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Philosophical Context of Yantra

Yantra function as revelatory conduits of cosmic truths. Yantra, as instrument and spiritual technology, may be appropriately envisioned as prototypical and esoteric concept mapping machines or conceptual looms. Certain yantra are held to embody the energetic signatures of, for example, the Universe, consciousness, ishta-devata. Though often rendered in two dimensions through art, yantra are conceived and conceptualised by practitioners as multi-dimensional sacred architecture and in this quality are identical with their correlate the mandala. Meditation and trance induction that generates the yantra of the subtle body in the complementary modes of the utpatti-krama and saṃpanna-krama are invested in the various lineages of tantric transmission as exterior and interior sacred architecture that potentiate the accretion and manifestation of siddhi.

Mantras, the Sanskrit syllables inscribed on Yantras, are essentially 'thought forms' representing divinities or cosmic powers, which exert their influence by means of sound-vibrations.

Yantra is an aniconic temenos or tabernacle of deva, asura, genius loci or other archetypal entity. Yantra are theurgical device that engender entelecheia. Yantra are realised by sadhus through darshana and samyama. Yantra, or other permutations and cognate phenomena such as Mandala, Rangoli, Kolam, Rangavalli and other sacred geometrical traditions, are endemic throughout Dharmic Traditions. Some Hindu esoteric practitioners employ Yantra, mantra and other items of the saṃdhyā-bhāṣā in their sadhana, puja and yajna.

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