

Kularnava Tantra

You are speech. You are consciousness. You are bliss. You are Brahma. You are being-consciousness-bliss. You are the non-dual. You are plainly Brahma. You are knowledge. You are intelligence - Ganapati Upanishad

The *Kularnava Tantra* is held in high esteem by Kaula tantriks. The phrase *Kularnava* means ocean of Kula. It focuses on the Urdvhamnaya, or Upper Tradition, the four others belonging to the four other faces of [Shiva](#) and representing the five elements of the tradition. This tantra does exist in English translation (Prachya Prakashan, 1983) but this chapter is my own translation, done some years before. Each chapter is called an *ullasa* or bliss, this referring to the nectar of the Kaulas.

The essence of this third chapter is a eulogy about the magnificence of the Urdvhamnaya and its mantra, which is based upon the [21,600](#) breaths a human being takes each day and night. This upper form of Shiva is known as Ardhanarishvara, a form uniting both Shiva and Shakti in one form, representing the union of the outgoing and ingoing respirations (Ha and Sa).

A description (*dhyana*, meditation) of Ardhanarishvara, given in the same tantra, is of some interest. "In the centre of the wood of Aeon Trees is a canopy formed from nine rubies. Under the canopy is a throne studded with nine jewels. On the throne, on a triangular seat within the petals of the lotus, is Shiva, adorned with the Moon and the Sun with Devi Ambika forming half of his body..."

The mantras in *Kularnava Tantra* are all fashioned from the letters Ha Sa (shown in the picture above left as Hamsah). The Shri Prasada Para mantra is Hsaum, the Shri Para Prasada mantra Shaum, the Shri Prasada mantra Ham and the Shri Para mantra Sam.

Chapter Three

Shri Devi said: Lord of Kula, I want to hear about the most supreme of all dharmas, the Urdvhamnaya, its mantra and its magnificence. Speak to me!

Shri Ishvara said: Listen, Devi, I will declare that which you ask, by hearing which doctrine devatas become truly happy. I have never previously declared this, O Kuleshvari. Listen, dearest, I will tell you about the Urdvhamnaya out of my love for you.

Vedas, shastras, puranas are revealed but Shaiva and Shakta agamas are all renowned as being secret. The supreme secret of all secrets are the Kula Shastras, Parvati. Ambike, the Urdvhamnaya is the supreme secret of all secrets, the very essence of the whole of the absolute (Brahman). Well hidden before, it is now revealed by me to you.

The five amnyas are born from my five faces are the east, the west, the south and the north and the upper, the five amnyas renowned for bringing liberation (moksha). Many are the amnyas but there is none equal to the Urdvhamnaya. This is the truth, Vararohe, there should be no discussion about it.

Many distinctions have come from the secret four amnyas. In this tantra, O Lady of the Kulas, I will first speak of them. O Kamini, many are those who study the four amnyas, but those knowing the Urdvhamnaya knowledge are few.

Just as the myriad of particles of dust on the earth, so many are the mantras giving enjoyment and liberation from any one or other of the [four] amnyas. So too is there a myriad of lesser mantras from the amnyas, spoken by me to you for the grace of the world.

Sweetly smiling one, the devatas of all of these mantras originate from us both, giving the siddhis which are desired. I know every single one of these mantras and no one else. By my grace, only a handful of men out of millions are aware of them. If one knows just one amnaya, it bring liberation. How much more so for a person who knows all four. Clearly, he becomes Shiva.

The Urdhvamnaya is supreme, above the knowledge contained in the four amnyas. Whosoever desires it becomes a Siddha because of it. From the Urdhvamnaya comes all dharma. The Urdhvamnaya is praised by all and there is nothing greater than it, it is said.

Kuleshani, a person is freed from the ocean of Samsara by the Urdhvamnaya. It is said that the heavens all worship the Urdhvamnaya. By practising it, Deveshi, one may become liberated in this very birth. The fruit of the Urdhvamnaya is greater than all other amnyas, the very quintessence. As in all worlds one should worship me, dearest, so in all amnyas one should worship the Urdhvamnaya.

Like Vishnu amongst gods, like the sun amongst heavenly lights, like Kashi amongst sacred bathing spots, like the philosopher's stone to gold and so forth, as Meru is to mountains, as the sandalwood is to trees, as Ashvamedha is to sacrifices, like a diamond is to pebbles, as sweetness is to other flavours, as gold amongst metals, as the cow is to quadrupeds, as the swan is to birds, as sadhu-ship is to the different ashramas, as a brahmin is to the [other] varnas, as a king is to men, as the head is to the limbs, as musk is to the scents, as Kanchi is to cities, so of all paths the Urdhvamnaya is the best, Dearest.

In various births, the Urdhvamnaya is the fruit giver of supreme merit and not anything else, O Lady praised by Viras! Whosoever knows this Urdhvamnaya is wealthy, has Kula knowledge and is the best amongst men.

Not by vedas, agamas, shastras, puranas, expositions, sacrifices, penances, bathing in 10,000,000 sacred water, not by vows or by other things Deveshi, not by herbs or mantras previously declared can the Urdhvamnaya be known, but only from the mouth of Shrimad Guru.

Deveshi, one should immerse oneself in that all knowing ocean of compassion, having all characteristics, the knower of the essence of the Urdhvamnaya, the source of the Urdhvamnaya. Whosoever knows the Urdhvamnaya knows everything. All that is desired is achieved and the person is accomplished. This is true, true, O Varanana! Whosoever knows all this from the mouth of Shri Guru becomes liberated by the path of Kulashastra, there is no doubt of it.

Whosoever knows this amnaya, O Devi, has everything. He is worshipped, he is a true guru, he is a teacher, he is an astrologer, he is a mantrin, he is served by all, he is praised by all, he is a seer, he is Sattva Guna itself, he carries things through, he is a true doer of tapas, he is an achiever, he is a magician, he is a knower of veda, agama, shastra, all knowledge and so forth, he is the path, he is wise, he is a saint, he is a Kaulika, he is a true sacrificer, he is self-contained, he is a true reciter of mantra, he is a doer of magic, he is a yogi, he is a real accomplisher of acts, he is a hero, he is the quintessence, he is a good person, he is a knower of all, he is liberated, he is Shiva, dearest.

His family is pure, his mother is Lakshmi, his father is an accomplisher and may himself become liberated. His family line is praiseworthy in everything, his relatives and friends are complete. What is the use of many words? The Urdhvamnaya is the Supreme!

He who recites it gets the fruit of being greater than a king, remembered by all, famed, praised, visionary. Wherever he dwells, Shri Vijaya (Victory) dwells also. He is a true mendicant, without description, the essence of nectar.

The best type of person attains this Urdhvamnaya by the grace of Guru. Whosoever knows it, knows everything, is beloved, and becomes like me. The eastern amnaya is creation, the southern amnaya maintenance, the western amnaya dissolution and from the northern amnaya comes grace. The eastern

amnaya is mantra yoga, the southern amnaya is bhakti yoga, the western amnaya karma yoga and the northern amnaya jnana yoga. There are 24 parts to the eastern amnaya, the southern has 25, it is said, the western amnaya has 32 parts and the auspicious northern amnaya has 36 divisions.

These divisions do not exist in the Urdvhamnaya, O lady of Kulas! Plainly, it is the very self of Shiva and no acts are known within it. I cannot speak of the magnificence of the Urdvhamnaya, from my love for you, you gave birth to this truth, Varanane!

So the greatness of the Urdvhamnaya is declared to you by me. Now, Kuleshani, the magnificence of the mantra is revealed. Its characteristics have not previously been spoken by me. I speak of them now because of your love. Listen, O One Dear to Me as Life Itself! The mantra called Shri Paraprasada is the chief mantra situated in the Urdvhamnaya. Whosoever knows this mantra, which is the supreme creator, becomes like Shiva.

Ha-Sa is the pathway breath takes in living creatures. This mantra exists in the form of exhalation and inhalation, dearest one. Just as clouds cannot exist without wind, and just as the sky is without limit, so the world cannot exist except by Shri Paraprasada mantra. The world of immovable and moving things comes from the Shri Paraprasada mantra.

Just as the absolute is without parts, Devi, and as wind moves the stem of the palm, and as the shoot is in the seed, and as sesame oil is in the sesame plant, and as brightness is in the sun and as the moon is in moonlight, and as fire is latent in wood, and as perfume is in flower, and as substances are dissolved in water, and as meaning is in sound, and as Shiva is in Shakti, and as ghee is in milk, and as colour is in fruit, and as sweetness is in sugar, and as coolness is in camphor, and as mantra favour exists in mantra punishment, and as divinity is in an image, and as movement is in the breeze, so also this universe exists in the Shri Paraprasada mantra. As in the fig tree, the subtle form of the tree subsists, so does the macrocosm exist in the Shri Paraprasada mantra.

Just as flavour exists in well-cooked food, Kuleshvari, and just as it is impossible to taste sweetness except by knowing saltiness, so those who are devoid of Mantra Shakti do not gain fruit or union with the Shri Paraprasada mantra. One should conceal the Shri Paraprasada mantra most carefully.

People wander in delusion amidst discussions, puranas, philosophies, amnyas, distinctions, mantras and shastras of various kinds, the 1,000 devas of the various texts, deluded by your Maya. They live and they die and have their share of the afflictions of Samsara, not knowing the Shri Paraprasada mantra, O Kuleshvari.

They do not gain liberation, deluded by your Maya. Whosoever knows and is devoted to the lovely form of Shri Guru gains the Shri Paraprasada mantra and having known this becomes completely liberated. Whosoever in 1,000 previous births knew Shaiva and the other (paths) and worshipped the mantras of the four amnyas will come to sing of the Guru. Whosoever knows the Shri Paraprasada mantra comes to be liberated from evil limitations, a purified being, dear to the Guru, and not in any other way.

Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Indra and so forth; various heavenly beings, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Sun, the dikpalas, Manu, the Moon and so forth; Markandeya and the other munis, Vashishta and other lords of saints, Sanaka and other lords of yoga, liberated beings like Shuka and so forth; yakshas, kinnaras, gandharvas, siddhas, fairy folk and others praise the one who attains this meritorious Shri Paraprasada mantra, from which comes all results.

One like this has everything, is worshipped, gains knowledge, is effulgent, happy, free from disease and from recitation of the Shri Paraprasada mantra gains kingship, heaven and liberation. Also the knower of this mantra exhausts all karma and attains to the realm of Brahma, Indra, Rudra and Vishnu. Whoever attains to this becomes happy in all, and a true person.

This is the wish-fulfilling gem, the heavenly cow (Kamadhenu), in the palace in the centre of the Aeon Trees. By reciting the Shri Paraprasada mantra, even Lord Kubera becomes a servant. Just as by using the philosopher's stone, iron becomes gold, so by the recitation of the Shri Paraprasada mantra, a beast (pashu) becomes a lord of beasts (Pashupati). Whosoever knows the Shri Paraprasada mantra has everything. He knows the best mantra of all and becomes like You and Me.

O Parvati, one who knows this mantra core of Shri Paraprasada mantra, even if a cooker of dogs, becomes liberated. If even a dog-eater becomes liberated by knowing the mantra essence of Shri Paraprasada mantra, how much more so one who knows its practice? The knower of the Shri Paraprasada mantra may do whatsoever he wishes, if, having heard that mantra he should meditate on it. This person, O Maheshani, previously initiated according to the genuine line (parampara) and knowing the Shri Paraprasada mantra, becomes one with So-Aham, there is no doubt. The knower of Shri Paraprasada mantra in the body is established eternally in the 14 worlds, aware of both moveable and immovable equally.

Wherever he who knows the Shri Paraprasada mantra resides, that place is like a celestial palace of broad dimensions. O Lady of Kulas, the knower of the essence of Shri Paraprasada mantra is praised by Gods and Asuras, over and over again. The place where the knower of Shri Paraprasada mantra stands is a place of the Siddhas, thronged with hosts of saints and devas.

A knower of the Shri Paraprasada mantra knows all mantras, whether they be Shaiva, Vaishnava, Daurga (of Durga), Arka (of the Sun), Ganapatya (of Ganesh) or Lunar. The sight of one who has the Shri Paraprasada mantra on the tip of his tongue, liberates even a cooker of dogs. Whether a brahmin or any other case, whether pure or impure, he who recites Shri Paraprasada mantra is liberated, there is no doubt of this.

Whether moving or staying still, whether awake or asleep, this Shri Paraprasada mantra always gives results, O Deveshi. The other thousands of mantras each give one single result but, Kuleshi, this king of mantras swiftly gives every kind of result. Of all mantras, this Shri Paraprasada mantra is the highest. Whether ignorant or knowledgeable, this mantra always gives fruit.

(Like the pairs) Sachi and Indra, Rohini and the Moon, Svaha and fire, light and the Sun, Lakshmi and Narayana, Sarasvati and Brahma, night and day, fire and the moon, bindu and nada, Prakriti and Purusha, that which is and that which is not, enjoyment and liberation, Prana and Apana, word and meaning, that with parts and that without parts, happiness and sorrow and so forth and in all complements seen and heard by me, this (Shri Paraprasada mantra) exists in all, there is no doubt. This Shri Paraprasada mantra exists in all male and female forms and is therefore the self of all, O Kuleshvari.

Kuleshvari, it is attained by meditation, is without form, the supreme absolute, without divisions, pure, eternal, without qualities, all pervading, the eternal imperishable thing, whose sphere of action is outside the realms of speech and mind. One becomes illuminated by virtue of the sadhana of Shri Paraprasada mantra.

Devi, this mantra is therefore known as Shri Paraprasada mantra, the supreme quintessence, having the nature of truth-consciousness-bliss, Shiva and Shakti, bestower of both enjoyment and liberation, with and without karma, with and without qualities (gunas).

This Shri Paraprasada mantra is the chief of all mantras. By reciting it, one gains both enjoyment and liberation, of this there is no doubt. What use here of much speech? It is the all-essence!

Listen, dearest. There is no mantra equal to the Shri Paraprasada mantra. It is supreme knowledge, it is supreme tapas, it is supreme meditation, it is supreme worship, it is supreme initiation, it is supreme mantra recitation, it is the highest of all tattvas, it is the greatest of all vows, it is the best of sacrifices, it is the highest of the high, it is supreme bliss, it gives the best result, it is the very absolute (parabrahman), it is the

highest refuge, it is the most secret of all secrets. After knowing this quintessential and boon giving mantra, one always becomes steady, Dear One.

Employing the rules of sadhana using the injunctions of the agama, one should recite the Shri Paraprasada mantra 108 times and one becomes liberated from the five great sins such as killing brahmins and so forth.

Whoever recites the Shri Paraprasada mantra 200 times, O Devi, is free from countless births, becomes healthy, youthful, strong, whether in wake, dream or deep sleep. In acts, mind and speech he can behave either as a fool or as a wise person and is liberated from great falls and 10 million lesser defects. This is true, Varanane! There is no doubt of it.

Whoever recites Shri Paraprasada mantra 300 times gains the merit of all sacrifices and all offerings, of all vows and of bathing in all of the sacred waters (tirtha). This is the result, O Devi, on this matter there should be no quibbling.

Whoever should recite Shri Paraprasada mantra 400 times always has Anima and the other eight Siddhis at the door of his house, as it were, with the collectivity of all the other Siddhis. Whatever is desired is gained, for sure, plainly Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are within reach. Heaven is before him, as well as the four kinds of liberation. O Lady of Kula, a sadhaka achieves all this, this is true, there is no doubt of it.

Whoever should recite Shri Paraprasada 500 times gains a result impossible of description, O Kula Lady. Therefore, by every effort, in every kind of condition, one should recite Shri Paraprasada mantra for liberation and enjoyment.

There is nothing greater than this, whether it be Guru, Tattvas, Shiva, other devas, Vidya, Kaula, Darshana, Kula, knowledge, that which is beyond knowledge, happiness, the eight limbs of Yoga, sadhana, nay, not even liberation. This is true, true, true and again true - there should be no doubt about it. I would not be able to speak of the magnificence of the Shri Paraprasada mantra even if there were 100 billion aeons. As the size of the mustard seed is to a mountain, and as a speck of sand is to the sea, so is the extent of the magnificence of the Shri Paraprasada to my description.

The magnificence of the Urdvhamnaya and the Shri Paraprasada mantra is thus declared to you, Devi. What else do you wish to hear?