

CHAPTER : IV

MYTHOLOGY

Introductory :

"Mythology means the body of myths or stories which give an account of the gods and heroes, describing their origin and surroundings, their deeds and activities, and it is thus included in, though not co-extensive with that aspect of religion which is concerned with belief"¹.

All that comes under mythology according to this definition is naturally not available in the LP to its fullest extent. The material that comes under the general topic of mythology can be divided as under :

Section I - Lord Śiva's family.

Section II- Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Gāyatrī and Alakṣmī.

Section III - Myths and legends.

Section I

Lord Śiva's family:

The mythology of Lord Śiva is discussed in Chapter III, Section I. Herein the mythology of Lord Śiva's family is discussed.

Umā (Pārvatī) :

Lord Śiva's consort Rudrānī is known by many names as Devī, Umā, Gaurī, Pārvatī, Durgā, Bhavānī and others. She is a very prominent figure in classical mythology.

The LP describes the origin of the form of Pārvatī from the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva, one part Śiva Himself and the other part Śakti, is explained as a manifestation of Śiva and Śakti in the form of the male and female principles (I.99.6-8). At the request of Brahmā to separate the two forms Śiva created Śraddhā from His left side and Śraddhā became Satī (the daughter of Dakṣa) and Pārvatī later (I.99.11-17; 41-44; I.98.184-185). She is described as the Prakṛti (I.102.45). She created other goddesses and feminine beings. (I.41.44-47).

She is married to Śiva. Her marriage is attended by many divinities and semi-divine beings, viz. Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kadru, Sukalikā, Pulomā, Surmā, Simhikā, Vinatā, Siddhi, Māyā, Kriyā, Durgā, Sudhā herself, Svadhā, Sāvitrī the mother of Devas, Rajanī, Dakṣṇā, Dyuti, Svāhā, Svadhā, Mati, Buddhi, Rddhi, Vṛddhi, Sarasvatī, Rākā, Kuhū, Sinīvālī, Anumati, Dharanī, Dhārani, Ilā, Sācī, Nārāyaṇī and other mothers and "wives" of Devas. Nāgas, Garuḍas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Kinnars, Gaṇas, Oceans, mountains, clouds, Vedas, Mantras, Yajñas, Kriyās, Humkāra, Pranava, the crores of Apasarases, the divine damsels and their female attendants also were present. Crores of Gaṇas and leaders of Gaṇas were present there. (I.103.4-13).

She is described as Vilāsini (I.10.4), Prasnavatām Varā (I.10.43), Śubhā (I.10.44), Pūrṇenduvadanā (I.10.41). At other place she is described as Vidyā, Prajñā, Śruti, Smṛti, Dhṛti, Kriyā, Ājñā and Icchā. (I.87.6-7).

The name Aparnā is given as referring to Pārvatī and two other names Ekaparnā and Ekāpātālā as referring to Her sisters. (I.70.331); I.82.14-15; I.101-6). The name Aparnā for Pārvatī also occurs in Kumārsaṁbhavaṁ². Her role in the creation of the form of Kālī was to destroy the demon Dārūka. (I.106.10-19).

We find Yakṣa episode also in the LP. Devas including Indra saw the lord devoid of specific characteristics in the guise of a yakṣa. On seeing him they wondered what that was. Fire went for inquiry. In front of that Yakṣa the fire-god could not burn even a blade of grass; the wind-God could not shake a blade of grass; all the leading immortal beings failed to exercise their respective powers of him. At that time Indra approached him alongwith the leading Devas. He asked the Yakṣa who he was. At that time the Yakṣa vanished. Then the splendid faced daughter of Himavat, Umā, shining gloriously with many auspicious ornaments appeared in front of him. Indra and others asked her about Yakṣa. Umā replied that the Yakṣa was invisible. Formerly she was Prakṛti subse^rvient to the behests of the Puruṣa, the Yakṣa. Devas including Indra bowed down to her. (I.53.55-61).

According to Purāṇic mythology she is the daughter of Himālaya, but in the Kena Upaniṣad, where she is first mentioned,

Umā Hemavatī, appears as a heavenly woman, conversant with Brahman. Apparently, she was originally an independent goddess, or at least a kind of divine being, perhaps a female mountain-ghost haunting the Himalayas, who was later identified with Rudra's wife. A similar mountain goddess had her home in the Vindhyas, she was of a cruel character, as a goddess of the tribes living in those hills. Her name is Vindhyāvāsini and she too is identified with Śiva's wife. It can safely be concluded that several goddesses from different parts of India and worshipped by different classes of people have in course of time, been combined into one great goddess, the spouse of Śiva, adored as his Śakti or energy.³

The LP records that Lord Śiva said her (Umā) that for the sake of creation, she should divide herself into two, right half being white and the left black. On being asked thus she bifuracted herself into white and black. Before division (i.e. when she was one) her names are as follows :

Svāhā, Svadhā, Mahāvidyā, Medhā, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Satī, Dakṣāyaṇī, Vidyā, Icchāśakti, Kriyātmikā, Aparṇā, Ekaparṇā, Ekapāṭalā, Umā, Haimavatī, Kalyāṇī, Ekamātrkā, Khyāti, Prajñā, Mahābhagā, Gaurī, Gaṇāmbikā, Mahādevī, Nandinī and Jātavedasī. (I.70.330-332).

After she had divided into two, her names are :

Sāvitri, Varadā, Puṇyā, Pāvanī, Lokavisrutā, Ājñā, Āveśanī, Kṛṣṇā, Tāmasī, Sāttvikī, Śivā, Prakṛti, Vikṛtā, Raudrī, Durgā, Bhadrā, Pramāthinī, Kālarātri, Mahāmāyā, Revatī, Bhūtanāyikā. (I.70.332-335).

At the end of Dvāpara yuga, her names are as follows :

Gautamī, Kausikī, Āryā, Caṇḍī, Kātyāyini, Satī, Kumārī, Yādavī, Varadā, Kṛṣṇapīṅgalā, Bahirdhvajā, Śuladharā, Paramā, Brahmācārini, Mahendropendrabhāgini, Dr̥ṣadvatī, Ekasūladhrk, Aparājtā, Bahubhujā, Pragalbā, Sindhavāhini, the slayer of the Daityas such as Sumbha and others, the suppressor of the great demon Mahiṣa, Amoghā, Vindhyanilayā, Vikrāntā and Gaṇanāyikā. (I.70.336-339).

The LP narrates that, at the time of the chastise, the Tripuras, Goddess Gauri the daughter of the Himālaya, identical with the worlds, was seated on the left side of the lord, shone with the tips of her hands holding the chowries. She had the lustre ^{and} ~~ad~~ colour of the golden lotus. (I.72.88-89).

Vināyaka :

Originally known as Vighneśvara, a trouble-maker for the Aryan gods ^{and} ~~ad~~ a leader of the 'ganas' - the indigenous tribe groups, - was Āryanized and transformed into the god of success, in the Purāṇas⁴.

The LP describes the creation of the form of Vināyaka, as the son of the divine pair Śiva and Pārvatī (I.105) at the request of the gods to nullify the efforts of the demons to gain powers by propitiating Śiva (I.104). He was born spontaneously from Śiva possessing an elephant, face, bearing the trident and noose. (I.105.7-9).

He was born for the destruction of Daityas and for rendering help unto Devas and Brāhmanas. The second purpose of His manifestation was to impede in the rituals of that person by whom the sacrifice had been performed without the monetary gifts on the surface of the earth. The third purpose was to destroy the person who improperly performs the rites of teaching and study of the vedas; and also those persons who have degenerated from their Varnadharma. (I.105.15-18).

He was worthy of being worshipped by Brāhmanas, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas and Sūdras by the offerings of splendid edibles and food-stuffs for the achievement of all siddhis. There is nothing to be achieved by Devas and others anywhere in the three worlds without first worshipping him with scents, fragrant flowers and incense. (I.105.24-25). If anyone performs - auspicious rite laid down in the śrutis or smṛtis or any worldly ceremony without worshipping him at the outset it will be turned inauspicious. (I.105.23).

Vināyaka Himself declares in connection with the destruction of the Tripura, the importance of His worship (I.72.45). He is to be worshipped along with Śiva and Pārvatī at the beginning of the yogic practices. (I.8.85).

Kumāra (Kārtikeya) :

He is first mentioned in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad⁵, where he seems to be identified with Sanatkumāra. Hopkins⁶ surmises that skanda is not a late addition to the epic but a god rapidly

increasing in importance as the epic expanded, or more particularly, as the Śiva cult expanded. Jacobi⁷ infers that Kumāra as the lord of the army was introduced as a new god probably due to a change in the form of government in the country where instead of the king holding both the offices of ruler in peace and leader in war, the office of a general became separate and distinct.

The LP describes the destruction of Kāma (I.101). It is mentioned here that Kumāra born of the wedlock of Śiva and Pārvatī would kill the demon Tāraka. (I.101.27 and 30). Then we have a description the penances of Śiva and Pārvatī and their marriage (I.102,103). But we do not have an account of the actual birth of Kumāra. In the chapter describing the destruction of Tripura also we have a reference to the destruction of Tāraka by Kumāra. (I.71.8).

Kumāra is described as Krauncāriḥ (I.46.14). He is adorned with excellent ornaments such as conch-shells, bangles, ear-rings, bracelets, anklets, belly-bands, tinkling bells, golden fig leaves etc. His forelocks are bedecked with the flowers of the Kalpa tree. His necklace is studded with rubies and other precious gems. He is adorned with shoulderlets and pearl necklaces having the lustre of the full-moon. He has the caste-marks on his foreheads. His is marked with saffron. A round mark has been made with Bhasma. His eyes are splendid (I.71.122-128). He is referred to as Sanmukh (I.71.121).

He is described as accompanying Śiva when Śiva sets out for the destruction of Tripura. (I.72.64).

The following are His other names. Skanda, Śaktidhara, Sadāśya (Dvādasabhuja) , Senānī, Pāvaki, Svāheya, Kārtikeya Gāṅgeya, Śaradhāmaja, Śākha, Viśākha, Naigameśa, Senāpatī and Mahāsena. (I.101.27-30).

The following are His names mentioned in the stotra known as Vyapohanastava (I.82.36-37) addressed to all the gods :

Skanda, Śaktidhara, Śānta, Senānī, Śikhivāhana and Devasenāpati.

Śivaganas or attendants of Śiva :

Amongst the Śivaganas, great attention is paid to describe Nandin (Śailādi).

Nandin :

He was born as son of the sage Śilāda (I.42). Nandin learned many vidyās from his father. Viz. the rēcensions of Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and the thousand branches of Sāmaveda with their ancillaries and subdivisions : Āyurveda (Science of medicine), Gāndharva (musicology), Dhanurveda (science of archery), Asvalakṣaṇa (characteristics of the horses), the details of elephants and also the characteristics of men. (I.43.5.7). He was made a chief gana by lord Śiva (I.43). The

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description of coronation of Nandīśvara is described in detail. (I.44).

In the chapter describing the episode of the destruction of the Tripura, he is enlogised. The LP states that he came there riding on a white bull. He had matted hair and held the trident and the iron club. He wore garlands, necklaces, ear-rings and bangles. The kumbhodara bowed him. He had the full banner. He was the commander-in-chief of the Ganas and was accompanied by the Ganas. His white umbrella stretched to ten yajanas. It was bedecked in clusters of pearls. The Ganas eulogised him with pleasing words. The sky-walkers showered fragrant flowers over his head. He was drenched in fragrant water dropping from the moon on the forehead of the lord. (I.71.142-160).

Vīrabhadra :

Vīrabhadra, another gana, said to be a form of Śiva Himself, figures in the destruction of the Dakṣayajña (I.100.4-38) and as Śarabha for putting down the wrath of Viṣṇu (as Narasimha, after Hiraṇyakaśipu was slain) (I.40.43; I.61-76).

In the Śarabha episode it is stated that he was saluted by heroes. He had the flames of the fire that occur at the end of the kalpas. He had three shining eyes and he wielded arms. He had matted hairs. He had two curved fangs. By means of his fierce Huṃkāra he deafened all quarters. He had the features of the blue cloud and collyrium. His moustaches were terrible

He had a wonderful form. (I.96.7-10).

Other Sivaganas :

At the time of coronation of Nandīśvara, Rudra remembered the Ganas, and they came there. All of them had thousand arms with weapons in all their thousand hands. They had three eyes. They resembled crores of fire that burn at the time of dissolution. They had matted hairs and crowns. There were lords of Ganas also present. They were accompanied by crores and crores of Ganas all equal in exploits to the chief. Their faces were terrible due to the curved fangs. They were eternal, enlightened and devoid of impurities. Those strong ones were singing, running, dancing and playing on various instruments with facial gestures. These Ganas rode in chariots, on elephants, horses, lions and monkeys. They were seated in airial chariots decorated in gold. They were ready to do anything at the behest of lord Śiva. (I.44.13).

The following leaders of Ganas surrounded Iśa and went forth to chastise the Tripuras -

Keśa, Vigatavāsas, Mahākeśa, Mahājvara, Somavallī, Savarna, Somapa, Senaka, Somadhrk, Sūryavāca, Sūryapeśanaka, Sūryākṣa, Sūrināma, Sura, Sundara, Prakuda, Kakudanta, Kampana, Prakampana, Indra, Indraajaya, Mahābhī, Bhīmaka, Śatākṣa, Pancākṣa, Sahasrākṣa, Mahodara, Yamajihva, Śatāsva, Kunthana, Kanthapūjana, Dvīśikha, Trīśikha, Pancasikha, Munda, Ardhamunda, Dīrgha, Piśācāśya, Pinākadhṛk, Pippalayātana, Angaraksana, Śithila, Śithilāśya, Aksapāda, Aja, Kūja, Ajavaktra, Hayavaktra, Gajavaktra, Ūrdhavavaktra and others. (I.72.76-83).

Section : IIBrahmā :

Prajāpati is a minor deity of the Rgvedic pantheon. In the Brāhmanas he is recognised as the chief god and in the sūtras he is identified with Brahmā. In the post-Brāhmanical period the worship of Brahmā declined as the cult of sacrifice fell into comparative disuse. He occupies a still minor position in the LP.

He is the primordial creator (Ādikartā) (I.20.18). He is self-born (Ātmabhūh) (I.31.2). He has unmeasured prowess (Amitaujas) (I.31.21). He is with faces all rounded (Visvatomukhah) (I.11.4). He is the cause of creation and annihilation of the universe (Sargasamhāarakāraṇam) (I.17.19). He is the creator of the universe (Jagatām Kartā), the proptor of Prakṛti (Prākṛteḥ Pravartakaḥ), the eternal (sanātana), unborn (ajah), the soul of the universe (Visvātma) and the lotus eyed (Pankajekṣana) (I.17.20-21).

He is described as born of the cosmic egg of golden womb - (Hemagarbhāṇḍajah) of golden colour (Rukmavarṇah) and beyond the pale of the sense-organs (Atindriyāḥ) (I.20.9). He has four faces (caturvaktraḥ) and large eyes (Viśālākṣah) (I.20.10). As he assumed the form of a swan, he is called Haṁsa or Virāta (I.17.38). The morning twilight, night, day and evening twilight - these four are the bodies of Brahmā (I.70.221).

Besides being a form of Śiva (I.19.12), Brahmā constitutes Śiva's right (I.37.21; I.38.3) or left (I.62.18) side.

He is endowed with the thirty-two qualities (I.16.29-31) Viz. Yoga, Sāṅkhya, penance (tapah), learning (vidyā); śāstric injunctions (vidhih), holy rites (kriyāh), pleasant speech (Ṛtam), truth (satyaṁ), mercifulness (dayā), vedic knowledge, (Brahma), non-violence (ahiṁsā), wisdom (sammatih), forbearance (kṣamā), meditation (dhyāna), proximity with the lord (dhyeya), control of the senses (dama), quiescence (śāntih), intelligence (vidyā), illusion (avidyā), intellect (matih), fortitude (dhṛtiḥ), splendour (kāntih), ethics (nītiḥ), fame (prathā), intelligence (medhā), modesty (lokāpavādabhītiḥ), vision (dr̥ṣṭiḥ), auspicious speech (Sarasvatī), Satisfaction (Tustih), Skill in the exercise of sense-organs (puṣṭiḥ), performance of vedic rites (kriyā) and pleasure (prasāda).

He crowned the sun as the overlord of planets (I.58.2 and I.57.38). He crowned soma (moon) as the lord of constellations and medicinal herbs (I.58.2). He crowned Varūṇa as the lord of the waters; Kubera as the lord of riches; Viṣṇu as the lord of Adityas; and Pāvaka (fire) as the lord of Vasus (I.58.3). In this way we get the description of the coronation of Dakṣa, Indra, Prahlāda, Dharma, Nirṛti, Rudra, Nandin, Vīrabhadra, Bhayaṅkara, Cāmundā, Nīlaloḥita, Vināyaka, Umā, Sarasvatī, Viṣṇu, Himavat, the ganges, ocean, Citraratha, Vāsuki, Takṣaka, Airāvata, Garuḍa, Uccaiśravas, lion, the bull, śarabha, Guha and lakulīśa (I.58.4-13). He made Sudharman, Śaṅkhaṇḍa, Ketumān and Hemaroman the overlords of all quarters in order (I.58.14).

He crowned Prthu as the lord of the earth; Mahesvara as the lord of all; the bull-bannered omniscient lord Saṅkara as the overlord among the four deities (I.58.15).

His subordinate position in relation to that of Śiva is brought out in the episode describing His dispute with Viṣṇu and Śiva's appearance as a column of fire before them. (I.17.1ff and I.19.11-13).

Viṣṇu :

Viṣṇu, though a deity of capital importance in the mythology of the Brāhmanas, occupies but a subordinate position in the RV¹⁰. In the LP also he occupies a subordinate position in the description. (I.24.14.7).

Description etc.

In the LP he is recognised as the lord of devas (Sarvadeves-
varah) (I.17.25). He is also called Devadevesa (I.36.10) and
Devesa (I.36.14; I.36.37) and Suresa (I.94.13). He has certain
universal and qualifying epithets viz. Jagannātha (I.36.4;
I.36.10), Janārdana (I.36.4), Madhusūdana (I.36.37), Viśveśvara
(I.36.5); Viśvamūrti (I.36.9), Bhūpati (I.36.6); Śrīpati
(I.36.6), Svārata (I.36.14; I.36.31); Hari (I.20.3); Śrī
Nārāyaṇa (I.20.4); Puruṣottama (I.20.4); Āyuta (I.17.24) and
Īśana (I.17.24).

The usual weapons of Viṣṇu are Śaṅkha, Cakra and Gadā. He
is described as Śaṅkhacakra-gadādharaḥ (I.20.3; I.36.1). He is

described as pītāmbarah, having yellow garments (I.36.2). He has the lustre of the cloud - (Jīmūtambha I.20.3; Kālameghasama-dyutiḥ I.62.29; Dharādharākārah I.94.15). His eyes resemble the lotus. He is described as Ambujākṣaḥ (I.20.3), Puṇḍrīkani-bhekṣanaḥ (I.64.19). He wears a coronet. He is described as Kirītī (I.20.3) and I.36.2). He is moon-faced (Candravaktra, I.94.15).

He has eight cosmic bodies, (Aṣṭamūrti, I.94.13), eight arms (Aṣṭabāhu, I.20.4) and large chest (Mahāvaksāḥ, I.20.4). He is the source of origin of the universe (Lokānām yoniḥ, I.20.4). From his mouth emerged all souls, all beings (I.20.4). He has occupied the lofty body of a huge serpent that had a thousand ^{hoods} ~~hands~~: (Mahābhogapateḥ phanāsahasrakalitam, I.20.5). He always sleeps in yogic slumber in the milky - ocean (I.46.6). When he wakes up, the entire universe wakes up; when he is asleep, it is also asleep (I.46.7). He is the whole universe (Jagatsar-vam) consisting of the mobile and immobile beings (carācaram) (I.95.26; I.46.7).

In the description of the form of varāha assumed by Viṣṇu, the LP (I.94.11-18) gives a general account of the greatness of Viṣṇu in His manifestation as Varāha. There is no other lord, like him (I.17.26). He is Viṣṇu, Rudra and Brahmā (I.95.27). He is the storehouse of mercy (ghṛṇānidhiḥ, I.64.19).

The seven nether worlds are his feet; the earth constitutes his loins; the seven oceans are his clothes; the four quarters are his great arms. The heaven is his head; the sky is his

umbilicus; the wind is his nose; Puskara and others constitute his tresses. The stars, constellations and firmament are the ornaments round his neck. (I.36.15-17). The moon and the sun are his eyes (I.94.17). All the Devas and all the Ganas are identical with Viṣṇu. There is no other goal equal to the goal of attaining Viṣṇu (I.24.143).

He wears ornaments (Sarvābharanabhūṣitaḥ, I.36.2). He bears the mark of Śrīvatsa over his breast (I.37.29). His lotus-like feet had turned red due to the contact with the lotus-like soft hands of Lakṣmī (I.37.29).

Philosophical Epithets :

Some philosophical epithets are ascribed to Viṣṇu. Thus he is Anantaḥ (I.95.27); Anantamūrtiḥ (I.94.13); of unrivalled splendour (Apratimavarcaśam I.71.39); Hartā, Kartā, Netā, (I.17.26); Puram Brahma, Param Tattva (I.17.26); Parmātmā, Param jyoti (I.17.27); Prabhavodbhava (I.17.24); Parātparambrahma (I.95.22), Prakṛti, Puruṣa (I.36.4); Nirālambah, Nirdvandvah, Nirupaplavaḥ (I.95.23); Viśvātmā (I.19.3); Varada (I.36.39) Sthūla, Suksma, Susūksma, Subhah, Śabdabrahmamayah (I.95.23); Tattvāt tatvatamaḥ (I.95.22); Yogātmā and Yogavit (I.20.4).

Various forms :

Besides being a form of Śiva (I.19.12) Viṣṇu constitutes the right (I.62.18) or the left (I.37.21; I.38.3) part of Śiva. He is described as supporting Śiva in the Meghavāhaṇakalpa

assuming the form of a cloud (I.37.17-18). He is mentioned (I.58.8 and II.5.156) as the master of māyāvins in the section on jyotiṣa. He is also said to be of illusory nature. (II.6.3-5 and II.5.156).

The other forms are : the Caturvyūha, Pradyumna and Aniruddha (II.48.29-30); Padmākṣa (I.98.177) etc. The LP describes (I.98.176) how Viṣṇu got the Sudarśana disc by the grace of Śiva.

The ten manifestations (II.48.30-32) of Viṣṇu are : Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, (I.94.8 and I.38.7), Narasiṃha, Vāmana, Parasurāma, Rāma (II.5.144-149), Kṛṣṇa (I.69.68 and II.3.78), Buddha (I.87.74) and Kalki (I.40.51-61). These are due to the curse of Bhṛgu. (I.95.26).

The greatness of the mantra of twelve syllables (om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya) and eight syllables (om namo nārāyaṇaya) for Viṣṇu are described (II.4.3-11). ^{7.3-16; II.48.35; I.42.40; II.6.13} Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu is mentioned in the LP, only at a few places (viz. I.81.29). But the LP describes (II.6.5-74) in detail the origin and habitat of Alakṣmī, the older sister of Lakṣmī.

Surya :

The sun was worshipped as Sūrya, Mitra, Savitr and Pūṣan in vedas. Though, all of them represented basically the same phenomenon, yet they were considered to be distinct deities as their concepts revealed different powers of the sun. As savitr, he is the giver and sustainer of life, who each morning awakes the universe and men from sleep; as Mitra, perhaps the most ancient cult of all, he is associated as a member of

an early triad, symbolized by the sacred syllable om, the ^triad being Agni, Vāyu and Mitra. He is invoked also as Pāsan, the guardian and preserver of the cattle, the companion of travellers ^{and} guide of the soul on its perilous way to the lower world. In latter times these several sun-gods were merged in one and he continued to be worshipped as a sun-god even after the rise of the supreme gods.

The LP states that lord Brahmā crowned the sun as the overlord of planets. (I.58.2). The entire universe including Devas, Asuras and human beings originates from him. He is the lustre of all luminaries and the universal refulgence. The refulgence of Rudra, Indra, Upendra, the moon, the leading brāhmanas, the fire and the heaven-dwellers come from the sun. He is the soul of all. ~~He is the lord of all worlds,~~ He is the lord of all worlds. He alone is Mahādeva, Prajāpati and the lord of the three worlds. He is the original great deity. Everything originates from him and dissolves in him (I.60.6-8). He is also described as a regulator of time (I.60.10-11). He is also stated to be a form of Rudra (I.60.14) and identified with Śiva (I.54.62-65; II.20.6). In another place He is described as subject to the control of Śiva (II.10.35 and II.13.13).

There are twelve general names of the lord sun. Indra, Dhātṛ, Bhaga, Pāsan, Mitra, Varuṇa, Aryaman, Aṁsu, Vivasvān, Tvastṛ, Parjanya and Viṣṇu (I.59.31-32). Sūrya possesses twelve names for each of the months of the year, viz. Varuṇa, Pāsan, Aṁsu, Dhātṛ, Indra, Aryaman, Vivasvān, Bhaga, Parjanya, Tvastṛ,

Mitra and Viṣṇu. It is said that Varuṇa shines in Māgha; Pūṣan in the Phālguna, Aṃsu in Caitra, Dhātṛ in Vaiśākha, Indra is Jyestha, Aryaman in Āṣāḍha, Vivasvān in Śrāvaṇa, Bhaga in Bhādra, Parjanya in Āsvina, Tvastṛ in Kārtika, Mitra in Mārgaśīrṣa and Viṣṇu in Pauṣa (I.59.33-35).

In different seasons, the sun shines in different colours. In the spring it is tawny, in the summer he has the lustre of gold. In the rainy season it is white, in the autumn it is grey. In the early winter it is copper coloured and in the late winter it is red. (I.59.39-40).

The different forms of the sun have different numbers of rays. Thus it is said that Varuṇa shines with 5000 rays; Pūṣan with 6000 rays; Aṃsu with 7000 rays; Dhātṛ with 8000 rays; Indra with 9000 rays, Vivasvān with 10,000 rays; Bhaga with 11,000 rays; Mitra with 7,000 rays; Traṣṭṛ with 8,000 rays; Aryaman with 10,000 rays; Parjanya with 9,000 rays and Viṣṇu with 6,000 rays. (I.59.35b-38). The thousand rays of the sun serve the purpose of the world. Reaching the earth they assume different forms by emitting snow, rain and heat. (I.59.43-44).

He infuses strength into the medicinal herbs; he propitiates the Pitṛs by means of svadhā rays; he instils nectar into the immortal beings (I.59.41). He is support and source of origin of the stars, planets and the moon. (I.59.44).

Seven rays :

Seven rays, that are the source of origin of the planets

are the most excellent ones among the thousand rays. They are :
 Suṣumna, Harikeśa, Viśvakarman, Viśvavyacas, Sannaddha, Sarvāvasu
 and Svarāta (I.60.19-20). Suṣumna makes the southern region
 flourish. It moves about above, below and on the sides. Harikeśa
 which is in front (in the east) is glorified as the source of
 origin of constellations. In the south, Viśvakarmā develops
 Budha (mercury). Viśvavyacas, which is in the West (behind)
 is the origin of Śukra (venus); Sannaddha is the source of
 origin of Mars. Sarvāvasu is the source of origin of Brhaspati
 (Jupiter); Svarāta nourishes sanāiscara (saturn) (I.60.21-24).

His chariot :

The chariot of the sun was created by Brahmā. It is
 conceived through the parts of the year. It is the abode of
 all Devas. It has a single wheel with five spokes and three
 naves. Its length and breadth is nine thousand yojanas. Twice
 that length is the distance between the driver's box and the
 poleshaft. The horses are stationed on the side where the wheel
 is. They are unattached but appear to be yoked. There are
 seven horses. They are evolved out of the vedic passages and
 metres. The horses are bound to the side of the wheel. The axle
 is fitted to the poleshaft. The chariot revolves along with
 the wheel and the horses, and the poleshaft revolves along with
 the axle. The axle prompted by the poleshaft whirls along with
 the single wheel. It is the intelligent Dhruva (Pole star) that
 urges the luminaries by means of the wind and the rays. There are
 two reins in the chariot. They are united to the extremities
 of the yoke and the axle. The chariot tied by means of the reins

to the yoke and the axle revolves by the grace of Dhruva.
(I.57.2-8).

That chariot is occupied by Devas, Ādityas, Sages, Gandharvas, Apsarases as well as serpents, Rākṣasas and Grāmanīs (I.55.17). The sages eulogise the sun by means of hymns. The Gandharvas and Apsarases worship him by music and dance. The Grāmanīs, Yakṣas and Bhūtas hold the reins. The serpents bear the sun and yātudhānas follow him. The Vālakhilyas surround the sun from his rise to his setting and accompany him (I.55.19-21).

The Worship of the Sun :

The worship of the sun is prerequisite for the worship of Śiva (II.22.79). The LP describes in detail the worship of Sūrya using the nine syllabled mantra (II.22.9 and II.22.46.47) while describing the greatness of the Pañcāksarimantra, the LP mentions that the worship of Sūrya reciting the Pañcāksarī gives a healthy life (I.85.196).

Gāyatrī :

The Gāyatrīmantra is personified as a form of Rudrānī (Pārvatī). She had her origin from the face of Śiva in His form as Tatpuruṣa in the His form as Tatpuruṣa in the Pītavāsakalpa. Each part of her body has four sets of limbs (I.13.5-11, I.13.13). She possesses the thirty-two qualities (I.13.7). Gāyatrī is also identified with Gaurī, Māyā, Vidyā,

Kṛṣṇā, Haimavatī, Pradhāna, Prakṛti and Viśvarūpā (I.16.34-35). The four fold divisions of dharma yugas, stages of life, etc. are attributed as due to Gaytrī of four feet. (I.23.26-36).

Alakṣmī :

(A) The Origin of Alakṣmī :

Lord Viṣṇu created one set consisting of Brāhmanas, Vedas, Vedic virtues and Padmā-Śrī. He made another set consisting of Jyesthā, Alakṣmī, the base men excluded from the vedic sphere as well as sin. It was after creating Alakṣmī at the outset that Viṣṇu created Padmā afterwards. Therefore Alakṣmī is Jyesthā. At the outcome of nectar after the terribly potent poison, the inauspicious Jyesthā was born. So it is heard. Thereafter Śrī--Padmā was born who later became Viṣṇu's wife. A brāhmanical sage Dusaha (II.6-8).

B. Good Spirits :

The following are the good spirits (places), which are disliked by Alakṣmī :

A loud chanting sound of the names of Viṣṇu and Śiva; a loud sound of the vedic mantras; the column of smoke rising from sacrifices and the people with their limbs smeared with Bhasman; the devotees of Viṣṇu and Rudra who have dusted and smeared their bodies with Bhasman; the precincts of the parks, cowpens, wealth and abodes of those delighted Brāhmanas, Kṣatriyas, Vaisyas and Sūdras who repeat the names and prayers of the lord; where there is svāhākāra and vasatkāra; a loud chanting of the

sāman hymns and where people engrossed in repeating the vedic hymns; devotion to daily rituals and worship of Vāsudeva; the holy rite of Agnihotra is performed; the Liṅga is worshipped and where the idols of Vāsudeva and Candikā are present; the persons devoid of all sins move; Mahādeva is worshipped by means of Nitya and Naimittika Yajñas; Brāhmanas well versed in Śrutis, cows, preceptors, guests and the devotees of Rudra are always worshipped (II.6.9-30).

(C) Evil Spirits :

The following are the evil spirits (places), which are liked by Alakṣamī.

Absence of Brāhmanas well-versed in the vedic lore as well as cows, preceptors and guests. Lack of devotion towards Mahādeva and Viṣṇu; where japa, homa, etc. are not performed; Bhasman is not kept; where there is no worship of Rudra on ceremonious occasions and particularly on Śaturdaśī and Aṣṭamī days of the dark halves; where people associate with wicked men; where husband and wife are at logger heads; these Brāhmanas who are deluded and wicked and who do not, repeat the names of Kṛṣṇa and Śiva (II.6.31-37). Absence of loud chanting of the vedic mantras, of rites relating to their ancestors of Liṅga - worship and performance of japa. Censure of devotion to Rudra is also a place. Where there is no guest well-versed in the vedic lore, where there is no preceptor, no Vaiṣṇava nor cows; where people eat foodstuffs without giving anything to children who keep on watching the same; where there is mutual quarrel among the inmates; where people are engaged in sinful activities, are

deluded, have no mutual mercy and remain lethargic; where the housewife never keeps secret and destroys domestic felicity and is never worthy of praise. (II.6.38-45).

The place where they are the ^hory trees,¹¹ where there is the winding creeper of Nispāva and where there is Brahmavrkṣa, where the trees grow in the houses, viz. Agastya, Arka, Bandhujīva, Karavīra, Nandyāvarta, Mallikā, the creeping plant kanyā, Drohī, Jati, the black plantain trees, Tāla, Tamāla, Bhalāta, Tintidī khaṇḍa, Kadamba, Khadira, Nyagrodha, Āsvattha, Cūta, Udumbara, Panasa and Mimba tree. Where there is a single maid-servant, three cows, five buffaloes, six horses or seven elephants¹²; the house of that person whose household deity is Kālī, Dākinī of the form of a ghost or Ksetrapāla; wherein there is the idol of Buddhist mendicant or the statue of Buddha; that house where the tongues of the inmates do not utter the name of Viṣṇu when going to bed, or taking up a seat or moving about in the course of their activities, such as taking food, etc. (II.6.52-56).

The evil spirits prefer ignorance, viz. persons engaged in heretic activities; excluded from the sacred rites laid down in the vedas and smṛtis; devoid of devotion to Viṣṇu; who censure Mahādeva, atheists and knaves; who do not believe in the superiority of the lord Śiva; who do not say that Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra were all born by the grace of Rudra; who say that the glow-worm and the sun are on a par (II.6.57-61).

The evil spirits stay in the abodes of those stupid

persons of deluded minds who eat cooked rice by themselves and who are devoid of ablution and other auspicious rites; of that woman who falls of from the ideal of cleanliness, who is devoid of purificatory rites of the body and who is continuously engaged in eating all kinds of food stuff. The houses of men who have dirty faces, who wear dirty clothes, whose teeth are full of dirt, though they are householders; who do not wash their feet; who lie down and who take their food at dusk; who are engaged in gluttony; who are addicted to too much of drinking; who are foolishly engrossed in gambling and arguing; who misappropriate the wealth of brāhmanas; who perform sacrifices on behalf of undeserving performs; who partake of the cooked rice served by sūdras; who are sinners; who relish flash eating and who are enamoured of other men's wives. (II.6.62-68); who indulge in sexual intercourse by day; who are not engaged in worship or festival days and who enjoy sexual union at dusk; the house of those who cohabit through the anus like a dog or other animals or those who indulge in sexual intercourse under water; who carnally approach a woman in her menses, or a cāṇḍāla woman or a virgin; who indulge in sexual intercourse in a cowpen. (II.6.69-73).

Section : 3

Myths and Legends

The myths and legends in the LP can be divided into three groups :

- (1) Śaivite (2) Viṣṇuite (3) Miscellaneous.

The śaivite myths and legends are given below :

(1) Gaḡāntaka, the form in which Śiva kills a demon who appears as an elephant (I.76.29).

(2) Jālandharāntaka, killing the demon Jālandhara (I.76; I.97).

(3) Tripurāntaka, the destroyer of the three demons of the three cities (I.76.52; I.71-72).

(4) Śakti (I.64), the son of Vasīṣṭha and Arundhatī, was devoured by a demon. Parāśara, the posthumous son of śakti did penance to propitiate Śiva to wreak vengeance on the demon and to destroy the world. He gave up his resolve on the advice of his grandfather.

(5) Śiva appeared (I.29) (I.31; I.33) at Dāruvana in a nude and attractive form to know the true dispositions of the minds of the sages of the forest. The wives of the sages were fascinated on seeing the beautiful form of Śiva in disguise. The sages showed their contempt for Him and Śiva favoured the sages at the end by revealing His identity.

(6) The origin of Nandin (I.37), as the son of Śilāda and his being made chief among the gaṇas of Śiva (I.43.29; I.44.39) are narrated.

(7) The conversation between king Kṣupa and his ascetic friend Dadhīci, son of Cyavana developed into a dispute about their relative superiority. The sage Dadhīci, a devotee of Śiva, was able to vanquish Kṣupa and even Viṣṇu who came to help Kṣupa (I.35.1-33; I.36.1-76)¹³.

(8) Sage Sanatkumāra became a camel (Uṣtra) on account of the curse of Nandin and got back his original form by the grace of Śiva and Nandin (II.28.12-13).

(9) Mount Mandara, which derives its name as it sustains the water known as Manda, is personified; Its devoted penance on Śiva is described. (I.53.9-11).

(10) The appearance of Śiva before other gods as yakṣa which is given in the Kenopaniṣad khanda: 3 is found (I.53.55ff). All the other gods lost their powers. After the disappearance of the Yakṣa from there, Umā, the consort of Śiva appeared before the gods and explained that the person who appeared in the form of Yakṣa was Śiva Himself and all the things in the world are controlled by him.

(11) In the Dāruvana episode in which Śiva appeared as a nude recluse, it is pointed out (I.29.25-35) that Śiva alone was not affected by the curses of sages, whereas the gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and others were subject to the curses of sages

on different occasions, such as - the destruction of Brahmā's sacrifice (obviously a mistake for Dakṣa's sacrifice), the ten manifestations of Viṣṇu due to the curse of Bhṛgu, the fall of the phallus of Indra on account of the curse of Gautama, the stay in the womb (garbhavāsa) and sufferings on that account for the vasus, the curse on Nahusa to become a serpent, the curse on milky-ocean that it would become ordinary ocean and hence could not be used for drinking. (This curse was removed by Viṣṇu's worship of Śiva at Varanasi) .

(12) Upamanya (I.107.3-64) the son of sage Dhaumya tasted sweet milk at the house of his uncle. Returning to his mother's house he requested his mother to give him milk same as that one he had tasted in the uncle's house. He could not be pacified by his mother. Unable to give him what he sought his poor mother gave him spurious milk prepared from the flour. When he could not be satisfied with that milk, his mother explained that their present plight was due to their neglect of the worship of Śiva. As advised by her he worshipped Śiva. Śiva appeared before him in the form of Indra. But Upamanyu did not desire boon from any deity other than Śiva. He could not be shaken from his resolve to obtain favour from Śiva alone. Upamanya wanted to get rid of this person who was speaking ill of Śiva. Satisfied with the steady devotion of Upamanya, Śiva manifested before him in His original form and blessed him, making him one of His own ganas.

(13) The next story is about the appearance of Pārvatī in the form of Kālī to kill the demon Dārūka. Her fury did not subside, even after the demon was killed. Śiva assumed the form of a child and sucked Her wrath along with Her breast milk and appeased Her (I.106.2-28).

(14) The final story (II.8,8-32) associated with Śiva is about Dhandumūka, son of a devotee of Śiva named Dhundhumūka. Dhundhumūka was given to evil ways on account of some curse. He obtained the favour of Śiva after initiation in the Pañcākṣara mantra.

II. The Viṣṇuites myths and legends :

(1) In the description of the form of Varāha assumed by Viṣṇu, the LP (I.94.11-18) gives a general account of the greatness of Viṣṇu in His manifestation as Varāha. His form is composed of the gods, the planets and the stars.

(2) In the episode associated with Śrīmatī daughter of Ambarīṣa the LP describes Viṣṇu as one in the posture of Yoganidrā, reclining on the serpent Śeṣa, as the source of brahmāṇḍa from which the lotus of the universe came out and as consisting of the three guṇas - sattva, rajas and tamas equated with Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Kālarudra (II.5.7-8).

(3) Ambarīṣa was a devotee of Viṣṇu. He had a daughter known as Śrīmatī. The sages Nārada and Parvata both wanted to marry her. The king said that the choice would rest with her daughter. The two sages separately requested Viṣṇu that the other

should appear as a monkey when they go for the svayamvara the next day. Viṣṇu kept up His word. He also appeared in between the two sages as visible to Śrīmatī alone and carried away Śrīmatī. On the words of the king that he had no hands in that incident, the two sages hastened to Viṣṇu, to find out the truth. Viṣṇu hid Śrīmatī and told the sage that it was all the work of the king. The sages also believed the words of Viṣṇu and concluded that Ambarīṣa had deceived them. They returned to Ambarīṣa angrily. Viṣṇu saved the king from the wrath and curse of the two sages ((II.5.1-142). The two sages censured the deceitful ways of Viṣṇu and became devotees of Śiva. (II.5.156).

(4) Dhruva was son of Uttārapāda and Sunīti. He was devoted to Viṣṇu. Special favour was shown to him by Viṣṇu that he would attain a position in the heavens. (I.62.3-40).

(5) There are two references (I.37.17-19); II.8.9-12) to Viṣṇu becoming the clouds and supporting Śiva and hence that particular time being known as the Meghavāhanakalpa.

III. Miscellaneous Legends :

Nārada :

Nārada's birth as mind-born son of Brahmā is mentioned in the Pūrvabhāga (I.63.78-80). He is described in the Uttārbhāga (II.3.3-106) as gaining proficiency in music from an owl (named Gānabandhu).

Gānabandhu

Gānabandhu was a king known as Bhuvanēsa in the former birth. He got the owl-form since he prevented his subjects from singing the glory of the gods. In order to be honoured like Tumburu, Nārada who was engaged in doing penance was advised by a divine voice to resort to Gānabandhu. In spite of the training Nārada had from Gānabandhu, he was not yet equal to Tumburu. He was advised by Viṣṇu to approach Viṣṇu again in the 28th dvāpara when Viṣṇu would manifest as Kṛṣṇa. Nārada had his instruction in music from Kṛṣṇa. He gained more proficiency than Tumburu. (II.3.76-82) II.3.94-108)

Kausika :

The next story is about Kausika who was a devotee of Vasudeva (Viṣṇu). He was persecuted by the king of Kalinga. After his death, he was honoured in heavens on account of his devotion. This story occurs in the LP as narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to Ambarīṣa (II.1.9.ff).

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