Chapter IV

Religious Beliefs mentioned in S. M.

Religion has its basis in time-tested customs, beliefs, usages and philosophical ideas. To have a comprehensive estimate of a work like S.M, it is necessary to study the "Religious matter" contained in the poem. N. P. was a very orthodox poet who has enumerated many of the religious beliefs prevailing during his contemporary period.

1. Creation of the Universe

The eleventh verse of the eighth canto of the poem describes in brief the creation of the universe.¹ The Lord created three guṇas and then the frigid (jāda) nature out of these three guṇas. He also created Caturmukha Brahmā, Rudra other gods, senses, elements and fourteen worlds.

This scheme of creation stands already explained in the Maṇmañjari, another poetical composition of the same poet.²

Even in the Viṣṇu-purāṇa, the scheme of the creation has been described fully in the second chapter of the first part.³

It is said that Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord exists in different forms, be it a micro-form or a macro-form. Brahmā and other souls in different structures of creation are different forms of the same Lord.
The *Visnu purāṇa* also describes that the Lord with the help of *Rajoguna* becomes Brahmā to create the world; with *Sattvaguna*, he looks after the same in the form of Viṣṇu. At the end, He in the form of Śiva, taking the help of Tamoguna destroys the whole universe.

The *Visnu-purāṇa* emphatically says that the works of the creation, the preservation and the destruction of the world are the works of the same Lord.⁴

The twelfth verse of the eighth canto of *S M.* is in accordance with the above theory.⁵

There is nothing but He, declares the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*. The creator and the created, the protector and the protected and also the destroyer and the destroyed all are but his forms.⁶

2. Tapta-mudradharana:

There is a mention in *S M.* about the wearing of the marks of heated metallic mudras. M. himself performed the ceremony.⁷

The *Chalari* explains:⁸ There were some people who were eligible to receive instruction in real philosophy (which is Dvaita Vedānta). They were to be given *Viṣṇu-dīksā* and were to be made devotees of Lord Viṣṇu. Hence M. made them have *tapta-mudrā-dhāraṇa*. That is two metallic seals each having the mark of conch (*pañcājanya-śaṅkha*) and wheel (*sudarśana-cakra*) were heated red-hot and were imprinted on their two arms-wheel-seal on the right arm and the conch-seal on the left arm. Then they were imparted instruction in sacred philosophy by M. This suggests that those who do not obtain *Viṣṇu-dīksā* are not eligible to receive instruction in Dvaita Vedānta.
The importance of wearing marks of the heated seals is described in the *Varāhapurāṇa*.

The goddess Earth receives instruction from Varāha, the Lord incarnate regarding the *modus operandi* of wearing the *mudrās*.

One may wear either heated metallic *mudrās* or the marks with the help of *Gopicandana*. These marks are to be worn by the Vaiṣṇava brahmins. The procedure of wearing these marks is also explained in detail in a passage of the *Skandapurāṇa*.

In this connection it is pertinent to note the detailed comments of C. M. Padmanabhachar:-

"The end and aim of all our symbols, as castemarks, image-worship, and Nama Sankeertans, as well as all the rites we perform, is Bhakti. Ritualism is only the lower stage of Bhakti, the training school of mental and moral drill, in which every man should undergo a rigid discipline to bring his senses under control and acquire the 'one pointed concentration' indispensable for salvation. The ritual may look like a shell devoid of vitality. But it is really not so. Ostensibly, it may look a mere fossil. But it is, in truth, a nutrition for the tender growing plant of spirituality. Let us see what it consists of.

"With a laconic brevity hardly appropriate for the subject, the District Manual of South Canara sums up Sri Madhva's injunctions in three words. It says that 'Ankana' 'Namakarana' and 'Bhajana' constitute the sum total of Madhva observances. A brief gloss adds that 'Ankana' is marking the body with symbols, especially hot iron. A foreigner unacquainted with Indian customs, is not likely to be particularly edified by the text and the gloss. He will run away with the idea that Madhvas are so many savages who undergo a branding-torture everyday of their lives, and that the practice is one akin to *Sati* and other forms of self-
immolation spoken of in weird stories of Indian life. But, as a matter of fact, branding does not exist as an evil, and no legislator or philanthropist need trouble himself to offer succour to save this community.

"Hinduism insists on every votary making no secret of his professions, and of exhibiting them, by openly wearing symbols and badges. Every caste, every asrama, and every cult, has its characteristic insignia. It is expected that the Hindu should not be ashamed to own open allegiance to his faith and publicly wear the prescribed marks. English education having shaken Hindu beliefs, has, of late, brought about a kind of double life, by reason of external symbols being adhered to, while the underlying faith has gone. This however is no fault of Hinduism.

"These caste-marks and badges are highly useful to promote solidarity among the members of the particular brotherhood. They serve as a banner for all co-religionists to recognize one another at a glance and rally together in the name of a common creed. The symbols are, every one of them, instinct with occultism, revealing to the esoteric inquirer, spiritual truths of value. It is difficult to see where the notion of barbarity comes in, when a social or religious guild adopts symbols analogous to masonic watchwords. Some Europeans probably confuse the caste-marks with tattoo pictures in paint introduced into the skin by a process of painful pricking. But the marks in question are merely smeared over the skin, liable to be wiped away by a copious perspiration.

"The forehead marks of a Madhwa Brahmin are a perpendicular line of charcoal with a reddish dot at its base. It is not any charcoal that is used for the purpose, but only a piece that had been used red-hot for burning incense to the Deity. The dot is a mixture of saffron and chunam whose chemical union produces
a reddish paste. The symbol worn on the forehead resembles the stem and bulb of a thermometer set in between two vertical lines of Gopi-mud or sandal paste. On the upper arms, the chest and belly, tracings of Gopi mud or sandal are prominent, resembling tapering leaves or flames. The central one represents a lotus stalk supporting a flower. On these tracings and upon the temples near the corners of both the eyes, marks of metallic seals, dipped in Gopi-mud are also visible. Just as a Sri Vaishnava is made out by the striking tracings in white and red upon his forehead and in numerous places on the body, and just as Smarthas are made out by horizontal lines of ashes on the said parts, Madhwas wear the marks aforesaid so as to be identified beyond mistake. The stamps are the emblems of Vaishnavaism. They represent the weapons of Vishnu. Whenever the Guru on the pontificate throne goes about touring, his followers receive imprints of the metallic seals heated more or less over the fire. At the Upanayana, every father or spiritual guru blesses the young initiate with the imprint, the Gopi-paste being used instead of fire. Sri Vaishnavas too submit to this holy branding at the hands of gurus. With us, the branding is very mild indeed, and occurs at enormous intervals, not more than once or thrice in a life time, on an average. These namams or tracings seem to have been largely in vogue in Canara at, and before, the time of the Master. Men professing Bhagavata Sampradayam wear these identical namams, to this day, though they are strong not madhwas. This community of smarthas is numerically strong in Canara. In faith, they occupy a position midway between Saivities and Vaishnavites, for, they hold Siva and Vishnu to be of equal rank. They do not wear the mudras or seals. They officiate as priests in several temples of Siva in that district.

"Sri Madhva was probably born in this sect and therefore inherited the namams under consideration. He perpetuated them with the addition of Vaishnava symbols, viz., mudras"
"It is a cardinal belief of Sri Madhva that the thought of the Supreme Being at the moment of one's death is of the greatest importance to one's spiritual salvation. It is only sages that are capable of it. Ordinary people remain either dazed or think of some mundane object while in extremis, and hanker after a sensual pleasure. These are bound to be re-born as slaves of that particular desire. Those who think of God at the crisis when life is ebbing away, attain immortality. Such is the strong belief.

"With this aim steadily kept in view, the ritualistic code is drawn up so that every thought, word, and act may be turned towards God. Man is nothing if not a slave of habit. It is of the utmost importance that our activities in the direction of virtue and rectitude should be so drilled as to become automatic. It is of the utmost importance that religious duties should become assimilated into our mental and spiritual framework as mechanical volitions.

"When the child begins to walk, every step it puts forward is the result of deliberate volition and conscious effort. When a lady is learning to play on a piano, she seeks out, by effort, the keys of the note and exerts herself to lay the finger on the right spot. Soon, the volition becomes mechanical and effort disappears. The child runs without any thought of the steps; and the lady produces melodious airs without thinking at all of the keys and the fingers. In each case, the will has degenerated into automatic action. Such is the drill of a military soldier. The story goes that a military deserter was once spotted and arrested in a crowd, when the detective simply cried "Attention" at random, and marked its effect among the multitude. The deserter involuntarily responded to the call, while everybody else stood heedless.
“The symbols of God are meant to serve as remembrancers of Vishnu, so that the Bhakta may automatically think of Him even when his senses are in disorder, when his brain is dazed or his soul is in a trance.” [Op cit pp. 177-178].

3. All About God’s Incarnations:

It is firmly believed by Hindus that gods from heaven incarnate in various forms to protect the good in the world. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bagavādgītā* has asserted that he would incarnate whenever there occurs the need to uphold Dharma. Further, he has declared every great personality as incarnation of some or other heavenly deity.

M.’s followers believe that Lord Viṣṇu incarnates only in the three Yugas viz.: Kṛta, Tretā and Dvāpara. Since He does not intend to have his incarnation in the Kaliyuga, He sends other gods or deities to incarnate and work for Him.

It is believed that when there was chaos in the world and real knowledge to attain salvation was eclipsed and it was not to be known even by the good, the Wind-god was instructed by Lord Viṣṇu to incarnate in the form of M., to remove false knowledge and to propagate real knowledge of Lord Viṣṇu. The Wind-god had already taken two incarnations to his credit - one was of Hanumān in the Tretāyuga and another of Bhima in the Dvāparayuga. The incarnation as M. is dealt with else-where in the thesis.

The mention of incarnations is found in the first canto of *Ś M.* and also in the eighth canto wherein all the incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu are enumerated. The incarnations enumerated are:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Animisesvara</td>
<td>Divine Fish</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hayagriva</td>
<td>Horse headed-god</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Kurma</td>
<td>Tortoise</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Varaha</td>
<td>Boar</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Narasimha</td>
<td>who killed Hiranayakaśipu</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Hari</td>
<td>Hari</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Parasurama</td>
<td>who punished kṣatriyas</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Vedavyāsa</td>
<td>One who systematized Vedas, composed brahmasyātra, Mahābhārata Purāṇas &amp;</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upapurāṇas</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rāma</td>
<td>Dāsarathi Rāma</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Kṛṣṇa</td>
<td>Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mahidāsa</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Kalki</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Yajña</td>
<td>Yajña</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Kapila</td>
<td>the great sage who burnt to ashes 60,000 sons of Sagara.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Dhanvantari</td>
<td>The god of Medicines</td>
</tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Mohini</td>
<td>Lady who hypnotized demons during the churning of the ocean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Dattatreya</td>
<td>Three-headed son of Atri &amp; Anasūyā</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Kumāra</td>
<td>Śaṃmukha, the army-chief of gods.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Rṣabha</td>
<td>Rṣabha</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Haṁsa</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Nara</td>
<td>Nara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Nārāyaṇa</td>
<td>Nārāyaṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Innumerable are Lord's incarnations; for, in every good person, we are habited to find an incarnation of god. The above twenty-two incarnations stand enumerated in various scriptures; they are also considered as most important.

The *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* describes the incarnations as below.14

1. Four-headed Sanatkumāra who protected Celibacy.
2. Boar's incarnation to lift the earth from Pātāla.
3. An ascetic called Nārada who composed Pañcarātra to preach desireless, selfless Karma.
4. Nara-Nārāyaṇa born to Dharma and Murtidevi to perform great penances.
5. Kapila, the Lord of Siddhas who propagated the Sāṅkhya philosophy.
6. Dattātreya born to Anasūyādevi and Atri to teach *Adhyātma* to Alarka and Prahlada.
7. Yajña born to Ruci Maharśi and Ākūti who ruled along with gods, Yama etc., throughout the Svāyambhuva Manvantara.
8. Rṣabha born to Nabhi and Merudevi preaching *Dharma* to all.
10. Matsya which protected during the Pralaya king Satyavrata a would-be Vaivasvata Manu.
11. Kurma which prevented the 'Mountain Meru' from sinking in the ocean during the churning of the ocean by gods and demons.
12. Dhanvantari who is the god of medicines.
13. Mohini who hypnotized demons for distributing the nectar among gods.
14. Narasimha who tore off the body of demon Hiranyakasipu to protect Prahlada.
15. Vāmana (dwarf) born to Aditi and Kaśyapa, who demanded from Bali, the
demon-king, space measuring three steps and conquered all the three
worlds, to hand over the same to Devendra.

16. Paraśurāma, who went round the world twenty-one times to eradicate
the Kṣatriya race.

17. Vedavyāsa born to Parāśāra and Satyavatī who systematised the Vedic
literature for the benefit of the world at large.

18. Rāma, son of Daśaratha, who killed the demon-king Rāvana.

19 & 20. Balarastra and Kṛṣṇa among Yādavas who unburdened the world
of bad elements.

While the above twenty incarnations have already occurred, two are
yet to occur.

21. Buddha to be born in Kīkala country (Gayā) to hypnotize the evil
elements.

22. Kalki - at the end of Kaliyuga, to eradicate the evil

It is believed by the Hindus that whenever the evil in the world
increases to unbearable extent, the Lord will incarnate to protect the good in the
interest of the world.

Though there is some difference in enumeration of twenty-two
incarnations in S M. and the Bhāgavata, by and large they are the same.

The incarnations are of two types: 1) Anupravesāvatāra; and
2) Svarūpāvatāra Incarnation through the bodies of other gods etc is called
Anupravesāvatāra, while incarnating with His true form is Svarūpāvatāra. These
bodies or forms are not the result of Karma as in respect of other creatures. Hence
they are called incarnations.
Also these incarnations can be classified as i) Pūrṇāvatāra; and ii) Aṃśāvatāra

Lord's incarnation with his own true form with all attributes is called Pūrṇāvatāra Aṃśāvatāra is the manifestation of the Lord through the Jīva (life) which is the abode of the Lord. The Pūrṇāvatāras are Varāha, Nārāyaṇa, Matsya, Kūrma, Mohini, Narasimha, Vāmana, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

4. Yajña - Its importance and procedure

The eighteenth verse of the first canto describes the war between Śrī Rāma and Rāvaṇa as a Yajña or sacrifice in which Sugrīva was Yajamāna, Hanumān the Adhvaryu, Laksmaṇa the Pratiprasthātā, Āṅgada and others Hotṛs, Agnidhra etc., were Rtvikṣ, and Rāma was the fire. Verses from forty-four to fifty-one in the ninth canto also give us an account of a Yajña performed through Madhva's brother. This shows that N.P. had much interest in Yajña as he has compared even the war with a Yajña.

The word 'Yajña' is derived from the root 'Yaj' Devapūjaṃsāṅgati-karana-dānesu The Yajña is mainly the worship of the Lord. It has many names 'Śvāhā' 'Adhvard' 'Yāgṛ' 'Saptatantra' 'Makhā' 'Krati' etc.

The Karmakāṇḍa of the Vedas gives details about Yajñas to be performed. When did this institution of sacrifice begin? It initially might have been a type of "Fire worship" or most ancient form of worship of the Lord through Agni.

It is said, Prajāpati created the Yajña and the rest of the world together. The Yajña was considered to be Kāmadhenu for getting whatever is wanted. Even the Bhagavadgītā makes this point clear.
Yajña was considered as "All giver" or "All powerful". Even gods had no power to stop or prevent its results. The belief was that whatever you had offered would certainly be got back. This principle was applied to such an extent that, for some time, gods were reduced to an unimportant position. "This was because of the complications of rituals. S N Dasgupta points out: The direct result of the growth contributed however to relegate the gods to a relatively unimportant position and to raise the dignity of the magical characteristics of the sacrifice as institutions which could give the desired result of themselves."

The performance of sacrifice was to be in accordance with Vedic injunctions and the deviation however negligible it may be, was believed to be dangerous. Though the gods were offered oblations they had no say in the results. The results were automatic and mechanical.

Haug notes Yajña "to be a kind of machinery in which every piece must tally with the other." Even the slightest discrepancies may cause danger. There was an instance in which one by name Tvastr performed a sacrifice for the birth of a demon who would be able to kill his enemy, Indra. Owing to the mistake on account of a single word, the object was reversed and the demon who was born was killed by Indra.

The Yajña is an eternal entity. The creation of the world itself was the result of sacrifice by the Supreme Being. The Yajña exists as Haug says "as an invisible thing at all times and is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be electrified."
It is believed that these *Yaññas* producing results automatically were the first seeds for the theory of *Karma*. But subsequently the Vaisnava cult was mostly responsible for adding the element of devotion to it.

Fire is the mouth through which the gods take their share.\textsuperscript{22}

Agni is the first god from the bottom and through him only whatever is offered would reach the gods.\textsuperscript{21}

The Vedas themselves are said to be the products of revelation in sacrifice.\textsuperscript{24}

In the *Gita*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says "Brahman is the product of *Aksara*; *Karma*, that of Brahman and *Yañña* that of *Karma*; rains etc., are due to Yajña while the food is the product of rains. All creatures are the result of food. Thus all-pervasive Brahman is eternally established in *Yañña*.\textsuperscript{25}

The process of sacrifice is believed to be operated through the Fire on the earth, Wind in the atmosphere and the Sun in the heaven.

The Sun is responsible for the rains which are responsible for the food and the people therethrough.\textsuperscript{26}

The *Purusa-sūkta* gives an account of a sacrifice which had seven boundaries.\textsuperscript{27} The twenty-one *samits* for the sacrifice were twelve lunar months, five seasons, three worlds and the Sun.\textsuperscript{28}

Why is a sacrifice to be performed? A brahmin is indebted to sages, gods and ancestors. He can get rid of the indebtedness towards sages by observing celibacy and study, towards gods by performing sacrifices and towards ancestors by begetting offspring. Hence *Yañña* is a duty of the brahmin towards gods.\textsuperscript{29}
The Gita emphasizes that one who consumes Yajña-prasāda, would be rewarded with Brahmaloka. Even the purpose of sacred thread is also Yajña. Now, coming to the procedural aspects of Yajña, it is to be performed through Vedic scholars who are called Ṛtviks. They will be given assignments depending on the scholastic ability and necessities of the circumstances.

There are many cadres in Ṛtviks but we may mention the four major of them viz., Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Udgātṛ and Brahmā -

(i) Hotṛ : He is a priest well-versed in the Rgveda. His duty is to chant mantras from the Rgveda and invoke gods in a sacrifice.

(ii) Adhvaryu : He is well-versed in the Yajurveda. He is so called as he institutes an advara or sacrifice. He is to look after the procedure of performance of the sacrifice. His main function is to offer oblations. He is called the "Executive Head". He had to measure the ground to build the altar, to prepare the sacrificial vessels, to fetch wood and water, to light the fire and to bring the sacrificial beast and offer it to the gods.

(iii) Udgātṛ : He chants the hymns from the Sāmaveda to please the gods, invoked in the sacrifice.

(iv) Brahmā : He is to supervise all the details of a sacrifice. He has to permit every work in the sacrifice by spelling the word appropriate to the circumstances. He has a place earmarked for him which he should not leave till the sacrifice is performed. He has to protect the sacrifice from commission of shortcomings, omissions, and over-performance.

Brahmā sits on the southern side of the altar to protect the sacrifice from evil spirits since they are believed to be coming from the south. His consent for every act will be expressed with the pronunciation of 'Om.'
Even during a marriage ceremony, when the couple goes round the sacred fire, Brahma moves just outside to protect the couple.

N. P. mentions that the Yajña was performed by M’s brother as Hotr as guided by M. It was so meticulously perfect that even gods were pleased with it.

5. The important Samskaras:

Hindu religion emphasizes that every one born in the three upper classes should go through sixteen samskaras or purificatory rites during one’s lifetime. The sixteen purificatory rites are


The Manusmṛti gives the details about the rites. Also, the Viṣṇupurāṇa deals with some of them in detail.

The Jāṭakarma should be performed, according to Manu immediately on the birth of a child even before cutting the umbilical cord. The child should be given honey with the essence of gold to drink.

The Viṣṇupurāṇa says that the father has to perform Jāṭakarma and Nāmakaraṇa and other rituals for the prosperity of his son. He has to offer feast to brahmans, who should be seated facing the east and who do not fail to perform
Sraddha for gods and manes. He should offer pindas made of curds, barley and badari fruits. The offering shall be made with 'Daivatirtha' i.e. using the finger tips. Further with the help of little finger, he has to offer 'Prājapatyatirtha' with all formalities, i.e. Upacāra-dravya. These rituals are to be performed during all holy ceremonies including marriage and Brahmopadesa.

The twenty-eighth verse in the second canto of SM describes about the performance of Jaïakarma and Namakarana ceremony of M.

Namakarana or the naming ceremony shall be done on the tenth or twelfth day from the child’s birth. There is no bar to perform it on any other auspicious day, says Manu.

Depending on the taste, a brahmin shall be given a name with auspicious attributes, a Kṣatriya, a name “symbolising strength”, a Vaiṣya, a name with some symbol of ‘money’ and any name to the rest. They shall be given respectively surnames meaning Sarma, Raksā, Pusti, Prāñju (Surnames like Sarma, Varma, Gupta, Dasa etc.). Female child should be given a name which has good and auspicious meaning, melody in pronunciation and easily pronounceable.

Regarding the types of names to be given to a child, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa deals with it in detail.

On the tenth day of the birth, the naming ceremony should be done. In the present context, the name Vāsudeva given to the child by Madhyageha, was even endorsed by gods, so says the poet. Hence there is no necessity to discuss about the appropriateness of the name.

The child was the incarnation of Vāyu (Asudeva) who incarnated for spreading the knowledge (Vāj). Hence ‘Vāsudeva’ was the befitting name for the
It is also appropriate as the child was an ardent devotee of Vāsudeva i.e. Lord Hari Himself. The significance of the name 'Vāsudeva' is enumerated in the article published in the Souvenir "Ananta Vaibhava" of Ananta Padmanabhaswamy temple, Kumble (14.4.76). The details from page 42 to 46 are given herebelow:

According to M himself, the meanings of the word Vāsudeva are many. It also means the "Aḍiśaktisvarupa" since 'Vasu' means goddess "Śakti" or also one who is looking after the world like a mother goddess.

Vāsudeva also means "the child or son of Vāsudeva". Also he is the greatest among the eight Vasus. Even Kṛṣṇa himself was liking that same very much which had declared in the Gita.

The Lord is called Vāsudeva since He permeates the whole universe like the sun permeating with his rays and also because He dwells in all the creatures.

Since the Lord dwells in all and sundry, He is called Vāsudeva. He is the indwelling force in all.

Śrīdhara in his Iḥāgavataṭīkā gives the meaning of the word 'Vāsudeva' as Cittādhīsthita or indweller of the mind. This is synonymous with the meaning of the Gayatri mantra.

Sāṅkaraçārya divides the name Vāsudeva as two words Vāsu and deva and gives the meaning. Hence an appropriate name supported by the scriptures was given to the child by Madhyagehabhatta.
The *Upaniskramana* or *Suryadarsana* is taking the child out or exposing the child to the sunlight. It is usually done in the fourth month from the birth.

The *Annaprāśana* or feeding the baby is to start from the sixth month or any other time depending upon the custom of the family.\(^57\)

*Cūḍākarma* or hair-cut may be begun either in the first or third year. It is known as *Caula* or *Sikhākarma* \(^58\)

Including the nine months in the womb, brahmans shall perform *Upanayana* during the eighth year, Kṣatriyas during the eleventh and Vaisyas during the twelfth year. The maximum age of *Upanayana* for a brahmin is sixteen years, twenty-two years for a Kṣatriya and twenty-four years for a Vaiśya.\(^59\)

*Godāna* is a purificatory rite which is like *Caula* or *Cūḍākarma*, which is known as *Kesānta*. This is to be done in the sixteenth year in case of brahmans, twenty-second year in the case of Kṣatriyas and twenty-fourth year in the case of Vaisyas.\(^60\)

In the twelfth verse of the second canto of *S M.* it is mentioned that young Madhyagehabhatta married a girl who later on became M.’s mother.\(^61\)

The same verse states that Madhyageha married a girl who hailed from a respectable family and who according to the scriptures was of suitable age, beauty and character.

What type of girl is to be married? There are some desired and undesired aspects with regard to the selection of brides. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* has laid down the details.\(^62\)

The *Manusmṛti* also gives details about the same.\(^63\)
Here in S M Madhyageha married a girl who was in conformity with scriptural injunctions. As such they could get a son of the calibre of M. Other purification-rites are not so important in the present context.

6. The significance of some of the places mentioned in S. M.

A. Rajatapithapura:

The place called Rajatapithapura was known as Odipur in the local language which must have in the course of time came to be known as Udupi. The word Rajatapith pura is used in the second canto twice.

The legend of the place is very interesting. Lord Parasurama after exterminating all the Ksatriyas from this world, gifted away all the land to brahmins during a great sacrifice performed by him. Consequently without finding any land for himself, he got a strip of land from the Sea-god, stretching from Gokarna to Cap Camerin. It was got by reclaiming the sea.

Rāmabhoja, a devotee of Lord Parasurāma was encrowned as a king of the strip of the land which was known as Parasurāmaksetra. With an intention to perform Aśvamedha sacrifice king Rāmabhoja selected a place for ploughing the land. During the course, a demon in the guise of a serpent was killed. Since the demon killed was in the form of a serpent, the king got worried. Lord Parasurāma instructed him to have a silver pedestal built with the images of serpents at its four corners. He was also directed to give away to the deserving, gold equal to his own weight. Afterwards the sacrifice was performed. Parasurāma, pleased with the same, declared the land to be a famous place of pilgrimage. The land was known as Rūpyapītha or Rajatapītha. Also it is known as Taulava land because of the Tulabhāra performed by king Rāmabhoja.
Visvapati, in his tika says "the village has the land under which is hidden the silver pedestal or the silver crown measuring about Krosa (¾ th of a Yojana) surrounding Śrimadanatāsana, and it is known as Rajatapithapura."\textsuperscript{67}

In the Bhāva-prakāśikā, N. P. says that Rajatapithapura was known as Udipu in local language. This Udipu must have become Udupi in course of time. But there is another legend as to the derivation of the name Udupi. The Moon-god performed penance to get rid of the curse from Dakṣa Prajāpati. Lord Śiva appeared before the Moon-god and blessed him. There is an ancient temple of Candramaulesvara in the place where Lord Śiva was said to have appeared before the Moon-god. Since Udupati or Udupa i.e the moon or Lord of stars had performed the penance in the place, the same became popular as Udupi.

The tenth verse of the second canto mentions two words Sivarupya and Rajatapithapura.\textsuperscript{68}

This Sivarūpya is a village called Sivalli surrounding the Rajatapiṭhapura.\textsuperscript{69} It is also known as Śivabelli.\textsuperscript{70} Though this name suggests that the modern Udupi and its surroundings were having Śiva as their principal deity, subsequently due to M.'s influence, Lord Kṛṣṇa occupied the place of central and primary deity of the village, now a town.

Lord Anantāsana is the name of Viṣṇu. The Purānic story about Anantāsana is that Lord Viṣṇu appeared before a pious couple in the form of a phallus to bless them with a son. The legend says that Lord Viṣṇu took the form of a phallus to commemorate the learning of archery from Śiva, in his incarnation as Parasūrama. It was perhaps to declare to the world at large that there is no difference between Viṣṇu and Śiva. Hence N. P. says emphatically that Lord Nārāyaṇa is the indwelling god in Rajatapiṭhapura.\textsuperscript{71}
The story of the pious brahmin has also been supported by him. It is said that Lord Viṣṇu is dwelling in the "Śaivī śilā". This is confirmed in the Tīrthaprabandha of Vādirāja.72

The temple of Anantesvara, according to Mādhvas is a Viṣṇu temple in which Lord Viṣṇu is in the form of a phallus. Though the puranic stories and legends support the above, the controversy among scholars is still alive. Some opine that it is a Śiva temple as Anantes'vara is a name like the names of deities of Ś'iva temples elsewhere in the Tulunadu. For example, Candramaulesvara at Kotesvāra, Pancaliṅgesvara at Barkur and so on. Some others opine that Anantesvara is none but Anantasana, who is none other than Lord Viṣṇu. They also argue that the very name“Anantesvara“ itself is the name of Lord Viṣṇu.73

But M. Ganapati Rao Aigal has a different version to tell. He is considered as the father of History of South Kanara and his words carry more weight than any other historian about the history of this district.

He says:- Prior to Śaṅkaracārya, till his time, Udupi town had been inhabited by many Jains. The Anantesvāra temple was a ‘Basadi’ or “Basti” of Jains. Even the Candramaulesvāra temple was also a Jain temple Anantanātha Basadi and Candranātha Basadi were there, where now respectively the Anantesvāra and the Candramaulesvāra temples exist. It is also stated by him that “Chitpadi“ which is about 1½ miles away from Udupi was inhabited by Jains where many Basadis and a Jain Ballal existed. Śaṅkarācārya converted these people into Śaṅkarantes; he converted the Basadis into temples. Shri Ganapati Rao Aigal supports his arguments with evidence of the flag-post in front of Anantesvāra temple. He says that Brahmā’s idol which then occupied the top of the flag-post, during Jains’ time, has been removed keeping the flag-post intact. The sanctum sanctorum of the temple of Anantesvāra is in the shape of a Basadi. Śaṅkarācārya
appointed one of his disciples as the head of the Math and left for Śrīneri. In course of time, the administration of Chitpadi and Nidamboor was taken over by Brahmins from Jains. M. himself was the disciple of Acyutapreksācārya who was the head of the Math at that time. When M. converted the local brahmins into Dvaitins, the Anantesāvara temple became a Mādhva temple.\footnote{74}

Without entering into any controversy, we may have to conclude as follows:

1. Dr. P. Gururaja Bhat does not mention anything about the history of these temples having been Jain temples.

ii. It has been mentioned as Anantesāvara temple as in the case of other Śiva temples.

But at the same time the words of Ganapathi Rao Aigal cannot be taken lightly. Hence,

i. There might have been Jain Basadis before Śaṅkarācārya for which no substantial historical proof can be given

ii. There is no doubt about the fact that it was a Math under Śrīneri Śaṅkarācārya Math's jurisdiction during the time of M, when his Guru Acyutapreksācārya was in charge of the same. There is no bar that Viṣṇu should not be worshipped in the form of a phallus as, like Śalagrama silas, the phallus or linga would represent different gods depending upon its structure. It may here be noted that at Kollur, the phallus represents Deī Mūkāmbikā. In addition there are Brahma-liṅgas in the district. Though there are so many facts in support of Mādhvas, it seems that the principal deity in the Anantesāvara temple prior to M. was Lord Śiva and not Lord Viṣṇu.
B. Pājaka:

This is the place where M. was born. The place Pājaka is about 12 kms. away from Udupi town in the south eastern direction. There is a Durgā temple in the hills of Kunjaru very near to Pājaka.

N. P. in the eleventh verse of the second canto describes the place Pājaka as that place which stands beautified with Vīmānagiri where goddess Durgā, the sister of Lord Kṛṣṇa was installed as the principal deity by Lord Parasūrāma. Also the place abounds in water throughout the year because of Lord incarnate, Parasūrāma.75

Because of “Viśva pājā” (pājā=pālaka=protector) i.e. Lord Parasūrāma, the place bears water all the days in a year (ka- means water) and hence it is renowned as Pājaka.76

Lord Parasūrāma with his axe, bow, arrow and mace did construct four ponds. Among the four, the Paraśutīrtha is on the eastern side, the Dhanustīrtha on the south, the Gadātīrtha is on the west and the Bānatīrtha on the north.

Regarding the name Pājaka, Viśvapati explains that the Lord-without-birth (Aja) who looks after the world (Viśva), (looks after - Pa) created the ponds for water-supply throughout the year (kam=water). The place having the same is called Pājaka.78

Chalari in his commentary describes similarly79 and it is explained by the same poet in his Prameyanavamalikā as the place where both Parasūrāma and Madhvacārya (Vāyu) were responsible for the supply of water (ka).

The creation of the holy ponds with four instruments (axe, etc) by Parasūrāma stands explained by Viśvapati.81
The sanctity and the holiness of the place and the tirthas are upheld by many. Some of them have compared the tirthas with river Ganga.82

It is said that Lord Parasurāma created four tirthas to bring home that the Dharma would stand on four legs when good people take bath in these tirthas. Also these tirthas would ward off sin of those taking bath therein, like the weapons (axe, bow, arrow and mace) of Parasurāma which helped him in the construction of the above.83 The goddess Durgā dwells at the hill as though with the affection towards her son, Lord Parasurāma.84

The neighbourhood of this Pajaka and Kunjaru stand as witness to the superhuman deeds of M. during his childhood. There is an ancestral house called "Mūdu Matha" where Vasudeva took birth and spent his childhood. Many places there remind us of the child-plays of M. Among them is a place on the hill-top wherefrom he took a jump to reach his house in response to his mother's call. Here Vādirajatīrtha installed an idol of M.

The spot at which M. offered tamarind seeds to the creditor and another spot at which he crushed demon Manimana in the guise of a serpent to death are still shown by the local people. A stone on which M. started learning the alphabets is also preserved. All these are the reminiscents of M.'s boyhood deeds.

C. Kabenad:

The ninth verse in the thirteenth canto describes M.'s visit to Kumbla or Kabenad.85 Also the twenty-first verse in the same canto mentions the same again.86

These two verses give us an account of the visit of M. to Kumbla. The word "visaya"87 used in the verse is no other place than Kabenad.88
“Kabe” means “sthmbha” or a pillar. King Jayasimha was also known Kabesimha in Tulunadu. There in the said place, M. visited the temple of Madanādhipati, which place is called Madhur.

It is better to know something about this Kabenad and this temple.

Kabenad was a part of Kumbla in those days which was coming under Tulunadu. To the south of Kabenad there is Kolathynadu. The Madanesvara temple here is a Śiva-temple. Madhur is famous for Ganeśa-temple where “Appam” made from ghee offered to the deity.

There are two different stories in two different Puranas about this place. The place was then known as Madhupuri.

In the Brahmānda-Purāṇa the installation of Ganeśa-idol is attributed to Lord Parasurāma, who during his pilgrimage from Kanyakumari towards north, came to Madhupuri. He not only installed the idol of Ganeśa but also got constructed the temple and the manṭapa. He also arranged for the daily offering of “Appam made from ghee” and handed over the same to a brahmin called Lakṣmindhara. It was also arranged to be looked after by a son of the local tributary king.

In the Skanda-Purāṇa, a different version is given. It is said: When a Mahārudrayāga was performed by Dharmagupta, the king of Traigarta, it could not be completed due to heavy rains. The sages went to Kumāradhāra and asked Vasuki the reason of the heavy rains obstructing the completion, of the sacrifice. Vasuki asked them to worship Ganeśa and start the sacrifice afresh. It was accordingly done and completed. The king got constructed a Śiva-temple also at the place and installed a linga of Madanesvara.
The other subsidiary deities are Durgā, Subrahmanya and Śāstā.

With all these legends we can come to the conclusion that the temple is a very old temple.

The historical importance of other places mentioned in S M. is covered under the chapter "The Historical Aspects."

7. Salutation; Prostration before God.

N. P. teaches us through M. as to how to salute or prostrate before the Lord. A salutation made with total surrender excels the performance of hundreds of Āsvamedha-sacrifices. M.'s prostration before Lord Anantesvara was so complete and meticulously perfect that gods became pleased and brahmins became stunned.93

The poet says that M. did prostrate, not because he was not prostrating before Anantesvara. In other words, M. had been prostrating and saluting Lord Hari every moment. But this prostration was to show to the world to emulate him in correct salutation.94

A well-performed Namaskāra is more than or equal to ten Āsvamedha-sacrifices. A person who had performed ten Āsvamedha-sacrifices may get a rebirth, but it is not the case with the person saluting the Lord—declares sage Vyāsa.95

Chaḍlari endorses that M.'s salutations to the Lord were to educate people at large.96

Namaskāra is one of the sixteen ways of worship of Lord Viṣṇu.97

It is also one of the sixteen formalities for performing worship of the Lord and also for respecting guests deserving respect. The namaskāra
in which the chest, the head, the eyes, the mind, the speech, the feet, the hands and the knees are involved is called 'Asṭāṅga-praṇāma'.

Manu also declares that those who do Asṭāṅga-praṇāma to their teachers will be blessed with long life, knowledge, fame and might. This will also be true in the case of those who serve elders.

Namaskāra to the Lord wards off all the evils—declares the Bhāgavata.

In conclusion we may say that Namaskāra is an inseparable way of cultural and religious life of Hindus. The Bhāgavata mentions Vandanam as one of the nine types of Bhakti.

M. himself places namaskāra above thousands of crores of other ways of warding away sins. Those who do namaskāras to the Lord are worthy of respect—asserts M. upholding the importance of namaskāra.