

सम्पादक-मण्डल

- डा० रामकरण शर्मा
भूतपूर्व कुलपति, सम्पूर्णानन्द संस्कृतविश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी; नयी दिल्ली
- डा० रामचन्द्र नारायण दाण्डेकर
भण्डारकर प्राच्यशोधसंस्थान; पुणे
- डा० जे० गोण्डा, उटरेख्ट, नीदरलैण्ड्स

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पुराणम्—PURĀṆA

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THE PURANIC DEFINITION OF YAJÑA

BY

RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

In three Purāṇas we find the following verse defining yajña (Vedic sacrifice) :

पशूनां द्रव्यहविषाम् ऋक्सामयजुषां तथा ।
ऋत्विजां दक्षिणानां च संयोगो यज्ञ उच्यते ॥

(Vāyu-p. 59.42; Brahmanḍa-p. 1.32.4; Matsya-p. 145.44 with the reading दक्षिणायज्ञः).

Here yajña is said to be a combination of the entities, namely *paśu*, *dravya*, *havis*, *ṛc-sāman-yajus*, *ṛvij* and *dakṣiṇā*.¹ It is to be noted that *paśu* etc. are regarded as the *śeṣas* or *aṅgas* (subsidiaries) by the Mimāṃsakas.²

The aforesaid factors are going to be discussed here chiefly with the help of Puranic statements. As to why fire has not been mentioned in the aforesaid definition, it may be said that since all *āhutis* are not invariably given into fire (certain *āhutis* are given into

1. It is to be noted that all the Purāṇas contain numerous passages which describe yajñas elaborately or briefly. In some passages questions have been raised about various aspects of yajña, as for example, see Bhāg. 3.7.30, Padma-p. 5.16 3-5 and Vahni-p. or Āgneya-p. Ch. 3 (See Hazra Commemoration Volume, I, p. 75) etc. In these Puranic passages following factors are mentioned frequently : अग्नि, आज्य, ऋत्विज्, काम, काल, धर्म, दक्षिणा, दर्भ, द्रव्य, देवता, देश, धर्म, पात्र, प्रमाण, फल, मन्त्र, ब्राह्मण, यजमान, याज्य, विधि, वेदि, श्रद्धा, सदस्य, समिध्, हविस् etc.

The description of Yajñavarāha as given in a few Purāṇas is full of sacrificial terms; see 'Yajñavarāha—an interpretation' by Dr. V. S. Agrawal (Purāṇa V, pp. 199-236) and 'Yajñavarāha—some more material' by Dr. V. Raghavan (Purāṇa VI, pp. 202-203).

2. See Pūrvamimāṃsāsūtra 3.2.1 which says that the mantras are the *śeṣa* of yajña. A statement of Upavarṣa has been quoted in Śabara's bhāṣya (on 3.1.6) which says that the *dravya* is the *nirapekṣa śeṣa* of yajña. It is usually held that *dravya*, *guṇa* and *samśkāras* are the *nirapekṣa śeṣas*.

water etc.)³ it has not been mentioned in the definition. Yajamāna may reasonably be included in *ṛvijs*.⁴

It is to be noted that in the Purāṇas yajña is said to be of five kinds (तं यज्ञियं पञ्चविधम् Bhāg. 4.7.41). These five are : Agni-hotra, Darśa-pūrṇamāsa, Cāturmāsya, Paśu and Soma (see the comm. by Śrīdhara).⁵ A similar view is expressed by Viṣṇu-purāṇa 3.4.1 (दशविधः कृत्स्नो यज्ञः). These ten kinds are the aforesaid five yajñas in their two forms, namely *prakṛti* and *vikṛti*.⁶

The division of sacrifices into *kratu* and *yajña* is also found in the Purāṇas. The division is based on the use and non-use of

3. Cp. सप्तमे पदे जुहोति (Tai. Saṁ. 6.1.8). See also the Upodghāta (in Hindi, p. 89) in the मीमांसा-शाबरभाष्य by Y. Mimāṃsaka.
4. The indeclinable च in this verse may be taken in the sense of *samuccaya* (accumulation) and consequently any intended factor (for example *devatā*) may be included in this definition. Such an inclusion does not seem to be necessary.
5. Cp. अग्निहोत्रदर्शपौर्णमासपशुसोमानां प्रकृतिविकृतिभि रनुसवनं (Bhāg. 5.7.5.). It is to be noted that in the Vedas we find the conception of पाङ्क्त यज्ञ; vide Śatapatha Br. 1.2.16 where a yajña is said to be *pāṅkta*, for there are five kinds of *havis*, namely घानान, करम्भ, परिवाप, पुरोडाश and पयस्या. The conception of *pāṅkta yajña* is found in Tai-up. 1.7.1 also. Ānandagiri in his comment clearly says that since the performance of yajña depends upon पत्नी, यजमान, पुत्र, मानुषवित्त and दैववित्त, it is called *pāṅkta*. Explaining Br. up. 1.4.17 (which contains the view of *pāṅkta yajña*) Śāṅkara remarks that since yajña is performed by *puruṣa* and *paśu*, each of which has five parts (namely मनस्, वाणी, प्राण, नेत्र, and श्रोत्र), it is called *pāṅkta*.
6. It is to be noted that there is a four-fold division of yajñas. The four forms are : प्रकृति, विकृति, प्रकृतिविकृति and अप्रकृति-अविकृति. For a clear description of these four forms, see Āryavidyāsudhākara (p. 45) by Bhaṭṭa Yajñeśvara Śarman.

*yūpa*⁷ (sacrificial post to which the victim is fastened); vide Śrīdhara's comm. on Bhāgavata 5.7.5; 5.18.35).

The Purāṇas often use the two expressions *saptarūpa* and *saptatantu* while referring to or describing *yajūas*: vide Agni-p. 25.29. (*yajūātmā saparūpakah*) etc. The seven Soma *yajūas* (Agniṣṭoma etc.) are said to be the seven *rūpas*. *Saptatantu* also bears the same sense according to Śrīdhara on Bhāg. 7.3.30. Some however take *sapta tantus* as the seven metres (Gāyatrī etc.) or the seven tongues of fire as shown in Muṇḍaka-up. 1.2.4 (vide the comm. Vyākhyasudhā on Amarakośa 2.7.13).

An interesting statement about the number of *yajūas* is found in the Padmapurāṇa 5.29.20 (शतानि त्रीणि षष्टिश्च यज्ञाः सृष्टाः स्वयंभुवा). It is not known whether the view has any traditional basis.

The most remarkable thing to be observed in this verse defining *yajūa* is the non-mention of *devatā* who is often regarded as the giver of the results (fruits) of *yajūas*. According to us this non-mention shows that this definition is based on the Pūrvamīmāṃsā view, according to which a *yajūa* or *yāga* is itself capable of producing the result and as such *devatā* is of secondary importance. According to Pūrvamīmāṃsā the position of *devatā* is similar to that of *dravya* as the *vidhi* about both *dravya* and *devatā* is the *śeṣa* of the उत्पत्तिविधि which enjoins a *yajūa* (P.M.S.10.2.10). It is well known that according to Pūrvamīmāṃsā there is no *upāsana* or *pūjā* (worship) of *devatās* in *yajūa*, though they are said to be the recipients of *havis* (comm. on P.M.S. 3.2.37).

Moreover in sacrifices *devatās* are regarded as external (*bahirāṅga*) in comparison to *havis*, which is regarded as internal (comm. on P.M.S.8.1.32). In fact *devatās* are regarded as subordinate to *havis* (comm. on P.M.S. 8.1.34). That is why in a formal statement enjoining a sacrifice we sometimes find no mention of *devatā* (as e. g. सोमेन यजेत). (Such sacrifices are technically called *avyakta yajūas*, vide P.M.S.8.1.16). It may be said that since *devatā* is the entity to whom *havis* is offered there is no necessity to mention *devatā* who is defined as *havis* as *havis*.

7. In the commentaries on Pāṇini. 4.3.68 (ऋतुयज्ञेभ्यश्च) it is remarked that the division is based on the use and non-use of *samarasa*.

There is however a variant reading *devānam* in the place of *paśūnam* in the verse defining *yajūa*.⁸ The variant reading has not been recorded in the Anandasram ed. of the Vāyu and Matsya Purāṇas. The author (a wellknown paṇḍita living in Vārāṇasī) who has quoted (in his work in Hindi) the verse with the reading *devānam* is silent on the reading *paśūnam*. He has not even mentioned the name of the digest in which the verse has been quoted with the reading *devānam*. It is evident that the scholar came to know of this reading directly from his teachers.

The reason for replacing *paśūnam* by *devānam* by the teachers of later time is obvious. Since the killing of animals in worship came to be regarded as a highly cruel act owing to the influence of Vaisnavism, the followers of Vedic religion (who were mentally Vaisnavas) did not like to kill animals in sacrifices. Consequently they thought to replace *paśūnam* not by any other word but by *devānam* as this would render the verse more attractive. These followers of the Vedic religion considered this replacing of *paśūnam* by *devānam* quite justified since there lies invariable connection between *yajūa* and the attainment of *svarga*, the abode of the *devas* (Matsya-p. 143. 33; Agni-p. 379.1; Brahmandā-p.1.30.44).

Ṛc-Yajus-Sāman

The essential characteristic of *yajūa* is said to be the offering of something to *devatās* (देवतोद्देश्यकद्रव्यत्यागः) by uttering ṛc, yajus and sāman—the three kinds of *mantras*. Though the *vidhi* (injunction) of *yajūas* is expressed by the passages of the Brāhmaṇas, yet the acts of offering, invoking etc. (in sacrifices) are done by using the *mantras*.⁹ That is why the act of sacrifice is stated to be

8. The verse has been quoted by Pt. Venī Rāma Sārmā Gauḍa in his Hindi booklet *Yajūamīmāṃsā* with the reading *devāna* for *paśūna* (p. 5). The booklet was written some years before its publication in 1951.
9. For the definition of these three kinds of *mantras*, see Brahmandā-p. 1.33.36-39. The Puranic definitions are in accordance with the Rgyajuh-pariśiṣṭa (p. 500) and the Vargadvayavṛtti on the Ṛkprātiśākhya (p. 6). There are a few corrupt readings in the aforesaid verses of the Brahmandapurāṇa. For the precise definitions of these three kinds of *mantras*, see Pūrvamīmāṃsā-sūtras 2.1.35-37.

ऋग्यजुःसामनिष्पाद्य in some Purāṇas (Nāradya-p. 1.49.21).¹⁰ There is an emphatic statement in the Purāṇas which declares that the three kinds of *mantras* were created by Prajāpati the creator with a view to performing *yajñas* : ऋचो यजूषि सामानि निर्ममे यज्ञसिद्धये (Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.8.55; Brahma-p. 1.49; Agni-p. 17.13; Śiva-p. 5.29.21).

The Puranic authors noticed that in these three kinds of *mantras* it was the *yajus* mantra that was chiefly connected with the sacrificial act as may be inferred from the passage यजूषि यो वेद स वेद यज्ञान् occurring in the following verse :

ऋचो हि यो वेद स वेद वेदान्
यजूषि यो वेद स वेद यज्ञान् ।
सामानि यो वेद स वेद ब्रह्मा
यो मानसं वेद स वेद सर्वम् ॥

(Vāyu-p. 79.95; Brahmanāṇḍa-p. 2.15.68 with the reading ऋचश्च).

The Purāṇas sometimes clearly show the connection of *yajña* with the Veda which comprise both *mantras* and *brāhmaṇas*. The reason is obvious. While the *brāhmaṇa* passages prescribe *vidhi* concerning *yajñas* the *mantras* are uttered while performing various sacrificial acts.¹¹

The connection of *yajña* with the Veda can be known from the following Puranic assertions :

10. The importance of *mantra* may be known from the mention of the three kinds of *mantras* in the definition of śrauta-dharma given in the Purāṇas : दाराग्निहोत्रसंयोग-मृगयजुः सामसंज्ञितम् (Vāyu-p. 47.49; Brahmanāṇḍa-p. 1.29.45).
11. For the relative predominance of *mantras* and *brāhmaṇas*, see commentaries on Mīmāṃsāsūtra 5.1.16. The *mantras* are helpful by reminding the sacrificer of the several *āngas* to be performed. According to Pūrvamīmāṃsā *mantras* alone are to be used for this act of reminding *āngas*.

- (i) Vedas were spoken out by Brahmā for *yajña* or they were created by Him along with *yajña*.¹²
- (ii) One Veda was divided into four so that *yajñas* can be performed easily.¹³
- (iii) Four principal sacrificial acts are connected with the four Vedas respectively.¹⁴
- (iv) There will be no *yajñas* if the Vedas are destroyed.¹⁵
- (v) Persons following the Vedas usually worship God by performing *yajñas*.¹⁶
- (vi) Persons practising Vedic devotion (*vaidiki bhakti*) perform Vedic sacrifices.¹⁷

12. वेदा मया प्रोक्ता यज्ञार्थं नात्र संशयः (Skanda, Prabhāsa 165.10); ऋग्यजुःसामाथर्वाख्यान् वेदान् पूर्वादिभिर्मुखैः । शस्त्रमिज्यां स्तुतिस्तोमं प्रायश्चित्तं व्यधात् क्रमात् ॥ (Bhāg. 3.12.37).
13. चातुर्होत्रं कर्म शुद्धं प्रजानां वीक्ष्य वैदिकम् । व्यदधाद् यज्ञसन्तत्यै वेदमेकं चतुर्विधम् ॥ (Bhāg. 1.4.19).
14. आध्वर्यवं यजुभिस्तु ऋग्भिर्होत्रं तथा मुनिः । औद्गात्रं सामभिश्चक्रे ब्रह्मत्वं चाप्यथर्वभिः ॥ (Viṣṇu-p. 3.4.12; Agni-p. 150. 24-25a; Vāyu-p. 60.18; Brahmanāṇḍa-p. 1.34.18; Kūrma-p. 1.52. 17). The form ह्यौत्र is also found in the Purāṇas. This is not corrupt, for the form is found in PMS. 22.3.30.
15. आम्नायेषु विनष्टेषु नष्टाः स्युः सप्ततन्तवः (Skanda, Kāśī 65.51; the printed reading शततन्तवः is corrupt).
16. त्रय्या च विद्यया केचित् त्वां वै वैतानिका द्विजाः । यजन्ते विततैर्यज्ञैः..... (Bhāg. 10.40.5).
17. ऋग्यजुःसामजाप्यैश्च संहिताध्ययनादिभिः । वेदमन्त्रहृदियोगैर्या क्रिया वैदिकी मता ॥१२ दर्शे च पूर्णमास्यां च कर्तव्यं चाग्निहोत्रकम् । प्राशनं दक्षिणादानं पुरोडाशश्च सत्क्रिया ॥१३ इष्टवृत्तिः सोमपानं याज्ञिकं सर्वकर्म च । ऋग्यजुःसामजाप्यानि संहिताध्ययनानि च ॥१४ क्रियते रुद्रमुद्दिश्य सा भक्ति वैदिकी मता ॥

(Skanda, Avantiksetra 7.12-15a). These verses (with slight variations are found in Skanda, Prabhāsakhaṇḍa 107.11-13, in Padma-p. 5.15.172-175 and Padma-p. 4.85. 19-22. It is worth remarking that in these passages *bhakti* is directed not only to Rudra but to Brahmā and Viṣṇu also.

In connection with the first assertion it is interesting to note that some Puranic passages show the creation of the Vedas not only with some particular yajñas but also with some particular *stomas* (collection of *ṛcs* for *stuti*, eulogy, to be used in sacrifices), *sāmans* (Vedic songs to be sung in sacrifices) and metres as under :¹⁸

Veda	Metre	Stoma	Sāman	Yajña
Ṛgveda	Gāyatrī	Trivṛt	Rathantara	Agniṣṭoma
Yajurveda	Triṣṭubh	Pañcadaśa	Bṛhat	Ukthya
Sāmaveda	Jagatī	Saptadaśa	Vairūpa	Atirātra
Atharvaveda	Anuṣṭubh	Ekaviṃśa	Vairāja	Āptoryāma ¹⁹

This is evidently based on Vedic tradition as may be known from the Brāhmaṇas. The coherence of the connection of the four Vedas with the particular yajñas, *stomas* etc. (as shown above) will be discussed in a separate article.

Dravya-havis

The expression *dravya-havis* (in द्रव्यहविषाम्) means *dravya*²⁰ and *havis*. The former is यज्ञिय द्रव्य, a term which occurs in the Purāṇas

18. Viṣṇu-p. 1.5.52-55; Vāyu-p. 9.48-52; Brahmāṇḍa-p. 1.8.50-53; Kūrma-p. 1.7.57-60; Liṅga-p. 1.70.243-246; Śiva-p. 7.12-58-62; Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 48. 31-34. Printed readings of these verses in all the Purāṇas except those of the verses in the Viṣṇu-p. are corrupt in many places. The words (used in these passages), namely ऋचः, यजूषि, सामानि and अथर्वणिम् are to be taken in the sense of the four Vedas (and not of the *mantras* only) as is proved by the word अथर्वणिम् which is not the name of any sort of *mantras*.
19. The Bhāgavata (3.12.40) however connects the Ṛgveda with the Ṣoḍaśin and Ukthya yajñas; the Yajurveda with Purīṣin and Agniṣṭoma yajñas; the Sāmaveda with Āptoryāma and Atirātra yajñas and the Atharvaveda with Vājapeya and Gosava yajñas.
20. The important position of *dravya* in yajña may be known from the statement द्रव्यमन्त्रात्मको यज्ञः in Matsya-p. 143.33. Cp. Mīmāṃsāsūtra 2.3.14 (यजतिस्तु द्रव्यफलभोक्तृसंयोगात्). The Mīmāṃsāka regard yajña as 'dependent on *dravya*' since yajñas are performed with the help of *dravyas* (6.3.11-12). Not only money but also things like *yāpa*, etc.

(Padma-p. 5. 16.27). It appears that *dravyas* are those that are different from both *havis*es and their material causes. Thus *dravyas* may be the *sambhāras*²¹ (requisites) which are of two kinds, namely *pārthiva* (made of earth) and *vārkyya* (made of wood)—both are of seven kinds each (see Yajñatattvapraśāsa, p. 3).

It may be safely held that all things known as *yajñāyudhas* (see Tai Sam. 1.6.89 quoted in Śabara 3.1.11) and *yajnopātras* etc. are regarded as *dravyas* by the Mīmāṃsakas (P. M. S. 3.1.11; 4.1.7 etc.).

Dravya-havis may be explained to mean 'havis made of *dravya*' (द्रव्यसंपाद्य-हविस्). In this sense *dravyas* are those things of which *havis*-es are prepared. The material causes of *havis*es are said to be of three kinds, namely *ośadhi*, *paśu* and *soma*.²²

The difference between a *havis* and its material cause (*dravya*) is easily discernible. As for example a *paśu* is a *dravya* while certain parts of its body are the *havis*;²³ *orihī* (grains of rice) or *yava* (barley) is the *dravya*, while *puroḍāśa* (cake) is the *havis*; *Nivāradhānya* is the *dravya* and *caru* is the *havis*; the Soma creeper is the *dravya* while *somarasa* is the *havis*. Sometimes the same thing in a particular state or position (i. e. without any transformation) becomes a *havis*.

Following *havis*es are often found to have been mentioned in the Puranic passages describing sacrificial acts : milk, curd (*dadhi*),

- are regarded as *dravyas* (Mīmāṃsāsūtra 6.1.10; 6.3.38). Even *mantras* are regarded as *dravya* (MS. 9.2.4). *Dravya* is said to be one of the two *rūpas* of yajña (the other being *devatā*; see commentaries on Mīmāṃsā-sūtra 2.2.3; 2.2.6; 2.2.13; 2.3.14.
21. A list of thirteen *sambhāras* associated with *yajamāna* and thirteen other associated with his wife, is to be found in Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra 6.1. The word *sambhāra* is found in the Purāṇas : बहूपकरण यज्ञा नानासंभारविस्तारः (Padma-p. Adi. 11.14; Matsya 111.13).
22. The connection of *ośadhi* (grain) with yajña has been stated in Viṣṇu-p. 1.6.49 and Varāha-p. 8.30. *Ośadhis* are of two kinds, cultivated and wild (*grāmya* and *āraṇya*) and each has seven varieties (Viṣṇu-p. 1.6.23b-26; Padma-p. 5.3. 145-150).
23. In the Pātnivata yāga the whole animal is offered.

dhānā (i. e. मृष्ट यव), *caru*, *puṛodāśa* (cake), limbs of animals; *vājina*, *ājya*, *saktu*, *payasyā*, *āmikṣā*, *surā* and *soma*. About *paśu* we shall discuss later on. We hardly find any important information about *soma* in connection with *yajña* in the Purāṇas. In the Brahma-p. there are some passages about *soma* (120.10-14). They are clearly based on RV. 10.96.18-22 (The Puranic passage ओषधयः संवदन्ते सोमेन सह राज्ञा occurs in RV. 10.96.22). That *Soma* is the king of *oṣadhīs* has been expressly stated in the Brāhmaṇas (Gopatha 2.1.17; Kauṣītakin 4. 12).

It is to be noted that *havis* is more important than *devatā*; that is why *havis* is mentioned in the aforesaid verse defining a *yajña*. According to Pūrvamīmāṃsā in a conflict between *havis* and *devatā*, the final conclusion will be arrived at by relying on the *havis* (P. M. S. 8. 1.32-34).

In connection with *havis* it is necessary to refer to an interesting Puranic verse, connected with the act of offering, which runs as under :

चतुर्भिश्च चतुर्भिश्च द्वाभ्यां पञ्चभिरेव च ।
हूयते च पुनर्द्वाभ्यां तस्मै होमात्मने नमः ॥

(Nāradiya-p. 1.19.35; Skanda, Dharmāraṇya. 39.8-9). The verse speaks of a set of five *yajus mantras*. The Bhāgavata-p. also refers to this set of five *mantras* in the expression पञ्चभिः स्विष्टं यजुभिः (4.7.41).

These five *mantras* contain 4,4,2,5 and 2 letters respectively :

(i) आश्रावय (4 letters) called āśrāvāṇa; (ii) अस्तु श्रौषट् (4 letters) called *pratyāśrāvāṇa*; (iii) यज (2 letters) called *praiṣa*; (iv) ये यजामहे (5 letters) called *yājyā*; (v) श्रौषट् (2 letters) called *vaṣaṭkāra*.²⁴

24. The verse is evidently based on Tai. Br. 1.6.11.1 (आश्रावयेति चतुरक्षरम्, अस्तु श्रौषडिति चतुरक्षरं यजेति द्व्यक्षरं ये यजामहे इति पञ्चाक्षरं द्व्यक्षरो वषट्कारः...), quoted by Śabara (PMS. 10.8.1). These five are called 'पञ्च व्याहृतयः' in Śatapatha Br. 1.5.2.16; see Vṛṣabhadeva's comm. on the word *Chandasya* in Vākyapadiya 1.17 for these five *mantras*. See Āryavidyāsudhākara (p. 54) for the meaning of these five formulae and History of Dharmasāstra, vol. II. p. 1054, fn. 2364 for their utterance.

Paśu

Though from the aforesaid definition of *yajña* it appears that the connection of *paśu* (animal) with *yajña* is invariable, yet in fact *paśu* is connected not with all kinds of *yajñas* but with a particular kind called *nirūḍhapaśubandha* or *paśuyajña*. It should be known that *paśu* as such is not a *havis*; particular limbs of a *paśu* is called *havis* (P. M. S. 10.7.1-2; see 10.7.4 for the number of the limbs).

Puranic views about the use of *paśu* in *yajña* are stated here in brief :

(i) Animals were created by Prajāpati for *yajña* or Prajāpati employed animals to *yajña*.²⁵

(ii) The killing of animals (in *yajñas*) is technically called *saṃjñāpana*, meaning 'killing without wounding or drawing blood', i. e. by strangling or choking.²⁶

(iii) The killing in sacrifice gives rise to violence (*himsā*) and consequently *yajña* is said to be the means of attaining hell.²⁷

In connection with the view of 'violence in *yajña*' it is worth noticing that the Puranic passages showing the views of anti-Vedic

25. सृष्ट्वा पश्वौषधीः सम्यग् युयोज स तदाध्वरे (Viṣṇu-p. 1.5.49 : Padma-p. 5.3.100); एवं पश्वौषधीः सृष्ट्वा न्ययुञ्जत् साध्वरे प्रभुः (Vāyu-p. 9.45); ये चान्ये पशवो भूमौ सर्वे ते यज्ञकारणात् सृष्टा भगवता तेन (Padma-p. 5.16.8). Statements like यज्ञोपयुक्ताः पशवः (Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 120.28) are also to be considered in this connection.

26. भो भो प्रजापते राजन् पशून् पश्य त्वयाध्वरे । संज्ञपितान् जीवसंघान् (Bhāg. 4.25.7); ते यज्ञपशवोऽनेन संज्ञप्ता येऽद्यालुना..... (Bhāg. 4.28.26); ईजे च क्रतुभिर्घोरैर्दीक्षितैः पशुमारकैः (Bhāg. 4.27.11). संज्ञपनं घातमन्तरा प्राणसंरोधादिना प्राणवियोजनम् (Yajñātattva-prakāśa, p. 42, fn. 2); अक्षतस्य मारणं संज्ञपनम् (Comm. on Ap. Śr. Sū. 7.165).

27. प्रथमं पठिता वेदा मया विस्तारिताश्च ते । हिंसामयास्ते पठिताः कर्ममार्ग-प्रवर्तकाः ॥ (D. Bhāg. 1.14.42); वेदधर्मेषु हिंसा स्यादधर्मबहुला हि सा ॥४९॥ प्रत्यक्षेण त्वनाचारः सोमपानं नराधिप । पशूनां हिंसनं तद्बत्... ॥५०॥ (D. Bhāg. 1.18.49-50); हिंसाविहारा ह्यालब्धैः पशुभिः स्वमुखेच्छवा । यजन्ते देवता यज्ञैः पितृभूतपतीन् खलाः ॥ (Bhāg. 11. 21.30).

schools expressly assert that the killing of animals is prescribed in yajña and that this violence is not only unreasonable but also fruitless.²⁸

(iv) The killing of animals in yajña is no violence.²⁹

(v) Animals killed in yajñas attain elavation or heaven.³⁰

(vi) The performing of yajñas by using things other than *paśus* is preferred.³¹

(vii) *Paśuyajna* came into existence on account of the misunderstanding of the Vedic injunction 'अजैर्यष्टव्यम्', in which *aja* originally meaning 'seed of grains that are more than three years old' was taken to mean 'a goat'.³²

28. See Skanda, Kāśīkhaṇḍa 58.108-110; Padma-p. 2.36.33-41; Viṣṇu-p. 3.18. 15-30.

29. न हिंसा याज्ञिकी मता (D. Bhāg. 2.11.40); अहिंसा याज्ञिकी प्रोक्ता सर्वशास्त्रविनिर्णये (D. Bhāg. 3.26.34). In the Devīpurāṇa (ch. 97) the question whether the yajñas like Gomedha, Aśvamedha etc. (in which animals are killed) are the means of attaining heaven, has been raised and the reply given is : यज्ञार्थे पशवः सृष्टा यज्ञेष्वेषां वधः स्मृतः । अन्यत्र घातनाद दोषो वाङ्मनः-काय-कर्मभिः ॥३॥ देवार्थे पितृकार्येषु मनुष्यार्थे पुरन्दर । वधयन् न भवेदन अन्यथा महाकिल्बिषी ॥४॥ (The printed reading of the last line is slightly corrupt).

30. देवतार्थे विसृष्टानां पशूनां स्वर्गतिर्भूवा (D. Bhāg. 3.26.34). In Mārkaṇḍeya-p. 120. 20-21 a deer says that animals killed in yajñas attain *ucchriti* (elevation, prosperity). The view is based on Ai. Br. 2.6 (पशुर्वै नीयमानः...स्वर्गं वै त्वा लोकं गमिष्यामः).

31. वन्यैश्चरुपुरोडाशैर्निर्वपेत् कालचोदितान् ।

न तु श्रौतेन पशुना मां यजेत वनाश्रमी ॥ (Bhāg. 11.18.7).

32. In the Matsya and Vāyu Purāṇas it is said that Indra performed an animal sacrifice for the first time. Sages told Indra that there was no injunction for animal killing in the Vedas and that in such Vedic statements as अजैर्यष्टव्यम्, the word *aja* meant seeds of corn which were old for more than three years. Indra did not accept this and thereupon Uparicara Vasu was requested to give

Ṛtvijs

A Puranic verse expressly speaks of the functions of four priests (*rtvijs*) and mentions the Vedas with which the functions are connected :

आध्वर्यवं यजुभिस्तु ऋग्भिर्होत्रं तथा मुनिः ।

औद्गात्रं सामभिश्चक्रे ब्रह्मत्वं चाप्यथर्वभिः ॥

(Viṣṇu-p. 3.4 12; see also Vayu-p. 60.17; Kūrma-p. 1 52. 16; Brahmanḍa-p. 1.34. 18).

It is said here that *hotra* (to be performed by *hotr*) is connected with the Ṛg-veda; *adhvaryava* (to be performed by *adhvaryu*) is connected with the Yajurveda; *audgātra* (to be performed by *udgātr*) is connected with the Sāmaveda; and *brahmatva* (to be performed by Brahman) is connected with the Atharvaveda.³³ *Udgātr* is

a decision. Uparicara Vasu supported the act of Indra and remarked that the Vedas were in favour of killing animals in Yajñas. Consequently he was cursed by the sages. This episode (which occurs in the Mahābhārata also) is highly significant and it deserves to be discussed seriously.

It is to be noted that in these chapters of the Purāṇas there are a few corrupt readings which must be corrected in order to render the relevant passages meaningful; as for example यज्ञ बीजैः (in Mat. 143.14 and Vāyu. 57.100) should be corrected to यज बीजैः. The PMS. also uses the word बीज in 11.3.15 and 5.2.13; see also comm. on 11.4.44.

33. The nature of the works of these four priests has been succinctly stated by the commentator Śridhara : *Sastra* (to be performed by *hotr*) is अप्रणीतमन्त्र स्तोत्र; *ijyā* i. e. the act of offering oblation is to be performed by *adhvaryu*; *stuti-stoma* (to be performed by *Udgātr*) is स्तुतिः संगीतं स्तोत्रम्, स्तोमं तदर्थम् ऋक्समुदायम्; *prāyascitta* is to be performed by *brahmā*.

Wilson quotes the commentarial passage प्रायश्चित्तं ब्राह्मम् and renders it by 'expiation or sacred philosophy (brāhma)' (Translation of the Viṣṇupurāṇa 1.5; p. 37). The word *brāhma* seems to create the confusion. There is no relevance of sacred philosophy here. 'प्रायश्चित्तं ब्राह्मम्' simply means 'prāyścitta is the work of Brahman, the priest connected with the Atharvaveda.

called Sāmaga in some Purāṇas (Bhāg. 9.7.22). These four functions are collectively called चातुर्होत्र which is explained as होत्रोपलक्षिता इत्वार ऋत्विज इत्तुर्होतारः, तैरनुष्ठितं कर्म (Śrīdhara's comment on Bhāg. 1.4.19). The Bhāg. uses *śastra* for *hotra*, *ijyā* for *adhvaryava*, *stuti-stoma* for *udgātra* and *prāyaścitta* for *brahmatva* in 5.29.6.

Each of the four priests has three assistants³⁴ and thus the total number of priests comes to sixteen³⁵. All of these priests are not required in all kinds of yajñas. It is the *soma-yajnas* that require sixteen priests. In some Puranic passages the names of all the sixteen priests are spoken of.³⁶

Upadraṣṭṛ is sometimes mentioned as a priest in the Purāṇas. Sadasyas, sometimes mentioned in the Purāṇas, are not regarded as priests (see comm. on P. M. S. 3.7.37). Camasādvaryus are also mentioned in the Puranic descriptions of sacrifices (Padma-p. 5.29.2). They are however not regarded as *ṛtvij*s (see P.M.S. 3.7.25-30). Similarly Śamitṛ (killer) is also mentioned in the lists of priests. This name is given to one of the priests of the *adhvaryu* group and as such he is included in the *ṛtvij*s (P.M.S. 3.7.29-30). Similarly *somavikrayins* mentioned only in a few passages in the Purāṇas are not regarded as priests (P. M. S. 3.7.31).

The *yajamāna* who is regarded as a priest in the *sattras* (cp. सत्रे ये यजमानास्ते ऋत्विज; comm. on P. M. S. 10.6.52), may also be regarded as an *ṛtvij*. A *yajamāna* is sometimes called Gṛhapati in the Purāṇas. He is defined as याज्यं यज्ञेन यजते यजमानः (Līnga-p. 1.28.5).

34. The names as given in some of the Purāṇas are as follows: Hotṛ has three assistants, namely Maitrāvaruṇa, Acchāvāka, and Grāvastut; Adhvaryu has three assistants, namely Pratiprasthātṛ, Neṣṭṛ, and Unnetṛ; Udgātṛ has three assistants, namely Prastotṛ, Pratihartṛ and Subrahmanya; Brahman has three assistants, namely Brāhmanāc-chamśin, Āgnīdhra and Potṛ.
35. See Mīmāṃsā-sūtra 3.7.37 (स्वामिसप्तदशाः कर्मसामान्यात्). In this *siddhānta-sūtra* *yajamāna* has been regarded as a *ṛtvij*.
36. Matsya-p. 467.6-13; Varāha-p. 21.13-20; Skanda, Setu 23.22-31; Skanda, Nāgara 5.3-8; 180.32-37; Padma-p. 5.36.83-86; 5.29.7-11. The Purāṇas sometimes use the word *śoḍaśa* while referring to the priests; see Padma-p. 5.16.100; 5.29.11. In these Puranic passages there are a few corrupt readings in the names of the sixteen priests.

Dakṣiṇā

The Purāṇas usually mention *dakṣiṇā* (fee paid to priests for sacrificial acts) while giving detailed descriptions of the performance of yajñas. The intimate connection between yajña and *dakṣiṇā* may be inferred from Yajña's marriage with Dakṣiṇā (the son and the daughter of Prajāpati Ruci)—a purely allegorical myth. (Viṣṇu-p. 1.7.20; Mārka-p. 50.17-18).

Following views regarding *dakṣiṇā* are found in the Purāṇas :

- (i) It is advised that *dakṣiṇā* should invariably be paid in order to achieve prosperity etc.³⁷
- (ii) If *dakṣiṇā* is not paid there arises harm in the sacrificer.³⁸
- (iii) *Dakṣiṇā* is required to be paid without delay.³⁹
- (iv) In case of delay in payment the amount of *dakṣiṇā* increases.⁴⁰

37. दक्षिणा कर्तव्या भूतिमिच्छता (Sāmba-p. 34.29). The view is based on such Vedic passages as तस्मादाशु दातव्यैव यज्ञे दक्षिणा (Ai. Br. 6.35). For the Mīmāṃsā view about *dakṣiṇā*, see PMS. 10.6.61-71.
38. [यज्ञः] दहेद् यष्टारं दक्षिणाहीनम् (Matsya-p. 93.111); यत्कर्म दक्षिणाहीनं कुर्वते मूढधीः शठः । स पापी पुण्यहीनश्च न यामि तस्य मन्दिरम् (Br. Vai. p. 3.23.34, said by Lakṣmī). Such statements as 'यो यज्ञो दक्षिणाहीनो'...तत्फलं ते भविष्यति' (Skanda-p. Nāgara 187.46) may also be considered in this connection.
39. कृत्वा कर्म च कर्ता च तूर्णं दद्याच्च दक्षिणाम् । तत्क्षणं फलमाप्नोति वेदैरुक्तमिदं मुने (Br. Vai. p. 2.42.53). The Vedic statement on which this view is based is not known. The importance of *dakṣiṇā* may be known from its etymology—तद् यद् दक्षिणाभिर्यज्ञं दक्षयति तस्माद् दक्षिणा नाम (Kausītakī Br. 15.1)—*Dakṣiṇā* is called so since it renders a sacrifice capable or powerful (दक्षिणा is derived from the word दक्ष).
40. दक्षिणा विप्रमुद्दिश्य तत्कालं तु न दीयते । तन्मूर्हतं व्यतीते ते दक्षिणा द्विगुणा भवेत् । चतुर्गुणा दिनातीते पक्षे शतगुणा भवेत् ॥ मासे पञ्चशतगुणा षण्मासे तच्चतुर्गुणा । संवत्सरे व्यतीते तु तत्कर्म निष्फलं भवेत् ॥ (Br. Vai. p. 3.7.25-27; see also 2.42.55-57; 4.87.71-72).

(v) Priests leave the sacrificer (*yajamāna*) (i. e. there remains no further connection) after receiving the *dakṣiṇā*.⁴¹ Since the priests are regarded as 'hired person' (*dakṣiṇā-kṛtā*; *dakṣiṇā* is regarded as *bhṛti*, wages) it is quite natural that the priests work like 'workers' and they have no love or friendship for their *yajamāna*.

(vi) For certain *yajñas* huge amounts were paid as *dakṣiṇā*.⁴²

We want to conclude the article by quoting a Puranic verse which eulogizes Viṣṇu by identifying him with *yajña* :

नमो द्विशीर्षे त्रिपदे चतुःशृङ्गाय तन्तवे ।
सहस्रस्ताय यज्ञाय त्रयीविद्यात्मने नमः ॥

(Bhāg. 8.16.31; an eulogy to Viṣṇu).

Hail to you as the deity presiding over sacrifices endowed with a couple of heads (in the form of the rites known as the *Prāyaṇīya* and *Udayanīya*, which are performed at the beginning and the end of a sacrifice respectively), three feet (in the form of *Savana* or the pressing out of the Soma juice,) which is done thrice a day, viz. in the morning, at midday and in the evening), four horns (in the form of the four *Vedas*; Rk, Sāma, Yajus and Atharva) and seven arms (in the form of the seven Vedic metres, Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh, Anuṣṭubh, Bṛhatī, Pañkti, Jagatī and Uṣṇik),—the Bestower of reward of sacrifices, whose essential nature has been described in the three Vedas (treating mainly of rituals). (Translation taken from the Gita Press edition of Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa).⁴³

41. त्यजन्ति ऋत्विजो दत्तदक्षिणाम् (Bhāg. 10.4.77).

42. क्रतुभिर्मूरिदक्षिणैः (Bhāg. 4.12.10; 7.4.15); राजसूयं सहस्रशतदक्षिणम् (Skanda-p., Prabhāsa. 20.74).

43. In explaining this verse Śrīdhara has referred to Yāska (vide Nirukta 13.7). It is to be noted in this connection that the R̥gvedic mantra has been taken as eulogizing *yāga* by both Śabara and Kumārila (on PMS. 1.2.46). Their explanations however differ in a few places; as for example while the four horns are taken as representing four *yāmas* by Kumārila, these are taken as four Vedas by Śabara. The Gopatha Br. (1.2.16) seems to be the source of Yāska's explanations. For a different kind of explanation, see Mahābhāṣya (Paśpaśāhnika). It is interesting to note that the *mantra* is taken as eulogizing Rudra in Kāśīkhaṇḍa 68.77-78 and 73. 95-96,

BOOK-REVIEW

Retrieval of History from Purāṇic Myths By P. L. Bhargava, M. A., Ph. D. Shastri, Retired Prof. of Sanskrit and Ancient Indian History, Rajasthan University, Jaipur; pages 122; Pub. : The Upper India Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Aminabad, Lucknow, U. P. 226018; Price Rs. 60.00.

The object of writing this book (containing eight essays), according to the author, is to show that the myths concerning eight Puranic personages (namely Viśvāmitra, Paraśurāma, Bhagīratha, Rāma, Vyāsa, Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira and Vālmiki) are at complete variance with the ancient evidence regarding them. The author seems to be abreast with the Puranic works and it is gratifying to note that he is in favour of the view that the Puranic genealogies are not the figment of the imagination of idle priesthood, but are based on reliable ancient tradition (p. 8).

In the first essay (called Introduction) the author makes a laudable attempt at showing authoritativeness of Puranic statements about the names, the order of succession and the regnal years of kings coming under ten dynasties. The second essay tries to establish that Vyāsa was the author of one Purāṇa-saṁhitā and that he was not responsible for the numerous absurd sectarian myths, legends and doctrines that found their way into the present Purāṇas. The third essay says that Viśvāmitra was not the father of Śakuntalā but her distant descendant through her son Bharata and that the anecdote of 'his dalliances with Menakā is a mendacious myth.

In the fourth essay the author has propounded that the myth of Paraśurāma's killing his mother is the creation of the person who grafted it in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa with the object of providing an illustration for the virtue of implicit obedience to father. The fifth essay tries to prove that the king Bhagīratha simply arrived on the bank of the Gaṅgā and gave the river his name. An attempt has been made in the sixth essay to show that the story of Sitā's banishment by Rāma and the slaying of the Śudra ascetic Śambūka by Rāma was invented at a very late period.