

Epistle from the Editor-in-Chief

The edifice of the scholarly tradition in Bhārata (India) is erected upon the notion of *tarka* (“तर्क”, meaning ‘reasoning’ or ‘argument’) and it has almost invariably been perceived in oxymoronic terms since time immemorial. Whereas some have espoused the method to establish their dicta, others have eschewed the approach as vainglorious and indeterminate. However, even those who count its demerits have time and again employed its techniques to reprove the very system of *tarka* from which they originate, almost paradoxically. From the epistemological apparatuses of the *nyāya* to the ontological evaluations of the *mīmāṃsā*, from the pragmatism of the *sāṃkhya* to the metaphysics of the Vedānta—almost all the philosophical schools have shown proclivity, both *a priori* and *a posteriori*, towards the system.

While Yama advises the young seeker, Naciketā, in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.9) that “नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया” (ultimate wisdom cannot be attained by rationale), we also find the great sage Yājñavalkya logically anatomizing the *brahma* in negative connotations of “नेति नेति” (neither this, nor that) to his wife, Maitreyī, in the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (2.3.6). If we take the former as a thesis and the latter as an antithesis, we may come across the synthesis in the maxim of the *Rgveda* (1.164.46): “एकं सद्ब्रिघ्नं बहुधा वदन्ति” (the ultimate truth is one and absolute— only the scholars define it in varied terms). So, allow me a lighter moment to pass the notorious remark that we had developed dialectical hermeneutics much before the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel!

However, these synthetic standpoints never remained stagnant, but have been challenged, refuted, and once again reinvigorated by latter generations. Perhaps, the lineage of our sages, seers, scholars, philosophers and thinkers took the motto of “स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः” (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 1.11.1) very seriously— never to be devoid from the pursuit of truth! However, we also have to be mindful to the fact that this noble pursuit, though it may appear to be fathomable by mundane intellect, can only be attained by intuitive vision and guidance of the *gurus*:

तर्कोऽप्रतिष्ठः श्रुतयो विभिन्नाः

नैको मुनि र्यस्य वचः प्रमाणम् ।

धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायाम्

महाजनो येन गतः स पन्थाः ॥

(*Mahābhārata* 3.313.17)

[Rationality is uncertain and inconclusive and the scriptural tenets vary greatly. No thinker’s premise can be taken as the ultimate authority on truth. The true essence of *dharma* lies hidden. Therefore, the path taken by the great beings is the right path.]

Ages after ages, these wise and the great beings have guided us in the form of *ācāryas* and *gurus*, enlightening us with the notions of self-realization and chastening us with pious deeds. They have all defined (or, rather should I say, attempted to define) the *satya* or the eternal truth which is but one and absolute.

This ultimate truth is concealed by the shroud of enlightenment as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (5.15) suggests: “हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम्”, and therefore, knowledge and intellect may show us to the canopy, but it is only intrinsic *sāadhanā* that can lead us to uncover it and be one with the supreme one! At the same time, the intellectual foregrounding remains quintessential since it is the vehicle that drives us to the absolute truth in the first place.

The acumen to seek this eternal truth has been hailed as the *brahmavidyā* and it has been cyphered in tergiversating axioms. The only inevitable answer to the impending ‘why’ may be found in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (4.2.2): “परेक्षप्रिया इव ही देवाः परेक्षप्रिया इव ही देवाः” – for the gods love to imply, O the gods love to imply! But, where do these perpetually evasive apothegms lead us to? They lead us to a psychedelic wonderland of cosmic mysteries, waiting for us to be unravelled as:

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।

यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥

(*Kena Upaniṣad* 2.2)

[I do not think that I know the *brahma* in its entirety, nor is it that I do not know anything about it— for the *brahmavidyā* is not something that can be utterly known, as well as, not something that cannot be known at all.]

It is this panchromatic ‘striving’—this beautiful poetry of human existence that has traversed for millennia, from ancient to the modern—that we have tried to visualize in the lexical expositions of the thinkers of our age! We have tried to capture this eternal ethos of argumentative disposition of the traditional scholarship in the *Journal of Sanātana Dharma* as we have felt a strong lack of journals which publish research works upon the domains parented by the Sanātana Dharma. Moreover, we have often felt that the research works published in certain journals on “Hindu Studies” tend to have ‘Orientalist’, ‘Indological’, or leftist biases which undermine the greater ‘*dhārmika*’ causes. Apart from that, it has also been observed that traditional scholars from the Indian subcontinent find less frequent representation in those journals. The articles published in those journals are mostly by Western scholars or Indian/Asian scholars with Western institutional affiliations.

The mission of this journal is to provide the traditional scholars a platform to publish their works. In addition to these serious concerns, we also feel that the article processing charges (APC) is often too much of a burden for scholars with merit but having financial constraints. The objective of the *Journal of Sanātana Dharma* is to be free from all sorts of racism (ethnic

or geographical), ideological biases, economic discrimination, and institutional snobbery, for we follow the path shown by the *R̥gveda* (1.89.1): आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः (may noble thoughts come from all directions).

As a matter of fact, in establishing this journal, we sought to bridge a longstanding divide between traditional scholars, the guardians of living lineages, and the modern academics trained in Western universities. This journal strives to correct imbalances wrought by orientalist biases, to provide a venue free of ideology, economic barriers, or institutional gatekeeping. We levy no article processing charges, and our editorial policies aim to dismantle barriers rather than erect them.

The *Journal of Sanātana Dharma* was born not out of institutional ambition, but out of a felt need— a gap in the scholarly landscape where the voices of traditional wisdom, vernacular expression, and *dhārmika* inquiry could converge without distortion. Too often, the study of Indic traditions has been filtered through paradigms that neither speak the language of the land nor honour the spirit of its knowledge systems. This journal is our response: a space where scholarship is not severed from reverence, and where inquiry is not afraid to be intimate.

We do not claim to represent the Sanātana Dharma in its entirety, for how could we? It is a tradition that defies containment by spilling over categories and disciplines that dance between the mundane and the metaphysical. What we do claim is a commitment: to host voices that engage with this tradition seriously, sensitively, and with intellectual integrity.

Our thematic remit mirrors the breadth of Sanātana Dharma itself: *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*, *itihāsas*, *śāstras*, *āyurveda*, *yoga*, *tantra*, *jyotiṣa*, Indic literary traditions, temple architecture, art and folklore, comparative religion, pedagogy, and more. We also remain open to emerging domains under the larger canopy of Indian Knowledge Systems. Whether you approach from a philological, historical, philosophical, or applied science perspective, your work has a home here. Apart from that, from its very inception, the journal has embraced a truly multilingual vision. We welcome submissions in English, Saṁskṛta (Sanskrit), Hindī, Gujarātī, Bāṅglā (Bengali), Marāṭhī, Tamiḷ, Kannaḍa, and other Indic tongues. Each language carries its own philosophical nuances and literary heritage; by publishing side by side, we ensure vernacular scholarship receives the same recognition and rigorous peer review as work in global academic *lingua franca*. Our double-blind review process safeguards both scholarly integrity and the anonymity of contributors, inviting candid feedback without hierarchies. We hope this multilingual approach will not only democratize access but also enrich the texture of discourse.

It is my privilege to usher in the first volume of the *Journal of Sanātana Dharma*, a platform born from the conviction that Indian Knowledge Systems deserve to be explored on their own terms. As Editor-in-Chief, I am committed to fostering a space where rigorous research and critical

interpretations converge and manuscripts rooted in millennia-old traditions meet contemporary scholarly standards.

This inaugural issue is intentionally kept as open-ended. We have invited contributions across a wide spectrum, from Vaidika hermeneutics to temple architecture, from *āyurveda* to *tantra*, from comparative religion to pedagogical methods rooted in Indic logic. Some articles are deeply textual, others are experiential. Some challenge prevailing narratives while others reaffirm timeless truths. Together, they form a mosaic that is unfinished, constantly evolving, and ever-vibrant.

Behind this journal is a team of quiet intellectual warriors— individuals who, away from accolades and applause, have offered their time, expertise, and discernment in the spirit of *sevā*. This is no small undertaking— from the earliest conceptual stages to the final proofs of publication— the *Journal of Sanātana Dharma* has relied on the collective strength and subtle brilliance of those who care deeply for the *dhārmika* traditions and their rightful place in contemporary scholarship. Our editorial group, marked by both academic excellence and ethical sensitivity, has approached every submission with patience and precision, ensuring that each piece is only structurally sound, but also philosophically sincere. Their rigorous choices have laid the foundation for a journal that aspires to balance clarity with complexity, and tradition with thoughtfulness.

The peer-review committee, equally devoted, brought a rare blend of critical acumen and respectful insight to the table. They engaged not as gatekeepers but as guides, helping contributors refine their arguments while preserving the integrity of their voices. Often working across languages and disciplines, their reviews were not merely evaluative, but rather transformative at times.

And finally, to our contributors: seekers of truth, custodians of wisdom. Whether rooted in lineage or academia, their writings represent the intellectual vitality and spiritual depth that this journal hopes to carry forward. Together, this ensemble has built something rare, not for reward or recognition, but for the joy of *jñāna-dāna* (offering of wisdom). In their dedication, we glimpse the true essence of Sanātana Dharma: quiet excellence, unwavering sincerity, and the timeless spirit of service.

To our readers and future contributors: this journal is not a finished product, but rather a living project. It is only a beginning. It is an invitation to participate, to critique, to contribute, and to co-create. Whether you are a scholar, a practitioner, or a curious wanderer, may these pages offer you something of value! We invite you not only to learn from these papers but to challenge, expand, and enliven the discourse. Submit your findings, share your critiques, and join us in shaping a truly inclusive and dynamic field of Sanātana Dharma studies.

Finally, do I convey that, in the quiet hours of contemplation, when the mind turns inward and the heart listens for echoes of truth, one encounters the pulse of the Sanātana Dharma— not as a doctrine, but as a living rhythm! It is this rhythm that we have sought to capture, however humbly, in the pages of this journal.

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय ।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

(*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.3.27)

[May we are led from ignorance to wisdom, from darkness to the light, and from death to immortality.]

In the spirit of *tarka* to *śraddhā*,
In the pursuit of *jñāna* to *mokṣa*,

तीर्थ

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Editor-in-Chief
Journal of Sanātana Dharma