THE CONCEPT OF
'SRI' IN VISISHTADWAITHA FROM
VEDAS TO VENKATANATHA

ENGLISH with Sanskrit

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Published by:
T. K. SADAGOPAN
5, Oil Monger Street,
Triplicane, Madras - 5.
PIN: 600 005.

1988
This book has been printed with the Financial Assistance given by the Thirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam, Tirupathi under their scheme Aid to Authors for Religious Studies.
This monograph re-examines the concept of SRI or Maha-lakshmi, according to Vishistadwaitha system of thought.

SRI is popularly viewed as Moolaprakrithi or an emancipated Jeeva (Muktha). But she is neither moolaprakrithi nor a Jeeva evolved. She is the Divine consort of the Supreme Godhead, Narayana, identical to Himself in all respects.

This is well-sounded in the Sri Sooktham (Rigveda). The popular commentary of Nanjeeyar or Ranganatha is translated here.

Sri Ramanuja, the greatest exponent of Vishistadwaitha, refers to the Omnipotence of SRI in his Saranagathi Gadya.

Yamunacharya, the predecessor of Sri Ramanuja, summarises the four chapters of the Brahma Suthra in four slokas (Verses) attributing Paramatmika tattwams to SRI.

SRI Sthuthi by Venkatanatha or Nigamantha Maha Desika is perhaps the greatest concept of SRI as the Supreme Consort of Sriman Narayana, in all Her aspects.

With these studies from Vedas to Venkatanatha, this epigram envisages the truth SRI is the Supreme Goddess or Paramatmika, identical to Narayana.

This selective, yet penetrating study of "Sri", leafed out from the Rig Vedas (Third Millinium B.C.) to Venkatanatha
(Thirteenth Century A.D.), will evoke immense interest to all those deeply concerned with the VISHISHTADVAITH Philosophy, and its allied ritualistic Agamas both PANCHARATHRA AND VAIGANASA.

VEDIC CONCEPT OF "SRI"

The Vedas lay stress on the ever inseparable nature of "Sri" with her consort, the Supreme Lord Narayana. Sri is identical and different from the Lord, succinctly known as Narayani. Equally omniscient and omnicompetent, *they together evolve the myriad Universes of the Nitya and Leela Vibhuthies. They together are the Parabrahman. (Vide Lakshmi Tantra prefactory verse)

SANIKHYA YOGIC VIEW

There are many variations of this vedic View: Lakshmi is the primordial cosmic Energy (MCOLA PRAKRITI) presided over and evolved by the Lord, PARAMA PURUSHA (YOGA & SAMKHYA). Yet a few scholars affirm She is a distinct Being, a class by herself, neither the Paramatmika (Supreme Goddess) nor Jeevatmika (the reincarnating Soul). Another School of Philosophers hold that Sri is the Supreme Sovereign of all except the Paramapurusha, while Sriman Narayana is the One Supreme Sovereign of all including ‘Sri’. The Sankara School of Monoism (Advaitha) dismissed Her sovereignty simply as MAHAMAYA, the Great illusion of the Supreme Reality, which is nameless and formless. A critical assessment of the main currents of Vishishtadvaita Philosophy—drawn from the Vedas and Samhithas,

* "confirms this concept in the 9th verse of SRI SUKTHAM. Other Vedic Hymns which refer “SRI” as the Supreme Goddess are: two Shraddha Sukthas, Medha Suktha and Aditi Sukthas."
such as Swayambhuva, Manaka, Mahalakshmi, Dhanadhyya, Sātāmakha, Kasyapa, Satthvata, Vashista, Saunaka, Parasara and Atri—reveals the Ultimate Reality of Sri and expels all these misconceptions of the UNMANIFEST TRANSCENDENTAL and MANIFESTED ABSOLUTE REALITY. The Extra-Cosmic Personal Godheads, Sri Lakshmi Narayana.

This monograph, basically relies on the Sri Sooktha Bhashya of Sri Ranganatha Muni alias Nanjeeyar, whose analytical view of the epistemology, metaphysics and philosophy of Sri Tatwa seems to be based on the authorities of the Samhithas as well as the earlier exponents of Vishishtadvaita.

The Vedas refer to "Sri" as "bhavat-bhavatmaka" (Being and becoming) and "ahamartha-ahamta" (I-entity and I-hood) of the Creator of the infinite realms of the universe; Sri is the self-hood of the Supreme Self (Paramatman) i.e. of God. She is the Divine presence. She is the possessor of the six Divine Attributes (Shat Gunas)—i.e. Absolute Knowledge, (GNANA) Sovereignty (AISHVARYA), Potency (SHAKTHI) Strength (BALAJ) Virility (VIRYA) and Splendour or Might (TEJAS). She is the one total agglomerate of all auspicious universal principles, inherent without any blemish. She pervades, sustains and rules the entire Cosmos. All cosmic missions are fulfilled by Her—, all varieties of Wealth, realisation of the Self (Kaivalya) and the Supreme (Moksha Pradam).

SRI LAKSHMI STOTRAS by the famous exponents of Vishishtadvaita - Yamuna - Ramanuja - Venkatanatha and Sri Vatsanga Misra - become much more profoundly significant when closely viewed in this light of the Vedas and the Samhithas - i.e. Sri as the Supreme Goddess.
In (CHATUS SLOKI) Sri Yamunacharya attributes the four qualities of Narayana to Sri, as defined in the Four Chapters of the Brahma Sutras. They are (1) She is the cause, efficient and material (2) Her greatness is unsullied by anything (3) She is the means by whom all have to obtain the highest goal, the Supreme bliss and (4) it is Herself.

In ‘SARANAGATHI GADYA’ Sri Ramanujacharyaprefaces a sloka on the total identity of Sri with the Supreme Lord Narayana. Sri appertains only to the Parabrahman, Manifested and the Unmanifested.

‘SRI STAVA’ by Sri vatsanga Misra offers new keys to understand the Cosmic Grace of Sri. In his spontaneous outpourings, the Acharya submits his finite will to the INFINITE-WILL OF Sri (‘Prapatthi’ to Sri).

‘SRI STUTHI’

A shower of gold, it is traditionally held, poured down instantly as Nigamantha Maha Desika uttered these verses of Sri Stuthi, With an eloquence of poesy of Vedanta Desika describes the diverse manifestations of Sri, Her Cosmic benevolence and Grace.

This monograph attempts to outline the Philosophy found in the Vishishtadwita on Sri Tatwa—with a select study of the scriptures.
SRI SUKTHA

Sri Suktha is the well known hymns of fifteen verses in praise of "SRI" or Mahalakshmi, who is referred to as the consort of Parama Purusha in the Uttara Anuvaka Purusha Suktha.

हीष ते लक्ष्मी पर्न्यो।

The Suktha is not found in any of the extant recensions of the four Vedas, but has been popular down through the ages as a "Khila Rik" (Supplemental Hymn) like the 'Khila Mantras.' This Khila Rik is in the fifteenth Mandala of Rig Veda.

There are many commentaries on this Suktha, the most famous of which are those of Sayana (or Vidyaranya) and of Prthividharacharya. The commentary of Nanjiyar or Raganatha is popular chiefly among the Vishishtadwaitins. This has been frequently quoted as an authority by Sri Venkatanatha (13th Century) in his works. In spite of its popularity and authoritativeness, the Bhashya has been so far only in manuscripts.

The first two verses are addressed to Jatavedah (Narayana) and request him to bring Sri to the votary. The third and fourth are invocations to Sri herself and by the fifth, the devotee does the 'Prapatti.' By the next five, he prays for the annihilation of all evils and ignorance and for the gift of learning, wealth and fame.
The next two request the attendant of Sri to dwell in his house. The last three are, as in the opening verses, addressed to Jatavedah requesting him to bring Lakshmi to him.

O, Jatavedah, Bring unto me (the Goddess) Lakshmi of Golden hues, who is destroyer of sins (of her devotees).

Who is (replendent) with her garlands of (lotuses of) gold and silver, who is the Delight (of the universe) and who has Plenty of (wealth in the form of) gold etc.

O Jatavedah, Bring unto me that Lakshmi who will never leave me and by whose Grace, I may obtain gold and cattle and horses and servants.

I invoke Goddess Sri who has the All Pervading (Vishnu before her), who resides in the heart of souls, (or on the chest of Narayana) and who wakes up (first) at the call (for help) of the elephants (and other beings in distress).

1 Lord Sriman Narayana, who has all wealth.
2 who is benevolent and charming.
3 The resplendent or the sportive Goddess who diverts Her self by the creation etc., of the world.
(Or I invoke Sri who has the cavalry in front in her march) and the chariots in the middle and who wakes up (daily) by the cry of the elephants attending on her. May She be benign towards me.

I invoke Sri who is bliss itself, who is sweet smiling, who resides in a hall of gold, who is compassionate or drenched (on account of her rising from the Milky Ocean or being bathed by the attending elephants) who is effulgent who is pleased (because of her association with Her consort or by the worship of Her devotees), who pleases (all by granting their desires) and who dwells in the lotus and is lotus-coloured.

I take refuge in Sri who is delightful (to those who take refuge in her), who has a shining form, who shines with the fame (of protecting those who seek Her), who is worshipped by the Gods (for getting their wishes accomplished) or who is loved by Narayana, who is bounteous in her gifts and who has the lotus for Her weapons (to remove the distress of and to shower favours on, Her devotees) May the Alakshmi* go away from me, I invoke you, O Lakshmi.

* Nescience or the non-existence of the knowledge of Brahman.
Lakshmi of Sun-like lustre! the auspicious Bilva tree
was generated by your penance. May the fruits of that tree
destroy through (our) penance (viz chanting their names and
worshipping them) (our) ignorance (or nescience), obstacles,
to the worship and service of you) and extraneous things (which
are not related to you).

O Goddess, May the reputation (of being learned) come
to me along with the gems. I am born in this world and
may you give me fame and plenty!

I destroy (by your grace) the Alakshmi, who is impure,
who is the elder (of Lakshmi) and who is (the cause of) hunger
and thirst. Dispel from my house all lack of wealth and of
prosperity.
I invoke Sri, to realise whom fragrant things (like sandal-paste flowers, etc.) are the means, * who is unassailable by the insuspicious, who is ever joyful and the possessor of Wealth in the form of manure (because of the abundance of cattle she has), and who is the supreme sovereign of all (living) beings.

ममसे: काममाकृति वाष्पस्थित्य पठीमाहि।

पञ्चानं दण्डमयः सन्य भी: अयतां यथा। ॥

May we realise all (the wishes) of our hearts and (our) aims, the truth of (our) words (in the form of requests) the wealth of cattle and food. May Sri bring me fame.(also.)

कर्दमेन प्रजाभूता मायि संग्रह कर्तुप।

ब्रिहवे वासये मे कूले मात्रे पदमालिनीि। ॥

(O Kardamal) Bring to me 'Sri, who has been taken as a daughter by Kardama (i.e. Yourself) and make Her dwell in my family - her, who is the (Universal) Mother and who is decked with garlands of lotuses.

बाप: दुस्मेन्ति रसमभाणि चिन्होति पस्मेमेः।

नि ्र देवीं मात्रें ब्रिहवे वासये मे कूले ॥ ॥

'O'Ciklita,* Let the waters (which are the dwelling places of the Lord) generate (for me) viseous things (like ghee and others). Dwell in my house and make the Goddess Sri, the (Cosmic) Mother live in my abode.

* Who is the means of bringing fame to her devotees.

* One of the personal attendants of 'Lakshmi. The name of 'Manmatha, son of 'Sri.
O Jatavedah, Bring to me Lakshmi who is compassionate, who resides in the lotus pond who is the goal of (all) sacrificial rites who is tawny-colored, who has garlands of lotuses, who delights (the Universe) and who has an abundance (of wealth in the form) of gold.

O Jatavedah, Bring unto me Lakshmi who is compassionate, who resides in the lotus pond who is prosperity (itself), who is of a golden hue, who is decked with garlands of gold who is the (efficient) impeller (of the Universe) and who is of golden form.

O Jatavedah, Bring into me Lakahmi who will never abandon me and by whose grace I may get in abundance gold and cattle, servants and horses and (other) men.
Sri Ramanuja, successor to Sri Yumunacharya, popularised the Vishishtadvaita system of philosophy. He is the author of nine works. The Vedanta-sara, the Vedanta Dipa and Sri Bhashya, are graded commentaries on the Brahma Sutras with increasing elaborateness. The fourth is the Brahma on the Bhagavath Githa; the fifth, Vedartha Sangraha, is a digest of the teachings of all Upanishads; the sixth is the Nitya which codifies the daily rites of a devotee of God, and the last three are devotional songs in prose, the Gadya traya - Saranagathathi Gadya, Sriranga Gadya and Vaikuntha Gadya. At the beginning of the Saranagathi Gadya and in one or two other places, he has spoken of Sri, though he has not specially devoted a book to Her greatness.

In Sri do I take refuge, helpless as I am, in Sri - who is saviour of the helpless: who has got innumerable hostsof qualities - auspicious and unexcelled - like sovereignty and amiability who possesses a nature, forms, qualities and Vibhuti (splendour) suited to and loved by Narayana, the Bhagavan (Himself, the possessor of such superb qualities) in Sri, the Goddess (of superb qualities), the denizen of the lotus ponds who is ever inseparable from Her Consort and unimpeachable and unsullied (by any fault; and who is the queen of the Lord of all Gods and the mother of the entire universe (and of myself).
CHATHUS SLOKI

Sri Yamanacharya - popularly known as Alavandar - is the master of Sri Ramanuja. He is the author of Mahapurusha Nirnaya, Agamapramanya and siddhitraya (Atma, samirt and Ishwara Siddhi) - scholarly works of highly argumentative nature. His Stotra Ratna is a song overflowing with devotion to the Lord. He has written is his own lucid and melodious style another hymn in four verses called Chatus sloki on Goddess Lakshmi also has the four qualities which attributed to Her consort Narayana in the four chapters of the Brahma Sutras. They are: (1) He is the cause, efficient and material, of the whole universe; (2) His greatness is unsullied by anythings (3) He is the means by which one has to obtain the highest goal, the supreme bliss and (4) it is Himself. Lakshmi also has these.

The first sloka speaks about the vibhutis of Goddess; Lakshmi, the second about her greatness which is incomprehensible even to Her omniscient consort, The third about Her grace which grants the different wishes of all and the last speaks about Her charming forms which are ever inseparable from, and co-existent with, those of Sri Narayana. The stotras of the Acharyas who came after, have been based more or less upon this and they elucidate the idea contained herein.

O Goddess, Purushottama, the greatest Lord of all Souls (is) your consort; the Lord of the hooded (Serpents, Adisesha) (is) your couch and the throne; the sovereign of the birds,
(Garuda) whose body Vedas are (is) your vehicle; Maya, the world-enchantress (i.e. Prakriti, composed of the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) (is) your veil; all the hosts of Gods with their sweethearts care your bery of attendants and maids. Your name itself is Sri (Possessed of all this greatness as you are), how can we (adequately) sing your praise?

Your Greatness, which is boundless, eternal and ever blissful by nature, cannot be comprehended in its entirety even by your Loving consort, omnipotent His own greatness, O the supreme sovereign of the universe. The Beloved of the saviour of the universe! I know you shower your mercy on those who seek refuge in you and so I fearlessly begin to sing (the greatness of) you for I am both your servant and prapanna (i.e. refugee.)

Being blessed by the grace of a particle of the nectar of your merciful glances, the three worlds, non-existent before because of its absence and saved (i.e. placed free from all troubles) now and are endowed with endless prosperity, For
without the grace of the Darling of the heart of the lotus-eyed (Narayana), the joy is never possible for the souls anywhere in this world, in the Kaivalya and in the path of Vishnu (i.e. salvation.)

श्बान्ताननमहाविभूति परं यद्वृष्टि रूपं हरे।
मूर्ति भक्ति तत्त्वेव तत्त्विच्यतरं रूपं यदत्तपदुभवं ।
वान्यवानि यथायुक्तं विहस्तो रूपां गुणां वायुः
स्वरूपस्वरूपविवैः मादेवायुवानि ते ॥

With your wealth, splendour and forms suited to His own are inseparably united, they say all his forms: that aspect of His which is free from any modification, which is unlimited, which is the Lord of the Great Vibhuti and which is called the Para Brahman, that form (of Vishnu which is called Brahman, which is marvellously charming and hence more liked by him; and also all the other forms assumed by Him at his own pleasure to divert Himself.

यत्प्रायमोहहहवानविभवस्ताशेषकर्मणि ॥
रस्तुवाच्यायातोइ यामेन्यं नमाभि तमू ॥

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**SRI STUTHI**

Sri stuti is one of the many stotras of Sri Vedanta Desika also called Venkatanatha (1268 A.D.-1369 A.D.) He is perhaps the greatest of the Acharyas among the followers of the Vishishtadvaita philosophy after Sri Ramanuja by the wealth of his qualities, intellect and accomplishments. He was a true “Sarva-tantra-Svatantrya” (master of all Arts and sciences) “Kavi-tarkika-simha” (easily the greatest of the poets and controvertialists). His works in prose and verse, and in Sanskrit and Tamil, are many and varied, and range from the simplest and sweetest poems to the most difficult works on abstruse metaphysical subjects. His command of language is marvellous. The greatness of his works can be well imagined by the tribute paid to him by Appayya Dikshita, the veteran scholar and polemic of the Advaita School, who wrote a commentary upon Yadavabhuyudaya of Sri Desika and another on his Padukasahasra.

Sri Desika was an equally great scholar of Tamizh and the author of many poems in chaste and sweet Tamizh overflowing with devotion to the Lord. His Rahasya works in the Manipravala style (Sanskrit and Tamil mixed) - beginning with the most elementary “Tattvapadavi” and “Rahasyapadavi” and going up to the ‘Paramadabhangya’ and Rahasya Trayasaara are like a series of text-books on the first principles of the Vishishtadwaitha philosophy and on the meaning of the Three Mantras. These form a complete and extensive literature on the Doctrine of Prapath (self-surrender).

In all Sri Desika’s works total to 116 in prose and verse; many original and a few commentaries on the works of previous Acharyas and some on his own. His works can be broadly classified as follows: 9 works on the Vedanta; 6 on logic and
Metaphysics; 34 Rahasyas; 5 Karyas; One Drama; 4 of a polemic nature 18 poems in Tamil. 29 stotras. 3 on rituals; and 7 on diverse subjects like geography and sculpture.

The 29 stotras are devoted to Sriman Narayana, His incarnations, His consorts, His weapons and His attendants.

Sri stuti is one of them and is in praise of Goddess Lakshmi in 25 verses. Following is an analysis of the content of the poem.

1-3 Introductory - Invocation to Lakshmi to bless the poet with power to praise Her:

4-9 Greatness of Lakshmi; she and Her consort are jointly the originators, Saviours and masters of the universe;

10-12 The diverse manifestations of Lakshmi.
13 The coronation of Lakshmi.
14-19 Manificence of Lakshmi in granting the wishes of those who desire for wealth, for the realisation of the soul or for the attainment of God.

20-22 The poet as the supplicant for Her favour.
23-24 The poet narrates how he was blessed by Lakshmi.
25 Conclusion.

Sri (or Lakshmi)! you are the auspicious of the auspicious and adorn the throne-like chest of (Vishnu), the conqueror of Madhu with your lustre. You are the good incarnate of all the subjects that pray for a greatness cognisable by perception and scriptures. I seek refuge in you, destitute as I am.
Mother Padma! (In the Nyasa Yagna) the soul is offered as an oblation to You and Your consort and You are deities that should receive it directly (without any intermediary); for your Lord and yourself, Though sought for by the Vedas incessantly, never comes within their concept and it makes our hearts dance with joy.

O Goddess, You are praised by all who are embodied or enchant everyone to do so. Thus I am also helpless in engaging myself in Thy appreciation. The moment I began Thy praise, my attempts were crowned with success, I became worthy of appreciation by all else in the world. For this significant cause who would not worship Thy twin feet at once!

O Goddess Lakshmi; Thy Lord, who governs this vast manifestations of the Universe as His Body, causing birth-existence-death to innumerable mutable and immutable beings, who
is beyond the Ken of all attempts thought, speech and mental probe, who is the focal point of all auspicious qualities, who is the subject of contemplation for the seers and saints, who is the Absolute, the Infinite of supreme Glory, identifies by the soft radience of your red feet as your distinct mark. Is it so?

निपुंशप्रणयपरिति देवि नित्यानायं
विपुलतः चेत्यनविधिनुं इति नर्योऽरक्षयस्मृ।
शेषविते तिनमनमस्य मौलस्य श्रमोऽः
संवचने तिह्रणविविचारस्य श्रव्यावशेषाः।

O Goddess of shining beauty, your bond of love (and affinity) to Thy consort (Lord Narayana) is ever uninterrupted (by any passing phenomenon) even by time. Thy Lord is the receptacle of infinite auspicious qualities. You are matching Him in all respects of power and intelligence. Yet you both do not deviate from each other's purpose (of sustenance of the whole universe). Adhiseshha, the minds of the pure devotees and the Vedantins serve as coach to thine endless plays.

उद्देशयत्वं जननि महालक्ष्मिन नित्यान्यायं
प्रत्ययपे हसिनि पुर्वयोगरेकाविविलयोगाद।
पश्चे प्रत्यक्षतः च निगमैौतिस्य मन्वित्यायणो
नावः चैवेदं भजति महिमा नतेस्मानां नः।

O Mother, Mahalakshmi, You or you rconsort are only overlords of the Universe. My soulful dedication is to you both! Your supreme nature is reached by the (followers of) Vedas, our minds are enchanted by Thy exaulted glory of Thy supreme Being (In Atma Samarpana or the dedication of one's self to the supreme is offered to both Lakshmi and Narayana alike.)
The Beloved of the Paramount Sovereign of the universe! when you and your consort are engaged eternally in a game of dice for your sport, the Vedas (like ladies) together with the hosts of Divine Angels stand around and observe. In it, the Prakriti composed of the three qualities (of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) is the chest-board kept in the centre, the different worlds (of Indra, Brahma and others) are the chequers and Brahma, Siva and others act as the dice for you. (The creation of the world is your sport and all the deities are but your creatures)

You have taken to Mukunda as your resort and you are the Sovereign of the world. Your names like “Lakshmi”, “Padma”, “the Daughter of the (Milky) Ocean”, “Vishnupatni”, and “Indira” are like the capital amount of the Vedas. Those who repeat them (in prayer) never again whirl in the wheel of birth (and death) which is turned by the winds of sin.
Some hold you are the Ruler of the Universe and others your Beloved. Of what use are those people, torn by mutually conflicting opinions? For they get drowned finally (in the ocean of ignorance), though they raise their heads a bit. But our Supreme Dieties are you two forming the Couple. The Vedas that speak about Hari and about His sports as means to your pleasure, have for their final good and purport only both of you, Goddess.

Vishnu is under a vow to remove the distress of the suffering (humanity) and they say you are His Beloved companion endowed with a unanimity of opinion. As the waves of the Milky ocean are inseparable from their sweetness and so follow it wherever it goes even to distant places far receding from the shore. Vishnu in all His incarnations goes after your suitable forms in an agreeable manner.

That slender primaeval form of yours, lonely like the purified gold (molten) and slightly bent by the weight of your elevated bosoms, adds beauty to the emerald-like person of Vishnu. In this form which is like an Ocean of Bliss, the origination and reabsorption of all your manifestations take place eternally caused by the force of your will, like the waves (that rise and vanish on the surface of the ocean).
आसन्सारे विततमलिं वासमनं यदिभूति–
युज्मन्त्रांत्युपन्तः किंकरो मेरुधन्वः
यथा नित्यं नयनश्वकेरकुल्हयो महेन्द्र;
पर्थ तारं परिणतिसौ मालेश्वरस्वदीये।

Saraswathy has for Her wealth all the vast world of speech ever since the beginning of the universe. By the mere knitting of the eye-brows of Parvathi, the Meru - bowed (Siva) become almost a servant of the flower - bowed (Manmatha), and Indirani is the cynosure of all the thousand eyes of Indira. This greatness (that is found) in all the three is but the result of Your least wiil, Padma.

अये भुत शरस्त्रमये मेदीपैठे निष्णाय।
मन्मोराशेेशिश्वमुदांधासुप्पलुच्चातु दिशारस्त्राय।
पुष्पमारत्यणगितान्तः पुष्कलावतेकान्यः
बल्मीइंरामायणस्वच्छ गजेन्द्राः।

You rose from the Milky Decan which was rich with the nectar (that came before You) and adorned a throne of lotuses in front of your consort. Then the lordly elephants bathed you with (water from) the golden vases being led by the clouds like Pushkala - vartaka that flooded the universe, with a rain of flowers.

श्रायांक्षप लक्षास्मतः नहसे विष्णुवस्त्यःशंसारस्तः
शापकाण्ता: शरणःगमन सारोधः: सुरेन्द्राः।
लक्ष्मी भुवनिष्णुवनमिदं लक्षितं त्वरकःकाः
सर्वाकार्तिरस्वदृश्यं संपं निर्मित्वः।
Sister (literally twin-born) of nectar! The chiefs of Gods saw you enthroned on the bosom of Vishnu and with their consorts sought refugee in you distressed by the curse (of Durvasa). Then they got back the three worlds enriched by your (benevolent) glances and enjoyed the wealth which began to flourish unchecked ever since.

The floods of affluence vie with one another in rushing to that quarter where your eyes play with their glances—Your eyes which have taken the vow of saving the destitute, which are (cool) like the blue clouds showering nectar and which much resemble the lotuses opening with the rise of the early dawn.

There are some people in the world who are eager to begin the practice of (karma) yoga and in order to carry it out and (at the same time) preserve the virtue of being devoted to you in a single-hearted manner they long for wealth (only from you). Towards them, the wealth rushes forth in torrents from the Earth or the place of Kubera or the sky or from the ocean in quantities far exceeding their wishes.
Lotus-mansioned (Lakshmi)! Persons desirous of Beatitude just meditate in their hearts upon Your feet that are like the diadem on the heads of the Vedas (upanishads) Anon they begin to move about with all the (royal) visignia: pairs of chowries are smiling on either side; an umbrella over the head is adding dignity to them; their ears are pleased to hear eulogistic words and their bodies are adorned by garlands of flowers. O wonder; (over and above the realisation of their wants get salvation, they enjoy wealth in this world also).

The beloved of Vishnu! Thy devotees, spotless in their devotion, look to thy mercy which is like a boundary line that marks the end of the series of births coming down to that of a ‘Stamba’ (the smallest micro-organism) and pray to You to get all prosperity, to curb the greatest foes (like covetousness and anger) to remove the hosts of sins and to dispel the primaeval Nescience.

जाताकाह्वा जननि युक्तोरूपे गर्भिकारे
भायाति क्रिया विभव गतिलं भायामानत्वार्थयाः
प्रीत्यें विशिष्टिर्द्र च वृत्तिः प्रीतिमन्तो मजन्ते
वेलामक्ष्यश्रमन्दलं बैठिं कर्मसौत्पुर्णं
Mother! The blessed, who wish to focus their single-minded devotion to You both, treat with contempt (literally, as trash) all the wealth of the world sprung from Maya (of God) and for the pleasure of you, and Sriman Narayana they observe the laws laid down by the Vedas which act ends in avoiding the transgression of the limits of the Dharmic code of the Vedas.

Goddess! I salute Your lotus-like feet which the Devatas worship with their garland like heads and which are like the fountain of affluence free from all misfortunes. Blessed are they that bend their heads at Your feet though slightly, for at the end of their lives, they cast off their mortal frames and go to dwell in the kingdom of God Vasudeva which is devoid of Tamas.

Your lovely glances pregnant with cordial affection, express Your unceasing mercy and partake of the nature of nectareous waves, by your pure and loving glances drench me even it be for a moment, as I am scorched by the heat caused by the three-fold miseries (relating to the body, to the world and to fate) and withered by helplessness.
By Your grace all thoughts rise in my mind overflowing with devotion towards the Lord Hari and they are like Suns in dispelling the dark fears of the mundane existence. Further with your highly amiable and munificent nature, you are showering on me again and again heaps of good fortunes. So what more can I beg of you now?

You are my mother, O Goddess, and Vasudeva is my Father. Therefore, Mother, I have become the one object of the compassion of you (both). Further I have been dedicated for your service by my masters. (Thus I have been blessed in all ways). Still you seem to ask me, with a sweet smile glistening on your lips "what more shall I give?" Thus you shine.
Lakshmi is the inexhaustible treasure of auspiciousness and the utmost limits indescribable compassion. She is the Eternal Bliss and adorns like a garland of Mandava flowers, the heads of the Vedas (Upanishads) She is (again) the Divine wealth of (Sirman Narayana) the conqueror of Madhu and is the Kama- dhenu, (The all yielding Divine Cow) in granting the wishes of all (the people in) the world. May that Lakshmi dwell for ever in my heart.

उपशित्युष्मकोन्नि स्मरकालिकुतिमिद्यो कक्षक्षुकालिनविद्वेगः
कलिकिनिलध्यायः स्तोत्रमेतर्पणम्
साक्षरकुशलसिमासारवमोऽमः मन्वित ||

This stotra of the Lotus - mansonied (Lakshmi) has risen from Venkatesa who has a full - grown devotion of Acharyas and it is capable of dispelling the faults of the Kali Age in all persons. Those that read this stotra of Lakshmi will become paramount sovereigns and enjoy the highest happiness and prosperity.
Sristava

Sri Vatsanka Misra, the ardent disciple of Sri Ramanuja, was held in high esteem by all, both for his wisdom and spiritual eminence. His devotion and saintliness were paralleled only by those of the Alwars—who were called as such, because they sank in the ocean of Bhakthi to God and so he was known popularly as Kurathazhwan (i.e. Azhwan of Kuram, his birth place near Kancheepuram). He is the author of a work called Yamakaratnakara and of five devotional psalms which go by the name of Pancha Stava-Sri Stava, Varadharaja Stava, Sundarabananu Stava, Atimanusha Stava and Vaikunta Stava—all in charming and moving verses.

His Sri Stava is in praise of Goddess Lakshmi in eleven verses. The first is an invocation to the Goddess, the next four form an introduction to the poem and the next three describe the greatness of Lakshmi. The prapathi of the Goddess is done in the ninth and the tenth. The last is a prayer to the Goddess, for blessing the poet with her benevolent glances.

स्त्रिस्ति श्रीदिस्मादश्रेष्ठजगतः तर्पोपरसारिती! ।
सत्यमूर्तिमनापत्तिकपं सर्वं च कुर्वनु हुरिः ।
यथवा वीर्य मुखं तद्दिक्षितपराधीनो विष्णेविलं
क्रीडेय खलु नान्यथागृह्य रत्नदा स्थादैवरस्याचया ॥
Fortunate may Sri be pleased to bestow on us, Sri whose face Hari turns to and by whose gestures, He is guided in the acts of creation sustentation and destruction of the universe and also in the act of giving the Heavens (i.e. Swarga) or the Hell or Eternal Bliss (as each one deserves, (Lakshmi and Hari) have identity of tastes (and likes). If it is otherwise, the sport (of creation) will no longer afford them joy.

Ο Sri Goddess Lakshmi, To praise Thee the Mother of all the universe, we make an attempt. So bless us with suitable words and have an increasingly loving temperament towards us. Give this servant and refugee of the devotion and make him happy. May we become objects within the range of the play of your wave-like glances.

Which (of the two) do poets call a ‘stotra?’ If it is this, viz, the superimposition of the qualities possessed by one another without them and praising Him (as having them) then such a stotra is untrue (and impossible) in your case. (For there are no qualities that are lovable and that are not found in you). Or if they say that a faithful and complete narration of the qualities
existing in one is "Stotra" (that too cannot be done in your case; for) how can such words be found (or coined) even by the Master of speech (Brihaspathi) - words suited to your ocean-like qualities.

To describe the qualities of yours which are well-known to be beyond the reach of mind and speech alike, my words have come out with a watering mouth. But (we) do not consider our attempt (to do the impossible) ridiculous; for a Canora bird does not certainly keep still drawing back her tongue, when she is thirsty, because of the fact that she will not be able to drink all the moonlight completely, all by herself.

Mean and wicked-natured, undevoted and indifferent and ignorant though I am, O Goddess, I am either afraid nor ashamed to taste (the nectar of) your glory (by beginning to praise it). For by that (attempt of mine) your glory will not be sullied (but I will be benefited). It is indeed a well-known fact that the Ganges is not made impure by the licking of a dog and that the dog too is neither ashamed nor afraid (to lick it). But its thirst is certainly quenched.
The power to control others that is found in all persons, the characteristic of beauty and charm which is considered auspicious and whatever is called ‘Sat’ (i.e. good or existent) in this world, all that is dependent on you. Because of this, those objects are known in this world by these words; either as Sri (Sri itself) i.e. being identical with thee or as “Srimat” Possessing Sri (and hence as being different from you).

Goddess Lakshmi, the extent of your greatness is not comprehended either by yourself or by Narayana. Though it is like this still the Omniscience of both of you does not suffer the least. For they say that not to know what does not exist (i.e. to know a nonexistent thing as non-existing) only corroborates the omniscience of a person. On the contrary, one who declares he knows the properties of a Sky-lotus a lotus that blossoms in the sky (i.e. a non-existent one) will only be called a man out of his senses.

loke varna paramparataram
yastya: pramadapramanamradharnanti
sa maa maditri mukhah samayamaham
va devadeva maraahrih shriyamahayam
We seek refuge in Sri who is the Divine consort of the Lord of all the Gods (Narayana), the Goddess of Learning, Saraswathy, is whose attendant and the flow or otherwise of whose (Saraswathi's) graces is responsible for the difference in this world between a tree (that is non-sentient) and Brihaspathi, the Lord of Speech (who is Omniscient).

We resort to Sri, the consort of the Supreme Lord of all Gods (for protection) to Sri by whose mere will to throw her sweet glances, the whole world came into existence immediately with all it things sprouting forth non-existent as it was because of their absence.

May that Lakshmi, the consort of Lord Sriranganatha, bless even me by Her glances, by becoming the object of whose glances even for a moment all become Mayesas (Lord Siva of powerful rulers).