

CHAPTER VI

LEGENDS AND MYTHS

Introductory :

The Purāṇic literature and legends and myths seems to be inseparable. The legends and myths which occur in the DP. are found also in epics and other Purāṇas. They are, in most cases, incorporated in the DP. with minor changes to suit the purpose of providing explanation to the origin of certain holy places and of showing the greatness of Dharmāranya. This chapter is essentially interrelated with chapter V. Hence, some points which are discussed in chapter V are not repeated here.

Creation¹

(1) Through the instrumentality of God (III.12 ff.):

The first man, who was alone, without blamishes, formed and formless, all-pervading, the lord of the universe,

¹ For detailed discussions on "Purāṇic Cosmogony" vide Pusalkar A.D., Studies in the Epics and Purāṇas, pp.43 ff.

the cause of all causes, created mankind, after having beheld the void everywhere. First, he created water and then deposited "vīryas" (germinating seeds) in it. From the vīryas arose foams which formed themselves into an egg as brilliant as ten million suns. From the egg arose "Prāṇa" and therefrom arose "Jāṭhara" fire. From the "Jāṭhara" fire arose the syllable "Om". The Om gave rise to the "Vyāhṛti" which in turn causes to exist "Satyaloka." From the Satyaloka arose the "Gāyatrī"; from the Gāyatrī, the "Sāvitṛī"; from the Sāvitṛī, the "Sarasvatī"; from the Sarasvatī, the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas; and from the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, the "Purāṇas". Waters are called "Nārā" as they are Nara's daughters. Nārāyaṇa originated from Nārās. The worlds and this earth consisting of seven "dvīpas" existed in the egg which originated from the unmanifest principle inherent in Nārāyaṇa. The "Puruṣa", originated from the unmanifest cause in the form ^{of} "sat" and "asat" was called Brahmā. He dwelt in the egg for the whole year; then by his own thought he split the egg into two parts. He created the sky with the first part; and the earth, with the second one. Between the sky and the earth, he created, space, eight directions and eternal abode of waters. The lotus with thousand petals sprang up from that abode and Brahmā was born in it.

(2) According to evolution-theory of theistic Sāṅkhya (III. 30 ff.) :-

The first portion of this theory has been discussed under "Sāṅkhya" in chapter V., Section II. The further accounts are given here :-

In Padma kalpa while Hari was sleeping on the serpent "Śeṣa", a lotus sprang up from his navel and therefrom emerged Brahmā. Then two demons, viz. Madhu and Kaiṭabha were created from the ear-filths of Hari. They threatened to kill Brahmā who then took refuge in Hari. Eventually, Hari slew the demons and ordered Brahmā to create the world. Brahmā, then, created the universe with his thought. Likewise, he created the sages, viz. Sanaka etc. The "Mādinī" (earth) came into existence from the fat of Madhu and Kaiṭabha who had been slain by Viṣṇu. From the "Mādinī" arose the syllable "Om"; from the syllable "Om", the "Gāyatrī"; from the Gāyatrī, the "Mahāvyaṛtis"; from the Mahāvyaṛtis, the worlds, viz. Bhurloka, Bhuvarloka, Svarloka, Maharloka, Janoloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka. The four Vedas originated from the mouth of Brahmā. Then Brahmā created oceans, mountains, rivers, trees, seven ether worlds, serpents, animals like lions, tigers, boars etc. Out of 84,000 different origins, there are four

classes of beings, viz. "āṇḍaja (oviparous beings)", "udbhijja (a plant)", "svedaja (generated by warm vapour or sweat)", and "jarāyuja (viviparous being)".

(3) The dissolution of the world (LXIII. 33 ff.) :

At the end of a kalpa the earth was submerged under water and then the whole world was destroyed. When the deluge was taking place, Viṣṇuśarmaṇ, a Brahmin and his wife called Susvarā were asleep. His house was swept away by the flood. The couple were drifted along the current in the swing till it was obstructed at the peak of a mountain. They remained there till his wife gave birth to a son. Then the Brahmin died of some illness. Susvarā demolished herself at her husband's funeral. Their son persisted on fruits brought to him by birds. When he was ten years old, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa came to him in the course of their world-inspection after the dissolution of the world. The boy could not speak a word, he, therefore, was given the name of "Mūḍha" by Brahmā. He, subsequently, was given the name of "Modhatraividya" as he was able to invoke the three gods after Śiva told him his past story. Then he was taken by the gods to Brahmāloka and he was initiated there. He learnt the three vedas from Brahmā. He married a daughter of a Brahmin belonging to a Devarṣi.

family. Three sons viz., Devaśarman, Brahmaśarman and Viṣṇuśarman, and a daughter, viz. Sukomalā were born of his wife. In the passage of time, their progenies increased to 18,000 and on account of that the Brahmāloka was crowded. Then the gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Mahēśa (collectively called "Kājeśa") built for them Moherakapura.

Devī²

The genesis of the goddess Mātangi :³

The DP. narrates the following story to account for the origin of the goddess (XX.31.ff).

Once upon a time there came to Moheraka a demon named Karnāṭa who created a lot of trouble to the Brahmins residing there. He was the son of Hiranyākṣa. He had a huge form and because of his adept in hundreds of tricks he was able to disguise in many forms. He was a flesh-eater. He was the enemy of the Vedas and Brahmins. He had as his weapons a bow and arrows, a club and an iron bar. The demon observed that in Moheraka there were

²•Some points concerning "devīs" have already been discussed under "Devī-worship" chapter V.

³•The same story with some slight variations occurs also in SKP. Brh. II.18. The origin of other goddesses is discussed at their respective places.

sacrificial posts, sacrificial altars, burning places, and mandapas. He heard the recitation of the Vedic mantras. He saw many boys reading and performing the sandhyā rites. They had in their hands kusa grass and sticks and wore girdles and deer-skins. He also saw the cloud of smoke rising from the sacrificial fire and the initiated boys drinking 'soma' juice.

The demon lurked in the forest-around Moheraka and resolved that he would impede the sacrifice performed by the Brahmins and make a living at the expense of their belongings and their peace. During the day he remained in the forest. At night, however, he came to the city, uprooted the sacrificial posts, made a mess of burning grounds and littered them with blood. Sometimes he scared the Brahmins who assembled to perform sacrifices. When there was a marriage party he kidnapped the newly married couple. Sometimes he devoured some boys and yelled with pride of his strength. He was invisible, though his yell was heard. Sometimes, he kidnapped some boys who were sleeping in their bed. The expert Brahmins tried their best to dispel the demon from the city but they failed. At one stage, the harrassed Vaniks who were afraid of the invisible threat, came to their Brahmin masters and expressed their desire

to go away from Moheraka. At the same time a Brahmin lady also came and reported fearfully that her newly invested son was kidnapped while he was learning to recite the Gāyatrī mantra. Under this circumstances, the Brahmins of Moheraka called the meeting of the Brahmins to discuss ways and means to get rid of the demon. In the meeting Devaśarman, a Brahmin belonging to Upamanyu gotra and who was an Udgātra (One who chants the hymns of the Sāmaveda), suggested that the goddess Śrīmātā should be invoked. When the Brahmins did accordingly and ^{at} that moment the demon came. He grabbed atrociously a son of a Brahmin and the chaos ensued. The goddess was angry. Her eyes and face became terrifyingly red and a hot flame emitted from her face. Then a beautiful goddess Mātāṅgī emerged out of the flame and asked Śrīmātā what service she could render to her.

Killing of Karṇātākṣa (XXI. 80 ff.)

The goddess Śrīmātā told Mātāṅgī to kill Karṇātākṣa to protect the Brahmins. Then Mātāṅgī made a terrifying roar which shook the three worlds. On hearing this roar the demon came hither. Then both parties made a mutual challenge by using hot words. The terrible fight ensued. During the fight the demon tried to incite the goddess'

anger by flirting her. He, however, was slain eventually with a heavy shower of arrows. Seeing that the demon had been killed, the Brahmins and the Vaniks who were watching the fight were full of joy and ~~en~~logized the goddess. She asked them what more they wanted her to do. When there was nothing left for her to do, she ordered the people to give her an offering every year on the third day of the dark fortnight of the month of Māgha, on which the demon was slain.

Who is Karnātākṣa ?

Karnātākṣa is described in the DP. as the flesh-eater, the killer of Brahmins and the enemy of the Vedas (XX.36). He resolved that he would interrupt the sacrifice performed by Brahmins (XX.41). Sometimes he is said to have eaten some boys. He is described as the source of fear of the people of Moheraka (XX.53-54). He put into disorder the burning ground and the sacrificial places and frightened the Brahmins at the sacrifice. (XX.46).

These facts possibly point out that the demon belonged to the cruel stock who had no regards for Brahmins and the Vedas. He possibly belonged to the non-Aryan tribes.

R.C. Parikh and G. Bühler are inclined to identify these non-Aryan tribes with the Rākṣasas and they are the Kolis, the Bhills, the Mehs and the like.⁴

Sūrya (XVI - XVII)

Samjñā was Sūrya's consort. She was Viśvakarman's daughter. Once while looking at her husband she winked her eyes owing to his brilliant lustre which she could not bear. For that reason Sūrya was angry, so he pronounced a curse that Yama who would administer judgement of people would be born of her because she refrained her eyes (Netra-saṁyama) from seeing him. Hearing the curse from her husband, Samjñā was shocked and rolled her eyes. Seeing that, Sūrya pronounced another curse that a daughter who was unsteady would be born of her. As the result of the curses Yama⁵ and Yamunā were born of Samjñā. Day by day Samjñā grew impatient because she could not bear the luster of her husband. At last she decided to go back to her

⁴•Vide Bühler, "Eleven Land-grants of Anahilavād Chalukyas, A Contribution to the History of Gujarat, Indian Antiquary, July 1877, p.186; Parikh R.C. (ed.), Kāvyaṇuśāsana by Hemachandra, Vol.II, Intro. pp. CLXIX - CLXX.

⁵•Cf. MKP. LXXIV. 4.(Chitrav S. Shastri, Prācīna Caritrakośa, p. 675.

father, Viśvakarman. Before going she created a woman who looked exactly the same as herself, then she gave her a strict order to act in her place in the domestic responsibilities, as if she were Saṁjñā herself. After that she went to her father's house and stayed there for quite sometime. By then her father became curious so he asked her for the reason of her long stay. She told him with tears that she could not bear the lustre of her husband, therefore she had to leave him. Nevertheless, her father insisted that she should return to her husband. Unwillingly, she had to leave her father but instead of going back to her husband's home she went to Dharmāraṇya and practised penance after having transformed herself into a mare.⁶ In her disguised form she worshipped the Sun god and fixed her mind on Lord Śiva and Umā.

Sūrya, on his part, showed his affection to Chāyā, thinking that she was really Saṁjñā. After sometime two sons, viz. Sāvarṇi and Śanaikara, and a daughter, viz. Tapatī, were born of her. Thenceforth she showed her partiality towards her own children against those of Saṁjñā,

⁶CF. BGP. VII. 13. 8-9 (Chitrav S. Shastri, Ibid., p. 1005).

viz. Yamunā and Yama. Yama could not tolerate this discrimination, so one day he raised his foot to kick her but luckily after some thought he did not land it on her. Out of anger that supposed Saṁjñā pronounced a curse, with trembling lips and with a shaking hand pointing at Yama, that the foot which was raised to kick her by Yama would fall off.

Hearing the curse, Yama was shocked because he felt that it was unusual that the mother should curse her own son & like that. He, therefore, approached his father and report the incident to him. Then Chāyā was summoned in and interrogated. At first, she took her firm stand on the affirmation that she was Saṁjñā. But after repeated questions and expression of little anger, on the part of Sūrya, the supposed Saṁjñā revealed her identity that she was only the double of Saṁjñā. She told him that real Saṁjñā had gone to her father's home. Thereafter Sūrya followed her to Viśvakarman's house; there he found that Saṁjñā had already left. In meditation Sūrya found that Saṁjñā in the form of a mare was practising penance in Dharmāranya; he also knew the purpose of her penance that she wanted his lustre to be reduced. He, therefore, told Viśvakarman to reduce his lustre; then gods began to

pray and implore him to abandon some of his lustre. Later he yielded to the invocation by the gods. From the abandoned lustre, Viśvakarman made the earth, the sky, the trident for Śiva, the discus for Viṣṇu, a sword for Vasu, an arrow for Śiva, heat for fire, a palanquin for Kubera, and other various deadly weapons for gods, demi-gods (Vakṣas) and Vidyādharas.⁷ Only one-sixteenth part of the lustre remained with Sūrya since then. With as much as that power of lustre, he went to Dharmāranya and saw his queen in the form of a mare there who was in deep meditation under the Bakula tree. He then transformed himself into a horse and approached the mare in disguise. On seeing him the mare came towards him and then both touched each other with their noses, showing mutual affectionate feelings. This meeting of both resulted in the birth of Aśvins, the divine physicians in Dharmāranya.⁸ Thereafter, the horse and the mare retransformed themselves as Sūrya and Saṁjñā. Then Sūrya conferred a boon on his wife that from then she would be able to bear his lustre.

⁷ Cf. Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa II. 24.90. (Chitrav S. Shastri, Ibid., p. 1005).

⁸ Cf. Mbh. Ādi. VII.34; Anu. CL. 17-18. (Chitrav S. Shastri, Ibid., p. 1005).

When he was the horse Sūrya scraped the ground in Dharmāraṇya with his front-right hoof. As a result of that a big ditch was formed and was then filled with the water of Gaṅgā at Kāśīkūṇḍa. It was later known as Sūryakūṇḍa. The statue of Saṁjñā was installed there by gods to mark the 55 years of her penance there. The gods, Gandharvas and Nāgas installed the statue of the Sun god specially called Bakulārka, and the statues of Aśvins there too. Behind Bakulārka at the place where Saṁjñā practised penance, a kūṇḍa was made by Viśvakarman in her memory and it was filled with the water of Gaṅgā.

The marriage ceremony of Saṁjñā with Sūrya was performed at Dharmāraṇya. The Vedikā for the ceremony was left to be seen even today. The wedding was attended by Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Mahēśa and other gods headed by Brhaspati. Ghrīṭācī, Menakā, Urvaśī, Tilottamā, a group of Apsarases and Gandharvas performed dances and sang songs. A wish-fulfilling jewel, a wish-fulfilling cow, a wish-fulfilling tree, Kubera, goddesses like Gaurī etc., 18,000 Traividya Brahmins and 36,000 Vanīks attended the function as well. After marriage Sūrya told the Brahmins inhabiting there that the statues of him and his wife kept in the temple built by Viśvakarman should be enthusiastically worshipped; that the implements used in his

marriage like garments, ornaments etc., should not be taken out of the temple; that Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Mahēśa, had conferred on him the supreme authority over the temple; that a chowrie held by Devanārī and a sword should be kept in the temple; and that the festival in his honour should be celebrated there on the due occasion. After saying that he and his wife resided in the temple which is otherwise called Satyamandira. Since then the sun-worship has been imposed as the obligatory rite for the people who live there, and the sun which was worshiped there is known as "Bakulārka".

Descriptions⁹ of Sūrya :

He is the embodiment of the three Vedas; he is the god of gods; he is the source of light; and he is changeless (XVI.4). He has thousand rays (XVI.6). He is full of powers and (is) the preceptor of all sciences. (XVI.7). He is the sole abode of knowledge; he is the dispeller of darkness; he is the mass of light; and he is eternal and pure. (XVII.3). He pervades the whole world; his form

⁹For descriptions of Sūrya in the MKP. vide Desai N.Y., Ancient Indian Society, Religion and Mythology as depicted in the Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa, pp. 164 ff.

consists of particles (XVII.4). He is the cause of everything (XVII.5). He is the maker of the day and the cause of the night. (XVII.6). He is the world-preceptor (XVII.7). He is the immutable form of Brahman which is formed and formless, gross as well as subtle (XVII.12). He is identified with kāla and kriyā (rituals) (XVII.13).

Viṣṇu

"Viṣṇu though a deity of capital importance in the mythology of the Brāhmaṇas, occupies but a subordinate position in the RV."¹⁰ In the later Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas he assumes importance and prominence.¹¹ In the Epic and Purāṇic mythology he is one of the three supreme gods of Hindu pantheon. The DP. contain some episodes of Viṣṇu and they are as follows :-

Viṣṇu the killer of Madhu and Kaṭabha :

It is narrated in the DP. (III.59 ff) that when Viṣṇu was sleeping on the serpent Śeṣa, a lotus sprang up from his navel and Brahmā was born therein. He (Brahmā)

¹⁰ Macdonell A.A., Vedic Mythology, (1971), p.37.

¹¹ Keith A.B., Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads, HOS Vol. 31, p. 110.

was puzzled about his origin. Viṣṇu cast the filth of his ears into water and therefrom sprang up two demons named Madhu and Kaiṭabha who threatened Brahmā. He took refuge in Viṣṇu who was slumbering and woke him up with prayer to the god. Then Viṣṇu fought with the two demons for 5,000 years but could not slay them. To make the matter worse, he became exhausted, which worried Brahmā. He, therefore, enlogized Prakṛti or Mahāmāyā, the goddess, who was pleased and consequently alleviated Brahmā's agitation. She deluded the demons in such a way that they became vulnerable to Viṣṇu's tricks. Viṣṇu offered a boon to them who laughed at him with contempt, being confident that they would certainly subjugate him. Instead of chosing the boon, ^{they offered the god a boon,} for which Viṣṇu asked them to be his victim. The demons realized that they were deceived by the god; so they asked for the boon from him that they should be slain at the place where there was no water. The god granted the boon and in keeping with his words he, after having expanded his thighs as big as a mountain, cut the demons' heads on them with his cakṛa.

This episode of Viṣṇu occurs also in Padmapūṛāṇa-Kriyāyoga, Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa and Harivaṃśa.¹² It not only

¹²•See Chitrao Siddheshvarshastri, Op.cit., p.603.

shows the superiority of Viṣṇu to Brahmā but also Viṣṇu as protector of the world from menacing demons.

Viṣṇu as Hayagrīva : Hayagrīva is an incarnation of Viṣṇu in the form of a horse-faced god. In this form he is also known as Hayaśiras and Aśvarśiras. The idea of Hayagrīva is tracable to the Rgvedic period. The name-Hayagrīva preserves the Sun-horse imagery of the Rgveda.¹³ In Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Hayagrīva appeared before the sage Agastya in the city of Kāñcī, holding in his hands a conch-shell, a discus, rosary and a book.¹⁴ The story of Hayagrīva grew out of the similar story in the Vedic literature in which Viṣṇu is identical with Yajña. The story runs¹⁵ as follows:-

Once upon a time Agni, Indra, Vāyu, and Yajña (Viṣṇu) agree to perform a sacrifice and distribute equally the

¹³•Vide Dandekar R.N., "Viṣṇu in the Veda", A Volume of Studies in Indology, Poona Oriental Series No. 75, p.100; Gonda J., Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism, pp.148-149.

¹⁴•Brṛ. P. 4.5; 9. 35-40.

¹⁵•Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa 7.5-6; Taittirīya Āraṇyaka 5.1; Taittirīya Saṃhitā, 4.9.1.

offerings obtained therefrom. Yajña, however, flew away with the offerings. Other gods pursued him but were defeated by Yajña who used a devine bow. At last the gods sought the help of white-ants to bite the bow-string of Yajña. When the string snapped the head of Yajña was cut off. He afterwards asked other gods to pardon him and subsequently with the help of Ásvins a head of a horse was planted on the headless body of Yajña.

In Devībhāgavata Purāṇa Viṣṇu incarnated as Hayagrīva to kill the demon Hayagrīva who stole the Vedas from the earth.¹⁶

Hayagrīva in the DP.¹⁷ (XIII-XV):-

Once gods including Indra assembled to perform a horse-sacrifice. They were headed by Brahmā and Rudra. Then they went to the Milk Ocean to meet Viṣṇu. There they did not find the Lord. For this reason, they were worried because the sacrifice could not be performed without Viṣṇu. Indra consulted Brhaspati who told him to ask Brahmā. Brahmā told him that Viṣṇu was in Dharmāraṇya meditating after having killed many demons. He placed his chin on one

¹⁶. Dbh. P. 1.5.

¹⁷. The same story with slight variations appears in the SKP. Brh. II. 14-15.

end of his bow, closed his eyes and concentrated on non-qualified Brahman. Then gods went to Dharmāranya and found Viṣṇu in that posture. They tried to make him abandon the meditation but in vain. Then the help from white-ants was sought. They were asked to gnaw the bowstring of Viṣṇu. When they did accordingly, the bowstring snapped and with the result of that the head of the god was severed by the impact of bow bouncing back. The head flew away and disappeared. The gods searched everywhere but they did not find the head. Later, they asked Viśvakarman to fix the head of the God. Viśvakarman cut off the sacrificial horse's head and fixed it on the headless body of Viṣṇu. The gods, ashamed of their deed which caused the severance of the god's head, started praising him who was pleased and therefore pardoned them. He explained the cause of the occurrence that he wanted to delude Brahmā. He then conferred a boon on them and they asked for the unimpedement of the sacrifice.

A number of tīrthas came into existence having the incident as the cause.¹⁸

It is apparent that the story is development of the one told in the Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇas etc.

¹⁸ See Ch. VII.

Śiva

"The name Śiva is unknown to the Vedas, but Rudra, another name of this deity, and almost equally common occurs in the Veda both in the singular and plural, and from these the great deity Śiva and his manifestations, the Rudras, have been developed."¹⁹ The DP. contains some episodes of Śiva. They are as follows :-

Śiva and Pārvatī :

We are told in the DP. (XXVII) that there are six kinds of mantras with various effects propagated by Śiva. Pārvatī, the consort of the god, driven by the desire to master the mantras, asked her lord insistently to teach her the mantras. The god was at first reluctant to teach the mantras, considering the wicked nature of women, but in the end he yielded to her persuasion. He revealed all the mantras to her who wrote down everything on a board for memorizing. On seeing that the god erased the written mantras from the board for fear that they would spread

¹⁹•Dowson John, A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History, and Literature, p.296. Some points concerning Śiva have already been discussed under "Śaivism". chapter V.

and thereby cause disaster to the world.²⁰ This act of Śiva caused a great resentment to Pārvatī who wept bitterly with disappointment. To console her, the god told her to master the mantras which were left unerased from the board. Then Śiva left Kailāsa for Dharmāranya and practised meditation there in the company of the gaṇas. Pārvatī, on her part, went to her father's place and tried to master the left over mantras in accordance with prescribed procedures. As soon as they were accomplished by Pārvatī Śiva who was at Dharmāranya fell to the ground and became unconscious owing to the effects of the mantras. After considerable chaos he was brought back to senses by the gaṇas.

Having known what had taken place, Pārvatī repented for what she had done. She was so much afflicted with painful feelings that she at first intended to end her life but afterwards she made up her mind to practise penance to expiate the sinful act and please Śiva. When she did so, Śiva out of his sympathy told her to shed her painful feelings arisen from her censurable act. This story is narrated to account for the existence of a tank called Devamajjanaka.

²⁰. This reflects a belief that the mantras should be kept secret.

The following are the six kinds of mantras mentioned by the DP. They are said to be capable of causing perplexity, death, stiffness, burning, hatred, trembling, bewitching and dispelling :-

1. Śākinī which consists of five syllables viz. Om hram hrīm hūm phaṭ.

2. Ḍākinī which consists of 7 syllables viz. Om hram hrīm klīm śrīm hūm phaṭ.

3. Kākinī which consists of five syllables viz. Om krām klīm hūm phaṭ.

4. Hākinī which consists of ten syllables viz. Om hasaum śrīm hrīm klīm aiṃ saum krām kraum cām.

5. Rākinī (syllables not given).

6. Tākinī (syllables not given).

The reference to the mantras in the Purāṇa suggests the ṭāntric influence which is imbibed in the Purāṇa. From an examination of the Matsya, Varāha and other Purāṇas, R.C. Hazra opines that the ṭāntric elements began to be absorbed appreciably by the Purāṇas not earlier than about 800 A.D.²¹

²¹ Hazra R.C., Studies in the Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs, pp.138-9. In connection with the mantras, it would not be out of place to quote M.P. Pandit, "Each Mantra has an individuality of its own and to repeat and concentrate upon a Mantra is to incubate it into revealing the Truth of Power or Devatā that dwells in its form. The supernatural Power so released could be utilised for spiritual as well as material ends." (Lights on the Tantra, p.17).

Śiva in relation to Brahmā and Viṣṇu :

The DP. LXV. 59 ff. narrates a story to account for the prohibition of using Ketakī flower to worship Śiva. The story centres around an infinitely expanding Śivaliṅga or the "Flaming Pillar", the theme of which is traceable to R̥gveda.²² The legend of the "Flaming Pillar" occurs also in Vāyu-Purāṇa, Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa, Vāmana-Purāṇa, Skanda-Purāṇa and Śiva-Purāṇa.²³ The theme of the flaming pillar finds its representation in art also.²⁴ The story in the DP. runs as follows :-

Viṣṇu and Brahmā were not able to decide between themselves as to who was superior to the other. They went to Śiva for judgement. Śiva produced a liṅga as brilliant as jewel then decked it with Ketakī flowers and annointed it with sandal paste. The liṅga began to expand till it covered the heaven and earth. Śiva then asked Brahmā and Viṣṇu to find its both the ends; the former, its top; and the latter, the base. Viṣṇu failed in the attempt; so he returned to report to Śiva of his inability to find the

²²•Vide Kantawala S.G., "The Flaming Pillar in the Purāṇas", Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal, Vol.XII,Nos.I & II, p.158.

²³•For details vide Ibid., pp. 152 ff.

²⁴•Vide Ibid., 160 ff.

base of the līṅga. Śiva was pleased with his honesty, he therefore asked Viṣṇu to protect the world. Brahmā, on his part, could not find the top of the līṅga but he asked Ketakī flower and Surabhī (Kāmadhenu) to be his witnesses in telling a lie to Śiva that he had found the top of the līṅga. Śiva who knew the truth about Brahmā, Ketakī and Surabhī cursed that Brahmā's idol would not be worshipped, that Ketakī would not be accepted in his worship and that Surabhī would eat unsuitable things.

The story in a way accounts for the disappearance of Brahmā-worship and shows that Śiva is higher even than Viṣṇu and Brahmā. Elsewhere it is said that the devotees of Śiva are higher than the devotees of Viṣṇu and Brahmā (V.34). Regarding the myth J.N. Banerjee observes that it "is undoubtedly sectarian in character, for it lays stress in a pronounced manner not only on immense superiority of Śiva over the other two members of the Brahmanical triad Brahmā and Viṣṇu, but it also attempts to explain the reason why Brahmā did not and could not have a sect developing around him."²⁵

²⁵•Banerjee J.N., Religion in Art and Archaeology, (1968), p.70; vide also Sharma B.N., "Religions tolerance and intolerance as reflected in Indian Sculptures", Journal of the Ganganath Jha Research Institute, Vol. XXVI, Nos. 1-3, pp. 667-68.

In addition to this the myth also accounts for the impurity attributed to the mouth of Surabhī. "With all the sanctity of the cow, her mouth is unclean."²⁶

Brahmā

The legends about Brahmā occur in the DP. only in relation to other two gods viz. Viṣṇu and Śiva. They are discussed at their respective places, hence, they are not discussed here.

Yama

The antiquity of Yama, who is also known as "Dharmarāja"²⁷, goes back to the Vedic period. He had the authority over the dead.²⁸ His father Vivasvat and his mother Saranyū.²⁹ In the Mahābhārata and Purāṇic literature he is a son of Vivasvat and Saṁjñā.³⁰ The DP. has the following accounts³¹

²⁶•Thomas P., Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners, p.31.

²⁷•Vide Brahmapurāṇa 94. 16-32 (Chitrav S.Shastri, Op.cit., p.676)

²⁸•Rg. X. 14,18.

²⁹•Rg. X. 14; X.17.

³⁰•Harivaṁśa 1.9.8; MKP. 74.7; BGP. 6.6.40; MP.11.4; Viṣṇu P. 3.2.4; Padma P. Srstikhanda 7; Varāha P. 20.8; Bhaviṣya P. Pratisargaparva 4.18.(Chitrav S.Shastri,Op.cit.,p.675).

³¹•The same story with some variations occurs in the SKP. Brh. II. 3-4.

regarding Yama (IX-X):-

Yama's penance:³²

Once upon a time Dharmarāja or Yama who was the son of Sūrya,³³ went to Brahmāloka and heard from there the story of how Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā had established the best of all the tīrthas (i.e. Dharmāranya). Then he decided to practise penance there. He practised penance there for five thousand years till the earth began to quake.

The Interruption of Indra :

Indra was afraid that Dharmarāja through his penance may take over his throne as the king of heaven by the favour of certain gods. He, therefore, tried to impede the penance himself but failed. Afterwards he sent Urvaśī to do the job.

The fruitful temptation of Urvaśī :

Indra went ahead of Urvaśī to the place where Dharmarāja was practising penance, caused the trees to blossom and created the romantic atmosphere around the place. When

³². See also chapter V under "austerity".

³³. For his parentage in the DP. see under "Sūrya" above.

Urvaśī arrived, she displayed to the best of her ability the woman's wiles. This resulted in the interruption of Dharmarāja's penance. He opened his eyes and to his surprise saw Urvaśī. He asked who she was, why she came and what she wanted. He was pleased and expressed his desire to confer a boon on her. Urvaśī told him the whole story of why she had to do this. Finally, she requested him not to seize Indra's throne. Dharmarāja told her that he had no other desire than see Lord Śiva and Pārvatī by practising penance. For the boon, Urvaśī asked that a pond bearing the name of Viñjola should be created there. Dharmarāja conceded to her request. Then she went back to Indra and reported to him the happenings and her success.

The fruits of the penance :

After Urvaśī had gone, Dharmarāja continued his penance for one hundred years more, then Lord Śiva was pleased. He and Pārvatī came to Dharmarāja and conferred a boon on him. Dharmarāja requested that the forest in which he practised penance be named after him, i.e. Dharmāranya, that a Śivaliṅga named Dharmēśvara be installed there and that Śiva and Pārvatī should abide

there always. Śiva granted the boon and also gave him the authority to judge man after death.³⁴ The servant's places were assigned to Lekhaka and Citragupta. He was given the lordship over Saṁyamī city.

The story of Yama or Dharmarāja as appears in the DP. is an attempt to give the derivative explanation to the word "Dharmāranya" and to raise the sanctity of the place by bringing it into association with certain gods; in this respect with Dharmarāja, i.e. Yama. A number of tīrthas are alleged to have come into existence as a result of Yama's penance.³⁵

Indra

Indra occupies the most important rank in the Vedas, which is indicated by the fact that about 250 hymns celebrate his greatness.³⁶ In the epic period he occupies the

³⁴•According to Padmapurāṇa Sr̥ṣṭikhanda. Ch. 8. this authority is given to him by Brāhmā (Chitrav S. Shastri, Op.cit., p.676).

³⁵•See Ch. VII.

³⁶•Macdonell A.A., The Vedic Mythology, pp. 54 ff.

position as the lord of gods.³⁷ However, his position is lower than the triad, viz., Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa.³⁸ The DP. has the following episodes of Indra which occur also in epics and other Purāṇas with some variations :-

Indra and Nahuṣa³⁹ (XXI. 43 ff.) : Indra, at one time, killed the three-headed god named Viśvarūpa who was the son of Viśvakarman.⁴⁰ On account of that he lost his lustre as well as power. Subsequently, he had to leave concealed in a lotus in the Mānasa lake. Having heard the news, demons assembled and tried to attack heaven which was deprived of a leader, i.e. Indra. Being struck with fear, the gods, viz. Kubera, Agni, Yama, Sūrya, Varuṇa, Rudra and Āśvins summoned Brhaspati and sought his advice according to

³⁷ Hopkins E.W., Epic Mythology, p.122.

³⁸ Dowson John, A Classical Dictionary, p.125. For discussions over the transition of Vedic Indra to Purāṇic Indra vide, Gonda J., "A Note on Indra in Purāṇic Literature", Purāṇa, Vol. IX, No.2, July 1967 pp. 222 ff.

³⁹ This episode occurs also in Mbh. Adi. 70.27; Adi.75; Udyoga. 11, 70; Anu. 156-157, Bhāgavat P. 6.18.2, Devībhāgavat P. 6.7-8, Viṣṇu P. 1.24. (Chitrav S. Shastri, Op. cit., p. 356).

⁴⁰ The killing of Viśvarūpa by Indra is traceable to the period of Brāhmaṇas, vide Gonda J., Ibid, p. 246.

which the king Nahuṣa was to be appointed as their leader for the time being. On request of the gods the king went to heaven and remained there. Then he was infatuated with love with Indrāṇī and wanted to enjoy her. He sent for her. Under these circumstances, unwilling Indrāṇī had to seek Br̥haspati's advice as to how to avert herself from this situation. Br̥haspati advised her that a word should be sent to Nahuṣa to come to her in a palanquin born by sages. Nahuṣa did as was asked. On the way he wanted the sages to go faster; so he whipped them, saying "sarpa, sarpa" (i.e. go, go). Agastya, the husband of Lopāmudrā, one of the sages, got angry, and he, therefore, cursed him (Nahuṣa) to be a snake.

Indra and Ahalyā.⁴¹ (XXV. 4 (ff.) : The legend is as follows :- Once there was a famous king called Vindhyāśva. While going out for hunting, he saw Menakā and fell in love with her. She told him that she was not independent as she was a servant of Indra. As she was about to leave, the king embraced her by force and enjoyed her. After the incident, Menakā went to heaven and as a result of the

⁴¹ For references from other Purāṇas and epics see Chitrava S. Shastri, Op. cit., p. 52-53. The love-story of Indra and Ahalyā is traceable to the period of the Brāhmaṇas vide Gonda J. Op. cit., p. 246.

union with the king she bore a daughter whom she delivered on the bank of the Ganges, and left her there disinterestedly. Brahmā found the child and gave the name Ahalyā to it. He entrusted the child to the care of the sage Gautama. The child was brought up by the sage. When she grew up, Brahmā gave her to Gautama in marriage. A son named Śatānanda was born of her by Gautama. One day, Indra, afflicted with the maddening love for Ahalyā, disguised himself as Gautama and then enjoyed with her during Gautama's absence. Gautama returned all of a sudden and found the uninviting scene. He became furious; so he cursed Indra that his serotums would fall off. Ahalyā also was cursed to become a stone. Indra suffered tremendously from the effect of the curse. As a result, he was absent from gods' sacrifices. This caused a serious concern among the gods. Agni informed them of what had happened to Indra. He advised them to transplant in Indra the serotums of a sacrificial goat. They did accordingly. In order to free himself from distress arisen from this incident, Indra went to Dharmāranya to practise penance there. The place of his penance was a krośa and a half from Moheraka. Śiva was pleased with his penance came there with Pārvatī, which resulted in Jayanteśvara being erected following a boon of Śiva to Indra.

The Story of Rāma
(XXX - LI)

Once there was a city called Ayodhyā on the bank of the Sarayū. It was ruled by the King Daśaratha who had only one daughter viz. Śānta. In keeping with his word, the King gave her to the king Lomapāda, who in turn gave her in marriage to the sage R̥ṣyaśṛṅga, the son of Vibhāṇḍaka. The king Daśaratha who had no heir invited the sage to perform the sacrifice for him in the hope of obtaining a son. At that time, gods requested Viṣṇu to incarnate to suppress Rāvaṇa who troubled them. The god agreed to do so and simultaneously he was born as Rāma of Kauśalyā, as Bharata of Kaikeyī, as Lakṣmaṇa, and as Śatrughna of Sumitrā. The four royal children were given education by the sage Vaśiṣṭha. When Rāma was fifteen years old, the sage Viśvāmitra came to Daśaratha's court and asked for his consent to send Rāma to kill the demons Mārīca and Subāhu for him. After some reluctance he agreed to send Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to do the job. The two boys accompanied the sage to his āśrama and on the way Rāma slew a Rākṣasī named Tātikā, the daughter of Suketu. At the āśrama, the sage started the sacrifice and he told Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa

to guard it. Mārīca and Subāhu, the two sons of Tātikā, came to obstruct the sacrifice but the former was pierced by Rāma's arrow and ran away whereas the latter was reduced to pieces by Rāma's arrows.

After staying at the āśrama with the sage for some time, they (i.e. Viśvāmitra, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) went to Ayodhyā and on the way Rāma revived Ahalyā who was transformed into a stone on account of Gautama's curse. At the court of the king Janaka of Ayodhyā, Rāma won Sītā, who emerged from a furrow, in a svayamvara-contest, in which he broke Śiva's bow left in the court of the king by the god. The king Daśaratha was invited to Ayodhyā to attend the betrothing ceremony, in which Sītā, Urmilā, Māṇḍavī and Śrutakīrti were given in marriage to Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna respectively. On the way back to Ayodhyā, Rāma performed the feat of lifting the bow of Paraśurāma, by which the latter knew that the former was the incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Rāma lived in Ayodhyā with his wife, Sītā, performing his duties as a righteous son, in accordance with the theory of four puruṣārthas. Twelve years elapsed and the destiny took its course. The king Daśaratha wanted to retire and he bequeathed the throne to Rāma but this

~~this~~ decision was resented by Kaikeyī very strongly as she wanted the throne for Bharata, her own son. She ~~reminded~~ the king of two boons which he had granted her in the past. At that time she refrained from choosing them but she wanted the king to grant them now by bequeathing the throne to Bharata and sending Rāma into exile for 14 years. As the king could not go back on his word, he had to comply with her demand. Consequently, Rāma left Ayodhyā for forest. He ~~sent~~ back his minister, Sumantra with his chariot, after reaching the bank of the Ganges. He crossed the river and arrived at the city of the king Guha. From there he proceeded to the āśrama of the sage Bharadvāja. After some time the king Daśaratha died of sorrow which resulted from the separation from Rāma. Then Bharata and Śatrughna were called to Ayodhyā from their uncle's place. Kaikeyī told Bharata of what had taken place and asked ^{him} to ascend the throne.

Instead of being elated at the unexpected fortune, Bharata collapsed like a tree hit by a lightningⁿ on hearing the news. He rebuked his mother painfully for her deed and refused to ascend the throne. After performing the crematory rite for his father, he did not enter the city of Ayodhyā in spite of the request from the sage Vasiṣṭha

and ministers. He and Śatrughna went to the āśrama of the sage Bharadvāja where Rāma stayed and requested him to return to Ayodhyā.

Failing to persuade Rāma to return and rule Ayodhyā, Bharata returned to Ayodhyā with Śatrughna and ruled it in Rāma's name, placing on the throne two sandals of Rāma. For fear that Bharata would come again Rāma went to the Dandaka forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. He lived there for thirteen years, then came to the āśrama Śūrpanakhā, Rāvaṇa's sister who tried to seduce Rāma. She was, later, punished by Lakṣmaṇa who cut off her nose and ears. With blood-bathed body she went weeping to her two brothers viz. Khara and Duṣaṇa and told them what had happened. They came with an army 40,000 strong and fought with Rāma. Both of them were killed. Śūrpanakhā, then, went to Rāvaṇa who then sought Mārīca's assistance in kidnapping Sītā. Aware of Rāma's prowess, as he was, he had to cooperate in ^{the} conspiracy because Rāvaṇa threatened to kill him if he refused to comply with him. Mārīca, then disguised as a golden deer sported near the āśrama of Rāma. Sītā asked Rāma to catch it for her. He told Lakṣmaṇa to guard Sītā before going out in pursuit of the deer. After tracking it down, Rāma shot an arrow at it and killed it. The dying disguised deer cried out in Rāma's voice for

Lakṣmaṇa's help. Having heard the cry, Sītā told Lakṣmaṇa to go and help him. Lakṣmaṇa was reluctant at first but finally, he had to leave her alone and went to Rāma's aid. Finding the opportunity, Rāvaṇa who had taken the form of an ascetic approached Sītā and asked for alms. She received him with due respect. Afterwards, the ascetic assumed the real form of Rāvaṇa and dragged Sītā along with him. On the way he fought with the vulture Jaṭāyus who tried to rescue Sītā but he was wounded in the fight. Rāvaṇa, then, took Sītā to Laṅkā. On returning to the āśrama, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa found that Sītā disappeared. They searched for her everywhere till finally, they found dying Jaṭāyus who told them the kidnapping of Sītā by Rāvaṇa before he breathed his last. Then they pursued Rāvaṇa and on the way Rāma slew Kabandha. When they proceeded further they met Śabarī and on arriving at the lake Pampā they met some monkeys headed by Hanumat . Then they became friends with Sugrīva who was the son of Sūrya. He was the half-brother of Vālin, the son of Indra. The two brothers ruled over Kiṣkindhā. Once both of them pursued a demon who used to harass his monkey-subjects. The demon fled into a cave. Vālin, after having posted Sugrīva at the entrance of the cave, pursued the demon into it and fought with him. After many days Sugrīva, having seen the blood

trickling out of the cave, thought that Vālin was killed. Therefore, he blocked the entrance with a stone and took over the throne of Kiṣkindhā including Vālin's wife. Having slain the demon, Vālin returned to Kiṣkindhā and threatened to kill Sugrīva. The latter fled from the city. He was accompanied by four ministers, viz. Jāmbavān, Nala, Nīla and Hanumat. Rāma and Sugrīva made a treaty according to which the former had to slay Vālin and the latter had to help in seeking Sītā. Subsequently, Rāma slew Vālin and restored Sugrīva to the throne of Kiṣkindhā.

In the Śarad season Rāma ordered Sugrīva to call a meeting of monkeys, then he sent the chiefs of the monkeys to different directions to find Sītā : Hanumat, Aṅgada, Nīla, Jāmbavān and Nala were sent to southern direction; and other monkeys to the other three directions. The five monkeys were told by Sampāti, Jaṭāyus' brother, told them that Sītā was confined in the Aśoka grove in Laṅkā. Hanumat, the ^{ablest} monkey, was, then, sent to Laṅkā. He met Sītā at the Aśoka grove and offered Rāma's ring to her. He was ready to carry her back to Rāma but she refused to comply with his offer. Then she asked Hanumat to tell Rāma to come and rescue her from Laṅkā.

Later on Hanumat was captured by Meghanāda. Subsequently, a piece of cloth steeped in oil was tied to his tail and then it was lighted. With his burning tail Hanumat burnt Laṅkā and then he bade farewell to Sītā who gave her crest-jewel to be delivered to Rāma. Then he leapt to another shore where other four monkeys were waiting. Then all of them went to Rāma. Hanumat gave him Sītā's crest-jewel and informed him about her.

Rāma decided to go to Laṅkā to rescue Sītā. He was ~~assisted~~ by Lakṣmaṇa and Sugrīva. After having assembled the army of monkeys he led them to the sea-shore. In Laṅkā Rāvaṇa's mother, Kaikaśī dreamt that Rāma built a bridge to Laṅkā and attacked it with his army, which resulted in the devastation of many Rākṣasas. She told her son Bibhīṣaṇa to persuade Rāvaṇa to return Sītā to Rāma. He did accordingly but failed. Out of anger, Rāvaṇa expelled him from Laṅkā. He went to take refuge in Rāma who crowned him the king of Laṅkā. Rāma, who found that the shore of Laṅkā was too far, took fast for three times. Then he took aim at the sea with his arrow. Out of fear, the god of ocean took a human form and told him to construct a bridge of stones with the help of Nīla who was an architect.

Before constructing the bridge, Rāma erected a Śivaliṅga called Rāmeśvara for the success of work. After five days, the construction was completed. After having crossed the bridge to the shore of Laṅkā, Rāma sent Aṅgada to Laṅkā, as a delegate to hold talks with Rāmaṇa for returning Sītā but Aṅgada's mission failed. Then Rāma attacked Laṅkā. In the first battle, Meghanāda took the field. He tied Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with his "nāgapāśa" (serpent-noose). They became unconscious because of the "nāgapāśa". Meghanāda thought that they had died. He, therefore, informed Rāvaṇa accordingly. Afterwards, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were released from the "nāgapāśa" by the Garuḍa. The fight began again. In the next battle, Hanumat slew Dhumrākṣa and Kampana, whereas Nīla did Prahasta.

Considering the situations, Mandodarī pleaded to Rāvaṇa to return Sītā but in vain. In the next battle, Kumbhakarna took the field. He could capture Sugrīva and carried him towards the city but at the gate Sugrīva tore off his ears with his hands and bit his nose off. Kumbhakarna returned to the battle field to meet his destruction at the hands of Rāma. After the defeat of many generals, Meghanāda took the field. Lakṣmaṇa fought with him and fainted because of Meghanāda's incantations. He was brought back to senses by the medicinal herb brought from

Dronagiri mountain by Hanumat. He, afterwards, slew Meghanāda with the help of Bibhīṣaṇa. The final battle was a confrontation between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. The battle ended with the destruction of Rāvaṇa at the hands of Rāma. After the war, Rāma rescued Sītā and returned to Ayodhyā. He ascended the throne as the period of his exile was over.

After some time Rāma had a desire to visit some holy places, to pacify the restlessness of his mind. He, therefore, asked the sage Vaśiṣṭha as to which tīrtha was the best. The sage elaborately described the high sanctity of Dharmāranya to him. Then Rāma decided to pay his visit to Dharmāranya. He set out for Dharmāranya with his retinue and before reaching there he stopped at Maṇḍalīpura to pay homage to Maṇḍaleśvara which was erected by the sage Māṇḍavya. At Dharmāranya he restored the place on the goddess Śrīmātā's request and re-established Brahmins in the city of Moherakā. He performed a sacrifice there, having the Traividya Brahmins as the sacrificial priests. He granted them 56 villages including Moherakapura. After that he paid his visit to Lohayaṣṭi, Govatseśvara, the Sarasvatī, the temple of Varāha and the Gomatī. He, then, returned to Moheraka once again to perform a sacrifice. On completion of the sacrifice he returned to Ayodhyā.

The story generally follows Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa except the portion which Rāma is depicted as coming to Dharmāranya.

As discussed under "Rāma-worship" in chapter V, this is possibly to justify the worship of Rāma there and to show the greatness of Dharmāranya..

Hanumat and Rāmeśvaram

(LVI - LVII)

The DP. has the accounts of legendary origin of Rāmeśvara (i.e. Rāmeśvaram):

Before the war with Rāvaṇa, Rāma took a vow that if Rāvaṇa was slain by him, he would worship Śiva before taking his meal. When the war was over and Rāvaṇa was killed, he ordered monkeys to find a Śivaliṅga for him to worship. No monkeys could find a single liṅga. Hanumat, then, volunteered to find one for him. Before going out to find the liṅga, he advised Sītā to cook for Rāma, while waiting. The cooking was finished before Hanumat's return. Sītā, then, requested Rāma to take his meal. Rāma did not comply with her request. He decided to wait until Hanumat's arrival. Sītā who was quick-witted made a Śivaliṅga out of white sand and then she told Rāma that it came from the mount Kailāsa on account of his virtues. With this trick Sītā successfully persuaded Rāma to take his meal. No sooner had Rāma finished his meal than

Hanumat arrived holding the whole Śiva temple in his hand. .
 Seeing Rāma washing his mouth after meal, Hanumat was
 surprised as to who had brought a Śivaliṅga for Rāma to
 worship before him. He approached Rāma to explain this.
 Rāma told him that Sītā had made the liṅga before he could
 bring one from Vārāṇasī and ordered him to put the Śiva
 temple he brought there. It would become wellknown over
 the whole world.

Hanumat was greatly annoyed but Rāma consoled him by
 saying that he worshipped the liṅga of sand in consideration
 to the monkeys who would not eat if Rāma would not do so.
 He, then, ordered Hanumat to instal the liṅga of sand in
 the temple he had brought. Hanumat tried his best to lift
 the liṅga but he could not move it. To make the matter
 worse, he fainted. Sītā brought him back to senses by
 spraying water from her mouth to him. In appreciation of
 Hanumat's devotion, Sītā give the names "Hanumanteśvara"⁴²
 to the temple brought by him and "Rāmeśvara" to the Śivali-
 ṅga she had made.

⁴². There is also a Hanumanteśvara - a holy place on the
 bank of the Narmadā, a few miles from Chandod.

According another legend, Rāma asked Hanumat to go to the Himalayas and bring a Śivaliṅga from Mount Kailāsa. Hanumat came late; so Rāma put up a liṅga made out of sand by Sītā and prayed to it. When Hanumat came, the liṅga brought by him was put to the north of it. (the earlier liṅga). The liṅga brought by Hanumat is called Viśvanātha, Kāśīliṅga and Hanumanliṅga. The other liṅga is known as Rāmaliṅga, Rāmeśvara and Rāmanātha.⁴³

Hanumanteśvara and Rāmeśvara mentioned in the DP. may be identified with modern Śrī Ramanathaswamy temple at Ramesvaram, the city lying about 164 kilometres south of the temple city of Madurai.⁴⁴

The Story of the King Prthu⁴⁵
(LXV. 3 ff.)

Once there was a famine in Dharmāranya which lasted for twelve years. The grievances of people prevailed everywhere. At that time the country was ruled by the

⁴³. Tourist guide published by Śrī Karthikeiya Publication, p.2.

⁴⁴. Ibid., p.1; for the descriptions of the temple vide The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol.XXI, pp.173-175.

⁴⁵. The name of Prthu, son of Vena is mentioned in Rg.VIII. 9.10. and Rg. X.148 is attributed to him.

vicious king named Vena. He forced the people to worship him as a god. Subsequently, he met with destruction at the hands of the oppressed Brahmins. During the anarchic period the country was chaotic. Robbery was everywhere. To bring back law and order to the land, the need for a ruler was felt. Brahmins, therefore, rubbed the left hand of the king Vena's body and as a result of it the ugly figure of a Niṣāda⁴⁶ emerged from it. He was not considered fit for ruling the country. The Brahmins, this time, rubbed the right hand of the corpse, as a result of it Prthu emerged from it. The Brahmins wanted to crown him but the Niṣāda objected to it. He threatened to shoot an arrow at Prthu if they did so. To avoid averse consequences, the Brahmins, divided the land between the two brothers. The king Prthu, in an effort to remove the famine from the land practised penance on the bank of the Rūpā (i.e. Rupyā or Rupen). Śiva was pleased with his penance, he, therefore, told him to select a boon. The king asked for the end of the famine; so Śiva instructed him to milk the

⁴⁶. For discussions about Niṣāda vide Kane P.V., HDS., Vol.II, Part I, pp. 86-87.

earth in the form of a cow⁴⁷ and her fourteen calves. Milk obtained from them should be made into curd. The curd was to be strewn over the land. The king did accordingly and the famine disappeared. The place where the curd was made was called "Dadhisthalī".⁴⁸ It was to the west of Dharmāranya (i.e. Modhera). Later on in his advanced age the king practised penance once again, and then he obtained liberation on the bank of the river Rupavatī in Dharmāranya (i.e. the Rupen).

The legend of Pr̥thu, the son of Vena, occurs in the epics and many Purāṇas.⁴⁹ The DP. - version of the legend differs in details from other sources and it is apparent that the story in the DP. is to the purpose of bringing out the greatness of Dharmāranya.

⁴⁷. The milking of the earth is traceable in the Atharvaveda (VIII.10).

⁴⁸. This may be situated somewhere near the village Delwadā, about one and a half kilometre west of Modhera. There is also the village "Dadhisthala" on the bank of the Sarasvatī, 4 miles west of Siddhapur. (Gazetteer of the Baroda State, p. 629.).

⁴⁹. For the legend in other sources vide Dange Sindhu S. "The Earth-Cow and Pr̥thu's Dart", Purāṇa, Vol. XIII, No. 1, January, 1971, pp. 79-81; vide Huntington Ronald M., "The Legend of Prithu", Purāṇa, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, July 1960, pp. 188 ff.; For the psychological analysis of the legend vide Huntington R.M., Ibid., pp. 196 ff.

Gaṅgāvatarana

(The descent of the Ganges).

The DP. (XLVIII) has the legend to account for the origin of the Ganges. The story is different from the one in which the Ganges was brought to the earth by Bhagīratha.⁵⁰ Hence, the Ganges mentioned in this story is probably Gantamīgaṅgā⁵¹ which flows to the south of the Vindhya. The sage who brought the river down to earth was Gautama. This also supports the above identification. The legend is as follows:-

Once there was a famine in which many people died. As a result, Bhārgava Brahmins and others called a meeting and sought for solutions. Devaśarman came up with the story that in Kṛtayuga, the sage Gautama practised severe penance in the Vindhya forest for a period of one hundred years till Brahmā was pleased. He came riding on his swan and offered him a boon. Gautama requested for permanent stay of Brahmā there and naming a mountain after him (i.e. Brahmagiri).

⁵⁰•Vide Dowson John, Op. cit., p.108.

⁵¹•Vide App. II. under "Gaṅgā".

He also asked for the fertility of the land so that crops may grow without cultivation. Brahmā granted the boons. Since then the land abounded in food-supply. Subsequently, the Brahmins and their families went to live with the sage for six months till it rained again. Then they wanted to go back to their home again, as there was plenitude everywhere. The sage asked them to stay longer until the food-grains collected for them were exhausted. They became impatient, therefore, they resorted to a trick. They produced a cow with the powers of a mantra, then they sent it to the sage who was performing his midday ritual. The cow ate his "Kūśa" grass. The sage hurled at it some Kūśa grass, which resulted in the death of the cow. On thinking that he had committed a sin, the sage felt so unhappy that he was on the point of ending his life. Brahmā came and told him that the cow was not real. On knowing this the sage cursed the Brahmins that they would be fallen from Dharma. Then the sage practised penance to propitiate Śiva. On account of it Śiva came and conferred on him a boon. Gautama asked for the descent of the heavenly Ganges. Śiva granted accordingly.

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