

About Dr. David Frawley (Pandit Vamadeva Shastri)

Those who know (vidvaamsah) will confirm that the works of Shri Vamadeva Shastri are distinguished by their authenticity. This is so because they are based on (1) his personal quest and experience (2) deep dwelling into the texts and (3) oral learning received from many authentic teachers who are experts in their areas of knowledge.

Shri Vamadeva Shastri (Dr. David Frawley) has done this great service to many that he has offered access into knowledge that was often hitherto inaccessible to an average western seeker.

Swami Veda Bharati, Swami Rama Sadhaka Grama, Rishikesh

Dr. David Frawley is one of the most important scholars of Ayurveda and Vedic Science today. I have great respect and admiration for his knowledge and the way he has expounded the ancient wisdom of the Vedas.

Deepak Chopra

Frawley is an Indian in an American body. The ease with which he enters into the spiritual of the Indian tradition and renders its deeper concepts in terms of modern thought shows an unusual familiarity with this ancient wisdom.

M.P. Pandit, Secretary of Sri Aurobindo Ashram

Certainly America's most singular "practicing Hindu."

Ashok Malik, India Today

Dr. David Frawley is a formidable scholar of Vedanta and easily the best known Western Acharya of the Vedic wisdom.

Ashish Sharma, Indian Express, the Express Magazine

Squidoo Page for Dr. Frawley's books

Regular Articles in Tathaastu Magazine

Articles at Folks.co India, along with many important Indian thinkers and writers

Motilal Banarsidass India Author's Page

Google video of interview with Dr. Frawley (one hour and fifteen minutes from Dutch television)

Dr. Frawley on Graham Hancock's website on Lost Civilizations

Dr. David Frawley (Pandit Vamadeva Shastri) is a unusual western born knowledge-holder in the Vedic tradition. He carries many special Vedic ways of knowledge (vidyas), which he passes on to students in India and in the West. In India, Vamadeva is recognized not only as a Vedacharya (Vedic teacher), but also as a Vaidya (Ayurvedic doctor and teacher), Jyotishi (Vedic astrologer), Puranic (Vedic historian), a Hindu acharya (Hindu religious teacher) and a Yogi.

In India, Vamadeva's translations and interpretations of the ancient Vedic teachings have been given great acclaim in both spiritual and scholarly circles. In America he is more known as a teacher and practitioner of Ayurvedic medicine and of Vedic astrology (Jyotish) and has done pioneering work on both these subjects in the West. Most recently the integration of Yoga and Ayurveda has come to the forefront of his work.

Vamadeva (Dr. Frawley) presents authentic Vedic knowledge in the Western world and in a lucid presentation recognized by the tradition itself. He has worked extensively teaching, writing, lecturing, conducting research and helping establish schools and associations in related Vedic fields over the last thirty years. He has studied and traveled widely gathering knowledge, working with various Vedic teachers and groups in a non-sectarian manner.

Vamadeva sees his role as helping to revive Vedic knowledge in an interdisciplinary approach for the planetary age. He sees himself as a teacher and translator to help empower people to use Vedic systems to enhance their lives and aid in their own Self-realization. He sees Vedic wisdom as a tool for liberation of the spirit, not as a dogma to bind people or to take power over them. For him, Vedic knowledge is a means of communing with the conscious universe and learning to embody it in our own life and perception. Though Vamadeva has worked in several different fields, he has endeavored to approach each of these with a great deal of specificity and precision. For a good overview of his work and background, it is best to examine his book *Yoga and the Sacred Fire: Self-Healing and Planetary Transformation* (2005).

Since 2005, Vamadeva has been working in collaboration with Shambhavi Chopra relative to programs, travels, teachings and publications. Shambhavi is a best selling author of several books on the Goddess in India and is now widely recognized in the West in Yoga, Ayurveda and Vedic astrology circles for her inspiring presentation and charismatic energy. She is known for her beautiful mastery of mantra chanting and recitation and has several CDs under the title of Yogini Bhava.

Shambhavi adds a knowledge of ritual, mantra, and working with the Goddess, particularly relative to sacred sites in India, tours and retreats. Note Picture to left.

Dr. Frawley's (Pandit Vamadeva's) Work and Background

Reviving Ayurveda

Dr. Frawley is a teacher or acharya of 'traditional Ayurveda', which incorporates Yoga, Vedic astrology, Vedanta and Tantra into its teachings and treatments. He is working to revive traditional Ayurveda both in the context of modern Ayurveda in India and popular Ayurveda in the western world.

Vamadeva's main teacher of Ayurveda was Dr. B. L. Vashta of Bombay and Pune (1919-1997), note photo. For ten years he remained under the guidance of Dr. Vashta, visiting him regularly in India and consulting with him on a wide variety of topics. Dr. Vashta, a graduate of one of the first Ayurveda programs in India in 1941, wrote many books on Ayurveda and helped formulate Ayurvedic products for several Ayurvedic companies in India. He was also one of the leading journalists in the state of Maharashtra and became an important spiritual guide for Vamadeva as well.

In America, Vamadeva studied Ayurveda with Dr. Vasant Lad, noted Ayurvedic teacher and author. He taught regularly along with Dr. Lad at his school in 1983 -1986 as a regular instructor and has remained on the visiting faculty. Along with Dr. Lad, he wrote the Yoga of Herbs, which was the first book integrating western herbs into Ayurveda and published in the West.

Vamadeva works with Dr. Deepak Chopra and Dr. David Simon and has been a faculty member of the Chopra Wellness Center in San Diego. Note picture of Vamadeva, Deepak Chopra and Shambhavi Chopra to the left (Shambhavi is not related to Deepak).

Vamadeva also works with the California College of Ayurveda, founded by his colleague and former student Dr. Marc Halpern. He is a teacher and advisor for the Kripalu school of Yoga and Ayurveda. He is allied with Mas Vidal of Dancing Shiva, particularly for Yoga and Ayurveda. He is on the advisory board for the National Ayurvedic Medical Association (NAMA) and the California Association of Ayurvedic Medicine (CAAM).

Recently he has joined the Advisory Board of Kerala Ayurveda, one of the largest Ayurvedic companies and educational centers. He is also now working with Patanjali Yog Peeth, the center of Swami Ramdev and Acharya Balkrisna, in Haridwar, India, the largest of its type in the country.

Dr. Frawley's Ayurvedic work is represented by a number of groups throughout the world. Aldo Lubrano handles the Spanish version of his courses. The Vedic Center, Ruegen, Germany (Maxim and Sergej Kuschpel) handles his German and Russian courses. Pavan Kanwar handles his work in the Czech Republic. His work in South America is represented by Dr. Jose Rugue and Marcia De Luca. Dr. Rugue has brought out complete trainings in Ayurvedic medicine in Brazil incorporating Dr. Frawley's course work.

Besides Ayurveda, Dr. Frawley has a background in Chinese medicine, in which he received a Doctor's degree in 1987. He taught Chinese herbal medicine at the International Institute of Chinese Medicine from 1984-1990. He served as a board member of the American Herbalist's Guild, the largest professional organization of western herbalists, from 1993-1994.

Vamadeva's main areas of specialization in Ayurveda are herbal medicine, Ayurvedic psychology, and Ayurveda and Yoga. He has written several books on Ayurveda including the Yoga of Herbs (with Dr. Vasant Lad, 1986), Ayurvedic Healing (with a foreword by Dr. B. L. Vashta, 1989), Ayurveda and the Mind (1997), Yoga and Ayurveda (1999), Ayurveda, Nature's Medicine (with Dr. Subhash Ranade, 2001), Yoga for Your Type (with Sandra Kozak, 2001), Ayurveda and Marma Therapy (with Drs. Ranade and Lele, 2003), and Neti: Healing Secrets of Yoga and Ayurveda (2005).

Spreading Vedic Astrology

Vamadeva began studying Vedic astrology (Jyotish) as part of his Vedic research in the early seventies and first brought out a correspondence course in the subject astrology in 1986, which remains one of the standard texts in the field today. He was one of the first to teach Vedic astrology in the West.

Dr. Frawley has written several books on Vedic Astrology starting with Astrology of the Seers (1990), one of the first books on Vedic astrology published in the West, now regarded as one of the classics in the field. Recently he brought out Ayurvedic Astrology: Self-Healing Through the Stars (2005), which pioneers the field of 'Ayurvedic Astrology' or Vedic medical astrology. In 1997, he brought out the book the Oracle of Rama (1997), an important Hindu oracle which in 2005 has been made into a beautiful set of cards through Mandala Press.

In 1992 Vamadeva helped convene the first major American Conference on Vedic Astrology, which led to the founding of the American Council of Vedic Astrology (ACVA) the following year. He became the first president of the organization and guided it for more than ten years. ACVA in 2004 became the American College of Vedic Astrology. It has convened a dozen international symposiums, a tutorial program in Vedic astrology, and an on-line training program.

Vamadeva's main Vedic astrology teacher was Dr. B.V. Raman (1916-1998), perhaps the greatest Vedic astrologer of modern India and founder of the Astrological Magazine, with whom he was specially initiated in 1992. He has also visited with Gayatri Vasudev, K.S. Charak, R. Santhanam and Bepin Behari. He works closely with Chakrapani Ullal, perhaps the most noted Vedic astrologer in the West today and considers Chakrapani to be his main teacher after Dr. Raman.

Vamadeva was one of the first Americans to receive Jyotish Kovid title from the Indian Council of Astrological Sciences (ICAS, 1993), the largest Vedic astrology association in the world, followed by the title Jyotish Vachaspati in 1996. He has written many articles for the Astrological Magazine, the largest Vedic astrology publication in India. He has researched medical astrology and psychology and astrology, as well as the historical origins of Vedic astrology, bringing out ancient Vedic material on the Nakshatras.

Work with Yogis and Sages-Spreading Yoga and Vedanta

Vamadeva has been a devotee of Ramana Maharshi, the great sage of South India, since 1970 and has studied his teachings in the broader context of Vedanta. He specially carries on the work of Ganapati Muni, one of Maharshi's chief disciple, whose teachings he received through K. Natesan of the Ramanashram in 1991, who he has been in close contact with ever since, photo below.

Natesan passed on Ganapati's writings to him, many in hand written form never published, for their preservation and

propagation. Ganapati's work that he has taken up includes both the Vedas and Tantra, as well as Ayurveda and Jyotish. In recent years, Natesan has brought out the Muni's Sanskrit work in ten volumes along with Vamadeva's help. Vamadeva continues to study and translate the Munis great stotras and sutras.

His study of Vedantic meditation methods, particularly the practice of Self-inquiry as taught by Ramana Maharshi, is the subject of his book, *Vedantic Meditation: Lighting the Flame of Awareness*, by North Atlantic Books (2000).

Dr. Frawley's study of Ganapati Muni's work was the basis of his book *Tantric Yoga and the Wisdom Goddesses* (1994), which is considered one of the best books on the deeper aspects of Tantric spiritual and mantric practices. It is also part of his recent, *Inner Tantric Yoga: Working with the Universal Shaktii* (2008). He also brings Vedantic and Tantric perspectives into his books on Ayurveda and Vedic astrology. He teaches the interface of Veda and Tantra and how to work with both Vedic and Tantric deities. Like Ganapati Muni, who cover a similar field of study, his books span Yoga, Tantra and Vedanta.

Vamadeva has spoken before the main Ramana Maharshi centers (Ramana Kendras) in India and writes frequently for the Mountain Path, the ashram's main publication and an important resource for information on the direct path of Self-Inquiry.

Since 1994 he has been in contact with the noted South Indian guru, Sivananda Murthy of Andhra Pradesh (Vishakhapatnam), who is also of Ramana's line and a great yogi as well, with connections to Trilinga Swami. He has worked with Sivananda Murthy on the study of the Upanishads. Sivananda Murthy visited the United States in 2004. Note picture of Sivananda Murthy with Vamadeva and Dennis Harness to the left.

Vamadeva has received the blessings and teachings of many saints and sages including Anandamayi Ma (with whom he corresponded with for several years between 1976-1982), Pramukh Swami (of the Swaminarayan movement, who has given him his private blessings on several occasions), Sivaya Subrahmuniya Swami (of Hinduism Today), Hansa Baba, Swami Amar Jyoti, Sri Ma, Ammachi, Swami Dayananda (Arshavidya Gurukulam), Dr. Pranav Pandya (Gayatri Pariwar), Swami Veda Bharati, Bharati Tirtha, Shankaracarya of Sringeri, and Chandrashekhara Saraswati and Jayendra Saraswati, Shankaracharyas of Kanchipuram.

On the Vedantic side, Vamadeva has been associated with Swami Dayananda of Arsha Vidya Gurukulam (picture left) and has spoken at his centers in India and the United States and worked with him in various conferences and programs.

He considers Swamiji to be the most important teacher of Vedanta in the world today and recommends all his students to study with him. Vamadeva regards Vedanta as the mind and soul of Yoga and Ayurveda and also aims at promoting Vedanta once more along with Yoga.

Vamadeva has also been connected to the work of Paramahansa Yogananda the the Kriya Yoga movement, since he first took the SRF lessons in 1970, and has closely studied the teachings of Yogananda's guru, Sri Yukteswar. SRF has published his articles and referred to his books in a number of their publications. His quote on Yogananda has recently appeared in the new edition of *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

Working with American Yoga Groups and Ashrams

Vamadeva has taught at many yoga and spiritual centers in the United States. These include the Shivananda Ashram, Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Yogaville, the Himalayan Institute, Ananda, Kripalu, CSA, Unity in Yoga, International Yoga Studies, the American Yoga College, the Yoga Journal Conference, the Southeast Yoga Conferences, and the Southwest Yoga Conferences. He has been one of the pioneers of bringing Ayurveda and Vedic astrology into the Yoga community and trying to look modern Yoga with its classical roots in India.

In 2005, he released his special Advanced Yoga and Ayurveda Course for promoting a deeper approach to both subjects. Dr. Frawley has been at the forefront of helping to develop an 'Ayurvedic Yoga therapy' and a Yoga Therapy as part of a complete system of Yogic medicine, rooted in Ayurveda, Vedic Astrology and Raja Yoga. It has become one of the prime focuses of his work.

His recent book *Yoga, the Greater Tradition* (Mandala Press 2008) shows his broad view of Yoga and the need to develop its many traditional connections with all aspects of Vedic knowledge.

New Light on the Vedas

Vamadeva began his study of the Vedas in 1971 through the works of Sri Aurobindo and started to study the Sanskrit language, at first on his own, in 1970. This led to writing many Vedic books and articles, starting in 1978. In 1979, M.P. Pandit of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram gave his support to his work and personally was responsible for publishing dozens of Vamadeva's Vedic articles and translations in various Sri Aurobindo publications in India, which occurred regularly from 1980-1984 in *World Union*, the *Advent* and *Sri Aurobindo's Action*. Pandit first awakened Vamadeva to his "Vedic mission" and encouraged him up to his death in 1994. Pandit helped publish Vamadeva's first book in India, the *Creative Vision of the Early Upanishads* (1982) and serialized material from two of his other books, *Self-realization and the Supermind in the Rig Veda*, and the *Heart of the Yajur Veda* that were never printed in book form.

Vamadeva's Vedic studies have included the early Upanishads, followed by the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, and Atharva Veda, and in recent years several Brahmanas and Aranyakas as well, which he has gone over in the original Sanskrit. Vamadeva has made special studies of the Rig Vedic hymns, particularly those of Vishvamitra, Parashara, Dirghatamas and Vamadeva. He has also worked specially with the Shukla Yajur Veda, Shatapatha Brahmana and Taittiriya Brahmana. Of the Upanishads, he worked extensively with the Brihadaranyaka, Chandogya and Taittiriya.

He has set forth a radical new spiritual interpretation of the Vedic texts, reflecting the work of Sri Aurobindo and Ganapati Muni showing the yogic meaning of the Vedic mantras, which has remained the inspiration for all that he has attempted. Starting from a poetic background in his youth, he was able to penetrate into Vedic symbolism and discern its spiritual and cosmic implications.

In 1986, he brought out a volume of his translations from the Rig Veda in India under the title, *Hymns from the Golden Age*. A revised version of the book came out in the USA and later again in India under the title *Wisdom of the Ancient Seers: Selected Mantras from the Rig Veda* (1993).

Revising Ancient History

After seeing how badly the spiritual meaning of the Vedas had been misinterpreted by modern scholars, Vamadeva could easily see how the historical side of the Vedas had similarly been distorted. This led him to a revision of ancient history in light of such knowledge. His work revising the history of ancient India has received wide acclaim and brought him into contact with major archeologists and historians. He has many published books on the Vedas and Ancient India.

His book on ancient India, *Gods, Sages and Kings* (1991) was one of the first to propose a new model of history for ancient India which many subsequent scholars and archeologists have followed. A shorter version of this material *Myth of the Aryan Invasion* (1994, 2001) has been one of the most popular books on the subject available on the internet.

Along with Georg Feuerstein and Subhash Kak, Georg Feuerstein, he wrote *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization* (1995) and along with N.S. Rajaram, he wrote *Vedic Aryans and the Origins of Civilization* (1994). His *Rig Veda and the History of India* (2001) takes this work yet further, setting forth a reconstruction of the history of ancient India in a Vedic light. Quotes from Dr. Frawley's books on ancient India and an interview with him were featured in Grahman Hancock's *Underworld, Flooded Kingdoms of the Ice Age* book and television series (for British television and the Discovery Channel).

His most recent book *Hidden Horizons: Unearthing 10,000 Years of Indian Culture* (Swaminarayan, 2007, with N.S. Rajaram) outlines their recent research and conclusions in the field and has been endorsed by prominent religious and cultural leaders from all over India. Over ten thousand copies of the book have already been distributed by the Swaminarayan order.

Contemporary Issues, Reviving Hindu (Sanatana) Dharma

Vamadeva has written many articles and several books on contemporary issues in India, particularly the challenges to Hinduism and yogic culture posed by modern civilization. He is regarded as a Hindu Acharya or 'teacher of Hindu Dharma', which is central to all of his work.

His published books on Hindu Dharma began with his book *From the River of Heaven: Hindu and Vedic Knowledge for the Modern Age* (1991). Additional titles addressing more contemporary issues published through Voice of India in Delhi like *Arise Arjuna* (1995), *Awaken Bharata* (1998), *How I Became a Hindu* (2000) and *Hinduism and the Clash of Civilizations* (2001) offer a helpful alternative to the media view of India and the Hindu religion, countering academic and leftist distortions and media stereotypes. This has given him the reputation in India as one of the foremost Hindu writers today. He is the most popular writer for Voice of India publications, often considered the foremost publishing company on contemporary Hindu thought. His book *Hinduism: the Eternal Tradition* (1995) has been widely used by Hindu groups and temples and has recently been reprinted (2008) in a new and expanded edition.

Dr. Frawley's main teacher of Hindu Dharma was Ram Swarup of Delhi (1921-1998), photo to the left, whom Hinduism

Today called the most important modern writer on Hinduism, with whom he was associated with from 1992. Ram Swarup wrote the foreword to his book *Awaken Bharata* (1998) that continues his call for a revival of dharmic traditions in India. Vamadeva's book *How I Became a Hindu: My Discovery of Vedic Dharma* (2000) unfolds his story of self-discovery. He wrote the forewords for Ram Swarup's collected works, including, *On Hinduism; Meditations, Gods, Yogas; and the Word as Revelation: Names of Gods*.

Touring and Speaking in India

Over the past twenty years, Dr. Frawley has lectured in various cities throughout India from Delhi and Rishikesh in the north to Bangalore and Chennai in the south. Places include Ayurvedic schools, Vedic Astrology schools, ashrams, universities, Hindu associations, Vedantic associations, and Yoga schools. He has become a well known figure through India both in traditional and modern circles.

He has lectured at Delhi University, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and Chennai, JNU (Jawaharalal Nehru University), Gauhati University, Anna University (Chennai), the Dalai Lama Foundation, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram (Pondicherry), the Sri Aurobindo Society (Delhi), Ramana Maharshi Kendra (Hyderabad, Chennai), Swami Narayan Akshardham, Chinmaya Mission (Chennai), the Sai Baba International Center (Delhi), Indira Gandhi Center for the Arts, Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR), the Nehru Memorial Library, Vivekananda Yoga Kendra, the Museum of Lucknow, Vivekananda Kendra (Assam), the World Sanskrit Conference, Institute of Management (Bangalore) and many other institutions in India.

He has done articles and interviews for Times of India (which serialized portions of his book *Vedantic Meditation*), India Today, Indian Express, the Hindu, Hindusthan Times, the Deccan Herald, the Business Standard, Vijay Karnataka, the Observer, the Organizer, and other prominent publications throughout the country. He has given several talks and programs for all India Radio and for Indian television (through Rajiv Mehrotra of the Dalai Lama Foundation).

Working with the Indo-American Community

Dr. Frawley has worked extensively with the Indo-American community, including the VFA (Vedic Friends Association), VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), Arya Samaj, and HSC (Hindu Students Council), Sringeri Shankaracharya Math, and the Swaminarayan movement. He has spoken before many temples and Hindu cultural groups throughout the United States, as well as at several universities. He toured UK and spoke at various Hindu temples and at universities in 1996 and has visited Hindu groups in Trinidad.

Articles

Dr. Frawley has written articles for many magazines and publications in the United States and India. In this country magazines he has contributed to have included *Yoga Plus*, *Quest*, *Hinduism Today*, *Tathaastu*, *Light of Consciousness*, *Clarion Call*, *Yoga-Vedanta*, *Vegetarian Times*, *LA Yoga*, *Yoga Chicago*, *Integral Yoga Magazine*, *Light on Ayurveda*, and *Yoga Journal* and such newspapers as *India Post* and *News-India Times*. In India he has contributed to the *Mountain Path*, *Life Positive*, *World Union*, *Sri Aurobindo's Action*, *the Advent*, *Mother India*, *Glory of India*, *Vedanta Kesari*, *Bharatiya Prajna*, the *Astrological Magazine*, the *Journal of Vedic Astrology*, and *Tattva Loka*.

For the Future

Vamadeva's new projects include a book on the Vedic Yoga and a book on mantra. He hopes to develop a Vedic educator distance learning program as well. He plans to spend more time in India as well as maintaining programs in the United States, Europe and Brazil.