The thesis deals with the critical and cultural study of *Srimala Purana* and tackles the problems regarding the Social Practices of *Srimali Brahmanas, Vanikas* and other castes originated from *Srimala*.

The *Srimala Purana* is not only the *purana* in the accepted sense of the term but it is also a *Tirtha Mahatmya* and as such it describes many *Tirthas* which are connected with *Srimala* in some way or other. An effort was made to find out all the *Tirthas*, identify them and fix their Chronology. For this purpose it was essential to prepare a collated text and then study it. For such a study the present work is divided into nine chapters.

Chapter I - Introduction to *Srimala Purana*:

It is an introductory chapter which tries to explain the nature of *Srimala Purana* and its critical apparatus that is used. *Srimala Purana* is a *Jnati Purana* and *Tirtha Mahatmya*. The aims of study and method of study of *Srimala Purana* through internal and external evidences is noted.

An attempt to fix the date of *Srimala Purana* is made in this chapter.
Chapter II - Summary of Srimala Purana:

It gives the summary of the seventy-five adhyayas of Srimala Purana.

Chapter III - The Sources of Srimala Purana:

In this chapter sources of each adhyaya are traced and influence of these sources on Srimala Purana have been traced.

Some of these sources are as follows:

1) The Mahabharata
2) The Ramayana
3) The Puranas and Upapuranas
4) Jain Granthas
5) Local myth and legends
6) Local Geography
7) Social Practices of Srimala

Chapter IV - Geographical data in Srimala Purana:

The geographical features of Bhimirala have been given under the following headings:

Location, Topography, Climate, Geological and Lithological conditions, water resources; the physiography, natural vegetation and cultivation.

The animal husbandary, wild-life, snakes, locust and other natural hazards like Arathi (sandy waves) are recorded. Some of them that are noted in Srimala Purana are compared.
Chapter V - Socio-Economic (Economic) Conditions in Srimāla Purāṇa:

Some Socio-Economic conditions and means of commerce are studied and means of commerce are studied and compared with the time when Srimāla Purāṇa was composed. The character of society is divided as:

i) The house-hold
ii) The occupations
iii) The Animal husbandary
iv) The subsidiary means
v) Farm forestries and local industries
vi) The trade, commerce and currency of Srimāla.

Chapter VI - Socio-Economic Structure (Castes and Social Practices) in Srimāla Purāṇa:

The castes mentioned in Srimāla Purāṇa are described with the history as noted in the Purāṇa. The castes are:

i) Srimāli Brahmanas
ii) Puskara Brahmanas
iii) Srimāli Vanikas
iv) Srimāli Sunāres
v) Bhils
vi) Deval Rajputs
vii) Patolias and Halvai.
Chapter VII - Religious Conditions in Śrīmāla Purāṇa:

In this chapter the religious conditions the Gods, Goddesses, Vratas, Tīrtha Mahātmya and the religious conflicts are discussed.

Chapter VIII - Administration and Polity in Śrīmāla Purāṇa:

The political conditions of the time are described briefly keeping in view the date of writing of the Śrīmāla Purāṇa.

Chapter IX - Conclusion:

It is the concluding chapter evaluating the study of caste purānas.

STATEMENT I

Regarding study of the new facts

This thesis is undertaken to prepare a collated text of Śrīmāla Purāṇa with a view to study the cultural and social conditions noted there in. It has brought to light the following facts:

1. Śrīmāla Purāṇa is a valuable source to study Jnāti and know the significant features of Śrīmāli caste.
2. The method adopted for the study of Kaumārika Khanda of Skanda Purāṇa by Dr. R. N. Mehta, was adopted. It was as follows:

"(1) The detailed examination of the style and subject-matter of the text. The subject matter is obviously a tīrtha māhātmya of region.

(2) Field study of the tīrthas. They were visited for gathering the archaeological evidences. This method gave a first hand information of the tīrthas treated in the work and it also gave independent chronological frame work for this text. Besides, this study incidentally gave some details for tracing the growth of the town of Cambay."

It was observed that the above method was equally effective in the study of the Srīmāla Purāṇa also.

3. To study the beliefs about the ancient cities of the Western India, the study of such Purāṇa is very useful.

4. The Jnāti Purāṇas and tīrtha māhātmya throw valuable light on the important tīrthas of the Ksetra from which the Jnāti emnated.

5. Many cultural traits and social customs of Srīmāli caste could be understood by the study of Srīmāla Purāṇa.
6. The importance of the tirthas of Srimala, their Gods and the way of their worship are also understood by this study.

7. To compare and contrast the post-customs of Srimali caste with those of the present day is made easy by the study of this purana.

8. The geography and situation of ancient Srimala Nagara can be studied with the help of Srimala Purana.

9. The identification of the tirthas noted in Srimala Purana with the help of site-study helped in understanding the pauranic mythology of Srimala Purana.

10. The influence of the local language on sanskrit can be seen by the study of Srimala Purana.

The study has indicated that similar Jnati-Purana and Tirtha Mahatmya require careful study to understand social practices of the castes and the stories about the place to which they belong. This throws light on mediaeval concepts about social practice and belief about the past as well as the chronology of such Puranas or parts thereof.

STATEMENT II
Statement showing the sources of information to the extent to which this work is based on the work of others and original portion of the thesis

Sources of information:

For this thesis all the published works relating to
Srimala Purana, Srimala Nagar and Srimala Kestra which is included in the present Bhinmal city and Bhinmal sub-division of Jalore district of Rajasthan State, have been consulted and studied. They are as follows:

1. The Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency, Part I (History of Gujarat), 1896
2. Gazetteer, Geographiya of Marwar
3. The Rajasthan circle report of 1901
4. Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan by James Tod
5. Marwar census report of 1891, Part III
6. Sirohi Ka Itibas by Pandit Gorishankar Hirasahand Ojha
7. Glorious Rathores by V.N.Rav
8. Geographical dictionary by N.L.Dey
9. The studies regarding Puranas and Upapuranas, by F.C.Hazra
12. History and Culture of Indian people classical age, Vol.III
13. The statistical report of Jalore district, published by the Statistical Department of Rajasthan, from 1962 to 1967
16. Cadstral Maps, Survey of India
17. An Introduction on Kavyānusāsana of Hemachandra
18. Gujarāt-ni-Raiddhanīya, by R.C. Parikh
20. Sraman Bhagwan Mahāvīr by Munikalyanvijai
22. Śrimalī Sidhānta (Amarālā), by Pandit Nand Ram Trivedi of Jodhpur
23. Puskarnā Jnati kā itihās by Mitha Lal Vyas of Jodhpur
24. Gujarāt Nu Murtividhāna by Kansalal Dave
25. "Praśād Mandan" by Sutrādhar Mandan, a Vastusāstra, edited by Pandit Bhagvandas Jain
26. Articles published by M.S. University by Dr. R.N. Mehta:
27. Jain Āgam Sahitya Ma. Gujarāt, by Dr. B.J. Sandesara

29. "The Hindu temple" by Stella Karmirsch, Professor of University of Calcutta, 1946

The extent to which this work is based on the work of others

All the works noted above were consulted. The opinions of the authors noted thereof are the parts of the work which depend on the sources already noted. The identification of the tirthas was based on the information received from the field-work. Thus many parts of the work are based on the previous works and local traditions that were collected.

Original portion of this thesis

This thesis is based on new discoveries revealed by the study of Śrīmāla Purāṇa. These are summed up as follows:

1. Original map of the town of Rāhmat and its sub-division is prepared and the tīrthas of Śrīmāla Purāṇa have been pointed out with their actual locations.

2. Origin and history of the castes of Śrīmāляет with their beliefs have been discovered with their customs and social trends through the study of Śrīmāla Purāṇa.
3. The area of Bhinamal and its geography with flora and fauna, annual rain-fall, and climate, wild-life, agricultural products, animal husbandry, society and its occupation have been studied and compared to the conditions mentioned in the Srîmâla Purâna.

4. Ancient commerce and industries and currency used in Srîmâla have been studied.

5. The causes of down-fall of Bhinmal and rise of Patan have been studied as viewed in Srîmâla Purâna and as known through history.

6. The conflict of religion specially in Jain and Brahmâna have been noted with its actual position in mediaeval period in Western India specially in North Gujarat and West Rajasthan.

7. The influence of local language on Srîmâla Purâna have been studied through the study of the language of Srîmâla Purâna.

8. Collation work of the Manuscripts of Srîmâla Purâna with text published have been done.

9. Effort to fix the age of the Srîmâla Purâna has been undertaken through internal and external evidences.

10. The Tîrthas of Srîmâla Purâna have been studied through the exploration work and iconographical study of the images Tîrthas was made. The Tîrthas were examined archaeologically.

11. The ancient city Bhinamal have been studied and compared with details of Srîmâla Purâna.
The castes that migrated from Srimala have been studied and their beliefs about their origin have been analysed.

The study discovered the major fact that:

i) The study of Caste-Puranas is very essential in order to know the history of castes existing in Indian society.

ii) The religious conflicts may be gleaned through the study of Caste Puranas.

iii) The Puranas give the actual data which could be helpful in identifying the Tirthas in old city with its surroundings and the social status prevailing at the time of their writing or the traditions that were preserved at that time.

It is of interest to know that the study of Caste Puranas should be undertaken for getting a better picture of society. Without their study it is very difficult to get the actual picture of a particular caste. To get cultural data of Indian Social Life, the study of Caste Puranas is essential and of vital importance.
Illustration

No. 1

KAMALA
(Devi ŚRI of Śrīmāla)

Śrīmāla Purāṇa, LXII

Gajalakṣaṁi in Mahalaksamī Temple

Bhimnāl