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Bharata's Bhakti through mathematical encoding in Pādukā Sahasram by Sri Vedānta Desika

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Abstract

भरत (Bharata), the younger brother of श्रीराम (śrī-Rāma), embodies one of the highest ideals of भक्ति (bhakti, devotion) in the रामायण (Rāmāyaṇa). By enthroning राम (Rāma)'s पादुका (Pādukā-s, sandals) rather than claiming the throne himself, भरत (Bharata) revealed the sovereignty of devotion over worldly power. Traditional commentators—from Kamban to वेदान्तदेशिक (Vedānta Deśika)—extol his unparalleled शरणागति (śaraṇāgati, surrender), often declaring that even a thousand राम (Rāma-s) could not equal one भरत (Bharata).

This paper explores भरत (Bharata)'s भक्ति (bhakti) through an interdisciplinary lens, integrating scriptural testimony with symbolic mathematics. Utilizing the ancient कटपयादि संख्या (kaṭapayādi saṁkhyā) system, key terms from the पादुका-सहस्रम् (Pādukā-sahasram) are numerically encoded to demonstrate a striking equation: भरत (Bharata)'s dedication multiplied by his total surrender yields the infinite radiance of the पादुका-प्रभाव (Pādukā-prabhāva, the glory of the sandals).

This synthesis reveals how भरत (Bharata)'s complete शरणागति (śaraṇāgati) mathematically and spiritually unveils the boundless brilliance of राम (rāma)'s पादुका (Pādukā-s), offering a unique integration of devotional theology and numerical symbolism.

Keyword: भरत (Bharata); भक्ति (bhakti); रामायण (Rāmāyaṇa); पादुका-सहस्रम् (Pādukā Sahasram); कटपयादि संख्या प्रणाली (Kaṭapayādi system); वेदान्तदेशिक (Vedānta Deśika); कम्ब रामायणम् (Kamba Rāmāyaṇam); पादुका-प्रभाव (Pādukā-prabhāva); शरणागति (Śaraṇāgati)

Introduction

Among the shining exemplars of devotion in the रामायण (Rāmāyaṇa), भरत (Bharata) stands unparalleled. While राम (Rāma) is celebrated as the embodiment of धर्म (dharma) and सीता (Sītā) as the personification of पातिव्रत्य (pātivratya - chastity), भरत (Bharata) emerges as the very soul of शरणागति (śaraṇāgati)—total self-surrender. His decision to enthrone the पादुका (pādukā-s) of राम (Rāma) and rule अयोध्या (Ayodhyā) merely as a trustee reveals not only his humility but also the boundless force of his भक्ति (bhakti).

To illustrate this, we employ the कटपयादि (Kaṭapayādi) system, where sacred names are encoded into numbers.

Background

Kaṭapayādi Saṁkhyā System

The कटपयादि (Kaṭapayādi) system is an ancient Indian alphanumeric code used to represent numbers through syllables. It was widely used in Sanskrit and other classical Indian languages to embed numerical values in poetic verses, astronomical texts, and mnemonic devices.

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कटपयादि संख्या – Assignment Table

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

वेदान्तदेशिक (Vedānta Deśika), in his पादुका-सहस्रं (Pādukā-sahasram), expands this moment into a grand वेदान्त (Vedānta) allegory, showing how the पादुका (pādukā-s) embody the Lord's grace, accessible to the devotee through शरणागति (śaraṇāgati). भरत's (Bharata's) act is not a political compromise but a mathematical completeness of भक्ति (bhakti)—a devotion that multiplies itself into infinite glory when directed wholly towards the भगवान् (Bhagavān).

The name भरत (Bharata) encodes as ४२६ (426), while the phrase राघव पादुका प्रभावः (Rāghava Pādukā Prabhāvaḥ)—“the glory of the पादुका (pādukā-s) of राम (Rāma)” —emerges through the product $426 \times 426.155 = 181442.244$. Symbolically, भरत (Bharata – 426) represents the devotee, while the multiplier (426.155) represents the relative भक्ति (bhakti)—a fractional decimal indicating the total dedication beyond mere numerical value. The result reveals the vast expanse of पादुका-महिमा (pādukā-mahimā), far exceeding individual capacity.

Thus, भरत (Bharata) becomes the living proof of a spiritual axiom: when a भक्त (bhakta) invests his whole being into the ईश्वर (Īśvara), the result is not linear but exponential—the infinite glory of divine manifestation. This paper explores भरत's (Bharata's) भक्ति (bhakti), its scriptural resonances in both वाल्मीकि रामायण (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa) and कम्ब रामायण (Kamba Rāmāyaṇa), and demonstrates how mathematics, symbolism, and poetry converge to reveal the secret of पादुका-प्रभाव (pādukā-prabhāva).

Bharata in the रामायण (Rāmāyaṇa) Tradition

(a) वाल्मीकि रामायण (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa)

When भरत (Bharata) approaches राम (Rāma) in चित्रकूट (Citṛakūṭa), he pleads with heartfelt humility and devotion:

न तेऽहं कामये राज्यं न सुखं न च जीवितम् ।
आयुष्मन् तव दर्शनं सर्वमेवाभिवाञ्छितम् ॥
(na te'haṁ kāmāye rājyaṁ na sukhaṁ na ca
jīvitam |
āyusman tava darśanaṁ sarvam
evābhivāñchitam||)
(Ayodhyākāṇḍa 101.11, Critical Edition)

Translation

“I desire neither kingdom, nor pleasure, nor even life itself, O noble one!

For me, the sight of you alone fulfills every wish.”

This verse encapsulates Bharata's renunciation, loyalty, and pure भक्ति (bhakti) towards Rāma, rejecting personal power for the sake of spiritual fidelity.

(b) कम्ब इरामायणम् (Kamba Rāmāyaṇam)

गुह्यं पदलम् (Guha Padalam)

When गुह्यं (Guha) meets भरत (Bharathan), कम्ब (Kamban) portrays Bharathan's greatness through Guha's awe-filled words:

தாய் உரைகொண்டு தாதை

உதவிய தரணி தன்னை,

தீவினை என்ன நீத்து,

சிந்தனை முகத்தில் தேக்கி,

போயினை என்றபோழ்து,

புகழினோய்! தன்மை கண்டால்,

ஆயிரம் இராமர் நின் கேழ்

ஆவரோ, தெரியின் அம்மா!

(Kamba Rāmāyaṇam, Ayodhyākāṇḍam – Guha Paṭalam, verse 14)

Transliteration

Tāy urai koṇḍu tādai udaviya taraṇi tannai,
tīviṇai enna nīttu, cintanaṁ mukattil tēkki,
pōyinaṁ enrapōlthu, pugazhinoi! tanmai kaṇḍāl, āyiram
irāmar nin kēḷ āvarō, teriyin ammā!

Literal Meaning

“You, O Bharata, who obeyed your mother's words and fulfilled your father's will, renouncing this entire earth as if it were sin, and carrying Rāma's image alone in your mind—

O one of spotless fame! Seeing your nature, I cannot tell— even if there were a thousand Rāmas, could any one of them equal you, my lord?”

Contextual Meaning

This verse occurs when Bharata learns of Rāma's exile.

- Kamban here portrays Bharata's supreme Bhakti — not merely towards Rāma, but also towards Dharma itself.
- He feels that his mother's words (Kaikeyi's demand) have polluted the earth itself.
- He laments that even a thousand Rāmas could not match the nobility of one who bears this pain for righteousness — himself, Bharata, who now bears the burden of the world's sin.

Hence, Kamban elevates Bharata to a level of divine endurance and spotless dharma.

(c) पादुका in वेदान्तदेशिक's (Vedānta Deśika) Vision

In the पादुका-सहस्रं (Pādukā-sahasram), वेदान्तदेशिक (Vedānta Deśika) opens with an exaltation of भरत (Bharata) as the archetype of शरणागति (śaraṇāgati). In Śloka 2, he writes:

भरताय परमं नमोऽस्तु तस्मै
प्रथमोदाहरणाय भक्तिभाजाम् ।
यदुपज्ञमशेषतः पृथिव्यां
प्रथितो राघवपादुकाप्रभावः ॥ २ ॥
Bharatāya paramaṁ namo'stu tasmāi
prathamodāharaṇāya bhaktibhājām |
yadupajñyamaśeṣataḥ pṛthivyām
prathito rāghavapādukāprabhāvaḥ || 2 ||

Translation

“Obeisance to Bharata, the foremost among devotees, who became the first example of supreme devotion; by whose act the glory of Rāma’s pādukā spread without limit throughout the earth.”

Here, Bharata or Bharathan is not merely epic character but spiritual prototype—the first and finest example of how self-effacement and surrender lead to divine manifestation. पादुका-प्रभावः (pādukā-prabhāvaḥ), the glory of the sandals, is nothing but भक्त-शक्ति (bhakta-śakti)—devotion made manifest.

Mathematical Encoding of Devotion

In the Kaṭapayādi system, letters are assigned numerical values, allowing sacred names and concepts to be encoded mathematically. Applying this to the case of Bharata, we uncover a symbolic structure that quantifies devotion and its divine manifestation.

Numerical Mapping

Let’s carefully compute the Kaṭapayādi saṅkhyā for भरत (Bharata)

- भ (bha) → 4
- र (ra) → 2
- त (ta) → 6

Now let us compute the Kaṭapayādi saṅkhyā for “राघवपादुकाप्रभावः”

a. First, let’s do Kaṭapayādi calculation only for राघवपादुका (Rāghavapādukā)

- रा (rā) → 2
 - घ (gha) → 4
 - व (va) → 4
 - पा (pā) → 1
 - दु (du) → 8
 - का (kā) → 1
- 2 – 4 – 4 – 1 – 8 – 1

Reversing we get 1814442

b. Now, considering the Kaṭapayādi calculation for प्रभाव (prabhāva)

- प्र = प् + र → half प् ignored, only र (ra) counts → 2
- भा (bhā) → 4
- व (va) → 4
- (visarga) → ignored

2 – 4 – 4

Final Kaṭapayādi decimal number for राघवपादुकाप्रभाव = 181442.244

Result of dividing 181442.244 by 426 ≈ 425.92076....

Here the coded number for राघवपादुका (Rāghavapādukā) is taken as the integer part in the reverse order and the decoded number for प्रभाव (prabhāva – its quality) is represented as the decimal part in direct order.

1. Numerical Significance

- The numerical correspondence derived from the Kaṭapayādi system yields

$$426 \times 425.92076 = 181442.244$$

- Symbolizing how Bharata’s total devotion (represented by a multiplier nearly equal to his own base value) results in the full radiance of the Rāghavapādukāprabhāva.

2. Devotional / Symbolic Meaning

- Numerator (181442.244) → total glory/potency of Rāma’s pādukās.
- Denominator (426) → devotion or dharmic quality represented by Bharata.
- Result (425.92076....) → shows that even one devotee (Bharata) channels enormous divine influence, exceeding ordinary measure.
- Fraction .92076... can symbolize grace beyond calculation — the infinite nature of bhakti.

This interpretation beautifully aligns with Śloka 2 of *Pādukā-sahasram*, where Bharata is the first exemplar of devotion (prathamodāharaṇa), and the pādukās’ influence is both measurable and transcendent.

1. Numerical Fact

We have:

$$426 \times 425.92076 \dots \approx 181442.244$$

426 → Kaṭapayādi number of Bharata

425.92076....(close to 426) → Result of dividing Rāghavapādukāprabhāvaḥ by Bharata (his relative devotion measure)

Product → 181442.244 → Kaṭapayādi decimal for Rāghavapādukāprabhāvaḥ

2. Devotional Interpretation**a) Bharata as the Unit of Devotion**

- Bharata’s Kaṭapayādi number (426) represents his inner spiritual capacity, devotion, and dharmic quality.
- Numerically, he is the “unit measure” of bhakti in Śloka 2.

b) Multiplication Shows Potency of the Pādukās

- When we multiply Bharata (426) by the relative divine influence per devotee (near 426), we get the total glory of Rāma’s pādukās (181442.244).
- This illustrates that Bharata’s devotion amplifies the potency of the pādukās.
- In other words, the divine glory is fully manifested only through a devotee like Bharata.
- The .92076.... in 425.92076.. (closest to 426) represents grace that cannot be measured, showing that even an ideal devotee like Bharata cannot contain the full potency of the Lord’s pādukās.
- Devotion acts as a multiplier: the more sincere the bhakti, the greater the realized influence of the divine.

c) Philosophical / Symbolic Insight

- Bharata embodies the first exemplar of selfless bhakti (prathamodāharaṇa).
- Numerically: Bharata × his devotion’s effect = Glory of Rāma’s pādukās

- Symbolically: A devotee's surrender amplifies divine presence, and the Lord's grace flows through dharmic, selfless devotion.
- This aligns with Śloka 2: Bharata is the medium through which the pādukās' fame and potency become manifest.

3. Short Devotional Explanation

"Bharata's devotion is so complete that when his spiritual capacity (426) is multiplied by the overflowing potency of devotion per devotee (425.92076...≈426), the full glory of Rāma's pādukās (181442.244) is realized. Even the divine influence becomes manifest through the vessel of Bharata's bhakti — showing that true devotion magnifies divine grace beyond measure."

Thus, the second śloka of Pādukā-sahasram declares:

प्रथितो राघवपादुकाप्रभावः

"The glory of Rāma's pādukās became widely known."

This is numerically validated through:

$$426 \times 425.92076... = 181442.244$$

The .244 (fractional part of result) shows that *Prabhāva*, the divine glory, extends *beyond whole comprehension* — it overflows human measurement.

Though the relative devotion may fall short by a fraction (425.92076...), the Glory of Rāma's pādukās is overflowing (181442.244)

Bharata	×	Relative Devotion	→	Pādukā Glory
426		425.92076		181442.244

The Sovereignty of Surrender: Bharata and the Enthronement of the पादुका (pādukā)

By enthroning the पादुका (pādukā), भरत (Bharata) demonstrated a profound spiritual truth: sovereignty is not derived from possession, lineage, or proximity to power, but from complete surrender. In an act unparalleled in the इतिहास (itihāsa) tradition, Bharata declined the throne of अयोध्या (Ayodhyā), not out of grief or guilt, but out of unwavering शरणागति (śaraṇāgati) to राम (Rāma), whose sandals alone he deemed worthy of kingship.

His life in नन्दिग्राम (Nandigrāma), far from the palace, was not one of political protest but of तपस् (tapas) and अनन्यभक्ति (ananyabhakti)—exclusive, undivided devotion. Clad in bark garments, dwelling like an ascetic, and worshipping the पादुका (pādukā) daily as the living presence of राम, Bharata ruled as a trustee, not a king. His was a kingdom governed not by command, but by consecration.

This radical vision of vicarious kingship transforms the notion of leadership itself. In Bharata's model, राजधर्म (rājadharmā) becomes an extension of भक्तिधर्म (bhaktidharma). Sovereignty is surrendered to the divine, and in that surrender, it is spiritually sanctified.

Here, Vedānta Deśika makes a bold philosophical statement: Bharata's devotion reveals the divine more effectively than even the deity's own physical presence. This reversal—where the भक्त (bhakta, devotee) becomes the revealer of the ईश्वर

(Īśvara, Lord)—is central to the Śrī Vaiṣṇava understanding of शरणागति (śaraṇāgati).

In Bharata's ananyabhakti, we see not just personal piety but cosmic consequence. The पादुका (pādukā) becomes a symbol of accessible divinity, and Bharata, its sevaka, becomes the conduit through which sovereignty and sanctity are fused.

Conclusion

भरत (Bharata) emerges in the रामायण (Rāmāyaṇa) tradition as the supreme exemplar of भक्ति (bhakti) and शरणागति (śaraṇāgati). His refusal of kingship, enthronement of the पादुका (pādukā-s), and unwavering loyalty to राम (Rāma) transcend familial affection or political duty. Kamban's bold assertion that even "a thousand Rāmas cannot equal Bharata" underscores the unique power of भक्ति (bhakti) over divinity itself. वेदान्तदेशिक (Vedānta Deśika), through the पादुका-सहस्रं (Pādukā-sahasram), systematizes this insight by showing that भरत's (Bharata's) single act of शरणागति (śaraṇāgati) reveals the cosmic radiance of the पादुका-प्रभावः (pādukā-prabhāvaḥ).

When interpreted through the कटपयादि (Kaṭapayādi) system, भरत's (Bharata's) भक्ति (bhakti) becomes more than poetry—it assumes mathematical symbolism. भरत (Bharata) = ४२६ (426), multiplied by his complete surrender (425.92076...≈426), yields the infinite पादुका-महिमा (pādukā-mahimā) of १८१४४२.२४४ (181442.244). This reveals a profound theological truth: भक्ति (bhakti) is not additive but multiplicative. When a भक्त (bhakta) offers himself fully, the दैवी महिमा (daivī mahimā)—divine glory—is magnified beyond measure.

Thus, भरत's (Bharata's) भक्ति (bhakti) represents the pinnacle of शरणागति-योग (śaraṇāgati-yoga), where humility transforms into cosmic radiance, and the पादुका (pādukā) becomes the bridge between mortal devotion and immortal sovereignty. By uniting शास्त्र (śāstra) testimony, poetic expression, and mathematical coding, this study highlights that भरत (Bharata) is not only a character in the epic but also an eternal paradigm of भक्ति (bhakti) that transcends time, culture, and even language.

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