

Knowledge beyond time

Issue 14  
May 2019

# साम्बन्धि



## Kṛṣṇāvatāra

In the dynamic  
balance of Krishna  
lies the ideal of  
Indian thought

## Yajña in the Bhagavadgītā

A cosmic principle  
that is the foundation  
of creation

## Introduction to Sanskrit Poetics

The science of  
creation and  
enjoyment of poetry



*Bi-annual  
magazine of  
India's culture  
& knowledge  
traditions*

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# Editor's Notes

"History is full of empires of the sword, but India alone created an empire of the spirit."

Indian culture is an ancient and a grandiose one. For at least two thousand years, the world was a willing and eager recipient of a startlingly comprehensive diffusion of Indian culture, religion, art, music, technology, astronomy, mythology, language, and literature. From the empire of the Gupta dynasty in the north and that of the Pallava dynasty in the south, India radiated her philosophies, political ideas, and architectural forms out over an entire continent not by conquest but by sheer cultural sophistication. Unfortunately, for most of its later medieval and modern history, it was India's fate to be on the receiving end of foreign influences. A direct consequence of this was that young Indians learnt next to nothing of India's vast intellectual heritage. Even today, the degenerate outcome of colonial policies is India's educational system which fails to instill into young Indians a dynamic awareness and understanding of their country's achievements and civilizing influences in various fields and at various epochs, including today.

SAMVIT, Amrita Darshanam's bi-annual magazine, was conceived to recreate interest in the variegated dimensions of our cultural and intellectual heritage in young minds. In this issue, we continue the series that were introduced previously – "On the Meaning of Mahābhārata", "The 'Why' of the Rāmāyaṇa", and "The Wonder that is Sanskrit". To this list are added four new series-titles – "Ancient Indian Linguistics", "Śabdatattvam", "Yoga – Ancient and Contemporary Perspectives", and "Wisdom of the Eternal Veda-s". In the students' section, we are introduced to certain important episodes of Indian history, the *sthalapurāṇa* of an important temple, and the *Gīta-Rāmāyaṇa*. Together, these articles shed light on significant aspects of Indian culture and knowledge traditions. We hope you enjoy this issue.



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## AMMA'S WORDS

# Śabarimala

*Māta Amritānandamayī, on 20 January 2019, inaugurated the 'Ayyappa Bhakta Sangamam' organized by Śabarimala Karma Samiti at Putharikkandam Maidan. Addressing Ayyappa devotees who gathered in their thousands to pledge to protect the traditions and customs of the Śabarimala temple, she spoke on the controversy surrounding the issue of women's entry to the Śabarimala Ayyappa temple.*

**T**HE RECENT INCIDENTS related to Śabarimala are quite unfortunate. The cause of the problem is lack of adequate knowledge regarding the specific nature of the *pratiṣṭhā-sankalpa* [ritualistic resolve at the time of consecration] for each deity worshiped in each temple and the practicing of the austerities associated with them. Ignoring or discontinuing them is incorrect.

When we consider the nature of deities worshiped in temples, we should understand the difference between them and the concept of God as the all-pervading consciousness. The all-pervading God has no limitations of constraints; there is no discrimination of male or female. There is a difference between the fish in the ocean and the fish nurtured in a fish tank at home. For the fish in the tank, we have to give food, provide oxygen and also regularly change the water. There are no such limitations for the fish in the ocean.

When we take a bath in a river, we don't have to follow any restrictions or *yama-niyama-s* [dos and don'ts]. On the other hand, when a swimming pool is filled with the water from the same river, that water then has to be filtered and chlorinated. People who want to swim in the pool have to wash their bodies first to remove sweat. They should also remove their old clothes and wear specific swimming suits. One

should not use soap in a swimming pool. Even though nothing but river water is used to fill the swimming pool, the rules of cleanliness are different there. Likewise, even though it is really just the all-pervading God worshipped in a temple deity, the rules and observances regarding purity for worshipping the temple deity are different and specific.

When we sow a seed, we will get fruit in the future only if we water the sapling, regularly apply manure and take proper care of the plant. Likewise, a temple deity has to be worshipped at the correct time, offered only *naivedyam* [consecrated food], differences of purity and impurity are to be observed, and codes of conduct must be followed strictly. But there are no such rules for worshipping all-pervading God.

Each deity in each temple has a different set of rules to be followed for worship. For example, the procedures of worshipping *devī* in a temple where she has been consecrated in *raudra bhāva* [fierce mood] are different from those in another temple where she is *śānta bhāva* [peaceful mood]. If those specific procedures are not followed, it can affect the sanctity of the temple.

The deities worshipped in temples are said to be



“ *Moreover in Śabarimala one cannot say there is gender discrimination; ladies of a specific age group are permitted to worship.* ”

considered like minors [as per the Constitution of India]. Just as a child requires the care of its parents and teachers, the deity requires the care of *tantri-s* and *pūjārī-s*. The role of the devotees of the deity is also of paramount importance. In fact, the deity indeed exists for the sake of devotees.

It is the belief of the devotees that Śabarimala Ayyappan was a *naiṣṭhika brahmacārī* [eternal celibate]. Devotees also believe that the vows associated with the shrine respect his last wishes before he entered final *samādhi* and left his mortal coil.

Making changes according to the changing times is necessary, but if we start changing things at will when it comes to temples, then there is scope to lose our fundamental values. It is like trying to bathe a child again and again and ultimately washing the child away in the process!

Śrī Śankarācārya, Śrī Nārāyaṇa Guru and Śrī Chattāmbi Svāmigal were all established in Advaita [the ultimate truth that everything is but one all-pervasive consciousness]. But after attaining that highest state, they still established temples for worship and outlined the procedural norms for the worship of those deities. I have been invited to visit such temples too, and I have gone there. In some Śiva temples, Amma was asked to do only three-quarter circumambulation and then return as per tradition. Bowing to those specific procedures, Amma followed them.

Even when Amma first began consecrating the *Brahmsthāna* temples at her *āśram-s*, Amma consulted experts and pundits and took their advice. When Amma initiated some of her *brahmacārī-s* [spiritual students]

into *sanyāsa* [monkhood], Amma followed the established procedures by inviting a *sanyāsi* [monk] from a traditional lineage to carry out the procedural norms. Thus, Amma – despite seeing everything as a manifestation of God – has not relinquished the traditional norms. Temples are indeed the pillars of our religious culture. We are duty bound to take care of them. Otherwise, like a kite whose string has been cut off, our society will drift aimlessly.

Even in the mundane world, we see that in places like airports smoking is only permitted in specific locations. People follow such restrictions.

In Mannarsala, the tradition is that the temple priest should be a woman. In some places there are schools and colleges exclusively for boys or girls. One does not demand gender equality there. Moreover in Śabarimala one cannot say there is gender discrimination; ladies of a specific age group [before 10 and after 50] are permitted to worship.

When mothers say to little children, “If you tell a lie, you will go blind” or “Your nose will get cut off,” it’s just to instill some fear in the children to prevent them from lying. If it were true, practically everyone would be blind and without a nose! But it has a practicality to it, coming down to the level of the child to uplift them.

Once a little girl showed a picture she had drawn to her father and said, “Father, see the elephant I drew!” The father, who was busy with some work, looked and saw only some scribbled lines. He said, “Where’s the elephant? I don’t see any such thing.” The child became sad and started crying. The father, realizing his mistake, said, “Oh, yes! I didn’t see the picture clearly before because I wasn’t wearing

my glasses! Now that I'm wearing them, I can see a beautiful elephant there!" The child felt very happy. Similarly, there is the language of the heart. We cannot evaluate everything with the intellect. To communicate certain things, one has to come down to the level of others.

God is the ultimate truth and to attain Him, temples are useful like the steps to the top floor. The top floor and the steps are made of the same bricks, cement and mortar. So too everything is indeed God. But to reach that destination, you cannot disregard the importance of the steps. Without the help of the steps, one cannot reach the top floor.

In the past, Amma did a minor research, spanning a period of 10-15 years. During Śabarimala season, she would send people to various hospitals to find out the pattern of the influx of patients. She observed that during the Śabarimala season, the number of patients coming to hospitals dropped by 30-40 percent. Perhaps the reason is that during those months, many men [on account of practicing the austerities for going to Śabarimala] do not drink alcohol, do not consume non-vegetarian food, do not fight with their wives and also do *pūja* and *mantra*

*japa* sitting together with their family. Thus, the Śabarimala temple's influence in bringing positive vibrations in both the body and mind of the people in society is obvious.

So, it is important that these traditions are nurtured and maintained by society. Society remains bound to good values this way. Everyone should adhere to this and move forward.

When Arjuna wanted to learn the *dharma* of war, he asked Kṛṣṇa to teach him, but Kṛṣṇa said, "Learn from Bhīṣma; he is the proper authority in that field." Likewise, certain things should be left to their respective authorities who are most competent to give the right direction. In this specific issue, it is the devout *tantri-s* and *pūjārī-s* of Śabarimala and the ardent devotees like you who need to sit together, discuss and come to a conclusion. There is a saying in Malayalam: "If you eat very slowly, you can even eat a palm tree."

I don't have anything more to say, and many people who spoke before me have mostly said what has to be said on this issue.

Namaḥśivāya. ❧

# Faculty's Articles



# Kṛṣṇāvatāra

*Through the dynamic balance of Kṛṣṇa, we find the ideal of Indian thought. All of ancient India was dedicated to finding the meaning of life — not by turning its back on life, but by learning to see life as it really is — infinite and beautiful, an absolute expression of the absolute Self.*

BY MANJUSHREE HEGDE

“**ONE DAY** when the children were playing, they reported to Yaśoda, “Kṛṣṇa has eaten dirt.” Yaśoda took Kṛṣṇa by the hand and scolded him and said, “You naughty boy, why have you eaten dirt?” “I haven’t,” said Kṛṣṇa. “All the boys are lying. If you believe them instead of me, look at my mouth yourself.” “Then, open up,” she said to the god, who had in sport taken the form of a human child; and he opened his mouth. Then she saw in his mouth the whole universe, with the far corners of the sky, and the wind, and lightning, and the orb of the earth with its mountains and oceans, and the moon and stars, and space itself; and she saw her own village and herself...”

O’Flaherty (1984:182)

Literature on Kṛṣṇa is abundant – his life has been told of in epics, songs and stories for centuries: in the *Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṁśa*, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*, *Śāṅḍilya-bhakti-sūtra*, *Nārāyaṇopaniṣad*, Śankaradeva’s *Pārijāta-haraṇa-naṭa*, Jayadeva’s *Gītāgovinda*, Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura’s (*Līlāśuka*) *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karaṇāmṛtam*, Vedāntadeśika’s *Gopālavimśatiḥ*, poetry of the Ālvārs, Mīrābāī, Sūrdās, Caitanya, etc. In most of this literature is painted a delightfully intimate picture of Kṛṣṇa enjoying himself in the beautiful and idyllic landscape of Braj – stealing butter from his mother, hiding from her in fear as she chases him with a stick, playing with the *gopī*-s, etc. The *Mahābhārata*, on the other hand, presents us with Kṛṣṇa as a diplomat, a regal statesman, machinating to bring about the destruction of *adharmā*.

Interestingly, it is not the Kṛṣṇa of the *Bhagavadgītā* or his statesmanship in the *Mahābhārata* that makes him the much-loved deity that he is. Rather, it is his childhood *līla*-s – play, pastimes, or frolics – during his infancy, childhood, and adolescence in the forests of Braj – among the cowherds – that are most relished through the centuries. It is this depiction of Kṛṣṇa that has inspired numerous spiritual seekers to renounce the world in quest of his lotus feet, countless more to engage in his *bhakti-yoga*, and generations of artists, dramatists, poets, singers, writers, dancers, architects, and temple-patrons across the centuries to depict him in their narratives. This depiction of Kṛṣṇa is primarily found in the tenth book of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* which occupies itself almost exclusively with Viṣṇu and his *avatāra*-s, and most particularly, in its tenth book, with the *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa.



'Avatāra' is derived from the verbal root *ṭṛ plavana-taraṇayoḥ*, meaning "to pass/cross over," with the prefix *ava*, meaning, "away, down" – so, it is literally a "crossing down", or a "descent" of a Divine Person. It is interesting to note that the same word, *avataraṇa*, is used of the entry of an actor upon the stage, which is an appearance from behind a curtain and a "manifestation" analogous to that of the *avatāra* upon the world-stage. Such "descents" are explained in the words of Kṛṣṇa spoken to Arjuna in the *Bhagavadgītā*: "Whenever order fails and disorder arises, then do I bring forth myself: for guarding the doers-aright and for the destruction of evildoers and to establish order, I take birth aeon after aeon" (*Gītā* 4.6-7).

The idea of 'avatāra' – the hypostatic union of two natures, one divine, and one human – is a paradox. Søren Keirkegaard wrote, "The thesis that God has existed in human form, was born, grew up; is certainly the paradox in the strictest sense, the absolute paradox" (Swenson 1936:31). Because it raises many questions: how can God, the divine un-originate, be born? How can two complete natures – divine and human – be united in one being? How can God remain unchanged in himself and yet be subject to suffering and death? In order to answer these questions, one can only point to Keirkegaard's line of argument – that it is only by a leap of faith that it can be understood. In the words of Cyril of Alexandria who used the Greek term *kath' hypostasin* (hypostasis) to refer to the oneness of divine and human natures,

"We must follow these words and teachings, keeping in mind what having been made flesh means; and that it makes clear that the Logos from God became man. We do not say that the nature of the Word was altered when he became flesh. Neither do we say that the Word was changed into a complete man of soul and body. We say rather that the Word by having united to himself hypostatically flesh animated by a rational

soul, inexplicably and incomprehensibly became man."

McEnerney (1986: 39)

*Avatāra*-s, in Indian tradition, are of different types: (1) *sākṣād* (direct) (2) *āveśa* (entrance or possessed) (3) *vyūha* (grouped or arranged) (4) *antaryāmin* (inner controller) (5) *arcā* (worship), and (6) *pūrṇa* (complete). They are all "descents" in play – *līlavatāra*-s. The Purāṇa-s enumerate 14 *manvantarāvatāra*-s, 25 *kalpāvatāra*-s, 4 *yugāvatāra*-s – of them, ten have attained great popularity. In a verse, the *Mahābhārata* enumerates ten of them in a chronological order:

*matsyaḥ kūrmo varāhaś ca narasiṃho'tha vāmanaḥ |*  
*rāmo rāmaś ca rāmaś ca buddhaḥ kalkī ca te daśa ||*

(*Mahābhārata* 12.339)

According to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, these (other incarnations) are *kāla*, partial incarnations, but *krishnastu bhagavān svayam*, 'Krishna is *bhagavān*, God, himself.'

In a beautiful depiction, Osho Rajneesh described Kṛṣṇa as 'Zorba the Buddha'. Rajneesh often reiterated that his ideal man was one who combined the characteristics of Alexis Zorba and Gotama Buddha. Alexis Zorba, a character in *Zorba the Greek*, is a perfect epicurean, a man who embraces the whole of life with an unrestrained exhilaration, a man with an infinite trust in life and a deep attunement to the present moment, a man with a living heart, a voracious mouth, and a great brute of a soul. Gotama Buddha, on the other hand, cuts a rather different figure. Sitting still, he watches life pass by, serenely unattached from it all, dwelling



“ *Wise and valorous, he was, loving and loved, far-seeing and yet living for the moment, gifted with a sage-like detachment and yet intensely human; the diplomat, the sage and the man of action, with a personality as luminous as that of a divinity.* ”



in the bliss within. Rajneesh insisted that the two must come together to form the perfect man. The epicurean, on his own, is incomplete, as is the ascetic – both of them leave the world to itself in their concern for themselves. The perfect man, according to Rajneesh, would pick up his bottle of wine, throw off his inhibitions and dance on the sand, knowing full well in his Buddha wisdom, the ultimate meaning of existence. Indeed, this perfect man would laugh until he became laughter itself; he would love until the ‘lover’ disappeared and only the love remained, he would dance with abandon until the ‘dancer’ disappeared and only the dance remained.

Just such a man was Kṛṣṇa – with all of Zorba’s passion and zest for life, and yet tempered by the deep awareness of the Buddha. A flute-player, a *ras*-dancer, a statesman, a philosopher, a *yogi* all at once, Kṛṣṇa personified the teaching, “The wise man is he who is intensely peaceful in the midst of intense action, and intensely active in the midst of intense peace.” In his book, *Krishnavatara*, Kulapati K. M Munshi described him thus: “Wise and valorous, he was, loving and loved, far-seeing and

yet living for the moment, gifted with a sage-like detachment and yet intensely human; the diplomat, the sage and the man of action, with a personality as luminous as that of a divinity.”

It is in this dynamic balance of Kṛṣṇa that we find the ideal of Indian thought. All of ancient India was dedicated to finding the meaning of life – not by turning its back on life, but by learning to see life as it really is – infinite and beautiful, an absolute expression of the absolute Self. No wonder then that ancient India could give the world not just Veda-s and Upaniṣad-s, but also Nāṭyaśāstra, Arthaśāstra and Kāmasūtra. India had accepted life in its entirety, with open eyes. With all her passion for renunciation, she never suffered from the blight of imagination which confuses the ideals of the ascetic and the citizen. The citizen was indeed to be restrained; but the very essence of his method was that he should learn restraint or temperance *by* life, not by the rejection of it. For him, the rejection of life, puritanism, would be in-temperance. E.M. Foster wrote,

“There is fun... [in India]. God can play practical jokes on Himself, draw chairs away from beneath His posteriors, set His own turban on fire and steal His own petticoats when He bathes. By sacrificing good taste, this achieved what Christianity has shirked: the inclusion of merriment. All spirit as well as matter must participate in salvation... [otherwise] the circle is incomplete”.

(Foster 2010: 289)

It is, indeed, difficult for us, with our materialistic values, to understand the ancient values of Indian culture; but we must attempt, if nothing else, to taste the delight of this rhythmic philosophy, this deep, slow breath of thought. From it, we can learn those virtues which, above all others, we need to-day: tranquility, patience, unruffled joy ‘like a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker’ – *yathā dīpo nivāstho neṅgate sopamā smṛtā* (Gītā 6.19). ☞

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SERIES: THE 'WHY' OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA

# Relevance of the Rāmāyaṇa

*The Rāmāyaṇa, the largest repertoire of idealism etched in words in the form of a story in Sanskrit language, offers mankind a path to pūrṇatā.*

BY DR. VISHWANATH M V

**T**HE STORY of the Rāmāyaṇa has been one of the mainstays of our *sanātana dharma*. Values propagated by this epic are read, sung and performed all over India and other countries. In the previous edition of this series, the various characteristics of speech, its relevance and the essentiality of all existing forms of literature were briefly discussed. The second part of this ongoing series will focus on the necessity of the epic Rāmāyaṇa in today's world.

In every discussion, Mīmāṃsā śāstra demands answers to three basic questions: (1) "What?" (2) "By which?" and (3) "How?" – *kim bhāvayet, kena bhāvayet* and *katham bhāvayet*. Within the quest of "How?" is hidden the question "Why?" and this is usually predetermined. Some may even argue that without answering this question, one may not be able to proceed into the important aspects of the task at hand. Hence, answering the question "Why?" becomes very important. If the question "Why study the Rāmāyaṇa?" remains unanswered, then the interest to study the Rāmāyaṇa can perhaps never be instigated in the reader. Before commencing the study of the Rāmāyaṇa, then the questions, "What?", "By which?" and "How?" are to be addressed and answered. Prior to that, we must determine the "Why?" of the Rāmāyaṇa.

## Necessity of the question "Why?"

The question "Why?" is usually asked to determine the relevance of a subject. The relevance of a subject needs to be established well before beginning the quest of the subject. Relevance, in other words, can be called as '*prayojana*' propagated in our śāstra-s. As the famous saying goes, *prayojanamanuddīśya na mandopi pravartate* – without being aware of the benefits or relevance of a subject, not even a fool will undertake its pursuit.

The idea of seeking benefits before pursuing a subject may seem rather self-centred; especially with most of our śāstra-s preaching to rid ourselves of self-centrism, this claim of establishing the *prayojana* as a pre-requisite for the study of a subject seems contradicting. The answer is rather simple: according to our śāstra-s, the two are not mutually-conflicting claims. Stating the benefits or *prayojana* of a subject makes the reader or the seeker sure of what is he getting into. Also, the śāstra-s state, *na kuryānniṣphalam karma* – one mustn't involve oneself in a useless work ever. Hence, it becomes extremely important to state the *prayojana* of a subject before its study begins.

Relevance of a subject must be established on two levels – first, on an individual level, where the relevance is narrated in the form of a *prayojana* that

caters to the needs of the individual; the second level is to establish firmly its relevance to the world. Only when relevance is established on both levels will a thing be worthy of pursuit. Thus, the question "Why?" becomes a dire necessity for any pursuit.

Merely stating the *prayojana* does not suffice for the quest of "Why?" of a subject. Unless a correlation exists between the benefit (*prayojana*) and the beneficiary (*adhikārī*) in relation to the subject (*viśaya*), the question "Why?" remains unanswered or partially answered. Hence Patañjali *maharṣi* says in his *Mahābhāṣya, siddhārtham siddhasambandham śrotum śrotā pravartate| sāstrādou tena vaktavyaḥ sambandhaḥ saprayojanaḥ ||* Only those things whose benefits are well known and the correlation between benefits and beneficiary has been sufficiently established, are generally sought by seekers, and thus, it is mandatory for an author to state the benefits and the correlation between the benefits and the beneficiary.

Since the question "Why?" not only answers the individual need of establishing relevance, but also the universality of its correlation between the benefits and the beneficiary, it must be noted that the question "Why?" is most essential in the pursuit of a thing.

### Rāmāyaṇa and its relevance

It would make perfect sense if we mentioned the *anubandha catuṣṭayam* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in the beginning and later established the relevance. But, amongst the *anubandha catuṣṭayam*, *prayojana* occupies the most important position and hence, the *prayojana*, the bedrock of instituting the relevance, will be dealt with in this article.

To understand that the *Rāmāyaṇa*, an epic form of literature, can have impact and can bestow benefits to men, one needs to be reminded of the Sanskrit literary critic, Mammaṭa's, summary of the *upadeśa* of a *kāvya* - *Rāmādivat vartitavyam, na Rāvaṇādivat*. This *upadeśa* focuses on 'vartitavyam', to lead life. The heart of this *upadeśa* is not merely the reference of Rāma and Rāvaṇa, but in imploring the reader in

likewise actions. The reference of Rāma and Rāvaṇa show the influence of the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* on the entire Sanskrit literature.



The *Rāmāyaṇa*, when presented by Lava and Kuśa in the presence of sages, was received well and was marked as a touchstone for all poets of the future. The *Rāmāyaṇa*, as an epic, has been impactful on poets of all ages. As Dr. V Raghavan points out in one of his essays on the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the ideas that later poets have presented in their works are all taken from Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. One may even argue that irrespective of the language, the medium of expression, there is plenty to be offered by the *Rāmāyaṇa* for everyone – be it the idea of a cloud messenger in Kālidāsa's *Meghadūtam* or the numerous plays that revolve around the abduction of the heroine, forging friendships for strategic advantages and many other such aspects, one cannot help but see the source of all these ideas in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. Such and various other aspects of Sanskrit literature establish with certainty the impact of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* on them, thus implying the relevance of the *Rāmāyaṇa* on a universal level.

On an individual level, the *Rāmāyaṇa*'s impact is to goad the reader to follow the path of *dharma* and truthfulness amongst other great attributes to be followed. The most important benefit that the *Rāmāyaṇa* has to offer mankind is idealism. So innate is idealism in all human beings that the longing

for idealism can be seen even in small children. As seen at homes, small children, although capable of consuming only half a *roṭi*, usually demand a full *roṭi*. This is an instance where the human mind, still in its innocence, seeks for fullness or *pūrṇatā* unknowingly. This desire for *pūrṇatā* is usually disguised by other names owing to the *triguṇāḥ* or *māyā* and human beings pursue it all but deluded due to this outer coverage. The problems we usually face in our life are mostly out of dissatisfaction or lack of completeness. In other words, non-fulfilment of *pūrṇatā* is the cause of all misery in life and achieving *pūrṇatā* is the solution for all of it.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is relevant on an individual level because it is the largest repertoire of idealism etched in words in the form of a story in Sanskrit language. Idealism, at times, may scare human beings. Nevertheless, idealism is the need of the hour, not just for this nation whose 'unique selling proposition' is ethics and family values entwined in its culture and tradition, but also for the entire world which is reeling with serious threats like terrorism, homicide, corruption, etc. The *Rāmāyaṇa* opens the inner eye that propels one towards achieving *pūrṇatā* in life by following the footsteps of Rāma.

### Conclusion

Overall, to quench our thirst for fulfilment, to solve the ever-growing miseries of life, the *Rāmāyaṇa* is the most suitable answer. By showing a definitive path to *pūrṇatā* through the life of Rāma, the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* displays idealism in various other aspects of life as well. As Mammaṭa mentions in his *kārikā* of *kāvya-prayojana, vyavahāravide, rājādigatocitācāra-parijnānam*, to depict idealism in every aspect of *kāvya* is one of the chief *prayojana*-s of a *kāvya*. Though the central character of the epic is Rāma, there are plenty of other characters who display superior qualities of idealism such as bravery, sacrifice, brotherhood, friendship and many more in their acts. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is like a handbook for all poets and a lexicon of all great poetic ideas. Thus, on both individual and universal level, the *Rāmāyaṇa* seems relevant for all ages and people of all caste, creed, race, community and nationality. 📖

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# Pāṇinian System of Grammar

*If language is the sky, then the Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini — the universal text on Sanskrit grammar — is a window to look at the sky!*

BY MANISH RAJAN WALVEKAR

**A**NCIENT INDIAN LINGUISTICS is a developed branch of linguistics – one that has the potential to expand the horizons of contemporary linguistics. Here, the word 'contemporary' is used instead of the word 'modern', because ancient Indian linguistics has a modern approach! In fact, several texts of grammar, *prātiśākhya* and *śikṣā* generate fundamental concepts of linguistics that are universal in nature. Before we begin the journey of ancient Indian linguistics, then, we should pay our humble homage to one of the most important pioneers of this branch: Pāṇini.

*aṣṭādhyāyī-jaganmātā yasya cittāt samutthitā |  
vedānām upakārāya tasmai pāṇinayenamaḥ ||*

## Pāṇini

Pāṇini is one of the most celebrated linguists of the world. L. Bloomfield said correctly, "Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence!" (Bloomfield 1954:11). Further, we can say that Pāṇini laid the firm foundation of Indian knowledge systems which was undeniably helpful in the evolution and development of several Indian *śāstra*-s.

According to *Kathāsaritsāgara* (*tarāṅga* IV), Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Vyāḍi were the disciples of Upavarṣa or Varṣa. Kātyāyana was a bright student whereas Pāṇini was a blockhead. One day, he got tired of being a dull student and performed an austere penance in the Himalayas for Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva appeared in front of him and adorned Pāṇini with intelligence. In that joyful state, Śiva performed a dance and played his *ḍamaru* for 14 times. After listening to those 14 sounds, Pāṇini generated 14 aphorisms. Hence, these aphorisms are also called as *Māheśvara-sūtra*-s. They are –

*a i u ṅ | ṛ | k | e o ṅ | ai au c | ha ya va ra ṭ | la ṅ | ṅa ma ṅa ṅa na m | jha bha ṅ | gha ḍha dha ṣ | ja ba ga ḍa da ś | kha pha cha ṭha tha ca ṭa ta v | ka pa y | śa ṣa sa r | ha l |*

This is nothing but the *māṭrkāpāṭha* rearranged. *Māheśvara-sūtra*-s – the new and strong system in place of the traditional *māṭrkāpāṭha* that existed before Pāṇini – can be called as one of his most fundamental intellectual contributions.

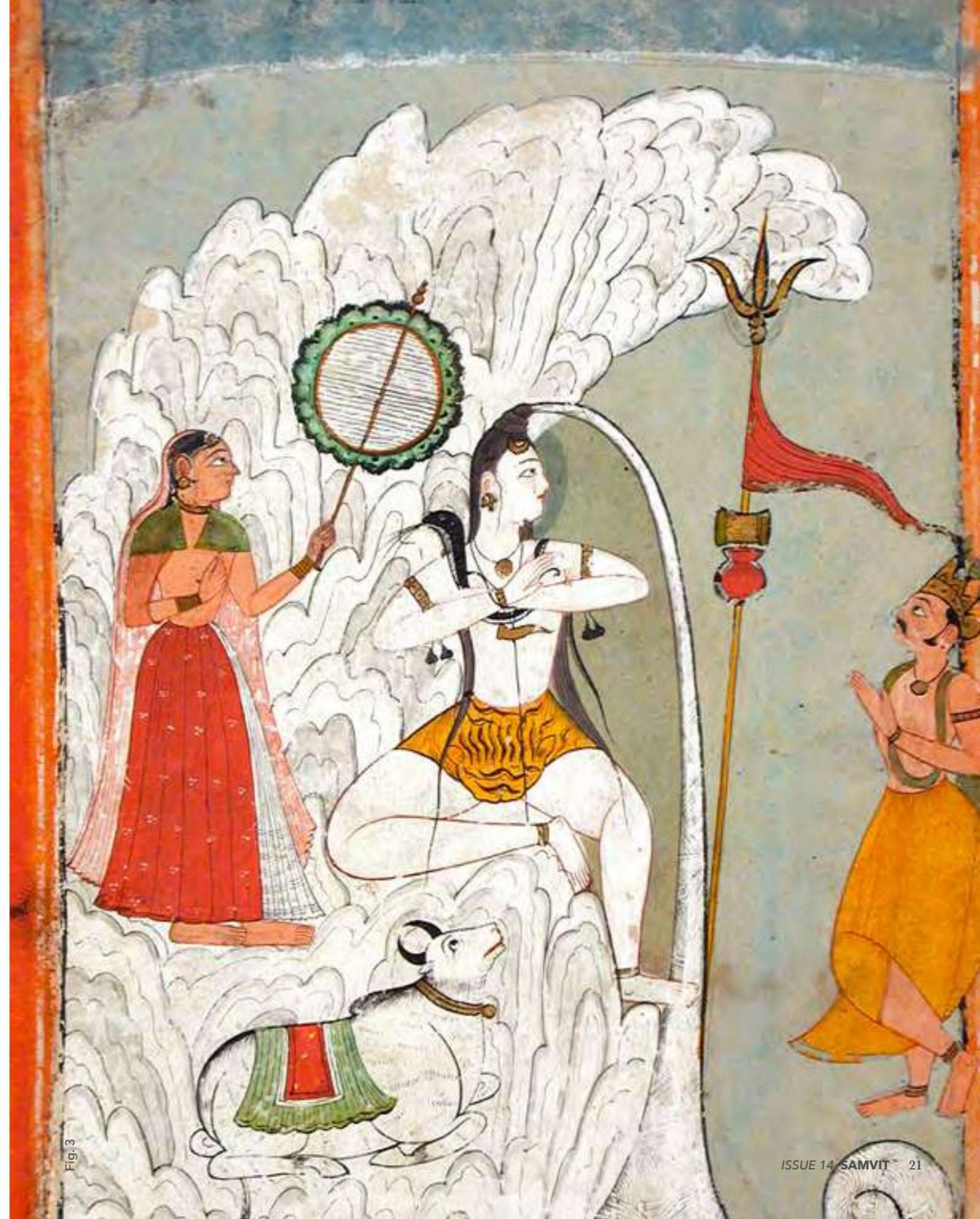


FIG. 3



Fig. 4

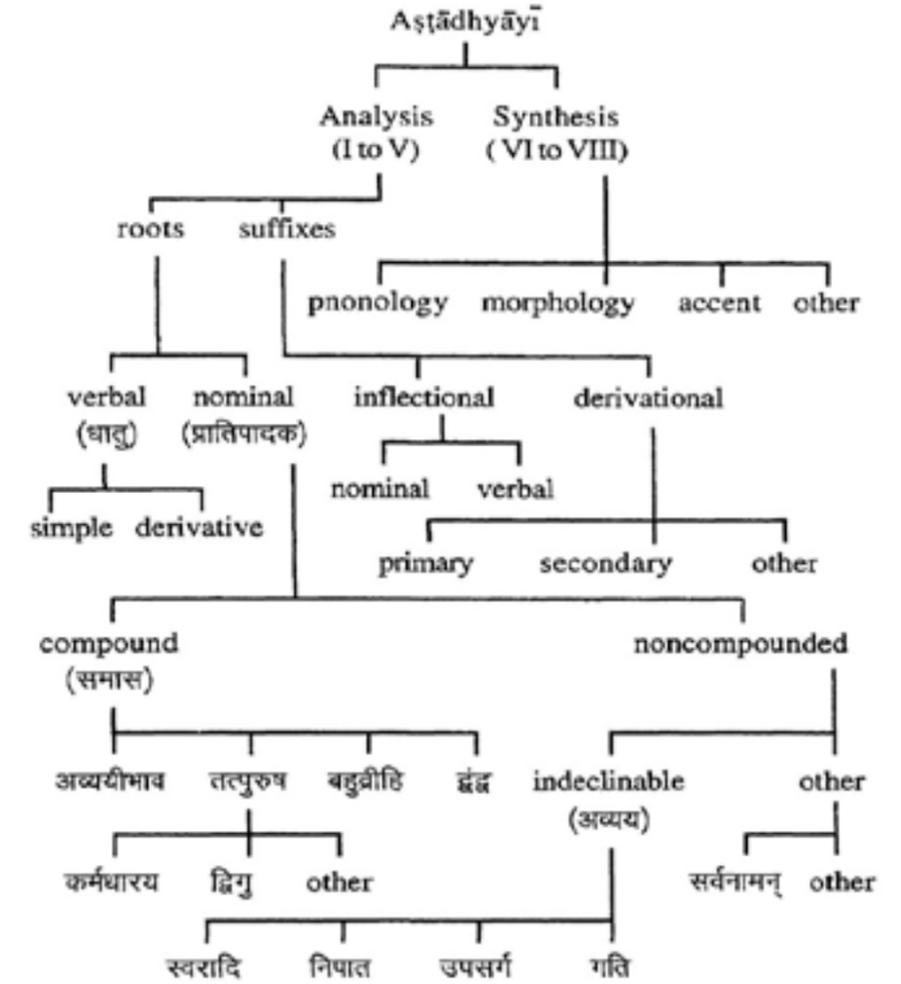
Unfortunately, we don't have any historical data as far as Pāṇini's life is concerned. According to tradition, his native place is Śālātura and his mother's name is Dākṣī. That is why he is also called as Śālāturiya and Dākṣīputra. There is no consensus among scholars about the exact period of Pāṇini. Some say 7<sup>th</sup> BCE, some say 5<sup>th</sup> BCE and others say 3<sup>rd</sup> BCE. There is an interesting record by Xuanzang [Huan Tsang]: Xuanzang studied Sanskrit at Nālandā. He was told that Pāṇini received grammar from Śakra who was a student of Brahma. Śakra's grammar contained 10000 śloka-s and Pāṇini reduced it to 4000 sūtra-s (Bhate 2002:2). If we look at the accounts given by Chinese travelers, we see that they are not retelling the mythical story of a dullard Pāṇini turning into a brilliant student. On the other hand, they are stating, time and again, that Pāṇini's grammar was not a gift given by god, but the result of his painstaking efforts and toil.

Pāṇini's grammar is descriptive grammar. By the term 'descriptive grammar', we mean that Pāṇini described the prevalent Sanskrit language; it is not prescriptive in nature. To decode or decipher an aphorism of *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, we must assume a verb like *bhavati*, *varate*, *asti*, etc. that completes the sense of the *sūtra* which certainly carries a descriptive sense. In other words, if language is the sky, then we can say that Pāṇini's grammar is a window to look at the sky. One must accept this fact that Pāṇini is not imposing anything on you! He is simply describing a language. In later period, several grammarians criticized Pāṇini's grammar as futile and of no use. Those calumniating grammarians built their own windows! But their windows were narrower and smaller than Pāṇini's!

Pāṇini's universal approach to observe a language and his omni-directional methods were vital to make the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* the time-tested text it is! Why should we call *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as an omni-directional (*viśvatomukha*) text? Because Pāṇini gives not only a structural grammar for Sanskrit but also for Pāli, Prakrit as well as other Indian languages like Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Gujarati, etc. and even for non-Indian languages like Persian, etc. Later, after the *apabhraṃśa-bhāṣā* period, when current Indo-European and Dravidian languages evolved,

their grammatical texts were written in Sanskrit using the Pāṇinian method! For instance, the Telugu grammar text, '*Āndhra-śabda-cintāmaṇī*' by Nannayya, the Marathi grammar text, *Mahārāṣṭra-bhāṣā-candrikā*, etc. were influenced by Pāṇini's method!

Sanskrit is an inflecting language. Pāṇini is the first person to delve into the deeper structure of inflections and provide the most possible grammatical as well as meaningful units to the extent possible. In the next article, we will discuss *Aṣṭādhyāyī*'s scientific and mathematical features like mnemonic pattern of the grammar, metalanguage, etc. To conclude, we will have an overview of the world created by Pāṇini (Bhate 2002: 21):



This is the world created by Pāṇini in a nutshell. In our upcoming article, this thread will be continued. 📖

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## ‘Ḷakāra’ in Sanskrit and other Indian languages

*An exploration of the rather peculiar nature of the alphabet, ‘la’ which is present in Vedic Sanskrit and in the Dravidian languages, but not in Classical Sanskrit.*

BY DR. NAVEEN BHAT

**S**ANSKRIT, one of the most expressive and phonologically rich languages of India, has enriched almost all Indian languages. It can be said that the linguistic diversity of the Indian subcontinent finds a platform for unification in Sanskrit. In fact, Sanskrit can be considered as an ideal model to measure the morphological and phonological correctness of most words in Indian languages for it shares a substantial vocabulary with the other languages of India. According to *Pāṇinīya Sikṣā*, 21 vowels (including their primary variants<sup>1</sup>), 33 consonants, and the *ayogavāhaḥ*-s add up-to 63 or 64 *varṇa*-s in the Sanskrit language; and these 63-64 *varṇa*-s articulate almost all the phones that a language may employ.

### Ayogavāhaḥ-s

Certain *varṇa*-s in the Sanskrit language are not included in the *Māheśvarasūtra*-s – the systematic arrangement of Sanskrit *varṇa*-s; yet they are significantly employed in the language. These *varṇa*-s are termed as *ayogavāhaḥ*-s. *Anusvāra*, *visarga*, *upadhmānīya* and *yama varṇa*-s are famously classed as *ayogavāhaḥ*-s. So, broadly, the phones without syllabic representation in the *Māheśvarasūtra*-s are classed under the umbrella-term, *ayogavāhaḥ*.

It is this very conjecture that opens a debate on the phone, ‘la’. We do not see a syllabic representation of ‘la’ in the *Māheśvarasūtra*-s, yet its sound is heard multiple times in the Veda-s.

### Ḷakāra in the Veda-s

There are quite a few examples of the Veda-s employing the *Ḷakāra*. A famous employment is in the very opening mantra of *Ṛg Veda* which reads as follows:

*agnim-īle purohitam yajñasya devam-ṛtvijam*

(Ṛg 1.1.1)

According to the *Dhātupāṭha* of Sanskrit Grammar, the root of the verb ‘īle’ is ‘īḍa – stutau’ (*Dhā. Pā. 2.9*). It

<sup>1</sup> Each vowel has either 12 or 18 variants of its own – this showcases the phonetic precision of this language.

must be noted that here, the *Ḷakāra* is not seen/heard. The *Ḷakāra* is not present in the verbal forms of this root when it is employed in classical Sanskrit – it is only in Vedic Sanskrit that the *Ḷakāra* is present and is represented in writing with the syllable ‘l’. The most reliable commentator of the Veda-s, *ācārya Sāyaṇa*, comments thus upon this:

*ḍakārasya Ḷakāro bahvṛcādhyeṭṣ-sampradāya-prāptaḥ | tathā ca paṭhyate – ajmadhyastha-ḍakārasya Ḷakāram bahvṛcā jaguḥ | ajmadhyastha-ḍhakārasya Ḷakāram vai yathākramam|*  
(*Sāyaṇa Ṛg-Veda Bhāṣya 1.1.1*)

*Sāyaṇa* makes it amply clear that the changing of *ḍakāra* into *Ḷakāra* is seen in certain traditions of *Ṛg-Veda Prātiśākhya*-s, and he therefore allows a position for *Ḷakāra* in Vedic Sanskrit. The *ḍakāra* which occurs between two vowels is changed into *Ḷakāra* and is known as *duṣṣṛṣṭa* in *Ṛg-Veda-Prātiśākhya*. This is indeed restricted to *Ṛg Veda* and cannot be applied to other Vedic hymns.

*Yajur Veda*, on the other hand, which does not adhere to the above rule, raises some debatable issues on the usage of *Ḷakāra*. *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya* says:

*ṣṛktasvarāt<sup>2</sup> lo ḍam iti pauṣkarasādeḥ*

The *Ḷakāra* which occurs after *ṛkāra* changes into *ḍakāra*. For instance, consider the word, ‘*mṛḍātīdṛśe*’ – here, the *Ḷakāra* itself is the *sthānī*, the pre-occupant, and according to the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya*, it must be replaced with *ḍakāra* because it follows a *ṛkāra*. Here, the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya* presupposes that the verb in use is ‘*mṛḷāti*’, and dictates the change of ‘l’ into ‘ḍ’. But surprisingly, there is no verbal root for ‘*mṛḷāti*’. Thus, we see that due to this rule of *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya*, there is a very less chance – or rather, no chance – of hearing *Ḷakāra* in *Yajur Veda*.

The *Prātiśākhya*-s of *Ṛg* and *Yajur Veda* make it amply clear that there is a letter ‘la’ in Sanskrit with phonetic

<sup>2</sup> *Rkāra* and *Ḷrkāra* are known as *ṣṛktasvara*-s because there are two components in these *varṇa*-s: an *aj-bhāga*, and a *hal-bhāga*.

and syllabic expression. Yet, it is not part of *Māheśvarasūtra*-s, the regular Sanskrit alphabets. Ācārya Pāṇini perhaps allows a place for *ḷakāra* when he says,

*triṣaṣṭhiścaturṣṣaṣṭhivā varṇāḥ śambhumate matāḥ (Pāṇinīya Śikṣā 3)*

Because it is only by adding *ḷakāra* that the count of Sanskrit *varṇā*-s reaches 64.

Hence, the following conclusions pertaining to Vedic Sanskrit can be drawn –

i) There is *ḷakāra* in Vedic Sanskrit.

ii) It is not a natural phone (*svabhāvasiddha*) but is obtained in the place of *aj-madhyastha-ḍakāra* in the hymns of *Ṛg Veda* because of the rule of *Ṛg Prātiśākhya*. Due to lack of evidence, the possibility of *svabhāvasiddha ḷakāra* in Vedic Sanskrit is refuted: there is no root with *ḷakāra* mentioned by Sāyaṇa in his commentary. He comments on the first mantra of *Ṛg Veda* as follows:

*agnināmakam devam ṭḍe, staumi; ṭḍa stutau iti dhātuḥ (Sāyaṇa Ṛg-Veda Bhāṣya 1.1.1)*

This confirms the absence of *ḷakāra* at the level of *dhātu*-s<sup>3</sup>.

iii) The *sthānī ḷakāra* of *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya (Yajus)*, which is changed to *ḍakāra*, is also not a natural one as the commentators show that there are no roots employing *ḷakāra*.

#### **ḷakāra in Classical Sanskrit**

The phenomenon of *ḍakāra* changing into *ḷakāra* can be noticed with respect to certain Sanskrit words used in various vernaculars of India. The following table sheds light upon the same:

Original Form	Variants in Vernaculars	Variants in Sanskrit
<i>vyāḍi</i>	<i>vyāḷi</i>	<i>vyāli</i>
<i>nāḍi</i>	<i>nāḷi</i>	<i>nāli</i>
<i>tāḍapatram</i>	<i>tāḷapatram</i>	<i>tālapatram</i>

These original forms and their variants are still in usage either in Sanskrit or in the vernaculars of India. This hints at the flexibility of Indian languages with respect to 'ḍa' and 'ḷa' (as also in the case of 'va' and 'ba'). But, no example of *ḷakāra* (natural or substituted) can be found in classical Sanskrit literature.

#### **ḷakāra in Kannaḍa**

Dravidian Languages, without any exception, employ '*lakāra*' and '*ḷakāra*' with clear phonetic and syllabic expression. The following is an attempt to examine *ḷakāra* in Kannaḍa, a Dravidian language.

The early Kannaḍa grammarian, Keśirāja, in his treatise, *Śabdamaṇidarpaṇa*, classified the *ḷakāra* sounds of Kannaḍa into three categories. First category is '*raḷa*', which is peculiar to Kannaḍa (old), Malayalam and Tamil. '*Kuḷa*' is the second category which represents the natural *ḷakāra* of Kannaḍa language. The third

<sup>3</sup> Similar instances can be found in Pāṇinian grammar. For example – the sutra *dhātūvādeḥ ṣaḥ saḥ (P.S.6-1-64)* converts all *ṣakāra*-s at the beginning of a *dhātu* to *sakāra* (with three exceptions).

category is termed as *kṣaḷa* by Keśirāja, and this is the *ḷakāra* used in the place of the Sanskrit '*lakāra*'. We will limit our discussion to *kṣaḷa* in this article.

Consider, for instance, the following table:

Sanskrit Original	Changed into Kannaḍa
<i>maṅgalam</i>	<i>maṅgaḷam</i>
<i>nalīnam</i>	<i>naḷīnam</i>
<i>kadalīvanam</i>	<i>kadaḷīvanam</i>

From the table, we see that when Sanskrit words are adopted into Kannaḍa (and other vernaculars), the Sanskrit *lakāra* changes into *ḷakāra*. But this does not occur with all Sanskrit words. For example, the *lakāra* of the word '*kamala*' remains as '*kamala*' in Kannaḍa; here the change has not occurred.

With this in mind, Keśirāja counts the alphabets of Kannaḍa thus: "The number of alphabets that remain after the deduction of alphabets borrowed from Sanskrit is the total number of alphabets in Kannaḍa" (*Śabdamaṇidarpaṇa* 33). According to Keśirāja, *ḷakāra* is one such letter that is deductible, or borrowed from Sanskrit. Keśirāja thus points to the liberty that vernaculars hold in changing the Sanskrit *lakāra* into *ḷakāra*, though this reference is not entirely clear given there is no *ḷakāra* at all in Sanskrit!

The 20<sup>th</sup> century Kannaḍa stalwart, Śrī Sedyapu Krishna Bhat, also opines that *kṣaḷa* is the *ḷakāra* used in place of the Sanskrit *lakāra*, and he claims that this occurs due to the affection that South Indians hold towards the letter '*ḷa*'. Yet, it must be remembered that not all the Sanskrit *lakāra*-s are replaced by *ḷakāra* in the vernaculars. Hence, there must be some regulating factor that determines which *lakāra*-s change and which don't. The subject of Keśirāja's *kṣaḷa* thus requires much research under this light.

#### **Conclusion**

The rules of *Prātiśākhya* enable the usage of *ḷakāra* in *Ṛgvedic Sanskrit*. Pāṇini and early grammarians of other Indian languages also hint at the usage of *ḷakāra* in classical Sanskrit. But because it is replaced by the familiar *lakāra* in classical Sanskrit (*ḷalayorabhedah*), the previously accepted *ḷakāra* is now classed as an *ayogavāhaḥ* in Sanskrit<sup>4</sup>. 📌

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<sup>4</sup> It must be noted that it is not explicitly listed under the *ayogavāhaḥ* category.



Fig. 5

# Paediatrics in Āyurveda

*Like Agni, with whose help the deva-s of heaven receive the offerings made to them, paediatrics nurtures all branches of Āyurveda.*

BY DR. GANESH. R

**ĀYURVEDA** is a pioneer among the medical sciences of the world in providing specialized care for specific age-groups and for focusing on specific organ-systems. In the history of Medicine – before the concept of ‘modern medical science’ evolved – ancient seers of India had developed specific systems for medical care of women and children. *Aṣṭāṅga Āyurveda* gives clear-cut descriptions of various diseases and their management in eight specialities including ENT, ophthalmology, surgery and paediatrics.

*Kaumārabhṛtya* or Āyurvedic paediatrics deals with every aspect of child-rearing – nutritional care, proper growth and development, social and emotional aspects of a child’s well-being, etc. Paediatrics was given great importance as it was designed to produce progeny endowed with superior qualities of intelligence, physical and mental strength; in fact, the earliest concepts of ‘baby-clinics’ can be found in our ancient paediatric textbooks. As early as 2<sup>nd</sup> century C.E., textbooks were written on paediatric-specific diseases that included developmental disorders, nutritional disorders, infections, behavioural disorders, etc. Elaborate descriptions are found in our classical texts regarding child-nutrition, qualities and deficiencies of breast-milk, its rectification, various recipes for balanced food supplements

(suitable for various ages), elaborate descriptions for child-nursery, toys for children, play-ground, the desired qualities for care-takers, etc. *Ācārya Harītā* also included pregnancy and post-delivery care in the scope of this speciality.

Many ancient treatises were written on the subject of *kaumārabhṛtya*. In current practice, *Kāśyapaśāhita* – with its elaborate descriptions of child-health and paediatric diseases, their diagnosis and management – is considered as the most important classic. Among the eight branches of Āyurveda, *ācārya Kaśyapa* considers *kaumārabhṛtya* to be the most important. He considers paediatrics as equivalent to Lord Agni, who stands foremost among the *deva-s* – ahead of even Indra, the King of the *deva-s*. Like Agni, without whose help the *deva-s* of heaven cannot receive the offerings made to them during *yāga-s* and *homa-s*, all other medical branches will be rendered without a patient if a child is not brought up with due care to healthy adulthood by a trained *kaumārabhṛtyaka*. So *kaumārabhṛtya*, like Agni, is essential for all branches of medical sciences, since it nurtures all other branches of Āyurveda.

## History of *kaumārabhṛtya*

Āyurveda has a long history enriched by the Veda-s and regional literature. Various āyurvedic principles

and remedies are found in the storylines of many Vedic and local scriptures. In *R̥g Veda*, it is written that the deaf and dumb son of Nṛṣad was given an ear, perhaps by plastic surgery. In the section of *krimiroga-s* (intestinal worm infestations), it is mentioned that some *krimi-s* – like *raktabojinī* – predominantly affect children. Ācārya Cāṇakya includes a separate chapter of *śiṣu-kalyāṇa* in his book *Arthaśāstra*. Based on the geographical, climatic and cultural situations of various regions, and also based on their thoughts and lifestyle, there were many developments in this field. Major works like *Caraka Saṁhitā*, *Suśruta Saṁhitā* and *Aṣṭāṅghṛdaya* have briefly documented information on *kaumārabhṛtya*.

Later, based on the teachings of ācārya Kaśyapa, Jīvaka, at the age of five years, wrote a detailed treatise on *kaumārabhṛtya*, but it was not praised by other ācārya-s as it was narrated by a child. So Jīvaka, in the presence of all other sages, dipped himself in the Ganges in Haridwar and came out the next moment with wrinkles and grey hair in his new incarnation as Vṛddhajīvaka. Then, the scholars of

Āyurveda accepted his book, *Vṛddhajīvaka tantra* or *Kāśyapasamhitā*, which still remains as an important paediatric reference in Āyurveda. However, this is available only in an incomplete state.

**Kaumārabhṛtya in Kerala**

With classical literature as the base-material, and imbibing the wisdom of other indigenous knowledge systems, many regional books were periodically compiled in different states of India depending on contemporary needs. In Kerala, the regional growth of indigenous medicine contributed significantly to the development of primary child health care. *Aṣṭavaidya* physicians contributed greatly to Kerala's reputation as a prominent centre for Āyurveda in India. The *aṣṭavaidya* culture blends the Āyurveda of *Aṣṭāṅghṛdaya* with the knowledge and practices of local healers. The *aṣṭavaidya-s* represent the Brahmin scholar-physicians who were masters of eight branches (*aṣṭāṅga*) of Āyurveda. According to tradition, 18 upper-caste families of Kerala were initially designated as *aṣṭavaidya-s*. Each *aṣṭavaidya* family developed and mastered its own therapeutic

“ From time immemorial, *kaumārabhṛtya* has addressed the need for procreating best children to enrich the capacity and repute of our nation. ”

specialties. Although many of the specialties were guarded as family secrets, students outside the family were accepted as disciples. This helped disseminate their knowledge beyond the family circle and to create new lineages of transmission. Among the *aṣṭāṅga-s*, *viṣa cikitsā* and *bālacikitsā* primarily flourished in Kerala, and many important books written in both these fields. Regional textbooks of *kaumārabhṛtya* include *Ārogyakalpadruma*, *Kaumāra-mañjarī*, *Bāla-roga-cikitsā-mañjarī*, *Vaidya-tārakam*, *Vaidya-manorama*, *Parambarya bālacikitsā* and *Bālacikitsā grantha*.

*Ārogyakalpadruma*, belonging to 19<sup>th</sup> century, is authored by Vaidyan Kaikkulaṅgara Rāmavārier. This scripture is written partially in Sanskrit language (*mañipravālam*) in Malayālam script. It gives in-depth details about care of the newborn and various diseases affecting children and their treatment. Kaikkulaṅgara Rāmavārier divided the paediatric age group into 11 subgroups and prescribed specific group of drugs for each age group which act as immunity boosters. These are called as *prākāra yoga-s* and they play a key role in the maintenance of health and prevention of disease. They protect children from diseases just as a *prākāra* (fence) protects a house from enemies. In this treatment, the drug schedule starts with birth and continues up to the age of 12.

*Uramarunnu* is the traditional baby-care practice in which a group of drugs is administered to the child in the form of a paste. This is widely practiced in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. *Uramarunnu* has derived its name from the method in which it is administered – *ura* is to rub and *marunnu* is medicine. Thus, it represents a wide range of drugs which are obtained by rubbing on

a smooth stone. They include drugs that promote digestion, boost strength and enhance intellect. The different ingredients of *uramarunnu* used in Kerala are *hing* (*ferula asafoetida*), *haridra* (*curcuma longa*), *candana* (*santalum album*), *yastimadhu* (*glycerrhiza glabra*), *vidanga* (*embelia ribes*), *ginger* (*zingiber officinale*), *pippali* (*piper longum*), *maricha* (*piper nigrum*), *mustha* (*cyperus rotendus*), *avartaki* (*caesalpinaceae auriculata linn*), *vacha* (*acorus calamus*), *jatiphala* (*myristica fragrance houtt*), *mayaphala* (*quercus infectoria oliv*), and *haritaki* (*terminalia chebula*). These drugs (alone or combined) are triturated with breast milk/honey/butter/cow's milk and administered frequently after 28 days of birth till the age of two. One dosage is equal to the drug obtained with a single rub on an abrasive material. There is no standardization of its dosage, and is dispensed as per the *vaidya's* advice. Care should be taken that these are stored hygienically and ensured that all the drugs are washed and dried before use.

Many scriptures of *kaumārabhṛtya* have comprehensive descriptions of various (single and combinations of) drugs to enhance immunity and ensure proper growth and development of children.

**Conclusion**

The government is keen on bringing up various projects to ensure the healthy upbringing of children. From time immemorial, *kaumārabhṛtya* has addressed the need for procreating best children to enrich the capacity and repute of our nation. It is indeed the need of the era that we explore these treatises to develop our own standards of care for our children in various aspects of child health applying the guidelines from these classics. ❧



Fig. 6

# Yajña in the Bhagavadgītā

*In a metaphysical sense, yajña refers to actions that are performed as an offering to God without expectation of rewards.*

BY DR. SRIPAD H. GHALIGI

**YAJÑA IS PRACTICED** – in letter and spirit – in Bhāratavarṣa from time immemorial. The term ‘yajña’ is derived from the root ‘yuj’ which has several meanings: to worship, to give, to sacrifice, to bestow, to congregate, etc. The *Bhagavadgītā* – one of the three foundational texts of *prasthānatrayī* – explores the concept of *yajña* through numerous profound and pragmatic approaches, and proclaims *yajña* as a cosmic and metaphysical principle that is the foundation of creation. According to it,

*sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovāca prajāpatiḥ  
anena prasaviśyadhvaṁ eṣa vostviṣṭakāmadhuk |*

(Gītā 3.10)

In beginning of creation, Prajāpati [the creator] – created mankind [and the world-cycle] by *yajña*, and said, “By this [*yajña*] you multiply. Let this be your yielder of coveted objects of desire.”

(trans. Swami Gambirananda)

In general, *yajña* is the process of offering *dravya* (specific to each *yajña*) to *Agni* with specific Vedic *mantra*-s for a specific purpose. In a metaphysical sense, *yajña* refers to actions that are performed as an offering [to God] without expectation of rewards. The *Bhagavadgītā* discusses the *yajña-chakra*, the chain of life that is sustained by *yajña*:

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḍ annasambhavaḥ |  
yajñād bhavati parjanyo yajñāḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ ||*

(Gītā 3.14)

Creatures are born out of *anna* [food]; *anna* is produced through rains and rains originate from *yajña* that is performed through human-action. In this context, all actions of the world are *yajña* if they are performed with the appropriate frame of mind – any physical, psychological, social and spiritual pursuit undertaken with a spirit of sacrifice becomes *yajña*. Through this, the doer is freed from the bondage of action, because such a

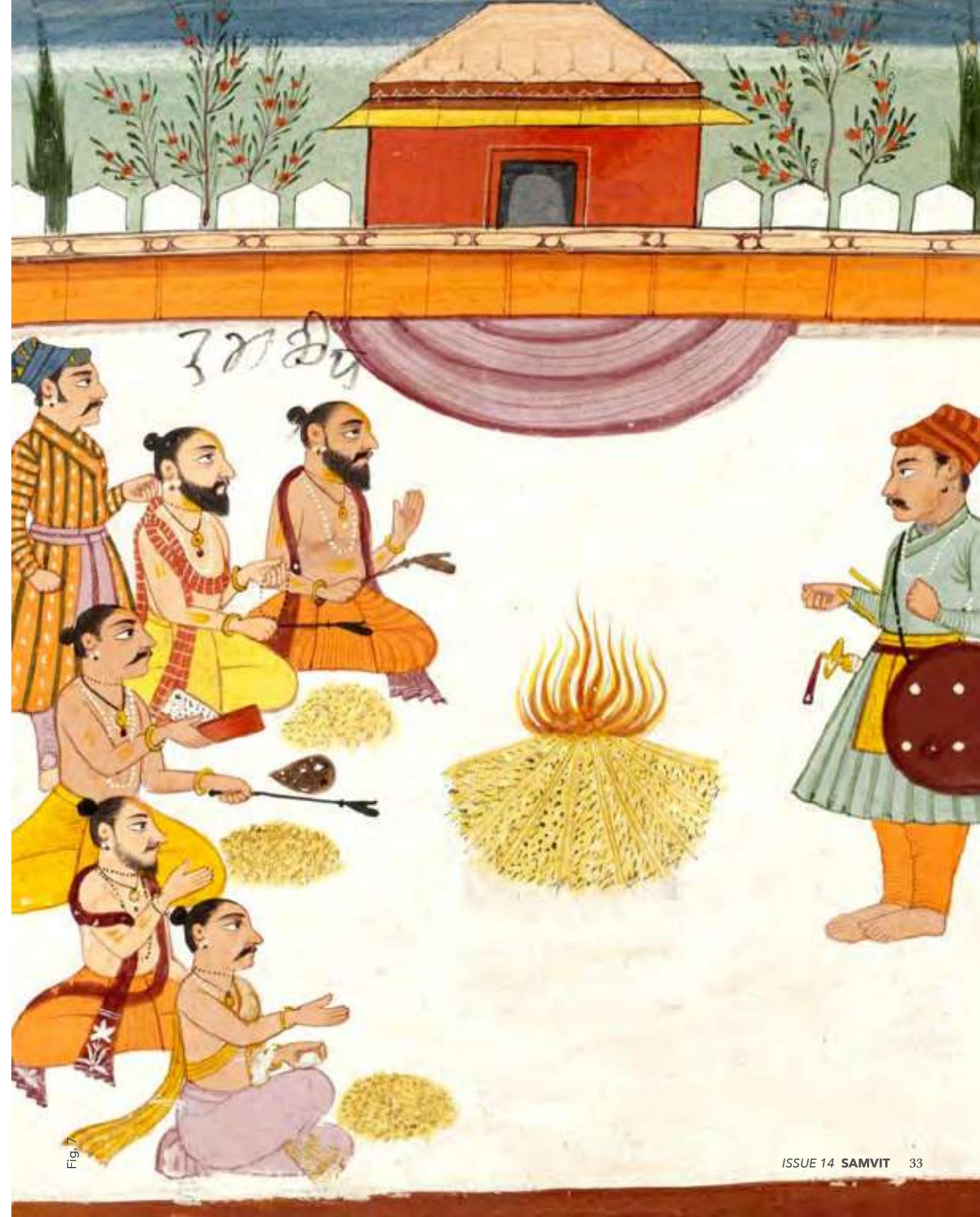


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

frame of mind reduces the impressions (*saṁskāra*) and deep-rooted tendencies (*vāsanā*) acquired from actions and allows one to transcend all the bondages of the world and to remain unperturbed in midst of upheavals in life.

#### Classification of *yajña*-s:

Based on the sacrificer and his intentions, the *Gītā* classifies *yajña* into three types: *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika*. *Sāttvika-yajña*-s are undertaken by men of purity and executed in a spirit of altruism, and in such cases, paramount importance is given to scriptural injunctions. The sacrificer does not hanker after personal gains, and the *yajña* is performed with conviction as service to God and for the benefit of the society. The motive here is simply the refinement of mind and the discharging of duties. This type of sacrifice is considered as the superior of the three.

*Rājasika-yajña* is one that is performed with an expectation of rewards. Self-interest, self-importance, and pretentiousness are the drive behind such sacrifices. *Tāmasika-yajña* is not in compliance with scriptural injunctions. It lacks *dāna* (charity), *śraddhā* and devotion. The *Gītā* recommends the first type of *yajña* and directs that the other two be abandoned (*Gītā* 17.11).

Based on the method of performing *yajña*-s, the fourth chapter of the *Gītā* enumerates several types of *yajña*-s – external, internal, ritualistic and non-ritualistic. Accordingly, the highest form of sacrifice is performed by a *yogī* who has adopted the path of action to propitiate the deities. A *yogī* may even perform the ritualistic *yajña* by perceiving the world as a manifestation of divinity. The *yogī* who has adopted the path of knowledge performs internal *yajña*: “He offers the self, as a sacrifice by the Self itself, in the fire of Brahman” (*Gītā* 4.25).

The ritualistic and external form of *brahma-yajña* consists of chanting the Vedic *mantra*-s and contemplating on its significance. The internal and highest form of *brahma-yajña* is realization of the supreme Self. This implies the burning of *ajñāna*

“ The uniqueness of the *Bhagavadgītā* lies in the flexibility and freedom it allows each person to perform the *yajña* that suits his temperament. ”

(ignorance) that is responsible for the wrong perception of Self and non-Self (*ātma* and *anātma*). The result of this *yajña* is that the Self is perceived as one with the supreme Brahman devoid of all *upādhi*.

Further, based on the offering (*dravya*), the *Gītā* enumerates *dravya-yajñā*, *tapo-yajñā*, *yoga-yajñā*, *svādhyāya-yajñā* and *jñāna-yajñā*. Sacrifices performed with material *dravya* acquired in a dhārmic way is referred to as *dravya-yajñā*. When *dravya* is offered as *dāna* (with a humble attitude), the receiver becomes the fire and the gift, the oblation. *Tapo-yajñā* symbolizes austerities where renunciation is itself the *agni* and our desires and cravings become the oblations – our senses of hearing and other faculties are offered into the fire of self-restraint and as a result of this sacrifice, mastery over senses is attained. *Prāṇāyāma* is also a *yajña*. Here, the oblation of *prāṇa* into *apāna* is called *pūraka*, and the oblation of *apāna* into *prāṇa* is called as *recaka*. Restraining both *prāṇa* and *apāna* is called *kumbhaka*. *Yoga-yajña* is a sacrifice which comprises of the practice of *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. The regular deep study of scriptures and contemplation of the same is *svādhyāya-yajña*. *Jñāna-yajña* is a subtler type of sacrifice. It is the offering of ignorance into the fire of knowledge through study of scriptures, guidance of the preceptor and deep analysis (*nitya-anitya-vastu-vivekaḥ*); this eventually leads to the experience of the ultimate reality. *Gītā* regards *jñāna-yajña* as superior and nobler compared to *dravya-yajña*. However, the importance of righteous actions and the other types of *yajña* cannot be denied – the *Gītā* endorses the actions done with the right spirit and awareness which can become an indirect means to attain ultimate knowledge and freedom.

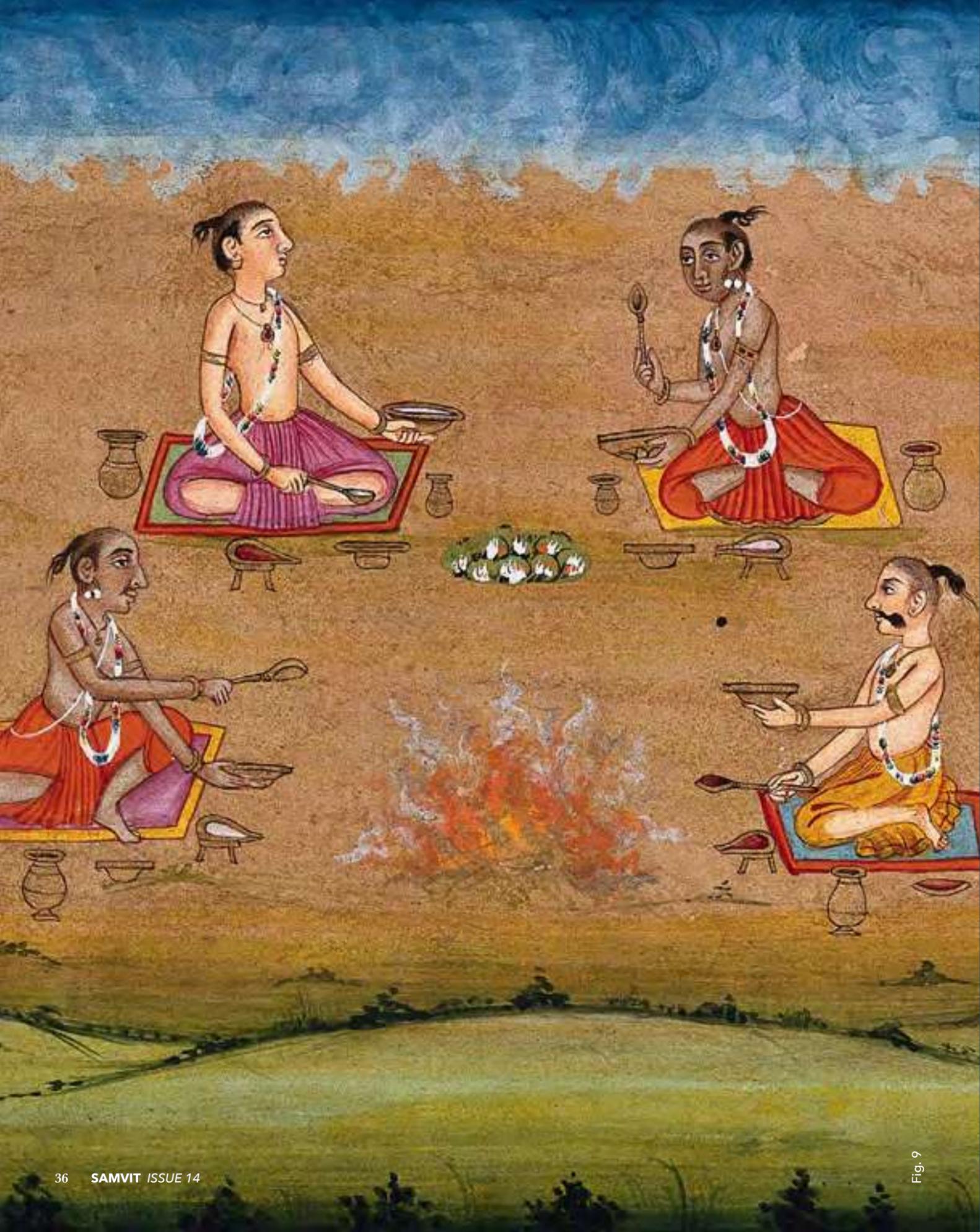
#### Conclusion

The spirit of *yajña* permeates the whole teaching of the *Bhagavadgītā* which illuminates the physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimension of *yajña*-s. The uniqueness of the *Bhagavadgītā* lies in the flexibility and freedom it allows each person to perform the *yajña* that suits his temperament. This allows all human beings, at all phases of life, to commence, implement and imbibe the essential elements of *yajña*, making the text relevant, timeless and universal.

The ancient tradition of performing *yajña* with proper understanding and fervor has diminished due to various factors of Indian history. It needs to be revived for holistic progress and harmony of the society, and this can be done if we follow Yogeśvara’s message in the form of *Gītā*; rest assured, *nahi kalyāṇakṛt-kaścit durgatim tāta gacchati* (*Gītā* 6.40). 📖

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SERIES: WISDOM OF THE  
ETERNAL VEDA-S

# Āpastambīya Kalpasūtrās

*Kārīrīṣṭi, a Vedic sacrifice, if performed correctly, will bring forth rains to the parched Earth — for beyond even the sphere of science, lies the realm of the Veda-s.*

BY DR. U K V SARMA

**V**EDA-S are known to be the authority on *dharma*. Quite a few meanings are available for the word *dharma* – righteousness, justice, duty etc. According to the Mīmāṃsā school<sup>1</sup>, the term *dharma* is defined as “*yāgādireva dharmah*” – sacrifices and suchlike only form *dharma*. It means that sacrifices, charity, austerities etc., as enjoined only by the Veda-s, are considered to be *dharma*. The popular quote, “*dharmo rakṣati rakṣitah*”, says that *dharma* being protected by way of being performed, protects the performers in exchange. Hence, the sacrifices, when performed well, ensure the welfare of the society, protecting it from various kinds of threats.

Veda-s are the treasure-house of knowledge. Deep and inexplicable are the ideas enshrined in this edifice of eternal scriptures. Considering their quality of being obscure, our ancient sages bestowed upon us the Vedāṅga-s, śāstra-s, Purāṇa-s etc., to facilitate the comprehension of the Veda-s, by illustrating those ideas and messages so as to reach out to more people in a society. Hence the purpose of the Vedāṅga-s is to elucidate the essence of the Veda-s, without which the Veda-s would remain too abstruse for the seekers of knowledge. These Vedāṅga-s – the

auxiliary limbs of the Veda-s – are enumerated to be six in number. As there are four Veda-s, namely *Ṛgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda*, each has its own set of six Vedāṅga-s. The verse that names those six is the following:

*śikṣā vyākaraṇaṃ chando niruktaṃ jyotiṣaṃ  
tathā |  
kalpaśceti ṣaḍaṅgāni vedasyāhur  
manīṣiṇaḥ ||*

Śikṣā (phonetics), Vyākaraṇaṃ (grammar), Chandas (metrical science), Jyotiṣaṃ (astronomy) and Kalpa (science of altar construction), thus, the wise say, are the six auxiliaries of the Veda-s.

Among these six, the branch of study that deals with the systematic procedure of conducting various sacrifices mentioned in the Veda-s is known as Kalpa. “*Kalpyate, samarthayate yāgaprayogo’tra iti kalpah*” is the derivation given of the word “*kalpa*” by the great sage, Vidyāraṇya. In other words, Kalpa is the branch of study that deals with the practical conduct of sacrifices. It is inclusive of four sections viz., Śrautasūtra-s, Gṛhyasūtra-s, Dharmasūtra-s and

<sup>1</sup>This is one of the six orthodox (*āstika*) schools of Hindu philosophy, and is also known as *pūrvamīmāṃsā*. The term “*pūrvā*”, here, means ‘earlier’, because the subject dealt here is the first three sections of the Veda-s i.e., *saṃhitā*, *brāhmaṇa* and *āraṇyaka*.

Śulbasūtra-s respectively.

Āpastamba, one among the various authors like Kātyāyana, authored his work in this branch of study, Kalpa, and his work is known as *Āpastambīyakalpasūtrās*. This work is upheld to not to have been tampered with by anyone. This voluminous text is divided into 30 sections called "praśna-s", of which the first twenty *praśna*-s deal with Śrautasūtra-s i.e., the aphorisms on practical conduct of the sacrifices mentioned in Śruti-s or Veda-s. Broadly, these sacrifices can be classified into two categories, *nitya* and *kāmya*. We shall first deal with the sacrifices pertaining to the latter category.

Veda-s mentions many sacrifices that are to be performed depending upon the various wants and needs of an individual or a society. Such sacrifices are known as *kāmyeṣṭi*-s. So these sacrifices are performed in order to fulfill the righteous needs and desires of a society or an individual.

#### Vedic-sacrifice for rains

We all know that water is one of the most important needs as it is an indispensable necessity for the sustenance of living beings. Water, properly utilized in required quantities for the cultivation of plants, causes a field to yield a good crop, much of which form the source of food for us. For this, an adequate and timely rainfall that is neither too excessive nor too little is sought after. But, sometimes we don't get rains on time due to various reasons. Besides this, the

torrid midsummer parches the Earth which heightens the deficiency of water. It causes a lot of problems in the society and we need sufficient rains forthwith to combat any further danger or suffering. At this point, we, depending solely upon the rain, and eagerly anticipating for sufficient downpours, worship God as He is our refuge, and with our *śraddhā*, we attempt to observe *dharma* i.e., performing sacrifices for obtaining rains.

As a remedial measure for the problem of drought, scriptures of *sanātana dharma* (or Hinduism), prescribe a particular sacrifice to be performed to obtain the rains in the hour of need. It goes by the name of '*Kārīrīṣṭi*'. According to the scriptures, this sacrifice should be performed by the one desirous of rains, under such conditions to have sufficient rainfalls for the purposes of agriculture and our livelihood.

#### Kārīrīṣṭi

The phrase *Kārīrīṣṭi* constitutes two terms – *kārīrī* and *iṣṭi*, where the former is the name of this particular sacrifice, and the latter is a Sanskrit synonym for the word 'sacrifice'.

"*Kārīryā vṛṣṭikāmo yajeta*"<sup>2</sup> is the precept of the Veda-s, which means that a person desirous of rains should perform *Kārīrīṣṭi*. The purpose of this sacrifice has thus become clear. The procedure for the performance of the *Kārīrīṣṭi* is found in an aphoristic manual called *Āpastambaśrautasūtra* (which will be mentioned as ApSS hereafter), and is authored by

Āpastamba<sup>3</sup>. The subject of *Kārīrīṣṭi* commences from the 16<sup>th</sup> *sūtra* (aphorism) in 25<sup>th</sup> *kaṇḍikā* and runs to the end of 19<sup>th</sup> *praśna* of ApSS<sup>4</sup>.

*Kārīrīṣṭi* is a prominent sacrifice which is extolled for its importance on account of its productivity in terms of a prompt rainfall after its performance. This is a prevalent one that is being performed long since in Indian tradition for the purpose of rains, especially, in the places where the problem of water scarcity prevails. Many events of this sacrifice have been recorded<sup>5</sup> to evidence the advent of the rains post sacrifice. Thus, *Kārīrīṣṭi* forms a standing testimony by way of granting rains for the welfare of the society.

It is further said that this sacrifice should be performed when it becomes an exigent need although particular time period has some inauspicious elements such as setting of Jupiter or Venus etc., in it, that are otherwise eliminated for the performance of sacrifices in general, inasmuch as it wouldn't be appropriate to postpone the same ignoring the pressing need at a given time. It does not mean that there is no mention of auspicious time as to the performance of this sacrifice. In fact, the very first *sūtra* pertaining to *Kārīrīṣṭi* ("*puṣkaleṣu nakṣatreṣu...*") lays emphasis on auspicious days with the stars conducive to rains to begin the sacrifice. The purport is that nothing

should overshadow the urgency of the performance of this sacrifice.

The maximum duration of this sacrifice is five days which could decrease depending on the advent of rainfall. Any attenuation in the maximum duration of the sacrifice would certainly signify the arrival of the rains and conclusion of the sacrifice. In other words, if it rains after the first or second or third day of the sacrifice, the sacrifice will be concluded. If it does not rain even on the fourth day, then the sacrifice will be concluded on the fifth day. A variant form of this sacrifice – namely *Sava Kārīrīṣṭi* – with a slight change in its duration and procedure, is also mentioned in ApSS whose duration is said to be only one day.

The *mantra*-s mentioned in ApSS that are to be uttered in this sacrifice are available in the fourth *praśna* (chapter) of the second *kāṇḍa* (volume) and first *praśna* of the third *kāṇḍa* of the *saṃhitā* of *Kṛṣṇāyajurveda*<sup>6</sup>. Specifically seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth *anuvāka*-s (sections) of the fourth *praśna* and eleventh *anuvāka* of the first *praśna*, contain the *mantra*-s used in the performance of the *Kārīrīṣṭi*. In the next article, we will learn the complete systematic procedure of the performance of the *Kārīrīṣṭi* in a detailed way. 📖

<sup>3</sup> An Indian Vedic scholar par excellence, who is known to have authored the enormous work namely "*Āpastambīya-kalpasūtras*" which comprises Śrautasūtra-s, Dharmasūtra-s, Gṛhyasūtra-s, and Śulbasūtra-s.

<sup>4</sup> ApSS has been classified into *praśna*-s (chapters), *paṭala*-s (sections) and *kaṇḍikā*-s (subsections). It has a total of 24 *praśna*-s in it.

<sup>5</sup> Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam conducted this sacrifice in Tirupati and many other places numerous times and significant amount of rainfall was witnessed by many and recorded after every performance.

<sup>6</sup> This is one of the two variants of *Yajurveda* – the other is known as *Śuklayajurveda*. The *saṃhitā* of *Kṛṣṇāyajurveda* has seven *kāṇḍa*-s (volumes) where each *kāṇḍa* is divided into varying number of *praśna*-s (chapters) and each *praśna* into *anuvāka*-s (sections).

<sup>2</sup> In fact, this phrase forms the second half of the very first *sūtra* pertaining to *Kārīrīṣṭi*.



## Introduction to Sanskrit Poetics

*The purpose of Alankāra-sāstra is to bring joy to our lives through the creation and enjoyment of beautiful poetry.*

BY ARJUN BHARADWAJ

**P**OETRY is a product of a poet's worldly experience – an experience that he has gone through with great intensity and portrays it without passionate involvement; for if it was merely the penning of his experiences, all poetry would have been autobiographical. His experiences, when aesthetically blended with his imagination, gives rise to a work of art, which, as a function of the poet's calibre, may survive in the hearts of connoisseurs for thousands of years and retain its relevance as a mode of entertainment with an underlying stream of value education. Thus, just as a work of art serves as a bridge between the artist and the connoisseur, literary art connects the poet to the reader.

The branch of aesthetics that deals with poetry is called Poetics, and in India, it is called Alankāra-sāstra. While in the West – especially in the Greco-roman tradition – rhetoric, stylistics, poetics and aesthetics have had independent existence and have developed as parallel streams, in India, they all come under the broad canopy of Alankāra-sāstra. Briefly put, rhetoric is the art of expression and can be called 'vāgvilāsa-mīmāṃsā'; stylistics, which deals with styles, can be termed as 'śailī-mīmāṃsā', poetics, the philosophy of poetry, is 'kāvyā-mīmāṃsā' and aesthetics, the philosophy of beauty, is 'soundarya-mīmāṃsā'.

This branch of study that deals with the creation and enjoyment of poetry has also been variously called 'kriyā-kalpa', 'sāhitya-mīmāṃsā' and 'sāhitya-vidyā', by different literary aestheticians of India. However, the giants of this tradition – Bhāmaha, Vāmana, Udbhaṭa, Rudraṭa, Ānandavardhana, Kuntaka and Abhinavagupta – have either used the term 'alankāra-sāstra' or 'kāvyālanākāra-sāstra' and these terms have been in vogue since their times.

It is also possible that readers might often mistake Alankāra-sāstra for merely a study of the figures of speech or different modes of expression, i.e., arthālanākāra-s or śabdālanākāra-s. This limits the sense of the word. Several ancient poeticians have used the word 'alankāra' in a broader sense, to suggest anything that adds beauty to poetry. For example,

*kāvyamgrāhyamalankārāt*

*(Kāvyālanākārasūtravṛttiḥ, 1-1-1,2)*

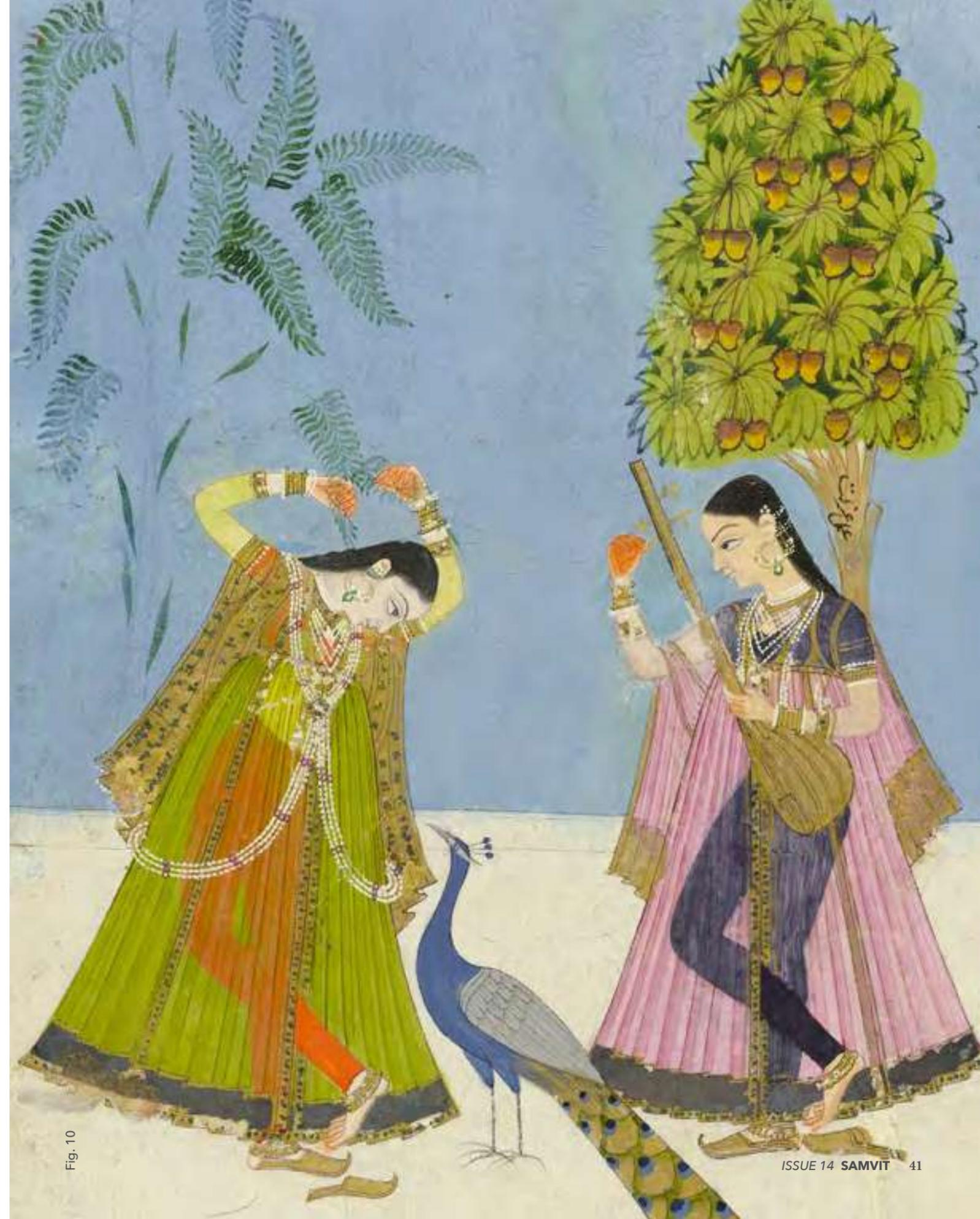


Fig. 10

“ The study of the *śāstra* makes a connoisseur more conscious and well-informed, and a poet, more focused.”

*saundaryam alaṁkāraḥ, kāvya-śobhākarāndharmān alaṁkāraṅ pracakṣate*  
(*Kāvya-darśaḥ* of Daṇḍin, 2 -1)

Thus, all ingredients that add beauty to poetry can be classified under '*alaṁkāra*'. In fact, the five *sandhi-s*, *sandhyaṅga-s*, *vṛtti-s*, *pravṛtti-s*, *vṛtṭyaṅga-s* and *lakṣaṇa-s* described by Bharata in his *Nāṭyaśāstra* add to the aspects of beauty and fall under *alaṁkāra*.

There has been a great debate if the word '*śāstra*' should be accorded to the field of study that deals with poetry. Traditionalists use the term only for the knowledge-systems that deal with the philosophy of *jagat-jīva-īśvara* (world, life and divine/supernatural) and thus, limit the word to *mokṣa-śāstra-s* or *darśana-s*. However, going by the definition of '*śāstra*', '*śāsanāt śaṁsanāt ca śāstram*', it should describe the rights and wrongs, dos and don'ts pertaining to the branch of study under question. It should also help the student of the particular branch of study to correct his understanding and must provide convincing explanations for the theory it propounds. Moreover, the ideas presented in any of the branches should have as little overlap as possible with the other systems. *Alaṁkāra-śāstra* gives us insights into the process of creation and analysis of works of literary art and does so without any overlap with the other fields. It exclusively deals with the dos and don'ts of poetry. The study of the *śāstra* makes a connoisseur more conscious and well-informed, and a poet, more focused. It can unravel several dimensions to the poet, help expand his horizons and enable him to express his thoughts better.

Every *śāstra* that is taken up for study should clarify four cardinal points, namely the *anubandha-catuṣṭaya*. The four are – *adhikāri*, *viṣaya*, *sambandha* and *prayajana*. Let us take a quick look on what these would be for *Alaṁkāra-śāstra*:

The *adhikāri* (pre-requisites for the study of the *śāstra*) is one who possesses

- curiosity, interest and patience to read poetry
- passive (and active) knowledge of the language in which the poem is written
- exposure to grammar and metrics (*chandas*)

And if he wishes to be a poet, he will need to have expertise in the language, its grammar and metrics.

The *viṣaya* (subject) of *Alaṁkāra-śāstra* is aspects pertaining to the creation and enjoyment of poetry – the qualities expected of a poet and a connoisseur, structure and types of poetry, etc. Also, as per the definition of '*śāstra*', it analyses the 'right' and 'wrong' in poetry, the relation of sound and sense, and also objectively delineates features that can classify a poem as superior/inferior.

The *sambandha* (relationship between the *śāstra* and its reader) is *āsvādaka-āsvādya* (enjoyment) or *saṁskāraka-saṁskārya* (refinement). The *prayajana* or the need for the study of *Alaṁkāra-śāstra* is to add joy to our lives either through the process of creation of poetry or through its enjoyment. It increases the sensitivity of the poet and the connoisseur. It lends us tools to analyse poetry and to develop a keen eye to understand the underlying layers of suggestion in a poet's work. 📖

# Students' Articles

# Gīta-Rāmāyaṇa

*The Marathi version of the Rāmāyaṇa, a poetic and musical tour de force, is drākṣārāsa for its connoisseurs.*

BY RITWIK LAL

**G**ĪTA-RĀMĀYAṆA resides in the hearts of all Marathi connoisseurs of poems and music. This version of the Rāmāyaṇa was composed by one of the famous Marathi poets, G.D. Madgulkar, and its musical rendition was done by Sudhir Phadke in 1950s. There are, in total, 56 songs in the Gīta-Rāmāyaṇa, and all stand at the zenith of poetic and musical astuteness. Each song of this series is a milestone in Hindustani classical music. In this series of articles, the author would like to introduce to a non-Marathi speaker the drākṣārāsa of this version of the Rāmāyaṇa.

In this article, the sons of Śrī Rāma – Lava and Kuśa – have arrived as per the commands of sage Vālmīki. To know what happens, read on.

## “Sing lads, the chronicle of Rāma!”

Sītā takes shelter in sage Vālmīki’s hermitage, where she gives birth to twin sons: Kuśa and Lava. Vālmīki educates them, teaching them the Rāmāyaṇa and asking them to spread the message:

*raghu-rājācyā-nagarī-jāūna-gā-bālānno-śrī-  
rāmāyaṇa*

“Travel to the city of the King Raghu”, Vālmīki tells them, “and sing praises of the king and spread his

story wide and far”. Lava and Kuśa make their way towards Ayodhyā with their guru, Vālmīki. Vālmīki requests them to go to the noble estates and houses, highways and roads, and sing the praises of Rāma’s endeavors and success.

*rasāḷa-mule-phaḷe-sevūnī-rasālatā-ghyā-  
svarāta-bharunī*

Lava and Kuśa pass through the streets, like fresh fruits blossoming out of trees, singing in a very beautiful and melodious voice. Their songs are soothing to the ears of the people of Ayodhyā who carefully note the rhythm and musical-notes and praise the Raghuvamśī clan’s supremacy. The music makes Lava and Kuśa popular. They are elevated to the level of celebrities and in due course, they are to grace the king’s palace. He will also listen to the beauty of their songs.

*sargakrama-ghyā-puratā-dhyānī-bhava-  
umaṭu-dyā-spaṣṭa-dāṭūnī,  
thoḍe-thoḍe-gāta-pratidinī-pūrṇa-kathece-  
sādhā-citraṇa*

Vālmīki advises Lava and Kuśa to complete the music as they now enter Rāma’s palace. As they sing, their voice must illuminate all the sentiments



Fig. 11

that will make the people understand and bow to the supreme Lord. However, Vālmīki says, “sing the stories little by little, so that everyone can savor each moment happily and envision the beauty behind it”. He also tells Lava and Kuśa that when Rāma pays attention to them, they mustn’t react. Keeping their facial expression calm, they must continue with their ballads. These songs and stories are nectar for the Raghu clan. This will honor the clan like the crown on their head.

Vālmīki also tells Lava and Kuśa to not reveal their identity or accept any gold or gifts. There is nothing as valuable as gold or silver that will be able to appease ascetics. All hopes are in Bhagavān Śrī Rāma. So sing lads, he says, the chronicle of Rāma.

#### Lord Rāma himself listens

*svaye-śrī-rāmaprabhu-aikatī,  
Kuśa-Lava-rāmāyaṇa-gātī*

Lava and Kuśa enter the grand gates of Ayodhyā’s palace and sing praises of the benevolent Śrī Rāma. As instructed by Vālmīki, they do not reveal their identities; they simply describe the chronicle of Rāma. Lava and Kuśa are compared to living statues; monuments that are a live example of the Lord’s grandeur and fame. The sons of their father worship His brilliance. Their feelings in the songs portray Vālmīki’s sentiments and are as regal as the monks from the ascetic worlds who are heavenly singers.

*te-pratibhecyā-āmravanātīla-vasanta-  
vaibhava-gate-kokiḷa  
bālasvarānnī-karūnī-kilabila-gāyane-  
raturājā-bhārītī*

The imagery in this stanza is perhaps the most beautiful of all. Spring is portrayed as a season of bloom and glory, a season of happiness. Often, cuckoos can be heard singing, and this always enhances the beauty of nature during this season. Lava and Kuśa sing in the same way, their tones overwhelming the effect of the season. Their tunes add beauty to the glorious and magnanimous Lord Rāma’s personality. Their songs flow into the hall

like a beautiful fragrance that brings a smile to everyone’s face and a sense of satisfaction. Their notes are in full harmony with the *vīṇā* that is playing in the royal court.

*puruṣārthācī-cāricaukaṭa-tyāta-pāhatā-nija-  
jīvana-paṭa.  
pratyakṣāhūnī-pratimā-utkaṭa-prabhuce-  
locana-pāṇāvātī*

The children sing in melodious tunes, as if the nine holy rivers are cascading down from the heavens to the palace hall. The audiences are mesmerized as if they are washed by the confluence of these rivers. The Lord’s life has been so beautifully recited that it brings tears to His eyes. His story has been so beautifully engraved in the minds of men that its image has a more profound effect than the real life story of the Lord himself. The raw beauty in the chronicles is very touching.

*soḍunī-āsana-uṭhale-rāghava,  
uṭhūna-kavaḷatī-apule-śaiśava,  
Putrabheṭicā-ghaḍe-mahotsava-pari-to-  
ubhayā-na-ca-māhitī*

The children continue their recitation in the *Sāmaveda* form. Verse after verse flows through the ears of the audience, who are blessed to have heard it. All those present sway in chorus with the songs, tears dropping down from their eyes as they marvel the beauty of the story. Prabhu Rāma steps down from the throne and embraces his children. A festive occasion and a reunion of father and sons, yet no one is aware of the reality.

We are starting a beautiful journey in this article. In the upcoming articles, the author would like to elucidate the poetic wisdom of this work, along with its musical attributes. The music of *Gīta-Rāmāyaṇa* is one of the masterpieces of Hindustani music; it is a constant and unending flow of melodious *svara*-s! We have now entered Rāma’s court with Lava-Kuśa. Let’s see what happens next in the forthcoming article. Till then, *gā-bāḷānno-śrīrāmāyaṇa* (Sing lads, chronicle of Śrī Rāma)! 🎵

# Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa

*The ruler of the Kārkota dynasty of Kashmir — celebrated for his military achievements, patronage of the fine arts, and building of a prosperous empire — is a figure of legends in Kashmiri history.*

BY ANUSH BALRAJ

**INDIA IS HOME** to a vast number of legends – legends of kings and sages and poets and sculptors, legends that thrive to this day, due to the struggles of her children. These legends have contributed immensely to the world. It is, therefore, a shame that many of them are now forgotten by the world, washed away by the waves of time and neglect. Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa is one such legend.

Most of what is known about Lalitāditya comes from *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* – a work of the 12<sup>th</sup> century historian, Kalhaṇa – which is blended with copious amount of mythical exaggerations. Nonetheless, Lalitāditya is believed to be one of the most dynamic rulers in the history of India who, at the peak of his conquests, managed to create an empire that was short lived, yet enormous, and one that included large parts of Northern India, Central Asia, and Afghanistan.

#### Ascension and Early Years (724 CE - 736 CE)

In the eight century, the southern Hindukush-Pamir region of northern India was occupied by three powerful kingdoms: Zābulistān, Kapisa, and Kārkota. All three kingdoms maintained close diplomatic ties with the Tang court in China, and also allied with them in preventing the Tibetan forces from penetrating the Pamir Mountains. The kingdoms of Zābulistān and Kapisa were ruled by kings of Turkic origin, while the kingdom of Kārkota was ruled by a line of Brahmanical kings since the seventh century. It was to this Kārkota dynasty that Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa belonged.

Lalitāditya ascended the throne of Kārkota in the year 724 CE. His first act as a king was to renew ties with the Tang court in China by extending an offer of assistance in fighting off the Tibetans. The Chinese emperor was delighted by this proposition, and bestowed upon him the title of “King”. Motivated by this new found alliance, the Chinese initiated a series of strikes aimed at recapturing the kingdom of Palur. To defeat the Tibetan and Arab forces, Lalitāditya formed an alliance with Yaśovarman, the ruler of Kannauj (then Kānyakubja) in 737 CE, in whose court resided the great Indian playwright, Bhavabhūti. The two kings sought the help of the Chinese in defeating the foreign invaders, with Yaśovarman sending an envoy in 731 CE and Lalitāditya in 736 CE.



“ Besides the military achievements, Lalitāditya was also an empire builder, his subjects of different faiths living harmoniously. Architecture, poetry and fine arts flourished in his time. ”

#### Extension of the Empire (736 CE - 747 CE)

Lalitāditya and Yaśovarman, however, had a falling out and the alliance collapsed by 740 CE due to the imperial ambitions of the two kings. A peace treaty was drawn, but it was found objectionable by one of Lalitāditya's ministers because in it, Yaśovarman's name was written before Lalitāditya's. Neither party was willing to yield, and soon, the alliance that had succeeded in driving off foreign invaders fell apart. In the resulting war, Lalitāditya defeated Yaśovarman and annexed his lands, which ranged from "the river Yamuna to the river Kālikā" (implying it ranged up to the eastern ocean), reducing him to the position of a minstrel.

Throughout the extent of his reign, Lalitāditya faced Mummuni, an Arab invader, on three separate encounters, and brutally defeated him in each encounter. In order to effectively assert his authority over the subcontinent, Lalitāditya undertook a *digvijaya*, a worldwide campaign. By this time, he had already conquered regions of Panjab, Afghanistan and large parts of western Central Asian highlands. The threat of the advancing Muslim armies had made it easy for Lalitāditya to "absorb" the neighbouring Turkic kingdoms, and the kingdoms of Gauda, Karnāta, both of which bowed down to him without any resistance. Turning west, he annexed the seven Konkana-s and proceeded towards Dwaraka in Gujarat. He then conquered Avanti and a string of kingdoms till he reached the hills of the north-west. These endless conquests led him to defeat the Kāmboja-s, Tukhāra-s (Turks), Bhautta-s (Tibetans), and Darada-s. These victories can be attributed to the superior military technologies acquired from these kingdoms, which helped him modernise his army. While some of the victories cannot be ascertained, not all the accounts can be written off as fictitious. These conquests extended the empire so much that it was the largest and most powerful one since the days of the Gupta-s.

#### Final Years and Death (747 CE - 757 CE)

In 747 CE, Lalitāditya was forced to halt his conquests briefly and return to his kingdom due to the Tibetan invasions. The Arab invasions led by Mummuni continued right till the near end of his life. The withdrawal of the Chinese armies from Central Asia in 755 CE because of the An Lushan Rebellion prompted the emperor to resume his military activities in Central Asia. In 757 CE, Lalitāditya led his troops into Kucha, Turfan and into the Gobi desert. It was here that the great King of Kashmir met his end. Like the Alexander III of Macedon that he is often compared to, Lalitāditya's death was shrouded in mystery with accounts ranging from avalanches to withdrawing with his generals to live in the immortal lands. The most credible among the several theories is that his army was annihilated in one of the conquests, and the king burned himself on a pyre along with his ministers and generals. Lalitāditya was succeeded by his son, Kuvalayāpīḍa. However, the empire did not last long after his demise.



Fig. 13

### Legacy

Besides the military achievements, Lalitāditya was also an empire builder, his subjects of different faiths living harmoniously. Architecture, poetry and fine arts flourished in his time. His victories and the resulting spoils of war had increased the resources of his empire, which he used in adorning public office buildings, monasteries, temples and deities. The most famous one among all these works is the Mārtanda temple whose ruins still stand tall today, representing the majestic architecture of its time.

Lalitāditya's conquests made him the most dynamic and powerful king among the Kārkota-s. During his time, the Muslims from the west could not advance beyond Multan in Punjab, and although this could be attributed to the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate, it also stands to reason that there was an Indian empire powerful enough to ward off the Caliphite armies. The relation between the Kārkota court and the Chinese Tang court in the eighth century was both rare and remarkable. Military cooperation had existed between a few Chinese and Indian kingdoms before, but none to the scale of these two courts. The alliance worked out beautifully for both the kingdoms. It is highly unlikely that without the military and logistical support provided by the Kashmiri Empire, the Tang forces would have succeeded in defeating the Tibetans of the Gilgit Valley, particularly in the reclamation of little Palur. The Chinese backed the Kashmiri King right from the beginning, helping him to fight off the invaders from Tibet and Arab lands. It also provided Lalitāditya with opportunity to focus his attention on conquering the western and central parts of India and expanding his empire, which ultimately turned him into a figure of legends in Kashmiri history. 📖

# Airāvateśvara Temple

*Śiva, who created Vīrabhadra from his trinetra to destroy Dakṣa's yajña, is the presiding deity of the Dārāsura temple — an outstanding monument of the imperial Choḷa-s.*

BY S. RISHI KUMAR REDDY

**O**NE of the most outstanding monuments built by the imperial Choḷa-s is the Airāvateśvara temple. This monumental marvel is situated at Dārāsura, near Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. This remarkable stone architecture was built in 1150 C.E. by Rājarāja II, the son of Kulottuṅga II, and was gifted to his court poet, Ottakūthar. Built in the Dravidian style of architecture, it reflects the culture and heritage of the Choḷa-s through its beautiful and intricate sculptures that are carved on the walls of the *garbhagrha* and the *antarāla*. Its uniqueness lies in the detailed depiction of the 63 Nāyanmār saints – the great disciples of Lord Śiva – through extraordinary sculptures.

### Architecture

A gigantic *gopura* on the eastern side – most of its upper parts completely destroyed – welcomes us into the temple. A flight of steps leads to the *bali pīṭha* – interestingly, these steps produce musical sounds. Then is the inner *gopura*, Rājagopuram, which mostly has empty niches carved into it, and a label that mentions the sculpture that was earlier present in each of them. Then is the *agara-maṇṭapa* – a unique chariot-shaped structure which is a porch on the southern side of the *maṇṭapa*, with wheels and spokes carved onto it, and is shown to be pulled by horses on either side. This attractive *maṇṭapa* has

stairs on both sides, and carved elephants on either side of the staircase that seem as if they are calling us to enter the temple. This *maṇṭapa* is named 'Rājagambhiram-tiru-maṇḍapam', after the builder of the temple, Rājarāja II, and it is built to look like the chariot of Tripurāntaka, a form of Lord Śiva holding an arrow of fire to kill the three demons, Tripurās.



Fig. 14

Most inscriptions refer to this temple as Rājarājeśvaram, and refer to the village as Rājarājapuram, which later became Rārāpuram, and finally evolved to its present name, Dārāsura. The *vimāna* of this temple is about 25m high. It is similar in structure to the Brhadīśvara Temple, Thanjavur, except for the *kaṇakūta*-s that are present in its *grīva* unlike the Nandī sculptures at Thanjavur. A separate shrine is dedicated to Candikeśvara, a Śaiva saint, in



the Northern side of the temple complex.

### **Sthalapurāṇa**

This temple was constructed at a time when the Choḷa Empire had achieved the height of glory and peace. Ottakūthar was a famous court poet of the Choḷa dynasty, and had served under the reign of three successive kings – Vikrama Choḷa, Kulottuṅga II and Rājarāja II. Ottakūthar had composed a poem called *Dakka-yāga-baraṇi* that depicted the story of Dakṣa's *yajña*. The god of this temple, Lord Śiva, is the protagonist of the story which describes how he destroyed Dakṣa's *yajña* in his form as Vīrabhadra. The story is as follows:

Once, Bhadrakālī or Mahākālī was seated on the throne in her court with her attendant deities, the Piśāci-s, who complained to her of their hunger. Just then, a Piśāci came into the court with the report that Dakṣa's *yajña* was destroyed by Vīrabhadra, and that dead bodies were strewn everywhere, and that the Piśāci-s could partake of the same. The story of Dakṣa's *yajña* was then told to Mahākālī:

Dakṣa intended to perform a great *yajña* to which his daughter, Sati, was not invited. Sati, unhappy about it, went to Lord Śiva, her husband, to seek his permission to attend the *yajña*. Śiva laughed, and inquired if she really wished to attend it, implying that she wasn't welcome there, and would not be received well. But how was it possible that she, Dakṣa's daughter, not attend the *yajña* to which all the *deva*-s were invited? Śiva then intimated his consent for her to go if she wished to. But when Sati reached Dakṣa's *yajña*, no one welcomed her – not her father, not her mother, not her sisters. An insulted and dejected Sati understood the import of Śiva's words.

### **Birth of Vīrabhadra**

Back in Kailāsa, Sati wept profusely before Lord Śiva, and insisted to him that her honor be avenged. Śiva laughed, and thus was born from his *trinetra*, Vīrabhadra. Vīrabhadra went to Dakṣa's *yajña* and completely destroyed it. He defeated all the *deva*-s who defended Dakṣa – including Sūrya, Agni, Viśnu

and Brahma – and finally, he killed Dakṣa.

### **Repentance of Sati**

Vīrabhadra reported to Śiva of destroying the *yajña*. When Śiva and his wife witnessed the destruction site, Sati saw her dead father lying with his head separated from his body and felt extremely sad. She told Śiva that Vīrabhadra had committed a mistake, and that her father should be brought back to life. Śiva saw the head of a sacrificial goat lying on the ground, and attached this head to Dakṣa's body, and gave him life. This is the reason Dakṣa is depicted with a goat head. Śiva granted life to all the *deva*-s, and they worshipped him gratefully.

It is the same Śiva – whom the *deva*-s worshipped – who is the presiding deity of the Dārāsūram temple; and further, the *deva*-s praised Rājarāja Choḷa II for building this great temple. The story is inscribed on the walls of the temple, and the sculptures of Vīrabhadra are also found here. This great temple is now tagged as a UNESCO World heritage.

### **Sculptures**

There is a beautiful sculpture of Ardhanārī, which is often mistaken for Ardhanārī Surya; but this remarkable sculpture is identified as Māratānda Bhairava. On the southern side of the *mahāmaṅṭapa*, there is a distinguished sculpture of Lord Śiva as Śarabhamūrti, defeating the Nṛsimha *avatāra* of Lord Viśnu. This story occurs in the *Śivapurāṇa*: when Lord Viśnu, as Nṛsimha, attained the peak of his ferociousness – a ferociousness that did not abate even after Hiraṇyakaśyipu was killed – he started to destroy *deva*-s and men. So all the *deva*-s went to Lord Śiva and beseeched that they be rescued from this grave danger. Then Lord Śiva took the form of Śarabhamūrti and defeated Nṛsimha at the peak of his ferocity, and sent him back to Vaikunṭha.

### **Conclusion**

There are many temples of Lord Śiva built by many rulers across the country. Yet, this temple has unique features to justify its stand as one of the greatest living temples of the imperial Choḷa-s. It is a must-visit place for every citizen of this country. 

# Vijayanagara: The City of Victory

*Vijayanagara, the best city of its time, had resisted Muslim invasion for 200 years, but was finally reduced to ashes by the asuravijaya of the Muslims.*

BY SHREEKAR BHARADWAJ & SAI MANISH

**INDIAN HISTORY** – of thousands of years – has witnessed many rulers, governments and invasions. The Muslim invasions of 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century C.E. left India reeling under terrible religious persecutions and destruction of its social and economic systems. Mohammed of Ghazni – who invaded India in early 11<sup>th</sup> century C.E. – destroyed and looted many temples. He took slaves from India, treated them miserably, and forcibly converted them to Islam. He looted the Somnath temple of Gujarat 17 times, and the loot from the temple of Mathura is an estimated three million rupees and 5000 slaves! Mohammed of Ghorai raided the temple of Varanasi (Kashi), and destroyed innumerable Hindu temples, and this onslaught continued for centuries. Bakhtiyar Khilji destroyed the great temple of knowledge, the Nālanda University, which had countless manuscripts of all subjects. He burnt them mercilessly – it is said that the library burnt continuously for three months! The rule of Muslim kings in North India left this region with only a few ancient temples. Most of those existing now are the ones that were rebuilt later.

Muslims tried to enter South India, but were entirely unsuccessful in establishing their rule here because of the Vijayanagara Empire, founded by Hakka and Bukka under the guidance of Vidyaṛaṇya (the only man comparable to Cāṇakya). Every empire of India has suffered great loss from the attack of the Muslim invaders – and the Vijayanagara Empire was no different. Kṛṣṇadevarāya, one of the greatest kings of Vijayanagara, died in the year 1529, without an heir. Achyutarāya was chosen as his successor (there is some ambiguity of his relationship with Kṛṣṇadevarāya – he was perhaps his brother). This was perhaps the most unfortunate choice for the Hindu empire. Nuniz, a Portuguese traveller, called Achyutarāya a craven, and it was during his rule that the Hindu empire started to fall apart.

Achyutarāya was succeeded by Sadāśiva in 1541 or 1542. Sadāśiva was a king for only namesake; the empire was ruled by Rāmarāya and his brothers, Tirumala and Venkaṭādrī, and under him, Vijayanagara became a powerful empire with a strong military force consisting of infantry, cavalry and elephants. In the later years, Muslim kings of the Deccan realized that none of them were strong enough to face the mighty army of Vijayanagara, and so, they formed an alliance. On 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1565, a great battle called the Battle of Talikota was fought – Rāmarāya had sent his youngest brother, Tirumala, with a large army of a hundred thousand men, 20,000 horses and 500 elephants, to block the passage on one side. He had also dispatched



Fig. 15



his other brother with a large army, and finally, he marched with the complete strength of the Vijayanagara army to fight against the powerful alliance of the provinces of the state of Canarese and Telugus of the frontier, Mysoreans and Malabarese from the West and the Tamils from the South. The armies clashed on the plains near the villages of Rakkasagi and Tangadigi and they fought each other vigorously. In an unfortunate twist, two Muslim generals of the Vijayanagara army betrayed them, and Rāmarāya – the seventy year old king de-facto, who had fought with the heart of a 30 year old – was caught and beheaded. The Vijayanagara army retreated at the loss of their leader and fled. The Muslims were completely victorious.

The city of Vijayanagara was well ahead of its time, well planned, well maintained, filled with architectural wonders and sculptures embedded with beautiful and majestic temples. The cruel, heartless Muslims marched into this city and killed the civilians, wrecked the temples, burnt and destroyed the buildings and complexes, plundered the statues of deities, and looted the treasury of the city. It is said that a diamond as big as a hen's egg was found by Ali Adil who kept it for himself. Vijayanagara, once the best city of its time, was reduced to ashes by the Muslims. It must be noted that the war victories of Hindu kings was *dharmavijaya* (righteous victory) but those of the Muslims were *asuravijaya* (demonic victory).

Vijayanagara's capital, now known as Hampi, is a UNESCO world heritage site. The ruins of the city look magnificent even today – it is hard to imagine how it was in its glory days. The empire of Vijayanagara was the only surviving Hindu empire which had resisted the Muslims in South India for over 200 years. Alas! It could not be forever. When Rāmarāya was killed in the Talikota battle in 1565, Tirumala (the younger brother of Rāmarāya) immediately emptied the treasury and fled the capital, taking with him the royal family and the minor crown prince, Sadaśivarāya. After a few years of hardships, he tried to re-establish the Vijayanagara rule in Penukonda, in present-day Andhra Pradesh. The empire that barely survived till 1646 did not regain its former glory.

On the other hand, the Muslim rulers began to spread their influence in South India, and occupied a few other regions and continued their atrocities. While invasions and wars for economic reasons are a part of any country's history, the Muslim invasions not only dented the economy but also eroded our culture which is an irreplaceable loss for a country of such rich heritage and history. 🇮🇳

*Vice-Chancellor, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Sansthana (SVYASA), Director and former Principal, Veda Vijnana Gurukulam, Chennanahalli, Prof. Ramachandra G Bhat is a renowned scholar of Vedānta and Nyāya. He graduated in English, Economics and History, and holds a B. Ed in Hindi, an M.A and a PhD in Sanskrit. He has taught in various institutions for 38 years, and in his 15 years of research experience, he has published numerous books and papers. Dr. Bhat is a member of the Doctoral Committee of Tumkur University, and of the Central Advisory Committee of the Children University of Gujarat. He is also a guide for the School of Philosophy in Dublin and Ireland. Among the many honours conferred on him, some are — “Bhavabhūti Puraskāra”, conferred by Madhya Pradesh Govt, 2006, “Vidyā Vāridhi”, conferred by Vaps Technosoft, Bangalore, 2003, D. Litt awarded by Tumakuru University, 2013, etc.*

*The following is an excerpt from a discussion between the students of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Bengaluru, and Prof. Ramachandra G Bhat (henceforth, RGB) held on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at Veda Vijnana Gurukula, Bengaluru.*



# Prof. Ramachandra Bhat

BY ANANTA SHARMA

**Student:** It is popularly believed that the traditional way of thinking/ life is of blind faith, impractical and without logic. How is this notion to be addressed? How do we untangle it from notions of religion and caste?

**RGB:** According to the *Bhagavadgītā* and as understood by us, science has two parts – (1) logical analysis, (2) logical synthesis. This “modern logical thinking” has been in practice in a magnificent way in our intellectual traditions – it is called *prāmānyavāda*. We have Veda-s, *sūtra*-s, *bhāṣya*-s, *kārikā*-s, *vārtikā*-s, etc., which are the finest forms of research – scientific and practical. Questioning and experimenting were given great importance in our *gurukula* system. We believe that philosophy must be supported by science, and science must be supported by technology. The three should go hand in hand. We should strive to bring back our great scientific thinking, not superstitions, ill practices, etc.

There are two faces of the caste system. It is not a bad practice, but discrimination based on the caste is bad. Because of the caste system, several talents, skills and creative works were maintained through generations without losing the quality of work. The negative aspects like discrimination, untouchability, dominance, etc., have crept in later, and were not

part of the actual system. People chose their fields of work based on their interest and skill. This natural tendency led to the division of work in the society, and the caste system developed because of this.

We should perceive the caste system like a knife. It can be used to cut fruits or to kill men. Similarly, this system can be used for social development or social division. It was intended for social development and it served the purpose well.

**Student:** Today, we see that people are greatly influenced by Western culture. Why is it that post-Independence, we were not exposed to our own scientific and diverse culture?

**RGB:** It is because of leadership crisis, and lack of efforts by leaders and education ministers to recognise our own cultural magnificence. Efforts are now slowly being made in this direction and we believe that it is in the hands of the young generation to take it forward. We believe that you can bring in the change – tomorrow, if not today; the following month, if not tomorrow; the following years, if not that. We are optimistic and truly hope that one day, Bhārata will rise again.

**Student:** Today, we are taught that education is entirely for livelihood. How can we overcome this notion?

**RGB:** Education is not preparation for life, but it is life itself. Ultimately, our goal is to be educated, to be more refined. Unfortunately, our education system is now commercialized and is consumerist (*bhōgavāda*) due to Western influences. The key to overcome this hurdle is to realize the value of the traditional form of education based on *śraddhā* (commitment and concentration), *medhā* (memory and knowledge), *prajñā* (creative thinking) and *pratibhā* (capability).

**Student:** It is often argued that the British did much good to India. What is your opinion?

**RGB:** The British wanted to eradicate everything that was Indian in India. They believed that the system

here was rubbish and outdated. But even on their side, there were many good people who saw good in the Indian system and supported it honestly. Unlike some people like Thomas Macaulay, several scholars like William Jones, who was a judge in the Calcutta high court, who brought back Sanskrit and *samskṛti*, tried to help in the growth of our culture. The list also includes research scholars from France, Germany, Portugal etc. We can only blame the political body of the British, and not the research scholars who made earnest efforts to bring back the Indian system. We must even blame ourselves for exhibiting slavish behaviour towards them.

**Student:** Nowadays, spirituality is a corrupted word. How can students be convinced to pursue it seriously?

**RGB:** The spiritual world is not so corrupted. Because of the media and its prejudiced propagation, this world appears tainted. It is simply a play of the negatively charged media influence. Do not believe in those things. There are still good activities for which the credit goes to spiritual organizations and great spiritual masters. The fear of God has its own



role to play in our lives. Otherwise, human beings become beastly. Swami Vivekananda also says that men who have God-fear learn to be moral. Fifty percent of our morality is guided by *bhaya* (fear) and *bhakti* (devotion). In the last week of December and first two weeks of January, the whole country is free of moral debacles and amoral activities because of the Śabarimala season, and bhakti towards Ayyappa swamy. If you go to North India during certain months, devotees visit the Vaishno Devi temple. In those months, the society is free from amoral activities. So you cannot generalize that all spiritual masters are corrupt.

**Student:** Guruji, according to the karma theory, we are told that what we experience now is because of our past actions. Are we fallen souls? Why did we fall? If god was omnipotent, why did we fall?

**RGB:** We are not at all fallen souls. *Puṇyoham, puṇya karma, puṇyātma, puṇyasambava*. The idea of fallen souls is a negative concept. The Upaniṣad-s proclaim that we all are essentially divine, *amitasya putrāḥ*. We are all children of immortal bliss, not sin. Human beings are specially gifted, our body attests to the sun god. According to the Upaniṣad-s, we have 101 *nāḍi-s* – from the bottom of the heart to the top of our brain. A nightingale has a wonderful voice, a donkey has very strong legs, a bull has a strong neck and back, every creature has its own strong areas. Similarly, we have a very powerful brain. With such a gift, we are sent to this world. Only because of some negative factors, we may go astray. But we are never fallen souls. We are highly elevated souls, gifted with a supercomputer, our brain, which is supposed to be properly utilized. To utilize it, we should have proper education. Proper nurturing, parenting and education are very important.

**Student:** Youth of today nurture hatred and other negative feelings. What is the solution?

**RGB:** This concerns everyone. This is very bad. We should be very careful. Many anti-national forces are prevailing. Political power is not very well structured in our country. They always fight for power and

temporary benefits. This should be duly addressed. The philosophy of Vidyāraṇyā and Cāṇakya states that only spiritual masters must be leaders. Highly cultured people, *yogi-s*, great masters, they must be the leaders. Our pure land has become highly corrupt. Bengal had the brightest people, but today, it is politically hopeless. We must go for leadership changes. *Kartṛtva* and *netṛtva* must be proper and the spiritual masters must influence that.

**Student:** How do we stand for our values when there is so much corruption around us?

**RGB:** The strongest man stands alone. You are strong and not a slave. The previous generation was influenced by the British but you are free-thinkers. Your generation is influenced by American culture, and that should be corrected. We must bring Indian influence in our culture, education and society. Let me give you an example. In Sringeri, there was an alarming problem of the rising influence of the Marxists. The youth were influenced by this. *Jagadguru* approached the RSS, and they took it as a challenge. The Indraseva Pratiṣṭhānam went to every nook and corner of Sringeri, and ran schools. Due to the effort of the spiritual organization, no negativity prevails in those villages now.

**Student:** To become spiritual, we must rid ourselves of ego, envy, etc. But, how can we rid ourselves of it in the present world which is predominantly run by these?

**RGB:** We encounter eight kinds of psychic problems in our present day, namely *kāma, krodha, mada, moha, lobha, mātsarya, śoka, bhaya*. To achieve success, one should overcome all these hurdles. Every society should aim for this. Social harmony and human excellence should be kept in mind. Work with positive thoughts and social well-being. This is what establishes spirituality in us. Establishing spirituality is different from establishing religion. Our mind must be *yogic*, this is our main principle. The outside world cannot shake a person who is well-rooted in our culture. This is the basis of *gurukula-s* – *svastha vyakti nirmāṇa* will lead to *svastha samāja*. 📄

# Centre Snap

## 7-day Textual Workshop on Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's Siddhāntabindu

(10 - 16 Nov, 2018 at Coimbatore Campus)

Amrita Darshanam (ICSS), in association with Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR), organized a seven-day National workshop on Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's "Siddhāntabindu". *Siddhāntabindu* is Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's commentary on Śrī Śankarācārya's *Daśaślokī*. It is a reliable and comprehensive digest of advaita vedānta. The workshop was conducted by eminent scholars of Vedānta – Prof. Kutumba Sastry, Prof. V.N. Jha, Prof. K. Ramasubramanian, Prof. Ramachandra G Bhat, and Prof. K. Srinivasan. 45 delegates from across the country – including New Delhi, Varanasi, Kolkata, Uttarakhand, Pune, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Hyderabad, Pondicherry, Kerala and Karnataka – participated in the workshop.



## 3-day National Seminar on Śakti Worship in India

(21 - 23 Sep, 2018 at Amritapuri Campus)

A three-day National Seminar on Śakti Worship in India was jointly organized by Amrita Darshanam (ICSS), and Nari Samvaad Prakalp, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi. Śakti worship is a unique phenomenon in India. The seminar aimed to recognize and revitalize the significances of Śakti worship in Indian cultures and traditions across centuries. More than 25 scholars of renown – including Prof. Sadashiv Kumar Dwivedi, Dr. R.S Nanda Kumar, Dr. Raghavan Payyanad, Dr. Prafulla K. Mishra, Dr. C.M. Neelakandhan, Dr. M.G. Sasibhooshan – delivered invited lectures on the different aspects of Śakti worship in India. Two traditional ritual arts of Kerala were also performed in honor of the *devi* or Bhadrakali – Kalamezhuthu and Padayani.



## 3-day National Seminar on Texts and Manuscripts of Vedic Corpus: Sources of Indian Knowledge Traditions

(9 - 11 Feb, 2019 at Mysuru Campus)

With the Veda-s as a focal point of reference, the related branches of Indian knowledge systems were discussed in the seminar, jointly organized by Amrita Darshanam (ICSS) and South Zone Cultural Centre, Tanjavur. Renowned scholars – including Dr. Nirmala Kulkarni, Dr. Vinaya Kshirsagar, Dr. Shilpa Sumant, Dr. Nab Narayan Bandopadhyay, Dr. P. Ramanujan, Dr. T. Ganesan – presented their papers.

## 1-day National Symposium on the Story-telling Tradition of Sanskrit

(20 Oct, 2018 at Mysuru Campus)

In this symposium, jointly organized by Amrita Darshanam (ICSS) and Sahitya Akademi, the diverse traditions of story-telling in Sanskrit were explored. Renowned scholars such as Dr. Abhiraj Rajendra Mishra, Prof. Prabhunath Dwivedi, Dr. Balram Shukla, etc, presented their papers.



## 3-day Workshop on Temple Architecture and Iconography (Level 1)

(4 - 6 Jan, 2019 at Bengaluru Campus)

The first in this series, this workshop introduced participants to the different aspects of temples, styles of architecture, relevant historical and social context, nuances of temple-construction, etc. It was conducted by Padma Bhushan Dr. R. Nagaswamy, Dr. M. S. Krishnamurthy and Dr. Manoj Gundanna.



## 2-day Workshop on Computational Linguistics

(30 - 31 Mar, 2019 at Bengaluru Campus)

In this workshop, the participants were introduced to the multi-disciplinary field of statistical, rule-based, grammatical modeling of natural languages. It was conducted by the renowned scholars, Dr. Amba Kulkarni, Dr. Malhar Kulkarni, Dr. K.P. Soman and Dr. Anand M.

## 8-day Workshop on Patañjali's Yogasūtras

(24 - 31 Dec, 2018 at Coimbatore Campus)

In this workshop, organized in association with Rishi Rina Trust, Prof. V.N.Jha conducted a textual reading of the *Yogasūtras* of Patañjali.

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