

श्रीशिवरहस्याख्यः महेतिहासः

THE ANCIENT SHIVA-PURAANA

*TITLED*

SHREE SHIVARAHASYAAKHYAH MAHETIHAASA

THE GREAT HISTORY  
KNOWN AS  
THE AUSPICIOUS MYSTERY OF SHIVA

प्रथमांशः

FIRST PORTION

*Sanskrit text & Translation*

by

*Narayanalakshmi*

**DEDICATED**

**TO**

**ALL THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH**

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Narayanalakshmi

Narayanalakshmi (Shubhalakshmi), an ascetic spent most of her life in the Himalayan terrain, engaged in the penance of knowledge. She is well-versed in all philosophies and is a scholar in Sanskrit language. Her mission in life is to retrieve the lost knowledge of the ancient Rishis and offer it unblemished to all the seekers of the Truth. She is from Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

## SHIVA AND SHAKTI

Shiva is the auspicious Brahman-state and Shakti his power to exist as the Jagat-phenomenon. They both are inseparable, rather the same principle appearing as two. How can you separate Shiva and Shakti at all!

Shiva and Shakti mentioned in this Great text Shivarahasyetihaasa - are just sound forms referring to the same principle of Reality.

They are not male and female characters, as Shiva and Shivaa depicted in the Puraanas. The Shiva and Shakti of ShivaRahasya are not the Kailaasa residents of a Brahmaa's Creation.

How to describe that state of Shiva/Shakti who stay far across the reach of language, for the very description that appears here is the manifestation of the unmanifest Shiva-Shakti!

*"Shiva is the immutable screen, and Shakti is the prismatic play projected upon it."*

Shakti is the luminous choreography of the Absolute - the iridescent wave that dances across the fathomless, silent ocean of Shiva, lending form to the formless and voice to the eternal silence.

Shakti is not separate from Shiva; she is his own innate brilliance (vimarsha) making his unmanifest nature (prakaasha) visible to itself.

*"The Jagat, the perceived phenomenon is a cinematic tapestry woven entirely of light. Shakti is that wild, shimmering projection of names and forms, dancing across the immutable screen of Shiva. The drama turns, the cosmos burns, yet the Screen remains forever unblemished, unaltered, and profoundly awake."*

This is the core realization of the ShivaRahasya - that no matter how terrifying, joyful, or complex the worldly movie appears, it can never leave a single scratch or stain on the underlying Consciousness hosting it.

Shiva is the motionless Depth; Shakti is the self-luminous Display. The entire cosmos is but 'Awareness' experiencing its own infinite potentiality through the prism of Divine Motion.

In the non-dual traditions, this relationship is called Ananyatva (अनन्यत्व)—absolute non-separateness. Just as the heat cannot be separated from the fire, and the light cannot be isolated from the sun, Shakti is the dynamic pulse (spanda) of Shiva himself. The movie and the screen are, fundamentally, one undivided reality.

In non-dual systems (like Kashmir Shaivism), the Universe is often described as 'prakaasha-vimarsha', the light of awareness and its own self-reflective display.

The light isn't just flashing randomly; it is structured, moving, and telling a grand cosmic story across the unmoving background.

A "phantasmagoria" is a sequence of shifting, dreamlike images. Shakti is the phantasmagoric beam or the prismatic play. A single, pure source of light splits into a kaleidoscope of diverse worldly forms.

"Effulgence" (from the Latin *effulgere*, to shine forth) implies a brilliant, pouring-out of light. It matches the grand, scriptural tone of the Shivarahasya Itihaasa.

## SHIVA RAHASYA ITIHAASA

The ShaivaRahasya Itihaasa (frequently classified as an Upapuraana, but structurally self-designated and revered as an Itihaasa Ratnam) is one of the most monumental, voluminous, and esoteric texts in shaiva literature.

Spanning approximately 100,000 verses (shlokas) divided into 12 parts (amshas) and 1,000 chapters (adhyayas), its sheer scale is comparable to the Mahaabhaarata.

The text serves as an exhaustive compendium of non-dualistic Shaiva philosophy, theology, sacred geography (maahaatmya), and esoteric saadhana.

### 1. Structural Architecture

The text unfolds as a grand narrative lineage, traditionally recounted by Lord Skanda (Kaarttikeya) to the sage Jaigeesavya, which was subsequently transmitted via Soota Puraanika to the Rishis assembled in the Naimishaa Forest.

Unlike conventional Puranas that focus heavily on genealogies, the ShaivaRahasya prioritizes the preservation of pure non-dual experience (advaita-anubhooti) alongside formal ritual practice.

### 2. Philosophical Core: The Projection Metaphor

Linguistically and philosophically, the ShaivaRahasya- particularly through the Rbhu Geetaa - employs a striking dialectic of absolute negation (neti neti) coupled with immediate affirmation. It presents reality through a beautiful, early visual metaphor: Shiva is the immutable, unmoving screen (adhiṣṭhaana), while Shakti is the dynamic, cinematic light projected onto it.

Because of its massive size, the complete Shivarahasya Itihaasa remained largely preserved in private palm-leaf manuscript collections and was rarely printed in its entirety.

A historical landmark occurred in the mid-20th century when the text was painstakingly translated from Sanskrit manuscripts into a massive 30-volume Kannada edition (1946–1950) under the patronage of Sri Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar (published in the Jayachamarajendra Grantharatnamaala series by H. Gangaadhar Shaastri).

While partial English and Tamil translations of the Rbhu Geetaa core are widely accessible, complete unabridged access to all 100,000 verses of the underlying Itihaasa remains a rare and treasured find among specialized research libraries and monastic archives.

This translation of the original Grantha is humble offering to the lotus-feet of Shiva/Shakti.

श्रीशिवरहस्याख्यः महेतिहासः  
 प्रथमांशः  
 THE 'FIRST PORTION'  
 OF  
 THE 'GREAT ITIHAASA' TITLED 'SHIVARAHASYA'

श्री शिवरहस्ये प्रथमांशे सूतमुनिसंवादे प्रथमोऽध्यायः

FIRST CHAPTER IN THE FIRST PORTION  
 OF  
 SOOTAMUNI CONVERSATION  
 IN  
 SHREE SHIVARAHASYA

प्रार्थना

SALUTATION TO SHREE GANESHA

शुक्लांबरधरं विष्णुं शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजं  
 प्रसन्नवदनं ध्यायेत्सर्वविघ्नोपशान्तये ॥

*I meditate upon the All-pervading one (Lord Ganesha),  
 who wears the white garment,  
 who is white in hue like the moon,  
 who is endowed with four arms,  
 and who has a smiling face -  
 for the removal of all the obstacles.*

SALUTATION TO THE DEVOTEES OF SHIVA

शिरसा शिवभक्तानां पादांबुजरजःकणान्  
 वंदामहे वयं नित्यं वासनाध्वान्तभास्करान् ॥

*With our heads fully bent in devotion,  
 we always offer salutation  
 to the dust-particles of the lotus-feet that belong to devotees of Shiva,  
 which are the suns that destroy the darkness of Vaasanaas (subtle dormant wants).*

## सूतमुनि संवादः 'CONVERSATION WITH SOOTAMUNI'

### MUNEESHVARAS MEET SOOTAMUNI

पुरा माहेश्वरे सत्रे प्रवृत्ते मुनयस्तदा यदृच्छयाऽऽगतं सूतं पैप्पलादं हि सत्रिणः

वाजश्रवस आहुस्तं समवेता महर्षयः,

Long ago, the Munis -

who were always engaged in performing the Maaheshvara-Satra (Mega-sessions or 'sacrificial sessions' that can last for hundreds of years),

who belonged to the school of Muni Vaajashravas (also known as Sage Gautama or Uddaalaka), and who were engaged in performing the Sacrifice - gathered around -

'Paippalaada (who belonged to the Pippalada school of Atharva Veda) (known as) 'SootaMuni', (Ugrashravas Sauti, son of Lomaharshana, disciple of Maharshi Veda Vyaasa, known as Soota because he is a narrator of Puraanic tales)',

who had arrived there in course of his travel, and spoke to him like this.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF THE MUNIS

कृष्णाजिनोत्तरासंगा भस्मोद्धूलितविग्रहाः

These Munis whose bodies were fully covered by ashes, wore deer-skin (Krshnaajina, skin of the black antelope) only, as their garments;

त्रिपुण्ड्रविलसत्फाला रुद्राक्षांगदकंकणाः

their foreheads were marked by the three horizontal lines of ashes (mixed with cow dung or milk or sandal) (Tripundraka);

they wore bracelets made of Rudraakshas (dried stones of the fruit of Elaeocaepus ganitrus tree);

यज्ञेश्वरं महारुद्रं पूजयन्तोऽध्वरेण ते लिंगेऽग्निहोत्रे सूर्ये च रुद्रसूक्तजपादराः

these Munis were worshipping MahaaRudra through a Yajna-rite, and were also into the discipline of AgniHotra and Sun-worship, and were diligently reciting the RudraSookta;

पञ्चाक्षरावृत्तिपराः शिवनामपरायणाः

they were always chanting

the Mantra made of five letters - 'na ma shi vaa ya' -, and the various names of Shiva.

पञ्चकोशातिगं देवं पञ्चास्यं परमेश्वरं ध्यायन्तः परया भक्त्या

These Munis were always meditating on -

'Parameshvara who had five faces (Sadyojaata, VaamaDeva, Aghora, Tatpurusha, Ishaana),

and who transcended the five Koshas (levels of existence made of Anna, Praana, Manas, Vijaana and Aananda) -

with extreme devotion;

तं पप्रच्छुरकल्मषाः संपूज्यार्घ्यानैभोज्यैः प्रश्रयप्रश्नभाषणैः अन्योन्यं कुशलप्रश्नैः प्रश्रयावनतास्तदा ॥

they who had faultless minds,

worshipped SootaMuni with Arghya and Paadya, offered him a seat and refreshments,

and conversed about his well-being and theirs, and other matters concerning his philosophy;

and questioned him like this, with extreme humbleness.

## NOTES

### [Satra:

सत्र- Derived from the root सद् (sad), meaning "to sit,"

A 'satra' etymologically implies a session where people "sit together."

Depending on the context, it refers to a specific class of massive Vedic sacrifices, a community monastery, or an institutional assembly.

In Sanskrit philology and ritual literature,

the word सत्र (satra)—often spelled 'sattra' - carries deep structural meaning'.

### Unique Rules of a Satra:

No Single 'Yajamaana': Unlike ordinary rituals funded by a single patron (Yajamaana) who hires priests (ṛtvij), a satra is a communal, cooperative sacrifice.

Priests are the Patrons: All participating priests (typically a minimum of 17) collectively act as the Yajamaanas; they share the spiritual merits (apoorva) equally.

Braahmaṇa Eligibility: It strictly requires participants who are deeply versed in the Veda and capable of performing alternating priestly roles.]

### [Vaajashravas:

The name Vaajashravas is a patronymic or a descriptive title rich in Vedic symbolism:

वाज (vaaja): Food, nourishment, strength, or the speed/bounty of a horse.

In a ritual context, it specifically refers to the sacrificial food or rewards of a yajña.

श्रवस् (shravas): Fame, glory, or that which is heard

Thus, Vaajashravas literally translates to "he whose fame is derived from the distribution of food/wealth" or "one who is renowned for sacrificial offerings."]

Uttara-Mīmaṃsaa / Vedaanta mindset: seeks shreyas (the good, the eternal, absolute liberation).

Pūrva-Mīmaṃsaa mindset: is bound to the Karma-Kaṇḍa (the ritualistic portion of the Vedas).

Vaajashravas represents the Pūrva-Mīmaṃsaa mindset.

His eyes are fixed on 'preyas' (the pleasant, worldly wealth, and celestial pleasures of heaven).

His Yajna performances are driven by egoistic attachment.]

### [Rudra Sūkta:

The shatarudrīya / shrī Rudram) is one of the most powerful, structurally intricate, and historically significant Vedic hymns dedicated to Lord shiva in his fierce form as Rudra.

#### 1. Structural Overview: Namakam and Camakam

The text is traditionally divided into two distinct halves, consisting of 11 chapters (anuvaakas) each. Together, they create a rhythmic, meditative dialectic between surrender and manifestation.

Namakam (Anuvaakas 1–11)

Repeatedly uses the word नमः (namaḥ) - "obeisances to you."

Camakam (Anuvaakas 12–22)

Repeatedly uses the phrase च मे (ca me) - "and to me let this be granted."

## 2. The Non-Dual Vision of the All (Sarvaatmatvam):

### A. The Rudra Sūkta views Rudra as the entire fabric of the universe.

It radically dismantles the duality between "pure" and "impure," "noble" and "lowly."

Obeisances are offered not just to sages and kings, but to: the forces of nature: the green-haired trees, the roaring clouds, carpenters (takṣa), the paths, the crossroads; and to the marginalized and outcasts, the thieves (stena), the cheats (parica), the carpenters (takṣa), the potters (kulaala), and the hunters (niṣaada).

By identifying the Divine with both the architect and the thief, the hymn asserts a uncompromising non-dualism: everything that exists is a modification of a single cosmic consciousness.

### B. The Birth of the Pancaakshari Mantra

From a textual history perspective, the shrī Rudram is the womb of the most famous shaivite mantra. In the exact centre of the Namakam (8th Anuvaaka), the phrase appears:

नमः शिवाय च शिवतराय च॥

*"Obeisances to the auspicious one, and to the one who is exceedingly auspicious."*

This is the earliest scriptural appearance of the Namaḥ shivaaya mantra, cementing the evolution of the Vedic Rudra (the Howler/Fierce One) into the classical shiva (the Auspicious One).

C. Beyond its liturgical use in continuous recitation (paaraayana) during water ablutions (abhiṣeka), the text holds free-standing mantras of immense philosophical weight:

The Tryambaka Mantra (Mahaamṛtyuñjaya):

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।

उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात्॥

*"We worship the three-eyed one,*

*who is fragrant and sustains all growth.*

*Just as a ripe cucumber is effortlessly liberated from its stalk,*

*may we be liberated from death unto immortality."]*

## MAUNIBHAARGAVA PLACES THE REQUEST TO SOOTAMUNI

तेषां कुलपतिर्वृद्धः प्राह तं मौनिभार्गवः ।

Their Kulapati (elderly person who is revered as their chief) named 'MauniBhaargava' the 'Silent one who was a descendant of Bhrgu' spoke like this to 'SootaMuni'.

### MauniBhaargava Spoke:

पैप्पलाद सनाथास्मः त्वदागमनतो वयम्, माहेश्वरं यतस्सत्रं प्रवृत्तं पारमेश्वरम्।

Hey Paippalaada, we who are engaged in Maaheshvara-Yajna, to please 'Parameshvara' - have attained great support by your arrival.

त्वं भक्तोऽतीव रुद्रस्य स्कन्दनन्दीशसन्निभः॥

You are a great devotee of Rudra and are very close to Skanda and Nandeeshha.

जैगीषव्यो मुनिः पूर्वमूर्ध्वरेता महातपाः शंकराज्ञाप्रभावेन स्कन्दाद्यत्प्राप्तवान् शुभम्

पुण्यं शिवरहस्याख्यमितिहासोत्तमोत्तमम् त्रिणेत्रापारचरितं द्वादशांशसमन्वितम्॥

Jaigeeshavya Muni, who is renowned for his severe penance, who is UrdhvaRetas (who lives in perpetual celibacy) - obtained from Skanda by the command issued by Shankara,

*the auspicious meritorious knowledge named 'ShivaRahasyaakhya', the excellent chronicle, which describes the historical events connected to Shiva's life, which contains twelve parts (Amshas) -*

उपासता त्वयापूर्वं मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शंभोस्त्वयि यत्प्रोक्तवान्स्वयं

यस्मिन्ददौ हरः प्रीत्या संस्थितेषु मुनिष्वपि द्वादशांशयुतं साक्षाद्रहस्यं शिवसंभवम्

when you (Soota) worshipped him with your mind, speech and actions dedicated to Shambhu's worship, with unparalleled devotion -

which was instructed by Hara himself to you, and also to the Munis who had assembled there, which contained twelve Amshas,

शिवरत्नमहाकोशं तद्देव्या हृदयंगमम् स्कन्दायाचष्ट सा देवी प्रीत्या तेन प्रदर्शितम्

which describes the 'Secret of Shambhu's manifestation',

which is the treasure-chest containing Shiva-gems,

which is very much treasured with love by Devi,

which was instructed to Skanda by Devi with much affection,

शंकरस्याऽऽज्ञया सूतगुरोते शांभवोत्तमे जैगीषव्यायतत्प्रादात् स्कन्दस्स्कन्दिततारकः,

and which he revealed to you, the SootaGuru, the best of Shambhu-devotees,

which was given to Jaigeeshavya by Skanda who destroyed Taaraka;

इति शुश्रुम वृत्तान्तम्॥

so it has come to our knowledge.

तन्नोब्रूहित्वं घृणानिधे सुगोप्यमपि तद्ब्रूहि यतो भक्ता वयं शिवे

That knowledge, you please reveal to us, since you are rich with the wealth of compassion.

Even if it is Great Secret, please reveal that to us, for we are the devotees of Shiva.

त्रिणेत्रसुचरित्राणां पात्रभूता मुनीश्वराः। माहेश्वरेण सत्रेण शुद्धगात्रा वयं सदा॥

We the best of Munis, are of purified bodies, because of performing Maaheshvara-Satra, and are qualified to absorb the events connected to the Tri-eyed Shiva.

सुत्राममान्ये लोकेऽपि वाञ्छा नो पातभीतितः। गात्रे कलत्रे पुत्रेवा मित्रेवा स्नेहवर्जिताः विरक्ताश्च।

We are without any attachment to the body, or wife, or son, or friend, and do not have to fear the danger of falling downwards into sinful acts, since we have not the least desire for anything in this world ruled by Indra ('Sutraaman', the Excellent protector), and we are filled with extreme dispassion.

वदास्मभ्यं रहस्यं शांभवं मुदा।

Please reveal to us the ‘Secret of Shambhu’ without any hesitation.

त्वं भो ज्ञानप्रदस्साक्षाद्गुरुः शिवसमो मतः।

You are equal to Shiva according to us, and you are the Great Guru who bestows the ‘Knowledge’.

त्वं नो माता पितास्माकं वद तत्करुणाबलात्।

You are our Mother who is filled with affection for us; you are our Father who cares for us.

Please be compassionate and instruct us this Knowledge”.

इत्थं स पैप्पलादो हि सूतः पृष्ठोमुनीश्वरैः उवाच प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यं तेषां भक्त्या सुतोषितः।

अनन्यशंभुभक्त्याच जानन्पात्रञ्चतानपि।

When the Muneeshvaras placed a request like this,

Paippalaada Soota, was well-pleased by their devotion, and addressed them with his hands folded in humbleness, understanding that they were fit to be instructed, and himself having unparalleled devotion towards Shambhu.

### Soota spoke:

पात्रं भवन्तः कृपया महेशितुः सत्रेण दानैस्तपसोपसद्भिः।

पवित्रगात्रावभृतेन दीक्ष्या वेदान्तसारार्थविचारनिष्ठाः।

You are all qualified to receive this Knowledge by the grace of Mahesha,

since you have been performing this ‘Maaheshvara-Satra’,

and have sanctified your bodies through the acts of charity, and ascetic practices (penance),

and have the Deekshaa (initiation) fit to receive this Knowledge,

and you are always engaged in analyzing the essence of Upanishads (Vedaanta).

*(Unless one had reached some level of Self-realization, after studying all the Upanishads and the Upanishad-based Scriptures, this subtle knowledge presented in this text cannot be grasped by him. This text is not a Puraana describing Shiva’s story as a Trinity; but refers to the mystery of the Shiva, the Aatman that hides within oneself.*

*This text will not bestow any superior merit as such; and just going through the book as a religious act will not render any fruit as such; and will not fulfil your worldly desires also.*

*It is not a Puraana-story; but points out the highest level of Aatman-state, far beyond the instructions of the Upanishads also.)*

शृणुध्वमाद्यं प्रथमांशमेतद्यथा गुरुर्मे भगवान् प्रसादभाक्।

महेश्वरस्याप्रतिमप्रभावो भावो भवोत्कृष्टहृदोद्दिङ्गिताशः॥

जैगीषव्यमुनिस्तताप तपसा रुद्रं जपंस्तुष्टधीः कष्टानप्यसमीक्ष्य संयतमना वर्षायुतं वायुभुक्।

Listen now to the first portion (Amsha).

Jaigeeshavya Muni, who is my Guru, the Bhagavaan (endowed with all the riches of knowledge),

one who is fit to receive the ‘Grace of Maheshvara’,

who exists as unparalleled state of penance,

who has thrown away the thoughts of the world completely -

performed severe penance, reciting the Mantra of Rudra,

with a mind oozing with blissful-devotion,

disregarding all the difficulties he met with,

with his mind fully under control,

consuming only the air, for ‘Ayuta (myriad) years’.

