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मातृस्तव:
[ Eulogy of Mātṛs ]

प्रचण्डमणिकुंडल भूकुटिभाषुरोगानं
करात्मकतिकीण्यं सिद्धश्रेष्ठमयुच्यणम् ।
स्म्यलक्ष्म्यशुभलक्षणमुख्याक्षुरं गुणं
नमामि वृद्धभृत्रविह तिरिवनं महामायस्वीम् ॥ २५

सितप्रवरप्रजने स्मरवृद्धनादाकुले
सदा विमलविषृंते विपुलराजसंस्थिताम् ।
स्थितं प्रवरवराजसे ऋषिकुलोपसरसिविता
नमामि शिरसा पितामहसमुद्रवां मातरम् ॥ २६

शारत्रूच्छिष्ठतों दुहिनशाखृंखुद्रप्रभां
स्थुलसुकिरणभासितसं सितोवासो वरिष्ठताम् ।
ज्ञानिकुटूटके दच्छति चन्द्रेशंकं तु यां
नमामि निर्गितारूपां प्रमणायथेवहसुलभाम् ॥ २७

महुरवरामाणी दर्दशुखुद्रवांकां
वर्णं च वर्णं कलितप्रचण्डकं निष्ठितारुक्तिसंवत्रताम् ।
प्रभातिकराभ्यस्मिन्नाननानानानं
नमामि गुप्तसंभवं विनिदशाश्चतुरणीस्वीम् ॥ २८

तस्मिनात्मकप्रभृतुकुसुमां पुजोपमां
गदागुल्लारणं धनुस्माणस्कारायुगं ।
गम्मनरस्तस्कितं विपुलपुरुषश्रेरक्षणं
नमामि नितिसंभवं विमलशिर्सिद्वं वैशाल्यीम् ॥ २९
NOTE ON THE MÄTRSTAVA

The deities called mātrs or mātrkās (mother-goddesses) are well-known in the field of Tantric worship.1 They are said to be the saktis of the supreme Mother and their chief function is to help the Goddess in her act of killing demons.2

As regards the number and names of the mātrs we find divergent views, usually they are said to be seven,3 eight4 or nine.5


2. Brāhmaṇidēvaśāra ṣamkara su: śūtā: नन्द-कल्याणकारणः नान्देनामानूर्तम। (D. Bhāg.), यथा देवस्य या शाक्तियाः भूपालवाहणः ! तद्विषयं हि तत्कथितसुयं योगृहायायः (Saptasāti 8.14); मातृत्वं: कर्त्तवयं: तन्त्रसङ्ग्रहे००५म्र०।

3. पारि मात्रकर्त्तात्वस्य परास्थानां स्त्रियाः कामेण समावेशिनां शरणाः महाप्राणायमः (Bṛhaṣṭhaḥ 58.56).

4. पारि मात्रकर्त्तात्वस्य परास्थानां स्त्रियाः कामेण समावेशिनां शरणाः महाप्राणायमः (Nāgajī's comm. on Saptasāti 8.38); पारि मात्रकर्त्तात्वस्य परास्थानां स्त्रियाः कामेण समावेशिनां शरणाः महाप्राणायमः (Kalpadrukos'a, p. 391, verse 105; mark the word ऐत्यम्).

5. पारि मात्रकर्त्तात्वस्य परास्थानां स्त्रियाः कामेण समावेशिनां शरणाः महाप्राणायमः (Nāgajī's comm. on Saptasāti 8.38); पारि मात्रकर्त्तात्वस्य परास्थानां स्त्रियाः कामेण समावेशिनां शरणाः महाप्राणायमः (Kalpadrukos'a, p. 391, verse 105; mark the word ऐत्यम्).

1. (Brhatsatitii 58.56).

2. (Sūtā: नन्द-कल्याणकारणः नान्देनामानूर्तम।)

3. (Prapaccasāra 7.11. mark the word ऐत्यम्; here the names are eight in number). In some commentaries on Amara 1.1.36 the...
According to some the number is 64 (vide Durgācanapaddhati pp. 676-677); in the Viṣṇu-dharmottara-p. (1. 226), the number is nearly 200.

The following eulogy of the mātṛkās in the metre Prthvī occurs in the Devī-purāṇa. Two editions of this Upapurāṇa are available—one in Bengali characters edited by Pt. Paṇcānana Tarkaratna with a Bengali translation, published by the Bangabasi Press and the other in Devanagari characters edited by Dr. Puspendra Kumar Sharma with the help of a few MSS, published by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi. The eulogy is called Mātṛstava in 87.24.

(Verse 25) The verse is highly perplexing since it eulogises one deity though it contains words of both masculine and feminine genders. As this stotra is called Mātṛstava, it cannot reasonably be held that the first three feet of the verse extol a male deity and the last foot a female deity. It is also surprising to note that only the last foot has variants of masculine gender which goes against the rule that the first three feet of a male deity and the last foot a female deity. It is also surprising to note that only the last foot has variants of masculine gender which goes against the rule that the first three feet of a male deity and the last foot a female deity.

The verse evidently extols the goddess Mahābhairavī. This name is however not read in the well-known lists of mātṛkās. Mahābhairavī seems to be the same as Kālī described in Saptāśati 7.5-7. This Kālī may be regarded as a mātṛkā; see the Viṣṇu-dharmottara-p. Sec 1, Ch. 226; see also the remarks of the comm. Sāntanavi (काली नाम शक्ति: काली अपरा देवी, on 7.5). Mātṛkās are regarded as saktis of various deities (See Saptāśati 8.11-13).

The Beng. ed. reads bhūkūṭi for bhūkūṭi (in the first foot). Both the forms are found in the lexicons and in poetical as well as Tantric works. The word is sometimes read with a long i and three forms with long i (bhūkūṭi, bhūkūṭi and bhūkūṭi) are mentioned in the Sāntanavi comm. on Saptāśati 7.5, विकटतेजसप्ताशुणाम (read in the Dev. ed.) is corrupt as it is metrically defective.

The variant घास्मार for घास्मार (in the first foot) is wrong, as there is no word as bhāsmara. Bhāsmara may be a slip of the scribe for bhāsvara.

(Verse 26) The verse eulogises the mātṛkā named Brāhmī also called Brahmāṇī, who is here said to come out from Pīṭhama (i.e. Brahmā); cp. Saptāśati 8.14 and 11.12.

The reading सिवित is corrupt as it cannot be construed with the other words in the verse. सिवित is to be construed with सिवितप्रयतन्तु, which is qualified by भ्रमरदनादकुले and भ्रमरदनीस्तु. The expression विपुलराजहसिष्ठाकुलम् is an independent adjective of मातरम्.
The expression प्रबरविराजिते in the third foot (read in both the editions) creates much difficulty, so far as its analysis is concerned. The word creates metrical fault also. It is difficult to conceive the correct reading of this expression. 

Verse 27 The eulogises the मात्रकā माहेश्वरी; Cp. Saptaśati 8.15 and 11.13.

The reading शविन्दत (in the first foot) is better than the variant शविन्दयाः कालिजजीर्णिः as it shows development of brightness which is intended here.

The reading मायिलाः (in the second foot) in both the editions is to be corrected to मायिलाः, संस्किर्तम् for metrical reasons.

Verse 28 This eulogises the मात्रकā कामारि; Cp. Saptaśati 8.16, 11.14.

The variant गामिणी (in the first foot) is wrong. Had the word been analysed as मुरुरवर्गम्: असिः अस्थिः, then गामिणी would have been correct. But as गाम is no word, the word must be spelt with the dental na. The compound is to be analysed as मुरुरवः, गामिनी (dvitīyā tatpurusa).

The meaning of दरादशुद्ध (read in both the editions) is not clear. Darada meaning red lead does not seem to be applicable here. Most probably the reading darada is corrupt. There is however no metrical fault in this reading.

The second foot is metrically defective. Moreover the expression वर्ण च वर्णान च भरण च भरणः च (in the Beng. ed.) does not help in any way correct the reading of this portion. We propose here a conjectural reading: पदार्थित्वमित्रः. It is difficult to explain how the corrupt reading वर्ण च...षिक्षक came into existence.

In the third foot the Dev. ed. reads प्रभासिकर्षिनिः. There is no विशार्द or रेपह after म् which is objectional; perhaps there is a printing mistake here. प्रभासिकर्षिनिः is a meaningful word, though it is better to read प्रभासिकर्षिनिः (प्र + भास + भिनिः = प्रभासिकर्षिनिः). The Dev. ed. reads श्रवणायमानाशुक्काः which has no meaning and as such the reading is to be taken as corrupt. It is metrically faulty also. 

Verse 29 The variant निरस्तील्लेक (in the fourth foot) is wrong. The reading निरस्तील्लेक is metrically defective. नाशनी is from
the word नाशन with the feminine suffix हीनः।

(Verse 29) This eulogises the मात्रका वाराही; Cp. Saptaśati 8.18 and 11.16.

The reading of the first foot is highly corrupt and the reading लर्ती (Beng. ed.), the variants प्रभृत्तिवालसी and प्रभृत्तिवालसीप्त्तमा (Beng. ed.) do not show the original reading. Our conjectural reading is प्रभृत्तिवालसीप्रतयेकसा (Beng. ed.) one compound word. The reading is slightly objectionable as कुषुमाता (कुषुमाता) is awkward, the usual form being अलसित्म. Can the form be defended by taking it as कुषुमाता अलसित्म? cp. बाहुनकेश्वरी in Saptaśati 2.50.

मुंश is read in the Beng. ed. (in the second foot). मुंश seems to be the earlier form, as it is derived from the root mas (मसी परिभाषा)।

The reading धनुशाख् in this foot must be corrupt as it creates metrical fault. The form धनु is unusual, the usual form being धनु which again creates metrical fault. We may read धनु with the prefix स and thus keep the metre intact (सुनुशाख्य) though such an amendment is hardly justifiable. The variant चन्द्रदुधाम् is corrupt as चन्द्र cannot be taken as a weapon.

The Beng. ed. reads बिजु for बिजल in the fourth foot, which is more acceptable.

(Verse 30) This eulogises the मात्रका वाराही though the name is not stated here expressly; Cp. Saptaśati 8.19 and 11.17.

The variant लर्ती in the first foot creates metrical fault. The whole first foot is to be taken as a compound word. About the grammatical correctness of वाहिनी in महामहिनिवाहिनी explaining the word महामहिनिवाहिनी, see Santanavi in Saptaśati 11.13.

9. See the comments of Bhāskara on the word दस्यविनाशिवाहिनी—यदव वानविनाशिवाहिनी शरणोत्तरत्वोदेशम् (on Lalitākhasanāna, verse 171).
10. प्रभृत्तिवालसीप्रतयेकसा व: तांत्र: दुः स उपमा यथा: सा— the word is to be understood in this way.
11. Later lexicons read both the forms.

January, 93] NOTE ON THE MĀṬRĀŚTAVA

As the variant शुक्री (for शिवकरी) in the fourth foot creates metrical fault it is corrupt. Since the verse eulogises वाराही and since the name of the मात्रका has not been expressly stated in the verse, some intelligent scribe replaced शिवकरी by it without noticing that the reading would create metrical fault.

(Verse 31) This verse eulogises the मात्रका इंद्रिङ्ग (also called उद्रिङ्ग); cp. Saptaśati 8.21 and 11.19.

The reading विपुलसलिसिप्त्तमा in the first foot (Dev. ed.) is corrupt as it is metrically defective. Moreover लर्ती can hardly be used appropriately with विपुल; the compound is hardly satisfactory. Unfortunately no variant of this reading has been given in the Dev. ed. As the reading in the Beng. ed. is meaningful, it is accepted here.

The second foot has a variant कविद्वर. There is no propriety in mentioning kavi here. As the use of both इत्र (in the sense of 'hydro') and वर with reference to one and the same entity is futile, we take the reading कविद्वर as correct. निंदु may aptly be used with रब (and not with वर).

The fourth foot has a variant विपुलभावम् (in the place of विपुलभावम्) which is evidently corrupt as it corrupts the metre and yields no acceptable sense. The variant शालजान्द्र (in the place of शालजान्द्र) seems to be written inadvertently by the scribe. It may also be supposed that the variant is due to the Bengali script in which the forms of श्र and श्र are very similar.

(Verse 32) This verse seems to eulogise the मात्रका चामुंड, for in the Purāṇas she is said to kill the Demon Ruru. चामुंडा's description in the Saptaśati is in consonance with the epithets given in this verse. चामुंडा is said to be one of the मात्रकाः in Prapañcāsāra 7.11.

The Beng. ed. reads मालापरी in the first foot. It is usual to use मालापर with the feminine suffix वाह. The use of the feminine suffix
The variant प्रलयर्वीचित्षिकोष्टिकाणाम् in the second foot is metrically defective. Moreover र्वीचित्षिकाणाम् is grammatically indefensible.

The reading स्ततुपारिती (in Dev. ed.) or स्ततुपारिती (in Beng. ed.) in the third foot is metrically defective. The correct Puranic form is त्र्य and not द्र्य. According to us the correct reading would be स्ततुपारिती which is in consonance with the metre. It is said in the Varāha-p. that before the killing of the demon Ruru by Cāmunḍā, his body was divided into two parts (called Carman or Carma and Munḍā). On account of these two bodies Cāmunḍā may rightly be described as स्ततुपारिती. We may read स्ततिद्यत also.

It is better to read मेद्वर्यां (in the third foot) as read in the Beng. ed. and not मेद्वर्यां (as read in the Dev. ed.) as the stem is मेद्वर्यां. Some opine that as गिर is also used for गिर, so मेद may also be used for मेद्वर्य (Cp. the maxim सवेसात्ता अदन्ता: in later grammatical works).

In the fourth foot there is a variant वसानुसंधनतः. The reading शवसानुसंधनतः is preferable, for Cāmunḍā is often described as प्रस्तास्या or शववाहनो in Trantric works.

(Verse 33) The mātrkā eulogised here seems to be Gaṇanāyikā, though her name is not read in the well-known lists of mātrkās.

The reading प्रहुस्तर (in the first foot) in the Dev. ed. is metrically defective. Moreover भांतिक (cessation) does not yield a good sense. The reading प्रत (in the Beng. ed.) suits the metre and is meaningful also (चामेरण प्रहति: बद्धतैः आरावितकः).

The reading द्वादशावस्तरमिदयन्तु (in Beng. ed.) is better than दश विदयन्तु (in the Dev. ed.).

The third and fourth feet have variant reading in which all adjectival words are read in the masculine gender referring to the deity Gaṇanāyikā. Since it is a verse of the Mātrstava, a male deity cannot be extolled here, and as such the variant readings are to be taken as corrupt.

(Verse 34) The verse seems to extol not any particular mātr but mātrīs in general.

In the third foot the Beng. ed. reads यमति, which must be corrupt as the root yama in the sense of uparame (cessation) is intransitive while in the sentence there is the object मात्रस्य. Moreover the correct form in this root would be यमकति and not यमति.

In this foot the Dev. ed. reads स्तवति and the Beng. ed. स्तवति. Grammatically the word should be स्तवति from the root सुतः स्तवति. स्तवति may be taken here in the sense of स्तवम् करोमि.

The reading देवसुता in the Beng. ed. seems to be a printing error, for a word in the first case-ending cannot be construed with the other words in this verse.

- R. S. Bhattacharya

12. For an unusual or far-fetched explanation of धर्ष in the word मालादुर्दशा-पारसारायस्य (Sāhārā's Annāprāṇa-stotra 5), see the Sanskrit notes by Pandit Paścātana Tarkarans: मालादुर्दशा-पारसारायस्य चारी धर्मवेदि समाहि:। परं पर्वतेनि सति न द्वारः सारायस्य स्तवति।

13. देवी च विशेष्यान्ति तथा वसानुसंधनतः ततो शुद्धावस्तर mātrayā शुद्धावस्तरमो चर्मीयुक्ते उमे समान वसानुसंधनतः (Verse 30) in the commentaries of the Vivaraṇa comm. on Amarakaśa 3.3.60 are worth noting: प्रभुवर्वे त्वस्तरकालस्य: प्रभुवर्वे प्रभुवर्वे प्रभुवर्वे: प्रभुवर्वे: प्रभुवर्वे प्रभुवर्वे। यथा सोपालोनार्दवस्य प्रथाय विनिवतें तथा। मूलानात्ति, यथा प्रश्नतस्याच।