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The *Harivaṁśa*, *Brahma*, *Viṣṇu*, *Bhāgavata* and *Brahmavaivarta* among the Purāṇas deal exhaustively with the life of Kṛṣṇa, and the accounts in the different Purāṇas are not only inconsistent but mutually contradictory. Ruben has critically considered some incidents relating to the life of Kṛṣṇa from different Purāṇas and has come to the conclusion that the original supplement (*Khila*) of the *Mahābhārata* was much shorter than the *Khila Harivaṁśa* now current, that the original *Harivaṁśa* is the oldest Purāṇa and that the original archetype of the *Harivaṁśa* has been better preserved in the *Brahma*.³¹ The order of the Purāṇas has variously been placed as: *Viṣṇu-Harivaṁśa-Bhāgavata-Brahmavaivarta*,³² *Harivaṁśa-Brahma-Viṣṇu-Bhāgavata-Brahmavaivarta*,³³ *Brahma-Viṣṇu-Bhāgavata-Brahmavaivarta*,³⁴ etc. A critical evaluation of the different accounts of Kṛṣṇa given in the Purāṇas shows that only the *Brahma* and the *Viṣṇu* have a common text, and that the former has an account older than the *Viṣṇu*.³⁵ Besides these, the *Padma*, *Agni*, *Bhāgavata* and *Brahmavaivarta* deal at some length with the Kṛṣṇa story, and the *Harivaṁśa*, truly as the supplement of the *Mahābhārata*, goes over the entire Purāṇic story, carefully omitting all references to the *Mahābhārata* story. The *Bhāgavata* is the only Purāṇic account which combines both the epic and Purāṇic accounts setting them in proper context. The *Brahmavaivarta* is a late work, solely written to glorify Rādhā.

It has been suggested that the Kṛṣṇa in the Purāṇas and the Kṛṣṇa in the *Mahābhārata* are distinct personages. Mutual exclusiveness of the two

31. JAOS, 61, pp. 115-127; JRAS, 1941, pp. 247-256.

32. Cf. Tattvabhushan, *Kṛṣṇa and the Gītā*, p. 56.

33. Cf. Durgashankar Shastri, *Purāna Virecana*, pp. 133-5.

34. Ruben, *Festschrift Thomas*, pp. 188-203.

35. Cf. Tadpatrikar, *Kṛṣṇa Problem*, pp. 276-277.