PREFACE

Medieval "Hinduism" (to use a convenient, if somewhat vague, term) was, as its successor, modern Indian orthodoxy, is, largely Tantrik. The Tantra was then, as it is now, the great Mantra and Sadhana Śāstra (Scripture), and the main, where not the sole, source of some of the most fundamental concepts still prevalent as regards worship, images, initiation, yoga, the supremacy of Guru, and so forth. This, however, does not mean that all the injunctions which are to be found in the Śāstra are of universal acceptance, as is pointed out in the Introduction which follows. This Introduction, however, is but a mere sketch of that which I hope to develop in a future volume after the ritual (in its widest sense) has been dealt with in detail. What is, in fact, wanted in this matter is an accurate statement of the facts; whereas up to now such cursory accounts of the Tantra as have appeared are as a rule mere general statements by way of condemnation of it.

One of the earliest of such accounts in English is contained in that interesting though biased and, in essential respects, ill-understanding work written by W. Ward, and published by the Serampore Mission in 1818. Of this book Horace Hayman Wilson wrote, in his well-known "essays," that Ward's information was merely oral, and might be regarded as unsatisfactory. It is a fuller account, however, than his own, and contains a certain amount of information which is fairly accurate with some which is not so. The author, however, like so many of his English successors, was influenced by a strong racial and credal bias, which in the old style he quite frankly and honestly displayed to view. With a strong faith in Protestant Christianity he combined exaggerated notions of the universal piety and morals of his own people who professed it. On the

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1 That is, ritual, practice. See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
4 Comparing the virtues of his country with the general Indian iniquity, he writes: "Where shall we find piety more elevated or morals more correct even among individuals in the lowest orders of society than in our own land?"
other hand, he wrote at a time when, according to his account, Hinduism was at a low ebb, and in its lower forms apparently productive of many evils. Contrasting, as some of his successors have since done, an over-painted picture of Western “Light” with a fictitious or exaggerated Eastern “Darkness,” he expressed himself, as some of them have also since done, much perturbed by the fact “that for some time past a very unjust and unhappy impression appeared to have been made in the public mind by encomiums passed on the Hindu writings.” He was certainly not himself guilty of the offence he here deplored. For we are told by him that the “Hindu system is the most puerile, impure, and bloody of any system of idolatry that was ever established on earth” amongst “an idle, effeminate, and dissolute people” of “disordered imaginations,” who “frequent their temples, not for devotion, but for the satisfaction of their licentious appetites.” The result of this alleged general depravity is stated in the extraordinary charge that “a chaste woman faithful to her husband is scarcely to be found in all the millions of Hindus,” whose “notions of the evil of sin are so superficial” that “they cannot be expected to promulgate the doctrine” of endless punishment in Hell-fire.

Given these circumstances, we are not surprised to find that he had only eyes for that which he understood to be bad. The good which is to be found in other religions is of no value to the mere controversialist. Thus, given the general brevity of his account, over-lengthy descriptions are set forth of such matters as how to kill an enemy by making his image in bull’s-dung, taking it to a burning-ground, then boiling the flesh of a hawk with spirits in a skull, with invocations to Antaka; charms against snake-bite, and so forth. Ward, like many another who followed him (and I deal with his case as in many respects typical of the others), seems to have thought that the chief and practically the sole subjects of the Tantra were sensual rites and black magic. It does not seem to have occurred to either him or them that, apart from its manifold secular contents, the Śāstra is the repository of a high philosophic doctrine, and of the means whereby its truth may through bodily psychic and spiritual development be realized. It is doubtless less easy to understand and describe these matters. The Scripture, however, is misjudged if we look

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3 Ward, vol. ii, p. lxxiv. The author of a quite recent work inspired by the same motive thinks to cure the European mind, “corrupted by theological moonings and mystical sentimentalism,” by violent and ignorant invective. “Hinduism,” he writes, “is the most material and childishly superstitious animalism that has ever masqueraded as idealism.” It has no morality, and the absurd object of its worship is “a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan, and Dick Turpin.” It is not a religion at all, but “is a pit of abomination, as far set from God as the mind of man can go”; and so forth. “The Light of India,” by Harold Begbie.

2 Ward, see vol. ii, pp. lxxiv, xlix, xlii, xlii, xxi; vol. i, p. 499.
merely to practices to be found therein similar to those contained in Western Grimoires, such as "Le Petit Albert," and other even less reputable works. A cursory glance, it is true, is thrown on higher matters, but with the same result. The lofty doctrines of Yoga, which the author of a quite recent work\(^1\) finds to be, "with its repulsive developments" "much the same as Shamanism," was long ago declared by his predecessor to be "absurd, impious, and ridiculous". It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the more disputable theories and ill-famed practices of some of the Tantras are not accurately described, and are indeed misunderstood. Whatever we may think of such doctrines, they are not truly represented by the statement that a certain division of worshippers seek to "blunt the edge of the passions with excessive indulgence."\(^3\)

The later experience of Brian Hodgson, whose valued work in Nepal should be better known, led him to describe the Tantra as "lust, mummary, and black magic."

The work of H. H. Wilson, though stated to be based in part on the texts, is admitted by its author to be necessarily superficial, depending on a cursory inspection of some of the documents.\(^2\) The account of the Tantras occupies but a small part of a description which purports to deal with all the Hindu sects. Of these Scriptures in particular he wrote what is as true now as then, "that they had been little examined by European scholars." He added, however, that such attention as had been paid to them was enough in his opinion to warrant the accusation that "they are authorities for all that is most abominable in the present state of the Hindu religion."\(^4\) His work is also written from the standpoint of one to whom all other systems are "shown to be fallacious and false by the Ithuriel spear of Christian truth," a standpoint which did not permit a countenance of either "devotees of superstition" on the one hand, or the men of learning on the other, "whose toleration," he complained, "is so comprehensive that it amounts to indifference to truth." The Tāntrik ritual in particular is described to be "nonsensical extravagance," at which, he says, he is disposed to laugh. Nyāsas\(^5\) are "absurd gesticulations," and so forth. H. H. Wilson was doubtless a distinguished Orientalist, and his work is in many respects of acknowledged value; but there are matters in his book which, from want of sympathy and knowledge, he wholly failed to understand, not only as regards general Hindu doctrines, but the specific teaching and ritual which is to be found in the Tantra. Nyāsa, for instance, is alleged to be absurd, but it does not

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\(^1\) "Antiquities of India," by Dr. L. Barnett, p. 17.


\(^3\) Wilson, vol. ii, p. 77.

\(^4\) See as to this form of ritual, Introduction to Tāntra Šāstra.
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appear that he or those who followed him really knew what it was, any more than he understood the nature of Bija. We learn nothing from his definition "monosyllabic ejaculations of imagined mysterious import" beyond this—that he had nothing else to say. His observation that the Abbé Dubois committed some egregious blunders may be applied to many others who have dealt with Hinduism, including himself. Indeed if we are duly modest, we will all of us be ready to admit the possibility of going astray in what is to us both a difficult and alien subject. Thus he appears to think that the oft-quoted verse commencing with the words, "Ptivā, ptivā, punah ptivā," is a Tantrik counsel of drunkenness as a means to secure what we call salvation. Apart from any special knowledge on the point, it might have been reasonably supposed that such an interpretation was absurd. And if it be hardly credible that a celebrated Sanskritist and intelligent man thought otherwise, this only shows that more is required for the understanding of a Hindu Śāstra than linguistic talent, however great. The verse is as little understood as some others (such as Mātriyonīm paramājya niharet sarvayonishu") which, in the language of a recent work, are supposed to inculcate "the sacred duty to practise incest."

Since Wilson's time all who have dealt with the Tantras appear to have adopted second-hand the accounts given by him and Ward, but never, so far as I am aware, with the qualifications which Wilson thought in fairness should be added to his adverse judgment. Thus, to take but one instance, we find all authors up to the present time reproducing Wilson's erroneous statement that the Mudrā of the Panchatattva are "mythical gesticulations," when in fact the term means parched cereal food of various kinds. The matter may appear to some a small one, even though accuracy is always important. But it is not the only instance of a repeated error; and how was it possible for those who have discoursed upon the Panchatattva of the Virāchāra ritual to have read the texts dealing with it, and not to have learnt what this particular Tattva means?

2 "Having drunk, drunk, and again drunk, and having fallen, let him rise again and attain liberation" (vol. i, p. 260). We find apparently the same error in Ward, vol. ii, p. xl. The explanation is too long to be given here. I deal with it elsewhere. It, however, refers to the ascent and descent in the body of Kundalini Śakti from its basic to its cerebral centre.
3 "Antiquities of India," by Dr. L. Barnett. The verse does not mean that incest may be committed with any woman save a mother, but that in doing recitation (japa) of the Śakti Mantra count is to be made on all the joints (yonī) of the fingers, except on the two upper joints of the first (index) finger, technically in such case called the Mātriyoni. In the case of japa of the Mantra of a male Devata, the two lower joints of the middle finger are called Mātriyoni.
In the work last cited, and in a review of my Edition of the Mahānirvāṇa, the opinion is expressed that there is in the body of Scripture called Tantra a nucleus only of Tāntrik teaching properly so called, which nucleus is defined as "black art of the crudest and filthiest kind, with a rough background of the Śiva Śakti cult." Round this nucleus, it is suggested, gathered a varying mass of Vaidik and "Brahmanic" ritual, together with a certain "quantum of Upanishadic idealism." "The Tantra" is itself said to be of two kinds. One of such classes is alleged to represent the "unvarnished" Tāntrik teaching above stated. Of Scriptures representing this class it is said that they are not merely "full of silly and vulgar superstition and magic," but have the additional "spice of wickedness and obscenity." It is of them that the author cited says: "The highly coloured Yogic imagination pales beside the doctrines of the infamous Tantras in which a veritable Devil's mass is purveyed in various forms to a swarm of sects, mostly of the Śivaite persuasion." The alleged second class of Tantras are apparently those in which the original wickedness and obscenity has been removed or rendered innocuous, or at least comparatively so, with the result that, according to the author cited, the most that can be said of them is that they are "full of silly and vulgar superstition and magic."

I cannot within the limits of this Preface discuss these strongly worded appreciations. I would, however, like to add this much to what is stated in the Introduction which follows: Allegations as regards "the Tantra"—that is, as regards the whole body of existent Scripture which passes under that name—must be received with caution. There is no European scholar who has read "the Tantra" in this sense even approximately. The reason for this are obvious. In the first place, a great deal of the Śāstra has disappeared. Of the Tantras which survive, and which are still numerous, some are extremely rare and others are fragmentary. I have myself been endeavouring for some years past to secure MSS. of several Tantras, but without success. A few only have been printed and imperfectly edited, and even these are but little, if at all, known in Europe. The frequently erroneous character of current criticism of the Tantra leads me to suppose that its authors are, generally speaking, second-hand by report, and without a knowledge of the actual texts. If this be in some cases not so, then it would seem that only portions of some Tantras have been read, and not infrequently ill-understood. The Tantra, in fact, contains many a technical term and secret doctrine which are not to be understood by the sole aid of a Sanskrit dictionary and grammar. When it is better known, some of the charges which have been made against it will have to be withdrawn. It has hitherto commonly been supposed that this Scripture is the expression in all its parts of all wickedness. The distinction above made, whether correct in itself or not, at least marks
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an advance towards a more correct appreciation of the Śāstra, even though it renders the same kind of justice as that which is done when a not unintelligent man whom we have hitherto called a knave is charged with being merely a vulgar fool. It must, however, be now obvious that conclusions based on such fragmentary material, and without knowledge of the occult teachings, is without authoritative value. In the present state of our knowledge, generalizations concerning the Tantra are likely in important matters to be hazardous. They seem to me to be particularly valueless when they take the form of mere abuse.

There is another important matter which is to be borne in mind, and which one of my Indian critics thinks that I have myself overlooked in my Edition of the Mahānirvāna. He says that the account I have there given of Tāntrik teaching is vitiated by the erroneous supposition that all the Tāntrik works are complementary to each other, and that I have ignored the distinctions which exist between varying schools and traditions. I was not unaware of the alleged distinctions to which my critic refers, though their existence and nature have yet to be established. I, however, then expressly stated that I did not deal with these subjects, reserving as I did such observations as I had at present to make for this work. A number of questions present themselves for solution upon this difficult matter. What, for instance, are the specific characteristics of the various classes of Āgamas known as Dāmara, Yāmala, Uddīṣa, and Tantra, whether of the so-called Śaiva (such as the Kāmika, Dīpta, Vījaya, etc.); Vaiṣṇava (such as the Gandharva, Gautama, Rādhā, Bhairavāyāmala and others); or the Śaṅkara, Kaūla, or Devī type of Tantra? A similar question may be raised as to the sixty-four Tantras of the Three Krāntas respectively. Again, what are the Tantras in force in the present Svetavarāha Kalpa? Again, what is the relation between all these Śāstras as representing the specifically "Indian" Tantra and the "Buddhist" Tantra? Finally, what, if any, are the developments which have taken place as regards these Śāstrīk teachings? For Indian thought moves, even though some who write of it from books only think of it as something merely past. As H. H. Wilson says of the Hindu religion generally: "Its internal constitution has not been exempt from those varieties to which all human systems of belief are subject, and it has undergone great and frequent modifications, until it presents an appearance which there is great reason to suppose is very different from that which it originally wore." Lastly, what (and this

1 Not that it is the first. In more moderate language Sir Monier-Williams had already suggested a distinction between the original Tāntrik teaching and its subsequent developments and between the Tantras themselves; adding, however, that little was known on the subject. ("Indian Wisdom," p. 324).
is my immediate subject) is the Tāntrik doctrine and practice as it is at present understood and followed? When these and a number of other questions of great difficulty are solved, we may permit ourselves a greater dogmatism than our present state of knowledge allows. I am more immediately concerned with another matter—namely, the present beliefs of the Indian peoples. In connection, however, with this purpose, I may here say this: if it is assumed that there are different schools, then Tantras of the same school may obviously be taken as complementary to one another. In respect of other Tantras, even if they do, as alleged, represent varying traditions, it will, I think, be found that there are in any case many common elements accompanying their own alleged distinctive differences which render them complementary to other Tantras to that extent. Take, for instance, the specific Tāntrik Yoga, known as Śatektrabheda, which involves concentration on the lower centres. This is dealt with in Tantras which are alleged to be the expression of differing doctrine and practice in other respects. Similar observations may be made as regards the general worship (Upāsana), and so forth.

As the foregoing observations may possibly be misunderstood by some to mean that I think that there is nothing in the Tantra which is likely to provoke dissent, and that nothing has been done in the name, or by followers, of the Śāstra, which is in fact evil, it is necessary for me to say that that is not my opinion, though I think that the Śāstra as a whole has not hitherto been understood—a fate which it has shared with many another Hindu doctrine and practice.

Looking at the matter from a purely objective standpoint, every Orientalist must admit that an accurate knowledge of this Śāstra is of first-rate importance. But apart from this historical view, there are in the Tantra principles and practices which are of value in themselves. There is, for instance, a deep philosophic doctrine and a wonderful ritual which artistically shares with the Buddhist Tantras, though in a different way, the vehement splendour which has aptly been ascribed to the latter; a ritual which is at the same time, when rightly understood, singularly rational and psychologically profound. One of my English critics aptly appreciated this character of the Tāntrik ritual when he said that “from one point of view it is perhaps the most elaborate system of auto-suggestion in the world;”¹ a remark which, as well as the theory of auto-suggestion itself, will have a deeper content for those who are conversant with the Indian doctrine of the Atman and states of consciousness than for the ordinary English reader. It is necessary, however, that the ritual should be understood, otherwise it will not unlikely appear to be the “nonsensical extravagance” which

¹ The Quest, October, 1913.
H. H. Wilson called it. Disdain for "meaningless mystical syllables," "absurd gesticulations," and so forth, is often, after all, nothing but the rather foolish expression of annoyance which is felt at the presence of something not understood. These things, however, are not so senseless as some suppose.

In the next place we have in the Tantra the recognition of the fine principle that this doctrine and its expression in ritual are (subject to their varying competencies) for all, whatever be their race, caste, or sex. This marks a great advance on the parochial restrictions of the Vedas, which are so often placed in favourable opposition to the Tantra by English writers. The Śudra and woman are under none of the Vaidik bans. What, again, can be finer than the high veneration of woman which the Tantra inculcates. The Sufi author of the Dabistan,¹ describing, in the seventeenth century, the Śāktas, speaks of the Mother of the World in the following charming passage:² "This Māyā is the maker of the productions of this world and of its inhabitants, and the Creator of the spirits and of the bodies: the universe and its contents are born from Her: from respect of the said production and of the mentioned effects She is entitled Jagadamba, or Mother of the Universe. Nonentity finds no access to this Creator. The garment of perishableness does not sit right upon the body of this fascinating Empress. The dust of nothingness does not move round the circle of Her dominion. The real beings of heaven and the accidental creatures of the nether world are equally enamoured and intoxicated of desire before Her. Bound by these ties of deceit in this revolving world, whoever rebels feels the desire of Muktī—that is, of emancipation, independence, and happiness; nevertheless, from carelessness, he pays obedience and worship to this world-deceiving Queen, and never abandons the path of adoration of this bewitching Lady who, as the spiritual principle, exists in all living beings in the Six Circles." As women are the earthly incarnations of this great Queen he goes on then to say: "The Āgama (Tantra) favours both sexes equally, and makes no distinction between women, for men and women compose equally humankind. This sect holds women in great esteem and calls them Śaktis (powers), and to ill-treat a Śakti—that is, a woman—is held to be a crime." As H. H. Wilson also himself points out,³ women, as manifestations of the Great Cause of all, are entitled to respect and even to veneration. Whoever offends them incurs the wrath of Prakṛti, the Mother of all, whilst he who propitiates them offers worship to Prakṛti Herself.⁴

¹ Ed. Shea and Troyer (1843).
² Ed. Shea and Troyer (1843) vol. ii, p. 149.
³ "Essays," vol. i, p. 246.
⁴ Even if it be held, as Wilson does, that this doctrine has led with one branch of the sect at least to abuse, the existence of such abuse cannot affect the doctrine itself as above described.
PREFACE

And so, at a time when, as some allege, in accordance with the Vedas,\(^1\) the rite of Sati was being practised, and many a woman was being horribly oppressed, it was the Mahāmr̥vāna Tantra\(^2\) which forbade it on the grounds above stated. In conformity, also, with these views we find that, according to the Tantra, alone of the great Śastras, a woman may be a spiritual teacher (Guru), and initiation by her achieves increased benefit. Thus initiation by a mother of her son is eightfold more fruitful than any other. This, some may think, is not without example to us in the West, where, notwithstanding the increasing recognition of the place of woman, her right of spiritual teaching is still denied. There are other matters in the Tantra to which in this connection I might refer, such as true principles of Śādhanā on the path of desire, were it not impossible to discuss such a subject shortly except at peril of misunderstanding.

Whatever we may think upon these matters, it will occur to everyone of experience and free from prejudice that there must be more in a Śāstra which has obtained so great a credence and wide-spreading authority than the moral abuses and silly superstitions alone with which it is charged. From the purely objective and detached standpoint of the historical student, the whole of the Śāstra is of value and interest. Historical research in itself is not concerned with moral values. Its subject is whatever man has taught, or said, or done. When we consider, however, these values, the case is, of course, different. From the latter point of view, the Tantra is an encyclopedic amalgam of elements of varying character and worth, extending from the doctrines of a lofty speculation to practices which to the higher occultism are suspect,\(^3\) and to prescriptions which may be used for the purposes of evil-intentioned magic. Here, therefore, we must distinguish. In short, we must first inquire and learn what, in fact, the Śāstra is, and then understand and discriminate.

Up to the present, however, want of knowledge is responsible for an indiscriminating condemnation of the whole of an extensive literature, the cultural expression of the varied activities of a secular epoch. It is sufficient at present for practical purposes to say that (apart from magic) the ritual in the Śāstra to which objection has been taken forms but one portion of the Scripture properly applicable to a select class of adepts, and that the remainder of its provisions deal with matters which are free from exception on the grounds on which the Tantra has been adversely criticized.

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\(^1\) The existence of Vaidik authority is disputed.

\(^2\) See Introduction, post.

\(^3\) I have here in mind what is technically called Nid Sādhanā, and express myself as I do remembering that some great Śādhanakas have practised it. It is noteworthy that both it and Mahāchinnāchāra (a term in itself full of significance) are the two chief elements in the Indian Tantra which are alleged to be non-Aryan importations.
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It is unnecessary here to further develop a proposition of which the book now translated is itself the proof.

I had at first intended merely to draw upon the author's work and other sources for the purpose of a presentation in Western form of some of the fundamental principles of a Śāstra which has been hitherto so little understood. The execution of this intention I defer to some future time, when I hope to deal in my own way with the metaphysical and psychological bases of Hindu worship, a subject, on its practical side, hitherto untouched. For the present, however, I present the subject in the words of an orthodox Hindu, who is an adherent of the Tantra Śāstra, and whose work (Tantratattva) is here translated.¹ For those who might be disposed to accept the correctness of the views expressed by the Authors above cited would not unlikely entertain a suspicion of the genuineness of the Tāṁtirik character of a work of the present description, if upon a reading they should find it to be neither silly, nor vulgarly superstitious, magical, wicked, or obscene. The exposition, therefore, here given is not mine, but the Pandit's.

His work is, however, in no sense complete, but deals in a popular style with some portions only of the subject-matter. After I had written the Introduction which follows, I received a letter from him in which he explains that his book was published over twenty years ago, with a view to combating both the errors of what is called "Reformed" or "Protestant" Hinduism, and the mistakes of some incompetent defenders of orthodoxy; and that therefore both the matter and form of his work were determined by the arguments of those whom he controverted. As a result, his reply, which is presented in a somewhat discursive manner, does not treat of some subjects with which he desired to deal. He writes, therefore, to me to say that he has in preparation a third part, in which he proposes to give an exposition of the philosophy of the Tantra. The two Parts, now published, treat of (to use our parlance) the religious side of certain portions of the subject, though in India philosophy and religion are mingled in a way which the West has not known since the age when philosophy was held to be Ancilla Theologiae. This third Part, when ready, I hope to publish in continuation of the volume now issued.

Further, there are certain matters of doctrine and practice which are, as the Author states, for the initiate alone, and of which, therefore, he treats either cursorily or not at all. What, however, he does say will effect more than a mere acquittal of his system of the wholesale charges of absurdity and vice so commonly made against it. Referring to what is blameworthy, the Pandit himself says: "We know that there are reasons for saying some hard things"; though he adds: "But how are

¹ The work and its author are referred to in the Introduction which follows.
Kāli or Śiva or Tantra to blame?" As regards the likelihood of abuse in any system, there is more to be said for the Hindu view of the naturally crooked influence of time than for the notion of "progress" from moment to moment which some of us in the West would seem to entertain. But for all that, it would indeed be a phenomenon of strange degeneracy if India, which has thought the deepest thoughts of the world, and which has been marked by the intensity of its religious feelings, should, even in its most unfortunate days, have produced a system of extensive influence and authority which is intellectually nothing but "brainless hocus-pocus," and morally a mere facile reversal of the high notions of Dharma, which have distinguished its peoples beyond all the races. As a matter of fact, and to my knowledge, even at the present day some of the most learned Pandits and the greatest Sādhakas esteem and follow this Scripture, which they regard as the treasure of their heart. How comes this to be if it is merely, as alleged, the debased product of the Hindu spirit "at its lowest and very worst"? Whether particular portions of its teachings or practice should be generally approved is another matter. The difficulties, however, which attend an exposition of even such parts of the Śāstra as seem to be at first view readily exposed to attack are such that those who have any real knowledge concerning them will be the first to abstain from hasty generalizations, particularly when they take the form of mere abuse.

As regards such portions of doctrine as are here exposed, the Author in the course of the defence of his own beliefs has in many an instance severely castigated his opponents for their inaccurate statements and loose thinking. For reasons, however, which I give in the Introduction which follows, views more favourable to the Author's position now more generally prevail in India than was the case when his work was first written. Many even of those who nowadays are not prepared to accept orthodox doctrine in its entirety are yet disposed to think that the beliefs of their fathers were not, after all, quite so foolish as under the first influences of the English "Illumination" they considered them to be. But this change of view is not peculiar to India only. We ourselves have also recently experienced something of the same kind. An intelligent understanding of Christian ideas and Catholic ritual has dispelled many a shallow criticism to which they have been subjected by a narrow sectarianism on the one hand, and an equally narrow "rationalism" on the other. By this, however, it is not meant that no adverse criticisms in either of these matters have had force, or that in some Indian quarters the Śāstra is not still regarded as (to use the words of an Indian writer) "mines of superstition".

2 Religion, duty, etc. See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
Though the Pandit's work is issued in two parts,¹ I have, for the benefit of the readers of the first volume, given the table of contents of the second part now in the press, which will be ready for publication this year. This will be preceded by an Introductory essay from the pen of Sj. Barada Kanta Majumdar.

Later I hope to make up for the deficiencies in the present work by others dealing with the ritual in greater detail. Thus the Pandit in the second part refers to, but does not treat of, the Tāntrik yoga process, known as Śātcakrabheda. This I have dealt with in the work now in the press,² entitled "The Six Centres and the Serpent Force," being a translation from the Sanskrit, with Introduction, commentary, and plates of the Śātcakranirūpāna of Purnānanda Svāmī, the Sanskrit treatise itself forming part of the extensive Śrītattvavacintāmani, which is also being prepared for publication in the series of "Tāntrik Texts."

The references to the "Introduction" are to the Introduction of my Edition of the Mahānirvāna Tantra.³ References to "Introduction, ante," are to the Introduction which follows this Preface.

Benares

December 28, 1913

Arthur Avalon

¹ Publishers' Note: Combined in one volume in the present edition.
³ Publishers' Note: Now published as a separate volume entitled "Introduction to Tantra Śāstra."
INTRODUCTION

This work, by an Indian Pandit, is a presentation, the first of its kind, of the principles of that development of the Vaidika Karmakānda which, under the name of the Tantra Śāstra, is the scripture (Śāstra) of the Kali age. This Śāstra, together with its accompanying oral tradition, is the voluminous source of the greater part of the Hindu ritual, Hathayoga, and the various forms of spiritual training which pass under the generic term “Śādhanā.” In fact, both popular and esoteric Hinduism is, in its practical aspects, largely Tāntrik.

Recently an increased interest has been shown in the Hindu beliefs. Hitherto, however, attention has been chiefly directed to those great Vedāntik principles, which, subsumed, to a greater or less degree, in the beliefs and practices of all the Hindu sects are yet, in their conscious realization, the very end only of the highest spiritual effort. Little has been done to present the practical application of those principles in the particular form which they assume in the various divisions, methods, and rituals of the Indian worshippers. This side of practice, though neglected, has both intrinsic value and helps to a clearer and deeper understanding of the general principles than can be gathered from any bare theoretical statement of them. Ritual and spiritual exercise are objectively considered their pictorial statement, as they are subjectively the effective means of their realization. The knowledge of hymn, and legend, of worship and śādhanā, will alone give that full knowledge of the Hindu spirit without which its religious and philosophical conceptions are likely to be but poorly understood. The present development of upāsana (worship) and śādhanā can only be learnt from the Tantra, which is the Mantra and Śādhanā Śāstra and its accompanying oral traditions.

“Some years ago,” Professor Cowell wrote, “the Tantras form a branch of literature highly esteemed, though at present much neglected”; yet, as Professor Sir Monier Williams 1 has more recently pointed out, none of the numerous Tantras had, when he wrote, 2 been printed in Europe or investigated or translated by its Orientalists.

The account, which the work last cited gives of them, itself affords, by its meagre character and inaccuracies, evidence of the lack of information

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1 “Indian Wisdom,” p. 522 et seq.
2 I have since published an English translation of the current Sanskrit version of the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra entitled “The Great Liberation,” and have in preparation a translation of the Kulārṇava.
on the subject of which its author speaks. Thus the mudrā of the Panchatattva does not, as there stated, mean "mystical gestures," but, in the case of the rājasika and tāmasika panchatattva, parched cereal of various kinds as defined by the Yogini Tantra. In the sātvika sādhana it has another and esoteric meaning, equally dissimilar from the sense of the term "mudrā" as that word is employed in ordinary upāsana and hathayoga.

"Nigama" is not the name of a "sacred book appealed to by Dakshināchārina" as opposed to "Āgama," but is that form of Tantra in which the Devī is guru instead of śīya, as opposed to "Āgama," in which the Devī is śīya and Śiva is guru. It follows, therefore, that Āgama does not mean "a sacred book appealed to by Vāmāchārina" as opposed to Nigama of the followers of Dakshināchāra. Nor is the term Vāmāchārin itself a synonym for Kaula, for a person may be the first without being the second. The Mahānirvāna Tantra is not the only Tantra "attributed to Śiva," but all Sāstra so called has Him as its Revealer and Ganeśa as its scribe. The Śraddhālaka and Mantramahodadhi are not Tantras, but Tāntrik compendia and commentaries. The Tāntrik rite called Brūtaśuddhi does not mean "removal of demons," but the purification of the elements (earth, air, fire, etc., and the tattvas of which they are derivatives) in the body of the sādhaka, and so forth.

As might be expected, errors abound in accounts given by authors claiming less expert competence, whether European or Indian. Thus an

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1 Chap. vi:

Bhrishtadānyādikang yad yad charvaniyang prachakshate,
Sā mudrā kathitā devi sarveshāh naganandinī.

The same and other errors occur in Encyc. Brit., xiii, pp. 511-512.

2 See Āgamasāra; Kaivalya Tantra, and the Tantra pāstrī, and Introduction to Tantra Sāstra.

3 See the Āgarādvalamānaya, cited post. On the contrary, the Nigamas are said to be Pūrnaraḥṣaya. Āgama and Nigama are also applied to the Veda, but Āgama as applied to the Tantra has the above signification, though, as Professor Whitney says, it etymologically means "that which has come down" (Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, vol. ix, p. 973).

4 The Kaula is a member of the highest of the several divisions of worshipers (Achāra), of which Vāmāchāra is one. It is only after a Sādhaka has fulfilled all preceding Dharmas that he is qualified for Kauladharma.

5 See Gāyatri Tantra, chap. I. Professor Whitney (loc. cit.) says that their authorship is sometimes ascribed to Dattātreya. Of this I have never heard, and if such ascription is made it is incorrect. There is a work dealing with Indrajāla Vidyā called the Dattātreya Tantra, as also a Yāmala of the same name, and Dattātreya is a Rishi said to be particularly revered by the Nakulāvadhūta Sect. The Tantras generally were, as stated in the text, revealed by Śiva.

6 See same author's (Monier Williams), Sanskrit Dictionary, sub bios "bhuta," where also are given some inaccurate definitions of the Satcakra.
INTRODUCTION

Indian writer1 explains the Mudrā of the Panchatattva to be "gold or coins." It is true that "coin" is one of the meanings of the term "Mudrā," but even in the absence of special information it might have reasonably been surmised that "Tāṇtrikas" do not worship with a gold mohur or rupee. Nor is the Śakti, which is by these and other rites worshipped, material force, as was supposed by the founder of the Bhāratavarnashīya Brāhmaṇasamāj, who wrote some years ago of the European materialists of his day as "Śāktas offering dry homage to force victorious over the European Bhaktas, worshippers of the God of Love."2 Nor is it the fact "that Śāktas divide themselves into the Dakshina and Vāma classes according to whether they attach the greater importance to the male or to the female principle respectively"3 and so forth. Misconception of the teaching of Tantra, together with abuses committed by one of the communities of Tāṇtrik worshippers, led a Bengali apologist of the Śāstra, when writing some twenty years ago on the subject of Tantra, to say:4 "Unfortunately, however, their intentions have been so grossly misrepresented in our days that the very name of Tantra shocks our nerves; yet two-thirds of our religious rites are Tāṇtrik, and almost half our medicine is Tāṇtrik."

The causes of this neglect of the Śāstra in the country of its origin and in the West are several. Their consideration will also explain the standpoint from which this book here translated is written. In the first place, in the case of India, must be reckoned the effects of English education. This, when first introduced, not merely struck at faith in all Indian Śāstra, but was in a particular manner adverse to that form of it which was then current, and with which we here deal. Tāṇtrik Hinduism is in its more common aspect, essentially of a sacramental and ritualistic character. Those who first introduced and gave English education were for the most part Protestants, with no sympathy with, or understanding of, a mode of religious thought and practice which to a considerable extent, both in its inner spirit and outward forms, bore resemblance to that which in Europe Protestantism, in its various sects, had arisen to oppose. Their general attitude is illustrated by a passage in a recent work5 (containing

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2 "The New Dispensation," pp. 105, 109. Nor, it may be here noted, is it correct to say that Tāṇtrikas believe the universe to have been developed by the inherent power of matter, as stated in the "Cyclopædia of India," vol. v, p. 72.
3 Nor is it correct to speak, as H. H. Wilson did ("Essays," p. 241), of the "worship of the female principle as distinct from the Divinity."
a singularly ignorant and unjust estimate of Hinduism), in which
the author says that, when standing before a Buddhist shrine, he felt as if he
was before that of St. Carlo Borromeo at Milan, adding: "But the chief
feeling that one had was of the extraordinary close similarity of Latin
Christianity and Pre-Christian Buddhism—the feeling and sensation of
the same immemorial superstition persisting through the forms and ritual of
two religions so diametrically opposed." As this matter presented itself
to the English teachers, so it did to the Indian students, who (to use a
Bengali expression) "held their tail". This the latter did the more
readily both because of the abuses for which some of the followers of
the Sāstra were responsible and of the unintelligent and mechanical
formalism of the worship of others. To the Hindu so educated the
Tantra was in all its parts as much superstitious "mummery" as it was
to his English teachers. This education did not, however, from the
religious point of view, bear the results which were expected of it. For
while many Hindus were led through such teaching to reject their
ancestral belief, but few were found who were willing to accept the form
of faith which was offered to them as its substitute. Possibly to some
extent different results might have been achieved had there been more
points of contact between the two faiths, for these might have served both
to guard the common religious sentiment and to afford some sort of
foundation upon which a Christian structure might have been raised.
Such had been the thought, in earlier times, of Jesuit missionaries both in
India and China. Many of the Hindus whose faith had been unduly
disturbed commenced (so far as Indians can—a matter for them of
fortunate difficulty) to question the validity of the religious sense
itself. A period of scepticism then followed, which, of course, has not
wholly passed away in India any more than it will wholly pass away
celsewhere.

Theories stale in the West, but new in the East, were adopted by
some with the same indiscriminating fervour as were the discarded fashions
of English "art" and articles of commerce. Some there were who,
judging all things by a narrow test of "utilitarian" principle, found
every historic religion, whether of East or West, to be the outcome
merely of the deceit of priests, whose "highest achievement" in all lands
has been "abomination worship." And of this in India the Sākta and
other cults were cited as the worst examples.²

² As regards the West, the author of the work cited is of opinion that the
system of auricular confession made further priestly efforts in the direction of
"abomination worship" supererogatory.

² "Hindu Castes and Sects," by J. N. Bhartāchārji. I cite this apparently
nārīka work as one of a type only, it being fairly well known and read. The
author writes down even the Buddha as an ambitious schemer.
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The use of this strong language applied to all the religions of East and West suggests the observation that, while grounds for adverse judgment may have existed, we must examine the criticisms by Hindus of the beliefs of their countrymen as we would any other, in order to see whether the author knows that of which he speaks, and, if so, whether he is free (which the author cited was not) from prejudice against "religion" in general, or the sectarianism which exists in India, as elsewhere.¹ Nor is the language used in such cases to be always taken literally. If, for instance, we can imagine the astonished mind of an otherwise uninformed Hindu, after the perusal of the stanza of the "Orange" hymn cited below,² it is not improbable to suppose that a too literal understanding of its words might give him notions as to the "obscenity" of the tenets and practice of the Catholic Church which would appear exaggerated even to the inflamed judgment of the author of the "hymn" in question.

In the West this raw philosophizing has for some time past been appreciated at its true value. More mature views will find a deeper source for the religious instinct than the machinations (even though they exist) of priests.

The following passage from another writer,³ purporting to give the verdict of "New India on Religion," is, in its blustering crudities, reminiscent of our own cheap rationalism of the second half of the last century:

"The world is passing from faith to reason. The future is for reason. When reason is established the problem of the world will be easy of solution. Reason will stand no miracles, no humbug, no special incarnations or exclusive revelations. It will elbow out all creeds, and admit nothing which cannot be demonstrated to the intelligence. Forms of worship are excrescences of religion. Belief in the supernatural and transcendental is getting into a discount. The element of mystery once believed to be an inseparable factor of religion is disappearing," and so forth.

They are but weakly met by such mawkish presentments of the "Religion of the Future" as those of which the following passage is a vaguely-conceived and worded, however well-intentioned, example: "No priest can lead us by the nose and make us believe in meaningless practices which profit no one but the professional

¹ Particular animosity used to exist, and amongst the sectarian-minded still exists, between Säktas and Vaiśnavas.
² "Scarlet Church of all uncleanness,
Sink thou to the deep abyss,
To the orgies of obscenity,
Where the Hell-bound Furies hiss,
Where thy father's Satan's eye
Hails thee, hellish Popery."
³ The Indian World, July, 1910.
priest! Free thought will be the watchword of the churches of the future. Religion will be a real being, becoming. Growing in life from within like an endogen; drawing sustenance also from without. Religion is to be in tune with the infinite. It will be the budding forth of the lotus of the heart; the correspondence with the environments of the soul; the opening out of the fountains from within; the setting aflow of the waters of life proceeding from the throne of the Most High. Religion will not be a theorem, a Q.E.D., but a problem, Q.E.F.”

A more definite attempt to reconcile religious tradition and “modern thought” was made by the Brähmasamāj, the doctrines of which, as also of the Secularist school, are combated in this book. The Ādisamāj, which preceded it, more closely adhered to orthodox Hinduism, being distinguished from the latter by the rejection of some of its beliefs and practices. In the Brähmasamāj the doctrines became of a more syncretistic character. There was a further divergence from orthodoxy, and an attempt was made to incorporate alien forms of thought and ritual. The Brähmasamāj describes itself in the words of one of its prominent supporters as “a humble gleaner of the truth wherever found.” The resulting eclecticism possesses its share of the weaknesses of all such systems.

All these influences, the outcome of English education—whether they be of the Secularist type, abandoning all ancient forms of beliefs, or of that which claims to reform but as often destroys them, or of the more modern kind which seeks a belief which shall be freed of form—led away from the standpoint of orthodox form, which is that of the Tantra. The process was accelerated by the decadence of many of the followers of the Vāmācāra community governed by the Śastra.

In the general neglect of Śastra, and repulsion caused by abuse, no attempt was made to ascertain what in fact were the true teachings of that portion of it which governed this community. No distinction was made between such doctrine and the abuses of it, nor between the particular portion of the Śastra prescribing and regulating Vāmācāra ritual and those other portions which governed other divisions of Śādīkās or the community in general. The Śastra was, generally in its entirety, condemned as useless where it was not considered morally harmful. To some extent these conclusions may have influenced European Orientalists, but

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1 This and the rest of the quotation are, of course, inspired by a type of Western thought. To the Hindu mantra is not mere akṣara, nor guru a mere man, but the manifestation of the Supreme and only Guru, the Ādīnātha Mahākāla. The revolt, however, is supported to some extent by the fact of the incompetence of many of the gurus.

2 “The Religion of the Future,” by Hemendra Nath Sinha, B.A., pp. 38, 39. The last sentence is like the rest obscure, but perhaps indicates the workings of the pragmatic bacillus even in the East.
probably in much less degree; for scientific investigation of human activities in whatsoever sphere is not (without closure of all historical inquiry) to be thwarted by the fear that what may be found on investigation is not that which is likely to be approved. Nor are the difficulties of a linguistic character, the Tantras being written in comparatively simple Sanskrit. The reason is rather to be found in difficulties of a different kind.

The Tantra in some of its aspects is a secret doctrine (guptavidyā) to be gathered, not from the written record, but verbally from those who hold the key to it. So with Eastern allegory it is said: “Verily, verily, and without a doubt the Veda Śāstra and Purāṇas are like a common woman, free to all, but the doctrine of Śambhu (i.e., the Tantra) is like a secret house bride, to reveal which is death.”

The key to the method has been with the initiate.

Next there are two special difficulties as regards the record; firstly, its fragmentary character and its existence in manuscripts which are not easily procurable, and then the technical character of the terminology. Next, the ritualistic character of the Tantra requires as a preliminary for its exposition at least some general knowledge regarding the subject, which does not ordinarily exist except among Hindus. In the case of certain Tantric doctrines and practices, the more ordinary difficulties have been increased owing to the complex and esoteric character of the rituals, and, as some allege, to the existence of higher and lower traditions (āmnāya), which to-day have become confused. Lastly, while the Śāstra provides by its various ācāras for all types, from the lowest to the most advanced, its essential concepts, under whatever aspects they are manifested, and into whatever pattern they are woven, are (as Professor de la Vallée Poussin says of the Buddhist Tantra) of a metaphysical and subtle character. This is particularly so as regards Saktitattva, Mantratattva, and Yogatattva, though there are others. It is claimed that the true Tāntrikācārya is the master of Veda, and that its esoteric teaching can only be fully understood from the Śāstra and its accompanying traditions, and the personal experiences which are the practical fruits of its Śādhana.

Since this work was first published the so-called “progressive” movement has been followed by a reaction in the orthodox Hindu world, which is not without its own defects. The spread of Theosophical ideas first

1 Vedaśāstrapurānāni sāmānyagānānī iva
Yā punah śambhavī vidyā guptā kulabadhūrīva
Prakāśe prārthānāni syāt satyānta satyānta na sānggāyah.
So also the Tantrasāra (Ed. R. M. Chatterji), p. 691, which says: “Kadāchid-
dehadhānāntat na chāgupti kadāchana, varam pūjā na karttavyā na cha vyaktih
dadāchana.”

2 To those, for instance, whose supposed “Hindu” sentiment would revive the practice of Sati may be recommended the words of the Mahānirvāna
renewed an interest in the teachings of India’s great past, and an awakening national spirit has done the rest. The Tantra has had a share in this interest as is manifested in the fair number of Tantras, Tāntrik compendia such as the Prānatoṣini, and other works on the Śāstra (of which that now translated is one), which have been first published or reprinted in recent years. It is a sign of the times to find even a Brāhma publication on the Śatcakra. This interest is due in part to the general religious revival in progress, and also to the increasing recognition of the necessity of sādhana (practice), as distinct from mere philosophizing, if any practical result is to be attained.

According to orthodox views, the Tantra will continue in force until the close of the Kaliyuga, when the golden age (Satya yuga) will reappear, governed by its appropriate Śāstra. The India of to-day is, however, not in the same sense as of yore the “Śrī Bhārata, adored of the Devas” (Surārichitabhārata), to which the book now published makes salutation.

The author has many a lament over the changes occurring in what appears to him to be a darkening time.

“If to-day all men had the strength of faith of Kāmadeva Tārkika, hero most powerful in the field of austerity, or of Ganesa Upādhyāya, whose life was one long surrender to the Mother; or of Rāmaprasadā, who was, as it were, a bee intoxicated with the honey of the lotus feet of Śakti, should we in that case have had to sing in Tantra Tattva the song of all these evil designs (against the Śāstras). But the day is now lost to us. That unflinching faith in Tantra, the Sādhana-Śāstra, has been shaken.”

“Alas! the lion-hearted heroes, pillars of Sanātana Dharma! where are you to-day in this dismal time? That resplendent lustre of yours hallowed by Sādhana, is mingled with the Mantra Śāstra itself. Do ye to-day shed that lustre in every letter, in every accent. Let the Śāstra of

Tantra: “O Kuleśā, a wife should not be burnt with her dead husband. Every woman is thy image. Thou residest concealed in the forms of all women in this world (tava svārūpā ramani jagatyāche bhannavigrahā). That woman who in her delusion (moha) ascends the funeral pyre of her lord shall go to hell” (chap. x, verses 79-80).

1 From the same source comes the Prānākriṣṇaṇabādāmbuddhi, which I hope to publish.
2 Gāyatrimālaka śatcakraśvyākāna o sādhana, a publication by the Mangala Ganga Mission Press.
3 The celebrated Bengali poet and Śākta.
4 Śakti is Devi—that is, both the power of God and God Himself. Each of the Devas has His Śakti or power worshipped under the form of His spouse.
5 This book.
6 “Principles of Tantra”
INTRODUCTION

Bhārata be again resplendent with the fire of the Tapas of Bhārata's sons."

But his cause is not wholly lost to him, and he continues to defend it—with a certain spacious splendour of imagery and feeling which belong to a passing world.

"Reasoning, argument and inference may be the work of other Śāstras, but the work of Tantra is to accomplish superhuman and divine events by the force of its own Mantras. Destruction, driving away, and establishment of control, and such other powers, are still to be daily seen. Hundreds of thousands of great and accomplished Śādhakas still illumine all India with the glory of their austerities. In every cremation ground in India the resplendent and divine halo of Bhairavas and Bhairavīs is yet to be seen mingling with the light of the flames of funeral pyres, rending apart the waves of nocturnal darkness and illuminating the wide expanse of Heaven. Dead and putrefying corpses submerged near cremation grounds are still brought to life by the force of the Śādhakas' Mantras and made to render aid to Śādhana and Siddhi. Whilst still living in this mortal world Tāntrik Yogīs even now obtain, through the potency of Mantras, direct vision of the supersensual activities of the world of Devas. She, with dishevelled hair, the dispeller of fear from the hearts of Her devotees, still appears in great cremation grounds, to give liberation to Her devoted Śādhakas who, made afraid by the fear of this existence, make obeisance to and supplicate Her. Śādhakas still merge themselves in the Self of Brahman by laying their Brahmarambhra at those lotus feet of Brahmamayi, which are adored by Brahmā and other Devas. The throne of the Daughter of the Mountain is still moved by the wondrous attractive force of Mantras. This, in the eyes of Śādhakas, is the ever broad and royal road upon which they travel untiring to the city of liberation."  

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1 Austerities, etc. (see Introduction).
2 "Principles of Tantra."
3 Daiva.
4 Māraṇam, Ucchātanam, Vaṣikaraṇam.
5 Tapas.
6 Smaśāna, where Savāsana, Munḍāsana, Latasādhana and other Tāntrik rites, are practised.
7 Adept Tāntrik men and women.
8 Before and whilst awaiting burning, the corpse is placed in the sacred stream.
9 Mahāsmaśānas, where some of the most difficult forms of Tāntrik Śādhana are practised. The auspicious Kālikā is thought of as with dishevelled hair (vigalitachikurā), and so is the hair of the devotee (see Karpurādi stotra, verses 3, 10).
10 The cavity of Brahman at the top of the head, here used for the head generally.
11 The Devi.
12 The Devi as daughter of Himavat.
13 "Principles of Tantra."
The same forces, however, against which this book, as also other orthodoxies, protest, are in conflict both with Hinduism in its present Tāntrik form and with Christianity of the older type. In the present mingling of East and West, each is providing a ferment for the other, which, when all is said, is as much a divine product as the Revelations which it sometimes appears to threaten. The embodied Ātmā, however, must ever seek itself revealing its search to us in that which we call the "religious spirit," clothed though it must also be in forms new or renewed—its changing expression in a world of unceasing change.

For the understanding of the Tāntrik, or, indeed, any other beliefs and practices, the usual dry-as-dust investigation of the savant is insufficient. In the first place a call should be made upon actual present experience. The primary inquiry should be addressed to the ascertainment of the present belief and practice of those whose religious history is under investigation. It is obvious that the course of time effects changes. But whatever these may be, present beliefs are the descendants of those of the past. Much, therefore, which was in the parent will be found in the child. A study of the present will help to an understanding of ancient documents which, if made the sole basis of research, often prove the source of error. For these reasons I have selected a modern exposition of the general basis of Tāntrik doctrine by one who, as its adherent, has inherited its traditions (vāktrādvaktreṇa). We are now recommencing to value tradition, which everywhere provides the key to truth. It is in all religions of equal if not of greater truth than the imperfect and sometimes falsified documentary evidence we at present possess of their origin and history.

Whatever may be the case upon the purely historical questions which have been raised in connection with the Śāstra, with respect to doctrine and practice, the first and simplest course is to learn from the lips of its living adherents what in fact they are, and, in so far as they can be given, the reason of and authority for them.

Mere book-learning (pustaka ēkitala vidyā), will not carry the student the full way without error. It must be supplemented by information derived from the Tāntrik Ācāryas and Gurus. The truth of learning so-gained can only be tested by personal experience.

Hindu beliefs, to be understood aright, should, if possible, be learned both of those who have not, as also of those who have, received an English education. The latter—in the past, at any rate—has generally involved the neglect of, and (prior to the recent national movement) often resulted in a contempt for, all that is ancient and specifically Hindu, whether

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1 Hinduism is already taking on a new life.
in Religion, Literature, or Art. In its tendency it is not only—under its present conditions, at any rate, and whether for good or ill—destructive of tradition, but also in varying degrees of the mentality which originally produced the beliefs, and by which alone they may be completely apprehended. Even in cases where competency assumes a favourable attitude towards the ancient teaching, there is often to be found a tendency to read modern ideas into it.

A modern Indian publicist and author* makes upon this matter some very just observations. In treating of the concept “mother” as applied to India by her children, he says that there is no mere metaphor behind it, though most modern educated Hindus understand the word in a poetical and metaphorical sense. “But this is,” he says, “because their education and environment have more or less completely diverted their thought and imagination from the ancient realities of their language and literature. There are, indeed, numerous words in common use amongst us to-day that have entirely lost their original sense, owing to the loss of the genuine thought-life of the people in the wilderness of ununderstood and un-assimilated foreign words and concepts accumulated by our present system of education. With the Europeanization of our minds and modes of thinking, even our words have been perceptibly Europeanized.” This criticism has a very extensive application, and one is reminded of it at every step in reading the works of English-educated Hindus on Hindu life and thought, which their prudent reader will in some instances do well to peruse, bearing the above well-founded remarks in mind. As regards his countrymen, the author, in the second part* of this work, observes: “Nowadays, most of those who represent the ideal type of a learned man in society are considered ignorant and devoid of all sense in the community of the Religious (Sādhakas).” It is also to be remembered that amongst the English-speaking Hindus who have attained success and even distinction there are many who, being of other castes, have neither inherited the traditions of the Brāhmaṇa nor had the benefit of his teaching. Interpretations coming from these classes are likely (though exceptions may exist) to suffer by reason of their ancient disabilities.

The Tantratattva (Principles or subject matter of Tantra), of which the first part* is here translated, is, so far as I am aware, the only

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1 As regards the two former, see the observations in Babu Dinesh Chandra Sen’s valuable “History of Bengali Literature,” published by the Calcutta University. As to Art, a limited residence in India will afford distressing proof.
3 See chapter on Gurukula and Kulaguru.
4 The work was originally published in one volume. The second edition has been divided into two parts, of which the first only has been published, the other being, when this was written, in the press. (Publishers’ Note: Both the parts are contained in this edition.)
considerable modern work of its kind. It was written in Bengali by Pandit Siva Chandra Vidyārṇava Bhattachārya,¹ and first published some twenty years ago, being now in its second edition.

The present work is a defence of the Tantra, of which Śāstra the author is an adherent and a polemic, undertaken in the interests of Hindu orthodoxy in its Śākta and Tāntrika form against Secularism on the one hand, and on the other the religious eclecticism and various "reforming" movements, of which, when the book was first written, the Brāhmaṇasamājī was a leading type. In fact, in parts the book reads like an orthodox Catholic protest against "modernism," and is thus interesting as showing how many fundamental principles are common to all orthodox forms of belief, whether of West or East.

The author of the Tantratattva is a well-known Tāntrik Pandit, preacher, and secretary of the Sarvamangalāsabhā of Benares, who, happily for our purposes, knows no English. His work, which is written in Bengali, may therefore be taken to be an accurate popular statement of modern orthodox views on the subject treated of by him. The word "Tattva" is a very comprehensive one, which it is by no means always easy to translate. I have rendered the title of the book as "Principles of Tantra," though, maybe, as a friend has pointed out, it should be "Subjects of Tantra." The work deals, it is true, with chosen topics of Tantra. This, however, also involves a statement of certain fundamental principles which govern Śāstrike teaching on the subjects dealt with, and this as well as the contents of possible future volumes must be my justification for giving the book a more ambitious title.

The author is both a poet and a preacher—a circumstance which accounts for the rhetorical style and popular devotional character of the work. Apart from such intrinsic merits as it may possess, it is of value as a document which records the thought and workings of an Indian mind affected but little, if at all, by the current notions of the day. It deals in the main, and in a popular way, with the philosophical and religious grounds of the orthodox system in its Śākta form. As regards some of its practical aspects, the author has considered that this was a subject fitter for the reader's Guru than for a book addressed to the public at large. It may therefore have proved a disappointment to those who, at the mention of Tantra, always expect to hear of rituals with wine and women, the midnight circle (Cakra), black magic in the cremation grounds, and so forth. The constant desire to hear of such things is not evidence of a true

¹ Editor of the journal Śaiva, and author of several other works—"Ghitān-jali," "Mā," "Śvabhāva o abhāva," "Vidyārṇaver durgotsava," "Kartā o Mana," "Pithamālā," "Gangeśa."
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interest in the Śāstra, but a confession of personal weakness.¹ To such it may come as a surprise to learn that the Tantra also concerns itself with matters of undoubted respectability even to its critics, and of universal, if less sensational, interest. It is commonly assumed by such persons (though altogether erroneously) that the Tantra Śāstra is only concerned with the Cakra ritual of those who are called (but incorrectly so) "left-hand" upāsakas, who follow virācāra.² This, however, is of course not the fact. On the contrary, the main subjects of Tantra are Mantra and Sādhanas in all its forms. It is also the chief repository of Yoga practice, and its general range of subject, as hereafter mentioned, is encyclopaedic.

As Professor B. K. Sarkar has well said, the Encyclopaedias of India known under diverse names, such as Sambhiśas, Purānas and Tantras, are really generic terms under which the whole culture of certain epochs in Indian history found expression and currency. He adds that, while it is difficult and sometimes impossible to assign to such storehouses of information respecting the national life the names of any particular authors or compilers and the question of their dates may never be solved satisfactorily, they furnish undeniable, though sometimes conflicting accounts, of the manners and customs, rites and ceremonies, sects and Samprādāyas, sentiments and traditions, which prevailed among the Hindus for epochs extending over hundreds of years.

The translation is primarily the work of my friend Babu Jānendralāl Majumdar, himself a Bengali. My own part has consisted in its revision. The translation may read rather cumbersomely in parts, but this is due to our desire to keep as close as possible to the somewhat discursive and rhetorical form of the original. I have added some explanatory notes to the text. I should have liked to have made the notes fuller if it could have been done without overloading the text. I have, however, referred in the notes to the Introduction written for my edition of the Mahānirvāna Tantra,³ where I have explained at greater length such terms as "yantra," "mantra," "mudrā," "nyāsa," "pancharatra," the "gaṭacakra," and others, and have in a general and summary way dealt

¹ Inquiry as to these matters is, to use a chess term, a common though bad "opening" for those who have a real desire to know the Śāstra.

² In "Non-Christian Religions," by Howard, pp. 77-78. The author, after a statement that the "Tāntrik System" originated with the Buddhist monk Asanga, says: "Further than this we must decline to plunge, even with the parts of the Tantra accessible to English readers." I am unaware of any parts "accessible to English readers" when this statement was made, and the author was evidently ignorant of any other.

³ The references to the Introduction are, unless otherwise stated, to that work, since published as Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
with sādhana, upāsana, and hathayoga. I have retained certain technical Sanskrit terms in the text, as there is no corresponding English word which accurately gives their meaning.

The following pages deal with certain general aspects of the Śāstra, its nature, origin, age, and authority—subjects which were either not then treated of or were more summarily referred to. If upon some of these topics, such as the age of the Śāstra, I have not presented sufficiently certain and detailed conclusions, it is because, for want of the necessary knowledge, I am unable to do so. The subject is a novel one, and possibly many years of inquiry into Indian, Chinese, and Tibetan records will have to be made before opinions of any finality can be formed as to many matters in and touching the Śāstra.

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Current definitions of Tantra as "Sacred writings of the Hindus," "Scriptures of Sāktas," "Collections of Magical Treatises," and the like, are either inaccurate and insufficient, or by their generality useless. A type of such inaccurate statements characterized by the usual vagueness and indecision says that: "The Tantras are a later development of the Puranic creed. They are the writings of Sāktas or votaries of the female energy of some Divinity (sic), mostly the wife of Śiva. Such ideas are not altogether absent in the Puranic works. But in the Tantras they assume a peculiar character, owing to the admixture of magic performances and mystic rites of perhaps an indelicate nature. Amarasinha knows not of them." In passing, it may be noted that this reference to the Amarakośa is a common one. It is true that the word Tantra is not mentioned in the svargavarga of that book. On the other hand, those who so cite it omit to state that some other ancient Śāstras, including the Atharvaveda, are not there mentioned; and in the Nānārthavarga reference is made to Āgama Śāstra, which is one of the names of Tantra. An anonymous author who writes on what he calls "Transformed Hinduism" says, after a description of the Purāṇas, "Another literature of a still more degrading type has been incorporated in the modern Hinduism, and this is the religious books called the Tantras, of which there are sixty-four volumes. These books are mostly manuals of mysticism and magic, written otherwise very

1 Indian tradition connects China and the Tantra, and both Chinese and Tibetan records are reputed to contain Sanskrit works which have long since disappeared from India.
2 "History of Classical and Sanskrit Literature," by M. Krishnamacharya, M.A., B.L., p. 34.
3 P. 180.
4 The author, in speaking of these "volumes" as he calls them, is thinking of the 64 Tantras assigned to each of the three krāntās, which make them, however, so far as such divisions are concerned, 192 and not 64.
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much on the same lines as the purāṇas. The religion advocated in these books is the exponent (sic) of Śāktism, the wife of Śiva (sic), under her various manifestations." Whilst the Indian author last quoted rather vaguely refers to "mystic rites of perhaps an indelicate character" the book now cited more definitely affirms: "It is a licentious worship, and leads to cruelty, self-indulgence, and sensual gratification. Hence it is a blot upon the 'Modern Hinduism.' This sect goes under the name of the Bāhm Marges (sic), or the secret sect." ¹ The Accounts of these and other uninformd authors treat the Tantra as a Śāstra of the Śāktas only where they do not as in the last cited quotation regard it merely as the Śāstra of the Vāmāchāra community of Śākta Śādhakas.

The word Tantra has various meanings, and amongst others Śāstra generally, and therefore does not necessarily denote a religious Śāstra.² In the sense, however, in which the term is most widely known and is here used, it denotes that body of religious scripture (Śāstra which is stated to have been revealed by Śiva as the specific scripture of the fourth or present Kali age (yuga). This is the definition of the Tantra according to the Śāstra itself.

There are four such ages (Mahāyuga)—namely, the Satya yuga, or golden age; the Tretā yuga, age in which righteousness (dharma) decreased by one-fourth; the Dvāpara yuga, in which dharma decreased by one-half; and the present Kali yuga, the most evil of the ages, in which righteousness exists to the extent of one-fourth only. At the close of this last age the Kalki Avatāra of Viṣṇu, "the rider on the white horse," will destroy iniquity and restore the rule of righteousness. Each of these ages has its appropriate Śāstra, or Scripture, which is designed to meet the requirements of the men of each age.

The Hindu Śāstras are classed into Śruti, Smṛti, Purāṇa, and Tantra. The three last all assume the first as their base, and are, in fact, merely special presentations of it for the respective ages. It has been said that the Tantras "are regarded by those who follow them as a fifth Veda

¹ The author means the vāma mārga, or vāmācāra, as it is ordinarily called. The Tantra does not only deal with this "sect," which is one only of its ṛcāras, the tenets of which the author does not understand. Dakṣinācāras and others are also followers of Tantra. The work is incorrect both as to the Tantra and other Śāstras and practices of the Hindus which it proposes to "transform."

² Thus in the Śabdasaṅkṣiptaprakāśikā it is said: "Tarkangtantranchavidushā vidushāngtoshakārikā, kriyate jagadishena"; where Tantra means the theory or science of argument. So the Pāñchatantra, which the so-called "Tantrik Order of America" includes in its International Journal amongst the Sanskrit and Tibetan Tantras, is not a Tantra in the sense here dealt with at all, but a book of fables.
as ancient as the others and of superior authority.”

No Śāstra is or can be superior to the Veda. That practical application of its teachings, however, which is prescribed in the Tantra is to be followed in preference to the vaidikācāra in the Kaliyuga. The relations of the Veda to the Tantra has been compared with that of the Jivātmā to the Paramātmā. The Tantra is said by its adherents to represent the inner core of the former. Professor de la Vallée Poussin says:

“Si l’on veut instituer une comparaison qui d’ailleurs n’est pas sans danger on sera frappé des ressemblances inaperçues qui permettent de rapprocher ces deux manifestations si différentes de la pensée Hindoue, le Védisme et le Tantrisme.”

These resemblances which struck the learned author are, of course, due to the fact that there is a base common to the Veda and the Tantra, the latter being, according to orthodox notions, a branch of the Vaidik tree. It is only those who would altogether disassociate the Tantra from the Veda who will experience any surprise at finding resemblances between the Śāstras for the respective ages. As the Kulārnava Tantra says, for each age (yuga) a suitable Śāstra is given—namely, in Satya-yuga, Śruti; in Tretā, Śmṛti; in Dvāpara the Purāṇas; and in the Kali age the Tantra.

The truth to be taught ever remains the same, though the method of inculcating it varies with the ages. Current definitions, when not incorrect, fail to bring out this character of the Tantra as a Yuga (age) Śāstra and its relations to the other Scriptures. As, however, our author well says it is by no means impossible that now towards the end of the Kali age a few parasites should be found growing on some of its branches.

The original and highest source of dharma is Śruti, or that “which has been heard,” and which is the ipsissima verba of divine revelation. The Vedas are apauruṣeya (without any personal composer), manifested to the Rṣis who were not their authors, but only their Seers (draṣṭārāh). The term “Śruti” is sometimes used in (what is to some) an extended sense, as where Kulluka Bhatta speaks of Tantra (which has sometimes been described as the fifth Veda) as Śruti (vaidikā tāntrikācāraya dvividhā kṛitiṣi Śrutiḥ). Popularly, however, the term is limited to the four Vedas—Ṛk, Sāma, Yajus, and Atharva—and the Upaniṣads, of which,

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1 Beveridge, “History of India,” ii. 77. And to the same effect “Biblical, etc., Encyclopædia,” McClintoch and Strong, xlii, 864.
2 Bouddhisme Études et Matériaux.
3 Krite sṛutyuktāchārastrātṛtāyānḥ śmṛtisambhavah
   Dvāpare tu purānoktang kalau āgama kevalam.
See also Mahānīrvāṇa Tantra, chap. i, verse 24, and Kubjikā Tantra, where Śruti, Śmṛti, and Purāṇa are assigned to the first three ages, and Tantra to the fourth.
4 See post. And as to the relation of Āgama and Veda, see Mahābābhāga-
vata cited, post.
Professor Paul Deussen says: "Die Upaniṣads, sind für den Veda was für die Bibel das neue Testament ist."¹ In its primary signification the term "Vedānta" means the latter part of the Veda. The Jānakāyda of the Vedas is therefore the Vedānta in the original sense of the word. As such it is Śruti, and therefore in this sense the Vedānta is identical with the Upaniṣads, which teach as the gist of Vaidik doctrine the knowledge of the Absolute Being (Paramātma) and union with It. The Devas worshipped in the Mantras of the Karmakāyda are, as well as the whole visible universe, but manifestations of It—the "Tat Sat," or the Reality. Based on Upaniṣad is the Vedānta Darśana, or philosophy embodied in the Vedānta Sūtras ascribed to Vyāsa, which have again been the subject of the commentaries known as Śaṅkarabhāṣya (of Śaṅkaraśārya), Śrībhāṣya (of Rāmānuja), Mādhvabhāṣya (of Madhva), and the less important Govindabhāṣya.

Śruti is "that which is remembered," and has been handed down by Rṣis. It is regarded as the expression of the Divine Will conveyed to mankind by inspiration through the agency of human beings. It is divided into the Śrauta sūtras, dealing with Vaidik ceremonies, and the Grhya sūtras, concerning the household rites; the prose Dharma sūtras, which lay down rules of law properly so called (of which there are various caranas or schools, such as those of Gautama, Baudhāyana, Āpastamba, Vaśistha, and others), and Dharma Śāstras, or metrical versions of previously existing dharma-sūtras, such as the Code of Manu (Manu-smṛti), the Yājñavalkya, Nārada, Parāśara Smṛti, and other fragmentary Dharma Śāstras and secondary Smṛtis of later periods. On these Smṛtis there are various commentaries, such as those of Medhātithi, Kullaka Bhatta, and others on the Manu Smṛti; the commentaries on the Yājñavalkya Smṛti by Vijnāneśvara (known as the Mitākṣāra), and others; commentaries on the Parāśara Smṛti; and other commentaries such as those on the Mitākṣāra. These commentaries have given rise to various schools of law, such as the Mitākṣāra, Dāyabhāga, Mithilā, and others. Smṛti provides for pravṛtti dharma, as the Upaniṣads had revealed the path of nivṛtti, or, as it is loosely called, "renunciation."

The third Śāstra, that of the Dvāpara yuga, is that contained in the Purāṇas, the principal of those now extant being eighteen in number.² They by myth and story convey in an esoteric manner the doctrines of the

¹ "Die Geheimlehre des Veda" (1909).
² The Viṣṇu Bhāgavata (it is a matter of dispute whether this is the Śrīmadbhāgavata or Devi Bhāgavata, both of which are largely quoted in this book); Nārada; Garuḍa; Padma; Varāha; or Vaśiṣṭa Purāṇas; Siva, Linga, Skanda, Agni (or, according to other accounts, Vāyu), Matsya, Kūrma; or Śaiva Purāṇas; the Brahma, Brahmāṇḍa, Brahmavimśata, Mārkandeya, Bhaviṣya, and Vāmana Purāṇas.
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Vedas to the declining intelligence and spirituality of the men of the third age. Like, however, the Tantra, they deal with nearly every subject of knowledge—theogonies, cosmogonies, genealogies, chronology, the astronomical, physical, and other sciences. In addition to the Mahâpurânas, there are the secondary Purânas or Upapurânas. Both of these are referred to in the Mahânirvâna Tantra, when dealing with the Śåstra of the different ages, as Samhitā. This word, which literally means "collection," and, according to the Śåd bartâvâlī, includes Dharma Śåstra, Smṛti, Śrutijivikā, also comprises Purâna, Upapurâna, Itihåsa (history such us Måhåbhårata and Råmåyana), the work of Vålmiki, Våsistha, and others.

The specific Śåstra for the fourth or Kaliyuga (according to orthodox views, the present age) is the Tantra. Though there are Āgamas or Tantras which are called Śiva and Śåkta or Devī (according to the particular form of the One which is regarded therein as Iśtadevati), it is, according to orthodox notions, a mistake to regard the Tantra generally as if it were a petty Śåstra of any particular division of Hindu worshippers. It is said, on the contrary, to be a universal Śåstra governing all men in the Kali age, though particular provisions in it may have reference to particular divisions of worshippers. Thus, while certain communities who perform the rahasâyapujā make use of wine in worship, others do not, and it is, in fact, forbidden to them by the Tantra itself, as is the specific Śakti- pujā associated with such use. So the Nityā Tantra prohibits the latter in the case of the Paśu (tātrau naiva yajeddeving sandhyåyång våparånihake). On the other hand, other portions of the Tantra govern the whole orthodox Hindu community. So not only the Śåkta mantra, but also the Viśnu and Śiva mantras are Tāntrik. The Tāntrika Sandhyå may be said by all, and the Śåstra is the source of the bulk of the generally current ritual. A remark of a friend who read the first part of this book, "that he could find little of the Tantra in it," is typical of the general misconceptions which prevail as to the nature of the Śåstra.

It is true that the so-called "Śåkta" Tantras prescribe, in the case of one of the Ācårâs, a form of sādhana peculiar to this ācåra known as the Panchatattva, or worship with wine, meat, fish, grain, and woman

1 Kålikå, Sanatkumåra, Nåråsingha, and others.
2 See Brahma Navalvartha Purâna, Jånakåhpåda, chap. cxxxii.
3 Because such worship connotes maithuna, which is not for the paśu on the path of pravritti, and who is still in the heavy bonds of desire.
4 Because it does not deal with those portions of the Tantra which are concerned with the Panchatattva, viråcåra, etc.
5 This is the term used by Tāntrikå themselves in speaking of the conjoined elements. Vulgarly, they are called the "five M's" (panchamakåra), because
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(Śakti): and not uncommonly the Tantra is associated with such worship only, with the result that a "Tāntrik" has come to connote, in the minds of many, merely a Hindu who practises this Sādhanā. Less narrow and crude notions popularly associate the Tantra with the Śākta cult only, though they would include all forms of worship within the Śākta community, and do not limit the scope of governance of the Tantra to the community of Vāmācārins worshipping with the rājasika Panchatattva. The reason for such views appears to be this: Though there may have been Saiva Tantras, as there have been what are called Saiva Purāṇas, and there are Tantras such as the Rādhā Tantra, which deal with the Viṣṇu cult; and though in ordinary worship there is adoration of the "Five Devatās" (Panḥopāsanā), yet in those scriptures which are more usually referred to when the Tantra is spoken of, the worship of Śakti assumes a more special form. All such notions, however, as regards Tantra, though popular, bespeak according to its followers a fundamental misconception of the scope of the Šāstra. Properly speaking, a Tāntrik should be defined as one who is governed by and follows the provisions of Tantra which are applicable to his particular case. In 1881 Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra2 wrote that the followers of Tantra might be reckoned by the hundreds of thousands, and that the life of many an Indo-Aryan (he might have said, in one way or another, practically all) was that of "bondage to its ordinances." As a Yuga Šāstra, the Tantra claims to govern all orthodox communities of worshippers in the Kaliyuga. But this does not mean that all its provisions are applicable to each one of them. The contrary is the case. There are some matters, such as Mantratattva, which are of common applicability to all such communities. There are other matters which are peculiar to, and governed only, a particular community or section of it. But both the common and special provisions have the same Šāstra as their source. It

1 Siva, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Ganeśa, and the Devī.
2 According to the views (whether historically justifiable or not) of Tāntrik Pandits with whom I have discussed this matter, it is not as though there were separate and conflicting Šastras, but one Šāstra—the Tantra with different sections appropriate to the various divisions in the community of worshippers. So, again, the Purāṇas constitute one body of Šāstra, though any particular Purāṇa may appear to give support to a sectarian hypothesis by reason of its emphasizing the cult of some particular Devatā.
3 "Indian Aryans" (1893), vol. i, p. 404.
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is, however, not here meant that every practice followed by the orthodox communities is of Tāntrik origin. Some rites, such as that of Homa, have descended from Vaidik times. Others are of modern origin. Thus, to take one instance from amongst others: the Vaiṣṇavas sing and dance and recite the name of Hari (Viṣṇu) in Kirtans which are of a popular and emotional character. This mode of worship was introduced by the great Chaitanya Deva to meet the needs of his time, and has nothing in common with the formal and intellectual character of the Tāntrik ritual. As to this, the author says: 

"When Chaitanya Deva deluged all Bengal with huge waves of the name of Hari, he observed that Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya families were on the verge of ruin. He thought that in the then state of society, full of middle-class (Navaśākha) Śūdras, incompetent for either the Vaidik or Tāntrik dharma, Harinām sangkirtana was the best form of dharma (religion), and consequently he preached that dharma." Though some may nowadays be disposed, through ignorance or other reasons, to dispute their connection with the Śāstra, the matter may be put to some very simple tests. If such a disputant be orthodox (whether Saiva, Vaiṣṇava, or Śākta), he might, if he would answer such a question, be asked whether he has been initiated, and, if so, in what form—what mantra he then received, and where that mantra comes from. And then, when worshipping before an image in Śākara upāsanā, with the sixteen articles of worship (godaśa upacāra), inquiry may be made as to the authority for such image-worship, and in what Śāstra this ritual and the rules relating to Nyāsa, Bhūtaśuddhi, and so forth, is to be found. The answer in all these and similar cases will be the Tantra. On the other hand, as above stated, certain provisions of the Śāstra may have no applicability to a particular Śādhaka. As the Īstadevātā of the various religious communities differs, so in some respects does the pūjā and śādhana. The Basil leaf (tulsi) is sacred to Viṣṇu; the Bael (bilva) to Śiva; the Scarlet hibiscus or China Rose to

1 I thus exclude all the little sects, some of a very peculiar and original character, with which India abounds, though sometimes loosely affiliated, or claiming to be affiliated, to the larger one; such as, apparently, the Chaliya Pantha of Jodhpur, which Sellon, in his Annotations, calls "Kauchiluas."

2 See post.

3 The singing of Viṣṇu’s (Hari’s) name with music and dancing. Among the Vaiṣṇavas there is a good deal of worship of a congregational character.

4 Thus in the Viṣṇu mantra “Kling kling Gopāla,” Kling is a Tāntrik bija which is to be found in no other Śāstra but the Tantra. In the same way, in the Kṛṣṇa mantra, given in the notes (see post), Āṅg and Shivog are Tāntrik bijas.

5 I include under this term not merely the image strictly so-called, but also the jar (ghata) in Devī worship, and the lingam and śālagrāma in Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava upāsanā, respectively.
the Deity. Whilst animal sacrifice is made to Kāli, it is forbidden in the worship of the aspect of the One which is named Viṣṇu. The use of the rājasika pancatattva is prescribed for Śākta initiates in Vaiṣṇavism. It is forbidden to the Śākta non-initiate, and to other communities of worshippers. But both the injunctions and the prohibitions have as their authority the same Śāstra,1 which governs in some way or other all orthodox communities.

In short, it is considered an error to regard the Tantra as the petty Śāstra of any religious sect only, and a still greater mistake to limit its operation to that which is but one only of its particular methods or divisions of worshippers (ācāras).

As mentioned later, the Tantra deals with all matters of common belief and interest, from the doctrine of the origin of the world to the laws which govern kings and the societies which they have been divinely appointed to rule, medicine and science generally. The Tantra is not only the basis of popular Hindu practice, on which account it is known as the Sādhanā Śāstra, but it is the repository of esoteric belief and practices, particularly those relating to yoga and mantra-tattva. Indeed, as regards the last, which is one of the most peculiar, and at the same time most profound, aspects of Hindu teaching, the Tantra is to such an extent the acknowledged repository of this spiritual science that its other name is the Mantra Śāstra. Its claims to such a name could not have been made good were there not some ground for its assertion that it is a Yuga Śāstra for the Kali age. As to which Tantras, however, are authoritative there appear to be differences of opinion, such differences being due either to a mistaken sectarianism, or possibly to real divergences as regards doctrinal thought and historical descent.

The Tantras are referred to as Āgamas. An Indian author and student of the Śaivāgama expresses the opinion that the Āgamas have branched out from the same stem of the Vaiḍik tree which produced the earlier Upaniṣads, and were at one time as widespread in India as the Upaniṣads themselves; that, like the Upaniṣads, the Āgamas also became in course of centuries the basis of a number of “creeds” which, unanimous in accepting the essentials of the Āgamic teaching, were divergent as regards rituals, observances, and minor essential details. He says: “The

1 This is overlooked in the common, though erroneous, appellation—“right hand” and “left hand” worship, used in a sense as if the two had no Śāskrit connection with one another. The worship is not “right” and “left” in the sense of “proper” and “improper,” orthodox and heterodox. Each is a recognized form of worship, presented by the “Tantra” for different grades of its Śādhakas. Each has a common authority. Therefore no follower of the Tantra which prescribes these two ācāras thus speaks of them.

2 Dr. V. V. Ramana Śastrī, in his Introduction to J. M. Nallaiswami Pillai’s “Studies in Śaiva Siddhānta.”
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Āgamas contend that they constitute the truest exegesis of the Vedas, and their origins are certainly as ancient as those of some of the classical Upaniṣads. If the Fire worship be regarded as the ritual inculcated in the Vedas as the outer symbolism of spiritual truths, the temple worship may, on its side, be also said to assume a similar importance in regard to the Āgamas. For the rest, it will be seen that in India at the present day there is hardly a Hindu who does not observe some kind of temple worship or another, which points to the conclusion that the Āgamas have had, in one form or another, an universal hold upon the continent of Hindu India, and that their influence tells." The principles and ritual of Śaivaism are said to be determined by the Āgamas or Tantras, which are twenty-eight in number, from Kāmika to Vatula.

According to some, the Vedas, issued from four out of the five mouths of Śiva and the Tantra of the "higher tradition" (ūrdhva-vāṃśa) from His central or fifth mouth. The other Tantra is said by some to have proceeded from the current issuing "below the navel" ¹ of the Deva. According to another account, all the mouths of Śiva gave issue to those Tantras which spring from the "upward current," and the others are the produce of the downward current" "below the navel".² According, however, to both versions a distinction is made between the two classes of tradition. In the Lalitā Sahasranāma, Bhāskararāya, commenting on the Śloka in which the Devī is addressed as Nījānārūpā Nigama, (the "Nigama are the expression of Thy commands"), says: "Athavā śanti vedānuṇyāyīnī śaivatantrāṇī kāmikādīnāyṣāṅgatsāthi veda-viruddhānā ³ kāpālabhāyavādāni cha teṣu vaidikāni nigamapadāvācyāni paramesvarasya mukhādadbhūtādājāṇārūpāni napunarnābbhyadhō bhaṅgadutpānāni veda-viruddhānāṁ yanthiḥ.

He there, referring to the Devī Bhāgavata and Skanda Purāṇas, states that there are twenty-eight Śaiva Tantras commencing with Kāmika which adhere to the Vaidik injunctions, as there are others commencing with Kāpāla, Bhairava, etc., (assigned by him to the "downward current"), which do not, and the reference in the Lalitā to Nigama is, according to his views, to the former class. As they sprang from the mouth of Paramēśvara, they are said to be the form of the Devī's commands. The five Tantras, commencing with Kāmika sprang from the sadāyāta face of Śiva. From the other four faces—viz., the vāmadeva, aghora, tapuruṣa, and śāna—sprang respectively the five Tantras, Dīpta, and others of its class, the five Vijaya and

¹ See post.
² See as to the meaning of these expressions post.
³ Verse 67.
⁴ As to whether the rahasyapūjā of the Tantra is opposed to the Veda, see post. In similar fashion Aufrecht (see Adikarma-Pradipa) says: "Subbagaṇa appellata a via Vedis prescripta non descendunt ideoque samayachara appellatur."
INTRODUCTION

others, the five Vairocana and others, and the eight Tantras Prodigita and others. These twenty-eight are said to have sprung from the “upward current,” and the others from the current issuing “below the navel.” The Kâmika identifies these twenty-eight Śaiva Tantras or Āgamas with various parts of the body of the Devi, Her ornaments and garments; and all other auxiliary and supplementary Tantras with the hair on Her body. For the body of the greatĪśvarī, who is one withĪśvara Her Lord, is contemplated upon under the form of all the Tantras (Sarvatantarârûpā). The same commentator, citing the Kûrma Purâṇa, observes:

“Yâni śastraṁ driyante lokesmin vividhâni tu
Śrutismrâvimuddhâni dvaitavâdarâti cha
Kâpâlang bhairavangchaiva sakalang gautamang matam
Evangvidhâni châhâni mohanârthâni tani tu
Ye kuśââbhivyogena mohayantiva mânavân
Mayâ sriśââni śastraṁi mahâyaishhâng bhavântare.”

In another place Devî says to Himavat: “Whatsoever Scriptures are found opposed to Śruti and Smrâti devoted to dualism—viz., Kâpâla, Bhairava, Sakala, Gautama, and similar ones—exist for the purpose of bewildering. Those who are confused by false scriptures also confuse the world. These were all created by me for the sake of bewildering.”

In the passage cited from the Lalitâ, Bhâskararâya refers to the Śaivâgamas or Śaiva Tantras, and, according to his apparently sectarian view, the other Tantras are those which proceed from “below the navel”.

There are, however, what are called Śâkta Tantras, and to these the term Tantra is more commonly applied, because in this form they have been perhaps more known and spoken of. According to the view of the author cited, the “Śaivâgamas are not related to the Śâkta Tantras by any organic community of thought or descent.” Whatever be the historical basis of this conclusion, which is not stated, it is to be noted (for the thought is profound) that in the passage from the Lalitâ, though different types of Tantra are said to have sprung from different currents, they are yet both represented as issuing from the body of the God. Śiva

1 Òrdhhasrâtvahavâ ete nabhyanâdharrotasah parah; the former existing in the chaste (Òrdhharatam), whose “stream of life” (retus) tends upwards.
2 Lalitâ, verse 137.
3 The Devî is, while the great Liberatrix, also the “all-bewildering” (Sarvamohîni). When devoid of Her grace, men are bewildered by Her Mâyâ.
4 Similar language is used as regards the Atheistic School in chap. lxxvii of the Kâlikâ Purâṇa, which says: “Vâmanâ kayobhrâma nipâ mangâmodyahibhuktaye, kritomayâ mohanâya chârvâkâdipravartatah.” The reference here is to the nãtika doctrines of Chârvâka and his followers.
5 Dr. Ramana Śâstrin, loc cit. See ante.
is represented as the author of all Āgamas. There is, in fact, but one
source whence all forms of religion, as all else, come. If the ray of pure
sāttvik light appears to be variously coloured, or even at times clouded or
obscured, it is not by reason of the alteration of its nature, but of the
disturbing and darkening qualities of the other guṇas constituting the Devī's
substance manifesting in the Jīva. It is not without reason that Śiva,
the Friend of all, is represented as surrounded by Bhūta and the demoniac
hosts. If the Devī, as Vidyā, liberates, by Her Māyā (from which the
religious sense no more than any other is free), She also binds. The
sectarian, whether a Śaiva or other, naturally discovers abundance of
this māyik play in the creed of his neighbour which he condemns.
I doubt myself whether there exists at present material for conclusions of
any degree of certainty as to the historical origin of the so-called Śākta
Tantras. Certainly no one has yet collected such as may exist. They are,
however, I believe, at base (whatever may be the accretions they are said
to have received) an outcome from the same Vaidik source, the
Mother of all Dharma, as the Śaiva Tantras, though, having regard to
the difference of acāra, they may derive from this common source in
different form.

That which is commonly regarded as telling against this conclusion is
the virācāra ritual with the Pancatattva. It is said by a modern
Śaivite that the Śaivāgamas prohibit drink and the eating of flesh.
Though we may recall both Vaidik usage and the curse of Bhṛgu on those
who follow the rites of Bhāva: Viṣvantu śvadīkṣayām yatra daivam
surāsāvakom; this prohibition is in accordance with the provisions of the
"Śākta" Tantras, which limit the ritual use of wine and flesh to the
worshippers of Śakti initiate in vāmācāra.

That the provisions of Tantra which relate to the Pancatattva are
opposed to the Veda is a notion which is declared by the Indian Tāntrik
pandits to be erroneous. Manu says:

"Na māṅgabhākṣanac doṣa na madye na cha maithune,
Pravṛtitireṇa bhūtānāṃ nivṛttiṣṭu mahāphalā." 8

"There is no wrong in the eating of meat, nor in the drinking of
wine, nor in sexual intercourse; for these things are natural to men. At
the same time abstention therefrom is productive of great fruit." 9

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1 Śaiva Siddhānta, 315, v. ante.
3 So also the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra says: "Eating and sexual union, O Devī, are desired by and natural to men, and their use is regulated for their
benefit in the ordinances of Śiva."

"Nrānāṃ svabhāvāyajang devī priyang bhojanamaithunam
Saṃścēpya hitāthayā śaiva-dharmam nirūpītam."

(UGsāsa ix, verse 283)
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He is doubtless there referring to those enjoyments which belong to the Pravṛtti Mārga—the use of meat and fermented liquor during the Vaidik age being well known. But such use formed also a part of its sacrificial and ritual system. As regards Latāśādhana, the Kālikopani-
śad of the Atharvaveda and other Śāstras are relied on as authorities by Tāntrik Padātis in support of the Virācāra ritual. It is unnecessary to deal with this ritual here, as its discussion forms no part of the author's work. Not improbably (in part at least) originating in a doctrine intended for the detached non-dualistic initiate,\(^1\) and kept closely secret,\(^2\) it may have been perverted by the vulgar, to whom some portions of it became later known. The abuses of these commoner people, as time went on, developed such proportions as to ultimately obscure all other matters in the Tantra, thus depriving them of that attention which is their due.

The objections, however, which have been made to the Tāntrik rahasyapūjā have probably been the chief cause of the attack made upon the age and authority of the Śāstra. It would be beyond the limits of a general Introduction such as this to enter at length into this difficult and debated question. As the view which is to be found more commonly stated is adverse to the Śāstra on both these points, it may be shortly pointed out that the Tantra is referred to in works of acknowledged authority such as Śrīmadbhāgavata, the celebrated Vaiṣṇava Śāstra, the Devī Bhāgavata (which in the ninth skanda speaks of it as a Vedāṅga), and in the Varāha, Padma, Skanda, and other Purāṇas. In the first-named work Bhagavān says: "My worship is of three kinds, Vaidik, Tāntrik, and mixed (miśra)," and in the fifth chapter of the eleventh skanda of the same work it is said that Kṛṣṇa assumes different forms in the different Yugas, and should be worshipped in different ways, and that in Kaliyuga he is to be worshipped according to the injunctions of Tantra. The great Śaṅkarācārya recognizes the Śāstra in his Ananda Lahari and Sāktāmoda, as does Ananda Tīrtha, the commentator of Vīṇaprajñādarsana. The Śāstra is frequently quoted in the celebrated work on Smṛti, the Aṣṭāvimśatitattva of Raghunandana, which is itself universally accepted as an authority throughout Bengal. In short, as the Veda issued from the mouth of Brahmā, so the Āgama Śāstra is said to have come from that of

\[^1\] Thus, as regards worship with woman (Latāśādhana), it is said that it is not possible for one who is a dualist devoid of the knowledge of Kula, and addicted to sexual intercourse, to duly follow Śiva's mandate. Hell follows lust. As the Tantrasāra says, "Liṅgāyaniratato mantri rauravang narakang brajet" ("The Mantrin addicted to lust goes to the Raurava Hell")—that is, the hell in which the qualities of the fiery tejas tattva exist in painful excess.

\[^2\] Mātriyonivar, as it is said.
PRINCIPLES OF TANTRA

Sadāśīva. Current objections to the Tantra on the ground that it lacks the authority of Śruti, Smṛti, or Purāṇa, and is of more recent date, are based, according to orthodox views, on a misconception. According to those views, all Śāstras are without beginning and eternal, as indeed in one sense they are, though their phenomenal appearance may be successive. Letters or sounds are the sensuous manifestation of words, the essence of which resides in the sphaṭa or conception which existed from all eternity before ever these sounds or words were uttered. The phenomenal appearance of Tantra postdates the other Śāstras in the same sense as that in which the Kuśa period is said to succeed to the earlier ages of the present Mahāyuga. There is, in fact, but one truth variously presented to the respective ages. So the Tantra has been said to exist in the Veda as the perfume exists in the flower. While the theoretical portion of the Gāyatrī Tattva is contained in the Vedānta, the practical and ritualistic portion is in the Tantra. Both the theoretical exposition and practical application of universal principles varies with the needs of the ages and the Jīva living therein. It is said of the Devī: "Many are the paths which vary according to the Śāstras but all leading to fruition (siddhi) merge in Thee alone, as all rivers merge and are lost in the sea."

For orthodox views on this matter I will here refer the reader to our author and to a recent essay on the "Antiquity of the Tantra," by Mahāmahopādhyāya Jādevaśvara Tarkaratna. The Pandit prefaces the matter by a notice of the views generally entertained by what are called "educated" Indians, which he summarizes as follows: They hold, he tells us, that the Tantras are of recent production; that to the Vaidik age succeeded the Upaniṣadik. Then followed the Purāṇik age, and then, quite recently, that of the Tantras. But even then the latter Śāstras was not of general authority, having neither governance nor influence in other parts of India than Bengal, where alone it was predominant. There it was created by Bengali Pandits upon the model of the Buddhist teaching and practice of the Mahāyāna sect. These Bengali Pandits are also alleged to have incorporated therewith the worship of Śakti, the goddess of the aboriginal barbarian inhabitants of Bengal. The date of many of the Tantras is said to fall within the last three hundred years, and, amongst other proofs of this, reference is made to the fact that the Yogini Tantra mentions the name of the founder of the Coochbehar Raj, which was established within that time.

1 Some other authorities will be found cited in the later pages of this book; and I summarize in the following pages the opinion of Mahāmahopādhyāya Jādevaśvara Tarkaratna, in his article on the antiquity of Tantra (Tantrair-prāchīnatva) in the Sāhitya Samhitā of Assin, 1817.

2 See preceding note.

3 See post.
These objections are then classified under four headings: (1) The Tantra is not an ancient Dharma Śāstra of the Āryan race having effect in all parts of India, but was in force in Bengal alone, being, indeed, an invention of the Bengalis, who naturally honoured their own creation. (2) Amongst Mahāyāna Buddhists there is worship of Tārā, Vajrayogini, Kṣetrapāla, and the use of mantras, bijas, and japa, in the cult of such Devatās. There is similar worship in the Tantra, which must therefore be derived from Mahāyāna Buddhism. (3) Aboriginal tribes are worshippers of Śakti, ghosts, snakes, and trees. The Tantras also deal with such worship, and have therefore adopted the worship of such aborigines. (4) A book which relates an incident which took place not more than three hundred years ago cannot itself be older.

To these objections the Mahāmahopādhyāya replies as follows: As to the first, he rejoins that Tāntrik influences are to be found, not only in Bengal, but throughout India. Just as the Bengalis of the higher castes are divided into Śāktas, Vaiṣṇavas, and Śaivas, so it is with the peoples of Kāmarūpa, Mithilā, Utkala, and Kalinga, and the Kāshmirian pandits. The Śāktī mantra, Śiva mantra, and Viṣṇu mantra, are each Tāntrik. Amongst Dākimātīyas, Mahāmahopādhyāya Subramanya Śāstri, and many others, are Śāktas. The late Mahāmahopādhyāya Rāma Miśra Śāstri, Mahāmahopādhyāya Rāma Śāstri Bhāgavatācārya, and many others, were and are Vaiṣṇavas. Mahāmahopādhyāya Śivakumāra Śāstri, and a number of others, are Śaivas. In Brindāvan there are many Śākta as well as Vaiṣṇava Brāhmaṇas, though amongst the higher castes in Mahrāstra and other Southern Indian countries, Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas are more numerous than Śāktas. Followers of the Paśupata and Jangama cults are Śaivas whereas those of Mādhavācārya and Rāmānujaśāstra are Vaiṣṇavas. Many in the North-west are initiated in the Rāma mantra, which is to be found only in the Tantra. It is still more remarkable that, according to this author, the pandās of Śrī Puruṣottama* are all Śāktas, and the priests of Kāmākhya Devī* are all Vaiṣṇavas.

Passing to the second argument, he denies that similarity between two doctrines and practices is necessarily proof that the first is borrowed from the second. It may equally be argued the other way. If, because the Buddhists worship Tārā, Hayagriva and others with dhyānas and bijas similar to those in the Tantra, it is contended that the latter is derived from the former, it may equally well be urged that such Buddhist worship is taken from the Tantra. If the Hindu mind was moved by and drawn

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1 Pandits of Southern India.
2 Jagannātha at Puri.
3 At Kamrup in Assam, a great Tāntrika centre.
to the touching teachings of Buddhism, why, he asks, should it concern itself with the externals, and not with the fundamental principles of the religion to which it is so attracted? Why should the Hindu, instead of striving for Nirvāṇa, stand before Buddhist images, fashioned after Buddhistic models, and with folded palms pray for beauty, victory, glory, and the destruction of foes? There is obviously a great difference between yoga undertaken for the extinction of all desires, and such prayers to the Deity for wealth and the destruction of foes, as form part of the Vaidik religion. The Bhagavadgītā preaches niṣkāma karma,\(^1\) which, with the pursuit of spiritual knowledge leads to the acquisition of such knowledge, and thereafter to Nirvāṇa; and on this account the "educated" say that the Gītā is influenced by Buddhistic ideals. In the Tantra there is performance of work with desire, which is contrary to Buddhistic teaching. Hinduism alone, of all religions, provides different forms of religious teaching for persons of differing religious competence (adhikāra). Buddhism does not. How, otherwise, is it possible to account for Buddhadeva's vairāgya,\(^8\) his loss of faith in Hinduism, and his discovery of the new path whereby man shall escape the infirmities of old age and death? Buddhism, out of pity for all living creatures, forbids the sacrifice of animals. It is, he thinks, an astonishing proposition that Tāntrikas followed such a religion, when at the same time they are supposed to have invented a novel Śāstra, enjoining the sacrifice of goats, buffaloes, and other animals, before images of Devas and Devīs, also drawn from Buddhism. While it is not to be expected that all will understand the complexities of Buddhist philosophy, pity is a virtue which goes with humble minds. If there be anything which might prove attractive in Buddhism to men in general, it is its prohibition against the slaughter of animals—an ordinance which melted the hearts of a large number of the Hindus and made them Buddhists. It is scarcely probable, then, that Hinduism should omit that which is fundamentally attractive in a religion which (in his view) denies the existence of God, and should inaugurate a new Śāstra (the Tantra) providing for the worship of Devas and Devīs, according to the tenets of the Buddhist Mahāyāna school. It is modern Vaiśnavism, on the contrary, which, in its prohibition of animal sacrifice, is inspired by the Buddhistic principle that "cessation from the killing of animals is the highest form of religion". In the great yajña, which lasted a hundred years, Śaunaka and other Rṣis used to listen to the Śrīmad Bhāgavata from the mouth of Sūta, and at the same time to sacrifice animals.\(^9\) In the Aśvamedha yajña which King Yudisṭhīra, the disciple of Kṛṣṇa, performed under the guidance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa himself, a horse

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\(^1\) The performance of work selflessly, without desire for its fruit.
\(^8\) Dispassion.
\(^9\) Skanda I.
was killed, offered to Devas, and eaten. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself hunted a boar under the command of Vāsudeva for the satisfaction of the Pīṭhas in Śrāddha. The eleventh skanda of the Bhāgavata explicitly states that the killing of animals in sacrifice is no killing.

Amongst the Vaiśyas of Mathurā, many had become Buddhists, and others Jains. Greatly moved as they were at the sight of Chaitanya’s love for Kṛṣṇa, and drawn thereby to Hinduism, they yet hesitated to return to it on the ground that it sanctioned the slaughter of animals in sacrifice. It was perhaps at that time that the Vaiśṇava teachers announced that the killing of animals was not sanctioned by their tenets, and thus succeeded in converting Buddhists and Jains to their faith. It is probably from this time that Vaiśṇava families abandoned animal sacrifice on occasions of pūjā. Although common Vaiśṇavas eat fish, the flesh of other animals is forbidden. In Bengal, Utkala, and other countries, Buddhist teachers adapted from Hinduism the establishment of images of Devas, the worship of such Devas with mantras and bijas, and called themselves Mahāyāna Buddhists—a sect which, of course, came into existence long after the passing away of the Buddha. The Lalitavistāra, or biography of Śākyasingha, states that he had a special knowledge of Nigama, Purāṇas, Itihāsa, and the Vedas. Whenever both Veda and Nigama are mentioned in the same passage, the latter term refers to Tantra, which goes by the names of Āgama and Nigama.

Again, Śākyasingha is made to say to the Bhikṣukas. “Such fools seek the protection of, and pay obeisance to, Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Viṣṇu, the Devī, Kārtikeya, Mother Kātyāyanī, Gaṇapatī, and others. Some perform tapasyā in cremation grounds, and at the crossing of four roads.” Speaking of the practice of heretics (pāśāndas), Śākyasingha mentions the use of wine and flesh. Had not the Tāntrik form of worship been then in existence how could he have known and spoken ill of it? Seeing, also, what the Lalitavistāra says, can it, he asks, be contended that the Tantra is derived from Mahāyāna Buddhism?

To the third objection the Mahāmāhopādhyāya answers that the views there expressed are similar to those given under the second heading, and the rejoinder, therefore, is similar. It may, however, he says, be

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1 XI, Chapter v, sloka xiii.
2 Chapter xii.
3 Buddhist Sannyāsīs.
4 Vide ante.
5 Lalitavistāra, chap. xvii.
6 This, of course, does not necessarily follow. All that is here proved is that Tāntrik practices antedated the Lalitavistāra, whatever be the date at which the latter was written. From the standpoint of Western criticism this and all similar orthodox arguments are weakened by the too ready credit sometimes given to the age and authority of the literary materiae on which they rest.
asked who are meant when the barbarian aborigines of India are spoken of. According to the English, such aborigines were Dravidians, Odras, and Paundrakas. Is it, he says, to be supposed that Bengali Pandits composed the Tantra Śāstra in imitation of the practices of Dravidians inhabiting the distant Deccan? Or was the Tāntrik system adopted from Mundas, Santhās, Garos, Mechis, Kuches, Khasias and other primitive inhabitants of Assam? The Pandit hesitates "to lay this heavy burden of ignomy on the heads of Bengali Pandits" seeing that the Śākti Devatā is established and worshipped in all parts of India. Thus Kāmākhya is worshipped at Kāmarūpa, Vindhyavāsini on the Vindhya Hills, Yogamāyā and Paurānasī at Brindāvan; Annapūrṇā, Sankata, Tripurabhairavi, sixty-four Yoginīs, Kālabhairavi, Durgā, Śitalā, Mangalā, and other Devīs at Kāli; Kuśalī at Kauṣālā; Pārvatī on the Sahya Hills, Poona; Guhyesvarī in Nepal; Gāyatrī and Sāvitrī in Rājputāna; Lalitā at Prayāga; Ugratārā at Tirhut; Māyādevī at Haridvāra; Chandi on the Chandi Hills near Haridvāra; Jvalāmukhi at Jalandhara; Cinnamasta, some forty miles therewith; Kāli (whom King Prithvī worshipped) seven miles to the south of Delhi; Mumbā in Bombay city; Mahālakṣmi, on the sea coast near Bombay; Kālikā on the Harsha Island, west of and near Mahākāleśvara; Kṣīrabhaṇāi near Kāshmīr; and Devī Mīnākṣī, south of Madras. All these Devīs (to which many others might be added) are still worshipped, and were established in their various places in distant and unknown ages. Even at the seat of Puruṣottama in Utkala, Vimalā is worshipped, so also are Sarasvatī, Bhuvanesvarī, Kāli, and Laksunī. Obeisance is made to Subhadra with the mantra: "Kātyāyanī, salutation to Thee." Bhuvanesvarī is worshipped at Bhubanesvara; Dhavalesvarī at Dhavalesvara; eight Śaktis, Viraja, Indrāni at Yājpur, and Katakhandi at Cuttack.

If it be argued that the Tantra Śāstra is of recent origin because it provides for the worship of Śaktī, then the same observation must apply to the Purāṇas, Mahābhārata, and even the Vedas and Upaniṣads. The Mahābhārata contains hymns in honour of the Devī. The Śrimadbhāgavata provides for the worship of Umā. The maidens of Vraja worshipped Kātyāyanī. The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa relates the greatness of Devī. In the Purāṇas Her greatness is sung. Numerous passages in

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1 The Pandit's reply, of course, takes benefit from the folly of the statement he answers.
2 After whom the place (Hardwar) is called Māyapuri in the Śāstra.
3 Where fire is said to ever burn to consume the offerings.
4 The Devī at Madura.
5 The temple of Jagannātha (Viṣṇu) at Puri, Orissa.
6 Sister of Jagannātha.
proof of this may be culled from the Skanda, Brahma, Brahmana-varta, Bhavisya, Padma, Devi, and Kālikā Purāṇas. The autumnal Durgā Pūjā is mentioned in many Purāṇas. It is an error to suppose that Raghunandana Bhattāchāryya alone has prescribed for the worship of Durgā. Previous to him many others had done so, such as Śrīdatta, Harinātha, Vidyādhara, Ratnakara, Bhujadeva, Jīmūtavāhana, Halā-yudha, Rāyamukuta, Vēcaspati Mīra and many other renowned compilers. Many well-known books written before the age of Raghunandana contain provisions for Durgā Pūjā, such as the Durgābhaktitarangini, Samvatsarapradipa, Kālakaumudi, Jyotiśānava, Smṛtiśāgara, Kalpataru, Krityamahānava, Krityaratnakara, Kāmanipūjānibandha, Krityatattvānava, Chakrānāryaṇi, Kriyāyogopasāmvāra, Durgābhakti-prakāśa, Dākṣinātya, Kālanirnaya and Pūjāratnakara.

Although the Bengali practice of worshipping earthen images of Durgā with great pomp is not followed in all parts of India, yet she is everywhere worshipped in Ghatas (jars). Shrines which contain her images are visited; nine-day vratas are made, fasts are observed, and the Chandi is read on the Mahāśaṭamī day. Even now the women of Vraja in Brindāvan bath in the Jumna early every morning for the first nine days of the bright fortnight of the month of Āśvina, and worship images of the Devi, which they draw on the banks of the river. Readers of the Chāndogya, Talavakāra and other Upaniṣads are aware of the incident in which Umā, the Daughter of the Mountain, riding a lion in a blaze of light, appeared to Indra and the other Devas in order to prove that it was not by their śakti that they lived and moved, but that all which was done was so done by virtue of that Mahāśakti. In the Veda there is the Saraswati sūktā, in the Yajurveda the Lāksṇī sūktā, and in the tenth Manḍala of the Rgveda the Devī sūktā. Even the worship of Devī Manasā is based, not on the Tantra, but Purāṇa. And the same may be said as regards the worship of the Tulsī plant, and the Bael and Āsvattha tree. Far distant from Bengal, on the summit of Mount Govardhana, there is an image of Devī Manasā. And in the land of Vraja, where animal sacrifice is condemned, goats are sacrificed before this Devī. Snake worship exists in other countries than Bengal, and was not introduced by the Tantra Sāstra. A survey of the religious practices prevalent in ancient times and in other countries does not support the conclusion that because the Tantra advocates Sākti worship it is therefore of recent origin.

Passing to the fourth heading, the Pandit asks how it is that, if the Yogini Tantra is at most only three hundred years old, Raghunandana

1 The Tulsī and Aśvattha are worshipped, and bael leaves are offered to Śiva. Aśvattharupbhagavān viṣṇureva na samśayah rudra-rūpamastadvat palāśo brahma-śradhrik. Padma Purāṇa, Uttar Khānda, ch. efx.
Bhattacharya, the great Smarta, and Krsananda Bhattacharya, contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya, referred to and quoted it as an authority in the Srutitattva and Tantrasa. On the other hand, it is common knowledge that if in some obscure family a great person (mahapurusa), or a succession of great persons, is born, their descendants and disciples name the members of that family after those of some other well-known family, so as to create the notion that the two families are the same. It was perhaps in this way he surmises that the Raj family of Cooch Behar was raised to the position of being the descendants of Siva mentioned in the Yogini Tantra.

Madhavacarya, the commentator upon the Vedas, has, in dealing with the Patanjala Darshana in his compilation of the six Darshanas, quoted many passages from the Tantra Sutra with reference to the ten forms of Samskara prescribed therein. Vacaspati Miira, the commentator upon the six Darshanas, has, in his commentary on the Patanjala Darshana, recommended dhyana of Devatas as prescribed in the Tantras. Bhagavan Sankaracarya, also, has, in the Sairaka Bhasya, made mention of the Tantrik Satakara. It is hardly necessary to say that none of these three great men—Sankaracarya, Madhavacarya, and Vacaspati Miira,—was a Bengali. Before the compilation of Krsananda's Tantrasa, there were many compilers of Tantra, such as Raghavanka, Raghabhatta, Virupaksa, and Govindabhatta. In his observations upon the Yantra of Nilaasarsat, in his Tantrasa, Krsananda, observes: "Said by even Sri Sankaracarya." The famous Sakti Stotra, named Anandalahari (wave of bliss), is everywhere known to be the work of Sankaracarya, and is, as such, universally recited by devotees before Devatas with feeling and reverence. Compilations of Tantra, such as the Ramarchana Candrikas, the Mantramuktavali, the Sarasamgraha, the Bhuvanesvariparijata, the Sradhatilaka, the Tripurarsarasamuchchaya, the Svachchhandasangraha, the Sarasamuchchaya, the Mantratantraprakasa, and the Somabhujangvali, were prepared long before the time of Krsananda and Raghunandana. References to these books are to be found in the works of Krsananda and Raghunandana. In the well-known astronomical work called Dipika, days for taking Diksa (initiation) have been determined separately from those for commencement of education and investiture with the sacred thread (upanayana). That Diksa must, therefore, be Tantrik Diksa, distinct from

1 Hymn to Sakti.
2 See Arthur and Ellen Avalon's "Hymns to the Goddess" for this and other Hymns to the Devi.
3 Passages compiled in the Ramarchana Chandrikas have been quoted by Vacaspati Miira in the chapter on Vasant Pujas in his Krityacintamani. This supports the antiquity of Ramarchana Chandrikas.
INTRODUCTION

Vaidik Dikṣā or Upanayana. Compilations come into existence long after the preparation of original works and when capacity for their production has ceased. It is when ordinary folk find difficulty in establishing a concordance between the ordinances contained in numerous original and other works—that the learned undertake the making of compilations for the determination of the right forms of religious practice, the regulation of objections against the Śāstra, the establishment of a concordance between apparently conflicting authorities and the settlement of all disputed matters. A period of at least a thousand years must, in this author’s opinion, be considered to have elapsed between the date of original works and that of compilations. Many of the compilers whose names have been mentioned lived a thousand years ago. There is therefore no ground, in the Pandit’s opinion, for doubting that the Tantra Śāstra is at least two thousand years old. In the eleventh skanda of the Śrīmadbhāgavata it is said that Keśava (Viṣṇu) should be worshipped in the manner prescribed in the Tantra Śāstra;¹ and, again, that men desirous of acquiring jñāna (spiritual knowledge) should worship Bhagavān according to Vaidik and Tantrik ordinances.² The same book in the same skanda also says: “Hear how people should worship Me in the Kali age according to various Tantras.³ They should observe my Yātrās (Dolayātrā, Rathayātrā, etc.), perform sacrifices, be initiated in the Vaidik and Tantrik modes, and undertake to perform the vrata in which I am worshipped.”

In the Brahma Purāṇa it is said that people should enter into the temple of Bhuvanesvara in the Garden of a single mango Tree,⁴ and there worship Mahādeva according to Vaidik and Tantrik rites. This passage has been quoted by Raghunandana in his Purusottamatattva. The Kūrma Purāṇa says: “There are found in the world many Śāstras antagonistic to Śruti and Smṛti. The ordinances of such Śāstras are tāmasik.⁵ Karāla, Bhairava, Yāmala, and similar other books follow Vāmamārga,”⁶ and so on. This passage, which is also contained in the Kūrma Purāṇa, has been quoted by Raghunandana and other compilers. The Pandit points out that Karāla, Bhairava, and Yāmala are Tantrik works, and that the Vāmamārga is a mode of Tantrik worship. In the Rāmāyana there are references to Balā and Atibalā,⁷ which are Tantrik,

¹ Chapter iii, stokes 47 and 48. See Śrīdhara Śvāmi’s note.
² Chapter v, stoke 28. Śrīdhara Śvāmi’s note.
³ Chapter v, stoke 31. Śrīdhara Śvāmi’s note.
⁴ The town of Bhuvanesvara.
⁵ That is, the outcome of a state in which the tamoguna predominates.
⁶ See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
⁷ Balakānda, canto xxii, stokes 12, 13, and 15. These are Vidyās taught by Visvāmitra to Rāma and Lakṣmana.
and the mode of acquiring which is given in the Tantrasāra. Rāghava Bhatta and Raghunandana quote Nārada as to the nature of the Tāntrik mode of worship for persons in impure conditions. In the Parāśara Bhāṣya there is a quotation said to have been originally made by Govinda-bhatta, which says that mantras with Om should not be taught to Śūdras, and so on. In Bhojarāja’s Vyavahārasamuchchaya there is reference to a passage stating that Upanayana and Dikṣā should not be performed whilst Brihaspati¹ is in Rāhu.² The Varāha says that learned men should worship Janārdana either according to the Vedas or according to the Tantras. The Padma Purāṇa, in its Uttarākhanda, asks how it is possible that one may become bhāgavata³ without taking dikṣā in the Vaishnavi cult? In the third chapter of the Nārada Pancarātra it is said that whilst meditating on the six Ćakras named Mūlāḍhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Mani-pūra, Anahata, Viśuddha, Ājñā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was seen in the thousand-petalled lotus, resplendent, of the colour of a freshly-formed cloud, wearing yellow silk, two-armed, beautiful, pure, and smiling, in the company of his own Śakti, Kundalini.⁴ Again, in the fourth chapter of the same book, the author uses the terminology of the Tantra Śāstra when he says, “Lakṣmimāyā Kāmabijām,” etc.,⁵ and thus introduces the great mantra of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, consisting of bijas, and formed of eight syllables. All are aware that the piercing of the six Ćakras, their names, and the Devī Kundalini are matters of the Tantra Śāstra. There are references to Tāntrik prāṇāyāma in the Pātañjala Darśana and in the Bhagavadgītā, and other places of the Mahābhārata.⁶ It should also be pointed out here that there is indirect, though not direct, reference to the Tantra Śāstra in Yudhiṣṭhira’s question to Bhīma contained in the 7th, 8th, and 9th ślokas of the 250th chapter in the Śānti Parva of the Mahābhārata, dealing with Mokṣadharma. These ślokas may be translated as follows:

“I have heard that Vaidik ordinances are gradually coming into disuse, in the progress of ages. There is one form of dharma for the Satya age, another for the Tretā age, another for the Dvāpara age, and another again for the Kali age. The Vedas contemplate different forms of dharma according to different capacities of men. The words of the Vedas are true, and from these words, again have emanated all-embracing Vedas,” and so forth. Now, here it may be asked, what are these all-embracing Vedas which have emanated from the Vedas? In the Mahāmoha-pādhyāya’s opinion no other reply is possible but that the Tantras are here referred to. Smṛtis also, like the Vedas, do not give to all castes equal adhikāra (right) to them, and prohibit their study to Śūdras.

¹ The planet Jupiter. ² The ascending node. ³ Devoted to Bhagavān. ⁴ Lakṣmī, Māyā and Kāma Bijas. ⁵ Shānti Parva, chap. cci, ślokas 17 and 19, with Nilakantha’s note.
The “all embracing Vedas,” therefore, cannot mean Smr̥tis. The Tantras give adhikāra to people belonging to all castes, so that they alone are “all embracing.” Moreover, there is no instance of the word Veda being used in the sense of Smr̥ti. There is, however, ample use of the terms Āgama and Nigama in the sense of the Tantras—terms which originally meant the Vedas. Just as, according to the Śastra, the Vedas have no author, but are merely remembered by fourheaded Brahmā, so the Tantras also have not, according to the Śastra, any author, but have merely emanated from the mouths of Śiva. Neither the Vedas nor the Tantras have emanated from the mouths of munī, pīṣis, or the spiritually wise (jñānī). Brahmā is Iśvara and Śiva also is Iśvara, and the Śastra says that the Vedas emanate from the mouths of the former, and the Tantras have issued from those of the latter. More explicit are the ṣlokas 121, 122, 123, and 124 of chapter cccxiv in the Śaṅti Parva of the Mahābhārata dealing with Mokṣadhāma. Here Mahādeva says to Dakṣa: “Extracting from the Vedas complete with their six angas (limbs), and from the Śāṅkhyā-Yoga, I promulgated the Paśupata vrata with such austere and extensive tapas as no Deva, or Dānava could perform. This vrata is superior to all practices ordained in the Vedas and other Śastras, all-good, beneficial to all castes and āśramas, everlastring, performed in three years and ten days, secret, highly spoken of by wise men, spoken ill of by fools; opposed (viparīta) in some matters to Vamāśramadhāma, though in many others similar thereto; prescribed by learned men; practised by men who have risen superior to Āśramas, and beneficial. Dakṣa, you will obtain all the fruits of such Paśupata vrata,” and so forth. To what Śastra, the Pandit asks, other than the Tantrā Śastra, can this Paśupata vrata belong? It cannot be the Vedas, for the vrata is said to have been extracted from them. Again, the reader will, he thinks, be astonished to know that the Mahābhārata has adopted the Tāntrik terminology and Tāntrik methods in the introduction of mantras. In the 74th ṣloka of chapter cccxiv of the Śaṅti Parva referred to above, the following mantra occurs:

1 It is open to all, which the Veda is not.

2 Quaere. The text I have before me runs: Ābdair daṣārdhā sangyuktam, which according to Nilakantha, means that it may be acquired in years or shortly by the merit of those who practise the five yamas and five niyamas. Some read “daśāha” (ten days) for “daṣārdha.” There seems to be no reason for limiting the period of the vrata thus.

3 Thus there is no caste in the cakra; the smārtha vrata, such as fasting, are not generally observed; pūja in Vāmācāra is done at night and other matters.

4 Paramahamsas, Parivrājikas, etc.
"Ghani charu cheli mili brahma kayikamagninam."  

Nilakantha explains this mantra as follows:
"Ghani = Om. The word 'Rudra' must be introduced. Agnikam = the wife of Fire, or Svaha; Brahma = Om. Thus the following mantra, containing eighteen syllables, has been here quoted: Om Rudra cheli cheli cheli mili mili Om Svaha."  

1 In the 379th sloka of chapter xiv of the Anuśāsana Parva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Yudhishthira: "Eight days passed as though they were but a moment, and I took mantra from that Brāhmaṇa (Upamanyu)." After this verse it is narrated how Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed austere tapasyā in the worship of Śiva by repeating this mantra; how Śiva, being pleased, appeared before him in the company of Umā: how the hymn sung by Śrī Kṛṣṇa pleased Śiva and Umā, so that they granted him blessings and so forth. One is therefore astonished to hear some educated persons say that nowhere in the Mahābhārata is there any mention of Sakti save in the Virāṭa Parva, where Yudhishthira hymns Durgā. In the story of Dakṣa's yajña, related in the Mahābhārata, there is no mention of the 'death of Dakṣa's daughter,' but it is said that Bhadrakāli rose out of Her body for the destruction of the yajña, and that pleased by the hymn sung by Dakṣa, Durgā appeared with Mahādeva before him, and then disappeared. Amongst the thousand names spoken of by Kṛṣṇa in the Anuśāsana Parva there appear "Vāmadeva, and Vāma, and Pṛśī, and Dakṣiṇa, and Vāmana," and "author of the Vedas and author of Mantras."

1 The full verse is—
"Ghantōghanto ghatī ghanti charu cheli mili mili
Brahma kayikamagnināṅg dandimundastridandadhurik."

The meaning of which is as follows: Ghantah = prakāśavāṇ, or shining—that is, Pūrṇabrahmaśāvīpāh. Aghanah = Māyāvidvēna prachchhama-prakāśa—viz., that whose shining is concealed on account of its being covered with mayā or jīva. Gathi = he who ghatayati (joins) men with the fruit of their karma, or who attaches fruit to the karma of men. Ghanti = ghatavāṇ, or possessor of ghaṇṭah (g. v.). Charu = those who move (charanti)—that is, jīvas, movable and immovable men, animals, trees, etc. Cheli = player; as men play with birds, so Śiva plays with us. Mili—one who has mili (attachment). Śiva as the cause is attached to, or, as we should say, in, all effects. The word is mentioned twice for emphasis. Brahma = Praṇava, Kāyikamagninām = the spouse of Fire, or Svāhā. Dandimunda = ascetics, paramahamsas, etc. Tridandadhurik = holding the three staves of bael, pālīśa and bamboo, as is done in Upakanyā. These staves are thrown into the Ganges on the twelfth day following Upakanyā. Śiva is thus Pūrṇabrahman; Jīva; the Giver of the fruit of Karma; the all-brilliant One; all-moving Jīvas: He who plays with Jīva; who as all Causes is in all effects; Praṇava; and Svāhā; the ascetic and Gṛhaṇa life.

2 This is according to the Gauras who say that Ghanī = Om; and insert Rudra in the vocative case, and repeat cheli four times.

3 Sati.

4 Śānti Parva, chapter ccxxxiv, slokas 32 and 54.
Mantras here cannot be said to refer to Vaidik mantras owing to the distinction made between the author of the Vedas and the author of mantras, and Nilakantha, the commentator, in fact, explains mantras as Tantrik mantras. By Vāma and Dakṣīṇa are meant (the Pandit thinks) the vāma and the dakkṣīṇa ācāras in Tantra. Tantrik Bij mantras are known to many. In the Anuśāsana Parva also, where mokṣadharma is treated of, it is said: "Four-mouthed Mahāliṅga and Cāruliṅga etc., ruler of bijas," author of bijas, and so forth. There are even more explicit references to the Tantra Śāstra in the Mahābhārata. For instance, it is said, "O Rājaṛṣi: the Sāṅkhya Yoga, the Pancarātra, the Vedas, and the Pāñcupata, know these Śāstras, the purpose of which is to establish jñāna," and, again: "Śrīkanṭha Śiva, husband of Umā and lord of all things, promulgated the Pāñcupata Jñānaśāstra when in placid mood. Bhagavān Himself is the Knower of the entire Pancarātra." Sanskrit scholars in India, according to the Pandit, believe the Pancarātra to be a Tantra. Again, the injunction that in the Kali age people should worship Iśvara in the manner prescribed in the Tantra Śāstra leads many people to think that the Tantras are recent because they are intended for the Kali age. The Pandit replies that the Mahābhārata itself answers this view in the Śānti Parva, where it is said that in the Satya age Rudra, engrossed in Yoga, told the Tantra Śāstra to Bālakhilya Rāṣis; but that subsequently it again disappeared through the māyā of that Deva. In the 17th sloka of Chapter cclxvii of the Śānti Parva, Mahāṛṣi Kapila questions Syūmarasmi as follows: "Tell me if you have seen any Śāstra other than Āgama." In reply Syūmarasmi speaks of many things, and at the end of each statement he remarks: "This is Śrutī." The Pandit then asks what is meant by the word Āgama in Mahāṛṣi Kapila's question. In his Commentary on the Sārīraka Śāstra, "owing to the impossibility of generation," Bhagavān Śaṅkarācārya refers to the fourfold division of Vāsudeva, Śankarāṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha as stated in the Pancarātra, and whilst he does not attempt to disprove it, he does disprove the theory of the generation of Śankarāṇa from Vāsudeva

1 Rāṣi and King.
2 Śānti Parva, chap. ccc.xd, slokas 64 to 68.
3 Small Rāṣis the size of a thumb (ānguṣṭha), 60,000 in number. Mārkandeya Purāṇa says they are children of the wife of Kriatu and Īrkharetas. It is believed that they still appear, and bathe on Pauṣa Śākraṇī Day at Gauḍāgāra.
4 Śānti Parva, chap. ccc.xviii, see slokas 17 and 18. The reference should be to chap. 349.
5 This should be chap. cclxviii.
6 Vāsudeva = Paramāṭma; Śankarāṇa = Jīva; Pradyumna = Manas; Aniruddha = Āhaṇkāra.
7 This should be chap. cclxviii.
advanced by the followers of the Pancarātra. Again, in his Commentary on the Sūtra: "The Lord cannot be merely the instrumental cause on account of the existence of diversity in creation," he writes: "Māheśvara, too, admit it," "All this was taught by Paśupati, who is Īśvara, for undoing the bonds of pañcas," etc. In his Śrībhāṣya on the first Sūtra quoted above, Rāmānuja Śvāmī writes, "Elucidated by Nārāyaṇa Himself in the Pancarātra Tantra," and, again, "Non-Vedic practices are opposed, and not the cults of Yoga and Paśupati; for Śāṅkhya, Yoga, Pancarātra, the Vedas and Paśupata, are self-evident, and cannot be disproved by reasoning," and so forth. Rāmānuja Śvāmī quotes as evidence all the passages of the Mahābhārata above mentioned, as well as many other passages from the same epic, and other works. There is a scripture named Śūtasamhitā, of which the Brahmagitā is a portion. Its speaker is Brahmā, and throughout it deals with Śāṅkara. Its annotator is Mādhavācārya himself, the writer on all Darśanas, and commentator of the Vedas. At the end of every Chapter he writes: "By Mādhavācārya, an inhabitant of Kāśi, a devotee of the Śakti of action, a server of the lotus-feet of the three-eyed Deva and illuminator of the path of Upaniṣad." Here Mādhavācārya calls himself a devotee of the Šakti of work (Kriyāśakti), but the Tantra alone deals with Šakti of will, Šakti of knowledge, and Šakti of action. Not only in the Mahābhārata, but in all Purāṇas the greatness of the Devī, as extolled in the Tantras, has been described either shortly or with elaboration. In the account of the greatness of Rudra contained in the Varāha Purāṇa it is said: "Śāṅkara has as many aspects as there are Mahāśaktis. He who worships Her ever worships Him as husband." Again: "If he who worships the Devīs pleases Rudra also, these Devīs become for ever siddha to that Mantram. There is no doubt of this." 1 What is there in the Tantras, it is asked, more than what this verse says? In the Śāṅkara-Saṃhitā, which forms a part of the Skanda Purāṇa, the Rṣis ask Śūta, "Bhagavān, we desire to hear of the system of Viramahēśvara," and so forth. And Kārtikeya says to Mahādeva: "There are few who know Śaiva-Āgama." Śāṅkara, in His reply, says: "The essence of the Vedas, the Āgama, and the Purāṇas charms the mind and should be kept secret." 2 According to the Mahāmāhyopādhyāya, Śaiva-Āgama undoubtedly means the Tantra-sūstra, 3 as does the word Āgama in the expression "the Vedas, the Āgama, and the Purāṇas," because it is mentioned separately from the Vedas. There are many Upaniṣads other than the ten on which Śāṅkara-cārya wrote his Commentary. He selected these ten

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1 Varāha Purāṇa, chap. xxvi.
2 Chapter xxv.
3 Vide ante.
because they supported his monistic theories. Just as there was no necessity to write a Commentary on the Vedas, so it was not necessary that he should write commentaries on the Upaniṣads which dealt with the methods of worship (upāsana). The Aṃśamatā Upaniṣad enumerates the substances which should be used for the rosary with which japa¹ is done. They are coral, pearl, crystal, conch, silver, gold, sandalwood, putrajīvī, lotus-seed, and rudrākṣa. The Tantra Śāstra mentions exactly the same substances. There are many Upaniṣads of the Atharva Veda, such as Atharvaśikhā, Atharvaśīrah, Advayatāraka, Adhyātma, Annapūrṇa, Amṛtānanda, Amṛtabindu, Avyakta, Kṛṣṇa, Kaula, Kṣu- rikā, Gaṇapati, Kātyāyana, Kāllāgnirudra, Kūndikā, Tripurā-pāpanīya, Dakṣināmūrti, Devīdevīya, Dhyānabindu, Nādabindu, Nārada, Nārāyaṇa, Nīrīśa, Nyāśīka-tāpanīya, Paśupata, Brahma-paṅgala, Pippalāda, Vahvricha, Vṛkṣajāvalī, Bhasma, Mukti, Rahasya, Rāma-tāpanī, Vajra-pānīya, Varāha, Vāsudeva, Sarasvatī-rābasya, Śītā, Sudarśana, Hayagrīva, etc.² As there are 21 recensions of the Rgveda, 109 of the Yajurveda, and 1,000 of the Sāmaveda, so there are the same number of Upaniṣads belonging to each of the Vedas respectively. The Sanskrit-knowing reader will have surmised from the name of the Upaniṣads above enumerated that each of them deals with forms of worship similar to that prescribed by the Tantra. There are many commentaries on the Nyāśīka-tāpanīya Upaniṣad, one of which is written by Bhagavān Śaṅkaraśārya and another by his great guru Gauḍapādāśārya, known by the name of Munindra. There is, therefore, no ground, it is contended, for the supposition that this Upaniṣad may be a spurious one. Kullaka Bhatta, the author of the most authoritative commentary on the Manu Samhitā, has, in his note on the first śloka of Chapter ii of the book quoted a passage from Hārīta’s work which says: “Now we shall explain dharma. Dharma is based on the authority of Śruti. Śruti is of two kinds—Vaidik and Tāntrik.” From this it is evident that the Tantra Śāstra is nothing else than a part of the Vedas, and is, consequently, known by the names of Āgama and Nigama. The passages above quoted from the Mahābhārata prove that Mahādeva first promulgated the Vedas, and then the Pāṣupata dharma from a part of it. Thus, from the statement also made by Mahādeva Himself, we learn that the Tantra Śāstra is a part of the Vedas.

According to the Pandit, the Tantra Śāstra is referred to by the word “rahasya” (mystery), used over and above the expression “All the Vedas,” in the 165th śloka of chapter ii of the Manu Samhitā, and also

¹ See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
by the word "vidyā," which is used in addition to the Vedas and the Upaniṣads in the 10th sūkta of the 4th Brāhmaṇa in the 2nd varga of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. The Vṛddhahāritisamhitā contains a full account of the Tāntrik form of initiation (dīkṣā). The Uṣanahsaṁhitā makes clear references to the Pancarātra and the Pāṣupata dharma. The Kātyāyana Saṁhitā ordains worship of Ganeśa, Gaurī, and other Devas and Devīs. The Vyāsa Saṁhitā recommends japa of the guhyavidyā, use of rosaries, with beads of crystal and the like, and worship of Rudra with Gāyatrī. Nowhere else but in the Tantra Śāstra is there a Gāyatrī for Rudra or any other Devatā. The Saṅgkha Saṁhitā says that after dhyāna of a Devatā, japa should be made with a rosary of crystals or other beads, the number of recitations being recorded by the fingers of the left hand. In the Vṛddhagautama-saṁhitā there is a list of the names of the authors of Dharma Śāstras. In this list there occur the names of Brahmā, as also those of Umā and Maheśvara. It is unnecessary, in the Pandit’s opinion, to further quote passages or to cite more authorities. Like the Purāṇas, all Smṛti, and Saṁhitās contain references, direct as well as indirect, to the Tantra Śāstra, but the Tantra Śāstra makes no reference to either Smṛti or Purāṇa. This also proves the great antiquity of Tantra Śāstra. There is a Tāntrik scripture named Śivāgama containing Śūtras which have been quoted as authorities by Kṛṣṇaṇanda in his Tantrasāra. Its commentator is Abhinavagupta, the Court pandit of Gonardda, King of Kashmir. Gonardda died the death of a hero in the great war of Kurukṣetra.

We need not here follow the Pandit in his speculations as to Buddhistic influences in Ancient America as established by Mexican architecture, or as to the similarity of the ritual of Ancient Egypt to that of the Tantra, beyond stating that in his opinion such speculation supports the more direct inferences derivable from the study of Indian history and literature as to the antiquity of the Tantra Śāstra, which his essay is written to prove. The learned Mahāmahopādhyāya concludes with the expression of a doubt whether the reasons and arguments he adduces will appeal to "the great men, free of all prejudice, learned in Western language and science, with intellects brightened, sharpened, and coloured by Western philosophy," and apologizes for himself, with perhaps some latent sarcasm, as follows: "I had not the good fortune of learning deductive and

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2 Secret Mantra.

3 See the Rājātarangini of Kashmir, and the Commentary on Śivāgama, of which there is a copy in the Library of the Mahārāja of Darbhanga.

4 He points out with regard to Horus, one of the Egyptian Devatās, that Aharpati (Lord of the Day) and Aharisha (Ruler of the Day) are Sanskrit epithets of the sun.
inductive logic. In the Chatuspáthi of a native Brāhmaṇa Pandit, I learnt to argue ‘whether sound follows the fall of a palm-fruit or precedes it,’ though he says it must not be supposed that other great logicians were mainly engaged in discussions of the “palm-fruit-falling” nature.

Western writers and Indians influenced by their works and general outlook are much occupied with this question of the antiquity and date of the Tantra. To the orthodox all Śāstra is eternal. Moreover, to the Indian temperament, as one of them has well said, sugar is prized for its sweetness without regard to the land whence it came or the cultivator by whom it was grown. It can hardly be said that we have the necessary materials for final judgment from the purely historical standpoint. If it be alleged that Indians have sometimes gone to opposite extremes, European critics and their Indian followers have, as a general rule, displayed almost a mania for belittling the antiquity of Indian religions, literature, and art. In coming to any conclusion on this matter, it is necessary first to inquire into the different elements of doctrine and practice, to distinguish what is original from what is alleged to be an accretion, or interpolation, and to consider the allegation of non-Āryan influences and so forth. It is necessary also to distinguish between Tāntrik doctrine and practice so ascertained from its expression or record in any particular document. The latter may be of yesterday, and yet its subjects may be of the ages. Some would derive the Tantra from Mahāyāna Buddhism. Others contend that the Mahāyāna school appears to have adopted the doctrines of the Indian Tantra, which is in notable respects opposed to the original doctrines of the Buddha. The influence of his teachings are rather, it is said, to be found amongst the Vaiṣṇavas, who have in their number many cryptic Buddhists, than in forms of worship which, not to mention other salient differences, prescribe the sacrifice of animals with elaborate rituals before the images of Devas and Devīs. In fact, the Lalitavistāra already cited represents Śākyasingha as condemning the “fools” who make obeisance to numerous Devās and who perform tapasyā in the cremation grounds and at the crossing of four roads, as also the practice of “sinful men and heretics (pāśandhas)” who use wine and flesh, he having prescribed the ascetic life and the avoidance of injury (whether by sacrifice or otherwise) to all beings. Professor Masaharu Anezaki, after citing the Rājaratangini as evidence of Tāntrik worship at the time of Aśoka (240 B.C.), says that without a doubt the Tantra began to develop even before Nāgārjuna (A.D. 200), and

1 Chap. xvii, using that work, not historically, but as an indication of a Buddhist view of a Śāstra which some would derive from Buddhism.
2 “History of the Religions in Ancient India.”
3 I cite the author’s views without myself expressing an opinion on the evidential value of the particular work cited.
that in observing Buddhism it has been successful despite all efforts to the contrary. In fact, as regards Buddhism, the Tantra, according to this view, stands for a Hindu conquest. How far, as some allege, the conquering doctrine has been itself subjected to non-Aryan influences is another question. Some contend that here, as in most things, there is some truth in both contentions, and that Indian and Buddhist thought are likely to have influenced one another. Such may think that the influence of the latter has predominated as regards certain Tantrik schools and rituals. It is thus noteworthy that the Tārā Tantra, which is said by some to belong to the northern tradition, states that Buddha and Vasīṣṭha were Tantrika munis and Kula Bhairavas.¹ According to the Rudrayāmala, the worship of Tārā was introduced from Mahācīna in the Himalayas by Vasīṣṭha, who worshipped the Devi Buddhīśvari, according to one of the Śakhās of the Atharvaveda. The solution may possibly be found in a more perfect knowledge of the various traditions, which are said by some to have existed, than we now possess.

Whatever be the date of the first appearance of specifically Tantrik doctrines, which owing to the progressive nature of its developments, may never be ascertained, it will be probably found, upon a profounder inquiry into the subject than has been hitherto made, that the antiquity of the Tantra has been much under-estimated. This, however, does not mean that all the current Tantras, or all their contents, are of great antiquity. The contrary is, I believe, the fact. The Meru Tantra,² in a curious āloka, says: "There will be born at London English folk whose mantra³ for worship is in the Phiranga⁴ language, who will be undefeated in battle and Lords of the world."⁵ Whatever be the age of this Tantra, it may be argued that this passage at least was probably not written earlier than the eighteenth century.

Comparatively modern Tantras may, however, be based on older versions now lost.⁶ On the orthodox hypothesis, moreover, there is no

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¹ See A. K. Maitra's Introduction to this Tantra published by the Varendra Anusandhana Samiti.
² Twenty-third Prakāśa.
³ That is, unlike some defiled (mlechcha) countries, it is not without a religion of its own.
⁴ Here English. The term, which is ordinarily derived from "Frank," is applicable to the European peoples generally. Its meaning, however, according to the Šabdakaṇḍapaduma, is, "those addicted to sin and anger". It is also used, as a qualitative of disease, to denote syphilis, because of the prevalence of the disease in Europe.
⁵ Phirangabhāṣayā, mantrāsteṣāṃsangsādhanād-bhuvāl
Adipāmandalāṇācaḥ sangrāmesvaparājītāḥ
Ingrejāṇavasāta-paścaḥ landrajāścāpi bhāvinah.
⁶ See also what the author of the Tantratattva says, post.
reason why new Śāstras should not even now appear in the world. The work of Śiva has not come to an end with the inception of the Kaliyuga. In this, as in other matters, Indian tradition, when rightly understood, may perhaps be found to largely justify itself. The following remarks of Professor Hayman Wilson have a bearing on this point, both on the general question of the antiquity of the Hindu Śāstras and that of the Tantra, if, as is commonly done, the date of the latter is to be fixed with reference to the alleged date of the Paurāṇik period, which, according to general European views, precedes them: "It is therefore as idle as it is irrational to dispute the antiquity or authenticity of the greater portion of the contents of the Purāṇas in the face of abundant positive and circumstantial evidence of the prevalence of the doctrines which they teach, the currency of the legends which they narrate, and the integrity of the institutions which they describe at least three centuries before the Christian Era. But the origin and development of these doctrines, traditions, and institutions were not the work of a day, and the testimony which establishes their existence three centuries before Christianity carries it back to a much more remote antiquity—to an antiquity that is probably not surpassed by any of the prevailing fictions, institutions, or beliefs of the ancient world."¹

The Tantras are generally cast in the form of dialogues between Śiva and his Sakti Pārvatī, the form in which Satt, his Spouse, reappeared after her death at Dakṣa’s sacrifice, or in their forms as Bhairava and Bhairavī. Śiva is called Ādinātha, the first Guru. But he is also Sakti, for he and the Devī are one.² The Devī is therefore included with him in the circle of Gurus. Sadāśiva, as the Mahāsvāchanda Tantra states, promulgates as both guru and śīya (disciple), the Tantras in the form of question and answer, by the division of his real and manifested forms (prakāśa and vimāna). Where the questioning is by the Devī as śīya and the answers are given by Śiva as guru, the Tantra is in the form called Āgama. Where the Devī is the teacher, as in the Nigamakalpadruma and other Nigamas,³ the Śāstra is known as a Nigama. Both terms are derived from the italicized letters of the Sanskrit verses which occur in the Āgama-dvaitanirnaya,⁴ and which run: "An

¹ Vīppu Purāṇa, xcix.
² Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, chap. i, verses 14-16. Mamarūpaśideviyam nabhedeṣte tvayāmama; for in their ultimate ground both Puruṣa and Sakti are one.
³ It is noteworthy that the Nigamas appear to deal largely with the Rahasyapūjā.
⁴ Āgarang Śambhuvaktrebyah gatacha girijā mukhe matalcha viṣudevena tasmādāgama uchyate Nirgato girijā vakrāt gatascha girijāstritram matalcha viṣudevasya nigamah parikṣhyate.
Ágama is so called because it proceeds from the mouth of Sambhu and goes to Girijá, being approved by Vásudeva. Nigama is so described because it emanates from the mouth of Girijá to enter the ear of Giriśa, being approved by Vásudeva. The seven marks or topics of an Ágama are said by the Váraññ Tantra to be śruti, pralaya, devatānām, sādhana, puraścarana, śatkarma, and dhyānayoga.

Śrutiśccha pralayaścchaiva devatānām yathārchchanam.
Sādhanaṁchaiva sarveśaṁ puraścaraṇameva cha,
Śatkarmmasadhanangchaiva dhyānayogaścaturvvidhah.
Saptabhirlakṣanairvyuktamāgamamamadbidurbudhah.

The same and other Tantras describe the subject (lakṣana) of such a Śāstra to be: The Supreme Spirit, the creation and destruction of the universe, the origin and worship of the Devas, classification of beings (bhūtānām sangsthānam), the heavenly bodies, description of the worlds and hells, of man and woman, and of the centres (cakra) of the human body, the law and duty (dharma) of the different ages and of the stages of life in the individual called āśrama, the sacraments (samskāras), the consecration of images of Devatā, mantra, yantra, mudrā, all forms of spiritual training (sādhana), and worship (pūjā, upāsana), whether external or mental, including worship with the pañcataṭṭva, consecration of houses, tanks, wells, trees, etc., descriptions of holy shrines (tīrtha),

1 Śiva.
2 The mountain-born Devi, His Spouse.
3 Viṣṇu. The above is the special meaning of these two terms, which both also denote the Veda. See as to Nigama, Śrimadbhāgavata Skanda, chap. v, verse 39.
4 Śiva.
5 That is, creation and destruction of the universe, the worship of Devas, spiritual exercises, the rite called puraścaraṇa, the six "magical" powers called Śatkarma (viz., māraṇam; uccāraṇam, vāsikaraṇam, stambhaṇam, vidveṣaṇam, svastīyāpanam), and the form of Yoga, so called.
6 Is the diagram for worship by which the mind is fixed on its object. The imprints of the Śrī yantra, the Gāyatrī yantra and the Kāli yantra appear elsewhere in the book. Yantra is Mantra in the sense that it is the body of the Devatā who is Mantra. Yantram mantramayam proktam mantrāmām devataiva hi. Dehātmānayathā bhedo yantra-devatayostathā (Kaulāvalīya Tantra). As to this and Mantra, see Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
7 Gestures made by the hands and positions of the body employed in worship and hāthayoga. Devāṁ mudrām tasmāt śaritām yatnātācharet.
8 Wine, meat, fish, grain, woman (maithuna), both in their literal, substitutional, and esoteric meanings, for the Tattva are of three kinds. See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
puraścaraṇa, japa, vrata, śatkarmaśādha, and all forms of ceremonial rites and "magic," meditation (dhyāna), and yoga, the duties of kings, law, custom, medicine, and science generally.

The Tantras, in fact, were (for they exist only in fragment) encyclopedias of the knowledge of their time.

The Tantras are still very numerous, though the greater part has been lost, destroyed, or is missing. Of those which are known, only a portion has been printed, and of these last the versions in circulation are sometimes incomplete. Thus the current version of the Mahānirvāṇa lacks the second part, which is double the extent of the first. This latter part has been long supposed missing. On the other hand, the first part of the Rudrayāmala is at present not found, though fragments may exist, such as the Mantrābhidhāna, which is reputed to belong to that part, and which I have published. The Śāradātiśaka, a Tāṇtrik compendium which is much esteemed in Orissa, contains more matter than is to be found in the current printed versions known to me, as is also the case with the current Bljakosa. Other Tantras appear to exist in defective or mutilated copies only.

According to the Tantras, there are three regions called Viṣṇukrānta, Rathakrānta, and Aśvakrānta (sometimes called Gajakrānta) respectively to which different Tantras are assigned. According to the Śaktimangala Tantra, Viṣṇukrānta extends from the Vindhyā Mountain to Chattala (Chittagong), thus including Bengal; the Rathakrānta from the same place to Mahācīna, including Nepal; and Aśvakrānta, from the same mountain to "the great ocean," apparently including the rest of India. The

1 Vide ante.
2 Japa is recitation, either external or mental, of mantras, according to certain rules (vīdhāṇena mantracchāraṇam). Vratam is a part of naumitikam or occasional karm, such as those of the Jāmāstami, Śivarātri, Durgāpūjā, etc.
3 Vide ante.
4 It exists, however, and I hope to publish it in my collection of Tāṇtrik Texts.
5 Certain Tāṇtrik Śāstras are called Yāmalas and Dāmaras, such as the Yāmalas, Siddhi-Yāmala, Rudra-Yāmala, Brāhma-Yāmala, and the Bhūta Dāmar, Deva Dāmar, Yakṣa Dāmar. The writer of an article in vol. v of the "Asiatic Researches," pp. 53-67 (Calcutta, 1798), says: "I am informed that the Tantras collectively are noticed in very ancient compositions; but as they are very numerous they must have been composed at different periods. It may be presumed that the Rudrayāmala is amongst the most ancient, as it is noticed in the Durgā Mahatva, where the principal Tantras are noticed as Kālī, Munḍamālā, Tārā, Nirvāṇa (not the Mahānirvāṇa), Sarvasāna, Bīrā, Lingārāma, Bhūta, Uddāsana, Kālikā, Bhairavi, Bhairavikulpa, Todala, Mārjhedana, Māyā, Bresvara, Vīvāsa, Samāja, Brahmāyāmala, Rudrayāmala, Sūkuyāmala, Gāyatrī, Kālikakāla, Sarvasva, Kulāṃga, Yogi, Mahāsamardini. These are universally known, Oh Bhairavi, greatest of souls: and many are the Tantras uttered by Śambilu (Siva)."
6 Vol. i of my Tāṇtrik Texts.
7 I have come across what appears to be a complete manuscript in Puri.
PRINCIPLES OF TANTRA

Mahāsiddhasāra Tantra agrees with this as to Viṣṇukrāntā and Rathakrāntā, but makes the Aśvakrāntā extend from the Karatoya River \(^{1}\) (in the Dinajpur District) to Java. The following Tantras are assigned \(^{2}\) to the several regions, though there are differences of opinion as regards particular Tantras. Thus, in the first list some would exclude the Tantrāntara and include the Yogārṇava. Some Tantras appear in more than one of these lists.

The Tantras of the Viṣṇukrāntā are said to be:

1. Siddhiśvara
2. Kālītantra
3. Kulārṇava
4. Jñānārṇava
5. Nilatantra
6. Phetkārlī
7. Devyāgama
8. Uttara
9. Śrīkrama
10. Siddhiyāmala
11. Matsyasūkta
12. Siddhasāra
13. Siddhisārasvata
14. Vārāhī
15. Yoginī
16. Gaṇeśavimarsini
17. Nityā-tantra
18. Śrīvāgama
19. Chāmunda
20. Muṇḍamālā
21. Hāṃsa-Maheśvara
22. Niruttara

23. Kulaprakāṣaka
24. Devikalpa
25. Gandharva
26. Kriyāsāra
27. Nibandha
28. Svatantra
29. Sammohana
30. Tantra-rāja
31. Lalitā
32. Rādhā
33. Mālinī
34. Rudrayāmala
35. Bṛhat-Śrīkrama
36. Gavākṣa
37. Sukumudini
38. Viṣuddhēśvara
39. Mālinī-vijaya
40. Samayācāra
41. Bhairavi
42. Yoginī-hṛdaya
43. Bhairava
44. Sanatkumāra
45. Yoni
46. Tantrāntara
47. Navaratnesvara
48. Kulachūḍāmaṇī
49. Bāvachūḍāmaṇī
50. Devaprakāśa
51. Kāmākhyā
52. Kāmadhenu
53. Kumārī
54. Bhūtadāmara
55. Yāmala
56. Brahmayāmala
57. Viśvasāra
58. Mahākāla
59. Kulodīṣa
60. Kulāṃrta
61. Kubjikā
62. Tantracintāmaṇi
63. Kālivilāsa
64. Māyātantra

The following are given as Rathakrāntā Tantras:

1. Chinnayā
2. Matsya-sūkta
3. Mahājāmarddini
4. Mātra-kodaya
5. Hāṃsa-Maheśvara
6. Meru-tantra

7. Mahānila
8. Mahā-nirvāṇa
9. Bhūta-dāmara
10. Deva-dāmara
11. Bijacintāmaṇi
12. Ekajatā

13. Vāsudeva-rahasya
14. Bṛhadgautamiya
15. Varṇoddhārti
16. Chhāyānila
17. Brihadyoni
18. Brahmajñāna

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\(^{1}\) A very sacred river which is notable in this—that it never loses its sanctity. All others do so in the month of Śrāvan (July-August).

\(^{2}\) See Sādhanaikalpatikā, by Nilmani Mukhopādhyāya, part ii, pp. 22-26; and Introduction to Vol. I of my “Ṭantrik Texts.” As to other Ṭantrik works, see post.
The Tantras of Aśvakrāntā are given as follows:

1. Bhūta-Śuddhi 23. Śivāchchana 44. Kāmaratna
3. Brhatāra 25. Śūlinī 46. Brahmāṇḍa
4. Tatvāsāra 26. Mahāmālinī 47. Cīna
ta
12. Siddha-tantra 34. Mohini 55. Yantrachudāmaṇī
ta
14. Śiva-tantra 36. Samīrana 57. Bhuvaṇesvarī
ta
15. Sārūṣa 37. Kāmakṣara 58. Līlavatī
ta
20. Vindu-tantra 42. Tīṣṇa 63. Dhumāvatī
ta
21. Mahā-yogini 43. Mangalā 64. Śiva
22. Brhad-yogini

Particular Tantras have been from time to time printed, such as the well-known Mahānirvīṇa, the Yogini, Kāli Tantras, and
others. The chief collection, however, is that of Babu Rasik Mohun Chatterjee, who has published at Calcutta the following Tantras or Šāntāṅṅī works in Bengali character: Muṇḍamāla, Śāktakramaṇa, Māyā, Bhhūtaśuddhi, Kaulikākṛchanadipikā, Kubjikā, Viśvasāra, Puraścaraṇara-sollāsa, Śāktāṅṅandatārangiṇī, Nila, Toḍala, Gandharva, Rudrayā-mala, Guptasādhana, Gāyatri, Fetkārini, Niruttara, Mahāścincara- krama, Nirvāṇakramadipikā, Mantrakośa, Yogini, Kulārṇava, Kāmā- khyā, Kankālamālinī, Māṭṛkābheda, Kāmadhenu, Mahānirvāṇa (first part), Sanatkumāra, Śaradātulaka, Tripurasārasamuchchaya, Uddānareśvara, Kaulāvali, Mantramahodādhi, Vṛhannila, Tārāhāsya, Rādhā, Shyāmārāhāsya.

A few of these and others have been printed at Calcutta in Devanāgarī and edited by Pandit Jivānanda Vidyāṣāgara—namely, Kulārṇava, Tārāhāsya, Tripurasārasamuchchaya, Mahānirvāṇa, Yogini, Rudrayā-mala (Uttarabhāga), Shyāmārāhāsya, Tantras; the Śaradātulaka, Prāṇatoṣṭiṇī, Mantramahodādhi; also a collection of small works on magic (Indrajāla) entitled Indrajālavidyāsāngrahā.

Considerable portions of some of the Purāṇas are appropriated (as Professor Hayman Wilson pointed out as regards the Agni Purāṇa) to instructions for the performance of religious ceremonies which belong to the Tāntrik ritual and are translated from the principal authorities of that system. In fact, a large number of Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas contain Tāntrik forms of worship, and on that account and in accordance with the general view of the comparative modernity of the Tantras rejected as “genuine” Purāṇas, though accepted and relied on as such by the Tāntrik pandits. The reader is referred to the introduction of Professor H. H. Wilson’s Viṣṇu Purāṇa. Reference may be here made to the Kālīkā, Brahmāṇḍa, Gruḍha, Agni, Śrimadbhāgavata, Devi-bhāgavata, and other Purāṇas. In the twelfth chapter of the Kūrma Purāṇa on the other hand, it is said: “The Bhairava, Vāma, Ārha, and Yamala Śāstras are intended for delusion.”

In addition to the Tantras, there are Tāntrik compendia, commentaries, such as the Tantrasāra, Prāṇatoṣṭiṇī, Prāṇakṛṣṇasahādāmbuddhi, Tantrābhjadhāna, or Mantrakośa, and others. Kṛṣṇānanda’s Tantrasāra, is one of those now best known. But before his time there were, as already stated, other compilers, such as Rāghavānanda, Rāghavabhāttā, Virūpākṣa, and Govindabhāttā; and such works as the Rāmāchanchandrikā, Mantramuktāvalī, Bhuvanesvaripārijāta, Śaradātulakam, Tripurasārasamuchchaya, Svachchhandasangrahā Sārasamuchchhayā, Somabhujangāvalī, and Mantramantaraprakāśa.

Controversy has also divided the Āgamas into “good” Āgamas (Sadāgama) and “bad” Āgamas (Asadāgama). Brahmānanda Giri, the author of the celebrated Śāktāṅṅandatārangiṇī (Wave of Delight for
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Śāktas), says: 1 “Sadāgama eva āgamaśabdasya mukhyatvāt” (‘Sadāgama alone is Āgama [Tantra] according to the primary meaning of the word Āgama’). Siva condemns, in the Āgama Samhitā, 2 the Asadāgama, saying: “Oh! Devesi men in the Kali age are generally of a rājasik and tāmāsik 3 disposition, and being addicted to forbidden ways deceive many others. Oh! Suresvarī—those who in disregard of their varṇāśrama-madharmā 4 offer to us flesh, blood, and wine—become bhūtas, pretas, piśācas, and brahmārājyasasās.” 5 It is denied that this passage is any proof that the Tantra prescribing the Pañcatattva Śādhanā with wine and so forth is an Asadāgama. That these verses do not, in the opinion of the author of the Śāktanandatārangiṇī, amount to condemnation of this śādhanā is to be shown by the following passage 6 in the same work in which the previous verses appear. “He who sees wine, fish, meat, woman should salute the Bhairavi Devī and say: Om! salutation to the beloved of Siva, the remover of all obstacles. Salutation to Thee, the giver of all boons, adorned with a garland of severed heads stained with streams of blood. Thee I salute for the destruction of all obstacles and the wellbeing of Kulācāra.” 7 The meaning of these two passages is therefore said to be that wine, flesh, and so forth, are prohibited in those cases where their use is forbidden by the Ācāra of the particular worshipper, as in the case of the Pañci. This form of worship is not to be followed indiscriminately and without reference to the rules which properly govern it. For in that case instead of being a help to the śādhanā, it leads him along the downward path. The Asadāgama, in short, is said to be that Āgama which prescribes forbidden acts, that is, acts forbidden by the ācāra of a particular worshipper; not all such rites, but the false rites followed by the bad. Where true worship is the aim there is sat, where it is not there is asat.

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It may be asked, What is the general characteristic of the Tantra as compared with other Śāstras? In the first place the Śāstra contains provisions which are applicable for all without distinction of race, caste, or

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1 Chap. ii.
2 Cited in Śāktanandatārangiṇī, chap. ii.
3 That is, of a sensual and ignorant disposition.
4 The law governing caste; and the stages of life, student, house-holder, etc., called Āramās. The term as a general one includes the ācāra of the Śādhanā.
5 That is, unclean, malignant, and demoniac spirits:
   Kalau pṛyena deveśi rājasastāmāsāstatha,
   Nishhiddhācharanāh santo mohayantyaparan bahūn,
   Avāhāhyāng pishitiang raktaṅg aurānchaiva sreṣṭi,
   Varnāstrochitang dharmamavichāryāryapayanti ye,
   Bhūaptapretapāchāchāste bhavanti brahmārākṣaśāh.
Chap. xv.
sex. The Śāstra affords to all, with freedom from Vaidik exclusiveness, the practical method (more extensive than mere ritual in its ordinary English sense) which qualifies the Śādhaka for the reception of the higher doctrine of the path of knowledge (jñāna mārga). The Śūdra and woman are not, as in the case of Vaidikācāra, under any ban. As the Gautamiya Tantra says ¹ people of all castes, and whether men or women, may receive its mantras “Sarvavarnādhikārāścha nārīnām yogyameva ca.” In the Cakra there is no caste at all, even the lowest Cāndāla² being deemed, whilst therein, higher than Brāhmaṇas. The Mahānirvāṇa Tantra says:³ “That low Kaaula who refuses to initiate a Cāndāla or a Ṭavana⁴ into the Kaula dharma, considering them to be inferior, or a woman, out of disrespect for her, goes the downward way. All two-footed beings in this world, from the vipra⁵ to the inferior castes, are competent for kulācāra.”

In the next place, as regards the subject matter in respect of which liberty is so given, it is necessary to understand the distinction which Hindus draw in religious matters between knowledge (jñāna) in the sense of actual experience, as distinguished from mere mental theorizing, and action (kriyā). The answer, then, is that the Tantra is above all a practical scripture primarily concerned with action and ritual, which the undiscerning may think has, in any case, been prescribed to an excessive extreme. It is so concerned because, though action cannot alone and directly secure liberating knowledge, the attainment of the latter must necessarily be preceded by right action. For how otherwise can such spiritual knowledge be gained? In order to secure the development of the Jīva’s body, certain physical exercises are necessary. Similarly both these and other mental and spiritual exercises are required if liberating knowledge (brahmajñāna) is to be attained. Such exercises are generically termed “Śādhana,” and include both worship (pūjā) and all its ritual.

Śādhana has historically varied with race and creed. The Hindu has his own in the Tantra which is called the Śādhana Śāstra. The provision of such a definite training is the strength to a greater or less degree of all ancient orthodoxies, just as its absence may prove to be the rock on which the more modern forms of religion may split. Doubtless to the newer “Protestant” spirit, whether issuing from Europe, Arabia, or elsewhere, all ritual is liable to be regarded as “mummery,” except possibly

¹ Chap. i.
² One of the lowest and most unclean castes.
³ Chap. xiv, verses 187, 184.
⁴ Here generally used for non-Hindu, a term specially applied to the Greeks or Bactrians. There is nothing, therefore, to prevent a non-Hindu from being initiated in Kaula dharma, provided that he be fit for such initiation. Initiation, however, in such a case would ordinarily be given by an avadhūta.
⁵ Brāhmaṇa.
the particular and perhaps jejune variety which it calls its own. For even
the most desiccated "Protestantism" has not been able altogether to
dispense with it. There is room for this spirit as for others, or it would
not be there. Like, however, everything else, it may go beyond the
purposes which are claimed to justify its origin.

Etymologists have derived the word "ceremony" from "cor" and
"monere". The derivation, though inaccurate, explains well the purpose
of the thing itself. The sacred rites which are the expressions of inner-
most feeling proclaim the religious truths which have inspired them and
excite devotion, rendering man more sensible of the Divine Presence.
So, as the Council of Trent declared, "the Catholic Church, rich with the
experience of ages and clothed with their splendour, has introduced mystic
benediction (mantra), incense (dupa), water (ācamana, pādyā, etc.),
lights (dīpa), bells (ghañṭā), flowers (pūṣpa), vestments, and all the
magnificence of its ceremonies in order to excite the spirit of religion to the
contemplation of the profound mysteries which they reveal. As are its
faithful, the Church is composed of both body (deha) and soul (ātmā). It
therefore renders to the Lord (Īśvara) a double worship, exterior
(bāhyapūjā) and interior (mānasapūjā), the latter being the prayer (vandana)
of the faithful, the breviary of its priest, and the voice of Him ever
interceding in our favour, and the former the outward motions of the
liturgy."

The human need for ceremonial in the sense of the necessity
which man feels of an exterior manifestation which shall both stimulate
and translate his inner feelings, is such that no religion of the past has been
without its rites and ceremonies, and even the shallowest of epochs, whilst
affecting a superiority to them, have yet preserved these ceremonies
in its civil life.

The necessity which is thus admitted exists with greater urgency
in the spiritual sphere. It is idle to suppose that all or any may, through
Vedāntik talk or by the mere closing of the eyes in pious pose, realize the
Nirguṇa Brahman. The great teaching of the Vedānta by itself and with-
out accompanying Sādhana can achieve nothing of real worth. Its study
may produce a Pandit. But to the Sādhaka the disputations of Pandits,
whether philosophical or scientific, is like "the cawing of crows". There
is both reason and humour in the Hindu saying that a logician will be
reborn a jackass. It is Sādhana which alone in any system, whether Hindu
or otherwise, is really fruitful. The Tantra claims to be practical and to
be a prayākṣa Śāstra in that it affords the direct proof of experience.
It is therefore one of its common sayings that, "Whereas other Śāstras
are concerned with speculation only, the art of medicine and Tantra are
practical, self-evident and prove themselves at every step."

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1 Portions of the Śodāsa Upacāra of Hindu worship.
The Tantra further claims not only to be practical and to contain provisions available for all without distinction of caste or sex, but also to be fundamentally rational. Nowhere else, in fact, than in the Hindu Śāstras do we find greater stress laid on the necessity of thought and reasoning. For in India it is said want of reasoning involves loss of dharma. "There is no sage who has not an opinion of his own." The virtue of its general method is not merely thaumaturgie, but is inherent in the mental states induced by dhyāna and other physical and mental processes, and the excitement of the exterior rituals; an inherence chiefly explained by the fact that as at base all existence is of the nature of mind, the transformation of mind is the transformation of existence itself. Thus the sacramental energy of the mantra, even when the Guru (who is himself the manifestation on the terrestrial plane of Ādīnātha Mahākāla) has vivified it with consciousness (caitanya), depends in part for its efficacy on the competence (adhikāra) of him who receives it.

Profoundly based on truth, however, as all ritual is, the Tantra yet recognizes that there is a stage in spiritual progress in which it becomes not merely unnecessary, but an obstacle to further advance. If Śādhanā be, as it is, but a means to an end (brahmajñāna, or the realization in personal experience of the Brahmā), with the attainment of such end, and to the extent that approach is made to it, it becomes superfluous. As the Mahānirvāṇa says: "To him who has faith in the root, of what use are the branches and leaves?" This stage is, however, both a high and infrequent one, which the great majority (notwithstanding the fancies of some of the "emancipated" in this matter) have by no means reached. As the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra says, Brahmasādhana is the highest state of mind; dhyānabhāva is the middling state, and japa comes next. External worship is the lowest of all. Yoga is the process whereby union of the Ātmā and Paramātmā is achieved. Pūjā (worship) is the union of worshipper and worshipped. But for him who realizes that all things are Brahman, there is neither yoga nor pūjā. For him there is neither sin nor virtue, heaven, or future birth. There is none to meditate on nor one to meditate.

In the opening chapter of the Kulārṇava Tantra it is said that "There are fools who, pleased with the mere name of the Karmakāṇḍa, deceive themselves with a multitude of rites. It is not by eating one meal a day that knowledge of the transcendent is attained." "If the ant-hill be struck, is the serpent thereby killed?" "If the mere rubbing of the body with mud and ashes gains liberation, then the village dogs who roll

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1 Nāsaun munīṛyasya matam na bhinnam, as the Mahābhārata says.
2 See as to this De la Vallée Poussin, op. cit.
3 Yogini Tantra.
4 Ullasā xiv, verses 122, 124. See post.
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themselves have attained it." Ritual is necessary, but it must be accompanied both by sincerity and increasing knowledge, which leads to tattva-jñāna, the sole cause of liberation. It is not to be had by talk and self-conceit. Those who read the Scriptures and know not the truth, but pass their time in disputation, are like "the ladle which, lying in syrup, knows not the taste of it." Mere talk leads to nothing. "One may discuss as to what is knowledge and what is knowable, for a thousand years." "Life is short. Many are the Vedas, many are the Śāstras, infinite are the obstacles; therefore it is necessary that the essences be mastered, as the gander sips from the water the milk which has been mixed with it." Ritual schemes exist to meet the requirements of all grades of competency; and their accomplishment with sincerity and intelligence effects their purpose. But of the perfected (siddha) Tāntrika Kaula, who has passed through all preliminary ācāras, it is said: "The wise man who through study of the Scriptures has realized the Truth discards them all as he who gathers paddy throws away the husk and straw." Jñāna derived from the Āgamas leads to the Śabdabrahman. That which issues from viveka (discrimination) is the Parabrahman. There is no realization (tattva-jñāna) with attachment to Vaidik and Āgamic rites, however much these may be necessary as the preliminary means to its attainment.

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If the injunctions of the Śāstra are to be rendered intelligible, certain general principles must first be understood. This is the necessary preliminary to the presentation of the ritual facts. For in these principles lie their ultimate significance. The author, in his preface, very truly says: "I feel it keenly myself how useless it is to follow a religious practice without understanding it."

For those to whom the Indian way of thinking, expression, imagery, allusions, and metaphor are unfamiliar, it is not always easy to follow at a first reading the author's discursive argument. A summary of that argument in a Western and more ordered form would therefore be useful. The conclusion of our enquiry, however, appears to be the fitting time for such a summary, even were there space available for it in this volume. The author's preface indicates the main lines on which he proceeds, which I here shortly state and amplify.

The previous portion of this Introduction states the circumstances under which Indian Śāstra was at one time neglected where it was not misunderstood or condemned. Scepticism, unbelief, and then (according to orthodox views) heresy, passing under the name of "reform," had prevailed. The author, in the beginning of his Preface, rejoices to note a revival of true religion, but as an adherent of Tantra is grieved to observe that this Śāstra had not, when he wrote, received its due share of attention. This was the more necessary in that it is the source of all Śādhanā (practice)
and of all Mantras and Yantras. Brahma-knowledge cannot be attained without self-purification, and for this the Tantra provides the only means in the Kaliyuga.

Doubtless there are (he writes) to be found nowadays some superior Vedāntic persons ¹ who are wont at all times to say that the portion of the Śāstras which relates to worship and ritual practice (Karmakānda) is only for those who are devoid of knowledge. This is so; but the implication that they have escaped this class has often but little foundation. They are doers of action (Karma), and as much affected by it as are others. The knowledge of which the Śāstra speaks is not the metaphysical faculty (with its acquisitions) of the mind on the ordinary plane of jāgrat consciousness but is that spiritual experience the existence of which constitutes the fourth stage of turiya consciousness attained by successful yoga. Notwithstanding—and, in fact, because of—their philosophical disquisitions, such persons still belong to the dualistic world, and there is nothing to be ashamed of in that. We cannot blow it away with our breath, and why should we trouble to do so if it is alleged to be a mere nothing. It would seem as if modern Monism had, through dread of the dualistic world shrunk all its limbs, and was trying to find a place wherein to hide its head in an unhappily existing universe.² Monism (advaitavāda) is doubtless true; but so also, necessarily, is the world of duality for that state of consciousness whence, indeed, it comes. In its own way, this world is as real as the Brahman whose Ilā ³ it is. What else is the world play of the Brahman but that show of duality which surrounds us?

Worship, by its definition, involves the dualistic idea, and is itself necessary for every dualist, since it is, whether in its ordinary sense, or in that in which it is conceived as all action dedicated to and informed by spiritual purpose and intention, ⁴ the true and only expression of the Ātmā to Itself on this plane. It is an essential verity that the Self alone knows the Self. But how may complete self-recognition be attained except the preliminary stages of Sādhana and worship have been passed? If the elect attain success along the path of knowledge (jñāna mārga), it is because, through action and devotion in this and previous births, they have become competent for that path. What the persons to whom the author refers really mean is that such Karma as consists in worship and so forth must be abandoned, but that which is required for the service of wife and children may be retained by the possessors of Brahma-knowledge. It is, however, only those who have truly acquired siddhi who are thereby

¹ See post.
² See post.
³ “Ilā” means “Hindu God.” When understood, a very profound Indian concept, proceeding on the ground that no other reason can be assigned for the world appearance than that which is inherent in the nature of the Brahman itself. See post.
⁴ See the fine Mantra in Mahāmīrvāṇa Tantra. Ch. vi, vv. 178-181.
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released from the obligation of observing these rules of the Karmakānda, which help to produce it. The Tantra does not, therefore, at the outset ignore this visible, palpable world. We must acknowledge and rightly tread this earth before the consciousness of the embodied Ātmā can be transformed into that other state of consciousness which reveals—for it is in fact—the unconditioned Ātmā Itself. But haste to know the Beyond should not blind us to that which is its present manifestation, constituting both the spacious field and material for Śādhanā. He alone realizes the sweetness of the Divine Play "who has plunged into non-dualistic truth after having churned the dualistic world," which is Its expression to us.

The Brahman is reached through Its universe-aspect. The world does not intervene, as though it were an obstacle hard to surmount between man and God, and set to frighten us. It is the wealth of the Śakti of Viśvēśvarī, whom it reveals. The Tantra, therefore, takes into its arms, as if they were its two children, both Dualism and Monism, affording by its Śādhanā and the spiritual knowledge generated thereby the means whereby their antinomies are resolved. It does not entertain the conceit that metaphysics, and still less science, however useful in their own sphere they may be to the full development of conditioned consciousness, can effect anything beyond it. Being but workings of the jāgrat mind, they can never of themselves transcend the limits of those conditions which constitute it. The ultimate questions which that mind raises never receive an answer which it can verify whilst it remains in its conditioned state. The end of all Śādhanā is the establishment of that fourth or higher state of consciousness, the existence of which is itself the answer to a question which is no longer put. The Tantra harmonizes Vedāntik Monism and Dualism. Its purpose is to give liberation to the jiva by a method through which monistic truth is reached through the dualistic world. It immerses its śādhakas in the current of divine bliss by changing duality into unity, and then evolving from the latter a dualistic play, thus proclaiming the wonderful glory of the Spouse of Paramāśiva in the love-embrace of Matter (jaḍa) and Spirit (cāitanya). Those who have realized this, move and yet remain unsoiled in the mud of worldly actions the mere touch of which is to others the cause of their perdition. Though resting and rocking upon the waves of the saṃsāra, they are not of it, but detached, and as it were the petals of some wind-rocked lotus. Śiva has therefore said: "In the

1 The results of sincere worship are patent. If, however, the cause of this be sought, it will be found to lie in the psychological truth that such a worshipper grows akin to that which he worships—a truth which is expressed in the Indian notion of the blissful abodes, sāmipya, sālokya, and others. The Devatā becomes not only the content of, but the consciousness itself, of the Śādhaka.

2 The Devi as Mistress of the Universe.
world some desire non-dualistic, others dualistic, knowledge, but those who have known My truth have passed beyond Dualism and Non-Dualism.  

Sādhana, which is of three kinds—physical, verbal, and mental—must be accomplished by the body, senses, and intellect, according to present conditions of country, time, and person. These, however, are all now bad. In India, which has for centuries eaten the bread of servitude to strangers, is to-day filled with persons born of parents of different castes, foreigners, defiled people, and adherents of other religious faiths. Bad and filthy habits and practices, oppression, license, and prostitution prevail. In the impure body, lust, anger, greed, pride, delusion, and envy, contend as upon a battle-field. Restless are the senses, and doubting the heart. The circumstances of the times render the carrying out of the Vaidik rites and disciplines impossible. That Āryan life no longer exists in which every event, from the conception in the womb to the cremation of the body, was accompanied by Vaidik Mantra. A heavenly body which, through the control of the passions, has become a suitable vehicle for the development of Brahma-knowledge according to Vaidik rules, is nowadays impossible of achievement. Foreseeing this, Śiva revealed the path of Tantra, the Sādhana of which is framed to meet the needs and circumstances of the Kaliyuga, and the varying temperaments and proficiency of those who live in it. If there be any doubt of its efficiency, actual practice will verify the reality of its claims.

It is not necessary that faith should precede Sādhana. This if sincerely performed, will produce faith by the effects it achieves in the mind of the Sādhaka. If the knowledge of the Brahman already exists, there is no use of Sādhana. It is in fact, the very want of such knowledge which renders all prayer and practice necessary. Further, whether one believes in it or not, medicine has the power to cure disease. It does not wait upon the intellectual recognition of that fact. In the same way Siddhi (success), the visible (pratyakṣa) fruit of the Śāstra, is the result of its inherent potency. Who knows what will happen in the next birth? That is the best of all philosophies which bears actual and visible fruit in this world. For reasons which the author explains the provisions of the Śāstra act with speed and efficiency, so that fruit ripens on the Tāntrik tree before even blossoms appear on the Vaidik tree. Owing, however, to the neglect of these practical principles, no useful results were being obtained from the renewal of the religious spirit beyond mere barren, pious velleities.

The spiritual ambitions of some were far too presumptuous. Instead of attending to daily duty and worship, they were giving quite an incompetent attention to such extremely subtle and advanced subjects as Nirvikalpa Samādhi, Videhakaivalya,¹ and the like matters, which are in no

¹ That is, the highest form of ecstasy: liberation from the gross body, etc. The author’s remarks are not without application to such Westerners as are prematurely attempting Yoga.
way the concern of the vast bulk of men, who are making good progress, according to their state, if they worship God, and do not hate or cheat their neighbours. Others of greater spiritual competence, through neglect or ignorance of the practical directions of the Tantra, which alone reveals the path, had lost their way. After pointing out that it is idle to suppose that knowledge of the truth can be acquired by simply reading the Yoga Vaśiṣṭha or Gītā in the gloom and under the sway of the Kali age, the author, in an interesting passage, states that he has known many a spiritually disposed man who, under the influence of such a day-dream, "has ended in becoming neither a believer nor an unbeliever, but a queer being half man, half lion." "By constant meditation on a nitty nothing his mind and heart become such a vacuity that there is neither faith, reverence, devotion, nor love in them, but merely a bewilderment, with the inward lament, 'Alas! I am lost.'" He continues "In many places we have found such persons coming secretly to ask, 'What means are there left to us?' But their only difficulty is this—they want to know whether it is not possible for them to become Tāntrik or Paurāṇik worshippers in secret whilst keeping up the show of the possession of Brahma-knowledge, and without having publicly to wear the sacred crown lock, or thread, or to paint their body with the sacred marks." "Is it not deplorable," he asks, "that a man should be in this condition, repenting at last in this fashion, at the close of his life, after having gone through all its useless troubles?" Doubts concerning the Tantra, the Sādhanasūtra, arise from ignorance of its true character. Here is to be found the reason why recourse has not been had to it. Common people had, no doubt, much talked about the Sūtra, and quarrelled over it. Some "illiterate traders, crafty discoverers of magic, and thoughtless and starving interpreters of the Sūtra," had busied themselves with it. "But want of faith in the Sūtra is becoming deeply rooted in people's minds by the troubles into which they fall through failure to realize the truth, and by the exposition to vulgar gaze of things a proper understanding of which can be acquired from Gurus only." "It is difficult," he says, "to guess how many hundreds of simple-minded Sādhus have been, and are being, deceived by the dangerous temptations held up before them by these people." Want of understanding of the Sūtra, together with actual abuses of its injunctions by some of its adherents, have led to the insults now levelled at it. Discussion and agitation and insult have, he says, to such an extent and with such constancy persecuted and wounded the community of Sādhakas that no one who is a son with a body of flesh and blood and strength can bear to see the sacred names of the Mother and Father of the universe

1 See post. One of the causes of this degeneracy is referred to by the author later.
slandered and abused in such manner." "Whose heart," he writes, "is not pained to see the axe of bitter abuse laid at the root of Siddhi and Sādhana? The object of our effort is to remove this great pain in the heart of the community of Sādhakas. We hope that the sons of the Āryan race will not hesitate to uphold the blissful standard of triumph in the assuring name of Her who destroys all Asuras."¹ From the Tantra alone, must be learnt its principles, the exposition of which he lays as his dakṣīṇā (offering) at the Lotus Feet of Dakṣīṇā (the gracious Devī).

 Arthur Avalon

¹ The demoniac enemies of the Devas and of Dharma. Here also the earthly representatives of the Asura spirit, who oppose religion.
TANTRA TATTVA

PART I
INVOCATION

OBEISANCE TO THE ALL-GOOD MOTHER WHO IS THE
SUPREME DEVATĀ

O ALL-GOOD MOTHER!

I bow to Thee Who, sweet in the joyous play of the music of the
flute, art the beloved of Rādhikā;¹

Who appearest as a sun illuminating the three worlds with Thy
effulgent rays;²

Who destroyest the body of Kāma in the right half of Thine own
eternal Self; ³

Who art in joyous play Heramba⁴ the son, resting on the lap of
Thine own Self as Ambikā the Mother;

Who art the field of play for the desires of Mahākāla; and
Who giveth birth to the three worlds.

May the Kaivalya fruit of Kulatattva⁵ grow in the grove of my heart
on that blossoming and verdant Creeper⁶ who, crowned by the beauty of

¹ Mangalācarana.
² The beloved Prakṛti of Kṛṣṇa in Goloka. "He who is the First male,
the imperishable One, Hari, on Him you have fixed your affection. Him
whom all extol as the invisible, the unseen, the impenetrable, you regard as
your husband" (Prem Sāgar). Here the Devi is saluted in Her incarnation as
Kṛṣṇa, the adored of the women of Vraja. Tantra says that in the Kali age,
Kṛṣṇa and Kāli, Gopāla and Kālikā, are awake (jāgrata)—that is, effective.
³ See Lalitā Sahasranāma, verse 3.
⁴ Man and wife form one body, of which the right half is the male. Śiva
destroyed Kāma, the Deva of Desire, with fire flashed from his eye, when the
latter sought to distract him from his great Yoga.
⁵ The elephant-headed Gāṇeṣa, son of Śiva and Pārvati.
⁶ The liberation which is the fruit of Tāntrik Kulāchāra.
⁷ Lata: a term for woman, who is thus thought of, embracing and dependent
on man, as the creeper (lata) clings to a tree. Thus, in the Yogavāśīṣṭha,
Gaurī, the wife of Śiva, is described: "embracing him as the Mādhavi creeper
clops the young Amra tree, with her bosom like a cluster of blossom"
(Nirvāṇa Prakāraṇa, chap. xviii.)
the crescent moon, and more beautiful than the rain-clouds, and more playful than the wife of the rain-cloud, rests on the soft, flowery bed of the breast of Mahākāla, intoxicated with the sweetness of supreme bliss.

3

O my heart, seek the shelter of that blue cloud-like Lady Who saith “Fear not,” Whose restless curling hair makes lines of resplendent beauty, Whose graceful form is clothed with space, Who charms the great Bhairava with the soft and sweet delights of Her eyes, playful like two large bees.  

4

I bow at the lotus feet of the Supreme Devi; at those feet which give joy to the heart of Him Who is ever joyful, whose form is the mantra in the mahāyantra, and Whose embodiment is the Tantra.

5

Mother, in Thy two aspects of Śakti and Śakta, Thou art the source of both Āgama and Nigama Śāstras. What Thou hast said as Pārvati is Nigama, and what Thou hast said as Śiva is Āgama. Thou alone, in Thy two aspects of Śakti and Śakta, art the nurse and nourisher of both Āgama and Nigama. Thou alone, in Thy two forms as Śādhikā and Śādhaka, holdeth in Thy bosom the Tantra Śāstra, with its teachings concerning Śivatattva and Śaktitattva. Again, it is Thou Who, in Thy aspects of Śakti and Śakta, art the shelter and guardian of both Nigama

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1 That is, the lightning.
2 Śiva.
3 That is who is naked as both Kāli and Śiva are represented to be.
4 So the Yogavāśītha speaks of the eyes of Gouri “as resembling the clusters of black bees fluttering in the summer sky” (Nīrāṇa Prakāraṇa, chap. xviii.)
5 “Goddess” or God in Its mother aspect as creator, nourisher, and ruler of the worlds.
6 Śiva, Her spouse; as are also His worshippers. Tāntrik, Gurus names end with Ānanda (joyful).
7 Devī is Sarvanantrātmikā (Lalitā, verses 53 and 56).
8 Tattva. And so the Lalitā (verses 53) addresses Devī as Saranantarūpā.
9 Power.
10 That is Śaktimān, or one who possesses power. He in whom She as Śakti inheres, though in reality both are one.
11 See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
12 Spouse of Śiva.
13 That is, male and female practisers of Śādhana, and worshippers.
14 That is, the principles relating to the Śiva and Śakti aspects of the one Brahman. The Devī is in the form of Śiva (Sivamūrtih), for, as Śruti says: “There is one Rudra hidden in all things. He is with Māyā. He is Devī.” Herself, and not separate from Her.”
and Āgama. Whatever modes of Sādhana\(^1\) have been prescribed in the Tantra Śāstra are hidden in Thy bosom in Thy two aspects of Śiva and Śakti. It was for this I said, O Mother, that it is Thou Who giveth birth to, nouriseth, and guardeth Nigama and Āgama in this world. But to destroy them, that even Thou canst not do. For the Tantra Śāstra all full of mantra is but another form of Thyself. Were the Tantra destroyed, Thou also would be destroyed. Though Thou Art the destroyer of the universe, Thy power of destruction avails not against Tantra. So I say, O Mother, that the Nigama and Āgama which are in Thee will never be destroyed! But destroy for once, O Mother, the Nigama and Āgama which are in me. Make cease my repeated coming in and going out of this world as Śakti, as Sākta, as Prakṛti, as Puruṣa.\(^8\)

(Or it may be explained in another way).\(^9\) O Mother, Thou alone, as Śakti and Śākta (as Prakṛti and Puruṣa), art the creator of the Nigama and Āgama\(^4\) of Jīva.\(^9\) It is by Thy law that Jīva,\(^4\) through the union of Prakṛti and Puruṣa, takes birth. It is Thou who, in Thy two aspects of Śakti and Śākta (mother and father),\(^6\) nouriseth and protecteth Jīva. Thou alone, O Mother, in Thy twin aspects of Śakti and Śākta, whereby Thou createth, and sustaineth and guardeth the outgoing and incoming of the world, art the cause of the outgoing, sheltering, incoming, birth, sustenance, and preservation of Jīva.

By Thy Mercy, bring about the dissolution\(^7\) of my world\(^8\) in these twin aspects of Thyself as Śakti and Śākta.

O Thou Who art Śakti-Śiva in Thy universal Prakṛti-Puruṣa form,\(^8\) grant me wisdom so that the beauty of the world-enchanting Mother may fill my eyes, my mind, my heart, and the whole of my world.\(^8\)

Appear, O Mother, in Thy eternal form illumining the ten quarters.

With the collyrium paint\(^9\) of wisdom grant glorious vision to the eyes of Thy son blind since birth.

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\(^1\) See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
\(^2\) There is a play on the words Nigama and Āgama, as meaning not only forms of the Tantra but also the coming in and going out, the birth and death and rebirth, of the human Jīva, who is the manifestation on the earthly plane of Prakṛti and Puruṣa.
\(^3\) That is, the Author says that this Sanskrit “śloka” may bear (and probably was written to bear) another interpretation.
\(^4\) Birth and death.
\(^5\) The embodied spirit, which is the supreme Spirit, viewed under the apparently limiting conditions known as “upādhi”.
\(^6\) The mother is always placed first, not “father and mother,” as in English.
\(^7\) Pralaya, or the dissolution of the world, which completes the return movement to its cause.
\(^8\) That is, the world as it appears to the Author. For to each person the world is his own creation; it is only imagined.
\(^9\) See as to Prakṛti and Puruṣa Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.

Aṭjana, which is used to clear the vision.
Grant to me that wheresoever I may turn them, whether on earth, the
waters, or on space, Thy beauteous form may make me forgetful of the
appearance of the world.

INVOCATION:

Mother! in this world, all, before setting themselves to ought, make
invocations of varying kinds.
But what invocation shall I make?
I know of none but that to the feet of the all-good Goddess.
All that I am about to write in the Tantratattva is already known to Thee
who knoweth the hearts of men.
Yantra, Mantra, and Tantra are not distinct from Thee.
But I, though in reality inseparable, wish to remain separate.
As Thou in thy substance art Brahman, as Thou existest in the form of
the universe, so art Thou full of play and dancing.
As Thou art all full of joy, will, consciousness and matter;
So, O Mother, I wish Thee to fill my mind, my eyes, my heart, with love.
Thou, too, art the power whereby it is in me to take Thy name.
It is Thine own song which Thou wilt hear.
In the love of Thyself Thou wilt dance.
What invocation then can I make?
The food which I shall give Thee is already Thine. Of it my portion will
be the sacred remnants only.
Thou wilt be intoxicated and forget Thyself in Thine own joy.
In the tranquil and solemn ocean of unity I shall swim, and raise therein
the waves of duality which are the cry of "Mother, Mother."

1 Mangalācarana—in Bengali: the preceding invocation being in Sanskrit,
with Bengali translation and commentary. 2 See Introduction to Tantra Sāstra.
3 By the will to separate life, which while itself a manifestation of the
Devī, is overcome by Her as Mahāvidyā: and because thus only can He enjoy
Her.
4 Brahmamayī. In the Kūrma Purāṇa Śiva says: "The supreme Śakti is
in me, and is Brahman Itself. This Māyā is dear to me, by which this world is
bewildered." Hence the Devī in the Lalitā is called "Sarvamohini" (all-be-
wildering).
5 Viśvamayī.
6 Nṛtramayī and Lilāmayī. The world is the movement and play of the
Supreme, as the Sūtra says: Lokavattulī kaivalyam.
7 Anandamayī, Ichchāmayī, Chinmayī and Mrinmayī. The Brahman is
Sat (existence), Cīt (consciousness), and Ānanda (bliss). Ichchā (will) is one
of its Śaktis, and, having created the visible world, the Brahman enters into it.
Tat śātvā tadevaśvatprāviṣat. The Devī is (Lalitā, verse 76) Kṣetrasvarūpa—
that is, the field, which is known by the Soul (Kṣetrajñā) or matter. Liṅga
Pr. says: "Devi becomes matter" (Kṣetra).
INVOCATION

If it vexes Thee, drown me with a thrust of Thy foot, but then in so doing
Thou must first raise Thy foot from the breast of Mahākāla.¹
May be Thou wilt turn to Him with wrathful eyes, and say: "Kill him."
But instantly I shall laugh outright and clap my hands, and say:
"This is Mother's."² O Dark Beauty, whose substance is a mass of
consciousness!³ O Mother! show me for once the full play of wrath
upon the splendour of Thy world-bewitching beauty.
Great is my desire, O Mother! to see the play of merciful flames reddening
with wrath in that face of Thine adorned with smiles.⁴
Unless that desire of mine is fulfilled, Sādhana ⁶ becomes full of pain.
O Thou who dispelst fear from the heart of Thy Devotees;⁵
O Thou who gladdens the heart of Bhava,⁷
Thou knowest (the secret of) Thy play.
Whether Thou makest me afraid or makest me laugh or weep, teach me
to say "Mother," so that in doing that which is auspicious (Mangalā-
caraṇa) or inauspicious (Amangalācarana) I may take shelter at the
feet of Her Who is good (Mangalā),⁸ dancing and shouting:
"Victory to the Mother."
Victory to Kulendra Kulānanda,¹⁰
Victory to Gūru,¹¹ Kāmadeva Tārākī,
Victory to Kuladānanda and his disciples.

¹ Śiva. The Devī is represented as standing on Śiva, who is, as it were, a
corpse, for he is bhūktā (enjoyer) only, whilst she is kartrī (actress).
² This is a play on the word "ma" (mother) which, as a noun in the
possessive case becomes in Bengali "mar," which is also the verbal imperative
"mar," meaning "kill."
³ Oidghana, as if Her body were a thickened mass of consciousness.
⁴ The Devī is Krodhākārāṅkuśojjavā (Lalitā, verse, 2). This is explained
in chap. XVIII of the second part.
⁵ The Devī is (Lalitā, verse 59) cāruhāsa (with beautiful smile); the saying
"The moon is thy sweet smile" means that there is a certain state of conscious-
ness (prabodha), which gives the highest bliss, and which should be learnt from
the Guru. See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
⁶ Fearlessness, at which the Tāntrik aims, and which is the special gift of
the Devī. The Mārkandeya Purāṇa says: "When you are remembered in
times of difficulty, you take away all fear of all beings." She is Bhayāpahā
(removeer of fear). Śruti says (Tait. Up., ii. 9-1); "By knowing the bliss of that
Brahman, none fear anything."
⁷ The watery form of Śiva in the Āstamūrti.
⁸ A play on the word "mangalācarana," which also means "invocation."
⁹ Celebrated Tāntrika.
¹⁰ See the Lalitā (verse 137): "We adore the Devī who assumes the form
of the Guru (Secret) in the form of secret knowledge beloved by her secret
devotees, residing in the secret place." Hence she is Guhyārūpaṇī.
¹¹ Celebrated Tāntrika.
Victory to the Lord, the Supreme Guru.
Victory, Victory, Victory to Kṣyṇānanda.¹
Victory to the most Supreme Guru.
Victory to Guru, the object of highest desire.
Victory, Victory to Bhairava and Bhairavi.²
Victory, Victory to the accomplished Sādhaka.³
Victory, Victory to the Sādhikā who grants Siddhi.⁴
Victory to Yantra, Victory to Tantra.
Victory, Victory to the Tantra Śāstra.
Victory, Victory to the revealer of the Tantra;
Victory, Victory to the Iśvari of the Tantra.
Victory, Victory to Her who fulfils all desires.
Victory, Victory to Her who is all-good.
Victory, Victory, Victory, Victory to the name “The all-good Mother of the world.”⁵

¹ Celebrated Tāntrika.
² Śiva and Śakti and their worshippers are so named.
³ See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
⁴ Success.
⁵ Feminine of Iśvara—Lord: the Devī the object of Tāntrik worship, who is ruler or promulgator of all Tantras, Sarvatantṛesā and Sarvatantṛarūpā (Lalitā, verse 53).

⁶ The Devī is the Holy Mother—Śrīmātā—the first of Her thousand names in the Lalitā Sahasranāma, where its commentator Bhāskararāya says: “The mother is usually called upon in times of sorrow, but our natural mothers are not able to remove the three forms of pain (tāpatraya). Great men have said: ‘Since I have had many thousands of births, I have had many mothers and many fathers. I know not how many I may have in the future. O Treasure House of compassion, save me who am overpowered with fear, and have no other refuge from the vast ocean of Saquāra, full of disaster.’ The greatest World-Mother is the only one who can remove the endless misery of existence. We should praise Her as the Mother, so that She may be induced to show mercy to us.”
VICTORY TO ŚRI ŚRI ISVARI, THE ALL-GOOD DEVI

PREFACE

By the grace of the all-good Mother, the drum of Sanātana Dharma ¹ seems to be again sending forth sweet and auspicious notes of triumph in Bhāratavarṣa,² the land of Āryas. Just as an intelligent man, who has a good knowledge of music, is naturally impelled, as it were, by some mantra on hearing the deep and soft sound of musical instruments to beat time at every measure; so also a child who has no knowledge of, but who loves and is charmed by, music, feels himself impelled to keep time at every measure by shaking his head, or moving his finger, or clapping his hands, or dancing, or by some other movement. Similarly, every scion of the Āryan race in India, be he intelligent or not, is to-day intoxicated with the sweet music of the charming mantra of the widespread agitation on the subject of the Sanātana Dharma, and is keeping time at every measure and dancing. In this great festival, in this ancient Durgā festival of India, astrology, philosophy, Smṛti, Purāṇa, Veda, Vedānta, and many other musical instruments are playing in the extensive courtyard of the universe. But we are grieved to find that the great instrument of the Tantra Sāstra, in which all other instruments are included, on which all other instruments depend, and which is the sole source of all yantras³ and mantras, is to-day silent. We know that the proper place for the playing of this instrument is not a courtyard, but the interior of the temple of Tantra Sāstra, which is full of mantras; as also that the proper place for its discussion is not at a meeting or by society at large, but in the heart of the accomplished Sādhaka. But what can we do? We are players on the outside. So long as we do not hear the solemn sound of sweet mantras from the accomplished mouth of the Sādhaka within the temple as also the triumphant sound of the bell in his hand, so long do we fail to make out what music

¹ In the present connection the phrase may be understood to refer to the eternal religion of the Hindus. As to Dharma, see Introduction to Tantra Sāstra.
² India.
³ The imprints of the Śrī Vidyā Yantra, and that of Smaśāna Kāli appear elsewhere in the book.
to play—the music of ablution, the music of ārati,¹ the music of sacrifice,² or the music of bhoga.³ The discordant noise of musical instruments in the mantra-less courtyard outside the seat of worship is the sole cause of all the disorder which now besets the work of preaching dharma, even in spite of so much agitation, discussion, speech-making, and interpretation. These musical instruments observe neither time nor measure. Perhaps at the place of worship the rite of great ablution⁴ has not yet been begun; but in the courtyard outside the music of the final oblation in homa⁵ is commencing. It is deeply to be regretted that the very community which trembles with fear, like a person suffering from constitutional fever, at the very mention of the rules of practice, is to-day constantly busying itself with such extremely subtle and secret matters as nirvikalpa-samādhi, samādhi,⁶ videha kaivalya,⁷ supreme love, and nirvāṇa, liberation. The result is that this untimely and timeless music has come to be of no purpose and impossible of performance.

In fact, the sight of this outward bustle of science and philosophy made by the community devoid of siddhi and sādhanā⁸ reminds us of our village (bārwāri) pūjā.⁹ Just as the condition of the pūjā makes one fear lest in course of time even the image itself should be dispensed with, so the condition of society to-day makes one afraid lest the talk of siddhi and sādhanā should one day disappear from the Āryan Society. Let us, however, console ourselves with the knowledge that, even if it were possible for the sun and moon to cease to move, it is impossible for this pūjā¹⁰ to become a village pūjā. Although it is the property of common people, it is always uncommon; and, although it is always uncommon, every member of the Āryan Society has always a perfect right to it as an independent sādhaka. In this pūjā there is no priest (purohita). Its object is not self-deception, but sādhanā for the self and acquirement of siddhi. In this temple of sādhanā the worshippers are not¹¹ unwilling to repeat the mantra on which we depend, but are doubtful about its efficacy. They are not incapable of repeating the mantra, but are apprehensive lest it be of no effect. There is, therefore, a hope that if this doubt can be dispelled and this apprehension removed,

¹ Ārati (waving of light before the image).
² Bali.
³ Offering of food.
⁴ Mahāsmāna.
⁵ The sacrifice in fire.
⁶ Highest form of “ecstasy”.
⁷ Kaivalya, in which the jiva becomes free from the trammels of the body.
⁸ See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
⁹ A pūjā carried out by subscription, in which often, more attention is paid to the accompanying amusements than the pūjā (worship) itself, which is their justification.
¹⁰ That is, Siddhi and Sādhanā.
¹¹ As in the village pūjā, where the worship is left to the purohita.
a day will soon come when the ten quarters of India will resound with the united voice of innumerable Āryas, loudly declaring: "There is no Sāstra superior to Tantra, no guru superior to Tantra, no path superior to Tantra, no method superior to Tantra." Emboldened by this hope, we make this novel entry into the field of work, depending on the community of Sādhakas for support.

It may be said that when doubts have arisen about the Sādhana Sāstra, it is no easy matter to remove them. We, too, do not deny this. But we say that the fact that it is not easy does not make it altogether impossible. It is happy news that doubts have arisen. When thirst has appeared, one need not be anxious about getting water. An unathomable lake full of water to the brim lies in front. One has only to come down to drink of the water. Having before us the well-arrayed presence of the Tantra Sāstra full of the nectar of eternal truth, we need not be anxious about dispelling the doubts of the Āryan mind. It is only necessary to advance slowly in the path of truth. It is a matter for regret that, although thirst has appeared and the lake lies in front, it has yet become necessary to advertise the fact and to preach in order to induce people to drink the water. Advertisement is, however, in fact, required, not so much in order to induce people to drink the water, but that the path may be cleared.

There is now much discussion, dispute, and quarrel among common people over the Tantra Sāstra, and the path which leads to the inner truth has become very difficult, very tortuous, full of doubts and thorns. These thorns and doubts are not ascribable to any fault in lake itself, but are due to want of traffic thereto.

Formerly, in the glorious days of happiness and good fortune of Bhāratavarṣa, Āryan sādhakas were wont to enjoy, even in their homes, the blessing of drinking the nectar of truth granted to them by their gurus. It was not then necessary that they should bathe in a place of pilgrimage for the purpose.

Under the remorseless pressure of the wheel of destiny such days are now past for Bhāratavarṣa. One by one the crest-gems of the race of sādhakas have found rest at the lotus-feet of liberation of Her who is all-merciful. For want of competent gurus the community of disciples is lamenting in deep darkness. We know not when again will the Isaḥī of the world illumine the hearts of devotees with the brilliant light of Her merciful glances; when again the blind children of the world, who

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1 The Tantra, which, being a practical Sāstra, is essentially concerned with Sādhana, as to which see Introduction to Tantra Sāstra.
2 Tattva.
3 Tīrtha.
4 Kaivalya.
5 The Devi, Mother and Mistress of the world.
now live at a distance from their mother, will open their eyes of consciousness, and, immersed in the effulgence of the beauty of Her whose substance is consciousness, get up on the lap of Ānandamayī, crying with an overpowering joy "Mother, Mother"; nor when again shall we hear the words, "The tie of the heart is broken; all doubts are dispelled and all karmas are destroyed for him who has seen Him is higher than the highest."

It is true that the path of Tantra has become full of thorns, but if, on hearing this terrible news, we sit down for ever to ponder on it with fearful hearts, the thorns will never be removed. If you wish to follow a path, you must take your stand on it. The thorns do not belong to the path, but have come to it from outside. Do not be afraid. The dry and worthless thorns will be broken and ground to dust under the heroic tramp of the feet of sādhakas. Fearing lest you should not believe in our words, we shall, with our eyes fixed on the feet of sādhakas, be to them their shoes. We care not if we be cut, torn, wounded, and lacerated all over. We have a strong desire to reach the path of truth, holding the feet of sādhakas to our heart, and to sink for once in the vast lake of the nectar of Tantra. We hope that the community of accomplished sādhus and sādhakas will not fail to fulfill this desire on our part.

During the progress of the nineteenth century many Tantras have been printed and translated. Of these, the compilation made by Mahātmā Rāmātoṣaṇa Bhattācārya under the title of "Prāṇatoṣiṇī," and published by Prāṇa Kṛṣṇa Bīswās Mahodaya, is a work which really gladdens the heart of the world of sādhakas. Next the Aryan Society has been greatly benefited by the publication, by Raika Mohana Chattopādhyāya Mahāśaya, of the Tantrasāra with a translation, and of many other Tantras. A faint idea of many a Tāntrik principle has thus been reflected in the mirror of the hearts of sādhakas. But, unfortunately, these indistinct impressions have themselves become a source of terror arising from deep doubts. A study of the Śāstra has served rather to make the intricate bonds of the heart stronger than to break them. Still, it seems to have been a source of great good; for, from the doubts it has raised, there has to-day appeared in society a spirit of inquiry into śāstraic (scriptural) truths. With the exception of the Prāṇatoṣiṇī and the Tantrasāra, all works which have been published on the subject of Tantra are but thorns on the path of truth.

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1 The ever-Blissful Mother.
2 Effects of action.
3 Those who practise Sādhanas: devotees.
4 As the shoe comes between the road and the feet and protects them, so the Author will come between Sādhakas and the thorns to protect them.
5 Saintly men.
Three classes of vipers are riding together over the Tantra Śāśtra— namely, a number of short-sighted and illiterate traders, a few crafty discoverers of practices of magic,¹ and some thoughtless and starving spiritual interpreters of the Śāśtra. Through them society is to-day going down to perdition. It is difficult to guess how many hundreds of simple-minded sādhus have been, and are being, deceived by the dangerous temptations held up before them by these people. Want of faith in the Śāśtra is becoming deeply rooted in people’s minds by the troubles into which they fall through failure to realize the truth, and by the exposition to vulgar gaze of things a proper understanding of which can be acquired from gurus only. This want of faith cannot be eradicated by anything but the weapon of Śāśtra. One must stand at the door of Śāśtra in order to dispel doubts about it. From the Tantra alone must be learnt what the Tantra has said about the principles of Tantra².

Secondly, as regards worship,³ many people think that faith must precede practice. But we do not think this possible, particularly in the case of those most hidden and obscure mysteries about Tántrik worship to which we find reference made. The intellect is powerless to understand why the Śāśtra has enjoined their performance. Nothing but disgust, hatred, disrespect and irreverence can find place in the conclusion at which man’s erring intellect then arrives. Not to speak of matters which are unknown to common people, even amongst such things as are of common knowledge, and thus well known to them, concerning Śaṭcakra⁴ alone there are innumerable interpretations, ideas, and experiences.⁵ Most of those who, in the rush of the daily novel religious waves of the twentieth century, lose their footing and know not what to do, nowadays take the name of Kula-Kuṇḍalini,⁶ in order to establish themselves on firm ground.

Besides this, there is a class of yogis⁷ devoted to the Upaniṣads and enlightened by the Yogavaśīṣṭha, who often say that there is really a lake of clear water within the body, and that lotuses blooming in them form the Śaṭcakra! In sorrow the Śādhaka and poet Rāmaprasāda has said:

“O mind, what search do you make for Her? Madman! She must be contemplated with feeling in a dark room. Can she be caught without such feeling?”

But, with a loud voice intoxicated with the drink of the honey of lotuses he has sung:

“In the bed of lotuses Kāli, in the form of a female swan (hamsī), plays amorously with the male swan (hamsa).”

¹Indraśāla. ²Tantra-tattva. ³Upāśana. ⁴The centres in the body. ⁵Pratyakṣa siddhi. ⁶The Devī whose seat is in the Muladhāra Cakra. ⁷Ironically.
PRINCIPLES OF TANTRA

It has become difficult to bear in silence all the insult to which we see the Śāstra subjected nowadays. Moreover, there is a class of pure sāttviks who every now and then say that Kāli is "butcher Kāli," that Tantra means "licensed grog-shop," that Śiva wrote the Tantra Śāstra under the influence of the fumes of gānjā, and so forth.

We have no time to pay any heed to the words of these Non-Āryas. Goats begin to cry as soon as the drum sounds the music of the Durgā pūjā festival, but that does not do away with Pūjā. Good deeds, of which the Daksāyajña is an example, will be taken care of by Virabhadrā himself. We know that there are reasons for saying some hard things, but how is Kāli or Śiva or Tantra to blame? The pity of it all is that those who abuse the Tantra in this way are themselves initiated in Tāntrik mantra. But what can we do? It is the nature of unchaste women to live on the means of their husbands, and at the same time to sing the praises of their paramours. We are not sorry to see the downfall of those whose nature is such. What we are sorry for is that the discussions and agitations carried on by these wicked people, and their example, constantly persecute and wound the community of sādhakas to such an extent that it is almost on the point of being destroyed. Who that is a son with a body of flesh and blood and possessed of strength, can bear to see the sacred names of the Mother and the Father of the universe slandered and abused in such a manner? Whose heart is not pained to see the axe of bitter abuse laid at the roots of siddhi and sādhana? The object of our effort is to remove this great pain in the heart of the community of Sādhakas. We hope that the sons of the Āryan race will not hesitate to uphold the blissful standard of triumph in the assuring name of Her who destroys all Asuras.

Thirdly, we often find that of such members of the Āryan Society as have been recently initiated, or are willing to be initiated, many are aimlessly moving about along various paths. Of some, perhaps, the gurus are dead; some have taken initiation from women gurus; some are sorry for the incompetence of their Gurus; some are disciples of sannyāsīs, who have gone away to distant places where it is difficult to go to them; some have, only sons of gurus, who, too, are of immature age, ill educated,

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1 Persons in whom the sattva guṇa predominates, "good people," here used ironically.
2 Because animal sacrifice is made to this Devatā.
3 Abhārī: the reference being to the use of wine in the ritual of the Tāntrik Vāmācārins, and the abuse of that ritual in disobedience to Śāstric injunctions. Intemperance, as the Śyāmarañhayasa says, leads to Hell.
4 Hemp (Cannabis indica).
5 As which they are sacrificed.
6 See Introduction to Tantra Śāstra.
7 The Great Bhairava produced by Śiva to destroy Daksā's sacrifice.
8 Demons.
or uninitiated. In the case of some, the families of gurus have died out; and some, again, who have seen the different views of different munis in the works of Tantra Sāstra printed with translations and commentaries, are, as it were, counting one by one the waves of a vast sea. Every one says: “Do this,” “Don’t do this.” But if I ask why I should do this, he becomes dumb. I do not disbelieve the words of the Śāstra, nor do I say that it will be useless to follow them. I only want to know what it is that I do. Unfortunately, there is no means of my knowing it. Such a destructive thunder has fallen on the high head of the present high society that not only people are ignorant that the mūlamantra of the Iṣṭadevatā, the Devatā of one’s worship, has a meaning, but many are even averse to believing that it may have one. It might not have mattered whether I know the meaning or not, had not the Śāstra itself, on the authority of which we base our practices, or the little of them we follow, said that it was useless and improper to follow a practice without knowing and understanding it.

In the Kulārṇava Tantra it is said: “O Spouse of Śambhu! fruitless are the worship and all the acts of those who do not know the true nature of Devatā, the principle underlying yantras, and the fakti of mantras.”

I cannot disbelieve the great saying of the Śāstra, for how can I ignore the prohibitions of the Śāstra whose commands I have to obey? Next I see it proved in my own case that it will be useless to follow a practice without knowing and understanding it. How can I disbelieve that of which I myself am a witness? I feel it keenly myself how useless it is to follow a religious practice without understanding it. The prohibition, therefore, must be acted upon, and in order to do so the thing must be known and understood. I have, however, already stated what the condition is of those from whom I am to know and understand it. Owing to these circumstances, it has become necessary to find out a means by which people will be prevented from giving up practice through want of understanding, trampling, through want of knowledge, on the Śyamantaka gem which adorns His head, and thinking that daily worship and the like are so much waste of labour. It is necessary that I should have firm faith in the doctrine, that the truth which I have come by is unerring whether or not I can act according to it, and that the path which I have taken is the broad royal road to the seat of the Queen of Queens of the universe. It is after a due consideration of the opportunities which the elements of time, place, and person may at present offer for finding out a means of effecting

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1 Sages (satirically).
2 The principal Mantra of a Deva.
3 Tātva.
4 The potency of the mantra.
5 Deity of the worshipper.
6 Worshipped diagrams.
7 Rājarājēśvarī.
this that we undertake this great pious act\(^1\) of expounding the principles of Tantra. This pious act is no doubt higher than the highest, and we are more insignificant than the most insignificant. It makes one laugh to think of Rājasūya\(^2\) Yajña in a beggar’s house. But there is no help for it. One who is hungry cannot afford to be ashamed of eating. In particular one who stands on this path should naturally be devoid of shame; for He who is the crest-gem of shameless people and clad with space\(^3\) is the Revealer of the Tantra Śāstra. In this path there is no cause for shame in being a beggar. He who has shown the path by performing this Rājasūya Yajña is Himself the crest-gem of beggars. In spite of His being the King of Kings\(^4\) of the three worlds, He is eternally a beggar at the door of Annapūrṇā,\(^5\) the Mother of the universe. Being the meanest of the servants of such a world-renowned Beggar-Master, why should I be ashamed of begging? Begging is the tribute which we have to pay to our King. The fundamental principle of our worship is to worship the Mother with alms received from Her (to worship the Ganges with Ganges water). If one is to be called a beggar or to be ashamed for this, then we do not know who is not a beggar and who will not be ashamed. The three worlds beg, and there is none but that Jagadchārī\(^6\) to give alms. Directly or indirectly, She is the only hope. We, therefore, trust that Mother Annapūrṇā, who dwells in the hearts of all Śādhakas, and is the Intelligence who works the jiva-instrument,\(^7\) will fill this begging bowl of ours with remnants of Her food. By the blessing of the Father of the universe and the grace of the Mother of the universe, even in such a destitute house as we possess, the final daksīṇā of the rājasūya of Tantra Tattva will be placed at the lotus feet of Daksīṇā (the gracious Devi).

SRI ŚIVA CHANDRA
ŚARMA VIDVÅRNAVA

KĀŚI (BENARES),
1811, Saka Era,
The month of Falguna.

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\(^1\) Vrata.
\(^2\) A great sacrifice performed in ancient times by conquering Kings.
\(^3\) Siva is represented naked.
\(^4\) Rājarājēśvara.
\(^5\) The Devī bountiful who dispenses food, and who presides at Benares.
\(^6\) The Devī as supporter of the universe.
\(^7\) Jiva-yantra; the jiva, embodied spirit, is Her instrument.
\(^8\) Presents offered to the officiating Brāhmaṇas at the conclusion of a rite.