

Sūkṣmasrṣṭi – Part II

SWAMI ADVAYANANDA



Introduction

We are now on the topic of *srṣṭi* or creation. From *māyā*¹ the subtle elements or the *tanmātras*² are born and the *tanmātras* in turn create the subtle-world (*sūkṣma-srṣṭi*) and the gross world³ (*sthūla-srṣṭi*). The following four fall under the category of *sūkṣma-srṣṭi*:

1. *Jñānendriyas* – the organs of knowledge like the ears, eyes etc.
2. *Antaḥkaraṇa* – the inner instrument of mind, intellect, memory and ego.
3. *Karmendriyas* – the organs of action like the hands, legs etc.
4. *Prāṇas* – the vital airs.

We have already seen in detail the creation of the first two aspects of the *sūkṣma-srṣṭi* – the *jñānendriyas* and the *antaḥkaraṇa*⁴. They are both born from the *sattva*-aspect (*sāttvika-aṁśa*) of the *tanmātras*. In this essay we shall elaborate on the creation of the *karmendriyas* and the *prāṇas*, which are born from the *rajas* aspect (*rājasika-aṁśa*) of the *tanmātras*.

¹ For an explanation of *māyā* refer to the July 2003 issue of *Tapovan Prasad*.

² For the description of *tanmātras* refer to the November 2003 issue of *Tapovan Prasad*.

³ Through the process of *pañcikaraṇa* which will be described in the later essays.

⁴ Refer to December 2003 issue of *Tapovan Prasad* for further elaboration on the creation of the *jñānendriyas* and the *antaḥkaraṇa*.

Karmendriya-sṛṣṭi

The *karmendriyas* or the organs of action are five in number.

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि वाक्-पाणि-पाद-पायु-उपस्थ-आख्यानानि ॥

Karmendriyāṇi vāk-pāṇi-pāda-pāyū-upastha-ākhyāni.

The organs of action are the speech (*vāk*), hands (*pāṇi*), feet (*pāda*), organ of evacuation (*pāyū*) and the organ of generation (*upastha*).

Karmendriya-sṛṣṭi refers to the creation of these five organs of action. These five organs of action are produced from the individual *rajas* aspect (*rājasika-amśa*) of the five *tanmātras*⁵. From the *rājasika-amśa* of *ākāśa* (space) is born the *vāk* (organ of speech), the function of which is speaking; from the *rājasika-amśa* of *vāyu* (air) is born *pāṇi* (hand), the function of which is grasping; from the *rājasika-amśa* of *agni* (fire) is born *pāda* (feet), the function of which is locomotion; from the *rājasika-amśa* of *jala* (water) is born *pāyū* (organ of evacuation), the function of which is evacuation, and from the *rājasika-amśa* of *pṛthivī* (earth) is born *upastha* (genitals – the organ of generation), the function of which is procreation⁶.

S.No	Rajas aspect of Tanmātra	Karmendriya	Function
1	Ākāśa	Vāk	To speak
2	Vāyu	Pāṇi	To grasp
3	Agni	Pāda	Locomotion
4	Jala	Pāyū	To evacuate
5	Pṛthivī	Upastha	To procreate

⁵ It is to be noted that the the five organs of knowledge are created from the *sattva*-aspect (*sāttvika-amśa*) of the five *tanmātras* whereas the organs of action are created from the *rajas* aspect (*rājasika-amśa*). This is only appropriate, for *sattva* is associated with knowledge and *rajas* is associated with action.

⁶ *Tattva-bodha*, the popular preliminary text of *Vedānta* states that from water is born the genitals and from earth is born the organ of evacuation. This is in variance from all the other texts of *Vedānta*. The reason for this change needs to be investigated. One plausible explanation could be that the change was caused by inadvertence on the part of some past manuscript writers.

Pañcha-prāṇa

The *prāṇas* (translated variously as vital airs or vital forces) are responsible for the various physiological functions like respiration, circulation, digestion etc. of the body. They are five in number – *prāṇa*⁷, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna* and *samāna*. In *Vedānta Sāra*, Sri Swami Sadananda gives a comprehensive definition by mentioning their functions as well as their abodes. Let us see each of these definitions:

1. *Prāṇa*: The *prāṇa* governs the function of respiration — both inhalation and exhalation. It moves through the mouth and the nose and manifests itself fully within the chest. Its seat is at the tip of the nose.

प्राणो नाम प्राग्गमनवान् नासाग्रस्थानवर्ती ॥

Prāṇo nāma prāggamanavān nāsāgra-sthānavartī.

Prāṇa is that vital force which goes upward and has its seat at the tip of the nose.

2. *Apāna*: This vital force governs the function of leading the body wastes to the organs of evacuation and excretion. Though the organs of evacuation and excretion (*pāyu*) are responsible for the function of elimination of the wastes per se, *apāna* leads the refuse down so that it can be disposed of by the concerned organs of evacuation and excretion. Its seat is the organ of evacuation (*pāyu*) and it is called *apāna* because it carries things down (*apa*)⁸.

अपानो नाम अवाग्गमनवान् पाय्वादिस्थानवर्ती ॥

Apāno nāma avāggamanavān pāyvādīsthānavartī.

Apāna is that vital force which goes downward and has its seat in the organ of excretion.

⁷ The five physiological functions are collectively called *prāṇas* and at the same time the first of the five is also called *prāṇā*.

⁸ The prefix '*apa*' in Sanskrit gives the sense of 'away', 'off', 'back' or 'down'.

3. *Vyāna*: This vital air is responsible for spreading and distributing whatever is eaten or drunk throughout the body by means of the blood vessels.

व्यानो नाम विष्वग्गमनवान् अखिलशरीरवर्ती ॥

Vyāno nāma viṣvaggamanavān akhilaśarīravartī.

Vyāna is that vital force which moves in all directions and pervades the entire body.

4. *Udāna*: This vital force helps the *jīva*⁹ to pass out from the body at the time of death. It manifests upto the head and is called *udāna* because it has an upward (*ut*) movement. It has its seat in the throat. Though at the time of death the *jīva* can pass out through any part of the body yet most often it is considered that the throat is the exit point.

उदानो नाम कण्ठस्थानीय ऊर्ध्वगमनवान् उत्क्रमणवायुः ॥

Udāno nāma kaṅṭhasthānīya ūrdhvagamanavān utkramaṇavāyuh.

Udāna is the ascending vital force which helps the 'passing out' from the body and has its seat in the throat.

Pujya Gurudev used to point out that *udāna* is also responsible for 'higher flights in thinking'¹⁰.

5. *Samāna*: This vital force governs the function of digestion in the stomach. It manifests upto the navel. It is called *samāna* because it regulates the digestion (*samīkaraṇa*).

समानो नाम शरीर-मध्यगत-अशित-पीत-अन्नादि-समीकरणकरः ॥

Samāno nāma śarīra-madhyagata-aśita-pīta-annādi-samīkaraṇakaraḥ.

Samāna is that vital force which digests the food and drink and has its abode in the stomach.

⁹ *Jīva* = Causal body+Subtle body+Reflected Consciousness (*Chidābhāsa*). This *jīva* exists on the substratum of *chit* or pure Consciousness.

¹⁰ This is in consonance with the *āyurvedic* view (*āyurveda* – an *upa-veda* dealing with holistic medicine) which points out that *udāna* is responsible for mental functions also.

Let us summarise the above data regarding the five *prāṇas* in a tabular column.

Name	Governs	Abode
<i>Prāṇa</i>	Respiration	Tip of the nose
<i>Apāna</i>	Excretion	Organ of excretion
<i>Vyāna</i>	Distribution of food and water throughout the body	Pervades the entire body
<i>Udāna</i>	Helps in the final departure of the <i>jīva</i> from the body	Throat
<i>Samāna</i>	Digestion	Stomach

Pañcha-upaprāṇas

The *Sāṅkhya*s¹¹ point out five more *upa-prāṇas* or subsidiary-*prāṇas*. The following verse summarises them:

उद्गिरे नाग आख्यातः कूर्म उन्मीलने स्मृतः । कृकलस्तु क्षुतिज्ञेयो देवदत्तो
विजृम्भणे ॥ न जहाति मृतं चापि सर्वव्यापी धनञ्जयः । (from *Gorakṣaśataka*)

Udgire nāga ākhyātaḥ kūrma unmilane smṛtaḥ, kṛkalastu kṣutijñeyo devadatto vijṛmbhaṇe. Na jahāti mṛtaṁ cāpi sarvavyāpī dhanañjaya.

Naga is that which causes vomiting, *kūrma* governs the opening of the eyelids, the function of *kṛkala* is to be known in hunger, *devadatta* produces yawning and *dhanañjaya* which pervades the body does not leave the body even when the person is dead¹².

Vedānta incorporates the five *upa-prāṇas*¹³ (subsidiary-*prāṇas*) within the five *mukhya-prāṇas* (major-*prāṇas*). Thus *nāga* which is responsible for vomiting is treated as a part of *udāna* which has an

¹¹ *Sāṅkhya* is one of the six schools of Indian Philosophy and was founded by Kapila Muni. *Vedānta* accepts the creation methodology of the *Sāṅkhya*s.

¹² *Dhanañjaya* causes the bloating of the body after the soul leaves the body. Hence it is said that it does not leave the body even after death.

¹³ The five *upa-prāṇas* (subsidiary-*prāṇas*) starting with *nāga* are called *nāgādi* whereas the five *mukhya-prāṇas* (major-*prāṇas*) beginning with *prāṇa* are called *prāṇādi*.

upward movement, since vomiting is an upward movement; *kūrma* which is responsible for the opening (and closing) of eyelids is included in *vyāna*, since *vyāna* pervades the whole body and nourishes every aspect of the body; *kṛkala* (called sometimes *kṛkara*) which creates hunger is considered a part of *samāna* as *samāna* has its abode in the stomach and is responsible for digestion; *devadatta* which is responsible for yawning (which is nothing but the forceful removal of accumulated waste carbon-di-oxide etc.) is incorporated within *apāna* which controls the evacuation of waste matter; and *dhananājaya* which nourishes the body is seen as a part of *samāna*, for *samāna* which is responsible for digestion helps in nourishing the whole body.

Yoga texts mention that *nāgā* gives rise to consciousness, *kūrma* causes vision, *kṛkala* causes hunger and thirst, the *devadatta* produces yawning (as mentioned earlier) and *dhananājaya* causes the sound of flatulence.

<i>Upaprāṇas</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Incorporated under</i>
<i>Nāga</i>	Vomiting, gives rise to consciousness	<i>Udāna</i>
<i>Kūrma</i>	Opening and closing of eyelids and vision	<i>Vyāna</i>
<i>Kṛkala</i>	Hunger and thirst	<i>Samāna</i>
<i>Devadatta</i>	Yawning	<i>Apāna</i>
<i>Dhananājaya</i>	Nourishes the body	<i>Samāna</i>

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While doing *japa*, it is not necessary for all the details to 'form' in your mind. The mere awareness that you are embraced with His love is more than sufficient.

Swami Chinmayananda

Since all the *upaprāṇas* which are responsible for minor functions can be incorporated within the *mukhya-prāṇas*, i.e. within the *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna* and *samāna*, almost all *Vedāntic* texts speak only of five *prāṇas* and do not therefore count the *prāṇas* as ten.

Pañcha-prāṇa-sr̥ṣṭi

Let us do a little bit of summarising before we proceed further. The *jñānendriyas* – the organs of knowledge like the ears, skin, eyes etc., are produced from the individual *sattva* aspect of the *tanmātras* i.e. from the *sattva* aspect of space is born the ear, from the *sattva* aspect of the air is born skin, from the *sattva* aspect of fire is born the eye and so on. The *antaḥkaraṇa* or the inner instrument of the mind, intellect, memory and ego is born from the collective *sattva* aspect of all the five *tanmātras* i.e. all the *sattva* aspects of all the five *tanmātras* of space, air, fire, water and earth combine together to create the *antaḥkaraṇa*. These two ideas were covered in the last essay¹⁴. In this essay we have seen that the

¹⁴ December 2003 issue of *Tapovan Prasad*.

Auspicious days

January 2004

3	Vaikunta Ekadasi	11	Sankataharana Chaturdasi	18	Ekadasi
4	Pradosham	13	Shashti Vratam	19	Pradosham
7	Pournami Tapovan Maharaj Aradhana Day	14	Bhogi	21	Amavasya
		15	Makara Samkranti Pongal	27	Shashti Vratam

February 2004

1	Ekadasi Vratam	12	Shashti Vratam	20	Amavasya
2	Bakrid	16	Ekadasi	26	Shashti Vratam
3	Pradosham	18	Maha Sivaratri		
6	Pournami		Pradosham		

karmendriyas – the organs of action like the hands, legs etc. are all born from the individual *rajas* aspect of the each of the *tanmātras* i.e. from the *rajas* aspect of space is born speech, from the *rajas* aspect of air is born the hand and so on. But then wherefrom are the five *prāṇas* created? Sri Swami Sadananda in *Vedānta-Sāra* answers this question:

एतत् प्राणादिपञ्चकम् आकाशादिगत-रज-अंशेभ्यो मिलितेभ्यः उत्पद्यते ॥

Etat prāṇādipañcakam ākāśādigata-raja-aṁśebhyo militebhyaḥ utpadyate.

The five *prāṇas* are produced from the combination of all the *rajas* aspects of space etc.

Thus all the *rajas* aspects of all the five *tanmātras* together produce the five *prāṇas*.

Conclusion

We have thus covered in the past two essays the whole of the '*sūkṣma-srṣṭi*'. In the next essay we shall attempt the classification of the '*sūkṣma-srṣṭi*' into the three *kośas* – *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* and also delve into the concepts of *līṅga-śarīra*, *taijasa* and *hiranyagarbha*. It would be better if one revises the last two essays so that there is no difficulty in grasping the ideas which will be discussed in the next essay. May the Lord's blessings and Puja Gurudev's grace help us in the true understanding of *Vedānta*.

Miraculous indeed is love. Its sweetness and power are alike great. Great poets like Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa with their powerful imagination, have portrayed in their immortal works a few aspects of love. Love and devotion are not two different things. Love for those above us is called *bhakti* – love for the gods or God is of this type. Love for one's equals is called friendship. When stainless devotion to God gets deep-rooted in the mind of man, we consider the object of his existence already attained.

Swami Tapovan Maharaj