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From the Editorial Board

We are extremely pleased to present the first issue of our Foundation's Journal, Paramartha Tattvam (Eternal Truth) to our fellow devotees. The Journal has the unique distinction that the title was suggested by Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Sringeri, His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Maha Swamiji, along with His blessings!!!

The Journal will include discourses of the Jagadgurus of Sringeri, several informative, scholarly articles, lessons in Sanskrit, children/youth sections, updates of the Foundation, events calendar, slokas with meaning, and other interesting features.

With all humility and devotion, we place the Journal at the lotus feet of His Holiness and seek His Grace for continued spiritual growth of our Foundation to newer heights!

Jaya Jaya Sankara,
Editorial Board



From the Chairman, SVBF

Dear fellow devotees:

Greetings and Best Wishes for a very happy and healthy New Year 1999.

We are in the midst of the fourth year of our spiritual journey after inauguration of our Foundation in July 1995. The divine grace of Shri Sharada, the blessings of His Holiness, the enormous dedication of all of our volunteers and the support of thousands of devotees like yourself, have enabled us to accomplish several significant milestones in the growth of our Foundation. With such encouragement, we look forward to a very active and spiritually rewarding New Year, 1999.

It is with a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation that I thank all our supporters and pray to the Lord for their welfare and continued success in all their endeavors.

With pranams at the lotus feet of the Jagadguru,
Ravi Subramanian



From the President, SVBF

Dear friend:

Greetings. This is the first issue of our Journal. The Journal will serve as a medium of communication with our fellow devotees to apprise them of current events, updates, services, plans, and progress of the Foundation.

The Foundation - SVBF

The Foundation is an international extension of the ancient Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri, (Karnataka, India) situated in a scenic 35-acre property in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. It is a non-profit organization and was inaugurated on July 13, 1995. It comprises a) a Shrine for Sri Ganesha, Sri Sharada and Sri Adi Sankara and b) Sadhana Center for our philosophy, and values.

The Foundation functions with the blessings and direct guidance of the Sankaracharya of Sringeri, His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Maha Swamiji. It is extremely committed to foster our Sanatana Dharma among global communities in general, and in the Continental United States in particular.

Adi Sankara, the Missionary:

The focus of Sanatana Dharma over the centuries, has always been peace and harmony among all of nature's creations. Every practitioner of this Dharma owes it to Sri Adi Sankara for His contributions in the reestablishment of this ancient tradition. Our Foundation is really blessed to have the first Shrine for Adi Sankara in the West. Sri Sharada as the Goddess of Learning, Sri Adi Sankara as the spiritual teacher and Sri Maha Ganapati as the meaning of Pranava, - grace our Shrine, and His Holiness, the Jagadguru Sankaracharya from Sringeri guides us in accomplishing our mission.

We are in the process of putting together various committees to take charge of critical functions of the Foundation. We should be able to introduce our committee coordinators in the next issue of the Journal.

Our biggest assets are our volunteers/supporters, and the inspiration and blessings of His Holiness. You can be a part of the global family of Adi Sankara's disciples by extending your support to the cause of our Foundation. May the Grace of Shri Sharada and the Jagadguru be

with you and your family always.

With kind regards,
Yegnasubramanian



Jagadguru Speaks: Human Birth-An Invaluable Asset



Among the countless creations of the world, man ranks the highest. That is why Sastras say that it is very difficult to get a human birth. It would be utterly foolish of a man if he does not make the best use of this birth.

अपि मानुष्यकं लब्ध्वा भवन्ति ज्ञानिनो नये
पशुतैव वरं तेषां प्रत्यवायाप्रवर्तनात् ॥

api mAnushyakam labdhva bhavanti
jnAnino na yE
pasutaiva varam tEshAm
pratyavAyapravartAnAt

This statement makes it clear that if a man fails to attain *jnAna* (knowledge) in this life, it is worse than being born an animal. The reason is simple: an animal cannot go down in evolution, but a man failing to get knowledge, can fall back on committing a sin. Thus, a man should essentially strive for knowledge, for there is nothing equal to knowledge. That is why Lord Krishna has said in the *Gita*,

नहि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

nahi jnAnEna sadrusam
pavitramiha vidyatE.

It is necessary to realize that knowledge here does not mean knowledge of worldly things. It refers, in fact, to knowledge of the real nature of Atma. On acquiring this knowledge, man has nothing else to do or achieve.

Again, knowledge manifests itself when *ajnAna*, or ignorance, is removed.

Therefore, a man should aim to get rid of ignorance. But this ignorance has accrued over many life times. And it is not easy to destroy it.

Therefore, man should, in the first place, attempt to purify the mind by performing good deeds. Without this essential purity, man cannot grasp the fundamental truth even if he is instructed any number of times. On the contrary, in the case of a pure mind, wisdom will dawn even with a single instruction from the guru.

परिपक्वमतेः सकृच्छ्रुतं जनयेदात्मदियं श्रुतेर्वचः ।

paripakvamatEh sakrut srutam janayEt
Atmadiyam srutErvachah

The question then arises, how does one purify the mind? Purity of mind arises only when man performs actions without an eye on results. If actions are done for results, results may happen, but not purity of mind.

It is therefore my wish that everyone should understand this properly and act, as enjoined by the *Sastras*, without caring for the reward. Then you are sure to get *chitta suddhi*, or purity of mind, which makes you eligible for *jnAna*.

- Tattvaloka xviii No.4 Oct / Nov 95

Totakashtakam

(A hymn of eight verses by
Totakacharya - disciple of Adi Sankara)

विदिताखिलशास्त्रसुधाजलधे महितोपनिषत्कथितार्थनिधे ।
हृदये कलये विमलं चरणं भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥

viditAkhilasAstrasudhAjaladhE
mahitOpanishatkathitArthanidhE ।
hridayE kalayE vimalam charaNam
bhava sankara dEsika mE saraNam ॥

Oh, Thou, the knower of the entire ocean of milk of scriptures, He Who teaches the truths found in the great treasure chest of the Upanishads ! I meditate on Thy faultless feet. Be Thou my refuge, Oh, Master Sankara.

(1)

करुणावरुणालय पालय मां भवसागरदुःखविदूनहृदम् ।
रचयाखिलदर्शनतत्त्वविदं भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥

karuNANavaruNALaya pAlaya mAm
bhavasAgara dukhkha vidUnahridam ।
rachayAkhiladarsanatattvavidam
bhava sankara dEsika mE saraNam ॥

Oh, Thou Ocean of compassion ! Save me whose heart is tormented by the misery of the sea of birth. Make me understand the truths of all schools of philosophy ! Be Thou my refuge, Master Sankara !

(2)

भवता जनता सुहिता भविता निजबोधविचारण चारुमते ।
कल्प्येश्वर जीवविवेकविदं भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥

bhavata janatA suhitA bhavitA
nijabOdhavichAraNa chArumatE ।
kalyEsvara jIvavivEkavidam
bhava sankara dEsika mE saraNam ॥

By Thee the masses have been made happy, Oh, Thou of noble intellect, skilled in the quest of Self-Knowledge ! Enable me to understand the wisdom relating to God and the Soul. Be Thou my refuge, Oh, Master Sankara!

(3)

भव एव भवानिति मे नितरां समजायत चेतसि कौतुकिता।
मम वारय मोहमहाजलधिं भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम्॥

bhava Eva bhavA niti mE nitarAm
samajAyata chEtasi kowtukitA |
mama vAraya mOhamahAjaladhim
bhava sankara dEsika mE saranam ||

Knowing that Thou art verily the Supreme Lord, overwhelming bliss arises in my heart. Protect me from the vast ocean of delusion. Be Thou my refuge, Oh, Master Sankara!

(4)

सुकृतेऽधिकृते बहुधा भवतो भविता समदर्शनलालसता।
अतिदीनमिमं परिपालय मां भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम्॥

sukritE(a)dhikritE bahudhA bhavatO
bhavitA samadarsanalAlasatA |
atidInamimam paripAlaya mAm
bhava sankara dEsika mE saraNam ||

Desire for the insight in unity through Thy Grace will grow only when virtuous deeds are in abundance - and in all directions. Protect this extremely helpless person. Be Thou my refuge, Master Sankara !

(5)

जगतीमवितुं क्लृप्ताकृतयो विचरन्ति महामहसशछलतः।
अहिमांशुरिवात्र विभाशि गुरो भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम्॥

jagatImavitum kalitAkritayO
vicharanti mahAmahasachalata: |
ahimAmsurivAtra vibhAsi gurO
bhavasankara dEsika mE saraNam ||

Oh Teacher ! For the purpose of saving the world the Great Ones take various forms and wander in disguise. Of these great Ones, You shine like the sun ! Be Thou my refuge, Oh, Master Sankara!

(6)

गुरुगुंगव पुगुंगवकेतन ते समतामयतां नहि कोऽपि सुधीः।
शरणागतवत्सल तत्त्वनिधे भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम्॥

guru pungava pungava kEtanatE
samatAmayatAm nahi kOpi sudhIhi ।
saraNAgatavatsala tattvanidhE
bhavasankara dEsikamE saraNam ॥

Oh, Best of Teachers ! Supreme Lord Who has the sacred bull as His banner ! None of the wise Ones is equal to Thee! Thou are compassionate to those who take refuge in Thee! Thou treasure chest of Truth! Be Thou my refuge, Oh, Master Sankara!

(7)

विदितानमया विशदैककला न च किंचन काञ्चनमस्ति गुरो।
द्रुतमेव विधेहि कृपां सहजां भवशंकर देशिक मे शरणम्॥

viditA na mayA visadaikakalA
na cha kinchana kAnchana masti gurO ।
drutamEva vidhEhi krupAm sahajAm
bhava sankara dEsika mE saraNamll

I do not understand correctly even a single "branch of knowledge". I do not possess even the least bit of wealth, Oh Teacher, quickly bestow on me Thy Grace. Be Thou my refuge, Oh, Master Sankara!

(8)



**"Golden Words" of Jagadguru His Holiness
Sri Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati
(34th Pontiff of Sringeri)**

Conversions from one religion to another is neither advisable nor desirable. The religion in which a man is born is the best fitted for his spiritual upliftment. The Lord knows which religion is best for us and gives us birth in a country, climate, time and faith for which we are best suited.

No matter how good an artist is, we cannot paint a picture on vacant air, though he may possess the finest paints and brushes. He requires a stable background, be it canvas or a wall.

Similarly a seeker should apply his God given gifts on the stable background of his God chosen faith. So a Hindu should try to become a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, a Buddhist a better Buddhist and a Christian a better Christian.

Who are we to sit in judgement over other religious teachers and religions? Waste not your precious life in judging others. Use it to regulate your life and purify yourself.

There must be perfect equality - each man to his religion - unmolested by anybody and every facility guaranteed to him to practice his own religious pursuit.

Every facility must be given for a Hindu to live the life of a Hindu, a Muslim to live the life of a Muslim, a Christian the life of a Christian, and so on.

No one on earth, howsoever powerful, has any right to compel the people to change or break their religious laws. No one has the right to interfere in the religious matters of another.

Guru: The Guiding Torch

Do not be disheartened by the spiritual darkness over-running the world. When the sun sets and the darkness of night envelops the land, we do not stop our work saying that the sun has set. Do we not light a lamp and get on with our normal activities with the aid of that lamp? If we feel that there is an urgency, do we not walk miles together during the darkest of nights guided by the flickering light of a torch?

If you feel earnestly and keenly the urgency for escaping from the cycle of birth and death, you will ignore the spiritual gloom prevailing in the land and seek out a guiding torch which will dispel the gloom for you. Such a guiding torch is the Guru, your spiritual

master, who is waiting to help you.



Sri Gurubhyo Namaha

The Vedas

by: Dr. S. Yegnasubramanian

The word *veda* is derived from the Sanskrit root *vid* which means "to know". Since our religion follows the Vedic Injunctions, it is known as "Vedic Religion". The word religion implies the meaning of *dharma*. What is *dharma*? Scholars consider *dharma* as that which when followed brings contentment and happiness. The texts that give us the complete knowledge of *dharma* are called *dharma pramana*. They are fourteen in number and the following *sloka* gives them as:

अंगानि वेदाश्चत्वारो मीमांसा न्याय विस्तरः
पुराणं धर्मशास्त्रं च विद्या द्योता श्वतुर्दशा ॥

angAani vEdAschatvArO
meemAmsa nyAsa vistara:
purANam dharmasAstram cha
vidyA hyOtAschaturdasA

four *Vedas* (*Rg*, *Yajus*, *Sama* and *Atharva*), six *Vedangas* (the organs of the *Vedas* - *Siksha*, *Vyakarana*, *Chandas*, *Nirukta*, *Jyotisha* and *Kalpa*) and four *Upangas* (secondary organs of the *Vedas* - *Mimamsa*, *Nyaya*, *Purana* and *Dharma Sastra*). These fourteen texts are glorified as *vidyasthanas* - the abode of true knowledge and wisdom.

Among the *Vedas*, *Rg Veda* sets forth the Vedic principles of knowledge, *Yajur Veda* shows the Vedic way of action and the importance of rituals, *Sama Veda* glorifies the Vedic way of ecstasy and *Atharva Veda* speaks about several other *vidyas* and supplementary principles of knowledge. As codified by Sage *Veda Vyasa*, *Rg Veda* had 21 *sakhas* (recensions), *Yajus* had 101 *sakhas*, *Sama* had 1000 *sakhas* and *Atharva Veda* had 9 *sakhas*, totaling 1,131 *sakhas*. However, only 10 *sakhas* are available to us today!

Among *Vedangas*, *Siksha* deals with pronunciation and euphony, *Vyakarana* - grammar, *Chandas* - meter and poetry, *Nirukta* - etymology, *Jyotisha* - astronomy, and *Kalpa* deals with the procedural aspects of Vedic karmas. Among the *Upangas*, *Mimamsa* deals with the action and knowledge based interpretations of the Vedic texts, *Nyaya* deals with logic, *Puranas* deal with mythology and serve as a magnifying glass of the Vedic Injunctions, and *Dharma Sastras* speak about the Vedic codes of conduct.

The Vedic literature can be classified into four groups:

1. *Samhita*: the mantra portion;
2. *Brahmanas*: the portion dealing with rituals;
3. *Aranyakas* - the forest texts, and
4. *Upanishads* - the portion dealing with Vedic philosophy.

The three important texts which speak about the highest principles of *tattvajnana* (metaphysics) are hailed as *prasthanatrayi* and are:

- a) *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*,
- b) *Upanishads* and
- c) *Brahma Sutras*, depicted in the *Uttara Mimansa*.

The principles of *dharma* as embodied in our religion are all centered around the *Vedas*.

Apasthambha Sutra describes *Vedas* as the *Pramana*: (authority)

प्रमाणम् वेदाश्च
(*pramANam vEdAscha*)

Manu Smriti hails them as:

वेदोक्खिलो धर्म मूलं
(*vEdOkhilO dharma moolam*);

Bhagavan Sri Krishna says:

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव ब्रह्मोः
vEdaischa sarvairahamEvavEdyo:
(I am known through the *Vedas*)

The *Vedas* are Infinite:

अनन्ता वै वेदाः
anantA vai vEdAha;

They are the very breath of *Iswara*:

यस्य निश्वासितं वेदाः
yasya nisvasitam vEdAha.

They are without beginning:

अनादि

anaadi;

and of non-human origin:

अपौरुषेय

apourushEya.

They teach the glories of all creations and the principles of *dharmā* and enshrine true knowledge and wisdom. That is why our scriptures proclaim:

वेदो नित्यं अधीयतां। तद् उदितं कर्म स्वनुष्ठीयतां॥

vEdO nityamadhIyatAm;
taduditam karma svanushtIyatAm
(practice the Vedas daily;
practice well their prescriptions)

It is our great fortune that we have inherited such a rich and cherished dharmic tradition and lineage. It should be our foremost duty and goal to preserve such a tradition. Our ancestors led a peaceful and contented life following the path set by the Vedic guidelines. That path withstood the tests of historic times and was smooth to follow without obstacles. Let us and our progeny follow that proven path and attain peace and harmony.

Ref: "The Vedas", Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 1988.

Dr. S. Yegnasubramanian (President, SVBF) is a scientist at Bell Labs., NJ. He has been teaching vedic recitation and vedanta for about 10 years. He was the General Chairman of the first International Ati Rudra Maha Yajna '97, held in Stroudsburg, PA, USA.

Feature Article of Next Issue

"Vedic Chanting - A Perfectly Formulated Oral Tradition"



Our Scriptures

I. Vidyasthanas (Source of Supreme Knowledge) - 14

a) Vedas (4) : Classified by Vyasa - 1131 recensions : ~20,500 mantras

Name	Rishi	Seer	Recensions	Contents
Rig	Agni	Paila	21	Hymns on Devas; Social Life; Soul...
Yajus	Vayu	Vaishampayana	101	Rituals/Yajnas, Sacrifices...
Sama	Aditya	Jaimini	1000	Devotional Hymns, Music, Peace...
Atharva	Aditya	Sumanthu	9	Devatas, Creation, Mantras to ward off evils / enemies

b) Vedangas: (6) & c) Upangas (4) (to help understand Vedas completely and in depth)

<u>Vedangas</u>		<u>Upangas</u>	
1. Chandas	Meter, Poetry	1. Meemamsa	Enquiry
2. Nirukta	Words & Roots	2. Nyaya	Logic
3. Siksha	Phonetics	3. Purana	Magnifying glass of Vedas; 18 Maha Puranas, 18 Upa; Puranas and Ithihasas
4. Vyakarana	Grammar		
5. Jyotisha	Astrology / Astronomy		
6. Kalpa	Yajnas, Samskaras...	4. Dharmasastra	Smriti, social frame, duties

II. Upa Vedas (4)

1. Ayurveda Science of Life
2. Artha Sastras Science of Wealth / Economics
3. Dhanurveda Science of Weaponary and Warfare
4. Gandharvaveda Treatise on fine arts, music, etc.

III. Aranyakas and Brahmanas - Vedic Scriptures learnt and interpreted by Rishis in the forests are known as Aranyakas and those interpreted in homes for homely use are known as Brahmanas:

<u>Veda</u>	<u>Aranyaka</u>	<u>Brahmana</u>
Rig	Aitereya, Kousitaki	Aitereya, Kousitaki
Yajus	Taittiriya, Brhadaranyaka,	Taittiriya, Kanva Satpatha, Madhyandin

	Maitrayania	Satpatha
Sama	Talvakara	Talvakara, Pancavimsa, Vamsa, Arseya, Sadvimsa, Chandoghya, Mantra, Daivata, Jaiminiya, Samavidhana, Samhitopanishad
Atharva		Gopatha Brahmana

Upanishads: are placed towards the end of Aranyakas. They deal with aspects of realizing through the path of knowledge (jnana marga), the nonduality (abhedha) of Brahman. They are considered as the quintessence of Vedas.

Veda	Main Upanishads
Rig Veda	Aitereya, Kousitaki
Yajur Veda	Taittiriya, Kathopanishad, Brhadranayaka, Isavasya, Maitiya, Svetasvara
Sama Veda	Kena, Chandoghya
Atharva Veda	Mundaka, Mandukya, Prasna

Prasthanatraya: (Texts on Tattvajnana - Knowledge of Self - Metaphysics):

1. Upanishads
2. Bhagavad Gita
3. Brahmasutras & Treatise by Acharyas

32 Primary Vidyas: (Primary Knowledge) 4 Vedas, 6 Vedangas, 4 Upangas, 4 Upa Vedas, 2 Ithihasas, Tantra, Smriti, Nastikamata (agnosticism), 3 Sastras (artha, kama and shilpa), Alankriti (asthetics), Kavya (poetry), Desabhasha (linguistics), Avasaokti, Yavanamata, Desadhidharma.

Feature Article of Next Issue

"Vedic Chanting - A Perfectly Formulated Oral Tradition"



If 'mantra' or 'yantra' is not for you, the secret of 'Sri Vidya' can come to you through the rich, elegant, captivating songs, called....

NAVAVARANA KIRTANAS

by: B. Rajam Aiyar

Muthuswami Dikshitar's devotional outpourings to Goddess Kamalaambika which took shape as the famous *Navavarana Kirtanas* (songs) make a treasure house of Carnatic music. The nine songs expound the secret of *Sri Vidya* which includes all ways of worship and excludes none.

Navavarana Puja to Sri Chakra is the foremost *sadhana* of *Sri Vidya* and Dikshitar's songs give shape to it in words set to divine music. By singing these songs with proper *bhava* (attitude), one will get the full benefit of formal *Navavarana Puja*.

Muthuswami Dikshitar was one of the three outstanding vocal musicians of recent times (1775-1835) from South India who has imparted joy to millions of people. His wonderful compositions and inspired songs were all dedicated to glorify the Supreme Being.

Dikshitar had his initial training under his father Ramaswami Dikshitar in the time-honored way and became an adept in the *lakshya* and *lakshana* (objectives) of music.

Influence of Yogi

Early in life he came under the influence of a *Mahatma*, known as Chidambaranatha Yogi who took him to Varanasi. There he was initiated into the subtleties of *mantra* and *tantra* sastras. He learnt Hindustani music as well.

Then he returned to the South and took refuge under "Guru Guha" in *Tiruttani Kshetra*. The inspiration which he derived there led him to compose his songs with the insignia of "Guru Guha".

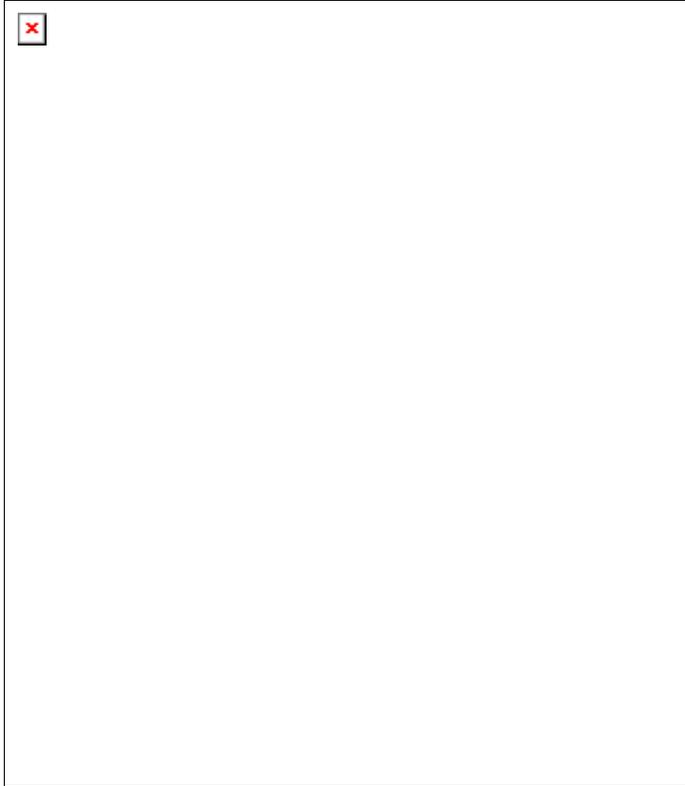
His next place of pilgrimage was Tiruvarur, known as Sripuram where the presiding deity is Kamalaambika. It is here that he was wholly inspired under the influence of the goddess to compose nine *kirtanas* in captivating *ragas*. Fortunate indeed are those who can sing these *kritis* mastering the nuances of the art and feeling the elevation of spirit.

Kirtanas Meaningful

After invoking Maha Ganapati and Bala Subrahmanya in two introductory songs and adding a Devi *dhyana Kirtana*, Dikshitar sang the *Navavarana Kirtanas* and concluded with a *Mangala Kirtana* on the goddess in Sri Raga. Altogether there are 13 *Kirtanas* in the series. Full meaning of the first and summary

meanings of the other eight important *Kirtanas* on Devi are given here.

"Kamalaamba Samrakshatu"
Raga: Ananda Bhairavi Talam: Misra Chapu



Meaning of the First Kirtana:

She who is in my heart and enshrined in Kamalagara, who is worshipped by Devas and pure-minded devotees, and whose mind shines like a lotus, who is the beloved consort of Sundaeswara, who grants the enjoyment of Brahmananda, who is like a beautiful parrot in the cage of Pranava, who is presiding deity of the nine Avarana chakras, beginning with Tripura, the ten siddhis, the eight Matrika Devis, 15 Nitya Devis, Kameswari, who is the Prakata Yogini and the empress of Bhupura known as Trailokya-Mohana-Chakra, who is destroyer of Mahishasura and other enemies of Devas, whose glory is proclaimed in Vedas Puranas, who is Tripuresi, Mother of Guru Guha, consort of Kameswara, sister of Maha Vishnu, who is Maheswari, Tripurasundari — May she protect me.

1. The Kirtana begins with "Kamalaamba Samrakshatu". Raga Ananda Bhairavi, Talam Misra Chapu. Avarana: "Trailokya Mohana"; Chakreswari

Tripura, Prakata Yogini.

2. The Kirtana, with "Kamalaambaam". *Raga Kalyani, Adi Talam. Avarana: "Sarvasa Paripooraka"*; Chakreswari Tripuresi, Gupta Yogini.

Order to Mind

In this *Kriti* Dikshitar asks his own mind to meditate on Goddess Kamalaambika and get freed from bondage. The goddess is the very embodiment of vibrant life and ultimate truth. Dweller in Kamalapura and destroyer of the demon *Bhandasura*, the charming goddess with lotus face and lovely tresses is joy incarnate. This consort of Siva, praised by other goddesses and worshipped by sage Durvasa, will dispel grief and grant all wishes and salvation.

3. The *Kirtana*, "Sri Kamalambikaya". *Raga Sankarabharanam, Rupaka Talam. Avarana: "Sarva Sankshobhana"*; Chakreswari Tripurasundari, Guptatara Yogini.

With Devi's grace, Dikshitar sees himself as ultimate Brahman, enjoying full and eternal bliss. She is worshipped by Manmatha, the Lord of love, and by the Devas. She is the embodiment of the Veda Mahavakya. Her mercy is infinite.

4. The *Kirtana*, "Kamalaambikayai". *Raga Kambodi, Adi Talam. Avarana: "Sarva Soubhagya Dayakam"*; Chakreswari Tripuravasini, Sampradaya Yogini.

Here Dikshitar bows to the eternal Devi, the sister of Vishnu and the consort of Siva. She is also Himavan's daughter, and is called Aparna and Suparna. She is worshipped through the esoteric mantra, *Hrim*. She is the mother of all creatures, the destroyer of all sins, and is bedecked with jewels, golden brocades and fragrant betels, Her lotus feet bestow grace on all.

5. The *Kirtana*, "Sri Kamalaambayaah". *Raga Bhaivavi, Misrajamba Talam. Avarana: "Sarvartha Sadhakam"*; Chakreswari Tripura Sri Kulotheerna Yogini.

Creator of Elements

With awe, Dikshitar wonders who can equal Devi, who is superior even to Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. She creates the five elements, is the essence of light and sound. It is her grace that lends life and energy to primordial Maya and Avidya that are the cause of this phenomenal universe.

6. The *Kirtana*, "Kamalaambikaayaa". *Raga*

Punnagavarali, Tisra Eka Talam. Avarana: "Sarva Rakshakaram"; Chakreswari Tripura Malini and Nigarbha Yogini.

Calling himself as Devi's devotee, Dikshitar praises her Kundalini power with its tenfold energies and the tenfold actions, all of which she enfolds within herself. She taught Lord Siva, and was worshipped by Dararatha. Highly regarded as Tripura Malini, she is fond of music and confers wealth and grace on the devotees.

7. The *Kirtana*, " Sri Kamalaambi-kaayam". *Raga Sahana, Tisra Triputa Talam. Avarana: "Rogaharam"; Chakreswari Tripura Siddha, Rahasya Yogini.*

Terror to Wicked

The composer expresses his devotion to Devi who grants all boons to those who take refuge in her and brings joy to gods, sages and men alike. She is also a terror to the wicked. With lotus eyes and face bright like the full moon, and feet worshipped by Indira, she is the embodiment and deity of the Mantra, *Hrim*. She is the Yogini with veena in hand and can dispel all ills.

8. The *Kirtana*, "Sri Kamalaambike". *Raga Ghanta, Adi Talam. Avarana: The Central Triangle called "Sarva Siddhi Pradam"; Chakreswari Tripuramba, Atirahasya Yogini.*

Dikshitar implores protection from Devi, who carries the flower arrow and other weapons, as also the parrot in her hand. She protects all the worlds and confers wealth on all. Known as Tripuraamba and Balaambika, and golden in color, she dispels all sorrows and gives joy and ultimate deliverance. Lord Vishnu and Subrahmanya understand her greatness.

9. The *Kirtana*, " Sri Kamalaamba Jayati". *Raga Ahiri, Tisra Eka Talam. Avarana: The Central Bindu called "Sarva Ananda Mayam"; Chakreswari Maha Tripurasundari, Paraparati Rahasya Yogini.*

Grace From Listening

Here Kamalaambika is great. She can explain *Brahmamaya kosa*, names and forms, *kama kala* equanimity. She is the mother of all the worlds, she has the moon's crescent representing knowledge, she is the indweller of chintamani mansion. Ever auspicious. She is the Supreme Devi seated on Sivakama's lap in the innermost circle, the central *bindu* inside the Sri Chakra.

In the concluding *mangala kirtana*, Dikshitar implores Goddess Kamalaambika to protect him.

Those who sing and hear these songs and with love and devotion will attain the goal of life by the grace of the Divine Mother.

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Note: Smt. Bhavani Rao & Party rendered the Kirtanas during this year's Navaratri at Sharada Temple, in Stroudsburg.



An Introduction to Sanskrit

by: M. R. Dwarakanath

Preface: The following is a general interest article on Sanskrit and is not intended to be the 1st lesson on the subject. The actual lessons will start with the next issue of this journal. The lessons will assume the reader to be familiar with the Nagari script and not much more about Sanskrit. Each lesson will be divided into a number of topics like Conversational Sanskrit, Popular Slokas, Vocabulary, Grammar and other material. The key to gaining a working knowledge of Sanskrit is patience; keep reviewing the old material with each new lesson and soon the rewards will become apparent. To be able to make sense out of written Sanskrit is to be able to break a word cluster into its constituent words, a process called pdzed, and to recognize the parts of speech. To this end minimal grammar will be introduced. However, the grammar will pay big dividends! Finally, the author acknowledges he is no sanskritist but merely a lay enthusiast, playing the role of a facilitator. He requests your indulgence for the many gaffs and errors to be found in these lessons and welcomes your drawing his attention to them.

प्रार्थना **Invocation**

नृतावसाने नटराजराजः ननाद ढक्कां नवपञ्चवारम् ।
उद्धर्तु कामस्सनकादि सिद्धान् एतद्विमर्शं शिवसूत्रजालम् ॥

Nruttaavaasaane Natarajaajajaha nanaada dhakkaam
navapancavaaram

Uddhartu kaamassanakaadi siddhaan etadvimarse Sivasootrajaalam

At the conclusion (अवसाने) of the cosmic dance (नृत्त) the lord of dance (नृत्त) sounded (ननाद) his double drum (ढक्का) nine (नव) and five (पञ्च) times (वारम्) with the aim of (काम) up-lifting (उद्धर्तु) accomplished souls (सिद्धान्) like Sanaka et. al. (सनकादि). It is that (एतत्) web (जालम्) of Lord Siva's aphorisms (शिवसूत्र) I wish to examine (विमर्शं).

संस्कृत भाषा Sanskrit Language: Sanskrit (संस्कृत) means properly (सम्यक्) crafted (कृतम्) or a refined (grammatically) language. It is regarded as the language of the Gods. Indeed it is believed that the phonology of all speech was created when Lord Nataraja sounded his double drum as in the above invocation.

पाणिनि Panini was a grammarian par excellence. Although many

grammarians preceded Panini, they are all but forgotten because of Panini's stature much as Shakespeare and Newton eclipsed their predecessors. Panini was considered to be a dull lad, and he ran away from home and practiced severe penance. Lord Siva, pleased by Panini's austerities appeared before him and sounded the drum nine and five or fourteen times. Panini became instantly learned by the grace of the Lord. The sound of Siva's drums transformed Panini into a gifted scholar and this sound contains all the alphabets of Sanskrit and are called Siva Sutras.

शिवसूत्राणि Sivasootrani

१	अ	इ	उ	ण					
२	ऋ	ॠ	क						
३	ए	ओ	ङ						
४	ऐ	औ	च्						
५	ह	य	व	र	ट				
६	ल	ण							
७	ञ	म	ड	ण	न	म्			
८	इ	भ	ञ्						
९	ढ	ध	ष						
१०	ज	ब	ग	ड	द	श्			
११	ख	फ	छ	ठ	थ	च	ट	त	व्
१२	क	प	य्						
१३	श	ष	स	र्					
१४	ह	ल्							

शिवसूत्राणि Sivasootrani:

When the Siva Sutras are recited with appropriate diction, they do indeed sound like a drum roll. These Siva Sutras play an extremely important role in the study of Sanskrit grammar. The sounds are arranged in a unique pattern and the sounds that are close together in the Siva Sutras are also close to one another phonologically. Panini creates from the Siva Sutras a shorthand notation for alphabet clusters in the following manner:

1. Ignore the final member of each line of the sutras.
2. A group of phonologically related sounds are then

abbreviated by the 1st and last members of the group forming a one syllable shorthand notation.

3. The last member can be (usually is) the last member of any line.

Examples:

अक् includes: अ, इ, उ, ऋ, ॠ - these are the simple vowels. Although these are short vowels (**ह्रस्व स्वराः**) taking one unit of prosodical time, the long vowels (**दीर्घ स्वराः**) are implicitly included. Only there is no long ॠ . The long vowels take two units of time to enunciate. Similarly, **अच्** represents all vowels including diphthongs or conjunct vowels. The diphthongs are ए, ऐ, औ and **औ**. **हल्** represents the consonants, **खल्** includes the harsh (**कर्कश**) or un-voiced consonants, **शल्** the fricatives (**ऊष्मान्**), etc.

The Siva Sutras show the grand phonology of the language, yet provide a utilitarian tool to concisely name groups of similar sounds. As we will be returning frequently to Siva Sutras in the study of Sanskrit, it would be well worth the effort to memorize them.

वर्णमाला - The Alphabets:

वर्णमाला literally means a garland of letters or characters. The standard organization of the alphabets include : 9 simple vowels, 4 diphthongs, **अनुस्वार**, **विसर्ग** and 33 consonants for a total of 48 characters. This arrangement is well known to readers. Here we arrange the same characters in a slightly different pattern to both display the scientific and mathematical beauty as well for the utility this arrangement affords.

1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
कण्ठ्य	Kanthya	अ	आ	क्	ख्	ग्	घ्	ङ्		[ह]
तालव्य	Taalavya	इ	ई	च्	छ्	ज्	झ्	ञ्	य्	श्
मूर्धन्य	Moordhanya	ऋ	ॠ	ट्	ठ्	ड्	ढ्	ण्	र	ष
दन्त्य	Dantya	ल्	-	त्	थ्	द	ध	न्	ल्	स्
ओष्ठ्य	Osthya	उ	ऊ	प्	फ्	ब	भ	म्	व	

1. The 1st column lists the points of articulation of sound in the vocal apparatus. There are 5 such points : **कण्ठ्य** or guttural (throat), **तालव्य** or palatal / velar (sound produced with tongue in

contact with the soft palate), **मूर्धन्य** or cerebral (tongue in contact with the roof of the mouth), **दन्त्य** or dental (tongue in contact with the back of the teeth), and finally **ओष्ठ्य** or labial (the lips coming together).

2. The 2nd column lists the **ह्रस्व स्वराः** or short vowels.
3. The 3rd column lists the **दीर्घ स्वराः** or long vowels.
4. Column 4 lists the **अल्पप्राण कर्कश व्यञ्जनानि** or unaspirated, unvoiced consonants. Aspiration involves an explosive gush of air released when the sound is produced. Voicing involves the vibration of vocal chords. Neither occurs for this group of sounds.
5. Column 5 lists the **महाप्राण कर्कश** or the aspirated, unvoiced consonants.
6. Column 6 lists the **अल्पप्राण मृदु** or the unaspirated, voiced consonants.
7. Column 7 lists the **महाप्राण मृदु** or the aspirated, voiced consonants.
8. Columns 8, 9 and 10 list respectively the **अनुनासिकाः** or the nasals, the **अन्तस्थाः** or the semi-vowels and the **ऊष्मान्** or the fricatives.

The mathematical and scientific beauty alluded to earlier may be seen by the logical organization of sounds into a nearly complete matrix by function of the vocal apparatus. This table will greatly facilitate understanding the various sandhi rules and may be worth memorizing the table in this form.

स्वराः Vowels

ह्रस्व, दीर्घ, गुण, वृद्धि : Hrsva, Deergha, Guna and Vrdhi: Although we have seen 13 vowel sounds, they are based on 5 basic vowel sounds. The rest are composite vowels. For now we will introduce the concept of Guna and Vrdhi as a process of strengthening the vowels. How precisely this is done will be seen in a later lesson.

ह्रस्व	अ	इ	उ	ऋ	ॠ
दीर्घ	आ	ई	ऊ	ॠ	-
गुण	अ	ए	ओ	अर्	अल्
वृद्धि	आ	ऐ	औ	आर्	आल्

By examining the following pairs of words: (अग्नि, आग्नेय), (शिव, शैव), (गुरु, गौरव), (कृत्तिका, कार्तिकेय), we can see how the initial vowel of the 1st member of a pair takes वृद्धि, to form the second member - a derivative word!

Suggested Books:

- Devavaani Pravesika - Robert Goldman and Sally Sutherland, University of California, Berkeley
- First / Second Book of Sanskrit - R. G. Bhandarker - Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay

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प्रश्नोत्तर रत्न मालिका

Prasnottara Ratna Malika

Sankara Bhagavatpada

(The Gem-Garland of Questions and Answers)

In this work, Adi Sankara enlightens and clears our doubts about various issues, in the form of simple question-answers. We intend to include a few in each issue of the Journal. (not in any order...)

Q1. भगवन् ! किं उपादेयं ? (bhagavan! kim upAdEyam?)

Oh, Lord ! Which is to be taken?

A1. गुरुवचनम्। (guru vachanam)

The utterances of the Guru

Q2. हेयमपि किम् ? (heyamapi kim?)

And, which is to be given up?

A2. अकार्यम्। (akaaryam |)

The forbidden act.

Q3. को गुरुः ? (kO guru: ?)

Who is a Guru (Preceptor)?

A3. अधिगत तत्त्वः। शिष्यहिताय उद्यतः सततम्।

(adhigatatattva:| SishyahitAya udyata: satatam)

One who has realized the truth and ever strives for the good of the disciple.

Q4. को पथ्यतरः ? (kO pathyatara:?)

What is more beneficial than anything?

A4. धर्मः। (dharma:) Righteousness.

Q5. कः शुचिः इह ? (ka: suchihi iha?)

Who is the pure (person) here?

A5. यस्य मानसं शुद्धम् (yasya mAnasam Suddham)

One whose mind is pure.

More in Future Issues



**Our Pranams to
Sri Veda Vyasa and Sri Adi Sankara:**

व्यासाय विष्णुरूपाय व्यासरूपाय विष्णवे।
नमो वै ब्रह्मनिधये वासिष्ठाय नमो नमः॥

vyAsAya vishNu rUpAya
vyAsa rUpAya vishNavE |
namO vai brahma nidhayE
vAsishtAya namO nama: ||

I hail thee, Vyasa, again and again; Thou God in human form, Thou scion of Vasistha's race. It is from Thee that all knowledge springs !

श्रुति स्मृति पुराणानाम् आलयं करुणालयं ।
नमामि भगवत्पादं शंकरं लोकशंकरम् ॥

sruti smriti purAnAnAm
Alayam karuNAlayam
namAmi bhagavatpAdam
sankaram IOkasankaram

We salute the sacred feet of Sri Sankara, the abode of Srutis, Smritis, Puranas and of compassion, and who ever accomplishes the good of the world !

**Watch for some thought-provoking
Subhashitas in the next issue!!!**

