THE AṢṬAPADI GĪTA-GOVINDA, AND ITS EMULATIONS

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Abstract: Sanskrit has been a vehicle of Indian traditional wisdom. The literary form known as "Kāvyas", as it is appropriately termed, retains its creative vitality in both prose and poetry. Mahā Kāvyas, Laghu Kāvyas, or Khaṇḍa Kāvyas are two literary genres created by our Indian poets that are both prose and poetry masterpieces, rich in all facets of culture. To a significant extent, a new vision of progress has been escorted by the genre of Aṣṭapadi known as Gīta Kāvyas. The poet Jayadeva's composition Gīta -Govinda, written in the twelfth century, is considered to be the foundational work of the Aṣṭapadis genre. This outstanding literary work paved the path for numerous other poets to replicate it and adapt it to their own works. This academic study investigates the diversity of the Aṣṭapadi Gīta -Govinda's lyrical genre and its emulations.

Key words: Gīta Kāvya, Aṣṭapadi, Gīta-Govinda, Jayadeva, Bhakti, Rasa, etc.

Introduction

Aṣṭapadi, the genre of Gīta Kāvya are eight-couplet sets of two-line hymns. The distinct Rāga and Tāla that each aṣṭapadi is tuned to reveal the joy of emotions. The entire Kāvya beautifully illustrates the excellence of the language by employing the poetic technique. It closely resembles other outstanding literary works in terms of its extensive use of figures of speech, inventiveness, and broad imagination.

The lyrics are well-written, melodious, simple, and not overly complicated. A certain meter is also used to add a melodic aspect that would highlight the descriptions of nature woven throughout the Kāvya. With the aid of the suitable flowing theme, the ideal emotions are communicated, strengthening the outstanding poetic beauty. The author carefully selects the sentences that are utilized throughout to heighten the Kāvya's allure and splendor.

The fundamental concept of aṣṭapadi is the merging of *Jīvātma* and *Paramātma*. There have been several *Jīvātma* and *Paramātma* links practiced in the Bhakti tradition. *Dāsya* (the love between a loyal servant and his kind master), Sakhya (the friendly love), and *Vātsalya* (the love between a parent and their child) are a few among them. A total self-sacrifice is required of the devotee. This kind of sacrifice requires emotional and mental self-control. Thus, the observer takes pleasure in the expressions that come from the realization of all these detected emotions.

The Aṣṭapadi Gīta-Govinda

Gīta-Govinda is a collection of lyrical Sanskrit poetry. There are twelve chapters (sarga) and twenty-four Prabandhas in total. Eight couplets are commonly included in these aṣṭapadi. The verses that set the scene for the following aṣṭapadi come before it and are written in a particular meter. There are about 3,000 manuscripts, 22 scripts, and 57 comments in the Gīta -Govinda.

The Author

One of the best pieces of poetry Jayadeva produced in the twelfth century is Gīta -Govinda. The renowned poet was born in Kindubilva Sasan, also known as Kenduli Sasan, in Balipatna P.S., a district in Khundra that was formerly part of Puri district, as the son of Bhoja Deva and Ramadevi. From the inscriptions, it is known that Jayadeva served as the court poet for King Lakśmaṇa Sena of the Bengal region, a member of the Soma dynasty.

The two titles "Kurmapataka Pravara" and "Sadhu Pradhan" placed over his name in the Lingaraj temple's inscriptions give the impression that he may have received his music and Sanskrit education at the Kurmapataka Institute. A great singer and dancer named Padmavathi, whom he later married, contributed color to his magnificent work Gīta-Govinda.

Style of the script

In his work, Jayadeva used Vaidharbhi and Gaudi stylistic elements. Grammar usage has been streamlined in the songs. Syllabic patterns in the literary form are delicate and fluid, charming fans of music and poetry alike. Many academics think that Prākṛt literary traditions are closely related to the diction and meter of the Gīta-Govinda. Every verse is written in identical meters throughout. Syllable sequences that are repeated in each quarter of the verse are often what distinguish syllabic meters from other types.

The number of beats in a line with each light and heavy word, or *Mātras*, defines the musical meters. They are additionally designed or set up in measures as *gaṇa*. The meter of the songs and the way they are articulated are almost identical to the meter of the *apabrahmsha* poetry of the middle centuries. Using the musical meter of *apabrahmsha*, Jayadeva may have created a song-like form of traditional poetic Sanskrit, according to Barbara Stoler Miller.

Due to the Kāvya's inclusion of the most significant meters, like Śārdulavikrīḍita, Vasantatilaka, Mālini, etc., traditional Sanskrit poetry has been given a more melodic effect. The prominence on repetitious and sound patterns structured in its songs reflects the rhythmical pattern of both styles of Indian classical music i.e., Hindustani and Karnatic styles.

Rhyme in Gīta-Govinda

In Gīta -Govinda, consonant and vowel pairings support the song's meters and sensual images. A common element of the couplets is the final rhyme, *Anuprāsa*. The mark of each metrical cycle is echoed by this trait, which is not just present in the first sounds of syllables. End rhyme is consistently employed in Gīta -Govinda. Jayadeva's extensive use of rhetorical devices like alliteration, rhyme, inter-rhyming, etc. demonstrates his talent as an artist.

The literary experts have praised the poetic style of using ornamental structures, or *alankāras*, such as *Upamā*, *Rupaka*, *Utprekṣa, Kāvyalinga,* etc. Every aspect of Indian aesthetic tradition i.e., *Rasa, Dhwani, Rīti and Guṇa* has been perfectly dealt with and balanced throughout the script.

The Content of Gīta-Govinda

One of the best pieces of poetry ever written by the poet Jayadeva is Gīta -Govinda. Madhura Bhakti is abundant in the Gīta-Govinda beauty's poetic. The verse expresses the divine love and separation pains of Radha and Krishna. Jayadeva has expertly combined the science of sensuality with a religious subject. The Gīta-Govinda contains two

themes: on the one hand, the theme of the hero and heroine as Nāyaka and Nāyika, and on the other, the poetry deals with the most extreme aspect of devotion shown towards the deity (Paramātma) by the devotee (Jīvātma).

The Gīta-Govinda is divided into twelve cantos or Sargas, each of which has 24 Prabhandas and 72 verses, as was previously mentioned. The 22 Prabandas are divided into Ashtapadis, which are groups of eight stanzas. The Gīta-Govinda's distinctively named cantos are listed below.

1) Sāmoda Dāmodara
2) Ākleśa Keśava
3) Mugdha Madhusūdanam
4) Snigdha Madhusūdanam
5) Sākāṅkṣa puṇḍarīkākṣam
6) Dhṛṣṭa Vaikuṇṭa
7) Nagaranārāyaṇah
8) Vilakṣya Lakṣmīpatih
9) Mugdhamukunda
10) Catura Caturbhujah
11) Sānanda Dāmodara
12) Suprītapitāmbatah

Story-line of Gīta-Govinda

The narrative in Gīta-Govinda is fairly simple, yet involves many layers of Nāyaka and Nāyika bheda. The plot of the narrative, which centers on Kṛṣṇa, Rādha, and her Sakhi, is most likely based on a topic from the Brahmavivarta Purāṇa and concerns Kṛṣṇa's amorous interactions with gopis, which cause Rādha and Kṛṣṇa to be separated.

Rādha observes Kṛṣṇa enjoying his time with other Brindavan gopis while waiting for him by the Yamuna riverbanks. Rādha, who is still bitter and alienated, is unable to handle the split and sends Sakhi, a friend, to Kṛṣṇa, who has since expressed regret for their previous estrangement. Rādha's pitiful state is described by the Sakhi to Kṛṣṇa, who is urged to visit her right away.

Rādha's Viraha (pangs of separation) achieves a pinnacle, as the evening time arrives which she expresses to her Sakhi. Radha also conveys her discontentment with herself and imagines Kṛṣṇa being with a lovely gopika, which makes her feel resentful and is recorded near the end of the Sarga.

Before nightfall, Kṛṣṇa finally comes and finds Rādha, who has been patiently waiting for him all day. The telltale symptoms of Kṛṣṇa's extramarital flings with other gopis are all visible to Rādha. She rebukes him and pushes him away, calling him callous and deceitful, and she is so hurt and furious that she begs him not to talk to her in vain of love.

In the meantime, Sakhi steps in and comforts Rādha, assuring her of Kṛṣṇa's devotion. She accuses Rādha of being stupid for shunning Kṛṣṇa. She admonishes Rādha to visit Kṛṣṇa instead of waiting any longer because he would have been there waiting for her with love in his heart. Additionally, she implores Rādha to avoid blowing the chance to meet Kṛṣṇa and to stop offending him.

After Rādha's rage has subsided, Kṛṣṇa returns to her to pacify it, reassure her of his love, and beseech her to have mercy on him. At her feet, he kneels and begs for her love. Having reconciled with Rādha, Kṛṣṇa is waiting in the lovely garden for his lady love while decked out in all the finery and arranging the fragrant flowers. Sakhi nudges Rādha in the direction of Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa), and the excitement of their meeting and the signals of love's blossoming are scripted.

Finally, the author reaches the episodes of Rādha and Kṛṣṇa's union, in which Rādha is decked by Kṛṣṇa and is thus characterized as having her lord at her frivolous whim out of love.

Place of Gīta Govinda in temple rites

Gīta Govinda is considered an important text during the reign of the Bhakti movement in India. Particularly at the Puri Jagannath temple in Odisha, these Aṣṭapadis play a significant role in the repertoire of temple customs. As a part of temple rites, these Aṣṭapadis of Jayadeva have been given prominence and are sung and performed.

The Gīta Govinda is performed every night during the Badasinghara, or final rite, of the Jagannath temple in Puri, set to conventional Odissi ragas and talas. Since Jayadeva, who himself used to sing at the temple, this tradition has persisted uninterrupted. The singing at the temple persisted after the poet's time as a required service, carried out by the Mahārīs or the Devadasis, and was rigorously documented in inscriptions and other official papers that explain the temple's operations.

A rare ritual dedicated to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādha is performed in the name of Gīta Govinda Path Puja and Homam.

Gīta Govinda aṣṭapadis are also a major part of the Bhajana Sampradāyam where the songs are sung during the Marriage occasion of the deities such as Sīta Kalyāṇam, Rādha Kalyāṇam, etc.

Emulations of Gīta Govinda

Gīta-Govinda became a persistent source of inspiration and joy to intellectuals, devotees, poets and other essayists because of its enchanting effects on its readers. It also became an inspirational source for all kinds of artists like sculptors, painters, dancers, musicians, etc. As a result of its fame, the tuneful script stands unique in the world of Sanskrit literature. Its popularity gave way for several scholars to script down their own works based on the foundation of the style Jayadeva had put on. Inspired by the external artistic beauty and internal universal appeal, many scholars have attempted, at different times, to compose poems in imitation of the masterpiece. It's estimated that there are currently 130 of these imitations of the Gīta Govinda available in Sanskrit alone. The other regional languages also posed no obstacles.
Many imitations were from the hometown of the original author of the inspirational Kāvya.

Based on the study of imitations, the first imitation of Gīta-Govinda by Banamali Rath, the following inferences are being made. The first imitation of Gīta-Govinda was by King Puruśottamadeva who attempted to introduce his Abhinava Gīta-Govinda in the ritual of Jagannatha temple.

Imitations of Gīta Govinda in Sanskrit

The list that follows provides some examples of Gīta Govinda imitations.

SLNO	TITLE OF IMITATION	AUTHOR
01	Jaganriathaballabha natakam	Raya Ranianda
02	Abhinava Gīta Govinda(poem)	Gajapati King Puruśottama Deva
03	Piyushalahari	Jayadeva acārya
04	Srngāra Rasamandanam	Vitthalanatha
05	Saṅgīta Mādhava	Prabodhananda
06	Bidagdha Mādhava Natakam	Rupa Gosvami
07	Saṅgīta Mādhava	Govinda Das
08	Gopāla Champu	Jiva Gosvami
09	Mudhitha Mādhava	Satamjiva Miśra
10	Mukunda vilāsa Mahā Kāvya	Yatīndra Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha
12	Rasagoshti Rupakam	Anadi Miśra

13	Samrdha Mādhava Natakam	Kavibhuṣaṇa Govinda samanta Rāya
14	Saṅgīta Cintmaṇi	Kavi Candra Kamal Lochana Khadgaraya
15	Gīta Gopāla	Maithila Krsnadattaja
16	Kṛṣṇa līlā Tarangini	Yatindra Nārāyaṇa theertha
17	Thyāgarāṣṭapadi	Ṣri Venkatamakhi
18	Śivāṣṭapadi	Ṣri Rāma Kavi
19	Mīnākshi Sundaram Aṣṭapadis	Ṣri Sadāśiva Dīkśitar
20	Gīta Gaurīśa	Bhanudatta
21	Candomakanta	Puruśottama bhatta
22	Gītaprakāśa	Krishna Dasa

Gīta kāvyās having Lord Rāma as the center of devotion

SL No	Name of the work	Name of the author
01	Gīta Rāghava	Harisankara
02	Gīta Rāghava	Prabhakara kavi
03	Gīta Rāghava Kāvya m	Rāmakavi
04	Rāmagīta govinda	Jayadeva
05	Rāmodahaharanagīta Kāvya	Venkatappa Nāyaka
06	Rāmagīta Kāvya m	Vrttamani Ṣri nivasacarya
07	Rāmagīta	Kṛnabhatta
08	Ramodharaṇagīti Kāvya m	Nārāyaṇa Swami
09	Rāmacandrodaya	Puruśottama Miśra
10	Rāmabhyudaya	Puruśottama Miśra
11	Rāmakatha sudodaya	Saiva Ṣri nivasa Suri
12	Rāghava Prabandham	
13	Rāghavaṣṭapadi	
14	Ṣri Rāmāṣṭapadivivarana	Upaniśad Brahmendra
15	Saṅgīta Raghunandana	Gangadhara
16	Saṅgīta Raghunandana	Priyadasa
17	Saṅgīta Rāghava	cinnabommabhupala
18	Saṅgīta Raghunandana	Vishwanatha

Conclusion: The theme and concept of Gīta Govinda have made a great impact on the Literary and cultural heritage of India. This new development in the field of poetics gave a fresh insight and in turn stood at its zenith for the invention of creative literature which was sacred, emotional, and contained devotional flavors, based on emotions of Bhakti and Ṣṛṇgāra. The sensuality and speculative religious ideas that were combined enough invigorated the medieval Bhakti movement and its literature. The Gīta Kāvyas poets elevated one of the most potent impulses of the human mind into a method of beautiful elevation by following in the footsteps of the widely acclaimed poet Jayadeva. Thus, the impact of Gīta Govinda has been in such a way on all the art forms that it seems as though it has been merged in the field exclusively.

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