

# Ontolosna

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ગંભીર વિદ્યાર્થીનું એક મિત્ર

તેને જાણીએ એક નવું



These ambiguities, redundances, and deficiencies recall those attributed ... to a certain Chinese encyclopedia entitled Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge. On those remote pages it is written that animals are divided into (a) those that belong to the Emperor, (b) embalmed ones, (c) those that are trained, (d) suckling pigs, (e) mermaids, (f) fabulous ones, (g) stray dogs, (h) those that are included in this classification, (i) those that tremble as if they were mad, (j) innumerable ones, (k) those drawn with a very fine camel's hair brush, (l) others, (m) those that have just broken a flower vase, (n) those that resemble flies from a distance.

—Jorge Luis Borges.

The five have come together and their journey begun. They think they want the scriptures, but they seek the end of the way.

Joyfully follow the way, the quiet way, to the other country."

— Wu Cheng'en, *The Journey to the West*.

Please Note:

Ontolosna is a speculative world of fantasy. It derives inspiration from the rich religious traditions of eastern Asia, particularly those of Tibet, Korea, China and India, and seeks to treat these sources with respect. However, religious traditions in Ontolosna should never be confused with those of the real world.



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Meditation 3:

Gifts  
of the  
Aji



Ontolosna  
Creators' Guidebook



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# Gifts of the Aji

ONTOLOSAN MYTH AND HISTORY REVOLVES AROUND THE AJI



**THE AJI** (plural) are revolutionary teachers and leaders who implement great religious and social change. An **AJA** (singular) transcends individual Traditions, often combining aspects of them in new and surprising ways. Aji are associated with technological progress, religious innovation, social upheaval, and spiritual, emotional and sexual liberation. They are believed to have Awakened into **TAY'KAN** (Liberation). Aji are forces of change, but often leave great destruction in their wake. The Aji are opposed by **SHALI** or Heroes.

In *Tlöna* tradition, seven **ANIMAL AJI** mark the evolution and progress of nature, while seven semi-legendary **AJI OF THE SKY** chart the beginnings of human endeavour. History proper—The Seventh Reality—revolves around six **AJI OF PROGRESS**, and begins with the first Theogyn ritual. As the world darkens, It is hoped that the seventh and final Aja will awaken to lead soon.

## THE CURSE OF HEROES

A **SHALA** (singular) or 'Hero' is one of great power who opposes the work of an Aja. Collectively, they are known as the **SHALI** or **SHILAJI** (anti-Aji). As the liberations wrought by an Aja often involve great social, religious and economic dislocation, most find themselves opposed by one or more Shali, who fight to defend the existing order. Some Shali are false or fallen Aji.

Lesser heroes or evil adepts who oppose the Aji are known as **MUNAJEYO** or **MUN**.



## SAH NI

Snow leopards (**SAH**) are held by the Tlōna to be among the four speaking races of the Bird's Back, along with humans, kut, and the legendary daktu (snow apes or yeti).

A **NI** is a nun (the term also includes monks).

Snow leopards usually live solitary lives above the snowline. They have learned to disrupt kut focii, or even face down wild kut in confrontations of raw power.

Ni Sah sometimes make pilgrimage in groups of three or four. Usually vegetarian, they are said to protect and feed meditating humans. No Sah can roar, but even Awakened Ni Sah are notoriously taciturn in communication. The rare visits they make to human communities to lead in (humming) chant or meditation are considered great blessings. Sah Ni will sometimes take human disciples, but require a vow of silence.

Sah Ni often work in close cooperation with **DA KINI**, and are usually followers of **KOMUN BLACK TONGUE** or **NUN SHAJA** the Snow Lioness.

## SEVEN ANIMAL AJI

First came **ANT**, who killed the Wild Fury and became the first gatherer.

Then was **SANDPIPER**, the first who imagined, the first who told stories.

Third came **VULTURE**, who saw the flow of the real, and made the first ritual.

Then was **FOX**, first of shamans, who stole the rattle and drum from the Twenty One Powers.

Next came **PIKA**, the first who traded.

Sixth was **HORSE**, who is called Sacrifice, the first who questioned; the first to understand death. She gave herself in return for wisdom.

Last came **SNOW LEOPARD**, she of the holy vows, the first who sought release, the first to glimpse Liberation.

*Then came Woman.*

## SEVEN AJI OF THE SKY

**THE FIRST AJA OF THE NUMINOUS SKY:** a wandering shamanka, no one knows her name or where she came from. She taught the arts of meditation and contraception and healing, cooking and queening and weaving and the use of plough and fishing net. We honour her with the title of **GAEUTARR**, 'The Awakened One'.

**THE SECOND AJA OF THE CLOUDY DEEP:** Saijin, a queen of her people. She cultivated the Five Gifts, she gave the hoe and plough laws, she laid out the order of altars and cities, she invented contracts and writing and bookburning. She taught pleasure.

**THE THIRD AJA OF THE STORMY GREY:** a man, a poor nomad who rose among the grain folk, who brought the invisible arts of mathematics and engineering, who made music and paper and who repaired the sky.







#### CONTEMPLATIONS OF FALLING LEAVES

This listing of the Twenty One Aji is derived from a history scroll entitled *Contemplations of Falling Leaves*, housed in the Hall of Ancestors and Descendants at Ba'Shijang. Its silver binding bears the seals of the Red Da Kini, and the document was honoured for burning in the byon of the opal magpie.

**THE FOURTH AJA OF THE NEVER-STILL PARASOL:** a nun of the high crownward plains. She ordained the trees, she found the secrets of the Wind Horse, the sacred soma, she tamed the sacrificial fire.

**THE FIFTH AJA OF THE MOUNTAIN-LOVING CLOUD:** the Axle-Carver, a farwing woman of the Narisha hills. She freed the slaves, she tamed anger and war, she taught the subtle strengths of **SUN** (non-violence) and diplomacy. It is said she ascended Bushon, the Real Mountain, and lives there un-ageing at Tap Jae Ji'ip.

**THE SIXTH AJA OF THE SPRAY-TOSSED FOG:** a voyager of the Tail Wing Islands. Ever-courageous, she angered the Ocean with her impious ships: pursued by the mightiest of the Kut, she mastered the terrible secrets of tantra. She brought the first of the New Seeing, she taught the fluidity of love.



**THE SEVENTH AJA OF THE THREE TORCHES:** a blind woman of the Tlöna, her names was **HWA-MAH**, greatest of the Sky Aji. Much-loved, she brought the mirror and the lens. She abolished marriage. She bought new speech. She rode the black horse.

*Then came the nations.*

## SEVEN AJI OF PROGRESS

**THE FIRST AJA OF THE PASSING YEARS**, a woman of the Ban, known to us as **KIJI PLEDGING BIRD**. In the first progress of the first epoch, the year of the opal crane, she gave voice and volition to the Kut in the first Theagyn ritual. It was she who birthed the Takut, the Speaking Devis. She taught a new language which opened minds to reality. Her Shala was the Songwhan of the Foaming Tide.

**THE SECOND AJA OF THE RISING GENERATIONS**, a Root Princess of the Ban, her name was **MOKU RED-BROW**. She mastered the secrets of furnace and steel, and in the fifth progress of the first epoch, the wing of the silver snow lion, she found Liberation. It was Red-Brow who first made slow-persuasion against the shamanka. In the eternal mountains, she founded **HI SALANKA**, the city of pearl and peaches where all find true harmony. Her Hero was the Bird Rider of Cho Lon, who bought the Xe mercenaries out of BanSam. The mudangs killed Red-Brow during the NewSpan rites at Ha'shandan.

**THE THIRD AJA OF THE WINGS OF PLEASURE**, a male of the Tlöna, of the caste of touch-doctors. His gifts were the secrets of fermentation and pin medicine, and in the fourth progress of the second epoch, the byon of the silver yak, he attained Non-Self. He lived with no doorway, he lived with no roof, he died alone. Some say his name was **TULSI-RA**. His Adversary was a ghost.

**THE FOURTH AJA OF THE PROGRESS OF TRUTH**, three in body, one in wisdom.

*[Let no one speak of the Two False Aji!]*

First came the **BEARDED AJA**, called **SATYA-RI HALF CRAZY**, a Tlöna priest of the altar builders, though he thought the TaKut but false mimics. His gifts were the paper bird, the alchemy of compounds, and the pathways of breathless trance. In the third progress of the fourth epoch, the year of the jijin tiger, he found Emptiness, and condemned all the priestesses of the queendom to poverty and silence. He made the contracts of new marriage. He opened the castes, he freed the children. His death was terrible.

Second came **DU LI OF THE HIGH PATH**, a trader of the Ban, a pilgrim of the Iron-Lung Road. Her gifts were boundless compassion and strong anger, and in the third progress of the fourth epoch, the year of the opal goose, she united the temples of Tlön. She renewed the castes.

Third came **MUK BI LAN, THE EYE OF THE PHOENIX**, once a bandit queen in the high forests of The Three Kingdoms. She carried many wounds; she lost her right hand in battle. In the fourth progress of the fourth epoch, the year of the silver snow lion, she conquered Illusion, and thereafter fell silent, lingering long in the realms of Story. At Wingtouch in the year of the jijin horse, in the city of Sinop, she gave birth to **BI BO KI SHA**, most beloved of the Kut, Devi born of woman. To see bi Bo Ki Sha was to love her: to resist her will was to destroy one's soul.

*These were the Three, their teachings are One. Many were the Shali, and many the Munajeyo who opposed them. Yet as she grew in beauty and wisdom, bi Bo Ki Sha conquered the enemies of the Aji with fierce compassion.*

**THE FIFTH AJA OF THE EPOCH OF LIBERATION** was **CHA-II OF THE HUNDRED REFININGS**, the White Mountain Empress, the Rider of Power. A Kal'ttar nomad of the high plains of Nunshanttang, her banner was the laughing lion, and her gift was the secret of the Walking Kut. In the seventh chon chon of the fifth epoch, the wing of the jijin snow lion, she attained Non-Duality, and with her armies brought the Friendship of the White Mountain. She blessed the mighty with poverty and the poor with meat and strong drink. She brought justice and mercy to the La Mahs. She taught simplicity and pleasure, hereness and nowness. She dissolved for a time the castes of the Tlöna. She made disciples of the Kut. Her Nemesis was the White Lotus Rani.

*[Then came Mountain Breaks Storm, in the third progress of the seventh epoch, the byon of the silver eagle].*

**THE SIXTH AJA OF THE REALITY OF ADVANCEMENT** was **KA-SIN THE BOUNTIFUL**, a woman of the Tlöna, first Rani of the Stone Mountain. Her gifts were the new law, the printing block, and the secrets of the high dome and que tower. In the fourth chon chon of the seventh epoch, the byon of the jade turtle, she found Perfect Bliss. As Rani, she exiled the shamanka and the script traders and the lawyers, she forbade the warriors and tantrikii their blood, she rebuilt the altars and made great once more the city of Sinop. Her daughters are many, as were the powerful who opposed her.

It is now the byon of the opal bear, the twenty fifth wing of the seventh progress of the seventh epoch. Two hundred and forty wings have passed since the terrible events of Mountain Breaks Storm.

All await with great longing the Awakening of the Seventh Aja, the **AJA OF KASANGSARI**, the Edge. Her city and her clan are hidden to us; her name is known only to our descendants. She will close the progress of the epochs. She will guide the ending of all things.

## OF HISTORY AND TRUTH

The Progress of the Aji contains the keys to ritual, to myth, and to the core values of farwing life. Yet what are we, as Ontolosnan creators, to make of the lists? Some are clearly historical, key actors in the progress of the epochs. Others are known only through their stories, and may well be creations of legend, or individuals whose deeds have been endlessly elaborated by cultic embellishment. Whatever ultimately lies behind the stories, all of the Aji may be considered symbolic representations of the achievements and challenges of their respective ages.

The idea of an for each epoch first arose in the early years of the Tlönan White Lotus dynasty. The lists were ordered and compiled, and the truth quickly spread through the power of bookburning, which frees history from the legacy of innapropriate interpretation. Only scholars of the skeptic tradition are interested in mere history over the all-important mythic legacy.

The classification system is not without its difficulties: for example in the mysterious case of the Fourth Aja—three undeniable historical individuals whose struggles tax the systematising tendencies of even the most pious.

The progress of the Aji is neither singular nor easily mapped. Marriage is abolished then reformulated, castes are extinguished then reintroduced, the privileges of kut and priesthood are curtailed or reinforced. Again and again, key institutions are recast for their age. And the Great Bird flies on.