

The Vāyu-Purāna

The original *Vāyu* is perhaps the oldest of the extant Purāṇas¹ The *Mahābhārata* (Vangavāsi ed., III, 191, 16) speaks of a 'Purāṇa proclaimed by Vāyu', the *Harivamśa* (Vangavāsi ed., I, 7, 13 and 25) refers to 'Vāyu' as an authority, Bānabhatta says in his *Harsacarita* that he listened to the reading of the *Vāyu-purāṇa* in his native village,² and Alberūni repeatedly names a *Vāyu-purāṇa* in his account of India³

The character of the *Vāyu* as a Mahāpurāṇa has sometimes been called in question⁴ The cause of this doubt is the use of the title 'Śiva' or 'Śarva' for 'Vāyaviya' in the majority of the lists of 'eighteen Mahāpurāṇas'⁵ But this substitution, which has been taken wrongly in favour of the comparatively late sectarian *Upapurāṇa* called '*Śiva-purāṇa*', is based on the Śaiva character of the *Vāyu* The *Skanda* says "The fourth (Purāṇa), declared by Vāyu, is known as *Vāyaviya* It is also called *Śarva* on account of

1 In the following pages the Ānandāśrama edition of the *Vāyu* has been used

2 *Harsacarita* ch. iii, (pavamāna-proktaṃ puṭānam papātha)

3 Sachau, *Alberūni's India*, I, pp. 41-2, 130, 168, 194, 247, 287, etc.

4 Naraśimha Vajapeyū includes the '*Vāyu-p*' among the *Upapurāṇas* See *Nityācāra-pradīpa*, ASB ed., p. 19 Śrīdhara Svāmīn, in his commentary on the *Bhāgavata-p*, explains the word *śarvaka* as '*Śiva-purāṇa*' See his commentary on *Bhāgavata* XII, 13, 4 Mitra Miśra recognises the Śaiva as a *Mahāpurāṇa* and says

यः पि विष्णुपुराणे ब्रह्माण्डमादाय वायवीय त्यागेन या च ब्रह्मवैवर्ते वायवीयमुपादात्त

ब्रह्माण्डपुराणपरित्यागेन अष्टादशसंख्या उक्ता सा कल्पभेदेन व्यवस्थायतेत्या ।

See *Viramitrodaya*, *Paribhāṣāprakāśa* (ed. Parvatiya Nityānanda Śarmā, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Benares, 1906) p. 13

5 See *Viṣṇu-p* (Vanga ed.) III, 6, 21 ff., *Bhāgavata* (Vanga ed.) XII, 7, 23 ff. and XII, 13, 4 ff., *Kūrma* (Vanga ed.) I, 1, 13 ff., *Padma* (Anss ed.) I, 62, 2 ff., IV, 111, 90 ff., VI, 219, 25 ff., and VI, 263, 77 ff., *Varāha* (Vanga ed.) 112, 69 ff., *Mārkandeya* (Vanga ed.) 137, 8 ff., *Linga* (Jivānanda's ed.) I, 39, 61 ff., *Śiva* (Vanga ed.) V (*Vāyaviya-sambhitā*), 1, 1, 38 ff., Śivamahātmya-khaṇḍa of the *Sūta-sambhitā* commented on by Mādhavācārya (Eggeling, *India Office Catalogue*, VI, p. 1377), *Saura-sambhitā* of the *Skanda-p* (Eggeling, *India Office Catalogue*, VI, p. 1382), *Sambhava-kāṇḍa* of the *Śivarāhasya-khaṇḍa* of the *Samkara-sambhitā* of the *Skanda-p* (Eggeling, *India Office Catalogue*, VI, p. 1363), and so forth

its connection with (i e., treatment of) Śiva-bhakti . . . It contains 24,000 ślokas”⁶ The description of the fourth Mahā-purāna, as given in the *Matsya*, *Nāradiya* and *Agni*, also agrees with the contents of the present *Vāyu-purāna*⁷ None of the Nibandha-writers, who have drawn upon the *Vāyu* and the *Śiva-purāna*, have been found to make any confusion between the two, for the verses quoted from the ‘*Vāyaviya*’ or ‘*Vāyu-purāna*’ are, in the majority of cases, found only in the present *Vāyu* but not in the *Śiva*, and those quoted from the ‘*Śaiva*’ or ‘*Śiva-purāna*’ are sometimes traceable in the present *Śiva* but never in the *Vāyu* That the *Vāyu* was more important in the eyes of at least the Nibandha-kāras is shown by the fact that almost all of them quote verses from it, whereas the *Śiva-p* is drawn upon by a very few of them Hence it seems that the attempt to raise the *Śiva-p* to the status of a Mahā-

6 चतुर्थं वायुना प्रोक्तं वायवीयमिति स्मृतम् ।
शिवभक्तिसमायोगाच्छैव तच्चापराख्यया ॥
चतुर्विंशतिसख्यातं सहस्राणि तु शौनक ।

Skanda-p (Vanga ed) V, iii, (Revā-khanda), 1, 33-34a These verses are also found in the *Revā-māhātmya* which claims to be a part of the *Vāyu-purāna* See Aufrecht, *Bodleian Catalogue*, p 65

7 See *Matsya* (Vanga ed) 53, 18, *Nāradiya* (Venkat ed) I, 95 and *Agni* (Vanga ed) 272, 4b-5 The mention of the Śveta-kalpa as connected with the declaration of the ‘*Vāyaviya Purāna*’ should not create any difficulty, for the *Vāyu-p* seems to connect itself with the Varāha-ka’pa (*Vāyu* 6, 11 and 13, 7, 5, 21, 12 and 23) and to identify this Kalpa with the Śveta-kalpa (*Vāyu* 6, 13, 23, 63 ff and 114 ff) Moreover, the *Nāradiya P* whose list of contents of the ‘*Vāyaviya Purāna*’ agrees much with those of our *Vāyu* but not even partially with those of the *Śiva*, also speaks of the connection of the ‘*Vāyaviya*’ with the Śveta-kalpa The word *bhāga-duaya-samanvita* used by the *Nāradiya P* with respect to the ‘*Vāyaviya*’ should not be taken to point to the *Vāyaviya-sambhitā* (of the *Śiva-p*) which also consists of two *bhāgas* (parts) Eggeling, in his *India Office Catalogue*, VI, pp 1299-1301, describes a few mss of a Purāna which is called ‘*vāyuprokta-purāna*’ or ‘*vāyu-purāna*’ in the colophons of chapters It is generally the same as our present *Vāyu*, and is divided into two khandas (or kāndas) or four *pādas* The ASB edition of the *Vāyu* also is divided into two *bhāgas*

Of the twelve Samhitās of the *Śiva-p* the *Vāyaviya-sambhitā* only is declared by *Vāyu* So, how could the words *vāyaviya*, *vāyu-prokta* etc be applicable to the entire *Śiva-p* which begins with a Samhitā other than the *Vāyaviya*?

purāna" was due to a comparatively late sectarian zeal⁹ The *Dēvī-bhāgavata* (Vanga ed., I, 3, 14) and the 'Padma-p' referred to by Gangādhara in his commentary on the Dharma-samhitā of the *Śiva-p*,¹⁰ include the *Śiva* among the Upapurānas

The *Vāyu* consists of four Pādas—(1) Prakriyā, comprising chaps 1-6, (2) Anusanga, chaps 7-64, (3) Upodghāta, chaps 65-99, and (4) Upasamhāra, chaps 100 to the end. It deals with all the five topics characteristic of the old Purānas. Over and above these, there are a few chapters on Smṛti matters, viz ,

chaps 16-17 — on the duties of the castes (*varnas*) and *āśramas*,

chap 18 — on the penances of yatis,

chaps 57-59 — on *yuga-dharma*,

„ 73-83 — on funeral sacrifices (including impurity due to births and deaths, and purification of things),

chap 101 — on hells and results of actions done, and

chaps 105-122 — on the glories of Gayā

These chapters do not seem to have belonged to the present *Vāyu* in its earliest form. They are in all likelihood later additions. Of these, chaps 16-18 are comprised in the section on Pāśupata Yoga which betrays the influence of chaps 39-43 of the *Mārkandeya-p*. In this section, which extends from chap 10 (verses 68 ff) to 20,

8 In its *Vāyaviya-samhitā*, the *Śiva-p* lays claim to the position of a Mahāpurāna saying that the fourth Mahāpurāna is the *Sava* which consists of twelve Samhitās. See *Śiva-p* V, 1, 41

9 The verse " . . . वायवीयमनुत्तमम् । अष्टादशं समुद्दिष्टं ब्रह्माण्डमिति संज्ञितम् ॥ in *Kūrma* I, 1, which includes the 'Sava' among the *Mahāpurānas*, should not be taken strongly in support of the early date of the *Śiva-p* and its character as a Mahāpurāna. This verse most probably means "That excellent (Purāna) proclaimed by Vāyu is enumerated as the eighteenth and is known as *Brahmānda* , because the *Brahmānda-p* also is proclaimed by Vāyu and is called 'vāyu-prokta *brahmānda*' in the colophons of its chapters

10 Haraprasad Shastri, *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts*, ASB, V, p 289

the *Vāyu* has not only a good number of verses in common with the *Mārkaṇḍeya*¹¹ but has also improved upon the latter with fresh addition of chapters and verses. Now, we have seen that *Mārkaṇḍeya* 39-43 cannot possibly be dated earlier than 200 A D¹². Therefore chaps. 16-18 of the *Vāyu-p* should be dated later still. The fact that the section on Pāsūpata yoga is not found in the *Brahmānda-p* tends to show that it was interpolated after 400 A D, because the *Vāyu* and *Brahmānda* could not have been separated earlier than 400 A D. Consequently, *Vāyu* 16-18 also are to be dated later than that period. As Śūlapāṇi quotes a verse from chap. 18 in his *Prāyaścitta-uvveka*, they are certainly earlier than 1300 A D. None of the early Nibandhakāras being found to draw upon them, it is difficult to place the lower limit of the date at a still earlier period.

Chaps. 57-59, dealing with *yuga-dharma*, give an account of the period ranging from the reign of the Nandas to the end of the Āndhra rule in Western India¹³. Therefore, these chapters should not be dated earlier than 200 A D. They were, however, written earlier than 275 A D, because the *Matsya-p* borrowed from the *Vāyu* a good number of chapters, including the three mentioned above, in the last quarter of the third or the first quarter of the fourth century A D¹⁴. Of these three chapters, chap. 59 has been drawn upon by Devanabhata in his *Smṛti-candrikā* (see Appendix).

Chaps. 73-83, on *śrāddha*, are included in the section 'Śrāddha-kalpa' (covering chaps. 71-85), the greater part of which is given as an interlocution between Brhaspati and his son Śamyu. In these chapters yogins have been given remarkable prominence as invited

11 Cf. *Vāyu*, 16 with *Mārkaṇḍeya*, 41, 3 ff., *Vāyu*, 17 with *Mārkaṇḍeya*, 41, 18 ff., *Vāyu*, 19 with *Mārkaṇḍeya*, 43, and *Vāyu*, 20 with *Mārkaṇḍeya*, 42, 5 ff.

12 See my essay on the *Mārkaṇḍeya-p* in *IHQ*, XI, 1935, pp. 108 ff.

13 See my essay on 'the Hindu society before 200 A D. and the Purānic rites and customs in the first stage of their development' to be shortly published in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*.

14 See my essay on the '*Matsya-purāna*' in *ABORI*, XVII, pp. 1 ff.

guests¹⁵ It is said "Śrāddhas should be carefully offered to yogins . . . What is eaten by an adept in yoga saves one from great fear A yogin is superior to a thousand householders, a hundred forest-hermits and a thousand students" Such prominence given to yogins is not traceable in the Codes of Manu and Yājñavalkya, who do not seem to have held yogins in high esteem On the other hand, yogins are given great prominence in the existing Pāñcarātra Samhitās which are certainly later than the above mentioned Codes. It is therefore highly probable that the chapters on *śrāddha* in the *Vāyu-p* belong to a date not earlier than 200 A.D. This date seems also to be supported by the hatred with which the 'nagnas' (the naked) have been mentioned in chaps 78 and 79¹⁶ The word *nagna* is said to mean those people who are without garments Such people are clearly the Jains and the Buddhists, because the terms *nirgrantha* and *pāsanda* also have been used in these chapters of the *Vāyu* The contempt shown to these religious sects could be possible only when their religions were in a decadent state Buddhism, which found its strongest upholders in Aśoka Maurya and Kaniska, was probably in a flourishing condition at the end of the second century A.D. So the chapters of the *Vāyu* cannot possibly be earlier than that time The mention of the Naksatras from Kṛttikā to Bharanī in *Vāyu* 82 points to a date earlier than 500 A.D. It is probable that the chapters under discussion were added to the *Vāyu* about the middle of the third century A.D.

Most of the above mentioned chapters on *śrāddha* have been drawn upon by the Nibandha-writers early and late, viz., Śūlapāni has quoted verses from chaps. 78 and 79 in his *Prāyaścitta-uvēka* (Jivānanda's ed.), Vācaspatimīśra from chaps 77 and 82 in his *Tīrtha-cintāmani* (Bibl. Ind.), Kullūkabhatta from chap 78 in his

15 *Vāyu*, 71, 50 ff

16 *Vāyu*, 78, 24, and 79, 25

commentary on the *Manu-smṛti*, Mādhavācārya from chaps. 75, 76 in his *Bhāṣya* on the *Parāśara-smṛti* (ed Islampurkar, Bombay), Madanapāla from chaps 75 and 79-81 in his *Madanapārijāta* (Bibl. Ind), Śridatta Upādhyāya from chaps 78 and 79 in his *Kṛtyācāra*, (Ms No 4339, Dacca Univ Lib), Candēśvara from chap 81 in his *Kṛtya-ratnākara* (Ms No 1055C, Dacca, Univ Lib), Devanabhata from chaps 75 and 78-80 in his *Smiti-candrikā* (ed Govt of Mysore), Ballālasena from chap 80 in his *Dānasāgara* (India Office Mss) and from chap 19 in his *Abhūtasāgara* (ed Muralidhara Jhā, Benares), and Aparārka from chaps 74-82 in his commentary on the *Yājñavalkya-smṛti* (see Appendix)

All of the verses in *Vāyu* 73-83 do not seem to have come from the same date. Verses 14-32 of *Vāyu* 82 are most probably spurious. They do not occur in the great majority of mss, nor are they to be found in the corresponding chapter of the *Brahmānda-p*. Besides these verses, there are certain others which were interpolated later, but it is very difficult to separate them. The fact that many of the quoted verses, especially on Śrāddha, are not found in the present *Vāyu*, proves that the Purāna has undergone substantial losses also.

Chap 101, on hells and results of actions, probably comes from the same date as chaps 57-59. As there is no evidence sufficient for the determination of its date, it is impossible to say anything definitely.

Chaps 105-112, on *Gayā-māhātmya*, did not originally belong to the *Vāyu*. In many mss of the Purāna this *Māhātmya* has been omitted¹⁷. On the other hand, it is often found to appear as an independent text in mss as well as in printed editions. That this appendage was attached to the *Vāyu* earlier than 1400 A D is certain, for Vācaspatiśra quotes numerous verses from chaps 105 and 111-112 (see Appendix).

17 See *Vāyu-p*, p 426, footnote

APPENDIX

Verses quoted from the 'Vāyu-Purāna' or 'Vāyaviya' in	
1 Aparārka's	Vāyu-p
com on <i>Yāj</i>	Vāyu-p
(Anss ed),	with <i>Vāyu</i> , 78, 8b-9a
p 258 (twice)=78, 51b-52a and 52b-54	and 78, 10b respectively
(except 53a)	These 21 lines are the
p 387 =77, 27	same as <i>Brahmānda</i> ,
p 448 =79, 67	III, 14, 8b-9, 10b-12
pp 454-5 =79, 68 and 78-80	and 14b-20
Three lines 'anāśrami	p 554 =80, 42b-45a and 47-48
<i>īapas tepe'</i> etc are not	p 559 =81, 18
found	p 560 =82, 2a
p 473 -Of the four lines	p 924 =79, 24b-25
quoted, only one	2 <i>Adbbutasāgara</i>
tallies with <i>Vāyu</i> , 78,	of Ballālasena,
31b, the other three	p 506 =19, 18
are not found	p 507
p 475 =74, 4	(twice) =19, 17 and 25
pp 487 8 =80, 39-40, 4, 37, 2,	p 508
5-8, 16 and 19-21 74,	(thrice) =19, 13, 27 and 14
1-2 Verses beginning	p 509
with 'śrāddhesūpānabau	(four times) =19, 16, 33 and 15
<i>dadyāt', tūlapūrne tu</i>	The verse 'nagnam
<i>yo dadyāt'</i> and ' <i>vyajana-</i>	<i>śravanakam</i> is not
<i>janam tāla-vrntam ca'</i>	found
are found to tally	3 <i>Dānasāgara</i>
with <i>Brahmānda</i> , III,	of Ballālasena,
16, 8-9 and 10	fol 187a =80, 59
p 490 =75, 54b-55a	4 Kullūkabhatta's
p 493 =78, 48b-49a	commentary
pp 502-3 =74, 20b-25a and	on <i>Manu</i> , III, 267—(Cf <i>Brahmānda</i> ,
26-28 The lines	Venkat ed, III, 14, 11b)
' <i>svargāpavarga-</i>	on <i>Manu</i> , IV, 49=78, 60
<i>sopānam'</i> and ' <i>bhrā-</i>	5 <i>Smṛti-candrikā</i> of
<i>tarab sarvabhūtānām'</i>	Devānabhata,
are not found	II, 589 =79, 18
p 506 =75, 43	IV, 25 =80, 45
p 551 =76, 31-33a and 34b-c	203-4 —These verses tally with
p 553 Of the 21 lines quot-	<i>Brahmānda</i> , III, 14,
ed, only the first three	14b-15, 16b and
and the last one tally	17b-20

	Vāyu-p	Vāyu-p
208 (twice)	= 78, 31b-32a and 40	p 558 = 79, 53a
331	= 75, 54b-55a	The other two lines 'grhasthānām' etc are not found
366	= 75, 43	
370-371	= 75, 22	p 579 = 80, 2
392-3	= 80, 2	p 581 = 75, 54b-55a
393	= 59, 49	p 591 = 75, 57b-58a, 71-72 and 75b-76a
6 <i>Kriyācāra</i> of <i>Śridatta Upādhyāya</i>		p 600 = 75, 43
fol 2a	= 78, 60	10 <i>Prāyaścitta-uvveka</i> of <i>Sūlapāni</i> ,
„ 10a	= 79, 38 and 39b	p 306 = 78, 48b-49a
„ 12b	= 79, 33a and 34a	p 347 = 18, 12
„ 41a	= 79, 46b-47a	pp 429-430 = 78, 69, 79, 20-22a
„ 64a	= 79, 88	p 474 = 79, 24b-25
7 <i>Kriya-ratnākara</i> of <i>Candeśvara</i> ,		11 <i>Tirthacintāmani</i> of <i>Vācaspathiśra</i> ,
fol 173b	= 81, 2-4	p 7 = 110, 2-3
„ 188a	= 81, 4a	pp 274-5 = 82, 9 and 43, 77, 96b-97a, 98-99, 101-103, 105-106a, (two lines 'snātuā dīnatrayam', etc on p 275 of the <i>Tirtha-cintāmani</i> are not found), 108a and 109
8 <i>Mādhavācārya's</i> Com on the <i>Parāśara-smṛti</i> , vol I, part II,		pp 280-281 = 108, 13a, 14-19 (one line <i>rāmātirthe narab snātuā</i> is not found), 21b-23a, (one line 'āgatya ca' on p 281 of the <i>Tirtha-cintāmani</i> is not found), 22 and 28-30
p 369	— These verses, which are not found in the <i>Vāyu-p</i> are the same as <i>Brahmānda</i> , III, 14, 14b-20 (except 16a and 17a)	p 282 = 108, 20
p 412	= 75, 54b-55a	pp 284-5 = 110, 9-15b, 19-20b, 20c, (one line 'ulāyadadhi' is found in the footnote on p 443 of the <i>Vāyu-p</i>), 56-59a and 61a
p 431	= 75, 22	
p 438	= 76, 31	
9 <i>Madana-pārijāta</i> of <i>Madanapāla</i> ,		
p 486	= 81, 2-4a	
p 552	— These verses are found not in the <i>Vāyu</i> but in the <i>Brahmānda</i> (III, 14, 9b, 10b-12 and 14b-17a)	

	Vāyu-p		Vāyu-p
pp 285-6	= 105, 18-19a, 26 and 33	p 321	= 107, 46 and 48
p 286	= 108, 71b, (one line 'pūtab' etc is not found), 111, 17	pp 321-3	= 111, 77, 78a, 79 Three lines 'drstvā natvā'tha', 'gayāyām dharma-prsthe' a n d 'gayā-śrse 'ksaya-vate' are given in the footnote on p 449 of the Vāyu-p 111, 76, 82-84 and 75 109, 5b and 7b-12 One line 'upendra tvam' on p 323 of the Tirtha-cintāmani is not found
p 288	= 110, 17 and 21-22		
p 289	= 110, 23-24 and 30-32		
pp 290-292	= 110, 34-42 and 44-55		
p 296	= 110, 8-9, 62a and 65		
pp 298-301	= 111, 1-3, 110, 21, 17-18a and 23-24, 111, 4-6b, 7, 8-10a, 12, 10b-11a, 13-14 and 15-22		
	Some verses, which are not found in the running text, are given in the footnote on p 443 of the Vāyu-p	pp 325-333	= 112, 21-22b, 23-26, (two lines are found in the footnote on p 451 of the Vāyu-p), 34b, 44b, 46-49a, 30-31, (four lines 'udbbijāb' etc are not found), 49b-53, (the lines 'śrāddhi nāma' etc on p 327 of the Tirtha-cintāmani are not found), 56-58a, 60 and 58b-59 108, 12, 24, (five lines 'rāme vanam gate' etc on p 328 of the Tirtha-c are found in the footnote of the Vāyu-p p 436), 43b-44a, (Vāyu-p, pp 436-7, footnote, verses 1-2, 5-15, 17, 16, 18-26a, 28-32, 34b-38a, three lines 'tam drstvā' etc on p 332 of the Tirtha-c are not found)
p 303	= 109, 43 The other three lines are not found		
p 309	= 111, 23a-b and 24-26		
pp 310-312	= 111, 30a, 31-32, 35-36, 33-34 and 38-40 One line 'śrāddhbāya pinda-dānāva' and one verse 'āmrās ca siktāb on p 311 of Tirtha-cintāmani are not found		
pp 314-8	= 111, 41, 44a, 45a, 44b, 45b-c, 46-49a, 50-52, 54a, 56b-63, 69-71a, 64-68, 73, (two verses are found in the footnote on p 449 of the Vāyu-p), 74-75b		
p 320	= 105, 26		