Vol. XXXIV, No. 1] [February 8, 1992

Vasanta-pancami Number

Contents—लेखकूटी

1. सीतास्तीसम् with Notes
   By R. S. Bhattacharya
   Pages 1-4

2. Purāṇas and Indian history and culture—An overview
   [पुराणी संस्कृति—संस्कृती पुराणाचितानि]
   By Prof. S. G. Kantawala M. A.; Ph. D.
   Dept. of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, M. S. University of Baroda, Baroda.
   Pages 5-13

3. Continuity and change in the Puranic Sun-worship
   [पुराणायुज्ञात्वम् यूज्ञात्वम् प्रज्ञानात्वम्]
   By Prof. V. C. Srivastava, M.A.; D. Phil.
   Dept. of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, B. H. U.
   Pages 14-25

4. The story of brahmacārin and the devoted housewife: A study
   [गृहस्वासनम् स्वरुपार्थिवपुराणाचितानि]
   By S. Jena, M.A.; Ph. D.
   Reader in Sanskrit, 395/L, F. M. Nagar P.o.—Baramunda Colony, Bhubaneswar-751003
   Pages 26-50

5. Kotitirtha in the great epic and the Purāṇas
   [कोटितिर्थस्तु पुराणाचितानि]
   By Swaran Prabha, M.A., Ph. D.
   Research Assistant, Maharsi Vedavyasa Study Chair, Kuruksetra University, Kuruksetra.
   Pages 51-60

Authors are responsible for their views, which do not bind the Editors and the Trust.

Authors are requested to use Devanāgari characters while writing Sanskrit slokas and prose passages. They are also requested to follow the system of transliteration adopted by the International Congress of Orientalists at Athens in 1912 [ṛ = r; ś = c; ś = ch;

Traditional Sanskrit scholars are requested to send us articles in Sanskrit (i) dealing with the religious & philosophical matters in the Purāṇas and (ii) explaining the obscure & difficult passages in the Purāṇas.
MANKIND AS DESCRIBED IN THE PURĀNAS

By

RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

Some Purānas are found to contain passages on the creation of human species (manuṣya)¹ by Prajāpati Brahmā. Since these passages show the essential nature and characteristics of man by using philosophical terms, they are going to be explained here with the help of philosophical works. As these passages occurring in different Purānas are almost similar, it may be reasonably concluded that they have a common source. It is needless to say that the printed readings of the Puranic verses are in many places corrupt. An attempt is made here to correct these corrupt readings also.

A close study of these Puranic verses shows that the readings contained in the Viṣṇu-purāṇa are without any corruption. The reason is obvious. This is the only Purāṇa that has been used even by the teachers of different philosophical schools. The three commentaries on it are also helpful in preserving intelligible readings. The Bhāgavatapurāṇa is of no help as it has only one verse on the subject in question. The Devi-bhāgavata is silent on it. The comm. Śivatoṁqi on the Śiva-purāṇa (a work of much later age) says nothing on the relevant verse.

January, 1992] Mankind as described in the Purāṇas 87

¹ passages show the essential nature and characteristics of man by using philosophical terms, they are going to be explained here with the help of philosophical works. As these passages occurring in different Purānas are almost similar, it may be reasonably concluded that they have a common source. It is needless to say that the printed readings of the Puranic verses are in many places corrupt. An attempt is made here to correct these corrupt readings also.

A close study of these Puranic verses shows that the readings contained in the Viṣṇu-purāṇa are without any corruption. The reason is obvious. This is the only Purāṇa that has been used even by the teachers of different philosophical schools. The three commentaries on it are also helpful in preserving intelligible readings. The Bhāgavatapurāṇa is of no help as it has only one verse on the subject in question. The Devi-bhāgavata is silent on it. The comm. Śivatoṁqi on the Śiva-purāṇa (a work of much later age) says nothing on the relevant verse.
It is to be noted further that some Purāṇas (namely Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa and Linga) contain some more lines giving such details as are not found in other Purāṇas.

No attempt is made here to afford a philosophical explanation of the introductory remarks about creation (given in the verses preceding the verses on the creation of man) which say that when Prajñāpāti Brahmā thought to create, a certain creation mukhya-srotas by name, concerning immovable beings (i.e. trees etc.) appeared. This was followed by another creation, called tiryak-srotas concerning animals, which in turn was followed by the creation called urdhvasrotas concerning devas. As all these three creations were a-sādhakas (non-accomplishing) Prajñāpāti continued his meditation and consequently there appeared a creation called arvāksrotas concerning man. (The import of the term arvāksrotas will be shown afterwards.)

After these remarks, the Purāṇas describe mankind in the following manner:

1. The words bahula, udriktā and adhikā are synonymous; they show abundance (i.e. a dominant or developed stage) of the three guṇas, namely sattva (the sentient principle), rajas (the mutative principle) and tamas (the static principle) existing in human beings. The word prakāśa

2. The reading of almost all Purāṇas: is the reading belonging to the arvāks-srotas. The Saura-p. however reads prakāśa: sā. The reading of the Vāyu-p. (nam: sattva-vyakta) has the same sense. tam.: pūṣṭa (for sāmāyikā) (Brahmāṇḍa-p.) and tam.: pūṣṭa (Līgā-p.) are scribal emendations. sūptat and pūṣṭa (meaning ‘touched’ and ‘associated’) are not quite wrong so far as the nature of the three guṇas is concerned; Cp. एव युगान् वर्षोप्रसरस्तित्वम्: (Vṛṣāśvapurāṇa on Yogasūtra 2.18). Since the sandhi in sāmāyikā is irregular, variant readings seem to have been conceived. An irregularity of this type is often found in the Purāṇas.

January 1592] Mankind as described in the Purāṇas

in the aforesaid passage undoubtedly stands for the sattva guṇa. The use of the word prakāśa for sattva is significant. The author seems to lay stress on the illuminating aspect (i.e. awareness, cognition, knowledge) of the sattva guṇa existing in man, instead of the sukha (pleasure) and lāghava (boyancy) aspects. The reason is obvious. Unlike awareness or knowledge pleasure and boyancy (in the body and mind of man) are often found to be easily overcome, disturbed or interrupted. Moreover, it is the knowledge aspect in which man excels other sentient beings.

It is to be noted here that the Puranic expressions bahula, udriktā and adhikā simply show a particular kind of developed stage of the three guṇas. It should not be supposed that the development of each of the guṇas is equal (sama). The guṇas in the manifested state always remain in a subordinate-dormant relation (guṇa-pradhiṇā-bhāva) as has been clearly stated in the Sāṁkhya-yoga philosophy. The aforesaid expressions plainly say that the development of none of the guṇas in man is not too low as is found in other kinds of beings. The precise nature of this development will be shown afterwards.

The Bhāgavata-p. has only one epithet (viz. rajo’adhikā) concerning the guṇas. As the Bhāgavata-p. employs only one verse to describe man, it prefers to mention rajo’s only in order to show the most common and cognizable characteristic (i.e. the same sense). natural tendency to act) of man. The Viṣṇupurāṇa (3.17.27) also refers to this characteristics in a very sublime manner; cf. Nirukta 5.1 (यद्य प्रत्ययो गुर्यानुतित कर्मुः).

3. Cp. Sām. Kā: प्रकाश्यामर्गितितिवायितात: प्रकाशयामर्गितितिवायितात: (12) and सत्त्व च मित्र प्रकाशयामर्गितितिवायितात: (13).


5. पुरुषप्रायमानमुक्ततेऽग्निः (Vṛṣāśvapurāṇa on YS. 2.15); परस्पराप्रकाशित्वादिषयां च च (on YS. 2.18).

6. पुरुषतः सत्त्वं च त्वं कर्मानं करणात्सकसः (Vṛṣāśvapurāṇa on YS. 2.15). परस्पराप्रकाशित्वादिषयां च (on YS. 2.18).

7. The reading संस्कृतं विषयस्त्र च च (Līgā-p.) is manifestly wrong as man cannot be sāmāyikā (concealed) internally.
engaged in action', and (iii) to ‘have external and internal awareness’. Since this statement begins with tasmāt, it is quite reasonable that the previous line affords some reason for man's 'having abundance of suffering', 'being repeatedly engaged in action' and 'having internal and external awareness'.

It can be easily observed that the three characteristics mentioned above are associated with the tamas, rajas and sattva guṇas respectively. Prakāśa refers to jñāna. Though duṣkha is usually associated with rajas,9 yet here it is associated with tamas for practical reasons. Duṣkha is the result of subjugation, or overcoming of the faculties by tamas. That bhiyō bhūyah- kārīṭva (the quality of being repeatedly impelled to action) is due to rajas is beyond doubt. The repetition of the word bhiyōs shows that a man fails to restrain himself from associating with actions even if he knows the evil nature of actions and has run on the path of self-knowledge to a considerable degree9.

Since the human body is weak or easily liable to diseases etc. in comparison to the bodies of other kinds of beings and since the human mind feels greater mental disturbances on account of insult, degradation etc., man is rightly said to be duṣkha-bahula. It is this acute feeling of pain in man that is the source of his secular inventions and divine wisdom

or externally. Properly speaking it is the vegetable world which is called sattva: सत्त्वम् has as has stated in the Purāṇas; see Viṣṇu-p. 1.39, 1.45, 1.46, 1.47, 1.48, 1.49 (1.5.6).

8. तत एव कायिते दुःखयं ब्राह्मचर्यमेव प्राणलेखकों रूपसुता वयक्तः (Abhinava-bharatī on Nātyaśāstra, Vol I, p. 283); राजी रामायणं दुःखहुः (Kṣiratrāṅgini on Amarakośa 1.3.29).

9. Cp. कर्मा-प्रयत्नाया: स्मुद्रा रजस्येवतानि जावने (Gītā 14.12; see also Gītā 14.9 (रजः कर्माय: रजस्येवतानि) and 14.7 (विज्ञानानि कर्मसंये देहिनस् ).

10. Cp. “It is mostly under the blows of pain that man turns inward to explore the recesses of his own being..... Hence it is said that wisdom is rooted in sorrow” (Annie Besant: An Introduction to Science of Peace, p. 5).

11. समुद्रात: सांक्षेपमेव: (Varāha-p. 2.32); Saura-p. 22.29 and Kurma-p 1.7.10 read मनुष्य: परिक्रियाभाजितम् Mark the use of the word manuṣya and not māna in the passages of all the Purāṇas. Both the words are derived from manu, but since the former signifies a jūtī (see Pāṇini 4.1.161 मनविकारवावयं यथा यथा च) and not the apātya of Manu (in this sense the word would be māna) it is used in these Puranic passages.

12. संसारः तास्मां प्राविधिक प्रस्तावितम्. मनुष्यम् [मानुषयम्] पुनर्वन्न च पद्धतिभवन्न दृष्टिभवन्न तस्मादवर्णधित्य वैवर्ज्येत्। सरस्वतेदृष्टिर्गतिः ज्ञातं भवति: सत्कारः: (Vāyu-p. 14. 359-374); see Linga-p. 1.88.67-69a also.

It is to be noted that pasus and mrgas are mentioned here separately. It seems that pasus are domestic animals while mrgas are wild animals (Bālārāma Uḍāsina’s comm. on Śaivism. p. 53). This may be the original view, for the Purāṇas are found to divide pasuś into grāmyas and āraṇyakas; see Viṣṇu-p. 1. 5. 50-51; Vāyu-p. 9.46-48a; Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 48. 29-30; Brahmanda-p. 18. 47.49,
to acquire, the human species is said to be difficult to attain.\textsuperscript{18}

Instead of showing the aforesaid three characteristics based on the three guṇas, the Kūraṇa-p. asserts that the human species is duṣkroṭa (severely affected by pain) and sattvayuṭa (endowed with sattva) (1.7.10). The same view is found in Saurā-p. 22.29 also (the reading being sattvayuktā). It is to be observed that here duṣkha is mentioned along with sattva—a hardly admissible association.

It appears that here the division is not based on the guṇas. It is evidently based on the two basically different notions of human beings, namely bhoga and apavarga\textsuperscript{14}. Those in whom the former is predominant are duṣkroṭa, while those in whom the latter is predominant are sattvayuṭa. Since the former are full of kliśṭa-vṛtti (see Yogasūtra 1.5), they are said to be severely affected by pain and since the latter are full of a-kliśṭa-vṛtti, they are regarded as endowed with sattva.

\textbf{(4)}

The additional statements found in the Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa and Liṅga Purāṇas are as under:

\begin{verbatim}
      व्यक्तिवर्गावलीते अवृत्ता च व्यक्तिवर्गावलीते:
      विभेदाधारानुसारे न्यूनतां न व्यक्तिवर्गावलीते:।
\end{verbatim}

(Vāyu-p. 6.55b-56a; Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.8.30; Liṅga-p. 1.70.155b-156a).

\textbf{13.} तुल्येः मानुषी-जातिः कर्म-विकारिणः दृष्टे (D. Bhaṅg. 9. 29. 23).

\textbf{14.} For these two basic notions, see the expression भोगावधारीपर्यं
      व्यक्तिवर्गावली (Yogasūtra 2.18) and the Bhaṅya thereon. The Bhāṣya after precisely stating the nature of bhoga and apavarga (the two kinds of notions) emphatically declares भोगपरिवर्तितस्मायम् धन्यं नाति.

\textbf{15.} In the place of the printed reading विभेदाधारे: we prefer to read विभेदाधारानुसार: (for reasons, see below). Liṅga-p. 1.70.155 reads तु for च. Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.5.50 reads नारायणानुसार: (for ताराकाये:) which is manifestly wrong. विभेदाधारानुसार: is the reading in the Brahmāṇḍa-p. (1.5.50).

\textbf{January 1992} Mankind as described in the Purāṇas 93

The verse says: on account of possessing the group of lakṣaṇas (distinguishing signs) beginning with Tāraka the aforedescribed human beings are grouped into eight (i.e., these lakṣaṇas are eight in number). These beings are characterized by siddhis (Tāraka etc. are called siddhis as well be shown presently). They are similar to gandharvas in attributes.

Apparently the verse is not easily intelligible. It becomes fully intelligible when we come to know that a group of eight siddhis beginning with Tāra or Tāraka is propounded in the Sāṁkhya philosophy; see the Sāṁkhya-kārikā 51. Here the first of the eight siddhis is called uḥa, which was called Tāra by ancient teachers of Sāṁkhya as has been stated by the commentators.\textsuperscript{16} Here siddhi is not supernormal powers (vibhūti) but attainments.

According to aforequoted Puranic verses manusyas are said to possess these siddhis. A remarkable view is found to be propounded by the Purāṇas saying that the immovable beings, beats and birds, human beings and devas possess vibhūṣya (ignorance), ākārttī or ākāti (infirmity), siddhi (attainment) and tuṣṭi (contentment) respectively.\textsuperscript{17}

The Purāṇas further tell us that the four factors (vibhūṣya etc.) fall under the sarga called anugraha;\textsuperscript{18} cp. Sāṁ. Kā. 46

\textbf{16.} The comm. Māthara, Gauḍāpāda, Jayamānalā and Tattvavāiśāradi mention Tāra (neuter); the Yuktidipikā, Tāraka (neuter). The Sāṁkhya-saṃapti-vṛtti (vi) (ed. by Dr. E. A. Solomon) also reads Tāra (neuter). Tāraka is the same as Tāra (स्त्राकः). See also the commentaries on the Tattvāsāma-sūtra गाढ्या तिद्य: (17).

\textbf{17.} The verse in the corrected from would be: स्त्राकः विकल्पादिता: विकल्पादिताविकल्पादिता। सिद्धिभद्धानां भुत्वातुस्तुहिंदेववृत्तम्:। (Vāyu-p. 6.68b-69a; Liṅga-p. 1.70.155; Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.5.61b-62a). Cp. Yuktidipikā on Sāṁ. Kā 51 (विकल्पादिता भास्त्राकः॥ ते हि मुक्तम्: कोरोत्सी विपर्ययायसः। विकल्पादिता भास्त्राकः॥ ते हि मुक्तम्: कोरोत्सी विपर्ययायसः। सिद्धिभद्धानां भुत्वातुस्तु हिंदेववृत्तम्:॥)

\textbf{18.} The correct reading of the verse would be: कुण्ड्योजनुः सम्यकः: स भूपञ्च स्थायलिता:। विपर्ययायसः स भूपञ्च सिद्धाय स्त्राकः॥
where the term pratyaya-sarga is used for anugraha sarga (एव प्रत्ययस्य अनुग्रहसर्गविधिविविशेषता) (See the comm. Yuktidipika for several senses of this word). It is to be noted that viparyāśa is the same as viparyaya. Since the seventh letter in the first foot of a verse in the Amuṣṭubh metre is required to be guru, viparyāśa is used instead of viparyaya.

(5)

The significance of the expression gandharvasahadharmināḥ or gandharvaśa saha dharmināḥ is difficult to determine. The Gandharvas are one of the devayonis (see Amarakośa 1.1.11) and as such there is apparently no reasons to regard human beings as possessing the same attributes as the gandharvas, who are usually regarded as deva-gānyanās (see the comm. Amarakośodgāñana on Amara 1.1.11). The view has some Puranic basis, for some Purāṇas hold that the gandharvas were created from the singing limb of the creator and that they were born while they drank speech (Viśṇu-p. 1.5.46b-47a).19

(See Vāyu-p. 6.57; Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.5.51 Liṅga-p. 1.70.157; Padma-p. 5.4.66; Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 47.28). Printed readings of all these verses are corrupt in some places. Śaṅkara in his bhāṣya on Śvetāsvatara-up. 1.4 informs us that in the Brahmapurāṇa an account of Viṣṇuaya, asākti, tuṣṭi and siddhi with their fifty 'varieties was given: एवं विष्णुवंदनाच्यो नित्यिवस्तुमयेन आयामाया। एव वातावरणेऽविष्णुवंदनाच्यो नित्यिवस्तुमयेनेऽविष्णुवंदनाच्यो अविभाविर्मिता। The extant Brahma-p. has no chapter on this topic, though it contains a few chapters on Sāmkhya-Yogic matters (which seem to be borrowed from the Śaṅkara, of the Mahābhārata). This evidently shows the existence of an earlier recension of the Brahman-purāṇa. The fifty varieties of Viṣṇuaya etc. have been mentioned in Sāmkhyakārikā 46-47.

19. गतोत्साहाः समुद्रपति गणवृत्तियो तद्भवत्ता। पवित्रो रजस्त मबं गम्बपत्तिहि वै हिंस ॥ (Viśnu-p. 1.5.56b-47a); see also Brahmanda-p. 1.8.40-41; cp. गात्रमाध्यमीति (The comm. Vivṛti of Liṅgaṇayasūrī on Amarakośa 1.1.11). कृष्ण लो-
beings is called karmad āha while that of non-human beings is called bhogad āha (or sometimes upabhogad āha). Since human beings can, to a great extent, choose the lines of his activity, restrain themselves, perform free-willed karmas to the greater degree they are rightly regarded as karmayoni in the śastras.

The rājas aspect in man has also been alluded to in the chapters on sarga while dealing with the creation of four ambhas namely devas, manuṣyas, pitṛs and asuras. The description is highly mystical. The relevant verses are given in the footnote without any explanation.

Absence of sub-division in human beings—

A remarkable declaration of the Pūrāṇas is that there is no subdivision or class in human beings; these beings are said to be of one type (एकविषय) only.24

This view must have some cogent reasons. A careful study of the relevant passages reveals that in the present scheme of creation subdivisions or classes are conceived on the basis of the cognisable difference in bodies or bodily activities, a fact which may be observed in the sub-divisions of the devas, immovable beings etc. (see the commentaries on Śaṁśī. Kā 53 for the sub-divisions).28 Since all human beings—from a highly ignorant person

22. ततो देवास्तर्भितथा मानुष्यम् च चक्षुयथम्। सिद्धवस्तर्भितथा समासायम्-मयुष्यम्। (Viṣṇu-p. 1.5.28) This is found with slight variations in Brahmaṇḍa-p. 1.8.2a-3b; Padma-p. 5.3.79; Garuḍa-p. 1.4.26; Kūrma-p. 1.7.39.

23. रजोवानिसिद्धाथ्यावं अव्रृत्तं हि तत्। रजोवानिसिद्ध्यात मनुष्यम् द्रव्यतः। (Viṣṇu-p. 1.5.35); see also Padma-p. 5.3.86; Garuḍa-p. 1.4.26; Kūrma-p. 1.7.48; Brahmaṇḍa-p. 1.8.18b-20a (with slight or more variations).

24. अर्वक-स्रोतस्य नाम: खलरकविधियो नृत्यम्। (Bhāgavata-p. 3.10.20); मनुष्यमनोभावं। (Skanda-p. Avantikṣetra 2.31); सवर्णं हि मानुष्यम्। (Devi-p. 10.2.7).

25. The Pūrāṇas are sometimes found to have their own views about the varieties. As for example the udbhids are said to have five varieties namely वृक्ष, गुल, लग्न, धीरस, धूम.}

January 1992] Mankind as described in the Pūrāṇas to a man of the jivan-mukta class—have the same form of the body and the same kind of bodily functions, they are said to be of one type only. There may be other reasons too.

In this connection it is to be noted that according to the Puranic declaration the mundane existence (समस्या) consists of fourteen kinds of sentient beings26 to be explicit, devas have eight classes; those born of tiryag-yoni, five classes and manuṣyas, one class. The fourteen-fold division is propounded in the Śaṁshī philosophy; see Tatāv samāsāsūtra 20 (सहस्राशीय यथात्मणे). We shall deal with the rationality of this division in a separate article.

26. षहस्राशीय विविधता बुद्धिता संसारालक्षणम्। (Vāyu-p. 15.1; Liṅga-p. 1.8.74); षहस्राशीय बुद्धि-तिल्लिता छ जन्मवस्तु। मनुष्यास्तेऽम्बादोऽम्बादोऽऽर्ब्बंस्थित संसारालक्षणम्। (Sk. Avantikṣetra 2.31); षहस्राशीय जन्मवस्तुहि उपर्ययां वाग्ययां। मनुष्यास्तेऽम्बादोऽम्बादोऽऽर्ब्बंस्थित। (Liṅga-p. 2.10.41); षहस्राशीय विविध स्वरूपतिः सांस्कृतिक च जन्मचाय। सवर्णेऽस्य जन्मवस्तुहि उपर्ययां वाग्ययां। षहस्राशीय जन्मवस्तुहि उपर्ययां वाग्ययां। (Siva-p. 5.4.10); मानुष्यां त्योजितोषः (Vide Śrīdhara’s commentary on Viṣṇu p. 3.17.29) or six varieties, namely वरसर्व, बोधिक, धार्मिक, धज्जय, धीरस, धूम (Vide Śrīdhara’s comment on Bhāgavata-p. 30.10.15).

27. अभिकृतशीततः नाम: श्वेतेकसोधियो नृत्यम्। षहस्राशीय जन्मवस्तुहि उपर्ययां वाग्ययां। षहस्राशीय मनुष्यास्तेऽम्बादोऽऽर्ब्बंस्थित। सवर्णेऽस्य जन्मवस्तुहि उपर्ययां वाग्ययां। (Vide Sridhara’s commentary on Viṣṇu p. 3.17.29).
this name as avāc-pravartana (going or tending downward). Śrīdhara’s explanations ब्रह्मावतरण संताणो वस्त्र संसार वनीत on Bhāg. 3.10.24 and अवाच् प्रवर्तनानां प्रस्तुते on Visnu-p. 1.5.16 (remaining alive by taking food inside) are not sound, for bests and birds also remain alive in the same way.

Since arvāc means ‘on the lower side’ ‘on this side; ‘below’, ‘downwards’ the word arvāc-srotas signifies ‘going-down’. That is to say that though human beings are said to be sādhakas yet they frequently forget their nature and capability and consequently they fall down. This act of easily falling down may be observed in the fact that the deep friendship of many years of two persons can often turn into enmity for the rest of the life on account of a quarrel on a very trifling matter.

(9)

Place of Arvāc-srotas

The creation called arvāc-srotas is said to be the seventh, the first six being (i) mahat-sarga, (ii) tannāṭra-sarga, (iii) and vaikārīka-sarga (these three are called prakṛta-sarga), (iv) mukhya-srotas, (v) tiryak-srotas, (vi) ūrdhva-srotas (these are called vaikṛtasargas). According to the Bhāgavata it is the ninth creation (कुर्मसंताण संसार वनीत 3.10.24), the first eight creations being (i) mahat-sarga, (ii) ahaṁsā-sarga, (iii) bhūta-sarga, (iv) ainḍriya-sarga, (v) devasarga, (vi) tamaḥ-sarga, (vii) mukhya-sarga and (viii) tīrthasarga.

28. For the meaning of arvāc, see Chān. up. 1.7.6 (ब्रह्मावतरण संताणो लोकाः 3.10.4(वाचकसेवन); BṛĀ.4.4.16 (समावकारहं संसाराध्वं); वाचकमहादेव (V. 1. 23) (Ganapatnamahodadhi 1.17); अवाच् वाचकसेवन (Amara 3.4.16); Cp. अवाचकमहादेव वाचकसेवनसंसार (Prakriyā-sarvasva, pt. iv. p. 185).

29. अवाचकमहादेव संसार: समान: सु तु मानव: (Vāyu-p. 6.64); तथा वाचकमहादेव संसार: मानव: (Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 47. 34; Garuḍa-p. 1.4.17; Kūrma-p. 1.7.17; Agni-p. 20.42; Liṅga-p. 1.70.164; Padma-p. 5.3.73). Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.8.57 reads ग्राह्माण्डार्त संसार: समान: सु तु मानव:; it should be corrected to अवाचकसेवन संसार: or अवाचकसेवन संसार:.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion we want to say a few words about the rationale of the principle underlying the scheme of four srotases, namely mukhya (concerning vegetables), tiryac (concerning animals), ūrdhva (concerning devas) and arvāc (concerning mankind). The Purāṇas seem to divide sentient beings into four classes on the basis of their faculties. According to the Purāṇas a being is a composite entity consisting of the three faculties, namely (i) the internal organ (the whole antaḥkaraṇa), (ii) external organs i. e. sense and motor organs (jñānendriyas and karmendriyas) and (iii) the vital power, five pṛāgas holding (i. e. constructing, developing, and maintaining) the body. The pure ātman, puruṣa-principle, or self is absolute and immutable and as such he is beyond any classification or division.

Since all of these faculties are made up of three guṇas they are capable of being developed. This development may be either (i) regular, normal or (ii) irregular or abnormal. ‘Normal development’ is there where the aforesaid three faculties are so developed as enable the embodied self (sentient being) to apply his faculties freely to a great extent, to choose or select what he desires, to check or restrain himself willingly. In short none of the faculties is so highly developed that it can subdue the legitimate functions of other faculties.

Now, if we observe the nature of mukhya-sarga i. e. the whole vegetable world we will find that it is an example of...
abnormal development. Here prāṇākṣaṭki (vital energy) is greatly developed, in comparison to the development of the internal organs and external organs. Tamas predominates in this creation. Since the three faculties are not developed in a harmonious way the development must be regarded as abnormal.

In the tiryak-srotas the development of the faculties is abnormal, for animals are found to engage themselves chiefly in acquiring food, in the activities of sense and motor organs and in such functions in which deliberation and ratiocination has little place. These beings have little control over the organic functions.

In the ūrdhva-srotas, the development of the faculties is abnormal, for in the beings of the devayoni with a subtle body the antāṅkaraṇa is so developed that their desires are fulfilled without any separate effort and that they enjoy under compulsion without the power to choose or change. This life is chiefly governed by saṃskāras and puruṣākāra has practically no part to play. Since the devakāriṇa is chiefly mental, it dies whenever the impressions of sleep arise (that is why the devas are called asvāpna, Amarakośa 1.1.8.).

In the arvāk-srotas the development of the faculties is harmonious and normal. It is for this reason that the following characteristics are found in the human species:

(i) Possibility of free-willed actions to the greatest degree;
(ii) greater power to choose the lines of one’s activity or to select the course that he should follow; (iii) not being overwhelmed by the unbalanced state of the faculties; (iv) efforts are not fully directed towards maintaining the ground against rivals or enemies; (v) experience not being fully determined by the circumstances in which one finds oneself; (vi) going beyond the struggle for sheer existence in planning a career for oneself; (vii) laying a store of new experiences for the future in the new form of activity to which one comes to apply one’s resources; (viii) living not in the sensuous present determined by antecedent conditions; (ix) using past experience to interpret the present situation in order to change it

31. This may be proved by observing their long span of life, lower sensitiveness, the power of changing inorganic matter into organic, maintenance of the body without the help of any artificial means etc.

32. In a separate article we propose to treat of various Puranic views on the classification of beings by showing their philosophical basis with necessary details.