

[Patanjali Lecture Series](#)

Topic : "Science and Spirit: The Indian Synthesis"

Date: May 4, 2006

Time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Abstract:

The Indian tradition claims to present an overarching science of which the understanding of the physical world and consciousness are components. This claim will be evaluated in light of modern science. The changing understanding of the history of the Indian cultural area will be used as backdrop and the previous encounters between India and the West, which go back to the 2nd millennium BC, will be outlined. This illustrated lecture will present an overview of Indian art, science and spirituality.

Bio:

Dr. S. Kak, born in Srinagar, Kashmir, India obtained his Ph.D. at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. He is currently Donald & Elaine Delaune Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering and Professor in the Asian Studies and Cognitive Science Programs at the Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, LA. His awards include the Science Academy Medal of the INSA (1977), Kothari Prize (1977), Halliburton Award (1982), UNESCO Tokten Award (1986), National Fellow of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study (2001), and the Distinguished Alumnus Award of IIT Delhi (2002). He has authored 15 books and more than 300 journal articles in various areas of science (quantum physics, information theory, neural networks), and Indian studies (astronomy and mathematics, literary history, yoga, art, and music). His books include *The Astronomical Code of the Rgveda* (2000), *The Wishing Tree* (2001), *The Gods Within* (2002), *The Asvamedha* (2002), and *The Architecture of Knowledge* (2004). He has written essays on Indian science, art, and philosophy for several encyclopedias.

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The lecture will address the question the essence of Indian culture through the symbols of its art and architecture. The language of art uses the alphabet of the cultural expression to construct representations of reality. Vital art also communicates paradox and oppositions that underlie ordinary experience of the universe. Indian cosmology, which incorporates within it both rational structures as well as paradoxical oppositions, will be described, and it will be shown how it is common to both Indian art and science. The lecture will be illustrated using examples of temple architecture and iconography and paintings.