

## S Y N O P S I S

### CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

After a brief mention of the importance of the Purāṇas in the study of Indian Society, religion and mythology are discussed the problems of the earlier and later parts of the MKP, its home and date. This is followed by a discussion viz. how far the MKP fulfils the classical Pañca-Lakṣana definition of a Purāṇa and the classificatory nomenclature etc. Finally the influence of other literature on the MKP is succinctly alluded to.

### CHAPTER II - SOCIETY

With a brief introductory note on the concept of society, the chapter is divided into five sections. The first section deals with the two schemes known as Varṇāśrama-vyavasthā which constitute the Indian Social Organisation. Then the concepts of Varṇa and Jāti are discussed as they are very useful in the study of the Varṇa-system. Then are taken up the problems like the theory of origin of the four Varnas as put forward by the MKP followed by a discussion

on the rights, privileges and the status of the four social orders, viz. the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Sūdras, including the problems of untouchability, the mixed castes and the social mobility. The Āśrama-organisation is then discussed by recording the views of the MKP thereon. This treatment of the social organisation is concluded by noting the views of the MKP about the institution of slavery.

The second section deals with the institution of marriage by discussing the topics like the forms of marriage viz. polyandry, polygyny and monogamy, and the views of the MKP on the same, eight forms of Hindu marriage, Svayamvara form of marriage, 'intercaste' marriages, limitations of marriage, qualifications of the bride and the bride-groom, and marriage rites.

The third section deals with the institution of family and discusses the problems like the concept of family, the status and position of the father and son, the ideal of relations between the husband and wife, the father and son, the brothers - elder and younger - and brother's wife and

the mores of relation of the daughter-in-law, parents-in-law, and other relatives-in-law.

The fourth section deals with the position of women and discusses the topics like women and higher studies, the choice of the mate, woman as wife and as mother, widow-remarriage, the practice of satī, women and religion, women not to be killed, the power of a pativratrā, and the general attitude towards women.

The fifth section deals with the social and religious life and discusses the following topics:- Food and drink, dress and decoration, customs and conventions, the daily and periodical duties and ceremonies (āhnikā and ācāra), the rules of purity (suddhi), ~~popular~~ superstitions, beliefs and taboos, ~~music and dancing~~, pastimes, and weights and measures.

### CHAPTER III - RELIGION

This chapter is divided into three sections.  
The first section deals with the following topics:-

A brief treatment of the material of the MKP on some of the factors of worship like the means, objects and procedure of worship and also the discussion of the subjects of (1) The Devī-worship and its Eulogy (2) The Sun-worship and (3) The Datta-worship.

The second section deals with the śrāddha ritual which is discussed under the following heads:- eulogies of śrāddha, the classification of śrāddhas, the description of the Ābhyudaya, Ekodāṣṭa, Sapindīkaraṇa and Nitya-naimittika of Parva-śrāddhas, persons entitled to offer śrāddha, the times for śrāddhas, Kāmyaśrāddhakālāḥ, the qualifications of the Brahmin-Invitees at the śrāddha-dinner, the persons unfit to be invited at the śrāddha-dinner, time of invitation, rules for the performer and the invitee, proper places for the śrāddha, persons and animals to be ejected from the places of śrāddhas, the recommended and prohibited substances and utensils of śrāddha, food and vegetables to be used or given up at śrāddha, what milk and water to be prohibited at śrāddha, vessels to be used at śrāddha, and the use of flesh at śrāddha.

The third section deals with the Yoga which is included here more for convenience than for the doctrine (and the reason for this is given in the thesis itself).

#### CHAPTER IV - MYTHOLOGY

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section discusses the cosmogonic accounts in the MKP.

In the second section on Devī-mythology, the following topics are dealt with:- A brief introduction on the importance of the study of the DM section (chaps.78-90) from the point of view of mythology, Origins and Exploits of the Devī, her description under the sub-sections viz.

(A) Names and epithets (B) Functions (C) The Philisophico-mythological aspect of the Devī's nature and (D) The cult and finally the Conclusion.

Then follows the third section on Solar-mythology with a discussion on the following topics:- The Birth of Mārtanda, Solar-family, a general description of the deity, particularly his names, epithets, weapons, functions etc., and his identification with certain gods like Indra, Yama, Agni, Brahmā etc., as well as with certain abstract or inanimate things.

The fourth section deals with the Datta-mythology and discusses following topics:- the birth of Dattātreya, a general description of the deity, particularly his names, epithets, functions etc., and the personages attached to him.

The fifth section deals with the following gods:-  
Agni, Indra, Brahmā, <sup>and</sup> Viṣṇu.

In the sixth section the following topics are discussed:- eschatology, heaven and hells, the pitrs or Manes, Yama, the god of dead, the doctrines of transmigration and karmavipāka.

APPENDIX I - A brief synopsis of the MKP.

APPENDIX II - The lists of the names and epithets of  
(1) Devī (2) Sun (3) Dattātreya (4) Agni (5) Indra  
(6) Brahmā (7) Viṣṇu and (8) Śiva.

APPENDIX III - Geographical, ethnic, floral, faunal and mythological data of the MKP.

APPENDIX IV - A list of peculiar words and phrases in the MKP with their meanings.

APPENDIX V - The editions and translations of the MKP.

APPENDIX VI - The commentaries on Durgā-saptasatī.