CHAPTER XV

WORSHIP IN GENERAL

Pūjā

Many people nowadays in a community which lays claim to great wisdom believe that image-worship was introduced and is maintained in the Ārya Society for those only who are very weak—that is, those who belong to a very low order of spirituality. We have little leisure to devote our attention to the words of such men as discuss these matters from the outside, just as a non-Ārya look at the Durgā-pūjā festival in an Ārya house from the courtyard outside the Caṇḍimaṇḍapa. We are servants of the Śāstra, and as such are bound to preach what the Śāstra has clearly established. We shall therefore now see what Pūjā (worship) is according to the Śāstra. It is a matter of great regret that even amongst preachers of Śāstrik principles there are many who are under the impression that "worship of the Deity with form" or image-worship is only a means of producing steadiness of mind. They opine, therefore, that for him who has acquired such steadiness there is no longer any necessity of worship of the Deity with form or image-worship. According to this argument we must suppose that there is an arrangement between the Devatā appearing with form or present in an image and the worshipper by which the latter's connection with the former endures only so long as his mind is not steadied, and that when it is so the Devatā ceases to exist for him. At the commencement and end of the worship of the Deity with form the Sādhaka forgets himself and offers at His feet everything which he calls 'My' or 'I.' As regards this worship Bhagavān Himself, the Creator of all things, has in the Kulārṇava Tantra said

1 Sādhāraṇa-upāsanātattva.
2 Pūjā is ceremonial worship with articles of worship (upacāra), generally before images. Upāsanā has a wider signification, being worship in its widest sense, including spiritual practices of all kinds, whilst the Sādhaka is in the realm of dualism.
3 Place in the house in which worship of images is performed.
4 Sākāra upāsanā.
5 Mūrti pūjā; Mūrti (form or appearance).
6 Manahsthira.
7 Sākāra upāsanā.
"Obeisance to the faith from which springs Siddhi in all things and the force of which makes even earth, wood, and stone bear real fruits." Reference is here made to the whole-hearted faith by the attraction of which Devatā Himself, who is all consciousness, is drawn towards and made to appear in unconscious images made of earth, wood, or stone, or in Yantras, and grants real fruits to Śādhakas in the form of Siddhi. If, then, worship with form founded on a Śādhaka's firm faith is compatible with the belief that the Devatā with form is false and is merely a means of steadying the mind, then I know not what kind of worship with form it is. Secondly, from such a wrong conclusion contrary to Śāstra and opposed to all experience, it also follows that Pūjā, Pāṭha, Japa, Homa, Śānti, Svastiyāyana, and the like, are nothing but lost labour, for we are told that the only effect of worship of the Deity with form is the establishment of steadiness of mind. We need hardly say that it is also lost labour to proceed to disprove a conclusion which on examination displays its own profound infidelity. Our object, however, in introducing the subject here is to reveal the mystery of the problem as to how in course of worship of the corporeal the incorporeal is seen."

The Śāstra says a Śādhaka should engage in meditation by gradually concentrating his mind on all parts of the Iṣṭadevatā's body; that is to say, the Śādhaka should, by repeatedly fixing his attention on the parts of the Iṣṭadevatā's body one by one, from the sole of His foot to His face, or from His face to the sole of His foot, acquire such concentration as will during unperturbed meditation reveal to his mind's eye the whole body of the Devatā at one and the same time. If this be done, meditation on the Deity with form will gradually become both profound and steady. But remarkable, indeed, must be the profundity of meditation and concentration of those who from this come to the conclusion that the Formless will appear of itself in the course of meditation on the Deity with form in the sense that the Formless will drive away the Deity with form. The Śāstra has, of course, said that when the mind has become steady through meditation on the gross image it may meditate on the subtle image. When the mind has been perfectly

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1 Pratimā: Prati=likeness.  2 Diagrams (see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra).

3 That is, ceremonial worship, reading, and recitation of the sacred texts, repetition of Mantras, sacrifice into fire, rites for working good and dispelling evil.

4 Dhyāna.  5 Dhāraṇā.  6 Nirākāra.

7 Sākāra. There are a class of people who think that forms are nothing, and, being purely imaginary, disappear when the real Formless One appears, and are merely useful to prepare the way for this; whereas the forms are the real bodies of the Devatā, just as the physical body is the sheath of the Ātman. The Devatā does really appear in these forms.
centred, then the Devatā is revealed in both Her gross and subtle aspects; that is to say, in course of meditation on His playful image—such subtle aspects as omnipresence, possession of Māyā, state of being above Māyā and so forth, are perceived in a subtle form as Śakti of consciousness, just as such gross aspects as love for devotees, all-mercifulness, almightiness and so forth, instinct with the outcome of play, are perceived; and this is what actually happens to a Sādhaka when he attains Siddhi. We are unable to make out how it can be concluded from this that the Devatā with form vanishes and the formless appears. It is, of course, not a matter of wonder that to those whose meditation on the Deity with form is from the very commencement based on the notion that “the form is false,” such form will vanish by the force of their singular devotion; nor is it impossible that when the form has vanished, an incorporeality which is non-existence itself will be seen as a matter of course. What is to be here regretted is that mere men should without hesitation seek to establish as Sāstrik this sight of an incorporeal nothing which their fate has made inevitable for them.

In the Śrīmadbhāgavata Bhagavān Himself has said to Uddhava, the crest-gem of devotees: “Just as gold is freed of its dross only by fire, and also gains its own (bright) appearance by the heat of that fire, so a Jīva’s Ātma is cleansed of the filth of Karma and desire by means of the Yoga of devotion to Me, and is also transformed into My Brahman aspect by means of that same Bhakti-Yoga. Ātma becomes purer and purer by hearing and uttering sacred hymns in My praise. The devotee whose heart is thus purified by devotion to Me sees with increasing power the supersensual subtle truth as the physical eye when painted with collyrium is enabled to perceive very minute objects. Just as the heart of a person who constantly thinks of wife, son, and other mundane objects, becomes attached to them only, so the heart of him who constantly thinks of Me becomes merged in Myself. Hence, O Uddhava! give up thinking of the objects of the world, false and made of Māyā as they are, like objects of desire got in dream, and rest your mind, full of thoughts of Me in Me.” Again, on the subject of meditation he has said: “A Yogi will call to mind within the circle of fire in the—

1 Sūkṣma-tattva and Sthūla-tattva. 2 Lilāmaya. 3 Abhāva.
4 The author is here satirical. In the case of him who does not perceive the Devatā with form, and thinks it to be nothing, it is quite natural that the Formless, whose form it is, should be nothing.
5 Adṛṣṭa.
6 They have not the fortune to be able to perceive the truth.
7 Author’s parenthesis. 8 Bhakti
9 Gāthā. 10 Atiṇḍriya. 11 Dhyāna.
lotus of his heart this form 1 of mine, beneficial in meditation—namely, a form full-limbed, calm, of beautiful features, with four long 2 and beautiful arms; a graceful neck and a fair forehead; with divine and gracious smile; decked with brilliant ear-ornaments 3 in his two well-shaped ears; dressed in yellow or deep blue; brilliant with the beauty of the Srīvatsa mark 4; bearing a conch shell, a discus, a club, and a lotus in his four hands, and a garland of wild flowers on the breast; with lotus-feet shining with the lustre of bejewelled anklets 5; illumined with the light of the Kaustubha gem; ornamented with shining crown, bracelets, waist-chain, and armlets; beauteous in all limbs, pleasant; his countenance sweet with grace, with tender eyes and form fair to look upon. He will meditate on this pleasing Brahmā-form by fixing his mind on all its limbs. Drawing his senses, such as sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell from their objects by means of his mind, 6 and with the aid of Buddhi, 7 the charioteer, the Sādhaka will bathe his mind completely in the waters of love for Me. After that he will draw that mental vision 8 hitherto spread over all my limbs to one place and hold it there. It will not then be necessary for the Sādhaka to think of anything else. 9 He will only meditate upon My countenance, on which plays a soft and sweet smile. When the mind can uninterruptedly and without distraction contemplate that countenance, he will withdraw his single-pointed mind and fix it in the ether. 10 Then, after perceiving My (aforesaid) subtle manifestations 11 in ether, in the mansions, 12 or in the whole of the infinite ether, he will draw his mental faculty, which has had the entire ether as its object, and again rest it in Me as the Paramātmā. Then it will not be necessary to meditate on anything. 13 The Yogi, thus in Samādhi, 14 will see me as the Paramātmā of all Jivas as his own Ātmā; as one light mingled with another, and not different from it. In a Yogi, who has thus by intense meditation attained Samādhi, 15 the three forms of error 16—namely, object of knowing, and action 17—will soon be subdued."

A Sādhaka will here understand that Upāsanā 18 exists only so long as Dhyāna 19 exists. In the next stage, which is Samādhi or Nirvāṇa, the
mental faculty is lost in the womb of Prakṛti. The Yogi, who has thus lost his mind, forgets even the Jīvātmā as something separate from the Paramātmā. Who, then, is it who perceives the incorporeal aspect in the one and only substance of consciousness at the time when even the sense “I exist” is lost, when the senses, mind, and even the “I,” do not exist? It is indeed difficult to solve this problem. We call this state not “seeing the incorporeal,” but Videha-Kaivalya. We may admire the energy of those who in the hope of their becoming incorporeal in the circumstances described above, invoke the incorporeal, and see shapeless dreams for a hundred births: but to such we would also say that there is no need to try to make arrangements to become incorporeal, for He who will one day make this entire corporeal universe incorporeal will not bide long to make either you or me incorporeal when the occasion for doing so arises. But know it for certain, that so long as the Deity with form does not appear before you, not even the Devatā without form can dissolve your own bodily form and give you Kaivalya. So much about meditation, concentration, and trance.

Next comes the process of Pūjā. We have more than once shown that there can be no Upāsanā of anything incorporeal. Now, what is image-worship? We must also see whether image-worshippers are really fools of a low order of spirituality who are led by blind faith. We cannot call that a criticism of image-worship which comes from those who have no inner knowledge of the subject. Rather it is a criticism of what they understand to be image-worship; for Pūjā and so forth are things of the Śāstra, which lays down the mode of Pūjā, and the person competent to perform Pūjā is a Śādhaka. On the other hand, the critic’s criticism is contrary to what the Śāstra and Śādhaka say—“It is Śādhana and Siddhi,” say the Śāstra and Śādhaka. “It is play and amusement,” says the critic. Now, in this conflict of views how can we disbelieve the word of those who by their practice have intimate knowledge of the matter, and believe those who have nothing to do with Śāstra, Śādhana, or Siddhi? Image-worship is not to be understood from outside. Only the worshipper understands it. The critic, therefore, is nothing but a critic of his own intelligence and education. One who does Pūjā and one who merely observes it are not, surely, the same thing. One who looks at a sweet-shop can tell us the shape, colour, and quantity of the sweets there, as also whether they are hot or cold to the touch; but

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1 Manovṛtti. 8 Manas.
2 Bodiless Kaivalya—that is, Kaivalya in which all trammels of body or limitation disappear, or full liberation.
3 Because in such a case the worship is of no avail.
4 Dhyāna, Dhāraṇā, Samādhi. 5 Vide ante.
6 Mūrtipūjā.
can he tell us whether their taste is sweet or bitter, sour or pungent? Howsoever clever a man may be, he only can tell us thereof who has tasted them with his tongue. Again, one who himself knows the taste of a sweet can never, despite his personal knowledge, make another who has never tasted it realize its taste even by the use of a thousand forms of speech or other device. Similarly, how can a man without faith know that supersensual truth which a capable Sādhaka realizes when he establishes a Devatā's life in his image by the powerful potency of Mantra? The Śāstra has nowhere said that one may as one wishes perceive the presence of Devatā in the street, market, or at the bathing ghāt just as one desires. It has said, if such and such things are done, such and such things will happen. Now I ask, How much of those things have you and I done? The Śāstra has said that it is only when a Sādhaka has long served his Guru, after having been tested and initiated by him in accordance with Śāstra, and when he has fully understood the principles of Sādhana and become able to awaken the potency of Mantra through the preliminary Śāstrik rites, that he becomes competent to cause by means of that Mantra the appearance of the conscious Devatā in Yantras, images, and so forth, made of such unconscious substances as earth, stone, and the like. Now, brother critic, tell me truly in the name of Dharma, opening for once the door of your heart, what have you done of all this? At the outset you are deeply suspicious, a great unbeliever. You have not the right even to serve Guru or receive initiation, not to speak of performing Sādhana and worship, yet such as you are you proceed to criticize the worship of Devatā in images, which can only be done by competent Sādhakas, who have knowledge of super-worldly truths. What can be greater impudence on your part than this? Unfortunately, in this land of madmen there is none to call a madman mad, and so, O brother critic! fortunately for you there is none to criticize you. But do not for this reason think to-day that the earth is the capital of mad men only.

The subtle criticism of critics and the goodness of Dayānanda's party have nowadays given birth to a few new words, such as image-worship, doll worship, and so forth. In consequence of the wide currency which

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1 Śakti.
2 The steps leading down to the river or other water down which those who go to the bath, etc., descend.
3 Śakti. 4 Bhajana. 5 Tattva.
6 Founder of the "reformed" Hinduism known as the Ārya Samāj.
7 Pratimāpūja, or mārti-pūjā.
8 Pauttalikatā. Puttali means doll.
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has been given to such language by the community of unbelievers, many senseless Hindus, both illiterate and literate, now take pride in publicly calling themselves image-worshippers or idolaters. Perhaps they think that these words are approved of the Śāstra. But how regrettable is this when we consider that such words cannot issue from the mouth of a man, the son of Manu, unless he has been born in a non-Ārya family with a non-Ārya disposition. The words when we consider them reveal a mine of profound infidelity.¹ Many authors write, “The practice of worshipping images has been prevalent in the Ārya community from ancient times.” One might suppose from this that we had merely to do with the worship of images without reference to Mantra, Devatā, or Sādhanā. Others, fond of far-fetched meanings, say that image-worship is like the modern practice of showing respect and honour to the lifeless statues raised in memory of lamented deceased persons; just as if Devatās were all dead, and we (shameless men who have no faith in the next world and yet call ourselves Ārya) were showing our gratitude to them before their images. Alas! O Bhagavān! when will the eyes of this class of born-blind educated fools be opened? When will we be saved from all such interpretations? How long will this generation of Ghaṭotkachas,² sprung from the seed of Bхima in the womb of Hiśimbā, last? Half-castes are governed by the Dharma³ of their mothers, therefore is it Bhārata’s ill-fortune that so-called religious principles⁴ propounded in the nineteenth century vomit only infidelity. But the matter does not rest even here. For is it not said that Āryas who worship the Deity with form are idolaters,⁵ that idolatry is their Dharma, or, in other words, that those who worship the Deity with form worship idols, images of Devatās being those idols; that worship of the Devata with form is like the play of ignorant children with dolls, and that those who perform such worship are as ignorant as such children. O critic! you consider yourself to be a wise man. Will you tell me that those Sādhanakas, crest-gems of the race of the wise, worshippers of the Devatā with form, were ignorant fools—men who produced⁶ the Vedas, Tantras, Purāṇas, systems of Philosophy, Astronomy, Ayurveda⁷ and Dhanurveda?⁸ Why! it is the partaking by you of the mere leavings

¹ Nāstikatā. Because it is not the pratimā or the mūrti, still less a doll, which is worshipped, but the Devatā in the heart, which in the prāṇapratīṣṭhā rite is transferred to the image and worshipped.

² Demon Rākṣasa, son of Bhīma (one of the Pāṇḍavas), and Hiśimbā, a Rākṣastā.

³ Law.

⁴ Ādhyātmika rattva.

⁵ Puttalikā.

⁶ That is, in the sense that the Scriptures are revealed to, and through, and spoken by the Rāṣis, who arranged them. In the higher sense the Veda is apanuṣeya—that is, without author.

⁷ Medical Śāstra.

⁸ Scripture of warfare; literally, archery.
of their food in the pages of books which makes you so proud of your knowledge and wisdom. Is it not to invite death for insects like you and I to attempt to-day to leap across that sky-kissing untraversable mass of light, which they with all the profundity of their knowledge, philosophy, and science took this worship to be? Hari! Hari! to call the most worshipful image of Devatā, the object of the Śādhaka's Śādhanā an idol. To call the Yantra (in which presides the Devatā who is consciousness itself) unconscious and inert. And yet it is only because an indistinct shadow of that Devatā of consciousness is cast upon you that you believe your own body to be conscious! When as an ignorant little child you sleep you may easily think that you are devoid of consciousness. But will a grown-up child also (who can call and awaken you) think so? To the Father or the Mother of the Universe you and I are similarly ignorant children, and hence to us His or Her image appears unconscious. But he who can call and awaken Him or Her—that is to say, he to whom Mother Kulakunḍalini the Devi, who is eternal wakefulness, has given the power to call and awaken Her by awaking Herself in him—to him the true image of Her body can never appear unconscious for by the grace of Her who is consciousness he himself has been transformed into consciousness itself. You and I are unconscious ourselves and so to us Her image also appears unconscious. It is neither Her fault nor the fault of Her image. It is the fault of the Karma done by us in past lives.

A discussion is impossible on the subject of the diverse fruits of worship, for it is difficult to explain the character of fruits to a person who has no knowledge of the different kinds of taste. For this reason we shall endeavour to see by a consideration of the mode in which worship is done whether the community of Ārya Śādhakas—the worshippers of the corporeal, the worshippers of the Deity with form—are ignorant fools of a low grade of spiritual competency or not.

According to the Śāstra it is the nature of Asuras to be made dumb with anger at the very mention of images of Devatā. A feeling of

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1 What these men have put in their books is regarded as their food. So great are they that the so-called critics are proud of a knowledge gained second-hand from the leavings of such food.

2 Tejas.

4 Diagram (see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra).

5 Author's parenthesis.

6 Jáda; not, of course, wholly so, but in the sense that we do not possess true consciousness, which perceives the Brahman in all things.

7 Tattva.

8 Mūrtimāyī.

9 Śākara upāsanā.

10 Dharma.

11 The demoniac enemies of the Devas.

12 Literally, "unconscious".
-enmity against Devatā can never arise in a person's mind unless there is an Asura disposition in his character and family. Again, without the appearance of such a feeling of enmity one is never liberated from the state of an Asura. Just as according to natural laws when fever is about to leave a man his body perspires, so when the time comes for liberation from the state of an Asura a feeling of enmity against Devatā is shown, for neither religious merit nor sin bears fruit in this world unless it grows enormous. Perhaps you think, "the image is not Devatā. Why, then, does this body of fools laugh or weep?" I ask, O prince of learned infidels! why, then, do you become angry at the mention of images of Devatā? It is true that an Asura becomes angry at the mention of the names of Devatā, but according to you an image is not Devatā. Why, then, do you become angry at the mere sight of it? Anger is a Vikāra as much as laughter and weeping are. It may be that the sight of a Devatā's image causes in you anger, a rājas Vikāra characteristic of a Dānava's state; while it causes in me joy, laughter, or tears of joy, Sāttvika Vikāras characteristic of manhood. Prakṛti, constituted of three Guṇas, is the Mistress of those Guṇas, and according to the proportions in which they occur in different persons she reveals different characteristics in them. If the sight of a Devatā's image had not produced any Vikāra in you, then you might one day say, "Why do these people laugh or weep?" But when you are wont to become angry at the sight of an image, you would do well to think that that which can make one person angry can also make another person laugh or weep—that in the unconscious image there is some such powerful consciousness as makes your eyes (which look upon all other persons and things with feelings of love, mercy, and brotherliness) red with a feeling of enmity. You, of course, do not believe that the image is the Devatā. But just consider that if the mere giving the image the name of Devatā can cause in you a Vikāra so contrary to human feelings, what a great Vikāra of joy and felicity ought to be produced in those who see in that image the true light of Devatā. With your physical eyes you see the worship of an image, but he who worships sees, with his superhuman vision, the full appearance of Her who is consciousness itself in that unconscious instrument, the image. During the period extending from the invocation of life.

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1 That is, the author and those that think with him.
2 Transformation of a thing from that which is its original nature.
3 That is, transformations due to the action of the Rajas and Sattwa Guṇas respectively.
4 That is, had you yourselves been apathetic.
5 ānte.
6 Pratyakṣa Jyotih.
7 Yantra.
8 Into the image by the Sādhaka.
until its final disposal \(^1\) the earthen image is in the eyes of the Sādhaka, which have been cleared by the collyrium paint of Siddhi, consciousness itself.\(^2\) It sheds the light, which is Brahman, of the beauty of the Mother of the Universe, the Brahmamāyī, full of ever new charms.

This is the Sādhaka’s point of view. But if you, without Sādhana and full of scepticism, know and really believe the image to be unconscious, then what a mean, hateful, cowardly disposition you show in becoming angry with it. Why become angry with a thing which you know is unconscious and without power? Why, like Asura Kamsa, do you proceed to break the image by dashing it against the ground? \(^3\) You want to grasp and dash against the ground that which even a Prince of Yogis cannot keep confined in the temple of his heart! \(^4\) You want to destroy one whom Kamsa could not subdue! \(^5\) What can be a greater impudence on your part than this? With a frown at insignificant insects like you the Daughter of Nanda \(^6\) will return to the Vindhyā mountain in order to destroy the conquerors of the three worlds, such as Śumbha and Niśumbha; but in order to crush your arrogance She will leave behind that manifestation \(^7\) of Hers, who descends in Nanda’s house in Gokula for play \(^8\) in the world of men. Had not Kamsa believed that he would receive from the eighth child of Devaki \(^9\) the punishment he deserved for his sins, would he have proceeded to destroy her sons and daughters? This example makes us think that it is not that you do not believe in the divinity of images, but that it is in the fear of having to suffer the cruel torments of hell in repentance for your sins that you proceed to break them. This is the distinctive characteristic of your faith. From such fear you believe in images, but the pity of it is that, like the memory of an intoxicated man, this belief leaves you the moment you become blinded with a feeling of enmity. When under the influence of anger only you proceed to break them, you fail to realize whom you are going to break. O critic! none can break or make Her.

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\(^1\) Visarjana; the withdrawing of the mental image from the objective image, with the Samhāra (dissolution) Mudra when it is broken and thrown away. It must be disposed of as a dead body. The root Visāja— to abandon, to leave, to give up; and Visarjana is allowing the Deity invoked to go from the image at the conclusion of worship.

\(^2\) As collyrium clears the eye, so Siddhi or success in worship enables the Sādhaka to see in the earthen image, Consciousness.

\(^3\) This Asura dashed the children of his sister Devaki on a stone, as he had been told that one of the children would be his destroyer.

\(^4\) So great is the Devatā that even great Yogis cannot hold Her.

\(^5\) That is, Krṣṇa.

\(^6\) Devi as Yogamāyā incarnated as daughter of Nanda, who gave Her to Vasudeva in exchange for Krṣṇa, who was left with Nanda.

\(^7\) Vibhūti.

\(^8\) That is, Krṣṇa.

\(^9\) Līkā
Whom do you want to frighten by breaking the outer image? We, too, break it after worship. May be that you dispose of it within your house while we dispose of it in water.\(^1\) We dispose of the outer image outwardly and guard the inner image in our heart. The light of the image whose substance is consciousness, which we brought out from within us and attached to the image made of earth, we take back into ourselves after we have done with the worship of this earthen image. Nothing is thus broken and done altogether away with as in your case. As the outer temple\(^8\) held the brilliance of a beauty filling the world, so also does the inner temple hold the grandeur of an incomparable beauty. Our Mother is without as She\(^2\) is within, and within as She is without. By my thus moving Her in thought from within to without and from without to within the door of my heart will become fully opened. On that day all invocation\(^8\) and final dismissal\(^4\) into and from the image will cease for ever. The day on which I shall see the inner image when looking at the outer image, and the latter when I look within, when it will be the same within as without—on that day the Mother will bring my own coming and going\(^6\) to an end, and the restless dancing Kāli\(^6\) will seat Herself and rest in peace; unless it be that the blissful Devī\(^7\) finding the path open both within and without, runs from sheer joy hither and thither with even greater activity than before. But even if She does, I shall not on that day call or bring Her. In Her own joy She will come, go, dance, sing, and play of Her own accord. I shall only beat time and dance with Her, crying out, "Victory to Mother". O brother critic! thou who art also the Mother's son, by the Mother's grace may you not be deprived of this joy. It is She whom you know as Mother within whom graciously issues thereout by Her own power,\(^8\) and thus gratifies the Sādhaka. Of this power\(^8\) we shall give an account afterwards. Here we shall say this much, that it is a mistake to think that to an Ārya Sādhaka the want of an outer image means the want of an image within. On the contrary, it is because there is an image within that it has been revealed without. It is only after we have the inner image that we commence the outer worship. Even in the absence of an outer image the Sādhaka is able to carry out worship by means of the inner image.

In the Śrīmadbhāgavata Śāstra Bhagavān has said: "Images are of eight kinds—namely, of stone, wood, iron (metals),\(^9\) pastes\(^10\) of clay, and

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\(^1\) After worship the image is thrown into water, such as the sacred Ganges.

\(^2\) Maṇḍapa.

\(^3\) Āvāhana, when the Goddess is called into the image.

\(^4\) Visajjana, see ante.\(^5\) In the Samsāra.\(^6\) Nṛtya-kāli.

\(^7\) Ānandamayi.\(^8\) Śakti.\(^9\) Author's parenthesis.

\(^10\) Pastes of sandal and the like.
such other substances; made of jewels, painted; and mental." In the presence of any of the seven kinds of images made of stone and the like, the mental image should be first worshipped with mental articles of worship before worship is done of the outer image with material articles. But in the absence of any of those seven kinds of images, those who do external worship must bring from within themselves the inner image and worship it. It is in this connection that Rāmaprasāda, the Prince of Sādhakas, has said: "Praśāda says, 'My heart is a mould made of spotless lotuses. Mayest Thou dance after Thou hast been cast in that mould and made mental.'"

In the Kulārṇava Tantra, the Lord of Devas has said: "O Great Devi! Sādhakas devoted to the Karmakāṇḍa by the combined force of Bhakti, and Mantra give form to Her who is above form and the supreme Śiva Himself; and worship Her between the sacred pit and the sacrificial ground, on winnowing fans (even now in many places Ārya women design images of Devatās on winnowing fans with vermillion, sandal and Duriā grass, Atap rice in Pūjās and Vratas of Maṅgalacāndi, Kulacāndi, and many other Devatās); on walls (generally amongst Āryas in the north-west images of Devatās are painted on walls), in Pūjā, Vrata, and other religious rites; in Maṇḍalas (Sarvatobhadra and other Maṇḍalas mentioned in the Śāstra), on slabs (metal, wood, or stone slabs), in the head and in the heart (1). Although the milk of a cow is produced from the blood which circulates through her whole body, it flows only from the teats of her udder; so, although the universe-pervading Devatā is present everywhere, Her true aspect is realized in images only (3). If an image be in all respects similar to the aspect of Devatā, as described in the Śāstra, if the articles of worship are collected with care, and if the Sādhaka has

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2 Rāmaprasāda Sen, the celebrated Bengali poet (born, 1718; died, 1775).
3 That is, Rāmaprasāda.
4 That is, by being moulded in the heart of the Sādhaka.
5 The Scripture dealing with ritual.
6 Devotion.
7 Rūpānta.
8 Sthaṅḍila.
9 There are two kinds of rice prepared from paddy. In the first the paddy is boiled and the husk is removed. In the other the husk is removed without such boiling by exposing the paddy to the sun. This is atap, and the other is called "siddha".
10 Devīs.
11 As to Vratas, see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
12 A geometrical figure frequently drawn or made with various colours. The difference between a Maṇḍala and Yantra is that the former is used in the case of any Devatā, whereas a Yantra is appropriate to a specific Devatā only.
13 Brahmaraṇḍhara.
14 Svarūpa.
15 Upacāra, such as water, flower; incense, lights, food, etc.
unswerving faith, then that Devatā is sure to enter that image (4). Cream so long as it remains in a cow’s body does not nourish anyone, but for those who draw milk from the cow and collect the cream from it by their personal exertion in the way of boiling and so forth, that cream becomes a cause of physical nourishment. Just as in this way only the cream becomes a cause of physical nourishment, so, O Paramēśvar! the Devatā residing in the body of every person becomes the cause of the Śādhaka’s liberation in consequence of worship only. Without such worship She does not grant the desired object to the Śādhaka (5–6). For this reason the Devatā should be worshipped by invoking into Her image Her life, senses, and everything else appertaining to Her, and by establishing them in such image with Tāntrik Mantras; otherwise, without such establishment of life,² the worship will be ineffectual (7). If the establishment of life in an image is performed according to the Śāstra, the worship will bear the great fruit of liberation, even if it be defective as regards other Mantras and rites.² Such defects will be cured by the Śādhaka’s prayer to the Devatā for forgiveness (8). Karma⁸ done in violation of the rules laid down in the Śāstra will be wholly fruitless in consequence of the fault known as Karmabhangha ⁴ (9). Karmas falling short of, or going beyond, the rules laid down in the Śāstra will never bear fruit. The fruits of all good Karmas ⁶ performed according to the Śāstra will always be as visible as a fruit or other thing held in one’s hand (10). Hence, in Japa, Homa, Pūjā ⁵, and the like, Karma ⁸ performed in strict conformance with Śāstrīk rules will please the Devatā, and secure both the fruits of Bhoga and Mokṣa ⁴ for the Śādhaka (11). O Spouse of Śambhu! futile is the worship and so forth done by those who do not know the nature ⁷ of the Devatā, Yantras, and Mantraśakti ⁸ (12). Yantras are all Mantra,⁶ and Devatā is the Śakti of Mantra itself. Therefore the Devatā is at once pleased if She is worshipped with Mantras according to the Śāstra (13). A Tantra is so called because it subdues (Niyantraṇa) lust, anger, and other faults of Jīva and the sufferings caused thereby. This Yantra is a source of satisfaction to Devatā when She is worshipped in it (14). As the body is for a Jīva and as oil is for a lamp, so is Yantra the seat of eternal

¹ Prāṇapratīṣṭhā.
² That is, other than those relating to the Prāṇapratīṣṭhā rite.
³ Rites.
⁴ Violation of the order of worship.
⁵ “Repetition” of Mantra, the sacrifice into fire and ceremonial worship (see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra).
⁶ Enjoyment and liberation.
⁷ Svarūpa.
⁸ Potency of Mantra.
⁹ Mantramaya. The Yantra is the body of the Devatā, who is Mantra.
play for all Devatās (15). Hence, the principal part ¹ of worship ² is to adore the Paramēśvari, after the making of and drawing of Her image and Yantra. But, O My Beloved! the worship should be performed according to the rules, and after the Sādhaka has received full instruction therein from Guru (16).”

Wherever Śāstra has spoken of images, it has in this way similarly referred to the Mantra and Devatā. It has also said: “In this way the Sādhaka, who has controlled his Prāṇa,³ should, having through meditation beheld his Iṣṭadevatā in his heart, contemplate upon the unity of the image of the Devi both within and without.” The process for so doing will be described in its proper place later. Here only this much should be understood that it is the inner image which must be brought out and established in the outer image. Our critic will now consider whether it is not the height of folly to try to do away with worship of the Deity with form by breaking its image. Be the image, mental or material, we break it every day after worship. But in spite of so much breaking we cannot really break it for a single moment. Whenever or wherever I look, within or without, I ever see the Devī, whose substance is will, as Bhagavān or Bhagavati, in whatsoever form She is pleased to appear. I see my Mother, the mad,⁴ disordered girl, dancing with gentle movements of her body, now taking up the flute instead of the sword, or again seizing the sword instead of the flute, or yet again at times making both the sword and the flute into one in Her hand; mingling Her laughter with Her dancing; now loosening and now binding up Her hair. If I sleep, she awakens me by coming Herself and playing on the flute. If I commit any offence, She raises Her sword and, smiling gently, threatens me with it. What infidel ⁵ is there who can break this image? Who in the three worlds has the power to break the image to which my heart is bound with such a deep love? The outer image with which you are concerned is nothing but a reflection of the real one. So long as the inner image, which is thus reflected, is not broken, what will you gain by breaking its reflection? The fair and transparent moon is reflected in the clear bosom of a river. The light of its golden beauty is borne upon the innumerable ripples raised by the gentle stirrings of the evening wind. If like foolish children you and I proceed to strike at the reflection with our sticks, think you that

¹ Kalpa.
² Pūjā.
³ That is, his breath by Prāṇāyāma.
⁴ Pāglā, as already stated (see ante), the English word “mad” fails to convey the meaning of the word “pāglā,” for in Bengali it is tinged with a feeling of tenderness, and persons so called are often greatly loved. The term denotes rather a person of eccentric and amiable character, and is akin to the Persian Dewāna.
⁵ Pāṣanda (heretic, miscreant).
we shall thereby break the moon itself? Mistaken as we are, the agitation of the water may lead us to think that the moon has been shattered into a hundred or a thousand fragments; but, O brother! wait but a moment, and you will see that when the water has again become calm the full moon shines as fully there as ever. Then you will understand that the moon which is agitated by the waves is only a reflection of and not the moon itself. The moon appears in the water because the rays of the moon in the heavens have reached it. O brother! you energetic child! the moon in the heavens will not be broken until the little arms of dwarfs such as you and I can reach through the firmament where the moonlight plays and touch the lunar orb itself. I therefore ask you, O brother! what is the use of striking at the reflection if you cannot touch that which it reflects? The external image which you see before a devotee is not merely such, nor is the image (which has risen in the sky of the devotee’s heart) of Her who plays on the breast of Śiva and stirs in the hearts of devotees a mere outward thing. That image of Brahmamaya, which is reflected in the river of the devotee’s love-laden eye, shedding the light of Brahman on the playful lucid waves of feeling; that image of Her who, though the one and only Īśvari, is reflected in multiple innumerable waves in the eyes of countless devotees, is not a mere outward thing. Were anyone to break that inner image, it might become him to say one day: “I shall do away with the worship of the Deity with form by breaking Her image.” If to-day you and I proceed to break an outer image with the cudgel of our own violent infidelity, do you think it will be really broken thereby? Never! If, however, the eye of the devotee is hurt, sweet tears of devotion will fall from them, the sight of which will stir the hearts of all men. But, then, instantly before your eyes the deep waters assume a calm, gentle, and tranquil aspect. The agitation of the water does not cause the moon’s reflection to disappear. On the contrary, the clear moon-beams like garlands of light dance and play on every ripple. Similarly, your blow will not drive away the Devatā’s image from the devotee’s eyes. On the contrary, the great Śakti of the mental Devatā will play on every ripple in the water of the tears of the devotee’s eye. But before your own eyes the consoling peace will shortly descend and calm the tears. Then instantly you will see that Brahmamaya, who dwells in the hearts of devotees, has again fully appeared without; and then, seeing the displayed and fearful nature of Her gentle, sweet laughter in the presence of the devotee, and the vanity of our effort to break that image, it will seem to you as if the victorious queller of Mahiṣa is to-day laughing peals of laughter after She crushed the pride of Dānavas under the toe of Her left foot and has bestowed the dominion of heaven on Devas. O Mother of the world!

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1 Jyothi.
2 The Asura.
3 Svarga.
let me see, O Mother! that day. By Thy kindness teach me that unbelief which causes Thee, O Mother (whom even Princes of Yogins seldom attain in meditation), to appear in person in the field of battle with assumption of a visible warrior form. Teach me that unbelief which causes Thee in Thy intense love to place on the hard neck and shoulder of the restless Dānava the beauteous lotus-foot, which is the treasure of the heart of Maheśvara. O Mother, full of unbounded mercy! there is nothing in the three worlds to compare with this mercy of Thine. It is by reason of this that Thou art, O Mother! the Mother of the Universe. What better proof of Thy mercy is there than this, that Thou hast no enemy in the Samsāra other than Thy son? Hallowed is the merciful Mother! Hallowed art Thou, hallowed is Thy mercy, and still more hallowed is Thy inimical son! Brother critic! as you are my friend, I tell you with tears in my eyes that everyone is hallowed in this Samsāra, which is the Mother’s dominion. But you and I, unfortunate as we are, seem to be the most unhappy of those who are unhallowed. We are neither faithless nor faithful. We have neither been able to become enemies nor sons. In deep sorrow and with tears, therefore, I say: “Tell me, Mother! where am I to stand, Mother?”

She alone knows where I am to stand. But I am here to say what I have heard about the path. I shall, therefore, tell you one or two more things to-day. I hear that you are given to saying at every word “image-worshippers are worshippers of unconscious matter.” From this it indirectly follows that you are a worshipper of consciousness itself. It is not at all strange, but rather natural, on your part for you to say that image-worshippers are worshippers of unconscious matter, for “a person speaks only of that which he understands,” and no one can blame him for so doing. There is, therefore, nothing to say to you on the score that you call image-worshippers, worshippers of unconscious matter. But we shall to-day ask you one or two things, because you are a worshipper of Brahman Himself, who is consciousness itself.

You know that the verbal root brṅgha means to pervade, and that Brahman is the name of Him who pervades the Universe. You are also

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1 Dhyāna.
2 Son of Danu, enemy of the Devas.
3 It is the Devi’s love which leads her to punish the Asuras. As the latter have thus drawn the love of the Devi, even though it takes the form of punishment, the author expresses himself to be envious of the Asuras, enemies of the Devas, who are thus more fortunate than great Yogis (see verses 8 and 9 of the Hymn to Jagadambikā in Chapter six of the Devībhāgavata Purāṇa, translated in A. and E. Avalon’s “Hymns to the Goddess”).
4 That is, She looks on them as Her sons, although they are Her enemies.
5 Jāda.
in the habit of saying that Brahman is consciousness itself. Being a worshipper of that Brahman, with what heart, O brother! can you call an image unconscious matter? Is it an expression of faith on your part to say that He who pervades the Universe, who pervades everything and exists everywhere, who is equally present everywhere from Heaven to Hell, does not exist in an image? It may, to a certain extent, become a dualist to say that "unconscious matter and consciousness are two different things". But being a worshipper of undefinable Brahman, with what face do you admit the existence of that which is called "unconscious matter" as distinct from consciousness? You may, of course, escape by saying, "Be it unconscious matter or consciousness, I do not care for worship at all." But in that case also you are in another way bound to admit that there is nothing which can be called unconscious matter. You call these things unconscious matter in which you do not see any sign of consciousness, as, for instance, earth, water, wood, stone, and so forth. Now, I ask, is it because there is really no consciousness in these things that you regard them as unconscious, or is it because you yourself have not the eye to see them otherwise? Many people, again, say that such things as plants, trees, shrubs, creepers, and so forth, are unconscious. Perhaps they think that eating, sleeping, fearing, and having sexual intercourse, are four inseparable marks of Jivahood, and that all such things as are without them are unconscious. The Śāstra, however, says that plants, creepers, and so forth, are not unconscious things, but unmoving Jīvas. Manu says: "Through faults arising out of the body—that is to say, sins committed by means of the body—men become unmoving things (are born as plants, shrubs, creepers, and so forth); that is to say, the punishment for such sins consists in this, that in their subsequent birth such men are unable to do any desired work by their physical exertion. Through sins committed by speech men are born as birds or beasts; that is to say, the punishment for such sins consists in this, that in their subsequent birth these men have not the faculty of speech. As the result of sins committed by mind, men are born in the lowest castes. The object of such punishment is that in their subsequent birth they may not be endowed with broad intelligent minds. It is merely in order to determine where we stand that we quote this passage from Manu. In fact, there are many others. Hundreds and thousands of reasons and authorities may be given and quoted in this connection, but we are afraid of digressing. What we want to show by the above passage is that plants, creepers, and

1 Svarga to Nāraka.
2 Nirviśeṣa—that is, to whom no limiting attribute can be given.
3 See ante.
4 Author's parenthesis.
5 Their minds are enveloped by the Tāmoguna.
so forth, are not unconscious or inert, but living things, that they, too, are born and die, share happiness, prosperity, and adversity, and so forth, in a remarkable degree, with, however, this difference from other living things, that while we can clearly observe the changes which are caused in the latter by happiness and sorrow, we do not perceive similar changes in the case of trees, creepers, and so forth. There are two reasons for this difference. First, the force of consciousness 1 which exists as Jīva in a plant or creeper is completely overpowered by the force of Māyā 2; and secondly, the changes which are caused in plants and the like by happiness and sorrow are so fine that our senses, gross as they are, have not the keenness and subtlety to perceive them. Only Rṣis, who have attained Siddhi by Tapas 3 and see all things, and Devas and Devayonis 4 (Yaksas, Kinnaras, Vidyādharas, and so forth), have the power to perceive them. For this reason we read in Paurāṇik and similar stories that whenever some great person has through a curse taken birth as a plant or the like, Rṣis or Devas have, on knowing when the curse comes to an end, delivered him from life as an unmoving thing. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself bears evidence of this in the incident of the breaking of the trees Yamala and Arjuna. 5

Next, as to stones and metals. It is not necessary to deal separately with the subject of metals, for metals exist in mines in the womb of mountains, and there is no difference between stones and metals as regards consciousness or unconsciousness. A mountain is a great living thing, and the greatest 6 of things that spring out of earth. It is in mountains that the earth's power of bearing burden is mainly seated. Hence mountains are called "supporters of the earth". 7 Mountains rise, grow, and become decayed. They rise by piercing through the earth; they grow by extending to the earth; and, again, during the time of their decay they gradually sink into the womb of the earth. As a mountain rises by penetrating through the earth, inch by inch, in thousands and hundreds of thousands of years, so it also disappears into the womb of the earth inch by inch during the same periods. A mountain has also birth and death. In a dead tree there remains no vitality. The stones of a dead mountain

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1 Sītākāli.  
2 Māyākāli.  
3 Austerity, devotion, etc. (see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra).  
4 Spirits emanating from the Devas and the Deva world. Deva eva yonih nidānabhūtāt yaśya.  
5 There is a tree called Arjuna. Śrī Kṛṣṇa broke a twin Arjuna-tree, and two Devayonis sprang forth, who had been cursed by a Rṣi. The author here speaks of Yamala and Arjuna, but Yamala means twin, and it should be twin Arjuna trees.  
6 Literally, crest-gem.  
7 Earth is that which is the supporter of everything, and it is mainly through the mountains that it is so, for they are the greatest masses of earth, and the mountain ranges are thought to be the back-bone of the earth.
become rough and destitute of moisture, like the dry wood of a dead tree; and as does such wood, they break into pieces under light blows. Dealers in stones who are versed in the science of the subject unhesitatingly admit this. They can also show, on an examination of them, which mountain is alive and which is dead. But perhaps you are shaking your sides with laughter on hearing that mountains have life. But can you say that to-day the mountains are not laughing on seeing you laugh in this way? Can you show any substance in the world which has no life, and yet grows and decays? The longevity of a mountain is lakhs of crores\(^1\) of years, thousands of Yugas,\(^2\) hundreds of Manvantras,\(^3\) while you and I are not reckoned as even insignificant bubbles in the vast sea of time. How is it possible for us in a single life to probe into the question of consciousness or unconsciousness of a mountain by observing its birth and death? Who can say how many times\(^4\) you and I are to be re-incarnated during the one life-time of a single mountain? It does not therefore become us to determine the question of consciousness or unconsciousness of a mountain, though we cannot see its birth and death. We, however, daily see the growth and decay of small hills, and from this you can very well realize whether a mountain is conscious or unconscious.

Then comes the question of earth. Consciousness of earth is still more subtle—indeed, as subtle as any matter can be. It is extremely difficult to discover it with the help of physical perception alone. It can be ascertained only by means of Divine\(^5\) powers attained by Sādhanā. It is not therefore capable of explanation. Besides this, even if we think that the earth is unconscious, we must consider whether it is really so; whether earthly atoms are seats of the play of unconscious forces\(^6\) only, or whether the force of consciousness lies in a subtle form within them and achieves its purposes by means of these unconscious forces which it has made its servants. Let us assume that earth is the seat of the play of unconscious forces only. But there, where I saw yesterday a stretch of barren earth, I see to-day the sprouting of new tender shoots. Whence has this vitality of conscious living things come to the inert atoms of unconscious earth? This is the first stage. The subsequent stages are still more wonderful. Before our eyes the shoots grow into stalks and leaves and gradually bear fruit. When the crop becomes ripe, it is eaten by men,

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1 A lakh equals 100,000 and a crore is 10,000,000.
2 A Yuga or age is a portion of a Kalpa, or day of Brahmā of 4,320,000,000 years (see next note).
3 The Kalpa is divided into fourteen Manvantras, which are again subdivided into seventy-one Mahāyugas, each of which is composed of Yugas.
4 Literally, "how many eighty-four lakhs of times."
5 Daiva (super-physical).
6 Jāta Śakti.
beasts, and birds, and is digested in the fire of the stomach. The essence of the digested crop is then transformed into fat, semen, and blood in the body. In the womb again the semen and blood are digested and grow into the living, conscious child in the womb. However learned we may be in various Sāstras, we are unable to realize this directly, the mother alone being able to do so. Gradually when, after ten months and ten days, the child issues from the mother's womb, we then see that the eating of an unconscious crop has produced this conscious fruit. If the semen and blood had not the force of consciousness in them, whence has consciousness come to the child? If the crop which has been eaten had no consciousness in it, whence did consciousness come in the semen and blood? If the tree had not consciousness in it, whence did consciousness come in the crop? And if earth had no consciousness in it, whence did consciousness come in the tree? Now, critic, who talks of unconsciousness! Tell me, is it the earth which is unconscious, or is it you and I who are so? Is it not a sign of one's own unconsciousness to consider the earth as earthen only, when it is thus full of consciousness in a subtle form. What can be more idiotic than to hold that the soil of the earth is unconscious matter, when men, beasts, birds, insects, trees, shrubs, mountains, and all else derive their consciousness from the force of consciousness contained in every atom of the earth, and to ridicule away with ideas that which has puzzled the brains of even philosophers? The philosopher has said:

"Unconscious semen becomes instinct with consciousness during its stay in the womb. Gradually hands, head, and various other organs spring up. Again, that same semen which has thus grown into a jīva takes on successively the attributes of childhood, youth, old age, infirmity, and so forth, one after another, and sees, eats, hears, smells, and moves about. What greater magic can there be than this?"

Here it may be objected that, if worship can be performed with earth, stones, wood, metal, and such other things, having regard to the Brahman-consciousness existing in a subtle form within it, why cannot it be performed with the bodies of men, beasts, birds, and so forth, in which that consciousness is more manifest? We ask in reply, Who is it who says that worship is not performed in this way? In fact, it is so performed; the worship of the supreme Brahman appearing as Guru is done towards the human body of the Guru, Kumārī is worshipped in the bodies of virgins. The Spouse of Śiva is worshipped in the animal body of jackals, and it is in the form of the Brāhmaṇī bird that the daughter of Dakṣa grants Siddhi to a Śādhaka's Śādhana. All this is worship done with other bodies. But a Śādhaka must first of all worship his Iṣṭadevatā in his own body, and then

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1 Śakti.  
2 Upādhi.  
3 The Devi as a virgin.  
4 The Brāhmaṇī Kite (Kṣemangkār) is worshipped.
he will be entitled to do worship of Her in other bodies. Worship with portions\(^1\) of Brahma-caitanya\(^2\) leads to perfection\(^3\) of Brahma-Jnāna\(^4\) and not to the perfection of Brahmā-worship.\(^5\) For the purpose of Brahmā-worship it is necessary to worship a form which has been assumed by the Devatā to show Himself to Śādhakas and to bestow favours on them. This image, again, must not be a production of the Śādhaka's imagination only. Such images alone should be worshipped as are images of forms actually assumed by Her. The worship also must be performed in the method approved of by the Śāstra, and then Śādhana performed according to the Śāstra is sure to lead to Siddhi.\(^6\) Mantra-Śakti\(^7\) wields sole authority wherever Siddhi is concerned. In Śādhana with Mantra the Devatā's real form is revealed by the Śakti of the Mantra. Hence the only form which I should meditate on is the form which is the subject of the Mantra in which I am initiated. In my own self I can meditate on that form for a very short time only. But so long as this meditation does not develop into perfect Samādhi,\(^8\) I have not the power to hold that true form of Her constantly in my heart. It is therefore as an aid to this end that the same form is worshipped outwardly in images. Secondly, unswerving meditation is impossible at the time of worship. I am the worshipping, She is the worshipped, and to worship is my duty. No worship is possible without this three-fold knowledge.\(^9\) Moreover, when we make our various offerings we are thinking of these things. Single-pointed meditation is never possible when so many different forms of knowledge crowd together in the mind. For this reason there can be no outer worship without the establishment of an outer image.

It may, however, be asked, Why should the Śakti, which is Her real aspect, appear in the outer image at my desire? That is a different question. On the one hand, images made of earth, stone, and so forth, are given the forms which Mantra-Śakti has revealed in the Śāstra, so that the condition is immensely favourable, instead of being unfavourable to the appearance of that true Śakti in them. On the other hand, Mantra-Śakti will awake by its own force and unite the Brahma-tejas in the heart of the Śādhaka.

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\(^1\) Amsa.

\(^2\) Brahman as consciousness.

\(^3\) Siddhi.

\(^4\) Brahman knowledge, or spiritual knowledge.

\(^5\) By worshipping the objects in which the Brahman exists, a man's knowledge of Brahman may be perfected; but, considered as worship, it is not the worship of Brahman in its entirety, which is only accomplished in the case of Avatāras on the earthly or spiritual plane, such as the Mahāvidyās.

\(^6\) Fruition.

\(^7\) The potency of Mantra, or rather Śakti as Mantra.

\(^8\) Ecstasy, or the attainment of the turiya consciousness (see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra).

\(^9\) That is, of worshipper, worshipped, and duty to worship.
with the Tejas in the outer form of the Devatā, and then the two Tejas will together burn like a sacrificial fire, accepting the offerings made by the Sādhaka. What is there in this for you or I to object to or rack our brains over?

Mantra alone, which is the mediator in the affair, is responsible for it. Mantra will, by its own power, bring divinity to the image; you and I need not be anxious about it. It is for this reason that Mantrāsakti is at the root of all Sādhana. Mantra can, by becoming one only Isvara (that is, supreme over all), cause such events by means of its super-worldly power as the three worlds or the universe cannot accomplish by their united effort. It is because Mantra possesses such wonderful power, that you and I, mere men though we be, are able to worship Devatā. The Śāstra has, therefore said: "If the worshipper has strength of Tapasyā (that is to say, if his Mantra is conscious), and if there is an abundance of offerings (that is to say, if such offerings inspire the Sādhaka’s heart with single-pointed devotion to the Devatā), and if the image represents the true form of the Devatā (that is to say, if at the sight of the image the Sādhaka’s mind and eyes sink in the sea of its beauty, sweetness, and gracefulness), then the Devatā readily approaches that image." In order to gain for oneself the different Śaktis which Brahmanayī has put in different Yantras in this house of the Universe, such as river, sea, mountain, tree, shrub, creeper, and so forth, it is necessary to worship Her in these Yantras. This is the ground of Her worship in jackals, Brähmīni kites, cremation grounds, dead bodies, women, bacl-trees, aśvatthā trees, aparājīta flowers, cows, bulls, Brāhmaṇas, places of pilgrimage, fire, and so forth. Opportunity offering, we shall try to explain the principles of this subject in its proper place. Here this much only should be understood, that in whatever Yantra or image She may be worshipped, it is the worship of Herself in that form. For this reason even Vedāntik Dandis, who take refuge with knowledge only, have said in the Pañcadaśī: "In the Viśvarūpa portion.
of the Puruṣa Sūkta, it has been said, from Brahmā, to a blade of grass everything is a limb of the vast macrocosmic body of Bhagavān (1).

Īsvara, Sūtrātmā, Virāṭa, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Indra, Agni, Vighna, Bhairava, Mairāla, Mārika, Yakṣa, Rākṣasa, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra, cow, horse, deer, bird, Asvath, banian, mango, and other trees, barley, paddy grass, and other crops, water, stone, earth, wood, axe, spade, and so forth—all are Īsvara. When worshipped as Īsvara they grant fruits according to the Śaktis, inherent in their respective Yantras (2-4). The fruit of the worship will be according to the Yantra and the mode in which the worshipper performs the worship. The differences in quality which are found to exist in these fruits are caused by differences in the character of the Yantras of worship and of the worship itself, according as it is Sāttvik, Rājasik, or Tāmasik. But liberation can never be attained without a knowledge of the Brahman, just as we sleep until we awaken ourselves. When one attains to knowledge of the non-dualistic Brahman, all this Univerre of conscious and unconscious things in the forms of Īsvara, Ījna, and so forth, appears to be nothing but a dream (5-7).

Three causes operate for the attainment of this knowledge of Brahman: (1) Hearing, thinking and constant meditation, prescribed in the Vedānta Philosophy; (2) practice of Yoga; and (3) Sādhanā, consisting of a combination of the three things—Karma (work), Yoga, and Jñāna (knowledge), with Bhakti (devotion) as their root. Of these three means the last is the easiest, most pleasant, most rapidly effective, and is suited to all the three classes of worshippers—namely, those who are given to worldly pursuits, those who are dissatisfied with the world, and those who yearn for liberation. In the realm of devotion the most worshipful and supreme objects of adoration are those forms only of the Supreme Devatā Paramesvāri, in which She as the central source of all Śaktis has manifested Herself in order to make worship possible. The ultimate Siddhi spoken of in the Tantra Śāstra

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1 The Vaidik Sūkta of that name.
2 Virāṭa. The whole Universe is considered to be the body of the Devatā, its constituent parts being the microcosmic aspect.
3 That is, the Ātmā considered as the continuing thread on which the objective world is strung and which it infuses.
4 Vighna Devatā. Ganeśa is so called as remover of obstruction. What follows and precedes are Devas, Devayonis, castes, etc.
5 That is, the Sādhaka acquires the Śakti which is manifested in the objects
6 See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
7 Śravana. See as to this and two following cp. cit. supra.
8 Manana.
9 Nididhyāsana.
10 Commencement must be made with Bhakti.
11 Tattvas.
12 Śvarūpa.
dances on the palms of the hands\textsuperscript{1} of such men as are not satisfied with Siddhi acquired from the worship of partial manifestations\textsuperscript{2} from Brahmā to a blade of grass described above as Her Virāṭa Vibhūti, but are desirous of attaining single-pointed devotion and liberation. They alone are competent to worship the Parabrahma aspect spoken of in the Tantra Śāstra of Her who is Parabrahman. It is for them that the Mother of the three worlds, who is Turiya consciousness,\textsuperscript{3} has assumed that Brahman aspect, which is massive consciousness,\textsuperscript{4} and bliss, and full of play.\textsuperscript{5} And it is for them that the Tantra Śāstra has loudly said: "Without a doubt he who enters upon the great path of Kuladharma\textsuperscript{6} will soon walk into the city of liberation. A man should therefore place himself under the direction of a Kaula."

\textsuperscript{1} That is, "is easily attained by". \textsuperscript{2} Vibhūtis.
\textsuperscript{3} The fourth state.
\textsuperscript{4} Cidghana—that is, nothing but a mass of consciousness.
\textsuperscript{5} Lilā.
\textsuperscript{6} Dharma of the Tāntrik Kaulas.