Prefatory Note

I first read about the ‘pictures of the Devis representing the Matruka Aksharas from the temple at Ujjain’ in the Invocation, page 1, of Shri Vidya Maharnava, compiled by Ananda Shri Swami Gnanendra Saraswati Yati, published in 1997. I visited the Harasiddhi temple at Ujjain and took the photographs of the 51 Devis of the 51 Aksharas. Then I came across the book Shaktinidhi where in the pictures of the Devis drawn by the artists of Mummadi Krishnaraj Wodeyar are published (1997). These pictures of the Devis are drawn as per the meditation verses of the Devis in Siddha Shabara Tantra.

These meditation verses needed some corrections and clarification. None of these Devis had any yantra. The symbolic meaning of the weapons and their vehicals needed explanation. Hence I took up this work on the Devis of the Aksharas.

It is my good fortune to have come in contact with Dr. B. S. Mahadevaiah, Chairman, Dept. of Sanskrit, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta. The support and encouragement from him helped me in securing Masters degree in Sanskrit. The present work is a result of his painstaking nature and erudite guidance. I record my deep sense of gratitude to him. I also thank Dr. N. B. Desai, Sahyadri college, Shimoga and Pundit Rajeshwar Shastri, Sanskrit Pathashala, Dharwad, for their help.

I respectfully mention the name of my late Guru, Shri Swami Rama, Ramakunj Haridwar, who taught me meditation. I could discover the yantras of the various Devis by his blessings.

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