

## Twitter Thread by Vibhu Vashisth



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**IS THE GREEK HERCULES, INDIAN BALRAMA: The Symbolical and Historical context.**

**Around 305 BC, the Greek explorer Megasthenes arrived at the court of Indian Emperor Chandragupt Maurya at Pataliputra (present Patna). He came as an ambassador of Seleucus Nicator of Seleucid Dynasty.**



During his stay in India, Megasthenes compiled a book Indica on the Geography, social traditions & religious customs of India. There were some very important observations made by him in this book. He wrote, "Hercules penetrated so far, Indians tell us, was a native of their country.."

# Hercules and Balarama: The Symbolic and Historical Connections



..He is particularly worshipped by the Suraseni(Shurasena), who have 2 great cities, Methora(Mathura) & Cleisoborus(Surapura) & the navigable river Jobares(Yamuna), passes through their territories".  
Some scholars mentioned that Hercules mentioned by him is indeed Lord Krishna.

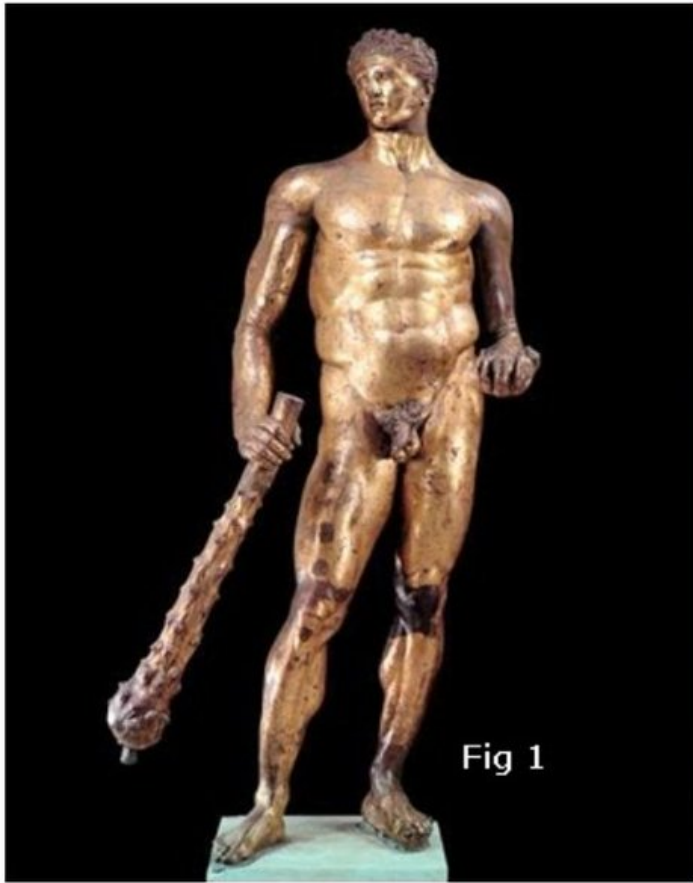


Fig 1



Fig 2

Fig 1: Statue of Hercules in gilded bronze from the 2nd century BC. Hercules is holding a club and a wine cup. Source: Musei Capitolini (<http://en.museicapitolini.org>). Fig 2: Standing figure of Balarama with the club, plough, conch and wine cup. Gold and brass, c.9th century AD. Source: Wikimedia Commons / Marie-Lan Nguyen

The parallels are quite remarkable. Krishna was born in Mathura at banks of Yamuna & he also belonged to Shurasena tribe of Yadu dynasty. But he was dark skinned & Balarama was fair skinned. Therefore, Megasthenes' description of Indian Hercules is strongly suggestive of Balarama.

“How invaluable such remnants of ancient race of Harikula! How refreshing to the mind yet to discover, amidst the ruins on the Yamuna, Hercules (Baldeva, god of strength) *retaining his club and lion’s hide*, standing on his pedestal at Baldeo, and yet worshipped by Suraseni! This was the name (Baldeo) given to a large tract of country round Mathura, or rather round Surpura, the ancient capital founded by Surasena, the grandfather of the Indian brother-deities, Krishna and Baldeva, Apollo and Hercules. The title would

In Indian tradition, Balrama is credited with wrestling & unarmed warfare. Like Hercules, Balrama is also depicted holding a club or a mace. Hercules used lion skin as his armour & Balrama also is sometimes shown with tiger's skin wrapped around his shoulders.



The Kingdom of Pandaea, over which the Indian Hercules is said to have placed his daughter as ruler is possibly the Pandyan kingdom of #TamilNadu. Pandyas r mentioned in the Mahabharata, where they r described as fierce warriors who took part in Mahabharata war & sided with Pandavas

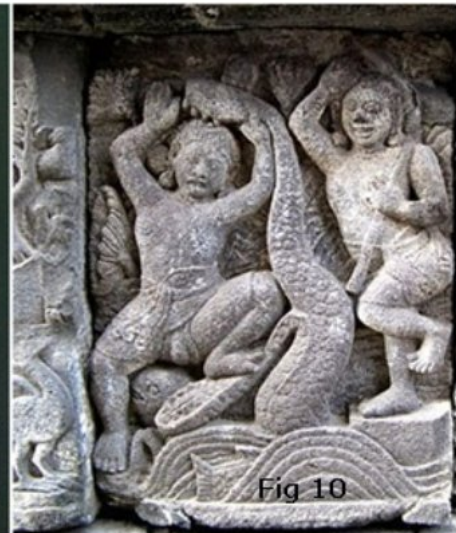
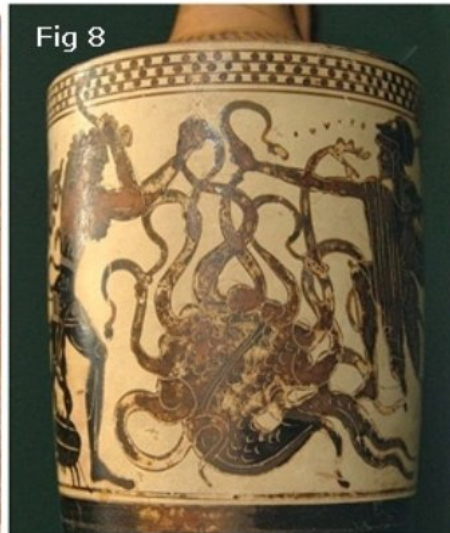
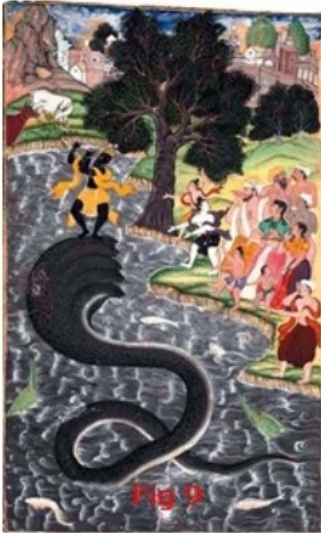


Fig 8: Hercules, Iolaus and the Lernaean Hydra. Attic lekythos, c. 500–475 BC.

Source: Wikimedia Commons. Fig 9: Krishna dancing on the head of Kaliya, Imperial Mughal School, India, c.1590-1595. Source:

Wikimedia Commons. Fig 10: Balarama prying apart the jaws of Kaliya, while Krishna dances in triumph. Candi Vishnu, Indonesia. Source: <http://www.art-and-archaeology.com/indonesia/prambanan>

If we dig deeper & compare some other iconographical features of both of them, we'll be left with very little doubt regarding the veracity of this association.

The most prominent attribute of Balarama, apart from the club is plough. Balarama is always depicted with a plough.

Bahram appears in the relief of Ardeshir I at Naqs-e Rostam III, with a *lion's skin* in his left hand and a *club* in his right.



Fig 7: Bahram depicted as Hercules. 153 BC. at Kermanshah, Iran. Source: Wikipedia / Alieh

Interestingly, the Greek Hercules is also associated with the plough.

Both Bahram and Hercules are termed as Gods of Fertility. Both of them were fond of drinking wine. Even temperamentally Bahram & Hercules were similar, both of them had a passionate fiery nature.





Fig 4: Bronze coin issued by the Indo-Greek ruler Agathocles (c.180-165 BC), depicting Balarama and Krishna. Source: Wikimedia Commons / Classical Numismatic Group, <http://www.cngcoins.com>

Both of them had great affection for their friends & a desire to rid the world of evil. Although, Hercules was indeed Balrama, he appears to have inherited many of the heroic exploits of Krishna as well, possibly b'coz the brother deities were conjointly worshipped in Mathura.



As a result, we can detect many symbolic similarities between the exploits of Krishna-Balrama & The labors of Hercules. As per legends, Hercules had roamed the entire world & performed many heroic acts. The brothers Krishna-Balrama r also credited with numerous acts of Heroism.



Balarama, in particular, was known for his fondness for travel. When the Mahabharata war was raging, he opted out of it & instead embarked on a year-long journey worldwide during which he killed many demons. It's possible that different cultures have preserved different versions of his exploits.

THE GREEKS TOOK STORIES OF VEDIC HINDUS  
AND MADE THEM INTO THEIR GODS AND  
GODESSES .... LIKE HERE .. KRISHNA WAS MADE  
AS HERCULES !!!

KRISHNA = HERCULES ....

THE HISTORIANS HAVE LIED TO HINDUS AND THE  
WORLD .....

INSPIRE OF WRITTEN EVIDENCE..... AS FOLLOWS  
... : In the 4th century B. C. E., Megasthenes the  
Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta  
Maurya said, "the Souraseni (Surasena), who lived  
in the region of Mathura worshipped Herakles." This  
Herakles is usually identified with Krishna (Hari-  
Kula-Eesha, Lord of Hari Kulam). The word Kulam  
means family or clan. Somewhere along the way  
the identity of Vaasudeva merged with that of  
Krishna.

And added onto them in an attempt to glorify their hero. Besides, migrations of people, trade & cultural contacts over past several 1000 yrs must've played role in giving shape to the currently available versions of these stories in different lands.



Starting from childhoods of both heroes, Hercules strangled 2 snakes in his childhood who were sent by his stepmother to kill <https://t.co/i5GW0gdef5> Indian version Kansa sent demon Putna, who smeared her breast with snake venom to kill Krishna, but he bit her so hard that she died



In another incident, Hercules killed Hydra of Lerna, a giant serpent-like monster with multiple <https://t.co/RqkgWcRhxF> Indian version, Krishna killed a multi-headed snake called Kaliya.

In another labor, Hercules killed stymphalian birds who had bronze beak & sharp metallic feathers.



Krishna too killed a giant man eating bird with a sharp beak called Bakasura.  
There are many other labors of Hercules which has a striking similarity with the exploits of Krishna.  
The similarities in these stories clearly, suggest a common origin.



Given the fact that Krishna-Balrama form an integral part of the Epic Mahabharata, one must conclude that these stories travelled to Greece from India and not other way round. Nor, should it surprise anyone that an Eastern Demigod, epitomizing strength courage and righteousness..



..was adopted by Greeks as their Cultural Hero. Greeks habitually adopted foreign deities as their own. As pointed by Sir William Jones, the Grecian Dionysus is none other than Indian God Rama. Dionysus and Hercules had a gap of 15 generations between them, same as Rama & Krishna.





Historical Context: During Mahabharata Epoch, Greek colonies existed in close proximity in India & many Greek Kings established small kingdoms in India. Mahabharata referred to the Greeks as "Yavanas". As per Mahabharata, Yavanas were present beyond Gandhara In Northwestern India.

The Epic mentions that Yavanas were fierce warriors who participated in great war along with other powerful conglomerates called Sakas, Pahavas, Hunas etc.

Mahabharata mentions a Yavana stronghold near Mathura & a Yavana Port city in Southern India.

What happened to these Greek colonies in India-whether they migrated westwards after war or got absorbed within the Indian populace is a question that remains unanswered. Given that many Greek colonies existed in India & they had also participated in the great war..

..it seems quite appropriate that the Greek glorified the brother deities Krishna-Balarama. The Greek and many other western people who value physical strength & heroic courage idolized Balarama in particular & turned him into their Cultural Hero.

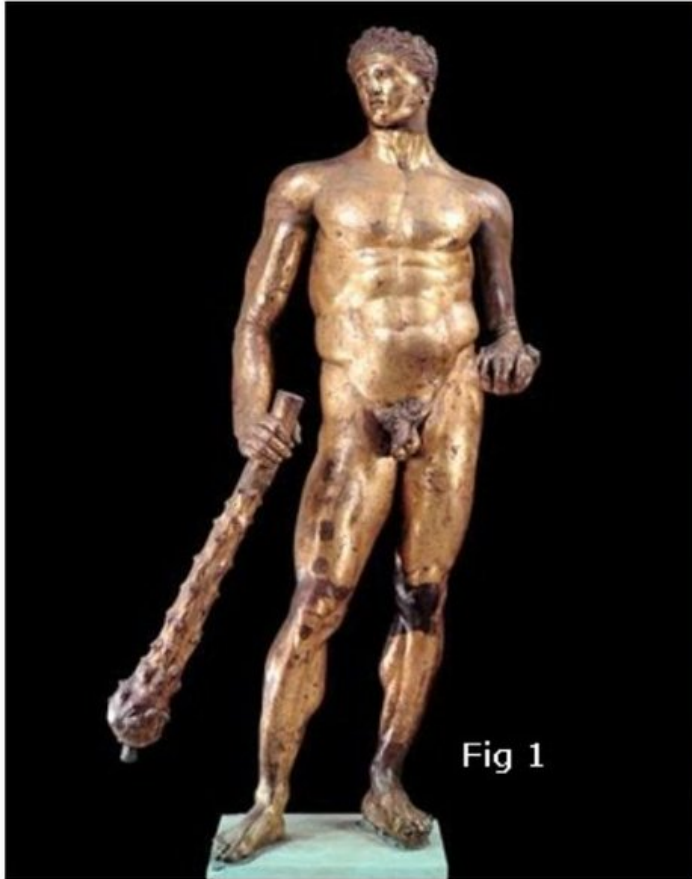


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Therefore, can it be true that Greek Hercules, Indian Balarama, Roman Iorgovan, Persian Barham & many other Demigods of different cultures were the same person.



Fig 4: Bronze coin issued by the Indo-Greek ruler Agathocles (c.180-165 BC), depicting Balarama and Krishna. Source: Wikimedia Commons / Classical Numismatic Group, <http://www.cngcoins.com>

If yes, then it further strengthens the Sanatan belief that there was only one Dharma ie Sanatan Dharma in the beginning of the World and it is indeed the oldest Dharma of the World.

Just think...

Jaitu Sanatan ■

