

*vāsukis tadanantaram* 1. 31. 5; hence called *bhujāgavarāgraja* 'elder brother of the excellent serpent' (i. e. of Vāsuki) 1. 32. 22; listed as a *kādraveya* (son of Kadrū, daughter of Dakṣa) along with Ananta, Vāsuki and others 1. 59. 40; Bhīṣma told Duryodhana that Vāsudeva Janārdana created the divine Śeṣa who is known as Ananta 6. 63. 10. B. Epithets and Description : adorable (*bhagavant*) 1. 32. 2; lord (*prabhu*) 1. 32. 5, (*prabhur bhuvah*) 1. 32. 22; to whom *dharma* is god (*dharmadeva*) 1. 32. 23; firm in truth (*satyadhṛti*) 1. 32. 6; of infinite coils (*anantabhoga*) 1. 32. 23; of boundless lustre (*amitatejas*) 3. 194. 9; of great vigour (*mahaujas*) 6. 63. 11; excellent among serpents (*pannagottama*) 1. 32. 16, (*nāgottama*) 1. 32. 23, (*bhujāṅgamottama*) 1. 32. 21, (*pannagaśreṣṭha*) 7. 69. 48; described as 'high as white mountain, wearing various ornaments, his tongues being like flames of fire, and of great strength' (*śvetocayanibhākāro nānāvīdhavibhūṣaṇaḥ | ... jvātājihvo mahābalaḥ*) 5. 101. 3; the big white snake issuing from the mouth of Balārāma is described as 'having a thousand heads, having an expanse like that of a mountain, and having a red face' (*sahasraśirṣaḥ parvatābhogavarṣmā | raktānanaḥ*) where apparently Śeṣa is meant, but is not directly named 16. 5. 12-13. C. Śeṣa's austerities and meeting with Brahmadeva : Śeṣa deserted his mother Kadrū and visited the slopes of the Himālayas; there on the Gandhamādana mountain and in Badarī, as also at other holy places like Gokarṇa, Puṣkarāraṇya and in various *ūrthas* and holy abodes (*āyataneṣu* 1. 32. 4) Śeṣa practised severe austerities living on wind and observing difficult vows; he lived all alone and had controlled his

senses (*ekāntaśilī*, *vijitendriyaḥ* 1. 32. 4); during the austerities he put on bark garments and wore matted hair; his flesh, skin and sinews dried up; when Pitāmaha Brahman, saw Śeṣa in this condition he asked him to do something beneficial to the people instead of tormenting them by his severe austerities; he asked Śeṣa the reason for undertaking the austerities; Śeṣa told Pitāmaha that his serpent brothers were dull-witted; they envied each other and did not suffer either Vinatā or her son (Vainateya Garuḍa) who was their cousin; they hated Garuḍa; Śeṣa therefore did not want to see his brothers nor live with them; Śeṣa undertook austerities to give up his body and to avoid the company of his brothers in the next life; he asked Pitāmaha's permission to do that 1. 32. 5-12; Brahman told Śeṣa that his brothers faced danger because they had offended their mother but that incident had been taken care of; since Śeṣa was devoted to righteousness (*diṣṭyā ca buddhir dharme te* 1. 32. 16), Pitāmaha offered him a boon 1. 32. 13-16; Śeṣa desired to find pleasure in righteousness (*dharmā*), equanimity (*śama*), and austerity (*tapas*) 1. 32. 17. D. Śeṣa as supporter of the earth : Brahman was pleased with Śeṣa's self-control and equanimity and asked him to collect the earth properly and hold it so that it became steady for the benefit of the creatures; Śeṣa agreed to do what Brahman desired and asked Brahman to place the earth on his head; Brahman asked him to go below the earth for which earth would provide an opening (*vivara*) 1. 32. 21-22; Śeṣa entered the earth through a cleft and held the divine (*devī*) earth, girdled by the oceans, after enclosing it on all sides; he made the earth firm 1. 32. 19-22; 5. 101. 2; 6. 63.