

Tract No. IV.

Price 2 Pice.

LECTURE ON  
POURANIC RELIGION.

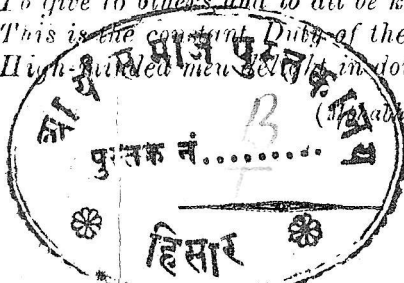
BY B. R. CHATTERJEE,

THE PRESIDENT, ARYA SOMAJ,

सुक्कर विज्ञानन्द टण्डा  
SUKKUR, 30th JUNE 1893.

c 2867

*"To injure none by thought or deed or word,  
To give to others and to all be kind,  
This is the constant Duty of the good,  
High-minded men set to in doing good."*



Printed and Published at the Albert Press, Sukk

## POURANIC RELIGION. \*



After the Buddhist Revolution in India, Pouranic Religion appears to have replaced the Vedic Religion between the years 300 and 500 B. C. There are so many Puranas and Upa-Puranas that if they are collected they would take the shape of a hillock. Purana literally means ancient, and the books in which the old events are recorded are called Puranas. *Upapuranas* are those that are deduced from the principal Puranas. The word Purana is traceable in the Brahmanas, Kulpa Sutras and some of the principal Upanishads. In the *Satapatha XIII* 4, 3-13, and *Gopatha* 1-10 *Brahmanas*, *Sankhayanana XVI*—1 and *Asswaloyana Sutras X* 7, Puranas have been classified next to the Vedas. Puranas have also been alluded to, in the *Atharva Sunghita XV* 6, *Tattariya Aranyaka II*. 9, and *Brihad Aranyaka* Chap. II, B 4, 10. In *Chhandogya Upanishad*, seventh *Prapatha*, Section I. Muntar 2, Puranas have been ranked as the fifth Veda. The words Itihasa and Purana occur twice in the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, in the 3rd Chapter, Section IV, verses 1 & 2, in connection with the *Atharva Angirasa* hymns; and again as the fourth

---

\* Substance of a Lecture delivered in the Quetta Arjamaaj, on Sunday the 21-8-92.

from the Rig Veda, or next in order after the Sama Veda. But Sankaracharya does not explain them further than by calling them the fifth Veda. In commenting upon the phrase *Vedanam Veda*, he adds "of the Vedas or of the five including the Bharata," which would imply that the Bharata, by virtue of its being an Itihasa, was a Veda. The Bhagavat Purana has the same idea. In the 4th Chapter of the first book of that work there is a passage which says, "Vyasa, having rescued the four Vedas, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva related the Itihasa and Purana which form the fifth Veda. This is, however, opposed to the interpretation given by Sankara in the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad Chap. II, B IV. verse 10. There he states that *Itihasa* alludes to such passages in the Vedas as advert to anecdotes and such expressions as the gods and Asuras fought of Yore; and the Purana relates to this ancient historical narratives. Most of these Historical Puranas must have been destroyed in the Buddhist revolutions, 7th to 10 Century B. C.

Manu in his code, Chapter III. Text 232, enjoins "that Veda, Dharma Shastras, *Akhyana*, *Eitihasa* and Purans &c, should be recited before the Brahmins when performing *Shrautha* ceremonies of their departed parents &c., when the word 'Puranas' is found in such ancient works it is natural to conclude that they were then

not full of the Mythological records of some gods and goddesses as the present eighteen Puranas and Upapuranas are. Works of some simpler nature perhaps were in existence, and they according to *Amar Kosa* possessed five chief characteristics viz., the description of creation, special creation, famines, historical and biographical sketches of celebrated peronages. The duty of preaching Puranas was entrusted with *Suta*, a low class of people, such as, *Lomharsana*, *Ugrasraba*, *Sumanta*, *Bysampayana*. If the old Puranas contained only religious legends and moral lessons as some of the new Puranas do, they would have been preached and explained away, as a matter of course, exclusively by Rishis, Monis and Brahmins, and not by the above mentioned sons of carpenters.

There are at present twenty-two principal or *Moha* Puranas, of which the following eighteen are said to have been compiled by *Vuyasa*, and are therefore authoritative.

I.—Puranas representing *Vishnu* religion are :—

1.	Vishnu Purana contains...	23,000	Texts.
2.	Narada       "       "	25,000	"
3.	Srimad Bagbatta       "	18,000	"
4.	Gorura Purana       "	19,000	"
5.	Pudma       "       "	35,000	"
	गुरु विष्णुसामन्त दण्डि	24,000	"

सम्पूर्ण 144,000

परिग्रह

2867

विष्णुसामन्त

II.—Puranas representing Shiva religion :—

7.	Mutsa, contains...	...	14,000	Texts.
8.	Kurma „	...	17,000	„
9.	Lingam „	...	11,000	„
10.	Bayho „	...	24,000	„
11.	Skanda „	...	81,100	„
12.	Agui „	...	15,400	„

---

1,62,500

---

III.—Brohma Puranas are :—

13.	Brohmanda	...	12,000
14.	Brahmo Boybarta	...	18,000
15.	Markanda	...	9,000
16.	Vobisyata	...	14,500
17.	Vamana	...	10,000
18.	Brohma	...	10,000

---

73,500

---

The whole eighteen Moha Puranas contain 3,80,000 texts ! (1)

The surplus four Mohapuranas are, 19th *Shiva*, 20th *Bunhi*, 21st *Brohma Boybarta*, 22nd *Davi*

---

(1.) Vide History of ancient civilization Vol. III. Page, 294.

*Bhagbatta* ; besides, the most famous *Ramayana* and *Mohabharatta* are not included in the lots.

The twenty-six Upapuranas are ; Sonat comar, Narasingha, Naradia, Shiva, Durbasus, Kapila, Manab, Osauaj, Varuna, Kalika, Sambho, Nandi, Soorya, Porasera, Aditya, Mohessur, Vargaba, Vasista, Vahisha, Brohmanda, Koorma, Adi, Mudgal, Kulki, Vahisather, Brihadhurma. The supplimentary eight Upapuranas must have been compiled very recently and the name of Vaysa forged on them to carry authenticity and weight.

Vaysa, according to Vishnu Purana, Vol. III. Chapter VI, Text 16, compiled only one Purana Sunghita, which he gave to his pupil Lombarsana. Vaysa had six other disciples *viz* Somati, Agnibarcha, Mitran, Sangsapayan, Akritoborna and Sarboni, each of whom is said to have edited a separate Purana Sunghita.

The celebrated Ramanyana and Mohabharata, as already shewn, were excluded from the aforesaid Mohapuranas and Upapuranas. They were, however, given a higher place among the Hindu Shastars. Some of the Brahmanas of Vedas have even recorded the achievements of the heroes of Mohabharata ; such as, the coronation of Janmenyoya, the heir of King Parikhita. The ceremony was miuistered by Rishi Toor, the son of

---

Kobash. (2)

Again a similar ceremony of Bhorata, the heir of king Dussanta, was performed by Rishi Momata the son of Dirghattuma. (3)

The names of Janak, Dussantanta, Sakuntala, Dtritarashtra &c., are found in the Satapata, Brahman. (4)

The names of some of the Aryan Queens; as, Amba, Ambica and Ambalica, whom Bhisma of Mohabharat fame, carried away from Benares and married the last two to (5) king Vchitrabija.

These two Queens were the grand mothers of Durjadhona and Yodhister who were the last Emperors of Hindustan and heroes of the fatal Mohabharata Tragidy.

In Mantra X 21 of the Vaj Soni-Sunghita the name of Arjun is found ; hence it can be safely conjectured that these Vedic Works were compiled after Ramayana and Mohabharata were out, or that the latter were contemporaneous with the former. In addition to the aforesaid Stupendous twenty-two Moha Puranas and twenty-six Upa-Puranas we find another huge lot of

---

(2.) *Vide Toiteria Brahmana, 8th Panchaka, 21.*

(3.) *Ibid, 8th Panchaka, 23.*

(4.) *S. B. XIII, 5, 4, 3.*

(5.) *Vaj Soni Sunghita XXIII, 14.*

works, called Mohatmas, which are in support of the Moha Puranas.

They are as follow :—

1	Agniswara Mahatma	}	Part of Brah- nanda Purana.
2	Anjanadri        "		
3	Ananta Sayana   "		
4	Adipur            "		
5	Arjunapur        "		
6	Katoragiri       "		
7	Tungavadra       "		
8	Arjuna Poora     "	}	Part of Agni Purana.
9	Kaberi            "		
10	Endrabatara Khattra Mahatma	}	Part of Skanda Puran.
11	Kodambabana     "		
12	Komolaloya       "		
13	Kolusk Khattra   "		
14	Kantaswara       "		
15	Kartika           "		
16	Kumar Khattra    "		
17	Krishna           "		
18	Gokarna           "		
19	Chidambur        "		
20	Oyrahata          "		
21	Khiriuibana       "		
22	Gorura chal Mahatma	}	Part of Brah- ma Boybarta Purana. (6.)
23	Golika chala     "		
24	Adratnaswara    "		
25	Tapustirtta      " &c.		

(6). *Vide H. H. Wilson's Mackenzie collection 1828 Vol. I. Pages 16—91.*



The following absurd and self contradictory quotations from the Puranas will convince you that they could never have been edited by *Vayasa* or by any one man, possessed of simple rules of morality and religion.

I. "He who through ignorance neglects Vishnu and worships other Gods, should become Pashanda (Demon). Nermallas (flowers and prosads) of other Gods than Vishnu must not be accepted. The Brahmins who have once taken the Prosad of Shiva shall certainly become *Chandala*, and burn in the hell fire for thousand crore kalpa years." (7)

II. This is the retaliation by another antagonistic sect ;—"Those who criticize Shiva, their communion, *homa* (sacrifices) *Topa* (devotion) knowledge, *Jajna*, shall be fruitless." (8)

III. Here an apologist of Goddess Kali participates in the vilification ; of the Vysnabas and say's ;—

"That Budha was the incarnation of Vishnu, he vilified the Vedas, thou shalt not, therefore take the name of Hori, not touch the Tulsi leaves, nor worship the stone symbolic Salgram." (9)

(7). *Vide Pulma Purana, Uttara Kanda 17th Chapter,*

(8). *Vide Kurma Puran, 25th Chapter.*

(9). *Kularnava Tantra.*



---

IV. A kind retort from the aggrieved parties is characteristic :—

“ The book, that records the death of *Asuras* and the glorification of Goddess *Kali*, is called *Bhagbata* by Pundits. In *Kali Yuga* the hypocrites will reject this *Bhagbata* and fabricate another to answer their purpose.” (10)

V. The followers of *Vishnu* are on the other hand “prohibited from taking food or drink from the hands of *Soryas* (sun worships) *Ganapattas*, *Shivas*, *Saktas*. They should not associate with *Shivas* and *Saktas* (followers of *Mo-badaha* and *Kali*), nor ask for any thing from them, as it deserves to be rejected as night-soil.” (11)

VI. Comments are superfluous on these anomalies, absurdities and vilifications, which were freely exchanged in the name of religion ; and in place of brotherliness and love. Such rancorous feelings were the death of all good understandings between the different sects which shattered the constitution of *Hinduism* in the *Pouranic Age*.

The wily *Brahmans* tried their best to give the foremost ranks to the *Puranas* and lower the

---

(10). *Vide Skanda Puran.*

(11.) *Vide Padma Puran, Uttara Kanda, 100th Chapter.*

---

dignity of the Vedic rituals and *Jnana Kanda*. They exaggerated the supernatural powers of the Puranas so much so, that they attributed to Brahma (the first of the Hindu Trinity) to have revealed Puranas first and the Vedas last for the welfare of mankind. (12)

My object is not to point out the weakness of the Puranas. That has been done by the Puranas themselves to the eternal shame of those concerned. What I intend to impress on your minds, is that the authorship of the Puranas could on no account be credited to one and the same person. There must have been a pack of hungry and jealous creatures, who, through the sacred language of the Aryans, have proved themselves to be guilty of intolerance and unforbearance which are the sole causes of Hindus' deep enmity, bigotry and stagnant conservatism for every thing that leads a nation to natural love, unity and perpetual progress. I should not, however, undervalue the golden maxims which adorn some of the Puranas. People charge the Arya Somajists for their ignorance of the Puranic religion. The charge is somewhat valid. It behooves the members of the Arya Somaj to de-

---

(12.) See *Vayoo Purana* 1—56.

*Pudma do.*

*Mutsa do.* III, 3 & 4.

*Brahma Boybarta Purana* I, 84.

---

vote a portion of their leisure hours to the study of some of the best Puranas, as they do the histories of other nations. Denuding the Puranas of the Mythological garb we can collect a good many precious Gems for the embellishment of our truth-seeking-minds and unprejudiced hearts, which we are bound, by our faith, to keep always as wide-open as possible, for the free light and the free breeze from the East or the West, the North or the South.

The Philosophical teachings of Bhaghat-Gitta, Srimat-Bagbata, Panchadasi, Santi-Purva, of Mohabharata, Yoga-Vashista of Ramayana &c , possess inexhaustible treasures borrowed, nay, chiefly transcribed from the Vedas and Upanishads and explained away in much simpler forms for the edification of the uncultured.

What amount of good these Puranas would have done to the Indians, had they purely recorded the facts of rise and fall of the great nation which was once the parent of philosophies, sciences, morality and religion, when all other nations were in the womb of ignorance and barbarity. I cannot but conclude with the sympathetic writings of one of the foremost Historians of the present century. Every sentence of his touches the vital chord of our heart and we regret we cannot sufficiently express our gratitude for such fellow

feelings.

“There is not a petty state in Rajasthan that has not had its Thermopylæ and scarcely a city that has not produced its Leonidas; but the mantle of ages has shrouded from view what the magic pen of the historian might have consecrated to endless admiration. Somnath might have rivalled Delphos; the spoils of Hind might have vied with the wealth of the Lyhian king, and compared with the array of the Pandus, the array of Xerxes would have dwindled into insignificance. But the Hindus either never had or have unfortunately lost their Herodotus and Xenophon.” (13)

The Arya Somaj must have a history of her own glorious achievements. Let there be no *Purans* of Hero-Worship, Idealism, Sectarianism and Idolatory. Let the future historians not record the feuds amongst the members of the different Somajes, whom a true Arya must fraternally embrace, inspite of all differences, with untarnished love, Vedic purity, and Aryan Humanitarianism.

(13). Vide Tod's Rajasthan Vol. I, Introduction.

गुरु विद्यालय  
 मन्त्रालय  
 पु. पत्रिग्रहण  
 दयानन्द प्रतिष्ठान, नवी दिल्ली, कुम्हार

2867