

## CHAPTER : I

### PROLOGUE

#### Importance of the Purānas :

"The Purānas occupy a unique position in Indian literature, both sacred and secular<sup>1</sup>, especially as they are the literature of the masses. But proper attention was not given in their study for a long time. S.G.Kantawala<sup>2</sup> rightly remarks that "The history of Sanskrit studies shows that the Purānas were neglected for a long time and the credit goes to Wilson and Partiger, the pioneer workers in this branch, to bring to the notice of the Indologists the historical importance of the Purānas. This ushered in an era of several works on political history by different writers".

#### Vocable Purāna :

The word purāna does not mean ancient, but according to Nirukta<sup>3</sup> Purānaṁ Kasmāt/ Purā nevaṁ bhavati / means that which was formerly, is at present and will in new form in future. According to the MP<sup>4</sup> that which is full of ancient stories is called Purāna. In ancient scriptures the Purāna was related with history<sup>5</sup>.

The Purānas are now accepted as one of the important sources of ancient Indian history<sup>6</sup>, as "they constitute an important

source of the cultural history of India as they throw a flood of light on the various aspects of the life and time. They occupy an intermediate position, broadly speaking between the age and the period of classical literature. They have been influencing the life of the people throughout the centuries and are valuable as supplying the materials for the study of such diverse subjects as religion and philosophy, folklore and ethnology, literature and sciences, history and geography, politics and sociology".

The LP is no exception to the general nature of the Purāṇas as stated above. It supplies valuable data on various aspects of ancient Indian culture. In the present thesis the social, religious and mythological material which is predominant in the Purāṇa is critically studied and evaluated.

#### Classification of the Purāṇas and the Liṅga Purāṇa :

The classificatory <sup>no</sup>omenclature of the Purāṇas may be briefly alluded to here. The Mahāpurāṇas have been sub-divided into sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa according to their preferential treatment to Viṣṇu, Śiva and other deities. Thus in the MP<sup>8</sup>, the Purāṇas glorifying Hari are styled as sāttvika, those glorifying Brahmā as rājasa and those glorifying Agni and Śiva both as tāmas, whereas those glorifying Sarasvatī and manes as Sankīrṇa .

The SKP enumerates ten Purāṇas as describing the greatness of Śiva, four of Brahmā and two each of Devī and Hari<sup>9</sup>.

Haraprasad Shastri divides the eighteen Mahapurāṇa into six

groups according to their character and states that Liṅga, Vāmana and Mārkaṇḍeya are of sectarian group.<sup>10</sup>

It may be noted here that LP is a sectarian, still we find the enlogies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and the Sun in it.

#### Extent of the LP :

The printed text in the edition, edited by J.L. Shastri has only about 9000 verses<sup>11</sup> whereas the text itself actually mentions<sup>12</sup> the extent of the Purāṇa as 11,000 verses. The MP<sup>13</sup> as well as the DB<sup>14</sup> and the AP<sup>15</sup> refer to the extent of the LP as 11,000 verses.

Referring to the LP in his Dānasāgara, Ballālasena states that<sup>16</sup> he has not drawn on this section <sup>on</sup> or dāna in the LP as this is based on the same section in the MP. But R.C. Hazra<sup>17</sup> would take this verse to mean that Ballālasena has not considered the whole of the LP as authoritative.

A line of the verse from the LP<sup>18</sup> on the Tulāpuruṣadāna and a few more verses<sup>19</sup> under Puṇyadeśaḥ quoted by Ballālasena in his Dānasāgara and found in the present text of the LP, are considered by Hazra<sup>20</sup> to be an interpolation as Ballālasena<sup>21</sup> has not included the LP when referring to the Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas consulted by him in composing his Nibandha.

Moreover, it has been shown<sup>22</sup> that quotations from the LP found in many of the works of the writers on Dharma (Jimūtavāhana, Lakṣmīdhara and Others) are not at all found in the present LP.

It appears therefore that the text of the LP has not come down to us in its original form; but it seems to have been revised and enlarged<sup>23</sup>.

The present LP is divided into two sections comprising respectively 108 and 55 chapters<sup>24</sup>.

Title :

The LP is a Śaiva Purāṇa . It derives its name from the fact that it reveals the supreme Lord Śiva in his niskala (attributeless) and sakala (qualified) forms, recounts his emblems, qualities, exploits and incarnations, narrates legends on the origin and importance of the Liṅga his phallic idol, dwells upon the merit of installing and consecrating it, describes the ritual and philosophical rituals of the Liṅga cult.

Author of the LP :

The authorship of the Purāṇas is attributed to the sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana but the BhP<sup>25</sup> speaks of separate authorship for different Purāṇas. According to this authority the LP was composed by the sage Tandi ; but the statement of the BhP is not supported by the internal evidence.

Spurious Portions in the Purāṇa :

The Uttarbhāga of the LP is a latter addition, as it is not mentioned in the anukramanikā adhyāya (Ch.2).

It has been pointed out by R.C.Hazra<sup>26</sup> and Pargiter<sup>27</sup> that the LP interpolates religious teaching in the genealogical

portion, when it introduces an eulogy of Rudra in Chapter 65 (verses 54-168). Besides this stotra, the Purāṇa introduces in Chapter 98 (verses 57-159), an eulogy of Śiva addressed by Viṣṇu.

Unlike the other Purāṇas, the LP opens with a list of the names of the holy places visited by Nārada and declares that the Purāṇa was narrated by Brahmā in the Īśānakalpa. It also refers to divine interlocution i.e. between Mahādeva and His <sup>consort</sup> ~~consent~~ only in the LP (I.25.2).

Hazra<sup>28</sup> has also pointed out that the present LP has a few chapters borrowed from the other Purāṇas. For example LP I.89 in 122 verses (on sadācāra) gives the 24 verses of Vāyu 16 with further additions. The chapter 90 on Yatiprāyaścitta is almost totally the same as in the Vāyu 18; LP I.91 (on Ariṣṭa and Omkāralakṣaṇa) is the same as Vāyu 19 and 20; LP I.40 consists of verses mainly taken from Kūrma I.29 and MP 144-48. The LP has improved upon the borrowed sections with additions and alterations in such a way that these additions and alterations at once betray their indebtedness.

V.S. Agrawala<sup>29</sup> has shown that the Kāśī Udyānavivaraṇa in the LP I.92.12-32 is the same as MP-179. The greatness of Kāśī described in the LP I.92 may be compared with the description in the MP 180-85.

Baladeva Upadhyaya<sup>30</sup> has pointed out that the LP II.28.44 on the gifts are an abridgement of similar verses from the

MP 273-88. It may be noted here that the second part of the LP is not referred to in the *anukramanī*-chapter in LP I.2.

Influence of the LP on Later works :

The *dāna* section in the LP has given rise to some Prayoga-works on *dāna*. The works are ascribed to be a part of the LP. The names of the works as known from the manuscript catalogues are given below : (1) *Ganeśadānaprayoga*<sup>31</sup>, (2) *Lokapālāṣṭakaprayoga*<sup>32</sup>, (3) *Viṣṇubrahmāmaheśvaradānaprayoga*<sup>33</sup>, (4) *Hiranyamadhenudana-vidhi*<sup>34</sup>, (5) *Hiranyāśvadāna-vidhi*<sup>35</sup>, (6) *Hiranyagarbhadānaprayoga*<sup>36</sup>. All these manuscripts are found only in the manuscripts collection at Tanjore. Probably they were composed during the Maṅgala rule at Tanjore<sup>37</sup>.

Date :

The problem of the date of the LP has already been discussed by eminent scholars. Wilson<sup>38</sup> observed that the data for conjecturing the era of the LP are defective. On account of the preference to the incarnations of Śiva and the importance attached to the practice of Yoga in the LP, he was rightly inclined to think that the work was not compiled before the 8th or 9th centuries. M. Winternitz<sup>39</sup> felt that the LP could scarcely be a very ancient work, as some passages in it show the influence of the Tantras and since the LP has material mostly serving as a manual for the worshippers of Śiva.

It is possible to arrive at a conclusion regarding the date

of the chapters on dharma in the LP, from the LP quotations in the Nibandhas, according to their traceability in the text of the LP. The verses quoted by some of the early Nibandha writers<sup>40</sup> from the LP, are not found in the present text. Some of the LP-quotations<sup>41</sup> in Dharmanibandhas are available in the present text of the LP.

The earliest Nibandha writer Lakṣmīdhara (1100-1130 A.D.) quotes profusely from the LP in his Kṛtyakalpataru<sup>42</sup>. Jimūtavāhana who is considered<sup>43</sup> to belong to 1090-1120 A.D. quotes from the LP in his Kālaviveka, Vijñānesvara, a little prior to him (1080-1100 A.D.) and Aparārka, about the same period as - Jimūtavāhana (1090-1120 A.D.) quote from the LP in their commentaries on the Yājñavalkyasmṛti. But none of the quotations made by the above writers is found in the present text of the LP, which probably means that portions of original text of the LP are lost.

From the evidence of the Nibandha-writers it is possible to indicate, as Hazra<sup>44</sup> has shown that the present LP-text in two parts was written not later than 1000 A.D.. Regarding the upper limit, Hazra<sup>45</sup> has rightly suggested that the LP was not written before 600 A.D.

Hazra<sup>46</sup> has suggested the following dates for the composition of the following sections for the Purāṇa on Dharma. This is given here for ready reference.

I.25-28	- On līṅga-worship	C. Between 600
I.77-78	- On the consecration of a Līṅga	and 1000 A.D. Most probably 600-800 A.D.
I.81	- On Paśupata-vrata or Śiva-līṅga-vrata	
I.83-84	- On Śaiva vrataś to be observed in the different months.	
I.85, I.82	- On the method of muttering the five-syllabled Mantra	
I.85, 83-- 126	- On Dikṣā and Paścaścārana	C. between 600 and 1000 A.D.
I.85, 127 to the end; I, 89	- On customs in general	Most probably 800-1000 A.D.
I, 90	- On penances for Yatis	
II, 23-26	- On Śiva-worship	
II, 28-44	- On great gifts	
II, 45	- On funeral sacrifices for living persons	
II, 46-49	- On consecrating the Līṅga	
II, 51 to the end	- On mystic rites and practices	



The chapters on the Liṅga-worship show two distinct modes of procedure - one using the vedic mantras and the other in which tantric elements prevail. Hazra<sup>47</sup> has suggested that while the former group has been retained from the earlier form of the Liṅga, the latter seem to have been in existence from the time of the recast of the Purāṇa, showing the influence of tantric practices, i.e. not earlier than 800 A.D.

According to V.S. Agrawala<sup>48</sup> the LP might have been a compact work of 108 chapters now comprising the first part during the period of the Kushanas, when the Pāsupatas were in their full glory. Chapters 9-27 of the second part could have been added as a supplement of the Pāsupata teachers of the Gupta age. In the third stage the Vaisnavas grafted chapters 1-8 at the beginning of part II, in which Nārāyaṇa is glorified in a dialogue between Ambarīṣa and Nārada. The story in the LP II.1, associated with Kausika may be taken as a reference to the Pāsupata ascetic Kusika. From this it may be inferred that the text of the LP comprising the Pāsupata elements had its definite shape around 600 A.D. V.V. Paranjape<sup>49</sup> fixes the earlier limit of the LP as the seventh century.

The genealogical portion also betrays a comparatively late origin of the LP. About this portion Pargiter<sup>50</sup> says : "The Liṅga account is based on the 'Vāyu version' , but adapts to frame its own text. Often it has the same verses, but often also it modifies, curtails and freely omits, especially - identical and descriptive matter; and it adds occasionally.

It also interpolate religious teaching, as where it introduces a long eulogy of Rudra. It, however shows traces of the influence of the Matsya-version; thus it has the same verses sometimes and ends the Aiksvāku genealogy with six kings instead of the Vāyu's twentyone just as the Matsya does".

From the foregoing discussion of the different views suggested above and the process of evidence available, it is seeing that the different sections of the LP dealing with the different subject matter were composed in stages probably between the seventh and ninth centuries<sup>51</sup> and in the whole the LP may be assigned to eighth century.

The LP as a Purana, its place, etc. :

The brief synopsis of the LP is given in Appendix I. Let us now see how far the LP fulfils the classical panca-laksana definition of the Purāṇa. According to the classical definition a Purāṇa is supposed to deal with five topics (Pāñcalakṣaṇa) viz. (1) sarga or creation of the universe; (2) pratisarga or re-creation after destruction; (3) Vāṃsa or genealogy ; (4) manvantara or the great periods of time with Manu as the primal ancestor and (5) Vāṃśānucarita or the history of the dynasties both solar and lunar<sup>52</sup>. But the texts that have come down to us under the title Purāṇa hardly confirm to this definition since they contain either something more or something less than the limitations set by it. It is happy to note that the LP fulfils these Pāñcalakṣaṇas. For example, the pratisarga in Chap. 5.

I.3-5 ; the pratisarga in Chap.I.10; the material regarding vāṃsa in Chap.I.63. The Chaps.I.46-63 deal with the manvantara. The Vāṃsānucarita is dealt with in Chaps. I.65-69.

Besides the Pancalaksanas, the LP deals with other topics viz. the Yugadharmas (duties of the different castes and orders during different periods of time) (I.Chaps.39-40), the dharma-sāstra material such as the observance of vratas, atonements of sins and making gifts (I.80-84; 88-90; II.18.27-45). Also the LP has chapters devoted to astronomy and astrology (I.54-62) and the omens foreboding one's death (I.91).

There are 163 Chapters (108 in the Pūrvabhāga and 55 in the Uttarabhāga).

Metres in the LP :

We find 17 metres in the LP<sup>53</sup>: viz. Vaitāliya, Puspitāgrā, Indravajra, Upendravajra, Upājāti, Śālinī, Rathoddhata, Vāṃsastha, Śrutavilambita, Bhujāṅgaprayātā, Praharsinī, Manjubhāsinī, Vasantatilakā, Mālinī, Mandākrāntā, Śārdūlavikrīḍita and Sragdharā. The detailed information regarding the metres in the LP is as under :

Vaitāliya - I, 72, 167; 107, 53.

Total No. = 2

Puspitāgrā - I.33.13.18; 34.23; 71.37; 104.28. Total No. = 5

Indravajra - I.5, 50; 29, 82; 53, 56; 54, 38a; 72, 65, 153, 159, 160; 85, 17; 106, 15; II.19, 32. Total No. = 11

Upendravajra ÷ I. <sup>40</sup>49, 93; 53, 57, 58, 60; 64, 9; 70, 83; 71, 134.  
 72, 54. 56. 57. 59, <sup>72</sup>73, 75, 96, 98, 100, 155; 81, 58;  
 94, 13. 15. Total No. = 21

Upajāti : - I. 20, 29; 29, 13. 16. 17; 35, 31; 36, 21; 53, 53. 54.  
 59. 61. 62; 58, 13; 64, 32. 67; 71, 56. 112. 114;  
 72, 49-53, 55. 58. 66-68, 71. 95, 97, 154, 156,  
 158, 161-163, 166, 168; 75, 37-39; 77, 4. 5;  
 80, 11, 18. 43; 81, 56. 57; 85, 125; 86, 42;  
 88, 38. 40. 41; 91, 32; 92, 34; 94, 14. 16; 106,  
 16. 17; 107, 26; II. 18, 26; 19, 31. 36-38; 26, 19, 20.  
 Total No. = 67

Śālinī - I. 16, 35; 21, 85. 86; 53, 55; 54, 38b; 72, 164. 165. 177;  
 88, 39; 89, 27; 96, 35.  
 II. 18, 34. 40; 26, 19a.  
 Total No. = 13

Rathoddhata - I. 64, 56. 57. 62; 72, 64, 69; 95, 14.  
 Total No. = 6

Vaṁsastha - I. 64, 31; 72, 120; 80, 12; 89, 28-29; 90. 24;  
 92, 12-18. 20.  
 Total No. = 14

Drutavilāmbita - I, 72, 90. 94. 99; 80, 8; II. 47. 2.  
 Total No. = 5

Bhujāṅgaprayatā - I. 42, 16; 93, 8 ; 95, 20.  
 Total No. = 3

Praharsinī - I.88,64; 92,25.26; 97, 33-35.

Total No. = 6

Mañjubhāsinī - I.94, 17-19.

Total No. = 3

Vasantatilakā - I.92, 21.22.27-29; 95, 19; 97, 17.

Total No. = 7

Mālinī - I. 80, 6-7; 92, 19.32.

Total No. = 4

Mandākrāntā - I.92,33; II.47.10.

Total No. = 2

Śardūlavikrīdita - I.72,70.

Total No. = 1

Sragdharā - I.92,23.24; II,9.55; 47,12.

Total No. = 4

Commentator :

The only printed available Sanskrit commentary on the Purāṇa is Śivatosinī. The author of this commentary was Gaṇeśa Nāṭu<sup>54</sup>, who wrote this commentary at Poona in Śaka 1760 or 1769 (=A.D.1838 or 1847), for aṅka means both : Zero as well as number nine<sup>55</sup>. He was the grandson of Nārāyaṇa and the eldest son of Ballāla and Yaśodā. He mentions Nīlakantha with reverence as

his preceptor<sup>56</sup>. He was inspired by his devotion to Śiva and he wrote the commentary for the enlightenment of the ignorant and the pleasure of the learned, after editing the text on the basis of several manuscripts that were available at the time<sup>57</sup>.

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2. Kantawala, S.G., Cultural History of the Matsyapurāṇa, Preface, p.vii.
3. Sarup L., Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta of Yāsk, 3.19.
4. MP. 53.63.
5. Itihāsapurāṇaḥ Pañcamo Vedānām, Ch.U.7.I.2.4.
6. Pusalkar, A.D., Presidential Address, History Section, Proceedings and Transactions of the AIOC, XVIII Session, Annamalainagar, December, 1955, Part I, p.62.
7. Pusalkar, A.D., Studies in the Epics and Purāṇas, Introduction, p.xviii.
8. MP. 53.68-69.
9. SKP, Kedārakhanda, 1 as quoted by N.Gangadhara, the Liṅga-purāṇa - A Study, p.
10. The Mahāpurāṇas, JBORS, Xiv, pp.330-337.
11. Vide Liṅga-Purāṇa edited by Prof.J.L.Shastri, Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, First edition, 1980.
12. I.24.Tasaikādaśya sahasram Gaṇthamānaṁha dvijāh /

and II.55.36. Granthaikādaśa Sāhasraṁ Purāṇaṁ Liṅgāmu-  
muttamaṁ /

1313. MP. 53.37.

14. DB. I.3.10.

15. AP. 272, 14-15.

16. Hazra, R.C., Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu  
Rites and Customs, p.95.

17. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., p.96.

18. II.28.34 (Dānasāgara, p.72).

19. I.77.33-35 and 52-54 (Dānasāgara, p.37).

20. Ibid.

21. Dānasāgara, p.3.

22. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., pp.93-94. Lakṣmīdhara quotes  
profusely from the LP in the Tīrthakāṇḍa of Kṛtyakalpataru,  
See Kane, P.V., History of Dharmasāstra, Vol.V, Pt.ii,  
p.903.

23. Cf. Gangadharan, N., Liṅgapurāṇa - A Study, p.14.

24. For detail see summary in Appendix I.

25. Bh.P. III. 28.10-15.



26. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., p.95.
27. Pargiter, Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, p.81.
28. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., p.96.
29. Agrawala, V.S., Matsyapurāṇa, A Study, pp.279-83.
30. Upadhyaya, Baladeva, Purāṇavimarsa, pp.122-23.
31. TD. 13560-64.
32. TD. 13588-89.
33. TD. 13582-84.
34. TD. 13633-35.
35. TD. 13639-41.
36. TD. 13565-81.
37. Cf. Gangadhara N., Liṅga-purāṇa - A Study, p.18.
38. Vis. P. Vol.I reprinted edition, Preface pp.xlii-xliii.
39. M.Winternitz, History of Indian Literature, Vol.I, p.569.
40. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., p.337 gives a list of these verses.
41. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., pp.299-301.
42. See, Upadhyaya, Baladeva, Purāṇavimarsa, p.556.
43. For the date of Jimūtavāhana and other writers on  
 Nibandha see Kane P.V., History of Dharmasastra, Vol.IV, p.xi.

44. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., p.95.
45. Ibid., p.95.
46. Ibid., p.179.
47. Ibid., pp.95-96.
48. Agrawala, V.S., Purāṇa I.2, p.236.
49. Paranjape, V.V., Purāṇa, II.2, pp.76-81.
50. Pargiter, F.E., Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, Oxford, 1922, p.81.
51. Cf. Gangadharan N., Liṅga Purāṇa - A Study, p.31.
52. Cf. Sargaśca pratisargaśca vaṁśa manvantarāṇi ca /  
Vaṁśānucaritaṁ caiva purāṇaṁ pañcalakṣaṇaṁ //  
MP. 53.64; SP. VII.1 / 41; GP. I.215.14<sup>14</sup>; DB.I.2.28.
53. Cf Von Adam Hohenberger, Metres on classical poetry in the Purāṇas, Purāṇa, XI.1, pp.22-23.
54. Cf. Raghavan, V., New Catalogus Catalogorum, Vol.V, Univ. of Madras, 1969, p.267.
55. Cf. Śivatoṣiṇī the concluding verses :  
Plavaṅgavatsare śuklapañcāmyāṁ śrāvanasya tu /  
Aṅkartva śvakusakhyāke śālivāhanake śake //  
Punya-grāme<sup>1</sup> a<sup>2</sup> vi<sup>3</sup> śve<sup>4</sup> śva<sup>5</sup> kṛ<sup>6</sup> payā<sup>7</sup> gurvanugrahāt /  
Iaṅgavyākhyā samāpteyaṁ śivapremabharāspadā //

56. Ibid., the preliminary verses 1-10 :

Nārāyaṇasuto.....Ballā<sup>la</sup>nāmavikhyātaḥ.....anvartḥaka  
 yasodeti Nāmanyā patnyā samanvita.....putresu tasya  
 prathamō Gaṇeśaḥ.....Śrīnīlakanthākhyaguroḥ prasādāt /

57. Ibid., the concluding verses :

Atra Lekhakadoṣeṇa Paṇḍitairapyasodhanāt /  
 Apapāthāstu bahusāḥ sañjātāstāhupekṣya vai //  
 Samyak pātham samādāya bahupustakadarsanāt ;  
 Vyakhyeyamaj nabodhāya modāya vidusām kṛtā : //