CHAPTER II

THE KAUMARIKA-KHANDA:

1. A SHORT DESCRIPTION

2. INFORMATION ABOUT MANUSCRIPTS

3. CHRONOLOGY
CHAPTER - 2

(I) A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF KAUMĀRIKĀ-KHANDA:

The Kaumārikā-khanda is a part of the Māheśvara-khanda of the Skanda Purāṇa. The Skanda Purāṇa, dealing with many mahātmyas, is one of the most important and comprehensive work for the study of Indian History and Culture. In it Kaumārikā-khanda deals with the area around Cambay.


The Gujarati edition of the Kaumārikā-khanda was published by Shri Narmadasankar T. Bhatt of Cambay, in the year 1961 A.D. He gives some important informations about the Kaumārikā-khanda in the preface of his book. According to him, a brief description of the Kaumārikā-khanda is available in Marathi and Hindi also.

He further notes that he had seen one MS of the Kaumārikā-khanda, which was written upto fifty adhyāyas by Shukla Manisankar Kashiram and the rest fifty by Shastri Pransankar Nathabhai. The year mentioned therein was Samvata 1960 (1904 A.D.) It had one hundred adhyāyas.
In the opinion of Shri N.T. Bhatt, the adhyāyas in the MSS are found, according to the convenience of writer and therefore printed edition of the Kaumārika-khanda contained sixty-six adhyāyas, whereas the MSS, which he had seen was containing one hundred adhyāyas.

In the present work, two MSS of the Kaumārika-khanda are consulted for the collation work and two more are studied for general informations, But of these four MSS, the MSS from the library of Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay, is found to be a complete work, containing 67 chapters (actually-66). The colophon at the end gives the year. Saṃvata 1890 (1834 A.D.) for completion of the work.

The Kaumārika-khanda is divided in sixty-six chapters. The first thirteen chapters describe the mythological genesis of the Mahī-Sāgara-Saṅgama. Next twenty chapters give a brief history of purānic story of Tāraka-vadhā and establishment of a few Śaivite temples on the Mahī-sāgara-saṅgama tīrthā. Then two chapters for explaining the name of Kaumārika-khanda give the story of Kumāri and Bārkanēśvara. Then in succeeding chapters the story of Sāura, Viṣṇu and Śakti worship are described. From the chapter 58, till the end, the Kaumārika-khanda deals with the story of Bhīmēśvara.

This arrangement of the chapter indicates that the first 41 chapters are devoted to the Śaiva religion. After that story of Viṣṇu, Sūrya and many other gods and goddesses are described.
Area of Kaumarika-khanda

"Biranic geography conceives of the earth shaped like a lotus, the petals of which represent the different continents. Kumarika, (the daughter of king Sataşrnga) who gave her name to the ninth dvipa of the Bharat Varga as Kaumarika khanda is also stated to have herself painted the earth in the form of lotus."\(^1\)

The Kaumarika-khanda which is described as the best of all the countries is identified with India proper. But according to the Skanda-Furana, Kaumarika khanda extended from only the Mahendra mountain to the Pariyatra mountain.\(^2\)

According to the Garuda Furana,\(^3\) however it was bounded on the east by the Kiratas, on the west by the Yavanas, on the south by the Andhras and on the north by the Turukas.

Kumaridvipa is stated to be extending for a thousand yojanas from south to north between the Southern Sea and Bindusara (Himalayan pond)\(^4\).

The area of Kaumarika-ksetra extends from Cambay to the region up to northern side of the river Narmada. The brahmanas of Cambay region, use this connotation in their rituals when they use the word Kaumarika khanda for this area.\(^5\)

1. Awasthi A.B.L. - Studies in Skanda Furana
2. SK P.I, II 39: 113
3. G.P. 55: 6
4. SK P. III, I 172: 8-10
THE MANUSCRIPTS AND PRESENT EDITION:

The text of the Kaumārika-khanda, is edited with the help of a printed text, two complete and one incomplete manuscripts. The Printed text was published in Samvata 1966, 1910 A.D. by Sri Venkatesvara Press, Bombay. The printed edition of Kaumārika-khanda is also available in the Skanda Purāṇa (complete work) published by the Naval Kishor Press, Lucknow (1916- A.D.)

An effort is made in the present work to collate it for a critical study by using available manuscripts.

The following printed work and manuscripts are used in this work:-

MSS- 0 - The MSS marked '0' is the printed copy of the Kaumārika-khanda, published by S.V. Press, Bombay

MSS- 'A'

The place of Deposit: Oriental Institute, Baroda.

Accession No. 3607

Title - Kumārika-khanda

Author - Unknown

Age - not mentioned but paleography suggests circa 17th or 18th century - A.D.

Language - Sanskrit

Script - Devanāgarī

Material - Pale yellowish paper slightly worn-out in parts.

Style - Written in one uniform hand-writing but at places, it has been corrected and letters are written in small size.

Size - 29.25 c.m. x 13 c.m. (11.7" x 5.2")
Folios - 357 (as mentioned on Bāthi.)

Actual No. of Folios - 278

Following Nos. of folios are missing.

Extent - 1 to 66 Adhyāyas

Adhyāya No. 26 to 39 and 66 are completely missing.

No. of lines in each folio: 14 (Fourteen)

No. of letters in each line: About 40 to 43 Devanāgari letters, scribed in dark-black ink.

Copyist -

Margin to each Folio - Right side 3 c.m.
Left side 3 c.m.
Upper side 3 c.m.
Lower side 3 c.m.

All the slokas are not numbered, at many places numbering of Adhyāya is also missing.

Slokas are numbered upto 2515.

Numbering of Adhyāya in MS and printed work, is not similar.

No Rupānjali in the beginning and no 'colophon' at the end. 'Ruptha-Matrā' is used in writing the work.

The MS runs upto Kelesvari Mahātmaya.
The Place of Deposit: In the library of Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay, Bombay.

Accession No. 906 Vol.II, Part I,

Title: Kaumārika-khaṇḍa

Author: Unknown

Age: Sanviata 1880 (1834 A.D.) as noted in the colophon

Language: Sanskrit

Script: Devanāgarī

Material: Yellowish paper, in good condition.

Style: Written in good and uniform handwriting.

Words quite legible.

Size - 28 cm x 12.5 cm.

Folios - 248

Missing nos. of folio - nil -

Extent: 1 to 67 Adhyāyas

(Actually 66 Adhyāyas.)

No. of lines in each folio 11 (Eleven)

No. of letters in each lines: about 42 to 45 Devanāgarī letters

Scribed in dark, black ink.

6. Adhyāyas are found according to the desire of writer. No. similarity with printed work. Adhyāya No. 59 is repeated and Adhyāya 57 is missing from the MSS-B.
Copyist

Margin to each folio: Right side 3 c.m.
Left side 3 c.m.
Upper side 2.5 c.m.
Lower side 3 c.m.

The serial no. of verses is not mentioned. There is no पुराण written in the beginning. But colophon at the end of MS is noted.

Colophons:-

इति श्रीकर्तव्येन कर्तव्यनिर्देशे गृहस्तिः साहित्यायिनी
सारत्विको शास्त्राय:
इति श्रीतन्त्रपुराणेण तिथिनिर्देशाय: विशेषः साहित्यायः समाधिः
शुभं अवलं - संवत - ९४६०

श्रीनामसंतत्वावरणः आचार्यः स्वामिः श्रीमान् ।
श्रीवृन्दावन स्वामिः ।
श्री साहित्य संकल्पः ।
श्री रामचरितानंदः ।
**MSS 'C'**

**The Place of Deposit:** Oriental Institute, Baroda.

**Accession No.:** 623

**Title:** Kaumārika khaṇḍa

**Author:** Un-known

**Age:** Not mentioned

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Devanāgari

**Material:** Pale yellowish paper, appearance old, worn-out in many parts.

**Style:** Written in one uniform hand writing but it has been corrected at many places.

**Size:** 25 c.m. x 11.75 c.m. (10' x 4.7")

**Folios:** 356 (As mentioned on ādiśāhī) Actual No. of folios are 177.

Following Nos. of folios are missing

1 to 3 = 03
49 to 148 = 100
159 to 165 = 07
183 to 195 = 13
to 30 = 06
233 to 236 = 04
250 to 261 = 12

273 to 284 = 12
300 -- 0 = 01
318 to 320 = 03
329 to 331 = 03
333 to 347 = 03

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179

**Extent:** 1 to 63

As there are numerous folios missing from the MSS-'C' Actual missing adhyāyas could not be find out.
No. of lines in each folio: 11 (eleven)

No. of Letters in each line: About 40 to 42 Devanagari letters

Copist:

Margin to each folio: Right side 3 c.m.
Left side 3 c.m.
Upperside 3 c.m.
Lower side 3 c.m.

The serial no. of versed and Adhyāyas are not mentioned.

'Aspāñjali' and colophons are not noted.

The M.S. begins with—

The last line in the M.S.

C. K. K. Ch. I 43
The calcutta MSS was however not available. Its information was collected from Catalogus Catalogorum by T.H. Aufrecht.

The MSS (No. 218), title - Kaumārika-khanda notes -
"The MS under notice contains the Kumārika-khanda only which describes the origin of the name of Kumārika-khanda (a tract of country stretching along the western coast of India from Mahī-sāgara sangama or the mouth of the river Mahī falling in the Gulf of Cambay to Ĝye Comorin) and the sacred places situated therein."

Chronology:
"The value of the Puranic texts as sources of post Gupta-traditional history has not been sufficiently examined. 7
The Purānic literature is usually, anonymous and hence the chronology of its composition remain problematic. Kaumārika-khanda is no exception to this general trend, therefore it is necessary to fix its chronology.

A.M.T. Jackson writing in Gazetteer of Bombay, Presidency in the foot note on Page-211 notes that "Kaumarika khanda a very bulky legend. Mahātmya, professes to be a part of the Skanda-śurāṇa and to give the origin and history of the Kumārika kṣetra in general and stambha-tīrtha in particular. It has no historical value and has been written by persons who knew very little of sanskrit. It may be from 400 to 500 years old. 8"

7. Dr. Raychaudhari H.C. - Studies in Indian Antiquities p. 150
In the absence of any political History in the Kaumārikā-khanda the task of fixing its chronology is rather difficult one. It has to be fixed on the circumstantial evidence of the MSS, language and archaeology. This multidisciplinary approach helps one to draw a few tentative conclusions.

The MSS so far available indicate that the earliest is ascribed to Saatvata 1630 (1574- A.D.)

If this is true then the Kaumārikā-khanda must have been composed at least in the 16th cent. A.D.

The study of the language indicate that the Sanskrit is mixed up with local language (Gujarati) and some of the words have taken the sanskritised form.

The study of tīrthas in Kauṃārikā-khaṇḍa reveals important points for fixing the chronology of Kauṃārikā-khaṇḍa.

The temples of Stambhes'vara, Kumāres'vara, Siddhes'vara and Pratijñēśvara are all simple structure which do not show any feature in their construction which could be referred to the chalukyan style. These temples give indication of late repairs or reconstruction which do not seem to go back to a period earlier than the 16th - 17th cent. A.D.

10. Its detailed description is noted in chapter - 'socio-economic condition of the Kauṃārikā-khaṇḍa'
In the *Kaumārīkā* khandā a note obtained in its chapter XXXIX, 169-170.

This definite reference to repair seems to indicate a time-lag after the first temples were erected.

*Kaumārīśvara* and *Stambhēśvara* temples do indicate some earlier phases and they might be fairly old at the time of the writing of *Kaumārīkā* khandā, which according to the internal evidence suggest that it was written after major phases of repairs, which could not be dated to a period earlier than 16th cent. A.D.

The marble figures of *Surya* and *Lakṣminārāyana* in *Pratiṃbēśvara* temple (under ground) are in Chaulukyan tradition. The linga of this temple is of great antiquity according to the *Kaumārīkā*-khandā. The author of *Kaumārīkā*-khandā, indicates their contemporainity and ascribes their establishment to Kumāra.

The temple of *Mahākāla* on the lake Madāla is also like those of *Kaumārēśvara* and *Stambhēśvara* suggesting that architectually

it could not be ascribed to a period earlier than 16th cent A.D. The temple of Somanāth has repaired in 1806 Samvat (1750 A.D.) is also of the same nature. "They are terraced temples, without any outward appearance of a temple and hence they follow the style developed during the domination of Islam."

Nāresvāra, Kotitīrthā, Bhimesvāra, Bethaks of Vitthānāthājī, and Aparadvārka all do not seem to date from a very early period. The local inquiries reveal that these tīrthas are late construction and repairs of some of them is clearly mentioned in the Kaumārīka-khanda.

From these observation it is clear that present Kaumārīka-khanda takes cognisance of the facts that are not earlier than 16th Cent. A.D. and some of them might belong to 17th cent. A.D. But earlier date of the tīrthas mentioned here do not go back to a period which is earlier than 10th or 11th cent. A.D.

The author of the Kaumārīka-khanda generally takes note of the tīrthas, situated at present and those built or repaired in the 16th - 17th century A.D.

Thus the internal evidence of the text and the external evidence of the Manuscripts indicate that the Kaumārīka-khanda is composed after 13th Cent. A.D. but its main part seem to have been formed by the 16th cent. A.D.

Its present form, might belong to the 17th century A.D.

Evidently the work seem to have grown over a few centuries.

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A view of Naresvara Lake, Cambay