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Manuscripts Collection Development in Mahamahopadhyaya Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library: A Case Study

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Abstract - **Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. U. V.Swaminatha Iyer Library is one of the oldest Manuscript Libraries having palm leaf and paper manuscripts amongst its collection which provides authentic records for tracing the cultural, social, political and economic history of people in Tamil speaking regions as such. This paper elicits the quantum of manuscript collections in this library. It recognizes the availability of access of manuscripts in different languages together with relevant information about the various subjects contained in these manuscripts housed in this library. This paper states the different aspects of manuscript management in this library. This paper also aims to restructure and reconstruct the information about the manuscript collection in digital environment and to provide a web OPAC for dissemination of information about the rich and valuable knowledge contained in the manuscript collections of the library.**

Keywords: **Manuscripts, Palm Leaf Manuscripts, Paper Manuscripts, Collection Development, Web OPAC**

I. Introduction

Collection development is a systematic building of information resources in a library and it is a continuous process. The Manuscript libraries have either bequeathed the Manuscript from a literary savant or received the Manuscript as donations. A Manuscript is a hand written composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material dating back at least 75 years that has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value. Manuscripts are found in hundreds of languages and scripts. One language is written in a number of scripts. For e.g. Sanskrit is written in Telugu Script, Grantha script, Devanagari script, Oriya script and so on. Latin word Manuscriptum, a word first recorded in 1594 as a Latinization of earlier Germanic words used in middle age. The term Manuscriptum, literally means Manuscript or hand written. Manuscripts provide authentic records for tracing the cultural, social, political and economic history of people of a region or a country as such.

India possesses the largest number of manuscripts in the world which is mainly due to the prosperous literary tradition. The literary tradition of ancient India contained in the manuscripts were preserved in the houses of learned scholars, gurukulas, temples, royal palaces, who patronage art and literature. Several important manuscripts libraries were destroyed by foreign invaders. The remaining known manuscripts in the form of palm leaf, birch bark, and paper are being housed in renowned libraries like, Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur; Government Oriental Library, Chennai; Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library and the like.

II. Scope and Objectives of The Study

This paper presents the survey and the state-of-the-art-of the Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library which is the oldest and having large collection of manuscripts in the state of Tamil Nadu. The objectives of the paper are as follows:

1. To present the quantum of manuscript collection in Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer library;
2. To elicit the acquisition policy and the process of collection development of manuscripts in Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer library;
3. To explore the different aspects of manuscript management in Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer library;
4. To identify the language wise availability of palm leaf and paper manuscripts;
5. To identify work wise availability of palm leaf and paper manuscript collection.

III. Profile of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

Wherever Tamil is known and Tamil scholarship is valued, the name of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer is known. Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer was solely responsible for unearthing and editing the great Tamil classics with his depth of knowledge, wealth of learning and beauty of thought and expression. At

the time of his death he was able to bequeath to the World of Tamil Scholarship a treasure of immeasurable value in the form of manuscripts. This valuable treasure was handed over as a gift in 1943 to Srimati. Rukmanidevi, President of Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai by the Venerable scholar's devoted Son Sri. S. Kalyana Sundara Iyer. The main object of this gesture was to see that Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer's rare and valuable collections were preserved intact and their individuality and purity maintained and also to continue Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer's Editorial work in the same style. Consequently this Library bearing the name of Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer was established in the year 1943. The Library is registered as a Charitable Literary Society under the societies registration act. XXI of 1860. The Library receives maintenance grant from the Government of Tamil Nadu. It has three kinds of collections of great literary value and merit, namely Notes of Various kinds, Paper manuscripts and Palm leaf manuscripts apart from printed books. The Library is open to public for reference of available information materials housed. The Library is engaged in the publication of books from original manuscripts following the footsteps of Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer.

A. Acquisition of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

The Library has 14 out of the 18 Sangam Literary Tamil works namely the Pattupattu and Ettu-t-tokai. Quantum of Collections of the Library are given in Table I.

Table I Quantum of Collections of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

S. No.	Nature of collection	Physical Form of Collection						
		Bundles	Works	Registers	Loose entities	Total	Accessed	To be accessed
1.	Palm Leaf	2173	-	-	-	2173	2149	24
2.	Paper	-	-	855	-	855	855	-
3.	Letters	-	-	-	3421	3421	3421	-
4.	Notes on various kinds	-	-	26	-	26	26	-
5.	Books					34868	29868	5000
6.	Journals	-	-	-	-	80	80	-
7.	Special Collections	-	-	-	-	2	2	-
8.	Microfilms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9.	CD ROMs	-	-	-	-	113	113	-

The Library has individual Accession registers for all the types of its collections. Descriptive Catalogues are available for some of the Palmleaf and Paper Manuscripts. The Library had bequeathed 939 palm leave manuscripts and 271 paper manuscripts from Mr.S. Kalyanasundaram The remaining manuscripts have been donated by Tamil lovers and the descendants of the Illustrious Tamil Thatha.

Table II Language Wise Availability of Palm Leaves and Paper Manuscripts

Languages	Palm Leaf Manuscripts	Paper Manuscripts	Total
Tamil	1919	829	2748
Sanskrit	142	8	150
Telugu	88	-	88
Malayalam	-	15	15
English	-	3	3
Total	2149	855	3004

Table II shows that the library has maximum of 829 registers of Paper manuscripts in Tamil followed by 15 registers of Malayalam Paper manuscripts. While in Sanskrit language the library has 15 registers of paper manuscripts and the least number of three registers of Paper manuscripts are available in English language.

B. Manuscripts Accessibility and Availability

Scholars can only refer the manuscripts in the presence of library staff. Language wise palm leaves and paper manuscripts are given in Table III.

Table III Language Wise Availability of Palm Leaves and Paper Manuscripts

Languages	Palm Leaf Manuscripts	Paper Manuscripts	Total
Tamil	1919	829	2748
Sanskrit	142	8	150
Telugu	88	-	88
Malayalam	-	15	15
English	-	3	3
Total	2149	855	3004

Table III shows that the library has maximum of 829 registers of Paper manuscripts in Tamil followed by 15 registers of Malayalam Paper manuscripts. While in Sanskrit language the library has 15 registers of paper manuscripts and the least number of three registers of Paper manuscripts are available in English language. The Table also shows that the library has maximum of Tamil palm leaf manuscripts numbering 1919 followed by Sanskrit 142 numbers and the least collection of palm leaf is in Telugu language numbering 88.

C. Period-wise Acquisition of Manuscripts

The library acquires manuscripts only through donations. Table IV depicts acquisition of palm leaves manuscripts up to 2010. It shows that the acquisition of palm leaves were highest during 1943 to 1950 aggregating to 939 and the next highest period was during 2001 to 2010. It is interesting to note there has been a decreasing trend from 1951 to 1960 from acquisition of 273 palm leaf bundles to 170 palm leaf bundles only during 1961 to 1970. While on the other hand it is evident that only 73 bundles were received during the period from 1971 to 1980 and none during the period from 1981 to 1990. The illustrated figure also shows that 38 palm leaves were received during the period from 1991 to 2000 and 656 palm leaves were received during period from 2001 to 2010.

It is interesting to note that after a steady decline in the rate of acquisition of palm leaves from the year 1951 onwards, there is an appreciable increase in the number of palm leaves acquired during the period from 2001 to 2010. It shows that there have been efforts both on the part of the library and donors in enhancing the rich manuscript collections in the Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library.

Table IV Period-Wise Acquisition of Palm Leaves and Paper Manuscripts

Nature of Manuscripts	1943-1950	1951-1960	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2010	Total
Palm Leaves	939	273	170	73	-	38	656	2149
Paper	271	180	-	304	60	20	20	855
Total	1210	453	170	377	60	58	676	3004

Table V Quantum of Palm Leaves and Paper Manuscripts Covered in Descriptive Catalogue

Nature of Manuscripts	Descriptive catalogues (in volumes)	Total		Included		Not Included	
		In bundles/ registers	In works	In bundles/ Registers	In works	In bundles/ Registers	In works
Palm leaves	5 Volumes	2149	3709	1439	2572	710	1137
Paper manuscripts	1 volume	855	891	726	741	129	150

It is evident from the Table V that out of 2149 palm leave bundles having 3709 works, 1439 bundles having 2572 works have been included in the five volumes of the descriptive catalogues published by Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library. The remaining 710 bundles comprising of 1137 works have not yet been included in any catalogue. Similarly, out of 855 paper manuscripts, having nearly 891 works, only 726 paper manuscripts containing 741 works have been included in the descriptive catalogue (Vol. No. 5). However, the remaining 129 paper manuscripts containing about 150 works have not been included in any catalogue. As such 839 manuscripts having about 1287 works need to be catalogued. Out of 2572 works in Tamil for four works details are not available fully.

The information contained in the descriptive catalogue is made available only to the users who visit the library in person. Further, library catalogue are not available even in card form. The library has not started using computers for their automation. Table VI presents the total number of manuscripts available in the languages Tamil and English respectively as given in the descriptive volumes.

Table VI Details of Descriptive Catalogue of Palm Leaf Manuscripts Published by The Library

S.No.	V. No.	Year of publication	No. Of Works included in the catalogue	No. of MSS Language-wise		Source of financial help for Publication
				Tamil	Sanskrit	
1	1	1956	440	440	0	Madras Government
2	2	1961	692	692	0	Ministry of Scientific and Cultural Affairs, Government of India, Delhi
3	3	1962	694	694	0	Ministry of Scientific and Cultural Affairs, Government of India, Delhi
4	4	1962	504	504	0	Ministry of Scientific and Cultural Affairs, Government of India, Delhi
5	6	1977	242	76	166	Department of Culture, Government of India, New Delhi

IV. Web Page Output of Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer Library Collections

In this paper a Web design has been developed for depicting the works contained in the Palm leaf collections of Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer Library. The following fields of information are being considered as the source data for creation of web page output.

- Name of the work
- Prose
- Poetry
- Text
- Text with Commentary
- No of pages
- No of lines
- Complete
- Incomplete
- Injured
- Slightly injured
- Very much injured
- Fair
- Good
- Old
- Very old
- New
- Earliest before 1300 AD
- 1301 to 1600 AD
- 1601 to 1900 AD
- Above 1901 Ad
- Period not traceable
- Published
- Not-published

The output of the web design of the homepage of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library is presented in Figure 1.

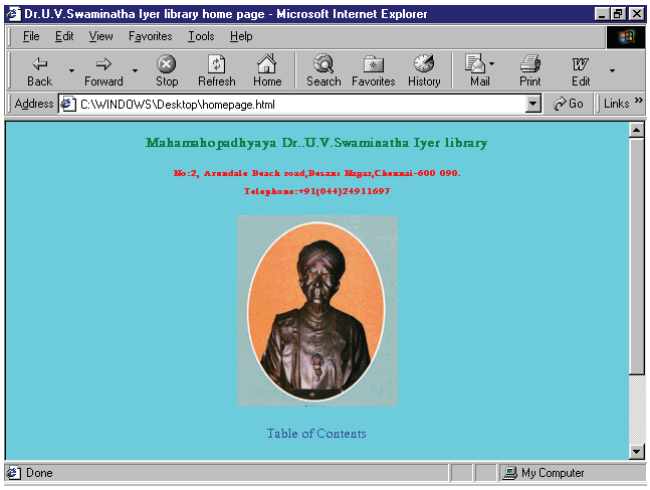


Fig. 1 Homepage of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

The Figure 1 represents the homepage of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library containing the following information.

a) Name of the Library

b) Address of the Library

c) Photograph of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer

d) Biography of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer

e) Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

f) Works of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

A. Works of Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library

On clicking the "works" from the homepage the link moves to the page which contains two options namely Tamil and English. Navigation facility is provided in two different languages. One can choose the language in which the data of the works is required. This facilitates multilingual approach (Figure 2).

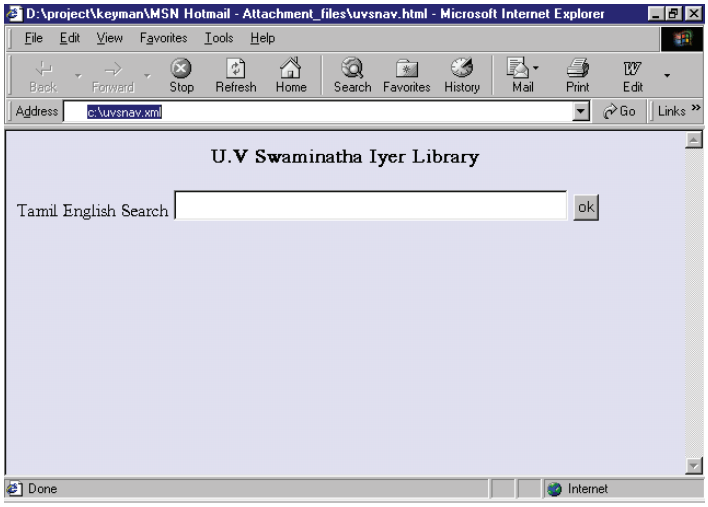
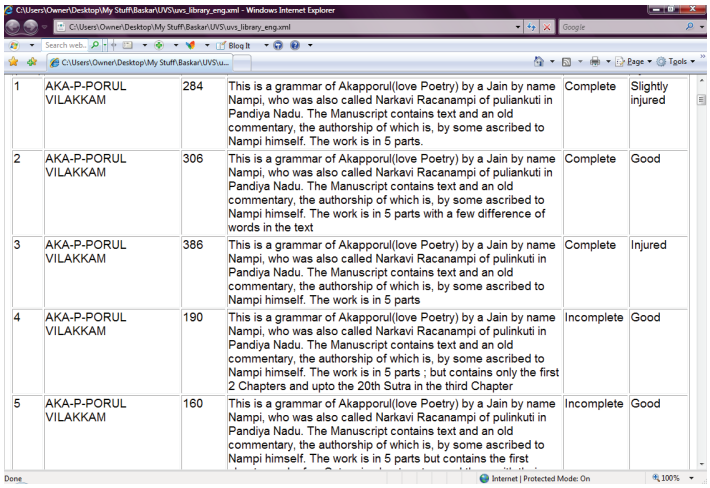


Fig.2 Multilingual Navigation



1	AKA-P-PORUL VILAKKAM	284	This is a grammar of Akapporul(love Poetry) by a Jain by name Nampi, who was also called Narkavi Racanampi of puliankuti in Pandiya Nadu. The Manuscript contains text and an old commentary, the authorship of which is, by some ascribed to Nampi himself. The work is in 5 parts.	Complete	Slightly injured
2	AKA-P-PORUL VILAKKAM	306	This is a grammar of Akapporul(love Poetry) by a Jain by name Nampi, who was also called Narkavi Racanampi of puliankuti in Pandiya Nadu. The Manuscript contains text and an old commentary, the authorship of which is, by some ascribed to Nampi himself. The work is in 5 parts with a few difference of words in the text	Complete	Good
3	AKA-P-PORUL VILAKKAM	386	This is a grammar of Akapporul(love Poetry) by a Jain by name Nampi, who was also called Narkavi Racanampi of pulinkuti in Pandiya Nadu. The Manuscript contains text and an old commentary, the authorship of which is, by some ascribed to Nampi himself. The work is in 5 parts	Complete	Injured
4	AKA-P-PORUL VILAKKAM	190	This is a grammar of Akapporul(love Poetry) by a Jain by name Nampi, who was also called Narkavi Racanampi of pulinkuti in Pandiya Nadu. The Manuscript contains text and an old commentary, the authorship of which is, by some ascribed to Nampi himself. The work is in 5 parts ; but contains only the first 2 Chapters and upto the 20th Sutra in the third Chapter	Incomplete	Good
5	AKA-P-PORUL VILAKKAM	160	This is a grammar of Akapporul(love Poetry) by a Jain by name Nampi, who was also called Narkavi Racanampi of pulinkuti in Pandiya Nadu. The Manuscript contains text and an old commentary, the authorship of which is, by some ascribed to Nampi himself. The work is in 5 parts but contains the first	Incomplete	Good

Fig. 3 Display of records based on alphabetical order in English

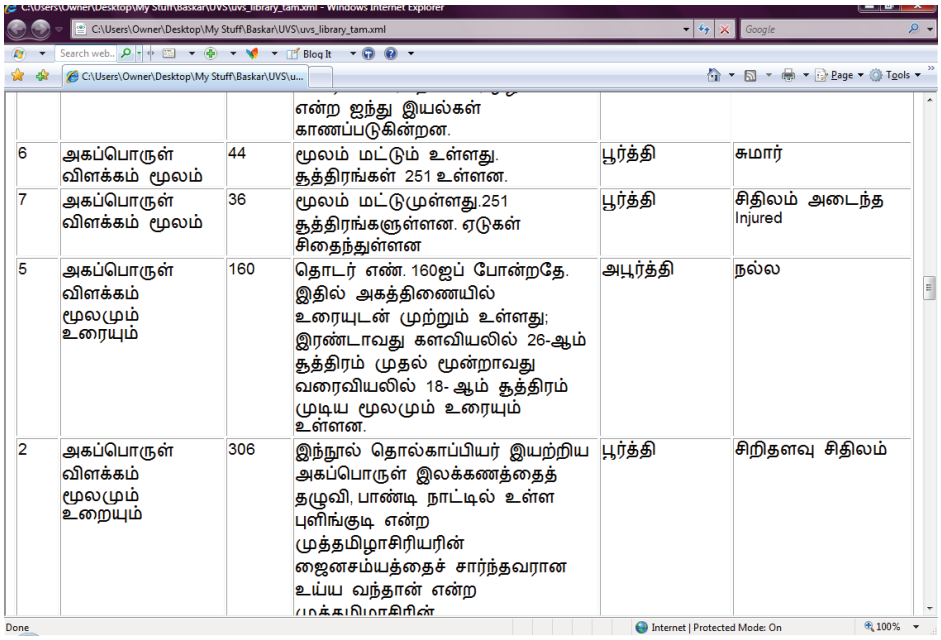
Figure 2 represents multilingual navigation facility wherein the user can choose the required optional language for the display of the records.

B. Display of Records in English

On clicking the "English" tab, on the screen the data is displayed in English containing the fields as shown in Figure3.

C. Display of Records in Tamil

On clicking the "Tamil" tab, on the screen the data is displayed in Tamil containing the fields as shown in Figure 4.



			என்ற ஐந்து இயல்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன.		
6	அகப்பொருள் விளக்கம் மூலம்	44	மூலம் மட்டும் உள்ளது. சூத்திரங்கள் 251 உள்ளன.	பூர்த்தி	சுமார்
7	அகப்பொருள் விளக்கம் மூலம்	36	மூலம் மட்டுமுள்ளது.251 சூத்திரங்களுள்ளன. ஏடுகள் சிதைந்துள்ளன	பூர்த்தி	சிதிலம் அடைந்த Injured
5	அகப்பொருள் விளக்கம் மூலமும் உரையும்	160	தொடர் எண். 160ஐப் போன்றதே. இதில் அகத்திணையில் உரையுடன் முற்றும் உள்ளது; இரண்டாவது களவியலில் 26-ஆம் சூத்திரம் முதல் மூன்றாவது வரைவியலில் 18- ஆம் சூத்திரம் முடிய மூலமும் உரையும் உள்ளன.	அபூர்த்தி	நல்ல
2	அகப்பொருள் விளக்கம் மூலமும் உறையும்	306	இந்நூல் தொல்காப்பியர் இயற்றிய அகப்பொருள் இலக்கணத்தைத் தழுவி, பாண்டி நாட்டில் உள்ள புளிங்குடி என்ற முத்தமிழாசிரியரின் ஜைனசம்யத்தைச் சார்ந்தவரான உய்ய வந்தான் என்ற	பூர்த்தி	சிறிதளவு சிதிலம்

Fig.4 Display of records in based on alphabetical order in Tamil

V. Work Wise Collection in Tamil Palm Leaf Manuscripts

From the descriptive catalogues published as shown in the Tables V and VI the details for works contained Tamil palm leaf manuscripts in Dr.U.V.Swaminatha Iyer Library are given in Tables VII and VIII which can be searched from the web page created.

VI. Conclusion

In this study creation of an online public access catalogue with multilingual search option for collections of Dr.U.Swaminatha Iyer Library together with complete detail\ about the palm leaf collections in Tamil language has been attempted. In the same way complete details about the works contained in Sanskrit palm leaf manuscripts and the paper manuscripts as such can be envisaged. This will help in creating a web site for Dr.U.Swaminatha Iyer Library in future and enable the library to get its primordial place in the global environment. Thus Web OPAC creation enables preservation and conservation of information about manuscripts in the digital environment and thereby bridges the gap between information seekers and the information contained in manuscripts housed in Dr.U.Swaminatha Iyer Library. The paradigm shift with respect to the use of available information is from a single user to that of multi-users simultaneously and use of available information on a particular nature of work.

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Table VII Details of Work Wise Collection of Tamil Palm Leaf Manuscripts With Respect to Contents

S.No.	Name of the Work	No. of Works	Prose	Poetry	Text	Text with commentary	commentary	No. of pages	No. of lines	Complete	Incomplete
1	Agarathi and Nikantu	32	4	28	29	1	2	3509	28481	11	21
2	Grammar	216	4	212	84	131	1	33488	311365	111	105
3	Literature	224	24	200	74	127	23	32818	276245	97	127
4	Kavyas and Ithikacam	110	5	105	86	22	2	41748	380525	13	97
5	Puranas and thalapuranas	204	5	199	189	13	2	56490	514649	114	90
6	Prabhandam and Minor Literature	578	0	578	544	32	2	33235	236305	370	208
7	Stray Verses	68	0	68	64	4	0	4830	28557	28	40
8	Fine arts	18	1	17	18	0	0	1286	8760	4	14
9	Medicine	20	4	16	15	3	2	3111	24434	5	15
10	Astrology	27	7	20	21	6	0	3170	20756	9	18
11	Maths	2	1	1	1	1	0	194	1460	0	2
12	Philosophy	249	50	199	197	40	12	15277	105207	185	64
13	Religion	534	10	524	508	20	6	42059	426020	337	197
14	Vedas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	Vedanta	99	26	73	85	14	0	5615	48504	65	34
16	Others	21	1	20	19	2	0	1700	13212	12	9
	Total	2402	142	2260	1934	416	52	278530	2424480	1361	1041

Table VIII Details of Work Wise Collection of Tamil Palm Leaf Manuscripts With Respect to Condition, Period and Publication

S.No.	Name of the Work	Injured	S.Injured	V.M.Injured	Fair	Good	Old	V.Old	New	Before 1300 AD	1301-1600	1601-1900	above 1900	Not available	Pub	Not Pub
1	Agarathi and Nikantu	13	2	3	1	13	26	3	3	6	11	8	0	7	31	1
2	Grammar	80	23	30	28	55	184	3	29	127	22	56	0	11	204	12
3	Literature	83	45	27	27	42	190	21	13	213	0	10	0	1	204	20
4	Kavyas and Ithikacam	37	17	16	16	24	96	9	5	54	17	31	0	8	87	23
5	Puranas and thalapuranas	43	21	28	77	35	175	15	14	0	67	110	0	27	175	29
6	Prabhandam and Minor Literature	152	87	73	220	46	505	28	45	34	86	316	0	142	446	132
7	Stray Verses	33	12	11	8	4	63	1	4	5	0	53	0	10	19	49
8	Fine arts	10	0	5	2	1	16	0	2	0	0	5	0	13	7	11
9	Medicine	14	2	2	2	0	19	0	1	7	0	1	0	12	0	20
10	Astrology	11	6	8	0	2	21	3	3	0	0	4	0	23	4	23
11	Maths	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1
12	Philosophy	81	78	48	32	10	197	19	33	1	81	57	0	110	150	99
13	Religion	221	73	80	123	37	438	47	49	184	112	68	0	170	392	142
14	Vedas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	Vedanta	35	23	22	10	9	80	5	14	8	56	14	0	21	48	51
16	Others	9	4	2	5	1	17	0	4	3	0	11	0	7	17	4
	Total	822	394	356	551	279	2028	155	219	642	452	746	0	562	1785	617

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