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 Shri 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 Pārvatī 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’hārva 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’hārva 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’hārva 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 Rāmayāna 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.
# Contents

**Abbreviations** used in this commentary ................................................................. page 3  
**Notes on Sanskrit pronunciation** ............................................................................. 4  
**Ganesha Atharva Sheersa (text + short translation)** ............................................. 8  

**Ganesha Atharva Sheersa - Detailed translations of:-**  
verse 1. Om. ....................................................................................................................... 10  
verse 2. Declaration of the veracity of this prayer. ....................................................... 12  
verse 3. Supplication for protection. ............................................................................. 16  
verse 4. Shri Ganesha as the Divine qualities manifested in man. ................................ 20  
verse 5. The relation of Shri Ganesha to the physical world. ....................................... 23  
verse 6. The relation of Shri Ganesha to the subtle world within. ............................... 25  
verse 7. The great Ganesha mantra. .............................................................................. 30  
verse 8. The Ganesha Gayatri. ....................................................................................... 35  
verse 9. Method of worshipping Shri Ganesha. ............................................................ 41  
verse 10. The eight names. ......................................................................................... 46  

**Ganesha A. S. part 2- Phala-shruti- ‘listening to the results’) ........................................ 50  
**Historical note** ........................................................................................................... 53  
**The Ganesha A.S. in Sahaja Yoga** ........................................................................... 55  
**Appendix 1-, Creation of Shri Ganesha (from the Shiva Purana)** ............................. 57  
**Appendix 2- Shri Vishnu, Shri Brahmā.** ...................................................................... 68  
**Shri Brahma and the creation** .................................................................................. 69  
**Om and the creation** .................................................................................................. 72  
**Appendix 5- Samkhya philosophy** .......................................................................... 73  
**Devi Atharva Sheersha** ............................................................................................ 77  
**Shri Matajīs comments on the Devi Atharva Sheersha** .......................................... 83
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 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 i 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 Ĺ as in boot.

o and e are always long, so med- would be pronounced as English ‘maid’ and mod- 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 sthito+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 ē 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 n 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 \( y \), \( r \), \( l \), \( lh \) and \( v \), three sibilants \( sh \), \( sh \) and \( s \), \( h \), \textit{anuswara}, \textit{visarga} and the composite letters \( ksh \) and \( j\bar{n} \).

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. \textit{twam}, \textit{swami}; and \( v \) when on its own, eg. \textit{Shiva}, \textit{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. \textit{Vishnu}, and an unaspirated \( sh \) as in \textit{Śhiva}, \textit{Ganeśha} etc. with a soft \( h \) as in ‘sure’.

\( s \) is always unvoiced, ie. like \textit{hiss} and not \textit{his}.

5 A common case ending is an aspiration called \textit{visarga} which is sometimes written as a final \( h \) or \( h \), e.g. \textit{namah}, but more accurately written \textit{namah} 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 \textit{ritam}, Krishna or \textit{Sanskrit} and sometimes \( ru \), as in \textit{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 \( j\bar{n} \) is pronounced palatally and hence had been written \textit{gny} (as in \textit{gnyāna} ‘knowledge’) to facilitate pronunciation.

\( g \) is always pronounced as in \textit{begin} and not as in \textit{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’\textit{h} eg. At’harva. Also \( ph \) is not \( f \) but an aspirated \( p \) (as in ’map-holder’) and \( v \) is half-way to \( w \).

\textbf{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 -‘dhown the gharden’. Un-aspirated consonants are more often found in French, for example \textit{qui}, which is unaspirated while the English \textit{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 ‘Jawannageddacakapoffee?’

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 namah⁴ namah⁴ becomes namo namah⁴, Indrah⁴ twam becomes Indras-twam, and binduh⁴uttara 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 enunced; 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 namah⁴ is on the o, and the namah⁴ 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 s as in Viṣṇu)
-čh (written c as in candra - the normal sounds of c are covered by s and k)
-the vowel ri (written r eg. Kṛṣṇa)

**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.
Twameva prayaksham tattvam-asi.
Twameva kevalam kartā-'si.
Twameva kevalam dhartā-'si.
Twameva kevalam hartā-'si.
Twameva sarvam khalv-idad Brahmasi.
Twam sākhśād-ātmāsi nityam.

Ritam-vachmi. Satyam-vachmi.
Ava twam mām.
Ava vaktāram. Ava śhrotāram.
Ava dātāram. Ava dhātāram.
Av-ān-ūchānam-ava śhishyam.

Twam vāṅg-mayas-twam chin-mayahª.
Twam ānanda-mayas-twam
Brahma-mayahª.
Twam sach-chid-ānand-ādvitīyō-'si.
Twam pratyaksham Brahmāsi.

Twam gñyāna-mayo vigñyāna-mayō-'si.
Sarvam jagad-idam twatto jāyate.
Sarvam jagad-idam twattas tiśh'hati.
Sarvam jagad-idam twayi layam-ēshyati.
Sarvam jagad-idam twayi pratyeti.
Twam bhūmir āpō-'nalō-'nilo nabhahª.
Twam chatvāri vāk-padāni.

Twam guna tray-ātītahª.
Twam deha tray-ātītahª.
Twam kāla tray-ātītahª.
*Twam avast'hā-tray-ātītahª.
Twam mūlādhāra st'hitō-'si nityam.
Twam shakti-try-ātmakahª.
Tvām yogino dhyāyanti nityam.
Twam Brahmas-twam Vishnus-twam.
Rudras-twam Indras-twam
Agnis-twam Vāyus-twam
Sūryas-twam Chandramās-twam
Brahma-bhūr-bhuvahª swarom.

Om. Salutations to You, O Lord of the Ganas.
You are the Manifestation of the Divine Principle
You alone are the Doer.
You alone are the Supporter and the Sustainer.
You alone are the Remover and Destroyer.
You are everything even indeed the Formless Spirit
You are the Embodiment of the Soul eternally (1)
I speak Divine Law. I speak the Truth. (2)
Protect thou me.
Be propitious to the speaker and the listener.
Watch over the one who gives and the receiver.
Show favour to the learned scholar and the pupil.
Protect from behind. Protect from the front.
Protect from the left side. Protect from the right side.
Protect from above. Protect from below.
From all directions guard and protect me constantly (3)
You are the Spoken Word and Pure Consciousness.
Joy is Your essence.
Formless Spirit is Your Nature.
You are Existence, Consciousness and Joy unequalled.
You are the Supreme Spirit manifested.
You are all Knowledge and Understanding. (4)
This whole world is born from You.
This whole world is sustained by You.
This whole world will dissolve in You.
This whole world returns to You.
You are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether (5 elements)
You are the four parts of speech. (5)
You are beyond the three attributes
You are beyond the three bodies.
You are beyond the three times.
You are beyond the three states of consciousness.
You are eternally stationed at Muladhara Chakra.
You are the Essence of the three Shaktis.
On You Yogis meditate constantly.
You are Lord Brahma. You are Shri Vishnu.
You are Lord Shiva. You are Shri Indra.
You are the God of Fire, You are Lord of the Wind.
You are the Sun and You are the Moon.
Supreme Spirit, Earth, Sky, Heaven and Omkāra (6)

* 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 para-tarah.  
Ardhendu lasitam. Tārena riddham.  
Etat-tava manu swa-rūpam.  
Gakārah pūrva rūpam.  
Akāro madhyama rūpam  
Anuswārash chāntya rūpam.  
Bindur uttara rūpam.  
Nādah samdhānam. Samhitā sandhih.  
Saishā Ganeshā-vidyā.  
Ganaka riṣhīh.  
Nichrid gāyatrī chhandah.  
Ganapatir devatā.  
Om Gam Ganapataye namah.  

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.  
'Α' 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.  

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.  

Eka-dantam chatur-hastam  
Pāśham ankuśha dhārinam.  
Radam cha varadam hastair bibhrānām  
Mūśhaka dhvajam  
Rakta, lambodaram  
Śhūrpa karnakam, rakta-vāsasam.  
Rakta gandhānu-liptāngam  
Rakta puṣhpaih su-pūjitam.  
Bhakt-ānu-kampinam devam  
Jagat kāranaḥ achyutām.  
Āvir-bhūtam cha sriḥty-ādau  
Prakriteh purushāt param.  
Evam dhyāyati yo nityam.  
Sa yoḥo yoginām varah.  

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.  

Sākshāt Śhrī Ādi Śhakti Mātāji Śhrī Nirmalā Devyai namo namah  
Who art in reality the Holy Primordial Energy, Divine Mother,  
To the Immaculate Goddess, salutations again and again  

* this is also commonly written prāthama-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 Prañava ‘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 Brahmanda* (‘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 Shaktis 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 it’s 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 Šhaktis appear in certain praises, Šrī 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 Ganeśha.

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 namahª with the ending modified due to its composition with the following word -te ‘to you’ *[namahª in comp.] (see Sandhi p.4).
namahª is an indeclinable adverb which takes the dative case, as in English ‘satutations 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’. namahª sounds like ’nummer-her’ with ’her’ very short.

Namas-kār- ‘making obeisance has two main forms:-
The first is that when saying namahª or namaste, the is head 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** can be separated as **na**-‘not’, **mah**-‘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**- abl. ‘from thee’ *(tah* 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 **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.

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 tattwam-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).

-evā-‘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-aksham(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-gāyāna- ‘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 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 indivuality. 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 Śhakti, the Kundalinī, the pure desire to reunite with the Purusha.

The 25th principle is Puruṣa (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.

 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)


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.]

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 nāḍī (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)


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 mahª. mām is the accusative– ‘me’. mama-gen. means ‘my’ or ‘mine’ and mamatā means ‘selfishness’ or ‘egotism’ as a vice, whereas ahāmkāra 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 vaktrî-‘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. Śhruti 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 dātrî.]

dhātāram- ‘the one who receives’- [mas. acc of dhātrî.] 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 dhātrî which is a name of Shri Brahmadeva as ‘the Creator’; dhātu being an element or constituent of creation.

Av-ān-ūchānam-ava śhisîhyam. (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.]

śhisîhyam- 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 paśchhāt-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 paścha- ‘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 i.e. ‘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 Pradesh- ‘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 puruṣ-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 ērhdvāt is long and may be drawn out slightly.

ērhdvāt-tāt- ‘from upwards’, ‘from above’. [abl of ērhdva ‘the upper part.’] ērhdva 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\(^\text{a}\)-in comp. abl. of sarva-‘all’.]
mām- ‘me’. [acc. of 1p pronoun]
sam-antāt- ‘constantly’, ‘completely’ or ‘all around’. [from sam-‘together’-anta-‘ends’, -at- ‘with’. ie. ‘with the ends touching’, ‘continuously’].

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’.

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.

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 (Swādhisht'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 Mātāji 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-ha –‘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 (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 in comp.]
twam– ‘You are’.
Brahma- (see v.1) is neuter here and hence denotes the Formless All-pervading Spirit. –mayah- ‘having the nature of’. [as above]

Twam sach-chid-ānand-ādvitīyō-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.
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-‘unequalled’, ‘without a second’, ‘unique’, ‘matchless’, ‘with no companion’ [advitiyah*- 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 o 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 Devanāgari 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*- 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*-asi. mayah*- ‘formed of’, asi- ‘You are’. (4)
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’. [twattahª 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-tiṣṭḥatī. (This whole world is sustained by You)
twattas- ‘by You’, ‘because of You’ or ‘through You’. [also twattahª in comp -abl. of twam.]

Sarvam jagad-idam twayi layam-eshyatī. (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.
eshyatī- ‘will go’ but it also means ‘in the future’. [3p.fut.of i- ‘to go’.] layam-eṣ hyatī could therefore be ‘in the future dissolution’ or just ‘will dissolve’.

Twam bhūmir-āpō-‘nalō-‘nilo nabhahª. (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, [bhūmih 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) 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.
analo- is ‘fire’ and the God of Fire as well as the digestive fire, and is synonymous with Shri Agni. [anala(h) 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. [anīla(h) 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)- 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, Vīshuddhi- ether, Āgnyā- 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’.
verse 6  Shri Ganeśha’s relation to the subtle world within

Twam guna-tray-ātītahª.(traya-ātītahª) (You are beyond the three attributes)
Twam deha-tray-ātītahª. (You are beyond the three bodies)
Twam kāla-tray-ātītahª. (You are beyond the three times)
*Twam avast’ha-tray-ātītahª. (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 namahª’ can be ‘Varada mūrtaye namahª’.

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 kārana- 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(hª)- ‘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’.


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

nityam- ‘eternally’. ‘constantly’, ‘always’. is used here as an adverb. see v.1.

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 Ganesha 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-. (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.

The three Śhaktis- Mahālakshmī, Mahāsarasvatī 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 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 Vishnu’* lit. ‘All-pervading’. [Viṣṇuh* in comp. nom.masc. ]

Note: The visarga (-hª) 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 Viśhuddhi (throat), Shri Agni as the fire of Tapas (renunciation) at 1Āgıyā 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 Āgıyā are not from the same root. Agni is the God of Fire and Āgıyā means ‘command’ or ‘authority’ from ā- ‘complete’ gıyā- ‘knowledge’.

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

Brahma bhūr bhuvahª 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-bhuvahª 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*- in comp.]

bhuvahª- ‘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. [swahª 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, gahª 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 bīja 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))

varn- ‘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\textsuperscript{a} para-tarah\textsuperscript{a}. (followed by the nasal sound (M))

\textit{anu-swāra(h\textsuperscript{h})-}‘the nasal sound’ \textit{[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 \textit{n} or \textit{m} which therefore preceeds the next consonant, and is generally formed in the same area of the mouth as the following consonant. It is \textit{n} before consonants (\textit{eg. Sanjay, Sandhya}) and \textit{m} before sibilants, semi-vowels (\textit{y,r,l} and \textit{v}), vowels (\textit{eg. samsara, samanta}) and as a word ending. Properly speaking the \textit{anuswāra} is a nasalisation rather than a consonant sound similar to the French ‘ton’.

\textit{para-tara(h\textsuperscript{h})-}‘followed by’, ‘after’, ‘further on’, ‘later’, \textit{[nom.mas.]} \textit{para} means ‘beyond’ or ‘far’ apart from several other meanings (\textit{v9 p27}) and \textit{–tara} is the comparative ending.\textit{(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 \textit{OM}.

Alternatively the \textit{anuswāra} is identified with \textbf{Lord Śhiva}.

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

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

\textbf{Ardhendu-lasitam.} (With the crescent resounding)

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

\textit{lasita(m)-}‘resounding’ \textit{[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 \textbf{Lord Śhiva} 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)’

\textbf{Tārena riddham.} (tāra-ena) (made to resound with the Om)

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

\textit{-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’.

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

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


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’.

Gakārahā pūrva-rūpam. (‘G’ is the first form.)

gakāra(h) 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 Devī 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’.

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

akāro- The letter a. (short a, like the u in ‘but’) [a-kāraḥ a in comp. nom.mas.]

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-antya-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 Śhaktī, the Yoga of the Kundalinī Śhaktī 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’.

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 Devī Atharva Sheersha, appendix 5. p.65)
‘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 Sakali-karana- ‘creator of everything’ and the universe takes its birth as a result of this Sakali-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-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 Adi 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.

Nādhah" sandhānam. (uniting as one sound)
nāda(h") ‘sound’ in general but particularly ‘the full nasal sound represented by the crescent’ [nom.mas.sing.]. The visarga (aspiration) here sounds like -s. (nādas-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-sandhiḥ** (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 Śiva Purana, for example, consists of five Samhitās.

Sandhi(h)-n) ‘euphonic rules’, ’the system of modifying words when used in compounds’. 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 euphonically 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 sam-dhānam and sam-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’.

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

saśi-‘in this manner is’, from sā-‘she’, esḥā-‘this’, ‘thus’. lit. ‘she is thus’.

Ganēśha-‘The Supreme Gana’. [ this has no case ending as it is compounded with –vidyā.]


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

**Ganaka-rishih.** (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(h)- ‘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. (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.]
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 At'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 nahª 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.

chhanda(ha)-‘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 chhanda-‘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 is the
nom./acc. of chhandas-‘a metre’ or the nom.mas. of chhanda- ‘acording 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’. [Ganapatiḥ 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-swārah⁴ para-tarah⁴.** *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.

**Gakārah⁴ 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 uttara rūpam.** At the top centre the Ādi Śhakti,

**Nādah⁴ samdhānam.** Uniting with Lord Shiva,

**Samhitā sandhīh¹.** Gives connection to the Supreme Brahman.

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

**Ganaka riṣhīh¹.** The reciter of these mantras becomes a great sage,

**Nichrid gāyatrī chhandah⁵.** 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.*
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 bija (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 Mahārāṣṭra, centred around Pūne.

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’, *[1p.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  in comp. 1p.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.]*

**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 Gajāsura –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 Pārvatī** 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’. [hastaih** in comp. inst.pl. of hasta ‘hand’].


**Mūshaka-dhvajam** (Having a mouse as an emblem)

**mūshaka**- can be a ‘rat’ or a ‘mouse’. [from mush- ‘to steal’ - also spelt mūshiaka.]

- 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.


**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 apareed 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. lambda- ‘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 rakta- 2 syllables; lambodaram- 4 syllables; shūrpa karnakam- 5 syllables; rakta vasasam- 5 syllables; rakta gandānu-liptāṅgam- 8 syllables; rakta pushpaṁiḥ 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-vāstra –‘wearing white clothes’ as He chose white as the symbol of purity, intelligence and discrimination for His costume.

Rakta-gandh-ānu-liptāṅgam (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.
ga(m)- ‘limbs’ or ‘the body’ in general. [acc.]
**Rakta pushpaiḥ su-pūjitam.** (Auspiciously worshipped with red flowers)

pushpaiḥ- ‘with flowers’, ‘by blossoms’. \[[inst.pl. of pushpa.]

su-pūjitam- ‘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(ām)- ‘compassionate one’, ‘a sympathiser’, ‘one who pities’. \[[acc.\]

deva(m)- ‘divinely’, ‘God’, ‘resplendent’, ‘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)- ‘cause of’, ‘reason for’, ‘principle behind’. \[[acc.\]

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

**Āvir-bhūtam cha srisḥty-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.

srisḥty ‘the creation of the world’, ‘procreation’, ‘bringing forth’, \[[srisṭi in comp. no case ending as compounded\]

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

**Prakriteh 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‘ 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‘ parama-purushāt’. However para does have a sense of ‘existing before…’
*prakrite(h*)- ‘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’].


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

Sa yogī yoginām-varahā. (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.
vara(h*)- ‘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 Vṛāta-pataye. Namo Ganapataye. (Salutations to the Lord of assemblies and Leader of the Ganas)

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

Note: namah\* 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 Ganāpataye- ‘salutations to the Leader of the Ganas’. see v.1 p.7.

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

namah\*- ‘prostrations’. Note: The ending of namah\* 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\* prat'hamapataye 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’. [impr. 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 ‘eka-danta’) to restore the moon, which He did but only for half the month, it reappearing in a crescent form like an elephant’s tusk.

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

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’].


suta- ‘son’, ‘offspring’. Shri Ganesha is the ‘Son’ of Lord Shiva and Shri Pārvati, 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 Pārvati (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 namaha in comp.] This repetition of namaha 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 namahª.
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’.
namo namahª requires the dative case as in English ‘salutations to…’
Note: This can also be said Shri Nirmala Devi namo namahª in which case Devi (short –i) is vocative ‘O Immaculate Goddess, obeisance again and again’-but technically not as correct.
namo namahª – [namahª namahª in comp.] ‘salutations, obeisance again and again’. This doubling of namahª is more respectful. see v.1 p7.
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-shirsham yo-adhîte. Whoever learns this Atharva Shîrsha
Sa Brahma-bhûyâya kalpate. He becomes absorbed into the Brahman,
Sa sarva-vighnair-na bâdhyate. He is not troubled by any obstacles,
Sa sarvatah sukha-medhate. He receives happiness from everywhere,
Sa pancha-mahâ-pâpât-pra-muchyate. He gets rid of even the five great sins. (11)

Sâyam-adhî-yano divasa-kritam Whoever recites this at evening time, has
Pâpam nâshayati. Any sins committed during the day destroyed.
Prâtar-adhî-yano râtri-kritam One who intones this at dawn, gets any
Pâpam nâshayati. Wickedness performed in the night removed.
Sâyam prâtah Reciting morning and evening
Pra-yum-jâno-apâpo bhavati. He becomes sinless.
Sarvatr-âdhî-yanô Reciting everywhere
Pavighno bhavati
Dharm-ârth’ha-kâma-moksham And receives the four blessings of life
Cha vindati. (12)

Idam-at’harva-shirsham This Atharva Shîrsha should not be given
Ashîshyâya na deyam. To one who is not worthy of instruction.
Yo yadi mohâd-dâsya-yati Whoever teaches it from temptation
Sa pâpiyân bhavati. For gain, He becomes more sinful,
Sahasr-ávartanât. Repeating this prayer a thousand times
Yam yam kâma-madhîte He whose mind is fixed on a desire,
Tam tam-anena sâdhayet. (13) He will attain it with this.

Anena yo Ganapatim-abhîshin-chati Whoever recites while bathing Shri Ganapatî
Sa vâgmi bhavatî. He becomes the master of speech.
Chaturt’hyâm-anashnana-japati Intoning while fasting on the fourth day.
Sa vidyâvân bhavatî He becomes full of knowledge
Ity-at’harvane-vâkyam. Thus speaks Sage Atharva.
Brahm-âdy-âvaranam vidyât Knowing no separation from the Brahman
Na bibhethi kadâ-chanetî. (14) He is never afraid.
Whoever worships with Dūrva grass becomes like the God of wealth. Whoever offers parched grains becomes famous. He becomes intelligent. Whoever offers a thousand sweetmeats gets all his desires fulfilled.

Everything he attains.

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.

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

‘In this manner is the Sacred Knowledge’, ‘Thus is the Divine mystery’, or ‘Here ends the Upanishad’.
Commonly this prayer either precedes or follows the At’hārva 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 Ganesāya namahª- ‘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 saja-nāv-avatu.    Om. May we both be protected together.
Saja-nau bhu-naktu.    May we both enjoy together,
Saja-vīryam kara-vāvahai.    May we both perform heroic deeds together.
Tejas-vin-āva-dhitam-astu    Let our studies be always glorious
Mā vid-īṣh-āvahai.    And let there not be hatred or discord.

Om bhadram karnebhih¹ shrinu-yāma devāhª,
   Om. May we hear with our ears only that which is auspicious, O ye Gods,
Bhadram pashyem-āksha-bhir-yajatrāhª.
   May we see only what is auspicious with our eyes,
Sṭhirair-angais-ṭuṣṭuvām-sastanū-bhih¹,
   Having sound limbs and desirous of praising,
Vyashema deva-hitam yad-āyuhª.
   May we enjoy in this body, that life given by the Gods.
Om svasti na Indro vriddha-shravāhª
   Om. May the ever-glorious Shri Indra¹ bless us,
Svasti nahª Pūṣhā vishva-vedāhª,    May the all-possessing Shri Pūshan² bless us,
Svasti nas-Tārkshyo-arīṣhta-nemih¹    May the invincible Shri Garuda³ bless us,
Svasti no Brihas-patir-dadhātu.    May the blissful Shri Brihaspati⁴ bless us,
Om shāntih¹, shāntih¹, shāntih¹.
   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 Rāmayana and Mahābhārata- being written around the time of Christ, the great Kālidas c.300AD, who wrote Shakuntala etc. and the beginning of the Puranic period (0-1800AD)

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 (500CE) there seems to have been some deterioration into superstition and tantrism before the revitalisation of Hinduism by Shri Ādi Shankarāchārya (780-812CE) 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 Brāhmīns until later; in fact the names ‘Ganeśa’ 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 (0-1800 CE), and it is not possible to date it exactly, but the Ganesha Aṭhārva 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 Mātāji 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, Mahāsarasarwatī; 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.”


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 as 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;- ‘What is your order? I shall accomplish what you command’. Thus addressed, Pārvatī replied to Her son.
23. ‘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.
24. O good son, without my permission, no-one, by any means, shall intrude my apartment. I tell you the fact.’
25. Saying this She gave Him a hard stick. On seeing His handsome features She was delighted.
26. Out of love and mercy She embraced and kissed Him. She placed Him armed with a staff at Her entrance as the gatekeeper.
27. Then the Son of the Goddess, of great heroic power, stayed at the doorway, Pārvatī began to take Her bath with Her friends, unworried.
28. At this very moment, Shiva who is eagerly indulgent and an expert in various divine sports came near the door.
29. 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.
30. My mother has entered Her bath. Where are you going now? Go away!’ , saying thus, He took up His staff to ward Him off.
31. 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 Pāṛshadas 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. Erelong 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. Thus 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.
29. 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’.
30. Pārvatī stood there for a moment and then taking up a haughty mood she Said;-
31. ‘What is to happen happens. What is done cannot be altered.’
32. The friend came to the door and told Ganesha what Pārvatī had said with affection.
33. ‘Whether good or bad let your duty be done’.
34. On hearing the words of the friend, Ganeshwara became highly delighted, strengthened and lifted up.
Girding up His loins, tying his turban firmly and clapping His calves and thighs, he spoke fearlessly to all the Ganas.

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’.

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

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.

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

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.

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

On seeing the Ganas coming, fully equipped for war, Ganesha spoke to them thus;–

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

Then Śiva, the lord of all, the consort of Pārvatī, then laughingly told me, Brahmā.

O Brahmā, you alone should go there. This strong boy shall be propitiated. O Brahmā, you shall bring him under control.

On hearing the words of the Lord, I went near Ganesha accompanied by the sages.

On seeing me approaching, the powerful Ganesha came to me very furiously and plucked my moustache and beard.

‘Forgive me, O Lord. I have not come for fighting. I have come to make peace and I will cause thee no harm’.

While I said thus, the heroic Ganesha took up the iron club, seeing which I began to run away immediately.

The others too were struck down with the iron club. Some fled to Śiva and intimated to Him the details of the incident.

On seeing them in that plight and on hearing the news, Śiva became very angry.

He issued directives to Indra and the other gods, to the Ganas led by the six-faced Karttikeya and to goblins, ghosts and spirits.

Lifting up their weapons, they came there from all directions. Whatever weapon they had was hurled on Ganesha with force.

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.

One Shakti assumed a very fierce form and stood there opening her mouth as wide as the cavern of a dark mountain.

The other assumed the form of lightning. She wore many arms. She was a huge and terrible goddess ready to punish the wicked.

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.

The earth with all the oceans quaked. As a result of the violent battle even mountains fell down.

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.’

26. 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 Mahādevi 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.
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.’

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

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

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

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

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.’

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

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.

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.

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

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

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:-

‘You have had great distress since your very birth. You are blessed and contented now. You will receive worship before all the gods. You will be free from distress.

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

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.’

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.
18. He is the remover of all obstacles and the bestower of the fruits of all rites.
19. He shall be worshipped first and we shall be worshipped afterwards. If he is not worshipped, we too are not worshipped.’
20. In order to gratify Pārvatī, 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 Mlechchas, 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 Brahmanda 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, Bhuvarloka, Swarloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka, Satyaloka 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 Purāṇa.

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 Purāṇa* 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 *Viśnu*, 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 *Viśṇu*. 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 progeniotor, 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*’.
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, ‘intelllect’). 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 **Gīyāna Shakti**.
Prakriti is made up of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Related to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priţhvi</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Mahā-bhūtas (gross elements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Āp</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tejas</td>
<td>Fire or light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vāyu</td>
<td>Air</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ākāśh</td>
<td>Ether or sky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandha</td>
<td>Smell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasa</td>
<td>Taste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rūpa</td>
<td>Sight</td>
<td>Tan-matras (subtle elements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparśha</td>
<td>Touch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śhabda</td>
<td>Sound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śhrotra</td>
<td>Ears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tvach</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chakshus</td>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Indriyas (senses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasana</td>
<td>Tongue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghrana</td>
<td>Nose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vāk</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pani</td>
<td>Hands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padam</td>
<td>Foot</td>
<td>Karmendriyas (5 organs of action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upastham</td>
<td>Generative organ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payu</td>
<td>Excretory organ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Prāgnya (intelligence), and Aniruddha, the Turiya (the fourth state of pure spirit).
Devi Atharva Sheersha
The Foremost Praise of the Supreme Devi.

Shrī Ganeshāya namah√.
Salutations to Shri Ganesha

Om sarve vai devā devīm-upa-tast'huh√ ‘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√ 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 vigyān-āvighyāne,
I am All Knowledge and the State of Ignorance.
Aham brahm-ābhrahmanī 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 akhilam 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-devaih,√
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-āgni 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 Twashtaram Pishanam Bhagam dadhami,
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,

Brahmanam-uta Prajapatim dadhami.  
And Brahma and Prajapati, the Gods who brings forth this Creation, I support.

Aham dadhami dravinam havishmate supravye yajamanaya suvrate,  
I am the Creator of Wealth to those who offer oblations very attentively and worship righteously,

Aham ragi sam-gamanai vasunam chikitushi prathamayagyiyanam,  
I am the Uniting Empress of the Gods, understood to be worshipped first and foremost,

Aham suve pitaram-asya murdhan-mama yonir-apsvantah samudre,  
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 daisim sam-padam-apnoti.  
Whoever has this knowledge, he achieves connection with the Lotus Feet of the Supreme Devi.

Te deva abruvan;  
The Devas replied

Nama Devyai Mahadevyai shriyai satatam namah,  
Salutations to the Devi, to that Most Auspicious Great Goddess, salutations always,

Nama prakrityai bhadraya niyatad pranatatma sam tam,  
We bow to the Adi Shakti, the Giver of Happiness, to Her who is everywhere and everything,

Tam-agni-varnam tapasajvalantim,  
To Her who shines like the Sun with the fire of renunciation, the Rewarder of all actions,

Durgadevi sharanam pra-padyamehe asuranashayitriai te namah.  
O Mother Durga We seek refuge at Your Feet, salutations to You, O Destroyer of demons.

Devim vacham ajanayanta devas-tam vishva-rupah pashavo vadanti,  
That Devi who is the Giver of Speech, whose form is the Universe, was praised by the Devas,

Sano mandresham-urjam duhanah dhenurvagas-manupasushhtataitu.(10)  
May that Goddess who grants all desires, speech and bliss, be pleased with our hymns.

Kala-ratrism Brahama-stutam Vasishnavim Skanda-mataram,  
O, Dark Night of dissolution (Shri Mahakali) praised by Shri Brahma, Shakti of Shri Vishnu (Shri Lakshmi) Mother of Shri Karttikeya (Shri Parvati)

Saraswatim Aditim Daksha-duhitaram namah pavanam shivam.  
Shri Saraswati and Mother Aditi, Daughter of Daksha, prostrations to You, O Pure and Auspicious Goddess.

Mahalakshmyai cha vidmahe, sarva-shaktyai cha dhimahi,  
We have the knowledge of Shri Maha-Lakshmi, we meditate upon the Embodiment of all Power,

Tanno Devi prachodayat,  
May that Devi stimulate and inspire us.
That boundless Goddess Aditi, daughter of Daksha, and Mother of the Devas, is born of You,
Your blessings O Emerger from the Ocean of Nectar, give endless victory to those Devas.

O Lotus giving birth to Desire, You are the swan bearing thunderbolt-handed Indra in the clouds,
Ever-hidden behind all the illusions and afflictions, is the knowledge of the Mother of the Universe.

This Devi is the Power of the Spirit,
This Devi is the Enchantress of the Universe, wielding noose, goad, bow and arrow,
This Devi is Shri Lakshmi, Grantor of the Highest Knowledge,
Whoever has this knowledge, he is carried across all sorrows.

Let there be Salutations to You, O Mother of all virtues, protect us everywhere, from all directions.

Thus is She the eight-fold Goddess of Wealth and the eleven Bringers of Disease and Disaster,
Thus is She the twelve Divine Sons of Aditi (the Devas),
Thus is She all the Devas, those that drink the Soma and those that drink not,
Thus is She the Giver of Wealth to the demons and the Power of the Rakshasas and sorcerers,
Thus is She the three Gunas, the attributes of Truth, Passion and Darkness
Thus is She taking the Form of the Trimurtis, Shri Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva,
Thus is She Shri Prajapati, Lord of Creation, Indra, King of the Gods and Manu, the first man,
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.
O Goddess who completely removes sins, and grants enjoyment and liberation,
Eternal, Victorious, Pure, our only Refuge, Giver of everything and exceedingly Auspicious,

Joining the heavenly form (A), connected with the God of Fire (U),
With the crescent resounding (M), is the seed of the Divine Power that fulfils all purposes,
In this way the one-syllabled mantra (OM) confers pure intelligence,
Meditating thus one becomes filled with Supreme Bliss, and an Ocean of the Highest Knowledge.

In the centre of the lotus of the heart, shining like a thousand suns,
Holding noose and goad, gentle and pleasing, fulfilling boons and giving fearlessness with the hands,
I praise that Three-eyed, Red-clothed Devi who is fulfilling the desires of Her devotees.
I bow to You, O Great Goddess, Destroyer of even the greatest of fears,
The Great Tearer-apart and the Calming Night, and Great Compassion personified.
Whose Form even Lord Brahma cannot comprehend, She is called ‘Unknowable’,
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-labhya 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’,


Mantrānām mātrikā Devī shabdānām gnyāna-rūpinī,  
That Devi 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).

Yasyāh” parataram nāsti, saįṣā Durgā prakīrtitā.  
There is nothing beyond Her, in this manner is Shri Durgā described. (25)

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.  
I bow to Her who carries us across the flood of this worldly existence and all fear and illusion. (26)

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 Atharva Shīrsha
Shata-laksham pra-japtvāpi sō-rchā shuddhim na vindati,
Though reciting ten million mantras, his worship will not become purified.
Shatam-asḥtottara ch-āsya purash-charyā-vidhih\textsuperscript{1} smритah,\textsuperscript{2}
This is to be performed a hundred and eight times according to the rules of traditional law
Dasha-vāram pạṭhet yas-tu sadyah\textsuperscript{3} pāpaih\textsuperscript{4} pra-muchyate,
Whoever says this ten times, gets all wickedness completely destroyed
Mahā-durgāni tarati mahā-devyāh\textsuperscript{5} pra-sādatah\textsuperscript{6}.
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\textsuperscript{7} pra-yunjānō-pāpo bhavati,
Reciting morning and evening, he becomes free from all sins
Nishīṭhe 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-devi-sam-nidhau japtvā mahā-mrityum tarati,
Being connected to the Great Goddess, the reciter is carried across Final Death
Sa mahā-mrityum tarati.
He is carried across even the Final Death,

Ya evam veda, Iti-upanịshat.
Thus is the sacred knowledge, In this manner is the divine mystery. So says the Upanishad.

Iti Devī-at’harva-shīrsham sam-pūrnam.
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 bija mantra. Supposing you want to raise your Kundalinī, then the bija 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 Vidya (‘knowledge’) has been penetrating into you slowly. Not with any teachers or anybody sitting with a stick in the hand. The whole Vidya 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 Kuṇḍalini 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 ‘Haan’ so the attention is there also. I am talking to you, attention is there, that Kuṇḍalini rises immediately. That’s it.’