

## The Sound of OM

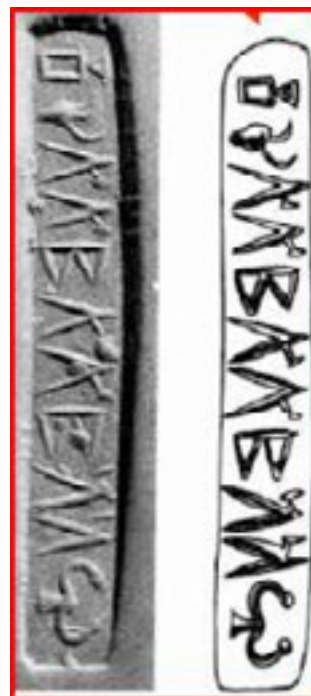
**O**M is the beginning of all the world of sound (words) and is the basis of phonetics. All sounds and words have their origin in Pranava Sabda. All the sounds that can be produced or uttered by a combination of different letters or alphabet come under the range of three sounds produced by A, U, M. As in the example of Devanagri Script, the letters Ka, Kha, Ga, Gha, emerge from the throat. The letters, Cha, Chha, Ja, Jha are mainly from the palate. The letters, Ta, Tha, Da, Dha originate from the tip of the tongue and the letters, Pa, Pha, Ba, Bha, Ma are formed by the meeting of the lips. Since the Pranava Sabda contains all the breath sounds, it is said that OM is the sum and substance of the Vedas. All names are contained within the Pranava, and so it is the basis of all the different forms of worship and all the different names by which God is adored.

OM must be chanted as slowly as possible. "A" emerging

from the throat (originating in the regions of the navel), "U" rolling over the tongue in crescendo until the sound reaches the peak, and end in "M" at the lips, descending as slowly as it rose, taking as much time as it took to ascend. The Amatra OM must gradually merge into the silence reverberating in the cavity of the heart. All forms of God respond when OM is chanted, it is said to be the direct line of communication with God. It is the key that unlocks for us the doorway to the house of the Lord. As we chant OM from the depth of our being, it elevates and lifts our consciousness to a higher realm and leads us to the supreme state of consciousness.

OM represents all the states of consciousness, the physical as well as the spiritual, and our awareness from the physical to the transcendental (divine) state. There are three states of consciousness: waking or Jagrat, dreaming or Swapna, and deep sleep known as Sushupti. There

is a super-conscious transcendental state called Turiyavasta, it is the highest state of consciousness experienced by Yogis. Once again, the "A" in Omkara represents the waking state (and our gross body), the "U" represents the dream state (and our subtle body), and the "M" represents the deep sleep state (and our casual body). But when the OM is pronounced, there is the tailing silence, the Asabda, soundless state where the same sound of OM rings without being aloud, vibrating in our ears even when our lips our closed. This letterless resonance, the rich humming sound of silence, represented by what is called the Amatra OM, is said to signify the Self or the Atma, which is transcendental to the three states of consciousness. It is deeper and beyond the three bodies: gross, subtle, and casual. It is the core, the essence, the reality of our being. It is the foundation of our very being.



**Left:** This ancient Mohenjo-daro seal has the Om symbol visible on the Saddle.

**Right:** This Cretan Seal contains a clear OM symbol as its ending note.