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## THE CONCEPT OF ANATOMY IN SRI HAYAGRIVA STOTRAM OF SRI VEDANTA DESIKA

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**Abstract:** Of the many erudite Sanskrit scholars, some stood above others for their uniqueness and their significant contributions to the world. The most prominent among them is the unequalled versatile genius and greatly honoured poet of the thirteenth century *Svāmī Śrī Deśika*. At the age of twenty, *Svāmī Śrī Deśika* exhibited an astounding ability to compose poems, spontaneously combining Philosophy and Devotion. The vastness of his knowledge can be compared to that of an ocean. Those who delve deep into the realm of his compositions can gather numerous pearls, science being one among them. This paper deals with one concept of anatomy revealed through the opening stanza of Sri Hayagriva stotram of ‘the Lion of Poesy and Logic’ namely *Kavi Tārīkika Kesarī*.

**Index Terms - Anatomy, Vulnerable spot, Marma sthāna, Svāmī Śrī Deśika, Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram.**

### INTRODUCTION:

*Svāmī Śrī Deśika*, an unequalled Vaishnavite *Ācārya* of the 13th century, mastered all branches of learning as we find in his remark in one of his works thus:

*Viṃśatyabda viśruta Nānāvidha-Vidyāḥ* | (*Sankalpa Sūryodayam* - Act 1)

**Meaning:** One who has mastered various branches of learning at the age of twenty.

At the age of twenty, *Svāmī Śrī Deśika* exhibited an astounding ability to compose poems, spontaneously combining Philosophy and Devotion. The vastness of his knowledge can be compared to that of an ocean. He has been rightly honoured as ‘the Lion of Poesy and Logic’ thus *Kavi Tārīkika Kesarī*. He has carved himself a ‘niche’ as an expounder of *Prapatti Mārga* to the world which was already revealed by the great philosopher *Śrī Rāmānujācārya*. Those who delve deep into the realm of his compositions can gather numerous pearls, science being one among them.

*Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram* is Hymn in thirty-two stanzas on Lord *Hayagrīva*, the Supreme form of Lord *Viṣṇu* known for learning, composed by *Svāmī Śrī Deśika*. When the poet had divine *Darśan* of the Lord in the hills of *Thiruvahindrapuram*, he went into raptures and the most popular and powerful hymn known as the “*Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram*” started flowing like nectar in praise of Him. The strength of this *stotram* is to enhance the learning faculty.

Tradition says that the above *Stotram* is recited for curing neuro-problems of human beings. This paper makes an attempt to reveal a concept of anatomy interwoven in the opening stanza of *Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram*, taking supporting evidence from *Suśruta saṃhītā* through Vedic Numerical Code (or *Kaṭapaya* coding).

### *Kaṭapayādi* Coding Scheme

Vedic Scholars adopted a different but convenient system of letter notation called the *Kaṭapayādi* or Vedic Numerical code.

In this system,

The consonants (*Vyañjanas*) beginning with *ka* (क), *ṭa* (ट), *pa* (प) and *ya* (य) referred the digits from 1 to 9 (i.e. letters from *ka* (क) to *jha* (झ), from *ṭa* (ट) to *dha* (ध) denote 1 to 9;

*pa* (प) to *ma* (म) stand for 1 to 5;

letters from *ya* (य) to *ha* (ह) represent the digits 1 to 8;

the nasals *ṅa* (ञ) and *na* (न) denote 0;

in the case of conjunct consonants, the number denoted only by the last consonant is taken

the vowels following consonants have no value

the arrangement of the digits is from right to left as per the rule *an̄k̄ānām vāmato gatiḥ* (अङ्कानां वामतो गतिः)

the letter *la* (ळ) peculiar to the Dravidian languages, represent 9.

The rule is:

*kādi nava, tādi nava, pādi pañca, yādyasṭau*

*Kādi nava* means *ka* and the following eight letters.

*tādi nava* means *ta* and the following eight letters.

*Pādi pañca* means *pa* and the following four letters.

*Yādyasṭau* means *ya* and the following seven letters.

*Kṣa* represents zero.

To make this more clear and understandable, the notation is given by the following table:

Table 1. Vedic Numerical Code (Katapayādi system)

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
<i>Kādinava</i>	क	ख	ग	घ	ङ	च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
	<i>ka</i>	<i>kha</i>	<i>ga</i>	<i>gha</i>	<i>ṅa</i>	<i>ca</i>	<i>cha</i>	<i>ja</i>	<i>jha</i>	<i>ña</i>
<i>Tādinava</i>	ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण	त	थ	द	ध	न
	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>ṭha</i>	<i>ḍa</i>	<i>ḍha</i>	<i>ṇa</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>tha</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>dha</i>	<i>na</i>
<i>Pādipanca</i>	प	फ	ब	भ	म					
	<i>pa</i>	<i>pha</i>	<i>ba</i>	<i>bha</i>	<i>ma</i>					
<i>Yādyasṭau</i>	य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स	ह	ळ	क्ष
	<i>ya</i>	<i>ra</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>śa</i>	<i>sha</i>	<i>sa</i>	<i>ha</i>	<i>ḷa</i>	<i>Kṣa</i>

Hence,

- The Vowels are not included in the list.
- They are exempted because; only the consonants with vowels are assigned numbers.
- In conjunct consonants, the last consonant alone is to be coded.

#### Opening stanza of Sri Hayagriva stotram

ज्ञानानन्दमयं देवं निर्मलस्फटिकाकृतिम्।

आधारं सर्वविद्यानां हयग्रीवमुपास्महे ॥

Transliteration of the Opening stanza of Sri Hayagriva stotram

*jñānānanda mayam devam nirmalasphaṭikākṛtim |*  
*ādharam sarva vidyānām hayagrīvamupāsmāhe ||*

Meaning of the opening stanza of *Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram*

We meditate upon Lord *Hayagrīva*, One who has the head of a horse, who is the personification of knowledge and bliss, whose form is like a flawless crystal and who is the support and citadel of all branches of learning.

Table.2 Vedic Numerical Coding of the opening stanza of *Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram*

Line 1	0	0	0	8	5	1	8	4
Line 2	0	5	3	2	1	1	1	6
Line 3	0	9	2	7	4	4	1	0
Line 4	8	1	2	4	5	1	5	8

The total of all the 32 single digit numbers yields 106, which represents the Vulnerable spots in Human anatomy.

#### About Vulnerable spots of the body (मर्मस्थानानि)

The human body has several sensitive points called vulnerable spots or '*marma sthāna*' by the great sage *Suśruta*, who lived in 6th century BCE. In one of the parts titled *Sārīra sthānam* of *Suśruta saṃhita* the author has given details about 107 Vulnerable points of the body in the 6th chapter. The word *marma sthāna* in Sanskrit connotes vital or Vulnerable or hidden parts of the body. The Sage *susruta* has given the divisions these vulnerable points as below:

#### Verses mentioning the total of Vulnerable spots:

तत्रैकादश मां समर्माणि एकचत्वारिंशत् सिरामर्माणि

सप्तविंशतिः स्नायुमर्माणि अष्टावस्थिमर्माणि विंशतिः

सन्धि मर्माणि चेति तदेतत्सप्तोत्तरं मर्मशतम्। (सुश्रुतसंहिता - शरीर.6.3-4)

**Transliteration:**

*Tatraikādaśa māṃsamarmāṇi ekacatvāriṃśat sirāmarmāṇi  
Saptaviṃśatiḥ snāyūmarmāṇi aṣṭāvasthimarmāṇi viṃśatiḥ  
Sandhimarmāṇi ceti tadetat saptottaraṃ marmāśatam I (Suśrutasaṃhitā śārīra.6.3-4)*

**Meaning:**

There are 107 vulnerable spots in the human body, among which 8 are bone related spots and 20 are joint related spots. Verses about the varieties of Vulnerable spots:

तेषामेकादशैकस्मिन् सक्थि भवन्ति  
एतेनेतरसक्थि बाहू च व्याख्यातौ।  
उदरोरसोर्द्वादश चतुर्दश पृष्ठे  
ग्रीवां प्रत्यूर्ध्वं सप्त त्रिंशत्।। (सुश्रुतसंहिता-शारीर.6.5-6)

**Transliteration:**

*Teṣāmekādaśaikasmin sakthi bhavanti  
Etenetarasakthi bāhū ca vyākhyātau I  
Udarorasordvādaśa caturdaśa pṛṣṭhe  
Grīvāṃ pratyūrdhvaṃ saptatrimśat II (Suśrutasaṃhitā śārīra.6.5-6)*

**Meaning:**

The Vulnerable spots are according to the following varieties:

Table.3 The Vulnerable spots

Parts of the body	Number of Vulnerable spots	Total
The two Thighs	11 each	22
The two arms	11 each	22
Stomach / chest	12	12
Back	14	14
Neck and above	37	37
Total Number of Vulnerable spots		107

*Svāmī Śrī Deśikawho* is a versatile Genius has given the list of all these 107 Vulnerable spots mentioned by *Suśruta*, in the opening *śloka* itself in a remarkable manner as evident from the following table:

Table.4 Vulnerable spots mentioned by *Svāmī Śrī Deśika* in the opening *Śloka*

SNo	Word from Sloka of <i>Svāmī Śrī Deśika</i>	Number found by decoding	Number of Vulnerable spots
1	आ..धारं सर्वविद्यानां हय..ग्रीवम् (आग्रीवम् means up to neck)	0927441081, the total of all these single digit numbers yields 36	36 up to the neck, whereas <i>Suśruta</i> mentions 37
2	स..महेज्ञानानन्दम..यं (which is an indication for snayu marmas)	5800085, the total of the all these single digit numbers yields 26	Sinew - related Vulnerable spots are 26
3	ज्ञानानन्दमयं देवं निर्मलस्फटिकाकृतिम्। आधारं सर्वविद्यानां हयग्रीवमुपास्महे॥	Sum of all 32 single-digit numbers of the opening stanza.	Total number of Vulnerable spots in the Human body is 106, whereas <i>Suśruta</i> mentions 107

Thus, an in-depth analysis of *Śrī Hayagrīva Stotram* itself will, not only explore traditional source of ideas and knowledge, but also fetch variety of novel materials hitherto unknown to even Modern Science.

**CONCLUSION:**

A reader of *Svāmī Śrī Deśika*'s works will identify him as not only a colossus in philosophy of *Srivaishnavism* and a prolific author in many languages, but as one of the greatest scientists ever lived if he delves deep into the realm of his literature.

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