

CHINNAMASTĀ

*The Aweful Buddhist and Hindu
Tantric Goddess*

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Invocation

Homage to Goddess Chinnamastā

*Yajñarūpaṃ yajñadātrīṃ yajñagrahaṇākārīṇīm /
mokṣadām sarvasattvebhyaśchinnamastāṃ namāmyaham //*

I pay homage to Chinnamastā who is the sacrifice; the sacrificer, and the recipient of the sacrifice. May she liberate all beings.

Homage to Chinnamuṇḍā

*rDo rje phag mo dbu bchad ma' /
sgrub thabs 'bri klog byed pai' dges /
ma gyur sems can thams cad kyis /
'khor gsum mi dmigs rtogs par shog //*

Homage to Chinnamuṇḍā Vajravārāhī . May she help all sentient beings to realize that the offerer, the offering, and the recipient of the offering do not ultimately exist.

The Divine Play of Chinnamastā

NĀMASTOTRA

The *nāmastotra*, the praise of names of a deity is well known in many religious traditions; such as the Sufi practice of *dhikr* (remembrance of the names of Allah) and the Buddhist Pure Land practice of reciting Buddha Amitābha's name.¹ Though not unique to Hinduism, the praise of names is a special and widespread feature of liturgical literature in the main devotional sects of Śakti, Śiva, and Viṣṇu. In the *Bhakti Cult in Ancient India* B. K. Goswami states, "The worship, the concentration on and recitation of the *mantra*, and the repetition of the holy names, constitute the main part of the religious life of a *Satwata* worshipper."² Most praises with the recitation of names consist of one hundred and eight, three hundred, a thousand, or a thousand and eight names. These names may be recited aloud, repeated inaudibly, mentally repeated, or sung in groups (*nāmakīrtana*). The recitation of the praise of names became popular because it was deemed a facile yet efficacious way of propitiating a deity who will help or protect a devotee especially in these troubled times. In the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (6.2.27) it says: "That which one obtains in the Kṛtyayuga by meditation, by performing sacrifice in the Tretā, by worship in the Dvāpara, one receives in the Kaliyuga, by reciting (the names) of Keśava."³

According to Indian cosmology we are in the age of decline, the Kaliyuga, wherein a person's life-span is limited to a hundred years or so. Therefore many spiritual practices which require a long-term commitment and perhaps costly rituals are no longer suited to this age of decline. The recitation of the *nāmastotra* is a simple ritual which can be performed by anyone who wants to be closer to the deity. Ideally, as one chants the names of the deity, one contemplates the deity and identifies with all the aspects of the deity. This is a personal and intimate ritual which requires no ritual person, costly rituals, or time commitment. In our 'time-conscious' society, it is an excellent and expedient ritual. This type of reasoning was also propounded by the various Buddhist Pure Land sects in East Asia. Since one needed an expedient yet effective method in order

to achieve happiness, spiritual attainments, and eventually liberation from cyclic existence, one method offered in Hinduism was the recitation of *nāmastotra*. In the *Chinnamastāsahasranāma* a practitioner is assured happiness, knowledge, and the attainment of great *siddhis* through reciting Chinnamastā's names.

The efficacy of the recitation of a deity's name in a ritual context has its historical antecedent in the Vedas. Renou in his "Études sur le Vocabulaire du Ṛgveda" states that "the name above all is that one of a deity" and that the beginning of language occurred when the ancient seers (*ṛṣis*) gave names to all objects (X.71.1).⁴ The first chapter in the *Ṛgveda* (1.1.1-ff) mentions Agni's name eight times in the first nine stanzas. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 6.1.3.9, receiving a name frees one from evil, and in 11.2.3.4-6, "... he who knows these two great forces (name and form) of the Brahman becomes himself a great force ...". Furthermore, the *Bhagavadgītā*, instead of repeating Kṛṣṇa's or Arjuna's name, is replete with epithets for them, thereby emphasizing their diverse and accomplished abilities. In the ninth chapter stressing devotion, Kṛṣṇa is described as many things, including the father of this world, the mother, the establisher (9.17), and one must worship Kṛṣṇa as encompassing all these variegated forms. The power of evoking a deity's name and his/her various epithets is emphasized in India's early sacred texts: one of the first specific one thousand names is that of Viṣṇu in dialogue between Bhīṣma and Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Mahābhārata*, chapter 149 of the 'Anuśāsanika Parvan'. From this prototype, the popularity of praising the names grew, as it is evident from the numerous praises found in the *Purāṇas* and Tantras. Some of the more famous ones are the *Lalitāsahasranāma* in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*,⁵ the *Śrī Gāyatrī Sahasranāma* in the *Śrīmad Devī Bhāgavatam*,⁶ the 'Kadistotra' in the *Mahānirvāṇatantra*,⁷ the *Śivasahasranāmastotra* in the *Vāyupurāṇa* 1.30.79ff and in the *Brahmapurāṇa* 38, 40ff.

The evocation of a name is efficacious only because the name itself is powerful. Well-attested in archaic societies, it was believed that a name of the person or an object was directly related to the essence of the person or object. Renou states that in many respects the name is considered the essential property of a person.⁸ This is one of the reasons why the Vedas are highly revered and consequently the power of words has always played an important role in Indian thought. The power of words is certainly evident in Tantric practice by the frequent use of *mantras* as a potent protection or gaining access to a deity. In the praise of names (*nāmastotra*), the names are either in the nominative or the dative. Frequently they are considered as *mantras* when they are in the dative because the name is preceded by *Aum* and followed by *Namaḥ*.

In Gonda's monograph, *Notes on Names and the Name of God in Ancient India*, he enumerates several ways that knowledge of a name makes one powerful. The name helps one understand facts and events. He cites the *Atharvaveda* (11,8,7): "As long as the former earth remains nameless it cannot be identified so as to become an object of knowledge."⁹ All empirical knowledge is based on knowing words and their meaning because without this, one could never relate to what was learned nor could one ever convey this knowledge to another person. In regard to soteriological knowledge according to the Tantric method, when the guru initiates a disciple by conferring a *mantra* (*mantradikṣā*)¹⁰ and imparting its meaning to the disciple, it is emphasized that this method is only possible because of the long tradition of transmitted knowledge from guru to disciple. For example, a major Śakti seed syllable *mantra* is *Klīm*. The *Mantrārthābhidhānam* of the *Varadātantra* explicates *klīm* as follows: *ka* stands for Kāmadeva or Kṛṣṇa, *la* for Indra, *ī* for Tuṣṭi and *m* for *sukha*.¹¹ Thus, one seed syllable symbolizes four important deities with whom one may mentally associate with oneself. Another explanation presented in the *Śivasūtra* divides the syllable into five parts which are related to the creation of the world since the *klīm* syllable is the seed syllable of the god of desire, Kāmadeva. The *Śivasūtra* states: "from the letter *ka* water arises, from the letter *la* the world is born, from *ī* fire comes, from the *nāda* the wind and from the *bindu* comes the sky."¹² By knowing the various meanings of a *mantra*, one begins to acquire power because of mental identification with the referents.

If we consider the recitation of praise of names as *mantras*, by performing the repetition of a *mantra*, one strengthens one's association with a deity or deities and gradually becomes more intimate with them.¹³ These deities are believed to aid a practitioner; by reciting their name or names, they become a source of help, strength, and encouragement. Already in the *Atharvaveda* we find the belief that uttering a deity's name will bring the deity's protection. *Atharvaveda* (6,76,4) states, "They who are aiming at him, do not kill the *kṣatriya* who, knowing, pronounces the name of Agni in order to (secure) length of life." Moreover the recitation of the name has a consecratory power and imparts a blessing conferred by the deity. In later devotional literature Dimock, describing the Sahajiyās' relationship with Kṛṣṇa, quotes from the *Ānandabhairava* "having said and understood Hari . . . the uttering of the name in the mouth brings the experience of him within."¹⁴ Tulasidāsa, the great *bhakti* poet, states that ". . . the name acts as an interpreter between the material and the immaterial forces of the deity, and is a guide and interpreter to both."¹⁵ In other words, the name is a linking reference point between the deity in her/his

saguna (form aspect) and *nirguna* (formless aspect). But note that the one thousand names of a deity are not all common names nor are they an exhaustive listing. S.K. De states:

The deity is often called Nameless or Anāman in the scriptures, but this usage is on par with the employment of terms such as 'birthless' (*ajanman*), 'formless' (*arūpa*) or 'actionless' (*akartr*). It does not mean that he has no name but that his name . . . is not like the common names we have in the phenomenal world; it possesses a spiritual significance and efficacy.¹⁶

The names given in the praises are the important ones but a deity cannot be fully described by any number of names, for a deity is nameless and limitless. Thus, by reciting the names of a deity one can: (1) become more familiar with the deity; (2) be protected by the deity, (3) receive blessings and experience the deity in her/his *saguna* form; and (4) be directed to the transcendent deity without form. Ramprasad Sen, a Bengali devotional poet, has a poem which exemplifies many of the reasons to recite the names of deities.

Kālī's name is the wishing-giving tree.
My heart is seeded with it.
I've peddled my bones in the marketplace
Of this world and brought up Durgā's name . . .
Tārā's name is the best remedy.
I've tied it to my topknot.

Ramprasad says:

I have begun my journey
calling on the name of Durgā.¹⁷

In the *Bhakti Cult of Ancient India*, B. K. Goswami states, "To chant therefore the holy names with the help of the sacred rosary of beads is better in one sense than every other formal act of religious life. It may be then viewed as the essence of worship and the culmination of worship."¹⁸ In many of the praises of names, such as the *Lalitāsahasranāma* and the *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, it is said in the *phalaśruti* (results) section that a reciter of the thousand names will be free from evil, all accumulated sins will be destroyed, one will achieve prosperity, eloquence, and whatever one desires.¹⁹ Furthermore, the *Lalitāsahasranāma* states that if one 'mesmerizes' ashes with the thousand names and applies these ashes over a sick person, the person will be healed. Or if water 'mesmerized' with the thousand names is poured over a possessed person, the *graha* (the pos-

essor) will flee at once.²⁰ Most importantly, in both the *Lalitāsahasranāma* and *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, the reciter of the praises will be free of all suffering and achieve liberation.²¹ In the 'Chinnamastātānta' of the *Śākta Pramoda*, in the introduction of the thousand names, Mahādeva (Śiva) tells Devī (his wife), "even without worship (*pūjā*), without meditation, without repetition, . . . only by reciting (the thousand names), one will obtain *siddhis*." In the *phalaśruti* (results) section, it stresses the attainment of *siddhis*, as well as the elimination of all sins, control over others, strength, beauty, wealth, respect from others, etc.

The attainment of *mokṣa*, however, is only indirectly mentioned in connection with the attainment of knowledge. In the *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, it comments that "one should not think that by merely reciting (this hymn) salvation is insured; because it is by knowledge alone that one attains *mokṣa*."²² Consistent with the Tantric viewpoint that the individual's power and understanding are needed to attain liberation, one cannot rely solely on the grace of the deity. Therefore the recitation of the praise of names is an expedient and efficacious means in reaching the threshold of liberation, i.e., having the knowledge of Brahman (*Brahmajñāna*).

CLASSIFICATION OF THE THOUSAND NAMES

Indians are fond of the practice of systematization and classification of names, terms, concepts, etc., and the *nāmastotra* genre was not exempt from classification. In the aforementioned *Kadistotra*, the hundred names all begin with *ka*, the first consonant in Sanskrit. In the *Chinnamastāsahasranāma* a loose alphabetical order, occasionally interspersed with names beginning with other letters, begins with name #95 *Karālī* and continues to the name #807 *Huṅkārabijarūpam*.²³ The *Lalitāsahasranāma* does not have names in alphabetical order but according to Bhāskaraśāya's commentary, an order according to subject-matter does prevail. The first hundred and twelve names comprise an exemplary group. The first five names reveal her real (*prakāśa*) form;²⁴ names 6 to 52 enumerate her manifested (*vimarśa*) form from her head to feet;²⁵ names 53 to 63 describe the seat of the Devī;²⁶ names 64-85 exalt her actions which have both an explicit meaning and implicit meaning;²⁷ and names 86-112 describe her subtle forms.²⁸ Thus in the *Lalitāsahasranāma* the classification is primarily according to subject-matter. In the article "Śrīrādhikānāmasahasram" Chemburkar classifies Rādhā's names also according to subjects, namely, the twofold main classification of Rādhā as Gopī and of Rādhā as a female deity worshipped by the Vaiṣṇavas.²⁹ This is subdivided into different classifications, e.g., Rādhā as a Gopī who is beloved of Kṛṣṇa, or Rādhā as a Gopī associated with the Rāsa-dance;

and the deity Rādhā as Śaktī or the deity Rādhā identical with the deity of the Śāktas.³⁰ Hence there are numerous ways to classify the praise of a thousand names.³¹

Another approach in systematizing the thousand names of a goddess is to view these epithets which are descriptions of her form according to iconography, mythological allusions, exaltation of her prowess, talents, extraordinary protection, etc., as a great *līlā* (divine play) of the goddess, i.e., the Goddess' manifesting herself in a myriad forms in order to instruct, help or protect her devotees. As Ramprasad says:

O Mother, who really knows Your magic? You're a crazy girl driving us all crazy with these tricks. No one knows anyone else in a world of your illusions. . . . If she decides to be kind, this misery will pass.³²

Chinnamastā is a wonderful example of a goddess who understands the illusions (*māyā*) of the phenomenal world and can assume various forms, such as a warrior, magician, beauty, protectress, etc. Chinnamastā is limitless as are the manifestations of the phenomenal world; this is simply a marvellous performance—*līlā*. By thinking of the thousand names of Chinnamastā as divine play, one can classify her thousand names according to the nine *rasa* (sentiments) of the Indian aesthetical theory.³³ The nine *rasas* are the: (1) erotic, (2) comic, (3) pathetic, (4) furious, (5) heroic, (6) terrible, (7) odious, (8) marvellous, and (9) peaceful.

In the preface to the *Theory of Rasa in Sanskrit Drama*, Gopinath Kaviraj states:

The Śiva Sūtras appear to suggest that the ancient Indian conception of Drama consists in the realization that Ātmā (self) endowed with its inherent Power and playing all possible parts is the Naṭa (actor), the senses are the spectators (Prekṣakāṇi) and the Anātarātmā (innermost self) is the Prekṣāgṛha or stage. The object of Abhinaya (dramatic representation) is evidently taken to be the manifestation of Rasa.³⁴

Gopinath Kavirāj is referring to the aesthetical theory propounded in Kashmir Śaivism, initially presented by Abhinavagupta. Abhinavagupta was a major proponent of a profound philosophical way of linking religion and drama. Influenced by the Tantric ritual of Kashmir Śaivism, he developed an aesthetic theory which incorporated the spiritual aspects of drama, and all later aesthetic theorists followed his lead.³⁵ Abhinavagupta was interested in how the actor, the spectator and the sentiment evoked in the play interacted. If one applies this theory to the thousand names, the goddess depicts the actress, the practitioner is the spectator, and the

feeling of transcendence or holiness is the sentiment evoked. Abhinavagupta considered the actor to represent the *paramātmān* who is never affected by the *rasa* portrayed, but evokes the *rasa* in the spectator, who represents the senses according to Kaviraj's interpretation.³⁶ *Ātman* always remains unaffected but the senses do react to emotion. The Goddess represents the *ātman* who can assume a myriad of forms and evoke emotions in her practitioners while she essentially remains unaffected. In contrast, her practitioners become very involved in her various forms and do react to them. However, Abhinavagupta states that a spectator becomes mentally attuned to the drama and the actor's depiction of a particular *rasa*, and by contemplating it, becomes absorbed by it and identifies with the actor. Furthermore, in the *Dhvanyālokalocana* he comments that some people are capable of identifying with the subject-matter because the mirror of their heart has been polished through *constant recitation*. If one applies this to the recitation of the thousand names of Chinnamastā, a sensitive reader can be affected by the repetitions of the names by sympathetically responding to her myriad manifestations, her paradoxes, her exploits, her limitless energy to protect, to help, to be kind, etc. One can become overwhelmed, forget oneself and experience the bliss of Chinnamastā. By reciting Chinnamastā's names one can experience the bliss of Chinnamastā and unconsciously identifies with Chinnamastā or experiences her essence. To the reciter of her names Chinnamastā is the sacrificer and the sacrifice which feeds her essence, reminiscent of feeding her two attendants.³⁷ Though this poem is not addressed to Chinnamastā, it evokes the same sentiment:

She's playing in my heart.
Whatever I think, I think Her name.
I close my eyes and She's in there
Garlanded with human heads.³⁸

For anyone who recites the 108 or 1000 names, certain emotions will be evoked. Though the nine *rasas* might all be present in the 108 or 1000 names, certainly some *rasas* will be dominant. Since Chinnamastā is such a paradoxical deity, I assume that her 108 or 1000 names will also entail an inherent paradox. Though classifying the deity's names according to *rasas* is not an Indian tradition, it is a provocative means to assess whether one *rasa* does dominate in the 108 or 1000 names of Chinnamastā.³⁹

These nine *rasas*, (1) the erotic (*śṛṅgāra*), (2) comic (*hāsyā*), (3) pathetic (*karuṇā*), (4) furious (*raudra*), (5) heroic (*vīra*), (6) terrible (*bhayānaka*), (7) odious (*bībhatsa*), (8) marvellous (*adbhuta*), and (9)

peaceful (*śānta*), are the basis of classifying the 108 and 1000 names of Chinnamastā from the *Śākta Pramoda*.⁴⁰

One Hundred and Eight Names

The following is a translation of Chinnamastā's one hundred and eight names.

Śrī Pārvatī spoke:⁴¹

"The one who is named 'overcoming the enemies', please now tell me the best hundred and eight names which are dear to Chinnamastā. (1)⁴² For those who cannot recite the thousand names, O Lord that I honour, O giver of mercy, I ask you again. (2) O merciful one, tell me, O esteemed one, who should recite these names."

Śrī Sadāśiva spoke:

"One should always recite the hundred and eight names. (3) Without doubt one will attain the same results by reciting the hundred and eight names as by reciting the thousand names. *Aum* to the praises of the hundred and eight names of Chinnamastā, the *ṛṣi* is Sadāśiva, the metre is Anuṣṭubh, the goddess is Chinnamastā, and the results obtained by this recitation will be all accomplishments.

"*Aum* 1. Chinnamastā 2. Mahāvidyā (great knowledge goddess), 3. Mahābhīmā (great fierce one), 4. Mahodarī (great bellied one)⁴³ / 5. Caṇḍeśvarī (fierce goddess), 6. Caṇḍamātā (mother of fierce beings or the fierce mother), 7. Caṇḍamuṇḍaprabhañjinī (killer of demons Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa) // (4)

"8. Mahācaṇḍā (great fierce one), 9. Caṇḍarūpā (fierce form), 10. Caṇḍikā (fierce one), 11. Caṇḍakhaṇḍinī (destroyer of Caṇḍa) / 12. Krodhīnī (wrathful one), 13. Krodhajanani (creator of wrathful beings), 14. Krodharūpā (wrathful form), 15. Kuṇḍa (new moon day i.e., darkness), 16. Kalā (skillful one) // (5)

"17. Kopāturā (afflicted with rage), 18. Kopayutā (filled with rage), 19. Kopasamhārakārīnī (destroyer of rage) / 20. Vajravairocanī, 21. Vajrā (adamantine one), 22. Vajrakalpā (competent with a *vajra*), and 23. Dākīnī // (6)

"24. Dākinīkarmaniratā (involved with the work of *dākinīs*), 25. Dākinīkarmapūjitā (worshipped as the work of *dākinīs*, / 26. Dākinīsaṅganiratā (delighted in the company of *dākinīs*), 27. Dākinīpremapūritā (filled with love of *dākinīs*) // (7)

"28. Khaṭvāṅgadhārīnī (holder of a *khaṭvāṅga*), 29. Kharvā (mutilated one),⁴⁴ 30. Khaḍgakharpāradhārīnī (holder of a scimitar and a skullcup) / 31. Pretāśanā (feeder of *pretas* [hungry ghosts]), 32. Pretayutā

(united with *pretas*), 33. Pretasaṅgavihāriṇī (plays or dwells in the company of *pretas*) // (8)

"34. Chinnamuṇḍadharā (holds a severed head), 35. Chinnacaṇḍavidyā (fierce *mantra* [holder]) of the one with the severed body), and 36. Citriṇī (having variegated forms) / 37. Ghorarūpā (terrific form), 38. Ghoradr̥ṣṭā (terrific to behold), 39. Ghorarāvā (having a terrific roar), 40. Ghanodari (firm abdomen, i.e., beautiful) // (9)

"41. Yoginī, 42. Yoganirātā (practitioner of yoga), 43. Japayajñāparāyaṇā (absorbed in sacrifice and recitation) / 44. Yonicakramayī (possessing *yonicaakra*), 45. Yoniḥ (embodying the *yonī*), 46. Yonicakrapravartini (arising from the *yonicaakra*) // (10)

"47. Yonimudrā (has the *yonimudrā*), 48. Yonigamyā (accessible to the *yonī*, [knowing the *yonī*]), 49. Yoniyāntranivāsini (abides in the *yoniyāntra*) / 50. Yantrarūpā (has the *yantra* form), 51. Yantramayī (possesses the *yantra*), 52. Yantreṣī (goddess of the *yantra*), 53. Yantrapūjita (worshipped with a *yantra*) // (11)

"54. Kīrtiyā (renowned one), 55. Kapardinī (has matted hair, [i.e., Śiva's wife in yogi form]), 56. Kālī, 57. Kaṅkāli (emaciated, [i.e., one who practises austerities]), 58. Kalavikāriṇī (constantly transforming) / 59. Āraktā (being slightly red), 60. Raktanayanā (having red eyes), 61. Raktapānaparāyaṇā (quaffing blood continuously) // (12)

"62. Bhavānī (Pārvatī), 63. Bhūtidā (gives prosperity), 64. Bhūtiḥ (prosperity), 65. Bhutidātrī (bestows prosperity), and 66. Bhairavī (formidable one) / 67. Bhairavācāranirātā (engaged in the practice of *bhairavas*, [i.e., practices in cemeteries]), 68. Bhūtabhairavasevitā (served by fierce beings) // (13)

"69. Bhīmā (formidable one), 70. Bhimeśvarīdevī (goddess who is lord of the formidable ones), 71. Bhimanādaparāyaṇā (having continuous formidable sounds) / 72. Bhavārādhyā (praised by Śaṅkara, [i.e., Śiva]), 73. Bhavanūtā (worshipped by all), 74. Bhavasāgaratāriṇī (crosses over the ocean of existence, [i.e. liberation]) // (14)

"75. Bhadrakālī (a form of Kālī), 76. Bhadratanuḥ (having a beautiful body), 77. Bhadrarūpā (beautiful form), and 78. Bhadrīkā (goodness) / 79. Bhadrarūpā (embodies goodness), 80. Mahābhadrā (magnanimous), 81. Subhadrā (wonderful goodness), 82. Bhadrapālīnī (protectress of goodness) // (15)

"83. Subhavyā (exceedingly beautiful [a name of Pārvatī]), 84. Bhavyavadanā (having a beautiful face), 85. Sumukhī (good face or mouth), 86. Siddhasevitā (served by *siddhas*) / 87. Siddhidā (gives *siddhis*), 88. Siddhanivahā (has the collection of *siddhis*), 89. Siddhā (accomplished one), 90. Siddhaniṣevitā (honoured by *siddhas*) // (16)

"91. Śubhadā (gives auspiciousness), 92. Śubhagā (elegant), 93. Śuddhā (pure), 94. Śuddhasattvā (has pure *sattva*), 95. Śubhāvahā (bearer of auspiciousness), 96. Śreṣṭhā (excellent), 97. Dṛṣṭamayī (embodies [the right] view), 98. Devī, 99. Dṛṣṭisaṃhāarakāriṇī (capable of destroying by [her] gaze) // (17)

"100. Śarvāṇī (Śiva's wife), 101. Sarvagā (omnipresent), 102. Sarvā (complete), 103. Sarvamaṅgalakāriṇī (creator of all auspiciousness, [a name of Pārvatī]) / 104. Śivā (pacifier), 105. Śāntā (peaceful), 106. Śāntirūpā (embodiment of peacefulness), 107. Mṛḍāṇī (gladdened, [a name of Pārvatī]), 108. Madanāturā (indomitable by Kāmadeva) // (18)

"These are rare praises which I have told you, O Devi. With great effort you must not reveal this secret section. (19) It is necessary to have said so much to you, O Beloved. You will obtain the ability to kill, delude, eradicate others, (20) perturb, along with the *ṛddhis* and *siddhis*. Recite these names three times a day and undoubtedly you will obtain all the *siddhis*. (21) This is the highest praise, O beautiful one; recite it with faith. Being the most supreme person, you are invincible to enemies. (22) This completes the praises of the hundred and eight names of Chinnamastā."

The following is my classification according to the nine *rasas*.

- (1) Erotic: 16, 40, 62, 76, 77, 83, 84, 85, and 92;
- (2) Comic: none;
- (3) Pathetic: none;
- (4) Furious: 3, 5, 8-12, 14, 17, 18, 23, 37, 39, 56, 60, 61, 66, 71, 75, and 99;
- (5) Heroic: 7, 19, 22, 28, and 69;
- (6) Terrible: none;
- (7) Odious: 21, 41, 42, 55, 57, 67, and 88⁴⁵;
- (8) Marvellous: 1-3, 6, 13, 15, 20, 24-27, 29-36, 44-53, 58-59, 63-65, 70, 72-74, 78-82, 86-87, 89-91, 95, 97-98, 100-104, 107, and 108; and
- (9) Peaceful: 43, 54, 79-81, 93, 94, 96, 105 and 106.

In the one hundred and eight names there are nine in the erotic *rasa*, twenty-one in the furious *rasa*, five in the heroic *rasa*, seven in the odious *rasa*, fifty-six in the marvellous *rasa*, and ten in the peaceful *rasa*.

Thus in this classification of names according to the nine *rasas*, more than half are subsumed under the eighth *rasa*, the marvellous. For a deity, the dominant *rasa* must be the marvellous one because a deity can perform extraordinary acts, has amazing abilities, and is superior to other beings, especially humans. Certainly many goddesses would also have names included in the erotic *rasa* but one would not expect this from Chinnamastā. Indeed, the erotic *rasa* is less prominent than the furious and

peaceful *rasas*. There are no names of Chinnamastā in the categories of comic, pathetic, and terrible.⁴⁶ Rather there is a predominance of the awesome, combining of the marvellous and furious.

REFERENCES

1. See Wilson, Martin, *In Praise of Tārā*: 94-104 for one hundred and eight names of Tārā. Wayman, Alex, translated and annotated; *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī*, Boston, Shambala, 1985.
2. Goswami, B. K., *The Bhakti Cult in Ancient India*: 302.
3. Sastry, R.A. trans., *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, Adyar, Adyar Library, 1980:14.
4. Renou, L., *Etudes sur le Vocabulaire du R̥gveda*:10.
5. Sastry, R.A., trans., *Lalitāsahasranāma*, Madras, Adyar, 1976.
6. Swami Vijnānānanda, trans., *Śrīmad Devi Bhāgavatam*: 1146-54.
7. Woodroffe, J., trans., *Great Liberation*: 185ff.
8. Renou: 10. Dimock, in his *The Place of the Hidden Moon*, has a subsection entitled "The Power of the Name" wherein he discusses the concept that the relationship between the word and its meaning is not arbitrary, but natural: 226-27.
9. Gonda (1970): 61.
10. There are many kinds of Tantric Hindu initiations, See 'Initiation', *Studies in the History of Religions*, vol.10, 1965: 71-80.
11. Rai, *Dictionary of Tantrasāstra*: 96.
12. Dimock: 233.
13. Basu, A., 'Dikṣā', Initiations:85. He quotes Śrī Aurobindo as describing *mantra* as "a supreme rhythmic language which seizes hold upon all that is finite and brings into each the light and voice of its own infinite."
14. Dimock: 228.
15. Gonda: 99.
16. Gonda: 94.
17. Ramprasad; Nathan L. and Seely, C. trans., *Grace and Mercy in Her Wild Hair*, Boulder, Great Eastern, 1982: 55.
18. Goswami: 302.
19. Ramprasad; Nathan and Seely, trans.: 59. In poem 51 of Ramprasad, he says, "He mows the grass of sin with the honed blade of Kālī's name."
20. Sastry, R. A., trans., *Lalitāsahasranāma*: 24-25.
21. The *Lalitāsahasranāma* states that one will have *brahmajñāna* (pp.396-97) and the *Viṣṇusahasranāma* states one will attain the ultimate (*prāpnotyanuttamam*) (p.423).
22. *Viṣṇusahasranāma*: 419.
23. There are a thousand names but the first 94 names and the names after #807 have no alphabetical order.
24. *Lalitāsahasranāma*: 46.
25. Ibid: 56.
26. Ibid: 56.
27. Ibid: 64-65. For example, name 65 is Bhaṇḍāsura-vadhodyataśaktisenāsamavṛtā which is translated as "she is endowed with an army of *śaktis* for the sake of slaying Bhaṇḍāsura" The first part of the compound, *bhaṇḍāsura*, is a fierce

demon who fights with the goddess. This is the exoteric meaning. However the esoteric meaning is that *bandha* (lit., shameless) means the embodied soul (*bhaṇḍiman*) with life and *asura* means life (*asu*) and to take away (*ra*)—he who takes away life, i.e., one who imprisons the real nature of life.

28. Ibid: 85.
29. Chemburkar, J., "Śriarādhikānāmasahasram", *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. LVII, 1976: 107.
30. Ibid: 108-9.
31. Also see Lalye, P.G., *Studies in Devi Bhāgavata*, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1973: 207ff.
32. Nathan and Seely: 30.
33. I thank Alex Wayman for this ingenious suggestion of classification.
34. Misra, H.R., *Theory of Rasa in Sanskrit Drama*, Chatarpur, Vindhyachal Prakashan, 1964.
35. See Masson, J.L. and Patwardhan, M.V., *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics*, Bhandarkar Oriental Series, no.9, Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969: 38-43.
36. In the *Bhagavad Gītā* 4:13 Kṛṣṇa states: "I am . . . the actor who never acts".
37. One definition of *rasa* is taste, the names of the deity let the reciter 'taste' Chinnamastā.
38. Ramprasad, trans. by Nathan and Seely: 63.
39. There are endless discussions about how a *rasa* is portrayed. I am certain that many will disagree with my classification of a particular name but few will disagree that the marvellous *rasa* is the predominant one. To complicate matters, many of the names are compounds. I have only presented one translation and did not indicate how I interpreted the compound. A book devoted to the topic of Chinnamastā's names would have included more meticulous detail.
40. The 1000 names will be given in Appendix 1.
41. This is an *āgama* since Śiva's wife is asking Śiva for instruction.
42. The numbers in parentheses are the verse numbers from *Śakta Pramoda*.
43. This name has various connotations, such as one who can contain all beings, a sign of yogic ability, or a possible connection with *yakṣas*.
44. This name also means that she has the *siddhi* to make herself small.
45. The odious category includes all yogic abilities.
46. One can argue for including some of the names under the furious in the terrible category but I opted for the furious. Chinnamastā is not terrifying to her devotees; however, she may display fury in order to make a devotee aware of his/her wrong actions.