

stuck in his throat and added beauty to his neck. Heard with wonder the Mohini form of Hari and came with Pārvatī to see him. Requested Hari to show himself again as Mohinī. Seeing the lovely form Śiva became enamoured and ran after her when his seed dropped in several places which ultimately became shrines of images of gold and silver. Then he realised his position and after taking leave of Hari, went to his abode;⁸ embraced Pārvatī sitting on his lap in the midst of his attendants. This was seen by the Vidyadhara Citraketu who laughed at it. So he was cursed by Pārvatī to be born an Asura. When Śiva appealed to her that Citraketu was Hari's friend, Pārvatī became mild;⁹ had a special park in which he sported with Pārvatī. Waited upon by Vasiṣṭha, he agreed to let Sudyumna be a male and female in alternate months;¹⁰ did not comprehend Hari's māyā and advised Duvāsas pursued by Cakra to go to Hari: prayed to by Bhagīratha, offered to bear the waters of the Ganges descending from Heaven after washing the feet of Hari. Joined the gods in the Tārakāmaya war;¹¹ worshipped as Paśupati in Ambikāvana: propitiated with goats in Dhanuryāga, went to Hari with Brahmā and attended on Him.¹² Easily pleased by devotees shows grace to them unlike Hari: backed by Śakti and full of three guṇas — Vaikārika, Taijasa and Tāmasa, granted Asura Vṛka what he wanted for his tapas by cutting flesh from his body viz—that he on whose head he placed his hand should die. He wanted to experiment it on Śiva himself who took to flight to Vaikuṇṭha.

Hari is nirguṇa and apart from Prakṛti. In the role of a young Brahmacārin, Hari appeared before Vṛka and said that owing to curse of Dakṣa his words would not come true. As a test he could try it on himself. The wicked Asura did so and died to the relief of Śiva. Śiva welcomed his brother Bhṛgu but the latter did not appreciate it;¹³ worshipped by Sudakṣiṇa, told him of a means to end the slayer of his father. Attended Varuṇa's sacrifice and Yudhiṣṭhira's; gave Śālva an aerial car capable of creating illusion.¹⁴ Arjuna blessed by