

Anu-Vayu Stuti

English Translation by Sriprasad Hunsur

Introduction:

This short composition extolling Vayu and his incarnations is credited to Smt. Kalyani Devi. She is believed to be the sister of Sri. Trivikrama PanditAchArya, whose most famous composition is Sri Hari Vayu Stuti.

The stuti uses one constant refrain as the second line in each verse – “AnandatIrtha mahAmunirAjam govinda bhakta shikhAmaNimIDe”. A simple translation of this would be “I worship with great fervor, Ananda tIrtha, the king of great ascetics, the crest-jewel amongst devotees of Govinda”. This is basically to stress the fact that the deity praised in the first line of the verse (Vayu, Prana, Hanumanta, Bhima) is indeed Acharya Madhva, the third incarnation of Vayu. However, there is more to it than the simple translation given above. This is because the key words used in the refrain (‘AnandatIrtha’, ‘muni’, ‘govinda’) are so flexible that they take on a different meaning in each verse! For example, ‘tIrtha’ means all of the following: ‘the head of a monastery’ (swamiji in common parlance), ‘a religious person in general’, ‘a body of religious literature’ (shAstra), ‘passage or way’, ‘one who helps people cross’ (‘tAryati iti tIrtha’) ‘one who helps people attain an objective’. ‘govinda’ is even more versatile because the word ‘go’ in Sanskrit has many meanings like Veda, cow, sun ray, water, Indra’s weapon, the sky, earth, hair, heaven, the eye, a sensory organ of the body and so on. When these factors are considered, the second line yields a meaning that is unique to the form of Vayu that is being extolled in that verse, in addition to the simple meaning outlined above. Let us now look at each verse and see the various nuances possible in the interpretation.

Versel:

chandra vibhUshaNa chandra purogairvandya padAmburuhaM pavamAnam
AnandatIrtha mahAmunirAjam govinda bhakta shikhAmaNimIDe

ಚಂದ್ರ ವಿಭೂಶಣ ಚಂದ್ರ ಪುರೋಗೈವಂದ್ಯ ಪದಾಂಬುರುಹಂ ಪವಮಾನಮ್

Introduction to Verse 1:

Here the stuti extols the mUla rUpa (main form) of Vayu devaru. It addresses him as ‘PavamAna’, to show that he is an exalted deity whom the Vedas eulogize. There is a Mandala in the Rig Veda called PavamAna mandala and there is the famous PavamAna sookta. Hence, PavamAna is a formal Vedic name for Vayu. In the PrAtah Sankalpa gadya, Sri Raghavendra swamigalu says “ramA vyati-rikta, pUrva prasiddha vyati-rikta, ananta veda pratipAdya mukhya tama” (Vayu is the most prominent amongst those extolled by the infinite Vedas, with the exception of those verses which extol Rama or Lakshmi, and those which are well known to extol to the Lord”). All of these considerations lead us to conclude that in this specific verse, ‘govinda’ should also be interpreted in the vedic sense. This is straightforward since one of the well known meanings of ‘Govinda’ is ‘the Parabrahma extolled by the Vedas’. ‘muni’ means one who does ‘manana’ or contemplation. ‘mahA muni’ refers to celestials like Shiva, Indra etc because they have spent several brahma-kalpas (cycles of creation) contemplating on the Lord. As stated earlier, ‘tIrtha’ means ‘passage or way’. ‘Ananda’ can mean the bliss of mukti (liberation) or the Lord Himself. In any case, ‘AnandatIrtha’ means ‘the (correct) passage to the Lord and liberation’, which is a fitting name for Vayu. In this context it is worthwhile to recall that Sri Hari Vayu Stuti says that celestials get perfect knowledge of the Lord by constantly serving Vayu (“ajasra seva anuvR^iddha prAGYaatmaGYAna”) so he is indeed ‘Ananda tIrtha’. The MadhvanAma by Sri SripadarAja says “Avavana baLiviDidu hariya suraraiduvaro” (“the person through whom the celestials attain Hari” – which conveys the same sense as the line from Hari Vayu stuti).

Word-by-word meaning:

chandra vibhUshaNa = One who has the moon as an adornment = Lord Shiva; chandra = moon; purogaih = Adi = and others; vandya = worshipped; padAmburuhaM = lotus feet (pada = feet; ambu = water; ruha = growing); pavamAnam = the vedic name for Vayu; AnandatIrtha = one who helps us reach bliss or the Lord; mahA = great; munirAjam = king amongst those who meditate; govinda = the Lord extolled by the Vedas; bhakta = devotees;

shikhAmaNim = the crest jewel (used in the sense of foremost) ; IDe = I worship with devotion;

Translation:

I worship with great fervour, Ananda tIrtha, the king of great ascetics, the crest-jewel amongst devotees of Govinda; he is PavamAna, whose lotus feet is worshipped by celestials like Shiva, Chandra and others. Celestials are great munis (because they contemplate on the attributes of the Lord) and Vayu is the crest-jewel amongst them, their king and the one who helps them attain Govinda, the Parabrahma extolled by the vedas.

Notes:

Amongst all the celestials, Shiva is subject to the special grace of Vayu. He is supposed to have spent 40 brahma-kalpas under the tutelage of Vayu, as his disciple (“kritti vAsane hinde nI nAlvattu kalpa sameeranoLu shishyatva vahisi” HKS 1.10) .

It would have been sufficient to say "chandravibhUShana purogaiH" since Shiva is higher than Chandra in the hierarchy, but this leaves room for the question “does the list of Vayu devotees include Shiva also? Or, does it mean all deities following Shiva?” To remove this doubt, the verse says ‘Chandra VibhushAna chandra purogaiH’ to convey that "Shiva, deities at his level, and deities between Shiva and Chandra, then Chandra and the deities below Chandra - all of them bow to PavamAna”.

Verse 2:

prANa gaNAdhipatiM bhuvi vANIpRANasamam dayayA hyavatIrNam
AnandatIrtha mahAmunirAjam govinda bhakta shikhAmaNimIDe

ಪ್ರಾಣ ಗಣಾಧಿಪತಿಂ ಭುವಿ ವಾಣೀಪ್ರಾಣಸಮಂ ದಯಯಾ ಹ್ಯವತಿರ್ಣಮ್
ಆನಂದತೀರ್ಥ ಮಹಾಮುನಿರಾಜಂ ಗೋವಿಂದ ಭಕ್ತ ಶಿಖಾಮಣಿಮೀಡೇ

Introduction to Verse 2:

The first verse focused on the the mula or external form of the Lord, Vayu and other celestials. that pervade brahmAnDa (the universe). The same

group enters the pinDAnDa (the living body) to regulate the functioning of living beings. In the human body, the Lord takes on many forms but one of the most important of these is the bimba, which is unique to each being. Vayu becomes PrANadevaru or Mukhya PrANa. Other celestials become tattvAbhimAni devatas (patron deities who regulate the functioning of various organs and components of the body). The second verse extols the Mukhya PrANA form of Vayu inside the body. In this context, ‘Govinda’ means the ‘the Lord who is present in every sensory organ of the body’. Since the celestials have the ability to replicate themselves and enter the body of living beings to regulate their functioning as part of their sAdhane they are ‘maha munis’. Prana is the crest-jewel amongst them and their king.

Word-by-word meaning:

prANa = sensory organ or in general, any part of the body; gaNa = group; adhipatiM = head; bhuvi = (to) earth; vANIpRANasamam = equal to the Lord of Vani (Chaturmukha Brahma); dayayA = out of compassion; hi = indeed; avatIrNam = one who descended (to earth or to the body of living beings); Ananda tIrtha = one who helps us reach bliss or the Lord; mahA = great; munirAjam = the king of the celestials who reside in the body; govinda = the Lord who is present in every sensory organ of the body (can also mean bimba); bhakta = devotees; shikhAmaNim = the crest jewel (used in the sense of foremost) ; IDe = I worship with devotion;

Translation:

I worship with great fervour, Ananda tIrtha, the king of great ascetics, the crest-jewel amongst devotees of Govinda; he is prANagaNAdhipati, the most important amongst the sensory organs in the body. He is equal to the Lord of Vani (Chaturmukha Brahma) and has come down to the earth (or to the body of living beings) out of compassion. Celestials are great munis because they have the ability to replicate themselves and enter the body of every living being as part of their sAdhane. PrANA is their king and the one who helps them attain Govinda, their individual BimbAs.

Notes:

The word ‘prANa’ comes from the dhAtu ‘aNa’ which expands into ‘gatou’ (movement, knowledge) and ‘CheshTAYam’ (activities, life). Hence prANa means somebody who controls our living and all associated activities. In the

finest sense of the word, it can only mean Lord Narayana because He is responsible for the creation, sustenance, destruction, management and other activities of this universe and all its contents (jada as well as jIvas). After the Lord, the next choice would be Vayu or mukhya prAna because it is he (under the control of the Lord) who controls our life breath, our activities and all our senses. All the lesser celestials who control our body and its functioning do so under his control and guidance. prANagaNAdhipati also reminds us that Vayu is jIvottama and occupies a very high position in the hierarchy of gods.

After learning that Vayu enters the bodies of different living beings (ant, insect, elephant, human etc) as Mukhya prAna one gets a doubt “is this form inferior in any form or manner to the original form because of the body it resides in?” This is answered by the word ‘avateerNam’ meaning that there is no degradation or decrease in his inherent power. However, the extent to which this power is manifested may vary based on the body of the living being.

The term ‘hi’ is used to indicate something well known (in literature or by word of mouth). Hence ‘hi avateerNam’ means it is a well known fact that “Vayu descended to Earth”. This fact has been documented in several puranas and the Vedas (for example, the BaLiTtha sUkta).

The use of the word ‘dayaya’ needs some explanation. Each jIva gets a gross body or sthUla deha when it takes birth on earth. Only the actions performed by the jIva with this body count towards sAdhane and spiritual progress. The jIva can stay in the gross body only as long as Vayu or PrAna devaru stays in the body. The moment he leaves it, everybody else (the jIva, other celestial beings and even Lord Hari) leaves along with him. In addition, as stated above, he controls our life breath, our activities and all our senses. Hence every act performed by the jIva (including its sAdhane) is a result of the compassion shown by prAna devaru. And what makes it even more praiseworthy is that he expects absolutely nothing in return from the jivas! This sentiment is best exemplified in the song by Sri jagannAtha dAsaru (‘apamrutyu parihariso aniladeva’) where he address Prana devaaru as ‘animitta bandhu’ (a totally selfless, altruistic close relative) in every birth; he further goes on to say that this body is a vehicle for performing sAdhana that Prana devaru has bestowed on us out of compassion.

Verse 3:

shrI hanumantamanantabhujjishyam laMghitasindhudastamahIdram
AnandatIrtha mahAmunirAjam govinda bhakta shikhAmaNimIDe

ಶ್ರೀ ಹನುಮಂತಮನಂತಭುಜಿಷ್ಯಮ್ ಲಂಘಿತಸಿಂಧುಮುದಸ್ತಮಹೀದ್ರಮ್
ಆನಂದತೀರ್ಥ ಮಹಾಮುನಿರಾಜಂ ಗೋವಿಂದ ಭಕ್ತ ಶಿಖಾಮಣಿಮೀಡೇ

Introduction to Verse 3:

After praising the forms of Vayu in the brahmANDa and pinDAnDa, the stuti moves on to the incarnations of Vayu. The first incarnation is Hanumanta, where he served the Lord who incarnated as Ramachandra.

In the context of this verse, the word ‘govinda’ means Lord Ramachandra as can be seen from the following discussion. ‘go’ means ‘arrow’, hence ‘govinda’ is one who attained the arrow (i.e, one who is known for his archery skills). As Lord Krishna says in the Gita, He is Ramachandra amongst people wielding a bow. ‘go’ also means rays emanating from the sun; this could also mean ‘soorya vamsha’ the clan that originated from the Sun. Lord Rama is certainly the greatest amongst the kings of this line. ‘go’ also means water; hence ‘govinda’ means one who reached water (and crossed it). This could mean Lord Rama who crossed the ocean with the monkey army.

The celestials incarnated in various forms –humans, Rakshasas or ogres (Vibhishana), monkeys, bears, birds etc. Since the sole purpose of their incarnation was to serve Lord Rama and they did that despite the form they took, they are called ‘maha munis’ and Hanumanta is the chief amongst them or maha-muni-rAja. He is also Anand-tirtha as the following points illustrate:

- he brought Ananda to Sita (and Rama) by crossing the ocean
- he brought Ananda to Sugreeva and Vibhishana (by securing Rama’s grace)
- he brought Ananda to the injured monkeys and Lakshmana by bringing the Sanjeeva-giri

The verse makes clever use of the word ‘ananta’ to convey 3 meanings in one shot! And what is even more wonderful is that all these three meanings are in one verse of Sri Hari Vayu stuti! ‘Ananta’ is one of the names of the Lord, it is also the name of Adisesha, it also means ‘infinite’. bhujishya means ‘slave or companion’. Hence ‘ananta bhujishyam’ means all of the following:

- one who is a servant of the Lord or has the Lord as his master ("trAta yasya tridhAmA")
- one who has Adisesha as his servant or companion ("kinkarAH shankarAdyAH")
- one who has countless jIvas as his servants ("jagaduta vashagaM")

In a similar fashion, the verse cleverly uses the various interpretations of ‘udasta’ (lifted / thrown away / indifferent) to convey multiple meanings. In the context of this verse, udasta mahIdram means the following:

- He lifted and brought sanjIvanI parvata ("girimutpATayantam gR^hitva AyAntaM")
- After restoring the dead and injured, he threw it away with indifference ('xiptaH pashchAt.h salIlaM...vyagrabuddhya')
- He was indifferent to the mountain i.e., when the Mainaka mountain came out of the ocean to offer him rest while crossing the ocean, he declined the offer and merely embraced the mountain ("naivAtra vishramaNAmaicchad ...Ashlishya parvatavaram" Sundarakanda nirnaya of MBTN)

Word-by-word meaning:

shrI hanumantam = Hanumanta; ananta = Lord / Adisesha / infinite; bhujishyam = servant or companion; laMghita = crossed or jumped over; sindhum = the ocean; udasta = lifted / thrown away / indifferent; mahIdram = large mountain; AnandatIrtha = Hanumanta; mahAmunirAjam = king of Rama's devotees; govinda = Lord Ramachandra; bhakta = devotees (Lakshmana and other brothers of Rama, Vanara sena, Vibhishana, citizens of Ayodhya); shikhAmaNim = the crest jewel (used in the sense of foremost) ; IDe = I worship with devotion;

Translation:

I worship with great fervour, Ananda tIrtha, the king of great ascetics, the crest-jewel amongst devotees of Govinda. As Hanumanta he lifted and brought sanjIvanI parvata and later threw it away with indifference; he also did not accept the offer of Mainaka mountain to rest. He has the Lord as his master, Adishesha and other celestials and countless other living beings as his servants. These celestials are great munis because they incarnated in various forms to serve Lord Rama as part of their sAdhane. Hanumanta is their king, the one who brought them happiness at various points in their lives and the one who helps them attain Ramachandra.

Notes:

The name ‘HanumAn’ is derived from the ‘hana’ dhatu which has means ‘gatau’ (movement, knowledge). Thus the primary meaning of hanumAn is ‘very great gyAni’. That is why the very first word used in the prayer to Hanumanta is “buddhiH”. In this sense, all the three incarnations of Vayu (and the main form) can be called Hanuman!

In the SundarakAnDa nirNaya of MahabhArata tAtparya nirNaya, Acharya Madhva himself describes the happiness that Lord Rama demonstrated after hearing that Hanumanta had located Sita. He says that Rama was ‘paramAbhitushTa’ (overwhelmingly happy) and could not think of anything to bestow on Hanumanta which would match the magnitude of the help rendered by him; finally, He offered himself to Hanumanta and embraced him with a full heart!

Verse 4:

bhIShaNaduShTakulAntaka bhImam bhImamabhItidamiShTajanAnAm
AnandatIrtha mahAmunirAjam govinda bhakta shikhAmaNimIDe

ಭೀಷಣದುಷ್ಟಕುಲಾಂತಕ ಭೀಮಂ ಭೀಮಮಭೀತಿದಮಿಷ್ಟಜನಾನಾಮ್
ಆನಂದತೀರ್ಥ ಮಹಾಮುನಿರಾಜಂ ಗೋವಿಂದ ಭಕ್ತ ಶಿಖಾಮಣಿಮೀಡೇ

Introduction to Verse 4:

After worshipping Hanumanta, the stuti next moves to Bhima, the second incarnation. Here Govinda refers to Krishna (the protector of cows and cowherds) and VedavyAsa (the one who organized the vedas).

The celestials incarnated as humans – Vidura, Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Yadavas, Pandavas etc. Since they were all well versed in the shAstras and served the Lord they are called ‘maha munis’ and Bhima is the chief amongst them or maha-muni-rAja. Unlike the other celestials who were born because of curses or other causes beyond their control, Bhima incarnated with the sole purpose of rendering service to Lord Krishna and Lord VedavyAsa (“yasya sarvottamasya shushrUshhArthaM”, “yAbhyA.N shushrUshhuH AsIH kurukulajanane”, “bhagavathi bhaktyatishayena bhagavadupaasanArtham svecchayaa gR^ihiita ruupaaNaam”). He is also maha-muni-rAja because he ‘saw’ the many sUkta while killing DushAsana.

Bhima is Anand-tirtha as the following points illustrate:

- he brought Ananda to people in general by killing demons like baka, Hidimba, KirmIra etc.
- he brought Ananda to Draupadi and other pAnDavas by killing kIchaka
- he brought Ananda to mother earth by destroying 6 Akshouhanis out of the 11 assembled by the Kauravas in the kurukshetra war
- he brought Ananda to Lord Krishna by killing JarAsandha (exceeding the happiness He got from the RajasUya and Ashvamedha yagas performed by Yuddhishtira).

The verse also makes clever use of the name ‘bhIma’. The dictionary meaning of ‘bhIma’ is ‘fearful, formidable, terrific’. This is the feeling that he inspires in the vile and wicked, the ones who are loka-kanTakas (menace to all of mankind). But his name can also be interpreted as ‘bhI ma’ (do not fear). This is for innocent, good-natured, god-fearing people. Thus the very name indicates the dual purpose of BhIma’s incarnation – ‘duShTa shixana, ShiShTa raxana’. This is the main theme highlighted in the verse.

Word-by-word meaning:

BhIShaNa = fearsome, duShTa = vile and wicked, kula = hordes or clans, antaka = destroyer, bhImam = awe inspiring, bhImam = Bhima, abhItida = granting fearlessness (removing fear); iShTajanAnAm = (belonging to) beloved people (i.e., those who are good natured); AnandatIrtha = one who helps us reach bliss or the Lord; mahA = great; munirAjam = king amongst

those who meditate; govinda = Lord Krishna, VedavyAsa; bhakta = devotees; shikhAmaNim = the crest jewel (used in the sense of foremost) ; IDe = I worship with devotion;

Translation:

I worship with great fervour, Ananda tIrtha, the king of great ascetics, the crest-jewel amongst devotees of Govinda. As Bhima he destroyed hordes of fearsome, vile and wicked people, but at the same time removed the fear of (inspired courage in) good-natured, god-fearing people. The celestials (Vidura, Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Yadavas, Pandavas) are great munis because they incarnated in various forms to serve Lord Krishna and VedavyAsa as part of their sAdhane. Bhima is their king, the one who brought them happiness at various points in their lives and the one who helps them attain Krishna.

Notes:

Purandara dAsaru says “bhImana nenedare biTTu hogade bhIti”, hinting that the very word ‘bhi mA’ means do not fear!

Verse 5:

shAntamanantanishAntasamAhve shAntakulekhakule kila jAtam
AnandatIrtha mahAmunirAjam govinda bhakta shikhAmaNimIDe

ಶಾಂತಮನಂತನಿಶಾಂತಸಮಾಹ್ವೇ ಶಾಂತಕುಲೇಖಕುಲೇ ಕಿಲ ಜಾತಮ್
ಆನಂದತೀರ್ಥ ಮಹಾಮುನಿರಾಜಂ ಗೋವಿಂದ ಭಕ್ತ ಶಿಖಾಮಣಿಮೀಡೇ

Introduction to Verse 5:

After worshipping the first two incarnations of Vayu, the stuti moves to Acharya Madhva, the third incarnation, the one that Kalyani Devi directly saw and interacted with. Here Govinda refers primarily to VedavyAsa but can also mean Krishna and Rama since Acharya Madhva worshipped them and gave their icons to his disciples for worship.

Ananda tIrtha is his name. His school of philosophy has been graced by mahA-munis like PadmanAbha tIrtharu, Jaya tIrtharu, ShripAdarAjaru,

VyAsarAyarU, VadirAjarU, Vijayendraru, RaghUttamaru , Rayaru etc. It also features great haridasas who were also mahA-munis even though they were not ascetics or sanyasis as commonly understood.

Ananda tIrtha is also the name of the shAstra given by Acharya Madhava (his teachings). This is also mahA-muni-rAja, because it is the king (raja) amongst all works worthy of maha manana (deep meditation and contemplation). It is also Ananda-tIrtha because it leads one to liberation from the cycle of births and deaths

The verse hints at the main purpose of Acharya Madhva's incarnation – to silence all the false and wrong doctrines propogated by vile philosophers.

Word-by-word meaning:

ShAntam= peaceful and serene; anantanishAntasamAhve = equal in lustre to infinite rising suns (ananta = infinite; nishAnta = one who ends the night = rising sun); shAnta = silenced; kulekha = bad writers or bad commentators; kule = (in the) clan; kila jAtam = took birth; AnandatIrtha = one who helps us reach bliss or the Lord; mahA muni = the great ascetics and haridasa who have graced the tattvavada school; rAjam = king; govinda = VedavyAsa, Rama, Krishna etc; bhakta = devotees; shikhAmaNim = the crest jewel (used in the sense of foremost) ; IDe = I worship with devotion;

Translation:

I worship with great fervour, Ananda tIrtha, the king of great ascetics, the crest-jewel amongst devotees of Govinda. He is the picture of peace and tranquillity, equal in lustre to infinite rising suns. He was born in a lineage that silenced bad / wicked writers or commentators. The celestials incarnated as ascetics and haridasas in his lineage to serve the Lord (and Acharya Madhva) as part of their sAdhane. Acharya Madhva is their king; his teachings are worthy of deep meditation and contemplation, and lead one to liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.

Notes:

In the MadhvanAma, ShripAdarAja repeatedly addresses Vayu as 'namma kula guru rAyanu' which is the same as 'maha muni rAjam'.

In the first two incarnations Vayu used his physical prowess (as well as his intellect) to put down the wicked. In the third incarnation, as an ascetic he abjured the use of violence and used his intellect to silence the vile. The verse begins with the word 'shAnta' to underscore this point.

Acharya Madhva was born in a lineage which opposed bad commentators boldly. More details about the great personalities who vigorously opposed wrong doctrines are given in Mani Manjari. His father, Madhyagehabhatta, was also in this category even though he was by birth an advaitin.

The Sumadhvavijaya gives a graphic picture of the state of things before the advent of Acharya Madhva. It portrays the scene as one of darkness and despair, and the birth of the Acharya to the dawn of a new sun. This verse uses the same metaphor.

|| bhAratIramaNamukhyaprANAntargata shrIkR^ishhNArpaNamastu ||

|| ಭಾರತೀ ರಮಣ ಮುಖ್ಯಪ್ರಾಣಾಂತರ್ಗತ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾರ್ಪಣಮಸ್ತು ||