Authors are responsible for their views, which do not bind the Editors and the Trust.

Authors are requested to use Devanāgari characters while writing Sanskrit ślokas and prose passages. They are also requested to follow the system of transliteration adopted by the International Congress of Orientalists at Athens in 1912 [ṛ = r, ṭ = t, ṇ = s, m].

Traditional Sanskrit scholars are requested to send us articles in Sanskrit (i) dealing with the religious & philosophical matters in the Purānas and (ii) explaining the obscure & difficult passages in the Purānas.
being stripped although he mentions her being dragged into the assembly hall. Even in the very killing of Duḥśasana, Bhima refers to Draupadi being dragged by her hair and only asks him with which hand he had dragged her, and Duḥśasana boastfully displays the hand in question, but neither refers to any stripping. In each case it is the insult to which Draupadi was subjected by being dragged into the royal court in a single garment while in her monthly period which features with the occasional additional detail of her being dragged by her hair.

The internal evidence, therefore, suggests that the vastrahāraṇa of Draupadi and the preservation of modesty by Kṛṣṇa's miraculous intervention is an interpolation. The comparatively recent character of the interpolation can be estimated when we notice that even in Bhasa's play Dūtavākya (circa 4th century B.C.) both Duryodhana and Kṛṣṇa only refer to Draupadi being dragged by her hair and not to her being stripped. This passage, including the appeal to Kṛṣṇa for succour, was inserted into the epic after the Bhāgavata and the Devī Bhāgavata purāṇas had been composed. That makes it a fairly late interpolation and the contribution of the Vaiṣṇavite bhakti movement. Confirmation of this diagnosis is available from the Critical Edition of the Sahā Parva which omits Draupadi's appeal to Kṛṣṇa as also that of the Karṇa Parva which omits reference to the stripping in Bhima's speech during the slaying of Duḥśasana.

SOME NOTEWORTHY READINGS IN THE KŪRMA PURĀṆA

By

RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

(1) The Kūrma-purāṇa (=KP) reads : कृष्णपति:द्वारे प्रविष्टे कुषाक्रमः (1.9.25). Here Kuṣadavaja undoubtedly means Brahma. Surprisingly enough the word is not found in any of the lexicons known to us.

The dictionary of Monier Williams however mentions kuṣaketu as a name of Brahma and remarks that the meaning is found in Galano's Dictionary (s. v. Kuṣa). (Ketu is the same as dhvaja). Unfortunately this dictionary is not with us.

Though no direct proof can be given from Sanskrit literature, yet there is reason to believe that the Kuṣa grass has some connection with Brahma. The Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 91.11 is found to extol Brahmadevi as कृषिकास्त्रिरिका which evidently shows this connection.

It is quite likely that in some Puranic tale Brahma has been connected with the Kuṣa grass. Unfortunately we have not come to know of such a tale.

(2) Describing the Vāmana incarnation KP. says that Vāmana learnt samācara from Bhāradvāja:

कृतीपनयो वेदानथैशु भगवान् हरि: ||
समाचारं भ्रात्राजातातं तिलोकयो प्रदर्शयन् ||

(1.16.44)

What is meant by samācara here? Usually the word means manners, customs, virtuous conduct, behaviour, usage. But these cannot be construed with the verb अर्जते : (he studied or read).

The word samācāra is used in Brahmasyātra 3.3.3 and according to Śaṅkara it means वेदांतोपेशेराश्रयः.

It is quite reasonable that KP. uses the word in this very sense in the above verse.

(3) While mentioning Rāma's marrying Sītā, KP. compares it with Kārttikeya's marrying Senā: सेनामिक व च वणमुखः. (1.20.25; Saṃmukha,
having six faces, is a name of Kárthikeya). In fact the actual name of the wife of Kárthikeya is Devasena. The use of Senā for Devasena is in accordance with the rule (विनाप्रत्येक: पृष्ठरस्त्रसदिक्षम: लोपे वक्तव्यः (कालिका 5.3.83)).

A similar example is found in KP. 1.11.227 (पोपिनां लें कुमारक) in which Kumāraka is used for Śānkatumāra. The secondary suffix ka is in svārtha.

(4) KP reads: महाकल्पक कल्पानाम् (2.11.10).

It is somewhat difficult to determine the import of mahākalpa. Mahākalpa is not the name of any kalpa (For a list of kalpas, see Sk. Revā, ch. 13). It may be said that as mahāpralaya is a particular kind of pralaya, so mahākalpa must be a particular kind of kalpa. Kalpa of a higher kind is however not mentioned in the Purāṇas.

It appears that some particular kalpas have been regarded as mahākalpas on account of some reasons (appearance of some great avatāra or occurrence of some great event); for example, the Pārva kalpa is regarded as a mahākalpa in Viṣṇu-p. 1.3.27. According to the comm. Śrīdhara mahākalpa is a secondary (avāntara) kalpa which, on account of possessing some glorious merit, has been regarded as mahākalpa.

(5) In the eulogy of Śiva KP. reads:

यया संततः मायां योगी संकीर्णकल्पः
अवर्ततपर्यंत तस्त हिसामेन नम: || (1.10.68)

The reading apāratara does not yield any good sense; it seems to be corrupt. A careful consideration of the variant readings reveals that it ought to be corrected to अवारपारपयंताः.

Avārapāra is a well-established word, for it has been used by Pāṇini in his sūtra (4.2.93). राज्ज्वारा पाराद बली According to the comm. Prakṛtyāraśarvasva avāra means avāktīra (the near bank) and pāra means paraṭīra (the distant bank). Thus avārapāraparyanta would mean 'embracing all far and near'; cp. the word parāvara in Muṇḍaka-up. 2.2.8 (तलिन्म हुते परावरे), in which parāvara means cause (para) and effect (avara); see Śaṇkara's bhāṣyā परे च कारणालम्बः, अवर्च च कारणालमकः.

(6) In सर्वोपिनिष्टं देवी गुहोपिनिष्टाने ।

(1.11.232) the significance of the word guhya requires to be determined, for guhya may aptly be applied as an epithet to all the Upaniṣads. The word guhyopaniṣad is found in 1.15.195 (देवतागुहोपिनिष्टातु गीतः) also. It occurs in Matsya-p. 248. 73 and in Harivānsha 3.34.40 (गुहोपिनिष्टदशनः). The word is found in Śvetāsvatara Up. 5.56 also.

It appears that guhya upaniṣad means that portion of an Upaniṣad which chiefly deals with the nature of brahman.

(7) While referring to Śiva KP. uses the word pitāmaha in 1.29.64; similarly it uses the word for Śūrya in 1.41.1.

In these places the word is to be taken in a broader sense ('the great father') and not in the conventional sense of Brahmā.

(8) In the passage श्रेष्ठे धर्मसांवाहः (1.7.28) dharma stands not for dharma (merit) but for the bull; cp. बुंसे हि भवान् धर्मः (Mbh. Śānti-p. 342. 88).

(9) The word brahman (neuter) is used as an epithet to the unmanifested prakṛti or pradhāna of Śāṅkhya in 1.4.89 (हृद्याति समवततः). This is found in Vaiṣṇu-p. 4.20 and in other Purāṇas also; see also the Puranic passage quoted in the comm. Ujjvalā on Āp. Dharma Śūtra 1.8.22.4.

The use of brahman for prakṛti is justifiable as it is the ultimate material cause of all internal and external entities. All kinds of activities fall under the guṇas (i.e. prakṛti); that is why some Purāṇas ascribe creation and dissolution to the prakṛti (सत्त्वं ज्ञातसऽसत्तवं कर्तः कत्वा किरिति च, Matsya-p. 3. 15; एतेऽत् = अवयक्त प्रधानः), and some go to the length of saying that the Mahat principle comes out on account of 'the act of seeing' of prakṛti; (प्रकृटिविच्छिन्नमममल्लभजयत्स (SK., Kūrma-khaṇḍa 37. 7).

While referring to prakṛti, Śāṅkhya works also use the word brahman; see प्रकृतिः प्रथमविमुक्तमकन्यायक (Māṭhara-वṛtti on Śāh. Kā. 22).

(10) KP. 2. 37. 13 says that according to Śāṅkhya (एतत् सांवद्याणम्) ātman (i.e. puruṣa) is eka. Since it is an established fact that Śāṅkhya accepts the plurality of puruṣas, some may take the reading as doubtful.

According to us the reading eka is correct, for eka in the above passage does not mean 'one in number', but it means 'simple', 'non-composite' unmixed (सारिन्हाता, ekaraṇa, akhaṇḍa); cp. असारिन्हस्त
should be noted that the particle standing for Dharmasastra). This is however highly doubtful, for the fact that avyakta and puruśa are opposite in character (तद्विपरीतः) and both avyakta and puruśa are similar in some points (तथा च पुमानि). Now as avyakta is eka (one in number), so puruśa is eka (of one form or nature). Here the same word eka is used in two different senses. The comm. Gauḍapāda has expressly remarked 'तस्मात् पुलोक्ते'कः.

(11) I want to conclude the article by referring to the peculiar reading of a verse. KP. 1.11.281-282 contains an enumeration of fourteen vidyās:

शिश्नकलो व्यक्तरः निरक्तः चन्द्र एव च।

tern three न्यायविद्या मीमांसा चोपवृहदगम्यः ||

एवं चतुर्दशिति विषयस्थानाति सताम।

चतुर्दशः सहकर्ताति धर्मो नात्र नानाध्याये इति॥

Curiously enough the number of vidyāsthānas comes to 13, the names being Śīkṣā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Chandas, jyotiḥsātra (i.e. Jyotiśa), Nyāyavidyā, Māmāṇsā and Upābhīṣṣa (i.e. Itihasa-Purāṇa).

It is well known that in the established list of 14 vidyāsthānas four Vedas, six Vedāṅgas, Nyāya, Māmāṇsā, Dharmāsātra and Purāṇa (in which Itihasa is included) are enumerated.

Thus it is clear that the KP. list does not mention Dharmāsātra. It should be noted that the particle च cannot stand for the 14th Vidyāsthāna (i.e. Dharmāsātra), for here the purpose of the verse is to give the names of the Vidyāsthānas and च cannot stand as the name of any śāstra.

Thus it stands to reason that the reading of the second line of verse 281 deserves to be corrected. That the reading दिव्या is corrupt may be proved by the fact that vidyā cannot reasonably be the name of any vidyā or vidyāsthāna.

It may be conceived that the original reading was न्यायवधर्मो (Dharma standing for Dharmāsātra). This is however highly doubtful, for the reading is not supported by the variants and it is difficult to explain how the word dharma was changed into vidyā by the scribes.

These verses with the same readings have been quoted by Bhāskara in his commentary on Lalitāsahasranāma (on verse 129). It is unfortunate that a scholar like Bhāskara failed to notice this discrepancy.

A conjecture may be hazarded about the occurrence of the word विष्या in the place of धर्म in न्यायथामी (conceived as the original reading). It may be surmised that the word dharma was discarded by some scribe willingly as he thought that since dharma (meaning merit) was said to exist in the vidyāsthānas only (भूतानां भूविष्यां विष्माणां) dharma could not be the name of any vidyāsthāna. The vacant place was filled up with the word vidyā by the scribe on account of its being capable of signifying dharma (merit), without considering the impotence of this word in conveying the sense of Dharmāsātra. It is needless to say that this conjecture possesses little strength and we request scholars to afford a better solution of the problem.

1. हंसेन्द्रनाथदास्य श्रीहरिश्चन्द्रचारिणी।

द्रामयोद्धसात्र्यां न नारायणश्च नास्तान्ति से॥

कुसुमसेनदास्य श्रीसाम्रानं। (कम्मता जातहरे)।

कुसुम दर्शनं। कुसुम दर्शन (कम्मता संतमातवी!)

2. कृतीका सत्यसहस्री। कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके।

कृतीका शिवके। (कम्मता नागरे)।

3. कृतीका सत्यसहस्री। कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके।

कृतीका शिवके। (कम्मता संतमातवी!)

4. कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके।

कृतीका शिवके। (कम्मता संतमातवी!)

5. कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके।

कृतीका शिवके। (कम्मता संतमातवी!)

6. कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके। कृतीका शिवके।

कृतीका शिवके। (कम्मता संतमातवी!)
sūtra-style (though the sentences are in verse), the fault of vākyabheda does not apply:

Vivaraṇa on Pañcapādikā, p. 82). This is the reason for describing the sūtra as viśvatomukha

Vivarāṇa on Pacchipādikā, p. 82). This is the reason for describing the sūtra as viśvatomukha

7. cp. इतिहासपुराणायामं केवल तद्यथाविभेदत (Mbh. Ādi 1.267); see also Vāyu-p. 1.201; Padma-p. 2.51; Śiva-p. Vāyaviya 1.1.36).

8. पुराणयायामीमांसायाम परम्परायामास माधवासिता: ||

(Yāj. Śūrṣṭi 1.3)

अहंनामि वेदायामि वीमांसा यायायामितर: |

पुराणायाम परम्परायाम स्विया हेरतामुद्रिस ||

(Viṣṇu-p. 3.6. 28).

QUESTION BOX

[ Scholars are earnestly requested to send us articles or notes bearing their well-considered opinions on the questions (or problems) put forward is this column for solution.

The column was started from the Vyāsa-pūrṇīma number (XXXV. 2) containing six questions. It is gratifying to note that Dr. N. Gangadharan of the Sanskrit Deptt. of Madras University has send his opinions on all the six questions (see below). We have received some more questions for this column which shows the growing interest of scholars in the Puranic field. Questions from the lovers of the epics and Purāṇas are solicited—Editor]

(7)

FIVE HUSBANDS OF DRAUPADI

The story of Draupadi having five husbands has been a point of controversy since Mahābhārata itself. I shall like to know if the fact of her having five husbands is clearly attested by the Puranic evidence as well. I shall also like to know if the propriety of her marrying five persons is discussed in the Purāṇas. Please give the necessary references.

Your's etc.

PRP Verma (Advocate).

Kabirnagar, Varanasi

(8)

KUMĀRASAṂBHA VA THEME IN PURĀṆAS.

Sir,

I have been working on the KumārasyAMBHAV of Kālidāsa. The story is said to be based essentially on the Puranic version. It is well known that Kālidāsa was an admirer of Vālmīki's Rāmāyana. In the 23rd Sarga of the Bāla Kāṇḍa there seems to be another version of the burning of Kāmadeva, quite different from the popular version. The main differences are as follows:

(a) The event took place after the marriage of Pārvatī and not before it.