

## YAVANA.

1) *General.* There are many references to Yavanas and the land of Yavanas in the Purāṇas. There is a statement in Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 85, Verse 34, that the Yavana race takes its source from Turvasu, the son of Yayāti. There is another version in Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 174, Verse 36, that Yavanas were born from the womb and the sides of Nandinī.

2) *Other details.*

(i) Arjuna's brother Sahadeva once conquered the Yavana land. (M.B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 31, Verse 73).

(ii) Mahābhārata, Sabhā Parva, Chapter 32, Verse 17, mentions that on another occasion, Nakula defeated the Yavanas.

(iii) According to Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 188, Verse 35, the world will be filled with Yavanas and other Mleccha (low class) kings.

(iv) In the course of his conquests, Karna once subdued the Yavanas. (M.B. Vana Parva, Chapter 254, Verse 8).

(v) Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva, Chapter 19, Verse 21, mentions that king Sudakṣiṇa of Kāmboja approached Duryodhana with an "Akṣauhiṇī" along with the Yavanas, to take part in Bhārata Yuddha.

(vi) Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 9, Verse 65 states that at the time of Mahābhārata, Yavana land was part of India.

(vii) Originally Yavanas were Kṣatriyas. But they became Śūdras by the curse of Brāhmaṇas. (M.B. Anuśā-sana Parva, Chapter 35, Verse 18).

(viii) Once there was a duel between a Yavana king and Mucukunda. (For further details, see under Mucukunda).

YAVASA. A particular region of Plakṣadvīpa. Bhāgavata, 5th Skandha says that Plakṣadvīpa had seven divisions which were - Śivam, Yavasam, Subhadram, Śāntam, Mokṣam, Amṛtam and Abhayam.

YAVINARA. A king of the Pūru dynasty. Bāhyāśva was his father. Five sons were born to Bāhyāśva. They were Mukula, Śrñjaya, Brhadiṣṭha, Yavinara and Kramila. These five persons became famous in later ages under the name of Pāñcālas. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 278).

YĀYĀTA. An ancient holy place in India. King Yayāti conducted a Yāga at this place. From that time the place became sacred. (M. B. Śalya Parva, Chapter 41, Verse 32).

YAYĀTI. An eminent king of the Lunar dynasty.

1.) *Genealogy and Birth.* From Viṣṇu were descended in the following order—Brahmā—Atri—Candra—Budha—Purūravas—Āyus—Nahuṣa—Yayāti.

Sage Atri had three sons—Candra, Durvāsa and Dattatreya—by his wife Anasūyā. Candra's son was Budha, Budha's son was Purūravas, Purūravas's son was Āyus, Āyus's son was Nahuṣa who had six sons—Yati, Yayāti, Saṁyāti, Āyāti, Ayati and Dhruva. Yayāti had two wives, Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā. Two sons, Yadu and Turvasu, were born to Devayānī. Of them, Yadu became the founder of Yaduvamśa. Śarmiṣṭhā had three sons who were Druhyu, Anudruhyu and Pūru. The Puru-varmśa traces its origin to Pūru.

2.) *Yayāti's marriage.* Yayāti married Devayānī, the daughter of sage Śukra and Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvā.

There is a story behind this marriage, given in Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 76.

Once there was keen rivalry between Devas and Asuras. For achieving victory Devas accepted Brhaspati and Asuras accepted Śukra as their preceptors. Although Devas slaughtered all Asuras they were restored to life by Śukra by the power of his mantra. Devas and Asuras resumed their battle. "Mṛtasañjivani" (the art of reviving the dead) was then unknown to the gods. Devas sent the handsome youth Kaca to Śukra, to learn Mṛtasañjivani from him. There, Kaca fell in love with Devayānī, Śukra's daughter. But after acquiring the knowledge about Mṛtasañjivani he returned, without marrying Devayānī. At the time of his departure, Kaca and Devayānī cursed each other. Devayānī's curse was that Kaca's newly acquired knowledge would not produce the desired result, while Kaca's curse was that Devayānī would not be married by any youthful ṛṣi.

Śarmiṣṭhā was the daughter of Vṛṣaparvā, the Daitya king. Devayānī was the daughter of Śukra, the Daitya preceptor. One day they were enjoying a bath in a forest brook with their maids, after leaving their clothes on the bank of the stream. At that time Devendra who came that way, transformed himself into a strong wind and carried all the clothes to a place and put all of them in a heap. Seeing this, the women rushed out of the water and in the hurried confusion in snatching their garments Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā happened to put on each other's clothes. A quarrel took place between them on this mistake and the angry Śarmiṣṭhā pushed Devayānī into an unused well. Thinking that Devayānī was dead, Śarmiṣṭhā and her maids went to the palace.

At this time, Yayāti who was a king of the lunar dynasty happened to come there exhausted after his hunting. After rescuing Devayānī from the well and enquiring about her identity and the circumstances in which she fell into the well, he returned to his palace.

Devayānī sent her maid Ghūrṇikā to her father and informed him about her mishap. The father, sage Śukra became angry towards Vṛṣaparvā, and came down from Daityaloka and settled down in the forest with his daughter. Afraid of his preceptor's curse and anger, Vṛṣaparvā came to Śukra and offered profuse apologies to him for his daughter's misconduct. But Śukra answered that he would be prepared to forgive only if Śarmiṣṭhā with 1000 maids would go and serve Devayānī. Finding no other way, Vṛṣaparvā yielded to the condition. Soon Śarmiṣṭhā and her 1000 maids went to the forest and began to serve Devayānī. Śukra returned to Daityaloka. Some time after this, Yayāti came to the forest one day for hunting. There he met Devayānī, being attended by many maids. In the conversation that followed, Devayānī was able to recognize Yayāti. She fell in love with him. But Yayāti insisted that he was not prepared to marry her without the consent of Śukrācārya. So she sent one of her maids to her father and informed him of her desire. The sage readily agreed and had their marriage performed. He also presented them 1,000 maids. After the ceremony, Yayāti returned to his palace with his bride. Śarmiṣṭhā and the 2,000 maids also accompanied them. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapters 76-81).

3) *Yayāti's domestic Life.* After his arrival in his capital city, Yayāti made arrangements for Devayānī's residence in his own palace while Śarmiṣṭhā took up her residence