

“Dressed in pure white and unadorned by jewels and ornaments, I represent the pursuit of knowledge over the material and the purity of true knowledge. Sitting upon the white lotus, accompanied by a swan, I am purity and known throughout the world by many names, I am Sarasvati, muse, and patron to the artist, mother of the Vedas, the origin of speech and so much more. I am the goddess of knowledge, music, the creative arts, speech, and the sciences and while my arms represent the four aspects of human personality, I offer in three hands ways through literature and music, to express them, and in my fourth, I hold a pot of sacred water.”



I am the goddess of knowledge, music, the creative arts, speech, and the sciences

Named after a very large river, which carried the precious commodity of water Sarasvati meaning elegant, flowing, and watery, was originally born as a river goddess who brought fertility good fortune, and purified those who bathed in its waters. The river now called the Ghaggar-Hakra River carried glacial water from the Himalayas through the plains of northwest India before spreading into farther reaching rivers. Studies by geologists and results from archaeological sites lining the river discovered the vital part the river played in the development of the Indus valley civilizations, where many settlements once stood and were abandoned during the Harrapan and late Harrapan phases and completely gone by 1900 BCE (roughly 4,000 years ago).

The Harrapa took Sarasvati with them as they moved Eastward towards the Indus Valley, and her importance began to shift and grow as she was inducted into cultures throughout the area. She became a more important figure in literature, the arts, and music, and with time, her original personification of purity along with deeper concepts such as consciousness, intelligence, creativity, enlightenment, education, and focus of refinement and purity.

Sarasvati, now known by many names and aspects is a patron to many including artists, those seeking true knowledge, purity, and [moksha](#) (the final liberation of the soul). She is the consort and Shakti (life-force and energy that maintains the universe) of Brahman, the creator god. Today a festival is held on the first day of spring where worshippers drape her statues in yellow and pray for blessings on pens, books, and musical instruments as well as the tradition of teaching young children how to write, venerating the ancestors and honoring the [Brahmin](#) priests with fine foods.

I am Sarasvati, muse, and patron to the artist and erudite alike, mother of the Vedas, the origin of speech and purveyor of purity and knowledge. Each of my arms represents an aspect of the human personality, and in my hands are gifted through literature to express it. My many names bring new understanding to all who know them.

Mirroring her husband Brahman and the representations of his four heads, Sarasvati's arms represent the four aspects of human personality: mind, intellect, creativity, and ego. The representations, in turn, are related to the Rig Veda, which represents the forms of literature: poetry, prose, and music that she offers in three of her hands in the form of a book or palm-leaf manuscript (prose), a rosary of crystal beads (poetry), and a vina (music). Her fourth hand, carries the bowl of sacred water representing the purity of these arts and their power to purify human thought.

Mother of the [Rig Veda](#), and inventor of the [Sanskrit alphabet](#), Sarasvati gave the god [Ganesha](#) the gifts of the pens and ink he uses and is known by many names throughout the east, she has names that correspond directly with her aspects, one of the most important being **Vac** or Speech.

As Vac, she is the very concept of sound and speech and its various aspects and uses. Though the significance of sound and speech being named as part of creation is primarily post Rig Vedic, it is no less vital. Used in still apparent within ritual speech, and important as the sound of Om, it is a powerful creative and mainstay of cosmic order. Vac is the presence that inspires the [rishis](#), the rituals that express the truth of their visions, and that makes a person a brahman.

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With Sarasvati's patronage over learning in the intellectual and creative pursuits, it's important to understand that part of her patronage is learning about the self, through meditation on purpose, growth, and actions, and seeking the truth through knowledge, and purity, She adheres closely to her origins as a goddess of purification, dressed in white, Sarasvati is accompanied by a white swan which she sat on, if not of the white lotus. The white of her garments symbolizing the purity of true knowledge, the swan represents spiritual perfection, transcendence, and moksha, and the white (Nelumbo Nucifera) lotus that symbolizes absolute truth. With her alignment, she has been said to destroy those who revile the gods, and have slain a Raksha (demon) of chaos called Vitra. In a darker aspect of keeping the purity of true knowledge, the Curse of Sarasvati, which holds more of a tendency than an actual curse. It is the tendency of the human ego to lose sight of their devotion to education and wisdom and turn it completely towards success and wealth instead. Success, fame, and wealth are equated with Lakshmi, and so Sarasvati becomes her.

Other names of Sarasvati:

- Benzaiten (Seven Gods of Fortune, Japan)
- Tara, Thurathadi, Tipitaka Medaw,(Buddhist arts of Myanmar and protector of Buddhist scriptures-Burma)
- Biàncáitiān (China,)
- Surasawadee (Thailand)
- Maha Sarasvati (part of the Tridevi (Trinity) of Lakshmi, and Parvati) India: Vindhya, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, and East Nepal
- Mahasaraswati (one of the nine forms of Durga, Eastern India.)
- Vagisvari and Bharati (Khmer literature of the Yasovarman era, Cambodia)

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