



One who undergoes any endeavour seeks out an auspicious beginning, hence the most popular of the gods of Rome was 'Janus' the god of beginnings, whose wise old face looks to the past, a book one can easily read, while his youthful face seeks out the future, a book yet to be written, and as each year begins, the augurs would seek out the signs, an auspicious book or a Shakespearean tragedy.

As the Romans dedicated the beginning of the year to 'Janus' the god of beginnings, it was appropriately named 'January' a time to be careful in one's words and deeds, a time for wishing one another a happy new year, a time to distribute sweets and a time when coins were freely distributed bearing the twin-headed Janus, the god of beginnings.

Janus is very much a Roman version of Ganesh where throughout Rome the doors, gates and

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passageways are protected by Janus just as throughout the lands of India the doors, gates and passageways are protected by Ganesh whose presence is also prominent upon the beginning of a marriage, the beginning of a career, the beginning of a journey and as Ganesh is placed upon the door of a couple who are beginning their married life they ask him to please remove all obstacles to a happy family life.



'Janus' is a name which seems to have its origin within 'Jan' a word from the language of Sanskrit which means to 'generate' to 'beget' to 'create' as seen within 'janma' meaning 'birth' as seen within 'janmastami' which is the birth of Krsna and as seen within 'jani' and 'janitr' the names for the mother and father who produce the offspring.

'Jani' meaning 'mother' and 'wife' can be seen within 'gyny' a word from the language of Greece whose meaning is 'wife' and 'woman' as seen within 'androgyny' whose meaning is that which is male (andros) and female (gyny) as seen within 'polygyny' meaning one who has many (poly) wives (gyny) as seen within 'misogyny' meaning one who hates (miso) women (gyny) and as seen within 'gynecology' the study (ology) of women (gyny).

'Jani' meaning 'wife' is also the source of the word 'Queen' as it journeys to become the Greek 'gyne' which becomes the Old Prussian 'genna' which becomes the Old Church Slavonic 'zena' which becomes the Old Saxon 'quen' and from this comes the word 'Queen' whose journey began as 'Jani' a word from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is 'wife' which here means the wife of the King.



'Jan' whose meaning is 'birth' can also be seen within 'Janaka' a great King from the epic tale of the Ramayana whose name means 'father'. Within ancient times the King would plough the sacrificial arena hence the King, who was the father of the citizens, would plough the earth which was their mother and from this came a daughter known as 'Sita' whose name means one who was born from a furrow.

'Janaka' is a king who is mentioned within the Gita whose antiquity is some 5000 years old hence discussions upon the source of the word 'jan' should take this into consideration as its part of a verse which predates by 2500 years the appearance of Buddhism and can be seen

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within the following verse.

"Even the kings like Janaka and others have attained the perfectional stage through their performance of prescribed duties. Therefore, just for the sake of educating the people in general, you should perform your work." Bhagavad Gita 3.20.



The ancient gateway to the Riviera is known as the grand city of 'Genoa' which lies upon the Italian coast of the Mediterranean Sea and as the 'gateway' its appropriately named after 'Janus' the god of the gates, the god of the doors, the god of beginnings and to confirm this etymology we have Jacopa Doria, one of the nobilities of 13th century Genoa who says the following.

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"Janua (genoa) is named after Janus which is a gate and the first entrance and the first access because Janus is the god of beginnings to whom the ancients consecrated every entrance and exit and therefore as a gate is the entrance and exit to anyones house, so too our city is the entrance and exit to all Lombardy."

"Just as Janua (genoa) is called after Janus, the god of beginnings who is depicted as having two faces, namely forward and back, thus the city of Janua overlooks the Sea before and the earth behind and as he is said to have two portals, east and west, thus the city of Janua has two gates namely a gate to the Sea and a gate to the land."



'Janiculum' was an ancient Italian city which was built and named after 'Janus' the god of beginnings and which now resides under the modern name of 'Giancola' a city whose hill is the second highest within Rome and upon it would gather the augurs who observed the signs which they hoped would lead to a good harvest and as a good result was dependent upon an auspicious beginning they worshipped 'Janus' the god of beginnings.

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'Tiggiano' is a town which resides upon the south east coast of Italy and the 'giano' part of the name is 'Janus' the god of beginnings whose two heads which look to the past and the future can be seen upon its coat of arms where against a blue backdrop we find the image of this two headed god.

'Subbiano' is a town in Tuscany within central Italy and we find its name is formed of 'sub' meaning 'under' whose origin is 'upa' a word from Sanskrit meaning 'under' and the second part 'iano' is the god of beginnings 'Janus' whose source is the Sanskrit 'jan' meaning 'birth' hence the name of 'Subbiano' means the town which is under (sub) the protection of Janus.



'Avezzano' is one of the most scenic parts of Italy with its lush green plains shadowed by Mount Velino in the north and Mount Salviano in the west and its name is formed from 'Av' a word from

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the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is to 'favour' to 'satisfy' and 'Janus' the god of beginnings, hence its meaning is hail (ave) to Janus (zano) the protector of the city.

'Selvazzano' is a town which once worshipped 'Janus' the god of beginnings its name easily recognised in 'zano' and we also find nearby are the 'Eugenai Hills' whose name possesses 'Su' a root from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is 'good' and 'jan' a word from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is 'birth' the name meaning 'good (su) birth (jan)'.

'Sarzano' is another town which possesses this suffix 'zano' which is a corruption of 'Janus' the god of beginnings, its a town which resides within the Liguria region of Northwestern Italy and its named once again after 'Janus' the god of beginnings.



The great scholar and saint "Isidore of Seville" writes " The month of January is called after "Janus" to whom it was consecrated among the pagans, or because it is the frontal or portal of the year and thus Janus is depicted bifrontally, so that he designates both the entrance and the exit of the year " .

In his book "Ten Great Religions : An Essay In Comparative Theology, Volume 1 " James Freeman Clarke writes " This deity (Janus) is believed by Creuzer and others to have had an Indian origin, his name to have been derived from the Sanskrit "jan" meaning "to be born". He resembles no Greek god and very probably travelled all the way from Bactria (central asia) to Rome."

In his book "The sword and spirit of ancient Rome" Robert Payne writes " Doorways were invested with magical or numinous significance, Janus, present in every household, exerted great power over the households undertakings... the god was invoked before any other god, even before Jupiter, at the beginning of any important undertaking".