Gotra I Choose

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I would like to acknowledge everyone of the program of Comparative Literature, Louisiana State University for their love, affection, and support.

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Gotra I Choose

Gotra and law—both derided me
When I chose to unlearn my
Understanding of the components of hemoglobin
or the anatomy of my
Genitals
that speak of my Savarna chastity ---

It’s all poetry down there
    Rhymes unfurling my clitoris
    constantly erupting into spectacles
    that made Jadavpur University,
a secluded comfort zone,
an asylum for the abjecting Savarna
and feel the warmth—
I have always defined as
    “family”
Discarding the “gotra” they speak in God’s name
Discarding the
    torch-bearers of my lineage
who [with a few exceptions]
are scribes of Manu
    like the old Ganga—
now dying in the historic blood of
rape, abuse, violence and tears
of ties enforced
    upon us all –
taking us to streets – where I
see women born with different genitals
conjuring solar storms
that will one day displace
the orbit of our Manu’s code.

So I un-learned my chastity,
My gotra and
My vagina
Shedding off my enforced ties
Before “they” become a part of “me”
here in the Southern shores of Mississippi
conjuring my rebirth—
in their Cuban, Afro-American
Iranian and spells undefined
a priestess who awakened my,
dormant “atma”
revealing to me the emotions I
am capable of inscribing
and witness how a family
forms
assigning a new “gotra”
that will never
scorn my genitals
a new gotra that will never question my fears
a new gotra that finds a root in
Karmayoga!

I felt the magic of family—
learning how spices melt in Mississippi’s bosom,
How poetry brings together two souls
like volcanoes of the same fire
flavors unexplored – yet familiar
hidden in my subconscious dreams !!

a magic around oak tress
providing shelter to a homeless traveler
a certain warmth of guardians of
“Trails of Tiger”
   Home-made chocolate cookie
   When she felt my longing
   And the void of a familial warmth
As leaves drowned themselves in Fall Break’s eve.

And I learnt with my priestess
And I learnt with my dream-interpreters
And I learnt with souls from middle-East and China
How families are created
And what it feels to be
“at home.”