हिरवंशपुराण, विष्णुपर्व अभ्याय ७४, शोकाणि २२-३४

रुद्रो देवस्तं रुद्यानखजणां रोरू-रमणा द्रवणाचार्यातिन्द्रेदः।
भर्त भक्तानां वत्सल वत्सलाणां कीर्त्या हुर्मेशाया प्रभवायम्यन्तरेण॥

अन्यी पूज्यायां व नित्यायां पशुनां व्यायो देवः पदमुपति: सर्वकर्मा।
नान्यस्वर्त: भरमो देवदेव जगत्यति: सुरवीरसिन्धु॥

यस्मादीशो महतासीध्राणां भवानां: प्रीतिद: प्राणदुः।
तस्मादिश्वार्मीर्मां प्रास्तीशं सतो विद्वासं: सर्वशास्त्रार्थज्ञा॥

भूतं यस्मांजगद्यनवीर लवत्तोऽवकाशराघकशे।
तस्मात्वामयुभेय इत्येव भूतं सर्वांश्राणां महतामयुदारम॥

पौज्यो देवे: पूज्यसे नित्यायां वशक्षेरथाय: कान्तिभर्यार्रमेवयीयः।
तस्मादिश्वायातो भवानांदेवेदेव: नित्यायां: सर्वभूतशेष॥

भूमित्रयाणां देव यस्माद्रतिष्ठा पुर्णर्काणां भावानेरामकिर्ति:।
व्यम्यक्तिः प्रथमः तेन नाम तवार्पमेह निद्रश्चानाथ॥

शव्यं श्रुणां शासनामदमेयतथा भूवं: शासनस्वरेण।
सर्वव्याप्तिवाच्चुदलताच सहिः: शच्याशायान: श्रीकाराग्रियतेजः॥

संस्कारान्न नित्यायां यत्रोरोधाः शमं भ्रातुव्याया यवनेशि: समस्तान।
तस्मादेव: श्रुनरोस्यग्रमेयं: सद्द्रिध्यमहः: कथ्यसे सर्वनाथ:॥

द्रत्य: प्रहारः कुलश्रेष्ठ पूव तवेशाय सुरराघातिनीयः।
कण्ठ नैत्यं तेन तेन यस्मवुर्चर्ता तस्मात्वात्त्वात्त्वाश्रीस्वरकेशिति कल्प:॥

उन्हिंद्राह यथोऽकों भगायं: सर्व सोम लय स्थावरं ज्ञायं:।
प्रास्तीश्यात्मा गुणिनतत्रा विविधान्त्वाथा धेरायाममिकां लोकोत्त्रीम॥

वेदर्माट्यस ता हि तत्त्वं प्रस्तूता यदहो दिखाण्यो योगिनां चातिरुप:।
नायत्त्वुर्चर्ता लतस्तमः देवभूतं भूतं मयं भवेदवाथ नारित॥

अहं ब्रह्मा कपिलो योगयुनस: पुजा: सर्वं ब्रह्मणास्त्वतिश्वकः।
त्वत्व: सर्वे देवदेव प्रस्तूता एवं सर्वेशा: कारणात्मा त्वमीड़च:॥

(rudrastotramkRiShNa.pdf)
A Commentary on the Rudra-Stotra

By

V. S. Agrawala

The above Rudra Stotra by kRiShNa is inspired by a Vedic spirit and begins by invoking the etymological import of Rudra from the root rud ‘to weep’. This symbolical meaning (arthanirvachana) is first recorded in the shatapatha br. (VI. 1. 3. 10):–

यदरोदीत तस्माद् रुद्रः।

When kumAra was born, he wept and, therefore, was named Rudra from रुद्र ‘to weep.’ This occurs in the Agni-chayana contest, where Agni is the new-born babe (कुमार), the prANic principle of the manifestation of life, that in each birth becomes young or renovated (नवो नवो भवति जायमानः). This agni or prANa is the pulsating principle of Life which manifests in the plant, animal and human kingdoms. He is named Rudra (अप्रिवृं रुद्रः, शतपथ ५.३.१०). What is the esoteric symbolism of the
word Rudra? The name points to a mystical meaning by the well
known Vedic dictum इत्याच्छक्ते परोक्षप्रेम प्रोक्षप्रक्या वै
देवा: प्रत्यविषदः; ‘that which weeps’ refers to a child
who starts life with weeping. The child weeps because he is
afflicted with hunger. Hunger implies the desire for food, or
what is called the principle of अशनाया, i.e. assimilation of
food from outside. अशि is the eater of food and सोम is food;
Agni is अशि and Soma is अश; अश-अशि is a veritable
pair that upholds the law of life. Food (अशि) and nourishment
(पोषण) go together; and it is agni that is always the eater
of रिय or सोम (अशि रियम पोषमेव दिने दिवे,
Rv. I. 1. 1). Assimilation and elimination make up the first
law of Life or prANa, upon which depends its second feature,
viz. that of growth (वृंहण). Assimilation in symbolical
language is rudana or weeping, i.e. hunger or the crying
for food (अशि), of which the perfect demonstration is
seen in the new born babe. The shatapatha br. makes a clear
statement about agni being Rudra for he cries for food as the
means of obtaining immortality and the Devas appease him by
offering food. agni longs for food and the gods bestow upon
him the highest immortality through food (अशि or सोम) by
which his terrific form becomes appeased, i.e. रुद्रदेवत्या अशि
becomes शान्तदेवत्या. This is the mystical import of
the शतस्त्रिय litany of Yajurveda, Ch. XVI.[1]

(Aथात: शातस्त्रिय जुहोति | अर्घ सर्वांशि: सन्तकृत: | स
एषोअशि रुद्रो देवता | तत्सिन देवा एतद्मूत रूपमुतममदद्यु: |
स एषोआशि दीयमानोपितितिदु अन्नमिच्छिन्नानां | तत्समातेवा
अविभयुः बोधयत न हिंस्यादिति | तेषुएव अन्नसमेव सम्भराम
tेनेवं शमयामेति | तत्स्म एतद्विषां सम्भरान शान्तदेवत्यं
tेनेवंशमयस्य - शतपथ ९.१.१.२-२

Here शतस्त्रिय is equated with शान्तदेवत्य or
The anusabda, rud is the ‘animal fire,’ expressing itself as hunger, which is the flare or flame in each individual or creature, referred to as mantra in the first mantra namaste rud mantra Yajurveda XVI. 1. It is a nam: stotra to Rudra comprising a sting of nam: offerings, where nam: means food’ arnam: shatapatha 6.3.1.17) which is the highest kind of ‘reverence’ offered to the Deity.

Agni grows amongst creatures for the consumption of every kind of food (jaya et ev etantu yabhiyate se et ev sarvesmamaajna
jaya shatapatha 9.1.1.3.), agni as Life has a hundred heads with a hundred mouths all longing for appeasement through food-offering (shatashishrundamnaya, shatapatha 9.1.1.7).

This was the Vedic background of Rudra and his Rudana, which is correctly interpreted by Griffith as ‘the hundred forms and powers of Rudra representing life and nature’, where ‘Agni has on completion become Rudra’.

The PurANas fondly borrowed and repeated this Vedic conception of Rudra, one of the clearest statement being in the li Nga purANA:

अथैकादश ते रुद्रा रुदन्तोभ्यकर्मस्थास || २३||

रोदनात्त खलु रुद्वर्ते तेषु वै सम्भायत ||

ये रुद्रस्ते खलु प्राणा ये प्राणास्ते तदात्मका: || २४||

प्राणा: प्राणवता होया: सर्वभूववस्थिता: || २५||

(सन्मन्त्युपराण १.२२)

Not only Rudra is derived from rud, but rudra is identified with prANA, a truly Vedic metaphysical doctrine, e.g.
Wherever there is a body constituted of the five gross elements (bhUtas), there inheres within it the Life Principle called prANa, or in its several functioning aspects as prANas. The One Rudra becomes many Rudras (रुद्र रुद्रांसंभवाः, विभुपुराण 1. 82. 41). The harivaMsha repeats the epithet of rudana as rorUYamANa, ‘crying day by day, or frequentatively’, and also as rAvaNa, i.e. the divine principle of prANa or rudra that makes a ten-headed Asura cry, referring to the prANas within the body (दशेमे पुरुषे प्राणा:) whose riotous aspect is rAvaNa.

The etymology of Rudra is also connected with drAvaNa, which is a new idea:

tे रुद्दम्यो द्रवन्तक्ष्ठ भगवन्ते पितामहम् । ।
रोदनाद्व द्रावणाचैव ततो रुद्रा इति स्मृता: ॥

(हरिवंश ३.१४.३९)

What is implied in this idea of drAvaNa, ‘taking flight’? This too is a Vedic conception, viz. agni being frightened of the gods fled in the form of a मृग (i. e. animal) and concealed himself. The meaning is quite obvious, viz. that agni as prANa (Life or Energy) can never be seen in concrete or manifest form unless it incarnates in an animal body. The animal form is material (made of the Five bhUtas) and agni comes within the orbit of our experience only on the plane of matter. agni is visualised not as prANa, but prANa within the mRigas. It is the same thing as प्राणात्मक and भूतात्मक joined together, Life and Matter integrated in manifestation. This is the principle
of drAvaNa or the flight of Agni as mRiga; each such mRiga or creature is pierced by Rudra’s dart who is the Great Hunter (मृगजयक), for which the mRigashIrsha star in the sky is pointed out as a symbol on the basis of निदान विद्या.

By referring to Rudra as पशुपति, the Vedic invocation of पशुनां पते नमः and the rich doctrine of pashu and pAsha and pashupati as elaborated by the pAshupata shaivas is hinted at in purANic terminology, as explained in my article on pAshupata yoga (purANa, I, pp. 242-243). From brahmA, the Creator, down to the plants and trees, all are pashus:

वनादयः स्थावरान्ताथ्य देवदेवस्य धिमतः ।
पशवः परिकृतेंते संसारवशवतिनः ॥

(विल्पुराण २.९.११-१२)

वहादिस्तम्भपर्यंत्य पशुन वद्वा महेश्वरः ।
त्रिभुर्बुधः पाषोऽ कार्य कारयति स्वयम् ॥

(विल्पुराण २.९.२१-२२)

Animals from the Rigveda onwards have been classified as tame (grAmya) and wild (AraNya, Rv. X, 90-8), the former being fit for yaj na and the latter being ayaj niya or amedhya; the former being symbols of Devas and the latter of Asuras (i. e. of dedicated power and riotous unharnessed power respectively).

Vs. 24 repeats the significant epithets, ईश्वर, ईश्वर, referring to shiva as the paramount Lord IshAn, because of which He was known as महेश्वर in his transcendent form.

Vs. 25 distinguishes between भूत and अक्षर, based on the क्षर पुरुष and अक्षर पुरुष doctrine of the Rigveda (I, 164-42, ततः क्षरस्यक्षरम). bhUta or Matter is called kShara, as defined in the gItA (क्षरः स्वर्ण भूतानि,
15.16). अण्व or अव्यय is called अक्षर (cf. गीता १२.२, वे त्वाक्षरमिकित्यमव्यक्तं पुरुषातुसि), also called कृतस्थ (कृतस्थोअक्षर उच्चते, गीता १५.१६). The purANas make very frequent references to AKSHARA–न क्षीरसे न क्षरसि कत्यकोटिशतैरैपि।
तस्मान्तत्तमक्षरत्वात् अक्षरं प्रकीर्तितः॥
(मत्स्य। २४८.१९)

The muNDaka up. contains an exposition of अक्षर विघ्न, also called परावर ब्रह्मविघ्न (I. 1-2) and according to it the source of this Universe is akshara, also identified with Satya, amRita, prANa. A significant term for it is सेतु–यः सेतुरीजानामक्षरं ब्रह्म यत्वम्।
अभयं तितितित्तं पारं नाचितें शकेमिह॥ (क। १.३.२)

The अक्षर or अण्व is the Bridge connecting the lower क्षर पुरुष with the highest अव्यय पुरुष called पुरुषोत्तम। Kshara is Matter, akshara is Energy and avyaya is Consciousness. akshara is therefore the connecting link between the two. If we conceive of these three as a circle, अव्यय is its centre, अक्षर the diameter, and kShara its circumference. It is the activity of the akshara that measures out the circle:
पञ्च पदानि रूपं अन्नमें हं चतुष्पदीमन्वें न ब्रतेन।
अक्षरेण प्रतिष्ठाम प्रतिमेह नामावधि सं पुनापि॥
(Rv. X, 13-3)

According to Griffith this stanza is most obscure; his translation is–

‘Five paces have I risen from Earth:
I follow her who hath four feet with devout observance.
This by the Sacred Syllable have I measured:
I purify in the central place of Order.’

Earth here is the symbol of each material creation (bhUpiNDa);
in its pulsating centre is the creative force of prANa
measuring out the Five aksharas through five steps, viz. brahmA
(sthitī), indra (gati), viShNu (Agati) and agni-soma. This is
the akSharavidyA, the pulsating rhythm which measures out the
threefold manifestation (mana-prANa-vAk) of each life-centre
against the background of Rita. Rita is Soma and akshara
is agni, the latter by virtue of its rhythm of expansion and
contraction (sama nchana-prasAraNa, prANApAna, shvAsa-
prashvAsa)
is drawing in matter from outside and creatiing the material
body. This was the ancient kSharAkSharavidyA-
यदक्षरेण पंचविंदे स्मेतत गुलो युक्ता अभि यत् संवहन्ति ।
(ऐतरेय आ. २.३.२०)
The five constituents of akShara are enumerated in the following
mantra:

tvam vdam śrīvṛṣabhaṃ: satamāsī tvam viśnuḥ-rūgāyo namastī ।
tvā bhadraṁ raviḥvibhū bhaṅganāspate tvā vīdṛthaṁ: sachasē
puruṣya ॥ (ऋ. २.१.३)

‘O Agni, thou art Indra, thou art viShNu of the mighty stride
adorable:

Thou Brahmanspati (Soma), thou brahmA; thou as agni bringing
in Rayi (rayi, the opposite principle of AgneyaprANa): thou
Sustainer (vivartaH) with thy power dwell in our Pura (so that
we may become Purusha).’

The invisible or unmanifested centre of Life is essentially
the akshara, the Divine Principle which creates and controls
the manifested bhUtas:

अव्यक्तोक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमादः परमां गतिम्। (गीता ८.२९)

It is rightly said that all creation takes place by virtue of akshara or the pulsation of prANic rhythm:

tथाक्षरातस्त्रवतीह विश्रमम्। (मुण्डक १.१.७)
tथाक्षरादृ विविधा: सोम्य भावा: प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति। (मुण्डक २.१.१)

It is the mighty reality of akshara or activating Energy that upholds all the material world:

यथा सूच्चा पलाशानि सन्तुष्टानि स्युरेवेचे तेनायांकरणेमेवः।
लोकः सत्तुष्टाः। (जैमिनीय उप.ब्र. १.१०.३)

The अक्षर is both the unifying Thread (सूत्रात्मा = the Thread Spirit) and the dynamic controlling spirit called antaryAmI atmA. It permeates each and everything in its hundred, thousand and million manifestations and thus is the basic Immortal Principle (अक्षिति) underlying all space:

तत्तदम् इमानितिविष्णु दशथा क्षरिति शतथा
सहस्राद्युत्था प्रयुत्था। (निनयुत्था)।

Like the mighty irresistible flood it overflows and overtakes each and everything, the lower and the higher ones, as itself being the Supreme Indestructible Reality – this Akshara is the One Divinity:

यथौधो विष्णुद्दमानः परःपरोवरीयान् भवति, पवमेवेतदू
अक्षरं परःपरोवरो भवति। (जै। उप। ब्रा। १.१०.५)

In vs. 25 the great Vedic doctrine of अक्षर is invoked by

rudrastotramkRiShNa.pdf
calling Rudra as the Lord of Akshara (अक्षर) and the Unmanifest Akshara from whom the Universe emanates in each cosmic aeon.

In vss. 26-27 Rudra is addressed as देवातिदेव, Supreme One God over all the gods and demons, referred to as महादेव in the Rigveda (IV. 58.3) and महादेव in the purANAs. The doctrine of trika or triple manifestation is the bedrock of Vedic and purANic metaphysics and in fact of all ancient Indian philosophical thought. The same is frequently mentioned in the Vedas and is the permeating spirit of purANic cosmogony. Verse 28 refers to it under the two symbols of Three Earths (bhUmitraya) and Three Mothers (tryambaka). For the generation of Mind, Life and Matter which constitute the unified Fire of prANa, Three Mothers are essential, as the tisro mAtRIH of the Rigveda:

वृक्षो मातृश्रीन पितृश्रीविशेषदेवाः उष्णार्थस्तथा निम्नमिचण्यति ।
(ऋ. १.१६४.१०)

वृक्षो यावो निहिता अन्तरारस्मिन् वृक्षो भूमीरूपरः पञ्चिथानाः
(ऋ. ७.८७.५)

tिश्रेष्ठारस्मिन् ॥ धीर्गारस्मिन् ॥ धीर्गारस्मिन् ॥
tिश्रेष्ठारस्मिन् ॥ पृथिवीस्तिथाः ॥ त्रिप्रभावः ।
(ऋ. ४.५३.५)

tिश्रेष्ठारस्मिन् ॥ पृथिवीस्तिथाः ॥ प्रवा दिवो नार्क रश्चेथे दुभिरत्स्मिन्निष्ठाम् ।
(ऋ. १.३४.८)

tिश्रेष्ठारस्मिन् ॥ महीरूपस्त्थारस्मिन् ॥ गुहा द्वे निहिते दर्श्याका ।
(ऋ. ३.५६.२)

षडाह्र्यनाृथिवी ।
(अथवा. ८.९.१६)
Earth and Heaven (पृथ्वी पृिथवी) are the combined units of
generation, Universal Parents (पिता पृथ्वी माता), who
together form a single Pair spoken of as one prajApati. There
are the Three Worlds (जगच्छय), also called पृथ्वय
(जगच्छयं रूः पृथ्वयं हि, विश्वपुराण पुराण, I 72.152;
L 71.24), the Triple Cities of Gold, Silver and Copper,
symbolising the three states of consciousness, viz the waking
state, the dream state and the deep sleep state (jAgrata-svapna
suShupti). Each of them has its source in a Parental Pair. shiva
as the Lord of tripura is the supreme controller of those three
states of consciousness. He is therefore the son of Three
Mothers in his manifest form. Ambaka (अम्बक) also means an
‘eye’, for each birth is an eye that opens on one of the three
worlds (संबोधियतृ चक्षु). The Three Eyes of Rudra are
the Sun, Moon and Fire of the purANas, which the Vedas refer
to as the Eye of mitra, varuNa and agni (चक्षुमित्रस्य
वहणस्याः). The Eye of agni is the जामत, the Eye of
mitra is svapna, and the Eye of varuNa is the सुषुंिि state,
which sends its unobstructed vision into those deepest regions
called the Dark Descent (कृण्ण नियानें, Rv. I. 164.47),
or the dark interior of varuNa-loka, of which the Seer is the
Rishi dIrghatamas.

The purANic authors very well understood this complex
symbolism
and their explicit statements are models of brevity and clarity:

च्रयाणामिप लोकानं गुणानामिप यः प्रभुः || १८
देवानामिप देवानां बहक्ष्चरितविशामिप ||

अकारोकारकाराणां मात्राणामिप वाचकः || १९
तथा सोमस्य सुपर्स्य वहेरभिन्नयस्य च ||
अम्बा उमा महादेवो हाम्बकस्तु त्रियम्नकः || २०

rudrastotramkRiShNa.pdf
Three Lokas, Three guNas, three Vedas, three devas, three varNas, three mAtrAs of praNava, and Three Fires—all these are the visible manifestations of the Great Mother Goddess umA and of the triyambaka Lord Rudra.

sharva as one of the forms of अण्मूर्ति रूप  occurs in the list of the eight names of kumAra in the shatapatha Br. (6.3.1.18), and is regularly mentioned in the purANas as a form of shiva-rudra. Here the name is derived from shatrUNAM shAsanAt, ‘the chaser of hostile forces’. It is said to symbolise the element of Earth पाठिवः


The well known exploit of shiva in drinking the poison and becoming nIlakaNTha is explained with some difference, viz. that He charred his throat on account of resisting the might of Indra’s thunderbolt. Of the five chakras in the human body, the विशुद्धितं in the throat is the centre of AkAsha, which is the first and foremost of the pa nch-bhUtAs. The Five Elements represent the Asuric aspect of darkness and death, which so long as they are dispersed in the AkAsha or expanse of space do not harm the owner thereof. If their poison descends to the other lower centres they become fatal. The Asura represents death, darkness, falsehood and sin (मृत्युः तमः अनृतं पापम्) and over all of them shiva has trimmedphed.

li Gga and Yoni correspond to Purusha and prakRiti, the Male and the Female Principles in the universe:

क्षीतिश्चमिकते देवी प्रक्तिर्मेवदेहजा ।
In fact they are two forms of one and the same energy and belong to a single Reality without distinction:

Verse 33 refers to यज्ञ and योग as the two manifestations of the Divinity, both receiving the sanction of the Vedas as the means for crossing the ocean of the world. There is no greater mysterious power than that of Rudra. It becomes the Past, Present and Future, and then vanishes into nothingness. The line of ancient gods like brahma, and sages like Kapila, and the many Rishis born from them, of all these the root cause and source is the great Lord Rudra (vs. 34).

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.. Shrikrishnakritarudrastotram ..

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