

Hindu Scriptures

Ancient holy texts revealed by God and man



The Word, verily, is greater than name. The Word, in fact, makes known the *Rig Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the *Atharva Veda* as the fourth, and the ancient lore as the fifth: the *Veda of Vedas*, the ritual for ancestors, calculus, the augural sciences, the knowledge of the signs of the times, ethics, political science, sacred knowledge, theology, knowledge of the spirits, military science, astrology, the science of snakes and of celestial beings.

Sama Veda, Chandogya Upanishad 7.2.1.
The Vedic Experience, Panikkar, p. 111

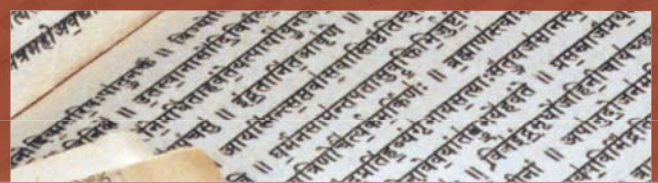
Than whom there is naught else higher, than whom there is naught smaller, naught greater, the One stands like a tree established in heaven. By Him, the Person, is this whole universe filled.

Krishna Yajur Veda, Shvetashvatara Upanishad 3.9, The Principal Upanishads, Radhakrishnan, p. 727



Presenting a mountaintop view of the vast library of wisdom that molds and influences Hindu life

Hinduism proudly embraces an incredibly rich collection of scripture. The holiest and most revered are the *Vedas* and *Agamas*, two massive compendia of *shruti* (that which is “heard”), both revealed by God to illumined sages centuries and millennia ago. The array of works known as *smriti* (that which is “remembered”) is equally vast, the most prominent and widely celebrated of which are the *Itihasas* (epic dramas and history)—the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*—and the *Puranas* (mythology). The Vedic arts and sciences, including ayurveda, astrology, music, dance, architecture, statecraft, domestic duty and law, are reflected in an assembly of texts known as *Ve-dangas* and *Upavedas*. Moreover, through the ages God-realized souls, sharing their experience, have poured forth volume upon volume that reveal the wonders of yoga and offer passionate hymns of devotion. The creation of Hindu scripture continues to this day, as contemporary masters reiterate the timeless truths to guide souls on the path to Divinity. In this Educational Insight, we offer a simple overview of Hindu scripture and an anthology of verses from this luminous library of dharma.



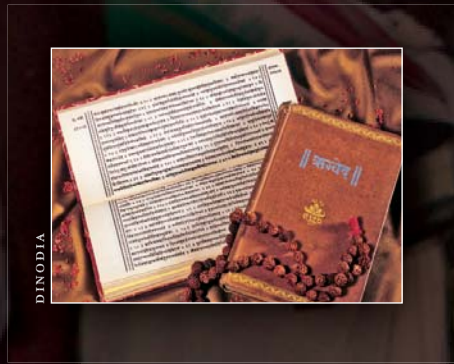
The stack of books at left holds one bound volume from each of the four *Vedas* in the Sanskrit language. For centuries they have been the basis of philosophical discussion, study and commentary. The *Vedas* are also the subject of deep study and meditation, to realize the wisdom of the ancients within oneself. Their mantras are chanted and used in rites of worship, prayer and japa.

The man who rejects the words of the scriptures and follows the impulse of desire attains neither his perfection, nor joy, nor the Path Supreme. Let the scriptures be, therefore, thy authority as to what is right and what is not right.

Bhagavad Gita 16.23-24, Mascaro, p. 111

What Are Hindu Revealed Scriptures?

The *Vedas* and *Agamas*, revealed by God, are Hinduism’s sovereign scriptures, called *shruti*, “that which is heard.” Their timeless truths are expressed in the most extraordinarily profound mystical poetry known to man. Aum.



Above, God holds the holiest of scriptures, the *Vedas* and *Agamas*. Around these are an array of other scriptures, enscribed on stone, wood, pillars and scrolls. At left, we see a copy of the *Rig Veda Samhita*. In the dimmed background, lamps are offered, as prescribed in the *Agamas*, by priests at Nallur Kandaswamy Temple in Sri Lanka.

VEDA, FROM VID, “TO KNOW,” MEANS “SUPREME wisdom or science.” Similarly, *Agama*, which names the sacred sectarian revelations, means “descent of knowledge.” The *Vedas* and *Agamas* are eternal truths transmitted by God through great clairaudient and clairvoyant rishis. They are Hinduism’s primary and most authoritative scriptures, expounding life’s sacredness and man’s purpose on the planet. These psalms of wisdom were disclosed over many centuries, memorized and orally conveyed from generation to generation within priestly families, then finally

written down in Sanskrit in the last few millennia. The subtly symbolic language of *shruti*, the cherished word of God, is lyrical and lofty. In imparting religious practice, rules and doctrine, the *Vedas* are general and the *Agamas* specific. The *Vedas* extol and invoke a multiplicity of Gods through elaborate fire rituals called *yajna*. The *Agamas* center around a single Deity and His worship with water, flowers and lights in sanctified temples and shrines. The *Tirumantiram* lauds, “Two are the scriptures that Lord Siva revealed—the primal *Vedas* and the perfect *Agamas*.” Aum Namah Sivaya.

What Is the Nature of the Veda Texts?

The holy *Vedas*, man's oldest scripture, dating back 6,000 to 8,000 years, are a collection of four books: the *Rig*, *Sama*, *Yajur* and *Atharva*. Each has four sections: hymns, rites, interpretation and philosophical instruction. Aum.



THOMAS KELLY



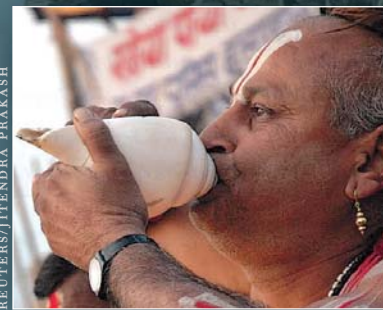
BACKGROUND PHOTO: HINDUISM TODAY

ART BY S. RAJAM

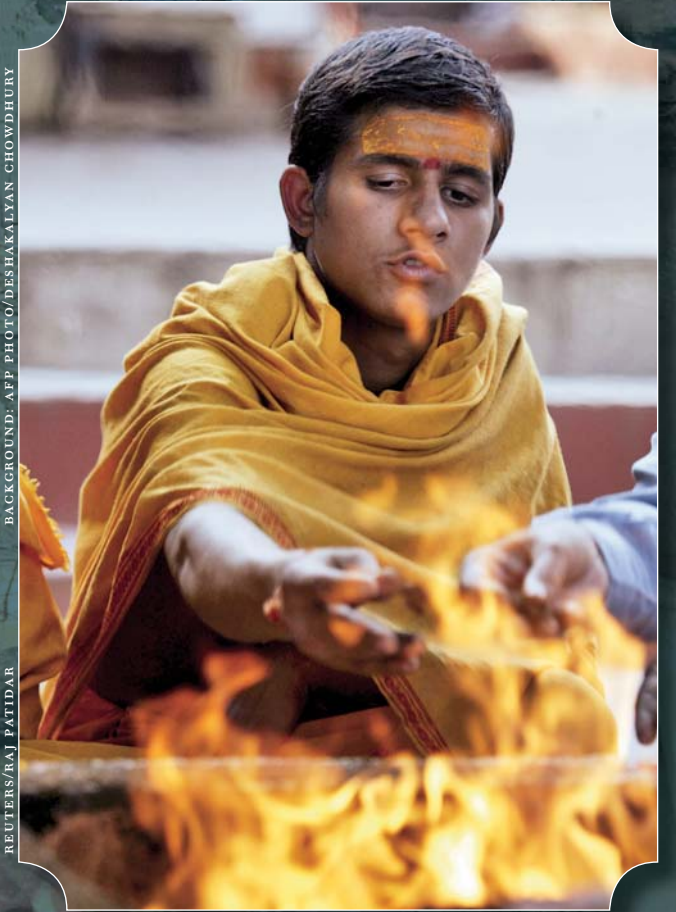
Above, using the traditional *elutani*, stylus, a pandit scribes memorized Vedic verses on dried palm leaves. For centuries the *Vedas* were passed on orally, then finally transcribed. Left, a devotee leafs through his holy text as he performs his morning *sadhana*.

How Are the Vedas Significant Today?

The *Vedas*, the ultimate scriptural authority, permeate Hinduism's thought, ritual and meditation. They open a rare window into ancient Bharata society, proclaiming life's sacredness and the way to oneness with God. Aum.



REUTERS/JITENDRA PRAKASH



BACKGROUND: AFP PHOTO/DESHAKALYAN CHOWDHURY

REUTERS/RAJ PATIDAR

Above, a young Smarta priest conducts a fire ceremony, *havana*, as decreed in the *Vedas*. At left, a Vaishnava priest blows a conch horn during prayers in Allahabad. Background photo, at Manikarnika Ghat in Varanasi, a priest performs *antyeshti*, the cremation ritual, last in the series of rites of passage prescribed in the *Vedas*.

THE OLDEST AND CORE PORTIONS OF THE *Vedas* ARE the four *Samhitas*, “hymn collections.” They consist of invocations to the One Divine and the Divinities of nature—such as the Sun, the Rain, the Wind, the Fire and the Dawn—as well as prayers for matrimony, progeny, prosperity, concord, domestic rites, formulas for magic, and more. They are composed in beautiful metrical verses, generally of three or four lines. The heart of the entire Veda is the 10,552-verse *Rig Samhita*. The *Sama* and *Yajur Samhitas*, each with about 2,000 verses, are mainly liturgical selections from

the *Rig*, whereas most of the *Atharva Samhita*'s nearly 6,000 verses of prayers, charms and rites are unique. The *Sama* is arranged for melodious chanting, the *Yajur* for cadenced intonation. Besides its *Samhita*, each *Veda* includes one or two *Brahmanas*, ceremonial handbooks, and *Aranyakas*, ritual interpretations, plus many inestimable *Upanishads*, metaphysical dialogs. In all there are over 100,000 Vedic verses, and some prose, in dozens of texts. The *Tirumantiram* confirms, “There is no dharma other than what the *Vedas* say. Dharma's central core the *Vedas* proclaim.” Aum Namah Sivaya.

LIKE THE TAOIST TAO TE CHING, THE BUDDHIST *Dhammapada*, the Sikh *Adi Granth*, the Jewish *Torah*, the Christian *Bible* and the Muslim *Koran*, the *Veda* is the Hindu holy book. For untold centuries unto today, it has remained the sustaining force and authoritative doctrine, guiding followers in ways of worship, duty and enlightenment—*upasana*, dharma and *jnana*. The *Vedas* are the meditative and philosophical focus for millions of monks and a billion seekers. Their stanzas are chanted from memory by priests and laymen daily as liturgy in temple worship and domestic ritual.

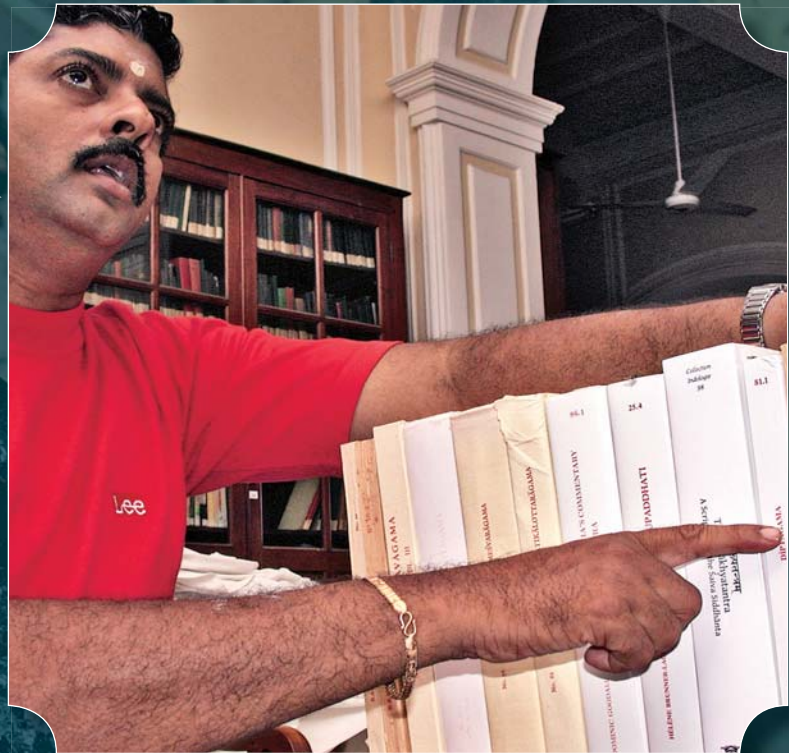
All Hindus wholeheartedly accept the *Vedas*, yet each draws selectively, interprets freely and amplifies abundantly. Over time, this tolerant allegiance has woven the varied tapestry of Bharata Dharma. Today the *Vedas* are published in Sanskrit, English, French, German and other languages. But it is the metaphysical and popular *Upanishads* which have been most amply and ably translated. The *Vedas* say, “Just as the spokes are affixed to the hub of a wheel, so are all things established in life, the *Rig* and *Yajur* and *Sama Veda*, sacrifice, the nobility and also the priesthood.” Aum Namah Sivaya.

What Is the Nature of the Holy Agamas?

The *Agamas*, Sanatana Dharma's second authority, are revelations on sacred living, worship, yoga and philosophy. Saivism, Shaktism and Vaishnavism each exalts its own array of *Agamas*, many more than 2,000 years old. Aum.



FR. INSTITUTE OF PONDICHERRY



BACKGROUND, THOMAS KELLY

FRENCH INSTITUTE OF PONDICHERRY

Above, Dr. Ganesan, a scholar at the French Institute of Pondicherry, India, shows the volumes of *Saiva Agamas* they have printed to date. They are keepers of 8,000 ancient manuscripts, mostly palm-leaf books, such as those seen stored on shelves on the left, which one day will be published to the world. In the background, a devotee offers flowers to the Lord.

IN THE VAST AGAMIC LITERATURE, TRADITION counts 92 main *Saiva Agamas*—10 Siva, 18 Rudra and 64 Bhairava—77 *Sakta Agamas* and 108 *Vaishnava Pancharatra Agamas*. Most *Agamas* are of four parts, called *padas*, and possess thousands of metered Sanskrit verses, usually of two lines. The *charya pada* details daily religious observance, right conduct, the guru-*shishya* relationship, community life, house design and town planning. The *kriya pada*, commonly the longest, extols worship and temples in meticulous detail—from site selection, architectural design and iconography,

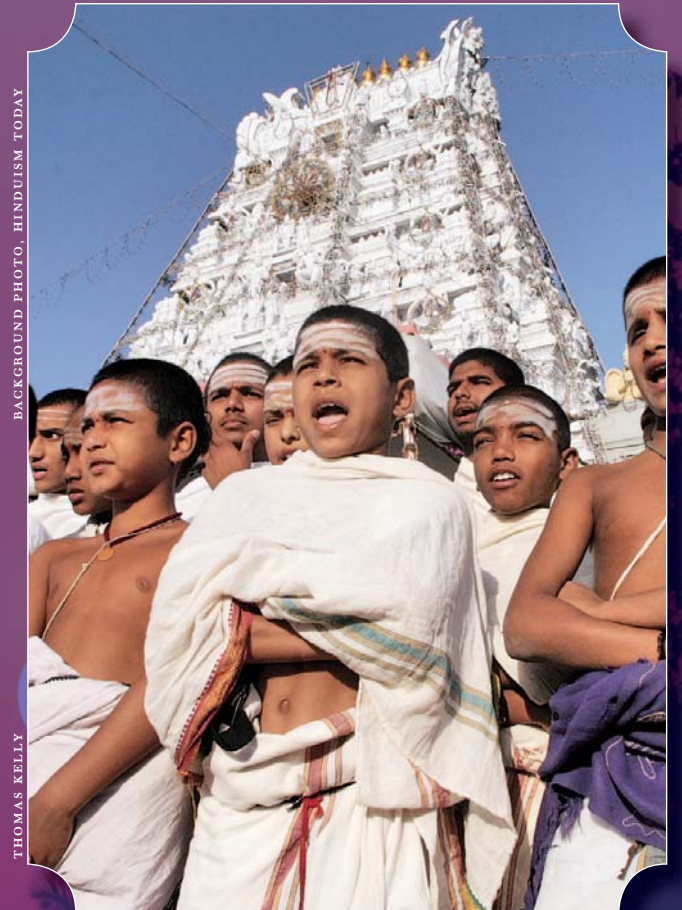
to rules for priests and the intricacies of daily puja, annual festivals and home-shrine devotionals. The *yoga pada* discloses the interior way of meditation, of raja yoga, mantra and tantra, which stimulates the awakening of the slumbering serpent, kundalini. The *jnana pada* narrates the nature of God, soul and world, and the means for liberation. The *Tirumantiram* declares, “*Veda* and *Agama* are Iraivan’s scriptures. Both are truth: one is general, the other specific. While some say these words of God reach two different conclusions, the wise see no difference.” Aum Namah Sivaya.

How Are the Agamas Significant Today?

While the *Vedas*, with myriad Deities, bind all Hindus together, the *Agamas*, with a single supreme God, unify each sect in a oneness of thought, instilling in adherents the joyful arts of divine adoration. Aum Namah Sivaya.



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BACKGROUND PHOTO, HINDUISM TODAY

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Like millions of Hindus before them, the youth in these two photos are learning precise recitation of liturgy from the *Agamas* and *Vedas*. They will spend years perfecting this training, enabling them to perform ritual worship, puja, in temples around the world. In their priest school in Tirupati, India, they will memorize hundreds of mantras.

GOD IS LOVE, AND TO LOVE GOD IS THE pure path prescribed in the *Agamas*. Veritably, these texts are God’s own voice admonishing the *samsari*, reincarnation’s wanderer, to give up love of the transient and adore instead the Immortal. How to love the Divine, when and where, with what mantras and visualizations and at what auspicious times, all this is preserved in the *Agamas*. The specific doctrines and practices of day-to-day Hinduism are nowhere more fully expounded than in these revelation hymns, delineating everything from daily work routines to as-

trology and cosmology. So overwhelming is Agamic influence in the lives of most Hindus, particularly in temple liturgy and culture, that it is impossible to ponder modern Sanatana Dharma without these discourses. While many *Agamas* have been published, most remain inaccessible, protected by families and guilds who are stewards of an intimate hereditary knowledge. The *Tirumantiram* says, “Nine are the *Agamas* of yore, in time expanded into 28, they then took divisions three, into one truth of Vedanta-Siddhanta to accord. That is Sudha Saiva, rare and precious.” Aum Namah Sivaya.

Do Smriti and Sacred Literature Differ?

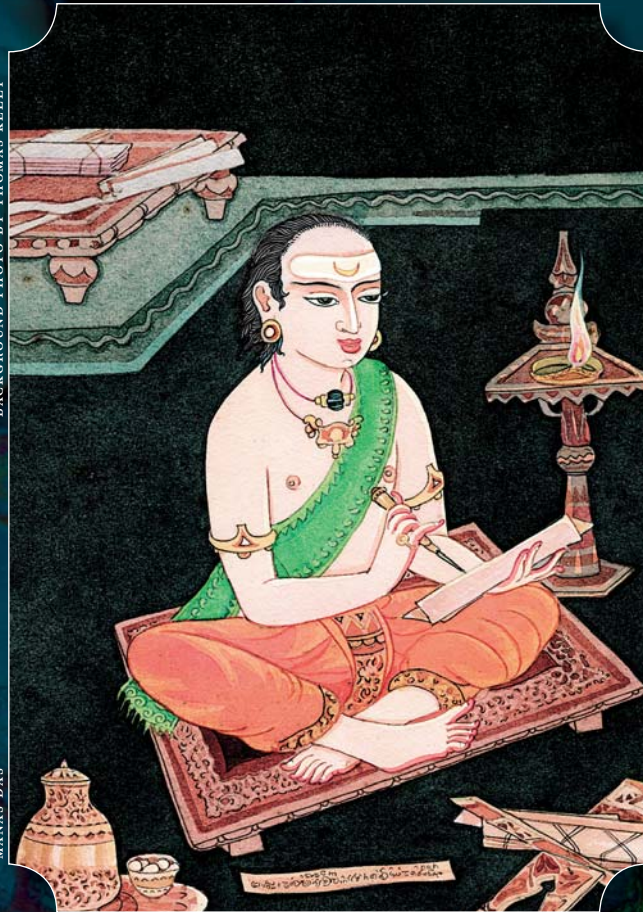
Hindu sacred literature is a treasury of hymns, legend, mythology, philosophy, science and ethics. From among this vast body of writings, each lineage recognizes a select portion as its secondary scripture, called *smriti*. Aum.



DINODIA

BACKGROUND PHOTO BY THOMAS KELLY

MANAS DAS



Above, Masako Ono voyaged from Japan to India to learn the ancient Odissi dance style and remained there to teach it. The many human arts are found in ancient scripture. At left, a collection of Hindu holy texts stacked in a Delhi store. In the background, two girls reverently touch the holy feet of Lord Vishnu at a shrine in Tirupati.

WHILE THE *VEDAS* AND *AGAMAS* ARE SHARED as part of every Hindu's primary scripture, *shruti*, each sect and lineage defines its own unique set of *smriti*. The sacred literature, *punya shastra*, from which *smriti* is drawn consists of writings, both ancient and modern, in many languages. Especially central are the ancient Sanskrit texts, such as the *Itihasas*, *Puranas* and *Dharma Sastras*, which are widely termed the classical *smriti*. In reality, while many revere these as *smriti*, others regard them only as sacred literature. *Smriti* means "that which is remembered" and is known as "the

tradition," for it derives from human insight and experience and preserves the course of culture. While *shruti* comes from God and is eternal and universal, the ever-growing *smriti* canon is written by man. Hinduism's sacred literature is the touchstone of theater and dance, music, song and pageantry, yoga and *sadhana*, metaphysics and ethics, exquisite art and hallowed sciences. The *Vedas* inquire, "In whom are set firm the firstborn seers, the hymns, the songs and the sacrificial formulas, in whom is established the single seer—tell me of that support—who may He be?" Aum Namah Sivaya.

What Texts Amplify Vedas and Agamas?

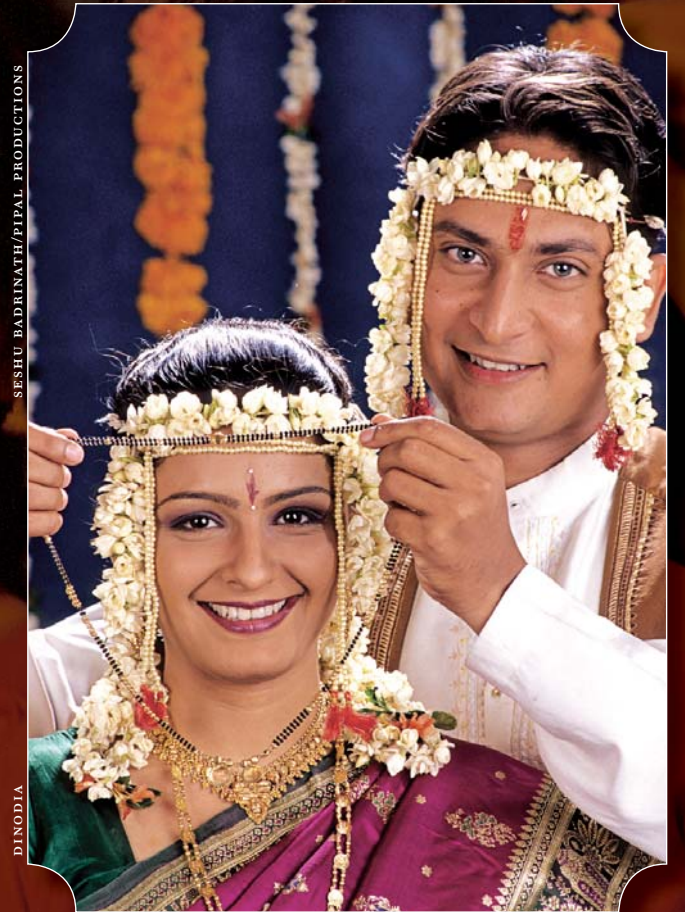
Many texts support the *Vedas* and *Agamas*. *Vedangas* detail conduct, astrology, language and etymology. *Upavedas* unfold politics, health, warfare and music. *Upagamas* and *Paddhatis* elaborate the Agamic wisdom. Aum.



DINODIA

SESHU BADRINATH/PIPAL PRODUCTIONS

DINODIA



Above, a bride and groom are in the midst of their wedding; at left they hold an offering of sacred grasses; wedding chants derive from the *Vedas*, *Agamas* and ancillary texts; attitudes and guidelines for family life are found in the *Sutras* and *Shastras*. In the background photo, a girl receives sacraments after a puja.

MUCH OF HINDUISM'S PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE is safeguarded in venerable texts which amplify *shruti*. The *Vedangas* and *Upavedas* are collections of texts that augment and apply the *Vedas* as a comprehensive system of sacred living. *Jyotisha Vedanga* delineates auspicious timing for holy rites. *Kalpa Vedanga* defines public rituals in the *Srauta* and *Sulba Sutras*, domestic rites in the *Grihya Sutras* and religious law in the *Dharma Sastras*. Four other *Vedangas* ensure the purity of mantra recitation, through knowledge of phonetics, grammar, poetry and the way of words.

The *Upavedas* expound profound sciences: *Arthaveda* unfolds statecraft; *Ayurveda* sets forth medicine and health; *Dhanurveda* discusses military science; *Gandharvaveda* illumines music and the arts; and *Sthapatyaveda* explains architecture. In addition, the *Kama Sutras* detail erotic pleasures. The *Agamas*, too, have ancillary texts, such as the *Upagamas* and *Paddhatis*, which elaborate the ancient wisdom. The *Jnaneshvari* says, "The *Vedas* in their perfection are as the beautiful image of the God of which the flawless words are the resplendent body. The *smritis* are the limbs thereof." Aum Namah Sivaya.

Does Hinduism Have Epics and Myths?

The *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are Hinduism's most renowned epic histories, called *Itihasa*. The *Puranas* are popular folk narratives, teaching faith, belief and ethics in mythology, allegory, legend and symbolism. Aum.

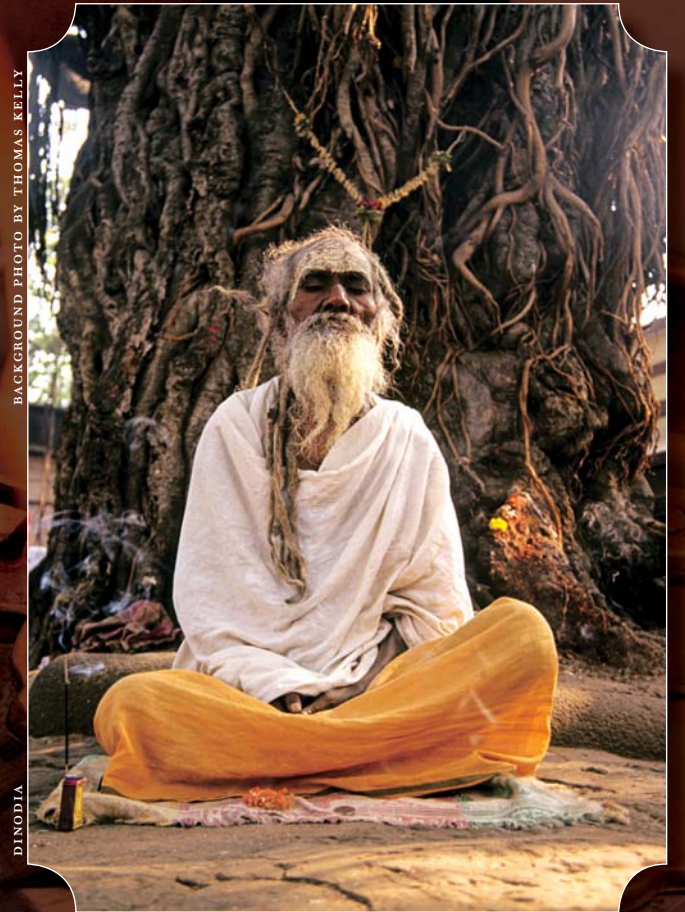


Above, a woman performs a dance depicting a scene from the *Ramayana* in Java, where the world-renowned epic is widely depicted in gala dance and theater. At left, Sanskrit volumes of the famed poem are shown, along with Hinduism's other epic, the *Mahabharata*.



Are There Other Types of Sacred Texts?

India's lofty philosophical texts expound diverse views in exacting dialectics. Yoga treatises unveil the mysterious path to ultimate samadhis. Intimate devotional hymns disclose the raptures of consummate Divine love. Aum.



Above, a recluse, clearly immersed in his yoga *sadhana*, sits in meditation beneath a gnarled banyan tree. At left are displayed two primary yoga scriptures, *Yoga Sutras* and *Yoga Vashishtha*. In the background, a young lady lights a ghee lamp to offer in personal worship, as her ancestors have done for centuries.



HINDUISM'S POETIC STORIES OF RISHIS, Gods, heroes and demons are sung by gifted panditas and traveling bards, narrated to children and portrayed in dramas and festivals. The *Mahabharata*, the world's longest epic poem, is the legend of two ancient dynasties whose great battle of Kurukshetra is the scene of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the eloquent spiritual dialog between Arjuna and Krishna. The *Ramayana* relates the life of Rama, a heroic king revered as the ideal man. The *Puranas*, like the *Mahabharata*, are encyclopedic in scope, containing teachings on *sadhana*,

philosophy, dharma, ritual, language and the arts, architecture, agriculture, magic charms and more. Of 18 principal *Puranas*, six honor God as Siva, six as Vishnu and six as Brahma. The witty *Panchatantra*, eminent among the "story" literature, or *katha*, portrays wisdom through animal fables and parables. The *Bhagavad Gita* proclaims, "He who reads this sacred dialog of ours, by him I consider myself worshiped through the sacrifice of knowledge. And the man who listens to it with faith and without scoffing, liberated, he shall attain to the happy realm of the righteous." Aum Namah Sivaya.

IN ADDITION TO THE EPICS, LEGENDS AND SUPPLEMENTS to the *Vedas* and *Agamas*, there is a wealth of Hindu metaphysical, yogic and devotional writings. Considered foundational are the early texts defining the six philosophical *darshanas*: the *sutras* by Kapila, Patanjali, Jaimini, Badarayana, Kanada and Gautama. Hailed as leading occult works on yoga, asanas, *nadis*, chakras, kundalini and *samadhi* are the *Yoga Sutras*, *Tirumantiram*, *Yoga Vashishtha*, *Siva Sutras*, *Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati*, *Jnaneshvari*, *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* and *Gheranda Samhita*. Widely extolled among the

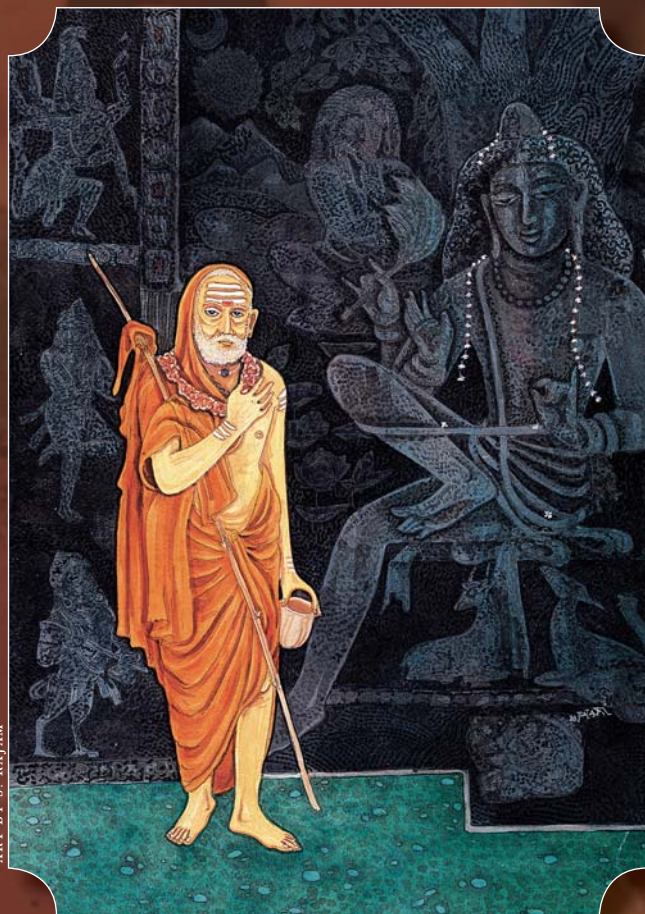
bhakti literature are the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Narada Sutras*, *Tiruvashagam*, the *Vachanas* of the Sivasharanas and the hymns of mystic poets like Surdas, Tukaram, Ramprasad, Mirabai, Andal, Vallabha, Tulasidasa, Tayumanavar, Lalla, Tagore, Auvaiyar and the saintly Nayanars and Alvars. *The Bhagavad Gita* explains, "As a blazing fire reduces the wood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all activity to ashes. There is nothing on Earth which possesses such power to cleanse as wisdom. The perfect yogin finds this knowledge in himself by himself in due time." Aum Namah Sivaya.



THOMAS KELLY

How Did the Sage of Kanchi Extol the Vedas?

Sri Chandrashekharendra Saraswati wrote, “The *Vedas* are eternal and are the source of all creation. Their greatness is to be known in many ways. Their sound produces in our *nadis* (subtle nerve channels), as well as in the atmosphere, vibrations that are salutary not only to our own Self but to the entire world—to the good of mankind as well as of all other creatures.”

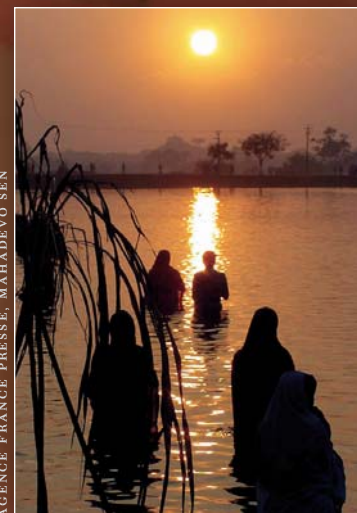


ART BY S. RAJAM

Sri Chandrashekharendra Saraswati [1894–1994], 68th pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Pitham, depicted above, walked throughout India teaching of the *Vedas*. Here he is shown before an image of Siva as Dakshinamurti, the silent guru seated beneath a banyan tree. Above left, an earthen mandala on a wall of Muktinath Temple in Nepal.

As when a fire is lit with damp fuel, different clouds of smoke come forth. In the same way from this great Being are breathed forth the *Rig, Yajur, Sama* and *Atharva Vedas*.

Shukla Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.4.10



AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, MAHADEVO SEN



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Above, an Indian boy piously pours ghee on the sacred fire, keeping the flame of devotion alive. At left, devotees worship the Sun in Bihar during Chhat festival, when, for one night and day, the people live on the banks of the river Ganga making offerings to Surya, the gracious Sun God, a primary Deity honored in the *Vedas*.

THE CONCERN FOR ALL CREATION THAT FINDS expression in the *Vedas* is not shared by any other religion. *Shanno astu dvipade shanchatushpade*—this occurs in a mantra. The *Vedas* pray for the good of all creatures including bipeds, quadrupeds, etc. Even grass, shrubs, trees, mountains and the rivers are not excluded from their benign purview. The happy state of all these sentient creatures and inert objects is brought about through the special quality of the *Vedas*.

“The *Vedas* are also notable for the lofty truths expressed in the mantras. The tenets of these scrip-

tures have aroused the wonder of people of other lands, of other faiths. They are moved by the poetic beauty of the hymns, the subtle manner in which principles of social life are dealt with, the metaphysical truths embedded and expounded in them, and their moral instruction as well as scientific truths.

“There are mantras that are specially valuable for their sound but are otherwise meaningless. Similarly, there are works pregnant with meaning but with no mantric power. The remarkable thing about the *Vedas* is that they are of immeasurable value as much for their sound as for their verbal content. While

they have the mantric power to do immense good to each one of us and to the world, they also contain teachings embodying great metaphysical truths.

“It must here be emphasized that on the doctrinal level the *Vedas* deal both with worldly life and the inner life of the Self. They teach how to conduct ourselves in such a manner as to create atmic well-being. And their concern is not with the liberation of the individual alone; they speak about the ideals of social life and about the duties of the public. How the brahmin ought to lead his life and how the king must rule his subjects and what ideals women are

to follow: an answer to these—stated in the form of laws—is to be found in these scriptures.

“My duty is to impress upon you that it is your responsibility to keep the Vedic tradition alive. If in India the *Vedas* retain their original vitality even today, it is because they are being continuously repeated by students and teachers of the *Vedas*, and the purity of the sounds and accents of the words are retained in that process. But it is only by practicing the Vedic injunctions that we can obtain the grace of God, both for our individual welfare and for the welfare of the whole world.”

Life illumined with scriptural wisdom

Gurudeva, Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, founder of HINDUISM TODAY, was once asked, “What can I say if a missionary comes to my door and asks, ‘Does Hinduism have a Bible?’” He answered, “You can say, ‘Yes, we have the *Vedas* and *Agamas*, plus a hundred other scriptures that serve us very well, thank you.’” Indeed, this diverse body of knowledge is unlike the one Holy Book of other world faiths. It is diverse, a bit neglected, some nearly lost, some actually lost, but all of it precious. In truth, it yet defines and colors Hindu life like the

genetic code that makes a starfish a starfish. It is reflected in the beautiful Hindu style of music, art, drama, dance, work ethics, law, domestic values, spiritual striving, relationships, rites of passage, astrology, medicine, games, love and business, architecture and storytelling, government and diplomacy, and the working together of this physical world with the heavenly realms of existence. This grand legacy helps make Hindus the gracious people they are, with qualities of humility, appreciation, love of God, forbearance, joy and soulful depth of character.



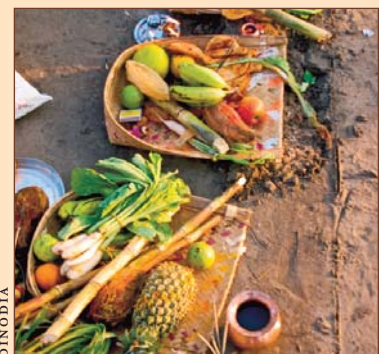
DINODIA

marriage & family



AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, INDRANIL MUKHERJEE

blessings



DINODIA

diet, ayurveda



BAPS

festivals



PANDIT HINDRAJ DIVEKAR

music



HINDUISM TODAY

venerating gurus



DINODIA

blessing a new home



EDWIN BERBAUM

love of nature

The soul is born and unfolds in a body, with dreams and desires and the food of life. And then it is reborn in new bodies in accordance with its former works. The quality of the soul determines its future body—earthly or airy, heavy or light.

Shvetashvatara Upanishad, 5.11–12.
The Upanishads, Mascaro, p. 94

With earnest effort hold the senses in check. Controlling the breath, regulate the vital activities. As a charioteer holds back his restive horses, so does a persevering aspirant restrain his mind.

Shvetashvatara Upanishad, 2.9. The Upanishads,
Prabhavananda & Manchester, p. 192

The guru who has attained Self Realization can alone help the aspirant in acquiring it.

Siva Sutras 2.6, Jaideva Singh, p. 102

If daily to his home the friends who love him come, and coming, bring delight to eyes that kindle bright, a man has found the whole of life within his soul.

Panchatantra, Ryder, p. 218

In the beginning of worship, at the conclusion of the rite, in the offering of water, in the anointing of the image, in the bathing of the image, in the offering of light, in the sprinkling of the image with sandal, in the bathing of the image with consecrated liquids, in the offering of incense, in the act of worship, and in all other things to be done, the Sivacharya should strike the great bell.

Karana Agama 190-191, Motivations of Temple
Architecture in Saiva Siddhanta, p.160

Mantra yields early success due to practice done in previous life. Self-fulfilling, too, is the mantra which is received according to the line of tradition, with due diksha, obtained in the right way. Innumerable are the mantras; they but distract the mind. Only that mantra which is received through the grace of the guru gives all fulfillment.

Kularnava Tantra 11.3, Woodroff & Pandit, p. 112

O thou who pervades all space, both now and hereafter, as the Soul of souls! The *Vedas*, *Agamas*, *Puranas*, *Itihasas* and all other sciences inculcate fully the tenet of nonduality. It is the inexplicable duality that leads to the knowledge of nonduality. This is consonant with reason, experience, tradition, and is admitted by the dualists and nondualists.

Tayumanavar, 10.3, The Poems of Tayumanavar, Coomaraswamy, p. 44

By overthrowing the aggregate of the six enemies [lust, anger, greed, vanity, haughtiness and overjoy], he shall restrain the organs of sense; acquire wisdom by keeping company with the aged; see through his spies; establish safety and security by being ever active; maintain his subjects in the observance of their respective duties by exercising authority; keep

up his personal discipline by receiving lessons in the sciences; and endear himself to the people by bringing them in contact with wealth and doing good to them.

Book I, Chapter 7, The Life of a Holy King, Kautilya's
Arthashastra, R. Shamasastri

Once Rama asked Hanuman, “How do you look at Me?” And Hanuman replied: “O Rama, as long as I have the feeling of ‘I, I see that Thou art the whole and I am a part; Thou art the Master and I am Thy servant. But when, O Rama, I have the knowledge of Truth, Then I realize that Thou art I, and I am Thou.”

From the Ramayana, as quoted by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Let us have concord with our own people, and concord with people who are strangers to us. Asvins, create between us and the strangers a unity of hearts.

Atharva Veda Samhita, 7.52.1

In him who is pure of mind, intellect and ego, the senses and their perceptions are pure, in fact, and he finds everything pure as well.

Sarvajnanottara Agama, Atma Sakshatkara 62,
Collected Works of Ramana Mararshi, p.110



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devotional art



DINODIA

nurturing children

One who is established in the contemplation of nondual unity will abide in the Self of everyone and realize the immanent, all-pervading One. There is no doubt of this.

Sarvajnanottara Agama, Atma Sakshatkara 14, Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi, p.107

The Self resides within the lotus of the heart. Knowing this, consecrated to the Self, the sage enters daily that holy sanctuary. Absorbed in the Self, the sage is freed from identity with the body and lives in blissful consciousness.

Sama Veda, Chandogya Upanishad 8.3.3-4, The Upanishads, Prabhavananda & Manchester, p. 122

With the help of the gardeners called Mind and Love, plucking the flower called Steady Contemplation, offering the water of the flood of the Self's own bliss, worship the Lord with the sacred formula of silence!

Lalla, The Sources of Indian Tradition, p. 360

The Lord of Appati is both inside and outside, form and no form. He is both the flood and the bank. He is the broad-rayed sun. Himself the highest mystery, He is in all hidden thoughts. He is thought and meaning, and embraces all who embrace Him.

Tirumurai 4.48.7. Poems to Siva, The Hymns of the Tamil Saints, Peterson, p. 114

At the time of the sacrifice, O Lord of the wood [Agni], the worshipers smear you with sacred oil. When you stand upright or when you repose on Earth's bosom, you still will grant us good fortune. Set up to the East of the sacred fire, you accept our prayer, intense and unflagging. Hold yourself high to bring us prosperity. Drive far away dearth of inspiration. Lord of the wood, take now your stance on this, the loftiest spot of all Earth. Well-fixed and measured one, give to the worshiper, who brings a sacrifice, honor and glory.

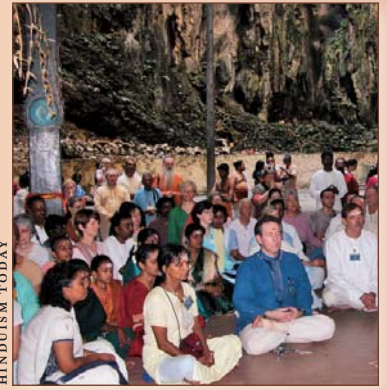
Rig Veda 3.8.1-3, The Vedic Experience, Pannikar, p. 373-374

There is no difference between devotion and perfect knowledge. A person who is engrossed in devotion enjoys perpetual happiness. And perfect knowledge never descends in a vicious person averse to devotion.

Siva Purana, Rudra Samhita. 23.16, Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology, vol 1, p. 380

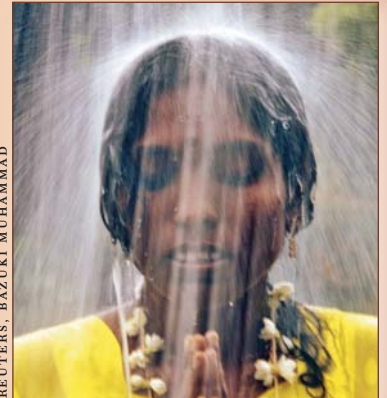
As wide Earth, as fire and water, as sacrificer and wind that blows, as eternal moon and sun, as ether, as the eight-formed God, as cosmic good and evil, woman and man, all other forms and His own form, and all these as Himself, as yesterday and today and tomorrow, the God of the long, red hair stands, O Wonder!

Tirumurai 6.308.1. Poems to Siva, The Hymns of the Tamil Saints, Peterson, p.113



HINDUISM TODAY

meditation



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penance



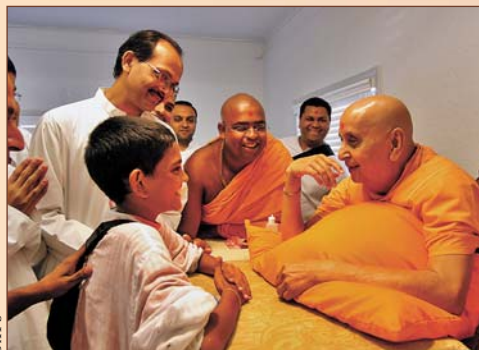
PAUL ESTCOURT/HERALD PICTURE

dance



REUTERS. DIPAK KUMAR

in the military



BAFS

guiding children



HINDUISM TODAY

monastic life