



Sacred Nature and Himalayan Womanhood

**A Research Monograph
in Visual Anthropology**

Sacred Annapurna and Himalayan Womanhood



A Research Monograph in Visual Anthropology

Panchassee's Past Part Two

Synopsis: Sacred Nature & Himalayan Womanhood

Nature and womanhood are parallel experiences as represented in Vedic nature symbols. These parallels are living in Himalayan culture today. In a multi-layered framework, sacred Himalayan nature, for example holy mountains such as Annapurna, are seen as representing also yoga concepts. In various aspects of a Vedic-Shakti conception, Himalayan culture associates experiences of nature as womanhood, for example Daughter-Dawn. This research presents a window into this Vedic past that still lives in the identification of village womanhood with nature as Shakti. There are inner and outer aspects to this Vedic nature symbolism and are described in earlier research in Mandala 5 Sukta 19 of the Rig Veda by the author. For a free download of this and the first research book, go to rigvedicannapurna.com. The present research has the same basis of the earlier research but focusses more on the yoga aspect of feminine Vedic nature symbols. In this living Vedic-Shakti perspective, Himalayan Mountain-Mothers such as Annapurna open us to a spiritual consciousness. Himalayan womanhood shares the same symbolism with Annapurna in this Vedic-Shakti perspective. This experience of Shakti is through psychological practices described in the Rig Veda. These Rig Vedic yoga practices can lead to the inner heart-center orientation of ancient yoga traditions.

The Complexity of Himalayan Womanhood Symbols



Mukerti, Nilgiri Plateau, South India



Himalayan Womanhood is as eternal as the Himalayan mountains. These mountains are described in Vedic hymns and live today in a multifaceted divine Feminine symbolism found throughout mountainous Nepal.

Sacred Nature and Himalayan Womanhood

There are three experiences that combine as a basis this research presentation:

- 1) The author lives the Himalayan village life of the Annapurna region and bases this research in that experience. Because their nature is holy, and feminine, their womanhood is given the same sanctity.
- 2) Vedic nature symbols have yoga associations. From the Vedic Purusha and Prakriti yoga experience grew the modern Puranic Shakti concept. But the Puranic Purusha and Prakriti are further apart than the Vedic yoga relationship of the same. Thus the term Vedic-Shakti, which represents the experience in local village life of a divine Vedic-Mother manifestation.
- 3) The identification of the indigenous village womanhood with nature brings a Vedic-Shakti worship of nature symbols, but with no shrines. Making offerings directly to mountains and trees etc. as divine Mother symbols brings womanhood this living divine gender association. The local Mongolian tradition and not the local Hindu tradition retains the living experience of Vedic nature symbolism. The local Hindu tradition is Puranic, even though the same Rig Vedic symbols are used.

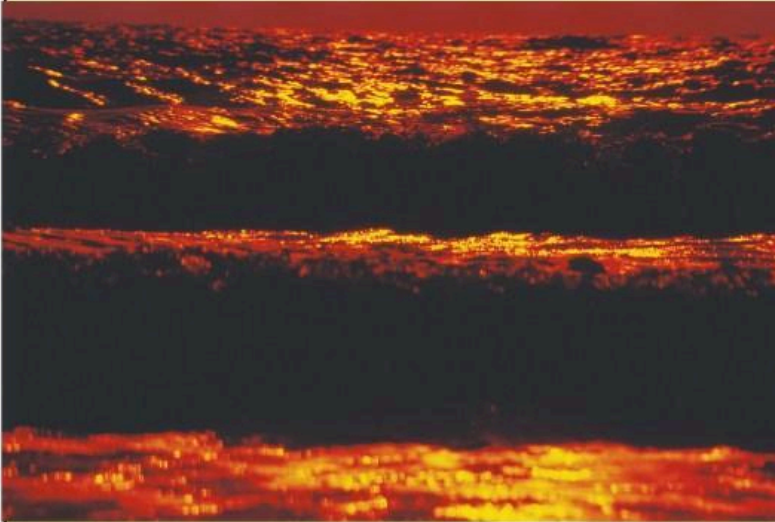
Vedic-Shakti Symbolism in Himalayan Nature: Mist



“O Fire, mayst thou not forget ancient friendships, thou who art turned towards us as the knower and seer. As a mist dims a form, age diminishes us; before that hurt falls upon us, arrive.” [1-071-10]

Rig Vedic hymns contain nature symbols that open us to a nature experience with spiritual dimensions. Vedic yoga practice took place in a divine Mother Nature. A divine nature has a layer of Shakti symbolism. Puranic Shakti symbolism is associated with an other-worldliness that is not present in Vedic nature symbols.

Rig Vedic Nature Symbols and Yoga: Waves



“The master of sacrifice who turns towards us the hidden treasures now risen and known, he in whose downward descent is a rush of waves hard to cross, when he conquers by the thought the plenitudes.”

[8-103-11]

This rik uses the nature symbol of waves to describe a descent of what is now named Shakti. First the Mystic Fire is lit and it flames upwards (“...now risen and known...”), then the mind is held still, as “...
he conquers by the thought the plenitudes.”, which brings about the descent of Shakti, symbolized as “...waves hard to cross.” The association of nature experience and nature symbols to yoga practice and spiritual experience is uniquely Vedic. There are divine genders in this.

1) Vedic Symbols: Nature, Women and Spirituality

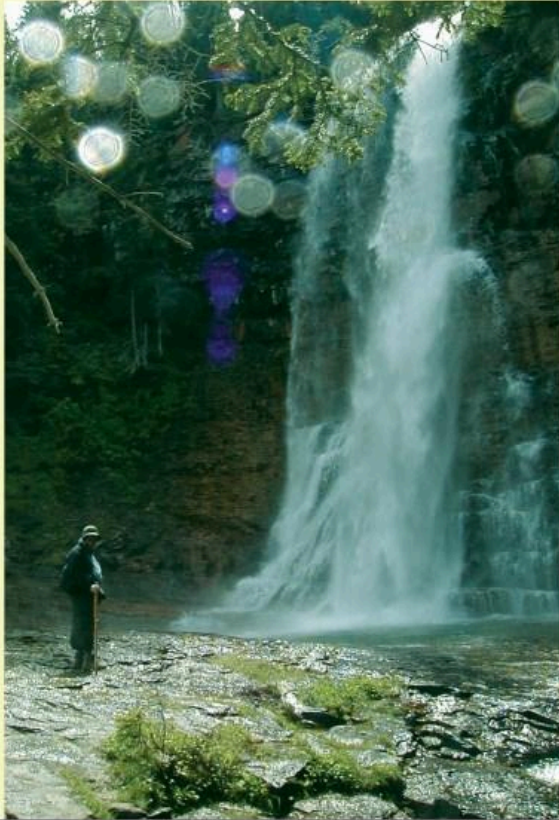
07



“By the Truth, divine, immortal and inviolate, the Waters with their honied floods, Fire, ... raced ever on to their flow.” [4-003-12]

Water is a Rig Vedic nature symbol with a spiritual associations to the Vedic mystic fire and womanhood. The “flow” of “honied floods” is a symbol for the descent of Shakti that is associated to this Fire.

2) Vedic Symbols, Nature, Women and Spirituality



In a simple distinction, the feminine gender can be seen with wetness as compared to the relatively physical dryness of the masculine gender. This is one Rig Vedic association of the female gender to the Vedic nature symbol of water.

“O felicitous Fire, ...quickly come ... [with] the Riches and the Rain of Heaven and the flowing of the Waters.” [6-013-01]

“May the Gandharvi speak to me and the Woman born from the Waters, may her protection be around my mind midst the roar of the river.” [10-011-02]

The “*Woman*” has a role to play in this spiritual experience: “...*may her protection be around my mind*”. The “*Rain*” is the descent of Shakti.

Sacred Nature and Vedic Womanhood

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Sacred Feminine Nature Begins In Symbol-Outlines ¹⁰



This book is edicated to

SANTOSH KRINSKY

A Setting for Vedic Feminine Outlines



This view is of the Annapurnas massif from meditation hut ruins on Panchassee. The outline is semi-circular and thus feminine, with a male Mystic Fire sitting in the center, and described in Mandala 5 Sukta 19 of the Rig Veda. Vedic symbolism includes all feminine genders. The author and his wife live here.

Womanhood Outlines Define Sanctity



Maria Gimbutus found through archaeology that prior to about 5000 years ago there were only female symbols. Originally womanhood was holy because she had characteristics and forms that paralleled Mother Nature who gives us food and life. These parallels are probably one ancient basis for Shakti symbolism. Thus the closer womanhood lives with nature, the easier it is to personally identify with Nature's divinity. There a variety of ways to experience the nature and womanhood parallels, but the simplest is a visit to holy nature. Because the the Vedic age lived close to nature, direct associations with womanhood will have been normal.

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Himalayan Motherhood Symbols in Outlines



This rock has a pregnant belly. It shows a similar outline to that of a human mother when she will give birth. The gender of the rock and woman is the same in the Himalayan culture of the Annapurna region. This is a Rig Vedic divine Feminine symbol in one of five divine Nature aspects. There are also daughter, sister, wife and woman-sage aspects in Vedic hymns.



This is the same Mother-Rock shown in the above photograph. Rock is a symbol of the divine because it's material lasts eternally compared to a human body. The mother aspect of the Vedic divine Feminine is both human and found in nature. This feminine symbolism is given respect even on a vilage trail down the eastern slopes of a Panchassee mountainside. The local villaqge people decorated this holy mother rock to celebrate its holy symbolism.

Aspect 1: Daughter-Dawn Brings Light-Blessings

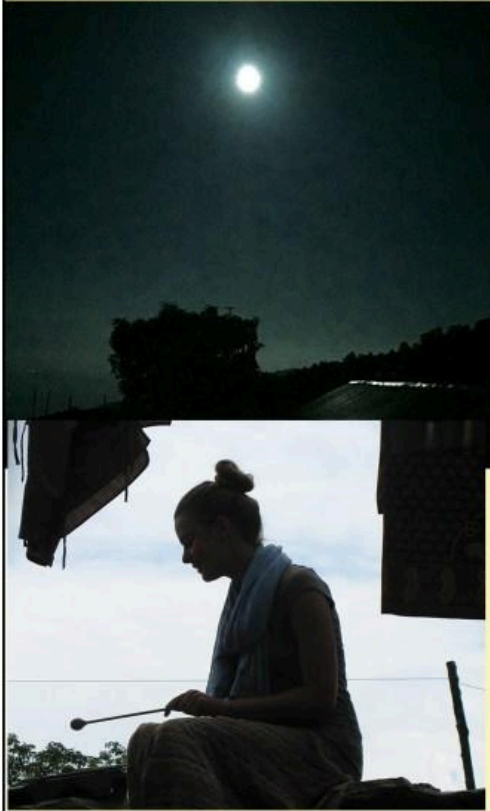


The Himlayan culture still keeps the Vedic Daughter-Dawn symbol alive in its Kumari-Goddess tradition. In Vedic symbols there are varied attributes for the same symbol; human, nature and divine. This daughter is blessing with spiritual symbolism like the dawn blesses each day with physical light. This holy nature association charms Vedic Womanhood.

This Culturally Himalayan Rig Vedic Interpretation

This research begins with the divine feminine gender symbolism of Annapurna as expressed in the Rig Vedic Mandala 5 Sukta 19 hymn. Vedic divine feminine symbolism is common in Himalayan culture among Hindus, Buddhists and Indigenous peoples. As the Himalayan mountains are holy and basically of the feminine gender, it is natural that this divine symbolism permeates the whole of Himalayan culture as Shakti. This Vedic basis is easily seen in the daily life of Nepal, but as there are few books on the subject. This exploratory research in visual anthropology is a simple way to see the Vedic influence. Himalayan society still lives a nature based Vedic symbolism, thus they have no need for books. The feminine gender focus of this research is based on the living divine status of Annapurna and Panchasree Mountain-Motherhood traditions. The divine Himalayan Mountain-Mothers feed the villages on their slopes and thus are living symbols of their divine gender. It is the yoga layer of association for this divine feminine symbolism, living in their pilgrimage traditions, that describes the Sanskrit term of Shakti. In this research the word yoga is used in its classical sense as a verb and not as a noun as found in modern usage.

Aspect 2: Sister-Night: Transformation of Dark



Vedic nature symbols have positive psychological experiences for all of womanhood. The inner and outer parallels for Sister-Night are different but as meaningful as for the other aspects of Vedic womanhood. Our nature experience of night is the framework for this divine Feminine symbol and conception. Rig Vedic culture accepted that night is as necessary as day for the workings of the world. The darkness in ourselves is a parallel for this world and nature experience of Sister-Night. She forces a concentration for the development of her relationship that we cannot ignore or we fall. She requires special care according to what we are doing with her. Even though night is different from dawn in the way a sister is different from a daughter, in Vedic hymns they are mostly described together.

Visual Anthropology and Feminine Nature Symbols

Primal cultures can also be presented in photographs, as before writing it was what we saw that brought knowledge. This research attempts to present the Vedic nature symbols that are part of the Himalayan multi-dimensional divine Feminine tradition. Visual Anthropology gives photographs instead of text as a basis for the associations. But this research is more of a dharmic presentation laying a foundation for future more traditional scholarship. Rig Vedic nature symbols as translated by Sri Aurobindo are photographable. Thus a nature experience is also fundamental to this research. Rig Vedic hymns describe a divine nature manifestation with womanhood as part of this divine symbolism.

Himalayan photos can portray the vastness and beauty of this Himalayan divine Feminine symbolism, for example, and so replace the textural support of more traditional research. These photos are of the living village traditions and symbols of Shakti that is a yoga basis for their mountain culture. A photo much better describes the holy mountains, rivers, rock and tree-mothers of the Annapurna region than any text can. The experience of Vedic nature symbols is virtually the same today as 5000 years ago, that only photos alone can present. Himalayan womanhood has living divine associations because the Vedic-Shakti symbolism of Himalayan nature symbols includes them.

Aspect 3: Daytime-Wife: Sufficiency Every Day



In a Vedic hymn this aspect of Vedic womanhood is characterized by sufficiency. It is during the day that our needs are met, thus the Himalayan wife is associated to daytime. She sees this as a duty.

Aspect 4: Growths-Mother: Earthen Life-Force



There are variations of the Vedic mother symbol. The above photo shows an offering in the center of a field to the Earth-Mother. This growth symbol has an inner parallel in Vedic self-discovery traditions.

Rig Vedic Nature Symbols for a Divine Womanhood

This research focusses on the Gurung people on Panchassee Mountain in front of mountain-massif Annapurna. With no script, this womanhood has no past or history: it is still living the way it always has. These women are given a higher status than that of the Hindus. And with their living nature symbolism, their self-conception can be traced back to the Vedic age. Vedic womanhood had the duty of manifestation, and this dharmic pursuit is what is visible, in general, in Himalayan villages. This duty has different layers of experience, and this research focusses on the yoga associations. Indigenous village womanhood still use wood for cooking, and their respect for the kitchen wood fire is a main Vedic association. Vedic fire symbolism is not mental, thus their lighting of a wood cooking fire can be inner as well as outer. Once their relationship with fire is understood, then the Vedic connection becomes clear. The fact that they are representatives of an ancient yoga symbolism with womanhood a holy symbol of manifestation, or Prakriti, opens a door for modern parallels to be found. Himalayan womanhood has no male associations, their mountain life is a symbol of the Vedic feminine gender. As the Vedic nature experience has not gone away, so also the experience of Vedic womanhood has not gone away.

Aspect 5: Vastness-Yogini (Woman Sage)



Himalayan womanhood shares vastness in the spiritual symbolism of Shakti. This is the view of Annapurna from Dhara. The vastness in this view symbolizes the vastness of the spiritual symbolism of which Vedic womanhood shares. In Vedic-Shakti there are no male associations. Shakti also lives as an inner Vastness, a paralell to the nature experience.



Himalayan Womanhood=Self-Discovery Symbolism

In Vedic hymns the female gender is associated to yoga symbolism now named Shakti. All feminine aspects are included in this Shakti conception. In the Rig Vedic Mandala 5 Sukta 19 hymn, one yoga association is translated as a “lap”. In the view of that Annapurna “lap” from Dhara mountain (as well as from Panchassee), this “lap” encircles the upward pointing peak sitting in the center of that “lap”. When a mother holds her child in her “lap”, her physical center has a parallel to that encircling. The inner aspect of this Vedic “lap” is a psychological encircling. Under the canopy of a Forest-Mother we are physically encircled as a sense parallel to that psychological encircling.

When the mind is encircled in our self-experience, this is the yoga or self-discovery parallel. This yoga association is a living portion of a divine Feminine nature experience that the Dhara and Panchassee mountain pilgrimages bring. The final self-discovery practice of these pilgrimages involves visualizing the Annapurna view as a Yantra. This view shows the divine Feminine symbol that encircles a male Mystic Fire symbol, here a pointed peak, in the center her “lap”. Annapurna is a spiritual Mother as a mountain symbol that includes the motherhood of women in a Vedic-Shakti conception and experience.

Vedic/Himalayan Symbol: “*dappled mother’s heights*”



“...Then wide is thy [the Mystic Fire] wandering and its light shines far as it drives them up to the dappled Mother's heights.” [6-006-04]

This is a view from Panchassee; “dappled” means spotted or patchy of color. Here the clouds shade patches of the green mountainside, a divine Mother in the hymn. Vedic hymns describe Himalayan nature of today, giving the hope that we can still experience something of the Vedic sages knowledge in a sacred Himalayan Feminine nature.

CONTENTS AND AUTHORSHIP

With the author living most of his life in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the content of this research is founded in that experience of yoga culture. It is this perspective that is applied to the living Himalayan tradition of Vedic nature symbols, and in general to a conception of Vedic culture. The Canadian nature experience of my youth continued in later years with an Asian nature experience. In China, Korea, Japan, India and Sri Lanka, parallel divine Feminine symbols are also still living. But the five aspects of Vedic Womanhood as nature experience is most easily found alive anywhere in mountainous Nepal. This research combines nature experience, Vedic yoga practices and womanhood into a single framework for a self-discovery perspective in this study of Rig Vedic Feminine symbols. Because the symbols have an outer layer of experience in nature, yoga practices can take the nature experience inside. This yoga association to nature is found all over Asia. These Asian countries provide living cultural support to this thesis of a divine Feminine symbolism that places womanhood in the same category as a divine Mother Nature. In Himalayan culture these three aspects of Vedic symbolism are found in the modern Sanskrit term of Shakti.

The Himalayan Mother of Strength and Force

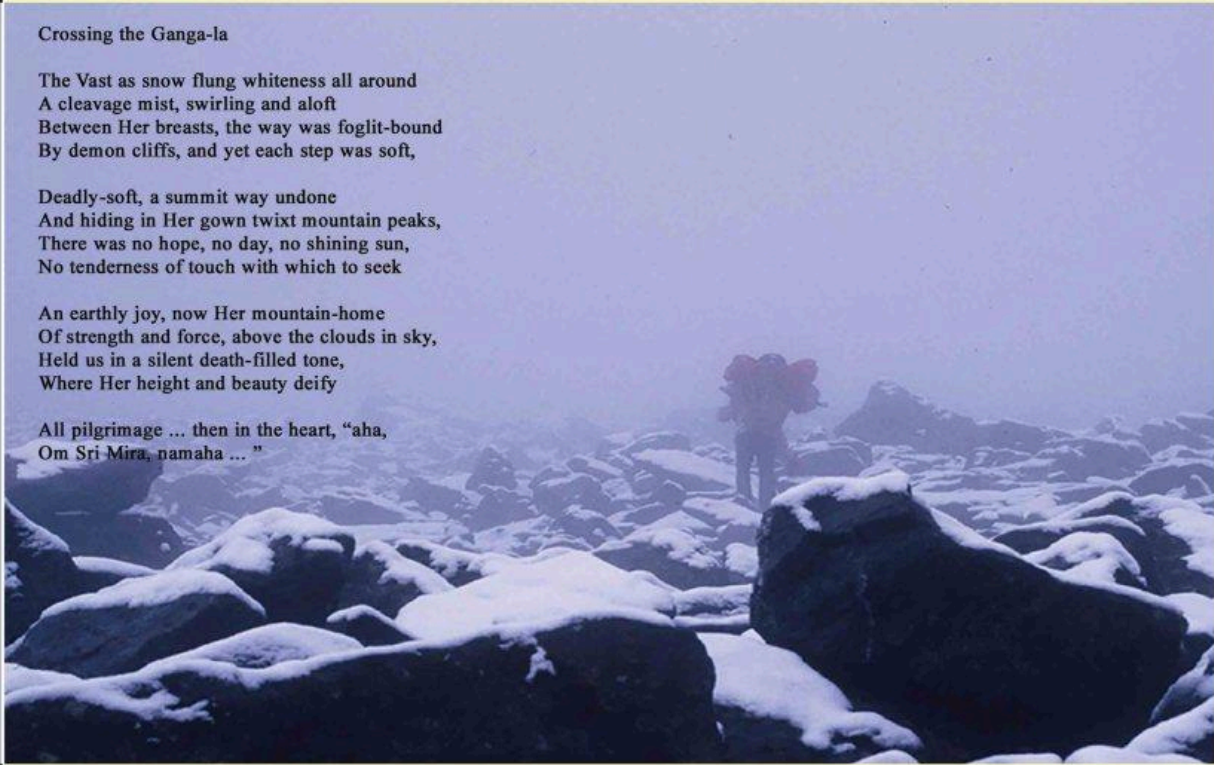
Crossing the Ganga-la

The Vast as snow flung whiteness all around
A cleavage mist, swirling and aloft
Between Her breasts, the way was foglit-bound
By demon cliffs, and yet each step was soft,

Deadly-soft, a summit way undone
And hiding in Her gown twixt mountain peaks,
There was no hope, no day, no shining sun,
No tenderness of touch with which to seek

An earthly joy, now Her mountain-home
Of strength and force, above the clouds in sky,
Held us in a silent death-filled tone,
Where Her height and beauty deify

All pilgrimage ... then in the heart, "aha,
Om Sri Mira, namaha ..."



CH 1: Vedic Annapurna's Yantra From Dhara

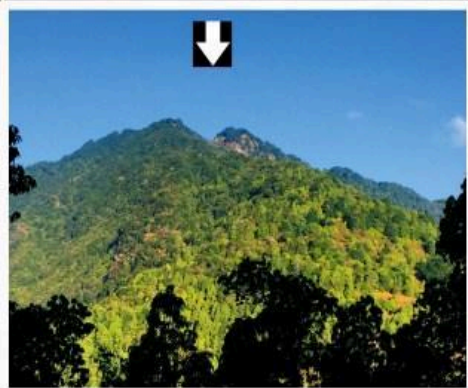
Mountain-Mother Dhara is another example, like Panchassee mountain, of living Rig Vedic divine feminine symbolism in Himalayan culture today. The Himalayan mountains are divine mother symbols, and this different location shows a complete parallel to the Mountain-Mother Panchassee tradition. Both pilgrimages occur on the same day and both end with the view of Annapurna. Further, Dhara has a fluted peak like Panchassee which is visible from Panchassee. As the Dhara elevation is higher than Panchassee, the Annapurna Yantra can be seen, even though this view is seven hours by walk south of Panchassee. Mountain-Mother Dhara sees the Rig Vedic Mandala 5 Sukta 19 view, which is a major support for the Rig Vedic Annapurna Yantra research. But the point is that Vedic nature symbols are alive in Himalayan Nepal, and specifically the divine Feminine gender symbolism, now named Shakti, is probably as much alive in the whole of Himalayan Nepal as it is in the Annapurna region of this study. However as there are no books on the Rig Vedic elements in Himalayan culture, to learn about it or to do research on this topic requires some manner of permanent residence in the area. The pilgrimage, the charm, the nature experience of Dhara is another living aspect of Rig Vedic symbolism in Himalayan culture.

Geographic Outlines and Feminine Associations



Nature is a divine Feminine symbol in Vedic texts. Womanhood and the female gender in all species is a part of this symbolism. The most obvious associations to womanhood occur when nature reproduces their shapes and outlines. This photo has two divine Feminine outlines, both with a flute-summit. The one on the left is Dhara. This scene is photographed from Panchassee, looking south. Fluted-peaked Dhara is a divine Mountain-Mother to the local people today. This divine Feminine nature symbolism has many variations as womanhood has.

Divine Feminine Geography as a Flute Outline

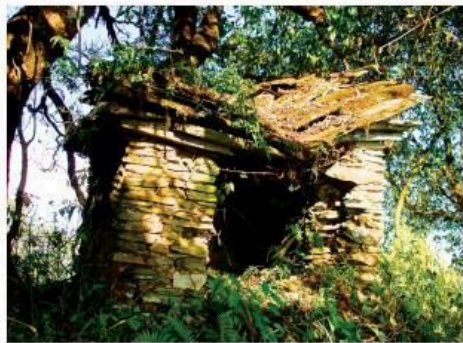
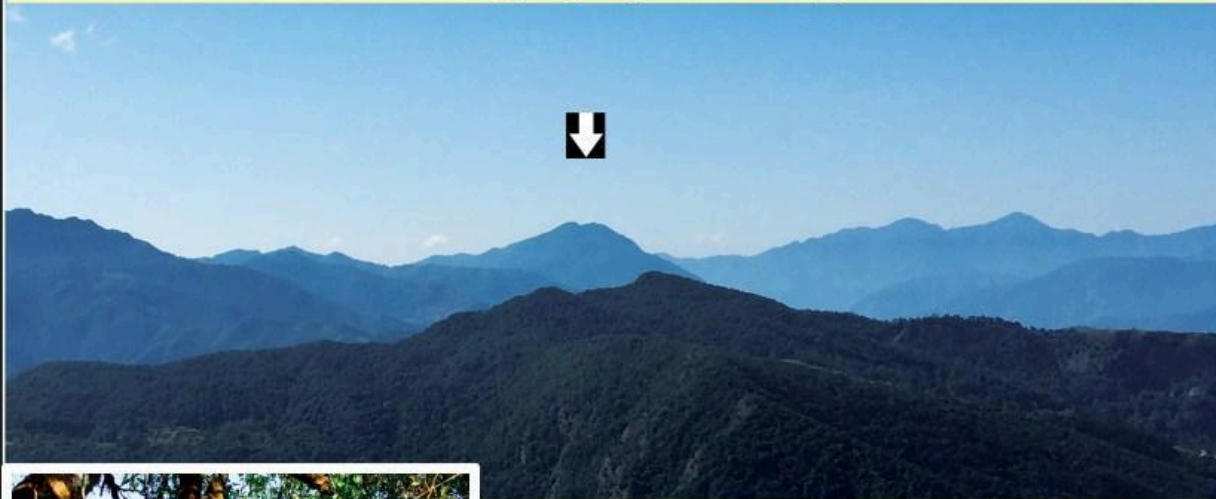


The upper photo is a closeup of the Dhara flute. Panchassee's flute symbolism (left photo) is from the Vedic age, thus also Dhara's divinity. Panchassee and Dhara can look at each other, and on their common Mela day, they both look at Annapurna as a yantra. Western studies in Minoan culture have shown that the fluted peak of Mt. Juktas is a symbol of the divine Mother, like here.

Rig Vedic Feminine Village Shakti Culture

Rig Vedic nature symbols and the present Himalayan village culture have many close associations. Modern Himalayan village culture is distinctive from that of towns and cities in Nepal. As village culture remains identified primarily with mountainous Himalayan nature, the towns are not. Towns with their modernity are separated from nature physically and psychologically. Panchassee indigenous villages still live a cultural world associated to the Vedic age, thousands of years old, based on the divine Feminine Shakti symbolism. Research conducted on Panchassee mountain has shown that Mandala 5 Sukta 19 of the Rig Veda describes the view of Annapurna from meditation hut ruins at Panchassee Banjyang. The same is true from Dhara. This view of Annapurna is probably a Vedic basis of n Shakti symbolism. The surrounding villages that people the Dhara Mela live encircled by nature, like Panchassee villages. There are feminine healers in these villages that are described as Shakti-women. This research documents the nature symbols in village life because they are associated to the Panchassee and Annapurna traditions, and so of the feminine gender. As an aspect within Vedic-Shakti symbolism, they are given spiritual respect because of this association in Himalayan mountain culture.

Divine Feminine Geography and Yoga Associations

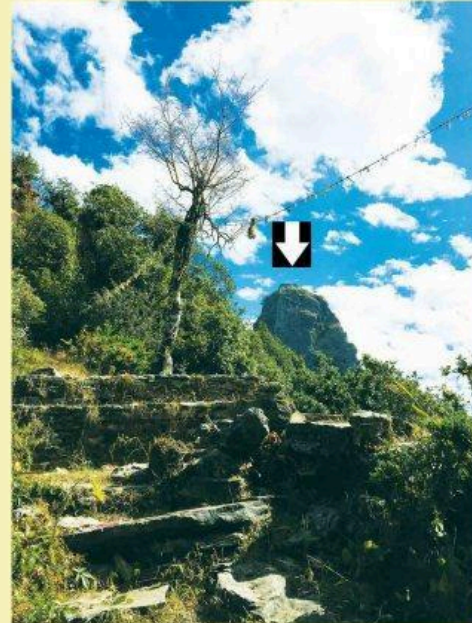


Inside this meditation hut ruin the fluted peak (under the arrow) is framed like a picture. It is a holy Mother-Mountain to local people like Dhara. It sits in the center of the view and so can be associated to the same yoga tradition as the Annapurna Yantra. To focus on nature symbols with a center brings Vedic yoga associations.

Dhara Divine Mother-Mountain Pilgrimage



This pilgrimage is steep and through jungle. As Annapurna can be seen from the summit, it is probably of Vedic origin.



The Dhara summit is under the arrow. This photo also shows the first resting place out of the jungle, in front.

Mountain-Mother Dhara Woman-Sage

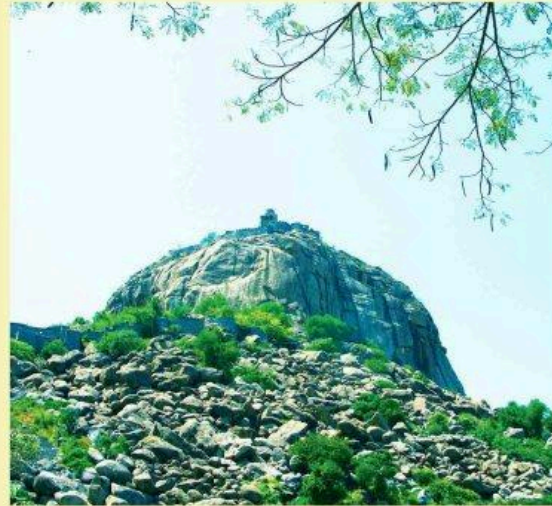


This is a photo of Bal Kumari. She did her yoga practice on Dhara. Her womanhood is associated with the yoga symbol of Shakti. Thus when parallel shapes and outlines in nature are seen, this yoga association is worshipped. For example water has a feminine gender in Vedic nature symbols. Nainital lake in north India is the shape of an eye, and so is holy as a symbol of the divine Feminine Eye. The female self-conception in this part of the Himalayas includes experiences of a higher level of consciousness as womanhood. This woman is a symbol of the Woman-Sage or Yogini.

Divine Feminine Geography as Womanhood Shapes



Above is Manasalu mountain, also a Tibetan Goddess with the same name. Her gender is based on a number of things, and one of them is her outline. She is a divine symbol of motherhood because of her breast shaped peak.



This is Gingee, a holy Mountain-Mother in south India. She has a breast outline and so is a symbol of the mother aspect of the Vedic divine Feminine. There is no abstraction in divine Feminine geography. If it does not resemble womanhood it is not female.

Himalayan Womanhood at the Dhara Mela

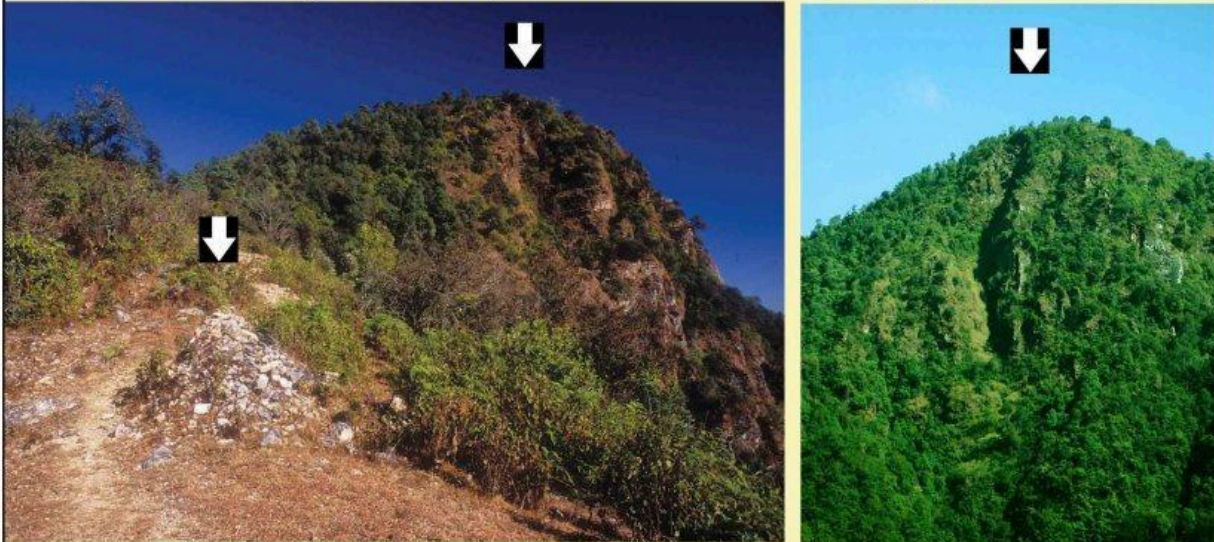


Young womanhood is well represented at the Dhara Mela. It is a two hour hike each way in Himalayan happiness.



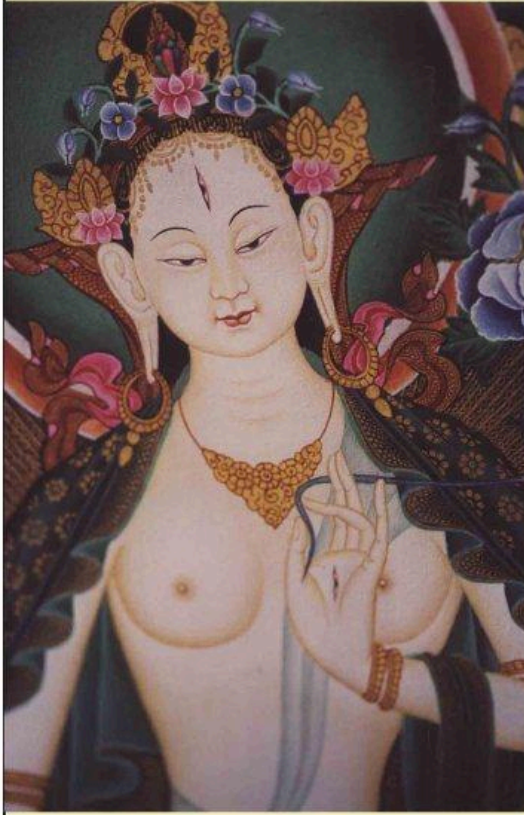
Local young children learn to worship the divine Feminine as a mountain and as their own mother. In the same way as on the Mela day of Panchassee, Dhara devotees come see Annapurna on Mela day. The vastness and beauty association to the divine Mother is living here a multi-dimensional nature experience.

The Variety in Holy Mountain Flute Symbolism



On a trail into the next valley from Panchassee is a fluted mountain peak with a different outline than Dhara. This Mountain-Mother is worshipped by placing a stone prayer atop her offering-pyramid by the trail, under the left arrow. The right arrow shows her flute-view from the village. Holy flute symbolism is found everywhere. but it is usually the farming communities that remember how precious Mother Earth is.

Divine Feminine Outline as Mother Goddess



This is a Tibetan mother goddess and divine Feminine symbol named Tara.

As the primal spiritual symbol of motherhood is recognized for its degree of self-giving, she is portrayed as the most beautiful of women. In

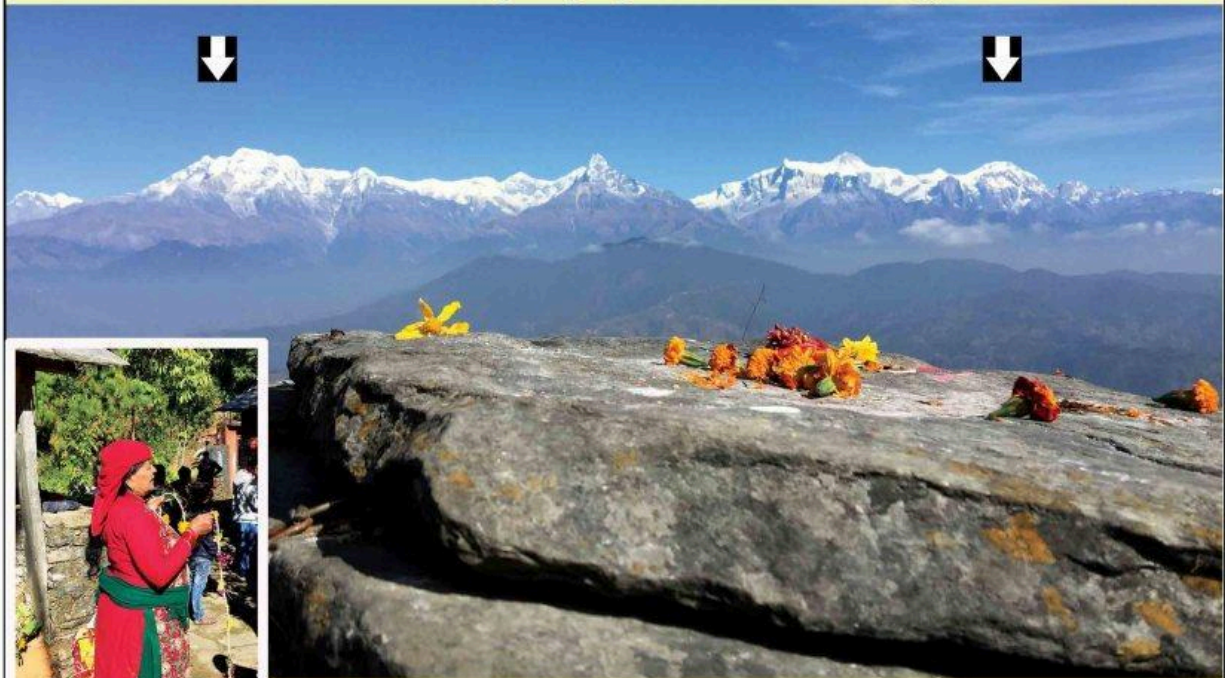
ancient and modern iconography a degree of undress is required to ensure there is no confusion about the gender being symbolized. Every part of the

divine Feminine in manifestation is holy, and so all portrayals as womanhood are also holy. This is still living

across the Himalayan region, and womanhood is celebrated as a symbol of the divine Feminine in the Mother aspect each year, a number of times.

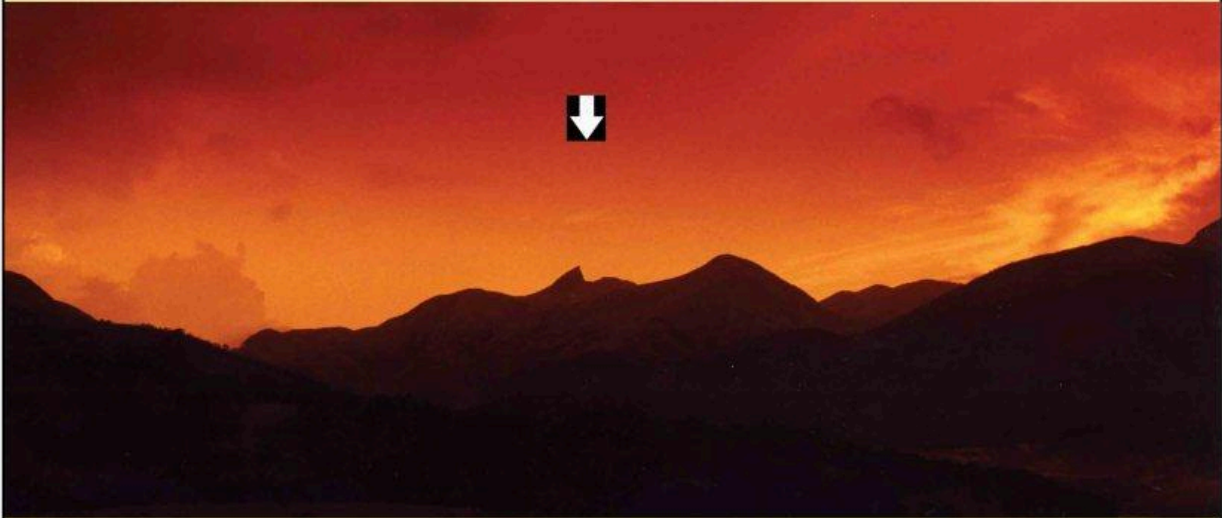
But for the experience today it is the mountain village life that openly portrays Her as nature. Vedic womanhood is not associated to maleness.

Divine Feminine Geography as the Annapurna Yantra



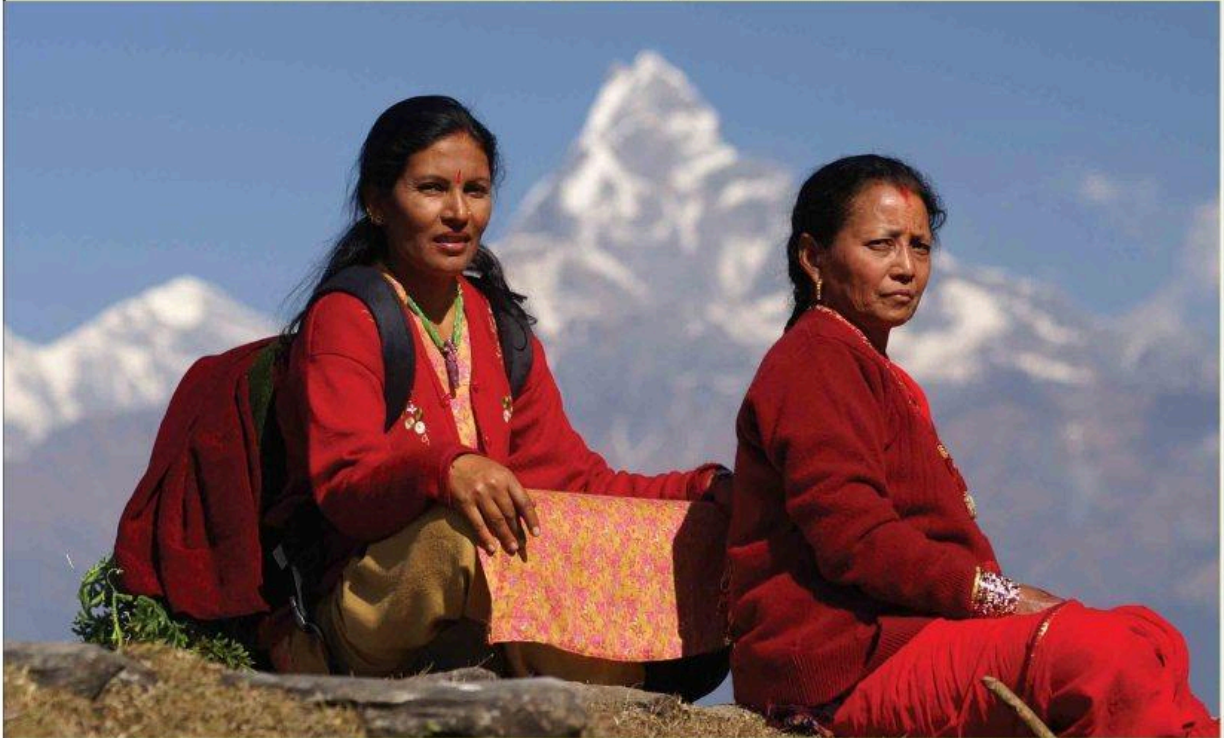
This local woman worships the divine Mother as Dhara and Annapurna. The large photo is of Annapurna from the Dhara summit: the same view as from Panchassee.

Divine Feminine Geography in Face Shapes



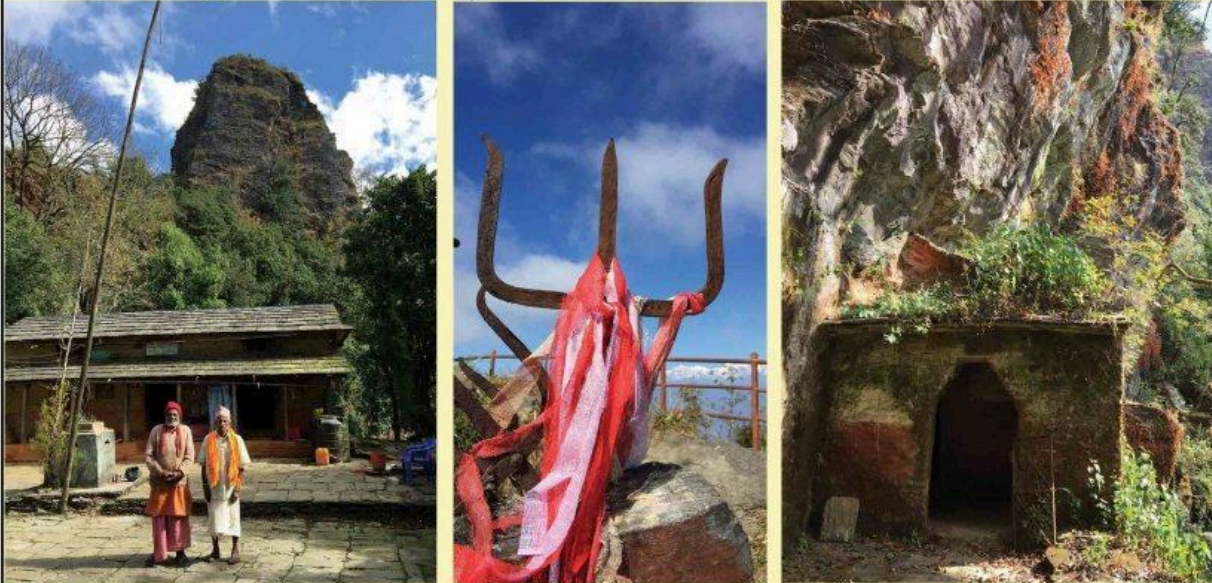
This is Mountain-Mother Mukerti on the Nilgiri plateau in south India. Her name means nose, and so this nose is the most prominent feature of her face, shown under the arrow. As the sun sets it passes directly behind her nose and shines as if a gemstone there, like the nose ornaments still worn by south Indian women. Accepting Mukerti as a divine symbol keeps the link between womanhood and nature with a feminine outline alive.

Divine Feminine Geography as Human Mothers



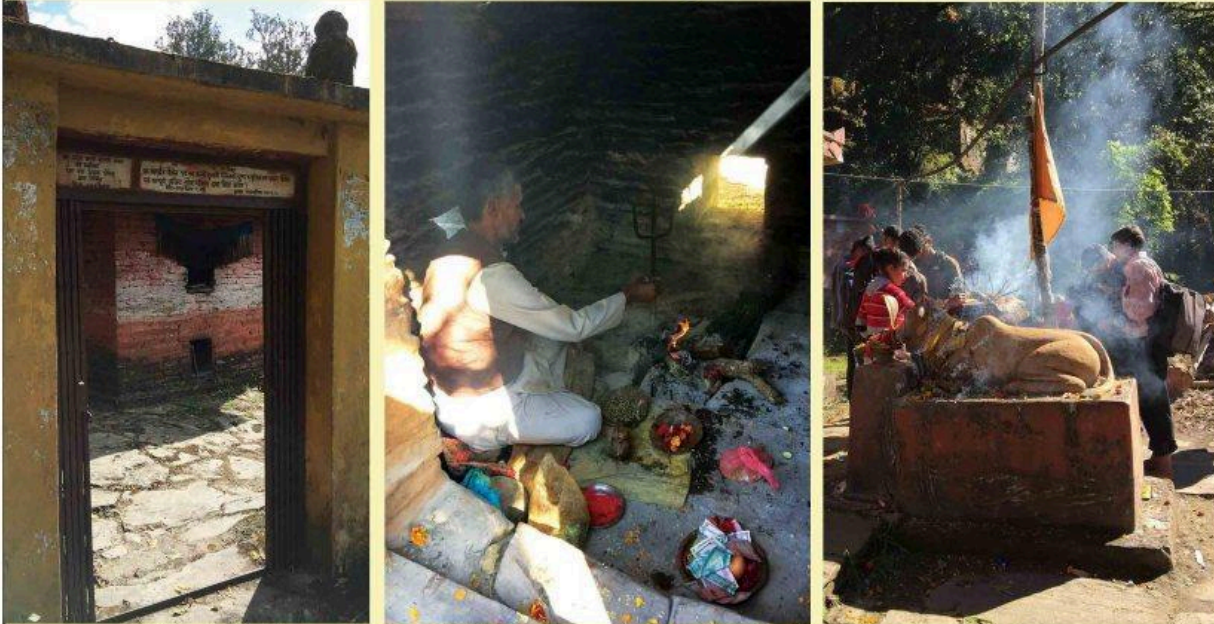
These two women are mothers with a self-conception that associates their individuality with the Himalayan divine Feminine consciousness.

Yoga Associations to the Dhara Tradition



In the left photo is the resident Sadhu with a village devotee and the Dhara summit behind. The middle photo shows a Shiva trident on the summit. The right photo shows a place for yoga practice behind the building of the left photo. The Puranic interpretation of yoga associations is present as well as the Puranic focus on the male gender. But this is a Vedic tradition as shown on the next page.

The Dhara Vedic Yoga-Fire Room



The left photo shows the Fire Room is the first building upon entering.

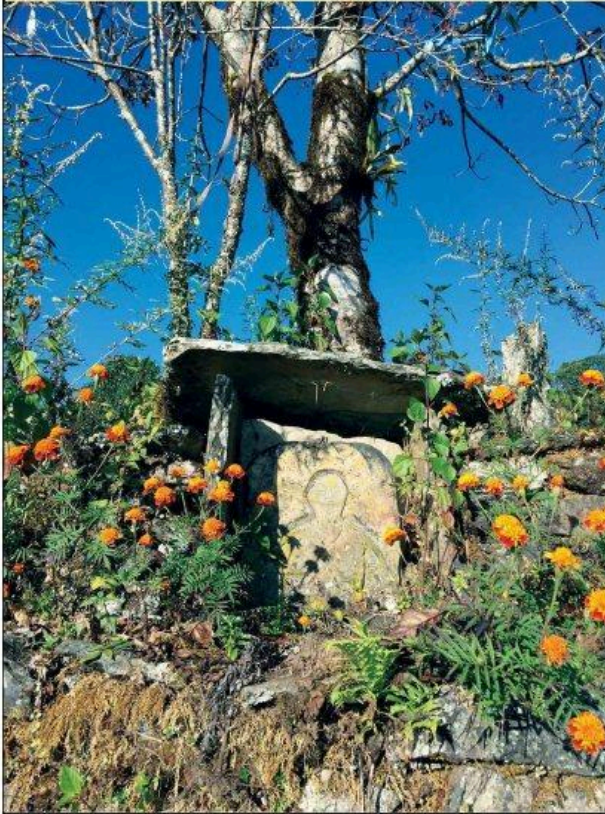
The middle photo shows the chanting to Fire in its own room on Dhara Mela day. The right photo shows that the Shiva temple is in a building separate from the Fire Room. Shiva is a Puranic symbol and here separate from the Vedic Fire symbolism.

Secrets of Vedic Nature Experience

The divine Feminine Nature Symbols of Dhara

Sri Aurobindo states that the Vedic hymns were an expression of the Age of Mysteries. There were inner secrets paralleling outer rituals that only adepts and disciples knew. One example of this is how the holiest peak in Nepal is now named Machhaputtre, but in Sanskrit it is Mataputra. or “son of the mother”. This research discloses some of these secrets as aspects of the divine Feminine symbolism of which Dhara, Annapurna and Panchassee are divine Mother-Mountain traditions. The living Vedic divine Feminine nature experience in Himalayan culture is an example for modern societies to attempt. Where the intellectual perspective governs the modern view of nature, the same perspective frames their perspective of womanhood. The Vedic experience of nature and womanhood has a yoga and spiritual dimension as an inner experience of Mother Nature. Modern nature experience lacks a self-discovery framework, but it can be developed. Dhara or Panchassee pilgrimage traditions are examples to study. Their nature symbols of womanhood are all holy and the Vedic-Shakti symbolism comes with it.

A Village Symbol of Vedic Divine Motherhood



On the trail out of the Panchassee area is a roughly chipped divine Mother image in a floral framed mountain shrine. The womanhood association is in the face and flowers. The open worship of womanhood symbols affects positively the self-conception of local womanhood.

Self-Conception in Himalayan Womanhood

Nature is a Vedic divine Feminine symbol in five aspects. Himalayan nature experience enlarges the self-conception of this womanhood to Himalayan proportions. Nature aspects of this divine self-conception are found in Vedic hymns and contribute to the Vedic-Shakti symbolism found in Himalayan life. The nature experience of the various aspects of Vedic womanhood provide a psychological or inner gateway to fulfill the spiritual element of this self-conception. The indigenous and Hindu womanhood worship the same divine feminine symbols, but live them differently in daily life. This nature based Himalayan symbolism allows associations from either nature or human female parallels, living mostly in village tradition due to their proximity to nature. For example the daughter as a nature experience brings a “light” psychologically in a parallel to a physical dawn. The sister, wife, mother and yogini aspects are similarly enlarged to a self-conception that embody Shakti elements and associations. Himalayan womanhood has wonderful and inspiring qualities, probably not changed much for thousands of years. Thus Himalayan nature experience is a basis for a relationship with Himalayan womanhood, which is the author’s experience.

Mountain-Mother Panchassee in Pilgrimage



Panchassee-Ma

Her soothing touch, a calm inside the heart
Breathward-flowing as I climb the Path,
Tingling everywhere her descent starts
To glisten on the leaves in daylight bath.

She comes light dressed in sun, morning-bare
With vastness all around her trees and rock,
As emerald lines of force her strands of hair
Fall into my eyes when footfalls lock

Me into breaths that meet somewhere inside,
Within her morning breeze and quiet flow,
This touching spreads her love into a wide
And sun-filled vastness on the way I go

Towards her lap, in barefoot tremble-tred,
Climbing up to plenitudes outspread.

CH 2: DAUGHTER-DAWN + SISTER-NIGHT

47

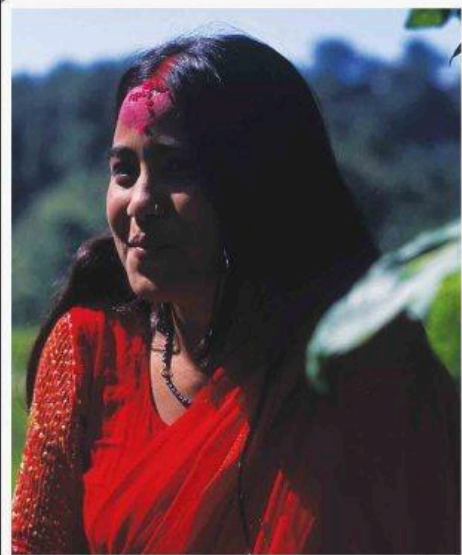
Rig Vedic Daughter-Dawn and Sister-Night Symbolism Includes the Human Daughter and Sister

*“Let the two divine daughters of heaven, formed beautifully,
dawn and night, sit in their native seat; O dawn and night, O
you who aspire, may the gods aspiring sit on your wide lap,
O blissful ones.” [10-070-06]*

Nature experience with night or dawn opens us to a relationship with nature as womanhood. When the relationship with a daughter or sister is as large as the nature experience of their Vedic symbol, then a beginning is made for understanding their Shakti associations.

In the villages around Panchassee mountain, the local indigenous females are given a middle name “Kumari” which in the Rig Veda is Daughter-Dawn. The first nature experience of the day, dawn, has colors of fire, and so the association with the Mystic Fire symbol. He sits in their “lap”. It is dawn and night, that together form this “lap” symbol. In Mandala 5 Sukta 19 of the Rig Veda they are the “two companions” in verse four, whose “lap” symbolizes a yoga experience of the mind being encircled.

Rig Vedic Womanhood as Daughter-Dawn



In Vedic symbolism these two images are the same. Vedic womanhood's nature experience has psychological parallels to this sense experience. The personalities of daughters bring divine light in this symbolism. Their association with Sister-Night is in terms of the "lap" that is visible between them in which the Vedic Mystic Fire sits.

Vedic Womanhood as Sister-Night



Just as night contains darkness as well as light, the personality of the sister also has these aspects in Vedic culture.

Nature experience is the basis of this symbolism. In Vedic hymns aspects of womanhood are described variously, for example these sisters are also mothers and matrons. Each aspect of Vedic womanhood contains the other aspects.

The Vedic Weft of the Divine Sisters

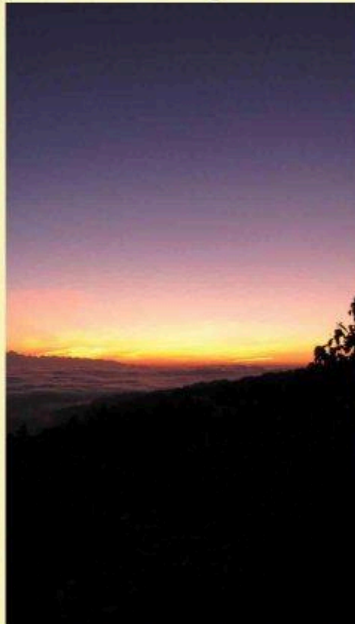


“..... Night and Dawn, the eternal and equal sisters, come like weaving women full of gladness, weaving out the weft that is spun, the weft of our perfected works into a shape of sacrifice [offering]”. [2-003-06]

In the left photo the flame between these sisters was elongated by the computer to accent their relationship to the Vedic fire symbol. In these mountains, however, people describe relationships in terms of the female gender. In Himalayan culture it is the sisters that bless their brothers and tie a ritual band around their wrists.

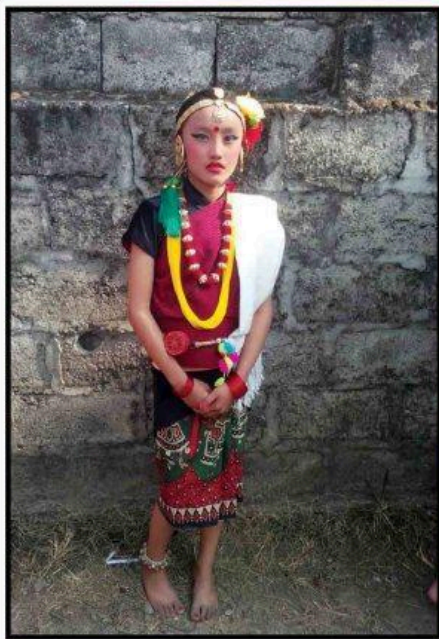
The Vedic Daughter-Dawn

51



In the left photo a young Himalayan daughter is blessed by the placing of lowers in her hair. She is a symbol for the dawn in the center photo, as well as for the Vedic psychological dawn that brings knowledge. Perhaps the European fairy symbol in the right photo was originally also a symbol of the divine Feminine in the daughter aspect.

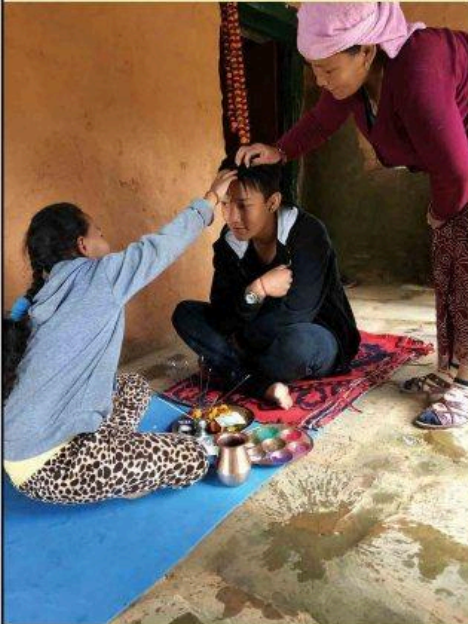
The Lap of Daughter-Dawn and Sister-Night



“When he had made this sap of essence... slipping downward, one close in touch ... set the flaming energy in his own daughter.” [1-071-05]

The association of the Mystic Fire to dawn and daughters is the reddish colors. Himalayan womanhood in general wears bright red, but here the focus is on daughter symbolism; in the photo is an Indigenous daughter.

The Holiness of Daughters



Daughters give blessings as priestesses and are spiritual symbols in the Himalayan Kumari tradition.



The above rocks hide the identity of the Kumari they represent, so that the dark forces remain ignorant and do not come near. This is how sacred she is to her Himalayan devotees in the Kathmandu valley. The name Kumari associates this holiness to daughters and will be a cultural element in their self-conception.

The Divine Daughter of Understanding



“He [Fire] was made by the thought, one Supreme; the daughter of Understanding set him in us” [3-027-09]

In this verse the daughter’s understanding is divine and brings a descent that lights the Mystic Fire.

The Daughter/Dawn/Kumari Goddess Tradition



In the left photo is a Himalayan Kumari Goddess; in the center photo is dawn, and in the right photo is a local Indigenous girl with a middle name Kumari. In Nepal they are in the same symbol of Daughter-Dawn.

This is where a divine Vedic-Shakti self-conception in the local psychology of the Himalayan female gender, begins.

The Self-Conception of Vedic Womanhood

Nature Symbols of Vedic Feminine Aspects are in the Self-Conception

This research attempts to associate things that serve as a living basis for the divine self-conception, in general, of Himalayan womanhood as Shakti. All aspects of the Himalayan Feminine gender are given spiritual respect. For example during the fall harvest divine Mother festival, the feminine species of the household animals are also given spiritual respect. The buffaloes, cows, goats, any domestic species in the feminine gender have their own day with special food and maybe a garland around the neck. In another feminine gender festival, household women create a symbol of the spiritual Shakti consciousness in water. One reason Himalayan Nepal is filled with a good measure of social harmony is that the Himalayan woman is given a very high status compared to that in modern societies. Further, the indigenous females are given absolute charge of things in their traditional duty of manifestation. Here the Shakti and womanhood symbols have no association to maleness. Himalayan mountains are mostly female but represent strength and force, a modern male attribute. This Vedic-Shakti symbolism contains a spiritual association that is found in Vedic hymns, and a feminine self-conception born of the heart, not the mind.

The Self-Abandonment of Dawn



The Self-abandonment of Dawn

She charms the heart to let our feelings grow
Into a self abandonment in day;
The light she brings into the nature-flow,
Reflecting in the lake, shows a way

To this Daughter-dawn's happy heart,
On the holy isle mid deep and green
Her happiness in thought and feelings chart
The day as if the lake made crystalline

Self abandonment, heartbeating-fresh,
Touching depths that in the beautiful lake
Transfixes mind so she can bring the test
Of morning-love, and soothes so it will slake

Everywhere, a thirst that she imparts,
A youthful love, her light in dawning hearts.

CH 3: Divine Feminine Nature: The Day-Wife

Vedic Wife symbolism includes the human wife

“He is light in a house difficult to inhabit; he is as a will ever active in us; he is like a wife in our abode and sufficient to every man.....” [1-066-03]

Vedic symbolism is multi-dimensional. Vedic culture saw womanhood as a divine symbol and everything about their lives as aspects of that divinity. Thus “sufficiency” extends to all activities. Vedic womanhood in the wife aspect is sufficient in every sphere. In nature it is in the day that we can find “sufficiency” for our survival. The Wife symbol is then associated to the daytime. This symbolism is also present and celebrated in Himalayan culture during a ladies only festival named Teez. In this Teez celebration there are three days of singing and dancing by Nepali women that Nepali television channels show. One of the reasons for their visible happiness during Teez is that here womanhood is given spiritual respect for their gender, and not for individuality, so all women are included. In the same way Himalayan nature is given spiritual respect in the Shakti symbol.

Devotion of the Day-Time Wife



"... he inhabits earth like a good and friendly king: he is like a company of heroes sitting in our front, dwelling in our house; he is as if a blameless wife beloved of her lord." [1-073-03]

In Vedic-Shakti symbolism. life is divine in a feminine manifestation.

Daytime is Beautifully Dressed as the Wife



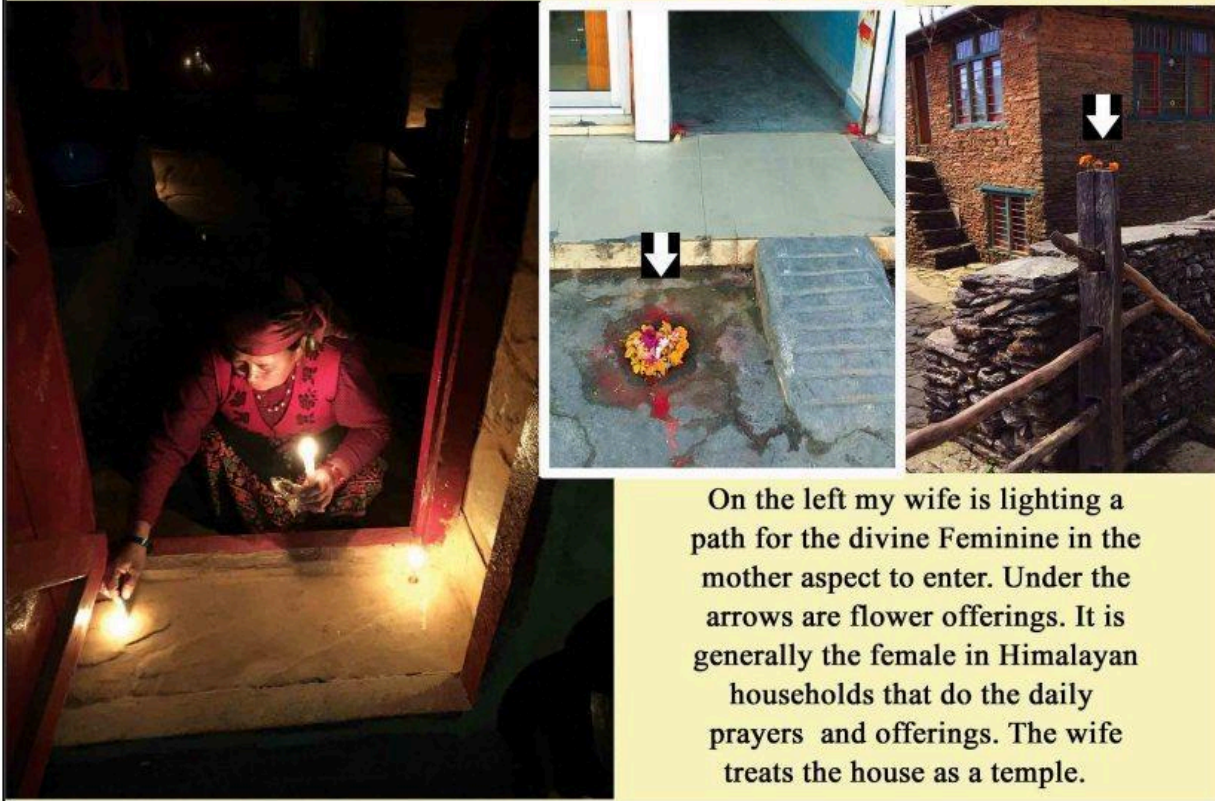
*“This is thy seat which we have made for thee, even as, ...
a wife richly robed for her lord; thou art turned towards
us and wide-extended around, sit here within....” [4-003-02]*

The Day-Wife and the Beauty of Nature



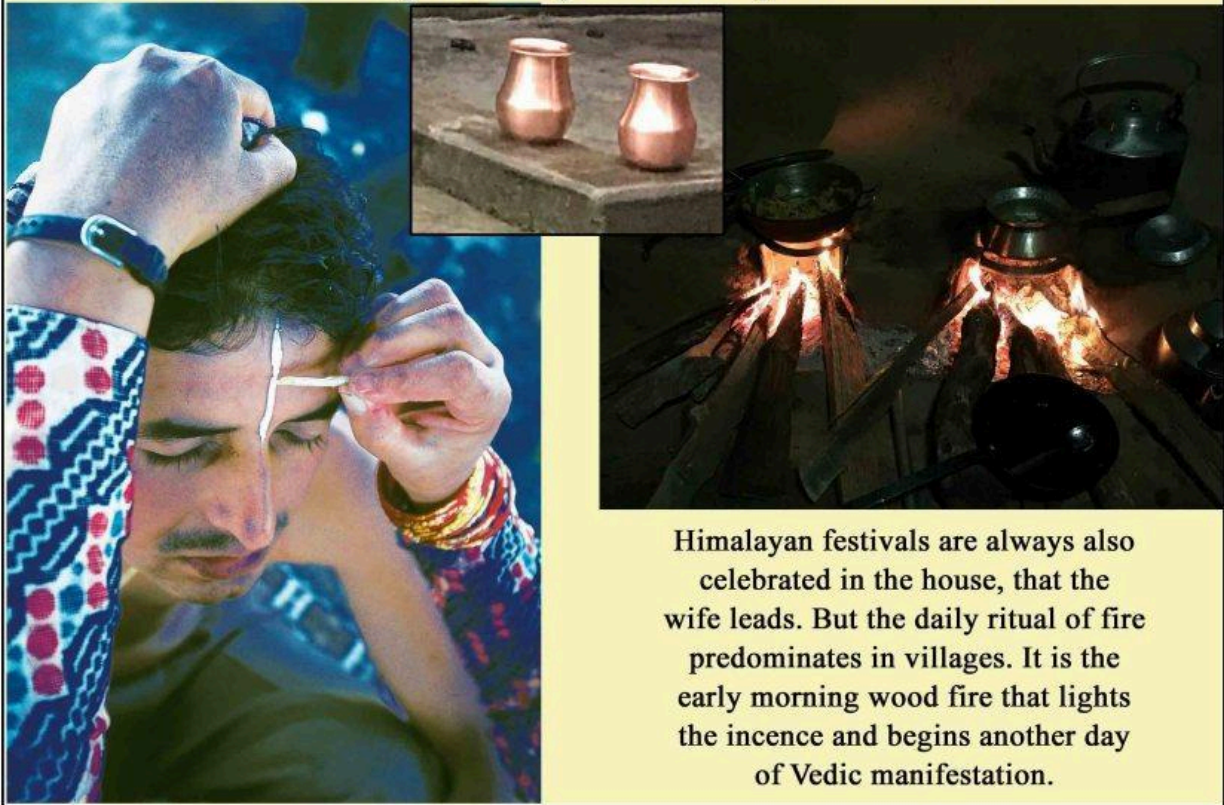
All aspects of Vedic womanhood are associated to a varied nature experience. The beauty of the wife is also a nature experience, as Nature provides us with a sufficiency also in terms of beauty each day. On the right a Chinese wife carving expresses a feeling of spiritual sufficiency. The wife brings sufficiency at every level.

The Vedic Wife Qualities of Spiritual Offering



On the left my wife is lighting a path for the divine Feminine in the mother aspect to enter. Under the arrows are flower offerings. It is generally the female in Himalayan households that do the daily prayers and offerings. The wife treats the house as a temple.

The Himalayan Day-Wife Spiritual Rituals



Himalayan festivals are always also celebrated in the house, that the wife leads. But the daily ritual of fire predominates in villages. It is the early morning wood fire that lights the incense and begins another day of Vedic manifestation.

The Wife's Sufficiency in Organization



Even walking home at dusk on a mountain trail is an occasion for a phone call. The village of Sidanee is about one hour down the slope on this trail. Mataputra watches all this from Annapurna's "lap", behind.

The Day-Wife and Her Sacred House

Vedic “house” symbolism includes the family house

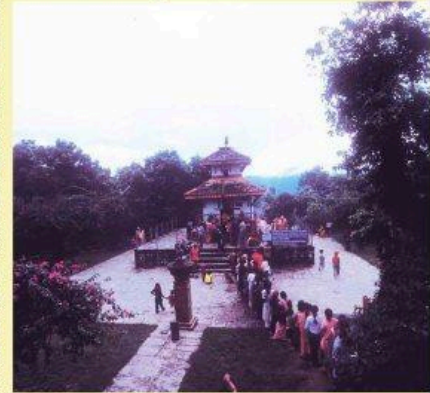
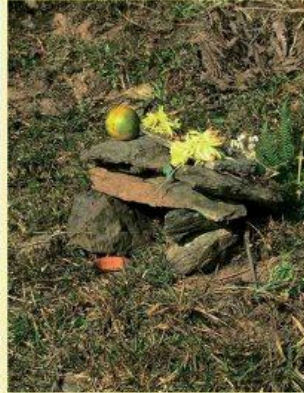
The most incredible experience of Himalayan womanhood, and in general all of Hindu Womanhood, is that they have retained the spiritual feelings of offering. The house becomes the shrine. These Vedic age female symbols of the wife inhabit Himalayan village homes. In general, the Himalayan wife attends to daily life through the kitchen fire. Only wood is allowed in the fire-pit. The Day-Wife manages everything as if a divine duty. In the Vedic age life was not so easy in the Himalayas where the Mystics and Sages settled to do their “secret doctrines” of yoga practice. Their womanfolk lived pretty much the way the Indigenous people live today on Panchassee mountain. My being married to a local Indigenous woman has helped me to formulate this aspect of the research. With no script, no books or history etc., Indigenous womanhood lives the way they always have. And with Vedic nature symbols still alive in their daily household culture, I conclude they still live something of the Vedic age, today.

A Mystic Himalayan “House” for the “Spouse”



“The soul of man is ... a house where the gods are our guests”... [Hymns]
The spouse is a Vedic-Shati symbol who anoints the house, symbolized in the photo as an Annapurna foothill summit surrounded by a bank of rain cloud. The Vedic house is a symbol of spiritual vastness in which the Mystic Fire dwells.

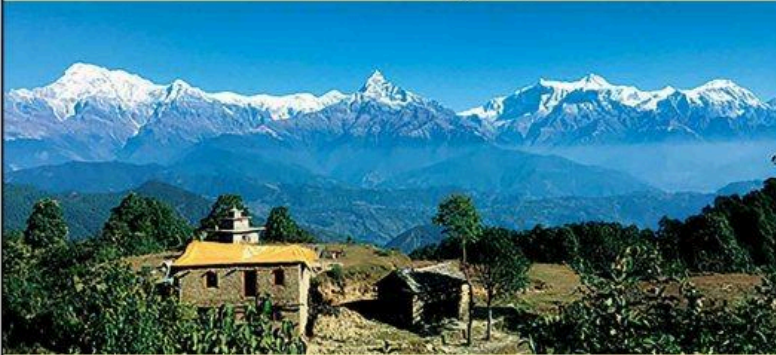
The Divine Vedic Himalayan House Symbol



“He is like an ancestral wealth that founds our strength, perfect in his leading like the command (or the teaching) of one who knows, he is like a guest lying happily well-pleased, he is like a priest of invocation and increases the house of his worshipper.” [1-073-01]

The Vedic house is where the offering is made. At home the wife is the priestess who makes the offering daily, and sees the house as a sacred dwelling-place. The left photo is of a Himalayan village house, the middle photo is of a symbol house for a forest offering, and the right photo is of a Rock-Mother house/temple: Badrakali temple in Pokhara.

The Himalayan House of Vastness



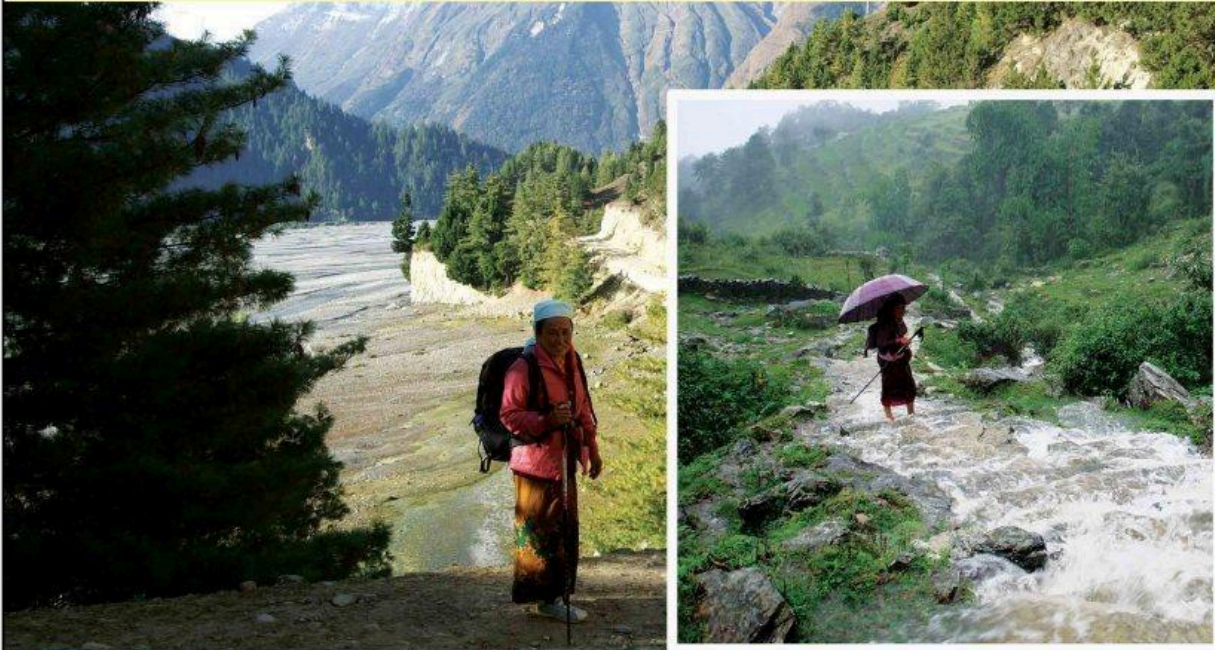
The Himalayan day is one of vastness because the surrounding nature is vast. The outside vast affects all of life, and naturally the psychology also tastes vastness, so the house symbology is vast, like a temple.



“... thou art the fire-bringer for the seeker of the Truth. The annunciation is thine, thou becomest the pilgrim-rite: thou [Fire] art the priest ... in our home.” [2-001-02]

The wife conducts house rituals that includes Vedic symbolism from the physical to the spiritual. Himalayan womanhood is also vast.

The Himalayan Wife's Duty



Whether in the mountains or at home, Nature needs to be accommodated as a part of every day life. Her identification with nature is fundamental to her self-conception and is developed alongside an outdoor experience of Himalayan nature.

She of the Green

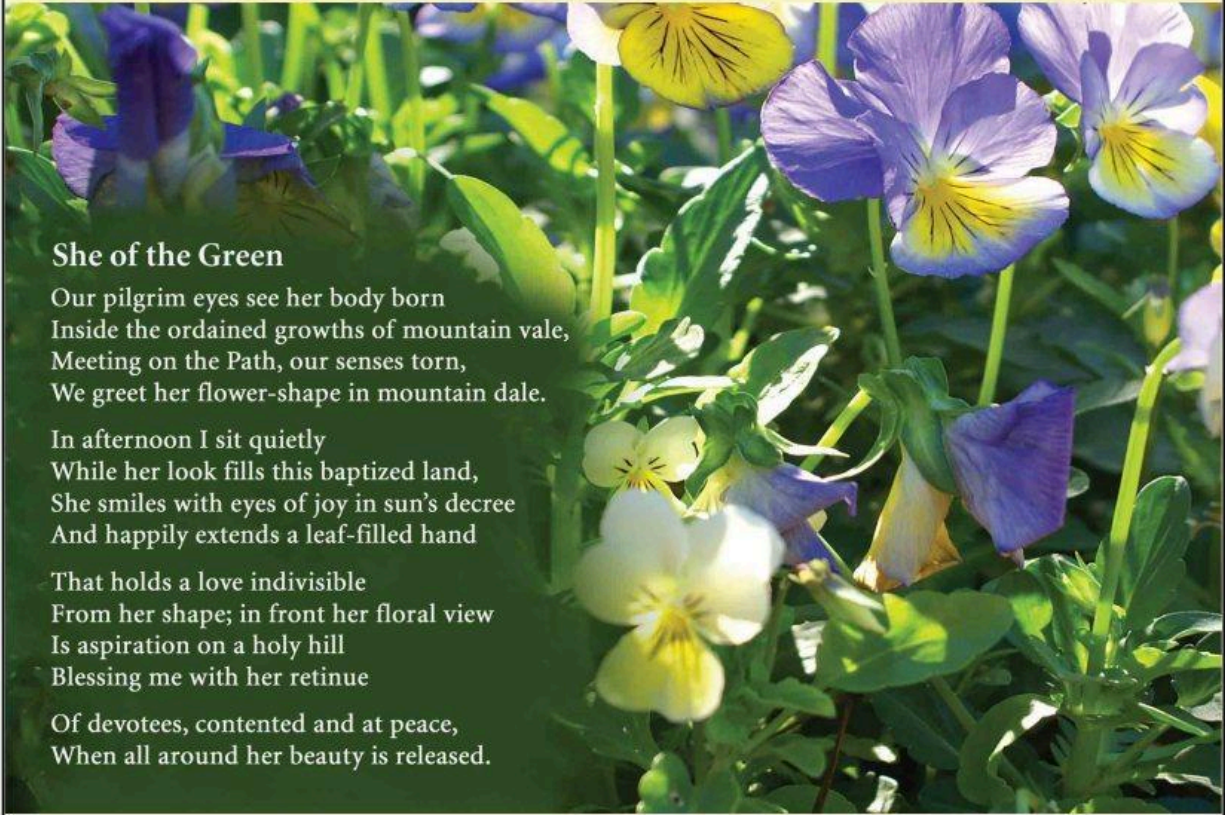
She of the Green

Our pilgrim eyes see her body born
Inside the ordained growths of mountain vale,
Meeting on the Path, our senses torn,
We greet her flower-shape in mountain dale.

In afternoon I sit quietly
While her look fills this baptized land,
She smiles with eyes of joy in sun's decree
And happily extends a leaf-filled hand

That holds a love indivisible
From her shape; in front her floral view
Is aspiration on a holy hill
Blessing me with her retinue

Of devotees, contented and at peace,
When all around her beauty is released.



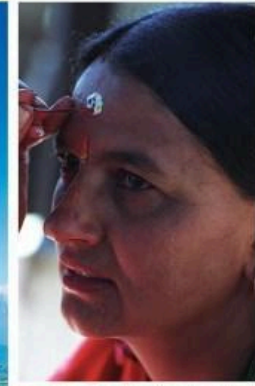
CH 4: Divine Feminine Nature: Growths-Mother

Nature as the Growths-Mother symbol includes human mothers

We can grow inwardly as we grow outwardly in the physical world with the Earth our nature mother. Our outer growth as a Pilgrimage experience through her growths up a holy mountain opens the nature doorway inside. In this region of the Himalayan culture, Annapurna is a Mother symbol with both inner and outer attributes. She is a volcanic plateau of mountain outlines covered with growths up to the snow line. Annapurna's "lap" is a spiritual aspect of this mother symbol with a parallel in human womanhood. Thus of the varied aspects of Vedic womanhood, the mother aspect carries the greatest spiritual associations. The "lap of the father and mother" in the below quotation probably represents the whole of creation.

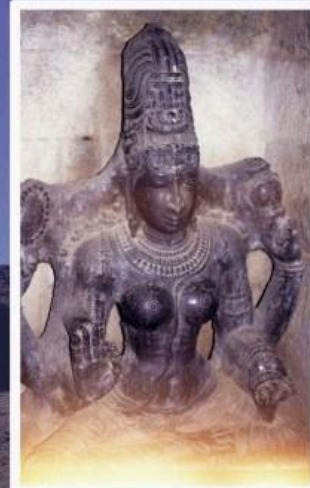
"Suddenly born he [Mystic Fire] is carried by the growths of the earth when the mothers who bore him make him grow by the light. The Fire in the lap of the father and the mother is as one who defends the waters gliding happily down a slope." [3-005-08]

Divine Vedic Nature as the Growths-Mother



Himalayan nature, goddesses and womanhood share the same Vedic symbol, all associated with inner and outer “growth”. The inner growth is associated to the yoga application of the modern Shakti symbol. The photos show this yoga association to Annapurna with white coloring.

Vedic Growths-Mother Symbolism With Breasts



"... Fire ... the goddess of understanding is yoked to her works ... he has drunk from her breasts with his tongues of flame." [5-001-03]

At the human level of physical symbolism it is breasts that represent our growth through motherhood. There are breasts of the Earth-Mother that bring the nature parallel. In Vedic symbols this represents holiness.

The Sanctity of Vedic Motherhood in the World



“Who is this boy, O young mother, whom thou carriest in thyself when thou art compressed into form, but when thou art vast thou hast given him birth? ... I saw him born when the mother brought him forth.” [5-002-02]

Vedic motherhood is a spiritual symbol. In this quote the son is a symbol for the Mystic Fire in manifestation. This symbolism is still found in the West, but the yoga symbolism has been lost.

The Himalayan Growths-Mother and Womanhood



During the annual divine Growths-Mother festival, Himalayan women are included in this nature symbolism. The left photo shows a symbol womb with grass seeds sprouting inside. In Vedic times the female anatomy and outlines were holy symbols because the Growths-Mother brings us to life and feeds us. She is also our spiritual mother with whom we develop inner feelings in a parallel to those of human motherhood.

Himalayuan Motherhood's Spiritual Symbolism



These mothers in Pokhara have gathered together in a public place under holy male and female trees, to bring about a spiritual “growth”. The left photo shows their Mystic Fire symbol creating Shskti in water. This Shakti-Water they will take home to bless the family and house .

Himalayuan Womanhood's Spiritual Symbolism



The color for the Shakti symbol is red, obviously associated with motherhood. The woman (Shakti symbol) in the big photo is preparing to give blessings. The left photo shows her goddess association.

Worship of the Himalayan Growths-Mother



On Panchassee pilgrimage day, grain is cast onto the mountain on whose slopes the villages plant their crops. On the left is the lake wall on Panchassee mountain, whose circular shape adds a distinctive feminine outline to this Growths-Mother aspect. Grains are deposited on this wall as devotees circumnavigate in a pilgrimage mode, this lake. Locally the most famous Growths-Mother is Annapurna, in the top photo, who stops the clouds with her enormous size for the rains to fall and village grains (growths) to sprout and come to birth. In Vedic hymns it is usually a Mother aspect that devotees surrender themselves to for a spiriual growth.

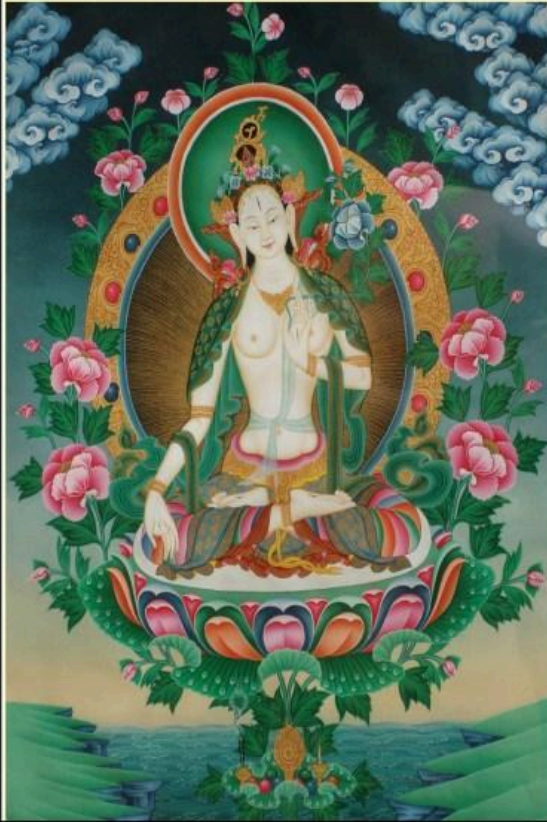
Worship of the Himalayan Growths-Mother



Worship of this symbol brings an inner level of experience. On the right it is Panchassee who feeds us and so is holy.

On the left flowers adorn the top of a rice-stack. Rice is Annapurna's divine nature symbol. Her husked rice whiteness is a parallel to the snow whiteness of her peaks and outline.

Inner-Growths Mother as Womanhood



In Tibetan Buddhism this is the Inner-Growths-Mother named Tara. There are shown outer growths that surround her in the photo, but her image is to lead us inside.

“He [Mystic Fire] who in the growths of earth holds up his greatnesses, both the progeny born and what is in the mothers, he is Knowledge in the house of the Waters” [1-067-05]

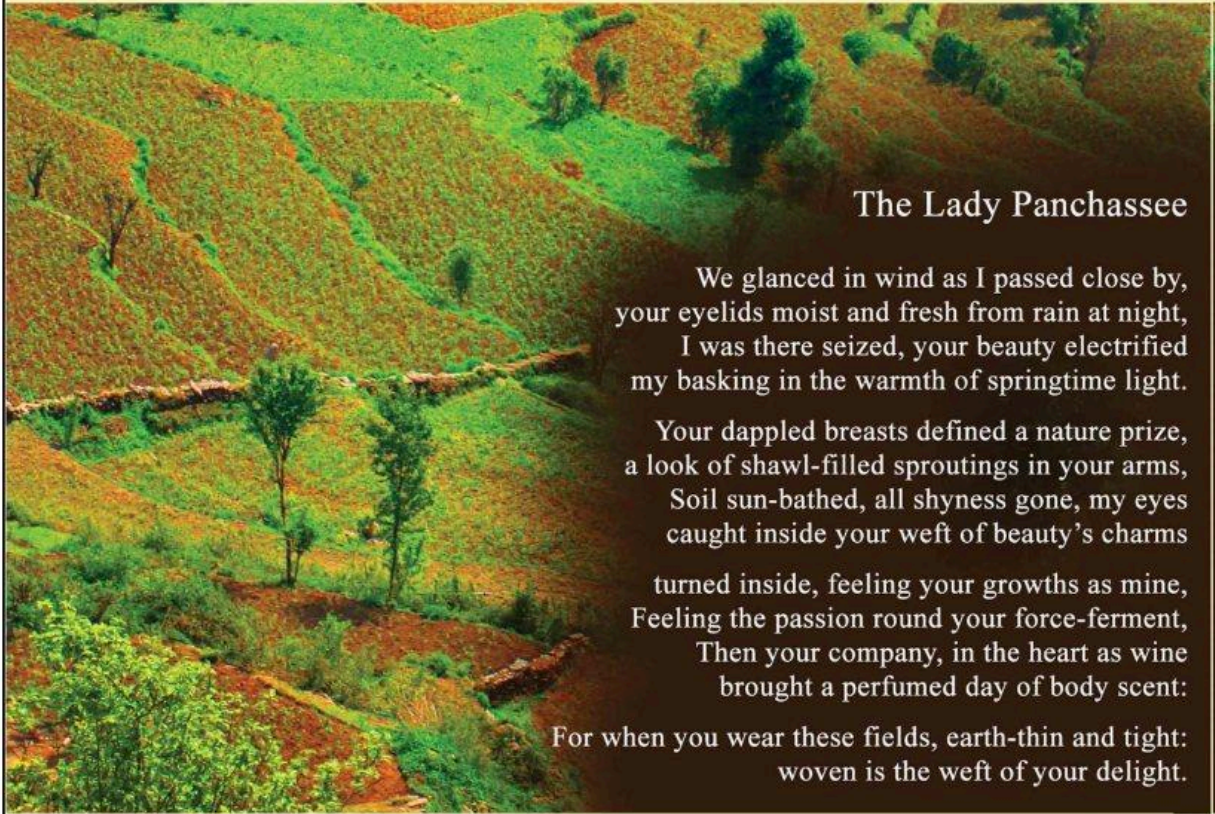
This quotation expresses the double meaning in Vedic symbols. The “Waters” is a symbol for a divine manifestation in which spiritual “Knowledge” is found. This hymn expresses the divinity associated with the “mothers”, both human and divine.

Inner Growths-Mother Symbol Teaching Daughter

81



The Lady Panchassee



The Lady Panchassee

We glanced in wind as I passed close by,
your eyelids moist and fresh from rain at night,
I was there seized, your beauty electrified
my basking in the warmth of springtime light.

Your dappled breasts defined a nature prize,
a look of shawl-filled sproutings in your arms,
Soil sun-bathed, all shyness gone, my eyes
caught inside your weft of beauty's charms

turned inside, feeling your growths as mine,
Feeling the passion round your force-ferment,
Then your company, in the heart as wine
brought a perfumed day of body scent:

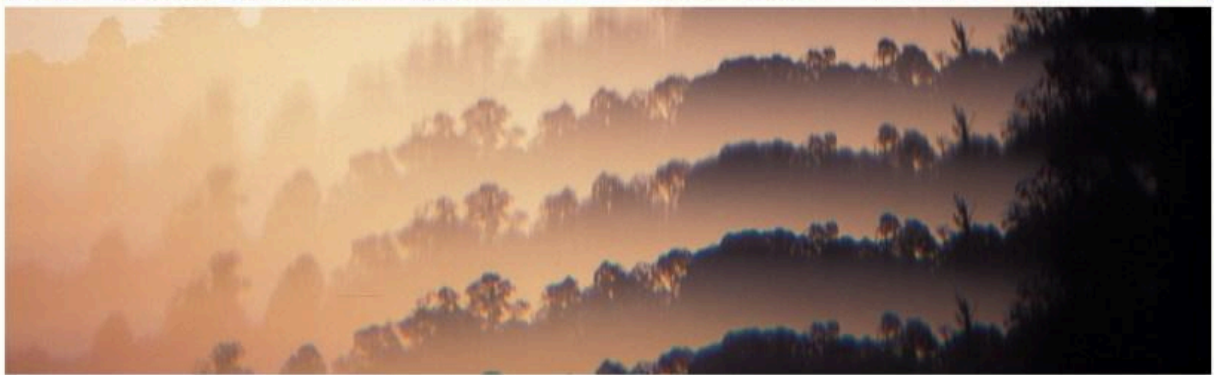
For when you wear these fields, earth-thin and tight:
woven is the weft of your delight.

CH 5: Yogini Symbolism in Himalayan Culture

The Yoga Associations to the Woman-Sage Symbolism

Himalayan nature experience is fundamentally of vastness. Himalayan villages sit below some of the highest mountains in the world. These mountains are mostly of the feminine gender and holy. Mount Everest, for example, is a divine Mother symbol to local people. With their Vedic multi-dimensional symbolism, womanhood is associated to this vastness, psychologically in terms of the yoga elements in Vedic-Shakti symbolism. This association brings a divine symbolism to womanhood. As there are Vedic hymns authored by Women-Sages, they represent a divine status and spiritual goal for women in the living Himalayan yoga tradition. The most interesting aspect of this is that in villages and towns and cities across Nepal, living examples of Shakti-women exist today. At distinctive levels, from an uneducated village woman to a highly educated university teacher, examples of a divine womanhood are considered as an integral part of Nepali society. The author has personally known this diversity of Nepali womanhood who see themselves in terms of a Shakti symbolism. Thus it can be concluded that the multi-layered Himalayan feminine symbolism contains a living level of Vedic yoga and spiritual associations.

A Multi-dimensional Annapurna Nature Symbolism



There are different levels of perception in nature experience, from the physical to the spiritual. She is a Big Lady. Vast is her experience, white is her color, the Yogini aspect is her highest womanhood dimension.

The Silver Tara: a “White (Shining) Mother”



“Creatures born, men who people the earth have increased the luminosity of the son of the white (shining) mother ,,,,” [5-019-03]

Vedic hymns describe living Himalayan female nature symbols which associate this womanhood to Vedic yoga traditions.

Himalayan White is the Holy Feminine Tint



Left arrow shows the divine female symbol as the milking buffalo to whom a temple offering is made. In the right photo, the arrow points to where divinely colored white milk is offered in the milkshed-temple. In Himalayan culture the milk of a mother is holy and white like snow.

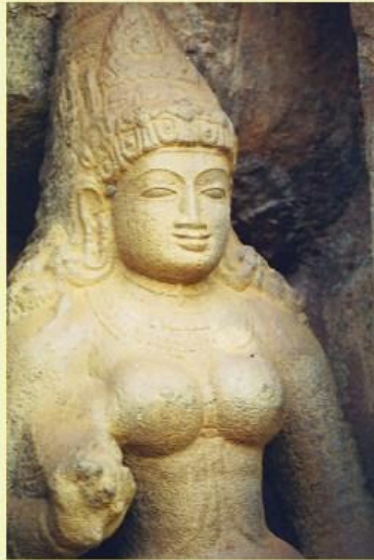
Himalayan White is in the Holy Streams



Physically, women are wet and men are dry, thus all water in nature, (rivers, rain, lakes etc.) are symbols of the Vedic divine Feminine. It is the white color of flowing river water that is symbolized as the “milk of the mother” in Rig Vedic Mandala 5 Sukta 19. The “descent of the waters” is a Vedic nature symbol for the spiritual descent of the Shakti consciousness, as with a waterfall.

Asian Divine Mother Symbols in White

88



In the left photo is a Chinese Mother. In the middle photo is an Indian divine Mother statue. On the right is a Tibetan divine Mother. They are all in the form of womanhood and white like Annapurna, the “*white mother*”. Annapurna’s iconographic symbol is a cup of rice which locally is associated to white rice.

The Himalayan Divine Feminine Celebration: Teez



Beneath two sacred trees these women meet, above Lakeside, Pokhara.

The Himalayan Divine Feminine Celebration: Teez ⁹⁰



These Nepali women will create their Divine Feminine Shakti symbol in water. The Yogini manifests the Shakti symbol in consciousness.

The Himalayan Divine Feminine Celebration: Teez ⁹¹



First the Vedic Mystic Fire is invoked by chanting: everyone has brought Vedic ature symbolds to offer. This is Vedic yoga symbolism.

The Divine Water-Shakti and Divine Male Fire

92



A Yogini is the human level of this consciousness through Yoga practice.

Chinese Taoist Divine Mother Yoga

93



On Mount Tai are meditation caves. The photo on the left shows a meditation cave of a Chinese Woman-Sage, identifiable by the strips of red cloth. China and the Himalayan culture have a parallel feminine symbolism with yoga associations.

South Korean Divine Feminine Symbol

94



In a famous South Korean Buddhist monastery, two holy womanhood symbols stand on either side of a statue of Lord Buddha. Asian cultures have divine Feminine symbols like India and Nepal, but their yoga associations to Shakti are less living and visible. In Korean culture like in Himalayan culture it is all womanhood that are included in the divine symbolism.

Divine Feminine Symbols Descend

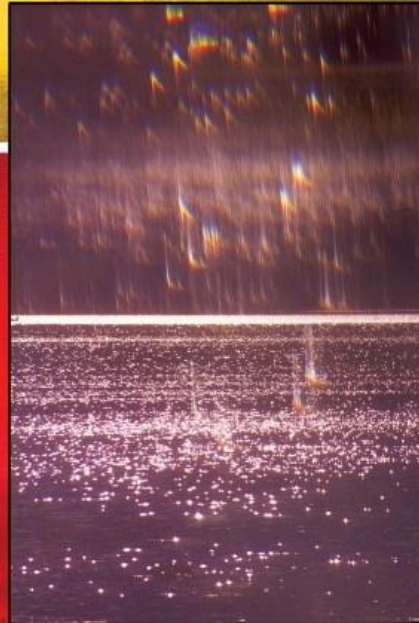
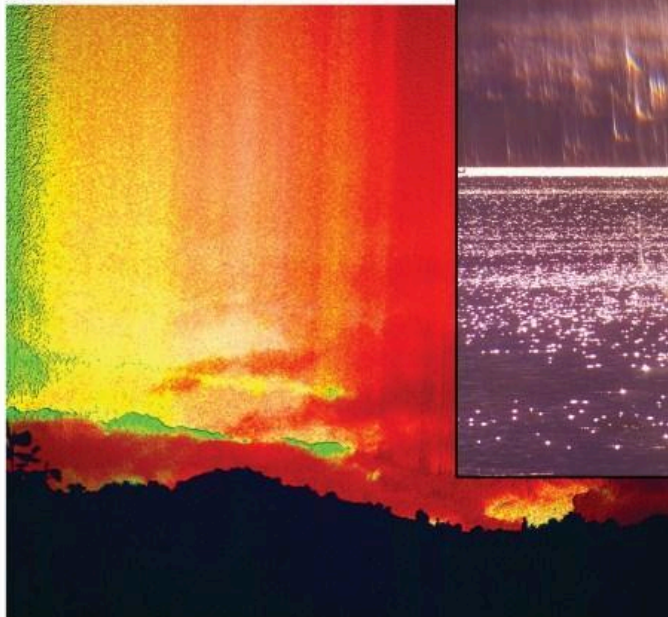


The divine Feminine descends into our physical world with spiritual consciousness and knowledge according to yoga traditions. Things that point downwards or flow downwards are symbols for the descent into the world of this Shakti consciousness. Vedic-Shakti allows for spiritual evolution in our everyday world, without leaving it. The Mandala in the left photo is to meditate on for the descent of Shakti.

“ ... He [Mystic Fire] is like a river running in its channel and sends in his front the descending Waters ...[1-066-05]

Vedic Nature Symbols of Shakti Descent

96



When descent is experienced in nature, it has manifest in the physical world as a paraalel to its inner dimension.

The Living Himalayan Shakti Symbolism

97



This scene depicts the living tradition of Himalayan Shakti. She is an ordinary woman as well as being a Shakti symbol. She is the ultimate yoga association to Himalayan womanhood and Yogini symbolism.

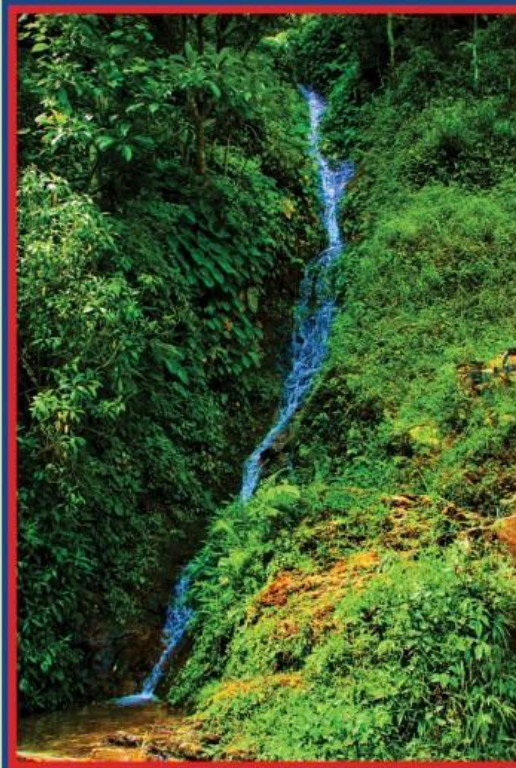
A Rig Vedic Yogini Hymn by “Mamata”



“O Fire, kindled by man's fires, Priest of the call who comest with thy light, Priest of the many flame-armies, hearken to the anthem our thoughts strain out pure to the godhead like pure clarified butter, even as Mamata chanted to him her paeon.” [6-010-02]

The Divine Yogini Descent

99



She of the streams, of the flowing movement

She of the streams, of the flowing movement

She of the stream, of the flowing movement's touch
Carries this water from summits, mountain-far,
As nature-streams She comes perhaps to clutch
The Shakti flowing on a water car.

She flows into the heart in pulsing waves
As streaming water flows towards the floor
At valley bottom, where they touch the cave
And enter through its inner-movements door

The inner worlds that Nature guides us to
Through straight descents, Her flowing movement's
press
Into ourselves a love that streams as true,
Her dawns inside the mind that come and bless

Our lives along the streams on lifetime's way,
Near where we pause to rest and then to pray.

CH 6: Rig Vedic Tree-Mother Nature Symbols

“This is a fundamental idea of Vedic thinking; and if we keep it well in mind, we shall be able to understand the peculiar imagery of the Veda. Earth is the image of the material being; material being, delight, action, etc. are the growths of Earth; therefore their image is the forests, the trees, plants, all vegetation Agni is hidden in the trees and plants, he is the secret heat and fire in everything that grows on earth All that we take pleasure in in the material life, could not be or grow without the presence of the secret flame of the spirit.”

The following pages show how a divine Mother nature is worshipped in the villages of the Annapurna region. Notice that there is no shrine, rather nature is worshipped the way she is, directly as if a personality.

“O Fire, the Angiras sought and found [thee] hidden in the secrecy lodging in tree and tree; by our pressure on thee thou art born a mighty force, the Son of Force they call thee, O Angiras!” [5-011-06]

Panchassee's Divine Feminine Tree-Mother



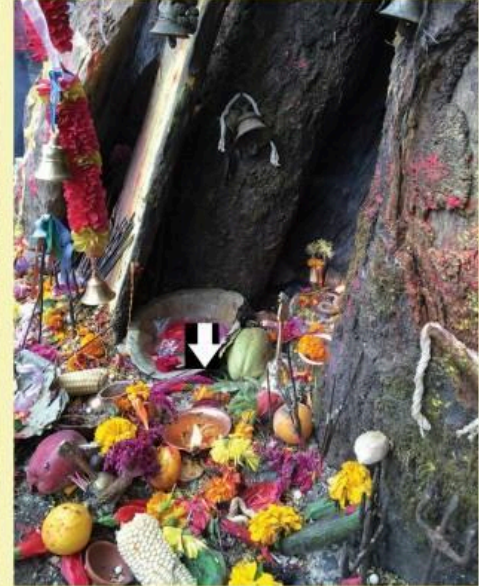
A holy Vedic nature symbol is the tree on peak#1. Indigenous devotees worship this divine Mother aspect with no shrine. The offerings are placed inside her trunk-opening, shown at the end of this chapter. This is nature symbolism from the Vedic age.

Holy Tree-Mothers in China and Nepal Wear Red



On Mount Tai in China the trees are decorated with red ribbons as on Panchassee. In Mankanpur village rice is offered with the red cloth. Red is the divine Feminine color symbol. These holy trees are feminine.

Vedic Fire Sanctifies Panchassee Tree-Mothers

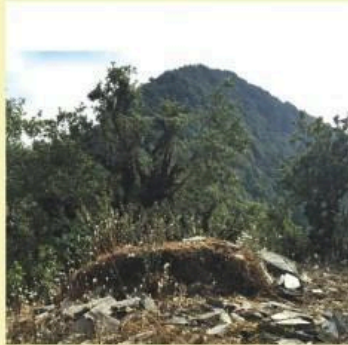


Trees are spiritual symbols because they give of themselves with no need of anything in return. Under the arrows an offering flame is lit at holy Panchassee trees. It is mostly the indigenous peoples that keep this Vedic symbolism alive. Modern Hinduism has taken a step away from this direct contact with nature and now prefers cement shrines. This is one difference from Vedic culture that the Puranic age has brought.

One Panchassee Divine Tree-Mother's Demise



The Purnic age brought a separation from nature with a focus on other-worldliness. This can be seen in many cultures. In a parallel movement womanhood has lost it's original sanctity.



The upper photo shows the Tree-Mother on peak #5, directly above the Panchassee Lake in the year 2000. Since then the stone steps to this Seat have been removed. This is one of the original five Seats and symbols included in Panchassee's name. Her name means five Seats of the divine Mother-Mountain: "Panch" means five. The bottom photo shows this same Seat today. Thus there are now effectively four Seats, and the name is more accurately Charassee (char=four).

Panchassee's Tree-Mother Devotion Above the Lake



This photo shows the trail down from the Tree-Mother on Peak#5 in the year 2015. Where devotees build tiny rock houses and stone-totems as a sign of not forgetting her. Before these rock symbols of devotion were built by the Tree-Mother as shown on the previous page. Now they are built on the trail down as the original access to this peak is gone. This is an example of how Vedic nature symbols have had their divinity translated out of them, and Puranic age translations have replaced them.

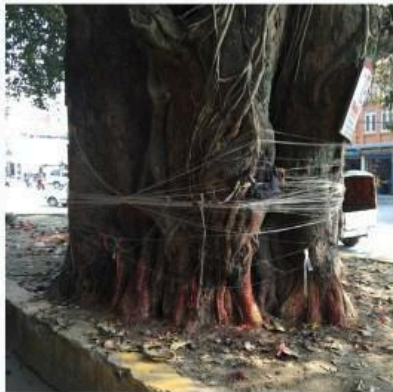
The Vedic Tree-Mother's "Radiant Cord"

106



*" O Tree, knowing
the goal of the
journeying of the
gods, bear us to
it binding with the
radiant cord"*

[10-070-19]



Above, a Tree-Mother in South Korea is bound to a rock shrine with a rope, the Vedic "cord". In the bottom photo, on a city street in Pokhara Nepal, a "cord" symbol is wrapped around the tree trunk. This "cord" is a holy symbol of our physical "cord" connection to our human and divine mothers at birth. Here the tree is our mother.

The Vedic Tree-Mother and the Mystic Fire

107



“The awakening of the fire by the friction of the Aranis, the rubbing together of the two pieces of tinder-wood is one way of making Agni to shine out in his own form, ... but this is said elsewhere to have been the work of the Angiras Rishis... This must mean in the esoteric symbolism ... turning it into material for the spiritual existence.” [Hymns]

In the left photo is a Tree-Temple in Kathmandu. This relates to the “... turning it (Mystic Fire) into material for the spiritual existence.” In the right photo is that which is “turned into material for the spiritual existence”, an ordinary wood fire. The tree is fundamental to all this.

*“What we place for thee, a few chance logs,
them accept, O ever-young Fire. [8-102-20]*

“

The Vedic Tree-Mother's Inner World

108



The inner world of Tree-Mothers is symbolized by the opening in which the offerings are placed. The ritual fire is associated to all trees.

"... the son of the Trees, the illumined seers praise for his protection, the ancient Fire." [8-023-25]

Himalayan Shakti Symbolism Includes Trees

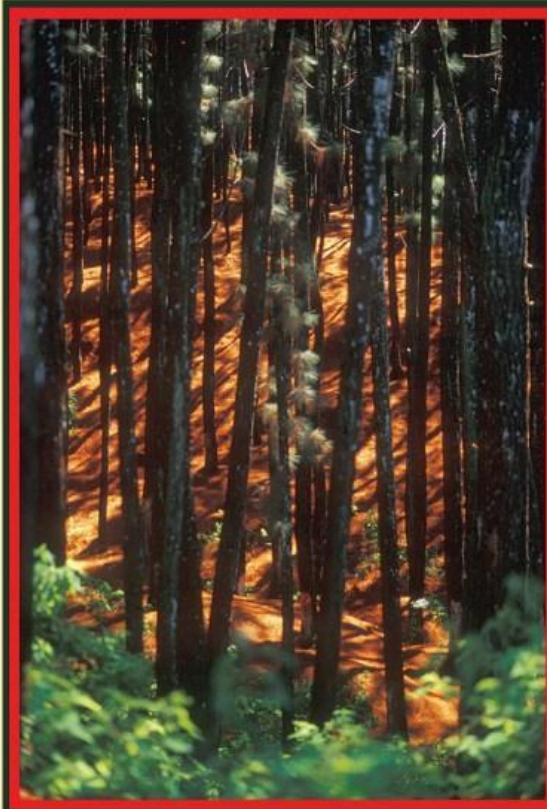
109



Himalayan Shakti symbolism combines the physical and spiritual. In the left photo it is the physical Tree-Mother that is sacred. On Panchassee in the right photo is another sacred Tree-Mother. Trees are sacred in the Veda because they provide fuel for the lighting of the symbol Mystic Fire. Trees are mother symbols also because they bring to birth the fire that we chant to.

Pine Forest Mother

110



Pine-Forest Mother

Pine Forest Mother

Sitting on this Mother's needled gown
Mid forest trees atop Her pine strewn curves,
I pull at dangling threads, needle-brown,
Impatiently in love: these feelings serve

To call Her near my seat in pine tree mood,
While sitting on Her russet-needled skirt,
Her long legged tree's infinitude
Spreads vastness on the dampness-tinted dirt.

Wood bark black lines this Mother's small
Copper-eyes above a shoulder-hill,
From where I sit She brings a magical
Daylight-brightness and a heart-filled, shrill

Whistling breath singing in forest heat,
Upon Her lap I warm on pine tree seat.

CH 7: Opening in Nature with Rock-Mothers

“Touch either heaven's superior peak or swing wide open with all the extent of earth, O doors of aspiration ...” [10-070-05]

Local village people around Panchassee mountain worship rock and stone in the way they worship Himalayan mountains. In this view it can be said that mountains are very large rocks, and this will explain the holiness associated to special village rocks. Generally it is the opening in holy rocks and trees where the offerings are placed, thus the opening in these sacred village rocks carries a great significance. The inner parallel to this Vedic symbolism is a psychological opening that is symbolized by the placing of the offerings there. It is natural that the placing of offerings brings a psychological opening in any circumstance. In local villages the placing of offerings directly into holy Vedic nature symbols in general supports the idea that nature experience provides a spiritual opening that is not of the mind. The inner opening wants to be associated in particular to the idea of worshipping nature directly and not in a cement shrine. This is where the yoga association has a practical basis, because all Vedic nature symbols have inner and outer parallels.

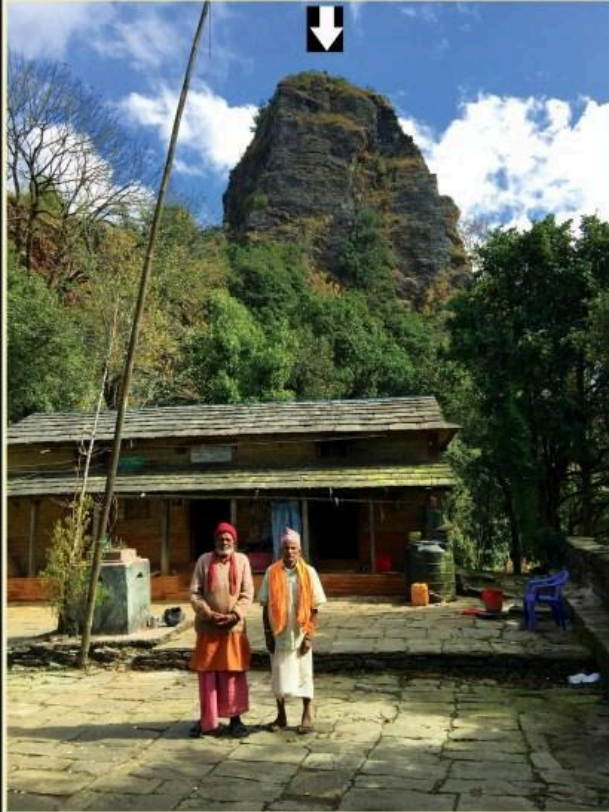
CH 7: Stone, Rock and Mountain Peak Opening



“What of this word do they say to me, what that has to be declared and is mysterious and hidden in the secrecy? What was as if a covering defence of the rays they have uncovered, he guards the beloved form, the summit plane of the being”
[4-005-08]

In Vedic culture the stone, rock and peak share the same symbol. This photo is of Mataputra’s peak, one of the the holiest peaks in Nepal. It is a symbol for the Mystic Fire in the Rig Vedic Mandala 5 Sukta 19 hymn. This mountain sits in the center of Annapurnas’s “lap”, her mountain-massif opening. The Vedic symbolism of a center brings the yoga inner-center parallel and an opening through the Mystic Fire.

Rig Vedic Nature as the Rock-Mother



*"I desire from the Fire, powerful
for the sacrifice the work of the
supreme bliss ... they speak of him
as the living son of the stone."
(Rock or Peak). [10-020-07]*

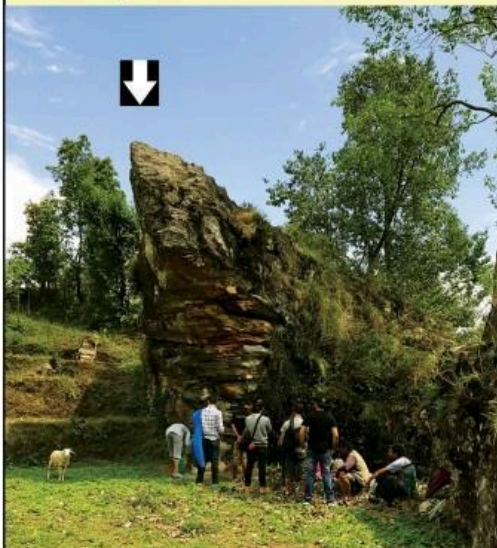
Below the arrow is the stone/peak of Mountain-Mother Dhara. In the photo is the resident sadhu with a local village devotee. In nature the rock is a natural symbol for divinity because it's material is seemingly eternal compared to a human lifespan. In anthropology the mountain peak as a holy rock or stone is named Omphalos, meaning navel, and is a symbol for our connection to the Mother. At birth we are connected to our human mother at the navel.

Rig Vedic Panchassee Rock-Mother



The photo is of Panchassee peak #2 with the present buildings removed by the computer. As an Omphalos or navel-center of the mountain, a meditation room was cut out into the rock. This remains the main yoga association of Panchassee. On Mela day it is adorned with flowers.

“High stands” this Himalayan Divine Rock-Mother

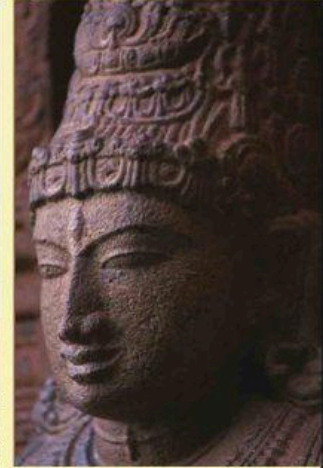
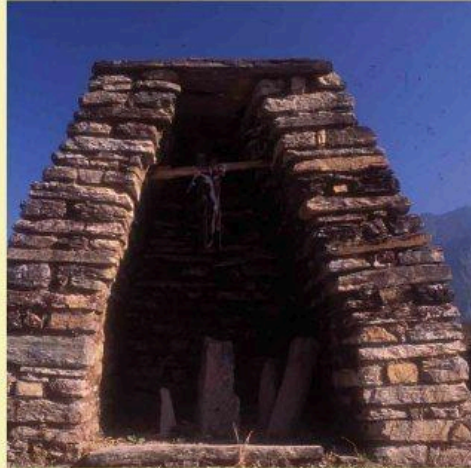


*High stands up the stone of
the pressing, high the Fire is
kindled, may it touch the vast
and the seats dear to us in the
lap of the infinite mother”*

[10-070-07]

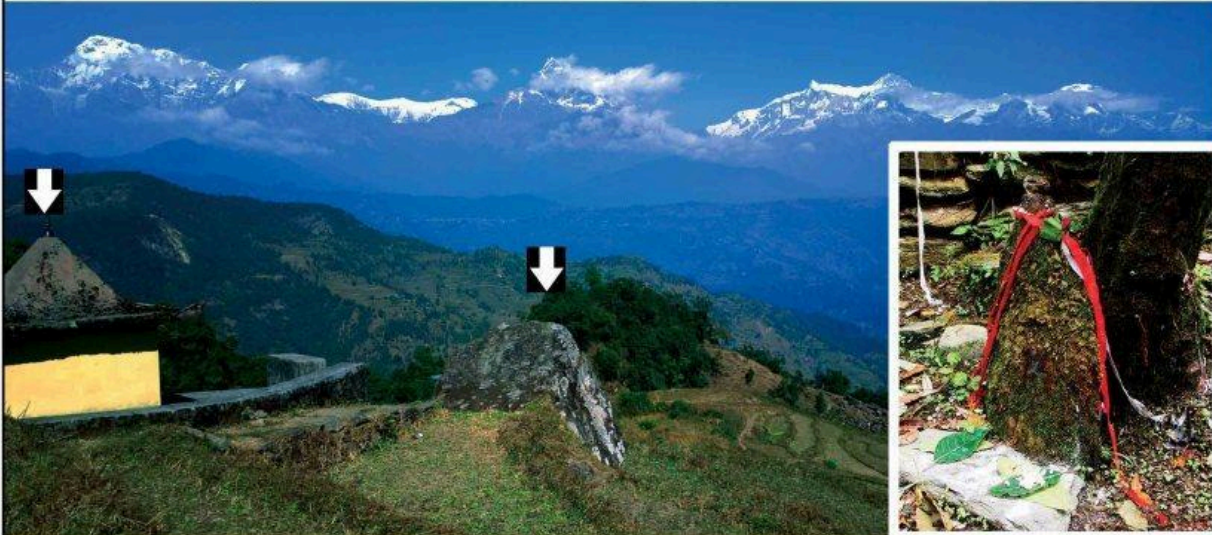
On Makanpur village Mela day, five Rock-Mothers are celebrated. This is the sacred opening of the left photo’s rock, in which offerings are placed. The Vedic hymn describes this scene. The above photo shows the wood fire under the arrow.

Panchassee Rock and Divine Mother Symbolism



Vedic associations to all kinds of rock are holy. Whether natural or carved into a statue or stacked for a temple or meditation hut, that holiness remains. And that holiness has a feminine gender as a symbol of the eternal divine Mother who upholds the manifestation. These three images share the same Vedic Rock symbol, as a symbol of the eternity of our divine Mother.

Himalayan Mountains and Vedic Rock Shrines



In Panchassee's Makanpur village photo on the left, the arrows show the original holy rock and beside it the new yellow cement shrine, both looking at the same view of Annapurna. The arrows mark the Vedic and Puranic culture's distinguishing features in terms of nature symbolism: the natural rock is Vedic and the cement shrine is Puranic. In the right photo with red ribbons along its natural shape, is a rock on peak #1: red is the color of the divine Feminine even as a rock.

Himalayan Divine Rock-Mother Sanctity



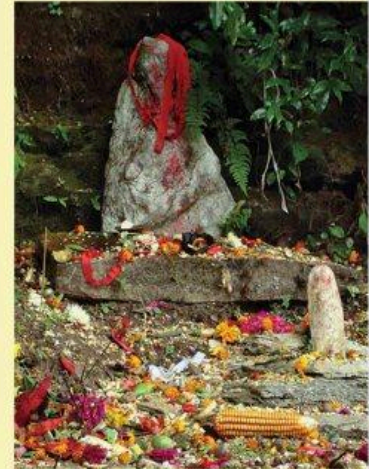
On the left is a tiny rock altar, in the middle photo is the holy rock that sits on the main street of Pokhara, Nepal. On the right is a holy rock on the way to Mountain-Mother Dhara's summit.

The Variety in Divine Rock-Mother Symbols



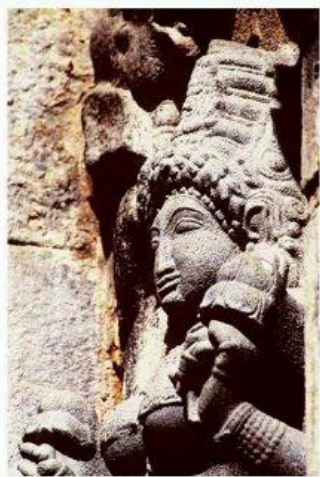
On the left is a lava stone carving of Quan Yin from Japan. The same Quan Yin as a Chinese mother goddess is the red shape inside the stone of the middle photo (arrow). She shows another face on her right In the right photo is a rock-offering-”house” built atop a jungle Rock-Mother of Panchassee, below the arrow. These Rock-Mothers are part of the same Vedic nature symbol of the divine Feminine with womanhood and the feminine gender of these holy rocks both as Shakti.

Ancient Panchassee Rock Shrines



On the left is an original rock divinity in front of a yellow cement temple. This photo is on the trail down from Makanpur village to Gatee Cheena. In the middle photo is a closeup of where the rock and cement meet. The offering flowers are placed as if in front of the Mother-Rock. Again this is an example of the original Vedic rock shrine being replaced by a Puranic shrine. On the right is a photo of a holy Rock-Mother with no shrine. In a general perspective, the rock shrine is worshipped by the Indigenous peoples while the cement shrine is for Hindu devotees.

The Evolution of Rock-Mothers into Iconography

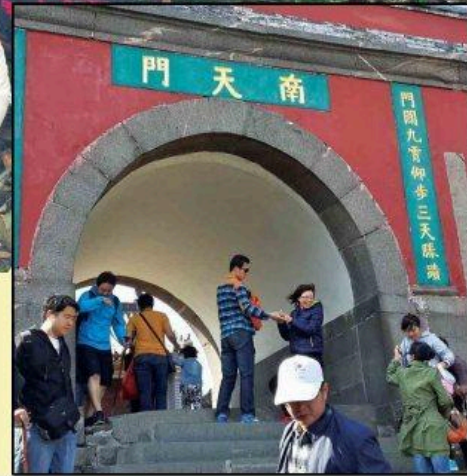


In the upper photo, under the arrow, is the offering place for another Panchasree Rock-Mother. This large rock is on the jeep road through Koodbedanda village. The left photo is of the same rock symbolism, only now it has visibly taken the shape of the divine gender it represents. This Vedic nature symbol has evolved into a woman, a yogini and goddess outline through a more mentally developed Puranic age.

Panchassee Rock-Mother's Symbolic Opening



These openings are symbols of a going inside with yoga practice. The left photo shows the inner opening symbol (arrow). On the holiest mountain in China, the entranceways the modern parallel, going through a divine doorway to self-discovery.

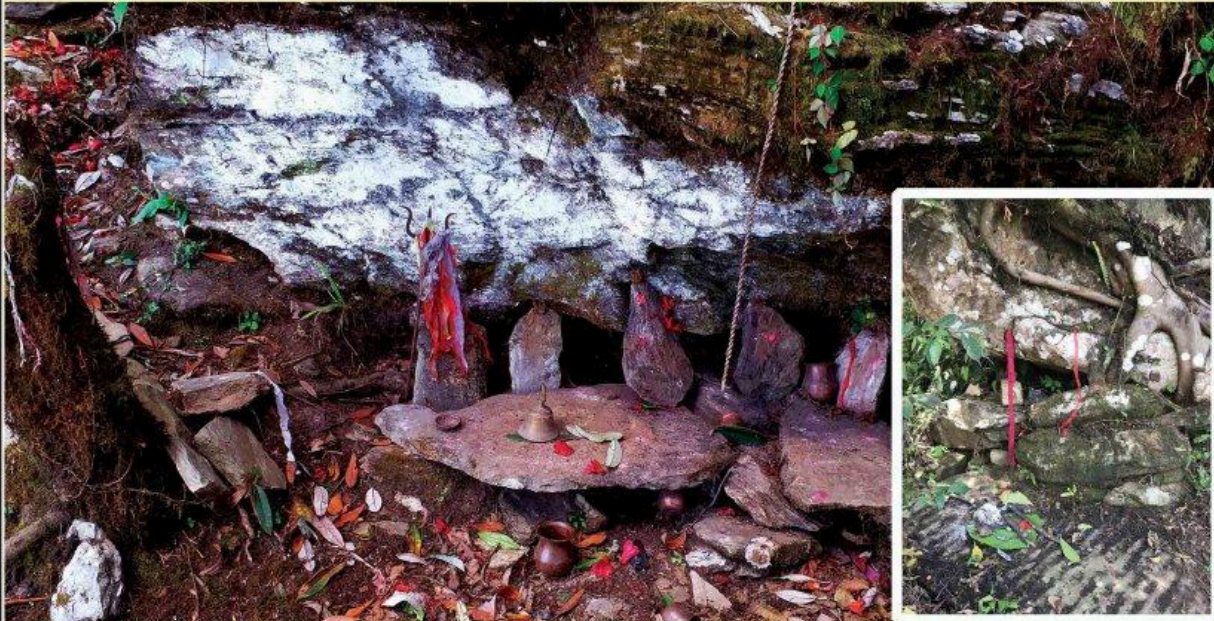


The Opening Inside Holy Rock-Mothers



Under the arrows are the openings of two more holy Panchassee Rock-Mothers. Vedic nature symbols are from an age of Mysteries according to Sri Aurobindo, all of which have yoga associations. Vedic nature symbols have subjective and objective parallels. We are to open and go inside ourselves as these Vedic nature symbols open physically and go inside the Earth-Mother. The mystic element helps to guide us inside as a psychological parallel so that we may find our inner way to this Mother.

Makanpur Village's Mystic Lama Rock



The Makanpur Rock-Mother of the right photo carries the name Lama, but as it has an opening like the Panchassee Rock-Mother of the left photo, it was probably originally of the divine feminine gender. The present Puranic age has tended to replace the divine feminine focus with a more male dominated focus.

The Mystic Fire's Outer/Inner Opening Symbol

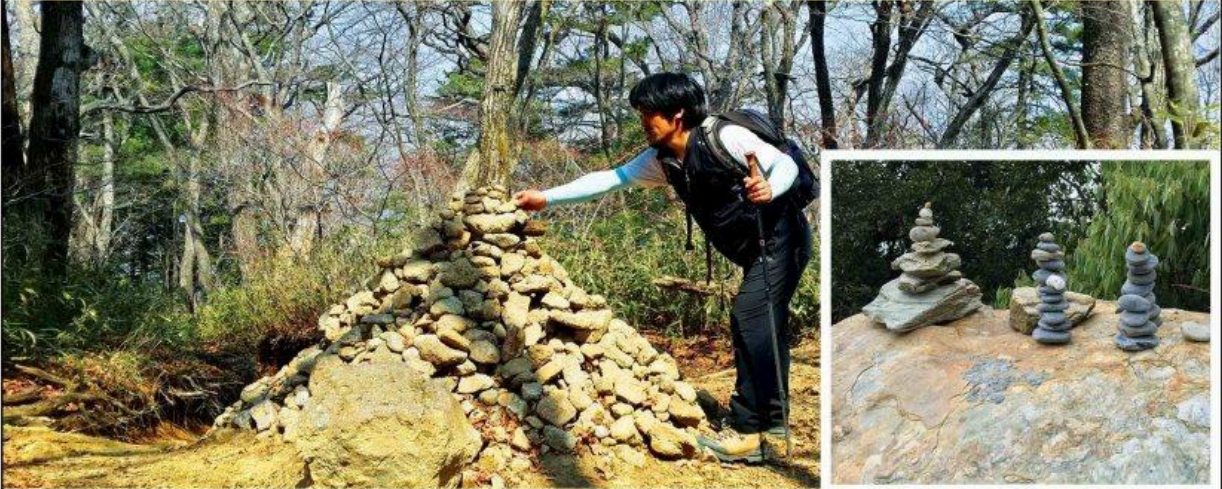


“May the divine Doors swing open, wide to our call, easy of approach with our prostrations of surrender; may they stretch wide opening into vastnesses, the imperishable Doors purifying the glorious and heroic kind”. [2-003-05]

Just as with the inner opening associated with the divine Feminine, an inner opening through the male Vedic Mystic Fire is visible in a wood-fire, below the arrow. The hysical and psychological parallels are amply described in Vedic hymns.

“ O Fire, give us the vast possessions, the thousandfold riches; open to inspiration like gates the plenitude ,...” [2-002-07]

Stone Offerings to the Divine Feminine Peak



Rocks are holy symbols for offering with their eternal-matter symbolism.

The background photo is of a rock offering on the trail up Mountain-Mother Chung Wang Bong in South Korea. The small photo on the right is from Panchassee where similar stone offerings as upward pointing triangles are found.

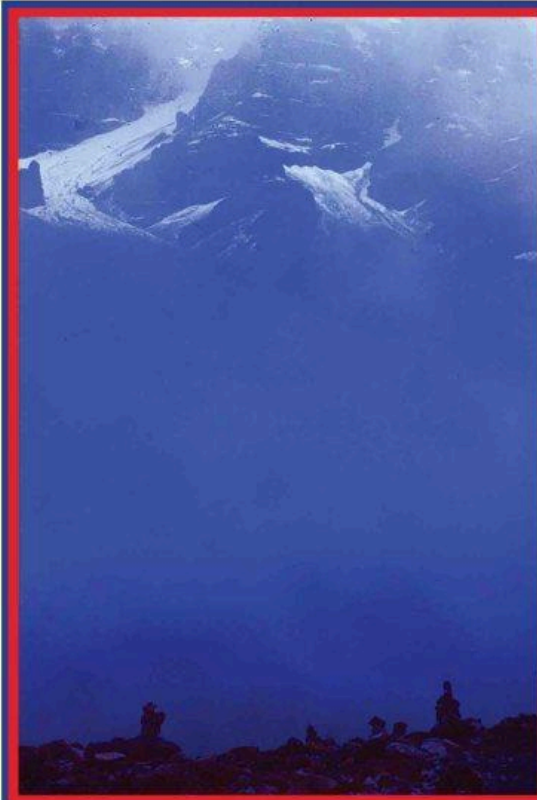
“... I pray as with the voice of the Stone of the pressing when it presses out the honey-wine.” [4-003-03]

Sri Lankan Divine Peak-Mother Symbolism



Ravana of the Indian Ramayana epic had his cave on this mountain at Ella; probably a mispronunciation of Vedic Mother Ila's name.

The Mystic Mountain Rock



Mountain-Mother Rock

Along a shale ridge, snow attended,
As offering upon Her pass and seat,
Her piles of garlanded rock ascended
In our front, the Mother's sight we meet

As symbol Rock, Her body as a stone
From the Flame laboring inside
Our every breath, She shows a mystic home
Of inner height as Mother-mountain-wide.

Stacks of offering, a pass of layered blocks
That give Her divine sight in divine ways,
Are calls of hope, My Lady's holy rocks
Lift their hands in prayer as silent praise

To Her mystic mountain side and face,
Her strength and force as vast as loving grace.

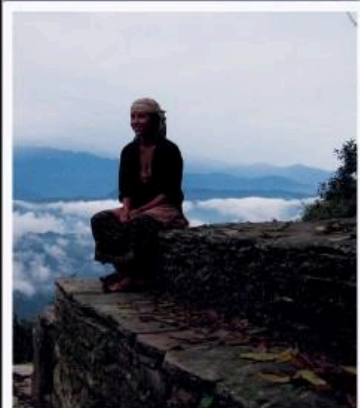
CH 8: Himalayan Womanhood and Sacred Nature

With all of Nature a Divine Feminine, and Shakti Symbolism in the female names, naturally the largeness of Himalayan nature experience and culture permeates the self-conception of this mountain womanhood.

“Anywhere he [Mystic Fire] is born new in eternal wombs; he stands in the forest hoary-old with smoke for his banner ...” [10-004-05]

A divine status and symbolism for women in Vedic hymns remains the living yoga tradition in Himalayan village culture. The yoga associations are present whether the women are conscious of them or not. To experience living examples of this Vedic-Shakti symbolism, however, requires time to be spent in Himalayan villages because there it is easily found. At different levels, from an uneducated village woman to a highly educated university teacher, examples of this feminine spirituality are an integral part of today's Nepali society. This spiritual consciousness has been living here for thousands of years, and thus the self-conception of Himalayan womanhood still has a yoga basis from the Vedic age.

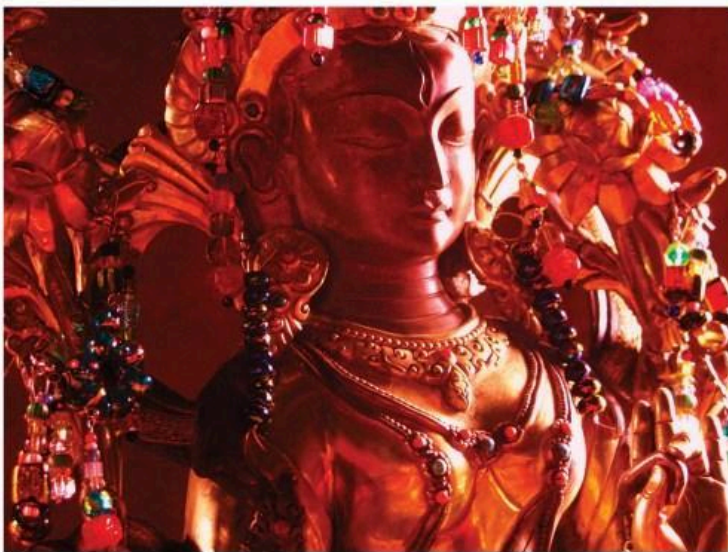
Himalayan Womanhood and “Vaster Worlds”



“Heaven and Earth grow as if vaster worlds to the Son [Mystic Fire], and sings our words even as might a man of discerning skill....” [1-059-04]

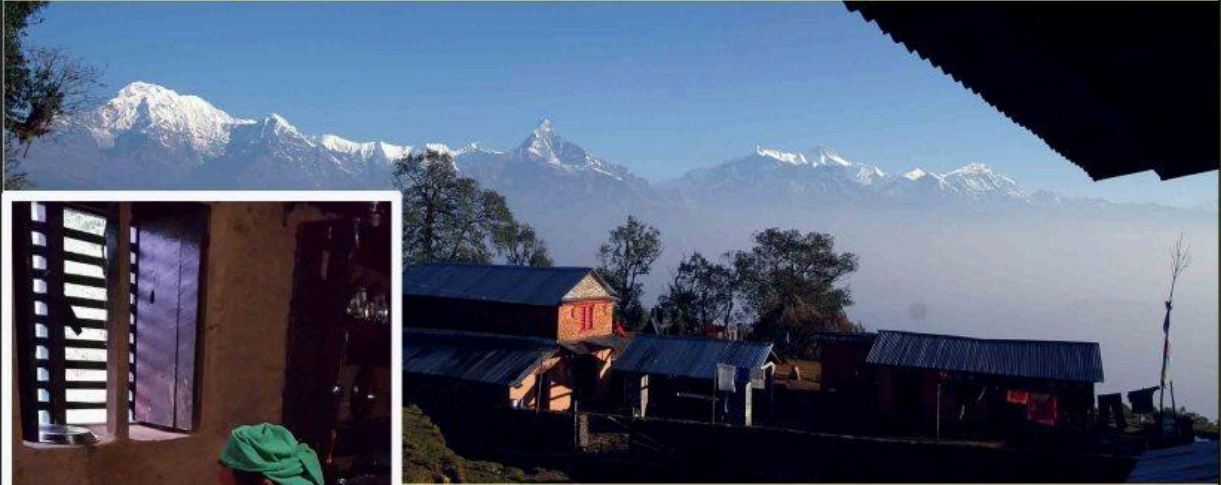
Encircled by a divine Feminine nature, with vastness all around, today’s Himalayan culture lives a Vedic yoga symbolism, Vastness is inside as well as in physical nature according to Vedic symbolism. Himalayan womanhood’s self conception can be as large inside as outside.

Himalayan Goddess Associations to Annapurna



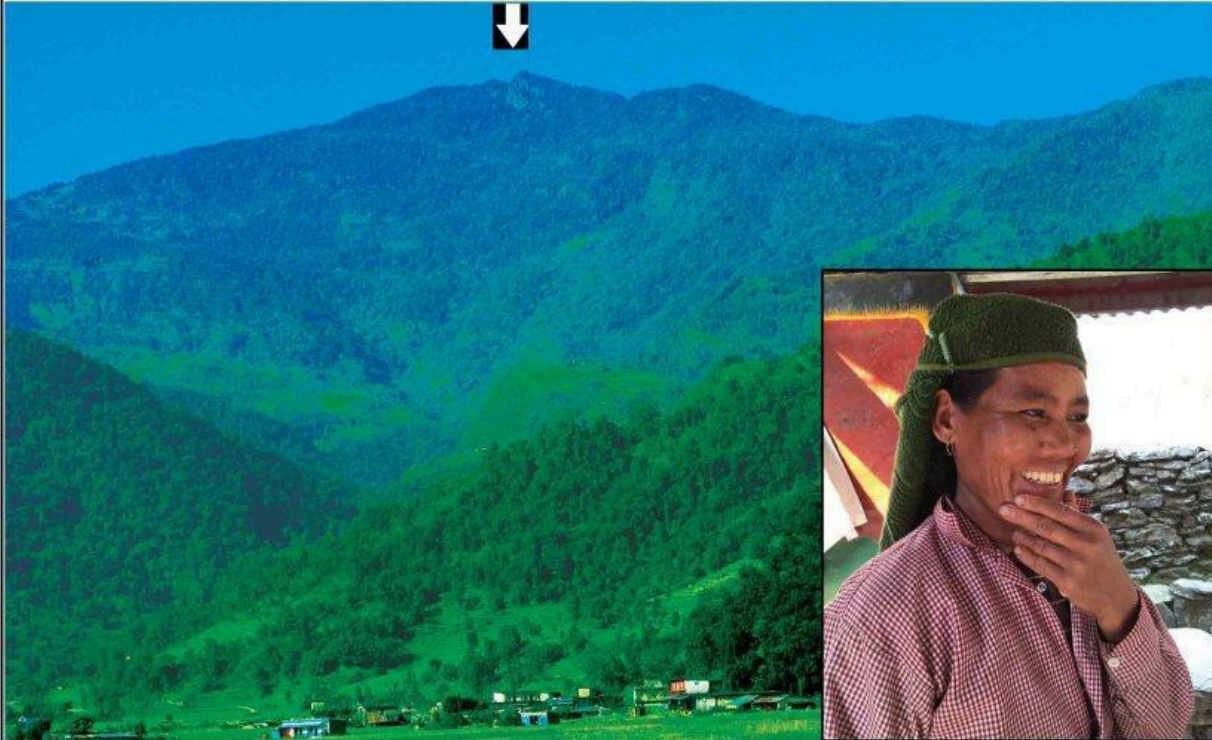
Himalayan divine Mother traditions like Annapurna have goddess and womanhood associations in Shakti symbolism. Her divine attributes are described as a nature experience in Rig Vedic Mandala 5 Sukta 19. Local village women live these goddess associations as nature experience.

Himalayan Womanhood and Annapurna Shakti



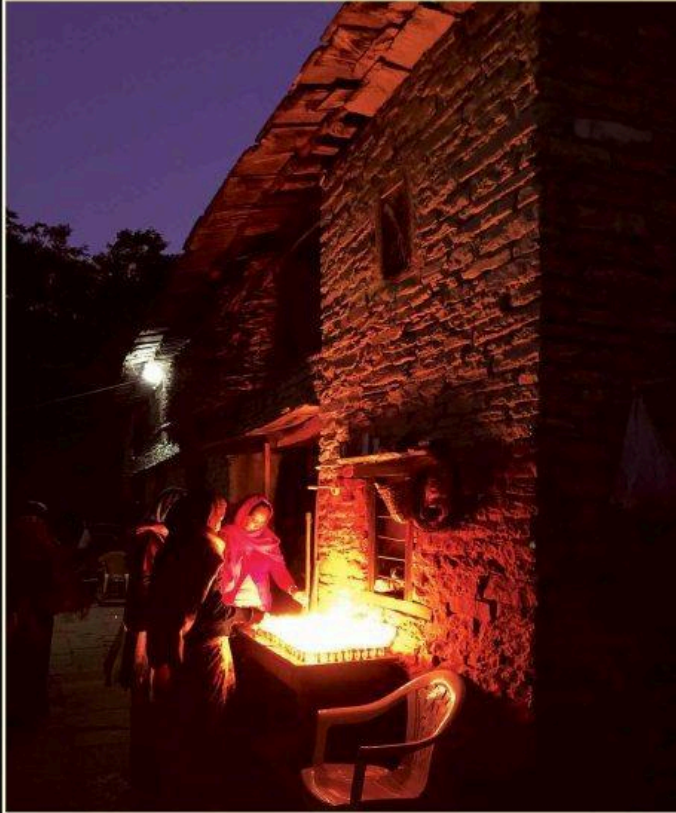
It is the vastness and kitchen wood fire that keep Himalayan womanhood with a connection to Vedic-Shakti. Their life is the strength and force aspect of this womanhood symbol, which associates them to Shakti. Above is a photo of the Happy Heart Hotel with Annapurna filling the sky. Here this Gender accomodates the male Fire between Shakti, Annapurna and womanhood.

Divine Feminine Himalayan Mountain Culture



The local Panchassee mountain culture includes womanhood as a spiritual symbol. Her fluted peak (arrow) marks this largeness of association.

Himalayan Womanhood and the Mystic Fire Symbol



Vedic nature symbols include the male and female aspects, from the physical to the spiritual. Vedic nature symbols provide Himalayan culture with a practical basis, bringing a balance between the genders. But this harmony between the genders is based in Vedic yoga symbols. Village life in the Himalayas still uses wood for cooking, thus everyday the Vedic Mystic Fire is seen in the kitchen, if not elsewhere. In this way the local women are associated to the divine male Vedic symbol as well as their own. This fire has a yoga association to Shakti. This brings a yoga balance of both genders in village culture.

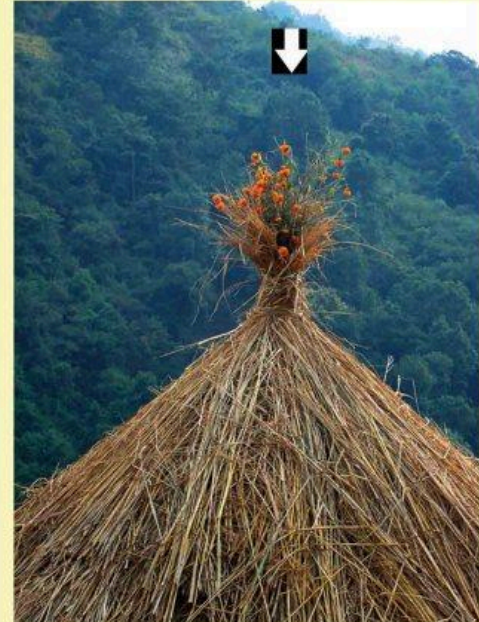
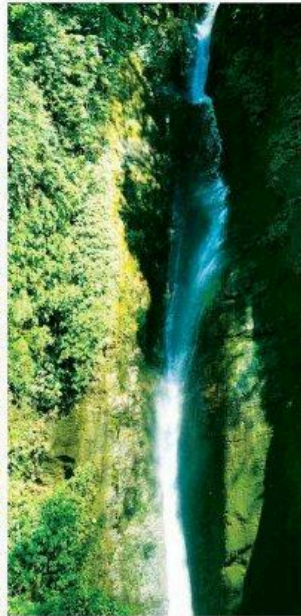
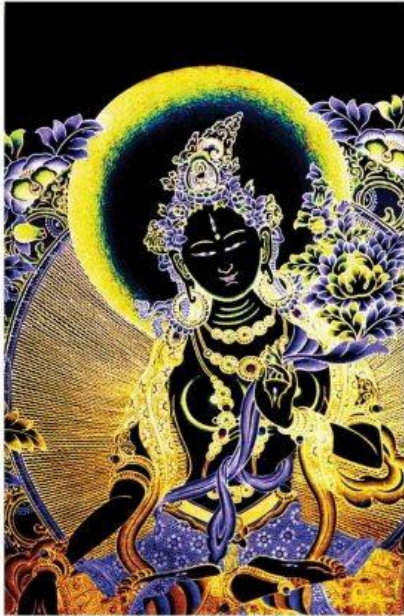
Himalayan Shakti Symbol: Kali Gandaki River



This photo is of Tukuche village by the Kali Gandaki river. It is the river current (and not the water) that specifically symbolises Shakti. Here is a Buddhist nunnery that local womanhood identify with yoga.

“ ... The Fire ... with his flame for the blaze of the offering of light, for its current poured on him as an oblation.” [1-127-01]

Annapurna: Goddess and Grain-Mother and Descent



The flowers atop a rice haystack thank Annapurna for the rains that fell and watered the rice crop. All descending waters are symbols for the descent of Shakti. Himalayan goddesses like Annapurna have this association to Shakti. Annapurna's "waters" as rain symbolize Descent.

Himalayan Vedic Divine Womanhood Symbolism



“When leaving the woods thou (Fire) goest to thy mother waters, that retreat turns not to oblivion of thee (or, to thy destruction)” [3-009-02]

In the photo is a Himalayan version of this Vedic divine Mother Water symbol. Her hands hold a water-pouring-conch-shell from the divine Mother-Waters. The Bird-Mother wings represents the earliest divine Water-Mother symbol of waterfowl. The five headed snake is the five levels of existence: thinking, feeling and sensing are three levels; everything above the mind and below the feet are the remaining two.

The snake is a male symbol that has united with the female symbol as in the above hymn. This copper statue is made in Kathmandu.

Himalayan Womanhood's Domestic Nature



Indigenous village women organize the family farm and themselves work in the fields with the men. Their life is spent completely in nature, at home s well as in the fields. This household nature experience is within a sacred and surrounding feminine Himalayan nature. The identification of Himalayan village womanhood with nature is complete.

Kali Streams

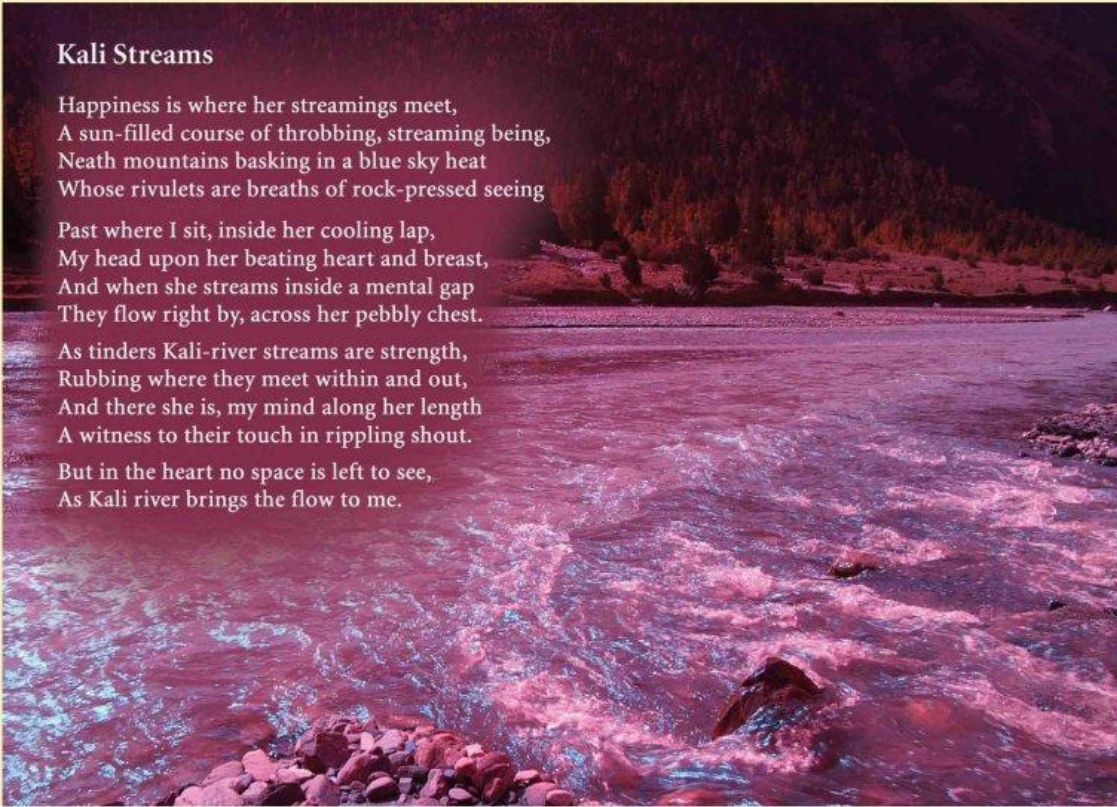
Kali Streams

Happiness is where her streamings meet,
A sun-filled course of throbbing, streaming being,
Neath mountains basking in a blue sky heat
Whose rivulets are breaths of rock-pressed seeing

Past where I sit, inside her cooling lap,
My head upon her beating heart and breast,
And when she streams inside a mental gap
They flow right by, across her pebbly chest.

As tinders Kali-river streams are strength,
Rubbing where they meet within and out,
And there she is, my mind along her length
A witness to their touch in rippling shout.

But in the heart no space is left to see,
As Kali river brings the flow to me.



CH 9: Himalayan Womanhood's Devotion to Water

The Rig Vedic beginnings of Himalayan womanhood's Shakti association can be seen in the nature symbolism of the "waters". In general "water" symbolism stands for manifestation, but it's Shakti associations are in aspects of streams, rivers, springs, and rain etc. all flowing downwards.

The first quotation explains there are inner and outer "waters" The middle quotation associates the female gender with the manifestation, yoga and the descent of Shakti. The final quotation explains the descent of Shakti is like a "*current poured on him as an oblation*"

"O Fire, thou goest towards the ocean of the sky ..., , towards the waters that abide above in the luminous world of the sun and the waters that are below.[3-022-03]

"May the Gandharvi speak to me and the Woman born from the Waters, may her protection be around my mind midst the roar of the river; may the indivisible mother establish us in the heart of our desire... [10-011-02].

I meditate on the Fire ... who ... hungers with his flame for the blaze of the offering of light, for its current poured on him as an oblation."

[1-127-01]

Vedic Water Symbolizes a Feminine Manifestation ¹⁴¹

*“ When leaving the woods thou
goest to thy mother waters ... ”*
[3-009-02]

On Panchassee Mela day, the first stop is Panchassee lake. Local womanhood worship the water, and as water is of the feminine gender, in fact they are worshipping themselves.



Lake Water Also Symbolizes Vedic Yoga Calm

*Shunahshepa ... him didst thou release
and he attained to calm; so do thou take
thy seat here in us [5-002-07]*

There are many yoga associations to the
aspects of Panchassee Mela water symbolism.



Himalayan Womanhood's Devotion to Water



On Panchassee Mela day a water spring is worshipped on the trail to the lake. There is no shrine, it is Nature herself who is addressed here. This is a Vedic nature symbol and experience that continues to associate village womanhood to Shakti.

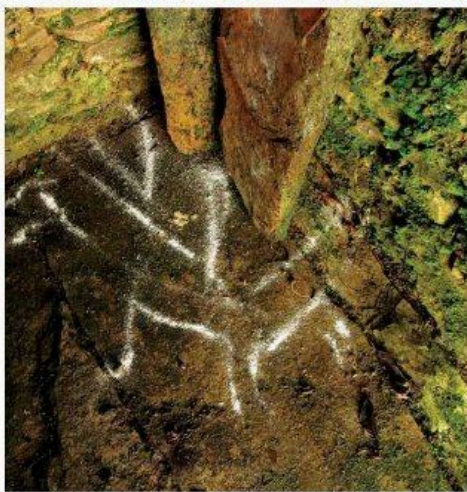
Panchassee's Young Vedic Womanhood



Young and old women identify with this lake with a center (under the arrow), There are no books in this tradition, the older females teach the younger, and this lack of books has kept this divine feminine Mela alive for thousands of years. But it is the young female devotees that show this Vedic tradition will live in the future.

Descending Water Symbolizes Shakti

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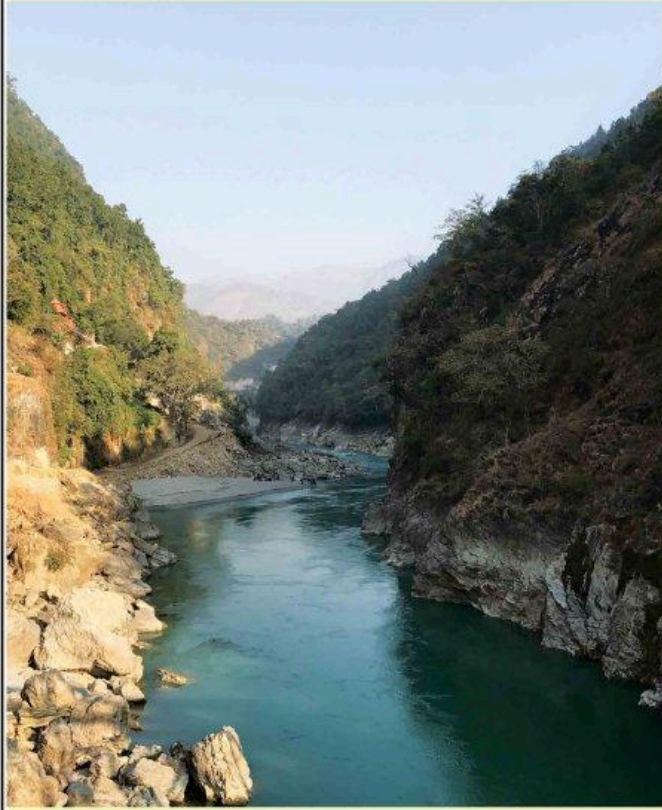
In Panchasree pujas, descending triangles are drawn with rice powder to symbolize Shakti as in the left photo. This represents the descent of water as a Shakti symbol that is visible in nature.

Vedic-Shakti Descends as Waters Descend



In primal Vedic lore, women are symbols of descending Shakti because just as their waters flow downwards, so does the experience of a descent of Shakti flow downwards.

Himalayan Culture Worships this River Crossing



The Kali Gandaki river narrows at Ramdi, in the left photo. When local buses cross the new metal bridge, that replaced the famous original rope one, flowers are cast from bus windows into these waters. In a famous song about these Mother waters at this crossing, with India and the outer world on the other side, only She can return us.

Shakti Yantras Point Downwards Like River's Flow



This is a footbridge over the Kali Gandaki river on its way down from Jomson. This river is a divine Mother symbol, so on the fall Grain-Mother festival its flow is celebrated with flowers across its width. The left photo shows a divine Mother Yoga Yantra with its center pointing downwards as this river flows. Divine Feminine symbolism as River-Water, womanhood and Yoga-Shakti are celebrated with these flowers.

I Heard Her Voice Today

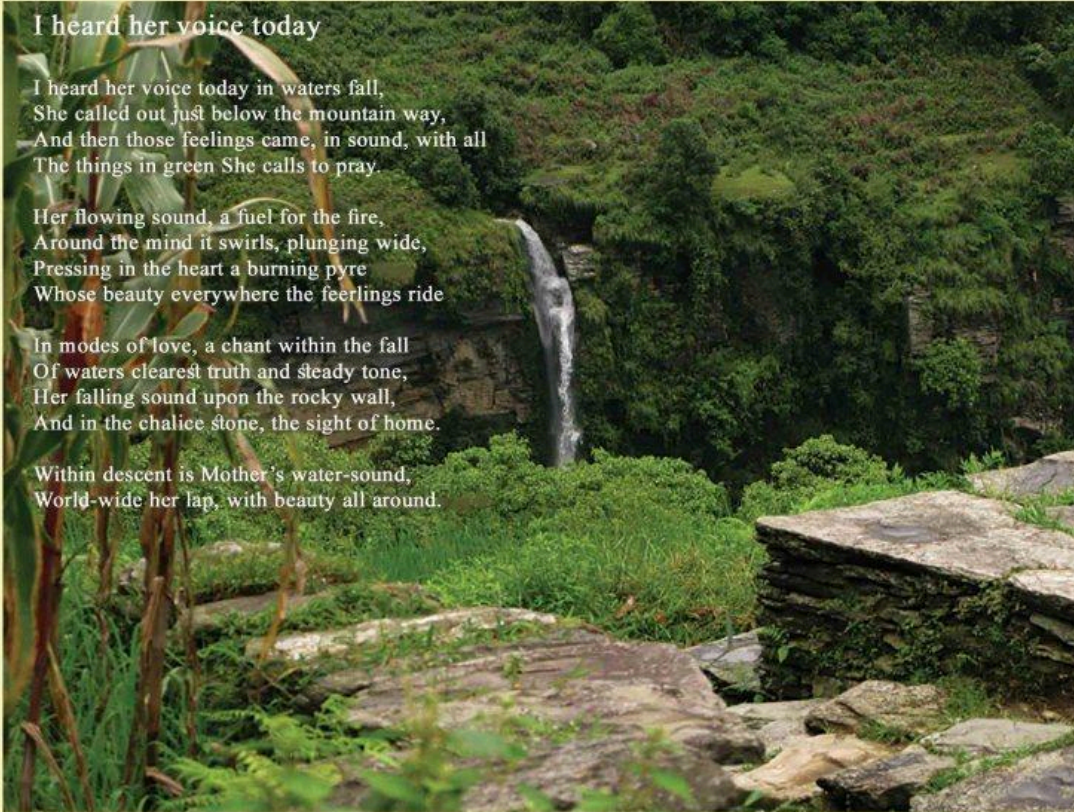
I heard her voice today

I heard her voice today in waters fall,
She called out just below the mountain way,
And then those feelings came, in sound, with all
The things in green She calls to pray.

Her flowing sound, a fuel for the fire,
Around the mind it swirls, plunging wide,
Pressing in the heart a burning pyre
Whose beauty everywhere the feelings ride

In modes of love, a chant within the fall
Of waters clearest truth and steady tone,
Her falling sound upon the rocky wall,
And in the chalice stone, the sight of home.

Within descent is Mother's water-sound,
World-wide her lap, with beauty all around.



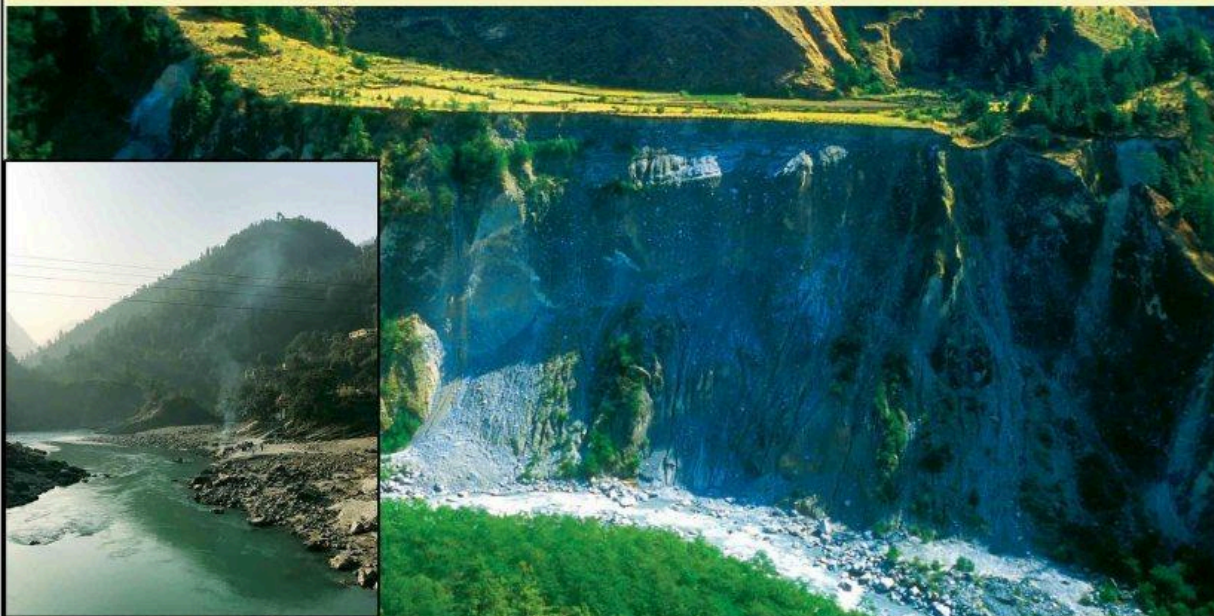
River Kali's Current Symbolises Divine Shakti

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The background photo is of the holy Himalayan Kali Gandaki river in the dry season, flowing down from the Tibetan plateau. The left photo is of Goddess Kali, and the right photo is of this river current that brings the Shakti symbolism. The physical strength and force of the river's current is a symbol of the divine Strength and Force of the goddess Kali, and one aspect of Shakti symbolism.

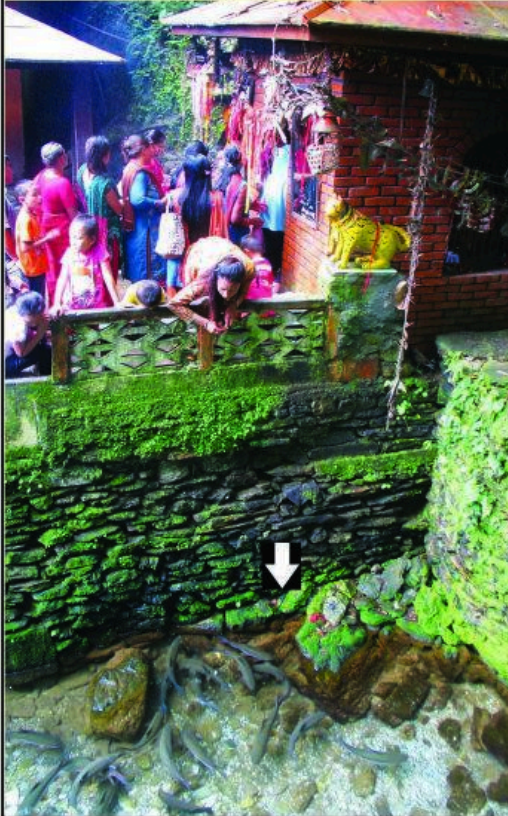
Kali River-Shakti Divine Force Symbol is Real



The background photo shows the force of Kali's river current. The left the left photo shows this river current being worshipped further down.

According to texts, Shakti is a divine force that descends into the physical world. These photos show that this symbolism is real. There are associations to all of this in Himalayan womanhood, also real.

Himalayan Waters are an Opening to this Current



The holy Dhor Barahee waters, under the left arrow, has a shrine directly above. Womanhood make offerings to the Goddess inside. Under the right arrow, the Goddess inside receives them as a human symbol of these holy waters. Himalayan womanhood connects to the Shakti current worshipping themselves.

The Himalayan Women of Strength and Force



Aarati-ma was a Shakti-woman, now deceased.

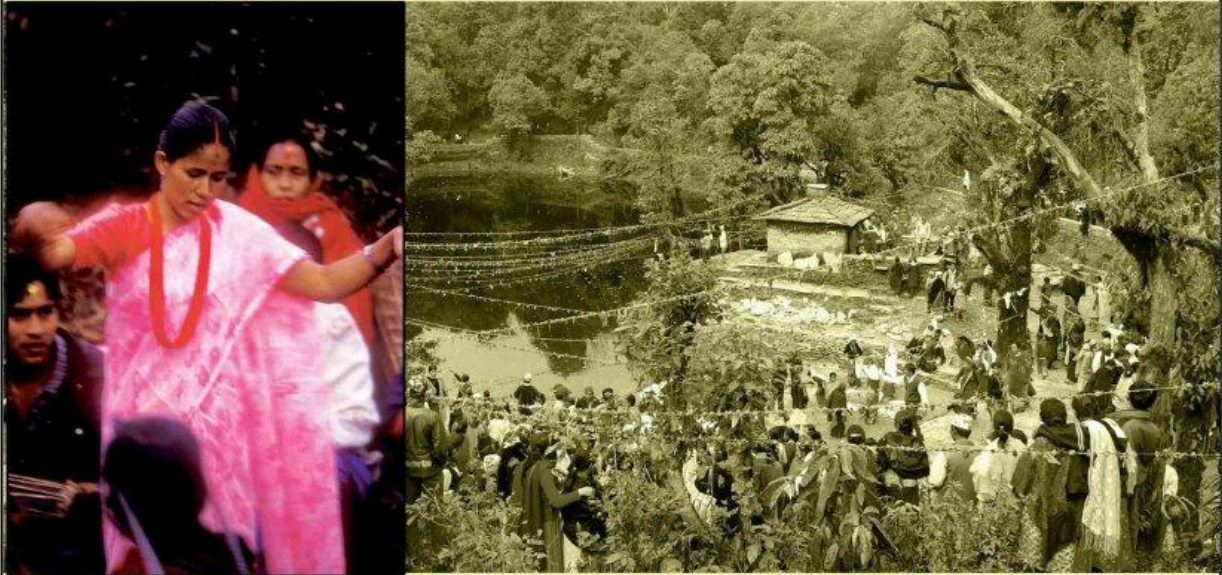
In Himalayan culture, strength and force is a feminine attribute, like the image of Annapurna beside her. She celebrated annually the day that Shakti descended into her. Aarati-ma was married, a mother and lived a normal life in Pokhara. But her persona was one with another level of consciousness that brought a particular force into manifestation.

Himalayan Women Spiritually Respect Water



These ladies remove their shoes on a cold winters morning (arrow) in order to make an offering to Panchassee lake. They are two hours from home, alone, in the cold, but their spiritual respect predominates.

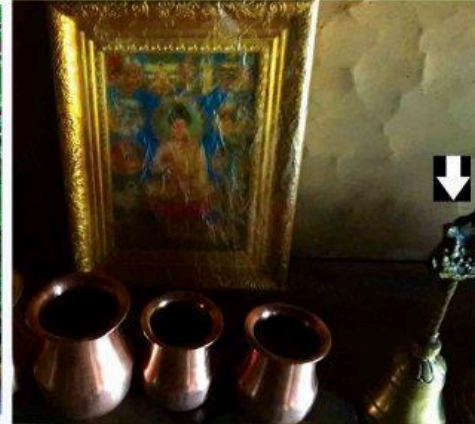
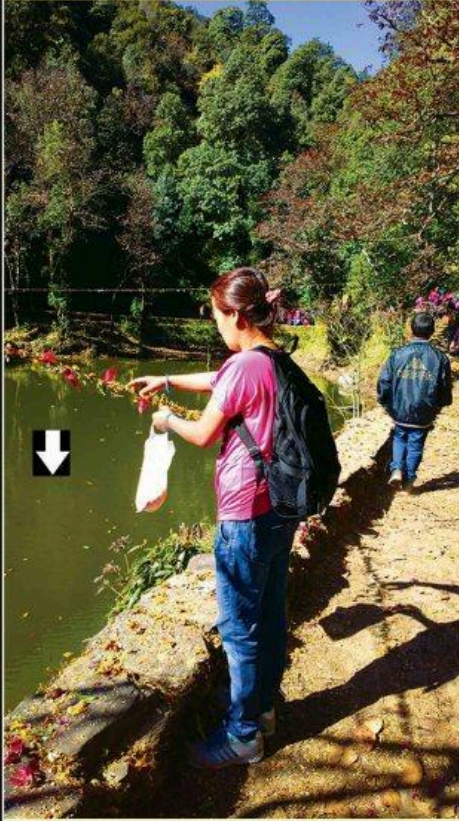
Panchassee Lake Opens the Mela Shakti-Current



This lake is the first stop on Mela day. Women dance there to connect with these holy waters.

" ..., may there be thy highest illumination; create a well governed union of the Lord and his Spouse, set thy foot on the greatness of hostile powers." [5-028-03]

Panchassee Womanhood's Water Relationship



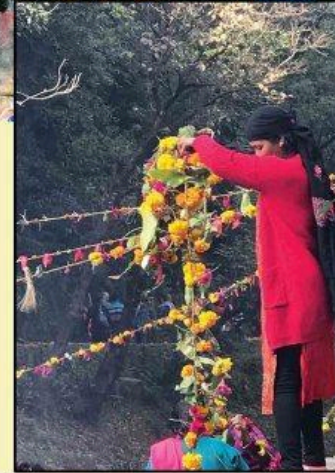
Above are the tiny copper vessels that hold the sacred water in the Happy Heart Hotel.

Their ritual bell is under the arrow. The center photo is of a Himalayan goddess holding water (in conches) in each hand, under the arrow. The left photo shows a local lady tying a prayer onto a floral garland at Panchassee lake. These photos show an aspect of the Shakti symbol that local women are culturally associated to.

Himalayan Womanhood Call the Shakti-Current



Some of the flower garlands are long enough to encircle the lake. They weight many kilos and are carried for hours up the mountain slopes. This offering to the Panchassee Lake-Mother is an inner call for Her Shakti to descend, whether conscious or not. The left photo shows how the younger female generation will continue to make that call. This is the living spirituality of Himalayan Womanhood.



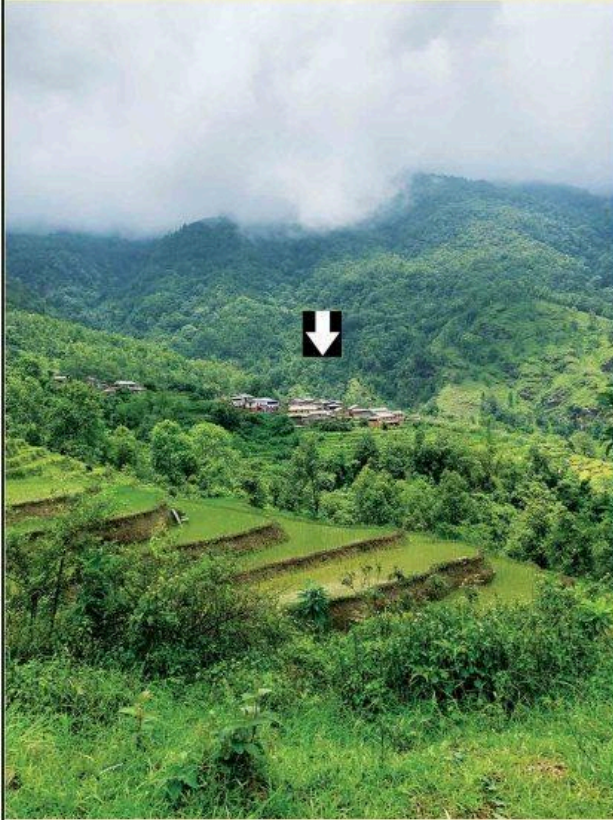
Himalayan Vastness Opens to Shakti



With Annapurna filling the horizon, her Mountain-Mother goddess view also fills the lives of local women. The wild-vegetable-collecting goddess symbol in this photo does her work amid vastness and beauty. She lives the holiness of Annapurna in nature experience, not in the mind.

The Himalayan Village Vastness

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Living in Himalayan physical vastness has an effect on the psychological vastness of the people. The right photo is from Tukuhe village. The left photo is of Sidhane village, under the arrow. Village peoples have a unsurprisingly vast view of the world and life. Simple but vast is their idea of existence, and this vastness is seen in the life of the village, centered in the Mother's Group.

The divine Feminine Community of the Gurungs

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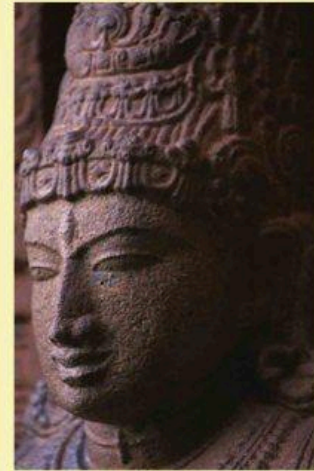
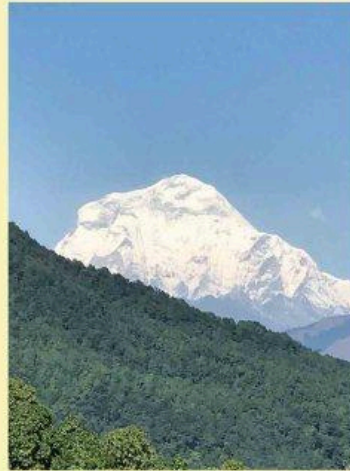
These ladies of the Indigenous Gurung culture into which the author has married, have gathered to bless him for a speedy health recovery. Each of them garlanded him with a traditional hand woven shawl and placed a holy thread around his neck. This is the “mothers group” within the family community. This priestess duty is given a spiritual respect by their men. They are the living Vedic symbols of a holy Himalayan womanhood in one aspect of Shakti.

The Indigenous Gurung Woman's Self-Conception ¹⁶¹



These Gurung ladies are giving blessings in a self-conception larger than the modern idea of individuality. They are blessing with their ancient vastness from an age in which they and nature were one: the Vedic age.

Himalayan Multi-levelled Divine Feminine Symbols



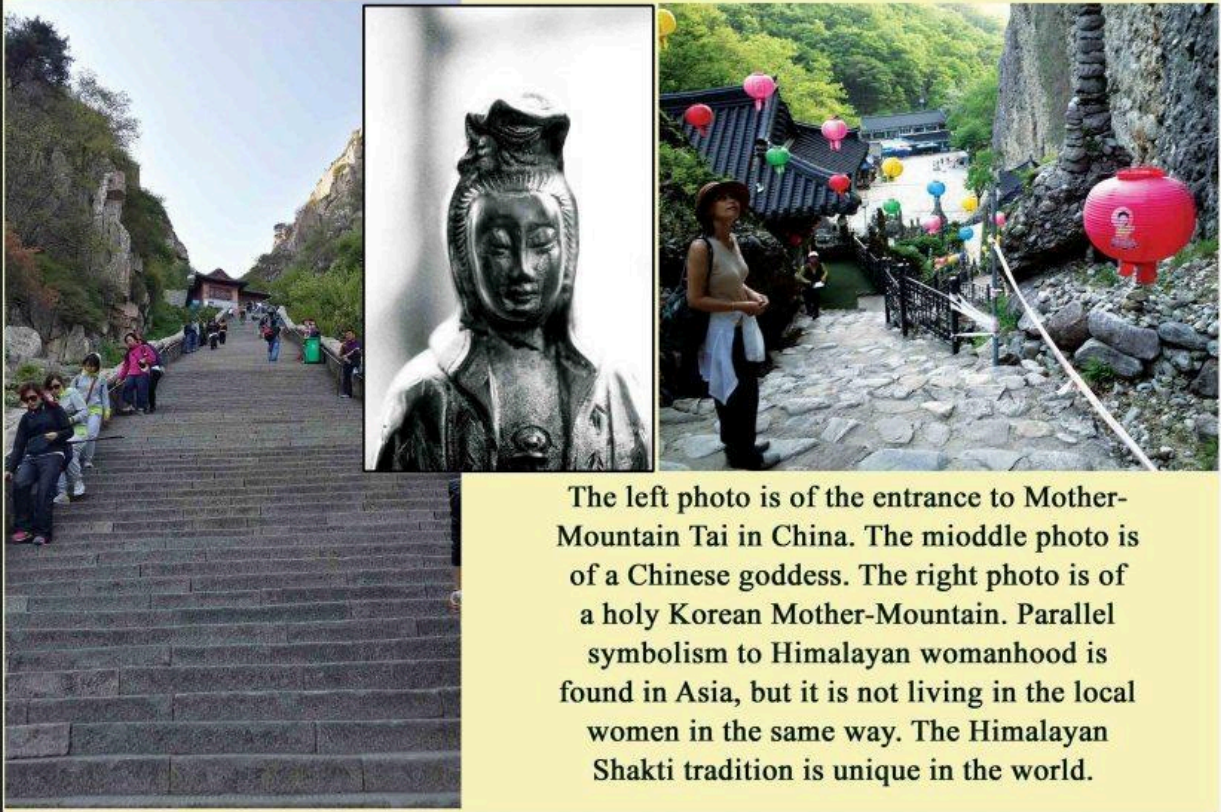
In the left photo a Hindu mother blesses. The Annapurna and Goddess photos bless in the same way as the Hindu mother. The Hindu mother is a priestess with the same sanctity as Annapurna as a mountain or goddess. This Himalayan womanhood thrives today in the midst of modern change. Hail Himalaya-Ma.

Himalayan Womanhood and Sacred Personalities



These women are lodge owners on Panchassee mountain. Among them we will find Sister-Night, Daughter-Dawn, the Growths-Mother, Day-Wife and the Vastness-Yogini symbolism from the Rig Vedic hymns.

Spiritual Nature-Womanhood Traditions in Asia



The left photo is of the entrance to Mother-Mountain Tai in China. The middle photo is of a Chinese goddess. The right photo is of a holy Korean Mother-Mountain. Parallel symbolism to Himalayan womanhood is found in Asia, but it is not living in the local women in the same way. The Himalayan Shakti tradition is unique in the world.

Chinese and Japanese Water Goddesses



In the left photo the Vedic association to the Chinese goddess Quan Yin is through the fire symbol around her head. She pours water as a symbol of the Shakti descent of consciousness as shown in the middle photo. In the right photo, from Japan, this water-pouring goddess is carved from volcanic rock, a Vedic fire symbol.

Vedic Womanhood and Self-Discovery

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Himalayan women retain a memory of the Vedic culture's yoga associations. They still worship the nature they live in with Vedic-Shakti symbolism. Their living relationship with water brings the Vedic Shakti association.

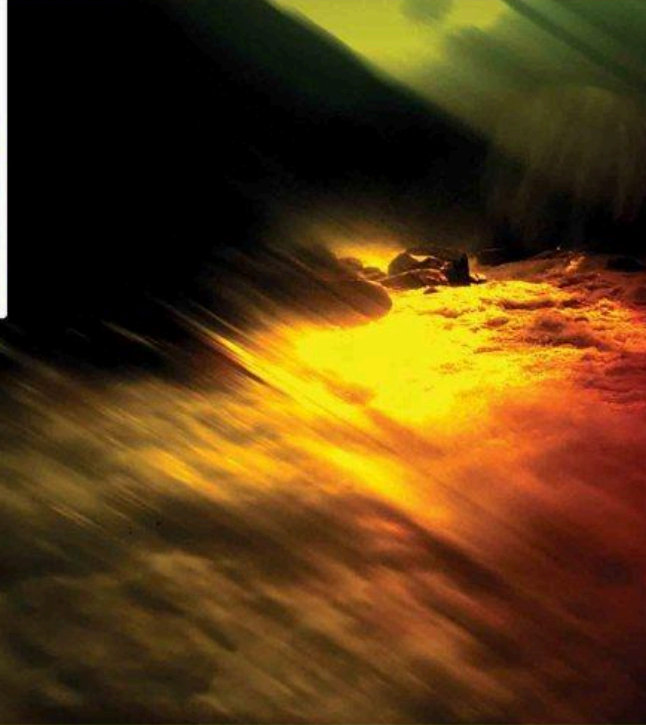
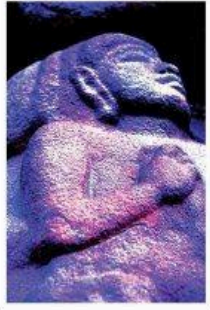
The Himalayan mountains are symbols of self-discovery. In the village dialect husband and wife are translated as Yogi and Yogini. There are different layers of experience for Vedic symbols and they are all divine. Nepali womanhood has an ancient living association to the divine Feminine in her Shakti aspect, as well as in other aspects.

Indigenous Womanhood's Daily Shakti Water-Rite ¹⁶⁷



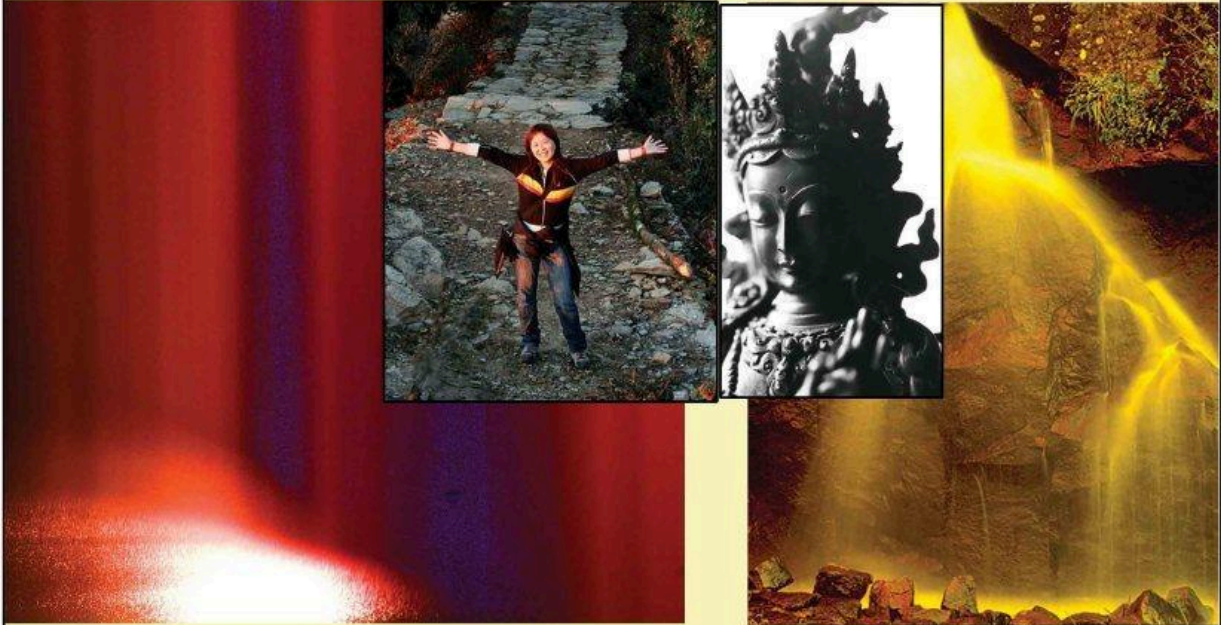
In the right photo are the copper vessels to hold the sacred water. The center photo shows the Shakti-Vessels (under the arrow in the left photo), the same as was used in the publically conducted Teez-Shakti celebration at Lakeside okhara. The left photo shows the daily puja in the Happy Heart Hotel. This is a call to Shakti.

Vedic Rivers, Womanhood, Yoga and Devvotion



*“... Mayest thou ... bring to light for us Heaven and Earth ad the rivers
that are self-revealed” [1-140-13]*

Vedic Waters, Womanhood, Yoga and Descent

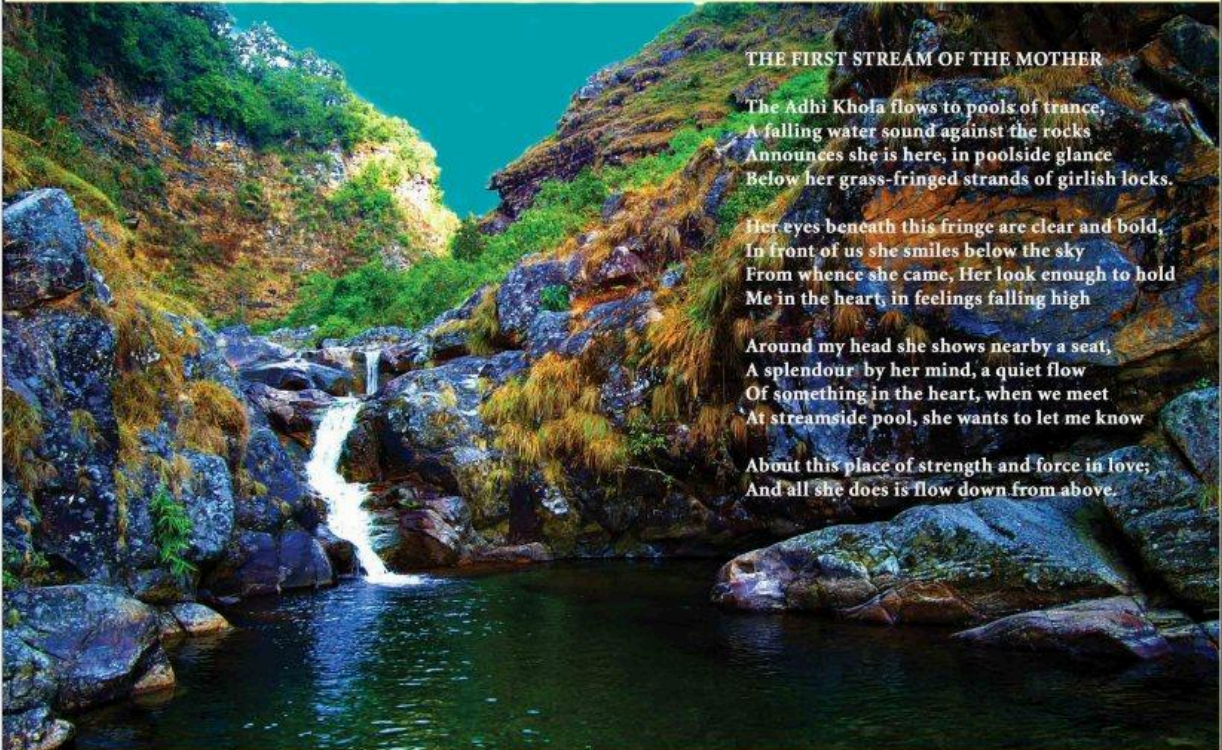


Descent is visible in nature. In the manifestation, symbols of Shakti and Descent are visible in the feminine gender. It is probably something primal in their gender-makeup that associates them to the force of spiritual consciousness that manifests in the world as Shakti.

They are the future.

The First Stream of the Mother

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THE FIRST STREAM OF THE MOTHER

The Adhi Khola flows to pools of trance,
A falling water sound against the rocks
Announces she is here, in poolside glance
Below her grass-fringed strands of girlish locks.

Her eyes beneath this fringe are clear and bold,
In front of us she smiles below the sky
From whence she came, Her look enough to hold
Me in the heart, in feelings falling high

Around my head she shows nearby a seat,
A splendour by her mind, a quiet flow
Of something in the heart, when we meet
At streamside pool, she wants to let me know

About this place of strength and force in love;
And all she does is flow down from above.

Some Very General Conclusions

- 1) With a focus on the Panchassee mountain villages, different interpretations of the same Vedic symbol can be seen. The modern Hindu is one mental Puranic step away from the direct level of Vedic nature experience of the indigenous peoples.
- 2) The Indigenous peoples live more closely the Vedic divine Feminine symbolism than the Hindus, with Indigenous women demanding greater respect and responsibility. Sri Aurobindo states the Purusha and Prakriti are closer together in the Vedic tradition than in the Puranic tradition.
- 3) Both Hindu and Indigenous peoples worship Vedic nature symbols on Panchassee Mela day. But the greater degree of mentalization by the Hindu's brings them to worship the same nature experience in a different way. For example the Hindu's now worship Panchassee mountain as Shiva, in spite of the fact that the tradition is of the female gender, and based on Mandala 5 Sukta 19 of the Rig Veda. They have built a Shiva temple at the Lake in spite of the offerings being placed around the Lake. The male Puranic gender is replacing the Vedic divine Feminine gender of Panchassee mountain.

Sacred Nature and Himalayan Womanhood

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