

INTRODUCTION

Testimonia Commentaries

- Cv = Commentary of Viṣṇucitta, available in print in the edition of the Venkateshvara press, Bombay – 1907.
- Cs = Commentary of Śrīdhara as given in the edition of the Venkateshvara press, Bombay 1907.
- Cr = Commentary of Ratnagarbha as given in VP Edition of Oriental Press Bombay; 1889 A.D. and followed by late H.H. Wilson in his translation of *Viṣṇupurāṇa*.
- Cn = Commentary of Nṛhari as available in the MS. Nos. TR 781-1, 781-2, 781-3 and 781-4 in 4 parts of the Adyar Library Madras.
- Cvv = Commentary of *Viṣṇu Vallabhā* of Kumāra Yogin given in MS. no. 656 of the Oriental Institute and MSS. Library, Trivandrum. The xerox copy of the original MS. is available in the Oriental Institute.
- Cg = Commentary of Gaṅgādhara called *Sanketa* available in the MS. No. 2224 of B.J. Institute Ahmedabad, the MS. bears the date 1383 A.D.

The text of Viṣṇupurāṇa

The text of this part i.e. *amśas* I starts with the enumeration of the twenty four elements as described in the *Sāṅkhya* system of Indian philosophy. This is the feature common with the other Purāṇas. It has been dealt with in full details by the late Prof. W. Kirfel in his '*Daspurāṇa pañcalakṣaṇa*' giving the comparative table of similar, and parallel treatment of the topic on the creation of the universe. The *Sāṅkhya* system popularly known as the *Sāṅkhyaśāstra* has laid several Purāṇas under obligation by its exposition of the creation of the universe as they seem to have followed it in this matter. Then the principle responsible for the creation viz. God Brahmā is taken up by the *Purāṇa*. It gives the information regarding the life-span of Brahmā. The creation of God Brahmā is described and along with it, the rescue of the earth by God Viṣṇu in his Boar-incarnation from the waters of great deluge is described. Thereafter the various types of creation are described. Then follows the description of the creation of the four primary castes and food etc. and a description of primary geography of the earth is also appended to it. This is followed by the description of Prajāpatis like Marīca etc. and the *tāmasa* creation and the progeny of Manu and Śatarūpā.

Then follows the description of *Raudrasṛṣṭi* and the immanence of Lord Viṣṇu and Goddess Laksmī is given with an elaborate treatment resembling the description of the *Vibhūtis* of Bhagavān given in *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* chapter X. The detailed description of the churning of the ocean – the famous *samudramanṭhana* episode forms the subject matter of the following portion. Then follows the description of the progeny of Bhṛgu, Agni and that of the *Pitṛs* like Agniṣvātā etc. Then in three *adhyāyas*, the episodes of Dhruva and Prthu are given. This is followed by the narration of sage Kaṇḍu and his being enamoured by the divine damsel Pramlocā which is the cause of the birth of Māriṣā or Vārṅkṣeyī. Then the marriage of this Māriṣā to the ten Pracetasas is described, which is followed by description of the lineage of Dakṣa and his eight daughters. Then follow the four chapters devoted to the episode