

The Roots of Faith HINDUISM



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books of faith: hinduism

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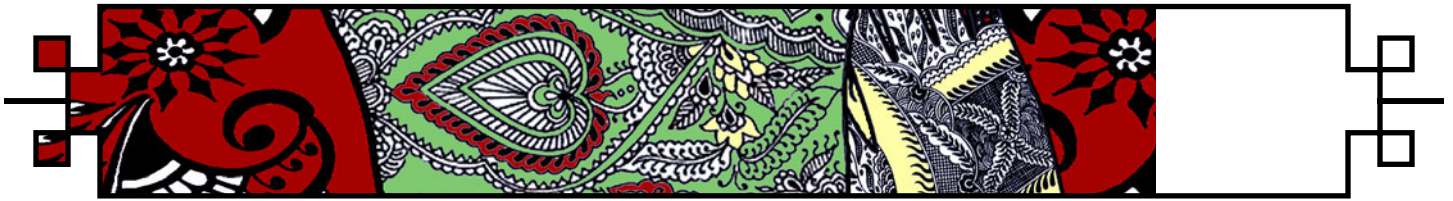
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introduction

Welcome back to Sahasra!

The land of 1000 Cities is a vast expanse, full of many people of many beliefs not all of which get along. One of the greatest divides among the people of Sahasra is one of faith. There are many religions and esoteric spiritual traditions with adherents scattered across the thousand cities. The Books of Faith series details several of these faiths, presenting their histories, practices, and beliefs.

Many of the faiths presented in this series are based on real world religions. We hold the beliefs of all people in high regard, and no disrespect is meant to any follower of the true faiths we present. The versions of the faiths we show here are fictionalized adaptations that have been subtly altered to fit the setting.

The religions of Sahasra are spread far and wide. With these guide books, we hope that you will discover some of the inherent depth and character of this wide land.

All it takes is faith.

Sean C. Frolich
Dog Soul Publishing



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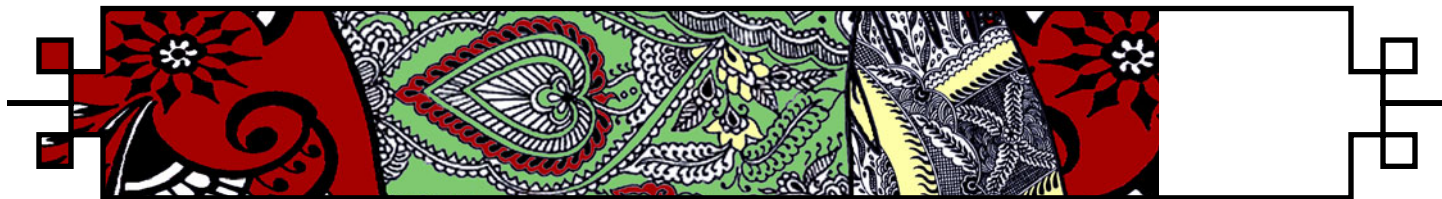


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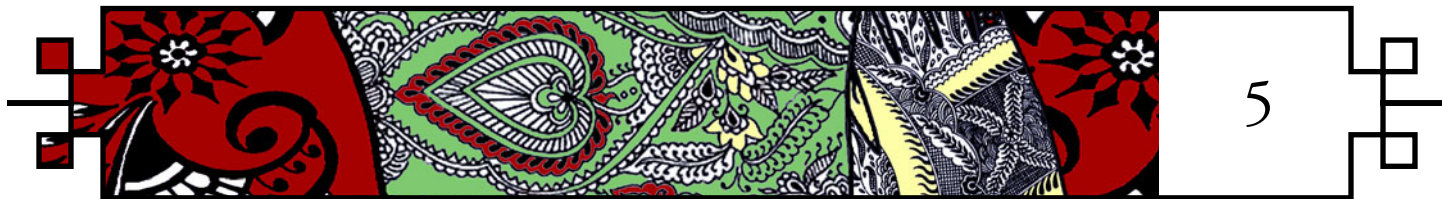
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Hinduism is a particularly deep and rich religion, full of contradictions, conundrums, and a panoply of colorful and varied personalities. The historical layers of tradition make sorting out the gods and their aspects challenging. What were once the supreme deities in ancient times have become relegated to lesser positions in more recent eras. Goddesses especially have multiple identities: is Devi one goddess with many aspects or many goddesses? Vishnu alone has at least ten avatars or manifestations. Out of necessity, some simplification has been done for game purposes, while striving to keep the spirit of the religion intact.

HISTORY

According to its adherents, the pantheon of Hindu deities came to Sahasra untold eons ago. After Brahma created the world and all that is in it, he largely left it to its own devices. Vishnu, Lord of the Universe, saw that the fairest land of all Brahma's creation was Sahasra. The people's hearts were open to him and his consort, Lakshmi. The first crude temple that was built in all the land was dedicated to the worship of Vishnu. This temple still stands today, somewhere in the heart of the Land of 1,000 Cities, protected from harm by Vishnu himself.

When Vishnu drew near to Sahasra and bestowed his blessings upon it, the attention of other gods was drawn to the land as well. Those gods who were companions or allies of Vishnu saw the wisdom of protecting the beauty and riches, both spiritual and material, of Sahasra. Opponents of the Lord of the Universe saw the opportunity to foul Vishnu's plans. They were moved by the attractions of the land as well, gaining followers among its people.

The chief goal of the pantheon is to protect Sahasra and its people from the incursions of the demons of the universe. While the gods may disagree among themselves about the best way to carry out this protection, they are united in this goal. Their ostensible reasons and secret motivations for the

goal are detailed in their individual descriptions in the God and Goddesses section.

Worshippers of the Hindu pantheon are a mix of common people and adventurers. The common people find and revere aspects of the gods that are appealing to their lives, while adventurers are particularly drawn to Vishnu as the Cosmic Adventurer. Hinduism has by far the largest number of adherents in Sahasra.

MAJOR CONCEPTS

The worshippers of the Hindu pantheon in Sahasra feel a kinship with other worshippers, no matter which god they have chosen. Few, if any, Sahasrans worship the entire pantheon. Members of the same family may worship a diversity of gods, but feel that they are all united. Hinduism is not an evangelical religion, and worshippers are comfortable with this diversity.

In Hinduism, the system known as *dharma* is important. Dharma is the duties and obligations, the actions that one does. These duties vary, depending on the god worshipped, but all actions taken are important, more important than the specific teachings of a particular god. The belief in dharma is the belief that correctly performing required rituals is a good in itself.

The specific actions themselves are referred to as *karma*. The accumulation of these actions throughout one's life determines what ultimately happens to the soul. After death, the soul may be reincarnated (*samsāra*), depending on the deeds done in life. The ultimate goal of the soul in the Hindu system is *moksha*, personal salvation or liberation from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

HINDUISM IN DAILY LIFE

As with any religion, some adherents are more devoted than others, but most who profess to worship the Hindu pantheon perform regular rituals dedicated to their favorite god. These rituals can be divided into two categories: rites of passage and rites of worship.

The major rites of passage include birth, high-caste initiation,



marriage, and funerals. Other rites emphasize the importance of literacy in Sahasran society, such as when the child learns the alphabet (age 5-7), known as “the beginning of knowledge”, and the ritual performed when the study of the sacred scriptures begins.

Rites of worship include public rituals, such as sacrifice, particularly the offering of flowers, incense, and vegetarian food (although some deities accept blood sacrifices); attendance at festivals, both local and regional; pilgrimage to various holy places throughout the land; consulting of astrologers, particularly in making important decisions; and private rituals, mainly performed by a devoted worshipper for a specific reason, although these private rituals do not replace the public rituals. Ritual purity is an important concept in these rites, and the morning’s daily cleansing is emphasized before rituals may be undertaken. *Mantras*, or the speaking of ritual formulas, are important in ritual worship and vary depending on the god worshipped.

STRUCTURE OF CLERGY

“*Brahmin* is the highest social class, and its members are respected as being of greater ritual purity. They maintain this purity through remaining vegetarian and abstaining from certain occupations thought impure. Because of their study and recitation of sacred scriptures, they are highly educated and are considered both spiritual and intellectual elites. They serve as ministers and advisers to the rulers of society, who are usually warriors. Traditionally Brahmins act as priests for weddings, funerals and ceremonial occasions.” – from *Sahasra: Land of 1,000 Cities*

Hindu clergy members include priests, teachers (*gurus*), and ascetics. While clergy associated with a temple may be arranged into a loose hierarchy, most people who devote their lives exclusively to religious activity perform their functions independently. Certain members of the Brahmin class who feel the call to service become priests. Often, but not exclusively, the call to service happens during the “renouncer” stage of life (see sidebar).

Householders perform many of their own ceremonies, but priests are necessary for community rituals. Priests preside at all major lifestage rituals, including weddings, funerals, and

other ceremonial occasions. Since so much of Hindu worship involves ritual, the priest is an important figure, helping the faithful through complicated ceremonies and ensuring that these are carried out as the gods wish.

Teachers, or *gurus*, are Brahmin who study the ancient Hindu religious texts and impart this knowledge to students. Gurus also coach students in the ways of meditation and in proper methods of yoga. Through the use of mantras, they gain control over their bodies and achieve amazing feats for themselves and those around them. Gurus may remain associated with a particular village or city, or they may wander throughout the land, acquiring knowledge and dispensing it to those who have need. A wise ruler will engage the services of a guru, who will then help her make decisions for governing the people based on the ancient teachings.

Ascetics are those people who have chosen to devote themselves to their god, particularly in the third and fourth stages of life (see sidebar). They spend their lives in fasting, meditation, and the performance of rituals to prepare themselves for the eventual liberation of their souls. Ascetics are treated with reverence by those who encounter them, but not all ascetics are holy. False ascetics are a recognized problem in society; these people achieve their goals through deception and falsehood. Many ascetics, true and false, live on the cremation

STAGES OF LIFE IN HINDUISM

Many Brahmins follow the system of the four stages of life: the student, the householder, the hermit, and the renouncer. The student stage begins when the Brahmin is young, after his initiation ceremony. He studies the holy texts with a teacher or *guru*. During this stage, he is under a strict rule of celibacy. The next stage is that of householder, when he marries and has a family. In the third stage, generally when he is of an advanced age, he and his wife retire to the forest as hermits to devote themselves to a life of ritual. Finally, in the renouncer stage, the Brahmin no longer cooks his own food, but begs for it. He goes beyond his attachment to the material world and concerns himself with the spiritual realm.

grounds and cover themselves with ashes as a symbol of their renunciation of the material world.

Others who draw their inspiration from divine sources in defending Sahasra against demonic incursion, but who are not members of the clergy, include the nataraja, whose fierce dances draw strength from Shiva; the harriers, worshippers of Hanuman who battle rakshasas either with weapons or spells; and the Phansigar, zealously devoted servants of Kali who kill travelers and sacrifice them to her.

EXAMPLE NPCS

Manisha (female human cleric 10) is a priest of Vishnu who serves in the large temple in Ujjayini. She is a member of the Brahmin class of society and was trained from an early age to carry out worship rituals. Her voice is rich and lilting; when she recites the hymns, she is often asked why she did not choose to sing professionally. She replies with a smile, "I prefer to serve Vishnu here, helping others achieve their dharma, which in turn blesses me." (See Reciter of Hymns under Feats for more information.) When the city of Ujjayini is in danger, King Vikrama calls upon her to help in its defense, and she gladly complies.

Sanjay (male human nataraja 3) began his devotion to Shiva at an early age, when his mother told him the story of how the god broke the back of the demon Muyalaka with his toe. Sanjay was fascinated with the image of the dancing Shiva, and he apprenticed himself at the nearest temple at the age of seven. On his eighteenth birthday, he set out on his own, intent on emulating Shiva Nataraja. His fiercely athletic dances alarm and amaze those who witness them. He has gained renown as a slayer of demons, but he shrugs off such acclaim and gives the glory to the cosmic dancer.

Rikka (female kananaukas rogue 7/Sword of Hanuman's Harriers 1) served as a scout for many years, defending her village from incursions by rakshasas. When her husband and children were slain in a raid, she vowed over their bodies that the rakshasa scourge would be wiped from the face of Sahasra. She sought out Hanuman's Harriers, a group of dedicated worshippers of the monkey god Hanuman, and was given immediate admittance because of her previous

experience against the evil beings. The training is difficult for her, but she is determined to prevail. Already she has used her new piercer of veils ability to see through a rakshasa's change shape ability.



GODS AND GODDESSES

Deity	Portfolio	Domains	Description	Symbols/Weapons
* Vishnu (LG)	Law, society, benevolence, protector	Good, Law, Protection, Strength	Black or blue skin, 4 arms, wears yellow	Rides Garuda, the man-bird; weapon: club
Shiva (CN)	Truth, energy, darkness, destroyer	Chaos, Death, Destruction	Three heads, 3 eyes (3 rd eye always closed), scantily clad or naked, blue neck. Also depicted wearing a necklace of skulls, entwined with snakes, body smeared with ashes.	Rides Nandi, the white bull; weapon: trident
Brahma (N)	Creator	Beginning*	Red or pink skin, 4 faces (3 visible)	Rides a goose or sits in a lotus; carries a water jug, a spoon, a scepter, his bow Parivita, wears beads representing time
Devi (CN)	Cycles of life, nourishment, growing things	Plant, Protection	Beautiful young woman in regal attire	Weapon: sword
Hanuman (NG)	Health, healing, knowledge from the written word	Healing, Knowledge	Monkey head and muscular human body	Weapon: club
Kali (NE)	Time, fertility, mysteries, destruction, death	Burning Ground*, Death, Fury*, Hidden*, War	Dark blue or black skin, adorned with skulls	Weapon: sword
Ganesha (NG)	Guardian of the way, knowledge and the arts, speech, learning, cultural arts, science	Eloquence*, Knowledge, Scribe*, Travel	Large belly, elephant head, at least 4 arms	Weapon: lasso
Lakshmi (NG)	Wealth and happiness, prosperity, luck, business	Law, Luck, Prosperity*	Golden skin, 4 arms (when alone) or 2 arms (when with Vishnu)	Weapon: club and shield
Karttikeya (CG)	Warfare, thievery, demon slaying	Trickery, War	Radiantly fair youth, extraordinarily strong, 6 heads, usually 12 arms	Rides a peacock; weapon: spear and shield
Yama (LN)	Death, judgment, justice	Death, Judgment*, Justice*	Green skin, red garments	Rides a black buffalo; weapon: club

* indicates new domains



VISHNU: COSMIC ADVENTURER

Vishnu is the supreme god in the Hindu pantheon of Sahasra. He is the lawful good god of order, society, and benevolence. He is the pillar of the universe and the traveler who opens up the way, making human existence possible. Of particular interest to adventurers in Sahasra is the concept that everything in the universe lives within Vishnu's three strides or footsteps, from which his nickname The Cosmic Adventurer is derived. A social god, Vishnu actively intervenes in human society whenever universal law and order are threatened and chaos reigns. When he must fight chaos, he incarnates himself in one of ten avatars, which range from animal to human forms. These forms are Matsya (fish), Kūrma (tortoise), Varāha (boar), Marasinha (man-lion), Vāmana (dwarf), Paraśurāma (Rāma with an ax), Rāma (known as the gentle Rāma), Krishna, Buddha, and Kalkī (the white horse), the form in which Vishnu will purify the world and destroy wickedness at the end of the present age.

Vishnu rules over the areas of law, society and benevolence, worshipped by Sahasrans of all walks of life. His domains are Good, Law, Protection, and Strength.

Worship of Vishnu is characterized by *bhakti*, or devotion, a complete surrender and deep emotional attachment to him. The worshipper of Vishnu performs deeds in his name that advance the cause of law, such as destroying demons and other evil monsters, discovering lost temples dedicated to him or one of his avatars, bathing in and protecting holy rivers, and aiding the oppressed and needy. These deeds are in addition to the typical acts of piety expected of any Hindu. The acquisition of status and wealth, while not frowned upon, should not be the whole focus of a follower of Vishnu. Falsehood, hypocrisy, envy, aggression, and pride are traits that are not found in a true son or daughter of Vishnu.

The story of the Hindu pantheon in Sahasra is the story of Vishnu. His charismatic leadership drew other gods to the land when, after creating it, he named it his especial abode. Since the land was so blessed, the people living in Sahasra at

the dawn of time praised the name of Vishnu and constructed a temple somewhere in the heart of the sub-continent. The temple was called Devayatana, the dwelling of the god, constructed of crude sandstone and decorated with primitive carvings displaying the actions and life of Vishnu. Despite its primitive character, it fairly glowed with holiness—making it an irresistible target for demons. One demon in particular took the form of the powerful King Kamsha, ruler of the region surrounding the temple, and hid the temple from sight in a labyrinth of mystical caverns. The followers of Vishnu tried in vain to defeat Kamsha, who wreaked havoc throughout the land. Hearing their cries, Vishnu incarnated himself as Krishna and battled Kamsha. He succeeded in banishing the demon, but the temple itself was lost. Vishnu periodically sends adventurers in search of the temple.

Most other members of the Hindu pantheon revere and respect Vishnu, an attitude he reciprocates. He sees in Shiva a dual nature that is necessary, even though that nature often brings chaos to Sahasra. Lakshmi, Vishnu's consort, is one of his staunchest allies, as are Hanuman and Ganesha. Vishnu and Devi, Shiva's consort, are often on poor terms because of the actions of her multifaceted nature, but they have never fought. Shiva intervenes before the situation can escalate.

Vishnu's attitude toward other pantheons is benevolent. Indeed, he looks on Buddha as one of his avatars. He is less interested in the philosophy of yoga, seeing asceticism as the province of Shiva. Hashishim is far too chaotic, and he and his followers often clash with adherents of that faith. Vishnu views Jainism as merely an emphasis on principles he espouses, and he allows its followers complete freedom to worship as they desire.

The primary long-term goal of Vishnu is to preserve the earth, particularly Sahasra, from harm until the ultimate battle that heralds the end of the present age. He fends off the incursions of demons in whatever incarnation he deems necessary. He also continually works to neutralize the chaos caused by Shiva. In the short term, Vishnu sends adventurers to seek his lost temple, Devayatana. Its loss grieves him, and he is unsure why he cannot overcome the evil wrought by the demon Kamsha.



The chief festival devoted to Vishnu comes in the spring, and it is called the Feast of Renewing. This feast is celebrated throughout Sahasra. It is a time of giving gifts, especially by those who have been greatly blessed with riches. In recent years, rulers have used this time to travel through their realms in caravans, distributing gifts of food and new clothing to their poorest citizens. Organized bands of robbers, especially those headquartered in the village of Adhyaka, have become a plague during the Feast of Renewing, so adventurers must be hired as escorts for these caravans.

SHIVA: COSMIC CHAOS

Shiva, a chaotic neutral god, is a paradoxical figure of opposites. He embodies the ascetic and the sexual, the terrible and the mild. In Sahasra, though, he manifests his darker side, ruling over the forces of death, night, violence, and annihilation. He is a dancer, originator of the eternal rhythm of the universe. He is depicted in Sahasran art with a necklace of skulls, entwined with snakes, his body smeared with ashes. Shiva is closely identified with Shakti, his consort, who is literally his power.

Shiva rules over truth, energy, and darkness. Ascetics and yogis in particular worship him. His domains are Chaos, Death, and Destruction.

Shiva hears the prayers of the sincere worshipper, especially inclining his ear toward those who perform rituals dedicated to him in his sacred place, the cemetery or burning ground. He is seen as the god who destroys the cosmos, and his followers work toward helping him achieve that aim. The common people who worship Shiva must offer sacrifices using specific mantras (see p. 38), follow the precepts in the holy texts or Tantras (see section on Devi), and undertake a pilgrimage to a burning ground at least every seven years. The emphasis in the worship of Shiva is on the liberation and knowledge that death brings. Asceticism is one way of simulating death while continuing to cultivate an army of worshippers for Shiva on the earth. This dark view of life and the cosmos is not as strongly held among typical worshippers, but the priests of Shiva, those completely

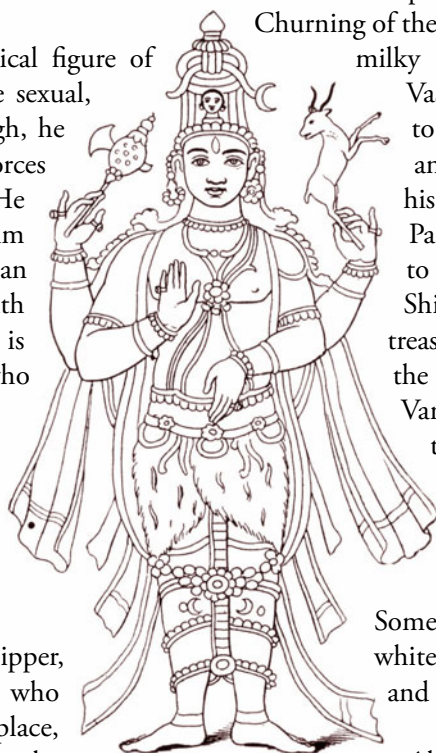
devoted to his cause, attempt to put these views into practice every day.

While he is seen as a lone ascetic, he comes to the aid of the other members of the pantheon at times of great need. Perhaps the greatest of these times occurred when the Elixir of Immortality was lost, an event written of in all the sacred Hindu writings. Shiva followed Vishnu and the other gods, setting aside their eternal struggles with the demons (*asurayas*) in order to focus on recovering the elixir together. They used a vast holy mountain as a churning-stick and the serpent Vasuki as a rope to accomplish what became known as the Churning of the Milky Ocean. The gods churned the cosmic

milky ocean for a thousand years. The serpent Vasuki spat out its poison, which threatened to pollute the ocean and kill both the gods and the demons. Shiva caught the venom in his mouth, and his quick-thinking consort Parvati clasped her hands around his throat to keep him from swallowing it. Ever after, Shiva was depicted with a blue throat. Various treasures came to the gods from the churning of the ocean, including Surabhi, the cow of plenty; Varunī, the goddess of wine; Pārijata, the coral tree that perfumes the world; the celestial nymphs called the Apsarases; Lakshmī, the goddess of beauty (who became Vishnu's consort); and lastly, the physician of the gods, bearing the Elixir of Immortality. Some of the treasures, such as Airāvata the milk-white elephant, are said to have come to Sahasra and may still be found by adventurers.

Although Shiva himself cooperates at need with the other gods of the Sahasran pantheon, the same cannot be said of his devotees. The followers of Shiva, particularly those devoted worshippers who have taken on the mantle of asceticism, deny that Vishnu is the supreme god, instead revering Shiva above all. Clerics of Shiva will often command their adherents to destroy 'blasphemers' who worship other gods.

Shiva's primary long-term goal is destroying the world. He is prevented from the world's immediate destruction by the cycle of regeneration and rebirth that even he cannot endanger. His



priests attempt to hasten the ultimate destruction through the rituals they perform. In the short term, Shiva is seeking more converts. He has granted extraordinary spells to certain of his priests if they follow the prescribed rites, allowing them to generate more power for Shiva. These fanatical priests are spreading the teachings of Shiva and promising wealth to those who join them. Many of the common people are skeptical, but in some regions ruled by oppressive tyrants, these priests are gaining large numbers of converts.

Both the Festival of the Milky Ocean, which commemorates the Churning of the Ocean, and the Dance of Shiva, a festival of intricate and beautiful dancing, are celebrated in honor of Shiva. They are very popular, especially among the common people. His most sacred feast day is that of the Quiet Night, held on the longest night of the year. On the Quiet Night, his followers fast during the day and assemble at sundown in a cemetery. They sit quietly and meditate through the entire night, not speaking or sleeping, while around them cavort all manner of *bhuta* and various evil spirits. At dawn, those who remain—for there are always a certain number who flee in terror—gather at the gates of the cemetery for a feast and storytelling of the creatures seen, heard or sensed during the night.

BRAHMA: COSMIC CREATOR

Brahma created the world and everything in it. He is part of the Trimurti, or trinity, with Vishnu the preserver and Shiva the destroyer. He is depicted as having four faces that represent the four *Vedas*, the holy books of creation. Instead of a weapon, he carries with him a vessel of water, the source of life. The stories of Brahma say that when he opened his eyes, the universe came into being and that when he closes them again, the universe will end. To him, a day lasts 4,320,000 years (an interval known as a *kalpa*), a year lasts 360 *kalpa*, and his life is one hundred *kalpas* long. Brahma should not be confused with the godforce, Brahman, nor the priestly class, Brahmin.

Brahma is the ruler of creation and the beginning of things. As such, his domain is Beginning.

While Brahma created the world, he is rarely worshipped in Sahasra. He is content to sit back and observe the pageantry of life and the adventures of the other gods, but does not intervene. He bides his time until he is ready to sleep, thus ending the universe and starting the cycle of rebirth.

The creator god was self-existent. He created himself as a boar, using his mighty tusks to pull the world up out of the vast, watery deep. He went on to create everything else. One of Brahma's early creations was Ignorance, which he discarded. Legends say that Ignorance survived to become Night, who then spawned various creatures of darkness such as the *bhuta* and *vetala*. Brahma then created the immortal gods before separating parts of his body from himself to form the *asuryas*. The earth was created from Brahma's feet. Many storytellers in Sahasra say that their beloved land was formed from the creator god's great toe. Having created the world, Brahma handed the reins over to Vishnu to preserve and sustain it and to Shiva to destroy it in the fullness of time.

The other members of the pantheon pay little heed to Brahma, and he, in turn, pays little heed to them. He resides in his paradise, Brahmaloka, with Sarasvati, his principal wife, noting what goes on. When the world is in great turmoil, particularly in times when the demon forces are aggressive, the other gods consult him for advice, which he is pleased to dispense. The other gods acknowledge his supremacy, even though they may not always be demonstrative of it.

Brahma's attitude toward other pantheons, however, is one of grave concern. He cares for his creation on an abstract level and does not wish harm to come to it. He knows the gods in his own pantheon; he created them. He does not know gods of other pantheons, and he fears that they do not know how to care for Sahasra and the broader world. Brahma does not interfere, however.

All of Brahma's goals are long term. He looks for the day when he will be needed for the recreation of the universe. Until then, he awaits the inquiries of the other gods and dispenses his wisdom as needed.



The feast day of Brahma is held on the first full moon night in the second month of winter. The image of Brahma is presented with a single flower and the traditional *ghee*, or sacrificial butter.

DEVI: COSMIC QUEEN

Devi is the Great Mother, the regal figure upon a heavenly throne, beautiful and terrible to behold. She hears the pleas of her worshippers and cares for them in their suffering. Vishnu and Shiva themselves, as well as the other gods and goddesses, bow to her wishes. In her form as Shakti, personification of creative power and vitality, she aids Shiva. She aided Vishnu in creation, indeed providing the essence that guided his footsteps as he brought the world into being. Devi is life and vitality, nourishing the earth with her immense reservoir of power. She is also known as the granter of wisdom, learning and liberation, the fount of both spiritual wisdom and practical knowledge, through which civilizations are built. One of her favorite manifestations is that of Durga, the fierce warrior woman, slayer of demons.

Devi rules over the cycles of life, nourishment, and growing things. Her domains are Plant and Protection.

Important in the dogma of Devi are the Tantras, holy texts that give guidance on how the goddess is to be worshipped. These texts advocate the ritual use of five items or substances that are generally considered forbidden to Brahmins: wine, fish, meat, parched grain, and sexual union. Some groups who worship Devi accept that these items must be used in ritual, despite their apparent defilement, while others use substitutes that allow them to maintain their traditional purity. Sexual rites are important as offerings to Devi, symbolizing male and female polarity in the universe. Through rituals involving these elements, the worshipper achieves higher states of consciousness.

At its heart, tantra is concerned with *sādhana*, or practice, the procedure that activates the inner powers of the worshipper. The identification of Devi, or any other god worshipped via the tantric method, with an image of her is important to

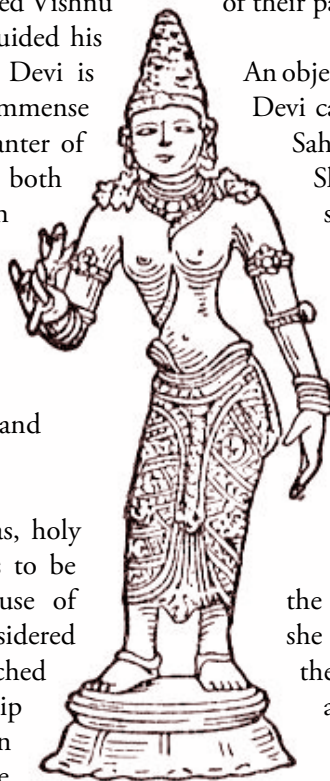
sādhana. Various symbols appear in the image, which have specific devotional meaning; for example, the goddess' hands are shown in particular positions, or *mudrās*, that may mean tranquility, protection, or the bestowal of a benediction.

Devi has only recently directed her attention to Sahasra. While she has known of the land since its creation, as she indeed knows of all things, only a few centuries ago did she decide that Vishnu and Shiva were not showing adequate care for Sahasra. The people of the land needed more. She founded the Order of Devi, paladins who see it as their duty to protect the innocent throughout the land and spread the benevolence of their patron goddess.

An object of adoration by other members of the pantheon, Devi cares for them as much as for her worshippers in Sahasra. She chastises those who stray, particularly Shiva, for whom she has a particular affection. She serves as a constant reminder of the dignity that is expected of a god and the duties that being worshipped brings.

Devi is tolerant of other pantheons and spiritual philosophies, although she has little patience with those that are wholly decadent and destructive. With Vishnu, she abhors demons and would wipe them all out if she could. She has often attacked demons who have attempted to usurp the positions of the other gods. Few in the pantheon know the reason for her hatred: when she first came to watch over Sahasra, she wandered the land in the form of a human woman. She met and fell in love with a man and bore him a son. It was not until after the birth of her son that she realized the man's true nature. The son, Aziva, half demon. Her lover turned back into his true form and vanished forever. Aziva continues to wreak havoc on the earth to this day, particularly in his attempts to usurp Vishnu's position.

The first and foremost goal of Devi is to tend to the earth and see that the other members of the pantheon care for its followers. She continually fights against threats from demons, leading the other gods into battle as necessary. Much of Devi's time is spent in service to her followers. She hears their cries,



and she has intervened many times on behalf of warriors who are in valiant life and death struggles, subtly helping them fight against greater evil and allowing them to maintain their dignity.

Once a week, temples throughout Sahasra celebrate Devi with rituals and songs. Her major festival is the Feast of the Mother of Earth, three days of joy and song held in the same month as the Feast of Renewing. Many children are conceived during this festival, which celebrates procreation and life.

HANUMAN

Born of a union between the wind god and the queen of the monkeys and raised in the underground city of Kishkindha by the *kananaukas*, Hanuman is the neutral good monkey god. He is worshipped as a healer, a maker of healing medicines, as well as a poet and patron of beautiful words and writing.

Hanuman rules over health, healing, and knowledge gained from the written word. Healers and bards in particular revere him. His domains are Healing and Knowledge.

The monkey god is revered for his assistance in time of need, but he is worshipped only as a minor god, generally as a companion of Vishnu in his incarnation as Rama. He is especially dear to the *kananaukas*, the monkey people of Sahasra, who view him as one of their own.

Hanuman's assistance of Rama led to his elevation to godhood. When Rama's wife Sita was kidnapped by the evil rakshasa Revala, Hanuman helped rescue her. He suffered greatly when he was temporarily held captive by Revala in his fortress city of Lankhala. The rakshasas set his tail afire, which was a tremendous humiliation. In revenge, as he escaped, Hanuman swept his tail around and set the town ablaze. For his bravery and his subsequent leadership of the army of the monkey king against the rakshasas, Hanuman was elevated by Vishnu.

The monkey god is a genial friend to all the other gods, even

those of darker aspect. He is well respected for his bravery, and his gentle humor and storytelling ease the countenances of the sternest gods.

As a newcomer to the pantheon of Sahasra, Hanuman does not condemn the worship of any other pantheons or those following other spiritual philosophies. He does condemn evil in all its forms, with particular hatred for rakshasas. The order of Hanuman's Harriers fight rakshasas in his name.

KALI

The goddess Kali, often known as the Dark Goddess, presents a fearsome aspect to the world of Sahasra. She is the female counterpart of Shiva in many ways, clad in serpent bracelets, a necklace of severed heads, a girdle of human arms, and little else. Kali fights demons, but with such ferocity that she threatens to destroy everything around her, including the stability of Sahasra. She is depicted as a black-skinned, wild-haired denizen of the cremation ground, companion to jackals and spirits.

Kali is the ruler over time, fertility, mysteries, destruction, and death. She is worshipped by those who need courage, especially fighters; by necromancers and rogues, who make their way daily through darkness; and by anyone intent on vengeance, especially through stealth and secrecy. Her domains are Burning Ground, Death, Fury, Hidden, and War.

Worshippers of Kali believe they are outside the moral order, that she guides them in ways that are not possible through mainstream society. They participate in the ritual of the *pañcatattva*, or "five forbidden truths," in which they partake of food items forbidden to those who would remain spiritually clean, as well as ingesting a grain-based hallucinogen and partaking in illicit sexual intercourse. While this ritual is often performed in service to Devi, performing it for Kali symbolizes Kali's forbidden nature through her association with death itself. She bids her worshippers to become unafraid of death and its trappings, such as the cremation ground and the creatures that



lurk therein. A true devotee of Kali who wishes to become part of her inner circle will perform the *pañcatattva* ritual, spend a night in a cemetery in conversation with a vetala or other spirits, and hunt down and slay a demon single-handedly. The liberation from fear that these acts produce renders the worshipper of Kali a truly fearsome opponent. Especially fearsome in some areas of Sahasra is the cult of Kali's fervent worshippers, called the Phansigars (stranglers), who surprise and ritually murder travelers and offer their dead bodies to her.

Kali has always been aware of Sahasra, but Sahasrans knew her chiefly as the embodiment of the fear and darkness found in the cemetery or cremation ground. She came to the attention of the other gods when they fought a demon army. Kali appeared from nowhere, clad in a garland of human heads and a tiger skin, wielding a skull-topped staff and a fierce-edged sword. She tore any demon in her path apart with her bare hands and decapitated the two demon generals with one stroke of her sword. The day seemed won by Kali and the gods until the demon Raktabija appeared. Raktabija could reproduce himself instantly from the drops of blood that fell to the ground when he was wounded, producing a host of demons that threatened to overwhelm the gods. Kali solved the problem by sucking the blood from Raktabija's body and then devouring all the duplicate demons. From that point on, she was celebrated as a defeater of demons, but she was also greatly feared.

Kali's attention is generally focused on searching out and fighting demons and enabling her followers to do so. She does not spend much time thinking about the other members of the pantheon. She is friendly with Shiva, as he shares many of her aspirations. She has little use for the other gods of Sahasra. As with Shiva's devotees, the followers of Kali, by nature a dark and secretive lot, look upon the worshippers of other gods with suspicion and distrust, if not disdain.

The dark goddess does not acknowledge the existence of other pantheons and does not consider the other spiritual philosophies one way or another. Again, her followers are suspicious, if not downright hostile toward worshippers of other pantheons. Many of them seek to destroy followers of other gods.

Although Kali agrees with Shiva's long-term goal of destroying the world in principle, she is not active in bringing it about. She is far more concerned with fighting the incursion of demons into the world and Sahasra in particular. Her long and short term goals coincide; she is narrowly focused on destruction of demons and eventually cleansing of them from the universe.

Kali's followers among the common people celebrate the Quiet Night, reverencing Kali and Shiva at the same time (see the section on Shiva above). Her fiercer devotees have a festival known as the Days of Frenzy, three days in the autumn when offerings are gathered for a massive blood sacrifice. Most cities of Sahasra have either outlawed this practice or insisted on animal or symbolic sacrifice. The center of her devotion is Dharajala, a city built on the ruins of an ancient temple that is sacred to Kali. Few travelers are brave enough to venture near this city during the Days of Frenzy, but those who have returned tell stories of fierce dances, wild battles, and blood splashed everywhere.

GANESHA

Ganesha, the neutral good elephant-headed god with an enormous belly, is one of the most popular in Sahasra. The eldest son of Shiva and Parvati, he is known as the clearer of obstacles and brings good luck. He must be appeased before any other god is approached, so he acts as an intermediary between worshippers and the pantheon. The servants of Shiva, demon dwarves known as the Ganas, are under Ganesha's control as well (see sidebar). Ganesha is often depicted riding a mouse and wearing a snake for a belt.

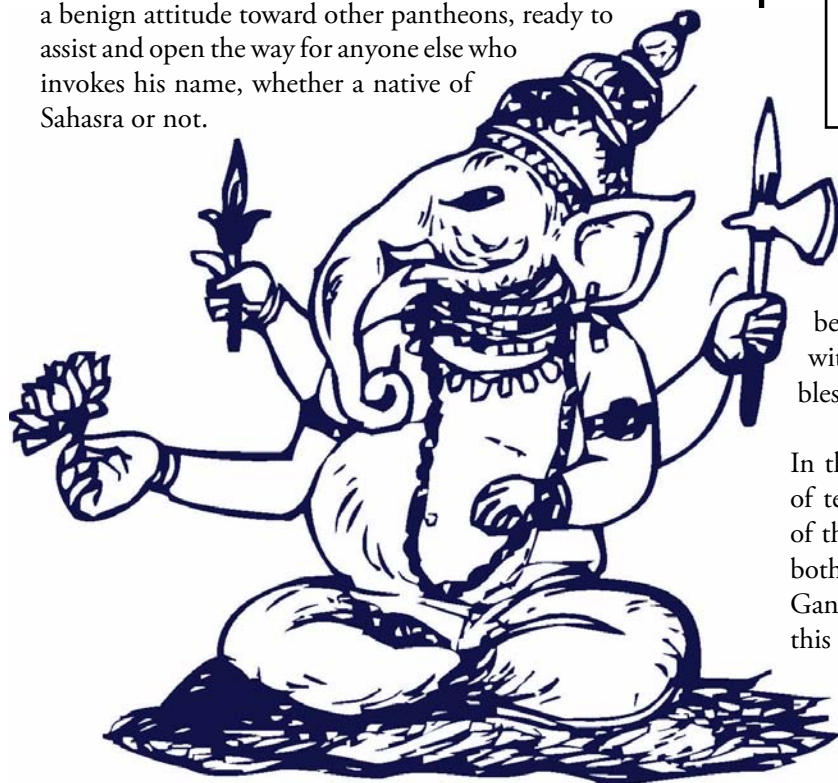
Ganesha rules over the areas of wisdom, eloquence, arts, and letters, and the sciences. He is considered the first scribe, and thus has dominion over scribes, scholars, and literature. His domains are Eloquence, Knowledge, Scribe, and Travel. He is particularly worshipped by bards and wizards. The Vidyadhari count him as a special patron.

Worshippers of the other gods of the Sahasran pantheon usually pay homage to Ganesha as well, since he is considered the "opener of the way." Ganesha teaches that earthly delights, such as the indulgence in eating that his massive belly symbolizes, are not a hindrance to spiritual pursuits. He is consulted before trips or establishing new businesses, and he

is invoked in other important ritual undertakings, particularly weddings and births. He is worshipped with offerings of fruits and vegetables to assuage his massive hunger.

Many stories exist that explain why Ganesha has the head of an elephant. One story relates that he was created by Parvati to guard her chamber while she meditated. She named him Ganesha. Her husband Shiva came to see her, and annoyed by the intervention of the guard, ripped off his head. Parvati saw what he had done and was horrified that her creation was desecrated. To console her, Shiva promised to revive Ganesha and replace his head with that of the first being that he saw. That first being was an elephant. Ganesha has been an important part of the pantheon ever since, serving in a cheerful and useful manner. He has only one tusk. The other was broken off when Rama, who was being barred by Ganesha from seeking an audience with Shiva, threw his axe. The axe belonged to Shiva, so the elephant-headed god allowed it to strike him, to the detriment of his tusk.

Ganesha is especially fond of Shiva and Parvati. In his role as gatekeeper to the gods, he has earned favor from all of them, and makes it a practice not to favor one over the other. He has a benign attitude toward other pantheons, ready to assist and open the way for anyone else who invokes his name, whether a native of Sahasra or not.



THE GANAS

The Ganas, servants of Shiva, are tamed lesser demons, formerly under the control of the asuryas (see below). They have been tasked with overseeing diverse areas of nature and sacrifice that are vital to the sustenance of the gods, such as the twelve annual phases of the sun, various natural phenomenon, and funeral offerings. The GM may wish to have particular Ganas appear as messengers or obstacles for the PCs. A Gana is twisted or deformed in some way, appearing as a fearsome creature. Use the duergar as a base, with the following changes:

--In addition to *enlarge person* and *invisibility*, add one spell-like ability, usable 1/day, as appropriate for the Gana's duties. Suggestions are: *heat metal* or *endure elements* for volcanic Ganas, *fog cloud*, *gust of wind* or *sleet storm* for weather-related Ganas, or *darkness* for those who oversee funeral offerings.

--Eliminate light sensitivity.

--Favored Class: Druid.

Ganesha's long-term goal is the protection and service of the other gods. He is also strongly interested in the preservation of knowledge. Many libraries and repositories of knowledge—oral as well as print—have been destroyed by the demons who are constantly at war with the gods of Sahasra, and Ganesha promises a special blessing on those who aid his fight against their destruction.

In the short term, Ganesha seeks to prevent the desecration of temples throughout Sahasra. A band of unknown agents of the demon Zranthana have been destroying ancient texts, both religious and secular, and killing noted Vidyadharis. Ganesha will greatly reward anyone who can put an end to this destruction.

Although most celebrations and festivals invoke Ganesha at the beginning, his chief festival is Ganesha-Chaturthi, celebrated in late summer. Images are made



of him out of clay, wood or paper, surrounded with lamps and mirrors, and worshipped for ten days with offerings of rice pudding. At the end of this time, the images are thrown into the water.

LAKSHMI

Lakshmi, the beautiful consort of Vishnu, is the very model of the devoted wife as well as the goddess of wealth and prosperity. In all of Vishnu's avatars, Lakshmi is there with him as the avatar's mate. She upholds the orderliness of the universe in the same way she manages an orderly household. Lakshmi presides over all things domestic, including cooking and household management, and as such, she is also the goddess of wealth, happiness, luck, and prosperity. She is revered by merchants and other business people. Her domains are Law, Luck, and Prosperity.

The presence of Lakshmi provides authority and power to the rulers of Sahasra, who in turn must worship her by actively pursuing good conduct, virtuous behavior, truth, and strength. These qualities are not just required of rulers, however. Anyone worshipping Lakshmi must also display them. She has few temples, but she is usually worshipped in the home.

When the gods and demons united to restore the Elixir of Immortality in the act known as the Churning of the Milky Ocean, Lakshmi emerged from the waters as one of the resulting treasures, holding her symbol, the lotus. She was dazzlingly beautiful, and all the gods wanted her for their wife. She favored them all with a radiant smile, but chose Vishnu and has remained faithful to him throughout the ages. When he turned his attentions to Sahasra, she, too, saw the land as worthy, and she devotes much of her energy to its preservation and enrichment.

The other members of the pantheon look upon Lakshmi as benevolent and caring, and generally endeavor to keep her happy. She and Shiva do not see eye to eye on most matters. Lakshmi strives to maintain the attitude her husband has toward Shiva, that a certain amount of chaos is necessary for balance, but she is barely civil to him and his consort, Devi.

As might be assumed for a deity so focused on law and order, Lakshmi does not approve of the worship of other pantheons, especially within the realm of Sahasra. She sees the "foreign gods" as a threat to an orderly society. She does not actively oppose their worship, but if followers of a deity outside her pantheon move in force against worshippers of her pantheon, she would bring her might and that of Vishnu to bear against them.

Lakshmi is concerned with maintaining order throughout the universe. When that is disrupted, she selects good and virtuous devotees, whether or not they are warriors, and enlists them in her cause to help restore order. Those faithful who assist her in these endeavors are richly rewarded and prosperous throughout the rest of their lives. She is particularly opposed to the chaos brought about by the daityas and actively seeks to destroy them all.

As the source of royal power, Lakshmi is concerned with the behavior of Sahasra's rulers. She is particularly concerned with the activities of King Jayasima, tyrannical ruler of the city of Viyadisa. Not only has Jayasima misused his power by making an alliance with the ogres of that region, he has also restricted the iron ore trade.

Lakshmi is celebrated at two festivals: the Feast of Lamps and Lakshmi-Vrata. The Feast of Lamps is held in late fall, during the new moon, and is the time when bankers and merchants count their wealth, blessed by Lakshmi. Lakshmi-Vrata is held in late summer, just before the full moon, celebrating her charitable aspects.

KARTTIKEYA

Karttikeya is the six-headed god of war and bravery in the Hindu pantheon, as well as the patron of thieves. He is renowned for his prowess in battle against demons, spending much of his time rallying support among the gods against them.

Karttikeya rules over warfare, thievery, and demon slaying. His domains are Trickery and War. He is worshipped by fighters, rogues, and warriors. Anyone who needs bravery calls on his name.



Bravery is the chief virtue that Karttikeya expects of his followers, whether soldiers or thieves. His clerics preach the importance of loyalty to one's clan, regiment or gang.

Karttikeya was literally born of flame. When the gods were besieged by a horde of demons, Shiva created six children from the flame of his third eye to fight them. Hard pressed by the demons' fierce assault, these children of Shiva realized they must combine their powers to defeat them. Karttikeya seized leadership and merged the bodies of the other five flame children into his own, retaining all six heads. The demons were quickly destroyed. Karttikeya continues to use his six heads to his advantage in defending the gods and Sahasra against demonic incursion.

The six-headed god feels that his role is that of guardian of the other gods of the pantheon. He regards the others with a patronizing attitude, an attitude exacerbated by his ability to steal from them without being detected. Indeed, rumors abound that somewhere in Sahasra is the place where Karttikeya hides the treasures he has stolen from the gods.

In his quest to protect the gods, Karttikeya is vigilant against heresy as well. He views worshippers of other pantheons as heretics and would crusade against them if not prevented by Vishnu and Shiva. He contents himself with urging thieves throughout Sahasra to prey on those who devote themselves to gods outside the Hindu pantheon.

Karttikeya's long term goal is to rid the universe of demons. He fights them at every opportunity. When he is not fighting them, he plans strategies against them and urges warriors in Sahasra to aid him in the struggle.

The robber village of Adhyaka in Sahasra is especially dear to Karttikeya. When he is not plotting battle strategy against demonic forces, he inspires the thieves in their endeavors. He delights in dropping hints to them about the place where he has hidden whatever treasure he has most recently stolen from the gods.

The Feast of Thieves is held in Karttikeya's honor during the three days leading up to the longest night of the year. The most extravagant version of the feast days is found in Adhyaka, and the most daring and outrageous acts of thievery are carried

out there at this time. Warriors preparing to go into battle often dedicate their first kill to Karttikeya, and they pray to him for bravery.

YAMA

Yama holds a mysterious place in the pantheon of the Hindu gods. Shiva and Kali both rule over aspects of death, but it is Yama who deals with the dead themselves and their final judgment. He was not always a god. He and his twin sister Yami were the first mortals on the earth. Yama became immortal because of his bravery (see history below), and thus received a place in the pantheon. In his role as judge over mortals, Yama personifies justice. His experience with the evil of which people are capable prompts him to inspire mortals, particularly adventurers, like he was, to crusade for justice. He has two striped, four-eyed dogs, Syama and Sabala, who act as messengers and guards. His city is Yamapura, and his palace within that city is known as Yamasadana.

Yama presides over death, judgment, and justice. He is worshipped particularly by paladins and others with a strong desire for justice. He is not generally revered by necromancers and those interested in the dark arts; they worship Kali instead. Yama's domains are Death, Judgment, and Justice. The sacred weapon of his clerics is the club.

Besides giving Yama a desire for justice, his role as judge has made him a philosophical god. He encourages his followers to practice self-contemplation through the practice of *yoga*, a spiritual discipline in which the mind and body are brought into unity. This practice, Yama teaches, will enable his devotees to conquer earthly desires and habits in pursuit of justice.

Brahma created the twins Yama and Yami as the first man and woman. When Yama died, Yami was heartbroken and her grief was inconsolable. Brahma was perplexed, as no one had ever died before. Wishing to end her grief, he created night and time, so that she would eventually come to terms with his death. Yama displayed such courage and ingenuity in his journey through the afterlife that the gods granted him charge of the south and made him judge of those who passed through his realm.

Yama is diligent in his duties, as he feels a special debt toward the other gods of the pantheon for giving him immortality.



He sees the need for Vishnu's preservation of life that balances Shiva's destructive nature. While he yields domination of the cremation ground to Kali, he does not approve of the acts that go on in her name. When a worshipper of the Dark Goddess

FUNERAL RITES AND THE PASSAGE OF THE DEAD

The rites for the dead are important in Sahasran culture and sending the spirit of the deceased on a journey to the afterlife. Note that these rituals are practiced alongside a belief in reincarnation of the soul.

At the point of death, the messengers of Yama, his dogs Syama and Sabala, collect the spirit with a noose and conduct him via the Path of the Fathers to the presence of Yama. This journey takes four hours and forty minutes, and cremation cannot take place until this time has elapsed. He or she is presented with an accounting of deeds and a fair judgment is passed.

Meanwhile, in the realm of the living, after the appropriate length of time has passed, the bathed, shaved, and sandalwood-paste anointed corpse is placed on the funeral pyre at the cremation ground, with its feet toward the south, the realm of Yama. The ashes are either buried in the cremation ground or scattered in the sacred river Gandhupal. For ten days following the cremation, the family of the deceased makes offerings of rice balls, which construct a spirit body to house the newly-judged soul.

Once this body has been created, the deceased must cross the bloody river Vaitarani. Devotees of Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu are spared this passage and conducted directly to their respective heavenly realms. The dead who are judged by Yama to be worthy are received into heaven, where they are fed soma, the drink of the gods, and become immortal. Those deemed fit for hell must journey two hundred leagues a day through the twenty-one hells, wastelands of darkness, and foul, icy weather, attacked by venomous serpents and hideous monsters until they reach the lowest depths.

passes through his realm, Yama and Kali often argue about the disposition of the devotee's soul. The other gods, having placed Yama in charge of judgment, typically side with their judge and do not interfere. Yama is angered by the tendency of the gods to banish mortals with whom they are displeased to his realms without following the proper protocols.

The other pantheons in the world mean little to Yama. Generally the worshippers of other gods do not travel the Path of the Fathers. Lately, though, Karttikeya has begun sending devotees of non-Hindu deities to him after death. As Yama has no standard by which to judge them and no access to the deeds of their lives, they end up traveling through the twenty-one hells, unless their god intervenes.

Yama's major goal is to fairly judge the souls sent to him. As mortals in Sahasra continue to die, he has plenty of work. He is also concerned with justice among mortals, so he regularly strives toward that goal.

In the short term, Yama sends champions who were slain while fighting for justice back to Sahasra. He sees this as an important tool in the struggle against demons, who strengthen the cause of injustice.

Yama's festival, Yama-dyitya, is held late in the autumn of the year, and honors him and his sister Yami as the first humans.

THE ASURYAS: COSMIC OPPONENTS OF THE GODS

Throughout the sacred writings of Hinduism appear the names of those who oppose the workings of the gods in Sahasra and the broader universe. These enemies of the gods are referred to informally as "demons," but their collective name is asurya. They are living powers, as powerful as the gods, the personification of various aspects of the universe, banished at the dawn of creation to the realm of Patala in the depths of the cosmic ocean. The land of Patala mirrors Sahasra, in that it contains vast numbers of cities, which are populated by aditya and daitya, two types of demons. The adityas are neutral toward the gods, not actively opposing them, not actively assisting them, driven by their own sense of morality and righteousness. The daityas, however, have sworn to disrupt the actions of the gods wherever possible, although

they generally will not interfere with adityas. Allied with the daityas are the giant evil spirits, the danavas. Other spirits in Sahasra, such as yakshini and vetala, pay homage to the asuryas, always fearing and often serving them. The asuryas are said to embody the qualities of pride, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance. Lesser versions of the asuryas carry out the bidding of these beings.

THE LAND OF PATALA

Patala is a realm that can only be reached magically, either through a boon granted by an asurya or by means of a relic. Some of the cities of Patala governed by the adityas are Shining, Startassel, Deep, and Golden. The adityas are renowned for their mining abilities, and they guard vast mines of magical gems of surpassing beauty and power. Kubera, a god who left the Hindu pantheon, jealously guards these treasures. The chief city of the daityas is Hiranyapura, which is said to have the ability to move and fly at the behest of its king, Hiranya-kasipu. The realm itself is guarded by nagas, chief of whom is the mighty hooded serpent Sesha.

Following are descriptions of the mightiest of the asuryas. See sidebar for using lesser asuryas as PC encounters.

DAITYAS

The chief of the asuryas and king of the daityas is Hiranya-kasipu. He is a vast, giant creature known as "Gold-Eye." One of his eyes is indeed formed of pure and shining gold, while the other is black as obsidian. He is often at odds with his son Prahlada, a fervent worshipper of Vishnu. His more favored son is the serpent-headed Hrada, known for stealing sacrifices meant for other gods. His mate is Mahallika. His brother is Hiranyaksha. In ancient times, Brahma granted the gift of invulnerability to Hiranya-kasipu.

Hiranyaksha was granted great strength and, like his brother, invulnerability by Brahma. He can only be destroyed by a boar, and thus is fearful of Varaha, avatar of Vishnu. He drowned the earth at one point in history, thus earning him

the eternal enmity of the gods. Hiranyaksha is the patron and protector of Revala, king of the rakshasas.

Bali is only the most recent of a line of fearsome Daityas; his father is the wicked Virochana. He is strict in his devotions to the principles of evil and practices an austerity that puts the other demons to shame. Despite, or perhaps because of this attitude of austerity, Bali uses his vast powers to oppose the gods. He has gathered a great host of lesser Daityas to him, and he is plotting the overthrow of the entire pantheon. He especially despises Vishnu, whom he feels tricked him out of his domains.

Mahisasura appears as a vast buffalo with wide spreading horns tipped in darkness and hooves that throw great arcs of lightning as he thunders toward a hapless opponent.



ASURYAS AS NPCS

Lesser adityas may appear to PCs as messengers or disinterested guardians. They do not actively oppose PCs of any alignment, but neither will they help them unless they are either given a compelling reason to do so or directed to do so by one of the greater adityas. The greater adityas may send them on specific errands or quests, such as "Find and detain the cleric who caused the disease to manifest in Ujjayini." Use the inevitable as a base, choosing kolyrut, marut or zelekhtu as appropriate for the Asurya's abilities. Names of lesser adityas include Andhaka, Bhaga, Gajasura, Holika, and Munda.

Lesser Daityas, on the other hand, are devious and will actively oppose PCs of any alignment, unless given a compelling reason to behave otherwise. They have fearsome tusks and a multitude of arms, often as many as a thousand. The number of arms does not significantly change their number of attacks. Use the demon as a base, particularly babau, hezrou, marilith, nalfeshnee, retriever, and vrock. Make the following changes:

--Delete the summon spell-like ability. Lesser Daityas are sent out by their masters and cannot summon others of their kind.

--Delete telepathy.

Names of lesser Daityas include Chanda, Mahabali, Munda, Raktabija, Sambara, and Virabhadra.

Danavas are giant evil spirits. Their motivations are their own, and not even the Daityas understand their behavior. Use the cloud giant as a base and apply the fiendish template. Kaitabha and Rahu are names of two Danavas.

Nitwatakawaca is known as the indestructible demon. No matter how many times the gods' champions have fought him, even going so far as to tear him into pieces and scatter those pieces throughout the world, he has returned within a matter of days, as fierce as ever.

Vritra is the demon of darkness and drought. His favored form is that of a vast serpent with ninety-nine coils. In his serpent form, he threatens Sahasra by lapping up the water of all the rivers, causing dearth and starvation throughout the land.

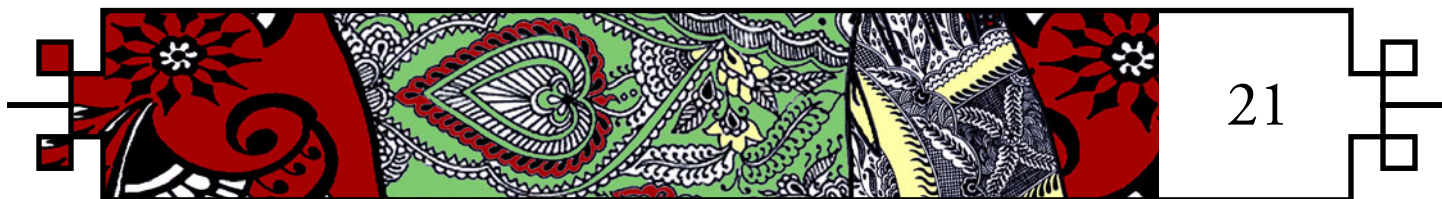
Vritra is strong and wily, and he has slithered out of many traps set for him by the champions of the gods.

ADITYAS

Varuna is one of a trio of former celestial beings who abandoned the sky for reasons unknown. Still quite powerful and the leader of all the adityas, he now resides in the depths of the ocean and can be seen riding through the ocean on a half-crocodile, half-bird sea monster known as Makara. He carries a noose that he uses to snare those he considers non-believers, as well as a casket full of gems that bestow prosperity upon those who possess them.

Mitra is the second former celestial being who went out into the world about the same time as Varuna for reasons of his own. He is a protector of truth, hating lies and deception. He will often hunt down those whose lies cause trouble, disharmony, and oppression. Mitra is accompanied on his journeys throughout Sahasra by a dog, a serpent, and a crow.

Savitar is the third celestial being. A constant traveler, he strides about the world, the personification of the motion of the wind and seas. He is surrounded by a glittering golden aura and rides in a chariot drawn by white-hoofed horses. He seeks out disease, particularly widespread epidemics, bringing solace and healing to caregivers and sufferers alike.



magic

NEW DOMAINS

BEGINNING DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can use *create water* once per day as a spell-like ability.

Beginning Domain Spells

- 1 **Obscuring Mist:** Fog surrounds you.
- 2 **Darkness:** 20-ft. radius of supernatural shadow.
- 3 **Create Food and Water:** Feeds three humans (or one horse)/level.
- 4 **Control Water:** Raises or lowers bodies of water.
- 5 **Control Winds:** Change wind direction and speed.
- 6 **Move Earth:** Digs trenches and builds hills.
- 7 **Control Weather:** Changes weather in local area.
- 8 **Control Plants:** Control actions of one or more plant creatures.
- 9 **Wish** ^X: As *limited wish*, but with fewer limits.

BURNING GROUND DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can use *deathwatch* once per day as a spell-like ability.

Burning Ground Domain Spells

1. **Cause Fear:** One creature of 5 HD or less flees for 1d4 rounds.
2. **Gentle Repose:** Preserves one corpse.
3. **Speak with Dead:** Corpse answers one question/two levels.
4. **Animate Dead** ^M: Creates undead skeletons and zombies.
5. **Waves of Fatigue:** Several targets become fatigued.
6. **Create Undead** ^M: Creates ghouls, ghosts, mummies, or mohrgs.
7. **Control Undead:** Undead don't attack you while under your command.
8. **Create Greater Undead** ^M: Create shadows, wraiths, spectres, or devourers.
9. **Astral Projection** ^M: Projects you and companions onto Astral Plane.

ELOQUENCE DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can perform a feat of amazing eloquence as a supernatural ability. You gain an enhancement bonus to Charisma equal to your cleric level. Activating the power is a free action, the power lasts 1 round, and it is usable once per day.

Eloquence Domain Spells

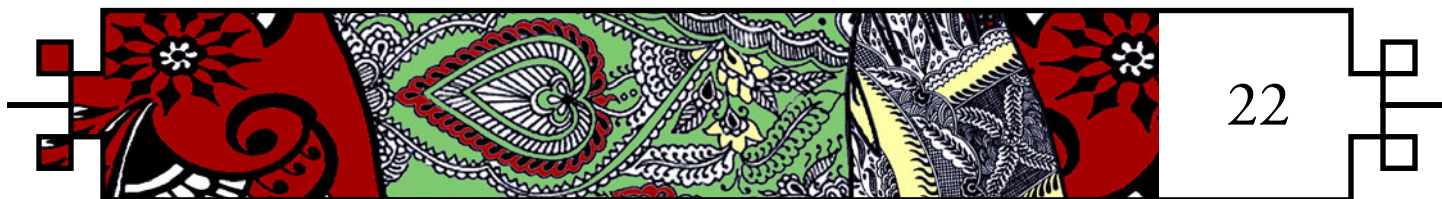
1. **Charm Person:** Makes one person your friend.
2. **Enthrall:** Captivates all within 100 ft. + 10 ft./level.
3. **Glibness:** You gain +30 bonus on Bluff checks, and your lies can escape magical discernment.
4. **Speak with Plants:** You can talk to normal plants and plant creatures.
5. **Command, Greater:** As *command*, but affects one subject/level.
6. **Charm Monster, Mass:** As *charm monster*, but all within 30 ft.
7. **Holy Word:** Kills, paralyzes, blinds, or deafens nongood subjects.
8. **Power Word Blind:** Blinds creature with 200 hp or less.
9. **Power Word Stun:** Stuns creature with 150 hp or less.

FURY DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can use *rage* once per day as a spell-like ability.

Fury Domain Spells

1. **Cause Fear:** One creature of 5 HD or less flees for 1d4 rounds.
2. **Bull's Strength:** Subject gains +4 to Str for 1 min./level.
3. **Heroism:** Gives +2 bonus on attack rolls, saves, skill checks.
4. **Divine Power:** You gain attack bonus, +6 to Str, and 1 hp/level.
5. **Slay Living:** Touch attack kills subject.
6. **Symbol of Fear** ^M: Triggered rune panics nearby creatures.
7. **Destruction** ^F: Kills subject and destroys remains.
8. **Shout, Greater:** Devastating yell deals 10d6 sonic damage; stuns creatures, damages objects.
9. **Wail of the Banshee:** Kills one creature/level.



HIDDEN DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can use *invisibility* once per day as a spell-like ability.

Hidden Domain Spells

1. **Hide from Undead:** Undead can't perceive one subject/level.
2. **Undetectable Alignment:** Conceals alignment for 24 hours.
3. **Obscure Object:** Masks object against scrying.
4. **Invisibility, Greater:** As *invisibility*, but subject can attack and stay invisible.
5. **Mage's Private Sanctum:** Prevents anyone from viewing or scrying an area for 24 hours.
6. **Mislead:** Turns you invisible and creates illusory double.
7. **Phase Door:** Creates an invisible passage through wood or stone.
8. **Screen:** Illusion hides area from vision, scrying.
9. **Imprisonment:** Entombs subject beneath the earth.

JUDGMENT DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can perform a feat of judgment as a supernatural ability. You gain an enhancement bonus to Wisdom equal to your cleric level. Activating the power is a free action, the power lasts 1 round, and it is usable once per day.

Judgment Domain Spells

1. **Detect Chaos/Evil/Good/Law:** Reveals creatures, spells, or objects of selected alignment.
2. **Zone of Truth:** Subjects within range cannot lie.
3. **Clairaudience/Clairvoyance:** Hear or see at a distance for 1 min./level.
4. **Discern Lies:** Reveals deliberate falsehoods.
5. **Atonement**^{F X}: Removes burden of misdeeds from subject.
6. **Banishment:** Banishes 2 HD/level of extraplanar creatures.
7. **Scrying, Greater:** As *scrying*, but faster and longer.
8. **Moment of Prescience:** You gain insight bonus on single attack roll, check, or save.
9. **Miracle**^X: Requests a deity's intercession.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Granted Power: You can use *detect good* or *detect law* once per day as a supernatural ability.

Justice Domain Spells

1. **Doom:** One subject takes -2 on attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and checks.
2. **Consecrate**^M: Fills area with positive energy, making undead weaker.
3. **Keen Edge:** Doubles normal weapon's threat range.
4. **Divine Power:** You gain attack bonus, +6 to Str, and 1 hp/level.
5. **Mark of Justice:** Designates action that will trigger *curse* on subject.
6. **Heroism, Greater:** Gives +4 bonus on attack rolls, saves, skill checks; immunity to fear; temporary hp.
7. **Resurrection**^M: Fully restore dead subject.
8. **Fire Storm:** Deals 1d6/level fire damage.
9. **True Resurrection**^M: As *resurrection*, plus remains aren't needed.

PROSPERITY DOMAIN

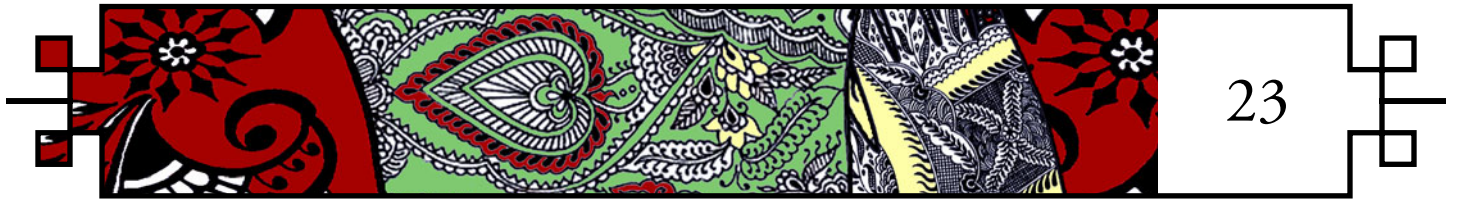
Granted Power: You bring prosperity to yourself and to those around you. You can use *bless* once per day as a supernatural ability. Add Appraise to your list of cleric class skills.

Prosperity Domain Spells

1. **Identify**^M: Determines properties of magic item.
2. **Fox's Cunning:** Subject gains +4 to Int for 1 min./level.
3. **Arcane Lock**^M: Magically locks a portal or chest.
4. **Sending**^M: Delivers short message anywhere, instantly.
5. **Secret Chest**^F: Hides expensive chest on Ethereal Plane; you retrieve it at will.
6. **Glyph of Warding, Greater**^M: As *glyph of warding*, but up to 10d8 damage or 6th-level spell.
7. **Scrying, Greater:** As *scrying*, but faster and longer.
8. **Discern Location:** Reveals exact location of creature or object.
9. **Wish**^X: As *limited wish*, but with fewer limits.

SCRIBE DOMAIN

Granted Power: Add one language per cleric level to your languages known. Add Decipher Script to your list of cleric class skills.



Scribe Domain Spells

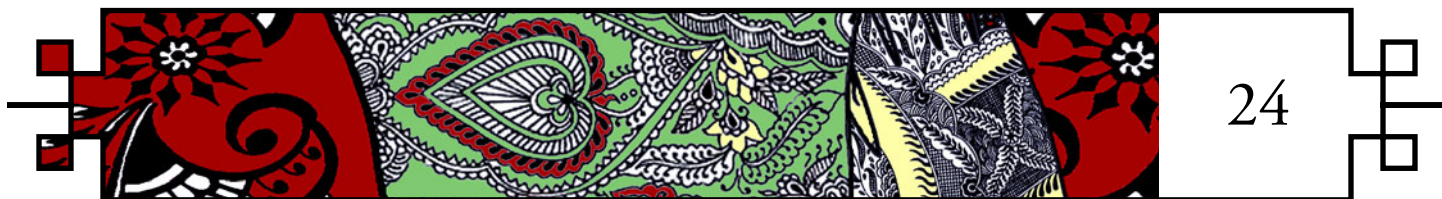
1. **Comprehend Languages** ^M: You understand all spoken and written languages.
2. **Continual Flame** ^M: Makes a permanent, heatless torch.
3. **Illusory Script** ^M: Only intended reader can decipher.
4. **Legend Lore** ^{M F}: Lets you learn tales about a person, place, or thing.
5. **Dream**: Sends message to anyone sleeping.
6. **Symbol of Persuasion** ^M: Triggered rune charms nearby creatures.
7. **Symbol of Stunning** ^M: Triggered rune stuns nearby creatures.
8. **Symbol of Death** ^M: Triggered rune slays nearby creatures.
- 9 **Power Word Kill**: Kills one creature with 100 hp or less.

નવા લાગોત િદલ

MANDALAS

A mandala is a circular sacred diagram that produces a spell effect when the drawing of the diagram is completed. Drawing a mandala requires the purchase of sticks of sacred chalk, as listed below. Anyone who has purchased the chalk may draw a mandala; spell casting ability is not required. Sacred chalk may be purchased at any temple at the cost given below. Upon completion of the diagram, the spell effect occurs. The diagram must be completed at one sitting; if it is not, it disappears and must be begun again with new chalk. The diagram requires a smooth, flat surface that is compatible with chalk. Its finished size is twelve inches in diameter. The mandalas given below are examples; the GM may wish to create additional mandalas, basing their cost on the item creation rules given in the Core Rulebook II.

Name of Mandala	Cost of Chalk Sticks Required	Time Required for Completion	Benefit
Mandala of Bodily Health	27,500 gp per +1 added	24 consecutive hours	+1 to +5 added to Constitution score of the person who draws the mandala
Mandala of Clear Thought	27,500 gp per +1 added	24 consecutive hours	+1 to +5 added to Intelligence score of the person who draws the mandala
Mandala of Endurance	300 gp	10 consecutive minutes	+4 enhancement bonus to Constitution for 10 minutes:
Mandala of Gainful Exercise	27,500 gp per +1 added	24 consecutive hours	+1 to +5 added to Strength score of the person who draws the mandala
Mandala of Gracefulness	300 gp	10 consecutive minutes	+4 enhancement bonus to Dexterity for 10 minutes:
Mandala of Leadership and Influence	27,500 gp per +1 added	24 consecutive hours	+1 to +5 added to Charisma score of the person who draws the mandala
Mandala of Quickness in Action	27,500 gp per +1 added	24 consecutive hours	+1 to +5 added to Dexterity score of the person who draws the mandala
Mandala of Splendor	300 gp	10 consecutive minutes	+4 enhancement bonus to Charisma for 10 minutes:
Mandala of Strength	300 gp	10 consecutive minutes	+4 enhancement bonus to Strength for 10 minutes:
Mandala of Understanding	27,500 gp per +1 added	24 consecutive hours	+1 to +5 added to Wisdom score of the person who draws the mandala
Mandala of Wisdom	300 gp	10 consecutive minutes	+4 enhancement bonus to Wisdom for 10 minutes:



ਨਟਰਾਜ਼

NATARAJA (DANCER OF SHIVA)

The nataraja is a fervent devotee of Shiva in his manifestation as the king of dancers. Shiva's dance symbolizes the motion of the universe, its creation and preservation, and the nataraja strives to duplicate these concepts through her graceful motions. She is dedicated to the destruction of demons, using her dances to channel the power of Shiva. Her fierce, chaotic nature often seems as wild as the demons she combats, but her hatred of them is undoubted.

The dances of the nataraja refer to the common depiction of the four-armed king of dancers, Shiva Nataraja, in his dancing posture. His raised left hand holds a flame, symbolizing the destruction of life. His raised right hand holds a drum, representing the source of creation in the form of musical rhythm. His lower right hand forms the gesture of blessing, symbolizing the preservation of life. His lower left hand crosses his body in the gesture of an elephant's trunk, representing strength. He stands poised on one foot, the raised foot representing liberation, mercy, and kindness. It is said that when he was attacked by the demon Muyalaka, Shiva pressed his toe on Muyalaka and broke his back while continuing the cosmic dance. The nataraja's dance known as Shiva's Wrath commemorates this event.

Adventures: The nataraja restlessly prowls throughout the land in search of demons to slay. Often she will join with others whose goals match her own, but her chaotic nature always prompts her to not to stay in one place for too long, just as Shiva Nataraja's dancing of the cosmic dance never stops. Some natarajas, particularly as they age, may decide to stay in a temple and train others to follow the path of the dancer.

Characteristics: The nataraja is athletic and graceful in her movements, but deadly as well. As she practices her dances and becomes more skilled and versatile, Shiva blesses her with more advanced effects that aid her in her fight against demons. The nataraja is a lone soul at heart, who maintains her distance from mundane entanglements and draws inspiration from her patron.

Alignment: The nataraja may be of any chaotic alignment, in keeping with the chaotic nature of her patron deity. Most of them are chaotic neutral, embracing all of the aspects of Shiva's contradictory personality. Chaotic evil natarajas are virtually unknown, as they do not generally approve of the goal of the destruction of demons and other evil outsiders.

Religion: The nataraja worships Shiva in his aspect as Shiva Nataraja, king of dancers. While she may, as many Hindus do, also offer worship to Ganesha, as opener of the way, the nataraja is usually single-minded in her devotions. Successful combat against demons and evil outsiders is followed by celebration and offerings of thanksgiving to Shiva.

Background: The devotee of Shiva who wishes to become a nataraja usually learns from mentor, a nataraja at a local temple. The emphasis on development of the body leads aspiring natarajas to train from an early age. Natarajas very rarely associate with other natarajas on any long-term basis. As soon as a novice nataraja has learned her first dance, the teaching nataraja will send her out on her own. She will usually return to the temple only for short periods of additional training before venturing out again.

Races: Humans are particularly adept at the skills needed to become dancers of Shiva, and most natarajas are members of this race. Elves, with their grace and love of dancing, often choose the path of the nataraja. Kananaukas have the dexterity that is useful, but they usually do not worship Shiva and so rarely become natarajas. Some rock nagas have been known to become natarajas. Other races almost never choose this class.

Other Classes: Fighters are often skeptical of the nataraja—until they witness her skill in battle. Monks recognize a kinship, although the wildness of the nataraja is at odds with the lawful nature of the monk. Clerics appreciate her deep devotion, while bards enjoy the sheer beauty and grace of her performance.

Role: The nataraja's combat skills make her a useful addition to a party. Her Charisma may enable her to speak for a group, although she is more practiced at speaking with her body than with her mouth. Her knowledge of and abilities against evil outsiders frequently prove invaluable to those adventuring in the dangerous cities of Sahasra.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Abilities: Charisma is necessary for the nataraja's Perform (dance) skill and improves her AC bonus. Dexterity assists in many of her other skills.

Alignment: Any chaotic.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The nataraja's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (dance) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Table 1: The Nataraja

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Unarmed Damage ¹	AC Bonus
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Unarmed strike, Dances of Shiva Nataraja, Dance of the upper right hand 1	1d6	+0
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Bonus feat	1d6	+0
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Bonus speed +10 feet	1d6	+0
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Shiva's wrath 1/day	1d8	+0
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Dance of the upper left hand 1	1d8	+1
6th	+6/+1	+2	+5	+2	Dance of the upper right hand 2	1d8	+1
7th	+7/+2	+2	+5	+2	Bonus feat	1d8	+1
8th	+8/+3	+2	+6	+2	Shiva's wrath 2/day	1d10	+1
9th	+9/+4	+3	+6	+3	Bonus speed +20 feet	1d10	+1
10th	+10/+5	+3	+7	+3	Dance of the lower right hand 1	1d10	+2
11th	+11/+6/+1	+3	+7	+3	Dance of the upper left hand 2	1d10	+2
12th	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+4	Shiva's wrath 3/day, Dance of the upper right hand 3	2d6	+2
13th	+13/+8/+3	+4	+8	+4	Bonus feat	2d6	+2
14th	+14/+9/+4	+4	+9	+4	Dance of the lower left hand 1	2d6	+2
15th	+15/+10/+5	+5	+9	+5	Dance of the lower right hand 2	2d6	+3
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+5	Shiva's wrath 4/day, Bonus speed +30 feet	2d8	+3
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	Dance of the upper left hand 3	2d8	+3
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	Dance of the lower left hand 2	2d8	+3
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	Bonus feat	2d8	+3
20th		+6	+12	+6	Shiva's wrath 5/day, Dance of the lower right hand 3	2d10	+4

¹ The value shown is for Medium natarajas. See Table: Small or Large Nataraja Unarmed Damage for Small or Large arajas.



CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the nataraja.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Natarajas are proficient with all simple weapons, plus the trident. Natarajas are not proficient with any armor or shields.

AC Bonus (Ex): When unarmored and unencumbered, the nataraja adds her Charisma bonus (if any) to her Armor Class. The fierce movements of her dances confound and confuse her opponents as she twists, turns, whirls, and pauses in a dizzying motion, evoking Shiva's dances that perpetuate the motion of the universe. In addition, a nataraja gains a +1 bonus to AC at 5th level. This bonus increases by 1 for every five nataraja levels thereafter (+2 at 10th, +3 at 15th, and +4 at 20th level). These bonuses to AC apply even against touch attacks or when the nataraja is flat-footed. She loses these bonuses when she is immobilized or helpless, when she wears any armor, when she carries a shield, or when she carries a medium or heavy load.

Unarmed Strike: The nataraja, as she dances with wild abandon, strikes out at her foes in a manner similar to that of a monk. At 1st level, a nataraja gains Improved Unarmed Strike as a bonus feat. A nataraja's attacks may be with either fist interchangeably or even from elbows, knees, and feet. This means that a nataraja may even make unarmed strikes with her hands full. There is no such thing as an off-hand attack for a nataraja striking unarmed. A nataraja may thus apply her full Strength bonus on damage rolls for all her unarmed strikes.

Usually a nataraja's unarmed strikes deal lethal damage, but she can choose to deal nonlethal damage instead with no penalty on her attack roll. She has the same choice to deal lethal or nonlethal damage while grappling.

A nataraja's unarmed strike is treated both as a manufactured weapon and a natural weapon for the purpose of spells and effects that enhance or improve either manufactured weapons or natural weapons.

A nataraja also deals more damage with her unarmed strikes than a normal person would, as shown on Table 1: The Nataraja. The unarmed damage on Table 1: The Nataraja is for Medium natarajas. A Small nataraja deals less damage

Table 2: Small or Large Nataraja Unarmed Damage

Level	Damage (Small Nataraja)	Damage (Large Nataraja)
1st–3rd	1d4	1d8
4th–7th	1d6	2d6
8th–11th	1d8	2d8
12th–15th	1d10	3d6
16th–19th	2d6	3d8
20th	2d8	4d8

than the amount given there with her unarmed attacks, while a Large nataraja deals more damage; see Table: Small or Large Nataraja Unarmed Damage.

Dances of Shiva Nataraja: On the nataraja's turn, she may initiate a dance. A dance is a standard action. The dance's effects last while she is dancing and for 5 rounds thereafter.

Dance of the Upper Right Hand (Ex): This pulsing dance, performed to a drum beat that only the nataraja hears, emphasizes the healing power of Shiva Nataraja's upper, or raised, right hand. A 1st level nataraja with 4 ranks in Perform (dance) gains fast healing at 1 hit point per round, so long as she has at least 1 hit point. At 6th level, the nataraja gains 2 hit points per round, and she gains 3 hit points per round at 12th level.

Shiva's Wrath (Su): Beginning at 4th level, once per day, when attacking with unarmed strike or with a trident, the nataraja may make a special attack against an evil outsider. If the strike is successful, the nataraja forces the evil outsider to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the nataraja's Charisma modifier + the nataraja's class level). Failure reduces the outsider to 0 hit points. On a successful save, the outsider takes damage as normal. This benefit rises to two times per day at 8th level, three times per day at 12th level, four times per day at 16th level, and five times per day at 20th level.

Bonus Speed: As the nataraja gains in skill and grace, Shiva grants her improved fleetness of foot. Her speed increases by +10 feet at 3rd level, rising by an additional +10 at 9th and 16th levels.

Dance of the Upper Left Hand (Su): Shiva's raised left hand symbolizes destruction. This fiery dance, learned by a 5th level

nataraja who has 8 ranks in Perform (dance), provides her with a +2 bonus to damage and mimics the leaping flames of Shiva’s destruction. The bonus rises to +3 at 11th level and to +4 at 17th level.

Dance of the Lower Right Hand (Su): Shiva’s lower right hand symbolizes the preservation of life. At 10th level, the nataraja with 13 ranks in Perform (dance) learns the dance of the lower right hand. She gains a +2 bonus to all saves when performing this dance. The bonus rises to +3 at 15th level and +4 at 20th level.

Dance of the Lower Left Hand (Su): The strength of the elephant is symbolized by Shiva’s lower left hand, and evoked in this dance that provides the 14th level nataraja who has 17 ranks in Perform (dance) with a +2 bonus to attack. At 18th level, this bonus rises to +3.

Bonus Feat: At 2nd, 7th, 13th, and 19th levels, the nataraja may choose a bonus feat from the following list: Combat Expertise, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Mobility, Snatch Arrows, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, and Whirlwind Attack.

EX-NATARAJAS

A nataraja who becomes lawful in alignment or who forsakes the worship of Shiva cannot progress in levels as a nataraja, though she retains all her nataraja abilities.

પ્રદીગ્ધ તોલકકક

GURU

Teachers, or *gurus*, are Brahmin who study the ancient Hindu religious texts and impart this knowledge to students. The guru has control over her body and mind to an amazing extent through her familiarity with mantras. A mantra is a series of syllables, which provide various abilities to the guru when they are chanted in a particular order. At higher levels, the guru may share this ability with others who are in close proximity to her.

The guru may remain associated with a particular village

or city, or she may wander throughout the land, acquiring knowledge and dispensing it to those who have need. A wise ruler will engage the services of a guru, who will then help make decisions for governing the people, based on the ancient teachings.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a guru, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Skills: Knowledge (any two) 10 ranks each.

Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge [any individual Knowledge skill]).

Special: The guru must be a member of the Brahmin class or have had a mantra shared with her by another guru.

Class Skills

The guru’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (all skills taken individually) (Int), Speak



Table 3 - Guru					
Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Mantra 1
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Extend mantra
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+1	Mantra 2
4th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Heighten mantra
5th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Mantra 3
6th	+3	+5	+2	+2	Share least or lesser mantra
7th	+3	+5	+2	+2	Mantra 4
8th	+4	+6	+2	+2	Share greater mantra
9th	+4	+6	+3	+3	Mantra 5
10th	+5	+7	+3	+3	Share mass mantra

Language (None), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the guru prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Gurus gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Mantra: At 1st level, the guru chooses one least mantra from the list. At every two levels higher than 1st (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th) he may choose a different least mantra, or a lesser or greater mantra for which he meets the prerequisites.

Extend Mantra: At 2nd level, the guru gains the ability to double the length of time for which the mantra is active.

Heighten Mantra: At 4th level, the guru gains the ability to increase the number of times per day the mantra can be used to two times per day.

Share Least or Lesser Mantra: At 6th level, the guru gains the ability to share the effects of a least or lesser mantra once per day with one ally within 30 ft.

Share Greater Mantra: At 8th level, the guru gains the ability to share the effects of a greater mantra once per day with one ally within 30 ft.

Share Mass Mantra: At 10th level, the guru gains the ability to share the effects of a least or lesser mantra once per day with one creature per guru level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart.

Hanuman's Harriers

Although the demonic rakshasa is hated and feared throughout the Land of 1,000 Cities, it is the particular enemy of the kananaukas. Hanuman's Harriers is an organization of worshippers of Hanuman who are devoted to eradicating rakshasas wherever they

are, in whatever guise they appear.

Harriers are usually, although not always, kananaukas. Two paths are available to those wishing to pursue this daunting destiny: the Sword of Hanuman's Harriers, for non-spellcasting classes, and the Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers, for spellcasting classes.



SWORD OF HANUMAN'S HARRIERS

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Sword of Hanuman's Harriers, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any good or neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Skills: Sense Motive 6 ranks, Spot 6 ranks.

Feats: Iron Will.

Special: Membership in Hanuman's Harriers, and must have participated in the tracking and destroying of a rakshasa.

Class Skills

The Sword of Hanuman's Harriers'

Table 4 - Sword of Hanuman's Harriers

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+1	+0	+0	+2	Piercer of veils, favored enemy (rakshasa) +2
2 nd	+2	+0	+0	+3	Bonus feat
3 rd	+3	+1	+1	+3	Render of veils
4 th	+4	+1	+1	+4	Favored enemy (rakshasa) +4
5 th	+5	+1	+1	+4	Resister of veils

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

All of the following are class features of the Sword of Hanuman's Harriers prestige class.

Piercer of Veils (Sp): At will, the Sword of Hanuman's Harriers can use *true seeing*, as the spell; however, unlike *true seeing*, this ability only allows the piercing of the rakshasa's change shape ability. It does not grant any of the other abilities of *true seeing*, nor does it allow detection of other polymorphed or changed beings or objects.

Render of Veils (Su): At 3rd level, the Sword of Hanuman's Harriers' weapon is considered good-aligned for purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

SPIRIT OF HANUMAN'S HARRIERS

Hit Die: d4.

To qualify to become a Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Skills: Knowledge (planes) 6 ranks.

Spells: Able to cast 3rd level divine or arcane spells.

Special: Membership in Hanuman's Harriers, and must have participated in the tracking and destroying of a rakshasa.

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Piercer of veils, favored spellfoe +2
2 nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Favored spellfoe +4
4 th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
5 th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Favored spellfoe +6





Class Skills

The Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers' class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Knowledge (planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Piercer of Veils (Su): At will, the Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers can use *true seeing*, as the spell; however, unlike *true seeing*, this ability only allows the piercing of the rakshasa's change shape ability. It does not grant any of the other abilities of *true seeing*, nor does it allow detection of other polymorphed or changed beings or objects.

Favored Spellfoe (rakshasa) (Ex): The Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers despises rakshasas. He studies his enemy assiduously, looking for weaknesses that he may exploit. At 1st level, the Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers gains a +2 bonus to overcome a rakshasa's spell resistance. This ability rises to +4 at 3rd level and +6 at 5th level.

Spells per Day: At 2nd and 4th levels, the Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers gains new spells per day, as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefits a character of that class would have gained, except for an increased effective level of spellcasting. If a character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a Spirit of Hanuman's Harriers, he must decide to which class he adds the new level for purposes of determining spells per day.

PHANSIGAR (ASSASSIN OF KALI)

The inner circle of zealously devout worshippers of Kali is the cult of the Phansigar. In the language of Sahasra, this name means strangler. Phansigars attach themselves in small groups of three to seven to travelers, gaining their confidence, murdering them by strangulation, robbing them of their

possessions, and finally burying them according to strict rituals.

These acts of murder are not carried out for personal gain, but for enabling the worshipper to contribute to the enrichment of the local temple of Kali. Any Phansigar caught disobeying this edict is ritually buried, without the benefit of being killed first. They never murder a traveler alone, but always operate in a small group, thus ensuring that the killing and burial is properly and efficiently carried out, and that the proceeds from the victim are evenly distributed for transport to the temple.

Phansigars believe that the ritual murders fulfill their duties to Kali as part of the divine cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. Great emphasis is placed on the rituals themselves. They believe that Kali, in one of her battles with daityas, tore strips of cloth from her skirt, forming the *ruhmāl*, or sacred implement of strangulation, and commanded her followers to do the same. The pickaxe used to dig the grave for the victim's body was originally one of Kali's teeth, given to the Phansigars. The ruhmals and pickaxes are passed down from one generation of Phansigars to the next.

The rules for an acceptable sacrifice are very strict. Those who are not native to Sahasra may not be sacrificed to Kali, nor may the blind or sick be sacrificed in her name. Children are not killed, but they are taken and adopted by Phansigars. Members of the Brahmin class are not harmed.

Phansigars usually have another occupation besides that of ritual murderer, which helps keep their phansigar identity secret. The secret of their membership in this group devoted to Kali is revealed by the parent to his or her child at about age thirteen. The knowledge is passed down, with many Phansigars coming from a line of ritual murderers stretching back hundreds of years. If a Phansigar has no heirs, he will kidnap a young child from a party of travelers and raise her as his own, training her in the ways of Kali.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Phansigar, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any evil.

Skills: Disguise 8 ranks, Bluff 8 ranks, Move Silently 8 ranks.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (ruhmal), Improved Grapple.

Special: The character must be a devout follower of Kali and ritually strangle someone in her name.

Class Skills

The Phansigar's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Use Magic Device (Cha), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Phansigar prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Phansigars are proficient with the crossbow (hand, light,

or heavy), dagger (any type), dart, pick (light and heavy), sap, shortbow (normal and composite), and short sword. Phansigars are proficient with light armor, but not with shields.

Weapon Focus (ruhmal): At 1st level a Phansigar gains the Weapon Focus feat for the ruhmal. If he already possesses this feat, he receives no additional bonus.

Sneak Attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. The extra damage dealt increases by +1d6 every other level (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th). If a Phansigar gets a sneak attack bonus from another source, the bonuses on damage stack.

Death Attack: If a Phansigar studies his victim for 3 rounds and then engages in a grapple while wielding the Phansigar's scarf and successfully deals damage, the grapple has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (Phansigar's choice). While studying the victim, the Phansigar can undertake other actions, so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the Phansigar or recognize the Phansigar as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the Phansigar's class level + the Phansigar's Int modifier) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim is rendered helpless and unable to act for 1d6 rounds plus 1 round per level of the Phansigar. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal attack. Once the Phansigar has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds.

If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save), or if the Phansigar does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 3 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Friendly Face: Phansigars gain a bonus in Disguise, Bluff, and Diplomacy checks equal to ½ their level in this class rounded down.

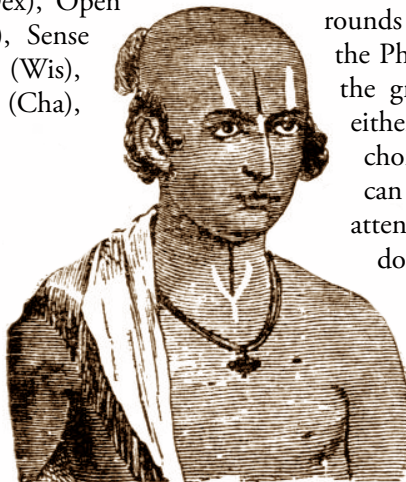


Table 6: The Phansigar

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Weapon focus (ruhmal), sneak attack +1d6, death attack, 2nd
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Friendly face, uncanny dodge
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +2d6
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Blessing of the goddess 1/day
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +3d6, improved uncanny dodge
6th	+6	+2	+5	+2	Blessing of the goddess 2/day
7th	+7	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +4d6
8th	+8	+2	+6	+2	Hide in plain sight
9th	+9	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +5d6
10th	+10	+3	+7	+3	Blessing of the goddess 3/day

ਨਵਾ ਦਿਵਾ

RECITER OF HYMNS

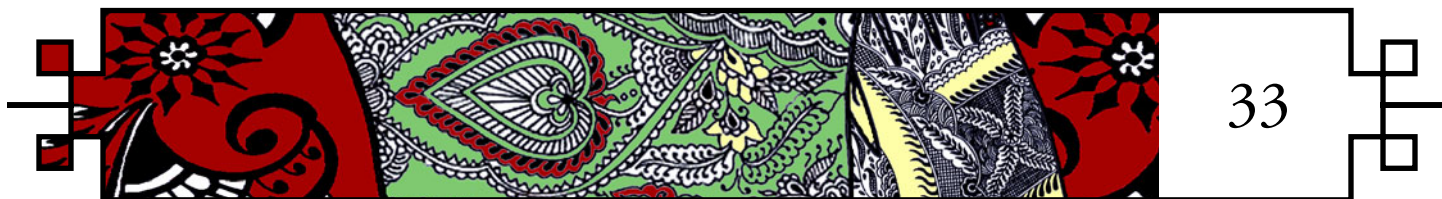
Prerequisites: Ability to cast divine spells, Perform (any) 3 ranks.

Benefit: An ally must be able to hear your voice as you sing or recite sacred hymns. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears you sing and for 5 rounds thereafter. An affected ally receives a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +1 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. This inspiration is a mind-affecting ability. This bonus stacks with other bonuses on attack rolls.

A detailed illustration of a man in traditional Indian attire, including a turban and a long, patterned robe, seated and holding a book or document. The man has a mustache and is looking slightly to the right. The illustration is in a classic, engraved style with fine lines and shading. The man is wearing a turban with a decorative band. His robe is long and flowing, with intricate patterns and a wide border. He is holding a book or document in his left hand, which is resting on his lap. The background is plain white. The illustration is positioned on the right side of the page, next to a table with two columns labeled 'Type' and 'nt'.

new exotic weapon

Exotic Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Two-Handed Melee Weapon							
Ruhmal	1 gp	1d6	1d8	x3	—	1 lb.	Bludgeoning



Mantras

A mantra is a series of seemingly nonsensical syllables imbued with mystical energy that aids the speaker of the mantra in specific ways, depending upon the syllables used. Each mantra consists of three versions, least, lesser and greater, that provide increasingly more powerful benefits.

MANTRA OF THE UNMOVED FORM

Choose one type of energy attack: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic. You are temporarily unmoved by this type of energy.

Least

Benefit: You gain resistance to energy 5 from the selected energy type for 1 min./level once per day. The energy type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

Lesser

Prerequisite: Least Mantra of the Unmoved Form.

Benefit: You gain resistance to energy 10 from the selected energy type for 1 min./level once per day. The energy type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

Greater

Prerequisite: Lesser Mantra of the Unmoved Form.

Benefit: You gain resistance to energy 15 from the selected energy type for 1 min./level once per day. The energy type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

MANTRA OF THE ENLIVENED BODY

Choose one ability score: Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution. You temporarily gain an additional modifier to this ability score.

Least

Benefit: You gain +2 to the selected ability for 1 min./level once per day. The ability type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

Lesser

Prerequisite: Least Mantra of the Enlivened Body.

Benefit: You gain +4 to the selected ability for 1 min./level once per day. The ability type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

Greater

Prerequisite: Lesser Mantra of the Enlivened Body.

Benefit: You gain +6 to the selected ability for 1 min./level once per day. The ability type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

MANTRA OF THE ENLIGHTENED SPIRIT

Choose one ability score: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma. You temporarily gain an additional modifier to this ability score.

Least

Benefit: You gain +2 to the selected ability for 1 min./level once per day. The ability type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

Lesser

Prerequisite: Least Mantra of the Enlightened Spirit.

Benefit: You gain +4 to the selected ability for 1 min./level once per day. The ability type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

Greater

Prerequisite: Lesser Mantra of the Enlightened Spirit.

Benefit: You gain +6 to the selected ability for 1 min./level once per day. The ability type must be selected before the applicable roll is made.

MANTRA OF RESISTANT HARMONY

Spells have little effect on your harmonious being. You temporarily gain spell resistance.

Least

Benefit: You gain spell resistance 5 for 1 min./level once per day.

Lesser

Prerequisite: Least Mantra of Resistant Harmony.

Benefit: You gain spell resistance 10 for 1 min./level once per day.

Greater

Prerequisite: Lesser Mantra of Resistant Harmony.

Benefit: You gain spell resistance 15 for 1 min./level once per day.

श्लोकार्य and pronunciation guide

The names and magic words are based on Sanskrit. The pronunciation follows these guidelines, but has been simplified, using a minimum of diacritical marks.

	English equivalent
Vowels	
a	u in <i>but</i>
i	i in <i>sit</i>
u	u in <i>put</i>
e	a in <i>mate</i>
ai	i in <i>pile</i>
o	ow in <i>owl</i>
Consonants	
k, b, p	same as in English
consonant followed by an <i>h</i>	aspirated
g	<i>goat</i>
c	<i>church</i> or <i>cello</i>
j	<i>jewel</i>
s	<i>song</i>
ś	palatal s between <i>s</i> and <i>sh</i>

Adhyaka (uhd-HYUH-kuh) – A city in the central forest region of Sahasra, inhabited by robbers.

Aditya (uh-DIHT-yuh) – A type of asurya neutral toward the gods.

Asuryas (uh-SOOR-yuhs) – Demons.

Bhakti (BHUKH-tih) – Devotion.

Brahma (BRUH-muh) – Creator god.

Brahmin (BRUH-mihn) – Priestly class in Sahasra society.

Brahmaloka (bruh-muh-LOW-kuh) – Brahma's paradise realm.

Daitya (DITE-yuh) – A type of asurya opposed to the gods.

Danavas (duh-NUH-vuhs) – Giant evil spirits, a type of asurya.

Devayatana (day-vuh-yuh-TUH-nuh) – The first temple in Sahasra, built in honor of Vishnu, now lost.

Devi (DAY-vih) – Goddess of the cycles of life.

Dharajala (dhur-uh-JUH-luh) – City that is the center of Kali devotion.

Dharma (DHUR-muh) – The system of duties and obligations in Hinduism.

Durga (DOOR-guh) – Incarnation of Devi as the fierce demon fighter.

Ganas (GUH-nuhs) – Demon dwarves in service to Ganesha.

Ganesha (guh-NAY-shuh) – Elephant-headed god of knowledge and learning.

Gandhupal (GUHN-dhoo-puhl) – The sacred river of Sahasra.

Guru (GOO-roo) – A teacher; prestige class.

Hanuman (HUN-oo-muhn) – Monkey god.

Hiranya-kasipu (huh-RUHN-yuh-kuh-SIH-poo) – Chief of the asuryas and king of the daityas, known as Gold-Eye.

Kali (KUH-lih) – Dark goddess.

Kananaukas (kah-nah-NOW-kus) – Monkey people of Kishkindha.

Karma (KUR-muh) – Specific actions taken throughout one's life that have consequences in the future.

Karttikeya (kurt-tih-KAY-uh) – God of warfare.

Kishkindha (kihsh-KIHN-dhuh) – City of the monkey people.

Lakshmi (LUHK-shmih) – Goddess of prosperity.

Lankhala (luhn-KHUH-luh) – Revala's fortress city.

Mandala (muhn-DUH-luh) – A circular sacred diagram that produces a spell effect.

Mantra (MUHN-truh) – Spoken ritual formula, made up of nonsense syllables but having great effect.

Moksha (MOWK-shuh) – Personal liberation from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

Nataraja (nuh-tuh-RUH-juh) – Dancer devoted to Shiva; character class.

Pañcatattva (puhn-chuht-UHT-tvuh) – Ritual of five forbidden truths.

Patala (puh-TUH-luh) – The otherworldly realm of asuryas.

Phansigar (PUHN-sih-guhr) – Stranger devoted to Kali; prestige class.

Revala (ray-VUH-luh) – King of the rakshasas. Traditionally known as Ravana.

Ruhmal (ROO-muhl) – The weapon of the Phansigar.

Samsara (sum-SUH-ruh) – The reincarnation of the soul.

Shakti (SHUK-tih) – Incarnation of Devi as Shiva's creative power.

Shiva (SHIH-vuh) – Destroyer god.

Shiva Nataraja (SHIH-vuh nuh-tuh-RUH-juh) – Shiva's incarnation as king of the dancers.

Ujjayini (uh-juh-YIH-nih) – King Vikrama's capital city.

Vaitarani (vie-tuh-RUH-nih) – The river of death in the underworld.

Varuna (vuh-ROO-nuh) – King of the adityas.

Vetala (vay-TUH-luh) – Mystical being that inhabits corpses and converses with humanoids.

Vidya (VIHD-yuh) – Esoteric knowledge.

Vidyadhari (VIHD-yuh-DHUUH-rih) – Semi-divine being possessed of great scientific knowledge.

Vikrama (vih-KRUH-muh) – Great legendary king of Ujjayini.

Vishnu (VIHSH-noo) – Protector god.

Viyadisa (vih-yuh-DIH-suh) – City in the southern hill region of Sahasra.

Yakshini (yuhk-SHIH-nih) – Nature spirit, often bound to a treasure site.

Yama (YUH-muh) – God of death and judgment.

Yamapura (yuh-muh-POO-ruh) – Yama's city.

Yamasadana (yuh-muh-suh-DUH-nuh) – Yama's palace within Yamapura.

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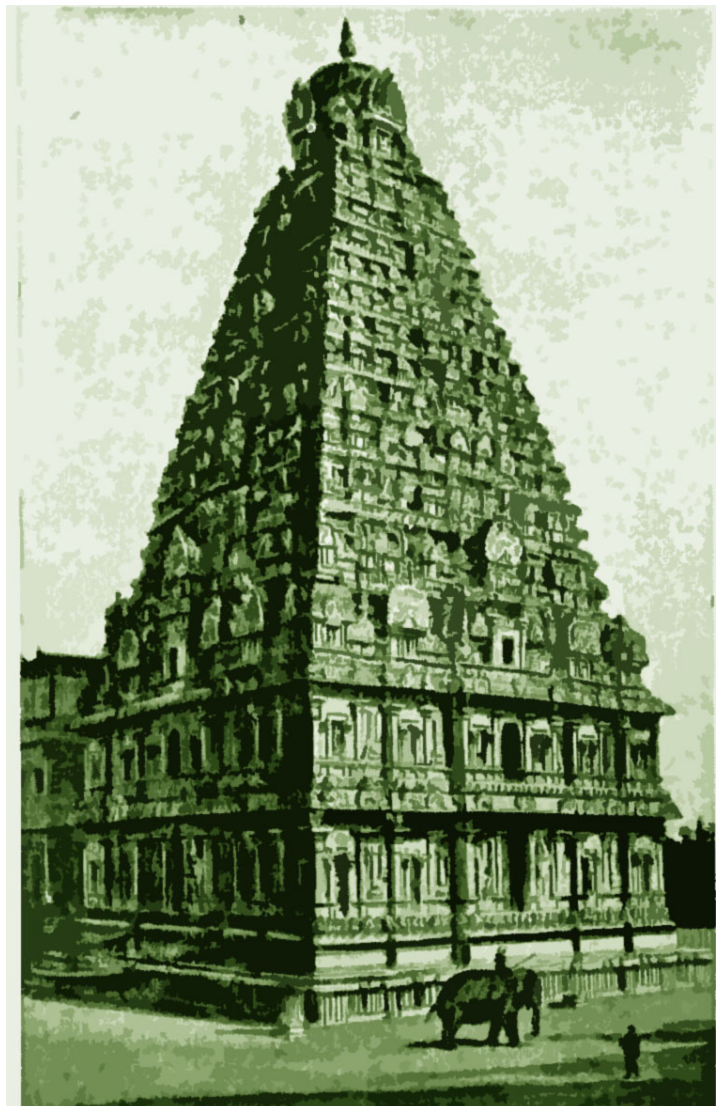
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