PREFACE

The present work is an attempt at studying various problems of the Narasimha Purana. Even though the Indian way of life is rooted in Puranic tradition and culture, the study of Puranas was taken up much later in India. Wilson's translation of the Visnu Purana heralded a new era in Indology. Next important name in the field of Purana is that of F. E. Parjiter who studied the Puranas from genealogical point of view. His translation of Markandeya Purana is a unique contribution to the Sanskrit world. He was followed by Kirfel, who made an intensive investigation of the Puranas and his continued efforts resulted in "Das Purana Pencalaksana" the Ur-kern of Puranas, dealing with the basic five characteristics of which the Puranas were primarily constituted. Equally his 'Das Purana vom Weltgebaude' (Bhuvana-vinyasa) is eye-opener for the study of geographic knowledge in India.

Among Indians mention may be made of scholars like H. P. Sastri, R. C. Hazra, Kane, A. D. Pusalker, Baladeva Upadhyaya, V. S. Agrawala, A. S. Gupta etc. who have written a number of papers covering a vast range of Purana literature. In the last two decades there have appeared some studies on particular Puranas. V. S. Agrawala makes a study of Matsya Purana (1963), S. D. Gyani makes a study of Agni Purana (1964), Asoka Chatterjee Sastri a study of

In the present study the first chapter contains some general introduction to the Narasimha Purana. The second chapter deals with the myths and legends of the Narasimha Purana. In the third chapter where I have taken up the discussion of the five characteristics of the Purana viz., Sarga, Pratisarga, Vamsa, Manvantara and Vamsanucarita, I have accepted Kirfel's Purana Pañcalaksana as the base and have dealt with these topics stage by stage till at last I come to Narasimha Purana for giving the critical remarks. Similarly in the fourth chapter Puranic cosmography and cosmology have been taken up and it is followed by cosmography in the Narasimha Purana. In the same process chapter V begins with the concept of Tirtha and then a comparative study of tirthas in the Narasimha Purana and

1. However, K. R. Van Kooij has made an intensive study of Kalika Purana and his dissertation appears under the title "Worship of the goddess according to the Kalika Purana." Part I & II Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1972.
other Purāṇa texts has been attempted. In chapter VI I have tried to show the development of concept of Man-lion (Narasimha). Besides the chapter contains a sub-section on the prevalence of Narasimha cult in Ancient India. With the last chapter on the date of Narasimha Purāṇa, part-I of this study comes to a close.

English translation of Narasimha Purāṇa constitutes the second part of this work. While translating the verses, I have made use of two editions of Narasimha Purāṇa now available:— Nirnaya Sāgar Press Edition, Gopal Narayan & Co., Bombay 1911, and Gītā Press Edition, Gorakhpur (Kalinya Journal 45th year No. I and II). In course of my work I found Gītā Press Edition to be more accurate and correct in contrast to Nirnaya Sāgar Press Edition; and that is why I have depended more on the former than on the latter. The defective and variant reading of Nirnaya Sāgar Press Edition has been pushed down to the foot-note as and when necessary.

The Appendix attached to this work shows the textual similarities of Narasimha Purāṇa with other Purāṇas and Sanskrit texts.

It will not be out of place to mention here that in my work I have used two editions of Padma Purāṇa — Gurumandala granthamālā, Mor Edition, Calcutta and Anandāsrama Sanskrit Series, Poona. In chapter V dealing with tīrthas I have
invariably referred, to the latter. Sometimes reference from Padma, A. S. S. Edn. has been indicated within brackets.

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Siddheswar Jena