CHAPTER-III
THE THEORY OF CREATION

1. Introduction:
From the very ancient time men are curious about the origin of the universe. How, when and why the universe has come into existence, these are the perennial questions, which have excited human mind from time immemorial. Speculations about cosmogony and cosmology constitute the first manifestation of philosophical thought. By cosmogony is meant the theory of the origin of the universe and cosmology means the branch of philosophy dealing with the origin and general structure of the universe. In the Purāṇas the discussions on the questions of cosmogony and cosmology lie on the borderline between philosophy and theology. The classical definitions of the Purāṇas make it mandatory for all the Purāṇas to have a section on the theory of creation: primary (sarga) and secondary (pratisarga). The Purāṇa first explains how the universe is originated from the first cause and the second shows how the universe is developed from the elementary substance and how they reappear after their temporary destruction.

The Cosmogony, Cosmology and Cosmography of the different Purāṇas show a striking similarity. In fact barring some minor differences
these Purāṇas describe the creation process in the same vein. H. Jaeger observes, “An abstract from the account of the creation in the Indian Purāṇa may serve to illustrate Purānic cosmogony, if we keep in mind that the accounts in other Purāṇas are on the whole similar in tenor, though they may vary in details.”

The Purāṇas are based on the Vedas. The Purānic concept of creation is also inherited from the Vedas, though they show later developments. In the Vedic literature different theories of creation of the universe are found. The philosophical theory of Vedic cosmogony has its origin in the Nāsadiya Sūkta. In this hymn the origin of the world is traced to Tadēkaṁ (That one), which is different from both being (sat) and non-being (asat). In the Puruṣasukta we find another account of the creation. Here Puruṣa is conceived as the cause, who has transformed himself into the world. The Upaniṣads further elaborate this idea and declare that sat or Brahman is the Ultimate Cause of the world. The Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad again describes this cause as Ātman (self). The Aitareyopaniṣad describes that Ātman produced the universe. The Ātman first of all desired to create

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 4, P. 159
2. Rg.V, 10.129
3. Ibid, 10.90
4. sadeva somyedamagra asidekamevadvitiyāṁ. CU, 6.2.1
5. ātmaivedamagra asit. BU, 1.4.17
the worlds, which he did by creating the super celestial regions of cloud, the celestial light, the earth and the subterranean region of waters. The Ātman then produced the universal person for further creation.6

It has already been said that Vedic concept of Cosmogony and Cosmology has a bearing on the Purānic views. But the Purāṇas derive mostly from the great epics, viz., the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. The Vedic creation theories do not show any influence of the Sāṅkhya System. But the Purānic concept is mostly indebted to the Sāṅkhya concept of creation where Prakṛti or Pradhāna is accepted as the primeval cause of the universe. But though the Purāṇas accept the evolutionary system of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, yet all these Purāṇas accord Prakṛti a subordinate place in their metaphysical concept. In this regard the observation of Jacobi is noteworthy. He says, “Here, too, the evolutionary theory of Sāṅkhya has been so modified as to agree with the Vedānta doctrine about the oneness of Brahman, by assuming that Puruṣa and Prakṛti are, but two forms of the Supreme Deity, who is identified with one of the popular gods according to the sectarian character of the work.”7

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6. ātma vā idameka evāgra asit. nānyat kiñcan miṣat.
   sa īksāta lokānnu sṛjā iti. AU, 1.1.4

2. The Theory of Creation in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, which conforms the most to the traditional definition of the Purāṇa deals with the theory of creation in the very beginning. The world, according to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is a creation of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says that Viṣṇu creates the world, it exists in Him and at the time of dissolution it goes back to Him.\(^8\) According to *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* by assuming three gunas Viṣṇu creates this world Himself Viṣṇu Himself assumes the forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara and becomes the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world.\(^9\) The first manifestation of Brahman or Viṣṇu is *Puruṣa*. Then proceed the other manifestations, viz., *vyakta* (the manifest), *avakṣya* (the unmanifest) and *kāla* (the time).\(^10\) These four forms have come out from Viṣṇu out of his playful activity.\(^11\) Thus in the beginning there were only four categories, viz., *Puruṣa, Avyakta, Vyakta* and *Kāla. Avyakta*, which is the unmanifest

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8. viṣṇoh sakāśāt saṁbhūtaṁ jagat tatraiva saṁsthitāṁ /
   sthīti saṁyamakartā’sau jagato’sya jagacca saḥ // VP. 1.1.35
9. srṣṭisthityantakaraṇād brahmaḥviṣṇusivātmikāṁ /
   sa saṁjñāṁ yāti bhagavān eka eva janārddnāy// Ibid, 1.2.64
10. parasya brahmaḥ rūpaṁ puruṣaṁ prathamaṁ dvija /
   vyaktāvyakte tathaivānre rūpe kālastathā paraṁ // Ibid, 1.2.15
11. vyaktāṁ viṣṇustathāvyaktāṁ puruṣaṁ kāla eva ca /
   kṛiḍato bālakasyeṣa cestāṁ tasya niśāmaya // Ibid, 1.2.18
cause of the world, is called as Pradhāna or Prakṛti. The Pradhāna or Prakṛti is described as sadasadātmaka, i.e., of the nature of both existence and non-existence.\(^ {12} \) This means that Prakṛti is endowed with the powers of both cause and effect. As Pradhāna proceeds from Viṣṇu it is kārya and as it produces the material object it is kāraṇa.\(^ {13} \) It is very subtle and eternal (nitya). By the term ‘nitya’ here the Viṣṇu Purāṇa means that it is uniform and devoid of buddhi (intelect) etc. Pradhāna is durable, having no other substratum, i.e., self-sustained, it is immeasurable, undecaying and stable. It is devoid of sound, touch, colour and form. This Pradhāna is endowed with three guṇas. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa also describes Pradhāna as jagadāyoni, i.e., the cause of the world. According to Wilson, this means that it is the passive agent in creation operated on or influenced by the active will of the creator. Pradhāna is also anādi (without birth) which means that it is not engendered by any created things but proceeding immediately from the first cause.\(^ {14} \) All created things are resolved in this Pradhāna and are pervaded by this Avyakta in the period subsequent to

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12. avyaktaṁ kāraṇaṁ yat tat pradhānamṛṣisattamaṁ / 

procyaṁ prakṛtiḥ sūkṣmā nityaṁ sadasadātmakaṁ // Ibid, 1.2.19

13. Śrīdhara's Commentary on Ibid.
dissolution and prior to the next creation. Pradhāna and Puruṣa are neither different from the nature of Viṣṇu who is the Ultimate Reality.\textsuperscript{15}

*Kāla* is that entity which brings about the conjunction of Pradhāna and Puruṣa at the time of creation and disjunction of both these at the time of dissolution.\textsuperscript{16} *Kāla* is beginningless and as such exists at the time of dissolution. It is because of *Kāla* that the cycle of creation, sustenance and dissolution continually goes on.\textsuperscript{17} Viṣṇu in the form of time abides in dissolution also when Puruṣa is detached from Prakṛti.\textsuperscript{18}

Now at the time of creation God Viṣṇu enters by his will into Prakṛti and Puruṣa and produces agitation in the mutable (Pradhāna) and immutable (Puruṣa) principles. When the lord enters into them, his proximity alone is sufficient to produce this disturbance, which leads to creation, just as fragrance affects the mind by its proximity only without actually modifying the mind.\textsuperscript{19} The Supreme Being thus becomes the agitat-or. But he is not only the agitator but the agitated (ksobhya) also. He is present in the essence of matter both when it is contracted (saṁkoca) and

\textsuperscript{15} viṣṇoh svarūpāt parato hi te’anye rūpe pradhānāṁ puruṣaścā vipra / VP, 1.2.24  
\textsuperscript{16} tasyaiva te’nyena dḥrte viyukte rūpāntaram yat tad dvija kālasaṁjñānāṁ // Ibid  
\textsuperscript{17} anādirbhagān kālo nānto’sya dvija vidyate / 
\hspace{1cm} avyucchinnāstatastvete sargasthityantasāmyamāḥ // Ibid, 1.2.26  
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid. 1.2.27  
\textsuperscript{19} pradhānāṁ puruṣaścāpi praviṣṭyātmecayā hariḥ /  
\hspace{1cm} ksobhayāmāsa samprāpte sargakaṇe vyayāvyayau // Ibid, 1.2.29
expanded \((vīkāśa)\). Contraction means the \(sāmya\) or equilibrium of three \(guṇas\) and expansion is the destruction of this equipoise by previous agitation and consequent development of material products.\(^{21}\) When the equilibrium of the \(guṇas\) is disturbed the unequal development starts because \(Pradhāna\) then becomes presided over by the \(Kṣetrajña\). The commentator of the \(Viṣṇu Purāṇa\) explains the term \(Kṣetrajña\) as \(Puruṣa\) or the embodied Spirit. Hence, the combination of Spirit with matter is required for the purpose of creation.\(^{22}\) In the 4\(^{th}\) chapter of the Part-I of the \(Viṣṇu Purāṇa\) \(Viṣṇu\) is regarded as the agent (\(nimitta\)) only, the material cause being the powers or energies of the objects of the universe, which are to be created. \(Śrīdharā\) \(Śvāmīn\) here points out that the agency of \(Goi\) consists merely in his presence. (\(sān nidhyamātreṇa\))\(^{23}\)

3. The Evolutes of \(Prakṛti\):

The first modification of \(Prakṛti\) is \(Mahat\) or Intellect in which the unequal development of the \(guṇas\) takes places. Wilson has discussed

\(^{20}\) \(sa eva kṣobhako brahman kṣobhyaśca puruṣottamaḥ / sa sanīkocavikāśābhyaśm pradhānatve'pi ca sthitaḥ // Ibīd, 1.2.31\)

\(^{21}\) Cf. \(Śrīhara's\) Commentary on Ibīd.

\(^{22}\) \(guṇasāmyāt tatastasmāt kṣetrajñādhiṣṭhitānāṁ / gunavyanjanasambhūṭīḥ sargakāle dvijottama // Ibīd, 1.2.33; Cf. \(Śrīdharā’s\) Commentary on Ibīd.

\(^{23}\) \(nimittamātreṇaḥ śrīyaṇām srstikarmanī / pradhānakāraṇābhūtā yato vai śrīyaśaktayaḥ // Ibīd, 1.4.51; \(Śrīdharā’s\) Commentary on Ibīd.

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about this Mahattattva in his notes on *The Viṣṇu Purāṇa* in some detail citing different synonyms of Mahat from other Purāṇas and concludes that ‘Mahat is therefore the divine mind in creative operation.’ In the *Mahābhārata* the Mahattattva is termed as Hiraṇyagarbhā. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, the *Liṅga Purāṇa* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* describe it as Brahmā and Īśvara. As Mahat is a creation of Prakṛti, which is Trīguṇa hence, Mahat is threefold, viz., sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika. Pradhāna then covers the Mahattattva just as the skin covers a seed. From the threefold Mahat the three fold Ahaṁkāra viz., vaikārika or sāttvika, tāmasika or rājasika and bhūtādi or tāmasika are produced. Ahaṁkāra being trīguṇa is the cause of bhūta (elements), indriya (sense-organs) and the devatā (gods). Just as Pradhāna covers Mahat, similarly Mahat covers Ahaṁkāra. Then bhūtādi or tāmasika Ahaṁkāra being productive as sābda tanmātra (rudiment of sound) produced Ākāśa (either). The quality of Ākāśa is sābda. The bhūtādi then covers sābda tanmātra and Ākāśa. When

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24. H. H. Wilson, *The Vishnu Purāṇa*, P. 14
25. hirāṇyagarbhō bhagavāneṣa buddhiritī smṛtāḥ / mahāniti ca yogeṣu bīriṇciritī cāpyajāḥ // MB, Śāntiparva, 302. 18.
26. H.H. Wilson, *The Vishnu Purāṇa*, P. 13n
27. sāttviko rājasascaiva tāmasasca tridhā mahān / pradhānatattvena samaṁ tvacā vijamiṇvāṛtaṁ // VP, 1.2.34.
28. vaikārikastaijascaiva bhūtādīścaiva tāmasah / trividho’yamahāṁkāro mahattattvādajāyata // Ibid, 1.2.35
Akāśa becomes productive it produces sparsā tanmātra. Ether and the rudiment of sound then enveloped the sparsā tanmātra. In this way the Viṣṇu Purāṇa describes the investment of each elements by its own rudiment and of each rudiment by its preceding gross and rudimental elements. Vāyu becoming productive produced rūpa-tanmātra from which jyoti (gross light or fire) produced colour or rūpa is the attribute of light and then as in the case of previous elements the sparsā-tanmātra and the Vāyu coverup the rūpa-tanmātra. Being thus conditioned, the differentiated gross jyoti produced rasa-tanmātra from which again water is produced. In a similar manner the rasa-tanmātra and water being covered up by rūpa-tanmātra produced gandha-tanmātra, whence earth originated. Rasa (taste) and gandha (small) are the properties of water and earth respectively29. In this way the bhūtas (elements) and tanmātras are the productions of Tāmasika Ahamkāra. The Tanmātras literally means its own measure and are the potential conditions of qualities. In each element resides its peculiar rudiment, i.e., the subtle form. The rudiments are the characteristic properties of the elements. These tanmātras are called avisēsa, i.e., they are not endowed with qualities. Therefore, they are not śānta (soothing), ghora (terrific) or mudha (stupefying). By these śānta etc. the Viṣṇu Purāṇa here alludes to the properties of the three gunas.

29. Ibid, 1.2.37-40
respectively. This is the elemental creation, which proceeds from Tāmasika Ahamkāra. Like Tāmasika Ahamkāra, Taijasa Ahamkāra also produced ten cognitive and conative organs. The five cognitive organs are skin, eye, nose, tongue and ear. The five conative organs are the organs of excretion and procreation, the hands, the feet and the speech. From Vaikārika or Sāttvika Ahamkāra ten presiding deities of these sense organs and eleventh indriya i.e., the mind is produced.

4. The Cosmic Egg:

Ether, air, light, water and earth – these elements are endowed with the properties of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. These are called visesa as they are distinguishable according to their qualities as śūnya, ghora and mudha. They possess various powers and are mutually different. Hence, without their combination they could not create living beings. Hence, having combined with one another, they assumed the character of one mass of entire unity. Then being supported by the Puruṣa and with the acquiescence of Pradhāna, Mahat and the rest up to the Mahābhūtas.

\[\text{tanmātrānyavisesāni avisēśāstato hi te /}\
\text{na śaṁtā nāpi ghorāste na mūḍhāscavisesanāh // Ibid, 1.2.44}\]

**30.** tanmātrānyavisesāni avisēśāstato hi te /
na śaṁtā nāpi ghorāste na mūḍhāscavisesanāh // Ibid, 1.2.44

**31.** Ibid,
formed an egg.\textsuperscript{32} This egg gradually expanded from within like a water bubble. This vast egg was compounded of the elements and was resting on the waters. Viṣṇu by assuming the form of Brahmā abide in that egg.\textsuperscript{33} The womb of this egg was composed of the mountain Meru, other mountains were uterus and the oceans were the waters, which filled its cavity. In that egg continents, the seas, the mountains, the planets as also the whole universe consisting of the three \textit{lokas} are produced. This \textit{Brahmāṇḍa} resembles a cocoanut, which has various shell coverings, since it is encircled on the outer side by water, fire, air, ether and the \textit{bhūtadi} each of which is ten times larger than the earlier. Next there is \textit{Mahat} and then the \textit{Avyakta (pradhana)}. In this way the \textit{Brahmāṇḍa} is encircle by these seven coverings.\textsuperscript{34} Lord Viṣṇu assuming the form of Brahmā and effecting \textit{Rajoguna} becomes engaged in creation. He Himself maintains the world in the form of Viṣṇu with \textit{sattvaguna}. In proper time, again by causing preponderance of tamas, God swallows up the universe in His form of Rudra. In this way creation process goes on.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{32} puruṣādhiṣṭhitātvacca pradhānānugraheṇa ca / mahadādyā viśeṣāntā hyānḍamutpādayanti te // Ibid, 1.2.52
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, 1.2.53-54(a)
\textsuperscript{34} ebhiravaraṇairāṇḍam saptabhiḥ prākṛtairvṛtām / nārikelaphalasyāntarbijāṁ bāhyadalairiva // Ibid, 1.2.58
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, 1.2.59-61
5. The Creation of Brahmā:

In the fifth chapter of Part-I of the *Visnu Purāṇa* we find the description of creation process from Brahmā, the creator. Professor Wilson opines here that this creation is not to be confounded with elementary creation. He says, “We have here to do with final productions, or the forms in which the previously created elements and faculties are more or less perfectly aggregated.” Thus, It is said in the Purāṇa that in the beginning Brahmā thought of creation and there appeared a creation beginning with ignorance and consisting of darkness. From that great being Fivefold avidya or ignorance in the form of *tamas, moha, mahāmoha, tāmisra* and *andhatāmisra* were evolved.

According to the Sāmkhya system, these are the five kinds of obstruction, which stand in the way of the liberation of the self. From these there sprang the creation of the fivefold immovables or plants, which are without intellect and sensation. But realizing that this creation is defective and not capable of fulfilling the purpose Brahmā again meditated and the animal kingdom was manifested. They are full of *tamas*.

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36. *The Vishnu Purāṇa*, H.H. Wilson, P. 30n
37. tamo moho mahāmohastāmisro hyandhasaṁjñītaḥ/
    avidyā paṇḍaparvaiśā prādurbhūtā mahātmanāḥ// VP, 1.5.5
38. SK, 48-50
39. paṇcadhāvasthitaiḥ sargo dhyāyato prati bodhavān /
    bahiranto‘prakāśaśca saṁvṛtātmā nagātmakaḥ // VP, 1.5.6
and are destitute of knowledge. They are internally aware of pleasure and pain but they cannot communicate with one another. The plant kingdom is called *Mukhya Sarga* (principal creation), as the creation of the plants is the first by Brahmā.\(^{40}\)

Seeing that this creation is also imperfect, Brahmā then created the gods or *urdha-srotas* who are always happy and immortal.\(^{41}\) Still Brahmā found it incompetent to fulfill his end and so continued meditation. As a result there arose the creation of men who are termed *arvāk-srotas* from *Avyakta māyā*. The products of this creation abound in the light of knowledge, but in them there is predominance of *rajas* and *tamas*. Hence, they are afflicted by sufferings and are impelled to action.\(^{42}\)

In this way the *Visnu Purāṇa* describes different types of creation, which are nine in number. First of all there is the creation of *Mahat*, which is also called the creation of Brahmā. Then the second one is the origination of the *Tanmātras*, which is also called *Bhūtasarga*. The third creation is the modified form of egotism, termed as the organic creation or *Aindriyaka*. These three are the unintelligent creations being created from

\(^{40}\) mukhyā nāgā yataḥśokta mukhyasargastata stvayaṁ / Ibid, 1.5.7

\(^{41}\) te sukhapritibahula bahirantastvanābṛtāḥ / prakāśa bahirantaśca urddhasrotodbhavāḥ smṛtāḥ // Ibid, 1.5.12

\(^{42}\) Ibid, 1.5.15-17
the Prakṛti, which is of the nature of avidyā. The fourth creation is the creation of the inanimate bodies. Then come the animals, which is the fifth creation. The sixth is the creation of the divinities and seventh, the creation of man also called arvāksrotas. There is an eighth creation, which is called Anugrahasarga. About this creation S. N. Dasgupta says, "The eighth creation seems to be the creation of a new kind. It probably means the distinctive characteristic of destiny of each of the four creations, plants, animals, gods and men. The plants have, for their destiny, ignorance, the animals have mere bodily energy, the gods have pure contentment and the men have the realization of ends. This is called the Anugrahasarga." This creation is both sāttvika and tāmasika. According to Wilson this is the Pratayyasarga or intellectual creation of the Sāmkhyas. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa gives a detail description of this creation.

Of this eight above described creations the first three are primary or Prākṛta and the last five are secondary or Vaikṛta. Then comes the ninth creation, which are both Prākṛta and Vaikṛta. This ninth creation is the

43. Ibid, 1.5.18-20
44. tiryakṣrotāstu yaḥ proktastrīryagyonyaḥ sa ucyate / urdhvasrotāstataḥ saṣṭho devasargastu sa smṛtaḥ // tato’rvāksrotasah sargah saptamah sa tu mānuṣaḥ / Ibid, 1.5.21-22(a)
46. H.H. Wilson, The Vishnu Purāṇa, P. 33n

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Kaumarasarga and refers to the creation of Sanatkumāra and other mental creations of God Brahmā.⁴⁸

In this way the *Visnu Purana* describes these nine types of creations which are the radical causes of the world.

6. Creation from Brahmā’s Body:

The *Visnu Purana* also points out that the creation process continues because of the fact that the consequences of the karmans of the beings do not perish without fruition. Nobody is exempted from his or her consequences. As a result when Brahmā creates the world anew after dissolution he takes the fruits of actions (*karma-phala*) of the beings into account.⁴⁹

Then the *Visnu Purana* describes the creation of different things of the world from the different things of the world from the different limbs of Brahmā. This is the organic conception of creation. When lord Brahmā started the creation process at first the four kinds of *Prakṛti* starting from gods to the inert objects were born which were all mental creations.⁵⁰ Then Brahmā used his body for creating Gods, demons and men. When he

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48. VP, 1.5.18-23
49. Ibid, 1.5.26, 59
50. sthāvarāntāḥ surādyāśtu prajābrahmanāṁ caturvidhāḥ /
    brahmaṇaḥ kurvataḥ śṛṣṭīṁ jātīre mānasāśtu tāḥ // Ibid, 1.5.27

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concentrated his mind into itself there was an abundance of tamoguna and at first the demons (asuras) were born from his thigh. Brahmā then abandoned that body composed of tamas and that deserted body became night. Continuing to create, but assuming a different shape he experienced pleasure and then from his mouth proceeded the gods in whom sattva predominated. He then gave away that body also which became day. Hence, by day the gods are most powerful and by night the demons. Brahmā then assumed another body in which also sattvaguna prevailed and the pitṛs were born from his side. This body being deserted became the sandhyā (twilight). Thereafter Brahmā adopted a rajomaya body and from this men in whom rajas predominates were born. He then abandoned this body, which became the dawn. Hence, dawn, night, day and evening twilight are the four bodies of Brahmā invested by the three guṇas.⁵¹

In the same manner from a body invested with rajoguna of Brahmā was produced hunger, from hunger anger, was born. He then created the Rākṣasas and the Yaksas sitting in darkness. Serpents were born from his hair. He then created the melodious Gandharvas. From his vital vigour birds were born, from his breast, the sheep, from his mouth, goats; from his belly and sides, cows; from his feet, horses, elephants, gavayas, deer.

⁵¹ Ibid, 1.5.28-38
camels and other animals. Herbs, roots and fruits sprang from the hair of his body.\textsuperscript{52}

In this way all creatures, great or small were born from the body of the progenitor Brāhma. This is what is termed as the organic conception of creation. Not only the creatures, the gods, the mankind and the plants were born, but the four Vedas and the four castes were also created from the body of Brāhma. Thus the four castes, viz., Brāhmaṇa, Ksatriya, Vaiṣya and Śūdra were born from the mouth, the breast, the thighs and the feet of Brāhma respectively.\textsuperscript{53} The similar description of the creation of the four castes is found originally in the Puruṣasūkta of the \textit{Rgveda} where the four \textit{varṇas} are described as the limbs of Brahman's cosmic body.\textsuperscript{54}

In the 7\textsuperscript{th} chapter of the 1\textsuperscript{st} part the \textit{Viṣṇu Purāṇa} describes how Brāhma further created human beings and other beings. The different creations of Brāhma from gods to the inanimate things did not multiply themselves. Seeing this Brāhma created other mind-born sons like him. They are Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Angiras, Marici, Dakṣa, Atri and Vaśistha. Sanandana and other sons of Brāhma who were previously created by him were un-desirous of progeny. When Brāhma perceived this

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid, 1.5.39-48
\textsuperscript{53} brahmanah ksatriya vaisyah sudrasca dvijasattama/
padoruvaksahasthalato mukhatasca samudgatah/\textsuperscript{Ibid, 1.6.6}
\textsuperscript{54} Cf. Rg.V, 10.90.12
he became angry and then from his forehead Rudra was born, who was half male and half female. Then Brahmā created from himself Svāyambhuva Manu and also Śatarūpā. Manu took Śatarūpā as wife and from them different sons and daughters were born.

Thus, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa describes how Viṣṇu in the form of Manu, Dakṣa etc. becomes the author of the uninterrupted vicissitudes of creation.

7. Cosmogony in Some Other Purāṇas:

The theory of creation in different Purāṇas is described in the similar vein. All the Purāṇas offer a more or less uniform creation theory although there are differences in detail. The sectarian nature of the Purāṇas has influenced their cosmogony. Thus, the Vaiṣṇavite Purāṇas describe that creation starts from Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa. The Śaivite Purāṇas, on the other hand, show Śiva as the Ultimate Cause. In some Purāṇas, again Brahmā is the Ultimate Cause.

In the Purānic concept of cosmogony various layers of beliefs are noticed. The account of cosmic Egg, the creation of the seven mind born sons of Brahmā, the division of creator’s body into two parts – male and female – are some of the common concepts found in almost all the Purāṇas. The influence of Sāṅkhya theory of creation is found in many Purāṇas.
The sāttvika or Vaiṣṇavite Purāṇas, viz., Bhāgavata, Nārāyaṇa, Garuḍa, Padma and Varāha give almost similar description of the creation process. The nine types of creation are practically the same in all these Purāṇas. There is no difference in their variety also, all these Purāṇas divide them into three types, viz., prākṛta, vaikṛta and mixed. In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa it is said that at the beginning of creation, Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa being desirous of becoming many accepted kāla, karman and svabhāva by his own power Māyā. When God desired to create the universe then the balance of the guṇas becomes disturbed and by the favourable condition of the adṛśta of the jīvas and by the transformable nature of Prakṛti, the principle of Mahat is evolved. All this is possible only because of the direction or presence of God. In the Mahattattva Sātvika and Rajas predominate. When Mahat undergoes modification, it evolves into Ahamkāra where Tamas predominates. After that there takes place the threefold modifications of Ahamkāra viz., Sāttvika, Rājasika or Tājasika and Tāmasa. These three types of Ahamkāra are also known as jñānasakti, kriyāsakti and dravyaśakti respectively. After this the creation process is

55. vaikṛtastraya evaite devasargascā sattama /
vaikārikastu yah proktah kaumārastubhayātmakah // BP, 3.10.27
56. mahattastu vikurvanadrajahsattvopabhinibhūtah //
tamaḥpradhānastvabhavadravyajñānakriyātmakah/ Ibid, 2.5.23
the same with the Viśnu Purāṇa. The description of the creation process in the Nārādiya Purāṇa tallies completely with the Viśnu Purāṇa.57

According to the Brāhma Purāṇa, at the very beginning of creation, it was nothing but water. This water is treated there as a female principle. God placed his semen in it. Then a golden Egg was produced from that very Egg Brahmā was born. Then Brahmā broke the Egg and created all things. He created the heaven and earth from the halves of the Egg and sky from the middle portion. For the purpose of multiplying creation Brahmā divided himself into two parts — male and female — and thus created different creatures.58 In some other place the Brāhma Purāṇa describes that Brahmā asked Viṣṇu to enter into the Egg and to activate. Then Brahmā creates the nine-fold universe. The description of which is similar to that the other Purāṇas. The description of the golden Egg is also found in the Matsya Purāṇa,59 Śiva Purāṇa,60 Vāmana Purāṇa,61 Avadhūta Purāṇa62 and so on.

57. NP, 1.1.3.80-83
58. Brāhma Purāṇa, 1.38ff
59. apa eva sasajädau tāsu bijam avāṣjat/ MP, 2.28ff
60. SP, 5.29.10
According to the *Siva Purāṇa* after the breaking of the golden egg, heaven and earth were created and from his mind Brahmā created the seven seers, viz., Marīci, Aṅgirā, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vaśiṣṭha. From various limbs of his body gods etc. are produced. From his generative organ human beings were produced and from his feet, the Asuras. He divided his body into man and woman and created other species. The *Siva Purāṇa* also takes the traditional account of creation and regards Śiva as the source of all. It says that Viṣṇu was born from Śiva and Śakti. As he was practising penance, from his perspiration water came out and formed an ocean. When Viṣṇu was sleeping in this water a beautiful lotus came out of his navel from, which Brahmā was born.

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* describes an Ultimate principle (*apravāva kāraṇa*), which is associated with the first causal movement of God. This principle is referred to by various names, such as Brahman, *Pradhana, Prakṛti, Prasuti, Ātman, and Yoni* etc. Being associated with *Puruṣa* through the preponderance of *rajas* and together with *kāla* that *Apraṃva* produced eight stages of *Prakṛti*. These eight are originated as a result of the *sāṅkalpa* of Maheśvara.

63. SP, 2.1.6.49-52
64. Ibid, 2.1.7.1-6
65. Va.P, 1.3.9
The Vāyu also describes the Avyakta or Prakṛti, which is the cause of the material world as of the nature of existence and non-existence and constituted of three guṇas just like Viṣṇu Purāṇa. Before creation in the state of equilibrium of the guṇas, Prakṛti as tamaś pervaded everything. At the time of creation being associated with Kṣetrajña, Prakṛti produces Mahat. The different creations of Mahat are described a little differently in this Purāṇa. It is said that Mahān, which consists of three guṇas first produces Ahamkāra with the preponderance of rajas. With the preponderance of tamaś there immerses Bhūtādi from Mahat. From this Bhūtādi the bhūtas (elements) and tanmātras are born. The production of these elements and their qualities are described in the same way as in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. The Vāyu Purāṇa also says that from the Nātha guṇa Ahamkāra called Vaikārika eleven indriyas are produced. Just like the Viṣṇu Purāṇa here also it is said that a cosmic Egg like water bubble is produced. All the seven worlds, seven islands and seven oceans remain inside this great Egg.

The Vāyu Purāṇa also says that Maheśvara entered that Egg and produced a disturbance in Pradhāna and Puruṣa. From the disturbance of

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66. Ibid, 1.4.17
67. Ibid, 1.4.45-55
68. Ibid, 1.4.66-67
the three gunas three gods were engendered. Brahma with rajas, Agni with tamas and Vishnu with sattva were born. Brahma was the creator, Agni was the kala or time and Vishnu was indifferent.

The creation process in the Kurma Purana also corresponds to a great extent to that of the Visnu Purana. In the Kurma Purana the Absolute Reality or the transcendental consciousness is termed as Mahadeva,69 while in the Visnu Purana, the same principle is called Visnu or Janardana. Maheshvara is described as unmanifested, infinite, unknowable and the governor of the world. He is the inner self and the Supreme God.70 At first Maheshvara entered Prakriti and Purusa and caused disturbance in them by his yogic power. Prakriti also called Pradhana is described as un-manifest and of the nature of both sat and asat. It is the cause of the material world.71 From the disturbance of Prakriti and Purusa sprang Mahat, which is the cause (bija) and which is of the nature of both Pradhana and Purusa.72 From Mahat came out three-fold Ahamkara, viz. Vaikarika, Taijasa and Bhutadi. The Kurma Purana also describes this Ahamkara as the doer, thinker and the self of all as all our efforts spring from this. The Kurma Purana describes a mind (manas), which is the

69. KP, 1.4.5
70. Ibid, 1.4.12
71. Ibid, 1.4.6
72. Ibid, 1.4.17
product of *avyakta* and is called the first effect. It is like a sort of cosmic mind, which superintends the evolution process and should be distinguished from the *manas*, the sense organ.

From *Ahamkāra* the evolution of different things are described more or less in the same manner as in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. From *Vaikārika* presiding deities were born, from *Taijasa*, the *indriyas*, and from *Bhūtādi* the *bhūtas* and *tanmātras*. This is similar to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. But here the mind, the eleventh organ is said to be the product of both *Vaikārika* and *Taijasa*. The creation of the *bhūtas* and the *tanmātras* is also described in the similar way as in other Purāṇas.

The *Kūrma Purāṇa* then describes the formation of the cosmic Egg with the combination of *Mahat*, *Ahamkāra* and five *tanmātras* by the help of *Avyakta* and being supported by *Puruṣa*. This cosmic Egg resembles a water bubble. The entire universe remained in that Egg. This creation is called *Prākṛta* creation and it is *abuddhi pūrvaka* because it is the spontaneous creation through the natural process of evolution and without any deliberate effort on the part of the creator. Here also we find

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73. Ibid, 1.4.18-19
74. Ibid, 1.4.35-36
75. Ibid, 1.4.65
reference to nine types of creation—five Vaikṛta, three Prākṛta and one Kaumāra.

In some Purāṇas the creation is described from the Great Egg. Here the influence of Sāṁkhya is not clearly seen. Thus, in the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa the motif of the Cosmic Egg is mentioned.76 The same motif is also found in other Purāṇas. In the Mārkanda Purāṇa, it is said that initially there was the great Cosmic Egg. Brahmā broke it and uttered the sound om. From om came out Bhūḥ, Bhuvah, and Svaha.77 It is also mentioned there that various heterosexual couples were produced from the mouth of Brahmā as he was contemplating about creation.78 The Maṅga Purāṇa elaborately discusses the creation of the universe from the golden Egg. It is said that Nārāyaṇa first created water from his body. In it he placed his seed, which turned into a golden Egg. Brahmā entered that egg and became Viṣṇu. Then god Sūrya appeared in it. The Egg was then broken into two parts from which Brahmā created the universe.80 Similarly, the Egg motif is found in other Purāṇas also.

76. Br. P, 1.1.3.29
77. Mar. P, 43.1-13
78. Ibid, 45.31-35
79. MP, 2.27.37
8. The Concept of *Purusa* and *Prakṛti*:

One of the oldest systems of Indian thought is Sāṅkhya. According to the scholars, Kapila was the founder of this system. That is why it is also known as Kapila Darsāna. Western scholars tried to place Kapila before Buddha. According to some, Kapila was the son of Brahmā. Among the twenty-four incarnations of Viṣṇu there is also one Kapila. Āsuri, Pañcaśikha, Gārgya and Ulūka are the successors of Kapila. But none of the work of these scholars is available now. The Sāṅkhya sūtra, which is available, now is said to be a work of a latter date. The Sāṅkhya Kārikā of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa is the most popular and authentic work. On Īśvarakṛṣṇas Sāṅkhya Kārikā Vācaspati Miśra wrote a commentary known as Sāṅkhhyatattvakaumudī.

The Sāṅkhya Philosophy is a dualistic philosophy and recognizes two ultimate principles of *Purusa* and *Prakṛti*. In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa also the concepts of *Purusa* and *Prakṛti* are found. In the following lines we are going to discuss these two fundamental concepts from the standpoint of the Sāṅkhya system and the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.

*Prakṛti*:

According to the Sāṅkhya, the ultimate material cause of the universe is Prakṛti. The universe has evolved out of an unmanifested source, which is known as *Prakṛti* or *Pradhāna* or *Avyakta*. It is the
contention of the Śāṅkhaṇya that the subtle elements such as mind, ahamkāra (egoism), senses etc. cannot have their origin in the physical elements. The cause of the universe should be such that even though it is physical it should be as subtle and infinitesimal as possible, should have no beginning and no end, and should be able to give rise to all the entities. All these qualities are to be found in Prakṛti. Hence, Prakṛti is the fundamental or the first cause of all the objects of the universe. It is eternal and absolute because a relative and non-eternal element cannot be the fundamental cause of the world. Śāṅkhaṇya’s Prakṛti is the state of equilibrium of the three guṇas, viz., sattva, rajas and tamas. “This state of equipoise is absolutely indeterminate, undifferentiated and homogeneous and it exists only as the possible source of energy of the whole world. Prakṛti is unlimited, all-pervasive and infinite. It is without any cause, eternal, inactive, one, independent and unconscious. It is the support of all and is not supported by anything else. The most important characteristic of Prakṛti is that it is productive.

80. SK, 14
82. hetumadanityamavyāpi sakriyamanekāsṛitaṁ liṅgaṁ / sāvaṁ paratantraṁ vyaktāṁ viparītāmayaktaṁ // trigunamaviveki, viṣayaḥ, sāmānyamacetanaṁ, prasavadharmi / vayktaṁ, tathā pradhānaṁ// SK, 10.11
The Sāṅkhyas offer five Justifications for the acceptance of Prakṛti as the ultimate cause.83 These are:

a) What is finite is itself caused. All categories including mātrārūtra are finite and limited. Hence they must be produced from some infinite and unlimited cause. This is Prakṛti (bhedaṇāṁ pariṃañāt).

b) The things of the world possess some common nature as each of them produces pleasure, pain and indifference. So there must be a common source, which is possessed of all these three qualities. That source is Prakṛti with its three constituents sattva, rajas, and tamas (samanvayāt).

c) A cause can produce that effect only for which it possesses efficiency or potency. Therefore categories must exist in the state of unmanifest or Prakṛti before their creation. (kāryatāḥ pravṛttesā).

d) Every effect arises from its cause and at the time of dissolution it goes back to that very cause from which it comes out. So the universe has also a cause in which the entire universe lies unmanifest. That cause is Prakṛti. (kāraṇakārya-vibhāga).

83. bhedaṇāṁ pariṃañātsamanvayācchaktitaḥ pravṛttesā/
kāraṇakāryavibhāgādavibhāgād vaisvārūpasya// kāraṇamastavyaktaṁ/ Ibid, 15.
e) By perception of the effect we can infer its cause; without cause there can be no effect. This universe is also an effect, so there must be a cause from which this world is evolved and this cause is Prakṛti. (avibhāgāt vaisvarūpasya)

**Puruṣa:**

According to the Sāṁkhya, after Prakṛti the second ultimate reality is Puruṣa or the self. Puruṣa is of quite the opposite nature of Prakṛti. According to the Sāṁkhya, Puruṣa is pure, conscious, beyond change and activity and is the silent spectator. It is inactive and changeless. Puruṣa is self-manifest (svapraṅkāśā) and does not require anything to illuminate itself. It has neither beginning nor end. By nature Puruṣa is inactive, and a mere witness a solitary, indifferent and passive spectator.84

In the Sāṁkhya Karikā we find some arguments to prove the existence of Puruṣa or the self.85

a) All composite things serve the purpose of some one else. This world is also a composite thing of five elements. Hence, there must be a separate enjoyer for these things. Unconscious things cannot be the enjoyer. So a conscious Puruṣa or self is accepted.

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84. tasmācca viparyāśāt siddhiḥ sākṣitvamasya puruṣasya /
   kaivalyaṁ māḍḍhyasthyanā drāṣṭrāmakartṛbāvasca // Ibid, 19

85. saṁghātapatārthatvāt, triguḍādiviparyayādadhiṣṭhānāt/
   puruṣo'sti, bhoktrbāvāt, kaivalyārtha pravṛttescā// Ibid, 17
for whom this universe is an object of enjoyment. (.saṅghāsa-
parārthatvāt)

b) All substances of this universe are the composition of three
guṇas – sattva, rajas and tamas. The substances made of three
guṇas presuppose the existence of Puruṣa who is their seer and
is beyond them. (triguṇādi viparyayāt)

c) There should be a presiding power, a pure consciousness, which
is beyond experience, to control and to direct all the
unconscious things of the world and that is Puruṣa
(adhisthānāt)

d) Prakṛti and its effects are equally unconscious. So there must
be someone different to experience the products of Prakṛti,
which is by nature conscious. All the objects of the world create
either pain or pleasure or indifference, these pleasure and pain
have meaning when some conscious being experiences it. That
bhoktā (enjoyer) is Puruṣa (bhoktrbhāvāt).

e) The sāstras promise liberation from the three types of misery
and prescribe means for achieving that. Prakṛti and its evolutes
are unconscious and are themselves of the nature of pain.
Hence, there must be a conscious principle, which is other than
Prakṛti. This is Puruṣa (kaivalyārtha pravṛttēḥ)

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In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also concepts of *Purusa* and *Prakṛti* are found. But there is some difference between the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and Sāṁkhya system. For both the Sāṁkhya system and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Prakṛti* is the root cause of the material universe. According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also *Prakṛti* is the *Avyakta*, which is subtle and uniform. It has already been discussed that *Prakṛti* is of the nature of both existence and non-existence. It is consisted of three guṇas- sattva, rajas and tamas. Like the Sāṁkhya the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also maintains that Pradhāna or *Prakṛti* is the state of equilibrium of these three guṇas.86 The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* generally uses the same expressions as given by the Sāṁkhya system to describe the *Prakṛti*. But this creates some incongruity also. Thus the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* describes *Pradhāna as nitya* (eternal) and *anādi* (beginningless). But then it also says that the *Pradhāna* is produced from Viṣṇu. To avoid, this incongruity the commentator says that ‘nitya’ does not mean eternal, but it means uniform and devoid of *Buddhi* etc.87 Similarly ‘anādi’ means not created by any created things but proceeding from the first cause.88 In this way the commentator avoids all the incongruity noticed in the description of the *Prakṛti* in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. The attributes of *Prakṛti* generally conform to

86. guṇasāmyāt ........................................ // VP, 1.2.33
87. Cf. Ibid, 1.2.19,21; nityam sadaikaṛūpaṁ bṛddhiādvihināṁ. Śrīdhara’s Commentary on Ibid
88. Śrīdhara’s Commentary on Ibid, 1.2.21
the Sāṁkhya system. However, the most important difference between
the Sāṁkhya system and the Viṣṇu Purāṇa is that while the Sāṁkhya regards
the Prakṛti as independent, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa regards it as dependent on
Viṣṇu.

In the same manner, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa also regards Puruṣa as a form
of Viṣṇu and not independent. It is the first form of the God. The Viṣṇu
Purāṇa describes the Puruṣa as Kṣetrajña, i.e., the embodied self. From
this it is clear that for the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Puruṣa is nothing but the
individual self. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa again says that the world of earth, fire,
water, ether the senses and the mind all these are Puruṣa. This may
imply that the Viṣṇu Purāṇa denies the existence of matter. However, from
other descriptions it is clear that the Viṣṇu Purāṇa denies the independent
existence of the matter.

9. The Concept of Pralaya:

The concept of Pralaya or dissolution is intimately related with the
concept of creation. It is believed that the process of creation is beginning-
less and the chain of creation and dissolution continues without break.
After each creation, there is dissolution and after dissolution there is again

89. prthivyāpastathā tejo vāyurākāśāmeva ca /
sarvendriyāntakahāraṇāṁ puruṣākhyaṁ hi yaj jagat // Ibid, 1.2.66
new creation. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* regards Viṣṇu not only as the creator, but he is the destroyer of the universe also. That is why in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* we find the description of Pralaya also.

Pralaya means the destruction of three lokaś. In the 7th chapter of the first book of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* pralaya is described as of four kinds. These are: Naimittika (occasional), Prākṛtika (elemental), Ātyantika (absolute) and Nitya (perpetual). In the 6th book again three types of pralaya are described, the perpetual dissolution is left out there.

*Naimittika Pralaya:*

This Pralaya is also termed as the Brāhma Pralaya. This Pralaya occurs when Brahmā, the lord of the world reclines in sleep. It occurs at the end of a kalpa or at the end of a day of Brahmā's life. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also describes the span of time of Brahmā's day. Thus, it is said that one year of man makes oneday and night of the gods. Three hundred and sixty such days constitute a year of gods. An aggregate of four ages of men contains twelve thousand divine years. A period of four thousand ages is

90. pralayo nama trailokyavinasah. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā,* P.
91. naimittikaḥ prākṛtikastathaivātyantiko dvijaḥ /
   nityasća sarvabhūtānāṁ pralayo'yaṁ caturvidhaḥ // VP, 1.7.38
92. sarveṣāmeba bhūtānāṁ trividhāḥ pratisaṅcaraḥ /
   naimittikāḥ prākṛtikastathaivātyantiko mataḥ // Ibid, 6.3.1
93. brāhma naimittikastatra yacchete jagataḥ patiḥ // Ibid, 1.7.39 (a)
94. brāhma naimittikasteṣāṁ kalpante pratisaṅcaraḥ // Ibid, 6.3.2
called a day of Brahmā. This period is also called a kalpa. After a kalpa
Naimittika pralaya occurs. As a kalpa constitutes a day of Brahmā so his
night is also of the same duration. During this period a vast ocean
submerges the world and God sleeps upon the ocean in the form of
Brahmā. When the Universal spirit sleeps, all the creatures are destroyed.
This dissolution is termed incidental because Hari, in the form of Brahmā
sleeps there as its incidental cause. It is also indicated in the Viṣṇu
Purāṇa that this dissolution occurs only in the three lokas, i.e., Bhu, Bhuva
and Svā. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa also gives a very fearful description of this
dissolution. It is said that Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all things in the form of
Rudra at first reduces the pātāla into ashes. Then that great fire consumes
the earth (Bhu), the atmosphere (Bhuva) and the sphere of the gods (Svā).
Then Janārdana in the person of Rudra having consumed the whole world
breathes forth heavy clouds. These clouds at first quench the dreadful fire
by showering down torrents of water. These rains then inundate the three
worlds, which look like a great ocean.

95. Ibid, 6.3.10-12
96. ekārṇave tatatasmin śeṣaśayāśthitaḥ prabhuḥ /
    brahmarūpapadhaḥ ātē bhagavāṇādikṛddhariḥ // Ibid, 6.4.4
97. ekārṇavāṁ bhavatyeva trailokyamakhilaṁ tataḥ // Ibid, 6.4.1
98. Vide, Ibid, 6.3.14-39
**Prakrtika Pralaya:**

This *Pralaya* occurs when the whole *Brahmāṇḍa* dissolves into *Prakṛti*. At that time all the things of the world return to their causes. This dissolution takes place in the opposite order of their creation. Thus, the seven forms of *Prakṛti* from *Mahat* to earth enter successively into their causes. The Egg of *Brahmā* is dissolved in the waters that surround it with its seven *lokas*, seven oceans, seven islands and the mountains. Water is drunk up by fire; that of air absorbs the stratum of fire. Air is merged in ether and *Bhūadi* or *Ahamkāra* devours the ether. *Mahat* again takes up *Ahamkāra*. Then *Prakṛti* absorbs *Mahat* and all these. *Prakṛti* and *Praṇaya* also are dissolved into the Supreme Spirit. This is *Prakṛti Pralaya*.99

**Ātyantika Pralaya:**

Absolute or final dissolution is attained by the knowledge of the Supreme.100 It is said that all beings are afflicted by three kinds of worldly pains, viz., *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādidaivika*. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also describes these three types of pains. *Ādhyātmika* is of two types bodily and mental. That kind of evil, which is inflicted upon men by beasts, birds, etc. are called *Ādhibhautika*. *Ādidaivika* pain is the work of cold, heat, wind, rain, lightning and other atmospheric phenomena. These three

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99. Ibid, 6.4.32-33.
100. jñāna-dātyantikah prakto yoginah paramātmā / Ibid, 1.7.40 (a)
types of afflictions are described in the Sāṅkhya system also in the simiha vein.  

Only true knowledge can rescue men from these three kinds of affliction. When a man attains true, knowledge and detachment from human afflictions, he obtains final dissolution. In this dissolution the yogis are merged in the Supreme Spirit.  

_Nitya Pralaya:_

The _Viṣṇu Purāṇa_ describes this _Pralaya_ in one line only. It is said that _Nitya_ or perpetual dissolution is the constant disappearance of all living beings. However, it is not clear what actually the _Viṣṇu Purāṇa_ means by this. This fourth kind of dissolution is not included in the _Purāṇa_ Book where other _pralayas_ are elaborately discussed. According to Wilson, this means the death of the living beings, which occurs constantly. Vans Kennedy, whom Wilson refers to, maintains that "_Nitya_ is the extinction of life, like the extinction of a lamp, in sleep at night".  

But there is no proof in our _Purāṇa_ to explain this _Pralaya_ as the sound sleep or deep slumber of a man. Actually the _Vedānta Paribhāṣā_ says:

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101. Ibid, 6.5.1-9; SK, 2
102. Supra, P. 101
103. _The Vishnu Purāṇa, H.H. Wilson, P.49_
Dharmarājādhvarindra describes Nitya Pralaya as *Susupti* or deep sleep.

10. *The Sāṁkhya System And the Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

It has already been mentioned that the creation process in the Purāṇas as also in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, corresponds to a great extent to the Sāṁkhya theory of creation. But there are some differences also.

The Sāṁkhya System accepts two ultimate realities, viz., the *Prakṛti* and the *Purusa*. But the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* regards Viṣṇu as the Ultimate Reality. *Prakṛti* and *Purusa* are only two modifications of Viṣṇu. They do not have any independent existence.

According to the Sāṁkhya System, *Prakṛti* is the ultimate material cause of the material world. *Prakṛti* is of opposite nature of the *Purusa* or the soul. Though *Prakṛti* and the *Purusa* are, thus, distinct and opposed to each other in nature, there is such a harmony between the two that the movements of the *Prakṛti* are invariably adapted to the needs of the *Purusas*. When all the adṛṣṭas or the merits and demerits of the *Purusas* require that there should be a world for their enjoyment, Īśvara Kṛṣṇa says that *Prakṛti* and the *Purusas* come in contact with each other, because

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104. tatra nityah pralayah susuptih. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, P. 250
Prakṛti wants to be known by Puruṣa and the Puruṣa wants to attain liberation.\textsuperscript{105}

Prakṛti is the state of equilibrium of the three guṇas – sattva, rajas, and tamas. When this equilibrium is disturbed creation starts. Now the question is how this equilibrium is disturbed. The Sāṁkhya says that the equilibrium of the guṇas is disturbed by the nearness (sānāṇḍhya) of the Puruṣas. The Sāṁkhya holds that these two principles co-operate in the same way as a blind man and a lame man co-operate with each other. The lame man may sit on the shoulders of the blind and point to him the way while the blind man may walk and thus both reach the destination. In the same way the inactive and conscious Puruṣa comes in contact with the unconscious and active Prakṛti and as a result the equipoise of the guṇas is disturbed and thereby evolution starts.\textsuperscript{106} However, this contact is also not the real contact. By contact the Sāṁkhya simply mean that Prakṛti is influenced by the mere presence of the Puruṣa just as a piece of iron is move by a piece of magnet.

But relation or co-operation between the Puruṣa and Prakṛti is the most perplexing point in the Sāṁkhya philosophy. How can the Prakṛti, an unconscious principal come in contact with Puruṣa, which is quite

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{105. puruṣasya dārśānārtham kaivalyārthāṃ tathā pradhānasya / SK, 21}
\footnote{106. paṅgvaṇdhabadbhayorapi saṁyogastātṛtah sargah / Ibid}
\end{footnotes}
indifferent and inactive? The Prakṛti though active cannot take the initiative, because it is unconscious. Neither can the Puruṣa come in contact with Prakṛti as it is inactive. The Sāṅkhyaists cannot satisfactorily solve this problem, as they do not accept any supreme reality or God who helps in bringing about this connection between the Puruṣa and Prakṛti.

The Viṣṇu Purāṇa on the other hand, maintains that Viṣṇu in the form of kāla brings about the conjunction of Pradhāna and Puruṣa at the time of creation and disjunction of both of them at the time of dissolution.107 It is also mentioned there that God Viṣṇu enters into Prakṛti and Puruṣa at the time of creation and produces agitation in them.108 In this way the Lord becomes the governor of the creation process. Thus, according to the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Viṣṇu is the Ultimate Cause and not Prakṛti. Not only the Viṣṇu Purāṇa but also all the Sattvika Purāṇas and also other Purāṇas conform to this view.

In this way we find that the Viṣṇu Purāṇa and other Purāṇas unanimously uphold Viṣṇu as the ultimate cause and not Prakṛti. The riddle of how an inert object like Prakṛti and an inactive principle like Puruṣa come in contact cannot be solved in the Sāṅkhya system, while

107. tasyaiya te'nyena dhṛte viyukte rūpāntaram yat tad dvija kālasāṁjñānām // VP, 1.2.3
108. pradhānaṁ puruṣaṁcāpi praviṣṭyatmecchayahariḥ// kṣobhayāṃśa samprāpte sargakāle byayāvyayau// Ibid, 1.2.29

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solved by the Purānas making God as the governor of the creation process.

Thomas J. Hopkins says, "The Viṣṇu Purāṇa begins with an account of the creation of the universe by Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu in this account is Brahman, of one essence but containing in his own nature the entire universe. He exists in the forms of spirit (Puruṣa), primary matter (Prakṛti) and eternal time (kāla) which brings about the connection and separation of Puruṣa and Prakṛti."¹⁰⁹

The evolutes of the Prakṛti are accepted by the Purānas in the same order with slight difference. The evolution process in Sāṁkhya Yoga starts from Prakṛti. From Prakṛti Mahat is born. It is also called Buddhi or intellect. Being evolutes of Prakṛti, it is material. Mahat produces Ahamkāra, which is said to be of three kinds, viz., Vaikārika or Sāttvika, Taijasa or Rājasa and Bhūtadi or Tāmasa. From Sāttvika Ahamkāra are produced the five sensory organs, five motor organs and the mind. From the Tāmasa Ahamkāra arise the five Tanmātras and the five gross elements arise out of these Tanmātras.¹¹⁰ The Sāṁkhya system maintains that the eleven indriyas are evolved from Vaikārika Ahamkāra. But in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is found that the indriyas are born from the Taijasa Ahamkāra and the Vaikārika is the cause of the mind and the presiding

¹⁰⁹. Thomas J. Hopkins, The Hindu Religious Traditions, PP. 99-100
¹¹⁰. SK, 22-25

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deities of the *indriyas*. The *Sāṅkhya*as do not regard the *Taijasa Ahaṁkāra* as the generator of anything. Thus here we find slight difference otherwise the course of evolution is the same both in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the Sāṅkhya system.

The comparative account of the creation process of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the Sāṅkhya system can be shown in tabular forms as follows:

**The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa***:

![Diagram of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* creation process]

- **Viṣṇu**
  - **Puruṣa**
  - **Pradhāna (Prakṛti)**
  - **Mahat**
  - **Ahaṁkāra**
    - **Vaikārika** or sāttvika
      - Manas and Ten divinities
    - **Taijasa** or rājasa
      - Jñānendriyas and Karmendriyas
    - **Bhūtadhi** or tāmasa
      - Tanmātras
      - Mahābhūta
The Sāṁkhya System:

1. Prakṛti
   ↓
2. Mahat
   ↓
3. Ahamkāra.
   ↓
   Sattvika
or Vaikārika
   ↓
   Manas Jñānendriyas Karmendriyas
   ↓
   Rājasa or Taijasa
   ↓
   Tāmasa or Bhūtadi
   ↓
   Tanmātras
   ↓
   Mahābhūtas

Hence, we can conclude that the primary creation in this Purāṇa corresponds to a great extent to the Sāṁkhya system. But the Viṣṇu Purāṇa accepts an omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent God who is the source and guide of the world process. Kāla or time is said to play a vital role in the creation process of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. This is no doubt a departure from the Sāṁkhya doctrine. It is also noticed that in the Sāṁkhyan scheme rajas does not account for the emergence of the senses, while in the Viṣṇu Purāṇic account it does.