Chapter-VII

VEDIC PRAJĀPATI EXTOLLED AS BRAHMĀ IN THE PURĀNAS

DEPICTION OF BRAHMĀ AS CREATOR IN THE PURĀNAS

In the post-Vedic literature, the different aspects of Hiraṇyagarbha, Prajāpati and some other Vedic gods were blended to create a new conception of a god, who was mainly put in charge of creation. All creative activities, which were asserted to Prajāpati in the Vedic period, are now imposed on Brahmā in the Purānic literature. In the Purānic period the concept of Brahmā has exhibited much change and evolution. Yet, the inner concept of depicting Prajāpati as Brahmā comes to light through a thorough study of the matter. In the philosophical speculation, the impersonal Brahman or the ‘Universal Soul’ being Nirguṇa is eternal. While being Saguna, he manifests himself in his creation of matter and comprises within himself the three aspects of his creation, viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. In the context of this material truth, this created universe is real and Brahman embraces all the three aspects of his material existence, i.e. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. In this developed concept of cosmic principle, Viṣṇu represents Sattva, Brahmā represents Rajas and Śiva represents the Tamas. The Rajas, which implies high mobility or great activity, is represented by Brahmā, the god of creation. The word Brahmā has been derived from the root ‘Bṛmh’ meaning ‘to multiply’ or ‘to
increase' implying nothing but creation.

In the Vāyu Purāṇa, the concept of Impersonal Brahman, the Supreme Being or Universal Soul has been introduced as Mahat and he is said to be born of Brahman due to the variation of guṇas. However, before creation, these guṇas existed in a state of equilibrium. According to the concept, Mahat is said to possess the aspect of Sattva. It is Mahat who creates and he is also known as Manas (Mind), Mati (Desire), Brahmā, Pūr (Fullness), Buddhi (Intelligence), Khyāti (Celebrity), Īśvara (Lord of Universe), Prajñā (Wisdom), Citi (Collection), Smṛti (Memory), Saṁvid (Source of all knowledge) and Vipura (Source of relativity). The Purāṇa also explains how the same Mahat can be designated as Brahmā, Bhava, Ka or Prājāpati, Puruṣa and Svayambhū.

The Vāyu Purāṇa also introduces in its own way the conception of the cosmic egg from which the four-headed god Brahmā, the primeval creator was born. The Puruṣa having knowledge of kṣetra remained in the egg which was floating over the water as the cause and effect of Brahmā. It is he who first takes the body; it is he who is called Puruṣa. It is he who is the primeval creator, Hiraṇyagarbha, the four-headed Brahmā.

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1. bhātvasādbhūbhāνābhāc bhāvābhāñ salilāśrayāt / yasmādbhraṇyate bhāvān brahma tena nirucyate // V.P., 1.4.29
2. Ibid., 1.4.22-39
3. bhātavāca śmrto brahmā bhūtavādbhava ucayate/ kṣetra kṣetrajñāvijñānādekatvāc ca kathā śmrtaḥ // yasmāt puruṣyantāte ca tasmāt puruṣa ucyate / notpāditatvāt pūrvvatvāt svayambhūriti cocyate // Ibid., 1.4.43-44
4. Ibid., 1.4.67-70
In the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Svayambhū has been identified with the manifested form of the Universal Soul, whose three different forms are described into a different order, i.e. the four-headed Brahmā as creator being possessed of the aspects of *Sattva* and *Rajas*. Antaka is in the form of Kāla being dominated with the aspects of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, and the Puruṣa with thousand heads in the form of Viṣṇu having occupied the aspects of *Sattva*. He creates the universe as Brahmā, destroys as Kāla and as Puruṣa remains inert or passive. According to this *Purāṇa*, these are the three different states of Svayambhū, i.e. Prajāpati and Brahmā represents only the aspect of creator.⁵ Here, it is clearly stated that the four-headed Hiranyagarbha himself creates, destroys and lies inert while only seeing.⁶ Hiranyagarbha is an appellation of Prajāpati and Brahmā, the *Purāṇa* declares clearly.⁷

The creation of the three lokas, viz. *bhūta*, *bhavya* and *bhaviṣya* has been ascribed to Brahmā in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. This concept perhaps originates following the earlier Vedic tradition, about Prajāpati’s creation of three worlds pronouncing ‘*bhūḥ*’, ‘*bhuvāḥ*’ and ‘*svāḥ*’.⁸ Here, in this *Purāṇa*, it is stated that Brahmā in meditation while

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5. Ibid., 1.5.26-29
6. srjate grasate vikṣate ca tribhīstu yat /
   agre hiranyagarbhaḥ sa prādurbhūtaścaturmukhaḥ //  Ibid., 1.5.39
7. …pāti yasmāt prajāḥ sarvāḥ prajāpatirataḥ smṛtaḥ /
   …bhātvacca smṛto brahmā bhūtavādabhūta ucyate /
   …smṛtaḥ hiranyamasya garbho’bhūdhiranyasaśyāpi garbhajah /
   Ibid., 1.5.40-45
8. prajāpatirakāmayata prajācyeti/… so’tāmyat/ sa bhūriti vyāharat/ sa bhūmimasṛjata/ ……sa bhūva iti vyāharat/ so’natarikṣamasṛjata/ ……sa svariti vyāharat/ sa divamasṛjata/ T.B., 2.2.4.1
pronouncing the word. ‘bhūḥ’ produced the bhūrloka; Brahma again pronounced the word ‘bhuvah’, from which the second loka sprang forth as antarikṣa; Brahmā for the third time pronounced the word ‘bhavya’, from which heaven or bhavyaloka came forth. ⁹

In the Vāyu Purāṇa, Svāhā, Svadhā, Mahāvidyā, Medhā, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī and Gaurī are said to have been produced by Brahmā. ¹⁰ It is also stated in another verse of the same Purāṇa that Brahmā had no offspring. He, therefore, mediated. In course of his meditation, Sarasvatī as Viśvarupa was born roaring to him. ¹¹ In another context, the Vāyu Purāṇa alludes to the sacrifice performed by the creator of the universe for the purpose of creation of the universe in which Brahmā, the god played the role of Brahmā, the priest. ¹²

The Mārkaṇḍeyya Purāṇa observes that Brahmā is the creator of the universe, who accomplishes the process of creation with the help of the five elements, viz. Ether, Air, Water, Earth and Fire. ¹³ Brahmā is identified with the Brahman of the Upaniṣad in this Purāṇa.

9. bhūtaṁ bhavyaṁ bhaviṣyaṁ tat smṛtaṁ lokatrayaṁ dvijaṁ /
   bhūrloko’yaṁ smṛto bhūmirantarikṣaṁ bhuvam smṛtam /
   bhavyaṁ smṛtaṁ divaṁ hyetatteśāṁ vakṣyāmi sādhanam //
   V.P., 2.3.10

10. svāhā svadhā mahāvidyā medhā lakṣmīḥ sarasvatī /
    aparṇā caikaparṇā ca tathā syādeva pātalā //
    umā haimavatī śaṣṭhi kalyāṇī caiva nāmaṁ āḥ /
    khyātiḥ prajñā mahābhāgā loke gourīti viśrutā //
    Ibid., 1.9.78-79

11. brahmaṁaṁ putракāṁsya dhyāyataḥ parameṣṭhīnaḥ /
    prādurbhutā mahānādā viśvarūpā sarasvatī //
    Ibid.1.23.34

12. Ibid. 1.2.5-6

13. Märk. P., 45
He is thus described as Unborn (Ajā), Unchanging (Avyaya), the Resort of the universe (Āśraya), the Highest Abode (Paramapada), Incomparable (Anaupamya), Imperishable (Aksaya), Undecaying (Ajara), Immeasurable (Ameya), Self-dependent (Nānyasainśraya) etc. Infusing the Upaniṣadic idea of Brahman in Brahmā, the Purāṇa states—‘Brahmā, being without beginning or end, the cause of everything, produced of triple guṇas or aspects, unchanged, eternal, unknowable, existed at first. The said Purāṇa also states that Brahmā, the creator of the universe was born first and he existed alone. He pervades this whole universe.

The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa describes in philosophical terms the creation of the universe out of Brahmā. He is stated as adorable, the creator, the lord of all creatures, the master and the divine. Here, in the present context, he is directly termed Prajāpati, i.e. the lord of all creatures who is best known as Brahmā in the Purānic literature. At the dissolution which followed the Padma Mahākalpa, the lord Brahmā awoke after having slept through the night. Then with the quality of Sattva, predominating in him he gazed at the empty world. He knew that the earth had disappeared within that water, and then became desirous, through reflection, to deliver the earth therefrom.

14. Ibid. 45.21-33
15. anādyantarām jagadyoninā triguṇaprabhavāpyayam / asāṃpratamavijñeyām brahmā'gre samavartata // Ibid. 45.34
16. ādikarttā ca bhūtānāṃ brahmā'gre samavarttata / tena sarvamidaṃ vyāptāṃ trailokyāṃ sacarācaram // Ibid. 45.64
17. yathā sasarja vai brahmā bhagavānādikṛprajāḥ / prajāpatiḥ patīrdevastanme vistarato vada // Ibid., 47.1
As Nārāyaṇa, he assumed the body of a Boar, raised the earth out of the lower regions, and set it free in water. The earth floated like an immense boat on that ocean, but did not sink by reason of the amplitude of its size. Then he made the earth level and created the mountains on the earth. He, then, divided the earth, adorned with seven dvipas; and he fashioned the four worlds.  

This Purāṇa has enumerated the different kinds of creations out of Brahmā. It states that while Brahmā pondered on creation, he next became manifested as devoid of intelligence, as enveloped in darkness. Darkness, folly, infatuation, gloominess and blind consciousness—ignorance, became manifested out of the Supreme Soul. Creation irrational became established in five ways while he was meditating. Externally and internally it was destitute of light, its soul was concealed, it consisted of vegetation, and since vegetation was declared to be ‘primary’ creation, the first one. He again thought of creating another world. While he was meditating on its creation, the animal world came next into existence. While he meditated on the third creation, the creation of gods came into existence. Brahmā again meditated for further creation. Accordingly he meditated on truth and the group of beings became manifest. This was the fourth creation of Brahmā as mankind. Anugraha was the fifth creation of Brahmā. It was disposed in four ways—by contrariety, by perfection, by tranquility and by satisfaction likewise. The creation of the origins of the gross elements and the gross elements was called the sixth; they

18. Ibid., 47.2-14
all possessed comprehensiveness and were prone to mutual division.\(^{19}\)

It is also described in the same *Purāṇa* that the creation of *Mahat* is to be known as the first one by Brahmā; and the second creation is called the creation of the Bhūtas. The third creation is that of the Vikāras and it is perceptible by the senses. So was produced the creation from *Prakṛti* wherein intelligence preceded. The creation of the immovable things is the fourth creation. The creation of the *tiryak-srotas* and *tiryag-yoni* is the fifth creation. Next one is the sixth creation and that is of the *ūrdha-srotas*; it is known as the creation of the gods. The seventh creation consists of the *arvāk-srotas*, i.e. of mankind. The eighth creation is *anugraha*; it is characterized by goodness and ignorance. These last five creations are known as those which evolved from the Vikāras and the first three as those evolved from *Prakṛti*. The ninth creation is known as *kaumāra*. Thus, these nine creations of Prajāpati, i.e. Brahmā have been delineated in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*.\(^{20}\)

In another context of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, the creation of the universe is discussed. When Brahmā was engaged in creation, the gods and other divine beings, the stationary things and the four classes of mankind were produced in his mind. Being desirous of creating the four classes of beings, namely, the gods, the Asuras, the Pitṛs and the mankind, he infused himself in the water. The particle of darkness grew up in excess as Prajāpati was rapt in meditation. Out of his

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 47.14-30

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 47.31-36
buttocks, as he was desirous of creating, were produced the Asuras first. Then he cast aside his body, which was composed of the particle of darkness and it became night. Being desirous of creating, he assumed another body and experienced delight. From his mouth the gods were produced. The mighty lord also abandoned that body and it became day. He, then, took another body which was indeed characterized by the particle of goodness; the Pitṛs were produced from him while he deemed himself to be a Pitr. After creating the Pitṛs, he abandoned that body and it became the twilight that intervenes between day and night. After that he assumed another body characterized by the particle of passion, from that mankind was produced. After creating these four, Prajāpati, feeling hunger and thirst, took another body composed of passion and darkness. The god created bearded monsters wasted with hunger. Some of those monsters were called Rākṣasas and Yakṣas. When the creator Brahmā saw them, the hair of his head through his displeasure grew withered and lost its erectibility. Through its downward gliding, it became the serpents and from its loss of erectibility, they are known as the Ahis or snakes.

It is stated that while Brahmā meditated on the earth, the Gandharvas were born as his offspring. The lord next created other things, birds and cattle. He created goats from his mouth; and he created sheep from his breast. Then Brahmā created other winged animals from his bodily energy according to his will. From his feet, horses and asses, hares and deer, camels and mules and other animals

21. Ibid., 48.2-12
22. Ibid., 48.18-22
of various kinds were produced. From him at the beginning of the kalpa, at the commencement of the Treta age were born the cow, the goat, mankind, the sheep, the horse, the mule, and the ass, which are called as the domestic creatures. Other animals, namely the beasts of prey, the cloven-hoofed beast, the elephant, monkeys, birds, aquatic beasts and creeping animals were created from Lord Brahmā.  

For the sacrifices, Brahmā fashioned from his front part of his mouth the Gāyatrī, and the Trca stotra, the Trivṛt hymns of praise, the Rathantara Sāmans, and the Agniṣṭoma verses. He also created from his right mouth the Yajus hymns, the Triṣṭubh metre, sacred hymns, the fifteen hymns of praise, the Brhat Sāman and the Uktha verses. He fashioned from his hindmost part of his mouth the Sāman hymn, the metre Jagati, and the fifteen hymns of praise (stoma), the Vairūpa Sāman and the Atirātra verse. He created from his left mouth the twenty-first Atharvan hymn, and the Aptoryāma sacrificial verse, the Anuṣṭubh metre and the Virāj metre.  

At the beginning of the kalpa, Brahmā created the lightning, the thunderbolts, the clouds, the ruddy rainbows and the periods of life. From his limbs, all the things great and small were produced. Having created the first four classes of beings, the gods, the Asuras, the Pitṛs and the mankind, he next created the things that exist both immovable and moveable, the Yakṣas, the Piśācas, the Gandharvas and the bevies of Apsarasas, men, Kinnaras and Rākṣasas, birds, cattle, wild animals and snakes, and whatever is changeless and changeable, stationary

23. Ibid., 48.23-30
24. Ibid., 48.31-34
The lord, the creator, himself ordained diversity and specialization among created things in their organs, pursuits and bodies. He assigned the names and shapes of created things, even by the words of the *Veda* at the beginning. He gave names to the Rṣis, and to the gods.  

It is also stated that, while Brahmā was first creating and was meditating on truth, he created a thousand pairs of human beings from his mouth; they came into being characterized chiefly by goodness. He created another thousand pairs from his breast, characterized chiefly by passion. Again he created another thousand miserable pairs from his thighs, characterized chiefly by passion and ignorance. He also created another thousand pairs from his feet; all characterized by ignorance. The self-existent Brahmā also devised means of livelihood for the advancement of those people.

In the *Kūrma Purāṇa*, Brahmā has been directly described as having thousand eyes, heads and feet and thus he is identified with Rgvedic Puruṣa, who is called Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa being identified with Viṣṇu is directly mentioned as sleeping over the primordial ocean.
with thousand heads, thousand eyes and thousand feet. Brahmā has been mentioned here as born of the lotus, springing forth from Nārāyaṇa’s navel. Thus, Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu and Brahmā are identified with each other. The Vāyu Purāṇa identifies Viṣṇu and Brahmā with Nārāyaṇa. The Liṅga Purāṇa also mentions Brahmā as sleeping in the night over the primordial water and he is identified with Nārāyaṇa.

According to the Padma Purāṇa, Brahmā, called Nārāyaṇa, created all the beings at the beginning of the kalpa. Brahmā, the lord, beginningless, cause of everything, who had slept at night at the end of the bygone kalpa, got up, with increased vitality and saw the world void. Noticing the earth plunged in the flood of water, Brahmā in the form of Viṣṇu, entered other forms like those of Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha in order to carry off the earth.

The Padma Purāṇa also describes that during the process of creation the cosmic egg was covered layer by layer with seven different elements, e.g. water, fire, earth, ether, Bhūta (i.e. darkness, egoism etc.), Mahān and Avyakta or Supreme Being. From this cosmic egg the creative principle springs forth. In the egg, the unknowable

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30. tvayā srṣṭaṁ jagadidaṁ padmanāṁ nābhō viniḥśṛtam /
tatra cāhaṁ samutpannastava vaśyaśca keśava // Pd. P., 5.4.105
31. ko bhavān viśvamūrtistvaṁ kīrca te mayā /
evaṁ bruvāṇaṁ vaikuṇṭhaṁ pratyuvāca pitāmahaḥ //
yathā bhavāṁstathā cāhamādikarta praJayapatiḥ /
nārāyānasmākyataḥ sarvaṁ vai mayi tiṣṭhati // V.P., 1.24.20-21
32. rātrau caikāṁave brahmā naṣṭe sthāvarajaṁgame /
susvāpām bhṛasi yas tasmād nārāyaṇaṁ iti śmṛtaḥ // L.P., 1.4.59
33. Pd.P., 1.3.25-29
transcendental Brahman or Supreme Being manifests itself as Janārdana Brahmā, i.e. Viṣṇu Brahmā. It also states that Brahmā himself creates this universe every time irrespective of difference in kalpas and in every yuga he himself protects it.

Brahmā created sheep from his chest, and rams from his mouth. He created cows and buffaloes from his belly; and from his feet, he created horses with elephants, donkeys, a species of ox called gavayás, deer, camels, mules, antelopes and other species; herbs having fruits and roots sprang up from his hair. At the beginning of the Tretāyuga, Brahmā having duly created animals and herbs employed himself in a sacrifice. He also created the beasts of prey, two-hoofed animals, elephants, monkeys, birds, camels and serpents. From his first mouth, facing the east, he created the Rks composed in Gāyatrī metre and also Trivrṣtoma, Rathantara and Agniṣṭoma. From his mouth, facing the south, he created the Yajus formulae, Triṣṭubh metre, and stomas like Pañcadaśa, Brḥatsāma and Uktha. He, again, from his mouth facing the west, created Sāmans, Jagatī metre, and stomas like Saptadaśa, Vairūpa and Atirātra. And from his mouth facing the north, he created Ekaviṃśa, Atharva, Aptoryāma, Anuṣṭubh and Vairāja. Thus, he created all the animals and the whole sacrificial institution.

Brahmā, the Supreme ruler, the Primary cause, having created gods, demons and human beings, created spirits, goblins, Gandharvas

34. Ibid., 1.2.104-107
35. brahmā svayaṁca jagāto visṛṣṭau sampravartate /
sṛṣṭiṣu pātyanuyugam yāvatkalpavikalpanā// Ibid., 1.2.112
36. Ibid., 1.3.105-113
and groups of celestial nymphs, Siddhas, Kinnaras, demons, lions, birds, beasts and reptiles at the beginning of the kalpa. He also created whatever is unchanging and changing, movable and immovable. From the Vedic words, he in the beginning brought about the names and forms, and also the diversity in acts of gods. He also gave names to the sages as reported in the Vedas and also to others according to their respective duties.

According to the Matsya Purāṇa, Brahmā created the universe including the gods by the division of the three guṇas in due proportion and he is the father of all. Brahmā produced various objects from the different parts of his body. He created all the Vedas and Śāstras from his mouth. Similarly, from his mind he produced ten sons. Brahmā is blissful and he is the dispeller of all troubles of the world and he is enshrined within Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sūrya and Rudra. He is supersensuous and is the giver of all peace, who is enthroned in the eyes of peaceful beings. Brahmā also created the gods—Sudharma,

37. Ibid., 1.3.115-117
38. Ibid., 1.3.121-122
39. tvamananta karosi jagadbhavatāṁ sa carcatagarbhabhinnagnāṁ / amarasurāmetadāsasamapi tvai tulyamahojanako’si yataḥ / piturasti tathāpi manavikṛtiḥ sagoṇo viguno balavānabalaḥ // M.P., 154.30
40. tapaścacāra prathamamamaraṇāṁ pitāmahaḥ / āvirbhūtāstato vedāḥ sāṅgopāṅgaphadakramāḥ // puraṇāṁ sarvasaṣṭrāṇāṁ prathamamāḥ brahmaṇāḥ smṛtām // Ibid., 3.2-3
41. vedābhyaśaratasyāṣya praJayāṃsya mānasāḥ / manasāḥ pūrvasrṣṭā vai jātā yata tena mānasāḥ // Ibid., 3.5
42. yadānandakaraṇī brahma jagat kleśavināśanam / brahmavisṇuḥ karturarudṛāṇāḥ abhyantaramatāndriyam // Ibid., 23.3
Sankhapada, Ketumana and Hiranyaroma, the kings of East, South, West and North respectively and they always protect the universe by destroying its enemies.\textsuperscript{43}

It is also stated that, when the vicious demons began to destroy places, full of habitation and also the hermitages, the whole world was dismayed with horror. The demons traversing the skies and roaring like lions frightened the living creatures, plunged the world into darkness and despair. The chaos thus created by them gave the Ādityas, Vasus, Sādhyas, Devas, Pitṛs and Maruts a shudder of horror and then they went to Brahmā for protection. They all saluted the deity with four heads seated on his golden lotus throne and prayed to protect them from the torture of demons residing in Tripura. Hearing the words of the gods, Brahmā advised the procedure to destroy Tripura along with Māyā and thus he was able to rescue the distressed living creatures.\textsuperscript{44} Thus, Brahmā is depicted as the protector of the universe.

The Matsya Purāṇa also tells us that, on one occasion, Brahmā was not satisfied with the creation of his ten mind-born sons and then he began to invoke Sāvitrī. After a while, Sāvitrī was produced from the half portion of his body in a female form. This form is also known by various names such as Śatarūpā, Sāvitrī, Sarasvatī, Gāyatrī and

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 8.9-11
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 132.3-16
Brahmāṇī. They are regarded as the daughters of Brahmā. Brahmā was so enamoured of the beauty of his own daughter that he began praising her. Vasiṣṭha and other sages saw this flush of vile emotion in Brahmā and were abashed. But Brahmā knew nothing due to the force of *kāma*. He had a desire for copulation with his daughter and thereby he had lost all his virtue required for the creation of the universe. Prajāpati is also described as having illicit relationship with his daughter which is narrated in the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas. In the account of the incest of the *Maitrāyanī Samhitā*, the daughter of Prajāpati is said to have assumed the form of the female deer and Prajāpati that of a stag. Rudra, getting enraged, is said to have shot an arrow at him whereupon the later promised to make him the lord of the beasts. The *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* also rehearse this obnoxious account. The story is also narrated in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* where the head of Brahmā was cut off by Rudra.

In the *Skanda Purāṇa* also the same Vedic account has been

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45. \[sāvitrīṁ lokasṛṣṭyartham hṛdi kṛtvāsamāsthitaḥ  
tataḥṣaṅjapastasyabhitvādehamakalmaśam  
stṛṅpuramardhamakarodarāṇi puruṣarūpavat  
śatārupā ca sā khyāta sāvitrī ca nigadyate  
sarasvatyātha gāyatri brahmāṇī ca parantapa//  
\] *Ibid., 3.30-32*

46. *Ibid., 3.33-43*

47. \[prajāpatirvai svārīṁ duhitaramabhyaśakamayatoṣasārin sā rohidabhat tāmrśyo  
 bhūtvādhyait tasāṁ apabratamacchadayat, tamāyatābhī paryāvartata,  
 tasmādvā abibhet.//  
\] *Mai. S., 4.2.12*

48. *Ś.B., 1.6.2.1*

49. *A.B., 3.33*

50. *Bha. P., 1*
described; but Prajapati here is called Brahmā and his daughter is Sarasvatī.\textsuperscript{51} In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the daughter with whom Brahmā had an illicit relationship, is stated as Vāc (Speech). The Purāṇa describes that Brahmā became infatuated on seeing his own daughter; and his sons, the Prajāpatīs Marīci etc., warned him to abstain from the misdeed as the copulation with one’s own daughter was a great sin. Being thus addressed to by the sons, Brahmā felt extreme mortification and on spot abandoned his body.\textsuperscript{52} Sarasvatī along with four other maids, viz. Lakṣmī, Marutvatī, Sādhyā and Viśvesā, are said to have produced by Brahmā.\textsuperscript{53}

The Matsya Purāṇa also introduces Brahmā as a great Yogi on one hand and the creator of the whole universe also. The great powerful Brahmā, the chief of the knower of the Vedas is described as sitting on the lotus in a posture with hand raised upwards. He is resplendent with his own power destroying the darkness like the rays of the sun. He, the presiding deity of all dharmas is shining like the sun of thousand rays.\textsuperscript{54} In the beginning, Brahmā was alone and had a desire for creation. His creation is primarily known to be of two types—\textit{Maithunī} and \textit{Mānastī}. The \textit{Maithunī sṛṣṭi} is that which comes

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\item \textsuperscript{51} Skn. P., 3.40
\item \textsuperscript{52} Bhg.P., 3.12.28-31
\item \textsuperscript{53} lakṣmīrmarutvatī sādhyā viśvesā ca matā subhā /
     devī sarasvatī caiva brahmaṇā nirmītāḥ purā //
     M.P., 171.32
\item \textsuperscript{54} sthitvā ca tasmin kamala brahmaṇa brahmavidāṁ varāḥ /
     urdhvabāḥurmahāte jāstapo ghoram samāśritaḥ //
     prajvalanniva tejohirbhābhiḥ svābhinstamonudaḥ /
     vabhāse sarvavadharmaṣṭhaḥ sahasrāṁsuvrāṁsubhiḥ //
     Ibid., 171.1-2
\end{itemize}
into being as a result of the union of the male and the female. The
other creation, i.e. the Manusāṣṭhī, is that which is born of Brahmā’s
mind. It has no physical aspect or existence. According to the Matsya
Purāṇa, Brahmā practised devout austerities, whereby were revealed
the sacred Vedas, together with their complements and supplements
and the metres. After that, he revealed the science of Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya
etc., together with the eightfold proof. Inspired with the Vedic
knowledge, Brahmā became conscious of his supreme potentiality
and through his desire created the ten sages, who are known as the
mānasas sons of the creator Brahmā. In addition to the ten mind-born
sons, the following came into existence from the various limbs of his
body, without having any mother. From his right thumb appeared
Prajāpati Dakṣā, from his breast Dharma, from his heart Cupid
(kusumāyudha), from his brows Anger (krodha), from his lips Greed
(lobha), from his intellect Delusion (moha), from his egoism
Arrogance, from his throat Glee (pramoda), from his eyes Death (mṛtyu)
and from his hands the sage Bharata. 55

The Brahma Purāṇa depicts Brahmā as the creator of the
universe and his epithet ‘Svayambhū’, who is born in that cosmic
egg, is often used. 56 At the same time he is also said to have emerged
from the navel lotus of Lord Viṣṇu at the end of his yoganidrā. 57

55. Ibid., 3.2-12
56. kīrtitaṁ sthirakīrtināṁ sarveyāṁ punyavardhanam /
tataḥ svayambhūrbhagavān sisrkvividhāḥ prajāḥ // Br.P., 1.37
57. so’sṛjadyogānitarānte nābhyyambhoramadhyagam /
padmakaiśarasaṁkaśaṁ brahmānāṁ bhūtavayam // Ibid., 45.29
Again it is said that Brahman, the Cause, which is *Avyakta, Nitya, Sadasat* and who is called *Pradhāna*, created Puruṣa, and Puruṣa created the world. The Puruṣa is Brahmā. He is then called *Ādyā, Susūkṣma* and lord of the world. 58 From him he created first the waters and from the waters an egg emerged which was of golden colour and in it Brahmā created himself. Brahmā divided the egg into two parts, sky and earth and in between them he created the atmospheric region. The whole earth was surrounded by water. Then he created *kāla, manas, vāc, kāma, krodha* and *rati*. He then created the seven *mānasa*-putras. Out of his anger, he then created Rudra, then Sanatkumāra and Skanda. After creating all these, he created lightning, clouds, rainbow and birds, followed by Ṛks, Yajus, Sāmans and Sādhyas. Then Brahmā divided his body into two parts, one-half constituting the female form. These two together created all beings. 59

The *Garuḍa Purāṇa* narrates that in the beginning, there was a cosmic golden egg and within it the four-faced Brahmā took for himself a physical body, for the sake of creation with *rajas* element in profusion. He then created movable and the immovable. The creator created himself along with the gods, demons and human beings within the cosmic egg. Taking the form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu creates the universe and he also protects what is to be protected. At the time of creation, Brahmā took up the physical form of a Boar and by means of curved teeth lifted up the earth, learning that it was submerged in water. 60

58. ādyauḥ susūkṣmaṁ viśvesauḥ brahmadīn praṇīpatya ca /
    itihāsaprāṇajñānīṁ vedavedāṅgaḥParaṇam //  
    Ibid., 1.28

59. Ibid., 1.34-52

60. G.P., 1.4.8-13
The *Garuda Purāṇa* also elaborates the creation process and states that the creation of *Mahat* (the cosmically great) is the first one. It is a metamorphosis of Brahmā. The second creation is called *bhūtasarga*, i.e. the creation of the intrinsic essences of elements (tanmātras). The third one is called *vaikārikasarga* (modificatory creation) or *aindriyakasarga* (the creation of sense-organs). All these three together constitute the *prākṛtasarga* (natural creation) beginning with the creation of cosmic intellect (the cosmic great). The fourth creation is called *mukhyasarga* (the principal creation). The stationary things are called principal creatures. The fifth creation is that of the subhuman beings known as *tiryaksrotas*. The creation of superhuman gods is the sixth one known as *urdhvasrotas*. The creation of human beings is the seventh one known as *arvāksrotas*. The eighth creation is what is known as *anugrahasarga*. It is both *sattvika* and *tamasika*. These five constitute the *vaikṛtasarga*. The ninth creation known as *kaumāra* is both *prākṛta* and *vaikṛta*.61

While Brahmā was engaged in this creation, the *mānasa* sons were born of him. The fourfold beings—deities, demons, men (the Pitṛs or deceased ancestors) and human beings, along with these waters were created by Brahmā alone.62 Brahmā is also stated to have created heaven and earth from his chest and the goats from his mouth. Prajāpati, i.e. Brahmā created cows from his belly and sides. However, elephants, buffaloes, camels, sheep etc., were created from his feet. From his hair were produced medicinal herbs and fruit-bearing

61. Ibid., 1.4.14-19
62. Ibid., 1.4.20-21
plants. The *Purāṇa* also states that the *Rgveda* and other Vedic texts came out from the mouths of Brahmā, facing the four directions. The Brāhmaṇas were born of his mouth. The Kṣatriyas originated from his arms, the Vaiśyas came out of his thighs and the Śūdras out of his feet.

According to the *Brahmāṇda Purāṇa*, Brahmā, the Self-born lord, created this earth consisting of seven continents along with the oceans and the mountains. He also created the four worlds beginning with ‘bhū’. After creating the worlds, Brahmā began to create his subjects (*prajā*). Desirous of creating different creatures, he created them in the same form as had been created earlier.

The *Brahmāṇda Purāṇa* identifies Brahmā with Hiranyagarbha and Puruṣa. He is stated as Unborn, Excellent and the first creator of subjects, through whom the *kalpa* has been competent to have its characteristics; through whom the fire has been capable of being a purifying factor. He is also the administrator of all the worlds. It is stated that the *Sattva* quality is Viṣṇu, the *Rajas* is Brahmā and the *Tamas* is Rudra. Viṣṇu the enlightener and revealer of *Rajas* becomes Brahmā, and attains the status of the creator. It is from him, being of

63. Ibid., 1.4.30-32
64. Ibid., 1.4.34-35
65. Brṇ.P., 1.1.5.28-30
66. yasmāt kalpāya kalpah samagraṁ śucaye śucih /
    tasmaḥ hiranyagarbhāya puruṣāye śvarāya ca //
    ajāya prathamāyaiva varisṭhāya prajāśrīye /
    brahmaṇe lokatantrāya namaskṛtya svayambhūve //  Ibid., 1.1.3.5-6
great vitality that the variety of creation of the worlds takes its origin. The Self-born Brahmā has three states—he has four faces as Brahmā; as Kāla (god of death) he is Bhava, the destroyer; as Viṣṇu, he is the Puruṣa with thousand heads. As Brahmā, he creates worlds; as Kāla, he annihilates them; as Puruṣa, he is indifferent. These are the three states of the Self-born deity. The trinity of gods carries out the functions of creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe, which are the three states of one and the same self-born deity. Brahmā is single, two-fold, three-fold and is manifold. Prajāpati, in the Vedic literature, is also described as single, seventeen-fold, twenty-five-fold, thirty-three-fold etc.

According to the Agni Purāṇa, the Self-sprung lord became desirous of creating various creatures. He first created water and in it seeds. The egg engendered in the water was gold-hued. In it Brahmā

67. sāsvatāḥ paramā guhyāḥ sarvātmānaḥ śarīrinaḥ/
sattvāṁ viṣṇū rajo brahmā tamo rudraḥ prajāpatiḥ//
rajaḥprakāsako viṣṇuḥbrahmāsaṃśātvamāpuyāt/
jāyate ca yataścitā lokasṛṣṭirmahoujasaḥ // Ibid., 1.1.4.6-7

68. caturmukhastu brahmātve kālātve cántakrdbhavaḥ/
sahasramūrdhā puruṣastisrō’vasthāḥ svayambhūvah//
sarve rajasca brahmātve kālātve ca rajastamaḥ /
sāttvikāḥ puruṣatve ca guṇavṛttai nh svayambhūvah // Ibid., 1.1.4.17-18

69. brahmā kamalapatrākṣaḥ kālo jātyānājanaprabhaḥ/
puruṣaḥ purṇādhikākṣo rūpeṇa paramātmanah/
ekadhā sa dvīdhā caiva trīdhā ca bahudhā punah// Ibid., 1.1.4.20-21

70. prajāpatirvā idamagra āṣīt eka eva/ Š.B., 11.5.8.1
71. saptadāsāḥ prajāpatiḥ/ Ibid., 12.3.3.4
72. pañcaviṁśo vai prajāpatiḥ/ J.B., 2.10
73. prajāpatirvai trayastrīṁśaḥ/ Ibid., 2.147
himself was born and therefore the Ṣruti reveals him as Svayambhū or Self-born. Having lived there for one full year Lord Hiranyagarbha sundered that egg into two parts, one forming heaven and another earth. And between these two fragments the Lord created the sky. The ten quarters upheld the earth when it was submerged under water. There Prajāpati, i.e. Brahmā, desirous of creating created the Time (kāla), Mind (manas), Speech (vāc), Desire (kāma), Anger (krodha) and Attachment (rati) and their counterparts. He created thunder and cloud from lightning, rainbow and birds from red colour. He also created Parjanya (Indra) and from his mouth, the Ṛk, Sāman and Yajus. For completing sacrifice he created Sādhyas (demi-gods) who propitiated the gods, the most exalted order of creation with sacrifices. He then created Sanatkumāra from his arm and Rudra from his anger. He again created the mind-born sons of Brahmā. Having divided his own body, he became male with one half and female with another. Brahmā then procreated progeny on his female half.\footnote{A.P., 17.7-16}

A detailed account about the birth of Rudra from Brahmā is stated in the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa. According to the Purāṇa, Brahmā created four sons—Sanandana, Sanaka, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra, before he could create Prajāpatis. But these sons were indifferent to mundane pleasure as they were great sages and scholars. They were abstinent. When Brahmā found his sons having no interest in the creation of the world, he became angry. Owing to his anger of high order, the whole world shone by radiance that emanated from
his anger. As a result, his eye-brow got curved and a male figure emerged from the curved eye-brow. This figure was Rudra, whose half body was male and half female. Brahmā ordered the figure to divide the male form, which he did accordingly by dividing it into eleven parts, which are known as eleven Rudras. The eleven Rudras are—Manyu, Manu, Mahīnasa, Mahān, Śiva, Ṛtudhvaja, Ugraretas, Bhava, Kāma, Vāmadeva and Dhṛtavrata. However the variant names of these Rudras are found in the various Purāṇas.

Thus, it is found that, the various Purāṇas repeatedly narrate the various kinds of creation out of Brahmā and he is depicted as the preserver of the universe also.

THE VARĀHA INCARNATION OF BRAHMĀ

Brahmā is often alluded to appear in his Boar incarnation in the Purāṇic literature. The incarnation is first ascribed to Prajāpati in the Vedas and then to Brahmā in the Purāṇas. The Boar incarnation of Brahmā is intended only for the purpose of creation and preservation of the universe. The Vāyu Purāṇa proceeds to describe the Boar incarnation of Brahmā for the purpose of lifting the earth from water. In the description of the body of the animal, its every part has been compared with the objects associated with the sacrifice and hence the animal is called yajña-varāha. The Purāṇa states that Brahmā, knowing that the earth is under water, thought of the form of a Boar, suitable for activity under the water. This form which is eloquent and

75. Br.V.P., 1.8.12-28
76. V.P., 1.6.16-22
unconquerable is no other than Dharma.  

The Boar incarnation of Brahmā in the Purāṇas is of Vedic origin. In the Taittirīya Samhitā, the incarnation is ascribed to Prajāpati. Here, it is narrated thus: ‘The universe was formerly full of water. On it Prajāpati becoming wind, moved. He saw the earth. Becoming a Boar, he took her up. Becoming Viśvakarman, he wiped the moisture from her. She extended. She became the extended one, i.e. prthivī. From this the earth derives her designation as the extended one. In her Prajāpati performed arduous devotion’.  

Prajāpati’s Boar incarnation is also introduced in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. It is narrated in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa passage that Prajāpati desired to create the world out of the vast sheet of water. He, then, noticed a lotus-leaf emerging out of the water. Prajāpati, immediately, assumed the form of a Boar and dived into the water in search of the earth which might stay as supporting the lotus-leaf. He, then, pierced the earth by means of his tusk and took it out and placed the earth on the leaf.  

77. jalakrīdāsu rucirāṇā vārāhāṇā rūpāsmaṣmaraṭ / adhṛṣyaṁ sarvabhūtānāṁ vāṅgamayam dharmasamjñitatam // Ibid., 1.6.11  
78. āpo vai idam agre sālilam āśīt/ tasmin prajāpatir vāyur bhūtvā acarat/ sa imāṁ apaśyat/ taṁ varāho bhūtvā āharat/ tāṁ viśvakarmā bhūtvā vyamārt/ sā aprathāta/ sā prthivyā abhavat/ tat prthivyai prthivyavitam/ tasyāṁ aśrāmyat prajāpatiḥ/ T.S., 7.1.5.1  
79. āpo vai idam salilam agre āśīt/ tena prajāpatir aśrāmyat ‘katham idam syād’ iti/ so’paśyat puṣkaraparanāṁ tiṣṭhat/ so ‘manyata’ asti vai tad yasmin idam adhitiṣṭatiti/īti/ sa varāho rūpaṁ krītvā upanyamajjat/ sa prthivīṁ adhan ārati/ tasyā upañahaya udamajjat tat puṣkaraparāṇe‘prathayat/ T.B., 1.1.3.5
In the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* also, it is stated that Prajāpati in his Boar incarnation raised the earth up which was submerged in water.\(^{80}\) In the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* also it is stated that a black Boar, with its hundred arms took up the earth out of water.\(^{81}\) There is a striking parallel between the Boar legend of Brahmā of the Purāṇas and that of the Vedic literature.

The *Padma Purāṇa* states that Brahmā having looked the universe void and known the earth under the waters thought that his Viṣṇu form would be able to bear the load of the earth. Prajāpati, then, having taken the form of *yajña-varāha*, i.e. Boar form of the sacrifice entered the waters to rescue the earth.\(^{82}\) Thus, the *Padma Purāṇa* ascribes the Boar incarnation to Prajāpati-Brahmā who, of course, has been identified with Viṣṇu. While describing the achievements of *yajña-varāha* incarnation of Brahmā, the *Vāyu Purāṇa* details the reason for floating the earth over the waters like a boat to the mercy of god.\(^{83}\)

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80. iyati ha vai iyaṁ agre prthivyāsa prādesa mātri/ tam emuśaḥ iti varāhaḥ ujjaghāna/ sośyāḥ patiḥ prajāpatis-tena iva enam etan-mithunena priyeṇa dhāmnā samardhayati kṛtsanaṁ karoti/ Ś.B., 14.1.2.11

81. varāhena kṛṣṇena sata-bāhuna uddhṛtā/ T.A., 10.1

82. Pd.P., 3.27-30

83. tasyopari jalaughasya mahatī naurivasthitā/ caritatvācca devasya na mahī yātī viplavam// V.P., 1.6.26
EPITHETS OF BRAHMĀ

In the Purāṇic literature, there appears a number of epithets for Brahmā which is due to his different activities. All these Purāṇic epithets have established him as the creator and preserver of the universe. Some of his epithets are noted in the following few lines.

Brahmā is often called Prajāpati in the Purāṇic literature. We have found the term in the Kurma Purāṇa, Matsya Purāṇa, the Brahma Purāṇa, the Markandaeya Purāṇa etc. Brahmā as Kāryabrahma, created the world and all the beings—living and non-living. He is their Lord (pati). Therefore, he is known as Prajāpati.

The Kurma Purana observes that Prajāpati is one of the aspects of the Supreme Being, because he is the preserver of his subjects. At the same time, his mind-born sons are also collectively regarded as Prajāpatis, because Brahmā wanted that his sons should generate their offspring for expansion of the world. Thus, his sons also came to be styled as Prajāpatis. In the world a king, who looks after his subjects well, is generally called Prajāpati. Just like in a family also a man, who has a number of offspring is known to be Prajāpati.

84. K.P., 1.6.2-7
85. दृष्टवः ताम् व्याहितास्तवकामवानार्ददतो विभुहः / अहो रूपमाहो रूपमनीत्वाहा प्रजापतिः /// M.P., 3.33
86. ये तन्नामासहस्तेनात्स्तवंशयकामः प्रजापतिः / Br.P., 31.28
87. यथा ससर्जा वाय ब्रह्मा भगवानाधिक्षिप्रजापतिः / प्रजापतिः पालिश्रवः स्तरातसं मद्या /// Märk.P., 44.1
88. (a) ådītvedādidevo’sāvajñatavādajah smṛtah / पालिश्रवः सारवाह प्रजापतिरिति मद्या /// K.P.,1.4.59
     (b) पालिश्रवः सारवाह प्रजापतिरिताह मद्या /// V.P., 1.5.37
Similarly, the sons of Brahmā were created for progeny, meant for the onward transmission of the world and they were termed as Prajāpatis which is clarified in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. In the *Ṛgveda* also, it is found that god Prajāpati has been invoked by the devotees to grant them progeny.

Prajāpatis are the mind-born sons of Brahmā. The sons of Prajāpati are presented as the instruments of the secondary creation which is clearly noted in the *Manusamhitā*. The sons are—Marīci, Atri, Aṅgirā, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracetas, Vaśiṣṭha, Bhṛgu and Nārada. These ten Prajāpatis are enumerated in the *Manusamhitā*, but the number differs from one *Purāṇa* to another.

According to the *Agni Purāṇa*, Prajāpatis are seven in number. They are—Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vaśiṣṭha. The *Brahma Purāṇa* admits the same number and names. The *Matsya Purāṇa* describes the ten mind-born sons of Brahmā. They are—Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracetas, Vaśiṣṭha, Bhṛgu and Nārada.

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89. *lokasya santānakarāstairīmā vardhitāḥ prajāḥ / 
   prajāpataya ityevaṁ paṭhyante brahmaṇaḥ sutāḥ //* 
   Ibid., 2.4.48

90. *ā naḥ prajāṁ janayatu prajāpatirājarasāya samanaktvayamā/ R.V., 10.85.43*

91. *kṛtvāhāṃuṭrasamsthanāṁ prajāsargaṁ tu mānasam/ 
   athāśṛjatprajākārttāmānasāṁriṇatyanayānprabhūḥ //* 
   G.P., 1.5.1

92. *ahaṁ prajāḥ sisṛkṣustu tapastaptvā suduścaram / 
   patīn prajānāmaśṛjīna maharśiṇādīta daśa // 
   marīcinatryāṅgirasou pulastyaṁ pulahaṁ kratum / 
   pracetasaṁ vasiṣṭhaṁica bhṛguṁ nāradameva ca //* 
   Man.S., 1.34-35

93. *marīcinatryāṅgirasasu pulastyaṁ pulahaṁ kratum / 
   vasiṣṭharaṁ mānasāṁ sapta brahmaṇa iti niścitaḥ //* 
   A.P., 17.15

94. *Br.P., 45.37*
Vasistha, Bhrgu and Nārada. In another context of this Purāṇa it is also stated that, once Brahmā, in course of his practising penance, created his beautiful wife from his body. She, by virtue of her austerities, equaled Brahmā and was gifted with the faculty of creation of the universe. Then Brahmā was engaged in creation and he first created the three-footed Gāyatrī. He, then, created the Prajāpatis who were like him and through them this universe and all beings have been created. The Prajāpatis are named as—Viśveśa Dharma, Dakṣa, Marīci, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasistha, Gautama, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, and Manu. The Vāyu Purāṇa also enumerates the Prajāpatis. Here, the Prajāpatis are—Marīci, Kratu, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, and Vasistha. The Purāṇa has also enumerated some other Prajāpatis in another context. They are—Kardama, Kaśyapa, Śeṣa,

95. marīciraḥ bhavatpūrvaṁ tato’trirbhagavāṁ rṣiḥ /
   aṅgirāścābhavatpaścāt pulastyaśadanantaram //
   tataḥ pulahanāmā vai tataḥ kraturajāyata /
   pratcaśca tataḥ putro vasīṣṭhaścābhavat punah //
   putro bhṛgurabhūttadvannārada’pyaciradabhūt /
   daśemāṃsānasānbrahmāmunīn putrānijjanat // M.P., 3.6-8

96. Ibid., 171.21-27

97. marīciḥ prathamastatra marīcibhyah samutthitah /
   kratou tasminsuto jajñe yatāstasmātsa vai kratuḥ //
   ahaṁ tṛtīyāṁ ityarthastasmādātṛih sa kīrttyate /
   keśaisca niśitaṁbhūtah pulastyaśtena sa smṛtah//
   keśair lambaiḥ samudbhūtastasmāt tu pulahāḥ smṛtaḥ /
   vasumadhyātsamutpaṇno vasumān vasudhāśrayaḥ //
   vasīṣṭha iti tattvajñaiḥ procyate brahmavādibhiḥ /
   ityete brahmaṇaḥ putrā mānasāḥ saṁmāharṣayaḥ // V.P., 2.4.44-47
Vikrānta, Śuśruvas, Bahuputra, Kumāra, Vivasvat, Pracetasas, Ariṣṭanemi, Bahula etc. The Garuḍa Purāṇa also enumerates the name of these Prajāpatis and they are—Dharma, Rudra, Manu, Sanaka, Sanātana, Bhṛgu, Sanatkumāra, Ruci, Śraddhā, Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Nārada, Pitr, Varhiṣad, Agniṣvāṭta, Kāvyādāna and Ājyapā.

The Viṣṇu Purāṇa introduces the concept of nine Brahmās and states that they are the mind-born sons of Brahmā created by him. These sons are—Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Aṅgiras, Marīci, Dakṣa, Atri, and Vasiṣṭha. According to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Brahmā’s earlier four sons, viz. Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra are not interested in creation but they are devoted to Vāsudeva only. His subsequent ten sons, viz. Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Dakṣa and Nārada are usually referred to as his mānasas or mind-born sons as being created

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98. kardamaḥ kaśyapaḥ seṣo vikrantaḥ suśruvāṣṭathā / 
bahuputraḥ kumāraśca vivasvān sa suciśtravāh // 
pracetaso’riṣṭanemirbahulaśca prajāpatīḥ / 
ityevamādayo’nye’pi bahavaśca prajeścarāh //

Ibid., 4.53-54

99. dharma rudraṁ manum caiva sanakaṁ ca sanātanaṁ / 
bhṛguṁ sanatkumāraṁ ca ruciṁ sradhāṁ tathaiva ca // 
marīcimatryāṅgirasou pulastyaṁ pulahaṁ kratum / 
vasiṣṭhaṁ nāradaṁ caiva pīṭhbarhiṣadastathā //

G.P., 1.5.2-3

100. bhṛguṁ pulastyaṁ pulahaṁ kratumāṅgirasāṁ tathā / 
marīcīṁ dakṣamatrīfica vasiṣṭhāficaiva mānasam// 
nava brahmāṇa ityete purāṇa niścyatāṁ gatāḥ /

Viṣ.P., 1.7.5-6
from his mind, eyes, mouth, ears, skin, prāṇa, thumb, lap and right breast respectively.\textsuperscript{101}

Brahmā is at the same time the creator, the preserver and the destroyer, thus combining into him the three-fold functions.\textsuperscript{102} His supreme position is acknowledged and he, the Self-existent god, is said to have manifested himself as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra while creating, preserving and destroying respectively the universe.\textsuperscript{103} As creator he created the worlds, all that moves and does not move. As a ‘maker and lord of the world’, he is called by various terms, e.g. Jagadīśa,\textsuperscript{104} Sarvabhūtānām sraṣṭā,\textsuperscript{105} Sarvasvarūpakrānta\textsuperscript{106}

\begin{itemize}
  \item marśicātryaṅgaṁraou pulahāḥ krātuḥ /
  bhṛgurvasiṣṭhaḥ daṁkaśca daṁsamastatra nāradaḥ //
  utsaṅgāṇnārado jajīfe daṁkṣo’ṅguṣṭhātsvayambhuvah /
  prāṇadvasiṣṭhaḥ saṁjāto bhṛgustvaci karātkrata //
  pulahāḥ nābhitō jajīne pulastyaḥ karṇāyorśiḥ /
  \item brahṇānāmādipuruṣaṁamputpattiṣṭhitisaṁiyame /
  yatkāranamanoupamyāṁ yatra sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam // Märk.P., 45.28
  \item yathā prāgyāpakaḥ kṣetṛi pālako lāvakastha /
  tathā sa sarṇīnāmyāti brahmāviṣṇuśākariṇī //
  brahmātvā sṛjate lokān rudratve sarṇharatyapi /
  viṣṇuvte cyapyudāsimāstrī ro’vasthā svayambhūvah // Ibid., 46.16-17
  \item prākṛtā vaikṛtāśeiva jagato mulahetavah /
  sṛjato jagadiśasya kimanyaccrotumicchasi // Ibid., 47.37
  \item taṁ budhyadhyperi muniśreṣṭha brahmāṇamamitoujjasam /
  sraṃśariṇi sarvabhūtanāṁ nārāyaṇaparāyanam // Br.P., 1.34
  \item sarvasmin sarvabhūtastvari sarvāḥ sarvasvarūpaṁ //
  sarvāṁ tvattaḥ samudbhūtanāṁ namaḥ sarvātmane tataḥ // Pd.P., 1.4.126
\end{itemize}
Jagadyoni, Jagatpati, Jagatkartr, Jagatsrastr, Lokakartr, Lokakrt, Lokatantr, Adikartr, Srstra, Srstikartr, Sargkartr, Pratham etc. Among these appellations, Pratham reminds the Atharvedic epithet Jyeṣṭha, as used for Brahmā. His appellation Lokatantr perhaps signifies that Brahmā is the originator of the concept of different Lokas in the universe.

The Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa states that Brahmā is Sarva, because he is the master of all; he is Viśṇu, because he permeates everything. He is also stated as Bhagavān. He is called Bhagavān because he existed first of all. He is Nāga because no sin (āgas) abides in him. He is Sarvajña as he knows everything.
The great powerful Brahmā is the chief of the knower of the Vedas, i.e. *Brahmavidāṁ varāḥ*. He sits on the lotus in a posture with hand raised upwards. He is resplendent with his own power destroying the darkness like the rays of the sun. He, the presiding deity of all dhammas is shining like the sun of thousand rays.\(^{122}\) Brahmā as creator of the universe was self-born in that cosmic egg and thereby he is known as *Svayambhū*, which is reiterated in the Purāṇas.\(^{123}\) According to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Brahmā is regarded as *Svayambhū*, because he is not produced and pre-existing.\(^{124}\) He is also known as *Devādi, Ādideva*\(^{126}\) and *Ādipuruṣa,\(^{127}\)* who was born first. Brahmā is generally identified with the Great Father (*Pitāmaha*).\(^{128}\) Some other personified abstractions of Brahmā are— *Dhāṭr,\(^{129}\) Vidhāṭr,\(^{130}\) Pāṭr,\(^{131}\)

\(^{122}\) sthitvā ca tasmin kamala brahma brahmavidāṁ varāḥ /
uruddhvaḥurtmahātejāstapo ghoram samāśritaḥ /
prajvalanniva tejobhirbhaḥbhīḥ svābhistamonudāḥ /
vabhāse sarvavadharmastāḥ sahasrāṁśuvṛtvāṁśubhīḥ //

\(^{123}\) (a) viṣṇutve cāpyudāśinātisro'vasthāḥ svayambhūvaḥ /
(b) anādinidhanā divyā vāgutsṛṣṭā svayambhūvā /
(c) tatra jajīne svyaṁ brahma svayambhūriti naḥ śrutam /

\(^{124}\) notpāditatvāt pūrvatvāt svayambhūriti sa smṛtah /

\(^{125}\) hiraṇyagarbho devādirānādirupacārataḥ /

bhūpadmakarṇikāsaṁsthō brahmāgre samajāyata //

\(^{126}\) brahmaṇe cādidevāya namaskṛtya samādhinā /

\(^{127}\) brahmaṇām adipuruṣam utpattisthitisānyame /

\(^{128}\) yāhi tvarī mānavīṁ yonimityevaṁ ca pitāmaha /

\(^{129}\) carācarasya jagato dhātāram paramāṁ padam /

\(^{130}\) tamuvāca jagatkarānta vidhānta jagatāmapi /

\(^{131}\) viṣṇuḥ satvaguṇaḥ pāṭa brahmaṁ sraṣṭā rajoguṇaḥ /

\(^{122}\) M.P., 171.1-2

\(^{123}\) Mārk.P., 46.17

\(^{124}\) K.P., 1.9.20

\(^{125}\) Br.P., 1.41

\(^{126}\) V.P., 1.6.40

\(^{127}\) Mārk.P., 46.21

\(^{128}\) Ibid., 4.40

\(^{129}\) Ibid., 45.28

\(^{130}\) Br.V.P., 2.15.26

\(^{131}\) Br.V.P., 2.15.21
Prakṛtipati etc.

Brahmā is called Hiraṇyagarbha. In the Rgveda also, Hiraṇyagarbha is identified with Prajāpati, i.e. Brahmā in the Purāṇas. Some other Vedic appellations are also ascribed to Brahmā in the Purāṇa literature, such as - Puruṣa, Puruṣarūpeṇa saṁśṭhita, Parameśvara, Parameśthin, Virāj etc. There are some appellations to Brahmā in the Epic-Puranic literature, which are originally found to designate Brahman in the Upaniṣadic literature. These epithets which are used to denote Brahmā in the Purāṇas are—Aja, Avyaya, Aguna, Akṣaya, Ajara, Ameya, Anādi.

132. sa eva kṣobhakaḥ purvarśi sa kṣomyaḥ prkṛteḥ patiḥ / Märk.P., 46.12
133. hiranyagarbho devādīrāmādīrīpacārataḥ / Ibid., 46.21
134. hiranyagarbhah hirnmayāsyāṇḍasya garbhabhūtaḥ prajāpatirhiranyagarbhah/ Sāyaṇa on R.V., 10.121.1
135. sa vai śarīr prathamaḥ sa vai puruṣa ucyate / ädiṣṭa ca bhūtānāṁ brahmāgre samavaratata // Märk.P., 45.64
136. tvam guhyāṁ paramarśi nityamajamākṣayamāvyayam / tathā puruṣarūpeṇa kālarūpeṇa saṁśthitam // Pd.P., 1.2.86
137. prakṛtiṁ puruṣarśi caiva praviṣyāśu jagatpatiḥ / kṣobhāyāmāsa yogena pareṇa parameśvaraḥ // Märk.P., 46.9
138. brahmāṇāṁ śaraṇāṁ jagmuḥ kṣudhārttāḥ parameśthinam / Ibid., 46.64
139. prthagbhūtaikabhūtyā sarvabhūtyā te namaḥ / vyaktam pradhānāṁ puruṣo virāt samrāt thāthā bhavān // Pd.P., 1.4.125
140. praṇipatya jagadyonimajamāvyayamāśrayam / carācarasya jagato dhātāraṁ paramarśi padam // Märk.P., 45.27
141. utpannāṁ sa jagadyoniragunopri rajugunam / Ibid., 46.13
142. dhruvaṃkṣayamajaramameyam nānyasaṁśrayam / gandharūparaśairhīmāṁ śabdasparsavivarjitaṁ // Ibid., 45.33
143. Ibid.
144. anādyntaṁ jagadyonim triguṇaprabhāvvyam / Ibid., 45.34
Sarvatmaka,\textsuperscript{145} Avyaktaśvarūpa,\textsuperscript{146} Brahmarūpa,\textsuperscript{147} Guhya, Nitya,\textsuperscript{149} Paramātman,\textsuperscript{150} Sāsvata,\textsuperscript{151} Iśvara,\textsuperscript{152} Bhagavat, Trigunaprabhava, Asāmprata, Avijñeya,\textsuperscript{154} Dhurva, Nānyasaṁśraya, Gandharūparasahina, Sabdasparśavivarjita,\textsuperscript{155} Sarvaga, Sarvasambha,\textsuperscript{156} Avyaktajanman,\textsuperscript{157} Bhava,\textsuperscript{158} Kṣetrajña, Viśiṣṭa,\textsuperscript{160} Para\textsuperscript{161} etc.

145. sarvatmako’si sarvesāṁ sarvabhūtaasthitāḥ yataḥ
146. tatrāvyaktasvarūpo’sou vyaktarūpi janārdanāḥ
147. sarvatrāsou samaścāpi vasannanuyamo mataḥ
    bhāvayaḥ brahmārūpeṇa vidvadbhiḥ paripathyate
148. tāṁ guhyāṁ paramāṁ nityamajamāksamāyamayam
    tathā puṣṭarūpeṇa kālarūpeṇa sarṣṭhitam
149. Ibid.
150. paraḥ parānāṁ paramaḥ paramātmaḥ pitāmahaḥ
151. lokakṛcchāsvataḥ kṛtsanaṁ jagatsthāvarajaṅgamam
152. sarvesvātveca lokānāṁ vāyaṣṭāvatāttheśvaraḥ
153. yathā sasārja vai brahmaḥ bhagavānādikṛtprajā
154. anādyantāṁ jagadyoninīṁ trigunaprabhavāpyam
    asāmpratamāvijñeyam brhamāgre samavarttata
155. dhruvamāksyaṁajaramaneṣaṁ nānyasaṁśrayam
    gandharūparasairhinam śabdasparsavivarjitaṁ
156. vedasyājaṁayam divyarāṁ vedayajñamayo vibhuḥ
    rūpaṁ kṛtva viveśāpsu sarvagaha sarvasambhavaḥ
157. evarīvidhāḥ śṛṣṭayastu brahmaṁo vyaktajanmanah
158. V.P., 1.4.43
159. Ibid.
160. Ibid., 1.4.16
161. sarvaheturacintyātmā paraḥ ko’pyaparakriyāḥ
    Pd.P., 1.4.127
    Ibid., 1.2.104
    Ibid., 1.2.85
    Ibid., 1.2.87
    Ibid.
    Ibid., 1.2.83
    V.P., 1.6.38
    Mārk.P., 47.2
    Mārk.P., 47.1
    Ibid., 45.34
    Ibid., 45.33
    Ibid., 47.8
    Ibid., 48.45
    Mārk.P., 46.8
Among these appellations, the word Puruṣa implies that Brahmā always lies in the state of *Avyakta* or unmanifested one.  

The name *Viśiṣṭa* is used probably that Brahmā is the god of special significance. Since Brahmā is manifested in all beings, he is called Bhava and as he knows *kṣetra*, he is termed *Kṣetrajña*.

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* explains the designations of Brahmā, viz. *Citi*, *Smṛti* and *Saṁvid*. It states that since the god collects different manifestations of knowledge and also the result of sacrifice and other actions, he is designated as *Citi*. As he takes action after recollecting and considering the past, present and future, he is called *Smṛti*. Further, because he is the source of complete and full knowledge, he is known as *Saṁvid*. The *Purāṇa* also introduces some other appellations of Brahmā, such as—*Vibhu, Aditya, Kapila, Yajña, Kavi, Kramaṇa* etc.

In the early part of the Vedas, Brahmā is introduced as the superintending sacrificial priest. In the *Purāṇas* some of his priestly characters have been retained and various appellations are also

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162. yasmāt puryyanūsāte ca tasmāt puruṣa ucyate / V.P., 1.4.44
163. ajāya prathamāyaiva viśiṣṭāya prajātmane / Ibid., 1.4.16
164. bṛhatvācca smṛto brahmā bhūtatvādbhava ucyate / Ibid., 1.4.43
165. kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vijñānādekatvācca sa kāḥ smṛtah / Ibid., 1.4.43
166. Ibid., 1.4.37-39
167. Ibid., 1.4.40-45
168. brahmā devānāṁ padaviḥ kavīnāṁ ṛṣir viprāṇāṁ mahiṣo mṛgānām/
    śyeno grdhrāṇāṁ svadhitrīr vanānāṁ somaḥ pavitram ati eti rebham //
    R.V., 9.96.6
ascribed to him. In the Padma Purāṇa, Brahmā has been designated as Brahmavidāṁvara, Kuśadhvaja, Triveda etc. Among these appellations, the epithet Kuśadhvaja is a very significant term. This epithet probably points to Brahmā’s character of sacrificial priest. The word means one who holds Kuśa-grass as his insignia. Or in other words, it means one who is represented by the Kuśa-grass. The Grhya Sūtras show how the Brahmā priest was associated with the Kuśa-grass. The Gobhila Grhyasūtra, holds that a person willing to do himself the job of both the Hotṛ and the Brahmā in a sacrifice should place a parasol, or an upper garment or a water-pot or a bunch of Darbha grass on Brahmā’s seat. Thus, Brahmā is closely related to the Kuśa-grass which represents him.

Hence, it is found that all these epithets of Brahmā, treated in the Purāṇas, clearly show his role as a creator and preserver of the universe as well as his connection with the sacrificial institution. All these traits of Brahmā reveal the fact that Purāṇic Brahmā is none other than Prajāpati of the Vedic literature.

169. carācaraguruḥ śrīmān brahmā brahmavidāṁvarah / Pd.P., 1.16.66
170. srīpaterudararn bhūyāḥ praviveṣā kuśadhvajah / K.P., 1.9.25
171. trivedo bahurūpaśca sūryāyutasampravah / Pd.P., 1.36.178
172. yadyu vā ubhayam cikūśedhoutrañci va brahmāvāñci vaitenai kalpena chatraṁ vottarāsaṅgāṁ vodakamaṇḍaluṁ darbhavaṭuṁ vā brahmāsane nidhāya teneiva pratyāvrajaṁ yāthānyacceṣṭet / Gv.G.S., 1.6.21

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