

## Chapter 1 : Congress of the Holy, Yab-Yum iconography

*Volume 1: The Pantheon of the Mantramahodadhi focuses on the iconography of deities described in the sixteenth-century Mantramahodadhi, which addresses topics related to Tantra, and specifically mantra-Āstra, like the function and structure of the deity descriptions (dhyāna) and the interpretations given to the iconographic attributes.*

Personal use only; commercial use is strictly prohibited. There is a diverse range of attitudes toward the tantric traditions, ranging from their emic understandings as paths to liberation to the relatively widespread associations of the tantric traditions with sorcery and libertine sexuality. Likewise, tantric traditions are also extremely diverse, which has made it difficult to develop a definition broad enough to cover the various tantric traditions without being overly broad. There have also been many attempts to discern the origins of the tantric traditions. While there is very little evidence supporting the hypothesis that any of the tantric traditions existed before the 5th century ce, there have been attempts to trace back these traditions much earlier, to the time of the Buddha or the ancient Hindu sages, or even back to the Indus Valley civilization. In overviewing various attempts to date these traditions, it appears that the first tantric traditions to emerge in a distinct form almost certainly first emerged in a Hindu context around the mid-first millennium ce. An overview of the history of tantric traditions, then, should begin with a survey the development of the Hindu tantric traditions, from the mid-first millennium ce up to the colonial period, when tantric traditions in South Asia generally entered a period of decline, followed by a renaissance in the 20th century. The historical appearance of Buddhist tantric traditions occurs a few centuries later, during the 7th century. The spread of tantric traditions quickly followed their development in India. Over the course of this millennium Hinduism went through a remarkable series of transformations, transitioning from the ancient Vedic tradition into the classical traditions of Hinduism. This period saw the rise of both the tantric and the Bhakti devotional movements. While the latter drew from the tendency toward monotheism seen in late Vedic literature, Tantrism developed from Vedic ritual traditions as well as from the yogic and meditative traditions that developed both within ancient Hinduism as well as in rival Buddhist and Jain traditions. Hinduism as currently practiced is a product of the intermixture of tantric and devotional approaches to practice that developed during the first millennium ce. But Tantrism, while originating in a Hindu context, is not limited to Hinduism. They also had a less striking but still real impact on Jainism and several other religious traditions. Buddhist tantric traditions, which emerged during the 7th century ce, were rapidly transmitted to Southeast, East, and Central Asia, leading to the establishment of several distinct East Asian and Tibetan traditions. The tantric traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism have been simultaneously infamous as well as poorly understood. The title Tantra Mantra was given to a recent Hindi horror film featuring black magic. As a result they are also diverse, which makes it a significant challenge to come up with an adequate definition, one that is broad enough to be applicable to all of the tantric traditions, but not too broad, including traditions that would identify themselves as tantric, and thus probably should be excluded from this rubric. The tantric traditions have been given several labels, but there is no single label that is accepted by all of these traditions. It is important to note the use of this term in a plural form. Tantric traditions are multiple and also originated as multiple, distinct traditions of both text and practice. This focus on lineage is found throughout the tantric world; originating in India, this emphasis was transmitted to Tibet and East Asia and remains an important concern of contemporary tantric communities. India traditionally knows only texts called Tantras. These texts, moreover, fall far short of covering the entire Tantric literature; nor are only Tantric texts called Tantras. So the presence or absence of tantras cannot be taken as a defining characteristic of these traditions. The scriptures known as tantras, which were transmitted to East Asia, tend to be heavily focused on the description of ritual, meditative, and yogic practices. These traditions tend to be heavily practice-oriented, with the goals of this practice ranging from worldly success to ultimate liberation, however defined. Obviously it would be ideal to define Tantra in terms of a single defining characteristic. Were there a single feature that all tantric traditions shared, this would naturally make it far easier to delineate exactly what the term designates. It is also a somewhat arbitrary definition, as there are also many other elements of tantric practice that are found in most, if not all, tantric traditions. One solution to this problem is

to delineate a range of features that tend to characterize tantric traditions. This definition is quite useful as it indicates the range of ritual and contemplative techniques employed by tantric practitioners in order to achieve magical powers siddhi as well as liberation. Liberation in the Hindu theistic traditions is generally defined as the attainment of union with or proximity to the supreme deity, while it is defined as the achievement of the awakening of a buddha by Buddhists. For both traditions liberation is characterized by both knowledge and freedom. While we might debate which elements of tantric practice might be included in a definition or taxonomy of Tantrism, it should be noted that tantric traditions of all sectarian affiliations, be they Buddhist or Hindu, are characterized by a strong focus on ritual and meditative practice. The Origins of Tantric Traditions The origins of the tantric traditions is an enigma, largely due to the paucity of historical evidence in India from the period when it seems that they first emerged, during the Gupta dynasty 4<sup>th</sup> ce. This paucity of evidence has led to a great deal of unbridled speculation regarding the origin of these traditions. There is no hard evidence for the existence of tantric traditions prior to the mid-first millennium ce. While it is clear that some aspects of the tantric traditions, such as characteristic practices or iconography, considerably predate the historical formation of these traditions, the various attempts to date Tantrism prior to the first millennium ce are based on very flimsy evidence. Some Buddhist tantric traditions claim that their scriptures were taught by timeless cosmic buddhas and then revealed to adepts. To the extent that tantric scriptures discuss their origins, these disclosures tend to be mythical rather than historical. Treating these myths as history is naturally methodologically unsound. Despite these origin claims, however, there is absolutely no evidence that any of the Buddhist tantras originated when the Buddha lived, around the 5<sup>th</sup> century bce. While attempts to root aspects of tantric traditions in the distant past are speculative at best, there is no doubt that these traditions, as they emerged, were heavily dependent on earlier Indian traditions of thought and practice. One of the biggest influences on tantric traditions was the far older Vedic tradition of Hinduism. Vedic Hinduism featured the priestly class, Brahmins, who had the sacred duty to memorize the oral sacred literature of the tradition, the Vedas, and also learn the complex ritual practices the tradition advocated. This tradition developed circa 15<sup>th</sup> bce, reaching its peak right around 600 bce, just prior to rise of the renunciant traditions that would challenge it. Although there was tension between advocates of the Vedic tradition and advocates of some of the tantric traditions, the tantric traditions drew heavily from Vedic ritual practice traditions nonetheless. These include, most notably, renunciation and asceticism as a key requisite for liberation. The practice of meditation and yoga were seen as key practices to develop this realization. Tantric traditions inherited this assumption, and many of the contemplative practices, from earlier renunciant traditions. Buddhist tantric traditions, naturally, accepted the cosmological and philosophical frameworks developed by earlier Buddhist traditions, as well as many of their contemplative practices. The early first millennium ce also saw another important development in Hinduism, namely, the rise of the Bhakti devotional movement. This development occurred around the same time as the rise of the tantric traditions. It was characterized by tendency toward monotheism, in that devotion to a single supreme creator god was seen as the key to salvation. The popularity and explosive growth of devotional Hinduism had a significant effect on the tantric traditions. This may be the case, but while the influence was less, it was not nonexistent. In the Buddhist context devotion is typically limited to the guru, but this is seen as an essential requisite for tantric practice. Thence it spread to other Hindu traditions, as well as to Buddhism; distinctly tantric forms of Buddhism emerged during the 7<sup>th</sup> century. It is impossible to precisely date the emergence of tantric Hindu traditions due to the poor state of textual preservation in these traditions; no Hindu tantric manuscripts from earlier than the 9<sup>th</sup> century have been preserved. These were ascetic groups who sought liberation and were also reputed to possess magical powers, and they likely constituted the context in which many practices that later came to characterize the tantric traditions first developed. It was characterized by public rituals performed by priests. The latter was subdivided into works of two genres: Both violent and sexual practices are common in these works. This tradition of practice was widely known as the Kaula tradition. Erotic ritual with a female companion 2. The notion that supernatural powers may be attained through the extraction by yogic means of the vital essences of living beings 4. Initiation through the consumption of consecrated liquor 5. The centrality of states of possession 37 The Kaula tradition was clearly established by the 9<sup>th</sup> century and may have originated a century or so earlier. It

developed four well-known subtraditions. From it developed the Trika tradition that focused on a trio of goddesses: Particularly important were the nondual Trika and Krama traditions that see no ultimate distinction between the deity and practitioner. He describes this as follows: The end result was a nondualistic system in which the transgressive elements were internalized and hence rendered less offensive to the orthodox. He was a prolific author who wrote a number of commentaries on major works from the Trika and Krama traditions, as well as works in philosophy and aesthetics. A similar development also occurred in Buddhist traditions; a tendency to neutralize the more transgressive elements of tantric practice, often by transforming the practice from external rituals to completely internalized visualizations. This is because these are clearly overlapping categories. The worship of goddesses was a venerable practice widespread throughout South Asia. These scriptures focus on the worship of goddesses and drew from both older Hindu as well as Buddhist works. This tradition went into decline during the medieval period and is now almost extinct, and very few copies of this work have survived. This was motivated both by the growing South Asian diaspora communities in the West as well as by growing interest in Asian religious traditions among non-Indian Westerners from the s onward. Many of these gurus have been successful in establishing religious communities abroad, serving both diaspora Indian communities as well as converts to Hinduism. This is due to the international Buddhist network that led to the rapid dissemination of new Buddhist works. Many works of Buddhist tantric literature were rapidly translated into Tibetan and Chinese, and the date when a translation was made provides us with terminus ad quem for the respective work. While there are still many lacunae in our understanding of the early history of tantric Buddhist traditions, available evidence points to the mid-7th century as the most likely point at which historically datable traditions began to take shape. These new traditions featured practices advocating union with a deity, and they typically claim to promote a secret method for the rapid achievement of Buddhahood. Within a few decades after their initial composition, early tantric traditions of text and practice were disseminated to East and Southeast Asia. This was facilitated by the active trade and diplomatic exchanges between India and China during the 7th and early 8th centuries, via overland trade routes via Central Asia and also maritime trade routes via South East Asia. Tantric traditions were established in China during the Tang dynasty, and thence disseminated to Korea 76 and Japan. It appears that tantric Buddhist texts and practices were first disseminated to Tibet during the 8th century, shortly after their initial dissemination to East and Southeast Asia. Buddhists traditions view the 7th century as the time when Buddhism first reached Tibet, although there might have been gradual dissemination of Buddhism into the region earlier. Advocates of the new Tibetan traditions based on these scriptures claimed that yogic practices involving the manipulation of the subtle body were requisites to complete awakening. Tibetan Buddhists would later play important roles in the dissemination of Buddhism and associated tantric traditions to China and Mongolia, and eventually throughout the world, with the diaspora of Tibetan lamas in the 20th century following the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet in

Influence on Other Religious Traditions Tantric Hindu and Buddhist traditions influenced a number of other religious traditions, both within South Asia as well as in other areas of the world. Because tantric traditions first emerged in South Asia, their impact there is naturally the most significant. The South Asian traditions that were influenced by the tantric traditions to some degree include Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism. Generally speaking, many Jains were interested in tantric practices, although given the Jain focus on nonviolence as well as strict celibacy for monks and nuns, Jain tantric texts did not advocate any of the transgressive ritual practices involving sex or violence.

### Chapter 2 : The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities (2 vols.)

*The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities, 2 Volumes Bound in One, Revised Edition [Gudrun B  hnemann] on www.nxgvision.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. This book deals with the iconography of Hindu deities as presented in Sanskrit texts.*

These studies rely on close visual analysis and the correlation of images with relevant written texts. Beyond this, the role of iconographical analysis is to understand what images mean and how they function as part of larger historical, sociopolitical, and intellectual contexts. Scholarship on Hindu images is characterized by both descriptive and interpretative levels of analysis. Following the main themes outlined in published works, this article charts the historical development of Hindu images in various media from the formative through the modern periods and highlights their meanings in different contexts: Discussion of regionalism and sectarian identity are balanced with examinations of crossovers among sects, regions, and religions. General Overviews Broad surveys of Hindu iconography are dominated by the search for textual explanations of visual representations of the three major cult deities, Shiva, Vishnu, and the goddess. Gopinatha Rao and Banerjea are the earliest examples of such scholarship, while Bhattacharyya and Maxwell demonstrate the hold that such a text-centered approach continues to have on the study of Hindu icons. All four of these general works rely heavily on the analysis of stone sculptures. Eck and Waghorne, et al. These last four sources are particularly useful in introducing readers to a broader range of media, including sculptures made from clay and metal Waghorne, et al. Beginning undergraduates and general readers will find Blurton and the Asia Society website adequate starting points before consulting Eck and Waghorne, et al. Advanced students will still need to consult the specialized albeit text-heavy sources in addition to Eck and Waghorne, et al. Separate links titled Rama, Krishna, Shiva, and Cosmic Realms provide a basic introduction to the nature of divinity in Hinduism and demonstrate the interrelatedness of rulers, Hindu deities, and heroes. The Development of Hindu Iconography. Two substantial chapters are dedicated to the representations of Hindu deities on coins and seals. Originally published in Iconology of Composite Images. Draws on Hindu texts and images represented in diverse media across multiple time periods to argue that all Hindu deities combine features of two or more deities in a single form. Harvard University Press, Nontechnical language and a good selection of examples representing different media, artistic styles, and time periods make this book a useful starting point, particularly for beginners and undergraduates. Seeing the Divine Image in India. Columbia University Press, A succinct explanation of the ways Hindu worshippers interact with aniconic and iconic representations of deities and holy people in the settings of temples and pilgrimage sites. Elements of Hindu Iconography. A standard source for learning about various Hindu deities and their symbols and attributes as well as descriptions of the deities in major classical Hindu texts. The Gods of Asia: Images, Text, and Meaning. Oxford University Press, Part 1 discusses Hindu worship and icons of four major cult deities  Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, and the goddess  from a pan-Indian perspective. Part 5 focuses on mythology and sexual symbols. Ten indexes assist in searching specific themes, subjects, place-names, and texts. Gods of Flesh, Gods of Stone: The Embodiment of Divinity in India. Users without a subscription are not able to see the full content on this page. Please subscribe or login. How to Subscribe Oxford Bibliographies Online is available by subscription and perpetual access to institutions. For more information or to contact an Oxford Sales Representative click here.

## Chapter 3 : Tantra - Wikipedia

*The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities, vol. 1: The Pantheon of the Mantramahodadhi. By GUDRUN BUHNEMANN. Gonda Indological Studies, vol. 9. Groningen: EGBERT FORSTEN, Pp. xxix [euro] The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities, vol. 2: The Pantheons of the Prapancasara and the Saradatilaka. By GUDRUN BUHNEMANN.*

Anuradha Ap In Hinduism, it is also the name of the deva, a personification of water, one of the Vasus in most later Puranic lists. Apam Napat is an eminent figure of the Indo-Iranian pantheon. Aranyani is a goddess of the forests and the animals that dwell within them. Aranyani has the distinction of having one of the most descriptive hymns in the Rigveda dedicated to her, in which she is described as being elusive, fond of quiet glades in the jungle, and fearless of remote places. The son of Pandava prince Arjuna one of the main heroes of the Mahabharata and the Naga princess Ulupi, Iravan is the central god of the cult of Kuttantavar Tamil: Ardhanari is a composite androgynous form of the Hindu god Shiva and his consort Parvati also known as Devi, Shakti and Uma in this icon. Ardhanarishvara is depicted as half male and half female, split down the middle. The left half is usually the female Parvati, illustrating her traditional attributes and the right half, Shiva. Ardra The Hindu myth associated to Ardra is that of Taraka. Taraka is an asura who is granted invulnerability by Brahma. Latin argentum is the third of the Pandavas, the sons and princes of Pandu, who with Krishna, is considered to be the hero of the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Aruna is a personification of the reddish glow of the rising Sun,[1] which is believed to have spiritual powers. Arundhati is the wife of the sage Vashista, one of the seven sages Saptarshi who are identified with the Ursa Major. She is identified with the morning star and also with the star Alcor which forms a double star with Mizar identified as Vashista in Ursa Major. Aryaman is one of the early Vedic deities devas. His name signifies "bosom friend". He is the third son of Aditi. He is an Aditya, a solar deity. He is supposed to be the chief of the manes and the Milky Way is supposed to be his path. Ashapura - Mata no Madh is one of aspect devi. Her temples are mainly found in Gujarat. Ahura Mazda are non-suras, a different group of power-seeking deities besides the suras, sometimes considered naturalists, or nature-beings. They are the forces of chaos that are in constant battle with the Devas. Asvayujau is a goddess of good luck, joy and happiness. The older name of the asterism, found in the Atharvaveda AVS Ayyappan is believed to be an incarnation of Dharma Sasta, who is the offspring of Shiva and Vishnu as Mohini, is the only female avatar of the God Vishnu and is generally depicted in a yogic posture.

## Chapter 4 : The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities (2 vols.) | Asian Languages and Cultures

*The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities (Gonda Indological Studies) [Gudrun Buhnemann] on www.nxgvision.com*  
*\*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Volume I: The Pantheon of the Mantramahodadhi; Volume II: The Pantheons of the Prapan-casa-ra and the Sâ-a-rada-tilaka.*

In post-Vedic texts, such as the Puranas and the Itihasas of Hinduism, the Devas represent the good, and the Asuras the bad. Rudra left is represented in Vedic literature, is shown as Shiva-Rudra 2nd-century sculpture middle , and as Shiva meaning kind in 13th-century art work right. The iconography evolved, retaining some symbolic elements such as trident, axe or antelope. Savitr , Vishnu , Rudra later given the exclusive epithet of Shiva , and Prajapati later Brahma are gods and hence Devas. In this case, the Titan is potentially an Angel, the Angel still by nature a Titan; the Darkness in actu is Light, the Light in potentia Darkness; whence the designations Asura and Deva may be applied to one and the same Person according to the mode of operation, as in Rigveda 1. Above Indra is part of the seal of a Thailand state. The Epics and medieval era texts, particularly the Puranas , developed extensive and richly varying mythologies associated with Hindu deities, including their genealogies. For example, god Indra a Deva and the antigod Virocana an Asura question a sage for insights into the knowledge of the self. In contrast, Indra keeps pressing the sage, churning the ideas, and learning about means to inner happiness and power. However, Ishvara represents different concept in various Hindu philosophies. Yoga , Vaisheshika , Vedanta and Nyaya schools of Hinduism discuss Ishvara, but assign different meanings. Early Nyaya school scholars considered the hypothesis of a deity as a creator God with the power to grant blessings, boons and fruits; but these early Nyaya scholars then rejected this hypothesis, and were non-theistic or atheists. The Samhitas , which are the oldest layer of text in Vedas enumerate 33 devas, [note 3] either 11 each for the three worlds, or as 12 Adityas , 11 Rudras , 8 Vasus and 2 Ashvins in the Brahmanas layer of Vedic texts. Gods who are eleven in heaven; who are eleven on earth; and who are eleven dwelling with glory in mid-air; may ye be pleased with this our sacrifice. Murti Proper Murti design is described in ancient and medieval Indian texts. They describe proportions, posture, expressions among other details, often referencing to nature. I worship you per rules, kindly accept it. May all who live in this tree, find residence elsewhere, May they forgive us now, we bow to them. Medieval era texts describing their proper proportions, positions and gestures include the Puranas , Agamas and Samhitas particularly the Shilpa Shastras. Saumya images are most common in Hindu temples. Linga-Yoni left symbolizes Shiva-Parvati, [] Tulsi plant in a square base center is symbolism for Vishnu, [] and sunrise or rivers are revered as aspects of the spiritual everywhere. The worship performed by Hindus is known by a number of regional names, such as Puja. Eck , states that a typical Puja involves one or more of 16 steps Shodasha Upachara traceable to ancient times: List of Hindu deities and Rigvedic deities Major deities have inspired a vast genre of literature such as the Puranas and Agama texts as well their own Hindu traditions, but with shared mythology , ritual grammar, theosophy , axiology and polycentrism. Trimurti and Tridevi Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva with their consorts. The concept of Triad or Trimurti, Trinity makes a relatively late appearance in Hindu literature, or in the second half of 1st millennium BCE. Painting currently in Victoria and Albert Museum. Avatar and Dashavatara Hindu mythology has nurtured the concept of Avatar, which represents the descent of a deity on earth. He becomes female, during the Samudra manthan , in the form of Mohini , to resolve a conflict between the Devas and Asuras.

## Chapter 5 : List of Hindu deities - Wikipedia

*The present study consists of two volumes. Volume One focuses on the iconography of Hindu deities, mostly in their Tantric forms, as they are described in the sixteenth-century North Indian compendium Mantramahodadhi ('the Great Ocean of Mantras') by Mahidhara.*

My own personal spiritual journey has similarly run the gamut from exploring the great earth religions and fertility cults of Europe to finding refuge in the Buddhist and Hindu temples that filled my early life. At the center of my own worship, the Great Mother has always been present—whether She has manifested as Ma, any one of the mighty goddesses of the western pantheon, or Vajrayogini. Tantrism itself is a method of psychospiritual advancement that was developed in India before the purported arrival of Indo-Europeans over three thousand years ago. With the pressures that were brought to bear on Indian religious life by the eighth-century Central Asian invaders, Tantric systems were maintained in the south of the subcontinent and also in Bengal, where they formed an important aspect of goddess worship in India. Those Indian and later, Tantric Buddhist traditions have preserved these systems and the iconography of the goddess since ancient times, but it is not exactly known how old they are. Despite the similarities between Hindu Tantrism and Vajrayana or Tantric, or Tibetan Buddhism, there are also some fundamental differences. The purpose of Vajrayana Buddhist practice is to attain the perfect enlightenment of Buddha, whereas in the Hindu Tantric system, the basis is realizing the ten Mahavidyas, or aspects of Devi, as the highest forms of deities. She has no other counterpart in Buddhism, and is a wild spirit who dances ecstatically in the sky of sunyata, or the great emptiness that underlies all phenomena. The similarities between Vajrayogini and Kali are so obvious that many scholars suspect they are only slight variations of the Great Mother of Hinduism. Typically, Vajrayogini is blood-red in color, naked except for elaborate ornaments of human bone and a necklace of skulls corresponding to the 16 vowels and 35 consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet. In Her right hand, She holds a flaying knife used to cut off attachments, and in Her left She carries a skull cup filled with mahasukha the great bliss, which She pours out like wine to Her devotees. Perhaps another aspect that links Her to Kali is the fact that both goddesses are depicted as two of the ten Mahavidyas. Among the Mahavidyas, Kali, Tara, and Chinnamasta have the most significance, especially in Tantric practice. In Buddhism, Vajrayogini is essentially the same entity as Chinnamasta also known as Krodha Kali, and both goddesses appear in severed-head forms and other identical imagery. The main face is wrathful, the very pure relative truth, and the upper face of a pig is the pure ultimate truth, gazing upward; both faces have three round red eyes. The right hand holds a curved knife upraised and the left a skullcup of blood held to the heart. In the bend of the left elbow, as the nature of method, appears a katvanga staff. Wearing an elephant hide as an upper garment and a tiger skin as a lower garment; adorned with snakes and bones. Dark yellow hair bristles upward, the remainder falling loose. With a crown of five dry human skulls, a necklace of fifty fresh. The left leg is extended in a half dance posture pressing on the heart of a human corpse. Standing on the left leg in a posture of dance atop a corpse, sun disc and lotus blossom, She is completely surrounded by the orange-red flames of pristine awareness. Appearing youthful and dwelling in the middle of a blazing mass of fire. Like Kali, She tramples upon illusion and ego-awareness in terrible jubilation. But like Tara who is also thought to be a manifestation of Vajrayogini in Tantric Buddhism, She offers grace and benediction to spirits in search of a way out of misery and the samsaric cycle. Vajrayogini is typically worshipped in mandala form and through visualization. The Guhyasamayasadhanamala is a tenth-century text that contains solely Vajrayogini sadhanas, with 46 comprised works by various authors. So for me, Vajrayogini is Ma. A Nyingma liturgical verse to Vajrayogini sits atop my altar, right next to an image of Ma: Mystical experience is required in order to experience Buddha-nature prior to full enlightenment. A body of esoteric knowledge passed via lineages of transmission was accumulated over centuries to prepare Tantric students for the next stage. The Vajravarahi Sadhana describes worship of Vajrayogini as a complex and exacting process. Typically, She is worshipped through visualization of offerings and recitation of verses. The syllable then quivers with energy, which draws down a mass of Buddhas from their dwelling place. These Buddhas which include gurus, Buddhas, and

Bodhisattvas are then to be worshipped with ritual offerings such as flowers, incense, lamps, perfumed powders, and food the upacaras, similar to the offerings made to Kali at Her temple in Dakshineswar. Worship can become even more elaborate, but it typically culminates in continuous repetition of an eight-part mantra. While exact methods of worshipping the goddess are veiled in Tantric secrecy, it is also possible to worship Vajrayogini as Tara. This beautiful goddess is also strikingly similar in appearance to Kali. While Kali is black, Tara is blue although She is a goddess who appears in different colors, such as the compassionate Green Tara and the volatile Red Tara. Both wear a necklace of severed human heads and a girdle of arms, and both sport lolling tongues with blood oozing from their mouths. Essentially, they are manifestations of each other, and Tara is often called Kalika, Mahakali, and Bhadrakali. However, Tara is often thought to be the more approachable manifestation of the Goddess.

*Dharma Texts, Sanskrit Literature, Hinduism texts, Tantra Books, Agama, Shaktism, Hinduism Books In Italian, 'The Iconography of Hindu Tantric www.nxgvision.com' Skip to main content Search the history of over billion web pages on the Internet.*

In the body of this entry, this description is followed by a list of the attributes held in each hand of this deity, and then a series of explanatory remarks detailing ritual contexts; discussion of attributes found in the autocommentary to this text; a discussion of similar deity descriptions found in other texts; a discussion of deities by other names but with similar iconography; and a discussion of line drawings and other illustrations of this deity that are included in the back of the volume. All of this is presented in the recognizable style and methodology of a European sometimes termed "scientific" Indological style. Encyclopedia of Indian Iconography "is not an academic work" is telling and reveals the underlying but mainly unexpressed methodological and theoretical assumptions that buttress and imbue her approach. Bühnemann, who identifies herself as a "philologist" vol. Throughout, the tone is restrained and impersonal, in a style that altogether eschews any wider interpretations or speculations about the many possible meanings of these deities. Bühnemann has organized this work as a reference tool to be accessed by various kinds of specialists and other interested students, and as a result, there is considerable, useful repetition and reiteration of information in various locations. Certainly, these two volumes will be of great interest to many, including numerous scholars in religious studies and the history of religions, who will now have additional and very substantial and detailed material from which to draw for the wider and pressing task of the interpretation of the many meanings of such Hindu tantric deities. Bühnemann herself outlines and suggests a wide array of research desiderata that arise from the study of these deity descriptions, saying: Problems to be investigated by students of iconography include the developments and changes in deity pantheons from earlier to later texts; the position of a deity within a pantheon; the identification of certain textual traditions and their relationships to particular regions; special rites connected to the worship of a deity; and the question of Buddhist and Hindu mutual influences. They will need to be read and analyzed as religious documents, and as constructs and artefacts of particular religious, geographical, and chronological moments or niches in the evolution of the many Hinduisms and many Tantrisms. What are the historical, theological, and sectarian contexts in which these three compendia of tantric lore were first gathered up and assembled? Who employed such texts and why? And who did not use such texts and why? It may be speculated that the selection of deities that is presented by each of these texts represents the tastes, predilections, and sectarian proclivities of its author s , or alternatively, an impulse toward a certain kind of "catholicity" that strives for a certain kind of nonsectarian inclusiveness. For the MM, for example, the "principle of selection" seems to respond to certain forms of highly assimilated and perhaps quite conservative tantric worship and practice within the sphere of sixteenth-century, brahminical, smarta culture in Varanasi. All of this demands and deserves further investigation. Naturally, it is important not to overgeneralize about "The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities" from these three texts. Despite the fact that they are important texts that gather up materials from many central sources, they still represent "snapshots" of Hindu tantric pantheons at different historical moments, and in different geographical locales. Additionally, there are clearly many other Hindu tantric deities who receive no substantial mention in any of these three texts for example, the Trika deities: Para and Malini, or the Kaula goddess, Kubjika. Moreover, as Bühnemann herself notes vol. There is something artificial and synthetic in the way that the authors of these texts gathered together, from what must have been disparate and highly differentiated sources and lineages, these many deity descriptions and their accompanying mantras, rituals, and so on. Nevertheless, the appearance of a kind of artificial unity imposed by the inclusion of these many deities in a single text must have historically imposed and projected a certain kind of subsequent coherence onto such a textual grouping of deities. Thus, it would be interesting to study how the processes of appropriation and inclusion or conversely, the process of exclusion, whether deliberate or not of any particular deity contributed to its subsequent mainstreaming or sidelining. These texts also present

us with concrete examples of the later evolution of Hindu Tantra, which permitted this kind of encyclopedic "mining" and assemblage of such deity pantheons. More than this, it seems that the continuing popularity of the MM, for example, gives testament to a later unfolding of Hindu Tantra, which has succeeded, in its many accommodations and progressive rapprochements, to an "ownership" of the mainstream and center of Hindu religious life. The work will also serve as a foundation for numerous other kinds of studies and inquiries that can be made on its basis. For example, it will be interesting to study these three texts statistically, and to inquire into which deities are mentioned and with what frequency. In addition, these volumes will add much rich information to any study of the major deities herein presented: Similarly, the volumes provide a wealth of information with regard to the many tantric goddesses and their various groupings. Certainly, there are here rare deities Tripura, Bandi about whom little is known, but there are also here forms of the more well-known deities who here show themselves in their "tantric" guise and usage. Thus, a study of these texts assists in the investigation of processes of appropriation into a tantric context and usage of both early deities of the tradition Agni, Varuna as well as of widely known pan-Indian, Hindu deities Siva, Krsna, Rama, Laksmi, Sarasvati, Annapurna, etc. Thus, it is interesting to ask, on the basis of these texts, what is it that makes any given deity "tantric"? Or alternatively, how are we to understand the very notion of "deity" which, as in prior periods of the Indian tradition, here spans the spectrum from quite mythologically fleshed out and personified gods and goddesses, to rather abstract, and at times patently artificial deification of philosophical principles and ritual elements Vac, Papapurusa, and also includes along the way a few albeit superior! Moreover, are there deities mentioned here that first appear or only appear in recognizably tantric textual and ritual contexts? So we are left with any number of different kinds of questions that arise from this work; for example: That is to say, we confront here again the complex questions surrounding the historical evolution and construction of this adjective, particularly in the face of modern "orientalizing" critiques of the enterprise of the modern construction of "Tantrism. This is a particularly crucial and important facet of this study: Part of the larger work of scholarship certainly centers on the difficult task of hazarding interpretive forays into what these deities convey and this in both senses: In closing, it is important to reiterate what an impressive work of scholarship this is--highly detailed, precise, and very careful in its approach! It is a great contribution, which teaches us much about these materials. And it will, no doubt, serve as the platform upon which much additional investigation may be based. With this publication, the study of Hindu Tantra makes an important and very welcome advance.

### Chapter 7 : Vajrayogini (Vajratara): History & Worship | SHARANYA

*Tantric Deities from Wisdom and The Sadhanamala, a 12th-century manual of iconography, identifies this form as Chakrasamvara. In Tibet, Chakrasamvara is a deity.*

### Chapter 8 : Mundamala - Wikipedia

*CHAPTER-VIII ICONOGRAPHY OF LOCAL GODS AND GODDESSES Evidence of sculptural treasure bears witness for strong veneration of Hindu worship of local Gods and Goddesses in Goa.*

### Chapter 9 : Iconography - Hinduism - Oxford Bibliographies

*Hindu puja, temples and iconography all show tantric influence. These texts, states Gavin Flood, contain representation of "the body in philosophy, in ritual and in art", which are linked to "techniques of the body, methods or technologies developed within the tantric traditions intended to transform body and self".*