The Vedic religion is based upon the conception of nature-worship. At first the god is hardly differentiated from the physical phenomena which it represents and slowly clothed with moral attributes and endowed with a character wholly divine can be traced. Thus we see the Dyaus as the broad bright sky; the Maruts, the deities of the storm; Indra, the god of the rain-cloud, who became the mighty warrior and champion of heaven and Agni the god of fire later on getting an individual and abstract existence.

Lack of individuality is conspicuous in Vedic gods. Thus Dawn, Sun, Fire, have the common features of being luminous, dispelling darkness and appearing in the morning and thus it becomes difficult to define the characteristics
pertaining to individual gods. Apart from this, certain essential traits as brilliance, power, beneficence are attributed to all gods in common and these common features tend to obscure what is distinctive in each god and lead to the identification of one god with another. Thus praying lord Agni, the seer identifies him with Varuna, Mitra, Indra and others and it becomes very difficult to give a definite outline of any god in particular. The tendency towards abstract personifications can be seen in the later hymns in the nature of Aditi, the immensity; Prajāpati, the lord of creatures; Hiranyagarbha, the golden germ and others.

In the period of the Brāhmaṇas, a ceremonial type of worship was developed and a growing insistence of rigorous precision in the observance of the niceties of rites and sacrifices marked the epoch. In the Āranyakas, the hermits believed themselves capable to supercede the gods and to obtain from them any gift at will by the practice of intense meditation and prolonged self-mortification. The line of thought on nature and being of god in the upaniṣads as opposed to the Brāhmaṇas is speculative and mystical and the great systems of Indian philosophy carry forward and develop it.

The importance of the great epic poems and the

1 Rv. (5-3).
purānas of India for the history of religious thought and its bearing upon the Hindu conception of god is very great as they are the popular possession of the inhabitants of every village as well as of great towns and the centres of pilgrimage. The names of their heroes and heroines are on the tip of tongue throughout India. The tone and tendency of this literature is towards a rich polytheism which has enriched the land with innumerable gods and goddesses. By the time of the epics and the purānas, the phenomenal side of the gods was greatly obscured. Anthropomorphism went to such an extent that even Sun and Moon were garbed as human beings in dress, talk and action.

In the mythology of the Brahma-purāna there are various categories of gods. Some gods such as Viṣṇu and Śiva are of primary importance. The god Sūrya occupies an independent section. Brahma is the narrator of the purāṇa and the purāṇa takes its name after Him. The gods Indra, Yama, Agni are of secondary importance and the gods Dattatreyā, Ganesā, Agni, Soma, Varuna, and Kārtikeya occupy a minor position in the pantheon of the Brahma-purāṇa.

There can be no limit to the pantheon when constantly new images invoke new personifications. Thus Manyu is anger personified and Kamadeva is the feeling of love incarnated. Sometimes the gods are created out of purely physical aspects. Thus jvara was created out of the perspiration of Ganesa's body and the Matrs were the creation of lord
Siva's perspiration. The semi-divine beings like the Yaksas, the Siddhas, the Gandharvas, the Kinnaras and others are always mentioned in connection with some primary deity. Among the goddesses, Pārvatī is described at length in association with lord Siva, and there are stray references to Aditi, Lakṣmī and Saraswati. The Brahma purāṇa lays special emphasis on the worship of Subhadra with Lord kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. It does not mention Rādhā. The outstanding feature of the mythology of the Brahma-purāṇa is that it presents a long eulogy of the river Gṛḍhārī, deifies it and describes its miraculous powers. Worship is extended to the Nyagrodha tree and it is identified with lord Viṣṇu. The pīṭras are also deified and worshipped.

In the Br. P., the gods are described as being well-versed in the śāstras, knowing the way to attain mokṣa and meditating on the highest principle. They are parivrādhas, attain yoga and meditate on veda (51.18-21). Their abode is the golden peak of the mountain Meru and it is also inhabited by the siddhas, Vidyādhāras, Yaksas, Kinnaras, Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Serpernts, Nymphs, Gaṇas of gods, Sages, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Suparnas, Maruts, Śadhus, Kaśyapas, Prajehvaras, Valakhilyas and others (45.5-7). The function of these semi-divine beings is either praying the lord, showering flowers, blowing the conch, serving the lord and protecting
the sacrifice (108,19-20). When not directly interested in the human affairs to the point of descending to earth, either to partake of a sacrifice or to intervene in worldly matters, the gods reside in sky where they live in courts of their own 'on top of the sky', in the third heaven or gather at the halls of their colleagues.2

Besides gods, the Br. P. deals with demons as enemies of gods and men and it narrates the stories regarding sages who helped kings and gods in the performance of sacrifice and various other matters.

VISNU

Introduction

In the Rgveda, Visnu occupies a subordinate position and his only anthropomorphic traits are the strides, which, as a solar god, he takes across the heavens.3 He traverses the three worlds in three strides referring probably to the Sun in the heavens through the three stages of rising, culminating and setting, or the three steps with which he encompassed the universe. He is closely related to Indra, but his connection with krsna is still obscure.4 In the Brähmanas,

3 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P. 37.
the position of Viṣṇu remains much the same as before; he is regarded as the equal of the other gods, not yet their superior. It should, however, be observed that in the Brāhmaṇas, Viṣṇu is repeatedly identified with the sacrifice, in honour which he shares with Prajāpati, and the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa ascribes the dwarf-incarnation to Prajāpati and the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa ascribes the boar incarnation to Prajāpati. But general opinion ascribes the related feats to Viṣṇu in his tortoise and boar incarnations. In the older portions of the Mbh., Viṣṇu is little more than a hero; in others he is represented as paying homage to Śiva, while in the latest portions of the poem, he is regarded as the most exalted deity. In Rāmāyaṇa and the Vaiṣṇava purāṇas, he is exalted to be the supreme spirit. The Brahma purāṇa is chiefly a Vaiṣṇava purāṇa and exalts Viṣṇu as the supreme deity, though it assigns a high rank to lord Śiva also and once states the liberal view that really speaking there is no distinction between lord Viṣṇu and lord Śiva and that they are two aspects of one and the same divinity (56.64-72).

Physical Description

Viṣṇu, in the Brahma purāṇa, is described as follows: He has thousand heads (45.40; 213.12) thousand
The eyes are compared to lotus (68.28, 178.29). They are wide like the lotus-leaf (178.123) and he shines like the lightening (68.53). He has thousand mouths (213.12), thousand tongues (213.13) and thousand hands (213.12). He is also said to have four hands (45.65; 68.30). He has a sign of Śrīvarā on his chest (45.41; 64; 68.31; 178.24). Śrīvarā is a particular curl of hair on the breast of Viṣṇu-krṣna and other divine beings and it may be classified under the well-known outward tokens of the status of cakravartin 'Universal sovereign' or Mahāpuruṣa. The explanation of the name is given as 'Śrī's favourite abode'. As an auspicious sign it has nine angles, this number often occurs in connection with precious or auspicious objects, powers and ceremonies related to warfare etc. Viṣṇu is said to have thousand feet (45.40; 178.156; 213.12). He is tall (178.151) and very strong (68.50). His complexion is blue like the petal of a blue lotus (45.62). He is also called Syāma (68.44). His brilliance is like that of a cloud full of water (45.41) and he is compared to an atasi flower (178.121).

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5 45.41; 128.155; 213.12. The reading 'Sasasra' seems to be a variant of 'Sahasra' in the last reference.

6 Gonda, Early aspects of Viṣṇuism, PP. 96 ff.
Dress and Ornaments

He wears yellow clothes (45.65, 68.44, 178.124) and decorated himself with Vanamalā, hāra, kayūra, makuta and anigada (45.65, 68.30, 178.123-124). Elsewhere he is said to wear thousand didems (213.13). He applies divine Candana to his body (178.125).

Weapons

He wields Sankha, Cakra and Gadā (45.65). His Sudarśana Cakra is terrible and the chief among all the weapons. It is white like the kunda flower, Moon, garland and Milk of the cow (68.45,46). The Pāñcajanya Sankha is garlanded with thousand garlands and perturbs the whole world with its sound (68.47). His Kaumodaki Gadā is terrible, brings to an end all the evil factors, demons and daityas. It is formed of burning flames and is unbearable even for gods (68.48,49). The Sarāṅga bow has the lustre of Sun and the arrows are like the rays of the Sun (68.49,50). He is well-versed in all the šastras (68.21) and bears Sarasvatī on his tongue (122.71).

Elsewhere it is said that Agni is his mouth, kṣiti his feet, Sun and Moon his eyes, the sky together with its directions his ears and body, heaven his head, the directions his eyes, Vayu his mind, waters born out of his perspiration
Stars the pores of his skin, oceans abounding in jewels his clothes, bed and abode (56.27-29). Again it is said that the brahmans are his mouth, the kṣatriyas his hands, the vaisyas his thighs and śūdras are his feet (56.22, 23). He is also called bahubāhu, urupāda, bahukarna and aksisirāṅka (122.72).

Consort and Abode

He is called lakṣmībhartā (136.6) and the remains engrossed in his service (109.41). As she is the abode of lotuses, Viṣṇu is called Padmālayākānta (65.51).

As water is his abode, he is called Nārāyaṇa (56.12, 60.25). Nārāyaṇa is an ancient and dignified epithet which has been applied to various Hindu gods. It is not the name of any distinct Hindu divinity. The world is believed to be a patronymic, derived from 'Nara', 'man', so that it means 'Son of man', but it is not known of whom it was originally used. The RV., the Satapatha-brāhmaṇa, the kātyāyana śrauta-sūtra, and the Mahānārāyaṇa upanisad (11.IX.1) relate the word Nārāyaṇa with Purusā and at a much later date,

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7 ERS., Vol., 9, P. 134.
8 X.20.
9 XII.iii.4.1; XIII.VI.1.1; 2.12.
10 XXIV. vii. 36.
in the Taittāriya Samhitā of the black Yajurveda (vii.1.5.1) it was suggested that the word was derived from narah (the waters are called naraḥ, for they are sprung from Nara) and ayana (moving). As in Greek thought, the world has arisen from waters is one of the earliest theories of Hindus and hence forward most Hindu writers preferred this secondary derivation of the word, and the Br. P. also follows the same line. He resides in the Kṣirasagara (45.60, 126.24) and he sleeps on the serpent Śeṣa (45.60). He is also said to reside in the Viṣṇu and the Br. P. provides a beautiful description of Viṣṇuloka (A.68). The nymphs Ghrācī, Menaka, Rambhā, Sahajanyā, Tilottamā, Urvasī, Nimlocā, Vāmana, Māndodari, Subhagā, Viśvācī, Vipulanāṇa, Bhadraṅgī, Citrasena, Pramlocā, Manohara, Ramā, Candramadhyā, Subhānā, Sukeśī, Nīlakesī, Manmathadīpinī, Alambūsā, Miśrakesī, Mañjikṣṭhara, Kratusthalā, Varaṅgī, Purvacitti, Parā, Paravati, Mahārupā, Saśilekha, Subhanānā, Mattavāraṇagaminī, Bimboṣṭhī, Navagarbha and others entertain lord Viṣṇu by dancing and playing the musical instruments (68.60,67). The status of Viṣṇu is un-modifiable, Viraja, Purā, devoid of the contact of worldly parlance and higher than the Brahmāloka (59.79,80).

11 Manu, i.8-10.
Particular Attributes

Lord Viṣṇu is called Hari, Śaṅkara, Vāsudeva, Deva, and kṛṣṇa (8.65). Govinda, Madhusūdana, Śrīdhara, Keśava, Nādhava, Vāmanā, Varāha, and Trivikrama (60.33-41, 61.14,15, 39,40).

Philosophical Epithets

Some philosophical epithets are ascribed to him. Thus he is called Avyakta, Suddha, Nitya, Sādākara-parāpa, Sarvajīnu, Paramātman, Hiraṇyagarbha, gross as well as subtle, Ajara, Amara, Akaśyā, Avyaya, one as well as many, Sarvajña (1.21-27), sat as well as asat (23.42), Nirguna, Santa, Sanātana (45.61-63), Kūṭastha, Acala, devoid of bhāva and abhāva, all pervading, beyond prakṛti (45.66,67), the ātman of all, Omnipresent, endless, Brahmārūpa, Urukrama and one controlling the wheel of time (56.43,44). He is known from the vedas (126.25). He is higher than Pradhāna, Buddhi and the senses (181.22). He is avyaktas mūla prakṛti and the vyākṛta world (23.43). He is acyuta (122.70) and is called Bhūtapāvyakta, Bhūtakṛt, Bhūtakṛt and Bhūtabhāvana (178.133,135). He is also called Kṣetrajña, Kṣetrabhṛt, Kṣetri, Kṣetraha, Kṣetraśāy, Kṣetraśāman, Kṣetraśchita, Kṣetraśaśta (178.135).
Gunāsraya, Guṇavāha, Guṇabhoktr, Guṇārāma, and Guṇatyāgī (178.136). He is Rk, Yajus, and Śāman (178.143). He is day, night, Vatsara, Kāla, Kaśthā, Muhūrtā, Ksana, Lava (178.145,146), etc. He is called Jagadbija, Jagadūhāma, Jagatsākṣi (178.128) and Jagatpati (68.28). The historically important fact here is that he is lauded with the vedanta epithets.

Various Forms

In different continents, he is worshipped in different forms. Thus it is said that in the Plaksadvipa, he is worshipped in the form of Soma (20.19), in Sālmaladvipa in the form of Vāyu (20.32), in the Kuśadvipa in the form of Brahmā (20.40), in Krauṭadvipa in the form of Rudra (20.57) and in the Śakadvipa in the form of Sun (20.72). His dharma is said to possess different colours in the different yugas. Thus it is said that his dharma becomes white in the Kṛtayuga, Śyama in the Tretāyuga, Red in the Dvāparayuga and Kṛṣṇa in the Kaliyuga (56.40,41). Desire, anger, joy, fear and moha are his other forms (56.29,30). He has a sacrificial form which is lauded at great length. It consists of Savaṇa, Hotā, Havya, Pavitra, Vedi, Dikṣā, Samidh, Sruvā, Sruk, Soma, Yūpa, Musala, Prokṣani, Daksināyana, Adhvaryu, a brahmin knowing the recitation of Śāmans, Sadasya, Sadana, Sabhā, Yūpa, Cakra, Dhruvā, Dhruva, Darvi, Caru, Ulukhala, Prāgvamsa, Yajñabhūmi, Sthanḍila,
Kusa, Mantra, sacrificial share, somabhokta and hutarc and he is called Agrasanabhoji. The constant identification of Visnu with the sacrifice is a special feature of the Brāhmaṇas. Gonda 12 discusses at length the relation between lord Viṣṇu and sacrifice and concludes, 'The Parallellism between the objects and presumed effects of the all-important ritual, the mighty means of securing the fulfilment of any desire on the one hand and the activity of a god who was believed to obtain, for men and other beings. Control of those powers which were considered to be of vital importance, and to prepare the way for the representatives of fertility and productivity on the other, might have led to an early identification of that divine power and activity which was denoted by the name of Viṣṇu and the mighty instrument in the hands of the priests.' Elsewhere it is said that lord Viṣṇu has four forms. The first is known by the name Viṣnu. It is near as well as far and has a white complexion. It is always pure. Its nature is indescribable. The second form is called Sesa. It holds the earth on his head and is the Tamasa form of lord Viṣṇu. The third form arises out of the Sattva quality of lord Viṣṇu, maintains the

12 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.40.
13 J. Gonda, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, PP.77-80.
world, establishes dharma, destroys the demons and protects the gods. The fourth form lies in the ocean on a big serpent and remains engrossed in creating the world. Rajas is his main quality (130.18-24).

**His Functions**

The primary function of lord Viṣṇu is the maintenance of the world but it is said that he created god Brahmā whose primary function is the creation of the world. Thus it is said that when at the beginning of a Kalpa, all the moving and non-moving beings were destroyed, when the gods, Gandharvas, daityas, Vidyālāharas and Uragas were absorbed in darkness, when nothing was distinguishable on account of all-pervading darkness, lord Viṣṇu created lord Brahmā from his navel-lotus at the end of his Yogānidra. Elsewhere it is said that lord Viṣṇu created water from which a golden egg came out and out of it, lord Brahmā emerged (1.33-40). This conception seems to have arisen from the ancient belief of the one or primordial being resting on or emanating from the primeval waters, where Hiranyagarbha, identified with Prajāpati and, in later times, with Brahmā, is said to have arisen in the beginning from the great water which pervaded the universe. According to the popular Indian belief the
the god Viśṇu goes to sleep for a period of four months on
the 11th day of the bright half of Āṣaṅga but the Brahma-
purāṇa states that lord Viśṇu goes to sleep for a thousand
yugas and at the end of that he manifests himself in order
to perform his functions (213.24,25). From the olden times,
the term nabhi was almost exclusively used in connection with
very potent conceptions, powers or divinities associated with
the same sphere of interests and activities as Viśṇu and the
gods or goddesses connected with him. It is a remarkable
fact that, in post-vedic times, the navel-lotus should have
been transferred to one deity, viz. Viśṇu.16 At the end of
the Kalpa, all beings together with lord Brahmā merge in lord
Viśṇu (1.60,62). Lord Viśṇu helps Prakṛti and Puruṣa in
retaining their relationship. The power of lord Viśṇu forms
the pradhāna and the puruṣa, it maintains their equilibrium and
at the time of creation, it disturbs them (23.29,32). The
four vedas spring from him and lord Nārāyaṇa consists of all
the things in the world (60.26,33).

Viśnu and other Gods

After having been Indra's assistant and younger
brother and playing a secondary part for the mighty god who
fights Vṛtra, in the vedas, the relations between these two

gods undergo a radical change in the epic period, \( ^{17} \) Visnu becomes the typical fighter for the gods, assuming a superior position and being called the god who is over Indra-Atindra. \( ^{18} \) The \( \text{Br. P.} \) provides many references when Indra being afraid of his enemies approach lord Visnu for protection. Demons and similar evil beings which in earlier times were regarded as special enemies of Indra are eventually combated and destroyed by Visnu. Thus when the gods were harassed by the demon Taraka, they at first worshipped lord Visnu and on his advice approached Himalaya and requested him to practice penance to have Uma as his daughter who in future might marry lord Siva and be the mother of Kartikeya who would slay the demon Taraka. \( ^{19} \) Similarly, when the gods were confronted by the danger from the demon Bali, Visnu took the form of a dwarf and saved them (A.73). Similarly, Visnu cut off the head of the daitya Rahu when he drank the neeter after taking the form of a god (A.106). Visnu killed the demon Sardula and brought back Suvarna, the daughter of lord Siva, who was carried away by the demon (129.64-69). The demon Sambara, a sort of replica of Vrtra, who in the \( \text{Rv.} \) is vanquished by Indra, \( ^{20} \) is said to be killed by Visnu in

\[ \text{References:} \]

17 Hopkins, Epic Mythology, P.140, 204 etc.
18 Ibid.
19 A.71; also cf. Matsya A.147-159, Brahmanda IV.11.7, III. 10.49, IV.30.103; Vayu 72.47; Padma P. Srti kh.42; Linga P.1.71; Mbh.Karnaparva 24.7; Kumarasambhava .
20 Macdonell, Vedic mythology, P.161; Rv.7.99.5 - he is defeated by Indra and Visnu.
the Brahma purana (134.10-13). Similarly, it is said that lord Visnu killed the daityas who carried away the cows of the gods (131.16-20). Elsewhere it is said that Visnu killed the demons Hiranyakasipu and the demon Ambarya in his Nrsimha incarnation (A.149,156).

Indra worships Visnu and Siva when he is confronted with the doubts regarding his frequent dethronement (122.63-88). Lord Visnu kills the demon Mahasani when Indra requests him to do so (129.94-100). Again it is said that Indra obtained the kingdom of the three worlds by praying lord Visnu, and therefore lord Visnu was called Govinda according to the etymology. Indram gam avindayat (122.95-97).

The relation of lord Visnu with Siva is very significant. Though, Visnu is considered to be the supreme god, he is said to worship lord Siva. Thus Visnu is said to have received back his cakra which was swallowed by Virabhadra, an attendant of lord Siva, by praying to lord Siva (122.95-97).

The Brahma purana relates an interesting anecdote about the quarrel between Brahma and Visnu regarding their relative superiority. It states that when they were quarreling in order to establish their individual supremacy, a Siva-linga arose between the two and the divine speech declared that whosoever would find out its end, would be considered as
superior over the other. Both of them were unable to find out the end, and thereupon Visnu declared his ignorance, but Brahma spoke lie with his fifth head and he was cursed by lord Siva (A.135).

Visnu's role as a beneficent god is also very prominent in the Br.P. Dhanvantari attained the status of Indra on praying lord Visnu (122.44-47). When the penance of the sage Kandu was disturbed by the nymph Pramloca, he prayed lord Visnu and attained him (A.178). Visnu is the highest among all the Adityas and is the lord of all (69.11,12). Once it is said that lord Indra and others practice penance on account of his fear (109.41,42). By praying lord Visnu the sage Maudgalya obtained prosperity (A.136).

INCARNATIONS

Theory of Incarnation

The theory of incarnation plays a very important part in medieval and modern Hindu religion as taught in the puranas and similar works.\(^{21}\) As Visnuites chiefly worship Rama or krsna the two incarnations of Visnu, it would be proper to examine the incarnations of Visnu and to comprehend the nature of incarnation as conceived in India.

\(^{21}\) cf. Gita, IV.7.
The theory of incarnation presupposes the recognition of Visnu as a supreme god, the creator and the ruler of the universe, the upholder not only of the cosmic, but also of the moral order of the world. When the enemies to this rule endanger the order of the world, the god incarnates himself for the purpose of defending it. Thus the Brahma purana says: 

Whenever there is a decline of law and an increase of iniquity, then I put forth myself in a new birth.

Number of Incarnations

Originally, therefore, the number of these appearances of births seems to have been regarded as indefinite and the Brahma-Purana goes to the extent of saying that there were 1,000 incarnations of lord Visnu (213.20), but theological speculation tended to fix the number of incarnations and also to define more clearly their relation to the supreme god. Thus after making the above statement, the Brahma purana starts relating the incarnations, with a starting remark of considering lord Brahma as a manifestation of lord Visnu (213.31). It then continues to mention the


23 Yada Yada hi dharmasya ganirbhavati Sattama Abhyutthanam adharmasya tada tmanam srjamyaham 56.35,36; for a slightly different reading vide 180.26,27.
incarnations Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Dattatreya, Jamadagnya, Rama, Kesava and Kalki, which is now to come (A.213). It is noteworthy that in this place the incarnations are called Pradurbhava 'manifestation' and not avatara, though at another place (180.39), they are called the avatara, which has become a current term.

The Brahma purana mentions the following incarnations: Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Nrsimha, Vamana, Dattatreya, Parasurama, Rama, Krishna, Kalkin and some others like Sesa, Hayasiras, Puskara and Buddha. Further, it states that in the different varas, Visnu is worshipped in different forms. Thus in the Bhadrasvavarsa, he is worshipped as Hayasiras, in Ketumala as

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Varaha, in Bharata as Kurma, in Kurupradesa as Matsya, and in the form Visvarupu, he is worshipped everywhere (18.57-58). Elsewhere it is stated that the body of a brahmin is protected by the various forms of god. Thus Jamardana protects the head, Varaha the hands, Kurma the back, Krsna the heart, Nrsimha the fingers, the lord of speech the mouth, Garudavahana the eyes, Dhanesa the ears and the lord Bhava protects all the sides (163.29-31).

Description of various Incarnations

The Brahma purana deals at length with some of the incarnations.

**Matsya:** The fish which in the Satapatha-brahmana (I.8.1.1) delivers Manu from the flood appears in the Mbh.\(^3\) as a form of Prajapati, becoming in the puranas an incarnation of Visnu.\(^4\) The Brahma purana states that Matsya was the first incarnation of lord Visnu, and when he was incarnated as Matsya, he was known as Matsyamadhava (60.1-2).

**Kurma:** In the Satapatha-Brahmana,\(^5\) Prajapati about to create offspring becomes a tortoise moving in

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38 iii. 137 ± 13474 ff.
39 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.
40 SB, 7.5.1.5 ; TA I.23.3.
primeval waters and in the puranas, this tortoise is an avatara of Visnu who assumes this form to recover various objects lost in deluge.\textsuperscript{41} The Brahma purana does not provide a detailed description of this incarnation.

Varaha:- The myth of Varaha incarnation can be traced to the vedic literature. Its purport is that Visnu having drank Soma and being urged by Indra, carried off hundred buffaloes and a brew of milk belonging to the boar, while Indra shooting across the mountain slew the fierce boar.\textsuperscript{42} It is developed in the Taittiriya Samhita,\textsuperscript{43} Satapatha Brahmana\textsuperscript{44} and the Taittirîya Brahmana.\textsuperscript{45} In the post-vedic mythology of the Ramayana and Puranas, the boar which raises the earth has become one of the avatars of Visnu.\textsuperscript{46} In the Ramayana,\textsuperscript{47} Brahma and not Visnu, is represented as taking the form of a boar.

The Brahma purana states that this incarnation of

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textsuperscript{41} Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P. \\
\textsuperscript{42} Rv. I.61.7; 8.66.10. \\
\textsuperscript{43} TS. 8.2.4. 2.3. \\
\textsuperscript{44} I.4.1.2.11. \\
\textsuperscript{45} I.1.3.5. \\
\textsuperscript{46} Macdonell, Op.Cit., P.41. \\
\textsuperscript{47} II.110; Hopkins, Op.Cit., P.147. \\
\end{tabular}
lord Visnu is vedapradhana and is of the form of sacrifice. Brahma is his head, the day and night are his eyes, the cities are his mouth, Yupa is his jaw, sacrifice is his teeth, Agni is his tongue, Havisya is his nose, Sruva is his belly, the Prayascittas are his nails, the animals his knees, the vedas are his feet, Kusa his pores, Vedi his back, Homa his linga, Ocadhí his seed, Udgata his intestine, Vedi his antarata -man, Mantras his buttocks, Somarasa his blood, Havisya his smell, Nava and Kavya his speed, Pragwamsa his body, daksina his heart, Samaveda his voice, Yajña his nature, Havisya his smell, Upakarma his necklace, Pravarga his ornament, various metres his path, the secret upanisads his seat, the srutis his ornaments. His penance is very great. He is Satya, and Dharma and is endowed with sri and diksas and is a great yogin and has the nature of a great sacrifice. The shadow of Prthvi always remains with him in the form of a wife and he was manifested above the waters like a bejewelled peak. The whole earth with its oceans, mountains, forests and cities was drowned in the ocean. The Varaha form having thousand hands entered the ocean, and held the whole earth on his jaw and saved it from his disaster (213.32-42; 180.27-32; 56.20). Narakasura was born to Prthvi when lord Visnu touched her in the Varaha incarnation. Narakasura was
afterwards killed by lord Viṣṇu in his incarnation as lord kṛṣṇa (202.23-25). Elsewhere it is stated that Viṣṇu brought out the pitṛs from the river koka in his Varaha incarnation (A.219). When the demon Sindhusena carried the sacrifice to Rasatala lord Viṣṇu took the form of Varaha and brought back the sacrifice to the earth (79.8-16). The reason of Viṣṇu taking the form of a tortoise and of a boar seems to be that his primitive worship had been of a theriomorphic character, at least with some class of people.49

Hṛṣimha:— The incarnation of Narasimha, or the man-lion, stands by itself. It refers to a popular legend of Viṣṇu killing in the form of a man-lion, the demon Hiranyakasipu — a legend which is once alluded to in the vedic literature, viz. Taittāriya Aranyaka (X.1-6).

The Br. P. states that after the Varaha incarnation, lord Viṣṇu assumed the shape of a creature half-man, half-lion, to deliver the world from the tyranny of a demon called Hiranyakasipu. His colour, thunder and lustre are like those of a dark cloud. When the demon Hiranyakasipu became invincible, lord Hṛṣimha emerged from the pillars of his assembly-hall and killed him and the whole of his retinue with his claws. He killed the daityas abiding in the

Hasatala, sky, forests and at other places. His nails were stronger than the thunderbolt and there were long hair on his neck and face (56.20, 213.80-106). He is unconquerable, Aprameya, indescribable, the king of animals and the bestower of enjoyment and liberation (56.12-16.58).

Vāmana:- This incarnation's origin lies in a legend developed from a mythical feat of Viṣṇu frequently mentioned in the Rv., viz. the three strides with which he measured the three worlds. In the Aitereya Brāhmaṇa (6.15) it is related that Viṣṇu and Indra, engaged in conflict with the Asuras, agreed with the latter that as much as Viṣṇu could stride over in three steps should belong to the two deities. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (I.2.5) refers to the dwarf form of Viṣṇu. This Brāhmaṇa story forms the transition to the myth of Viṣṇu's dwarf incarnation in the post-vedic literature.

Dattātreya:- The reference to Dattātreya as an incarnation is available since the epic period. The Brahma-purāṇa states that lord Viṣṇu was incarnated as Dattātreya in the form of the son of the sage Atri (180.31). He is full of forbearance and he was incarnated at the time when the vedas were destroyed, the sacrifices had disappeared, the four

50 Rv. 1.155.6
castes had intermingled, the righteousness had waned and iniquity had superceded, truth had disappeared and untruth had fullfledged, and when the subject wavered. He brought the atmosphere of righteousness together with the vedas, religious rites and sacrifices and he brought the four castes in their proper order. He gave a boon to Kārtavīrya Arjuna that he would rule the whole earth (213.106-112). He taught the Yoga with eight āngas to the sage Alarka (180.26-33).

In some parts of India, a saint Dattātreya is worshipped as combining the Hindu Trinity in himself.52

In the upanisad, it is said that Dattātreya was the gift of lord Mahēsvara to the sage Atri as a result of his being pleased with his austere penance. For the reason that he was given to Atri by Mahēsvara, he was called Dattātreya. But in purāṇas, Dattātreya is Viṣṇu born a son to Atri and Anasuyā, their other two sons being Soma as a result of Brahma's blessing and Duryāsa as a result of Śiva's blessings. But Dattātreya incorporates within himself all

52 Monier Williams, Indian Wisdom, P.327, f.n.; For details vide 'Dattātreya' by Shri H.S.Joshi, a thesis accepted for the Ph.D. Degree in Sanskrit, M.S.University of Baroda, 1959.
the attributes of the Trinity.  

Parasurāma:- The story of Paraśurāma, as told in the Mahābhārata has no reference to Viṣṇu, but the first book of Rāmāyaṇa, which is a later addition to the epic, contains a continuation of Paraśurāma's story, according to which the hero was in possession of Viṣṇu's bow and met the young Rāma, son of Daśaratha, expressly to subdue him; but the latter, who had already broken Śiva's bow, now bent Viṣṇu's bow and deprived Paraśurāma of his glory. This legend, apparently a late invention, would be absurd on the supposition that both Rāmas are incarnations of Viṣṇu, since then the god would humiliate himself, but it shows that Paraśurāma had, in popular tales, been brought into some connection with Viṣṇu; and this circumstance together with the name Rāma, which he shares with the more famous incarnation of Viṣṇu, may have facilitated his reception in the series of incarnations of that god.

The Brahma purāṇa clearly distinguishes the incarnation of lord Viṣṇu as Paraśurāma from that of Daśarathī Rāma. It states that in this incarnation, lord Viṣṇu was born as the son of the sage Jamadagni and descendant of Brāhma. He cut the

53 Shri Jaya Chamarajendra Wadiyar Bahadur - Dattātreya - the way and the goal, P.74.
54 Mbh. iii. 115; xii. 49.
thousand hands of Kārtavīrya Arjuna and cleared the earth
twenty-one times of the ksatriya class. In order to expiate
his sins, he performed a horse-sacrifice and gave much dakṣiṇa
and gave the whole earth together with elephants, horses
and chariots to the sage Kaśyapa. Even at present, he
practises a severe penance on the mountain Mahendra, for the
welfare of the world. Thus it seems proper to conclude
that the origin of this incarnation lies in the idea of
restraining the ksatriyas from arrogating dominion over the
Brahmanical caste.

Rāma:- The incarnation of Rāma seems to be an
incarnation in the making, for in the original parts of
Rāmāyaṇa, viz. bks.ii-vi, the poet regards his hero as
essentially human, and seems entirely to ignore his divine
class. The latter, however, is fully, acknowledged in
bks. i and vii, which by common consent of all critics are
declared to be later additions. Therefore, between the
composition of the original work and the addition of these
later parts the belief that Rāma is an incarnation of Viṣṇu
must have arisen and gained universal assent. Before that
time Rāma had been an epic hero, but the Rāmāyaṇa seems to
have made him immensely popular. Since the poet has described

56 213.113-122; also cf. Vanaparva 11071, Saṇṭi 1707, Adi
272-280, Udyoga 7142.
him as the best of men, the most dutiful son and loving husband, as possessed of every virtue, in short, as an ideal man, he became the favourite of the people at large and so the subject of veneration. Thus it is not difficult to imagine that the epic hero became a popular god, and that in order to account for his divine dignity, notwithstanding his human character, he came to be regarded as one of the manifestations of the highest god - as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.57

The Brahma purāṇa distinctly eulogises him as an incarnation of lord Viṣṇu. It states that in the twenty-fourth yuga lord Viṣṇu divided himself into four parts. In order to grace the world, to establish righteousness and to control the demons, lord Viṣṇu was born in the form of the four sons of Daśaratha. Rāma is described as Syāma, young, having red-eyes, brilliant, long-armed, strong, having the back as strong as that of a lion and mitabhaśi. His wife is Sītā who was Laxmi before her incarnation as Sītā. Rāma, Sītā and Laksmana went to the forest and practised penance for 14 years. Residing in the Janasthana, he worked for gods and killed Ravaṇa and his army. He also killed the demons Vālī, Lavaṇa, Harica, Subēha, Viradha, Kabandha, and others. His arrows were like the sparks of fire and lightening and they

were as effective as the thunderbolt of Indra. In the sacrifice conducted by Janaka, he showed his valour by breaking the bow of lord Śiva. After that he performed ten Asvamedhas and completed them without any obstruction. Rāma ruled the world for 10,000 years and the Br. P. gives a peaceful account of Rāma's reign, popularly known as Rama-rajya. After completing hundred sacrifices, Rāma went to heaven. He was the jewel of Iksvāku family (213.124-158).

Elsewhere he is glorified as a powerful hero but his being an incarnation of lord Viṣṇu is not mentioned. Thus it is said that Rāma built a great bridge over the ocean, killed Rāvana, brought back Sītā and purified her through fire but being blamed by some anāryas, he abandoned her near the hermitage of Vālmiki, after some days when Rāma performed a horse-sacrifice, Lava and Kusa, the sons of Rāma appeared there and sang the whole Rāmāyana. Rāma consecrated them and embraced them. The monkeys Sugrīva, Hanumān, Aṅgada and Jāmbavān came there and all of them went to the river Godāvari and worshipped lord Śiva (A.154). Elsewhere it is said that after reigning the world for a long time, Rāma attained the status of lord Viṣṇu (176.50). There it is said that he killed the demons Mahodara, Prahasta, Nikumbha, Kumbha, Narāntaka, Yamāntaka, Mālaḍhya, Mālyavān, Indrajit, Kumbhakarna
and Rāvana. He consecrated Bhārata and Satrughna on various kingdoms and coronated Sugriva on the throne of Kiskindhā and made Angada his Yuvarāja (176.40-48). Elsewhere it is said that Rāma was born to Dasaratha by the grace of the sage Rṣyasrīga and he saved his father Dasaratha from the hell into which he had fallen as a result of committing the sin of a brahmin-murder (A.123).

The question of the incarnation of Rāma has been thoroughly examined by Dr. Yacobi in his book Das Rāmayana. He remarks: 'The remarkable change in Rāma's position from an epic hero to an incarnation of Viṣṇu which took place between the redaction of the original Rāmayana and the addition of its first and last books, does not appear to be the result of a slow development of religious ideas, but seems to have been caused by the application to him of a theory already fully established. In other words, it is not likely that the theory of incarnation was first suggested by the story of Rāma, in all probability there was already another similar incarnation of Viṣṇu acknowledged by the people of India. This must have been his incarnation as Kṛṣṇa, since the preceding incarnations seem to have had little importance as far as popular religion was concerned. Krisnaism, in this sense, prevailed in India probably centuries before the
beginning of our era, while Rāmaism, so popular from the 10th century A.D. downwards is a comparatively later development.58

**Krśna:** During the Brāhmaṇa period, Prajāpati, the creator was believed to assume, various forms as that of a boar and a tortoise in order to rescue the creation in times of distress. After him came Nārāyaṇa and he was identified with Viṣṇu, the slayer of demons. About the end of the vedic period a popular deity, Vasudeva, came to be acknowledged as a form of Viṣṇu. Now the race of the Yaḍavas, whose clans were settled both in the north and in the west of India, revered as their tribal hero krśna, the son of Devakī, who had the renown of having been an earnest seeker of religious truth.

It can be assumed that about this time the worship of Vasudeva as a form of Viṣṇu had become the popular religion of the same people who worshipped their tribal hero and that both kinds of worship influencing each other intermingled in such a way that krśna was believed to be a manifestation of Viṣṇu - in a word, a human incarnation of the supreme god.59 Jacobi, further states that the widespread worship of krśna as a tribal hero and demi-god, and his subsequent identification with Nārāyaṇa

59 Ibid., P.196; vide also Walter Ruben, Krishna, Konkordanz und Kommentar Der Motive seines Heldenlebens, Istanbul, 1942.
gave birth to the theory of incarnation and therefore the incarnation of Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa is the most important one for the origin and development of the theory of incarnation.\textsuperscript{60} 

The Brahma purāṇa provides a myth which connects his incarnation bodily with lord Viṣṇu. When lord Viṣṇu was implored by the gods to save the earth from the oppression of her enemies, Narāyana plucked out two of his own hairs, a black and a white one. Descending to the earth and entering the womb of Devaki, the black hair was born as Kṛṣṇa, and the white hair was born as Baladeva. It is to be noted that this myth makes Baladeva also as an incarnation of Viṣṇu, though, he is also said to be an incarnation of Sesa, the snake-god (A.181). Heri kṛṣṇa is said to be a partial incarnation\textsuperscript{61} of lord Viṣṇu. Elsewhere it is said that the incarnation of Viṣṇu is Kṛṣṇa is for the welfare of the world and that he killed many demons like Śālva, Caidya, Kamsa, Dvivida, Ariṣṭa, Vṛṣabha, Kesi, Pūtaṇa, Kuvalayāpiḍa, Cāmūra, Muṣṭika and Narakaśura. He also cut the thousands hands of the demon Bāna (213.159-164). As the details about Kṛṣṇa are given in the following pages, here he is not discussed at length.

\textsuperscript{60} ERE, Vol. VIII, P. 196.

\textsuperscript{61} Colophon, A.181.
Buddha:— The Brahma purāṇa does not provide with a description of Buddha as an incarnation but just mentions his name in the list of incarnations.

Kalkin:— He is yet to appear for the welfare of the world. He is to be born as Kalki by the name Viṣṇu-yaśas in the village Sambhala.62

Monier Williams63 has rightly concluded, 'looking more closely' at the ten incarnations, we may observe that in the first three Viṣṇu is supposed to be present in the body of animals, and in the fourth to take the form of being half animal half human, this last may be regarded as a king of link, the object of which is to prevent too great abruptness in connecting the deity with the higher forms of worldly existence. From the mixed manifestation of half a lion, half a man, the transition is natural to that of a complete man. The divine essence passing into human forms commences with the smallest type of humanity, represented by a dwarf. Thence it rises to powerful sages and mighty heroes who deliver the world from the oppression of evil demons and tyrants whose power increases with the deterioration of mankind during the

four ages. In the final manifestation, which remains to be entirely rooted out. We see in all this the working of the Hindu idea of transmigration. Even in Manu's time, it was an accepted dogma that the souls of men, popularly regarded as emigrations from deity, might descend into the bodies of animals, or rise to those of higher beings. It was therefore an easy expansion of such a doctrine to imagine the divine soul itself as passing through various stages of incarnation for the delivery of the world from the effects of evil and sin and for the maintenance of order in the whole cycle of creation.'

This theory of incarnation has become immensely popular and is being applied in many cases even now. When a local saint has a proper shrine where he is worshipped, and his fame continues to increase, a legend is sure to be fabricated which declares him an avatāra of some god or Rṣi.\(^64\) Thus the worship of Saibaba has become very popular.

As regards his worship, it is said that one should remember him in the waters as waters are his abode. Especially at the time of taking a bath, one should meditate on him with a holy feeling and should perform his nyāsa (60.34,35).

\(^{64}\) ERS, Vol. VII, p.197.
One who worships him with japa, homa and arcana, who remembers lord Visnu day and night and who recites the Vasudeva-mantra 'Om namo nārāyanāya' never falls in hell (22.41,60.23). Elsewhere it is said that lord Visnu should be worshipped with tantrik mantras (61.45,46). The knowers of veda perform sacrifice in his honour (56.32). Out of all the expiations, remembrance of lord Hari is the best one. After committing sins, a sinner who remembers lord Hari only once, gets freedom from sons (22.38).

The details regarding his worship as 'Nārāyaṇa', as 'Jagannātha' and as 'kṛṣṇa' together with Balarāma and Subhadrā are given under the title 'worship' of chapter VII entitled 'Religion'.

Thus Visnu impersonates the higher evolution, the upward tendency of the human spirit. He represents several great and far-reaching religious ideas. In the increasing flux and change of all things, he is their preserver; and although he is one of the highest gods, he has constantly revisited the earth either in animal or in human shape.65

The kṛṣṇa problem is one of the most interesting and important topics in the domain of Indian literature and

65 Lyull, Asiatic studies, ii. 306.
history and many oriental scholars, have contributed their views regarding the problem.

According to traditional history as given in the purāṇas, kṛṣṇa belonged to the satvata sect of the Yadavas, who formed the lunar dynasty, and was 94th in descent from Manu. However, some purāṇas represent kṛṣṇa as coming from the solar dynasty. The Br. P. states that kṛṣṇa belonged to the lunar race of the Vṛṣṇi family of the Yadavas (12.50, 196.23,24). Thus both the solar and the lunar dynasties claimed kṛṣṇa as their own.

In the Rgveda, Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa, and Chandogya upaniṣad, kṛṣṇa is referred to as a vedic seer, as a human personality. Pāṇini indicates that Vāsudeva and Arjuna, originally kṣatriya heroes, were raised to the ranks of gods before his time and Patanjali shows that they had attained divinity by his time. In the oldest nucleus of the Mbh. there are clear references to the human

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66 Important books and Papers on kṛṣṇa problem, see Pusalkar A.D., Epic and Purānic Studies, P.49.
67 Pargiter, AIHT, PP.102-17; 144 ff.
68 Hari. II.38.35.
69 Rv. viii.35.3.4.
70 XXX.9 - Kauśitaki Br.
71 Ch. up. III.17.6.
72 Pāṇini IV.3.96; IV.3.98, Jacoby ERB, VII, P.195; Bhandarkar, Vaisāṇavism, Saivism., P.4; Raychaudhari EHVS, PP.30-31.
73 Mahābhāṣya on 2.3.36, 3.1.26 and 3.2.11.
character of kṛṣṇa. In the later portions, he is represented as a semi-divine being, whereas the parts of the epic that come still later, regard kṛṣṇa as the supreme god. The purāṇas also present various stages in the definition of the human hero kṛṣṇa. Thus the Br. P. states that when lord kṛṣṇa performed wonderful deeds like Kāliyadāmanā, Govardhana-dhāraṇa and the killing of Pralamba, in the form of a cowherd boy, the simple-minded villagers were perturbed and began to doubt about his human personality and said that one who performed deeds as were difficult to be performed even by the gods, cannot merely be a simple mighty human being and that surely kṛṣṇa was either a god or a danava or a yakṣa or a gandharva; and kṛṣṇa, though representing an incarnation of Viṣṇu, assures them that he was neither a god, nor a gandharva, nor a yakṣa, nor a daṇava, but he was simply their brother. (189.2-12). Thus here one can see a happy blending of the divine and human elements in sri kṛṣṇa's character, the divine element predominating while performing the wonderful deeds and the human element prevailing while assuring the villagers.

Among the purāṇas, the Harivāmsa, Brahma, Viṣṇu, Bhāgavata and Brahma vaivarta deal exhaustively with the life
of krsna and the accounts in the different purānas are not only inconsistent but mutually contradictory. After critically examining some incidents of krsna's life, Ruben has come to the conclusion that the original supplement (khila) of the Mahābhārata was much shorter than the present khila Harivaṃśa, that the original Harivaṃśa is the oldest purāna, and that the original archetype of the Harivaṃśa has been better preserved in the Brahma. Different scholars arrange the order of purānas in different ways. Viṣṇu - Harivaṃśa - Bhāgavata - Brahmavaivarta, Harivaṃśa - Brahma - Viṣṇu - Bhāgavata - Brahmavaivarta, Brahma - Viṣṇu - Bhāgavata - Brahmavaivarta, etc. Tadpatrikar critically evaluates the different accounts of krsna given in the purānas and shows that only the Brahma and Viṣṇu have a common text, and that the former has an account older than the Viṣṇu.

75 JAOS, 61 PP. 115-127; JRAS, 1941, PP. 247-256.
76 Tattvabhasha, krsna and the Gīta, P. 56.
77 Durgashankar Shastri, Purāṇa Viveçana, PP. 133.5.
78 Ruben, Festchrift Thomas, PP. 188-203.
79 Kṛṣṇa problem, PP. 276-277.
Besides these, the Padma, Agni, Bhāgavata and Brahmavaivarta deal at some length with the krṣṇa story, and the Harivamsa, truly as the supplement of the Mbh., goes over the entire puranic story and omits all the references to the Mahābhārata story. The Bhāgavata combines both the epic and puranic accounts. The Brahmavaivarta is a late work and mainly glorifies Rādhā.80

As regards the much discussed problem of the identity of krṣṇa and Vasudeva, the Brahma purāṇa provides that Vasudeva and krṣṇa were one and the same person (179.11) and that the deification of Vasudeva krṣṇa and his identification as an incarnation of Viṣṇu were complete before the composition of the Brahma purāṇa (179.12). Another much debated problem regarding Vasudeva-krṣṇa is his identification with Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu. Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu were originally names of distinct deities, but later on they were identified.82 The Brahma purāṇa clearly identifies them. As the deification of krṣṇa and his identification with Viṣṇu as his avatara find full expression in the Bhagavadgītā, it might be taken to date at least since the pre-buddhist period.83

80 Pusalkar A.D., Epic and Purānic Studies, P.61.
As krṣṇa's life in Gokula is not given in the Mahābhārata and some earlier texts, some scholars take them to be later additions. Dhruva thinks the purānic and Mahābhārata stories of krṣṇa to be a blending of poetic fancy and historical facts and seeks philosophical and symbolical explanations for most of the exploits of krṣṇa in childhood. Some stories as the approach of Earth to the gods and the promise of god to be born for her relief (A.181), exaggerated accounts of some of the miraculous feats of child krṣṇa (A.184-192). Fight between Indra and krṣṇa for the Pārijāt tree (A.203-204) etc. are evidently added after the deification of krṣṇa was complete. As the accounts given in the purāṇas constitute important landmarks for the development of the krṣṇa myth and the evolution of the Vaisnava religion, a detailed analysis of the account as given in the Brahma purāṇa is worth representing.

In the olden times, the sage Garga had prophesized that lord Viṣṇu would take an incarnation at the end of the twenty-eighth Dvāpara age (196.26,27; 176.52,53; A.181) and accordingly, when the earth was oppressed by the evil forces, she approached gods, and lord Viṣṇu consented to take birth as krṣṇa (A.181). Thus Devakī, the wife of Vasudeva, gave

84 Dhruva A.B., Āprāṇo Dharma, PP. 752 ff.
birth to lord krṣṇa in the middle of night on the eighth
day of the black half of a month in the rainy season (381.44,
182.11). Before the birth of krṣṇa, Kamsa, the son of
Ugrādena, had usurped the Mathurā throne and had imprisoned
Vasudeva and Devakī (181.34). Relying on the prophecy of
Nārada that Devakī’s eighth child would kill him, Kamsa used
to kill the children of Devakī (181.31-35). Krṣṇa was born
in the prison cell at Mathurā, but immediately after birth,
was removed to Gokula, and by the power of lord Viṣṇu, all
the prison warders and Yasodā fell asleep during the transfer
of krṣṇa from Mathurā to Gokula (182.20-25). In the veda,
the sun, in the form of Mārtanda, is the eighth son born of
Aditi, and his mother casts him off, just as Devakī, who is
at times represented as an incarnation of Aditi, removes
Krishna. -(A. Barth, The Religious of India, P. 173.) He
was brought up in Gokula as the child of Nanda and Yasoda,
whose daughter was substituted for krṣṇa, and the baby daughter
an incarnation of Yogamāyā, was later killed by Kamsa who on
reaching heaven declared to Kamsa that the person who was
destined to kill him had already been born (182.27-31).

As a child, krṣṇa appears to have been extraordinary,
and he passed through many a crisis.35 He was once attacked
by Putanā who had the power to kill children while nursing

them at her breast. But Kṛṣṇa pressed her so hard that immediately she fell dead (184.7-10). Putana has variously been given as a female nurse a fearful bird and a terrible giantess. Śrūṭa mentions Putana as a fatal children's disease. Dhruva interprets the Putana story to mean that the benevolent power of the Almighty is superior to the power of the diseases harassing young children. Thereafter, while he was kept beneath a cart by his mother, he overturned it by the stroke of his foot (184.23). Once while tied to a mortar with a rope round his waist in order to prevent him from playing mischief, Kṛṣṇa tried to extricate himself from the rope and began to drag the mortar after him till it stuck fast amid two Arjuna trees, which eventually were uprooted and fell down. As the rope was tied round his waist, he was called Dāmodara (184.35-39,41,42). On account of the onrush of evil omens and hundreds of troubles, the cowherds in a body left Gokula for Vṛndāvana and soon settled there (184.44-51). In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa subjugated Kāliya, a Nāga chief and released him on the condition of his leaving that place with his tribe (A.185). Bhagwan Das takes the subjugation of Kāliya to represent reign over five senses. Kṛṣṇa and

87 Uttaratantra, Ch. 27.37.
88 Apano Dharma, P. 758.
89 Kṛṣṇa, P.59.
Balarāma killed the demons Dhenuka and many others who had the faces of donkeys (A.186). Kṛṣṇa used to gather his friends in the forest and played many a game, during the course of which Balarāma killed Pralamba, an Asura, who joined them dressed as a cowherd boy (187.1-30). On Kṛṣṇa's advice, instead of celebrating the worship in honour of Indra current among the herdsmen, they performed the Girīyajñā in honour of the mountain Govardhana. There was a heavy rainfall when the herdsmen were engaged in their new sacrifice and Kṛṣṇa protected them by holding the mountain Govardhana on their last finger, the rainfall being the result of Indra's wrath (187.42-50, A.183). Lord Kṛṣṇa himself received all the relations as he himself took the form of the great mountain and together with the herdsmen worshipped his second form (187.50,60). According to Dhruva90 the Govardhana story shows us the world surrounding us as superior to Indra in the sky and should be regarded as Īśvara. On seeing Kṛṣṇa's power, Indra came there and consecrated him as Indra of cows 'Gāmū Indra' - Govinda - sprinkling him with the water pouring from the trunk of Airāvata. Then Kṛṣṇa played the famous Sāsā with the gopīs and the Bṛāhma purāṇa represents, Kāśa as a maddening love of youthful maidens for a young man (A.189). Kṛṣṇa then killed the demon Aṛiṣṭa who came to Vṛndāvana in the form of a bull (189.47-50).

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90 Apāṇa Dharmā, F. 759.
Kṛṣṇa's extraordinary exploits and wide fame reached the ears of Kamsa and he planned to kill them through his wrestlers. He sent Akrūra as an envoy to Vṛndāvana with an invitation to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to visit his court and attend the wrestling bouts (190.10-15). Before starting for Mathurā, Kṛṣṇa killed the demon Kesī and was known as Kesāva (190.43). Then, according to the message of Kamsa, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma started for Mathurā to visit the court of Kamsa and attend his wrestling bouts. On their way, Kṛṣṇa astonished Akrūra by showing him his two forms (192.34-66). Soon after reaching Mathura, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had an affray with the washerman of Kamsa and as he denied to give the clothes demanded by them and spoke undignified words, Kṛṣṇa killed him (192.70-72). Then he granted the wish of flower-man to attain prosperity (193.1-12). Kṛṣṇa turned Kubja into a beautiful maiden as she applied the anointments prepared for Kamsa to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma (193.30). In the main tournament Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa (193.62), Kṛṣṇa killed the wrestlers Cānūra (193.67) and Tōṣala (193.63) and Balarāma killed the wrestler Muṣṭika (193.74). Kṛṣṇa also killed the tyrant Kamsa (193.78). He then bowed down to his parents Vasudeva and Devakī and reinstated Ugrasena on the Mathurā throne (194.9). Kṛṣṇa sent Vēyu to bring the
Sudharma Sabha from Indra and gave it to Ugrasena (197.15-18).

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then left for Avantipura near Kāśī for their education at the hermitage of Sāndīpanī and they learnt all the lores within sixty-four days. After that they killed the demon Pāncajana who had carried away the son of the sage Sāndīpanī, made a weapon of his bones, went to Yamaloka conquered Yama and gave the son to the sage Sāndīpanī as Gurudakṣinā (A.196). Enraged at Kamsa's death, Jarāsandha, his father-in-law and ruler of Magadha, invaded Māthura with a large army a number of 12 times, but kṛṣṇa repelled the invasions and he defeated Jarāsandha for 21 times (A.195). In order to protect the people from the danger of Kalayavana, the lord of Yavanas, kṛṣṇa built the city of Dwārakā and sent the people there. After that he went to Māthura and seeing him without weapons, Kālayavana followed him, kṛṣṇa concealed himself in a cave. Kālayavana followed him and kicked a man sleeping in the cave thinking him to be kṛṣṇa. The man who was sleeping was the great Mucukunda and Kālayavana was burnt by the fire emanating from his eyes (196.16-23). Kṛṣṇa then married Rukmīni, the daughter of Bhīmaka, the Vāderbha king, whom her brother Rukmi intended to marry to Sisupāla (A.199). The famous story of the Syamantaka jewel is also given by the Brahma
purāṇa. Kṛṣṇa wanted the Syamantaka jewel which was in possession of the king Prasenjīt. A lion killed Prasenjīt and carried away the jewel with him. As kṛṣṇa wanted the jewel, people suspected kṛṣṇa to be the killer of Prasenjīt. Kṛṣṇa traced out the whole thing and found that Jāmbavaṇā had got the jewel after killing the lion. Kṛṣṇa fought with Jāmbavaṇā, got the jewel and married his daughter Jāmbavatī. He then gave it to Satrajīt to whom it originally belonged and married his daughter Satyabhāma. Akrūra got the jewel from Satadhanvā who had obtained it by killing Satrajīt. By the power of Yoga, kṛṣṇa knew that the jewel was with Akrūra. Without any hesitation, Akrūra gave the jewel to kṛṣṇa who gave it back to him (16.28-47), (17.1-40). It is curious to note that the story of the Syamantaka jewel does not occur in the regular kṛṣṇa-story but is given separately.

By Rukminī, kṛṣṇa had a son Pradyumna who afterwards killed Śambara (A.199). The other children of kṛṣṇa and Rukminī were Cārudesṇa, Sudesṇa, Cāradeha, Suṣeṇa, Cārugaṇṭa, Bhadracāru, Cāruvinda, Cāru and a daughter Carumati. Besides Rukminī, kṛṣṇa had other seven chief queens. Their names are: Kālinī, Nagajitī, Jāmbavatī, Rohini, Suśilā, Satyabhāma and Laksmanā (201.1-5). Kṛṣṇa then killed the demon Mura.
and burnt his 7,000 sons. He then killed the demons Hayagrīva and Pañcajana (202.17-21). Kṛṣṇa killed the demon Naraka, married his 16,000 wives and took into possession all his wealth (202.22-35, 204.18). For the Parijata tree, Kṛṣṇa had a terrible fight with Indra and other gods and eventually Indra gave the tree to him (A.203,204). Kṛṣṇa had a terrible fight with Bāṇāsura and lord Śiva as Bāṇāsura had captivated Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumna, who had gone to Bāṇa's city to enjoy with Uṣā, the daughter of Bāṇa (A.206). Kṛṣṇa killed Vasudeva, the king of Paundra who wrongly believed himself to be an incarnation of Viṣṇu (A.207). Kṛṣṇa had the sons Sāmba by Jāmbavatī, Bhadravinda by Nāgnajīti, Samgrāmājītī by Saibya, Vṛka by Madrī, Gātravān by Laksmanā, and Śrūta by Kālindī. In all he had 8,800 sons (205.1-5). Kṛṣṇa relieved the earth by destroying the evil forces, then he thought of destroying his own dynasty. Once the Yādavas went to Prabhasa to perform religious rites. There they enjoyed themselves and drank heavily. From hot words they came to blows and with the eraka grass which had grown there and which was as sharp as thunderbolt, they fought with each other and killed each other (210.36-47). The relation between the eraka grass and the musala is provided by Brahma purāṇa in the famous anecdote of Sāmba and musala. Once the sages
Visvamitra, Kaśyapa and Nārada had come to the great tīrtha Pindaraka. The Yādava princess wanted to poke fun of them. So they garbed Samba in the dress of a pregnant woman and asked the sages as to who would be born to Samba. The sages knew the trick and cursed them that Samba would give birth to a musāla which would bring an end to the whole Yadava dynasty. Accordingly, a musala was afterwards produced from Samba and Ugrasena pierced it into powder and threw it into the great ocean from where it grew in the form of the grass erakā. A portion of the musala remained and could not be powdered, that too was thrown in the ocean and was devoured by a great fish; which afterwards reached the hands of a hunter who made an arrow out of the portion of musala which at the end became the cause of the death of lord krṣṇa (210.6.15). After the great massacre of Yadavas at their own hands, krṣṇa sent his charioteer Dāruka to Hastināpur with the news and a message to Arjuna to come to Dwārakā to look after the women and children. He himself consoled the wailing women and children, and asked them to await Arjuna's arrival and then to accompany him to Hastināpur as Dwārakā was destined to be swallowed by the sea (210.53-58). Krṣṇa was hit by the arrow of a hunter Jara who mistook him for deer, krṣṇa assured him that he would attain heaven and
he passed away (A.211). Pusalkar\(^91\) states that from the name of the hunter, viz. Jara it can be inferred that Krishna died of old age. Arjuna came to Dwārakā, took with him the remnants of the Yadu family, and installed Vajra, the only surviving grandson of Krishna on the throne of Mathurā, but on his way to Mathurā, the wives of Krishna were carried away by the Abhiras (213.1-21). Vyāsa consoled Arjuna that he need not repent, since the fate of the wives of Krishna was destined to be so by the curse of the sage Aṣṭāvakra in their previous birth (213.30-95). This, in short, is the life of Krishna as given by the Brahma purāṇa.

His description gives us an idea of his beauty. He has beautiful hair and beautiful eyebrows (42.46). His eyes are lustrous and beautiful like lotus (49.8, 21, 12). He is also called Padmapatrāyatekṣana (50.43, 59.74-77, 176.22-24), Puṇḍarikākṣa (177.23; 182.12) and Prafullapadmapatrākṣa (191.20). He has a pretty and long nose (42.48). His face is compared to a lotus (191.21, 51.14). He is also said to have four faces (49.6). He has good teeth (42.48), a cheerful smile and his lower lip always shines on account of the smile (42.48; 191.21). He has red nails, (191.21). His

chest is wide and big and it is marked by the sign of sri
and vatsa (191.20, 50.48, 182.12).

His complexion is said to be of various types.
Sometimes it is described like the blue cloud and hence krṣṇa
is called by various epithets like Nīlameghābha (49.7),
Prāvṛtmeṣhapratikāsa (51.16), Nīlajimūtasamkāsa (59.75) etc.
Sometimes it is said to be like a lotus and moon and the
epithets kṣirodajalasamkāsa (59.76), Phullendivapratrabha
(182.12) and Phullanīlotpaladalakhāvī (191.19) and
Vimaḷascandrasamīlbha (59.76) are applied to him. He wears
yellow clothes (191.22, 51.10, 176.24) Mukuta and aigāda
(42.47, 49.19) ear-rings (42.47), Vanamāla (49.20, 191.22),
white lotuses in ears (191.22).

He holds plough in his hand (49.6). The plough
is a special weapon of Balarāma but here it is ascribed to
krṣṇa also. His special weapons are Sudarśana Cakra,
Paṇcājana conch, Kaumodāka Gāda, Sārṅga bow and a sword
(50.43, 49.19, 51.14; 59.77). His banner has the sign of
a bird or of a fish (59.77, 49.3). The idol of krṣṇa is
described as Suklavarnabha, Sāradendusamaprabha, Āraktākṣa,
Nahākāya, Sphaṭavikatamastaka, Nīlāmbaradnara, Kundālakadhara
and gadāmusaladhārin (50.49, 56).
Not only in his description does krśṇa resemble Viṣṇu to a great extent but most of his epithets also are common to those of Viṣṇu. Thus he is called by some particular epithets as Govinda, and Mādhava (16.25,33), Vāsudeva (16.29), Purusottama, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Dharaṇidhara (49.2), Ratikanṭa, Aniruddha, Jagannātha and Madhusūdana, Tridārṣcita, Viṣṇu, Narasimha (49.1-11). He is called by the names of other gods as Brahmā, Śiva, Indra and Yama (51.4). He is called the husband of Kamalā, the destroyer of Kaśśa, Ariṣṭa and the daṇḍavas (55.21,22). He is called Uṇḍara (183.35), Sūrya, Dhātā, Vidhātā, Indra, Varuṇa, Kubera, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, Brahmā, Pasupati, Aryā (139.55,56).

He confers boons and is dear to gods (49.20,21). He kills the enemies, gives prosperity, destroys sins and protects the people (51.2, 10.16). He is earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, Ahamkāra, Buddhi, Prakṛti, sattva, puruṣa, higher than puruṣa, Viśakhyla, Prajāpati, Asya and everything that constitutes the moveable and immovable (55.23-35). In Satyayuga, he is known as Hari, in gods he is known as Vaikunṭha, and in men he is known as krśṇa (179.70,71). He resides within all the beings and the past and future are framed according to his instructions. In sacrifice the
oblations are offered to him (193.82,83). The reason of his birth is his lila (206.42).

Some philosophical epithets are ascribed to him. He is citsvabhāva, niraṇjana, devoid of bhāva as well as abhāva, nirlepa, nirgūṇa, the best, kuṭastha, acala, dhrūva, devoid of all the limitations, and advaita. He has two aspects the formless and the one having a form. But even the gods do not know his formless aspect (49.1-22). He is called Ādya, Isānu, Niśkala, Sanātana, beyond Šabda and Guṇa, Nirlepa, Nirgūṇa, Sūksma, Sarvajña, Vibhu and avyaya (51.10-12). He is Kuṭastha, Śāsvata, Aja and Śānta (55.32-35). He is called Aksaya, Nirvikāra, Nirmaṇa, Nityatrupta, and Nirmāṇa (179.65-75). By establishing him in one's heart, one crosses the avidyā of Yoganāyā (191.13,14). He is Sabdasvarupa, Vijñānasvarupa and Havīsvarupa (192.49). People have atmabuddhi in snātman things on account of his māyā (203.11).

He was highly respected and his words were carried out (17.36). One who being engrossed in his dharma meditates on him crosses all the māyā and attains liberation (203.12,13). The triple function of creation, preservation and destruction of the world is also ascribed to him (212.63) with his various forms he protects the world and taking the form of a Sun, he destroys the world at the time of Pralaya (192.57). According
to Barth, krṣṇa is a solar deity. Grierson also finds a connection between the religion preached by krṣṇa and Sun-worship. But Keith has refuted their views and has shown that no original solar character can be ascribed to krṣṇa and the very name krṣṇa speaks seriously against the solar theory.

As regards the problem of identifying Vāsudeva-krṣṇa with the Gopāla-krṣṇa, it should be stated that the Brahma purāṇa represents a stage when the legend about the cowherd krṣṇa must have already been current and his identification with Vāsudeva-krṣṇa been effected. In the Narayaniya section of the MBH, the avatāra of Vāsudeva is mentioned for the destruction of Kamsa but of none of the demons whom the cow-herd krṣṇa killed in the cow-settlement, whereas in the statement of the Brahma Purāṇa (181.8-12) the avatāra of krṣṇa is meant to destroy all the demons that appeared in the cow-settlement as well as of Kamsa. In this respect, the Brahma purāṇa is at par with the Harivamsa, the Vāyu P., and the Bhāguvata P.

References:
92 Religions of India, PP. 382-406-7.
93 Indian Antiquary, 1908, P.171.
95 vv. 5276-5373.
96 98, vv. 100-102.
97 II.7,
The name Govinda given to krśna occurs in Āraṇa and other parts of the Mahābhārata. It is an ancient name being derived by a vārtika on P.III.1.138. In the Ādi parvan of the Mahābhārata, the etymology is given as the form of a boar who found the earth (ga) in the waters which he agitated. The origin of the name may be traced to this legend but most probably Govinda is a later form of Govid, which in the Ṛgveda is applied to Indra as a founder of the cows. The Brahma purāṇa gives two etymologies—'Indrum Gaṇavindya' as Indra got the world from him and 'Savām Indra', therefore, he is called Govinda.

Sesa and Balarama

Serpent worship arose from the fears entertained about the deadly effects of snake-bites. The serpent-cult is very ancient and is referred to in the Taittiriya Samhitā, Kathaka Samhitā, and Vājasaneyi Samhitā. Fergusson traces serpent worship in the nations of antiquity, such as in Egypt, Judea, Greece etc. It occurs very frequently in the Mahābhārata. The purāṇas are full of the shrines of serpents.

98 Kane P.V., HDS, II. II, P. 823.
99 iv. 2.8.3.
100 16.15
101 13.8-18.
102 Tree and Serpent worship (1868).
103 Ādi 35,123.71; Māyoga 103, 9-16; Anuśāsana 150.41.
and the Brahma purāṇa states that the snakes are the sons of Kasyapa and Surasa and Kadru. Surasa gave birth to thousand serpents—sarpas and Kadru gave birth to thousand Nāgas, the chief of whom were Sesa, Vāsuki, Takṣaka, Airāvata, Mahāpadma, Kambžala, Asvatara, Elāpatra, Saṅkha, Karkotaka, Dhanānjaya, Mahānīla, Mahākarna, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Balāṅkha, Kuhara, Puṣpadamastra, Durmukha, Sumukha, Saṅkha, Saṅkhapāla, Kapila, Vaṁana, Nahuṣa, Saṅkharomā, Mani and thousand others (3.96-101). Garuḍa is their enemy (A.90) and devours them whence it has been interpreted that the Nāgas represent darkness which is dispelled by Śun. When Brahmā divided the kingdom, he made Vāsuki, the king of Nāgas and Takṣaka, the king of serpents (4.7). Serpent worship continues to this day particularly in South India, and the serpents are worshipped on the 5th of the bright half of Sravaṇa called Nāgapāñcami. India possesses more varieties of serpents than any single country in the world and the toll of life taken by snake bites is very heavy as compared with any other country.104

In the Av.,105 the names of some mythical serpents, viz. Takṣaka, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Airāvata occur. In the Mahābhārata106 the names of the serpents that support the earth, viz.

105 Av. VIII, 14.14.16.
106 Anusāsana Parva 150.41; Udyoga 103.9-16; Adi 35;123.71.
Vasuki, Ananta and others are introduced and Seśa (Ananta) has been promoted to a higher rank, and he is represented as supporting the earth on his expanded hoods, and he has become a servant of Viṣṇu, who rests on him while sleeping in the ocean.

The Br. P. also deals at length with Seśa and describes him as follows. The Tāmasa form of lord Viṣṇu resides in Pātāla. The Siddhas call him Ananta. He has thousand heads. On his hoods there are thousands of jewels and through them all the directions are shining; he is decorated by swastika-shaped, ornaments. One Kūndala is shining in his ears and the head is decorated by Kiriṭā; and the neck shines by a necklace of jewels. He shines like a white mountain. He wears blue clothes and white garlands. He remains intoxicated and in his one hand, he holds musala, whereas the other hand rests on hala. The serpent wives apply the Hari-candana to him and by his breaths all the directions become fragrant. He lives at the root of Pātāla and bears the whole world on his head. In order to mind the well-being of the world, he takes away the power of all the demons. At the time of Pralaya, Rudra - the destroying power - comes out of his mouth in the form of flames and destroys the three worlds. He maintains the gods, the asuras, all the beings and all the
worlds. The gods and the devārsheśī offer worship to him. Even the gods cannot describe the greatness of his strength, nature, appearance and brightness. The whole world appears red on account of the rays emating from the jewels worn by him. When the lord Ananta yawns, the whole world together with the mountains, oceans and forests begins to swing. As even the gandharvas, nymphs, siddhas, kinnaras and serpents are unable to find out his end he is called Ananta, the symbol of eternity. The sage Garga obtained the knowledge of the Jyotiṣastra by worshipping the lord Ananta. Elsewhere it is stated that he was the lord of Pātāla. When the demons drove him out, he prayed lord Śiva, obtained a Sūla from him, killed the enemies and regained the lordship of Pātāla. A fruit Bilva grew on the path from which he went to lord Śiva and from it the river Ganges emerged.

Maṇināga is the son of Sesa and the Brahma purāṇa relates how Maṇināga worshipped Śiva in order to get freedom from the danger of Garuḍa (A.90). Thus it can be seen how the Brahma purāṇa deifies Sesa and how many epithets and attributes later on ascribed to Balarama, considered to be his incarnation, are attributed to him.


108 A.115.
Balarama

Bhandarkar109 provides with a passage of Niddesa which mentions the religious prevailing in the fourth century B.C., among which there is a mention of the worship of Balarama along with krishna. An inscription found at Ghosundi in Rajputana110 also proves the worship of Vasudeva in 2nd century B.C. In the inscription No.1 in the large X cave at Nanaghat,111 the names of Samkarsana and Vasudeva, in a dvandva compound, occur along with those of the other deities in the opening invocation. In the Niyayaniya section of the Mbh., Samkarsana is mentioned as form of Vasudeva.112 In ch. 344 of the same section Samkarsana is given as the individual soul and Bhandarkar113 concludes that the idea of a religion of devotion of Vasudeva arose in earlier times, but it received a definite shape when Vasudeva revealed the Gita to Arjuna and led to the formation of an independent sect, when his brother and grandson were associated with him as his forms presiding over certain psychological categories, or as persons created by him for the purpose. That sect became conterminous.

109 Vaishnavism, Saivism, P. 3.
110 Ibid., P.4.
111 Ibid., P.5.
112 Ibid., P.8.
113 Ibid., P.11.
with the race of the satvatas. The Br. P. acknowledges Balarāma as an avatāra of Viṣṇu and gives him due importance as the elder brother of krṣṇa besides mentioning his worship with krṣṇa and Subhadra at Konārka. Even at present, Balarāma is worshipped at Mathurā and there is a celebrated temple in his honour where he is worshipped by the name of Deuji. The idol of Balarāma holds a cēp in his hand, a cup meant for wine to which his addiction is famous. Behind him there is a shrine of serpent Seṣa of whom he is considered to be an incarnation. Even at present he is worshipped as Vrajarāja in the northern India.

He is considered to be an incarnation of Seṣa (181.39) as well as of Viṣṇu. It is said that after the incarnation of Rāma, Viṣṇu snatched out two hair - one black and another white - from his body, the black hair was incarnated as lord krṣṇa and the white hair was incarnated as Balarāma. Thus Balarāma too, like krṣṇa, is considered to be an aṁsāvatāra of Viṣṇu. He was the seventh child of Vasudeva and Devakī but on account of the fear of Kaṁsa he was dragged from Devakī's foetus and was afterwards transferred to the womb of Rohini. Therefore, he is known as Saṁkaraṇa (181.39-42). This story is apparently invented in order to make him a

114 181.17, Mbh, Bom, ed., I. 197.33.
brother of krṣṇa, probably the two popular gods Govinda-Vaśudeva and Baladeva were closely connected, and, after the former was identified with the Rajput hero krṣṇa, the latter came to be regarded as his brother. A similar transfer of an embryo is told by the Śvetāmbara Jains of Mahāvīra, who was transferred from the womb of Devanandā to that of Trisalā.

The Brahma purāṇa gives his description as follows: His eyes are like the lotus (50.51,52). He has a face prettier than Moon (58.21-26). His hands are long (191.24, 25). He wears blue clothes and beautiful ornaments and in his neck, he wears a Vanamāla (192,36-38). He is very tall and like the mountain Kailāsa surrounded by clouds on account of his blue dress (192,24,25). His body is fair like Kanda flower (192.36,38). He is called Gaurāṅga, Kṣīravarna, Mīlajinītasannibha, Atasipāṣpasaṃkṣa (50.45,46,51,52). He wears one Kūndala (54.21-26) and is decorated by Swastika (50. 45-46). He holds plough, musala and cakra (50.51,52). He is called Lāṅgalin (17.19). He is the husband of Revatī, the daughter of king Revata and he had two sons, Niṣatha and Ulmāka by her (7.29-39; 50.45,46, 108,19). In the ṇbh, the sons of Balārama are mentioned but not as his sons by

116 Bom. ed. 2.34.6.
He is called Ananta because not even the gods, the dānavas, gandharvas, yakṣas, vidyādharas and uragas are able to know end (50.45, 46). Here he is identified with Sesa, who too as previously shown was called Ananta. He is divine and the bestower of all the desired things (50.51, 52). He is dear to the devotees and is worshipped by the gods and he is unconquerable (58.31-36). He is the lord Sesa himself who holds the earth (A.208). He is the atman of all, subtler than subtle, cause of the whole world, a precedent of all the causes, the advitiya atman, the atman of the world and aprameya (187.22-26).

The following anecdotes are given regarding Balarama. Satadhanvā had the jewel Syamantaka. Śrī kṛṣṇa killed him in order to get it but found that Satadhanvā had not it then in his possession. When śrī kṛṣṇa related this to Balarama, Balarama was not prepared to believe that kṛṣṇa had not got the jewel and refused to believe śrī kṛṣṇa's statement. He broke all the relations with kṛṣṇa and entered Mithilā. There he was highly respected by all. Duryodhana went to Mithilā and learnt the gadāvidyā from Balarama. Kṛṣṇa then pleased him and brought him back to Dwārakā (17.20-23). Balarama killed the donkey faced demon Dhenukā (A.186). In
a game called Harikrīdāna, a demon called Pralamba disguised himself as one of the playmates, carried Balarāma at his back and began to fly. Realising his trick, Balarāma pressed him with all his weight and force which the demon was unable to bear and hence the demon had to abandon the disguise and thereupon Balarāma killed him with his fist-blows (187.1-30).

Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa killed the elephant Kuvalayāpiḍā (193.30). Balarāma killed the demon-wrestler Muṣṭika (193.65). He also killed Sunāmā, the brother of Kamsa (193.77).

Balarāma is famous for his addiction to wine. Varuṇa sent the wine Vārāṇī to Balarāma for a drink. Balarāma drank it to his heart's desire and being intoxicated ordered the river Yamunā to come to him as he wanted to take a bath. As the river Yamunā did not come, he dragged her with his plough (A.198). He defeated the kings Paunḍraka, Dantavaktra, Vidūratha, Sīṣupāla, Jarāsandha, Sālva and others when they followed Kṛṣṇa while he was carrying away Rukminī (199.7).

On the occasion of the marriage of Aniruddha with his granddaughter, Rukmi invited Balarāma for gambling. Rukmi was an expert in gambling and Balarāma lost much wealth. The king of Kalinga mocked at him. Being irritated, Balarāma staked one crore mudras, Rukmi played his turn and Balarāma won but Rukmi protested saying that he had not consented to the game.
Upon this the divine speech declared that even though Rukmi did not say anything about the betting, Rukmi's playing his turn amounted to giving consent to the bet, and that therefore, Balarama had won the bet. But Rukmi did not even then accept the ruling so Balarama got angry and killed Rukmi by throwing at him the Aṣṭapada. He also broke the teeth of the king of Kalinga and killed all the kings who were partisans of Rukmi (202.11-25). Balarama killed the army of Bānasura when there was a terrible fight between krṣṇa and Bānasura (206.30). Samba was attempting to kidnap Laksmana, the daughter of Duryodhana. Thereupon Duryodhana and others caught hold of Samba. Balarama went to Hastināpur and requested to release Samba. When they did not comply with the wish of Balarama, he shook the city with his plough and thereupon Duryodhana and others released Samba (A.208).

Once when Balarama was in the company of his wife Revati, a monkey Dvivid threw a slab of stone on him and Balarama killed him with his fist (A.209). At the time of death, Balarama went into Samādhi whereinupon a serpent emerged from his mouth and entered the ocean and the serpent was worshipped by the Siddhas and the Uragas (210.50-53). The Br. P. deals at length with the worship of Balarama along with krṣṇa and Subhadra and the mode of his worship is described in the
section 'Worship' of Chapter VII on 'Religion'. Elsewhere it is said that one who worships Balarama gets the desired rewards and becoming free from all the sins, goes to Visnu-loka (58.21-26). According to Tarapada Bhattacarya,117 Balarama is more associated with Rudra or Siva as their characteristics agree in many respects. Rudra is regarded as a god of agriculture in the Vedas and so does Samkarsana's emblem 'Wala' indicate. Balarama is associated with Naga and so is Siva. Both Rudra and Balarama are known to have been great drunkards. The Mbh. also does not mention him as an avatara, but refers to sātvata as an avatara in his place. Samkarsana was thus a god of the Rudra-Siva cult and later on incorporated into Vāsudeva cult by identifying him with krṣṇa's brother Balarama. Balarama-worship referred to in the benedictory stanza of Bhasa's famous drama Svapnavasavadattam.

SIVA

Introduction

The history of Siva has undergone many vicissitudes. He was the supreme god of the proto Indians and was worshipped

by them. The early vṛātyas in the proto-Indian period worshipped the triad consisting of Śiva, Murugan and Amma corresponding to Śiva, Subhramanya or Kārtikeya and Pārvati respectively. He was held by the proto-Indians both as a philosophical entity, and as a god to be meditated upon.\textsuperscript{118}

However, with the advent of the vedic period, the vedic bards tried to present a new personality before us by introducing the character of Rudra. As Rudra, he is a minor god in the Rgvedic pantheon.\textsuperscript{119} He is described there as a malignant as well as a beneficent deity. The euphemistic epithet Śiva 'auspicious', which begins to be applied to him in the Rgveda, grows more frequent in the later Vedas, till it finally becomes his regular name in post-vedic mythology. Thus the next effort of the Aryans mainly lay towards causing an amalgamation of the two gods, viz. Śiva and Rudra respectively. In the later Samhitas he along with Viśnu becomes one of the two great gods of the brahmans.\textsuperscript{120} The Vaiśānaveṇī Samhitā\textsuperscript{121} mentions such epithets of god as Girīśa, Pusupati, Kapardin, Sarva, Bhava, Śiva and also as wearing hide-skin garments, and in the Av. he is elevated to a higher platform.\textsuperscript{122} In the

\textsuperscript{118} Karmarkar A.P., The Religions of India, Vol.1, P.38.
\textsuperscript{119} Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.76.
\textsuperscript{120} Keith, Religion of Veda & upaś., P.143.
\textsuperscript{121} Ch. 16.
\textsuperscript{122} Bhandarkar, Vaisnavism, Saivism, P. 148.
period of Brāhmaṇas, the power of Rudra is at its height. The gods are afraid of him lest they be killed by the god. It is, however, in the Svetāsvatara Upaniṣad that Siva stands alone in the field as the supreme god and the germs of Bhakti which manifested themselves at that time were mostly directed towards him. But this Upaniṣad is not a sectarian work and there is no evidence in the work of the existence of a Śaivite sect which worshipped Siva as its favourite god. The Gṛhyaśūtras also do not provide evidence to the existence of a Śaivite sect. From the days of Patañjali onwards, the existence of some Śaiva sects can be taken for granted.

In the earlier portions of the Māhāt, both the sects, viz. Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavites exist without much antagonism between them but in the later part of the epic such antagonism is clearly traceable. The history of Siva during the epic and purāṇic period is of deep interest. In the epics, the formation of the oasis of the future mythology takes place. Siva is now brought into direct contact with the other Brāhmaṇic gods. The working of the purāṇic writers looks as if a

123 Keith, Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 Apte V.M., Social and Religious life in the Gṛhyaśūtra.
continuation of what is contained in the epics. The old characteristics of Siva during the Indus valley period are attributed to the new personality of Rudra-Siva. Thus the epic and puranic Rudra is a combination of the vedic and non-vedic notions. Hence the early notions of Siva as a dancer, an ascetic and a yogin, a god of the Himalayas, one possessed of three eyes and others, are all endowed to the Siva-Rudra of the vedic and Brahmanic period. It should be borne in mind that all these elements are not an innovation but they are introduced only as a matter of revision of the past.128

Though, the Brahma-purana is considered mainly to be a Vaishnava purana, still it does not aim at the exclusive worship of Viṣṇu. On the contrary, it deals at great length with lord Siva and considers him at par with Viṣṇu. The following is the picture of Siva as obtained from the Brahma purana.

Siva is called Vikṛtarūpa (34.110), Dhūrjaṭī (35.1), Mīlaloḥita (35.1), Vilohāta (40.13), Suciromā (40.61), and Sikkhendī (40.79). He is said to have three heads (40.11) or thousand heads.129 The Moon rests on his head and hence the

129 40.30; 115.7; cf. Mbh. vii. 80.54 f., iii 39.74 f.
The crescent on the forehead of Siva is a mere development of the early representative of the so-called 'Trisula-horn' placed on the head of Siva during the proto-Indian period. His head is either fully shaved or half shaved. He keeps matted hair. He is said to have three jatās. He has a blue braid or a golden braid. Elsewhere it is said that he keeps his hair loose and they are wet with the water of the river Ganges that rests on Siva's head. His hair is of yellow colour. The epithet ārdhavakeśa is also applied to him.

He is said to have three eyes of which one is in the forehead. According to Monier Williams, the third eye and the crescent Moon on it marks the measuring of time by months. According to father Heras, the idea of three eyes was so well-known that the only mention of his three-eyes

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131 49, 43, 40.11, 37.12, also cf. Av.II.2.7; Vs. 16.7.
132 Religious Thought and Life in India, P.80.
as found in the inscriptions, revealed to those people the idea of the supreme being.\textsuperscript{135} He is also said to have a thousand eyes (37.4, 40.31). His eyes are said to be deformed (40.3). The colour of his eyes is said to be white, yellow, black or red (40.35). The sun and Moon constitute his eyes (37.12, 40.82). His eyes are like lotuses (40.79).

He has big ears (40.4). The other epithets describing his ears are Śaṅkukarna, Kumbhakarna, Gajendrakarna, Gokarna and Ātakarna (40.4, 5). These seem to be the Rākṣasa characteristics. In the south, his fane as Gokarna was known as holy.

When the lord Siva appeared before Pārvatī in an ugly form, he presented himself with a broken nose (35.5). He has a terrible and big mouth. In his mouth, Kālāgni resides (40.65). He is said to have a thousand tongues (40.5). His tongue is said to be sharp like a sword (40.23). He is called Damstrī (40.23). He has terrible teeth (40.23). His face is pleasant like a Moon (40.74). His throat is said to be blue and hence the epithets nilakantha (109.31) and nilagrīva (40.13) are applied to him. The term nilakantha

\textsuperscript{135} Marshall, No.8.
for the first time appears in the Safarudriya. His beard is yellow (40.61). His shoulders are as strong as those of a bull (40.15). He has ten hands (40.21). He has a big belly (40.61). He is also said to have hundred bellies (40.5), He has a thousand feet (40.30).

His complexion is a red like that of the rising Sun (40.31). Elsewhere he is said to be Saratkundenduswarcasa (59.14,15). Possibly the attribution of a white complexion to Siva may be due to the fact that the Brahmins of Kashmir, who are almost as fair as the Europeans, were the first worshippers of Siva. Then as his cult passed southwards the god naturally received a complexion more in keeping with that of his worshippers or it may be that white and black, like day and night, symbolised the close connection and succession of the destroying and regenerative principles. Siva's wife Pārvatī is often called Gaurī, the pale-coloured. He is said to wear no clothes (38,36,37) or to wear the skin of a lion (59.14,15), or that of a black deer (40.37), or that of an elephant (A.124). He applies white bhasma (40.22, 59.14,15) and saffron (A.108). He is called Vyālayajnopavitin

136 Vājasaneyī Samhitā, 16.7.
(40.37). He is called Candratilaka (35.4). Dharma and Karma are his ornaments (A.40). A serpent adorns his neck. It denotes the endless cycle of recurring years.\textsuperscript{138} He also wears a necklace of bells and hence the epithets ghanṭāki and ghanṭī are applied to him (40.66). He likes the garland of Karnikāra flowers (40.72). He also wears a gṛha garland of skulls and a sūtra of kapālas (37.7). The practice of offering human victims to Śiva was long in vogue since the proto-Indian period. This may be the reason why Śiva and Kāli are always represented as wearing the necklace of skulls.\textsuperscript{139} The kāpālikas and the kālamukhas are called the wearers of skulls.\textsuperscript{140} He rides on a bull (40.15,73), the Nandi, the lord of cows (127.59). In the epics\textsuperscript{141} and purāṇas\textsuperscript{142} the stories regarding the origin of bull as a vehicle of Śiva are given. They study of iconography\textsuperscript{143} proves that the ideas of the association of the bull with Śiva must have arisen in or somewhere round about the territory of the Mahāvṛṣas, situated in the north-west of India. And as Father Heras observes, the idea must have travelled far and wide in

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{138} Monier Williams, Op.Cit., P.80.
\textsuperscript{139} Karmarkar, A.I. P. 70.
\textsuperscript{140} Māhir J., Original Sanskrit texts, Vols. I-V.
\textsuperscript{141} Mbh., Amuśāsana 112.30; Rām. Uttarākanda, 16.17.
\textsuperscript{142} Śiva Purāṇa, Uṛtara Satarudriya Saṃ., Adh.3, Liṅga P. Purvārdha, 47 ff., Kurma P. Uttarābhāga, A.42.
\textsuperscript{143} J.N.Banerjea, Development of Hindu Iconography, P.121.
\end{footnotes}
India during the regime of the Kushan and Pallava rulers.\textsuperscript{144} Eventually the story must have for the first time been introduced in the \textit{Mbh}. Dharma constitutes the nature of the bull (40.31).

As Siva is constantly engaged in battle with mighty demons like Pura, Tripura and Andhaka, he is armed with special weapons suited to his warlike deeds. The name of his bow is Pinäka (34.5, 123, 68, 69). He holds Trisula (40.11, 34.5) or three-pronged trident, thought by some to denote his combining in his own person the three attributes of creator, destroyer and Regenerator.\textsuperscript{145} He is also said to have a thousand sūlas (40.31). He wields gadā (40.51), danda (40.12, 65, 79), arrows (40.51), bows (40.51), a non-descript weapon called Khatvāṅga (40.51), consisting of a kind of staff with transverse pieces surmounted by a skull,\textsuperscript{146} mudgara ā (40.51) and sword (40.10). His banner is of white colour (40.18) and has the emblem of a bull (34.6, 75.25). The bull as his vehicle may appropriately constitute the emblem of his banner.\textsuperscript{147} The sign of Sun also constitutes the emblem of his banner (40.14). This shows lord Siva's connection with Sun. He

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{144} Heras, \textit{Op.Cit.}
\item \textsuperscript{145} Monier Williams, \textit{Op.Cit.}, P.81.
\item \textsuperscript{146} Mānier Williams, \textit{Op.Cit.}, P.81.
\item \textsuperscript{147} also cf. \textit{Mbh.}, \textit{Anuśasana parva}, 112-30.
\end{itemize}
He produces the sound 'Hum Hum' (40.27). He plays the musical instrument by mouth (40.20). The Tumbi and Vina are dear to him (40.23). He also possessed a ghanta (40.26).

He is called Tryambaka (40.11). This epithet which is commonly applied to Siva in the post-vedic literature is already applied to Rudra in the vedic texts, and also once even in the RV. The meaning seems to be one who has three mothers in allusion to the three-fold division of the universe. No three mothers are known but this may be derived from the Rudra-Agni conception as in the RV., Agni has three mothers. The simplest explanation of Tryambaka may be that Siva has not the three mothers but three mother goddesses - Uma, Gauri, Kali, who are called Ambikas, each originally an amba or mother. The other meanings suggested are 'having three rivers' as Ganges is, and Uma may be the river; or ambaka = singa and hence the lord Siva himself might be addressed as a mountain having three peaks, or amba = pupilla thus agreeing with the traditional meaning of the god having three eyes.

Some general epithets like Deva, Devadeva, Mahadeva,
the best one, lord of lords, ParamesVARa, Svayambhū, (34.1-6; 99-101), Bhaktavatsala (94.27-30), Prabhu, Purānapuruśa, Paramadeva, Lokaguru, Devavara, Devesa, Kārunityakara, Pāpahara, Ištadeva, Mangaladāyaka, Jagannātha, Sarvakāmaprada and Varada (34.1-6, 122.195-206, 124.94-97, 109.21-31), Rudra (34.1-6, 123.195), Bhagamkra, Somesa, ūmesa, Vighmesvara, Nandinātha (123.196.206), Vāgīsa, Vedatrayekṣaṇa, Godharalakṣmīsa, sarva, Yajñesa, Bhaśkara, Vitteśa, Siddhesa (124.94-97), Bhīmanātha (173.39), Bhūtenātha, Kalātman and Tridhāma (109.21-37) are applied to him. He is called Bhava, Rudra, Sarva and Pasupati (40.10). In the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (1.7.3.8) these are given as the names of Agni. Sarva, Bhava, Rudra, Pasupati etc., were really different gods of different regions, but owing to some common characteristics they were identified with one another and ultimately with vedic Agni. But even though they were identified with Agni, these names were also the names of Siva and the Indus valley remains perhaps indicate that 'Pasupati' existed before the vedic Agni. We cannot now say that these names were at first applied to vedic Agni and then became Appellations of the later god Siva.154 He is the lustre of the lightening, thunder of the clouds, lion among the animals, prāṇava among the mantras, vajra among the weapons, and satya among the vows. He is identified with

various feelings like desire, dveṣa, rāga, moha, šama, kṣamā, vyavasāya, dhairya, lobha, kāma, krodha and jaya. It is also said that the colours green, red, yellow, blue, white, kapila, brown and black belong to him (40.42-50,55). He is dānapara (100.19-21), remover of poverty and unhappiness (122.195-206), and Annadātā (40.40). He is called Kilakila, Kubja, Kuṭila, Canda, killer of enemies and ugra (40.15-21). He is Kāmada as well as Kān̄ayana (40.38) and Bhairava.155

The knowers of Brahmāṇa invoke him by the ups. and he is worshipped by the Trisuparna re and the Satarudriya Sanhitā of Yajurveda. Many of the epithets given in the Satarudriya Sanhitā are given in the Brahma purana also. He is Gāyatrī, Ćīkāra, Praṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udāna, Vyāna, Unmeṣa, Nimeṣa, Hunger and Thirst. He is the progenitor of past, present and future. He is Bhūvarloka, Bhurloka, Svarloka, Brahmāvarta, ārugavra and Kāmāvarta (37.15-21). He is phala, desa, kāla, karta, datā, pratinidhi and dāna (75.8-13).

Some philosophical epithets are given to him. He is called Ajara, Amara, Vibhū, Avināśī, (36.39-41), Sūkṣma, Ananta, Anādi, Nitya, Samasta, Apara, Akaṣaya, Ayasya, Nitya, Kṣara (122.195-206), Anāmaya (124.133), non-dual, independent

155 37.4, missing in 'ga' ms.
(129.68,68); Sudha, Buddha, Adi, madhya and anta, the atman
of all (37.15.21), birthless, omniscient, the sakṣi (75.8-13),
acintyarūpa and Idya (122.195-206) and Akhilatman (117.17),
Cidrūpa, anandamaya, satsvarūpa (122.79-82), Sadasadpranetā,
Sadasadvyatīta (122.195-206) and his form constitutes of
sat, cit and ānanda (124.133), higher than the highest (36.39-
41), kriyā, kārana, kārya, kartā, asat as well as sadasat
(37.15-21), pradhāna, creator of prakṛti, higher than prakṛti
and the enjoiner of prakṛti (37.15-21), Purusa, Samkhya-pradhāna
and lord of Yoga (37.15-21). He is known by the vedas and is
the sakṣat Brahman (173.39), the lord of the four pravah puru-
sārthas (40.35) and caracaresta (34.99-101), Yajñesvara, lord
of Havya and Kavya (122.195-206), Like Viṣṇu, Siva is also
described as having the Yajñasvarūpa. Thus he is called
Kāta, Hotṛ, Huta and Holya, Svāhā, Svadhā, Vasatkāra and also
Samadhāta, Vidhāta, Dhāta and Middhāta (37.15-21). In wood, he
is fire; in flowers he is fragrance; in seeds, he is tree; in
stones, he is gold and in all the beings he is Atman (130.21-
31). He conjoins purusa and prakṛti and is the creator of
kārya and kārana (37.2). He is suddha and Buddha (40.32)
and is called Sthāna (40.76).

Siva is styled as a Yogin par excellence. Siva is
represented in a seated yogic posture on some of the proto-
Indian seals. Hence the idea of Siva as an ascetic is
current since the proto-Indian period. In the Brahma
purāṇa he is called the lord of yogins and destroys the yoga
of the daityas (40.36,37.12). He practises penance in
waters. He keeps his mind in tranquility and bestows
prosperity as a result of practising Yoga (37.15-16). Siva's
connection with waters is interesting. The place of
Varuṇa as a water-god was at a later period to some extent
assumed by kṛṣṇa and Siva. During the 5th and 6th centuries
A.D., on the arrival of the White Hūnas in Gujarat and
Kathiawad, the sea began to influence these new comers as is
shown by the fame gathered round Siva in his form as
Somanātha with his shrine at Somanātha. Siva is worshipped
at river junctions, or the connection of Siva with waters
might have been given in direct antagonism to that of Viṣṇu
as Viṣṇu too has direct connection with waters, the ocean
being his abode. He is said to perform Sandhyā and other
five religious practises daily (40.33). He performs the six
karmans and the three karmans (40.33) and regulates the
various dharmas of castes and āśramas (40.34).

He is the creator of the world, the regulator of the world and its final aim (94.27-30, 124.94-97). As he is the cause of the destruction of the world, he is called Krathamakarta (37.15-21). He creates Pralaya (37.15) and creates the world in sport (130.21). He is Visvodbhavaśajārūpa, Visvagoptā and Visvapati (122.195-206). Though, in various purānic passages Śiva is described as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the universe, during the period of the epics and purāṇas, Śiva is mainly made to function in the capacity of the destroyer, whereas Brahmā and Viṣṇu are allotted the first and the second functions. Cemeteries and burning grounds are his favourite haunts; imps and demons are his ready servants, and ferocity and irritability, on the slightest provocation, constitute his normal condition of mind.\footnote{Monier Williams, Brahmanism & Hinduism, P.82.}

Śiva is the best architect and the progenitor of all the artisans (A.40). In order to regulate the world, he divided the vedas and has made a propaganda of gāthās, smṛtis, and purāṇas and all of them have the nature of sabda (75.8-13). Though, the lord Śiva creates, protects and destroys the world by his Maya, he is not attached to it (129.68,69).
There is nothing higher and greater than him. The anadi tattvas like kartṛtva, datṛtva, mahatva, priti, yasas and sāṁkhya are situated in him (130.21-31). He is the lord of moving and non-moving worlds (97.20-23). He is the highest among all the Rudras (69.15). None can equal lord Śiva in bestowing the desires (115.6-9). He protects the people with his eight forms. All people act according to his desire and only the learned men can know his greatness (97.20-23). He is the lord of the sacrifices. People sing the rathāntara āsāman in his honour and the adhvaryus give a share to him in the sacrifice (39.40). Though living the life of a sādhu, he is a grhastha and he gives gifts (37.14). Those who are afflicted by the troubles of the world get peace by worshipping lord Śiva and Pārvatī (107.55, 103). Those who are patient, who have no desires and whose minds are concentrated on him, go to him (A.110). People worship him with five great sacrifices. They are amply rewarded and enter the divine region with a tranquil mind on attaining him; people have a Samātvabuddhi for the duals, viz. Soka, Moha, Jara, Mrtyu and hunger-thirst (122.74-82). People worship him with Gāyatrī. The worshippers of Sun worship him in the form of Sun (40.6,14). It reflects on the connection of Siva with Sun. By worshipping lord Siva, even a foolish man goes to heaven. The fruits of all the
great things like sacrifice, knowledge, penance, dhyāna, homa and others consists of a permanent devotion for the lord Siva (122.74-82). He gives freedom from the worldly parlance (117.7-17). By the grace of lord Siva, one is established in the highest world (56.68). He is the refuge of the world and a ladder to attain the final liberation (122.74).

Pārvatī, the daughter of Himavat, was the spouse of Siva. Himavat practised severe penance and by the grace of sage Kasyapa, he had a daughter Aparna. As she observed fasting for many days, her mother Menaka tried to avert her from doing so by the words 'u mā' and from that time onwards she was known as Uma. Being satisfied by her penance, Brahma declared that she would get the husband of her desire and eventually she married Mahadeva (37.78-98). In her former birth, she was Sati, the eldest among the daughters of Dakṣa. She burnt herself at the indignation of Siva being not invited at the sacrifice performed by her father Dakṣa. It was her jealousy which roused Siva to destroy Dakṣa's sacrifice. Mahadeva himself says that it is the custom to exclude him from sacrifice and seems to be indifferent, till Uma rouses him. Here it is noteworthy that only Dadhiīci seems to worship him. She is as beautiful as Moon. The Br. P. further gives detailed description of
Parvati's marriage with Siva (36.70). The Br. P. narrates how Parvati formed a conspiracy with Vinayaka and Jayā to bring down Ganges from the head of lord Siva (A.74). He is called Umāpriyekara and Ambikanātha (34.1, 37.3, 40.38).

Ambikā, a post-vedic name of Siva's wife, is mentioned for the first time in Vājasaneyā Samhitā (3.5) appearing here, however, not as Rudra's wife but as his sister Uma and Parvati, the regular names of Siva's wife seem first to occur in the Tā. and the Kena-up.159

He lives on the mountain.160 He is called Giriśa and Giritra 'lying on a mountain', probably because the thunderbolt that he hurls, springs from a cloud, which is often compared to a mountain and on which he was believed to dwell.161 He is said to reside on the Jyotisthala peak of the mountain Meru which was studded with Jewels. Mohenjo Daro inscriptions mention the white mountain (Himalaya) as the place of residence of Siva. Further the Śatarudriya refers to Rudra-Siva as Giriśa, Giritra, etc. Eventually this idea must have later on developed itself. And it is thus that Siva is endowed with the Kailāsa as his abode.162

159 Maedonell, Vedic Mythology.
160 34. 99-101; Vs. 16.2-4.
He is living with the Adityas, Vasus, Asvinikumāras, Kubera with Guhyakas, Sukrācārya and Sanatkumara and others (39.4-8). The Rākṣasas, Piśācas and Pārśadas sat near him. The Mbh.\(^{163}\) and Purāṇas\(^{164}\) give a detailed description of the Gaṇas of Śiva. Pārvatī sat by his side and Gāṅgā served him (39.4-8). Elsewhere he is said to reside in the cemetery (38.36,37). He is also called Aniketa (38.36, 37). Ocean is also considered to be his abode (40.88). As great rivalry was going on between Śiva and Viṣṇu, ocean, the abode of Viṣṇu might have been described as the abode of Śiva too. He is surrounded by the naked Gaṇas (38.36,37). He is the destroyer of Pramathas (40.15). He lives in the beings residing in ocean, river, mountains, caves, unapproachable places, cow-settlements, four paths, old houses, directions, between Indra and Sūrya, in Rasaṭala and in the places where elephants, horses and chariots are kept (40.93, 96).

He is the highest among all the deities and his fame and prosperity are unattainable (39.5,40). Neither Brahmā nor Govinda nor the sages are able to know his greatness (40.83). The form of a child in the lap of Uma, he

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163 Sauptika parva, Adh. 7.
paralysed all the gods (36.29-35). He is the protector of gods and demons. He is Brahma and Indra. In his reside Moon, Varuna, Sun, Vishnu, Brahma and Brhaspati (40.57). In all the vedas, it is said that Brahma is the creator, Vishnu the maintainer and Siva the destroyer (130.21). Yama cannot kill the devotees of Siva and Vishnu. Once lord Siva killed Mrtyu and Yama when they tried to take away the life of the devotee of lord Siva (94.39-41). He lives in the form of Rudra, Vasu, Aditya and Asvinikumaras (37.16). Brahma and others are like his servants (34.99-101). Once lord Siva had a terrible fight with lord krsna in helping Bana in helping Bana (A.206). The sage Apastamba declares to the sage Agastya that though all gods are the aspects of one thing, still lord Siva should be worshipped as he was liberal in granting the boons (A.130). He is considered to be so liberal that when pleased, he grants things which one does not deserve and hence the epithet Ayuktadatta is applied to him (110.101-106).

He threw Dasanana beneath the Rasatala by his thumb, gave Bana the power to conquer his enemies (110.100-107). He drank the poison which emerged from oceans when the gods and the Asuras churned it (112.4). The blue colour of the throat of lord Siva is associated with the drinking of the poison in Puranas. He burnt Kamadeva when he tried to
disturb him (112.6). He is called Tripurārī, Tripurahanta and Purārī (43.65), (57.3), (34.1-6), (40.11). It seems that the number three is a favourite with lord Siva as he is called Trijāta, Trisirsa, Trisūla, Trymbakā, Tripuraghna (40.11), though, he is described in terms of Sahasra (40.26, 30.31) also, a number favourite of lord Visnu. He killed the demon Andhaka (A.129). He is also called Puramāra (122.205). He destroyed the eyes of Bhāga (57.3, 40.68) and broke the teeth of Puṣaṇ. He destroyed the sacrifice by taking the form of a hunter when the sacrifice was running away in the form of a deer (39.75, 76; 37.9). In many Purānas, Siva is said to have destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa (A.109). He moved the mountain Kailāsa (A.100) and removed the trouble of the Pramathas (37.3, 9). He is called kṛsnakesāpahārin (37.8, 9). He received the falling Ganges on his head (A.73). By the grace of lord Siva, a dead child became alive in the kingdom of king Śveta (A.59). The sage Śukra got the Mṛtāsāṃjīvanīvidyā (A.95); Śeṣa, the lord of Pātāla got a Sula to kill his enemies (A.115). The sage Dattātreya obtained the knowledge of Ātmān (A.117).

165 (37.9). It should also be mentioned that when Brahmā promised protection to demons against the gods by his fifth head having the shape of that of a donkey, lord Siva cut it off and held it. This might be the reason why he is called a bearer of skull in hand.
Devāpi, the son of the Purohita of the king Bhara was able to bring back the king Bhara with his retinue from Rasātala (A.127). Kubera obtained a boon (A.97). On seeing the third eye of lord Siva, Mahimā was born to the king Pracīnabarhiś and he composed the Mahimna Stotra in his honour (A.153). Revatī, the wife of Kaṭha, regained beauty (A.122). Nāga, the son of Śūrasena, the king of Pratiṣṭhāna-pura, got freedom from his curse and regained a human form (A.111). A maiden Pippalā got freedom from the curse of being a river and regained her original form on worshipping Siva (A.132). He was so great that even the greatness of the sacrifice cannot equal him (110.101-106).

Lord Siva protects the world with his eight forms. In his capacity of having eight forms, he is identified with the Sun. The Tāmasa form of lord Siva was worshipped. One Visvarūpa meditated on the Tāmasa form of lord Siva. He lighted the fire in a terrible Kuṇḍa, sat on it and meditated on the lord. He then threw himself in the fire as an oblation to lord Siva (A.273). Siva's ArdhanaŚīvara form is also alluded to in the Brahma pūrāṇa (129.70-80). The idea of ArdhanaŚīvara was current.

166 97.2.23; Śākuntala I.1.

among the proto-Indians. Father Heras observes that this is the same as the deity found in Sumer, with the name of Ama-a-half-man (proper left) and half-woman (proper right) which seems to be the original idea of the Hindu image of Ardhanārīśvara.

Rudras:— Siva is represented with eleven armlets in the Indus valley period. Eventually the number seems to have attained a sanctity of its own. In the Rv. they are considered to be the father of the Maruts, are closely associated with vasus, visvedevas and Ādityas and make eleven of the thirty-three gods. The Mbh. and purānas give the lists of Rudras, though the names differ. The Br. P. states that Rudra was created out of the anger of Brahma and that Rudras are the sons of Kaśyapa and Sūrabhi. The names given are Ajāikapada, Ahirbudhnya, Tvasta, Hara, Bahuṛūpa, Tryambaka, Vṛṣākapi, Sambhu, Raivata, Sarva and Kapali. They were born by the grace of lord Mahadeva.

168 Karmarkar A.P., Op.Cit., P.42: The Brahma Purāṇa relates an interesting story about the ardhanārīśvara form of lord Siva. It states that as Visākhā, i.e., Kār̥tikeya wanted to sit in the lap of his mother as well as his father at the same time, lord Siva took the ardhanārīśvara form and satisfied his desires. 110.109-106.

171 Mbh. Sānti P. A.207.20.
172 Br.P.3.46-48;Harivamsa I.1.41;Brahmānda Madhyabhāga 3.69; Bhāgavata VI.6.17-13; Padma P. Srstikhanda 37, 83; Matsya 5.29-30; Kūrma, Purvabhāga A.10; Siva P. Uttara Satarudra Saṃ. 13.24-25; Saura P. 26.26; Vāmana P. A.5; Visnu P. 1.7.11-2; Mārkandeya 52.2 ff.
173 1.45. 174. 3.46-48.
The expressions Ajaikapada and Ahirbudhnya occur in the Rgveda.\textsuperscript{175} In the opinion of Karmarkar,\textsuperscript{176} Ekapad is indicative of the image standing on one leg in the Indus Valley period. As Siva was a yogin par excellence, he might have been described as Ekapad, it being a posture adopted as a process of penance and the expression Ahirbudhnya throws light on the close association of Siva and the Nāga, which was supposed to be in the depths of the world, or the later Pāṭāla.

\textbf{Virabhadra:-} Virabhadra is said to have been born from the anger of lord Siva and taking the form of a lion, he destroyed the sacrifice of Daksa (39.75-77). From his pores he created many rudras and on account of them darkness prevailed on all the sides and the lustre of Sun and Moon became dim (39.40-58). Virabhadra is a favourite deity of the Kurumbhas, a tribe of hunters and shepherds in Souther India.\textsuperscript{177} Virabhadra destroyed the sacrifice of Daksa with the help of Bhadrakāli, who too was created out of Pārvatī's wrath (39.72).

\textbf{Jvara:-} He is said to have been created out of the perspiration of lord Siva's forehead. When lord Siva

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{175} RV. X.65. 13, 66.11; AV, IV. 1.6; Pāraskara G.S. 2.15.2

\textsuperscript{176} Karmarkar A.F., Op. Cit., P.77-78.

\textsuperscript{177} Hewitt, 'Ruling Races etc.' I, P.136.}
was irritated with Dakṣa, he wanted to destroy the sacrifice of Dakṣa and the sacrifice being afraid took the form of a deer and started running away in the sky. Śiva took bows and arrows and followed him. At that time Jvara arose from his perspiration and he is described as Hrasva, Atimatra, red-eyed, yellow-bearded, terrible, urdhväkeśaḥ, Atiromāṅga and Sonakarpṣṇa, having a terrible or bad colour and wearing red clothes. He burnt the sacrifice and the gods were afraid of him and ran away in different directions. The earth began to tremble and lord Brahma then declared that he would be known in the world by the name of Jvara (39.77-87).

Manyu:— In the Rgveda, Manyu, wrath is a personification suggested chiefly by the fierce anger of Indra and is invoked in two hymns. He merged from the third eye of the lord Śiva. His form is made up of brilliance. He is the puruṣa in men, Ahamkāra in all the beings and the anger of all. He is Indra, Varuṇa and Lokapāla. He is within all but no one knows him. He is Rudra and Śiva and all the moving and non-moving things are pervaded by him. The gods conquered the demons with his help. He is a representative of lord Śiva and burns everything with his brilliance at 178 Rv. 10, 83,84.
the time of destruction. At the time of destruction, he holds all the weapons, increases joy and conquers everything (162.20-29).

**Hari-Hara:** The concept of Harihara also seems to have come in vogue side by side with that of the Hindu trinity. The purāṇas refer to it. The Brahma-purāṇa also mentions how Indra worshipped Harihara when he was very worried about his three dethronements (A.122). The various puranic passages show how both the gods Hari and Hara are the same, though, two in the outward appearance. From the passages of the ṇbh., it becomes clear that the appellations of the one are attributed to the other. There are many scriptural representations and shrines of Harihara in Southern India.

The mode of worship of lord Siva is discussed under the section 'worship' of Chapter VII on 'Religion'.

**KARTIKEYA**

Among the post-vedic gods, a deity of high ranks is Kumāra or Kartikeya also called Skanda and Mahāsena. The

179 Harivamsa II, 129.40; Skanda VII, 2,17,185; Linga, Purvārdha, A.96, Nārādiya Mahā. P, 83.23.

popularisation of the cult of Śiva involved a process of syncretism, the adoption of various local gods as his manifestations. Skanda, the deity of the same class, who was the family god of some west-Indian dynasties, now under the name of Subhramanya is most popular in South India, where his association with the mother-goddess shows that he is connected with non-āryan cult. It is a cult special to the Tamil and Mālagalam peoples. He is first mentioned in the Chāndogya upanisad vii. 26.2, where he seems to be identified with Sanatkumāra. Hopkins surmises that skanda is not a late addition to the epic but a god rapidly increasing in importance, as the epic expanded or more particularly as the Śiva-cult expanded. H. Jacobi infers that Kumara as the lord of army was introduced as a new god probably due to a change in the government of India where instead of the king holding both the offices, viz. ruler in peace and leader in war, the office of a general became distinct.

The myth of the birth of Kumāra is variously

181 BG i, Pt. ii, PP. 180, 287; Oppert 303, 370.
182 ERE, Vol. 12, 442.a
183 Epic Mythology, P. 227
related,\textsuperscript{185} his father being given as Śiva (81.2) and Agni (82.10, 3.40), his mother as Umā (81.2), Gāṅgā (82.10) and various other minor deities like the wives of the sages (42.6) and others. These rival claims to parentage had to be settled and this was effected by the assumption of a sort of joint parentage, and by making some of the female deities his nurses or adoptive mothers.\textsuperscript{186} The strange myth about the birth of Kumāra appears to be best interpreted on the assumption that in different parts of India there were several popular godlings of the war-god type and that there have been combined into the Kumāra, the war-god common to all Indians.\textsuperscript{187} For there are three variants or altar-egos of Kumāra, viz. Viśākha, Sākha and Naigameya and the Br. P. identifies Viśākha (81.4) with Kārtikeya who is known to have received popular worship.\textsuperscript{188}

Some myths are related about Kārtikeya in the Brahma Purāṇa. When the gods were oppressed by the danger of the demon Tāraka, they requested Agni to relate the danger to Śiva. Thereupon Agni took the form of a Parrot and with great hesitation went to the place where lord Śiva was in

\textsuperscript{185} Mbh. iii. 225 ff., ix.44 f., xiii.84 ff., Rām. i.36 ff.
\textsuperscript{186} 128.23; ERE. Vol. II, P. 807.
\textsuperscript{187} ERE. Vol. II, P. 207.
\textsuperscript{188} Patanjali ad Panini, V.3.99.
privacy with Parvati. Lord Siva released his virile-semen in Agni who being unable to bear it released it in Kṛttikās on the bank of the divine river and the child that was born to them was known as Kārtikeya (128.1-25; 3.41). Elsewhere it is said that the Agni drank the virile semen of lord Siva and kept it in the wives of the seven sages excepting Arundhatī. They released their foetus in the Ganges where they were mixed up by the wind and out of them a child with six faces was born, who was destined to kill the demon Tāraka (82.1-12). Therefore, he is called Kārtikeya, being a son of the six Kṛttikās, the wives of the sages; Śāmukha, because he was born with six faces, the foetuses of the six wives being gathered together. Gāṅgeya, as the foetuses were released in Gāṅgā; the son of Śiva as the semen-virile originally belonged to Śiva and Agniputra as Agni drank the semen-virile of Siva.

Among the feats of Kārtikeya is mentioned the most important one, viz. the destruction of the demon Tāraka (81.2). A disgraceful story is related about Kārtikeya, viz. After the destruction of Tāraka, lord Śiva and Parvati were pleased with Kārtikeya and asked him to enjoy at his will. Kārtikeya took an undue advantage of the parent's advice and enjoyed with the wives of gods, and the gods complained to
Pārvatī about her son's misdeeds, and when, inspite of Pārvatī's insistence to check himself, Kārtikeya was unable to resist his lust, Pārvatī took the form of every god-wife and when Kārtikeya saw the form of his mother everywhere, he took a strict vow of considering every female as his mother (82.1-15). Further it is said that when lord Śiva did not release Ganga, Pārvatī took in confidence Skanda and Gaṇeśa for the matter of Ganga's release (74-15). Kārtikeya is said to be defeated by Pradyumna and Gaṇuḍa when he helped lord Śiva in his fight with lord kṛṣṇa (206.26) and he killed Yama in the fight. These and other myths are related about Kārtikeya in other works.¹⁸⁹

The Brahma purāṇa further states that a holy place, viz. Kārtikeyatīrtha or Kumāratīrtha on the bank of the river Godāvari is dedicated in honour of Kārtikeya approaching which one gets good family and beauty and even great sins like those of approaching the wife of a teacher are expiated (81.20,21).

A lingāyat tradition reports that he was a founder

¹⁸⁹ Vanaparva A.223-226; Anuśasanaparva A.85; Matsya P. V. 27, 53.61, 153.4.18; 160.10-26, 260.19.45-51; Bhāgavata XI.4.17; Vismu I.15.115; Vāyu 66.24, 72.35-46, 72.48-50; Brāh.P.III, 3.24, 10.35-48; IV.30.39, 99 to the end, Nais XI.50.
of a gotra and was a form of lord Śiva himself. On the reverse of the vines of the Kuśāna Prince Kaniska, there are figures with their names in Greek letters of Skando, Mahāśeno, Kumāro and Bizago. In the year 414 A.D. a gallery in the temple of Swami Mahāśena was built by Dhruvaśarman at Bilsad. Several observances and vows in the name of Kumāra and Kartikeya are mentioned in Hemadri's Vratakhanda and the worship of that god has not become obsolete even at the present day.

In Siam, a great festival was celebrated in honour of Kartikeya and the pleiades who fostered him. It took place at the time of the Moon's conjunction with this star-cluster i.e. shortly before full-Moon. It was a fire-festival in agreement with Kartikeya's legendary birth from fire. Similarly a worship is offered in honour of Kartikeya in southern India on the full-Moon day. The Brahma-purāṇa also states that one who takes a bath at Kṛttikātīrtha is the Kṛttikāyoga of the Kṛṭiaka month gets the merit of all the sacrifices and becomes a religious king (82.15,16).

190 Bhandarkar, Vaisnāväism, P.214.
191 JBBRAS, Vol. XX, P. 385.
192 Ibid., P. 395.
GANAPATI

His worship starts from the puranic period and except in one legend mentioned in the northern recension of the MBH, he does not appear in the epic literature.\textsuperscript{194} The leader of Gaṇas or the hosts of Maruts of Rudra was called Gaṇapati. Gradually, the name Gaṇapati was generalised and meant many leaders of the Gaṇas or groups. Another name Vināyaka also came in use. In the Atharvasiras upanisad, Rudra is identified with many gods, among whom one is called Vināyaka.\textsuperscript{195} In the MBH,\textsuperscript{196} many Gaṇeśvaras and Vināyakas are mentioned. In the Mānavagṛhyasūtra (2.14) and the Yājñavalkyasūrti (I.271 ff.) an account of Vināyakas is given but the difference between the two shows that during the period that had elapsed between the composition of the sūtra and that of sūrti, the four Vināyakas had become one Gaṇapati-Vināyaka, having Ambikā for his mother.\textsuperscript{197} The ceremony occurring in the Grhyasūtra mentioned above suggests that the Vināyakas were the object of faith before the christian era but the one Gaṇapati-Vināyaka, the son of Ambikā, was introduced in the Hindu pantheon much later.\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{194} JRAS, 1898, P. 380 ff.
\textsuperscript{195} Bhandarkar, Vaisnavism, P.210.
\textsuperscript{196} Anusasana 151, V.26 & V. 57.
\textsuperscript{197} Bhandarkar, Op.Cit.,
\textsuperscript{198} Ibid.
There are groups of images of kāla, kāli, the seven mothers or śaktis and Gaṇapati in the caves at Ellora and the caves are to be referred to the later part of the eighth century. Thus it seems that the Gaṇapati-cult must have come into vogue between the end of the fifth and the end of the eighth century. In another inscription dated Vikrama Saṁvat 918 corresponding to A.D. 862, dated found at a place called Ghaṭiyālā, 22 miles north-west of Jodhpur an obeisance is made to Vināyaka.

About his birth, the Br. P. states that Pārvatī created him by meditation. Many gods came to see the newborn child Gaṇesa. Ignoring his mother's advice, he had grasped Moon in his hand from his father's forehead. As he sucked the milk profusely out of a childish jealousy that his brother Kartikeya might not get more of it, Pārvatī called him Lambodara (114.4-18). Elsewhere it is stated that he was created out of the dirt (97.22).

As he pleased the lord Mahādeva by the play of his anklets, he gave him the status of the lord of the Gaṇas. He is also said to have pleased his mother by music, dance and humorous talks (97.22).

199 Cave-Temples by Fergussen & Burgess.
In one hand he holds the Vighnapāsa and on another shoulder he keeps an axe and when he does not receive homage, he throws obstructions. He is said to have thrown obstructions in the deeds of his mother. He is very proud of his own capacity. His vehicle is a rat. It is probably more than a coincidence that the rat is a totem of at least one dravidian tribe, the créons (276 BRE, Vol. VI, P. 178). He is called Ambikānandana, ādideva and Gaṇeśvara. In all the rites, all the deities, Brahmā, Vishnu and Mahēśa worship him, meditate on him and bow down to him. None can equal him in bestowing the desired fruits. Thinking thus, even lord Siva worshipped him before killing Tripura. Meditating on him, all the animated beings get the desired fruits. In the works dealing with Dharma, Artha and Kāma, he should be worshipped first. The merit of his worship never decreases. According to the way of worship, one gets the fruit of worshipping him. The gods and the deities worship him daily (114.4-18).

Parvati asked Gaṇeśa to bring down the Ganges from the matted hair of lord Śiva as she did not like the increasing affection of lord Śiva for the Ganges. Gaṇeśa thought out a plan through which he made the sage Gautama to bring the Ganges on earth from the locks of hair of lord Śiva.
Ganesa throws obstructions in the way of one who goes for the pilgrimage of the Ganges as he does not like Siva's affection for the Ganges (A.176). These and other myths are referred to in other works.201

Thus Ganesa is considered to be the leader of the Ganas, or attendants on Siva, and first appears in Hindu literature as a creator of obstacles, and as such, hindering success.202 Thus though primarily he was worshipped to induce him to abstain from impending but in modern practice, he is looked upon as a remover of difficulties, the god of wisdom and the guardian of the public ways.

He is called Gajavaktra (175.37). It is difficult to determine how the god came to have the elephant's head. The images in the cave-temples at Ellora have that head and Bhavabhuti in the beginning of the eighth century describes him with that head in Mālatimadhava. Bhandarkar203 infers that as Rudra-Siva and other gods allied with him were closely associated with forests where elephants were

201 Bhág. III.41, 37-41, 43.2 & 33, 43. 18 & 31, Brahmāṇḍa IV.27, 72-104; 44.67; III.67.55; Matsya 23.36 & 84; 54. 524, 532-41, 250.25; Maitrāyani Samhitā 2.6.1; Brahma- vaivarta 3.8; Lόnga 105; Padma srṣṭi 43, 63; Yājñavalkya 1.27, Matsya 153; Gānēśa P. 2.137; 1.81-106; 1.44-45; 2.138-148, 1.61, 1.16, 2.73-83, 1.92, 1.13-15.

202 Hopkins, Rel. of India, P.451.

203 Vaisnavism, Śaivism and other minor religious systems.
found, it perhaps suited to the fancy of some men to place
the head of that animal over the body of a god originally
mischievous.

His image stands in every well-to-do Hindu house
and there are numerous temples in his honour scattered all
over India. His image is also found in temples dedicated
to Siva. Every Hindu book commences with the words
'Ganesāya namah'.

In Travancore there are special shrines called
homapurās, in which homas, or sacrifices are daily offered
to Ganeśa for the prosperity of the country.204 His image
of clay is worshipped with great pomp in the Maratha country
on the fourth lunar day of the month of Bhadrapada and at
Cichawad near Poona there is a special establishment for the
exclusive worship of this god.205

His symbols of the rat and the elephant connect
him with some local theriōlatory, but he is now independent,
and though he is a member of the Saiva group of deities, he
has become almost non-sectarian, and all sects agree in doing
him honour as the god of luck.206

204 ERE. Vol. VI, Pp. 175
206 IA XXX. 255 f., also A Getty's study entitled 'Ganeśa'.
Six varieties of the Gaṇapatya sect are mentioned by Ānandagiri in his Samkaradigvijaya and by Dhanapati in his commentary on the corresponding work of Madhava.

BRAHMĀ

Brahmā, known as Prajñāpati, in vedic times, is celebrated in Rv.207 as the creator of heaven and earth, of the waters and of all that lives, who was born as the one lord of all that is, the one king of all that breaths and moves, the one god above the gods, whose ordinances all the gods and beings follow, who embraces with his arms the whole world with all creatures.208 Here he is praised as a supreme lord. In Av. and Vs. and elsewhere regularly in the Brāhmaṇas, he is recognised as the chief god. In the sūtras,209 Prajñāpati is identified with Brahmā. In the place of this chief god of the later vedic mythology, the philosophy of the ups. put the impersonal Brahmā, the universal soul of the absolute.

The views of Sri Karapada Bhattacarya210 regarding the Brahmā cult are original and noteworthy. He states that

207 Rv. X. 121.
208 Maedonell, Op.Cit.,
209 Āsvalāyana G.S., 3,4, etc.
210 The Cult of Brahmā, 1957, PP. 184-186.
in the pre-vedic days when religion and magic were inseparably connected, there were various forms of Rātra cults in which the gods worshipped were Water, Earth, Fire, Air and Ether. Some worshipped any one or two and so on of these, regarded as creators of the world. The worshippers of Earth gave rise to the worship of the Mother goddess and later on to the Śākta or Tantric religion. Gradually these religions gave rise to the idea of a single creator - Brahmā. The old god of the water, Worshippers was perhaps known as Nārāyana and he was now identified with Brhmā. The worship of Dharma, Siva, Sūrya and other minor gods was also gradually assimilated by the Brahmā cult. The srāddha cult was also thus amalgamated. It is probable that the worship of the gods known to the early vedas also existed in the pre-vedic period. Besides the god or a goddess of Earth, even a Water - god, a Fire god (pre-vedic Agni), a Wind god, and Vyoma were worshipped. They were the Rātra gods. But, for reasons, now unknown, gradually the cult of sacrifices arose in India and many of the old gods were incorporated in the vedas, but their worship was to be performed in the form of sacrifice. Hence followed a great religious schism, the vedic people forming one group and the worshippers of the old Brahmā (Rātra gods) continued their worship in the old method. The vedic gods were called Divā (from which arose the world
'Deva') and the gods of Brahmā cult were known as 'Rātra' gods - which was symbolised as the struggle between Devas and Asuras. The Brahma or Rātra cults were for a long time regarded as Ashura or non-orthodox in character chiefly followed by the lower class people in some parts of India. But even then the old religions gradually changed the character of the vedic religion. In eastern parts of India, from Brahmāvarta and Kurukṣetra to Crissa, where the vedic cult spread gradually and slowly, the majority of the people followed the Brahma cult. In the north-west the great personality of Krishna Vāsudeva gave rise to the Vaishnava Vāsudeva Pañcaratra cult. In Eastern India arose Jainism and Buddhism which gave a death blow to both the vedic and the non-vedic cults, including that of Brahmā. But Buddhism fell a prey to the old religions and Vaishnavism became the predominant religion. Along with that arose the worship of Śiva, Śakti goddesses, Sun and other gods, which gave rise to the modern form of Hindūism. The Vaishnava religion assumed the form of the Bhāgavata-Pañcarātra religion, and the religions sects arose out of the five gods of the old Brahmā cult. But Brahmā totally disappeared. Thus we find Krishna being called 'Śagwān' himself or Nārāyana or Śiva. The vedic sacrifices were forgotten. But the old beliefs in
image-worship, ancestor worship, free worship, sanctity of water, the old exclusiveness among the prehistoric sects in the form of the caste system, the sacred places of Brahma and Siva all survived in the Indian religions. The philosophy of the Ratra cult gave rise to the Samkhya, the vedic sacrifice, whose power was called Brahman (after Brahma) gave rise to the Upanisads and Vedanta philosophy. But the Samkhya was followed by all religious sects. Many problems of Indian philosophy, religions and art may thus be solved if further investigation is carried out about the Brahma-cult.

The Brahma-purana takes its name after Brahma who is its narrator. But the Brahma-purana does not give as high a position to Brahma as it has given to Visnu and Siva. The Brahma-purana describes him as follows:

He is called Swayambhu (I. 37.40). At the same time he is also said to have emerged from the navel-lotus of lord Visnu at the end of his Yogamidra (45.29-39). Again, it is said that the cause which is Aavyaka, Mitya and Sadasad and which is called Pradhana, from it the lord created a Purusa who created the world. He is Brahma. He is then called Adya, Suskrsma and lord of the world (1.27). From him he created the waters first and from it the Virya was created, from the waters an egg emerged which was of golden
colour and in it Brahma created himself. After living there, lord Brahma divided the egg into two parts, viz. sky and earth and in between them he created the sky. The whole earth was surrounded by the waters. Then he created Kāla, Manas, Vācā, Kāma, Krodha and Rati. Then he created the seven Mānas-Sons, Marīci, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha. Then he created Rudra out of his anger. Then he created Sanatkumāra and Skanda. After that he created lightening, clouds, rainbow and birds. After that he created Ṛṣis, Yajus, Śaivas, and Śādyas. Then Brahma divided his body into two parts, one half constituting the female form. Both together created all the beings (I.33-52). From that time onwards, the sexual intercourse between man and woman has started (45.22-39, A.161). Mythological and theosophic notions inherited from the vedic period have been combined with notions of later origin - genealogic legends, the evolutionary system of Sāṁkhyā and the scheme of the ages of the world - in order to give a rational theory of the origin and development of the world in harmony with the teaching of the vedas.211

It appears that some numbers were looked upon as having a special significance and it is probable that the

211 ERE., Vol. IV, P. 1536.
fancy ascribing various numbers of hands and heads to the
gods was a result of such belief. Brahma is also said to
have four heads and hence the epithet Chaturmukha is applied
to him (26.31). But the Brahma-purana also alludes to the
fifth head of Brahma which was cut off by lord Siva.212 It
has been stated that Brahma having five heads perhaps refers
to a mixed form of Brahma-Siva. The story of Siva's
Brahmasiraschedaka murti also refers to Siva's cutting off
the fifth head of Brahma. Siva's epithet Kapalahasta
(39.7) probably refers to his cutting off the head of Brahma
and holding it in his hand. The figure at Bodhagaya of
Dharma or Champesa of the Pāla period may also be that of a
mixed god of this type.213 He is called Hiranyavarna (I.40).
He is always surrounded by gods, danavas, gandharvas, yaksas,
Vidyādharas, uragas, munis, siddhas and nymphs (26.31).
His lustre cannot be measured (I.24). He is also called
Padmakesarasamakaśa (45.29). Besides the seven Manasa-sons
referred to above, he had five daughters, Savitri, Gayatri,
Sraddhā, Medhā and Saraswati (102.1,2). As regards his
rising from the navel-lotus, there is a myth in the Taittiriya Āranyaka214 which relates that, when the universe was

212 113.3; cf. also Matsya P. III. 39.40.
214 T.A. I. XXIII. I.
still fluid, Prajapati alone was produced on a lotus-leaf. He is called Adideva (9.24), Jagannatha, Jagadyoni, Jagatpati, Jagadvandya, Jagadadhara and Isvara (26.31). He is Sanatana (9.24,25), Avyaya, lord of the worlds and Pancha-bhutasanayuktta (45,30). He is the knowær of past, present and future.

The Maya form of Brahma is aja and is red and black in colour. She keeps her hair loose. Kama constitutes her nature. She infatuates the three worlds. She is called Mahesvari and Mahamaya and is very proud of her greatness (134,6,10).

The main function of Brahma is creation. By mental powers, he created the sage Atri, Yoni-Bhutas, Sthula-bhutas, Suksmabhutas, all the four types of beings, Maricas, sages, gods, pitrs, Yakshas, Vidyadharas, rivers, men, monkeys, lions, birds, Jarayujas, andajas, Svedadas, udbhijas, Brahmanas, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas, Sudras, Antyajas, Mlecchas, trna, gulma and ants (45,29-39).

The Brahma puraæa describes Brahma in the capacity of a bestower of boons. Thus Brahma granted a boon to Bali that he would be a great yogin and that no one would equal

215 122.53; cf. Ram. 7.54.32.
to him in strength (13.32-34). When Parvati practised penance, Brahma granted her a boon that she would get a husband of her desire (34.98). At the same time, Brahma was unable to tolerate injustice and cursed the deserving. Thus when Saraswati enjoyed with Pururava for many years without Brahma's knowledge, he cursed her that she would be a river in the Mātyuloka and would be seen at some places and would not be seen at other places (A.101). Many a times, Brahma helped the other gods and the sages. Thus in the Svayamvara of Uma, Brahma came with the retinue of yogins and Siddhas and performed the rites of marriage of Siva with Uma (36.4, 134,135). Again, when the Moon refused to give back Tara to Brhaspati, Brahma meddled in the matter and brought the reconciliation (9.24,25). Elsewhere it is said that Brahma took the form of a maiden and infatuated the demons who obstructed the sacrifice (134.5). The relation of Brahma with Viṣṇu is noteworthy. At the beginning of a kalpa, when many demons wanted to kill Brahma, he prayed lord Viṣṇu and killed the demons (A.156). Elsewhere it is said that Brahma was dependent on Viṣṇu (I.24) and that at the end of a kalpa, all the gods with Brahma enter into Nārāyaṇa (5.61).

The Br. P., further, relates some disgraceful episodes about him.
During the later epic, his superiority is set aside in favour of Visnu or Siva and the temples of Brahma are now very few and far between the most well-known being that at Puskara. There is a temple of Brahma in the Idar State and another at Sadhi in the Padra district of the Baroda State.  

SUN

Solar worship has been described as the real religion of India. As India is a land flooded with Sunshine and as every phase and function of life is dependent upon the kindly warmth of the Sun and his destructive power is felt in the uttermost extremes of heat, it should be man's primary business to win his favour and placate his wrath.

Sūrya as the orb seen in the sky is a vedic deity. He is the most concrete of the solar deities, his connection with the luminary never being lost sight of. He is called the lord of eyes; and beholds all the beings and their good and bad deeds. He is the father of Asvins and of Yama and Manu. Sun was worshipped as Sūrya, Mitra, 

221 Kane P.V., Hist. of Dh.S., Vol.II. II, P.724.
222 ERE., Vol. 12, P. 83.
223 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P. 30.
224 Av. 5.24.9
225 Rv. 1.50.7; 6.51.2; 7.60.2; 61.1, 63.1.4.
226 Rv. 10.17.2
227 Rv. 10, 14.5, 17.1.
stories about lord Brahma. While performing the marriage rites of lord Siva, the virile-semon of Brahma fell on seeing lord Siva touch the thumb of Parvati for the performance of marriage rite and from it the Vālakhilyas were created. Brahma was abashed but lord Siva gave him a water-pot consisting of holy waters for expiation (A.72). Another story relates how Brahma grew passionate for his eldest daughter and followed her in the form of a deer when she was running away in the form of a female deer. Lord Siva took the form of a hunter and threatened to kill Brahma. Thereupon Brahma refrained from following her (A.102). A similar myth is told in Rv.216 and is several times referred to in the Brāhmanas.217 The basis of this myth seems to be two passages of the Rv.218 in which the incest of a father with his daughter is referred to and an archer is mentioned.219 Another myth relates how when a dispute arose between Brahma and Visnu regarding their superiority over each other, Brahma spoke lie with his fifth head that he had seen the end of the Jyotirmaya linga of lord Siva (A.135).

216 Rv. 10.61.
217 Aiterereya Br. 3.33; Satapatha Br. 1. 7.4, Pañcavimsa Br. 8,2.10.
218 I.71.5; 10.61. 5-7.
219 Bergaigne, La Religion Vedique, 2,169; Oldenberg, sacred books of the East,46,78, f.
Savitṛ, and Pusan in Vedas. Though, all of them represented basically the same phenomenon, yet they were considered to be distinct deities as their concepts revealed different powers of the Sun. Especially, he is reverenced as Savitṛ, the giver and sustainer of life, who each morning awakes the universe and men from sleep. Another is Mitra, in perhaps the most ancient cult of all, which he is associated as a member with an early triad, symbolised by the sacred syllable Om, the triad being Agni, Vāyu and Mitra. He is involved also as Pusan, the guardian and preserver of the cattle, the companion of travellers, and guide of the soul on its perilous way to the lower world. In later times these several Sun-gods were merged in one and he continued to be worshipped as a Sun-god even after the rise of the supreme gods.

In Rv.228 and the Kausitaki Brahmana upanisad,229 he is prayed for the removal of sins. Āsvalāyana230 insists upon reciting the Gayatri at the time of worshipping the Sun. Even at present, every religious Hindu begins his day with the recitation of Gayatri. Khādira231 228 (VII, 60.1; 62.2) 229 II.7 230 III.7.4-6. 231 IV. 1.14 & 23.
prescribes the adoration of Sun for the enjoyment of riches and for the attainment of fame. In the seventh century, Mayūra prayed lord Śiva with 100 stanzas and in the eighth century, Bhavabhūti eulogised lord Sun in his Mālatīmādhava. Thus the Sun has been adored since the vedic times for the removal of sins and the bestowed of riches, & food, fame, health and other blessings.232

In the mythology Sūrya is the son of Dyaus, the wide spreading sky but according to the Brahma-purāṇa, he is the son of Aditi and a myth is related regarding his birth and how he came to possess the name Mārtanda. Aditi gave birth to gods but the Daityas, Dānavas, the sons of her co-wives Diti and Danu, troubled them. Therefore, she prayed lord Sun and requested him to be her son. During the period of pregnancy, she observed several vratas. Her husband scolded her saying that she was killing the child by observing fasts. At that very time, she gave birth to a child and the divine speech declared that as Kasyapa had charged Aditi with the words 'Tvāya Māritam Aṇḍam' the child would be known as Mārtanda (32.9-45). In the fight with the daityas, they were burnt by the Sun's

rays and the gods obtained their sacrificial share and Sūrya is also said to have enlivened Sampāti and Jatāyu, the sons of Aruna and Garuda, when they burnt their wings while going near the Sun (A.166).

Another myth is related about the family of the Sun. Viśvakarman, who is regarded as Prajāpati, gave his daughter Samjñā to the Sun for wife. She bore him two sons Mapu Vaivasvata and Yama and one daughter Yamunā. Now the splendour of the Sun was so great that Samjñā could not bear to look on him. She, therefore, substituted for herself 'Chāyā' her shadow, and thus deceiving her husband, she went to her father's house, but as Viśvakarman was determined to send her back to her husband, she fled in the shape of a mare to the Uttarakurus. Meanwhile Chāyā bore to the Sun two sons, Sāvarṇī and the Planet Saturn, and a daughter the river goddess Tapatī also called Vistī. Chāyā preferred her own children to those of Samjñā and thus the Sun detected the fraud committed by his wife. He went to Viśvakarman and asked him to reduce his splendour so that Samjñā (also called Uṣā) might bear his light. Viśvakarman, therefore, put him on his lathe and pared down the body of the Sun. The Sun, learning from Viśvakarman, the retreat of his wife, went in the shape of a horse to the land of the Uttarakurus. There he met Samjñā and from their nostrils were produced the two
Asvins (A.6, 32.49-81, A.89). These and other myths are related in other works.

In the Brahma purāṇa, he is described as follows: Lord Śūrya shines on a white lotus (28.30). The association of the Sun with the lotus seems to rest upon the natural observation that the flower opened when the Sun rose and closed at Sunset, so as to suggest to the primitive mind the idea that the flower might be the residence of the Sun during its nocturnal passage through the under world, or that it might be the revivifier, resurrector, or regenerator of the fresh or refreshed Sun of the next day. His eyes are yellow (28.30) and he is decorated with ornaments and is very beautiful (28.31) and he has two hands and his complexion is red. His clothes are like a red lotus (28.30).

Further it is said that he is worshipped by 108 names. Some of them are Śūrya, Aryāṇa, Bhaga, Tvāsta, Puṣan, Arka, Savitā, Ravi, Gabhastimān, Aja, Kalā, Mrtyu, Dhātā, Prabhākara, Prthvī, Āpa, Tejas, Kha, Vāyu, Soma, Brhaspati, Sukra, Budha, Angāraka, Indra, Vivasvān, Diptāṃśu, Suci, Sauri, Samjñāścara, Brahmā, Vīṣṇu, Rudra, Skanda.

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233 Mbh. Adi Parva 66-27, 67-35; Bhāg., 6.6.2-13; Harivamsā 1-9, Viṣṇu 3-2, Varāha 20; Vāyu 84; Padma 5-2; Nāṣya 11, 124; Mbh. Vanāparva 164, Anudāsana 145.

234 ERE., Vol.8.
Vaisravana, Yama, Vaidyuta, Agni, Jāṭharāgni, Aīndhana, Tejahpati, Dharmadhvaja, Vedakartā, Vedāṅga, Vedavāhana,
all Kṛta, Treta, Dvāpara, Kali, the resort of the Gods, Kalā, Kāstha, Muhurtā, Kaśpa, Yama, Kaśmā, Samvartakakara, Aśvattha,
Kālacakra, Vibhāvasu, Puruṣa, Śāṣvata, Yogī, Vyakta as well as avyakta, Sanātana, Kālādhyakṣa, Prajāhyakṣa, Visvakarmā,
Tamonuda - the remover of darkness, Varuṇa, Sāgara, Aṃśa,
Jimūta, Jīvana, Aṛihā, Bhūtāśraya, Bhūtāpati, bowed down by all the worlds, creator, devourer of all the things, Alolupa - one who has no temptations (This is an epithet of Śiva applied to Sun),
225 Ananta, Kapila, Bhūnu, Kāmada, Sarvatomukha, Jaya, Viśāla, Varada, Sarvabhūtaniserīvita, Mana, Suparna, Bhūtādi, Sighraga, Prāṇadhāraṇa, Dhanvantari, Dhūnaketu, Ādideva, Aditiputra, Dwādāṣṭma, Ravi, Dakṣa,
Pitā, Mātā, Pitāmaha, means of getting heaven, progeny and liberation, Trivistapa, Devakartā, Praśāntātmā, Visvātma,
Visvatomukha, Carācarātma, Sūkṣmātma, Maitreya and merciful (33.34-45). One who recites these names gets the desired results (33.48-49).

There are twelve general names of the lord Sun, viz. Āditya, Savitā, Sūrya, Mihira, Arka, Prabhākara, Mārtanda,
Bhūskara, Bhūnu, Citrabhūnu, Divākara and Ravi (31.15,16).

235 Hopkins, Epic Mythology.
Sūrya possesses twelve names for each of the months of the year, viz, Viṣṇu, Dhātā, Bhaga, Pūsan, Mitra, Indra, Varuṇa, Aryamā, Vivasvān, Aṃśuman, Tvāṣṭā, and Parjanya (31,17) and it is said that Viṣṇu shines in Caitra, Aryamā in Vaiśākha, Vivasvān in Jyēṣṭha, Aṃśuman in Āṣāḍha, Parjanya in Śrāvana, Varuṇa in Prauṣṭha, Indra in Āśvāyuṇa, Dhātā in Kartika, Mitra in Mārgaśīrṣa, Pūsan in Pausa, Bhaga in Māgha and Tvāṣṭā in Phaḷgūn (31.19-21). Another list of 21 names is given reciting which one gets freedom from sins, and it bestows health, wealth and prosperity (31.34-35). The names are Vikartana, Vivasvān, Mārtanda, Bhāskara, Ravi, Lokaprapakāsa, Sṛīmān, Lokacaksu, Mahaśvāra, Lokasāksi, Trilokesa, Karta, Harta, Tamisrahā, Tāpana, Tapana, Suci, Saptasnaavahana, Gabhastihasta, Brahma and one who is bowed down by all the gods (31.31-33). The derivation of the word Vivasvān is given in the Satapatha-Brāhmaṇa where it is said that Āditya Vivasvāt illuminates (vi-vaste) night and day. Vivasvān goes back to the Indo-Iranian period being identified with Vivanhvant, or the father of Yama.

After creating the Prajāpatis and other beings, the lord Sun divided himself into the forms of twelve Ādityas. The form known as Indra destroys the enemies of gods. Dhātā is a Prajāpati and creates various beings. Parjanya resides
in clouds and showers rain. Tvasța resides in vegetables and herbs. Pūsan stays in food, Aryama in all the deities, Bhaga in all the beings, Vivasvān resides in fire and helps the digestion of food. Viṣṇu tāṁ destroys the enemies of gods. Amśumān gives happiness to all by residing in Vāyu. Varuṇa resides in waters and maintains all the beings. Mitra practices penance for the welfare of all. The Sun pervades the whole earth by his twelve forms (30.24-39).

Some philosophical epithets are applied to him. He is without beginning and without end. He is eternal, indestructible, dhāta and vidhāta (30.8-11). He is the Ātman of all, the lord of all the beings, the basic essence of the three worlds, the Prajāpati and the highest deity (31.3). He has a form which is nitya, endowed with knowledge, acintya, avijñeya, Akṣeya, Avyaya, anādi and ananta. It is beyond sacrifices, beyond vedas and beyond the worlds (33.19-21). He is the creator, maintainer and destroyer of the worlds. He is called Kāla and his nature is constituted by the rivers, mountains, oceans, lightening, rainbow, pralaya, creation, the things manifested as well as not manifested (33.12-13). He is the Ātman of all the moving and non-moving beings (110.220-221).
Functions

He pours the rain, maintains the beings, gives light to the world, measures time and divides the seasons (31.4-9).

In different seasons, the Sun shines by different colours. In spring, it is Kapila, in Grīśma, it is golden, in rainy season, it is white; in Autumn, it is yellow, in Hemanta, it is red like copper, in Śidra it is red (31.12,13).

The different forms of Sun have different numbers of rays. Thus it is said that Viṣṇu shines with 1,200 rays, Aryama with 1,300 rays, Vivasvān with 1,400 rays, Aṃśumān with 1,500 rays, Parjanya with 1,400 rays, Varuṇa with 1,300 rays, Tvāstā with 1,100 rays, Indra with 1,200 rays, Dhātā with 1,100 rays, Mitra with 1,000 rays, and Puṣan with 900 rays (31.22-26).

He is higher than the gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Since they are known through vedas whereas the lord Sun is directly perceptible (30.19). There is no god higher than him (30.7). He is the first cause of all the beings. He is Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, Vāyu, Indra, Soma, Vivasvān and Varuṇa (33.11). Rākṣas and Yajas and Sāmans constitute his form and he is also known by the name Om (32.15,16). He is
the life of all the beings, gods, gandharvas, rāksasas, sages, kinnaras, siddhas, uragas and birds (33.10).

It is said that the form of the Sun known as Mitra is indestructible, unmodified, manifested as well as unmanifested, and eternal. It is the upholder of the world and the highest abode. It is birthless. The past, the present and the future are established in him. It is the father and mother of all the beings (30.41-43). Mihira is the Sanskritised form of the Persian Mihr, which is a corruption of Mithra, the avestic form of the Vedic Mitra. The cult of Mihira had originated in Persia and it extended itself unto Asia minor and even Rome and the proselytising energy which characterised its first adherents must have led to its extension towards the east also and of this extension the figure of Mihira on a coin of Kaniska is an evidence.  

Bhandarkar opines that there were six classes of the devotees of Sūrya who interpreted the Vedic hymns as setting forth the greatness and the supremacy of the lord Sun. These sects were devoid of any trace of the foreign influence but from the early centuries of the Christian era such an influence contributed to the growth of the Sun-worship in northern India. In the Brhat Samhita (60.19), Varahamihira

expressly tells that the installation and consceration of the images and temples of the Sun should be caused to be made by the Magas which shows that the Magas were the special priests of the Sun-god. There is a legend in the Bhavisya-purāna (Ch.139) which relates how Samba brought Magas from Sākadvīpa and installed them as priests of the temples he had constructed in honour of Sun. A reference to Sāmba and Magas is found in an inscription at Govindapur in the Gayā district dated Saka 1509 = 1137-38 A.D. and in Rajputana and other provinces, the brahmins of that name are found.237 These Magas are the Magi of the ancient Persia and Albánī speaks of the Persian priests Magas existing in India.238 As the Indians had been familiar with the foreigners Sākas since the 2nd or the 3rd century B.C., the idea of associating Magas with Sākadvīpa must have arisen as they too were foreigners like the Sākas.239 Thus the worship of the Sun was brought into India by the old Persian priests Magi but at whose instance and under what circumstances it is difficult to say. The story of Sāmba was prevalent in the first half of the 12th century.

Bhandarkar makes a survey of all the records available on Sun-worship and opines that the Mihira cult was introduced into India from Persia and the construction of temples is also a foreign influence and this cult is entirely different from the Saura systems. Gradually, the Magas were assimilated and hinduised by the new cult and became indistinguishable from the other Hindus and formed only a separate class.

The evidence of the copper plate grant of Harṣavardhana styling his father, grandfather and great grandfather as the great devotees of Āditya proves that the Sun-cult, probably made up of a mixture of the indigenous and foreign forms prevailed in the beginning of the sixth century and was professed by great princes.240 The Brahma purāṇa mentions Mihira (30.41-43) in the names of the Sun and emphasises the Mitra form of Sun (31.15).

Not many temples dedicated to Sun have survived. That at the konārka in Orissa is the best known and architecturally of the great interest. The Brahma purāṇa eulogises the worship of Koṇāditya in the holy temple of konārka situated in the Aundradesa on the northern shore of the Lavana ocean (A.28). It is, however, neglected and in ruins and

attracts no worshippers. There is another temple at Gayā and a small but much frequented shrine at Benaras where the fire-sacrifice is offered in honour of the Sun. 241

The Brahma purāṇa deals with Sun-worship in Chs. 28-33. Hazra has made a comparable study of the Saura upapurāṇas and states that many verses are found common to Brahma P., Sāmba P. and Bhavisya P. and it shows definitely that the Brahma P. borrowed these common verses from the Sāmba P. and that some of the verses of the Brahma P. originally belonged to some other source is shown by the fact that though in Brahma P., ch. 28 Brahma begins, at the request of sages, to describe the place of Konārka or Konāditya situated in Utkala on the northern shore of the salt-ocean, in chs. 29-33 he is found to describe Mitravanā situated on the bank of the Candrasarit mostly in the same verses as found in the Sāmba P. and the Bhavisya P., no mention being made by him of Konāditya, of Utkala, or of the ocean in the chapters. 242

For the mode of Sun-worship, refer to the section on 'Worship' of chapter VII on 'Religion'.

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241 EM, Vol. XII, P. 34.

242 Hazra R.C., Studies in the upapurāṇas, Vol. I.
At the present day worship is performed in honour of Suraj Nārāyaṇa. All pious Hindus revere the rising Sun, and he is invoked when the pilgrim bathes in the sacred rivers and at other domestic rites.

**INDRA**

*Indra* is the favourite national god of the Vedic Indians. He is celebrated in 250 hymns. As the name, which dates from the Indo-Iranian period and is of uncertain meaning, does not designate any phenomenon of nature, the figure of Indra has become very anthropomorphic and much surrounded by mythological imagery, more so than that of any other god in the Veda. He is primarily the thunder-god, the conquest of the demons of draught or darkness and the consequent liberation of the waters or the winning of light forming its mythological essence.\(^{243}\)

By the time of purāṇas, the importance of Indra waned and in the Brahma-Purāṇa he is a deity of secondary importance constantly searching the help of either lord Viṣṇu, Śiva, Brahma or some great sage in order to ensure safely from the demons and other forces.

*He has thousand eyes and a beautiful form.* He

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\(^{243}\) Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, P. 54.
wears a necklace and mounts the famous elephant Airāvata (36.8-10). Saci sits by his side and Jayanta adorns his lap (140.6-4). In the Svayamvara of Umā, he comes with great pomp (36.8-10). He is surrounded by gods and is praised by Siddhās and Saṉhyās. Apsarasas sing and dance and wave fans round him (140.6-8). He wields thunderbolt in his hand (124.5) and the thunderbolt is the weapon exclusively appropriate to Indra. He is called Sakra, Maghavān (10.20), Mahendra & Varada, Jīṣṇu (140.6-8), (124.5), Purāṇḍara (10.20), Vṛtraḥ, Namacihantā, Parambhettā and Gōtravid (124.5).

The court of 'hall' of Indra is the rendezvous of the other gods and this is called Saudharmā and by lord krāṇa's order Vāyu carrièd it to Dwārakā when Ugrasena was coronèd and at the end of the Yādava family, it was given back to Indra (115.14,15; 212.7). According to Hopkins the 'halls' is a late description in epics, a supposition favoured by other evidence of the same character regarding their inhabitants - perhaps a loan from the Jains, who have a heaven and gods called Saudharma.

Indra is the lord of clouds and waters and in order

245 Epic Mythology, P. 38.
to please him, the Indrotsava was celebrated. He protected the sacrifice of Dakśa (A.108,109).

Many anecdotes are related about Indra in the Brahmapurāṇa. He killed the demon Namuci by the foam of the ocean (A.124). He was thrice deprived of his throne once on account of the sin of killing Vṛtra, next for the sin of killing Sindhusena and thirdly when he seduced Ahalyā in the garb of the sage Gautama. The sage Gautama cursed Indra to have a thousand signs of female organ on his body but on being prayed by Indra, the thousand signs turned into the form of eyes and hence he was called Sahasrākṣa (A.87). Indra asked lord kṛṣṇa to protect Arjuna who was a part of himself (A.188). He pierced the foetus of Diti into 49 pieces at the advice of the demon Maya and the Maruts were born from them. Thereupon Diti cursed him that he would be dethroned and would be defeated by a woman and the sage Agastya cursed him that he would have to show his back in the battle (A.124). Indra deceived Raịji by flattering him and thus deprived him of becoming the king of gods (A.11). There was a terrible fight between Indra and lord kṛṣṇa for the Pārijāta tree and consequently Indra had to give the tree to lord kṛṣṇa (A.188). By the killing of Vṛtra, Indras was

246 187.35-40; cf. also Indradhvaja ceremony in Kausikasūtra & Brhatārtika, Ch. 43.

247 122.49; also cf. Sādv. Br. i.1.19-20.
polluted with the heinous sin of Brahmanicide and he fled in great terror to the end of the world. There he entered water, and concealed himself in the fibre of a lotus. After many years, he was purified by the water of the river Gautami (A.26). In the Mbh. it is stated that Brhaspati cleansed him by a horse-sacrifice from the brahmahatya which was distributed amongst women, plants, etc.

In the Rgveda and the Brāhmaṇas there are innumerable stories which relate the intrigues of the gods with married women e.g. of Indra with the wife of Vṛṣaṇasva, with Apalā Atreyī, etc. The conduct of the gods is not here made a matter of reproach and adultery is not much considered from the ethical point of view. It is because the brahmin is in possession of the secret whereby he can inflict harm, that therefore, man must refrain from illicit intercourse with the wife of a brahmin. In the Brahma purāṇa, it is said that when the sage Gautama entered his hermitage when Indra was in the company of Ahālya, Gautama's wife, Indra out of the fear of the sage became a cat and was afterwards cursed by the sage (A.122)

248 V. 11 ff.
249 Rv. I.51.13, combined with Sātyāyana Brāhmaṇa by Sāyana, Sādvinsa Br. I.1.16; Maitrāyanīsamhitā ii.5.5
250 Rv. viii.31 & Sātyāyana Br. iv.1.15.
251 Sātapatha Br. XIV,9.4.11; Brhadāraṇyaka VI.4.12; Pāraskāra Grh.Sū.,I.11.6; Encycl. Vol.1, P.128.
Indra in the brahmanical mythology is the ruler of heaven and represents the kṣatrāya or warrior class. Indra is always afraid lest some saint should by severe austerities wrest his power from him, and when there is a danger of this kind, he sends one of the Apsaras, or heavenly nymph, to seduce the saint from his ascetic exercises. Thus the Brahma-purāṇa states that Indra sent the nymph Pramloca to disturb the penance of the sage Kandu (A.178). Still he is regarded as the powerful lord of heaven and the chief of the gods, but in comparison with the supreme gods - Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Siva - he, like the remaining gods, occupies but a second rank.

Though, there are no temples of Indra, at least in modern times, his images and niches dedicated to him are met with in temples of other gods and so he may be said to receive a kind of indirect worship.

ARJUNA

When the ancient gods ceased to appeal to the masses of the people in that form in which they were represented in the veda, the same god under a particular aspect became in some cases popular, and was hence regarded as a separate
god, demigod, or as a hero connected somehow with the original god. A popular godling, with functions similar to those of an ancient god, grew up as a kind of duplicate of the latter, or if he was not accepted as a god proper, he came, by the anthropomorphic influence of the epic poetry, to be regarded as a hero, whose resemblance to the ancient god was explained by the assumption that he was an incarnation of that deity.252

Thus, Arjuna is, in the Brahma purāṇa, represented as an incarnation of Indra and Indra personally requests lord kṛṣṇa to protect Arjuna as he was a part of his own self. He calls Arjuna a very brave personality and asks kṛṣṇa to take his help in his function of destroying the evil factors. Lord kṛṣṇa also ensures Arjuna's safety to Indra (183.40-46). According to the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa,253 Arjuna is a mystical name of Indra and he was according to Pāṇini254 worshipped just as Vāsudeva was. But Arjuna is one of the principle heroes of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and is intimately connected with Indra.

253 II, 1.2.11
254 IV, 3,98.
255 iii, 41 ff.
Further, it is related that before lord krṣṇa passed away from the world he had instructed Arjuna to take care of his wives, and to install his grandson Vajraṁabha on the throne (211.2). On the passing away of lord krṣṇa and Balarāma, Arjuna performed the funeral rites and installed Vajraṁabha on the throne. He then took the widows of lord krṣṇa with him and was passing with them through Paṇca-nada. Here he was confronted by the Ābhiras. They fought with him and defeated him. Arjuna to his great dismay found that he had lost his prowess and the skill of using his favourite bow Gāndiva. He found himself unable to save the widows of lord krṣṇa whom the Ābhiras successfully kidnapped. Deeply distressed by the catastrophe, he resorted to Vyāsa for consolation (212.1-12, 14-33).

MARUTS

In RV., there are said to be storm-gods, the sons of Rudra and Prśnī,256 also often called Rudras, a group of thrice seven or thrice sixty deities, the constant allies of Indra in his conflicts.257

In the Br. P. an anecdote is related regarding their birth. In the war between gods and daityas, when

256 1.39. 4.7; I. 23.10; AV. 5.21.11.
257 RV. 3.35.9; 6.17.11; I.165.11.
many sons of Diti had been slain, she asked her husband Kasýapa of a son who should kill Indra, and Kasýapa granted her request on the condition that she should strictly observe purity during the period of her pregnancy. Once, however, she slept without washing her feet (elsewhere it is said that she slept facing the north at the time of twilight), Indra availed himself of this opportunity, and entering Diti's womb, cut into seven pieces the child with which she was pregnant. When the seven parts began to weep, Indra asked them not to do so by the words 'Mā rodih' (elsewhere 'Mā ruta'), and again cut each piece into seven pieces; and hence they were called Maruts and became a troop of 49 gods. On seeing this Diti and the sage Agastya cursed Indra, and Kasýapa worshipped Siva who granted a boon that wherever Indra gets a share, the Maruts would be the first Partakers and that they would be the constant helpers of Indra and no one would be able to vanquish Indra when he is helped by the Maruts. **This and other anecdotes regarding** (3.110-123, 124.17-26). This and other anecdotes regarding Maruts are given in other works.

258 Rām. I.46 f., Bhāg. VI. 18.19, 23-27; VII.13.4; VI.10. 17, IX.2.23; 20.35-9; X.25.7; XI.6.2; II.3.8; VI.5.31; Brahmanda III.5. 79,90,99,104; III.7.20; 61.46; IV.2.27, 197; III.10.110; Matsya 6.47; 163.22-3; Ch.7.8.4; 9.29; 23.35; 36.1; 49.15; 25-30; 58.33; 132.3; 137.18, 172.14-44; 174.32; 191.117; 246-60; Vāyu 99.133-51.
YAMA

Yama in RV. is a deified hero and is considered to be the chief of dead. In RV., it is implied that he is a god though, however, expressly he is not called a god but only a king who rules the dead. In the Brahmanical mythology he has become the dreaded god of the nether world, the sovereign of the demons, and the regent of the south (24.4). He is the son of the Sun-god Vivasvat, brother of Manu and Yamunā (6.8). In the RV. it is said that his father is Vivasvat with whom Saranyu is mentioned as his mother. In the Brahma-purāṇa it is said that Samjñā or Usā was his mother (6.7, 89.3-5). Yama is many a times called by his patronymic Vaivasvata. The trait of Yama being called by his patronymic Vaivasvata is Indo-Iranian for in the Avesta Vivahavant, as the first man who pressed Soma, is said to have received Yama as a son in reward.

His vehicle is the bull (94,16). He is the guardian of the world (94.32). All men are afraid of him and practice brahmacharya due to his fear. Due to his fear

259 RV. 9.113; 10.14, 1a 94.4
260 RV. 10.14.5
261 RV. 10.17.1
263 Roth, ZDMG, 2, 213.
people behave properly, perform the religious rites, observe fasts, go to the forests, drink Soma, give annadāna and godāna and the mumuksus discuss the Brahmavāda (125.23,24).

Several myths are related regarding Yama in the Brahma purāṇa. It is said that as Chāyā who was replaced by Samjña, Yama's mother, preferred her own children to those of Samjña, Yama was unable to bear it and raised his foot to kick Chāyā but Chāyā cursed him that his foot would fall. When Yama explained the matter to his father, his father modified the curse by saying that though the foot might not fall down, it would be eaten by worms and insects (6.23-29).

Once on seeing the unhappy condition of a Yaisya family over the death of their child, Yama gave up his work of killing and practised penance but on the advice of Sun, he resumed his work (A.86). When Mṛtyu tried to take away the life of Śveta, a devotee of Śiva, he was killed and on hearing about his death, Yama was very angry and a terrible fight ensued between Yama and Nandi and Vināyaka and at the end Kārtikeya killed Yama. The gods Viṣṇu and others approached Śiva and Śiva enlivened him with condition that Yama would have no control over Śiva's devotees (A.94). Here Yama and Mṛtyu are distinguished and the superiority of Śiva over Yama is emphasised. Yama pacified the enmity between owls and
pigeons (A.125). His messengers fetch the souls of dying men and lead them to Yama's hell where Citragupta, the recorder, reads the account of their deeds, and the god sits in judgment upon them. The Brahma purāṇa provides a terrible description of Yama's hall and the way that leads to it (A.214,215). Many details about Yama are given in other works too.264

AGNI

In the Rgveda, he is the personification of the sacrificial fire. He is therefore the god of the priests and the priest of gods. The vedic conceptions of Agni are partly retained and occasionally revive in later mythology.

In Brahma purāṇa it is said that he is the husband of Svāhā. He is the enjoyer of sacrifices. He is the mouth of gods. He is the first god, takes the offerings to gods and is a messenger of gods. He is a means to perform the sacrifice and has a visible form. The deities enjoy

264 Rv. 10.14.5, 10.17.2, 10.10, 10.14.1, 58.1, 60.10, 164.2, 1.35.6, 10.155.4, 10.14.10, 10.135, AV.8.3.13, Kausitaki up. 4.15, Maitrayaniya 6.36, Brhadaranyaka 1.4.11, 3.9.21, Satapatha Br.2.2.4.2, Taittiriya 3.3.6.3, Harivamsa 1.9, Matsya 11.9.11, 12.17; Padma P. Sṛsti khaṇḍa 8; Vayu P. 2.22.82, Pātāla khaṇḍa 39; Bhaviṣya P. Brahma khaṇḍa 53; Skanda P. 2.4.11, 3.2.4, Yājñavalkyasmṛti 1.2.59, Anuśasana 161.76, Mitāksāra 3.2.55, Naiṣadha xii.17, XXII.205; XIX. 46,47.
the offerings through him. He resides within the body in the form of the bestower of food (125.15-17, 98.15). By the grace of other gods, Agni gained the power to go everywhere (49.17). He is called Jātavedas, Brhadbhānu, Saptārci, Milalohita, Jalagarthā, Samāgarbha, Yajñāgarbha, and Vibhāvasu (98.17-18), Hutasana, Havyāhana (128.16,17).

At the time when the gods were confronted by the danger of Tāraka, they sent Agni to lord Śiva to reveal the danger and as lord Śiva was in privacy with Pārvatī at that time, he threw the virile-semen into Agni who had arrived there in the form of a parrot and as Agni was unable to bear it, he threw it into Kṛttikās from which Kārtikeya was created and the remaining portion was thrown by Agni into his wife Svāhā from which the children Suvarnā and Suvarna were created who were married to Sankalpa and Dharmarāja respectively (128.1-28).

KAMADEVA

Originally Kāma is desire - not of sexual enjoyment only, but of good things in general, - and as a personification of desire he is invoked in AV.265 but in its another hymn,266 he is already conceived as the god of sexual love, in which function only he is known to later mythology.

265 Av. IX. 2
266 AV. III. 25.
Māyāvatī brought him up. The latter, however, was Rati, who had assumed the form of Māyāvatī in order to deceive the Asura, and thus to cause his destruction by Pradyumna. Eventually, Pradyumna kills Sambara and married Māyāvatī.267 These and other stories about Kāma are given in other works too.268 Apparently Pradyumna is but a variant of Kāma, or to be more accurate, a god of love popular in those tracks of India where the worship of kṛṣṇa prevailed.269 Kāma has also been identified with Māra, the tempter and devil of Buddhist legend; hence, in later Sanskrit, Māra becomes a synonym of Kāma.270 He is still the subject of a mystery play in South India.271

**SOMA**

Soma, as an intoxicating plant of N.W. India which was pressed and allowed to ferment (Skr. Su, 'Press', Soma 'the pressing'), is supposed to be the Asclepias acida or sarcostemma viminale, the expressed juice of which produces a peculiar astringent, narcotic, and intoxicating effect. As such it was regarded as a divine power, and as in Mexico

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267 A.200; Harivaṃśa 9263 ff.
268 Bhāgavata III.12.26; VIII.7.321 X.55; XI.4.7; Viṣṇu V.27-28; Matsya 154. 203-239; 7.13; 100,329; 261.53-6; 191.110; 3.33; 4.12-21; 23.23.
269 ERW. Vol. II, P.303.b
270 Ibid.
271 E. Thurston, Castes and tribes of S. India, iv, 399 ff.
and Peru the octri and similar intoxicating plants were deified, so in India and in Persia the Soma, identical with the Zarathushtrian haoma, was regarded as a god. Before the end of the Rv., the yellow plant became esoterically identified with the yellow swelling and water-cleansed Moon, and in some of the latest hymns of the Rv., there is no question that some means the Moon. From this time onwards Soma was thus used in two senses, either of the divine plant or of the Moon-god, until as in the epics, unless expressly the plant, the word Soma means the Moon.

In the Brahma purāṇa, Soma is considered to be the Moon and is the son of Atri. An interesting story is given regarding its birth. The sage Atri practised a penance called Amttara for 3,000 divine years. During that period, his virile-semen went on the upper side and came out of his eyes and it began to brighten the ten directions in the form of the Moon. When the Moon was thus falling, Brahmā sat him on his chariot and the sons of Brahmā as well as other sages began to pray him. Being pleased, he spread his lustre in all the directions for the welfare of the world and went round the world for 21 times. At that time from his lustre, corn and other things maintaining the world were created. Then the Moon practised penance for many
many years and lord Brahma got pleased with him and made him the king of herbs, seeds, water and brahmins (IX.1-12). Elsewhere it is said that he was made the king of sacrifices and penances (4.2). Then the Moon performed a Rajasuya in which he gave a daksina of lakhs of things. The nine goddesses Sinī, Kubā, Dviti, Pusti, Prabhū, Vasu, Kirti, Dhrīti and Lakṣmī attended him and he worshipped all the gods and sages (9.13-17). He was married to the 27 nakṣatras, daughters of Ṛakṣa, i.e. the 27 mansions of the Moon and their children are of immeasurable lustre (3.59). Elsewhere it is said that Soma married Ausadhis (A.119).

A disgraceful myth is related about Soma. He carried off Tārā, the wife of Ērhaspati, though Brahma bade him restore her to her husband. Usanas, the teacher of the Āsuras and the enemy of Ērhaspati, Rudra and Āṅgiras sided with Soma in the conflict between them and the gods. At last Soma was compelled to give up Tārā. After some time she gave birth to a boy whose parentage was doubtful; and she declared, when coerced, that he was the son of Soma. The boy was named Budha (the Planet Mercury), who afterwards married Ilā, daughter of Manu. Their son was Purūravas with whom lineage of lunar kings begins (9.13-36). Ērhaspati cursed the Moon to have a spot and a crooked form (152.27-29).
Soma is once said to be Amṛta, and the Br. P. states that one who takes a bath and gives dāna at Somatīrtha goes to heaven (119.19). An interesting story is related about Soma, the favourite drink of gods (A.105). Soma was in the possession of Gandharvas. The gods wanted it and so gave Saraswati to the Gandharvas and took the Soma from them. Afterward Saraswati also returned to the gods without the acknowledgement of the Gandharvas and the Brahma purāṇa lays down a rule that as Saraswati - the speech - had returned to the gods without the knowledge of the Gandharvas, whenever there is a sale of Soma, one has to speak slowly.

The moon plays an important part in the ancient belief about the life after death. The souls of the dead are supposed to go to the Moon, and assembling there cause her waxing. At full Moon, the Moon sends some spirits on to the world of Brahmā - Devayāna - and sends the rest as rain down to the earth to be born again - Pitṛyāna.274

Though, he was a deity of great holiness, he seems scarcely to have received popular worship as a separate god; at least no temples seem to have been dedicated to him.275

VIŚVAKARMA

Viśvakarman, 'all-creating', appears as the name of an independent deity, to whom two hymns\(^2\) of the last book of the Ṛgveda are addressed. In the Brāhmaṇas,\(^2\) Viśvakarman is expressly identified with the creator Prajāpati, while in post-vedic mythology he appears, doubtless owing to the name, as the artificer of the gods.

In the Brahma purāṇa, he is called the best among the architects (50.40-43). He constructed the idols of kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā, for the king Indradyumna (50.48). He protected the sacrifice of Dakṣa (108.19,20).

TVĀṢṬR

He is one of the obscurest members of the vedic pantheon.\(^3\) He is a skilful workman producing various objects showing the skill of an artificer.\(^3\) In the Brahma purāṇa he is said to have constructed the whole city of god for the sage Atri. He is there called the creator of beings, all-pervading and Viśvakarman (140.12-13). In the Rv. he is also the ancestor of the human race in so far

\(^{276}\) Rv. 10.81,82.
\(^{277}\) ŚB. 8.2.1.10; 3.13; AB 4.22.
\(^{278}\) Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.117.
\(^{279}\) Rv. I.85.9; 3.54.12.
as his daughter, Saranya, wife of Vivasvat, becomes the
mother of the primeval twins Yama and Yami.²⁸⁰ In the
Brahma-purāṇa, too, he assumes the role of a practical
father advising her daughter Samjñā to go back to her
husband Sūrya as she had left him on account of his unbear-
able lustre (6.16, 89.10). Eventually, Tvāstā pared the
Sun on his lathe and lessened his brilliance. He is there
called Prajāpati (6.39, 89.42).

ASVINS

Next to Indra, Agni and Soma, the twin deities
named the Asvins are the most prominent in the RV. and
though they hold a distinct position among the deities of
light and their appellation is Indian, their connection with
any definite phenomenon of light is so obscure, that their
original nature has been a puzzle to vedic interpreters
from the earliest times; and this obscurity makes it probable
that the origin of these gods is to be sought in a pre-
vedic period.²⁸¹

The Asvins have lost, in Brahmanical mythology,
whatever cosmical element they had in the hymns of the
Rgveda. They continue to be regarded as beautiful youths

²⁸⁰ 10.17.1.2, 5, 42.13.
²⁸¹ Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.49.
and physicians (6.44). The Br. P. relates an anecdote (6.41-45) regarding their birth from Sūrya and Samjña. Samjña was practising penance in the form of a mare in the Uttarakurus. Sūrya approached her in the form of a horse and from their nostrils were created the two Asvins hence called Nāsatyas (6.44). Another epithet applied to them is Āsra (6.44). In the Rgveda also the epithets Dasra 'wondrous' and nāsatya are applied to them the latter generally explained as 'not untrue' (Nāsatya), but other etymologies, such as the 'savers' have been proposed. These two epithets in later times became the separate proper names of the Asvins.

Elsewhere, it is stated that they were created in the river Godāvari from the mouths of Sūrya and Uṣā (89.36).

Sanaiscara

Sanaiscara is said to be the son of Sūrya and Chāyā (6.20, 89.14). Sanaiscara is said to have obtained the position of the Planet-Saturn (6.50). It is said that he killed the demons Asvattha and Pippala who troubled people in the form of brahmins (A.118). References to Sāni are met with in other works also.

282 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P. 49.

283 Visnudharmottara 1.106; Kālikā 18; Skanda 5.2.50; Mārkandeya 105.25; Padma P. Uttarā khaṇḍa 33.
VARUNA

Varuna is the greatest of the Vedic gods besides Indra. He dates from an early period, for in name he is probably identical with the Greek O Ἱππας, and in character he is allied to the Avestic Ahura Mazda. In Veda, he is the chief upholder of the moral and physical order. With the development of Prajāpati as creator and supreme god in the later Vedas, the importance of Varuna waned, till in the post-Vedic period he retained only the dominion of the waters as god of the sea.

In the Brahma-purāṇa he is said to be the lord of waters and his daughter was married to king Janaka. He seems to be a great philosopher and gave a discourse on the comparative superiority of enjoyment and liberation to king Janaka and Yājñavalkya (A.88). His constant association with Mitra in RV. is not much alluded to in the post-Vedic mythology but in the Br. P. it is stated that Manyu performed a sacrifice with a view to obtain a son and offered an oblation in the name of Mitrāvaruna and from their amsa, a maiden Ila arose from the sacrifice who married Budha and propagated the lunar race (7.3-6). The Brahma purāṇa relates an interesting story how on account of the fear of

284 RV. 8.42.1, 7.61.4, 5.62.1.
the daitya Mahāśani, Indra agrees to serve Varuṇa. A
demon Mahāśani defeated Indra and started to conquer Varuṇa
but Varuṇa gave him his daughter Vāruṇī and saved himself.
Being requested by Varuṇa he released Indra on condition that
thenceforth Indra should be ready to serve Varuṇa (A.129).
Elsewhere Vāruṇī is said to be the goddess of wine and
Varuṇa advises her to go to Balarāma whose favourite drink
was wine and who after drinking her snatched the river
Yamunā with his plough. There she is addressed as Madirā
and as one which the beloved/all the times (198,1-5).
Varuṇa possesses a miraculous umbrella which pours the rain
and the Br. P. states that it was in the possession of the
demon Nāraka. Kṛṣṇa killed him and got the umbrella (202,
10,34). He is called a king (38,9) an epithet frequently
applied in the Rv.285 and it is said that Varuṇa sent a
garland of unfading flowers to Balarāma(198,16).

VAYU

Vāyu, the god of wind, is not a prominent deity
in the Rgveda, and under his more anthropomorphic form, he
is chiefly associated with Indra. Since the invisible.
element of wind does not lend easily itself to anthropomor-
phism, scarcely any myths are told of Vāyu; nor did the god

285 \[24,7,8, 10,132,4, 2,27,10, 5,85,3, 7,87,6.\]
receive popular worship. In the Br.P., It is said that on being asked by Kṛṣṇa, he brought the 'Śudharmā Sabhā' from Indra for the king Ugrasena (194.14-17).

**HANUMĀN**

With the monkey-god Hanumān, India claims to be the chief home of the cult of monkeys. It has been argued that this cult is not primitive, but has been borrowed from some wild tribe; and this conclusion is based on the fact that there are no traces of worship of the monkey in the Veda, same so far as Vṛṣākapī may be regarded as the object of such.

In the Brahma purāṇa, he is said to be the son of Vāyu (157.22). Ramachandra calls him as his brother and asks him to dispose of the Śivalinga established by him (157.11.22). Elsewhere it is said that Hanumān was the son of Vāyu and Anjanā who was the wife of the monkey Kesari and who by her best limb also was a monkey originally. She was a nymph but through the effect of a curse she was deformed. Hanumān takes her to the river Godāvari and she gets her original form (84.2,3,17). There Hanumān is called Vṛṣākapī.

286 Rv. X.96.

287 cf. the conflicting views of Bergaigne, Religion védique, i. 270-272; Oldenberg, Religion des veda, 172-174; Geldner, Vedische studien, ii.22-42; Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie, iii 278.
NANDI

Nandi, the divine bull, is the vehicle of lord Siva and his idol is always placed facing lord Siva in the temples constructed in the honour of lord Siva. In the Brahma purāṇa, it is stated that he carried away the divine cows but on being asked by the gods, he returned her to them (91.6-9).

KUBERA

Kubera is mentioned in the Atharvaveda as chief of the 'good people' (Puñyajana), or other people (itarajana) and as concerned with concealment. In the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa and in later vedic texts he is mentioned as king of the Rākṣasas, and in the Taittiriya Āranyaka (1.316) he is mentioned as the lord of wishes and as possessor of a wonderful car(apparently the later Puspaka). In later mythology, he is the king of the Yakṣas as well as of the Kinnaras and Guhyakas, while the Rakṣasas are the subjects of his half-brother, Rāvana.

According to Brahma purāṇa, he is the son of Viśravas, grandson of Pulastya, Prajāpati's son (97.2,15). It is said that Viśravas had two wives, by the former he had one son, Kubera; the latter was a Rākṣasi, and by her
he had three sons, viz. Rāvana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhīsana. Kubera was the lord of Lanka and possessed the aeroplane which was given to him by lord Brahma, but being advised by the mother, Rāvana fought with Kubera, defeated him and expelled him from Lanka, made it his own capital. Kubera, then by the advice of Pulastya, went to the river Gautamī and worshipped lord Śiva, and obtained from him the boon of being the lord of treasures (A.97). References to Kubera are met with in other works also.288

SAGARA

He is the god of sea, the lord of rivers and jewels. The mountains, demons and nectar are held by him. Lord Viṣṇu resides with Laxmī in the ocean and nothing is impossible for him (172.6,7,9,10). It is said in the Brahma-purāṇa that the river Ganges divided herself into seven parts and merged in the ocean (172.18).

GODDESSES

The Brahma-purāṇa does not propagate Sāktism as a cult but it eulogises Pārvatī; and refers to Laks̄mī, 288 Bhāgavata IX.2.32-33; IV.1.37; 11.83; X.50-56,1.9.3, IV.12.1-9, Vāyu 40.8, 47.1, 70.38, 97.2, 69.196, 70.41; Brahmāṇḍa II.13.1-2, 35.94, 36.218, III.7.254 & 331, 8.44, 72.2, IV.15.32; Matsya 121.2-3, 137.32, 148.84, 150.50-102, 152.179, 180.62, 47.30, 55.32, 189.4,11, 191.85, 261.20.2, 133.53; 138.25, 140.41, Moh. Vana 275, 276; Udyoga 136; Śalya 48,47; Śabha 10, Rāmāyaṇa Aranya 15.22; Uttarakanda 13; 15; Devī Bhāgavata 12.16; Padma Śvarga 16; 3; Bhavisya Brahma 124.
Saraswati, Ausadhis, Matrs, Yogamayā, Suvarna, Aditi, Subhadra, Virajā, Mātā and other goddesses. It deals at great length with the river-goddess Godāvari.

In the vedic literature down to the Grhyasūtras no female goddess of predominant power is mentioned. Such names as Rudrāṇi and Bhavāṇi are available but they do not show a belief in the existence of an independent powerful goddess. But we see that one whole hymn is addressed to Durgā in the Mbh. which shows that at the time when it was inserted in the Mbh., Durgā had acquired an importance of a powerful goddess. In the Br. P., it is said that Śakti is the mother of Brahmā, Viṣṇu & Mahēṣa (131.47).

PĀRVATĪ

Siva's consort Rudrāṇi or Mrdāṇī is known by many names as Devī, Umā, Gaurī, Pārvatī, Durgā, Bhavāṇi, Kālī, Kāpālinī, Gāmundā and others. She is a very prominent figure in the classical mythology.

According to the Br. P., Pārvatī, in her former birth, was the eldest among the eight daughters of Dakṣa,

289 Bhīşmaparvan, ch. 23.
and was known as Satī. She was married to Tryambaka and when her father did not invite her husband to his sacrifice, she felt insult and threw herself in the fire and died. 390 Himalaya practised severe penance and obtained Satī as his daughter. As she observed several fasts, Menākā tried to avert her by the word 'U mā' and thenceforth she was known as Umā. 391 She practised severe penance in order to attain Śiva as a husband. Once lord Śiva took an ugly form and appeared before her but she knew his identity through yogic powers and welcomed him (35.1-7). Lord Śiva created an illusion before Pārvatī of a child struggling to be released from an alligator. The alligator agreed to release the child on the condition that she should give the merit of her penance to him. When Pārvatī expressed her willingness to do so, the alligator released the child and showed her his real form (35.35-61). The Svayamvarta of Umā with Śiva was celebrated with great pomp and all the gods had participated in it (A.36, A.72). Śiva's wooing and wedding of Pārvatī and their conjugal life and conversation are often introduced and often narrated at great length, yet always in wholly human fashion.

390 34.9-26; 109.1-11; Padma srṣṭi Khanda 29, 5; Siva P. Sataradriya Samhitā 3, 25; Bhāgavata Sk. 4, A.5; Devī Bhāgavata 7-30, Skanda 6.77; Vāyu 1.30; Kālikā 18; Naisadha IV. 45.
391 34.78-98, Brahmanda III.19.2-13; Vāyu 72.7,11-2.
In the Brahma-purāṇa, lord Śiva himself eulogises Pārvatī. It is said that when the evil factors like sin, greediness, poverty, moha and other worldly pains superceded in the world lord Mahādeva was astonished and asked Pārvatī to find out a solution. At that time, she was called Lokamātā, the protector of all, the highest succour of all, the essence of prosperity and the pratiṣṭhā of the world. She was also called Bhū, Saṃādhi, Vānī and Buddhi. She is beginningless and endless; and in the form of Vidyā she protects the three worlds. On being thus addressed, Pārvatī smiled and merged half of her body into that of Śiva. Her equality of rank with her husband is naively expressed in the dual form of Śiva, viz. the ardhanārisvāma, of which one half is male and another half is female. She then sprinkled the ground with the perspiration of her fingers and from it were manifested Dharma, Lākṣmī, dāna, the highest type of rain, the quality sattva, corn, flowers, fruits, śāstras, weapons, tīrthas, forests and the moving and the non-moving worlds. The whole world became sinless through his power and all the devotees worship the non-dual form of lord Śiva and Śakti (129.70-80).

Elsewhere it is said that she is the beloved of lord Śiva. All the beings give dāna of food and practice penance in her honour. Her fame is very great and even
Indra wants her favour. She pervades the whole earth and purifies it. She is the beautiful power of lord Śiva. She is said to be pretty like a Moon. She is the goddess of speech and bestows the pleasure of senses. By taking her name one gets bliss. It is said that in order to purify the minds of men, she took the form of the river Ganges and on account of this Vibhūti of lord Śiva, one gets the rewards of righteous life (75.16-21). In order to mind the welfare of the world, Pārvatī takes as many forms as those of the lord Śiva (75.24).

She is the cause of the creation of the three worlds, and is the mother of gods and Asuras. She is called Para Prakṛti in the purāṇa (36.24-26). She is of the form of prakṛti and helps the lord Śiva, the cause of the world, in the creation in the form of a wife (36.41-42). This has been supplied with a philosophical justification, being a popularised version of the saṃkhya principle of the union of the soul of the universe - puruṣa - with the primordial essence prakṛti. On this theory, the belief is more closely connected with Saivism than with any other religious system, originates in philosophical Brahmanism, and traces back its history through Brahmanism to the earliest vedic conceptions.\footnote{Monier Williams, Brahmanism & Hinduism, 80. ff.; H.H. Wilson, i. 241. f; Wadell, Buddhism of Tibet, p. 129, f.}
As Śiva is the lord of the mountains, Girīśa, so is his spouse lady of the mountains - Pārvatī. According to purānic mythology she is the daughter of Himalaya, but in the Kena Upaniṣad, where she is first mentioned, Umā Naimavatī, appears as a heavenly woman, conversant with Brahman. Apparently, she was originally an independent goddess, or at least a kind of divine being, perhaps a female mountain-ghost haunting the Himalayas; and was later on identified with Rudra's wife. A similar mountain-goddess had her home in the Vindhyas, she was of a cruel character, as might be expected from a goddess of the savage tribes living in those hills. Her name is Vindhyavāsinī and she too is identified with Śiva's wife. It can safely be concluded that several goddesses from different parts of India and worshipped by different classes of people have in course of time, been combined into one great goddess, the spouse of Śiva, who was adored as his Saktī or energy.²⁹³

Even at present Gaurīvrata is observed with great festivity in the month of Āṣādha in Gujarāt and it is

believed that Gaurī or Parvati observed the same vrata in order to attain Śiva.

**LAKSMĪ**

She is the consort of lord Visnu, but she seems originally to have been an independent deity impersonating beauty and wealth. According to classical mythology, she rose from the ocean when the gods and demons churned it for the production of nectar and thence she was made over to Visnu.

In the Brahma-purāṇa, it is stated that a great quarrel took place between Laksmī and the goddess of poverty called Daridrā regarding the superiority over each other. Daridrā accuses Laksmī that she is always associated with sinners, wicked men, political personalities, cruel, wicked, pīshācas, greedy, anārya, kṛtaghnā, violators of righteousness and the traitors. She also accuses Laksmī of fickle nature and popularly as Fortuna, she is the fickle goddess who stays nowhere long. But at the end of this quarrel the river Godāvari declares the superiority of Laksmī over Daridrā and states that nothing is possible without her and that she pervades everything in the world. She pervades all the splendour like Brahmaśrī, Tapahśrī, Yajñaśrī, Kīrti, Dhanasrī, Yājñārī, Vidya, Prajna, Sarasvatī, Bhukti, Mukti,
Sri seems to have become a deity from an obscuration, just as occasionally abstract names as Hṛī, Dhṛī, Kṛī, etc. are used as the names of gods and goddesses. 234

SARASWATĪ

From being a river goddess in the RV., she became the goddess of wisdom and eloquence and as such she is most frequently invoked by the poets of classical Sanskrit literature. She has been identified with vac 'speech' and as such she is the wife of Brahmā.

The Br. P. relates that as Saraswati secretly enjoyed with Pururava, and had a son Sārasvata by him, when lord Brahmā came to know about this he cursed her to be a river but on being requested by her, the curse was modified that she would be seen at some places and would not be seen at other places. This is the reason why Saraswati disappears at many places. But the Brahma-purāṇa calls her as the daughter of Brahmā and divine river (A.101). Once

the gods played fraud with Gandharvas by taking from them Soma in exchange of Saraswati and afterwards took away her too. She is regarded as the guardian deity by the people of Kāśmīra.

YOGAMĀYA

It is related in the Brahma-purāṇa that Viṣṇu descended into the Pātañjāla and asked sleep to keep the six sons of Hiranyakasipu in the foetus of Devaki and they would be killed by Kaṣa, after that the seventh child would be born of lord Viṣṇu’s own amsa and would be known in the world as Saṅkaraṇa as he was to be taken to Rohini’s foetus after dragging him from Devaki. Lord Viṣṇu would take birth as the eighth child of Devaki on the eighth day of the black half of Śrāvan and he instructed Yogamāya to take birth as the daughter of Yaśoda on the ninth day. She would be carried away by Vasudeva and Kaṣa would throw her, on a slab of stone and she would attain her original place. Then lord Indra would consider her as his sister. Then she would kill Sumbha and Visumbha and other thousand daityas and she would be worshipped at many places (A.181.38-43).

She is called Yoganidrā, Mahāmāya of lord Viṣṇu,

236 Stein, Kalhana’s chronicles of Kāśmīr, ii, P. 286.
Bhūti, Sannati, Kīrti, Kānti, Prthivi, Dhṛti, Lajjā, Pusti, Usā, Ājyā, Durgā, Vedagarbha, Ambikā, Bhadrā, Bhadrakālī, Kṣemā and Ksemamkārī. She was worshipped by wine and meat and she always fulfilled the desires of men (181.37, 49.53). In the Harivamsa, a similar account is given.

**SUBHADRĀ**

She is the sister of Vasudeva, has a Rākṣma colour, is beautiful and has all the good qualities. In Brahma-purāṇa, she is worshipped along with kṛṣṇa and Balaraṇa. The colour of her idol was golden. She had eyes like lotus, she wears the clothes of variegated colours and she is decorated with ornaments. She goes everywhere, she is called Kātyāyāṇī, Jagaddhātrī, Varada, Siva and engrossed in the welfare of all the beings.

**ADITI**

She is a purely abstract deity in the RV. whose main characteristic is the power of delivering from the bonds of physical suffering and moral guilt. She, however, occupies a unique position among the abstract deities owing to the peculiar way in which the personification seems to have come about. She is the mother of the

297 RV. 1.24.15, 4. 12.4, 5.22.6, 2.27.14; 7.93.7; 10.87.18.
small group of deities called Adityas, often styled 'Sons of Aditi'.

In the Brahma-purāṇa, it is said that she is the daughter of Dakṣa and was married to Kasyapa (3.25,51). But according to the older mythology of the RV, Aditi is the mother of Dakṣa as an Aditya, though in a cosmogonic hymn, she is said to be his daughter as well as his mother by the reciprocal generation which is a notion not unfamiliar in the RV. In the Brahma-purāṇa also she is said to be the mother of the twelve Adityas, viz. Visnu, Śakra, Aryama, Dhātā, Tvastā, Pusan, Vivasvān, Savitā, Mitra, Varuna, Amsā, Bhaga (5.37,58). When the demons defeated her sons, she prayed lord Sun and obtained him as her son Mārtanda after practising severe penance (A.32): The demon Narakāsura had robbed Aditi of her earrings. Lord kṛṣṇa defeated Narakāsura and deprived him of the earrings. He then went to the heavens and returned the earrings to Aditi. Thereupon Aditi granted him a boon that he would be invincible in the world and granted another boon to Satyabhāma that she would never get either old age or ugliness (203.22-24). These

299 2.27.1
300 10, 72.4,5.
301 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.121.
and other myths are found in other works.302

GÄYATRĪ

In the Br. P. it is stated that she is the mother of all the Vedas. She is very holy and destroys sins (67.17). Gayatri is a mantra303 dedicated to Sun and is to be recited in the Sun-worship. She is the first of metres.304 Gayatri seems to be a thorough identification of the verse and goddess.

VIRAṆĀ MĀTĀ

In the Brahma-purāna it is said that Virajā Mātā is the mother-goddess Brahmanī and she resides in the Viraja-ksetra in the Utkalapradesa. One who worships her saves her seven families and goes to Brahmaloka (42.1-2).

KSUDHĀ

The Brahma-purāna states that this goddess emerged out of the mouth of death. She has a terrible form. Her

302 Vājasaneyī 29.60, 13.43, 49; Taittīriya 7.5.14, AV. 13.1. 38, Mbh. Vana 155; Anuśāsana 83, Ṛgveda 48; Bhāgavata VI.6.25, 13.9; 5.38, 39; IX.1.10; VIII.13.6; VIII. Chs. 16 & 17, VIII. 13.1-12; X. 3.42, 59, 39; Brahmanda II. 33.17; III. 3.56, 17; 71.200; III. 72.22; 73-75; III. 7.277-94, 465; Viṣṇu F.15.124, III.1.42; Matsya 172.5; 138-20; 171.55-8; VIII 23.4, 21, 27; 244.9-48; Vayu 96.46; 66.55; 60; 55, 69.92.

303 RV. iii. 62.10 - tat savitur vareṇyam bhargo devasya dhimahiḥ Dhiyo yo naḥ pracodaṇat.

304 Mbh. 14.44.5. f.
nature is constituted of anger and she troubles the sinners (85.8-14).

**AUSADHIS**

In the Brahma-purāna, it is stated that they are the mothers of the world. The sacrifice, Svādhyāya and religion are established in them. All the diseases are removed by them. They produce the food and protect the animals (119.1-4). They are having the form of Brahmā and Prāna (120.10). Soma is their husband. 305

**MĀTṛṣ**

The Br. P. states that at the time of war between gods and demons, the drops of perspiration fell from Śiva's body and from them the Mātrṛṣ emerged. The place where they emerged was called Mātrṛṣrtha and they were worshipped by gods and men. They killed all the daityas and they are worshipped along with lord Śiva (112.12,13).

In general, it is said that the goddesses Śrēddhā, Puṣṭi, Tusti, Śanti, Lajja, Sarasvatī, Bhūmi, Dyauṣ, Sarvarī, Ksanti, Uṣa, Āsā, Jayā, Mati, and others attended the sacrifice of Dakṣa (109.15,16) and the goddesses Śini, Kuhū, Dyuti, Puṣṭi, Vasu, Kīrti, Dhṛti and Laksmī attended the Rajasūya 305 also cf. Brahmanda III. 1.28; IV.7.72; 14.6; 20.46; Matsya 98.53; 179.9-32; 41.39.
sacrifice of Soma (9.16). The goddesses Kīrti, Prajñā, Medhā, Saraswati, Buddhi, Mati, Kṣānti, Siddhi, Mūrti, Dyuti, Gāyatri, Sāvitrī, Maṅgalā, Prabhā, Mati, Kānti, Nārāyaṇī, Śraddhā, Kaustikī, Vādyut, Saudāminī, Nidrā, Rātri, Māyā, surrounded lord Viṣṇu (68.56-58).

One might wonder as to why the Brahma purāṇa has devoted a long portion consisting of 105 Adhyāyas (A.70.175) to the glorification of the river Gautami. But from olden times, the rivers have always been given the greatest importance in India. The Āryans divided the land into two types: Devamātṛka, the land where agriculture depends on rain and nādimātṛka, the land where the agriculture depends on river. The region of the Punjab was called Saptasindhu and that between Gāṅgā and Yamunā was called Antarvedi. Instead of describing the parts of the country with reference to mountains and hills it was customary wīth to designate the various parts of the country with reference to the rivers, e.g. it was said 'Godāvāryāḥ daksinē tīrē' or 'revyāh uttare tīrē'. Some brahmins take the name of their family after the names of the rivers. Thus the Sārasvata brahmins are so called after the name of the river Saraswati. The pāṇḍās living on the banks of the river Gāṅgā feel proud when they are being called by the names 'Sons of Gāṅgā'. A king is considered to be the king in his right sense when he is
consecrated by the waters brought from the four oceans and seven rivers. Even in the ordinary daily worship an Indian mind prays all the rivers to purify his small water-pot. 306

Whenever an Indian goes for a pilgrimage, he never forgets to visit the rivers. When a man dies, he is supposed to cross the Vaitarāṇī river. Thus in life as well as after death, an Indian's life is associated with the rivers. All the poets beginning from the seers of the vedic age to Vyāsa, Vālmīki, Sūka, Kālidāsa, Śhavabhūti, Kṣemendra and Jagannātha have composed the poems in glorification of the rivers. Every river represents a flow of culture.

From the above discussion, one can get an idea of the importance attached to the rivers in ancient India. Even now it becomes a problem for the Government when the malevolent aspects of the great rivers Brahmaputra, Kosi, Ganges and others bring disaster to the various regions of India. Even in the present sophisticated era, it is not unusual to find high dignitaries of the state offering pūjā to rivers when laying the foundation of big river-projects.

In vedic literature, the river Godāvari is not referred to. 307 The traditions about Savarī residing in

306 Gange & Xamun caiva Godavari Saraswati Narmade Sindhu Kaveri Jaleśmin Sannīdhim Kuru

the vicinity of Alaka on the Godāvari are found. There are numerous references to Godāvari in epics and purāṇas but it is in the Brahma purāṇa that Godāvari and the subsidiary tīrthas on it have been lauded at great length. The Brahma purāṇa generally refers to Godāvari as Gautami. It is stated by the Brahma purāṇa that the Ganges to the south of the Vindhya mountain is called Gautami and that to its north is Bhāgirathī (78.77). It is said to be 200 yaks yojanas long and there are three crores and a half of tīrthas on it (77.8-9). A bath in the Godāvari when Jupiter enters the sign of Leo has been regarded even upto the present day as very meritorious. The Brahma purāṇa says that three crores and a half of tīrthas that exist in the three worlds come for a bath in the Godāvari when Jupiter is in Leo and that bathing in the Bhāgirathī every day for sixty thousand years confers the same boon as a single bath in the river Godavari when Jupiter is in the Zodiacal sign Leo (175,83,84; 152,38,39). Jupiter is in Leo for one year once in twelve years. Crowds of pilgrims throng at Nasik in their thousands from all parts of India in the Simhastha year.

309 Dharmasindhu, P. 7.
The Brahma-purāṇa eulogises her in the following way. She is called Pāvani, Paramārtihārīṇī, Śreyaskara, Pāpapratardini, Śāntirūpā, Śāntikari, Maṅgalā, Śubhā, Aghanāsini (85.8-10). She is Jalodbhūta and Maheśvara-jalodbhava (85.8). She is called Dāridryanāsini (85,16) and she is also called Brāhma, Maheśvari, Vaisnavi and Tryambaka (85.12,13). She is the beloved of lord Śiva and is held by him on his head. She is the goddess of rivers, destroys sins, is worshipped by the three worlds, gives the desired fruits, is Brahmamayī, and emerges out of the feet of Viṣṇu and the locks of the hair of lord Śiva (119.9-12). She is a boat in crossing the meaningless worldly parlance (131.29). She is Viśveśvari, Yogamāyā and Abhayadāyinī (131.30). She is Devanādi, greater than the great and lord of the world. She is worshipped by Brahmā, Isa and others and the sins are destroyed by remembering her (72.3-6). She purifies the three worlds, has a divine form, applies divine ointments, and is called Saraswatī, Jagaddhātri, Jagajjādyahara, Visvajananī and Bhuvanesvarī (164.43.45).

Various anecdotes are related to glorify the river. Gautami. It is said that by worshipping the river Gautami, the sins were expiated. Once the gods sent Agni to relate the danger of the demon Taraka to lord Śiva. At that time lord Śiva was in privacy with Pārvatī. Agni took the form
of a parrot and went there. On knowing that Agni was observing them, Parvati was very abashed. Siva was all wrath and threw his virile-semen into Agni which was unbearable to him. He threw it into two parts in his wife from which the twins Suvarṇa and Suverṇa were born. As there was the 'Anyonyaretavyatiśāṅgadosa!' in the case of the twins, they took the forms of various gods and goddesses and enjoyed freely with them. On seeing this, the gods approached Agni and all of them worshipped the river Gautamī and the children were expiated (A.123). On praying the river Gautamī, a brahmin Ajīgarta was released from hell when he had sold his son Sūnaḥśēpa due to his inability to maintain the family (A.130). A brahmin Sanājjāta was enjoying with his mother Mahī, both being unaware of the identity of each other. When the sage Gāleva revealed their relationship both of them went to the river Gautamī and purified themselves by taking a bath in it (92.2-48). A bird Ciccika had two mouths on account of the bad deeds in his past birth and it had no happiness in the present birth. The king Pavamāna took him to the river Gautamī and by taking a bath in it, it went to heaven (A.164). A brahmin Gautama was freed from the sin of gambling by taking a bath in the river Gautami (A.170). Madhucchandā, a Purhita of the king Saryāṭi revived the king Saryāṭi by praying the river Gautamī.
as he had entered fire on the bank of the river Gautami to enliven the wife of Madhucchanda (A.138). A hunter who had killed a female-pigeon went to heaven in an aeroplane after taking a bath in the river Gautami (A.80). Even such grave sins as approaching the wife of one's teacher are expiated by taking a bath in the river Gautami. Lord Indra was freed from the sin of brahmin-murder by the sprinkling of the water of the river Gaṅgā (A.96). Prthuṣravā, son of Kāśivān, got freedom from his triple debts by taking a bath in the river Gautami (A.99).

The river Gautami is also said to pacify the effects of curse. The sage Gautama had cursed his wife Ahalyā to become a dry river as Indra had enjoyed with her after taking the form of the sage Gautama. Ahalyā regained her original form on joining the river Gautami (A.89). Aūjanā and Adrika, the mothers of Hanumān, were deformed on account of some curse. They got the original beauty on praying the river Gautami (A.84). A Havyagha who had become black on account of some curse, regained his fairness on being sprinkled by the water of the river Gautami (A.133). Kasyapa had cursed his wives Suparnā and Kadrī to become rivers as they had violated his instructions to be observed during their pregnancy. On praying the river Gautami, they
regained their original form (A.100). Kadru was cursed to be blind as she laughed at a sage in the sacrifice. She too regained her eyesight by the grace of the river Gautami (A.100).

Gautami is said to fulfill the desires. Narśana, son of Sūrya and Chāya, worshipped Gautami and made his parents happy (A.165). A brahmin Vṛddhagautama had married a lady older than himself. As some sages poked fun at their difference in age, they prayed the river Gautami and she became younger (A.107). The Ausadhis got their desired husband Soma on worshipping the river Gautami (A.119). Once the Aṅgirāsas started practising penance but as they had not taken the permission of their mother before starting it, their penance did not entail any fruit. They worshipped the river Gautami and became the Vyaśas (A.158). By praying Gautami, Pramati released his father from prison (A.171) and lord Viṣṇu killed the demoness Kānkālinī who was troubling Āśandiva (A.167). By worshipping Saraswatī on the bank of the river Gautami, Parasu went to heaven (A.163). The river Gautami declared the superiority of Laksīmi over Daridra when there was a dispute between them (A.137). Gautami granted a boon to Kanva that no one would suffer from hunger in his family (A.85). The dāna given at Deśasvamedha-tīrtha on the bank of Gautami gives endless merits (A.83).
The Brahma-purana relates anecdotes regarding the origin of the river Ganges. Brahma performed the marriage ceremony of lord Śiva. On seeing lord Śiva touching the foot of Pārvatī during the performance of some rite, Brahma's virile-semen fell and the Vālkhīyas were created from it. Brahma was very abashed but lord Śiva gave him a Kamandalu full of holy waters and in it lord Śiva established Ganga by remembering it (A.72). The Brahma offered the arghya from his Kamandalu into four directions and the water falling in the southern direction was received by Śiva, that falling in the north was received by Viṣṇu, that on the west was received back by Brahma and that on the east was received by the sages (A.73). By praying lord Śiva, one part was brought by the sage Gautama from the locks of hair of lord Śiva (A.74,75) and the second part was brought by Bhagiratha (A.73).

DEMONS

The people of India, particularly the forest tribes and the lower castes, from the eradi to the grave, are oppressed with a feeling best described as demonophobia - the belief that they are haunted by evil spirits of all kinds, some malignant fiends, some mischievous elves, to whose agency are attributed all kinds of sickness and misfortune.
Their worship is a worship of fear, the higher gods, particularly in the opinion of the less intelligent classes, being regarded as otiose and indifferent to the evils which attack the human race, while demons are habitually active and malignant.311

The evil spirits can be classified in two groups. The non-human spirits or fiends and the human spirits or the bhuta, preta and pisacas. The non-human spirits or fiends are endowed with superhuman powers, and possess material bodies of various kinds, which they can change as they list and which are subject to destruction. As free agents they can choose between good and evil, but a disposition towards evil preponderates in their character.312 The so-called Asuras, Dēnavas, Daityas and Rākṣasas belong to this group, "all personations of the hostile powers of Nature, or of mighty human foes, both which have been eventually converted into superhuman beings." This group as a whole seems to have been derived from pre-animistic beliefs, the worship or dread of 'powers', the vague impersonations of the terror of night, hill, cave or forest. In contradistinction to the fiends or non-human

312 G.Oppert, Original inhabitants of Bhāratavarṣa or India, 515 ff.
spirits, there are the malignant spirits of men, which for various reasons cherish feelings of hostility to the human race, and, if not expelled or propitiated, to endless mischief. But as the Brahma purāna does not deal with them, the discussion here would pertain to the first class alone.

Probably the earliest Sanskrit expression for a 'demon' is Asura and though this word is used in the later literature as a general term for evil demons of malignant disposition, it was originally restricted to beings of a god-like nature, and even applied to the gods themselves. In the Rgveda, the word Asura is used as an epithet of Indra and other deities and is especially an attribute of the ancient deity Varuṇa, who is first an impersonation of the vault of heaven, and then identified with the supreme being. In Avesta Ahura is the name of the highest god. In the Taittirīya Samhitā it is said that Prajāpati created them with his breath. In the Satapatha Brahmaṇa the seventh Manu is made to produce gods, asuras and men. On the other hand, in the Veda various orders of evil beings are spoken under the name of Dasyuṣ, Rākṣasas, Yatudhānas, Pisacās and Panis. In the

313 3.4.56
314 Rv. 7.104; 10.87
315 Rv. 10.87
316 Rv. 1.133
317 Rv. 6.20.4; 39.2; 10.108; 7.9.2; 4.58.4; I.151.9.
Rāmāyāna constant mention is made of beings hostile to gods and men called Rākṣasas. The purānas are full of the stories related to demons and the Brahma-purāṇa extensively deals with Asuras, Dānavas, Daityas and Rākṣasas.

The Br. P. recognises four types of demons, viz. Daityas, Dānavas, Rākṣasas and Asuras. The sons of Diti were called Daityas and those of Danu were called Dānavas. Apart from this some other demons who are not the progeny of either Diti or Danu have also been given the names of Daityas and Dānavas e.g. Arista is called a Daitya (189.46-58) and the demon Mitha though not mentioned in the genealogy of Danu is designated as Dānava (127.7-8). Sometimes a demon is called Daitya as well as Asura e.g. Sambara is called the lord of Daityas (154.16) as well as an Asura (199.12).

The genealogy of Daityas and Dānavas is given in the Br. P. as follows: Diti, the daughter of Dakṣa was married to Kaśyapa and she had two sons Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyakṣa and a daughter Simhika who was married to Vipracitti. Hiranyakasipu had four sons, Hṛṣa, Anuhrāda, Prahrāda and Samhrāda. Hṛṣa had two sons Siva and Kāla.
Prahrāda was given the kingdom of Daityas and Dānavas (4.5). Virocana was born to Prahrāda and Bali was the son of Virocana. Bali had hundred sons of whom Bāna was the eldest. They practised penance and the names of some of them were Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sūrya, Candrā, Candratāpāna, Kumbhanābha, Gardabhāṣa and Kuśā. The sons of Hiranyākṣa were learned and strong. Their names were Bharbhara, Sakuni, Bhūtasantāpāna, Mahānabha and Kālanabha.

Samhrāda gave birth to Nivatakasvaca, and they had three koti sutas and resided at Manivati. They too were indestructible by gods and eventually Arjuna killed them (3.90-92).

Danu gave birth to hundred sons by Kaśyapa. They were brave, strong and practised penance. The names of some of them were Dvimūrdhā, Sāṅkukarna, Hayasiras, Ayomukha, Sambara, Kapila, Vāmana, Marici, Maghavān, Ilbala, Svasruma, Vikṣobhaṇa, Ketu, Ketuvirya, Śatahrda, Indrajit, Sarvajit, Vajranābha, Ekacakra, Tāraka, Vaiśvānara, Pulomā, Vidrāvāna, Mahāsiras, Svarbhānu, Vṛṣaparvā and Vipracitti. As the progeny of all these is innumerable

318 3.73; Mahābhāga acc. to 'kha'.

319 After Vāmana, the 'kha' ms. adds Muka, Hunda, the sons of Hrada, Meriṣa, Sunda, Saramāṇa & Sarakalka.

320 3.77, 'Ekavaktra according to ms. 'kha'.

518 5.75. Mahabhaga acc. to 'kha'.

520 5.77. 'ikavaktra according to ms. 'kha'.

519 After Yamana, the 'kha' ms. adds Muka, Hunda, the sons of Hrada, Marxca, Sunda, Saramana & Sarakalka.
it is indescribable. The daughter of Svarbhānu was Prabhā, that of Pulomā was Śaci; that of Hayasīras was Upāditī; that of Vṛṣaparvan Sarmiṣṭhā and those of Vaiśvānara, Pulomā and Kālika.

The progeny of Mārica consisted of 60,000 dānavaś and there were other 1,400 danavas belong to Hiranyapura. These along with Paulomus and Kālaśiras were indestructible by gods and by the grace of lord Brahma, Arjuna killed them. Vipracitti, the son of Danu married Simhikā, the daughter of Diti and by the samyoga of Daityya and Dānava elements thirteen best types of Dānavaś were born. They were very brave and were called Saimhikeyas. They were called Vamsya, Salya, Nala, Vatāpi, Namuci, Ilbala, Svasruma, Anjika, Naraka, Kālanābha, Saramāna and Svarakalpa. They had hundred and thousands grandsons. Though the above mentioned sons of Diti are called Daityyas, the Maruts whom Diti gave birth were called gods and though originally they were meant to kill Indra (3.109-122), eventually they became the greatest helpers of Indra.

Elsewhere it is said that at the time of milching earth, Madhu was the milcher of Asuras, their milk was consisted of Maya, Virocana was their calf and their vessel
was made up of iron; the milcher of Rāksasas was Rāgānābha, blood was their milk, Sumāli their calf and skull their vessel (4.104,106). There is no clear line of demarcation to distinguish in groups Rāksasas, Asuras, Piśācas, etc. though the Piśācas are too mean and low to be confused with demons of the highest type. The Nāgas, though distinct from Asuras, are as a group affiliated and usually mentioned by their side.

The meaning of the terms Daityas, Dānavas, Rāksasas and Asuras as given by Monier Williams is as follows: The Rāksasas\(^\text{320}\) are sometimes regarded as produced from Brahmā's foot, sometimes with Rāvana as descendants of Pulastya, elsewhere they are styled children of Khasā or Suraśā, according to some they are distinguished into three classes, one king of a semi-divine benevolent nature and ranking with Yaksas, etc. another corresponding to Titans or relentless enemies of the gods, and a third answering more to nocturnal demons, imps, fiends, goblins, going about at night, haunting cemeteries, disturbing sacrifices and even devouring human beings. This last class is the most commonly mentioned. Their chief place

\(^\text{320}\) Monier Williams, Sanskrit English Dictionary, P.371.
of abode was Lanka in Ceylon. The Dānavas\textsuperscript{321} are a class of demons often identified with the daityas or Asuras and held to be implacable enemies of gods or devas; the daityas\textsuperscript{322} are known as the sons of Diti; and the Asuras are regarded as children of Diti by Kasyapa, as such they are the demons of the first order in perpetual hostility with the gods, and must not be confounded with the Rākṣasas or imps who animate dead bodies and disturb sacrifices.\textsuperscript{323}

As regards their general description it would be said that they were ugly and deformed. The names Śāṅku-karṇa (A.3), Ėkaśa (213.90) etc. suggest that they were deformed. Many a times they were animal-shaped. The names Kūrmakukkuṭavaktra, Šāsolūkamukha, Kharostravadana, Varāhavadana, Mārjarasīkhivaktra, Nakramesanana, Gojāvimahīsanana, Gudhasallakivaktra, Krostuvaktra, Ākhudarduranaktra, Vṛka-mukha, Makaravaktra, Krauṅcavaktra, Āsvānana, Kharamukha, Meṅuravadana, etc. suggest it (213.93-97). They live in Rasātala, mountains, oceans, rivers, villages, forests, sky, air and Jyotirloka (149.4,5). They wore various types of dresses and decorated themselves with garlands and ointments. They \textit{wore} didems, ear-rings, turbans, kirita and

\textsuperscript{321} Ibid., P. 474.
\textsuperscript{322} Ibid., P. 497.
\textsuperscript{323} Ibid., P. 121.
wore the skin of elephants and black dāer. They were also called Mīlakavāsas. They had broad cheeks. They wielded various weapons like Sataghnī, Cakra, Musala, Bhindipāla, Aśva yantras, Āyudhas, Sūla, Ulūkhala, Parasvadha, Pāśa, Mudgara, Parigha and great slab stones. They had long hair, their necks were like Kambū and some of them were lustrous (213.90-99).

Some Daityas were religious. The Br. P. states that the great demon Bali was indestructible by gods and he protected the kingdom with righteousness and there were no troubles in his kingdom. He was a great devotee of Visnu and when the gods approached Visnu to protect them from Bali, Visnu said that Bali was too dear to him to be killed and therefore lord Visnu took the form of Vāmana and made him the king of Rasātala (A,73). Some demons practised severe penance. Hiranya, the ancestor of the daityas practised great penance and got the power to remain indestructible by gods (139.11,12). Meghāsa, the son of Rāhu practised severe penance in order to revenge the death of his father who was killed by the gods when he tried to have a portion of the nectar that was obtained after churning the ocean. The gods pacified him and placed Rāhu in the sky and made Meghāsa the king of Nairṛta direction
By the power of penance, the demon Hiranyakasipu had obtained the power of remaining invincible, lord Viṣṇu took the form of Nṛsiṁha and killed him (A.149).

The main work of the demons was to obstruct the sacrifices of sages, kings and gods. Thus Sindhusena, a great demon, defeated the gods and carried away the sacrifice to Rasātala. Thereupon lord Viṣṇu took the form of Varāha, killed him and brought back the sacrifice (79.8-15). A demon Hiranyakṣa obstructed with his retinue the sacrifice of king Priyavrata, thereupon the sage Vasistha killed them with his rod (A.103). Mārca & Subāhu obstructed the sacrifice of brahmins, so Rāma killed them (213.133). The Ṛkṣasas Aśvattha and Pippala were the sons of the Ṛkṣasa Kaitabha. They obstructed the sacrifice of Agastya, took the form of brahmins and devoured the other brahmins. Lord Śaṅkunderstood their trick and applying the principle of 'Tit for Tat' ate them away (118.11,12). The dānava Kitha obstructed the sacrifice of king Ārṣṭiṣeṇa and carried away the king together with his retinue to Rasātala. Thereupon Deṣṭ Devāpi, the son of Purohita, prayed lord Siva and brought them back (A.127). The tendency to obstruct the sacrifice went to such an extent that a demon was named Havyaghna and he was given a boon by lord Brahmadeva to devour the sacrifice.
at his will. His whole family was black in colour by the curse of lord Brahmā. When he obstructed the sacrifice of the sage Bharadvāja and ate the sacrificial cake, Bharadvāja asked him about his blackness and on knowing from him about the curse sprinkled the water of river Gautamī and he became fair (A.133).

Another function of the demons was to fight with the gods. Generally, the demons were very strong and the gods were always defeated. Indra fell helpless before the strength of demons and they had to approach either Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Śiva for protection. Thus the demon Tāraka had a boon of lord Brahmā that he would remain invincible. Even lord Viṣṇu expressed his inability to defeat him. Thereupon the gods approached Himalaya and with the help of Kāmadeva disturbed the penance of lord Śiva and married lord Śiva with Pārvatī, the daughter of Himalaya and requested them to create a son who would kill the demon Tāraka (A.71). Another story tells that Māhāsāni defeated Indra and asked his father Kīranya to look after him. Then he attacked Varuṇa but Varuṇa gave him his daughter and on Varuṇa’s advice, he released Indra and asked Indra to consider Varuṇa as his lord. This shows how powerful the demons were and how Indra had to agree with them (A.129).
Namuci was a great enemy of Indra and a terrible fight took place between them. Indra eventually cut the head of Namuci with the foam (129.4-6). A daitya Ambarya was invincible and he was the lord of Dandaka. He possessed a strong army and a terrible fight ensued between him and lord Nṛṣimha and at the end of it lord Nṛṣimha killed him (149.10.12). As a boon was granted to Ravana, he was unconquerable, gods, Rākṣasas, Yākṣas, Rākṣas; he was very brave and was always surrounded by a koti Rākṣasas. He was black like collyrium and brave like a lion (213.129-135).

Disturbing the penance of some sage also constituted one of the mischiefs of the demons. A great Asura took the form of a beautiful maiden and disturbed the penance of king Dhanvantari (122.8-15). When lord Brahma sent his Maya to distract the attention of the demons who were obstructing the sacrifice of the sages, Sambara, the lord of daityas, devoured her (134.9-11). There was another Rākṣasa by the name Parasu. He had a deep hatred for sacrifices and brahmins. He had the capacity to take various forms according to his liking. Sometimes he took the form of a brahmin, or of a tiger, or of a god or of an animal or of a woman or of a deer or of a child. He took the form of a brahmin and went to the sage Sakalya and expressed his desire to devour the sage but he saw lord
Visnu in the form of the sage and refrained from killing him (163.7-10).

Sometimes the gods befriended demons. Thus an interesting story relates how after killing Namuci, Indra by the use of a trick, befriended Maya, the brother of Namuci, who wanted to revenge his brother's death. Afterwards Maya advised Indra to pierce the foetus of Diti which contained a son who was meant for killing Indra (A.124). Rāvana was a great devotee of lord Siva (A.143). Bana was a great devotee of lord Siva and when krṣṇa came to fight with Bana, lord Siva and Kārtikeya fought with krṣṇa on behalf of the Asura Bana (A.206).

In the life of lord krṣṇa, he had to face many demons. In his childhood, he killed Putanā, a demoness who killed children (184.7-10). Again, he killed the demon Ariṣṭa, who had come to him in the form of a bull (189.46-52). He also killed Kesī (190.29-37), Dhemuka (186.4), the donkey formed. The Asura Naraka was born to Prthvī by lord Visnu in his Varāha incarnation (220.23). Lord Visnu killed him in his incarnation as lord krṣṇa and took away all his possessions and married all his 16,000 wives (220.30.35). Narakāśura was very powerful. He was the king of Prāgjyotispatīpura. He had imprisoned the daughters of the daityas, siddhas and kings, had in his possession
the Chhatra of Varuṇa, the Maniparvata, the Mandara mountain, and the ear-ornaments of Aditi (202.8-11). Again, lord krṣṇa killed the dāitya Mura and his 2,000 sons, Hayagrīva and Pañcajana (202.18-19). Lord krṣṇa killed another demon by the name Pañcajana who had carried away the son of sage Śāndiṇi to the ocean and after killing him made a conch Pañcajanya out of his bones (134.27,28). Pradyumna, the son of lord krṣṇa killed the Asura Sambara who had thrown him in the ocean after the sixth day of his birth (200.2,3,19).

Elsewhere it is said that lord Viṣṇu in his different forms killed the various demons, Hiraṇyakaśipu (180.28), Tāraka (179.21-24), Kālanemi (179.25), Vipracitti (180.29), Madhu and Kaitabha who wanted to kill Brahmā and who had emerged out of his ear (180.37). Kālanemi was again born as Kamsa, the son of Ugrasena who was killed by krṣṇa (A.181). In his incarnation as Rāma, lord Viṣṇu killed the demons Yamahasta, Prahasta, Mikumba, Kumbha, Narāntaka, Yamāntaka, Mālādhya, Mālikādhya, Indrajit, Kumbhakarna and Ravaṇa (176.44-46). As Lavaṇa had become too impudent on account of a boon, Rāma killed him (213.137). Rāma freed Virādha and Kabandha from their state of being

324 'Mahodara' according to 'ka' ms.
demons as they had obtained that form due to a curse though originally they were Gandharvas (213.140). In his Vamana incarnation, lord Viṣṇu killed the demons Vipracitti, Śiva, Saṅku, Ayahsāṅku, Ayahśiras, Asvāsiras, Hayagrīva, Ketumān, Ugra, Vyāgra, Puṣkara, Aśvapati, Prahrāda, Kumbha, Saṃhrāda, Saṅkha, Kupatha, Kṛḍhana, Krathā, Bṛhatkīrti, Mahājihva, Saṅkukarṇa, Mahāśvāna, Diptajihva, Arkanayana, Mṛgapada, Namuci, Sambara, Vikṣara, Garīṣṭha, Varīṣṭha, Prālemba, Nareka, Indratapana, Vaṭāpi, Ketumān, Aśiloma, Pulomā, Bāskala, Pramada, Mada, Svamisra, Kālavadana, Karāla, Kesī, Ekākṣa, Candremā, Rāhu, Sambara, Śvanā and others (213.32-90).

Thus it could be said that the Br. P. gives a fairly broad idea of demonology as it extensively deals with the Dānavas Hiranyāka, Mitha, Dhenuka, Prālemba & Lavaṇa; the Daityas Bali, Tāraka, Māya, Namuci, Hiranyā, Sambara, Hiranyakaśipu, Āmbarya, Medhu, Kaitabha, Kesī, Paṅcajana and Mura; the Rākṣasas Sindhusena, Aśvattha, Pippala, Havysaghna, Rāvaṇa, Paraśu, Virādha, & Kabandha; and the Asuras Tama, Namuci, Sambara and Nareka.

SAGES

Asceticism in India is under the definite and strong sanction of religion. India has always been the
home of asceticism, and from the very earliest times, this feature of Indian life has attracted attention. The sanction of religion to asceticism was given by the example of the greatest saints and heroes of old, and of the gods themselves, who are represented as enduring self-inflicted tortures for thousands of years in order to attain supernatural or enhanced power. The Ṛgis of old, the demigods of legend and story, the dwellers in heaven as well as on earth, engaged in the practice of tapas to secure dominion for themselves, or to confound their foes. In the doctrine of the four Ādramas asceticism was made an integral part of the orthodox Hindu life; and it became the duty of every Hindu, as advanced age overtook him, homeless and a wanderer to chasten himself with austerities. Formally this was to be done for the sake of detaching himself from earthly ties, and of realising union with Brahman. And a religious motive was thus supplied for that which in itself was a welcome release from responsibility, care and the minute requirements of an elaborate social code.

The general characteristics of the sages are tranquility of mind, freedom from kāma, krodha and dveṣa,

devoid of *sangha*, *Ahamkāra*, a tendency to mind the welfare of all the beings, predominance of the sattva quality, a passion for practising penance, and an intense desire to know the highest being (66.24-25).

The Br. P. states that there were different groups of sages in different Manvantaras. Thus it relates that the seven sons of Brahma, viz. Marīci, Atri, Anīgirā, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya and Vasiṣṭha were the sages of the Svāyambhuva manvantara and they resided in the northern direction (5.8,9). The Maharṣis of the Svērociṣa manvantara were Aurva, Stamba, Kaśyapa, Brahaspati, Datta, Atri and Čyavana (5.11,12). In the Uttama manvantara, the sages were the seven Vasiṣṭhas, the sons of Vasiṣṭha, and Urjās, the sons of Hiranyagarbha (5.16,17). The sages of Raivata manvantara were Devabāhu, Yadudhra, Vedasirās, Hiranyaromā, Parjanya; Urdhvaabāhu, the son of Soma; Satyanetra, the son of Atri (5.20,21). The sages of the fourth Tāmasa manvantara were Kavya, Prthū, Agni, Jahnau, Dhāta, Kapivān, Akapivān (5.25,26). The sages of the sixth, viz. Cākṣuṣa manvantara were Bhrīgu, Nabha, Vivasvān, Sudhānā, Viraja, Atināma and Sahiṣṇu (5.29,30). The sages of the Vaivasvata manvantara were Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, Gautama, Bharadvāja, Visvāmitra, Jamadagni (5.34,35).
The Br. P. then states that the sages are meant for the maintenance of Dharma and protection of the world. At the end of every manvantara, four sages go to Brahmaloka and other four sages take their place (5.39-41). Further it enumerates the would-be-sages of the future manvantaras. The sages of Savarni manvantara would be Parasurama, Vyāsa, Atreya, Aśvatthāma, the son of Drona born in the Bharadvāja family; Saradvān born in the family of Gautama, Gālava born in the Kausika family and Aurvā, the son of Kaśyapa (5.43-45). Thus it could be surmised that the existence of the sages for the maintenance of righteousness was very important.

Some sages were very learned, and had studied all the śāstras. Thus Vyāsa is highly eulogised. About him it is said that he was well-versed in all the śāstras, expert in vedas and vedāṅgas, the composer of the Mahābhārata, the speaker of purāṇas and āgamas, engrossed in the welfare of all the beings, meditating on Adhyātma, and best among the intelligent (26.6,7). He knew the past, the present and the future (26.26). He is also praised for composing the Brahma purāṇa (A,245). The great sages (26.9-14) like Kaśyapa, Jamadagni, Bharadvāja, Vasistha, Jaimiti, Dhaumya, Mārkandeya, Vālmiki, Viśvāmitra, Satānanda, missing in ms. 'kha'.

The sages after Vālmiki are missing in ms. 'kha'.

326 missing in ms. 'kha'.

327 The sages after Vālmiki are missing in ms. 'kha'.
Vatsya, Gargya, Asuri, Samantu, Bhargava, Kanva, Meghatithi, Mandavya, Gyavana, Dhumra, Asita, Devala, Maudgalya, Trnavajna, Pippalada, Samvarta, Kausika, Raibhya, Maitreya, Harita, Sandilya, Vibhanda, Durvasa, Lomasa, Narada, Parvata, Vaisampayena, Galava, Bhaskari, Purana, Suta, Pulastya, Kapila, Uluka, Pulaha, Vayu, Devasthana, Caturbhuja, Sanatlumara, Paila and Krsna went to the sage Vyasa to have the solution of their doubts regarding worldly parlance. Elsewhere (A.145) it is said that the sages Markandeya, Bharadvaja, Vasishtha, Atri, Gautama, Yajnavalkya, Jabali and other Munis were the propagators of Sutras and proficient in Vedas, Vedangas, Puranas, Nyaya and Mimamsa. They discussed with lord Brahma, Visnu and Siva as to whether karma was higher or jnana was higher and came to the conclusion that as nothing can be attained without performing an action, karma should be given the prime importance. Again it is said that when the Munis killed the king Vena as he behaved in an unrighteous way, the sages Vamadeva and others approached the sage Kapila who was a knower of the highest essence, engrossed in penance and vrata and who was cruel as well as kind-hearted and asked him as to what they should do and the sage advised them to cut the arm of Vena out of which Prthu, the righteous, would be created (A.141). The sage Apastamba asked a very interesting
question to the sage Agastya (130.514) as to who among the three gods Brahma, Visnu and Siva was the highest and the sage Agastya's remarkable answer establishes the identity and non-difference of the three gods and thus blends the theories of many - was with the theory of one god, and finally concludes by saying that the forms of the three gods are different and as regards forms, the vedas are the authority but regarding the formless, there is only one, non-dual and no other. Still, however, for the sake of getting success, one should worship lord Siva. Once it is said that the sages Sanaka and others know the inner secret of Vedanta (129.69). Bahlika, the son of Kanva, was well-versed in vedas and vedangas (148.4). Sunaṣeṇa, the son of Ajigarta, was a knower of Brahman (151.3). The god Dhanvantari was born to Dhanu as a result of severe penance and he learnt the Ayurveda from the sage Bharadvaja and divided it into eight parts and taught it to his pupils (11.36-38). Elsewhere it is said that the sages like Vasiṣṭha, Jabali, Yajñavalkya, Ângirâ, Dakṣa, Marici who were devoted to Visnu, others like Sātātapa, Saunaka, Devarāta, Bhṛgu, Agni, Vesya, Atri, Marici, Manu, Gautama, Kausika, Tumburu, Parvata, Agastya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Pipa and Gālava who were engrossed in the practice of Yoga and the sages Vamadeva, Ângiras and Bhārgavas who were proficient...
in _smṛti_, _sruti_ and _purañhas_ worshipped the river Godāvari (154.2-4). The sage Sāndīpani was an expert in Dhanurveda and lord kṛṣṇa and Balarāma learnt it from him (194.22-25).

The sage Kapila was considered to be a manifestation of lord Viṣṇu and the fire emnating from his eyes burnt the progeny of king Sagara (8.55,56). The sage Nārada was considered to be the best among the Devarṣis (69.70).

The performance of sacrifice was one of the main functions of the sages. Thus many sages had gathered together in the Naimiṣa forest for the performance of the sacrifice that was to last for twelve years (I.11). The sage Ātreya performed sacrifices with the help of many sages and at the completion of all of them, he obtained the power to move everywhere (140.2-4). The sage Bharadvāja performed a sacrifice and offered the sacrificial cake for the Agnisomīya and the Aindrāṇa and then he transformed the black form of the demon Ḥavyaghna into a fair one by sprinkling the water of the river Gaumāti on him. The sages Vasīṣṭha and others performed a sacrifice on the bank of the river Godāvari (134.2).

Another main function of the sages was to mind the welfare of the world. When being harassed by Rāhu,
the Sun was falling on earth the sage Prabhākara blessed him and saved the world from the calamity of darkness (13.8-14). When it did not rain in the kingdom of Kāśi, the sage Śvaphalka was called and after his arrival, it began to rain (14.4-8). When the unrighteous Veṣa harrassed the people, the sages killed him and created Prthu out of his right hand (4.42, 49; 2.21). The mountain Vindhyā was rising higher and higher and in order to avert the calamity, the sage Agastya went near him and asked from him a promise that he would return. Ultimately he never returned and the mountain remained in the same position (118.3-5).

Sometimes the sages helped the gods. In the marriage of lord Śiva with Pārvatī, the sages Vasistha, Agastya, Paulastya and Lomaśa had gone to the Himavān mountain (72.3). The sages Mandavya, Vasistha, Gautama, Agastya, Atri, Kāśyapa and others consecrated Indra in order to free him from the sin of brahmin-murder. The sages Māṇḍavya, Vasistha, Gautama, Agastya, Atri, Kāśyapa and others consecrated Indra to free him from the sin of a brahmin-murder (96.21). Dadhīcī gave his bones to gods in order to prepare a weapon, out of them (A.110). Dadhīcī was a great devotee of lord Śiva and was very enraged when Dakṣa did not invite him in his sacrifice (39.28, 29).
Indra was dethroned for the third time owing to his undesirable union with Ahalya, he went to the sage Brhaspati for advice (122.51). When Sarama spoke lie about the theft of dogs to Indra, Brhaspati found out the truth and held Sarama to be the cause of the whole thing (131.2-13). The sage Maudgalya was a staunch devotee of lord Visnu and lord Visnu manifested himself to him every day (136.5,6). When there was a great famine in the world, the sage Gautama supported the world and the gods by the power of his penance (74.27-30). When lord Siva concealed the river Ganges in his locks, Parvati requested Skanda and Ganesa to find out a way through which Siva would release her. At that time also Ganesa thought that none was capable of bringing the Ganges down except the sage Gautama (74.39-42). Finally the sage Gautama prayed lord Siva and brought the river Ganges on earth (A.75). The sage Sveta was a devotee of lord Siva and when on the completion of his life Yama came to take away his life, lord Siva fought with Yama, killed him and reanimated him on the condition that Yama would not have any control over the devotees of lord Siva (A.94). At the time of famine, the sage Visvamitra forced Indra to pour rain (A.93).

The sages served as the Purohitas of the kings and advised them on all the important matters. By the grace
of the sage Vasiṣṭha, king Sagara obtained sons (78.10),
By the favour of the sage Rṣyaśṛṇga, king Lomapāda had the
son Caturāṇga (13.38) and king Daśaratha had the famous
four sons, viz. Rāma and others (123.34). All sages acted
as Purohitas in the sacrifices and helped the kings. Thus
the sage Kaśyapa acted as a Purohita in the performance
of the ten Asvamedhas of the king Bhauvana (82.3).
Vasiṣṭha acted as a Purohita in the sacrifice of king
Priyavrata (103.3) and Daśaratha (109.14) in the reign of
the king Daśaratha (123.5). The sage Madhucchanda was
a Purohita in the reign of king Śaryāti and he accompanied
him when he started to conquer the world (138.3,4). When
the king Aila was very distressed on account of the separa-
tion from Urvaśī, the sage Vasiṣṭha consoled him (151.12-16).
The sage Viśvāmitra taught Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa the great
Māheśvarīvidyā, Dhanurvidyā, Āśstravidyā, Astravidyā,
Laṅkikīvidyā, Rathaśāvidyā, Gajavidyā, Aśvavidyā, Gāḍāvidyā
and the recitation of mantras (123.97,98) and gave them
divine weapons (213.142). By the advice of the sage
Uttanka, the sons of king Kuvalāśva killed the demon Dhundhu
and the sage Uttānaka granted them boons (7.74-85). King
Indradyumna performed a sacrifice with great pomp after
calling the priests who were experts in the performance
of sacrifice (47.35-36).
The lives of Pījaks sages stamped deep impression on the lives of people. Many sages were revered for their holy lives. The sages practised severe penance and restrained their senses. Thus the sage Atri practised penance called Anuttara for 3,000 divine years and his virile-semen manifested in the sky in the form of Moon, and the tears falling from his eyes brightened the ten directions (9.2.6). Sage Viśvāmitra, the son of King Gāḍhi was a great ascetic and he became a great Brahmarsi (10.55-60). He had many famous sons like Devarāta, Kātyāyana, Hīranyākṣa, Renu, Renuka, Kacchapa and Hārita; and they were the promulgators of the gotras Pāṇini, Babhra, Dhyānajapya, Pārthiva, Devarāta, Śālāṅkāyana, Bāskala, Lohitāyana, Hārita and Śālāṅkāyana and Bāskala, Lohitāyana.328 Hārita and Aṣṭakādyajuṣa (10.52-63). The sage Śākalya practised severe penance on the mountain Śuḥra (163.4). The Siddhas like Sanandana and others meditated on kṛṣṇa with concentration on the tip of their nose (193.42). The sage Kaṇḍu practised severe penance but he was disturbed by the nymph Pramalocā (A.173). The penance of the sage Viśvāmitra was also disturbed by Menakā (147.6,7). There is an interesting example of Aṅgirasas who though practised severe penance did

328 The name Lohitāyana and the following are according to ms. 'ka'.
not get success as they had not asked the permission of their mother before practising it (158.8-11). The sage Narada is considered to be the best among the Devarsis (69.70). Sage Ruci was very xarnx righteous and has the power to create sons according to his liking (A.10).

The sages were unable to bear adharma and cursed those who barred the proper path of action. Thus when Samba and his friends wanted to poke fun of the sages Visvamitra, Kanva and Narada and had garbed Samba into the role of a pregnant woman, they cursed them that Samba would give birth to a musala which would bring disaster to the whole Yadu family (A.210). Another anecdotes relates that when the nymphs Rambha, Tilottama and others satisfied the sage Astavakra he granted a boon to them that they would get lord Purusottama as their husband but when they laughed at his crooked limbs, he cursed them that they would be carried away by the Dasyus (212.79-84). When Indra enjoyed with Ahalya after taking the form of her husband Gautama, the sage Gautama cursed him to have a 1,000 signs of female organ on his body and cursed Ahalya to become a dry river (87.59). King Kartavirya gave his whole kingdom in dana to Agni and Agni devoured it. In this disaster, the hermitage of the sage Apava was also burnt, so he cursed Kartavirya that he would be killed by an ascetic brahmin
Parasurāma (13.192-197). When Pippalā, the sister of Viśvāvasu poked fun of the sages at a sacrifice, they cursed her to be a river (132.3). Kadrū was cursed to pose one eye as she poked fun of the sages (100.28).

Sometimes the gods had to intervene in the matters of sages. Thus when Soma carried away Tārā, the wife of sage Brhaspati, lord Brahmā brought the reconciliation between the two (9.19-25).

Many a times the sages grew jealous of each other and a great rivalry arose among them. Thus the rivalry between the sage Vasistha and the sage Viśvāmitra is famous (147.5). A sage Kanva was very envious of the prosperity of the sage Gauṭama and he prayed the river-goddess Godāvari in order to attain prosperity (A.85).

About the sages Vasistha, Atri, Pulastya, Aṅgirā, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu and Marici who were the sins-in-law of Dakṣa, it is said that they were religious, great yogins, observed vratas and meditated on Brahman (34.16,17), and that the sages Bhṛgu, Atri and Pulaha worshipped Sun (33.17).

Some sacred places were ascribed to the Ṛsis.
Thus Prabhasa, Bhargava, Agastya, Nara, Narayana, Vasistha, Bharadvaja, Gautama, Kasyapa, and Manu were called the ārsatirthas after the names of the sages (70.37,38).

Various anecdotes are given in the Br. P. regarding different sages. Thus it is said that in the marriage of lord Siva with Pārvatī, Brahmā's semen-virile fell on seeing the beauty of Pārvatī and from it the sages Vālkhilyas were created (72.18,19). The sage Atri obtained the power to move at his will everywhere by the performance of the sacrifice and he went to Indraloka and then asked Tvāśṭā to construct a similar Indraloka for himself. He enjoyed the pleasures but when he was confronted by the troubles of the dānavas, he requested Tvāśṭā to destroy the Indraloka (A.140). Elsewhere it is said that Atri worshipped Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara and requested them to be his sons. Later on they were born to him as Datta, Soma and Durvāsā (A.144). The sages Aigirasas saved people when the earth devoured them (155.4). Lord Viṣṇu protected the sage Mārkaṇḍeya at the time of the great deluge (A.53). By the grace of lord Śiva, the dead child of the sage Kapālāgaṇatama was reenlivened (59.3). The sage Vajñavalkya had discussions with the king Janaka regarding Bhukti and Mukti (88.5-15). When Brahmā created Ahalyā, he had a problem before him as to who should be given the charge of
bringing up Ahalyā, He selected the sage Gautama and later on married Ahalyā to him (87.5,6,29). The sage Galava was well-versed in vedas and vedāngas and he showed the proper way of behaviour to Sanājātā and his mother (92.40,41). The sage Māndavya consecrated Indra in the country Malāvā (96.12,19) King Hariścandra asked the sages Nārada and Pārvata about the importance of a son in one's life (104.4-14). A sage Veda was a great devotee of lord Śiva (169.4). The seven sages came with their wives to see the merging of the river Gaṅgā into the ocean (1.172) and divided the river Ganges into seven parts and called the seven parts after their seven names, viz. Vāsiṣṭhī, Dākṣineyī, Vaiśvāmitrī, Vāmādevī, Gautamī, Bhāradvājī, Ātreyī and Jāmadagnī (173.3-5). The sage Viśvāmitra explained the philosophy of Karma to Viśvarūpa (173.10-25). Lord Viṣṇu in his incarnation as the sage Dattatreyā taught the Āstāṅga Yoga to the sage Alarka (183.31,32). The sage Vasiṣṭha drank the semen-virile of lord Śiva and deposited it in the six wives of the seven sages after excluding Arundhatī. Afterwards a child with six faces was born who later on killed Tāraka (82.1-12). When the sage Jahnu did not accept the river Ganges as his
wife, she drowned the sacrificial altar of the sage.
Thereupon, the sage was all wrath and he drank the Ganges. Being requested thereupon by other sages, he accepted her as his daughter and thereafter she was known as Jāhnavī (10.14-21, 13.82-88).