CHAPTER: I

PROLOGUE

Importance of the Purānas:

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

Vocable Purāna:

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

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

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

Classification of the Purāṇas and the Liṅga Purāṇa:

The classificatory nomenclature of the Purāṇas may be briefly alluded to here. The Mahāpurāṇas have been sub-divided into sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa according to their preferential treatment to Viṣṇu, Śiva and other deities. Thus in the MP⁸, the Purāṇas glorifying Hari are styled as sāttvika, those glorifying Brahmā as rājasa and those glorifying Agni and Śiva both as tāmasa, whereas those glorifying Sarasvatī and manes as Sankīrṇa.

The SKP enumerates ten Purāṇas as describing the greatness of Śiva, four of Brahmā and two each of Devī and Hari⁹. Haraprasad Shastri divides the eighteen Mahāpurāṇa into six
groups according to their character and states that Linga, Vamana and Markandeya are of sectarian group.\(^{10}\)

It may be noted here that LP is a sectarian, still we find the eulogies of Brahma, Visnu and the Sun in it.

**Extent of the LP:**

The printed text in the edition, edited by J.L. Shastri has only about 9000 verses\(^ {11}\) whereas the text itself actually mentions\(^ {12}\) the extent of the Pur\(\text{\=a}\)na as 11,000 verses. The MP\(^ {13}\) as well as the DB\(^ {14}\) and the AP\(^ {15}\) refer to the extent of the LP as 11,000 verses.

Referring to the LP in his D\(\text{\=a}\)nas\(\text{\=a}\)gara, Ballalasena states that\(^ {16}\) he has not drawn on this section or dana in the LP as this is based on the same section in the MP. But R.C. Hazra\(^ {17}\) would take this verse to mean that Ballalasena has not considered the whole of the LP as authoritative.

A line of the verse from the LP\(^ {18}\) on the Tul\(\text{\=a}\)purus\(\text{\=a}\)d\(\text{\=a}\)na and a few more verses\(^ {19}\) under Punyadesah quoted by Ballalasena in his D\(\text{\=a}\)nas\(\text{\=a}\)gara and found in the present text of the LP, are considered by Hazra\(^ {20}\) to be an interpolation as Ballalasena\(^ {21}\) has not included the LP when referring to the Pur\(\text{\=a}\)nas and Upapur\(\text{\=a}\)nas consulted by him in composing his Nibandha.

Moreover, it has been shown\(^ {22}\) that quotations from the LP found in many of the works of the writers on Dharma (Jimutav\(\text{\=a}\)hana, Laksm\(\text{\=i}\)mdhara and Others) are not at all found in the present LP.
It appears therefore that the text of the LP has not come down to us in its original form; but it seems to have been revised and enlarged.  

The present LP is divided into two sections comprising respectively 108 and 55 chapters.

Title:

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

Author of the LP:

The authorship of the Puranas is attributed to the sage Krsna Dvaipayana but the BhP speaks of separate authorship for different Puranas. According to this authority the LP was composed by the sage Tandi; but the statement of the BhP is not supported by the internal evidence.

Spurious Portions in the Purana:

The Uttarbhaga of the LP is a latter addition, as it is not mentioned in the anukramaniya adhyaya (Ch.2).

It has been pointed out by R.C.Hazra and Pargiter that the LP interpolates religious teaching in the genealogical
portion, when it introduces an eulogy of Rudra in Chapter 65 (verses 54-168). Besides this stotra, the Purana introduces in Chapter 98 (verses 57-159), an eulogy of Siva addressed by Visnu.

Unlike the other Puranas, the LP opens with a list of the names of the holy places visited by Narada and declares that the Purana was narrated by Brahma in the Iśanakalpa. It also refers to divine interlocution i.e. between Mahādeva and His consent only in the LP (I.25.2).

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

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

Baladeva Upadhyaya has pointed out that the LP II.28.44 on the gifts are an abridgement of similar verses from the
It may be noted here that the second part of the LP is not referred to in the anukramani chapter in LP I.2.

Influence of the LP on Later works:

The dāna section in the LP has given rise to some prayoga works on dāna. The works are ascribed to be a part of the LP. The names of the works as known from the manuscript catalogues are given below:

- Ganesadānaprayoga
- Lokapalastakaprayoga
- Visnubrahmāmahesvāradasanaprayoga
- Hiranyamadhunadanavidhi
- Hiranyasvadanavidhi
- Hiranyagarbhadanaprayoga

All these manuscripts are found only in the manuscripts collection at Tanjore. Probably they were composed during the Mahratha rule at Tanjore.

Date:

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

It is possible to arrive at a conclusion regarding the date.
of the chapters on dharma in the LP, from the LP quotations in the Nibandhas, according to their traceability in the text of the LP. The verses quoted by some of the early Nibandha writers from the LP, are not found in the present text. Some of the LP-quotations in Dharmanibandhas are available in the present text of the LP.

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

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

Hazra has suggested the following dates for the composition of the following sections for the Purāṇa on Dharma. This is given here for ready reference.
I.25-28 - On lihga-worship  C. Between 600 and 1000 A.D.
I.77-78 - On the consecration of a Lihga  Most probably 600-800 A.D.
I.81 - On Pasupata-vrata or Siva-lihga-vrata
I.83-84 - On Saiva vrata to be observed in the different months.
I.85, 88 - On the method of muttering the five-syllabled Mantra
I.85, 88 - On Dikṣa and Parascarana  C. between 600 and 1000 A.D.
I.85, 88 - On customs in general to the end; I.89
I.90 - On penances for Yatis
II.23-26 - On Siva-worship
II.28-44 - On great gifts
II.45 - On funeral sacrifices for living persons
II.46-49 - On consecrating the Lihga
II.51 to - On mystic rites and practices the end
The chapters on the Lihga-worship show two distinct nodes of procedure - one using the vedic mantras and the other in which tantric elements prevail. Hazra has suggested that while the former group has been retained from the earlier form of the Lihga, the latter seem to have been in existence from the time of the recast of the Purana, showing the influence of tantric practices, i.e. not earlier than 800 A.D.

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

The genealogical portion also betrays a comparatively late origin of the LP. About this portion Pargiter says: "The Lihga account is based on the 'Vayu version', but adapts to frame its own text. Often it has the same verses, but often also it modifies, curtails and freely omits, especially identical and descriptive matter; and it adds occasionally."
It also interpolates religious teaching, as where it introduces a long eulogy of Rudra. It, however, shows traces of the influence of the Matsya-version; thus it has the same verses sometimes and ends the Aiksvāku genealogy with six kings instead of the Vāyu's twentyone just as the Matsya does.

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

The LP as a Purāṇa, its place, etc.: The brief synopsis of the LP is given in Appendix I. Let us now see how far the LP fulfils the classical pana-laksana definition of the Purāṇa. According to the classical definition a Purāṇa is supposed to deal with five topics (Pancalaksana) viz. (1) sarga or creation of the universe; (2) pratisarga or re-creation after destruction; (3) Vaṃśa or genealogy; (4) manvantara or the great periods of time with Manu as the primal ancestor and (5) Vaṃśanucarita or the history of the dynasties both solar and lunar. But the texts that have come down to us under the title Purāṇa hardly confirm to this definition since they contain either something more or something less than the limitations set by it. It is happy to note that the LP fulfils these Pancalaksanas. For example, the pratisarga in Chap
I.3-5; the pratisarga in Chap. I.10; the material regarding vaṁśa in Chap. I.63. The Chaps. I.46-63 deal with the manvantara. The Vaṁsanucarita is dealt with in Chaps. I.65-69.

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

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

**Metres in the LP:**

We find 17 metres in the LP: viz. Vaitālya, Puspitāgra, Indravajra, Upemravajra, Upājati, Śalinī, Rathoddhata, Vaṁśastha, Śrutavilambita, Bhujāṃgapravatā, Prahaṃśini, Manjubhāṣini, Vasantatiłaka, Mālinī, Māndarānta, Sārdulavikṛīdita and Srāgdrāha. The detailed information regarding the metres in the LP is as under:

- **Vaitālya** - I, 72, 167; 107, 53. Total No. = 2
- **Puspitāgra** - I.33.13.18; 34.23; 71.37; 104.28. Total No. = 5
- **Indravajra** - I.5, 50; 29, 62; 53, 56; 54, 38a; 72, 65, 153, 159, 160; 85, 17; 106, 15; II.19, 32. Total No. = 11
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<tr>
<th>Manuscript Title</th>
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<td>Upendravajra</td>
<td>1.40,93; 53, 57, 58, 60; 64, 9; 70,83; 71,134. 72,54.56.57.59; 73,75,96,98,100,155; 81,58; 94,13,15.</td>
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<td>Upajati</td>
<td>1.20, 29; 29,13,16,17; 35,31; 36,21; 53,53,54. 59,61,62; 58, 13; 64, 32,67; 71,56.112.114; 72, 49-53, 55,58.66-68, 71.95, 97, 154, 156, 158, 161-163, 166, 168; 75, 37-39; 77, 4,5; 80, 11, 18,43; 81, 56,57; 85, 125; 86, 42; 88, 38,40,41; 91, 32; 92, 34; 94, 14,16; 106, 16. 17; 107, 26; II. 18,26; 19,31.36-38; 26, 19,20.</td>
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<td>Śālinī</td>
<td>1.16,35; 21,85.86; 53,55; 54,38b; 72,164,165,177; 88,39; 89, 27; 96, 35. II. 18,34,40; 26, 19a.</td>
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<td>Rathoddhata</td>
<td>1.64,56,57,62; 72,64,69; 95,14.</td>
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<td>Vaṁśastha</td>
<td>1.64,31; 72,120; 80,12; 89,26-29; 90,24; 92, 12-18,20.</td>
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<td>Drutavilāmbita</td>
<td>1,72,90.94.99; 80,8; II.47,2.</td>
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<td>Bhujāṅgaprayata</td>
<td>1.42,16; 93, 8; 95,20.</td>
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<td>Commentator:</td>
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<td>The only printed available Sanskrit commentary on the Purana is Sivatosini. The author of this commentary was Ganesa Natu, who wrote this commentary at Poona in Śaka 1760 or 1769 (=A.D.1838 or 1847), for ahka means both: Zero as well as number nine. He was the grandson of Narayana and the eldest son of Ballāla and Yasoda. He mentions Nilakantha with reverence as</td>
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his preceptor. He was inspired by his devotion to Siva and he wrote the commentary for the enlightenment of the ignorant and the pleasure of the learned, after editing the text on the basis of several manuscripts that were available at the time.
REFERENCES


4. MP. 53.63.

5. Itihasapurānah Pañcamo Vedānāṃ, Ch.U.7.1.2.4.


8. MP. 53.68-69.

9. SKP, Kedārakhanda, 1 as quoted by N. Gangadhara, the Liṅga-purāṇa - A Study, p.


12. I.24. Taṣaikādasya sahasram Gaṃthamanāmīha dvijāh /
and II.55.36. Granthaikadasa Sahasraḥ Purāṇaḥ Laiḥgāmu-
muttamaḥ /

1313. MP. 53.37.


15. AP. 272, 14-15.

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


18. II.28.34 (Dānasāgara, p.72).

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

20. Ibid.

21. Dānasāgara, p.3.

profusely from the LP in the Tīrthakānda of Krtyakalpataru,
See Kane, P.V., History of Dharmasastra, Vol.V, Pt.ii,
p.903.


24. For detail see summary in Appendix I.


31. TD. 13560-64.

32. TD. 13588-89.

33. TD. 13582-84.

34. TD. 13633-35.

35. TD. 13639-41.

36. TD. 13565-61.


40. Hazra, R.C., Op.cit., p.337 gives a list of these verses.


42. See, Upadhyaya, Baladeva, Purāṇavimarsa, p.556.

43. For the date of Jimūtavahana and other writers on Itthandha see Kane P.V., History of Dharmaśastra, Vol.IV, p.xi.

45. Ibid., p.95.

46. Ibid., p.179.

47. Ibid., pp.95-96.


49. Puranjape, V.V., Purâna, II.2, pp.76-81.


52. Cf. Sargasa ca pratisargasa ca vaṃsa manvantaraṇi ca / 
   Vaṃśanucaritaṃ caiva parānām pancalaksamāṃ //
   MP. 53.64; SP. VII.i / 41; GP. I.215.16; DB.I.2.28.

53. Cf Von Adam Hohenberger, Metres on classical poetry in the Purāṇas, Purāṇa, XI.1, pp.22-23.


55. Cf. Śivatosinī the concluding verses:
   Plavaṃgavatsaṃ sauklapahāmyāṃ srāvanasya tu /
   Ankarṭva śvakuśakhyāke śalivahanake śake //
   Punyagrameoavisvesvakṛpayā gurvanugrahāt /
   Laṅgavākyāhyā samāpteyaṃ śivapremabharāspadā //
56. Ibid., the preliminary verses 1-10:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Narayanasuto} & \ldots \ldots \text{Ballanamavikhyatah} & \ldots \ldots \text{anvarthaka} \\
\text{yasodeti Namanya patnya samanvita} & \ldots \ldots \text{putresu tasya} \\
\text{prathamo Ganesah} & \ldots \ldots \text{Srinilakaunthakhvyaguroh prasadat}
\end{align*}
\]

57. Ibid., the concluding verses:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Atra Lekhakadosena Panditairapyasodhanat} & \\
\text{Apapathastu bahusah sahjatasthahupeksya vai} & \\
\text{Samyak patham samadaya bahupustakadarshanat} & \\
\text{Vyakhyeyamajnabodhaya modaya vidusa krta}
\end{align*}
\]