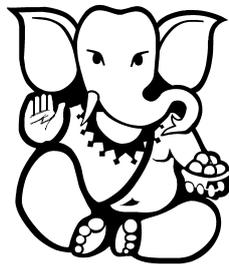


Om namaste Ganapataye.

A detailed translation of the
Ganesha Atharva Sheersha

Dedicated to Her Supreme Holiness
Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

The Source of this knowledge and all knowledge.
May the three worlds resound with Your praise.



The Ganesha Atharva Sheersha

This ancient prayer in praise of the elephant-headed Hindu Deity **Shri Ganesha**, or **Ganapati** as he is also popularly known, is widely used in worship all over India and is considered to be the oldest and most important text concerning **Shri Ganesha**.

In Hindu mythology **Shri Ganesha** was created as a boy by **Shrī Pārvatī**, the Mother Goddess, to guard Her bathroom, and His refusal to allow Her Husband **Lord Shiva**, the personification of the Supreme Spirit, to enter, resulted in a fierce battle where **Shri Ganesha's** head was severed by trickery. In order to avoid the destruction of the universe by **Shri Pārvati** in anger at Her Son's murder, He was restored to life; His head being replaced with that of a one-tusked elephant and He was given the honourable position as the Chief of the **Ganas**, various troops of celestial servants of **Lord Shiva**, and promised that He would always be worshipped first. Thus He is praised at the commencement of all worship, marriages, journeys or any other ceremony or enterprise; also because He is **Vighneshvara**, the 'Ruler of Obstacles', and when propitiated removes impediments to success, but if ignored creates obstacles. There is a story that once **Lord Shiva** set off to destroy **Tripura**, the three-fold city of the **Rakshasas** (demons), and His chariot-wheel broke on the way. Surprised that such a thing should happen to Him, He discerned through His supernatural powers that He had omitted to worship **Shri Ganesha** before setting off, which He duly did and achieved success.

The name **Ganesha** is a compound of **Gana** 'troop' and **Īsha** 'Supreme Lord' and thus means 'Leader, Supreme Master or Lord of the troops'. In the prayer itself He is mostly addressed as **Ganapati** which has the same meaning. In Sanskrit, meanings can also be derived from each syllable, so **Ga-na-pati** can be taken as **ga**- 'elephant' (**gaja**), **na**- 'man' (**nara**) and **pati** 'Lord' from **pa**- 'to protect' thus meaning 'the Lord Protector who is elephant and man'. It is said that Christ was sometimes worshipped as an elephant during the Middle Ages.

Shri Ganesha is 'the Lord of Wisdom' and is completely dedicated to the wishes of His Mother, who is Herself the Supreme Goddess, the **Ādi Shakti** or Creative Principle of the Universe. He is 'the Son' of the Divine Family, His immaculate creation being reflected in the birth of Christ and, like Lord Jesus, He can be considered as comprising this whole universe from the tiniest grain of matter to the Supreme Spirit.

His qualities of innocence, purity, wisdom and auspiciousness are fundamental to all the Divine Incarnations and **Sat-gurus**. He is the ‘**Mūlādhāra**’ –‘the Original Support’, the foundation of the whole Divine subtle system and it is only when He is awakened within us that the **Kundalinī Shakti** can rise up to **Sahasrāra** (the Thousand petalled Lotus at the top of the head) and unite with the **Ātmā**-‘Spirit’ to give us our Self-realisation.

The title **At’harva Sheersha**, although commonly used (*see Devi Atharva Sheersha p.56.*) apparently has no clear translation. **Sheersha** means ‘head’ and **Atharva** the name of the sage who composed the last of the four **Vedas**; so ‘from the head of Sage Atharva’ has been suggested. However this invocation does not appear in the extant portion of the **Atharva Veda**. In fact **Shri Ganesha** is not mentioned in any of the **Vedas**. The connection may be that the **Atharva Veda** contains mainly invocations of the Divine for various purposes and this is in the same style. **At’harva** can simply mean a prayer and **Shīrsha**, like ‘head’ in English, can mean the ‘foremost’, or ‘highest’, so one interpretation is ‘the Highest Praise’; another is that **at’harva** means ‘unwavering’ and so our **shīrsha**-‘head’ and hence ‘mind’ is fixed intently on our purpose of attaining Self-realisation.

The **Ganesha A.S.** is a minor **Upanishad** in it’s own right, sometimes called the **MahāGanapati Upanishad**, and contains a variety of wisdom concerning **Shri Ganesha**, each of the ten verses being composed in a different style and metre, addressing a different aspect of His knowledge. It was probably composed in the Puranic period (0-1700AD) later than the **Rāmāyāna** and **Mahābhārata** (*see Historical Note. Appendix 2. p54.*). The **Vedas** are about two thousand years older.

The ideas expressed in the **Ganesha A.S.** correspond with the **Samkhya** philosophy on which there is a note at the end of the booklet. (*Appendix 5. p.64*)

The **Ganesha A.S.** is widely believed to have great power, and many miracles and much spiritual progress are attributed to its use. The ***Phala-shruti** ‘listening to the results’, a further six verses after the main body of the prayer indicates some of the powers of this invocation (**see page 46 for the text and short translation*). Repeating a thousand times is said to grant any desire of the devotee. Like the **Rām-raksha** and many other great prayers, the **Ganesha Atharva Sheersha** was revealed in a divinely inspired dream, although the identity of the author is unclear.

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Abbreviations used in the following commentary.....

abl. ablative case- 'from....'.

acc.- accusative case- ie. The object of the sentence.

adv.- adverb

as above. means that the word has appeared previously in the same verse.

as below.- means that the word will appear later in the same verse

cf. 'compare with.....' - 'shows similarity to....'

comp. comparative 'more'

dat. dative case- 'to....'

Eng. 'similar to the English word...'

fem. -feminine

gen. -genitive case- 'of...', 'belonging to...'

impv.-imperative mood. i.e. an order

in comp. 'a modified form of this word used in composition' (see **Sandhi** above and note below)

inst. -instrumental case- 'by...' or 'with...'

Lat. - 'derived from the Latin word'

lit. - 'literally translated this means'

loc. -locative case- 'in...', 'at...'

mas. -masculine

MW- M. Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary.

neut. -neuter ending.

nom. -nominative case- the subject of the sentence.

p. -person or page. **1p.** = 1st person- **p.1** = page 1

pl. -plural.

pp -present participle. 'doing'

pres. -present tense of the verb.

pron. -pronoun- 'he, she, it, etc.'

psp. -past participle. 'done'

sing. -singular. In the following text words are considered to be singular unless stated otherwise.

In the explosion of the text, case endings have been put in brackets so that the original, and possibly more familiar, root words can be seen, eg. **rūpa(m)**, the accusative of **rūpa** 'form'. These endings are often modified according to the rules of **Sandhi** (word joining) in which case the word with the original, unmodified ending is written afterwards followed by the abbreviation '**in comp.**' eg. **st'hito-** (**st'hitah^a** *in comp.*)

Notes on Sanskrit pronunciation.

These notes also apply to Hindi and Marathi.

Sanskrit, Hindi and Marāthi are written in a script called **Deva-nāgarī** *lit. 'from the town of the Gods'*, sometimes called **Nāgarī**. This was developed by the Aryans in India from an earlier script known as **Brahmi**, probably Phoenecian in origin, more than two thousand years ago. **Devanāgarī** script reached its present form in about 1000 AD. A peculiarity of all Indian scripts is that each consonant is considered to be followed by a short **a**, unless indicated otherwise. Unlike English, letters in **Deva-nāgarī** have fixed sounds and one can be fairly sure of the pronunciation from the spelling.

1 **Vowels.** Devanagari has only 14 vowels as opposed to 23 in English, and three of those are virtually unused. It is important for correct pronunciation to know whether **a**, **i** or **u** is short or long.

The symbols ā, ī and ū have been used for long vowels as in cart, keen and pool. **a**, **i** or **u** written without a line on top are short. Long **ā** and short **a** are different sounds whereas long **ī** and **u** are merely the short sounds lengthened.

The short a sound is like the **u** in **but** or the **a** in **local** and never as in **bat**. This hard **a** sound (**mat, flat**) does not seem to exist in any Indian language. It is almost as if you tried to say the consonants without any vowel sound. **Ganapati**, for example, would be pronounced 'g-n-p-ti' roughly like 'gunner-putty'.

The short i is as in **bit** and the long **ī** as in **beet**.

The short u is as in **put** and not as in **fun** (which is a short **a**, unless you come from Yorkshire or Lancashire) and the long **ū** as in **boot**.

o and e are always long, so **med-** would be pronounced as English 'maid' and **mod-** as in 'modem' and not as in 'modern'

au and ai are the diphthongs (double sounds) **a-u** and **a-i**, so **maid-** = 'my-eed'. Short **o** and **e** as in 'log' and 'leg' are not in Sanskrit, but are used in Hindi and Marathi.

The symbols ō and ē are used where a final **o** or **e** elides into a short **a** at the beginning of the next word as in **sthitō-'si** which is **sthitō+asi**, or **namastē-'stu** which is **namaste+astu**, so the vowel is longer than an ordinary long **o** or **e**.

Where a word ends in **e**, it is always pronounced long **é** or **eh**.

- 2 **Deva-nāgarī** alphabet is systematically arranged (*unlike the English jumble*) -first the 14 vowels followed by five sets of five consonants in the order of the parts of the mouth in which they are produced, gutturals (k+g), palatals (ch+j), cerebrals (t+d), dentals (t+d) and labials (p+b), with an aspirated form of every letter (kh, gh etc.) and a nasal for each set (guttural **n**, palatal **ṅ** etc.-*in English the adjustment is made automatically, eg. the n in 'hung' being pronounced palatally, but in 'hunt' dentally*). The cerebral **ṭ, ṭh d, dh, n, l** and **sh** are pronounced with the tip of the tongue curled back against the roof of the mouth. These are the letters generally used for writing English in **Nāgarī** script (**and, store** etc.).

The rest of the alphabet is the six semivowels **y, r, l, ḷ, ḷh** and **v**, three sibilants **śh, ṣh** and **s, h, anuswara, visarga** and the composite letters **ksh** and **jñ**.

- 3 Both **v** and **w** are used in transliterating Sanskrit but are in fact the same letter. The sound is halfway between **v** and **w** like 'vw' i.e. **tvwam**. One suggestion is to try to pronounce 'w' with the upper teeth touching the lower lip. Normally **w** is used when the consonant is compounded, eg. **twam, swami**; and **v** when on its own, eg. **Shiva, Vishnu**;

In Marathi a final **-āva** is pronounced **-āo**, so **Rāva**=**'Rāo'**; **Namdeva**=**'Namdeo'**

- 4 There are three sibilants in Sanskrit, a normal dental **s**, an aspirated **sh** which almost never starts a word (except when meaning 'six') and is usually found compounded eg. **Vishnu**, and an unaspirated **śh** as in **Śhiva, Ganeśha** etc. with a soft **h** as in 'sure'.

s is always unvoiced, ie. like **hiss** and not **his**.

5 A common case ending is an aspiration called **visarga** which is sometimes written as a final **h** or **h**, e.g. **namah**, but more accurately written **namah^a** indicating an echo of the final vowel sound with the aspiration. This is often the nominative singular of nouns and adjectives, and commonly modifies in composition.

6 **r** is a vowel, normally written **ri**, as in **ritam, Krishna** or **Sanskrit** and sometimes **ru**, as in **amrut**. Be aware that there is no full vowel sound after the **r**. Both the vowel **r** and the consonant **r** are retroflex (with the tongue curled back) and should be rolled in the Scottish manner and not with the English tendency to elongate the vowel and drop the **r** (ie. 'dark' being pronounced 'daak')

- 7 The composite letter **jñ** is pronounced palatally and hence had been written **gñy** (as in **gñyāna** 'knowledge') to facilitate pronunciation.

g is always pronounced as in **begin** and not as in **vegetable** (which is **j**).

- 8 There are no real fricatives (**th, f, v**) in Sanskrit, so **th** is not like 'the' but is pronounced as in **boat'hook** and is thus written **t'h** eg. **At'harva**. Also **ph** is not **f** but an aspirated **p** (as in 'map-holder') and **v** is half-way to **w**.

Note: *Differentiating between aspirated and un-aspirated consonants is tricky for westerners as we pronounce most initial consonants half aspirated anyway, 'down the garden' for example, has an aspirated **d** in 'down' but an un-aspirated cerebral **d** in 'garden'. The aspirated consonants have to be pronounced more like the Irish - 'd' hown the g'arden'. Un-aspirated consonants are more often found in French, for example **qui**, which is unaspirated while the English **key** is aspirated.*

- 9 In Hindi and Marathi short **a** at the end of words and before long syllables is dropped so **Rāma** becomes **Rām**, **Sulabhā** becomes **Sulbhā** etc.

This is not done in Sanskrit.

Hyphens are used in the text to facilitate pronunciation and ease of reading. Where a hyphen is used, it may indicate that the letter at the beginning of the following word also belongs to the end of the previous word or that the words are inextricably compounded. In either case, they should be run together as one word.

Sandhi (*euphonic combinations*)

Sanskrit is written as it is spoken, with phrases run together as a continuous string of letters or sounds. In order to make this smooth and sonorous the endings of words are modified to suit the beginnings of the following words. There are long complicated rules as to how this achieved. In effect we do the same in English without writing it, so that ‘Do you want to get a cup of coffee?’ if actually written as it is normally pronounced would be ‘Jawannageddacuppacoffee?’

Thus **Sat chit ānanda** becomes **Sach-chid-ānanda** and **Jagat** (world) softens to **Jagan-mātā** and **Jagad-ambā** (both meaning ‘World-Mother’) An **a** at the end of a word will coalesce with a vowel at the beginning of the following word, so **ava uttarāt** becomes **avottarāt**. **Visarga** (final aspiration) modifies in composition, so **namah^a namah^a** becomes **namo namah^a**, **Indrah^a twam** becomes **Indras-twam**, and **binduh^u utara** becomes **bindur-uttara**.

Pronunciation. The Indian way of saying mantras or indeed talking in general, is rather like playing the bagpipes, in that the vocal chords make a constant drone which is modulated into words in the mouth, rather than each word being individually enunciated; and thus a whole sentence becomes one piece.

One writer comments ‘The key to reciting Sanskrit is to dwell exaggeratedly on every heavy syllable (and in particular to draw out long vowels to a great length) while passing lightly and rapidly over all light syllables.’ A heavy syllable is one with a long vowel, or a short vowel followed by two or more consonants, Aspirated **sh**, **dh** etc. are single consonants.

Stress. There is a stress in the form of a slight upward inflection musically which generally falls on the penultimate syllable of a word or phrase, if that syllable is heavy, or the syllable before that if that is heavy or even the one before that if heavy. So the stress on **namo namah^a** is on the **o**, and the **namah^a** is rather thrown away.

Notation The notation adopted here is one which will still sound right to the uninitiated, while giving full information to scholars. It is in the main the modern or ‘scientific’ system of writing Sanskrit with the following exceptions:-

- śh** (written **ś** as in **Śiva, Ganeśa**), -**ṣh** (written **ṣ** as in **Viṣṇu**)
- ch** (written **c** as in **candra** - the normal sounds of **c** are covered by **s** and **k**)
- the vowel **ri** (written **r** eg. **Krsṇa**)

Sources. Sanskrit spellings and meanings have been checked using Monier-Williams’ Sanskrit Dictionary, M.Coulson’s Sanskrit primer and original Sanskrit texts as well as by Sanskrit scholars, and special thanks to Mrs. Padma Gujjewar without whose help and enthusiasm, the project could not have been completed.

Ganesha Atharva Sheersha

The Highest Praise of the Lord of the Ganas.

Om namaste Ganapataye.	<i>Om. Salutations to You, O Lord of the Ganas.</i>
Twameva pratyaksham tattvam-asi.	<i>You are the Manifestation of the Divine Principle</i>
Twameva kevalam kartā-‘si.	<i>You alone are the Doer.</i>
Twameva kevalam dhartā-‘si.	<i>You alone are the Supporter and the Sustainer.</i>
Twameva kevalam hartā-‘si.	<i>You alone are the Remover and Destroyer.</i>
Twameva sarvam khalv-idam Brahmāsi.	<i>You are everything even indeed the Formless Spirit</i>
Twam sākshād-ātmāsi nityam.	<i>You are the Embodiment of the Soul eternally (1)</i>
Ritam-vachmi. Satyam-vachmi.	<i>I speak Divine Law. I speak the Truth. (2)</i>
Ava twam mām.	<i>Protect thou me.</i>
Ava vaktāram. Ava śhrotāram.	<i>Be propitious to the speaker and the listener.</i>
Ava dātāram. Ava dhātāram.	<i>Watch over the one who gives and the receiver.</i>
Av-ān-ūchānam-ava śhishyam.	<i>Show favour to the learned scholar and the pupil.</i>
Ava paschāt-tāt. Ava puras-tāt.	<i>Protect from behind. Protect from the front.</i>
Av-ottarāt-tāt. Ava dakshināt-tāt.	<i>Protect from the left side. Protect from the right side.</i>
Ava-chordhvāt-tāt Av-ādharāt-tāt.	<i>Protect from above. Protect from below.</i>
Sarvato-mām pāhi-pāhi sam-antāt.	<i>From all directions guard and protect me constantly (3)</i>
Twam vāng-mayas-twam chin-mayah^a.	<i>You are the Spoken Word and Pure Consciousness.</i>
Twam ānanda-mayas-twam	<i>Joy is Your essence.</i>
Brahma-mayah^a.	<i>Formless Spirit is Your Nature.</i>
Twam sach-chid-ānand-ādviṭyō-‘si.	<i>You are Existence, Consciousness and Joy unequalled.</i>
Twam pratyaksham Brahmāsi.	<i>You are the Supreme Spirit manifested.</i>
Twam gñyāna-mayo vigñyāna-mayō-‘si.	<i>You are all Knowledge and Understanding. (4)</i>
Sarvam jagad-idam twatto jāyate.	<i>This whole world is born from You.</i>
Sarvam jagad-idam twattas tiṣṭṭhati.	<i>This whole world is sustained by You.</i>
Sarvam jagad-idam twayi layam-eṣhyati.	<i>This whole world will dissolve in You.</i>
Sarvam jagad-idam twayi pratyeti.	<i>This whole world returns to You.</i>
Twam bhūmir āpō-‘nalō-‘nilo nabhah^a	<i>You are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether (5 elements)</i>
Twam chatvāri vāk-padāni.	<i>You are the four parts of speech. (5)</i>
Twam guna tray-ātītah^a.	<i>You are beyond the three attributes</i>
Twam deha tray-ātītah^a.	<i>You are beyond the three bodies.</i>
Twam kāla tray-ātītah^a.	<i>You are beyond the three times.</i>
*Twam avast’hā-tray-ātītah^a.	<i>You are beyond the three states of consciousness.</i>
Twam mūlādhāra s’hitō-‘si nityam.	<i>You are eternally stationed at Mooladhara Chakra.</i>
Twam shakti-try-ātmakah^a.	<i>You are the Essence of the three Shaktis.</i>
Twām yogino dhyāyanti nityam.	<i>On You Yogis meditate constantly.</i>
Twam Brahmā twam Vishnus-twam.	<i>You are Lord Brahma. You are Shri Vishnu .</i>
Rudras-twam Indras-twam	<i>You are Lord Shiva. You are Shri Indra.</i>
Agnis-twam Vāyus-twam	<i>You are the God of Fire, You are Lord of the Wind.</i>
Sūryas-twam Chandramās-twam	<i>You are the Sun and You are the Moon.</i>
Brahma-bhūr-bhuvah^a swarom.	<i>Supreme Spirit, Earth, Sky, Heaven and Omkāra (6)</i>

** This line does not appear in all versions and not always in this position, sometimes being second or third.*

Ganādim pūrvam uchchārya.
Varnādim tad-anantaram.
Anu-swārah^a para-tarah^a.
Ardhendu lasitam. Tārena riddham.
Etat-tava manu swa-rūpam.
Gakārah^a pūrva rūpam.
Akāro madhyama rūpam
Anuswārash chāntya rūpam.
Bindur utara rūpam.
Nādah^a samdhānam. Samhitā sandhihⁱ.
Saishā Ganesha-vidyā.
Ganaka riṣhihⁱ.
Nichrid gāyatrī chhandah^a.
Ganapatir devatā.
Om Gam Ganapataye namah^a.

Saying Ganas first letter (G) at the beginning,
The first letter of the alphabet (A) next.
And the nasal sound (M) after that.
The crescent resounding, completed with the Om.
This is the true form of Your mantra.
'G' is the first form.
'A' is the middle form.
And 'M' is the last form
Bindu (dot) is the finishing form on top
With the sounds united according to Sandhi.
In this manner, is the knowledge of Shri Ganesha.
The seer is sage Ganaka.
The metre is a mixed Gāyatrī.
The presiding Deity is Shri Ganapati.
'Om Gam', obeisance to the Lord of the Ganas. (7)

Eka-dantāya vidmahe.
Vakra-tundāya dhī-mahi.
Tanno dantī prachodayāt.

We have the knowledge of the One-Tusked God.
We meditate on the Lord with a Curved Trunk ,
May the Ivoried God inspire and stimulate us. (8)

Eka-dantam chatur-hastam
Pāśham ankuśha dhārinam.
Radam cha varadam hastair bibhrānam
Mūṣhaka dhvajam
Raktam, lambodaram
Śhūrpa karnakam, rakta-vāsasam.
Rakta gandh-ānu-liptāngam
Rakta puṣhpaiⁱ su-pūjitam.
Bhakt-ānu-kampinam devam
Jagat kāranam achyutam.
Āvir-bhūtam cha sriṣṭy-ādau
Prakriteh^e purushāt param.
Evam dhyāyati yo nityam.
Sa yogī yoginām varah^a.

One-tusked and four-handed
Wielder of the noose and elephant goad.
Holding a broken tusk and all blessings in the hands
Having a mouse as an emblem.
Red-coloured, with a big belly,
Ears like winnowing fans and clothed in red.
With fragrant red sandalwood paste anointing the body.
Auspiciously worshipped with red flowers.
The God who is Compassionate to devotees,
The Imperishable Origin of the world,
And becoming manifest at the beginning of creation.
Being beyond the Ādi Shakti and the Supreme Spirit.
Whoever meditates in this way constantly,
That Yogi becomes the most excellent of Yogis. (9)

Namo vrāta-pataye. Namō gana-pataye.
Namah^a *pramat'ha-pataye.
Namastē-stu lambodarāy-aika-dantāya
Vighna nāshine Śhiva sutāya
Śhrī varada mūrtaye namo namah^a.

We bow to the Lord of Assemblies and Chief of Ganas
Prostrations to the Leader of Lord Shiva's hordes,
Let there be obeisance to the Big-bellied, One-toothed
Destroyer of Obstacles, the Son of Lord Shiva
To the Embodiment of the Giver of prosperity and boons,
Salutations again and again. (10)

Sākshāt Śhrī Ādi Śhakti Mātājī Śhrī Nirmalā Devyai namo namah^a

Who art in reality the Holy Primordial Energy, Divine Mother,
To the Immaculate Goddess, salutations again and again

** this is also commonly written **prat'hama-pataye** – 'to the First and Foremost Lord'*

As is the style in Sanskrit the verse numbers are placed at the end of the verses.

! **Om.-** Several large dissertations could be written about the great Sacred Syllable **Om**. It is used in almost every Hindu and Buddhist prayer, as well as Jewish and Christian ones in its form as ‘Amen’ and is an indispensable salutation to the Divine. It is the Primordial Sound from which all creation flows, ‘The Word’ of St. John’s gospel, and audible as pervading the whole universe to those who can hear it. The three syllables A, U and M are associated with the three **Mūrtis (Shri Vishnu , Brahmā and Śhiva)** and their **Śhaktis** (feminine powers), but not always in the same way. In fact almost every possible combination appears in different scriptures (BVS *see p54*, SBV, VSB and VBS as below). Traditionally **Anusvara**, the dot cradled in the crescent denoting the nasal sound ‘M’, is associated with the **Ātma** (Spirit) and is sacred to **Lord Śhiva**; while **Shri Vishnu** is associated with the **a-kāra** (letter a).

Shri Ganesha is **Omkāra-swarūpa** ‘the embodiment of Om’ being Himself the Primordial Sound from which all creation flows. Originally **Om** was referred to as **Praṇava** ‘The Sound’ or ‘reverberation’, and only later termed **Omkāra**. As **A-u-m** it starts with the **a** in the throat, travels through the mouth as **u** and ends with the **m** at the lips thus covering the whole range of letters, and so can be likened to ‘the alpha and the omega’.

Exposition of the sacred syllable OM. *Chapter 42 of the Markandeya Purana.*

Dattātreya spoke;

The yogi who lives thus, rightly busied in religious devotion, cannot be turned away even by hundreds of other lives. And when he has beheld the Supreme Soul, visible, existing in all forms, whose feet and head and neck the Universe composes, the Lord and Creator of this Universe, let him in order to attain thereto utter the one mighty and holy syllable **OM!** Let it be his study as he listens to its true form.

A and U and M are its three letters; these are its three instants; they are characterised by goodness, passion and ignorance. And another, a half instant, which has its seat on the top of the head is without quality and can be understood by yogis only. It is called **gāndhāri**, as it is to be uttered in the **gāndhāra** note (**Ga**). Being pronounced it reaches the head and it conveys the feeling of ants moving (on the top of the head).

As the syllable **OM** being pronounced reaches the head, the yogi who is lost in meditation of **OM** should become united with **Brahman**, the Supreme Soul. Life is his bow, the soul is his arrow, **Brahman** is the target sublime. It is to be pierced by the heedful man; he should be united with **Brahman**, as the arrow becomes embedded in the target.

The syllable **OM**, consisting of three and a half instants, should be known in its true sense as the three **Vedas** – the **Rig**, **Sama** and **Yajus** – the three worlds, the three fires, and the three deities **Vishnu**, **Brahmā** and **Śhiva**. And the yogi who is absorbed in religious meditation thereon, may obtain extinction therein.

Moreover the letter A is designated the **Bhūr-loka** (Earth), and the letter U the **Bhūvah-loka** (Sky) and the letter M with its nasal mark is decided to be the **Swah-loka** (Heaven).

Now the first instant is called the discrete (manifest) the second the indiscrete, and the third instant is the intellectual faculty (consciousness, attention); the half instant is the highest abode (final emancipation from existence). In this very order must these stages of religious meditation be known.

By uttering the word **OM** everything both existent and non-existent may be grasped. Now the first instant is short the second is long (two instants) and the third is prolated (three instants) and the half instant is not cognisant to speech.

Such is this word. **Brahman** is designated the Supreme **OM**. The man who truly understands it and further meditates on it, escaping the circle of mundane existence casts off the three-fold bonds, and gains sublime extinction in **Brahman**, the Supreme Soul. And he who is bound with the unconsumed results of his actions, after experiencing death through ill omens, and recollecting it at the time of his departure, attains to a yogi's condition again. Hence by means of imperfect religious devotion, or again by perfected religious devotion are always to be known the ill omens' so that he does not sink into despondency at the time of his departure.

End of chapter 42.

! **Om** is the sound which issued forth first when the **Brahmānda*** ('Egg of Brahman') was cracked and the creation emerged. The shape of the **Devanāgarī** letter is a visual representation of the emergence of the three **Śhaktis** from the central point, the **Kundalini** (crescent) and the witnessing **Param-ātma** (dot). The order in which the syllables of **Om** are here assigned to the Deities corresponds to the order in which the Creation took place (according to this book, at least). The Undifferentiated and Attributeless Supreme Spirit, **Brahman**, awoke from the night of dissolution of the first creation (**Padmavasana**) first clothed Itself in goodness and truth, and manifested as **Shri Nārāyana** (The One who lies on the waters, **Shri Vishnu ***, the All-pervading). Next It clothed Itself in passion and action, and manifested the creation as **Shri Brahma***, the God of Knowledge, and thirdly became clothed in darkness and desire as **Shri Rudra**, the earlier name by which **Shri Śhiva** was addressed.

**see note on the Creation Appendix 4 p58*

The Qualities of the **Ātma**- 'Spirit' or 'Self', realised by the devotee when released from all mis-identifications, are **Sat-Chit-Ānanda**- Existence, Awareness and Bliss, which are also associated with the three **Murtis** ('forms') in the same order viz. **Shri Vishnu** as the Quality of being in the Present (**sat**) in the

Central Channel, **Shri Brahmadeva** as the power of the attention (**chit**) which has its seat on the Right Side in the Liver, and **Lord Śhiva** as the Yogi immersed in Bliss (**ānanda**) which comes from the Heart on the left Side, the seat of the **Ātma**. This is also the order in which the three **Śhaktis** appear in certain praises, **Shrī Mahā-Lakshmī**, **Mahā-Saraswatī** and **Shri Mahā-Kālī**, as the Consorts or Powers of **Shri Vishnu ***, **Shri Brahmadeva*** and **Shri Śhiva**. The **Skanda Purana** also assigns the letters **a-u-m** to the **Tri-mūrtis** in this order. The **Śhiva Purana** has the **a** as **Brahmā** and the **u** as **Vishnu**. (see notes on *Shri Brahmadeva- appendix p.57*)

**see Notes on Shri Vishnu and Shri Brahmadeva- appendix p.57*

Verse 1 **Salutation and extollation of the all-encompassing nature of Lord Ganēsha.**

Om namaste Ganapataye. (Om. Obeisance to You, O Lord of the Ganas)

Om- ‘Amen’- (see above)

namas- ‘obeisance’- comes from **nam** ‘to bow’ or ‘bend’, and hence means a ‘reverential salutation’, ‘obeisance’ and ‘worship’ with a sense of ‘glory to’.

Namas, like **namo**, is **namah^a** with the ending modified due to its composition with the following word **-te** ‘to you’ *[**namah^a** in comp.](see *Sandhi p.4*).

namah^a is an indeclinable adverb which takes the dative case, as in English ‘salutations to...’.

*Not from the same root as **nāma-** ‘name’.*

**Throughout the rest of the book where the ending of a word is modified due to composition, it will be referred to by the abbreviation ‘in comp.’*

*Note: Having both short **a**’s, **namas** is pronounced like ‘numbers’ without the ‘b’. **namah^a** sounds like ‘nummer-her’ with ‘her’ very short.*

Namas-kār- ‘making obeisance has two main forms:-

The first is that when saying **namah^a** or **namaste**, the head is bowed and the hands are put together, generally at the heart, but it is more respectful to salute one’s **guru** or elders at the forehead and to salute God by putting the folded hands at the top of the head, to the **Brahma-randhra** ‘the crevice of the Supreme’ in the centre of the **Sahasrāra**, where the Sacred Feet of the Supreme Goddess reside. We are thus bowing at Her Feet.

The second form of **namaskār** is bowing at the Feet of the Divine where the devotee kneels and places the head to the ground, with the hands extended forwards. In Sahaja Yoga the hands are placed palm upward as flat as possible, not in contact with the head. The forehead or normal hairline is placed to the ground-not the Sahasrara- and the backside raised as far as possible. The feet should not be touching each other.

In the subtle system the **Brahma-randhra** is also the Heart Chakra, and this gets blocked if the balloons of ego and superego at the temples are inflated. The act of bowing, and especially bowing the head to the ground, helps to bring down the ego (sense of separate identity), and the word **namah**^a can be separated as **na**-‘not’, **mah**^a-‘I’, and hence means ‘not I’, an ego-negating mantra.

This obeisance can be made internally, if preferred, by putting the attention to the Divine Feet in the heart or at the **Sahasrāra**, with perhaps a slight inclination of the head.

te- ‘to You’, ‘to Thee’. *dat. of twa-* 2nd person pronoun.

The root of the 2nd person pronoun is technically yushmad, but it is simpler to say twa-, which, in the singular, gives:-

twam- *nom.* ‘thou’.

twām- *acc.* ‘thee’,

te, tava- *gen.* ‘of thee’, ‘thine’. **twat-tah**^a- *abl.* ‘from thee’ (**tah**^a is an ablative suffix),

twayi- *loc.* ‘in thee’,

twayā- *instr.* ‘by thee’,

te or tubhyam- *dat.* ‘to thee’ or ‘for thee’.

These pronouns show similarity with the old English (thou, thee) and French (toi etc.), and there is some striking likeness in the first person forms aham- ‘I am’, me- ‘me’, way(am)- ‘we’, as(mān)- ‘us’, and the plural yūy(am)- ‘you’.

Gana-pataye- ‘to the Lord of the Ganas’

The word **Gana** means a ‘group’, ‘troop’, ‘host’, ‘multitude’, ‘tribe’ or a ‘body of attendants’, but more commonly refers to the the **Ganas**, troops of celestial attendants of Lord Shiva, sometimes referring to the nine groups of demi-gods including the **Ādityas**, **Vasus** (eight elemental Gods ruled by Lord Indra, *see v5 p14*), and the **Ekādaśha** (eleven) **Rudras** originally connected with storms and tempests, and bringers of disease and destruction. Sometimes the attendants of Lord Shiva are known as the **Pramat’ha** *see v.10*, who are not very pretty, being quite demonical-looking and deformed, some with animal heads maybe with one eye, long pointed noses, hunchbacked etc. and some looking like **Lord Śhiva** Himself, with matted locks and dressed in animal skins. These are the ruling spirits of the Left Side (Collective Subconscious). In the **Bhagavatam** these are listed as **Dakinis**, **Yatudhanas**, **Kushmāndās**, **Bhutas** (spirits), **Pretas** (ghosts), **Pisachas** (flesh-eaters), **Yakshas** (sorcerers), **Rakshasas** (demons) and **Vināyakas** (Imps).

In western culture there is widespread interest in superhuman beings, aliens, ghosts and vampires, and the occult in general, which is a movement to the Left and Right, the Collective Sub-conscious and supra-conscious. The real ‘Superman’ is the realised soul, a state which can only be achieved through the Central Channel of the Present Reality. **Shri Ganeśha** is the Support of the whole system and corrects us if we move out of balance into these Left or Right Side extremes.

pati- ‘Lord’, ‘master’, ‘ruler’, ‘owner’, ‘protector’, and also ‘husband’- from **pā-** ‘to protect’.

Note: In olden times, India had a system of government called **Gana-rāj** whereby each group or tribe would elect a leader to represent them at a council, and the leader of this council was known as the **Ganapati**, which therefore has a special meaning of ‘chief among leaders’. India’s present government is also called **Gana-raj** (*‘rule by the multitudes’*).

-aye- is the dative case ending for masculine words ending in **-i**. The dative of feminine words ending in **-ī** is **-yai** as in **Devyai**, from **Devī**.

Like a hologram, or the DNA in a cell, where every small part contains the whole, every aspect or incarnation of God is the complete Divine Nature, from a tiny grain of sand to the Formless All-pervading Consciousness. Thinking there is some difference between them is an illusion. It may seem contradictory that in this prayer Shri Ganesha is praised as ‘everything even the Supreme Brahman’, and then apparently limited as ‘the Son of Shiva and Parvati’, or ‘the Leader of the Ganas’. One way in which we can consider **Ganesha** or **Ganapati** as a name for God Almighty is as ‘the Lord of all groups and categories’. In the Rig Veda, God is addressed as ‘**Ganapati**’.

Twameva praty-aksham tattvam-asi. (You indeed are the Divine Principle manifest)

Twam-(or **tvam**). ‘You are’, ‘Thou art’. The ‘are’ is implied by the nominative case of **twam** but is also followed by **-asi-** ‘you are’ (*see below*).

-eva- ‘indeed’- is a suffix which emphasises a quality as ‘truly’, ‘really’, ‘You alone..’, ‘You even...’ or the biblical sounding ‘verily’.

praty- is a prefix meaning ‘towards’, ‘against’, ‘upon’, or ‘like’. [*prati-in comp.*]

aksha- ‘eyes’ or the senses in general. **praty-aksha(m)-** ‘manifest’- is similar to **sākshāt**, both adverbs meaning ‘really’, ‘verily’ or ‘in person’, ‘actually present’, ‘perceptible’. **sākshāt** means ‘with the eyes’ or ‘with the senses’ and **praty-aksham** ‘before the eyes’.

tat-twa(m) is a ‘principle’ or ‘quality’¹, [*acc.*] from **tat** ‘that’ and **-twa** which is a suffix meaning ‘having the quality of’, like the English endings ‘-ness’ or ‘-ity’ (as in ‘clearness’ or ‘clarity’).

tattwa- often has a similar meaning to **sattva-** ‘truth’ or ‘reality’ as in **tattva-gñyāna-** ‘knowledge of truth’.

Alt. trans. ‘You are the truth manifested in person’.

¹The word ‘quality’ is similarly composed from the Latin **qualis** ‘such’ and **-ity** ‘-ness’. In Robert Pirsig’s book ‘Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance’, the character Phaedrus logically deduces the existence and nature of God, starting from the word ‘quality’.

In the **Sāmkhya**² philosophy, which the Ganesha A.S. can be said to expound, the **tattwas** are the principles of creation, usually numbering 25, 24 of which are produced by **Prakriti**, the **Ādi Śhakti**- These are:-

- Buddhi**- The faculty of Perception or Intelligence, also called **Mahat**, which gives rise to:-
- Aham-kāra**- 'I am'-ness, ego, conception of individuality. From this arises:
- 5 Tan-mātras** - The 5 subtle elements, which give rise to the 5 gross elements and are the objects of the 5 senses, **gandha** (smell)-earth, **rasa** (taste)-water, **rūpa** (form-the object of sight)-fire, **sparśha** (touch)-air and **śhabda** (sound)-ether.
- 5 Bhūtas** The 5 gross elements- Earth, air, fire, water and ether.
- 5 organs of action**- Speech, hands, feet, reproduction and excretion.
- 5 organs of sense**- Ears, skin, eyes, tongue, nose.
- Manas**- The heart/mind, psyche, thinking/feeling.
- A-vyakta**- The 'Unmanifested' part of the **Ādi Shakti**, the **Kundalinī**, the pure desire to reunite with the **Puruṣha**.

The 25th principle is **Puruṣha** (**Shri Sadāśhiva**- the Supreme Spirit) which animates, pervades and witnesses the creation of **Ādi Śhakti**.

Shri Ganeśha is here eulogised as the embodiment of all these principles.

²See Appendix 6 p.54- an extract from the *Srimad Bhagavatam* on the *Samkhya* philosophy.

tat-twam-asi is also 'the Divine Principle', known in **Sāmkhya** philosophy as the **Mahā Vākya**- 'the great word', being composed of **tat**- 'that', which in philosophical writing, denotes to the Pre-existent Formless Supreme Spirit, **Brahman** (see below) –**twam** 'Thou' and –**asi** 'art', *lit.* 'thou art that'; expressing the idea that everything in this universe has identity with the Supreme **Brahman**. '**Tat-twam-asi**' is used as a mantra to realise the nature of the Supreme Formless **Brahman** with which **Shri Ganeśha** is identical.

-**asi**- 'You are', 'Thou art', 'You are really', 'You are ever' [2p.sing. of **as**- 'to be', 'to exist'.] *As a suffix it has an emphatic quality of 'really being and enduring'.*

Twameva kevalam kartā-'si. (**kartā-asi**) (You alone are ever the Doer)

Twameva kevalam dhartā'si. (You alone are ever the Supporter and the Sustainer)

Twameva kevalam hartā-'si.(You alone are ever the Remover and the Destroyer)
kevalam- 'alone', 'exclusively on Your own', 'solely', 'entirely', 'wholly', 'only'. [adv.]

kartā- 'the doer', 'maker', 'performer', 'accomplisher', 'creator'. [(from **kri**- 'to do') *nom.mas.*]

The long ā here and in the next two lines, is stressed and drawn out as it elides into –asi. Long syllables are always drawn out, but here even more than usual.

dhartā- ‘the supporter’, ‘maintainer’, ‘preserver’, ‘bearer’, ‘holder’ and also ‘restrainer’ or ‘suppressor’. [(from **dhri-** ‘to support’) *nom.mas.*]

hartā- ‘the remover’, ‘one who carries away’, ‘depriver of’, ‘stealer’, ‘overcomer’, ‘destroyer’. [(from **hri-** ‘to remove’) *nom.mas.*] Similar in meaning to the English epithet of God as ‘Giver and Taker’

These are the three functions of the Divine as G.O.D.- Generator, Operator and Destroyer-, and correspond to Shri Brahma the Creator, Shri Vishnu the Preserver and Shri Shiva the Destroyer. *See v6 p12.*

Twameva sarvam khalv-idam Brahmāsi (You are Everything even indeed the Formless Supreme Spirit)

sarva(m)- ‘everything’, ‘all’, ‘the entire (Universe)’, ‘the whole (Creation)’. [*nom.neut.*]

khalv- ‘even’, ‘indeed’, ‘and further’. [**khalu-in comp.**] **khalu** exists mostly in compounds with this quality of emphasising what follows. The changing of the final –u to –v before a vowel is normal Sandhi.

-idam ‘this’, ‘this here’, ‘the following’. [*nom.neut.*] **khalv-idam Brahmāsi** therefore means ‘even indeed this very Brahman’.

Brahma- The name **Brahman**, the All-pervading, Undifferentiated, Unmanifest, Self-existent, Impersonal Divine, Pre-existent to all duality and manifestation, and **Brahmā** the Creator, who emerged from the navel-lotus of **Shri Viṣṇu** differ only in that the former is neuter and the latter masculine. Here it is neuter and hence denotes the Pre-existent Formless Spirit. [*from brimh-* ‘to pervade’ or ‘expand’]

Twam sākshād-ātmāsi nityam. (You are the personification of the Soul eternally)

sākshād-‘the personification’, ‘perceptibly’, ‘in person’, ‘manifestly’. [**sākshāt in comp.**] (**sa-aksha-at**) **sa-**‘with’, **aksha-**‘eyes’ or the senses in general, **-at** is the ablative ending- ‘with’. (cf. **sākshin-** ‘the witness’).

ātmā- the ‘Soul’, ‘Self’ or ‘Individual Spirit’, [*nom. of ātman- mas.*] ‘The Reflection of the Divine within every being’, which resides in the heart until awakened in response to the **Kundalinī** piercing through the **Brahma-randhra-** the crevice in the top of the head which is soft in babies and realised souls. Rising through a special **nādī** (channel) to the top of the head, the **Ātman** merges with the **Kundalini Śhakti** and the attention (**chit**) is absorbed into the **Parabrahma**, the all-pervading Divine Consciousness of which it is a part, resulting in the loss of ego and other illusions in the realisation of the true nature of the Self (Self-realisation). In this blissful state the devotee is filled with **ānanda** (supreme joy) and feels the Divine Grace flowing down over their whole being ‘vibrating every fibre with joy’.

Shri Śhiva is the embodiment of the **Ātmā**, and in sacred art is shown embracing **Shri Pārvati** or **Śhakti**-the female form, expressing this union (**yoga**).

ātma also means ‘essence’, ‘nature’, ‘character’ and ‘self’ in the more mundane sense of ‘own’, e.g. **ātma-kārya**- ‘one’s own business’.

-asi- ‘Thou art’. [*as above.*]

nityam- ‘eternally’, ‘constantly’, ‘always’. [*adv.*] from **nitya** which means ‘eternal’, ‘continual’, or ‘perpetual’ and also ‘constant’, ‘fixed’, or ‘usual’ as in **nitya-dharma**- ‘daily duty’. **nityam** here is not describing **ātmā**(*nom*) but is an adverb, so the meaning is not ‘You are the Eternal Self’ but ‘You are the Self eternally’. (1)

Unlike the English ‘-ly’, there is no specially dedicated ending to make adverbs from adjectives, and the accusative is often used (as here) or sometimes the instrumental- eg. ‘with speed’ for ‘quickly’.

Verse 2 Declaration of the veracity of the prayer.

Ritam-vachmi. Satyam-vachmi. (I speak Divine Law. I pronounce the Truth)

ritam- ‘Divine law’, ‘truth’, ‘sacred order’, ‘settled rules’, ‘scriptural correctness’, ‘the balance and order of the Universe’.

vachmi- ‘I speak’, ‘I say’, ‘I pronounce’. ‘I announce’.[*1p.pres. of vach ‘to speak’.*]

satyam- ‘truth’, ‘reality’, ‘goodness’. [*From sat- ‘to be’, ‘to exist’.*]

ritam and satyam both mean ‘truth’ but ritam is ‘truth as the Divine order of the Cosmos’ and satyam is ‘truth according to experience of reality’ so an alternative translation could be:-

‘What I am saying is true according to the scriptures, and true according to reality’ (2)

Verse 3 Supplication to Lord Ganeśha

Note: This verse is arranged in contrasting pairs, first ‘Thou/ me’, then ‘speaker/ listener’, ‘giver/ receiver’ and ‘scholar/ pupil’ which all imply a Guru/ disciple relationship and then the six directions arranged ‘back/ front’, ‘left/ right’ and ‘up/ down’.

Ava twam mām. (Protect Thou me)

Ava vaktāram. (Show favour to the one who recites Your praise)

Ava śhrotāram. (Be Propitious to the one who listens with devotion)

Ava dātāram. (Accept the gift of the one who offers this payer)

Ava dhātāram. (Be pleased with the one who receives this knowledge)

ava has a range of meanings from the main meaning of ‘protect’ or ‘guard’ to ‘show favour’, ‘accept my offering’, ‘be well disposed towards’, ‘promote’, ‘satisfy’, ‘drive’ or ‘lead’. [*2p.sing.impv. of av- ‘to protect’*]

twam- ‘thou’. As this is in the nominative case it is the subject.

mām-‘me’ [acc.] *The root of the 1st person pronoun is technically **asmad** but it will be easier to refer to it as **mam**. **Aham** (which sounds remarkably similar to English ‘I am’) is the nom.sing. ‘I’, which is an inversion of **mah**^a. **mām** is the accusative- ‘me’. **mama-gen.** means ‘my’ or ‘mine’ and **mamatā** means ‘selfishness’ or ‘egotism’ as a vice, whereas **ahamkāra** is ‘ego’ as the illusion of separate identity.*

vaktāram- ‘the one who recites’ or ‘pronounces’, ‘the speaker’- in this case presumably the person saying the prayer. [*mas. acc. of **vaktri-**‘speaker’ from **vāch-** ‘to speak’.*]

śhrotāram- ‘the listener’ or ‘one who hears’, [*mas. acc. of **śhrotri-**‘hearer’ from **śhru-** ‘to hear’*] (**śhrotra** or **śhrotas** is the ear) In the pure witness state we are listening to ourselves reciting the prayer. **Śhruṭi** means ‘listening’ and is used as a name for orally transmitted sacred knowledge, particularly the Vedas.

dātāram- ‘the one who offers’ ‘the giver’, or ‘utterer’ and again probably refers to the person offering or uttering the prayer. [*mas. acc. of **dātri.***]

dhātāram-‘the one who receives’- [*mas. acc of **dhātri.***] can also mean the one who ‘supports’, ‘performs’ or ‘creates’ and possibly here has the meaning ‘to fix the attention on’ -again referring to the one performing the prayer, the one having the attention fixed on the Deity. ‘The receiver’ is the commonest translation but it is not the usual meaning of **dhātri** which is a name of **Shri Brahmadeva** as ‘the Creator’; **dhātu** being an element or constituent of creation.

Av-ān-ūchānam-ava śhiṣyam. (ava-anu-uchānam..) (Protect the learned scholar and the pupil)

Note: This is run together as a single phrase in every version encountered so far.

an-ūchānam-‘the learned scholar’. This is someone who is devoted to learning and able to repeat the Vedas by heart and hence to ‘follow’; sometimes translated as ‘the master’. [*acc. from **anu-** ‘following’ –**vach-** ‘speak’- the **va** of **vach** becomes **u** in composition.*]

śhiṣyam- is a ‘pupil’, ‘student’ or ‘disciple’. [*acc. from **śhas** ‘to discipline or control’.*]

Alt.trans. ‘protect the one able to repeat this prayer by heart and the one still learning it.’ (which we can be both!)

Ava paśhchāt-tāt. (Protect from behind)

Ava puras-tāt. (Protect from the front)

Av-ottarāt-tāt. (Ava-uttarāt-) (Protect from the left side)

Ava dakshināt-tāt. (Protect from the right side)

Ava ch-ordhvāt-tāt (ava cha-ūrdhvāt...)(And protect from above)

Av-ādharāt-tāt. (ava-adharāt...) (Protect from below)

paśhchāt-tāt- ‘from behind’, ‘from the back’, as well as ‘from the west’. [*abl. of paśhcha-* ‘behind’, ‘west’]

Note: All the directions have this double meaning based on the notion that the person worshipping is facing eastwards; a tradition in many religions including Christianity. Therefore the back is west, the left north, and the right south. Generally, the **murti** (form of God) should not be placed such that the worshipper is facing south, this being the realm of Shri Yama, the God of Death, nor sleep with the head in that direction.

The directions are here given in the ablative ie. ‘from the...’. If the sense was ‘protect the east side’ as sometimes translated, it would be in the accusative.

puras-tāt- ‘from the front’, ‘from the beginning’ and ‘from the east’. Note the similarity to **pūrvam-** ‘first’, ‘previously’ in v.6. [*abl. of purah-* ‘in front’, ‘east’.]

ut-tarāt-tāt- ‘from the left’, ‘from the north’. **Uttara** is the comparative of **ud-** ‘up’ or ‘above’ and as well as ‘north’ and ‘left’ means ‘later’, ‘last’, ‘higher’, and also can mean ‘superior’ or ‘chief’. (cf. **Uttar Pradeśh-** ‘the northern region’) [*abl of uttarā.fem*]

Note: **-tara** and **-tama** are the comparative and superlative endings (like ‘-er’ and ‘-est’), so **ut-tara** means ‘higher’ and **ut-tama** means ‘highest’ or ‘best’ as in **puruṣh-ot-tama** ‘best of men’ (a name of Shri Rāma) cf. **para-tara-** ‘further’ from **para-** ‘far’ in v.6.

dakshināt-tāt- ‘from the right’, ‘from the south’. [*abl of dakshinā fem.*] On visiting a temple one traditionally circum-ambulates the Murti (idol) clockwise, hence keeping it on one’s right as a mark of respect. A statue of Shri Ganesha is always kept on Lord Shiva’s right side.

The Latin **dextra-** ‘right hand’ sounds similar, and like the English ‘dextrous’, **dakshina** has a meaning of ‘clever’ or ‘able’. **Dakshina** also means ‘the offering to the Guru’ or the fee paid to a priest (placed in his right hand?).

cha- ‘and’- which, like the Latin ‘que’*, comes after the word it would precede in English (*see translation above*) In this case it is probably just a device to separate the two vowels and preserve the metre. When a final **a** joins with **u** it forms **o** whether the **u** is short or long. However the **ū** of **ūrdhvāt** is long and may be drawn out slightly.

ūrdhvāt-tāt- ‘from upwards’, ‘from above’. [*abl of ūrdhva ‘the upper part’*] **ūrdhva** is the only common word in Sanskrit which starts with a long **ū**.

adharāt-tāt- ‘from below’, [*abl of adhas-* ‘down’.] Not from **ādhāra** - ‘support’.

*as in **SPQR** which the Romans had written on their standards; an acronym for- **Senatus Populus-que Romanus-** ‘The Senate and People of Rome’

Sarvato mām pāhi-pāhi sam-antāt. (From all directions watch over and protect me constantly)

sarvato- ‘from all directions’, ‘from all sides’, ‘from everywhere’, ‘entirely’, ‘thoroughly’. [**sarvatah^a**-in comp. abl. of **sarva-**‘all’.]

mām- ‘me’. [acc. of 1p pronoun]

pāhi- ‘watch over’, ‘protect’, ‘keep’, ‘follow’. [impv. of **pā-** ‘to protect’.]

sam-antāt- ‘constantly’, ‘completely’ or ‘all around’. [from **sam-**‘together’-**anta-**‘ends’, **-at-** ‘with’. ie. ‘with the ends touching’, ‘continuously’.] (3)

Verse 4 Shri Ganeśha as the Divine Qualities manifested in man.

Twam vāñg-mayas-twam chin-mayah^a. (You are the Spoken Word and Pure Consciousness)

Twam- all five lines of this verse start with **twam** in the nominative case ‘You are’.

vāñg- ‘the spoken word’, ‘speech’, ‘language’, ‘voice’. (palatal **ñ** like English ‘hung’) [**vāch** in comp.]

*Note: Each of the five sets of consonants has its own nasal sound. This is the palatal nasal and is made at the back of the mouth. The **g** is not really there but being a guttural consonant, it is added to give the correct pronunciation.*

vāch- ‘speech’, being the precursor to thought and hence the ability to project into the future, is an attribute of the Right Side, whose rulers **Shri Brahmadeva** and **Shri Saraswati** are both worshipped as ‘the Giver of Speech’

maya(s)- ‘made of’, ‘consisting of’, ‘full of’, ‘relating to’, ‘whose essence is’. [**mayah^a** in comp.] Not to be confused with **māyā-** ‘illusion’ or ‘magic’.

*The visarga in **mayah^a** changes to –s before **t** indicating that the **twam** is to be said as part of this phrase. If **twam** started the second phrase **mayah^a** would remain unmodified as it is after **chin**.*

chin- ‘consciousness’, ‘awareness’, ‘attention’, ‘perception’, ‘thought’, ‘comprehension’. [**chit** in comp.]

*The senses of the words **chit-** ‘attention’, **chetana-** ‘awareness’, **chitta, chitti, chinta-** ‘thought’ and **chaitanya-** ‘consciousness’ have meanings which are not completely distinct from each other.*

The attention is the part of our consciousness on which we are focussing. Let’s say we are travelling in a railway carriage of which we are, in a sense, aware; however our attention may be on a book, on what we are thinking or something we can see out of the window. Our view and experience of life is therefore conditioned by our attention.

The attention is associated with the Right Side (*Rajo Guna* see v.5 p.18), and its seat is in the liver, which is governed by the Right Nabhi and Swadhishthan Chakras. When enlightened by the rising of the **Kundalini Shakti** it moves up to the Centre Heart (Sternum bone) and hence into the Central Channel. Thus the attention which at **Nabhi Chakra** is involved in acquiring food, money and possessions goes onto spiritual ascent and love for others. In decadent societies the collective attention, having acquired material comfort, goes to ego-boosting technology, and futuristic thinking and planning (**Swādhiṣṭ'hān**) and below this at **Mūlādhāra Chakra**, there is a lot of attention on sex. It is not hard to see that this is the modern movement in this **Kali Yuga** (Age of impurity). The **Mūlādhāra Chakra** is the realm of Earth and below this is **Pātāla** or **Naraka** (Hell). **Shri Ganeśha** opens and closes the gates of Hell, just as Lord Jesus controls the 'narrow gate' to the Kingdom of Heaven at **Āgñyā Chakra**.

Thinking arises from our attachments and the attention is drawn to our catches. A simple and effective **vichāra** (self-enquiry) suggested by **H.S.H. Shri Mātājī** is to ask ourselves 'Where is my attention?' By honest enquiry we can come to know the nature of our attachments, and the extent to which we are slaves of the 'six enemies' (jealousy, greed, anger etc.).

maya-h^a - 'consisting of'. *as above. The aspirated ending is not modified by Sandhi, so this is the end of the phrase.*

Twam ānanda-mayas-twam Brahma-mayah^a (Joy is Your essence.

Formless Spirit is Your Nature)

ānanda- 'joy', 'bliss'.

In Sanskrit a short a before a word is a negative but a long ā is affirmative indicating 'full' or 'up to'. nanda- 'joy', 'pleasure', 'delight', 'happiness' is here strengthened to ānanda- 'supreme joy', 'pure happiness'. If pronounced with a short a at the beginning (ananda) it would mean 'joyless'!

mayas- 'composed of' [**mayah^a** in comp.]

twam- 'You are'.

Brahma- (see v.1) is neuter here and hence denotes the Formless All-pervading Spirit. **-mayah^a**- 'having the nature of'. [*as above*]

Twam sach-chid-ānand-ādviṭyō-si. (You are Existence, Consciousness and Joy unequalled)

sach-chid-ānanda is **sat-chit-ānanda** modified by Sandhi. These are the three attributes of the **Ātmā** or Spirit that remain when all mis-identifications with the body, mind, thoughts or emotions drop away.

sat- 'existence', 'being', 'reality', 'truth', 'the present'.

chit- 'consciousness', 'awareness', 'attention'. [*as chin above*]

ānanda- 'bliss'. [*as above*]. The Joy that is free of any duality or sorrow, not a 'high' which necessitates a concomitant 'low'.

a-dvitiyo-‘unequaled’, ‘without a second’, ‘unique’, ‘matchless’, ‘with no companion’ [*advitīyah^a* in comp.] **dvi-** is ‘two’ and **dvitiya-** means ‘second’ and also a ‘companion’ (cf English-‘divide’). If pronounced without **a** at the beginning, **dvitiyo-** would mean the opposite, ‘having equals’.

Note: The long **ō** denotes an elision between the **–o** and a short **a** at the beginning of the next word and is therefore more drawn out than usual. There is a special symbol in **Devanāgarī** to indicate this extension of the vowel.

-si- ‘You are’, ‘Thou art ever’ [*asi-*in comp. see v.1]

Twam pratyaksham Brahmāsi. (You are the Manifestation of the Supreme Spirit)

praty-aksham-‘manifestation’, ‘personification’. [*lit.* ‘before the eyes’. see v1 p10]

Brahma- The Attributeless Supreme Spirit **Brahman.** [*neut.* see v1 p10]

-asi- ‘You are’. see v.1

Twam gñyāna-mayo vigñyāna-mayō-‘si. (You are all Knowledge and Understanding)

gñyāna- ‘knowledge’- spelt **jñāna** but pronounced gutturally more like **gñyāna** is ‘knowledge’ in the sense of what is learned through direct experience. **vidya** is similar but is more intellectual knowledge, or ‘learning’.(**vidyālaya-** is ‘a school’) A **gñyāni** is an enlightened person who has the supreme knowledge of the **Brahman.**

mayo- ‘made of’- [*mayah^a* in comp.] The aspiration changes to **–o** before the semi-vowel **v.**

vi-gñyāna- ‘understanding’, ‘recognition’, ‘discernment’, ‘to become wise or learned’. In metaphysical philosophy, **vignyāna** means Self-realisation, the knowledge of the Supreme. **Vigñyāna** can also mean knowledge ‘about’ something and mundanely means ‘science’.

Alt.trans. ‘You are all spiritual Knowledge and Self-realisation’ or as it says in the ‘Divine Essence of the Prayer’... ‘You are all Knowledge and the use to which the Knowledge is put’.

vi- as a prefix generally denotes ‘other’, ‘special’ or ‘about’, as here; ‘knowledge about..’, ‘special knowledge’; or in **vi-śhuddhi** ‘special purification’, or it can be a negation as in **Vi-mala** which means the same as **Nir-mala** ‘spotless’.

Mayō-‘si is an elision of **mayah^a-asi.** **mayah^a-** ‘formed of’, **asi-** ‘You are’.

(4)

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Verse 5 Shri Ganeśha's relation to this physical world

Sarvam jagad-idam twatto jāyate. (This whole world is born of You.)

sarvam- ‘the whole’, ‘all’ or ‘everything’, ‘the complete’, [*nom.neut.*] *This adjective's ending agrees in case with the noun jagat.*

jagat-idam- ‘this world’; **jagad** mostly means ‘the world’ or ‘the Earth’ but can mean ‘mankind’, ‘whatever lives or moves’, and even ‘the Universe’. [*neut.*] *The final -t softens to jagad before a vowel as in Jagad-ambā - ‘World-Mother’.*

idam- ‘this’. [*nom.neut.*]

twatto- ‘from You’ with a sense of ‘through’ or ‘because of You’. [*twattah^a in comp.-abl of twam.*]

jāyate- ‘is born’. [*3p.pres. of jan-* ‘to be born’, ‘to come into existence’] (cf. *jananī* ‘mother’, *jāyā-* ‘wife’ and *saha-ja-* ‘in-born’)

Sarvam jagad-idam twattas-tiṣṭ’hati. (This whole world is sustained by You)

twattas- ‘by You’, ‘because of You’ or ‘through You’. [*also twattah^a- in comp -abl. of twam.*]

tiṣṭ’hati- ‘is sustained’, ‘stands’, ‘is firmly fixed’, ‘continues’, ‘endures’, ‘is supported’, ‘preserved’. [*3p.pres of st’ha ‘to stand’.*]

Sarvam jagad-idam twayi layam-eshyati. (This whole world will dissolve in You.)

Sarvam jagad-idam twayi pratyeti. (This whole world is returning into You)

twayi- ‘in You’ or ‘at You’. [*loc. of twam.*]

laya(m)- any dissolution, destruction, absorption or rest. **Pra-laya** is the time of the final dissolution of the Universe.

eśhyati- ‘will go’ but it also means ‘in the future’. [*3p.fut.of i- ‘to go’.*] **layam-eśhyati** could therefore be ‘in the future dissolution’ or just ‘will dissolve’.

praty-eti- ‘returns’, ‘goes back’. **prati-** ‘back’, **eti-** ‘goes’. [*3p.pres. of i- ‘to go’*]

Twam bhūmir-āpō-‘nalō-‘nilo nabhah^a. (You are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether (5 elements))

Shri Ganeśha is here worshipped as the five gross elements (**Mahā-bhūtas**) and as the Deities that control them (known as **Vasu**’s and usually numbering eight).

Note: *The o at the end of apo and analo elide with the a at the beginning of the following words, producing an extended vowel sound as in v.3 p.16.*

bhūmi(r)- 'Earth' in all it's meanings as soil, the ground, the element and the planet, [*bhūmihⁱ in comp. nom.fem.*] Worshipped as the Goddess **Shri Bhūmi Devi** 'Mother Earth'. **Bhū** is also the earth as the lowest of the three (or seven) worlds (*see end of verse*). Another word for 'Earth' with all it's meanings is **Prithvi**.

āpo- is ‘water’, in all its meanings as the wet stuff, the element and ‘the waters’- rivers, lakes and oceans. [*āpa(h^a) in comp. nom.fem.pl.*], It is also the Demi-God ruling water, who like **Shri Varuna** governs all the waters on the Earth, while **Shri Indra** (thunderstorms) or **Parjanya** (rain) control water from the skies. **Sanskrit** abounds with synonyms and ‘water’ is also **jala, nīra, ambu, jahman, pāthas, am,** etc.etc.

analo- is ‘fire’ and the God of Fire as well as the digestive fire, and is synonymous with **Shri Agni**. [*anala(h^a) in comp.*]

anilo- is ‘air’ or ‘wind’ and the Wind God as well as wind as one of the humours of the body, and is therefore synonymous with **Shri Vāyu**.

[*anila(h^a) in comp.*]

Shri Maruta or Pavana is also Lord of the Wind and the father of Shri Hanuman- who is therefore known as Māruti.

nabha(h^a)- is ‘ether’ as an element, as well as the ‘sky’ or ‘atmosphere’, also called **ākāsha**. [*nom.mas.*] As an element it is the subtle fluid which permeates and creates space and is the vehicle of light, sound and life itself and is equated with the Formless All-pervading **Brahman**.

Each **Chakra** has the qualities mainly of one element but with a small proportion of others, for example **Mūlādhāra Chakra** consists mainly of earth element compounded to a small degree with water, the main elements of the other **chakras** are **Nabhi-** water, **Swadhiṣṭhāna-** fire, **Anahata (Heart)-** air, **Viśuddhi-** ether, **Āgñyā-** light, and **Sahasrāra- Chaitanya** (Divine Vibrations). The extra sense to perceive the element of Divine Vibrations is only fully awakened in Self-realised souls where it manifests as a cool breeze on the palms of the hands and on top of the head.

Twam chatvāri vāk-padāni. (You are the four stages of speech) .

It is not obvious why this phrase occurs at the end of this verse, perhaps because speech is the necessary precursor to thought, which is the way we deal with the physical world, or perhaps because speech as sound is connected with ether, the fifth element.

chatvāri - ‘four’. [*neut.nom. of chatur.*] As a separate word **chatur** acquires a case ending agreeing with **padāni**; the semi-vowel **u** changes to **va** in composition.

vāk- ‘speech’, ‘language’, ‘the spoken word’. [*vāch in comp.*]

padāni- ‘stages’, ‘steps’ or ‘feet’. [*nom.neut.pl. of pada- ‘feet’. (cf. English pedal.)*]

The four stages of speech are:- **parā** ‘beyond’ or ‘distant’, the germ of an idea, with the Kundalinī; **paśhyantī** ‘seeing’ in the mind, the process of Divine inspiration is that one first sees the words, which then assume sounds in the **madhyamā** ‘heart’ or ‘middle’, the words resounding inside before becoming **vaikharī** ‘intelligible utterance’. Speech is one of the greatest of Divine gifts, as the precursor to conceptual thinking and the Goddess Saraswati is primarily addressed as the ‘Giver of Speech’. **(5)**

verse 6 Shri Ganeśha's relation to the subtle world within

Twam guna-tray-ātīta^a.(traya-atīta^a)(You are beyond the three attributes)

Twam deha-tray-ātīta^a. (You are beyond the three bodies)

Twam kāla-tray-ātīta^a. (You are beyond the three times)

***Twam avast'ha-tray-ātīta^a.** (You are beyond the three states of being)

**This line does not appear in all versions and not necessarily in this position, sometimes coming second or third. As there is very little variation in the G.A.S. in the many versions available, it is strange that this line should vary so much. Other items that vary are the 'Shri' and the 'namo' in the last line of the last verse which are sometimes omitted- 'Shri Varada mūrtaye namo namah^a' can be 'Varada mūrtaye namah^a'.*

twam- 'You are'. [*nom.*] *This is the subject.*

guna- 'attribute', 'quality', 'mood' or 'style'. The three attributes, **Sattvas** 'truth', 'reality', ;goodness', **Rajas** 'passion', 'action', and **Tamas** 'darkness', 'desire' are associated with the three channels of the subtle system inside human beings; **Suṣhumna** 'gracious' - Centre channel, **Pingala** 'golden'- Right side and **Ida** 'refreshment'- Left side. These are associated with the three bodies (**deha**) which are the **sthula-** physical, **sukshma-** subtle and **kāraṇa-** causal, and the three times (**kāla**) Present, Future and Past, and the colours white, red and black.

The three states (**avast'ha**) are waking, dreaming and deep sleep

traya- 'three'. [*tri* in comp.] *Pronounced as English 'try' rather than 'tray'.*

atīta(h^a)- 'beyond', 'past', 'one who has passed beyond'. [(*ati-ita*) *psp* of *ati-i-* 'to go beyond, to pass over'].]

Twam mūlādhāra st'hitō-'si nityam. (You are eternally stationed at the Mooladhara Chakra.)

mūlādhāra- 'root support', 'original support'. **Mūl-ādhāra** is a compound of **mūla** meaning something which is 'firmly fixed' and hence a 'root', but also a 'basis', 'foundation', 'cause' or 'origin', as well as 'the bottom' or 'beginning'. (eg. **mūlāt** *abl.* is 'from the bottom') and

ādhāra- 'support', 'prop', 'sustaining power'.

st'hitō- 'stationed', 'standing', 'remaining', 'occupied with', 'established', 'constant', 'firm', 'steady', [*nom st'hitah^a-in comp.*]

–**si** = **-asi-** 'You are'. *The o at the end of st'hito is elided into the a of asi to give an extended vowel sound.*

nityam- 'eternally'. 'constantly', 'always'. is used here as an adverb. *see v.l.*

Shri Ganeśha is stationed at and rules the **Mūlādhāra Chakra**, the four-petalled subtle centre situated between the anus and the genitals on the surface of the body

and thus normally in contact with the earth when sitting cross-legged on the ground with the back straight. This centre is the support of the whole system and if weakened due to adharmic lifestyle results in a difficulty for the **Kundalinī** to rise, or, if risen, to maintain a steady state of meditation. **Tantrikas** who try and raise the **Kundalinī** through sex actually damage this centre and jeopardise any future chance of true **Yoga**. The dangers that are rumoured to accompany the raising of the **Kundalinī** such as intense heat, are in fact expressions of anger from **Shri Ganeśha** against improper techniques. When approached with innocence and purity He is placated.

As a compound word with **-st'hitōsi, mūlādhāra** has no case ending and the locative relationship, 'at the **mūlādhāra**', is assumed; as is **Chakra-** 'wheel' or 'disc'. There is no direct reference to the **Chakras** or the **Kundalinī** anywhere else in this prayer and it is possible that this is worshipping Shri Ganesha as 'the steady foundation support'.

Alt.trans. 'You are constantly occupied with sustaining the foundation (of this existence)'.

Twam śhakti-tray-ātmakah^a. (From You the three Shaktis are born.)

śhakti- 'power', 'energy', 'force'. The feminine aspect of a Deity as the power and creative energy; eg. Shri Lakshmi is the Shakti of Shri Vishnu.

traya- 'three'. [*tri in comp.*] - pronounced like English 'try', not 'tray'.

ātmaka(h^a) 'forming', 'having the nature or character of'. [*nom.mas.*] **ātma-** 'self', **ka-** 'making', 'having'.

The three **Śhaktis- Mahālakshmī, Mahāsaraswatī** and **Mahākālī** are associated with the three primary Deities, **Shri Vishnu**, **Brahma**, and **Śhiva**; and with the three channels, and their attributes. (*see above*). The **Ādi Śhakti** (Primordial Creative Principle) formed Herself in three and a half coils which are the three **Śhaktis** and the half coil as the **Kundalinī**, the Pure Desire to become re-integrated into the Divine Consciousness which is our Source and our true Self. A balance of the three **Śhaktis** in our lives confers the four-fold blessings of **Dharma, Artha, Kāma** and **Moksha** (Righteousness, Purpose/Wealth, Love and Emancipation) mentioned in the **Phala-Śhruti** (p.26) which are necessary for happiness. **Moksha** is mostly interpreted as final emancipation but it can be the gift of getting temporary liberation from this mundane world, the ability to touch the Eternal in our everyday lives through meditation.

Twām yogino dhyāyanti nityam. (On You Yogis meditate constantly.)

twām- 'You'. *The long ā is the accusative, making this the object of the phrase.*

yogino- 'Yogis'. [*yoginah^a in comp. nom.pl.*] *This is the subject of this phrase.*

dhyāyanti- 'meditate on', 'think of', 'contemplate', 'have the mind turned towards'. [*3p.pl.pres. of dhyai- 'to meditate'*]

nityam- 'constantly', 'always', 'eternally'. [*adv. of nitya 'eternal'*].

Alt. Trans. 'Yogis always keep You in mind'

Twam Brahmā twam Vishnus-twam. (You are Lord Brahma* the Creator, You are Shri Vishnu * the Sustainer, You are,)

Rudras-twam Indras-twam Agnis-twam.(Lord Shiva the Destroyer, Shri Indra, King of the Gods and Shri Agni the God of Fire You are)

Vāyus-twam Sūryas-twam Chandramās-twam. (Lord of the Wind You are, the Sun You are, the Moon You are)

twam- ‘You are’. [*nom.*]. The repetition of **twam** after each name is emphatic.

Brahmā- is masculine and so is Lord **Brahmadeva*** the Creator rather than the All-pervading Formless Divine **Brahman**. [*nom.masc.(see v1p10)*]

Vishnus-‘Shri Viṣṇu*’ *lit.* ‘All-pervading’. [*Viṣṇuh^u in comp. nom.masc.*]

Note: The **visarga (-h^a)** at the end of this and the following names becomes **-s**, before **twam** which comes after the names, as written.

**see Notes on Shri Vishnu and Shri Brahmadeva- appendix 2 -p.36*

The order in which these Deities are listed corresponds to the ascending order of the **Chakras-** viz. **Shri Brahmadeva** in the **Swādhiṣṭhāna**, **Shri Vishnu** at the Navel, **Shri Rudra (Śhiva)** in the Heart, **Shri Indra** ‘the Father’ as **Shri Krishna** at **Viśuddhi** (throat), **Shri Agni** as the fire of **Tapas** (renunciation) at **Āgñyā Chakra** and **Shri Vāyu** as the cool breeze that is felt at the top of the head (**Sahasrāra**) when the **Kundalinī** emerges. The Sun and Moon can be considered as the right and left side powers; alternatively the Sun is the **Bindu** (Dot) and the Moon is the **Ardha-bindu** (Crescent), the two **Chakras** above **Sahasrāra** (higher points of contemplation more than operational energy centres). One may take the attention up through the Chakras while saying these names.

¹ *The words Agni and Āgñyā are not from the same root. Agni is the God of Fire and Āgñyā means ‘command’ or ‘authority’ from ā- ‘complete’ gñyā- ‘knowledge’.*

See Note on ‘the meanings of the names of the chakras etc.’ Appendix 4 p.42.

Brahma bhūr bhuvah^a swarom. (Formless Spirit, Earth, Sky, Heaven and Om)

Brahma is *nom. neut.* here and thus is the All-pervading Attribute-less Formless Spirit, being that which exists independently of the three worlds.

bhūr-bhuvah^a swarom- The **tri-loka** ‘Three Worlds’. *see- ‘Note on the Creation’ p.71, an extract from the Devi Bhagavatam.*

bhūr- ‘Earth’, the abode of humans, [*bhūh^u- in comp.*]

bhuvah^a- ‘Sky’, ‘Atmosphere’, and ‘Heaven’ as the abode of the Devas.

swar- is also Heaven as the abode of the Blessed and the Gods, and can also mean ‘the Sun’ and ‘light’, and sometimes the realm that souls inhabit before taking re-birth. [*swah^a in comp.*]

Note: Not to be confused with **swāhā**, the mantra uttered while making offerings to the fire, which is derived from **su-** ‘good’, ‘auspicious’ and **āhā-** ‘speak’, a way of blessing.

Om-‘the primordial vibration’, ‘Amen’, ‘the Sacred Syllable’, *see v.1. p.7.* (6)

Verse 7- Explanation of the bīja mantra ‘gam’ and the great Ganesha Mantra.

Gan-ādim pūrvam-uchchārya. (Gana’s first letter (G) is to be uttered at the beginning)

Gana-ādi(m)-‘Gana’s first (letter)’ [*acc.*] **Gana**-‘troop, group’ is used here to furnish it’s first letter and perhaps indicate the connection of the **bīja** (seed) mantra ‘**gam**’ with **Gana** and hence **Ganapati** and **Ganeśha**. A **Gana** can also be a series of words starting with the same letter. There is a **Gana** (‘series’) of **bīja mantras** for the **Mūlādhāra Chakra** starting with **g, gam, gām, gīm, gūm, gaum, gah^a** and the 1000 names of Shri Ganesha all start with the letter ‘g’, the first 101 of which start with the word **Gana**. The **bīja** mantras are the sounds created by the chakras themselves. (*see Shri Mataji’s comments on the Devi Atharva Sheersha. P65*).

Alt. Trans. ‘Pronouncing the first of the series in front’.

ādi means ‘first’, ‘beginning’ or ‘original’ (as in **Ādi Śhakti**). *The long ā of ādim tends to be drawn-out as the short a at the end of Gana elides with it, as it does also in varn-ādim in the next phrase.*

pūrvam-‘at the beginning’, ‘first’, ‘before’ or ‘in front’. [*Adverb from pūrva- ‘first’, ‘previous’*]

uchchārya- ‘to be uttered’, ‘to be pronounced. or ‘to be said’. [*Gerundive of uchchar- ‘to go forth, rise, pronounce’.*] There is some uncertainty here as **uchchārya** can also be the gerund- ‘uttering’ as well as the past indicative- ‘having uttered’, which is interesting in the light of the double meaning of all these lines and adds to the ambiguity.

Double meanings.

Sanskrit abounds with both synonyms and multiple meanings of words, so that there can be many ways of saying the same thing as well as a phrase having many possible interpretations.

This art of making a simple statement have deeper philosophical resonances is something both Sanskrit and Chinese authors mastered to a high degree and is one of the reasons why it is hard to translate these great texts adequately.

Part of the beauty of the Tao Te Ching (Lao Tsu.China.300BC.) is that any of the many interpretations a phrase may have, will be meaningful. The word Tao itself has many meanings including a ‘path’, ‘name’, ‘Spirit’ etc. so that the opening line, ‘The Tao that is Tao is not Tao’ can be interpreted as ‘The way that can be named is not the eternal way’ or myriad other combinations.

The whole of this verse seems to be composed with each line being open to a deeper interpretation; which perhaps explains why the composition of the **bija** mantra **gam** is described twice.....

Gan-ādim can also mean ‘the First of the Ganas’ and is thus an epithet for Shri Ganesha Himself.

Uch-chārya comes from **ud-char-**‘to move up’ or ‘issue out’ and so as well as meaning ‘pronounced’, can mean ‘rises up’ or ‘issues forth’.

Pūrvam means ‘previously’ and denotes something that existed ‘before’ something else;

Alt. trans. - ‘Shri Ganesha arises first’ or ‘Shri Ganesha having issued forth previously’.

Varn-ādim tad-an-antaram. (Then the first letter of the alphabet (**a**))

varna-‘letter’- has many meanings stemming from the root meaning of ‘colour’ or ‘appearance’, so as well as the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, it denotes the different castes, the seven musical notes, the colours and appearance in general.

ādi(m)-‘the first’, ‘the beginning of’ ,[*acc. as above.*] **varn-ādim** is still the object of **uchchārya-**‘uttering’- from the previous phrase.

tad-an-antaram- ‘next’, ‘then’ or ‘immediately after that’ ,[*adv. Said as one word.*]

tad-‘that’, ‘there’. **an-**‘not’ or ‘without’ (like English **un-** which sounds the same) **antara-(m)** is ‘inside’ or ‘in between’, so **tad-an-antaram** means ‘that with nothing in between’ ie.‘next’. ‘Im-medi-ately’ is similarly composed from the Latin ‘nothing in the middle’.

Double meaning. The first letter of the alphabet is short **a**, the letter implicit in every consonant. MW (*Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary*) gives:-

a, as,- name of **Shri Vishnu** (especially as the first of the three sounds in the sacred syllable **Om**).

Tad-anantaram is ambiguous because as well as the adverb it can also be the accusative adjective in which case it means, like English ‘nothing between them’, ‘very similar’ or ‘closest to’ so the double meaning can be ‘very similar to.....’ (**Shri Vishnu** or any of the following other meanings), or it can be the adverb ‘then’, ‘next’, ‘immediately followed by

Varnādim also means ‘the first caste’ ie. **Brāhmanas** (the twice-born bearers of Divine Knowledge), ‘the first colour’- red, ‘the first note’- which can be either ‘sa’ (associated with the **Mūlādhāra Chakra** and sung with the sound of a peacock), or in some systems ‘ni’, whose sound is supposed to resemble an elephant, ‘the first form’ or ‘first outward appearance’, and ‘the first sound’ or ‘the first word’ – ie. the **OM.** - all of which can be readily associated with **Shri Ganeśha.**

Alt. trans. ‘Being identical with the Om’.

Anuswārah^a para-tarah^a. (followed by the nasal sound (M))

anu-swāra(h^a)-‘the nasal sound’ [*nom.mas. lit. ‘after-sound’*] **anu**-‘following’, **swāra**-‘sound’] is written as a dot (**bindu**) over a letter whose vowel is then followed by one of the five nasal sounds **n** or **m** which therefore precedes the next consonant, and is generally formed in the same area of the mouth as the following consonant. It is **n** before consonants (eg. **Sanjay, Sandhya**) and **m** before sibilants, semi-vowels (**y,r,l** and **v**), vowels (eg. **samsara, samanta**) and as a word ending. Properly speaking the **anuswāra** is a nasalisation rather than a consonant sound similar to the French ‘ton’.

para-tara(h^a)-‘followed by’, ‘after’, ‘further on’, ‘later’, [*nom.mas.*]

para means ‘beyond’ or ‘far’ apart from several other meanings (*v9 p27*) and **-tara** is the comparative ending. (*v3.p14*)

Double meaning. **Anu**-as a prefix to nouns (or verbs) - after, each by each, methodically, one after another.

Swāra- a sound, tone, reverberation, the seven notes of the musical scale and hence denotes the number ‘seven’. This could therefore be referring to the seven chakras, whose manifestation ‘follows’ the Primordial sound **OM**.

Alternatively the **anuswāra** is identified with **Lord Śhiva**.

Para-tara has further meanings including ‘Supreme’ or ‘chief’, so we get

Alt.trans. ‘**Shri Śhiva** is the Supreme above all’ or ‘The seven chakras come in order after that’.

Ardhendu-lasitam. (With the crescent resounding)

ardhendu-‘a crescent’ or ‘the crescent moon’. *from* **ardha**-‘half’, **indu**-‘drop’(like **bindu**) or ‘moon’. When writing **Gam**, the dot (**bindu**) is nestled in a crescent which denotes the full nasal sound, as it is also in the symbol for **Om**. The dot without the crescent gives a limited nasal sound; whereas with the crescent it reverberates in the whole head.

lasita(m)-‘resounding’ [*mas.acc.*] has a variety of meanings from ‘shining’ ‘appearing’ ‘playing’ to ‘dancing’ and ‘embracing’. the mundane meaning is more likely to be ‘the nasal sound resounding’, but ‘the crescent moon shining’ would reinforce the image of **Lord Shiva** who ‘wears the crescent moon as a crest-jewel’ or Shri Ganesha Himself who ‘sports the moon on the forehead’ .

Alt.trans. ‘With the crescent moon shining (on His forehead)’

Tārena riddham. (**tāra-ena**) (made to resound with the Om)

tāra-‘the Om’ *lit.* ‘the one that saves’, ‘the mystic monosyllable that has the power to liberate’ normally referring to the **Om** (but could possibly be **gam**.) [*from trī-* ‘to carry across’, ‘to save’]

-ena-instrumental ending- In Sanskrit, like English, the instrumental ‘with’ can also be the comitative ‘with’.

riddham- ‘made to resound’ is a special terminology in the science of **japa** ‘recitation’. Normally it means ‘prosperity’ or a ‘conclusion’ or ‘distinct result’ from **ridh-** ‘to grow’, ‘increase’, ‘prosper’ ‘accomplish’ or ‘succeed’ (not very different from **siddha-** ‘success’).

In some versions this is written **ruddham-** ‘obstructed’, and thus ‘controlled by the Om’?

Note: Technically the vowel **ri** should change to **r** by **Sandhi** and become **tārenarddham** which it does not, so this is puzzling to more erudite scholars.

Alt.trans. ‘Completed by the liberating syllable’

Double meaning. **Tāra-** means a ‘saviour’ or ‘protector’ and can denote any of the Deities but particularly **Lord Śhiva**. **riddham** is also ‘prosperity’ or ‘success’, so we get.

Alt.trans. ‘With the protection of Lord Shiva we prosper’, or possibly

Alt.trans. ‘With this liberating syllable we accomplish our perfection’.

Etat-tava manu-swa-rūpam. (This is the true form of Your mantra)

etat- ‘this’, ‘this here’. [*etad in comp.*] also ‘thus’, ‘in this manner’.

tava- ‘Your’, ‘of You’. [*gen. of twam 2p.sing.pron.*]

manu means, apart from other things, the same as **mantra**, a prayer or sacred text; so that the sometimes-used translation ‘this is the form of Manu’s mantra’ actually translates the word **manu** twice and omits to translate **tava-** ‘Your’. **manu** generally means ‘thinking’, ‘wise’ or ‘meditating’ (from **man-** ‘to think’ or ‘meditate’ *cf.* **manas** ‘mind’) and hence ‘man’ as ‘the thinking creature’. It is also the name of ‘the first man’ (like Adam) who was a law-giver and father of the human race.

swa-rūpam- ‘true form’, ‘the real shape of’, ‘special character or nature of’, but a specific philosophical meaning is a connection to God through ‘having the same character’ or ‘being of a like nature’ or even ‘identical with’.

[*nom.neut. lit. ‘own form’*]. **swa-** ‘own’, **rūpa-** ‘form’.

Double meaning- ‘Thus is man made in Your image’.

or ‘In this way the wise attain to Your condition’.

Gakārah^a pūrva-rūpam. (‘G’ is the first form.)

gakāra(h^a) ga- is the letter G, **-kāra** means ‘making’, ‘creating’ or ‘doing’.

[*nom.mas.*] The letters are given this appellation as ‘making’ the sound given, as in the following **akāro** ‘the letter a’ and **Omkāra** ‘the sound Om’.

pūrva- ‘first’. [*as above.*] **pūrva** has no case ending as it is compounded with **rūpam**.

rūpa(m)- ‘form’, ‘shape’, ‘appearance’ [*nom. neut.*]

Double meaning- The **Bīja** mantras for each **chakra** are said to be the sounds actually produced by the **chakra** as the Divine Energy flows through them. (*see Shri Mataji's comments on the Devi Atharva Sheersha, appendix 5. p.65*)

As the **Bīja** mantras of the **Mūlādhāra chakra** start with the letter 'ga', the title '**ga-kāra**'- 'making **ga**' could aptly be a description of this **chakra**.

Pūrva- 'first, before, lowest, previous' is generally opposed to **antya**- 'last' or **uttara**- 'top', and can mean 'accompanied by'.

Pūrva-rūpa has a special meaning of something antecedent, an omen or indication of future events.

Rupa is any outward appearance or phenomenon, or object of the senses.

Alt.trans. 'The **Mūlādhāra chakra** is the first manifestation'
or 'The **Mūlādhāra chakra** is the lowest form'.

Akāro madhyama-rūpam. ('A' is the middle form)

akāro- The letter **a**. (short **a**, like the **u** in 'but') [*a-kārah^a in comp. nom.mas.*]

madhyama- 'middle', 'in between', 'middlemost', 'central'. *same as madhya. cf. Madhya Pradeśh-* 'the central region'; the state where Shri Mataji was born in the middle of India.

rūpam- 'form' *as above*

Double meaning. **a-kāra** as mentioned above can be associated with **Shri Vishnu**.

madhyama is essentially the same as **madhya** 'middle' but has more a sense of 'the middle thing' and can easily denote the Central Channel of the subtle system. It also means the middle of the body and could be associated with the **Nābhī chakra**. Both the Central Channel and the **Nābhī chakra** are ruled by **Shri Vishnu** and His consort **Shri Lakshmi**.

Alt.Trans. 'Shri Vishnu is the manifestation in the central channel'.

Anu-svāraśh-ch-āntya-rūpam. (**anu-swārah^a-cha-antya**) (and 'M' is the finishing form)

anu-svāra(śh)- 'M' or any 'nasal sound' *as above*. [*anusvarah^a in comp. nom.mas.*]

cha- 'and' *see v.1*

antya- 'finishing', 'last in place, time or order' also 'lowest in place or condition', 'most inferior', [*from anta-* 'end'] *cf. an-anta* 'endless', 'eternal', 'infinite' or '*Narak-ānta-ka*'- 'One who kills (makes an end to) *Naraka*' (a demon killed by **Shri Krishna**, and also one name for Hell).

rūpam- 'form' [*acc.*] *as above*.

Double meaning. If we take the **anu-swāra** as denoting **Lord Śhiva**, or even, being the combination of **Bindu** and **Nada** (see below), as the Union of **Śhiva** and **Śhakti**, the Yoga of the **Kundalinī Śhakti** with the **Ātma**, this could be referring to the **Sahasrāra**, which is also the 'last' form, the highest chakra.

Alt.trans. 'We get our Yoga at the highest chakra' or
'The seven chakras are the final manifestation'.

‘The entire universe consisting of the movable and the immovable is of the nature of **Bindu** (dot) and **Nāda** (sound). **Bindu** is **Śhakti** (power) and **Śhiva** is **Nāda**. Hence the universe is pervaded by **Śhiva** and **Śhakti**.

Bindu is the support of **Nāda**. The universe has the support of **Bindu**. Both **Bindu** and **Nāda** together support the entire universe. The unification of the **Bindu** and the **Nāda** is called **Sakalī-karana-** ‘creator of everything’ and the universe takes its birth as a result of this **Sakalī-karana**. Goddess of the form of **Bindu** is the Mother and **Śhiva** of the form of **Nāda** is the Father.’ *Shiva Purana*.

Bindur uttara-rūpam. (Bindu (dot) is the form on top)

bindu(r)- ‘dot’, ‘spot’, ‘drop’. [*binduh* in comp. nom.mas. as above.] The **bindu** is the dot over a letter denoting **anuswāra**, the nasal sound.

Note: **Bindu** is also the name of the first **chakra** above **Sahasrāra** as the seat of **Shri Sadāśhiva-** the Ultimate Spirit as the witness of this universe. The crescent-**ardha-bindu-** is the second **chakra** above **Sahasrāra**. cf. **bindi-** the red spot worn on the forehead (a Hindi word derived from Sanskrit).

uttara- ‘upper’, ‘last’, ‘most excellent’. see v.3 p.9. **rūpam-** ‘form’ as above.

Uttara-rūpa has a special meaning as the second of two combined vowels or consonants, **pūrva-rūpa** being the first.

Double meaning- ‘the **Ādi Shakti** manifests in the highest chakra’.

Or; ‘The **Ādi Shakti** is the most excellent form’.

The Creative Power of God- **Mahāmāyā** – is the Supreme Goddess who resides in the **Sahasrāra chakra** at the top of the head.

Nādah^a sandhānam. (uniting as one sound)

nāda(h^a) ‘sound’ in general but particularly ‘the full nasal sound represented by the crescent’ [*nom.mas.sing.*]. The visarga (aspiration) here sounds like -s. (**nādhas-sandhānam**)

san-dhānam- ‘uniting’, ‘conjunction’, ‘combination’, ‘bringing together’ [*nom.neut nominal of sam-dhā*]. The sounds **g**, **a**, and **m** are united into a single syllable **gam** (pronounced ‘gum’) which is nasalised. Like **OM** the sound travels from the back of the mouth to the front.

Alt.trans. ‘the nasal sound bringing everything together’.

Double meaning- From the above extract of the **Śhiva Purana**, we see that **Nāda** is **Lord Śhiva**, the unmanifest Spirit, and is presumably the half instant ‘known only by Yogis’ mentioned in the extract about **OM** from the **Markandeya Purana** on page 10.

san-dhānam- is both the noun ‘the union’ and the nom./acc. neut. present participle ‘uniting’ –.

Alt.trans. ‘uniting with **Lord Śhiva**, the All-pervading Spirit’

Samhitā-sandhihⁱ (joined according to euphonic rules)

Samhitā-'joined', 'conjunction' The preparatory stage of arranging letters to be joined by **Sandhi** [*f. psp.of sam-dhā.-*] **Samhitā** is also used to mean a treatise or a text of methodically arranged verses. The **Śhiva Purana**, for example, consists of five **Samhitās**.

Sandhi(hⁱ)-(n) 'euphonic rules', 'the system of modifying words when used in compounds'. [*nom.*] Both words come from the same root as **samdhānam** above and mean virtually the same thing, 'junction' or 'combination' and specifically the system of joining words euphonicly in Sanskrit. (*see Sandhi in 'Notes on Sanskrit pronunciation' p.4*)

Note: Although **sandhānam**, **sandhi** etc. are usually written with an n, there is a Sanskrit convention of writing them as **saṃ-dhānam** and **saṃ-dhi** is to show that they are nasalised approximating to the French 'ton'.

Alt.trans. 'the treatise is completed according to the euphonic rules'.

Double meaning- **Samhitā** can be 'the force which binds together the universe' the **Supreme Brahman**.

Alt.trans. 'Becoming merged into the Supreme Brahman'.

Saiṣhā Ganesha-vidyā. (*sā-eshā*)-*fem.* (In this manner, is the knowledge of Shri Ganesha)

saiṣhā-'in this manner is', *from sā-*'she', **eṣhā-**'this', 'thus'. *lit.* 'she is thus'.

Ganeśha-'The Supreme Gana'. [*this has no case ending as it is compounded with – vidyā.*]

vidyā- 'knowledge', 'what is to be learnt', 'learning', 'philosophy'. [*nom.fem. from vid-* 'to know'.] Like **pragñyā-** 'wisdom', **vidyā** is feminine, reminiscent of the Greeks who personified learning and wisdom as the Goddess **Sophia**.

Alt.trans. 'This is what is to be known of Lord Ganesha'.

Ganaka-rishihⁱ. (The Composing Seer is Ganaka)

ganaka-'composed', 'assembled', 'put in order',. *From gana-*'group', **ka-**'making'. *This point is not clear as normally the name of the sage who composed the prayer is given at this point. If this means that the name of the seer or author is Ganaka, as suggested by some writers, this could also be taken as an epithet of Shri Ganesha Himself, being a way of saying that the poem is divinely inspired.*

ganaka also means to 'count' or 'calculate' and **san-ganaka** is the Hindi word for a 'computer'.

rishi(hⁱ)-'seer', 'Divinely inspired poet', 'a singer of sacred songs', 'sage'. The process of Divine Inspiration is that the sage first 'sees' the composition and then translates it into sound. A **rishi** is 'one who sees'.

Double meaning – **ka** means 'making', so **ganaka** can be the 'one making the string of sounds' ie. the person who recites these mantras.

Alt Trans. 'The one who recites this becomes a great sage'.

Nichrid-gāyatrī-chhandah^a. (the metre is a mixed Gayatri)

nichrid-‘mixed’, commonly means to ‘infix’, ‘insert’ or ‘mix’ but specifically it means ‘mixed’ or ‘imperfect’ when applied to a metre. [*nichrit in comp.*]

gāyatrī- ‘The name of a poetic metre’, ‘song’, ‘hymn’ [*gāyatrīhⁱ in comp. nom.fem.-from gāi- ‘to sing’, the root of gīta ‘song’.*].

Gāyatrī is one of the great sacred metres used in composition of hymns and due to it’s efficacy is sometimes known as the **Veda-mātā-** ‘mother of knowledge’. The words are arranged in verses of 24 syllables, in three lines of eight syllables. The other familiar metres used in sacred texts are **anushtubh** (four blocks of eight) and **trishtubh** (four blocks of eleven). It is slightly confusing here; is this referring only to the mantra at the end of the verse or the **Gāyatrī mantra** which follows it, or the whole **Ganesha A’harva Shīrsha**? It is possible to arrange some of the G.A.S. in blocks of eight but with plenty of eleven syllable lines too -nearly the whole of verse 4 is composed of 11 syllable lines, which would be **trishtubh** metre- Verse 9 is in lines of eight syllables but in blocks of two (**anushtubh**?)! Therefore it could be called a **nichrit** ‘imperfect’ or ‘mixed’ **Gāyatrī** metre.

The three lines that constitute the next verse are similar in form to the classic Gāyatrī Mantra from the Rig Veda- ‘Om, tat-savitur-varenyam, bhargo devasya dhi-mahi, dhiyo-yo nah^a prachodayāt’ which falls easily into three blocks of eight. The chanting of a Gāyatrī mantra is one of the most potent means to establish a connection with the Divine.

chhandah(h^a)-‘a metre’. [*(aspirated chh) chhandas in comp. nom. neut.*] At the beginning of many Sanskrit hymns are given, as here, the name of the author (**rishi**), the metre (**chhandas**) and the presiding Deity (**devatā**). **chhandas** can also mean a ‘sacred hymn’ and is used in writing specifically to refer to the Vedas. From **chhandah-** ‘delight’ or ‘desire’.

Double meaning- **Gāyatrī** is personified as the Mother Goddess who confers the Divine Nectar of Immortality, an aspect of **Shri Durga**, the **Shakti** of **Lord Shiva** and one of the main forms of the **Adi Shakti**. ‘**Nichrit- gāyatrī**’ can therefore denote absorption in the Blissful Nature of the Divine Mother, **chhandah^a** is the nom./acc. of **chhandas-**‘a metre’ or the nom.mas. of **chhandah-** ‘according to ones desire’.

Alt.trans. ‘Becoming immersed in the Divine Nature according to his desire’.

Ganapatir-devatā. (The presiding Deity is Shri Ganapati)

Ganapati(r)- ‘the Leader of the Ganas’. [*Ganapatihⁱ in comp. nom.mas. see v.1.p.7*]

devatā- ‘Deity’, ‘Godhead’, Each hymn is addressed to a particular Deity whose job it is to watch over and protect the proceedings.

Double meaning- **devatā** –has a double meaning of ‘with the God’, so we become in the company of Shri Ganesha when immersed in the Blissful nature of the Divine Mother.

The hidden meaning behind the more prosaic explanation can be:-

Ganādim pūrvam uchchārya. *Shri Ganeśha is the pre-existent manifestation,*

Varnādim tad-anantaram. *Being identical with the Primordial Sound OM,*

Anu-swārah^a para-tarah^a. *Shrī Śhiva is the Supreme Lord above all*

Ardhendu lasitam. *With the crescent moon shining (on His head)*

Tārena riddham. *With Lord Śhiva as our saviour we accomplish
(our self-realisation) and prosper.*

Etat-tava manu swa-rūpam. *In this manner the wise attain Your state.*

Gakārah^a pūrva rūpam. *Contemplating Mūlādhāra Chakra, the lowest form,*

Akāro madhyama rūpam *Then Shri Vishnu in the central channel,*

Anuswārash chāntya rūpam. *And the witnessing Spirit at the highest chakra.*

Bindur utara rūpam. *At the top centre the Ādi Śhakti,*

Nādah^a samdhānam. *Uniting with Lord Shiva,*

Samhitā sandhīhⁱ. *Gives connection to the Supreme Brahman.*

Saishā Ganesha vidyā. *Thus is the knowledge of the Lord of Ganas.*

Ganaka riṣhīhⁱ. *The reciter of these mantras becomes a great sage,*

Nichrid gāyatrī chhandah^a. *Being immersed in the Blissful Nature of the
Divine Mother, according to his desire.*

Ganapatir devatā. *In the company of the Supreme Lord, Shri Ganesha.*

‘While saying the word ‘gam’, take the attention from the **Mūlādhāra Chakra** up through the central channel to the top of the head, where the **Kundalinī Shakti** gets united with the **Ātma** and we become at one with the all-pervading Formless Supreme Spirit, to whom **Shri Ganesha** is identical’.

‘When this flow reaches to the higher state of Agnya Chakra, where Shri Ganesha's power becomes the power of forgiveness. Then it rises above to the limbic area where the power of Shri Ganesha which is beyond sun, is seated; then superego appears above. This is the power of moon. Here is the spirit of moon. It becomes the 'Spirit'. It is always seated on the head of Shri Shiva. This is the complete evolution of Shri Ganesha's Shakti, as you see, it's extremely beautiful. In this way our 'desire' itself becomes the 'Spirit'. Your desire and Spirit become one, united.’

H.S.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi.

Rahuri 31/12/1980.

! gaM^ Om Gam Ganapatayé namah^a. ('Om Gam' Salutations to the Lord of the Ganas)

*When reciting the G.A.S. some people say this mantra three times, which would make it a kind of **Gāyatrī**. It is a potent invocation to **Lord Ganesha** and may be used for all worship and meditation*

Shri Pārvatī once asked Her husband **Lord Shiva** on whom He was meditating, to which He replied 'On the One who is the Supporter of the entire universe'. She asked 'May I also meditate upon him?' and so **Lord Shiva** initiated Her into the power of the **bīja** (seed) mantra '**Gam**', following which **Shri Pārvatī** performed austerities in a cave at **Lenyadri** for twelve years, and then **Shri Ganapati** manifested before Her. This cave is the site of **Shri Girijātmaka** 'created by the Daughter of the Mountain (Shri Parvati)' one of the **Ashta Vinayakas**, the eight **swayambhū**, or self-created forms of **Shri Ganesha** found in **Mahārāshtra**, centred around **Pūne**.

P

Verse 8 – The Ganapati Gāyatrī-

*These three lines form a **Gāyatrī** mantra similar in form to the classic **Gāyatrī** Mantra from the **Rig Veda** (see above).*

Eka-dantāya vidmahe. (We have the knowledge of the One-Tusked God) **eka-** 'one'. - e is always long in Sanskrit and not as in 'egg', although in Hindi and Marathi **eka** will tend to have a short e.

danta- 'tusk', 'tooth', 'ivory'. [*cf. Eng. 'dental'*] There are many stories about how **Shri Ganesha** broke or lost His tusk, usually his left one (H.S.H. Shri Mataji has a chip out of Her left front tooth). One tale is that **Shri Ganapati** refused **Shri Parashurāma** (sixth incarnation of **Shri Vishnu**) entry to **Kailāsh** (the home of **Lord Shiva**) as the Lord was sleeping. **Parashurāma** was angry and in the fight that ensued, threw His axe at the boy. Recognising that the axe had been given to **Shri Parashurāma** by His father **Lord Shiva**, in respect **Shri Ganapati** did not destroy it, but allowed it to hit His tusk which was severed; another story is that He pulled out his tusk as a weapon to subdue the demon **Gajāsura**, who then transformed into a rat and became His vehicle; most commonly it is told that the head of the elephant He was given only had one tusk.

-āya- 'to (the one-tusked)' [*dative ending*]

vid-mahe- 'we have the knowledge of', 'we know', 'we are acquainted', 'we have an understanding of'; but there can also be a sense of 'wishing to know or have the correct notion about' and also 'remembering' or 'keeping in mind', similar to **dhī-mahi** in the next line. [*1p.pl.pres. of vid 'to know'*].

Vakra-tundāya dhī-mahi. (We meditate on the Lord with a Curved Trunk)

vakra- ‘curved’, ‘bent’, ‘twisted’. *No case ending as it is compounded.*

tunda- ‘trunk’, ‘snout’, ‘beak’. *A parrot is also called **vakra-tunda**, having a curved beak. –āya-* dative ending.

dhī-mahi- ‘we meditate on’, ‘we fix our attention on’, ‘we keep in mind’, [*Ip.pl.pres.of dhya.- ‘to meditate’.*]

Tanno-dantī prachodayāt. (May the Ivoried God therefore inspire us).

tan- ‘therefore’, ‘then’. **tad** in comp. **no-** ‘us’. [*nah^a in comp. Ip.pl.pron.acc.*]

dantī- ‘possessed of ivory’, ‘one having tusks’,. *Being nominative this is the subject.*

pra-chodayāt- ‘may inspire’, ‘may impel’, ‘may stimulate’, ‘may excite’, ‘may command’, ‘may direct’. [*potential case of pra-chud.*] (8)

Alt.trans. ‘May the Tusked One stimulate and direct us’.

These three lines correspond to the three channels of the subtle system;-

Eka-dantāya vidmahe- vidmahe means ‘we know’ and direct knowledge of reality -**sattva-** is the quality of the central channel. **Eka-danta-** ‘the one-tusked’- Shri Ganesha’a single tusk lifts us up out of Samsāra- the illusions of worldly life- and thus symbolizes the central channel as the only path out of illusion leading to the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality.

Vakra-tundāya dhī-mahi- dhī-mahi means ‘we meditate’ or ‘we direct our attention’- the quality of the Right Side. **Vakra-tunda-** ‘the One having a curled trunk’- Shri Ganesha’a curled trunk is associated with the **OM**, and is often depicted as forming the ‘u’ of the Devanagari letter (the curl to the right below the crescent) which is the **Brahmā Shakti**, the Right Side. The **OM** emerges first from the Brahmānda (egg of Brahmā) and is the basis of creation as well as speech. The trunk is an elephants main organ of action.

Tanno-dantī prachodayāt- dantī- ‘the one with a tusk’ can refer to the broken tusk that Shri Ganesha holds in His hand which He used as a weapon to destroy the demon Gajāśura –demons are negative forces which attack the Left Side- and is therefore a symbol of the protection we receive as devotees of Lord Ganesha, as well as a sharp stick to spur us on! **prachodayāt-** ‘may He stimulate’- our Left Side, the side of desire, generally needs stimulation whereas the Right Side tends to need brakes! Stimulated by Shri Ganesha our desire is pure and for the highest purpose.



Verse 9 - the method of worshipping Shri Ganesha

Note; This verse is a description of the attributes of Lord Ganesha, physical and subtle with an exhortation to worship Him in this manner.

*This description is all in the accusative and the only verb- **evam dhyayanti yo** 'whoever meditates thus'- is at the end. The translation is worded in this way.*

Eka-dantam chatur-hastam (Having one tusk and four hands)

eka-danta(m) 'one-tusked'. [acc. –as above.]

chatur- 'four'. **chatur-hastam** is a compound so **chatur** has no case ending.

hasta(m)- 'hands'. [acc.] (*interestingly this can also mean 'trunk' as an elephant's 'hand' (hasti is 'elephant') ... but I don't think we would interpret it as 'having four trunks'!*.)

Pāsham-ankusha-dhārinam (Weilder of the noose and elephant goad)

pāsham- 'a noose', 'fetter', 'snare'. [acc.] Like the goad this is an item specially identified with an elephant keeper, a rope used to tie the elephant's leg to a tree.

pāsha can mean 'bonds' of any sort, and symbolises what binds the soul to this earthly existence, our 'karma'.

ankusha- a hook with a spike on it, looking a bit like a hatchet, used by elephant-drivers and commonly referred to as a 'goad'. **Shri Ganesha** is holding this in his right hand as a 'stimulator' (the Right Side being action) and the noose as a 'punisher' and also a symbol of attachments, in the left hand (the Left Side being the past and hence our **Karma**). Of His four hands it is the back two that hold these more fearsome weapons while the front hands give blessings and nourishment.

dhārin(am)– 'the wielder', 'one who holds', 'carries' or 'possesses'. 'Wielder' is therefore a closer translation than 'wielding' [acc.]

Radam cha varadam hastair bi-bhrānam (Holding a tusk and granting boons with the hands)

rada(m)- 'tusk' or 'tooth'. [Lit. 'a splitter' or 'gnawer'. acc.] Shri Ganesha is often depicted holding His broken tusk in His right hand. In one tradition Shri Ganesha was asked to be Ved Vyas's scribe to write down the **Mahābhārata** epic. He agreed on the condition that He must be kept busy. The **rishi Ved Vyas** agreed on the condition that **Shri Ganapati** understood everything that He was writing and so deliberately construed obscure passages to give himself time to compose while **Shri Ganesha** was figuring out the meaning. The Elephant-headed God broke off His tusk to write with.

*Commonly **Shri Ganesha** is holding in His left hand a bowl of **laddhus** - a sweet made from gram flour, ghee and sugar, representing nourishment for the world. The rat or mouse which is His vehicle, is usually shown eating one of the **laddhus**.*

In some traditions **Shri Ganesha** is Himself made of gram flour and fragrant oils- that being the cleansing paste which **Shri Pūrvaṭī** rubbed on Her body before bathing and which She scraped off to fashion a boy to protect Her chastity.

-cha- ‘and’ -appears after the word it would precede in English and therefore links this phrase to the previous one and not **radam** and **varadam**.

vara-da(m)- ‘granting boons’. [acc.] **vara** is a ‘choice’, ‘wish’ or ‘boon’ as well as whatever is ‘most excellent’ or ‘best’. The word ‘choicest’ is apt as it shows the derivation of one meaning from the other. **-da-** means ‘giving’, ‘granting’ or ‘bestowing’ so **varada** means ‘granting boons’, ‘fulfilling wishes’ or ‘giving the best’, perhaps also referring to the nourishment.

hastai(r)- ‘with the hands’. [**hastaihⁱ** in comp. inst.pl. of **hasta** ‘hand’.]

bi-bhrānam – ‘holding’, ‘offering’, ‘bestowing’. [pp. acc. from **bhri** ‘to hold’.]

Mūshaka-dhvajam (Having a mouse as an emblem)

mūshaka- can be a ‘rat’ or a ‘mouse’. [from **mush-** ‘to steal’ -also spelt **mūshika**.] - the same word means both. In the various legends the rodent is usually a nuisance, such as a **rakshasa** (demon), who has to be controlled and hence **Shri Ganesha** takes it as a vehicle. In this prayer the mouse is His emblem rather than His vehicle.

dhvajam- ‘emblem’, ‘banner’, ‘sign’, ‘flag’. [acc.]

Raktam, lambodaram, shūrpa-karnakam (Red in colour, with a big belly and ears like winnowing fans)

rakta(m)- means ‘red’ or ‘blood’ normally but also has a range of meanings including ‘excited’, ‘beloved’, ‘sporting’ and ‘coloured’ in general. So there is a sense of praising **Shri Ganesha** here as ‘beloved’, ‘beautiful’ and ‘joy-giving’. [acc. same root as **ranja** ‘colour’.]

Shri Ganesha is also frequently described as **dhumra-varna-** ‘smoke coloured’. From personal experience when **Shri Ganesha** has appeared to my inner eye, He is nearly always grey in colour, sometimes seated and sometimes dancing, although once golden in colour. The **Mūlādhāra Chakra** itself is normally coral red or terracotta, and becomes bright or dark red when **Shri Ganesha** is angry; people who become unbalanced by drinking too much alcohol sometimes see pink elephants!

raktam here is describing **Shri Ganesha** generally and not just His belly; if ‘having a red belly’ was the sense, as sometimes translated, it would be compounded **rakta-lambodaram** as in **rakta-vasasam** and **rakta-gandhānu-liptāngam** which follow.

lambodara(m)- ‘having a large or protuberant belly’. [acc. **lamba-** ‘hanging down’, **udara-** belly.] One of **Shri Ganesha**’s qualities is that He has a voracious appetite, particularly for sweet things- a bit like Winnie the Pooh and his ‘Hunny’.

Once **Shri Kubera**, the God of Wealth, proud of His affluence, invited **Shri Ganesha** to dinner. **Lord Shiva** warned **Kubera** that the boy had a big appetite, but the Lord of Wealth proudly replied that He had plenty to offer; However **Shri Ganesha** quickly consumed all the food available and, still hungry, started to eat the gold plates, tables and chairs. Panic-stricken **Kubera** ran to **Lord Shiva** for help, who gave him five parched grains and said ‘Give these to the boy’. The five grains from the hand of His Father satisfied **Shri Ganesha**’s appetite which all the wealth in the world could not.

His big belly also indicates that He is an awakened soul, because when the **Kundalinī Shakti** rises from the Sacrum bone to the **Nābhi** (navel) **Chakra**, the small of the back arches, causing the belly to relax and be thrust forwards and down.

shūrpa- ‘a winnowing fan’- a large wicker fan two or three feet across with a two inch raised lip on the curved side, resembling an elephant’s ear, used for winnowing corn or rice by throwing it up in the air and catching it on a windy day. This also has the symbolism of sorting out the wanted from the unwanted- the good from the bad.

karnaka(m)- ‘having ears’ [*acc. from karna-* ‘ear’, *ka-* ‘having’.] cf. The warrior **Karna** in the **Mahābhārata** was so named because of the ear-rings he was born with.

When reciting the **Ganesha A.S.**, I always enjoy the way the verse builds up with **raktam**- 2 syllables; **lambodaram**- 4 syllables; **shūrpa karnakam**- 5 syllables; **rakta vasasam**- 5 syllables; **rakta gandānu-liptāngam**- 8 syllables; **rakta pushpaihⁱ su-pūjitam**... etc and the rest of the verse is in 8 syllable phrases. Technically there must be a break after **shūrpa** as this verse is in **Anushtubh** metre of 8 syllable lines.

Rakta-vāsasam. (Clothed in red)

rakta- ‘red’ [*no case ending as compounded*]

vāsasa(m)- ‘clothed’, ‘wearing a garment’, [*from vāsas-* ‘garment’.]

Shri Ganesha is also often referred to as **Shubra-** or **Shukla-vastra** – ‘wearing white clothes’ as He chose white as the symbol of purity, intelligence and discrimination for His costume.

Rakta-gandh-ānu-liptāngam (**gandha-anu-lipta-angam**) (With fragrant red sandalwood paste anointing the body)

rakta- ‘red’ [*no case ending as compounded*]

gandha- ‘sandalwood paste’ or any ‘fragrance’, ‘scent’, ‘perfume’ or ‘smell’ in general.

anu-lipta- ‘anointed’, ‘smeared’, -especially after bathing.

anga(m)- ‘limbs’ or ‘the body’ in general. [*acc.*]

Rakta pushpaihⁱ su-pūjitam. (Auspiciously worshipped with red flowers)

pushpai(hⁱ)- ‘with flowers’, ‘by blossoms’. [*inst.pl. of pushpa.*]

su-pūjita(m)- ‘auspiciously worshipped’, ‘highly honoured’. [*from su- ‘good’, pūjita- ‘worshipped’*]

Bhakt-ānu-kampinam devam (Divinely Compassionate to devotees)

bhakta- ‘devotee’, ‘worshipper’ and also ‘share’, ‘allotment’. [*psp of bhaj- ‘to engage in, devote, worship’, also the root of bhajan.*] ‘bhakta’ has a nice resonance here with the ‘rakta’ that has started the previous lines.

anu-kampin(am)- ‘compassionate one’, ‘a sympathiser’, ‘one who pities’. [*acc.*]

deva(m)- ‘divinely’, ‘God’, ‘resplendant’, ‘Divine’. [*adv./acc.*] Again the accusative form leads to some ambiguity as it can also be the adverb. **Devam** is not necessarily connected to **Bhakt-ānu-kampinam**. In fact if it meant ‘The God who is Compassionate to devotees’ it would be written **Bhakt-ānu-kampita-devam**. Therefore **devam** seems to have a more adverbial sense ‘Divinely compassionate ...’

Jagat-kāranam-achyutam. (Imperishable Origin of the world)

jagat- ‘world’ *see v.5 p.10*

kārana(m)- ‘origin of’, ‘cause of’, ‘reason for’, ‘principle behind’. [*acc.*]

achyuta(m)- ‘imperishable’, ‘solid’, ‘permanent’, ‘unable to slip or fall’. [*acc.adj.*]

Āvir-bhūtam cha srishty-ādau (and becoming manifest at the beginning of the creation)

āvir-bhūta(m)- ‘manifest’, ‘being visible’, ‘apparent’. [*acc. from avis- ‘visible’, bhūta- ‘becoming’*]

-cha- ‘and’ - *links this phrase to the previous one.*

srishty- ‘the creation of the world’, ‘procreation’, ‘bringing forth’, [*srishti in comp. no case ending as compounded*]

ādau- ‘in the beginning’, ‘at first’. [*loc. of ādi- ‘first’.*]

Prakriteh^e purushāt-param. (being beyond the Ādi Shakti and the Supreme Spirit)

para(m)- ‘beyond’, ‘far from’, ‘other than’, ‘anterior to’, ‘superior to’. [*acc.*]

para takes the ablative case (‘from...’) which **prakriteh^e** and **purushāt** are in. If it was connected to the previous phrase ‘before the creation from **Prakriti** and the Supreme **Purusha**’ as sometimes translated, it would be written ‘**prakriteh^e parama-purushāt**’. However **para** does have a sense of ‘existing before...’

***prakrite(h^e)**- ‘**Ādi Shakti**’, ‘the original or natural form’, ‘primary substance’, ‘Nature’, ‘matter as containing the three Gunas’. In metaphysical philosophy the **Ādi Shakti** is the feminine Power of Creation (**Ādi**- ‘first’, **shakti**- ‘power’) [*abl. of prakriti- fem. from pra- ‘before’, kriti- ‘doing’, ‘making’.*]

***purushā(t)**- ‘the Supreme Spirit’, ‘**Param-ātma**’, ‘the Animating Principle’, and the Masculine Principle of Creation- the Spirit as the passive witness of **Prakriti’s** Creation’. [*abl. of purusha-mas.*]

purusha can also mean ‘man’, ‘a man’ or a ‘husband’ as it does also in Hindi.

*Terminology here becomes difficult as both **Ādi Shakti** and **Param-ātma** can denote the Attribute-less **Brahman** before any descent into duality, but if we say that the Divine assumed this duality for the sake of creation then **Ādi Shakti** is the **Prakriti**, the Female principle, personified as **Shri Pārvatī** or **Māyā** whose creation is permeated, animated and witnessed by the **Param-ātma** (Supreme Spirit) or **Purusha**, the Male principle personified as **Lord Shiva**. **Shri Ganesha** is here extolled as being beyond this division into duality and hence is the Supreme Supreme who is pre-existent to all manifestation. Obviously there is some paradox here as He is also worshipped as being the child of **Shri Pārvatī** and **Lord Shiva** who are themselves the **Ādi Shakti** and **Supreme Spirit**.*

See: Note on **Samkhya philosophy. Appendix 5 p.64.**

Evam dhyāyati yo nityam. (Whoever meditates on You in this way constantly)

evam- ‘in this way’, ‘thus’, ‘in such a manner’. [*adv.*]

dhyāyati- ‘meditates on’, ‘thinks of’, ‘recollects’, ‘keeps in mind’. [*3p.sing.pres.*]

yo- ‘whoever’, ‘who’. [*yah^a in comp.nom.*] *In Sanskrit the relative pronoun ‘who’-yah^a is not the same as the interrogative pronoun ‘who?’ which is kah^a.*

nityam- ‘constantly’, ‘always’, ‘continually’ see v.1 p.8.

Sa yogī yoginām-varah^a. (That Yogi becomes the most excellent of Yogis)

sa- ‘that’, ‘that very’, ‘He’. [*nom.mas.*] **Ya... sa...** ‘whoever...that person...’.

The use of the masculine is a convention and does not in any way preclude women from attaining this state.

yogī- ‘yogi’- ‘one who is connected’, ‘a master of the Divine Arts’, ‘a contemplative saint’. [*nom.mas.*]

yoginām- ‘of Yogis’, ‘of the saints’. [*gen. pl.*]

vara(h^a)- ‘most excellent’, ‘best’, ‘most eminent’, ‘choicest’. *nom.adj.* **Vara** also means a choice or a boon, so it could be translated as ‘that Yogi becomes the choice of Yogis’ ie. He attains that state desired as a boon by Yogis. see v.9 p.14

(9)

verse 10 - the Eight Names

Namo Vrāta-pataye. Namō Ganapataye. (Salutations to the Lord of assemblies and Leader of the Ganas)

namo- ‘salutations’. [*namah^a in comp. see v.1 p.7.*]

Note: namah^a always takes the dative case, which for words ending in short or long –a (which is by far the majority in Sanskrit) is –āya. Here it is –aye, the dative of words ending in short –i.

vrāta- means an assemblage, a collection, a congregation, gathering or group of people (cf. **pañcha vrātā-** ‘the five races of men’) and hence has a similar meaning to **Gana**. A **vrāta-pati** is the leader of an assembly, or chairman of a meeting.

Not to be confused with vrata- a ‘vow’, ‘religious observance’, ‘a fast’.

pataye- ‘to the Lord of’. [*dat. of pati. see v.1 p.7.*]

namo Ganapataye- ‘salutations to the Leader of the Ganas’. *see v.1 p.7.*

Namah^a *pramat’ha-pataye. (Prostrations to the Chief of Lord Shiva’s attendants)

namah^a- ‘prostrations’. *Note: The ending of namah^a does not change before a following p. Also there is a caesura (pause) in the metre after it.*

pramat’ha- The weird and demonic-looking attendants of Lord Shiva, one of whose names is **preta-chārin-** ‘going about surrounded by spirits’. Shri Ganesha is the ruler of these imps also sometimes known as **Vināyakas**, due to their unruly nature. *see v.1 p.7. under Ganas.*

**Note: In some versions this line is written namah^a prat’hama-pataye meaning ‘salutations to the first and foremost Lord’. As both versions are equally common and equally appropriate it seems to be a matter of personal choice, although pramat’ha-pataye is considered more correct by some scholars.*

Namastē-stu lambodarāy-aika-dantāya. (*Namaste-astu lambodarāya -ekadantāya*) (Let there be obeisance to You, the Big-bellied, One-tusked God)

namastē- ‘salutations to You’. *see v.1 p.7.*

astu- ‘let it be’, ‘may there be’. [*impv. of as ‘to be’.*] There is a long vowel between **te-** and **–stu** as the **–e** coalesces with the elided **a** at the beginning of **–astu**.

lambodarā(ya)- ‘to the big-bellied’

eka-dantā(ya) ‘to the one-tusked’ [*both appear in the previous verse.*]

Note: Technically these two names should be run together as lambodarāyaikadantāya but in fact there is a caesura (break in the metre) after lambodarāy-.

There is a story that combines these two attributes of **Shri Ganesha**. The God was riding home one moon-lit night on His mouse, His stomach distended from gorging Himself on **modakas** (sweetmeats) which His Mother had given Him. Suddenly a snake slithered out in front of the mouse, **Shri Ganesha** fell from His mount, His stomach split open and the **modakas** fell out onto the road. The Elephant-headed God shovelled the sweets back into His belly and tied it up using the snake as a belt to keep the sweets inside. The moon, which in those days was always full, laughed at this scene so uproariously that **Shri Ganesha** was angry and pulling out His tusk threw it at the moon which fell down. After that the nights were dark, so the people implored **Shri Ganapati** (now '**ekadanta**') to restore the moon, which He did but only for half the month, it reappearing in a crescent form like an elephant's tusk.

Vighna-nāshine Shiva-sutāya (to the Destroyer of Obstacles, to the Son of Lord Shiva)

vighna- 'obstacle', 'opposition', 'difficulty', 'trouble'. [*from vi-* 'apart', *ghna-* 'breaking'.]

Note: Vighna has no case ending as vighna-nāshine is a compound; the same is true of Shiva in Shiva-sutāya.

Shri Ganesha is also commonly known as **Shri Vighneshwara-** 'Supreme Ruler of Obstacles'. His nature is such that He places or removes obstacles according to what is beneficial to the spiritual ascent of a person.

nāshin(e)- 'to the destroyer', 'eliminator'. *-e is the dative suffix for words ending in a consonant. [from nāsh-* 'to destroy'].]

Shiva- 'The Auspicious One', **Shri Mahādeva**, the 'Great God', [**Shiva** means 'auspicious', 'happy', 'prosperous'.]

suta- 'son', 'offspring'. **Shri Ganesha** is 'the Son' of **Lord Shiva** and **Shri Pārvatī**, forming the same Holy family as the Christian Trinity- Father, Son and Mother. In some traditions **Shri Ganesh** is the 'Son of **Lord Shiva**' only by adoption after He has been restored to life having been created immaculately by **Shri Pārvatī** (see '*Creation of Shri Ganesha*', Appendix 4 p57). Another version of His creation is that the **Devas** approached **Lord Shiva** for help as they were being harassed by the demons and a beautiful child emerged from His forehead. Everyone was so struck with the beauty of the boy that **Shri Pārvatī** was jealous and cursed Him to be **vikata-** 'monstrous', with an elephants head and big belly. However She felt great love for the boy and taking Him on Her lap blessed Him that no endeavour, human or Divine would be successful without a prayer to Him and Lord Shiva made Him the chief of His **Ganas**.

Shri Ganesha is a ‘twice-born’, being killed and then restored to life, nearly always by **Shri Shiva**. In most of the stories His head is removed, a common theme denoting the loss of ego in order to be born-again of the Spirit. It may be significant that the head He was given by His Mother, who is the **Ādi Shakti**, did not recognise **Lord Shiva**, the **Param-ātma**, the formless animating principle of this universe, but when He is given His new head by **Shri Shiva** He becomes full of Knowledge and is elevated in rank to the Chief of **Ganas** and the God to be worshipped first. Thus His body comes from the Mother and the Head from the Father, which is a commonly held belief about children in India. Again we can see the parallels with the life of Lord Jesus Christ, the immaculate birth, the killing and resurrection, and the subsequent elevation to the right hand of the Father.

Shrī vara-da mūrtaye. (To the embodiment of the Giver of prosperity and boons)

Shrī- as well as being a respectful form of address, is also the name of the Goddess **Lakshmi** and denotes prosperity and well-being, so this can be taken as **shrī-da-** ‘Giver of prosperity’.

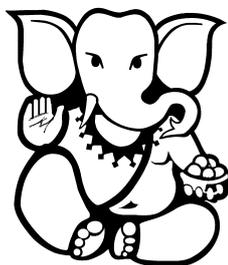
Shrī has a range of meanings including ‘lustre’, ‘beauty’, ‘majesty’, ‘prosperity’, ‘auspicious’, ‘sacred’, ‘holy’ and may be repeated to express greater veneration for Deities (eg. **Shri Shri Durga**), sacred objects or even books. **Shrīmān** and **Shrīmati** are used as Mr. and Mrs. in modern-day India.

vara-da- ‘Grantor of boons’ or ‘Bestower of the most excellent’. *See v.9 p.21.* The **vara** (boon) we seek to have granted by **Shri Ganesha** is complete absorption into the Ultimate Reality who is in fact Shri Ganesha Himself, and the loss of ego- the **ahamkāra-** the sense of separate individuality which prevents us from realising our true nature as Pure Spirit.

mūrtaye- ‘to the embodiment of.’, ‘to the form of.’ ‘the personification of’ [*dat. of mūrti-* ‘form’, ‘shape’] **mūrti** can also mean a ‘statue’, ‘idol’, or ‘likeness’ (the image in a temple will be referred to as the **mūrti**). *see v7 p20.*

Alt. trans. ‘To the image that grants boons and prosperity...’

namo namah^a (salutations again and again) [*both namah^a in comp.*] This repetition of **namah^a** is a more respectful salutation and is normally accompanied by putting the hands together and bowing the head in the greeting known in India as **namaskār** (‘making a bow’). (*see v1, p10*) **(10)**



Sākshāt Shrī Ādi Shakti Mātājī

Manifesting in person the Holy Primordial Energy, Divine Mother,

Shrī Nirmalā Devyai namo namah^a.

to the Immaculate Goddess, obeisance again and again

sākshāt – ‘manifest before our eyes’, ‘in person’. *See v.1 p.5*

Shrī – respectful form of address, ‘holy’, ‘auspicious’. *As above.*

Ādi Shakti- ‘Primordial Power’, **ādi-** ‘first, beginning’, **shakti-** ‘energy, power’. A name often given to the **Supreme Devī** (Goddess) as the origin of all existence. *See v.9 p.18.*

Mātājī- ‘respected Mother’- **Mātā-** ‘Mother’. The use of the suffix **-jī** to denote respect is a Hindi convention.

Shrī Nirmalā Devyai- ‘to the immaculate Goddess’-

nir- means ‘not’, ‘without’, ‘not having any’, In the **Shri Lalita Sahasra-nāma**, the description of the Supreme Goddess, 54 of the 1000 names start with **Ni-** indicating Her qualities of Purity and Attribute-less-ness. ‘**ni**’ (short for **nishāda**) is the seventh musical note in the Indian scale representing the **Sahasrāra chakra**, which is ruled by the Supreme Goddess.

mala- ‘imperfections’, ‘blemishes’, ‘dirt’, ‘spots’. ‘Immaculate’ is a good translation of **Nirmala** being similarly derived from the Latin ‘not-soiled’, ‘spotless’, ‘unblemished’. In one sense the ‘**mala**’ here referred to are thoughts, conditionings, ego, negative emotions, anything that disturbs the unlimited peace and serenity that is Her nature. Reality is a gem which lies hidden in the mud of mental and emotional activity within us. She has none of this mud. **Mala** also has a more specific meaning as body dirt (or blood on the body of a new-born baby). The Goddess is therefore **Nirmala** also in the sense that She scraped off Her body dirt to create **Shri Ganesha**. This idea of the body dirt of the Divine being so fertile appears in many myths including the story that **Shri Ganesha** was born from the mixing of the bathwaters of **Shiva** and **Pārvatī**.

The long **-ā** at the end is the feminine ending.

*Not to be confused with **mālā-** ‘a necklace’ or ‘garland’.*

Devyai- is the dative of **Devī-** [*fem. of Deva ‘God’*] - ‘to the Goddess’.

namah^a requires the dative case as in English ‘salutations to...’.

*Note: This can also be said **Shri Nirmala Devi namo namah^a** in which case **Devi** (short **-i**) is vocative ‘O Immaculate Goddess, obeisance again and again’ -but technically not as correct.*

namo namah^a – [**namah^a namah^a** in comp.] ‘salutations, obeisance again and again’. *This doubling of **namah^a** is more respectful. see v.1 p7.*

K

*This is the end of the portion normally recited but there are six more verses known as the **Phala-shruti**- 'listening to the rewards'.*

The text and a short translation are given below.

*Traditionally a **Phala-shruti** is always included with a prayer to tempt us with what can be achieved by the power of the invocation (especially if repeated often) and giving instructions as to how, where and when the prayer should be used.*

Ganesha Atharva Sheersha. part 2 Phala-shruti (listening to the results)

Etad-at'harva-shīrsham yo-adhīte. *Whoever learns this Atharva Shīrsha*
Sa Brahma-bhūyāya kalpate. *He becomes absorbed into the Brahman,*
Sa sarva-vighnair-na bādhyate. *He is not troubled by any obstacles,*
Sa sarvatah^a sukha-medhate. *He receives happiness from everywhere,*
Sa pancha-mahā-pāpāt-pra-muchyate. *He gets rid of even the five great sins. (11)*

Sāyam-adhī-yāno divasa-kritam *Whoever recites this at evening time, has*
Pāpam nāshayati. *Any sins committed during the day destroyed.*
Prātar-adhī-yāno rātri-kritam *One who intones this at dawn, gets any*
Pāpam nāshayati. *Wickedness performed in the night removed.*
Sāyam prātah^a *Reciting morning and evening*
Pra-yum-jāno-apāpo bhavati. *He becomes sinless.*
Sarvatr-ādī-yanō *Reciting everywhere*
Pavighno bhavati *One becomes un-troubled.*
Dharm-ārt'ha-kāma-moksham *And receives the four blessings of life*
Cha vindati. (12) *(righteousness, wealth, love and liberation)*

Idam-at'harva-shīrsham *This Atharva Shīrsha should not be given*
Ashishyāya na deyam. *To one who is not worthy of instruction.*
Yo yadi mohād-dāsyati *Whoever teaches it from temptation*
Sa pāpiyān bhavati. *For gain, He becomes more sinful,*
Sahasr-āvartanāt. *Repeating this prayer a thousand times*
Yam yam kāma-madhīte *He whose mind is fixed on a desire,*
Tam tam-anena sādhayet. (13) *He will attain it with this.*

Anena yo Ganapatim-abhishin-chati *Whoever recites while bathing Shri Ganapati*
Sa vāgmi bhavati. *He becomes the master of speech.*
Chaturt'hyām-anashnana-japati *Intoning while fasting on the fourth day.*
Sa vidyāvān bhavati *He becomes full of knowledge*
Ity-at'harvana-vākyam. *Thus speaks Sage Atharva.*
Brahm-ādy-āvaranam vidyāt *Knowing no separation from the Brahman*
Na bibheti kadā-chaneti. (14) *He is never afraid.*

**Yo dūrvām-kurair-yajati.
Sa vaishra-van-opamo bhavati.
Yo lājair-yajati
Sa yasho-vān bhavati.
Sa medhāvān bhavati.**

*Whoever worships with Dūrva grass
Becomes like the God of wealth
Whoever offers parched grains
He becomes famous
He becomes intelligent.*

**Yo modaka sahasrena yajati
Sa vānchhita-phalam-avāpnoti.
Yah^a sājya-samidhir-yajati
Sa sarvam labhate,
Sa sarvam labhate. (15)**

*Whoever offers a thousand sweetmeats
Gets all his desires fulfilled
Whoever worships with ghee and sacred wood,
He attains everything,
Everything he attains.*

**Ṃṣṭtau brahmanān
Samyag-grāha-yitvā
Surya-varchasvī bhavati.
Surya-grahe mahā-nadyām
Prati-mā-san-nidhau vā japtvā
Siddha-mantro bhavati.**

*Whoever makes eight godly-natured
People proficient in this praise,
Becomes resplendent like the sun
During a solar eclipse, in a great river
With the mind fixed on the image or intoning
His muttered mantras become powerful.*

**Mahā-vighnāt-pra-muchyate.
Mahā-dōshāt-pra-muchyate.
Mahā-pāpāt-pra-muchyate.
Sa sarva-vid-bhavati
Sa sarva-vid-bhavati. (16)**

*Great obstacles are completely annihilated.
Great faults are completely annulled.
Great wickedness is completely removed
He attains all knowledge
All knowledge he attains.*

**Ya evam veda,
Ity-upanishad.**

*'In this manner is the Sacred Knowledge',
'Thus is the Divine mystery', or
'Here ends the Upanishad'*

X

Shānti Pāt'ha.- the Path of Peace. *From the Yajur Veda**.

Commonly this prayer either precedes or follows the **At'harva Shīrsha**, or both. In the Vedic tradition an invocation needs a **samputa**- 'a covering', a short prayer said at the beginning and end to create the right atmosphere and ensure auspiciousness. The invocation itself (without **Phala-shruti**) may be said as many times as required in between. A session of saying the **Ganesha A.S.1000** times is not uncommon. If said in about 3 minutes, this would take two days of continuous chanting. (Indians can say it remarkably quickly) As always, the proceedings would be prefaced with **Om Ganeshāya namah^a**- 'salutations to Shri Ganesha'.
*The first verse here is in the dual voice, a peculiarity of Sanskrit, denoting two people together, as opposed to singular or plural, and is referring to the **Guru** and the disciple chanting together.*

Om saha-nāv-avatu. *Om. May we both be protected together.*
Saha-nau bhū-naktu. *May we both enjoy together,*
Saha-vīryam kara-vāvahai. *May we both perform heroic deeds together.*
Tejas-vin-āva-dhītam-astu *Let our studies be always glorious*
Mā vid-ṛish-āvahai. *And let there not be hatred or discord.*

Om bhādrām karṇebhiḥⁱ śhrinu-yāma devāḥ^a,
Om. May we hear with our ears only that which is auspicious , O ye Gods,
Bhādrām paśyem-ākṣha-bhir-yajatrāḥ^a.
May we see only what is auspicious with our eyes,
St'hirair-angais-tuṣṭuvām-sastanū-bhiḥⁱ,
Having sound limbs and desirous of praising,
Vyāshema deva-hitam yad-āyuh^u.
May we enjoy in this body, that life given by the Gods.

Om svasti na Indro vridhā-shravāḥ^a
Om. May the ever-glorious Shri Indra¹ bless us,
Svasti nah^a Pūshā vishva-vedāḥ^a, *May the all-possessing Shri Pūshan² bless us,*
Svasti naś-Tārkshyo-aṛiṣṭa-nemihⁱ *May the invincible Shri Garuda³ bless us,*
Svasti no Brihas-patir-dadhātu. *May the blissful Shri Brihaspati⁴ bless us,*
Om shāntihⁱ, shāntihⁱ, shāntihⁱ. *Om. Peace, peace, untroubled peace.*

¹Shri Indra is the Jupiter or Zeus of the Indian Pantheon, the King of the Gods and Weilder of the Thunderbolt. Many prayers in the Vedas are addressed to Him. As the supreme Ruler of Heaven he lived in great splendour and luxury.

²Shri Pushan is a Vedic God associated with the Sun and the Moon, and is the Lord of Wealth.

³Shri Garuda is the powerful and indestructible eagle-like God, who became the vehicle of Shri Vishnu .,

⁴Shri Brihaspati is the Guru of the Devas, and in the Vedas sometimes worshipped as Lord Brahma Himself, the Creator and Source of all knowledge and sacred speech.

Historical Note

There are two main ways of dating historical events in India; the modern 'scientific' system and what we might call the mystical or traditional Indian; and there seems to be an insuperable gulf between the two. To believe in either to the exclusion of the other would seem extreme.

According to archaeologists and linguists the war-like **Āryans** would have arrived in India around 1800^{BCE} through the North-west passes from Afghanistan, originally from Iran, over-running the probably already defunct 1000-year-old Indus Valley civilisation (**Harappa** and **Mahenjodaro**) From its cities this civilisation can be dated fairly accurately and shows no traces of Aryan culture, which was, at this time, nomadic. The Aryans slowly spread across the Gangetic plain, driving the aboriginal people before them. By the time the Rig Veda was compiled, any notion of a previous homeland had been forgotten and their original tongue had developed into a very precise and ornate language, based on subtle knowledge. In the Vedas, God is worshipped primarily through the sacred fire ceremony; Zarathustra introduced monotheism and fire-worship in Iran at about the same time.

The Indian tradition can be called the mystical way because the dates it proposes have more vibrations, placing the **Vedas** as 20,000 years old, **Shri Rāma**'s incarnation at 6,000^{BCE} and the **Mahābhārata** war (*Shri Krishna*) at 3137^{BCE}, the starting date of **Kali Yuga** (*Age of vice*). **Markandeya** lived 14,000 years ago and the **Devi Mahatmyam** is similarly ancient.

The **Āryans** brought with them more or less the same pantheon that they manifested in Persia, Greece, Rome and northern Europe, with **Indra**, the king of the gods, corresponding to **Zeus**, **Jupiter**, **Woden** etc.. The subtler elements of Indian worship such as **Lord Shiva**, **Ganesha** and the **Devī** in Her many forms (who compose the Divine family of Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and the incarnations of **Shri Vishnu**, are fully developed only in the Puranic period.

The 'scientific' evidence based on linguistic studies as well as archaeology places the composition of the **Rig Veda** at around 1500^{BC}, with some hymns even earlier, closely followed by the **Sama** and **Yajur Vedas**. The **Atharva Veda** was written maybe 300 years later, and being somewhat Shamanistic in nature, was not always accepted as a true **Veda**. Originally it was considered a sin to write down the **Vedas**, although elaborate texts existed to help the **Brāhmins** to remember them correctly. When they were finally committed to writing around 500^{CE} it was found that there was virtually no variation in the texts from north or south, after two thousand years of oral transmission.

As the **Āryans** settled down to agrarian life, they became more philosophical and the older Vedic gods who were worshipped for wealth, long life, progeny and victory in battle, became secondary to the Aspects of the Divine which could confer **Moksha**- Liberation and Enlightenment.

This period of the development of Indian theology is expressed in the **Upanishads**. Other Aryan civilisations did not develop this subtler understanding of the nature of reality, although the Semitic races did, and Judaism was ultimately accepted by other Aryan civilisations as Christianity and Islam. Buddhism emerged from the **Upanishad** school of thought and became the religion of at least the ruling classes of India for nearly a thousand years (500_{BCE}-500_{CE}), although the Vedic religion must have flourished at the same time, particularly as Buddhism had no priests or ceremonies for marriages, births etc. In fact this is the golden era of Sanskrit literature – the later Upanishads, the Epics- the **Rāmāyana** and **Mahābhārata**- being written down around the time of Christ, the great **Kālidās** c.300_{AD}, who wrote **Shakuntala** etc. and the beginning of the **Puranic** period (0-1800_{AD})

One idea that occurs commonly in the **Purānas** is the refutation of Buddhism. Although **Buddha** was recognised as an incarnation of **Shri Vishnu**, the **Purānas** maintain that He came only to expound a false doctrine to lead stupid people away from the **dharma** of worshipping God. After the demise of Buddhism in India (500_{CE}) there seems to have been some deterioration into superstition and tantrism before the revitalisation of Hinduism by **Shri Ādi Shankarāchārya** (780-812_{CE}) and his tremendous poems in praise of all the Deities including **Shri Ganesha** (*Hemaja sutam bhaje...et al.*). Since then there has been a steady stream of great saints in India who have added to the prayers and praises of **Shri Ganesha**.

Shri Ganeśha appears in literature at the beginning of the first millennium _{CE}, and it is interesting that, if Christ were indeed **Shri Ganesha** incarnate, His widespread worship emerges around the time of His incarnation. It may have been that **Shri Ganesha** was originally worshipped by the common people, and the worship of Him was not accepted by the **Brāhmins** until later; in fact the names '**Ganeśha**' or '**Ganapati**' can mean 'the God of the Tribes' or 'Lord of the multitudes'.

There is no mention of **Shri Ganeśha** in the **Rāmāyana**- **Shri Rama** was a great worshipper of **Shri Shiva**. In the **Mahābhārata**, He appears in the introduction as being asked to write down the **Mahābhārata** from **Ved Vyās**'s dictation. By the time the **Purānas** were written down, His place in the Hindu pantheon is firmly established.

One of **Shri Ganesha's** more common epithets is '**Vināyaka**' which among other things can mean 'unruly' and He was considered to be a mischievous Deity who would cause trouble if not propitiated. **Vināyakas** were guardian imps carved around temples to ward off evil, many with animal heads and short stocky bodies. It may have been that the elephant-headed **Vināyaka** gradually became prominent and assumed the title of **Ganapati**- 'head of the troop' and was then elevated to the rank of Son of **Shiva** and **Pārvati**- after all **Vishnu** and **Shiva** themselves had, in Vedic times, very minor roles and yet, later, came to be the Supreme Deities.

The Puranic period is long (0- 1800CE), and it is not possible to date it exactly, but the **Ganesha Atharva Shīrsha** was probably written in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. By 1700 it had become well established as an authoritative text and pre-eminent praise of **Shri Ganesha**. Today it is the most commonly recited praise of **Shri Ganesha**, especially in **Mahārashtra**, the heart-land of **Ganesha** worship in India.. The full text is carved over the doorway of the **Ashta Vināyaka** temple at **Ranjangaon** near **Pune**.

The worship of **Ganesha** and especially the ten-day **Ganesha** festival in September was promoted by '**Lokmanya**' **Tilak** at the end of the nineteenth century to help restore the people's pride in their heritage. A **Pune Brāhmin**, he was continuing the long tradition of **Mahārashtrian** resistance to foreign rule, including **Shivaji** three hundred and fifty years before, and king **Shalivahana** around the time of Christ. **Tilak-ji** symbolised India as an elephant being attacked by the British tiger.

The Ganesha Atharva Sheersha in Sahaja Yoga

'I remember once, during an India tour in the 1980's we camped on top of a hill near **Aurangabad** in **Mahārashtra**. We were extremely blessed that Her Supreme Holiness **Shri Mātājī** came to have breakfast with us and we sat at Her Lotus Feet in the morning sunshine while She gave us various bits of advice on hygiene and how to look after ourselves. One of the things She recommended for us (westerners!) to sort out our Left Side problems was to sit on the Mother Earth, put our right hand on the ground and say the **Ganesha Atharva Sheersha** twice every morning. I have also heard of Her recommending it to people to clear out their Left Side and **Moolādhāra** problems'. It has been used extensively at the Belapur (or Washi) Clinic often being said many times together

“**Mahārashtra** is the country where I would say the **Ganesha** principle is very strong; because there are eight **Ganeshas** which have come out of the Mother Earth; and all the three powers are represented by Mother Earth also here, **Mahākālī**, **Mahālakshmī**, **Mahāsaraswatī**; so the whole place is very vibrated, the Mother Earth is very much vibrated.

Now if you have any problem of **Mūlādhāra**, for example, on this land if you sit down on the ground, put my photograph in front of you, and meditate with your left hand towards the Sun, or the Photo, and the right hand on the Mother Earth, and say the **Shri Ganesha** mantra or the **Atharva-shīrsha**, your Left Side will be cured ... means Left **Swadhishtān** first of all.

So if you take vibrations on the left side, then you clear out your **Mūlādhāra** in such a manner that the problems of **Mūlādhāra** are solved. That is very important for all of us. This you can't do anywhere else that good; I mean of course Mother Earth is everywhere but here is a special place for **Mūlādhāra Chakra** where it clears you very much and fills you up with Holiness and Auspiciousness; so try to sit on the ground as much as you can, and try to meditate with your left hand towards the Sun, and the right hand on the Mother Earth.

...You can cleanse it through your **Mūlādhāra**; there are only two ways you can clear out your left side, one is your **Āgñyā**, and another is your **Mūlādhāra**.”

H.S.H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. 7th Dec 1988. Aurangabad, Maharashtra.

The **Ganesha Atharva Shīrsha** is normally recited at the start of **Pujas**, as many times as desired, and a common practice for Indian SY's is to start the public programs and their morning meditation by saying **Shri Ganesha's** mantra once or four times, the **Ganesha Atharva Shīrsha** and the **Three Great Mantras**. Generally this is enough to clear a path for silent meditation. The **Ganesha Atharva Shīrsha** seems to cover every aspect of the Subtle Being, and **Shri Mataji** has on more than one occasion which I was fortunate enough to witness, advised all Sahaja Yogis to learn it by heart.



Appendix 1.

The Creation of Shri Ganesha

The most widely recounted version of the creation of Shri Ganesha is found in the **Shiva and Padma Puranas**.

The Creation of Shri Ganesha. (extract from the **Shiva Purana**)

Nārada said, 'I wish to hear the excellent story of **Ganesha**, the details of his divine nativity, auspicious of the auspicious'.

On hearing the words of **Nārada**, the great sage **Brahmā** became delighted and replied to him remembering **Lord Shiva**.

5. 'Due to the different **Kalpas** (*ages*) the story of the birth of **Ganesha** is told in different ways. According to one account He is born of **Mahādeva**, the great lord (**Shiva**). His head, being looked at by ***Shani** (Saturn) was cut off and an elephant's head was put on Him.

6. Now we narrate the story of the birth of **Ganesha** in **Swetakalpa** (*present age*) when His head was cut off by the merciful **Shiva**.

7. No suspicion need be entertained, O sage. **Shiva** is certainly the cause of enjoyment and protection. He is the Lord of all. **Shiva** is possessed as well as devoid of attributes.

8. It is by His divine sport that the entire universe is created, sustained and annihilated. O excellent sage, listen to what is relevant to the context, with attention.

9. A long time had lapsed after the marriage of **Shiva** and His return to **Kailāsa** that **Ganesha** was born.

10. Once the friends **Jayā** and **Vijayā** conferred with **Pārvatī** and discussed.

11. 'All the **Ganas** of **Rudra** carry out the orders of **Shiva**. They all, **Nandin**, **Bhringin** and others are in a way our own.

12. **Pramathas** are numerous. But none of them can be called our own. They stand at the portals, subservient to **Shiva's** behests.

13. They also may be called our own but our mind is not in unison with them. Hence, O sinless lady, one, our own must be created.'

This refers to one version of His creation where **Shri Ganesha was born as a normal boy to **Shri Pārvatī**, who was proudly showing the beautiful baby off to all the gods. **Shani** (the planet Saturn- **Shaniwar** is Saturday in Hindi) was cursed that his glance had an evil effect, so he would not look at the boy. **Shri Pārvatī** taunted him that nothing bad could happen to Her child and insisted that he look at him. However when he did the boy's head was burnt to ashes, which distressed the Goddess greatly. On the advice of **Lord Brahmā** they set out northwards and the first creature they found was an elephant whose head they took to place on the boy, whose life was restored by **Lord Shiva**.*

14. Goddess **Pārvatī** to whom this charming suggestion was made by the two friends considered it wholesome and resolved to carry it out.

15. Once when **Pārvatī** was taking Her bath, **Sadāshiva** rebuked **Nandin** and came into the inner apartment.

16. The Mother of the universe, seeing the untimely arrival of **Shiva** in the midst of Her bath and toilet, stood up. The beautiful lady was very shy then.

17. The Goddess decided that Her friends' suggestion would be conducive to Her good and became enthusiastic.

18. At the time when the incident occurred, **Pārvatī**, the great **Māyā**, the great Goddess, thought as follows;

19. 'There must be a servant of my own who will be expert in his duties. He must not stray from my behest even a speck'.

20. Thinking thus the Goddess created a person with all the characteristics, out of the dirt from Her body.

21. He was spotless and handsome in every part of his body. He was huge in size and had all brilliance, strength and valour.

22. She gave him various clothes and ornaments. She blessed him with benedictions and said;- 'You are my son. You are my own. I have none else to call my own.' Thus addressed the person bowed to Her and said;-

23. 'What is your order? I shall accomplish what you command'. Thus addressed, **Pārvatī** replied to Her son.

24. 'My dear, listen to my words. Work as my gate-keeper from today. You are my son. You are my own. It is not otherwise. There is none else who belongs to me.

25. O good son, without my permission, no-one, by any means, shall intrude my apartment. I tell you the fact.'

26. Saying this She gave Him a hard stick. On seeing His handsome features She was delighted.

27. Out of love and mercy She embraced and kissed Him. She placed Him armed with a staff at Her entrance as the gatekeeper.

28. Then the Son of the Goddess, of great heroic power, stayed at the doorway, **Pārvatī** began to take Her bath with Her friends, unworried.

29. At this very moment, **Shiva** who is eagerly indulgent and an expert in various divine sports came near the door.

30. Not knowing that He was **Lord Shiva** the consort of **Pārvatī**, **Ganesha** said;- 'O sir, without my mother's permission you shall not go in now.

31. My mother has entered Her bath. Where are you going now? Go away!', saying thus, He took up His staff to ward Him off.

32. On seeing Him **Shiva** said;- 'O foolish fellow, whom are you forbidding? O wicked knave, don't you know me? I am Shiva, none else'.

33. Thereupon **Ganesha** beat **Shiva** with the staff. **Shiva** expert in various sports became infuriated and spoke to His son thus.

34. 'You are a fool. You do not know that I am **Shiva**, the Husband of **Pārvatī**. O boy, I go in my own house. Why do you forbid me?'

35. When **Lord Shiva** tried to enter the house, **Ganesha** became infuriated and struck Him with His staff once again.

36. Then **Shiva** too became furious. He commanded his own **Ganas**;-'Who is this fellow here? What is he doing? O **Ganas**, enquire'.

37. After saying this, the furious **Shiva** stood outside the house. The Lord, following the worldly conventions, is capable of wonderful sports.

Chapter 14.

1. The infuriated **Ganas** of **Shiva** at His bidding went there and questioned the son of **Pārvatī** who stood at the gate.

2. 'Who are you? Whence do you come? What do you propose to do? If you have a desire to remain alive go away from here'.

3. On hearing their words, the son of **Pārvatī** who was armed with the staff spoke to the **Ganas** as follows;-

4. 'O handsome fellows, who are you? Whence have you come? Go away. Why have you come here and why do you stand in opposition to me?'

5. On hearing His words, **Shiva's Ganas** of great heroism and arrogance laughingly spoke to one another.

6. After conferring with one another, the infuriated **Pārshadas** of **Shiva** replied to **Ganesha**, the doorkeeper;-

7. 'Listen, we are the excellent **Ganas** of **Shiva**. We are His doorkeepers. We have come here to throw you out at the bidding of **Lord Shiva**.

8. Considering you too as one of the **Ganas**, we are not going to kill you. Otherwise you would have been killed. Better stay away yourself. Why do you court death?'

9. Though warned thus, **Ganesha**, the son of **Pārvatī**, stood fearless. He did not leave His post at the door. He rebuked **Shiva's Ganas**.

10. After hearing his words, the **Ganas** of **Shiva** went back and informed **Shiva** about His stand.

11. On hearing their words, **Lord Shiva** of wonderful divine sports, following the worldly conventions rebuked His **Ganas**.

12. 'Who is this fellow? What does he say? He is standing there haughtily as though he is our enemy. What will that wicked knave do? Certainly he wants to die.

13. Why? Are you dastardly eunuchs to stand here helplessly and complain to me about him? Let this new doorkeeper be thrown out'.

14. Thus commanded by **Lord Shiva** of wonderful sports, the **Ganas** returned to that place and spoke to the doorkeeper.
15. 'O gatekeeper, why are you standing here? Why have you been stationed here? Why don't you care for us? How can you thus remain alive?
16. We are here the duly appointed doorkeepers. What are you saying? A jackal sitting on a lion's seat wishes for happiness.
17. O fool, you will roar only as long as you do not feel the brunt of our attack. Ere long you will fall by feeling the same'.
18. Thus taunted by them, **Ganesha** became furious and took the staff with his hands and struck the **Ganas** even as they continued to speak harsh words.
19. Then the fearless **Ganesha**, son of **Pārvatī** rebuked the heroic **Ganas** of **Shiva** and spoke as follows;-
20. 'Get away. Get away. Or I shall give you a foretaste of my fierce valour. You will be the laughing-stock of all'.
21. On hearing these words of **Ganesha**, the **Ganas** of **Shiva** went to **Shiva** who was standing at a distance of a **krosha** from **Kailāsa** and spoke to Him'
22. **Shiva** ridiculed them all. The trident-armed great lord of fierce temperament spoke to His **Ganas** who professed to be heroes.
23. 'Impotent wretches, you profess to be heroes but are never so. Why should I speak more? He must be driven away'.
24. Thus rebuked by **Lord Shiva**, the excellent **Ganas** went back and spoke to Him.
25. 'Listen, boy. You go away from here; if not your death is certain'.
26. In the meantime the Goddess heard the noise of this wrangle between the **Ganas** and the doorkeeper, and told Her friend 'Go and see'.
27. The friend came to the door and saw them for a moment. She understood the whole matter. She was delighted and returned to **Pārvatī**.
28. 'O great Goddess, the heroic **Ganas** of **Shiva** are taunting and rebuking our own **Gana** who is standing at the door.
39. When this man belonging to us is taunted, it amounts to our being taunted. Hence, O gentle lady, you shall not abandon your prestige of high order'.
40. **Pārvatī** stood there for a moment and then taking up a haughty mood she Said;-
44. 'What is to happen happens. What is done cannot be altered.'
45. The friend came to the door and told **Ganesha** what **Pārvatī** had said with affection.
46. 'Whether good or bad let your duty be done'.
47. On hearing the words of the friend, **Ganeshwara** became highly delighted, strengthened and lifted up.

48. Girding up His loins, tying his turban firmly and clapping His calves and thighs, he spoke fearlessly to all the **Ganas**.

49. I am the son of **Pārvatī**. You are the **Ganas** of **Shiva**. Both of us are thus equal. Let your duty be done now. You shall not enter the apartment either forcibly or humbly’.

50. The **Ganas** went to **Shiva** and acquainted Him with that news of wonderful nature.

51. **Shiva** replied;- ‘If we are humble, there is likely to be a rumour:- ‘**Shiva** is subservient to his wife’. O **Ganas**, this is certainly derogatory to me.

52. How can a woman be obdurate, especially with her own husband? **Pārvatī** will certainly derive the fruit of what She has done.

53. Hence, my heroic men, listen to my words with attention. This war has to be fought by all means. Let what is in store happen.’

Chapter 15.

1. When **Shiva** told them thus, they got ready and went to **Shiva’s** palace.

2. On seeing the **Ganas** coming, fully equipped for war, **Ganesha** spoke to them thus;-

3. ‘I am only one and that too a mere boy. You are all experts in warfare and have fought in many a battle.

4. You shall look to your lord and I to my mother. Let what is destined to occur, occur.’

10. When thus taunted and rebuked they rushed towards Him with big batons adorning their arms and taking up different kinds of weapons.

11. Gnashing their teeth, grunting and bellowing, the **Ganas** rushed at Him.

12. **Nandin** came first and caught hold of His leg and pulled at it. **Bhringin** then rushed at Him and caught hold of His other leg.

13. Before the **Ganas** had time to pull his legs **Ganesha** struck a blow at their hands and got His legs free.

14. Then seizing a big iron club and standing at the doorway He smashed the **Ganas** so that none among them could stand face to face with Him.

20. Just as deer flee to any direction on seeing a lion, the **Ganas** fled. Then **Ganesha** returned to the doorway and stood there.

21. At this time, urged by **Nārada**, all the gods including **Vishnu** and **Indra** came there.

22. Standing in front of **Shiva** and bowing to Him, they said; - ‘O Lord be pleased to command us.

23. You are the great **Brahman**, the lord of all, the creator, sustainer and annihilator of all created things. All are your servants.

24. You are intrinsically devoid of attributes but by means of your sports you assume **Rājasika**, **Sāttvika** and **Tāmasika** forms. O Lord, what sport are you indulging in now?’
26. Then **Shiva**, the lord of all, the consort of **Pārvatī**, then laughingly told me, **Brahmā**.
27. O **Brahmā**, you alone should go there. This strong boy shall be propitiated. O **Brahmā**, you shall bring him under control.
30. On hearing the words of the Lord, I went near **Ganesha** accompanied by the sages.
31. On seeing me approaching, the powerful **Ganesha** came to me very furiously and plucked my moustache and beard.
32. ‘Forgive me, O Lord. I have not come for fighting. I have come to make peace and I will cause thee no harm’.
33. While I said thus, the heroic **Ganesha** took up the iron club, seeing which I began to run away immediately.
34. The others too were struck down with the iron club. Some fled to **Shiva** and intimated to Him the details of the incident.
35. On seeing them in that plight and on hearing the news, **Shiva** became very angry.
38. He issued directives to **Indra** and the other gods, to the **Ganas** led by the six-faced **Karttikeya** and to goblins, ghosts and spirits.
44. Lifting up their weapons, they came there from all directions. Whatever weapon they had was hurled on **Ganesha** with force.
45. In the meantime the Goddess, the Mother of the Universe, came to know of the entire incident and was very furious. She created two **Shaktis** for the assistance of Her own **Gana**.
46. One **Shakti** assumed a very fierce form and stood there opening her mouth as wide as the cavern of a dark mountain.
47. The other assumed the form of lightning. She wore many arms. She was a huge and terrible goddess ready to punish the wicked.
48. The weapons hurled by the gods and **Ganas** were caught in the mouth and hurled back at them. None of the weapons of the gods was seen anywhere around the iron club of **Ganesha**. This wonderful feat was performed by them.
57. The earth with all the oceans quaked. As a result of the violent battle even mountains fell down.
58. The sky whirled with the planets and stars. Everything was agitated. The gods fled. The **Ganas** too did likewise.

Chapter 16.

1. On hearing this, the great Lord who grants benediction to his devotees became desirous of fighting with the boy.

2. He called **Vishnu** and consulted Him. Then, with a great army and the gods, He the three-eyed Lord, stood face to face with Him.

5. **Ganesha** hit all the chief gods with his staff. He hit **Vishnu** too, all of a sudden. The hero had been conferred great strength by the **Shaktis**.

6. Seeing Him terrific, even **Shiva** was greatly surprised, thinking within Himself; 'He has to be killed only by deception and not otherwise', He stayed in the midst of the army.

12. **Vishnu** said;-'I shall cause Him delusion. Then let him be killed by you O Lord. Without deception he cannot be killed. He is of **Tāmasika** nature and inaccessible.' Thinking thus and consulting **Shiva**, **Vishnu** secured His permission and was engaged in the activities of delusion.

13. On seeing **Vishnu** in that manner, the two **Shaktis** handed over their power to **Ganesha** and became submerged. **Shiva** arrived there with desire to fight him to the finish, the great Lord with the trident in His hand.

19. **Ganesha** the great hero, who had been rendered more powerful by the two **Shaktis**, remembered the lotus-like feet of his mother and struck Him in his hand with his spear

20. Thereupon the trident fell from the hand of **Shiva** of the supreme soul, who took up His bow **Pinaka**.

21. **Ganesha** felled that to the ground by means of His iron club. Five of His hands were also struck. He took up the trident with the other five hands.

22. 'Alas, this has been more distressing even to me. What may not happen to the **Ganas**?' **Shiva** who followed the worldly conventions cried out like this.

23. In the meantime the heroic **Ganesha** endowed with the surplus power bestowed by the **Shaktis** struck the Gods and the **Ganas** with His iron club.

24. The Gods and the **Ganas**, smothered by that wonderful striker with the iron club, went away to the ten directions. None of them remained on the battlefield.

25. On seeing **Ganesha**, **Vishnu** said-'He is blessed. He is a hero of great strength. He is valorous and fond of battle. Many Gods, **Dānavas**, **Daityas**, **Yakshas**, **Gandharvas** and **Rakshasas** I have seen. In the entire extent of the three worlds, none of them can equal this boy in regard to brilliance, form, features, valour and other qualities.'

28. **Ganesha**, the son of **Pārvatī**, whirled the iron club and hurled it at **Vishnu** even as He was saying so.

29. After remembering the lotus-like feet of **Shiva**, **Vishnu** took up His discus and split the iron club.

30. **Ganesha** hurled a piece of the iron club at **Vishnu** which was caught by the bird **Garuda** and rendered futile.
31. Thus for a long time the two heroes fought with each other.
32. Again the foremost among the valiant, the son of **Pārvatī** took up His staff of unrivalled power remembering His Mother and struck **Vishnu** with it.
33. Struck with that unbearable blow He fell on the ground. But he got up quickly and fought with **Pārvatī's** son.
34. Securing this opportunity, the trident bearing Lord came there and cut off his head with his trident.
35. When the head of **Ganesha** was cut off, the armies of the Gods and **Ganas** stood still.
36. **Nārada** came and acquainted **Pārvatī** with the matter 'O proud woman, listen. You shall not cast off your pride and prestige.'
37. Then **Nārada**, fond of quarrels, vanished from there.

Chapter 17

3. When **Ganesha** was killed, the **Ganas** were very jubilant. They played on **Mrdanga** and **Pataha** drums.
4. After cutting off the head of **Ganesha** even as **Shiva** became sorry, goddess **Pārvatī** became furious.
5. 'O what shall I do? Where shall I go? Alas great misery has befallen me. How can this misery be dispelled now?'
6. My son has been killed by all the Gods and the **Ganas**. I shall destroy them all or create a deluge.'
7. Lamenting thus, the great Goddess of all the worlds angrily created in a moment hundreds and thousands of **Shaktis**.
8. The **Shaktis** who were thus created, bowed to **Pārvatī**, the Mother of the universe and blazing brilliantly spoke- 'O Mother, be pleased to command.'
9. On hearing that, **Pārvatī**, the Shakti of Shiva, the Prakriti, the Mahāmāyā, spoke to them all in great fury.
10. The Goddess said;- 'O Shaktis, O Goddesses, now a great deluge shall be created by you at my bidding. You need not hesitate in this regard.'
11. O friends, devour forcibly all these sages, gods, **Yakshas**, **Rakshasas**, belonging to us and others.'
12. Leaders of **Ganas**, **Vishnu**, **Brahmā** or **Shiva**, **Indra** or **Kubera**, **Skanda** or **Surya**- **Shaktis** began to destroy them all. Wherever one looked, **Shaktis** were present.
13. Just as the fire consumes dry grass, so also these **Shaktis** started to destroy.

They took up the gods with their hands and threw them into their mouths.

28. The gods then discussed with **Nārada**- ‘How could our misery be quelled?’ then they said;-

29. ‘As long as the goddess **Pārvatī** does not favour us there will be no happiness. No suspicion need be entertained in this matter.’

30. **Nārada** and other sages went to **Pārvatī** in order to appease Her anger. They then propitiated her.

31. They bowed to Her again and again. They eulogised Her with hymns. They tried to please Her with devotion and at the behest of the gods and **ganas**, spoke thus.

32. ‘O Mother of the universe, obeisance to you. Obeisance to you, O **Shivā**, Obeisance to you O **Chandikā**, Obeisance to you, **Kalyānī**.

33. O Mother, you alone are the Primordial **Shakti**. You are the eternal cause of creation. You alone are ever the sustaining power. You alone are the cause of dissolution.

34. O Goddess, be pleased. Spread peace. Obeisance be to you. O Goddess, the three worlds are agitated by your fury.

35. The Mahādevī Pārvatī thus eulogised by Nārada and the other sages glanced at them furiously. She did not say anything.

36. Then the sages bowed at Her lotus-like Feet and spoke to Her in low voices with devotion joining their palms in reverence.

37. The sages said;- ‘O Goddess, forgive. The final dissolution seems near at hand. Your lord is standing here. O Mother you see him.

38. What are we, the gods, Brahmā, Vishnu and others? We are only your subjects. We stand here with palms joined in reverence.

39. O Mahādevī, our guilts shall be forgiven. We are agitated and distressed. O Pārvatī, give us peace.’

40. After saying this the agitated and distressed sages stood in front of Her with their palms joined in reverence.

41. On hearing their words **Pārvatī** was pleased and She replied to the sages with Her mind full of compassion.

42. If my son regains life there may not be further annihilation. If you can arrange for him an honourable status and position among you as the chief presiding officer, there may be peace in the world. Otherwise you will never be happy.’

43. On hearing that, **Indra** and other gods joined their palms in reverence and piteously intimated to **Shiva** what had transpired there.

44. On hearing what the gods said, **Shiva** spoke thus-‘it shall be done accordingly so that there may be peace over all the worlds.

47. You shall go to the northern direction and whatever person you meet at first, you cut off his head and fit it to this body.’

48. Then they carried out **Shiva’s** behests and acted accordingly. They brought the headless body of **Ganesha** and washed it well.

49. They paid homage to it and started towards the north. It was a single tusked elephant that they met.

50. They took the head and fitted it to the body. After joining it, the gods bowed to **Shiva, Vishnu** and **Brahmā**.

53. Then **Brahmā, Vishnu** and the other gods spoke after bowing to Lord **Shiva** who is free from the ill effects of the attributes.

54. They said- ‘Since we are all born out of your brilliant energy, let that energy come into it by the recitation of the Vedic mantras.’

55. Saying so, they jointly sprinkled the holy water, invoked by the **mantras** on that body after remembering **Shiva**.

56. Immediately after the contact of the holy water the boy was resuscitated to life and joined with consciousness. As **Shiva** willed, the boy woke up as from a sleep.

57. He was handsome, extremely comely. He had the face of an elephant. He was red-complexioned. He was delighted with face beaming. He was brilliant and had fine features.

58. On seeing the son of **Pārvatī** resuscitated to life, they all rejoiced and their miseries came to an end.

59. They showed him delightedly to the Goddess. On seeing him restored to life, the Goddess was greatly delighted. Taking him up with both hands she embraced him joyously.

Chapter 18

6. When the son of **Pārvatī** was resuscitated, he was honoured by the Goddess who bestowed all **siddhis** on him and touched him with the hand that removes all distress and said;-

7. ‘You have had great distress since your very birth.

8. You are blessed and contented now. You will receive worship before all the gods. You will be free from distress.

9. Vermilion is visible on your face now. Hence you will always be worshipped with vermilion by all men always.

10. All achievements certainly accrue to him who performs your worship with flowers, sandal paste, scents, auspicious food offerings, **Nīrājana** rites (*waving of lights*), betel leaves, charitable gifts, circumambulations and obeisance. All kinds of obstacles will certainly perish.’

14. Then with the graceful blessings of **Pārvatī**, instantly peace reigned upon the gods and particularly on the **ganas**.

17.Placing his lotus-like hand on **Ganesha**'s head, **Shiva** told the gods,-'this is another son of mine.

22.He is the remover of all obstacles and the bestower of the fruits of all rites.

23.He shall be worshipped first and we shall be worshipped afterwards. If he is not worshipped, we too are not worshipped.'

27.In order to gratify **Pārvati**, **Ganesha** was proclaimed as the Presiding Officer by all, **Brahmā**, **Vishnu**, **Shiva** and others.

Appendix 2 **Notes on Shri Vishnu and Shri Brahmadeva**

Shri Vishnu is the Supreme Being who takes incarnation to establish **dharma** (right conduct) and direct the beings of Earth towards the spiritual goal. Of the ten incarnations, nine have already been recognised including **Shri Rāma**, **Shri Krishna**, and **Lord Jesus Christ**. The tenth, **Shri Kalki**, the immaculate rider of the last judgement, appears dressed in jewelled white garments, riding a white horse. His blinding radiance destroys negative attachments but purifies those who are clean of heart. The intensification of the **Ekā-daśha Rudra** Power which precedes His manifestation, results in more diseases and disasters world-wide to spur humanity on to abandon attachment to materialism and sensuality. The following is a quote from the **Vishnu Purāna** about **Shri Kalki**....

'When the practices of the Vedas and the established Law decline and have nearly ceased to exist, the end of the Kali Yuga will approach. In Magadha (modern Bihar) a sovereign named Vishwaphatika will eliminate the Kshatriya race and elevate fishermen, barbarians, Brahmins and other castes to power. In the Indus, Dvarika, Chandrabhaga and Kashmir, sudras, mlechchas (outcastes) and barbarians will be in power. The kings will be boorish and stingy and of violent temperament. They will inflict death on women, children and cows. They will remain in power for short durations, and will experience rapid rise and fall of their fortunes. Their power too will be limited, and they will seek to use the limited time they are in power to seize the property of their subjects. Their lives will be short, their desires insatiable and they will show little piety. Barbarians will enjoy the patronage of princes, and regions and countries mingling with each other will follow the bad examples, thereby neglecting and leaving by the wayside purer tribes and groups whose influence will slowly vanish. Property alone will confer rank, people will worship wealth only. Women will become mere objects of sensual gratification. Passion not love, will be the only bond between the sexes.

Falsehood will be the only way to be successful in litigation, and dishonesty will be the universal means of subsistence. Weakness will be the cause of dependence, menace and presumption will be the subterfuge for learning. Only external indicators will distinguish one caste from another – the Brahminical thread will constitute a Brahmin, not his knowledge and learning. Ablution will not be for prescribed ceremonies or prayers, but merely for pleasure or comfort, liberty will be devotion, and purificatory rites and gifts will be made not for religious reasons but just out of ordinary feeling.

Mutual assent will be marriage, and dignity measured by fine clothes. The Earth will be plundered of her mineral treasures, and no spot will be venerated as sacred. Unable to bear the heavy burdens imposed on them, people will take refuge in the valleys and will feed on wild honey, herbs, roots, flowers and leaves. They will wear only the bark of trees and be exposed to the wind and cold. Life-expectancy will dwindle to twenty-three years. Decay will therefore flourish in the Kali Yuga till the human race approaches annihilation.

At this nadir in human existence, a Divine Being, who comprehends all things and is the beginning and end, shall descend upon the Earth. He will be born in the family of Vishnu yasas, an eminent Brahmin of Sambhal village, as Kalki. He will be endowed with eight superhuman faculties. He will destroy the Mlechhas, thieves and all those whose minds are set on wickedness. He will then re-establish righteousness on earth; and the minds of those good people who survive at the end of Kali Yuga will be awakened and be made clear as crystal. These men, who are changed in virtue of that particular time shall be those who will give birth to a race which shall follow the Krita Yuga or Age of Purity’.

Note on Shri Brahmadeva and the Creation

The sacred book **Shrīmad Bhagavatam** narrates that, while the Supreme Being **Shri Vishnu (Nārāyana)** was in a mystic sleep after the great deluge and the Earth was submerged beneath the waters, there came about an imbalance in the **Gunas** (see v.4 p.17) such that a thin stalk emerged from His navel which was an expression of **Rajo-guna** (Right Side) and in the lotus at it's end manifested **Lord Brahmā (Brahmadeva)**, who undertook the new creation. From His four heads He created four **rishis** (sages) whom he instructed to perform the tasks of creation, but, intent on achieving salvation, they refused. Angry at their refusal, a wailing child emerged from **Lord Brahmā's** forehead whom He named **Rudra (Shri Shiva)** who, together

with His other children, gave rise to the population of the Earth, which was raised from the waters by **Shri Vishnu** in His form as a boar (**varaha**). As the father of the sages whose children populated the world **Lord Brahmā** is called **Pitāmaha**, ‘Grandfather’. **Lord Brahmā**’s **Shakti** is **Shri Saraswatī**, Goddess of Speech and Music, who rides on a swan. He is normally depicted as bearded and having four heads, facing the four directions, representing the four Vedas as the basis of all knowledge.

Brahmānda- (*from the Devī Bhāgavatam*) The word **Brahmānda** means the ‘egg of **Brahmā**’- the Supreme Being, which is the root of the origin of the universe. At a time long ago which is beyond reckoning, there was nothing but an egg. This egg was split into two and from it a male child with the radiance of innumerable suns came out. This wonderful child was helpless. After his birth he cried for a while, because of hunger and thirst. He got no help. There was nobody to feed it. So this wonderful child looked up and lay there. This helpless child was called ‘**Virātpurusha**, (the next emanation of **Brahmā**) by those versed in the **Purānas**. The boy was so called because he was the most material of materiality. But he was an atom of atoms and the first figuration of God. From each pore of the skin of the great **Virāt** who was the base of all the worlds a universe came into being. Thus all the countless universes were born. Each universe has its own trinity of **Brahmā**, **Vishnu**, **Śhiva** and **Devas** (the bright ones), the protectors of the eight zones. One universe comprises fourteen worlds or realms, from the **Pātāla** to the **Brahmaloka** (from the nether world to the highest world). Countless such universes exist. Over and above all these universes there is **Vaikunṭha**, and above **Vaikunṭha** there is another world with an area of fifty crore yojanas (leagues), called ‘**Goloka**’ (the world of cows). Only the two worlds **Vaikunṭha** and **Goloka** are eternal. **Bhū-loka** (the Earth) consists of seven islands and sixty-four peninsulas. There are seven worlds above and seven worlds below. The seven upper worlds are **Bhūloka**, **Bhuvarko**, **Svarloka**, **Maharloka**, **Janaloka**, **Tapoloka**, **Satyalo** and **Brahmaloka**. Thus a universe consists of fourteen worlds.

That egg was as radiant as the Sun, with the colour of gold. **Brahmā** the great grandfather of everything in the world took birth by Himself in it (**Lord Brahmā** is sometimes called **Hiranya garbha-** ‘born of a golden egg’). Ages before the beginning, when all the worlds with everything they contained were submerged in the single ocean of the great flood, the germ of living things formed itself into a big egg. **Brahmā** who had been inside the egg went into a long sleep. The sleep continued for a thousand Yugas (Ages)

when **Brahmā** woke up; as **Sattva guna** (purity) was the foremost attribute of him, he saw that the world was void. When the thought of creation occurred in his mind **Rajoguna** (Activity or passion) became His foremost attribute. **Rajas** is the attribute that creates and **Sattva**, that which preserves. At the time of destruction **Tamoguna** (Darkness) becomes the foremost attribute. That **Bhagavān** (Supreme Spirit) the **Purusha** (the male creative energy) pervades over everything, in all the living worlds. That eternal being is **Brahmā, Vishnu, Śhiva**.

Knowing that the world was lying in pure water, the **Bhagavān** (Supreme Being) cut the egg open. From it the **Omkāra** (the sacred syllable 'Om') emanated. The first sound of it was '**Bhūh**', the second sound '**Bhuvah**' and the third sound '**Swah**'. So they came to be known as '**Bhūrbhuvah Swah**'. Then the glorious radiance of the Sun was born from it and **Brahmā** the grandfather of the worlds originated in the centre of the egg.

Shri Vāmana Purāna.

There are few temples to **Shri Brahmadeva** in India. According to legend He cheated in a contest with **Shri Vishnu** to see who could find an end to **Shri Shiva's Lingam**- a column of fire representing Spirit which appeared before them. **Shri Vishnu** plunged down and Lord Brahmadeva went upwards to try and find the end. Up and up He went and at last found a Ketaka flower which had fallen from the top of the **Lingam**, persuading the flower to lie that it had been collected from the top of the **Lingam**, Lord **Brahmadeva** returned to meet an unsuccessful and crestfallen **Shri Vishnu** and claimed to have won the contest. When His deception was discovered, He was cursed that He would not be worshipped on the earth, and the flower would not be auspicious for **Pūja** (worship).



Concerning Om and the Creation.

The **Shiva Purāna** says;

‘The five-faced **Shiva** spoke thus:

The syllable **A** came first from the northern face, the syllable **U** from the western; the syllable **M** from the southern and the **Bindu** (dot) from the eastern face. The **Nāda** (mystical sound) came from the middle face. Thus the complete set emerged in five-fold form. Then all of them united in the syllable of ‘**Om**’. The two sets of created beings-**Nāma** (name) and **Rūpa** (form) are pervaded by this mantra. It indicates **Shiva** and **Shakti**. From this also is born the five syllabled mantra (**Namo Shivāya**). It indicates all knowledge. The syllables ‘**na**’ etc. follow the order of the syllables of the ‘**Om**’. Different things are achieved by different mantras but everything is achieved through **Omkāra** alone. The Supreme **Brahman**, the Truth, the Bliss, the **Amruta**, the greatest of the great and the ultimate cause can be expressed by the single-syllabled mantra.

The single syllable **A** is the source of the Lord **Brahmā**. The single syllable **U** is the source of **Viṣṇu**, the ultimate cause. The single syllable **M** is the source of **Rudra**. The Creator is expressed by the letter **A**. The Enchanter is expressed by the letter **U**. The being expressed by the letter **M** blesses always. It is all-pervasive and progenitor. The letter **A** is the seed.

The being expressed by the letter **U** is **Viṣṇu**. it is the source, the receptacle, the lord of primordial nature and primordial being, the progenitor, the seed, source and sound. All these constitute **Lord Shiva**. The progenitor is stationed after dividing itself. From the **Linga** of the progenitor, the lord, arose the seed- the syllable **A**. The **Bija**-‘seed’ being deposited in the **Yoni**-‘womb’, the letter **U** began to increase all round. It became a golden egg (**Hiranya-garbha**). It was something known which could not be delineated. The divine egg floated in the waters for many years. Then at the end of a thousand years it split into two giving birth to **Brahmā**. The egg floating in the waters on being hit by **Īshwara** split into two. The auspicious upper lid became the upper region and the lower one became the Earth of five characteristics. From the inner part of the egg was born the four-faced Lord **Brahmā** expressed by the letter ‘**ka**’.

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Appendix 5. *The Samkhya Philosophy.*

An extract from chapter 291 of the Srimad Bhagavatam.

In the beginning **Brahman** was, and nothing else. **Brahman** the soul of all souls, the Lord of **Prakriti**, the cause and the effect blended into one. He was the Seer and, in the beginning there was nothing to be seen. The **Brahman** was self-luminous. **Prakriti** was in Him. The power of the Manifest Himself was in him.

In the beginning, the **Gunas** (*attributes*), **Sattva** (*truth*), **Rajas** (*passion*) and **Tamas** (*ignorance*) were perfectly balanced. They were in equilibrium. Another powerful aspect of the **Brahman** is **Kāla**, time. Now, because of the passage of time, the balance in the **Gunas** was upset, disturbed. There was a throb of unrest and this disturbance had in it, the germ of creation.

The power because of which the **Purusha** (*Spirit*) creates the universe is called **Prakriti** (*Ādi Shakti*), the active aspect of the **Brahman** which is all consciousness, awareness.

This consciousness manifested itself in the form of Universe ruled by the three **gunas** and their sway. The original soul, the Universal Spirit altered its appearance, meaning, it became the cause as well as the effect, the Seer as well as the seen, the Doer as well as the Deed.

The disturbance in the equilibrium of the **Gunas** was the cause of the manifestation of **Prakriti**. Out of **Prakriti** was evolved the **Mahat-tattva** (= *buddhi*, 'intellect'). **Mahat** is all light. It swallowed the darkness which had enveloped everything during the great annihilation, the great Deluge during the previous **Kalpa**. The **Mahat tattva** became transformed into the **Aham-tattva** (*sense of individuality, ego*).

Aham-tattva is **Kriya Shakti**, the power of action.

Aham-tattva is seen to have three aspects:

Sattvic Aham-tattva which is also called **Vaikārika** (*subject to change*),

Rajas Aham-tattva which is also called **Taijasa** (*brilliant*),

Tamas Aham-tattva which is also called **Tamasa** (*darkness*).

Out of the **Sattvic Aham-tattva** is born the mind, **Manas**.

Out of the **Rājasic Aham-tattva** are born the **Indriyas**, the sense organs.

Out of the **Tamasic Aham-tattva** are born the five **Maha-bhutas** (*material elements*).

The essential features of the **Aham-tattva** are again three:

Karya- action itself because of the **Tamasic** aspect.

Kartutva- the power of becoming a performer of action, as a result of the **Sattvic** aspect.

Karanatva- causing the performance of the action which is the result of the **Rājasic** aspect.

Peace, which is **Shānti**, anger which goes by the name **Raudra**, ignorance which is named **Avidya**, are again three more characteristics of **Sattvic**, **Rājasic** and **Tamasic Aham-tattvas**.

Because of the **Sattvic Aham-tattva** the mind begins to function. The power to think is there and out of it are born perception and desire.

The **Karmendriyas**, the organs of action, and the **Gñyanendriyas**, the organs of perception are born of the **Rājasic Aham-tattva**. Out of the **Tamasic Aham-tattva** are born the **Maha-bhutas**, the elements, and the **Tan-matras** (*objects of the senses*).

The first is the **Shabda matra**, sound, the subtlest of the five: in association with it is born **Ākāsha**, the sky, ether.

Ether conducts sound and it is, like sound, all-pervading.

Sparsha Tan-matra occurs next: the sense of touch, and in association with it, **Vāyu**, the air which, again, permeates everything. **Sparsha** has in it the quality of **Shabda** also. **Vāyu** conveys sound as well as touch, both these sensations. Incidentally, the air is slightly more tangible than the ether, and to that extent, it is grosser than ether.

Then is formed **Rūpa Tan-matra**: what can be perceived since it will have a form. With this **Tan-matra**, in association with it was born Fire or Light. **Rūpa Tan-matra** now has three qualities, **Shabda**, **Sparsha** and **Rūpa**. It is evidently more gross than air as it is more tangible.

The next **Tan-matra** is to be formed is **Rasa Tan-matra** and complimentary to it, water. Water has four qualities: **Shabda**, **Sparsha**, **Rūpa** and **Rasa**.

The last and the grossest of them all is formed last. **Gandha Tan-matrā**, the sense of smell, and with it is born the Earth. The Earth has all the five qualities in it, **Shabda**, **Sparsha**, **Rūpa**, **Rasa** and **Gandha**.

Prakriti is also known as **Saguna Brahman** (*having attributes*) as against the **Nirguna Brahman** (*attribute-less*) which is the **Brahman** in the absolute form. The power underlying the five **Mahābhūtas** is collectively known as **Dravya Shakti**; the power lying in the **Indriyas** is known collectively as **Kriya Shakti**, the power of **Prakriti** and the **Ishwara** presiding over this is known as the **Gñyāna Shakti**.

Prakriti is made up of:

Prit'hvi	Earth	}	
Āp	Water	}	
Tejas	Fire or light	}	The five Mahā-bhūtas (gross elements)
Vāyu	Air	}	
Ākāśh	Ether or sky	}	
Gandha	Smell	}	
Rasa	Taste	}	
Rūpa	Sight	}	The five Tan-matras (subtle elements)
Sparśha	Touch	}	
Śhabda	Sound	}	
Śhrotra	Ears	}	
Tvach	Skin	}	
Chakshus	Eyes	}	The corresponding Indriyas (senses)
Rasana	Tongue	}	
Ghrana	Nose	}	
Vāk	Speech	}	
Pani	Hands	}	
Padam	Foot	}	The Karmendriyas (5 organs of action)
Upastham	Generative organ	}	
Payu	Excretory organ	}	

The **Antah-karana** (*internal organs*) is of four kinds: **Manas**, **Buddhi**, **Ahamkāra** and **Chitta**. These twenty-four features namely the five **Mahā-bhūtas**, the five **Tan-matras**, the five **Indriyas**, the five **Karmendriyas** along with the four **Antah-karanas** comprise the **Saguna Brahman**.

Kāla, time, is also considered as the twenty-fifth feature. Some thinkers deem **Kāla** to be that ultimate end of which men are frightened, men who are ignorant of the glory of **Īshwara** and who are caught up in the web spun by **Prakriti**, men who are deluded by the ego which manifests itself and becomes all-powerful.

Īshwara who is without the **Gunas** who is the cause of the manifestation of **Prakriti** is the twenty-fifth feature. With His **Māyā** and with the help of **Kāla**, **Īshwara** inhabits every living and every created being: the living beings as **Purusha** and the outside as **Kāla** which is the end of everything and the beginning too.

The supreme aspect of the **Antah-karana** is reflected in the **Mahat-tattva** which is all light. **Purursha** is ever found in the **Mahat**. This is to be worshipped as **Vāsudeva** (*Shri Krishna*), the highest **Purusha**. **Ananta**, the thousand headed, who pervades the **Bhūtas**, the **Manas** and the **Indriyas** has to be worshipped **Sankarshana** (*Shri Balarāma*) in the **Aham-tattva**. **Sankarshana** has to be worshipped since he is the **Ahamkāra** in its absolute form: the Ego before any transformation takes place.

Manas Tattva is the power of thinking, particularly in the field of feelings, **Kāma** or desire, likes and dislikes, mental bondage and similar feelings. This aspect of the **Aham-tattva** is worshipped as **Aniruddha** (*Krishna's grandson*), dark and charming like a blue lotus, flowering during the season, autumn when the skies are blue and not marred by the rain-bearing clouds.

Chitta is the **Buddhi** which functions through the brain of created beings. This is more intellectual than emotional and Pradyumna is the form in which the **Chitta** is worshipped. The **Adhishtata**, the controlling power, for the **Mahat-tattva** which is worshipped as **Vāsudeva** is **Kshetra-gñya**. For **Ahamkāra** worshipped as **Sankarshana**, the **Adhishtata** is **Rudra**.

Chandra (*moon*) is the **Adhishtata** for **Manas** which is worshipped as **Aniruddha** while **Brahmā** is the **Adhishtata** for the **Chitta** or **Buddhi** which is worshipped as **Pradyumna** (*God of Love, Krishna's son*).

Vāsudeva is also said to represent the **Vishva** (*intellectual faculty*), **Sankarshan**, the **Taijasa** (*life energy, spirit, power*), **Pradyumna**, the **Prāgñya** (*intelligence*), and **Aniruddha**, the **Turiya** (*the fourth state of pure spirit*).



Devi Atharva Sheersha

The Foremost Praise of the Supreme Devi.

Shrī Ganeshāya namah^a

Salutations to Shri Ganesha

Om sarve vai devā devīm-upa-tast'huh^u 'Kāsi Twam Mahā-devīti' (1)

Om, All the Devas reverently approached that Devi, and asked 'Who are You, O Great Goddess?'

Sā-bravīd-aham brahma-swarūpinī, ,

Replying She said 'I am the Personification of the All-pervading Formless Consciousness,

Mattah^a prakriti-purush-ātmakam jagat,

From Me the Creative Ādi Shakti and the Animating Principle of Spirit are born,

Shūnyam ch-āshūnyam cha.

(2)

Being both Emptiness and Non-emptiness.

Aham-ānand-ān-ānandau,

I am Joy and beyond Joy;

Aham vigñyān-āvigñyāne,

I am All Knowledge and the State of Ignorance.

Aham brahm-ābhraḥmanī veditavye,

I am Brahman, the Supreme Consciousness and yet unknowing the Brahman,

And the understanding of the difference between the two,

Aham pancha-bhūtāni apancha-bhūtāni

I am the five gross elements and beyond the five elements,

Aham akhīlam jagat.

(3)

I am this whole manifested world.

Ved-ōham aved-ōham,

I am the sacred scriptures and yet beyond all scriptures,

Vidyāham avidyāham,

I am the pure knowledge and also the illusory ideas that men fall into,

Aj-āham anaj-āham,

I am Unborn and yet take birth again and again,

Adhash ch-ordhva cha tiryak ch-āham,

(4)

Both below, above and beyond am I,

Aham rudrebhir-vasubhish-charāmi,

I move as the Rudras who send disease and disaster, and as the Vasus who bless,

Aham-ādityair-uta vishva-devaiḥⁱ,

I am the Adityas and indeed all the Deities,

Aham-mitrā-varūnāv ubhau bibharmi,

I am Mitra, the 'Friend', as well as Varuna, Lord of the Ocean, whom I uphold,

Aham-indr-āgnī aham-ashvināv ubhau,

(5)

I am Indra, King of the Gods, Agni, the Lord of Fire, and the Divine Physicians, the Ashvin twins.

Aham Somam Twashtāram Pūshanam Bhagam dadhāmi,

I am the Lord of Soma, the Divine Builder, and Pushan and Bhaga, Gods of Wealth, I support.

Aham Vishnum-uru-kramam,

I am the wide-stepping Shri Vishnu ,

Brahmānam-uta Prajāpatim dadhāmi.

(6)

And Brahma and Prajapati, the Gods who brings forth this Creation, I support.

Aham dadhāmi dravinam haṁishmate suprāvyē yajamānāya suvrate,

I am the Creator of Wealth to those who offer oblations very attentively and worship righteously,

Aham rāgnī sam-gamanī vasūnām chikīṭushī praṭhamā yagnīyānām,

I am the Uniting Empress of the Gods, understood to be worshipped first and foremost,

Aham suve pītaram-asya mūrdhan-mama yonir-apsvantah^a sam-udre,

I am the Father of these Gods, from the top of My head are born the waters of the seven oceans,

Ya evam veda, sa daivīm sam-padam-āpnoti.

(7)

Whoever has this knowledge, he achieves connection with the Lotus Feet of the Supreme Devi.

Te devā abruvan;

The Devas replied

Namo Devyai Mahā-devyai shivāyai satatam namah^a,

Salutations to the Devi, to that Most Auspicious Great Goddess, salutations always,

Namah^a prakṛtyai bhadṛāyai niyatāh^a pranatāh^a sma tām,

(8)

We bow to the Adi Shakti, the Giver of Happiness, to Her who is everywhere and everything,

Tām-agni-varnām tapasā jvalantīm,

vairochanīm karma-phaleshu juṣṭām,

To Her who shines like the Sun with the fire of renunciation, the Rewarder of all actions,

Durgādevī sharanam pra-padyāmahe asurān-nāshayitryai te namah^a. (9)

O Mother Durga We seek refuge at Your Feet, salutations to You, O Destroyer of demons.

Devīm vācham ajanayanta devās-tām vishva-rūpāh^a pashavo vadanti,

That Devi who is the Giver of Speech, whose form is the Universe, was praised by the Devas,

Sā no mandreṣham-ūrjam duhānā dhenur-vāgas-mānupa suṣṭu-taitu. (10)

May that Goddess who grants all desires, speech and bliss, be pleased with our hymns.

Kāla-rātrīm Brahma-stutām Vāishnavīm Skanda-mātaram,

O, Dark Night of dissolution (Shri Mahakali) praised by Shri Brahma, Shakti of Shri Vishnu (Shri Lakshmi) Mother of Shri Karttikeya (Shri Parvati)

Saraswatīm Aditim Daksha-duhitaram namāmah^a pāvanām shivām. (11)

Shri Saraswati and Mother Aditi, Daughter of Daksha, prostrations to You, O Pure and Auspicious Goddess.

Mahā-lakshmyai cha vidmahe, sarva-shaktyai cha dhīmahi,

We have the knowledge of Shri Maha-Lakshmi, we meditate upon the Embodiment of all Power,

Tanno Devī prachodayāt,

(12)

May that Devi stimulate and inspire us.

Āditir-hyajanīṣṭa dakṣha yā duhitā tava,

That boundless Goddess Aditi, daughter of Dakṣha, and Mother of the Devas, is born of You,

Tām devām anvajāyanta bhadrā amṛita-bandhavah^a. (13)

Your blessings O Emerger from the Ocean of Nectar, give endless victory to those Devas.

Kāmo yonihⁱ kamalā vajrapānir-guhā hamsā mātariṣhva abhramindrah^a

O Lotus giving birth to Desire, You are the swan bearing thunderbolt-handed Indra in the clouds,

Punar-guhā sakalā māyayā cha purūchyaishā vishva-mātā-di vidyom. (14)

Ever-hidden behind all the illusions and afflictions, is the knowledge of the Mother of the Universe.

Ḙsh-ātma-shaktihⁱ,

This Devi is the Power of the Spirit,

Ḙshā vishva-mohinī, pāsh-ānkusha-dhanur-bāna-dharā,

This Devi is the Enchantress of the Universe, wielding noose, goad, bow and arrow,

Ḙshā Shrī Mahā-vidyā,

This Devi is Shrī Lakshmi, Grantor of the Highest Knowledge,

Ya evam veda, sa shokam tarati. (15)

Whoever has this knowledge, he is carried across all sorrows.

Namaste astu bhagavati mātara-smām-pāhi sarvatah^a, (16)

Let there be Salutations to You, O Mother of all virtues, protect us everywhere, from all directions.

Ṣaish-āṣṭau vasavah^a ṣaish-aikā-dasha rudrāh^a

Thus is She the eight-fold Goddess of Wealth and the eleven Bringers of Disease and Disaster,

Ṣaishā dvā-dash-ādityāh^a

Thus is She the twelve Divine Sons of Aditi (the Devas),

Ṣaishā vishve-devāh^a soma-pā asoma-pāsh-cha

Thus is She all the Devas, those that drink the Soma and those that drink not,

Ṣaishā yātu-dhānā asurā rakshāmsi pishācha-yaksha-siddhāh^a,

Thus is She the Giver of Wealth to the demons and the Power of the Rakshasas and sorcerers,

Ṣaishā sattva-rajas-tamāmsi

Thus is She the three Gunas, the attributes of Truth, Passion and Darkness

Ṣaishā Brahma-ṽishnu-rudra-rūpinī

Thus is She taking the Form of the Trimurtis, Shrī Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva,

Ṣaishā prajā-pat-īndra manavah^a

Thus is She Shrī Prajapati, Lord of Creation, Indra, King of the Gods and Manu, the first man,

Ṣaishā graha-nakshatra-jyotiṁshi kalā-kāṣṭh-ādi kāla-rūpinī (17)

Thus is She the Light of planets and constellations, and of the Form of various measures of time,
Tām aham pranaumi nityam.

(17)

To Her who is the great 'I am', I prostrate eternally.

Pāp-āpa-hārinī devī bhukti-mukti-pra-dāyinīm,

O Goddess who completely removes sins, and grants enjoyment and liberation,

Anantām vijayām shuddhām sharanyām sarva-dām shivām. (18)

Eternal, Victorious, Pure, our only Refuge, Giver of everything and exceedingly Auspicious,

Viyadīkāra sam-yuktam vīthotra-sam-anvitam,

Joining the heavenly form (A), connected with the God of Fire (U),

Ardhendu-lasitam devyā bījam sarv-ārt'ha-sādhakam, (19)

With the crescent resounding (M), is the seed of the Divine Power that fulfils all purposes,

Evam-ek-āksharam mantram yatayah^a shuddha-chetasah^a,

In this way the one-syllabled mantra (OM) confers pure intelligence,

Dhyāyanti param-ānanda-mayā gnyān-āmbu rāshayah^a, (20)

Meditating thus one becomes filled with Supreme Bliss, and an Ocean of the Highest Knowledge.

Vāñg-māyā brahma-sūs-tasmāt śaṣṭ'ham vaktra sam-anvitam,

**Aim (Speech), hrīm (māyā), klīm (Supreme Brahman), cha-(6th consonant) the first term, is joined,*

Sūryo vāma-shrotra bindu sam-yukt-āshṭa-tritīyakah^a,

With m- (the Sun), u- (right ear), n- (anuswāra) connected to d (3rd letter of the 3rd group)

Nārāyanena san-mishro vāyush-ch-ādhāra-yuk tatah^a,

Combined with ā (Lord Vishnu) and y (Shri Vayu) and ai is joined to the root.

Vichche navārnakō-rnah^a syān mahad-ānanda dāyakah^a. (21)

*Vichche completes the nine-syllabled mantra –‘*aim hrīm klīm Chamundāyai vichche’, which confers the greatest bliss and gives the devotee union with the Supreme Brahman.*

**a reminder that ‘ai’ is a double sound (diphthong) of long ā and i – not like English ‘aim’!*

This is all a kind of code where gods stand for numbers and letters. Sūrya, for example stands for the number 12 as the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

Hrit-pundarīka madhya-st'hām prātah^a surya sama-prabhām,

Standing in the centre of the lotus of the heart, shining like a thousand suns,

Pāsh-ānkusha-dharām saumyām varad-ābhaya hasta-kām,

Holding noose and goad, gentle and pleasing, fulfilling boons and giving fearlessness with the hands,

Tri-netrām rakta-vasanām bhakta-kāma-dugham bhaje. (22)

I praise that Three-eyed, Red-clothed Devi who is fulfilling the desires of Her devotees.

Namāmi twām mahā-devim mahā-bhaya-vināshinīm,

I bow to You, O Great Goddess, Destroyer of even the greatest of fears,

Mahā-durga pra-shamanīm mahā-kārunya-rūpinīm. (23)

The Great Tearer-apart and the Calming Night, and Great Compassion personified.

Yasyāh^a swarūpam brahmādayo na jānanti tasmād-uchyate agñeyā,

Whose Form even Lord Brahma cannot comprehend, She is called ‘Unknowable’,

Yasyā anto na labhyate tasmād-uchyate anantā,

Whose end cannot be found, She is called ‘Eternal’,

Yasyā lakshyam n-opa-lakshyate tasmād-uchyate alakshyā,
Whose distinguishing marks cannot be perceived, She is called 'Imperceptible',

Yasyā jananam n-opa-labhyate tasmād-uchyate ajā,
Whose births cannot be observed, She is called 'Unborn'.

Ek-aiva sarvatra vartate tasmād-uchyate ekā,
Being indeed one whichever way She turns, She is called 'One',

Ek-aiva vishva-rūpinī tasmād-uchyate naikā,
Being indeed one with the Form of the Universe, She is called 'Many',

Ata ev-ochyate agñey-ānant-ālakshy-āj-aikā-naik-eti. (24)
She is ever called 'Unknowable', 'Eternal', 'Imperceptible', 'Unborn', 'One' and 'Many'.

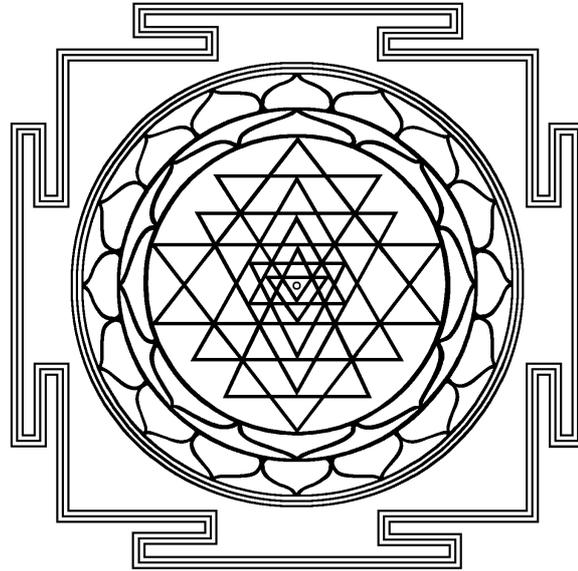
Mantrānām mātrikā Devī shabdānām gnyāna-rūpinī,
That Devī is the root syllables of the mantras and the sacred knowledge of sound personified,

Gnyānānām chin-may-ātītā shūnyānām shūnya-sākshini,
She is the knowledge that is beyond thought and the solitary witness of the emptiness (the zero).

Yasyā^a parataram nāsti, saishā Durgā prakīrtitā. (25)
There is nothing beyond Her, in this manner is Shri Durgā described.

Tām durgām durgamām devīm durā-chāra vighātinīm,
That Goddess Shri Durgā who is inaccessible, who completely removes our misfortunes,

Namāmi bhava-bhītō-ham samsār-ārna-vatārinīm. (26)
I bow to Her who carries us across the flood of this worldly existence and all fear and illusion.



Shri Chakra.

(Shri Yantra)

The mystical design representing Shri Mahālakshmi.

A view through the Sushumna Nadi.

There are four upward pointing and five downward pointing triangles, whose intersection forms 112 triangles and 21 quadrilaterals.

Phala Shruti *(listening to the results)*

Idam-at'harva-shīrsha yō-dhite,

Whoever learns this Atharva Sheersha,

Sa pancha at'harva-shīrsha japa-phalam-āpnoti,

*Gains the rewards of reciting *five Atharva Sheershas,*

Idam-at'harva-shīrsham agñyātvā yō-rchām st'hāpayati,

Whoever establishes worship without knowing this At'harva Shīrsha

Shata-laksham pra-japtvāpi sō-rchā shuddhim na vindati,

Though reciting ten million mantras, his worship will not become purified.

Shatam-aṣṭottara ch-āśya purash-charyā-vidhihⁱ smritah^a,

This is to be performed a hundred and eight times according to the rules of traditional law

Dasha-vāram paṭ'het yas-tu sadyah^a pāpaihⁱ pra-muchyate,

Whoever says this ten times, gets all wickedness completely destroyed

Mahā-durgāni tarati mahā-devyāh^a pra-sādatah^a

(27)

He is carried across the greatest of difficulties and attains serenity, happiness and well-being through the assistance of the Great Divine Power.

Sāyam-adhīyāno divasa-kritam pāpam nāshyati,

Recited in the evening, any wickedness performed in the day is destroyed

Prātar-adhī-yāno rātra-kritam pāpam nāshayati,

Recited at dawn, any sins done in the night are destroyed,

Sāyam-prātah^a pra-yunjānō-pāpo bhavati,

Reciting morning and evening, he becomes free from all sins

Nishīt'he turīya-sam-dhyāyām japtvā vāk-siddhir-bhavati,

He attains the fourth state of being (pure spirit) and his mutterings become powerful mantras

Nutanāyām prati-māyām japtvā devatā-sām-nidhyam bhavati,

Whoever worships an idol reciting this praise, becomes united with that Deity,

Bhaum-āshvinyām mahā-devī-sam-nidhau japtvā mahā-mrityum tarati,

Being connected to the Great Goddess, the reciter is carried across Final Death

Sa mahā-mrityum tarati.

(28)

He is carried across even the Final Death,

Ya evam veda, Iti-upaṇishat.

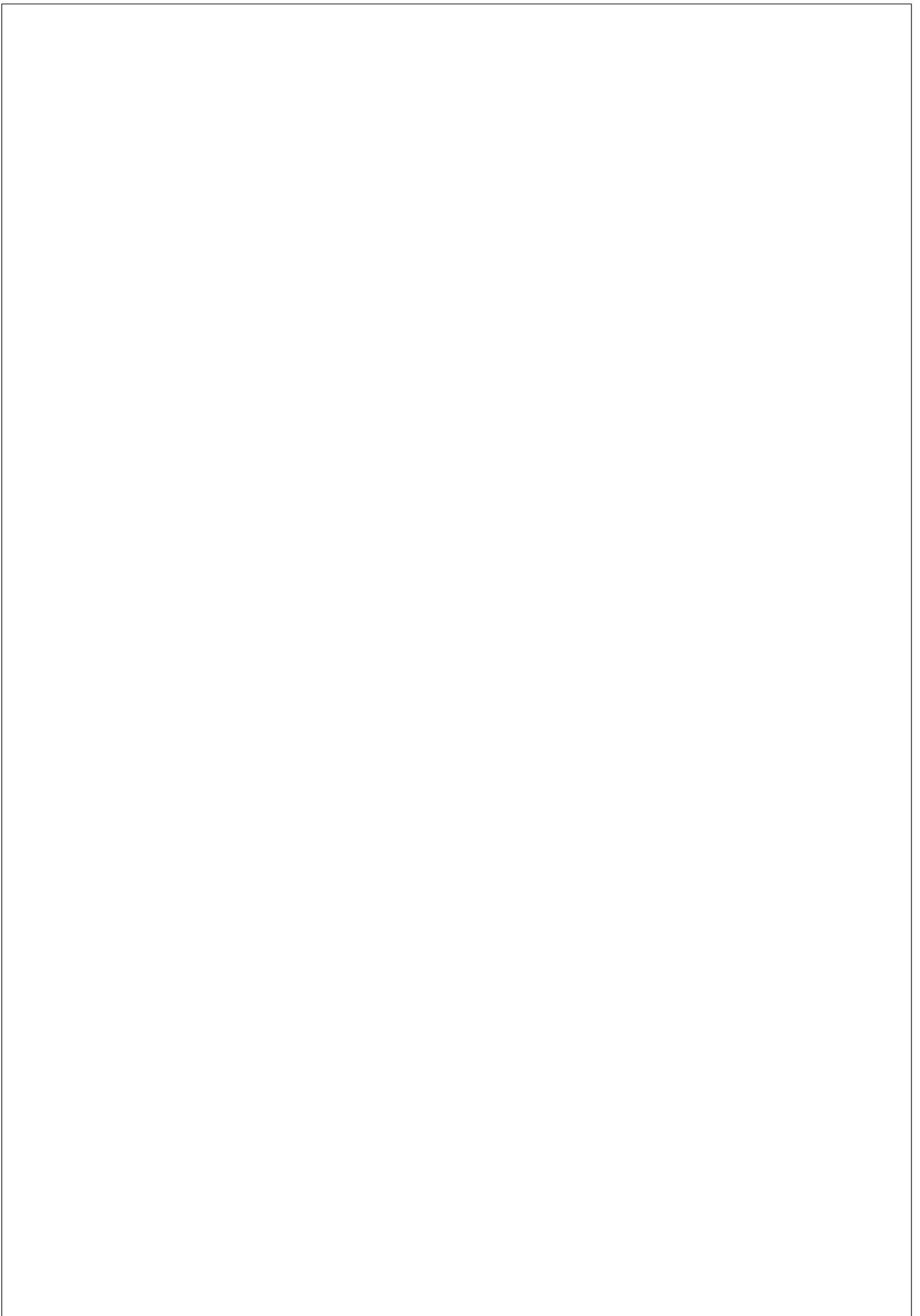
Thus is the sacred knowledge, In this manner is the divine mystery. So says the Upanishad.

Iti Devī-at'harva-shīrsham sam-pūrnām.

Thus is completed the Devi Atharva Sheersha.

**The five Atharva Sheershas traditionally recited are the Ganesha, Devi, Surya, Vishnu and Shiva.*





Shri Mataji's comments on the Devi Atharva Shīrsha.

(Pune, 17th Oct. 1988)

- When you give joy to someone, the source of joy has to be beyond the joy.
- I am the Giver of Knowledge.
- Without the light of **Ātma**, without the light of the Spirit, how can you know anything?
- You see the Source is Unborn; it can take birth because it is primordial, so it is unborn. Primordial is there, it is absolute, but then Absolute can take birth.
- Why not get Realisation? Without that what's the use of doing **Devi Pūja**? Without the knowledge of **Ātma**, if you do any **Pūja**, what is the use? You won't get Divine Blessings. Already said thousands of years back.
- **Vaikhari** is the powers by which we speak.
- Any God's name you take, you ask 'are you this?' -you get cool vibrations..... -because the **Shakti** of all those people is the essence of all those. Because I am that **Shakti**, that's why you get the vibrations. Ask anybody's name, even the saints, **rishis**, **mahārishis**. '**haanh**' ('yes' in *Hindi*) all of that is Me. that is why- that's the point they are trying to make.
- **Bīja** ('seed') **mantra** means say the **Vaikhari**. **Vaikhari** is the power of speaking. This power of speaking is made into mantras by the people who have power of realisation. Now, so, for them to improve, supposing they want to improve their centre, or they want to improve left or right. They have to say the **bīja mantras**. If they say the **bīja mantras**, that area gets the **bīja**, then the **bīja** has to sprout and has to grow. So the first step they have to say the **bīja mantra** and then they have to say the different mantras of the different **chakras**. So one is the **bīja** and then is the tree. So if you know the **bīja** first of all, you can implant a **bīja** into yourself by saying that, and then you start saying all other. So, that's how you make it grow.
- The word **Sanskrit** has come out of **Kundalini's** movement, when She makes a sound, all was recorded by the great saints and like that every **chakra** has got vowels and consonants according to the number of sub-plexuses they have- you can say petals they have- and all of them make all the alphabets of **Sanskrit** language.
- **Sanskrit** is made holy; this language was made holy; first it was one language, out of which two languages were born, one was Latin and the one which was made holy was **Sanskrit**.

- This **Sanskrit** language comes from the saints, who heard all those things and they made this and this is the energy of the **Vaikhari**. Now the script is there, the **Vaikhari** is there. The energy is there and this is the way you should say the instrument, but to make it work in a Divine way, you have to make it into a **mantra**. To make it a **mantra**, any **mantra** you want to do, you must know first the **bīja mantra**. Supposing you want to raise your **Kundalinī**, then the **bīja mantra** is ‘**hreem**’ and from ‘**hreem**’ you should go on to ‘**Om Twameva sākshāt Shrī Hreem**’. Then you should go on saying the mantras of all the deities that are there.
- You have all become **Vidyāvān** now. (*‘embodiment of knowledge’*)
- Now you try to understand that how this **Vidyā** (*‘knowledge’*) has been penetrating into you slowly. Not with any teachers or anybody sitting with a stick in the hand. The whole **Vidyā** is exposed from within and without. Whatever I say, you can tally it on your Vibrations. So it goes into your hand. You don’t accept it because I am saying but it is so, that’s why you accept it. Supposing I say, this is water, then what, you will drink the water and you will see I fit quenches your thirst. Then only are you going to believe that this is water, otherwise you are not going to believe. In the same way it is.
- We are **Swayam-siddhas**. (Self-realised)
- ‘**Ra**’ is the energy, **Radha**. The one who sustains the energy is **Radha**. She is **Mahālakshmī** that is why she sustains the **Kundalinī**.
- ‘**Eee**’ is the primordial Mother and ‘**Ra**’ is the energy that is **Kundalinī**. So the ‘**Reem**’ means that you have the energy passing through the **Mahālakshmī tattwa** which is **Ra**. You see the energy is passing through the thing towards the Primordial Being. So **Reem**. That is why the Yogis- because they believe only in connection. Yogis believe in Yoga and so they have to look after the energy and also the Primordial Mother. This is very important because that is how energy should be there- **Kundalinī** as well as Primordial Mother. Fourteen thousand years before they have written all this which is the truth, which you know now. Now when you read this book (**Devi Sapta-shati** *‘seven hundred verses in praise of the Devi’*), you will understand.
- **Chitta Swarūpinī**- right side, that is **Mahāsaraswatī**, then **Sattva Rūpinī**- **Mahālakshmī**, **Ānanda Rūpinī**- **Mahākālī**, and you know all these things.
- (For receiving the knowledge of the **Brahma**, we always meditate on You) Without that you have got it, even without meditation you got Realisation. Now meditate you must- I don’t know what to do about that.

- In the witness state you become 'zero'. See your 'I' is no more in the witness state. You just see and there that is **Śhūnya** (*meaning 'empty' or 'zero' in Sanskrit and Hindi*). So She's the one at the time when you are in **Śhūnya** state, who is the **Śhakti** of that is She. You are in '**Nirvichāra**', thousands of people have that, now they have found out so who knows that. I know also if your **Kuṇḍalinī** has passed through. So even if you may not know, I'll say it is done, you know. So She is the One who knows all your states. So the whole idea you can understand like a computer, that is already made so well that it records everything that happens and immediately I , like see I'm talking to you, suddenly a person is sitting. I say '**Haanh**' so the attention is there also. I am talking to you, attention is there, that **Kuṇḍalinī** rises immediately. That's it.'