



Modern Practices of the 21st Century that Re-Iterate Practices of Engaging 'Prana' & 'Nadi' in Vastu Shashtra

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Abstract

Vaastu Shastra, an ancient Indian architectural and planning system, seeks to achieve harmonious and balanced environments through building design and construction. Vastu, founded on Hindu and Vedic concepts, emphasises qualities such as well-being, prosperity, and spiritual harmony by aligning structures with certain cardinal directions and incorporating natural materials based on spiritual text. Two particularly important principles in Vastu Shashtra is the concept of "Prana," or life force energy, which runs through channels known as "Nadi." Yoga, sound healing, and the strategic use of colours and materials all help to promote Prana. Modern research shows that these habits improve well-being and productivity. This article investigates the integration of Vaastu principles with current architectural methods, focusing on the role of sound, notably through Kirtan and Mantras, in improving spatial energy and promoting a sense of community & mental clarity.

Keywords: Vaastu shastra, prana, Nadi, sound healing, kirtan, mantra, spatial planning, cardinal directions, Hindu architecture, Vedic principles, yoga, meditation, natural materials, positive energy, well-being, prosperity, spiritual harmony

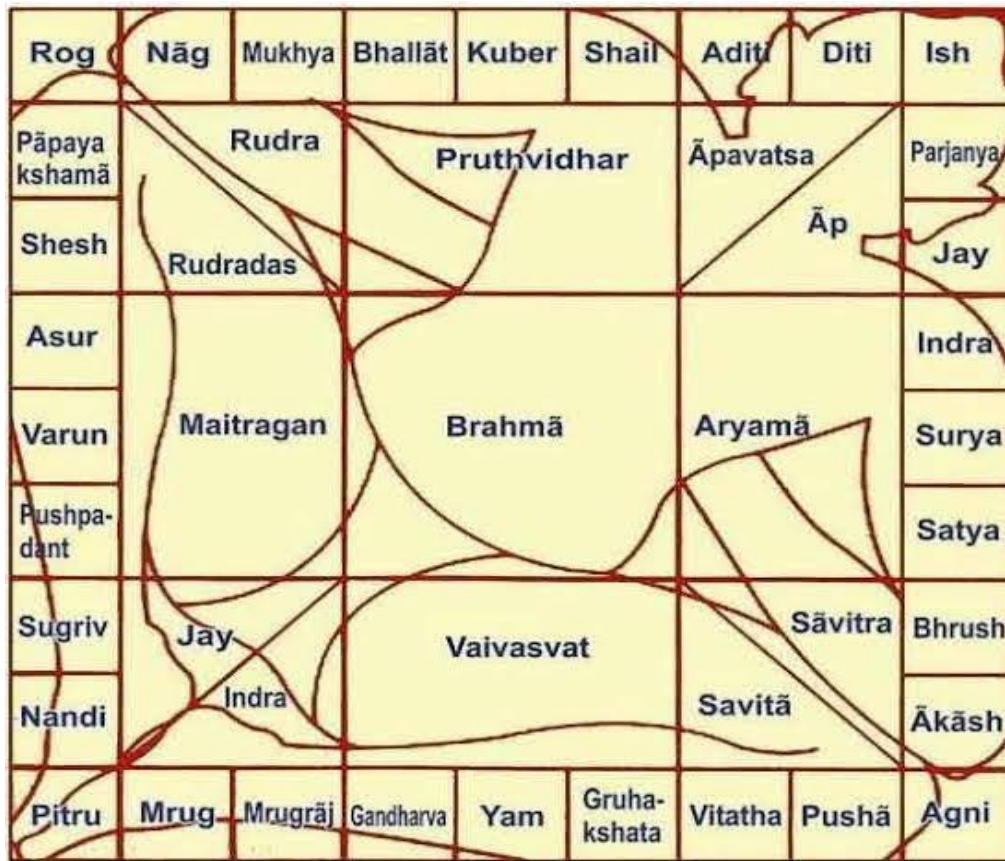
1. Introduction

1.1 Vastu Shastra and Its Purview

Vaastu Shastra, an ancient Indian architectural and planning theory, aimed to create harmonious and balanced surroundings through building design and construction. The term "Vaastu" comes from Sanskrit, where "Vaas" means "to dwell or reside," and "Shastra" refers to a scientific or systematic body of knowledge regarding different Hindu gods & goddesses and the impact of their positions, which are used as guidelines, referring to them with the use of cardinal directions and using those positions to underline the appropriate practices & values that should be central in that spatial direction, to have them affirmed based on the gods and goddesses.

Vaastu Shastra, which can be identified as a holy science founded on Hindu and Vedic concepts from ancient books of Hindu Mythology, aims to promote key values in the home or even workspace. This is particularly based on a diagram or grid system of organizing spaces once aligned with the magnetic directions that is based on the Hindu mythology of Brahma, who is held seated along with 45 other Gods & Goddesses, and placement of these gods and goddesses is what we refer to as the Vastu Purusha Mandala. This diagram is used as a spatial layout guideline to aid in creating values in the space like:

- Well-being
- Prosperity
- Spiritual harmony.



1.2 Vastu & Spatial Arrangement

Vastu, through space arrangement and orientation as an ode to or paying respects to the God of that cardinal direction, as well as their history, can aid in determining what areas of a building that can be vacated for a certain value or purpose, or for a certain practice, would manifest the best energies spiritually. Some of the key points of a building structure that can be analysed and critiqued through a Vastu-Shastra point of view include the following:-

- **Building Materials:** Advocates for natural, organic materials often naturally found or naturally created from the earth as they help incorporate the 5 natural elements into the building with ease.
- **Spatial Planning and Block Work:** Focuses on orientation and layout in reference to the four cardinal directions & the pockets between them, along with placement and connection of entries and exits placed within a structure, with scrutiny on both opens for circulation, and openings for air & light, as according to Vastu Purusha, they should face the North, North-East & East, as the dieties in that direction welcome prosperity and positive Prana.
- **Color and Decor:** Uses specific colors and decorations to enhance the flow of positive energy, or "Prana" as pronounced in Sanskrit. Certain colors are attributed to the nature elements they represent, as well as positive energies and emotions.
- **Key Elements:** Emphasizes the use of water and earth to manipulate the flow and maneuvering of positive & negative energy in a space.
- **Prana:** Is the sanskrit word that refers to maneuvering of energy & between spaces & is key to what this paper will be exploring.

2. "Nadi" and "Prana" in Vastu Shasthra

2.1 Nadi

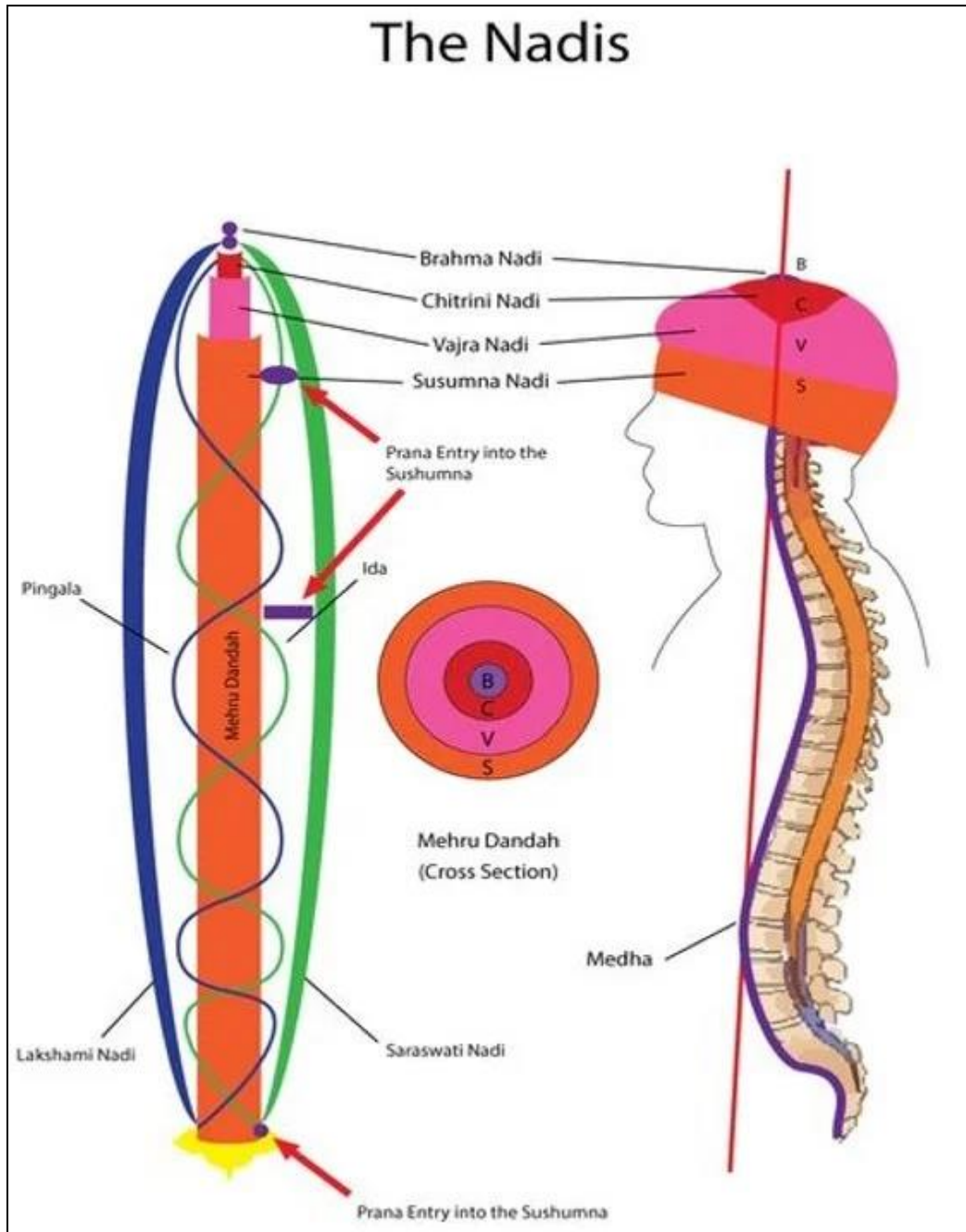
Nadi can be described as the channels through which energy, or "Prana," flows in a space but also in the body, according to the ideologies of the Vastu Shastra.

Nadis include the concept of Chakras when referring to the Nadis in the body; ida, pingala, sushumna, brahmani, chitrani, and vijnani. Of these six, 3 can be referred to as the principal nadis, and include the

- Pingala, in the right nostril that acts as the Nadi of Surya (Sun).
- Ida, in the left nostril that acts as the Nadi of Chandra (Moon)
- Sushmna, which is eer present in the the space between breaths unobstructed.

These chakras and the studies that encourage practicing holistic and spiritual activities like Yoga, meditation, and Sound Healing to nourish or activate these chakras from the Eastern world of studies and research, are the same conclusions come to be Western research with reference to analysis of the Vagus Nerve in the spinal area and it's interaction with the parasympathetic nervous system, as well as it's connection to the brain.

In a similar way, in Vastu, Nadis also include the general physicalities of the building such as the entries & exits & building practices and position of items also seem to impact the energy flow. These channels can be enhanced through the performance or cultivation of spiritual practices by individuals in the space. Naturally, however, they can also be maneuvered, according to ideologies, by creating waterscapes, or providing fire in certain spaces, or manipulating the entry and exit of light in & across spaces.



2.2 Prana

Is the vital life force or energy present in both people & in a space, according to the books that speak about the Vastu Shastra. According to the Vastu Shashtra, harvesting Prana and focusing on it's presence is crucial to effectively creating a harmonious & spiritually healthy physical environment. From a building perspective, Prana can be harvested or grow in a space through certain structures, like creating waterscapes, or growing certain trees in a certain area as they can both produce energy also aid in energy flow. Alternatively, certain spiritual practices by individuals can also help harvest more Prana. This can be viewed from a more modern perspective as the conclusion that practices that improve mental health and positive presence in turn have an effect on the perception and comfort in space, and in turn, creating a tranquil environment by utilising principles taught by Vastu can aid this impact on the self and the space around.

2.3 Examples of practices that facilitate better Prana

that we not also see adopted heavily in countries of the western hemisphere can include:

- **Yoga and Meditation:** Promotes tranquility and harvest more positive energy in a space which will in turn create better spiritual impacts on the users.
- **Pranayama:** Pranayam is sanskrit for Breathwork or Breathing techniques that can change the Prana of the environment as well as the individual. Pranayama, in the present, is commonly known in the western sphere as box breathing, and many studies find a correlation between box breathing and a regulation of negative emotions like stress, worry and anxiety in individuals, according to many psychological studies.
- **Sound Healing:** Sound healing includes practices like sound baths, sound bowls, and Indian pieces of music known as Bhajan which are examples of religious chanting. These pieces are akin to the hymns sand in

christian churches by Roman Catholics that are scripted forms of pray, but in this case, in remembrance of certain gods, and singing bowls that adjust the environment and promote better Prana. In Sanskrit, this is referred to as Vastu Pujan, and is said to be additive to the energies in the space. Some examples of pieces that are composed for this intention include the following Bhajans

- *Vastu Santi Mantra* - Dr. R. Thiagarajan
- *Vastu Poojan* - Acharya Dhananjay Vyas
- *Vasthu Bali* - T. S. Rohini Sastry

Kirtan is a collective performance or chant of a mantra or religious vocal music aimed at deterring excessive thoughts from the mind and promoting a tranquil environment, according to Hindu scriptures. This practice involves repetitive singing or chanting of sacred sounds or phrases, known as Vasthu mantras, which according to the Vastu Shastra, are specific pieces of music or chants that possess or create specific vibrational qualities that can influence the Prana in a space. However, in this aspect, it's worth considering the lack of scientific evidence that establishes a correlation between religious chanting and vibrational effects on a space. At its most, it can be explained as either psychologically soothing for a person to chant positive messages as it may reinforce it for themselves mentally, or it can be viewed arguably as a thought manifested by the placebo effect of religious teachings.

The Vastu Mantra is a specific type of mantra within Vastu Shastra that is believed to

- Pacify malefic planets and strengthen benefic ones.
- Remove negative energies and bring prosperity.
- Create an aura of peace, security, and happiness.
- Protect from evil spirits and negative forces.
- Remove stress and purify the environment.

By reciting Vastu Mantras, occupants of a space can enhance the flow of positive energy and create a more harmonious living or working environment.

3. Sound Baths & Sound Healing (in Detail)

Vastu views sound as one of the methods of adjusting the spiritual environment and using music or specific types of sounds to facilitate better Prana. Various Hindu Mythological texts over centuries have resulted in various religious chants and outcries, known as Kirtan & Bajan, which also can be used to create a certain amount of Prana in a space as healing practices can address discomfort or negative energies by transforming the space's vibrational frequency. The findings regarding the concept of sound healing can be reaffirmed by general studies in western sciences and research with regards to mental health and white noise or music's emotional response in the human brain being a positive stimulus.



3.1 Vastu Perspective

From the perspective of Vastu Shastra, sound is considered a powerful form of energy that can be harnessed to enhance the Prana within a space. The vibrations from specific sounds can travel through Nadis, the energy channels, to create a harmonious environment. This practice involves using sound baths, which include instruments like singing bowls, gongs, and tuning forks to produce resonant frequencies that align with the body's energy centers and the spatial Prana.

3.2 Western Perspective

Western research supports the idea that sound can significantly influence productivity and well-being. Studies have shown that ambient music, nature sounds, and classical music can boost work performance and reduce errors. For instance, research conducted by Mindlab International Ltd found that music enhances productivity by creating a more stimulating and pleasant work environment. This aligns with Vastu Shastra's teachings that sound can adjust and improve the energy within a space, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life.

3.3 Modern Practices

Modern practices of Kirtan emphasize its power to foster a sense of connection and unity. Yogi David Newman, a renowned Kirtan artist, observes that chanting mantras together can create a profound sense of closeness and community, even among strangers. He notes that in a world filled with messages of separation and disconnection, Kirtan provides an antidote by promoting a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Additionally, Kirtan and mantra chanting can have therapeutic effects, reducing stress and promoting mental clarity. The repetitive nature of these practices helps to quiet the mind, allowing individuals to connect more deeply with their inner selves and the surrounding environment. This aligns with the principles of Vastu Shastra, which seeks to harmonize the individual's energy with the cosmic energies present in a space.

4. Conclusion

Vastu Shastra offers a complete approach to planning and organising places that encourage harmony, well-being, and spiritual balance. Vastu tries to harness positive energy, known as "Prana," by aligning structures with cardinal directions and using natural materials. This system is built around the concepts of "Nadi" and "Prana," which describe the flow of energy through areas and humans. Modern activities such as yoga, pranayama, and sound therapy, including Kirtan and Mantras, have been demonstrated to improve Prana, promoting mental clarity and a sense of belonging. These practices, which are supported by both traditional wisdom and modern research, emphasise the importance of spatial energy on well-being and productivity. By merging Vastu principles with current building technologies, one can design settings that are both visually beautiful and conducive in spiritual harmony & prosperity.

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