

CHAPTER IX

Literary Estimate

Now I proceed to evaluate the Mahābhāgavatapurāṇa from the literary point of view.

Ārṣaprayogas :-

In Purāṇas at times we find certain usages which are not in accordance with the rules laid down by Pāṇinī. Such usages are called Ārṣaprayogas. Some such Ārṣaprayogas are found in the Mahāg. e.g.

- (i) Chāyāṁ saṁsthāpya santyaktvā māyayāntarhitā svayaṁ || 11.108^{cd}

Here according to Pāṇinian rules santyajya should have been there. Instead there is santyaktvā which is an Ārṣaprayoga.

- (ii) Yonipīṭhe tapastaptvā punarlabdhvā mahāśvarīm || 11.117^{cd}

Here according to Pāṇinian rules punarlabdhā (Labh 1 A. First Future) should have been there. Instead there is punarlabdhvā which is an Ārṣaprayoga.

- (iii) Yathā pravṛttiṁ teṣāṁ tu yuddham ghoraṭaram naḥat | 47.20^{ab}

Here according to Pāṇinian rules yathā pravṛttaṁ should have been there. Instead there is yathā pravṛttiṁ which is an Ārṣaprayoga.

- (iv) Ādau līgaṁ prapūjyeta bilvapatreisca Nārada | 81.14^{ab}

Here according to Pāṇinian rules prapūjayet should have been there. Instead there is prapūjyeta which is an Ārṣaprayoga.

Epic Tag :-

Note the epic tag in stanzas 14^d and 17^d of Adhyaya 47 viz. " Śataśo'ṁtha Sahasraśeḥ | "

Another well known epic tag is employed in 71.11 viz. " Śatasahasraśeḥ ".

Versification Parallelism :-

This is noticed in the case of half stanza 28.22^{cd} of Mabhg.P. with Devīmāhātmya from Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa.

"Namastubhyaṁ namastubhyaṁ namastubhyaṁ namo namaḥ ||" 28.22^{cd}

Note versification parallelism of the above noted half stanza with the following half stanza from Devīmāhātmya from Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa¹ (Bibliotheca Indica ed.) viz. "Namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namaḥ | " Adhyaya 85. every second line of stanzas 12-32 and 34.

Another similar instance of versification parallelism of half stanza 2.3^{cd} of Mabhg. with the said verse from Devīmāhātmya from Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa is as follows :-

"Kṛtārtho'smi kṛtārtho'smi kṛtārtho'smi na saṁśayaḥ || " 2.3^{cd}

Refrain :-

The last quarters of Mabhg.P. Adhyaya 44. sts. 2-4, 6-9, 11-12, 14-15 contain a refrain which is :- "Jayaṁ dehi namo'stu te | " This refrain reminds us of Devī Māhātmya or² Saptaśatī refrain : "Rūpaṁ dehi jayaṁ dehi yaśo dehi

1 Vide Rev.Banerjee K.M. edited 'The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa', Bibliotheca Indica ed., Bishop's College Press, Calcutta, 1862.

2 Vide Dr.Jani A.N. edited 'Śṛīsaptaśatī', 3rd edition, Baroda, 1972 second line of stanza 2-21 of Argalāstotra.

dviṣo jahi | " from Argalāstotra second line of stanzas 2-21.

The fourth quarters of sts.20-22 of Adhyaya 66 contain another refrain which is : "Viṣṇo prasīda paramēśvara te namo'stu"

A Portion of Prose Eulogy Containing Harmony of Sound & Sense:-

Om namo vimalavedanēyai bhūrbhuvahṣvabhūparamakamalāyai,
kevalaparemanāndāsandoherūpāyai lokatrayatimirāpahāraka -
paramējyotirūpāyai, asadbhilāsayuktasandūṣitadosāpasārāṇa -
paramāmṛtarūpāyai, mūrtimatkoṭicandravedanēyai durgādevyai
sarvavedodbhavanārāyaṇyai janāśarīre, paramātmārūpāyai
prasīda te namo namaḥ || 45.3 ||

This portion of the eulogy of Devī by Brahmā which is in prose is excellent from the literary point of view. The epithets piled up are very significant and it has a unique harmony of sound and sense which can be compared with the eulogy of the Sun god by yājñavalkya in Śrīmadbhāgavatā XII. 6.67-72.

Figures of speech :-

Arthāntaranyāsa :-

A very fine instance of the figure of speech Arthāntaranyāsa is found in 22.53. Indra says to cupid :
Yadartham tvam samānitastattvam hi svayamuktavān |
Prājñeṣu vecanāpekṣā prāyaśo naiva vidyate || 22.53

While soliloquizing on hearing the words of Indra, cupid thought that the time of irrevocable curse had arrived. No person is ever able to transgress the destiny at any time (22.66). This stanza contains a very fine instance of Arthāntarenyāsa. Compare So'yaṁ me samayaḥ prāptah śāpakālo'nivāritah |

Daivam na puruṣaḥ ko'pi śakto laṅghayitum kvacit || 22.66

In both the above instances a particular statement is supported by a general statement.

Simile :-

In Mābhg. 4.28 a fine simile is found which equates the growing of child Satī with that of moonbeams in autumn or with that of a heavenly river in monsoon.

Note a fine simile in - ' devāḥ sarve mahātmānaḥ paṭe Citrārpitā iva || 9.40^{cd}. This simile is very apt.

Metres in the Order of Preponderance :-

Anuṣṭubh :-

Excepting the stanzas in various metres that are specified hereunder and the prose passages noted below all the remaining stanzas in the Mābhg. are in Anuṣṭubh or śloka metre.

Upajāti : 2.41; 67.133 (of Upendrevajrā and Vamśastha); 5.26;

8.56, 59; 60.27, 29.30; 62.22, 23.26 (of Vamśastha and Indrevamśa); 5.27; 8.55, 58; 27.31; 62.25; 63.12,

13; 67.129 (of Indrevamśa and Vamśastha); 5.51; 60.24

↳ 5.28; 60.25; 67.162 (of Indrevamśa, Indrevajrā & Vamśastha);

8, 57; 27.30 (of Indravajrā, Vamśastha & Indravamśā)⁴⁹¹

(of Indravamśā, Vamśastha and Indravajrā); 10.92 (of
Sāradulavikrīḍita and Sragdharā; 27.29; 67.127 (of Upendravajrā,
Indravajrā and Vamśastha); 30.47 (of Indravajrā, Indravamśā,
Upendravajrā and Indravamśā); 45.10^{cd} (of Śālinī and
Vaiśvadevī) 56.37 (of Upendravajrā, Indravamśā and Indravajrā),
38 (of Indravajrā, Vamśastha, Indravajrā and Indravamśā);
60.23 (of Indravajrā and Upendravajrā), 26 (of Indravamśā and
Upendravajrā); 62.24; 67.131 (of Vamśastha, Indravamśā,
Indravajrā and Vamśastha); 63.44 (of Upendravajrā and Śālinī);
67.128 (of Indravamśā, Indravajrā, Upendravajrā and
Indravajrā); 67.130 (of Upendravajrā and Indravamśā); 67.132
(of Indravamśā, Indravajrā, Indravajrā and Upendravajrā);
67.134 (of Indravamśā, Upendravajrā and Vamśastha); 67.135
(of Indravajrā, Indravamśā and Upendravajrā); 70.59 (of
Indravajrā, Vamśastha, Indravamśā and Vamśastha); 79.32 (of
Indravamśā, Vamśastha, Upendravajrā, and Vamśastha); 79.33
(of Indravamśā, Indravajrā and Upendravajrā)

Sāradulavikrīḍitam :- 1.3, 32-37; 6.20; 10.93; 15.37-44;

21.61; 30.2,4; 35.54, 55; 42.56-60;

50.87-89; 61.65; 67.34-36; 70.34-36; 72.63

Vasantatīlekā :- 1.4; 10.94; 31.26,27; 43.27-29; 46.33; 55.32;

57.13-20; 58.53; 61.64; 62.27; 66.20-23.

Vamśasthavilā :- 5.48-50; 8.54,60; 30.48; 57.19; 60.28; 62.22

Śālinī :- 45.9,11 (defective); 63.45-51 (48 second pāda
defective)

Upendravajrā :- 2.40; 5.25; 56.36

Indravamśā :- 8.53; 63.11; 70.60

Śikharinī :- 6.18, 19; 30.3

Sragdharā :- 10.91

Adhyaya 45 passages 3-8 and 10A are prose passages.

Stotras

The Stotra constitutes the last link in the chain of four Bija, mantra, Nāmāvali and stotra. The Bija has no meaning apparantly, but it is a symbol of a deity and is supposed to be the condensed power of a deity. The mantra is somewhat intelligible, but retains an aura of mysticism around it. The concatenated chains of names (108 or 1000 names) of a particular deity, are generally full of attributes. A stotra which has a literary flavour, brings out not only the greatness of a deity, but the efficacy of devotion to him or her and a desire to be in constant devotion for him. A stotra or a panegyric is sung by the devotee either out of gratitude for the divine help in the accomplishment of some task or as a cry for help in distress. Some stotras, however, are sung out of devotional fervour.³

The stotras have sung eulogies of both the aspects of the deities Saguna as well as Nirguna.

The efficacy of eulogy :-

The eulogy of Lord Śiva by Nandī exhibits devotional fervour.

Once upon a time when Lord Śiva and Satī went to the peak of the Himalayas after their marriage (6.1), Nandī, a servant of Dakṣa and a student of sage Dadhīci approached Satī and Śiva and eulogized both of them especially requesting Lord Śiva not to delude him (6.12^{cd}-15^{ab}).

3 Vide Lelye P.G., "Studies In Devī Bhāgavata", Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1973, P.180.

Nandi² eulogized Lord Śiva stating that he was the highest Puruṣa, the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of all the worlds. According² to him Lord Śiva was the over-lord of everything and everyone in the world and that He was Brahman Itself. He stated that His form was unthinkable. Those who worship Him, sing His praise and utter His names and mutter His mantra (sacred formula) with or without devotion even they obtain His position and rejoice in heaven constantly. Who can be more merciful than Lord Śiva² ? (6.18-20).

The eulogy of Lord Śiva² by Dakṣa - An Apology

Lord Brahmā and Viṣṇu advised Dakṣa to worship Lord Śiva² by different eulogies respectfully. Dakṣa stated that the form of Lord Śiva was very difficult to understand, even for Lords Viṣṇu or Brahmā and hence it was not possible for him to know Lord Śiva. As the intellect of all creatures are under the control of Lord Śiva's intellect, why should His censure by Dakṣa be considered to be Dakṣa's fault ? (10.91).

Dakṣa further stated that Lord Śiva² was pure, the highest of all, worshipped by Brahmā and gods and hence it was not possible for Dakṣa to describe His nature or deeds. He sought Śiva's protection and apologized to Śiva to save him from the ocean of sin (10.92).

As Lord Śiva² was of the form of the universe, therefore not only the great but also the distressed were His forms. Dakṣa failed to understand as to how he could incur sin by Śiva's censure (10.93).

The eulogy of Lord Śiva by Himālaya exhibits devotional fervour :-

After the completion of the marriage ceremony of Śiva and Pārvatī, Himālaya devoutly eulogized Lord Śambhu. Himālaya respectfully bowed down to Lord Śaṅkara and remarked that his own birth was fruitful and his life was a good life in so far as he saw the master of the world in company of the mother of the world by his own eyes (28.21^{cd}-23).

Lord Śambhu who was pleased with Himālaya's eulogy greeted him and told him that he was himself one of His forms (28.24-25^{ab}).

Phalaśruti (the hearing of the fruit) of listening and reciting the auspicious festival of Marriage of Pārvatī :-

The hearer as well as the reciter of the auspicious incident of marriage festival of Pārvatī attains the position of the goddess, is immune from fear arising from enemy or a king and attains his desired object on hearing this auspicious incident once and is freed from all sorts of sins as a result of the grace of the goddess (28.34-35).

The eulogy of Devī by Śruties - Contains Philosophical ideas :-

The Śruties undertook to show Vyāsa directly the veracity of their statements (1.30).

Thereafter the Śruties began to eulogize the highest goddess who was constituted of Sat, Cit and Ānanda and was inclusive of all gods (1.31).

According to the ²Śruties goddess Durgā has appointed the three great gods viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Mahēśa in the task of creation, preservation and destruction of the world in keeping with Her free will. There is no one in this world capable to appoint Her hence who can be capable to describe Her qualities in this world ? (1.32).

Even Lord Viṣṇu had to worship the goddess in order to enable Himself to kill the demons and protect the three worlds. As a result of bearing Her foot on His chest Lord Śiva was able to drink deadly poison capable to destroy three worlds. How can one belonging to the three worlds describe Her deeds ? (1.33).

That power which is known as body here by His supernatural qualities of that highest embodied puruṣa and the power of the nature of sentiency and that which is the highest pulpitating power which is residing in the body and which is spoken of as puruṣa as a result of the perception of difference by the embodied selves, deluded by supernatural power of the goddess to that Ambikā the ²Śrutis bowed down (1.34).

According to the ²Śrutis that Brahman which is devoid of mass of limiting adjuncts mainly like womanhood, manhood etc. as well as the desire to create itself which arose from the goddess in regard to the creation of the world, that Śakti (power), the highest person, and the two forms viz. man and woman all are full of the supernatural power of the goddess and as a result the highest Brahman is also of the nature of ²Śakti power (1.35).

Just as on seeing hail stones etc. arising from water it is decided as water in the same way the truth also is decided on seeing everything arising from Brahman. By the mind that Brahman is grasped as of the nature of Śakti i.e. power. Consequently the highest Brahman considered as Puruṣa is finally decided as Śakti (1.36).

These six Śivas i.e. auspicious deities viz. Brahmā etc. who appear in the six mystical circles in the body of the embodied selves, they on departure from this world attain the highest self on account of their resorting to the goddess. Hence the lordship does not rest in Śiva but in Śiva who is the mother of the world and who is bowed down even by gods (1.37).

The eulogy of Devī by Trimūrti Contains Philosophical ideas :-

While eulogizing the highest goddess the trinity (Lords Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) stated that She was eternal, of the nature of consciousness of the world, of the nature of Pūrṇa Brahma and of the nature of highest lore who had accepted a body on account of Her sweet will (11.21).

The embodied condition of the goddess was the result of Her own sweet will and was not a result of merit or demerit produced previously as in the case of other creatures.

Advaita - the real nature of the goddess :-

Advaita (non-duality) is the highest nature of the goddess as definitely decided by the Vedas and the Āgamas and

that is known by the knowledge of Brahma (i.e. Veda) and is extremely hidden (11.22).

Advaita - the real nature of the goddess-transformed to Dvaita:-

The goddess assumed a body for the sake of the creation of the world and thus changed Her non-dual nature into a dual one (11.23). The Śruties imagined two elements Pradhāna (Prakṛti) and Puruṣa (Ātmā). The Puruṣa is incomplete without Her (Prakṛti), just like a dead body. Consequently the goddess is considered to be the highest of all gods (11.24).

The forms and deeds of the goddess - unthinkable :-

As the intellect of the three great gods was imperfect they were unable to eulogize the auspicious goddess whose deeds and forms were unthinkable (11.25).

The three great gods conceded that they were created and destroyed on account of Her will and hence no one in the three worlds was capable to praise Devī (11.26).

The deluding Supernatural Power of Devī :-

All knowers were deluded by the Supernatural power of the goddess just like human beings and hence even the three great gods were unable to praise Her (11.27).

The goddess was the consciousness, the intelligence and the power of the triad (Trimūrti) and without Her all of them were like dead bodies. Hence Her praise was not possible for them (11.28).

Devī was unknowable even by the three great gods who were bound by three guṇas and were deluded by Her superhuman power just like the ignorant people (11.29).

The eulogy of goddess Kālī by Lord Śiva :-

In order to make sure that Pārvatī was Satī Herself Lord Śiva asked Her to show Him Her Kālī form assumed by Her at the time of the destruction of Dakṣa-yajña. Thereupon Pārvatī assumed the form of Kālī, Whose foot was placed by Lord Śiva on His heart. Then Lord Śiva assuming five faces stood in front of Her by His part and eulogized goddess Kālī with a thousand names with folded hands (23.22^{cd}-28).

Śiva began to eulogize the goddess in the following words which constitutes the famous 'Lalitāssahasranāmastotra' (23.29-180).

Even though this eulogy is called 'Lalitāssahasranāma', it is quite different from the eulogy popularly known by the same name.

In keeping with the practice of the purāṇas the Mahāg. has given the 'Lalitāssahasranāma'. The 'Sahasranāma' generally tries to attribute a number of qualities to a particular deity. Continuous succession of adjectives and the compounds create a musical cadence. It is prescribed to be recited daily. The epithets create an impression of awe and reverence. The stotras employ full grammatical sentences whereas the list of thousand names does not contain any verb. It is a list of epithets. On close analysis we find that the the list of the thousand names contains the adjectives of the Devī only and can be classified into some categories.

1. The abstract virtues or qualities of Devī :-

23.29; 30^{ab}; 32^{ab}; 36^{ab}; 37^a; 38^{a,c}; 39^{ab}; 39^d;
40^{ab}; 41^{ab}; 54^a; 55^{ab}; 65.68; 69^{cd}; 71; 82^{abc}; 83^{ab}; 85^{ab};
97.98; 99; 100; 103; 104^{cd}; 105^{ab}; 106; 107; 109^{ab}; 110^b;
113^d; 114^a; 130^{ab}; 141; 142; 143^a; 159^{ac}; 160^{ab}; 165^a;
167^d; 170^{cd}.

2. Adjectives conveying the beauty of the Devī :-

23.31^b; 31^c; 32^c; 33; 34^{cd}; 35^a; 36^{cd}; 37^{cd}; 38^b;
55^{cd}; 56^{ab}; 58^a; 83^{cd}; 85^{cd}. 86; 88^c; 95^d; 111^{cd}; 112^{ab};
114^b; 115; 116^{ab}; 118^{cd}; 136; 137^{b,d}; 138; 139; 140; 146;
147^{ab}; 148^a; 154^c; 155^{ab}; 157^{a,c,d}; 159^d; 167^{a,b,c}; 171^{cd};
172^{a,b,c}; 174^{cd}; 175^{cd}.

3. Adjectives describing the Devī after the manner of
the Tantras :-

23.30^d; 56^{cd}.57; 58^b; 88^{ab}; 91^d; 94; 95^{a-c}; 101^d;
102^{ab}; 116^{cd}; 117; 119; 121; 122; 152^{a,c,d}; 163^c Kapālīnī
Pāṇasttā; 164^{ab}; 166^{cd}; 179^{cd}; 180^{ab}.

4. Adjectives describing the Paraphernalia of the
Devī e.g. weapons etc. :-

23.43^a Kamandalukarā; 45^a; 47; 58^{cd}; 64^b; 112^{cd};
113^{a,b,c}; 118^b; 120^{ab}; 123^{cd}; 137^a; 154^d; 165^b; 168; 169^{cd}.

5. Adjectives conveying the connection of the Devī
with certain other divine beings :-

23.42^{ab}; 44^{cd}; 45^{b-d}; 48^{cd}; 50^d; 52^{cd}; 54^b; 101^b;
104^{ab}; 109^{cd}; 111^a; 114^{cd}; 127^a; 171^{cd}; 173^{b,c,d}; 174^{ab};
175^{ab}; 177^d; 178; 179^{ab}; 180^{cd}.

6. Adjectives connected with certain personalities :-

23.130^c.

7. Adjectives directly identifying the Devī with certain ladies :-

23.30^c Umā; 31^a Urvaśī; 77^c Dākṣāyaṇi; Dākṣakanyā;
144^{ab} Sunandā; 155^c Aditi; 178^{ab}.

8. Adjectives indicating Devi's various exploits :-

23.31^d; 35^b; 38^d; 51; 52^{ab}; 53; 54^d; 59^b; 61; 62;
63; 69^{ab}; 77^{b-d}; 120^{cd}.

9. Epithets of the Devī embodying Vedānta concepts :-

23.79^{a,c,d}; 101^c; 105^{cd}; 126^{ab}; 127^{cd}; 128; 129;
141; 150^{cd}; 153^{ab}; 173^a; 176^{cd}.

10. Epithets describing Devī's special qualities :-

23.32^d; 34^{ab}; 35^{cd}; 37^b; 39^c; 40^{cd}; 41^{cd}; 42^{cd};
43^{b-d}; 44^{ab}; 46; 48^{ab}; 49; 50^{a-c}; 54^c; 59^{a,c,d}; 60; 64^{a,c,d};
66; 67; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76; 77^a; 78; 79^b; 80; 81; 82^d;
84; 87; 88^d; 89; 90; 91^{abc}; 92; 93; 96; 101; 102^{cd}; 108;
110^{a,c,d}; 111^b; 123^{ab}; 124; 125; 126^d; 127^b; 131; 132; 133; 134;
135; 136; 137; 143^{b,c,d}; 144^{cd};
145; 147^{cd}; 148^{b,c,d}; 149; 150^{ab}; 151; 152^b; 153^{cd}; 154^{ab};
155^d; 156; 157^b; 160^{cd}; 161; 163^{a,b,c}; Mattavārenagāmini;
164^{cd}; 165^{b,c,d}; 169^{ab}; 170^{ab}; 172^d; 176^{ab}; 179^{c,d}.

The goddess thus praised told Lord Maheśa that She had become a daughter of Himālaya for His sake and that She was His exclusive wife (23.181-182). She added that He had practised austere penance for long for Her sake and that She was fit to be worshipped by penance and that She would again obtain Him as Her husband (23.183).

Lord Śiva requested the goddess Kālī to grant Him a boon to favour Him by Her own qualities and to place Him in Her (23.185). He also demanded that each and every manifestation of Her Kālī form should remain in the heart of Śiva and that She would be well known in the world as Śavevāhanā (23.186-187).

Goddess Kālī granted Him the boon and again became Gaurī as before (23.188).

Phalaśruti the hearing of the fruit of the eulogy
'Lalitāsahasrenāma' :-

He who recites this eulogy containing a thousand names of the goddess taught by Lord Śambhu would become equal to the goddess (23.189).

He who after adoring the goddess Maheśvarī by Sandal paste, by flowers, by incense, and by lamps recites this eulogy obtains the highest place (23.190).

He who eulogizes the goddess by this eulogy with unswerving mind daily, he acquires all sorts of accomplishments (23.191). The kings come under his control. His foes are destroyed. The beasts of prey like lions and tigers and the robbers etc. run away from a fer on seeing him from a distance (23.192-193^{ab}).

After having remembered goddess Durgā at the time of death he becomes a digit of goddess Herself (23.194).

The Eulogy of the Goddess by the Trinity replete with devotional fervour :-

The trinity accepted their ignorance of the splendour of Devī (42.56).

Śiva eulogized the particles of dust attached to the feet of the goddess considering them as the givers of the world of the goddess and desired to bear them on His head with devotion (42.57^{ab}). Lord Śiva gave the credit of His bearing the deadly poison in His throat to His conquering death as a result of the goddess's placing Her foot on His chest (42.58^{abc}).

Viṣṇu emphatically stated that She was subtle nature higher than the high and the only cause of the worlds. Some know Her as beyond the power of creation etc. of the worlds. She was the mother of the worlds and all the three of them were Her sons (42.60). As stated here the power of the goddess is not limited to the powers of creation, sustenance and destruction of the worlds, but it is unlimited.

Brahmā accepted that even He had a partial knowledge of the form, character and qualities etc. of the goddess. Even He knew something about them which was found in the Śrutis and which was known to others also (42.61).

The Eulogy of the Goddess by Rāma seeking Her Favour For Victory :-

Rāma bowed down to Kātyāyanī, the giver of victory and requested Her to be pleased with Him and bestow victory on Him in the battle (44.1). Rāma addressed Her as an

omnipotent one, overthrower of the visualized enemy and prayed to Her to give Him victory and bowed down to Her (44.2). Rāma stated that She was the only highest power residing in all the creatures and prayed to Her to kill the wicked in the battle and to give Him victory (44.3). Rāma addressed Her as the lover of battle as blood thirsty, as devourer of flesh, as remover of calamity of the seeker of protection in the battle and prayed to Her to give Him victory (44.4). Rāma addressed Devī as the wielder of Khatvāṅga and a sword, as one whose figure was shining with a garland of skulls and requested Her to be the remover of miseries of those who remember Her in calamity (44.5). Rāma eulogized Devī stating that feebleness (Dainyam) was far removed from Her lotus like feet and that She was the lover of seekers of refuge and requested Her to kill the enemies in the battle and give Him victory (44.6). Rāma further praised Devī as one having unthinkable prowess, beautiful form and deeds and as one beyond thought and requested Her to give Him victory (44.7). Rāma continued that those who remember Devī, the destroyer of calamities in calamities are not ~~destroyer of calamities in calamities~~ destroyed and that She was the giver of victory (44.8). Rāma praised Devī as the lover of the blood of Maṇiṣa in the battle, as the killer of Maṇiṣāsura, as the daughter of the mountain and as the giver of protection (44.9). Rāma addressed Devī as Candī as killer of Candāsura possessing gracious face and requested Her to bestow victory in the battle and to kill the enemies (44.10).

The Eulogy of the goddess by Brahmā I-

Lord Brahmā also worshipped that goddess devoutly in the Bilva tree and awakened Her for the sake of victory of Rāma by reciting the eulogy devīsūkta taught by the Vedas (45.1-2).

Vedasūkta :-

The eulogy of the goddess by Brahmā called Vedasūkta is contained in stanzas 3-11 of Adhyaya 45.

Brahmā bowed down to one with untainted face, to the highest Kamalā (an excellent woman) of the earth, the atmospheric regions and heaven, to one who is of the form of mass of highest bliss, to one who is of the form of highest flame removing darkness of three worlds, to one who is of the form of highest vector removing faults accompanied by improper desires, to one who is the Nārāyaṇī arising from all the Vedas in the body of the people to one who is of the form of highest self to such a goddess Durgā possessing a face resembling crores of moons and requested Her to be pleased with Him (45.3). Brahmā saluted to Durgā addressing Her as Ambikā and referring to Her frightful form and to Her natural states Preṇava and Svāhā and to bashfulness as one of Her forms and also referring to Her as the origin of three guṇas. Brahmā addressed Devī as Śervā, the giver of accomplishment, sphreṁ, sphrom, of the nature of Svāhā, of the nature of Hrīm of the nature of Svādhā with untainted moon like face, with uproaring face and dreadful form and

requested Her to be pleased with Him (45.4-5). The goddess according to Brāhmā is an enemy as well as a friend of Bhuvaneśī who is intoxicating the world. She is Durgā for one in miserable condition. She is one as well as many as also of subtle form without modification in the heart of the Yogins. She is the origin of crores of Brāhmāṇḍas (45.6). The trinity as well as other gods are capable to eulogize Her Who is Svāhā, Svadhā, Vauṣat, Omkāra, the seed of bashfulness etc., a woman, a man possessing all forms Whom Lord Brāhmā tries to awaken (45.7). The goddess is the deity of the form of time viz. a month, a season, and two ayanas. She is the enjoyer of Kavya by Svadhā as well as of Havya by Svāhā (45.8). She is verily the gods fit to be worshipped in the bright fortnight. She is verily the manes fit to be worshipped in the dark fortnight. She is verily the truth with digitless nature (45.9). The goddess has the Sun, the moon and the fire as Her eyes. The worshipper of Her lotus like feet attains final beatitude (45.10). The goddess is of the nature of force capable to place down a bulky body from high and to lift it up to a high place at the proper time. Verily She is strength in Rāghava, Rāvana and in Rudra etc. By giving expression to the desire that the goddess might grow by pure left hand ritual, Brāhmā also acknowledges the importance of the Vāmanmārgīya Upāsana (45.11). Lord Brāhmā also tries to awaken Her by means of the above eulogy called Vedasūkta. Thus eulogized caṇḍikā woke up (45.12).

The Eulogy of Devī by Brahmā on Her Waking up :-

Lord Brahmā prayed to Devī that for the destruction of Rāvaṇa along with the demons and for the victory of Rāmacandra the gods would worship Her Who was awakened by them in an inopportune time for the benefit of all creatures (45.13-16).

After Devī's predicting the fall of the demons, she is eulogized again and saluted by Brahmā. Thereafter there is erroneous repetition of the portion after first eight syllables in the second line of the prose passage bearing no.3 followed by erroneous repetition of St.4 and the first five syllables of St.5 of Adhyaya 45.

The Eulogy of the Amiable Form of Devī by Vasudeva :-

Vasudeva praised the mother of the worlds as the beginningless highest and very subtle lore and also as the father, the beginningless Puruṣa, self sufficient and of the nature of consciousness itself. According to him she is the universe as well as the women of the universe, the resort of the universe and omnipresent in it. There is nothing else than the goddess in the universe (50.87). In the matter of creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe it is the goddess who acts as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra respectively. Vasudeva requested the black hued Durgā to be pleased with him (50.88). The goddess is the subtle nature who even though declared by the son of the formless as pervading the world in accordance with the difference of a woman, a man and a eunuch is always free from womanhood, manhood etc.

The essence of the goddess is not known to anyone in the world. As Brahmā Himself had His intellect stupified in the matter of eulogizing the goddess hence it was not meet for Vasudeva to do so i.e. to eulogize Her (50.89). Vasudeva complimented the goddess stating that she was the one deluding the universe whose complexion was whitish as well as black and who was having the form of Māyā Puruṣa (59.90).

The Eulogy Of Devī By Yudhiṣṭhira Seeking Her Favour :-

In course of their wanderings, the great souled Pāṇḍavas came to Kāmākhyā, adored Her in keeping with the rites there and prayed for regaining their kingdom (56.1,3). After having obtained a boon from Devī Yudhiṣṭhira eulogized Her (56.16).

Yudhiṣṭhira bowed down to Kāmeśvarī who was fit to be saluted by the world of gods and demons and was of the nature of Brahman (56.17). He stated that even the great gods do not know Her Prowess and requested Her, the origin of the world to be pleased with him (56.18). As eulogized by Yudhiṣṭhira, Devī was the beginningless highest lore supporting the bodies of the creatures (56.19). Devī was the seed of all creatures and was the intelligence, the sentience and patience and awakening and sleep as eulogized by Yudhiṣṭhira (56.20). In this stanza some abstract qualities are spoken of as Devī. In this way abstract qualities are considered as non-different from Devī. Even Lord Mahēśa, the highest self considers, Her worship as the final accomplishment (56.21).

Kāmeśvarī was the destroyer of the deeds of the ill-behaved ones, the giver of the fruits of demerit and merit and the destroyer of the torment of the people (56.22). Kāmeśvarī, the fearful faced Kālī used to bring about the creation sustenance and destruction of all the worlds (56.23). Kāmeśvarī was the remover of the distress of the seekers of shelter (56.24). Kāmeśvarī was the mother of the three worlds, and those who devoutly resort to Her become the resort of the worlds (56.25). Kāmeśvarī was the Pūrṇa Prakṛti filled with pure knowledge and was the only virtuous woman of the creation (56.26). After hearing Her eulogy by Yudhiṣṭhira, Devī appeared before him and asked him to choose his desired boon (56.27).

The Eulogy of Devī By Draupadī Seeking Her Protection :-

The daughter of Drupada after having come to know about Kīcaka's lustful behaviour was afraid and resorted to the goddess Śivā (56.70).

Draupadī eulogized the goddess addressing Her as Durgā, the mother of the world, the protector of everyone and the destroyer of miseries and poverty of those who seek her protection (56.71). She further addressed Her as Kātyāyanī, Maheśvarī, Viśveśī, as one paralyzing the wicked, as one tempting the universe and of the form of sentience (56.72). She was of the form of great infatuation and also of the form of pure knowledge. Those who remember Her in the transmigratory existence they cross all adversities (56.73). Draupadī addressed Devī as the mother of the world and eulogized Her as of the

form of chastity of chaste women and as the final recourse (shelter) of the distressed always and requested Her to rescue her from that great danger (56.74-75). Thus eulogized Devī Durgā remaining in the atmosphere told her not to be afraid (56.76).

The Eulogy Of Devī By Pāṇḍavas In The Beginning Of War :-

Then all the Pāṇḍavas got down from their respective chariots and eulogized the mother of the world for the sake of attaining victory in the battle (57.12). The Pāṇḍavas addressed Devī as Kātyāyanī as the wife of Tripurārī and as Durgā and added that even the gods used to bow down to Her lotus like feet and that She was of the form of the only cause of the origin, sustenance and destruction of the universe and was the destroyer of the furious as well as the destroyer of the distress of the worlds and requested Her to be pleased with them (57.13).

Devī is always the slayer of wicked demons and the destroyer of miseries deluding the wicked. No miseries of temporal existence trouble worshipper of Devī. Her form is unthinkable (57.14). The trinity proceeds to perform its work of creation, protection and destruction after bowing down to Her. The creation, protection and destruction are the sport of Devī. But Devī is not affected by the destruction of the people (57.15).

The arrows of the antagonists do not enter the bodies of those who remember Devī in front of the battle. But their arrows pierce the bodies of their antagonists up to their feathered part and devour their vital airs (57.16). He who mutters the sacred formula of Devī in the terrible battle is looked upon by his antagonist as the god of death and from one whom Devī makes victorious from his mouth Her sacred formula of the nature of Brahmākṣara comes out (57.17). Those who resort to Devī in calamities in their case verily there is no fear as well as hereafter as the calamities run away on seeing such persons from afar (57.18).

In the ancient times, the leader of the gods supplicated Devī and was able to slay the throng of the demons. Similarly Rāma also killed the family of the Rākṣasas. Verily there is no victory here without Devī's worship (57.19).

The Pāṇdavas eulogized Devī as the giver of victory, the only one who deserves salutations of the world, the only resort of the universe whose feet are worshipped by Hari, Viṣṇu etc. and requested Her to ordain their victory (57.20).

Phalaśruti Of This Eulogy :-

Those who eulogize Devī with devotion by this eulogy on the earth, for them She would always be the giver of victory without doubt (57.25).

The Supremacy of Durgā :-

According to the Śruties goddess Durgā has appointed the three great gods viz. Brāhmā, Viṣṇu and Mahēśa in the task

of creation, preservation and destruction of the world (1.32) in keeping with Her free will.

The greatness of Durgā is such that Her name is muttered in the ear of the (dying) creature by Lord Śambhu for the sake of bestowing salvation (2.20,21). Thus the name of Durgā is a Tāraka mantra according to Mahābhāgavata-Purāṇa. In other Purāṇas it is mentioned that Lord Śive mutters the Tāraka mantra viz. the name of Rāma in the ear of a dying person for bestowing salvation to him.

Thus the influence of other Purāṇas especially Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas on the Mahābhāgavata-Purāṇa which is a Śākta Purāṇa is clearly visible.

The Irresistible Fascinating power of Mūla Prakṛti :-

The dalliance of Lord Śive and Satī lasted for ten thousand years after the departure of the retinue of Lord Śive in keeping with His command (7.1-12^{ab}).

In this manner Satī, the fascinator (Mohinī) of the three worlds enamoured Lord Mahādeva by Her Superhuman power (7.12^{cd}-13^{ab}).

This shows that the fascinating power of Mūla Prakṛti (Primordial nature) is so much irresistible that even the highest Lord Mahādeva, a Mahāyogī succumbs to it.

Eulogy of Mahākālā And Mahākālī By The Trinity :-

The trinity prostrated on the ground like a stick before both of them i.e. Devī Mahākālī as well as the Lord Mahākālā (63.37) after having eulogized Them by different eulogies found in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas (63.38^{ab}).

Eulogy Of Kālī by Lords Brahmā And Viṣṇu :-

Then Lords Brahmā and Viṣṇu Who were discouraged on account of the absence of the glimpse of Devī began to eulogize Kālī with devotion (63.43). Both of Them bowed down to Devī, the creator of the Universe, the highest Supremacy, the eternal, preeminent, of the nature of true knowledge, beyond speech, attributeless, most subtle, beyond knowledge, fit to be understood by pure knowledge (63.44). In this stanza the majority of the epithets applied to the goddess Kālī stress Her aspect as Mahāsarasvatī. The three attributes viz. Vācātītām, Nirguṇām and Jñānātītām stress the transcendental aspect of Mahāsarasvatī.

They praised Kālī Who was accomplished, pure, of the nature of universe, beautiful, the goddess fit to be saluted by the Universe also, remaining in everyone, remaining in the highest place, the protector of the universe (63.45). In this stanza all the epithets applied to Devī Kālī stress Her aspect as Mahālakṣmī. The immanent aspect of Devī is stressed by the epithets Viśvarūpām and Sarvāntasthām.

They praised Kālī Who was beyond supernatural power as well as possessing Māyā or being Māyā Herself, dreadful, dark coloured, possessing dreadful eyes, the lore, the accomplished one residing in the hearts of all creatures, and the destroyer of the universe (63.46). In this stanza all the epithets applied to Devī Kālī stress Her aspect as Mahākālī. The immanent aspect of Devī is stressed by the epithets Māyām and Sarvabhūtāśayasthām, while the epithet Māyātītām stresses Her transcendental aspect.

Nobody knew Her form, character, abode nor Her meditation nor sacred formula (Mantra). They sought protection of Her Who was of the form of existence, the only cause of all the worlds, fit to be worshipped by the universe and yielding protection (63.47).

Pantheistic Form Of Devī Eulogized :-

Heaven is Her head, the sky is Her navel, the Sun, the moon and the fire are Her eyes, the awakening and the day are the opening of Her eyes and the nights are the closing of Her eyes (63.48).⁴ This stanza contains the description of the universal form of the goddess. This stanza symbolizes pantheism (Universe itself considered as god). Bhagavadgītā Chapter XI sts. 19-20 contain ideas similar to those contained in this stanza.

The gods (instead of देवो actually it should be वेदा i.e. the Vedas) are Her sentence, and this earth is Her hip and sin Her feet ankle and the portion between ankle and knee and the knee, righteousness is Her pleasure and the result of unrighteousness is Her wrath, the creation is Her awakening and the destruction is Her sleep (63.49). This stanza continues the description of the universal form of Devī.

4 Vide Devyatharvasīrṣa Mantra 17: Saiśāṣṭau vasaṣvāḥ | Saiśaikēśa rudrāḥ | Saiśā dvādaśādityāḥ | Saiśā sattvarejastamāmsi | Saiśā Brahmanaviṣṇurudrerūpinī | Saiśā prajāpatīndramanavaḥ | Saiśā grahanakṣatrajyotiṃṣe / Kālākāṣṭhēdikālerūpinī Tāmahom prapñomi nityam || Also compere : Aham rudrebhirvasubhiṣcarāmyahamēdityairuta viśvadevaḥ | Aham mitrēvaruṇobhē bibharāmyahamindrāgnī ahamasvinobhā ||

Rgveda (Aṣṭaka 8-7-11) and
Māyām tu prakṛtiṃ vidyānmāyinaṃ tu Maheśveram |
Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 4.10^{ab}

Fire is Her tongue, the Brahmins are Her lotus like face, the two twilights are Her eyebrows, the universe itself is Her figure, the wind is Her breath, the guardians of quarters are Her arms and the creation, sustenance and destruction are Her sport (63.50). This stanza also continues the description of the universal form of Devī.

They bowed down to such a one Kālī, the soul of the universe, to one of the nature of Brahmadevī, to the accomplished one, to one knowable by Brahmadevī, to Durgā, to the limitless one, to one of the nature of essence and requested Her to be pleased with Them (63.51). Thereupon Kālī became pleased with Them and reappeared before Them along with Mahākālī (63.52).

Eulogy Of Kālī By Indra :-

After having prostrated before Devī on the ground just like a stick (63.63^{cd}-64^{ab}), Indra after having got up eulogized Mahākālī, fit to be saluted by the world by the eulogies described in Vedas and Vedāṅgas (63.64^{cd}-65^{ab}).

Eulogy of Gaṅgā by Sage Jahnu :-

According to Jahnu Gaṅgā was the highest power, the resort of all, the purifier of the worlds, the giver of happiness and release. Neither god Viḍhi nor Lord Hari nor Lord Śambhu know Her (70.34). Her form and character are unapproachable by the mind and indescribable by speech and are without limits (70.35^{ab}). He implored Her to extend Her mercy towards him and to purify him who sought Her protection (70.35^{cd}).

Jahnu considered that his birth on this earth, his actions, penance, his eyes all were ble^{ss}ed in so far as he was able to see Her Who was worshipped even by the three eyed god (70.36^{ab}). He also considered that his hands were blessed as they touched Her waters and his body was also ble^{ss}ed as Her water had entered into it (70.36^{cd}).

The special characteristics of Gaṅgā referred to by Jahnu in his eulogy of Gaṅgā are the following. Gaṅgā is the destroyer of sins, the ornament of the head of Hara, the giver of heaven and salvation, and the purifier of the degraded (70.37-38).

Gaṅgā - Aṣṭottaraśatanāmāni :-

When Nārada inquired of Mahādeva about the praiseworthy names of Gaṅgā as She was considered to be the highest auspiciousness, Mahādeva informed him that out of a thousand names of Gaṅgā, one hundred and eight names of Jāhnavī are considered to be the best (75.1-2).

One hundred and eight praiseworthy names of Gaṅgā are contained in stanzas 3 to 21 of Adhyaya 75. Those names are :

1. The abstract virtues or qualities of Devī :-

Pāpahantṛī, Mahāpātakanāśinī 75.3^{cd}, Patitoddhārinī 4^a,
Sādhvī 5^a, Devapūjyatamā, Divyā, Divyasthānavivāsinī
6^{ab}, Śuddhā 7^c, Mahābhogā 8^a, Subhagānandadāyinī 8^b,
Mahāpāpasharā, Puṇyā 8^c, Paramāhlādā^ādyinī 8^d,
Nirmalā, Nirmalānandā 9^d, Mahākaluṣahantṛī 10^a,

Jagatpriyā 10^b, Trailokyapāvanī, Pūrṇā 10^c, Pūrṇa-
 brahmasvarūpīnī 10^d, Jagatpūjyatamā, Cārurūpiṇī,
 Jagadambikā 11^{ab}, Lokānugraḥakartrī 11^c, Sarvaloka-
 dayāparā 11^d, yāmyabhītiherā, Tārā, Pārā saṁsāratārīṇī
 12^{ab}, Acintyacaritā cārurucirātimanoharā 13^{cd},
 Pāpāpahārīṇī, Dūracārīṇī, Vicidhārīṇī 14^{cd},
 Kāruṇyapūrṇā, Karuṇāmayī, Duritanāśinī 15^{ab},
 Ādyā, Trilokajanānī, Trailokyaparipālīnī 16^{cd},
 Tīrthaśreṣṭhatamā, Śreṣṭhā, Sarvatīrthamayī Śubhā
 17^{ab}, Tejasvinī 18^c, Sarvāśubhanivārīṇī 20^b,
 Sudrśyā, Cākṣuṣītrptidāyīnī 20^{cd}, Sadānandamayī
 Nityānandadā Nāgopūjitā 21^{ab}.

2. Adjectives Conveying the connection of the Devī
 with Certain Other divine beings :-

Viṣṇupādābjasambhūtā, Viṣṇudehakṛtālayā 75.4^{cd},
 Śivapatnī 9^a, Brahmakamaṇḍalukṛtālayā 12^{cd},
 Gaurībhaginī 15^{cd}, Śivavallabhā 18^b, Trilocanāmano-
 ramā 18^d.

3. Adjectives connected with certain personalities :-

Jāhnavī 75.3^c, Bhāgīrathī 7^a, Jahnuputrī 10^b,
 Girirājasutā 15^a, Girīśapriyā 15^d, Menakāgarbhasam-
 bhūtā, Mainākabhaginī priyā 16^{ab}, Jāhnujānuprabhedīnī
 19^d.

4. Adjectives indicating Devī's Exploits :-

Mahāvegā, Sverṇasrīṅgaprabhedīnī 75.5^{cd},
 Brahmāṇḍabhedīnī 12^c.

5. Epithets describing Devī's special qualities :-
 Gaṅgā, Tripathagā Devī, Śambhumsulivihāriṇī 75.3^{ab},
 Srotasvatī, Paramaveginī 4^{ab}, Svargābdhinilayā,
 Svarṇadī, Suranimagā 5^{ab}, Mandākinī 5^c, Sucāru-
 nīrarucirā, Mahāparvatābhedinī 6^{cd}, Bhagavatī 7^a,
 Mahāmokṣapradāyinī 7^b, Sindhusaṅgagatā 7^c,
 Rasātalanivāsinī 7^d, Bhogavatī 8^a, Pārvatī 9^a,
 Śivaśīrṣagatālayā 9^b, Śambhorjetoṣṭhāmadhyagatā 9^c,
 Saubhāgyadāyinī pūṁsām Nirvāṇapadadāyinī 13^{ab},
 Mṛtyasthā, Mṛtyubhayāhā, Svargamokṣapradāyinī
 14^{ab}, Caturvedamayī servā 17^c, Pitr̥santṛptidāyinī 17^d,
 Śivadā, Śivasāyujyadāyinī 18^{ab}, Trinayanā 18^c,
 Saptadhārā, Śatamukhī, Śagarānvayetāriṇī 19^{ab},
 Munisevyā, Munisutā 19^c, Mākarasthā,
 Sarvagatā 20^a, Mākarālayā 20^d, Sarvadevādhidevaiśca
 paripūjyapadāmbujē 21^{cd}.

These praiseworthy names of goddess Jāhnavī are
 the removers of all sins (75.22).

Phalaśruti of Reciting One Hundred And Eight Names of Gaṅgā :-

The fruit of recitation of one hundred and eight
 names of Gaṅgā is the destruction of all sins including
 Brahmicide and the attainment of good health and incomparable
 happiness (75.23-24). If a person recites this eulogy,
 anywhere while bathing, he attains the fruit of bathing in
 the Ganges (75.25).

The Fruit Of Daily Recitation Of These Names :-

The daily reciter of these hundred and eight names of Gaṅgā after having attained Gaṅgā at the end goes to the highest heaven (75.26).

The Fruit Of Reciting These Names While Bathing In Gaṅgā :-

The reciter of these names with devotion at the time of bathing in Gaṅgā, attains the fruit of the performance of thousands of Aśvamedhyajñas (75.27). One who recites these names on the fifth day of both the fortnights, attains the fruit of giving ten thousand cows by way of alms (75.28).

One who recites this after bathing in Gaṅgā at the junction with the sea on the full moon day of the month of Kārtika, definitely attains the position of Lord Mahēśa doubtlessly (75.29). The place where the goddess Gaṅgā meets the sea is the highest Tīrtha (75.30).

In other places of pilgrimage of Jāhnavī, there results salvation by dipping into the water of Jāhnavī knowingly, while in Vārāṇasī there results enlightenment in water or on the earth knowingly or unknowingly (75.31-32^{ab}).

He who abandons his body knowingly or unknowingly on the earth or in the water of Jāhnavī or in the sky attains release (75.32^{c-f}). A person who abandons his body there by another's will he also attains release by the grace of the great Tīrtha (75.33).

One should resort to Gaṅgā that is the highest Tīrtha, the accomplisher of all objects of man, the power in the form of waters, the uplifter of the people from calamities, the destroyer of nescience, the goddess Who is the giver of Brahmevidyā (the lore of Brahman) as if one is caught by hair by death (75.34-35).

He who devoutly recites this great anecdote he goes to the status of the goddess without doubt (75.37).

Where this highest and auspicious Gaṅgā Māhātmya is recited, there Gaṅgā resides in person accompanied by all the Tīrthas (75.38).

Whatever rite is performed pertaining to the gods and the manes by man here is spoken of as the giver of inexhaustible fruit in the world (75.39).

Where this meritorious anecdote is kept in black and white sin does not touch that region on account of fear (75.40).

At the time of approaching death, if a person listens to this Māhātmya with devotion, he does not come under the control of death and goes to the highest abode (75.41).

The fruit of this māhātmya is supreme. There is no other meritorious anecdote comparable to this in the world, which is the remover of great sins, more auspicious than other auspicious anecdotes (75.45-46^{ab}).

Listening To This Anecdote Leads To Heaven :-

A man who listens to this anecdote attains heaven (75.46^{cd}).

Tulasī Eulogized In Most Glorificatory Terms :-

Just as Gaṅgā is Herself the best of the rivers in the same way among the trees Tulasī ever engaged in the final emancipation of the three worlds is the best for the sake of sanctifying the three worlds (79.32).

Tulasī was formerly adored by the best of gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu etc. and was born on the earth for the sake of sanctifying the world. The devotee should bow down to Tulasī with devotion and should request Tulasī to be pleased (79.33).

Eulogy of Viṣṇu By Indra :-

Indra eulogized Lord Viṣṇu by stating that the auspicious Gaṅgā that had originated from the foot of the Lord and was fit to be saluted by the throng of the gods, sanctified all the worlds. Indra considered it to be His incomparable good-luck as He was able to see Viṣṇu (61.64).

Bhagīratha's Eulogy Of Lord Viṣṇu :-

Bhagīratha addressed Viṣṇu as the sanctifier of the three worlds, as the Lord of the universe, as one immanent in the universe as great Puruṣa, as the enemy of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, as Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta, Hari and Viṣṇu and bowed down to Him in order to please Him (66.20).

The reference to the immanent aspect of Lord Viṣṇu is significant from the philosophical point of view. This aspect is mentioned in the Upaniṣad along with transcendental aspect. Cf. yādā paśyaḥ paśyate rukmavarṇaṁ kartārmīśaṁ puruṣaṁ brahmayonim | Tadā vidvān puṇyapāpe vidhūya nireñjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmānyupaiti || (Mundako^o 3-1-3)

Agnirmūrdhā cakṣuṣī candrasūryau diśaḥ śrotre vāgvivṛtāśca vedāḥ Vāyuh prāṇo hṛdayaṁ viśvamasya padbhyāṁ pṛthivī hyeṣa sarvabhūtāntarātmā || (Mundako^o 2-1-4)

Bhagīratha addressed Viṣṇu as the only cause of the universe, as the ancient one, as treasure of the world, as possessor of characteristic mark of Śrīvatsa, as all pervading one, as one named as Madhusūdana, Govinda, Vāmana, Janārdana, as one having universe as His form and requested Him to be pleased with him (66.21). The said references to Viṣṇu's being the only cause of the universe being the ancient one, being the treasure of the world, being all pervading one, being of the form of the universe are philosophically significant references as found in the upaniṣads.

In Bhagīratha's eulogy in 66.22, the philosophically significant attributes are Viṣṇu's endless prowess and His being complete and immanent in the world. Other significant attributes of Viṣṇu in 66.22 are Vāsudeva, killer of demons, killer of danger, Vaikunṭha, Mādhava, the supporter of the earth which are mainly found in the Purāṇas. Similarly in 66.23, the philosophically significant attributes are Viṣṇu's being the only resort of Māyā and being bliss concentrated,

being pure knowledge and being the Lord of speech. Other significant attributes of Viṣṇu are His being the husband of Lakṣmī, being the lord of gods, being only Lord of the world, being one full of pity, being lotus-eyed one, and being the Lord of all which are mainly found in the Purāṇas.

Bhagīratha further stated that he bowed down to Viṣṇu Who is of the form of the universe, of the form of existence, intelligence and bliss, of the nature of pure knowledge and possessing limitless lustre (66.24). Viṣṇu's being of the form of Universe is a pantheistic aspect, while His being of the form of existence, intelligence and bliss and of the form of pure knowledge and possessing limitless lustre are philosophically significant attributes.

Bhagīratha's Eulogy of Lord Śiva :-

Bhagīratha eulogized Lord Śiva by a eulogy containing one thousand names of the Lord (67.1-125). In keeping with the practice of the Purāṇas, the Mābhg. has given Śiva-sahasranāma. A Sahasranāma generally tries to attribute a number of qualities to a particular deity. Continuous succession of adjectives and compounds create a musical cadence. The epithets create an impression of awe and reverence. It is generally a list of epithets prescribed to be recited daily. For details see Chapter VII, PP.275-277.

Phalaśruti Of Hearing Gaṅgāvatarana⁵ :-

The fruit of reciting or making another recite this holy anecdote of Gaṅgāvatarana is final beatitude, longevity

5 For this episode of Gaṅgāvatarana see chapter VIII.

as well as wide-spread reputation, happiness everywhere and auspiciousness in every way (71.14-15).

He who recites this devoutly on the day of the anniversary of the death of a relative in whose honour a Śrāddha is performed in proximity of a brahmin, his ancestors even though they be sinners attain the highest human goal (71.16-17^{ab}). That hearing of Gaṅgāvatarana becomes the cause of the great pleasure of the manes (71.17^{c-f}).

He who recites this anecdote with devotion and with self-controlled mind on the eleventh day of a fortnight, in his case there will be the attainment of all that is worth accomplishing by the grace of Gaṅgā (71.18). His happiness accompanied by sons, wives etc. knows no bounds and his stage of householder becomes united with splendour by the grace of Gaṅgādevī (71.19). These are the wordly fruits of the recitation of Gaṅgāvatarana.

Extra-ordinary Fruit Of Hearing Gaṅgāvatarana :-

The fruit of reciting this meritorious anecdote in Kāśī is the attainment of the position of the Lord of the Universe who is the giver of salvation to the people. Not only that but even a sinner is freed from terrific sin by the sight of the reciter (71.20-21^{ab}).

He who recites this meritorious anecdote on the full moon day, or on the day of the transit of the Sun from one sign of the Zodiac to the other attains the fruit of performing an Aśvamedhayajña (Vājimedha) (71.21^{cd}-22^{ab}).

He who after taking bath in the waters of the Ganges and after having practised restraint either hears or recites this anecdote finds no equal of him on the earth (71.22^{cd}-23^{ab}).

He in whose house this anecdote remains in written form, in his case misfortune or enemy have no power at any time (71.23^{cd}-24^{ab}) and in his case there will rise the fruit which accrues by bathing in the Ganges for the whole life. In his case there will be no suffering arising from the planets, nor separation from his relatives, nor suffering on account of disease, nor the rise of fear from the enemies (77.24^{cd}-25). There is no sacred place of pilgrimage equalling the Ganges on the earth and hence Her anecdote is considered to be very meritorious (71.26).

Phalaśruti :-

One who recites Adhyaya 72 containing Gaṅgāmāhātmya with his mind steady in his case there is no danger arising from the messengers of Yama even though he may be a great sinner (72.63^{cd}).

Kāmākhyā Kavaca :-

'Kavaca' is a charm considered as a preservative like armour. In Sanskrit literature the Kavacas form a special type of composition. As stated above the purpose of a 'Kavaca' is to secure protection of the concerned deity.

In the Mabhg. P.77.31-45, 'Kāmākhyā Kevaca' is given for the protection of the aspirants by Kāmākhyādevī. As is usual the aspirant is considered as protected from all the directions by the ten Mahāvidyās (77.31-34) and the different parts of the body of the aspirant from head to foot are considered as protected by some other forms of the goddess (77.35-44).

Intervention of Supernatural Element Arousing Wonder :-

A Voice From the Air Assured Rāma About His Victory :-

When Rāma was eulogizing Devī thus a voice from the air was heard all of a sudden (44.17) which forbade Rāma to be frightened and assured Him that after killing the demons with great strength and prowess. He would conquer Laṅkā ere long (44.18). It further stated that She who was adored in the Bilva tree by Lord Brahmā, the creator would give Rāma His desired boon (44.19).

On hearing this sentence produced in the air the best of Rāghus confided in His own victory beyond doubt (44.20).

Nature Sympathizes with the Heroic Feat of Lakṣmaṇa :-

On Lakṣmaṇa's killing the great hero Atikāya the monkeys were overjoyed and repeatedly uttered, "Jaya, Jaya". A great shower of flowers fell down from the sky indicating nature's sympathizing with Lakṣmaṇa (47.28).

Nature Sympathizes with the Heroic Feat of Rāma :-

When Rāvaṇa died at the hands of Rāma, there was a shower of flowers on Rāma spreading fragrance (47.74^{cd}) and indicating nature's sympathizing with Rāma.

On Account of Rāma's Command Indra Showered Nectar :-

On account of the command of Rāma, the king of the gods showered nectar and consequently the monkeys killed in the battle were again enlivened (47.75).

According to A Voice From The Air The Eighth Offspring Of Devakī - A Killer Of Kāṁsa :-

At the time of the departure of Devakī and Vāsudeva, Kāṁsa approached them to bid adieu to them but an incorporeal speech by a deity was heard from the sky all of a sudden which declared that the eighth offspring of Devakī would be the killer of Kāṁsa (50.18-20).

Nandī Brought A Chariot Drawn By Lions :-

In the meanwhile Nandī brought there a chariot decorated by jewels to which lions were yoked from atmospheric regions for Kṛṣṇa (58.35).

Lord Brāhmā Brought Many Chariots :-

Lord Brāhmā brought many thousands of chariots and remained in the sky, along with the gods (58.36).

Gods Showered Flowers On Kṛṣṇa :-

The best of gods after observing Kṛṣṇa's coming to the sea-shore, showered flowers in torrents joyfully (58.37).

Gods Celebrated Kṛṣṇa's Ascending Heaven :-

The denizens of heaven celebrated the event of Kṛṣṇa's ascending heaven by playing upon different musical instruments viz. Mṛdaṅga, Paṭṭha etc. and rang the bells in hundreds, and the celestial damsels danced (58.38).

Devī's asking Gaṇanāyaka to inquire about the specific Brahmāṇḍa to which the great gods belonged aroused wonder since there were many Brahmāṇḍas and many specific Brahmās etc. (63.22-23). To that question put to them by Gaṇanāyaka, the great gods could not give a satisfactory reply (63.24). Then Gaṇanāyaka informed Devī about Their ignorance of other Lords of gods (63.25^{ab}).

Merging Of Sambhu In Lord Mahākāla - First Miracle :-

While Trinity was eulogizing Mahākālī and Mahākāla suddenly Lord Sambhu merged into Mahākāla (63.38^{cd}-39^{ab}). This merging of Lord Sambhu into Lord Mahākāla was the first miracle experienced by the great gods Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

Then Lords Brahmā and Viṣṇu, not finding Sadāśiva pondered over as to where Lord Maheśvara had gone (63.39^{cd}-40^{ab}) and entertained a doubt in Their minds about Indra's getting a glimpse of Devī (63.40^{cd}).

Mahākālī And Mahākāla Both Disappeared Simultaneously Second Miracle :-

While Lords Brahmā and Viṣṇu were thinking like this, the goddess Mahākālī along with Mahākāla disappeared in a moment (63.41). This their disappearing from the sight of Brahmā and Viṣṇu was the second miracle.

Kālī Eulogized By Both The Gods Reappeared Along With Mahākāla - Third Miracle :-

On hearing the eulogy of Devī by the two great gods, Kālī became pleased and reappeared before Them along with

Mahākālā (63.52). This reappearance of Mahākālī along with Mahākālā before Brahmā and Viṣṇu is the third miracle.

The Reappearance Of Śaṅkara From Mahākālā-Fourth Miracle :-

From the figure of that Mahākālā, Śaṅkara again got separated who was having long arms and having the hue of a silver mountain (63.53). This is the Fourth miracle.

All The Gods-Deluded By The First Song Of Śiva :-

The wonderful effect of the first song of Śiva was so much deep rooted that all the Lords of gods Brahmā etc. were deluded by it (64.15).

As A Result Of The Second Song Of Śiva, Viṣṇu Fainted :-

The second song of Śiva deeply moved Lord Viṣṇu so much so that He had horripilation on His body and ultimately He fell down on the ground unconscious (64.16).

On Hearing The Third Song Of Śiva Viṣṇu Transformed In A Liquid Form :-

After hearing the third song of Śiva, Lord Viṣṇu was transformed in a liquid form in a moment (64.17). On Viṣṇu's transformation into liquid water the whole Vaikunṭha was flooded (64.18). This transformation of Viṣṇu into water was a great miracle.

Nature Sympathizes with Gaṅgā's Descending On The Earth :-

When Gaṅgā fell on the surface of the earth, a shower of flowers rained forth in the directions and the words of victory of the people were heard all around (69.40).

Discrepancies in the Mabhg.P. :-

Here in 34.15^{ab} one discrepancy is to be noted. In the previous stanza there is only the narration of fact and no speech by any one still stanza 15 begins with the worlds ityuktvā Kārtikeyo'sau.

There is another discrepancy also in the stanza which relates to the weapon by which Tāraka was slain by Kārtikeya. In the previous adhyaya stanza 19, it is clearly stated that Kārtikeya hurled a lance given Him by Lord Brahmā towards the demon king by which he was killed, while here in 34.15^{cd} it is stated that Tāraka was slain by a club in the battle. This is another discrepancy.

In the beginning of stanza 34 of Adhyaya 35 the proper word should have been 'Uvāsa' instead there is 'Uvāca' which is a mistake. Even the editor has missed to correct it or it may be a printing mistake.

The Purāṇakāra has mentioned Nala as the son of Maya here, but Maya was an Asura. As mentioned in the Gītā Press edition of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇe I.17.12^{cd}, Nala was born from Viśvakarmā, the architect of the gods. This is a clear mistake of the Purāṇakāra.

The best of Vānaras constructed the bridge on the ocean within two Yāmas i.e. a period of six hours (40.7). According to the description given in the Gītā Press edition of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇe VI.22.68-72, the bridge was constructed

by Nala with the help of the Vānaras within five days. The length of the constructed bridge also differs from day to day and the actual measurement of it is also mentioned per day. In this way there is a glaring difference in the period during which the bridge was constructed.

In Mabhg.P.40.27 it is mentioned that on the fall of (A) Kampana, Dhūmrākṣa surrounded by his army came forward by the command of Daśanana and waged a fierce fight. This mention of (A)Kampana's fall and Dhūmrākṣa's coming forward to fight with Vānaras as mentioned in this Purāṇa is an anachronism.

As mentioned in the Gītā Press edition of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa VI.52.36-37, Dhūmrākṣa fell in the battle at the hands of Hanumān and thereafter Vajradamṣṭra came forward to fight with the Vānaras VI.53. On the fall of Vajradamṣṭra as mentioned in VI.54.34-35 Akampana came forward to fight with the Vānaras VI.55.8, who was put to death by Hanumān as mentioned in the said edition VI.56.29-30. In this manner Dhūmrākṣa was killed first by Hanumān, then Vajradamṣṭra was killed by Aṅgada and thereafter Akampana was killed again by Hanumān. Thus the anachronism lies in the order of the fall of Dhūmrākṣa and Akampana which is reversed in the Mabhg.P.

In Mabhg.P. 40.28^{ab} it is stated that Rāghava put to death Dhūmrākṣa in the battle on the second day.

This is also another discrepancy as Dhūmrākṣa was killed by Hanumān VI.52.36-37 and not by Rāma.

It is mentioned in Mabhg.P.40.29^{cd} that the fight of the Vānaras with Prāhastā continued in the night during which he was put to death when only one Yāme of the night was left 40.32^{ab}.

In the Gītā Press edition of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa VI.58 there is the mention of the fight between Prāhastā and his retinue with the Vānara chiefs in which Prāhastā was put to death by Neelā VI.58.54. But there is no mention of Rātriyauddha under the leadership of Prāhastā. This is an anachronism.

As stated in the Mabhg.P.40.37^{ab}, Rāma remembered goddess Śarvāṇī and then Garuḍa appeared and removed their fetters. But according to the Gītā Press edition of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa VI.50.33-37 Garuḍa appears of its own accord. This is a discrepancy necessitated by the desire to spread the Śākta cult.

There is an anachronism from the narration of the incident of Rātriyauddha and Nāgapāśa Bandhana as described in the said edition of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa VI.44, which takes place in the very beginning of the battle on the very first day in the night. The Rākṣasa chiefs viz. Dhūmrākṣa, Vajradamṣṭra, Akampana and Prāhastā fall one after the other after Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are freed from the fetters of serpents by Garuḍa.

According to Mabhg.P.40.39 Rāvaṇa comes to fight with Rāma and his army on hearing their being freed from Nāgapāśa, while according to the said edition of Vālmīki

Rāmāyana, Ravana comes to fight with them on hearing about the fall of Prahesta VI.59.4-5 and 7. This is an anachronism in the Mabhg.P.

The portion of Mabhg.45.21 up to first five syllables of line 3 of 22 contain repetition of eulogy of Devī uttered by Brahṁā. In it the portion after first 8 syllables in the second line of prose passage numbered 3 up to first 5 syllables of stanza 5 is erroneously repeated which was a part of eulogy of Devī by Lord Brahṁā now under Devī's speech. This is a glaring mistake which must have crept in the manuscripts and from them into the present edition of the Mabhg. This could have been easily avoided by the editor.

As stated in Mabhg.P.55.43^{cd} - 44^{ab} the brothers of Yudhishthira subdued all the kings and brought them along with them to the city of the king of Magadha. This bringing of the conquered kings to the city of the king of Magadha appears to be a mistake on the part of the redactor of the Mabhg.P. It may be due to misinformation. This is a serious blunder on his part.

In the battle between Bhīma and Jarāsandha, Kṛṣṇa got the latter slain by Bhīmasena with a lance (55.45).

The above statement that Jarāsandha was put to death with a lance by Bhīmasena appears strange. This incident of killing Jarāsandha which is described in Śrīmadbhāgavata X. 72. 16-48 is quite different according to which Bhīmasena, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa went to Girivraja, the capital of Jarāsandha

in the guise of Brahmins at the time of receiving the guests and requested him to give them their desired thing. On Jarāsandha's promising them to give their desired object, they requested him to enter into a duel with them, disclosing their real identity. Thereupon Jarāsandha preferred to enter into a duel with Bhīma and started it with clubs. When the clubs were destroyed then they started wrestling which lasted for twenty seven days. At the end of the duel Bhīma killed Jarāsandha by bisecting him. Bhā.X.72.44-46. Thus the description of this incident in the Mabhg.P. appears to be based on some other unknown source.

As stated in the Mabhg.P. Sahadeva was assigned the work of adoring the members of the assembly at the Rājasūya sacrifice by the son of Dharma (55.47) who adored the son of Yadu in the very beginning (55.48).

According to other sources viz. Mahābhārata (Gītā Press ed.) Sabhāparva 36.32 Yudhiṣṭhira asked Bhīṣma the question as to who deserved the first adoration to which Bhīṣma replied that only Kṛṣṇa deserved that honour and Sahadeva in keeping with the advice of Bhīṣma adored Kṛṣṇa first in the assembly Mbh.II.36.30. Śiśupāla objected to it and insulted Kṛṣṇa in the assembly a hundred times. On his crossing the limit Śiśupāla's head was severed by Kṛṣṇa with His discus in the assembly. But according to Śrīmadbhāgavata X.74.18-25^{ab} Sahadeva advised Yudhiṣṭhira to adore Kṛṣṇa first of all when the members of the assembly could not reach a decision in that regard. Thereafter king Yudhiṣṭhira adored Kṛṣṇa.

The wicked Duryodhana tried to get Draupadī undressed at the hands of Duḥśāśana in the assembly on the first defeat of Yudhiṣṭhira as stated in Mahābhārata (Crit.ed.) II.61.40. But afterwards due to the intervention of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the Pāṇḍavas along with Draupadī were freed from slavery and were allowed to return to Indraprastha, their capital. On their way to Indraprastha a messenger from Dhṛtarāṣṭra again came to them and invited them in the name of the king to play the game of dice again. Thus there are discrepancies in this account as found in the Mahābhāṣya Purāṇa. The incident of Draupadī's insult which had occurred at the time of the game played for the first time is stated in Mahbg.P.55.58 as occurring at the time of the game played again. The redactor's carelessness must be responsible for that.

In Mahbg. 63.49 instead of Vākyam Vedā there is Vākyam Devā which is a glaring discrepancy.