

Synopsis

Chapter I

Introduction

The Mahābhāgavatapurāṇa (=Mabhg.) is a Śākta Upapurāṇa advocating Śaktism with a Śaiva tendency, and throws light on the exploits of Devī as well as on the ten Mahāvidyās. In spite of its outspoken inclination towards Śiva, this Purāṇa follows the Vedānta in advocating the unity of all gods. The importance of this Purāṇa in spreading Śaktism is noticeable. Specially noteworthy is the spirit of tolerance of other sects that breaths forth in this Purāṇa. The Bṛhaddharmapurāṇa's plagiarizing many verses from this Purāṇa over and above imitating language and contents of it testifies to its recognition as such.

Chapter II

Purāṇa As A Literary Form

Herein the various stages leading to the growth of Paurāṇic literature and the characteristic features of Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas are described keeping in view the Mahābhāgavata.

Chapter III

Summary of Contents

It contains a succinct summary of the contents of all the Adhyāyās of this Purāṇa.

Chapter IV

Sources of Mahābhāgavatapurāṇa

Herein the indebtedness of the Mabhg. to the Purāṇas e.g. Śiva, Skanda, Śrīmadbhāgavata, Kālikā, Devībhāgavata, Liṅga, Vāyū in the descending order as well as to the two epics Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, and to Tāntre works like Mahānirvāṇa-tāntre is shown by a detailed comparative study.

Chapter V

The Relative Dates of Relevant Purāṇas

In this chapter light is thrown on the relative dates of a dozen relevant Purāṇas with a view to get a glimpse of the possible inheritance and contribution of each one of them.

Chapter VI

Philosophy In Mahābhāgavatapurāṇa

Herein the Vedantic concepts gleaned from the Mahbg. are noted along with some concepts of Pratyabhijñā system of Philosophy. Specially noteworthy is the teaching of yogasāra found in the didactic section of the Mahbg. known as Bhagavatġītā.

Chapter VII

Myths And Legends

Herein all the details regarding the deities, mythological anecdotes and personages, contained in this Purāṇa are comparatively studied along with an epitome of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa found in the Mahbg.

Chapter VIII

Essential Nature, Forms, Incarnations And exploits of Devī

This chapter contains critical examination of the essential nature of Devī, Her different forms, incarnations and exploits referred to in this Purāṇa, emphasizing the supreme powers of the great goddess.

Chapter IX

Literary Estimate

In it a critical literary study of this Purāṇa is contained evaluating it as a literary work from all conceivable points of view.

Chapter X

Cultural Study

In this chapter the social and religious condition, customs, social norms, beliefs and superstitions, arts etc. are gleaned from this Purāṇa.

Chapter XI

Conclusion

Herein the importance of this Purāṇa depending upon its throwing light on the topics previously discussed and its influence on other works and its special contribution in the field of knowledge are stated.