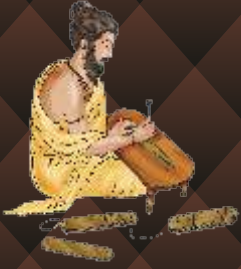


भारतीय-चतुष्षष्टिकलाः

The 64 Arts

(A glimpse into the ancient art forms of India)



Prepared by:



SAMSKRITI FOUNDATION®
Mysuru

Sponsored by:

NCF

National Culture Fund

Ministry of Culture
Govt. of India
New Delhi



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Foreword

India is a living civilisation and is defined by its robust ancient cultural heritage and traditions. Its ancient mythology and literature encompasses several dimensions covering social, spiritual, economical, administrative, medicinal and various other spears of human life. Amongst these are the many human talents and attributes that have been complied and are collectively known as the Catuṣṣaṣṭikālā-s, i.e 64 Arts. These arts cover various arts and Science forms of different genres like Societal and Social Arts, Intellectual Arts, Mechanical Arts and so on. These have been the tools of economic survival of the large masses of India even today.

The 64 arts of India, are understood to have originated from the Vedic texts and were for the first time mentioned in the Mahabharata, one of the two most important epics of Bharata, the other epic being the Ramayana. Later, these 64 Arts have been listed and mentioned (with minor variations) in the works like the Jayamangala commentary on Sage Vatsyayana's Kamasutra, Shukranitisara and so on. These have been systematized, categorized and presented in a versatile, easy to understand manner, in the present monograph. Such a monograph delineating the 64 arts along with appropriate illustrations has not been researched into or published earlier as it has been done in the present form.

Sanskriti Foundation, a premier organization working to preserve and propagate the cultural and scientific heritage of India, (with a focus on its contemporary relevance), has come forward to undertake this task and has put in scholarly efforts with great dedication to bring out this monograph, which is comprehensive and authentic.

The National Culture Fund (NCF), an organization coming under the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, was happy to financially support this project. It is hoped that the current monograph will create awareness about the Traditional 64 Arts of India, and in due course, facilitate the revival, preservation and propagation of these Arts and also showcase to the entire world, the uniqueness of India's Cultural Heritage from time immemorial.

Dr. Arvind Kumar
Member Secretary,
NCF, Ministry of Culture,
Government of India
New Delhi

Preface

It is with great honour that we present this book, "64 Arts of India." This work is a profound exploration of the rich cultural heritage that encompasses India's traditional art forms and practices. It aims to offer readers an insightful journey through the diverse and vibrant world of Indian art, celebrating the essence and spirit of our nation's creative legacy.

First of all, Samskriti Foundation® places on record, its deep sense of gratitude to all the officials of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, especially from the **National Culture Fund (NCF)**, for providing financial aid for executing this project.

We also respectfully and fondly remember the wonderful and pioneering vision of our founder **Mahamahopadhyaya, Panditaraja Prof. M.A. Lakshmithathacharya**, inspiration and guiding force behind this publication. His blessings continue to stand us in good stead even as we embark on a very fulfilling and spiritually rewarding journey, to turn his dreams of bringing out several such unique publications into reality.

This book is the result of the collective efforts and dedication of the team consisting of Sri L.K. Acharya, who has prepared beautiful illustrations, Sri Shriganesh Devaru Bhat, Dr. Amulya Bharadwaj, and Ms. Anne Roopa D'souza, who have edited the text which has been further enriched by the efforts of Sri R. Venkatesh and Sri S. Karthikeyan. The collective efforts of this team has resulted in the publication of this book that depicts the timeless beauty and significance of India's 64 traditional arts.

Our Foundation's commitment to preserving and promoting Indian culture is evident throughout this book. Through "64 Arts of India," we invite you to explore a world of creativity and tradition that has been nurtured over centuries. We hope this book serves as a source of inspiration to the present generation.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those involved in bringing this book to fruition, and hope that readers will find it as enriching and captivating as it was for us while creating it.

Prof. E.S. Dwarakadasa
President
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Dr. M. A. Alwar
Managing Trustee
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Introduction

India, the land of ancient traditions and cultural diversity, has been a beacon of art and creativity for centuries, has gloriously preserved its societal values, language, food and customs, a representation of its rich cultural heritage. The evolution and growth of art in India have been a testimony to the country's strong cultural foundation. The freedom to explore and express oneself through various art forms has been an essential aspect of Indian culture, which has stood the test of time.



Indian art has served as a conduit for connecting with the world and displaying the grandeur of the country's past and the opulence of its legacy. Indian art is a treasure trove of varied and diverse forms, encompassing dance, music, literature, architecture and more, catering to a wide range of tastes and interests. Each art form is a window to the vibrant and culturally rich past and present of India, providing a unique glimpse into the nation's heritage. The creative spirit and artistic excellence that have characterized Indian art have made it an inspiration for generations to come.

Vidyā or Knowledge is the basis for any art or Kalā. The in-depth knowledge, coupled with consistent practice in any art, makes one an expert in that particular art form. Each of the art forms mentioned in the book "The 64 Arts" have science behind them and are developed over a period of time. For example, Gaṇitham is science in itself and used in other arts also like – Gītam (music), Chandognānam (meters used in the verses), Metallurgy, etc.,



Historically the origin of the Catuṣṣaṣṭikālā, or the 64 arts can be traced back to the ancient Indian texts, which not only emphasize the significance of these arts in daily life, but also provide detailed instructions and guidance on how to master them. With the passage of time, the 64 arts gradually became an integral part of Indian folklore.



The artistic legacy of India is deeply entwined with scientific principles, evident in the intricate patterns of dance, the harmonious melodies of music, and the majestic architecture of temples and monuments. For instance, in the classical Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam, the hand gestures, known as mudras, are not just symbols of expression but also embody geometric shapes and patterns. Each mudra carries a specific meaning and is executed with precision, reflecting the profound understanding of geometry inherent in Indian classical dance.



Furthermore, the rhythmic structure of Indian classical music, particularly in Carnatic and Hindustani traditions, is founded on mathematical principles. The division of time into rhythmic cycles, or tālās, follows complex mathematical ratios, creating a symphony of patterns that are both aesthetically pleasing and intellectually stimulating. This mathematical precision can be traced back to ancient





treatises such as the Nāṭya Śāstra and the Saṅgīta Ratnākara, which codify the principles of music and dance.

Moreover, the architectural marvels of ancient India, such as the temples of Khajuraho and the caves of Ajanta and Ellora, exemplify the amalgamation of artistic expression and scientific ingenuity. The intricate carvings and sculptures adorning these structures are decorative, aesthetically pleasing and also function as acoustic enhancers, amplifying the sound of chants and prayers within the sanctum sanctorum.

One of the most iconic examples of the intersection between art and science in Indian history is the concept of Vāstu Śāstra, the traditional Indian system of architecture. Vāstu Śāstra prescribes guidelines for building design and layout based on principles of geometry, symmetry, and proportion. For example, the layout of a traditional Indian home is designed to optimize natural light and ventilation while maintaining harmony with the surrounding environment. This harmonious integration of architectural design with natural elements reflects a deep understanding of scientific principles.

Furthermore, the Indian concept of rasa, or aesthetic experience, encompasses not only artistic expression but also emotional and intellectual stimulation. According to the Nāṭya Śāstra, the ancient treatise on performing arts, there are nine rasas or emotional states that a performance evokes in the audience and is achieved through a combination of artistic elements such as music, dance, and drama. This holistic approach to artistic expression underscores the profound psychological and philosophical insights embedded in Indian art forms.

In this book - "The 64 Arts," we bring you a glimpse of these 64 Arts, that people have mastered over time. It is a reminder that every one of us have talents and interests, contributing to our individuality, which needs to be discovered and nurtured.

Art endures the passage of time as it has always served as a source of inspiration and a medium of expression for people of all ages and backgrounds. Art is a universal language that transcends borders and speaks to people across time and space. It has the power to inspire and move individuals, regardless of their background or culture. Monuments and artworks are preserved not only for their beauty but also as a testament to the values and beliefs of the people who created them. As society evolves, so too do art forms, reflecting changes in lifestyle, thought, and values.

According to legends, Sri Kṛṣṇa was born with the inherent ability to master an array of arts. The story of Sri Kṛṣṇa's mastery of the 64 arts is a well-known tale in Indian folklore. According to a legend Kṛṣṇa's friend Sudāma was kidnapped by a demon. Kṛṣṇa quickly sprang into action, defeating the demon and rescued Sudāma. In gratitude, Sudāma's parents offered to grant him any boon he desired. Kṛṣṇa requested Sudāma's parents to ask Sāṅdīpani Muni (his Guru) to



accept the Gurudakṣiṇa by him.

Sāndīpani Muni asked Kṛṣṇa to retrieve his deceased son who had drowned in the sea as Gurudakṣiṇa. Kṛṣṇa revived and returned Sāndīpani Muni's son. Sāndīpani Muni was overjoyed and impressed by Kṛṣṇa's abilities, blessed him with the knowledge of the Catuṣṣaṣṭikā, including the Vēdās, archery, music, dance, painting, sculpture, and many other skills.

It is widely believed that ancient India had achieved mastery in the 64 arts, which were classified into diverse categories such as music, dance, literature, and science. These arts were extensively documented in texts including Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra, Śukrācārya's Śukranītisāra, Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. After an exhaustive and meticulous study, the Catuṣṣaṣṭikā, or the 64 arts, which are considered as the indispensable aspects of ancient Indian culture, are elucidated in this book. The Catuṣṣaṣṭikā, or 64 arts, are distinguished into various categories and are explained as follows:

1. **Gītam:** Indian classical singing is a soul-stirring and captivating art that is melodious, emotive, and enchanting. It requires immense dedication, training, and a deep understanding of Indian musical traditions to master this intricate and complex form of singing.
2. **Vādyam:** Instrumental music is a captivating and soulful form of artistic expression that involves creating music without using the human voice. It allows the musician to convey emotions and feelings through the sound of their instrument, and can evoke a wide range of emotions in the listener.
3. **Nṛtyam:** Indian classical dance is a captivating and graceful art form that embodies beauty and storytelling through sophisticated movements and expressions. It celebrates tradition and culture while also conveying a sense of spirituality and devotion.
4. **Nāṭakam:** The art of acting and theater involves the charismatic portrayal of characters and stories through performance, using various techniques to evoke emotions and convey messages to the audience. It requires creativity, skill, and an understanding of the complexities of human emotions and /behavior.
5. **Vācanam:** The art of reading books aloud, also known as recitation, is fascinating and enchanting. It allows for the exploration of various emotions, bringing the written word to life with its intonations and expressions.
6. **Indrajālam:** The mesmerizing art of creating illusions and performing magic tricks in Indian culture is both enthralling and exciting, leaving spectators spellbound with its mystery and wonder.





7. **Hastalāghavam:** The fascinating and impressive art of dexterity of the hands, balancing and tricking to manipulate objects and defy gravity, showcasing incredible strength, agility, and precision, although used for wrong purposes at times.

8. **Sūtrakriḍā:** The gripping art of creating intricate patterns and designs with a loop of string in Indian tradition, showcasing dexterity and creativity.



9. **Dhātuvādaḥ:** The exquisite art of metallurgy that involves the manipulation of metals into various forms and shapes, showcasing skilled craftsmanship and technical expertise.

10. **Khanivādaḥ:** The fascinating art of mineralogy involves the study and identification of minerals, their properties, and their uses.



11. **Ratnaśāstram:** The interesting art of studying gemstones and their properties in Indian traditional knowledge, incorporating scientific and mystical aspects.

12. **Maṇirāgākarajñānam:** The knowledge of processing gemstones in Indian traditional knowledge.



13. **Lohakriyā:** The exquisite art of metalworking involves the crafting and shaping of various metals into beautiful and functional objects using specialized techniques and tools.

14. **Aśmakriyā:** The delicate art of stone-cutting and masonry in Indian traditional knowledge is a meticulous and intricate craft, involving precision and skill to create beautiful and durable structures.



15. **Mrṭkriyā:** Pottery making in Indian traditional knowledge is an interesting and intricate art form that involves the skilled use of clay and other materials to create beautiful and functional objects. It requires patience, precision, and creativity to master the art of pottery making.

16. **Takṣaṇam:** The exquisite art of carpentry and woodworking in Indian traditional knowledge involves skillful craftsmanship and precision, resulting in beautifully crafted objects with multifarious designs.



17. **Veṇvādikriyā:** The meticulous and skilled craft of creating handmade objects or handicrafts in Indian tradition. Exquisite handicrafts made with bamboo showcase the incredible creativity and skill of artisans.

18. **Yantramātrkā:** The ingenious and innovative art of inventing and designing devices in Indian traditional knowledge, which has contributed greatly to technological advancements.



19. **Vāstuvidyā:** The awe-inspiring art and science of designing and constructing buildings and structures in a functional and aesthetically pleasing manner in Indian tradition.



20. Citrakarma: The exquisite and vibrant art of painting and drawing, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and intricate details of Indians traditional knowledge.

21. Puṣpāstarāṇam: The delicate and artistic skill of creating intricate floral decorations and arrangements in the Indian tradition.

22. Śāyyārācanam: The ornate and detailed art of crafting and arranging bedding with precision and elegance.

23. Viśeṣakacchedyam: The sacred and ceremonial art of applying a tilak on the forehead, symbolizing auspiciousness and devotion.

24. Mālyagrathanavikalpaḥ: The art of making garlands using flowers, leaves, and other natural materials.

25. Sūtrapāṭakaraṇam: The intricate and skillful art of spinning and weaving in Indian traditional knowledge, creating beautiful and durable fabrics using various techniques and tools.

26. Daśanavasanaṅgarāgaḥ: The vibrant and skilled art of whitening the teeth, dyeing of fabric and body colouring, using natural colors and intricate techniques to produce exquisite designs.

27. Sūcivānakarma: The sophisticated and exquisite art of needlework and embroidery, coupled with skilled fashion design, results in stunning and visually appealing creations.

28. Chalitakayogaḥ: The clever and skillful art of disguising oneself often used in espionage, storytelling and theatre performances to create intrigue and surprise.

29. Gajāśvarathakaūśalam: The majestic and exhilarating art of riding elephants, horses, and chariots, showcasing skill and grace in equal measure.

30. Yuddhavidyā: The formidable and intricate art of warfare and martial arts in Indian traditional knowledge, encompassing various techniques and strategies for combat and self-defense.

31. Vyāyāmikī Vidyā - The science of physical exercise or fitness training. It includes various forms of exercises, such as yoga, physical exercises and more.

32. Taraṇam: The graceful and skilled art of swimming in ancient India, practiced with precision and finesse.

33. Nimajjanam: The skillful and fearless art of diving into water and swimming under water with precision and grace, showcasing physical prowess and bravery.

34. Udaḱāghātaḥ: The exhilarating and skillful art of splashing water and other water sports, were a celebration of the country's love for



water and aquatic sports.



35. **Kāvyaṃ**: The art of writing and composing expressive and meaningful words that touch the hearts and minds of the readers, evoking powerful emotions and thoughts. It is a beautiful and profound form of art that has been cherished and revered for centuries.

36. **Prāhelikā**: The ingenious and thought-provoking art of creating and solving riddles, showcasing the wit and intellectual abilities through wordplay and hidden meanings.



37. **Pratimālā**: The playful and creative art of stringing verses and crafting responses with the ending letter of the previous verse.

38. **Durvācakayogaḥ**: The art of creating and pronouncing tongue twisters and deciphering its meaning. It is a skill that was highly valued in ancient India and is still practiced by scholars and intellectuals.



39. **Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam**: It is an art of communicating through sign languages and gestures of hands, eyes etc., and also used in communicating secrets. as depicted in our epics and purāṇā-s, with attention to detail and accuracy which involves a meticulous and thorough examination of ancient texts and resources to reconstruct and understand the social, cultural, and political context of the times.

40. **Mlecchitavikalpaḥ**: The art of written communication through cryptic languages by encoding phrases and deciphering them. It was an important skill for traders and diplomats in ancient India.



41. **Abhidhānakośaḥ**: A study of collecting and compiling dictionaries, containing an extensive collection of words and their meanings in a structured format, a comprehensive and invaluable resource for language enthusiasts.

42. **Chandojñānam**: The complex and sophisticated art of understanding and utilizing poetic meters in Indian traditional literature, showcasing a deep appreciation for language and rhythm.



43. **Deśabhāṣā**: The diverse and vibrant art of knowing regional language or dialect in Indian traditional literature, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and unique identity of different regions.

44. **Lipikarma**: The elegant and precise art of creating beautiful writing or calligraphy in various scripts and styles.



45. **Gaṇitam**: The precise and logical art of studying and understanding numbers, quantities, and shapes and its applications like – astronomy, astrology, architecture etc.,

46. **Itihāsapurāṇāni**: The art of studying and interpreting past events as



depicted in our epics and purāṇa-s, with attention to detail and accuracy which involves a meticulous and thorough examination of ancient texts and resources to reconstruct and understand the social, cultural, and political context of the times.

47. **Nimittajñānam:** The mystical and fascinating art of interpreting omens and signs using symbolism and intuition to understand the universe's messages.

48. **Aṅgavidyā:** The art of analyzing body features and interpreting the same, which is used in predicting one's personality and fate.

49. **Dhāraṇamātrkā:** The art of memorization or remembering through repetition. It is a technique used to memorize texts or other information.

50. **Auśadhasiddhiḥ:** The science of herbal medicine in Ayurveda, a traditional Indian system of medicine that uses herbs and natural remedies to treat various ailments.

51. **Bālakriḍanakādi:** The art of crafting games for children, nurturing and developing cognitive, motor and social skills

52. **Durodaram:** The art of playing the game of dice is a strategic and skillful activity that requires patience, focus, and calculated moves. It is an intriguing and exciting game that has been enjoyed for centuries.

53. **Vainayikī Vidyā:** The art of enforcing discipline is characterized by strictness, patience, and wisdom. It involves using appropriate methods and techniques to instill good behavior and cultivate virtues such as self-control and respect.

54. **Vaijayikī Vidyā:** The art of gaining victory is characterized by strategic planning, careful execution, and a deep understanding of one's opponents. It is a complex and dynamic art that requires patience, skill, and determination.

55. **Sārathyam:** It refers to charioteering or the art of driving chariots, which was an important skill in ancient warfare and transportation.

56. **Mārjanam:** It is an art of cleaning, which is an important aspect of maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in daily life.

57. **Sevā:** It is a voluntary service or work, which is seen as a way to cultivate virtues and selflessness in Indian culture.

58. **Taṇḍulakusumabalivikārah:** The intricate and reverential art of preparing offerings with rice and flowers for the divine, imbued with devotion, to express gratitude and honour to the divine.

59. **Devatātoṣaṇam:** It refers to worship or pleasing of deities, which is an important aspect of Hindu religious practice.

60. **Śukasārikāpralāpanam:** The fascinating and delicate art of training



birds to speak in human language, involving patience, skill, and persistence.



61. Sūdakarma: The art of cooking delicious and aromatic preparations, using a myriad of spices and techniques to create unique and tasty dishes.

62. Gandhayuktiḥ: Perfumery in Indian traditional knowledge is an exquisite art that involves blending of natural scents with precision and finesse. It combines the elements of chemistry and artistry to create aromatic masterpieces that have the power to enchant and delight the senses.



63. Kṛṣiḥ: The art of agriculture, horticulture and floriculture, utilizing sustainable and eco-friendly techniques to cultivate crops and nourish the land. It was a vital and revered practice, with a deep understanding of the natural world and the interconnectedness of all life.

64. Pāśupālyam: Animal husbandry is the skilled and careful management of domestic animals for food, fiber, and other products. It involves compassionate care, breeding, feeding, and sheltering to maintain the health and well-being of animals and optimize their production.



The advent of modern technology and globalization has resulted in the decline of traditional skills and practices related to these 64 arts. As a result of the lack of attention and insufficient recognition of these art forms, there has been a notable decline in people pursuing these arts. Lately, there has also been a renewed interest in reviving these ancient arts as people seek to reconnect with their cultural heritage and preserve their traditions. Recognizing this growing interest and the void that needs to be filled, we believe that this publication will be instrumental in bridging this knowledge gap.

In this context, the legend of Kṛṣṇa's mastery of Catuṣṣaṣṭikālā or the 64 arts serves as an exemplar of the significance of knowledge of these arts. It also accentuates the belief that exceptional talents should be nurtured and developed to their full potential. Therefore, the 64 Arts represent a fundamental element of Indian culture and testify to the abundant inheritance of abilities and practices that are crucial for a well-rounded individual. By rediscovering and practicing these age-old arts, we can reconnect with our cultural heritage, comprehend ourselves better, and attain a more profound understanding of our place in the world.

Scheme of Diacritical Marks

Transliteration Scheme

a	अ	ā	आ	i	इ	ī	ई
u	उ	ū	ऊ	ṛ	ऋ	ī	ॠ
lṛ	लृ	e	ए	ai	ऐ	o	ओ
au	औ	m̐	ं	ḥ	:		

k	क्	kh	ख	g	ग	gh	घ	ṇ	ङ
c	च्	ch	छ	j	ज	jh	झ	ṇ	ञ
ṭ	ट	ṭh	ठ	ḍ	ड	ḍh	ढ	n	ण
t	त्	th	थ	d	द	dh	ध	n	न
p	प्	ph	फ	b	ब	bh	भ	m	म्
y	य	r	र्	l	ल	v	व	ś	श
ṣ	ष्	s	स्	h	ह	kṣa	क्ष	jña	ज्ञ

Illustrations for transliteration

चरकसंहिता	carakasamhitā
सुश्रुत	suśruta
अष्टाङ्गहृदय	aṣṭāṅgahr̥daya
परीक्षा	parikṣā
ज्ञान	jñāna
प्रमाण	pramāṇa

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Epilogue	160
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Performing arts refer to various types of creative expressions that are meant to be performed in front of an audience. This encompasses a wide range of art forms, such as theatre, dance, music, magic, and games involving thread. Each of these art forms have their own unique techniques, styles, and traditions that require skilled performers who have honed their craft through years of training and practice. They are an essential part of human culture and have a rich history dating back centuries.

1. Gītam

Art of Singing

Gītam, the art of singing, holds a cherished place in Bhāratiya musical tradition, echoing ancient times and cultural richness. Rooted in the Sāmaveda, it blends heavenly songs with earthly rhythms, guiding musical wisdom. Gītam exemplifies the spirit of musical expression, transcending time and space.

In Indian classical music, singers rely on four important elements: Rāga, Tāla, Śruti, and Laya. Rāga is like the mood of the music, representing different feelings and times of the day or year. It's made up of specific patterns of notes that musicians use to express themselves creatively. Tāla is the rhythm of the music, guiding the timing and beats of a composition. It provides a framework for performers to follow, ranging from simple to complex patterns. Śruti is all about the pitch of the music, helping singers tune their voices accurately. It's crucial for creating the beautiful melodies of Rāgas. Laya is the tempo or speed of the music, governing how fast or slow a performance is. Together, these elements give singers everything they need to create enchanting and expressive music.

It must be noted that, classical music in India encompasses two main traditions: Hindustani classical music and Carnatic classical music. Hindustani classical music originated in North India, while Carnatic classical music originated in South India. Although they share common elements such as rāgas and tālas, each tradition has its own distinct repertoire, performance practices, and stylistic shades.

In Bhārata, classical music is also known for its many types of songs, like khayals, thumris, bhajans, kritis, and varnams. These compositions are passed down through generations within the Guru-Śiṣya Paramparā (teacher-disciple tradition) and serve as vehicles for musical exploration and expression.

We can thus heed that classical music in India is a philosophical art form that celebrates the complex chemistry of melody and rhythm, improvisation and composition, tradition and innovation. Through its eternal beauty and spiritual depth, it continues to mesmerize audiences and inspire musicians around the world.

1

गीतम् Gītam

Art of Singing



स्वरगं पदगं चैव तथा लयगमेव च ।
चेतोवधानगं चैव गेयं ज्ञेयं चतुर्विधम् ॥

2. Vādyam

Art of Playing Musical Instruments

Vādyam, the musical instruments grace the rhythm of Bhāratiya life, ornamenting social gatherings, cultural festivals, and sacred rituals with celestial fascination. They are associated with various deities, like Sri Krishna's Flute and Shiva's Damaru. Various instruments have been mentioned in ancient texts like the Vedas and epics such as the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata. The Nāṭyaśāstra by Bhārata Muni classifies instruments into categories like stringed, wind, percussion, and solid instruments.

In Indian classical music, a diverse range of instruments like Vīna, Sitar, Sarod, Violin, Flute, Shehnai, Tabla, and Mridangam play vital roles. Manufacturing these instruments requires expertise and understanding of acoustics, as outlined in the Nāṭyaśāstra. They select properly seasoned woods, natural reeds, and metals, crafting each element with care to produce instruments that echo the soulful melody of the universe.

Musicians transform these instruments into vessels of emotion, each requiring a unique touch to reveal its melodic secrets. String instruments like Sitar and Vīna invite fingers to pluck and stroke their strings, while wind instruments like Flute and Shehnai await the gentle breath of their players. Percussion instruments like Tabla and Mridangam demand rhythmic precision, with hands tapping out beats that resonate through the air. Each instrument follows its own path of mastery, yet all share a common bond with singing, requiring a deep connection between musician and melody. In Indian classical music, rāgas, tālas, laya, and śruti provide the framework for musical expression, shaping the flow and interpretation of music, and adding depth and richness to performances.

Through history, Indian music has evolved and adapted foreign influences, such as Persian instruments introduced during the Mughal period. Archaeological findings and ancient texts provide insights into the historical evolution of Indian musical instruments, showcasing their significance in various contexts like rituals, ceremonies, and battles depicted in epics like the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata.

Playing a musical instrument is like starting a special journey. It's about dedicating oneself to learning and respecting India's rich musical traditions. With a sincere practice and learning about music, one can not only improve their own skills but also help keep India's musical heritage alive for the future.

2

वाद्यम् Vādyam

Art of Playing Musical Instruments



घनं च विततं वाद्यं ततं सुषिरमेव च ।
कांस्यपुष्करतन्त्रीभिर्वेणुना च यथाक्रमम् ॥

3. Nṛtyam

Art of Dancing

Nṛtyam or Dance is a distinct part of Bhāratiya tradition. It tells stories and expresses emotions through graceful movements and facial expressions. Dance in India finds its roots deeply in the ancient text of Nāṭyaśāstra, a comprehensive treatise on the performing arts attributed to the sage Bharata Muni.

Classical Indian dance, regulated by the rules of the Nāṭyaśāstra and also Nandikeśvara's 'Abhinaya Darpaṇa', is distinct from folk dance for its adherence to precise guidelines. A performance's success lies in evoking emotions (rasa) through gestures (bhāva) with grace (Lāsyā), akin to worship and meditation. Nandikeśvara's treatise elaborates on 'Āṅgika-abhinaya', detailing gestures, postures, and movements. The Nāṭyaśāstra outlines a meticulous dance technique, featuring 108 basic units, varied stances, foot and hip movements, neck articulations, facial expressions, and symbolic hand gestures, illustrating the depth and complexity of classical Indian dance.

The Sangeet Natak Akademi recognizes eight Indian classical dance styles: Bharatanāṭyam, Kathak, Kathakali and Mohiniyattam, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Manipuri, and Sattriya.

These classical dance forms evolved various movements using the Abhinaya Darpaṇa as a guide. Similarly, Kathak developed Sampada, Odissi used Chauk, and Manipuri employed Agratala.

Indian dance comprises three elements: 'nṛtta' (rhythmic elements), 'nṛtya' (rhythm with expression), and 'nāṭya' (drama), conveying masculine 'Tāṇḍava' and feminine 'Lāsyā' aspects. In classical dance, the dancer's entire body, from feet to fingertips, undergoes rigorous training to express the nine rasas: Śṛṅgāra (Love), Hāsyā (Happiness), Karuṇa (Sympathy), Raudra (Anger), Vīra (Heroism), Bhayānaka (Fear), Bibhatsa (Disgust), Adbhuta (Wonder), and Śānta (Tranquil/Peace).

Through these technicalities and gracious attitude, when Indian classical dancers grace stages around the globe, they carry with them the legacy of a thousand years, symbolizing the spirit of a nation steeped in tradition and adorned with beauty.

3

नृत्यम् Nr̥tyam

Art of Dancing



करणान्यङ्गहाराश्च विभावो भाव एव च ।
अनुभावो रसाश्चेति संक्षेपो नृत्यसंग्रहः ॥

4. Nāṭakam

Art of Theatrics

Nāṭakam, revered as a sacred art form in ancient India, represents the soul of Indian culture and tradition. Its origins date back to the dawn of civilization, with the earliest mention found in the profound verses of the Śārīputraprakaraṇa by the venerable sage Aśvaghoṣa. Across the periods, Sanskrit drama unfurled, knitting stories of gods and mortals, love and loss, virtue and vice, echoing the essence of existence itself.

Nāṭaka is recognized as the highest form of dramatic composition, portraying historical events and personalities with an appearance of plausibility or probability. Bharatamuni asserts that a nāṭaka should personify numerous rasas and be brimming with Rasa throughout the performance.

The ten sacred forms of drama are Nāṭakam, Prakaraṇa, Anka, Dīma, Samavakāra, Bhāṇa, Vithī, Prahāsana, Īhāmṛga, and Utsrṣṭikāṅka, listed in Dhanañjaya's Daśarūpaka. These theatrical creations, from the majestic Nāṭakam to the delightful Prahāsana, each resonate with a distinct rasa, a divine essence of emotion. Through rigorous training, the actors instilled these rasas into their performances, invoking the very essence of the cosmos upon the sacred stage.

Throughout history, great poets such as Bhāsa, Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti and others have graced the world with their literary prowess, sculpting masterpieces like Abhijñānaśākuntala, Mṛcchakaṭika and several others. These jewels of Sanskrit drama illuminate the depths of human experience, transcending the boundaries of space and time to touch the hearts of generations in different languages across different cultures.

The traditional Sanskrit drama, holds immense significance and contribution to the evolution of Indian theatrical tradition. It is crucial to recognize and honour the profound impact Sanskrit drama has had on shaping the present-day Indian theatre. Serving as the cornerstone of Indian theatrical talent, Sanskrit drama has not only laid the foundation for diverse theatrical forms but also continues to enrich the cultural heritage of the nation. With every rise and fall of the curtains, the sacred stage becomes a platform for the profound narratives of human existence, echoing the harmonious melodies of the cosmos.

4

नाटकम् Nāṭakam

Art of Theatrics



नाटकं ख्यातवृत्तं स्यात् पञ्चसन्धिसमन्वितम् ॥

5. Vācanam

Art of Reading Aloud

The art of Vācana, which includes recitation, storytelling, and clarifying scriptures, holds deep cultural and spiritual significance in Indian tradition. Rooted in ancient wisdom, Vācana refers to the spoken word and includes various forms such as reciting, narrating, and discussing religious texts and stories. Vācana is not just about uttering words but about conveying philosophical meanings and emotions through vocal expression and dramatic delivery. It plays a vital role in preserving and transmitting knowledge, culture, and spirituality from generation to generation.

In Hindu tradition, Vācana comprises of diverse practices such as Vedic recitation, storytelling through Harikathā, Kathākālākṣepa, and Pravacana. Vedic recitation involves chanting sacred texts like the Vedas with precise pronunciation and rhythm, believed to have spiritual potency. Storytelling forms like Harikathā and Kathākālākṣepa combine narration, music, and mime to convey mythological tales and moral lessons to audiences. Pravacana involves the explanation of scriptures and spiritual teachings by knowledgeable Gurus to seekers and the public, aiming to inspire spiritual growth and moral conduct.

The practice of Vācana continues to flourish in modern times through various mediums like radio, television, and digital platforms, ensuring the eternal wisdom of ancient scriptures reaching wider audience. With this it can be seen that, though the scriptures are now available in the form of written texts, their principal authority still lies in orality.

Sanskrit is a beautiful and complete language, and the ancient texts are composed with multifaceted layers of symbolism. All ancient texts are the personification of the wisdom in Sanskrit literature passed down from sages over generations by the oral method of communication. The art of reading aloud not only preserves the essence of these texts but also helps to keep the tradition and culture alive.

Vācanam or the art of reading books aloud, thus, is an ancient Indian performing art that has stood the test of time. It served as a means of educating and entertaining the masses in ancient times. The tradition of reading aloud continues even today and is an important aspect of preserving the wisdom and culture of ancient India.

5

वाचनम् Vācanam

Art of Reading Aloud



शुद्धेनानन्यचित्तेन पठितव्यं प्रयत्नतः ।
न कार्यासक्तमनसा कार्यं स्तोत्रस्य वाचनम् ॥

6. Indrajālam

Art of creating Illusions

*I*ndrajālam, the art of Illusion, has been a significant part of Indian culture and heritage from time immemorial. The literal meaning of Indrajālam is creating an illusion to deceive the “Indiryā-s” or sense organs. Indrajālam, is referred to in Atharvavēda, and it was originally used as an art of entertainment where the magician creates an illusion as good as the real scenario.

Also, Indrajāla aimed to create illusions of natural phenomena like clouds, darkness, or fire to intimidate enemies. This concept is part of the traditional methods known as the Chaturupāyas, which include Sama (conciliation), Dāna (bribery), Daṇḍa (punishment), and Bedha (dissension), along with Māyā (deception), Upekṣā (neglect), and Indrajāla (magic) according to the Agnipurāṇa. These methods were employed by kings for tactical dealings with allies, enemies, and their own people.

Māyā, the practice of deception through magic or yogic powers, was used to create illusions to deceive adversaries. Meanwhile, Upekṣā advocated not intervening in unjustifiable conflicts, and Indrajāla focused on instilling fear in enemies through magical illusions. These concepts, mentioned in ancient texts like the R̥gvēda and Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, illustrate the multifaceted strategies employed by rulers in ancient India for governance and warfare, incorporating elements of diplomacy, coercion, and mysticism.

This concept of delusion is at the heart of Indrajāla, and the art form can leave people spellbound through various means. One of the most famous exponents of this art was Meghanāda, the son of Rāvaṇa, who possessed supreme abilities in the art of magic. He used his skills during the war, making it very difficult for them to defeat him.

Later, Magic evolved to become a form of professional art that was used to entertain people. However, the practice of magic was not limited to entertainment purposes only. It also brought peace, health, courage, and other positive effects.

The art of Indrajālam has been practiced in India for centuries and is often performed at fairs, festivals, and other cultural events. It is a highly respected art form that requires years of practice and dedication to master. Despite the challenges of modernization and changing tastes, Indrajālam remains a cherished form of entertainment throughout the world.

6

इन्द्रजालम् Indrajālam

Art of creating Illusions



इन्द्रियाणामावरकम् इन्द्रजालं प्रचक्षते ॥

7. Hastalāghavam

Art of Dexterity of the Hands

*H*astalāghavam literally means dexterity of hands. Any work that involves doing it with hands and which are completed with such speed and skill that onlookers would wonder and appreciate is called as Hastalāghavam. And when seen from a broader perspective any work considered to as very difficult or impossible is done with such ease, finesse and speed that others are left wondering is known as Hastalāghavam or dexterity of the hands.

Dexterity of hands is associated with any art form like playing a musical instrument, creating an art, dance, cooking or involved in highly precision work performed with hands, and is also associated with stealing skills.

In the ancient play "Mālavikāgnimitram" by the poet Kālidasa, there's a scene where Queen Irāvati compares King Agnimitra to a thief when she finds out about his secret romance with Mālavikā. This comparison suggests that during that time, there was a great admiration for the skill and stealthiness of thieves. Just like thieves who moved swiftly and silently to achieve their goals, the king's actions in his love affair were seen as clever and cunning, reflecting the admiration for such abilities in society. This shows how even in ancient times, people appreciated and respected traits like quickness and skill, even if they were sometimes used in less noble pursuits.

As illustrated in Purānā-s the divine craftsman Viśwakarma was an extremely talented architect who built amazing structures for the gods, like fancy palaces and powerful weapons quickly and skilfully which can be considered as Hastalāghavam. Viśwakarma is an example of how hastalāghavam can be a positively used for the betterment of the world at large.

Several times, Hastalāghavam has been associated with performing arts, as well as with unlawful activities such as theft and robbery. While the latter should never be celebrated, the former continues to be an important aspect of Indian culture and heritage. The ability to perform tasks with speed, finesse, and grace is highly valued in various forms of art and has been passed down from generation to generation.

7

हस्तलाघवम् Hastalāghavam

Art of Dexterity of the Hands



सन्धिं छित्वा चौर्यकृतिर्ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

8. Sūtrakrīḍā

Art of Playing with Threads

Sūtrakrīḍā is a distinctive and traditional art form that revolves around the playful manipulation of threads through a range of creative techniques, which continues to be prevalent in India. The term "Sūtrakrīḍā" is derived from two Sanskrit words: "Sūtra," which refers to thread, and "Kīḍā," meaning play. This skilful art form can be utilized to tell stories or produce stunning decorative artworks. Sūtrakrīḍā can be likened to an amalgamation of string games, finger puppetry, and shadow theatre, with its unique characteristics and rich cultural significance.

Sūtrakrīḍā has a rich history in ancient texts such as the Ṛgvēda, Mahābhārata, and Rāmāyaṇa. The Mahābhārata describes Arjuna's impressive skills in creating complex designs with threads during his wedding ceremony. In the Rāmāyaṇa, the demon king Ravana uses his expertise in Sūtrakrīḍā to impress Rama's wife, Sita.

Sūtrakrīḍā utilizes threads of diverse colours and textures to create difficult patterns and designs. This art form goes beyond producing decorative pieces like rugs and wall hangings. It can also extend to functional items like clothing and accessories. Incorporating threads into storytelling is another facet of Sūtrakrīḍā which involves finger puppetry or shadow theatre, where the use of threads creates the impression of movement for the puppets or actors. Beyond its entertainment value, Sūtrakrīḍā is also regarded as a meditative pursuit. The repetitive actions of manipulating threads can aid in focusing and soothing the mind, making it a valuable resource for alleviating stress and fostering relaxation.

While string play is a universal activity, and Sūtrakrīḍā fills it with a heightened artistic flair that is distinctively Indian. Despite its rich cultural heritage and historical significance, Sūtrakrīḍā faces the risk of fading away in the modern era due to the dominance of technology and contemporary forms of entertainment. Nonetheless, endeavours to uphold this art form continues, through exhibitions, workshops, and social media platforms that help promote awareness about this invaluable cultural legacy.

8

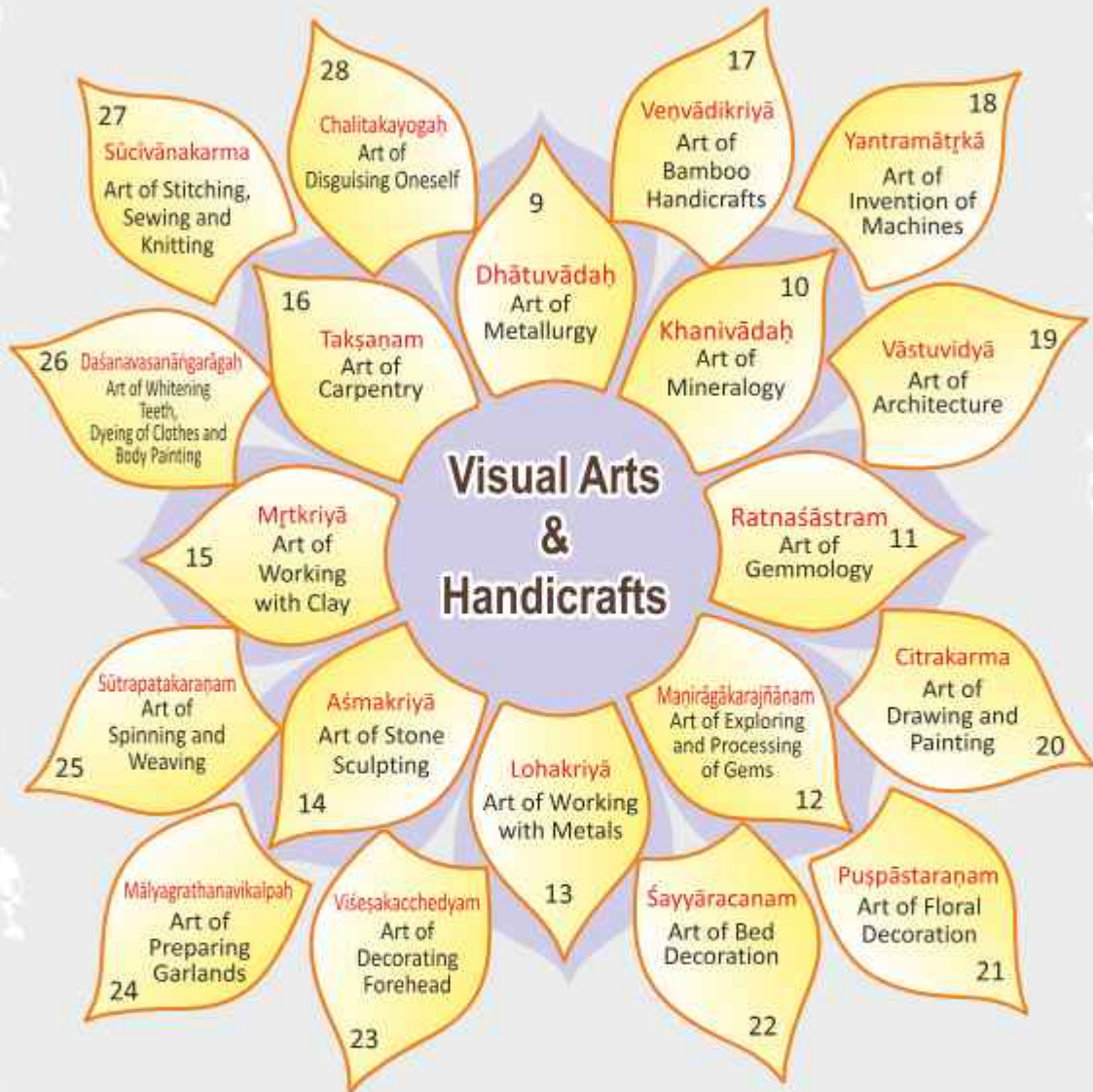
सूत्रक्रीडा Sūtrakrīḍā

Art of Playing with Threads



सूत्ररज्वादिना क्रीडाविज्ञानन्तु कला स्मृता ॥





Visual arts and handicrafts are two separate genres of art that depict distinct forms of creative expression. Visual arts involve various forms of art that appeal to the eye, while handicrafts refer to the production of handmade objects using traditional techniques and skills. By creating and appreciating visual arts and handicrafts, people can explore their cultural identities and deepen their understanding of the world around them.

9. Dhātuvādaḥ

Art of Metallurgy

Ancient Indian civilization had a rich tradition of Metallurgy or the art of extracting and working with metals that dates back to several millennia. R̥gvēda mentions divine artisans and deities associated with metallurgy, such as Tvaṣṭṛ, the divine craftsman, who is credited with creating celestial objects and bestowing metallurgical knowledge upon humanity. Artefacts, Tools, weapons, and ornaments, unearthed at various archaeological sites show that ancient Indian societies began mastering the art of alloying metals, particularly copper and tin, to create bronze and indicating a well-developed metallurgical industry capable of producing high-quality bronze objects for both utilitarian and ritualistic purposes. Ancient Indian metallurgists learned to extract metals from its ores using charcoal-fuelled furnaces and employ various techniques such as forging, welding, and heat treatment to shape metals into tools, weapons, and agricultural implements. The widespread use of iron revolutionized agriculture, warfare, and trade, leading to significant socio-economic changes in ancient Indian society. Gold and silver were considered precious and were used to fashion exquisite ornaments worn by both men and women in ancient India. They played an integral role in shaping ancient Indian societies, economies, and cultures, leaving behind a rich legacy of craftsmanship and artistic expression.

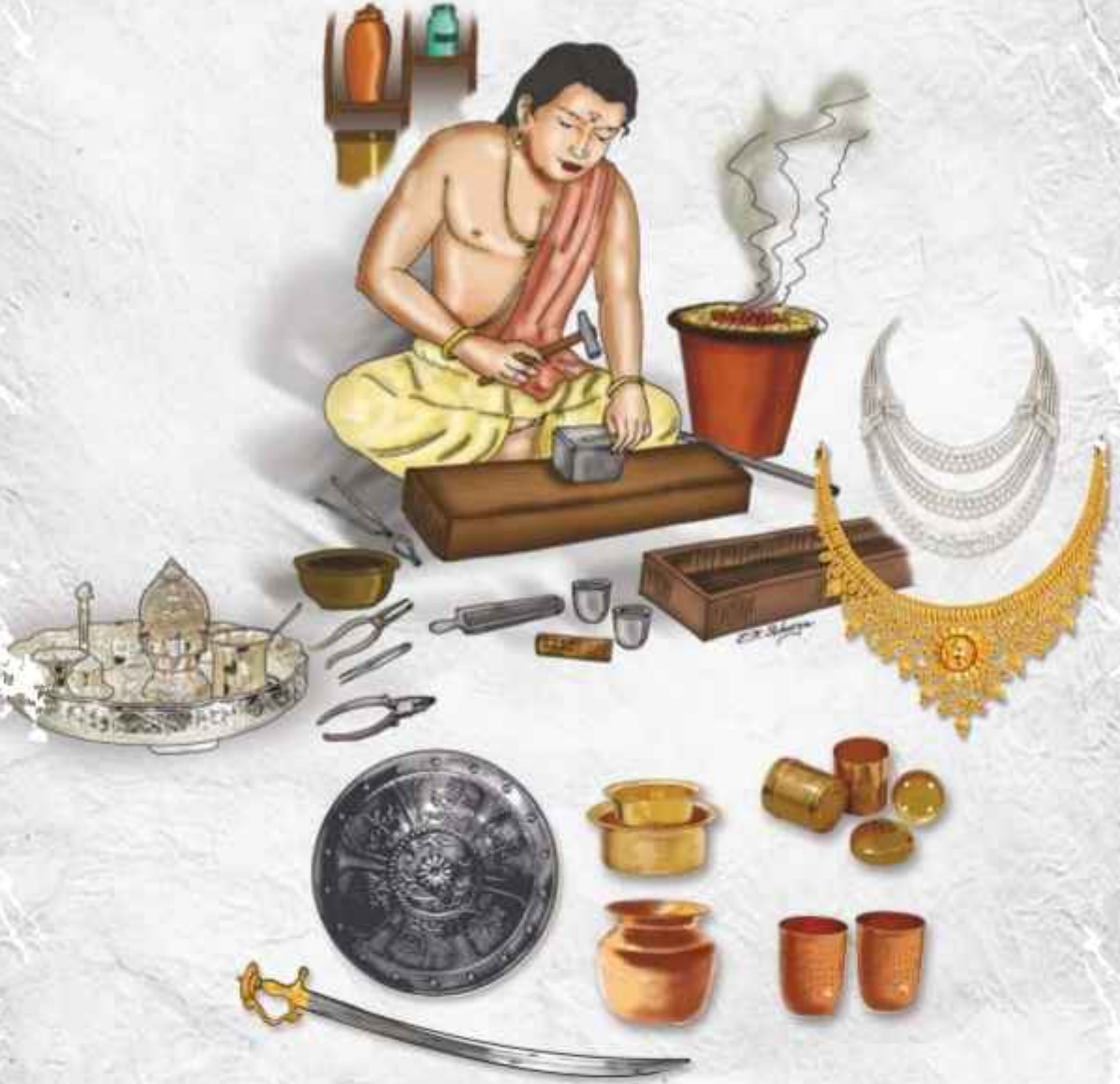
Metallurgy was divided into two main branches: Lauha-Vidyā, which focused on the extraction and working with iron, and Rasa-Vidyā, which dealt with the extraction and purification of various metals and minerals. Ancient Indian scholars and scientists made significant contributions to the field of metallurgy through their scientific treatises and texts. The Arthashastra, contains detailed descriptions of metallurgical processes, mining techniques, and state regulation of metal industries. The Rasaratnākara, authored by the alchemist Nāgārjuna, explores the transmutation of metals and preparation of alloys, reflecting the alchemical pursuits prevalent in ancient India.

The royal patronage during the Mauryan and Gupta empires, promoted metallurgy through technological innovations and artistic excellence, evidenced by the exquisite bronze sculptures, coins, and architectural embellishments produced during this era, 'The Iron Pillar of Delhi', being an apt example. As one of the 64 arts, metallurgy embodies the fusion of science, art, tradition, and innovation—a testament to human ingenuity, creativity, and cultural diversity.

9

धातुवादः Dhātuvādaḥ

Art of Metallurgy



पाषाणधात्वादिदृतिस्तद्धस्मीकरणं कला ॥

10. Khanivādaḥ

Art of Mineralogy

*K*hanivāda or Mineralogy, the study of minerals and their properties, was highly valued among the 64 arts in ancient India. Skilled individuals known as Khanivādaka-s practised this art. Mineralogy deals with the study of minerals, their physical and chemical properties, crystal structures, and occurrences in nature. It is a multidisciplinary field that draws from various other sciences such as chemistry, physics, geology, and environmental science. The study of minerals was also closely linked to astrology and the use of gemstones for astrological purposes. Viśṇu Purāṇa, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and other Purāṇa-s contain references to minerals, gems, and precious metals, highlighting their symbolic, ritualistic and cosmological significance.

The references to minerals and their uses can be found in ancient Indian texts such as the Rāmāyaṇa, Āyurvēda texts, and Indian alchemy. The Caraka Saṃhitā and Suśruta Saṃhitā also describe the use of minerals and metals in Ayurvedic treatments, such as using gold to treat heart diseases, silver for eye diseases, and iron for anaemia. Indian alchemy, or Rasaśāstra, includes the study of minerals and metals in the form of bhasma (ash), which are used for medicinal purposes.

The knowledge of minerals was not limited to their aesthetic and therapeutic uses but also extended to their economic significance. Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, provides insights into the mining and trade of minerals in ancient India. The importance of minerals in the economy of the state was well-recognized, and the accessibility and profitability of mines were given great consideration.

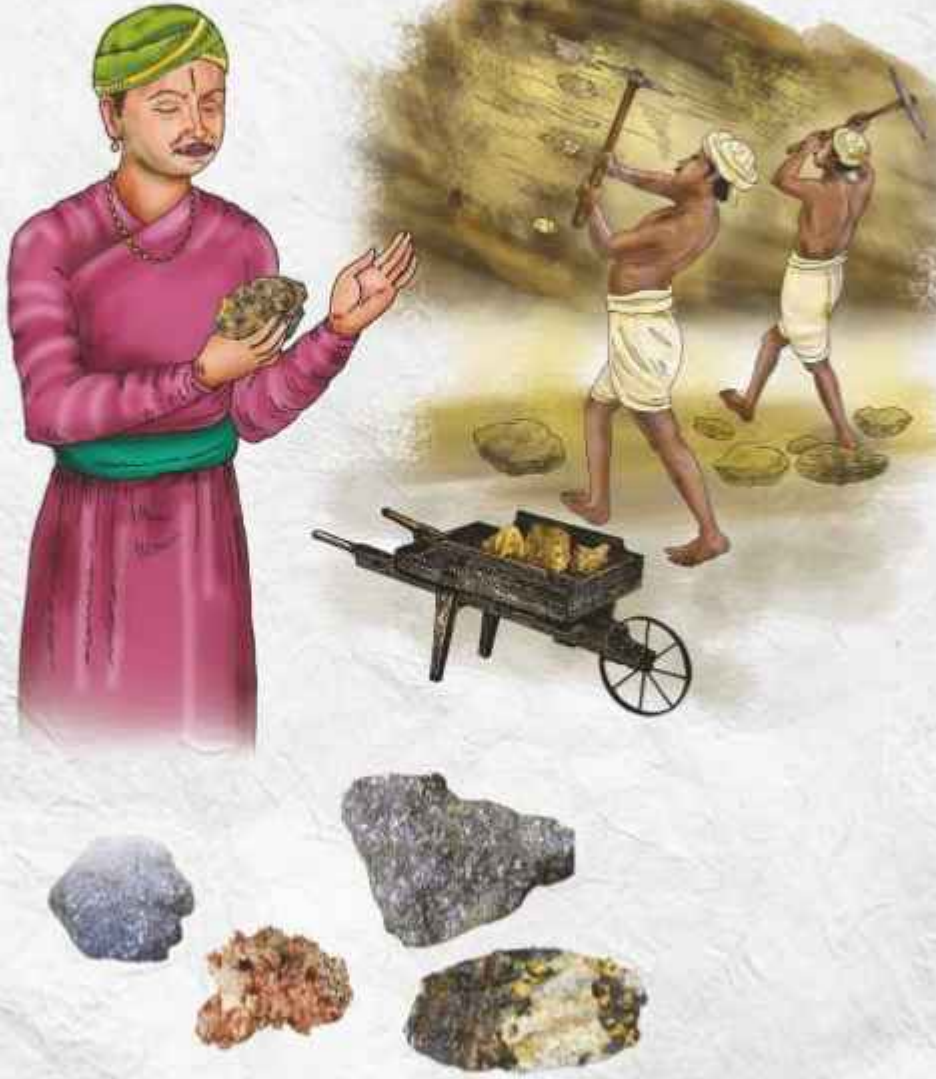
Minerals have been used for their aesthetic value in the visual arts and handicrafts. Gemstones, for instance, have been used in jewellery and other forms of decorative arts. The colours, textures, and patterns of minerals have also inspired artists and designers, making them an essential component of various art forms.

Through empirical observation, scientific inquiry, and artistic expression, ancient Indians cultivated a deep appreciation for minerals and their role in shaping human civilization. As one of the 64 arts, Khanivāda exemplified the synthesis of knowledge, skill, creativity, and cultural heritage that characterized ancient Indian society's quest for enlightenment and prosperity.

10

खनिवादः Khanivādaḥ

Art of Mineralogy



खनिविश्लेषणज्ञानं कला सञ्जन्तु तत्स्मृतम् ॥

11. Ratnaśāstram

Art of Gemmology

Ratnaśāstram, the science of Gemmology, has been an integral part of Indian culture and history for ages. It is an interdisciplinary science that involves the study of gemstones, including their physical and chemical properties, origins, classifications, and values. *Ratnaśāstram* was highly valued for its practical, spiritual, and symbolic significance. Gemstones are prized for their healing properties, believed to possess therapeutic benefits for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Ancient Indians revered gemstones for their beauty, rarity, durability, and metaphysical properties, considering them auspicious and endowed with divine energy. From the opulent crowns of the rulers to the auspicious talismans worn by common people, gemstones have been an embodiment of power, prosperity, and beauty.

Through ancient texts, such as the *Ratnapariksha*, *Garuda Purāṇa*, *Brihat Samhitā*, and *Maṇimāla*, scholars and practitioners have disseminated knowledge of gemmology, shaping its growth and development over millennia. Gemstones are considered auspicious and endowed with mystical properties, making them integral to religious ceremonies, astrological practices, and personal adornment. For example, the ruby is associated with the sun and is believed to bring success, health, and wealth to the wearer. The pearl, associated with the moon, is believed to bring peace, harmony, and prosperity. Similarly, emerald is associated with Mercury and is believed to bring intelligence, communication, and creativity.

Apart from its cultural and astrological significance, gemstones have also been a significant industry in India for over 2000 years. The *Arthaśāstra* talks about the importance of using minerals and gems for the greater good of the country. In fact, Kautilya even recommended the appointment of a Director of Mines to oversee the production of minerals and gems! During the period of Vijayanagara Empire, gemstones were traded in dedicated markets known as "ratnakara bazaar" or gemstone markets.

Ratnaśāstram, or Gemmology, played a vital role in ancient Indian civilization, exemplifying a holistic approach to understanding gemstones' physical, metaphysical, and aesthetic qualities making it an inseparable part of India's cultural heritage.

11

रत्नशास्त्रम् Ratnaśāstram

Art of Gemmology



वेधादिसदसज्ज्ञानं रत्नानाञ्च कला स्मृता ॥

12. Maṇirāgākarajñānam

Art of Exploring and Processing of Gems

Maṇirāgākarajñānam which can be split as *Mani-rāga-ākara-jñānam* translates to the knowledge of 'Colour and shape of the Gemstones'. *Maṇirāgākarajñānam* covers knowledge not only of the physical properties and characteristics of gemstones but also of their sources, processing techniques, and artistic applications. This expertise involves understanding the geological formations and environments in which gemstones are found, the methods of mining and extraction used to obtain them, and the processes involved in shaping and enhancing their beauty.

Maṇirāgākarajñānam involves the extraction of the rough mineral rock and further processing based on its intended use. This includes cutting, shaping, polishing, and enhancing gemstones to maximize their beauty and value. It also involves knowledge of the treatments and enhancements used to improve the appearance or durability of gemstones.

Lapidarists plan the gemstone cut based on its intended use and the mineral's refractive properties. Special tools are used to cut and shape the mineral rock, which is then polished to bring out its natural beauty. Finally, the gemstone's quality is evaluated by assessing its colour, clarity, cut, carat weight, and other factors affecting its value.

Ancient Indian lapidaries and craftsmen honed their skills in mining, cutting, polishing, and setting gemstones, developing techniques to enhance their beauty and value. This knowledge expanded as trade networks flourished, enabling the exchange of gemmological expertise and materials across regions.

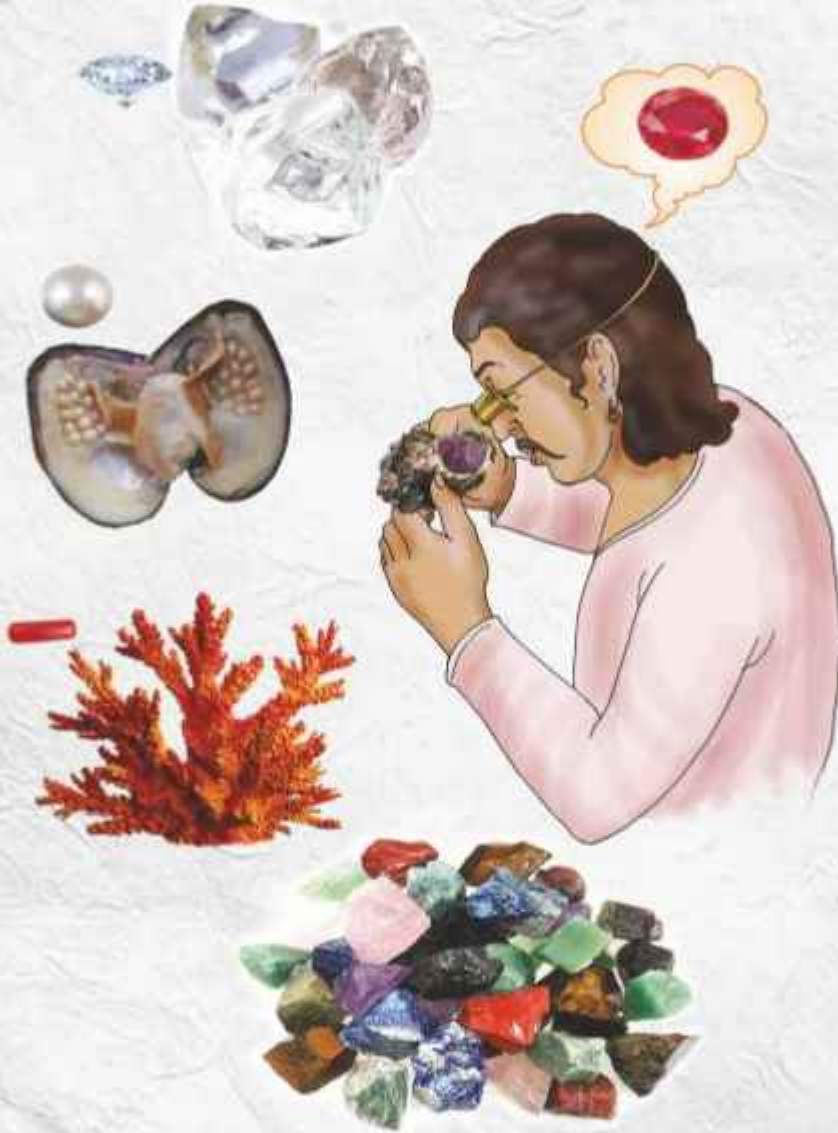
Maṇirāgākarajñānam is mentioned in various ancient texts of India, such as the *Agni Purāṇa*, *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, and *Maṇimālā*. These texts serve as valuable resources for lapidarists and gemmologists, offering insights into ancient lapidary techniques, aesthetic principles, and cultural traditions surrounding gemstones in ancient India.

Maṇirāgākarajñānam is thus a complex art and science requiring knowledge of geology, mineralogy, lapidary techniques, and the ability to evaluate the quality of gemstones. Being an important Kala among the ancient 64 arts of India, *Maṇirāgākarajñānam* –the Indian Lapidary tradition, which has been passed down from generation to generation has been acknowledged globally as one of the finest arts.

12

मणिरागाकरज्ञानम् Maṇirāgākarajñānam

Art of Exploring
and Processing of Gems



मुक्ताविद्रुमवज्रेन्द्रवैदूर्यस्फटिकादयः ।
चक्षुष्या मणयः शीता लेखना विषसूदनाः ॥

13. Lohakriyā

Art of Working with Metals

*M*etal works in ancient India were crucial to the country's rich cultural heritage. The art of Lohakriyā involves working with iron and other metals, such as copper and brass, to create various objects of utility and beauty. It includes various techniques such as casting, forging, soldering, and enamelling. In ancient times, metalworkers were highly skilled artisans who created objects ranging from weapons to household items. Metal was also used extensively for ornamental purposes, creating beautiful sculptures and complex jewellery.

Ancient Indian metallurgists developed sophisticated techniques for extracting metals from ores, refining them into high-quality alloys, and shaping them into intricate designs. This knowledge expanded as trade routes flourished, facilitating the exchange of metalworking techniques and materials with neighbouring regions and civilizations.

Lohakriyā also included the art of 'Damascening', which involved inlaying one metal into another to create designs and patterns used in decorating swords, daggers, and other weapons. The metal smelting process involved using specific herbs and treatments to convert iron into steel. The blacksmiths used techniques of forging and casting to create decorative and functional items.

Rasaratnākara, Agastya Saṃhitā and Śilpa Śāstrā-s provide guidelines for metalworking artisans, including principles of design, proportion, and craftsmanship. The Viṣṇu Dharmōttara Purāṇa provides instructions for creating specific metal objects such as images of deities, lamps, and vessels. In addition, the use of metals such as gold and silver are mentioned in the treatise of Arthaśāstra by Kauṭilya. Evidence of ancient metal works can be seen in the various archaeological sites found throughout the country. The surviving bronze and copper figures from the Gupta period, such as the 'Sultanganj Buddha', serve as a great witness to the exquisite craftsmanship of ancient Indian metal workers. From hunting tools to building materials, metals played a vital role in the development of ancient Indian civilization.

Lohakriyā is a multifaceted art form that has played an essential role in the cultural heritage of India and has paved way for the creation of beautiful and intricate pieces of art. Today, metal sculptures continue to be popular and are often displayed in museums, galleries, and public spaces around the world.

13

लोहक्रिया Lohakriyā

Art of Working with Metals



लोहं तिक्तस्सं शीतं मधुरं तुवरं गुरु ॥

14. Aśmakriyā

Art of Stone Sculpting

Aśmakriyā, the ancient art of stone sculpting, stands as evidence to the imagination and artistic competence of ancient Indian craftsmen. Throughout history, Indians have been celebrated for their mastery of various crafts, including metalwork, pottery, weaving, and, notably, stone sculpting. *Aśmakriyā*, thus occupies a significant position among the 64 arts of ancient India, reflecting the cultural, architectural, and artistic heritage of the civilization.

Stone sculpting involves the meticulous carving and shaping of stones to fashion exquisite designs, sculptures, and architectural marvels. From humble household items to majestic temples and stupas, stone art finds diverse applications in Indian culture. The *Vēdā-s* document the use of stones in the construction of sacrificial altars and religious edifices. Stones were meticulously categorized based on their colour, age, and quality, with artisans selecting from a range of stone types, each with varying degrees of hardness, for their creations.

Ancient Indian scriptures, such as the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, offer precise guidelines for stone selection and craftsmanship, detailing the characteristics and defects to consider when working with stones. Additionally, the *Śilpa Śāstra* provides comprehensive insights into the use of stone in sculpture, temple architecture, and iconography.

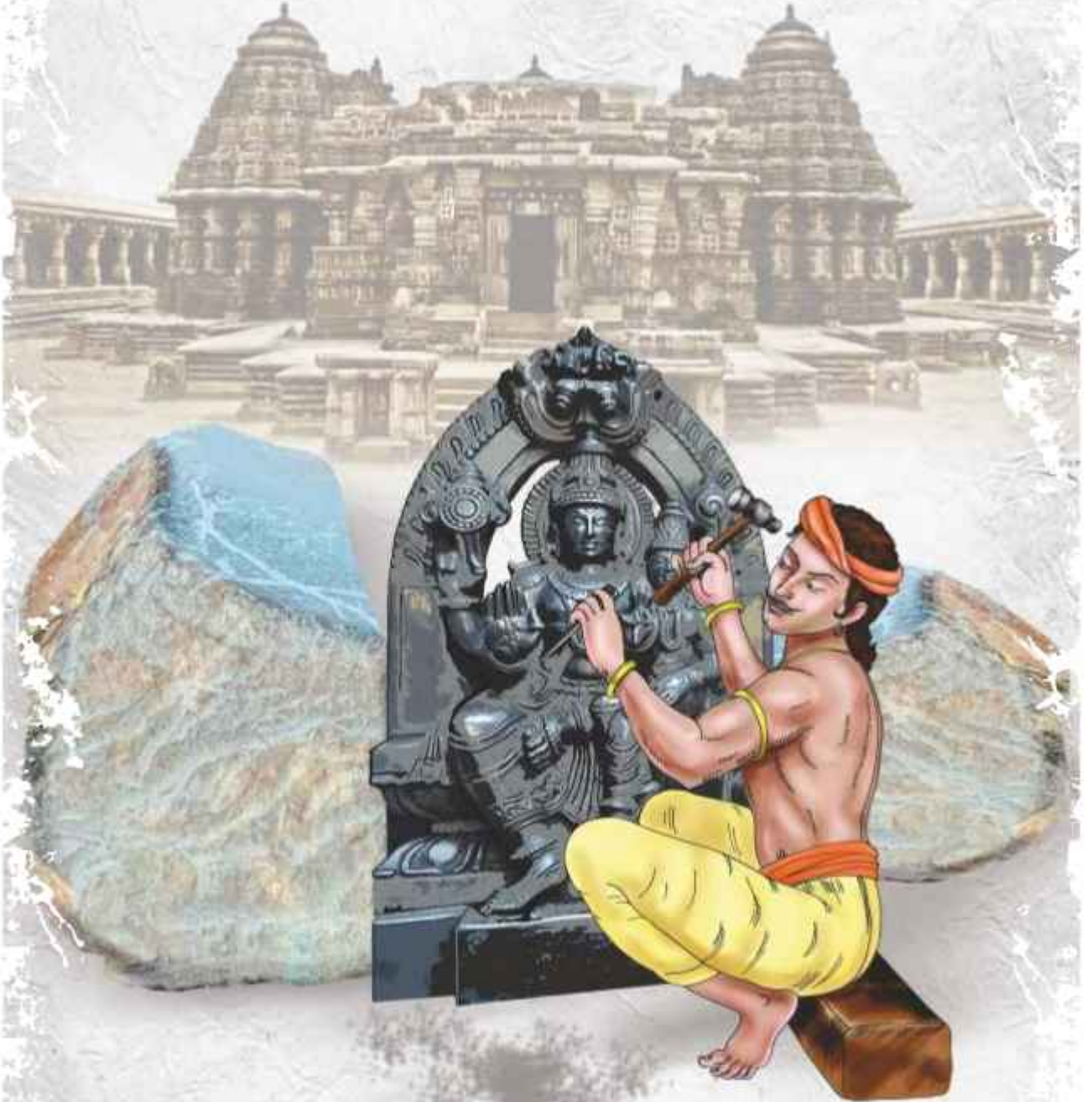
The mastery of stonework techniques facilitated the creation of elaborate architectural structures, including rock-cut caves, temple structures, and monumental sculptures, demonstrating advancements in engineering and craftsmanship. The awe-inspiring rock-cut caves of Ajanta and Ellora, and many temples across India stand as enduring testaments to the exceptional skill and artistry of Indian stone sculptors. Stone art adorns pillars, walls, and architectural marvels, showcasing exclusive designs and architectural brilliance.

Today, *Aśmakriyā* – stone sculpting continues to be a cherished tradition in Indian culture, passed down through generations. Its intricate designs, stunning sculptures, and magnificent architectural achievements are not only a source of national pride but also captivate visitors from around the world, serving as a testament to the enduring legacy of Indian craftsmanship and artistic excellence.

14

अश्मक्रिया Aśmakriyā

Art of Stone Sculpting



पाषाणैर्मूर्तिकरणे ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

15. Mr̥tkriyā

Art of Working with Clay

Mr̥tkriyā, or the art of clay working, occupies a pivotal role in India's cultural legacy, tracing back several millennia. Throughout history, clay has served as a fundamental medium for both artistic expression and practical utility. The artefacts unearthed from Indus Valley sites showcase the advanced skills developed by early artisans over four thousand years ago.

Beyond pots, dishes and sculptures, clay was also fashioned into beads, utensils, and an assortment of other items. The architectural application of clay was considered an important innovation that revolutionised construction activities in ancient times. Elements like clay tiles and bricks used in the construction of ancient buildings, tanks, dams, swimming pools, temples etc., reinforce the importance of clay work in construction. Clay seals, bearing inscriptions and animal motifs, unearthed during excavations, reflect the administrative and commercial uses of clay work in the Indus Valley Civilization.

Clay working is also associated with many rituals described in the *Purāṇa*-s involving clay idols which are used in worship and are often immersed in bodies of water after the festivities, which is especially common in celebrations like Ganesha Chaturthi and Durga Puja today. Certain *yajnas* (ritual sacrifices) described in the *Purāṇa*-s require specific types of altars, some of which included components made of clay. Clay is often mentioned in a symbolic context for its purifying properties. As per the rituals described in the *Purāṇa*-s, clay might have been used in various forms, from simple spots or designs on the body to more complex ritualistic uses.

The process involved in traditional clay working starts with obtaining the clay from suitable sources and then preparing it for the required application. It is further shaped on the rotating wheel using techniques like pinching, coiling, and slab building. It is then dried, baked in fire and glazed before giving it a final finishing and colour as required.

Mr̥tkriyā or Clay working is thus an art requiring skill and patience, which allows for creative expression through various techniques and finishes, making it a versatile and enduring art form practised by artisans around the world.

15

मृत्क्रिया Mr̥tkriyā

Art of Working with Clay



मृत्तिकाकाष्ठपाषाणधातुभाण्डादिसक्रिया ॥

16. Takṣaṇam

Art of Carpentry

*T*akṣaṇam or Wood carving, has long been a foundation of Indian craftsmanship, tracing its roots back to ancient times. This art involves meticulously shaping wood into elaborate designs and patterns, resulting in both beautiful and utilitarian objects. Historically, carpenters, known as Takṣaka, were esteemed artisans alongside blacksmiths, ironsmiths, and masons, forming an essential part of the artisan community responsible for some of the country's most remarkable art pieces.

The earliest mention of wood carving in India appear in the R̥gVēda, which references carpenters and highlights the longstanding presence of this art form. Notably, the intricately designed chariots used by kings in warfare, as described in epic tales like the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, showcase the advanced skill level of ancient Indian carpenters. Ancient Indian temples and palaces often featured extensive use of wood. Wood was the principal material in the construction of early Hindu temples before the widespread use of stone.

The wooden structures of the Kerala 'Tharavad homes' and the 'Havelis' in Rajasthan and Gujarat showcase exquisitely carved ceilings and doors adorned with stunning designs, from floral motifs to geometric patterns. Wood was most commonly used for making domestic items such as beds, stools, carts, and tools. Artisans employed various woodworking techniques including carving, inlay work, and joinery, to produce items that were both sturdy and artistically adorned. Many temples in regions like Karnataka and Odisha housed wooden idols of deities, intricately carved and often painted or gilded. Boat and Ship making is another fine example of the craftsmanship and engineering skills of our carpenters.

The choice of wood was based on its availability, durability, and traditional associations with certain qualities. The motifs and designs used in woodwork—ranging from geometric patterns to elaborate depictions of deities—reflected India's rich symbolism and cultural narratives. From practical applications to spiritual expressions, the legacy of Takṣaṇam continues to influence modern craftsmanship. Even today, it remains as an integral part of India's cultural heritage, celebrated for its historic significance and enduring beauty.

16

तक्षणम् Takṣaṇam

Art of Carpentry



द्रवाणाञ्चैव सर्वेषां शुद्धिरुत्प्लवनं स्मृतम् ।
प्रोक्षणं संहतानाञ्च दारवाणाञ्च तक्षणम् ॥

17. Veṇvādikriyā

Art of Bamboo Handicrafts

*V*ṇvādikriyā, is the venerable art of bamboo handicraft. Across millennia, this craft has not only adorned homes and temples but also served vital roles in day to day construction, adding a layer of significance to its cultural and practical importance. From the iconic flute of Lord Krishna to the sturdy huts in the āśrama-s, references to bamboo's abundance, uniqueness and adaptability can be found in several texts right from the vedic period. Also, that Bamboo's natural hollow structure made it an ideal material for crafting musical instruments, offering resonance and versatility.

The significance of bamboo handicrafts resonates through ancient Indian literature, including epics like the Rāmāyaṇa in which, bamboo baskets feature prominently, such as Sītā carrying her belongings and Śravaṇa Kumāra carrying his blind parents as he fulfils his filial duties.

India's abundant bamboo forests have long provided a rich resource for crafting a diverse array of items, ranging from practical household goods to intricate works of art. From sturdy baskets to complex furniture and decorative pieces, bamboo's strength and versatility have shaped Indian lifestyles and livelihoods, particularly within tribal communities where it has served as a vital resource for sustenance and commerce for generations. Application of Bamboo also extends to the navigation of waterways by bamboo made rafts for which they are used even to this date.

Across generations, the mastery of bamboo crafting has been meticulously passed down, preserving this cherished tradition for the generations to come. Today, as India embraces sustainable construction practices, bamboo's eco-friendly properties and structural integrity continue to shine, offering a beacon of hope in a world grappling with environmental challenges. Veṇvādikriyā, with its dual identity as both a revered art and a practical construction technique, stands as a testimony to India's rich heritage and ingenuity. As artisans weave their stories into every bamboo creation, they pay homage to an art form that transcends time, enriching lives and landscapes with its enduring beauty and utility.

17

वेण्वादिक्रिया Venvādikriyā

Art of Bamboo Handicrafts



वेण्वादिवाद्यकृतिज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

18. Yantramātrkā

Art of Invention of Machines

*Y*antramātrkā, or the invention of devices and machines, is a field that has been in existence in India for centuries. The ancient texts of India reveal that India was one of the most advanced civilizations when it came to science and technology and the invention of various devices called yantra-s, was also considered an art. Archaeologists during the excavation of Mehrgarh revealed evidence of bow drills used in dentistry that the healers may have used in order to cure tooth disorders back in 7000 BCE.

The yantra-s invented during those times were categorized into two main types: Sajīva, which were machines that were run by animate objects, such as horses, bulls, buffaloes, camels, and so on, and Nirjīva, which were machines that were run without animate objects, such as water currents and winds. Nirjīva is probably the closest version of modern-day machines.

From the point of view of practical applications, Yantramātrkā further classified machines as Yānayantra – for transportation etc., Udayantra – for irrigation etc., and Saṅgrāmayantra for warfare or combat. Reference to Several examples for these types of yantra-s can be found in our epics, like the Puśpaka-Vimana of Ravana, the water mechanism in the moat around Lanka, the different mechanisms to hurl Astra-s and Śāstrā-s used in the battlefield etc.

Ancient texts on astronomy, such as Brāhma-sphuṭa-siddhānta, created in 628 CE, considered one of the most important astronomical texts of ancient India, discussed at length about astronomical instruments. These include a variety of clocks, clepsydrae, gnomons (śāṅku), and several technical instruments for measurement. Upon testing today, it is evident that many of the ideas and instruments proposed by ancient scientists are theoretically correct.

Yantramātrkā represents the integration of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics disciplines into traditional arts. It underscores the importance of holistic learning, where students develop both technical skills and creative thinking abilities. The inventions and devices created during those times laid the foundation for our modern technology. These discoveries and advancements have helped to shape the world we live in today and continue to inspire future generations.

18

यन्त्रमातृका Yantramātrkā

Art of Invention of Machines



घशाद्यनेकयन्त्राणां वाद्यानान्तु कृतिः कला ॥

19. Vāstuvidyā

Architecture

Vāstuvidyā is an advanced and traditional science of architecture that has flourished in India since antiquity. It represents a unique blend of mathematical precision, artistic expression, and astrological insights, offering comprehensive guidelines on site selection, building orientation, spatial arrangement, and adherence to cultural norms to achieve harmonious and impactful architectural outcomes. The term "vāstu" refers broadly, in ancient texts such as Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, to houses, buildings, grounds, and other constructions like bridges and lakes, while the Purāṇa-s extend its meaning to include towns, temples, palaces, forts, and monasteries.

According to the Matsya purāṇa, the genesis of Vāstuvidyā is attributed to Lord Viṣṇu in his Matsya avatar, who imparted this profound knowledge to Manu, the first human. Mānasāra, one of the most important treatises on Vāstuvidyā, provides detailed guidance on architectural design discussing various construction techniques, suitable materials, and the strategic placement of architectural features such as windows, doors, and altars to create spaces that are not only functional but also auspicious and conducive to well-being.

Vastuvidya, incorporates a set of core principles that harmonize architectural design with natural and cosmological elements. At the heart of Vastuvidya is the concept of the Pañchabhūta-s or the five essential elements—Earth (Prithvi), Water (Jal), Air (Vāyu), Fire (Agni), and Space (Ākāsha). These elements are balanced within a building's structure to align with nature, promoting the well-being of its occupants.

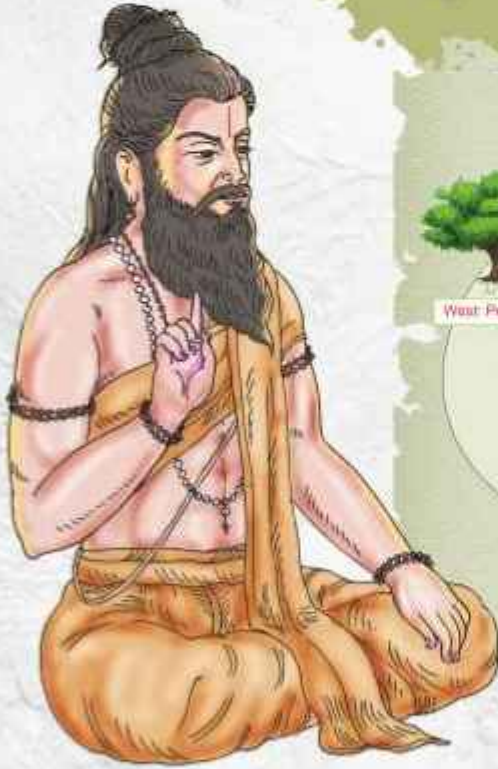
The architectural grandeur of ancient India, evident in its temples, forts, and Buddhist stupas, showcases the highly developed practice of Vāstuvidyā. The enduring structures of civilizations such as Mohenjo-Daro and Dwaraka, along with other ancient temples, water systems, storage facilities, and landscaped gardens, are a testament to the expertise of Vāstu practitioners. These structures continue to captivate with their beauty and architectural brilliance.

As Vāstuvidyā evolves with modern architectural practices, it remains a testament to India's rich cultural heritage and its quest for harmony between human existence and the larger cosmos.

19

वास्तुविद्या Vāstuvidyā

Architecture



येन यत्रैव चाक्रान्तं स तत्रैवाभवत् पुनः ।
निवासात् सर्वदेवानां वास्तुरित्यभिधीयते ॥

20. Citrakarma

Art of Drawing and Painting

Chitrakarma is an ancient Indian art of painting, symbolizing a variety of techniques and styles. It has been an integral component of the Indian cultural heritage. It portrays both religious and secular themes with rich, vivid imagery. From the spiritual depictions in temple murals to the miniatures of royal courts, Chitrakarma has captured the philosophical, religious, and cultural ethos of India across millennia.

The genesis of Chitrakarma can be traced back to prehistoric times with the Bhimbetka cave paintings in Madhya Pradesh, showcasing scenes of animal hunting and daily life from around 10,000 BCE. As Indian civilization advanced, so did the art of painting, transitioning from the rudimentary depictions in Vedic texts to more sophisticated forms.

The Chitrasūtra of the Viśnu Dharmottara Purāṇa stands out as a seminal text, deeply influencing Chitrakarma with its comprehensive guidelines on proportions, colour use, and emotional depiction in painting. This text underscores painting as not merely an aesthetic endeavour but a spiritual one that offers merit to both the artist and the viewer. The theoretical underpinnings of Chitrakarma, detailed in the Śilpa Śāstrās, attribute the origins of painting to divine sources such as Viśvakarma and sage artists like Nārāyana and Nagnajit. These texts discuss the preparation of substrates, measurement, colour theory, and the interaction between light and the viewer, emphasizing a painting's ability to captivate and communicate. According to the Viśnu Dharmottara Purāṇa, the interconnectedness of painting with dance, music, and other arts is crucial, highlighting that the knowledge of these arts enriches the painter's work, enabling a deeper expression of *rasa* (aesthetic pleasure) and *bhāva* (emotion).

Ancient Indian painters employed natural pigments derived from minerals and plants, ensuring the longevity of their artwork through organic binders. The styles varied significantly, with frescoes and murals in religious and royal establishments particularly notable during the early centuries in sites like Ajanta and Ellora.

Chitrakarma not only honours India's rich artistic traditions but also continues to inspire new generations of artists, sustaining its relevance in a rapidly evolving world.

20

चित्रकर्म Citrakarma

Art of Drawing and Painting



चित्राद्यालेखनकृतिर्ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

21. Puṣpāstaraṇam

Art of Floral Decoration

Puṣpāstaraṇam is traditionally known as the art of floral decoration. It occupies a cherished place in the Indian cultural and aesthetic practices. The practice of laying out flowers, which has been an essential part of Indian celebration for centuries, transcends mere decoration, articulating expressions of love, purity, and tranquillity.

The roots of *Puṣpāstaraṇam* are ancient, with references found in Indian epics like the *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*, where flowers beautify celebratory and sacred spaces, signalling victories and welcoming the deity. The *Kāmasutra* also details the art's role in enhancing the allure of romantic settings. Beyond literature, historical practices underscore flowers' pivotal role in Hindu rituals, which is a sentiment echoed in the *Mahābhārata*, where flowers are described as pleasing to the mind and auspicious for prosperity.

Floral decoration in India is characterized by its diversity. Flowers are chosen for their colours, textures, and fragrances, which are believed to influence the ambience and energy of environments. Techniques vary from creating Rangoli with flowers during festivals like Diwali, Onam and Pongal, where petals are arranged in beautiful designs, to the assembling of garlands used to adorn venues, deities, and participants in various ceremonies. In Kerala, the floral Rangoli known as *Pūkkalam* is a testament to communal artistry, crafted by teams of women who blend colours and designs at temple entrances. This tradition exemplifies the communal and ritualistic importance of *Puṣpāstaraṇam*, reflecting a harmonious blend of artistic sense and cultural practice.

Puṣpāstaraṇam, more than just an art form, is a cultural expression that encapsulates beauty, tradition, and symbolism in Indian society. Whether it graces traditional Indian ceremonies or modern global events, it brings spaces to life, conveying profound messages through the eloquent language of flowers. This art continues to evolve, blending tradition with contemporary trends, and remains a vibrant testimony to India's rich cultural heritage and the enduring appeal of natural beauty. As both an aesthetic and spiritual practice, *Puṣpāstaraṇam* not only decorates spaces but also elevates moods, reduces stress, and transforming environments.

21

पुष्पास्तरणम् Puṣpāstaraṇam

Art of Floral Decoration



शय्यास्तरणसंयोगपुष्पादिग्रथनं कला ॥

22. Śayyāracanam

Art of Bed Decoration

Śayyāracanam, or the art of preparing and decorating the bed, transcends mere aesthetics to exemplify the cultural practice that is integral to daily life and ceremonial traditions. This sophisticated art involves the meticulous preparation and adornment of beds, blending comfort, hospitality, and aesthetics. Historically esteemed in royal and noble circles, and essential in rituals and bridal preparations, Śayyāracanam reflects a deep understanding of social etiquette and personal grooming.

Vātsāyana's Kamasutra describes in detail and highlights the significance of this art, suggesting that proficiency in bed decoration was seen as elevating a person's virtues, making it essential for women preparing for marriage and men seeking to demonstrate cultured behaviour and gallantry. Śayyāracanam involved far more than the simple laying out of bed linens and included a selection of fabrics such as silk or cotton for the purpose. Flowers like roses, jasmine, and marigolds were used for decoration due to their colour, fragrance, and soothing properties. The practitioners were also trained in Aromatic herbs and the subtle use of incense, which infuses the sleeping area with scents that promote relaxation and good health. Beds were often adorned with pillows, drapes, and canopies embellished with embroidery, beadwork, or precious metal threads, reflecting the artistic skills of the decorator and adding a layer of visual richness.

Śayyāracanam goes beyond decoration, serving functional purposes that enhance the sleeping experience. The ergonomic arrangement of bedding ensures optimal comfort, reflecting ancient knowledge of body support and sleep health. Symbolically, the art form communicates respect, care, and status, playing a significant role in hospitality, understanding the manner in which a guest's bed is prepared. In ancient India, students who joined Gurukula-s to pursue their education were also trained in this art form, to inculcate hygiene and discipline in them.

In modern times, the principles of Śayyāracanam continue to influence luxury interior design, particularly in high-end hotels and bridal suite preparations. Thus, the art of bed preparation and decoration continues to be a relevant and cherished practice, embodying the timeless appeal of Indian traditions in the creation of inviting and beautiful living spaces.

22

शय्यारचनम् Śayyārācanam

Art of Bed Decoration



सुखशय्यासनं सेव्यं निद्रापुष्टिप्रदम् ।
श्रमानिलहरं शस्तं विपरीतमतोऽन्यथा ॥

23. Viśeṣakacchedyam

Art of Decorating the Forehead etc.

Viśeṣakacchedyam, traditionally also known as *Patrācedyā*, is an ancient Indian art form that encompasses the skilful application of decorative and symbolic colour marks on the forehead, face and body. This practice is deeply intertwined with cultural, religious, and social traditions and continues to hold a place of reverence in modern Indian society. Though applying the marks on the forehead is considered as a routine *Nitya Karma*, *Agama-s* and *Tantra* texts provide detailed descriptions of rituals where the body is adorned with symbolic marks and prescribe specific materials, designs, and placements of the *tilaka-s* as part of the ritual purity and preparation processes.

The practice of *Viśeṣakacchedyam* dates back thousands of years, with its roots firmly planted in Hindu traditions and inspired from the nature around i.e., flowers, leaves, girdles, creepers etc. The art of applying *tilak* or decorative marks transcends simple decoration, incorporating spiritual and philosophical significance that reflects the wearer's religious beliefs, social status, and community identity. These marks, applied using natural pigments such as sandalwood paste, *kumkum*, turmeric, and ash, vary significantly across different Indian communities and sects. In Hinduism, the *tilak* is not merely ornamental but is believed to represent the third eye, or the spiritual sight of Lord Shiva, and serves as a point of focus that helps center the inner vision. Beyond the forehead, *tilak* can be placed on the neck, chest, arms, and other body parts, each with its symbolic meaning and purpose.

The art of *Viśeṣakacchedyam* plays a crucial role in Indian social functions, especially during weddings and religious festivals where the designs become more elaborate, contributing to the festive attire and atmosphere. The application techniques of *Viśeṣakacchedyam* vary widely, from simple dots and lines to more complex patterns like flowers and geometric shapes. These designs are often personalized to reflect the individual's marital status, religious sect or role in a ceremonial function. The choice of colours and the complexity of the patterns are carefully selected to enhance the aesthetic appeal and to fulfil the cultural and spiritual requisites of the occasion.

While rooted in tradition, *Viśeṣakacchedyam* has adapted to modern trends and continues to be a vital part of daily routines and special occasions in many Indian households.

23

विशेषकच्छेद्यम् Viśeṣakacchedyam

Art of Decorating the Forehead etc.



पत्रच्छेद्यानि नानाभिप्रायाकृतानि प्रेषयेत् ॥

24. Mālyagrathanavikalpah

Art of Preparing Garlands

Mālyagrathanavikalpah, the ancient art of garland making, is a revered cultural practice and an elaborate art involving skilfully tying colourful flowers into garlands that are used in a plethora of cultural, religious, and social ceremonies across India. This art form was not confined to the divine and royalty; it was a widespread practice enjoyed by both men and women, seen as a way to beautify oneself and the surroundings.

Mālyagrathanavikalpah, is exemplified in the eternal story of Āṇḍāl, one of the twelve Alwar saints of South India. According to legend, Āṇḍāl, being the daughter of Periyālwar, as a young girl would make garlands daily to adorn the deity of Śrī Viśṇu at the temple. She cherished this ritual so much that she would wear the garland herself before offering it to ensure it was perfect. Though initially frowned upon, this practice was later believed to be appreciated by Śrī Viśṇu himself, who saw it as a sign of pure devotion. Āṇḍāl is revered not only for her intense devotion to Śrī Viśṇu but also for her deep connection to the art of garland making.

In Hinduism, specific flowers and leaves are chosen for garlands based on their suitability to honour particular deities. For example, Durvā grass garland for Lord Ganēśa, Jasmin or crown flowers for Lord Hanumān, and Dattūra for Lord Śiva, each chosen for their sacred associations and believed benefits. In Hindu tradition, Svayamvara marriage rituals are said to be solemnised by the princess garlanding the man of her choice or the one who completes the challenge posed. The art transcends decoration, engaging with spiritual practices and the invocation of blessings.

The traditional practice of *Mālyagrathanavikalpah* involves selecting flowers like marigolds, roses, jasmine, and lotuses based on colour, fragrance, and durability. The artistry is displayed in various styles of garlands such as single strand garlands, composite garlands and tōraṇā-s decorative arches crafted with flowers and leaves hung at entrances during auspicious events to symbolize welcome and ward off evil spirits.

As one of the ancient arts, it continues to beautify significant life events, infusing them with meaning and connectivity to nature. Its continued relevance and adaptation highlight the enduring appeal of integrating natural elements into cultural expressions, ensuring that this ancient art form remains a cherished tradition and continues to inspire innovation in the floral arts globally.

24

माल्यग्रथनकल्पः Mālyagrathanavikalpah

Art of Preparing Garlands



पुष्पादिभिर्हारकरणं ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

25. Sūtrapāṭakaraṇam

Art of Spinning and Weaving

Sūtrapāṭakaraṇam is an art of spinning thread and weaving fabric. It stands as one of the major contributions of ancient India to the world at large. The transformation of raw fibres into threads and textiles is a process steeped in history, with each region of India developing unique weaving styles and techniques that reflect their local customs and cultural heritage.

The "Devanga Purana" articulates the weaving profession's origins and divine sanction attributed to the Devanga community. It narrates how Lord Śiva commanded Sage Mārkaṇḍēya to initiate the creation of textiles weaving fabric from lotus fibre, which he then used to create the cosmos. This act of weaving by the sage establishes the cosmic significance of weaving and positions the weavers within a sacred narrative, highlighting their work as not merely a craft but a divinely ordained activity.

From the ancient Vedic period, as mentioned in the R̥gvēda, the craft of textile manufacturing, known as Sūtrapāṭakaraṇam, was highly advanced. Weavers, referred to as Vasāvaya, played a crucial role in society, and their skills were detailed in sacred texts, showcasing their importance through ages, from the epics of the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata to the archaeological finds at Harappa and Mohenjodaro which include bone needles and wooden spindles, indicating that hand-spinning and weaving were widespread practices. The spinning wheel, believed to have originated in India, marks a significant development in this craft, further revolutionizing the production of textiles.

The process of Sūtrapāṭakaraṇam begins with the spinning of fibres—commonly cotton, wool, silk, or flax—into yarn using tools like spindles and spinning wheels. The yarn is then intricately woven on looms, ranging from simple hand-operated frames to more complex automated systems. The weaving involves interlacing warp (longitudinal) and weft (transverse) yarns to create cloth, employing various techniques that have evolved over centuries.

Today, rural artisans are revered for their skills, and handwoven fabrics like Khadi, Ikat, Mysore Silk and Kanjeevaram are prized globally for their quality and cultural significance. Moreover, there is a growing global movement towards sustainable fashion, which has revitalized interest in traditional, handcrafted textiles echoing a global consciousness that values sustainability and ethical production.

25

सूत्रपटकरणम् Sūtrapatākaraṇam

Art of Spinning and Weaving



अनेकतन्तुसंयोगैः पटबन्धः कला स्मृता ॥

26. Daśanavasanāṅgarāgaḥ

Art of Whitening Teeth, Dyeing of Clothes and Body Painting

Daśanavasanāṅgarāgaḥ is considered one of the arts focusing on three primary aspects of personal grooming and beautification: *Daśana* – whitening of the teeth, *vasana* – dyeing or colouring the clothes and *āṅgarāgaḥ* – the body painting. The arts reflect the holistic approach to cleanliness, aesthetics, and presentation valued in ancient Indian society, indicating a comprehensive regime of personal care that was integral to daily life and social interactions.

Though it was primarily known as dental care, ancient Indians used to colour their teeth with gold, silver and other colours. One who coloured the teeth was called “Dantalekhak”. *Daśana*, also extended to the practice of keeping the teeth clean and white considered essential for health and aesthetics. Herbs and neem twigs, charcoal, salt & lime known for their cleansing and antibacterial properties were used to keep the teeth clean. *Charaka Saṁhitā* and *Suśruta Saṁhitā* provide extensive insights into health and hygiene practices, including dental care concerning whitening teeth.

Vasana is the art of colouring & dyeing clothes and natural colours from turmeric, henna leaves, and other plant resources. This also includes making designs on the clothes with natural colours, which would give a rich look to the clothes and also shows the affinity of the people to wear colourful and exquisitely designed clothes.

Āṅgarāga, or the art of colouring the body parts involves the application of natural cosmetics to enhance the aesthetic appeal. Ingredients like turmeric, saffron, and sandalwood not only provided colour, but also provided nourishment to the skin. The use of kohl for eyes, natural dyes for lips and cheeks, colour for the nails and decorative designs for the forehead added to the aesthetic ensemble, integrating beauty practices with health and wellness. Texts like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* often describe characters adorned with intricate body decorations, which were used to signify heroism, divinity, and royalty. *Nāṭya śāstra* details the use of makeup and body colouring in theatrical arts, emphasizing how different colours could be used to represent different emotions, characters, and themes.

Today, the principles of *Daśanavasanāṅgarāgaḥ* find their echo in modern beauty and hygiene practices with increased preference for organic and natural personal care products.

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दशनवसनाङ्गरागः Daśanavasanāṅgarāgaḥ

Art of Whitening Teeth,
Dyeing of Clothes and Body Painting



हीनमध्यादिसंयोगवर्णाद्वै रञ्जनं कला ॥

27. Sūcīvānakarma

Art of Stitching, Sewing and Knitting

Sūcīvānakarma, encompassing the ancient crafts of stitching, sewing, and knitting, is celebrated as one of the classical 64 arts of ancient India which dates back to the Vedic period, illustrating the evolution of fabric handling through centuries. In Sanskrit, a tailor is referred to as "Sūcikā", which essentially means needle. The R̥gvēda mentions the symbolic importance of needlework, suggesting that a woman with a never-breaking needle can sew not only fabrics but also weave the destiny of her family, bestowing prosperity and valour upon her children. This connection between textile arts and societal roles underscores the profound cultural significance of sewing and embroidery.

Bharata Muni in Nāṭya Śāstra, states the importance of stitched costumes in theatre and dance. Costumes help define character attributes, enhance aesthetic appeal, assist in story telling through symbolic uses of colour and also enrich the performance by complementing body movements. This integration of costume design with performance not only maintains traditional authenticity but also enhances audience engagement, proving the timeless relevance of Sūcīvānakarma in both classical and contemporary Indian theatre.

Traditional materials used in Sūcīvānakarma include natural fibers such as cotton, wool, and silk. The choice of material often depended on the local climate and available resources, influencing the style and method of fabric creation. Techniques also included Embroidery and Ornamentation on the stitched clothing. From the ornately embroidered garments of the Mauryan empire to the practical and spiritual applications in daily life and religious ceremonies, textiles have played a pivotal role in defining social and economic status.

Today, the modern fashion and textile industries continue to draw on traditional techniques, incorporating them into contemporary designs while preserving their cultural roots. Additionally, the global movement towards sustainable fashion has renewed interest in handcrafted textiles, highlighting the value of traditional arts like Sūcīvānakarma in sustainable and ethical fashion.

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सूचीवानकर्म Sūcīvānakarma

Art of Stitching, Sewing and Knitting



सीवने कञ्चुकादीनां विज्ञानन्तु कलात्मकम् ॥

28. Chalitakayogaḥ

Art of Disguising Oneself

*C*halitakayogaḥ, recognized as one of the traditional 64 arts of ancient India, involves the sophisticated skill of disguise. This art is crucial in various domains such as theatre, espionage, and ceremonial practices. It highlights its adaptability and importance across different aspects of Indian culture.

Historically, Chalitakayogaḥ has been integral to both cultural performances and statecraft. In classical Indian drama, actors employed disguises to effectively portray multiple characters or to facilitate dramatic narrative twists, as outlined in seminal texts like the *Nāṭya Śāstra*. This practice enhanced the theatrical experience by adding layers of complexity and engagement for the audience. The art of disguise also held significant strategic importance in ancient statecraft. The *Artha Śāstra* by Chanakya documents the use of disguise by spies for intelligence gathering, showcasing how Chalitakayogaḥ was pivotal in the covert operations and surveillance activities of kingdoms. Some Folklores mention great kings like Rāma and Śivāji Mahārāj adopted disguises to roam among the citizens incognito and understand their plight and sentiments. The art of disguise is also prominently featured in Indian epics and folklore, where it is used by both divine and demonic characters. For instance, the demoness Putana disguises herself to try and kill the infant Krishna, while in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Śūrpanakha transforms her appearance to seduce Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. These stories underscore the dual use of Chalitakayogaḥ as both a protective and deceptive tool within mythological narratives.

Chalitakayogaḥ is not merely about changing one's appearance; it encompasses a comprehensive transformation that includes physical transformation through clothing, makeup, and physical accessories, prosthetics etc., and behavioural adaptations through mannerisms, gestures, and speech patterns of the persona. This includes mastering different dialects, accents, and unique behavioural quirks to enhance the believability of the disguise.

Chalitakayogaḥ remains relevant in fields such as theatre, film, and television, where character portrayal and transformation are key. Efforts to preserve this traditional art form continue, highlighting its importance as a cultural heritage and its adaptability in contemporary arts, media and security sectors.

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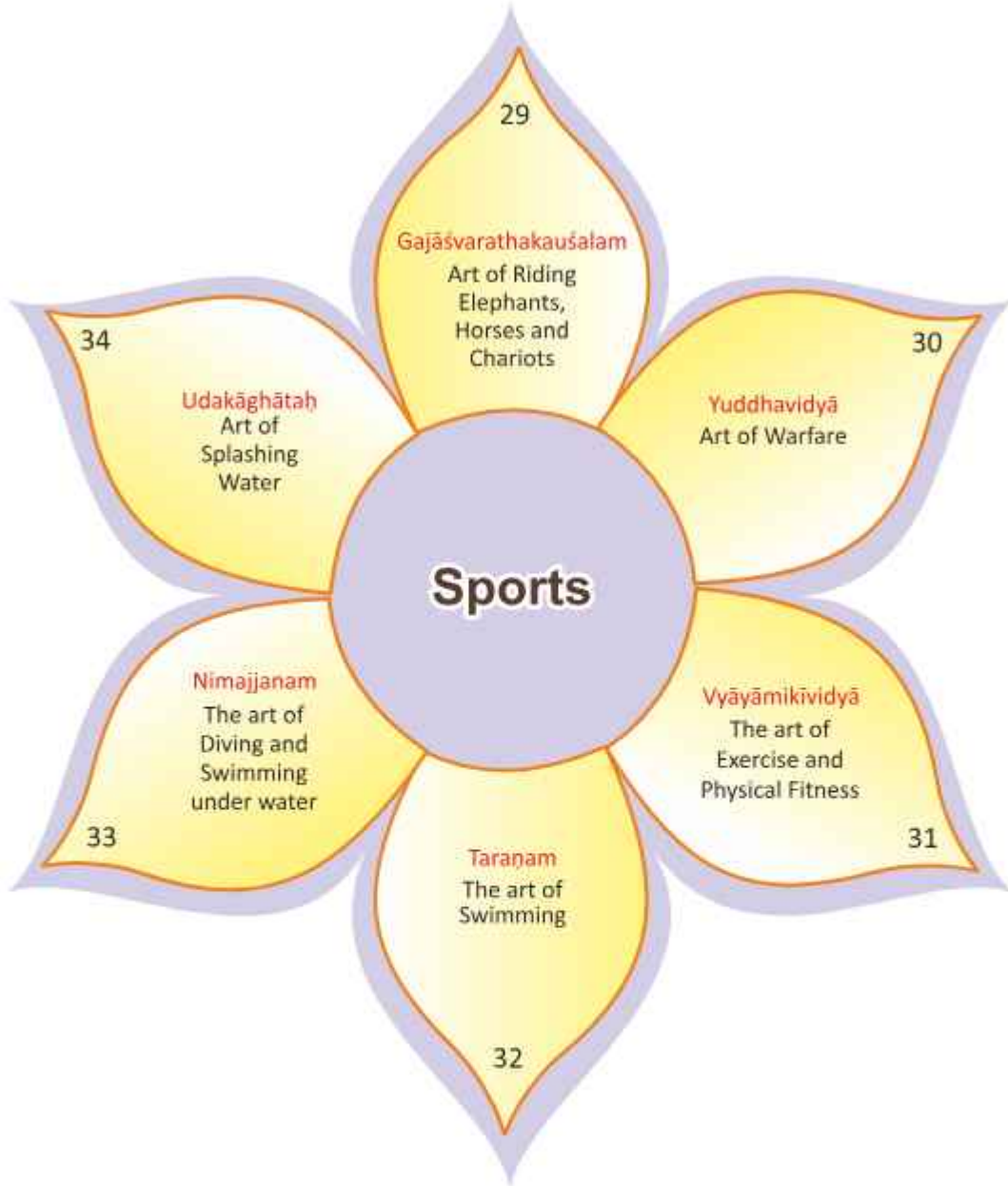
छलितकयोगः Chalitakayogah

Art of Disguising Oneself



यद्रूपमन्यरूपेण संप्रकाश्य हि वञ्चनम् ।
देवेतरप्रयोगाभ्यां ज्ञेयं तच्छलितं यथा ॥
स्वरूपस्याच्छादनकृतिर्ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥





Sports are not just games or physical activities but also a way of life. Be it the splash of water, clanging of swords or toughness of the mind and body, sports can promote physical and mental well-being, boost self-esteem, and create a sense of accomplishment. The thrill of victory and the wisdom gained from the defeat are both part of the journey, and they teach valuable life lessons about perseverance, discipline, and teamwork.

29. Gajāśvarathakauśalam

Art of Riding Elephants, Horses and Chariots

Gajāśvarathakauśalam is a part of ancient Indian education that deals with the skills required to tame, handle, manage and ride elephants, horses along with the chariots.

Ancient Indians were renowned for their expertise in *Gajākauśalam*. Several treatises were written on every aspect of handling and managing elephants, including their capture, subjugation, training and healthcare, as well as the skills required by the *Aṅkuśadhara* or mahout. Elephant trainers and mahout-s from ancient India were in high demand not only within the country's borders but also outside. The skill was also used during the war, and there was a separate wing called "Gajapade" elephant division in the army. Elephants are also used in processions carrying the deity on its back.

Horses elevated the power and prestige of rulers in ancient India, and their usage was predominant in the Vedic times from 2000.B.C. As mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* Nakula was excellent in handling the horses. We can also recall the story of Chetak, the horse that saved the life of his master, Rana Pratap Singh. Racing on the horses back was a favourite pastime of the royals, and even today, we can see many sports, including the horses – polo, equestrian sports etc.,

Chariots have been an essential aspect of warfare from the times of the *Vēdā-s*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Mahābhārata*, where they were given prime importance. The charioteer, also known as *Sārathi*, was expected to handle the vehicle in both war and times of peace. Horse-drawn chariots were preferred for their speed and mobility. The charioteers were known for their skill in manoeuvring the chariot during the war. *Śrī Kṛīṣṇa*, *Sātyaki* and King *Śālya* were considered as excellent *Sārathi-s*. The earliest chariot remains found were at *Aṭṛānjikhēra* (350 - 50 BCE). The recent discovery of three chariots in *Sanauli* village could push back the dates of usage by centuries.

In addition to its historical significance, *Gajāśvarathakauśalam* finds a vibrant expression in modern-day India, notably during events like *Mysore Dasara*, which showcases a splendid procession featuring caparisoned elephants, adorned horses, and ornate chariots.

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गजाश्वरथकौशलम् Gajāśvarathakauśalam

Art of Riding Elephants,
Horses and Chariots



गजाश्वरथगत्या तु युद्धसंयोजनं कला ॥

30. Yuddhavidyā

Art of Warfare

Yuddhavidyā is referred to as art of warfare in ancient India. The knowledge of various forms of combat was passed down from generation to generation through the Guru- Śiṣya tradition. The art of war was not just a means of self-defence. It was considered as a spiritual practice that emphasized discipline, concentration, and self-control. The epics *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* are great examples of how martial arts were a vital part of Indian culture. These epics describe how the warriors were trained under the guidance of great gurus like Śri Paraśurāma, Viśwāmitra and Droṇācārya.

The ancient Indian texts mention various forms of martial arts, including *Dhanurvēda*, which describes the various positions and postures used by archers. According to legends, *Dhanurvēda* was introduced by the creator himself and was taught by Bhagavān Śiva to Paraśurāma, the eight avatār of Śri Mahāviṣṇu.

The *Agnipurāṇa* mentions five types of weapons, which include weapons projected by machines, thrown by hand, cast and retained in the hand, those always held in hand and fighting with bare hands. The young princes and members of the royal family were expected to be trained in the art of warfare and it was an integral part of their education in the gurukulam. Yudhiṣṭhira in *Mahābhārata* was said to be an expert in handling spear and Arjuna an excellent exponent of archery, while Bhīma used his strength and the sheer power of his mace.

Apart from these, various other forms of martial arts were practiced throughout the history of India, such as *Kalaripayattu*, *Lathi-danda*, *Gada-vidya*, *Dhanurvidyā*, *Khaḍgavidyā* etc. Discipline, focus, determination, courage, and humility, were considered as essential qualities required to learn this art.

Yuddhavidyā, the art of warfare in ancient India have played a vital role in shaping the identity of India. The art also has deep connections to Indian philosophy and spirituality, with many of the martial arts practices being used as a form of meditation or self-improvement. While *Yuddhavidyā* has historical and cultural significance in ancient India, many of its principles and strategies it teaches can still be applied in modern warfare and combat sports.

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युद्धविद्या Yuddhavidyā

Art of Warfare



शस्त्रसन्धानविक्षेपकतिर्युद्धं कला स्मृता ॥

31. Vyāyāmikīvidyā

Art of Exercise and Physical Fitness

In the illustrious records of ancient Indian culture, Vyāyāmikīvidyā, the venerable science of exercise and physical strength, held an exalted status, revered as both an art form and a pathway to holistic well-being. As sighted in the sacred scriptures, including the Carakasamhitā of Āyurvēda, resounded the resolute proclamation of a balanced existence: a harmonious interplay of nourishing sustenance, restful repose, and diligent physical exertion.

Treatise on Suśruta Samhitā, elucidates Vyāyāma as an integral part of bodily movements—be it the rhythmic cadence of walking, the fluid grace of swimming, or the daring plunge of diving—a pantheon of active engagements designed to invigorate the body and elevate the spirit. It extolled the virtues of disciplined exercise, heralding its capacity to foster the muscle growth, fortify endurance, and mental alertness.

From the sacred verses of the Vēdās to the timeless lore of the Puraṇā-s and Upanishads, the echoes of Vyāyāmikīvidyā resonated through the corridors of time, affirming its cardinal place in the historical existence. The epics of Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa stood as living testimonies to the valorous warriors, endowed with robust physiques and herculean strength, honed through the rigors of disciplined practice and unyielding perseverance.

Yet, beyond the mere contours of physicality, Vyāyāmikīvidyā was a sacred covenant, an alchemical fusion of body, mind, and spirit. Through the sublime alchemy of posture, breath, and movement, practitioners sought not merely to sculpt the physical form, but to awaken dormant faculties of perception and attune themselves to the symphony of existence. In the profundity of their ancient wisdom, they understood that the body was a conduit through which the luminous essence of the soul could be manifested. The timeless ethos of Vyāyāmikīvidyā endures, even in modern times, as a beacon of light amidst the tumult of existence. From the serene sanctum of yoga to the bustling halls of the modern gymnasium, the pursuit of physical excellence persists as a testament to the enduring legacy of ancient Indian wisdom—a testament to the eternal dance of body, mind, and spirit in harmony with the boundless rhythm of the cosmos.

31

व्यायामिकी विद्या Vyāyāmikīvidyā

Art of Exercise and
Physical Fitness



व्यायामो हि सदा पथ्यो बालानां स्निग्धभोजनाम् ।
स च शीते वसन्ते च तेषां पथ्यतमः स्मृतः ॥

32. Taraṇam

Art of Swimming

*I*n ancient India, Taraṇa, the art of swimming, held significance as a vital component of physical fitness routines. It was integrated into daily exercises, known as vyayama, aimed at strengthening the body. Swimming wasn't just about physical health; it was also a favoured leisure activity and water sports, widely enjoyed since antiquity. This highlights the cultural and recreational value placed on swimming and aquatic activities throughout Indian history.

Archaeological revelations, particularly those unearthed at the hallowed site of Mohenjōdārō, offer significant sights into the aquatic prowess of ancient civilizations. Amongst those ruins, a witness to human ingenuity emerges. That is a public water tank, or Jalaśāla was found, where in its dimensions were echoing the grandeur of bygone eras. Amidst the whispers of antiquity, it is believed our ancestors gathered to partake in the sacred rituals of bathing and the exhilarating strokes of swimming.

In Mahābhārata, Bhīma, the Pandava prince and Duryodhana were known for their expertise in swimming. In fact, swimming was an essential part of Indian culture, particularly in the Indus Valley Civilization, which existed from 3300 BCE to 1300 BCE. The people of this civilization were known to swim for recreational and religious purposes.

In ancient texts such as the Caraka Saṃhitā and the Suśruta Saṃhitā, swimming emerges not merely as a leisurely pursuit but as a disciplined art form, integral to the holistic regimen of physical well-being. Yet, even amidst the exaltation of aquatic endeavours, the wisdom of our forebears shines forth, cautioning against the excesses that may ensnare the unwary seeker.

Swimming obviously played a crucial role in ancient Indian water sports or "Jala Krida." Swimming was an essential skill for various aquatic activities in ancient India. From recreational swimming to competitive water sports, such as diving and water polo, swimming proficiency was vital. In addition to being a leisure and competitive activity, swimming was also part of military training in ancient India. Soldiers were trained in various physical activities, including swimming, to enhance their combat readiness and survival skills.

Swimming serves as our deep-rooted affinity with the element of water, symbolizing not only physical strength but also spiritual harmony and a profound connection to ancient wisdom.

32

तरणम् Taraṇam

Art of Swimming



बाह्यादिभिश्च तरणं कलासंज्ञं जले स्मृतम् ॥

33. Nimajjanam

Art of Diving and Swimming under water

*N*imajjanam or the art of Diving / Swimming under water is an ancient water sport that was prevalent in India. The practice of diving has its roots in the Rgvēda era and it was considered a valuable breathing technique.

According to the Mahābhārata, diving was a skill that was mastered by many warriors, including Bhīma and Duryōdhana. These two great warriors often challenged each other to dive underwater and see who could hold their breath under the water for longer period. Duryōdhana was exceptionally proficient in this art called as “Jalastambhana”. He used this skill to hide under the water during the battle of Mahābhārata. Diving was a sport and a form of exercise recommended in ancient texts to increase muscle strength and reduce the risk of many illnesses and obesity. The Kautīlya's Arthaśāstra also mentions the various utility of divers in warfare, indicating that divers were also used strategically during sieges or wars.

Diving was also an essential skill for the Koli fisherman community in western India for more than 1,000 years. For more than 1,000 years, the Koli fishermen caught fish, crabs, and other marine creatures by using traditional diving equipment such as wooden goggles, nose clips, and leather straps to hold their breath underwater. In addition to fishing, diving was used for military purposes in ancient India. The Maratha Navy, for example, employed skilled divers who were trained to fight the enemy during naval battles.

In addition, diving was also used for hunting and retrieving valuable treasures and food from underwater. Our ancient ancestors would dive into the water without technology and retrieve pearls, corals, and other resources from beneath the surface and, which required great skill and physical strength. In present day “Scuba-Diving” is one of the aquatic sports where the divers use modern equipment to enjoy the deep sea and also as a profession to search for treasures and archaeological survey purposes.

Nimajjanam was an essential part of ancient Indian culture and was considered a valuable skill that provided stability and harmony with nature. It was not just a sport but also an exercise, a hunting technique, and a strategic tool in warfare.

33

निमज्जनम् Nimajjanam

Art of Diving and
Swimming under water



जलाशये निम्नगतिर्ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

34. Udakāghātaḥ

Art of Splashing Water

*W*ater sports were part of ancient Indian culture. Various water sports were practised for recreational, cultural, and religious purposes. Udakāghātaḥ is one such sport where the physical strength combined with the art of splashing the water with force and skill was tested. The act of splashing water in a duel, particularly as described in ancient Indian texts like the Jain scriptures, was known as Udakāghātaḥ. This term is composed of two Sanskrit words: "udaka," meaning water, and "āghata," meaning to strike or hit. So, "udakaghata" quite literally translates to "water striking or splashing."

These arts are highlighted in the Jayamangala commentary by Yaśodhara and further elaborated upon by Dr. V Raghavan in his work "Festivals, Sports and Pastimes of India." Udakāghātaḥ is a sport where it was played to enjoy an occasion or a cultural festival and also to test the competence of the players. One such example is the duel between Bharata and Bahubali, as detailed in the Ādi purāṇa, where the two compete in various events including Udakāghāta to ascertain the supremacy.

Udakāghātaḥ is also celebrated during the festivals and cultural events. One such story is illustrated in Krishnavatara where Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to have played Holi with Gopis and Gopiks splashing colourful water on them. Holi is celebrated involves people throwing coloured water and playing in the water to celebrate arrival of "Vasantha" or spring season.

Water sports were not limited to the aristocratic class but were enjoyed by people from all walks of life. Even outside of India, Sanskrit literature influenced works like the Jānakīharaṇa by King Kumāradāsa and Padyacintāmaṇi by Ven. Kekunawela Piyaṛathana, which also include references to water sports.

Water sports, or Udakāghātaḥ, have always been an essential part of Indian culture and history for entertainment, physical exercise and training. Udakāghātaḥ is in practice even today, not as a competition but as a recreational activity.

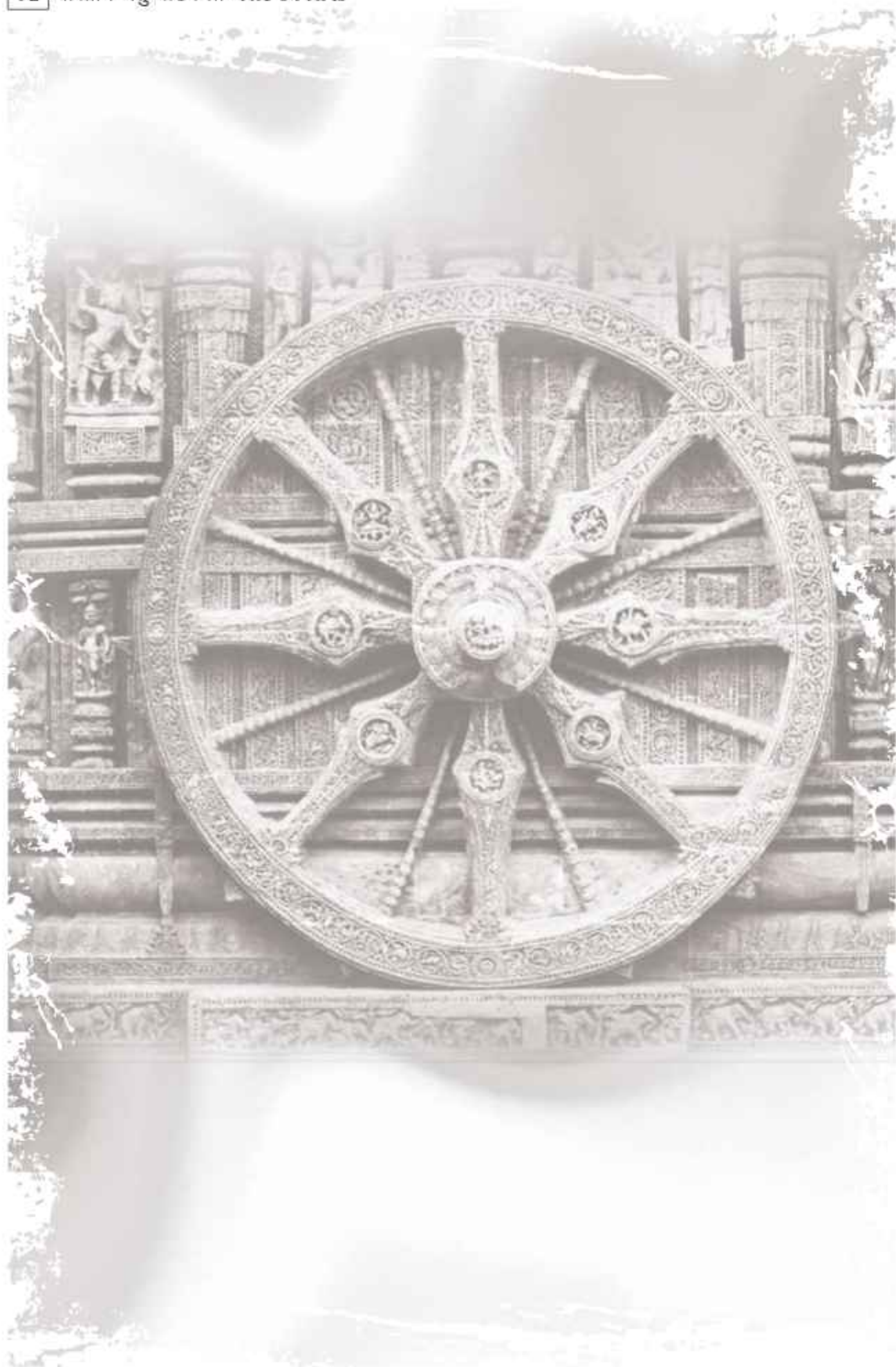
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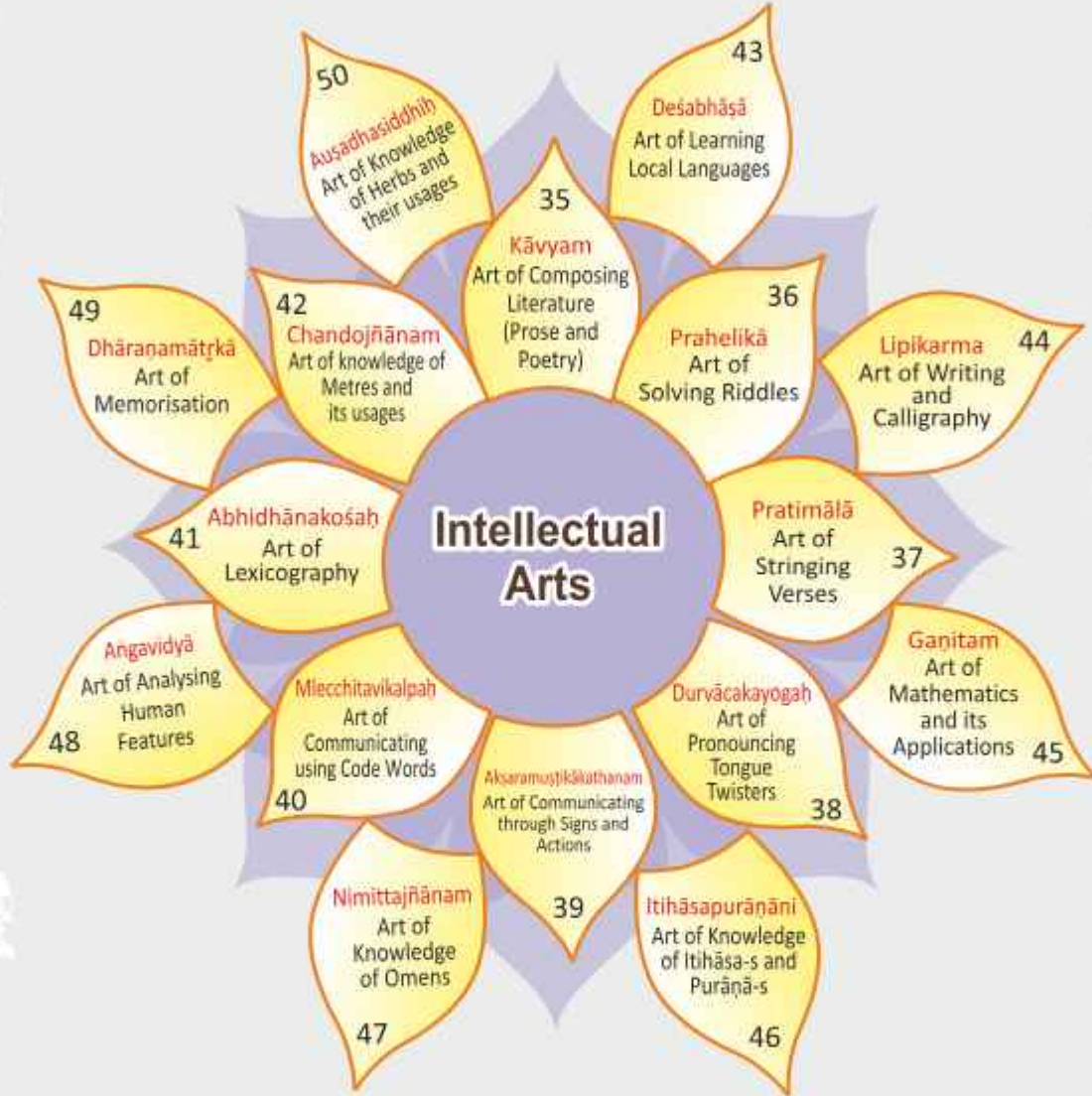
उदकाघातः Udakāghātaḥ

Art of Splashing Water



संसेचनं संहरणं जलानां तु कला स्मृता ॥





Intellectual arts showcase the ingenuity and imaginative flair of its people. Whether it's the poetic prowess and linguistic dexterity required in literature, or the mental agility needed to solve complex riddles and puzzles, these arts demand both finesse and expertise. The mastery of mathematics, astronomy, and herbal medicine reveals the extent of their knowledge and proficiency. These intellectual arts continue to impress and inspire us, bearing testimony to the remarkable intellect of ancient Indians.

35. Kāvya

Art of Composing Literature (Prose and Poetry)

Kāvya is a Sanskrit literary genre that originated in ancient India and flourished during the medieval period. Sanskrit literature is known for its rich cultural and artistic heritage. Śravya Kāvya, or poetry meant to be heard, is vital to this legacy. Although it is primarily a written form of poetry today, its original purpose was to be recited or reading it aloud to the listeners. The Śravya Kāvya literature comprises three primary forms: gadya, padya, and miśra/campū.

Gadya, or prose poetry, is defined by its sequence of words that do not fall into metrical feet. While it is not as common in Sanskrit as in other languages, it is considered challenging and essential. It tests a poet's skills, and the ability to write compelling prose poetry is a vital skill for any poet. Padya Kāvya, or metrical verse, is a popular form of poetry in Sanskrit literature. Its origins can be traced back to the period of the Rāmāyaṇa, the first work of Sanskrit literature. According to legend, the first ever Padya Kāvya came out of Maharishi Vālmiki's mouth due to his compassion for a pair of krauñca birds, which were shot by a hunter. Padya Kāvya has played a significant role in Sanskrit literature, covering a wide range of literature and an essential part of the language.

The earliest example of Kāvya in ancient India is the Rāmāyaṇa and Maharshi Valmiki is called as the Ādi Kavi or the first poet. There are umpteen examples of Kāvya and one of them is the Raghuvamśa, an epic poem composed by the Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa in the 5th century CE. The Raghuvamśa considered a Mahākāvya tells the story of the Raghu dynasty, one of ancient India's most prominent royal lineages. It is known for its ornate language and sophisticated use of poetic devices. Kāvya peaked during the medieval period, when it was used to express the ideals and values of the Indian courtly culture. Some of the most famous works of Kāvya from this period include the "Abhignana Śakuntala" and "Mēghadūta" by Kālidāsa, and the "Ramcharitmanas" by Tulsidās.

Kāvya represents a rich legacy of artistic expression. It serves as a touchstone for poets, testing their skills and ability to use the language effectively. The influence of Śravya Kāvya can still be seen in modern Indian literature. Its enduring legacy continues to inspire and captivate readers worldwide.

35

काव्यम् Kāvyaṃ

Art of Composing Literature
(Prose and Poetry)



वाक्यं रसात्मकं काव्यं दोषास्तस्यापकर्षकाः ।
उत्कर्षहेतवः प्रोक्ता गुणालङ्काररीतयः ॥

36. Prahelikā

Art of Solving Riddles

*P*rahelikā-s are a unique form of riddles or problems that have a special place in Sanskrit literature. For example, exercises are required for the body to be fit and to keep the mind fit and active, and we also need to give exercise to our minds. Here, the Prahelikā-s play a significant role in engaging the mind, keeping it active and fit, and also making it a fun activity. Asking a Prahelikā and answering itself is an art and it has its origin in our Vēdā's and scriptures. Prahelikā is the one that gives exercise to the mind and at the same time it gives joy and fun. Also, the Prahelikās play a pivotal role in communicating secret messages, too. The art of crafting Prahelikās was highly regarded among poets and considered a measure of their skill and intelligence. The two broad types of Prahelikās are śābdī (explicit) and ārthī (implicit), each with its own set of challenges and complexities.

The question-and-answer format is the most common structure of Prahelikās. One person poses a question in this format, and the other answers. The Mahābhārata's Yakṣapraśna is a famous example of this format. The Vēdās also contain riddle-like verses, with the name of the devatās not explicitly mentioned. Similarly, Upaniṣads use Prahelikā-s to discuss the core of philosophy. The social functions of Prahelikā-s, as stated by Daṇḍin, are also worth noting.

The benefits of composing and solving Prahelikās extend beyond mere entertainment. They are helpful in developing lateral thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. Riddles often require out-of-the-box thinking and creativity to solve. Solving puzzles can help develop creative thinking skills by challenging individuals to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. Solving riddles can also be a fun and engaging activity that can help reduce stress and anxiety levels. It provides a positive distraction from daily stressors and can help improve mood and cognitive function. Prahelikā-s are still a popular form of entertainment and a topic of study. The art of composing and solving Prahelikā-s has not lost its relevance. It continues to be a valuable part of Sanskrit literature and culture.

In addition to entertainment value, Prahelikā-s have also been used to teach important moral and ethical lessons. Many of these riddles contain a deeper meaning or lesson that can be inferred from the hidden sense, making them a valuable tool for teaching and learning.

36

प्रहेलिका Prahelikā

Art of Solving Riddles

वृक्षाग्रवासी न च पक्षिराजः,
त्रिनेत्रधारी न च शूलपाणिः ।
त्वग्बस्त्रधारी न च सिद्ध योगी,
जलं च बिप्रन्तु घटोत्कचः न मेघः ॥



व्यक्तीकृत्य कमप्यर्थं स्वरूपार्थस्य गोपनात् ।
यत्र बाह्यान्तरावर्थौ कथ्येते सा प्रहेलिका ॥

37. Pratimālā

Art of Stringing Verses

Pratimālā, or "stringing verses," is a literary game that has its origins in ancient India. This fascinating game was cherished by scholars who were well-versed in the details of Sanskrit language and literature. The essence of *Pratimālā* lies in its elegant simplicity: one participant recites a Sanskrit verse, and the next one has to recite a verse, starting with the ending syllable of the previous verse. While some may regard this activity as a mere academic exercise, it appealed significantly to those who appreciated its linguistic challenges and poetic nuances.

Documented in esteemed literary works such as the *Jayamaṅgaḷa*, the commentary for the *Kāmasūtra*, and the *Bhojaprabandha*, *Pratimālā* was celebrated for its ability to test language proficiency and inspire creative expression. Beyond its scholarly context, the game served as a source of entertainment, fostering camaraderie and friendly competition among participants. Despite its ancient origins, *Pratimālā* endures to this day, evolving into modern iterations like *antyāksari*, transcending linguistic boundaries and captivating players of various languages.

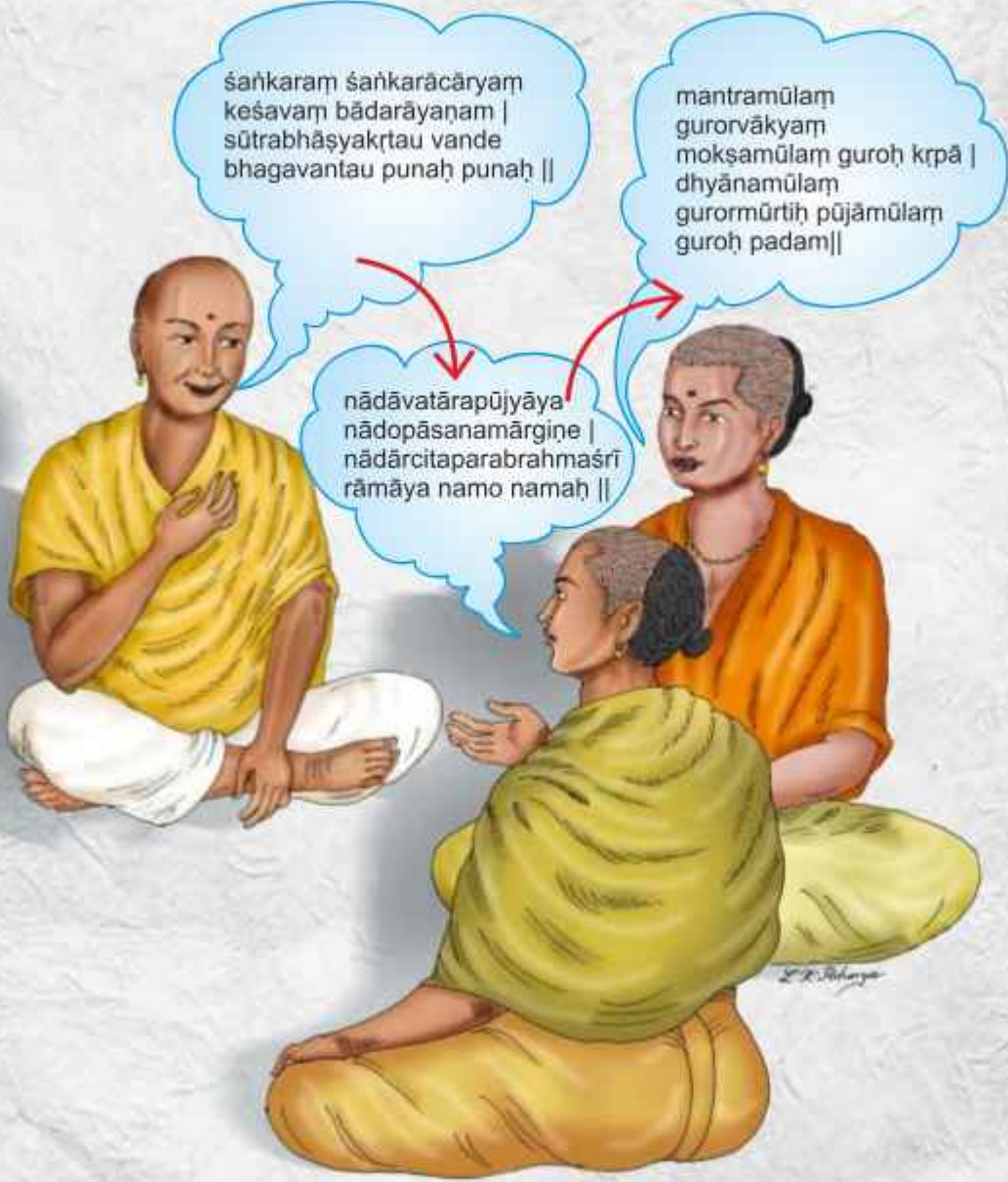
The benefits of engaging in *Pratimālā* are manifold. Not only does it stimulate creativity and sharpen problem-solving skills, but it also cultivates quick thinking and encourages participants to craft clever and insightful responses. Moreover, the game serves as a conduit for deepening one's understanding of language and literature, fostering a profound appreciation for Sanskrit poetry and its rich cultural heritage.

Participation in *Pratimālā* offers a multitude of advantages, including the enhancement of language proficiency, the refinement of cognitive abilities, and the promotion of cultural exchange. By exploring Sanskrit poetry, players enhance their linguistic prowess while gaining insight into the nuances of classical literature and culture. Additionally, the game inspires creativity, challenging participants to devise inventive ways to advance the poetic exchange. Thus, *Pratimālā* stands as a cherished cultural tradition, offering both entertainment and enlightenment to those who partake in its timeless pursuit.

37

प्रतिमाला Pratimālā

Art of Stringing Verses



प्रतिश्लोकं क्रमाद्यत्र संधायाक्षरमन्तिमम् ।
पठेतां श्लोकमन्योन्यं प्रतिमालेति सोच्यते ॥

38. Durvācakayogaḥ

Art of Pronouncing Tongue Twisters

The Durvācakayogaḥ is assembling words in the shloka or verse that are difficult to pronounce and understand. This art is more about displaying the proficiency and knowledge of the scholars. The more complex the verse, the more expertise the scholars would have. Durvācakayogaḥ or the tongue twisters are present in our ancient scriptures. R̥gvēda has such examples of phrases which are difficult to pronounce.

Durvācakayogaḥ, or tongue twisters, is also an ancient literary game in Sanskrit literature. The game involves reciting phrases that are intentionally difficult to pronounce and understand. The opponent team should recite the verse in the same manner and also tell the meaning of the verse. Then the second team would repeat the process. The games show the skill, competency and proficiency of the team members involved in the Sanskrit language and literature. The team that could recite the verses with clarity and be able to tell the audience the meaning of the verse correctly would be the successful team.

Examples of Durvācakayogaḥ can be found in many Sanskrit literary works, particularly in post-Kālidāsa literature and in Mahākāvya. One well-known example is the Śisupālavadha, a poem by the poet Māgha. Poetry incorporating Durvācakayogaḥ is sometimes called citrakāvya or picture poetry because the play of vowels, consonants, words, and sounds creates a visual effect rather than simply following the traditional rules of poetry.

Some examples for Durvācakayogaḥ are कच्छपकुच्छकुङ्कुमद्वयशीर्षकम् - *kaccapakucchakuṅkumadvayaśīrṣakam* - This phrase means "A tortoise with a pair of heads and a red-coloured top."

कम्बुकण्ठकुम्भकर्णकुञ्जराश्वत्थकुटीरकम् - *kambukaṇṭhakumbhakarṇa-kuñjarāśvatthakuṭīrakam* - This phrase means "A tiny hut made of fig leaves for an elephant with a water pot in his trunk and ear flaps that look like pitchers."

Durvācakayogaḥ is practised by Sanskrit scholars even today. The game of Durvācakayogaḥ is a fun and engaging way to practice pronunciation skills and improve knowledge of the Sanskrit language and its literature. It is an essential aspect of the rich cultural heritage of ancient India and a valuable tool for preserving and promoting that heritage.

38

दुर्वाचकयोगः Durvācakayogaḥ

Art of Pronouncing Tongue Twisters

कच्छपकुच्छकुङ्कुमद्वयशीर्षकम् ।
कम्बुकण्ठकुम्भकर्णकुञ्जराश्वत्थकुटीरकम् ।



उच्चारणे क्लेशकृतिर्ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

39. Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam

Art of Communicating through Signs and Actions

*I*t is a well-known fact that man is a social animal, and humans convey their thoughts for which language is a means. But sometimes it is difficult to express our thoughts through a language, and in such cases, they are expressed through actions or signs. This art of communicating through actions or signs is called as Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam.

When thoughts are expressed through a sign or action and the same is understood by the person to whom it was intended, it is called Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam. This art is extremely useful in communicating and providing assistance to the people deprived of speech and hearing abilities. The news for the deaf and dumb on the Doordarshan news channel is an excellent example of this art where the weekly news is conveyed through sign language. It is also a form of cryptic communication, where the message is communicated secretly through actions or signs.

Furthermore, Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam transcends mere speech, encompassing speech-linked gestures as well. While gestures traditionally complement speech to enhance communication, this art form distinguishes itself by utilizing hand gestures alone, rendering speech unnecessary. This enhanced method of communication not only facilitated the discreet conveyance of sensitive information but also underscored the profound understanding of language and intricate coding skills possessed by its practitioners.

Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam finds resonance in various historical and cultural contexts, like during political conspiracy or espionage. Individuals adept in this art form utilized it to exchange vital information discreetly, safeguarding secrets from prying eyes. Moreover, its recognition as one of the 64 Kalās by Vātsyāyana highlights its esteemed status as an art form, emphasizing its cultural significance and enduring legacy.

39

अक्षरमुष्टिकाकथनम् Akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam

Art of Communicating
through Signs and Actions



आकारैरिङ्गितैर्गत्या चेष्टया भाषितेन च ।
नेत्रवक्त्रविकारैश्च गृह्यतेऽन्तर्गतं मनः ॥

40. Mlecchitavikalpaḥ

Art of Communicating using Code Words

Mlecchitavikalpaḥ is a form of ancient Indian cryptic communication mainly associated with written communication. The main aim of this is to conceal information. The original meaning of the message would not be known even if the message fell into the wrong hands and the message was understood only by the person to whom it was meant. This secret art of communication was mastered by various personalities in ancient times, and it was considered a significant branch of knowledge then, as it is now. Inside of this art was associated with shrewdness and intelligence. Great War strategies, impressive culinary recipes, or even garden-side gossip could be passed from one person to another without the interference of a third party.

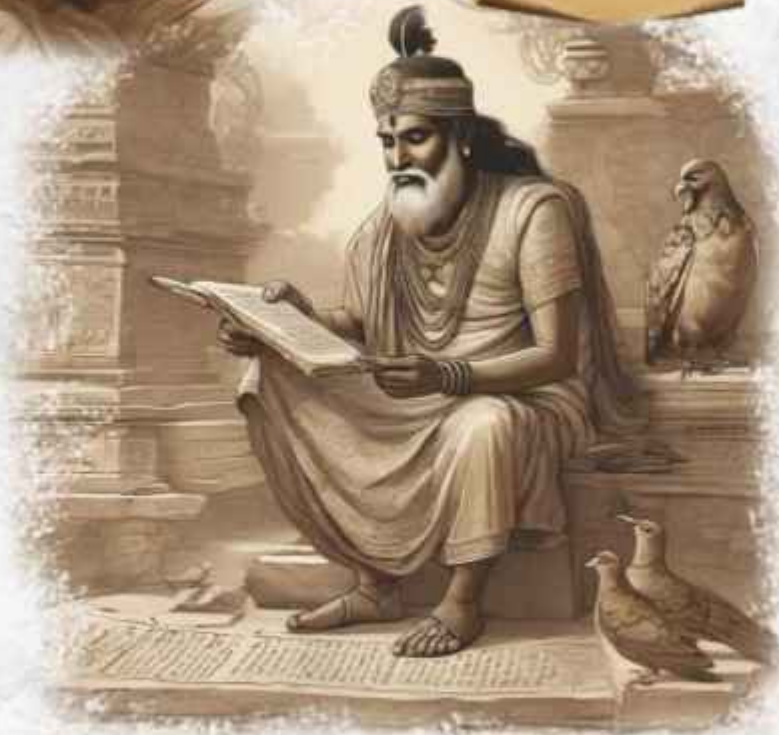
A variation of *Mlecchitavikalpaḥ* is named after Kauṭilya, and there are references to this cryptic messaging and analysis in his *Arthaśāstra*, where the Art is called "Kutīla Vyavahara," which refers to techniques involving using coded language or symbols in written correspondence between kings to convey messages discreetly, especially when discussing sensitive matters or negotiating alliances.

This technique is similar to the modern-day encryption techniques used in computer science, where the message is encrypted using a key, and the message can be decrypted only by the person who knows the key. The existence of this complicated system of cryptic messages and the fact that many of our ancestors were masters of this communication shows that ancient Indians were not just visionaries but were highly intelligent and could create and adapt to new arts and science methods. The use of *Mlecchitavikalpaḥ* and other similar cryptic communication techniques also shows that the ancient Indians were highly knowledgeable in this art. Today, *Mlecchitavikalpaḥ* is studied as a part of the history of cryptography and the development of encryption skills.

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म्लेच्छितविकल्पः Mlecchitavikalpah

Art of Communicating
using Code Words



वाक्कतिर्गुप्तरूपेण ज्ञानं तस्य कला स्मृता ॥

41. Abhidhānakośaḥ

Art of Lexicography

The study of Abhidhānakośaḥ involves the compilation, comparison and preservation of Sanskrit dictionaries that list the meanings and synonyms of Sanskrit words. These dictionaries serve as a treasure bank of knowledge for scholars, poets, and students of Sanskrit literature who seek to understand the complex words of Sanskrit language and poetry.

The earliest known Sanskrit dictionary is the Amarakośa, compiled by Amarasimha in the 4th century CE. This dictionary, along with other notable works such as the Śabdakalpadrūma and the Śabdamaṇidarpaṇa, form the basis of Sanskrit lexicography and are invaluable resources for those seeking to understand the language and literature of ancient India.

In addition to providing definitions and synonyms for Sanskrit words, the Abhidhānakośaḥ also offers insights into the cultural, social, and historical context in which these words were used. By studying the words and their meanings in the context of the literature in which they appear, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the society and culture of ancient India.

The study of Abhidhānakośaḥ is a crucial aspect of Sanskrit scholarship, as it enables scholars to unlock the secrets of Sanskrit literature and understand the complexities of the language in which it was written. It is an art that requires patience, dedication, and a deep love and appreciation for the rich cultural heritage of India.

Abhidhānakośaḥ is essentially a dictionary of Sanskrit words, but it is much more than that. It provides detailed information on each word's etymology, grammar, and usage, making it an indispensable tool for scholars of Sanskrit literature. The work is considered to be one of the most important and authoritative Sanskrit dictionaries, and it has been widely used by scholars and students of Sanskrit for centuries.

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अभिधानकोशः Abhidhānakośaḥ

Art of Lexicography



समानार्थकशब्दानां ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

42. Chandojñānam

Art of Knowledge of Metres and its Usages

Chandojñānam, or the knowledge of metres, is indeed an important aspect of Sanskrit literature and poetry. Chandas, in the context of Sanskrit literature and poetry, refers to the rhythmic patterns or meters used in composing verses. These metres dictate the arrangement of syllables within each line of poetry, creating a rhythmic structure that contributes to the overall musicality and aesthetic appeal of the verse. Understanding chandas is essential for poets and scholars studying Sanskrit poetry, as it allows for the appreciation of the intricate rhythms and patterns that characterize this ancient literary tradition.

Sage Piṅgala's Chandaḥśāstra is considered the foundational text for the study of Chandojñānam, and it provides detailed information on the different chandas, their structure, and the rules governing their usage. Other works such as Chandoviciti by Jayadeva, Chandomañjarī by Gangādāsa, and Vṛttaratnākara by Kedāranātha have also contributed significantly to the study of chandas in Sanskrit literature.

The various types of chandas include Gayatri, Anuṣṭup, vasaṃtatilaka, upajāti, śārdūlavikrīḍitam, maṇḍākrāntā, śikhariṇi, upemaṇḍavajra, iṇḍravajra, prakṛti, ārya etc., For example, the sacred Gayatri mantra is in Gayatri chandas which has 3 pādās or lines and contains 8 syllables in each line. Similarly, Anuṣṭup chandas has 4 pādās or lines and again contains 8 syllables in each line. In comparison, Triṣṭup chandas has 11 syllables in each of the 4 pādās. Poets have depicted stories using different metres with great prowess. They had a definite reason for choosing specific metre since the metres themselves could indicate the emotion of the entire story. A poet's choice of metre can enhance the impact of the words and elevate the literary work. The study of metres has also contributed to the mathematical aspect of Sanskrit literature.

The study of Chandojñānam is essential in understanding the various forms of literature in Sanskrit. Poets have used metres to enhance the beauty of their works and convey the intended emotions. It is an art that requires an understanding of the syllabic patterns and the mathematical aspect of constructing meters. It is through the knowledge of Chandojñānam that we can appreciate the depth and complexity of Sanskrit literature.

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छन्दोज्ञानम् Chandojñānam

Art of Knowledge of Metres and its Usages

uktā atyuktā madhyā
pratiṣṭhā supraṭiṣṭhā gāyatrī
uṣṇik anuṣṭup bṛhatī
panktiḥ triṣṭup jagatī



छन्दसां पद्यरूपाणां ज्ञानं सा हि कला स्मृता ॥

43. Deśabhāṣā

Art of Learning Local Languages

In the colourful cultural landscape of Bhārata, the knowledge of Deśabhāṣā, or mastery of local languages and its dialects, stands as a pillar of its rich heritage. India, with its diverse topography and kaleidoscopic culture, boasts a masterpiece of languages echoing across its vast expanse. To truly grasp the essence of this nation, one must delve into the details of its myriad tongues, for language is not merely a tool of communication but a vessel carrying the essence of emotions, ideas, and values.

In the heart of India's linguistic mosaic lie four major language families: the Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, and Sino-Tibetan. From the ancient whispers of Middle Indo-Aryan tongues like Prakrit, Pali, and Apabhraṃśa to the modern echoes of diverse dialects, the linguistic journey of India is a tapestry woven with threads of history and culture. Variants such as Saurasēni, māgadhi, mahārāṣṭrī, and Jain Prakrit dance through time, each telling tales of bygone eras.

The mastery over multiple languages was hailed as a refined art, as evidenced in the epics of Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata. Individuals adept in various languages navigated social spheres with ease, adapting their speech to suit the occasion and audience. This linguistic versatility was especially prized among traders and merchants, whose livelihoods depended on bridging linguistic gaps to conduct commerce with distant lands.

Deśabhāṣā, deep-rooted in the fabric of India's cultural ethos, served as the lifeblood of societal interactions and governance. From bustling marketplaces to the corridors of power, proficiency in local languages was the key to unlocking doors of communication and understanding. Rulers, adorned with the mantle of authority, relied on their linguistic prowess to govern effectively, connecting with subjects in the language of their hearts.

As per the 2001 Census of India, our nation boasts 122 major languages and 1599 additional languages. Nonetheless, data from various sources may differ due to distinct interpretations of "language" and "dialect". In our contemporary journey, the significance of Deśabhāṣā remains paramount. Embracing linguistic diversity fosters connections, bridges gaps, and enhances our comprehension of India's rich heritage and vibrant present.

43

देशभाषा Deśabhāṣā

Art of Learning Local Languages



अस्त्यनेको गिरां मार्गः सूक्ष्मभेदः परस्परम् ॥

44. Lipikarma

Art of Writing and Calligraphy

*L*ipikarma, the art of writing, is a witness to the rich cultural heritage, deep-seated in our society. Our forefathers cherished this art as a means to immortalize their knowledge, ensuring its passage through generations. Initially, communication relied on pictorial representations and stone carvings, gradually evolving into the attractive realm of calligraphy.

Lipikarma, also personifies the essence of artistic writing which can be seen in calligraphy. Its roots explore deep into antiquity, echoing the tales of ancient wisdom. In India, calligraphy is not merely a form of writing; it is a mesmerizing art form that conveys messages with visual appeal. Our country boasts a legacy steeped in calligraphic history, tracing back thousands of years.

The Indus valley civilization exposes the earliest traces of writing in India, depicted through pictorial symbols. References in the Atharvavēda hint at the existence of rudimentary writing practices in ancient India. Emperor Ashoka's and Sanskrit manuscripts' monumental inscriptions on palm leaves are poignant reminders of India's enduring calligraphic tradition. The Brahmi script marked the inception of writing in India, primarily used for Sanskrit and Prakrit languages. This script birthed several others, including Gupta script, Devanāgarī, Śāradā, and Siddhamātrika. Over time, these scripts diversified into regional forms like Landa, Gurmukhi of Punjab, and Gujarati derived from Devanagari. India's linguistic diversity shines through in scripts like Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam, each evolving into distinct calligraphic styles.

Beyond its communicative function, calligraphy surpasses into an art form, effortlessly blending technique with aesthetics. Indian literature owes much of its beauty to calligraphy, with many pivotal texts adorned in exquisite scripts. Today, calligraphy continues to thrive, captivating enthusiasts who investigate into its intricate strokes. Calligraphy remains relevant, attracting practitioners who view it as a profession or a cherished pursuit. Its transformative power turns ordinary words into visual masterpieces, embodying the timeless charm of India's artistic heritage.

44

लिपिकर्म Lipikarma

Art of Writing and Calligraphy



मुद्रालिपिः शिल्पलिपिर्लिपिर्लेखनिसम्भवा ।
गुण्डिकाधुणसम्भूता लिपयः पञ्चधा स्मृताः ॥

45. Gaṇitam

Art of Mathematics and its Applications

Gaṇitam, also known as mathematics, has a rich and extensive history in India. The roots of *Gaṇitam* can be traced back to the Vedic era. It is said that the concept of *Gaṇitam* was first introduced to aid in constructing accurate altars for Vedic rituals, which required knowledge of geometry.

India is the birth place of many important mathematical concepts like numerals, algorithms, algebra, and the decimal system. The decimal system is particularly noteworthy as it is fundamental to mathematics, science, and technology. The idea of Śūn'ya or zero was also introduced in India, which revolutionized the way we understand and use numbers. Śūn'ya means 'void', and it signifies a number's absence in a position. Our ancestors were also familiar with negative numbers and their practical applications. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Harappa civilization, which existed around 2500 BCE, had a uniform system of weights and measures. The scales and measures were marked with remarkable accuracy, which indicates a sophisticated understanding of mathematics.

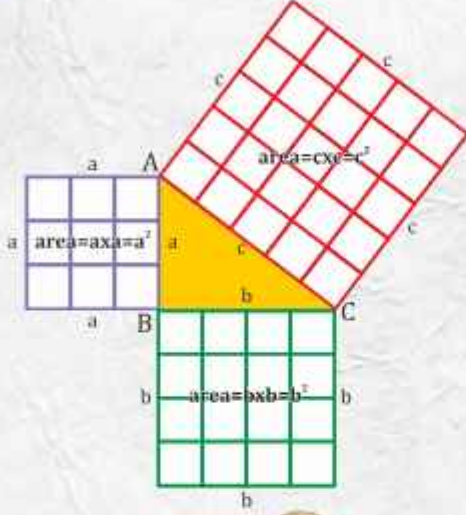
Gaṇitam is an essential and integral part of all other sciences like astronomy, astrology, Śilpa Śāstra, Rēkhā *Gaṇitam* etc., Our ancestors were able to calculate movement of the planets around the sun accurately even before the invention of the telescope. The distance between the Earth and the Sun was accurately mentioned in the *R̥gvēda*, which was confirmed by western scientists much later. The theorem of the square of a diagonal of a rectangle, was mentioned in the *Śulba Sūtra* of Sage Baudhāyana, which was later credited as the discovery of Pythagoras, which states that in a right-angled triangle, the square of the length of the hypotenuse (the side opposite the right angle) is equal to the sum of the squares of the lengths of the other two sides. The knowledge of *Gaṇitam* was considered an essential aspect of education in ancient times, and students in Gurukula were meticulously trained in it. This gives us an insight into the highly developed intellectual abilities of ancient Indians.

The concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division were first used in ancient times, and algebra was introduced in India long before it became known to the world. The Indian mathematicians from Āryabhaṭa, Brahmagupta, Bhāskara to Ramanujan have made notable contributions to the field of mathematics, and their work has been studied and recognized worldwide.

45

गणितम् Gaṇitam

Art of Mathematics and its Applications



BAUDHĀYANA SŪTRA

$$AC^2 = AB^2 + BC^2$$

This theorem now known as Pythagoras theorem was known to Indians 1000 years before Pythagoras, found in Śulba Sūtras of Baudhāyana



Vedic Method

$$\begin{array}{c} 45 \\ \swarrow (+) \searrow \\ 4 \quad 9 \quad 5 \rightarrow 495 \end{array}$$

पारे परार्धं गणितं यदि स्यात् गणयेयनिश्शेषगुणोऽपि स स्यात् ॥

46. Itihāsapurāṇāni

Art of Knowledge of Itihāsa-s and Purāṇā-s

*I*tiḥāsapurāṇāni, a combination of two Sanskrit words, means a definitive account of past events. It is considered a credible source of history, and it includes the epics of Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, and the entire collection of the Purāṇas. These epics depict the scholarly knowledge and intellectual thinking of the people of Bhārata. These texts also convey the message of righteous living, the intelligence of our Gurus, and their unparalleled knowledge of warfare and medicine etc.,

Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata are legends that occurred in two different Yugas, the Tretā Yuga and the Dvāpara yuga, respectively. The Purāṇas are still older and refer to the ancient texts compiled based on events across various epochs. There are about 108 Purāṇas and, 18 are considered the most significant. They cover a variety of topics in ancient Indian literature, including astronomy, astrology, medicine, philosophy, genealogy, the creation of the universe, etc., The 18 Purāṇas are: Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Śiva Purāṇa, Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Brahma Purāṇa, Brhmānda Purāṇa, Padma Purāṇa, Vāmana Purāṇa, Varāha Purāṇa, Skanda Purāṇa Matsya Purāṇa, Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, Linga Purāṇa, Garuda Purāṇa, Kūrma Purāṇa, Agni Purāṇa and Nārada Purāṇa.

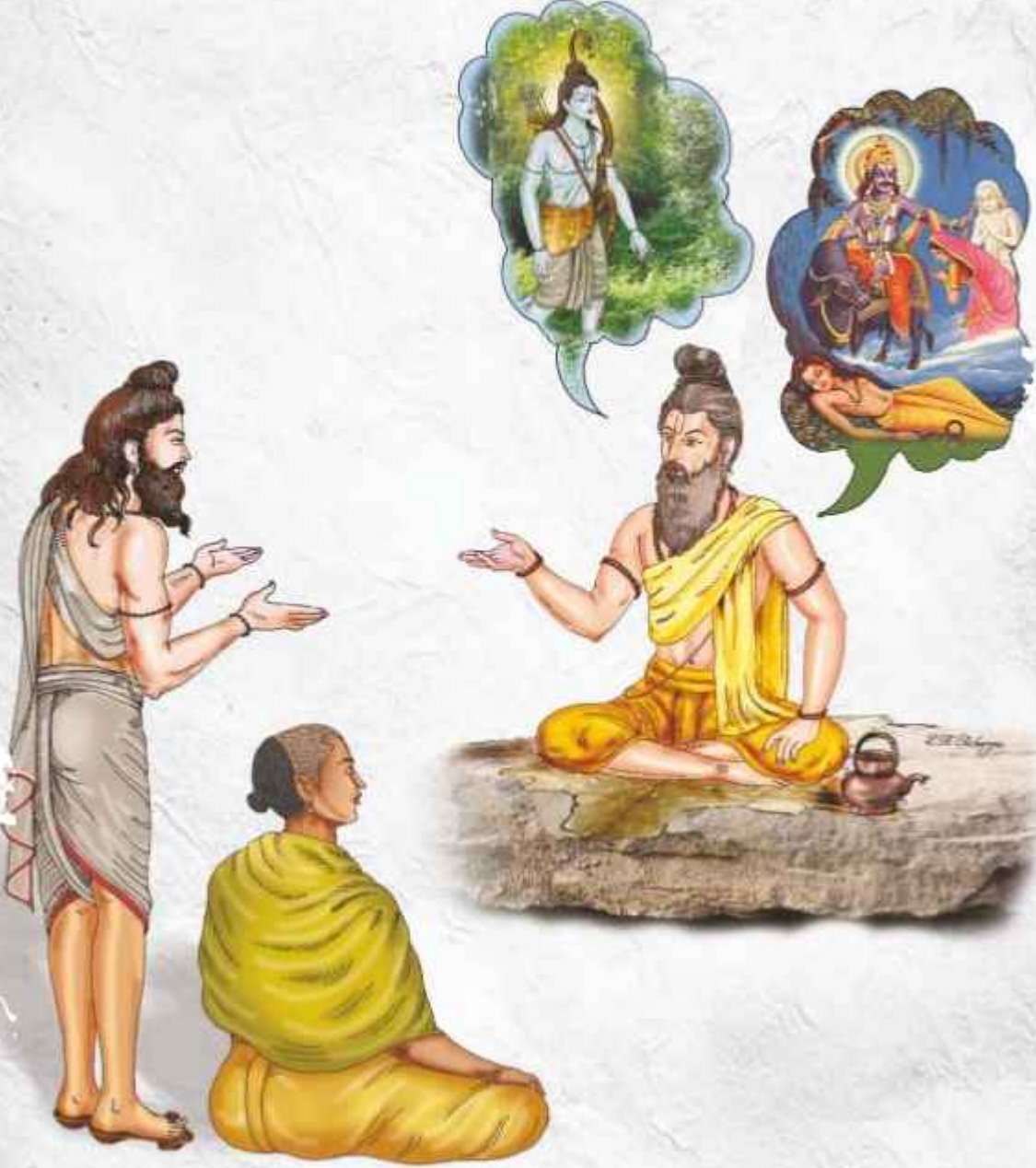
The stories of the Itihāsa and Purāṇas are a beautiful amalgamation of devotion, culture, tradition, and righteousness that gives us an insight into the life and lifestyle of the people in ancient India. During ancient times, when the Gurukula system of schooling was followed, the students would be sent away to the ashram of the Guru to learn various disciplines. The Purāṇa-s were one of the disciplines learnt by the students. This was considered an essential aspect of their education because studying Itihāsa & Purāṇa taught them the cultural practices of the times.

Most ancient Indians were very well acquainted with the Itihāsa and considered having the knowledge to be a form of art. The Itihāsa and Purāṇas were not just considered as literary works but also as a source of guidance on the right way to live, and they continue to be so to this day. Itihāsa-s and Purāṇa-s are an essential part of India's cultural heritage and continue to be a source of inspiration and guidance. Their teachings are relevant even today and will be relevant for future generations, too.

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इतिहासपुराणानि Itihāsapurāṇāni

Art of Knowledge of Itihāsa-s and
Purāṇā-s



धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणामुपदेशसमन्वितम् ।
पूर्ववृत्तकथायुक्तमितिहासं प्रचक्षते ॥

47. Nimittajñānam

Art of Knowledge of Omens

Nimittajñānam is one of the 64 kalās, that has been an essential part of Indian culture for centuries. This art form is part of astrology and can predict future events by observing auspicious and inauspicious signs in our environment. The signs may include the behaviour of animals, the movement of air through the nostrils, interpretations of dreams, and other omens. The art of Nimittajñānam has been referenced in several ancient texts, including the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, and it was believed that people relied on omens to interpret situations.

For example, it was recorded that during the birth of Duryodhana, there were a lot of inauspicious omens like dogs and wolves howling, and likewise, there was a joyous atmosphere like flowers blooming, and soothing winds blowing while Śri Krishna incarnated on the earth.

The art of Nimittajñānam is not limited to superstitions and beliefs, but also has a scientific basis. Observations such as planetary conjunctions, animal behaviour, and cloud patterns have been found to predict natural calamities like earthquakes and droughts. Our ancestors' meticulous understanding and research in this field of study have led to the accurate prediction of several natural events. The art of Nimittajñānam was often used by kings, rulers, and other prominent individuals to make important decisions and take actions.

The knowledge of Nimittajñānam has been passed down from generation to generation and continues to be a vital part of Indian culture. It is a dynamic and meaningful way to understand and live harmoniously with the environment. While Indian society is fast progressing, ancient wisdom and modern science go hand in hand, making it a unique cultural phenomenon.

The art of Nimittajñānam is an ancient Indian practice that has a profound impact on the culture and society. It is an art that goes beyond superstitions and beliefs, and its scientific basis can be seen through accurate predictions of natural calamities. While Nimittajñānam is considered a superstitious art form by many today, it remains an integral part of Indian culture. It has contributed to the rich and diverse culture and tradition in the Indian subcontinent.

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निमित्तज्ञानम् Nimittajñānam

Art of Knowledge of Omens



निमित्तानि च शंसन्ति शुभाशुभफलोदयम् ॥

48. Aṅgavidyā

Art of Analysing Human Features

India is known for its diverse cultures, religions, and languages, which have always interested people worldwide. Aṅgavidyā, is an ancient knowledge, which covers various facets like astrology, medicine and psychology.

By observing bodily markings, examining limbs (extremities), and assessing doshās (bio-energies), Vaidyas (Ayurvedic practitioners) could pinpoint health issues and prescribe remedies. From predicting illnesses to understanding the aging process, Aṅgavidyā played a pivotal role in ancient healing practices. This ancient science is an amalgamation of astrology and Ayurvēdā, and it brings together a person's mind, body, and soul to impart complete fulfilment. In modern times also, it is a significant field of study for the students of psychology. In addition, practitioners could even predict if the person was nearing death. This knowledge was considered divine and highly valued by the people, as it allowed them to navigate their lives with better understanding and harmony.

In today's world, the technical evolution has overshadowed traditional knowledge, and Aṅgavidyā is often overlooked. However, this ancient scientific knowledge holds great importance as it brings together a person's mind, body, and soul to impart complete fulfilment. It can cure any physical or psychological ailments by targeting the root cause, leaving a person in good physical health, great mental peace, and happiness.

There are also instances in the renowned treatise of Kautilya, the Arthashastra, that he utilized Aṅgavidyā to navigate the complexities of statesmanship. By interpreting bodily signs and gestures, Kautilya could foresee political conspiracy, identify threats, and devise strategies for governance. His keen insights into human behaviour and actions laid the groundwork for effective leadership and governance.

Despite the advent of modern science and technology, the legacy of Aṅgavidyā endures, plaiting its way through India's cultural fabric. Thus, Aṅgavidyā is an ancient Indian scientific knowledge that is still relevant today. The practitioners of this Vidyā possessed a divine skill to predict a person's nature, ailment, and sometimes even their future, based on their natural movements, speech, and gestures. It is an essential part of our traditional knowledge and deserves acknowledgement and respect.

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अङ्गविद्या Aṅgavidyā

Art of Analysing Human Features



अङ्गानि च प्रशंसन्ति क्षेमाऽक्षेमाफलोद्भवम्

49. Dhāraṇamātrkā

Art of Memorisation

Dhāraṇamātrkā is the Sanskrit term used for the art of memorization in ancient India, which was an essential part of the education system. The ancient Indian education system was based on the principle of oral transmission of knowledge, where the students learned by listening to the teachers and memorizing the texts. This method of education was considered as a means to develop a fully self-reliant person in the student, as they were expected to retain the information and reproduce it when required.

Dhāraṇamātrkā, is a skill where the learner would be totally focused on the subject taught without any distractions. Swami Vivekananda is said to have a photographic memory where he had the ability to read a book once and could recall any word with precise paragraph and page number. The Vedās were memorized using various techniques such as Saṃhitā pāṭha, pada pāṭha, krama pāṭha, jāta pāṭha, ghāṇā pāṭha, and others. These techniques involved reciting the texts in different patterns, which helped in the retention of the information. The recitation of the texts was done with mathematical precision to ensure that the texts remained unchanged in content and to preserve the purity of sound, word, pronunciation, and intonation.

The practice of Dhāraṇamātrkā was not just limited to the memorization of texts but was also used to develop other cognitive skills such as observation, multitasking, retrieval, reasoning, and creativity. One who has mastered the art of memorization was considered an Avadhāni, and there are Ashtāvadhāni (able to listen 8 different questions at a time and answer them in the same order) and Shatāvadhāni (able to handle 100 questions at a time) based on their practice and skill which involved the ability to concentrate and focus.

Dhāraṇamātrkā was not just limited to memorization of texts or verses. It also involved the memorization of other subjects like music, dance, and mathematics. For instance, students memorized the intricate rhythms and patterns of Indian classical music and dance, which helped them to perform these art forms with exactitude and grace. The practice of Dhāraṇamātrkā helped in the preservation of the knowledge for future generations.

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धारणमातृका Dhāraṇamātrkā Art of Memorisation



यस्तु कोषस्तथा द्रव्यं लक्षणं केतुरेव च ।
इत्येते धारणादेशाः पञ्चाङ्गरुचिरं वपुः ॥

50. Auṣadhasiddhiḥ

Art of Knowledge of Herbs and their usages

Auṣadhasiddhiḥ, refers to the knowledge of herbs and preparing medicine in Vedic India. It is an important discovery and practice that has been in use for thousands of years. Ayurvēda, translated from Sanskrit as the science of Life, is a preventive and curative methodology that has been used in ancient India long before the discovery of modern medical sciences and equipment. The knowledge of Ayurvēda is considered a divine gift to mankind and has been practised continuously for centuries.

One of the key aspects of Ayurvēda is its knowledge of the herbs and the preparation of medicines from these herbs, which is known as *Auṣadhasiddhiḥ*. What distinguishes the therapeutic approach of ancient India is its well-defined conceptual framework that provides ways to live a balanced life, prevent and cure diseases and pain, and even treat incurable conditions. The ancient text of Caraka Saṃhitā is one of the primary sources for the knowledge of the preparation of *Auṣadhi* or medicine according to the framework described in Ayurvēda.

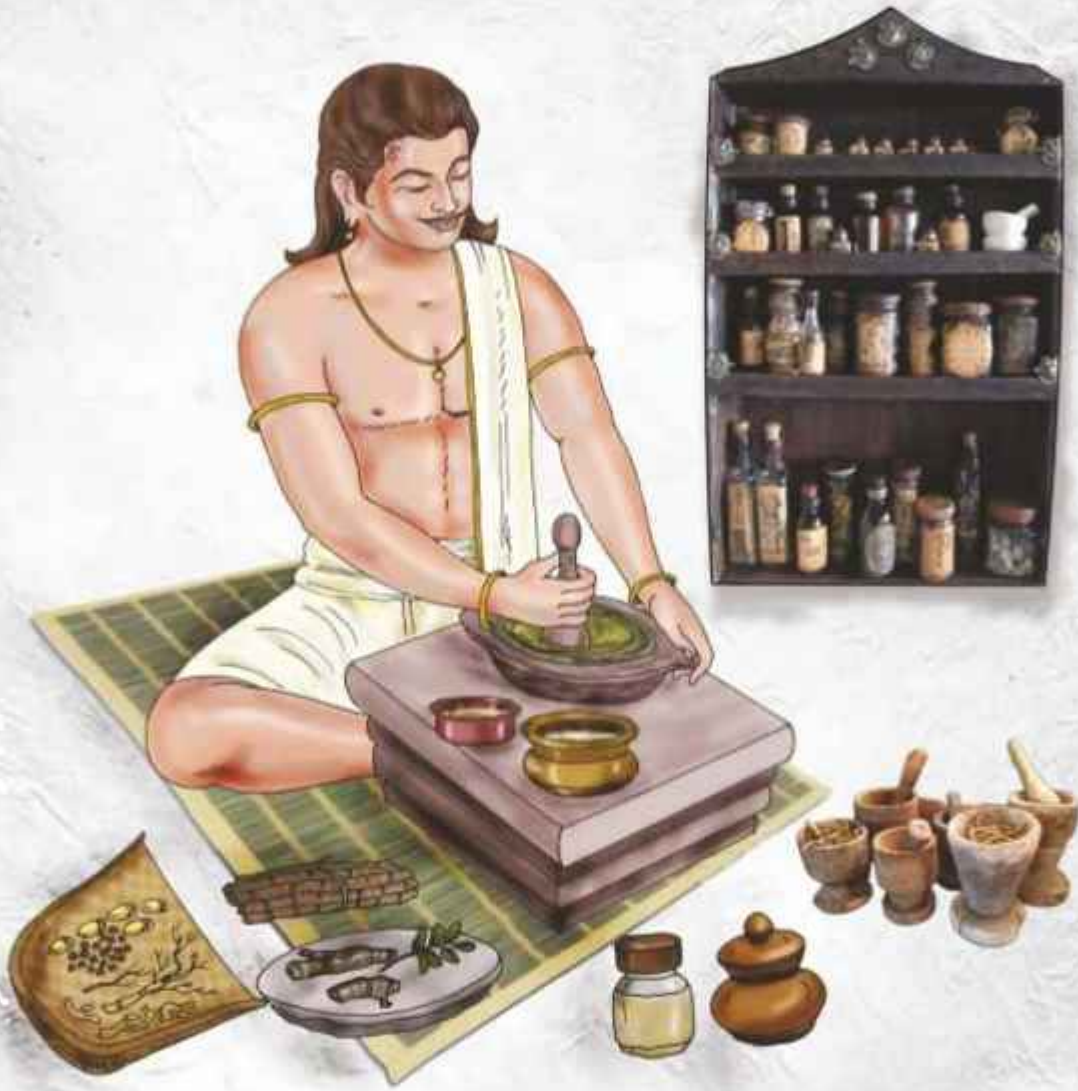
The preparation of medicines in ancient India was based on the knowledge of the “tridoṣā-s” – vāta, pitta and kapha and understanding their balance in the human body. Any imbalance in these tridoṣā-s is considered as illness or ailment. In addition to this, a healthy human body is considered a result of the proper balance between the five elements of nature – water, fire, earth, air, and ether and the balance of vāta, pitta and kapha. Different concoctions of various medicines were prepared from herbs, fruits, roots, various kinds of salts, fats, etc., after understanding the imbalance of elements in the body that brought about the ailment. Caraka Saṃhitā lists several herbs, their characteristics and their usage in curing and preventing several ailments. Some of the herbs mentioned are – Ashwagandha, Boswellia, Brahmi, Turmeric, Licorice root etc.

Another significant concept in the preparation of ancient aushadhi was the principle of 'Mātra' (the term used for the measurement – in this case, of the medicine). The administration of the medicine was done by keeping in mind the age and strength of the patient. The legacy of Ayurvēda and its framework of developing effective herbal medicines, remains unbroken and provides effective cures and relief to those who seek its treatment. Today, Ayurvēda has gained popularity all over the world and is practised widely, with *Auṣadhasiddhi* being one of the core science and indeed an Art.

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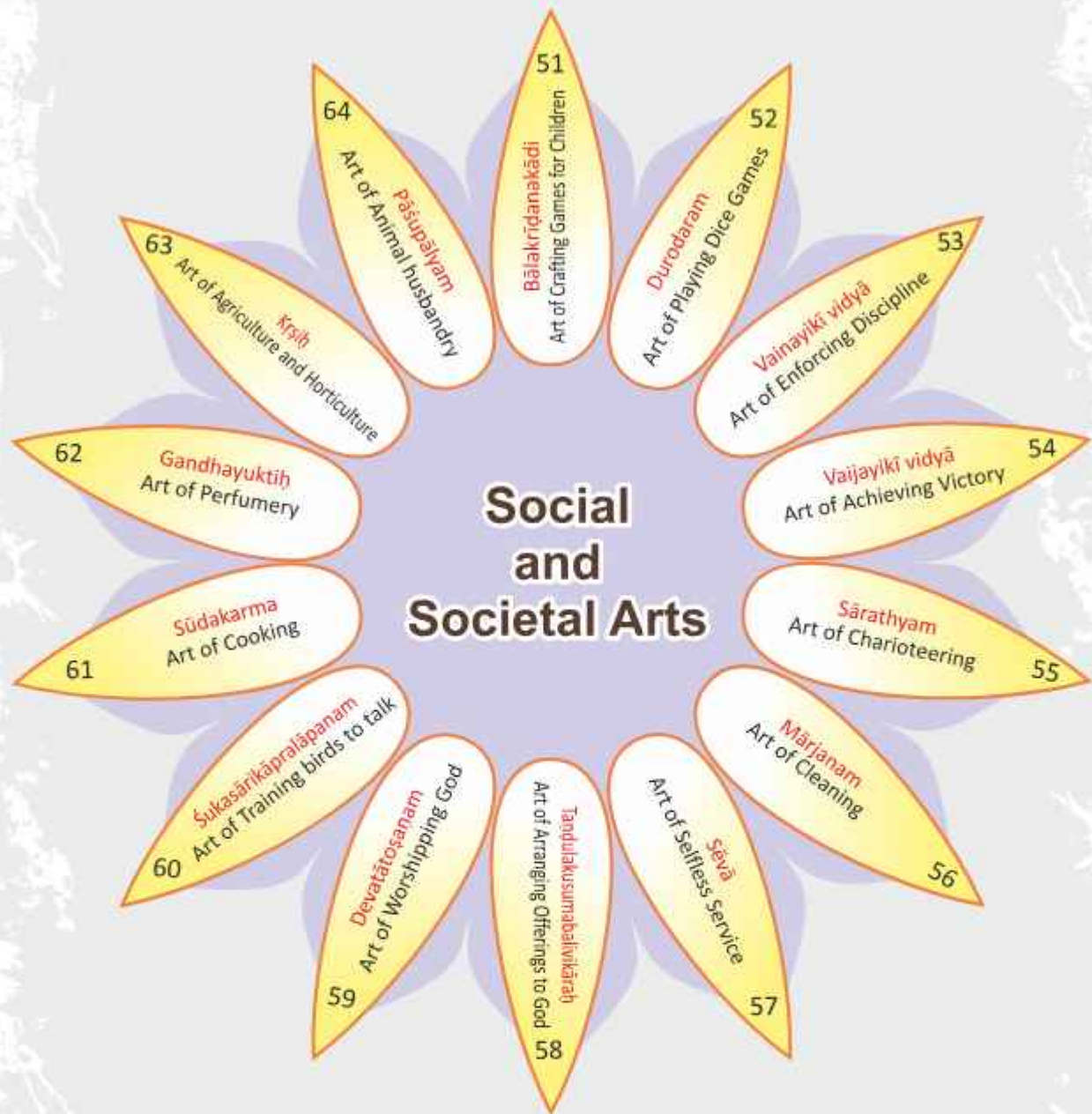
औषधसिद्धिः Auṣadhasiddhiḥ

Art of Knowledge of Herbs and
their usages



धात्वौषधीनां संयोगक्रियाज्ञानं कला स्मृता ॥





Social and societal arts aimed to enhance community involvement, social cohesion, and civic responsibility through various art practices and skills. These arts include playful activities with children, culinary skills, artistic expressions of devotion to the divine, volunteer work, and even agricultural practices such as crop cultivation and livestock rearing. Each of these arts reflected the interconnectedness of individuals with the world around them, emphasizing the importance of community and cultural traditions.

51. Bālakrīḍanakādi

Art of Crafting Games for Children

*I*n ancient India, the concept of Bālakrīḍanakādi was based on the belief that childhood lays the foundation for a person's character and abilities. It wasn't just seen as a pastime but as a crucial element of holistic development. Within this framework, the home was considered as the child's first school, and the mother was celebrated as the child's first friend and teacher, initiating them into the world of games, learning, and culture and tradition.

Central to Bālakrīḍanakādi was the active involvement of parents and siblings, who played pivotal roles in facilitating and participating in these games. This engagement fostered bonds, imparted values, and transmitted cultural knowledge through playful interactions, creating a nurturing environment for growth and learning. Through games, children not only developed motor skills but also learned important social and cognitive lessons, laying the groundwork for their journey through life.

The spectrum of games in Bālakrīḍanakādi was vast, encompassing both indoor and outdoor activities. Indoor games, such as traditional board games like Pachisi, navakankari, Aadu-Huli etc., encouraged strategic thinking, problem-solving, and social interaction among players. Outdoor games provided opportunities for physical activity, teamwork, and a connection with nature. Running, jumping, and skipping not only promoted fitness but also taught valuable life lessons such as cooperation, resilience, and adaptability. Moreover, activities like riding wooden horses or spinning tops honed children's dexterity, motor skills, and hand-eye coordination, fostering their physical development. These games not only entertained but also cultivated companionship and sportsmanship, fostering learning with lots of fun.

In the ancient Indian education system, the gurukula embraced Bālakrīḍanakādi as an integral component of the curriculum. Games were not merely recreation but essential tools for instilling discipline, resilience, and moral values in students, shaping them into well-rounded individuals with sound physical, mental and social health.

Over time, games have changed a lot with new technology, but the ancient games of India are evergreen and needs to be passed on to the next generation as a treasure for the Joy of Life.

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बालक्रीडनकादि Bālakrīḍanakādi

Art of Crafting Games for Children



शिशोः संरक्षणे ज्ञानं धारणे क्रीडने कला ॥

52. Durodaram

Art of Playing Dice Games

Durodaram or dice games have been a prominent form of entertainment in India since time immemorial. Despite its association with gambling, it was widely enjoyed by people from all walks of life, including royalty and commoners alike. The game of dice is considered to be one of the most ancient games known in India and it is documented in various literary works, including the epics Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata.

Earliest references came from Indus Valley Civilization. The Harappan sites in 3rd Millenia BC gave material evidence of dice. Oblong dice were found in excavations at Lothal, Alamgirpur, Kalibangan, Desalpur, Ropar, etc. Stones were also used for weights, marbles and dice, forming the most remarkable remnants discovered.

Though the game was originally considered as a favourite pastime of the people of ancient India, it was also used as a means to snatch the wealth of the opposition by betting. As illustrated in Mahābhārata, Pāṇḍavas end up losing everything including their kingdom and wife. Though the game is played to relax the mind and for recreation purposes, it can become an addiction and even lead to losing everything and the peace of mind.

In ancient India, dice games were played on cloth boards using wooden pawns and shells. Games such as Jhandi Munda involved betting on a symbol after rolling dice, while Chaupar was played on a woollen or cloth board by two players. Pallāṅkuḷi, originating in Tamil Nadu, was played with 146 counters and 14 cups. Gutte involved spinning a stone and picking small pebbles without the stone dropping. In Aṣṭāpada, players moved pieces clockwise to the castle, then counter-clockwise to the center to reclaim the castle. Mōkṣa pataṁ was the original form of today's Snakes and Ladders, with players ascending to higher levels of spiritual enlightenment. Each game had unique rules and materials, including cups and counters.

Thus, the ancient dice games of India offer valuable insights into life's unpredictability and ethical choices. They teach us to confront challenges with integrity and wisdom. These games are integral to our cultural heritage, passing down important lessons to future generations. Let us appreciate and safeguard these traditions, ensuring their continued significance for years to come.

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दुरोदरम् Durodaram

Art of Playing Dice Games



अप्राणिभिर्यत् क्रियते तल्लोके द्यूतमुच्यते ।
द्यूताद्यनेकक्रीडाभी रञ्जनं तु कला स्मृता ॥

53. Vainayikī vidyā

Art of Enforcing Discipline

Vainayiki Vidya, one of the 64 arts of India, is the art of fostering discipline and proper conduct. Rooted in the ancient Vedic traditions, this art emphasizes the cultivation of virtues such as humility, respect, and ethical behavior. It is not merely about following rules but understanding the deeper moral and philosophical underpinnings of one's actions. Vainayiki Vidya teaches the importance of self-control, patience, and the maintenance of social harmony through righteous conduct. It is a discipline that integrates personal growth with social responsibility, aiming to create individuals who contribute positively to society.

This art extends beyond personal ethics to include the management of interpersonal relationships and the maintenance of order within communities. Practitioners of Vainayiki Vidya learn to navigate complex social dynamics with grace and wisdom, ensuring that their actions reflect a deep-seated respect for others. This art is especially relevant in today's world, where the principles of mutual respect and ethical conduct are crucial for fostering inclusive and harmonious societies. By embracing Vainayiki Vidya, individuals can develop a balanced approach to life that honors both personal integrity and collective well-being, embodying the timeless values that have sustained Indian culture through the ages.

In contemporary society, Vainayiki Vidya's relevance is more pronounced than ever. As we navigate an increasingly interconnected and fast-paced world, the principles of ethical conduct and discipline provide a foundation for harmonious coexistence and effective leadership. Modern challenges such as digital misinformation, social unrest, and ethical dilemmas in professional environments underscore the need for a revival of these ancient teachings. By integrating Vainayiki Vidya into modern education and professional development, we can cultivate individuals who are not only skilled and knowledgeable but also principled and empathetic. This holistic approach to personal and social ethics can help address some of the most pressing issues of our time, promoting a culture of integrity, respect, and collective responsibility.



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वैनयिकी विद्या Vainayikī vidyā

Art of Enforcing Discipline



जितेन्द्रियत्वं विनयस्य कारणं गुणप्रकर्षो विनयादवाप्यते ॥

54. Vaijayikī vidyā

Art of Achieving Victory

Vaijayikī Vidyā, the ancient Indian art of achieving victory, encompasses a myriad of strategies, skills, and principles aimed at achieving triumph in various facets of life, from the battlefield to personal and societal realms. Central to the practice of Vaijayikī Vidyā is the deep understanding that victory transcends mere conquest or dominance; it necessitates upholding righteous principles and ensuring the welfare of society.

The significance of the Rājaguru (royal preceptor) and the royal council of ministers looms large in imparting the Vaijayikī Vidyā. They served as custodians of wisdom and guidance, offering counsel and strategic direction to the rulers. For instance, King Chandragupta Maurya, sought the guidance of Cāṇakya and Harshavardhana, sought the counsel of his Guru Bāṇabhatta, ministers and advisors, for conquests and administration of the Kingdom. The concept of Dharma, the righteous path, serves as the guiding light in the pursuit of victory. Upholding Dharma entails not only ethical conduct but also strategic decision-making aligned with the welfare of the kingdom and its people. The Bhagavad Gīta, emphasizes the importance of righteous action and the pursuit of victory for the greater good.

Vital to the practice of Vaijayikī Vidyā are the strategies encapsulated in the dictum: "Sāma, Dāna, Bhēda, Danda". These four pillars represent different approaches to achieving success. They are integral to the art of governance and leadership- Sāma, or conciliation and diplomacy, Dāna or self-restraint and discipline of helping others, Bhēda or division and differentiation and Danda or punishment and enforcement. Kings who employed strategic manoeuvres and exploited the weaknesses of their opponents gained the upper hand in conflicts and secured victory on the battle field. The Arthaśāstra outlines four types of warfare: Mantrayuddha, focused on counsel and diplomacy; Prakāsayuddha, involving direct battle engagement; Kūṭayuddha, employing psychological tactics; and Guḍāyuddha, using manipulative methods for victory without direct combat.

Ancient Indian wisdom brought together in the Vaijayikī Vidyā, recognized the multifaceted nature of victory, extending beyond the battlefield to encompass all aspects of life. Their teachings remind us of the importance of ethical leadership, strategic planning, and collective wisdom in navigating the complexities of the modern world.

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वैजयिकी विद्या Vaijayikī vidyā Art of Achieving Victory



रणे प्रवेशसदृशं कर्म वैजयिकं कृतम् ॥

55. Sārathyam

Art of Charioteering

Sārathyam, the ancient Indian art of charioteering, holds a distinguished place in the chronicles of warfare and transportation. Rooted in a rich tradition of skilful and strategic handling of chariots, Sārathyam encompasses diverse contexts, including warfare, transportation, and ceremonial processions. Charioteers, known as Sārathi-s, were esteemed for their expertise in driving, manoeuvring, and maintaining control of chariots in various terrains and conditions. Chariots were not merely vehicles but symbols of power, mobility, and prestige on the battlefield. Their presence conveyed authority and command, with the Sārathi playing a pivotal role in directing movements and coordinating strategies. The art of constructing and maintaining chariots was honed with great skill and precision in ancient India, reflecting the importance accorded to charioteering in military operations.

The Rgvēda, contains hymns dedicated to Aruna, the charioteer of Surya, who rides on his chariot driven by the seven divine horses. In Mahābhārata, Krishna, is revered as the divine charioteer, who possessed unparalleled skill, wisdom, and foresight, making him the ideal choice to guide the Pandava-s on the battlefield.

The skills required for proficient charioteering were multifaceted. Sārathi-s needed technical proficiency in driving and manoeuvring chariots, as well as a deep understanding of strategy, timing, and situational awareness. They were responsible for navigating chariots amidst the chaos of combat, coordinating movements with other units, and exploiting terrain features to gain tactical advantages.

Various types of chariots were employed in ancient warfare, each tailored to specific battlefield roles and conditions. From lightweight, agile chariots for reconnaissance and hit-and-run attacks to heavy, armoured chariots for frontal assaults, charioteers mastered the nuances of driving and manoeuvring different types of chariots to achieve strategic objectives. Despite the eventual decline of chariots as principal war machines, their legacy endures through gallant tales of heroic exploits and noble charioteers. The art of Sārathyam, with its emphasis on skill, strategy, and leadership, continues to inspire admiration and respect, serving as a demonstration to the enduring legacy of ancient Indian traditions in warfare and transportation.

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सारथ्यम् Sārathyam Art of Charioteering



सारथ्यं च गजाश्वादेर्गतिः शिक्षा कला स्मृता ॥

56. Mārjanam

Art of Cleaning

*M*ārjanam, the sacred art of cleaning, spans physical, domestic, religious, and metaphysical realms. It plays a crucial role not just in maintaining hygiene but also in achieving spiritual purity and balance. In Indian culture, personal hygiene is seen not just as a routine but as a sacred duty that enhances spiritual purity. Regular practices such as bathing, brushing teeth, and washing hands and feet before meals or religious rituals are deep-rooted from an early age. Similarly, the cleanliness of one's living environment is paramount. Homes are kept meticulously clean, often with daily sweeping and mopping, which is believed to attract positive energy and repel negativity, thus maintaining a spiritually harmonious environment.

There are several Textual references for Mārjanam, like the Ṛgvēda celebrating water as a purifying agent, essential in various rituals for cleansing both physically and spiritually, Manusmṛti prescribing detailed codes for personal hygiene and societal norms to uphold purity and the epics Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa mentioning episodes underscoring the importance of purification before significant events or decisions.

Cleanliness has always been highly esteemed, often equated with divinity itself, and is considered essential for achieving spiritual objectives. The significance of maintaining a clean and pure environment is apparent in various Hindu rituals which include practices such as bathing before engaging in puja, purifying the temple space before performing Ārati, and tidying the home in anticipation of guests. These acts of cleaning are integral to the preparation for spiritual and religious activities, underscoring the deep connection between physical cleanliness and spiritual purity.

Common practices include the sprinkling of water mixed with turmeric and sandalwood paste, which is believed to purify the area and the individuals. This ritualistic cleansing is integral to preparing for divine worship and is performed in temples, homes, and on devotees themselves. During rituals like pujas, weddings, and festivals, objects of worship such as idols and ritual implements are cleansed with holy waters or sanctified liquids. This ritual cleansing, often performed with elaborate prayers and chants, symbolizes the purification of the participants' minds and souls, preparing them for spiritual engagement.

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मार्जनम् Mārjanam Art of Cleaning



मार्जने गृहभाण्डादेर्विज्ञानन्तु कला स्मृता ।
वस्त्रसम्मार्जनञ्चैव विज्ञानं सा कला स्मृता ॥

57. Sēvā

Art of Selfless Service

Sēvā, signifies "service" and holds a pivotal role in various religious traditions, exemplifying the essence of selflessness, performed without any expectation of reward or recognition. It is revered not merely as a moral duty but as a spiritual discipline that fosters purification, personal growth, and ultimately, liberation.

In Hindu philosophy, Sēvā is intertwined with the principles of Karma (action) and Dharma (duty). The Bhagavad Gīta, extols the virtue of performing one's duty selflessly, advocating for action devoid of attachment to outcomes. This path of selfless action is seen as a means to purify the heart, reduce egoism, and achieve Mokṣa (liberation). Sēvā transcends conventional volunteerism by inculcating a spiritual aspect. This practice involves dedicating time, effort, and resources to serve others selflessly, fostering a profound sense of peace and fulfilment. It is an art that requires proactively responding to the needs of others, often necessitating improvisation and personal sacrifice.

Mahābhārata also emphasizes the importance of service in relationships, such as the duty of a son towards his parents or a brother to his siblings. In these contexts, service is seen as a way of expressing respect and gratitude, and of upholding the values of duty and loyalty.

Practitioners attune themselves to the subtle needs of situations and individuals, rendering service that is both thoughtful and empowering. Sēvā manifests in diverse forms tailored to individual capabilities and community needs, ranging from direct involvement in community kitchens, teaching underprivileged children, and caring for the sick, to advocating for environmental conservation and social justice. Maintaining the purity of intent in Sēvā is challenging in a world that often values material success. Practitioners must continually introspect to ensure their service remains free of egoistic motives and the desire for recognition.

Sēvā enriches societies by fostering a culture of mutual care and support, bridging divides across caste, class, religion, and ethnicity. It is an art form that requires dedication, humility, and creativity, offering significant personal and communal benefits creating a more compassionate and harmonious world.

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सेवा Sēvā

Art of Selfless Service



मनोऽनुकूलसेवायाः कृतिज्ञानं कला स्मृता ॥

58. Taṇḍulakusumabalivikāraḥ

Art of Arranging Offerings to God

Taṇḍulakusumabalivikāraḥ is a deeply spiritual and culturally rich practice in Hinduism. It focusses on the ceremonial preparation of offerings for the divine using rice and flowers. This art form is a testament to the devotion and creativity of the practitioners, serving as a bridge between material expressions and spiritual aspirations.

The Elements of Taṇḍulakusumabalivikāraḥ are Rice (Taṇḍula) and Flowers (Kusuma). Rice is central to Hindu rituals, symbolizing prosperity, fertility, and sustenance. It is often used uncooked in its most pristine form, representing the ether element among the five elements. During various auspicious occasions, rice grains are artistically laid out in patterns known as Rangoli or Kolam at temple entrances and home thresholds, inviting divine blessings and prosperity. Flowers are integral to Hindu worship, revered for their purity, vibrant colours, and fragrances. They are meticulously chosen to match the deity being worshipped, with specific flowers linked to specific gods.

In Taṇḍulakusumabalivikāraḥ, every aspect of the offering—from the selection of grains and flowers to their arrangement—carries deep spiritual significance. These offerings are a form of Sēvā or selfless service, a way for devotees to express their devotion and commitment to their faith. By making these offerings, they seek to attract divine blessings and prosperity to their lives and their communities.

In modern India, Taṇḍulakusumabalivikāraḥ remains vibrant and significant, especially during religious festivals and temple ceremonies. For instance, the Brahmotsavam festival at Tirumala Tirupati Devasthānam features elaborate decorations using rice and flowers that showcase both skilful artisanship and devotion. Similarly, the practice of creating Kolam designs in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka during auspicious occasions is a common sight, intended to welcome positive energies and honour the deities.

Taṇḍulakusumabalivikāraḥ is more than a ritualistic practice. As such, this practice not only beautifies the religious settings but also enhances the spiritual connection, making it a vital aspect of Hindu worship and cultural celebrations. Through this tradition, devotees connect deeply with the divine, personifying the sacred interplay of nature, spirit, and devotion.

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तण्डुलकुसुमबलिविकारः Taṇḍulakusumabalivikārah

Art of Arranging Offerings to God



सुवर्णादीनि रत्नानि बलीन् सर्वौषधिरपि ।
शुक्लमाल्यानि लाजांश्च पृथक् च मधुसर्पिषी ॥

59. Devatātoṣaṇam

Art of Worshipping God

The sacred art of worshipping God, known as Devatātoṣaṇam, is deeply ingrained in Hindu tradition, with roots tracing back to the ancient Vedic texts. Hindus believe that the deities are omnipresent and can be reached through various forms of worship. The ancient texts of Hinduism have outlined several methods to worship God, including pūja, penance and sacrifice.

Pūja is a form of ritualistic worship performed by priests in temples or by individuals in their homes. The pūja ritual is believed to purify the mind and create a spiritual connection with the deity and a way of expressing gratitude towards the divine for the countless blessings bestowed upon us.

There are nine forms of worship which is mentioned in our scriptures and they are – Śravaṇam – listening to the sacred names of the divine, songs, bhajans, discourse etc., Kīrtanam or singing the glory of God, Smaranam – remembering the name of the god or doing Japa (chanting) continuously, Pāda Sevanam is a form of worship where the devotee do the sēva (service) to the divine. Arcanam is another form of worship where it involves chanting names of the divine and offering the flowers, Vandanam is prayer and prostration (Sāshtanga-namaskāra) with faith and reverence, to the divine. Dāsyam – is being like a servant to the divine, just carrying out the will of the divine without any expectations. Sri Hanuman's devotion towards Sri Rāma is an example for Dāsyam. Sakhyam, where one cultivates a feeling of a friend towards the divine. Arjuna's relationship with Śri Kṛṣṇa shows this type of worship, and lastly, Atma Nivēdanam is totally surrendering to the divine or merging with the divine – there is no duality in this type of worship.

Apart from these forms of worship, penance is also considered an essential aspect worship. Penance involves undertaking tasks, such as fasting or meditation, to attain spiritual purity and connect with the divine. Through bhakti, worshipers embark on a spiritual journey that transcends time and space, leading them closer to the divine essence that permeates all creation.

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देवतातोषणम् Devatātoṣaṇam Art of Worshipping God



विविधासनमुद्राभिर्देवतातोषणं कला ॥

60. Śukasārikāpralāpanam

Art of Training birds to talk

Śukasārikāpralāpanam refers to the ancient art of training parrots and Mynas to talk - a practice that has been a part of Indian culture for centuries. This art form involves teaching these birds to mimic human speech and delighting us with their intelligence and charm. These birds were revered for their ability to mimic sounds and communicate with humans.

References to trained parrots can be found in classical Sanskrit literature, including plays, poems, and treatises on arts and sciences. In Bāṇabhatta's romantic fiction *Kādambarī*, the whole story is narrated by a parrot. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* also references the use of birds for security purposes, such as training a parrot to warn of the presence of poison nearby. The intelligence of these birds is further demonstrated in a story about Kumārila Bhatta. It is said that parrots around him were able to reproduce the Vedas with same intonations, showcasing the birds' ability to learn and mimic human speech.

Techniques of training these birds require patience, skill, and a deep understanding of avian behaviour. Trainers use the ability of the birds to mimic sounds they hear to teach birds to mimic human speech by repeating words and phrases in their presence. Birds respond well to positive reinforcement techniques, such as offering treats or praise when they successfully mimic a word or perform a desired behaviour. This encourages them to continue learning and performing. Consistent repetition of words and phrases is essential for reinforcing learning and helping birds develop their vocabulary.

Trained birds are a popular form of entertainment at fairs, circuses, and street performances, captivating audiences with their ability to speak and perform tricks. Parrots and Mynas hold symbolic significance in Hindu mythology and are often associated with auspiciousness, wisdom, and divine communication. Trained birds are sometimes regarded as messengers of gods and goddesses in religious ceremonies and rituals. Studying the behaviour and intelligence of trained birds provides valuable insights into avian cognition and communication. Researchers and educators often use trained birds as subjects to study language acquisition and animal behaviour. The art of Śukasārikāpralāpanam fosters a deep appreciation for the wonders of nature and the enduring bond between humans and animals.

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शुकसारिकाप्रलापनम् Śukasārikāpralāpanam

Art of Training birds to talk



ब्राह्मणा इव यः सूक्तं पञ्जरस्थः शुकः पठेत् ।

61. Sūdakarma

Art of Cooking

Sūdakarma the Art of Cooking or preparing food is not merely a mundane day to day task, but it is considered as a sacred activity. Bhagavad Gītā says "The food which increases life, purity, strength, health, joy, and cheerfulness, which are savoury, substantial, and agreeable, are dear to the satvic people" highlighting the importance of cooking and consuming nutritious and wholesome meals.

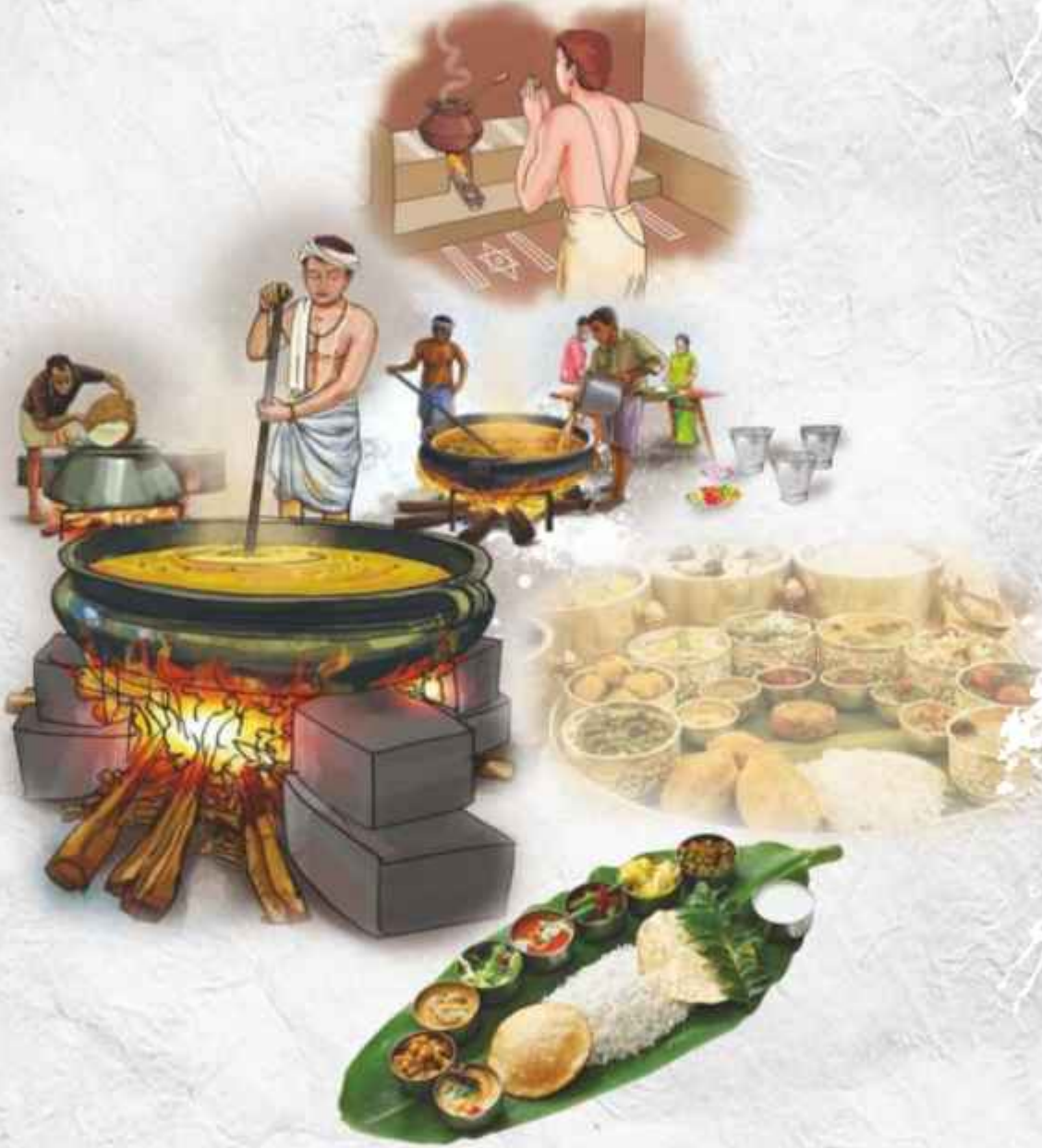
Cooking is deeply entrenched in Hindu culture as a way of showing hospitality and expressing love and care for guests. Offering food to others is considered a noble act and is central to social gatherings, festivals, and religious ceremonies. Recipes and cooking techniques are passed down through generations, preserving heritage and culinary traditions. The preparation of meals is seen as a collaborative effort, with family members or community members coming together to cook and share food fostering bonds and strengthening social ties.

Traditional cooking often emphasizes the use of fresh, seasonal ingredients, herbs, and spices to enhance flavour and nutritional value. Indian cuisine is known for its diverse cooking techniques, including frying, sauteing, steaming, roasting, and grilling. Each method of cooking imparts unique flavours and textures to the dishes. Bhakṣya refers to foods that can be eaten directly without cooking or minimal processing, Bhojya are those that are cooked or processed and form the main course, Chōṣya foods are beverages that are consumed alongside solid foods to aid in digestion, Lehya refers to semi-solid or viscous foods that are usually sweet or savoury, Pānaka denotes sweetened beverages or drinks that are consumed as refreshments or desserts and Pāka refers to elaborately prepared delicacies. The complete meal targets and satisfies the ṣaḍrasās or the six tastes of Sweet (Madhura), Sour (Āmla), Saline (Lavaṇa), Bitter (Tikta), Pungent (Katu) and Astringent (Kaṣāya).

In Hinduism, food is considered a divine gift and is offered to deities as part of worship rituals. Prasad, or blessed food, is distributed to devotees as a symbol of divine grace and blessings. The quality of food is believed to influence one's physical health and spiritual well-being. Sātvik food, which is pure, fresh, and vegetarian, is preferred for its ability to promote clarity of mind and spiritual growth.

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सूदकर्म Sūdakarma Art of Cooking



भक्ष्यं भोज्यञ्च पेयञ्च चोष्यं लेह्यमथापि वा ।

उपाकृतं नरैस्तत्र कुशलैः सूदकर्मणि ॥

हिङ्गवादिरससंयोगादन्नादिपचनं कला ॥

62. Gandhayuktiḥ

Art of Perfumery

*P*erfumery, known as Gandhayuktiḥ in ancient India displays rich cultural heritage and enduring connection to fragrances that date back to thousands of years. The term Gandhayuktiḥ, derived from Gandha meaning fragrance or scent, and Yuktiḥ representing technique or skill, captures the art and science of blending fragrances to create perfumes, oils, and incense.

The practice of perfumery was highly valued and cultivated by skilled artisans known as Gandhayukta-s or perfumers who had extensive knowledge of botanicals, herbs, spices, and resins, meticulously crafting fragrances that held both aesthetic and spiritual significance. Utilizing methods such as distillation, extraction, and blending, they created intricate compositions that adorned the royalty and permeated sacred spaces.

Perfumes, since ancient times, have been crafted from a diverse array of natural sources, each imparting its unique fragrance and character. Flowers have long been praised for their captivating scents - Rose, jasmine, lavender, tuberose, and gardenia are just a few examples. Herbs and spices like basil, thyme, sage, mint, cinnamon, cardamom, and clove offer a wide range of aromatic possibilities. Woods like Cedar, sandal, vetiver and fruits like orange, lemon, lime and grape fruits add richness and depth to perfumes. Animal-derived ingredients like musk, ambergris, and civet are known for their unique and sensual qualities. Ingredients like sea salt, seaweed, and marine accords were also used to create breezy and watery fragrances reminiscent of oceanic landscapes.

References to perfumery can be found in ancient Indian texts like Charaka Saṃhitā, Sushruta Saṃhitā, kāmasutra and Arthaśāstra. These texts not only describe the properties of aromatic substances but also delve into the therapeutic benefits and spiritual symbolism associated with it. Gandhayuktiḥ was primarily meant for royalty, as described by Varāhamihira in the Br̥hat Saṃhitā.

The historical evidence of perfumery in ancient India can be traced back to the Indus valley civilization, where excavations have revealed perfume bottles and containers. Gandhayuktiḥ is a reflection of the profound connection between humans and nature, where fragrances not only delighted the senses but also served as conduits for divine communication and personal transformation.

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गन्धयुक्तिः Gandhayuktiḥ Art of Perfumery



इष्टश्चानिष्टगन्धश्च मधुरोऽम्लः कटुस्तथा ।
निर्हारी संहतः स्निग्धो रूक्षो विशद एव च ॥

63. Kṛṣiḥ

Art of Agriculture and Horticulture

Kṛṣiḥ, encompassing the Science and art of Agriculture, Horticulture and Floriculture, holds a unique place in shaping the socio-economic scene of the nation for millennia. References to agriculture can be found in ancient Indian texts such as the Vēdā-s, Upaniśad-s, epics like the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, Purāṇā-s, Bṛhatsamhitā, and Arthaśāstra. While the R̥gvēda extols agriculture as a source of happiness and prosperity, urging people to engage in farming activities and shun vices like gambling, the Arthaśāstra, underscores its importance as one of the three primary sources of wealth, alongside trade and cattle rearing. These texts not only mention agriculture as a source of wealth but also provide detailed insights into agricultural practices, soil classification, plant diseases, medicinal preparations, and seed planting procedures.

India's agriculture is as diverse as its geography and climate, with 15 prominent climate types and 46 soil types. This has led to diverse agricultural practices and crops grown across different regions of the country, contributing to food security and economic development. Farmers relied on seasonal cycles, natural fertilizers, and traditional wisdom to cultivate a diverse range of crops suited to local climates and soil conditions.

Horticulture, a specialized branch of agriculture, focuses on the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and ornamental plants. Floriculture, another facet of agriculture, involves the cultivation of flowers for ornamental, decorative, and commercial purposes.

Traditional Indian farmers practice crop rotation, where different crops are cultivated in the same field in sequential seasons to help maintain soil fertility, prevent soil erosion, and control pests and diseases by disrupting their life cycles. Kṛṣi also incorporates techniques like Inter-cropping, Agro-forestry, Rainwater Harvesting, Drip Irrigation, Mulching, Vermi-composting and Pest Management.

Over the centuries, while traditional farming methods continue to be practiced in many parts of the country, modern agricultural practices, including mechanization, irrigation, and the use of agrochemicals, have also gained prominence. Today, there is a growing recognition of the need to balance modernization with sustainability and ecological stewardship in agriculture.

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कृषिः Kṛṣiḥ

Art of Agriculture and Horticulture



वृक्षादिप्रसवारोपपालनादिकृतिः कला ।
सीराद्याकर्षणज्ञानं वृक्षाद्यारोहणे कला ॥

64. Pāśupālyam

Art of Animal husbandry

*A*nimal husbandry, known as Pāśupālyam in ancient India, has been a foundation of the country's cultural, agricultural, and economic heritage for ages. This ancient art involves caring for, breeding, and managing domesticated animals for various purposes, including agriculture, transportation, dairy production, and religious rituals. Communities relied on domesticated animals such as cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goats, horses, and camels for milk, meat, wool, hides, and transportation. These animals were not only sources of sustenance but also symbols of wealth and status, with cattle particularly revered as symbols of prosperity and fertility.

Ancient Indian texts, contain numerous references to animal husbandry and the significance of cattle in our lives. The R̥gvēda, for instance, praises the virtues of cows and bulls and acknowledges their role in sustaining human life and civilization. The Arthaśāstra, shares information on different animals, including elephants, horses and cows, grazing lands, rules of meat science, livestock products like skin and fur, and veterinary philosophy. One of the most revered animals in ancient India was the horse. Nakula, one of the Pāṇḍava brothers, was known for his exceptional horse-keeping skills.

Though the practices differ across regions, there are several common techniques and principles that characterized ancient animal husbandry like, selective breeding reproduction, grazing, herding, shelter, feeding, water management, healthcare, waste management and finally culling.

With the rise of civilization, organized farming communities emerged, leading to the development of specialized breeds of livestock and improved management techniques. Today, animal husbandry remains vital to India's agricultural sector, supporting the livelihoods of millions of people, particularly in rural areas. Modern practices incorporate scientific advancements, selective breeding, veterinary care, and improved infrastructure to enhance productivity and animal welfare.

Challenges such as land degradation, water scarcity, climate change, and livestock diseases continue to threaten sustainable animal husbandry. Efforts are underway to promote eco-friendly and ethical practices, conserve indigenous livestock breeds, and adopt modern technologies to address these challenges while preserving the ancient art of Pāśupālyam for future generations.

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पाशुपाल्यम् Pāśupālyam Art of Animal husbandry



पशूनां रक्षणं तेषां पालनं च कला स्मृता ॥

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Appendix

List of Ślōka-s

1. svaragaṃ padaḡaṃ caiva tathā layagameva ca ।
cetovadhānagaṃ caiva geyaṃ jñeyaṃ caturvidham ॥
2. ghaṇaṃ ca vitataṃ vādyāṃ tataṃ suśirameva ca ।
kāṃsyapuṣkaratantrībhirveṇunā ca yathākramam ॥
3. karaṇānyaṅgaḥārāśca vibhāvo bhāva eva ca ।
anubhāvo rasāśceti saṃkṣepo nṛtyasaṃgrahaḥ ॥
4. nāṭakaṃ khyātavṛttaṃ syāt pañcasandhisamanvitam ॥
5. śuddhenānanyacittena paṭhitavyaṃ prayatnataḥ । na
kāryyāsaktamanasā kāryyaṃ stotrasya vācanam ॥
6. indriyāṇāmāvarakam indrajālaṃ pracakṣate ॥
7. sandhiṃ chitvā cauryyakṛtirjñānaṃ sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
8. sūtraraḡvādinā krīḡḡāvijñānantu kalā smṛtā ॥
9. pāṣāṇadhātūvādidṛṭistadbhasmīkaraṇaṃ kalā ॥
10. khaṇivīśleṣaṇajñānaṃ kalā sañjñantu tatsmṛtam ॥
11. vedhādisadasajñānaṃ ratnānāṅca kalā smṛtā ॥
12. muktāvidrumavajrendravaiḡḡūryyasphaṭikādayaḥ ।
cakṣuṣyā maṇayaḥ śītā lekhanā viṣasūdanāḥ ॥
13. lohaṃ tiktaraṣaṃ śītaṃ madhuraṃ tuvaraṃ guru ॥
14. pāṣāṇairmūrtikaraṇe jñānaṃ sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
15. mṛttikākāṣṭhapāṣāṇadhātubhāṇḡḡādisatkriyā ॥
16. dravāṇāṅcaiva sarvveṣāṃ śuddhirutplavanaṃ smṛtam ।
prokṣaṇaṃ saṃhatānāṅca dāravāṇāṅca takṣaṇam ॥
17. veṇvādivādyakṛtijñānaṃ sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
18. ghaṭhyādyaneḡayantrāṇāṃ vādyānāntu kṛtiḥ kalā ॥
19. yena yatraiva cākrāntaṃ sa tatraivābhavat punaḥ ।
nivāsāt sarvadevānāṃ vāsturityabhīdhīyate ॥
20. citrādyālekhanakṛtijñānaṃ sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
21. śayyāstaraṇasaṃyogapuṣpādigrathanam kalā ॥
22. sukhaśayyāsaṇaṃ sevyam nidrāpuṣṭidhṛtipradam ।
śramānilaharaṃ śastaṃ viparītamato'nyathā ॥
23. patracchedyāni nānābhiprāyākṛtāni preṣayet ॥
24. puṣpādibhirhāraḡaraṇaṃ jñānaṃ sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥

25. anekatantusaṃyogaiḥ paṭabandhaḥ kalā smṛtā ॥
26. hīnamadhyādisaṃyogavarṇādyai rañjanaṃ kalā ॥
27. sīvane kañcukādīnāṃ vijñānantu kalātmakam ॥
28. yadrūpamanyarūpeṇa saṃprakāśya hi vañcanam ।
devetaraprayogābhyāṃ jñeyam tacchalitam yathā ॥
svarūpasyācchādanakṛtirjñānam sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
29. gajāśvarathagatyā tu yuddhasaṃyojanam kalā ॥
30. śāstrasandhānavikṣepakatiryuddham kalā smṛtā ॥
31. vyāyāmo hi sadā pathyo bālanāṃ snigdhabhojinām ।
sa ca śīte vasante ca teṣāṃ pathyatamaḥ smṛtaḥ ॥
32. bāhvādibhiśca taraṇam kalāsaṃjñam jale smṛtam ॥
33. jalāśaye nimnagatirjñānam sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
34. saṃsecanam saṃharaṇam jalānām tu kalā smṛtā ॥
35. vākyam rasātmakam kāvyam doṣāstasyāpakarṣakāḥ ।
utkarṣahetavaḥ proktā guṇālaṅkārarītaḥ ॥
36. vyaktikṛtya kamapyartham svarūpārthasya gopanāt ।
yatra bāhyāntarāvarthau kathyete sā prahelikā ॥
37. pratiślokaṃ kramādyatra saṃdhāyākṣaramantimam ।
paṭhetām ślokamanyonyam pratimāleti socyate ॥
38. uccāraṇe kleśakṛtirjñānam sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
39. ākārairīṅgitairgatyā ceṣṭayā bhāṣitena ca ।
netravaktravikāraiśca grhyate'ntargatam manah ॥
40. vākkṛtirguptarūpeṇa jñānam tasya kalā smṛtā ॥
41. samānāρθakaśabdānām jñānam sā hi kalā smṛtā ॥
42. varṇaparīmiterjñānam kalā sañjñeti budhyate ॥
43. astyaneko girām mārgaḥ sūkṣmabhedāḥ parasparam ॥
44. mudrālīpiḥ śilpalīpīrīlekhanisambhavā ।
guṇḍikāghuṇasambhūtā lipayaḥ pañcadhā smṛtāḥ ॥
45. pāre parārdham gaṇitam yadi syāt gaṇeyaniśśeṣaguṇo'pi sa syāt ॥
46. dharmārthakāmamokṣāṇāmupadeśasamanvitam ।
pūrvavṛttakathāyuktamitihāsam pracakṣate ॥
47. nimittānica śamsanti śubhāśubhaphalodayam ॥
48. śikṣā vyākaraṇam chando niruktaṃ jyotiṣam tathā ।
kalpaśceti ṣaḍaṅgāni vedasyāhurmanīṣiṇaḥ ॥

49. yastu koṣastathā dravyaṃ lakṣaṇaṃ ketureva ca ।
ityete dhāraṇādeśāḥ pañcāṅgaruciraṃ vapuḥ ॥
50. dhātvauṣadhīnāṃ saṃyogakriyājñānaṃ kalā smṛtā ॥
51. śiśoḥ saṃrakṣaṇe jñānaṃ dhāraṇe krīḍane kalā ॥
52. aprāṇibhīryat kriyate talloke dyūtamucyate ॥
dyūtādyanekekakrīḍābhī rañjanaṃ tu kalā smṛta ॥
53. jīvendriyatvaṃ vinayasya kāraṇaṃ guṇaprakarṣo vinayādavāpyate ॥
54. raṇe praveśasadrṣaṃ karmma vaijayikaṃ kṛtam ॥
55. sārathyāṃ ca gajāśvādergatiḥ śikṣā kalā smṛtā ॥
56. mārjane gr̥habhāṇḍādervijñānantu kalā smṛtā ।
vastrasammārjanañcaiva vijñānaṃ sā kalā smṛtā ॥
57. mano'nukūlasevāyāḥ kṛtijñānaṃ kalā smṛtā ॥
58. suvarṇādīni ratnāni balīn sarvauṣadhirapi ।
śuklamālyāni lājāṃśca pṛthak ca madhusarpiṣī ॥
59. vividhāsanamudrābhirdevatātoṣaṇaṃ kalā ॥
60. brāhmaṇā iva sūktaṃ paṭhati pañjaraśukaḥ ।
gr̥hadāsivādhikaṃ kurakurāyate madanasārikā ॥
61. bhakṣyaṃ bhojyañca peyañca coṣyaṃ lehyamathāpi vā ।
upākṛtaṃ naraistatra kuśalaiḥ sūdakarmmaṇi ॥
hiṅgvādirasasaṃyogādannādipacanaṃ kalā ॥
62. iṣṭaścāniṣṭagandhaśca madhuro'mnaḥ kaṭustathā ।
nirhārī saṃhataḥ snigdho rūkṣo viśada eva ca ॥
63. vṛkṣādiprasavāropapālanādikṛtiḥ kalā ।
sīrādyākaraṣaṇa jñānaṃ vṛkṣādyārohaṇe kalā ॥
64. paśūnāṃ rakṣaṇaṃ teṣāṃ pālanaṃ ca kalā smṛtā ॥

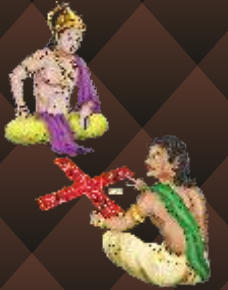
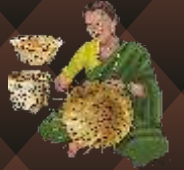


Epilogue

As we conclude our journey through the 64 arts of India, we find ourselves immersed in a world of profound creativity and ancient wisdom. These arts, encompassing everything from dance and music to craftsmanship and culinary skills, reveal the depth and diversity of Indian culture. Each discipline, with its unique history and techniques, showcases the ingenuity and resilience of a civilization that has thrived for millennia. This rich tapestry of skills not only reflects the aesthetic and intellectual pursuits of ancient India but also highlights the enduring relevance of these arts in contemporary society. By exploring these traditional practices, we gain a greater appreciation for the intricate blend of spirituality, practicality, and artistry that defines the Indian way of life.

The legacy of the 64 arts serves as a bridge between the past and the present, offering a timeless source of inspiration and knowledge. As modern practitioners and enthusiasts continue to revive and reinterpret these ancient skills, they ensure that the essence of India's cultural heritage remains vibrant and dynamic. This revival is not just about preserving traditions but also about fostering innovation and creativity in a rapidly changing world. As we look to the future, the 64 arts of India remind us of the importance of cultural continuity and the boundless potential of human expression. In honouring these arts, we celebrate a legacy that enriches our lives and connects us to the vast and varied history of human civilization.





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