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"One of the first questions, any Indian gets asked when abroad, is about the bindi. Of all the various answers that are possible, the most definite one is that a bindi is considered auspicious among Hindus , even by those who do not sport it!" 1/n

Even within the country there are people who question it's need find it to be obsolete an incongruous tribal marking in this day and age; however one looks at it, it is lack of understanding of what the bindi entails, it's purpose, it's symbolism, it's health benefits if any 2/n

■ring■r is a major aspect of a vaidik■'s life. It was not just the women who indulged in beautification but so did the men. kri■■a is always adorned in his favourite colour yellow, a diadem with a peacock feather, a garland of Vaijayanti flowers, his flute and so on. 3/n

These are his vibhutis, with or without them he is the embodiment of joy and freedom but these are his individual expressions of that very same joy! Most important of all he sports kasturi tilakam on his forehead, made of musk paste!(tilak is a vertical line to a bindi's dot) 4/n

Most Hindus, who take after such lofty examples, enjoy alankara■a (mehendi/ bindi) and ■bh■■a■a (bangles/ anklets etc). Adornment and Accessories are part and parcel of day-to-day life for a vaidika. 5/n

Gold jewelry of the most intricate and of the best quality is what India has always been known for worldwide (along with it's textiles). Financial security apart, the sheer variety in jewelry design is noteworthy, all of which is at least thousands of years old. 6/n

Using natural minerals, plants and flowers holistically to express one's wholeness, a whole new aesthetic came into being with the rise of vaidika culture. Using nature's bounty to beautify oneself is a common practice in all cultures – 7/n

from the Aboriginals in Australia to the various Tribes of Africa to the Natives in Americas –we see body paint, tattoos, feathers, and elaborate costumes. What is amazing with the Indian adornment is that it has survived in it's traditional form in this modern age. 8/n

It is not relegated to museums like other dying or dead cultures. One reason for the hardy nature of ‘Indian culture’ is that the whole culture is based on a strong philosophy, unlike other modern practices which will remain just fads, any vaidika custom is hard to get rid of 9/n

Fashion changes every season but an Aesthetic that stems from living in consonance with one’s belief system never fades into oblivion. The main reason for putting a bindi (from ‘bindu’ ie a dot or a centre or the source) is to do ■tma p■ja. To remember the one who is inside 10/n

To acknowledge; we are not just a physical body there is something more to us. It is this j■v■tma’s identity that we are symbolizing. By applying the same kumkum or chandan on the deities at the altar we emphasize the connection between jagat / ■■vara and us, as individuals. 11/n

We do this day and day out. This is how a philosophy is lived. This is how it is actualized. Placement of the bindi is very important – the ■jna cakra or the third eye – which is central command for our bodies in terms of housing the pineal gland 12/n

(and in turn connected to the pituitary gland) is being activated by our own finger-tips (nerve endings) during application. By constant application of pressure at this point, as in acupressure, we end up curing ourselves of many ailments. 13/n

Secretions of melatonin, serotonin and so on that are essential to the body are released via this rub in between the eyebrows. Most of us rub this spot automatically when suffering from stress or headaches. 14/n

Of course various styles of tilak are sported as j■ti symbols, this is also true, just as turbans are tied in various set patterns and these work as an identity marker of their region and family, so too the style in which chandan is applied can tell us who that person is...15/n

..sociologically speaking, all about his origin and status et al Chandan of course is applied by renunciates for cooling purposes or even vibhuti to signify vair■gya, while red sindoor is used by women for retaining the positive energy at this centre. 16/n

(■jna cakra is the point from where latent energy of kun■alini that rises is released) Only married women sport a bindi is a false discourse that must be remedied immediately even babies in South India both male and female sport bo■■us. Men too wear a bindi when they pray 17/n

–technically no prayer is possible without putting on a bindi. Guests are sent off with fruits and a freshly applied bindi, here it works as a promise, to come back! No festival is complete without roli (turmeric and lime) 18/n

and marriages in the North of India are signified by the husband applying sindoor in the parting of the hair of the bride. This is the expanse of the brahmarandhra, an astral aperture, that is kept active and alert with the mercury present in sindoor. 19/n

Physical benefits said to be numerous from controlling blood pressure, to clearing sinuses, to reducing stress, to alleviating headaches, to keeping infections at bay, to beating insomnia, helps hearing, removes symptoms of Bell’s Palsy all from a

small dot on your forehead! 20/n

In Ayurveda ■irodh■ra is done on this point for forty minutes plus to release the strain of the muscles and nerves in this area. The best part of our culture is that we don’t need labs or scientists to tell us if a practice works, we can start the practice right away ..21/n

..and observe for ourselves what the truth is. Nowadays of course bindis made of synthetic materials are in vogue and they serve no purpose whatsoever except perhaps enhancing the looks of the wearer and/or causing dermatological damage. 22/n

Traditionally bindi was always red or maroon in colour (colour of energy) and was produced from the styles and stigmas of the Saffron flower (crocus sativus). It can also be substituted by the dye of the Annatto seeds (bixa orellana) or the less expensive ...23/n

...and commonly available Turmeric powder (curcuma longa), which is mixed with lime and/ or alum to get the red tone. Unfortunately from a very renewable and reusable-minded culture we are veering towards a dangerous use and throw mentality. 24/n

Whatever we apply on our bodies is food for the body we must not apply on our skin what we don’t ingest inside our stomach. A cardinal rule for healthy and beautiful living. Yet, the cosmetic industry is choc-a-block with harmful chemicals and no one seems to mind the abuse. 25/n

Our sages wrote the great texts of Ayurveda after centuries of study and practice, it behooves us to follow some basic tenets, at the very least, as these are for our own long lasting benefit. 26/n

from an article I wrote 3 yrs ago - by collating info from net (have source links) and also from what I learnt from vriddha vyavahaara - that never got published. @JyotiSNK and @khatvaanga. Have also noted bindis on Amazighs of Maghreb n Koreans and Chinese of yore TVDramas! 27/n

if anyone has more info please to thread...needed convincing when i was growing up in the north and hated putting a bindi 1) coz not married then 2) thought it did not go with my 'smart look' (I KNOW I KNOW don't judge) So I know how the other 3/4th thinks! Now it is 24/7 n/n