

**Explication of Supportive form of Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā in the Śrīmad
Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa**

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Abstract

This research article explores the supportive form of Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa līlā in the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa. It examines characters and themes of the divine play of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as portrayed in the scripture. The article highlights the significant role of the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa in presenting Śrī Kṛṣṇa līlā as a means of spiritual instruction and devotion. The researcher uses Baruch Spinoza's principle on Nature. The philosopher believes that the divine being is the basis of morality. Through an analysis of the text, it sheds light on the philosophical aspects embedded within the narrative. Interpretative method is used in the analysis of the primary text. By delving into the supportive nature of Śrī Kṛṣṇa līlā in the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the scripture's theological significance and its impact on devotees' spiritual lives. The findings of this article suggest that a number of factors instigate intimacy between Śrī Kṛṣṇa līlā and supportive form of Nature in the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa. The main conclusion drawn from this investigation is that Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa is a classical epic writer who sees Nature in favor of Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the performance of his līlās.

Keywords: Investigation, līlā, māhāpurāṇa, scripture, yogic power.

Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā of the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa: An Introduction

The Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa focuses on Nature through the character of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One gets an analogy between Nature and the text to establish its importance for humans. In the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa "accepts Prakṛiti for play" (Jīva Gośvāmī 58). Basing his argument on such idea, the analyst believes that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Prakṛiti are same. Vedavyāsa writes in confirmation about Nature as the production of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The writer argues: "The Lord of the universe maintains all planets inhabited by

demigods, men and lower animals"¹(1. 2: 34). This argument addresses the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a superhuman who has capacity to retain Nature from devastation. To add more bricks on this line of argument, one can contemplate that Śrī Kṛṣṇa motivates himself for the use of Nature appropriately. In relation to this subject, Prabhupāda further explores the necessity of Nature for humans "for the sake of further enlightenment" (191). The relation of human beings to Nature should be positive. If not, it causes harm to both plants and animals.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* presents sufficient evidences for the basis of Nature through Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. The text establishes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a Nature lover who dedicates his life not only for the welfare of creatures but also for the conservation of Nature. Nature is a noticeable point in the playful activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa both in the physical and the transcendental worlds. For this reason, it is imperative to understand land of Vraja as "geographically identified, venerated, and visited regularly, since the times of Krishna" (qtd. in Hari 53). This expression focuses on the use of Vraja *Bhūmi* as the background for the performance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. During his *līlā*, each natural phenomena of that place is dear to him. The description of Yumanā River, *Kādambā* tree, Govardhan Hillock, creepers on the plain area, trees, and bushes show the importance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

Researchers and devotees do not differentiate between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. To strengthen the argument, Akrūra, a friend and secretary of Śrī Kṛṣṇa sees analogy between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Nature:

Fire is said to be Your face, the earth Your feet, the sun Your eye, and the sky Your navel. The directions are Your sense of hearing, the chief demigods Your arms, and the oceans Your abdomen. Heaven is thought to be Your head, and the wind Your vital air and physical strength. The trees and plants are the hairs on Your body, the clouds the hair on Your head, and the mountains the bones and nails of You, the Supreme. The passage of day and night is the blinking of Your eyes, the progenitor of mankind Your genitals, and the rain Your semen². (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10.40:13-14)

Akrūra notices the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the objects of Nature such as the fire, the sun, the sky, directions, oceans, wind, trees, plants, clouds, mountains, and rain. His dramatic character in relation to Nature is developed most fully in the *Bhāgavata*. In this context, Dev Dutt Pattanaik argues that "Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the world, he is in the world and the world is in him" (28). Based on this argument, we analyze that Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* does not have completion in the absence of Nature. It is interesting to note that Nature is inseparable from the playful activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

To look into the broader framework of Nature in the text, it becomes instructive to stress Śrī Kṛṣṇa as an embodiment of Nature. He has dark complexion like the color of clouds and does the welfare for others. The presence of dark clouds portrays fertility on the earth. During the birth time of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the sky is cloudy. Vasudeva, Devaki, and other well-wishers believe that the birth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is going to be held for the welfare of human beings on the earth. From the time of his childhood, he does not cause any problems in Nature. "He

has been evoked as a *guru* for environmental education" (qtd. in Tagare 47). To support this idea, one claims that Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes conscious to humans to conserve the objects of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa*.

The birth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in the critical circumstances inside the prison house of Kamsa. The analysis of the birth discussed in the text shows that his birth brings the sign of hope to the *Yadu* dynasty. To retain the value of Nature, sage Ugrasravāsūta mentions the sages Saunakādī in Naimīsāranya forest and he compares Śrī Kṛṣṇa with sandalwood: "The unborn is unborn for the glorification of pious kings, and others say that He is born to please King *Yadu*, one of Your dearest devotees. You appear in the family as sandalwood appears in the Malaya hills" ³ (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa* 1.8:32). Explaining this statement, one postulates that a tree of sandalwood becomes the centre of attention in the Malaya Hill and the beholders neglect other trees due to the fragrance of the sandalwood. The comparison of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to sandalwood of Malaya Hill makes Nature valuable. It presents the view that Nature is the embodiment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* takes place in rivers, wind, rainbow, birds, and lotus flower in Vṛndāvana. The attraction of rivers with fresh water and the lakes draw the attention of beholders. The scenario of lotus flowers promotes natural beauty. Nature establishes harmony with creatures. The natural world is green, matured, and healthy. The rivers swell in rainy season and their appearance attracts creatures. The wind blows and makes rivers powerful with strength. Readers realize harmony in Nature in interrelation to *līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The involvement of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Nature is to make a balance between Nature and society. He was born in Mathura city but was reared in Vṛndāvana village. One examines that Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes a bridge between villagers and town dwellers. When a rainbow appears, it becomes the centre of attention for humans. Similarly, the advent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes the focusing matters for others and his activities belong to postulate the issues of Nature.

Readers find manifestation of Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa*. No one imagines living on the earth without support of natural objects. If human beings understand the link between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature, they know his love to Nature. Due to self-realization, Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not do selfish works in his life but rather he dedicates for the welfare of others. In his company, humans, animals, plants, rivers, and insects get relief. If humans make an effort to conserve Nature from local and cosmic levels, we control the intervention of human beings upon Nature.

Problem, Objectives and Methodology

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Māhāpurāṇa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa inscribes that Nature is not just Nature; it is the *dharma* for humanity. As *dharma*, Nature sustains existence of humans and other creatures on the earth. Śrī Kṛṣṇa worships the sun, trees, mountains, and small plants. He needs no idols to worship in his life. The objects of Nature are his deities and Govardhana hillock is his God. The hero uses the feathers of peacocks (which have been discarded) as his crown and argues that nothing is waste in the creation of this world. One gets all the objects of Nature in the body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The researcher has explored research questions through close reading of the relevant passages in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* presents a complex and multifaceted view of Nature. Though readers and researchers find many general problems in the epic, primarily this study concentrates to address the following specific research questions:

- What does the world of Nature play in the supportive form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*?
- How does the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* portray supportive form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's relationship with Nature?
- Why does Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* relate to supportive form of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*?

The specific objectives of this study are to explore supportive Nature in the spiritual life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; to examine supportive form of Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, and to investigate the relation of the supportive form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The objectives could be pursued through research methodology and textual analysis that draw insights from Nature and ecology.

To find out reasons, the researcher examines motives, precepts, and activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the light of Baruch Spinoza's principle on Nature for the analysis on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The philosopher argues that the things of Nature and God are same (120). He further explicates that the law of Nature is the basis for morality. One gets similarities between Spinoza's conception of Nature and certain themes in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is often portrayed as the ultimate substance that underlines all of existence. The world is claimed to be his divine energy and unified substance is the basis of all things in the world.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*: A Review of Literature

Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa's the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* discusses on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* from different perspectives. This epic has drawn the attention of different critical thinkers, readers, and academicians. Major critics, writers, and men of intellects such as Sāraṥhā Darśini and Loknath Swami have interpreted Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* from his *Yogic Power*; Roshen and Whitney Stanford have reviewed Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a cowherd. In the same way, Carl G. Jung, Northrope Frye Abrams, and Harpham have analyzed Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* from mythical perspective. In the similar vein, Swami Girishananda, Srīla Visanatha Cakravarti have reviewed on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* from perspective of *Rāsa Līlā*. In this connection, Sāraṥhā Darśini exposes the *Yogic Power* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. In her words: "To give bliss to Lord Brahma and the mothers, Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself into both the calves and the boys. Kṛṣṇa could do this because He is the master of *mahat-tattva* and the creator of the entire cosmic manifestation" (327). *Mahat-tattva* is *budhi* (knowledge) from which there is the perfection of *yogic power* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Brahmā tries to bewilder Śrī Kṛṣṇa by hiding calves and boys but he himself is bewildered from the *yogic power* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa because of the replacement of Śrī Kṛṣṇa into the cowherd boys and their calves in their respective places. Loknath Swami follows Darśini's footsteps from his argument: "He expanded and in matter no time there were as many cowherd boys as many he had that day coming with him herding

the cows” (4). This type of miraculous implementation of the *yogic* power cannot be found in the characters of the other heroes and superheroes in the history of the world-myth.

Unlike Darśini and Swami, Roshen corroborates that Kṛṣṇa is reared in the community of cowherd and is given the name “Govinda,” which means “One who gives pleasure to the cows” (16). One can get many stories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s connection to cows during his lifetime. The commentator further explores that there are similarities between a mother and a cow. In the similar fashion, Whitney Sanford is apt to state: “The cow is fundamental both economically and spiritually, and by protecting the cows and the *brāhmanas* [priests], people are guaranteed both material and spiritual success” (298-99). From the connection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with cows and pastoral life, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* manifests Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a cowherd boy and he dedicates himself for grazing and protecting cows. While Kṛṣṇa is in the pastoral life, he plays the flute to attract plants and animals. The melodious music from Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s flute is one of the discussed subjects of the text.

Carl G. Jung has different line of argument on Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and the critical thinker appraises Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* from mythical interpretation. He evaluates that "collective unconscious of the human race are expressed in myths, religion, dreams, and private fantasies, as well as in works of literature" (qtd. in Abrams and Harpham 18). It shows that the manifestation of myth is found not only in religion but also in dreams, fantasies, and literature. It is related to condition, events, and the activities of people who had become different from others. On this ground, Northrope Frye clarifies that "some of the figures of myth have had a pleasanter after life" (401). In this regard, a myth passes from generation to generation drawing attention of human beings from the admirable activities of the mythical hero. When it remains in contact to religion, myth becomes popular everywhere.

In his counterargument, Swami Girishanand Saraswati bases his discussion on the *Rāsa Līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with *gopīs* at night in the forest of Vṛndāvana. He finds that the *gopīs* give up everything for this *Rāsa* (10). The *gopīs* are the components to promote *Rāsa Līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Likewise, Śrīla Viśanātha Cakravartī incorporates: “ The *gopīs* heard the sound of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s flute, their bodies had been twofold, material and spiritual, and upon hearing the flute, they gave up the material bodies, which their husbands had enjoyed” (qtd. in Prabhupāda 525). Cakravartī applies the spiritual lens for the analysis of *Rāsa Līlā* between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*. From the magical sound of the divine player’s flute, the *gopīs* have self- realization and they neglect their physical bodies without paying attention to their duties at home and rush to the nearby forest for the union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the similar vein, Mohan Kumar Pokhrel explores that spiritual bodies of the *gopīs* surpass the material bodies (26). Thus, this analysis highlights the romance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs*.

The aforementioned review shows that there is perfection in the *yogic* power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. Firstly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses the *yogic* power to instruct Brahmā by replacing all the calves and the cowherd boys in their respective forms. Śrī Kṛṣṇa changes himself into the calves and the cowherd boys. Secondly, he swallows the bonfire to keep calm to the fearful cowherd boys, animals, and other creatures. Thirdly, Kṛṣṇa multiplies himself into different numbers to please the *gopīs*. Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses his *yogic*

power for three times for different purposes to give a lesson to Brahmā, to save the cowherd community, and to please the *gopīs*.

Nature in Supporting Form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* portrays supporting form of Nature in relation to beauty, purity, and ecological harmony on the earth. The beauty, happiness, and the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are related to supporting form of Nature. In it, Nature becomes dynamic according to context and psychology of characters. The writer asserts in the beauty of Nature as the base of entertainment and the fulfillment of the needs of creatures. Supporting form of Nature originates positive sense in the life of human beings and the other creatures. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has good interrelation to Nature and wants to remain happy in the natural world. Vṛndāvana is the main setting during the time of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's childhood and the scenario manifests supporting form of Nature. In this venue, the creatures feel happy in company of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the richness of natural beauty.

Supporting form of Nature affects human beings and other creatures in Vṛndāvana. Keeping the supporting form of Nature at the centre of theme, Śukadeva presents it as the following:

Between Nandeśvara and Mahāvana is a place named Vṛndāvana. This place is very suitable because it is lush with grass, plants, and creepers for the cows and other animals. It has nice gardens and tall mountains and is full of facilities for the happiness of all the *gopas* and *gopīs* and our animals.⁴ (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 11: 27)

This argument supports the point that Vṛndāvana is rich and matured in supporting form of Nature. The cowherd community is fond of the beauty of Vṛndāvana forest. Because of troubles from demon Ariṣṭāsura, they shift from Nandagrām to Vṛndāvana. It shows that supporting form of Nature is suitable for human beings to live without any problems. Human beings of the *Paurāṇic* period had their selection to live in the place where Nature supported them. On the basis of this relation, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has supporting activities and helps others without any sign of selfishness.

Supporting form of Nature inspires human beings to be cooperative and helpful for others. Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa intellectually reaches to this connection and forwards his idea: "Kṛṣṇa created happiness for every creature in Vṛndāvana, including the humans, animals, and plants" (106). It hints that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is dear to Vṛndāvana and the venue is memorable for him. It further proves that supporting form of Nature is the foundation-stone of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. Both Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma make Vrajabhūmi as their playground and perform their *līlās*. The geographical identity of Vraja Bhumi is closely associated with the *līlās* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As a profound narrator, Śukadeva explicates: "Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma passed their childhood age in Vrajabhūmi by engaging in activities of childish play, such as playing hide-and seek; constructing a make-believe bridge on the ocean, and jumping here and there like monkeys"⁵ (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 11: 59). Based on this argument, one can state that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have their merrymaking life-style in Vraja Bhūmī playing games and sports. The supporting form of Nature makes them easy

for the creation of fun in their childhood. Both the children and Nature seem to be in good harmony of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in that place. The supporting form of Nature images please to the inhabitants of Vraja Bhūmī. In this form of Nature, one can get the scenario of progress, success, and happiness. The activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which take place there, teach human beings how to make harmony with Nature.

One can get the maturity and richness of the supporting form of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* at night before the *Rāsa Līlā*. The supporting form of Nature is in climax at this moment. The scenario of the night time in the forest of Vṛndāvana is a typical example of supporting form of Nature:

Kṛṣṇa saw the unbroken disk of the full moon glowing with the red effulgence of newly applied vermilion, as if it were the face of the goddess of fortune. He also saw the *kumuda* lotuses opening in response to the moon's presence and the forest gently illuminated by its rays. Thus the Lord began to play sweetly on His flute, attracting the minds of the beautiful-eyed *gopīs*.⁶ (10. 29: 3)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa belongs to the lunar dynasty and the moon plays a prominent role for the background of the *Rāsa Līlā*. The presence of the moon promotes natural beauty of the earth and raises the mood of Śrī Kṛṣṇa for *rāsa* dance. Thus, this natural beauty has reciprocal relationship with *rāsa līlā*. Nature is the sources for the creation of emotions and love.

About the supporting form of Nature, Edwin F. Bryant further explores that "A fresh breeze blew in that region, pleasing the senses and carrying pleasant fragrance " (119). This is a positive sign that the beauty of Nature is a joy for beholders. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* refers the supporting form of Nature of Indraprastha: "Requested by the king to stay with them, the almighty Lord remained happily in Indraprastha during the months of the rainy season, giving joy to the eyes of the city's residents"]⁷ (10. 58: 12). The discussion shows that Yudhishtira requests Śrī Kṛṣṇa to stay in Indraprastha for pleasure in natural beauty. Rainy season symbolizes fertility and Nature is seen at the apex of her beauty. Green scenario of Nature draws the attention of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and it evokes him awareness about the utility of Nature. The pleasure with Nature surpasses to the other entertaining things for humans. It instructs human beings to see the beauty of Nature for the sake of peace and pleasure.

One can get the reflection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's passion in the creation of Dvārakā. The scenario of water in front of the palace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa promotes the value of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The noticeable beauty is presented as follows:

The Lord then entered His capital. The city was lavishly decorated with flags and victory arches, and its avenues and crossways were all sprinkled with water. As conch shells, *ānakas* and *dundubhi* drums resounded, the Lord's relatives, the *brāhmaṇas* and the general populace all came forward to greet Him respectfully.⁸ (10. 63: 52)

It shows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses Nature to promote the beauty of his palace in Dvārakā. There is the amalgamation of the beauty of Nature with artificial beauty of the palace. Kṛṣṇa regarded the objects of Nature as the source for merrymaking. He is fond of natural beauty and the scene of the spring reminds him the scenario of waterfalls in forest.

The activities and the characteristics of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are related to the activities of a folk hero. On the basis of this notion, Benjamin Preciado Solis describes Nature referring Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a folk hero. Responding to such claims, he argues that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in favor of Nature (87). Explaining this statement, one can establish Kṛṣṇa as a folk hero due to his love for Nature. Ugrasravā Suta discusses on the Nature of Dvārakā: "The city of Dvārakāpurī was filled with the opulences of all seasons. There were hermitages, orchards, flower gardens, parks, and reservoirs of water breeding lotus flowers all over"⁹ (1. 11: 12). Based on the quote, one can agree that Nature is the backbone in the perfection of human civilization. The gardens contribute to the natural beauty of Dvārakāpurī. There are no references of industries, garbage, and pollution. The reality is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has ideal lifestyle and his Dvārakāpurī is the ideal place to live where one can get harmony between Nature and creatures. This remarkable image of Nature is useful for the revelation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

Human beings can observe the supporting form of Nature in the panorama of Dvārakā. The city of Dvārakā which is built by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the area of 90 sq miles on the Indian Ocean is naturally an enchanting place. Śukadeva explains the natural beauty of Dvārakā: "The city was filled with the sounds of birds and bees flying about the parks and pleasure gardens, while its lakes, crowded with blooming *indīvara*, *ambhoja*, *kahlāra*, *kumuda* and *utpala* lotuses, resounded with the calls of swans and cranes"¹⁰ (10. 69: 2-4). This idea confirms that the premises of Dvārakā is full of natural beauty. When Nārada arrives at Dvārakā, he is fascinated by the beauty of Nature. There are 900,000 palaces (Prabhupāda: 869) and the palaces are surrounded by beautiful gardens and parks. It is a clear manifestation of the beauty of Nature in the magical form. One can realize that Nature is the foundation stone of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa lives in the forest of Vṛndāvana, he is pleased with the world of Nature but he develops the same environment in Dvārakā by planting trees and flowers. He plants various types of trees in the premises of his palaces. If one intends, he can make the world of Nature in the city as the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā city.

Ranchor Prime connects Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* with Nature: "The best way to teach environmental concern is through Krishna's life. Krishna is the only savior of the environment" (57). It is exhilarating to see that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the base to conserve environment. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* focuses on the supporting form of Nature by showing contrast between town and the forest dwellers. This contrast creates interest for readers and researchers. Śrī Kṛṣṇa prefers Nature in his argument: "Residence of forest is in the model of goodness, residence in a town is in the mode of passion, residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance, and residence in a place where reside is transcendental"¹¹ (11. 25: 25). In this context, it is important to remember that the inhabitants near forest are better than town dwellers. Śrī Kṛṣṇa lives in village that is close to forest so that he is simpler in his activities and behaviors than the inhabitants of cities. The scenario of Nature affects in the psychology of human beings. One can claim that the people of country sides are helpful and co-operative for others. The supporting form of Nature shows intimacy between Śrī

Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature. It motivates human beings to live happily in the world of Nature without destroying it. There is encouragement for inhabitants to live close to Nature for betterment.

One can argue that the natural objects such as lotus flowers are the embodiment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. In this context, Kavi Karnapura extends the scope of Nature in Vṛndāvana contemplating that lotus flowers on lakes are as the feet of Kṛṣṇa (5). The text formulates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys go to different places of forest to observe the scenario of Nature. Kṛṣṇa has intimate friendship with Nature and pleases to the cowherd boys, cows, and the other creatures of forest. For him, the beauty of Nature makes him and his mates happy. According to the survey of Śukadeva Gośvāmī:

Sometimes Kṛṣṇa would go to a somewhere distant place to see the beauty of the forest. Then all the other boys would run to accompany Him, each one saying, "I shall be the first to run and touch Kṛṣṇa! I shall touch Kṛṣṇa first!" In this way they enjoyed the life by repeatedly touching Kṛṣṇa.¹² (10. 12: 6)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanders hither and thither to satisfy himself from the beauty of Nature and other cowherd boys follow him. The mates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa accompany him to share happiness of natural beauty. Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, which is related to Nature, inspires human beings to go to forest like Śrī Kṛṣṇa. If human beings go to forest now and again, they may be careful about its pollution and destruction.

Rain symbolizes fertility, so it is the supporting form of Nature. Cornelia Dimmitt and J.A.B. Van Buitenen write about supporting form of Nature with evidence: "Rainclouds rumbled softly, pouring down showers of blossoms" (109). Based on this argument, one can argue that rainclouds cause rain and it brings changes from dreary landscape to fertility. With this conditioning, there is the depiction of supporting form of Nature in the autumn season tracing fertility. It is the season of mating and pregnancy for cows, women, and the female birds. It shows the supporting form of Nature that brings fertility in the life of creatures. Śukadeva extends the scope of supporting form of Nature:

By the influence of the autumn season, all the cows, does, women, and female birds became fertile and were followed by their respective mates in search of sexual enjoyment, just as activities performed for the service of the Supreme Lord are automatically followed by all beneficial results.¹³ (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 20: 46)

From this logical description, the autumn season is presented as the fertile time for creatures. The female creatures are engaged with their mates and their pregnancy is the news of happiness. If there is happiness, one gets the possibility of creation. We can agree if Nature remains in the supporting form, it brings fertility in the life of creatures. It indicates that happiness becomes the sign of creativity but Nature should be in favor of creatures. Human beings and other creatures do important works when Nature is in the supporting form with supporting actions.

The images relating to the Yamūnā River are remarkable and they have connection to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *gopās*, and *the gopīs* go to the river frequently either for water sports or

for other works. The river symbolizes fertility and the land which is situated near the Yamūnā River is arable for farming. Due to that river, the area is green, fresh, and healthy. Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes the scene of the Yamūnā River as follows:

My dear friends just see how this riverbank is extremely beautiful because of its pleasing atmosphere. And just see how the blooming lotuses are attracting bees and birds by their aroma. The humming and chirping of the bees and birds is echoing throughout the beautiful trees in the forest. Also here, the sands are clean and soft. Therefore, this must be considered the best place for our sporting and pastimes.¹⁴ (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 13: 5)

The aforementioned scenic description highlights the area of the Yamūnā River which is filled with the chirping and cooing sound of different birds. Here, we have picture that shows the connection between Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature. Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes his favorite place which is full of natural beauty. The bank of the Yamūnā River is full of blooming lotus flowers with sweet fragrance and the fragrance becomes the centre of attraction for bees and birds. This supporting form of Nature brings perfection of freedom for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his playmates.

There is climax of richness of natural beauty on the bank of the Yamūnā River. Richard L. Thompson associates his ideas about the value of the Yamūnā River. He ponders that the river is the base to entertain for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and other cowherd boys (190). From this perspective, human beings realize the intimacy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with rivers. In this connection, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* refers how Śrī Kṛṣṇa looks after the cows on the bank of the Yamūnā River: "Thus expressing His satisfaction with the beautiful forest of Vṛndāvana and its inhabitants, Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoyed tending the cows and other animals with His friends on the banks of the river Yamūnā below Govardhan Hill"¹⁵ (10. 15: 9). This discussion shows that cows and other animals are part of Nature and Śrī Kṛṣṇa treats cows not as his property but as intimate friends. The animals remain near him to endow pleasure. In supporting form of the world of Nature, the persons become aware of its ecological balance. This activity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa evokes awareness in Nature and this *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa gives a lesson to human beings to go to rivers and forests for eternal pleasure.

Keeping the supporting form of Nature at the centre of theme, the activities of Balarāma highlight Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*: "Sometimes the honey bees in Vṛndāvana became so mad with ecstasy that they closed their eyes and began to sing. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva imitate their sounds"¹⁶ (10. 15: 10). To imitate the sound of birds and animals is the sign of enjoyment in Nature. Two brothers remain happy with those natural things and creatures of that place. Being nature lovers, both Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva treat birds and animals as their friends and try to remain happy with them. Like them, human beings should have their awareness with the natural things and they should love them. Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* has his profound interrelationship with Nature.

Charles R. Brooks explores Kṛṣṇa *līlā*: "Krishna and his *līlās* are not bound by human conceptions and understandings" (29). With this argument, one can opine that Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* incorporates layers of meanings so that modern readers should attempt to understand it. The text refers the scenario of forest as follows: "Sent by the demigod Varuna, the divine Vāruṇī

liquor flowed from a tree hollow and made the entire forest even more fragrant with its sweet aroma"¹⁷ (10. 65: 19). Varuni is liquor made from honey and the fragrance of the liquor makes the aura of forest charming. The creatures of that forest remain happy there. The objects which are the production of Nature have their prominent role to attract others. There are sufficient evidences to show the interrelation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature. The world of Nature has its own fragrance for the pleasure of creatures. Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* evokes awareness to project Nature in their respective forms.

In order to show the connection of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* with the supporting form of Nature Śrī Kṛṣṇa travels to different places and enjoys the beauty of Nature. It is the job of a nature lover to visit different places to make mutual relationship with Nature. In this regard, Sage Śaunakādī highlights the beauty of Nature during the journey to the place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "The Lord then proceeded towards Kurujāṅgala, Pāñcālā, Śūrasenā, and the land on the bank of the river Yamunā, Brahmāvarta, Kurukṣetra, Matsya, and Saravastā"¹⁸ (1. 10: 34). As Śrī Kṛṣṇa visits the places Yamunā, Brahmāvarta, Kurukṣetra, Matsya, and Sarasvatā, he gets opportunity to observe Nature in its diverse forms. Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays the role of a pilgrim and a traveler. His observation of beauty of different places supports ideas about the importance of Nature. In this sense, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is more Nature lover in comparison to the present pilgrims and the environmentalists. If there is awareness about Nature as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, there is possibility in maintaining the natural beauty and purity in the same condition.

The argument turns out to be valid when John Milton exposes *karma* of human beings for the evaluation of the supporting form of Nature. He tries to console himself with the argument: "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n" (qtd. in Prophet and Spadaro 190). From this standpoint, one can inscribe that humans have their responsibility either to create or spoil the natural beauty. This discussion further supports that a conscious person should believe in the *Brahmājyoti* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the foundation stone of Nature. The *Śrimad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* emphasizes the use of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *Brahmājyoti* to highlight Nature. With the help of that *Brahmājyoti*, there is the creation of the stars and the planets.

The sage Nārada argues about the significance of *Brahmājyoti*: "I create after the Lord's creation by His personal effulgence known as *Brahmājyoti*, just as when the sun manifests its fire, the moon, the firmament; the influential planets and the twinkling stars also manifest their brightness"¹⁹ (2. 5: 11). The divine sage claims that the *Brahmājyoti* is the base for the creation of the universe. Here, the role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa changes from a simple Nature lover to the creator of the universe. There are the natural things in the planets and stars which are useful for the existence of creatures on this planet (earth). This expression extends the scope of Nature. These Nature images have connection to Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* so that human beings should survey Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* and Nature relating to each other.

Generally, Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* focuses on the supporting form of Nature in Vṛndāvana, Mathura, and Dvārakā. In Vṛndāvana, he lives in the world of Nature and performs his sportive activities with his cowherd mates but in Dvārakā, he creates Nature by making gardens, orchards, and fountains to entertain himself and others. The remarkable Nature

images in the supporting form show Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* as the development from childhood to manhood. He teaches human beings how to deal with the supporting form of Nature so that one becomes happy and satisfied without harming Nature. The supporting form of Nature becomes supportive to understand his *līlā* in the text. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* instructs human beings how to be pleased in the world of Nature.

Conclusion

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* depicts Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in relation to supportive environment that nurtures and facilitates interaction about the importance of Nature for creatures. The setting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, primarily the region of Vṛndāvana, is portrayed as a lush and abundant Nature. The forests, rivers, and meadows of Vṛndāvana create a serene and harmonious backdrop that complements to divine activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, including the cowherd boys, *gopīs*, and other devotees, possess unwavering devotion towards to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Their love faith and dedication create an atmosphere of pure devotion and spiritual support. The supportive Nature serves as a catalyst for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's interactions and facilitates the expression of divine love.

Vṛndāvana is manifested as a sacred and spiritually charged place. The environment itself is said to be infused with Kṛṣṇa's presence and divine energy. Plants, animals, and even inanimate objects are described as being aware of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's presence, further enhancing the supportive Nature. Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* unfolds within a supportive environment characterized by natural abundance, a devotional atmosphere, spiritual connectivity, divine playgrounds, and loving interactions. Nature enhances the divine experiences and facilitates the profound relationships between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his devotees, allowing for the expression of love, devotion, and spiritual growth.

Appendix

1. भावयत्येष सत्त्वेन लोकान् वै लोकभावनः ।

लीलावतारानुरतो देवतिर्यङ्नरादिषु ॥ ३४ ॥ (1.2:34)

bhāvayaty eṅa sattvena

lokān vai loka-bhāvanau

līlavatārānurato

deva-tiryāṅ-narādiṅu

2. अग्निमुखं तेऽवनिरङ्घ्रिरीक्षणं

सूर्यो नभो नाभिरथो दिशः श्रुतिः ।

द्यौः कं सुरेन्द्रास्तव बाहवोऽर्णवाः

कुक्षिर्मरुत्प्राणबलं प्रकल्पितम् ॥ १३ ॥

रोमाणि वृक्षौषधयः शिरोरुहा

मेघाः परस्यास्थि नखानि तेऽद्रयः ।

निमेषणं रात्र्यहनी प्रजापतिर्मेढ्रस्तु

वृष्टिस्तव वीर्यमिष्यते ॥ १४ ॥ (10:40.13-14)

agnir mukhaṅ te 'vanir aṅghrir ékṅaēaṅ

*sūryo nabho nābhir atho diçaiù çrutiù
dyauù kaà surendrās tava bāhavo 'rēavāù
kukñīr marut präëa-balaè prakalpitam
romäëi vākñāuñadhayaù çiroruhā
meghāù parasyāsthi-nakhāni te 'drayaù
nimeñaëaà rätry-ahané prajāpatir
meðhras tu vāñōis tava véryam iñyate*

3. केचिदाहरजं जातं पुण्यश्लोकस्य कीर्तये ।

यदोः प्रियस्यान्ववाये मलयस्येव चन्दनम् ॥ ३२ ॥ (1.8:32)

*kecid āhur ajaè jātaè
puṇya-çlokasya kértaye
yadoḥ priyasyānvavāye
malayasyeva candanam*

4. वनं वृन्दावनं नाम पशव्यं नवकाननम् ।

गोपगोपीगवां सेव्यं पुण्याद्रितृणवीरुधम् ॥ २८ ॥ (10.11:27)

*vanaè vāndāvanaè nāma
paçavyaè nava-kānanam
gopa-gopé-gavāà sevyāà
puëyādri-tāëa-vérudham*

5. एवं विहारैः कौमारैः कौमारं जहतुर्व्रजे ।

निलायनैः सेतुबन्धैर्मर्कटोत्प्लवनादिभिः ॥ ५९ ॥ (10.11:59)

*evaè vihāraiù kaumāraiù
kaumāraà jahatur vraje
nilāyanaiù setu-bandhair
markaötplavanādibhiù*

6. दृष्ट्वा कुमुद्वन्तमखण्डमण्डलं

रमाननाभंनवकुङ्कुमारुणम्

वनं च तत्कोमलगोभिरञ्जितं

जगौ कलं वामदृशां मनोहरम् ॥ ३ ॥ (10.29:3)

*dr̥ṣṭvā kumudvantam akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalam
ramānanābham nava-kuṅkumāruṇam
vanaṁ ca tat-komala-gobhī rañjitaṁ
jagau kalaṁ vāma-dr̥śāṁ manoharam*

7. इति वै वार्षिकान् मासान् राज्ञा सोऽभ्यर्थितः सुखम् ।

जनयन् नयनानन्दमिन्द्रप्रस्थौकसां विभुः ॥ १२ ॥ (10.58:12)

*iti vai vārṣikān māsān
rāñjña so 'bhyarthitaḥ sukham
janayan nayanānandam
indraprasthaukasāṁ vibhuḥ*

8= स्वराजधानीं समलङ्कृतां ध्वजैः (10.63:52)

सतोरणैरुक्षितमार्गचत्वराम् ।

विवेश शङ्खानकदुन्दुभिस्वनै -

रभ्युद्यतः पौरसुहृद्विजातिभिः ॥ ५२ ॥

sva-rājadhānīm samalaṅkṛtām dhvajaiḥ

sa-toraṇair ukṣita- mārga- catvarām

viveśa śaṅkhānaka- dundhubi-svanair

abhyudyataḥ paura-suhrad- dvijātibhiḥ

9. सर्वर्तुसर्वविभवपुण्यवृक्षलताश्रमैः ।

उद्यानोपवनारामैर्वृतपद्माकरश्रियम् ॥ १२ ॥ (1.11:12)

sarvartu-sarva-vibhava

punya-vṛkṣā-latāçramaiḥ

udyānopavanārāmair

vṛta-padmākara-çriyam

10. इत्युत्सुको द्वारवतीं देवर्षिर्द्रष्टुमागमत् ।

पुष्पितोपवनारामद्विजालिकुलनादिताम् ॥ ३ ॥ (10.69:3)

ity utsuko dvāravatīm

devarṣir draṣṭum āgamat

puṣpitopavan ārāma-

dvijāli-kula-nāditām

11. वनं तु सात्त्विको वासो ग्रामो राजस उच्यते ।

तामसं द्यूतसदनं मन्त्रिकेतं तु निर्गुणम् ॥ २५ ॥ (11.25:25)

vanam tu sāttviko vāso

grāmo rājasa ucyate

tāmasam dyūta--sadanam

man-niketam tu nirguṇam

12. यदि दूरं गतः कृष्णो वनशोभेक्षणाय तम् ।

अहं पूर्वमहं पूर्वमिति संस्पृश्य रेमिरे ॥ ६ ॥ (10.12:6)

yadi dūraḥ gataḥ kṛṣṇo

vana-çobhekṣāyā tam

ahaḥ pūrvam ahaḥ pūrvam

iti saḥspṛçya remire

13. गावो मृगाः खगा नार्यः पुष्पिण्यः शरदाभवन् ।

अन्वीयमानाः स्ववृषैः फलैरीशक्रिया इव ॥ ४६ ॥ (10.20:46)

gāvo mṛgāḥ khagā nāryaḥ

puṣpiṇyaḥ çaradābhavan

anvīyamānāḥ sva-vṛṣaiḥ

phalair éça-kriyā iva

14. अहोऽतिरम्यं पुलिनं वयस्याः

स्वकेलिसम्पन्मृदुलाच्छवालुकम् ।

स्फुटत्सरोगन्धहतालिपत्रिक -

ध्वनिप्रतिध्वानलसद्द्रुमाकुलम् ॥ ५ ॥ (10.13:5)

aho 'tiramyaà pulinaà vayasyäù

sva-keli-sampan mādulāccha-bālukam

sphuōat-saro-gandha-hātāli-patrikadhvani-

pratidhvāna-lasad-drumākulam

15. एवं वृन्दावनं श्रीमत्कृष्णः प्रीतमनाः पशून् ।

रेमे सञ्चारयन्नद्रेः सरिद्रोधःसु सानुगः ॥ ९ ॥ (10.15:9)

evaà vāndāvanaà çrémat

kāñēaù préta-manāù paçün

reme saïcārayann adreù

sarid-rodhausu sānugaù

16. क्वचिद्गायति गायत्सु मदान्धालिष्वनुव्रतैः ।

उपगीयमानचरितः स्रग्वी सङ्कर्षणान्वितः ॥ १० ॥ (10.15:10)

kvacid gāyati gāyatsu

madāndhālīñv anuvrataiù

upagēyamāna-caritaù

pathi saikarñāēänvitaù

anujalpati jalpantaà

kala-vākyaiù çukaà kvacit

17. वरुणप्रेषिता देवी वारुणी वृक्षकोटरात् ।

पतन्ती तद्वनं सर्वं स्वगन्धेनाध्यवासयत् ॥ १९ ॥ (10.65:19)

varuṇa- preṣitā devī

vāñī vṛkṣa-kaṭarāt

patantī tad vanam

sva-gandhenādhyavāsayat

18. कुरुजाङ्गलपाञ्चालान् शूरसेनान् सयामुनान् ।

ब्रह्मावर्तं कुरुक्षेत्रं मत्स्यान् सारस्वतानथ ॥ ३४ ॥ (1.10:34)

kuru-jāṅgala-pāñcālān

çürasenān sayāmunān

brahmāvartaà kurukṣetraà

matsyān sārasvatān atha

19. येन स्वरोचिषा विश्वं रोचितं रोचयाम्यहम् ।

यथार्कोऽग्निर्यथा सोमो यथर्क्षग्रहतारकाः ॥ ११ ॥ (2.5:11)

yena sva-rociñā viçvaà

rocitaà rocayāmy aham

yathārko 'gnir yathā somo

yatharkṣa-graha-tārakāḥ

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