

## The Microcosmic Alchemical Tantrik Architecture of Hangseshwari Temple

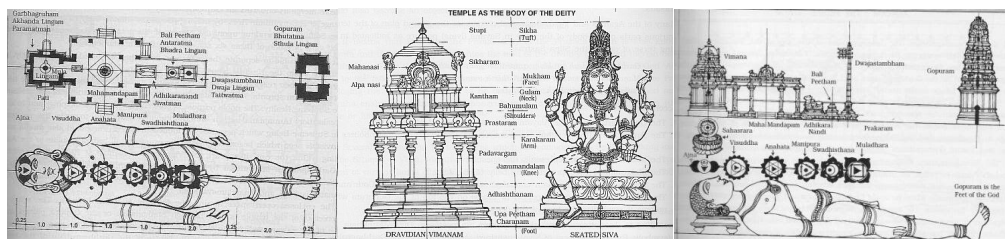
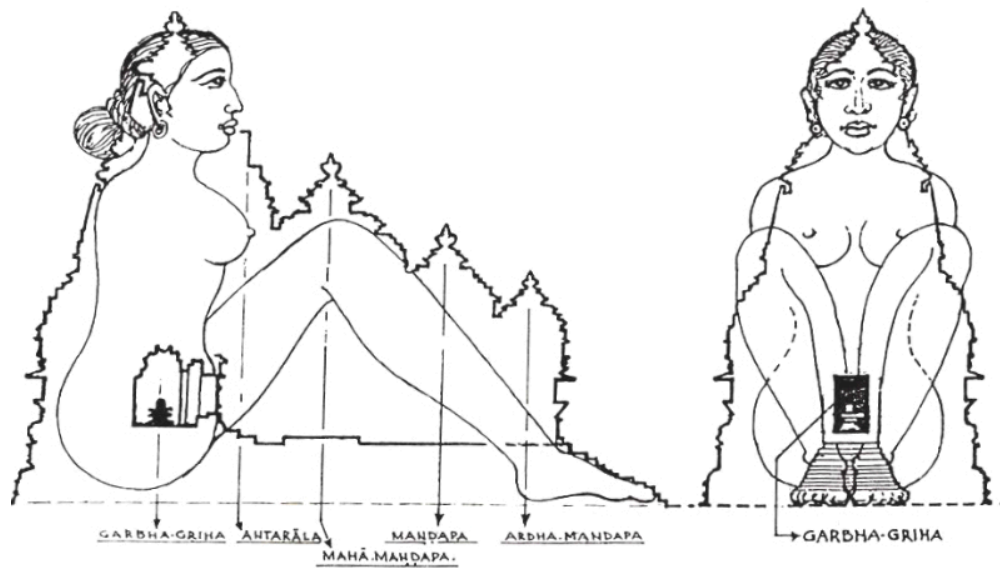


तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥१६॥  
*tejo yat te rūpaṃ kalyāṇatamaṃ tat te paśyāmi yo 'sāv [asau puruṣaḥ]  
so'ham asmi*  
"The light which is thy fairest form, I see it. I am what He is" ~ Isha  
Upanishad (verse 16),

One of the most beautiful, alchemical, castle-like temples is the Hangseshwari Temple of the Hoogy District of Bengal. It is the spiritual center of a Tantrik astral dream sect that inspired a King to build this temple in a dream, combining the Mother Goddess with his own mother's symbolic name into one of the most beautiful Tantrik temples in the world. We use this temple and its symbolism to introduce key teachings, practices and symbols and invite those interested to inquire for further details in our alchemical missionary work.

The Hangseshwari Temple has been called the abode of “Our Lady of the Cosmic Goose” by scholars aware of the alchemical significance. This name combines alchemically with the Black Virgin in the Western Tradition, as well as the alchemical immortals of diverse traditions. This temple is a true example of “Tantrik *Satchakrabhed*” or the “*sat-chakra-bhed* or piercing of the chakra nerve plexuses.” This is sacred Tantrik architecture expressing the microcosm in the temple's structure, which is symbolic of the Human Body. Built by wise *sthapatis* (temple architects), these temples encode the divine proportions and inner secrets of the microcosm and subtle body in sacred architectural principles dating back to the *Vastu Shastra*, which may be the oldest known architectural treatise in the world. We can see various temples laid out in the dimensions of the universe itself, or a

specific deity, or the human body with *chakras*, all of which are worlds in miniature. We maintain that these temples, their architectural style and aesthetic are born out of the pure light realm, for, just as there is a subtle body, there is a equally astral architecture, seen in visionary states that are hyperreal sources from the most subtle realms. It is these that have inspired the builders of not only these temples, but all traditional societies that possessed a visionary alchemical legacy. These temples, and likewise the pyramids and Grecian temples and many others have exact correspondences in the ethereal numinous dimensions and are the archetypal realms of true initiation from which this earth is a reflection or projection.



*Vastu Shastra* is composed of *Shastra*, which is “enlightened literature,” and *Vastu*, which means “manifest,” derived from *Vustu*, or “unmanifest.” The temple, this world, this reality, the body are all in varying mesocosmic degrees of this reflection and the philosophical interplay of manifest and unmanifest. This is classically demonstrated in many traditions by the moon and its reflection in the water. This profound truth is at the core of all the sacred sciences and architecture of India, and all the alchemical and Mystery traditions. It is the foundation of Vedic and Tantrik insight into

this life as a reflection from a higher, divine plane of existence. This is perhaps one of the most beautifully expressed symbols in the perfectly reflected Hangseshwari Temple as seen projected in reverse onto the water.

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The Hangseshwari Temple has 13 lotus petaled, conical *sikharas* (spires) and has five stories representing the five parts of our Human body: *Bajraksha*, *Ira*, *Chitrini*, *Pingala* and *Sushumna*. Built in the 19th century by King Nrisinhadeb Roy Mahasay was finished after his death by his wife Rani Sankari. According to the folklore, the King was a deep student of kundalini yoga and six chakra, and the Goddess Hangseswari came to him in a dream. Hangseswari is worshipped as a form of Maa Kali as Rani Hanseswari was the mother of Raja Nrisingha Deb Roy, Kali is worshipped as Maa Hanseswari. King Nrisinhadeb Roy Mahasay, who erected several other temples, unfortunately died mid-construction in 1802, with his wife finishing this project in 1814. He was an avid Tantrik practitioner and spent the last years of his life devoted to Tantra. This temple is dedicated to these principles expressed in the sacred Tantrik architecture and symbolism and in the sanctum are the supreme two deities Lord Shiva and goddess Shakti. The Shakti is named as “Hanseswari” and an image of white “Lord Shiva” is found to be lying on six triangular marbles. The idol of goddess Shakti is in

blue color and carved in wood derived from “Neem tree.” The idol of Lord Shiva is made in white marble. This is beautiful alchemical symbolism of the different polarities reconciled, inverted and reflecting the core aspect of its opposite.



The name of the Goddess, *Han-ses-swari* is the same intonations of *Hams-sa*, the “Ham”, or “Han” sound being the sound of breathing out, with the sound “sa” being the sound breathing inward. “Ham” means Shiva and “Sa” means Shakti. This is the secret to Shiva's yoga and Kundalini. *Hamsa* is symbol in the Vedic literature shown as a swan or goose, symbolic of *Prana* and the inner highest prana of Self.

The swan or goose is the vehicle for Lord Brahma the Creator and his consort Sarasvati Devi in Puranic thought. It is the bird of light, the Aryan solar bird in the Rig Veda but also sometimes the hawk or falcon that steals the *Soma* from earth to Heaven. In the Tantras though, *Hamsa* is the soul or *jiva* of the individual, who is subject to a life of breath, in and out in the duality of this realm that we must transcend. The “Ham” or “Ha” or “Sa” sounds are the basis of many forms of *Pranayama*. As one Vedic scholar says, “Yet at a higher level beyond duality, *Ha* and *Sa* are the natural sounds of the Self, which is the inner breath of awareness, the unitary Prana that is Self-existent and immortal. *Ham* is the Self as I (*aham*) and *Sa* is the Self as that or the inner Being. Hamsa also refers to the supreme swan or *ParamaHamsa*, which is the liberated soul that dwells in the state of the Supreme Shiva. In this regard, Hamsa teachings are an integral part of Shiva Yoga and Shiva is also personified *Hamsa*. Hamsa as sound and prana vibration is also Om or Pranava, of which Lord Shiva is the indicator.” The syllable A is considered to be its (the bird Hamsa's) right wing, U, its left, M, its tail.

Hamsa and Kundalini, the breath and serpent, must in a sense *help*



*the Soma to descend to the microcosmic heaven in the human cranial vault.* Hamsa is the union of the breath in Pranayama, the union of Shiva and Shakti (as “Ha” and “Sa”, Sun and Moon, *Prana* and *Apana*) the alternating currents and energies, combined into the Ardhanarishwara. This is also symbolic of the alchemical alloys like *parad*, which is mercury and silver combined, the female and male, lunar and solar energies.



The soul's flying up to subtle realms, the two wings of prana and mind, is the *Jiva* soul ascending, they unite to become the feathered serpent (for the swan/goose is the long neck of the snake, but with wings and feathers the union of Naga and Garuda and soma) of Kundalini and Hamsa. The most subtle channel of the subtle body, *susumna nadi*, is likewise either a snake or bird. Swans were thought to sing before they died, thus the “Swan song” as a metaphor of death and dying, or departing, transitioning, or finale. The bird without stretched wings and sun, seen in Egypt and in alchemical literature of solar and lunar weddings is depicting this. The Hamsa is an extension or expansion of the *bindu*, blue pearl or the third eye focus point in its movement and expansion. And the *Nada* or vibratory principle forms its wings. The mantra **Soham** (सो ऽहम् *so Soham*) is the mystical articulation of the individuated Absolute Self, meaning "I am He/That" and the mantra is also inverted from *so 'ham* (the sandhi of *sah + aham*) to *ham + sa* and the combination of *so 'ham hamṣaḥ* has also been interpreted as "I myself am the Swan", where the swan symbolizes the Atman. It is Hamsa Chaitanya, the “consciousness of the Hamsa,” that allows for a balanced, harmonized integration of the self into the Self, avoiding the psychological derangements from ego and wayward energy. This is why highly realized and enlightened masters are called **ParamaHamsa** (परमाहंस), or “Supreme Swan.”

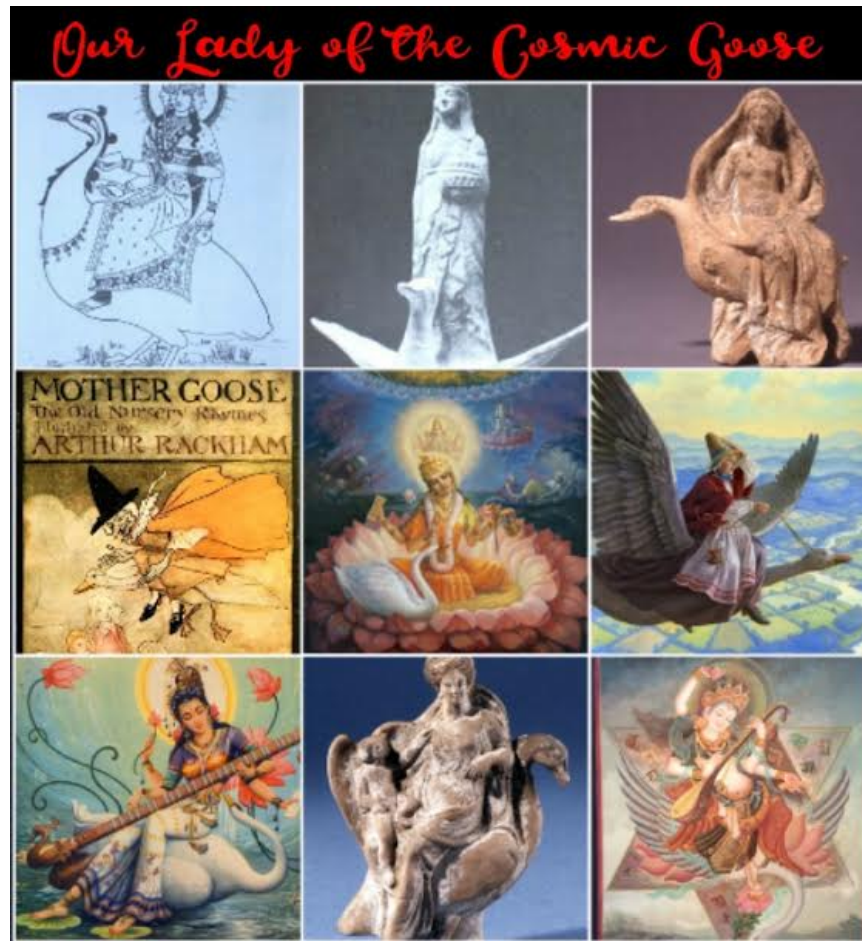
The *kundalini* must become winged and ascend up the spine to propel

and build the energy for the soul to ascend. The scholars say, “The *Hamsa* is the *Jiva* or individual soul that must take its journey back through the chakras guided by *Shakti*, to realize the supreme Shiva above in the thousand petal lotus of the head. The *Hamsa* is propelled in its ascending movement by *Nada* (vibration), *Bindu* (concentration) and *Bija* (mantras), and energizes the *Lingas* (powers of stillness) and *Yonis* (powers of receptivity) along the way. The *Hamsa* carries the Soma or nectar of delight (*Amrita*, *Ananda*) up from the lower chakras to the thousand petal lotus of the head, where it can release it in a thousand streams.” To this we would add the special power substances that are the food of the Hamsa Goose enabling its long migration back to the soul's abode. The 'royal swan' of the soul floats in the cosmic ocean with the sun's reflection, beholding both its body and the ocean as manifestations of the same Spirit. The word '*ParamaHamsa*' signifies one who is Awakened in all realms, drifting through lotus blossoms.

The symbolism goes even deeper, Soham is the “un-intoned sound” of regular breathing that means “I am He” and its inversion is *Hamsa*, the goose (*Anser indicus*) or Swan, and it's alchemically symbolic of Soma and nectars that Swan's are thought to be able to separate milk from water. The wild goose, *Hams*, is known as a disciplined, graceful and beautiful bird associated with ascetics like *Hamsan*, and with the Sun, spirit, knowledge and life itself whose high flight symbolized the spiritual quest and ascent. It is the vehicle of transport (*vahana*) for various Gods like Brahma and Saraswati. The mystical *Vimana* also are said to have used mercury to fly.

Annual pilgrimages in Northern India center on the main temple of Brahma the Creator, who emerged from a Cosmic Egg laid by *Hamsa*. This is similar to the Egyptian God Geb in whose shrine in Bata in Iunu he laid the great Egg (symbolized rebirth and renewal) from which the Sun-god arose in the form of a phoenix or *Benben*. The Egyptian God was given the epithet "The great Cackler" because of the noise he made when the egg was laid, just like the Hamsa bird made the sound “Aum” which instigated creation through sound. This is the source of all creative resonance as sound “Aum” is the frequency of creation. As scholars write, “sky-car pulled by seven swans”, while the swan-goose is also the avatar of his wife Saraswati, the goddess of music, writing and divine inspiration. She is the personification of what was once India's most sacred river, the Saraswati, which rose in the foothills of the Himalayas in southwest Tibet. Just like the Ganges today, it was seen as a terrestrial representation of the Milky Way, linking Saraswati with Egypt's sky-goddess, Nut.” We hope to present a

further article on the astro-theological and star yantra sigils and mysteries related to the constellation Cygnus being identified with the swan-geese *Hamsa*. We can see the Swan and Goddess, or Swan Immortals with sacred Geese as the highest symbolism for the alchemical transmutation all over China and Asia and encoded deeply in the mysteries of pagan Iran that survived in various Sufi terms and Persian Epics.



The Hamsa has been the most widely used and ancient symbol to describe the micro- meso- and macro-cosmic experiences of the birth and ascent and experience of the world soul and individual, from the metaphors of the birth of the and Brahma to the sound of the breath, to *pranayaman*, to accomplished sage. In the Rig Veda, the ether of *kha* is the seat of the Hamsa bird, introducing the sound of creating of vibratory resonance *nada* that created the world. This sound is also heard by the adept in yoga, inducing *Samadhi*, and Hamsa is identified with the *sunya*, or empty channel, “through which the vital energy, breath, and consciousness descend in the individuation of the Absolute into an individual being.” There is the

famous “*Hamsa' ham*” that can be read as the breath in and out, but also as “I am That!” the Absolute Self, I, *atman*, am that *Brahman*, but also “The goose! The goose!” which is ingenious wordplay. This symbolic term, which is the basis for the Language of the Birds of the codes in alchemy, are so vast and profound that innumerable texts could be written on this alone.



The alchemical connections go deeper still, with mercury understood as when it evaporates it “flies” to the top of the vessel, such as the *damaru yantra*. When the volatile mercury is made fixed, as in the alchemical *parad* of silver and quicksilver through purifications, it gives the adept the “power of flight,” *khecara*, with the *parad rasamani* bead held in the mouth. When mercury is heated too fast, there is loss through evaporation and this is described as having its wing's clipped *paksa-ccheda*, with too much evaporation, *patina*, the mercury escapes the vessel and is “gone like a goose,” *Hamsaga*.



This is the same as the human vital breath, and the fettering or yoga control fixes this energy, like the stabilized kundalini energy, like the volatile mercury, like the uneven, unsteady breath. The bird must fly up the “cranial



vault” as the goose is seen to fly incredibly high up into the vault of the sky or firmament, transforming into its stellar light body in the night sky as the constellation Aquila, identified with the half-eagle half-human deity Garuda who ascended to heaven with the stolen soma. In the Rig Veda, Hamsa can refer to a variety of birds such as birds with the root of *Hamsa* (हंस), such as Maha-Hamsa, Raj-Hamsa, Kal-Hamsa but all retain the symbolism and correspondences. Scholars classify “several types and colors of Hamsa, reflecting the cosmic energies that it is working with:

- Nila Hamsa – Dark blue Hamsa, power of electrical energy or lightning, the Vidyut Hamsa, represented by the bija mantra Krim. Here the dark blue is that of a rain cloud from which the streak of lightning arises.
- Suvarna Hamsa – Golden Hamsa, the expansive power of the Sun and the heart, Surya Hamsa, represented by the bija mantra Hrim.
- Shveta Hamsa – White Hamsa, the expansive power of the Moon, the Soma Hamsa, represented by the bija mantra Shrim.
- Rakta Hamsa – Red Hamsa, the ascending force of Fire, Agni Hamsa, represented by the bija mantra Hum.

These different types of Hamsas are manifestations of the same Hamsa that is the soul in all of its manifestations. The supreme Hamsa is the liberated soul that is all the Hamsas or all forms of manifestation.”

He does not fear pain, nor longs for pleasure. He forsakes love. He is not attached to the pleasant, nor to the unpleasant. He does not hate. He does not rejoice. Firmly fixed in knowledge, his Self is content, well-established within. He is called the true Yogin. He is a knower. His consciousness is permeated with that, the perfect bliss. That Brahman I am, he knows it. He has that goal achieved.

— ParamaHamsa Upanishad, Chapter 4

### **Hamsa So’ham Nadi Shodhana**

This is a simple method of combining mantra with alternate nostril breathing.

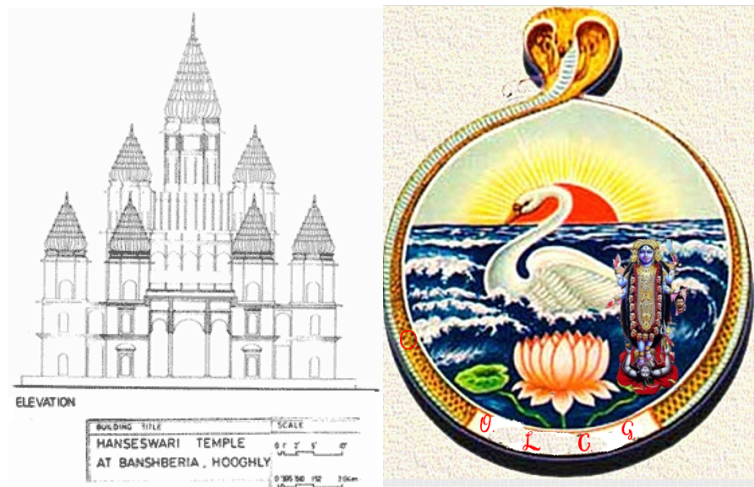
In Sanskrit symbology, the breath is governed by *s* and *h* sounds. This is

common to many languages, but perhaps nowhere stressed so much as in Sanskrit. Especially the sounds Soham and Hamsa are used relative to the breath. In this special method, one can use both Soham and Hamsa relative to alternate nostril breathing.

In this regard, one should note that the Sa sound has a lunar energy while the Ha sound has a solar energy according to the ancient science of mantra. Similarly, the mantra So'ham also has more a lunar or Soma energy, while Hamsa has a solar energy. Inhalation in general has a more lunar energy and exhalation has a more solar energy as well.

In this procedure, one uses the mantra So for inhalation through the left or lunar nostril, followed by the mantra Ham for exhalation through the right or solar nostril. Then one uses the mantra Ham for inhalation through the right nostril, followed by the mantra Sa for exhalation through the left nostril. This process of So'ham Hamsa makes one round of alternate nostril breathing.

During this practice, one should let the breath naturally deepen. There need be no overt effort to hold the breath but if this occurs naturally it can be allowed.



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