Epistle from the Editor-in-Chief

If the first issue of the *Journal of Sanātana Dharma* was an act of articulation, and the second an act of listening, this third issue marks an act of *manana*—of sustained, rigorous reflection. Articulation grants form to intent; listening expands the horizon of awareness; but reflection is where knowledge is tested, disciplined, and integrated. With this third publication, the journal moves beyond initial statements of purpose into the quiet work of consolidation and intellectual depth.

Sanātana Dharma does not reveal its essence through superficial survey or ideological posture. It demands a mode of inquiry that is both intellectually uncompromising and inward-looking. The Upaniṣadic tradition outlines a triadic pathway for authentic understanding:

श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ॥
(*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 2.4.5)
[It is to be heard, reflected upon, and deeply meditated upon.]

Śravaṇa is the reception of textual and lived heritage; *manana* is the rigorous critical wrestling with arguments, objections, and counter-arguments; *nididhyāsana* is the ultimate alignment of knowledge with reality. A journal devoted to Indic thought occupies the space of *manana*. It is a laboratory of reflection where primary texts, lived traditions, and contemporary frameworks meet. The papers assembled in this issue do not merely repeat received wisdom; they engage it with critical care, recognizing that real reverence for a tradition is shown not through passive repetition, but through serious, disciplined inquiry.

The intellectual history of Bhārata has never been afraid of debate. Indeed, its most enduring systems of thought (*darśanas*) were refined through the rigorous method of *pūrva-pakṣa* and *siddhānta*—where an opponent's argument is understood so thoroughly that it is stated with greater clarity than the opponent themselves might manage, before a counter-perspective is offered. This dialectical tradition is framed by a distinct ethical requirement, as highlighted in the *Bhagavad Gītā*:

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥
(*Bhagavad Gītā* 4.34)
[Know this through humility, thorough inquiry, and service. The wise who have seen the Truth will impart knowledge unto you.]

The key concept here is *paripraśna*— relentless, penetrating questioning. Yet, in the dhārmika framework, *paripraśna* is intentionally situated between *praṇipāta* (epistemic humility) and *sevā* (ethical responsibility). Questioning divorced from humility degenerates into cynical pedantry; reverence divorced from questioning stiffens into dogmatism. The *Journal of Sanātana Dharma*

aims to uphold this middle path, where critical scrutiny and civilizational respect operate not as opposing forces, but as mutually reinforcing virtues.

A central challenge in contemporary scholarship is avoiding the trap of treating living traditions as mere historical artifacts. Indic knowledge systems are not frozen monuments of a bygone era; they are dynamic frameworks capable of responding to the complexities of time, place, and context (*deśa-kāla-pātra*). Continuity in the Indic world has rarely meant static repetition; it has meant continual reinterpretation anchored in core principles. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* offers a timeless mandate for this balance:

सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर । स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम् ॥
(*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 1.11.1)
[Speak the truth. Practice dharma. Do not swerve from self-study and the sharing of knowledge.]

Here, *svādhyāya* (introspective self-study) and *pravacana* (scholarly discourse and dissemination) are treated as an unbroken discipline. Scholarship within this framework is not a competitive career pursuit; it is a vow (*vrata*) of truthfulness and intellectual rigor.

This third issue reflects a commitment to that vow. The contributions featured here traverse diverse domains like epistemology, hermeneutics, aesthetics, social ethics, and textual analysis, without forcing them into a artificial uniformity. Sanātana Dharma has always flourished through conceptual plurality:

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति ॥
(*Ṛgveda* 1.164.46)
[Truth is One; the wise express It in many ways.]

This ancient insight is not a mere statement of tolerance; it is an epistemological principle. It reminds us that no single language, methodology, or academic dialect holds a monopoly on truth. By encouraging research across Saṁskṛta, regional Indic languages, and modern English, and by welcoming voices from both traditional *pāṭhaśālās* and global university departments, this journal seeks to dismantle artificial hierarchies between 'traditional practitioner' and 'academic researcher'.

The editorial ethos behind this volume remains guided by principles of fairness and accessibility. By maintaining double-blind peer review and keeping this journal open-access without article processing charges, we affirm that scholarship should be judged by the strength of its evidence and reasoning, rather than institutional affiliation or financial backing.

To edit and curate such a journal is a exercise in patience, discernment, and collective effort. I extend my sincere gratitude to the scholars who submitted their work, to our peer reviewers for their meticulous feedback, and to the editorial team whose dedicated labor makes each issue possible. Above all, I thank our readers, whose critical engagement gives life to these pages.

May this third issue deepen our collective *manana*. May it serve as a quiet, steady contribution to the revitalization of Bhāratīya knowledge systems in service of global understanding.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
(*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 5.1.1)

[That is Whole; this is Whole. From the Whole arises the Whole. Taking away the Whole from the Whole, the Whole alone remains. Peace, Peace, Peace.]

In that spirit of completeness and continuing inquiry, this third issue is offered.



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