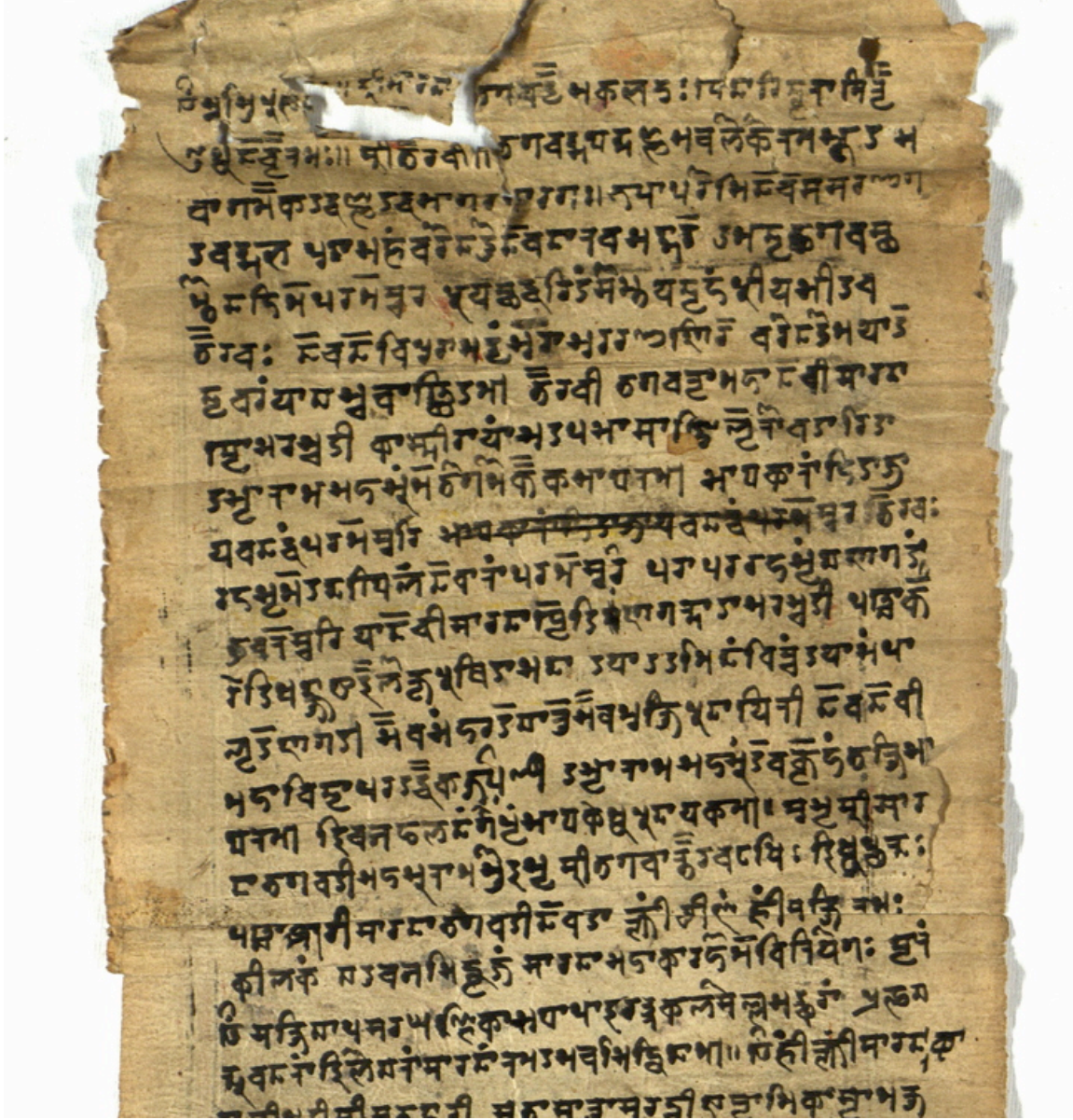


Śāradā Sahasranāma Stotra of Śrī Sahajaka.

* Translation by Christopher Tompkins.

* Transcribed from the original śāradā script extant in the scroll (below) by Alexis Sanderson and Christopher Tompkins. © 2013.¹



Scroll recovered in Kashmir by Christopher Tompkins, 2012.

¹ Neither this Sanskrit edition nor any transcription or translation based on this edition may be used without written permission from Christopher Tompkins.

* **Text**-- the scroll depicted below, presents the only know surviving copy of this Stotra. It is eight feet in length.

* **Affiliated Tradition** – a *Kaula* school of Kashmir Śaivism, probably belonging to the Trika-Kālikula lineage (fomented by Śrī Abhinavagupta ca. 1000 A.D.)

* **Transmission** -- from the Goddess in medieval Kashmir through a Brahmin sage named Śrī Sahajaka, beginning on the fortnight of the waxing moon in the month of Vaishākha and completed by the full moon in the month of Jyaiṣṭha. Year: unknown.²

Symbols

corr.	<i>correctio</i>	emendation based on a precedent
a.c.	<i>ante correctionem</i>	before correction
p.c.	<i>post correctionem</i>	after correction
conj.	<i>conicit</i>	conjecture for emendation (no known precedents)
ab.oc.	<i>aberratio oculi</i>	eyeskip in copying manuscript
dub.	<i>dubius</i>	doubtful
i.m.	<i>in margine</i>	‘in margin’ of MS folio
i.r.	<i>in rasuram</i>	over an erasure
leg.n.	<i>legi nequit</i>	illegible (†††)
om.	<i>omittit</i>	omits

NOTE: Line numbers in the section of our scroll presented above are noted in parentheses (#) in my transcription, below.

BENEDICTION.

(1) oṃ svasti prajā[bhyaḥ na]ma[h]³ śrīśāradābhagavatyai
sakaladuḥkhadāridryanāśinyai (2) iṣṭadevyai namaḥ ||

OM! Praise be to Venerable Śrī Śāradā! Salutations to She who generates [the universe]! Homage to [our] Tutelary Goddess, who destroys all deprivation and suffering!

² I have already discovered evidence to suggest that it was composed prior to the 15th century, although its date cannot be accurately determined, if at all, until my transcription of the text is complete.

³ leg.n.; conj. by SANDERSON.

BHAIRAVA AND BHAIRAVĪ INTRODUCE THE ŚĀRADĀ SAHARANĀMA.

śrībhairavī ||

bhagavat sarvadharmajña sarvaloka⁴-namaskṛta |
sa(3)rvāgamaika-tattva-jña tattva-sāgarapāraga ||
kṛpāparo si deveśa śaraṇāga(4)tavatsala |
purā mahyaṃ⁵ varo datto devadānavasaṅgare ||
tam adya bhagavac cha(5)mbho dehi⁶ me parameśvara |
prayaccha tvaritaṃ śambho yad ahaṃ preyaśī⁷ tava ||

Śrī Bhairavī [said]-

“O Venerable (Bhairava), who embodies universal order, who personifies all that is praiseworthy in the world! As the sole awareness that pervades [all of] reality, you are an ocean of insight on the true state of reality! O God of Gods! Your compassionate nature is incomparable! O Protector, O Dear One, great was the boon [of amṛta] granted [by you] long ago, during the battle between the gods and the demons. O Glorious Śambhu, O Highest Divinity, O Soul of Mine, quickly grant [me] that [amṛta] now—for I am your Beloved.”

(6) bhairavaḥ ||

devadevi purā satyaṃ surāsuraraṇājire |
varo datto mayā te (7) adya⁸ varam yācasva vāñchitam ||

Bhairava [said]- ||

“O Goddess of the Gods, the boon you ask for today cheats [death]; it is indeed the boon [of immortality] granted by me long ago, in the battle between the gods and demons.”

bhairavī ||

⁴ sarvaloka p.c.; sarvaloko a.c.; correction by TOMPKINS.

⁵ mahyaṃ p.c.; mahaṃ a.c.; correction by TOMPKINS.

⁶ dehi p.c.; dahi a.c.; correction by SANDERSON.

⁷ preyaśī p.c.; priyaśī a.c.; correction by SANDERSON.

⁸ adya p.c.; <>dya a.c.; correction by SANDERSON.

bhagavan yā mahādevī śāradā (8)khyā sarasvatī |
kāśmīrāyāṃ sutapasā śāṅḍilyenāvatāritā⁹ ||
(9) tasyā nāmasahasraṃ me bhogamokṣaikasādhanam |
sādhakānāṃ hitārthā(10)ya vada tvam paramēśvari ||

Bhairavī [said]- ||

“O Venerable One, She who is called Śāradā is Sarasvatī in the form of the Supreme Goddess. She was drawn down amongst the people of Kāśmīr through the great [yogic] austerity of [the sage] Śāṅḍilya.¹⁰ O Supreme Divinity, for the benefit of [all] practitioners, teach me the [ritual] performance comprising Her 1,000 names, which grants liberation and worldly blessings.”

bhairavaḥ ||

(11) rahasyam etad akhilaṃ devānāṃ paramēśvari |
parāpararahasyaṃ ca jagatāṃ (12) bhuvaneśvari |
yā devī śāradākhyeti jaganmātā sarasvatī ||
pañcākṣa(13)reti ṣaṭkūṭā trailokyaprathitā sadā |

Bhairava [said]- ||

“O Supreme Goddess of the gods, this [ritual] is completely secret. O Living Goddess of all that lives, it is a secret to higher and lower [beings alike]. The Goddess who is known as Śāradā is Sarasvatī in the form of the Universal Mother. She continually pervades the three worlds as the five syllables and the base that is the sixth.”¹¹

⁹ śāṅḍilyenāvatāritā p.c.; śāṅḍilyenauvatāritā a.c.; correction by SANDERSON.

¹⁰ The Śāṅḍilya Brahmins of Kashmir descend from Śāṅḍilya, who received a *śāktipāta* of Śrī Śāradā via a moon-beam as a consequence of his *tapas*, allegedly in the location of the current ruins of her temple in Pakistan; his ashram, *Shāradāvanam*, was located in the Bolair Valley near the River Kishanganga. The legend of Śāṅḍilya was established in Kashmir before the 11th century, for Abhinavagupta refers to it in his *Tantrāloka* (37.41).

¹¹ Śakti, as the sonic ‘power’ of the universe, embodies the ‘five syllables’ (*pañcākṣara*) or seed (*bīja*) mantras which are representations of the five (universal) elements. There are two sets of these five mantras to be engaged. The first, called *brahmā mantras*, correlate to the five directional heads of Bhairava and are powered by the five short vowels (A, I, U, E, and O, earth, water, fire, air, and space), which respectfully represent the elements in the cyclical phase of universal emission (*śiṣṭi*). The second set of five, called *aṅga-* (mantras of Bhairava’s ‘body’) or *vidyā-* (wisdom) mantras, are powered by the five long vowels (Ā, Ī, Ū, AI, and AU, earth, water, fire, air, and space) which respectfully represent the elements in the cyclical phase of universal dissolution (*saṃhāra*).

tayā tatam idaṃ viśvaṃ tayā saṃpā(14)lyate jagat |
saiva saṃharate cānte saiva muktipradāyinī |
devadevī (15) mahāvidyā paratattvaikarūpiṇī |
tasyā nāmasahasraṃ te vakṣye haṃ bhaktisā(16)dhanam |
trivargaphaladaṃ gopyaṃ sādhaḥkeṣṭapradāyakam |

“This universe is pervaded by Her; this world is protected by her. In the end She alone destroys [the universe], and She alone is the Bestower of liberation. The Goddess of the gods is the Supreme Wisdom.¹² She alone comprises the supreme reality. I will teach you the secret that bestows the reward of the three [reality] levels [i.e. worlds], that delivers what is [most] sought after by sādhas--the devotional *sādhana* of Her 1,000 names.”

VISUALIZATION (DHYĀNAM) OF GODDESS ŚĀRADĀ.

****This is the first known depiction of her to ever exist.****

In the Śaiva Tantras, the compound ‘base that is the sixth’ commonly refers to the initial letter before each of the vowels that power the respective elemental seed mantras delineated above; Derived from the *visarga* (Ḥ), the initial letter (the ‘base’) is either H- or KṢA-. The technical term ‘sixth’ refers either to the fact that the *visarga* is extraneous to the 5 categories (*vargas*) of Sanskrit consonants produced respectively from the 5 short/long vowels (A/Ā produce the guttural consonants beginning with K-, etc.), or to the 6th lotus center (*cakra*) in the subtle body, located between the eyebrows in most of the later *śākta* lineages, where the ‘Coiled’ Goddess (*Kuṇḍalinī*) descends in the form of the subtle *visarga* (‘emitter’) from the crown of the head. As the in-breath is drawn into the body at the apex of the nasal cavity (i.e. at the third eye center), its subtle resonance is that of the *visarga*, which thereafter descends via inhalation down into the navel (equated to the Śiva’s act of *sṛṣṭi*, ‘universal emission,’ in the body microcosm). There, in the space between breaths, the subtle *visarga* (Ḥ) transforms into the gross (audible) letter H- (or KṢA) to be uttered, in the following sequence, via the out-breath (equated to the act of *saṃhāra* in the body microcosm): the H conjoins to one of the five vowels (one per out-breath), such as ‘Ā,’ in forming each uttered mantra that culminates in the *anusvāra* (-Ṃ), a vocalic sound described as similar to the resonance of bee, made as the out-breath (and rises to the point of the third eye center (so H in the navel + Ā at the heart + Ṃ at the 3rd eye = earth; H + Ī + Ṃ = water, etc.). The internalized yogic rite briefly outline here is common to all Śaiva scriptures, wherein it is referred to as *Mantrōcchāra* (*Mantra-Ucchāra*) or simply *Ucchāra* (‘Utterance’).

¹² Here, as elsewhere in this *stotra*, ‘Śrīvidyā’ refers generically to the entire Sanskrit Alphabet from which the sonic elemental universe comes into being as the personification of the Goddess Herself.

dhyānaṃ || oṃ ||

śakti-cāpa-śara-ghaṅṭikāsudhā-
pātra-ratna-kalaśollasat-karāṃ¹³ <|>
pūrṇa-ca(21)ndra-vadanāṃ trilocanāṃ |
śāradāṃ namata sarva-siddhidāṃ ||¹⁴

Visualization [of Śāradā]:

“OM! Praise be to Śāradā--who grants all the wishes of Her devotees—who has three eyes, who has the full moon as Her third eye;¹⁵ who has in [her four respective] hands: a powerful bow with arrows; a bell; a chalice of nectar; [and] a pitcher adorned with resplendent jewels.”¹⁶

END OF PRELIMINARIES.

HEREAFTER THE HOMA RECITATION OF THE 1,000 NAMES OF ŚĀRADĀ BEGINS...

¹³ kalaśollasatkarāṃ p.c.; kalaśopallasatkarāṃ a.c.; correction by TOMPKINS.

¹⁴ In *Rathoddharā* metre.

¹⁵ The compound ‘pūrṇa-candra-vadanāṃ’ is commonly used as a simile in which the facial shape or countenance of a deity is compared to the beauty of a full moon. But here I render *vadanāṃ* (countenance, face, mouth; summit, apex) as ‘the apex of a triangle,’ a reading attested elsewhere, and finally the compound itself as a dependent clause qualifying ‘trilocanāṃ’ (three-eyed), so that the full moon in this case comprises or emanates from the central eye itself. This reading is moreover substantiated by the lack of the particle –ca- (‘and’) in this line. For *Śāradā* is not just compared to the moon, as are other deities, she is depicted as a personification of the (Autumnal) Moon itself, as some of her ‘names’ suggest – *candrikā* (‘Moonlight’), *candravāsītā* (‘She who is clothed in moon[-light]’), and so on.

¹⁶ That Śāradā is sometimes visualized with 6 hands is suggested by a series of epithets found in first quarter of Her 1,000 names, which includes the accoutrements delineated in this *dhyānaṃ*, plus a hand holding a lotus (*padmahastā*) and a hand bearing varadā mudrā (*varadātrī*).