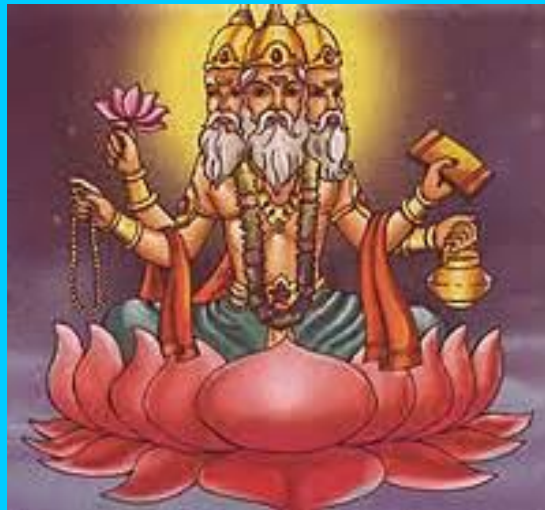


**A HISTORY OF CREATION  
FOR  
THE FIRST TIME READER**

**by  
N.KRISHNASWAMY**



**LORD BRAHMA,  
THE CREATOR OF ALL CREATION**

**A VIDYA VRIKSHAH PUBLICATION**

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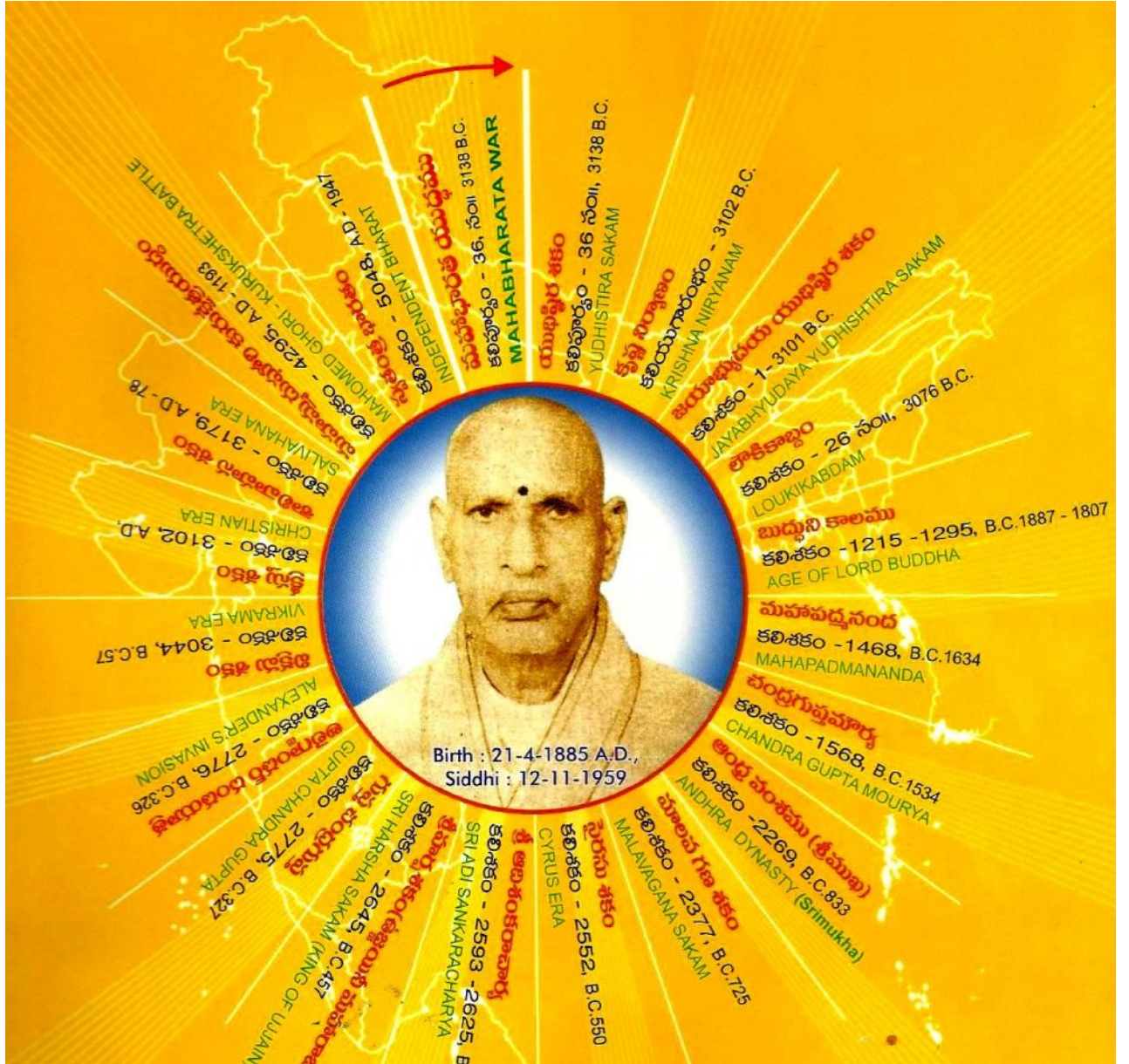
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## DEDICATION TO A VOICE OF TRUTH



### SHRI KOTA VENKATACHALAM

taking the name Sri Avyananda Bharati Swamy after entering Sanyasa,  
and assuming the role of the Peethapati  
of the Sri Sri Abhinava Virupakha Peetham

**A MODERN SCHOLAR WHO FOLLOWED IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OUR  
ANCIENT SAGES TO PRESERVE THE SANCTITY OF  
THE VEDAS AND PURANAS,  
PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF INDIAN CULTURE AND  
ENSURE THAT INDIAN HISTORY SHALL REST ON TRUTH**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This book is published under the auspices of Vidya Vrikshah, Chennai, a no-profit social service organization devoted to the spread of literacy and education, covering ancient and modern knowledge, and specially serve the socially and physically disabled poor of India, specially the blind. This book, like all our other publications, is not priced and is available as an e-book for free download from its website [www.vidyavrikshah.org](http://www.vidyavrikshah.org).

I make no claim to originality in the content of this book. I have simply assembled knowledge spread over other publications and the Internet, particularly the Wikipedia. I have not offered individual acknowledgement to the distinguished authors and publishers, in the belief that I have served their own purposes by making their valuable contributions accessible to those who do not have the means for such access. But I do remain grateful to them and crave their indulgence for not making explicit individual acknowledgement to each of them.

‘ I am deeply grateful to Justice Shri V.Ramasubramanian, Judge of the High Court of Madras, for contributing a graceful Foreword to this book.

**N.KRISHNASWAMY**

Dated : 15-11-2014

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Justice *V. Ramasubramanian*



No.42, Greenways Road,  
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Chennai-600 028.

### **FOREWORD**

I am amazed not only at the prowess of Sri.N.Krishnaswamy, but also at the high level of motivation that he has at this ripe age of 89 constantly contributing to the knowledge bank of the society, for the benefit of the younger generation. Though Sri.N.Krishnaswamy has indicated that all his books are for the benefit of the first time reader, they contain so great a wealth of information that even many times readers may find it interesting.

Some books are intended to be read for passing time, but some books witness the passage of time. The book on hand belongs to the second category.

As Sri.N.Krishnaswamy has indicated, perhaps the Puranas and Science are saying the same things in different words. Unfortunately, our history got distorted to such an extent that our perspectives have completely changed over the past few hundred years. Therefore, books of this nature from scholars like Sri.N.Krishnaswamy (though he would not like himself to be called so), are very much essential.



-2-

I am truly touched by Sri.N.Krishnaswamy's humility and nobility. By making no claim of originality to the contents of the book, he has exhibited his humility. By making all his publications available for free download from his website, he has exhibited his nobility. Therefore, I am happy that I was given a part to play, in the form of writing a foreword to this book.

I pray to the Almighty to give good health to Sri.N.Krishnaswamy to author many more such books for the benefit of first time readers like me.



**Justice V.Ramasubramanian,  
Judge, High Court, Madras.**

itiḥ sapurāṇa pañcama vedāṇāṃ ,  
**The Itihasas and Puranas comprise the Fifth Veda**

--- Brhadaranyaka Upanisad ---

## **PREFACE**

The student of today may begin his study of Indian history with a popular school text-book such as that of Vincent Smith. His onward studies could lead him to the study of World history by Arnold Toynbee or Will Durant or for the perspective of modern science, the History of Time by Stephen Hawking. The present book is designed to lead the First Time Reader of today into a different history of altogether another perspective, another dimension, a history of Creation itself. This book goes back to an unusual version of history believed to be authored by the Creator, Lord Brahma himself ! This history does indeed take the reader back to the creation of the Creator himself. The ultimate Creator is the One Supreme Divine, that One Existence that is Eternal, Infinite and Unmanifest. On being created, Brahma initiated the process of Creation, the task for which he was created. His task was to create the vast worlds of name and form set in a vast framework of Time and Space. The Time Scale in which his creations were set, was made up of finite time units. ranging from the infinitely small to the infinitely large. This Time Scale is presented in Annexure 1 of this book.

Brahma, the Creator, is portrayed by man as an old man, because he was as old as Time itself. He is shown holding in one hand a sheaf of manuscripts, which symbolized the totality of knowledge, which of course, he really held in his mind. This knowledge he then passed on to several gods and sages mainly through intuitive, extra-sensory channels of communication, which the sages passed on to mankind through the ages, mainly by word of mouth. This knowledge has ultimately come to us in written records in the languages of the present day, much of it in the form of the Vedas and Puranas. It is here, in these ancient texts, that we now have the recorded History of Creation.

This knowledge originating from Brahma was disseminated in each age by a succession of sages, said to be incarnations of Vishnu, each bearing the name Vyasa, a name meaning “one by whom the knowledge is organized”. The last Vyasa was the man we identify as a historical person named Krishna Dvaipayana ! It is he who arranged the entire knowledge corpus. Its historical content of the ruling dynasties of Kings was duly arranged and updated till his own time at the start the Kali Yuga Era, the era in which we live today and will extend beyond our time.

Purana and Itihasa are two ancient words both standing for History, but set in two different time frames, one Cosmic and the other Human. Both time frames, as will be seen in Annexure 1, are part of single scale that suggests that history rests on a vast continuity. The word Itihasa means “It was thus”, suggesting a narration of proximate experience in a human setting. Purana means “ancient”, suggestive of events, both human and divine, occurring in the cosmic time scale. One other version is that the word Purana is derived from the words Pura + Nava, meaning both Old and New, standing for old history that is up-to-date. A narration of proximate human experience had to rest on credible fact. But a narration of distant human events and especially, beliefs in divine events had to present a mix of both credible and incredible. The appeal and value common to both types of narratives lay in driving a moral or ethical lesson home. The ancients clearly considered that this was the true purpose of history, and indeed formed the core motivation of all of ancient Indian culture. The original Purana stories presented by ancient sages did make considerable use of metaphor and allegory so essential to describe a cosmic or spiritual setting. But the stories, as they developed through the narrations of generations of popular story tellers, got greatly laced with interesting and attractive exaggerations, that often gave the Puranas a dominant image of incredible mythology and less of credible history.

It certainly requires a different mindset to see how the Puranas could, indeed did, use metaphors and allegories for a totally different way of presenting history in terms of the many facts, events and circumstances within human experience. The Puranas present Creation as a transient Manifestation of name, form and function from an eternal Unmanifest. Modern Science on the other hand, describes Creation as a historical event called the Big Bang involving a physical transformation of one fundamental form of energy into vast forms of energy and matter. Perhaps the Puranas and Science are saying the same thing in different words.

Indeed, the distinguished Scientist-scholar, Subhash Kak, in his perceptive paper “The Gods Within On The Vedic Understanding Of Mind and Neuroscience”, presents the Vedic-Science perspective in a way that is worth quoting as a fitting answer to those so-called scholars of today, who are unable to understand the beautifully crafted metaphoric under-pinnings of the ancient Vedic texts :

.....The devas are visualized (in the Vedas and Puranas) in a complex, hierarchical scheme, with some being closer to the autonomous processes of the body and others being nearer creative centers. In analogy with outer space, inner space of consciousness is viewed to have three zones: the body (earth), the exchange processes (praṇa, atmosphere), and the inner sky



(heavens). ..... So the devas are the higher or spiritual functions and the asuras represent the lower or bodily functions. The dichotomy of the left and right is between emotion and reason. The dichotomy of gender is between potential (male) and energy (female). ..... Physics and the Vedas agree that reality is consistent only in its primordial, implicate form. The Vedas insist that speech and sense-associations cannot describe this reality completely (Neuro-Science describes only the physical part in terms of the functions of the the left and right parts of the brain, and is unable to go beyond this) ..... How do we reconcile the determinism of science to the subjective sense of free will ? .....

Brahma starts the proliferation of the different forms of human, animal and plant life, starting from the first man and woman – Svayambhuva and Satarupa. This could as well be seen as a metaphor representing a bi-sexual evolution of all species of life. This is similar to the evolution of all forms of bi-sexual life from the single DNA as envisaged by Science. The many exaggerations seen in the Puranic stories can be seen as myths or contributions of later story tellers dressing up their narratives for increased appeal to their audiences. On the other hand, they present consistent connections of a vast succession of named persons across generations, which suggest authentic historicity. The dynastic chronologies in the Puranas were explicitly presented as sources of credible ancient history, and were well preserved through later ages by a scholarly tradition that certainly placed the highest value on truth. The early Western scholars and British colonial rulers too were aware of this Indian tradition of commitment to Truth, and if they chose to discredit the historical tradition of the Puranas, it was more to serve their own political purposes. Unfortunately some of the later Indian historians nurtured in the education and culture introduced by the British have chosen to depart from their Indian roots under the influence of new values promoted by concepts of liberalism, secularism, materialism, Marxism, etc each with different definitions of Truth and serving a different set of political, social and economic objectives.

It is important therefore to look for history in the Puranas not by discrediting them as myth but by a careful side-stepping of the superfluities imported into them by later story tellers and focusing on the credible and plausible core. This has been the approach of several modern distinguished scholars who have used powerful tools of analysis resting on disciplines of etymology, philology, linguistics, various branches of science like physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, geology, mathematics, statistics, archaeology, anthropology and extensive cross-referencing across related texts. Even more importantly, these perspectives tell us more about the social and economic realities of the lives of the common people of those times, whereas the perspectives of present day conventional historians present a stilted picture coloured by the ideologies and realities of the

present day. We are today beholden to these new modern scholars for giving us an increasing sense of true history of life in the ancient times of the Vedas and Puranas.

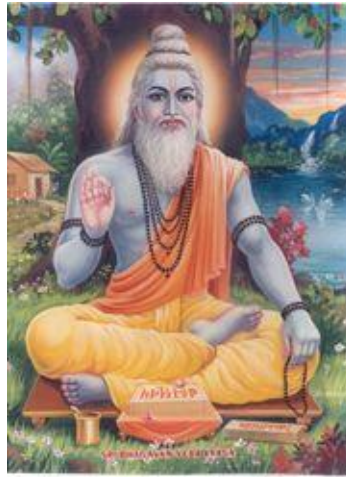
It is clear that the Vedas and Puranas presented the purpose of Creation, in a framework of History of both God and Man in a single integrated framework. This book separates and presents the two perspectives of Divinity and Humanity for the clear understanding and benefit of the First Time Reader. The earlier Chapters focus on the perspective of Divinity, presenting the Gods in many fascinating stories designed to drive home lessons man to enable man to grow out from the limitations of his physical existence to the full potential of a larger divinity. The later Chapters shift the focus to Humanity and addresses the History of how the Vedas originated in India, and how its influence spread world-wide to guide Humanity towards Divinity. We then present the course of Indian History through the Itihasas, starting with the Ramayana and Mahabharata and going right up to the beginning of the Christian Era as they appear in the Puranas. The penultimate Chapter describes how that part of ancient Indian history based on the Puranas was significantly modified in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century CE by the British colonial rulers; and how the deep social, economic and political conflicts of Post-Independence India have been clouding the emergence of a true official history of ancient India This Chapter concludes with the work of modern scholars of the present day engaged in correcting the errors introduced by the British colonial rulers. Indian History from the beginning of the Christian Era is fairly well documented and is therefore not addressed in this book.

A final Chapter fittingly closes with a plea for not only rationally resolving the past distortions of Indian and World History but place before humanity with renewed emphasis the ancient wisdom of the Vedas and Puranas that Human History must be founded on Truth in order to fulfill Divine Purposes. Truth must prevail in accordance not only as a motto for India but as a universal motto for Mankind, as set out over five millennia ago in the [Mundaka Upanishad](#) :

**satyam-eva jayate**  
**सत्यमेव जयते.**

-----

## CHAPTER – 1 : VYASA – THE EDITOR



If Brahma is considered the original divine author of the History of Creation as set out in the Puranas, then Vyasa must surely be considered the later first human editor who placed not only the Puranas but practically the whole of the ancient scriptural corpus of India within the reach of all of posterity. Vyasa is himself presented as an avatar of Vishnu, in the Vishnu Purana which says : “ ..... In every third world age (Dvapara), Vishnu, incarnates in the person of a Vyasa, in order to promote the good of mankind through the Veda, ..... Observing the limited perseverance, energy, and application of mortals, he makes the Veda fourfold, to adapt it to their capacities; and the bodily form which he assumes, in order to effect that classification, is known by the name of Veda-Vyasa..... Twenty-eight times have the Vedas been arranged by the great Rishis in the Vaivasvata Manvantara... and consequently eight and twenty Vyasas have passed away .....”.

The last Vyasa is known to us as Krishna - Dvaipayana. His god-like status led great later sages, like Sankara to refer to him as Bhagavan. While modern rationalist historians think of him as a mythical figure, there is much evidence accumulating today that he was indeed a historical figure. To the people of India, however, it has never mattered whether he was real or mythical, because, despite the passage of over five millennia, the Vedas and Puranas give him a living presence in their psyche to the present day. The debate whether one who lives across time is historical or not, is in any case irrelevant.

Internal textual references would place Vyasa's birth around the start of the last century of Dvapara Yuga, and his death soon after the start of the Kali Yuga in 3102 BC. He is believed to have been born to the sage Parasara through Satyawati, daughter of a fisherman Dusharaj, in an island in the river Yamuna in Kalpripa Nagri, now known as Kalpi. Another version places his birth at the junction of two rivers Seti and Madi, at a place named Vedavyas, possibly the modern-day town of Damauli in the Tanahu district of Nepal. His name Krishna comes from his dark complexion and surname, Dvaipayana is indicative of his birth in an island. The festival of Guru Purnima also known as Vyasa Purnima is observed today on the full moon day in the month of Ashad (July-August) as both his birthday and the day he commenced compilation of the Vedas.

Vyasa's mother Satyawati later married the King Shantanu of [Hastinapura](#), and had two sons Chitrangada and Vichitravirya. Chitrangada died unmarried and Vichitravirya had no issue and hence their mother asked Vyasa to father his children. [Dhritarashtra](#) and [Pandu](#) were thus born respectively to [Ambika](#) and [Ambalika](#), the wives of Vichitravirya. Ambika came first but when approaching Vyasa she closed her eyes out of shyness and fear. Vyasa told Satyawati that her child would therefore be born blind, as happened with this child named Dhritarashtra. Then Satyawati sent Ambalika and warned her that she should remain calm when approaching Vyasa. But Ambalika's face became pale because of fear. Vyasa told Satyawati that Ambalika's child would suffer from anaemia, and would not be fit enough to rule the kingdom. This child came to be known as Pandu. Then Vyasa told Satyawati to send one of them again so that a healthy child could be born. This time Ambika and Ambalika sent a maid instead of going themselves. The maid was quite calm and composed, and she got a healthy child later named as Vidura. Vyasa's own son, [Urukshya](#), born of his wife, Pinjal, was considered his true spiritual heir, appearing occasionally as a spiritual guide to the young princes.

Vyasa himself says in the Mahabharata that he started composing it in the first year of Kali Yuga and completed in three years. A mythical story holds that when Vyasa wanted to write down the work, Brahma told Vyasa to seek the help of Ganapati for his task. The story would obviously be a metaphor standing for what transpired in Vyasa's mind. When Vyasa asked Ganesha to aid him in writing the text, Ganesha imposed a condition that he would do so only if Vyasa narrated the story without pause. To which Vyasa then made a counter-condition that Ganesha must understand the verse before he transcribed it. The story suggests existence of writing at that time though evidence at present goes back to archeological findings of [styli](#) in the [Painted Grey Ware](#) culture, dated between 1100 BC and 700 BC. and also archeological evidence of the [Brahmi](#) script being used from at least 600 BC. The story may be more easily understood as Vyasa's having invoked the blessings of Ganesha

when commencing the work, such as is the common practice of the people when commencing some new work.

Vyasa is believed to have composed the core of Mahabharata called Jaya, to which later accretions resulted in its final size of 100000 verses. The work is structured in the form of a dialogue between Dhritarashtra (the Kuru king and Sanjaya, his adviser and chariot driver. Sanjaya narrates the particulars of Kurukshetra War, lasting eighteen days, chronologically. Eighteen chapters in Vyasa's Jaya constitutes the Bhagavad Gita. The final version of Vyasa's work is the Mahabharata. It was structured as a narration by Ugrasrava Sauti, to an assembly of rishis who, in the forest of Naimisha, had assembled for the conduct of a 12 year sacrifice.

According to the early Puranas themselves, (specifically the Vayu and Matsya) there was only one Purana Samhita in the beginning written by Vyasa. This Samhita contained the record of all the kings and rishis from ancient times and legends of their activities. It was the duty of certain court officials called Sutas to maintain these dynasty lists. Existence of a work called Purana or Itihasa-Purana in the Vedic period is mentioned in the Vedic Samhita and Brahmana literature. In Atharvaveda V (XI 7, 24) there is mention of existence of a Purana. It is therefore believed that Vyasa must have composed the original Purana Samhita based on this Vedic Purana. There were continued additions to this Purana Samhita during the subsequent generations after Vyasa and reached the final version of the Samhita around five generations later, in the reign of king Adhiseemakrishna (about 1225 BC) of the Bharata lineage.

The story goes that the Rishi Shaunaka approached Brahma for advice on a location where all holy activities could be conducted without interruption. Brahma provided him a wheel with the instructions to keep it moving until it stopped and the place where it stopped, would be the place to suit their needs. Finally the wheel stopped at the forest of Naimisharanya (from Nemi = fellow, or wheel circumference, and aranya = forest) near the river Dhrishtadvati. This place is Neemsar of today in Uttar Pradesh. It is in this very holy place that Romaharshana (alternatively Lomaharshana), Vedavyasa's disciple, narrated the Puranas to several Rishis. It is also the blessed place where Ugrasrava, the son of Romaharsana, narrated the Bhagavata Purana.

The legends were narrated by later story tellers elsewhere, and delighted the listeners who liked the deeds of the ancient gods, kings and other heroes. In the new narrations the older accounts became corrupted in various ways. Some presented unrealistic exaggerations e.g. long lifetimes and reigns to the kings; numerous children; use of family name of a Vedic rishi throughout the era without giving a personal name in order to glorify names of Rishis like Atri and Vasishta, thus giving the

appearance of the same person having lived throughout the ages. The priests who contributed all this were of lesser scholarship, but talented enough to have added material to enhance the appeal of the Purana stories. Thus it was that over time, the single Purana corpus compiled by Vyasa, got segmented into the 18 Maha-Puranas and numerous Upa-Puranas.

The 18 Maha Puranas are : Brahma, Vayu, Matsya, Brahmanda, Vishnu, Bhagvata, Garuda, Agni, Padma, Linga, Kurma, Markandeya, Bhavishya, Narada, Brahmavaivarvata, Varaha, Vamana and Skanda. They were compiled at different times with increasing number of myths in the later Puranas, the process of additions lasting until the end of the first millennium of the CE. Older the Puranas, better do they agree with the Vedic evidence. The order in which these Puranas were written is as follows: (Brahma, Vayu, Matsya); (Brahmanda); (Kurma, Linga, Garuda, Vishnu); (Agni, Bhagavata, Padma); (Markandeya, Bhavishya, both giving little genealogy); and (Narada, Brahmavaivarvata, Varaha, Vamana, Skanda which are sectarian). Later Puranas follow one of the three earliest Puranas. Texts of the Puranas other than the first three have been frequently edited and sometimes contain conflicting information.

The ancient prescription for qualifying as a Purana required that it should cover the following topics : (1) The creation of the universe, (2) Its destruction and recreation, (3) The genealogy of gods and prajapatis, (4) The reigns of the Manus (Manvantaras), (5) The History of Kings of Ruling Dynasties (Vamsanucharita). But not all Puranas fulfill these requirements in entirety. The single integrated Purana Samhita, compiled by Vyasa got segmented over time into 18 major Puranas. One aspect of this proliferation was perhaps to enable updating the course of later ruling dynasties of the Kali Yuga as they appear in the later redactions of several Puranas. A peculiar feature of presenting these lists is sometimes using the future tense for the narrative. This would perhaps be similar to our present day usage when we say “details will follow shortly”. Indeed the Bhavishya Purana, has its very name translating as a History of the Future, which would suggest its construction as a Book of Prophecies. Anyway it is this section of the Dynastic lists in the Puranas that has enabled the reconstruction of ancient history down up to the dawn of the Christian Era.

The 18 Puranas and their sizes are as follows : Agni : 15,400 verses; Bhagavata Purana : 18,000 verses; Bhavishya: .. verses; Brahma : 24,000 verses; Brahmanda : 12,000 verses; Brahmavaivarta : 18,000 verses; Garuda : 19,000 verse; Kurma : 17,000 verses; Linga : 11,000 verses; Markandeya 9000 verses; Matsya : 14,000 verses; Narada : 25,000 verses ; Padma : 55,000 verses; Shiva : 24,000 verses; Skanda : 81,000 verses; Vamana : 10,000 verses; Vayu : 24,000 verses; Vishnu : 23,000 verses;



It will be of interest to the reader to take note of the extraordinary way in which the ancient texts were organized by that awesome compiler, Vyasa, and specially how they demarcate the relationship between the Vedas and the Puranas. The Vedas may perhaps be viewed as summarizing the essence of the philosophical and spiritual ideas of those times, while the Puranas retained the enormous wealth of background stories in which those ideas were embedded. The effort was clearly to delimit the esoteric from the exoteric, to provide a different basis of appeal and belief, to the learned on one hand and to the common people on the other. While the Vedas sought to appeal to the learned in philosophical terms to help them distinguish between the true and the false, the Puranas sought to appeal to the common people in simple practical ethical terms to choose between right and wrong.

The ancients rested their approach on the basis that Existence was one single Reality that manifested in multiple ways, and they built a vast edifice of Knowledge on this simple premise. They went on to explain that the individual was but a tiny part of that One Reality, but endowed with faculties that could not only make sense of external world, but also manifest a whole world within himself and at the same time recognize that both were indeed part of that larger Reality. They then presented the edifice of Knowledge in ways that made sense to the all the levels of man's cognitive personality, the physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, instinctive, intuitive, moral, religious, philosophical and spiritual levels, always within a totally integral and comprehensive framework, and always emphasizing that these levels represented an evolutionary upward progression of man from the human to the divine. Vyasa captures these perspectives in a vast range and perceptive depth in the Vedas and Puranas in ways not to be found in or matched by any other ancient culture of the world.

We now start with the Brahma Purana and present it in some detail to illustrate how it fulfills all the five qualifying requisites of a Purana. The three Chapters which follow present the other principal deities, Shiva, Vishnu and Devi, but limited to a few interesting but important stories about each of them. In the remaining Chapters we shift our focus from the Divine to the Human domain. These later Chapters are devoted to Itihasa and Vamsanuchrita or conventional Human History. We may now turn to the next Chapter on Brahma the Creator.

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## CHAPTER – 2 : BRAHMA – THE CREATOR



Fig 2-1

### The Space and Time Contexts of Creation :

The Process of Creation as directed by Brahma, the Creator, is described in detail in the Brahma Purana. The Process must be first understood in terms of Space and Time as the context in which Creation takes place. The context of Space in which all that was created appears, is described later in this Chapter. The context of Time is set out in Annexure 1, which presents the units of time in which the events of the Puranas were set, with their correspondence to the measures of time of the present day.

The ancient Puranic Time Scale is described in Annexure 1 in terms of finite units of Time. These units range from the tiny instant to the vast cosmic duration of the Kalpa, which is Brahma's day, which is followed by a night of the same duration. One sees from the table that Brahma himself has an infinitely large lifetime of a Maha-Kalpa of 100 years of such day and nights, The Brahma Purana tells us at once that each cycle of Creation ends with his lifetime, when the entirety of whatever exists is submerged in the deluge, called the Maha Pralaya, where the Ultimate Divine alone remains as the One Unmanifest Existence where Finite Time merges into Eternity and Finite Space merges into Infinity.. Thereafter a new Brahma is born, and so the cycle of new Brahmas continues eternally.

Brahma was joined by Vishnu and Shiva also as transient manifestations of the same Eternal Unmanifest Divine, with the same lifetimes. They were differentiated only for performing the three functions of Creation, Preservation and Destruction respectively, for administering each cycle of manifested existence. In the above time scale. It is to be noted that human activities occur in units at the lower end of human years. Cosmic or divine activities occur at the higher end in terms of the Manvantara. (Manvantara is a Sanskrit word meaning the Duration of Time of its Ruler, the Manu, whose subjects include Manava, meaning Mankind. (The affinity of these words to the English word Man, may be noted.) The

Puranas present the History of Creation in a vast time sequence of 14 Manvantaras comprising the current Kalpa of the current Brahma. The first Manvantara was called Swayambhuva, named after its head, Swayambhuva-Manu. Yama was the prominent deity of this Manvantara. Marichi and six other prominent sages were the Saptarishis of this Manvantara. Swayambhuva Manu had ten sons---Agnighna, Agnibahu, Vibhu, Savan, Jyotishman, Dyutiman, Havya, Medha, Medhatithi and Vasu. The remaining Manvantaras were manned and their personalities were named similarly.

The current Manvantara in which we live today, is the seventh in this cycle of 14 Manvantaras. It is called Vaivasvata and its Saptarishis are Atri, Vasishta, Kashyapa, Gautama, Bharadwaja, Viswamitra and Jamadagni. The Saptarishis are considered the eternal guides of mankind, and therefore identified with stars bearing the same names and forming the prominent star constellation, Ursa Major, also known as the Great Bear as seen in the images below. The position of this constellation moving against the background of more distant stars provides, as will be shown later, a long-term time frame of human experience and events in human history. The close linkage between humans and the stars reflected in shared names is a distinguishing feature seen in the Puranas and Itihasas and in all of Indian culture. A pair of stars in the above constellation, one of them small and scarcely visible, represent the Rishi Vasishta and his wife Arundathi. The two stand as a model of perfect marital felicity and fidelity. An interesting observance in marriages even to the present day, is that the newly wed couple is required to gaze at these two stars immediately after the marriage, as if to commit themselves to lives of the same felicity and fidelity. A distinguished historian of the ancient Indian Cultures of Central America, Zella Nuttal, has suggested that their star gazers derived the Swastika symbol in their art from the configuration of this constellation !



Fig 2-2

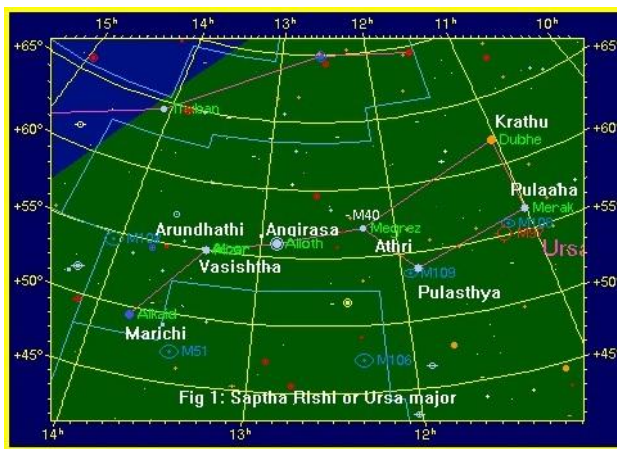


Fig 2-3

The Manus heading these fourteen Manvantaras would each successively rule the world for the total period of 1000 Chaturyugas. This depth of detail of the time scale even for the Cosmic context is truly astonishing and reflects a highly imaginative time sense, if not historical sense, even if with our modern sceptical mindset, we are ready to dismiss it as entirely mythical. But such timespans are recognized today by Science when it talks of Creation at the time of the Big Bang !. A modern perceptive Vedic scholar, Frits Staal, considers these Purana narratives as reflecting an amazingly sophisticated tradition of cognitive and analytical thought.

A first word on how people now portray Brahma as seen in popular images. He is visualized and portrayed as an old man, as old indeed as all of Time. He has four heads signifying the reach of his vision into all the directions of Space. He is shown holding in one hand a sheaf of manuscripts representing the totality of all knowledge, which of course resides in his mind, ready to be transmitted to mankind through posterity. The knowledge includes the Vedas and Puranas which is where, thanks to Vyasa, we get the recorded history of Creation of our present Manvantara.

#### **Creation of Gods and Sages :**

The Brahma Purana starts with details of the first Creation of Brahma himself and then goes on to the creative activities of his own lifetime. With all his phenomenal creative powers, he first creates the cosmos, then he goes on to populate it. Brahma himself had initial problems handling Creation. Thus he had to create sons from his own mind through different parts of body to become the first progenitors of mankind. From the powers of his mind, Brahma created the Kumaras or Divine Sons, Sanaka, Sananadana, Sanatana and Sanatkumara. He then created the seven great sages, Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vashishtha. These are the Sapta-Rishis, the guiding stars of our Manvantara, bearing the same names, but referred together today by the constellation Ursa Major. We see here how the Puranas start their narratives in the language of vast metaphor, from which we can derive any meaning we may choose !

These sons of Brahma did not have his creative powers, nor were they interested in creating onward generations. Finding Creation not proceeding as fast as he desired, Brahma therefore sought guidance from his own Creator. On that, the Highest Divine appeared before Brahma in the form of Shiva in a new and remarkable manifestation of a Half-Man-Half-Woman, under the name of Ardhanariswara. He advised Brahma that the solution was to create sons and daughters who would themselves take Creation forward with sex-enabled Procreation. Shiva separated the

woman part of His manifestation to create the Universal Mother to empower Brahma's Creation in this new onward direction. The Universal Mother became the first prototype of the Goddess, manifesting first as Lakshmi, Parvathi and Saraswathi, who became the Consorts of Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma respectively.

#### **Creation of Mankind :**

Backed by this new power of the Universal Mother, Brahma was able to take creation forward rapidly. He created the first man and woman duo, under the names, Svayambhuva (the Manu heading the Vaisvasvata Manvantara) and Satarupa, to launch the first bi-sexual model for procreation. Humans also became the channel for the transmission of the Knowledge and Virtue from Brahma, as if to confer on them autonomy in the governance of the world !. Interestingly too, many of the early humans also carried the wide range of positive and negative psychological qualities springing from the mix of three Gunas or Generic Qualities : Sattva. Rajas and Tamas. This differentiation was reflected in the wide spectrum of human character and conduct to emerge in humanity. One of Brahma's sons was called Adharma (Unrighteousness) and he was married to Mrisha (Untruth). From them sprang their later progeny with names like Dambha (Hypocrisy), Maya (Conceit), Lobha (Greed), Nikriti (Obstinacy), Krodha (Anger), Himsa (Harm), Kali (Evil), Durukti (Foul speech), Yatana (Pain), Bhaya (Fear), Mrityu (Death) and Niraya (Hell). One must always look behind the metaphors of the seemingly mythical dressing of the Purana stories.

Svayambhuva and Satarupa had three sons named Vira, Priyavrata and Uttanapada. Uttanapada's son was the great Dhruva whose meditation (tapasya) for three thousand divine years led Brahma to bless him and immortalize him with an eternal place in the heavens as the Dhruva Nakshatra or the Pole Star.

Daksha, another son of Brahma, had sixty daughters through his wife Asikli . Ten of these daughters were married to the god Dharma and thirteen to the sage Kashyapa. Twenty-seven daughters were married to Chandra and the remaining daughters were married to the sages Arishtanemi, Vahuputra, Angirasa and Krishashva. The ten daughters who were married to the god Dharma were named Arundhati, Vasu, Yami, Lamba, Bhanu, Marutvati, Sankalpa, Muhurta. Sadhya and Vishva. Arundhati's children became different objects (vishaya) of the world. Vasu's children were the eight gods known as the Vasus. Their names were Apa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Salila, Anala, Pratyusha and Prabhasa. Anala's son was Kumara. Because Kumara was brought up by goddesses identified with the stars known as the Kritikas, he came to be called Kartikeya. (Another story makes Kumara the son of Siva and Parvathi)

Prabhasa's son was Vishvakarma. Vishvakarma was skilled in architecture and the making of jewelry. He became the architect of the gods. Sadhya's children were the gods known as Sadhyadevas and Vishva's children were the gods known as Vishvadervas. The twenty-seven daughters of Daksha who were married to Soma are known as the nakshatras (stars).

**Creation of the Devas, Asuras and other living species :**

Brahma went on to extend the process of bi-sexual procreation to create all forms of existence including plant and animal life as well. The thirteen daughters of Daksha who married Kashyapa were Aditi, Diti, Danu, Arishta, Surasa, Khasa, Surabhi, Vinata, Tamra, Krodhavasha, Ila, Kadru and Muni. Aditi's sons were the twelve gods known as the Adityas. Their names were Vishnu, Shakra, Aryama, Dhata, Vidhata, Tvashta, Pusha, Vivasvana, Savita, MitraVaruna, Amsha and Bhaga. Diti's sons were the Daityas (demons). They were named Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu, and amongst their descendants were several other powerful Daityas like Bali and Banasura. Diti also had a daughter named Simhika who was married to a Danava (demon) named Viprachitti. Their offspring's were terrible demons like Vatapi, Namuchi, Ilvala, Maricha and the Nivatakavachas. The hundred sons of Danu came to be known as Danavas. The Danavas were thus cousins to the Daityas and also to the Adityas. In the Danava line were born demons like the Poulamas and Kalakeyas. Arishta's sons were the Gandharvas (singers of heaven). Surasa gave birth to the snakes (sarpa). Khasa's children were the Yakshas (demi-gods who were the companions of Kubera, the god of wealth) and the Rakshasas (demons). Surabhi's descendants were cows and buffaloes. Vinata had two sons named Aruna and Garuda. Garuda became the king of the birds. Tamra has six daughters. From these daughters were born owls, eagles, vultures, crows, water-fowl, horses, camels and donkeys. Krodhavasha had fourteen thousand children known as nagas (snakes). Ila gave birth to trees, creepers, shrubs and bushes. Kadru's sons were also known as Nagas or snakes. Among the more important of Kadru's sons were Ananta, Vasuki, Takshaka and Nahusha. Muni gave birth to the Apsaras (dancers of heaven).

**Origins of Deva – Asura conflicts : The story of the Maruts :**

Diti's children (Daityas) and Aditi's children (Adityas) continually fought amongst themselves. On one particular occasion, the gods succeeded in killing many of the demons. Thirsting for revenge, Diti began to pray to her husband, Kashyapa that she might give birth to a son who would kill Indra, the king of the gods. Kashyapa found it difficult to refuse his wife outright. "All right", he said. "You have to bear the son in your womb for a hundred years. Your son will then be able to kill Indira. But if you do not observe these instructions to the letter, your desire will not be



satisfied." Diti resolved to do as her husband had bidden her. But Indra had got to know about Diti's resolve and was waiting for an opportunity to save himself. There was an occasion when, tired after her prayers. Diti went to sleep without first washing her feet. This was an unclean act and it gave Indra the required opportunity. He adopted a miniscule form and entered Diti's womb. With his weapon vajra, he sliced up the baby inside the womb into seven parts. The baby naturally began to cry at the pain. Indra kept on saying, "ma ruda," that is, "don't cry." But the boy, or rather its seven parts, would not listen. Indra thereupon sliced up each of the seven parts into seven more sections, so that there were forty-nine sections in all. When these forty-nine sections were born, they came to be known as the Maruts, a name derived from Indra's words "ma ruda". Since Diti had not been able to adhere to the conditions her husband had set, the Maruts did not kill Indra. Instead they became Indra's followers or companions, and were treated as gods. The foregoing account virtually summarizes the whole spectrum and wide variety of Brahma's creations, which included gods and other divinities, demons, and all the different human, animal and plant species.

#### **The Sun and the Solar Dynasty :**

Kashyapa and Aditi had a son named Vivasvana. This was the sun god, also known as Surya or Martanda. Surya was married to Samjna, Vishvakarma's daughter. They had two sons. The first son was Vaivasvata Manu and the second son was Yama or Shradhadeva, the god of death. Yama had a twin sister named Yamuna. The sun's energy was so strong that Samjna could not bear to look at her husband. Through her powers, she created an image from her own body that looked exactly like her. This image was called Chhaya (shadow). Samjna told Chhaya, "I cannot bear the energy of my husband, I am going off to my father's house. Stay here, pretend to be Samjna and look after my children. Under no circumstances tell anyone, certainly not my husband, that you are not Samjna."

"I will do as you have asked me to," replied Chhaya. "But the moment someone curses me or pulls me by the hair, I shall be forced to reveal the truth." Samjna went to her father Vishvakarma who kept asking her to return to her husband. But this Samjna refused to do. Instead, she went to the land known as Uttara Kuru and started to live there as a mare. Meanwhile, Surya, who had not realized that Samjna had been replaced by Chhaya, had two sons through Chhaya. They were named Savarni Manu and Shani (Saturn). As soon as her own children were born, Chhaya no longer displayed as much of love for Samjna's children as she used to do. Vaivasvata Manu was a quiet sort of person and he ignored the implied neglect. But Yama was not so tolerant. Besides, he was also younger. He raised his leg to kick Chhaya. At this, Chhaya cursed Yama that his legs would fall off. Yama went and complained to Surya. "I have not really

kicked her," he said. "I only threatened to. And does a mother ever curse her children?"

"I can't undo the curse, " replied Surya. "At best, I can reduce its severity. Your legs will not actually fall off. Some of the flesh from your legs will fall off onto the earth and create worms. Thereby, you will be freed of your curse." But nevertheless, Surya felt that there was some truth in Yama's asking whether a mother would ever curse her children. He pressed Chhaya for the truth, but Chhaya would not reveal anything. Surya then grasped her by the hair and threatened to curse her. Since her conditions were now violated, Chhaya blurted out the truth. In an extremely angry mood, Surya dashed off to Vishvakarma's house. Vishvakarma tried to cool him down. "it is all because of your excess energy that this has happened, exclaimed Vishvakarma. "If you permit, I will shave off some of the extra energy. Then Samjna will be able to look at you." Surya agreed to this proposition. With the shaved off energy, Vishvakarma manufactured Vishnu's chakra. Surya found out that Samjna was in Uttara Kuru in the form of a mare. He joined her there in the form of a horse. As a horse couple, they had two sons named Nasatya and Dasra. Since ashva means horse, the sons were also known as the two Ashvins and became the physicians of the gods. Surya and Samjna then gave up their equine forms and lived happily ever after.

Meanwhile, Vaivasvata Manu had no children and so he arranged for a sacrifice so that he might pray for a son. Nine sons were born as a result of this sacrifice. Their names were Ikshvaku, Nabhaga, Dhrishta, Sharyati, Narishyanta, Pramashu, Rishta, Karusha and Prishadhra. Manu also made an offering to the two gods Mitra and Varuna. As a result of this offering, a daughter named Ila was born. Ila married Budha, the son of Chandra, and they had a son named Pururava. Subsequently, thanks to a boon conferred on her by Mitra and Varuna, Ila became a man taking the name Sudyumna.

Sudyumna's sons were Utkala, Gaya and Vinatashva. Utkala ruled in Orissa, Gaya in the region that is also called Gaya, and Vinatashva in the west. Sudyumna was not entitled to rule since he had earlier been a woman. He lived in the city known as Pratishthana. Pururava inherited this later on. When Vaivasvata Manu died, his ten sons divided up the earth amongst themselves, Ikshvaku ruled in the central regions. He had a hundred sons, the eldest of whom was named Vikukshi. After Ikshvaku died, Vikukshi returned to his father's kingdom and began to rule there. This kingdom came to be known as Ayodhya. Rama of Ramayana fame was born in this line.

## **How the Ocean came to be called Sagara : The story of Sagara :**

**Descended in the Solar dynasty was a king named Bahu. Bahu devoted too much time to pleasurable pursuits. The upshot of this was that the defence of the kingdom was not properly taken care of. Enemy kings seized this opportunity to attack Bahu's kingdom. They drove Bahu out and Bahu went off to the forest with his wife Yadavi,**

**The enemy kings who dislodged Bahu were led by the Haihaya and Talajangha kings. They were aided by the Shakas, Yavanas, Paradas, Kambojas and Pahlavas. King Bahu died in the forest. His wife Yadavi desired to die on her husband's funeral pyre. But since Yadavi was pregnant at the time, the sage Ourva persuaded her that such an act would be a sin. He brought Yadavi to his own hermitage and began to take care of her. Bahu had also a second wife and she had once tried to poison Yadavi. The poison (gara) had however done Yadavi no harm and emerged when the baby was born. Since the baby was born together with poison, he came to be known as Sagara.**

**The sage Ourva took care of Sagara's education. He imparted to Sagara the knowledge of all the shastras and also the usage of weapons. Amongst other things, Sagara acquired the skill of using a divine weapon known as agneyastra. When he grew up, Sagara attacked the Haihaya kings and defeated them through the use of agneyastra. He then defeated the Shakas, Yavanas, Paradas, Kambojas and Pahlavas and was about to kill them all. But these enemy kings fled to the sage Vashishtha for refuge and Vashishtha persuaded Sagara not to kill his enemies. Instead, the heads of the Shakas were half shaven off. The Yavanas and Kambojas had their heads completely shaven. The Pahlavas were instructed that they would have to keep beards. These enemy kings also lost all right to follow the religion laid down in the Vedas. Amongst the other kings who Sagara defeated were the Konasarpas, the Mahishakas, the Darvas, the Cholas and the Keralas.**

**King Sagara had two wives. The first was named Keshini and she was the daughter of the king of Vidarbha. The Brahma Purana does not tell us the name of the second wife but from the Mahabharata we know that it was Sumati. Keshini and Sumati had no sons. They therefore began to pray to Ourva so that they might have sons. Ourva was pleased at these prayers and said, " Both of you will have sons. But one of you will have a single son and the other will have sixty thousand sons. Tell me, who wants what." Keshini asked for a single son and Sumati asked for sixty thousand sons. In due course, Keshini gave birth to a son named Panchajana. Sumati gave birth to a gourd. Inside the gourd there was a lump of meat. The gourd was placed inside a pot full of clarified butter (ghrita). And from the lump of meat were born sixty thousand sons.**

King Sagara proceeded to conquer the entire earth. As a recognition of this conquest, he initiated an ashvamedha yajna (horse sacrifice). In this ceremony, the sacrificial horse is left free to wander all over the earth. The sixty thousand sons accompanied the horse as its guards. The horse eventually reached the shores of the ocean that lies towards the south-east. While Sagara's sons were resting, the horse was stolen. The sons started to look for the horse and began to dig up the sands in their search. In this process, they came upon the sage Kapila. Kapila had been meditating and his meditation was disturbed by the terrible din that Sagara's sons made. He gazed at them in fury and all but four of the sons were burnt to ashes. The four sons who were saved were named Varhiketu, Suketu, Dharmaketu and Panchajana.

Brahma Purana also tells us that the sacrificial horse was obtained by Sagara from the ocean. This is the reason why the ocean is referred to as Sagara. Sagara's descendents through his son Panchajana were Amshumana - Dilipa. - Bhagiratha who it was who brought down the river Ganga from heaven to earth and thus redeemed his ancestors who had been burnt to ashes by Kapila. It was because of this that the river Ganga came to be known as Bhagirathi. From Bhagiratha was descended Raghu. Raghu's son was Aja, Aja's son Dasharatha and Dasharatha's son was Rama which brings us to the Ramayana. All these descendents constituted the Solar Dynasty. It is truly amazing that the Puranic geneology of the Solar Dynasty reaches not only to Rama of the Ramayana, but well beyond to recognizable historical personalities like Buddha of the Ikshvaku Dynasty as detailed in Annexure 2.

#### **The Moon and the Lunar Dynasty :**

There was a sage named Atri. Atri performed very difficult tapasya. So difficult was the tapasya that Atri's energy was thrown up into the sky. The sky could not bear this energy and hurled it down onto the earth. This energy then gave birth to Soma or Chandra, the moon god. Brahma took Chandra up into his chariot and drove the chariot around the earth twenty-one times. From whatever energy was left after Chandra has been created, the herbs were born. Chandra also performed very difficult tapasya. One padma year consists of 10,000,000,000,000 normal years. For one hundred such padma years, Chandra meditated. After the meditation was over, Brahma appointed Chandra lord over seeds, herbs, brahmanas and the oceans. Chandra also performed a rajasuya yajna (royal sacrifice) as a celebration of his lordship. This gave him a lot of pomp, glory, wealth and respect. But all this merely served to turn Chandra's head.

Brihaspati the guru of the gods had a wife named Tara and Chandra abducted Tara. Despite the gods and the sages asking Chandra to return

Tara, the moon god would not listen. A terrible war then raged over Tara. Shukracharya, the guru of the demons, fought on Chandra's side and Shiva fought on Brihaspati's side. This war (Samgram) came to be known as tarakamaya samgram, since it was fought over Tara. Finally Brahma intervened and a truce was called. But Chandra and Tara had by then had a son, and Brihaspati refused to accept this son as his own. This son was Budha. As narrated earlier, Budha had a wife married Ila and they had a son named Pururava and the Lunar dynasty was descended from them.

How the country came to be called Bharatavarsha and the origin of its constituent kingdoms : the story of Yayati :

In the lunar dynasty, there was born a powerful king named Nahusha. He married Viraja and they had six sons named Yati, Yajati, Samyati, Ayati, Yati, and Suyati. Yati became a hermit. So although Yayati was not the eldest, he was crowned king after Nahusha. Yayati had two wives. The first was Devayani, daughter of Shukracharya. And the second was Sharmishtha, daughter of Vrishaparva, the king of the Danavas. Devayani had two sons named Yadu and Turvasu and Sharmishtha had three sons named Druhya, Anu and Puru. Yayati conquered the whole earth and ruled over it. When he became old, he divided the earth amongst his five sons. Yadu was given the lands to the east, Puru the lands in the center, Turvasu the lands to the south and south-east, Druhya those to the north and Anu those to the west.

Yayati gave up his weapons and decided to travel throughout the world. He called Yadu to him and said, "I wish to explore the world and my old age is a hindrance. Please accept my old age and give me your youth in return." Yadu refused. "I will not," he said. "One cannot eat well when one is old, nor can one pleasure the comforts of the world. Old age is not pleasant. Ask one of my brothers instead." Yadu's refusal angered Yayati. He cursed Yadu that he or his descendants would never be kings. Yayati next requested Druhya, Turvasu and Anu, but they too refused and were similarly cursed by their father. But Puru agreed to his father's request and gladly accepted the old age. He was blessed by his father. After many years had passed, Yayati got tired of the world and returned Puru's youth to him. He accepted back his old age and retired to the forest.

From Puru was descended King Bharata after whom the land came to be known as Bharatavarsha. Also in this line was King Kuru, after whom all the descendants came to be known as Kauravas. The sacred place named Kurukshetra owes its name to King Kuru. From Turvasu were descended the kings of Pandya, Kerala, Kola and Chola. From Druhya were descended the kings of Gandhara. The horses of the Gandhara kingdom are famous. Yadu had five sons, Sahasrada, Payoda, Kroshtu, Nila and Anjika. Sahasrada's descendants were the Haihayas, amongst whom the

most famous was Kartyavirya Arjuna. Arjuna pleased the sage Dattatreya and became invincible. He also had a thousand arms. Arjuna's greatest deeds were his defeat and imprisonment of Ravana, king of Lanka. Kroshtu's descendants were Vrishni and Andhaka and in the Vrishni line was born Krishna. All these descendents constituted the Lunar Dynasty.

#### The Geography of the world :

During his stay at Naimisharanya, the sages requested Romaharshana. "Tell us a little about the geography of the world." Romaharshana responded thus : The earth is divided into seven regions (dvipas). Their names are Jambudvipa, Plakshadvipa, Shalmaladvipa, Kushadvipa, Krounachadvipa, Shakadvipa and Pushkaradvipa. These regions are surrounded by seven oceans and their names are Lavana, Ikshu, Sura, Sarpi, Dadhi, Dugdha and Jala. Jambudvipa is in the center and right in the middle of Jambudvipa is Mount Sumeru. To the south of Sumeru are the mountains Himavana, Hemakuta and Nishadha and to the north of Sumeru are the mountains Nila, Shveta and Sringi. Jambudvipa itself is divided into several regions (varshas). For example, Sumeru is in the middle of Ilavritavarsha. Braratavarsha is to the south of Sumeru. To the east of Sumeru is Bhadrashvarsha and to the west is Ketumalavarsha. Harivarsha lies to the south and Ramyakavarsha to the north. Still further north is Hiranmayavarsha and beyond that, Uttara Kuruvarsha. These regions are presented clearly in the following beautiful map reproduced from the blog of Dr Vineet Aggarwal Blog)



Fig 2-4



Brahma's city is on the peak of Sumeru. It is there that the river Ganga descends from heaven and gets divided into four tributaries. Sita flows eastwards, Chakshu westwards, Bhadra Northwards and Alakananda southwards into Bharataavarsha. There are seven major mountain ranges in Bharataavarsha and their names are Mahendra, Malya, Sahya, Shuktimana, Riksha, Vindhya and Pariyatra. Bharataavarsha itself is divided into nine regions (dvipas).

To the east of Bharataavarsha live the Kiratas and to the west the Yavanas. Below the earth lie the seven regions of the underworld (Patala). Their names are Atala, Vitala, Nitala, Sutala, Talatala, Rasatala and Patala. The daityas, danavas and the snakes (sarpa) live there. The underworld is a wonderful place, more beautiful than heaven itself. The sage Narada once went on a trip to the underworld and was bowled over by its beauty. It is full of palaces and jewels. The sun rises there, but does not radiate too much of heat. The moon also rises, but its beams are not at all chilly. The forests are populated by beautiful trees and the ponds are thick with lotus flowers, the songs of cuckoo birds are heard everywhere. Below the underworld sleeps a great snake, known as Shesha or Ananta. It has a thousand hoods, all covered with jewels. In fact, this snake is really Vishnu in one of his various forms. A later chapter, according to one belief, connects Patala to America, with Narada's glowing description seeming to refer to the great ancient Indian civilizations of Central America, which carry considerable evidence of contact with India and deep imprints of India's ancient culture.

Also part of the world are hells (naraka), presided over by Yama, the god of death. Those are full of weapons, fire and poisons and sinners are sent there to be punished. Sins that are punished by dispatch to one of the several hells are lying, murder, killing cows, destroying cities, drinking, killing brahmanas, theft, selling wines or hair, criticizing the Vedas, insulting elders, making weapons, selling salt, destroying forests needlessly, killing sheep or deer, cheating and studying under one's own son. Each sinner receives a punishment that is in proportion to the severity of his sin. Of course, if one performs penance (prayashchitta) for one's sins, one need not go to naraka. The best form of penance is praying to Krishna.

The earth (Prithivi or bhuloka) extends upto those parts of the sky that can be lit up by the rays of the sun and the moon. The expanse from there to the solar circle is known as bhuvarloka and holy sages live there. Above the solar circle is the lunar circle and beyond it, in succession, come the regions of Mercury (Budha), Venus (Shukra), Mars (Mangala), Jupiter (Brihaspati), Saturn (Shani), the Great Bear constellation (saptarshi) and the Pole Star (Dhruva). The region from the solar circle to Dhruvaloka is known as heaven (Svarloka or svarga). Beyond Dhruvaloka is Maharloka

and further away, Janaloka are Tapaloka and Satyaloka. At the end of a kalpa, all the three lokas (regions) of bhuloka, bhuvarloka and svarloka are destroyed. But the four lokas of Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapaloka and Satyaloka are not destroyed.

The holy places in Bharatavarsa : The Brahma Purana now narrates the origin of the most important places of pilgrimage to which the people flock to this day. Here is the story of Konaraka :

There is an ocean to the south of Bharataavarsha. On the shores of this great ocean there is a land named Ondra or Utkala (present Orissa). Utkala is populated by religious people and the brahmanas who live there are learned in the Vedas. They are very good priests, learned in the Puranas and the shastras and skilled in the art of sacrifices. In the land of Utkala, there is an image of the sun (Surya) known as Konaditya. The word aditya also means the sun, as does the word arka. Thus, Konaditya is the same as Konarka, a corruption of the latter word being Konaraka. The image of Konaditya is so wonderful that even if one gazes at the image, all one's sins are forgiven. All around the temple there is sand. But nevertheless, many trees grow around the temple. The best time to worship the sun there is at the time of sunrise. One has to face the east and draw a lotus flower on the ground with red sandalwood. The lotus flower must have exactly eight petals. A copper vessel has to be placed at the center of the flower and filled with paddy, sesamum water, red sandalwood, red flowers and sacred grass. One prays to Surya to descend on the lotus flower that has thus been drawn. If one worships Konaditya according to these prescribed rites, the sins of seven preceding generations are forgiven.

The twelve adityas are nothing but different forms of Surya. Their names are Indra, Dhata, Parjanya, Tvashta, Pusha, Aryama, Bhaga, Vivasvana, Vishnu, Amshumana, Varuna, and Mitra. As Indra, Surya destroys the enemies of the gods. As Dhata, he creates living beings. As Parjanya, he showers down rain. As Tvashta, he lives in the trees and herbs. As Pusha, he makes foodgrains grow. As Aryama, he is in the wind. As Bhaga, he is in the body of all living beings. As Vivasvana, he is in fire and helps to cook food. As Vishnu, he destroys the enemies of the gods. As Amshumana, he is again in the wind. As Varuna, Surya is in the waters and as Mitra, he is in the moon and in the oceans.

## **The story of Garuda and Maninaga :**

**You have already been told about the great snake (naga) Ananta. Ananta had a son named Maninaga. Garuda was the enemy of the snakes and the snakes were all afraid of Garuda. Maninaga began to pray to Shiva. Having pleased Shiva, he obtained the boon that Garuda would be able to do him no harm. Armed with this boon, Maninaga started to wander around freely and did not run away even when faced with Garuda. Garuda found this to be exceedingly strange. Although he could not kill Maninaga, he captured him and kept him imprisoned in his own house.**

**Shiva had a companion named Nandi. Nandi told Shiva, "Lord, what has happened to Maninaga? We have not seen him for some time. I hope that Garuda has not done him some harm." Shiva of course knew what had happened. He advised Nandi to pray to Vishnu. Nandi was to please Vishnu and then ask for the boon that Maninaga might be freed from Garuda's imprisonment. Nandi did this and Vishnu asked Garuda to release Maninaga.**

**"Lord," Garuda told Vishnu, "this is very unfair. Other masters treat their servants really well. They give their servants gifts. See how Shiva has sent Nandi himself to rescue Shiva's devotee Maninaga. You never give me any gifts Moreover, when I obtain something on my own, you ask me to relinquish it. Is this proper on your part? It is on me that you ride when you go out to fight the demons. They get defeated because of my prowess. And yet it tickles your ego no end to think that you have defeated them yourself."**

**Vishnu smiled and replied, "Garuda, you are quite right. You have become thin and lean from bearing my weight. It is quite true that I can defeat the demons only because of your prowess. You have a lot of strength. Why don't you bear the weight of my little finger and demonstrate your strength?" Vishnu placed his little finger on Garuda's head. So heavy was the finger that Garuda was crushed against the ground. "Please forgive me, said" Garuda. "I have been very stupid. I am an ignorant ass and you are the lord of everything. I have been completely flattened by the weight of your little finger. Please tell me how I may regain my old self."**

**Vishnu asked Nandi to take Garuda to Shiva. Shiva would find a way of restoring Garuda's old appearance. Maninaga was released and Nandi took Garuda to Shiva. Shiva asked Garuda to bathe in Goutami Ganga. This would make his appearance normal again. Garuda did this. Not only was his old appearance restored, he became stronger and swifter than he used to be. The place where Garuda bathed is a tirtha known as Garudatirtha.**

### **The story of Kubera :**

Kubera was the eldest son of the sage Vishrava. Vishrava had two wives. The first wife gave birth to Kubera. The second wife was a rakshasa (demon) woman and gave birth to Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana. Kubera used to rule in Lanka and his relations with his cousins were extremely good. But Ravana's mother did not like the idea of her sons mixing so much with Kubera. She called her sons and said, "What are you up to? Why do you cause me so much of pain? You are demons and Kubera is a god. Is it proper that you should be so friendly with him? The relation between gods and demons is one of enmity. Consider Kubera's pomp and glory. Have you got anything like that to show for yourselves? Do something so as to improve your own statures." Thus instructed by their mother, Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana went off to the forest to perform tapasya. They pleased Brahma with their prayers and desired the boon that they might win over the kingdom of Lanka. Ravana also obtained the boon that he would become very strong. Thus fortified with the boons, the demons attacked Kubera and defeated him. They drove Kubera out of Lanka. Kubera possessed a beautiful Vimana, a vehicle that could fly in the air, named Pushpaka. This was also appropriated by Ravana. Ravana also made it known that whoever gave Kubera refuge would be killed by him. This meant that no one dared give refuge to Kubera. Kubera sought the advice of his grandfather Pulastya. Pulastya told him to go to the banks of the Goutami Ganga and pray to Shiva there. Shiva appeared before Kubera and blessed him with the boon that Kubera would become the god of all wealth.

### **The classes of mankind and the stages of life : The Varnas and Ashramas :**

There are four varnas (classes). Their names are brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra. The duties of a brahmana are to donate alms, perform tapasya, worship the gods, perform yajnas and study the Vedas. To earn a living, brahmanas are authorized to teach and act as priests at sacrifices. The duties of kshatriya are to bear arms and protect the earth, donate alms and perform sacrifices. A kshatriya is also permitted to study the shastras. The duties of a vaishya are agriculture, animal husbandry and trade. That apart, vaishyas should donate alms, perform sacrifices and study the shastras. The duties of a shudra are to serve brahmanas. Shudras can also be shopkeepers and artisans. In times of emergency, a brahmana is allowed to adopt the livelihoods of kshatriyas or vaishyas to earn a living. In similar fashion, a kshatriya is permitted to adopt the livelihoods of vaishyas or shudras and a vaishya is permitted to adopt the livelihoods of shudras.

There are four ashramas (stages of life) as well. The first of these is known as brahmacharya (celibate studenthood). During this period, the

individual spends his days with his guru and studies the Vedas well. He has to serve his guru in proper fashion and live on alms. The next ashrama is that of Grihastha (householder stage). The individual now gets married and has children. He serves the gods, the sages, the ancestors and guests. It is householders who provide alms for sages and hermits. That is the reason why the householder stage is so very important. The third ashrama is known as vanaprastha (forest-dwelling stage). The individual now retires to the forest and withdraws his mind from the earthly life. He can leave his wife in the care of his sons or take her with him. He lives on roots, fruits and leaves and makes a bed for himself under the trees. He is not permitted to shave or cut his hair and his clothes have to be made out of bark or skins. The final ashrama is that of sannyasa (hermithood). A hermit gives up all association with the world and lives alone. He grows completely detached. He lives alone. He gets his food through begging.

The story of Dattatreya :

Dattatreya was the son of the Rishi Atri and his wife Anasuya. The story goes that when Narada visited the couple, he was so deeply impressed by Anasuya's character that he described her as model of chastity to the wives of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. With their curiosity aroused these goddesses in turn prevailed on their husbands to test Anasuya's purity. The three Gods disguised as poor brahmanas went to Anasuya's house when Atri was absent and asked to be fed, stipulating that she should be naked while serving them. Unwilling to displease her guests, she went to the next room, and undressed, wishing that if only her guests were babies, her being naked would not matter. Returning to serve them, she was surprised to see the guests had now turned into babies, and so she fed them at her breast. The guests were thereafter unable to leave. The goddesses got anxious when their husbands did not return and so proceeded to Atri's house to investigate. On seeing them, the three babies were then restored to their normal form. and on hearing what happened, the goddesses realized the power of Anasuya's purity and chastity. They then blessed that Anasuya would have three sons as incarnations of Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma, under the names Datta, Viswamitra and Chandra. The story goes that the sons grew up and while the last two went away, Datta stayed back, retaining the divine character of the three Gods. Datta was therefore intended as a divine response to Atri's long penance praying for a son like Highest Divine, of whom Brahman Shiva and Vishnu were but manifestations. The story was thus intended to convey this precise conclusion. We may appropriately at this point shift our narrative to the next great God of the Trinity, Shiva - the Destroyer. who could be more fittingly described as the Transformer.

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## CHAPTER 3 – SHIVA, THE TRANSFORMER



Fig 3-1  
THE 19 AVATARS OF SHIVA

The description of Shiva as the Transformer is a more fitting description than the more common one of Destroyer. The latter actually arises from his role as a destroyer of all Evil when he is at his destructive best. But it refers really to his broader cosmic role of transformation of physical forms that is a constant feature of nature, and the transient character of all existence, typically such as occurs at death of living forms. Shiva is also known as Kala, the Lord of Time, that provides the context of all change. Outside of this cosmic role, he is widely worshipped as a peaceful, tranquil figure always responding to his devotees. His story comes to us in many Puranas and more specially in the Shiva Mahapurana. Here Shiva is here represented as Brahman, the Highest Supreme, just as the Vishnu Purana gives that role to Vishnu. The Saivites and Vaishnavites retain this distinction for their respective allegiance. Since both Shiva and Vishnu are manifestations of the same Unmanifest, there is no basic contradiction here.

At the assembly of Sages at Naimisharanya, the Sage Shaunaka requested Suta to describe how man in this era of Kali could attain to Lord Shiva, by cleansing all the impurities of his mind and rectifying his inherent demonic tendencies. Suta then narrated the Shiva Mahapurana - the supreme of all the Puranas, which was narrated by Lord Shiva himself and which was later on retold by Sage Vyasa.



**Shiv Mahapurana contains twenty-four thousand shlokas organized under seven Samhitas or text sequences. A few selected stories from each of these Samhitas are presented below.**

#### **PART ONE : VIDYESHWAR SAMHITA :**

Suta continued with his narration :- During the initial period of Sveta Varaha Kalpa, six prominent sages collected near Triveni and started debating as to who was the greatest deity, among Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha. Their debate remained inconclusive, so they went to Lord Brahma to seek the answer. Lord Brahma told them :- The source of Vishnu, Rudra and all the deities including myself and all the other creations are none other Mahadeva. Union with the Shiva should be the objective of a man to attain that objective.

Nandikeshwara narrated the following tale of a battle between Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu. Once while travelling Lord Brahma reached the abode of Lord Vishnu and found him resting on Shesha, the divine serpent, and being attended by Garuda, the divine eagle, and others. When Brahma saw that Vishnu did not get up to receive him, he became very angry. Very soon, a verbal dual erupted and developed into a battle which continued for very long time. All the deities in heaven came to watch the battle. They became very worried when they saw no sign of battle coming to an end. They decided to go to Lord Shiva, to seek his help. Though Lord Shiva knew everything, but still feigned ignorance. The deities told him about the battle, fought between Brahma and Vishnu.

Lord Shiva then sent one hundred Ganas, his followers, to pacify both of them. He too went there accompanied by Parvati. When Lord Shiva reached there, he saw that Brahma and Vishnu were about to use their deadly weapons, Maheshwar and Pashupat respectively. Fearing the destruction, which these deadly weapons might cause, Lord Shiva manifested himself in the form of Analstamba, a pillar of fire, between them. Brahma and Vishnu had already released their weapons, but both fell into the pillar of fire and got destroyed. Brahma and Vishnu were very surprised to see the pillar of fire, which was so enormous in size that it reached the sky and penetrated down into the earth. Vishnu transformed himself into a boar and went down into the nether world to find the base of that 'Pillar of fire'. But he was unsuccessful in his attempt and came back. Similarly Brahma transformed himself into a swan and flew up in the sky to find its top end. While going through the aerial route he came across a Ketaki flower in a tree, withered but still fragrant. Lord Shiva smiled at the futile attempts of Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu. As a result of his smile the Ketaki flower fell down from the branch. The Ketaki flower spoke to Brahma and said it had been present there since the beginning of the creation, but was unable to know anything about the origin of the pillar of fire. The

flower also advised Brahma against continuing his quest as it would be of no use. Brahma then requested the Ketaki flower to testify before Lord Vishnu, that he Brahma, had been successful in seeing the top end of the pillar of fire. The Ketaki flower agreed and both of them went to Vishnu and Brahma told him that he had seen the top end of the pillar of fire. The Ketaki flower confirmed this. On this, Vishnu accepted the superiority of Brahma.

Lord Shiva became very angry with Brahma and proposed to punish him for his false claim. Lord Vishnu interceded and requested Lord Shiva to spare the life of Brahma. Lord Shiva became pleased with Vishnu and accorded him a status equal to his own. After according same status to Vishnu as his own, Lord Shiva opened his third eye and from it manifested the form of Bhairav. He ordered Bhairav to kill Brahma. Bhairav severed the fifth head of Lord Brahma with his sword. Brahma was terrified. Lord Vishnu felt pity for Brahma and requested Lord Shiva to forgive him. Lord Shiva then stopped Bhairav, but told Brahma : You spoke untruth with a desire to become fit for worship. It is my curse that, you will not be worshipped by anybody. You will possess only four heads hereafter.

Brahma begged his forgiveness. Lord Shiva feeling pity on Brahma gave him a boon of being the presiding deity of all yajnas. Similarly the Ketaki flower was also prohibited from being used during worship. But when Ketaki also tendered an apology, Shiva gave it the blessing that it would be fortunate to be offered to Lord Vishnu during worship. Lord Vishnu and Brahma made salutations to Lord Shiva and offered him a seat and then worshipped him. This was the first time Brahma and Vishnu had worshipped Lord Shiva. Shiva was very pleased. Shivaratri has been continued to be celebrated since that day. This particular day is considered to be the most auspicious day for the worship of Lord Shiva and is observed with reverence by people in India to the present day.

## ***PART TWO : RUDRA SAMHITA :***

The story of Narada : Once upon a time a Narada was performing a penance in the cave of Himalaya mountain. Indra becoming fearful sent Kamadeva to obstruct his penance. But Kamadeva was unsuccessful in his attempt as the place where Narada was doing penance was the same place where Lord Shiva did penance. After the completion of his penance, Narada became arrogant that he had foiled Kamadeva. He went to Kailash mountain and narrated this feat to Lord Shiva. Narada was naïve not to realize the fact that it happened only because Shiva had willed it so. Lord Shiva listened to his arrogant statement. He advised Narada not to reveal this secret to anybody. But Narada went to Brahmaloaka and boasted about his feat to Lord Brahma. Lord Brahma listened to his boisterous statements and advised him not to reveal this to anybody. But Narada was not satisfied. He wanted to give the news of his achievement to Lord Vishnu.

So, he went to Lord Vishnu's abode and boasted about his feat of defeating Kamadeva. Lord Vishnu with a desire to subdue his inflated ego, manifested his illusionary power with the blessings of Lord Shiva. While Narada was returning from Vaikuntha Loka, he saw a beautiful city. This city was ruled by a king named Sheelnidhi. The king had a daughter and her swayamvara was being organised. Numerous kings had arrived to take part in that swayamvara. Narada, curiously entered the place where the swayamvara was being held. The king requested Narada to study the lines of the palm of the princess. Narada was infatuated by the princess' beauty. He returned back to Lord Vishnu and expressed his desire to marry that princess. He also requested Vishnu to make him as handsome as himself (Vishnu). Lord Vishnu made Narada's whole body very beautiful except his face which he made to look like a monkey's. Narada being unaware of this happily went back to swayamvara site. Narada sat among the kings –with his face like a monkey. Lord Vishnu too was present there. The princess saw Narada and was amused seeing his face. Ultimately she put the garland around the neck of Lord Vishnu and went to Vaikuntha Loka along with him. Some of the Shiva's followers called Marudganas were present there asked Narada to look at the reflection of his face in the water. When Narada saw his face in the water, he saw that he was looking like a monkey. He became very furious and cursed the Marudganas to be born as demons. Narada then went to Lord Vishnu and cursed him- "You too would suffer due to separation from your wife, during your incarnation of Rama and a monkey would come to your help.

Lord Vishnu accepted Narada's curse without any hesitation. He then removed the illusionary powers by which Narada's mind was influenced. Now Narada regretted his actions. Lord Vishnu told Narada that everything happened because of Shiva's divine powers. He said : You did not pay heed to his advice and hence Shiva by his illusions, has taught you a lesson. Shiva is beyond the reach of the three basic qualities, Satva, Rajas and Tamas. Therefore you must worship Shiva. All of your sins will be destroyed. Narada then descended down to earth and while having darshan of numerous Shivalingas, he saw two of the Marudganas, whom he had cursed. He told both of them that they would take birth from a demoness's womb, but their fathers would be sages. He also assured them that they would become very famous due to their devotion, Narada went to Lord Brahma and requested him to tell him all about the divinity of Shiva.

In the Sati Khanda of Rudra-Samhita, Narada asks Lord Brahma why Lord Shiva married Sati, in spite of being a 'yogi'. He also requested Brahma to narrate how Sati became the daughter of Daksha Prajapati and in her next birth as Uma the daughter of Himalaya. How did Uma get Lord Shiva as her husband. Continuing his narration Brahma told Narada : A girl by the name of Sandhya manifested from my being. I was amazed by her heavenly beauty. Right then a divine entity appeared before me, whose beauty could

not have been matched even by the deities. Kamadeva, the god of love influenced me to such an extent that I forgot that Sandhya was my daughter and got infatuated by her. When Rudra came to know about my lust for Sandhya, he admonished me and ridiculed about my character. I felt ashamed. But I also became jealous of Rudra. I decided to influence him with the power of infatuation, but I was unsuccessful in my attempts. I remembered lord Vishnu and how he tried to make me understand about the futility of my attempts, as according to him (Vishnu), Rudra was beyond the reach of any human emotions.

But I instructed my son - Daksha to help in the procreation of a girl child from the womb of Ashwinivirini. Thus Sati was born. Sati later on became famous of Uma and got Rudra as her husband on account of her tremendous penance. Though Rudra was free from all kinds of attachment, but still he became so influenced by the desire for procreation that he married with Sati. He enjoyed a blissful married life for a very long time. Rudra father in law, Daksha in his arrogance started condemning his son in law Rudra. Once, Daksha organised a grand yajna ceremony. He gave invitations to everybody except Rudra and Sati. Despite Rudra's disinclination to allow Sati to go to her father's yajna, she insisted and ultimately she was successful in convincing Rudra, to allow her to go. When Sati went there, she was not given respect by her father Daksha. Not only this, Daksha made fun of Rudra. Feeling dishonored, Sati gave up her life by jumping into the sacrificial fire. When Rudra got the news of Sati's death he became extremely furious. To take revenge, he created Veerbhadra from his locks of hair. Veerbhadra went to Daksha place and destroyed his oblation site. He severed Daksha's head. All the deities became afraid and prayed to Rudra, to have mercy. Rudra then brought back Daksha to life and helped him to accomplish the still incomplete Yajna. The site where Sati had died later on became famous as Jwalamukhi devi. The same Sati in her next birth was born as Parvati to Himalaya. By her tremendous penance she again got Lord Shiva as her husband.

#### **PARVAT KHAND : HIMALAYA MARRIES MAINA :**

Narada requested lord Brahma to shed light on the birth of Maina and also how she was married with Himalaya. Brahma said- After relinquishing her body, Sati, the daughter of Daksha attained to the abode of Shiva. In her next birth she was born to Maina, the wife of Himalaya and was known as Parvati. Maina had done great service to Sati in her previous life considering her as her own daughter. For this reason she was blessed and got Parvati as her daughter. Parvati did tremendous penance and got Lord Shiva as her husband.

Continuing with his story Brahma said- Himalaya, the king of the mountains married Maina and they enjoyed a happy married life for a long

time. Once, Lord Vishnu paid a visit to his place, accompanied by all the deities. Himalaya was very pleased by his arrival. After making salutations, he asked for the purpose of their visit. The deities revealed to them that very soon the incarnation of Sati as Parvati is going to take birth. Therefore, O Himalaya! Be prepared for that glorious occasion. The deities started praying to Uma. Being pleased by the invocation made by the deities Goddess Uma assured the deities about her arrival in this world. She told that her incarnation would take place in the house of Himalaya and by the virtues of her tremendous penance she would get Lord Shiva as her husband. She also told the deities that she was satisfied by the service of Maina, done to her in the previous life. After being assured the deities went back satisfied.

## **BIRTH OF PARVATI**

Himalaya and Maina commenced their penance with the objective of getting Uma as their daughter. Maina did a tremendous penance which lasted for twenty-seven years. Goddess Uma became very pleased by her penance. She appeared before her and asked her to demand anything she wished for. Maina expressed her desire of having one hundred valiant sons and a daughter, who would be worshipped by the people in all the three worlds. Goddess Uma blessed her. Maina narrated this incident to her husband Himalaya. He became very pleased. In due course of time one hundred sons were born to Maina. One of the sons was Mainak who possessed supreme qualities. Due to some reasons, Indra had severed the wings of Mainak's ninety-nine brothers, but by taking the refuge of ocean Mainak was able to survive the assault of Indra's Vajra. Himalaya and Maina engaged themselves in the worship of Shiva and Shakti, day and night. After some time Parvati was born. Later when she attained the marriagable age, Maina requested her husband a suitable bridegroom for her. Himalaya told her that the words of Narada would never go in vain hence Parvati should be asked to do penance, so that she could have Rudra as her husband. But Maina was disinclined in forcing her tender daughter - Parvati into to such hardships like penance. Parvati then told Maina about her dream, in which she had seen a brahmin instructing her to do penance in order to have Rudra as her husband. Maina told Himalaya about Parvati's dream. Himalaya then revealed to Maina about his own dream, in which he had seen Shiva pleased with Parvati and ultimately both of them getting married. Maina was satisfied and waited eagerly for that auspicious moment.

One day Himalaya arrived at the place where Lord Shiva was doing his penance. Parvati too came along with him. Himalaya requested him to let Parvati, remain there at his service. Lord Shiva declined fearing that her presence might hinder his penance. Now, Himalaya became very concerned about his daughter's future. When Parvati saw her father

becoming worried by Shiva's response she decided to intervene. She said to lord Shiva- I am 'Prakriti' (Nature) and you are the 'Purusha' (almighty). You exist in the 'Saguna' form (with form) because of me. In my absence, you will find it impossible even to exist. Lord Shiva was impressed by her knowledge. He allowed her to be present near him. Himalaya and Parvati became very pleased. Parvati used to come daily at the place where lord Shiva was doing his penance. Her companions too used to come along. She used to engaged herself in the worship of lord Shiva with great devotion.

Though lord Shiva was very much impressed by her devotion, he decided that he would not marry her until she has proved her mettle by her tremendous penance. The deities were being tormented at that time by a demon named. Tarakasur. They went to Lord Brahma to seek his help. Lord Brahma sent 'Kamadeva' to disturb the Samadhi of Shiva, so that being influenced by him Shiva would marry Parvati and ultimately kill Tarakasur. This attempt of Brahma was unsuccessful. Shiva 'burnt' Kamadeva with the help of his third eye. Parvati, then redoubled her effort to attract the attention of Shiva by engaging herself in a tremendous penance.

Parvati, after successfully accomplishing her penance came back to her home. Everybody was happy at her arrival. After sometime Himalaya went out to take his bath in the river Ganges. Meanwhile Lord Shiva arrived in his appearance of Nataraja and started dancing in front of Parvati's mother Maina. She was so pleased by his dance that she wanted to present jewels to him in appreciation, but Shiva refused to take them. He expressed his desire to marry Parvati, which made Maina furious. In the meantime, Himalaya arrived and she informed him what Shiva had said. He became angry too and ordered his attendants to drive away Nataraj (Shiva) from that place. Shiva then showed his divine appearance due to which Himalaya had the vision of Lord Vishnu and Parvati sitting by the side of Lord Shiva. Himalaya was very surprised. Lord Shiva again demanded Parvati to be made as his consort, but Himalaya in his ignorance again refused it. Nataraja then returned back to his abode. After Shiva went back, Himalaya had a feeling that perhaps it was lord Shiva himself, who had arrived in the appearance of Nataraja. He realized what a grave blunder had been committed. Because of their guilt consciousness, both Maina and Himalaya felt the impulse of devotion in their heart. They sought Shiva's forgiveness. Shiva forgave them and finally Shiva and Parvati were married.

#### **THE STORY OF GANESHA :**

Once Narada had a desire to listen to the story of Ganesha. Brahma replied- "There were various Ganeshas in different Kalpas. During the

period of 'Shweta-Kalpa', Ganesha was born to Shiva and Parvati, when they went to Kailash mountain shortly after their marriage. "Once while going to take her bath, Parvati instructed Nandi, to stand guard at the entrance and not to allow anybody to enter the premise without her permission. Lord Shiva arrived there by chance. Despite of Nandi's refusal to allow him, in he went inside. Parvati did not like this. One day it happened so that once again, Parvati wanted to take her bath. She asked Ganesha not to allow anybody without her permission. She also gave him a stick for his protection. Incidentally lord Shiva arrived once again. He tried to enter inside but Ganesha refused to let him go inside. But when Shiva tried to go inside forcibly, Ganesha hit him with his stick. Lord Shiva became furious and ordered his ganas to kill him.

The ganas of Shiva attacked Ganesha but all of them were no match for him. After being defeated by Ganesha, the Shivaganas went to Shiva and narrated what had happened. While the Shivaganas were narrating their stories, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and some other deities arrived there. Lord Brahma then went to Ganesha to convince him, but as soon as Ganesha saw him he tried to attack lord Brahma. Brahma came back without achieving anything. After this lord Shiva himself came to fight Ganesha. A fierce battle was fought between Shiva and Ganesha. When Lord Shiva realized that Ganesha was dominating the fight, he severed his head with his trishul. Parvati became extremely furious at the death of Ganesha. Her anger resulted into the manifestation of innumerable goddesses, who started creating havoc on the deities. The deities became frightened and they were forced to take the refuge of Parvati. They eulogized her and requested to be pardoned. Parvati told them that they could be saved only when Ganesha becomes alive and he also is worshipped like the deities.

The deities went to lord Shiva and requested him to make Ganesha alive once again. Lord Shiva instructed them to go in the northern direction and bring the head of any creature they might find and join it with the trunk of Ganesha. The deities followed the instruction and went in the northern direction. They found an elephant which had only one tusk. They severed the elephant's head and joined it with the trunk of Ganesha. By the blessings of Shiva, Ganesha became alive once again. The deities worshipped Ganesha and returned back to their respective abodes.

#### **GANESHA'S MARRIAGE :**

Both Kartikeya and Ganesha grew up to become handsome youths in due course of time. Shiva and Parvati started to think about their marriage. When Ganesha and Kartikeya came to know about the plan of their marriage both of them started quarreling among themselves as to who should get married first. Lord Shiva and Parvati devised a plan to



sort out this problem. They told them that whoever between them return after circumambulating the earth, will get married. Kartikeya and Ganesha agreed. Kartikeya proceeded on his journey to circumambulate the earth. Ganesha was very intelligent. He requested his parents - Lord Shiva and Parvati; to sit at a place together and circumambulated them seven times and said- "According to Veda, circumambulating one's parents give virtues equivalent to that of circumambulating the whole earth. So now you must get me married first." Lord Shiva and Parvati were very impressed by his intelligence. They decided to get him married with Siddhi and Buddhi - the daughters of Vishwaroopa Prajapati. (In a perceptive paper entitled 'Vedic Impeccability', a writer G, Srinivasan presents Siddhi and Buddhi the wives of Ganesha as names, whose meanings suggest the complementary faculties of human intelligence resident in the left and right sections of the human brain as described by modern Science.)

While Kartikeya was returning after circumambulating the whole earth, he met sage Narada on the way. He told Kartikeya about Ganesha's marriage. Kartikeya became very sad and felt like having been cheated by their parents. When Kartikeya reached Kailash mountain he made salutations to lord Shiva and Parvati and without saying anything, went to Krauncha mountain to do his penance. Parvati was very sad. She went to Kraunch mountain to meet Kartikeya accompanied by Shiva. When Kartikeya saw them coming he moved to another place. Lord Shiva and Parvati followed him and ultimately met him. Both these places have religious significance. Having a darshan of Kartikeya on the full moon day of Kritika nakshatra is considered to bestows immense auspicious and destroys all the sins of a man.

### **PART THREE - SHATRUDRA SAMHITA :**

#### **THE TEN INCARNATIONS OF SHIVA AND SHAKTI :**

Describing about the ten incarnations and their corresponding power (Shakti), Suta said- The first incarnation of lord Shiva was as Mahakal and his Shakti was called Mahakali. Lord Shiva took his second incarnation as Tar and his Shakti was called 'Tara'. The third incarnation of Lord Shiva was as Bhuvaneshwar and his Shakti was called 'Bhuvaneshwari'. Lord Shiva took his fourth incarnation as 'Shodash' who was also known as 'Srividdyes' and his Shakti was called 'Shodashi' or 'Sri'. Lord Shiva took his fifth incarnation as Bhairav and his Shakti was called 'Bhairavi'. The sixth incarnation of Lord Shiva is known as 'Chhinamastak' and his Shakti by the name of 'Chhinamasta. Lord Shiva took his seventh incarnation as 'Dhoomvan' and his Shakti was known as 'Dhoomvati. The eighth incarnation was as Baaglamukh and his Shakti as Baglamukhi. The ninth

incarnation of lord Shiva became famous as Matang and his Shakti as 'Matangi'. Lord Shiva took his tenth incarnation as 'Kamal' and his Shakti as Kamala. If these ten incarnations of Shiva are worshipped along with his ten Mahavidyas then a man attains salvation. Apart from these ten avatars, which was accompanied by the ten Shakthis, referred to in a later Chapter, Shiva had 19 other Avatars as seen in the images in the beginning of this Chapter.

#### **THE TWELVE JYOTIRLINGAS :**

Describing about the twelve Jyotirlingas, Suta told the sages:- "There are twelve Jyotirlingas which are as follows : 1) Somnath in Saurashtra, 2) MallikArjuna in Srishaila, 3) Mahakal in Ujjain, 4) Amareshwar in Omkar, 5) Kedar in the Himalaya, 6) Bhimashankar at the bank of Bhima river. 7) Vishwanath in Varanasi. 8)Trayambakeshwar at the bank of Gautami river, 9) Baidyanath at Chitabhumi, 10)Nagesh which is between Darukvan Dwarika and Bhet Dwarika 11) Rameshwar at Betubandh and 12) Dhushmesh in Shivalaya. These above mentioned twelve Jyotirlingas are considered to be very sacred. A devotee who pays a visit to any of these places for worship, gets all of his wished fulfilled.

#### **PART FOUR - KOTI RUDRA SAMHITA :**

#### **ATRI AND ANUSUYA DO PENANCE :**

Sage Atri and his wife Anusuya were doing penance in the forest called Kamad, situated near the Chitrakut mountain. Once it did not rain for many days. As a result people living in that area faced a severe drought. Anusuya requested her husband to help out the people from their hardships. Sage Atri sat down to meditate. One by one, his disciples deserted him. Only Anusuya remained with him. She spent her days worshipping the Parthiva lingas and circumambulating sage Atri who was engrossed in his meditation. She had vowed not to have a single morsel of food till it rained. All the deities became very pleased with their penance. They arrived at the place where both of them were doing penance and after giving blessings went back to their respective abodes.

Both sage Atri and Anusuya continued with their respective penance. While doing penance, sage Atri felt thirsty. He requested Anusuya to fetch some water. Anusuya went with a Kamandal, in search of water but did not find it anywhere. Ganga appeared before her and said- "I am very pleased with you. You can demand anything from me you like." Anusuya asked only a Kamandal full of water for her husband. Ganga instructed her to dig up a pit and when it was done she entered into that pit. Anusuya filled her Kamandal with the water from that pit and went back to her thirsty husband. After quenching his thirst, Atri enquired from Anusuya as to

where she found the water. Anusuya narrated the whole story. Both of them then went back to the place where Anusuya had met Ganga. Both of them requested Ganga to stay at that very place. Ganga agreed to remain there on the condition that Anusuya donates all the virtues attained by her husband by worshipping Lord Shiva for one year. Anusuya donated all the virtues, without any hesitation. Lord Shiva became very much pleased by their charitable tendencies. He appeared before them. After eulogizing him, Atri requested lord Shiva to remain in his hermitage with Parvati. Lord Shiva agreed to do so. Ganga also stayed with them. Later on Atri performed a grand Yagya after the completion of which it rained heavily. Thus Atri ended the phase of drought by his tremendous penance. River Mandakani flows from that same 'Pit' which Anusuya had dugged up. The Shivalinga, which was worshipped by Anusuya during that time came to be known as Atrishwar Linga.

## **PART FIVE - UMA SAMHITA :**

### **THE DESCENT OF GANGA :**

Once, emperor Sagara performed an Ashwamedha Yagya. Indra abducted the sacrificial horse used in this Yagya and kept it in the hermitage of Sage Kapila. All the sixty thousand sons of Sagara went to search the horse and found it in Kapila's hermitage. Hearing the commotion and noise, sage Kapila who was engrossed in his meditation opened his eyes and came out to see what was happening. He was very angry. He looked angrily towards the sons of Sagara. All of them were burnt to death except four. In due course of time, Sage Bhagiratha, a descendent of Sagara became successful in bringing river Ganga to earth with the blessings of lord Shiva. Bhagiratha then brought salvation to all of his ancestors who had met an untimely death, by sprinkling the water of the Ganga on their bones. River Ganga here is also known as Bhagirathi in memory of Bhagiratha.

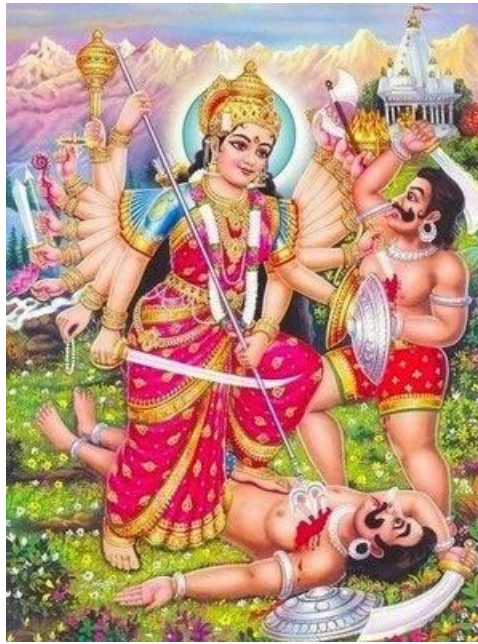
The story of Mahalakshmi killing the demon Mahishasura :



**Fig 3-2**

Mahishasura was the demon son of Rambhasura. He captured heaven after defeating the deities. The dejected deities came to seek the

help of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva who became extremely furious after hearing about the misdeeds of Mahishasura. Radiant lights appeared from the bodies of Vishnu, Shiva and other deities and collectively manifested into a single form of Mahalakshmi. All the deities presented their respective weapons to her. Mahalakshmi went to fight Mahishasura, who fought valiantly but ultimately got killed by her. The deities became very pleased by the death of Mahishasura. They eulogized and worshipped her. The story of Kausiki killing the demons Shumbha and Nishumbha :



**Fig 3-3**

After being tormented by the demons Shumbha and Nishumbha, the deities went to the goddess Parvati and requested her to protect them. Kaushiki was then manifested from the body of goddess Parvati. Goddess Kaushiki assured the deities and disappeared. The attendants of the demons - Shumbha and Nishumbha, happened to see Kaushiki and became enchanted by her divine beauty. They went to Shumbha and Nishumbha and praised her beauty. Both the demons sent a messenger to summon her. Kaushiki asked the messenger to convey the message to the demons that only such a person can become her lord, who defeats her in a battle. The messenger returned and gave the message to Shumbha and Nishumbha.

Both the demons were enraged. They sent a huge army to bring Kaushiki forcibly, under the command of Dhumralochan. When Dhumralochan reached there, he told her about his master's command. Kaushiki gave the same reply that only such a person can become her master, who defeats her in a battle. Dhumralochan then tried to abduct her forcibly. Kaushiki gave a loud roar in her anger as a result of which Dhumralochan was burnt to death. The whole army was annihilated by

Kaushiki's vehicle, the lion. When Shumbha and Nishumbha learnt about the death of Dhumralochan and the destruction of his army, they sent many mighty demons like Chanda, Munda, Raktabeeja etc to fight her. But each of them got killed by goddess Kaushiki. Ultimately Shumbha and Nishumbha themselves came forward to fight. Both of them attacked Kaushiki with volley of arrows. Kaushiki destroyed their whole army. The whole battlefield became flooded with blood. After that Kaushiki killed Nishumbha with special types of arrows, which did not allow single drop of blood to fall on the ground. Angered by his brother's death, Shumbha attacked Kaushiki with his various weapons, but she neutralized all of them. At last, she killed Shumbha with her trident.

The story of Shakambhari killing the demon Durgama :



Fig 3-4

The demon Durgama had acquired all the four Vedas from lord Brahma who also gave him a boon of invincibility. Durgama became very arrogant and started tormenting the whole world. As the consequence it did not rain for one hundred years and the whole world was hit by drought. The deities went to goddess Maheshwari (Parvati) and narrated their woeful tales. Maheshwari was so moved by their plights that tears rolled down from her eyes for nine continuous days and nights. The tear took the form of a river as the result of which the phase of drought came to an end.

The deities then requested her to recover the Vedas, which were in possession of Durgama. They then went back to their abode. When Durgama saw that people were living happily, he attacked them with a large army. At that very moment goddess manifested herself and fought a tremendous battle with Durgama. From her body manifested the ten Mahavidyas and many other goddesses. Finally Maheshwari killed Durgama with her trident and recovered the Vedas from his possession. She then handed over the Vedas to the deities. Maheshwari is also known as Shakambhari as she had created a river by her tears and saved the lives of people.

## **PART SIX - KAILASH SAMHITA :**

**CLASSIFICATION OF YOGA :** Describing about the various types of Yoga, Suta told the sages that there were three types of Yoga - Jnana Yoga, Kriya Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. Each of them is capable of giving salvation to a man. When the mind or intellect unites with the soul it is called Jnana Yoga. When the soul gets attached with external objects, it is called Kriya yoga. The unification of one's whole being with goddess Bhagawati is called Bhakti Yoga. A man becomes a devotee by his actions or Karmas. Devotion or Bhakti helps a man to attain Jnana or knowledge. Jnana or Knowledge gives salvation. Yoga is the path through which a man can attain liberation whereas Kriya-yoga is the chief means to attain it. Other topics in this Samhita include Conduct of a Sanyasi or Ascetic; The greatness of the Pranava Mantra; Initiation and Last Rites of a Sanyasi;

## **PART SEVEN - VAYVIYA SAMHITA :**

**THE ORIGIN OF VIDYA (KNOWLEDGE :** There are fourteen types of learning or Vidyas - four Vedas, Six Vedangas, Meemamsa, Nyaya, Puranas and other religious scriptures. These fourteen learning along with Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Gandharvaveda and Arthashastra becomes eighteen. All these eighteen subjects originate from Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva created lord Brahma to felicitate the process of creation and bestowed him with all these eighteen subjects. He also empowered lord Vishnu to protect the creation. The four Vedas emerged from the mouth of Lord Brahma, on the basis of which were created the numerous scriptures like Vedangas etc. Since these Vedas were difficult to understand, therefore Lord Vishnu took incarnation as Vyasa and created the Puranas, so that they could be understood easily. The Puranas contain four lakh shlokas and they help us to understand the essence of the Vedas. From Shiva the Transformer we may now shift or attention to Vishnu, the Preserver

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## CHAPTER – 4 : VISHNU, THE PRESERVER



Fig 4-1

Vishnu, the Preserver appears through the cycle of Creation in sequence of ten Avatars, called the Dasavatara, as shown in the picture above. Among the Puranas, he appears as the central divine figure in the Vishnu Purana, and then reappears in the Bhagavata Purana as Krishna, referred to as a Purna-Avatar, or a full Avatar, one possessed of full divinity within the human form. How does the divine Vishnu , pass through all these ten lives, these transformations ?

The details come to us through many fascinating stories narrated in the Puranas. In the first place we must note that Vishnu, Siva and Brahma have themselves arisen as the first manifestations of the Highest Unmanifest Divine, the First Effect as it were, of that First Cause. This was therefore the first link in a chain that persisted within finite manifestations of time. It was a chain that was subject to the Unmanifest Divine's power of Maya, and the latter's forces of the three Gunas and its unrelenting Law of Karma. As the First Effect, Vishnu, Brahma and Siva too were subject to these forces. This high Triumvirate had to manage these very forces, that operated in the onward chain of creation in vast numbers of composites and combinations. They were required to protect, create or destroy them as the occasion demanded. The environment was rendered even more complex and unpredictable where the Curse seemed to have emerged as a major mechanism that queered the pitch of Karma all the time. The Curse was freely used by many characters to vent their ire and it would seem that even the Three Divines were themselves not exempt from their impact.



Vishnu himself was cursed by the Rishi Sukra for having killed his mother Kavyamata. The curse was to spend one lifetime as a man, who turned out to be Krishna Himself !. The curse took effect in the following way. Several celestial women were sent by Indra to Badarikashram to disrupt the penance of the great Yogins, Nara and Narayana (both Avatars of Vishnu) and asking to be married to them, Narayana was about to curse them, but luckily Nara intervened; Nara said that if they would respect and protect their penance, he would marry all of them in a later birth, when he would be born as Krishna. Thus the Curse of Sukra was fulfilled. And interestingly Krishna's life was also finally ended by a Curse. After the Mahabharata War which is reckoned to have occurred in the year 3138 BC, Gandhari saw Krishna standing with the victorious Pandavas, while all her own defeated sons lay dead in the battle field. Overcome by grief she blamed Krishna for letting events come to this pass, and cursed him that 36 years later he would die after seeing his entire tribe perish in internecine wars. This came to pass exactly in the year 3102 BC, which marked the end of the Dvapara Yuga and the start of the Kali Yuga. Yet it also seemed to be a vindication of Krishna's earlier declaration in the Gita teaching - Sambhavami Yuge Yuge - that he would re-appear in the world from age to age, to establish righteousness.

The intervention of Vishnu in upholding Righteousness against Evil is beautifully illustrated in the story of churning the Ocean to obtain Amrita, the Nectar that conferred Immortality. Problems started for Brahma at the early stages of Creation when he created the first man and woman, Svayambhuva and Satarupa, to speed up the process of Creation through sexual Pro-creation. This couple's daughter Prasuti married Daksha and bore him several daughters all of whom married Kasyapa Rishi. Two of them, Aditi and Diti, are relevant to the story at this point. Aditi's sons by Kasyapa became the Adityas or Devas who were godly. Diti's sons by Kasyapa were the Daitryas or Asuras, who became ungodly in nature. The result in Diti's case arose from her having broken into meditation in which Kasyapa was engaged and insisting on his immediately satisfying her uncontrollable sexual urge. Thus it was that the Asuras were ruled by the Rajasic nature of passion and came into inevitable conflict with the Devas who were ruled more by their Sattvic nature. The central and eternal conflict between the forces of Good and Evil in human nature, represented now by the Devas and Asuras had been well and truly launched,

Yet, the Asuras who were of divine descent and derived their power from that source, had to be reclaimed and this was a task assumed by the Rishi Bhrgu also known as Sukra, who became their preceptor. The Devas, now with a bit of non-Sattvic elements of human nature occasionally asserting itself, also had their share of indiscretions. One such indiscretion by Indra, the Lord of the Devas, almost led to the loss of their primacy in the three worlds. One day, Indra received a divine garland of fragrant

flowers from the great Rishi Durvasa whom he met in a chance encounter. Thoughtlessly, Indra placed the garland on the head of his divine elephant, Airavata. In turn Airavata flung the garland away and trampled on it. In great anger, Durvasa cursed Indra with loss of his Deva supremacy.

The curse soon started taking effect. The power of the Asuras started waxing while the power of the Devas started waning, till a point in their conflict when the Devas suffered huge casualties and found their very existence threatened. In great anxiety they approached Brahma to save them. Brahma was in a fix because both Devas and Asuras were descended from him, and so he took the Devas to the Supreme Lord, MahaVishnu for a decision. The Lord's solution to the Devas was simple but formidable. Churn the Ocean of Milk and you can get Amrita, the Nectar of Immortality, and consuming that will enable you to outlive the Asuras. Churning the ocean was a formidable task, said the Lord, and it would need the strength of both sides, so that they would have to make peace and then share the prize. The task would also require use of the Mandara Mountain as a churn stick and the huge serpent Vasuki as the churning rope. Both sides accepted the solution but it needed the Lord's help to raise the mountain, and move it into position in the sea, He had also to commission Vasuki to function as the rope. And finally the Lord had to himself take the form of a huge tortoise to support the mountain from sinking in the ocean waters during the churning operation.

Tactical differences of course, arose between the two sides, from time to time. Which end of the rope would each of them take : the inferior tail, or the superior head which however posed the danger of Vasuki's fiery breath ? The Lord prevailed on the Devas to let the Asuras take whatever choice they made. Finally after long and strenuous churning effort by both sides, helped now and then by the Lord, the ocean started yielding its contents. First to come up was the deadly Kalakuta poison, that filled the air with its poisonous fumes that threatened to consume all of them. On the desperate appeal of the Devas, Shiva arrived and consumed the entire poison. But the poison could not harm the power of Shiva, beyond getting stopped at his throat and cause it to turn blue in colour. Thus it was that Shiva became known as Neelakanta, or the Blue-Throated One.

The Ocean then yielded a succession of wonderful gifts, like Kamadhenu the wish-giving cow, the Parijata the eternal flower, Moon the planet, Mahalakshmi the goddess, and finally the divine physician Dhanvantari, bearing a bowl of the Amrita. From these gifts everyone took whatever they wanted. Shiva took the Moon and Mahavishnu accepted Mahalakshmi, giving her His chest for residence as desired by her. Seizing an opportunity, the Asuras suddenly snatched the bowl of Amrita from Dhanvantari and ran away. In consternation the Devas appealed to Mahavishnu to intervene.

In an interesting twist to the events, Mahavishnu took the form of an enchanting woman called Mohini and appeared before the Asuras who were quarreling among themselves as to who should get the first serving of the Amrita, some even suggesting that in fairness, the Devas should not be denied their share. But when they beheld the bewitching form of Mohini, they were overcome with desire for her, and started seeking her favour. Finally at her suggestion that the sharing of the Amrita should be settled first, the Asuras handed the bowl of Amrita to Mohini and left its distribution to her, and sat with their eyes closed, waiting for her decision. She quickly handed the Amrita to the Devas and disappeared, while the Devas consumed it in full.

Deeply disappointed, and in great anger, the Asuras resumed their hostilities and a great fearful war ensued. Vast were the methods and weapons used. The entire animal kingdom was pressed into service as vehicles, for speedy surprise moves by the fighters, including birds, serving as aircraft ! Finally, the Asuras were routed, with a large number of them decimated, while the Devas, thanks to the Amrita, survived and enjoyed their victory.

There is a great metaphor behind this story of Churning the Ocean for the nectar of Immortality, which finds an echo in many ancient Civilizations like the Incas of Central America, that bear the imprint of the Vedic Culture. It symbolizes the Universal conflict between Good and Evil, as personified in the Devas and Asuras, and also the human yearning for a bliss-filled life, idealized as a Divine Immortality beyond the conflict ridden limitations of Human Mortality. This thus, is the message of this story, that invests humans with a sense of clear direction and high purpose. Incidentally this story also tells us how Vishnu got his Consort. Among the wonderful gifts that came up from churning the ocean was Lakshmi, who, Vishnu chose for himself. And as desired by her, Lakshmi got to reside in Vishnu's chest as an inseparable part of His existence.



Fig 4-2

Lakshmi is also known as Sri, and the word Nivas means Residence. And that is why Vishnu is also known as Srinivas, the residence of Lakshmi, as seen in the picture above !

The ten Avatars of Vishnu, each makes a fascinating story, some so detailed as to need an entire exclusive Purana. But the most popular one is the Bhagavata Purana, devoted to the story of Krishna. And with his critical role in shaping the course of Indian History in the Mahabharata War, which became subject of Vyasa's epic, Krishna occupies a special place in the hearts and memories of the Indian people. Krishna with his Avatar-predecessor Rama, brought Vishnu into wider popular appeal in terms of the rapid spread of Vaishnavism which conferred on him the place of pre-eminence within the Divine Trinity. There was however a fourth Divine who constituted the power behind the Trinity, also a manifestation of the Highest Unmanifest Divine, Devi, the Universal Mother of all Creation. To the Universal Mother we shall now turn.

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## CHAPTER – 5 : DEVI - THE MOTHER



Fig 5-1

Devi is also represented by a group of her ten aspects called the 10 Mahavidyas, personified as the Wisdom Goddesses, who represent a spectrum of feminine divinity, from horrific goddesses at one end, to the gentle at the other as portrayed below under the names, Kali, Tara, Shodashi, Bhuvaneshvari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi, and Kamala. The development of Mahavidyas represents an important turning point in the history of Shaktism as it marks the rise of Bhakti aspect in Shaktism, originating around the 6th century C.E. as a new theistic movement in which the Supreme being was envisioned in the female form.



**Fig 5-2**

We have had a brief glimpse of Devi, the Universal Mother in the Brahma Purana. There she appeared as part of the Highest Divine before Brahma, as the half-man-half-woman Manifestation of Ardhanariswara,. This Manifestation then detached the female half of this form to create the separate Manifestation of Devi the Universal Mother, from whose power Brahma derived the mother form as the vehicle for the onward birth of all of creation. Another more magnificent version comes from the Brahmanda Purana, which presents Creation issuing directly and perhaps more appropriately from the Mother as the Creator. The story of Devi as the Universal Mother of all Creation is told in the beautiful Stotra form called the Lalita Sahasranama, listing her 1000 names describing the Perfection of the Form and Purpose of Her Manifestation. The names are recited with devotion, every day to this day by Hindu housewives. Devi's story here is embedded in a string of connected stories beginning with the story of the penance of the Sage Agastya set out below.

Long ago, the Vindhya mountain Vindhya (in central India), in its huge egoistic pride, started growing upwards to reach into the skies, threatening as it were, to cut off the South of the country. The sage Agastya moved from his home Varanasi (Uttara Pradesh, India), subdued the mountain's ego and crossed into South India where he settled. Thanks to the divine presence of the sage Agastya, the entire South of India became prosperous and pious. Eventually however, with the onset of the Kali Yuga, the evil effects foretold for this Yuga started developing and people started straying from their piety and righteousness. This greatly saddened the sage who set out on a pilgrimage to seek God's guidance. Finally after severe penance, he sought the advice of Vishnu who presided in the temple at Kanchipuram in the form of Varadaraja. Vishnu appeared before the sage in the form of Hayagreeva . How Hayagreeva got a horse's head, as indicated by his name, forms another interesting story.

Agastya asked him "Oh Lord! What is the path of salvation for these ignorant people"? Hayagreeva replied "There are two paths for this. First, after renouncing everything, one can attain the knowledge of the, attributeless aspect

of God, but this is a very difficult way. The second method is to worship the Divine Mother who is a form of Vishnu but with attributes. Even a sinner can do the worship. By this path the devotee enjoys this life and yet earn salvation". Vishnu ordered Agastya to propagate this divine secret throughout the world. The sage then asked to be told the story of Para Shakti, the Ultimate Power, the Divine Mother, who was an aspect of Vishnu but with attributes. In response to this request Hayagreeva narrated the story of the Divine Mother's manifestation as Mohini and her role in the Churning of the Ocean. (The story has been told in an earlier Chapter)

After hearing the story so far, Agastya returned to his primary concern : how to ensure the welfare of the common people to withstand the corruptions of the Kali Yuga. He said, "Hayagreeva! Tell me in detail the form of Para Shakti (The Divine Mother, the Supreme Power) which will bestow both food and salvation to the devotees in the Kali Yuga". Hayagreeva replied, "Lalita Devi is the only Goddess who has the power to do so. Listen now to her story"

Long ago, in the distant past, Sati Devi, a daughter of Daksha, was married to Shiva. However gradually, Daksha developed hatred towards Shiva. Daksha performed a Yaga (fire sacrifice) without making any offering to Shiva. He didn't invite even his daughter Sati Devi to the Yaga. She came to know of the forthcoming great Yaga to be conducted by her father. And overjoyed by the news, she went to the Yaga, in spite of Shiva's disapproval of her visit. Ignoring natural affection for his daughter, Daksha insulted her and also abused Shiva. Unable to bear the insult to Shiva, Sati Devi burnt her body in a fire created by her power of yoga. Hearing of this calamity, Shiva became furious. He created the terrible person, Veerabhadra, out of the locks of his hair, and sent him to attack Daksha. Veerabhadra destroyed the hall of Yaga, and beheaded Daksha. The wives of Daksha prayed to Veerabhadra for mercy. Veerabhadra was pacified and restored Daksha to life. Daksha repented and prayed to Shiva for pardon. Sati Devi was later reborn as the daughter of Himavanta (the Himalaya mountain) and Menaka, who had both engaged in a long penance for being blessed with a child. The newborn was named Parvati, meaning daughter of the Parvata, or mountain.

One day, the sage Narada visited Himavanta and said, "You are very fortunate. The Divine Mother has been born as your daughter; Shiva is doing penance in your mountain range in his "Sthanu Ashrama" (abode of stones). After the departure of Sati Devi, He has become an ascetic. It will benefit you considerably if you send your daughter to serve Him". Himavanta's joy knew no bounds on hearing Narada's words. He went to the abode of Shiva along with his daughter. He approached Shiva, worshipped Him and prayed to Him to allow Parvati to serve him. Shiva agreed and from then onwards, Parvati started serving Shiva, who however never took notice of her as he was always in a state of ecstasy of yoga all the time.



### The story of the burning of Manmatha, the God of Love :

A demon by name Taraka invaded and occupied the Heaven along with his army and started to hurt and pester the celestials. All of them approached Brahma for relief, who said, "The son born to Shiva and Parvati alone can kill the demon. Hence you may make efforts to make their marriage come about". Indra, the Lord of the celestials called for Manmatha (the God of love). praised him and asked him to disrupt Shiva's ascetic concentration so as to take note of and start to love Parvati.

Encouraged by Indra's praise, Manmatha agreed to do this. But learning of this Rati Devi, the wife of Manmatha tried her best to dissuade him from embarking on this hazardous venture. In spite of it, Manmatha proceeded to Shiva's abode "Sthanu Ashrama", created the alluring atmosphere of the spring season suited to love-making, and entered the abode of Shiva stealthily. Seeing Shiva seated in the state of ecstasy of meditation, he got unnerved, but just at that moment, Parvati came there. Seeing her, he recovered his resolve, and just when Parvati was getting up after bending low to prostrate to Shiva, and her upper garment slipped a bit, Manmatha aimed an arrow (of desire) on Shiva, to disrupt his concentration. While Parvati rejoiced, Shiva looked around to find who disturbed him, and found Manmatha hiding behind the bushes to be the cause. At once, Shiva's third eye (in between the eyebrows) opened and the fire rushing out from there reduced Manmatha to ashes. Parvati closed her eyes out of fear and when after a few moments she opened her eyes, Shiva had disappeared with all His attendants. Himavanta came there, consoled Parvati and took her home. Rati Devi wept bitterly at the death of her husband Manmatha. Vasanta, the god of spring approached Rati Devi, consoled her and reminded her of the curse of Brahma to Manmatha.

### The story of Brahma's curse on Manmatha :

Once upon a time, there were two demon brothers by name Sunda and Upasunda. They did penance meditating on Brahma and obtained a strange boon from him that their death could not be caused by anyone else except by themselves. They were very much fond of one another, hence they expected that no mutual harm would be possible. Thereafter they created havoc by their terrible atrocities in the three worlds. All the celestials prayed to Brahma who then thought of a strategy to destroy the demons. He collected the essence of beauty of all the fine things in the world and from them created a woman of exquisite beauty. She was called Tilottama and her beauty enchanted even the celestials. One day when Brahma was checking up keenly to see that her beauty was perfect in all respects, Manmatha, who happened come by at that time, decided to play a practical joke. He aimed an arrow (of desire) at Brahma. Due to this, Brahma forgetting that Tilottama was His own creation, chased her full of desire. As a last resort, Tilottama started running taking the form of a deer. Brahma also followed her in the form of a deer. The celestials were highly agitated by this untoward event and observing this, Shiva manifested as a hunter and holding a bow and arrows confronted Brahma. Looking at the fierce form of Shiva, Brahma came to

senses. He prostrated at Shiva's feet and prayed for pardon. By then, the celestials and Tilottama arrived there and everyone was pacified. After taking Shiva's permission, the celestials sent Tilottama to meet Sunda and Upasunda. Finding Tilottama going in a garden, both Sunda and Upasunda were overwhelmed by her beauty and in competing to possess her finally killed one another. Tilottama returned to Brahma, who felt happy and sent her to the Heaven with a permanent status as one of the Apsaras (celestial dancers).

After the entire affair was over, Brahma recollected what all had happened and sent for Manmatha and said "You fellow! Blinded by the power bestowed on you, you have dared to aim your arrows (of desire) at one and all, disregarding their age. Do you intend to destroy the code of righteousness? I am saved of grievous sin due to the timely arrival and protection of Shiva. Hence, one day you will be burnt to ashes by the fire of Shiva's third eye. Beware!" Hearing the curse, Rati and Manmatha were frightened and prayed to Brahma for release from the curse. Brahma regained his composure and said, "The Divine Mother will manifest as Lalita Devi. She will marry Shiva. After the marriage, she will revive Manmatha to life" After narrating the story, Vasanta (the God of the spring season) consoled Rati Devi, saying, "Sister-in-law! It is a must for everyone, however great he is, to undergo the suffering of a curse. However as predicted by Brahma, my brother Manmatha will be revived to life soon. Until then, be bold and continue to pray to Lalita Devi"

#### The key story of Bhandasura :

At this point of time, Chitrakarma, a commander of one of the Rudra Ganas (Shiva's troops) one day started toying with the ash of the burnt Manmatha and prepared a doll out of it. He took this doll to Lord Shiva. As soon as the doll neared Lord Shiva, it sprang to life and the boy thus born prostrated before Lord Shiva and Chitrakarma. Chitrakarma was overwhelmed with joy. He gave the boy the Upadesha of Shata-Rudreya Mantra and asked him to undertake penance. When the penance reached the stage of fruition, Lord Shiva appeared before him. He asked Lord Shiva to grant him a special boon His request was "Anyone who fights against me should immediately lose half of his strength and that strength should be added to my strength. None of the weapons of my opponents should be able to harm me". Immediately Shiva granted the boon and then disappeared. The boy was surprised by Shiva's ready response, but soon forgot all about it. Lord Brahma, who was witnessing all this, felt greatly disturbed and cried "Bhand" "Bhand" (meaning Shame, Shame), a circumstance from which the boy as a member of the Asuras, got the name 'Bhandasura'.

In the mean time, from the remnants of the ashes of Manmatha were born two demons – Vishukra and Vishanga. These two became the brothers of Bhandasura. In addition, thousands of Rakshasas (demons) were also born out of the ashes of Manmatha and all of them became followers of Bhandasura. Having come to know about the birth of thousands of Rakshasas, Shukracharya (the guru of Rakshasas) came there and assumed the role of the Guru for all those Rakshasas and initiated them to undertake regular Anushthanas (daily rituals). He

also summoned Maya, the architect-builder of demons and asked him to create a new city in the province of Mahendra Mountains. He named the city as 'Shoonyaka Pattana'. Shukracharya asked all the demons to move to the new city. He crowned Bhandasura as the king of the newly formed kingdom and made Vishukra and Vishanga the Yuvarajas (princes) of that kingdom. Bhandasura had four wives, Sammohini, Kumudini, Chitrangi and Sundari. Under the guidance of Shukracharya, activities like fire sacrifices, Vedic education and penance went on uninterruptedly in every house of the kingdom.

When the kingdom was well established, Bhandasura called for a meeting of his brothers and ministers and stated as follows : The Devatas (Gods) are our enemies. As long as Manmatha was alive, their lineage continued without any problems and they also enjoyed many pleasures. Now, because of our luck, we have taken birth from the ashes of Manmatha. The gods are trying to see that Manmatha is born again. We should not allow that to happen. Before they try anything like that, we should kill the Devatas. But, if we go in our present form, we can not win. Let us therefore assume the form of air and enter their bodies. After having so entered their bodies, let us dry up their body fluids, especially the semen. If semen dries up, the strength of other tissues and organs will automatically diminish. Then they will automatically be annihilated. Let us torment the beings of all the three worlds by entering their bodies in the form of air and by drying up their body fluids.

Hearing this, the entire army of the demons cheered with joy. Without wasting much time, Bhandasura and his army of 1000 Akshouhinis assumed the invisible form of air and entered the heaven. First of all, they entered the minds of the angels and dried up their mental faculties. Subsequently they entered the face of the angels, robbed them of their beauty and made them ugly looking. All the women and men in the heaven became impotent and sterile. Not only that, their love for one another was also lost. They lost enthusiasm to do anything. Even the plants and animals suffered the same fate. Vishukra, along with his troops entered Bhooloka (earth) and meted out the same treatment to the beings there. People on the planet earth stopped smiling. They lost all happiness. No one had any respect for another. No one thought of helping the other. They lost interest in their activities. The situation was stone-like, devoid of any life and feelings. Vishanga, along with his troops entered Rasaatala (one of the seven netherworlds). He created similar havoc there also. In the Naga Loka (land of serpents) everyone became afflicted with grief for no apparent reason. Everyone started hating everyone else. Everyone became drained of energy and potency.

Rasa, the fluid principle is the basis for the accomplishment of the four-fold aims of life (Purusharthas). Rasa itself is the form of Paramatma, the Almighty. From Rasa are created Shukla (sperm) and Shonita (ovum). These two are collectively called as Veerya. From Veerya comes Kanti (radiance), Utsaaha (enthusiasm), Ullasa (happiness), Dharma (righteousness), Daya (compassion), Preeti (love), Buddhi (intellectual capabilities), Vikasa (development), Parakrama (valour), Shastra Vijnana (scientific knowledge), Kala Asakti (interest in arts), Soundarya Drishti (aesthetics) etc. In plants, the Rasa enhances the fire energy,

which is hidden in them. Only when the fire energy is harnessed, the plants can branch out and bear flowers and fruits. Because of this fire principle, the dried logs catch fire easily and burn. The Vedas have declared that beings can experience happiness only if Rasa is present. Rasa is nothing but Prana (vital energy). Having known all these secrets, Bhandasura devised the plan of entering the bodies of all beings in the form of air and drying them up.

Vasanta, the close friend and associate of Manmatha observed this and consoled Rati (Manmatha's wife). He said "Even the sun, the moon and the stars have lost their brilliance. Even Goddess Parvati seems to have become dull and has engaged in Tapas. Therefore, the day when your dead husband will come to life again is not very far. That day will come very soon. So, stop grieving." On hearing this, Rati Devi prepared to undertake penance. In the heaven, all the Devatas including Brahma, could not comprehend what was going on and what had caused the situation. Not knowing the remedy for their hardship, they approached Lord Sri Hari. When they finally reached the abode of Lord Sri Hari, they saw that even He was sitting still with his eyes closed. It appeared as though He was merged in the bliss of Sushupti. After the angels praised His glory for a long time, Lord Sri Hari slowly opened His eyes. "What is this? Why are you all looking drained of your energies?" asked Lord Sri Hari. He called everyone by their names and said: "Your present condition is due to the invisible foul play of Bhandasura. Even I have lost the affinity for Goddess Lakshmi. What to say about other lesser beings? Brahma, Rudra and I are Karana Purushas (causal beings for the manifest Creation). Even so, because we are also part of this Creation, even we can not escape the torture of Bhandasura.

#### Introducing the Supreme Divine :

Sri Hari continued : There is however one Almighty God who is beyond this manifest Brahmanda. He is called Maha Shambhu. Parashakti is constantly in His Company. He is devoid of form. He is not dependent on anything. He has no modifications. He is greater than the greatest. He is the ultimate. He is not influenced by the foul play of Bhandasura, who is born from the ashes of Manmatha. He alone can rescue us from our difficulties. Therefore, let us all take refuge in Him and praise Him. Follow me".

So saying, Sri Hari led all the angels to the brim of the Brahmanda (Universe). There was a huge wall like fence there. The angels summoned the celestial elephants to break the wall. After toiling continuously for one year, a breach was formed in the wall. After passing through the breach, they saw Chinmaya Akasha, which was Niralamba (independent), Nirajnana (untainted) and which was devoid of the five elements. They all stood in that Chinmaya Akasha and sang the glory of Maha Shambhu, who was of the form of Chidakasha. Then Maha Shambhu appeared before them. He was dark like the clouds. He had two hands and held a Shoola (spear) in one hand and a Kapala (skull) in the other. He had three eyes. Parashakti also appeared before them, bright and cool like the Moon, holding the Aksha Mala (rosary of beads) and the Pustaka (book) in her hands.

**The Supreme Divine, who is Unmanifest, explains Creation as a Manifestation from Himself :**

The great Maha Shambhu smiled and said : I am aware why you have all come here. Pralaya (destruction) is of three types, Avaantara Pralaya, Maha Pralaya and Kama Pralaya. I am the one who is responsible to rescue the world from Maha Pralaya. Vishnu is the one who rescues from Aavaantara Pralaya. It is Lalita Parameshwari who rescues the world from Kama Pralaya. These three kinds of Pralaya take place in a cyclic pattern in every Kalpa. Now, Kaamika Pralaya has taken place because of the destruction of Kama and subsequently due to the actions of Bhandasura. Only Lalita Devi can rescue all from this situation. Parashakti alone can create another Lalita Devi. Therefore, take shelter in her. Beg her to help you.

Hearing this, the Devatas did not know what exactly had to be done. . They again prayed to Maha Shambhu to teach them the method of invoking Parashakti. Maha Shambhu explained: What is needed is called the Maha Yaga. (great fire sacrifice) In this I myself, assuming the form of Vayu, become the Hota (the priest who makes the offerings in a Homa) in this Yaga. My Chidagni (the fire of Consciousness) itself is the fire in this Yaga. The last one of the seven seas, the Jala Samudra (Water Sea) has now dried up. The huge pit so formed is itself the Homa Kunda (fire pit where Homa is performed) The remaining six great oceans constitute the six drops of ghee which is used as offering. Srishti (Creation) is of five types : Manasa Srishti (Thought), Jarayavee Srishti (Creation through the womb. (Human beings), Anda Srishti (Creation through eggs), Swedaja Srishti (Creation taking place through sweat) and Udbhija Srishti (Creation through sprouting of seeds). These five Srishtis (Creations) are the sacrifice animals in this Maha Yaga. Bhoomi (land), Parvata (mountains), Jala (water), Vayu (air) and Akasha (space) these five are the substances used in this fire sacrifice. The Agni element (one of the five elements) being a part of my Chidagni can not be a substance to be offered. At the end of this great fire sacrifice, all of you (the performers of the Yaga) should jump in to the Homa Kunda (fire pit). While doing so, you must possess absolute devotion.

Then, Lalita Parameshwari will manifest. Her onward story is beautifully illustrated by her 1000 names forming the Lalita Sahasranama Stotra, which will be highlighted at appropriate places in the following narrative). She is seated in a chariot called Chakra Raja Ratha. She will create Parabrahma in the name of Kameshwara and will have Him as Her consort. This couple will re-create the entire universe, which will turn out to be more beautiful than the previous creation. Lalita Parameshwari will bring Manmatha back to life. She will create four weapons, namely Ikshu Dhanus – a bow of sugarcane - [Mano Roopekshu Kodanda](#) – five Pushpa Banas – flower arrows - [Pancha Tanmatrasaayaka](#) ; Paasha – a noose - [Raaga Svaroopapaashaadhyaa](#) - and Ankusha - a hook, especially an elephant driver's hook - [Krodha-akaaran kushojjala](#). With the help of these weapons, she will destroy Bhandasura. She will bring Manmatha back to life. She will give you fresh bodies. If you all agree, I will begin this great sacrifice myself.

The angels became very pleased and begged Maha Shambhu to be the Hota and commence the sacrifice. Parashakti and Maha Shambhu disappeared. The angels also returned to their abode. After some time, Maha Shambhu, accompanied by Parashakti started chanting the Lalita Maha Mantra and entered the Universe in the form of the seven-layered Vayu (air). Parashakti assumed the form of His Kriya Shakti (energy of action). With the help of Kriya Shakti, Vayu blew over the Jala Samudra (the water ocean) till it became totally dry. In the pit thus formed he kindled the Chidagni with the help of fire emanating from the third eye. This Agni raged from the Patala (a region in the nether-world) to the Brahma Loka. He decorated the periphery of the Homa Kunda with the stars just as one decorates a sacrificial fire pit with flowers. After this, he performed the Yaga as ordained by the Vedas. He used the Pralaya Meghas (clouds appearing during Pralaya), namely Pushkala and Aavartakaas as Srik and Sruva (the two spoons which are used to offer ghee in fire worship). As the Homa progressed, the Chidagni emanating from it spread to vast area. He then offered the first six oceans and then the five-fold creations to this Agni. In the end, the gods too decorated themselves and sat on the Srik and Sruva, ready to be offered to Agni. Maha Shambhu offered them to Agni. Finally, Maha Shambhu discarded his Vayu form and assumed his real form and chanted eight special mantras and performed eight Homas.

(Note : Here then is a vivid description of the highest Sacrifice by the Supreme Divine offering all of the existing creation, comprising but an infinitesimal part of himself in initiating a new Creation through the instrumentality of Parashakti : a sacrifice that provides a prototype for all the sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas.)

#### Manifestation of Lalita Devi from the Maha Yaga :

At the end of the Homa, Lalita Devi emerged from the Chidagni Homa Kunda, seated on a special chariot called “Chakra Raja Ratha”. These are reflected in the Lalitha Sahasrama in the descriptions [“Chidagnikunda sambhoota”](#), [“Deva kaarya samudyataa”](#) and [“Chakra Raja Rathaa Roodha Sarvaayudha Parishkritaa”](#). The Sri Chakra Raja Ratha had the form of “Meru Prastara”, was made of “Tejas”, was 4 Yojanas wide (1 Yojana is approximately 9 miles), and Yojanas high, and had 4 Chakras (wheels, standing for the four Vedas), 4 Horses (standing for the Purusharthas or four-fold aims of existence), a Flag (standing for absolute bliss) and 8 Parvas (landings), with the topmost landing having the Mother’s seat, called the Bindu Peetha.

The Lalita Parameshwari so manifested, then invoked her creative powers commencing with creating a male form from within Herself, with the name Kameshwara. By her power of will, she created 4 different weapons, the Ikshu Dhanus or Bow, Five arrows, a Pasha (noose) and an Ankusha (a special hook), which she held in her four hands. vide [“Chaturbahu samanvitaa”](#). She shone with a crimson colour like the morning sun, vide [“Udyad bhanusahasraabhaa”](#). Her beauty was total – vide [“Sarvarunaanavadyangee sarvaabharanabhooshitaa”](#), and appeared always to be 16 years of age - vide [“Nityaa shodashikaaroopaa”](#).

One other meaning of this description is that it refers to Her representation in the form of 16 Nityaa Devis (eternal goddesses).

**The process of Creation (continued) :**

Lalitha Devi extended Herself in both male and female forms and continued the process of creation. From the left eye, which was of the nature of Soma (moon) came Lakshmi Devi. From the right eye, which was of the nature of Soorya (sun) came Vishnu and Parvati. From the third eye, which was of the nature of Agni (fire), came Rudra and Sarasvati. Of these, Lakshmi & Vishnu, Shiva & Parvati and Brahma & Sarasvati became couples.

Lalita Devi directed them to continue the process of Creation. She herself continued to create certain other things. From her long hair she created darkness. From her eyes, she created the sun, the moon and the fire. From the pendent hanging in front of her forehead came the stars. From the chain above her forehead came the nine planets. From the eyebrows, she created the penal code. From her breath, she created the Vedas. From her speech, she created poetry. From her chin she created the Vedangas. From the three lines in her neck, she created various Shaastras. From her breasts, she created the mountains. From her mind, she created the power of bliss. From her fingernails, she created the 10 incarnations of Vishnu. From her palms, she created the Sandhyas. From her heart, she created Baalaa Devi. From her intellect, she created Shyamala Devi. From her ego, she created Vaaraahi Devi. From her smile, she created Vighneshwara. From the Ankusha (a special hook), she created Sampatkaree Devi. From the noose, she created Ashwaa Roodha Devi. From her cheeks, she created Nakuleshwari Devi. From her Kundalini Shakti, she created Gayatri. From the eight wheels of the Chakra Raja chariot, she created 8 Devatas. In the 9th landing, in the Bindu Peetha, she herself took her seat. Afterwards, she created the Devatas who would protect the Chakra Raja chariot. She also created many other things as narrated in the Purusha Suktha. After having thus completed the great creation, Lalita Devi requested her consort, Shiva Kama Sundara to create the Shiva Chakra. He immediately brought out a big humming sound and from this, the Shiva Chakra Devatas numbering 23 manifested.

Later, Lalita Devi appointed Shyamala Devi as the prime minister who was therefore called Mantrini Devi. She made Vaartaalee Devi the chief of her army, who was therefore Vaartaalee Devi is also called as Dandanaathaa Devi. She is also called as Vaaraahee Devi. Lalita Devi created a mace (a weapon) from her eye brows and gave it to Dandanathaa Devi. After this, Lalita Devi created two chariots from her chariot and gave them to Mantrini Devi and Dandanatha Devi. Mantini Devi's chariot is called "Geya Chakra Ratha". This chariot used to make musical sounds whenever it moved. Dandanatha Devi's chariot is called "Kiri Chakra Ratha". Later, Lalita Devi hummed with rage. From this hum, 64000000 Yoginis were born. Another 64000000 Bhairavas were also born. Innumerable Shakti Senas (armies) were also created by her hum.

### Lalitha Devi's victory procession :

Later Lalitha devi, making the noise emanating from the four oceans used as the drums and accompanied by several other instruments proceeded for the battle against Bhandasura. From Lalitha Devi's Ankusham (spear), Sampatkari Devi, emerged along with vast numbers of elephants and started following Lalitha Devi – vide "[sampatkarisamarudha sindhura vraja sevita](#)". Sampatkari Devi was sitting on the elephant named 'Ranakolahalam' (meaning battle uproar). From Lalitha Devi's Pasham (whip) arose Ashwaroodha Devi along with a big army of horses and started moving in front of Lalitha Devi – vide "[ashwarudhadhishtiswaswa koti kotibhiravruta](#)". The horse carrying Ashwaroodha devi was named 'Aparajitam' (meaning one that cannot be defeated). Later , commander of the army, Dandanatha Devi played the drums to start marching. As the march started Dandanatha Devi got down from her chariot and started to ride a lion named 'Vajraghosham' – vide "[kirichakra ratha rudha damdanadhapuraskruta](#)". Her soldiers started praising her by twelve different names. Later Mantrini Devi played the drums and her soldiers, decorated attractively started singing and playing veenas and singing. Mantrini Devi was moving on in her Geyachakra Ratha (circle of army formed by singers vide "[geyachakra ratha rudha mantrini parisevita](#)". She was praised by sixteen names comprising a stotra that assures success to whoever recites it.

Then, from the bird in the hands of Mantrini Devi, appeared the god Dhanurveda with a spectacular bow in his hand and said "Mother! this bow is called Chitrajeevam. This quiver is has the akshaya (inexhaustible) quality. Please accept them for demolishing the demons." Now Lalitha Devi started moving ahead her chakraraja chariot with her weapons : sugarcane, bow, arrows, spear and whip in her hands. She was praised with 25 names, comprising a stotra that assures attainment of ashta siddhi (8 spiritual accomplishments) to whoever recites it. The Sahasranama says "[Bandasura vadhodyukta shaktisena samanvita](#)" to indicate her readiness with her army (shakti sena) to annihilate Bhandasura.

### Bhandasura's war preparation :

Meanwhile a large number of bad omens were observed in Bhandasura's 'Shunyaka' city. Bhandasura called an urgent meeting along of his brothers Vishukra and Vishanga to assess and evaluate the situation. In the meeting Vishukra spoke thus: All gods have burnt themselves by jumping into fire, out of despair. From that fire the mother goddess arose who rejuvenated all gods She is now coming for a war with us, along with an army of women These gods seem to think they can cut stones with tender leaves Even then we should not neglect that woman. We must send our army immediately.

Vishanga said: Any work should only be done after properly thinking about it. First we must send spies and see how powerful their army is. We must not under estimate the enemy's army. In the past Hiranyakashipa was killed by an animal. Sumbha and Nishumbha were killed by a woman. So, we must get more



information about this goddess. Who is she ? Who is supporting or protecting her? What does she want? We must have the answers to these questions.

Listening to this Bhandasura smiled and boastfully said "Even if all the gods are behind her, we have nothing to fear. Do not entertain such useless thoughts and spoil your mind". Immediately thereafter Bhandasura ordered Kutilaksha, the Commander-in-chief of his army, to arrange to protect the fort. He ordered the priests and ministers to perform abhichara (black magic) homa and ordered that Lalitha to be dragged by the hair and placed before him. Now, the demons played the war drums. Kutilaksha sent the first batch of army with Durmada as the commander to confront the enemy and then positioned army units at various points on the City's perimeter.

#### Shakti Senas's uproar :

Durmada was confronted by Sampatkaridevi and her army of elephants. Realising that his army was being defeated Durmada himself came to take the lead. Sampatkari Devi who was seated on her elephant 'Ranakolahala' faced him. In the ferocious battle Durmada was able to dislodge one gem from the crown of Sampatkari Devi. Angered by this, Sampatkari Devi killed Durmada with her spear piercing his heart. With that the remaining demons fled back to their town out of fear.

Angered by this setback, Bhandasura sent Durmada's elder brother Kurunda to resume the battle. An expert in maya yuddha (war using mystical powers) and thirsting for vengeance, Kurunda attacked Sampatkari Devi. In the meanwhile Ashwarudha Devi came forward and pleaded with Sampatkari Devi to let her fight demon. Now Ashwarudha Devi mounted on 'Aparajita' herself led the army and in the battle that followed she killed Kurunda by piercing his chest with her spear. The remaining demons fled for their lives.

Bhanda became furious. He sent a huge army this time (100 akshohini) along with 5 commanders. They materialised serpent gods by name 'Ranashambari' which attacked the Shaktisena letting loose vast numbers of serpents. At this point, Nakuli Devi arrived at the battle filed mounted on Garuda. From her mouth she let loose vast numbers of mongooses which promptly gobbled up all the serpents. Then Nakuli Devi killed Ranashambari with her weapon, the Garudastram. All the five commanders now attacked Nakuli devi. Nakuli Devi's mongoose army attacked them from the rear. In the ferocious battle that followed, Nakuli Devi mounted on Garuda, made sustained aerial strikes on the demons and finally killed the five commanders by chopping off their heads.

Now Bhandasura despatched Valahaka and seven other commanders along with a huge army. These seven commanders were the sons of the demoness named Kikasa and had obtained a boon from the Sun God that at the time of war, the sun would reside in their eyes. As a result as soon as the shakti sena army faced the enemy, they got blinded by the brilliance in their eyes. Seeing this, Tiraskarinika Devi, the bodyguard of Dandanatha Devi mounted a flying vessel oplane named 'Tamoliptam' and as orderd by.At the order of Dandanatha Devi she

discharged an arrow named the 'Andhanastra' which forced the seven demon commanders to close their eyes. With Tiraskarinika Devi in the forefront, other gods attacked and killed the seven demon commanders.

With this blow Bhandasura lost his senses and called upon his two brothers for a discussion. In that meeting it was decided that Vishanga would attack devi's army from its rear side in a treacherous way (This is called Parshti grahamu). This decision was taken because they got information from their spies that Lalita Devi had less army protection at the rear end and it was easier for them to get close to Lalita Devi and attack her directly. After the first day's war, at dusk, Vishanga with a small army proceeded to the rear of Lalita Devi's army noiselessly without any drums. Vishanga was thus able to reach close to the Srichakraraja and attack Devi's chariot all of a sudden in the dark from the rear.

Anima and other gods who were present there were taken back at this unexpected attack but quickly mobilized themselves for a counter attack. Exactly at the same time Kutilaksha along with a large army attacked from the front side. Seeing attack from both ends Lalita Devi was a little annoyed, when an arrow from Vishanga struck the fan in Lalita Devi's hand and it fell down and broke. Seeing this the Tithidevatas became furious and they requested Lalita Devi that Vahnivasini and the Jwalamalini Nitya Devis who had the power of illumination to dispel darkness deal with the situation. With the permission of Lalita Devi, Vahnivasini and the Jwalamalini Devis started glowing like fireballs whereby all the demons who were hiding in darkness became visible. Now the 16 angered Nitya Devis attacked Vishanga's army and killed all their commanders, while both Vishanga and Kutilaksha fled for their lives vide ["nityaparakrama topa nirikshana samatsuka"](#). Seeing the valour of nityadevatas, Lalita Devi was very pleased but Mantrini Devi and Dandanatha Devi felt unhappy that their arrangements of protection had left Lalitha Devi exposed to the attack. They went to Lalita Devi to express their regret. At the instance of Lalita Devi, Jwalamalini Devi now made a protective compound wall of fire around their army but with an opening on one side from which they could proceed to attack Shunyapuram – vide ["jwalamalinikashipta vahniprakaramadhyaga"](#) with Stambhini Devi assigned to protect this entry point. By then it was dawn.

Knowing all this, Bhandasura was in despair and started thinking what to do. This time he sent all his 30 sons to resume the fight. Now Bala Devi, the daughter of Lalita Devi daughter Baladevi wanted to fight these demons herself. Lalita Devi was hesitant but yielded seeing Bala Devi's courage. Seeing Bala Devi coming for the war Mantrini and Dandanayaka were astonished and decided to stand by. Now in a ferocious encounter lasted the whole of the second day of the war, and finally with a single shower of 30 arrows Bala Devi killed the 30 sons of Bhandasura to the great delight of Lalitha Devi – vide ["Bhanda putra vadhodyukta bala vikrama nandita"](#).

Bhandasura was grief stricken and wanted to set out for the war himself. Vishukra and Vishanga pacified and dissuaded him from doing so. Now Bhandasura sent Vishukra to the war front. In the darkness Vishukra approached

the Vahniprakara (the protective firewall) and on a flat stone he drew a mystic symbol and performed some black magic. He then threw that mystic symbol forcefully to fall at one point on the firewall. This Vighnayantra (mystic symbol) had the power to sow fear and doubt in the minds of the Devi's army and some discussions among themselves fell into a stupor. After midnight, Vishukra along with 30 akshohini sena surrounded the firebarrier. Even then none of the members of Shakti Sena did not stir as they were still under the influence of the spell. However, Vighnayantra was not able to affect Mantrini and Dandanatha and they were saddened at the state of their army. Not knowing what to do they went to Lalita Devi for advice. In response, Lalita Devi turned to look at Kameshwara with a gentle smile. And Lo! And Behold, from her smile, Ganapathi took birth, proceeded to the firewall and finding Vighnayantra stone, broke it into pieces and ground it to a powder with his teeth – vide [“kameshwaramukhaloka kalpita sri ganeshwara Mahaganesha nirbhinna vighnayantra praharsita”](#). With that the spell was dispelled and the Shaktisena immediately got up and readied for the war. Now Vighneswara along with this army came out of the fire barrier and started fighting the enemy. Vishukra sent Gajasura to attack him but soon Gajasura was killed. Seeing this Vishukra ran away.

After discussing the matter again with Bhandasura, Vishukra came back to war, along with his brother Vishanga and son-in-law. This was the third day war. Dandanatha Devi attacked Vishunga. Mantrini Devi confronted Vishukra. Ashwarudha, Sampatkari and others attacked the son-in-law. Seeing his army getting discouraged, Vishukra discharged the Trushastram, a weapon that caused the Shaktisena army to experience intense thirst. Thereupon Dandanatha Devi invoked the god of 'Madyasamudra' who showered rains that quenched the army's and rejuvenated them. By sunset most of the demons including Bhandasura's son-in-law had died. Then Shyamala devi (Mantrini) fought with Vishukra and killed him with the a powerful weapon named the 'Brahmashironamakastra'. Vishanga was killed by Mantrini (Varahi as per the Sahasranama)– vide [“Mantrinyamba virachita vishanga vadhatoshita Vishukra prana harana varahi viryanandita”](#). By then it was past midnight of the third day.

Only Kutilaksha the commander in chief was left over to console Bhandasura. Along with Kutilaksha, Bhandasura set out for the battlefield with a massive army under 40 commanders followed him. He rode a chariot named 'Aabhilamu', meaning fearful, which was drawn by lions instead of horses. Noticing this Lalita devi herself started moving in her Srichakra raja ratha towards the warfront. Behind her was Mantrini in the Geyachakra ratha followed by Potrini in the Kirichakra ratha. Other shakti deities followed her in vast numbers capable of dealing with all types of mystic weapons – vide [“Bhandasurendra nirmukta shastra pratyasha varshini”](#). Now Bhandasura by his mystical powers regenerated Madhukaitabha, Raktabija and other old demons. Then from Lalita Devi's laughter, –Durga Devi and other deities described in Chandi Saptashati were born and killed these demons. Bhandasura regenerated Somaka and other demons. Lalita devi generated the 10 incarnations of Vishnu from the finger tips of her hands – vide [“Karanguli nakhotpanna narayana dasakrutih”](#). The sun was about to set and

Lalita Devi decided not to delay any more. She then discharged Narayana astra and Pashupata astra and destroyed the demons and their commanders who were all turned into ashes - vide “Mahapashupatastragni nirdagdhasura sainya”. Now Bhandasura was the only one left. Lalita Devi now discharged the Mahakameshwarasra and killed Bhandasura. Immediately his Shunyaka City got burnt down. – vide “Kameshwarastragni nirdagdhasabhandasura sunyaka”. The Gods proclaimed the victory of Lalita Devi on the drums and they showered flowers, lighted camphor blazes and shouted slogans of victory.

#### Kama sanjeevanam – the rebirth of Kama (Manmatha) :

Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and other gods praised Lalita Devi’s greatness – vide “Brahmopendra mahendradi deva samstuta vaibhava”. In that praise they proclaimed thus: Mother! Bhandasura is dead but his friend Taraka is still alive to trouble us. To annihilate him Shiva must have a son. We were trying for the same but in the mean while Manmatha (god of love) died and all these events happened. Therefore kindly give rebirth to Manmatha and perform the marriage of Shiva and Parvathi.

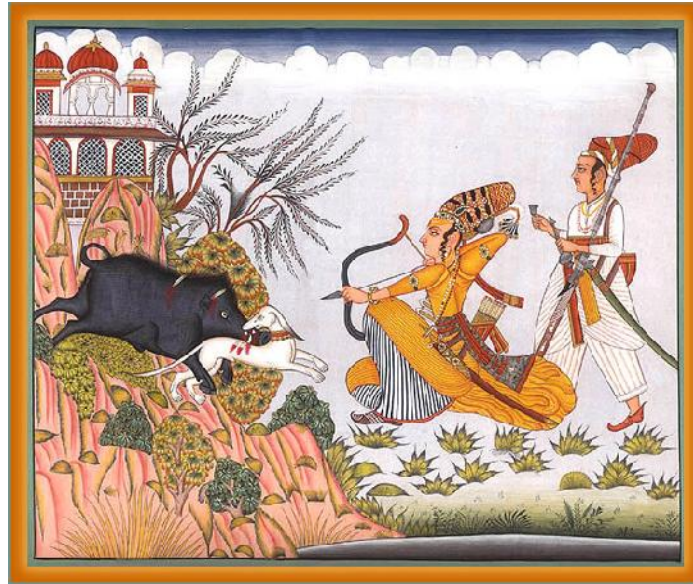
Lalita Devi smiled compassionately and looked at Kameshwara. From that look Manmatha took rebirth – vide “Haranetragni sandagdha amasanjeevanaushadhih”. - meaning Lalita Devi is the sacred herb sajeevini which gave rebirth to Manmatha who was destroyed by the fire from Shiva’s eye. Rati and Manmatha prostrated to the Mother Goddess in adoration.

The Mother Goddess blessed them and instructed them as follows : Manmatha! Now you need not fear. Go once again and cast your magical arrow on Shiva. He will lose to you this time and will marry Parvathi. With my blessings Shiva will do you no harm. From now on you can enter every one’s body and cause them to enjoy aesthetic and sensuous pleasures. And protect my devotees. At the instructions of the Mother Goddess Manmatha with his family went and cast his magic charm on Shiva. This time Shiva shook off his austerity and started searching vigorously for Parvathi. Then Manmatha cast magical arrows on Parvathi also. Shiva was very pleased with Parvathi’s penance. He appeared before her, granted a boon and married her. Kumaraswamy was born to Shiva and Parvathi. He became the commander of the army of the Gods and annihilated Tarakasura. He then married Devasena devi, the daughter of Indra. After thus helping all the gods Manmatha left to Sripura to serve Lalita Devi.

Such was the magnificent story of Devi, considered the Universal Mother, as she created a whole new world from the old world destroyed by Evil personified by the demon Bhandasura. From this Chapter of Divine History we may proceed to the story of Puranjana, to illustrate how this Purana uses pure Mythology to drive home basic lesson for the world of mankind on the perils of leading a life of Sin.

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## CHAPTER - 6 : PURANJANA : THE PERFECT MYTH



**Puranjana goes hunting**

**Fig 6-1**

The Bhagavata Purana is a massive work of 18000 verses with a network of stories leading to and finally elaborated around the life of Krishna. Among some of the most unusual and fascinating stories of the Bhagavata, was one that Sage Narada narrated to the King Prachinabarhis, to illustrate how man must conduct his affairs. It is fascinating because Narada himself says it is consciously told as an allegory. This is the following story of Puranjana, and is an example of the perfect myth, and is narrated here to distinguish it from those contents of the Puranas which have historical relevance.

There was a King called Puranjana, who wanted to find a city where he could live and which would fulfil all his physical wants and desires. He set out on a search, accompanied by a mysterious and invisible friend and after a long time came up to a magnificent city with nine gates. These gates were positioned two in the front, four at the sides, one at the back and two at a lower level below. The city had every possible convenience and facility for entertainment and enjoyment. And there, to top it all, he found a lady of extraordinary beauty, with a large retinue of personal assistants, and with security provided by a retinue of soldiers under the command of a five-headed serpent.

Questioned by Puranjana on her background, the lady replied that like everyone else, she knew nothing of her origin, or who built this city, except that she lived there at that moment, in the company of those around

her who were her friends and under the protection of the serpent who guarded the city.

Enchanted by her, Puranjana wooed her, married her and together they lived in the city for a hundred years. The city was described as having nine gates leading to different places (experiences). Of the two front gates the left one was Khadyota (the less powerful left eye). The one at the right was Avirmukhi (the more powerful right eye). Through them the master (organ of sight) could go out along with a friend Dhyuman (the sense of sight) to the village Vibhrajita (Forms grasped by the eye). Between those two gates were two more gates, Nalini and Naalini (the nostrils). Through them the master (the organ of smell) could go along with a friend Avadhuta (sense of smell). And the adjacent gate just a little below was called Mukhya and through it, the master (the mouth) could go to the lands called Apana (eatables) with two friends, Vipana (the organ of speech) and Rasajna (the organ of taste). The gate on the right side was called Pitruhu, through which the master could go along with a friend Sutradhara (the organ of hearing) to the land of Dakshinapanchala (the ritual texts). The gate on the left side was called Devahu, through which the master could go to the land of Uttarapanchala (the scriptures teaching renunciation). The gate below in the front was Asuri (the penis) through which the master could go along with a friend Durmada (sex function) to a place called Gramaka (sexual enjoyment). Behind that was the gate Nirriti (the anus) where the master could go with a friend Lubdhaka (excretory function) to the land Vaisasa (faecal matter). The gates at the sides were Nirvak (the legs) for mobility and Pesaskrit (the hands) for manual work. Lastly when the master enters the Antahpura (the heart) along with Vishuchina (the mind) he is overcome by attachment to wife and children. It was thereby that Puranjana finally lost all his sense of discrimination and his bondage to the senses was complete.

Now comes another allegory within this allegory. One day Puranjana set out on a hunting expedition in the forest of Panchprastha in his swift chariot (his dream body) drawn by five horses (the five organs of Knowledge). The chariot had a pair of shafts (I-ness and My-ness), two wheels (Merit and Demerit), one axle (Prakrti), three flagstaffs (the three gunas) and five joints (the five Pranas). The chariot had one rein (the mind), one charioteer (Buddhi), one seat (the heart) two yokes (joy and sorrow), five shooting counters (the five sense objects), seven protective coverings (the Dhatus) and five types of movement (the organs of action). Protected by golden armour (Rajoguna), armed with an inexhaustible quiver of arrows (Ahamkara and its different variants) and accompanied by the commander of his forces (the mind), Puranjana entered the Panchaprastra forest. In a violent spree of ruthless slaughter, he killed vast numbers of animals, with no place for sympathy or respect for the rules prescribed for the killing of



animals for sacrificial purposes. Exhausted at the end of the day, Puranjana returned home and went to sleep.

On waking, fully refreshed, he looked for his wife and could not find her. Her attendants then drew his attention to her lying on the floor in a dishevelled state, overcome by sorrow and anger. Summoning all his charm, he pacified her till she became composed and they were able to forget themselves in an orgy of mutual desire. Puranjana's bondage to her, to their children and to the demands of their senses became complete. In the course of time, the Daughter of Time arrived in the form of age and started to overtake them. This unrelenting person had earlier made amorous advances to Bhaya (Fear) the King of the Yavanas. Not accepting them but yet not distress her, Bhaya put her on to his brother, a fever called Karma, who ruled and consumed the world of humans, while himself (Bhaya) providing her the support of his army. The Daughter of Time now set to work on Puranjana who was thereby rendered weakened and dependent on others who soon started neglecting and ignoring him. Finally death overtook him, but even at his dying moment his bondage remained as he was full of the thought of what would happen to his wife. So it was, that this thought at the time of his death resulted in his next birth as a woman, the noble daughter of Rajasimha, the Bhoja King of Vidharbha. She was married to Malayadhvaja the Pandya King of Madurai to whom many children who continued the Pandya dynasty in that Dravida country.

In due course Malaydhvaja and his wife took to asceticism and worship of the Lord. When he died, his wife started to follow him by entering his funeral pyre. At that point she was stopped by a brahmana, who then told her that she was neither the daughter of Rajasimha, nor the wife of the departed king that she thought herself to be, but a man, Puranjana, in a previous birth. These memories notwithstanding, said the brahmana, her real identity was the eternal Jiva which takes residence in different bodies in different births and gives them transient and seeming identities which were false.

Concluding the narration of this story to Prachinabarhis, Narada clarifies that the unknown companion whom Puranjana deserts at the approach of the nine-gated city (the human body) is the Buddhi (discrimination). He does so at the instance of Ahamkara (the sense of "I") that creates a false sense of identity under external influences in the shape of the woman, Pramada (false sense of "Mine"). Narada emphasizes how the performance of Vedic rituals should not be for the sake of selfish rewards or for self-glorification but for the glorification of the Supreme Lord and fulfilment of his purposes. He drives home the point of how the extensive and senseless slaughter of animals had rebounded on Puranjana through the action of Karma.



In the foregoing Chapters we have, so far covered the History of Creation, in a sense, the creation of Gods , within the world of Human Consciousness. . It seems quite pointless to be drawn into the puerile debate between the Gnostics and Agnostics whether that Consciousness originated in a God or Man. That Consciousness had a profound spiritual, moral and material impact on the lives of mankind is a fact of History. That even a pure myth like the story of Puranjana would be seen to serve this purpose. We are therefore now poised to complete our History of Creation in terms of the physical facts of Human History in the context in which we have been brought up. We therefore now to a series of five Chapters of such History as they are presented in the Vedas and Puranas.

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## CHAPTER – 7 : ITIHASA – I VEDIC INDIAN HISTORY



**Fig 7-1**



**Fig 7-2**

That Early Man, was present and thriving in the Indian heartland, is evident from the Cave-paintings of [Bhimbetka](#) in Madhya Pradesh, vide sample above. These paintings date from 40,000 BC and show how a developed way of life extends way back far into pre-historic times.

We may also now consider the dating of remotely ancient observations and events in Indian History to be found the Vedas, in the light of extensive studies by modern scholars based on astronomical data that give BC dates as below.

**-10,000 :** Taittiriya Brahmana 3.1.2 refers to Purvabhadrapada nakshatra's rising due east, a phenomenon occurring at this date (Dr. B.G. Siddharth of the Birla Science Institute), indicating earliest known dating of the sacred Veda.

**-8500 :** Taittiriya Samhita 6.5.3 places Pleiades asterism at winter solstice, suggesting the antiquity of this Veda.

**-6776 :** Start of Hindu king's lists according to Greek references that give Hindus 150 kings and a history of 6,400 years before 300 BCE; agrees with next entry.

**-6500 :** Rig Veda verses (e.g., 1.117.22, 1.116.12, 1.84.13.5) say winter solstice begins in Aries (according to D. Frawley), giving antiquity of this section of the Vedas.

**-5500 :** Date of astrological observations associated with ancient events later mentioned in the Puranas (Alain Danielou).

**-3928 July 25<sup>th</sup> :** the earliest eclipse mentioned in the Rig Veda (according to Indian researcher Dr. Sri P.C. Sengupta).

**-3200 :** In India, a special guild of Hindu astronomers (nakshatra darshas) record in Vedic texts citations of full and new moon at winter and summer solstices and spring and fall equinoxes with reference to 27 fixed stars

(nakshatras) spaced nearly equally on the moon's ecliptic (visual path across the sky). The precession of the equinoxes (caused by the mutation of the Earth's axis of rotation) makes the nakshatras appear to drift at a constant rate along a predictable course over a 25,000-year cycle. Such observations enable specialists to calculate backwards to determine the date in which the indicated positions of the moon, sun and nakshatra occurred. Considerable work has been done in recent years by scientists like Professor Narahari Achar, using the Stellarium / Planetarium software to date astronomical events quoted in the ancient texts. Dr. P.V.Vartak refers to Valmiki recording the birth of Rama as on Chaitra Shuddha Navami (9th), on Punarvasu Nakshatra with five planets Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn in exaltation (vide Ramayana - Bala Kanda : 18 - 8,9). That date is today celebrated as Rama Navami. Dr Vartak computes the birth date on astronomical grounds to be the 4th December 7323 B.C.

The river Saraswati finds extensive reference in the Rig Veda. It went dry around 1900 BC. Its course has been established both by excavations on the ground and by satellite photography and is represented in the following drawing.

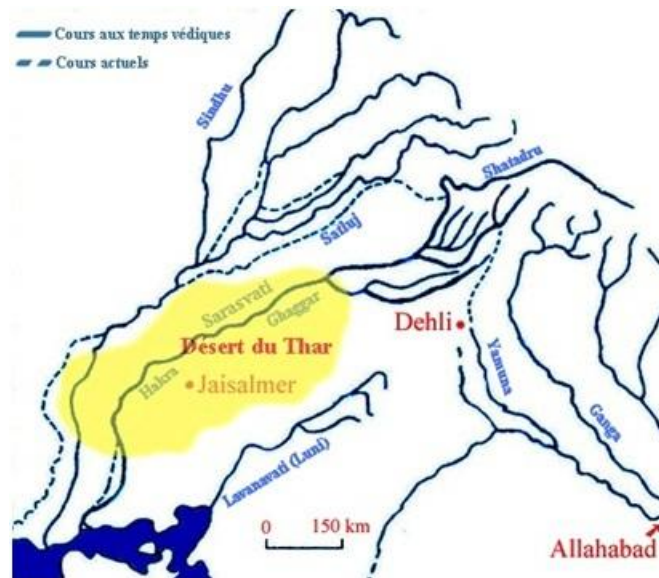


Fig 7-3

The Saraswati supported the highly developed Indus-Valley civilization at Mohenjo Daro, and Harappa in the period 3300–1300 BC, the mature period being 2600–1900 BC, and became extinct after the Saraswati dried up as will be borne out by the following images :



Mohenjodaro structures  
Fig 7-4



Indus valley civilization seals  
Fig 7-5

Several important hymns in the Rig Veda have a far-reaching historical implications to indicate India's intimate relationship, and indeed contribution to the rest of the ancient world, extending right into the origin of its ancient advanced cultures of Mesopotamia, Assyria, Greece, Egypt and even America. One set of hymns refer to the ocean going ships reaching distant lands. Another set of more numerous hymns deal with the extensive tribal conflicts, where King Sudas, was effectively able to drive many tribes hostile to the Vedic culture out of the country through Gandhara (modern Afghanistan) into the West. Both classes of people, traders and emigrants, carried with them large parts of the Vedic inheritance to distant lands – the religion, language, knowledge, arts, crafts, skills and goods, to provide the foundations of the new civilizations that flowered over the centuries in those lands. These developments are elaborated in the next Chapter.

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## CHAPTER – 8 : ITIHASA – II – VEDIC WORLD HISTORY

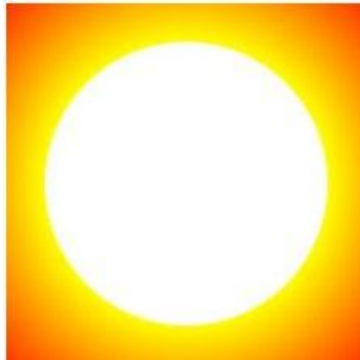


Fig 8-1

THE SUN – THE GOD OF WORLD-WIDE CULTURES  
PRESENTED TYPICALLY AS BELOW



Fig 8-2

AS SURYA BY THE INDIANS



Fig 8-3

AND AS INTI BY THE INCAS

It was earlier stated that the Vedas and Puranas presented the purpose of Creation, in a framework of History of both Man and God in a single integrated framework. This brings to mind, a perspective that has been elaborated in a perceptive book entitled “Gods, Sages and Kings”. The author, David Frawley is a remarkable American scholar, who mastered the Vedas and embraced the Vedic way of Life and was christened Vamadeva Shashtri. In his book he propounded the thesis that History should not be based on the politics of Kings and Wars but on the evolution of spirituality across mankind. He pointed out that in this regard there was convincing evidence to show that spirituality originated in India and developed as the Vedic culture, which spread and got established across the whole world, of course, adopted and adapted with local variations. We may now see how the Gods, Sages and Kings of India paved the way to internalize the ancient spirituality in all its dimensions into the way of life of the common people of India and also went on to influence the evolution of virtually all the ancient cultures of the world.

First we may note that inspired by the Gods, as many 403 Rishis composed the Rig Veda and 356 other Rishis composed the vast texts covering all branches of practical knowledge (vide Rishi lists compiled by scholars and presented in the websites at <http://www.vmission.org.in/> and <http://www.trsiyegar.com/>). The texts included Vedangas and other Smriti texts. These Rishis were men of profound insight and enormous knowledge across a vast range of subjects, each Rishi being virtually a whole University in himself. They took Prakrit, the common language of the people, refined it, building upwards from a set of fundamental phonetic elements of all human speech, and structuring it into an alphabet and a grammatically perfect language, Sanskrit, a word meaning “done to perfection”. Interestingly it is a language universally acknowledged to the present day to be the last word in linguistics, with its roots showing up in virtually all the advanced languages of the world. Its script is also referred to as Devanagari or the language of the Gods, designed as it were, to address the Gods and hence serve as the medium of the Vedas, With this language, these Rishis gave word to all the scriptural texts and devised powerful methods of teaching and memorizing them, that would and indeed did, stand the test of time, despite a purely oral mode of transmission over five millennia. With these aids they propagated the Vedas through a country-wide network of Vedic Shakas or Scholar Branches, and Vedic Patashalas or Vedic Schools, while local story tellers or Sutas, entertained the people with stories from the Puranas. With the new language, they developed the mantra and stotra and the tantra and yantra modes of worship for use by everyone. Alongside, they also developed the texts of ethics to regulate personal and social conduct, and the texts of the arts and the sciences of astronomy and geometry, which they applied to the country-wide building of sacrificial altars and temples and in making sculptures of gods for worship in homes and temples. And as all these activities, carried the divine authority of the Gods, the moral authority of the Sages and the temporal authority of the Kings, they commanded the willing support of all the people. The reach of every facet the Vedic culture was thus embedded deep into the psyche of the people over the millennia, and it is this that has to this day, certainly withstood the disruptions of later times of Muslim and British rule and even today, of the modern influences of materialism, liberalism, rationalism and the so-called secularism.

The ubiquitous temple remains today one of the most visible characteristics of Indian culture, with its features showing up in temples of all other cultures of the world. The rapid spread of the temple culture goes back to a few centuries before the start of the Christian Era, perhaps with the great impetus given by the kings of the Gupta Empire, during what is called the Golden Age of Indian History

The earliest temple discovered so far in India, dating back to around the 2<sup>nd</sup>. century BC is at Gudimallam in Chittoor District, in Andhra Pradesh as seen in the image below. The idol here is called Parasurameswara and is a unusual representation of Siva, Vishnu and Brahma together in a single sculpture. It

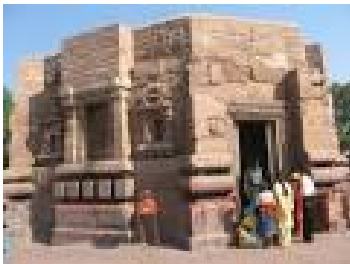


is a concrete representation in human history of an old Puranic story of the Divine Trinity. The idol presents Vishnu in his Avatar form of Parasurama punishing Brahma for upsetting his daily worship. The idol depicts Parasurama as the middle figure standing on Brahma shown as the dwarf figure at the bottom, while Shiva is at the top of the figure in the form of a Linga, in response to Brahma's appeal for help.



Fig 8-4

Another slightly later example is the Mundeswari Temple in Kaimur District of Bihar State dated to around 108 AD. This temple would appear to have been devoted first to Vishnu, and later been replaced by Shiva, and finally to Shakthi in the form of Mundeswari as in the images below :



The Temple

Fig 8-5



The Linga

Fig 8-6



Mundeswari

Fig 8-7

By the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium of the Christian Era, the temple culture had spread throughout India with massive structures housing beautiful icons of gods and goddesses and embellished by aesthetic sculptures of a vast range of themes. These works of art rested on sophisticated disciplines of the Vastu and Shilpa Sastras, resting in turn, on principles derived from geometry and astronomy. The temples were often built on mountain tops, or in the plains, as tall stepped structures or within towering gopurams around them. It is these structures and the knowledge on which they rested, that were replicated in distant lands as mountain-top or pyramid-like structures. We may now look at how the Vedic Culture originating in India started moving beyond India to countries

around the world to leave a significant imprint on the many advanced cultures that were established there.

The Rig Veda has accounts of wars where the dominant Puru dynasty who were strong votaries of the Vedic culture, pushed the non-conformist Anus and Dhruhyus westward, beyond the Indus, into and beyond Afghanistan. There these emigrants became the fore-runners of the Western civilizations that bear an imprint of many of the characteristics of their early Vedic heritage. Sudas was a Puru king who had a special role in a critical battle he waged by against the Anus and Dhruhyus, as evidenced in the following verse from the Rig Veda. It also gives an indication of the resultant emigration.

Rig Veda : VII – 18-14

नि गव्यवोऽनवो द्रुह्यवश्च षष्टिः शता सुषुपुः षट् सहस्रा ।

षष्टिर्वीरासो अधि षट् दुवोयु विश्वेदिन्द्रस्य वीर्या कृतानि ॥

ni gavyavō-navō druhyavaśca ṣaṣṭiḥ śatā suṣupuḥ ṣaṭsahasrāḥ .

ṣaṣṭirvīrāsō adhi ṣaṭ duvōyu viśvēdīndrasya vīryā kṛtāni ..

The warriors of the Anus and Dhruhyus, hostile to the pious Sudas, intending to carry off the cattle, perished to the number of sixty six thousand, six hundred and sixty, such is the glorious act of Indra.

Rig-1

Within India, that was also a period there was considerable urbanization and growth of cities as vividly evidenced by the Indus Valley Civilization. Writing on civilizations, Will Durant has said “For in the city are gathered, rightly or wrongly, the wealth and brains produced in the countryside; in the city invention and industry multiply comforts, luxuries and leisure; in the city, traders meet and barter goods and ideas; in the cross-fertilization of minds ....., intelligence is sharpened and stimulated to creative power. In the city some men are set aside from the making of material things, and produce science and philosophy, literature and art. Civilization begins in the peasant’s hut but it comes to flower only in the towns.” This description fits aptly the the growth of the Indus Valley Civilization in the environment of the Vedic culture. Here is one of several hymns in the Rig Veda that refers to a large number of cities of this civilization :

RV – VII – 3 - 7

क्वा वः स्वागृणे दासेम परीवमिष्टवद्विष हन्वैः ।

तेभिर्नो अग्रे अभिमहोभिः सप्त पूर्वैरवसीभिर्नो पाहि ..

kvā v: svāgṛṇe dāsema parīvamiṣṭavadvīṣa hanvāi .

tebhīrno agre abhimahōbhiḥ sapta pūrvairavāsībhiṇo pāhi ..

When we present to you, Agni, the sacred offering along with oblations mixed with milk and butter, then protect us, Agni, with those vast unbounded, innumerable golden cities.

Rig –2

Vast advanced cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro flowered during Vedic times, under the life-giving sustenance of the mighty Sarasvati river, but which later disappeared along with that river in the geological and ecological upheavals towards 1900 BC. Archeological excavations and later Satellite Images have yielded a phenomenal amount of evidence not only for the existence and course and canal network of the Sarasvati river, but of the existence of well developed cities at Harappa and Mohenjodaro, and several other locations in the Indus – Sarasvati basin. The evidence shows brick buildings laid out on well planned streets with water supply and drainage networks, which could not have been executed without a deep knowledge of geometry and skills of engineering. There was an existence of a wide range of arts and crafts involving working with cotton and metal. The Sulba Sutras of the Baudhayana school dedicated to the geometry and design of sacrificial symbols, carries a detailed design of the spoked wheel. This is a frequent motif among seals found in Harappa, which also carry inscriptions indicating use of writing systems, and suggesting use in trade and commerce, clearly pointing to the urban dimensions of the Indic civilization. The drying up of the Saraswati which brought this civilization to an end, would inevitably have led to a vast migration of its population.

Here is a hymn that indicates the reach of the Indus civilization right up to the western coastline of India and points to an established environment of travel in large ocean-going boats, obviously manned by large numbers of sailors, that would indicate an involvement in maritime commerce.

RV – I – 116 - 5

अनारम्भणे तदवीरयेथानमनास्थाने अग्रभणे समुद्रे ।

ययदाश्विना ऊहथुर्भुज्युमस्तं शतारित्रां नावमातस्थिवांसम् ।।

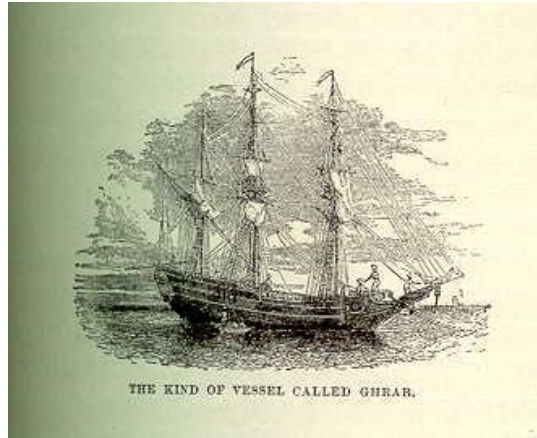
anārambhaṇē tadavīrayēthānāmanāsthānē agrabhaṇē samudrē .

yayadāśvinā ūhathurbhujyumastaṃ śatāritrāṃ nāvamātasthivāṃsam ..

This exploit you achieved, Asvins, in the ocean, where there is nothing to give support, nothing to cling to, that you brought Bhujyu, sailing in a hundred-oared ship, to his father's house.

When read with evidence in distant places like Egypt, Pheonicia, Babylon and Asia Minor, seen in their records, seals, artifacts and linguistic and knowledge exchanges originating from the Indus civilization and the western coast of India, it is clear that there were extensive trade contacts in Vedic times both by land and by sea, with these distant lands. There is evidence of trading in 975 BC by King Hiram of Tyre (Pheonicia) with India through the port of Ophir, also bearing a Sanskrit name Supara, near modern Mumbai. Indian elements were known to have migrated to Sri Lanka. The Brahmi alphabet is seen in Indonesia in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC. And Harappan artefacts dated to 2400 BC have been found in ancient Mesopotamia sites indicating contacts between the Harappa, Sumer and Akkadia civilizations, which had a special interest in importing timber from India. These developments involved the two large movements of people from India, one for trade with distant lands, and the other of emigration as mentioned earlier. The movement of people by land, was Westwards into Tibet, China, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome. The other movement was by sea, Southwards to Srilanka, and Eastwards to South-East Asia, China and ultimately across the Pacific, through Easter Island to reach Central America. The people who went to those distant lands carried with them all the facets of Vedic culture, its language, beliefs, knowledge and skills. It is these features that stand out so prominently in the cultures that flowered in those countries, almost to suggest that there was a basic spread of the Vedic culture across the world. Indeed a perceptive and brilliant British historian, Edward Pococke developed a remarkable and incisive thesis that the advanced civilisations of those regions were founded on the knowledge and skills that the ancient traders and emigrants brought with them from India. We may now look at how Indian contact and influence originated and spread in this way.

## THE SPREAD OF VEDIC CULTURE : THE SEAFARERS OF INDIA



Indian – sea faring ships  
Fig 8-8

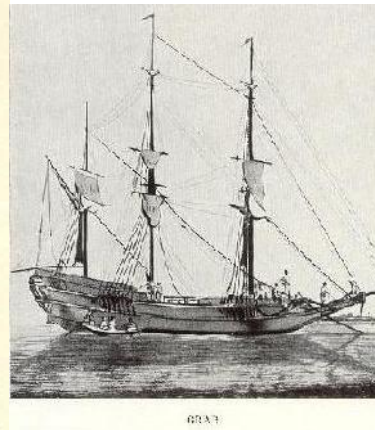


Fig 8-9

India had a long coast along with large rivers of the country joining the sea through large estuaries which provided a natural basis for development of boats for navigation by river, along the coastline and on the high seas. Indians might therefore well be the oldest seafaring people with an advanced level of skills in both boat-building and navigation.

Yuktikalpataru, a Sanskrit manuscript compilation by Bhoja Narapatti, of which a manuscript is now in the Calcutta Sanskrit College Library, It is like a treatise, on the art of shipbuilding in Ancient India. It cites several different kinds of wood of which one which is light and hard, but cannot be joined to any other class of wood. Bhoja says that care should be taken that no iron be used, in joining planks, but they are to be fixed together with substances other than iron. Bhoja also gives names and dimensions different classes of ships, like river-going ships and ocean-going ships, the largest called the Begini, being 176 cubits long, 22 cubits broad and 17 cubits high (1 cubit = 18 inches). The "Yuktikalpataru" gives a lot of details like ; metals to be used for decorations, e.g., gold, silver and copper; different colour schemes; shape designs and decorations of the prows; the number of masts; the size of cabins, for instance, the Agramadira type of cabins near the prows, used for sailings in the dry seasons as well as for long voyages and naval warfare, etc. Pali Literature describes the ship in which Prince Vijaya's bride was conveyed to Ceylon, as big enough to accommodate eight hundred people of the bride's party.



## THE WORLDWIDE SPREAD OF VEDIC CULTURE EASTWARDS :

### INDONESIA :



**Fig 8-10**

The temples of Borobudur in Java contains sculptures recalling the colonization of Java by Indians. Some of these sculptures depict Indian ships of the 6th and 7th century AD.

The following pictures show vividly the depth of Indian culture here :



**Shiva  
Fig 8-11**



**The Kalpataru or Tree of Life  
Fig 8-12**



Shiva temple, the main shrine of Prambanan, in Indonesia.

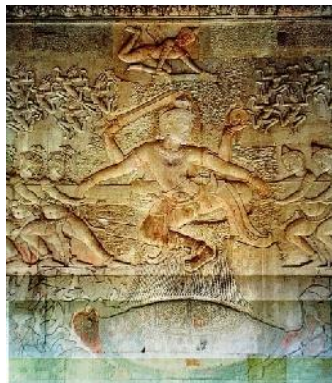
Fig 8-13



The Ramayana Ballet at Prambanan

Fig 8-14-A

Fig 8-14-B



The Samudra Manthan – Temple in Angkor Wat, Cambodia

Fig 8-15



## EASTER ISLAND :

The Easter Islands in the Pacific Ocean was perhaps the last transit point of the ancient Indians on their way across the Pacific to establish their links with the Incas, Aztecs and Mayans in Central America. Here is a comparison of ancient writings in the Easter Islands showing remarkable closeness to the writings in the Indus Valley Civilisation which is dated to 1800 BC.



Fig 8-16

## JAPAN AND CHINA :

Interestingly, the 12 Adityas were adopted into Chinese and Japanese Buddhism as guardians of the monasteries covering the four main directions, four semi-directions, above, below and the Sun and Moon. They are known as Devas or Ten in Japan (which literally means Heaven or Celestial).

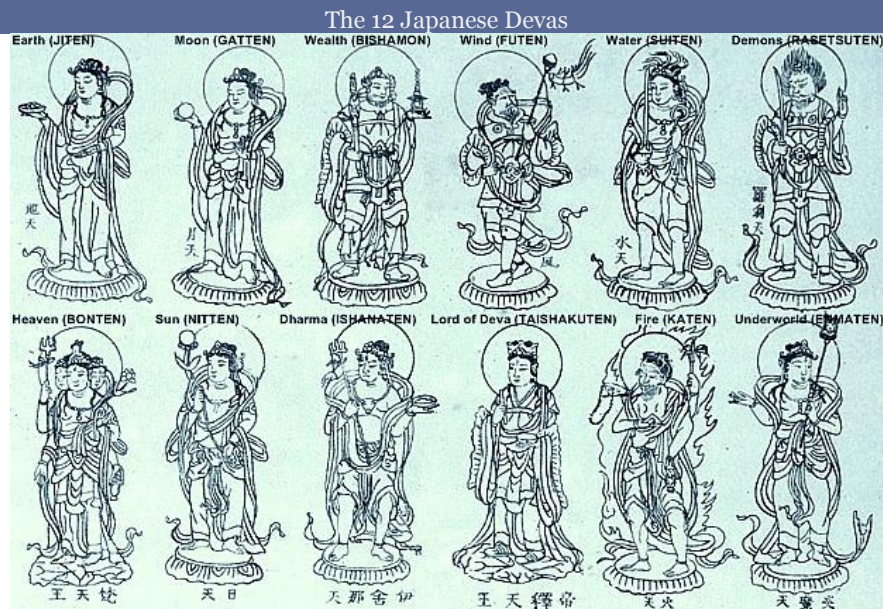


Fig 8-17

## CENTRAL AMERICA :



In no other area of the world is the imprint of the Vedic culture so deep as in the ancient civilisations of the Incas, Mayans and Aztecs of Central America. An interesting view is that "Aztecs" must be a distorted form of "Astikas"; and that the Incas of Peru, who worshipped the sun temple, had their name coming from "Ina", one of the Sanskrit names of the sun god. (Don't we call Rama "Inakula Tilaka" ?). See the image (Fig 8-18) of the Inca Sun God at the left.

The Spanish colonists who first landed in South America thought they had reached India and took the local people to be Indians, and that name has since then stuck to them. In their conquests of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century they virtually destroyed these ancient civilisations and their records. The Indian historian Chamanlal found the vast ancient temples in ruins, presenting Vedic features but more importantly found the Vedic way of life still an active presence among the local people. Their beliefs and practice included the four Hindu Yugas (epochs), the Gurukula scheme of education, the Panchayat organization, the bazaar economy, the Soma Yajna (sacrifice), the worship of Indra, Ganesha and other Hindu gods, the practice of Hindu religious observances of child-birth, marriage, death ceremonies, Suttee, the Devadasi system, the Hindu priestly hierarchy, celebration of festivals and similar legends. A festival called Sita-Ram (Situa-Raimi) was celebrated in Mexico during Navaratri or the Dussehra period. The parallels between the Hindu Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva Trinity and the Mexican Huitzilopochtli-Tlaloc Trinity and the resemblances between the attributes of certain Hindu deities and those of the Mayan pantheon are impressive. This Indian origin of the people and their culture is acknowledged in unmistakable terms by the official historian of the Mexican Government, and the head of the Archaeological Department of Mexico, not to speak of the many international historians and historians. , Ramon Mena, reputed authority of Mexican Archaeology, called the Nahuatl, Zapoteca, and Mayan languages "of Hindu origin." He went to say, "A deep mystery enfolds the tribes that inhabited the state of Chiapas in the district named Palenque... their writing, and the anthropological type, as well as their personal adornments... their system and style of construction clearly indicate the remotest antiquity... (they) all speak of India and the Orient."

B. G. Siddarth, director of the B. M. Birla Science Centre in Hyderabad states that according to the ancient texts, the devas and asuras lived on opposite sides of the Earth. Mexico and India are at opposite sides in longitude. Another reference has perhaps for the same reason, identified Mexico as the Patala of the Purana tradition. He also said the Hindu story

of the churning of the ocean has been found in carvings in Mexico, as well Mayan representations of a tortoise carrying twelve pillars similar to Indian illustrations. Dr. Ganapati Sthapati of Chennai, a foremost expert on Vastu Shastra, the ancient Hindu science of Architecture, has visited the Mayan structures in Central America and found many similarities between the design and construction methods of the Mayans and that of the ancient Hindus.

### The Gods of the Incas :



Inti the Sun God

Fig 8-19



Viracocha, is the great God of Creation

Fig 8-20

**The Gods of the Incas :** the similarity to Indian deities is striking.

**Viracocha** (also Pachacamac) – Created all living things

**Apu Illapu** – Rain God, prayed to when they need rain

**Ayar Cachi** – Hot-tempered God, causes earthquakes

**Illapa** – Goddess of lightning and thunder (also Yakumama water goddess)

**Inti** – sun god and patron deity of the holy city of Cusco (home of the sun)

**Kuychi** – Rainbow God, connected with fertility

**Mama Kilya** – Wife of Inti, called Moon Mother

**Mama Occlo** – Wisdom to civilize the people, taught women to weave cloth, and build houses.

**Manco Cápac** – known for his courage and sent to earth to become first king of the Incas, taught people how to grow plants, make weapons, work together, share resources, and worship the Gods.

**Pachamama** – The Goddess of earth and wife of Viracocha, people give her offerings of coca leaves and beer and pray to her for major agricultural occasions

**Qochamama** – Goddess of the sea

**Sachamama** – Mother Tree, goddess in the shape of a snake with two heads

**Yakumama** – Mother Water, represented as a snake, when she came to earth she transformed into a great river.



## Maya Civilization :



Fig 8-21

El Castillo is the nickname of one of the most spectacular Mayan temples that dominates the archaeological site of Chichen Itza. The design of the temple has special astronomical significance. Each face of the pyramid has a stairway with 91 steps, which together with the shared step at the top, add up to 365, the number of days in a year.

## Aztec Civilization :



Entry to an Aztec temple

Fig 8-22

## **THE WORLDWIDE SPREAD OF VEDIC CULTURE WESTWARDS :**

### **Assyria and Asia Minor :**

A wonderful perspective of the spread and depth of the Vedic culture in West Asia has been provided in a brilliant and perceptive essay entitled “Akhneten, Surya and the Rg Veda”, by the scholar-scientist, Subhash Kak. He provides as a first indication the wide prevalence of Sanskrit related names in West Asia as a first indication of this region. He quotes Roger T. O’Callaghan and W.F. Albright who had published a list of 81 names (13 from the Mitanni, 23 from the Nuzi, and 45 from the Syrian documents) with clear Indic etymologies. Dumont provided a shorter list of the etymology of 45 names in 1947, a few of which, Kak provides, with their Sanskrit cognates and meanings in parentheses as below :

Abirata (Abhirata, pleased, contented)  
Aitagama (Etagama, with the gait of an antelope)  
Aitara (the son of Itara)  
Artamanyu (Rtamanyu, revering the divine Law)  
Ardzawiya (Arjaviya, straight, honest)  
Biras'ena (Virasena, possessing an army of heroes)  
Birida'swa (Brhadasva, possessing a great horse)  
Barda'swa (Varddhasva, the son of Vrddasva)  
Bayawa (Vayava, the son of Vayu)  
Biryas'ura (Viryas'ura, the hero of valour)  
Biryawadza (Viryavaja, owning the prize of valour)  
Biryasauma (Viryasoma, the moon-god of valour)  
Biryas (Viryas, valour)  
Indarota (Indrota, upheld by Indra)  
Kalma's'ura (Karmas'ura, the hero of action)  
Purdaya (Purudaya, giving much)  
Ru"cmanya (Rucimanya, revering light)  
Satuara (Satvara, swift)  
VSaima's'ura (Ksemas'ura, the hero of security)  
Subandu (Subandhu, being good kinsmen)  
Sumala (having beautiful garlands)  
Sumida (Sumidha, bountiful)  
Swardata (Svardata, given by heaven)  
Tsitriyara (Citrya-rai, having distinguished property)  
Uruditi (Uruditi, having wide splendour)  
Warasama (Varasama, equal to the best)  
Wasasatta (Vasasapta, possessing seven dwellings)  
Wasdata (Vasudata, given by the Vasus)  
Yamiuta (Yamy'uta, favoured by Yamin)

Analysing the names, Dumont concludes that the names are clearly Indic and not Iranian.

Excavations in El-Amarna in Egypt have yielded the fact that about the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C., Kings and Princes with typical Vedic names were ruling in the region of modern day Syria. Some of the names are Artamanya, Aryavirya, Yashodatta and Suttarna. From Mitannian proper names such as Shuwardatta one can also infer the presence of the Vedic Sun God Surya in the Mitanni pantheon.

Surya was also worshiped by the Vedic Aryan Kings of Babylon, the Kassites, by the name of Suryash, as in the sculpture shown here.



Fig 8-23

A similar depiction in a rock-cut cave in Yazili Kaya in Turkey shows a frieze with 12 gods carved on it who were worshipped by the Hittites – this is suggestive of the 12 Adityas.



Fig 8-24

The more direct Vedic link was established around four thousand years ago, by the Hurrians (The Hari) who controlled an important empire called Mitanni. In a famous treaty between the Hittite ruler Suppiluliuma and the Mitanni king, Mattiwaza, (Mattiraja) about 1370 BC, the Vedic gods Mithra, Varuna, Indra and the twin Nasatyas are mentioned. In particular, the treaty listed among divine witnesses "Mitra-ash, Uruwana, Indra, and the Nashatiyanu gods", an explicit reference to Mithra, Varuna, Indra, and the Nasatya gods of the Vedic pantheon.

Another treatise from the State Archives of the Hittite Empire was discovered in Boghaz-keui in modern Turkey. It is a treatise on chariot racing and it uses Sanskrit words such as "Aikavartana = One Turn, Teravartana = Three Turns, Panchavartana = Five Turns, Sattavartana = Seven Turns."

### **Egypt :**

Col. Henry Steel Olcott, a former president of the Theosophical Society, who explained in a March, 1881 edition of The Theosophist that: "We have a right to more than suspect that India, eight thousand years ago, sent a colony of emigrants who carried their arts and high civilization into what is now known to us as Egypt...This is what Bengsch Bey, the modern as well as the most trusted Egyptologer and antiquarian says on the origin of the old Egyptians. ....He insists that they 'migrated from India before historic memory, and crossed that bridge of nations, the Isthmus of Suez, to find a new fatherland on the banks of the Nile." The Egyptians came, according to their own records, from a mysterious land...on the shore of the Indian Ocean, the sacred Punt; the original home of their gods...who followed thence after their people who had abandoned them to the valley of the Nile, led by Amon, Hor and Hathor. This region was the Egyptian 'Land of the Gods,' Pa-Nuter, in old Egyptian, or Holyland, and now proved beyond any doubt to have been quite a different place from the Holyland of Sinai. By the pictorial hieroglyphic inscription found on the walls of the temple of the Queen Haslitop at Der-el-babri, we see that this Punt can be no other than India. For many ages the Egyptians traded with their old homes, and the reference here made by them to the names of the Princes of Punt and its fauna and flora, especially the nonmenclature of various precious woods to be found but in India, leave us scarcely room for the smallest doubt that the old civilization of Egypt is the direct outcome of that the older India."

Klaus K. Klostermaier, in his book A Survey of Hinduism p. 18 says: "For several centuries a lively commerce developed between the ancient Mediterranean world and India, particularly the ports on the Western coast. The most famous of these ports was Sopara, not far from modern Bombay, which was recently renamed Mumbai. Present day Cranganore in Kerala, identified with the ancient Muziris, claims to have had trade contacts with Ancient Egypt under Queen Hatsheput, who sent



five ships to obtain spices, as well as with ancient Israel during King Solomon's reign.

We now come to the critical influence of the Mitanni on the course of Egyptian history. According to ancient records, 3400 years ago, Egyptian Emperor Menkheperura or Thutmose the IV, married a daughter of King Artatma. Artatma was the King of the Vedic Mittani Kingdom, situated in the Upper Euphrates river area. We know from a letter that Dushratta, king of Mitanni - wrote to Akhnaten, that his grandfather Artatma had given his daughter in marriage to Thutmose the Fourth. The new queen gave birth to King Amenhotep the Third who married one Tiy, daughter of Yuua, a priest of the age-old Egyptian fertility-god, originally from Mitanni. Dushratta, king of Mitanni, in a letter to Akhenaten, refers to Tiy as his sister, which would indicate that she herself was, through one of her parents at least, if not through both, of royal Mitannian blood.

Akhenaten was born in the beautiful Charuk palace, in Thebes, in or shortly after 1395 B.C. At the young age of 12, Akhnaten was crowned King of Egypt while his Mitanni Mother, Queen Tiy, governed as Regent. At the age of eighteen years, he came into complete power of the Kingdom. He removed older polytheistic forms of worship and proclaimed his faith in One God-The Sun, designated by the name of Aten, ie. The Disk or Fiery Orb. He and his wife, the famous Nefertiti assumed the role of High Priest and Priestess of the new religion in this context. Also Aten as the Supreme Godhead, was imbued with both the male and female principles. Aten is described as "Father and Mother of all that You have made." We thus see the Vedic influence coming through the Mitanni connection finally established in Egypt. After Akhenaten's death, the priests of Amon, did their best to obliterate the memory of Akhnaton and his religion of Aten. All his monuments and inscriptions were torn down and the stones were all reused.



**Queen Nefertiti  
Fig 8-25**



**and King Akhenaton  
Fig 8-26**



**Fig 8-27**

**This shrine stela depicts Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and Princesses Meretaten, Mekeaten, and Ankhesenpaaten worshiping the Aten as a family**

Subhash Kak presents the Great Hymn to the Aten, attributed to Akhenaten, which was retrieved from the Amarna tomb of Ay. It is one of the most important early markers of the Western monotheistic tradition because of the manner in which it presents the Sun as the master and lord of human destiny. According to most biblical scholars, Psalm 104 of the Old Testament, the concept of Yahweh is derived from this hymn, and as a crystallization of early Old Testament and Ugaritic traditions and also as a contribution of Moses from his background of experience in Egypt at that time, and as was finally absorbed by the Hebrews. On the other hand the deification of the Sun hearkens further back and more vividly to the Surya of the Rig Veda. And more interestingly, Kak points to the Sankrit word

**Yahvyah and its derivations occurring as an epithet applied to Agni 31 times in the Rig Veda.**

### **Greece :**

Western scholars have consistently held that Civilization with its emphasis on Rationality and Science originated in Greece and has since then spread and got established worldwide. Against this background it is interesting that Edward Pockocke, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century British historian, has put forward a brilliant and path-breaking thesis that Greece itself rests on a much older advanced Pelasgian civilization which it has virtually written off as a mythical and not historical. His point is that there a truth on which a superstructure of myth has been constructed by later Greeks from ignorance rather than true understanding. The truth is to be found in names have been established in the language of the ancient civilization that the later Greeks who displaced them did not understand. That language was Sanskrit of the people of the far older civilization of India, who emigrated and colonized Greece and other areas of the world to establish their old civilization in their new homes, with place names drawn from their old homeland. They gave their new home in Greece the name Palasa, the name of their old Indian home (which was later called Bihar), and from Palasa, the name slowly became Pelasgia. Pockocke carries this analysis to a large number of associated names to establish convincingly that the Pelasgian civilization was indeed Indian in origin and bore all of its richness. With this analysis a great deal of historical truth was seen to emerge from the large body of myth obscuring it. Pococke's analysis has much to teach us in understanding the history behind the myths of the Puranas.

### **Rome :**

Excavations from the oldest civilization of Italy, the Etruscan Civilisation show artefacts with Hindu motifs on them such as the Swastika as in the image below :



Fig 8-28

The foregoing account thus indicates the ancient direction and spread of the Vedic Culture across the world as below :

**THE WORLDWIDE SPREAD OF VEDIC CULTURE EASTWARDS :**  
India-Srilanka-South-East Asia-China-Japan-Easter Island-Central America.

**THE WORLDWIDE SPREAD OF VEDIC CULTURE WESTWARDS :**  
India-Iran-Mesopotamia-Assyria-Mitanni-Egypt-Greece-Rome.

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## CHAPTER – 9 – ITIHASA – III RAMAYANA AND MAHABHARATA



**RAMA**



**KRISHNA**

The Itihasa is a word that has generally been used to refer to the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics. The Sanskrit word Itihasa means “It was thus”, which represented History. The two epics present Indian history, the Ramayana during the rule of Rama and the Mahabharata during the great war between the Pandavas and Kauravas in the period of Krishna. The two epics therefore represent a formal and detailed history meriting their description as Itihasa or History. Later historical events with the beginning of the Kali Yuga in 3102 BC figure largely as lists of dynasties and kings figuring as the Vamsa element of the Puranas as the got updated in the later centuries. At this point we are concerned the history as presented in the Ramayana and Mahabharata, with our focus on the authenticity of their historicity. Rama and Krishna, as the last avatars of Vishnu who graced the last two Yugas, the Treta and Dvapara, remain vivid collective memories in the psyche of the common people of the current Kali Yuga, though so-called intellectuals and historians of the present day presume to question their authenticity. It will be appropriate to begin by first placing Rama and Krishna within the chronology of the two dynastic lines to which they belonged, the Solar and the Lunar Dynasties, as presented in the Bhagavata Purana.

### **SOLAR DYNASTY**

This dynasty begins with Vaivasvata Manu through his son Surya, who is succeeded in the following sequence :

Surya –Sudyumna– Pururava - Parishadhru - Sharyati - Nabhag - Ambarish - Ikshvaku - - Vikukshi - Puranajay :- Puranajay was the son of Vikukshi - Yuvnashva – Mandhata -Trishanku - Harishchandra - Rohit - Bahuk - Sagara - Anshumana - Dileep – Bhagiratha (who brought Ganga to the earth) - Michsah – Khatvanga - Dhirghbahu - Raghu - Aja – Dasaratha – and finally Rama, whose story is narrated in the Bhagavata Purana but elaborated by Valmiki in the Ramayana. The fuller Purana



geneology of the Solar Dynasty leading up to Buddha of the Ikshvaku dynasty is set out in Annexure - 2

### **LUNAR DYNASTY**

This dynasty begins with Chandra the son of the Rishi Atri the son of Brahma as follows :.

Chandra – Budha - Pururava - Vijay - Gadhi. Gadhi - Jamadagni – Parashurama ....Rantidev - Shibi – Yadu - Kuru – Puru - Dushyanta – Bharata - Shantanu – Bhishma, Chitrangad and Vichitravirya - Dhritrashtra, Pandu and the Kaurava and Pandava brothers. Their history is narrated in the Bhagavata Purana and elaborated by Vyasa in the Mahabharata.

One critical important fact on which we rely for accepting the historicity of the Vedas and Puranas, as that record contemporaneous astronomical positions which provide impeccable evidence of dates and times of events. Modern historians conditioned to accept records on paper or parchment or stone alone as proof and only recently starting to looking at the stars which Indian ancients have been doing for ages.

Coming then to the Ramayana, we now have the following astronomical evidence before us as proposed by Dr.P.V. Vartak. In the ancient tradition, the start of a year was assigned to the nakshatra reigning at the time of the Vernal Equinox. Vishwamitra modified this and started reckoning the start from the nakshatra at the Autumnal Equinox. As the reigning star Sharvan then was around 7500 B.C, the presence of Vishwamitra and the events of the Ramayana, both are placed at this time.

At that time the start of the year was celebrated at the time of the Summer Solstice with the hoisting of a flag. There is a reference to this celebration at the time of Ashwin Purnima in the Ramayana (vide Kishkindha 16/37, and Ayodhya 74/36 and Ayodhya 77) which mentions that the flags were defaced and damaged due to heat and showers. These descriptions point to the fact that their new year started on the Summer Solstice when heat and rain simultaneously exist. The Summer Solstice fell on Ashwin Full Moon, when the Sun was diagonally opposite at the Swati nakshatra. This astral configuration can be calculated to have occurred around 7400 B.C. Dr Vartak has therefore concluded that this is the time of the events of the Ramayana . He then proceeds to date the birth of Rama. Valmiki records the birth of Rama as Chaitra Shuddha Navami (9th), on Punarvasu Nakshatra and five planets were exalted then; Sun in Mesha upto 10 deg., Mars in Capricorn at 28 deg., Jupiter in Cancer at 5 deg., Venus in Pisces at 27 deg. and Saturn in Libra at 20 deg. (Bala Kanda.18/Shloka 8,9). Dr Vartak finally arrived at the date , the 4th December 7323 B.C. as the date of Rama's birth. It should of interest of the corresponding day through the ages till today continues to be celebrated as Rama Navami and is observed as a national holiday in India.

The astronomical evidence in support of the Mahabharata is equally impressive. The birthday of Krishna is reckoned as the 18<sup>th</sup> July, 3228 BC and is celebrated as a national holiday as Sri Krishna Jayanti. The date of his death on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 3102 BC marks the start of the Kali Yuga. This start has been fixed at the 20<sup>th</sup> February, 3102 BC, on the basis of the conjunction of the seven planets, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn in the constellation Aries or Mesha. This date has been computed and confirmed through the centuries till the present day, by Indian astronomers and confirmed and accepted by Western astronomers. This becomes the “sheet anchor” for the chronology of ancient Indian History. It is indeed by several distinguished scholars as the reference point for several incidents of the Mahabharata to establish its authentic historicity.

Two references in the Mahabharata texts are of special interest and importance. At the end of the Mahabharata war, now computed by scholars to have taken place in 3138 BC and lasting 18 days, Bhishma lay dying on a bed of arrows that had struck him during the war. He had long ago earned a divine blessing that he could choose the time of his death. He chose the date of the Uttarayana, the Winter solstice when the Sun would turn back from its-most position southern to return on its northern course. The Uttarayana was considered a preferred time for death for that would take the soul to the world of Brahma. This happened exactly on that day and time namely : When all the kith and kin collected for the cremation of Bhishma, Gandhari, who was overwhelmed by the loss of her sons, the Kauravas in the war, addressed Krishna, and blamed him for siding with the victorious Pandavas, instead of averting the war. She then cursed him that 36 years from then all the people of his tribe would perish and he would meet an ignoble own death. This curse finally did come true and Krishna died in 3102 BC, the day that marked the start of the Kali Yuga Era.

Yet there are historians today who declare the Ramayana and Mahabharata are Myths and not History and take their disbelief into later centuries of the Kali Yuga to declare that much of the History of those times are also Myths. Such historians do not count. It is the millions who have believed in Rama and Krishna, in the Veda and Purana through the millennia to the present day, who count. For them it is not words like History and Myth, but Truth that count. We may now turn to the next two Chapters where the Truth was presented in the Purana and finally distorted by the Western and Indian Historian in the service of the British Ruler.

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## **CHAPTER – 10 : ITIHASA – IV PURANIC INDIAN HISTORY**

The Ancient History of India is today divided between two conflicting versions. The first is the ancient Traditional Version based upon the Vedas and Puranas. The second is the modern Revised Version established by the British scholars and rulers in the 18<sup>th</sup>. Century. The latter is followed till the present day by the generations of students, teachers and scholars brought up in the educational system and its attendant culture and values as established by the British colonial rulers.

The early British colonial historians and rulers, notwithstanding the scholarship of many among them, were driven by racial, political and religious motives to reject the historicity of the ancient Indian texts and at the same time denigrate them in their entirety as irrational mythology. They therefore constructed a version of Ancient Indian History to suit their motives. But more importantly, they created an educational system to perpetuate their revised Version of Ancient Indian History, a legacy that India still lives with today. Their version is entrenched in not only in our educational system, but more importantly in the minds of the many generations of students, teachers and scholars nurtured in that system and its attendant culture and values. The two versions of Ancient Indian History, the Puranic and British, are therefore set out in some detail below for the Reader to come to his conclusions.

### **Ancient Indian History : the Puranic Version**

Some historical material can be made out in the Vedas, but most of it appears in the Puranas. When Vyasa compiled the Puranas, he set the traditional historical material in lists of dynasties that ruled in different parts of the country. The formal detailed history called the Itihasa was the Ramayana, centred around the Rama Avatar. Vyasa followed up this up with the second Itihasa, the Mahabharata, centred around the Krishna Avatar.

Vyasa is said to have compiled the Puranas as an a single narrative with the dynastic lists inevitably ending with his own time soon after the end of the Mahabharata War dated to 3138 BC. He had then presumably to leave it to posterity to update the dynastic lists of later times from the start of the Kaliyuga in 3102 BC onwards through the later redactions. This may have led to the later segmentation of his single Purana version, into the 18 main Maha Puranas and the later numerous subsidiary Upa-Puranas. The later Bhavishya Purana, as the name suggests, would appear to provide for

such future updating through future redactions. These dynastic lists appear with extensive inter-se corroboration in the earliest important Puranas. Details of dynasties also got recorded in texts other than the Puranas by later generations of scholars. One text of unknown origin, but nevertheless comprehensive and credible, was the Kali Yuga Raja Vrittanta. Other better known, and credible texts included the Rajatarangini of Kashmir and the dynastic lists of Nepal which provided valuable evidence of historic contact or contemporaneity with the mainstream dynasties of India.

The main dynastic lists covered by the Puranas and the other texts referred to above, are summarized below, with reasonable approximations of reigning dates noted against each ruler.

**Dynastic lists of Magadha as per Bhagavata Purana, (Skandha 11) :**

**1.B. Bhadratha Vamsha :** Started with Somapi, son of Sahadeva killed in Mahabharata war.

- (1) Somapi (Majari)-(3138-3080 BC),
  - (2) Bhadratha (3080-3016 BC),
  - (3) Apratapa (3016-2980 BC),
  - (4) Niramitra (2980-2940 BC),
  - (5) Sukta (2940-2882 BC),
  - (6) Bhadrakarman (2882-2859 BC),
  - (7) Senajita (2859-2809 BC),
  - (8) Bhadrakanya (2809-2769 BC),
  - (9) Mahabala (2769-2734 BC),
  - (10) Uchi (2734-2676 BC),
  - (11) Kema (2676-2648 BC),
  - (12) Auvrata (2648-2584 BC),
  - (13), Dharmanetra (2584-2549 BC),
  - (14) Nirvtti (2549-2491 BC),
  - (15) Suvrata (2491-2453 BC),
  - (16) Dhasena (2453-2395 BC),
  - (17) Sumati (2395-2362 BC),
  - (18) Suchala (2362-2340 BC),
  - (19) Sunetra (2340-2300 BC),
  - (20) Satyajita (2300-2217 BC),
  - (21) Vrajita (2217-2182 BC),
  - (22) Ripunjaya (2182-2132 BC)
- Total-22 kings for 1006 years

**2. Pradyota Vamsha :** As per Brahma Purana (2/3/74/121), Vishnu Purana (4/23/12 etc) Brahma Purana (2/3/74/122), Skanda Purana (12/2) etc. The last Bhadratha king was Ripunjaya killed by his minister Unaka (or Pulaka) who established his son-in-law Pradyota, as king

- (1) Pradyota (2132-2109 BC),
- (2) P laka (2109-2085 BC),
- (3) Vi khay pa (2085-2035 BC),
- (4) Janaka (2035-2014 BC),
- (5) Nandivardhana (2014-1994 BC)-Total 5 kings for 138 years.

### 3. i un ga Vam a - (Kaliyuga R ja V tt nta (2/2), and Bh gavata Pur a (12/2/8)

- (1) i un ga (1994-1954 BC),
- (2) K kavar a or akavar a (1954-1918 BC),
- (3) K emadhanv (1918-1892 BC),
- (4) K atrauja (1892-1852 BC),
- (5) Vidhis ra (Bimbis ra) or re ika (1852-1814 BC),
- (6) Aj ta atru (1814-1787 BC),
- (7) Dar aka (1787-1752 BC),
- (8) Ud yi (1752-1719 BC),
- (9) Nandivardhana (1719-1677 BC),
- (10) Mah nandi (1677-1634 BC).

**Buddha who was born as Siddh rtha, the son of uddhodana, belonged to this period. He was 5 years younger than the 5<sup>th</sup>. ruler, Bimbis ra and died in 8th year of Aj ta atru's rule in 1806 BC.**

The 8<sup>th</sup>. Ruler, Ud yi in the 4<sup>th</sup>. year of his rule established his capital at P aliputra on the confluence of the Sone and Gang - as per V yu Pur a (119/318).

### 4. Nanda Vam a :

Mah -Padma-Nanda was the son of last i un ga king Mah nandi by his dr wife. He won most of India by exterminating all k atriya kings. vide Bh gavata Pur a (12/1/10). He ruled for 88 years followed by 8 sons for 12 years – vide Matsya pur a (270/20, 273/23). The dynasty ruled for a total of 100 years from 1634 to 1534 BC.

### 5. Maurya Vam a :

The famous minister Kau ilya, also known Ch akya, the author of the Arthasastra, destroyed the earlier dynasty and made Chandragupta the king. Twelve Maurya kings ruled for a total of 316 years. Vide Matsya Pur a (270/32), V yu Pur a. Kaliyuga R ja V tt nta (3/2), etc.

- (1) **Chandragupta Maurya (1534-1500 BC).**
- (2) Bindus ra (1500-1472 BC),
- (3) **A hoka (1472-1436 BC),**
- (4) Sup r va (Suya a, or Ku la)- (1436-1428 BC),
- (5) Da aratha (Bandhup lita)-(1428-1420 BC),
- (6) Indrap lita (1420-1350 BC),
- (7) Har avardhana (1350-1342 BC),
- (8) Sangata (1342-1333 BC),

- (9) Ilika (1333-1320 BC),
- (10) Soma (Deva-) arm (1320-1313 BC),
- (11) atadhanv (1313-1305),
- (12) Bhadratha (Bhadra)- (1305-1218 BC).

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In 1784, Sir William Jones deliberately decided that the name Sandrakottus appearing in the record of the Greek historian Megasthenes referred to Indian king Chandragupta Maurya as the contemporary of Alexander the Great at the time of the latter's invasion of India around 312 BC. Two names Xandrames and Sandracryptus figured in the Greek record as the predecessor and successor of Sandrakottus. These names bore no similarity to the names Mahapadma Nanda and Bindusara, the predecessor and successor of Chandragupta Maurya. But this fact was glossed over by Jones, who brought the date of Chandragupta Maurya down from 1534-1500 BC. to around 312 BC to fix his contemporaneity with Alexander. The objective of Jones was to reject the antiquity and denigrate the sanctity of the Puranas and thereby establish the priority and superiority of the Graeco-Roman civilization. In the process he perpetrated a grave distortion of the entire chronology of Ancient Indian History.

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#### 6. Unga-Vamsha :

Ten Unga kings ruled for 300 years - as per Matsya Purana. Vyasa

and Kaliyuga Rāja Vṛtanta .

- (1) Puyamitra (1218-1158 BC),
- (2) Agnimitra (1158-1108 BC),
- (3) Vasumitra (1108-1072 BC),
- (4) Sujyeha (1072-1055 BC),
- (5) Bhadraka (1055-1025 BC),
- (6) Pulindaka (1025-992 BC),
- (7) Ghodavasu (992-989 BC),
- (8) Vajramitra (989-960 BC),
- (9) Bhagavata (960-928 BC),
- (10) Devabhṛti (928-918 BC).

#### 7. Kaśapa-Vamsha :

Four Kaśapa kings ruled for 85 years (Vishnu Purana 4/24/39-42 etc).

- (1) Vāsudeva (918-879 BC),
- (2) Bhāmimitra (879-855 BC),
- (3) Nārāyaṇa (855-843 BC),
- (4) Suarm (843-833 BC).

#### 8. Andhra-Vamsha : - Also called the Satavahanas :

Thirty three Andhra kings ruled for 506 years. – vide Matsya Purana (Chapter 270 etc.). Other Puranas show gaps but the full detailed list is available in the Kaliyuga Rāja Vṛtanta.

- (1) Simukha (Sindhuka or Sumukha)-(833-810 BC),
- (2) Riksha (810-792 BC),

- (3) r malla takar (792-782 BC),
- (4) P r otsanga (782-764 BC)
- (5) r takar (764-708 BC),
- (6) Skandha-stambin ( r vasvan )-(708-690 BC),
- (7) Lambodara (690-672 BC),
- (8) pilaka (672-660 BC),
- (9) Megha-Sv ti (660-642 BC),
- (10) ta-Sv ti (642-624 BC),
- (11) Skanda-Sv ti (624-617 BC),
- (12) M gendra-Sv ti-Kar a (617-614 BC),
- (13) Kuntala (614-606 BC),
- (14) Saumya (606-594 BC),
- (15) ata-Sv ti-Kar a (594-593 BC),
- (16) Pulom vi-1 (593-557 BC),
- (17) Megha (557-519 BC),
- (18) Ari a (519-494 BC),
- (19) H la (494-489 BC)-author of G th -sapta- at ,  
**It is to be noted that he was a contemporary of Adi ankar .**
- (20) Ma alaka (489-484 BC),
- (21) Purandara-Sena (484-463 BC)
- (22) Sundara- takar (463-462 BC),
- (23) Chakra-V si h -Putra and Mahendra (462-461 BC),
- (24) iva-1 (461-433 BC),
- (25) Gautam -Putra- takar (433-408 BC),
- (26) Pulom vi-2 (408-376 BC),
- (27) iva-2 (376-369 BC),
- (28) ivako ( 369-362 BC),
- (29) Yajña r (362-343 BC),
- (30) Vijaya r (343-337 BC),
- (31) **Chandra r (337-334 BC),**
- (32) Pulom vi-3 (334-327 BC : He was a child son of Chandra r .

**Chandrasri and Pulommavi-3 were murdered and were succeeded by Chandragupta who launched the Gupta Dynasty as detailed below.**

**Gupta Vamsa :**

- (1) Chandragupta-1 (title –Vijay ditya). (327-320 BC)
- (2) Samudragupta (title – A ok ditya) (320-269 BC)
- (3) Chandragupta-2 (title - Vikram ditya) (269-233 BC).
- (4) Kum ragupta-1 (233-191 BC)
- (5) Skandagupta (191-175 BC)
- (6) Vainyagupta (175-174 BC)

- (7) Kum ragupta-2 (174-172 BC)
- (8) Budhagupta (172-166 BC)
- (9) Narasimhagupta (title B l ditya-1)- (166-126 BC)
- (10) Kum ragupta-3 (126-85 BC) and finally
- (11) Vi ugupta (85-82 BC).

One other effect of the distortion of chronology perpetrated by Jones was to shift the start chronology of the Gupta dynasrty from 312 BC to 312 AD. The Greek record names of Xandrames Sandrakottus and Sandracryptus bore a better correspondence to the Gupta sequence of kings, Chnadrasi (or Chandrames), Sandrakottus and Sandracrypyus and therefore pointed to the contemporaneity of the Chandragupta of the Guptas with Alexander. Jones ruled out this possibility as it did not suit his purpose as mentioned earlier.

It is the above Puranic Version of ancient Indian History from the start of the Kaliyuga in 3102 BC, upto the dawn of the Christian Era that the Western Historians and British Colonial Rulers distorted to present their own Modern Version, to which we may now turn our attention.

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## **CHAPTER – 11 - ITIHASA – V**

### **THE MODERN VERSION OF PURANIC HISTORY**



**PURANIC VERSION ---- MODERN VERSION**

The Ancient History of India as stated earlier, is today divided between two conflicting versions. The first is the Ancient Traditional Version based upon the Vedas and Puranas described in the earlier Chapters. The second is the distorted Modern Version established by the Western Historians and British Colonial Rulers in the 18<sup>th</sup>. Century. The latter Version, as described in the present Chapter, remains intact till the present day, because of the generations of students, teachers, scholars and historians brought up in the educational system established by the British colonial rulers or steeped in the attendant culture and values fostered by the West.

Today however, traditional Indian scholars and the larger Hindu population remain deeply devoted to the sanctity of the Vedas and Puranas and do not doubt their version of Ancient Indian History, And in addition there is currently in India and around the world, a large number of Indian and Western scholars brought up in the tradition of modern science who have been substantiating much of the content of traditional Indian history with an increasing body of scientific evidence.

The early British colonial historians and rulers, notwithstanding the scholarship in Sanskrit of many among them, were conditioned by racial, political and religious bias that rendered them unwilling to recognize and accept the historicity, not to speak of the philosophical, spiritual and religious strengths, of the ancient Indian texts. They constructed a version of Ancient Indian History substantially different from that recorded in the ancient traditional texts and designed to cast their credibility in doubt and reject them as irrational mythology in order to pave the way for the entry of Christianity. Today however, a growing body of scholars, both modern and traditional, Western and Indian, have been bringing to light an expanding body of new facts, interpretations and insights that challenge the British version and present a serious case for its reconstruction to present a more objective version of ancient Indian History.



## **Ancient Indian History : the British Version**

A website, in <http://www.encyclopediaofauthentichinduism.org/index.html> has the following interesting account of how the British historian Sir William Jones changed the course of Ancient Indian History. In January 1784, the Asiatic Society of Bengal was established in Calcutta under the patronage of Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones was appointed its President. Its main purpose was to find ways of how to accomplish British aims through publication of research works in the name of "Asiatic Researches". These aims appeared in its first paper published by Jones towards the end of that year. (vide Asiatic Researches Vol. 1. Published 1799, pages 234-235) in the following words : "As to the general extension of our pure faith in Hindustan there are at present many sad obstacles to it. We may assure ourselves, that Hindus will never be converted by any mission from the church of Rome, or from any other church; and the only human mode, perhaps, of causing so great a revolution, will be to translate into Sanscrit such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of ISAIAH, as are indisputably evangelical, together with one of the gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse, containing full evidence of the very distant ages, in which the predictions themselves, and then heritage history of the Divine Person (Jesus) predicted, were severally made public; and then quietly to disperse the work among the well-educated natives."

On 2nd February 1786, Jones, in his Presidential speech proposed his theory of an unknown protolanguage that was designed to discredit the authenticity of the Puranic/Vedic tradition and to prepare a ground for presenting Indian history resting on an Aryan invasion from the West. There is no doubt that Jones and his other contemporary Western historians were distinguished scholars in Sanskrit who brought the ancient India heritage to world attention and for this India must remain grateful. But their aims were to use the knowledge to subvert the Indian heritage and replace it by the Western heritage. The British contributions in India did not follow the example the role of the Spaniards in destroying the great ancient civilizations in Central America or the destruction wrought by Muslims in India and in other countries in furtherance of their respective religions. On the other hand their destruction of the socio-economic strengths of India was no less gruesome in its consequences.

The Bhagavata Purana list of ancient ruling dynasties was presented to Jones by his Sanskrit teacher, Pandit Ramakanta. In his 10th Presidential speech of 1793 Jones propounded his finding that discredited the entirety chronology of the Purana dynastic list. He picked the name Chandragupts Maurya from that list, (There was nowhere else that he could have got the names of Cnandragupta Maurya and his successors and the periods for which they reigned) and forced his reigning date down from 1534-1500 BC, to a date around 312 BC in order to prove him to be a

contemporary of Alexander the Great. He did this, based simply upon the similarity of the name Chandragupta to Sandrakottus named in the Greek records of Alexander's campaign. However two names, Xandrames and Sandracryptus, also figuring in the Greek records as the predecessor and successor of Sandrakottus held no such similarity to the names of the predecessor and successor respectively of Chandragupta Maurya, namely Mah -Padma-Nanda and Bindusara, while ignoring the closer corresponding similarity to Chandrasri and Samudragupta, the predecessor and successor of Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty. Critically also, there was no reference whatever in the Greek records to the central figure, Chanakya, the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya. Jones chose to gloss over these serious discrepancies. The contemporaneity of Alexander with Chandragupta Maurya established by Jones came to be called the Sheet Anchor of Indian History. Concurrently and consequently there were further serious distortions of traditional Puranic chronology, shifting dates of other critical historical figures like Buddha and Ashoka, each by over a thousand years. H.H.Wilson who was the Secretary of the Asiatic Society at the time of Sir William Jones, was a great Sanskrit scholar who had translated a large part of the Vedas and Puranas. It is interesting that in his introduction to the Vishnu Purana he has himself largely conceded that the dynastic lists, discrepancies notwithstanding, could be largely considered ancient and credible. Jones died in 1794 leaving behind a legacy of this far-reaching change in the record of Indian History, to be addressed by later scholars, Western and Indian.

Among Western Orientalists the German, Max Müller occupies the foremost place by his monumental work of retrieving, translating and documenting the bulk of the ancient Indian scriptural texts, for which India must be ever grateful. He had the highest regard for those texts and it would be hard to improve on his words of praise for them. "What have we inherited," he wrote, "from the dark dwellers of the Indus and the Ganges ? Their historical records extend in some respects, far beyond all records and have been preserved to us in such perfect and such legible documents, that we can learn from them lessons, which we can learn from nowhere else". Yet Muller too fell in line with the British projection of the Aryan Invasion theory and with the ancient chronology projected by Jones. Muller himself wrote "Although other scholars and particularly, M.Troyer, in his edition of the Rajatarangini, have raised objections, we shall see that the evidence in favour of the identity of Chandragupta and Sandrakottus is such as to admit of no reasonable doubt.... " Vide Pp 3-8 of Max Muller's History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature – Ed 1859, & The Allahabad Edition – Pp 141-148. M.Troyer in his Introduction to the Rajatarangini had asserted that the identity was to Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty and he also wrote a letter to Max Muller accordingly, but got no reply.

**M.A.Troyer, who translated the remarkably objective dynastic history of Kashmir showed Dharma-Ashoka of the Gonanda dynasty in 1148-1400 BC to be the contemporary of the Mauryan Ashoka as per the Puranic Chronology. The British historian Sir Aurel Stein who had also translated the Rajatarangini contested its chronology and also the finding of Troyer in order to conform to the discounting of the Puranic chronology by Jones. The traditional Indian Scholar, Kota Venkatachalam, referred to later, set out in impressive detail with credible reason, how all these British Historians were clearly acting in concert in decrying and distorting not only the chronology of the Puranas but also the Rajatarangini chronology of Kashmir and the Raja Vamsa chronology of Nepal and the Buddhist sources, to ensure the sanctity of their prized Sheet Anchor of Indian History. It would seem that Troyer, being a Frenchman and a scholar of high integrity had no axe to grind like the German-British conspirators who were out to distort Indian History as part of a larger European strategy to establish Western Racial, Christian and Colonial supremacy over the rest of the world.**

**Muller's later writings towards the end of his life would suggest that he was uneasy that he too had been party to an unjust distortion of the ancient Indian texts for which he had developed the highest regard. "No nation", he wrote, "has in this respect, been more unjustly treated than the Indian. Not only have general conclusions been drawn from the most scant materials, but the most questionable and spurious authorities have been employed without the least historical investigation....". Nevertheless a whole succession of Indian scholars made their careers and even national reputations, building on the work of Jones. Added to this, the political, social and communal problems generated by the British and inherited by India after Independence removed all incentive to correct distortions of the country's history till the present day.**

**Possibly one of the most well-researched study of the old Puranic version and the distorted British Version was by a traditional Indian scholar of outstanding erudition and perception, Kota Venkatachalam (1885-1959). His life was one of deep spiritual commitment, supported by dedicated yogic and religious practice, but yet devoted to social and educational causes and participation in the freedom struggle. He travelled by foot over the whole of South India like a mendicant, living on charity, visiting holy places and interacting with religious figures. Around 1912 during his visit to the Sankara Mutt at Sringeri, he sought initiation into Sanyasa but the Acharya dissuaded him on the ground that he had family responsibilities yet to be fulfilled. He spent his whole lifetime studying not only the scriptures but an amazing spectrum of subjects, like Ayurveda, Geography. Astronomy, and ancient and modern Indian and Western history. His study of History led him in to extensive research to demonstrate the motives and methods of the British distortion of Puranic History, and he turned out a**

vast volume writings on the subject. His specific presentation on this subject at the 1951 Session of the Indian History Congress, at Jaipur is reproduced in Annexure 3 of this book. Towards his last years he embraced Sanyasa and became the Peethapati of the Sri Abhinava Virupakha Peetham, under the name Sri Avyananda Bharati Swamy. His last words in his last work, Age of the Mahabharata War, which he completed just before he died were “May truth prevail !”

The Puranic dynastic lists reproduced in the last Chapter were the painstaking compilations of Kota Venkatachalam and were corroborated in their entirety by a modern lay scholar, Arun Kumar Upadhyay, a retired officer of the Indian Police Service, coming from a family of erudite traditional Sanskrit scholars of Bihar. One of the authorities cited by them in support of the Puranic dynastic lists reproduced in the last Chapter, is the Kali Yuga Raja Vrittanta, said to be a part of the Bhavisyottara Purana, but possibly the work of a later unknown scholar. The age and identity of the author of the Vrittanta not being known, the distinguished modern Indian historian Dr R.C.Mazumdar (1888-1980) rejected it as a forged document. Dr Majumdar supported the British rejection of the Puranic chronology and its corroboration by Kalhana's Rajatarangini. Yet distinguished traditional scholars like T.S.Narayana Sastry (1869-1918) and Kota Venkatachalam who dedicated their lifetimes researching Ancient Indian History have asserted that the text of the Kali Yuga Raja Vrittanta speaks convincingly for itself with facts borne out not only by the Puranas, but also facts derived from other independent sources. Dr. Mazumdar cited some reasons for his conclusion, but Venkatachalam responded with more elaborate arguments and more convincing details. A commonsense view would show that the document contains substantial accuracies and is largely in agreement with other sources of history, and one should not be sidetracked by trivial discrepancies. Traditional scholars generated texts to disseminate knowledge, and simply had no need or motive to engage in malpractices of today like Plagiarism, Fabrication and Forgery. Questions whether the document is genuine or forged can be raised in respect of any document where the writer was known or unknown, and this should detract from whatever truths are set out in the document, which should therefore be entitled to fair consideration and not suffer unfair rejection. This controversy also highlights a sad aspect of the social and academic environment of that day and continuing today, where the modern well known scholar is heard but not the so well known traditional scholar, who is peremptorily dismissed. More often the modern scholar does not have the command and insight of Sanskrit texts that the traditional scholar has, and who often has the same perception of modern texts as well. The loud voices that dominate the public discourse of today are those announcing themselves as modern, progressive, liberal, and secular. The print and electronic media of today also have a great preference for the

loud voices of the powerful, not the meek and humble voices that seek to speak for truth.

Let us now hear Kota Venkatachalam on his findings on a question of critical importance : the dating of the Gupta Dynasty. It is critical, as he submits with impeccable reasoning and credible evidence that Sandrakottus cited in the Greek documents of Alexander's invasion refers to Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty whose date is shown to be the contemporary of Alexander. Venkatachalam provides proof for this. He says that Dr.Fleet, the infallible archaeologist, has given us a huge volume on the subject of inscriptions, "Corpus Inscriptionem Indicarum Vol III". In it he presents an excellent collection of the Early Gupta inscriptions, but his conclusions from them are quite wrong; his finding that the Gupta Era began in 319-320 A.D., proceeds from a serious misinterpretation. Dr. Fleet relies entirely upon one record, the Mandasor inscription of Kumaragupta and Viswavarman. The inscription is in a temple constructed by the weavers of Malawa when Kumaragupta was the Gupta ruler and Viswavarman was the governor of Malawa; the temple was later repaired in the time of Bhanuvarman, son and successor of Viswavarman.

The date of the construction is recorded in the inscription as the expired 493<sup>rd</sup>. year and the date of repair as 524<sup>th</sup>. of some Era. The text of the inscription is in Sanskrit and the expired 493<sup>rd</sup>.year is described as "Malavagana Stitya" which means "according to the calculation current among the Malawas." Dr. Fleet translates "Malavagana Stitya" as "from the establishment of the tribal constitution of the Malawas." A parallel inscription (No. 35 of Yasodharman) in Sanskrit verse gives the date as 589<sup>th</sup> expired year described as "Malawa Gana-Stiti-Vasaat—Kaalajnaanaaya Likhitheshu" which means "in the years written according to the method of calculation of the Malwas for chronological purpose". Here again Dr. Fleet translates the phrase as "from the (establishment of) the Supremacy of the Tribal Constitution of the Malawas"; adding in a footnote that he does not quite catch the significance of Vasaat! Dr. Fleet does not enlighten us where he got this unknown "tribal constitution of the Malawas" but this was taken to be 57 BC which is the start of the Vikrama Era. And so this Mandasor inscription, we are told by Dr.Fleet, gives 494 minus 57 or 437 A.D. as the date of Kumaragupta. Since Kumaragupta I lived in year 127 of Gupta Era it follows that the Gupta Era began in 437-127, that is 320 A.D. and so the Gupta dynasty proceeds from there as per Dr.Fleet !

Kota Venkatachalam now proceeds to set the record straight from his encyclopaedic knowledge of local Eras then prevailing. He clarifies that the Malava Gana—Saka starting in 725 B.C is in common use among the astronomers (Kalajnas) of Malawa. The province Malawa attained its independence in 725 B.C., in commemoration of which the Malawa-Gana-

Saka (or Era) was started in 725 B.C., by the people of Malawa. Therefore Malawa-Gana-Saka 725 B.C. minus 494 gives 231 B.C. corresponding to year 96 of the Gupta Era and therefore sets the start of the Gupta Era at 327 BC, which accords with the Purana chronology. The Mandasor inscription has therefore to be read dated to year 96 of the Gupta Era or 231 B.C. thus setting the reign of Kumaragupta I as between 94-136 of the Gupta Era, or between 233 and 191 B.C. Thus Venkatachalam's close examination of Malawa-Gana Saka has yielded a valuable finding in support of the Puranica chronology and the contemporaneity of Alexander with Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty.

Another similar corroboration comes from K.D.Sethna, the distinguished scholar and life-time disciple of Aurobindo. After a detailed exchange of letters with Kota Venkatachalam, with whom he largely agreed but nevertheless felt the need for clinching corroboration. In his book "Ancient India in a New Light", he has provided another similar instance of the Gokak plate inscription dated to 532-533 of Dejj Maharaj (530-550 AD) during the Manpura branch of the Rashtrakutas. This inscription states it is dated 845 years following Gupta dynasty. Sethna points out that the reference to the Gupta dynasty in the inscription is by the word "Aguptyayika", where the Sanskrit "A" prefix could mean either the beginning or end of the dynasty. As dating of an era is associated with founding of a dynastic rule, this points the start of the Gupta at 327 BC. Sethna's reference to Alberuni's record of the Gupta dynasty ending at 320 AD would therefore be off the mark.

The chronology, as set out above by Kota Venkatachalam and K.D.Sethna thus provides yet another affirmative evidence of the contemporaneity of Alexander with the Gupta dynasty and a more credible association of the three names in the contemporaneous Greek record of Xandrames, Sandrakottos and Sandracryptos to the succession of Gupta kings Chandrasri, Chandragupta and Samudragupta. The contemporaneity with Chandragupta Maurya forced on us by the British rulers thus stands discredited.

There are three important personalities whose dating is thrown completely into historical disarray by the British rejection of the Purana chronology : Buddha and Ashoka and Sankara. The earlier narrative in the last Chapter clearly takes Ashoka also back to the same early true period of Chandragupta Maurya. All Buddhist, Jain and Puranic sources agree that Buddha who was born as Siddh rtha, the son of uddhodana, was contemporaneous with the 5<sup>th</sup>. Ruler of the Sisunaga dynasty , Bimbis ra (1852-1814 BC), and having died in during the reign of his son Aj ta atru (1814-1787 BC). Kota Venkatachalam has pin-pointed Buddha's death as on Vaisakha Purnima, on the 27<sup>th</sup> March,1807 BC., The current modern view however of the age of Buddha derived by varied interpretation of various

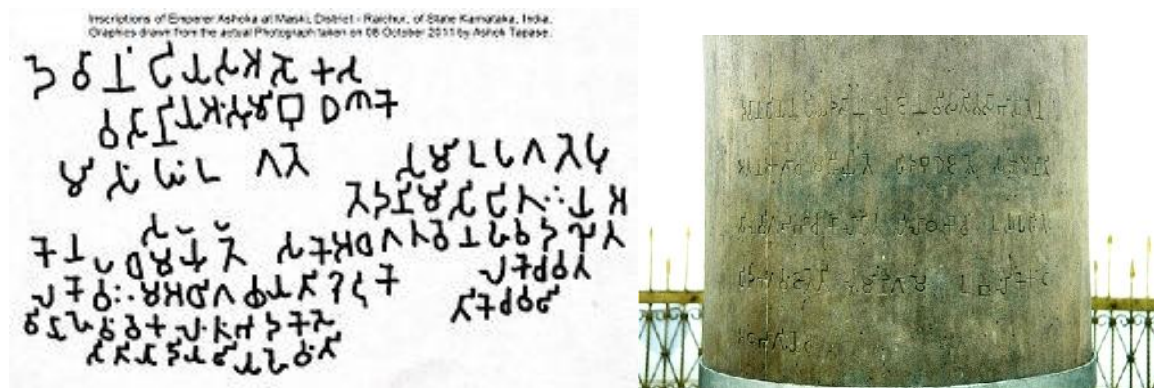
Buddhist sources, assumes his Nirvana to be dated at 554 or 483 BC. There is presently an important confirmation of Kota Venkatachalam finding of the 1807 BC date by Dr. Narahari Achar based on astronomical evidence. (see : [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4BAzCi4O\\_I4cXR5cHFyZW5vWlE/edit?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4BAzCi4O_I4cXR5cHFyZW5vWlE/edit?usp=sharing)) His lead came from the historian P.C.Sengupta's interpretation of a passage from the Buddhist canonical text, Samyutta Nikaya, that Buddha spent three months before his death at Sravasti. An allegory in the text was clearly interpreted by Sengupta to refer to the occurrence a lunar and solar eclipse at that time. Using the Planetarium software, Dr Achar reviewed all possible star configurations that could confirm the above combination of event markers, and this led to the exact date arrived at by Kota Venkatachalam. Yet another collaboration on astronomic data came unexpectedly from another source. Around the year 1900, Bishop P.Bigandet, had written a biography of Buddha based on Burmese texts, and had arrived a date of Buddha's death around the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC. Later an Indian astronomer Swamikannu Pillai using astronomical markers of a set of events in Buddha's life, cited by Bigandet, arrived at 1-4-478 BC as the date of Buddha's death. Venkatachalam referred this astronomical evidence to V.Thiruvengkatacharya, a Professor of Mathematics at the Government Arts College at Rajahmundry for his opinion. That person pointed out that astronomical events always recurred cyclically and felt that the result should have been corroborated by external collateral evidence, by reference for instance to the fact that the death occurred eight years after the death of the King Ajatasathru, which was not done. He therefore looked for such occurrences in the period of Ajatasathru's reign from 1815 to 1788 as per the Purana chronology. And it turned that the same star configuration for the events listed by Bigandet and used by Swamikannu Pillai occurred in 1807 exactly as Venkatachalam had arrived at !

Let us now hear the scholar T.S.Narayana Sastry on the date of Sankara. Currently Sankara's birth has been set tion at 788 CE. Sastry has contested this and has provided convincing proof that Sankara lived from 509 to 477 BC and had established the Mutts at Kanchipuram, Sringeri, Jagannath, Badarikashrama and Dvaraka 481, 483, 484, 485 and 490 BC respectively. These dates are borne out by the archives of Kanchipuram, Jagannath and Dvaraka Mutts. The original archives of Sringeri had been lost and a reconstructed archive carried a later mistaken date that would place Sankara in the 1<sup>st</sup>. Century BC. The Mutt at Badarikashrama had apparently ceased to exist a few centuries ago and its records were not traceable. The rejuvenation of the Vedic culture by Sankara in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC and his establishment of Mutts across the country marks the resurgence of Vedanta to meet the challenge of Buddhism, and indeed led to many of the Vedantic concepts being absorbed into Mahayana Buddhism.



Venkatachalam has shown that Alexander was contemporaneous, not to Chandragupta Maurya whose date Jones had brought down by 1200 years to 312 BC, but to Chandragupta of the Gupta Dynasty whose date was conveniently shifted by the British to six centuries later. These monstrous distortions simply played havoc with the facts of ancient Indian History. The nation wide spread of the Edicts currently credited to Ashoka form hard physical evidence, but to what date are they to be assigned - to the Puranic Ashoka of 1472-1436 BC or the “British” Ashoka 268-232 BC ?. They would fit into the earlier date on the basis of possible use of Brahmi and established building skills evidenced by the Indus Valley civilisation. They can also well be the work Buddhist people themselves. Buddhists may have formed a sizeable part of the population of the period of the Guptas who promoted a liberal co-existence of both the Hindu and the Buddhist streams of the population through a vast spread of Hindu Temples and Buddhist Monasteries. The Guptas also promoted the Nalanda University that produced a flowering of the intellectuals of both streams who may have spread both within and outside India.

Their author in all the Edicts is presented by the title Devanamapiya Piyadasi, and not by a personal name. The title may have referred to the Mauryan Ashoka or to a later Gupta King. Two minor rock Edicts alone mention the name Ashoka, and this happens to be one of the names of Samudragupta of the Gupta Dynasty. These Edicts were discovered the first in 1915 by C. Beadon, a British gold-mining engineer, at [Maski](#), a village in [Raichur district](#) of [Karnataka](#) and the second in the village Gujarra in [Datia district](#) of [Madhya Pradesh](#). The pillars make the pillar edicts more impressive, but the rock edicts are crude. The inscriptions in both cases do not present high calligraphic quality as can be seen in the image of the Maski Rock edict and the Vaishali Pillar edict below :



The Inscription in the Samudragupta Pillar at Allahabad seen below shows, in comparison, a clearly superior quality indicative of direct royal authorship of the Guptas.



The story in Edict- No XIII narrates the conversion of the King to Buddhism as revolt of his conscience to the mass slaughter of his Kalinga campaign : a hundred and fifty thousand people deported, a hundred thousand killed and many times that number perished ! The huge scale of such a genocide and deportation seems unbelievable and no local evidence or tradition has been traced for such an event in Kalinga around the 8<sup>th</sup> year of the King, which would be 260 BC of the Mauryan Ashoka (268-232 BC) according to the the British version). It seems inexplicable that the British Historians and all of subsequent historical accounts should universally gloss over the confession of this massive genocide and proclaim its author as the greatest Emperor of Indian History. There seems to be a case for a detailed investigation and analysis of the internal evidence across all the Edicts along with external collateral evidence to arrive at their authenticity, chronology and authorship. The stories in Edict No XIII could have been designed by the Buddhists to spread the appeal of Buddhism.

Another view is to attribute the Edicts to another Dharma-Ashoka, the 43<sup>rd</sup> King of the Gonanda-vam a in 1448-1400 BC who had become a Buddhist. He is referred to in the Rajatarangini of the Kashmir Historian Kalhana (12<sup>th</sup>.Century AD) in its well documented accounts of dynasties of ancient Indian History. The inscription at Kalsi near Dehradun gives the names of four defeated kings : Tulamaya, Antikina, Maka, Allikasudala. The last one is considered to be King Alekha-sundara of Kalinga. Alakha is a common name all over India, but the variant Alekha occurs only in Orissa. Ashoka's son Jalauka (1400-1344BC) drove away all the Buddhists and re-established Ch turvar ya (Vedic path). This is the only traditional historical reference to an Ashoka linked with Buddhism and Kalinga. A number of additional interesting facts related to the Edicts are set out in Annexure 4

Thus all the revisions made by the British rulers to the History of Ancient India fall to the ground. Yet it is tragic that these that the voices that prevail in support of the British version are those of West-oriented modern Indian Historians considered to be the final authorities, while the

voices of conventional scholars true to the Indian tradition are ignored. We are now confronted with two versions of History – one True and the other False. We have not only to resolve this specific conflict in Indian History. Far more importantly we have to confront the similar and larger conflicts that the motives and methods of vested interests of the Western World have imposed and continue to impose to this day on the non-Western World. We close this book with its next final Chapter, with the provocative title “Whither History ?”

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## CHAPTER 12 : WHITHER HISTORY ?

The narrative of this book brings home a simple finding : The Puranas have a far better claim to Truth, (both Higher Truth expressed through Metaphor, and Historical Truth presented by Fact) than the Version of Ancient Indian History of Western Historians / British Colonial Rulers. While the narrative so far has focussed on the distortion of the Puranic chronology, there is a much larger and more critical historical narrative which is distorted or missing in the books written by British historians, and faithfully echoed by Western and Indian historians. These books fail as true history because, as detailed in the last Chapter, they rest often on dubious chronologies and doubtful events. Beyond that, they have their focus on rulers, wars and political events, and hardly ever touch the socio-economic realities of the lives of the common people.

Luckily, some interesting and revealing details from writings of the early period of British presence in India, are available from which we can get or reconstruct more detailed histories of those times. These are writings of a few perceptive scholars, both British and Indian, or records available in the official archives of both England and India. These writings have never found a place in the teachings of schools, colleges and universities. It is interesting that soon after his return from Africa, Mahatma Gandhi had carefully studied some of those writings of scholars like G.W. Leitner, William Adams and others. on the status of literacy in India in those times. He had not only studied but also written extensively on this subject. In a speech on the 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1931 in the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, he declared that literacy in India had declined and that the British were responsible for it. "The British administrators", he said, "when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that and the beautiful tree perished ...". After he returned to India, Gandhi pursued these studies and encouraged more studies to substantiate what he said.

One such remarkable study many years later was by the Gandhian scholar Dharampal. After several years of painstaking investigations in both India and UK, he published his findings in 1981, entitled "**The beautiful tree**", the phrase he picked up from Gandhi's speech. Following up from the studies of the early scholars, Dharampal did a masterly survey of the state of indigenous literacy and education in several states of India, much of it in the Madras Presidency. His findings were derived from extensive ground level data in the reports of District Collectors, available in State Government Archives. The Madras data was collected between 1822-25 and reflected a state of literacy which was still largely operational during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Dharampal's study showed that there were schools in most

villages, supported by local resources, which imparted teaching a variety subjects and crafts at a level of practical utility and adequacy. Interestingly, the schools were found to cater to local children across caste and community barriers. Even more interestingly, Dharampal found that the spread of the schools in India and quality of the teaching were far superior to what obtained in England in a corresponding period !. By the end of the Century, the level of taxes levied by the British Rulers in India had drained the local resources of the villages and virtually destroyed the rural education system and replaced it with the Western type schools which were few and far between and which the local people could not afford. At the same time local crafts and other services which made for local self-sufficiency in the villages were also destroyed reducing a well established self-sustaining economy to bankruptcy. Simultaneously the wealth and natural resources of the country were siphoned off to England to build their own prosperous economy. All these areas of exploitation were studied and documented by Dharampal in a remarkable series of books which are available for download on the Internet at :

<https://archive.org/details/DharampalCollectedWritingsIn5Volumes>.

These books indeed provide a great model for the reconstruction of Indian History.

A critical reason for correcting the distortions and reconstruction of our History lies in the need to understand the underlying the strategies that originated in vested interests of the West which exacted a calamitous toll on our past and continue to the present day, in order to exact a heavy toll, to assert world control and exploitation. These strategies originated with Britain and Europe colonizing Africa, South Asia and America, with Islam also spreading its control over the Middle East, India, Central Asia and South East Asia. The human toll exacted by these colonizing forces was in terms of millions killed, losing their means of livelihood, perishing in man-made famines, driven out of their homelands into slavery in distant lands, stripped of their wealth and natural resources and last but not least having their own religions and cultures denigrated and finally left with legacies of human devastation and destitution, communal conflict and civil wars. The role of the vested interests of the Western World seemed to be a direct implementation of the strategy proposed by Satan's challenge to God, in Milton's immortal lines :

Till I, in Man residing, through the race, His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect; And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

Many of these Western strategies of domination and exploitation within and between countries continue in the play of world politics today. They are driven by insidious but subtle and sophisticated behind the scene operators but executed on the ground with open and callous cruelty . This is largely not understood by the educated classes because the issues are clouded by the vested interests supported by the media that is obsessed with controversy and sensationalism. The redeeming feature is the

**emergence today of a new generation of perceptive writers and readers from all around the world with even the common man finding voice through the Internet to demand fairplay and justice. Even a few years ago we could not have foreseen the emergence of powerful world whistle-blower individuals like Julian Assange and Edward Snowden, leading this world-wide demand.**

**The following steps can be considered toward reconstruction of Ancient India History. At the outset it is important for us as Indians that we respect the sanctity of the Vedas and Puranas which gave India a spiritual and moral stature from which the rest of the world drew inspiration over the millennia. It is important for us also to cherish the lofty spirituality and intellectual integrity of the Rishis who created these texts. The texts are the prime source of the historical details of the dynasties that ruled India from the start of the Kali Yuga, These are details that merit our prima facie trust until contradicted by proven facts. It is not for any member of any other culture to tell us where in our own culture, we should place our beliefs and trust. The Puranas however give us just skeletal bare-bones details of the ancient ruling dynasties. We do need to flesh out the skeleton with more factual details supported by extended analysis of contemporaneous and connected facts and also more hard scientific evidence in order to carry conviction to the modern student of History.**

**The following steps would require follow-up action :**

- (a) Ancient India is known to have had extensive interactions with other countries of the world. An intensive search needs to be organized in India and other countries, for connections as seen in writings, inscriptions, monuments, coins, artefacts, language and other cultural features analysed by the latest tools of Science. Based on contemporaneity of persons and events, we can then present ancient Indian History as an integral part of World History commanding universal intellectual acceptance where narrower perspectives will become irrelevant. All relevant information that may have been missed or suppressed in the past must be retrieved, reviewed and published.**
- (b) The historical archives now existing in all Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations in India and other countries like the UK where critical information may still lie unnoticed or suppressed. For example, Dharampal was able to retrieve a vast volume of astonishing data, not only from Governmental archives in India but also from the British Museum and the India Office in UK. As another example, Kota Venkatachalam drew attention to a publication in the Indian Antiquary P. P. 333-334, of an inscription (plate) of a gift deed by Emperor Janamejaya dated to 3012 BC of a gift of land for the worship of Sri Sita and Rama on the bank of the Thungabhadra River. The authenticity of the above example has been questioned**



and perhaps needs to be investigated. Beyond that however, Temples and religious institutions, big and small, around the country may be a still untapped source of such evidence for which a intensive nation-wide search must be organized.

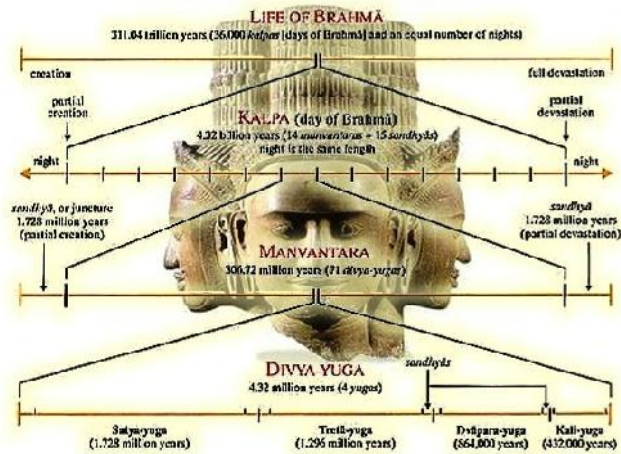
- (c) All such evidence must be documented and made freely accessible to people around the world to encourage a shift of their sense of History from a national to a universal, human perspective. Scholars and scientists around the world, brought up in the true objective tradition of science, should join together in this vast effort of reconstructing not only Ancient Indian History, but also a more Universal History that is free from narrow perspectives of race, religion, or social, economic and political ideologies that describe or prescribe what History should be. We need to restore History to be true to India's motto recorded many millennia ago in the [Mundaka Upanishad](#) as a motto for humanity :

**satyam-eva jayate**

**सत्यमेव जयते.**

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## ANNEXURE 1 - THE TIME SCALE OF THE PURANAS



Courtesy : Dr Vineet Aggarwal Blog

1 truti	8/13,500 second
1 vedha	8/135 second
1 ava	8/15 second
1 nimesa	8/15 second
1 kṣaṇa	8/5 seconds
1 Asu (or Prana)	4 (s.dereā) seconds
1 kāṣṭhā	8 seconds
6 Asus	1 sidereal Paśa (or Vighatī or Vinadi or 24 seconds)
1 aghu	2 minutes
1 darḍa	30 minutes
60 Palas	1 Ghati (24 minutes)
1 prahara	3 hours
60 Ghatis	1 day (24 hours)
1 pakṣa	15 days
30 days	1 month
2 months	1 Ritu (season)
12 months	1 year
4,320,000 years	1 Yuga cycle
72 Yuga cycles	1 Manu (311,340,000 years)
14 Manus	1 Kalpa (1008 Yugas or 4,354,560,000 years)
2 Kalpas	A day and night of Brahma (8,709,120,000 years)
30 days and nights of Brahma	1 month of Brahma (261,273,600,000 years)
12 months of Brahma	1 year of Brahma (3,135,283,200,000 years)
100 years of Brahma	Life of Brahma (1 Mahakalpa or 313,528,320,000,000 years)

## ANNEXURE 2

### PURANIC GENEALOGY OF THE SOLAR DYNASTY LEADING TO BUDDHA OF THE IKSHVAKU DYNASTY COMPILATION BY KOTA VENKATACHELAM

Vaivaswata Manu is the seventh among the Manus. Vaivaswata Manu had ten sons, of whom Ikshvaku was the eldest. Buddha is his descendent. Ikshvaku was at the beginning of the Krita yuga of the 28th (present) Mahayuga. The following is the genealogy of Ikshvaku.

1. Ikshvaku    2. Vikukshi    3. Kakutstha    4. Prithu
5. Drishadasya    6. Andhra    7. Yuvana    8. Sravasti
9. Brihadasva    10. Kuvalayasva or Dundhurnara    11. Dridhasva
12. Haryasva    13. Nikumbh1    14. Samhataasva    15. Krisasva
16. Prasenajit    17. Yuvanasva    18. Mandhata    19. Ambarisha
20. Sambhuti    21. Anaranya    22. Haryasva    23. Sumati
24. Tridhanva    25. Thrayaruni    26. Satyavrata or Trisanku
27. Harischandra    28. Rohita    29. Harita    30. Chanchu
31. Vinaya    32. Ruruka    33. Bahu    34. Sagara
35. Asamanjasa    36. Amsumantha    37. Dilpa    38. Bhagiratha
39. Sruta    40. Nabhaga    41. Ambarisha    42. Ayutayu
43. Rituparna    44. Sarvakama    45. Sudama
46. Saudasa or Kalmashapada    47. Asmaka    48. Mulaka
49. Satharatha    50. Ldabida    51. Krisakarma
52. Dilipa or Khatvanga    53. Deerghabahu
54. Raghu    55. Aja    56. Dasaratha
57. **Rama – Lakshmana-Bharata-Satrughna**

Satrughna killed the Demon Lavanasura and reigned over the city 'Madhura.' His sons Subahu and Surasena succeeded him, Angada and Chandraketu were the sons of Lakshmana. They ruled over the Himalayan regions. Angada had Angadapura as his capital and Chandraketu, Chandrachakrapura. The portions in Kosala that fell to the share of the sons of Lakshmana are now known as Nepal. Taksha and Pushkara were the sons of Bharata. Gandhara was brought under their rule. Taksha had Takshasila and Pushkara had Pushkaravati as their capital. Kusa and Lava were the sons of Rama and became the kings of Kosala. Dakshina Kosala was under Kusa with Kusasthali as the capital. Uttara Kosala was under Lava with Sravasti as the capital.

#### **Dynasty of Kusa. (Capital Kusasthali.)**

58. Kusa    59. Atithi    60. Nishadha
61. Nala    62. Nabha    63. Pundarika
64. Kshemadhanva    65. Devaneeka    66. Ahinaguna
67. Pariyatra    68. Dalaraja    69. Balaraja    70. Ulluka

71. Vajranabha 72. Sankhana 73. Ushithasva 74. Visvasaha  
75. Hiranyanabha 76. Pushpakshya 77. Dhruvasandhi  
78. Sudarsana 79. Agnivarna 80. Sighranamaka 81. Maru  
82. Prabhu 83. Susandhi 84. Sahasvantha 85. Visrut  
86. Bruhadbala ; He was killed by Abhimanyu in the Mahabharata  
war of 3138 B. C, and was succeeded by his son Brihadkshana  
and the remaining kings of the Ikshvaku dynasty as listed  
below according to the Brahma Purana,  
(Upodghatapada IVth Chapter).

1. Brihadkshana 2. Uruyaksha 3. Vatsavyuha 4. Prativyoma  
5. Divakara 6. Sahadeva 7. Brihadasva 8. Bhanuratha  
9. Pratitasya 10. Supratika 11. Marudeva 12. Sunakshatra  
13. Kinnara 14. Anadharaksha 15. Suprana 16. Amitrajith  
17. Brhadbhuja 18. Dharmi 19. Krtanjaya or Dhananjaya  
20. Ranamjaya 21. Sanjaya 22. Sakya  
23. **Suddhodana : father of Buddha**  
24. **Siddhartha : This is Buddha – as confirmed below.**  
25. **Rahula – son of Buddha**  
26. Prasenajit 27. Kahudraka 28. Kundaka 29. Saratha  
30. Sumitra

The Ikshvaky line terminated with Sumitra as confirmed by Matsya,  
Vayu, Vishnu and other Puranas. S.No 24 above is identified as the  
Buddha in the Vishnu Purana as below :

“मायामोहस्वरूपोऽसौ शुद्धोदनसुतोऽभवत् ।  
मोहयामास दैत्यास्तांस्त्याजितान् वेदधर्मकम् ।  
तेन बौद्धा बभूवुर्हि तेभ्योऽन्ये वेदवर्जिताः ॥”

He who was called Maya-Mona in his previous birth was born as the son of  
King Suddhodana. By the propagation of his teachings, many gave up  
their traditional Vedic religion and adopted the new  
religion of Buddha and became Bauddhas

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## ANNEXURE 3

*"Bharatacharitra Bhaskara"* PANDIT KOTA VENKATACHELAM'S  
125<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS COMMEMORATIVE VOLUME

### **XANDRAMES, SANDROCOTTUS and SADROCYPTUS**

*Speech by*

**Pandit Kota Venkatachalam,**  
*delivered at The Indian History Congress,  
Jaipur, Rajaputana, 1951.*

The western historians identified the Xandrames, Sandrocottus and Sandrocypus of the Greek writers as Mahapadma Nanda, Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusara. There is practically no resemblance between the names (except in the case of Chandra Gupta)

The names given in the writings of the Greek Writers correspond very clearly to Chandrasri (Chandramas) the last king of the Andhra dynasty, and Chandragupta and Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty. If they had recognized the Kali era of our Puranas and the Mahabharata, which commenced 36 years after the Mahabharata war i.e. B.C. 3102 and if the dynasties of kings and the periods of time assigned to them in the Puranas had been accepted straight without any suspicion or interference would have been obvious that about B.C.326 the Hindu rulers were Chandrasri, Chandragupta and Samudragupta and these were the Xandrames or Chandramas, Sandrocottus and Sandrocypus of the Greek writers.

There were some western scholars and Indian scholars however, who pointed out that Xandrames or Chandramas, Sandracottus and Sandrocypus are not to be identified with Mahapadma Nanda, Chandragupta Maurya and his son Bindusara and that there is no similarity in the names.

But in general the western scholars ignored them and stuck to their assumption and the conclusions based on them without setting right the original mistake and so the times of many historical events have continued to be wrongly fixed to the present day. M.Troyar in his translation of Rajatarangini has argued ably and very logically against the assumption of Max-Muller and his followers and declared the identity of Chandrasri, Chandragupta and Samudragupta with the Xandrames (or Chandramas), Sandrocottus and Sandro-cypus of the Greek historians. The first Indian scholar to point out that the conclusions of the western scholars are not correct, that the Hindu princes mentioned by the Greek writers should be recognized in the founders of the Gupta empire, that the account of the Hindu Royal dynasties according to our Puranas reckoning by the Kali Era tallies exactly was an Andhra by name Kuppaiyah, vide pp. 198, 199 of Kuppaiyah's History of Ancient India).

#### **GIRIVRAJA AND PATALIPUTRA**

Girivraja has been the capital of Magadha ever-since the foundation of that kingdom, seven thousand years ago. All the Royal dynasties beginning with Barhadradha and ending with Andhra ruled over Magadha with "Girivraja" as the capital. None of these

**"Bharatacharitra Bhaskara" PANDIT KOTA VENKATACHELAM'S  
125<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS COMMEMORATIVE VOLUME**

dynasties had Pataliputra as the capital. With the Andhra dynasty, ended the Magadha empire having "Girivraja" as the capital.

Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty killed "Chandrasri" the last Magadha emperor of the Andhra dynasty and annexed a portion of Magadha to his own kingdom Pataliputra but could not get mastery over the Magadha empire. So, he left 'Girivraja' and was anointed at "Pataliputra". Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusara, Ashoka and other Maurya kings had "Girivraja" but never Pataliputra as their capital. The Puranas have uniformly mentioned "Girivraja" as the capital of Magadha, but nowhere is Pataliputra mentioned in them. It was only in the time of the Guptas that Pataliputra developed an empire. It was insignificant in the time of Chandragupta Maurya.

Magasthenes and Dionysius and other Greek Ambassadors were in the court of Samudragupta and Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty at "Pataliputra". Chandragupta Maurya was the emperor at Girivraja and not at "Pataliputra". As Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty was wrongly identified with Chandragupta Maurya, so also Pataliputra the capital of the Guptas was wrongly identified as the capital of Chandragupta Maurya.

Age of Mahabharata War	.....	3138 B.C
a. Barhadradha dynasty	1006 years	
b. Pradyota	138 years	
c. Sisunaga	360 years	
d. Nanda	100 years	
	<u>1604 years</u> .....	<u>1604 years</u>
End of the Nanda dynasty & the beginning of the Maurya dynasty with Chandragupta as the 1st king.	.....	1534 B.C
The invasion of Alexander	.....	<u>327 B.C.</u>
Difference	.....	1207 B.C.

So, in Indian history a period of 1207 years was lost by the wrong synchronisation of Chandragupta of the 4th century B.C. as Chandragupta Maurya of the 16th century B.C. The hearsay version of the origin of Chandragupta Maurya was attributed to Gupta Chandragupta by the Greek historians and the Chinese travellers who visited India nine or ten centuries after the invasion of India by Alexander. This is one of the many mistakes which they had committed in reproducing their hearsay versions. A



confusion would have thus arisen and Chandragupta Maurya was reckoned as contemporary of Alexander. Our history has thus become incorrect and inaccurate.

The five Yavana kings who are referred to in the 2nd and 13th edict of Asoka, were the Yavana Kshatriya kings of Abhisara, Urasa (or Uraga), Simhapura, Divyakataka, and Uttara Jyotisha of the 15th century B.C. All these five Yavana Kshatriya provinces are located in Bharat. It was wrongly supposed by historians that these were Greek Kings of the 3rd century B.C. These five kingdoms cover modern Afghanistan, the western part of the Kashmir, and the North-western part of the present North-western Frontier province.

The fact that the Greek ambassadors resided at Pataliputra makes it clear that they were in the court of Gupta kings. The reference to Pataliputra as the capital of the Mauryas in the Sanskrit drama Rudrarakshasa has misled our historians in this respect.

All the Puranas state that the capital of the Magadha empire is "Girivraja" and that all the emperors ruled only from that capital. The name of Pataliputra is not hinted at all in any Purana. It would be sheer injustice to the Puranas which mainly deal with historical facts, to build up historical theories contrary to their contents, on the strength of fictions and dramas whose plots need not be truly historical. V.A. Smith writes in this connection as follows -

"Many alleged incidents of the revolution in Magadha are depicted vividly in the ancient political drama entitled the "Signet of Rakhasa" (Mudra Rakshasa) written, perhaps, in the fifth century after Christ. But it would be obviously unsafe to rely for a matter of fact historical narrative on a work of imagination composed some seven centuries after the events dramatized". (vide Oxford History of India by V.A. Smith 2nd Ed. 1923. Page.73)

Prof. Kasinath Trimbak Telong in his introduction of Mudrarakshasa page 22, 7th Ed. 1928 writes:

"The scene of the play is laid for the most part in the city of Pataliputra or Kusumapura, as it is also called. Now it may be argued, I think with some ground of reason, that the geography of our play must have been based not upon the state of things which existed in the time of Chandragupta and which probably there were no materials for ascertaining at the date of the play, but upon the state of things which actually existed at the time when the play was itself composed."

In the Puranas of Ceylon it is stated that the first convention of Buddhists was held in the year of Buddha's demise at Rajagriha (i.e. Girivraja) the capital of the Magadha empire".

This shows that the capital of Magadha was Rajagriha (or Girivraja). In Ashoka's time Pataliputra was a place where the Buddha Sangha Parishat was situated.

Pataliputra is nowhere said to be the State capital of Ashoka, but it is said to be the religious capital. Much mis-understanding has arisen out of ignoring the importance of the word 'religion' in the following passage -

"Ashoka, who was third in succession from Chandragupta, and who made Buddhism the State religion, in his inscription on the rock at Dhauili in Katak, gives it (Palibothra) the title of Metropolis of the religion" i.e. "Buddhism".

(Mc.Crindles Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, P.212 foot-note).

Megasthenes the Greek ambassador in the court of the Gupta kings (Samudragupta and Chandragupta II) in his description of Pataliputra stated that there were councils of elected representatives of the people for the governance of the capital and other towns in the empire.

Nowhere do we find in Kautilya's Arthashastra (which was intended for Chandragupta Maurya) that there were or should be councils of people's elected representatives or nominated councils by the king. Mr.Mamidipudi Venkata Rangaiah in his introduction of Kautilya's Arthashastra (Telugu) writes about the city administration (in Chandragupta Maurya's time) described in Kautilya's Arthashastra thus :-

"The Jails, Police Station etc., should be in charge of "Nagarika" (Officer appointed by the king). It appears that there was no system of Self-Government in those days, as now, to carry on these functions of city administration. There were no councils elected by the people to assist the Nagarika. Moreover, the councils referred to by Megasthenes in his account of the administration of Pataliputra are not mentioned at all by Kautilya in his Arthashastra. Therefore the Nagarika may be said to be all powerful".

There is practically no similarity between this and the system of the city administration described by Megasthenes in the 4th Century B.C. This shows that the Chandragupta of Kautilya (1534 B.C.) was not the Chandragupta of Megasthenes. (3rd century B.C.)

Moreover, Megasthenes would not have failed to mention Kautilya or his Arthashastra if Kautilya had lived in the 4th century B.C. contemporaneously with him or a bit prior to him.

Megasthenes definitely says that "there was no slavery in India":-

"Of several remarkable customs existing among the Indians, there is one prescribed by their philosophers which one may regard as truly admirable: for the law ordains that no one among them shall, under any circumstances, be a slave, but that enjoying freedom, they shall respect the equal right to it which all possess". (P.38 of Mc Crindle's Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian).

Further he tells us that : "All the Indians are free, and not one of them is a slave".

"The Indians do not even use aliens as slaves, and much less a countryman of his own".  
(P. 68 of Mc.Crindle's Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian).

Quite in contrast with this we find definite reference to the existence of slavery in Kautilya's Arthashastra, where Chapter 65 entitled "Dasakalpa is solely devoted to the status of slaves among the Aryas and the Mlechas. So, it can be safely concluded that Megasthenes was not in the court of Chandragupta Maurya whose contemporaneity with Kautilya is questioned by none.

It need hardly be said that Chandragupta of Kautilya who speaks so vividly of slavery in his time (16th century B.C.) is not the Chandragupta of Megasthenes who speaks of the absence of slavery in India in the 4th century B.C.

Chandragupta Maurya owed his accession and maintenance on the throne to Chanakya alias Vishnugupta and he is not known to have possessed any of the great qualities attributed to Sandrocottus by the Greek historians who accompanied Alexander when he invaded India. Their descriptions of the Indian prince who met Alexander are appropriate to Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty and on this point all our Puranas, the writings of the Buddhists, etc., all are in agreement.

Plutarch the Greek historian wrote -

"It is nowhere stated in the Hindu or Buddha Puranas (or in the inscriptions) that Chandragupta Maurya led an army of six lakhs and conquered the entire country. This description applies to Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty."

#### THE TITLE OF THE GUPTA KINGS

In the year 1354 Kali (1738 B.C.) Udayana, the 8th king in the Sisunaga Dynasty constructed the city of Kusumapura on the southern bank of Ganga. This was later on called Pataliputra, Palibothra and Patna. This was the capital of Gupta kings. Chandragupta, Samudragupta and Chandragupta II of Gupta dynasty reigned over it in the end of the fourth century and in the 3rd century B.C. The western historians wrongly assumed that Chandragupta Maurya and the other Maurya kings belonged to his period.

That Megasthenes lived in the court of the Guptas and not of the Mauryas is clearly known from the statements of Megasthenes himself.

The following passage may be quoted from Mc.Crindle's Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian (pp.65, 66) -

"At the meeting of this river (Ganga) and another (the Son) is situated "Palibothra", a city 80 stadia in length and fifteen in breadth . . . . .

The people in whose country this city situated is the most distinguished in all India, and is called the Prasi. The King, in addition to his family name, must adopt the surname of Palibothros, as Sandrocottos, for instance, did, to whom Megasthenes was sent on an embassy". (Vide Book II Fragm XXV Strabo XV 1-35-36, p.702)

The Gupta kings were the Licchavi Kshatriyas of the Solar dynasty. Chandra and Gupta in the name Chandragupta are respectively the names of the individual and the house. But Chandragupta of the people of Palibothra. Videha and Kosala were kingdoms chiefly inhabited by Licchavi kshatriyas of the Surya-vamsi. They were known by the common name of Suryavamsa. There were nine sects of Licchavi kshatriyas, eight of which formed into a confederation and jointly carried on the administration. Gupta Chandra gupta conquered them and got the territory under his rule and made palibothra the capital of his kingdom—which is called the Prasi".

" The Prasi surpass in power and glory every other people, not only in this quarter, but one may say in all India, their capital being Palibothra, a very large and wealthy city after which some call the people itself Palibothri, . . . may, even the whole tract along the Ganges". (Mc. Crindle Ancient India, as described by megasthenes and Arrian P.141.)

As these kings and a large number of their subjects were of the solar race, a custom developed whereby these kings affixed to their names as the title the word "Aditya" which means the Sun-God the progenitor of their race. The mauryas were Sudras and they never affixed "Aditya" or any other title to their names.

The names of the Gupta kings and their titles are given below —

S.No.	Name of the king	Name of the Family	Title
1	Chandra	Gupta (Chandragupta)	Vijayaditya
2	Samudra	Gupta (Samudragagupta)	Asokaditya
3	Chandra II	Gupta ( Chandragupta II)	Vikramaditya
4	Kumara	Gupta ( Kumaragupta)	Mahendraditya
5	Skanda	Gupta(Skandagupta)	Pratapaditya
6	Sthira	Gupta (Narasimhagupta after attaining majority)	Baladidtya
7	Kumara II	Gupta (Kumaragupta II )	Kramaditya

It thus appears that all the Gupta kings and not the Maurya kings that affixed to their names a title indicative of the race of the kings and the people of Palibothra as described by Megasthenes.

"Palibothri must denote here the subjects of the realm of which Palibothra was the capital, and not merely the inhabitants of that city, as Rennel and others supposed, and so fixed its site at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna." (Mc. Crindle's Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, P.142 footnote).

Therefore it is clear that Megasthenes lived in the court of the Gupta Kings at Palibothra and not of the Maurya Kings who flourished in the 16, 15, 13th centuries B.C. at Girivraja.

From the above discussion we may safely conclude that the Xandrames, Sandrocottes and Sandrocyptus of the Greek writers were not Mahapadma Nanda, Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusara or Amitraghata of the 16, 15 centuries B.C., but Chandrasri (last Andhra king), Chandragupta and Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty (4th century B.C.)

Sd/- Kota Venkatachelam  
1-1951

"Om Tatsat"

## **ANNEXURE 4**

### **Ashoka's Edicts : Some more facts**

The Edicts attributed to Ashoka of the Maurya Dynasty present several questions about their age and authorship which need to be resolved.

The following is a summary of the distribution and content of the Edicts as listed in an excellent analysis by Dr. Meena Talim in her book "Edicts of King Ashoka – A New Vision" :

- (a) There are a total of about 164 Edicts, 156 distributed within India (with a concentration in Karnataka), and 9 outside India in Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- (b) Within India, they are distributed as 118 Rock Edicts ( 18 of them Minor), 43 Pillar Edicts (6 of them Minor), 3 Cave Edicts. Many of the Edicts are partial or are fragments.
- (c) The Edicts in India are recorded in the Brahmi script, while those abroad are in Greek, Aramaic and Kharosthi scripts, with a few being in Brahmi .
- (d) The contents of the Edicts follow standard texts numbered I to XIV which are repeated in different locations. Most of them present ethical Buddhist exhortations and arrangements for public welfare services.
- (e) One Edict No XIII alone refers to the King's campaign in Kalinga in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of his reign in Kalinga attended by huge loss of life and human suffering that resulted in the King's being stricken by his conscience and then embracing and propagating Buddhism. Interestingly, this Edict is not present in Kalinga itself.
- (f) All of them present the author by the title and name Devanampiya Piyadassi, which are not identifiable with the name of any known Indian king. It was only much later in 1915 that two inconspicuous Edicts were discovered at Maski village in Raichur District in Karnataka and Gujjara Village in Datia District of Madhya Pradesh which explicitly record the name "Ashoka".

Sir William Jones had in 1793, settled on the date of the Maurya dynasty as starting with Chandragupta Maurya, which placed Ashoka's reign at 268-232 BC. The inscriptions in the Edicts attributed to Ashoka were deciphered by the British scholar James Prinsep in 1836 who found that the author named in all of them was described as "Devanampiya Piyadassi". This is a name that did not appear in any other Indian historical record at any time. This name was finally identified by Prinsep as referring to Ashoka on the basis of information provided to him from Srilanka by George Turnour, a member of the Ceylon Civil Service, who had undertaken the task of translating Sri Lankan Buddhist texts in Pali into English. Around August 1837 while going through a major work of Pali Buddhist Chronicles, the Dipavamsa, Turnour came across one passage, which read:

Two hundred and eighteen years after the beatitude of Buddha, was the inauguration of Piyadassi ... who, the grandson of Chandragupta, and own son of Bindusara, was at that time viceroy at Ujjayani....

The above text uses the name Piyadassi and not the name Ashoka, though it implies the name Ashoka indirectly as the son of Bindusara and grandson of Chandragupta. The other main Srilanka text, the Mahavamsa states that Ashoka's coronation was 218 years after the demise of Buddha.



It is interesting to see the correspondence between the following two sets of dates.

	Puranic version	British Version
Date of demise of Buddha :	1807 BC	483 BC
Accession of Ashoka	1472 BC	268 BC
Interval between Puranic/British versions	330 years	215 years
Interval as per Srilanka version	218 years	

The Srilanka Chronicles – the Mahavamsa and Dipavamsa – presented the ancient tradition of Srilanka as a mix of mythology and history similar to the content of the Indian Puranas, but without the latter's greater detail of chronology. And it was like the British approach in India that the British Colonial Rulers of Srilanka dealt with the chronology of Srilankan History, which had a close linkage with Indian History thanks to the common heritage of Buddhism. It is therefore not surprising that Srilankan History got tied into the chronology of Ashoka and Buddha as determined by the British Colonial Rulers in India. It is equally interesting that practically the whole of Chapter XI in the Mahavamsa is devoted to the coronation of the king Devanamiya-Tissa and his friendship and interaction with Ashoka who is referred in the text by the name Dhammashoka. It is also interesting to note that there was a Buddhist king of the name of Dharmashoka in 1448-1400 BC, the 43<sup>rd</sup> King of the Gonada dynasty of Kashmir who is considered as a possible author of the Edicts.

The foregoing facts seem to point to a significant linkage in the role of the British Colonial Rulers of both India and Srilanka in distorting the Ancient History of both countries with an identical chronology to serve their strategic purpose of divide and rule to control and exploit the countries they ruled. The tragic ethnic conflict that divide the Srilankans and Tamils in Srilanka and the caste and communal conflicts that divide in India right up to the present day are clearly the result of manipulation and not an accident of History.

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