

The Concept of Shakti Peetha in International Relations

Vas' Work

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Dedicated to
Devi Sharadamba

Abstract:

In International Relations, Power is considered as a very important concept. In Indic Studies, there is a Concept of Shakti which is having some more features than what is described as Power in International Relations. The Power centers, where there is concentration of power are considered as Great Powers in International Relations. However, if one aims to study the Concept of Power Centers in Indic Studies, we shall consider it as Shakti Peethas and discuss it in detail. This paper consists of the characteristics and behaviour of Great Powers in International relations. The Shakti Peethas as per Indic Studies has been described in detail. The characteristics and functions of Shakti Peethas may give the clarity about the Concept of Shakti Peetha in International Relations. The empirical study about the knowledge aspect through Shakti Peetha has been discussed. The research is a multidisciplinary study based on International Relations and Advaita Vedanta. The qualitative analysis is based on methods like content analysis and text interpretation.

Key Words: Shakti Peetha, Sringeri, Knowledge Transition Theory, Vishwaguru, Sharda Peethaam, Teetwal, Kashmir.

Introduction to Shakti Peethas in International Relations

In International Relations, there are several great powers since 18th Century. These great powers are major actors in the international system. These great powers have the potential to change as well as maneuver the ecosystem of the international system. Hence, studying about the great powers and their characteristics seems an interesting topic. However, when there are great powers in International Relations, what is the need to study about Shakti Peethas? Shakti means power and Peetha means revered place. Shakti Peethas are power centers. These powers centers are not just great powers but also something more which we shall discuss in this paper. Earlier, in the paper on *The Concept of Vishwaguru in International Relations*, I have discussed about the Guru states which are subordinate to the Vishwaguru in the above-mentioned research paper. In that context, we shall discuss these Shakti Peethas or power centers, replacing the guru states as in the above research paper. We shall also discuss their characteristics and their functioning in detail in this research paper.

There are three major concepts studied widely by the political thinkers or philosophers all over the world in the subject of International Relations. These concepts are of Power, Economy and Knowledge. Power and Economy have got a prominent place due to realist approach. Though knowledge has been discussed by philosophers; even then it does not have the relevance that Power and Economy possess till date. There is a need of prominent place for Knowledge as well in the subject of International Relations.

Knowledge is needed as it is something that never gets reduced on spending or sharing with other entities. When it comes to economy, it also does not gets reduced in the world but it moves from one entity to another entity, hence all the actors are busy in enhancing their economic power with zero-sum game. However, knowledge is something that one may keep gaining and there may not be any fear of losing it as it increases when it is shared with others.

Secondly, until now we all have developed keeping in mind the ease of human efforts and increase our comforts. We never have thought that in doing such things how we have exploited nature around us. In recent past, we have discovered that our actions are resulting in Climate Change and our planet is getting more and more unwell. So, if we start gaining more knowledge about our planet's health and about other planets, we would be able to address the issues of Climate Change.

Thirdly, wise people having knowledge would never engage in terrorists' activities. These kinds of activities are mostly driven either by emotions or impulse. Those who possess knowledge about one's Self would never move on such path of causing harm to innocent people. Those who possess knowledge would never take any action based on impulse or anger or revenge. Consequently, with the help of knowledge major issues of the International System can be resolved. According to the Knowledge Transition Theory as discussed in the research paper on *The Concept of Vishwaguru in International Relations*, the states having knowledge may guide the other states in terms of designing foreign policies. In the paper on Vishwaguru, the structure is discussed based on the hierarchy in which at the base the states those which are willing to gain knowledge are there. Above them there are those states that have gained the knowledge and are capable to guide other entities. And at the top there is Vishwaguru which has transcended all the aspects and has moved beyond various cycles of rise and fall. This structure is depicted in next section in this paper as well.

The need of this paper is there due to the functioning of Guru States and Disciple states that are discussed in individual centric manner in my previous work on the research paper on Vishwaguru. Guru States can be discussed as Shakti Peethas in this paper in which the characteristics and functioning are discussed that can be implemented in this pragmatic International System. Guru States/Shakti Peethas are the power centers that possess knowledge. And they disseminate knowledge to the entities which are willing to or aiming to gain knowledge.

Knowledge is the aspect on which we shall focus, hence the Sarvajna Peetham or Sharada Peetham in Kashmir is the one that needs to be mentioned here. We shall firstly discuss little more about the Sharada Peetham and then discuss how Sharada Peetham can become an epicenter of Knowledge aspect that can be adopted by the entities in International Relations.

Connecting Sharada Peetha with the Shakti Peethas in International Relations

The Sharada Peetham in Kashmir and the Sringeri Matha in Karnataka are linked with each other. Maharishi Kashyap did a lot of penance in Kashmir region, hence the name is Kashmir after him. In Sringeri region, Maharishi Kashyap's son Rishi Vibhandaka and his son Rishyasrung did penance. After Rishyasrung, the region is named Sringeri. Another most important connection is that in the world, there are only two places of Shri Sharadamba one is

Sharada Peetha which is time immemorial and another is Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sharada Peetham. The Sringeri Matha has been established by Jagadguru Shri Bagawad pada Adi Shankaracharyaji about some 1200 years ago. It is believed that Bagawad pada Adi Shankaracharyaji saw an amazing scene at the place where a snake was protecting a frog from rainfall. Usually, snakes consume frogs. It is the food for snake, but this place is so pious that enemy or the one who kills became a protector. So, Adi Shankaracharyaji decided to establish his first matha in Sringeri, Karnataka. Similarly, during adverse situation, when any entity or actor of International Relations protects those who are weaker in terms of power to them, then they can be considered as Shakti peethas in true sense. The Sharada Peetha in Kashmir is right now in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir region. “the remnants of the Sharada Peeth lie in a village known as Shardi where the river Neelam (Kishanganga) converges with Madhumati and Saraswati rivers.” (Pandit, 2024, p. 25) A newly constructed Sharada Peetham is now established in Teetwal, Kashmir.

Relevance of Sharada Peetha

The Sharada Peetha in Kashmir is relevant today as it is considered as the ‘Sarvajna Peetha’. The door of South was still not open and Adi Shankaracharyaji debated with all the schools which had their own opinion about the Soul. Adi Shankaracharyaji defeated each one of them and established the idea of Advaita Vedanta as the only correct way to understand, interpret and realize the Soul and the Paramatma.

Before the establishment of Takshashila or Nalanda Universities, the Sharada Peetham housed 5000 students from various parts of the world. (Pandit, 2024, p. 25) Devi Sharada is considered as the goddess of knowledge. And most of the people write with their right hand. Devi Sati’s right hand which had fallen in Sharada Peetham thus indicates the relevance of writing work to preserve the jnana through books and which is the task of the researchers and professors those who are into the profession of imparting and gaining knowledge.

Implementing the Concept of Shakti Peethas in International Relations

There are most of the Shakti Peethas in Bharat and a few ones in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Tibet, as well as Pakistan. After the independence of Bharat, during the first attack by Pakistan, the Sharada Peetham remained in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. Hence, Bharat has now constructed a new Sharada Peetham at Teetwal, on the banks of river Kishanganga, Kashmir that was inaugurated in 2023 AD.

During the inauguration ceremony of the Sharada Peetham Temple in Teetwal, Kashmir, the Keynote address was given by Jagadguru Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Sannidhanam. Swamiji recited the same prayer that was done by Jagadguru Sri Sri Sacchidananda Shivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Mahaswamiji who was the 33rd Acharya of the Sharada Peetham. The prayer done by both the reverend Swamijis has opened up a new perspective to view the world in holistic manner that includes everything.

“Karma-svatmochiteshu sthira tara dishanam. Its purport is: O Devi! Grant me single-pointed focus in the execution of my duties... Deha dardhyam tadartham- bestow good health upon me...Dirgam chayuh. Grant me a long lifespan to engage in noble deeds and to discharge my duties well...Yasascha tribhuvana viditam- Grant me fame that spans the entire world...When will we acquire such fame? When we engage in good noble deeds...papa margat viraktim- may my mind never incline towards sinful deeds...When my mind gravitates towards such deeds, restrain my mind, O Devi, and restore it to goodness...Satsangam- Bestow upon me noble associations... Satkathaya-shravanamapi- may I always listen to exalted stories... Vidyam shuddham ca buddhim...dehi mahyam. Shuddha buddhi is the root for all work. i.e. jnana- may I be blessed with such jnana, such intellect” (Sannidhanam, 2024, pp. 60-61)

In International Relations all actors are seeking the power and economy, however, the Sharada Peetham is adding the relevance and importance of Jnana –knowledge for all the actors. It is necessary for all the actors to work with single minded focus, good health of all its citizens or members or employees, long lifespan as well for them so that they may do noble deeds, by doing such good noble deeds they may receive fame throughout the world, restrain oneself from sinful or evil deeds, association with the noble, powerful actors, for all the citizens or members or employees may listen to exalted stories of their nation or company or organization so that they may adopt such good qualities from them and work in a better manner to maintain those good standards that have been set up by previous citizens or members. And ultimately, the Suddha buddhi that is knowledge about all the aspects and perspectives as well as about the universe becomes necessary for any actor to act in the international system. This prayer is sufficient enough to establish the connection between The Sharada Peetham as Shakti Peetha and Shakti Peetha as a position for all the actors to achieve or aim at in the international relations discipline. However, as said by Swamiji in his keynote address, “All this is solely due to the grace of Bhagavati and the special sankalpa (divine will) of Devi.” (Sannidhanam, 2024, p. 54) And I think Devi herself has said the following words through Swamiji in his keynote speech about the prayer that we have just read.

“This prayer is essential for every individual. This prayer cannot be restricted to select a few. Nor can it be confined to people of a specific nation, kingdom or era. We cannot say that this prayer is not essential to the present generation. For the upliftment of every nation and every individual, such a prayer is of utmost necessity. It is solely through Devi’s grace that we obtain that most invaluable jnana.” (Sannidhanam, 2024, p. 61) Jagadguru of Sringeri has clearly said that for the development of every nation as well as every individual, prayer to Devi is necessary and through her grace we receive the most invaluable jnana- knowledge. Hence, Sharada Peetham can be considered as the epicenter of the jnana.

In International Relations, there is a need of such entities which may contribute in strengthening the weaker units in terms of knowledge. So far, we have studied that the West- Phalian State System emerged with the end of Thirty Years War and Eighty Years War. So, the purpose was to protect (Security) the people living in areas that follow same culture and tradition. That has led to gradual progress in the strengthening of states from middle powers to great powers. Later on, the Economic World Order brought in the relevance of economy after the end of World War II. Hence, the relevance of security was taken over by economy and now the time has come to have a paradigm shift with the relevance of knowledge in international relations. Sharada Peetham in Kashmir where the right hand of Devi Sati had fallen, is considered as Sarvajna Peetham, where sarvajna literally means all knowledge.

Secondly, the need of knowledge is high in today’s time of Artificial Intelligence. Those human beings who possess knowledge would be able to survive, however, those who rely on gadgets for their work would face a very challenging time as they have not developed their own thinking capabilities and hence have to succumb to machines due to which their job may also be at risk. In the times of artificial intelligence, some of the tasks are done easily and hence the issue of unemployment would grow larger if we do not move on the path of knowledge. Knowledge is such a thing that may give all the Shakti peethas or actors the power to rule, the wealth that is spent and saved wisely, and the strength to protect themselves and their subordinates may be citizens, employees, or its members. Economic aspect may lead the businessman to reduce their expenses and hence they would rely more on artificial intelligence where the work is done precisely without errors in less time than what we human beings as employees do perform. Sometimes we commit errors and sometimes we fail to complete the task in time. Hence, the demand for artificial intelligence may increase to reduce the expenses as well as errors. AI would be preferred over human brains if we still continue with this same approach and ignore

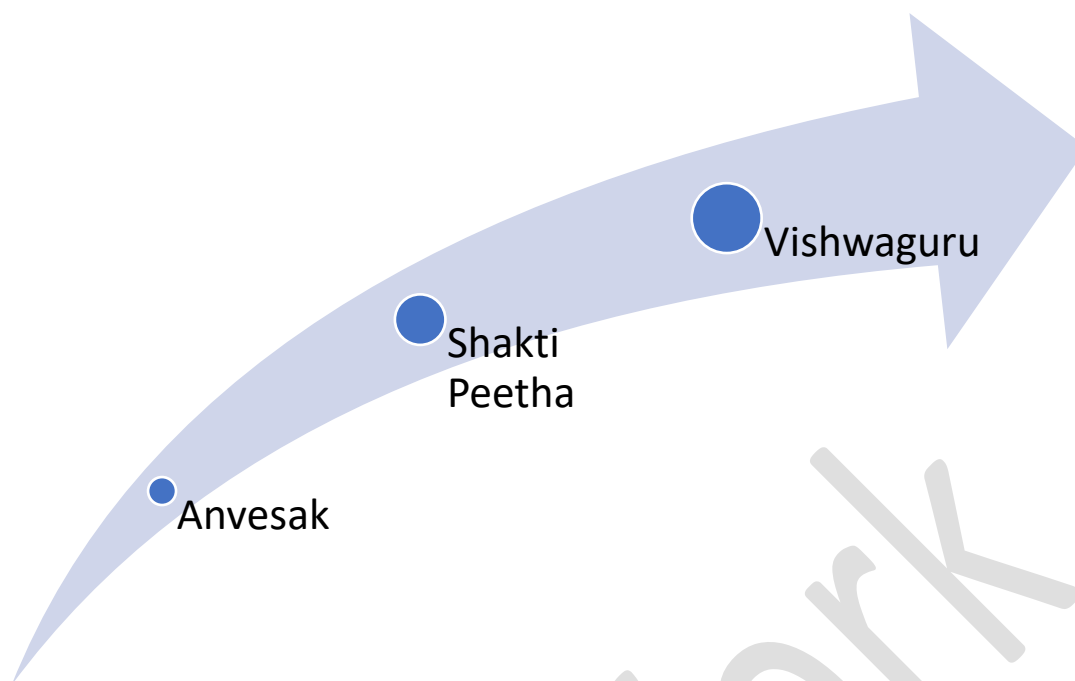
adopting the knowledge aspect in International Relations. Let us first understand the meaning of Shakti Peetha in International Relations.

Concept of Shakti Peetha in International Relations

As we all know, Shakti Peethas are temples dedicated to Devi Sati. Her body parts were scattered into pieces during Shivji's Tandaav dance when Vishnuji used his Sudarshan chakra to detach Shivji from Devi Sati's corpse. Wherever Devi Sati's body parts have fallen, the temples are built there to preach Shakti. In Advaita Vedanta, there is only one element called Brahman. In order to manifest, the Brahman requires Shakti, a female form. Devi Sati is the manifestation of Brahman and wherever Her body parts have fallen are preached because She is Shakti of Brahman. That is why a common name for all the temples is Shakti Peetha. Brahman is all powerful. Thus, when manifested in the form of Devi Sati, She is also considered all powerful. There are most popular four Shakti Peethas. Then there are 18, 51 and 108 Shakti Peethas. These numbers vary. But the relevance is there in any part of South Asia. There are certain parts of Devi that has fallen in today's Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Tibet as well as Pakistan.

Meaning of Shakti Peethas

The term Shakti Peetha literally means Power Centers. Shakti is literally translated as Power and Peetha means a revered seat. The way we have Chairs, we have revered Peethas as seat from which the lessons are delivered by a revered person or a Guru. Hence, we rename Guru States of Knowledge Transition Theory as Shakti Peethas. In International Relations the Shakti Peethas would be the actors that possess the characteristics and functioning of Guru States as well as other non- state actors. In the below smart art, it is shown that the Anvesak is at the beginner's level. Anvesak literally means seeker. One who seeks knowledge, one who seeks development through knowledge is considered as anvesak. Any actor whether a transnational actor, individual, states, international organizations, multinational companies, non-governmental organizations may seek knowledge that can be considered as anvesak.



Similarly, when any actor is guiding or giving knowledge to anvesak can be considered as Shakti Peetha. Any actor whether a state, or non-state actor when is at the level where it imparts knowledge can be considered as Shakti Peetha. As discussed last year in the research paper on *The Concept of Shakti in International Relations*, that Shakti means the sum of characteristics of Power and characteristics of five basic elements. Hence, those entities possessing the knowledge of all the above characteristics of Shakti can be considered as Shakti Peetha.

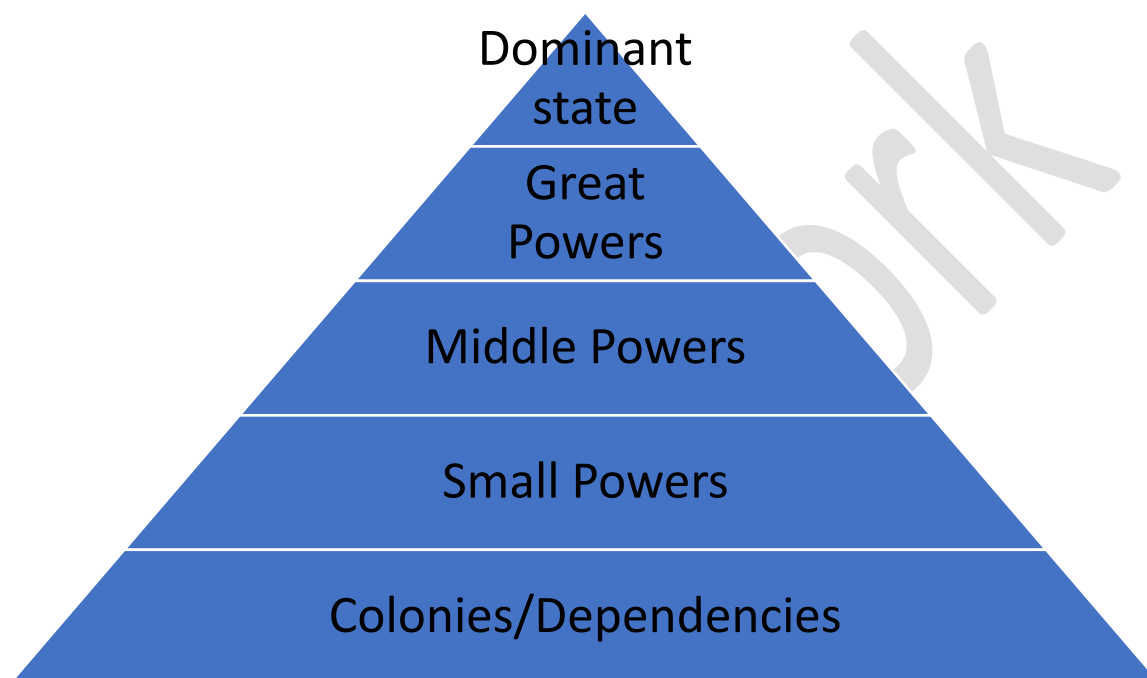
And Vishwaguru as mentioned in the above smart art has transcended the cycle of rise and fall of states. Vishwaguru's policies are beyond time and space. Vishwaguru has to reveal the Cosmic Order so that the World Oder may synchronize with the Cosmic Order and create a balance between Knowledge and Economic aspects in the World.

All the Shakti Peethas has its relevance in Knowledge Transition Theory. In International Relations, the Great powers are relevant in Power Transition Theory. Great powers possess economic power, military power, political power, cultural power as well as technological power. Hence, let us try see what great powers are according to the Power Transition Theory in international system.

Great Powers

In International Relations, there are several actors that interact amongst one another based on various perspectives. Amongst these actors, states have a prominent place based on Realism.

These states are arranged in a hierarchical order in which the most powerful state is called Superpower. Below Super power, there are few Great powers, below them there are Potential Powers or Middle Powers and at the base level there are dependencies. This structure is designed by A.F.K Organski and he has made a representation of these States in hierarchical manner in a pyramid shape in his book *The World Politics*. This realist structure has been accepted by all the states and various other non-state actors, no matter the perspective that they have adopted in order to design their policies and interact in the International System.



According to this Power Transition Theory, the dominant states and the great powers are more satisfied compared to other states mentioned below them in the pyramid. The author is of view that the states falling in the categories at the bottom of the pyramid do not have any scope to develop economically hence cannot become powerful as great powers or dominant state. In my previous research paper on *The Concept of Vishwaguru in International Relations* there is another hierarchical structure developed based on the knowledge aspect called as Knowledge Transition Theory. In this Knowledge Transition Theory, at the top there is Vishwaguru that has transcended the cycle of rise and fall of states, below that there are Guru States and at the bottom there are disciple states. The names Guru States and Disciple States sound little unexplainable as actors in international relations. Hence, we saw that we have renamed Guru States as Shakti Peetha and Disciple States as Anvesak above. Here, there is scope for all the

actors to grow or develop in terms of knowledge. So, let us discuss in detail the characteristics of both the great powers and shakti peethas in the next section.

Characteristics of Great Powers and Shakti Peethas in International Relations

The characteristics of Great Powers can be studied based on various perspectives. For that below given table may give us clarity. There are several approaches that are adopted by states, based on which the characteristics have been identified. Classical Realist approach is power centric and hence when a state aims to seek power in the international system, it can be considered as a great power. Here the never-ending urge to seek power even after developing to an extent is discussed. According to Neo-Realist, self-sufficiency in terms of economy as well as militarily has been discussed.

Sr. No.	Approach	Great Power Characteristic
1.	Classical Realist	Power seeker
2.	Neo realists	Self Sufficiency
3.	Interdependence	Resilience
4.	Neo Liberal	Global Influence
5.	Normative	Human Integrity
6.	Advait Vedantic	Knowledge

According to the Interdependence approach, resilience is the characteristic of the great powers and according to Neo-liberal approach, global influence is the characteristic of great powers. These days the great powers adopt eclectic approaches hence they possess above all characteristics.

When it comes to shakti Peethas, two more characteristics based on Normative and Advait Vedantic approaches can be added to the above list. They are human integrity and knowledge respectively. There are characteristics of five basic elements those are of Akash-Space/ Ether, Vayu- Air/motion, Tejas- Fire/Energy, Apas- Water/Fluidity, Prithvi Earth/Solidity which are measurable in physics as discussed in a conference by Dr. John Hagelin. Now in the paper on The Concept of Shakti, the characteristics were sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The Electromagnetic waves in the space, speed of the motion, energy production, fluidity not only in the form of water but also oil in the international market and solidity of the products that are taken from the earth and are used as raw material to make the products that are made for our

comfort and luxury all these can be measured. Hence, above mentioned characteristics are when found in any actor then that actor can be considered as a Shakti Peetha.

Let us try to understand the functioning of great powers so far and the functioning of Shakti Peethas.

Functioning of Shakti Peethas in International Relations

As discussed above, we know that the Great powers are powerful states and hence they act in a manner where they get things done as they want from less powerful states. It means the great powers use the power in one's own favour. They might begin developmental projects in less developed states or dependencies ending up in adding the profit of great powers in terms of economy. So, the actions taken by great powers are taken keeping in mind the profit to themselves, great power's national interest. These great powers once used to exploit the colonies. The great powers would really create a challenge for other potential powers those who are trying to rise. For example, People's Republic of China, USA, Western Developed states are trying to hamper the path of India's developmental process considering their loss in the international system. China is trying to make sure that South Asia region remains in debt. So, if the neighbouring states of India cannot develop or they are dependent on China, India cannot rise faster. Such kind of behaviour is considered as normal in power politics. However, the behaviour that is expected from Shakti Peethas is completely different.

Shakti Peethas have passed through the stage of anvesak hence, they know what all problems are faced and how one must guide anvesaks or the knowledge seekers. As discussed above, Shakti Peethas can be in the form of states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, multinational companies or transnational actors as well as individuals.

Secondly, great powers keep profit, tariff, market, production at the center in order to develop economically. Militarily great powers act defensively and try to avoid offensive actions. However, these days a few of the great powers are engaged either in a direct state of war or in indirect trade war or any other type of war. Knowledge is such an aspect which is mostly ignored. Here, Shakti Peethas can consider all the three most important aspects- economy, power and knowledge in a different manner. "Sri is the Mother of the Universe- Tripura Sundari. She is the golden coloured dame in whom Lalita, Lakshmi and Sharada have merged. She is the collective munificence of individual deities." (Swamy, 2005, p. 34) In International Relations, the Shakti Peethas are the manifestations of various aspects such as economy, power and knowledge. In the keynote address Swamiji has said "During worship of Goddess

Sharadamba, it is customary to address her as ‘Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati swarupini Sharadamba’... The same Divinity, Bhagavati Sharadamba...as the form of Durga, She destroys the wicked and relieves people of their suffering. The same Divinity, in the form of Sarasvati, bestows jnana upon those who seek it. The same Divinity in the form of Mahalakshmi, bestows wealth and prosperity to those who need it.” (Sannidhanam, 2024, p. 62) This is true for the devotees of Ma Sharadamba but we have to think how actors in international relations may function to achieve the grace of Ma Sharadamba. We shall discuss each of these in elaborate manner.

In International Relations, the main focus of every state and other non-state actor is to enhance one’s own power through economic development. Once they gain economic power, they may strengthen military in terms of sophistication, they may also upgrade in terms of technology and try to develop the facilities to maintain their culture. So, every other aspect is mainly dependent on economy. The great powers try to maintain their economic status either by some trade policies or try to make out more from the middle powers or dependencies. However, if we try to see the functioning of Shakti Peetha, it is not only about economy but also about the security as well as knowledge of one’s own citizens, or members, or employees. It is not only about national interest; it is about global interest. Let us discuss it in detail.

Economic aspect

Devi Mahalakshmi is considered as the Goddess of wealth who grants wealth, prosperity, money, comfort, etc. In the book on Mahalakshmi Devi, from Sringeri Math, there are certain aspects that we can consider here and can easily adopt them in international system. “Devi Mahalakshmi manifests in eight forms called Ashtalakshmi. All these forms grant us various forms of wealth.

- 1 Adi Lakshmi, - Adi Lakshmi is the form of Brahman through which It has manifested. She grants happiness, wealth, and bliss to Her preachers. “Lakshmi in the abode of Narayana in Vaikuntha. She is called Ramana, one who brings happiness to mankind...protecting the Lord’s devotees.” (Swamy, 2005, p. 30) In International Relations, the knowledge about all the aspects with all the perspectives is required for shakti Peethas to understand how to interact in the International System. Knowledge about the Cosmic Order, which they have gained from the Vishwaguru needs to be practically implemented in their policies towards other actors.

- 2 Dhanya Lakshmi,- “Dhanya Lakshmi is the goddess of nourishment... Dhanya Lakshmi, by manifesting herself in flowers, seeds, plants, and fruits and grains, provides for survival.” (Swamy, 2005, p. 30) In International Relations, the Shakti Peethas have to gain enough knowledge about the characteristics of basic five elements as discussed above so as to share the knowledge about it with the anvesaks. The knowledge about the basic five elements may lead Shakti Peethas to remain happy, healthy and wealthy. They may even be able to protect themselves from various pandemics and diseases. Dhanya Lakshmi is the goddess of nourishment, hence fitness with practicing yogasana, pranayama, breathing pure air, drinking pure potable water as well as eating food which is grown naturally without chemicals, all these may help Shakti Peethas to remain healthy and give their best to the world. Here, this is meant that the states must try to take steps to reduce air, water and land pollution so as to provide a healthy environment to her citizens. Similarly, other non-state actors must also consider this aspect.
- 3 Dhana Lakshmi, - Dhana Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth. “According to the Rg Veda and Purusha Sukta, dhana is not coins and currency alone. The sun, moon, stars, rain, rivers and oceans, progeny, wisdom and will power are considered wealth.” (Swamy, 2005, pp. 30-31) This is the most prominent and relevant aspect in the International Relations. The existing World Order is Economic Order and all the actors seek and aim to enhance their economy or wealth. As discussed above, it is not only coins or currency that one must seek, but also proper sunlight to produce solar energy, moonlight to nourish the plants and grains, knowledge about stars to understand the Cosmos, rains to receive potable water, rivers and oceans to get connected with each other, good demography so as to keep developing, wisdom of those citizens and will power to give or contribute to the world must be adopted by the Shakti Peethas in International Relations.
- 4 Santana Lakshmi, - “Children are the greatest wealth for a family. To beget children of high intelligence and good character, one needs the blessings of Santana Lakshmi.” (Swamy, 2005, p. 31) In International Relations, it is very important to have the grace of goddess Santana Lakshmi so that the actors may have its citizens, members or employees or individuals who all are sincere and faithful as well as dedicate their work for the development in terms of

knowledge of the whole world. The states may have intelligent corruption free citizens and other actors such as NGO may have good character philanthropists, MNC may have intelligent and good employees and in general any individual who aims to develop may have blessings of Lakshmi.

- 5 Gaja Lakshmi,- “Gaja Lakshmi is the daughter of the ocean...she is the protector of humanity and promoter of peace and prosperity.” (Swamy, 2005, p. 31) Each of the Shakti Peethas need to adopt and implement such policies that may protect humanity and promote peace and prosperity in the International System. So, when any actor aims to become Shakti Peetha, that actor has to develop economically in this manner as well.
- 6 Vidya Lakshmi, - “True education is not mere gathering of information, but conversion of knowledge into wisdom, to have righteous thoughts, righteous words and righteous deeds. Vidya Lakshmi grants this value-oriented education to those who worship her.” (Swamy, 2005, pp. 31-32) In International Relations, the Shakti Peethas must give importance to the knowledge aspect and the wisdom of their citizens, employees, members, etc... Here, the most important point is one may be able to achieve Dhana Lakshmi or wealth by adopting Vidya Lakshmi.
- 7 Vijaya Lakshmi, - “Vijaya means victory. Vijaya always refers to the victory of Dharma or righteousness. Vijaya is achieving our right goals in life... to win over anger, lust, greed, jealousy, hatred and evil thoughts is true victory.” (Swamy, 2005, p. 32) In International Relations the leaders or the chairperson of the various types of Shakti Peethas may have to achieve this victory over six evils within us. Then they would be able to take proper decisions for the Shakti Peetha which they are heading or leading. This is an important aspect as one would be able to achieve knowledge if one is having control over above-mentioned evils. There are internal issues within the entities such as different political parties, pressure groups, interests groups etc. may create problems in running smooth government. There are even toxic work cultures in corporate world even in local offices as well. When there is the grace of Vijaya Lakshmi, all would be performing their work free from the inner enemies. For outer ones we have military to take care of.
- 8 Dhairya Lakshmi, - “Infinite courage, confidence and strength to fight against evil is essential for everyone. One may lose any other wealth, but with courage

and confidence one can get them back.” (Swamy, 2005, p. 32) Here, I would like to add the knowledge along with courage and confidence to get back or gain any kind of wealth. An individual or any other actor gains confidence due to the knowledge they possess.

As discussed above, economic aspect is not only limited to coins or currency, it is essential to consider above eight forms of Devi Lakshmi in order to achieve complete economic development by the Shakti Peethas in International Relations.

Power Aspect

Power is the most dominant aspect for the study of International Relations. All the actors seek power, no matter the perspective other than realist has been adopted by them. Power literally means Shakti. When we talk about Shakti, we usually understand it as Maya in Advaita Vedanta, however, if we imagine any form of Shakti, the form is preached as Devi Durga. Devi Durga manifests in the form of a mother to her devotees. “A mother plays two roles- firstly, is to have immense affection, love and kindness for her child. Hence people take refuge of such Devi as her devotee. Secondly, same mother takes a fierce form to protect her child from evils that prevails in the world. At that time no one can stand against her no matter how strong or powerful that evil may be.” (Viditatmanandaji, 2015)

In International Relations, power means to get things done from other actors which they may not be willing to do. Swamiji gave the clarity that for the actors that are aiming to act as Shakti Peetha has to take care of one’s citizens, members, employees etc., and treat them as children by taking care of the environment required for them to do creative innovative tasks at domestic level. Same actor plays a role to protect one’s citizens from various evils which we may consider as the major issues that prevails in the International System. That fierce form of that actor is such strong that even the powerful forces or terrorists may not be able to survive.

Power for Shakti Peethas would be responsibility to take care of the weaker anvesaks and not only to have all the privileges. Shakti Peethas are the ones who have gone through the stage of anvesak, hence they know what all problems an anvesak may have to face so the shakti peethas are supposed to help anvesak, use their power in solving the problems that anvesaks are facing and not exploiting the weaker entities of the system.

So far, in International Relations, we have studied that great powers use their power to design the international order in their own favour. They usually benefit with the existing order. “Great powers are, as their name indicates very powerful nations, but they are less powerful than the

dominant nation. They receive substantial benefits from the international order of which they are members, but they receive less benefits than the dominant nation...Because these nations are so important, the dominant nation requires the help of at least some of them to keep its international order running smoothly. Thus, we find that some of the great powers are allied with the dominant nation, sharing in the leadership of the dominant international order and in the benefits that flow from it.” (Organski, 1959, p. 327) A. F. K. Organski has discussed this in his book that the great powers are more satisfied group of states compared to middle powers and dependencies. Again, here his meaning of satisfaction is in terms of power and economy. Consequently, the functioning of great powers is according to the international order which is beneficial to themselves and the dominant nation.

When we discuss about Shakti peethas, their functioning is such where they are able to aid the anvesaks wherever they are stuck up in their developmental goals. The developmental goal is not only in terms of enhancing power or economy but also the knowledge in each and every field. The anvesak can be any actor- state or non-state, similarly Shakti Peetha can also be any actor. These are not state centric.

Knowledge Aspect

This is the most important aspect for Shakti peethas as knowledge is the basis for the functioning of them. Main task or role is to facilitate the anvesaks with knowledge. It is not about giving aid in economic or military terms but making all the anvesaks self-sufficient with the knowledge they can gain and grasp about the international system. When I am talking about Shakti Peethas as all the actors, let us see in detail which actor may function in international relations according to their level. The aim of the shakti peethas is to develop the characteristics of shakti peethas in the anvesaks.

States as Shakti Peethas may have to attain that much of knowledge in almost all the aspects that they can train or give it to anvesak states. Each state has got its own culture, traditions as well as specific skill in which they are experts. Shakti peethas are supposed to help anvesak identify their skill and make them learn to become self-sufficient. Power seeking is somehow a natural phenomenon that all the actors would pursue. Resilience is to get back soon after any disaster or any other situation such as war or economic recession, pandemic etc. This characteristic definitely requires skill and a mentor to teach the techniques how to bounce back to normal condition after any kind of downfall. Shakti peethas has reached such a level that they know how to get back to the normal condition. But anvesaks are seekers of knowledge

and hence those must be trained as and when required. Human integrity and excelling in the knowledge about one's own perspective, culture, and tradition and about the world are also supposed to be learnt by the anvesaks. Hence, the Shakti peethas may help anvesaks in becoming shakti peethas by making them develop the characteristics of shakti peethas.

These are just the characteristics of power in international relations. The characteristics of shakti in international relations are achieved by adding the characteristics of five basic elements. In Physics, all those characteristics can also be gauged. Those are of Akash-Space/Ether, Vayu- Air/motion, Tejas- Fire/Energy, Apas- Water/Fluidity, Prithvi Earth/Solidity discussed in a conference by Dr. John Hagelin. The role of the Shakti peethas would be to research with these five elements and come up with innovative ideas to reduce the pollution and utilize these five elements in such a manner that may be useful to all the living creatures on our planet and also improves the health of our planet. Use of Artificial Intelligence as well as technology in this area of studies is expected from the Shakti Peethas.

Shakti peethas can be any other actor such as MNC or NGO in which they are having complete knowledge of their area of work and are capable enough to guide the unicorns or newly developed NGO. These days the information is available in ample amount from various sources but the users are lacking knowledge of how to manage the information and utilize the required one for one's benefit. Hence, such kinds of trainings will be required in near future.

So far, Multilateral platform based on Knowledge has never been formed, which is shifting from Economic as well Military based multilateral platforms. Group of Shakti peethas from different background may come together and form a platform to act upon discuss about the knowledge aspect. Shakti Peethas in the form of two three states, Shakti Peethas in the form of a few MNCs, NGOs, etc making a different platform that may discuss about where the Knowledge aspect is lacking in their area of work and how further the knowledge can be disseminated to the anvesaks in their category. How to identify anvesaks can also be discussed in such a platform.

Hence, the main function of any type of Shakti Peetha is to disseminate knowledge to those who require it. Devi Sharadamba who is the combined form of Mahakali, Mahasaraswati and Mahalakshmi may bestow her grace on all the future Shakti Peethas in International Relations to work in co-operation with each other and help other weaker actors to develop by giving them knowledge as and when required.

Concluding Remarks

Shakti Peethas in South Asia as we all know are the divine temples where we preach the body parts of Devi Sati. Each and every part of her body possesses shakti. Especially, the Sharada Peetham, Kashmir is the epicenter of the knowledge. She grants all her devotees the power, strength, knowledge as well as prosperity. She protects all her devotees from evils. Shakti peetha is not only a temple but such an entity having divine energy. In International Relations, there can be a position called Shakti Peetha- an entity that can impart knowledge to the anvesaks. Shakti Peetha is not confined to states. All the actors whether states, international organizations, multinational companies, non-governmental organizations, transnational actors or individuals can become shakti peethas.

Unlike great powers, shakti peethas would help the weaker entities in the time of real need. As the shakti peethas have reached the position by gaining knowledge, they would share their knowledge with anvesaks as and when required. Shakti peethas would be considered as power centers with knowledge at its base. The characteristics of shakti peethas based on perspectives would be knowledge, power seekers, self-sufficient, resilient, having global influence and human integrity.

The functioning of Shakti Peethas is based on three major aspects – economic, power and knowledge aspects. The major function would be to focus on holistic view of each aspect as discussed above. Where the shakti peethas would utilize its power to protect the weaker entities and guide them to grow by aiding in terms of knowledge. Hence, the concept of Shakti Peetha may add the scope of studying International Relations widely. This may empower individuals to other all entities in directly contributing to the betterment of world through the knowledge they possess.

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