

Symbolic Implications of Shri Krishna's Flute with Reference to 'The Lord of Mathura'

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Abstract

Lord Krishna is the only deity who is endowed with sixty-four arts. Shri Krishna is considered a mine of virtue; whether it is a peacock feather in a beautiful crown on his head or his beautiful flute, everything in him gives a new lesson to life. While having *darshan* of Shri Krishna in any temple, we always see two things with his idol: peacock feathers on his head and the second flute in his hands. Talking about the flute that is always visible with Lord Krishna gives us all kinds of lessons. The most significant tutorial we get from the flute is to speak sweetly. There is no knot in any flute, which teaches that we should not keep any knot inside us. Also, the specialty of the flute is that it does not play without playing. That is, do not speak until told. Whenever the flute is played, it is melodious. That is, if we talk to anyone, speak sweetly. This paper explores the various events that occurred due to the flute in the Lord of Mathura.

Keywords: Krishna, Flute, Vrindavan, Radha, Gopis

Introduction

Krishna plays the flute for many reasons. Sometimes he plays the flute because he loves to play the flute. Sometimes he plays the flute to dance with gopis, call his cows, smack his gopas, and even kill demons. The song of Shri Krishna's flute was utterly covered in Vrindavan. The flute's melody had an extraordinary sweetness that any creature who heard this tune could not move from that place. Anyone can listen to the Shri Krishna's flute song in every corner of Vrindavan. Its presence gave strength and comfort to the people of that secluded valley of *Vrindavan*. Krishna assured them that they were safe even in this solitude. The residents there also felt that someone powerful and benevolent was watching over them, and any danger could be dealt with in one go. Krishna's flute was giving many more messages in the valleys of Vrindavan like life, and all its pleasures are limited; one day, this good time will end, and one should make the best use of one's time because this time. Does not stop for anyone. Consequently, the flute mourned former relatives of the Vrishni dynasty who were in *Vrindavan* and were living there according to their wishes. With the help of the flute, Yadav expressed grief over the incidents that had happened in the nation. It shared the sorrows of death and failures, love and loss, war and vengeance.

The Magnificence of Shri Krishna's Flute

Although there are seven notes in music, only six are in the flute. Therefore, the melody is played by only six musical notes on the flute. According to music experts, measurement is essential in making and playing the flute. The size of the flute's holes and the bamboo's thickness also play an indispensable role. There are eight holes in the flute, and the first hole is near the mouth, which blows air. The flute has six spots in the gamut on which the fingers are moved. There is another hole at the bottom, which is the eighth hole which is for tuning. Although the flute player has many flutes, there are three main types.

The most miniature flute is playful; whose size is twenty-two centimeters. It is used in folk music and other such songs. In comparison, the length of the medium-sized flute is forty- two centimeters. Its tendency is light; that is, it is very harmonious. It is used in romantic songs. At the same time, the giant flute, about ninety centimeters in size, has a boisterous sound, is used for bass voice, played in classical music. It is very close to the human voice, and whatever the singer brings out through his music can be brought out through the flute. The flute player sings and plays the flute in his heart. That is why the flute sounded very sweet when played by Krishna in an environment surrounded by nature.

Lord Krishna has three types of flutes, and all are made of bamboo. Firstly, *Venu* is tiny, not more than six inches long, with six holes for whistling. Secondly, *Murli*: The flute is about eighteen inches long with a spot at the end and four holes on the flute's body. This type of flute produces a stunning sound. Lastly, *Vamsi*:

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Vamsi's flute is about fifteen inches long, with nine holes on its body. Krishna used to play any of these three flutes when he was required. Venu uses the flute to attract the *gopis*. These flutes were sometimes ornamented with ornaments. Sometimes the flute was made up of marble and sometimes of hollow bamboo. When the flute is made of gems, it is called *Sammohini*. When made from gold, it is called Akarsini. He has another flute named Mahananda, the same as the beak of a fish that catches the fish of the heart and mind of Shrimati Radharani. An additional flute, which has six holes, is known as Madanjhankriti. Krishna's flute, Sarla, makes a slow, gentle tone like the voice of a musical singing cuckoo. Krishna is very addicted to playing this flute in raga Gaudi and Garjari. Krishna is called **Venugopal, Bansilal, Murali, Muralidhar** and others, based entirely on his association with his flute. It is meant to attract trees, rivers, and forests.

It could not express the flute's melody, things that could feel but could not be described with the tongue. Events that happened in the past are going to happen again. The song of Krishna's flute served as a break between battles, as relief between wars, and symbolized a rare moment of peace between the violence of yesterday and the madness of tomorrow. The flute's melody kept the people of the *Vrishni* dynasty healthy and whole and nourished them with a new ray of hope every day in Vrindavan. The reason for his life was the flute because he used to face it every day fearlessly.

Before, the little *gopis* used to come from the pasture and graze their calf deliberately antecedent to Shri Krishna, and this was the proof of the love of that *gopis* towards Shri Krishna. Each *gopis* passed by, praising and saluting Krishna's flute playing. Shri Krishna would accept everyone's prayer without saying anything and make each *gopi* feel that Krishna smiles only for one *gopi*. Similarly, all the *gopis* would smile and take their calves back. Playing his flute, Krishna roamed the valleys, pastures, hilly areas, river banks, lakes and forests. In Vrindavan, where the entire community played Rasa Leela, the *gopis* waited with their gaze on Shri Krishna and hoped that Shri Krishna would appear soon. The *gopis* with Yashoda's beloved Sri Krishna had more than one thrilling dream. When Krishna's flute was being played, he would lower his hands while taking the flute. After that, Shri Krishna would wipe the flute with his bright cloth and carries it flute securely in his waistband.

Shri Krishna's Sweet Flute Playing Within the Vrindavana

It is said that Krishna plays different tunes from different holes of the flute. Such as, in the first tune, Deities like Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva lose their attention, forget everything in awe, and Lord Anantadeva shakes his head like a hypnotist. The second tune makes the Yamuna flow backwards. The third tune makes the moon stop moving. The fourth tune makes the cows run toward Krishna, who is stunned to hear the flute. The fifth *Swara* of the flute attracts the *gopis* and makes them run to them. The sixth tune melts the stones and makes the season of autumn. The seventh note appears in all seasons. The eighth note is especially for Srimati Radharani, it takes her name and calls her, and she comes running to him and misplaces her clothes and Kajal.

There was no doubt that Radha was an admirer of Krishna's flute playing, but it had gone beyond that. Despite Krishna's refusal, Radha kept on following Krishna. Krishna and Balarama lived together, so Krishna used to ask Radha why Radha was chasing them, and then she would answer with a gasp and say: -

"Just you, I want to keep you company while you graze the herds." (Banker 27)

A beautiful dressed Radha wants to meet her Krishna. Finding him absorbed in her flute, she takes him away from the flute. A state of confusion and disorder fills the air. Gopika understands the loss caused by this. She returns the flute to Krishna to bring back normalcy all around. Whenever Krishna played his flute, wherever he was and in whatever work he was engaged in, Radha, leaving everything behind, would come running to sit at his feet, resting her chin on her opposite palms and listening enthusiastically. Despite his tendency to follow her like a newborn calf, he had to admit that he found Radha endearing. As Krishna thinks: -

"Why, this isn't so bad, after all. Maybe Radha can keep quiet for a bit. She may finally be growing some patience and good sense." (Banker 29)

It was a feast day for the clan, and everyone gathered by the lake in festive colors. Families ate sitting under trees or in meadows. In the new pastures, the shepherds grazed freely and were allowed to eat their fill because that is how they feasted. Children were playing, splashing and swimming in the lake, small children riding on their father's shoulders. Older children swung from a rope tied to a hanging branch of a giant banyan tree and jumped to fall into the lake. Krishna was playing his flute sitting on a hill by the lake near the new pastures.

Radha sat beside Krishna and got excited listening to the melodious song of Krishna's flute. Radha was enjoying it as much as Krishna. Far from chattering for hours, Radha could find satisfaction in simply lying down or sitting beside it and immersing herself in the sounds of nature, as Krishna did lose in the eternal song of the earth. Krishna loved the way the sounds of the world returned to his consciousness after a long session of flute playing. Seeing the colors seep into things and the earth being conscious once again was like seeing the dawn of a new day. Radha praises Krishna's playing the flute by saying: -

"You succeeded so well! Your music is ethereal. Even apsaras in swargaloka can't play music like you can, Krishna. Your flute speaks a language all its own. All eternity stops to listen." (Banker 97)

Reassurance of Shri Krishna Playing Flute with his Herd of Cows

Krishna sits beside a tree and plays the flute to check the number of nine lakh cows grazing alongside him. Then, before returning home, they call each cow by its name - through the sound of their flute. Shri Krishna calls all of them one by one - Chandrika, Dhavali, Ivali... When Krishna plays the flute for Chandrika, only Chandrika can hear Krishna's name through the sound of his flute. She is pleased when Krishna calls her name and comes running towards him. Then he calls Dhavali, Ivli and all other cows in the same way. Thus, no cow is left behind, as Shri Krishna knew everyone in Vrindavan was attracted to his flute playing. His flute playing brought peace and comfort to the herd, kept them healthy and safe from disease and illness, and inspired them to give plenty of nutritious milk to the cows so that the village's residents became healthy and strong.

The flute's articulation power is exceptionally diverse, playing subtle emotional melodious music of long, loud, fickle, fast and heavy types. However, not only, it is adept at imitating various natural sounds; for example, a variety of the sound of birds can be imitated precisely. Once Krishna had said to Radha that: -

"The song belongs to those who listen." (Banker 112)

The grown nubile of Vrindavana, smiling and commenting on their children's enthusiasm, watched the young happily walking along the path. It seemed as if a procession had raged on the parts of the north-eastern forest of Vrindavan, happily dancing and singing. There was a festive spirit in the air. The flute, a musical instrument, was a powerful instrument of the Vrishni shepherds, enabling them to carry the tune of their flute over long distances. It reminded their cattle of their presence. Most of the *gopa* and *gopikas* played the flute, and all played the tune Krishna liked.

The Flute Analogy of Shri Krishna

The bamboo flute is an elaborate metaphor associated with Lord Krishna. Literature about Krishna's flute embodies several philosophical ideals: the pursuit of self-knowledge, personal growth and enlightenment, the pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of the spirit of questioning and the need to find balance and moderation. The flute has been a favorite subject of poets, philosophers, and artists. If the musicians sing the glory of the flute, the dancers create a spectacle of their performances around it. Krishna's perceived naughtiness adds to the greatness of the instrument. Repeated attempts have been to restore the story to its deep philosophical roots, re-contextualize its mythological settings, and re-focus its charm and wisdom.

Its rich mythology allows us to do just that. If Krishna plays the flute for the *gopis*, then only they will be able to hear, and no one else. If he plays the flute for the cows, then only the cows will be able to hear, and no one else. We do not have that power, our music cannot be restricted to any one party, but when Supreme Lord Krishna plays the flute, He can pick out and regulate his concertgoers. For instance, when the *gopis* hear the reverberation of Krishna's flute, they suddenly leave the household chores in the middle and run away. The other family members cannot understand what happened to the *gopis* suddenly and where they are going. Sometimes the roti is half cooked on the stove, and the *gopi* listens to Krishna's flute. Then, she runs away, leaving her husband waiting for the bread to arrive on the plate. Nevertheless, the husband cannot hear the flute. Only Krishna can do this. He made the most of the gap between bouts of violence by spreading fun and hope with his heart-warming smile and luscious flute lyrics.

In the incarnation of Krishna, the Lord fulfilled his love for music with the most melodious instrument - a flute. So, every day, little Krishna used to leave the house with a flute tied around his waist. God's love for his flute is legendary. How did the bamboo flute, considered the most organic of musical instruments, get the

blessing and the privilege of being with Sri Krishna at all times? The *gopis* were always jealous of this lucky instrument. Invariably cheek to cheek, the flute of the Lord received the touch of the lips attributed to the nectar of the Lord. It is something that the devotees crave for a lifetime.

Conclusion

Therefore, this research paper is intended to spread the actual messages of Lord Krishna's Flute. We should make ourselves like a flute, completely hollow from within, free from obstructions and obstacles so that we can bear all the hardships and penances of life. We generally have different kinds of likes, dislikes, desires, anger and such qualities. So, even if the Lord takes us with him, we will continue to sing according to our preferences and attachments. So, Krishna wandered the hills of *Vrindavan* and played his flute, trying to ease the burden of his mind through music, filling the world with the melodious beauty of his song. Nevertheless, this did not give complete success to Krishna, it did help a little, though, which was enough.

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