

Review of: "A Survey: Looking for the best possible way of modern engagement with Traditional Indian knowledge"

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I commend the author for a courageous step towards paradigmatic unification of two great scientific traditions. As a neuroscientist and practicing clinical neurologist with a strong interest in Tantra and Hindu mind sciences, this is a topic very close to my heart. There is one criticism I will make - the lack of focus on Devatas. Throughout the history of Indic thought, the central focus has been on the Devatas - this briefly got submerged during the early Buddhist period, but made a comeback in the Mahayana and Tantric age. Modern scholars and scientists when surveying the history of India ignore any mention of the Devatas, thinking (incorrectly) that it is only philosophical statements and scientific assertions about the external world which are to be taken seriously. The presence of the Hindu Devatas in far away Buddhist cultures such as Japan and Tibet and Vietnam are glossed over as just anachronisms. However, I lean towards the viewpoint that the Devatas can be understood by modern scientists as conscious agents, worship of whom serves to create powerful attractor basins in the dynamic system that is the cognitive architecture of the individual. Over time, this radically dismantles the limited individuality of the human, and replaces it with a larger, more universal self-consciousness, that of the Devata. This brings about a host of beneficial changes in the individual, including better health, peace of mind, and usually, intellectual and artistic and scientific talent. This is the only way to make sense of why thoroughgoing rationalist thinkers like Shankara, mystics like Matsyendranatha, mathematicians like Bhaskara and artists like Tyagaraja all shared Devata Upasana in common. And why even initially nontheist systems like Buddhism and Jainism ultimately converted to Devata Upasana. The common thread that links Indian culture is the Devatas, not philosophical arguments about logic or nondualism. Other than this one criticism, this paper is very well written, easy to read, and the author is clearly comfortable spanning both Western and Indic science. I look forward to more from his pen.