

Some Hindu Gods

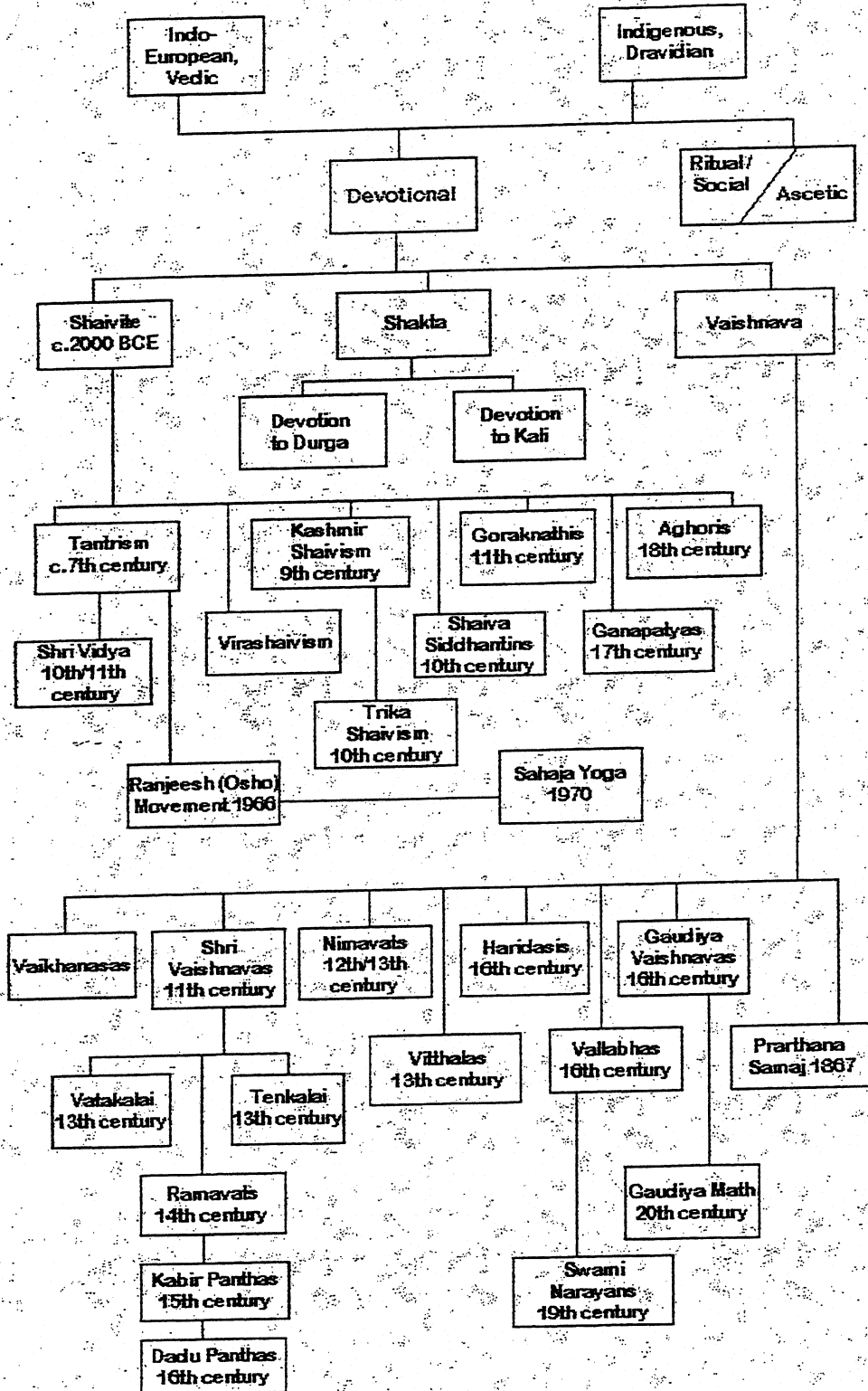
Deity	Function	Depiction
Brahma	Creator	Four heads
Sarasvati	Brahma's wife; goddess of learning	Stringed musical instrument
Vishnu	Preserver	Blue color, conch shell, discus, staff
Lakshmi	Vishnu's wife; goddess of fortune	Blue color, conch shell
Shiva	Destroyer	Trident, three horizontal stripes. (a) Lord of the beasts: animal skin, hair piled on his head (b) Lord of the dance: dancing on the head of a snake that forms a circle around him (c) Lingam: a phallic representation
Parvati	Shiva's wife	Depicted alongside Shiva
Durga	Goddess of death	Eight or ten arms, long spear, riding a lion

Deity	Function	Depiction
Kali	Terrifying destroyer of demons	Black, grimaced face, necklace of skulls, riding a tiger
Rama	Avatar of Vishnu; ideal king	Green, large bow
Krishna	Avatar of Vishnu; cowherd	Dark blue or black, flute
Ganesha	Son of Shiva; remover of obstacles	Elephant head
Hanuman	Grand vizier of the monkeys	Green monkey, often alongside Rama

Vaishnavites	Shaivites	Shaktites
Devotees of Vishnu or one of his avatars, frequently Krishna or Rama	Devotees of Shiva	Devotees of a goddess, frequently Kali or Durga

Hindu Devotional Sects

Link to Hindu Ritual and Ascetic Sects



AN OLD HINDU LEGEND says that there was a time when all men were gods, but they so abused their divinity that Brahma, the chief god, decided to take divine power away from men and hide it where they would never find it. Where to hide it became the big question.

When the lesser gods were called in council to consider this question, they said, "We will bury man's divinity deep in the earth." But Brahma said, "No, that will not do, for man will dig deep down into the earth and find it." Then they said, "Well, we will sink his divinity into the deepest ocean." But again Brahma replied, "No, for man will eventually explore the depths of every ocean and will be sure some day to find it and take it up again for himself." Then the lesser gods concluded, "We do not know where to hide it, for it seems there is no place on earth or in the sea that man will not eventually reach."

Then Brahma said, "Here is what we will do with man's divinity. We will hide it deep down in man himself, for he will never think to look for it there." Ever since then, the legend concludes, man has been going up and down the earth, climbing, digging, diving, exploring, searching for something that is already in himself.

Two thousand years ago a man named Jesus found it and shared it's secret.

Eric Butterworth in *Discover the Power Within You*
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