

CHAPTER - III

SUN WORSHIP IN THE
EPIC AND THE
PURANIC LITERATURE

SUN WORSHIP IN THE EPIC AND THE PURĀNIC

LITERATURE

I

EPICS

The post-Vedic period was characterized by the growth of sects and sectarian ideologies because of the resurgence of non-Āryan indigenous traditions and growth of the *bhakti* movement. The religious life of the Epics,¹ therefore, came to be dominated by sectarianism. In keeping with the changed ambiance, the Sun-cult also underwent very important changes in its concept of the divinity and its ritual. The Sun came to be one of the few important deities of the Epics who had a sectarian following.²

A Sun-sect known as *Sauras* finds specific reference for the first time in the *Mahābhārata*. It is said that in the camp of the Pāṇḍus, there were a thousand and eight others who were Sun-worshippers.³ In the said Epic, there is a hymn⁴ in praise of the Sun god having 108 names, which was finally communicated to Yudhiṣṭhira by Dhaumya.⁵ All the characteristic features of a sectarian divinity can be traced in this legend of Sun worship by Yudhiṣṭhira. He is the highest god, the lord of Manus and Manvantaras.⁶ In the list of 108 names, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Skanda, Yama, Varuṇa, Indra, Soma etc. are just other names of the Sun god that demonstrates his supremacy. In all the seven worlds, there is none who can surpass him.⁷ His names such as Aja, Kāla, Ādideva,

Carācarātmā, Sukṣātmā and Viśvakarmā point to his superiority and recognition with the highest metaphysical principle of the cosmos. In this context, mention is also made of the grace of the god and submission to him. This shows that the Sun god was a deity of a sect and the flow of *bhakti* was flooding the naturalistic concept of the Vedic tradition of the Sun god. In the legend of Karṇa, there are references to the *bhaktas* of the Sun god.⁸ In the same way, the legends of Samvarṇa⁹ represents Vaśiṣṭha as praying to the Sun god in a sectarian manner. He is the cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution. In the *Āditya-hṛdaya Mantra* of the *Rāmāyāṇa*,¹⁰ the Sun god has been identified with all the great divinities in the typical sectarian way. He is the lord of even Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa.¹¹ He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of all creatures.¹² The development of sectarian texts, which is a fundamental feature of a sect, is also traceable in the Epics. 'A secret *Veda* of the Sun' has been specially mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* that was taught to Arvāvasu^{12a}. It is, therefore evident that the *Sauras* developed a *Veda* of their own that was different from the traditional Vedas. The sectarian following of the Sun god may also be traced in some of the names of historical celebrities in the *Mahābhārata*. Such names are Sūryadhvaja, Rocamāna, Amśumāna¹³ and Sūryadatta. In ancient India, many persons used to take the name of their god because of intense devotion to him. Thus, we find in the Epics the march of Sun worship towards sectarianism from the non-exclusive and naturalistic tradition of the Vedic period.

Most probably, the solar sect originated as early as two-three centuries before the Christian era as the evidences of the Epic data, Pāṇini, Patañjali, early Buddhist and Jaina literatures combined with that of early images and coins disclose.¹⁴ The distant past of

the Sun-sect may be pushed back to the 5th-4th cent. B.C. that is the upper limit of the *Mahābhārata* and that may be the era of Pāṇini as well.

The solar sect seems to have been ideologically connected with the Vedic thoughts. It is said that the Sun worshippers in the camp of the Pāṇḍus were experts in the Vedic lore.¹⁵ Names such as Sūrya, Savitā, Pūṣa, Bhaga, Aryaman, Tvaṣṭā, Vivasvān, etc. in the list of 108 names are Vedic survivals in the Epic pantheon. The method of Sun worship in the Epics is also in many ways a survival of the Vedic tradition. The *japa* and other constituents of the ritual such as the *ācamana*, the *prāṇāyāma*, the *upasthāna*, the *arghya*, etc. are mentioned in them.¹⁶ In the *Rāmāyāṇa*, a class of worshippers is referred to as worshipping the Sun by means of the *upasthāna* with their arms upstretched.¹⁷ Similarly, Samvarṇa adored the Sun god by asceticism with face towards the Sun.¹⁸ His descriptions as the soul of the universe,¹⁹ the Time and the rain-giver are continuations of the Vedic tradition.

The solar sect seems to have been developed by the indigenous traditions of *bhakti*. It is said that various non-Āryan tribes such as Siddhas, the Cāraṇas, the Gandharvas, the Yakṣas, the Guhyakas, the Nāgas, the Asuras and the Rākṣasas adored the Sun.²⁰ *Bhakti* finds direct mention several times in the *Mahābhārata* in connection with the Sun worship. He is adored by means of *dhūpa*, *dīpa* and *naivedya*. The worship of the Sun god in the Epics integrated the indigenous traditions of *bhakti* and *pūjā* along with the Vedic tradition.

The *Mahābhārata* appears to have been familiar with the fire-Sun-worshipping Maga priests from Śākadvīpa, the advent of whom marked the beginning of new traditions in solar cult.²¹ They are mentioned for the first time in this work. Reference is

also made to the four castes of Śākadvīpa one of which is the Magas - the Fire-worshipping priests.²² The Irānian tradition of Sun worship seems to have had its impact on the solar sect of the Epics. Mihira - the Magian Sun god has been explicitly referred to in the *Mahābhārata* as one of the names of the deity and distinguished from its Indian counterpart - Mitra in the same line.²³ In addition, the Magian tradition of providing boots etc. to the Sun-images seems to have been mentioned in the legend of Jamadagni referring to the offer of umbrella and boots to him by Sūrya.²⁴ It is evident that the *Mahābhārata* was familiar with the Magian tradition. However, there is no significant influence of it in the Sun worship in the *Mahābhārata* except in the adoption of the name of Mihira and a few legends like those of Jamadagni and Māṭhara. In the *Rāmāyāṇa*, there is no reference to Mihira or the Magas in the *Āditya-hṛdaya* hymn.

The solar sect found in the Epics is not referred by the Greek writers. Moreover, it is not specifically mentioned either in the works of Pāṇini or of Patañjali. In view of this, it is reasonable to suggest that in the Epic period, the sect of the Sun was not very popular. Most probably, it emerged under the impact of the indigenous tradition of *bhakti* and the Magian tradition of Sun worship. The patronage given by the alien rulers like Darius, Mihirakula, Kaniṣka, etc.²⁵ might have also been responsible for the growth of the solar sect.

The personality of Sūrya has been fully humanized in the Epics.²⁶ However, he is still described as a disc, a bird, a horse, or a bull.²⁷ In the *Mahābhārata*, the Sun appears in human form in connection with the legends of Arvāvasu, Karṇa, Kuntī, Yudhiṣṭhira and Jamadagni.²⁸ The Sun was allegedly present in human form when Agastya instructed

Rāma to recite *Āditya-hṛdaya* hymn.²⁹ He possesses hands, hair etc., drinks, makes speeches, gives knowledge, acts as witness and goes home.³⁰

In keeping with the humanization of the Sun's personality, there also developed a family round him. Tvaṣṭrī, daughter of Tvaṣṭā and also known as Saṁjñā and Saraṇyū, is the wife of Vivasvat.³¹ Suvarcalā is also mentioned as a devoted consort of him. Chāyā, the shadow of Saraṇyū, though not referred to in the Epic proper, finds specific mention in the *Harivaṁśa* as the wife of Sūrya. Aśvins are his sons by Tvaṣṭrī,³² and Śaniścara by Chāyā. Karṇa, and Yama are also his children.³³ In addition, Sūrya had also a few other sons. Suprajā, Sraddhā Vaivasvatī and Sāvitrī are referred to as his daughters.³⁴ Most probably some of his family-members such as Aśvinī-kumāras (Dasra and Nāsatyas)³⁵ came to be invoked along with him. Aruṇa is the charioteer of Sūrya.³⁶ Aruṇa, Māṭhara and Daṇḍa are referred to as his attendants and worshipped along with the Sun.³⁷

The Epics refer to several old Sun gods such as Sūrya, Savitṛ, Mitra, Pūṣan, Aśvins, Vivasvat, Viṣṇu, Bhaga and Tvaṣṭā.³⁸ However, these once-separate gods are now considered just as different names and forms of the Sun. Vibhāvasu came to be common name in the Epics.³⁹ *Ādityas*, sons of Aditi, are also referred to in the *Mahābhārata*. According to the scholars, they are twelve in number.^{39a} In accordance with a list of the *Mahābhārata*, the twelve *Ādityas* are Dhātā, Mitra, Aryaman, Indra, Varuṇa, Aṁśa, Bhaga, Vivasvān, Pūṣā, Savitā, Tvaṣṭā, and Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, though youngest, is said to be the greatest of the *Ādityas* because of his qualities.⁴⁰ The twelve *Ādityas* have been identified with the twelve months of the year in the Epics too.⁴¹ It is clear that the Epics were following the tradition of the *Brāhmaṇas* in respect of the *Ādityas*. The only difference is that Viṣṇu emerges here as the chief of the *Ādityas*.

Under the name of Sūrya or *Āditya*, the once-separated solar deities were merged into one Sun god though his different aspects were represented by different old names and new synonyms and epithets. The coming out of the Sun in *Āditya* or Sūrya as the Supreme and original solar divinity marks an exit from the past and may be considered as the Epic innovation.

The primary function of the Sun god is to drive away darkness and demons.⁴² More prominent than his day-maker aspect is his role as the rain-giver and the corn-producer. It is said that he draws up waters for eight months during his northern course and in the remaining four months, he pours them down in the form of rain during his southern course.⁴³ From the combination of heat and water, the plants and corns are produced. Thus, the Sun is ultimately responsible for the production of food on which men subsist.⁴⁴ That is why the food has been described as a form of Sūrya. Yudhiṣṭhira prayed to him specifically for food, which he gave to him for twelve years.⁴⁵ The rain-giving aspect of Sūrya is not fully developed in the Vedic tradition though it is known. However, in the Epics this aspect is quite frequently emphasized and was taken up later on by the Purāṇas.

He is identified with Time in an equal manner. This becomes evident from his names such as *Kāla*, *Samvatsarakara*, *Kālacakrapravartaka*, *Kālādhakṣya* and *Kṣaṇa*.⁴⁶ The twelve *Ādityas* who are regular Sun gods in the Epics are identified with the twelfth months of the year.⁴⁷ He is the lord of the planets⁴⁸ and also identical with all the planets.⁴⁸ Thus the tradition of worshipping Sūrya in association with Navagrahas was initiated in the Epics.

In the Epics, the benevolent qualities of the Sun god are expressed by such epithets as *Maitreya*, *Karunānvita*, *Dhanvantari*, *Jivana*, *Kāmada* and *Prāṇāadhāraka*.⁴⁹ However, the role of the Sun as a malevolent deity is also emphasized in both the Epics. He is the destroyer of the universe⁵⁰ and an evil planet.⁵¹ Probably, the oppressive heat of northern India, where the Epics were composed, had contributed towards this feature. The Sun god is a great moral and ethical force in the Epics. He is the beholder of good and bad deeds of men.⁵² The identity of the worshipper and the worshipped is repeated when it is said that the saint approaches to enter his disc at which Vivasvat welcomes him. The glory of the saint and the glory of the Sun becomes one.⁵³

Method of Sun worship:

The recitation of hymns sacred to the Sun god formed an essential feature of the Epic worship too. Yudhiṣṭhira worshipped the Sun by repeating hymns containing 108 names of the divinity as well as by hymns of praise and prayer.⁵⁴ Karṇa resorted to the method of *japa* of hymns propitiatory to the Sun god. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Rāma* invokes the Sun by the *japa* of the *Āditya-hṛdaya* hymn.⁵⁵ Besides the *japa*, others constituents of the ritual are the *ācamana*, the *prāṇāyama*, the *upasthāna* etc.⁵⁶ The concentration and purity of mind and observance of vows involving complete fasting also constituted the ritual of Sun worship as Yudhiṣṭhira lived on air only while adoring the Sun god with devoted mind.⁵⁷ There is a reference in the *Rāmāyaṇa* to the *munis* who observe difficult vows such as worshipping the Sun god by means of the *upasthāna* with their arms up stretched.⁵⁸ Similarly in the *Mahābhārata*, Samvaraṇa worshipped the Sun god by asceticism with face towards the Sun. Kuntī invoked the Sun by the power of a magic

formula. The posture at the time of the worship used to be standing with face towards the Sun.⁵⁹ The salutation⁶⁰ to the Sun god is a frequent theme in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. However, the *japa* of the Epic tradition is slightly different from that of the Vedic ritual. In the *japa* of the Epics, exclusive emphasis was laid upon the names of the deity while in the Vedic school the repetition was of full hymn containing praise and prayer.

Departures that are more significant may be seen in the employment of flowers, incense, garlands, lamps etc. in Sun worship in the Epics.⁶¹ It is already mentioned that Sun god was completely anthropomorphized and he used to appear in human form before the worshipper. However, there is no specific mention of any image of the Sun god in the Epics.⁶² On the other hand, usual images of the Sun dating as early as the 2nd century B.C.⁶³ are found. Further, terracotta-containing figures of the Sun of still earlier period i.e. Maurya-Śuṅga period are available.⁶⁴ Therefore, it can be said that the tradition of Sun worship by means of images was known the Epic society⁶⁵ but it was not a popular creed, as it is not directly mentioned. The worship of the Sun was done at two *sandhyās* and seventh and sixth days were especially auspicious for his worship.⁶⁶

In reality, the Epics continue Sun worship of the Vedic tradition along with the adaptation of non-Āryan and popular trends of the solar cult. In the Epics, Sun worship assumed greater proportions and a sect came to be developed round him. The solar sect is purely indigenous in nature though the Epics are aware of the Magian tradition. Further, in the Epics, the Sun god witnessed a free and full humanization and there emerged a fully developed family round him. He has been associated with various legends in which may be traced the origin of the conception of halo and high boots, the latter under the

Irānian influence. In spite of various names of the Sun god, there is a tendency to regard these once-separate solar gods as different names and forms of one Sun god. There are many traits of Vedic origin in Sun's personality while others presage Purāṇic trends of solar worship. Sun worship appears to be popular among all sections of the Epic society. The worship centers round the concept of *bhakti* with its paraphernalia, which is a revolutionary change from the Vedic tradition.

II

PURĀṆIC LITERATURE

The Purāṇas present a composite religion, in which are blended the Vedic tradition of sacrificial religion, the semi-Vedic stream of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and other unorthodox cults and the non-Vedic thought of Śāktism and Tāntricism.⁶⁷ Broadly speaking, there are two main stages in the development of the composite religion.⁶⁸ Firstly, in the early Purāṇic works the Vedic and the *Smārta* traditions have been given prominence though the semi-Vedic thought of *bhakti*, *pūjā*, *vrata*, *tīrtha* etc. are also casually mentioned. Secondly, in the later Purāṇas, which originate from the 5th-6th centuries A.D. emphasis is laid upon the glorification of the semi-Vedic and even non-Vedic divinities in a sectarian fashion. The prevalence of *bhakti*, *pūjā*, *vrata*, *tīrtha*, the worship of images in temples and the influence of Tāntricism are special characteristics of this stage.⁶⁹

We know very well that there had been a vigorous tradition of solar worship in the Vedic period and an indigenous school of Sun worshipper existed from the pre-Āryan times. From the first century A.D. onwards (if not earlier),⁷⁰ a foreign tradition of Sun

worship appears to have been quite popular in the society. After the downfall of the Vedic system and the prevalence of a foreign tradition of Sun-cult, the indigenous thought of solar cult⁷¹ really presented a sort of challenge to orthodox Sun worshippers. In response, they composed this system of composite Sun-cult, which are found in many early and late Purāṇas.

SUN WORSHIP IN THE EARLY PURĀṆAS

Impact of the Vedic and Epic Tradition:

The earlier Purāṇas carry on the Vedic and *Smārta* traditions of solar worship, though minor changes and additions are found in keeping with the changed conditions. The atmospheric aspect of the Sun as seen in the Vedic literature continues to be adhered to. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, the Sun appears as the chief of the planetary system.⁷² His descriptions as the arranger of the day, night, seasons etc. show his atmospheric aspect.⁷³ He is worshipped by the *Gāyatrī* and nobody should neglect the *Sandhyopāsana*.⁷⁴ According to the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, he abides in the *Veda* and his self is Vedic.⁷⁵ He dwells in the sky.⁷⁶ His first form is luminous and can hardly be gazed upon because of its circle of splendour.⁷⁷ The concept of the twelve *Ādityas* as the twelve months of the year (as will be discussed in the following pages) is popular in the early Purāṇas.⁷⁸ which is also Vedic in origin. Constituents of the solar ritual such as the *arghya*, the *ācamana*, the *japa*, the *sanhdhyopāsana*⁷⁹ etc. are also Vedic survivals. References to sacrificial oblations to the Sun god are occasionally found in the early Purāṇas.⁸⁰ All these are indicative of the fact that in the Sun-cult of the early

Purāṇas, the Vedic tradition was given a prominent place, though non-Vedic elements such as sectarianism, *bhakti*, *pūjā* etc. are also traceable therein.

Epic sectarianism had its impact upon the early Purāṇic world. The legends of Yājñavalkya,⁸¹ Satrājīṭ,⁸² Brahmā,⁸³ Aditi⁸⁴ and Rājyavardhana⁸⁵ reveal the acquaintance of the early Purāṇas with the ideologies of a Sun-sect. Most probably, this trend was inspired and nourished by the non-Āryan tradition. Significantly, the picture of solar sectarianism drawn based on early Purāṇic accounts is corroborated by the Gupta inscriptions⁸⁶ and iconography. Many Sun-images of the Gupta period had been found from all over northern India⁸⁷ that clearly demonstrate that Sun worship had developed itself into a cult-form.

In the early Purāṇas, Āditya appear as the most popular name of the Sun. In the *Vāyu* and the *Brahmāṇḍa* Purāṇas, this term is enumerated along with other names of Sūrya.⁸⁸ In the *Matsya Purāṇa*, prayer is given to the Sun god under the name of Āditya.⁸⁹ Yājñavalkya invoked the Sun god in the name of Āditya too. The emergence of Āditya as the popular name of the Sun is really an achievement of the Epic-Purāṇa tradition, because the etymological derivation of Āditya in the Purāṇas is based upon the semantic principles⁹⁰ while in the Vedas it was derived from the name of their mother – *Aditi*.⁹¹ The Ādityas represent a group of Sun gods in the early Purāṇas. Generally, their number has come to be fixed as twelve. In many early Purāṇas,⁹² the list of the names of these twelve Ādityas is given. A comparative study of these lists⁹³ will reveal that Viṣṇu, Indra, Dhātā, Tvaṣṭā, Pūṣā, Vivasāvn, Mitra, Varuṇa, Amśa (its variants are Amśu, Amsumān) and Bhaga are common to all lists. The other two Ādityas are taken among

from these Sun gods - Savitā, Aryaman, Parjanya, Yama, Viṣṇu and Indra. One significant omission in these lists is Mārtaṇḍa. However, he finds a definite mention as a Sun god in the *Matsya Purāṇa*.⁹⁴ The twelve Ādityas reside in the *Sūrya-maṇḍala*⁹⁵ and are identified with the twelve months of the year. The concept of the Ādityas as the Time is more prominent than their being simply the Sun gods.

Many Ādityas such as Viṣṇu, Pūṣan, Savitā, Aryaman, Vivasvān and Bhaga are invoked independently of this group. Savitṛ, Bhāskara, Sūrya, Vivasvat and Āditya are some of the names of the Sun god⁹⁶ under whom Yājñavalkya prayed him.⁹⁷ In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, the names of the Sun-deity are mentioned as Āditya, Bhāskara, Bhānu, Savitṛ, Divākara, Pūṣan, Aryamā and Svarabhānu. In all these references, we do not find the name of Mihira - the Irānian name of the Sun god - most probably due to the orthodoxy of the early Purāṇic world.

It is mainly the benevolent aspect of the Sun god, which is worshipped in the early Purāṇic period.⁹⁸ He draws water for the eight months and pours them down during the next four months. Due to the rain and heat produced by the Sun, the corn grows and the world subsists. Therefore, he is called *Jivana* and *Brahmasatkṛta*.⁹⁹ As noticed earlier in representing the Sun in the Epic period, we again come across the story relating to the Sun as the source of *Jivana* and *Brahmasatkṛta*. He is responsible for long life as is revealed by the legend of Rājyavardhana found in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*.¹⁰⁰ The malevolent aspect of the Sun also finds mention in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. To avoid the creation-destroying, fiery glory of the Sun, Brahmā prayed to him and persuaded him to contract his supreme glory.¹⁰¹ Viśvakarmā's paring of the Sun's rays¹⁰² probably symbolizes the curtailment of the excessive heat and the destructive power of

the Sun as well. The emphasis was laid upon the benevolent aspect of the Sun in the early Purāṇas because the Purāṇic religion centered round the concept of a loving god whose grace is sought for by the devotees.¹⁰³

There is also a development in his personality towards humanization in the early Purāṇas. The legends of Satrājīṭ,¹⁰⁴ Adīti,¹⁰⁵ Yājñavalkya¹⁰⁶ and Rājyavardhana¹⁰⁷ are important in this regard. In all these legends, the Sun appeared at first in his natural form. However, he displayed his human form when the worshipper requested for the same. With humanization, there emerged a family round the Sun god. In the early Purāṇas, the story of Saṁjñā and her shadow Chāyā as wives of Sūrya is referred to.¹⁰⁸ Sūrya has many children -Yama, Manu and Yamī by Saṁjñā; two Aśvins - Dasra and Nāsatya and Revanta from Saṁjñā in mare's form ; Manu, Śanaīścara and Tapatī from Chāyā. In some late passages of the early Purāṇas,¹⁰⁹ the attendants of the Sun god - Daṇḍa and Piṅgala - also find mention.

From the references to human form of the Sun it appears that the early Purāṇas were aware of the iconic tradition of the Sun god that was in vogue in the contemporary society.¹¹⁰ However, no direct reference occur to the image of the Sun in them. Some passages of the *Vāyu*, the *Matsya* and the *Mārkaṇḍeya* Purāṇas, which refer to the Sun-image, are regarded as later interpolations.

According to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Yājñavalkya and his pupils, having been inflicted with the sin of *Brahmahatyā* and advised by Brahmā, worshipped the god *Vālukeśvara* of twelve beams in the city of Vāyupur, took bath in the tanks including the *Sūryakuṇḍa* and merged them into the world of Sūrya (*Sūrya-maṇḍalam*). Ten *Rākṣasas* named

Yātudhānas who were probably indigenous tribes of India are said to have been the followers of Sūrya and roamed with the deity.¹¹¹ The reference to *the Rākṣasas* wandering along with the god can refer only to the icon of the Sun. Similarly, the reference to the worship of the god *Vālukeśvara* of twelve beams in the city of Vāyupur may clearly mean to refer to the worship of a Sun-image in a temple. Further, from the presence of a *Sūryakuṇḍa*, which became quite common in classical and mediaeval Hindu India¹¹² and was an integral part of the Sun-temple complex, it appears that there existed the image and temple of the Sun at this place. The legend of Yājñavalkya occurs in many early Purāṇas, which do not mention the worship of *Vālukeśvara* or *Sūryakuṇḍa*. It may, therefore, be said that these additions were interpolated in the original story in the later period. In the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, they were added after the 5th cent. A.D.¹¹³ to meet the popular demands for image and temple. These passages seem to have been influenced by the *Sāmba Purāṇa*,¹¹⁴ which refers to the twelfth form of the Sun that is similar to *Vālukeśvara* of twelve beams. The god *Vālukeśvara* who was no other than the Sun god is specifically mentioned as of twelve beams. This is very much in conformity with the Magian tradition of worshipping the Sun in his twelfth form. All these lead us to presume that there were some foreign elements in the Sun-cult as referred to in these passages of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.

Detailed instructions are found in the *Matsya Purāṇa*¹¹⁵ for the construction of Sun-images. It indicates that the practice of making Sun-images was already an established fact. There is no reference to Irānian features such as northerner's dress, high boots etc., which came to be incorporated in the orthodox literature from the 6th-7th cent. A.D. as is evident from the *Sāmba Purāṇa*.¹¹⁶ Therefore, the *Matsya Pūraṇa* passages

cannot be later than the sixth cent. A.D. As noticed earlier, no mention is made of Sun-images in earlier Purāṇas like the *Vāyu* and the *Brahmāṇḍa* that were composed between the 3rd-5th cent. A.D.¹¹⁷ Therefore, these passages may be placed between 500-600 A.D.¹¹⁸ Similarly, Sun-images are referred to in connection with several solar vows but these passages cannot be earlier than the sixth cent. A.D.¹¹⁹ However, there prevailed the custom of making Sun-images in society from first cent. A.D. onwards as is evidenced by the iconography.¹²⁰ The early Purāṇas ignored it out of their orthodoxy, as the tradition of Sun-images seems to have been alien to the Vedic tradition.¹²¹

The development of vows on an organized scale as the part of a particular religious faith is essentially a Purāṇic concept.¹²² In the *Viṣṇu*, the *Vāyu*, the *Brahmāṇḍa* and the *Mārkaṇḍeya* Purāṇas, there are no references to solar vows. However, penances and austerities, fasting in honour of the Sun god etc. are referred¹²³ to several times. *Sauravratas* are mentioned for the first time in certain late chapters of the *Matsya Purāṇa*. The worship of the Sun god by means of lotus as displayed in these *vratas* definitely points to a period, which is earlier than the time of the adoption of the Magian forms of Sun worship by means of images with Irānian features. S. N. Roy¹²⁴ and Srivastava¹²⁵ have justifiably placed those chapters on the *Sauravratas* in between 500-550 A.D. Thus, the solar vows came to be developed and incorporated in the Sun-cult at the end (500-550 A.D.) of the early Purāṇic age. The main solar vows are the *Kalyāṇasaptamī*, *Viśokasaptamī*, *Phalasaptamī*, *Śarkarāsaptamī*, *Kamalasaptamī*, *Mandārasaptamī*, *Śubhasaptamī*¹²⁶ and *Sūryasaṅkrānti*¹²⁷ in the early Purāṇas.

The *Kalyāṇasaptamī vrata* is to be performed on Sunday of the 7th day of a bright fortnight. It centers round the worship of the Sun with flowers, sandals, white clothes, incense, eatables, raw sugar, salt and fruits. Eight pictures of the Sun god drawn on the eight petals of a lotus should be worshipped by the recitation of a *mantra* having eight names of the Sun deity. One who observes this *vrata* attains freedom from diseases, liberation from all sins, prosperity and long life.¹²⁸

The *Viśokasaptamī vrata*¹²⁹ is to be kept on the sixth and the seventh days of the bright fortnight in the month of *Māgha*. On the sixth day, the observer of the *vrata* should take bath with black sesame and observe fast and celibacy. After taking bath and performing the *japa* in the morning, he should worship the golden lotus as *Arka*. On the seventh day, he should observe silence, eat food without oil and salt and give away the lotus, clothes etc. in charity. This makes the observer free from all sorrows and diseases for a period of ten *padmas*. The observer of this *vrata* with no particular desire attains unification with *Brahma*.

The *Phalasaptamī*¹³⁰ is to be celebrated on the seventh day of the bright fortnight in the month of *Mārgaśīrṣa*. The vow requires the worship of the Sun with a golden image and golden lotus under various names. The rewards of this vow are the attainment of endless fruits, prosperity and the freedom from diseases and ultimately the attainment of the *Sūryaloka*. In this *vrata*, the Sun god has been identified with *Brahmā*, *Indra*, *Viṣṇu*, *Śiva* and *Varuṇa*, which shows that he was regarded as the highest. The *Śarkarāsaptamī*¹³¹ is to be observed on the seventh day of a bright fortnight in the month of *Vaiśākha*. The Sun is to be worshipped by drawing a lotus on an altar, reciting hymn propitiatory for Savitṛ and employing incense etc. One who celebrates it attains sons,

grandsons and final emancipation. The *Kamalasaptamī vrata*¹³² is to be celebrated on the 7th day of bright fortnight in the spring. The Sun is worshipped here in the form of a golden lotus by means of flowers, incense etc. and recitation of *mantra* sacred to the Sun under various names - *Kamala, Prabhākara* etc. The observer should then give away gifts and food to the Brāhmaṇas. This enables one to possess inexhaustible wealth and to go to the *Sūrya-maṇḍalam* .

The *Mandārasaptamī vrata*¹³³ is to be observed on the seventh day in the month of *Māgha*. Here the Sun is to be worshipped by means of a golden image along with an eight-petalled lotus. The god is invoked here in the name of *Bhāskara, Sūrya, Arka, Aryama, Vedadharmā, Caṇḍabhānu, Pūṣan* and *Ānanda*. The employment of *mandāra* flowers in this vow forms a special feature of it.¹³⁴ In the *Subhasaptamī*,¹³⁵ the Sun is worshiped by means of the golden ox and golden cow as born from him and also by flowers, incense etc. In addition, *mantra* is recited to *Aryamā priyām*. The *Sūryasaṅkrānti vrata*¹³⁶ is to be observed on the day of equinoxes or solstices. The Sun should be worshipped by drawing an eight-petalled lotus under eight different names in the pericarp of the lotus. The *arghya* of water, sandal and flowers is to be given on the floor to the Sun. This entitles the observer to be honoured by the gods in the kingdom of Indra.

These *vratas* display a fixed procedure of the worship, the supremacy of the divinity and exclusive devotion to him. Thus, they appear to be connected with sectarian Sun worship but their nature is essentially domestic. There is no reference to any regular image or public worship. However, the references to the making of golden man on the lotus as the solar symbol clearly show the foreshadowing of the iconic tradition.

Besides these occasions, Sun worship is prescribed in general on Sundays by drawing a twelve-petalled lotus with red sandal.¹³⁷ In the fore part of the lotus, the horses of the Sun should be inscribed. Here he has been described as the soul of the universe, the basis of the *Ṛk-*, the *Yajus-* and the *Sāma-* Vedas. One who observes this ritual attains freedom from all sins and goes to the *Sūrya-maṇḍalam*. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,¹³⁸ it is prescribed for every householder to perform this form of Sun worship as one of the daily obligations. It involves the *ācamana*, *arghya* of water and recitation of a hymn, which invokes the Sun god under various names such as *Vivasvat*, *Bhāsvat*, *Savitṛ* and *Viṣṇu* etc. It is stated that the *Sūryavrata* is one of the sixty ordinances explained by Śiva.¹³⁹

The existence of various types of Sun worshippers is well revealed by the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. The subjects of Rājyavardhana who worshipped the Sun god included variety of Sun worshippers.¹⁴⁰ Some of them paid adoration by presenting to him the *arghya*, presents and other oblations. The second class maintained silence, while the third repeated the Vedic hymns. The fourth lay down on river sandbanks without taking food and the fifth offered oblations to the fire and repeated solar hymns day and night. The sixth cast their eyes on him standing there and the seventh worshipped him by presenting incense, flowers, oblations, unguent prayers, food, lamps and other offerings. The *pūjā* form of worship was getting popular though persons also resorted to older traditions.

It is said in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*¹⁴¹ and other early Purāṇas that the *cakra* of Viṣṇu, the trident of Śiva, *vimāṇa* of Kubera and *śakti* of Kārttikeya were made by Viśvakarmā out of the pared glory of the Sun. This is undoubtedly indicative of the superiority of the

Sun over Viṣṇu and other gods. According to *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Brahmā prayed to the Sun god for the continuance of his creation. Evidently, the power of Sūrya was greater than that of Brahmā.¹⁴² The prominent place of the Sun god in the legends of Yājñavalkya, Rājyavardhana, Brahmā and Aditi and the reference to *Sauradarśana*^{142a} may tend to show that the Sun was occupying an important position. The equality of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya is indicated when these four gods are regarded as indistinguishable.^{143a} Further, the Vaiṣṇava, the Śaiva and the Saura vows are treated on equal terms in the early Purāṇas.¹⁴³ Sūrya has been identified with Śiva in the *Matsya Purāṇa*.¹⁴⁴

SUN WORSHIP IN THE LATE PURĀṆAS

The late Purāṇas and the Upa-purāṇas throw a flood of light on the Sun-cult as developed between the 6th century A.D. and the 12th-13th centuries A.D.

A vast *Saura* literature came to be developed in this period. However, most of these works such as the *Sūrya Purāṇa*, etc. have been lost except the *Sāmba Purāṇa*. Of all the extant Purāṇas, the *Sāmba Purāṇa* appears to be the earliest work of the *Sauras*. The verses in the *Skanda*, the *Brahma*, the *Varāha*, the *Agni* and the *Garuḍa Purāṇas* show that sectarian form of Sun worship have certainly been borrowed from the *Sāmba Purāṇa*.¹⁴⁵ The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* also appears to have been the borrower from the same *Purāṇa*.¹⁴⁶ The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and the *Sāmba Purāṇa* are the most comprehensive and complete documents of the Sun-cult of the Magian tradition.

A full-fledged Sun-sect developed in the later Purāṇic times on an unprecedented scale along with all the paraphernalia. The indisputable supremacy of the god, the exclusive devotion, the fixed procedure of worship and other sectarian features are found

in the *Sāmba*, the *Bhaviṣya*, the *Varāha*, the *Skanda* and other late Purāṇas. The *Sāmba Purāṇa* at its very outset describes the Sun god as the cause of creation, protection and destruction of the universe and also as the soul of Brahmā, Nārayaṇa and Śaṅkara.¹⁴⁷ He creates the universe and various kinds of creatures in the form and capacity of Brahmā¹⁴⁸ and pervades it as well. He is the only god to deserve devotion and worship.¹⁴⁹ He is attended by the gods, the Yakṣas, the Gandharvas, the Apsarās, the three Vedas incarnate, the three Sandhyās incarnate, the Ādityas, the Vasus, the Maruts, the Aśvins, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and many other lesser gods. The reference to Indra, Varuṇa, Rudra etc. as attendants of the solar divinity points to his supremacy. He is eulogized by Brahmā, Rudra¹⁵⁰ and other important gods. Thus, the concept of the Sun god as developed in the later Purāṇas is that of a sectarian deity.

The sectarian character of the solar cult is evidenced by these phenomena: presence of a band of its followers known as the *Sūryabhaktas*,¹⁵¹ emergence of a special class of priests known as the Magas and the Bhojkas or the Yājakas,¹⁵² and development of a sectarian *Saura* literature. The reference to the *Sūrya-Siddhānta* as distinguished from the *Traividya-Siddhānta*¹⁵³ clearly reveals that the system of Sun worship had developed an exclusiveness that is quite suitable for a sect. Employment of flags and flag-staffs for the Sun god,¹⁵⁴ fixed methods and procedures for his worship,¹⁵⁵ evolution of a code of conduct for his worshippers,¹⁵⁶ use of a sectarian *mantra*,¹⁵⁷ elaborate rules and regulations for making his images and temples and for other constituents of the solar ritual¹⁵⁸ were actually products of a sectarian Sun-cult. *Bhakti*, which is the basis of a sect, is referred to several times in the late Purāṇas.¹⁵⁹ The late Purāṇic records on Sun-
sect are corroborated by the epigraphy of the period. The Māliya copper plate inscription

(571-72 A. D.) describes Mahārājā Dhārāpaṭṭa of the Maitraka dynasty as a *Paramādityabhakta*.¹⁶⁰ The Sonepat copper seal inscription informs us that Harṣavardhana was a *Paramādityabhakta*.^{160a} The Pratihāra kings - Rāmabhadra and Vināyakapāla are also mentioned as the *Paramādityabhakta* in Barāh copper plate and Pratāpagarh inscription respectively.^{160b} Viśvavarūpasena and Sūryasena of the Sena dynasty (12th cent. A.D.) are described as the *Paramasaura*.¹⁶¹ The sectarian nature of the solar cult as propounded by the late Purāṇas is also corroborated by the secular literature of the period as well.¹⁶²

In the *Sāmba* and other late Purāṇas, the Sun god is of greatly a metaphysical nature. *Sāmba Purāṇa* describes Sūrya as the cause of creation, protection and destruction, whose manifestations are the three Vedas.¹⁶³ which appears to have been inspired by the Vedic concept. The influence of Vedantic philosophy may be seen in the Vaśiṣṭha's praise of the Sun god as the highest. At several occasions, the Sun has been described simply as the luminary¹⁶⁴ that is in line with the Vedic tradition. Savitṛ, Sūrya, Āditya, Mitra, Vivasvat etc. are Vedic survivals in the later Purāṇic pantheon of the Sun god. That the twelve Ādityas- Pūṣan, Mitra, Viṣṇu, Vivasvat, Dhātā, Bhaga, Indra, Varuṇa, Aryaman, Amśumat, Tvaṣṭrī, and Parjanya are identical with the twelve months¹⁶⁵ is also Vedic survival.

Mihira is one of the twelve common names of the Sun in the later Purāṇas.¹⁶⁶ According to *Sāmba* and other late Purāṇas, the Sun should be worshipped in his twelfth form, which is that of Mihira.¹⁶⁷ All these show that the Magian tradition was also accepted in these Purāṇas. Thus, the sectarian concept of the Sun god synthesized the

Vedic and Magian concepts of the Sun god. In between these two, there had been the indigenous tradition of *bhakti*¹⁶⁸ centering round a human Sun god who had a large family also.¹⁶⁹

In the late Purāṇas, we find that Sun worship came to be formally associated with a foreign priesthood known as Maga. Many of them refer to a legend about the coming of the Magas in India from Śākadvīpa and their association with the Sun-cult. The relevant part of the legend in brief is as follows: Sāmba, the son of Kṛṣṇa by Jāmbavatī, was cursed by his father to suffer leprosy for his undesirable relations with the wives of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa. To be cured of the disease Sāmba, on the advice of Nārada, constructed a Sun-temple at Candrabhāgā (modern Chenab in the Punjab) for the worship of the god. Unfortunately, no Brāhmaṇa was ready to accept the office of a regular priest in this temple. Therefore, he sought the help of Gauramukha, the priest of Ugrasena who advised him to get the Magas, the special Sun worshipping priests from Śākadvīpa. Accordingly, Sāmba went to Śākadvīpa, brought eighteen families of the Magas and installed them into the office of the priest of his temple.¹⁷⁰

The late Purāṇic data on the Magas are corroborated by Varāhamihira¹⁷¹ who clearly instructs that the installation and consecration of Sun-images should be caused to be made by the Magas. The legend is repeated in an inscription at Govindapur in Gayā district dated the Śaka year 1059 corresponding to 1137-38 A.D. In its opening stanza, the Magas are said to have been brought into the country by Sāmba. Their existence in India is again indicated by many Irānian features such as *avyaṅga*, *udīcyaveśa* and *upanātpinaddha*.¹⁷² All these evidences conclusively prove that a certain class of priests

known as the Magas with exclusive devotion to the Sun was brought into India from Śākadvīpa.

It has been held¹⁷³ that the Magas of the Purāṇas were the Sun worshipping Magi priests of Irān. Originally, they were a priestly tribe of Medea¹⁷⁴ and a section of them worked their way into Zoroastrianism. Compromise between the way of life of the Magi priests and that of the Persians¹⁷⁵ led to the growth of Mithraism not later than the 5th-4th cent B.C..¹⁷⁶ The chief features of the Magi-cult were the worship of the Sun god and Fire-god under the name of Mithra, the use of 'barsom' and a belief in the division of the world between good and evil powers represented by light and darkness¹⁷⁷ respectively. They were famed for magic and occult power. Śākadvīpa must have been situated in Irān, most probably in eastern Irān¹⁷⁸ since the Śaka occupation of western India where the temple of Mūlasthāna is said to have been built by the Magas, was principally the work of the Śakas of eastern Irān.

It has been suggested¹⁷⁹ that the Magas entered into India for the first time in the wake of the Achaemenid invasion of the 6th-5th cent. B.C. The first wave of them appears to have been confined to the north-west borders of India where the Achaemenian influence had been paramount. In this very region, the Magas started their activities.¹⁸⁰ They continued coming in waves in the trains of foreign invaders. The second significant wave of the Maga came in the wake of foreign invaders in the post-Maurya period. The advent of the Magas in waves is indicated by the *Sāmba Purāṇa*.¹⁸¹ It appears that a third wave of the Magas who were the followers of Zoroaster must have left Irān for India because of the spread of Islam after the sixth cent. A.D. The Magas of this wave came to be known as the Yājakas.¹⁸²

It is difficult to say as to how far these Maga-priests could influence the indigenous tradition of Sun worship in ancient India. Many Purāṇas¹⁸³ do not mention the role of Magian priests at all and continue the indigenous and national tradition of Sun worship that is found in the *Vedas*, the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Sūtras* and the Epics. Purāṇas like the *Kūrma* describe the Sun just as a heavenly body, which is in conformity with the Vedic account of the Sun god. The *Viṣṇu*, *Vāyu*, *Brahmāṇḍa* and *Matsya* Purāṇas reveal that the orthodox tradition of Sun worship actually developed on the lines of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*'s¹⁸⁴ prescription of a golden disc to represent the solar orb and the Upaniṣadic¹⁸⁵ doctrine of the golden *Puruṣa* in the Sun who was identified with the Ultimate Being. The prevalence of this tradition even after the spread of the Magian tradition is also attested by the *Kūrma Purāṇa*. Even in the *Sāmba Purāṇa*,¹⁸⁶ the Vedic tradition has not been forgotten. Moreover, the name of the sect of which the Magas became priests is *Saura* - a Sanskritised form. Further, the whole theology¹⁸⁷ of this system is a reflex of the teachings of the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads* and the Epics.

The fundamentals of the Maga-cult could not make much headway in India probably because of the assimilative and absorbing capacity of the Indian culture. Besides, there was hardly anything new for Maga-priests to propagate in India. India had already most of the features of the Maga-cult (especially its Irānianised form that reached India) such as the worship of the Sun under the name of Mithra in the *Rgveda*,¹⁸⁸ the *Atharvaveda*,¹⁸⁹ the *Upaniṣads*,^{189a} and the Epics,¹⁹⁰ close connection of the fire worship with the Sun right from the times and dualist view of the world in ancient Indian

mythology.¹⁹¹ Therefore, it is evident that the influence of the Magas was negligible as far as the mythology, theology and philosophy of the solar cult were concerned.

The Magas, however, appear to have exerted powerful influence in iconography and temples. Most probably, the images and temples of the Sun-deity were not known. If known, they were not popular in India before the advent of the Magas as is evidenced by the Purāṇas.¹⁹² The solar orb was worshipped by the general masses.¹⁹³ Further, it is mentioned in the Purāṇas¹⁹⁴ that the masses adored the Sun god not in its anthropomorphic but in the symbolic forms of disc, wheel, lotus, *svastikā*, etc.

However, features such as northern dress, girdle round the waist and high boots occur in solar iconography of the Kuṣāṇa, the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods, which are definitely Persian.¹⁹⁵ They are also referred to in the literary texts¹⁹⁶ of India. These features are confined to north Indian tradition while they are conspicuous by their absence in images of South Indian tradition. The existence of a large number of Sun-temples in western India where the Magas first established a Sun-temple at Mūlasthāna (modern Multan),¹⁹⁷ also points out that it was the Maga-priests who started this new tradition in the Sun-cult. The Magian tradition of image making and temple building played the key role in propagating and diffusing the sectarian form of Sun worship. The imaginary and atmospheric conception of the Sun as found in the Vedas, the Epics and the Purāṇas was given a concrete and lithic representation.

The Magas are not referred to in the orthodox literature until the 5th-6th century A.D. This shows that for centuries they remained neglected by the orthodox Hindu society. However, Sun-images with Irānian features begin to occur from the Kuṣāṇa period onwards. This is indicative of their popularity particularly among the foreigners

and among unorthodox sections of Hindu society. Because of their immense popularity in the pre-Gupta society, the orthodox sections of Hindu society probably accepted them by the 4th-5th cent. A.D. Their absorption in the orthodox Hindu society by the middle of the sixth cent. A.D. is evidenced by the prescription of Magianised Sun worship in the *Sāmba Purāṇa* whose lower limit goes back to 500 A.D.¹⁹⁸ In a manuscript dated 550 A.D. found in Nepal, the Brāhmaṇas and the Magas are given equal status.¹⁹⁹ The instruction of Varāhamihira (550 A.D.) for making sun-images according to Irānian tradition also proves that they were absorbed in Hindu society by the middle of the sixth century A.D.

The Magas, no doubt, commanded wide popularity in the later Purāṇic period. The factors for their temporary success may be as follows: their proselytizing spirit,²⁰⁰ support of the Indo-Greek, the Scythian and the Kuṣāṇa rulers,²⁰¹ the propaganda of the benefits of Sun worship especially its curative properties, their contribution towards image-making and temple-building of Sūrya and their allowance to extend religious privileges to women and men of lower castes.²⁰² However, in due course they lost their individuality in absence of anything distinctive about them.

The Magas were divided in course of time into two groups: Magas and Bhojakas (later on degraded as the Yājakas).²⁰³ The Magas meditated on the syllable 'M' and the Yājakas adored the Sun by burning incense, offering garlands and various other articles and muttering *mantras*. The aim of both was, of course, the same i.e. the attainment of final emancipation through *Karmayoga*. It appears that the Bhojakas or the Yājakas or the Sevakas were native priests of the solar cult as they chanted Vedic *mantras* etc.²⁰⁴ However, in the later period, they established matrimonial relations with foreigners like

the Magas and came to be degraded as low or *apāñkteya*²⁰⁵ or *Devalaka-Brāhmaṇas*²⁰⁶ (temple-priests).

The later Purāṇas elaborately describe the family and attendants the Sun god. His two wives are *Rājñī* and *Nikṣubhā*. *Rājñī*'s another name was *Samjñā* or *Sareṇu*²⁰⁷ and the Sun had two sons with her - *Vaivasvata Manu* and *Yama Śrāddhadeya* and a daughter named *Yamī* or *Kāḷindī*. The shadow of *Samjñā* was *Chāyā* who is said to be the same as *Nikṣubhā* and is identified with *Pṛthvī*. From *Chāyā* the Sun got *Śrutaśravas*, *Śrutakarman*, and a daughter known as *Tapatī*. The other sons of the Sun god were two *Aśvins* named *Nāsatya* and *Dasra* (from *Samjñā* in *Kuru* country) and *Revanta* with the body of a horse having bow and arrows.

Eighteen attendants of the Sun²⁰⁸ are also referred to. *Agni* known as *Pīṅgala*²⁰⁹ on the right side of the Sun was engaged in checking the good and bad deeds of all creatures. *Indra* under the name of *Daṇḍanāyaka*²¹⁰ on the left side of the Sun was engaged by the latter to rule over the world with his *daṇḍa* and *nīti*. *Kārttikeya* and *Hara* stood at the eastern gate under the name of *Rājña* and *Stoṣa* respectively. *Yama* (i.e. *Kalmāṣa*) and *Garuḍa* (i.e. *Pakṣīn*) stood with two asses at the gate. The two *Aśvins* stood on two sides of the god. On the south stood *Citragupta* and *Kālā* under the names of *Jāṇḍakāra* and *Māṭhara*, on the west stood *Varuṇa* and *Sāgara* under the names of *Prāpnuyāna* and *Kṣutapā* respectively, on the north stood *Kubera* and *Vināyaka* and on the east stood *Revanta* and *Rudra*, the latter under the name of *Diṇḍī*²¹¹ and also *Śrī*, *Mahāśvetā* and *Mātṛs*. In addition to these chief eighteen attendants, *Soma* also figures as

an attendant deity of the Sun at one place and there were fourteen other attendants. These attendants of the god Sūrya are represented in the art of the period.²¹²

Method of Sun Worship:

The later Purāṇas demonstrate many influences in the evolution of the methodology of Sun worship, which are those of the Vedic tradition, indigenous system, as developed in the Epic period, Irānian system, Tāntric practices and Śaiva theology. The most important feature in the solar cult was the introduction of image and temple of the Sun god, which is expressly brought out in the later Purāṇas.²¹³ The rules for the construction of the Sun-temples and images are also described.²¹⁴ References are also made to six mediums of Sun worship viz. fire, water, air, holy place, image and pedestal for the image of a deity.

The later Purāṇas give prominence to the Vedic tradition in their earlier chapters. Irānian elements were, however, already present in the Sun-cult of this period. The Vedic *homa* forms an important part of the worship and the *mantras* to be used are either Vedic or Purāṇic or both.²¹⁵ The hymns in praise of the Sun are called *Vedokta* or *Veda-Vedāṅga-sammīta*. The *agnihotragraha* (the house for the oblations to the fire) is an integral part of the Sun-temples.²¹⁶ There is no reference to Tāntric symbols like *yantra* or *maṇḍala* in the earlier chapters.

The Tāntric cult was becoming quite popular particularly in eastern India from 7th-8th centuries onward²¹⁷ from which the solar cult could not remain untouched. *Sāmba Purāṇa* refers to many Tāntric elements in the Sun-cult. The method of initiation, which is full of Tāntric influence, involves the selection and preparation of the ground, selection

of spiritual preceptors and disciples, offer of *arghya* to the Sun with the *Mahāmantra*, drawing of a *maṇḍala* with the figure of a twelve-petalled lotus in it, performance of *homa* and of *tattvanyāsa* and *mantranyāsa*, worship of the quarter-guardians to whom fish, meat etc. are offered.²¹⁸ The *mantras* with Tāntric symbolism are employed at every step. *Maṇḍala* is drawn and various kinds of *mudrās* and *nyāsas* are performed in keeping with the Tāntric philosophy. The methods of performing *abhicāra* rites and *bījas* in *mantras* and practice of *yoga* have also been described and *vaśīkaraṇa*, *ākaraṇa*, *māraṇa*, *uccāṭana*, *vidveṣaṇa* and *stambhana* etc²¹⁹ are also referred to.

Sun worship, however, remained free from some fundamental principles of Tāntricism. The concept of a female principle as the cause of the universe²²⁰ is conspicuous by its absence in the later Purāṇas in the Sun-cult. No such concept as of Prajñā of Tāntric Buddhism and Umā of Tāntric Hinduism came to be developed round the name of Saṁjñā or Chāyā - wives of the Sun god - by the solar sectarians. No image of the Sun along with the female consort in Tāntric sense has also been discovered. Thus, the Sun-cult appears to have been influenced by Tāntricism outwardly because these practices were in keeping with the Yogic practices, which were prevalent in the Sun-cult as early as the Upaniṣads.²²¹

The Sun was worshiped at sunrise, mid-day and sunset.²²² The later Purāṇas also describe the method of performing annual worship (*Saṁvatsarī pūjā*) and annual car-festival (*Rathayātrā*) of the Sun with the use of Vedic and Purāṇic mantras²²³ as well as the methods of the use of incense and other materials in *pūjā*. Elaborate methods and results of observing seven different *saptamī tithis* as well as twelve *śukla-saptamīs*²²⁴ are also described.

Centres of Solar Cult:

From the later Purāṇas we come to know of three centers of Magian type of solar worship. The first place is Mūlasthāna or Maitravana²²⁵ on the Candrabhāgā River, which is identified with Multan in Punjab. Hiuen -Tsang who visited this place in the seventh century A.D., testifies to its great popularity as a centre of the Sun-cult.²²⁶ Alberuni, Al Edrisi, Abu Ishak al Ishtakhri etc. also give an account of this temple. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* as well as the *Sāmba Purāṇa* refers to this place as *Ādyasthāna*.^{226a} According to the legend of *Sāmba*, it was here that a Sun-temple was established for the first time.²²⁷ The fact that Western India where Multan is situated was a strong hold of the Sun-cult, is also attested by epigraphy.²²⁸

The second centre of solar worship is Kālapriya identified with modern Kālpī on the southern bank of Yamuna.²²⁹ Some scholars identify the Kālapriya-temple of the Sun at Kālpī with Kālapriyanātha at whose fairs all the three plays of Bhavabhūti were staged while others identify Kālapriya with Mahākāla of Ujjayinī.^{229a} The third place of Sun worship is mentioned as Sutīra, or Muṇḍīra or Udayācala also known as Sūryakānana, Ravikṣetra, Sūryakṣetra and Mitravana²³⁰ while the *Brahma Purāṇa* expressly calls it Koṇāditya or Koṇārka in Utkala (Oḍradeśa)²³¹ It is identified by some scholars with modern Koṇārka near Puri in Orissa.²³² Though some scholars believe that the eastern abode of the Sun was Koṇāditya or Koṇārka in Orissa, but on the basis of the evidences at our disposal there is little difficulty in identifying the place with Gaṅgāsāgara.

Thus, it is evident that the Magian type of the solar cult was developing in the whole of northern India. Further, it was gradually extending towards the eastern India as

is evidenced by the recasting of the *Sāmba Purāṇa* and further growth in volume of the text.²³³

Religious syncretism:

Religious syncretism reaches its climax in later Purāṇas and is best illustrated in the *Pañcāyatana Pūjā*.²³⁴ *Sāmba Purāṇa* speaks of the spirit of rapprochement among different sectarian deities. The Sun is said to have been worshipped as Viṣṇu in Śvetadvīpa, as Maheśvara in Kuśa-dvīpa, as Brahmā in Puṣkara-dvīpa and as Bhāskara in Śākadvīpa.²³⁵ A compromise between the sects of Sūrya and Brahmā²³⁶ is revealed by the Ms. *Puṣkara-Māhātmya* of the *Padma Purāṇa*. The trend of rapprochement between different sects is best represented by the syncretic images of the Sun.²³⁷ The cult-syncretism in the later Purāṇas is corroborated by early mediaeval inscriptions of the Pratihāra, Pāla, Chauhān and many other Rājput kings who patronized more than one deity and the same at one time.²³⁸

Notes and References

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2. Karmakar, A.P., 'Religion and Philosophy of the Epics', *Cultural Heritage of India*, Ramakrishna Mission Institute, Calcutta, Vol. II, p. 80.
3. MBH, VII.82.16 – *Sahasrānucarān Saurānsahasraṁ cāṣṭa cāparān*.
4. MBH, III.3.16-28.
5. Ibid, III.3.78.

6. Ibid, III.3.56 – *Īśvarāṅgām tvamiśvaraḥ*
7. Ibid, III.3.45.
8. Ibid, III.301.8 – *bhaktō ayam parayā bhaktayā māmiteva mahāabhujā*.
9. Ibid, I.173.18.
10. *Ram.* VI.105.
11. *Ram.*, VI.105.19 – *Brahmeśānacuteśāya Sūrāyādityavarcase*.
12. Ibid, VI.105.22.
- 12a. *MBH.*, III.138.18- *rahasyavedam kritavān Sūryasya dvijottamaḥ*.
13. *MBH.*, I.85.10.
14. *SWAI-S*, pp. 182-184.
15. *MBH.*, VI.82.16 – *dāntān vedavratasnātān snātānavabhritheṣu ca*.
16. Ibid, III.3.35, 39; *Ram.*, VI.105.29.
17. *Ram.*, II.95.7.
18. *MBH.*, I.172.12, 13.
19. Ibid, III.3.27- *Carācarātmā*; cf. *RV*, I.115.1.
20. Ibid, III.3. 29, 40.
21. Bhandarkar. R.G., *Vaiṣṇavism. Śaivism and other Minor Sects.* (Rep.) Varanasi, 1965, pp. 153-54.
22. *MBH.*, VI.2.36.
23. Ibid, III.6, 61.
24. Ibid, XIII.96.13.
25. Jairazbhoy, R.A., *Foreign Influence in Ancient India*, Bombay, 1962, p.151.
26. Raychaudhury, H.C., ‘The Mahābhārata, Some Aspects of its Culture’, *Cultural*

Heritage of India, Ramakrishna Mission Institute, Calcutta, Vol. II, p.77.

27. Hopkins, E.W., *Epic Mythology*, Strasburg, 1915, p. 85.
28. *MBH*, III. 138.18-19 – *Mūrtimāstam dadasārtha svayamagrabhugavyayaḥ*; III.300.9;
III.306.9, 10; XIII.96.20; III.3.70.
29. *Ram.*, VI.105.31.
30. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 85.
31. *Ibid*, I.66.35.
32. *Ibid*, I.III.58.
33. *Ibid*, XII.196.6.
34. *Ibid*, III.221.9; XII.265.8; III.110.26.
35. *Ibid*, I.3.56f.
36. *Ibid*, I.24.15-17.
37. *Ibid*, III.3.68.
38. Sorenson, S., *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*. Vol. II, Delhi. 1963, p. 64;
Ram., II.25.
39. *MBH*, XII.3.19.2f.
- 39a. *Ibid*. III.134.19.
40. *Ibid*, I.65.15-16.
41. *Ibid*, III.134.19. for details, see supra, Chapter II, p. 18.
42. *Ibid*. pp. 85.30.
43. *Ibid*, XII.264.11 – *Ādityaijāyate vriṣiḥ*; *Ram.*, VI.105.13 – calls him *ghanavṛṣṭi*.
44. *MBH*, III.3.6-8.
45. *Ibid*, III.3.67, 71.

46. Ibid, III. 3.16, 20-23.
47. Ibid, III.134.19.
48. *Ram.*, VI.105.15; *MBH*, III.200.85.
48. *MBH*, III.3. includes names of planets also in the list of 108 names of the Sun god.
49. Ibid, III.3.22, 24, 25, 27.
50. *Ram.*, VI.105.19 – Bhāsvate sarvavakṣāya Raudrāya vapuṣe namaḥ;
cf. *MBH*, III.3.58.
51. *MBH*, III.200.8. In the *Smṛtis* also, Ādityas are mentioned in the list of terrible deities, *Viṣṇu P.*, LXXXVI.9.
52. *Ram.*, III.63.16- Āditya bho lokakṛtākṛtagñyā lokasya satyānrtakarmasākṣin.
53. *MBH*, XII.362.15, 16.
54. *MBH*, III.3.35- *Suciḥ prayatbhāg bhūtvā stotramūrabdha vaṁstataḥ.*
55. *Ram.*, VI.105.29 – Ādityam prekṣya japatvedaṁ param harṣamavāptavān.
56. *MBH*, III.3.35, 39; *Ram.*, VI.105.29. In the *Smṛti* literature, these features are also mentioned in details. Kane, P.V., *History of Dharmasāstras*, Vol. II, pt. I, Poona, 1930-53, pp. 315-21.
57. *MBH*, III.3.34 – yogamāsthāya dharmatma vayuvakso jitendriyah.
58. *Ram.*, II.95.7- Ādityamupatiṣṭhante niyamādūr dhvabāhavaḥ.
59. Ibid, III.3.34, I.172.12.
60. Ibid, III.3.68; *Ram.*, VI.105.16-20.
61. *MBH*, III.3. 33 – puspopahārairbalibhiraracayivā divākaram.
62. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.
63. *DHI*, p. 433.

64. *JISOA*, III. No. 2, p. I, 25; *Lalitakalā*, No.6, Oct. 1959, p. 46.
65. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
66. *MBH*, III.3.77, 64.
67. Hazra, R.C., *Studies in the Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Dacca, 1940, pp. 215-227.
68. *Ibid*, p. 228.
69. *Ibid*. p. 21.
70. The presence of the Magian tradition of Sun-cult is proved by the evidence of coins with Mihira legend and Sun-images with Irānian traits from the Kuṣāṇa period onwards. *DHI*, p. 433.
71. The reference to a Sun-sect - '*Sauras*'- in the *Mahābhārata* (VII.82.16) shows the emergence of non-Vedic trend in the post-Vedic period.
72. *Viṣṇu P.*, II.8.11f.
73. *Ibid*, II .8.11-12 *Ahorātravyavasthānakārṇam bhagavān raviḥ*; II.8.67ff.
74. *Ibid*, II.8.53, 58 -- *sa hanti Suryam samdhyāyā nopāstīm kurute tu yaḥ*.
75. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CII.20, CI TI.6.
76. *Ibid*, CIX.63.
77. *Ibid*, CIX.73.
78. *Viṣṇu P.*, II.10; Roy, S. N., 'Early Purāṇic Account of Sun and Solar Cult' *Journal of Allahabad University Studies*, 1963 (64), pp 39-59; Srivastava, V.C., 'The Purāṇic Records on the Sun worship', *Purāṇa*, Vol. XI, No.2, p. 232.
79. *Viṣṇu P.*, 111.11.39 refers to the *ācamana* and the *arghya* to Sūrya. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIX refers to the *japa* as one of the means of Sun worship. In the *Smṛtis*, the Vedic

tradition of worshipping the Sun god by means of the *japa*, the *arghya*, the *upasthāna*, the *sandhyopāsanā* etc. is continued, which the early Purāṇas have tried to imbibe. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 313ff.

80. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIX.61.

81. *Viṣṇu P.*, III.5; *Vāyu P.*, 69.209-21; *Brahmāṇḍa P.*, II.35. 14-26.

82. *Viṣṇu P.*, IV.13; *Vāyu P.*, IVC.22; *Brahmāṇḍa P.* III.71.23.

83. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIII.2; CIII.5; CIV.18-29; CIV.36.

84. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIV.18-29; CIV.36.

85. *Viṣṇu P.*, IV. 1.34-36; *Brahmāṇḍa P.*, CIX.62-63; *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIX.69-71;

CIX.65; CIX.77. It is tempting to identify this king with Rājyavardhana of the Vardhana dynasty in view of the identical name and identical faith of both the personages. Both are the worshippers of the Sun but the early character (3rd-5th century A.D.) of the cantos where this story occurs and different genealogy does not allow us to identify them. Rājyavardhana of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* appears to have been a mythical figure.

86. Srivastava, V.C., 'The Solar Cult as revealed by the Gupta and post-Gupta inscriptions', *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, Vol. XXVII, Nos. 1-4, pp. 41-48 ; Fleet, J.F.(Ed.), *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, London, 1888, pp. 70, 79-88, 125-129, 200-210.

87. *DHI*, pp. 432-36.

88. *Vāyu P.*, XXXI.37; *Brahmāṇḍa P.*, II.13.125.

89. Dikshitar, V.R.R., *Purāṇa Index*, *Matsya P.*, 184.31.

90. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, 100.14.

91. Agrawala, V.S., *Matsya Purāṇa - A Study*, Varanasi, 1963, p. 21.
92. *Viṣṇu P.*, I.15.126-131; *Vāyu P.*, 66.66-67; *Brahmāṇḍa P.*, 3.2.67-69; *Matsya P.*, 6.3-5.
93. Roy, S.N., *Paurāṇic Dharma Evaṁ Samāja*, (H), Allahabad, p. 48.
94. *Matsya P.*, 9.86.
95. *Viṣṇu P.*, II.10.19; *Matsya P.* 126.25.
96. Dikshitar, V.R.R., *The Pūrāna index*, Vol. III, Madras, 1955, pp. 683-86.
97. *Viṣṇu P.*, III.5.15-24.
98. Roy, S.N., 'Early Purāṇic Account of Sun and Solar Cult', *University of Allahabad Studies*, 1963, p. 48.
99. *Vāyu P.*, XXXI.37; *Brahmāṇḍa P.*, II.13.125. Such titles are given to the Sun in the *Mahābhārata* too
100. Srivastava, V.C., 'The Purāṇic Records on the Sun worship'. *Purāṇa*. XI. No.2, pp. 241-243.
101. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIII.13.
102. Ibid, LXXVII; Agrawala, V.S., *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Eka Sāṅskritika Adhyayana* (H), Allahabad, 1961, p. 165.
103. Macnicol, N., *Indian Theism*. London. 1915, pp. 7, 20.
104. *Viṣṇu P.*, IV.13.11, 12, 15.
105. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CVI.1, 3.
106. *Viṣṇu P.*, III.5.25.
107. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIX, 59-61, 75-78.
108. *Viṣṇu P.*, III.2; *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, LXXVII.1-42.

109. *Matsya P.*, XI.32.36.
110. *DHI*, 434ff. Actual pieces of Sun-images of the Kuṣāṇa and the Gupta periods have been found and the Gupta inscriptions testify to the fact that there had been Sun-temples in the Gupta period; Srivastava, V.C., *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, XXVII, (1-4), pp. 41-48.
111. *Vāyu P.*, 69-12.
112. Sankalia, H.D., *Archaeology of Gujarat and Kathiawar*, Bombay, 1948, pp. 212.
113. *SWAI-S*, p. 221.
114. *Sāmba P.*, III.3.
115. *Matsya P.* CCLXI. 1-7; XCIV.
116. Hazra, *Studies* Vol. I., p. 57ff. Varāhamihira (550 A.D.) in his *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, ch. 57, directly refers to these features.
117. Hazra, *Purāṇic Records*, p. 175.
118. *Ibid*, p. 176 assigns these chapters to circa 550-650 A.D.
119. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 48. However, S. N. Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 165 takes it to be earlier than 550 A.D.
120. Banerjea, J.N., 'Sūrya, Ādityas and the Navagrahas', *JISOA*, XVI, pp. 53ff.
121. The *Sāmba* and the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇas* expressly state that the Irānian Magas were responsible for the introduction of this practice. R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upa-Purāṇas*, Vol.I, Calcutta, 1958, pp. 31ff.
122. Hazra, *Purāṇic Records*, p. 228.
123. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIX.49, CX.26; *Viṣṇu P.*, III.5.14.
124. Roy, S.N., *op. cit.*, p. 165.

125. *SWAI-S*, p. 225.
126. *Matsya P.*, 74.2.3.
127. *Ibid*, 98.
128. *Ibid*, 74.19.
129. *Ibid*, 75.
130. *Ibid*, 76.
131. *Ibid*, 77.
132. *Ibid*, 78.
133. *Ibid*, 79.
134. *Ibid*, 79.5.
135. *Ibid*, 79.
136. *Ibid*, 79.
137. *Ibid*, 97.5-9.
138. *Viṣṇu P.*, III. 11.39-40.
139. *Matsya P.*, CI.63.
140. CIX.50ff. Ānandagiri also informs us that Śaṅkara encountered the followers of a Sun-sect whose leader was Divākara. There had been six classes of devotees of the Sun. Details may be found in Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
141. *Viṣṇu P.*, III.2.11.
142. *Mārkaṇḍeya P.*, CIII.
- 142a. *Vāyu P.*, 104.16, 16.131-34 also refers to it; Handiqui, K.K., *Yasastilaka and Indian Culture*, Sholapur, 1949, p. 216.
143. *Matsya P.*, 52.23.

- 143a. Ibid, Ch. 95-101.
144. Ibid, LV.3-5.
145. Hazra, R.C., *Studies in the Upa-Purāṇas*, Vol. I, p. 59.
146. Ibid, p. 57.
147. *Sāmba P.*, 1.1- *Namaḥ savitrejagaaekacakṣuṣejagatprasūtisthitināśahetave/ Trayīmayāyatriguṇātmadhāriṇaviriñcinārāyaṇaśamkarātmane.*
148. Ibid, 4.4.
149. Ibid, 2.7- *Nataḥ parataro devaḥ kaścidanyonarādhipa* 9- *Sarvasyajagatonāthaḥ karmasākṣīvibhāvasuḥ; 20 – tasmadān yatrabhaktirhimākāryyāśubhamichatā*
150. Ibid, 16.25-35; d. *Bhaviṣya P.* 1.124.8.
151. Ibid, 38.10 – *Nābhya Sūryecca tadbhaktamnavamādyācānya devatā.*
152. Ibid. 27.3, 4, 22, 23.
153. Ibid, 28.15- *Traividyaśiddhantaratāḥ Sūryasiddhānta vedinaḥ.*
154. Ibid, 33.8.
155. Ibid, Chs. 47-83.
156. Ibid, 44.
157. Ibid, 44.
158. Ibid, Chs. 30-31, 36-37; cf. *Bhaviṣya P.* 1.13 1.132.
159. *Sāmba P.*, 38.7-12.
160. Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-71.
- 160a. Ibid, pp. 219-21, 234.
- 160b. *E.I.*, Vol. XIV, p. 176 & Vol. V., p. 212.
161. *CBI.*, p. 325.

162. *Sūrya Śatakam*, 22 – *prātaḥ prollaṅghaya Viṣṇoh padamapi ghr̥ṇayevātivegādda vīyasyuddyām dyotamānā dahatu dinapaterdurnirmittam dyutirvaḥ*; 25, 29 88, 89, 90, 91, 92.
163. *Sāmba P.*, 1.1-6.
164. *Ibid*, 14.9.
165. *Sāmba P.*, 9.5ff; *Bhaviṣya P.*, 1.65.26b-29; I. 78.58-60.
166. *Sāmba P.*, 9.2 ; *Brahma P.*, 31.15.
167. *Sāmba P.*, 1.13 says that this *Purāṇa* is concerned with the twelfth form of the Sun.
168. *Ibid*, 38.10.
169. *Ibid*, 26.
170. *Sāmba P.*, 26. 48.
171. *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, 60.19.
172. Rao, Gopinath T.A., *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, 2 vols, New York, 1968, pp. 299-305; cf. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1952, XXVIII.
173. Jairazbhoy, *op. cit.*, p.153; Barth, A., *The Religions of India* (Tr. J.A.R. Wood), London, 1882, p. 257; Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 544; Majumdar, R.C. (Ed). *Age of Imperial Unity*, Bombay, 1951, p. 465; Mitra, D., 'Foreign Elements in Indian Population', *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. II, pp. 613-15.
174. Moulton, *The Treasure of Magi*, Oxford, 1917, p. 9. Moulton regards them neither Āryan nor non-Āryan but as belonging to a low graded indigenous tribe of Medea.
175. Herodotus was aware of these differences especially in matters connected with the disposal of the dead. They exposed the dead body while the Persians burnt it. cf.

- Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, London, 1926, p.57; Ghirshman, R., *Irān*, Pelican Series, 1963, p.156.
176. Burns, E.M., *Western Civilizations*, London, 1957, p. 70.
177. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, pp. 182-253.
178. Majumdar, R.C. (ed.), *Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 465.
179. *SWAI-S*, pp. 244-254.
180. *Skanda P.*, VI.76; *Sāmba P.*, 26.14; *Bhaviṣya P.*, I.72.4-6 refer to Mūlasthāna (Multan, Punjab) as the original place of the Magianized Sun-cult .
181. Hazra, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.
182. Hazra, *op. cit.* p. 96. cf. *Sāmba P.* 30.22b. The word *Yājaka* has been substituted for the word *Bhojaka*.
183. Majumdar, R.C. (Ed.), *The Classical Age*, Bombay, 1954, p. 438.
184. *SB*, VII.4.1.10.
185. *BAU*, II.5.5.
186. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 63. cf. *Sāmba P.* 6.15; 12.8; 12.13; 24.7; 29.15; 30.18.
187. Furquhar, J.N., *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India*, London, 1920. p. 153.
188. *RV*, III.59.
189. *AV*, XIII.3.13, IX.3.18, III.8.1 and V.12.1.
- 189a. *Taittirīya U.*, I.1.1, I.12.1.
190. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-204.
191. Frazer, J.G., *Worship of Nature*, Vol. I, London, 1926, p. 596; *VM*, p.60; Ludwig, quoted by Pusalker, A.D., *Cultural History of India*, Vol. II, p. 65.

192. *Sāmba P.*, 29.2-6. It is interesting to note that here the Maga priests are not described as responsible for image making but Viśvakarman - the native architect was responsible. It is suggested that Bodh Gayā, Bhājā, Lālā Bhagat and Anantgumphā Sun-images represent the native tradition of solar iconography. cf. *DHI*, pp. 432-34.
193. *RV*, I.175.4; V.29.10; *SB*, VII. 4.1. 10; *DHI*, pp. 137-40, 198-99.
194. *Sāmba P.*, 29.2.6. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa (Brahma Parvan)* refers to *maṇḍala* form of Sun worship. In commenting upon *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra*, II.11.29.16 Haradatta says that the Dravidas used to worship *Āditya* by drawing *maṇḍalas*.
195. Banerjea, J.N., 'Myths Explaining Some Alien Traits of North Indian Sun icons', *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXVIII, 1952; *DHI*, p. 437.
196. *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, ch. 57 (45-8); *Viṣṇudharmottara*, III.67.1-5.
197. *Sāmba P.*, 29.2.6; *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Ch. 139 too narrates the incident.
198. Hazra, *op.cit.*, p. 93.
199. *I.A.*, 1911, Jan., p. 18.
200. Vasu, N.N., *Castes and sects of Bengal*, IV.55-57 suggests probable connection of the Sun worship with Śuṅga, Kaṇva and Hūṇa dynasties.
201. Bloch, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, 1910, p. 723 believes that the theory of cure of leprosy by the Sun god came from Persia. However, as shown by the *Ṛgveda* and the *Atharvaveda* there was native tradition also that the Sun god cures leprosy and other skin diseases. *Sāmba P.*, ch. 24; *Mayūra Śataka*.
202. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

203. Ibid, p. 97.
204. *Sāmba P.*, 27.
205. *Bhaviṣya P.*, I.140, 141, 146.
206. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
207. *Sāmba P.*, 10.17b; *Bhaviṣya P.*, 1.79b; *Skanda P.*, VII.1.11.65b.
208. *Sāmba P.*, 16.1-22.
209. *Bhaviṣya P.*, I.76.23; *Sāmba P.*, 6.21; III.67.5-7; *Viṣṇudharmottara*, III.67.5-7.
210. *Viṣṇudharmottara*, III.67.5 refers him as Daṇḍīn.
211. *Sāmba P.*, 16.1.24.
212. *IBBS*, p. 160.
213. *Sāmba P.*, 29.2-6 - -*na purā pratimā hy āsīt pūjyate maṇḍale raviḥ/ yathaitan maṇḍalam vyomni sthīyate savitus tadā// evaṁ eva purā bhaktaiḥ Pūjyate maṇḍalakṛtiḥ / yataḥ prabhṛti cāpy eṣā nirmītā viśvakarmaṇā / sarvalokahitārthāya sūryasya puruṣākṛtiḥ/ grihesu pratimāyās tu na tāsām niyamah kvacitt. . . . // devāyatana-vinyāse kāryam mūrtiparīkṣaṇam //*; Ibid., I.17a - *Sāmbasya ca tadollāsam pratimasthapanam tathā*. It is omitted in the Venkateśvara Ed. but is found in *Eggeling's Ind. Office., Cat.*, VI, p. 1317.
214. Ibid, 29; *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, 57. 46-48.
215. *Sāmba P.*, 30.18, 32.12.; 37.19.
216. *Sāmba P.*, 29.15.
217. Chakravarti, C., *The Tantras, Studies on Their Religion and Literature*, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 80-89.
218. *Sāmba P.*, 39.41.

219. *Sāmba P.*, Ch.I.47-83. cf. Chakravarti, C., *op. cit.*, pp. 38-44, 80-82.
220. Majumdar, R.C. (Ed.), *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, Bombay, 1955, p. 314ff.
221. *Maitrī U.*, I.2.
222. *Sāmba P.*, 29.
223. *Ibid*, 34.14ff.
224. *Ibid*, 46.
225. *Sāmba P.*, I.38.
226. Beal, A., *Buddhist Records of Western Countries*, Vol. II, London, 1906, p. 274.
- 226a. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
227. *Sāmba P.*, ch. 24-26.
228. Sankalia, *op. cit.*, pp. 60, 80, 137,212 ; Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 70, 80, 162, 218.
229. Mirashi, V.V., 'Three Ancient Famous Temples of the Sun,' *Purāṇa*, Vol. VIII. No. I, p. 42.
- 229a. Kane, P.V., (Ed.) *Uttararāmacarita* (4th Ed.) (Intro.), Tripurāri. A Commentator of Bhavabhūti's *Mālatīmādhava* identifies both. Bhandarkar, D.R., *EL*, vol. VII. p. 30.
230. *Sāmba P.*, 42.2.
231. *Brahma P.*, 28-32, Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
232. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 146. Mirashi, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
233. Hazra, *op. cit.*, p. 62 suggest that the present *Sāmba Purāṇa* was composed in Orissa.
234. Banerjea, J.N., *Pañcopāsana* (Bengali), Calcutta, 1950.
235. *Sāmba P.*, 26; 37; 38.

236. Chatterjee, A., *Padma Purāṇa - A Study*, pp. 193-94. The *Śāradātilakam*, XIVA.2,
emphasizes the syncretic character of the worship of the Sun.
237. *DHI*, p. 551.
238. *SWAI-S*, pp. 366-391.