CHAPTER I

Skanda Purāṇa,
Its Text, Date, Contents
and Process of Myth Making
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SKANDA PURANA - ITS TEXT, DATE, CONTENTS AND PROCESS OF MYTH MAKING.

In the Introductory remarks, the general nature and content of the Puranas were discussed and the complex nature of Sk.P. was noted. Because of its popularity and bulk Sk.P. has more than one form. Ballalasena draws our attention towards the complex textual problem of Sk.P. in the following couplet:

"Pracārādrūpataḥ Skandapurāṇaikūmsato'dhikam;
Yat Khanda tritayam paundrarevavāntikathāsrayam."

The textual panorama of Sk.P. is very vast and it has two extensive divisions viz., Khandatmakā and Samhitatmakā. Generally the former is taken to be a Mahāpurāṇa and the latter to be an Upapurāṇa. But the numerous references which are made to Samhitatmakā and Khandatmakā portions of Sk.P. criss-cross and the problem can be stated briefly as follows:-

a) According Halāsyā Mahātmya of the Agastya Saṃhita (Sānkari Saṃhitā), Sk.P. consists of six Saṃhitās viz., (1) Sūta Saṃhita (2) Sānkari Saṃhitā (3) Vaiṣṇavī Saṃhita (4) Brāhmi Saṃhita and (5) Saura Saṃhitā. Apart from these five Saṃhitās, fifty Khandas are separately mentioned.

1. Dānasāgara of Ballālasena. It is in MS.Fol.3b (MSS Nos. 719-720 - India Office Library, London).
b) In its Śīvakāśmīram Khaṇḍa the Sūta Saṁhitā, which has Mādhavaśācārya's commentary entitled Sūtasamhitā-
āṭparyā dīpikā, divides and subdivides Sk.P. as in (a) giving
the length of the Saṁhitās as one lakh granthas, but it
actually adds up to 86,000 granthas

4.  

c) The Kālīkā Khaṇḍa belonging to the Sanathkumāra
Saṁhitā, gives a more detailed but slightly different infor-
mation about the divisions and sub-divisions of Sk.P. The
Kālīkā Khaṇḍa contains 100 chapters and the date of the MSS
is Śaka 1718.

This division of Sk.P. into six Saṁhitās gains
ground also from the fact that, the Saṁhitās exist partly or
wholly in MSS. The existence of a commentary on Sūta Saṁhitā
by Mādhavaśācārya, proves the fact that the division of Sk.P.
into Saṁhitās must have been made much earlier than
1300 A.D. 6

KHANДAS AVAILABLE IN MSS:-

Besides the different khandas mentioned in
Saṁhitātmaka portions, there are many other khandas available
in MSS which claim to be parts of Sk.P. A few of them are

(1) Ambikā Khaṇḍa 7  (2) Taṇḍī Khaṇḍa  (3) Kanakādri Khaṇḍa
(4) Sāhyādri Khaṇḍa (5) Bhīma Khaṇḍa (6) Brahmatottara Khaṇḍa

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4.  Ibid. p.1378.
5.  Shastri and Gupte, Cat. of SKT.MSS., Cal.SKT Coll.
   Vol. IV No.285.
(7) Nirvāṇa Khandā (8) Uma Khandā (9) Parasurāma Khandā
(10) Bhu Khandā (11) Himāvat Khandā. 'Dānasāgara' of
Ballālasena mentions a (12) Paundra Khandā and (13) a Mahā-
kala Khandā. 'Caturvargaśantāmapi' makes mention of a
(14) Mahākāla Khandā, as also of a (15) Chamatkāra Khandā,
which is cited by Mādhavacārya in his comm. on Parāsara Smṛti.
An MS of a (16) Karatoya māhātmya which consists of two
parts has been found.

From the above, brief discussion of the divisions
and sub-divisions of Sk.P., it is evident that, the Sk.P.
grew-up into a huge bulk with the addition of parts which
never came from the same hand or belonged to the same age.
Probably the seven Khandas which now constitute the printed
Sk.P. belonged originally to one or the other Saṁhitās.

THE DATE OF SKANDA PURĀNA:

The very nature and the growth of the extent Sk.P.
shows that, the problem of its date is as complex as its
textual problem. The earliest MS of Sk.P. is an MS referred
to in 'the catalogue of palm leaf and selected paper MSS'
belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal 190510. Shri. H. P.
Shastri assigns Seventh Century A.D. to the MS. This MS
gives an epitome of the contents of Sk.P. But the printed
Sk.P. does not correspond to it. Probably, it refers to a
original Sk.P., Saṁhitātmaka or otherwise, which is lost to us.

P.1098,
9. D.V. Ms.Lib., M.S.No.1434. It is a complete MS., consisting
of four folios dated Saka 1784. The metres used in this
are Vasantā Tilakā, Mandū Krānta, Sārdula Vikrīḍita,
Upajāti etc.

10. PP.111.141 fava
Hence the date of Sk.P. has to be discussed with reference to Khandātmaka and Saṃhitātmaka portions.

The Khaṇḍas and Saṃhitās are referred to in the early Nibandha works like Smṛticandrika, Caturvarga cintāmaṇī Madhavacārya’s comm., on Parāśara smṛti etc. But they cannot be considered as having come in their entirety from a very early date. A careful examination of their contents and frequent tāntric elements found in them seem to show that they were subjected to revisions and emendations at times. During these revisions some of the older portions were rejected and some were retained with modifications, while many new chapters and verses were interpolated.

CITATIONS FROM SK.P. BY NIBANDHA WRITERS:-

About 750 lines are quoted from Sk.P. by Vijñāneśvara, Jimitavāhana, Aparārka, Ballālasena, Devanabhṛta, Madhavacārya, Madanapāla and Sūlapāṇi without any special mention of the names of the Khaṇḍas from which the lines have been drawn. Out of these 750 lines, only about 137 lines are found in the Vaisnava Khaṇḍa, Kāśī Khaṇḍa, Nāgara Khaṇḍa and Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa of the printed Sk.P. Hemādri also quotes hundreds of verses from this Purāṇa in his caturvarga cintāmaṇī and a good number of these are found in the extant Sk.P.

11. Division of Sk.P. into seven khaṇḍas seems to be late; but not later than 1600 A.D. because Mitra Mitra quotes 2-102-106 of Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa in his ‘Viramitrodaya’.
13. Ibid p.159 Foot No.214.
**Other Citations from Skanda Purāṇa:**

Besides these, there are also other lines which have been quoted by the Nibandha writers with the special mention of the names of Khandas or Mahātmyās. For example:

1. The Vidhāna Pārijata has 132 lines from chapter thirty-seven of Kāśī Khanda.
2. Smrtitattva of Raghunandana has thirty-two lines of which eighteen are found in the fourth and thirty-fifth chapter of Kāśī Khanda.
3. The Tīrtha Cintāmani of Vācaspati Mīra has fifty-six lines of which forty-one are found in chapter fiftynine of Kāśī Khanda — ii
4. in Mādhavācārya's commentary on Parāśara Smriti twenty-nine lines of Āvantya Khanda are quoted of which nine are found in the chapter 159. Mādhavācārya in his Brahmaśūtra Bhāṣya quotes profusely from a Sk.P. with the words 'iti Skānde'. But many of them are not traceable in the printed Sk.P.

Dr.R.C. Hazra on the basis of the citations from Sk.P. contained in the later Nibandha works states as follows: "the Smrti chapters contained in the various Khandas of Sk.P. are fairly old. For instance, Purusottamaksetra- māhātmya contains chapters which must be dated earlier than 1300 A.D. The Kāśī Khanda has chapters (i, 4–35, 38) which are earlier than 1300 AD. The Nāgaraka Khanda contains chapters...

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15. Sri Mādhavācārya, 'Brahmaśūtra Bhāṣya', Adhyāya 1/1/1/1; Adhyāya 1/2/3/3.
(especially chapters 177, 178, 215 to 22 and 266) which are earlier than 1200 A.D. The Prabhāsa Khanda has chapters of which some (especially chapters 19, 205 - 207 and 336 of prabhāsa Khanda i) are earlier than 1200 A.D. and some (especially chapter 208 of Prabhāsa Khanda i) are earlier than 1050 A.D." But as to the upper limit of the date of Sk.P., Dr. R.C. Hazra concludes that "there seems to be little in it which can be dated earlier than 700 A.D. At least the frequent tantric traces tend to create such an impression. But the evidence of a MS as early as 700 A.D., which Dr. Hazra himself admits, pushes the date of Sk.P. much earlier.

In the 6th chapter of Sk.P.I.ii, there is a verse told by Hārīta, which runs as follows:

"Sahasā Kriyām na kuryāt padametamahāpadam;  
Vimrṣyakārīnam dhīram vṛnate sarvasampadāh."

This is an adaptation to the anuṣṭubh metre of the famous stanza of Mahākavi Bhāravi's Mahākavya - viz., Kirāṭārjunīyam. The stanza runs as follows:

"Sahasā Vidadhiṣṭā na Kriyāmavivekaḥ Paramāpadām padam;  
Vṛnate hi vimrṣyakārīnam Gunālubdāḥ Svayameva Sampadaḥ"

It is very clear that in the verse occurring in Sk.P., the words have been changed and re-arranged to adapt it to Anuṣṭubh metre, from the original Viyogini metre.

16. Dr. R.C. Hazra - St. P.R., Part I Chap. IV, p.165.  
17. Sk.P. I/ii/6/16.  
The above quoted verse is found in the recent 1982 Delhi edition, S.V. Press Edition, Calcutta edition and the Mysore editions of Sk.P., which shows that it is a part of the said Khanda of Sk.P.

The date of Bhāravi according to the available sources is not later than the sixth century A.D. as he is mentioned in an inscription of A.D. 634. Hence the upper limit of the particular chapter of Sk.P. which contains the stanza of Bhāravi's 'Kirātārjunīyam' must be later than six century A.D.

Dr. H.C. Ray Chaudhuri assigns eight or ninth century A.D. to the Kumārikā Khanda of Sk.P., on the basis of the geographical material found in it. Mr. C.V. Vaidya reflecting on the geographical material available in the Kumārikā Khanda list observes that as Gurjarāta appears to be yet Southern Mārward and hence it is probable that Skanda Purāṇa is not later than the eleventh Century A.D.

Dr. A.B.L. Awasthi discussing the date of Sk.P., concludes as follows. "The epoch of Skanda coincides with the Age of Imperial Kanauj and struggle for the empire i.e., roughly from ninth to thirteenth century A.D. while giving an account of Čaturyugavyavasthā, Sk.P., refers to

the king Pramiti giving his date as about 1298 A.D. Thus Sk.P. presents a picture of Indian History and culture at the close of its ancient period. 22

With regard to the date of eighteen purānas, Vincent Smith makes the following observations:

"Alberuni, who wrote his scientific account of India in A.D.1030, gives a list of eighteen purānas composed by the so called rsis .... It is therefore certain than in A.D. 1030, the purānas were, as now eighteen in number and were regarded as coming down from immemorial antiquity when mythical rsis lives .... Bāna the author of Harsacarita ... carries the proof of the antiquity of the Purānas four centuries further back. 23"

From the above discussion, the following plausible conclusion can be drawn, i.e., the date of the compilation of Sk.P. began much earlier to Bāna's time and additions and reductions went on till at least 12th century A.D. 24 Thus Sk.P. provides us an insight into the socio-cultural scenario of India for a period of at least seven to eight centuries, starting with the Post-Gupta period and extending to the early part of the medieval period.

EDITIONS OF SKANDA PURĀNA:

The Khāṇḍātmaka Sk.P. which is the basis of the present study, has appeared in print in several editions.

23. Vincent Smith, Early History of India, p. 23.
They may be discussed as follows:

1. Sri Venkatesvara Edition (SV.ed), Bombay 1910. This is one of the oldest editions and one of the popular editions. Many of the later editions are based on this.

2. Vaṅgavāsī edition, Calcutta (Vang.ed): This is published in seven volumes. There are certain differences between the Vaṅga ed. and this ed.\(^{25}\)


4. Gurumandal Series edition, Calcutta 1956. (G.S.Ed): This was designed to be published in seven volumes. The last two volumes are still un-published. According to the editor, it follows the N.K. Press edition, S.V. Press and Vang.eds.

5. Bareli Edition 1956. This is in two parts and a popular edition. It is an abridged ed. with Hindi translation. The text contains only six khaṇḍas.

6. Skandamahāpurāṇam - Jayacamarajendra Granthamāla Mysore 1956. This is based on the S.V.ed. It contains a running Kannada translation.\(^{26}\)

7. Sri Skanda Mahāpurāṇam 1972 published by Nagasharan publishers, Delhi. It follows the S.V. Khaṇḍa division. It is in three volumes and there is no introduction. The edition is based on MSS and has some photo

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26. This also has some volumes containing the Saṁhitātmaka portions with Kannada translation.
plates. This edition is preferred and referred to in the present thesis as it is in the form of a photo copy edition of an MSS. None of the above editions are critical editions. They have not discussed the textual problem and the variant readings are not given. Hence, there is a need for publishing a critical edition.

CONTENTS OF SKANDA PURĀNA:

The Khandātmaka Sk.P., which is taken up for study, has the following arrangement of Khandas and Adhyāyas:

I. Māhesvara Khandam:
This contains 138 Adhyāyas, three parts viz., (i) Kedāra Khandam, (ii) Kaumārika Khandam, (iii) Arunācala Māhātmyam with two parts viz., (i) Purvārdham and (ii) Uttārārdham.

II. Vaisnava Khandam:

III. Brāhma Khandam:
This contains 114 Adhyāyas, three parts (i) Setu Māhātmyam (ii) Dharmāranya Khandam (iii) Brahmottara Khandam.

IV. Kāśi Khandam contains 100 Adhyāyas and two parts viz., (i) Purvārdham and (ii) Uttārārdham.

v. Avantya Khandam: This contains 387 Adhyāyas and three parts (i) Avantyakṣetra Māhātmyam (ii) Avantisthacaturātītaśilingamāhātmyam, and (iii) Revā Khandam.

vi. Nāgarā Khandam: This contains no parts but has 269 Adhyāyas.

vii. Prabhāsā Khandam: This has 491 Adhyāyas and four parts viz., (i) Prabhāsakṣetramāhātmyam (ii) Vastrāpatha-kṣetramāhātmyam (iii) Arbuda Khandam and (iv) Dwārakā Māhātmyam.

The extant Sk.P. in its seven Khandas referred to above contains 1688 Adhyāyas and 81,000 stanzas. In bulk, it is equal to the epic Mahābhārata. It is the biggest of the eighteen Mahāpurāṇas. Sk.P. is of Pan-Indian importance and throughout the width and breadth of India, it is used as a compendium of daily and seasonal rituals. Although in the seven Khandas of Sk.P. there is no continuity of a original theme, it gives us a picture of the evolution of Śaiva tradition from its ancient roots upto the early part of medieval times through the description of various myths, deities, Daityas, Ganas, Bhaktas, Sages, Vratas, Rivers, tirthas, yoga, Dhyāna, Jñāna etc., associated with it. The absorption of tāntrism by Śaiva tradition is noted. In Sk.P. we get a picture of the Indian society from about sixth century A.D. upto thirteenth century A.D. corresponding to the declining Age of Guptas and the early part of medieval period. The focus is on the diffusion of the social system due to the advent of Mlecchas. The
consequent social, cultural, religious and political changes are noted. The description of the temples and Tirthankatru spreading over the entire compass of India is found in Sk.P. with their associated geography. This makes it an ancient Gazettier of India. By its variety and intensity of myth making Sk.P. has assumed literary importance. And it is an eye opener to the variety of experiments carried out in the field of religious experience in India. Sk.P. attempts at the harmony of the different religious denominations by the media of different myths. This is comparable to the harmonious impact on the audience created by the various elements of an orchestra\textsuperscript{28}. Because of the bulk and complexity of the material, a detailed analysis of the contents of Sk.P. is not attempted here. But in the study of Sk.P. the following methodology and perspective are used.

METHODOLOGY AND PERSPECTIVE:

As already indicated in the Introduction, the methodology adopted here is 'typological'. Hence the material scattered over the entire text with regard to a topic is put together and analysed in the proper perspective of Saiva and other traditions. The central activity on which the attention is focussed is the activity of myth making. The activity of myth making is taken as a criterion study the socio-cultural implications of religious experience\textsuperscript{29}. But the link between the 'activity of myth making' and 'religious experience' is studied on the principles of:

\textsuperscript{28} c.f. Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Vol.10. p.575.
\textsuperscript{29} c.f. Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life, p.72ff.
Sociology of Religion. Hence here there is no attempt to interlink the observations in the process of study with definite programmes of social reforms.

Skr. P. is made-mine of myths (containing 1688 chapters and 81,000 slokas) and hence in the present study of Skr. P. only the material in Khandas connected with religious and philosophical, social and political traditions are taken up for study. But other material in other Khandas like Vaisnava Khand and other portions which do not have a direct bearing on the religious and philosophical, social and political traditions are considered only as a background for the general study of religious and philosophical, social and political traditions.

This delimitation is done taking into account the studies already made in the field. Dr. R.C. Hazra in his pioneering work vis., 'Studies in the Puranic records of Hindu rites and customs', has given us an insight into the complex textual problem of Skr. P. Dr. Hazra has drawn our attention towards the Tantric elements in Skr. P. Analysing the influence of Smerti literature on Skr. P. he has shown how various chapters on Smerti topics were added to Skr. P. In his survey analysis, the vast subject matter of Skr. P. has not found a place, as his approach was of a general nature and had a different objective.

30. Sociology of Religion according to Joachim Wach treats the patterns in ideological order and not disregarding the geographical, ethnological, political, cultural conditions which have determined the actual course of events, it tries to understand and appreciate the nature and significance of religious phenomena - Joachim Wach, Sociology of Religion, p.39.

Finding the inadequacy of a partial approach to the vast complexity of the form and contents of Sk.P.
Dr.A.B.L.Awasthi in his doctoral thesis entitled 'Studies in Skanda Purāṇa', has made a topicwise study of the encyclopaedic material in Sk.P. The topics covered by him are Geography, Society, Political System, Religion, Economic Life, Arts, Iconography, Literature etc. In the published thesis much attention is not paid to the textual problem. The line of approach being comprehensive than intensive, the main theme of Sk.P. viz., 'Śaiva Dharma'(Śaiva Tradition) has not been dealt in detail. Hence in the present thesis an indepth study of Sk.P. from this angle is taken up. But the approach here is not historical but typological, based on the myths\(^{32}\) and hence general. A survey of the materials found in Sk.P. on the other topics like Geography, Architecture, etc., are also made as a part of the present study.

**The Genesis of the Activity of Myth Making:**

Myth making is an universal human activity. The activity of myth making started very early in India as evident from its traces in the Vedas. In the history of Vedic studies with special reference to Vedic Mythology, the ancient tradition is represented by Yāska, Saunaka, Kātyāyana, Sāyapācārya and others. The modern tradition is represented by scholars like F.Max Muller, Hillebrandt, Oldenberg, A.A.Macdonell, E.W.Fay and others.

According to F.Max Muller, Vedic Mythology is essentially a solar mythology. Hillebrandt and Oldenberg see a preponderance of Moon God in it. The third view is that Vedas consist

\(^{32}\) There are a few studies made in different journals with regard on the various topics connected with Sk.P. that
of the myths of thunder and lightning as advocated by W. Fay and others. The line of interpretation followed by these scholars is naturalistic interpretation. This means that the Vedic activity of myth making centered round the cosmological ideas which were there before. These ideas were later assimilated into the various Vedic myths like Vṛtra myth, Vṛṣākapī myth, etc. The sociological, cultural, ethnological and other ideas were latter added to them. Scholars like A. N. Brown and others assign these cosmological myths to sociological roots, showing trends of Petronomy in them as opposed to Metronomy. Thus according to this line of interpretation, sociological and cultural ideas which were proto-Vedic or proto I. E. or proto Indian in nature, worked behind the cosmological ideas in the Vedic myths and gave rise to the various divinities like Indra, Agni, Rudra, Varuṇa, Viṣṇu etc.

An analysis of the Vedas shows that in them the activity of myth making centered round the rituals viz., sacrifice. The mantras uttered in such sacrifices had a magical power. But Vedic Mythology was essentially an evolutionary one.

**MYTHS IN THE LATER VEDIC AGE:**

In the later Vedic Age, the Brāhmaṇas and Upanisads brought in the elements of Arthavāda, Nirukti,

36. R. N. Dandekar contends that both Viṣṇu and Śiva are proto-Indian gods, vide V. M. T. 'Viṣṇu in the Vedas' and 'Rudra in the Vedas', pp. 68-90, pp. 199-277.
Itiḥāsa, Vāma, Narāsāmasī,37 Gātha, etc., to broaden the base of the Vedic rituals and the myths were invented to expound them. New techniques of narration were introduced to drive home the ideas contained in the Vedic myths. Traces of a new genre of popular literature called 'Purāṇa' could already be seen coming up. The Purāṇa genre which was taking shape by this time combined in itself the narrative coherence of the Brāhmaṇas (Bandhūtā)38 and the speculative tendency of the Upaniṣads, without bidding good bye to the narrative simplicity of the Vedic tradition.

MYTHS IN THE SŪTRAS, SMRTIS AND EPICS:

The Sūtras and Smritis took up this developing genre of myths. To re-establish faith in the Vedic tradition with the help of the myths and with the view that they should take deep roots, they traced the myths to the ancestors. The Sūtrakāras and Smrtikāras prepared a whole system of daily rituals from birth to death (viz., Samskāras) from boy-hood to the stage of old age. A separate class of 'preservers' and 'observers' of the tradition was brought into the social set-up, to uphold the tradition. In the Epics, the kings aided by the preservers of the tradition, tracing themselves from the divine lineage of Sun or Moon, took the vow of preserving the tradition. The theory of incarnation (Avatāra) took strong hold along with the Akhyānas and Upākhyānas aiding the mythical narratives.39

37. The primary sense of Narāsāmasī is the magically potent formula produced by men, that is priests. R.N.Dandekar, V.M.T. p.286.
38. R.N.Dandekar interprets the word 'Bandhūtā' as ritual magic. 'Some aspects of the history of Hinduism' p.69.
The Epics were styled the fifth Veda and they were read and re-read on various occasions to emphasise their continuity in the mythical tradition.

**MYTHS AND THE PURĀNAS:**

But in the Epics the myth-proper was to a certain extent lost in the cob-web of narratives and a tendency of tangentiality was seen with the Vedic tradition with their leaning towards the scions of a particular race. Hence the mythical tradition was in search of an independent tradition, which combined all the elements of development, but which preserved its identity with 'the myth-proper' and thus arose the 'Sūta-tradition' which later developed and became known as the 'Purānic-tradition (Purānaparamāpārā)\(^{40}\).

And this tradition outbeat all the previous traditions\(^{41}\) and made the myths a living reality. The myths vi:., Vedic, Brāhmaṇic, Upaniṣadic, Epic etc., encompassing the cosmological, geographical, philosophical, theological, ethical, social, political and other ideologies were brought into the fabric of the mythologic and the Purānas grew in extent and number. A survey of the important myths of the various Purānas would certainly show the flight of imagination and the depth of understanding the mysteries of Man and the universe shown by the Purānic writers, makes one wonder about their vitality.

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40. c.f. Padmapurāṇa V.2.53
   'Purā Paṃparām vasti purānam tenatatsmrtam'.

In order to understand the Purānic myths in a better perspective they may be compared with Sagas and Ballads, their counterparts (of narration) in the European tradition. Whereas the romantic Sagas keep out abundances to retain the dramatic energy without yielding to imbalance and partiality, the Ballads place emphasis on the denouement of a particular incident, keep their comments to the minimum and allow the action to interpret itself. But in the Purānic myths, which are in sharp contrast to the two referred to above, the divinities play a definite role. They are the ones who interpret the events. In this way, the Purāṇas adding the divine element into many of the existing Vedic, Epic and other narratives transformed them into myths. And such myths began fulfilling an indispensable function of expressing, enhancing and codifying belief, safeguarding and enforcing morality; vouching for the efficiency of the rituals and containing practical rules for the guidance of man. Thus myths in the Purāṇas are statements of a primordial, greater and more relevant reality, by which the present life, facts and activities of mankind are influenced.

42. Everything in the Sagas tends to the same ends; the preservation of the balance of completeness of the history as far as it goes; the impartiality of the record. W.P.Kerr. Epic and Romance, Sec.III, p.187.

43. "A ballad is a folk song that tells a story with stress on the crucial situation, tells it by letting the action unfold itself in events and speech and tells it with little comment or intrusion of personal bias". Gerould, The ballad of Tradition, p.3.
The domain of these myths is the world of abstract things and while ushering upon them the element of concreteness, the medium of verbal communication is resorted to. This system of verbal communication is symbolic and multidimensional. In the event of religious experience, the connected concepts have to be generated in the mind without reference to particular things and events in the external world\(^44\). In this context, the scheme of non-verbal communication consisting of metaphoric (symbolic) and metonymic (sign) relationships, is made use of. Let us take an example:

(1) 'The God Śiva is a source of devine potency' is a statement in the metaphysical context and concept.

(2) 'The Lingam (or penis) is a source of potency', is a statement in the context of functional biology.

(3) 'The Lingam is an object shaped like a penis' is a statement in the context of material physics, which involves an iconic relationship between Lingam and penis.

(4) 'The religious assertion that the Lingam is the God Śiva', then acquires meaning by mixing together 1, 2 and 3 in the mind. Whenever the idea of a deity is represented by a material object, a hymn, a temple, such metaphorical and metonymic transformations are involved\(^45\). This is exemplified in the Linga myth of Sk.P.\(^46\)

\(^{44}\) Edmund Leach - Culture and Communication - An introduction to use structuralist analysis in Social anthropology, p.18 f.

\(^{45}\) Ibid. p.35

\(^{46}\) Sk.P.1/(1) 6-9.
Sk.P. has taken a step ahead of the other purāṇas in as much as in its seven Khandas, mountains, rivers, kṣetras, tīrthas, temples, kundas, trees, plants, ghosts, animals and birds and others are brought into the fold of the myths, by establishing this metaphoric and metonymic relationship between mountains, rivers, kṣetras, tīrthas, etc., on the one hand and the divinity on the other.

Śaiva Tradition more than any other Indian Tradition, has assimilated in its developmental stages various elements of other religions and cults. In explaining the process of assimilation the system of non-verbal communica-
tion has to be resorted to. This aspect is clearly seen in the myths of Sk.P. expounding the Śaiva Tradition.

But a margin has to be drawn and a measure has to be evolved in order to unearth the various 'ideas' that have gone into the fabric of the myth-making activity in Sk.P. as evidenced in the Śaiva myths.

The following general content pattern may be seen in the 'Śaiva myths' of Sk.P.

1. Super-natural or mysterious origin,
2. Portents at birth,
3. Perils during infancy,
4. Some kind of initiation,
5. A boundary,
6. A magical context,
7. A trial or persuasion,
8. A last scene,
9. Accident or mysterious death, and
10. A resurrection and or ascension.\(^47\)

In some of the Śaiva myths taken up for study, of the steps enumerated above, a few may be combined and a few ones may be missing. But a unity of design is seen.

This design of the myth is set at a time or in a time, i.e., betwixt and between.\(^48\) The plane on which the activity is carried out is the 'Liminal Plane', where anything can happen, where immoderacy is normal even normative and where the elements of culture and society are released from their customary configurations and recombined in bizarre and terrifying imagery. A peep into the plurality of such myths in Sk.P. shows that in a myth Śiva is not invented but experienced.\(^49\) Even in that experience, the emphasis is primarily on the logic of oppositions and correlations, exclusions and inclusions, compatibility and incompatibility of the social, cultural, psychological or spiritual ideas\(^50\) that knitted the various ideas in the long history of Śaivism. It is true that myth and logic cannot go together because myth is discourse and logos is 'reason', but as the Greek word 'Logos' stands for both

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2. The concept of 'purāṇaśravana phala' - the fruits of listening to a purāṇa, hints at this.
4. cf., Encyclopaedia - --
reason and discourse, the mythologic stands for both discourse and reason which finds a happy and harmonious expression in the Saiva Tradition as presented in the myths of Sk.P. It is this aspect of harmony between the divergent elements of Socio-religious Tradition that is assessed in the subsequent chapters of the present thesis.

51. c.f. Lévi-Strauss., 'Symbolism and discourse', Ibid., p.579.