My amazing journey while discovering tAla in my world

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This article had its origin in the most unexpected way. Madam Sashikala had shared with me the article she had written for the Ritambhara website and some of her students. It was titled '*tAla* in *vAstu Shilpa shAstra*'. It was a very interesting exposure to the very high importance of 'ratios' and 'proportions' in this ancient, as well as a current science.

I started to read it and when I had finished, I felt myself like a little child discovering the world through the eyes of *vAstu Shilpa shAstra*. Madam Sashikala explained in her article that *tAla* is the name used for rhythm when this concept is related with music, and *mukham, tAla, pada*, or module when it is related with the visual field. She also mentioned that this concept has an important role in Indian classic music, dance, and Vedic chanting too.

She shared the following fundament of *vAstu Shilpa*: 'When a form or *vastu* that inhabits a space is out of alignment, then there is a disturbance in the inner alignment of people who occupy the space' and after reading this paragraph, it was unavoidable that thoughts and images came to my mind. The first image was about Nature. More from intuition than from knowledge, I concluded that Nature must grow and manifest itself following its own inner *tAla*. A second thought was related with the effect that this *tAla* in Nature produces, especially in us, the human beings. I remember to have said with surprise 'that is why Nature is so calming and revitalizing!'; that's why when we are surrounded by her or look at her, we feel peaceful, connected, and experience harmony inside. In the same way that a form or *vastu* that inhabits a space produces a disturbance, it is also possible that a *vastu* produces harmony to the space which surrounds it, that was a kind of conclusion I made. I conceive Nature such as a huge *vAstu* or space which produces a powerful harmony in all the *vastus* linked to her. I was completely fascinated with the discoveries I was making!

Then, I started to ask myself about the proportions, which are the measure that gives the origin to rhythm. How important is the first *tAla* or module that creates the pattern, which will be followed by a structure! In that moment, another image came to my mind, a drop falling into a container with still water. The waves formed when a drop falls on it go from the

smallest to the largest. They follow their own *tAla* which makes the waves look so harmonious.

At one point, I realized that these concepts, *tAla* and proportion were everywhere!

I have been very interested in Ayurveda and I thought that it would be amazing to find how these concepts fit in this science. And it did not take me too much time to realize that Ayurveda is based totally in *tAla!* This *tAla* is not only manifested in the way the Ayurvedic texts are written in Shlokas, verses, for facilitating the memorization and understanding of it, but everything in Ayurveda is *tAla*, has *tAla*, seeks to create *tAla* in the body, mind, and spirit of each human being, because the acharyas and rishis knew its importance to create and maintain good health. Here is the definition given by Acharya Charaka for health: 'It follows that the *doshas* must be in equilibrium, the digestive fire must be in a balanced state and the tissues (*dhatus*) and *malas* (wastes) must work in a normal state. The sensory and motor organs, the mind and *atma* must be also in a pleasant state'. The complete definition is full of references to balance, equilibrium, pleasant state, which is *tAla* and proportion working together.

This exercise with Ayurveda made me think about our mind. I could observe that there are some patterns in which the mind is used to fall into again and again. Some of them make us happy, others make us really unhappy. There is a tendency of the mind to think and act according to this 'rhythm'. These tendencies are called '*gunas'* in Ayurveda. And as it occurs with the *doshas*, when there is a balance between the *gunas*, the mind can work in favour of the human being, not against him/her. In this matter, I remember that once I read somewhere that the ideal state for the mind is to be established in *sattva,* and as long as the mind could stay in this way, more *sattvic* thoughts and actions could be generated in our lives as a result. This *sattvic* effect could be manifested inside us as detachment, happiness, and other virtues, which would maintain us in the real state of inner balance. We are talking once again about proportions. If there is a strong *sattvic* proportion in the person, faster is the way she may return to her inner balance point. The dance of the mind, crazy and suffering or loving and harmonious depends on *tAla*, again.

I spent many days thinking and applying the above mentioned concepts to my daily life and to the universe as I experience it. Some questions that came were easy to answer. The experience was fantastic until I could not find an answer to a specific question: 'Everything is great! yes, everything has *tAla*, but, what about the measure of this *tAla*? How are the proportions defined in everything? How to answer this question? I didn't even know how to formulate the question. My best shot was to write down on the internet '*tAla* and the creation of the universe? To my surprise the first image I found was of Nataraja, the dancing Shiva! I

learned that He dances to create and transform. These two faces of the same coin keep the rhythm in the universe. Thinking about Lord Shiva is to think about eternity and on the other hand, thinking about proportions and rhythm is to think about mathematics. So, I could conclude that *tAla* is eternal as the eternal dance of Lord Shiva. However, the question was not answered… I needed a mathematical answer and in that moment the name of Harish Johari came to my mind. Once, I had read a book of this professor, titled ´Numerology' and I thought that maybe he could help me. He explains that the numbers can be categorized in two basic groups, odd and even numbers. The odd ones are solar, masculine, electric, acidic, and dynamic while the even numbers are lunar, feminine, magnetic, alkaline, and static. For example, the number 2 is static, it does not move because it is in balance, it is complete, while the number 3 is dynamic, this disparity produces movement. If I translated the phenomenon to what I watched in nature, to numbers, to this language, I thought it could be possible to understand how the numbers (these energies of dynamism and passivity) interact to create the patterns, the proportions, and *tAla.* I would say that the universe uses the numbers as music uses notes to create. Sounds and silences in music are the analogy to dynamism and passivity in numbers when they work together.

With the simple explanation from Professor Johari, I thought that the question had been answered somehow, at least for me. Yes, I know, it is a very simplistic and full of deficiencies as an explanation. I only can say that this is my way to say that I'm sure that there is an explanation, a wise and logical way in which *tAla* works inside this universe. Again, it is more my intuition which speaks for me than the knowledge I have about the subject.

The questions that emerge from the concepts I have been talking about are infinite! I could start to question myself about the 'music sheet' of the magnificent creation of the universe and the generator of the primordial *tAla*, but I think someone with the necessary knowledge should do it.

To find my own *tAla*, to keep myself in silence and listen to it; to find my own rhythm in the music sheet of my life and generate a harmonious connection with the other instruments (everything and everyone around me), will be now my target and possibly an incredible experience that I would like to live.

What a journey for me! I invite you to have your own experience. Please read Madam Sashikala's article mentioned above and experience *tAla* and the proportions around and inside you. I'm sure that you will be touched and moved by her words and the amazing wisdom of *vAstu Shilpa shAstra*.

María J. González – Mexico City – October 2023.

tAla in vAstu Shilpa shAstra, *Article By: Ar. Sashikala Ananth ,*
https://ritambhara.org.in/2023/08/01/tala-in-vastu-shilpa-shastra/