Integration of *Rāṣṭra, Rājya* and Yoga

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Abstract

There is a propensity in social sciences to use words interchangeably and loosely with little consideration to their specific contexts and usages. It is noticeably context-free when Sanskrit words are used or translated into English in analyses of socio-political history and systems. The main purpose of this paper is to delineate certain Sanskrit terms within their contextual usage and fully define them for analysis. In order to do this, the paper focusses on two terms "*rājya*" and "*rāṣṭra*" and carefully defines their boundaries, their compositions and their points of interaction to understand the historicity and the dynamics of ancient Bhāratīya civilisation. One cannot do justice to the uniqueness of this civilisation if one does not come to terms with the vocabulary thatis best suited to define the systems and concepts peculiar to it. This paper deviates from the pattern usually followed in social sciences research; instead of introducing the topicsat the beginning of the paper, it introduces them sequentially. The main argument of thepaper, which revolves around the integration of the terms "*rājya*" and "*rāṣṭra*," uses certain concepts from the Yoga Darśana to articulate a new understanding of civilisation in general and the Bhāratīya civilisation in particular.

Keywords: *rājya*, *rāṣṭra*, yoga, civilisation, *dharma,* Communism, Capitalism

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A Brief Note on the Terms Used in the Article

It is important to note that many Sanskrit words are contextual and hold no universal denotations. A brief explanation, therefore, of how the words are used in thisarticle, would be in order.

I have used *rājya* for political entity, *rāṣṭra* for civilisation, *saṁskṛti* for culture, *saṃskaāra* for rites of passage and *sampradāya* for local practices. The word 'realm' is used to denote any space that has a form *(rūpa)*. The Sanskrit term for it is *kṣetra* (fieldof action) and cognition of this state is *kṣetrajña*.

Expanding on the above definitions, *rājya* can be described as any realm that hasthe following characteristics:
1. It has a form *(rūpa)*.
2. It has a leader/ sponsor *(raja/yajamana)*.
3. It has a system of governance for application of power *(dharma)*.
4. It has a motility *(prāṇa),* which flows as various vāyu, such as *prāṇa* (incoming resource), *apāna* (generation and disposal of waste), *vyāna* (anaura or presence), *udāna* (communication and brand) and *samāna* (operations).
5. It has a discrete identity *(Puruṣa)* and manifests in the environment (Prakṛti).

Rāṣṭra, on the other hand, is the bedrock or *dharma* of the *rājya*. It existsindependent of the *rājya*. So even when political entities disappear or change, it remains within the region in different forms. In this article, *rāṣṭra* refers to the civilisation that encompasses the SAARC region as well as Tibet and parts of South-EastAsia, where *yoga*, *jyotiṣ*, Buddhism, etc., are practised. For convenience, it is taken as the SAARC region.

It must be borne in mind that *rāṣṭra* is a practice based on existentiality, with thegoal of being in cognition of individuality or *svātantrya*. This cognition covers a person,the civilisation and the state. The aim is to achieve complete situational awareness (awareness of the present). When this is achieved, the entity becomes a supreme-being or *puruṣottama*.

I would also like to mention that the translations of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* used in the article are my own.

Integration of *Rāṣṭra, Rājya* and Yoga

Governments the world over are predominantly based on Western systems (capitalism or communism), which tend to be intrinsically competitive. Competition, asis well known, morphs into power structures that aggressively pro-

mote their positions, which can only result in turbulence or chaos (*adharma*) within and between societies.

Indic civilisation or *rāṣtra* believes that competition stems from greed and insecurity. It also accepts that differences between individuals and societies are natural. But it is of the firm view that rule-based-order *(dharma)*[1] is the only way to build harmony within societies.

Before delving into the topic, it would be fitting to delineate the premise of *rāṣtra*. It is primarily based on two realities:

1. Differences between people arise from variations in conditioning *(dharma)* [2]. So, for a societal order to prevail, individuality *(svatantra)* must be respected. In effect, all entities, from the individual to state or *rājya*, must thereforebuild elasticity of tolerance in order to accommodate personal choice and space in the ecosphere.

But a few words of caution here: this does not mean that individual rights are paramount. On the other hand, *rāṣtra* lays emphasis on teaching an individual that free-will *(svatantra)* extends only to the right of sacrifice *(yajñá)* for maintenance of harmony and order *(dharma)*. For example, public buses in India mostly go full. When pregnant or old ladies come on board, other healthy passengers have the option of remaining seated or sacrificing their comfortable seat for a person who needs it more. Remaining seated is an exercise of the right to a paid seat. Sacrifice(*yajñá*) is the act of giving up that seat with no expectation of reward.

2. *Rāṣtra* is unique in that it recognises that both sentient and insentient entities have equal rights to existence. And humans, being at the apex of the evolutionary pyramid, are the natural conservators with a responsibility of ensuring harmony within and between all entities.

It therefore behoves one to align his or her motility *(prāṇa)* with other entities at an elemental *(panchabhuta)* level. The onus for development of harmony andorder depends on three things: the state *(rājya)*, the culture *(rāṣtra)* and the individual.Since the individual is the building block of both *rājya* and *rāṣtra*, emphasis is on the individual to transform into an integrated person *(puruṣottama)*. This can be achieved through the practice of yoga.

This hypothesis is best demonstrated and tested by the age-old structured method employed in the *Brahma-sūtra* to systematically prove the ideas

of the *Upanishads (Radhakrishnan 1960)*. Each section or topic, known as *adhikāraṇa,* is codified into five parts:

1. *Viṣaya*: topic of the section.

2. *Vismaya*: issue at hand/ doubts/ problem statement.

3. *Pūrva-paksha*: introduction to the solution / background.

4. *Siddhānta*: theory and arguments/ solution and concept/ doctrine.

5. *Samgati*: threading of logic to form a cohesive and comprehensive

    argument /conclusion.

For ease of understanding, it would be good to split the argument of this essay into four sections:

Viṣaya 1: To propose a governance system for *Bhārat* that aligns the *rājya* with the *rāṣṭra*.

Viṣaya 2: To propose a system that integrates the individual with the ancient South Asian culture and civilisational roots *(rāṣṭra)*.

Viṣaya 3: To integrate *rāṣṭra* with *rājya*.

Viṣaya 4: To integrate the individual with *rāṣṭra* with *rājya*.

Aligning *Rājya* with the *Rāṣṭra*

Viṣaya 1

To propose a governance system for *Bhārat* that aligns *rājya* with *rāṣṭra*.

Vismaya

Today, governance principles worldwide are a mix of capitalism and communism.

The two systems differ primarily on the rights of the individual vis-à-vis the state and compete with each other. Also, they assume that all entities embedded within the stateare subordinate and exist for the benefit of mankind.

The defined behaviour acceptance criteria of these two governance systems are strong and compete in ideology, resulting in a high incidence of polarisation within and between societies. Naturally, this often results in turbulence within and between people,cultures and countries.

Purva-pakṣa

The *rājya* governance model posits that all creation should be viewed as part of asynergistic eco-system with an inalienable right of existence and individuality. So, all creation must be viewed as equal (with equal gaze or *samadṛṣṭi*). Harmony is possible only if all the elements in this system maintain a symbiotic balance with one another.

Siddhānta

Components of Existentiality

All ecosystems comprise earth, water, fire, air and space elements in varying proportions. All creations exist within the boundaries of this balance. For example, rainforests have a higher proportion of water, resulting in more vegetation, which forms the feed for animals. Unsurprisingly, this attracts predators. Humans, who are at the apex in the chain, also use this ecosphere to build structured societies. However, this is not possible in a desert where there is shortage of water or the tundra where the fire element is absent and everything is ice. Similarly, oceans do not have the earth or air element and only those that are specifically designed can survive in this eco-sphere. Finally, nothing survives in space, even birds have to return to land for food and water.

The motility that makes these five elements synergise with each other and evolve into creation is called *prāṇa* (motility). The five elements are called *panchabhuīa* (five primordial elements). These elements combine to form sentient *(jīva)* as well as insentient entities *(jadam)* and each has its own identity/ self-worth *(asmitā),* which it strives to exhibit to establish itself as an individual *(svatantra)*. The integration of all this into a cohesive and balanced system is called yoga.

Components of Order and Harmony *(Dharma)*

The ecosystem in *Bhārat* has evolved in such a way that lifestyle is in consonance with motility *(prāṇa)* and the five primordial elements. Food, language, dressing, homes and other aspects of living reflect the synergy of the people with the elements. This is why, the ancient civilisational rules of *dharma* posited that order *(dharma)* be governed by three factors— location (*sthala*), time *(kāla)* and diet *(pātra)*.

For example, Rajasthan and North Gujarat are predominantly hot and dry,

so people here value water. Hence, whenever a guest enters the house, the first thing theyoffer is water, indicating value as well as courtesy to a thirsty visitor.

However, Bengal sits astride the Gangetic delta and is predominantly wet, so fishforms a primary part of the diet. But fish is not found in common Rajasthani diet, yet both societies follow same principles of order *(dharma).*

Hence, it can be seen that even though people live in the same subcontinent andfollow similar customs, they can have different habits, which are based on local conditions *(sthala)*. This is how diet *(pātra)* and location *(sthala)* affect *dharma.*

Dharma (order or harmony) is the basis on which people live in peace with themselves as well as their environment. So, when people live in this state of naturalharmony for a period of time, it becomes their conditioning or natural state.

Consequently, they remain at peace or in harmony for as long as the stimulus is in congruence with their *dharma*. Conversely, people get agitated and anxious when anystimulus impacts their natural state *(dharma)*. This is called *adharma* or chaos.

This state of *dharma* and *adharma* covers all entities. For example, when a cowis fed meat, it is *adharma* (contrary to its natural state) and as a consequence, the cowfalls sick with "mad cow disease[3]."

The Integration of Order, Self-Worth and Individuality

Whenever a location is at peace or harmony for an extended period of time, all entities in the location begin to centralise on a common set of factors for stabilisation oftheir sense of self-worth and this is exhibited in the common way they react to stimuli. So, it can be established that extended periods of order result in a stable sense of self-worth and individuality of a population. It is important, however, to recognise that theconverse is also true. Order in society can prevail only when all resident entities have a stable sense of self-worth as well as the ability to express it as their individuality. So, order *(dharma)*, sense of self-worth *(asmitā)*, individuality *(svatantra)* and society areco-dependent on one another for harmony.

It is important to note that the functioning of order, sense of self-worth and individuality are applicable to both sentient *(jīva)* and insentient *(jadam)* entities. Forexample, in a desert, the *dharma* of sentient (fauna: camels) as well as insentient entities (flora: cactus) is governed by environmental factors.

For insentient entities, let us review a steel beam. The beam has its own shape and strength. This is its sense of self-worth. Its usefulness and contribution are its individuality. When the beam is subjected to load, it has an inherent ability to bear the strain and then it returns to its original form without loss of strength. However, if the beam is subjected to sustained load or loaded beyond its strength, it either breaks or deforms without returning to its original form and strength. The range under which the beam is able to bear the load is its elasticity, which represents order for the beam and itsown natural state *(dharma)*.

Hence, it can be concluded that order *(dharma)* covers all entities and impactstheir sense of identity as well as independence/individuality.

The sense of self-worth known as *asmitā[4]* means "this is me." Individuality, independence or free-will is called *svatantra[5]*, which is a compound word (*sva = asmitā*or self-worth + *tantra* = weave of identity with behaviour). This is that which makes each entity unique.

Order or *Dharma* and *Bhāratiya* Civilisation *(Rāṣṭra)*

We have seen that when people experience a state of harmony between themselves and their environment over extended periods of time, they develop more sophisticated and nuanced rules for order and harmony *(dharma)*. This becomes ingrained in their behaviour and forms a part of their identity as well as their individuality.

What then is the difference between *Bhāratiya* and Western civilisations?

Western societies have evolved from ancient Greek and Italian civilisations, but their cultures have evolved from Abrahamic philosophies, which posit that all creation exists for the benefit of humans[6]. This places order or *dharma* in a power hierarchy withhumans at the top, controlling all other entities. As a result, relationships between man and earth are often driven by power and control.

Bhāratiya civilisation accepts that humans are at the top of the existential pyramid and posits that since all creation is equal by design (Swami Lokeswaranand, 2017), humans, by virtue of their ability to exploit others, have a greater responsibility for maintenance of harmony and order *(dharma)*. This makes humans conservators ofcreation, who maintain harmony and balance between various entities.

As a result, *Bhāratiya-rāṣṭra* ethos emphasises harmonious interactions

of humans with other sentient and insentient entities such that all entities are accepted as having their own identity *(asmitā)* as well as individuality *(svatantra).* This requirement of amenability towards all entities results in a *dharma* where society is elastic, tolerant, resilient and amenable to change.

However, for the above ethos to become a practice at a civilisational level, it is imperative that every element of society that is capable of changing its construct, from the individual to the state, becomes aware and participates in all the nuances of harmony in action and maintenance. It is important to note, however, that the synergistic integration of so many diverse entities cannot become a practice in daily life unless the individual, by virtue of being at the top of the existential pyramid, subsumes his or her desire for personal gain at the temple of greater benefit of creation.

This concept that all creation is interconnected is called *vasudhaiva- kuṭumbakam,* which means that all creation is a family. An example of how *Bhāratiya rāṣṭra* exemplifies *vasudhaiva-kuṭumbakam* can be seen from the actions of Maharaja Jam Saheb of Nawanager[7] during World War II, when he welcomed Polish refugees into his kingdom when he had no compulsion to do so.

The state is called *rājya* or ruling entity and comprises political and administrative elements within a hard border. In *Bhārat*, this would cover the panchayat at a village level, thereafter progressing into *zilla*, *taluk*, district, state and the country called India.

The civilisational underpinning of many of the SAARC countries *(rājya)* such as India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, etc., is called *rāṣṭra*, covering all ancient cultures that sprang from this region, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism.

This civilisation seeks to integrate the state or *rājya* with its culture *(rāṣṭra)* through a symbiotic weave of the individual with society so that all interact as close as possible to their natural state of peace *(dharma),* which results in minimum dissonance between the individual and other entities in the ecosystem. This is managed by creating a nuanced lifestyle practice where all actions are intended to bring peace and harmony within the self, society and civilisation.

It requires an inherent awareness in the individual of his or her sense of identity *(asmitā)* as well as the role in society *(svatantra).* This can be split into an outward flowing awareness from the person into the environment, which is called *vijñāna* and an awareness of the person of his or her sense of identity or

self-worth, which is called *jñāna*[8].

The integrated situational awareness is called *prajñā* and when a person is ableto exist in a sustained state of complete situational awareness, it is called

sthithaprajñā[9]. This technique of increasing situational awareness is called yoga and isaddressed in *Viṣaya 4*.

Saṅˑgati

It can be concluded that the ancient *Bhāratiya* system is different from westernsystems of civilisation because it considers all creations as equal, *sthithaprajñā*, with humans at the helm. This position brings with it the responsibility of ensuring that all creations exist in harmony.

Since the onus of achieving harmony or *dharma* is on humans, the individual aswell as the state must retain their awareness at every level and support the inalienable right of every entity to reach excellence *(svatantra)*. For this state to be achieved, everyindividual in the realm must be aware of his or her own self-worth *(asmitā)* and consciously subsume it for greater harmony in society.

Integrating the Individual with the Ancient Subcontinent's Culture and Civilisational Roots

ViṢaya 2

To propose a system that integrates the individual with the ancient subcontinent's culture and civilisational roots *(rāṣṭra)*.

Vismaya

We have concluded in *Viṣaya 1* that the individual is the core of civilisationaldevelopment and culture is the integration of various societies as well as common practices. These ultimately form the underpinning of the realm.

What was the rāṣṭra of the ancient Indian subcontinent like? What did it achieve?

What were its drivers?

Purva-pakṣa

It is important to realise that the civilisation *(rāṣṭra)* is not a monolithic entity but an animate organism that lives, changes and adapts to new situations. So, the *rāṣṭra*is an entity with its own identity *(asmitā)* and *svatantra* (free-will or individuality).

The *rāṣṭra* of yore is still resident in *Bhārat*, though in a smothered form with adamaged sense of identity as well as individuality on account of years of oppression, suppression and mismanagement.

Siddhānta

The *rāṣṭra* is a living organism, so it must have motility *(prāṇa)*[10]. Motility is thatlife-force which drives all creation, sustenance and dissolution of materiality and it is what enables *rāṣṭra* to exist and sustain life as well as *dharma* like a living entity.

However, the *rāṣṭra* cannot experience harmony without its residents conforming to order *(dharma)*; likewise, residents cannot experience harmony if the *rāṣṭra* is not intrinsically order based. If all entities are to remain in harmony, then the*rāṣṭra* should ensure that all entities, right down to the primordial elements *(panchabhūta)*[11] are in a state of balance with their inherent motility.

How does the *rāṣṭra* function as a living organism with its own motility *(prāṇa)* and identity in such a manner that order is maintained? The *rāṣṭra* has a hardware anda software—the hardware of the *rāṣṭra* is the material manifestation of motility, the physical manifestation of the primordial elements *(panchabhuta)*. The software is the various forces that attract or repel entities, causing order or chaos *(dharma* or *adharma)*. Obviously, today's *rāṣṭra*, on account of its historical tryst with external factors, is struggling to find itself, which accounts for the turbulence in its sense of identity *(asmitā)*.

Rāṣṭra: Its Identity, a Stable Underpinning for the *Rājya*

Since the *rāṣṭra* derives its identity from its constituents and vice-versa, it would be appropriate to examine the basic building block or micro-unit of a *rāṣṭra*.

The basic unit of a *rāṣṭra* is the individual, and without the individual there can be no *rāṣṭra*. Individuals combine to form societies and the way they interact will determine the natural state of harmony specific to their society. This is called *dharma* and when people live within those parameters, there is harmony or order. However, since individuals have a lifetime and are fickle, they cannot be expected to contribute towards the lasting stability of a *rāṣṭra*. It has to be something more substantial. It alsocannot be the home, because a home has an intimacy that makes deep attachment and sentiment inescapable. This makes the transactions biased— order, balance and a senseof identity are very specific to the family as an entity.

The lasting source of stability is the village because it is substantial enough to have its own identity. Also, the village, while being dependent on the individual for existence, is independent of the individual for its identity. Even if one individual were tohold sway for a brief period of time, after his or her departure, the centre of gravity of the village will shift to its natural state of existence. This is similar to how heads of state can sway a country's standards/methods while in power.

For example, in 1962, India's leadership weakened the military. The result was adebacle. However, in 1971, the leadership built a strong military and diplomatic front. This resulted in victory and the creation of a nation. However, throughout their rules, the intrinsic quality of *Bhārat* continued to remain unchanged.

Also, since the village has a border, it has a form *(rūpa)*. From the form, the village derives its identity. This makes it an integrated micro *rājya* with a *rāṣṭra*. However, since the village also represents the people of the *rājya*, the motility of thevillage can be extrapolated to become the civilisational underpinning of all further administrative or political entities *(rājya)* such as *taluk*, district, state or country.

Determining the Identity and Motility of a Village *(Gra   a)*

The *rāṣṭra* views all sentient and insentient entities in the village to have specific roles to function in their existence and to express their identity. This includes dogs, cats,cows, houses, streets and the village itself.

The way all these come together defines the identity as well as individuality of thevillage. The chemistry of various entities is driven by motility *(prāṇa)*, which exists in five forms:

- *Prāṇa-vāyu*: incoming motility, in the form of income, electricity, water, transportation, firewood, gas, etc.
- *Apāna-vāyu*: outgoing motility, which manifests as pollution control of the primordial elements, such as soil erosion and maintenance *(prithvi)*, water pollution and reduction of toxicity *(áp)*, thermodynamic balance *(agni)*, air pollution *(vāyu)*, and noise pollution *(ākāsha)*.
- *Vyāna-vāyu*: how the village presents itself, measured by the beauty of its houses, cleanliness of the streets, garbage collection, commercial enterprisesand quality of infrastructure.

- *Udāna-vāyu*: how the village represents itself, and this is determined by howthe elected representatives and people portray the village.
- *Samāna-vāyu*: this is the circulation of motility within the village. How peopleinteract with each other, restrictions between people, whether construction hampers movement of *panchabhūtas* (stagnation of water, existence of rubble,no air circulation, etc.).

Whenever there is a stoppage or impedance of *prāṇa*, such as when canals or drains are blocked, this impacts the identity *(asmitā)* of the village. Similarly, when people of a village are found to be quarrelsome and greedy, its identity gets affected. When a village is peaceful and harmony prevails, the inhabitants are content, thereby impacting the village identity. The three qualities of sluggishness, greed and balance arecalled attributes or *guṇa* and impact the flow of motility *(prāṇa)*.

Thus, we can see that the quality of integration of hardware and software determines the identity and individuality of a village. This then is the basis of software for a *rāṣṭra*. The efficacy of the software of a *rāṣṭra* depends on the level of congruencein the natural states *(dharma)* exhibited by its constituents, both sentient as well as insentient entities, such as people, land, houses and livestock.

Since there is enormous variance in the inherent natural harmonics of these constituents, harmony can only be achieved when people, being the conservators, view each other and other entities as equal (*samadṛṣṭi* or equal gaze), in performing a role tokeep their village harmonious.

The impact of the flow of *prāṇa* on the insentient aspects of the village has beendetailed above. What about motility between people?

People of the village work as generalists as well as specialists and these roles are classified as *vārna* (colour)[12]. All people start as workers and work their way up the value chain to become business people, protectors of order or conceptual repositories oforder. So how does the village ensure that discrimination between roles as well as powerbalance is minimised? This is done by instilling a sense of sacrifice in all personal effort,called *yajñá* or sacrifice. The intent is that people work for the well-being of all without discrimination of role when all action is performed as a sacrifice.

Dharma Yokes Varṇa with Work, Personality, Duty, System and Environment

"A warrior *(kṣatriya)* needs to be able to maintain awareness in battle; his *dharma* or duty is to fight and defend. If he runs away from the battlefield,then he compromises the integrity of whatever he protects and loses his *dharma* or equilibrium. To perform his *dharma,* he has to overcome the fear of death. Similarly, a teacher's *(ācārya) dharma* or duty is to teach and develop students into responsible citizens. If he or she is afraid of the opinions of others, then he or she would never be able to teach effectively and build good citizens. Next, the *dharma* or duty of a business person *(vaiśya)* is to increase material value without lowering integrity. When integrity is lost or when the business person is afraid of risk, *dharma* is lost. Finally, the *dharma* of a farmer is to grow food; he must not stop sowing because he is worried that there may be no rains. That fear wouldresult in famine and destruction of society[13]."

Interestingly, the village also acts as an incubator for people development. Peoplestart as novices in the village and as their expertise in their chosen trade evolves, they migrate to the *rājya* seeking betterment. In this manner, they also take their *dharma* with them to the *rājya*, thus bringing cohesiveness into *dharma*. So the *rājya* becomes a melting pot of various *dharma,* which is moulded together by people who have evolvedinto being able to manage the *rājya*.

Difficulties in Deriving a *Rāṣṭra* That is Uniform Across the *Rājya* and the Resolution

The underpinning of *rāṣṭra* is order *(dharma,)* which is dependent on *sthala* (place), *kāla* (time) and *pātra* (diet). This makes *dharma* (natural state) a variable. Asmentioned, *dharma* gets impacted by time, both when events occur and over extendedperiods. For example, countries that have experienced war and strife over extended periods of time or peoples who have been controlled/ colonised/ subjugated for long periods of time will have a *dharma* that reflects a damaged sense of identity as well asindividuality.

Also, the stage in life or *a rama* impacts *dharma*. There are four stages— single *brahmacharya-aśrama*), family (*gārhasthyāśrama*), retired (*vaaprasthaśramā*) and renunciate (*sannyāsāśrama*) and a person's cognition as well as *dharma* will change with the stage he or she is passing through.

Finally, *paṭra* (diet) impacts the *rāṣṭra* as well. Quality of ingredients, methods ofpreparation, serving styles as well as eating practices, all impact societal

interaction and conditioning *(dharma)*.

So, we can see that there are infinite variables that impact the dharma of societies. This is evident in *Bhārat* where there are large differences across regions.Realistically, these differences should result in chaos *(adharma)*. So, how does the *rāṣṭra* reconcile with these incongruences?

The backbone of the *rāṣṭra* is the *saṃskara*[14] (rites of passage) and *nitya-karma*or daily duties. Both are followed by everyone in the *rāṣṭra*. *Saṃskāras* mark the goalposts at various stages of life and are common to everyone. *Nitya-karma* may be different for different people, but they all have elements of the five major sacrifices *(pancha-maha- yajñá)* and charity *(dana)* as well as visits to the local temple.

For example, the current *saṃskāras* followed almost universally in *Bhārat* are*namakaraṇa* (naming ceremony), *vivāha-saṃskāra* (wedding ceremony), *sīmantonnayana-saṃskara* (parting of the hair or seventh month ceremony) and *antyeṣṭi* (death ceremony).

Another common factor across the *rāṣṭra* is the almanac. The *rāṣṭra* follows analmanac which is based on the movements of the Sun and Moon, such as *uttarāyaṇa* and *dakṣiṇāyana*, *rāhu-kālam*, *nakṣatram* and *rāśis*[15]. This makes events common.

Lastly, the *rāṣṭra* is defined by its common festivals, such as *Shankaranti* in January, New Year in March-April, *Dassehra* in October or so and *Deepavali* aroundNovember.

The important thing to note is that while these ceremonies are followed throughout the *rāṣṭra*, each community *(jāti)* follows its own practice. So, across the *rāṣṭra*, there is a congruence as well as divergence of practices within the framework of ceremonies. This makes *Bhāratiya-rāṣṭra* a resilient shock absorber of change.

While *saṃskara* (rites) and *sampradāya* (practices) anchor the people to a location, this varies between various communities *(jatis)* in the same village *(grāma)*.So, a centre of identity is required within the village that brings the various peoples together on a single platform. This role is fulfilled by the village deity *grāma-devata*.

The *grama-devatā* fulfils the following roles:

The *grāma-devatā* acts as a centre of identity for the village; even those who haveleft the village identify their roots through the *grāma-devatā*. It brings the

village with its myriad practices together on one platform. The reason for this is that the *grāma-devatā* by itself has no capability for sustenance except what is given by the village. Since it is helpless to look after itself, the villagers are forced to look after it. This bringsall villagers together to develop a single *dharma* that covers every entity in every stage of existence *(aśrama)* in the village *(grāma)*.

This is why temple functions are not meant to be sponsored by a single entity but conducted from contributions from every villager. This brings all the villagers together, builds an attachment to the *grāma-devatā*, encourages intra-village communication and helps develop cohesiveness and integration of *dharma* (conditioning and development of practices).

Also, the *grāma-devatā* fills a subtle power vacuum. Not all issues and problems can be resolved by the panchayat *(rājya)*. Often, villagers vent out their personal day-to-day issues in the non-judgemental presence of their *grama-devatā*.

Temples form the identity of the village, akin to brand ambassadors. Well-maintained temples bring great fame to villages such as Thillai-Nataraja temple in Chidambaram, Meenakshi-Amman temple in Madurai, Chamundi temple in Mysore,Tryambakeshwar at Nashik, Shri Balaji at Tirumala, etc.

Last, the temple is the place where charity is practised. When villagers participate, there is a generation of goodwill, kindness, tolerance and charity. In the end,this becomes part of the village identity.

Unfortunately, today these temples have stopped being the bulwark of *dharma*.

Almost all functions are sponsored and participation is selective. Temple lands have been usurped and their finances are in a mess. A renaissance of temples is desperatelyrequired for rejuvenation of the *rāṣṭra*.

Saṅgati

It can be concluded that while the *rāṣṭra* is the underpinning of the *rājya*, the underpinning of the *rāṣṭra* itself is *dharma* (order or natural state). While *dharma*, being the natural state of all entities, is co-dependent on all aspects of creation, it is humans who have the ability to change and be most affected by *dharma*. The *rāṣṭra* recognises this and is designed to create an ecosystem that builds an inclusive and symbiotic tolerance to various entities within society.

What this means is that while the natural harmonics of various societies *(dharma)* may differ due to location *(sthala)*, diet *(pātra)* and time *(kāla)*, the civilisation *(rāṣṭra)* harmonises these diverse societies through various practices such as *samskāra* (rites) and *sampradāya* (local practices). The state ensures material wellbeing of the civilisation by material flow of energy such that there is no impediment to motility *(prāṇa)*. This is done by ensuring that the flow of motility *(prāṇa)* is without break or agitation in all material aspects of the environment. Backed further by increasing awareness, humans can then cohabit with one another other and other entities as equals *(samadṛṣṭi)*, judging all contribution for quality and dedication of input *(śraddhā)* as well as spirit of sacrifice *(yajñá)*.

Since *dharma* within the *rāṣṭra* is likely to change due to situations and stimuli, the *rāṣṭra* stiches societies together by prescribing common life-events where people of various *vārna* (colour or background) can come on the same platform. As mentioned earlier, one critical integrator of *dharma* is the village deity, which acts as a brand ambassador and anchor of the village.

The *rāṣṭra* is, therefore, flexible and resilient, creating an elastic society that amalgamates varying lifestyles and personal preferences. Besides, it possesses the ability to absorb shocks and changes without losing its inherent symbiotic capability.

Integrating *Rāṣṭra* with *Rājya*

Viṣaya 3

To integrate *rāṣṭra* with *rājya*.

Vismaya

How does the *rāṣṭra* integrate with *rājya* to build a scalable, sustainable and resilient *rājya*? Here, *rājya* is *Bhārat*, also known as India.

Purva-pakṣa

We have seen that *dharma* is the underpinning of *rāṣṭra,* which determines the identity *(asmitā)* as well as individuality *(svatantra)* of both the individual and the *rāṣṭra*.

It stands to reason that the quality of *dharma* will impact the state *(rājya)* and will be exhibited by it in all its forms, from the panchayat to *taluk*, district, state and centre. This means that integrating *rājya* with *rāṣṭra* systemically

is critical for the governance of the *rājya* in a manner that ensures free-will or individuality *(svatantra)* for all entities in the *rājya* and that the *rājya* treats all entities within and outside it to achieve harmony of all creation *(vāsudhaiva-kuṭumbakam).*

Siddhānta

Concept of *Rājya*

The *rājya* is a political and administrative entity that has a hard border. Its smallest entity is also the village *(grama)* and the micro-administrative entity is the *panchayat.* This is explained by Sri Krishna in *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā,* Chapter 13 *(kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vibhāga-yoga),* where Sri Krishna calls *kshetra* the realm and its cognition as *kshetragnya.*[16] This cognition of *rājya* covers all sentient and insentient entities as well as their *rāṣṭram* in the realm, including villages, *zilla, taluks,* districts, states, country, even companies, societies, markets, etc.; in fact, anything that has a hard border and has systems regulating its functioning.

Concept of *Svātantrya* (free-will/ individuality) of *Rājya*

What is a *rājya*? How do the principles of *rājya* apply to various collectives of people such as village, *taluk,* district, state and centre? For a start, the *rājya* is established by people with a common cultural/civilisational ethos *rāṣṭram,* which has a fixed border that gives it a form *(rūpa)* and an identity *(asmitā).*

The free-will/ individuality *(svātantrya)* of a country is the way it is perceived by its people, other peoples and countries. Importantly, this perception is an outcome of the way people perceive their own *rājya,* which would be reflected in the way they carry themselves and behave.

For example, if the people have a balanced view of themselves and behave in a responsible manner, that country would be considered to be in harmony with its own nature *(sāttvic).* Next, if the people of a country behave in an aggressive manner and bully others, they would be considered a volatile or greedy country *(rājasic).* Finally, if the people of a country are deluded, confused and weary or if the people do not resonate with their government, it would be a deluded country *(tāmasic).*

Obviously, no single *guṇa* should dominate public discourse, but people's conditioning *(dharma)* would determine their individuality *(svātantrya),* reflecting the way in which citizens and the country behave in their respective

environment. Since people live in the country for betterment and harmonic living, is there a template on which a country's development could be based? Ancient texts from *Bhārat* speak about *puruṣārtha* [24] *(puruṣa* = human + *artha* = reason) which means reason-for-living or raison-d'etre of human existence. *Puruṣārtha* principle states that people live for *artha*— material gain, *kāma*— sensual pleasure, *dharma*— harmony and order, and *mokṣa*—freedom from seeking.

The question that needs to be answered is does freedom from seeking or *mokṣa* fit? Yes! When people have sought and enjoyed material *(artha)* and sensual pleasure *(kāma)* in harmony *(dharma)*, they begin to look for answers to questions such as these: "What is life?", "Why am I alive?", "Does life have a purpose?", etc. This takes them into an esoteric world that culminates with freedom from materiality *(mokṣa)*.

Therefore, any country that wishes to exist with complete free-will *(svātantrya)* must be able to create for its citizens circumstances to delve into the mysteries of life and death as well as existence. Not encouraging people to seek freedom from materiality *(mokṣa)* would condition people into viewing materiality as life's sole objective, which really is the basis of capitalism.

Also, practice of *mokṣa* brings with it finer altruistic sentiments of charity, tolerance, equal-gaze, non-violence, etc.

Application of the Principles of *Puruṣa tha* (Reason for Human Existence) to the Management of the Country

- *Artha* (material progress) is obviously material well-being, availability of food, shelter, clothing and infrastructure such as transport, electricity, availability to water, etc.

- *Kāma* (sensual balance) is the softer aspects of *artha*. For example, while shelter might be available, if it is designed and constructed in a haphazard manner, badly designed or dilapidated, there can be no positivity about the place and residents would be unhappy. If food is spoiled, cold, unappetising or lacking in nutrition, then there would be no pleasure derived in eating. This means that both hardware *(artha)* and software *(kāma)* are required for a society to be functional and happy.

- *Dharma* is the conditioning of a people such that they live in harmony.

For a country to experience its individuality *(svatantra)* completely, its society must be conditioned for a life of order, peace and harmony *(dharma)*. This occurs whenthe weave of its material *(artha)* and its sensual balance *(kāma)* of existence are in harmony in such a manner that there is no impediment to the flow of *prāṇa* (motility).

So, it is clear that a *rājya* needs to systematically integrate people in various states of materiality *(puruṣārtha)* with their stages in life *(āśrama)* to ensure maximisation of *dharma* in the *rājya*.

People generally experience four stages of existence *(aśrama)* in their life-time*:*

- *Brahmacharya-aśrama* (stage of youth) is a phase of learning and formation of conditioning *(dharma)*. This is the most critical stage of a *rājya* and the investment of the *rājya* in teaching its youth to work with dedication, to sacrifice and align sacrifice with Truth will determine the country's *dharma* and, consequently, its personality *(svatantra)*.

- *Gārhasthyāśrama* (stage of a house-holder) is that stage where maximum consumption occurs. Here, awareness *(prajñā)* is the quality that needs to be developed. The householder needs to be alert to income, expenses, waste and its disposal. Only then does the householder understand and contribute to allaspects of the country's development.

- *Vaṇaprasthaśrama* (stage of retirement) is a stage when the person steps backfrom activity and reflects on the learnings of his or her life. The key requirement of this stage is having enough resources to face the remainder of life and not be dependent on anyone.

- *Sannyāsāśrama* (stage of renunciation) is the last stage, where a person is expected to focus on the nature of the Soul *(ātma-vichāra),* its freedom *(mokṣa)* and nature of death. Unfortunately, people often baulk at the suggestion of reflecting on death and after-life. However, ignoring this major life-event results in anxiety and fear of death. The *rājya* has an important rolein fostering facilities that enable such personal development.

Cognition of the realm *(kṣetrajña)* comes from understanding the movement of *prāṇa* (motility) across the *rājya*. This covers not just the political and administrative bodies such as village, *taluk,* district, state and centre but alsoentities such as factories, businesses, hospitals, schools, colleges, etc.; in fact,anything that experiences the flow of *prāṇa*.

Impact of *Prāṇa* on Primordial Entities (*Panchabhutas*)

- *Prāṇa-vāyu* is incoming motility, which includes material, ideas, energy and resources. The key discriminator is debt *(ṛṇa)*. When a country is not in debt, it is able to enjoy material security such as food, water security, climate/energy security as well as sensual, cultural or arts security. However, when it lives beyond its means and borrows beyond its means of repayment, the country soon defaults and lapses into imbalance, delusion and depression.

- *Apāna-vāyu* can be viewed in the light of the primordial elements *(panchabhūta)*. For as long as solid and liquid waste management ensures betterment of the community, when air and space pollution are under control and energy/fire used is adequate to transform raw materials into products of value, *apāna-vāyu* will not become destructive but ensure that the *rājya* is inharmony and peace.

- *Vyāna-vāyu* is when people of a land *(kṣetra)* use their energies in constructive development of themselves and their neighbourhood, resulting inthe overall aura of the country becoming one of a people that can be called civilised and developed. For example, we know of countries that have fought and lost wars but have recovered their reputations because they used their energies to transform themselves in a holistic manner over the years and are now considered positively today. Reputation or brand image is *vyāna-vāyu*.

- *Udāna-vāyu* is how the country communicates and represents itself. Some countries punch above their weight, some become bullies, some play victim orstruggle to keep their composure, others turn docile, while a few become rebellious. We can see examples of all these countries in the neighbourhood ofIndia, in Asia itself. This is the manifestation of self-worth *(asmitā)* as personality *(svabha a)*.

- *Samāna-vāyu* is the civilizational/administrative/internal security energy thatcirculates within a country. For example, within any company, some departments are considered better managed than others. This is on account of the energy flow within the department being productive, ethical and harmonious. People are the same, it is *dharma* that makes a difference
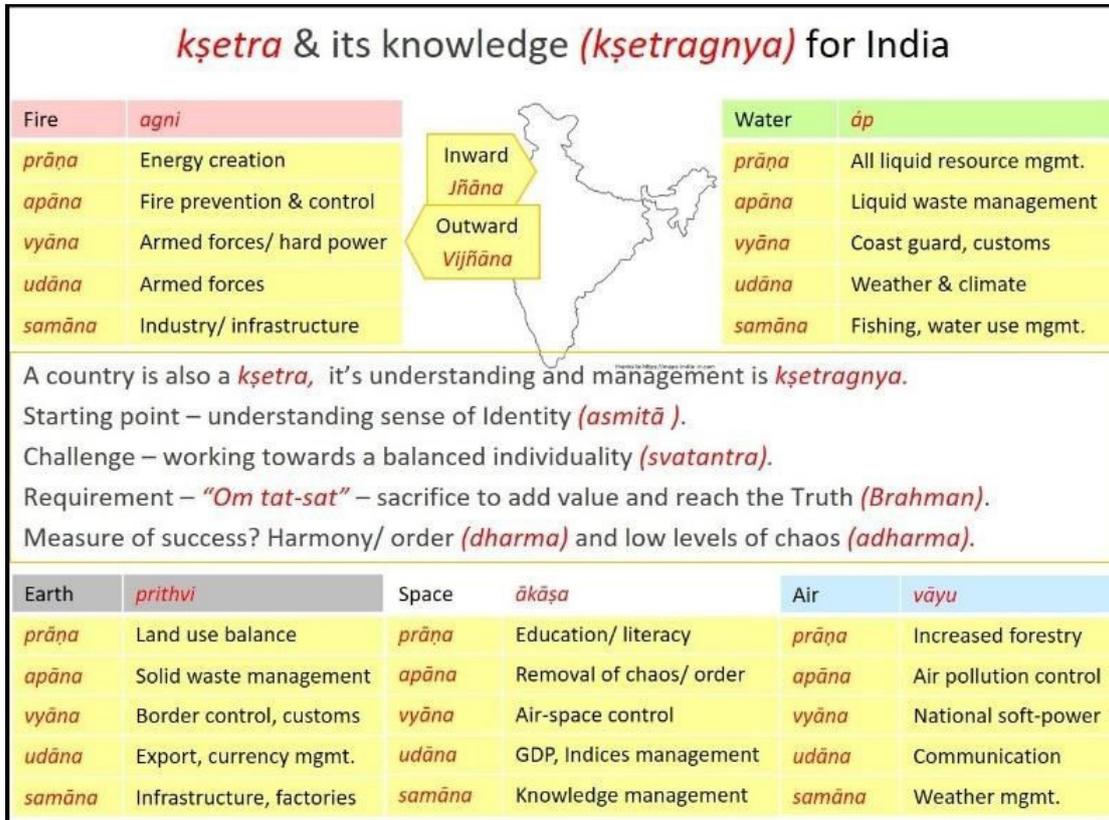
Figure 1: Chart of Bhārat Integrating Prāṇa With Panchabhūtas

Saṅgati

A *rājya* has to be a place where *dharma* is practised. Since *dharma* evolves from the *rāṣṭra*, *rāṣṭra* will need to be integrated with the *rājya* for seamless delivery of *dharma*.

Additionally, the *rājya* will need to integrate *dharma* at the individual level by ensuring harmony across *puruṣārtha* (human materiality) and various *āśrama* (stages of living), ensuring that *svatantra* as well as *dharma* is not lost at any level.

Since the *rājya* is also hardware such as structures, systems, administration and application of power, motility or *prāṇa* of a *rājya* will need to be taught, understood and practised by the *rājya*. This means that the individual needs to be brought to a standard where he or she is aware of his or her position in the *rājya* as well as *rāṣṭra* and contributes to maximising delivery of *dharma* without compromising on individuality *(svatantra)*.

Integrating the Individual with *Rāṣṭra* and *Rājya*

Vishaya 4

To integrate the individual with *rāṣṭra* and *rājya*.

Vismaya

How can the individual be integrated with the *rāṣṭra* and *rājya* for seamless delivery of *dharma* without losing his or her individuality *(svatantra)*?

Purva-paksha

To reiterate the concepts enunciated so far:

- *Dharma* is the underpinning of *rāṣṭra* and determines the identity *(asmitā)* as well as the individuality *(svatantra)* of both the individual and the *rāṣṭra*.

- Hence, the quality of *dharma* will impact the state *(rājya)* and will be exhibited in all its forms—from the *panchayat* to *zilla*, *taluk*, district, state and centre.

- This means that integrating *rājya* with *rāṣṭra* symbiotically is critical for the governance of the *rājya* in a manner that ensures free-will or individuality *(svatantra)* for all entities in the *rājya* and that the *rājya* treats all entities within and outside it to achieve harmony of all creation *vasudhaiva-*

kuṭumbakam).

Siddhānta

Integration of *rāṣṭra, rājya* and *yoga*:

What are the common requirements of a *rāṣṭra* and *rājya*?

- Inward: The *rāṣṭra* and *rājya* must vibrate to the natural frequencies of all itssentient and insentient inhabitants.

- Outwards: It must view all creation as one *(vasudhaiva-kuṭumbakam).*
  The *rāṣṭra* as well as the *rājya,* therefore, cannot be bound by a single dogma. It will need to be elastic to accommodate not only varying requirements of change but alsoexpressions of identity *(asmitā)* and individuality *(svatantra)* within the boundaries of *dharma.*

It will need to be flexible enough to accommodate, yet firm enough to desist andresist chaos *(adharma).* This means that the *rāṣṭra* as well as *rājya* must have a strong awareness *(prajñā)* of all forms of sentient and extra-sentient stimuli, a sense of discrimination between real and unreal and the ability to act with dispassion.

Since humans are at the apex of the evolution hierarchy, the state *(rājya)* shouldaspire to develop the individual to the pinnacle of his or her capabilities while being in harmony with the civilisation *(rāṣṭra).*

It can be seen that there is a natural divergence between the requirement of *dharma,* which requires accommodating others to ensure harmony and order in society,to the requirement of the individual who desires freedom without restrictions.

Reconciliation of Differences into a Symbiotic Confluence of Individual, Civilisation and Culture (*Rāṣṭra*) as well as Society and Country (*Rājya*)

The reconciliation is through the practice of Yoga. The sense of self-worth *(asmitā)* is most robust when one's individuality or *svatantra* is completely self- contained or least dependent on other entities for its sense of self-worth. Consequently,when there is a high level of *svatantra* across the *rāṣṭra, rājya* and individual, that realm exists harmoniously and has value *(sat)* to itself and those around it.

However, *svatantra* requires a high degree of awareness of the Self *(jñāna)* and awareness of the environment *(vijñāna)*. When this awareness is steady and unshakeable, the individual becomes impervious to external pressures *(sthithaprajñā)*.

Unfortunately, awareness *(prajñā)* can also be directed towards pursuit of passion or become delusional, in which case the sense of individuality *(svatantra)*becomes destructive.

So, it is critical that awareness *(prajñā)* across the *rāṣṭra, rājya* and individual betacked to the pursuit of value and the Truth—*satyameva jayate* (Sitaram Sastri 1905).

This is explained by Sri Krishna in *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* in Chapter 18[17].

Conditioning the Individual to Add Value Through *Rāṣṭra* and *Rājya*

Four factors are intrinsic in value creation *(sat)*— *yajñá* (sacrifice), *vivekam* (discrimination between real and unreal), *vairagyam* (dispassion) and *śraddhā* (perseverance and sincerity). When any individual integrates the above qualities inaction *(karma)*, he or she adds value *(sat)* to the *rāṣṭra*.

This results in the evolution of a person to *sthithaprajñā* (state of steady awareness), ensuring strong adherence to *dharma,* which becomes the foundation of asustainable *rāṣṭra* and *rājya*.

Such a person is described by Sri Krishna as a *puruṣottama*[18] (supreme person)in *Srimad-Bhagavad-Geeta*, Chapter 15. The qualities of such a person allow them to:

- focus on the Truth/ objective/ reality of the situation.

- not dwell on the past or worry about the future; the person tries to be

    in thepresent.

- view everything as transient *(māya)* and is not bothered by change or opinion.

- discriminate between value and non-value *(vivekam)*.

- consider all action to be a sacrifice *(yajñá)* to create or increase value *(sat)*.

- focus on the goal, and is sincere and steadfast in effort *(śraddhā)*.

- rely on himself/herself alone and is dispassionate in success or failure *(vairāgyam)*.

- view everyone as equal, work to build teams and ensure balance and harmonyacross all resources and outcomes.

One can see that the above qualities can be applied across the *rāṣṭra*, *rājya* andthe individual. Such an entity achieves perfect individuality *(svatantra)*.

Saṅgati

The *rājya* is a physical/ political/administrative entity with a rigid border underpinned by the cultural/civilisational roots of the *rāṣṭra*. Both require *dharma*, which is the ability of all sentient and insentient entities in the realm to co-exist as closeas possible to their natural state *(svatantra)* and in harmony with each other *(dharma)*.

The building block of *dharma*, *rāṣṭra* and *rājya* is the individual who is at theapex of the evolutionary pyramid. But it can also be seen that since *dharma* is dependent on multiple factors and is constantly changing, *rāṣṭra* and *rājya* will constantly change and become free-floating and elastic.

An individual can be enabled to follow the *dharmic* path through yoga, which increases awareness in the practitioner, subsuming his or her instinct for personal gain,resulting in a balanced, harmonious outcome.

This can be done by inculcating the principles of *yama* (behaviour control) and*niyama* (self-control) at all levels of society at every opportunity, even in schools, colleges, institutions, functions, business enterprises, etc.

Principles and Components of *Yama* and *Niyama*

Yama: "Transaction or behaviour control can mean "rein, curb, or bridle, discipline or restraint" when dealing with the environment. Therefore, *yama* meansexercising restraint in reaction to stimulus"[19].

Niyama: Self-control is the ability to manage the turbulence generated by change[20].

A comparison of the various *Yama* and *Niyama*-s is given in Table 1 on the next page.

Table 1: Comparison of the Various Yama and Niyama-S

	Hatha Yoga Pradeepika Chapter 1, verse 17	Patanjali Yoga Sutra, Chapter 2 Verse 30 & 32	www.schoolofyoga.in
Yama	non-violence (ahimsā) truth or integrity (satya) sexual continence (brahmacaryam) forgiveness (kṣamā) self-discipline (dṛithi)compassion (dayā) straightforwardness (arjavā) diet control (mitāhara) and cleanliness (śaucam)	non-violence (ahimsā) truth (satya) non-stealing (asteya) renouncing possession (aparigrāhya) sexual continence (brahmacaryam)	non-violence (ahimsā) truth (satya) non-stealing (asteya) renouncing possession (aparigraha) sexual continence (brahmacaryam) diet control (mitahāra)
Niyama	austerity (tapas)	hygiene (soucham)	hygiene (śaucam)
	contentment (santoṣam)	contentment (śaucam)	contentment (santoṣam)
	accepting authority of the Vedas (āsthikyam) charity (dānam)	austerity (tapas) self-study/ reflection (svādhyāyam)	introspection (svādhyāyam) austerity (tapas)
	prayer to the macro-entity (īshwara-pūjanam) listening to spiritual teaching (siddhānta -vākyam)	surrender to a higher entity (īshwarapranidānam)	sincerity and dedication (śraddhā) and charity (dāna)
	modesty (hrīmath)		
	repetition of mantras (japā)		
	sacrifice with fire (hutam)		

(Source: https://schoolofyoga.in/)

The above values will need to be inculcated and practised with other societal values everywhere, from schools, colleges, offices, government institutions, etc. Also, the individual will need to be taught to handle fear of isolation, elasticity of transaction, equality of vision and anxiety of change. Above all, the individual will require at least one anchor to help him or her retain a semblance of stability and manage the turbulence of change. This role is played by the village temple. So, for lasting *dharma* and *svatantra* to be achieved, the village temples must be set free from the *rājya* and allowed to act as an anchor for the individual, *rāṣṭra* and *rājya*.

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End Note

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