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॥ संस्कृति ज्ञान की ॥

Gyāndarshan Council

RESEARCH WORK COMPILATION



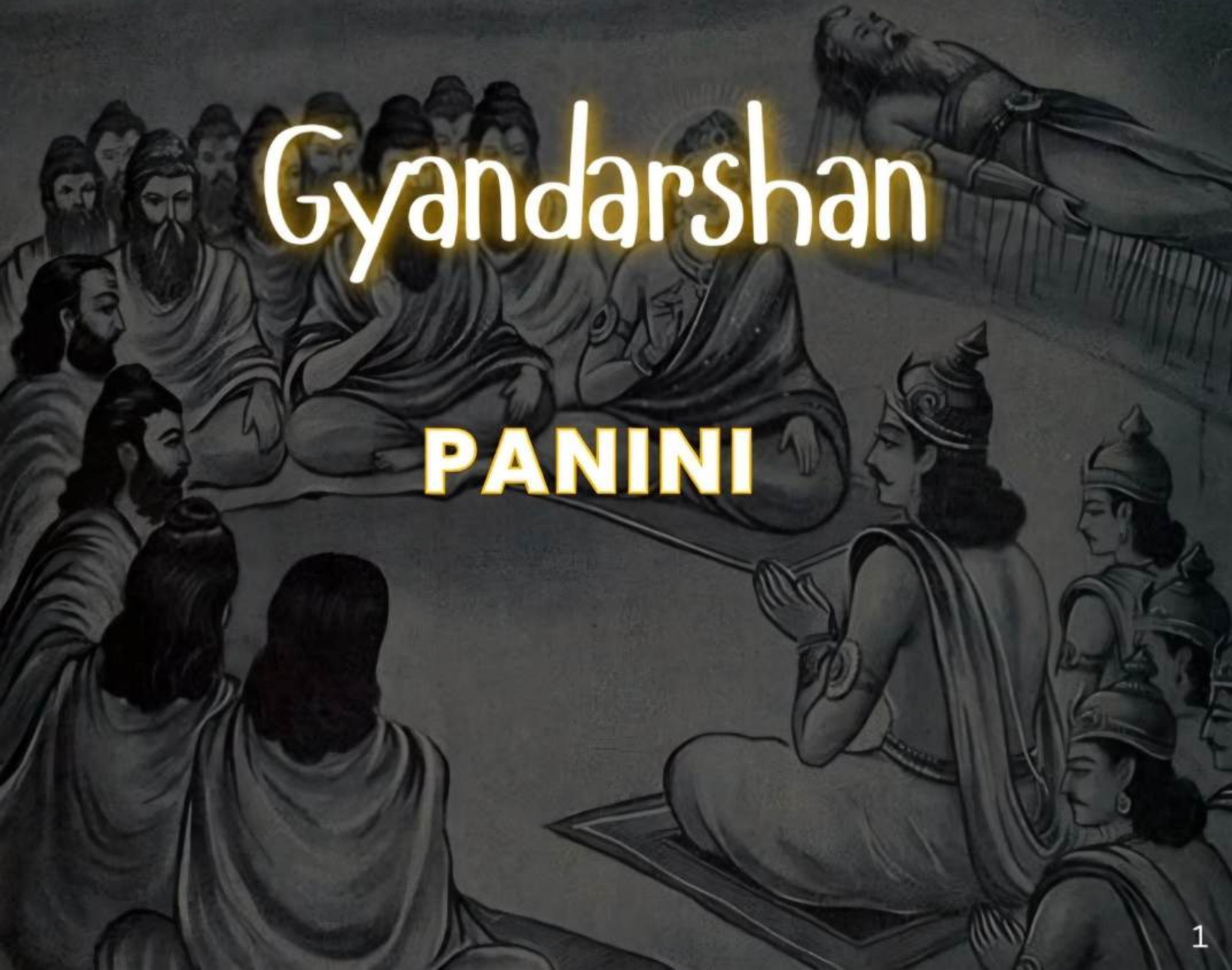
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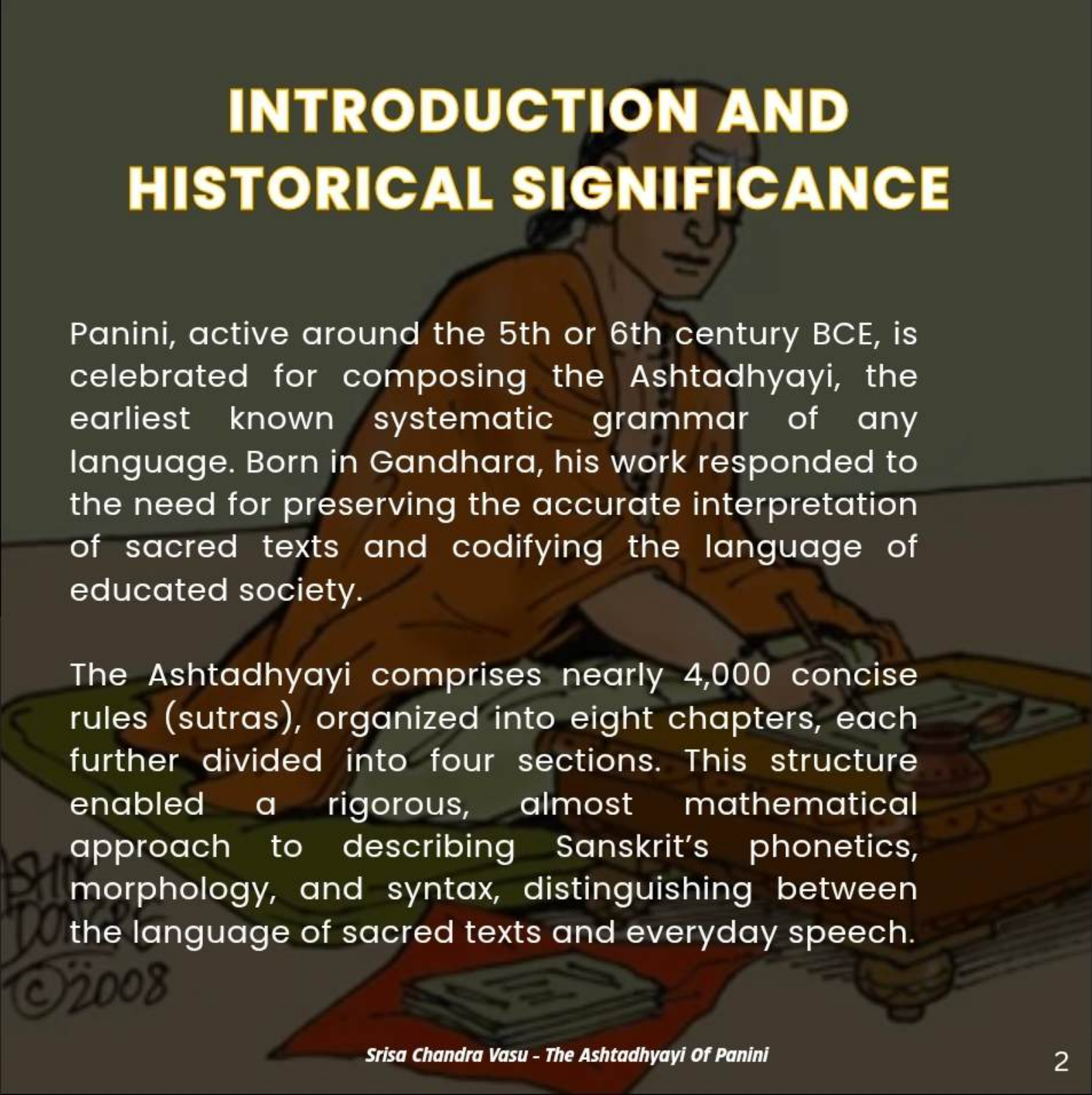


Gyandarshan

PANINI



INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

A stylized illustration of a man, presumably Panini, sitting cross-legged and writing on a scroll. He is wearing a brown robe. The background is a dark, textured grey. The text is overlaid on the illustration.

Panini, active around the 5th or 6th century BCE, is celebrated for composing the Ashtadhyayi, the earliest known systematic grammar of any language. Born in Gandhara, his work responded to the need for preserving the accurate interpretation of sacred texts and codifying the language of educated society.

The Ashtadhyayi comprises nearly 4,000 concise rules (sutras), organized into eight chapters, each further divided into four sections. This structure enabled a rigorous, almost mathematical approach to describing Sanskrit's phonetics, morphology, and syntax, distinguishing between the language of sacred texts and everyday speech.

LINGUISTIC INNOVATION AND INFLUENCE

Panini's grammar introduced a scientific theory of phonetics and morphology, systematizing the language into what is now called Classical Sanskrit. He began with roughly 1,700 basic elements—nouns, verbs, vowels, and consonants—grouped into classes, and developed formal production rules for constructing words and sentences.

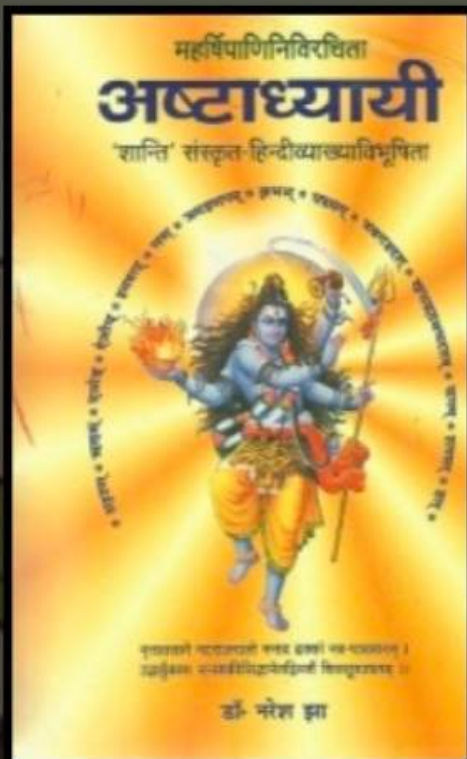
His method was so precise and systematic that it has been compared to mathematical functions and is considered a forerunner of modern formal language theory. Panini's approach prioritized popular usage over etymological purity, reflecting the living language of his time and influencing later literary, dramatic, and philosophical works such as the *Natyashastra* and *Kavya*.



ENDURING LEGACY IN INDIAN AND GLOBAL LINGUISTICS

The Ashtadhyayi became the standard for correct Sanskrit usage, with its rules memorized and recited in traditional education. Later grammarians, notably Patanjali in his Mahabhashya, wrote extensive commentaries, further cementing Panini's authority.

When Sanskrit evolved into a literary and sacred language, Panini's descriptive rules became prescriptive norms, shaping all subsequent Sanskrit literature and scholarship. His influence reached beyond India, impacting 19th-century comparative philology and inspiring the development of modern linguistic theory in the West.



RELEVANCE TO MODERN LINGUISTICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Panini's work is recognized as a precursor to contemporary theories of formal languages and computational linguistics. His use of metarules, transformations, and recursion in grammar closely parallels the structures employed in modern computer languages and artificial intelligence. The Backus-Naur Form, foundational in computer science, shares similarities with Panini's notation, demonstrating his enduring relevance. Ongoing research continues to draw insights from Panini's methods for applications in natural language processing, machine translation, and knowledge representation in cognitive sciences.

```
User ::= <uID>, <password>, <details>
Process ::= <Task>, <Process>
           | <Task> || <Process>
           | <Task>
Task ::= <tID>, <accountable id>, <description>, <Duration>
Rule ::= (tID, uID, Authority)
Authority ::= Responsibility | Consulted | Informed
Message ::= (uID, tID, content)
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**BRAHMAGUPTA'S
FORMALIZATION OF NEGATIVE
NUMBERS**

BRAHMAGUPTA'S FORMALIZATION OF NEGATIVE NUMBERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In his 7th-century treatise *Brahmasphutasiddhanta*, Indian mathematician Brahmagupta (598–670 CE) pioneered rules for negative numbers, which he termed debts (negative) and fortunes (positive). He established foundational arithmetic principles, including:

Multiplication: "A debt multiplied by a debt is a fortune" ($-a \times -b = ab$), while "a fortune multiplied by a debt is a debt" ($a \times -b = -ab$).

Subtraction: "A debt subtracted from zero becomes a fortune" (equivalent to $0 - (-a) = a$).

Brahmagupta also introduced rules for addition and subtraction involving zero, such as "Zero minus zero is zero" and "A debt minus zero remains a debt." He represented negative numbers with dots above them instead of the modern minus symbol. These groundbreaking ideas laid the foundation for algebra and influenced global mathematics through later Arab translations of his work.



Brahmagupta

Brahmagupta. Brahmasphutasiddhanta. Translated by C. V. K. S. Raghavan, 1930.

Ranjan, R. "Brahmagupta and His Contributions to Mathematics"

BRAHMAGUPTA'S FORMALIZATION OF NEGATIVE NUMBERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Brahmagupta's framework, rooted in practical contexts like accounting, contrasted with contemporaneous European skepticism toward negatives as "absurd". However, his system had limitations: he erroneously claimed $0/0=00/0=0$ and lacked formal proofs for his rules, relying instead on algebraic intuition.

Despite this, his work profoundly influenced later scholars like Bhaskara II and laid the groundwork for modern algebra. Notably, he represented negatives with dots above numbers, predating the modern minus symbol. This innovation underscored ancient India's mathematical sophistication, with concepts **later transmitted globally via Arab scholars**.

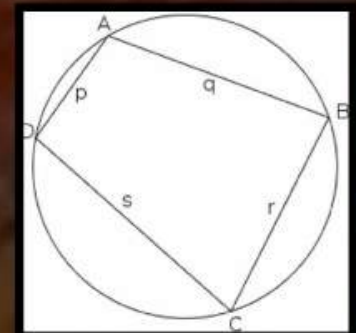
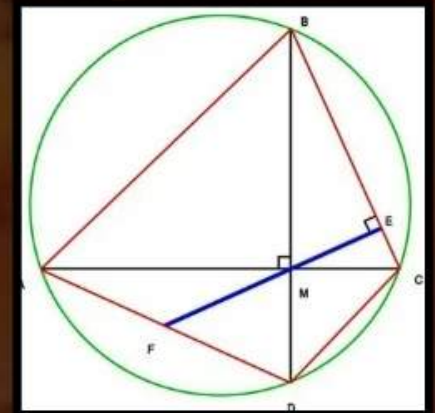
Additionally, Brahmagupta's insights into solving quadratic equations and indeterminate problems showcased his advanced understanding of mathematical concepts, further solidifying his legacy as one of the great pioneers in the history of mathematics. His work not only impacted Indian scholars but also played a crucial role in shaping mathematical thought in the Islamic Golden Age and beyond.

BRAHMAGUPTA'S FORMALIZATION OF NEGATIVE NUMBERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

One of Brahmagupta's most famous contributions is his formula for calculating the area of cyclic quadrilaterals (quadrilaterals inscribed in a circle).

In addition to mathematics, Brahmagupta made significant contributions to astronomy. He described gravity using the Sanskrit term *gurutvākarṣaṇam* (attractive force), explaining that objects fall toward Earth due to its pull. He calculated planetary positions, lunar eclipses, and solar eclipses with remarkable accuracy.

Brahmagupta's legacy as a pioneer in both mathematics and astronomy continues to inspire scholars worldwide. His innovative ideas on zero, negative numbers, quadratic equations, and geometry remain fundamental in mathematical education today.



Brahmagupta. Brahmasphutasiddhanta. Translated by C. V. K. S. Raghavan, 1930.

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PRADAKSHINA

THE SACRED ACT OF CIRCUMAMBULATION



PRADAKSHINA

Pradakshina(Sanskrit: प्रदक्षिणा) is a profound ritual in Hinduism where devotees **walk around a sacred object**, deity, or space in a circular manner as an act of worship. This practice is deeply rooted in Vedic traditions and is considered a way to align oneself with **cosmic energy** and divine presence.

The term 'Pradakshina' is derived from two Sanskrit words:

'**Pra**'(प्र): - Means "forward" or "onward."

'**Dakshina**' (दक्षिण): - Refers to the "south," symbolizing auspiciousness and righteousness



The ***Rig Veda***(2.42.3 and 2.43.1) explains:

"**Pra**" signifies moving forward, while "**Dakshina**" represents the south, the direction of **Dharma** (righteousness). Keeping the deity on the right side during **circumambulation** is considered highly auspicious, as it aligns the devotee with divine energy.

Most temples face east, so devotees enter with south (Dakshina) to their left and begin their circumambulation clockwise around the garbha griha. This clockwise movement aligns with cosmic energy and enhances spiritual connection.

Types of Pradakshina:

1. Atma Pradakshina

- Circumambulating oneself, acknowledging the divine within. This practice symbolizes self-realization and the recognition of the soul as a microcosm of the universe.

2. Giri Valam

- Circumambulating sacred hills or mountains, such as 'Arunachala Hill' in Tamil Nadu, believed to be a manifestation of Lord Shiva.

3. Adi Pradakshina

- Taking small, measured steps close to the shrine, symbolizing humility and devotion.

4. Anga Pradakshina

- Rolling one's body on the ground around the temple, often performed by highly devoted individuals as an extreme form of surrender.

5. Agni Parikrama

- Circumambulating the sacred fire during Hindu wedding rituals, symbolizing the eternal bond of marriage.

Scientific and Spiritual Significance

1. Alignment with Earth's Magnetic Field

- Walking clockwise during Pradakshina aligns the body's magnetic energy with Earth's magnetic field, enhancing vitality and spiritual focus. Temples are often built in areas with high positive energy fields, and circumambulation helps absorb this energy.

2. Cosmic Energy

- The clockwise movement (Pradakshina) mirrors the rotation of the Earth and the movement of celestial bodies, fostering a connection with cosmic rhythms.

3. Psychological Benefits

- The repetitive act of walking in a circle induces a meditative state, calming the mind and promoting mindfulness.

Pradakshina is believed to connect devotees with divine energy concentrated in sacred objects. Walking clockwise aligns one's magnetic energy with **Earth's magnetic** field, fostering vitality and spiritual growth.

Temples were strategically built in areas with high **positive energy** fields, making circumambulation a way to **absorb** this energy.

Half-Parikrama Around Shiva Lingam

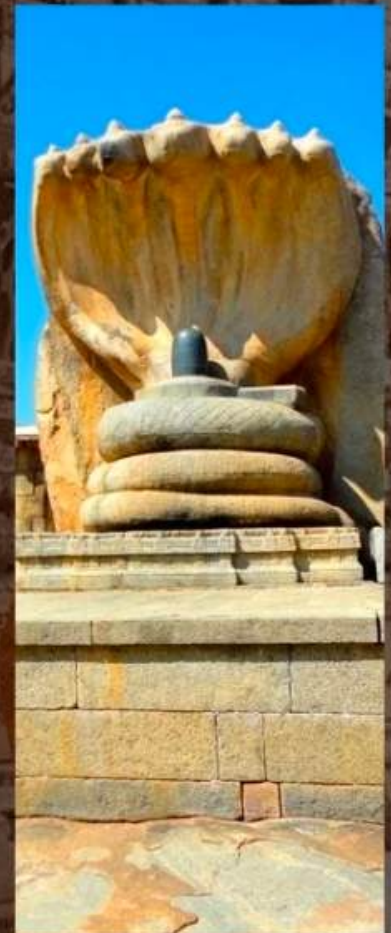
The Shiva Purana prescribes only half-parikrama around the Shiva Lingam due to its unique structure and symbolism:

The Shiva Lingam has an outlet called Nirmili, which carries away offerings like milk and water poured during worship. Crossing or stepping over this outlet is considered disrespectful and harmful.

According to legend, King Gandharva lost his power and intellect after overstepping the Nirmili during circumambulation.

Shiva's energy (Shakti) is immense and fierce; hence, devotees avoid interfering with its flow by performing only half-parikrama.

The half-parikrama also symbolizes Shiva's role as Anadi (without beginning) and Anant (infinite). It represents his function of dissolution within creation.



Number of Parikramas

एकंदेव्यांरवौसप्त त्रीणिकुर्याद्विनायके।
चत्वारिकेशवेकुर्यात् शिवेचार्थप्रदक्षिणम् ॥

One pradakshina should be performed around the Goddess, seven around Sun Devalay, three around Shri Ganapati, four around Shrivishnu and a half around Shiva Devalay.

Shiva: Half-parikrama (to avoid crossing Nirmili).

Ganapati: Three parikramas symbolize union with three flows of willpower (Ichha-shakti).

Sun: Seven parikramas represent transformation through seven levels of radiance.

Vishnu: Four parikramas signify invocation, itation, praise, and protection.

Goddess Durga : One parikrama symbolizes dissolution after manifestation. In general

Male deities are honored with even-numbered parikramas (e.g., 2, 4).

Female deities are honored with odd-numbered parikramas (e.g., 1, 3).

Devotees chant this mantra while performing circumambulation:

यानि कानि च पापानि जन्मांतर कृतानि च।
तानि सर्वाणि नश्यन्तु प्रदक्षिणे पदे -पदे॥

Oh God! Whatever sins I have committed in all my lives,
please destroy them with every step of my Pradakshina.



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SHUKRA NITI

SHUKRA NITI

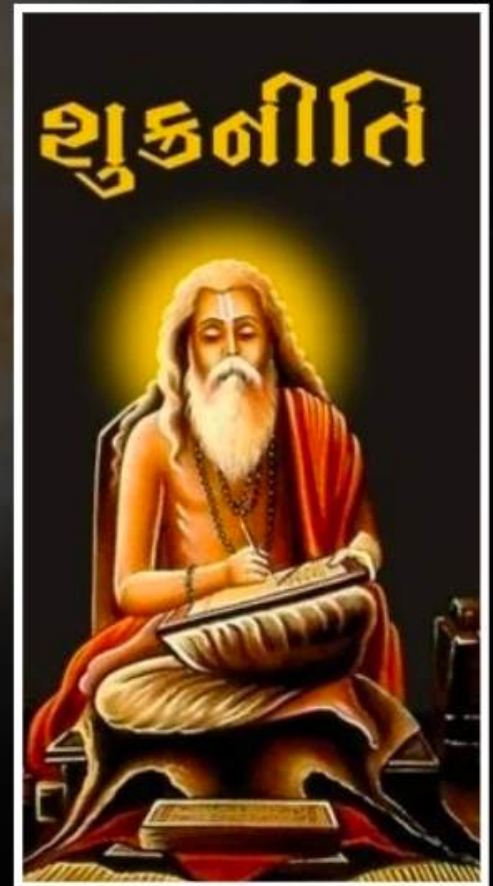
Shukraniti is an important ancient Indian text that provides insights into politics, governance, and social structure. However, historians have debated its exact period of composition. Some scholars believe it was written during the Gupta period (4th century CE), while others argue that it is a 19th-century text.

Historian K.P. Jayaswal has dated Shukraniti to the 8th century CE, a view also supported by A.S. Altekar..

Despite the uncertainty regarding its authorship and dating, Shukraniti holds significant value in Indian political thought. It presents a pragmatic approach to governance, making it relevant even today.

Shukranitisara puts more importance on righteousness. It believes that ethical policies should guide both the government and individuals.

One of the key ideas in Shukranitisara is that a king is not special just because of his birth. He is a servant of the people, and the money he collects as revenue is like a salary for his services. Ministers must report regularly, and the king himself should travel around the country to understand people's problems.



Statecraft

Shukraniti rejects the divine origin and sanction of kingship. The king is seen as an ideal figure of morality, bound by duty and good conduct, ensuring that people fulfill their obligations.

A good and virtuous king represents God, while an evil ruler symbolizes a demon. The king is not above Dharma, which is supreme, like a modern constitution. He must follow Rajdharma and ensure others adhere to their Varna-Ashram Dharma. The king should respect public opinion, and an immoral ruler should be removed. It is not the king's person but his lawful orders that deserve honor. Governance is classified into three types: administrative efficiency, public enlightenment, and judicial pronouncement.

Features of Shukra's Niti Shastra statecraft

Popular Sovereignty – King's power comes from the people.

King as a Public Servant – Paid through taxes.

Merit Over Birth – Kingship should be based on ability, not just social status.

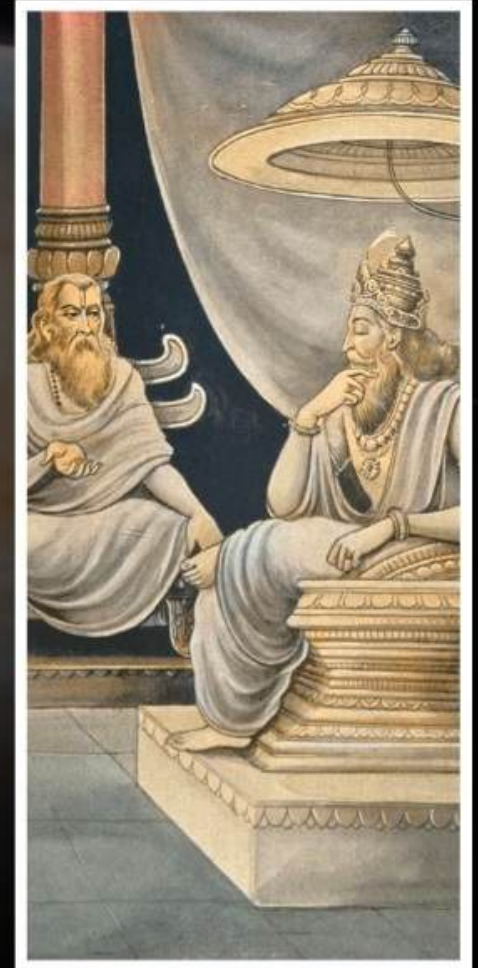
King Under Law – Cannot rule arbitrarily, must follow the law.

Consultation & Accountability – Must seek ministers' advice in writing.

People's Voice Matters – Majority opinion should be honored.

Right to Remove a Bad King – Immoral rulers can be overthrown.

Respect for Law, Not the King – Only lawful orders deserve obedience.



Administration of the state

The administration of the state in Shukraniti was organized into 20 departments and 10 ministries. Key officials included:

- Purohita: Protector of the kingdom, handling theology, political, and military affairs.
- Pratinidhi: Second in rank to Purohita, performing the king's duties when he was unwell.
- Pradhana: Chief of the council of ministers.
- Sachiva: Minister for war.
- Mantri: Foreign minister, using strategies like Sama, Dama, Danda, and Bheda.
- Prādvivaka: Minister of law and justice.
- Pandita: Expert in scriptures and jurisprudence.
- Sumantraka: Finance minister.
- Amatya: Revenue minister.
- Duta: Minister of diplomacy.

financial administration

Shukraniti prescribed an organised tax and revenue system for financial administration:

Taxation: Up to 33% of the gross produce. Farmers were entitled to an income twice their expenditure on land tax and cultivation costs.

A king who unjustly seizes the wealth of the people is considered a thief or robber.

- New taxes should be imposed judicially and carefully.
- State revenue allocation:
 - 50% for defense
 - 8.33% for grants, subsidies, and subvention
 - 8.33% for general administration
 - 8.33% for royal establishments
 - 16.66% for treasury reserves

The book provides detailed information about government structure, economy, and taxation. It describes different levels of rulers, from small landlords to the highest sovereign, based on the revenue they collect. It also mentions 64 different professions and 32 fields of study, showing a well organized society. The government is advised to always have extra money and spend it on public services like roads, education, and food security. Shukranitisara also talks about fair taxation. Taxes should not burden people too much, and different income sources should be taxed wisely. The idea of taxing services, which modern India follows, was suggested in this book



REFERENCE:

State and government in ancient india by dr as altrekar

The Śukraniti– Published online by Cambridge University Press: 24 December 2009

SHUKRANITISARA: A POLITICAL ECONOMY TEXTAT THE CUSP OF INDIAN KINGDOMS AND COLONIAL RULE
Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad.



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PURANAM

फाल्गुन माह शुक्ल पक्ष सप्तमी ,
विक्रम संवत् २०८१

मंत्राणां ९

देवमयं धान्यं सर्वोत्पत्तिकरं महत् प्राणिनां जीवनोपायमतः शां०॥ धान्यं॥ प्रणवः सर्वं शां० नारीणां
पार्वतीयथा॥ तथारसानां प्रवरः स वेदो रसानां तः॥ ममतस्मात्परां लक्ष्मीं ददस्व य इ सर्वदा॥ गुड

The Puranas are a collection of ancient Indian history and stories that talk about origin of gods and his avatars, kings time line, sages, medicine , astronomy, and the creation of the universe. They have been an important part of Hindu culture for centuries, shaping beliefs, traditions, and religious practices.

The word purana means ancient, and these texts were meant to pass down knowledge in a way that was easy to understand.

Unlike the Vedas, which focus on rituals and hymns, the Puranas use stories to teach moral values, history, and philosophy. For a long time, these stories were not written down but were passed from generation to generation through storytelling.

Over time, scholars compiled them into written texts, making sure they were preserved. Because of this, the Puranas have played a major role in shaping Indian traditions, from the way people worship to the festivals they celebrate.



PURANAM

The micro View of 18 puranam

SARGA

History of Creation of Cosmos

VISARGA

History of Creation of Life

VRUTTI

History of Evolution of Life

RAKSHA

History of Sustenance of Life

ANTARANI

History of Time Scales

VAMSA

History of Lineages

VAMSANUCHARITA

History of Dynasties

SAMSTHA

History of Catastrophes

HETHU

History of Prime Causation

APASHRAYAHA

History of Supreme Being

ब्राह्मं पादं वैष्णवं च शैवं लैङ्गं सगारुडं ।
नारदीयं भागवतमाग्नेयं स्कान्दसंज्ञितम् ॥ २३ ॥
भविष्यं ब्रह्मवैवर्तं मार्कण्डेयं सवामनम् ।
वाराहं मात्स्यं कौर्मं च ब्रह्माण्डाख्यमिति त्रिषट् ॥ २४ ॥

Srimad Bhagavatam 12.7.8-11

The **eighteen** major Purāṇas are the **Brahma, Padma, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Liṅga, Garuḍa, Nārada, Bhāgavata, Agni, Skanda, Bhaviṣya, Brahma-vaivarta, Mārkaṇḍeya, Vāmana, Varāha, Matsya, Kūrma and Brahmāṇḍa** Purāṇas.

There are eighteen main Puranas, called the Mahapuranas, along with many smaller ones, known as the Upapuranas. Each purana has its own focus. Some talk about the creation of the universe, some tell the stories of gods and goddesses, while others give lessons on morality and life.

One of the most popular is the Bhagavata Purana, which tells stories Avatara of Vishnu , especially his form as Krishna. The Shiva Purana, on the other hand, focuses on the stories and teachings of Shiva. These texts were written over a long period, with different authors adding their own perspectives. Because of this, the Puranas reflect the changing beliefs and traditions of Indian society over time. Even today, they are a huge part of Hindu culture, influencing religious ceremonies, art, music, and daily life.





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THIRUKKURAL

A PROFOUND EXPOSITION OF MORAL, ETHICAL
AND PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

फाल्गुन कृष्ण पक्ष चतुर्दशी,
विक्रम संवत् २०८१

27th February 2025
Thursday

Thirukkural is a timeless masterpiece of ancient Tamil literature composed by the revered sage Thiruvalluvar composed of 1,330 couplets, divided into three main sections: Aram (Virtue), Porul (Wealth), and Inbam (Love).

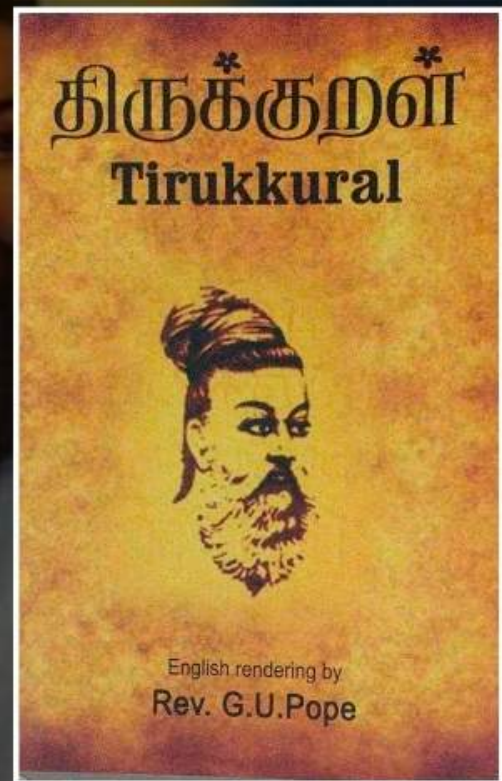
These sections correspond to the first three of the four purusharthas (supreme aims of life) in Hindu philosophy: dharma, artha, and kama. The fourth aim, moksha (salvation), is not explicitly covered, as it is believed to naturally follow the pursuit of the first three.

Thirukkural has been dated variously from the 2nd century BCE to the 8th century CE. However, the traditional accounts often place it as the last work of the third Sangam period, which is not supported by modern scholars.



Tamil literature, including Thirukkural, reflects a cultural continuity that preserved ancient traditions despite external influences. The relative insulation of South India is highlighted from historical shocks faced by the North, allowing Tamil literature to maintain its distinctiveness while still being influenced by Sanskrit.

The text's themes of Thirukkural, such as duty (dharma), wealth (artha), and love (kama), correspond to traditional Hindu life components, making it a work of universal ethical wisdom.



Endangered Archives Programme

This work Thirukkural has 133 chapters with 1330 stanzas in three divisions. The following leaf nos.1-10 are missing.,Extent: 124. Size and dimensions of original material: 24cm x 2.5cm. Condition of original material: Fair. Custodial history: Department of Pamlleaf Manuscripts, Tamil University. Arrangement: Chronology. Author(s)/Creator(s): Thiruvalluvar. Original institution reference: TU_TAMIL_1825_2343.



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UPANISHADS

फाल्गुन कृष्ण पक्ष सप्तमी,
विक्रम संवत् २०८१

20th February 2025
Thursday

UPANISHAD

The Upanishads are ancient Indian texts that form the philosophical foundation of Hinduism. They are part of the Vedas, the oldest sacred scriptures of Hinduism, and are considered the culmination of Vedic thought. The term "Upanishad" translates to "sitting down near," reflecting the tradition of disciples gathering close to a teacher to receive spiritual knowledge. Composed between approximately 800 and 500 BCE, these texts explore profound questions about the nature of reality, the self, and the universe.

Central to the Upanishads is the exploration of the relationship between the individual soul (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman). They propose that understanding this connection leads to spiritual enlightenment and liberation (moksha).

The influence of the Upanishads extends beyond Any religion, impacting various philosophical and spiritual traditions worldwide. Their emphasis on inner realization over external rituals marked a significant shift in spiritual thought. Themes from the Upanishads have resonated with and inspired thinkers and scholars globally, contributing to a broader understanding of consciousness and the nature of existence.

The texts employ dialogues, stories, and metaphors to convey their messages, encouraging introspection and the pursuit of true knowledge. One of the key teachings is the concept of non-duality, suggesting that the individual self and the universal essence are one and the same.

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UPANISHAD

Non-binding & Macro Classification of 108 Upanishads

- 1: Yoga
- 2: Vedanta
- 3: Mantra
- 4: Sanyasa
- 5: Shareera (Bodily)



The Macro View of 108 Upanishads

Brahman (Ultimate Reality)
Atman - Paramatma (Self)
Maya (Illusion)
Moksham (Liberation)
Avidya (Ignorance)
Gnyanam (Knowledge)
Dhyana (Meditation)
Bhakti (Devotion)
Karma & Punarjanma (Rebirth)
ॐ (cosmic symbol)
Prana Shakthi (Life Force)
Dharma (Righteousness)



UPANISHAD

Some Oldest And Famous Upanishads

- **Isha Upanishad**

Derived from "Isha" meaning "Lord" or "Ruler", Discusses the omnipresence of Brahman., Emphasizes living a life of balance

- **Kena Upanishad**

*Derived from "Kena" meaning "By whom?", Questions the source of existence.
Questions the nature of the Self, Questions the nature of the Brahman
Emphasizes the ineffable nature of Brahman., Realization of the ultimate knowledge.*

- **Katha Upanishad**

Narrates the story of Nachiketa and Yama, Explores the nature of Death and the Soul, Discusses the immortality of the Soul. Describes the path to Self-realization.

- **Prashna Upanishad**

Derived from "Prashna" meaning "Question"

Structured around 6 questions asked by 6 disciples.

*Discusses the origin of creation.
Explains the nature of life and breath.
Talks about the nature of mind and senses.
Describes meditation and its benefits.
Explores the concept of the Paramatma
Ends with affirmation of the union of Self & Brahman*

- **Mundaka Upanishad**

*Derived from "Munda" meaning "Shaved head" (implying renunciation)
Describes the two kinds of knowledge: higher and lower. Emphasizes the importance of higher knowledge.*

- **Mandukya Upanishad**

*Shortest Upanishad with just 12 verses.
Discusses the syllable "AUM" as the symbol of Brahman.
Explains the four states of consciousness:
Awake, Dream State, Deep Sleep, Turiya
Emphasizes the unity of the individual soul and Brahman.
Uses AUM to describe the entire range of consciousness.
Concludes with the affirmation of the non-dual nature of reality*

- **Taittiriya Upanishad**

*Derived from "Taittiri," referring to a school of Yajurveda
Divided into three sections: Siksha, Brahmananda, & Bhrigu Valli.
Explores the nature of bliss and Brahman in Brahmananda Valli.*

- **Aitareya Upanishad**

*Describes the creation of the universe.
Talks about the origin of living beings.
Explains the nature of the self.
Discusses the journey of the soul.*

UPANISHAD

Some Oldest And Famous Upnishads

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Describes meditation and its benefits.
Explores the concept of the Paramatma
Ends with affirmation of the union of Self & Brahman*

- **Mundaka Upanishad**

*Derived from "Munda" meaning "Shaved head" (implying renunciation)
Describes the two kinds of knowledge: higher and lower. Emphasizes the importance of higher knowledge.*

- **Mandukya Upanishad**

*Shortest Upanishad with just 12 verses.
Discusses the syllable "AUM" as the symbol of Brahman.
Explains the four states of consciousness:
Awake, Dream State, Deep Sleep, Turiya
Emphasizes the unity of the individual soul and Brahman.
Uses AUM to describe the entire range of consciousness.
Concludes with the affirmation of the non-dual nature of reality*

- **Taittiriya Upanishad**

*Derived from "Taittiri," referring to a school of Yajurveda
Divided into three sections: Siksha, Brahmananda, & Bhrigu Valli.
Explores the nature of bliss and Brahman in Brahmananda Valli.*

- **Aitareya Upanishad**

*Describes the creation of the universe.
Talks about the origin of living beings.
Explains the nature of the self.
Discusses the journey of the soul.*



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Gyandarshan

AJIVAKA SECT

फाल्गुन कृष्ण पक्ष एका
विक्रम संवत् १९८१

13th February 2025
Thursday

AJIVIKA SECT

The Ajivika sect was an old religious group in India that started around the same time as Buddhism and Jainism, about 2,500 years ago. It was founded by Makkhali Gosala, who was once a friend of Mahavira, the Jain leader. The people who followed this religion believed that everything in life is already decided by fate.

They thought that no matter what a person does, their life will go exactly as it was meant to. Because of this belief, they did not think good or bad actions could change a person's future. They lived very simple and strict lives, often giving up clothes and food to show their commitment.

Since they believed in fate, the Ajivikas thought that everyone was on a fixed path in life, moving from one birth to another until they reached their final goal. They believed that no amount of effort could change where a person would end up.

Even though this idea might make it seem like they had nothing to do, they still followed a strict lifestyle. They lived with very few things, avoided comfort, and spent a lot of time thinking deeply about life.

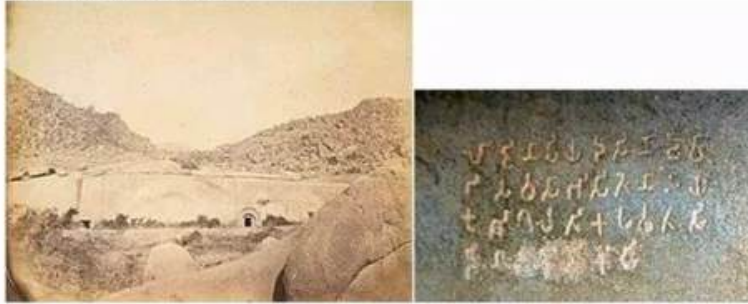


AJIVIKA SECT

For some time, the Ajivikas were well known, especially when Emperor Bindusara, the father of Emperor Ashoka, supported them. But over time, their ideas became less popular as Buddhism and Jainism spread. By the 14th century, the sect had almost disappeared. Today, we only know about them from old Buddhist and Jain writings, which might not tell the full story. Even though their religion no longer exists, their ideas about fate and destiny were important in shaping Indian philosophy.



Inscriptions and caves



The 3rd century BCE mendicant caves of the Ājīvikas (Barabar, near Gaya, Bihar). Dedicatory inscription of Ashoka in Visvakarma/Viswamitra cave, Barabar



An Ājīvika ascetic in a Gandhara sculpture of the Mahāparinirvāṇa, circa 2nd-3rd century CE. On the left: Mahākāśyapa meets an Ājīvika and learns of the parinirvāṇa

For more information:-

- 1. History and doctrines of the ajivikas by Basham, A. L. (Internt archive)*
- 2. Ājīvika -asceticism See our article on the Barabar Caves in [academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu).scribd & [researchgate.net](https://www.researchgate.net) Dr Uday Dokras Ph D SWEDEN*



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Gyandarshan

VIDUR NITI

STATECRAFT AND RAJDHARM

अष्टमी शुक्ल पक्ष
, माघ , एका

6th January 2025
Thursday

VIDUR NITI

Vidurniti is a collection of ethical and practical lessons that Vidura shared with Dhritarashtra. He warned the king about the dangers of greed, injustice, and favoritism, urging him to protect his kingdom and family by following the path of dharma. Vidura explained that a person ruled by anger, ego, and desires invites ruin, while someone who practices humility, patience, and self-control finds true peace. He taught that wealth and power are temporary, but virtues like honesty and kindness leave a lasting impact

Vidura's teachings also applied to everyday life. He advised against unnecessary quarrels, overindulgence, and jealousy, as these bring suffering. Instead, he encouraged cultivating virtues like contentment, gratitude, and detachment. He believed that true happiness lies in fulfilling one's duties without being swayed by selfish desires.

STATE CRAFT AND RAJDHARMA

For a king, Vidura stressed the importance of ruling with fairness and compassion. A good ruler, he said, must always think of the welfare of the people and avoid being influenced by selfish or wicked advisors.

Vidura emphasized the need for justice, saying that protecting the weak and punishing the wrongdoers is the primary duty of a king. He also spoke about the value of forgiveness, diplomacy, and careful decision-making to maintain peace and stability in a kingdom

Despite Vidura's efforts, Dhritarashtra ignored his advice, leading to the devastating war of Kurukshetra. Vidurniti remains a timeless guide, teaching us that righteousness, wisdom, and compassion are the keys to a life of peace and harmony.





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Gyandarshan



**THE PATH TO MOKSHA IN
VEDANTA**

MOKSHA IN VEDANT DARSHAN

Moksha, or liberation, is a profound concept in Indian philosophy, representing the ultimate spiritual goal and the highest state of the soul. It signifies freedom from the cycle of birth and death (samsara) and the attainment of eternal peace and bliss through union with Brahman, the Supreme Reality. Moksha is not merely a state of being but an eternal truth that transcends the material existence and unveils the purpose of life.

Indian philosophy explores Moksha through various schools of thought through vedant ,smakhya ,yog darshan and bodh and jain darshan

Key Concepts Supporting Moksha Vedanta emphasizes that liberation is not about achieving something new; rather, it is the removal of ignorance and realizing what has always been true. The core principles include:

- **Maya (Illusion):** The material world is a temporary projection, veiling the ultimate reality. Recognizing this illusion is essential for liberation.
- **Avidya (Ignorance):** Ignorance of the true nature of the self is the root cause of bondage. Dispelling this ignorance through knowledge leads to freedom.
- **Jnana (Knowledge):** Knowledge of one's true self as Brahman is the sole means to Moksha



*Moksha in Vedanta- Vedanta, one of the most profound and ancient philosophical schools of Indian thought, draws its principles from sacred texts like the **Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Brahma Sutras**. Among its central tenets, the concept of Moksha (liberation) holds a paramount place.*

*Vedanta defines Moksha as the ultimate union of the individual soul (**Atman**) with the Supreme Reality (**Brahman**)*



*This state represents the cessation of all suffering and liberation from the endless cycle of birth and death (**samsara**). In Vedanta, particularly in the **Advaita (non- dualism)** philosophy propounded by Adi Shankaracharya, it is emphasized that there is no fundamental difference between Atman and Brahman. This non-dualistic perspective is expressed through the celebrated phrase, "**Aham Brahmasmi**" (I am Brahman). According to this school, the material world is an illusion (**Maya**), a projection of ignorance (**avidya**).*

The realization of one's true nature as Brahman leads to liberation. In this state, the soul perceives that it was never distinct from Brahman but has always been one with the Supreme Reality.

The Path to Moksha in Vedanta-The journey to Moksha in Vedanta requires the cultivation of self- knowledge (Atma-jnana), which dispels ignorance and reveals the unity of Atman and Brahman. Vedanta prescribes three essential practices for attaining this realization:

*1. **Shravana** (Listening): The first step involves listening to the teachings of the Vedantic scriptures under the guidance of a qualified teacher (guru). This enables the seeker to comprehend the foundational truths about Atman, Brahman, and their unity.*

*2. **Manana** (Reflection): The seeker then reflects deeply on the teachings to resolve doubts and attain intellectual clarity. This process strengthens conviction in the non-dualistic nature of reality.*

*3. **Nididhyasana** (Meditation): The final step is meditative contemplation on the truth revealed by the teachings. Through sustained focus, the seeker internalizes the knowledge and directly experiences the unity of Atman and Brahman.*





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Present a series

Gyandarshan

PANCHATANTRA

A BRIEF HISTORY



PANCHATANTRA

The Panchatantra is an ancient Indian collection of interrelated animal fables in Sanskrit verse and prose, arranged within a frame story

The Panchatantra remains a seminal work in the study of folklore, literature, and moral philosophy. Its tales continue to be retold and adapted, reflecting timeless human wisdom and the art of storytelling

Origin

Time Period: The exact date of composition is uncertain, with estimates ranging from 200 BCE to 300 CE. Sanskrit scholar Johannes Hertel suggests it was composed around 200 BCE. Many Indian temples which constructed 1500 - 2000 years ago even today we can see Panchatantra story carvings on the walls

Authorship: The prelude of the Panchatantra attributes the work to an octogenarian Brahmin named Vishnu Sharma, who is said to have composed it to educate the three sons of King Amarasakti in the principles of governance and worldly wisdom. However, the historicity of Vishnu Sharma is debated, with some scholars considering him a literary invention.



Manuscripts

The Panchatantra does not have a single "original manuscript" that survives today. Like many ancient Indian texts, it was transmitted orally and through numerous handwritten manuscripts over centuries. Several early manuscripts and versions exist, and they are housed in various libraries and collections worldwide.

Sanskrit Manuscripts:

Ancient Sanskrit versions of the Panchatantra are preserved in Indian libraries, such as:

The Asiatic Society, Kolkata.

Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur.

These manuscripts vary in content, as the text was modified and adapted over time.

Persian and Arabic Translations:

The Panchatantra was translated into Persian (as Kalila wa Dimna) and Arabic around the 6th century CE.

Manuscripts of these translations are preserved in collections such as the British Library (London) and Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris).

European Translations:

- Early Greek and Latin translations influenced European literature. Some manuscripts of these translations are kept in: Vatican Library (Rome). Bodleian Library (Oxford).

Structure

The Panchatantra is divided into five books, each focusing on a specific aspect of governance and human relationships:

1. Mitra-Bheda - (The Loss of Friends): Discusses how friendships can be broken.

2. Mitra-Labha - (The Gaining of Friends): Explores ways to win friends.

3. Kākolūkīyam - (Of Crows and Owls): Deals with war and peace.

3. Labdhapraṇāśam - (Loss of Gains): Warns against losing what one has gained.

4. Aparīkṣitakāraṇam - (Ill-Considered Actions): Highlights the consequences of rash actions



Global Influence and Translations:

It is approximately translated in 50 languages across the world

1. Sanskrit, India, ~500 BCE
2. Pahlavi, Persia, ~500 CE
3. Arabic, Saudi Arabia, ~750CE
4. Greek, Greece, ~1080 CE
5. Old Spanish, Spain, ~1250 CE
6. English, UK, ~1570 CE
7. Italia, Italy, ~1580 CE
8. French, France, ~1720 CE
9. German, Germany ~1870CE





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Present a series

Gyandarshan

VEENA :

Sound, Spine, Spirit!





VEENA :

The Veena, an ancient Indian musical instrument holds profound spiritual and anatomical significance.

The Veena is not merely a musical instrument; it is a representation of divine energy. Maa Saraswati, considered as the Goddess of wisdom and music, embodies this energy, aiding in subduing our restless minds .

*Each part of Veena symbolizes various deities: it's **danda (stem)** represents **Lord Siva**, it's string embody **Goddess Uma's energy**, while it's bridge signifies **Goddess Lakshmi**. The gourd connects to **Lord Brahma**, and its naval is associated with **Maa Saraswati**.*

Anatomical Correlations

The design reflects a remarkable parallel between the instrument and human anatomy, emphasizing its spiritual alignment.

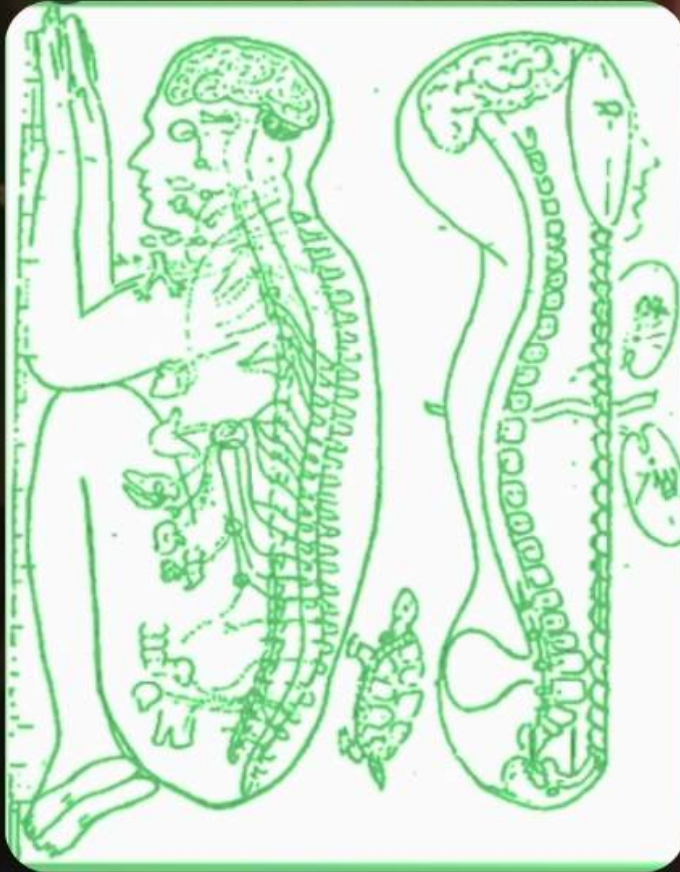


Fig no.1 Aligning the Frets & the Vertebrate

Frets and Vertebrate

The Veena traditionally has 24 frets, corresponding to the 24 presacral vertebrae in the human spine - **7 cervical, 12 thoracic, and 5 lumbar vertebrae**. This structural similarity provides a compelling basis for anatomical comparison.

Fret and Disc Spacing

As the inter - fret distances reduce towards the head of the Veena, this mirrors the decreasing inter- vertebral disc spacing from the lumbar to cervical regions in the spine. The gradation reinforces the notion of the Veena as a symbolic spinal column.

Strings and Neural Plexuses

The Veena typically features seven strings, which have been metaphorically linked to the **seven major nerve plexuses** (**coccygeal, sacral, lumbar, cervical, brachial, and components of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system**). They also align with the **seven chakras** in yogic anatomy.

Base and Sacrum Representation

The curved base or tail of the Veena is often seen as a representation of the **sacro-coccygeal complex** in humans. This area is considered the seat of the **Muladhara chakra** in yogic tradition.



Fig no.2 : Lower end of the Veena representing the gluteal region

Veena, Nada Yoga and Moksha

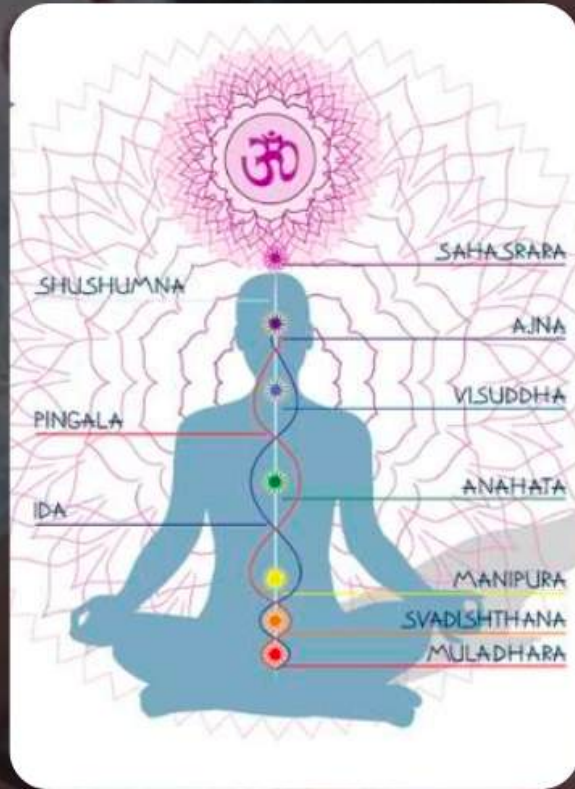


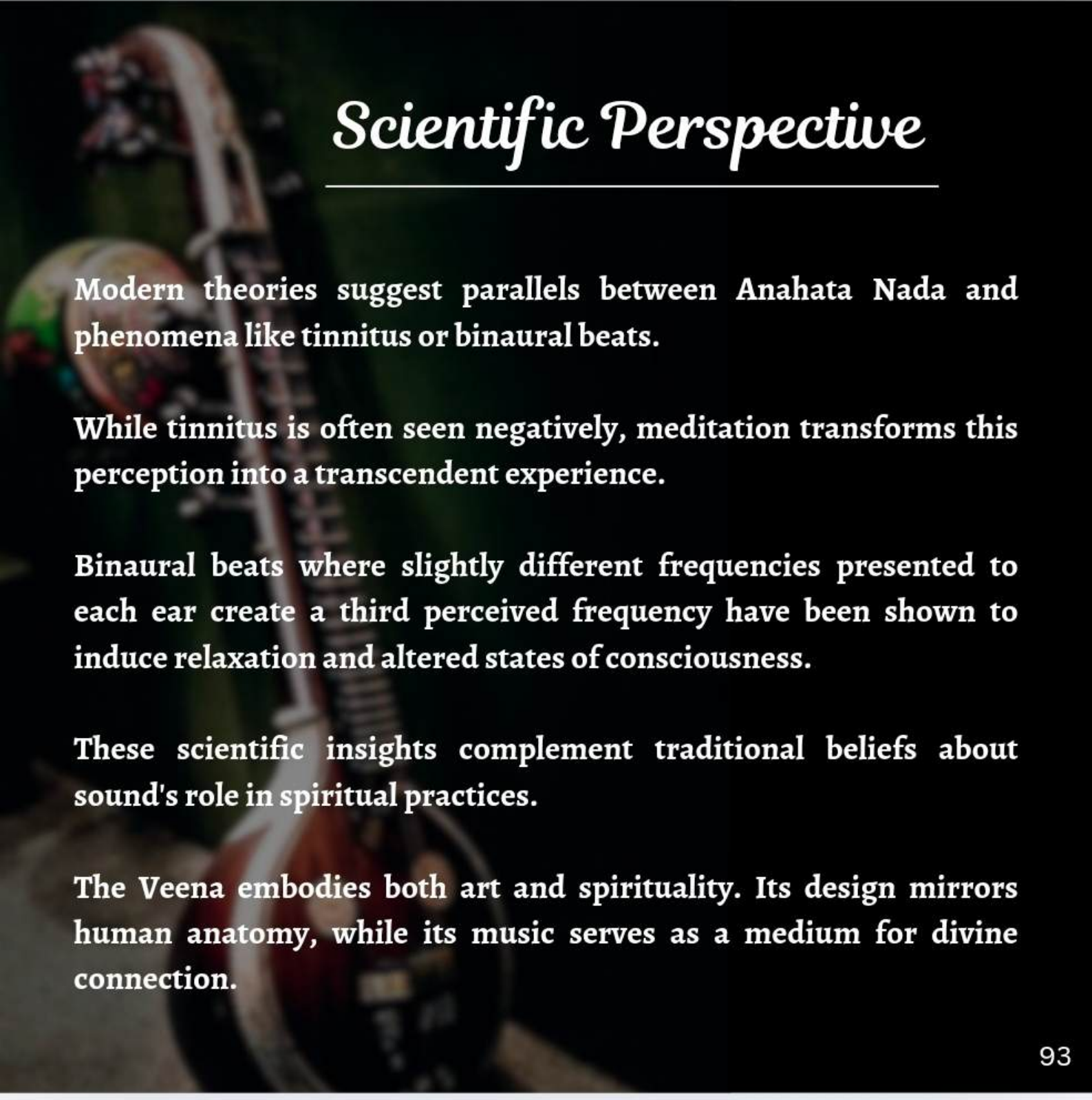
Fig no.3 The Chakras and the 3 Primary Nadis

The practice of playing or meditating on Veena aligns with **Nada Yoga**, a spiritual discipline that uses **sound vibrations to attain Moksha (liberation)**.

The **Anahata Nada** - the inner sound heard during deep meditation, is believed to originate from divine energy within us.

This sound resonates with the **heart chakra** and symbolizes connection with **Paramatma** (Supreme Soul).

Through disciplined manipulation of chakras during **Nadopasana** (sound meditation), one can experience Anahata Nada leading to **Brahmanubhuti** (salvation).

A blurred image of a Veena instrument, a traditional Indian stringed instrument, serves as the background for the text. The instrument's neck and strings are visible, extending from the top left towards the center.

Scientific Perspective

Modern theories suggest parallels between Anahata Nada and phenomena like tinnitus or binaural beats.

While tinnitus is often seen negatively, meditation transforms this perception into a transcendent experience.

Binaural beats where slightly different frequencies presented to each ear create a third perceived frequency have been shown to induce relaxation and altered states of consciousness.

These scientific insights complement traditional beliefs about sound's role in spiritual practices.

The Veena embodies both art and spirituality. Its design mirrors human anatomy, while its music serves as a medium for divine connection.



DAKSHI

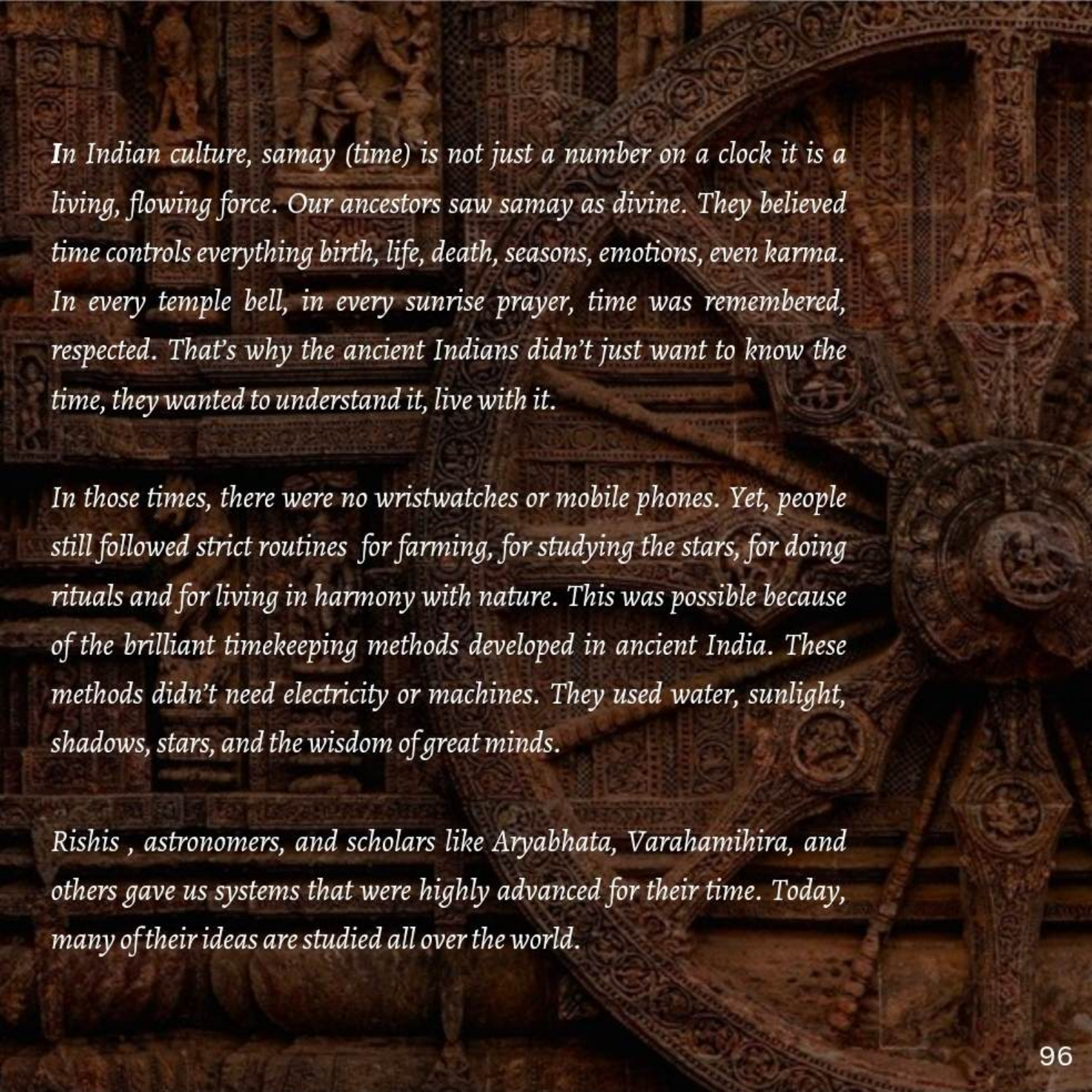


!! संस्कृति ज्ञान की !!

Present a series

Gyandarshan

Measuring time through
the Indian lens

The background of the page is a dark, textured image featuring intricate carvings from ancient Indian temples. On the right side, a large, ornate wheel, possibly a chariot wheel or a celestial model, is visible, with spokes and a hub decorated with circular motifs. The overall tone is sepia and historical.

In Indian culture, samay (time) is not just a number on a clock it is a living, flowing force. Our ancestors saw samay as divine. They believed time controls everything birth, life, death, seasons, emotions, even karma. In every temple bell, in every sunrise prayer, time was remembered, respected. That's why the ancient Indians didn't just want to know the time, they wanted to understand it, live with it.

In those times, there were no wristwatches or mobile phones. Yet, people still followed strict routines for farming, for studying the stars, for doing rituals and for living in harmony with nature. This was possible because of the brilliant timekeeping methods developed in ancient India. These methods didn't need electricity or machines. They used water, sunlight, shadows, stars, and the wisdom of great minds.

Rishis , astronomers, and scholars like Aryabhata, Varahamihira, and others gave us systems that were highly advanced for their time. Today, many of their ideas are studied all over the world.

Let us now explore five such techniques used in ancient India to measure time. These were not just scientific methods they were deeply connected to nature, to spirituality, and to the Indian way of life.

1. Gnomon – Shadow Clock

*In ancient India, the **Shanku Yantra** was a simple yet effective tool for measuring time using the sun's shadow. A vertical stick, known as a **gnomon**, was placed upright on a flat surface. As the sun moved across the sky, the gnomon's shadow shifted in length and direction. By observing these changes, people could determine the time of day. This method was particularly useful for identifying key moments like sunrise, noon, and sunset. It also helped in understanding seasonal changes, as the shadow's behaviour varied throughout the year.*

The Shanku Yantra was not only a timekeeping device but also a valuable tool for astronomical observations. Ancient Indian scholars, including Aryabhata and Varahamihira, documented the use of the gnomon in their works. The simplicity and effectiveness of the Shanku Yantra made it a widely used instrument in ancient Indian society.

2. Water Clocks

Water clocks, were ingenious devices used in ancient India to measure time based on the flow of water. A common design involved a small bowl with a hole at the bottom, floating in a larger vessel filled with water. As water entered the bowl through the hole, it gradually sank. The time it took to sink corresponded to a specific time interval, such as **one ghatika (approximately 24 minutes)**. These water clocks were particularly useful for timing rituals, astronomical observations, and daily activities.

They provided a consistent and reliable method for measuring time, especially during **cloudy days or at night when sundials were ineffective**.

Ancient texts like the **Surya Siddhanta** and works by scholars such as **Varahmihira** and **Brahmagupta** describe the construction and use of water clocks in detail. Their widespread use highlights the advanced understanding of time measurement in ancient Indian civilization.

3. Clepsydra (Kapala Yantra)

The Clepsydra, referred to as **Kapala Yantra** in ancient India, was a sophisticated water clock used to measure time intervals with greater precision. Unlike the simpler Ghati Yantra, the Clepsydra often featured a graduated vessel to measure the volume of water that had dripped out, allowing for more accurate timekeeping. One design involved a hemispherical copper vessel with a small hole at the bottom, placed in a larger container of water. As water filled the vessel through the hole, it would eventually sink. The time it took to sink was used to measure specific time intervals. This method was particularly useful for timing religious rituals and astronomical observations. Ancient Indian scholars, including Varāhamihira and Brahmagupta, documented the use of Clepsydra in their works. The precision and reliability of this device underscore the advanced understanding of time measurement in ancient Indian society.

4. Astronomical Calculations

Ancient Indian astronomers developed complex methods to calculate time based on celestial movements. They observed the positions of the sun, moon, and stars to determine various time units, such as **tithis** , **nakshatras** , and **muhurta** . Scholars like Aryabhata and Brahmagupta created detailed astronomical models to predict celestial events and calculate time accurately.

They used mathematical formulas to determine the positions of celestial bodies, accounting for factors like the Earth's rotation and orbital movements. Instruments such as the **Chakra Yantra** and **Sundial variants** were employed to measure angles and track celestial movements. These tools, combined with mathematical calculations, allowed ancient Indian astronomers to develop highly accurate calendars and timekeeping systems.

The integration of astronomy and mathematics in timekeeping reflects the advanced scientific knowledge of ancient Indian civilization.

5. Natural Methods

In addition to mechanical and astronomical tools, ancient Indians also relied on natural indicators to measure time. They observed the behaviour of animals, such as birds returning to their nests at dusk or cows heading back to their shelters, to gauge the time of day. The opening and closing of certain flowers, which occurred at specific times, also served as natural time indicators.

The position of the sun and stars played a crucial role in determining the time of day and night. By observing the sun's position in the sky, people could estimate the time, while the appearance of specific stars or constellations signalled particular times during the night.

These natural methods were deeply integrated into daily life and rituals, reflecting a harmonious relationship with nature. They provided a practical and accessible means of timekeeping, especially in rural areas where mechanical devices were unavailable. The reliance on natural cues for time measurement highlights the observational skills and environmental awareness of ancient Indian society.



DAKSHI
presents

Gyandarshan

NABAKALEBARA

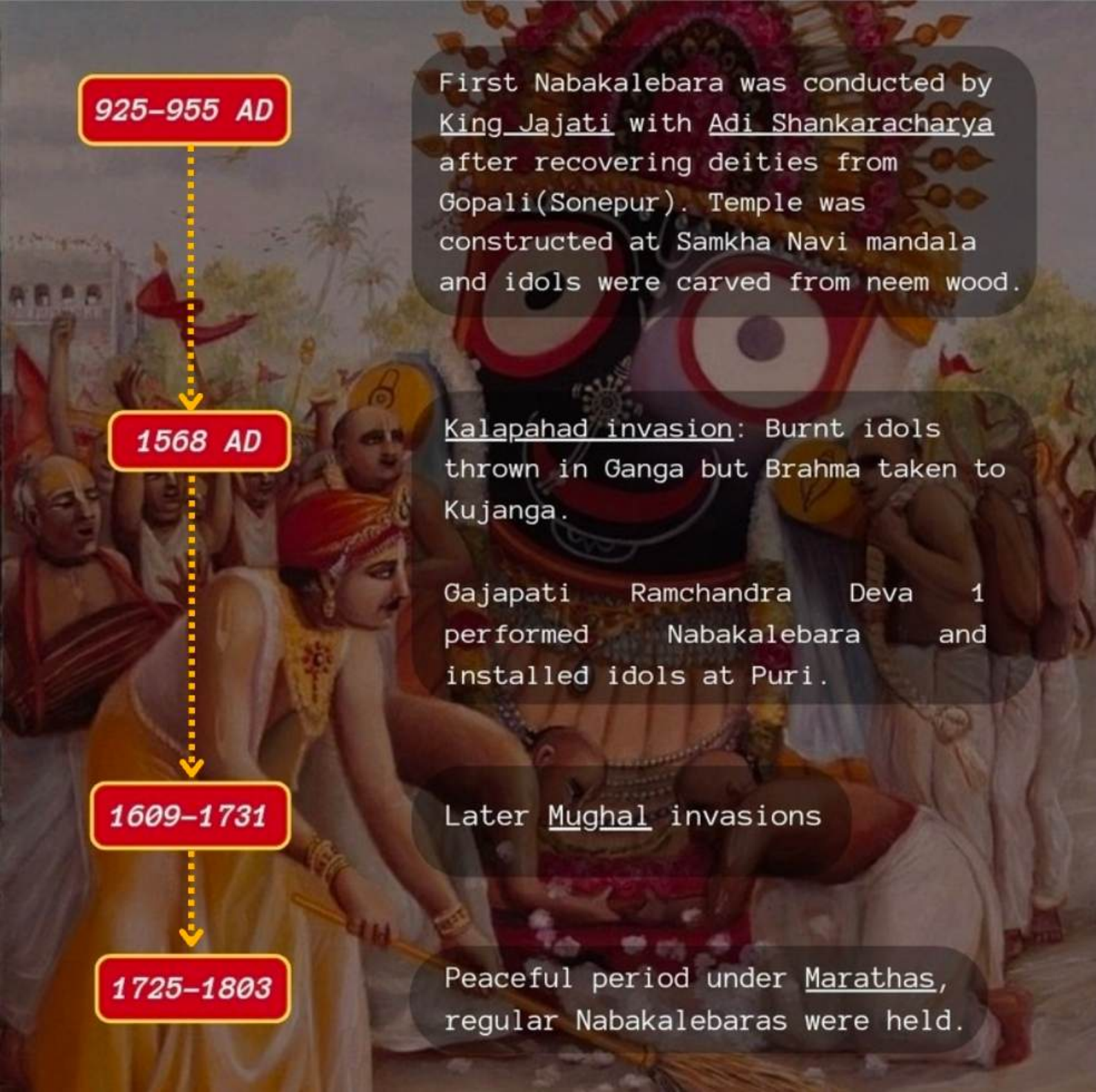
The eternal cycle of divine renewal

Nabakalebara

is typically celebrated in the year when the month of Ashadh occurs twice in the form of *Joda Ashadh*, an occurrence that occurs roughly every *8,12 or 19 years* .

A ritual that witnesses the transformation of the idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, Maa Subhadra and Sri Sudarshana into newly made ones, highlighting the *cyclical nature of life , death and rebirth* .

Its a meticulous process that requires extensive search for the right raw materials for making the idols and infusing life into them once again. Let us delve deep into the various versions & historicity of this ritual.



925-955 AD

First Nabakalebara was conducted by King Jajati with Adi Shankaracharya after recovering deities from Gopali(Sonepur). Temple was constructed at Samkha Navi mandala and idols were carved from neem wood.

1568 AD

Kalapahad invasion: Burnt idols thrown in Ganga but Brahma taken to Kujanga.

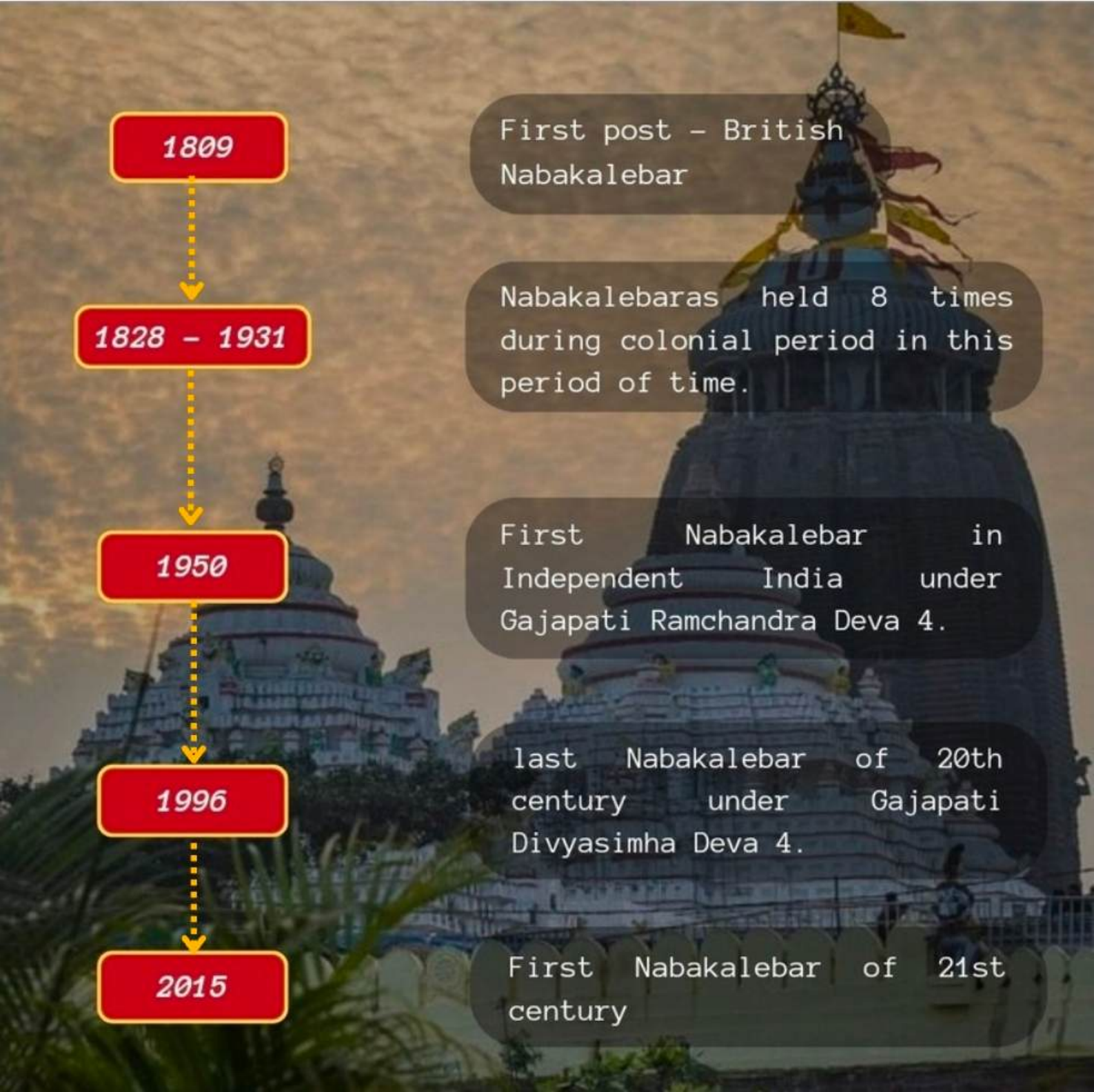
Gajapati Ramchandra Deva 1 performed Nabakalebara and installed idols at Puri.

1609-1731

Later Mughal invasions

1725-1803

Peaceful period under Marathas, regular Nabakalebaras were held.



1809

First post – British
Nabakalebar

1828 – 1931

Nabakalebaras held 8 times
during colonial period in this
period of time.

1950

First Nabakalebar in
Independent India under
Gajapati Ramchandra Deva 4.

1996

last Nabakalebar of 20th
century under Gajapati
Divyasimha Deva 4.

2015

First Nabakalebar of 21st
century

Banajaga yatra is the sacred journey conducted to seek neem tree (Daru) that would become deities.

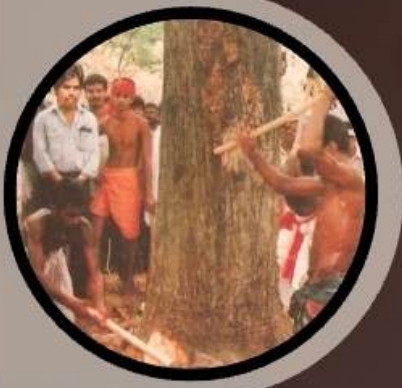
Suta Samhita' states, the timber wood of Shri Jagannath, Shri Balabhadra, Mother Subhadra and Shri Sudarshan should be Krishna (black), Sweta (white), Pita (yellow) and Red respectively. The divine symbols that the tree must possess are :

- *Tree must be old with straight trunk and 3-7 branches.*
- *Absence of bird nests or hunder damage*
- *Presence of Sacred symbols nearby (temple, river, ant hill etc)*
- *Divine symbols on tree like Conch, disc, mace and lotus*
- *A cobra residing in the hole or the ant hill as a divine guardian*
- *with a circumference of around 2-3 meters, the tree must be 10/12 feet in height*



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Once Daru is selected, the tree are ceremonially cut using three symbolic axes : *Vidyapati (gold)*, *Viswavasu (Silver)* and *Vishwakarma (iron)*.

After *Snana Purnima* (ritual bath), the old deities are kept in *Anasara* due to illness. The *Daitas* and *Vishwakarma* artisans carve new idols inside Darsana Mandap in secrecy. This phase is called *Mahaanasara*.



The logs are wrapped in silk cloth, placed in specially sanctified chariots and brought to Puri. They are placed at *Koili Vaikuntha* through *Uttaradwara* of temple.



On the *14th day of dark fortnight*, the most sacred ritual is conducted: the transfer of Brahma Padartha from the old to new idols. The old idols are then buried in *Koili Vaikuntha* under the Kalpa Bata creeper

Ratha Yatra

A white paste is applied to the new idols for 15 days. Finally on the new moon day, **the Netrotsava or Nava Yauvana Darshan** takes place, when the devotees see the rejuvenated, youthful deities. This marks the culmination of Nabakalebar.



॥ जय जगन्नाथ ॥



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**AMBUBACHI
MELA**

कामाख्येवरदे देवी नीला पर्वता वासिनी
त्वम् देवी जगतम माता योनि मुदेऽमोस्तुते



ABOUT AMBUBACHI MELA

Ambubachi Mela is also known as '*Maha Kumbh Mela of the East India*'. Ambubachi Mela also locally known as "*Ameti*" or "*Amoti*" is the biggest religious congregation in the North East India. The word "*Ambu*" means *water* and "*Vasi*" or "*Bachi*" means *flowing*.

It is observed during the monsoon season in the month of '*Ashada*' as per Assamese/Bengali calendar beginning with the seventh day which falls around 21st or 22nd of June of Gregorian Calendar.



It is a *four day* festival celebrating the menstrual cycle of Goddess Kamakhya which symbolises the ability to give life.

Ever since the ancient times it was a practice that on the fourth day the menstruating girl could take head bath and resume the daily tasks and worship. Hence, for three days the temple remains closed and on the fourth day it is opened and Goddess Kamakhya is worshipped.

The festival is associated with *fertility, the beginning of the monsoon season*, and the common historical association of a fertile woman across cultures on Earth. The name 'Ambubachi' translates to "water flowing".



Historical background

Long ago Goddess Sati, daughter of Prajapati Daksha had married Lord Shiva and was deeply devoted to him. However, Prajapati Daksha, considered Lord Shiva unworthy of his daughter due to his unconventional and ascetic lifestyle.

As per Kalika Purana, one day Prajapati Daksha organised a grand yajna but didn't invite Sati and Shiva due to his hatred towards Shiva. On their arrival on the day of yajna without invitation, Prajapati insulted Shiva



At the time, Sati gained her mightiest form and burnt herself in the sacred Havankund and sacrificed her life. Shiva couldn't tolerate the death of his most loved.

Enraged, Shiva took the form of Veerabhadra and beheaded Daksha. It is said that after this incident, heartbroken Shiva carried the dead body of Sati all over the world in grief and to pacify him



Vishnu dismembered the body of Sati into 51 parts using his Sudarshana Chakra which fell in different regions where the Shaktipeeths got formed



In the northeastern area, in present day Assam, the genital or yoni of Goddess Sati fell which is a symbol of creation. The Shaktipeeth formed at this location is the present day Kamakhya temple.

SACRED RITUALS

AMBUBACHI MELA

Kamakhya Temple



The tantric cult of Kamakhya is closely associated with specific rituals that are performed at the temple. The main form of offerings are flowers, incense and sweets, however, animal sacrifice is also carried out on some occasions.

Mass animal sacrifices are also carried out at some times of the years. A very special kind of sindoor, made from the local rock, is available here. This is considered to be a blessing from the goddess

This festival is also known as Ameti.



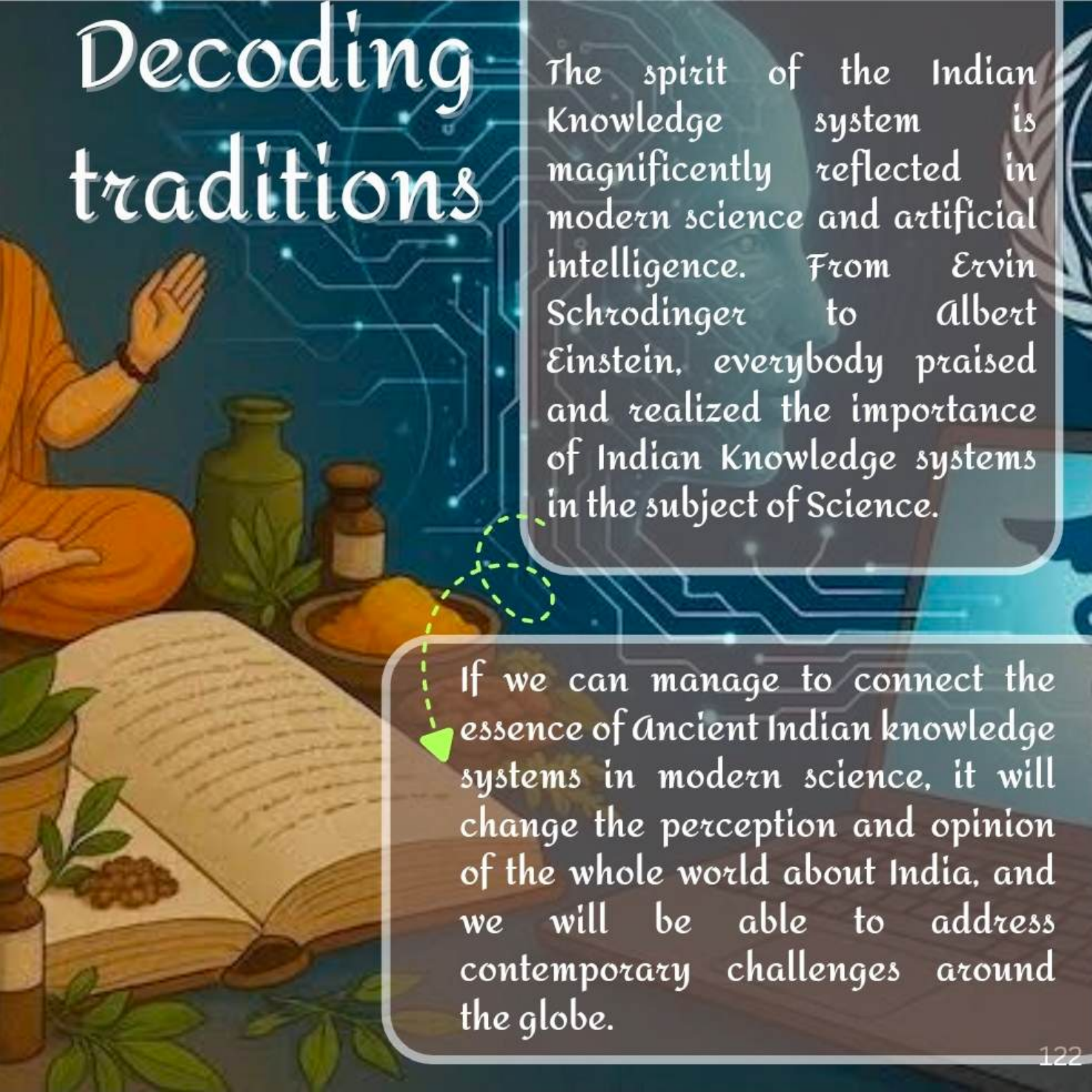
DAKSHI
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Gyandarshan

The spirit of IKS in modern
science and AI

Decoding traditions



The spirit of the Indian Knowledge system is magnificently reflected in modern science and artificial intelligence. From Ervin Schrodinger to Albert Einstein, everybody praised and realized the importance of Indian Knowledge systems in the subject of Science.

If we can manage to connect the essence of Ancient Indian knowledge systems in modern science, it will change the perception and opinion of the whole world about India, and we will be able to address contemporary challenges around the globe.

IKS/Modern science

PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE

The Upanishadic exploration of Yoga and consciousness improves the depressed and weak mindsets of modern people, and through complex training and meditation, modern people find solutions for their mental well-being and physical body.

Srinivasa Ramanajuna discovered the concept of infinity and continued fractions, saw calculations in his dreams, and introduced mock theta functions. Many modern professors and mathematicians consider him the greatest mathematician ever born. The development of the Ancient text Ayurveda and the Charak Samhita by Charak and Sushruta has been a significant text in the field of modern medicine.

PHYSICS AND MEDICINE

IKS/AI

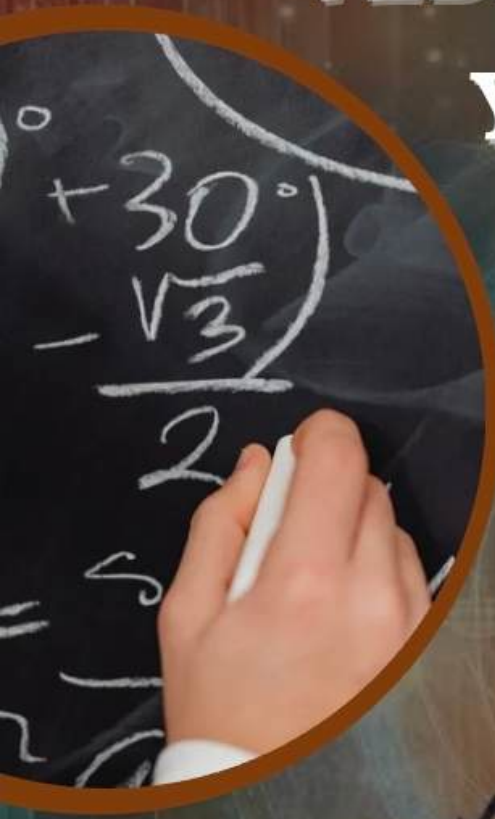
This concept of language was introduced thousands of years ago by a legendary scholar, Panini, who wrote the Asthadhyaya. He divided the Sanskrit Language into 4000 Sutras and made the learning easy for his students to understand the language better and easily. Now, meta language gets used in the development of various AI models and machines to make the responses better and more humanized.

CONCEPT OF META LANGUAGE

PHILOSOPHICAL INTEGRATIONS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

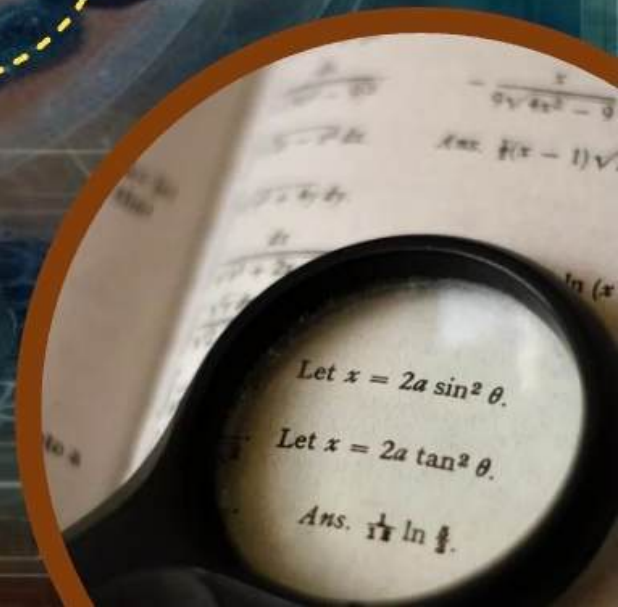
The philosophy of Dharma signifies ethical conduct and responsibility toward others, AI systems designed with this will prioritize fairness, justice and greater good. A principle of Ahimsa should also be incorporated in AI, it promotes non-harming and empathy, crucial for AI decisions in sensitive domains like- healthcare or law enforcement. Seva (selfless service) promotes the idea of technology serving humanity selflessly, ensuring AI systems benefit the most vulnerable in society, the cultural influence in AI models will help AI systems to promote ethical and moral considerations.

VEDIC MATHEMATICS AND YOGIC PRINCIPLES



Drawing inspiration from Vedic Mathematics, researchers can explore novel algorithms that enhance the speed and efficiency of machine learning models. By integrating traditional mathematical wisdom with modern computational techniques, India has the potential to contribute significantly to the evolution of AI algorithms.

Yogic principles of focused attention and mental discipline can inspire the creation of AI algorithms that simulate human cognitive processes. Moreover, the ethical underpinnings of yoga can guide AI developers in ensuring that technology aligns with human values and societal well-being. Ethical Uses of AI in respecting Human Rights, transparency, and protecting privacy in this professional cyber world.



CYBER SECURITY

Cybersecurity advisors suggest that AI systems should be transparent, explainable, and accountable. This is particularly important in high-stakes applications such as criminal justice, healthcare, and finance, where AI systems can significantly impact individuals and society. In addition, ensuring that AI systems are transparent and explainable will help build trust in these technologies and ensure that they are used responsibly and ethically.



If the AI lacks these important aspects, then it will become the principles that distinguish between right and wrong. As Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly changing the way we live, work, and interact with one another, it is increasingly important to consider the ethical implications of these technologies. The future of ethics in AI will play a critical role in shaping the development and deployment of AI systems and their impact on society.





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Gyandarshan

The Ancient Look East Policy

~ Sailing Beyond Seas ~

Series on ~ Chola Empire

Part 1.



Chola Empire (850-1279 CE), located in the heart of fertile Kaveri delta was a powerful empire founded by Vijayalakshmi Chola by overthrowing Pallava dynasty, with its capital at thanjavur. Unlike other south Indian dynasties, Cholas have been given the title of being 'Imperial Cholas' because of their overseas explorations and dominance.

Naval Supremacy of Cholas

Cholas were pioneers of naval power in South Asia, with their earliest activities recorded around the 1st century CE at **Kaveripoompattinam** (**Poompuhar**), a bustling harbor where fleets escorted merchant ships. Some Roman sources and the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea highlight their maritime strength and early naval weapons.

The Chola Navy comprised the naval forces of the Chola Empire along with several other naval arms of the country. The Chola navy played a vital role in the expansion of the Chola Empire, including the conquest of the Ceylon islands and naval raids on **Srivijaya** (present-day Indonesia).

After a period of decline during the **Kalabhra rule** (3rd–7th century), the Cholas revived their naval might under Vijayalaya Chola. The empire reached its maritime peak under **Rajaraja Chola I** and **Rajendra Chola I**, who used powerful fleets to conquer Sri Lanka, raid Srivijaya (Indonesia), and secure dominance over the Indian Ocean trade. They adopted **advanced shipbuilding techniques** from Arabs and Chinese, reflecting their cosmopolitan outlook.



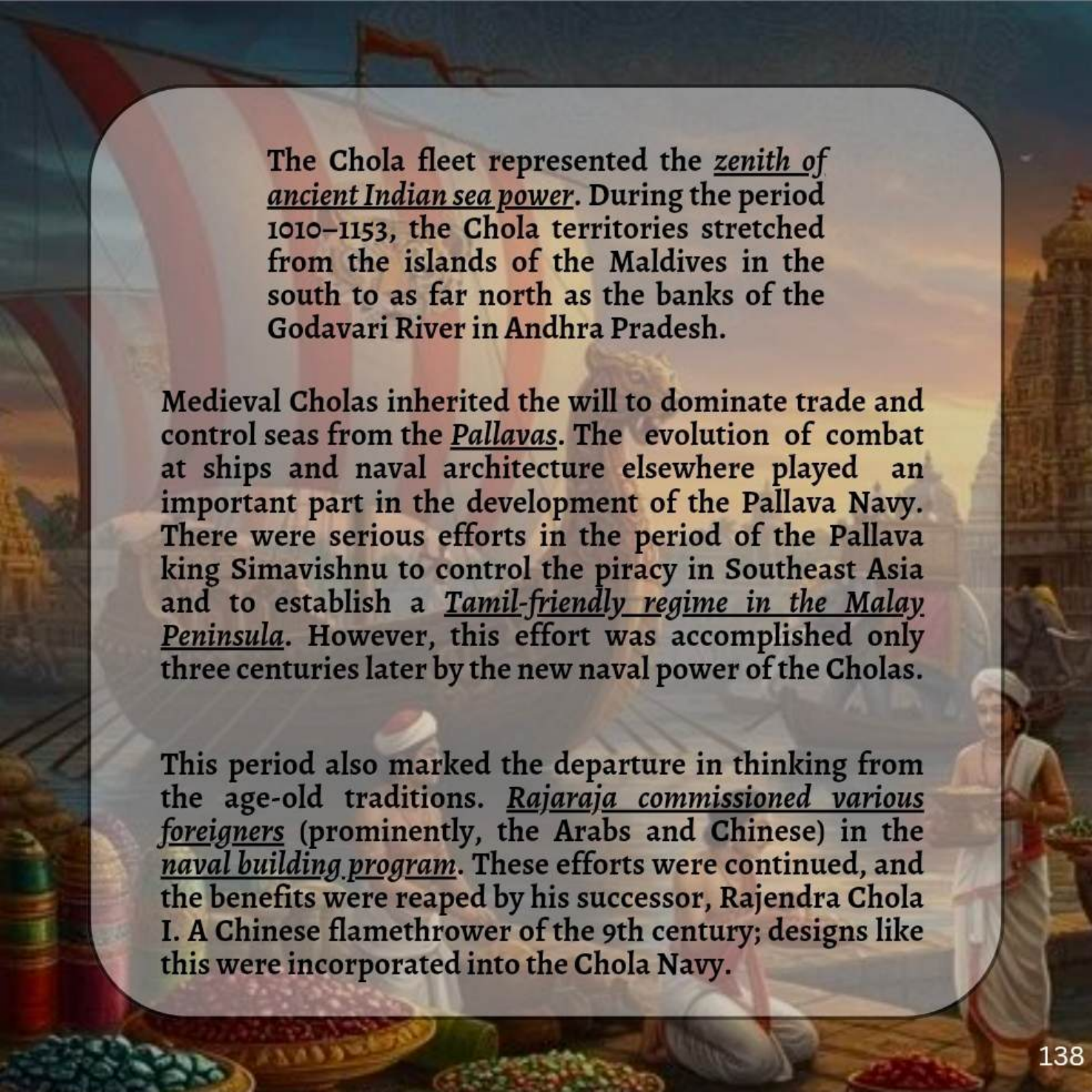
Rajaraja I

The Chola ruler **Rajaraja I** was an amazing military leader and was the 1st ruler to have brought South India under one umbrella. He broke the Chera's naval power and started constructing a powerful navy as well as a **merchant fleet**. With the help of warships, he managed to capture the northern part of **Ceylon and 12,000 islands** (the Laccadives and Maldives). He had the ambition to dominate a sea route, but he could not fulfill it in his lifetime.

Rajendra I

Rajendra I son of Rajaraja I, was an outstanding military personality acted in a dual role as Army Commander and Naval Admiral of Chola by utilizing naval power; he controlled all over Ceylon. He also was sending a **naval expedition** across the deep sea of the Bay of Bengal. He subdued the powerful empire of **Sri Vijaya of the Sailendras**, whose sway spread over **Malaya, Singapore, and Indonesia**. Rajendra I fulfilled his father's dream. None of the other military leaders in India could possess such an extraordinary naval achievement so far.



The background of the page features a traditional Indian painting style. On the right, a tall, ornate temple gopuram (tower) is visible against a sunset sky. In the foreground, a person wearing a white dhoti and a white turban with a red sash is walking towards the left. The overall scene is set in a historical or mythological context, likely related to the Chola dynasty.

The Chola fleet represented the zenith of ancient Indian sea power. During the period 1010–1153, the Chola territories stretched from the islands of the Maldives in the south to as far north as the banks of the Godavari River in Andhra Pradesh.

Medieval Cholas inherited the will to dominate trade and control seas from the Pallavas. The evolution of combat at ships and naval architecture elsewhere played an important part in the development of the Pallava Navy. There were serious efforts in the period of the Pallava king Simavishnu to control the piracy in Southeast Asia and to establish a Tamil-friendly regime in the Malay Peninsula. However, this effort was accomplished only three centuries later by the new naval power of the Cholas.

This period also marked the departure in thinking from the age-old traditions. Rajaraja commissioned various foreigners (prominently, the Arabs and Chinese) in the naval building program. These efforts were continued, and the benefits were reaped by his successor, Rajendra Chola I. A Chinese flamethrower of the 9th century; designs like this were incorporated into the Chola Navy.

Trade Legacy

A fragmentary Tamil inscription (Lobu Tua or Barus Inscription) found in Sumatra cites the name of a merchant guild, Nanadesa Tisaiyayirattu Ainnutruvar. Literally, "the five hundred from the four countries and the thousand directions", a famous merchant guild in the Chola country. The inscription is dated 1088, indicating that there was an active overseas trade during the Chola period.



Towards the end of the 9th century, southern India had developed extensive maritime and commercial activity, especially with the **Chinese and Arabs**. The Cholas, being in possession of parts of both the west and the east coasts of peninsular India, were at the forefront of these ventures. The **Tang dynasty** of China, the **Srivijaya empire** in the Malayan archipelago under the Sailendras, and the **Abbasid caliphate** at Baghdad were the main trading partners. The trade with the Chinese was a very lucrative enterprise, and trade guilds needed the king's approval and the license from the customs force/department to embark on overseas voyages for trade. The normal trade voyage of those day involved **three legs of the journey**, starting with the Indian goods (mainly spices, cotton, and gems) being shipped to China, and in the return leg, the Chinese goods (silk, incense, and iron) were brought back to Chola ports. After some materials were utilized for local consumption, the remaining cargo, along with Indian cargo, was shipped to the Arabs. Traditionally, **this involved the transfer of material/cargo to many ships before the ultimate destination was reached.**



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Gyandarshan

from Kaveri to Ganga

~ Expeditions of
Rajendra Chola ~

Rajendra Chola

as

'Bhagirath'

A decorative graphic consisting of a yellow and white swirl that ends in a yellow arrow pointing towards the word 'Bhagirath'.

Rajendra Chola's expedition to the Ganga is compared to Bhagiratha's legendary act of bringing the Ganga to earth. The Colas by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri says Rajendra, "mocking Bhagiratha," brought the waters of the Ganga to sanctify his land by his own strength. This act showed not only spiritual merit but also political and military power, symbolizing his conquest over northern kingdoms

Expeditions by powerful monarchs followed a political code requiring digvijaya, or conquest of directions, as a royal duty. For Rajendra Chola, the goal was not just bringing Ganga water to the capital but establishing a right of way to show strong military force.

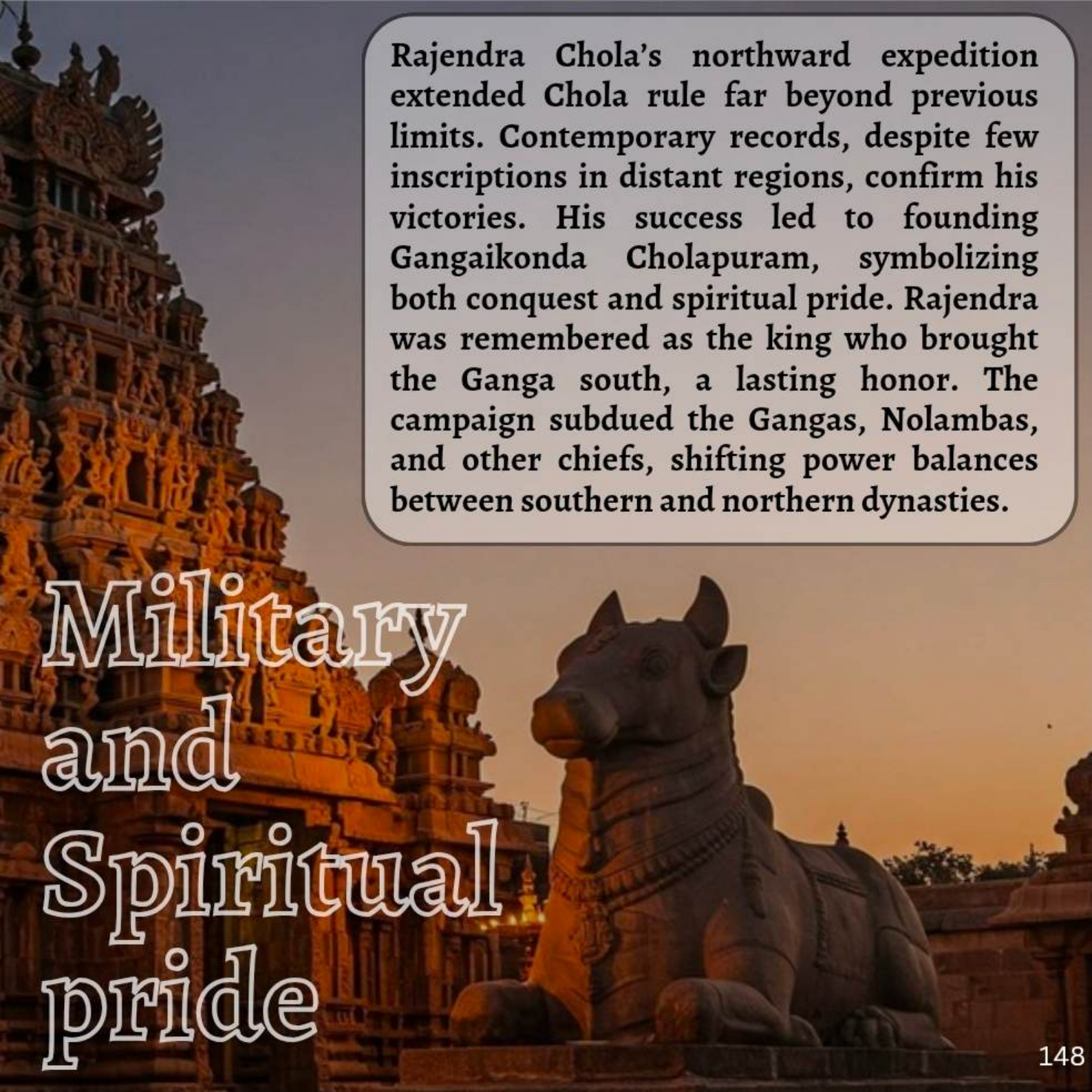


After victory, he built the Colaganga tank at Gangaikonda Cholapuram with Ganga water, creating a “*liquid pillar of victory*” symbolizing his triumph.

Pillar of 'Victory'

TIGER ON MARCH

Rajendra Chola's campaign moved north through Mysore after defeating the Western Gangas and Nolambas. Despite resistance, his army prevailed due to the Chalukya restoration weakening the Gangas' Rashtrakuta patrons. The 900,000-strong Chola army advanced deep into the Deccan, capturing territory and seizing booty (though such claims are considered hostile exaggeration in Chalukyan records). The campaign annexed nearly all Ganga and Nolamba lands in Mysore and much of modern Bellary, extending the empire's boundary to the Tungabhadra river.



Rajendra Chola's northward expedition extended Chola rule far beyond previous limits. Contemporary records, despite few inscriptions in distant regions, confirm his victories. His success led to founding Gangaikonda Cholapuram, symbolizing both conquest and spiritual pride. Rajendra was remembered as the king who brought the Ganga south, a lasting honor. The campaign subdued the Gangas, Nolambas, and other chiefs, shifting power balances between southern and northern dynasties.

Military
and
Spiritual
pride

The Ultimate legacy

His exploits epitomize Chola military ambition in history and tradition.

Rajendra Chola's expedition to the Ganga was both a military conquest and a symbolic achievement. His army marched through Mysore, the Deccan, and up to the Ganga, defeating many regional powers amid changing alliances. The crowning achievement was founding a new capital, Gangaikonda Cholapuram, celebrated in inscriptions and literature as the peak of Chola imperial power.



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Gyandarshan

Sacred Servants

The Devadasi tradition in Chola era

Chola series- Part 3.



Devadasi System

The term 'Devadasi' has its origin in Sanskrit which means 'female servant of diety or handmaiden of God'. Devadasi women were motivated by intense devotion to worship and were employed to serve a diety. To become a Devadasi, a girl has to perform some rituals which was similar to a marriage ceremony. They performed rituals and were well versed in classical arts. These activities transform an 'ordinary girl' into an 'ever auspicious female'. Found in various regions of India, there were distinct categories of Devadasis: Dutta, Hrutta, Bikrita, Bhrutya, Alankara and Dasis.



Golden period of

Devadasis were more prevalent in South Indian Temples. The rule of The Chola Empire in the middle of 9th-12th centuries was termed as the Golden age for Devadasi. The popularity of the Bharatanatyam tradition in Tamil Nadu can be traced to a large number of ancient temples that came into existence long before and several thousand during the time of the Cholas. Well versed in the arts, Devadasi was considered a jewel of both Court and Temple alike. Both these institutions mutually cared for her rather lavish economic heeds.



Deva- dasis

Epigraphical

Sources



- The inscription on Brihadeshvar temple, Thanjavur notes the grants to 400 Devadasis.
- Inscriptions on Suchidram temple mentions endowments by Devadasis for constructing theatres and mandaps.
- Kanyakumari inscriptions, particularly Guhaswami inscription of 1040 AD refers endowments for their ceremonial duties, with a specific mention of Devadasis Kandan Cholai.
- Tiruvennainallur inscription of the Kadava ruler Kopperumchinghan mentions Devadasis Aramudaiyar converting a donation into various temple items like bells.
- The Ratnagiri inscription mentions that the Devadaais were treated equally in the society and respected in the temples where they rendered service.

Nitya means 'eternal' and sumangali means 'auspicious', referring to the Devadasis who were ritually married to a diety.

Nityasumangalī

Devadasi Tradition in South India



SASKIA C. KERSENBOOM

Devadasis were considered free from 'Widowhood' and were called 'Akhand Saubhagyawati', since she is married to divine diety. Dance and music performed by Devadasis are interpreted not as secular entertainment but as integral components of temple worship, embedded within daily (nitya) and occasional (naimittika) ritual cycles. In this book, the authors described how the tradition was later reinterpreted as immoral under colonial reform, leading to its decline and the marginalisation of a formerly religious institution. However, Kersenboom consistently argues that it should be viewed from indigenous Hindu ritual logic.

Conclusion”

According to historians, the presence of a devadasi on any religious occasion in the home was considered sacred and treated with respect and gifts were given to them. They lived in quarters around the temple and were given 'tax free land's out of the temple endowment. The food supplies to Devadasi was Thiriyar Devarkandan, Thanyuvarana Uttama, Chola Valrathryan during the time of Rajarajan I. Tanjore temple inscriptions mentioned that there were 400 devadasis in Rajeswara temple, 500 devadasis in Dorti Somnath temple and 450 devadasis in Brahideswara temple during 11th century. Devadasis were central to temple culture and were responsible for preserving traditions in the form of dance music and various rituals. But the tradition declined due to colonial intervention and moral restructuring, which dismantled temple economies and redefined gender roles, transforming a once integral religious institution into a stigmatized social identity.





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Basant Panchami

पावका नः सरस्वती वाजेभिर्वाजिनीवती।
यज्ञं वष्टु धियावसुः॥

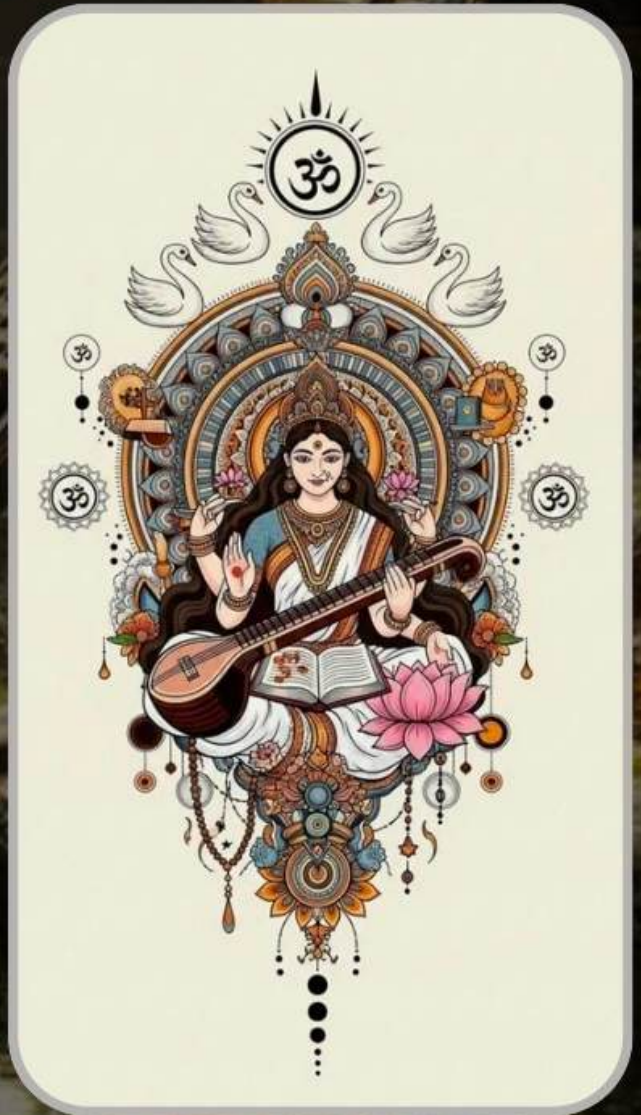
ऋग्वेद १.३.१०

Vasant , Panchami

It is the festival of Saraswati Puja in West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, Odisha, Bihar, and many other places. Goddess Saraswati is the embodiment of knowledge, art, music, aesthetics, and harmony. In the Shanti Parva in the epic Mahabharata, she is called the mother of the Vedas. The effulgent Saraswati illumines and removes nescience and darkness. Vasant Panchami is commemorated on the Magh Sud, that is, the fifth day of the bright lunar fortnight (Sukla paksham) of the month Magha in the lunisolar calendar. It signifies the start of spring as per the Hindu calendar.

The Science behind

Vasant Panchami's science lies in its timing with the arrival of spring (Vasant Ritu), marking nature's rejuvenation, which boosts human mood and immunity, explained through seasonal shifts, increased sunlight, blooming mustard (yellow symbolism), and the Ayurvedic concept of Kapha dosha melting, while the worship of Goddess Saraswati connects this natural renewal to knowledge, creativity, and the historical importance of the Saraswati river, with rituals like wearing yellow and eating turmeric-rich foods supporting mental clarity and health. This festival is basically connected with renewal of nature and human psychology.



Inside literature

In Sanskrit literature, the onset of spring is associated with nature coming alive: flowers blooming, bumblebees buzzing, and animals mating. “In both poetry and prose, writers have reserved their best for the spring season.



In the ‘Ritusamhara’ (“The Collection of Seasons”), the poet Kalidasa (4th century CE) begins the sixth and last canto with a beautiful description of the onset of Vasanta,” Misra says, translating the verse (6.1): “O dear, the warrior Vasanta has arrived to pierce the hearts of lovers. The blooming mango flowers are his sharp arrows, and the garland (swarm) of bumblebees is his shining bowstring.

Significance ”

In Banabhatta's Kadambari, the heroine compares the slow coming of spring to the gradual arrival of youth: Chaitra → sprout → flower → bumblebee → excitement/intoxication.

The festival is also linked with Saraswati, symbolising the rise of wisdom and learning—often connected with the legend of Kalidasa, who became a great poet through divine grace. Overall, it represents renewal, knowledge, and the celebration of Indian wisdom traditions.

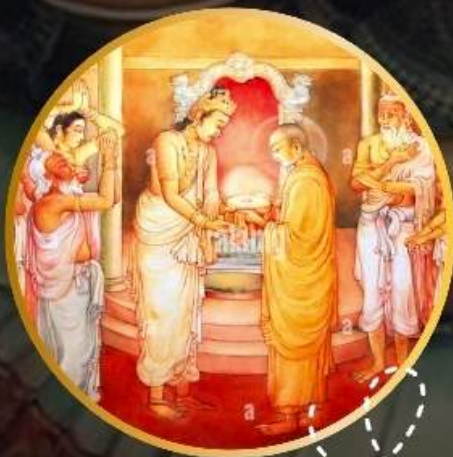


Folktales of Syncretism



Lord Brahma created Goddess Saraswati on this day to bring speech, music, and knowledge to the silent world, making it her birthday and a festival for learning.

Kamadeva (God of Love) shot an arrow at Lord Shiva to awaken him because of the death of the Goddess Sati, marking the start of spring and fertility, with prayers for love and joy.



King Brahmadatta: a king who, after a long period of ignorance, was enlightened and gained wisdom on this day, symbolising the triumph of knowledge.



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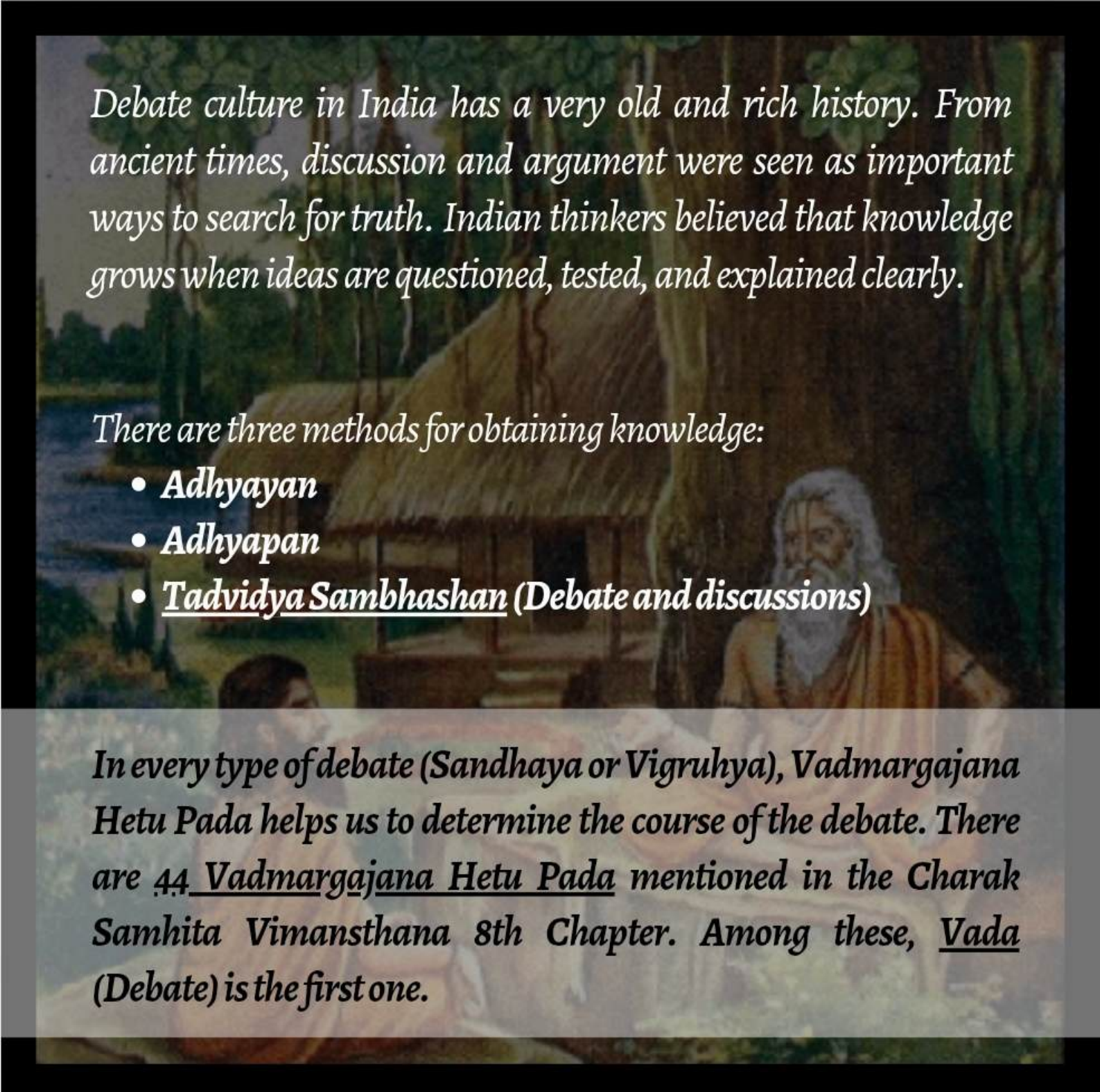
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Gyandarshan

Debate Culture In Ancient India

Vada-Jalpa-Vitanda

A painting of a traditional Indian village scene. In the foreground, a thatched-roof hut is visible. To the right, a bearded sage with long white hair, wearing a yellow shawl, is seated. The background shows a lush green landscape with trees and a body of water.

Debate culture in India has a very old and rich history. From ancient times, discussion and argument were seen as important ways to search for truth. Indian thinkers believed that knowledge grows when ideas are questioned, tested, and explained clearly.

There are three methods for obtaining knowledge:

- ***Adhyayan***
- ***Adhyapan***
- ***Tadvidya Sambhashan (Debate and discussions)***

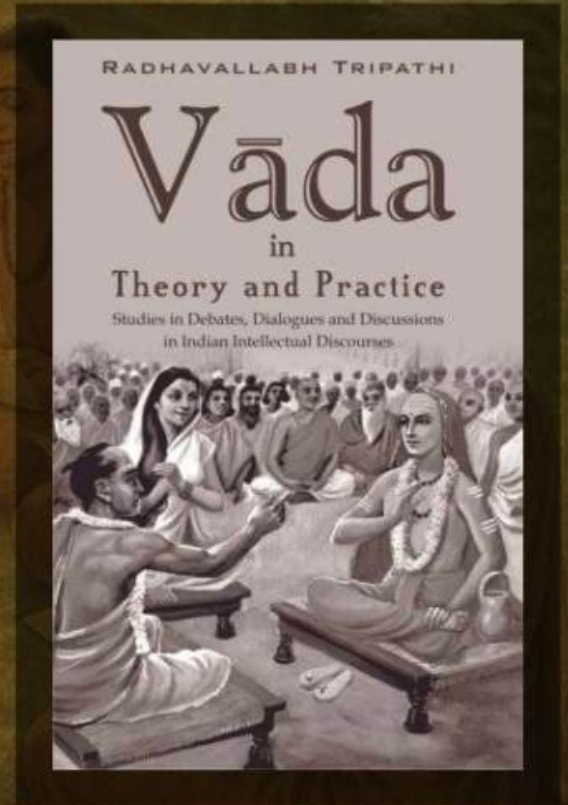
In every type of debate (Sandhaya or Vigruhya), Vadmargajana Hetu Pada helps us to determine the course of the debate. There are 44 Vadmargajana Hetu Pada mentioned in the Charak Samhita Vimansthana 8th Chapter. Among these, Vada (Debate) is the first one.

Vāda

The word 'Vāda'(वाद्) means 'Debate'; Parampara(परम्परा) means 'Continuing Tradition.' The vāda process aims for a conclusion and theory building along the way, leading to vāda also meaning a "Sense of theory." Theories in the philosophical systems were named vādas, e.g. Ārambhavāda, Prāmāṇyavāda, etc.

The popular saying of the Sanskritists ~ "वादे वादे जायते तत्त्वबोधः" ~ after going through the series of vādas, true knowledge is acquired. The concept of tattvabodha is to arrive at "the very essence and ultimate truth," and this is a feature of the vāda tradition that distinguishes it from western dialecticism.

(Radhavallabh Tripathi., 2016, p. 21).



प्रमाणतर्कसाधनोपालम्भः सिद्धान्ताभ्यनुज्ञानाभ्यनुज्ञो वादः॥

(Nyaya Sutra 1.2.1)

It defines Vāda, which refers to a sincere, constructive debate or discussion aimed at reaching the truth, based on proper reasoning and evidence.

The Vāda Paramparā (वाद-परम्परा), the Indian tradition of debate, traces its roots to the Vedic age in the form of brahmodya (ब्रह्मोद्य), or philosophical questioning, and reached greater sophistication in the dialogical exchanges (saṃvāda) of the Upaniṣads. This tradition was later formally systematized in the Nyāya Sūtras, which distinguished between vāda (dialogue aimed at discovering truth), jalpa (contentious debate seeking victory), and vitaṇḍā (debate limited to refutation). Buddhist and Jaina philosophers significantly expanded and refined these methods, embedding dialectical reasoning at the heart of their intellectual traditions. Across centuries, debates held in royal assemblies, monastic institutions, and centers of learning played a decisive role in shaping Indian philosophical thought, revealing a civilizational ethos grounded in rational inquiry, intellectual plurality, and the quest for ultimate truth.

यथोक्तोपपन्नः छलजातिनिग्रहस्थानसाधनोपालम्भः जल्पः

(Nyaya Sutra 1.2.2)

Jalpa

The main goal of Jalpa is not truth but winning the argument. In this type, a person may use tricks, clever words, and even weak logic to defeat the opponent. Sometimes false arguments or emotional statements are also used. The speaker focuses more on proving the other person wrong than on understanding the issue. Jalpa still follows some rules of logic (Pramanas), but honesty is often missing. Many debates in courts, politics, and public discussions today can be seen as Jalpa because people care more about victory and reputation than truth.

सः प्रतिपक्षस्थापनाहीनः वितण्डा

(*Nyaya Sutra 1.2.3*)

Vitanda

Vitanda is the lowest form of debate. In Vitanda, a person does not present their own clear argument. Instead, they only try to criticize and break the opponent's views. They point out mistakes and weaknesses but do not offer any solution or alternative idea. The aim is only to confuse or defeat the other side. This kind of debate does not help in gaining knowledge. It often leads to negativity and endless arguments without conclusion. Vitanda was criticized even in ancient times because it stops meaningful discussion.



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The Sacred Sound

(कठोपनिषद् १.२.१५)

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपाँ सि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥

Significance of 'OM'

‘Om’ is regarded as the eternal Sacred sound. It is an Omnipotent and Omnipresent sound of the Cosmos. For this reason it is also referred as ‘Pranava’; the energy that runs in our **Prāna**. ‘Om’ is the source of all religions and also religious scriptures. The uttering of the sacred and mystical ‘Om’ is called ‘Omkar’ or ‘Aumkar’. It is the sound of Brahma. It is the predominating force and power. The Mandukaya Upanishad declared Om to be everything (इदं सर्वम्). Maharishi Kalidasa called Om/Pranava a primal mantra and is used at the beginning of all mantras. For this reason, chanting Om is essential before every auspicious activity.

Decoding

Pranava



Maharishi Patanjali has mentioned "तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः" that means that thou (Ishvara) name is Pranava. Om has been referred to in Indian scriptures as Pranava. Being sound form of God, it is also called Shabda Brahma. The Bṛhad Yogayājñavalkya scripture lists ten names for Pranava- Omkāra, Praṇava, Sarvavyāpin, Ananta, Tāraka, Śukla, Vidyut, Haṃsa, Turya and Parabrahma. In Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, Shri Krishna manifests himself as a supreme god by addressing himself Pranav (प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु). In the Agni Purāṇa, it is said that Pranav is the essence of all mantras. In Śrī Vāmana Purāṇa, abandoning the chanting of Pranava is termed sinful.



Four States *of* **CONSCIOUSNESS**



The Pranava (ॐ) is a combination of four parts, namely-

- **अ (Akara),**
- **उ (Ukara),**
- **म (Makara) and**
- **Bindu and Nada.**

These parts are symbolic of-Creation, Preservation, Dissolution and Deliverance, which form the eternal life-death rhythm that goes on in an endless cycle. Thus, Pranava is the sound manifestation of GOD.

THE FOUR STATES OF AUM

“म” - Deep sleep state,
symbolizes the
Sushupti Avastha

“..” - The closing sound
of the syllable .
State of Pure
Consciousness,
symbolizes the
transcendental state i.e
Turiya

“अ” - Waking state,
symbolizes the Jagrat
Avastha

“उ” - Dreaming state,
symbolizes the Svapna
Avastha





Pronunciation



The “O” sounds like the “अ” sound combined with the “उ” sound within Blend the “m” (म) into the top. Position mouth as saying vowel “U.” With mouth unchanged, start pronouncing ‘AUM’ for throaty “O.” Finish with “म” as deep humming. Sit up straight wherever sitting, shut eyes, taking a pleasant long deep breath and let go. With the next deep breath, let “अ-उ” slip out low and rumble from belly. Half-way through breath, slowly bring lips together into the “म”, Taper off and enjoy silence. That’s one Om.



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Gyandarshan

A journey closer to the Divine

*Indic idea of
Detoxification*



Introduction

With respect to the problems faced in the modern day health practices, we find different kinds of solutions in different branches of thoughts. The Ancient Indian Shastric tradition has finely observed that it is as much important to detoxify the mind as the body itself and has laid down various measures to do so. One among them is the practise of 'Upavasa' or fasting, which acts as a 'Spiritual therapy' and helps purifies the mind and the body.

Langhana

लंघनं लाघवं यत्

"That which brings lightness to the body is known as Langhana"

The **Langhanabrimhaniya Adhyaya**, the 22th chapter of the Sutra Sthana in **Charaka Samhita**, outlines the core principles of Ayurvedic treatment through six fundamental therapies:

Langhana, Brimhana, Rukshana, Snehana, Swedana, and Stambhana

Langhana is a foundational Ayurvedic therapeutic process aimed at creating lightness (laghavata) in the body by reducing excess fat, toxins (ama), and aggravated doshas (primarily Kapha and Pitta).

Acharya Vaagbhata has categorized the principles of treatment under two main headings:

Santarpana (nourishing/enriching/brihmana)

Apatarpana (depleting/cleansing/langhana)

Upavasa

Upavasa is one of the 10 types of *Langhana* (*Charak Samhita*):

चतुष्प्रकारा संशुद्धिः पिपासा मारुतातपौ।
पाचनान्युपवासश्च व्यायामश्चेति लङ्घनम्॥

'**Upavasa**' is the Sanskrit term for fasting. **Upa** means "near" and **Vasa** means "to stay". Fasting implies "to sit or stay near (the Lord)".

Fasting is a practice that involves voluntarily abstaining from food and/or drink for a specific period. Fasting can be done for various reasons, including spiritual, health, and cultural. One of the most common reasons for fasting is religious or spiritual. Many religions, including Hindu, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, prescribe fasting to purify the body and mind, strengthen faith, and demonstrate devotion to God.

Why Upavasa is important?

Upavasa is a kind of '**adravya aushada**' In Ayurvedic traditions it is mentioned that "लंघनं परम् औषधं" 'Fasting is the Supreme Medicine'

*It is not just abstaining from food but Upavasa also means abstinence from **krodha** (anger), **shokha** (grief), **lobha** (greed), **mohadi** (fascination) etc.*

In today's world, intermittent fasting has become a prominent health trend. It is praised for promoting weight loss and cellular recycling, known as autophagy. However, this practice has ancient roots.

For over five thousand years, Ayurveda has practiced a deep form of therapeutic fasting called Upavasa. Unlike the modern idea of deprivation, Ayurvedic fasting is a conscious choice to withdraw energy from digestion to encourage internal healing and mental clarity.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Continuous and unhealthy intake of food results in the building up of **Ama**, formed due to weak digestive fire (agni), which according to Ayurveda is one of the primary reasons for diseases. Fasting expells *ama* from our digestive system, freeing up energy for healing and strengthening the immune system., thus improving Metabolic health.

Upavasa detoxifies not just body but the mind as well. It generates psychological power, stability and spiritual enlightenment. In psychology, studies have suggested that fasting can alleviate the symptoms of some psychiatric conditions including depression and schizophrenia.

MENTAL HEALTH

Upavasa as Tapas

Tapas is the third **Niyam** (among the *Ashtanga marg*) in *Patanjali's Yoga Sutra*. It refers to voluntary self-discipline, austerity, and **"inner fire" (root word-tapa)**. **The Bhagavad Gita (17.14–16)** speaks of three kinds of tapas: **austerity of body, speech, and mind**.

Upavasa (fasting) and Tapas (austerity/penance) are deeply intertwined in Hindu, yogic, and Indian spiritual traditions, with upavasa acting as a specific, **practical form of tapas**. It is considered as one of the **Bahya Tapas** (external austerity)



DAKSHI

presents

Gyandarshan



Śūnyatā

"Bridging the understanding
between the finite and the infinite"

Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya

*'Form does not differ from emptiness;
emptiness does not differ from form.
Form itself is emptiness; emptiness
itself is form'*

(Verse 2)

In the Heart Sutra (Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya), that is one the fundamental mahayana text, the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara explains the nature of emptiness (shunyata) to Shariputra.

All the phenomena of existence are characterized by voidness. In this context form and emptiness are therefore said to be non-dual. Form does not differ from emptiness means that they do not have differing characteristics.

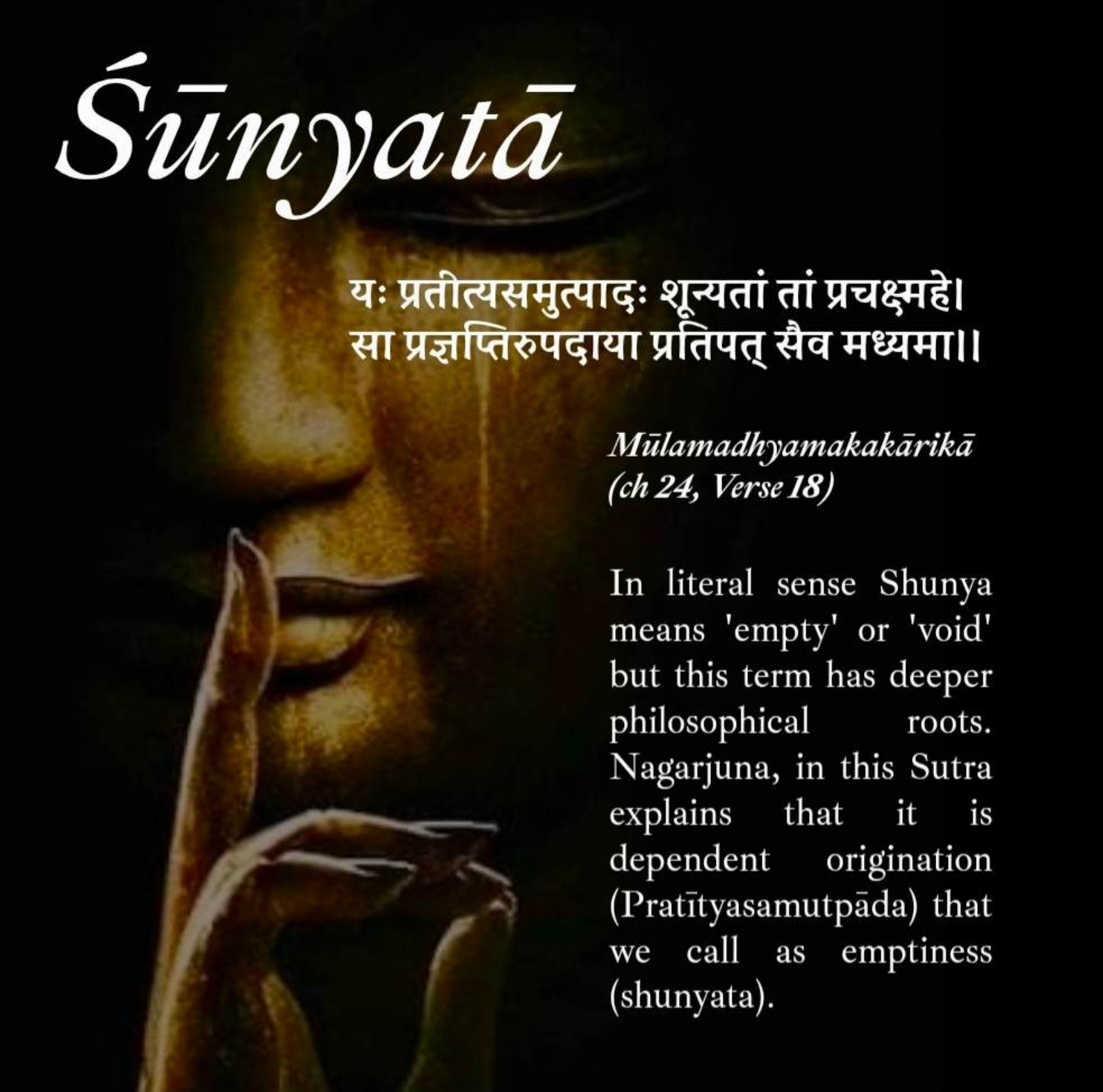
'Second Buddha'

Nagarjuna



Nagarjuna, who lived around 2nd century CE in south India is widely regarded as a 'second Buddha'. He is one of the greatest thinkers in the history of eastern philosophy. Nagarjuna is the founder of the *Madhyamika* ("Middle Way") school of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy in which he has articulated the *doctrine of Śūnyatā* (emptiness). The foundational text explaining the philosophy written by Acharya Nagarjuna is *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*.

Śūnyatā



यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादः शून्यतां तां प्रचक्ष्महे।
सा प्रज्ञप्तिरुपदाया प्रतिपत् सैव मध्यमा॥

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā
(ch 24, Verse 18)

In literal sense Shunya means 'empty' or 'void' but this term has deeper philosophical roots. Nagarjuna, in this Sutra explains that it is dependent origination (Pratītyasamutpāda) that we call as emptiness (shunyata).

Pratītyasamutpāda

is a core Buddhist doctrine stating that all phenomena arise in dependence upon multiple, interconnected causes and conditions, rather than existing independently.

Paramartha Satya

Nagarjuna propounded the doctrine of the two truths, Paramartha Satya (ultimate truth) and Samvriti satya (relative truth), explaining that everything that exists is ultimately empty of any intrinsic nature but does not exist conventionally. The Paramartha describes emptiness (shunyata).

Beyond Nihilism

The concept of Śūnya since its inception has drawn criticism especially from non-buddhist circles , eventually getting branded as "Sarvavaināśika - vāda" or absolute nihilism. It is a popular and understandable charge if one were to only interact with the concept at face value.

*"Śūnyam iti na vaktavyam aśūnyam iti vā bhavet
Ubhayam nobhayam ceti prajñaptiyartham tu kathyate"*



(It cannot be called void or not void, or both or neither, but in order to indicate it, it is called the void)

The Absolute

Śūnya in brief refers to the indescribable, indeterminable, the Absolute. No adjectives which govern this finite world of ours could describe it and hence it can be best termed as Śūnyam. The perceived voidness and nihilistic undertone in the term emerges from the absence of viveka - jnana i.e discriminative knowledge and is equivalent to the Parā-Vāk of Dakshinamurthi.

Where nihilism erects a sign of hopelessness and meaninglessness, Śūnya guides an individual towards accepting the unreality and helps transcend it . The phenomenal is translated and interpreted as a dream , a passage , a phase which an individual can observe without attachment , unconcerned with the issues.

Parallels in

Advaita Vedant

Nirguna Brahman in Advaita Vedanta is the ultimate, non-dual reality (Paramarthika Satya) devoid of all attributes, qualities (gunas), forms, and limitations. It is formless, absolute consciousness, described as Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). It transcends time, space, and causality, often described through "neti, neti" (not this, not this) siddhanta.

Though non-dualism is common to both, there is difference between the "Brahman" of Advaita Vedant and "Shunyata" of Nagarjuna in a way that Brahman is eternal whereas shunya is nothing in eternal.



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Gyandarshan



*"Mystic representation of a
psychological struggle"*

"the lord of

Illusion"

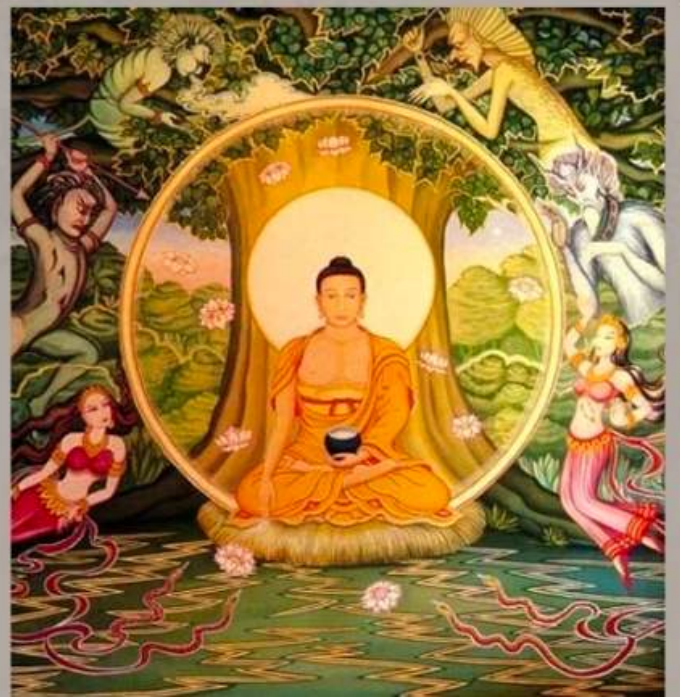


The figure of Māra, often described as the “*Lord of Illusion*” or the tempter, occupies a crucial symbolic position within Buddhist thought while also resonating deeply with broader Indian philosophical traditions. Far from being merely a mythological demon, Māra embodies a complex interplay of psychological, ethical, and metaphysical meanings.

Inside the *Pali Canon*

The most famous episode occurs during the Buddha's meditation under the Bodhi tree, where Māra attempts to disrupt his concentration through fear, violence, and sensual temptation.

This narrative, recorded in texts such as the *Nidānakathā* and various suttas, depicts Māra deploying armies and his daughters—symbolizing desire, aversion, and attachment—to prevent enlightenment. Māra's defeat signifies the *triumph of insight (prajñā) over ignorance (avidyā)*.



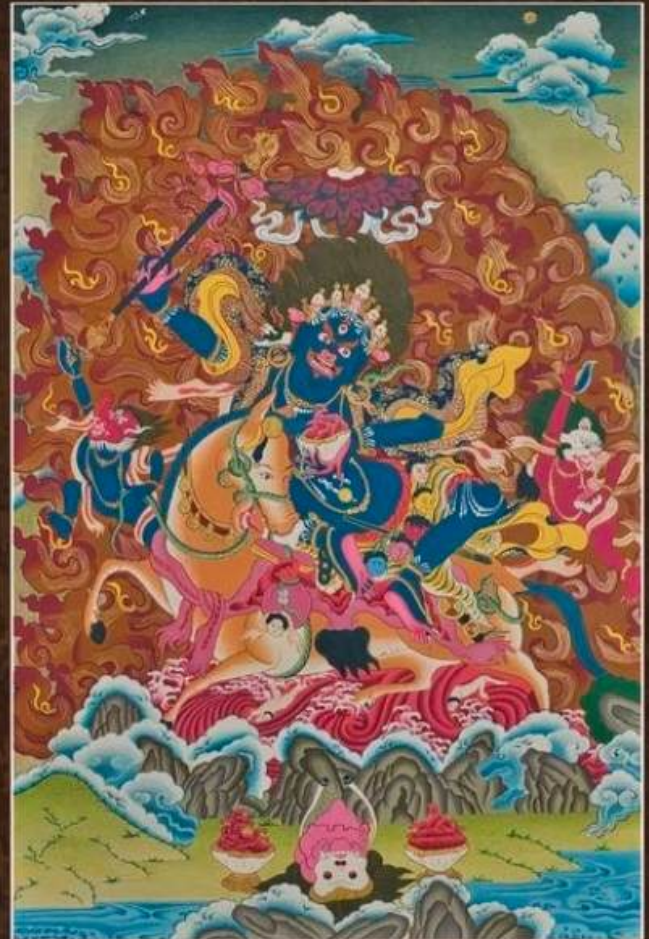
Unfolding Māra:

The 4 forms

A key doctrinal development in Buddhist thought is the classification of Māra into four distinct forms:

- klesa-māra (defilements),
- skandha-māra (the aggregates),
- mṛtyu-māra (death), and
- devaputra-māra (the celestial tempter).

This fourfold schema demonstrates the remarkable ability of Buddhist thought to integrate myth, psychology, and metaphysics into a unified symbolic system.



Iconography of Māra



Gandhar style
sculpture of Māra



Iconographically, Māra is represented in diverse forms, ranging from terrifying demonic figures to regal deities, reflecting the multifaceted nature of his symbolism. According to Ananda Coomaraswamy, such representations should be understood symbolically rather than literally, as visual expressions of the internal states that hinder spiritual progress (Coomaraswamy 1927, p. 56).

*Ghantasala region of Andhra Pradesh
(2nd-century CE)*

a broader

Indic Perspective

The symbolism of Māra can be fruitfully compared with the concept of māyā, particularly as developed in *Advaita Vedānta*. While Māra represents illusion in a psychological and ethical sense, māyā denotes the cosmic illusion that veils ultimate reality (Brahman). Adi Shankaracharya describes māyā as that which “makes the impossible appear possible,” creating the illusion of multiplicity in a fundamentally non-dual reality (Śaṅkara, Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, v. 108). The figure of Māra also resonates with other Indian mythological motifs, particularly the god of desire, Kama. In classical narratives, Kāma attempts to disrupt the meditation of Shiva by shooting arrows of desire, an episode that parallels Māra’s temptation of the Buddha.

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ŚHILPĀŚHĀSTRĀ:

स्त्री-दर्पण

Devi Iconography

Part I.

General depiction of

In Hindu iconography, Devi represents the supreme feminine principle known as Sakti, the dynamic cosmic energy responsible for srsti (creation), saṃrakṣaṇam (preservation), and saṃhāra (destruction). Without the co-operation of this goddess, even the absolute Brahman can achieve nothing. Śakti is the personification of universal energy and exists both in the macrocosm (the universe) and the microcosm (the human body). Devī is worshipped in various forms such as Durgā, Kali, Parvatī, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Amba, Gauri, and other Devī-rūpas each expressing different aspects of divine power .



Different Forms



Kāvānī or Mahishāsūramardani : Stone : Mahābalipuram.



(Fig. 1.) Mahākālī : Bronze : Mādeyūr.

Devī is usually portrayed with a graceful yet authoritative rūpa (form), symbolizing both matritva (motherhood) and raksha (protection). Her mukha-bhava (facial expression) varies according to her nature. In śānta-rūpa forms like Lakshmi and Sarasvati, she appears calm and benevolent, while in raudra-rūpa forms like Durga and Kali, her expression is fierce, reflecting śaurya (valor) and shakti (power)

Iconographic Features

A major iconographic feature of Devī is her bahu-bāhu (multiple arms), usually four, eight, or more, symbolizing her sarva-śaktimatva (omnipotence) and ability to perform many cosmic functions simultaneously. Each hand holds an āyudha (weapon) or cihna (symbol), such as the triśūla (trident), khadga (sword), cakra (discus), śaṅkha (conch), padma (lotus), and dhanuḥ (bow).





The triśūla represents control over the triguṇa—sattva, rajas, and tamas. The khadga symbolizes jñāna (knowledge) and justice, while the padma stands for purity and vairāgya (detachment). These weapons are often shown as gifts from the Devas, indicating Devī's supreme role in restoring dharma especially in mahishasur mardani rupa of Devī

Vahan of Devi

Every form of Devī has a vāhana (vehicle) that reflects her qualities. Durgā rides a simha (lion) or vyāghra (tiger), symbolizing vīrya (strength) and parākrama (valor). Sarasvati's hansa (swan) represents viveka (discrimination). Lakshmi's ulūka (owl) symbolizes jāgratā (alertness). Kali is often shown standing upon Shiva, emphasizing the dominance of Shakti over inert Shiv-tattva (pure consciousness).





Ornaments

Devī is richly adorned with ābharāṇa (ornaments), mukuṭa (crown), and divya-vastra (sacred garments), signifying her status as Jagadambā (Mother of the Universe). A prabhāmaṇḍala (halo) behind her head denotes divine radiance and spiritual authority. Her āsana (posture) changes according to her function. In peaceful forms, she is seated on a padmāsana (lotus seat), symbolizing purity and stability. In her warrior form, she is shown in yuddha-bhāva, slaying asuras like Mahiṣāsura, representing the victory of satya (truth) over adharma.



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ŚHILPAŚHĀSTRĀ:

स्त्री-दर्पण

Visual depictions of Shrī

Part 2. (Devi
Iconography)

Lakshmi

Devi Lakshmi, also known as Shri (her conceptual roots lie in the early Vedic notion of Shri), Padma and Kamla, is the divine consort of Lord Vishnu and occupies a central position in the Hindu philosophic thought. Representing sustainable energy that maintains the cosmic order, she is the embodiment of prosperity, fortune, abundance, fertility and auspiciousness. Along with Saraswati and Parvati, Lakshmi forms the Tridevi. The iconography of Devi Lakshmi is deeply symbolic and conveys essential Hindu values. The iconography becomes a crucial interpretive tool for accessing and contextualising scriptural meaning.



General features

The figure of Lakshmi should have only two hands when she is by the side of Vishnu. But when she is worshipped in a separate temple, she should have four hands (her four hands represent the purushasthas- Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. and be seated upon a lotus of eight petals placed upon a simhasana. In the hands she carries, a lotus, bilva fruit, amritaghata and a sankha. Two elephants standing a little behind her should pour from pots pure water on her head for bathing her. On her head also there should be a lotus. She should be adorned with Keyura and Kankana.

Some textual referances

Vishnudharmottara describes the goddess is of dark complexion but according to Amsumadbhedagama, the colour of Lakshmi is golden yellow. She should wear golden ornaments set with precious gems; in her ears there should be jewelled *nakra-kundalas*. The silparatna mentions that the colour of Lakshmi is white and further says that in her left hand she holds the lotus and in right hand the bilva fruit.



9th century
Padmalastha Sri
Lakshmi Sculpture



Sridevi : stone : Ellora



Sridevi : ivory : Trivandrum



Lakshmi : stone : Madayur

Depictions in Stone



Varaha Cave Temple in Mahabalipuram features a notable rock-cut, bas-relief panel of Lakshmi (Gajalakshmi), depicted seated on a lotus, with attendants and elephants pouring water over her.

A rare, 6th century Greek-influenced green stone stele of Gaja Lakshmi from Kashmir, displaying hellenistic influence in it's iconography is noted



A 10th century sculpture of Gajalakshmi, discovered in the Valvani river in Sattari region of Goa.



Maha Lakshmi



Kollāpura Mahālakshmi: Stone: Kolhapur.

In Karavira (the modern Kolhapur) there is a temple dedicated exclusively to Mahalakshmi: it is therefore a very famous place of pilgrimage. The Visvakarma-sastra describes separately the figure of Mahalakshmi as found in temples. She is represented as a small girl wearing various ornaments. In her four hands she holds a patra, gada names Kaumodaki, Bilva fruit and Khetaka.



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ŚHILPAŚHĀSTRA:
स्त्री-दर्पण

SAPTAMATRIKA Iconography

Part 4. (Devi
Iconography)

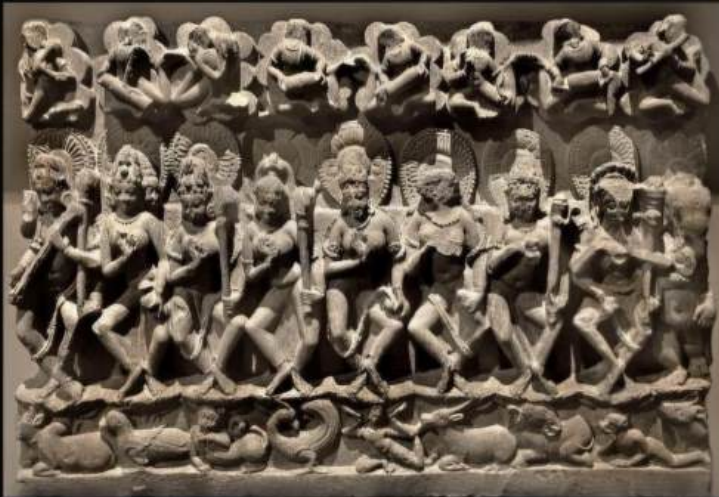
Sapta-Matrikas

*There are **different Puranic versions** related to the origin of Matrikas. According to Puranas, Matrikas are Shakti of Shiva, Indra and other gods and they are **goddesses of the battlefield**. But in the sculptural portrayals, they are depicted differently as benevolent, compassionate and aristocratic mothers. It is said that the Sapta-Matrikas are connected with **Shiva**. Their names reveal that they were born from the bodies of Brahma, Vishnu, and other Gods. There is a story that when Shiva and Vishnu joined together and tried to kill the asura named **Andhaka** and failed, they then created the seven mothers to kill him. From each drop of blood that fell on the ground of Andhakasura there rose another asura. It is believed that the **seven goddesses drank up that blood and did not allow it to fall on the ground, which made it easier for lord Shiva to kill the Asura.** (see reference no. 3)*

Sculptural Representations

It is interesting to note that the earliest sculptural representation of Saptamatrikas occurred in the Harappan Civilisation.

A seal discovered from Mohenjo-Daro has the representation of seven figures standing beside a tree. (Parpola, 2001)



Representation of matrikas are found from prominent kingdoms like Kushana, Gupta, Chalukya and Kadamba. Their number vary in various texts. For example- 8 Matrikas are depicted in Varah Purana, the 8th being Yogeshwari.

Inscriptions

- Earliest reference in the Tamil country found from the walls of Kailashnatha Temple at Kanchipuram. (depicted along with **Ganesh** and **Virabhadra**).
- Land grants inscriptions from 10-11 th centuries AD records worship of parivara dieties including Saptamaitrika.
- An inscription from Alambakkam of Chola Rajadhirajadeva (A.D. 1049-50) mentions endowment to the temple of Saptamaitrikas.
- Vattezhuthu inscription at Triprangot temple refers to the offerings pertained to the matrikas.

Textual references

The earliest literary works like Tantra Samuchaya and Silparatna refers to worship of Saptamaitrikas. They are arranged in usual sequence starting from right Brahmi, Maheshwari, Kumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamunda; they are flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesh on right and left side respectively. Some more texts mentioning about Maitrikas are Amsumadbhedagama, Sritattvanidhi, Vishnudharmottar, Purvakaranagama, Vishvakarma Shastra and Matsya Purana.

BRAHMANI

Mada-pride

She has **four faces**, body **bright as gold** and wears **yellow garments-pitambara**. In the back right hand, she carries **sula** and in the back left hand, she carries an **akshamala**, front right hand is in **abhaya pose** and front left hand is in **varada pose**. Her vahana is **hans** and sits under a **palasa tree**.

- Virattanesvara temple Tiruttani

MAHESHWARI

Krodha-anger

She carries **sula** and **akshamala** in her two hands and the other two hands are in **abhaya** and **varada mudra**. Her vahana is the **bull**.

- Government Museum, Madras.



KAUMARI

Moha-illusion

She carries **Sula** and **kukkuta** in her two hands, the other two hands are in **abhaya** and **varada mudra**. Her makuta is bound with **vasika** or **vachika**. She rides on peacock and her abode is under a **udumbara** or fig tree.

- Golingesvara temple and Samalaji, Gujarat.



CHAMUNDA

Pasunya-tale bearing

She is **red in colour**, and has **3 eyes**. Her hair is abundant and thick and bristles upwards. She wears a **skull garland like yajnopavita**. She has a **kapala** (skull) in one hand and a **sula** in the other, the other two hands are in **abhaya** and **varada mudra**. Her abode is a **fig tree**.

She's depicted with various things in hand at **Virattanesvara temple Tiruttani**, **Ambika Mata temple Jagat** and **Musee Gurimet, Paris**.



Vaishnavi

Lobha–Covetousness

She has a lovely face, **dark complexion** and wears pitambara. Two among her four hands carries **Chakra** and **Sankha** while the other two are in **abhaya** and **varada mudra**. Her vahana is **Garuda** and she sits under a **rajavriksha**.

Varahi

Asuya–Envy

She has the **face of a boar** and she is storm cloud in colour. She wears a **karanda makuta** and is adorned with **ornaments made of corals**. She has **hala** and **sakti** in her hands.

Indrani

Matsanya–Fault Finding

She is **red in colour** and has **3 eyes**. She carries **vajra** and **Shakti** in two hands and other two hands are in **abhaya** and **varada mudra**. Her vahana is **elephant** and she sits under a **Kalpa tree**.





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ŚILPAŚĀSTRA:
स्त्री-दर्पण

Unveiling the
Mystical

YAKSHIS



Yakshi

A Nature Spirit



The early Indian sculpture witnessed profusion in the figures of male Yakshas and female Yakshis. The significant early representation of female in Indian art is that of Yakshi. They have been identified as tutelary guardian deities or as beneficiary spirits who rule over nature and whose sculpt can be traced back to the pre-Buddhist era (Thakurta 2002). They were regarded as the deities connected with water, fertility, trees, forest and wilderness, most probably a tree dwelling spirit. Manifested in different forms, they are celestial bodies as per ancient Indian texts. The Jaina tradition had also incorporated the Yakshas and Yakshis as Sasanadevathas to twenty-four Tirthankaras.

Sculptural Representations

One of the earliest sculptural reference of Yakshis/Yakshinis are found from **Kushana period** in the form of **Bhutesvara Yakshis**, a renowned set of three red sandstone pillars featuring sculptures of voluptuous female Yakshis.

Bhutesvara Yakshis

Dating 2nd century CE, these pillars were excavated from Bhutesvara mound near Mathura. They originally formed Buddhist stupa railing, exemplifying Mathura school of art.



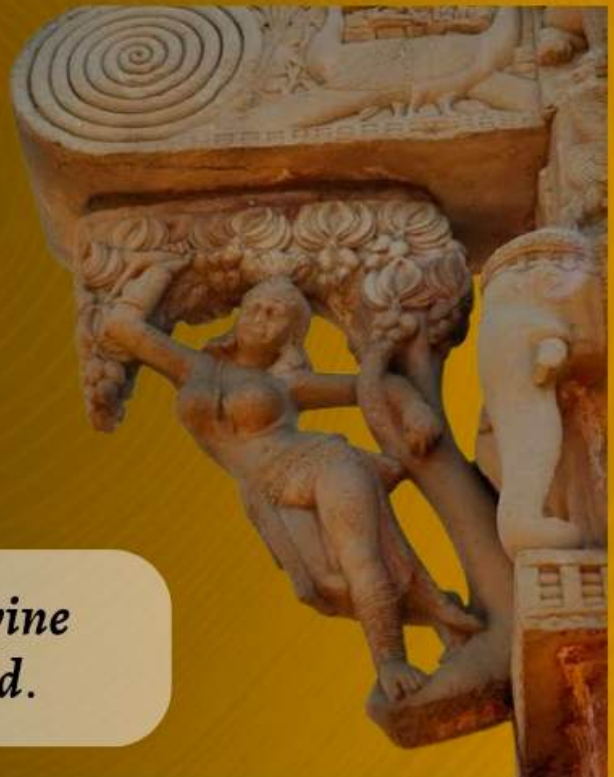
SHALABHANJIKI / DOHADA MOTIF



The decorative motifs were commonly known as Shalabhanjikas or tree dwelling spirits, also known as dohadas. It is a symbolic representation of the fertility aspect and sculptural representation of a woman grasping branches of a tree and representation of Yakshi.

They originated from the pre-Buddhist Indian style and appeared for the first time in the railing pillars of Barhut, and Sanchi surrounding the sanctuaries dedicated to Buddha (Seckel 1964).

The meaning of dohada is that the divine touch of Yakshi makes the tree blossomed.



GANDHARA YAKSHIS

In Gandhara, the Yakshi figures were less important than in Sanchi. Shalabanjika motif continued to exist in the Gandhara region with the Greek, Roman and Persian influences in attire and coiffure.

HARITI

The most remarkable example of Gandhara Yakshi is Hariti. The Gandharan artists have represented Hariti in four ways; as a mother goddess, as a demon goddess, as a goddess with Cornucopia and a couple with her consort Panchika (Rowan 2002). She has also been represented as the goddesses of smallpox.



DIDARGANJ YAKSHI



In the Mauryan period, the Yakshi were given a more anthropomorphic form with subdued nudity and ornamentation. The best example pointed to this effect is the Didarganj Yakshi.

This female figure is obtained from the banks of River Ganga at a place called Didarganj, as a buried object. The ornaments include earrings, a heavy torque, a flat rectangular necklace, and armlets with feathered projection

Mauryan empire, 3rd century BC

AŚVAMUKHĪ YAKSHI



*Fig: Sanchi Stupa, late 2nd
century BCE*

Aśvamukhī Yakṣī sculptures represent a **unique, semi-divine, horse-faced** female figure (Yakshini).

It is in the Jātaka tradition of Buddhism that we find the mention of Aśvamukhī Yakṣī. *Padakusalamāṇava-jātaka* preserves a story that the queen of Benaras swore a false oath and became a horse-faced Yakṣī.

Dress and Ornaments patterns



The images of Yakshinis are found ***abundantly embellished*** and offered a great variety of ornamental patterns. It consisted of ***mauktikajala*** (strings of beads and pearls covering the head), ***kundalas***, ***angada***, ***bracelets***, ***mekhala*** and ***thick anklets***. Great ornamental standards are found from the sculptures of Sudassana, Bhatanwara and Simhika Yakshi.

The hairstyle has been executed with precision and beauty. The mode of tucking ***hairs in form of bun*** was common but certain motifs shows diversity. Eg. A shalabhanjika figure from Sanchi has hairs arranged in ***palm leaf pattern***.

It is interesting to note that the custom of wearing ***tikuli*** (tattoo marks) is found in the Yakshi sculptures.



DAKSHI

!! संस्कृति ज्ञान की !!



ŚILPAŚĀSTRA

स्त्री-दर्पण

presents

Ardhanarishvara

Iconography

'शिवः शक्तिविहीनो यः शव एव स उच्यते'

ARDHANARISHVARA

Ardhanarishvara is shown as a composite and unified form of Shiva and Parvati, represented within a single body divided into two halves. This combined form visually expresses the *inseparable nature of the two divine principles*. The figure is conceived as one complete image and not as two separate figures placed together. The unity of the body emphasizes that the masculine and feminine aspects *exist together in a single, integrated form*.



Vertical Division

The right half represents Shiva, while the left half represents Parvati. This vertical division is clearly marked and carefully executed by the sculptor so that the two halves can be immediately recognized. The clarity of division helps the viewer distinguish the two aspects while still perceiving the figure as a single, unified form.

Textual references

The puranas narrate many interesting episodes regarding the emergence of this composite form of Shiva. For instance, *Skandapurana* mentions that when Brahma asked Rudra to divide himself, the latter divided himself into male and female forms.

Matsyapurana, *Shivapurana* and *Lingapurana* also gives detailed explanations of this form of Shiva.

Iconographic texts, like Silparatna and agamic texts, namely, *Amsumadbhedagama*, *Kamikagama*, *Suprabhedagama* etc provide us with elaborate information of the image of Ardhanarishvara.



Variations in Forms

The Ardhanarishvara is sometimes represented in different varieties and forms. For instance, there may be *two, three, four or more arms*. If there are four arms, one of the right hands should be held in the abhaya-mudra and the other should hold the parashu, or one hand may be in the varada-mudra and the other carry a school or tanka and the other arms may be bent or rested upon the head of his Vahana Nandi. If there are only two arms, the right one should be held in varada-mudra or may be kapala held in it.



*Brihadeahwara Temple,
Thanjavur*

The right half SHIVA

The right half, Shiva should have a jata-mukuta on the head, which should be adorned with Chandra. In the right ear there should be makara-kundala or sarpa-kundala or ordinary kundala and the right half of the forehead should have half of the third-eye on it. On the right side, the garment should cover the body below the loins upto the knee and material of the garment should be the tiger's skin or silk and there should be naga-yajnopavita on the right half of the chest. The right leg should be either straight or sometimes bent and resting upon a padma-peetha.



The left half SHAKTI



On the left side, Parvati should be depicted wearing a karanda-mukuta. On the forehead of this half, a half-tilak mark, contiguous with the half eye of Shiva should be shown. In the left ear, there should be a kundala. This side should have the bosom of a woman with a round well developed breast. This half is draped in multi coloured silken female cloth covering the body down to ankles adorned with beautiful anklet. The colour of the left half may either be parrot green or dark and should be of pacific appearance.

Some Sculptures



Ardhanarishvara, inner wall, Cave 1,
Badami



Ardhanarishvara, pillar,
Durga Temple, Aihole



Ardhanarishvara, inner wall, Ravalaphadi cave, Aihole

Ardhanarishvara, devakoshtha,
GTC, Pattadakal



Ardhanarishvara, outer
niche, Virupaksha temple





DAKSHI

!! संस्कृति ज्ञान की !!



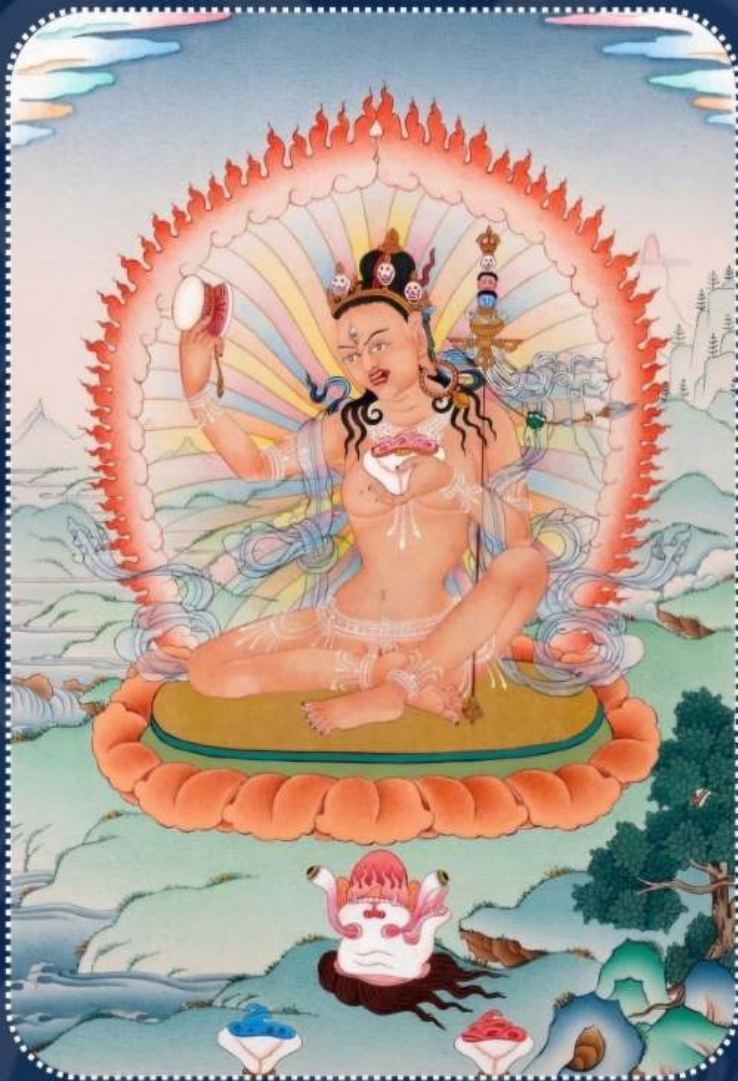
ŚILPAŚĀSTRA

स्त्री-दर्पण

presents

Dakini

Iconography



The term “Dakini” is derived from the Sanskrit root “ḍak”, often interpreted as “to fly” or “to move in space,” hence translated as “sky-goer” or “sky-dancer”.

In early Hindu Tantric texts, Dakinis are described as supernatural female beings associated with occult practices, cremation grounds, and esoteric rituals.

Over time, the concept evolved and was incorporated into Buddhist Tantric traditions.

Origin and Etymology

Dakini as Manifestations of Shakti

“योगिनीदाकिनीशक्तिसमूहाः शक्तिसंभवाः।”

MEANING: “The groups of Yoginis and Dakinis arise from Shakti.”

This reinforces the idea that Dakinis are not independent deities but manifestations of divine feminine energy.

They function as extensions of the Goddess's power and are integral to the cosmic and ritual order.

Dakinis: The Sacred
Sky Dancers



Dakini and Yogini Traditions

The close relationship between Dakinis and Yoginis. In Hindu Tantra, Yoginis are often organized into groups (such as the 64 Yoginis), and Dakinis are either included within these groups or associated with them.

This connection reflects a broader system of feminine spiritual powers, where:

- Yoginis represent structured, often temple-based traditions
- Dakinis represent more esoteric, fluid, and liminal aspects
- Both function as intermediaries between practitioners and divine forces, playing essential roles in Tantric rituals and spiritual transformation.



Yogini Tantra
Yantra

ICONOGRAPHY

DANCING POSTURE: Symbolizes dynamic energy, movement, and spiritual freedom

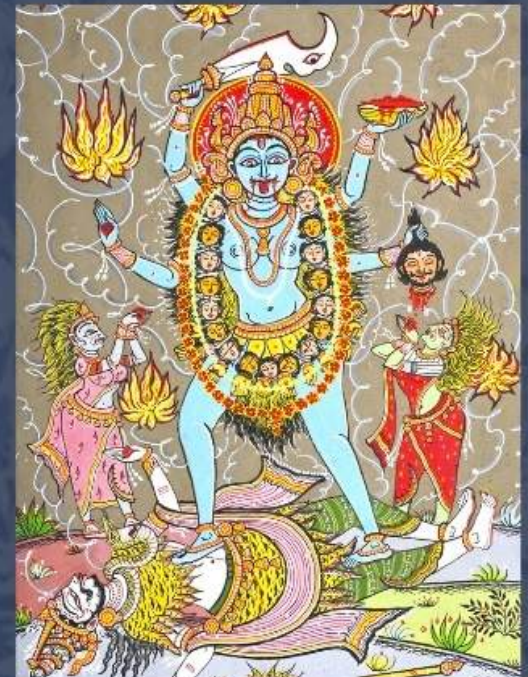


NUDITY / SEMI-NUDE FORM / SEMI-NUDE FORM: represents truth beyond illusion (maya) and detachment from social norms

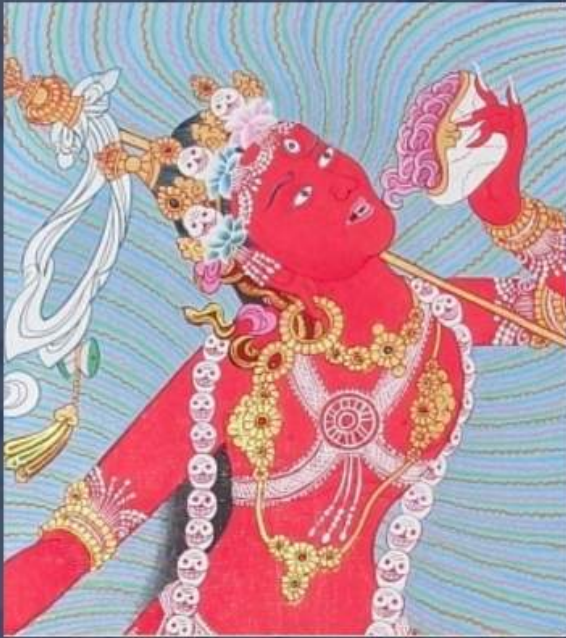
FIERCE / WRATHFUL
EXPRESSION → indicates
destruction of ego and
ignorance



CREMATION GROUND (श्मशान)
SETTING → signifies
impermanence, death, and
transformation



SKULL GARLANDS (मडुंमाला) AND
BONE ORNAMENTS → represent
transience of life and
fearlessness toward death



ASSOCIATION WITH SKY ("SKY-GOER") → represents limitless freedom and transcendence

WEAPONS (KARTIKA/KNIFE, KAPALA/SKULL CUP) → symbolize cutting ignorance and transforming negative energies



The Dakini embodies prajna (transcendental wisdom), which is one of the two essential aspects of enlightenment, the other being upaya (method or skillful means).

The union of wisdom and method is central to tantric practice, and the Dakini symbolizes the wisdom aspect of this union.



Dakinis also represent:

- Impermanence (Anitya) – through their association with cremation grounds and death symbolism.
- Emptiness (Shunyata) – reflecting the ultimate nature of reality beyond illusion.
- Transformation – guiding practitioners from ignorance to enlightenment.

Thus, the Dakini is not simply a deity but a manifestation of deeper metaphysical truths.

Vajrayana Buddhism