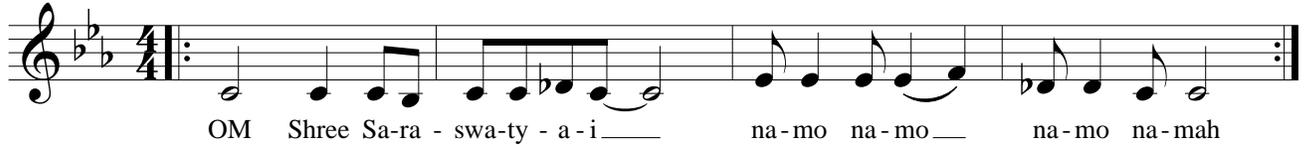


Tridevi Praise Cycle

Words traditional Sanskrit; melodies traditional
and Shivadam; movements Shivadam

Open tuning, key of C

Part I.



OM Shree Sa-ra - swa-ty - a - i____ na - mo na - mo____ na - mo na - mah

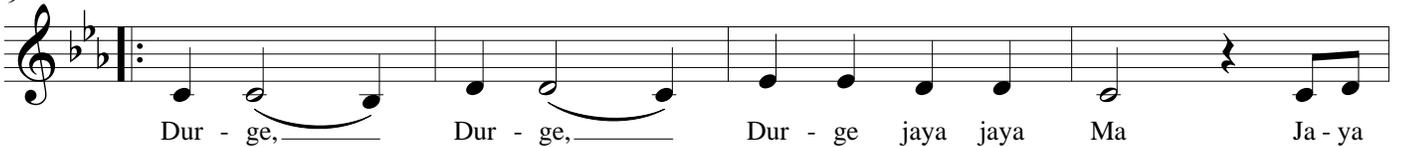
5



OM Shree Sa-ra - swa-ty - a - i____ na - mo na - mo____ na - mo na - mah

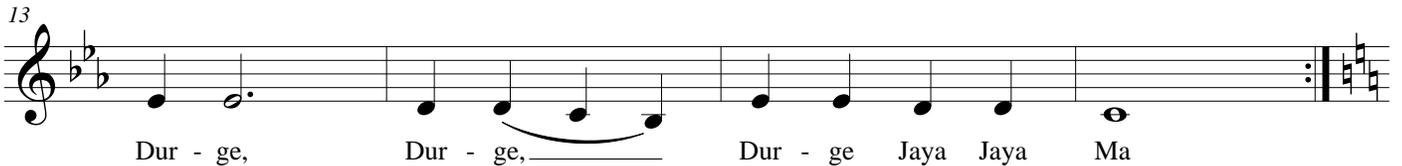
Part II.

9



Dur - ge,____ Dur - ge,____ Dur - ge jaya jaya Ma Ja - ya

13



Dur - ge, Dur - ge,____ Dur - ge Jaya Jaya Ma

Part III.

17



Na - mo - stu - te, na - mo - stu - te, Ma - ha Lak - shmi na - mo - stu - te____

21



Na - mo - stu - te,____ na - mo - stu - te, Ma - ha Lak - shmi____ na - mo - stu - te____

In this three-part Sanatana Dharma (Hindu) Cycle, we dance and praise the "tridevi," the three aspects of Divine Mother corresponding to the trimurti (trinity) of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara (Shiva). As manifestations of shakti, the Devis are the very power of the Devas of the trimurti. This Cycle takes us on a journey, beginning with seeking wisdom, then overcoming the ego, and finally celebrating and honoring the Divine essence in all. Note that these phrases are essentially praises, rather than mantras. Traditional ritual and dance forms inspire the movements.



I.) We begin with invocation of **Saraswati**

OM Shree Saraswatyai namo namo namo namah

(OM – Salutations again and again to the venerable Saraswati)

Attunement: Mother Saraswati is the patron of the arts and sciences, bestower of creative inspiration and higher knowledge, wisdom. Fair and bright, She sits on a lotus of purity, plucking Her “Saraswati veena” (the instrument that Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan mastered) and is accompanied by Her *vahana* (animal vehicle), the peacock or the swan. Consort of Lord Brahma the Creator, Saraswati is the facilitator of that evolution of consciousness and awareness we seek in order to awaken and fully enliven our existence. She is typically invoked at the beginning of endeavors, particularly of the arts or of learning. *(Element associations: Air, Water, Ether)*

Movement: Circle moves clockwise: walk forward in line of direction with a L step-and-close, then R step-and-close, palms held face up in front of heart and receptive like an open book. On “namo namo...” continue to step and close, but move only side-to-side (rather than forward) as hands come together in pranam at heart. (Repeat.) For higher melody part, all face Center and sidestep L-close, R-close, raising hands, palms up high over head, forming a “chalice” to receive wisdom and inspiration from Ma, and on “namo namo...” bring hands down to pranam at heart, continuing side-stepping. (Repeat.)

II) Next, we submit to battle, as both the ego and as its vanquisher, **Durga**

Durge, Durge, Durge, jaya jaya Ma

(Jaya) Durge, Durge, Durge jaya jaya Ma

(Durga... Victory, victory to the Mother!)

Attunement: Durga is one of three manifestations, or aspects, of the consort of Shiva. She is *adi-shakti*, the primordial power of change and agent of transformation. Astride Her tiger or lion, She wields the weapons of the other gods. Slayer of selfish interest, She alone has the strength to defeat the demon of false identification with the ego and liberate the self-bound soul to conscious union with the Divine, with Herself. In Her most raw form, She assumes the terrifying appearance as the blackish and fierce Kali, the forces of Nature run amuck. As Parvati, She is gentle mother, supportive wife, and accomplished practitioner of the most arduous spiritual arts. *(Element associations: Fire, Ether)*

Movement: This movement emulates the traditional “*dandiya*” stick dance: Group forms two straight lines of equal numbers, facing each other. Step L-and-close and clap R hands with opposite “partner” on first “Durge,” then R-and-close, clapping L hands with “partner” at second “Durge.” At “Durge jaya jaya Ma,” spin to L (hands slightly out to sides, palm up, relaxed at waist level), progressing to new position and new partner, and repeat steps and claps for second line, and so forth...(Note that because both lines move to their left, your “next partner” is the person two people to the left of your present partner.) When one comes to the end of the line, the spin/progression is to the opposite line to continue. (May also be done with two circles, inner facing outer.) *This section may be gradually sped up (as in frenzied battle), but care should be taken to not lose the sense of symmetry or to go out of control.*



III) Having thus achieved victory over the small self, we now celebrate the abundance of spiritual wealth, embodied as **Lakshmi**

Namostute, namostute, Maha Lakshmi namostute

(Praise-salutations to the Great Lakshmi)

Attunement: Shree Maha Lakshmi is bestower of wealth, material and especially spiritual. Holding in Her upper hands open lotuses, or sometimes a wheat stalk, She is the beautiful, approachable, and fertile mother. Golden coins and blessings pour forth from Her devotee-facing palms, generously bestowing Her boons. The root *lakshya* in Sanskrit means objective, goal, or target, therefore Her name suggests success of endeavor. Seated on a lotus afloat on the ocean of immortal existence, She is consort of Vishnu, the sustainer. Often flanked by two white elephants spraying water, She is the very image of abundance. On her owl, Shree Lakshmi travels from house to house, bestowing wealth in accord with the needs of Her devotees. *(Element associations: Earth, Water, Ether)*

Movement: Face a partner: Gently sway (shifting weight) R and L for each “namostute” with hands held together and cuplike (as if holding an *aarti** tray, or the precious riches of your partner’s heart or of your *sangha*), following direction of sway in a crescent shape at about heart level; at end of 2nd “namostu-te,” hands follow “sway” up and around to complete a full clockwise circle (effectively “framing” partner’s heart and head, hands reaching pinnacle of this circle at “Maha”); sway with cupped hands once more for final “namostute”; walk past this partner, L shoulder to L shoulder, then repeat above with new partner. For the higher melody part, all turn to Center and take hands and move in (R,L,R,L), raising hands into a group “lotus” opening up and releasing at pinnacle (at 2nd “namostute”); all step back R,L,R,L: the first time, bringing hands down and culminating in “bestowing of blessing” with fingers together and palms facing forward and slightly out from sides, low; then, move in again as above, and for the second out, bring palms together over head, then down in front, and pranam to Center.

*The *aarti* ritual is common to virtually all worship in this tradition. It may have originated as a means for illuminating the *murti*: prior to electric light, a lamp flame would be waved to reveal every part of the idol, including head, hands, heart, navel and feet. *Aarti* is also done to welcome an honored guest or saint.

