

# The Cycle of Time

*A Journey into the Mind  
of Ancient India*

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English Version Debora Pita*

*" If the universe may be conceived as a definite quantity of energy, as a definite number of centres of energy, - and every other concept remains indefinite and therefore useless, - it follows therefrom that the universe must go through a calculable number of combinations in the great game of chance which constitutes its existence. In infinity, at some moment or the other, every possible combination must once have been realized; not only this, but it must have been realized an infinite number of times. And inasmuch as between every one of these combinations and its next recurrence every other possible combination would necessarily have been undergone, and since everyone of these combinations would determine the whole series in the same order, a circular movement of absolutely identical series is thus demonstrated: the universe is thus shown to be a circular movement which has already repeated itself an infinite number of times, and which plays its game for all eternity...*

*...Would you have a name for this world? A solution of all your riddles? Do you also want a light, you, most concealed, strongest and most undaunted men of the blackest midnight?"*

*The Will to Power - Eternal Recurrence  
Friedrich Nietzsche*

Shrouded by a kaleidoscope of images, information and new inventions, we could be at the point of manipulating life according to our will, were we not so distant in responding to so many questions related to existence. Having created a thousand schools of thought and experimented with a whole gamut of ideologies, we could be at the threshold of a new era, if only we had a reliable reference over our origins and felt certain on what the future holds.

We have been reaching further boundaries in space, delving deep into the micro universe of elements, and wondering how to address the disorder we've caused in nature. And yet we know so little about ourselves. Who is really the 'self'? What is our story? Where do we actually come from? Is there a place or an ultimate state we can eventually return to?

India was once a fertile soil for this kind of investigation and it made use of a rather interesting analogy for situating man on the path of life. Existence used to be perceived as an unlimited 'Cosmic Drama' in which man played the role of threading the lines of history.

This real life play - *Prabhu Ki Lila* - was never seen as random and chaotic, but as a perfect plot that contained a plan in itself. Those who could understand the course of history were believed to have realized the essence and purpose of human life. As if they were able to 'see' how civilizations, religions and ideologies had risen and declined, letting truths and facts become apparent in coherent and constant patterns.

An understanding of this plan of life had always been an aim for those who searched for self-knowledge and for a wider 'Reality' behind our well known reality.

Today we rarely pursue those things which could take us to a depth of understanding and to the wisdom we had once possessed. By no means do we hold a truly wide or complete view of history. We have moved away from subtle and deep thought; we have lost the ability of living in contact with our core.

The turning of the twentieth century has seen the recycling of ancient theories and ideas, brought up by a latent force in the human subconscious. The quest for knowledge became the foundation for the renaissance of philosophical and religious thought and for the expansion of science.

But the task of putting this unlimited puzzle together, of tracking the origins of what we call history, has so far not been accomplished. It is interesting to notice how this last frontier was once considered the domains of a super consciousness, in a time when men still pondered on the nature of the Supreme.

Scientists and spiritualists will certainly agree on how difficult it is to deal with the absolute. Still, we keep on moving, defining patterns in the fields of

neurobiology and mathematics, in physics and astrophysics, seeing the wonder in the intricate diagrams of chaos.

Even though a complete picture of 'reality' still eludes us, there is no reason to doubt that we are getting closer to a complete comprehension of the processes of the universe. It definitely seems to be an order, even if only partially understood.

Yet, it is beyond physical form and sound, beyond the reach of science's devices, within the sphere of the invisible that still remains inscrutable the ultimate reality.

To find the 'generator principle' or 'the first cause'; one who would be aware of this wider reality, seems to be the key to the enigma which was part of the ancients' play. A riddle believed to be unveiled only at the final moments of a cosmic cycle, when history would take a new turn.

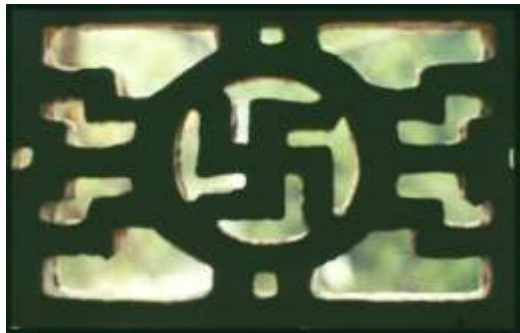
All great traditions of the past refer to the quest of wisdom, to the urge of comprehending that make us so unique and special amongst creation. They also remind us of how the 'light' of understanding has always emerged from the depths of darkness, as if knowing and forgetting was but a part of the play. This is probably the reason why it has always been remembered that *'...in the beginning there was the Word'*.

The Swastika is an omnipresent symbol in India. It is found on the walls and frescos of the temples, on the streets and pages of accounting books, in the hands of uncountable gods and goddesses.

Considered an auspicious sign, the swastika portrays the flow of time. It also tells how, at the end of a cosmic cycle, the journey of humanity is revealed through intellectual understanding - *gyan* - as well as through focused meditation - *yoga*.

Those who come to know its significance and make use of it are believed to become *trikaldarshis* -- knowers of the dimensions of time.

The vision of a line following a curve into the distance delineates world history with no beginning, with no end. So the ancients had understood what we today call eternity.



An essay on India's soul, whose wisdom had once known no limits, and whose clock of time points to almost midnight now.