THE HOLY TRINITY

Hindus acknowledge that, at the most fundamental level, God is the One without a second — the absolute, formless, and only Reality known as Brahman, the Supreme, Universal Soul. Brahman is the universe and everything in it. Brahman has no form and no limits; it is Reality and Truth. Thus Hinduism is a pantheistic religion: It equates God with the universe. Yet Hindu religion is also polytheistic: populated with myriad gods and goddesses who personify aspects of the one true God, allowing individuals an infinite number of ways to worship based on family tradition, community and regional practices.

"Since time dawns, we; humans are fascinated about gods. The questions that we ask ourselves are usually Who are these beings?

Gods were nothing but the primeval force that governs the affairs of the universe. The letter G in God means generator, O means operator and D means destroyer. The cosmic manifestation is undergoing these processes over and over again without us realising it.

Hinduism has 33 million gods or sometimes known as demigods. The leader of them is King Indra. He is the lord of thunderclouds and king of the heavenly planets. Above Indra are the Trinity of Gods; namely Lord Brahma (creator), Lord Vishnu (preserver), Lord Shiva (destroyer). Below Indra, are the lesser gods like Yama (god of death) and Varuna (god of seas and waters).

The stories of various gods had been carefully recorded in ancient vedic literatures such as the Vedas, Puranas and Isopanisad. To support these stories, there is the Bhagavad- Gita. The Bhagavad-Gita is the actual science of God and the essence of the Vedas itself.

In this modern age of Kali, people are not interested anymore with gods. This is the influence of this Dark Age. When people are not interested with spirituality and self realization can never be able to control their senses. Thus, they are actually killing themselves slowly and the time is up for them to die, they will be forced to take birth as lower animals or hellish beings. Thus one must take into account hearing the tales of gods.

"At the beginning of time, there was nothing. There were no planets and stars. The universe itself has not existed in this time. It is just darkness.

However in the darkness, only the God of the name Sri Vishnu existed. It is explained by Bhaktivedanta Swami that Lord Vishnu lies on the causal ocean known as the Garbodhaka. The ocean itself was formed from the dissolution of the planetary systems.

Bhaktivedanta Swami described about this ocean in the book entitled Krsna. It is said that that the ocean is the origin of material creation. From the word Karana came the Malay word; 'kerana'. It means reason. Thus the Karana Ocean is also known as the Ocean of Reason for this ocean is the ultimate reason of creation of this world.

The proof of before the existence of universe and the gods, Lord Vishnu existed is explained in the Brahma-Samhita and the Vedas. At this moment, Lord Vishnu is so gigantic, and here He is known as Maha Vishnu.

It is because of Maha Vishnu, the creation begins to take place. Maha-Vishnu threw His glance to the bubbling water of the Karana Ocean or the Garbodhaka Ocean. In "It is because of Maha Vishnu, the creation begins to take place. Maha-Vishnu threw His

glance to the bubbling water of the Karana Ocean or the Garbodhaka Ocean. In this way, the Supreme Lord injected His male energy into the waters of Karana Ocean. Immediately, the bubbles began to emanate from His body. Each bubble is actually one universe. Thus, the concept of multiple universes or parallel universe put forward by modern scientist is a fact as immure-able bubbles that emanate from His gigantic body are universes. This is the ultimate beginning of creation that occurs before creation of gods.

Maha-Vishnu expanded Himself into many uncountable forms, which are much smaller than Himself. These expansions are known as the Garbodaksayayi Vishnu.

Garbodaksayayi Vishnu entered into each and every bubble which is actually a particular universe. When Garbodaksayayi Vishnu entered these universes, His other expansion known as Ananta Sesa also entered into each bubble.

The tale of Brahma's creation actually takes place in this particular universe, which is a bubble to the great Maha Vishnu. It is said that in each universe there is a Brahma, and we do not have the knowledge of how the Brahmas' of the other universes look like.

"Lord Vishnu was lying comfortably and meditating in His sleeping posture on His snake-bed of the name Ananta-Sesa. This sleeping posture is known as yoga-nindram. Ananta Sesa is a multi-hooded snake which was floating on the great ocean of milk in the planet known as Vaikuntha.

Upon meditation, a long cord started to emerge from Lord Vishnu's deep navel and subsequently began to move upwards defying the planet's gravitational pull.

The umbilical cord began to journey away from Lord Vishnu's navel further and further upwards until it penetrated the atmosphere of the planet Vaikuntha. Not stopping there, the cord shot upwards beyond and beyond into darkness.

Finally the cord stopped moving all of a sudden. At the end of the cord, there was a pink lotus flower which is still in the bud stage. The lotus petals closed tightly but some sort of effulgence shone from the flower. All of a sudden, the petals began to open and a man was sitting in the lotus flower with his eyes closed tightly.

The man has four heads, with each head facing the four cardinal points of the world, namely north, south, east and west. Each head "was wearing a golden helmet bedecked with jewels. Four hands emerge from the man's body and each hand was found to be holding different things namely a prayer book, a blooming lotus flower, prayer beads and a water pot. His body was nicely constructed and decorated with various jewellery and ornaments. On the forehead of each head was painted with an auspicious clay marking known as tilaka. Each face was handsome with raised nose, thick eyebrows and rosy lips. This man is none other than the Hindu god of creation known as Brahma.

It is confirmed in various Vedic literatures that Lord Brahma is the first created being from the navel of Garbodhakasayi Vishnu.

"The gopis (eternal girlfriends of Lord Krishna) stated that, 'From Your navel emanated the original lotus flower which is the birth site of Brahma; the creator.'

Brahma opened his eyes which are eight in number and looked around without turning his heads as he doesn't have to. He saw nothing but darkness in the four directions. Brahma tried to find other lives and subsequently tilted his head and peered down. He saw that a long cord that connects the lotus flower which he was sitting. Lord Brahma stood and levitated. Now He has a greater view and saw that the cord goes deeper and deeper into an unknown planet. (Brahma did not know that the planet is Vaikuntha).

"Where this cord goes?" asked the god of creation to himself. Feeling very curious, Brahma descended from the lotus flower and made way to the planet. He wanted to know the source of the cord which was his "birthplace. Ultimately, Lord Brahma entered into the planet and a vast ocean greeted his eyes. The waves of the ocean roared when Brahma came nearer to its surface. However the cord goes deeper into the ocean. "What a long cord is it, well I shall not give up in finding the source", said Brahma to himself surprised. The Lord without any hesitation dived into the ocean. The ocean rippled once Brahma dived into it.

Lord Brahma swam and eventually he came to the ocean bed and within the ocean, Brahma saw a super-large palace within the ocean.

"This palace is so big! Who is here must be the one who created me, I must find my creator", said Brahma with a determinant aim.

The palace was decorated with billions and billions of pillars. The pillars itself were decorated with jewels. The glaring "effulgence of these jewels made Brahma perplexed.

Eventually Brahma came to the main quarters of the palace. At the main quarters He saw a gigantic serpent with millions of hoods. Each hood was decorated with jewels beautifully dazzling. Each hood has two eyes which appeared to be very fearful. The body was so white like snow and the necks were bluish. The serpent known as Ananta-Sesa or Ananta-Deva. On the body of Ananta-Sesa which was decorated with pillows, Sri Vishnu was lying very comfortably. His skin is just dark blue just like the colour of clouds in the rainy season. He wore a yellow garment and held a disc which is razor sharp (Sudharshana cakra), a lotus flower, a conch shell (Pancajanya) and a large club (Kaumodaki) was lying beside the Lord

Lord Brahma stood like a statue for a while in front of Sri Vishnu, surprised and as well as scared seeing the gigantic form of "the Lord. But this moment of surprise and fear doesn't last long because as if told by someone, Lord Brahma sank to one knee upon Lord Vishnu. This action of Brahma was significant because he understood that he came from Vishnu. In other words, Brahma knew that Lord Vishnu is his father. In Hindu culture, a son or daughter must pay respects to their parents when they see their parents. This is shown by Lord Brahma respecting his great father.

Lord Brahma says, "My Lord, the material creation is created because of You as Maha Vishnu glances upon the womb of this material nature. Just as a male injects his sperm into the womb of a female that results in formation of foetus and subsequently an individual, similarly You creates this material nature by transferring Your energy to the womb of material nature."

"This is confirmed by the statement in Brahma-Samhita that 'Lord Vishnu is lying in the Karana Ocean. When He exhales, innumerable universes come into existence and when He inhales, these universes enter within Him. Bhaktivedanta Swami explained this is how the material creation is created and destroyed in a cyclic pattern. Actually, the concept of ultimate destruction does not appear in Hinduism, as the universes is created and destroyed and re- created.

Lord Brahma paused for a while and continued, "My Lord, it is You that expands from Maha-Vishnu into Garbodhakasayi Vishnu and I have not the slightest idea of what are you are going to do after this. I have not known my purpose yet. Why You created me from Your navel? But I believe that You will reveal to me the reason."

Brahma said further, "Lord Govinda, please therefore disclose the purpose of my birth. Upon hearing His son's prayers and respects, Lord Vishnu opened his lotus like eyes, smiled and woke up from His lying position and sat. Ananta whimpered suddenly. Lord Vishnu said, "My dear Brahma, what you said is true and I accept it without any hesitation. Thus, now it is your duty to satisfy me as I created you in order to create the universe and organisms in it." He paused a while.

You may create other gods to help you in these affairs. However, you must meditate for thousand years and after the meditation, you will receive the knowledge from Me to create." explained Lord Vishnu further. I will carry out Your wish immediately", replied Brahma solemnly, rising. He bowed to Lord Vishnu with great respect; Lord Vishnu extends His right hand, blessing His son.

Lord Brahma stormed out of the palace and swam to the surface where he reached the cord which is still up in the air. Lord Brahma flew upwards and reached His lotus flower. He sat there and started to meditate. Brahma meditated for one thousand years according to gods calculations. Later at the end of his meditation, Brahma received knowledge from Lord Vishnu regarding the method of creation.

This knowledge of creation is analogous to some permission by the Lord. We must understand that knowledge is never ours to own. That means we are not the master of the knowledge. Everything comes from Vishnu. For example, in this particular case of Brahma to create, it is not possible for Brahma to immediately create the universe as soon as he opens his eyes. He requires his father's knowledge. It is not his knowledge but is Vishnu's. Similarly, what we learnt is never ours and never will be. The original knowledge comes from Vishnu and is passed down and distributed among the beings in this universe. Thus we can conclude the proprietor of knowledge is none other than Vishnu, as He is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said that Lord Vishnu is wearing knowledge in the form of necklace. Just as a necklace is unimportant for an individual in general, similarly Lord Vishnu's knowledge is so vast and is unlimited, so even knowledge itself has no importance to Him.

Lord Brahma thus created the universe, namely planets and stars. However he has not created any beings yet. Brahma meditated a while closing his eyes and suddenly a baby sprang out from his mind. The baby floated in the space. Without any prior information or warning, another three babies sprang out of Brahma's mind. These are the quartet brothers. The four brothers were called as the 'Four Kumaras'. The Four "Kumaras were namely Sanaka, Sananta, Sanandana and Sanat-kumara.

The four Kumaras were the first sons born out of Brahma. They appeared like small children but their body gives off effulgence. They wore no clothes except for a piece of white linen cloth covering their pubic area. Lord Brahma addressed them, "My dear Kumaras, I created you from my mind so that all of you can carry out my wish of propagating the population of this universe."

The four brothers looked at each other and then turned simultaneously to their father; Brahma. Sanaka; the eldest brother spoke thus, "My dear father, it is already known to us that you yourself was born from Lord Vishnu, so we wanted to live our lives devoted to Sri Vishnu because He is the Supreme Personality of the Godhead. Therefore we "are unable to fulfil your wish of propagating the population.

Upon speaking thus, the Kumaras immediately vanished from the sight with explosion. Brahma flew into rage but he controlled his anger with great intelligence.

Bhaktivendata Swami stated that Lord Brahma has the capability of controlling his anger with his intelligence. If we humans wanted to control our anger, we need to do so using our mind and intelligence. A learned man is able to control the anger more efficiently compared to an uneducated man. This is a general rule. Education in this case means not going to school and learning the sciences, but is actually learning the philosophy of spirituality. This is the core of controlling anger. If anyone were able to control the anger, he is eligible to control his senses and if that is possible, he can be steady in the determination.

Controlling His emotion, Lord Brahma created ten beings from His mind, exactly like how he created the Kumaras, but the beings sprang as adults and not like mere babies as the Kumaras. These ten beings were known as 'Manas-Putras'. The word 'Manas-Putras' means mind sons. They were the original fathers of mankind but because they were created by Brahma, Hindus' refer Brahma as Pitamaha. It means grandfather. But as Brahma himself was created by Lord Vishnu, He is known as PraPitamaha. It means great grandfather. The Manas- Putras name were as follows; Narada, Pulastya, Marichi, Angiras, Pracetas, Pulaha, Kratuj, Vashista, Bhrigu and Atri.

My dear sons, I created all of you to populate this entire universe, with your off springs, please do not say you cannot as the Kumaras that I created were unable to fulfil my wish." said Lord Brahma. Marichi representing his siblings said, "My dear father, we will carry out your wish".

"Please bless us", said Vashista and all of them bowed except Narada. He said, "Father, I wish to dedicate my life to Lord Vishnu without getting married." Lord Brahma after hearing this flew into rage. His eyes turned reddish but suddenly a powerful voice was heard across the newly formed universe.

"Listen here Brahma, Narada has My word that in this life he will live his entire life dedicated to Me", Lord Brahma understood that the voice belongs to Lord Vishnu.

"So be it Narada," replied Brahma slowly. Narada bowed his head to his father and travelled to the direction of Vaikuntha to see Lord Vishnu. However the other Manas- Putras vanished to carry out the order of propagating the universe. After instructing his sons, Lord Brahma returned to his lotus "flower which is actually his planetary abode known as Brahmaloka. It is told that various gods and goddess of numbering 33 million, and 840 000 creatures within this universe were all originated from the 'Manas-Putras'.

After the propagation of mankind and various beings, Lord Vishnu expanded Himself once more into much smaller Vishnu known as Ksirodakasayi Vishnu. The Ksirodakasayi Vishnu entered into each and every heart of the beings, including the lowborn animals like ant up to gods like Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva. Ksirodakasayi Vishnu is also known as the Paramatma; Supersoul. Thus, Lord Vishnu exists in our heart as Supersoul. He not only entered within the hearts of the beings but also within each and every atom that make up this universe. This fact is confirmed in the Brahma-Samhita that Lord Vishnu had entered within the atom.

The Bhagavad- Gita states; I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. No beings can fully understand Lord Vishnu's expansion, its purpose and the numbers. It is beyond anything, beyond the knowledge. Lord Krishna (8th

incarnation of Lord Vishnu) says that it is possible that for a physicist to estimate the number of atoms that make up earth, but to estimate Lord Vishnu's various forms, activities and paraphernalia is totally impossible and out of question.

The creation of universes and various beings all originally came from Lord Vishnu. He is the utmost root cause of everything in this universe. Lord Vishnu is the supreme god that preserves this universe and He took numerous incarnations to preserve the universe from the hands of various demons.

In the eleventh chapter of Bhagavad- Gita, Lord Krishna explained the history of the universe briefly. Lord Brahma was born out of His navel. From Brahma, all living entities all over the universe are manifested.

The various Vedic literatures explained that there are innumerable universes and innumerable planets within each universe, and each planet is full of population of different varieties.

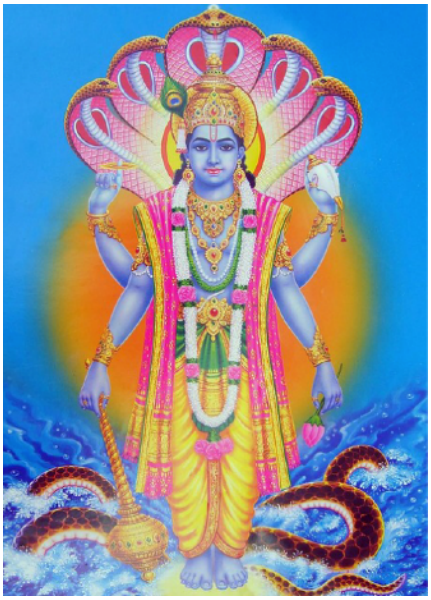
The Holy Trinity

Known as Brahman, this sacred, yet rather vague, divinity is represented in many different Hindu gods. The three most important are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Being the creator god, Brahma's name sounds very similar to the divine entity known as Brahman. It is Brahma who brought all things into being.

Brahma, the Creator

Brahma is the first member of the Hindu Trinity and is "the Creator" because he periodically creates everything in the universe. (The word periodically here refers to the Hindu belief that time is cyclical; everything in the universe — except for Brahman and certain Hindu scriptures — is created, maintained for a certain amount of time, and then destroyed in order to be renewed in ideal form again.)

Vishnu, the Preserver



Vishnu is the second member of the Hindu Trinity. He maintains the order and harmony of the universe, which is periodically created by Brahma and periodically destroyed by Shiva to prepare for the next creation.

Vishnu is worshipped in many forms and in several avatars (incarnations). Vishnu is an important, somewhat mysterious god. Less visible than nature gods that preside over elements (such as fire and rain), Vishnu is the pervader — the divine essence that pervades the universe. He is usually worshipped in the form of an avatar (see below).

Shiva, the Destroyer

Shiva is the third member of the Hindu Trinity, tasked with destroying the universe in order to prepare for its renewal at the end of each cycle of time. Shiva's destructive power is regenerative: It's the necessary step that makes renewal possible.

Hindus customarily invoke Shiva before the beginning of any religious or spiritual endeavour; they believe that any bad vibrations in the immediate vicinity of worship are eliminated by the mere utterance of his praise or name.

There are multiple stories about the origin of Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. The Shrimad Bhagvatam states that Shiva emerged from a burning tower when Lord Vishnu and Brahma had an argument. The Shiva Purana states that lord Vishnu originated when lord Shiva rubbed some nectar on his ankle.

The Vishnu Purana says that lord Shiva originated from the eyebrows of the lord Vishnu, and that is why lord Shiva is mostly in the meditative state.

Though it seems that there are multiple stories and hence, confusion about the origins of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva, but, actually all the stories are true.

There are broadly two reasons for this confusion:-

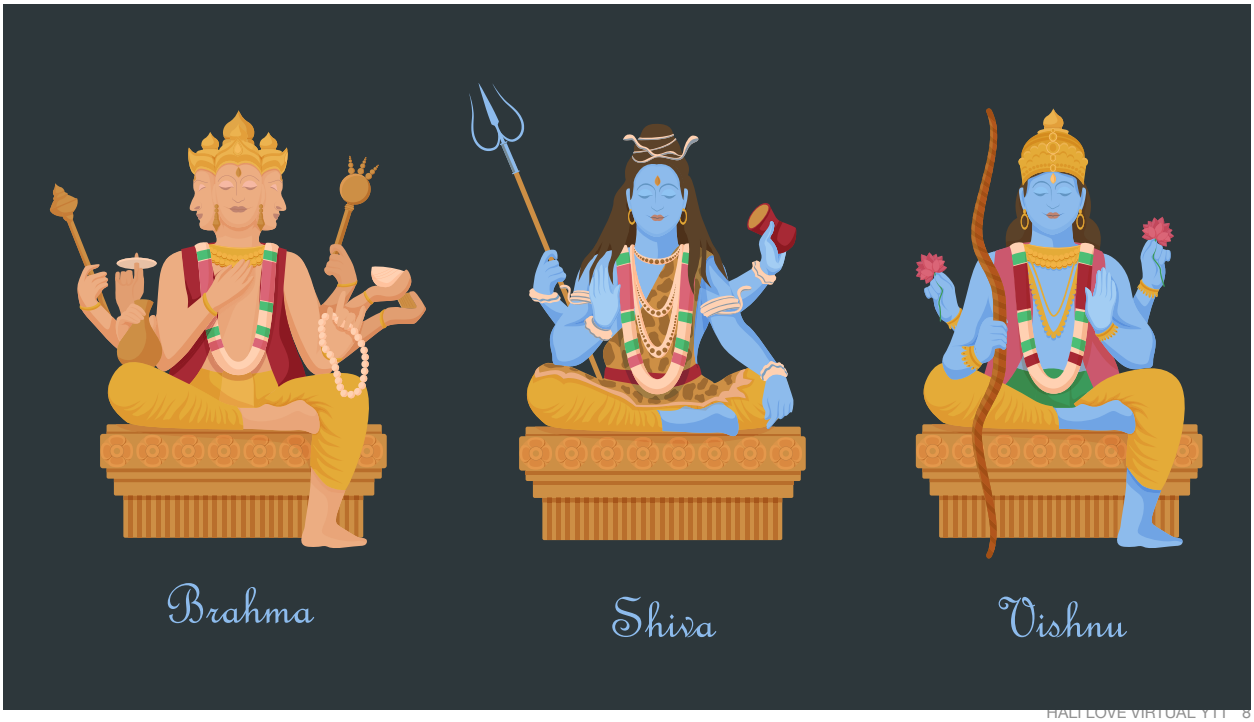
One is that we do not account for the fact that the Hindu system of time is not linear but cyclical in nature!

Second being that every deity has a formless (nir-gun or without attributes and characteristics) and Physical form (Sagun with a form and attributes).

So, Who was the First Hindu God Born?

To be honest, it depends on what belief system in Hinduism you follow. Shiva Purana attributes that at first Ardhanarishvara came into being from whose bifurcation came to being Shiva and Shakti. From Shiva's left body came Vishnu and from Vishnu came Brahma.

Vishnu Purana attributes Vishnu first came to being and then from his navel sprout a lotus bearing Brahma in it and from his left body came Shiva.



The Holy Trinity's Relation to AUM.

Om is to Hindus what the cross is to Christians. This root mantra is spoken at the beginning and end of Hindu prayers and meditations. In written form, Om is used to marking the beginning of a text in an inscription or a manuscript.

The syllable is discussed in a number of the Upanishads, which are the texts of philosophical speculation, and it forms the entire subject matter of one, the Mandukya.

When we examine the AUM more deeply, it contains the essence of all beings is the earth, the essence of the earth is water, the essence of water is the plant: the essence of the plant is man; the essence of man is speech; the essence of speech is the Rigveda. The essence of Rigveda is the Samveda. The essence of Samveda is OM.

All activities which people start with uttering the syllable OM do not fail to bear fruit. (Shankaracharya's Commentary on the Taittriya Upanishad 1.8.1) In the Puranas the syllable Om became associated in various ways with the major Hindu devotional sects.

Vaishnavaites

Shaivites

Vaishnavites identify the three sounds as referring to the trinity of Vishnu, his wife Lakshmi, and the worshipper. Shaivites mark the lingam (a symbol of Shiva) with the symbol for Om. Vaishnavism and Shaivism are two types of religious sects that prevail in India. These two sects show some differences between them. The followers of Vaishnavism are called by the name Vaishnavaites. On the other hand, the followers of Shaivism are called by the name Shaivaites.

Vaisshnavism believes in the supremacy of Lord Vishnu over all the other Gods. On the other hand, Shaivism believes in the supreme power of Lord Shiva. This is one of the main differences between the two religious sects.

Vaishnavism was jointly founded by many great religious leaders, but the credit goes to Ramanujacharya who lived in the southern part of India. He is said to have lived in the 12th century AD. He is said to be the founder of the Visishtadvaita philosophy that explains the principles of Vaishnavism. In addition to him, there were several other leaders and philosophers who propounded the religion of Vaishnavism. These leaders included Yamunacharya and Vedanta Desika.

Shaivism on the other hand, was extolled in the philosophy of Advaita founded by Adi Sankara of the 8th century AD. He gathered a few disciples and disproved some of the principles of Mimamsa (reflection or critical investigation) to establish the Advaita (non duality) philosophy. Shaivism believed in the one-ness of living beings and it believed in the fact that the oneness was brought about by the innate power of the supreme soul called the Brahma.

On the other hand, Vaishnavism believed in the principles of qualified monism. Sankara says that everything in the universe is the element of the Supreme Brahma. He says that the human being is Brahman too. The body alone perishes but the soul within the body has no death. It cannot be burnt, made wet or cut into pieces. He describes the theory of Karma and Maya as well. He says that the dual appearance of nature is due to Maya or illusion. Man fails to see the real nature of the Brahman due to the illusory aspect that prevails in his perception.

Just as a person sees a serpent in a rope, and later realizes the true nature of the rope, in the same way a man fails to see the real nature of the Brahma in the beginning and sees the illusory aspect of nature and thinks that it is the truth. This is the underlying principle of the religious sect of Shaivism. Hence, Shaivism is based on the philosophy of Advaita. Lord Shiva is spoken of as the Supreme Brahman or the Supreme Self that gives birth to many individual selves.

In the Vaishnavism sect of religion, Lord Vishnu is considered as the Supreme Brahman who gives birth to several individual selves. Lord Vishnu is the supreme God according to the Vaishnavaites. He is the protector of the universe. He sustains the universe. He sustains all the living beings in the universe. Lakshmi is his consort. She lives in his heart. He stays in the Vaikuntha (the celestial home of Vishnu). He reclines on the serpent bed of Adi Sesha and is accompanied by his consort. This is how Lord Vishnu is portrayed in the Vaishnavaite texts.

Om is spoken at the beginning and the end of Hindu mantras, prayers, and meditations and is frequently used in Buddhist and Jain rituals as well. Om is used in the practice of Yoga and is related to techniques of auditory meditation.

From the 6th century, the written symbol of Om was used to mark the beginning of a text in a manuscript or an inscription. Om Parvat, a sacred peak at 6191m in the Indian Himalayas, is revered for its snow deposition pattern that resembles Om.

Om is the most chanted sound in all of India. In addition to being used in sacred texts, prayers and invocations, the Om sound may also be used as a greeting. In a nutshell, Om is the god in the form of sound- a word of great power. It's the most important mantra is both Hinduism and Buddhism as well.

In Hindu Culture, AUM does not just present the status of consciousness (awake, dream, deep sleep, illusion and supreme consciousness, it also represents the three worlds: earth, atmosphere, and heaven; The three major Hindu gods - Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva; and the three sacred Vedic scriptures - Rg, Yajur, and Sama. In Hinduism, Om (also spelled Aum) is a Hindu sacred sound that is considered the greatest of all mantras. The syllable Om is composed of the three sounds a-u-m (in Sanskrit, the vowels a and u combine to become o) and the symbol's threefold nature is central to its meaning. It represent several important triads:

The three worlds - earth, atmosphere, and heaven

The three major Hindu gods - Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva

The three sacred Vedic scriptures - Rg, Yajur, and Sama

Thus Om mystically embodies the essence of the entire universe. This meaning is further deepened by the Indian philosophical belief that God first created sound and the universe arose from it. As the most sacred sound, Om is the root of the universe and everything that exists and it continues to hold everything together.

Om in Hindu culture

The syllable is discussed in a number of the Upanishads, which are the texts of philosophical speculation, and it forms the entire subject matter of one, the Mandukya.

AUM is a bow, the arrow is the self, And Brahman (Absolute Reality) is said to be the mark. (Mandukya Upanishad) The essence of all beings is the earth. The essence of the earth is water. The essence of water is the plant. The essence of the plant is man. The essence of man is speech. The essence of speech is the Rigveda. The essence of Rigveda is the Samveda. The essence of Samveda is OM. (Chandogya Upanishad) All those activities which people start with uttering the syllable OM do not fail to bear fruit. (Shankaracharya's Commentary on the Taittriya Upanishad 1.8.1) In the Puranas the syllable Om became associated in various ways with the major Hindu devotional sects. Saivites mark the lingam (a symbol of Shiva) with the symbol for Om, while Vaishnavites identify the three sounds as referring to the trinity of Vishnu, his wife Sri, and the worshiper.

With its threefold nature, special shape and unique sound, Om lends itself to a variety of detailed symbolic interpretations. The symbol of AUM consists of three curves (curves 1, 2, and 3), one semicircle (curve 4), and a dot (5).

The large lower curve 2 symbolizes the waking state (A), in this state the consciousness is turned outwards through the gates of the senses. The larger size signifies that this is the most common ('majority') state of the human consciousness. This is represented by Brahma: The Creator. He is the deity of the cosmos, all beings, he symbolizes the mind, intellect and all knowledge necessary for the universe. He has 4 faces: mind, intellect, and completeness of knowledge, and 4 hands that represent mind, intellect, ego and consciousness.

The upper curve 1 symbolizes the (M) sleeping state, this is represented by Shiva. A part of Shiva is often depicted meditating with his eyes closed. He often is seen with a snake, that symbolizes his alert state of consciousness. His trident signifies the 3 states, and how he upholds all of them. His 3rd eye represents knowledge and wisdom. His body is often blue like the Sky. Blue signifies all pervading, infinity which has no limits. It has no shape. Shiva does not have a body. Shiva was never a person at all. To symbolize the unfathomable, the infinite Divinity and to make that Divinity comprehensible to people, the ancient Rishis made a form. Knowledge has no shape but it infiltrates each and every particle of the universe. The whole world is filled with Shiva – whose body is in the whole universe.

The middle curve 3 symbolizes the (U) dream state, which is represented by Vishnu. Vishnu is the source of all Creation. And he also sustains and protects the Universe making his role a lot more complex than that of Brahma's.
Vishnu is the All-Pervading One, derived from "vis' in Sanskrit which means both 'to spread' and 'to be present everywhere'.
Even when there was Nothing, there was Vishnu, present as a nameless, formless, dormant energy. In this un-manifested (nirguna) state, even Vishnu was not aware of his own being. He just was. But just because he was not perceived, does not mean he did not exist.

In this Nothingness, when the first ripple of awareness stirred , spontaneously and of its own will, the formless energy became Vishnu, the Supreme Being, Parabrahman.

As Parabrahma, Vishnu lies in a dream like state on the serpent Adisesha Ananta who is Time, without beginning or end. Ananta floats for all eternity on the waters of the Ksheer Sagar (the ocean of Cosmic Consciousness).
When Brahma begins the process of Creation, it is Vishnu who expands into everything and becomes part of everything. Now he is Brahman, the Cosmic Consciousness.

As if he is seeing a dream, Vishnu watches Brahma create the Universe. By the act of watching his dream, Vishnu sustains the Universe. When Vishnu wakes from his dream one cycle of Creation ends.
Vishnu who dreams up the Universe must also now protect it. To maintain the order of Creation, Vishnu becomes The Protector. He takes the form of Ishwara or God.

This form of Vishnu looks very different from the one reclining on Ananta. He is standing, radiant as the sun and has four arms. In his hands he holds the Conch, The Discus, The Lotus and The Mace.