

## SACRED HINDU TEXTS

### 1. The Vedas:

*Veda* means ‘knowledge or sacred wisdom.’ There are four Vedas:

- Rig Veda: a collection of 1017 hymns arranged for reading or reciting.
- Yajur Veda: the ‘sacrificial Veda’ which presents the liturgical arrangement for intoning the hymns in sacrificial ceremonies.
- Sama Veda: the ‘chant Veda, another liturgical arrangement of some hymns for chanting in particular sacrifices in which the juice of the soma plant is the principle offering.
- Atharva Veda: the ‘spell Veda’ in which texts are presented as formula, charms and spells to achieve certain goals. This was added at a later period and is from a class of priests known as the *atharvans*.

Each Veda consists of four parts:

- *Mantras*: hymns and chants use in the praise of the gods.
- *Brahmanas*: detailed descriptions written in prose as guide books for the performance of sacrificial rites.
- *Aranyakas*: meditations which explain their meanings.
- *Upanishads*: concluding philosophical reflections about the nature of the universe and human relationships to it. They are philosophical and mystical discourses on spiritual truths—treatises which draw upon parables to communicate their view of reality.

The Upanishads constitute the foundation of later Hinduism. Their teachings center around the concepts of *brahman* (the Absolute Being), and *atman* (self). The Upanishads are based on the Vedas, and reflect a movement away from the sacrifices and ritualism of polytheism to a more human centered philosophies and the the problems of ethical behavior. In the Upanishads we are told that “Brahman dwells in all and outside all—unborn, pure, greater than the greatest, without breath, without mind.” Yet Brhman is “ever present in the hearts of all—the refuge of all and their supreme goal.” In Brahman exists all that moves and breaths. Brahman is seen as the adorable one. To know Brahman is to find one’s being within Brahman.

### 2. Epics:

The epics are the common person’s scriptures, and most Hindus draw their values and ideals from them. There are two great epics expounding the principles of the Vedas by interpreting the exploits of great national heroes.

- *Ramayana*: the story of Rama who destroys the demon-king Ravana and reestablishes his righteous kingdom on earth. Rama is the ideal man, and shows how an individual should behavior towards all other humans, and how a community should live in peace and harmony. Characters such as Rama and Sita, his wife, depict the ideals of moral

and social behavior for the individual, the family, and the nation. Rama is believed to be an *avataar* or incarnation of God and the repetition of his name is the most common devotional exercise in popular Hinduism.

- *Mahabharata*: is the story of the conflict of war between two branches of the same family. The one hundred Kaurava brothers represent evil, and are fighting their five cousins, the Pandavas, who represent good. With the help of Sri Krishna, an incarnation of God, good triumphs over evil. Through parables and dialogues the epic seeks to answer the moral, spiritual and metaphysical problems of the times.

One dialogue is recorded in the *Bhagwad Gita*, or Song of the Lord. On the eve of the great battle, Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers, is beset with doubts. How can he wage war against his own people, even though his cause is just? On the battlefield the god Krishna expounds to him the moral and philosophical implications of human action. The entire Gita may be seen as a long dialogical sermon. It teaches humans to do their duty, whatever it may be, and whatever consequences it may have. The basic teaching of the Gita centers on the need for selfless action. Such action should take place as part of our unflinching devotion to God. Humans attain perfection by worshipping God through the performance of their duties. In the *Bhagwad Gita*, Krishna describes himself as the Absolute who is identified with all things that are. He is the light of the sun, the brightness of fire, life in all things. In a sacrifice, he is the act of offering, the offering, the sacrificial fire and the sacrificer. Krishna tells Arjuna on the battlefield,

“I am the unborn, the Lord of all things. Yet I am the born by entering nature through my mysterious power. I incarnate myself from age to age, to save the righteous, to destroy the wicked and to reestablish Dharma—righteousness.”

These two epics contain the characters and episodes which illustrate human qualities and human situations. They teach values of courage, loyalty, devotion, truthfulness and steadfastness. They have shaped Indian art and literature. They speak to the common people, touch their hearts and fire their imaginations. In the Upanishads God is most often described as impersonal and without qualities. He is everything and nothing. He can only be described as “not this, not that.” In the Epics, the gods, in the persons of Rama and Krishna, are persons and moral heroes through whom the impersonal Absolute becomes knowable.

### 3. Puranas:

The Puranas rank next to the epics in their influence on religious Hindus. They seek to evoke religious devotion among the masses through myths, stories and legends, and events in national history. They are more concerned with ideal truth than historical truth. They tell the deeds of gods, the exploits of heroes, and the achievements of saints. These stories, in which heroes display virtues such as honesty, chastity and self-sacrifice, have played a significant part in the formation of the Hindu moral code.

There are eighteen principle Puranas, and many secondary ones. Some are about Brhma, some about Vishnu, and others about Siva.

4. Agamas:

There are three main branches of Hinduism: Vaishnavism, Saivism, and Shaktism. Each has its own theological treatises and manuals for worship. These are known as Agamas. Because of the strength of sectarian Hinduism, the Agamas are very important to their adherents.

5. Darsanas:

The Agamas appeal to the masses. The Darsanas are philosophical in character and are meant for the scholar. Various systems of Hindu philosophy emerged which were known as *darsanas* or “worldviews” or “systems.” There are six orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy which have sought to systematize the Vedic literature and their own tenets of faith in the form of short aphorisms or *sutras*. The Darsanas consist of the interpretation and classification of the turths contained in Vedic writings in a collection of *sutras* attributed to the founder of each school, and in authoritative commentaries on them.

6. Manu Smriti:

This is known as the Law of Manu. It is a metric work of 2,685 verses dealing with religion, law, customs and politics. It is the most often quoted source book in Hindu ethics. It lays down rules about how people belonging in one caste should behave towards others, and the homage and service due from those in lower castes to those in higher castes. It teaches that the Brahmins, or priestly castes, came from the mouth of Brahma, the Creator; the Kshatriyas, or ruler and warrior castes, came from Brahma’s arms; the Vaisya or merchant castes from his thigh, and the Sudras or worker castes from his legs.

Figure 1: The Vedic Texts

	<u>śākhā</u> (branch)	<u>saṃhitā</u> (compilation)	<u>Brāhmana</u>	<u>Āraṇyaka</u>	<u>Upaniṣad</u>	<u>Śrauta Sūtra</u>
1. <u>Rg Veda</u>						
a.	Śakala	Śakala	Aitareya	Aitareya	Aitareya	Āśvalāyana
b.	Bāskala	Bāskala	Kauṣītakī	Kauṣītakī	Kauṣītakī	Śāṅkhāyana
2. <u>Yajur Veda</u>						
<u>Black</u>						
a.	Kāṭhaka	Kāṭhaka	Kaṭha	Kaṭha	Kaṭha	Kāṭhaka
b.	Maitrāyaṇī	Maitrāyaṇī			Maitrāyaṇī	Mānava Vārāha
c.	Taittirīya	Taittirīya	Taittirīya	Taittirīya	Taittirīya Śvetāśvatara	Baudhāyana Vādhūla Bhāradvāja Āpastamba Hiraṇyakeśin Vaikhānasa
<u>White</u>						
a.	Mādhyam̐dina	Mādhyam̐dina	Bṛhad	Śatapatha	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Iśā	Kātyāyana
b.	Kāṇva	Kāṇva				
3. <u>Sāma Veda</u>						
a.	Kauthuma-- Rāṇāyanīya	Kauthuma-- Rāṇāyanīya	Pañcaviṃśa	Āraṇyakasaṃhitā	Chāndogya	Lāṭyāyana Drāhyāyana Ārṣeyakalpa
b.	Jaiminīya	Jaiminīya	Jaiminīya Śātyāyana	Jaiminīya- Upaniṣad- Brāhmaṇa	Kena	Jaiminīya
4. <u>Atharva Veda</u>						
a.	Śaunaka	Śaunaka	Gopatha		Muṇḍaka Māṇḍūkya Prašna	Vaitāna
b.	Paippilāda	Paippilāda				

## YOGA

“Yoga” is derived from *yuj*—to bind together or yoke. It is the process by which a person is yoked to Brahman through liberation from *purusha*.

Yogis are first mentioned about 800 B.C., and a rationale for yoga is found in the Katha Upanishad. Later Patanjali [2<sup>nd</sup> cent. B.C.], the founder of the Yogak system systematized the practices in the Yoga Sutras. He held that *yoga* is discrimination between subject and object, *purusa* [self of spirit], and *prakrti* [nature], which leads to the establishment of the self in its purity. It is the effort to attain perfection through the control of the different elements of human nature, physical and psychical. It literally means ‘union’ of the spiritual soul of the individual with the Universal Soul of the cosmos. It is achieved by concentration and meditation. The goal is merger with the cosmos, not relationship to God.

Mahadevan lists three kinds of yoga: *karma* (through good deeds), *bhakti* (through devotion), and *jnana* (through enlightenment). The Yogatattva Upanishad lists four types: *mantra*, *hartha* (physical disciplines and breath control), *laya* (annihilation of the personality of the worshiper that allows the *purusha* to reunite with Brahman), and *raja* (royal yoga). Some see these all as stages in *raja yoga* developed by Patanjali.

1. Philosophical Yoga: Philosophical rationales which are based mainly on Samkhya philosophy. These hold that *purushas* are entrapped in *prakriti* and need release to join Brahman. There are two major divisions in philosophical yoga.

1.1 Ignorance of the “self” due to *avidya* or ignorance. The basic problem is that we equate *purusha* with *prakriti*. The *buddhi* (intellect) is closest in nature to *purusha*, so achieving pure intellect is a means to release a person from the captivity of *prakriti* (matter).

- but *buddhi* is constantly flooded with the conscious mind (*manas*) and the impressions from outside (*vasanas*) so the voice of pure intellect cannot be heard. these need to be eliminated.

- consciousness (*chitta*) is both visible and invisible which interact—reality and potentiality. This interaction is the basis of *karma*.

1.2 Agitations of consciousness. *Chitta-vritti* (thoughts-whirl winds) constantly distract us from focusing our minds. We need Yoga to control the mind to stop thoughts and perceptions (*vasanas*).

- yoga is the taming of the mind, the cessation of the agitation of consciousness. By burning off the *vasanas* the *chitta* is no longer conditioned by imkputs, and is free to enter its normal state of being which ins noncognizant (*nirodha*).

2. There are Many Paths of Yoga:

- *jnana yoga* [union by knowledge]
- *bhakti yoga* [by love and devotion]
- *karma yoga* [ by action and service]

- *mantra yoga* [ by voice and sound]
- *yantra yoga* [by vision and form]
- *laya and kundalini yoga* [by arousing the latent psychic nerve-force]
- *tantri yoga* [psycho-logical disciplines and union by harnessing sexual energy]
- *harth yoga* [by bodily mastery---principally breath]
- *raja yoga* [ mental mastery]

### 3. Practices of Yoga. The *ashtangas*. There are eight steps in the practice of yoga.

- 3.1 *Yama* (self restraint or abstention): This is the apprenticeship stage in which a person must master *yama* and *niyama* before moving on. The restraints to be learned are: no acts of violence (*ahimsa*), no lying (*satya*), no stealing (*asteya*), no satisfying of sexual appetites (*brahmacharya*), and no avarice (*aparigraha*). The goals are cleanliness, contentment, ascetic practices, study of scriptures and contemplation of the Lord.
- 3.2 *Niyama* (spiritual discipline): Here the apprentice must learn to concentrate the mind on a single point (*ekagrata*) to achieve singleness of mind. This helps eliminate the random flux of thoughts (*chitta-vritti*) that normally clutters the mind.
- 3.3 *Asana* (posture): To concentrate the mind on a single point is the first step in disciplining the body. Posture is important here—one must learn to sit motionlessly and effortlessly for long periods of time.
- 3.4 *Pranayama* (breath control): Next must be learned breath control. by metering the length of inhalations and exhalations, and by holding the breath to give the body time to feed on it, the yogi learns to control the energy released in breathing. This calms the body and mind. Eventually the yogi by *asana* and *pranayama* will be free from all thought of the body and prevent the generation of *vasanas*.
- 3.5 *Pratyahara* (withdrawal or restraint of the senses): Next the mind must be focused through four steps. This step eliminates external sensory stimuli. It marks entry into the meditative stages.
- 3.6 *Dharana* (mental concentration). this is the concentration on a fixed external point for a long time for the purpose of comprehension.
- 3.7 *Dhayana* (deep meditation): Here the yogi begins to discover truths and profound realities through meditation.
- 3.8 *Samadhi* (higher consciousness or absorption—detachment and death to this world). This is of two types: with seed and without seed. The latter is the highest form. The former uses an external reference point. The latter eliminates duality. the subject and object of meditation become one. The *purusha* discovers its true identity as Brahman. Ignorance is broken and the yogi becomes *jivan-mukti* (liberated alive by burial).

#### 4. Influences on the West. Yoga has had a wide influence in the West.

- 4.1 Japa Yoga: This is the repetition of mantras such as those used by Hari Krishna and Transcendental Meditation. The meditator learns first to forget the rest of the world and to concentrate only on the mantra. Then he forgets the mantra too, transcending all thought and feelings and becoming aware of the awareness—a transcendental state of consciousness. He/she becomes aware of both the world and of pure consciousness. The he/she attains God consciousness, and finally oneness with the universe.
- 4.2 Sura-Shabd Yoga: This is the union of soul (*surat*) and word (*shabd*). This is taught by Divine Light Mission. It is gnostic and secretive. There are four stages of expanded consciousness (*samadhi*): seeing the divine light, hearing the divine music, tasting the divine nectar and experiencing the divine word.
- 4.3 Kundalini Yoga: Kundalini is the sleeping serpent resting in the cavity at the base of the spine. Kundalini Yoga rouses the sleeping serpent and releases serpent power (*shakti*) which travels up a small canal in the spine, running through six *chakras* (wheels or psychic centers). It draws latent energy from these to higher *chakras* where it is purified. Later Kundalini returns the energy on its path down to the base *chakra*. The methods include breathing, and heterosexual and homosexual activities.
- 4.4 Tantric Yoga: This is practiced by Rajaneesh. Enlightenment and salvation is gained through sexual activity in sexual orgies.
- 4.5 Transcendental Meditation: Rishi Mahesh Yogi

#### 5. Short Bibliography:

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Figure 2: Religious Tenets of the Darśanas

from Ninian Smart: Doctrines and Argument, p. 130.

	Advaita Vedānta	Mādhyaṃika	Vijñānavāda	Viśiṣṭa Advaita	Madhva Vedānta	Śaiva Siddhānta	Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika	Yoga	Sāṅkhya	Mīmāṃsā	Jainism	Theravāda Buddhism	Materialism (Cārvāka)
Absolute	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Lord	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O
Creator	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O
world real	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
selves	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	O
rebirth	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
release	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
devotion	O	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
meditative knowledge	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	O

Figure 2a, Smart, p. 133.

devotion	1	1	1	3	2	2	-	O	O	O	O	O	O
devotional meditation	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
meditation-knowledge	3	3	3	1	O	O	-	3	4	O	4	4	O



Figure 1: Classification of the Darśanas (Systems of Philosophy)

Skeptics (Cārvāka)	Mādhyanika Buddhism (Nāgārjuna)	Yogācāra Buddhism (Vasubandhu)	Buddhist Logicians (Dharmakīrti)	Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā (Prabhākara)	Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika	Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā (Kumārila)	Jaina	Sāṅkhya (Iśvarakṛṣṇa)	Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta (Rāmānuja)	Bhedābheda vāda (Bhartṛprapañca)	Bhāmati Advaita (Vācaspati Miśra)	Vivaraṇa Advaita (Prakāśānanda)	Sureśvara's Advaita	Fatalists (Ajivikas?)
Anti-freedom	Leap-philosophy (ajātivāda)	Progress Philosophies											Leap-philosophy (ajātivāda)	Anti-freedom
Asatkāryavāda (effect not pre-existent in cause)				Anekāntavāda (everything both same and different)				Satkāryavāda (effect pre-existent in cause)						
Sādrśya (co-ordination)			Sādrśya and Samavāya	Samavāya (inherence)	Bhedābheda (identity-in-difference)			Parināma (transformation)		Vivarta (manifestation)				
Wholes Unreal				Parts and Wholes Real and Distinct		Wholes Both Equal to and Not Equal to Parts		Whole Equal to Sum of Parts		Parts Unreal				
Nominalism (post rem)				Realism (ante rem)		?		Conceptualism (in re)						
?			Bhedāgraha Apohavāda (similarity is non-grasping of difference)		Abhāvas or Negative Reals		?		No Negative Reals		Abhedāgraha Apohavāda (difference is non-grasping of similarity)		?	
Asatkhyāti (object of error nonexistent)		Ātmakhyāti (object of error is the self)		Phenomenalism		Akhyāti (no error in simple judgments)	Anyathākhyāti (errors only of misplacement or mistiming)	Viparītakhyāti (error consists in taking things other wise than they are)		Satkhyāti or Yathārthakhyāti (object of error real or 'as is')			Anirvācaniyakhyāti (object of error is false)	

From Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963, inside cover.

## HINDUISM

Hinduism is the oldest of the organized living faiths. Hinduism has 300 million followers in India, and perhaps fifteen-to-twenty million elsewhere. Hinduism is difficult to describe because there is no founder, no creed, and no final truth or revelation.

### THEMES RUNNING THROUGHOUT HINDUISM

- I. The Unity of All Things: nature, man, spirit  
The aim of religious practice, then, is to realize oneness with God.
- II. The Variety and Its Validity
  - A. Variety of levels of being: matter, plants, humans, diety, spirit
  - B. Variety of levels of society: caste system
    1. Bhamans (priestly intellectuals)
    2. Kshatriyas (warriors)
    3. Visyas (merchants and farmers)
    4. Shudras (laboring class)
    5. Outcasts

There are rules about food, clothing, marriage, and work, and religious and social practices for each caste.

- C. Variety of Ways to God

Goal of life is to find out who you are, and to live that way; and to pass beyond illusion to become one with divine.

Raja-Yoga (Yoking) are mental exercises for psychological discipline and a graded course in mental concentration.

  1. The Way of Knowledge (Jnana-Yoga) for the philosopher. Search for the real self.
  2. The Way of Devotion (love)/Bhakti-Yoga/for the emotional man. This is the most popular way in India.
  3. The Way of Works (Karma-Yoga) for the active man, without giving up home or duties. The domestic ritual is important: household idols. Death rites: at Benares, die with feet in river water, burned on pyre. Important: action as duty without thought of reward or consequences.

	<u>CHRISTIAN</u>	<u>HINDU</u>
LIFETIME (s)	Man has unique existence: once only.	Transmigration of souls: reincarnation.
FUTURE LIFE	Resurrection	Reincarnation, until absorption
SCRIPTURES	The Bible. Truth in other writings, but all are measured by revelation in Christ, Bible.	None, but the closest are Vedas, Bhagavad Gita. Hindu is open to all good books.
MAN'S PROBLEM	Sin: a problem of relationships (to God, to self, and to others). Inner attitude, not acts.	Ignorance: Illusion Karma: Outside acts
SOLUTION	Man cannot save himself. Repentance and faith in God's acts in Jesus Christ	Yoga: process of yoking self to divine in way that produces illumination. YOU SAVE YOURSELF.
AGENT OF SALVATION	Christ: God in human flesh.	Avatars (Nine, so far) One a deer, one a turtle, one Krishna
PLACE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS	One places trust on own.	Follow guru's instruction.
UNIQUENESS	One God, not many. Christ is unique.	Many paths to divine; all are valid. Jesus one of many great teachers.
MEDITATION CONTEMPLATION	Focusing on God, or some aspect of God's life. Substance	Nonfocus: mantra's use to defocus. No-substance

#### HOW HINDUISM SEES CHRISTIANITY

Since all paths to God are valid, so is the Christian one. Hindu is tolerant of Christianity, as would a patient teacher be who seeks to lead one to light. But toleration is with expectancy that one will eventually be absorbed into the Hinduism viewpoint, not the other way around.

- C. As it relates to man in relation to others. Hindu temple is solitary, for one alone. Hindu is used to the given community of his caste. Not prepared by his background for the chosen community of the church. Therefore conversion needs explaining.
4. Reverence for life: Christianity also affirms all of life as created by God, not a part of God himself. Distinction, too, between man and all the rest of the created order.
  5. Caste: Agree that each person is to determine his own potential and live within his limitations. But the gospel of Jesus Christ affirms that you don't have to stay what you are. The new creation transcends previous dividing lines of culture and class.
  6. Inner and outer life: The Hindu contribution to the world of religion is the importance given to the interior life.

Christianity agrees on importance of inner life, but criterion finally is outer life lived as expression of Life inward.

7. Time and history: Little importance in Hinduism. Christian linear concept of time makes history meaningful as a arena for significant action by man and by God. Life has meaning NOW, not waiting for life and rebirth.

The issue of the Incarnation is Hindu's stumbling block.

8. Tolerance: Hinduism is known for its tolerance of other faiths. Yet, in interfaith discussion, Hindus often become very intolerant, refusing to let Christians begin from their premise that Jesus is unique. Also, Hindus often do not let Christians begin with premise that truth may be divisive as well as unitive; one revelation may measure another in Christian perspective.

Point out the intolerance involved in not letting the Christian hold to his belief that God has shown himself in Jesus in such a way that this revelation is the measure of all other revelations that claim to come from God.

ADVAITA VEDANTA HINDU WORLD VIEW

BRAHMAN: ABSOLUTE UNCHANGING REALITY = ATMAN: ULTIMATE INNER SELF

Avidya: desire and ignorance

MAYA: THE WORLD OF PHENOMENOLOGY, ILLUSION AND TRANSCIENT REALITY

Life	Beings	Cycle of Life	Values	Goals, Desires and Drives	Ashramas, or Stages in Life	Selves	Margas or Religious Paths	Space		
Pure Spirit	BRAHMAN	R e i n c a r n a t i o n	M o k s h a	Spiritual Values	Moksha	Sannyasin	Atma	SEVEN HEAVENS		
	Higher gods			- passionless	- spiritual release	- mendicant	- sat = existence		Jnana Marga = Metaphysical	
	Lesser gods	A c t i o n	D e s i r e	- detachment	- liberation	- spiritual	- chit = conscious	- Brahman is the focus		
	Rakshasas						- anand = bliss	- wisdom is the path		
	Yavanas								- release is the goal	
	Dayamulu					Rational Values	Dharma	Vanaprastha		
	Ghoshamulu					- wisdom	- social status and position	- hermit, recluse		
	Bhutamulu					- knowledge	- righteousness	- rational & spiritual	Sharira	
	Saints								1. Causal Body	Bhakti Marga = Theological:
	High Castes								- true body	- gods are the focus
	Middle Castes					Biological Values	Artha	Grhastha,	- lasting self	- worship, love and devotion
	Low Castes					- offspring	- power	- householder	- not self aware	- heaven is the path
Untouchables			- health	- prosperity	- biological social	2. Subtile Body	- heaven is the goal			
Pure	Cows						and transmigration			
	Horses						3. Physical Body	Karma Marga = Ritualism:		
	Middle Animals			Material	Kama	Brahmacharin	- awake life, temporary	- idols are the focus		
	Lower Animals			- possessions	- natural body drives	- student	- shed like a skin	- duty, ritual and disinterested		
	Higher Plants			- wealth	- enjoyment of the senses		- made up of five physical elements	- service the path		
Middle Plants							- heaven is the goal			
Lower Plants										
Inanimate Beings								SEVEN HELLS		

Eka jivam: all life is one

Debts: gods - worship and service,  
rishis and gurus - preservation of wisdom and culture  
parents and ancestors - progeny

Hinduism is a school of metaphysics, for its aim is not merely to make humans perfect beings on earth or happy denizens of heaven singing for all time the glories of God, but to make them one with the ultimate Reality, the eternal, universal Spirit in which there are no distinctions - no cause and effect; no time and space; no good and evil; no pairs of opposites; and no categories of thought. This is achieved, not by improving, reforming, or saving character, but by transforming human consciousness (Sarma).

# M - Ā - Y - A

PEANUTS By Schulz



### III. FOLK HINDUISM

#### 1. OVERVIEW:

##### GREAT TRADITION:

##### HIGH HINDUISM - PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL.

- benevolent Hindu high gods (good), warring against evil demons
- focus on males and marriage
- Sacritic written scriptures and commentaries (Vedas, Epics, Puranas)
- temples, icons and temple rites
- Brahmin priests
- vegetarian sacrifices
- cyclical and life cycle rites
- astrology
- mantras and worship rites
- orthodox centers and seminaries

##### Mendicant Orders

- orders of sannyasins
- ashrams and retreat centers
- mystics

##### LITTLE TRADITION:

##### FOLK HINDUISM - PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL.

- regional Hindu gods and local gods linked to Hinduism, demons and evil spirits
- vernacular scriptures: local epics, etc.
- local temples and household shrines
- Brahmin priests, middle and low caste priests, and untouchable priests
- vegetarian offerings, and some blood sacrifices
- cyclical rites, regional festivals and local religious fairs
- building rites
- local variations on life cycle rites

##### Mendicant Orders

- local mendicants and sannyasins
- mystics

##### LOCAL ANIMISM:

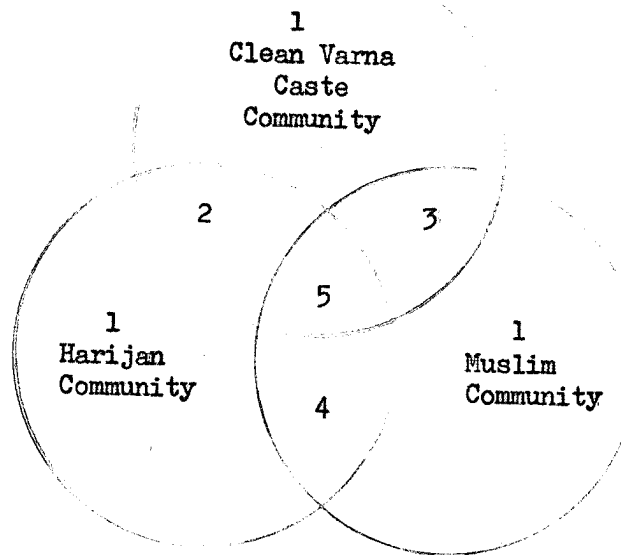
##### SPIRITS AND MAGIC - PROBLEM OF ORDER AND CHAOS.

- local amoral, capricious goddesses, local evil spirits, mana and powers
- focus on asexual females and fertility
- ancestors, and ghosts
- oral traditions, little written materials
- sacred rocks, rivers, trees, mountains, field shrines, household alters, etc.
- blood sacrifices
- low caste and untouchable priests
- crisis rites: illness, plagues, disasters
- fertility rites: planting, harvesting, etc.
- magic, evil eye, divination, curses

# PILGRIMAGE SITES IN INDIA







1. Areas of Distinction for All Three Groups:  
Religion: temples, mosques, priests, and festivals.  
Entertainment: dramas and bajanas.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>2. Clean Caste and Harijan Commonalities</p> <p>Hindu<br/>Telugu<br/>Sari, pancha, etc.<br/>Essential monopolies<br/>Hindu</p> | <p>As<br/>Against<br/><u>Religion</u><br/><u>Language</u><br/><u>Dress</u><br/><u>Work</u><br/><u>Names</u></p> | <p>Muslim<br/>Distinctives</p> <p>Islam<br/>Urdu<br/>Purdah, fez, etc.<br/>Few monopolies<br/>Muslim</p> |
| <p>3. Hindu Clean Caste and Muslim Commonalities</p> <p>Integrated</p>  | <p>As<br/>Against<br/><u>Residence</u></p>  | <p>Harijan<br/>Distinctives<br/>Segregated</p>   |
| <p>4. Harijan and Muslim Commonalities</p> <p>Free use of foods</p>   | <p>As<br/>Against<br/><u>Food</u></p>   | <p>Clean Caste<br/>Distinctives<br/>Food restrictions</p>  |

5. Areas of Commonality for All Three Communities  
 All are members of the same village, share the same government, and are linked together by multiplex relations of economic, social, and legal nature.

Figure 3

Distinctive Community Characteristics in Konduru Village

**ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF AN INDIAN VILLAGE**  
Paul G. Hiebert

**1. A Structural-Functionalist Approach.**

- 1.1 Popular view of Indian village social structure: four castes.
- 1.2 Static model of caste: many castes, varna clusters, clear hierarchy based on power.
- 1.3 Dynamic model of caste: castes competing for power and resources, with social mobility over time.
- 1.4 Multivariant model of caste: looks at caste, class and personal factors in a dynamic social structure.

**2. A Cultural Approach.**

- 2.1 Attributional model of caste: looks at cultural symbols of caste.
  - touch, cigarettes
  - handling polluted objects
  - food exchange
  - marriage, hypergamy, blood
- 2.2 Purity - Pollution model of caste: (Dumont)
  - pollution removal, maintenance of purity.
  - encompassing and encompassed.
- 2.3 Symbolic analysis of village life:
  - hot and cold; sacred and secular
- 2.4 Religious analysis of village life:
  - high and folk religion

**3. A Semiotic Approach.**

- 3.1 Substance exchange: (Marriott and Nichols)
- 3.2 Semiotics of space: (Daniels)
- 3.3 Worldview and category formation:

## SEMIOTIC NOTES ON A YOUTH ROCK CONCERT AND TEEN FLICKS

1. Rock concert:
  - social: - instant 'community' (substitute for real thing.
  - being with people - not alone
  - mob excitement --> ecstatic experience
  - identity
  - be entertained - fun - nothing else to do
  - religious experience:
    - = search for prophet, guru, meaning and transcendence in emotions
    - = sexual power, ecstasy, youth's emerging sexuality
    - = freedom from traditions - rebellion
    - = individual centered (no reconciliation, no concern for justice or true community.
  - \* a limited, shallow, incomplete map fo social reality. End in itself. Not like a Requiem.
2. Youth leisure culture:
  - adolescence as separate age grade in west emerged 1880-1900. created to protect and shelter youth. Ended in isolating them.
  - post w.w.II this became equated with affluence
3. Teen Flicks: such as 16 Candles, Risky Business, Beach parties, etc.
  - \* make most money: Spend 3- 6 Million, earn 150 - 180 M.
  - 3.1 stress sexuality of adolescent male (most seen through eyes of sexual phantasies of middle class, white, males.
    - = must score, appeals to emerging puberty period and sexuality
  - 3.2 reinforces adolescence sense of being a separate stage - segregated from rest of society. Adults presented as dumb, tyrannical or not understanding. Films give 'meaning' to teenage life by providing an interpretation or map of it.
  - 3.3 sex, abortions, violence etc. are value free. No one pays a price.
  - 3.4 education is of secondary importance in these years. Social life is most important.
  - 3.5 affirm intergenerational conflicts, youth victims, not understood
  - 3.6 consumerism = success. No work to live, mainly consume.
  - 3.7 guaranteed happy ending.

## MYTHS AND VALUES

### 1. Indo-European: (Walter Wink)

ORDER

^

- | - Messiah: deliverer, king, hero, Marduke,  
| Settler, cowboy, detective, Popey, Batman.  
| (good guy - villan draws first)
- | - Winning verifies who is good. At first the  
| good guy loses, but in the end he wins.
- | - Contest is the means: duel, battle, war, gun  
| fight, vigilantism.
- | - Redemption through violence.
- | - Male dominance: danger is sexual violation of  
| the women.

v

CHAOS

- \* order is imposed from above - by the gods. Humans must offer them sacrifices, and die in their armies.
- \* government is too weak, so we need a hero who superseeds the law and can restore order by his own power. Law is too slow.
- \* moves towards centralized power, empires and search for a uniform, universal order imposed on all things. King as representative of the gods establishes law and order. Allegiance to state is the ultimate allegiance.
- \* anyone opposed to the king and state is an enemy. Must be defeated and liquidated. No dialogue with the enemy. There is no problem with evil - no grays or shades of decision.
- \* The enemy must be confronted by power and killed. Violence is a necessary step to keeping order. Order prevails over chaos by means of redemptive violence.
- \* success shows the conqueror has the favor of the gods.
- \* war creates peace, violence leads to harmony and order. The universe, and all human lives are theaters of perpetual conflict as chaos repeatedly threatens to take over.



(cheerleaders, audience, admirers). Reinforces role distinction and superiority of men.

- contest of power: competition is good, might makes right.
- violence is o.k., so too is revenge of a previous defeat.
- victor is good; loser has no place, leaves the field, is forgotten, becomes invisible. Victor is 'number one'.
- success is the main thing.

4. All of life is a contest between people.

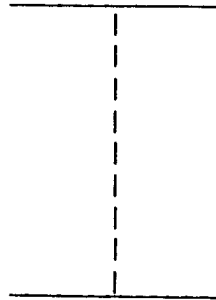
- must win, be successful, be number one.
- must be higher than another - hierarchy is o.k. so long as all 'play by the same rules'. No account taken of factors prior to the contest: who has more training, who is advantaged in life, who is potentially better. The only test is NOW and a face-to-face show-down.

5. Specialization and Professionalization.

- most team sports require a high degree of professionalization.
- team sports require working together under the direction of the leader. Not community, but cooperation of specialists.
- when you get very good you become a professional. You are then a hero, and are paid highly for being successful and a 'religious' role model for the young.

2.2 RIGHTEOUSNES/EVIL:

RIGHTEOUSNESS = community, right relationships - shalome  
= justice  
= equality, dignity of all

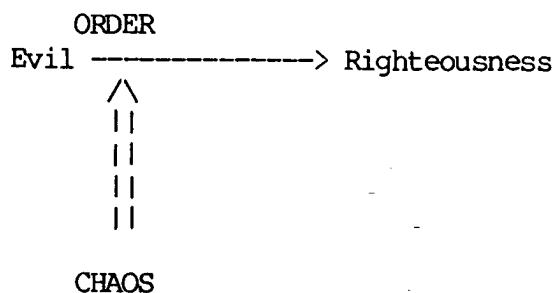


= love, bear suffering, servanthood,  
cooperation, mutual assistance  
= nonviolence, grace, forgiveness  
= mutual submission

EVIL = injustice, oppression  
= depersonalization, alienation

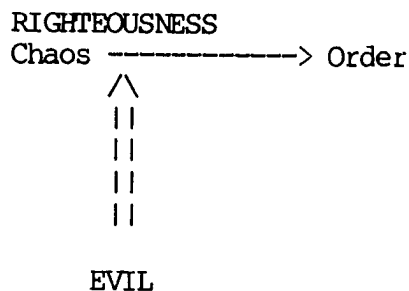
## 2.3 PRIORITIZATION:

2.31 Middle Class America: (common in dominant, powerful society)



- \* must get order first: if by violence or by breaking the law if need be (eg. detectives, cowboys, wars) then when we have control, we can establish righteousness through law.
- \* no place for chaos: children, poor, sick, dying, death, deformed, crippled, powerless. Cultural denial of these - we keep these invisible and hidden (Becker).
- \* eg. must have a clean house before we can invite company. Can't invite if it isn't clean.
- \* eg. church order more important than people. Start on time, clean sanctuary, follow bulletin order, clear roles and statuses.
- \* eg. missionary emphasis on order. Can't turn over for fear chaos will set in. Hospitals won't be as clean, church order will break down, services won't start on time.
- \* eg. middle class denominational relationships with ethnic churches: must keep accounts straight, order high.

2.32 Biblical: (common in poor, disposes, marginalized)



- \* emphasis on relationships: people are nobodies if they are alone. Focus not on persons as individuals, but networks of relationships that link persons into communities (koinonia) and on the rightness of these relationships.

- \* willing to live with a measure of chaos rather than giving up righteousness and relationships. Birth of a child, sick, homeless, hospitality, marginal - all have a place in this.
- \* eg. invite people to our homes even if they are not always clean.
- \* eg. let people sleep in our churches, or use our churches even if this means they will get dirty.
- \* eg. in missions we are willing to entrust program to people even if some chaos sets in. Developing leaders is more important than getting a successful program.

### 3. EASTERN VALUES:

ORDER (Structure)	<----->	CREATIVITY (Chaos)
- Masculine		- Feminine
- Rationality		- Raw power, fertility
- Day, dry		- Night, wet
- Peace ( -->boredome)		- Ecstasy, thrill ( -->fearsome, dangerous)