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Reinstating Heritage Temples as *Kṣetra* for Spiritual Growth

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Abstract:

The fulfilment of a *yātrā* (pilgrimage) occurs when the seeker successfully establishes harmony between mind and body enabling the union of individual consciousness with the Universal Consciousness (Form). The search for *rūpa* (Form)—facilitated by a 48-day immersion (*mandalam*) in temple art, architecture and beauty—culminates in a “tasting” of the Form (*rūpa* and *rasa*). Recognizing that 48-day immersions are incompatible with modern life, this paper proposes a destination-specific 5-7 days praxis. The proposed framework is a three-step approach (1) *Darpana*: Classical discovery that decodes the visual “markings” in a temple (2) *Chintana*: Instructional discipline that adds intellectual “sense” to the mark (3) *Darshana*: Sustained discipline and contemplation of Form showing a way to derive “meaning” that aids in recalibration of the seeker’s mindset facilitating spiritual growth.

Keywords: *Kṣetra*, *Yoga Sūtra*, *Sahṛdaya*, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Somatic Literacy, Indian aesthetics, Temple Architecture

INTRODUCTION

Indian civilisational culture is characterised by an uninterrupted living continuity which is preserved primarily through its oral traditions and its temples. Humanity has been searching for answers to questions related to existence like who they are, what is the purpose of life, what is their role in this universe, and so on. While the scriptures provide answers to most of these questions, the experiential knowledge is what humanity seeks. The temple architecture, the music, the dance, the deity, the sculptures, the carvings on the walls, etc. create an ambience enabling the seeker to tune into the spiritual resonance and gain this knowledge. The longing for experiential knowledge of our True Self has led to the mushrooming of various temple towns and temple forms since ancient times.

Indian aesthetics uniquely prioritizes the connoisseur of art above the art and the artist. The ancient temples are a living example of the same. It is the seekers and their enduring focus or search for spiritual resonance which brings temples to life and render temple arts timeless. These temples were built not only as objects of timeless beauty but were also intended to preserve the land's socio-cultural memory.

SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

This context raises two critical questions which we examine in this paper:

1. Can these heritage temple destinations—their history, socio-cultural memory, and the enshrined deity—be used to realize the potential of the body to tune its spiritual resonance even today?
2. Can these sacred geographies and cultural destinations be reinvented for infusing (neo)*bhakti* that will re-purpose temple destinations and create new socio-cultural memories?

Keeping in mind that the body is a silo of memories, this paper connects the past in the present utilizing *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga's* eight limbs from Patañjali Yoga Sūtra to design and develop appropriate yoga practices suiting the destination.

THE CRISIS OF PLACELESS-NESS AND THE 48-DAY MANDALAM

The uninterrupted continuity of Indian civilisation is rooted in the concept of *Tīrtha-yātrā*—not as a journey of distance and destinations, but as a journey of biological recalibration. Traditionally, a *yātrā* was characterised by a residency of 48 days (one full *Maṇḍalam*). The *Maṇḍalam* (a 48-day cycle) is recognised in traditional Indian physiology as the duration required for the human biological system to undergo a complete metabolic and energetic overhaul. It aligns with the time needed for *prāṇa* (vital energy) to complete a full circuit through the *nāḍīs* (energy channels), ensuring that the somatic reset triggered at a *kṣetra* (a field or area of land) gets mapped at a cellular level.

This was a scientific necessity for transmutation. The human body requires this specific temporal cycle of consistent environmental exposure to overwrite existing somatic noise and begin resonating with the frequency of the consecrated place (*kṣetra*).

In the contemporary era, this resonance has been severed. The casual visitor approaches the temple with a tourist's gaze, while the sentiment of *bhakti* has often devolved into transactional blind faith. This has led to a state of placeless-ness. Without a somatic anchor, the resonance of the *kṣetra* (sacred place), the architectural flow of the temple and the deity is reduced to a static idol and the heritage site is reduced to a spectacle.

Current heritage safeguarding (UNESCO/ASI) focuses primarily on the physical aspects of the *kṣetra*—the stone, the mortar, and the tangible monument. It largely ignores the internal state of the visitor who visits the *kṣetra* – equating a casual visitor with a seeker pursuing spiritual growth. This study argues that a site is only "safeguarded" if its vibrational "Seed" can successfully take root in the consciousness of the seeker.

In other words, the focus has to shift from treating the ancient temples as monuments of historical significance. They have to be recognized and preserved as space for spiritual upliftment.

THE SUBJECTIVE GAP IN GLOBAL SAFEGUARDING OF TEMPLES

A critical limitation in the current global discourse on Intangible Cultural Heritage is the subjective gap in heritage experience. While UNESCO mandates under Articles 2.2(a) (d), 2.3, 14, and 18 acknowledge the importance of knowledge concerning nature and the universe, they lack the technical tools to measure the internal transmission of that heritage.

The Hamsa™ Methodology discussed in the subsequent sections addresses this gap by positioning the human body as a biological laboratory. It moves heritage from being passive and performative to being an active centre of knowledge through a three-stage cognitive process (*Darpana*, *Chintana* and *Darshana*). The goal is to move the onlooker—whether a *bhakta* (devotee) or *rasika* (art enthusiast)—past superficial "seeing" into a biological homecoming. By shifting focus from the "monument" to "somatic resonance", this methodology proposes a new best-practice for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage through the active recalibration of the seeker's internal perception.

While the methodology traces its roots in civilisational pillar of '*kama*' where the Form, its potential and aesthetic essence hides Truth, its contemporary operational framework is inspired from visual artist A. V. Ilango's three-stage process of Mark-Making, Sense-Making, and Meaning-Making. Building on the principles of visual grammar, the author has synthesized these principles to integrate concepts of Patanjali's Yoga Sūtra and Temple Science to design a structured psycho-somatic discipline for seekers that mirrors a specific aesthetic, socio-ecological mark. The steps involved are:

- ***Darpana* (The Mark):** Identifying an external 'Mark'—such as a *vigraha* or sacred geometry—to act as a object of relish having *saguna* attributes adhering to Indian aesthetic theory.
- ***Chintana* (The Sense):** A phase of intellectual contemplation combined with an initiation into somatic discovery that is site specific, to take control of sensory perceptions so that the seeker gains (or sustains) an inward gaze.

- **Darshana (The Meaning):** The elevation of the inward gaze is achieved through sustained discipline under facilitators initiated in the Hamsa™ pedagogy. While the facilitator aims to shift the gaze from outward to inward, the goal for the seeker is the shifting in the perception from: (i) “ordinary seeing” to learning the “art of seeing”; or, (ii) from *srishti krama* (classical discovery) to *rakshana krama* (sustainability and intuition).

In this way, the Hamsa™ methodology aims to impart *nīra-kṣīra viveka* (the pedagogy of discernment) by addressing the gap of subjectivity and the crisis of abstraction. Specifically in the context of *Kestra*, by shifting focus from the “monument” to “spiritual resonance”, this methodology proposes a new best-practice for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage through the active recalibration of the seeker’s internal perception. The goal is to move an onlooker: whether a *bhakta* (devotee) or *rasika* (art enthusiast), past superficial "seeing" into a biological homecoming.

DARPANA: THE SEEDING OF ETHICAL INTENTION FOR THE SEEKER

From *Vāk* to *Viśeṣa Vastu*: The Mechanics of Somatic Addressing

In Vedic metaphysics, *Vāk* (the word/vibration) is the primordial source from which *Rūpa* (Form) is projected. The *Viśeṣa Vastu* (the specific consecrated object) is not viewed as a representational “idol” but as a functional “vibrational silo”. It represents the exact point of concentration where the *anāhata* (unmanifest sound) is crystallised into *āhata* (manifest sound or Form), creating a permanent somatic resonance point for the seeker.

Applying the Hamsa™ methodology, “Mark-making” is defined as the rigorous translation of *vāk* (the vedic word) into the seen and unseen aspects of *rūpa* (the visual form). This process results in the *Viśeṣa Vastu* - the consecrated idol treated as a specific, functional object of worship suiting the *kestra*.

The *Vigraha* (consecrated image or body of the deity) is not a static symbol; it is conceived as a Somatic Addressing System. The intention of the *Śilpa* tradition was to create a form so ethically “tight” that it allows the seeker to “see” and “feel” the Form that will rekindle their perception or plough their somatic memory. By housing a specific metaphysical intention within the *Viśeṣa Vastu*, the act of consecration sets a permanent “Mark” that the seeker’s internal sensor can tune into each time they visit the sacred site or invoke the Form mentally remotely.

From *Citta-Vṛtti* to *Ekāgratā*: The Evolution of Perception

Yoga is a spiritual discipline that concentrates on bringing harmony between mind and body enabling the union of individual consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness. The preliminary goal of yoga, as mentioned in Yoga Sūtra 1.2, is “*Citta Vritti Nirodhah*”. It defines

yoga not as physical movement, but as a state of stillness—where the mental fluctuations (*vrittis*) come to rest.

The intervention specifically targets the transformation of the *citta* (the mind-field) through the stages of evolution described in Yoga Sūtra 3.9–3.12

- ***Nirodha-Pariṇāma*** (Yoga Sūtra 3.9): The initial effort to intercept the fragmentation of sensory perception
- ***Samādhi-Pariṇāma*** (Yoga Sūtra 3.11): The gradual fading of all-pointedness and the rise of one-pointedness.
- ***Ekāgratā-Pariṇāma*** (Yoga Sūtra 3.12): The state where the “subsided” thought and the “arising” thought are identical in their focus on the “Mark”.

The argument is that the *vigraha* (consecrated image or body of the deity) having *saguna* (having defined characteristics) properties facilitates *ekāgratā* (one-pointedness) through *samyama* (complete mental control). According to Yoga Sūtra 3.14 (*śāntoditāvyapadeśyadharmānupātī dharmī*), the *dharmi* (the underlying unchanging substratum/the true nature of seeker) is that which continues its existence through the past, present, and future states. As the seekers anchor their gaze on the “*Pāda* Measure” of the deity or idea of Form, they undergo a somatic shift, enabling contact with their true Self.

The *Pāda* Measure (or *Māna*) refers to the fundamental unit of proportion in the *Śilpa Śāstras* (design and principles for a wide range of arts and crafts), where the entire geometry of the *Vigraha* is derived from a central modular scale. Anchoring the gaze on this measure is a technical act of somatic calibration or realignment. Since the *Vigraha* is constructed using the same proportions that govern the human skeletal and energetic frame (*Purusha*), the seeker’s visual engagement with these “Golden Ratios” triggers a resonance, physically “pulling” the seeker’s internal geometry back into alignment with the universal template.

Ekāgratā (one-pointedness), combined with a disciplined mastery over *indriya* (sensory organs), allows the seeker to engage in a continued search for Form. It is this specific cognitive state that empowers the seeker to (re)interpret the “Word” (*Vāk*) into a living, contemporary resonance as the *vigraha* “pulls” the *dharmi* out of its chaotic *svabhāva* (innate disposition) and back into its *svarūpa* (True Nature/Alignment).

The *Sahṛdaya*: The Aesthetic Preparation for Impact

This somatic reset is not available to the “tourist” or the “spectator”. Following Abhinavagupta’s theory of *Rasa-Niṣpatti*, the Hamsa™ methodology insists that the seeker must be prepared as a *sahṛdaya* (a sensitive, like-hearted connoisseur); because, for the “seed” to take root, the internal landscape of the soil of the seeker must be “ploughed”.

Without the preparation of the *sahṛdaya*, the deity remains an object; with it, the deity becomes a mirror of resonance.

Mapping the *Pāda* Measure as *Tapas* against *Karma*

The *Pāda* Measure—the three cosmic strides—represents the total occupation of space by the Divine Will. In the human context, while an individual may not have absolute control over their accumulated *karmas* (past imprints), they have absolute agency over *nitya karmas* (daily practices).

As per Yoga Sūtra 2.1 (*tapah svādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogah*), *tapas* (self-discipline) is the first step of *Kriyā Yoga* designed to weaken the *kleśas* (afflictions) as well as *karmas* (imprints). The intervention treats the 5-7 days somatic retreat as a concentrated period of *tapas* and *svādhyāya* (self-inquiry).

- The Goal: Utilising the *Pāda* Measure as a geometric template for postural and respiratory alignment, the seeker employs *Kriyā Yoga* to arrest the momentum of past *vāsanās* or *karmas* (imprints).
- The Result: Through this “ploughing” of the somatic soil, the seeker’s “Footprint of Perception” is recalibrate against the universal *svarūpa* of the *vigraha*. This transformation (*pariṇāma*) effectively overwrites the dormant *karma-phala* of placeless-ness—the modern state of being unmoored from sacred geography—with a stabilized, resonant identity.

CHINTANA – THE INQUIRY INTO SOMATIC MEMORY

If the “Mark” is the seed, *chintana* (deep contemplation) is the process of cultivation. It involves a shift from the historical "What" to the operational "How". We move beyond the tiny lens of subaltern studies or mythological storytelling to view these records as evidence of an underlying truth through various temporal forms.

Case 1: The Gesture of Surrender (The Padmanabha Dasa-s)

Here, we analyse the *Thiruppadihanam* of the Travancore kings not as a medieval political strategy, but as the fulfillment of a vertical civilizational axis.

- **The Ancestral Beacon:** This lineage traces back to the Chera King Kulashekhara Alwar, whose identity as a Vaishnavite Saint-King that amplifies the initial “seed” of sovereignty-as-service. Kulashekhara Alwar (c. 8th-9th century CE) was a Chera King who renounced his throne to become one of the twelve Vaishnavite Alvars (mystic saints). His legacy provides the 'Vertical Civilizational Axis' for the Travancore kings. *Bhāgyam* refers to 'accumulated spiritual merit' or 'destiny-potential' that is encoded into a lineage or a geography, influencing its *vāsanā* (latent impressions) and dictating

its long-term ethical and spiritual trajectory. Kulashekhara's *bhāgyam* acts as the cultivator of the land's *vāsanā*.

- **Persistence of Truth:** The Travancore kings, by executing the will of their ancestors through *Īśvara praṇidhāna* (alignment/surrender to the Form), prove the *dharmānupātī* (follower of *dharma*/righteousness) (Yoga Sūtra 3.14)—the persistence of the underlying truth through temporal shifts. Their *bhakti* is a high-level cognitive alignment where the ruler's ego is surrendered to protect and sustain the *Rūpa* (Form) naturally making them the trustees of the *ksetra*.
- **Outcome:** The seeker learns that the right interpretation of *bhakti* is an act of somatic stewardship, ensuring that the vertical axis of the land remains unbroken by contemporary transactional noise of *bhakti*.

Case 2: The Body as Tapas (The Devadāsi as an Energetic Filter)

We further refine the role of the temple dancer from a biological silo to an active energetic instrument.

- **The Somatic Filter:** Temple arts was trained to be the somatic blueprint of the land's rhythms. Through the daily ritual of *Aarti*, a *devadāsi* did not merely perform a ritual; her body acted as a silo of counter-resonance as the *nitya sumangali* for the *ksetra*. The term *Nityasumaṅgalī* (The Ever-Auspicious) refers to the ontological status of the *devadāsi*, who, through her ritual marriage to the deity, remains outside the biological cycles of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness (birth/death/widowhood and *nitya-anitya* concept in Yoga Sūtra). As Saskia Kersenboom-Story (1987) establishes, the dancer's presence was a functional requirement for the 'management of power' (*śakti*) within the *kṣetra*. Her ritual performance, particularly during the *Upacāra* (services), acted as a 'protective shield' (*Rakṣā*) that neutralised the *Amangala* (inauspiciousness) brought in by the visiting public, thereby maintaining the ritual purity and energetic stability of the sacred environment.
- **Countering External Interference:** In the complex sacred-social interactions of a temple town, the vibrational pulse of the *kṣetra* is constantly under threat from external negative forces (chaotic human energies). The dedication of the *devadāsi* and her own craft served to balance the (visiting) dark forces. Her actions neutralised the day-to-day entropy of the crowd, safeguarding the "Order and Rest" of the consecrated space. Her state of perpetual auspiciousness allowed her to act as a permanent cooling agent for the 'Heat' (*Tapas*) generated by the temple's intense ritual cycles.
- **The Lesson for the Seekers:** This introduces the concept of protection through presence and practice. The seeker realises that a disciplined, tuned, transcendental body

is not just for personal health, but a tool to protect the ecological and spiritual sanctity of the *kṣetra* (*rakṣaṇa*).

Case 3: The Spark of Inspiration (Patañjali at Chidambaram)

The account of Patañjali—the architect of mind science—travelling to Chidambaram to witness Śiva’s *Ananda Tāṇḍava* is the ultimate record of *svādhyāya* (self-study). However, a critical distinction must be made: Patañjali’s journey was that of an initiated seeker.

- **The Pre-condition of Tapas:** In the architecture of *Kriyā Yoga* (Yoga Sūtra 2.1), *tapas* (disciplined heat/energy) is the primary engine. Without the friction of *tapas* to weaken the *kleśas* (afflictions), the subsequent stages of *svādhyāya* (self-inquiry), *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* (alignment with the total) cannot take root. Patañjali’s system was already tempered by years of rigorous discipline, making him a high-precision sensor ready for the “Seed”.
- **The Tīrtha as Laboratory:** This establishes *tīrtha* as a high-resonance environment meant to trigger the final realisation of *svarūpa* (Yoga Sūtra 1.3). It proves that even for the architect of mind science, the body-instrument requires a specific external “pulse” (the *kṣetra*) to achieve the final transition from the “Seer” (*draṣṭuḥ*) to the “Seen”.
- **The Lesson for the Seeker:** It validates the necessity of the physical journey. The seeker learns that *svādhyāya* is not a passive reading of texts, but an active placement of the “prepared body” in proximity to the *rūpa* (Form). Without the prior heat of *tapas*, the journey is merely tourism; with it, the journey becomes a somatic reset.

DARSHANA – MEANING-MAKING FOR RE-PURPOSING THE TĪRTHA

In the Hamsa™ framework, *darśaṇa* is redefined as the simultaneous activation of the *Kriyā Yoga* triad of *tapas*, *svādhyāya* and *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* (Yoga Sūtra 2.1 - *tapasḥ svādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ*). It is the moment where the *tapas* (the prepared seeker) engages in *svādhyāya* (the inquiry into the Mark) to dissolve into *Īśvara praṇidhāna* (total somatic surrender/alignment), allowing the *dr̥ṣṭi* to open and reveal a state of absolute resonance with the *vigraha*.

By establishing this technical definition, we can differentiate the intention and impact for every stakeholder entering the *kṣetra*. The temple is no longer just a heritage site but a multi-layered field where each visitor interacts with the *kṣetra* according to their functional capacity:

Stakeholder	Redefined Intention (The Hamsa™ Lens)	Role & Responsibility
Knowledge Architects (<i>adhikāri-s</i>)	Preservation of the Form: Ensuring the "Information Integrity" of the <i>Vāk-Rūpa</i> translation remains unbroken.	To maintain the "Vibrational Silo" of the site.
Lineage Trustees / Performers / <i>sahradaya-s</i>	Somatic Continuity: Acting as the Living Resonators (like the <i>devadāsi</i> or the Alwar lineage) to keep the <i>kṣetra</i> active.	To prevent the <i>kṣetra</i> from becoming inert through ritual <i>tapas</i> .
Initiated Devotees / Seekers / <i>sahrdaya-s</i>	Somatic Reset: Utilizing the site as a high-frequency laboratory to achieve <i>ekāgratā</i> and <i>svarūpa</i> .	To engage in <i>svādhyāya</i> and override individual <i>karma</i> with <i>tapas</i> .
Rasika-s / Social-media content creators & consumers	Perceptive Refinement: Learning to differentiate sightseeing from a <i>sahrdaya</i> (the sensitive viewer) & cultural custodian	To transition from level 1 (Spectator) to level 2 (seeker).
Policy Makers / Administrators	Structural Safeguarding: Moving beyond Stone Preservation to Resonance Protection (Article 18 of UNESCO).	To ensure the social-sacred environment does not interfere with the <i>kṣetra</i> 's pulse.
Uninitiated Devotees / Tourists / Tour Providers	Potential Seeding: To be primed so that the "Seed" in the soil can eventually trigger a future "Spark"	To observe "Order and Rest" so as not to add to the "Somatic Noise" of the site.

Table 1: The Stakeholder Hierarchy and Intention

SOMATIC IGNITION: THE 5-7 DAYS COMPRESSED MANDALAM

The Hamsa™ methodology argues that if the knowledge architect (a practicing scholar) can prime the visitor with the right *tapas* and *svādhyāya*, the traditional 48-day *maṇḍalam* can be compressed.

- **The Protocol:** By mirroring the temple's geometry (*vighraha*) through specific breath-based practices of yoga, the seeker's body are prepared to a state of "forced alignment"
- **The Reset:** This 5-7 days intensive is designed to isolate from the chaotic *svabhāva*. The result is a somatic reset where the seeker leaves the site not with information but with a re-calibrated internal geometry.

The somatic protocol does not claim an instantaneous exhaustion of all *karma-phala*; rather, it initiates a transition from the seeker's habitual *śṛṣṭi krama* (the discovery phase of practice) to a disciplined *śikṣaṇa krama* (a transformative pedagogy for refinement). By providing a *nava śarīra saṃskāra* (a new bodily imprint) through the "forced alignment" with the *vighraha*, the intensive acts as a *pratyahara* (a withdrawal from chaotic entropy) to allow for a direct *rasa* (focused aesthetic tasting) of the *rūpa*. This "tasting" serves as a cognitive titration, providing the necessary somatic memory for the seeker to sustain long-term recalibration through subsequent *rakṣaṇa krama* (sustained practices for self-preservation).

The compressed *maṇḍalam* thereby restores the heritage temple's role as a centre of knowledge by transitioning it from a static monument to an active cognitive laboratory. By treating the *kṣetra* as a differential teaching medium for higher languages like *vāk* and *rūpa*, the 5–7 days protocol provides the necessary somatic literacy for seekers to interface with the site's vibrational library. This process converts the modern "spectator" into a "somatic custodian", ensuring that high-level civilisational intelligence is once again transmitted through embodied cognition rather than mere documentation.

DISCUSSION

In the Hamsa™ framework, studio practice is viewed as a closed-system exercise, whereas "Field Practice" at a *kṣetra* is an open-system interface. The former maintains the seeker's existing biological boundaries, while the latter utilises the high-frequency vibration of the temple to temporarily suspend the individual's *karma* of placelessness, allowing for a genuine somatic reset that is impossible in a neutral environment.

Another important point to be remembered is that this protocol is not another "fancy name" for "Yoga Tourism"—a practice that has become very popular in the last few decades. The table below outlines the key differences between these two concepts.

Feature	Conventional “Yoga Tourism”	Hamsa™ Somatic Protocol
Primary Goal	Leisure, relaxation, and cultural "sightseeing."	Somatic Reset and civilizational transmission.
Role of the Temple	A scenic backdrop or a neutral physical space for generic exercise.	An Active Cognitive Laboratory and vibrational library.
Nature of Practice	Site-Agnostic: Studio-style Yoga transplanted to a different geography.	Site-Specific: Protocol is non-transferable and derived from the <i>kṣetra's</i> resonance and deity's geometry.
Engagement Model	Passive Spectatorship: Collecting information and visual memories.	Active Signal-Processing: Using the body to interface with the site's resonance.

<p>Mechanism</p>	<p>Standard physical stretching and generic "mindfulness"</p>	<p>Forced Alignment: Recalibrating internal geometry against the <i>Pāda</i> Measure. Unlike voluntary relaxation, "Forced Alignment" refers to the technical process where the specific proportions of the <i>vighraha</i> and the architectural frequency of the <i>kṣetra</i> act as a "magnetic" pull on the seeker's subtle body. This ensures that the somatic recalibration occurs regardless of the seeker's initial mental state, provided the technical protocol of <i>tapas</i> and <i>svādhyāya</i> is followed.</p>
<p>Temporal Focus</p>	<p>Short-term "vacation" effect with no lasting spiritual shift.</p>	<p>Compressed Maṇḍalam: Intensive 5-7 day "overwriting" of chaotic <i>svabhāva</i>.</p>
<p>Visitor Status</p>	<p>Tourist/Consumer: Seeking a selfie moment.</p>	<p>Somatic Custodian: Safeguarding the <i>kṣetra</i> through disciplined presence (<i>rakṣaṇa</i>). A somatic custodian is defined as a seeker who has achieved a level of somatic literacy allowing them to not only receive the temple's resonance but also to contribute to the energetic stability of the site. This reflects the traditional role of the <i>sahṛdaya</i>, where the quality of the "Seer" is as vital to the ecosystem as the "Seen" (<i>vighraha</i>).</p>

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

We must move beyond the crisis of abstractions to reclaim the temple spaces, art & architecture as a vital instrument for the transmission of renewed socio-ecological awareness needed for contemporary times. By defining *darshana* as a technical protocol of *Tapas*, *Svādhyāya*, and *Īśvara Praṇidhāna*, the Hamsa™ Pedagogy bridges the gap between the *rūpa* (Form) and the human system.

When the architect of mind science (Patañjali Yoga Sūtra) is paired with the architects of visual form (*shilpi-s*), the *kṣetra* is restored to its function as a laboratory for embodied cognition. This re-purposing of sacred geography ensures that Intangible Cultural Heritage safeguarding is no longer a passive act of stone preservation, but an active engagement that re-calibrates human perception—thus, securing the continuity of India’s civilisational wisdom through lived experiences.

We can design empirical studies and collect data of seekers who have adopted specific Hamsa™ knowledge modules to map the body’s internal blueprint before and after the interventions. The data collected will not only help fine-tune the interventions for enhanced experiential knowledge.

Beyond individual recalibration, these empirical studies can pave the way for a standardised Heritage Experience Impact Rating System. By quantifying the shift from “ordinary seeing” to “somatic literacy”, we can establish a measurable distinction between a knowledge architect (facilitator) and a commercial tourist guide, and between a sovereign trusteeship (custodianship) and an administrative servant. Such a rating system would provide temple administrations and public policy makers with a technical tool, ensuring that heritage management is measured not just by footfall, but by the depth of civilisational transmission achieved.

Brief Profile of the Author:

Deepa Charkavarthy is a bridge between the silence of the text and the vibrations of oral tradition. As a recognised Mohiniyattam artist, she has spent decades exploring the “Dancer’s Path” - not only as a performer but also as a living study of human geometry. Her art has graced international stages, from the largest museum of Asia in France to the sacred, niche gatherings on the banks of the Narmada.

Beyond the proscenium, Deepa belongs to the illustrious lineage of T. Krishnamachari (KYM) and holds a Senior Fellowship in Indology, mapping the profound intersections of Yoga and

Natya. Her mastery is most evident where it meets the human spirit at its edges, using temple traditions and yoga as transformative tools. As the founder of Jvala, Deepa guides seekers out of the churning moments of life. Her column, *Arty Affair* for The New Indian Express engages the readers on appreciation of intangible cultural heritage.

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