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by
RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

The Bhāgavata, after stating the burning of the sons of the king Sagara by a sage named Kapila in 9.8.10-12, remarks in the following two verses (13-14)1 that this Kapila is the same as the founder of Sāmkhya. These two verses suggest that it is not the wrath of the sage that burnt the sons of Sagara to ashes; in fact it is their sinful acts that caused their death. The Devi-Bhāgavata (6.15.42),8 while giving incidentally examples of the ill-results of lust, wrath, greed and egoism, categorically states that the sons of Sagara were burnt by the Sāmkhya teacher Kapila on account of dāsāyoga (the power of destiny).

This incident of burning was so widely known that a poet like Bhavabhūti has clearly referred to it in his Uttarārāmacarita (1.23). Though Kalidāsa in his Rāghuvaṃśa (13.3) spoke of the digging of the earth by the sons of Sagara with a view to finding out the sacrificial horse and the carrying away of the horse by Kapila to the nether region and was silent on the incident of the burning of the sons of Sagara by the fire created by the wrath of Kapila, yet we have no doubt that he was aware of this incident.

A careful study of the relevant Purānic passages would reveal that the philosopher (i.e. founder of Sāmkhya) Kapila was not the destroyer of the sons of Sagara. We shall also try to show the causes that gave rise to this wrong identification.

(A) The episode of the burning of the wicked sons of the king Sagara by the wrathful sage Kapila is set out in the following

1. न सामुपार्व चेतससिद्धिनां निभेत महाबली 
   कर्तवं रोषमयं बिहायन्ते वर्तमानमिति ये जो मुखः॥
2. मस्तेन्द्रां सामुपादित्यां निभेत महाबली 
   कर्तवं रोषमयं बिहायन्ते वर्तमानमिति ये जो मुखः॥
3. धारितात्मित्यां विजीलितं विद्वेष्टं 
   परास्मतुस्तर्वत्वः कर्तवं रोषमयं बिहायन्ते वर्तमानमिति ये जो मुखः॥
4. नृसिद्धिविदान्येव नृसिद्धिज्ञान्येव निभेत महाबली 
   निभेत महाबली निभेत महाबली निभेत महाबली॥
Though Harivamśa (1.15.7) and Brahma-p. (8.68) inform us that ‘the ārūti says that the king Sagara had two wives’ yet no Vedic text is found to contain any information about this king or his sons. This is why no Vedic text is of any help to us in determining the identity of the destroyer Kapila. It is quite reasonable to think that the word ārūti in the aforesaid Purānic passage simply means ‘tradition’ (aitihya).

6. स तं देवं सुहृतः। सवेन: भानमासाभाषणः। बासेश्वर तत्सृष्टिस्वरुपसन्ने स्मरणगच्छे॥ तत्मार्जनेन बैवं हरिः क्रुणं प्रजापतिः॥ विष्णूः कपिलकपणें हूँसं नारायणं प्रमुखं॥ तत्यत: चुरं: समाप्तेत्र तेजस्तत्र निर्भरते।।

42. *Vāyu*-p. 88. 147-148; *Brahmāṇḍa*-p. 2.53.25-35 and 2.63.144-146; *Viṣṇu*-p. 4.4.11. (The destroyer is called Viṣṇu; there is no separate mention of the name Kapila); *Pāda*-p. 5.8.147; 6.21.37b-39a; *Liṅga*-p. 1.66.18; the printed reading of the name Kapila has been corrected to विष्णु


51. *Harivamśa*-p. 1.18.95-109; *Kālīma*-p. 2.53.25-35. दुर्गोऽन्तरित दृष्टबलम धन्तं संस्कारः। च।
The burning incident has not been mentioned by the Garuda-p. (1.138.29), the Kārma-p. (1.21.5-7) and the Saura-p. (30.38) though they speak of the king Sagara, his wives and his descendants.

Since the genealogical accounts in these Purāṇas seem to be brief, the non-mention of the incident does not prove that it was not known to the authors of these Purāṇas. The Brahma-viṣṇu-p., the Viṣṇu-p., the Kāliki-p., the Markandeya-p., the Skanda-p., the Vāmana-p., and the Bhaviya-p. are silent on the king Sagara and his descendants. Though the Devi-Bhāgavata, which contains a reference to this incident, has chapters on the Solar race in the 7th book, yet it furnishes us with no information of Sagara or his sons, as it abruptly ends after giving an account of the life of the king Hariscandra (27.42) - a remote ancestor of Sagara.

According to us this non-mention is of great importance. It cannot be explained away by saying that since the 'mention of Kapila's promulgating Sāṁkhyā' was of little significance, it had not been stated in the Purānic works. Since most of the epithets used in the aforesaid passages in the Purāṇas, Upapurāṇas and the epics (some are found to use more than five epithets to describe Kapila and some have more than three verses to describe him) are such as are commonplace and do not bear any important significance, the nonuse of such a significant epithet as 'the founder of the Samkhya' must be due to some real (i.e. historical) cause. According to us this cause is no other than the non-recognition by the authors of these Purānic works of the fact of burning by the founder of the Sāṁkhyā system.

(B) That the philosopher Kapila was deemed as different from the destroyer Kapila by the Purānic authors may be fairly ascertained if the period of their appearance as shown in the Purāṇas is considered. While according to the Purāṇas the destroyer Kapila appeared in the Vaivasvata manvantara (the 7th manvantara) since Bhaviṣya-p. is found belonging to the dynasty of Ikṣvāku, the son of Vaivasvata manu (Sagara appeared a few generations before Rāma Dāsārathī), the philosopher Kapila appeared in the Śvayambhava manvantara (the 1st manvantara), for he is said to be the son of Devahūti, the daughter of Śvayambhava Manu.7

Far a full account of the whole episode beginning with Sagara's performing the horse sacrifice and ending with the burning of his sons to ashes by the fire created by the wrathful sage Kapila, readers should read some verses more preceding the verses referred to here. There is no need to give an account of the episode as it is well-known to the readers of the Purāṇas.

7. Regarding Devahūti and Kardama (the parents of the philosopher Kapila) and Kapila's teachings to his mother, see D. Bhāg. 8.3.12-19; Bhāgavata 3.24.6-19; Śiva-p. 2.1.16.15, 2.5.16.13, Br. Vaivaita-p. 4.22.47; 4.3.6. It is to be noted that no older Purāṇa contains any information about the parentage of Kapila. The Skanda-p. is found
Since this information is found neither in the epics, nor in the older Purāṇas, nor does it occur in any ancient work on philosophy its authoritativeness may be doubted, but as here we are dealing with the question of identity of the two Kapilas on the basis of the Purāṇic views it is not necessary for us to examine the validity of the Purāṇic statements.

The Viṣṇu-purāṇa, which is one of the older Purāṇas, also places Kapila in the same period. From Viṣṇu-purāṇa 2.13-14 it appears that Kapila, the philosopher, was contemporary with Bharata (a later period). From the epics, it is not necessary for us to examine the validity of the Purāṇic statements.

The Viṣṇu-purāṇa also places him in the same period. From Viṣṇu-purāṇa 2.13-14 it appears that Kapila, the philosopher, was contemporary with Bharata (a later period). From the epics, it is not necessary for us to examine the validity of the Purāṇic statements.

It would be wrong to hold that Kapila of the Śrīyaṁbhuvana manvantara was alive in the Vaivasvata manvantara also, for he is nowhere regarded in the Purāṇas as a longlived (dirghajīvin or cirajjīvin) person. One Kapila (along with four others) is regarded as 'sukhaśayin' (sleeping peacefully) in the Rākpariśiṣṭa (Khilaśakta 1.10). Even if this expression is interpreted to mean a longlived person it serves no purpose, for there is no reason to take this Kapila as identical with the philosopher Kapila. He may rightly be regarded as the destroyer Kapila, who is often described (vide Brahman-dāsa, p. 855; Hariv. 1.14.24) as भिन्न कलियेल्लेण स्वात्मतम् (mark the use of the root स्वात्त् to recline, to rest, to lie down). It is quite likely that this sage remained in the state of 'suspended animation' for a very long period.

Like the difference in manvantara, we find difference in yuga also in connection with the appearance of these two Kapilas. While the Purāṇas place the philosopher Kapila in the Satya or Kṛta yuga (प्रथम स्वर्गवन्धनकालम्, Viṣṇu-p. 3.2,54), they place Sagara in the Tretā yuga (Pargiter : A. I. H. T. p. 177).

Moreover the Purāṇic declarations like 'the philosopher Kapila is the first incarnation of Viṣṇu in human form' (Viṣṇudharma, vide 'Studies in the Upapurāṇas', I, p. 146) place him to an earlier period as cannot be assigned to the destroyer Kapila, who appeared some generations before Daśarathī Rāma. Harivāmśa 3.14.4 and Matsya-p. 171.4 speak of the presence of Kapila, the Sāṁkhya-teacher and Hiranyagarbha (Brahma), the yoga-teacher in the earliest period of creation—a statement which shows that according to the Purāṇikas the Sāṁkhya-teacher Kapila appeared long before the birth of the destroyer Kapila. In some of the Purāṇas (vide Vaiṣṇava-p. 65.53-54) Karthāma, Kapila's father, is said to be a Prajāpati (one of the 21 Prajāpatīs; Śanti-p. 334.36-37).

(D) Purāṇic statements about the parentage of the two Kapilas do not seem to uphold the identity of the two Kapilas.

8. The Māthara-vṛttiṁ Saṁk-kā(1) speaks of Kardama (a Prajāpati) and Devahūti (the daughter of Śrīyaṁbhuvana Manu) as the parents of Kapila. This is evidently based on the Bhāgavata. (A verse from the Bhāgavata is found to have been quoted in this vṛtti.)

9. One remarkable point deserves notice. The Viṣṇu-p (2.13.54) says that the king of the Sauvira country wanted to know from Kapila of the nature of tārakārodha. (This information is found in other Purāṇas also). The Viṣṇudharma (an unpublished Upapurāṇa) informs us that once Kapila was asked by the gods and sages to expound the nature of tārakārodha (vide Yoga-cintāmaṇi by Śivānanda, p. 58), which shows that the nature of tārakārodha was one of the topics chiefly dealt with by the teachers of Sāṁkhya; cp. Sāṁkhya-kārikā 'तारकारोधिं विद्वै भेद भावाभावविद्विदिनां' (2).

10. See the following verse of the Brahmāṇḍa-p. about the destroyer Kapila saying that he remained in the state of meditation for a period of one hundred divine years (ब्रह्माण्डस्य प्रवद्धिके विद्वैत्तवत्ताय विद्वैत्तत्ताय विद्वैत्तत्ताय विद्वैत्तत्ताय विद्वैत्तत्ताय विद्वैत्तत्ताय)

11. I have used the word 'suspended animation' in the Hāṭhayogic sense of tārakārodha, which has great similarity with it. It is well-known that Haridāsa yogin, who was acquainted with the Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh, was able to remain in this state for a considerable length of time; vide W. G. Osborne : The Court and Camp of Kunjeet Singh (p. 47 in the course of ten months he remained under ground); Dr. J. M. Honigberger : Physician to the Court of Lahore (pp. 126-130); Dr. Mc Gregor : History of the Sikhs. Interested readers may profitably read the article 'Studies on Shri Ramanand Yogi during his stay in an air-tight box' in Indian Journal of Medical Research, 49 (1961).
While the Purāṇas inform us that the philosopher Kapila was the son of Devahuti and Kardama, they never ascribe the same parentage to the destroyer Kapila. The only information in this respect (which is mythical in character) is found in the Mbh. which says that the destroyer Kapila was born of the sun (Sūrya) and was named Mahānirvāṇa. The philosopher Kapila has never been called by this name. It has however no connection with real parentage. The assertion of the Mahābhārata that the Sāmkhya teacher Kapila is Vāsudeva (remaining in the sun, 339.68) cannot be taken as proving his identity with this Kapila.

(E) In connection with the incident of burning we find the Mahābhārata to declare that this sage was called Vāsudeva by people (vasudevaṁ yā paritā: kapilaṁ muniśca puruṣaṁ Vana-p. 107.32). That the destroyer Kapila was actually called by this name (or appellation) in ancient India is borne out by the following passage of the Śāriraka-bhāṣya on Br. sū. 2.1.1, "या हृ कृतिः कपिलस्...कपिलमिति बुद्धरामायणमंब्लात्। अमरस्य च कपिलस्य सरत्रपनाणि प्रतिपूर्वुवेशनानां। स्मरणात्। (Mark the word vāsudevenāman:). This shows that in the Rāmāyana passage "(Evā:) कपिलस्य वर वासुदेव सतानाम्" (1.40.25) we are to take Vāsudeva as another name of Kapila and not as denoting the sense of ‘a divine being in which all reside’. This however is a significant name (i.e., based on some guya or karman of the person concerned) as will be discussed in the sequel.

The philosopher Kapila is never said to have another name as Vāsudeva, though in a very few passages of the Purāṇas he is regarded as an incarnation or form of Viṣṇu. Such expressions simply show excellence, glory or divinity in the sage and they cannot be taken as proving real identity in the two Kapilas.

In the Udyoga-p of the Mbh, we find the statement that the sons of Sagara were destroyed by a great sage named Cakradhanu (109.17-18). The philosopher Kapila has never been called by this name. (Vide infra for a discussion on this name).

(F) A consideration of the places associated with the two Kapilas reveals that one has no connection with the other. The philosopher Kapila is connected with the river Sarasvatī, Bindusarās (being the places where his father Kardama resided), Pulaha-āśrama,15 and the river Ikṣumati.16 [It is not necessary to identify these here.] None of these has been mentioned in the Epic-Purānic passages that refer to the destroyer Kapila. Similarly the places mentioned in connection with the destroyer Kapila17 have never been mentioned in connection with the philosopher Kapila.

There is no need to deal here with the aforesaid Purānic passages in order to solve any contradiction or problem that may arise from them. We simply assert that none of the places referred to

13. तालक्षणमथं सरत्रपनाणि प्रतिपूर्वुवेशनानां स्मरणात्।
   स्वयं: साक्षुष्मितिमिति राज्ञिविविधिनिःश्वामात्।
   Bhāg. 3.24.9; Kardama is the father of Kapila.

14. अय संग्रहितोऽयस्कृतः कर्त्योऽयात्वर्त्तानि:।
   भास्ये चित्तविवर्त्तस्य तत् कालं विलिपणात्।
   (Bhāg. 3.21.35)

15. वेदबुधाय पररां जानं तत्वविविधानिषर्वं कर्त्योऽयात्वर्त्तानि:।
   वेदबुधाय पररां जानं तत्वविविधानिषर्वं कर्त्योऽयात्वर्त्तानि:।
   (D. Bhāg. 8.3.17, 19). Mahāyogin refers to Kapila. If D. Bhāg. 9.21.16-18 are taken as referring to the philosopher Kapila, then the place (situated somewhere in South India) as described here is also to be accepted as connected with him. The name of the place is not given.

16. वेदवेदावस्तूतोऽयस्कृतः महाधरामविषयकोऽयात्वर्त्तानि।
   वेदवेदावस्तूतोऽयस्कृतः महाधरामविषयकोऽयात्वर्त्तानि।
   (Vīṣṇu-p. 2.13.48).

17. The places mentioned are: महात्मन (Bṛhadāranyaka-p. 2.22.41); भारतक्षण (north-eastern direction, Bhāg. 9.8.10); भारतक्षण (Mbh. Vana-p. 107.28); महोदय (Anuvāsanā-p. 153.9); पुरुवलिस्बर (south-east ocean, Harivāhana 1.14.22; Brahmapurāṇa-p. 2.63.143; Bhāmānī-p. 8.53; Padma-p. 6 21.33). According to Udyoga-parvan 109.17-18 the destroyer Kapila resides in the southern direction. The statement of Viṣṇudharma (विद्वात्तुपवर्त्ती, Studies in the Upapurāṇas I, p. 123) may also be considered in this connection.
in connection with the destroyer Kapila has any connection with the philosopher Kapila—a fact which tends to disprove the identity of the two Kapilas.

(G) We find that some significant expressions, which are used as the epithets of the philosopher Kapila in the philosophical and Purānic works, have never been used in connection with the destroyer Kapila—a fact which undoubtably shows that the authors of these works were aware of the difference between these two Kapilas.

The first epithet of this sort is ādīvidvās, which is used in connection with the philosopher Kapila in an aphoristic statement of Pūrānīka quoted in the Vyāsabhāṣya on Yogasūtra 1.25. We find the Purāṇas to declare that Kapila promulgated the science of the self. The destroyer Kapila has never been described in a similar way.

The second epithet is siddhēloṣa or words having a similar sense. These are found in Gitā 10.26, Brahma-vaiśāvīta-p. 4.22.47, Bhāgavata-p. 3.24.19, Padma-p. 6.212.42-43 etc. (It is used in Sātvata-tantra 2.10 also.) None of these epithets is found in the Purānic passages describing the destroyer Kapila.

The third is paramārṣī, which is found in the aforesaid aphorism of Pūrānīka, in Sāmkhya-kārikā 69 and in Śaṅkṛi-p. 217.1, 349.65, Vana-p. 220.21. Only once it has been used (in Viṣṇu-p. 4.23) in connection with the destroyer Kapila.18

The epithet mokṣadharmajīṣa is applied to the philosopher Kapila in Viṣṇu-p. 2.13.49 etc., which is highly significant, as Śaṅkṛi is regarded as the philosophy of liberation (परमेष्ठी तू मोक्षदर्मिज्ञः Śaṅkṛi p. 300,5). It has not been used in connection with the destroyer Kapila.

(H) As to the time and cause of the wrong identification, our views are as follows:

18. The word paramārṣī has a technical meaning also as stated in Vāyu-p. 59-80 (लिङ्गसिद्धांतः तु दुस्माय्यमहुः: स्वयम्। परं हि खच्चे भवस्तु परमार्षीतः स्मृतः।; the printed reading seems to be slightly corrupt) and in the Yuktidīpikā comm. on Śaṅkṛi-kā 15 (स्वयं स्वतःप्राच्छ विभक्ति त परमार्षी।). It appears that the Viṣṇu-pūrāṇa has used the word in its usually accepted sense of ‘a great sage’ (परमार्षी क्षत्रियः).
surmised that since the colour kapila has a great resemblance to fire, the person who created fire from his body or eyes came to be called Kapila. [It may be noted in this connection that the act of creating fire from the body depends upon the supernormal power known as samāna-jāya and this power renders the body effulgent—Yogasūtra 3.40]. In connection with the philosopher, the word Kapila must be taken as his personal name.

There is however some difficulty in determining the proper name of the destroyer sage. We have already said that Śaṅkaracārya tells us that the name of this sage is Vāsudeva (वासुदेववानम:) which is in consonance with the Vanaprav-an-passage quoted above. Since the Mbh. in another parvan uses the word Cakradhānu as the name of this sage (अर्जुनकि:र्मुनि:) a doubt arises about the actual personal (proper) name of the sage. It would be too much to assume that there were two different traditions regarding the incident of burning the sons of Sagara. It is quite reasonable to think that Cakradhānu was the name given by the parents of the sage in the ‘ceremony of naming’ and afterwards the sage came to be called Vāsudeva on account of his similarity with Viśnu as stated above. It may also be surmised that since the Mbh. does not say कृष्णनाम (i.e. nāman in the third case-ending),21 the word Cakradhānu may be taken as an epithet. We are however in favour of taking Cakradhānu as the personal name, for the word as an epithet has no obvious fitness in its context and as far as I know the word is not found as a name of any other sage.

(iv) We have already said that the statement showing identity of the two Kapilas is found in the Bhāgavata and the Devi-bhāgavata only. As to which of these two Purāṇas spoke of the identity at first we think it more reasonable to hold that the mistaken idea arose at first in the author of the Bhāgavata and this is why he, being aware of the divine nature of the philosopher Kapila,

21. If the word nāman is not used in the third case-ending it may signify simply pratisñcita and not a ‘proper name’; cp. नाम प्रति:ित्वो नामवद्वसंगारं चतुर्विद्यायत शास्त्रानित्यं (Comm. by Rucipati Upādhyāya on Anargharāghava 1.3). This is why sometimes we find the use of both नाम and नामा in the same sentence: मारिखा नाम नामा (Viśnu-p. 1.15.8).

tried to exonerate him from the fault of violence—the greatest fault for a yogin—by offering the explanation embodied in verses 9.8.13-14. As these Bhāgavata verses put the explanation in a highly philosophical way and as they do not point to the real cause directly, while the Devibhāgavata verse (6.15.42) does not say anything philosophically but directly mentions a popular cause (viz. daśayoga) it follows that the author of the D. Bhāg. came to know of this explanation from the Bhāgavata. That the explanation of the D. Bhāg. is nothing but a popular version of what the Bhāgavata says in a philosophical way may be readily accepted.

(I) As the author of the Bhāgavata22 is sometimes found to deal with the tales and incidents of ancient times independently23

22. According to us the Bhāgavata is later than the older parts of all the earlier Purāṇas. Our study of the Bhāgavata reveals that the Bhāgavata was composed by a single person who was highly learned and was a follower of Vaiśeṣika āśra, especially the Pāñcarātra Āgama. By utilizing the Purānic materials he composed a āgama giving it a Purānic character. This is why the nature of the composition of the Bhāgavata is not similar to that of the other Purānic works which have been composed by different persons (belonging to different or even rival sects) at different times. The original forms of these Purāṇas have been revised in various ways from time to time by using the process of incorporation, augmentation and rejection. This is why all of these Purāṇas have, unlike the Bhāgavata, more than one version or recension. Only a few verses seem to have been interpolated in the Bhāgavata. In a forthcoming paper we shall demonstrate our view in detail.

23. A remarkable example of this tendency of the author of the Bhāgavata is his assertion that Šuka, the son of Vyāsa, narrated the Bhāgavata-puṛāṇa to the king Pariksit (1.3.41-42), who has been just after the Bhārata war (Asvamedha-p. 66.8). But according to the Mahābhārata (which was known to the author of the Bhāgavata as it has been referred to in Bhāgavata 1.4.25) Šuka left his mortal coil before the Bhārata war (Sānti-p. 333). Since Šuka was highly praised in the Mahābhārata the author of the Bhāgavata deliberately connected him with the Bhāgavata with a view to proving the exalted character of the Bhāgavata dharma. Curiously enough though the last days of the king Pariksit have been described in the Mahābhārata beginning with the curse uttered by the sage Sāmika and ending with the biting of the Takṣaka nāga with great detail (Adiparvan 40-43), yet there is no mention of his hearing the Bhāgavata from Šuka.
(i.e. he does not follow the accounts as given in the older works) it is more plausible to presume that he deliberately identified the philosopher Kapila with the destroyer Kapila to serve some purpose. The purpose seems to show that Viṣṇu (Kapila is regarded as an incarnation of Viṣṇu in 1.3.10) protects the world even by causing destruction directly or indirectly. Since the Vaiṣṇava author of the Bhāgavata took the sage Kapila as an expounder of ātmajñāna or a promulgator of mokṣadalstra he thought it illogical to conceive that Kapila created fire in order to burn some persons to ashes (even though they were wicked). This is why he declared that the sons of Sagara were burnt by the fire of their own bodies (swadīrājanina saṃsāradharmam 9.8.12) — a statement which suggests that they were burnt as a result of their own sinful acts and that there was no agency or volition of Kapila in the act of burning.

The Bhāgavata words ‘वृक्षेश्वर पुत्र व्याकरणजाता हति न साधुवादः’ clearly indicate that the incident of burning of the wicked sons of Sagara by Kapila was regarded as an established fact in the Purānic tradition and that from older Purāṇas the author of the Bhāgavata knew that the wicked sons of the king Sagara were really consumed by the fire created by the sage. As he connected the act of burning with the philosopher Kapila (either ignorantly or deliberately) he tried to justify the act in his own way.

24. Like the Bhāgavata, Viṣṇu-p. 4.4.11 also says स्वाधीनराजसुर्यवंश विनिवृत्त: विनिवृत्ता. Though all Purānic works except these two expressly state that fire was created by Kapila from his eyes or his body (i.e. Kapila’s volition was active in producing the fire) which burnt the sons of Sagara into ashes, the author of the Viṣṇu-p. (who was a Vaiṣṇava) tried to minimize the agency of Kapila in the act of burning. That there was some connection between Kapila and the act of burning is admitted by this Purāṇa as is proved from the words काण्डः हृदयः श्रवणम् stated just after the above passage. In this respect the author of the Bhāgavata seems to follow the Viṣṇu-p. (which however does not regard the destroyer Kapila as the founder of Śāṅkhyā of whom it speaks in connection with the life of Jada Bharata in sec II) but he went one step further and declared that there was no rise of wrath in Kapila. Since the author of the Bhāgavata took this Kapila as identical with the philosopher Kapila he was compelled to express the above view.

There are, however, strong grounds to believe that the author of the Bhāgavata changed the incident in the aforesaid manner deliberately. Though the Bhāgavata says that the sons of Sagara were burnt by the fire born of their own bodies, yet it mentions ‘Kapila’s opening the eyes’ (विनिवृत्ततः दर्ता पुनः 9.8.11). What was the use of opening the eyes by Kapila possessing an absolutely pacified mind if the fire was born of the bodies of the persons (who were burnt) without having any connection with Kapila’s volition or activity? Does it not indicate that the author of the Bhāgavata was personally aware of the incident as described in the older Purāṇas and that he described the incident changing it slightly in order to serve some purpose?

The reason afforded by the Bhāgavata (9.8.13-14) with a view to exonerating the sage from the sin of violence was deemed so justified that in later times it was reiterated (in a popular form) by the author of the Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa in 2.52.29-31 (the chapter is however not on vamśaśucarita) in connection with the destroyer Kapila, who is not regarded by this Purāṇa as the founder of Śāṅkhyā.

(J) The present writer is of opinion that if the act of burning the sons of Sagara is judged in accordance with the principles of adhyātma-vidyā, it cannot be attributed to the philosopher Kapila. We find the historical statement of Pāñcaśikha (quoted in the Vyāsabhāṣya on Yogasūtra 1.25) that Kapila instructed Asuri in Śāṅkhyā by assuming a nirvāṇa-citta. Since this citta is caused by dhyāna it is bereft of all latent impressions (Vide Yogasūtra 4.6). It is inconceivable that a yogin possessing such a high stage gets so highly enraged that he becomes compelled to create fire to kill
some persons however wicked they are. It is well known that these yogins are so powerful that even evil thoughts of wicked persons get restricted if they happen to come near them.

The destroyer Kapila seems to be a yogin of a lower stage though he possessed certain supernormal powers. It may be easily accepted that this Kapila (who appeared at the time of the king Sagara) cannot be regarded as adividvas, cannot be recalled in the act of manuṣya-tarpaka (vide the Gṛhya-sūtras etc.), cannot be described as kṛṣṇa prabhū kāriṇa varṣam (Svetāvatara-up.4.5) and cannot be regarded as a mind-born son of Brahmā appearing at the earliest period of creation. All these show that the ancient Indian tradition did not recognize the two Kapilas as one.

We want to conclude this discussion by presenting a problem regarding the time of the Śāṅkhya teacher Kapila.

We have already said that there are Purāṇic statements that place Kapila in the Svāyambhuva manvantara or in the Satya yuga or in the earlier period of creation. Such statements must be regarded as of mythical character and they simply mean that Kapila was a man of hoary past.

But in the Mahābhārata we find such statements of non-mythical character as seem to place Kapila at a much later period, thus giving rise to a grave contradiction.

It is said in the Śānti-p., that Pañcasikha (the disciple of Āsuri, the disciple of Kapila) taught Dharmadhvaja Janaka, king of the Videha country, in Śāṅkhya (320.4,24). We find no mention of Dharmadhvaja Janaka in the genealogical lists in the Purāṇas except in the list in the Bhāgavata. According to this Purāṇa Dharmadhvaja appeared one generation after Sīradhvaja, the father-in-law of Dāsarathī Rāma (9.13.18-20) who was born some generations after the king Sagara. Accepting the Bhāgavata genealogy as valid a question presents itself—if the grand-disciple of the philosopher Kapila taught a person who appeared one generation after the father-in-law of Rāma, how can Kapila be held as appearing in the Kṛta yuga or in the Svāyambhuva manvantara as stated before so far as the Purāṇic view is concerned?

It should be noted here that this Kapila (i.e., the teacher of Pañcasikha who instructed Dharmadhvaja) cannot be regarded as the destroyer Kapila, for there is a period covering more than 20 generations between Sāgarā and Daśaratha, a contemporary of Sīradhvaja. We have already shown that (i) no Purāṇic work (except the two Bhāgavatas) says that the destroyer Kapila was the founder of Śāṅkhya and that (ii) the ancient Indian tradition never seems to have ascribed those activities and characteristics to the destroyer Kapila that exclusively or especially belong to the philosopher Kapila.

The aforesaid problem seems to be highly perplexing and I plead my inability to solve it.