C H A P T E R X.

MĀGHA'S ERUDITION - PAURĀṆIKA STORIES. (CONTINUED).

We examined in the previous chapter the scholarship of Māgha in Philosophical Doctrines. Now we examine his proficiency in Paurāṇika literature. As mentioned in the preceding Chap., Māgha is fully equipped with 'the dozen' mentioned by Rājaśekhara. We noted his scholarship as regards Samaja Vidyā and Pramāṇa Vidyā. Here we shall discuss his knowledge of 'Itihāsa and Purāṇa' to quote the terminology of Rājaśekhara.

Māgha is highly proficient in Paurāṇika Literature as is evident from the allusions he makes in his poem to myths and legends and to mythological personalities. Some of them are important as they throw some light on the cultural background of the age of Māgha. These personalities etc. are arranged below in an alphabetical order.

(1) Agastya: Śiśu. III. 1.

The path of Agastya is referred to here. It is the winter solstice. Agastya is a well-known sage in the Hindu mythology. In the Rgveda, he is described as the offspring along with Vasiṣṭha , of Mitra and Varuṇa, whose seed fell from them at the sight of the celestial nymph, Urvaśī. From the part of the seed that fell into a jar, this sage arose, and is, therefore, called Ghatodbhava, Kumbhayoni etc. The legend of Agastya and the Mt. Vindhya narrated in the Mahābhārata (Vanaparva 104.24; 105.20) probably suggests that

Agastya was the first man to spread Aryan civilisation to the Southern India.

(2) Airāvata: Śiśu I. 8; IV. 13.

I. 8 refers to Airāvata, Indra's elephant. He is milk-white in colour. Here the sage Nārada white like lusty lotus stalk is compared to Airāvata with his white body covered with housings painted in various colours.

In IV. 13, we are told that the beauty of the silver rock with the tree bearing a thousand flowers growing on it was like that of the white Airāvata with Indra of thousand eyes mounted on it.

He is one of the fourteen jewels churned out of the ocean. He is Indra's vehicle and white in colour. He has seven trunks and four tusks.[1]

(3) Amarāvatī: Śiśu. I. 51 and III. 62.

It is the capital city of heaven where Indra rules. It was besieged by Rāvana (I. 51). It is said to be situated on the mountain Meru. The city of Dwārakā is said to have challenged this city of gods (III. 62).

(4) Aruṇa: Śiśu. I.2; IV. 141.

He is referred to in I.2. He, the son of Vinatā by Kaśyapa, was born thighless, as his mother had hatched the egg permanently. He is supposed to hold the office of the charioteer

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1. Paurāṇika Kathākoṣa: p.88.

of the sun. He is of ruddy colour. In fact Aruna is dawn personified.[1]

(5) Babhru: Śiśu.II. 40.

Babhru was a Yādava whose wife Śiśupāla carried off by force from Dwārakā (II.40).

(6) Bakasura: Śiśu. XIX. 114.

Kṛṣna is the killer of the demon Baka (XIX. 114). He was an ally of Kamsa. Once, assuming the form of a crane and going to Vrndāvana, he swallowed Kṛṣna but had to take him out from his mouth on account of burning sensation in his throat. Kṛṣna tore him in two (Bhag.P. Skandha 10, Chapter 12).[2]

(7) Bala: Śiśu. I. 52.

The demon Bala, an ally of Vrtra, was slain by Indra (I. 52). He was one of the sons of Danāyū.[3]

(8) Bali: Śiśu. VI. 27.

Kṛṣna is x said to have broken the pride of the King Bali (VI. 27). He was the grandson of Prahlāda and son of Virocana. He was very strong. The name of his chief queen was Vindyāvalī. He had hundred sons. The legend of the demon king Bali and Vāmana is well-known.[4]

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1. "His imperfect form may be allusive to his gradual or partial appearance, his legs being supposed to be lost either in the darkness of the departing night or in the blaze of the coming day".- Monier Williams.

2. Paurāṇika Kathākoṣa, p.335. 3. Ibid, p.338. 4. Ibid.p.341.

(9) Bindu Lake: Śiśu. XIII. 50.

The architect Maya fashioned the assembly-hall for Yudhisthira in Indraprastha with the gem-slabs left out after the construction of the mansion for Vṛsaparvā. These gem-slabs were hidden in the Bindu Lake by Maya himself (XIII. 50). According to the account given in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (3. 21), this lake came into existence from the tears of joy that fell on the ground from the eyes of Viṣṇu who was much pleased to see Kardama Prajāpati practising penance on the banks of the river Sarasvatī.[1]

There is a hermitage named after that sage in Siddhapura in North Gujarat. The pool of water there also known by the same name.[2]

It appears that Māgha must have this pool in view as he belonged to Gujarat and this lake was near his home town Bhinmala.

The Matsya Purāṇa gives a different account of the origin of this lake.[3]

(10) Brahmā: Śiśu I.28; III. 65; IX. 9 and 14; XIII. 19, XIV. 69 and 82; XVII. 54; XVIII. 40;

(a) Nārada is compared by Kṛṣṇa to a treasure, Brahmā (the creator) to a father of many children, and the Vedas to hoards

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1. Ibid. p.345.

2. Ibid, p.345.

3. Ibid, p.345.

of wealth. Brahmā, the creator, made the sage Nārada a vast repository of the Vedas. Thus Brahmā, who looks after the well-being of his creation, had his mind set at ease, having entrusted the knowledge to a worthy person like Nārada (I. 28)

(b) Viṣnu from whose navel sprang the lotus which holds Brahmā in it (III. 65). His four mouths are supposed to have given out four Vedas to the world (III. 65). Also XIV. 69.

(c) Brahmā is said to have torn asunder the Brahmānanda with his nails (IX. 9).

(d) Sandhyā is said to be the image of Brahmā and therefore the people adore it (IX. 14).

The Bhaviṣya Purāṇa says:

पितामहः पितॄन्सृष्ट्वा मूर्तिं तामुत्ससर्ज ह।
सा प्रातः सायमागत्य संध्यारूपेण पूज्यते॥

(e) Brahmā is reported to have worked as the charioteer of Lord Śiva set out to burn the three cities (XIII. 19).

(f) Brahmā is instrumental in Viṣnu incarnating as Kṛṣna. It was Brahmā who prayed to Viṣnu to incarnate as Kṛṣna in order to kill the enemies of Indra like Śiśupāla and others (XIV. 82).

(g) When Brahmā desires to create the universe, the quality of Rajas preponderates suppressing the quality of Sattva (XVII. ३ 54).

(h) The legend that Brahmā entered the stomach of Visnu on one ocassion in order to study the previous creation as he wanted to take it as the model for future creation is referred to (XVIII. 40).

(11) Brhaspati: Śiśu. II. 68 and 69.

Uddhava learnt the science of polity from Brhaspati and hence Brhaspati was the preceptor of Uddhava (II. 68). Brhaspati was the younger brother of Utathya (II. 69)

(12) Dāśārhāḥ (Yādavas): Śiśu. II. 58, 64 and XV. 27.

The vast invincible armies of the Yādavas are compared to the wide impassable oceans (II. 58). The word 'Dāśārhāḥ' means the descendants of Daśārhaḥ. He was an ancestor of the Yādavas (II. 64).

It is one of the families of the Yadu dynasty.[1]

The Yādavas lost their royal glory on account of the curse given by Yayāti (XV. 27).

(13) Duryodhana: Śiśu. XIII. 59.

The notorious character of the Mahābhārata. He fell into water mistaking it to be hard ground on account of the lotus plant covering the water in Yudhisthira's assembly-hall fashioned by Maya. This made Bhīmasena laugh loudly. Duryodhana and his allied kings took this as an insult. Thus this lotus plant was at the root of the Mahābhārata wars. (XIII. 59).

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1. Paur. Katha. p. 228.

(14) Gangā: Śiśu. III. 3, 65; XII. 23; XIII. 25, 27; XIV. 18; XVII. 64.

(a) The celestial Ganges lit. the river of the Siddhas or gods is referred to (III. 3).

(b) The Ganges, after arising from the left toe of Viṣnu (in the Vāmana incarnation), fell on the Meru and thence flowed into four different streams, viz., Sītā, Alakanandā, Caksu and Bhadrā. Of these, Alakanandā which flowed to the south, was held by Śiva in his matted hair for over hundred years. The poet refers to this river which came down on the earth from Śiva's head being propitiated by king Bhagīratha, to purify the ashes of his ancestors (III. 65).

(c) The Ganges is spoken here as flowing in three streams (XII. 23).

(d) The confluence of the waters of the Ganges and the Yamunā is referred to (XIII. 25).

(e) The river Ganges is referred to (XIII. 27).

(f) It is said that the Lord Śiva holds the Ganges on his head (XIV. 18).

(g) The elephants of the quarters are said to sport in the waters of the heavenly Ganges (XVII. 64).

(15) Garuda: Śiśu. I. 7; IV. 14; V. 66; XII. 2; XX. 30 and 73.

(a) The feathers on the body of Garuḍa are referred to in I. 7.

(b) Garuda is said to be the younger brother of Aruna (IV. 14).

(c) The legend that Garuda, once upon a time consumed the Mlechhas. He swallowed a Brahmin along with them but took him out on knowing him to be there from the burning sensation in his throat is referred to in V. 66.

(d) Garuda is used as a vehicle by Lord Hari (XII. 2).

(e) Garuda's mother is Vinata (XX. 30).

(f) In good old days, Indra struck Garuda with his thunderbolt as he was stealing ambrosia from the heaven in order to gain freedom for his mother and it failed to produce any effect on Garuda. But Garuda allowed only one feather to fall off from his wing in order to respect Indra. This Pauranika story is alluded to in XX. 73.

He was the second son of Vinata by the sage Kasyapa. His brother is Aruna. He gained freedom for his mother from Kadru by obtaining ambrosia from the heaven. He has killed a number of demons. His son is Sumukha.[1]

(16) Govardhana: Sisu. XIV. 86.

Krsna protected the cows from the torrential rains for seven days continuously by lifting up the Govardhana hill with his hand.

It is a hill situated on the banks of the Yamuna and opposite to the Vrndavana.[2]

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1. Paura. Katha: p.164.

2. " " p. 171.

(17) Hidimba: Śiśu. II. 60.

The demon Hidimba, having failed to lure the Pandavas through the agency of his sister Hidimbā who fell in love with Bhima, fought a terrible battle with Bhima who is here called the enemy of Hidimba.

(18) Hiranyakaśipu: Śiśu. I. 42-47 and III. 14.

(a) The atrocities of this demon are described (I.42-46). He was killed by the man-lion (I. 47).

(b) Krsna took away the life of the lord of demons, viz. Hiranyakaśipu in his man-lion incarnation with his nails (III. 14).

(c) He was the son of Kaśyapa and Danu. He was very mighty and ruled the universe for a very long time. The name of his wife is not known. It appears that the demon Mandāra was his son.[1]

(19) Hiranyākṣa: Śiśu. I. 39.

Hiranyākṣa was a mighty demon who was killed by Hari (I. 39).

(20) Indra: Śiśu. I. 8; IV. 13; V. 31; IX. 80; XIII. 15; XIV. 36, 84; XVIII. 1; XX.73.

(a) Indra's vehicle is the elephant Airāvata (I.8).

(b) The story that Indra was once cursed by the sage Gautama, whose wife Ahalyā he had seduced, that his body would be impressed with a thousand marks resembling female organ. However, the sage relented, and these marks were afterwards changed to eyes;

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1. Ibid, p.712.

hence Indra is called Sahastrākṣa (IV. 13)

(c) Indra cut off the wings of the mountain. (V. 31; IX. 80; XIII. 15; XVIII. 1).

(d) Indra is called Pākaśāsana because he killed a demon Pāka (XIV. 36.).

(e) Indra killed Vṛtra (XIV. 84). Krsna carried away the Pārijataka tree from the heaven after humiliating Indra's pride (XIV. 84).

(f) Indra struck Garuda with a thunderbolt when the latter was stealing away ambrosia from the heaven to gain freedom for his mother. But Indra's weapon could produce no effect on Garuda. However, out of the respect for Indra, Garuda allowed only one feather to fall off from his wings (XX. 73).

(21) Jarāsandha: Śiśu. II. 60 and XV. 24.

(a) The King Jarāsandha was the son of two mothers. Formerly, Bṛhadratha, the king of Magadha, having pleased a great sage named Candakauśika, received from him a mango fruit concecrated with mantras potent enough to give the childless king a son. The two queens of Bṛhadratha, who ate the fruit, gave birth to two lustrous halves of a boy, each half having one eye, one arm and one leg. These two halves were cast away in horror, but a female demon by name Jarā, happening to come there, picked them up and put them together, when, in a moment, a boy was formed of them. The terrific roars of the boy brought out the king and the queens, to whom Jarā delivered their son. The father named the boy as Jarāsandha, because he was put together by Jarā.

This story of his being the son of two mothers is referred to in II. 60.

Bhīma killed this powerful king with the help of Kṛṣṇa. This is also alluded here (II. 60).

(b) When Kṛṣṇa slew Kamsa, Jarāsandha, vowing the extirpation of the Yādavas, attacked Mathurā eighteen times forcing Kṛṣṇa to leave Mathurā and to make Dwārakā his capital (XV. 24).

(22) Kādraveyas: Śiśu. XX. 43.

There is a Paurānika legend that once upon a time, the sons of Kadru covered the tail of Indra's horse, Uccaissrava and rendered it black and thus made Vinatā, the mother of Garuda, the slave of their mother Kadru. This story is alluded here (XX. 43).

She is one of the thirteen wives of the sage Kaśyapa and the daughter of Prācetasa Dakṣa. She is the mother of all serpents.[1]

(23) Kaiṭabhāsura: Śiśu. I. 23 and XIV. 68.

(a) According to the Mbh. (Vana. 203), as Viṣṇu lay asleep on his couch of Śeṣa at the end of the Kalpa, there sprung from his navel a lotus, on which again arose Brahmā, having four heads and carrying four Vedas. Sometime after that, the ear-wax accumulated in Viṣnu's ear gave forth two demons Kaiṭabha and Madhu. They threatened to devour Brahmā , who awakened Viṣnu from his sleep. On waking, Viṣnu, in mere fun, offered the demons a boon which they declined

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1. Paura. Katha. p.94.

and asked Visnu himself to beg one of them. He immediately asked that he should be their slayer. This they granted to Visnu, only on condition that they should be killed only in a place that was absolutely uncovered and that could not leave any free space when occupied by them. Visnu, thereupon, seized them between his thighs and cut off their heads with his discus.

This Kaitabha is alluded here (I. 23).

(b) These two demons disturbed Visnu's sleep for a while when he was asleep on the couch of Śesa at the end of the Kalpa. Visnu killed both of them easily. They are compared to two bugs (XIV. 68).

(24) Kāliyāsura: Śiśu. XVII. 69 and XIX. 28.

(a) He was the famous serpent-demon killed by Krsna. Here Krsna's body is spoken to be as black as that of Kāliya (XVII. 69).

(b) The black swords are compared with the black Kāliya (XIX. 28).

(25) Kāmadeva: Śiśu. IV.5; 28; VI. 9, 77; VII. 50; VIII. 33; IX. 42, 45, 63, 66, 67, XIV. 18 and XVII. 10.

(a) Kāmadeva was reduced to ashes by the Lord Śiva (IV. 5, 28; VIII. 33; IX. 42; XIV. 18, XVI. 58 and XVII. 10).

(b) The travellers, attracted by the sweet humming of bees surrendered to Kāmadeva (VI. 9).

(c) Wine is the friend of Kāmadeva (VI. 77).

(d) Kāmadeva hastens young men and women to sexual sports (VII. 50).

(e) The young ladies tied the big elephant in the form of Kāmadeva in the regions in the form of their hips with the ropes in the form of their girdles. Kāmadeva has fish as his symbol (IX.45).

(f) The cruel Kāmadeva reduces the bodies of young ladies separated from their lovers (IX. 63).

(g) It appears that the arrows of Kāmadeva are very sharp for they pierce the heart of a young lady which has the armour in the form of hard breasts (IX. 66).

(h) Kāmadeva torments the young ladies with his flowery arrows (IX. 67).

(26) Kamsa: Śiśu. I. 39 and XV. 38.

(a) Kamsa, the mighty demon king, was killed by Krsna (I. 39).

(b) He was the son of king Ugrasena (XV. 38).

He was the eldest of the nine sons of king Ugrasena of Mathurā. Ugrasena was born in the line of Andhaka who was the son of Sātvata. He belonged to the Yadu family and the Soma dynasty.[1]

(27) Kubera: Śiśu. I. 55; III. 1 and XIII. 18.

(a) Rāvana conquered Kubera, the God of Wealth and took from him his greatest treasure Samkha and his aerial car Puspaka (I. 55).

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1. Paura. Katha. p.109.

(b) Kubera is the regent of the northern quarter (III.1).

(c) Kubera lends his helping hand to Indra when the latter rides a cloud (XIII. 18).

Kubera, one of the Lokapalas and lord of riches, is the son of Viśravas by Iḍavi̇ḍa, and thus the half-brother of Ravana. He is the king of Yaksas, Kinnaras and Guhyakas. He rules in his capital Alaka.

He is represented as deformed in body, having only one eye and a yellow mark in place of the other, only eight teeth, three legs and a long beard. It is probably on account of his appearance that he is called 'Manuṣyadharmā'.

(28) Kuvalayāpīḍa: Śiśu. XVI. 59.

A mighty elephant belonging to Kamsa and killed by Kṛṣna (XVI. 59).

(29) Madhu: Śiśu. XIV. 68.

A demon of that name. He was killed by Kṛṣna. XIV. 68. See Kaiṭabha.

(30) Mahākālī: Śiśu. XVII. 44 and XVIII. 50.

(a) She is a mighty goddess XVII. 44. She killed two demons named Śumbha and Niśumbha.[1]

(b) The goddess Candikā issued from the body of Nanda's daughter and repaired to the sky when Kamsa dashed the newly born daughter of Nanda to the ground (XVIII. 50).

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1. Paura. Katha. p.118.

(31) Mandara: Śiśu. III. 6.

At the time of the churning of the ocean, Visnu is said to have invisibly pressed the mountain Mandara on the back of the Tortoise when that mountain was being thrown up during the churning (III. 6).

(32) Manu: Śiśu. I. 67 and II. 62.

(a) Rāma was born in the race of Manu. Manu, the Vaivasvata, "son of the Sun" and the first king of the earth, was the progenitor of the Solar race to which Rāma belonged (I. 67).

(b) His Śāstra is referred to (II. 62).

(33) Maya: Śiśu. XIII. 50.

The architect Maya fashioned the golden assembly-hall of Yuddhisthira in Indraprastha with gem-slabs left out after constructing the mansion for Vrsaparvā. He had hidden these gem-slabs in the Bindu Lake situated on the Himalayas. Thus he repaid the obligation done to him by Arjuna who rescued him from the wild conflagration produced on account of the burning of Khāndava forest by him (XIII. 50).

(34) Menakā: Śiśu. IX. 86.

Menakā is a beautiful heavenly nymph (IX. 86). She is one of the three principal heavenly nymphs. The episode of the association of the sage Viśvāmitra and the nymph Menakā is well-known.[1]

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1. Paura. Katha. p.410.

(35) Mucukunda: Śiśu. XV. 24.

Kṛṣṇa resorted to the sleeping king Mucukunda (XV. 24)

Mucakunda was a solar king and was the youngest of the three sons of the king Māndhātā of Ikṣvāku dynasty, from Bindumatī. He was as heroic as his father. He helped the gods to victory in their fight against the demons. The gods were therefore pleased with him and asked him to choose a boon except salvation. He asked for three things. (1) A solitary place when he can sleep quietly as he was too much tired by war, (2) the power to reduce to ashes the person disturbing his sleep when looked at by him and (3) the realisation of god Viṣnu instantly after reducing the person who disturbed his sleep to ashes. All this was granted.

When the demon Kālayavan[a] attacked Kṛṣṇa, he pretended to be defeated and when Kālayavana pursued Kṛṣṇa, the latter purposely entered the cave where Mucakunda lay asleep. Consequently Kālayavana was reduced to ashes by Mucakunda.[1]

(36) Mura: Śiśu. II. 1.

Kṛṣṇa is referred to here as the enemy of the demon Mura (II.1). Kṛṣṇa killed him.

(37) Namuci: Śiśu. I. 51.

Indra is referred to here as the enemy of the demon Namuci (I. 51).

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1. Raura. Katha. p.405.

According to the mythology, Indra cut off Namuci's head at twilight, between day and night, with thunderbolt made of the foam of the sea, which is neither wet nor dry.

(38) Nandanavana: Śiśu. I. 51.

It is Indra's garden which was cut down by Rāvaṇa and laid bare (I. 51).

(39) Narakāsura: Śiśu. II. 39; VIII. 15; XII. 3; XV. 31 and XVI. 8.

Kṛṣṇa is referred to here as the enemy of Narakāsura (VIII. 15). He is called the conqueror of the same demon through the force of 'double entendre' (XII. 3). The same story is repeated here (XV. 31) and in XVI. 8., but here it is done through the force of 'double entendre'.

The demon is also known by the name of Kṣitisuta (VIII. 15). As he was the son of the earth (Bhūmi), he is called Bhaumāsura (II. 39). Kṛṣṇa killed him and released 16000 brides imprisioned by him and married with them at Dwārakā. Kṛṣṇa installed Bhagadatta, the son of Narakāsura, on the throne.[1]

(40) Paraśurāma: Śiśu. XIII. 52; XIV. 80 and XVIII.70.

(a) Paraśurāma filled pools with the blood of Kṣatriyas and offered it to his manes (XIII. 52 and XVIII. 70). He destroyed the Kṣatriyas twenty one times and filled five pools with their blood and offered it to his manes (XVIII. 70). Here (XVIII. 70) we

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1. Paura. Katha. p.282.

are given the exact number of pools filled with the blood of Ksatriyas though the mythology puts the number of pools to fifty.

(b) The incarnation of Viṣnu as Paraśurāma is referred to here. Paraśurāma killed thousand-handed Sahasrārjuna (XIV. 80).

(41) Pārvatī: Śiśu. I. 50; VII. 7; XIII. 33, 39.

(a) When the mount Kailaśa was shaken violently by Rāvaṇa in trying to uplift it, Pārvatī was seized with such fright that she threw her arms round Śiva and clung fast to him. Rāvaṇa was thus directly instrumental in giving the god the most delectable pleasure of a voluntary embrace by his wife. The poet fancies that Rāvaṇa thus made a full return for the boon that Siva had granted him (I. 50).

(b) Gaurī (Pārvatī) is supposed to be endowed with all auspicious qualities (VII. 7).

(c) The Ardha-nārī-nareśvara form is referred to here (XIII. 33).

(d) Lord Śiva is supposed not to look at the young ladies of Hastināpura as he is fancied to be afraid of Pārvatī. Hence Kāmadeva could dwell in these ladies without any fear (XIII. 39).

(42) Pātāla: Śiśu. XVII. 15, 65 and XX. 58.

(a) It is the abode of serpents (XVII. 15; XX. 58). They never experience the heat of the rays of the sun (XVII. 65).

(b) The earth pressed by the weight of the war-elephants became one with the Pātāla and the earth and the sky became one on account of the dust raised at the time of the battle of the

belligerent armies. Thus, the poet fancies, all the three worlds became one (XVII. 65).

(43) Pradyumna: Śiśu. XIX. 10-23.

In these fourteen verses, the poet describes the heroic exploits, skill in fighting and the ultimate victory achieved by Pradyumna, the son of Krsna. The poet also speaks of the honour done to victorious Pradyumna by gods (XIX. 10-23).

He was the first son of Rukminī. He was the incarnation of Kāmadeva reduced to ashes by the Lord Śiva. Pradyumna married with Rukmavatī, the daughter of his maternal uncle Rukma. He had a son named Aniruddha from her. Arjuna taught him archery. He inherited the kingdom after the Mahābhārata war and governed it very well. He died along with other Yādavas at Prabhāsa.[1]

(44) Rāhu: Śiśu. II. 35, 49; XVIII. 59; XX. 45, 78.

(a) He is the son of Simhikā. Mythologically, Rahu is a demon (son of Vipraciti and Simhikā) who is supposed to seize the sun and the moon and swallow them.

Here he is referred to as swallowing the moon even in presence of gods (II. 35).

(b) Though both had wronged him equally, Rāhu attacks the moon frequently and the sun less often. The poet accounts for this by remarking that this is the result of the weakness of the moon and the fiery nature of the sun (II. 49).

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1. Paura. Katha. p.327.

In other words, the Lunar and the Solar eclipses are referred to in both the cases and we are informed that the Lunar eclipses take place more often than the Solar ones (II. 35 and 49), an idea which is confirmed by the science of Astronomy.

(c) The frightening face of Rāhu is referred to here (XVIII. 59).

(d) The sun becomes dim at the time of the Solar eclipse (XX. 45).

(e) God Visnu cut off the head of Rāhu with his discus. But Māgha represents this incident with the help of a beautiful fancy. He tells us that Visnu rendered the hardness of the breasts of Rāhu's wife futile by keeping only Rāhu's head and thus destroying the pleasure arising from embrace with his wife (XX. 78).

(45) Rāmāyaṇa:

The characters and the story of Rāmāyaṇa are alluded to at various places in our poem.

(a) Rāma: Śiśu. I. 67, 68; IV. 59; XIV. 81 and XIX. 107.

Visnu who is divine and never-born was yet born as Rāma, the son of the king Daśaratha, in the family of Manu (I. 67). As Jānakī was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa (I. 67, 68), he marched to Lankā after crossing the ocean and killed Rāvaṇa (I. 68). Rāma is again referred to here as one of the characters of the story of Rāmāyaṇa (IV. 59). Hari, who always protects humanity, incarnated as Rāma, killed Rāvaṇa and installed Vibhiṣaṇa on the throne of Lankā (xIV. 81).

Rāma penetrated seven palm-trees simultaneously with one arrow[1] (XIX. 107).

(b) Jānakī: Śiśu. I. 67, 68.

Rāvaṇa kidnapped Jānakī, the wife of Rāma (I. 67 & 68).

(c) Lakṣmana: Śiśu. IV. 59.

He is referred to as one of the characters of the story of Rāmāyaṇa (IV. 59).

(d) Hanumāna: Śiśu. IV. 59.

He is referred to here as one of the characters of Rāmāyaṇa. He encouraged the monkeys to action (IV. 59).

(e) Vibhiṣaṇa: Śiśu. XIV. 81.

Rāma installed Vibhiṣaṇa on the throne of Laṅkā after killing Rāvaṇa (XIV. 81).

(f) Rāvaṇa: Śiśu. I. 48-69 and XIX. 52.

(i) The demon Hiraṇyakaśipu was reborn as the demon Rāvaṇa (I. 48).

(ii) Rāvaṇa, desiring to be the overlord of the three worlds, performed severe penance to propitiate the Lord Śiva. He cut off himself his nine heads and offered them in the sacrifice. When he was about to offer his tenth head, Lord Śiva, who was pleased by his penance, appeared before him and Rāvaṇa begged the overlordship of the three worlds from him. This Paurāṇika story is alluded here (I. 49).

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1. Ram. बिभेद च पुनस्तालान्सप्तैकेन महेषुणा ।

I.l. 66ab (V.L. सालान् as found in the Vulgate).

(iii) The Paurānika story, that Ravana, out of pride of his phenomenal strength, uplifted the mountain Kailāsa, is referred to here (I. 50).

(iv) He waged war against Indra, besieged the heavenly capital of gods, Amarāvatī, laid bare the heavenly garden Nandana-vana, plundered the celestial valuables and kidnapped the heavenly ladies (I. 51).

(v) Indra, put to rout in the battle by him, hid himself, like an owl, in one of the caves of the Himalayas. (I. 52).

(vi) The unfailing Sudarśana failed to kill him (I.54).

(vii) He plundered the principal treasure of Kubera and took away Kubera's aerial car, Puṣpaka (I. 55).

(viii) The serpent-nooses of god Varuṇa failed to produce any effect on him (I. 56).

(ix) He uprooted the horns of Yama's buffalo and fashioned his Sarnga bow from them (I. 57).

(x) The sun and the moon attended on him like his servants (I. 58 and 59).

(xi) The poet fancies that Rāvaṇa must certainly have uprooted one of the tusks of Vināyaka (Gaṇapati) for fashioning the ear-ornaments for his pleasure-loving queens. This tusk does not grow again till now (I. 60).

(xii) The wind acted like his favourite servant (I.61).

(xiii) Rāvaṇa's lustre was brighter than that of fire (I. 62).

(xiv) He governed so strictly that the wicked had to give up their wickedness (I. 63).

(xv) His mighty elephants formed a very powerful limb of his manifold army (I. 64).

(xvi) He satisfied his lust by enjoying the heavenly ladies imprisoned by him (I. 65).

(xvii) All the six seasons attended on him simultaneously (I. 66).

(xviii) He kidnapped Jānakī (I. 67) from the Daṇḍaka forest (I. 68) and Rāma killed him (I. 68).

(xix) The same deceitful demon Rāvaṇa was reborn as Śiśupāla (I. 69).

(xx) Rāvaṇa and his Laṅkā are referred to here (XIX. 52).

(46) Revatī: Śiśu. II. 14, 16, 20 and III. 60.

(a) Revatī's lower lip resembling a bimba fruit kissed by her husband, Balarāma (II.14).

(b) When Revatī had kissed overnight her husband's eyes in amorous sports, the wine she had drunk and the betel-leaf she had chewed left their traces on them; these things from her mouth gave purity to Balarāma's eyes (II. 16).(The fragments or leavings of anything chewed or drunk though they are impure, are regarded as pure, when they have left a woman's lips kissing in amorous sports. Cf. रतिकाले मुखं स्त्रीणां शुद्धमाखेटके शुनाम् ।

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(c) The sweet odour that Balarāma's mouth emitted was

really that of the wine which had been perfumed in the mouth of his wife, Revatī. Balarāma and Revati exchanged draughts of wine overnight (II. 20).

Revatī was the daughter of Kakudmin (II.20).

(d) Revatī is the wife of Balarāma (III. 60).

(47) Rukminī: Śiśu. XV. 53, XVI. 48 and XX. 6.

(a) She was kidnapped by Kṛṣṇa (XV. 53)and XVI. 48).

(b) Her brother, Rukmin, was angry with Kṛṣṇa and wanted to take revenge since the day she was kidnapped (XV. 53).

(c) She was the daughter of Bhīṣmaka (XVI. 48). This Bhīṣmaka was the king of Vidarbha (XX. 6).

(d) As Kṛṣṇa carried Rukminī away, Śiśupāla became angry with Kṛṣṇa. This was one of the several reasons why Śiśupāla turned to be Kṛṣṇa's foe (XX. 6).

(48) Śakaṭāsura: Śiśu. XI. 3; XV. 37.

He was a deceitful demon. He assumed the form of a cart and went to Gokula to kill Bālakṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa killed him easily (XI. 3 and XV. 37).

(49) Śiva: Śiśu. I.4,49, 50; III. 61, 62, 65; IV. 5, 7, 28, 64, 65; VIII. 33; IX. 42; XII. 69; XIII. 19, 29, 33; XIV. 18, 85; XVI. 46, 58, 71; XVII. 7, 10; XIX. 54.

Māgha refers to Śiva at several places in the poem. From these scattered references, it is possible to reconstruct the

whole picture of this god as visualised by our poet.

(A) His appearance:-

(a) God Śiva has three eyes- the third one in his forehead. This eye emits fire (IV. 28; XIII. 29 and XIV. 85).

(b) He holds the Ganges in his matted hair (XIV. 18; XVI. 46). The waters of this river issue from his matted hair (III. 65).

(c) He holds the moon on his head (XIV. 18 and XVI. 71).

(d) His threat is black (XII. 69).

(e) He besmears his body with ashes (IV. 65 and XVI. 71). The ashes are washed away from one of his sides on account of his embrace with Pārvatī (IV. 5).

(f) The serpents are entwined round his neck (IV. 7) and waist (IV. 65 and XVI. 71).

(g) His Ardha-nārī-nareśvara form is referred to here (XIII. 33).

(h) He is attended by his Ganas (III. 62).

(i) He is fond of Tāṇḍava dance (I. 4).

(j) He sleeps on the cold Himalayas covering himself with the thick skin of an elephant (IV. 64).

B. His terrible aspect:-

(k) He killed a demon named Andhaka (XVI. 58).

(l) He burnt the three cities of the demon Tripura. Brahmā acted as his charioteer when he set out for this purpose (XIII. 19).

(m) He destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa Prajāpati (XVII. 7 and XIX. 54).

(n) He reduced Kāmadeva to ashes (IV. 5, 28; VIII. 33; IX.42; XIV. 18; XVI. 58 and XVII. 10).

C. His love for his devotees:-

(o) The demon-king Bāṇa was his devotee. Out of his love for his devotee, god Śiva fought with god Hari who was fighting with the demon-king Bāṇa (III. 61).

(p) When the rash Rāvaṇa, who wanted to be the overlord of the three worlds, was about to offer his tenth head, Lord Śiva who was won over by Rāvaṇa's penance, appeared before him and granted him his desired object (I. 49). Rāvaṇa, however, returned this obligation by lifting up the mountain Kailāsa and thereby causing the frightened Pārvatī to run to the arms of her lord, Śiva (I.50).

(50) Śrī (Lakṣmī): Śiśu. I. 44; II. 118; VIII. 15, 64; IX. 30; XII. 3; XIX. 58.

(a) The fickle nature of Śrī (Lakṣmī) is alluded here (I. 44).

(b) She ever dwells on the broad and full chest of Kṛṣṇa (II. 118 and XII. 3).

(c) She is eternally associated with lotus (VIII. 15).

(d) She came out from the ocean at the time of its churning (VIII. 64). She is the daughter of the ocean (IX. 30).

(e) She embraces Kṛṣṇa (XIX. 58).

(51) Satyabhāmā: Śiśu. XII. 3; XIII. 12; XIV. 84 and XV. 25.

(a) Satyabhāmā was the beloved of Krsna (XII. 3 and XV.25).

(b) In good old days, Krsna, in order to reconcile his beloved Satyabhāmā, carried away the Pārijātaka from the heaven after humiliating the pride of Indra and brought it to Dwāraka (XIII. 12 and XIV. 84).

(c) She was the daughter of the king Nagnajit (XV. 25). This king Nagnajit fought on the side of Duryodhana in the Mahābhārata war as he was under the influence of the demon, Isupāt.[1]

(52) Ucchaissravas: Sisu. I. 52 and III. 82.

(a) The speed of this horse is referred to here. Many a time, Rāvana routed and put Indra to flight from the battlefield. Hotly pursued by Rāvana, Indra owed his escape solely due to the swift speed of his horse, Ucchaissravas. Therefore, Indra now prized the speed and not his varied gaits as ambling, prancing, canter etc. of his horse (I. 52).

(b) The sea gave birth to Ucchaissravas. He is one of the jewels that came out of the ocean when it was churned by gods and demons (III. 82).

(53) Urvasi: Sisu. IX. 86.

She is a celestial nymph celebrated for her beauty (IX. 86).

The king Pururavas rescued her from the clutches of the demon Kesin.[2]

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1. Paura. Katha. p.279.

2. Ibid, 76.

(54) Varuṇa: Śiśu.I. 56.

(a) In the battles that were fought between gods and Rāvaṇa, Varuṇa hurled his serpent-noose on Rāvaṇa to strangle him; but the weapon, even before it had touched Rāvaṇa, suddenly turned back and recoiled on the hurler himself (I. 56).

(b) Varuṇa is represented in the Purāṇas as the regent of the ocean (of all waters) and of the western quarter. His usual accompaniment is his noose which he always carries in his hands for binding those who transgress the moral law.

In the Ṛgveda, he is the supreme omniscient deity, the maker and upholder of the universe and preserver of the moral order of the universe.

(55) Vasudeva: Śiśu. I. 1; XIII. 13 and XIV. 82.

(a) Vasudeva, son of Surasena, of the Yādava branch of the Lunar race, was the father of Kṛṣṇa (and Balarāma) (I. 1; XIII. 13, XIV. 82).

(56) Vināyaka: Śiśu. I. 60.

The poet fancies that Rāvaṇa must certainly have uprooted one of the tusks of Vināyaka (Gaṇeśa) for fashioning the ear-ornaments for his artful and sportive damsels. This was done by Ravana to secure the best ivory. Thus Vināyaka was left with only one tusk. (I. 60).

The real reason of the loss of Gaṇeśa's tusk, according to the mythology, was his fight with Paraśurāma, who had once gone to Kailāsa on a visit to Siva. When Paraśurāma reached Kailāsa,

Śiva was asleep and Ganeśa objected to the entrance of the visitor to the inner apartments. A wrangle ensued, which ended in a fight. Ganeśa had at first the advantage, he seized Paraśurāma with his trunk and giving him a twirl threw him down senseless. On recovering, Paraśurāma flung his axe at Ganeśa, who, recognising it as his father's weapon (Śiva having given it to Paraśurāma) received it with all humility on one of his tusks, which it immediately severed; hence Ganeśa has but one tusk and is known by the name of Ekadanta (the single-tusked).

(57) Viśvakarman: Śiśu. III. 35.

Viśvakarman was the architect of the gods. It was he who planned and built the city of Dwārakā which was the highest limit to which excellence of skill in architecture acquired by close study by him could go. The city appeared to be the reflection of heaven (III. 35).

(58) Vṛṣabhāsura: Śiśu. XV. 35.

The demon named Arista who took the form of a bull was killed by Krsna (XV. 35). He wanted to kill Krsna under instructions from Kamsa.[1]

(59) Vṛṣaparvā: Śiśu. XIII. 50.

Vṛṣaparvā was the demon-king for whom the architect Maya constructed a mansion with gem-slabs. It was with the gem-slabs that were left out after the construction of this mansion and

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1. Paura. Katha. p.27.

that were hidden in the Bindu Lake that Maya constructed the golden assembly-hall for Yudhiṣṭhira (XIII. 50).

(60) Vṛtra: Śiśu. I. 41; XIV. 84.

Vṛtra was a demon killed by Indra (I. 41 and XIV. 84). He is also called 'Ahi' (I. 41).

In the Ṛgveda, Vṛtra is represented to be an atmospheric demon, the demon of drought and inclement weather, with whom Indra, the god of the firmament, is constantly at war and whom he overcomes and releases rain. In the later mythology, Indra is represented as the king of gods, ruling in heaven. He killed Vṛtra, a demon with his thunderbolt specially forged for him from the bones of the sage Dadhici by Viśvakarman. Hence Indra earned one of his most distinctive epithets, viz. 'Vrtrahan', its synonyms being 'Ahidviṣ', 'Vṛtravidviṣ' etc.

(61) Yama: Śiśu. I. 57, 73; XVIII. 67-69; XIX. 28,71 and XX. 4, 12, 46.

(a) Yama is the lord of the dead. He is the ruler of the world of the departed spirits and the dispenser of justice to the dead.

Rāvaṇa uprooted the horns of the buffalo, his vehicle, in order to fashion his Śārnga bow from them (I. 57).

(b) His residence is referred to here (I. 73).

(c) The poet fancies that the parosals with broken handles and lying upturned on the battlefield looked like the silver trays arranged for Yama's meals (XVIII. 67).

(d) The broken pearl-necklaces, which were reddened by the saffron on the chests of the kings killed in action, lay scattered on the battlefield. The poet fancies that these necklaces looked like Yama's teeth stained by drinking wine in the form of blood and clearly visible on account of his hearty laughter (XVIII. 68).

(e) The poet again fancies that the blood accumulated in the pits on the battlefield appeared like red water in Yama's residence to dye red the upper garments of his queens (XVIII. 69).

(f) Yama's sister is the Yamunā (XIX. 28).

(g) The battlefield is fancied to be Yama's vast bed and the elephants, with their tusks broken and killed in the battle, are fancied to appear like bugs in his bed (XIX. 71).

(h) Yama is referred to here (XX. 4).

(i) Yama's knitted eye-brows are referred to here (XX. 12).

(j) Yama's noose is referred to here (XX. 46).

(62) Yamunā: Śiśu. XII. 66, 67; XIII. 25; XIX. 28.

(a) Her cool waters tossed by the breezes of wind rendered fragrant by Kalhāra (XII. 66).

(b) Though she is the daughter of the hot sun, her waters are cool. Though she is the sister of Yama who takes away life, her waters are life-giving. Though her waters are black still they remove sin (XII. 67).(Cf. कालिन्दी सूर्यतनया यमुना शमनस्वसा ।).

(c) The confluence of the Yamunā and the Ganges is referred to here (XIII. 25).

(d) Yamunā is the sister of Yama and is the residence of the serpent Kālīya (XIX. 28).

The following mythological topics are referred to in the poem.

(A) Churning of the Ocean: Śiśu. II. 107; III. 82; VIII.64; XIV. 29, 83 and XX. 56.

(a) The gods and demons churned the ocean by employing the mount Mandara as the churning rod and the serpent Vāsuki as the churning rope (II. 107; III. 82, XX. 56) and churned out Nectar (II. 107; XIV. 29), the goddess Laksmī (III. 82; VIII. 64), the seven-headed horse Ucchaissravas (III. 82) and the moon (XI. 8).

(b) The serpent Vāsuki who was employed as the churning rope had to undergo great physical hardship by the revolving of the mountain Mandara employed as the churning rod (XX. 56).

(c) The gods spoke to Viṣnu, " We are unable to churn the ocean without your help " (XIV. 83).

(B) Submarine Fire: Śiśu. I. 20 and XI. 43.

(a) The submarine fire clasps the ocean by its flames (I. 20).

(b) It consumes the waters of the ocean and burns down the universe (XI. 43).

The story of the origin of the submarine fire is given in the Mbh. (Adi 158-83) and a little differently in Harivaṁśa (Chap.14).

But the story of the submarine fire is a mythological fiction and was probably invented to account for the inexplicable

phenomenon of the ocean remaining the same in dimensions though so many rivers are continuously pouring their waters into it. According to some, story is an allegorical explanation of the physical phenomenon, viz., the temperature of the water of the sea at its bottom is very high.

Cf. "Doubtless the story was invented to suit the phenomenon of a marine volcano, which exhaled bitumenous inflammable gas, and which occasionally showed itself above the sea, perhaps in the form of a horses mouth" - Monier Williams.

(6) Universal Destruction: Sisu. XVI. 51; XVII. 1, 12, 40; XVIII. 35; XIX. 4 and XX. 7.

(i) The cyclonic wind at the time of the universal destruction is referred to by our poet in XVII. 12 and XIX. 4. This wind causes fear to the three worlds, shakes the earth and blows violently (XIX. 4). It shakes the mountains at the end of Kalpa (XVII. 12).

(ii) The universal destruction by fire is spoken of in (XVIII. 35 and XX. 7.

The fire produced by the rubbing of the trees due to the cyclonic wind at the end of Kalpa consumes the world and constellations that are high up in the sky (XVIII. 35). The flames of this fire arise at the end of Kalpa (XX. 7).

(iii) The universal destruction by water is spoken of in XVI. 51, XVII. 1, 40.

(a) The ocean disturbed by the cyclonic winds produced at the end of the Kalpa sets out to destroy everything (XVI. 51; XVII. 1).

(b) The ocean does not become empty even after inundating the entire universe at the end of the Kalpa (XVII. 40).