CHAPTER - 1
Salient features of Tantra

A. What is Tantra:

Desire of pleasure and removal of pain was and still is the human tendency. Like other communities of the world, Hindus also believed that they were surrounded by supernatural powers which they considered as the cause of their pleasure and pain. For the benign influence of power and removal of the evil impact, they gave them a status of deity and worshipped them through Mantras. The important occasions which start from the conception of womb to the cremation ground, according to the oriental view, they are sixteen in number, known as Sodas' Samshāras, the human subject is protected from the evil influences through the pronunciation of Mantras as a part of certain ritualistic pattern or tradition.

Physical disorders and mental ailments also were considered as wrath of supernatural power. For this they have worked out Mantric therapy, in which Mantra is considered as having healing power. Does Mantra really contain such power? Apparently it looks as a collection of syllables but in reality they are highly potent but their potency is latent. One has to charge the Mantra with his own inner power for the desired results. But how to charge? Or how to awaken the inner latent power? As we
have seen both in the preface and in the introduction that Tantra shows the way of expansion of inner power. But what Tantra is? One may have question. This chapter is chiefly devoted for the exposition of the Subtle and sound meaning of Tantra and its related notions.

1. Lexical and esoteric meaning of Tantra:

Many definitions have been given for the term 'Tantra'. In the Sanskrit lexicon, the term Tantra has been used in many senses. This term is derived from the root 'tan means 'to spread out'. But what is to be spread out? It is the spreading out or the expansion of worldly and other worldly knowledge. Esoterically, the meaning expansion also represents the cultivation of latent physical and mental powers.


2. Tanyate Vistāryate Jñānamanena iti Tantram. Cited by Shri Ram Sharma, Tantra Vijnana (Hindi) Part-II pp.171. Published by Samskriti Sansthan.
How let us penetrate deeper into the very term Tantra and see what it represents? The term Tantra is a combination of two words namely, Tanoti and Trayate which stand for expansion and liberation respectively. But what is to be expanded and what is to be liberated? Here it is an expansion of mind and liberation of energy. Let us illustrate this point.

Mind functions within a specific circle or limit. It works through the data given by senses. We can see only those things which our optic system allows us to see. We can not see behind the wall with naked eyes. There are also minute objects in the world which we can not see through eyes because of its limitations. Likewise, we can hear only those voices which come from the specific range. Same is the case with all senses. This indicates that mind is dependent on sense-stimuli and because of this its experiences are very limited.

If we break the boundaries of mind, it can have infinite experiences of varied types. Just now it is a slave of senses. If it comes out of the clutches of sense
organs, it can flow everywhere and can enjoy desired experiences. This can happen only after the expansion or liberation of mind from the clutches of sense organs. Simultaneously, the modification of the powers of senses or the transformation of senses through certain practice also expands the area of the functions of mind infinitely.

How Tantra helps in this regards? Tantra sheds light on the way of expansion through techniques (One of the meaning of Tantra is also technique). Tantra says that allow your mind to move everywhere. Expand the area of mind. Mantra helps in this regards. It's a vehicle for awakening the deeper forces lying within oneself.

A Sound is a wave which carries electrical vibrations of energy. The pronunciation of Mantra gives a new dimension to consciousness which penetrates deeper into inner recesses of mind.

3. In the Tantra Sadhana, there is a Mantra in which Sadhaka or a practitioner mentally offers the earth element of the universe as a fragrance of flower. (Lam Prīthvītattvātmakam gandham pārika-\(\)payāmi) Like wise he offers all the five elements of the universe in his worship. In doing so, he has to expand his area of imagination as far as possible till he mentally offers the entire universe to his desired deity.
For this, Tantra has also prescribed unique types of method of meditation. Tantra is also meditation, but it is a meditation through symbols. These may be linguistic syllables (Mantra) or geographical figures (Yantra). Tantric way of dealing with mind is that, in which one has to attend each and every thought as a mere witness or seer and not to suppress the thought. Give total independence to mind, it will transcend the thought. So both by Mantra and by meditation one can come out from the boundaries of mind and can expand the arena of mind because only unconditioned mind can realize the infinite. The observations of Dr. Lalan Prasad also leads us to this fact. In his own words, "Tantra Sadhana therefore means a spiritual path which leads to the expansion of one's mental objectivity; the arena of mental projection is also increased. When a Sadhaka attains the projection of mental arena of 360°, he becomes one with the cosmic mind".

This is about the former portion of the term Tantra, that is Tanyate. Now something about the later portion of the term, that is Trayate. As we have seen,

Trāyate stands for the meaning "liberation". He can liberate only those things which are in bondage. For Tantra, Kundalini, the cosmic universal energy, lying dormant in human body in the pelvic region or the Hāladhāra cakra in coiled form is to be liberated. If once the Śādhaka (practitioner) liberates this energy, he becomes the master of all manifestations of energy because he has gripped the very source of energy. The way of liberation is the very core of Tantra Śādhana.

The other meaning of Tantra is that which saves or protects. It saves the Śādhaka from the worldly bondage by the constant meditation (Manana) of the Highest Reality in the form of Mantra. It also protects Śādhaka from physical and mental ailments. Thus it works as a Therapy. The S'abdaka-"malpadruma, a Sāmskrit dictionary also gives the meaning of the term Tantra in which it declares Tantra as medicine and doctrine.

5. Traniti Trāyate Nityam. Tantramithan Vidurbudhaḥ | 

6. Tanoti Vipulānarthān śāntvamantram samnvitām Trāntām 

7. Tanoti tanyate iti vā | Ouṣadhi, Sīkṣānta S'abdaka-
So Tantra saves Sadhaka both as knowledge and as therapy. With the lamp of knowledge it saves Sadhaka from the darkness of nescience and with the healing process it protects him from physical and mental disorders. Hence it saves Sadhaka from both, spiritual as well as psycho-somatic calamities. It is rightly remarked by Hastings in the encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics that, it has been estimated that two thirds of Hindu religions and one third of Hindu medicine is Tantric.

In the meanings of Tantra, given by the S'advaka-Ipadruma, we have seen that, term Tantra also signifies the doctrine or system. (Siddhanta). So any philosophy can be called Tantra. For instance, Samkhya Tantra, Gaumamiya Tantra etc. The great vedantist S'ree Samkaracharya has also used the term "Vainasiika Tantra" for the ksanabhanga-veda of the Buddhists.

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9. S'arirakamianasa bhasya of S'amkaraacarya. Commentry on the Brahma Sutra Sutra 2.2.32 Saryathantu papattes'ca |
The term Agama is the synonyme of Tantra. The definition given by the Param Samhita, a Vaishnava Tantra includes all the S'iva, S'akti, and Visnu aspects. According to it, Agama is that which comes from S'iva goes to Parvati and is approved by Vasudeva.

With the help of such information, without having any hesitations, we can say that Tantra is not a cheap literature of ghost and globin or a cult of black magic and sorceries as it is so considered. Tantra is a process or method which leads Sadhaka to the self realization through the cultivation of inner forces. Here we close this point with the mystic definition of Tantra given by Dr. Lalan Prasada Singh. "The mystic definition of Tantra is that it is a spiritual cult which liberates from the bondage of crudeness.

10. Agamonama anityupsargata gam dhatoḥ aca pratyaye niṣapannaḥ tantra S'astrarupoartham avabodhakaḥ | Param Samhitaḥ pāncarātra. Edited and translated by Aiyangar, Krishnaswami S. pp.29, Oriental Institute, Baroda. 1940

11. Agatam Pancavakatrātiḥ gataṁ cagirijaṁ | Matam Cavaśudevasya tasmāt Agamaucyate ||
and ignorance. The word ta is the bija-Mantra (acoustic root) of crudeness. Tantra is a process of Sadhana which relieves one from the fetters of crudeness (ta). Thus, Tantra is an intutional science which stands for the progressive realization of the Divine. It liberates one from the cimmerian darkness and leads unto the divine effulgence. It is a path of Salvation. It is a science of the soul. The authoritative definition of the Tantra, is that which brings emancipation from the bondage of Ṭāyā (tārā ya ayat trāyet yastu sc tantra parikīrtitaḥ).¹²

After having been acquainted with the meaning of Tantra one may be eager to know about its antiquity or tradition. Now let us glance over its tradition.

B. Tantric Tradition:

Indian spiritual heritage is contained in scriptures. Various scriptures show us different ways which culminate at one point. Tantra is also one of them. It is the greatest path which has been forgotten rather neglected. The saviour

of Tantra Arthur Avalon has tried to give a vivid description of supremacy of Tantra. Let us have a pleasure in his own words, "In this great festival, in this ancient Durga festival of India, astrology, philosophy, smriti, purāṇa, Veda, Vedanta and many other musical instruments are playing in the extensive court-yard 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 Yantras and Mantras, is to day silent." This is not a fancy but it secures sound base which is also reflected in the view of Sree Dasgupta, S.B. who concludes all the esoteric schools as the off-shoots of Tantricism. Off-shoot presupposes seed which is under the soil. But the question is: when the Tantra seed had been planted? For this let us proceed with the Tantra antiquity.


Antiquity of Tantra is a very controversial problem. A complete and decided answer to this enigma has not yet been given. Antiquity can be answered only in terms of time but not in terms of soundness of principles. Ancientness is not the only measurement for the justification of any system but it should have some sound base. Tantric tradition is fortunate to have both ancientness and soundness. For ancientness we will have to go back till Indus-Valley Civilization. (3500 B.C.)

There is a great controversy among the scholars whether Tantra has its origin in Veda or vice versa. The reports of the excavations of Indus-Valley civilization, before the Aryan came into India, have favoured the first possibility.

S'iva and S'akti symbols are highly attached with the Tantric metaphysics. They were so deeply rooted in the mind of pre-Aryan people that they took the form of Gran-devata. The idol of S'iva and S'akti was and is still being worshipped by each and every village. We shall expound this view with the help of the authentic report of the archaeologist Donald Mackenzie. As he reports, "The clay figures and images and phallic bacylic stones suggest that 'Durga' and 'Siva' worship was of a much greater antiquity
in India than has hitherto been supposed.\textsuperscript{15} Ghose, N.N also supports the same view. "...... people were also intensely religious is proved by the discovery of a number of beautiful temples still preserved in fine shape, which they used as places of worship of the Mother Goddess and three headed S\'iva.\textsuperscript{16}

Vedas are composed by the \textsuperscript{\textit{Aryan}} people while Tantra is the gift of pre-\textsuperscript{\textit{Aryan}} civilization. Dr.\textsuperscript{\textit{Lalan}} Prasad emphatically declares that, From all these available historical evidence, it can be said with certainty that Tantra is the cult and spiritual faith of ancient India.

\textsuperscript{15} Kundu, Hundo Lall. \textit{Non-Dualism in S\'aiva and \textsuperscript{S\'akta} philosophy}. pp.\textsuperscript{3} (Who has cited from Preface to pre-historic ancient Hindu-India by Donald A Mackenzie) Sri Bhairabi Jageswari Math, Calcutta.

\textsuperscript{16} Ghose, N.N. \textit{Early history of India}. pp.\textsuperscript{17} The Indian Press (pub.) Private Ltd., 194\textsuperscript{6}, Fourth edition.
It is the gift of the non-Aryan civilization.\textsuperscript{17} The view of Ram Chandra Rao is nothing but the echo of the above mentioned views. The origins are last in the prehistory. In any case it is as old as Veda may be older.\textsuperscript{18} Here Ram Chandra Rao accepts the ancientness of Tantra than Veda as a possibility. But he is sure to accept Tantra as old as Veda. As we know in Veda, we found ample references of S'iva-S'akti which are the Tantric deities. The Rgveda and the Athervaveda also contain many Suktas, like Ratri Sukta, Prithvi Sukra, Uga Sukta etc. and also puruṣa Sukta, Rudra Sukta, which are related with female and male deities. This is enough pointer to declare Tantra as much older than Veda. Here the view of Mandulal Kundu will not be out of place. In his own words, "It is remarkable fact to be noted here that nowhere in some of the oldest Tantras such as the 'Kalini-Vijaya Tantra' the Rudra-Tamala Tantra etc., no trace of the vedic influence and no mention of the vedas can be found; where as in the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Review of Ram Chandra Rao's book 'The truth about Tantra' by S.K.Ram Chandra. Published in 'The Times of India' April 19, Sunday, 1981.
\end{itemize}
Vedas we have clear evidence of Tantric influence or the influence of 'Agama' and 'Nigama' which go to prove that before the Aryans migrated to the Indian soil, the Tantras and the Tantric Cult were there as forming the core of the Non-Aryan or the Pre-Aryan civilization." 19

S'āivism and S'āktism are the schools of the Tantra-tradition. Both S'iva and S'akti as god and goddess were prevalent in the non-Āryan Cult. We again here quote Ghose, N.H. regarding this. "The religion of the people seems to be iconic, the image of S'iva taking the place of honour. The worship of phallic emblems, the linga and the yoni also prevailed". 20 This necessarily leads us to conclude that S'āivism and S'āktism are the two pillars on which the spiritual edifice of non-Āryan was established.

Here we have tried to prove Tantra as much older than Veda in terms of time. But this does not mean that they are contrary to each other. In the Tantric treatise like the 'Kularṇava' and the 'Mahanirvāṇa' Tantra it is


declared that Tantra is a scripture for the Kaliyuga while Veda is for the Satyayuga. The one principle is presented in different ways according to the moral standard of the people of the particular age. We are the people having limited life-span and senses. It is impossible to grasp Vedas that is why Lord S’iva has gifted Tantra for the people of the Kaliyuga. Arthur Avalon has beautifully compromized this controversy by declaring Tantra as a perfume existing in Vedic Flower. It can be further asked who has perfumed the Vedic flower? For this, let us proceed towards the founder of Tantra.

C. Founders of Tantra:

Vedic Flower is perfumed by Tantra. But who has perfumed Tantra is our problem of investigation. Though we know very little about it, Scholars have tried to fix the authorship of Tantra. There are two superficial contrary views regarding this notion among them one supports divine origin while the other favours human authorship, whoever may secure the authorship, we are not concerned with it. We are highly concerned with the core of philosophy. Any system can endure only by the strength of its essence. We have seen that Tantric philosophy

21. Krite S’rutya{kāchārastreatīyāng Smrtisam - bhavah |
Duṣpāre tu purānāktang Kalau āgamakevalam ||

It has been prevalent since five thousand years if not more. This is enough evidence of its soundness. This soundness is infused by divine forces. How is it so? For this we will have to peep into the related notions of this concept.

Tantra is generally considered as a form of knowledge. Each syllable of this term is full of significance. As C. Chakravarti notes, "The term Agama is explained as that class of Tantra which is addressed to Parvati by Siva." This exposition supports divine origin. But at the same time we have got some other Tantras which are associated with human names. For instance, Sanat Kumāra, Dāttātreya etc. who are considered as authors of several Tantras. Of course, they were not layman like us but at the same time we cannot consider them as Lord S'iva. We have accepted them only as seers.

Dr. Lalan Prasad has very distinctly worked out the authorship. He is against accepting all these scriptures as of divine origin. In his own words, "But from our point of view neither Tantra nor the Vedas are of divine origin. Both embody the intuitive vision of seers."

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the Vedas and of Tantra is an infinite, eternal, formless and transcendental entity. It is not a personal god. It does not have any vocal chord. There is no transcendental validity in the argument that Tantra or Veda is the voice of providence (Apta Vichya)." Not with standing, he accepts S'iva as originator of Tantra but not S'iva as we have accepted as god. In his own words, "The Founder of Tantra is Lord S'iva. He is known as Ādi Guru. He is a great ascetic (Mahā yogi) and a great Tantrika (Mahā Kaula) he has oneness with the Supreme God. He attained occult powers through Tantra Sadhana. It is beyond human mind to measure the depth and dimension of his spiritual power and personality. People revered, worshipped and adored him in ancient times. He is conceived to be Guṇatītā and Nīrguṇa Puruṣa."  


25. Ibid., pp. 9
The great adherent of Tantra, Arthur Avalon differs on this point. It seems that he has accepted the founders of Tantra not as a scholar but as a devotee. He has tried to prove conclusively that Vedas and Tantras are Ṛpta Vākya or voice of providence. As he thinks, "is the courtiers of a royal court are not the authors, but merely the interpreters of statecrafts, so the truth seeing Risis are not the originators of the Śādhanā Sastra, but rememberers merely. It is not a S'āstra marred by mistake, errors and deception. Bhagvana, the creator of all creatures, knower of all hearts, is its revealer."26

The above mentioned two points are opposed to each-other but what I think is that, this controversy is only at an apparent level. If we go into the root of these views we find that the both respected scholars represent their views from the same ground, that is the ground of consciousness. Let us diffuse this statement.

There is incredible movement in the universe in every atom. Movement is a characteristic of consciousness. Universe is a combination of different atoms and they are full of consciousness. Hence universe is nothing but the ocean of consciousness. The one and the same consciousness pervades in the man and in the animal world also. But what makes man Superior to animal? There are certain obstructions of nescience or consciousness. Only man possesses the capacity to remove these obstructions which is not possible for animal. Animal is at sub conscious level while man is at self conscious level. Beyond self-consciousness there are certain layers which are known as super-consciousness. It is not easy to reach as it seems so. Man should have tremendous power to control the natural forces, then he can realize the identity with Super consciousness. Here individual self merges into universal, self. At this level he secures all the powers which we ascribe to god. It is my humble view that Dr. Lalpan Prasad thinks S'iva, as a founder of Tantra, as a realized soul or as a soul of super consciousness. Though consciousness is same in man and Superman but he has shattered off all the limitations of name and form. This type of soul can not be earthly but a divine one as Arthur Avalon accepts. We can conclusively declare that both have accepted divine origin directly or indirectly.
Voice of realized soul comes, from the domain of divinity and far remote from human territory.

What is that in the Tantric perfume which has fragranced all the scriptures? It is not its hoary antiquity or divine authorship but its sound principles on which edifice of Tantra system stands. Now we shall try to see the bricks of Tantra edifice under the title "Principles of Tantra".

1. Principles of Tantra:

The solidity of edifice depends upon the firmness of foundation and quality of bricks. Tantra principles are very sound on which Tantric system is still sustained since five thousand years.

1. Principle of Polarity:

The principle of polarity is the foundation stone of Tantra system. Before going into the root of this principle let us be acquainted with what polarity is. The term 'polarity' is related with the word 'pole'. The lexical meaning of the word 'pole' is either of the two
points of a body in which the attractive or repulsive energy is concentrated, as e.g. in a magnet.\textsuperscript{27}

Tantra has very uniquely worked out these two poles in the human body which is symbolically represented in Tantric treatise as \textit{S'iva-S'akti}. Biologically, it represents the male-female poles which is pre-requisite for any creation.

\textit{Tantric principle of polarity works not only at physical level but it also applies at universal level.}

For Tantra, like human, universe is also an off-spring of the Highest Reality. The literal meaning (Vācyārtha) of the First verse of the \textit{Saundrayalahari} reflects this fact\textsuperscript{28}. The same view is also depicted by the \textit{Rasārṇava Tantra} in which \textit{S'iva} tells \textit{Parvati} that He is the Father and She is the Mother of the universe and worldly objects.\textsuperscript{29}


28. \textit{S'ivas'aktyoh jayāvatīnāyena jayayā S'aktyā Yukta'cāt prapañcārūpasantaṁ nirmātum S'aknoti, tayo vyutkas'cet na S'aknoti iti ||}

29. \textit{Tvam nātā sarva bhūtānāma pīta caaham Sanātanaḥ |}
\textit{Dvayos'ca yo raso devī | mahā maithuna sambhavaḥ ||}
Principle of Identity:

How this polarity resides in the human body?
Every human being contains these two poles within himself; one is expressed while the other is latent. The externally expressed pole indicates either male or female character. If a person is male, female is already there but in a latent form. Same is the case of female. This new concept in biology is known as bi-sexuality. But it is not a new notion for a Tantric seer. It has already been revealed by them and expressed it in terms of Harinamphrodite (Lrdha nārīs'vara). Let us see how the exponent of Tantra tradition, Ajit Hookerji throws light on this point. "The bi-sexual potential exist in equal male-female (½/½) ratio in the reproduction of proto plasm. Visually it has been depicted as the form of Lrdhanarīsvarā (Siva-Parvati), male and female attributes shown as part of the same body, hermaphroditically joined. The idea that masculinity and femininity are two factors is as illusory as that of the duality of body and soul.  

S'iva and S'akti are the two poles of one thing. Tantra represents polarity but not duality. S'iva and S'akti are not two ultimate Realities but they are identical. This identity has been profusely described in many Tantras. We here quote only one or two. In the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra Lord S'iva emphatically tells pārvati that there is no difference between them.\(^{31}\) The Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati of Gorksanātha depicts the same truth by giving the illustration of moon and moon light. As moon light is not different from moon and moon can not exist without moonlight in the same way S'iva and S'akti are identical.\(^{32}\)

This identity is also explained with the help of the illustration of creation. In the process of creation S'iva is not able to do anything without S'akti.

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31. *Mama rupānī devi tvam na bhedostī tvam mama* | 

32. *S'ivasya bhāyatāre S'aktih S'aktierabhyaṣṭaraḥ S'ivah* | 
Antarm naivā jāniyaścandraścandrikaśyātirivi | 
S'iva is considered as corpus (S'ava) devoid of S'akti (i). The very first verse of the Saundraya Lahari purports the same view. In which it is declared that without the union of S'iva-S'akti no creation is possible. Not only that but when S'iva unites with S'akti only then he is able to do anything. The Total Tantra also reflects the same view. We can't go ahead without quoting the words of S'ree Namakriṣṇa which are cited by Swami Prabhavananda. "Shri Namkrishna was want to say that just as fire and its burning power are inseparable, so inseparable are Brahman and S'akti." Then I meditate upon Reality as at rest, he once remarked, "that is, without the activities of creation, preservation and dissolution. I call it Brahman. When I meditate upon Reality as creative, I call it S'akti. In either case I am concerned with one and the same truth, the difference

33. S'ivaḥ s'aktīya yuḥto yadi bhavati S'aktīḥ Prabhuitumā na cedavām deva na khalu kuśalaḥ Spandītyumāti |
Sundṛya Laharī Vṛṣe-1. S'ri S'āṅkāra Bhagavatpaḍhārya. Edited by Kuppuswami A.

34. Yasunī tyakū Mahākāli S'aktīnāma Sadās'vakā S'aktīyā yuḥto yadā devi, tadātiv S'ivarūpaṁāta
S'aktīnīśe S'avaḥ Jñāṣē puruṣatvām na mukṣati |
Todal Tantra. taken from Karpura Sūvarāja (Hindi) by Mahākāla. pp.60. Nōtilal Banarasidas.
being only in the name and aspect."^25

Macrocosm and Microcosm:

Hence S'iva and S'akti become the invisible seed of the full grown up tree of universe. As the seed pervades in the branches, in the fruits of the tree likewise, S'iva and S'akti also pervade in the universe and in the human body also. This is enough to raise a question about the relationship between the universe (Macrocosm) and the individual self (Microcosm). If there is a cold in the universe, we also feel coldness. If there is a heat, we also feel heat in the body. How is it possible? Tantra has found out that whatever is in universe also resides in human body. The third chapter of the Siddha-Siddhanta paddhati of Goraksanath is completely devoted to this aspect. The slightest change in universe consequently reflects in body. Thus Tantra accepts the of identity between macrocosm and microcosm on which the whole astrology is based.

Being a replica of universe, body contains all whatever there is in the universe. Hence for the realization of Reality behind the universe, it is not necessary to roam into the world. Body is the best means for realization of the Ratnasara Tantra which is quoted by Ajit Hookerji is very suggestive. "He who realises the truth of the body can then come to know the truth of the universe."  

3. **Concrete and positive view of Reality:**

This also reflects the view of Tantra about the nature of Reality. For Tantra, Reality is not an abstract entity but can be realized through physical or mortal body. Body is not merely a gross product of Prakriti but is a divine gift of Nature and because of this, the Tantra like Kularnava declares body as the temple of God.  


37. Deha  devālayo devī jīvo devaḥ Sādāśivah |  
The Kularnava Tantra. Ullāsa-9-41.
This shows how human being enjoys great significance in Tantra tradition. The Kularnava Tantra has laid greater stress on this aspect. As Vishvasastra Tantra declares, "There is no birth like unto the human birth. Both Devas and pitras desire it. For the Jiva, the human body is out of all bodies, the most difficult to come by. For this, it is said that human birth is attained with extreme difficulty.  

Indian philosophy believes that soul has to cross the cycle of births according to the deeds he has committed in previous life. Human birth is the only birth in which he gets complete sway over the birth cycle by doing selfless deeds. (Niskama Karma). To do anything with or without intension is a property of mind. Hence mind should be first controlled. It is not the worldly objects that bind us but the attitude of mind toward it creates pleasure and pain. This is the wisdom and ignorance of this is the knot of nescience. This knot should be broken and that is the liberation (Moksa) advocated by Tantra. 


39. Aññana granthibheda yaḥ-Sa mokṣa iti Kāthyate | Sarvajñabhairava Tantra. Taken from Lupta Āgama Samgraha.
But how mind becomes the cause of pleasure and pain? It is the mental disposition (Bhāva) which is responsible for this and for Tantra mental disposition is the property of mind. Worldly objects are neither good nor bad, they are as it is. But it is our mental disposition towards them which binds us or liberates. Scriptures like Dharma Sūtra discloses this truth by giving illustration of a person who kisses his wife and his daughter with the same limb but with different intention. So it is the mental outlook which distorts the world and not anything else. This fact is beautifully depicted by the Kaulāvali Tantra which is cited in the Karpūra Stava Rāja.


41. Uāṇa eva manusyaṇām karaṇam bandha mokṣayoh | Yathāivalingīta Kāntā tathāivalingīta Sutā || Dhrama Sūtra. Quoted in the Karpūra Stava Rāja, pp. 34.

42. Ata eva yadā yasya bhāvanā kutsitā bhavet | Tadā doṣāya bhavati nāṇathā duṣṣanām Kūcita. Kaulavali Tantra. Cited in Karpūra Stava Rāja, pp. 34.
So mind can be the means for both bondage as well as Salvation. Among all the mental instincts, sex is generally considered as the most binding and powerful one. But Tantra has a healthy view regarding this. Tantra views sex as a positive force. There are two possibilities in the utilization of this force. If it is misused, it may prove to be a curse and a source of misery. At the same time if it is used properly with understanding it proves to be boon. To utilize it as a boon or curse depends upon us. Tantra accepts the positivity of sex energy to such extent that it becomes the source of salvation. Tantra shows the way of sublimation of that instinct which is generally considered as the cause of downfall.\(^43\)

In conclusion we can say that Tantra lays greater stress on mental aspect. As it is declared in the Kulārṇava Tantra, if anything is done with the purity of mind even sin becomes virtue and phenomenal world becomes door to divinity.\(^44\) It would be more proper to say that the approach

\(^{43}\) Yatreva patanaṁ draavyaiḥ Siddhiḥ iti heva Gaudītaṁ. The Kulārṇava Tantra. 5-48.

\(^{44}\) Bhogo yogayate Sāksat pātakaṁ Sukrutayate Mokṣayate ca Sansarāḥ Kuladharma Kules'vari || Ibid. 2-24
of Tantra is to avoid the two extremes, that is renunciation and indulgence. Thus it shows the balanced and healthy view regarding world and its affairs.

From this we can conclude without having hesitation that the bricks of Tantra edifice are very sound and rational. But what is that which has distort or shaken the foundation of the system of Tantra?

It is nothing but misinterpretation of its symbolic language which is responsible for this. One may wish to know which are the symbols and how they are unduely justified. For this let us see some of the Tantric Symbols with their proper significance with the help of Tantra treatise.

E. Tantric Symbolism:

It is a fact that the revealer of the epic Rāmāyana, the Valmiki, was robber in his youth. One vulnerable incident happened which changed a robber into pīṣi. Which was that? At one night some sages gave him a Mantra Rāma, a word symbol of the Higher Reality, for the repetition or japa. Constant repetition and concentration on the Mantra Rāma changed the
entire personality of Valmiki. An ordinary man Valmiki, what is that symbol one may wish to know.

From the instance of Valmiki, we could see that symbol is a medium through which one conveys his sentiments. He worshipped the Higher Reality through the word symbol Rama. This medium can either be a language, figure or image. At initial level symbols are required for layman but not for the Sadhaka like Sree Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, for whom every where there is a linga. He feels god not at particular place or in object but every where. This identity is the base of Indian symbolism. As Danielou, Alain observes, "The whole Hindu iconography is built on a code of symbols based on the assumption that there exist a natural affinity between forms and ideas." 45

Tantra symbology is based on such a fact. All the natural forces are symbolized in a geometrical figures or in a language form which in Tantra terminology known as Yantra and Mantra respectively. Details of Yantric and

Hantric symbology we shall see at proper place. Apart from Mantras and Yantras there are also some figures or symbols which have played prominent role in Tantric symbolism. Here we shall try to see some of the Tantric Symbols.

1. Tantra Symbols:

Tantra has been largely misunderstood for its symbolic language. The cause behind this is that, it represents subtle thought process of evolution and dissolution of universe in naked form without bringing any religious, social or political prejudices to bear upon. It's aim is out and spiritual which lifts man from his slumber to make him aware of the infinite potentialities with which he is endowed.

Now what Tantra believes regarding symbolism? Like other systems, Tantra has considered two aspects of Reality. One is formless (Nirguna) while the other is with form (Saguna). As the Devi Bhagavata declares, the formless Reality can not and will not be ever seen in the universe. All the perceived things are the combination of three reals of Reality, that is, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.
Hence each and every object of the world represents or is a symbolic presentation of the Higher Reality. The Kulārṇava Tantra has very beautifully expressed the importance of symbol. For its explanation it 'gives similarly of cow. As milk of cow pervades in the whole body of cow but it comes only through udder like wise the all pervading formless reality expresses itself through symbols. Worship of the particular symbol with full faith and devotion secures the attainment of the reality.

But how the all pervading deity is symbolised? Tantra has symbolised it in a copulation form that is the union of S'iva-S'akti or linga-yoni. In the previous paragraph we have seen that Tantra has viewed energy as Mother, the female pole. But as we know, for any creation

46. Vastumātrāṁ tu yaddras'yaṁ Saṁsāre trigūṇa hi tat ||69|| Dras'yaṁ ca nirguṇam loke na bhūtaṁ no bhavisyat. | Nirguṇah Parmātmāssou na tu dṛṣṭyāḥ Kācācma ||70||

47. Gavāṁ Sarvāṇajam Ḍārāṁ Streveta Stana-Mukhād Yatha |
    Tathā Sarvagato devāḥ pratimādiśu rājate ||
   The Kulārṇava Tantra 6-75.
copulation with opposite pole is required. Hence Tantra has accepted male pole, which is known as S'iva. This is not the duality but the polarity which is the pre-requisite for any creation. It seems that to avoid dualism and to project monism Tantra has utilized copulation symbol to represent the real nature of the Higher Reality. Here it is necessary to be clear that whenever Tantra has used the sexual symbology of Siva-S'akti, it has always viewed the union of positive and the negative aspect of Reality and not the physical copulation of gross linga and yoni as it is generally considered. Sex in Tantra, is not a goal but the source of salvation. It is a path of love and not of lust. Now let us deal in detail the Tantra symbols with the help of Tantra texts. We shall start with the Symbol linga.

A. Linga

The most misunderstood Symbol, in Tantra Symbols is linga. It is neglected only by considering it as mere phallus, the male generative organ. Why is it neglected? The reason of it, is that, linga is related with the sex concept and we consider sex as something obnoxious. Though we hate it apparently, we have accepted it internally but we feel inferiority to accept it. Tantra seers were very courageous in this regards. They have accepted sex positively. Not only that but also gave a high status as a source of salvation.
We have seen before that Tantric view is out and out spiritual. It also views linga in a spiritual manner. The Tantric text "Anubhava Sutram" clearly declares the linga as a source of creation and dissolution, that source is nothing but the Lord S'iva Himself.⁴⁸ The another Tantric text, the Vatulśuddhākhya Tantra also emphatically declares linga as a creator and destroyer.⁴⁹

48. Liyate gamyate yatra yena sarvaṃ caracaran |
    Tadetadlingamitiyuitam śingatattva parāyanaḥ |
    Layagatyartha yohetubhūtatvāt Sarvadehinām |
    Liṅgamitiyuyate sākṣatśivaḥ Sakalaniṃkalah |
    Anubhava Sūtram.


49. a) Liṅgat Sarvam Samutpannam Layāṃ tasnim
    Prakārītītam |
    Vatul Śuddhākhya Tantra 1-51.

b) Liṅge tu jāyate Sarvam jagat Sthāvarajangam |
    Ibid 1-72.

Taken from Yogatantreta-Granthmāla (3) pp.151
This view is also supported by the Abhinava Gupta. In his Tantra-loka, he declares that the wise man should consider linga as a cause of creation and destruction. In the term linga, 'La' indicates dissolution (Laya) while 'Ga' stands for arrival (Agaman). One should worship the Atmalinga and avoid other lingas.\(^50\) Not only the above mentioned Tantras but puräṇa like Śīva puräṇa and linga puräṇa also support the same view. The Śīva puräṇa considers linga as a first cause, the source of consciousness and substance of universe.\(^51\) While according

\(^{50}\) Linga Ś'abdena Vidvānsaḥ Sruṣṭisamhāra Kāraṇam ||
layādāgamanāccāhubhāvanām padama vyam ||
Tantraloka - 4/131.

Krucchailadātyatnādibhavam linga na pūjayet ||
Yajedādhyātmyām Īlingam yatram īlinam Caracaram ||
Bahilingasya lingatvamanenādhiśthיתām yataḥ ||
Tantraloka - 5/120


\(^{51}\) Lokam Lingātmakam Ṣvātu Linga Yosrpayate hi māna ||
Na me taṃtaḥ priyataraḥ Priya ka Viḍhyate Kuṣcita ||
Śīva Purāṇa.
to the linga purāṇa, linga is both the cause of dissolution and evolution.  

There are ample references in Tantra which suggest this meaning. The above mentioned references are enough to conclude that Tantra has not applied linga as physical or gross phallus but as a prime cause of creation of universe. This view is also supported by Danielou, Alain, “Then Hindus worship the linga, they do not deify a physical feature, they do not deify a physical feature, they merely recognize the divine, eternal form manifest in the micro-cosm. It is the human phallus which is a divine emblem of the eternal causal form, the all pervading linga.”

A devotee worships linga. Like other forms of worship, this also secures some results. In other systems of Śādhanā, Śādhaka gains salvation through penance while Tantric worship of linga is very positive in nature as its secures both indulgence and liberation. This

52. Layam gacchati bhūtāni Samsāre nikhil yathā;  
Sruṣṭikāle punah Sruṭiḥtasmāt lingamudā hatam  
Līṅga Purāṇa.

uniqueness lies in the approach of Tantra towards sex. How it secures both that has been reflected in the view of Karapātri, "Those who do not recognize the divine nature of the phallus, who do not measure the importance of sex ritual, who consider the act of love as low or contemptible or as a mere physical function, are bound to fail in their attempts at physical as well as spiritual achievement. To ignore the sacredness of the liṅga is dangerous, whereas through its worship the joy of life (bhukti) and the joy of liberation (mukti) are obtained.\(^{54}\)

Having seen something about the liṅga concept let us proceed with the other symbol which is also related with sex notion, that is, symbol Harmophrodite. (Artha nāris'vara).

6. Artha nāris'vara:

We have been discussing about symbolism. Our first symbol was liṅga in which we have considered liṅga as a source of creation. But as we know, only liṅga or male pole is not sufficient for any creation. Creation is a result of compulation which demands on the other pole, that is, yoni.

54. Ibid.
the female pole. Tantra represents the Synthesized form of linga-yoni or S'iva-S'akti through the symbol of Ardhanāris'vara or half male- half female form.

The concept of Ardhanāris'vara is not a fancy of Tantra seers but it also contains both spiritual and scientific significance, Universe is a creation. This pre-supposes its creator who contains both positive and negative or "F poles. Tantra has projected this polarity in the Higher Reality. The Tantric treatise the Saundaryā Lahari very emphatically and beautifully declares universe as an offspring of the universal parents the S'iva-S'akti.55 Tantra symbolizes these two inseparable and identical aspects of the Higher Reality in the form of Ardhanāris'vara. The Vatul S'uddhākhyya Tantra also affirms this fact. As it declares linga is S'iva and yoni is S'akti. Their copulation is the result of universe.56

55. S'ivas'aktyoh Jayāpatinyayenc Jayaya S'aktya Yuktas'ceta prapanocarupa Santanam nirmatum S'aknoti.
Saundaryā Lahari, Vācyārtha of the First Verse, pp.2

56. Lingam S'iva iti Jñeyam pitham S'akthiḥ udāhātā |
Yoni Lingapražareṇa jagats'rūṣṭayartho Kāraṇam |
The Vatul Suddhākhyya Tantra, 1-69.
Not only Tantras but Vedas also have mentioned the different pairs for pro-creation. A list of the pairs has been mentioned by Agrawala, Vasudeva, in his book "Siva Mahadeva".

But what these pairs indicate? According to Tantra, these pairs of opposite is nothing but the form of energy. We may coin any name like Nara-Nari, Kumāra-Kumāri, S'iva-Parvati etc. but all these can be reduced into one Higher Reality, that is, for Tantra, is energy. Then the creative positive energy combines with the negative energy, interaction starts which results into creation. Zimmer, Henrich views this fact like this: "As the Symbol of male creative energy, the lingam is frequently combined with the primary symbol of female creative energy, the yoni, the later forming the base of the image with the former rising from its centre. This serves as a representation of the creative union that procreates and sustains the life of the universe. Lingam and Yoni, Siva and his goddess, symbolize the antagonistic yet co-operative forces of the sexes. Their sacred Marriage (Greek: hieros - gamos) is multifariously figured in the various traditions of world mythology. They are the archetypal parents, Father and Mother of the world, themselves the first born of the
pairs of opposites, first bifurcation of the primal cosmogenic reality, now re-united in productive harmony. Under the form of Father Heaven and Mother Earth they were known to the Greeks as Zeus and Hera, Uranos and Gaia, to the Chinese Ti'en and Ti, Yang and Yin.\footnote{Zimmer, Henrich. "Myths and Symbols in Indian art and civilization. pp.127. Edited by Joseph Campbell. The Bollingen Series, VI.1946.}

Tantra projects the nature of Hermaphrodite of Higher Reality in its manifestation, that is the objects of universe also. Being a part and parcel of the Higher Reality we also contain the same quality. Every male has female pole and female has male pole, in latent form. This Tantric truth has emerged out under the name of bi-sexuality in modern bio-physics. According to the law of bi-sexuality to tell somebody as mere male or female is opposed to the concept of bi-sexuality. We bifurcate the two sexes by the expressed pole. But in reality we are both male and female, S'iva and S'akti.

Tantra is not only confined to the bi-sexuality but it has also located the exact place of male-female
pole in the body where the bio-physics has yet to reach. According to the Tantra, the right side always represents male-sun or positive pole while the left side represents female moon or negative pole. In the Tripura Samhitā, Devi declares, "The wise should know the basic fact that the female gene resides in the left side of all males. He can not discover the self when he is alienated from his own nature." 58

Like linga symbol, this has also been neglected on the ground that it is related with the sex drive. Tantra views sex as a means for realizing wholeness. Though we are infinite and whole, due to the lack of wisdom of it we constantly feel finiteness. That is why we always try to reach that wholeness. This fact is reflected by the attraction of the opposite sex. Man

58. Etādi manusya-tvāvicchinādi bhedaḥa Vama-
bhāge mama aksunna nivāsaḥ | Evam' ātad
Buddhe Svayameva nirdes'ah iti ardhanāri
S'varatvena mahāpuruko Vidyate |
tries to feel completeness by uniting with the outer woman. Likewise Homan also feels wholeness by the unification with outer man. Tantra says that satisfaction of sex drive is the only easiest way for realizing infinite because it is our nature. Suppression of it will create nothing but disorders and distortion. In the words of Hookerji, Ajit, "The composite figure of S'iva and Parvati as half male and half female indicates that male and female elements are balanced in both of them. Full emancipation is dependent upon our realization of this fact."

In conclusion we can say without having any doubt that the symbol of Ardhanāris'vara has nothing to do with gross physical form of sex. On the contrary, it leads us from gross to subtle. As S'ree Majithia views this symbol, "According to Sociologist, the male and female secret has an external as well as internal aspect. To elevate himself to a higher plan of thought and existence, man should grasp the meaning of the concept 'Ardhanāris'vara'.


60. Majithia, Surendra Singh 'The Great Yogic Sermon' pp.32.
How let us proceed with the other mis interpreted symbol that is Yajña.

C. Yajña: Sacrifice:

The first two discussed symbols linga and Ardha-nāris'vāra are attached with sex notion. The third symbol which we are going to discuss is also partially related with it. The name of the symbol, as it is mentioned above is Yajña or sacrifice.

Tantra is way of sublimation from gross to subtle. According to Tantra, the pleasure which comes out from the physical copulation can be sublimated-into the spiritual bliss. This is the real import of the Symbol Yajña.

Before going into the root, let us first see the etymological meaning of the term Yajña. √yaj is the root verb of this term which stands for propitiation. 61 For

61. √yaj = to worship or propitiation.
Samśkruta S'abdartha Kousabha. Edited by Sharma, Dwarkaprasād, pp.548,
Tantra every act is a propitiation or worship of the Higher Reality. Even the action like copulation which we generally consider as low is viewed with veneration. Now let us see how this Yajña is performed externally and internally.

In the external formation of sacrifice, an altar is formed out from special materials and by experts. Burning fire is placed inside the altar. During the performance of Yajña, clarified butter is constantly poured into the sacrificial fire. Sometimes animals are also used as an object of oblation for the satisfaction of deity. The same Yajña takes place in the physical body. According to Tantra, body is an altar in which the soma or elixir is being constantly dropped from the Sahasrāra Cakra or brain. This elixir is being consumed by the fire situated in the navel region or the Āṇipura Cakra. Semen is the gross form of elixir or Soma which is ejected maximum in quantity in intercourse. Constant or frequent ejection of semen naturally results into decay because semen is the very base of life. A Tantric Sadhaka retains this consumption through the Kundalini yoga or other Tantric practises. This is the real Tantric yajña which takes place within the body with the result that Sadhaka enjoys the immortality.
Tantric notion of yañṇa also leads one from the individuality to the universality. The concept of Yañṇa is the core of the Sadhanā aspect. In Sadhanā, Sadhaka offers many objects like flowers, lamp of fire, fragrant powder, various types of corns namely Tiḻ, Cooked rice, Java, milk etc. But in Tantra Sadhanā there is no need to offer all these things in gross form. Because of a Sadhaka mentally offers all the five elemental forces or the five gross elements (Panca Mahābhūta) namely Earth (prithvi), Water (vāp) Fire (Teja) Vāyu (Air) and Ether (Ākāśa) in the place of flower, lamp, powder etc. Whatever he does physically that is not important in Sadhanā but he is mentally attuned with the universe and offers it to desired deity. This kind of yañṇa removes the boundary of limitations and Sadhaka feels identity with the entire cosmos.

How let us see what seems objectionable to lay man in this symbol. As we have mentioned, in Sacrifice, sometimes animals are also offered. But Tantra has never taken the gross animals. This misinterpretation happens due to lack of proper knowledge of the Tantric meaning of animal. The Tantra like Yogini Tantra, Anandakalpa etc. have clearly mentioned that the animals like vice should be killed with
the sword of knowledge. From this reference we can say
without having doubt that if we take the real meaning
of ablation, there is nothing objectionable. On the
contrary the proper views leads one to the infinite from
finite or from individuality to universality.

Now apart from these symbols, which are largely
related with sex concept, there are also some symbols
which are highly significant in the Tantric Sadhana. Among
all them, Symbol of 5 M's is the basic one. Now let us see
about it.

1. Panca Mākāra : 5 M's:

The misinterpretation of the Symbol 5M's plays
prominent role in the degeneration of the Tantric tradition
and system. In Tantrism, there are also some sub-sects
namely, Vāmācāra, Daksinācāra, Divyācāra etc. Among them
5 M's comes under the title Vāmācāra. Let us see first
why it is known as 5 M's. It is known as so because there

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62. Punya Punya pas'um hatvā 'jñāna khadageṇa yogivata
Togini Tantra.
Sri Ram Sharma. Tantra Mahāvijnāna (Hindi)
are five items in it start with the syllable 'M' that is why it is recognized as 5 M's. These are namely Madya (Wine), Mānsa (Meat), Matsya (Fish), Mudrā (Grain) and Maithuna (Copulation). Let us see each of the syllable respectively.

1. Madya: Wine:

Madya means wine. The inherent quality of Madya is to make man aloof from the outer world. To forget the frustration created from the machine age, man resorts to take wine, which gives him temporary relief.

Madya is not utilized in Tantra in the sense of wine. In Tantra Madya is not a liquor but as the Kulārṇava Tantra declares, it is an energy. All of us have a treasure of energy which is hidden in our body. Tantra shows the approach of awakening of it. Ṣādhaka, who awakens the centres of energy (Cakra) releases his senses from the engrossment (Pās'c) of the outer world. The:

63. Sura Saktih Ś'ivo māṁsaṁ tādbhokta
dhairavaḥ svyam |
The Kulārṇava Tantra 5.79.
utilization of this Tantric Madya results into not in a temporary relief as it so happens in the gross wine but it gives life-time bliss to the Sadhaka. By doing so he yokes his self with his original nature, that is S'iva or limitless infinite element. The peculiarity of the Tantric Madya is that, as the Kularnava Tantra declares it leads Sadhaka to Brahman, or a state known as Brāhmi sthiti (i.e. identity with ultimate Reality).

Hence for Tantra,哈利ya is not a wine and Tantric Sadhaka is not a drunkard but he is a worshipper of S'akti or energy.

**Hamsa - Meat:**

The meaning of Hamsa is meat. It is one of the seven components of the body i.e. Rkta (Blood), Rasa (Essence), Hamsa (Heat), Īṣya (Veins), Asthi (Bone), Sūkra (Semen) and Međa (Marrow). Meat is utilized for food purpose by animals as well as human beings. But how this meat is related with Tantra ?

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64 Madira brahmagāh proktāḥ cittṣ'odhana Sadhanāḥ
The Kularnava Tantra 5-41.
In the Tantric puja, meat of an animal, sometimes of a human being also is offered to a deity for the satisfaction of deity. But to utilize a gross meat is not consistent with the Tantric meaning of meat. What is then the Tantric meaning of meat one may question.

Generally, we get meat by killing the animal. In Tantra whenever the term animal is used, it does not indicate animal like goat, donkey, deer etc. In Tantra, man in a natural state is considered as Pas'u or an animal. To sacrifice this animal means to raise man from his natural state to a Supra natural state or even to the spiritual state. Offering meat means a process of sublimation, from gross to subtle. According to the Kulārṇava Tantra those who do so is the real eater of meat and rest are the killers of life.

So Tantra has never favoured the killing of any gross animal but one has to kill his animal like gross instincts.

**Matsya - Fish:**

Matsya stands for fish. In Tantra it symbolically represents mind and prāṇa, the Vital force.
As fish floats in the water, mind also floats in the sea of sense objects. Mind always moves from one sense object to the other and due to its constant movement it looses its powers. So far the channelization of mental powers, according to the Tantra, mind should be a entrapped by the net of Sadhana. 65

The another subtle meaning of Matsya is prāṇa or vital force. Vāyu (air) is the gross form of it. As has been explained in the Hathayoga pradipikā, mind and prāṇa follow one another. By controlling the one, another can automatically be controlled. 66 So here like mind, prāṇa is also considered as fish. But how Tantra considers prāṇa as fish one may wish to know.

According to the Tantra, though prāṇa pervades in the entire body; we breath, which is the gross form of prāṇa through right and left nostrils which in terms of Tantra known as Pinglō, the sun and Ida, the moon respectively.

65. Manasa caidriyagaṇaṁ Saṁyamātmāni yo jayet | Taken from Tantra Mahāvijnana (Hindi) Shrama, Sri Rama, p.261.
In the Yogic terms, life span depends upon the amount of Prāṇa consumed through respiration. The more amount of it we utilize, we can enjoy more life or longevity. Prāṇa floats either in Pinglā or in Iḍā which we feel it in the form of respiration. So to minimize the amount of respiration or in other words to enjoy longevity one has to control the prāṇa, which moves like a fish in Iḍā and pinglā.

From this we can conclusively say that the Tantric meaning of matsya is totally different from the gross one.

- iv. Hudrā—Grain:

Hudrā means grain or cooked food. The root verb of Hudrā is Ṛud means to please. We eat food for the sustenance of life without which our body can not persist. Food nourishes body and with the result body becomes healthy and with healthy body, we enjoy all pleasures.

67. Hudrā Kurvanti devānām manān̄i drāvayant i ca Tasmān mudrā iti khyātā dars'ītanyāḥ Kuṇḍāvati. The Kulārṇava Tantra. 17-57.
Tantra has not taken only the gross meaning of Mudrā. According to it, in the realm of Sadhana, the spiritual body of a Sadhaka should be strengthened by the spiritual food like Jñāna, Vairagya, Tapa etc. The Tantra tattava prakāśa has mentioned eight types of Mudrā or grain like desire, greed, anger, greed, anger, lust etc., which should be cooked or sublimated into the fire of Brahman. This is the real food of Sadhaka by which he sustains his spiritual life. So this is the Tantric meaning of Mudrā.

Mudrā also is a part of Tantra Sadhana and there it is a means for identifying spiritually various parts of the body with cosmic force or energy. So in Tantra, Mudrā is not merely a cooked food but it also contains spiritual meaning.

68. Ās'atrusna jagupśabhoca Vis'adagrūnāmāna -
     lajjā prakopah |
Brahmāgnavaṣṭa mudrāḥ parasukṛutijanaḥ
     pacyamanāḥ samantat |
Maithuna indicates copulation. Copulation is an union of male and female; the opposite poles required to be brought together for the purpose of creation by nature.

Tantra has presented the subtle meaning of creation, that is, spiritual creation for which two opposite poles are required. These two poles are Śiva and Śakti. Śiva resides at the Sahasrāra (brain) while Śakti at the Īlādīhāra Cakra (pelvic region). In between these two there are six centres of energy around the spinal cord. The energy which resides at the Īlādīhāra Cakra awakens and penetrates all the centres and unites with Śiva at the Sahasrāra Cakra. This is the real Tantric maithuna or copulation which occurs in the Śādhaka. 69

So it is not a gross maithuna or copulation taking place between two physical bodies but it is a spiritual communion with Śiva and Śakti which gives birth or transforms the whole personality of a Śādhaka.

69. Parās'aktyātma maithunāṁ samyogānanda nīrbharaḥ | The Kularñava Tantra 5-112.
With the help of Tantric treatise, we have tried to see the correct meaning of Tantra symbols. Tantric way of Sadhana is so effective which gives quick results. So to avoid misuse of it, this system is armoured in the symbolic terminology. So symbols are designed to maintain its secrecy. But due to lack of its proper knowledge, a distortion takes place into the Tantra system.

We could see from the description, of the symbol that there is a world-wide difference between a gross meaning and a Tantric meaning. The symbols like liṅga, Ardhanārīs'vara, Maithuna etc. are largely distorted because of their relevance with sex action. We consider sex as a cause degeneration but as the Kulaṁava says that which brings about degeneration can as well be a means for sublimation. Thus the subtle meaning of symbol is enough to decide its soundness.

70. Taireva Patanaṁ dravyaiḥ Siddhiḥitaiḥ eva ccuditaṁ I
**Conclusion:**

Body is the only means for achieving any goal. Disease proves to be an obstacle in the path of gaining the goal. Tantra is a *Sādhanā*, system. In the way of *Sādhanā*, *Sādhaka* has to face many physical disorders and mental disturbances. Tantra has not overlooked this fact. To come out from this, it has mentioned certain processes which are designed for strengthening body mind complex and thereby fortifying the instrument for achieving all goals, physical as well as *Supra* physical.

If we glance over the content of the first chapter with a view to examine the therapeutic aspect of it, it will be found highly significant. The very definition of Tantra reflects its therapeutic aspect. As we have seen, one of the meaning of Tantra according to the *Śabḍakalpadruma* is medicine (ousadhi). The other meaning, liberation is also dealt with this aspect. It liberates *Sādhaka* from the physical and mental ailments. How Tantra does this that we have already indicated as and when we have found an opportunity. Still however by way of stating the investigations we have found clearly, we would like to recapitulated briefly as follows:
**Tantra** does this by two ways: One by the cultivation of strong will power and second, by the utilisation of गरद or mercury and its preparations.

As has been accepted, generally everybody has got its own medicine, that is, its power of inbuilt resistance against attacks from diseases. This can be further cultivated by the cultivation of strong will power. From the principles of **Tantra** we could see that, **Tantra** Sadhana is nothing but the awakening of inner powers of senses, body and mind. Willpower is the key of all powers. With the cultivation of it, one can open doors to the other latent powers. The power of resistance against disease is also included within it.

**Tantra** also does this same job by the utilisation of mercury (गरद) and its preparations. Mercury is considered as highly medicinal metal. But it can not be used in a natural form because of its poisonous nature. **Tantric** seers have found out this fact five thousand years back and also worked out the process (सामकर) to make mercury fit for medicinal use.
Lord Śiva is considered as the originator of this process of alchemy who is also the revealer of Tantra. With the help of these two only a Hatha yogi or a Tantric Śādhaka survived on the snowy summits of mountains without having any antibiotic drugs. This is but the physical side of Tantric way of dealing with bodily ailments. We now turn to its mental side:

Symbol and their therapeutic value:

As is the case with Farada or mercury in strengthening body so also, Tantra has a distinct medicine for mental ailments. And it is surprising to note that Tantra uses psychological symbols or linguistical alphabets as symbols for curing the mental diseases by cultivating inner potent mental powers.

Symbols are also highly significant in this regards in lying stress on mental aspect. Mind plays prominent role in mental and physical diseases. Mental disturbances are expressed sometimes in a physical disorders or physical disturbances; sometimes makes mind weak. Thus all our diseases are psycho-somatic. Being a subtler than body, mind's effect on body is felt more powerful. Tantra has recognized this fact much earlier than we started talking about psycho-somatic aspect of disease.
The Tantrics prescribe the use of symbol for making mind calm and positive by concentrating it on syllables or figures of particular types. It is undisturbed and concentrated mind which is a source of creative imagination or all the creativity of mind. Tantric Sadhana is based on imagination. Sadhaka has to positively think that he is offering this or that object. This positive thinking also helps as therapy if the mind is diseased. The theory of auto suggestion in psychology is highly related with this aspect. In the process of auto-suggestion patient gives strong suggestion or he imagines himself quite healthy very powerfully. This process gives relief to patient and gradually helps in curing himself from diseases. Tantric Sadhana through symbols strengthens the positive powers of imaginations which Sadhaka can utilize as a therapy for himself and also can be used as therapeutic means for curing others.