Hindu Sādhanā is basically a composition of the Vedic Cult and the Tantric Cult. All the rituals that are performed in the name of Hindu Sādhanā are either of Vedic origin or Tantric origin. Lord Kṛṣṇa says,¹

Sādhanā is of three types -- Vaidikī, Tāntrikī and Miśra. Out of these three, Sādhanās, a devotee can choose any one and worship me accordingly.

\[ \text{vaidikastāntriko miśra iti me trividho makhah} \]
\[ \text{trayāṇāṃṣitenaiva vidhinā māṁ samarccayet} \]

He also says,²

He who wants early liberation of soul, may worship Lord Keśava according to Vedic and Tantric practices –

\[ \text{ya āsu hṛdaya-granthim nirjīhirṣyuh paratmanah} \]
\[ \text{vidhinopacareddevāṁ tantroktena ca keśavāṁ} \]

In Tantra Sādhanā all the rituals center round the human body which has been given the highest preference. According to Tantra, the human being is a miniature universe³ –

\[ \text{brhadbrahmāṇaṁ yadrūpaṁ tadṛṣṭaṁ kṣudrāraṇākam} \]

All that is found in the cosmos can be found within each individual and the same principles that apply to the Universe apply in the case of the individual being.⁴

---

1. BGP, 11/27/7.
2. Ibid, 11/3/47.
3. TOQ, 2/2.
4. ŚĀKT, 1/10.
In human beings the surplus of energy that is not being used to maintain the functioning of the organism is also symbolically described as a coiled or resting serpent bhujangarūpiṇīṃ devīṁ mūlādhāra-nivāsinīṁ.

This potential energy is called Śakti or Kuṇḍalinī. Tantra Śādhanā is aimed at the awakening of Śakti or Kuṇḍalinī from Mūlādhāra (the Sacro-Coccygeal Plexus) and making Her proceed in an upward movement till Śakti becomes united with Śiva in Sahasrāra Cakra (the Cerebral Region).

In order to lead a Śādha to his highest goal, Tantra formulates a good number of rituals. The performance of these rituals helps the Śādha to awaken Kuṇḍalinī and to be one with the Absolute. All these rituals are linked up with body as Tantra gives the utmost importance on body.

vinā dehenā kasyāpi puruṣārtho na vidyate

What modern psychologists mark was marked by Tantrics long ago. They noticed the body - mind relation. The human body, with its psychological and biological functions, is a vehicle through which the dormant psychic energy, Kuṇḍalinī Śakti, can be awakened to finally unite with Śiva and be one with Śakti.

Tantra has become a ŚādhanāŚāstra.
‘What defines Tantra is practice (Sādhanā) rather than thought’.

Tantra Sādhanā is a physico-psycho-spiritual process.

It is not possible to discuss all the rituals for want of space. Our scope of discussion is limited to some of the important topics of Tantra Sādhanā.

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SĀDHANA

Modern psychologists classify all individuals into different groups. Of them, Jung proposes – (i) Extroverts, (ii) Introverts, on the basis of psychology.

Kretschmer classifies into – (i) Asthenic, (ii) Athletic and (iii) Pygmy.

But Tantra classifies Sādhakas on the basis of both physical and psychological nature. Three classes of Sādhakas are identified. They are – Divya, Vīra, Paśu.  

bhāvastu trividhāḥ prokto divya-vīra-paśukramāt.

There are five different ways in which the teachings of the Sāstra are to be considered. These five ways are – Sthūla (Gross), Sūkṣma (Subtle), Kāraṇa (Causal), Sāmānya (Cosmic), Sākṣīn (Witness like). Now everyone is not competent to consider things from these five different viewpoints.

The Paśu man can hardly be expected to see beyond the Sthūla or material aspect of things. In the Vīra man there is an urge to reach the plane beyond matter. The Vīra is he who fights the six enemies which obstruct the path of spiritual advancement.

The man of Divya disposition is endowed with qualities which make him almost divine.

Tantra speaks of the qualities of these three classes of people.

The Paśu is a man whose inclinations are like those of an animal. He is a slave to his six enemies-lust, anger, greed, pride, illusion and envy.  

10. EPG, p. 199.
11. KN, 11/1.
12. KĀM, 4/50-52.
The Vīra is a man who is fearless and is pure in his motive. He is gentle in speech and is always mindful of the five tattvas (principles). He is physically strong, courageous, intelligent and enterprising.\textsuperscript{13}

The man of Divya disposition is beloved by all. He is prudent in speech. He is quiet, steady, sagacious and attentive to all. He is always contented and devoted to God. He is fearless. He never swerves from the path of truth and avoids all that is evil.\textsuperscript{14}

**B. CLASSIFICATION OF ĀCĀRA**

Ācāra or rules of conduct occupies an important place in Indian Culture. Sadācāra or good conduct is one of the causes of Brāhmaṇhood.

The cause of Brāhmaṇhood is neither birth nor sacraments; neither the studies of the Veda, nor the family, but Ācāra.\textsuperscript{15}

Manu also stresses on it. He says,\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{align*}
\text{'śudro brahmaṇaṇatāmeti brahmaṇaṇaceti śudratām} \\
\text{kṣatriyat jātamevaṁ tu vidyāt vaisyāṭthaiva ca.}
\end{align*}

It is Ācāra for which Śūdra becomes Brāhmaṇa and Brāhmaṇa becomes Śūdra. This is also applicable to Vaiṣya and Kṣatriya.

Tantra also prescribes different Ācāras for different classes of people.\textsuperscript{17} *Kulārṇava*

*Tantra* mentions seven kinds of Ācāra. They are\textsuperscript{18} – Veda, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Dakṣiṇa, Vāma, Siddhānta, and Kaula.

\textsuperscript{13. Ibid, 4/47-48.}
\textsuperscript{14. Ibid, 4/44-46.}
\textsuperscript{15. Mahābhārata, Vanaparva as quoted in TMV, p. 210.}
\textsuperscript{16. MSM, 10/65.}
\textsuperscript{17. MM, 1/1/18.}
\textsuperscript{18. KNT, 2/7-8.}
Vedācāra is better than any other Ācāra. Vaiśṇavācāra is better than Vedācāra. Śaivācāra is better than Vaiśṇavācāra. Dakṣinācāra is better than Śaivācāra. Vāmācāra is better than Dakṣinācāra. Siddhāntācāra is better than Vāmācāra. Kaulācāra is better than Siddhāntācāra. Kaulācāra is the best of all Ācāras.

The Śādhaka rises step by step through these different Ācāras till he reaches the seventh and the highest stage. In the first stage (Vedācāra), cleanliness of body and mind is cultivated. The second stage (Vaiśṇavācāra) is that of devotion. The third (Śaiva) is that of knowledge. The fourth stage (Dakṣinā) is that in which the gains acquired in the preceding three stages are consolidated. This is followed by Vāma which is the stage of renunciation. The sixth stage (Siddhānta) is that in which the aspirant comes to a definite conclusion. The final stage is Kaula. This is the stage in which Kula or Brahman becomes a reality to him.

The first three of these seven stages, i.e., Veda, Vaiśṇava, and Śaiva belong to Paśubhāva. Dakṣinā and Vāma belong to Vīrabhāva. Siddhānta and Kaula belong to Divyabhāva. Viśvasāra Tantra, alluding to the importance of the Bhāvas and Ācāras, says.19

He truly is liberated in this life who knows the seven Ācāras comprised within three Bhāvas.

C. TECHNIQUES OF TANTRAS RITUALS

There is a multiplicity of techniques employed in Tantric rituals through the medium of sound (Mantra), diagram (Yantra), identification of parts of body (Nyāsa), gestures (Mudrā), offerings of flowers, incense and ritual ingredients, breath-control (Prāṇāyāma), Yogic seating (Āsana) and concentration (Dhyāna).

The success of the performance of all the Tantric rituals is connected with the Sādhakas for whom those rituals are prescribed. Here lies the great importance of the Bhāvas and Ācāras.

The performance of rituals prescribed requires some techniques that are hidden and made these techniques known only by a qualified Guru. The Guru is the centripetal force of the Tantric Cult.

Our aim is to select some important elements of Tantra Sadhana and discuss their importance as it is not possible to present all the elements in this chapter. We start our discussion with the significant role of Guru. Besides Guru we shall present here the importance of Śīṣya, Dīkṣā, Mantra, Pūjā, Cakra Pūjā, Kumārī Pūjā, Bali, Yantaka, Pañcamakāra and Śaṭkarma.

1. THE GURU

The Guru is the point where the bird's eye view and worm's eye view of salvation meet, for he is the living incarnation of God's grace and the point where any devotee first makes direct contact with the divine. He holds the key to the mysteries of the scriptures. He is the repository of the secret lore of the Mantras and their applications in ritual and meditation. He is the successful Sādhaka, a Siddha, who has attained union with God's loving personality by identifying himself with Śakti by means of his Mantra and his power.20

Lord Śiva Himself assumes the form of Guru for the salvation of mankind.21

\[
\begin{align*}
yasmāṁmaheśvarah sākṣī
dvā māmuṣa-vigraham
krpayā gururūpeṇa magnāh
proddharati praśāh
\end{align*}
\]

20. UM, p.235.
21. As quoted in BSAS, i, p. a9
DERIVATIVE MEANING OF GURU

The derivative meanings of Guru are given in different Tantra texts. In Agun<tattrva-vilāsa>, the word Guru is explained thus22 –

'gakārāḥ' siddhiḥ proktō 'rephaḥ' pāpasya hārakah
'ukaro' viśṇuravyaktāstritātmā guruḥ paraḥ

The letter 'Ga' grants Siddhi. The letter 'Ra' destroys sins. The letter 'U' is the un-manifested Viṣṇu. The Guru consists of these three forms. So the Guru is the greatest of all.

Kaulāvalinirṇaya and Yāmala Tantra derive the word 'Guru' with the slightest variation.

Kāṅkālamālini Tantra23 defines it thus –

gusabdascandhakāraḥ syat 'ru' 'sabdastannirodhakṛt
andhakāranirodhitvāt guruḥ yabhidhiyate

'Gukara' means darkness and 'Rukara' is the dispeller of darkness. He is called Guru as he dispels darkness.

According to Tantrārṇava24,

gakārājijnasampatiś rephaḥ pāpasya dāhakah
ukārāčchivatādāmyam dadiūditi guruḥ smṛtah

'Gakara' stands for knowledge and wealth, 'Repha' means the burner of sins. 'Ukara' means Śiva and His identity. So Guru consists of these three.

22. ATV, p. 60.
23. KAG, 1/16.
24. Tantrārṇava as quoted in BTS, p.9.
So the general derivative meaning of Guru is that the entity, the guiding faculty that dispels all darkness, all spiritual darkness, is the Guru. He is Guru who gives Siddhi and removes sin.

FUNCTIONS OF GURU

The functions of the Guru are many. Some of them are as follows:

(a) The Guru causes the Śiśya see the feet of the God-head who is all pervasive:

\[
\text{akhaṇḍ-} \text{maṇḍalākāraṁ vṛṣṭapāṁ yena caśācaśaṁ}
\]

\[
tatpadaṁ darśitāṁ yena tasmaī śrīgurave namah
\]

(b) The Guru illumines humanity with spiritual effulgence and dispels all darkness:

\[
\text{ajñāna - timirāndhasya jñānānājana - śalākāya}
\]

\[
caksurumālātāṁ yena tasmaī śrīgurave namah
\]

(c) The Guru grants all the wishes.

\[
sarba - siddhi - pradātāram.
\]

POSITION OF GURU

The Guru is given the highest position in Tantra. He is at the root of the Universe:

\[
gurumūlam jagatsarvam
\]

The Guru is the highest Tattva:

\[
gurureva param tattvam.
\]

25. RUY, 2/22
27. RUY, 2/24
28. Ibid, 1/224.
29. MM, 1/40; KNT, 13/52, 60.
The Guru is father, mother, God and destination. The Guru can save if Lord Siva is angry. But none can save if the Guru is angry.

The Guru is not to be considered as an ordinary man. Tantra beautifully expresses the position of the Guru.\(^{30}\)

\[ a\textit{trinetra\textit{h} sivah saks\textit{adacaturbh\textit{ahury}utah} \]
\[ acaturvadano brahma sr\textit{iguruh kathita\textit{h priye}. \]

The Guru is none other than Siva without His three eyes, Vi\text{\^}n\text{u} without four arms and Brahm\text{\^}a without His four faces.

\textit{Guptas\textit{adhana Tantra} says}\(^{31}\) that Guru is Tirtha (Holy place), Yaj\text{\^}na (Sacrifice), D\text{\^}na (Gift), Tapas (Penance), Agni (Fire), S\text{\^}rya (Sun) and the whole universe is the reflection of the Guru.

\textit{Yogin\text{\^} Tantra}\(^{32}\) says that Tantra is Guru-oriented S\text{\^}tra. Gods salute him who has pleased the Guru.

\textit{J\text{\^}n\text{\^}nasah\text{\^}kali\text{\^} Tantra}\(^{33}\) says that no relatives even friends, sons, father and husband can be compared with the Guru.

Without worshipping the Guru\(^{34}\), no other Gods can be worshipped.

\[5.5cm\]

30. S\text{\^}KT, 2/37; KNT, 13/57; KN, 10/3.
31. GUP, 2/3.
32. YOG, 1/1/23.
33. JNS, 92 sl.
34. MM, 1/41-42.; GUR, 44 Sl, KVT, p.6.
*Murtamālā Tantra* says that Mantra is born of the Guru and deities are born of Mantra. The Guru is the grandfather of deities. Only scriptures without the Guru cannot help a person in attaining salvation.

**CLASSES OF GURU**

Different Tantra works have mentioned various classes of the Guru. According to *Ṣaḍāṁnāya Tantra*, the Guru is of two kinds – (i) Dīkṣā Guru and (ii) Śikṣā Guru.

*Kaulāvalinirṇaya Tantra* speaks of three classes of the Guru – (i) Mahān (Noble), (ii) Madhyama (Middle) (iii) Viśvanidita (Worst).

According to *Netra Tantra*, the Guru or Ācārya is of three types –

\[karmī yogi tatha jñāni ācāryastrividhah smṛtah\]

Ācārya or the Guru is of three kinds – Karmī (Activator), Yogi (Yogi) and Jñāni (Wise).

According to *Kularnava Tantra*, The Guru is of six classes. They are – Preraka (Inspirer), Śucaka (Indicator), Vācaka (Expositor), Darśaka (Practical Guide), Śikṣaka (Teacher) and Bodhaka (Illuminator)

\[prerakah sūcakasa caiva vācako darśakastathā\]

\[śikṣako bodhakasa caiva ūṣdete guruvaḥ smṛtah\]

35. MM, 1/46.
36. UD, 1/14.
37. ŠAM, 2/24, 68.
38. KN, 11/2-3.
39. NET, 16/66.
40. KNT, 13/128.

QUALIFICATIONS OF GURU

In order to be an ideal Guru, one must come into this earth with the highest qualifications in the spiritual field and with the greatest capacity to face the mountainous obstacles in the physical world. To shoulder the responsibility of the Guru is no children’s play. A person must have requisite qualifications to be a Guru.

Tantra works have given long lists of qualifications of the Guru. It is not possible to mention all the requisite qualifications of the Guru for want of space. Some qualifications mentioned in Rudra Yāmala, Mahāsvarottara, Yāmala, Saradātilaka, Annadākalpa, Āgamasamhitā, Kāmākhya Tantra, Yoginī Tantra, Gandhārva...

41. Ibid, p. 337.
42. RUY, 1/118-123.
43. Mahāsvarottara as quoted ATV, p. 58.
44. Yāmala as quoted in ATV, p. 58.
45. ŚĀT, 2/130.
46. AT, 1/19.
47. Āgamasamhitā as quoted in BTS, pp. 1-2.
49. YOG, 2/6/168.
Tantra⁵⁰ Paramānanda Tantra⁵¹, Ṣanāi - Kumāra Tantra⁵², Lākṣmī Tantra⁵³, Gorakṣasiddhānta⁵⁴, are summarized here.

The Guru must be –

Śānta (Restrained), Dānta (Continent), Kulīna (Born of noble family), Viṁś (Sober), Dāta (Generous), Supratiṣṭha (Well-established), Dakṣa (Skilled), Mahān (Nobly), Paṇḍita (Scholar), Jñānī (Wise), Śuci (Pure), Vākpati (Orator), Nīrogī (Healthy), Bhadra (Gentle), Bhāvuka (Intellectual), Mantrī (Having knowledge in Mantra), Susamāhita (Fully concentrated), Yati (Self-controlled), Khyāta (Famous), Dayālu (Kind), Grhaṣṭha (Householder), Vipradaśīka (Spiritual Guide and Advisor of Mantra), Jitendriya (Having the senses subdued), Satyavādi (Truthful), Sarvāgamasārajña (Knower of the essence of the Agamas), Sarvaśastra-rathā – tattvavid (Knower of all the Tatvas with meanings), Paropakāra-nirata (Benevolent), Japa-Pūjā-tatpara (Devoted to Japa and Puja), Amoghavacana (Sayings prove correct), Niṇānta-Śanta-Vigraha (Tranquilized physique), Adhyātmavid (Meta-physician), Brahmacari (Celibate), Pañca-tattvātma-kośa (Skilled in theory and practice of Pañcatattva), Sundara (Gracious), Sumukha (Good-faced), Alobhi (Unavaricious), Anahārīkāra (Free from vanity), Kavi (Poet), Veda-Vedāṅga-pārakāsa (Well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅga) etc.

50. GAND, 26/16.
51. PRT, 12/7-8.
52. SKT, 11/6.
53. LM, 21/31.
54. GOS, p. 49.
DISQUALIFICATIONS OF GURU

Rudra Yamala Tantra\textsuperscript{55}, Ydmala\textsuperscript{56}, Kālikāpurāṇa\textsuperscript{57}, and other Texts mention the following disqualifications of the Guru.

Śvītrī (White leprosy), Galat-Kuṣṭhi (Leprosy), Netrarogī (Eye-diseased), Vāmana (Dwarf), Kunakha (Having bad nails), Śyāvadanta (Discoloured teeth), Śrīnā (Henpecked), Kapaṭī (Hypocritical), Rōgī (Diseased), BahuŚrī (Gluttonous), Bahu-jalpakā (Garrulous), Abhiśapta (Cursed), Aputra (Sonless), Kadarya (Ugly), Kitava (Slender), Kriyāhīna (Without activity), Guru-nindaka (Fault finder of Guru) etc.

GURU AND CASTE

Some Tantra texts recommend the Brāhmaṇas as Guru, though there is no privileged caste in Tantra. According to Brhad Gautamiya Tantra\textsuperscript{58}, a person who is virtuous conduct, self-restrained, simple-minded, devoted to Hari, greatest among seers and Brāhmaṇa can become the Guru of all castes —

\begin{quote}
 hari-bhakti-yuto ṣkruraḥ sadācāro jītendiyah
 vipra eva muni-sreṣṭho vṝṇāṁ gurucye
\end{quote}

NUMBER OF GURU

Tantra texts are not unanimous in case of the number of the Guru. According to Kaula-Upaniśad\textsuperscript{59}, the number of the Guru is one —\textit{gurekhaḥ}.

But Kulārṇava Tantra\textsuperscript{60} expresses other view. According to this Tantra, a Śiva may leave the Guru who is inexperienced and sceptic and may go to the other Guru.

\textsuperscript{55} RUY, 1/195.
\textsuperscript{56} Yamala as quoted in BTS, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{57} KPU, 55/75.
\textsuperscript{58} Brhad Gautamiya Tantra as quoted in ATV, p.60.
\textsuperscript{59} KU, 23.sl.
\textsuperscript{60} KNT, 13/131-132.
Thus doing it, he does not do any wrong. As a humble-bee goes from one flower to other flowers at the attraction of honey, so a Śīṣya goes from one Guru to other Gurus in search of knowledge.

WOMAN GURU

According to Tantra, a woman has every right to be a Guru. Rudra Yāmala\textsuperscript{61} lays down the following qualifications of a Woman Guru –

Sāddhīt (Chaste), Sadacārā (Of good conduct) Guru-bhaktā (Devoted to the Guru), Jītendriyā (Having the senses subdued), Sarva-Mantrārtha-Tattvajñā (Knowl or of all Mantras and Tattvas), Suśilā (Good-natured), Pujaṇaratā (Engaged in Puja), Sarvālakṣaṇa-sampannā (Having all good signs), Padma-locanā (Lotus-eyed), Sāntā (Self-restraint), Kuṭina (Born of a noble family), Ananta-Guṇa-Sampannā (Having innumerable qualities) and Priya (Favourite) etc.

Rudra Yāmala\textsuperscript{62} disqualifies a widow to be a Guru. If a mother is a widow, she can be a Guru.

2. THE ŚĪṢYA

In the whole process of the Tantric rituals Śīṣya plays an important role. Śīṣya takes direct part in all the rituals under the guidance of the qualified Guru. The success of the performance of all the rituals mainly depends upon the ability of the Śīṣya.

MEANING OF ŚĪṢYA

A person is called Śīṣya who dedicates and sacrifices his own body, wealth and life for the sake of the Guru and learns Yoga from the Guru\textsuperscript{63}

\begin{itemize}
\item 61. RUY, 2/107-109.
\item 62. Ibid, 2/110.
\item 63. KNT, 17/30
\end{itemize}
QUALIFICATIONS OF ŚĪṢYA

Tantra texts have mentioned some special qualifications of the Śīṣya. According to Śūradātilaka, a Śīṣya must be Kulīna (born of noble family), engaged in achieving piety, wealth, desire and emancipation, simple-minded, well-versed in the Vedas, passionless, well-wisher of the beings, detached from atheists, devoted to own duties and parents, always engaged in the service of the Guru with physical, mental and financial abilities, devoid of any sentiment against the Guru, ready to sacrifice his life in order to obey the orders of the Guru.

Tantra also says that a Śīṣya should be restrained, modest, pure, revered, patient, able to perform any task, born of noble family, wise, self-controlled and of good conduct.

śānto vinītaḥ sūddhāma śraddhāvān dhūraṇaṅkṣamaḥ
samarthaśca kūlinaśca prājnītaḥ saucarito yatih.

Tantra further says that a Śīṣya must be virtuous, holy, devoted to the Guru, self-restraint and engaged in charity –

punyavān dhūrmikāḥ sūdho gurubhakto jītendriyaḥ
śīṣya-yogyo bhavet so hi dāna-dhyāna-parāyanaḥ.

DISQUALIFICATIONS OF ŚĪṢYA

The Guru must not initiate a person and make him his (Guru’s) Śīṣya if the person is found with the following disqualifications.
Sinner, evil-doer, cheat, miser, very poor, devoid of good culture, critic of Mantra, censurer, fool, critical of holy places, devoid of respect for the Guru, idle, ill-dressed, weak, arrogant, sick, always dissatisfied, enraged, greedy, violent, malicious, harsh-toned, rich by dishonest means, having illicit relation with other's wife, envious of the learned persons, proud of learning, corrupted, cruel, wicked, gluttonous, heartless, vicious and ill-famed.

CLASSES OF ŠIṢYA

Tantra speaks of three classes of Šiṣya.⁶⁸ They are Ādiyogya, Madhyayogya and Antayogya. They are also called – Adhama, Madhyama and Uttama respectively.

At the time of Dikṣa, the Šisyas become very much devoted and later on their devotion diminishes. They are called Ādiyogya or Adhama.⁶⁹

The Šisyas who are devoid of knowledge and whose valour has been destroyed by reverence, are called Madhyayogya or Madhyama.⁷⁰

The Šisyas who are without reverence at the initial stage, who are with reverence at the middle stage, and who have much reverence in the final stage are called Antayogya or Uttama.⁷¹

TEST OF ŠIṢYA

Despite all the requisite qualifications, the Šiṣya has to undergo some tests made by the Guru. Generally the test period is one year.⁷²

\[ \text{iṣṣyaṁ varṣamekāṁ parīkṣayet} \]

---

⁶⁸. KNT, 14/27.
⁶⁹. Ibid, 14/28.
⁷⁰. Ibid, 14/29.
⁷¹. Ibid, 14/30.
⁷². Sarasarṅgraha as quoted in ATV, p. 73; BTS, p. 7.
Sāradātilaka⁷³ fixes the period of test according to caste. The test period for a Brāhmaṇa Śisyā is one year, two years for a Kṣatriya Śisyā, three years for a Vaiśya Śisyā, and four years for a Śūdra Śisyā –

\[
ekābdena bhavety yogyo brāhmaṇo 'abda-dvayān nyapah \\
vaśyō varsatribhiḥ śūdraścaturbhivrutsarai gurōh.
\]

RudraYamala also views it,⁷⁴

The Guru will take tests of the Śisyā on the knowledge and activity.⁷⁵

\[
jñānena kriyaya vapi guruh śisyam parikṣayet.
\]

The Guru engages the Uttama Śisyā (best disciple) into ignoble works and the Adhama Śisyā (worst disciple) into honourable works. Sometimes the Guru gives biased orders and sometimes impartial orders in relation to essential goods or wealth.⁷⁶ He who passes such tests is eligible for being initiated into the Tantric Cult by the Guru.⁷⁷

**TEST OF GURU BY ŚISYA**

Tantra says⁷⁸ that when the Guru and the Śisyā live together, they test each other.

\[
gurutā śisyatā vāpi tayorvatsara-vāsataḥ
\]

The Śisyā tests his Guru by different signs. The Śisyā notices joy in Guru at the time of the performance of Japa, Stotra, Dhyāna, Homa and Arcana.⁷⁹

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⁷³ SAT, 2/141.
⁷⁴ RUY, 2/92.
⁷⁵ KNT, 14/19.
⁷⁶ Ibid, 14/20.
⁷⁷ Ibid, 14/24.
⁷⁸ Sarasamgraha as quoted in ATV, p. 73.
⁷⁹ KNT, 14/25.
He must know the ability of the Guru in imparting knowledge, capacity of Mantra siddhi and perfection.  

According to Mahēśvara Tantra, no one should be treated as the Guru unless he passes the tests taken by the Śiśya.

3. DĪKṢĀ

The symbolic language of Tantra is known as Sāndhyabhāṣā. An ordinary person cannot understand this language. It can be easily understood by only initiates. The adept who wants to participate in the whole gamut of the Tantric rituals, is to attend a ceremony known as Dīkṣā and he is to be initiated. Dīkṣā or initiation is a mystic passport to get entrance into the kingdom of the Tantric Cult. It is compulsory for all Tantra Sādhakas. There can be no liberation without Dīkṣā. It involves one-to-one inter-personal contact between the Guru and the Śiśya. Without proper initiation, the incantation of Mantra and meditation of God become an intellectual exercise of non-sense syllables. After initiation, Mantra becomes conscious and brings the desired result of spiritual awakening. Through initiation, Guru imparts the practical lesson to make use of Mantra and Yantra.

MEANING OF DĪKṢĀ

The word Dīkṣā comes from the Sanskrit वध (vadh) meaning 'to cut or to destroy'. In the initiation all negative forces are destroyed in order to gain the supreme state of existence.

81. MAH, 28/20, 21.
82. TW, p. 131.
According to other scholars, the word Dīkṣā is derived from the V‘Dīkṣ’ meaning ‘to consecrate or purify’. Its derivation is V Dīkṣ + a + tāp. The Sādhaka’s soul is purified for the union with Śakti through Dīkṣā.

Dīkṣā is defined in Tantra:

\[
\text{diyate jñāna-sampattih kṣiyate pāpasaścayah}
\]
\[
tasmāt dikṣetī samprokoṭo munibhistantravedibhiḥ.
\]

As this ritual gives knowledge, wealth and destroys sins, it is called Dīkṣā by the Tantric seers.

According to Viśvasāra Tantra:

\[
divyajñānaṁ yato daidyāt kuryāt pāpasyaṁ tataḥ
\]
\[
tasmāt dikṣetī sā proktā sarvatantrasya sammata
\]

As it imparts divine knowledge and destroys sins, it is called Dīkṣā approved by the Tantric works.

According to Jñānārṇava Tantra,

As the Sisya gives all the wealth including money, jewels, gold, clothes etc., to the Guru, all the sins of Śisya are destroyed. So it is called Dīkṣā.

According to Saradātilaka:

\[
divyajñānaṁ yato daidyāt kuryāt pāpasya saṁkṣayam
\]
\[
tasmāt dikṣetī samprokoṭa deśikaiṣṭantravedibhiḥ
\]
The Tantric teachers call it Dikṣā as it gives divine knowledge and destroys sin.

According to Śataratnasamgraha⁸⁸,

dīyate jñānasadbhāvaḥ kṣīyate ca malatrayam

dīyate kṣīyate ceti dikṣāsabde dvidhocyate.

As it imparts pure knowledge and frees self from three Malas, it is called Dikṣā

Yoginī Tantra says⁹⁰–

manasā kriyayā vācā yaacā pāpamupārjitam

niḥśeṣāṃ nāṣaytvā ca param jñānam pradaśyati

ato dīkṣetī loke asmin kīrtaye śāstrakvidaiḥ.

In this world, Dikṣā instantly destroys all sins committed by mind, action and speech and imparts divine knowledge

AIMS OF DĪKṢĀ

In the real sense, Dikṣā is a self-refining process. Self is covered by Ānaya, Māyā and Kārma Malas. Its natural manifestation is not possible due to the influence of these bondages. Dikṣā frees Self from three impurities (Malas). So the aim of Dikṣā is to free oneself from bondage and lead to the path of liberation. Salvation is not possible without initiation and without the Guru a Sadhaka cannot be initiated.

EFFECTS OF DĪKṢĀ

When a Sadhaka is initiated, he becomes purified.⁹¹

śuddhāḥ varṇā-yastu dīkṣitāḥ.

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⁸⁸. As quoted in UDN₃, p. 661, Article – Tripurā Rahasya

⁸⁹. YOG, 2/6/160-161.

⁹⁰. KNT, 14/3 ; SDS, p. 154.

⁹¹. Ibid, 14/88, 97.
When he worships, all of this universe is worshipped. Moreover he has not to perform other religious rites like penance, vow etc.

*Kulārṇava Tantra* says,

\[
\text{rasendrega yathā viddhamayaḥ suvarṇatām vrajet}
\]

\[
dīkṣāviddhatathā hyātmā śivatvāṁ labhate priye
\]

As iron is turned into gold when iron is compounded with mercury, so initiated soul attains Śivahood.

The chain of casteism slackens after initiation -

\[
dīkṣāsāṁskara-saṁpanne jātibheda na vidyate.
\]

**TEST OF GURU AND ŚIṢYA BEFORE INITIATION**

A Brāhmaṇ Śiṣya stays with the Guru for a year, a Kṣatriya for two years, a Vaisya for three years and a Śūdra for four years. Both the Guru and the Śiṣya keep constant watches on each other when they live together.

*Kulārṇava Tantra* warns that both the Guru and the Śiṣya are turned into ghosts if advice (Dīkṣā) is given to and taken by without the test of the Guru and the Śiṣya made by each other.

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92. Ibid, 14/94.
93. Ibid, 14/95.
94. Ibid, 14/89.
95. Ibid, 14/91.
96. MAH, 28/7-8; ATV, p. 74.
97. KNT, 14/11.
**DĪKṢĀ AND AGE**

According to Śāktananda Tarangini, a Sadhaka is to be initiated into the Tantric Cult when he attains the age of sixteen.98

*saṃprāpte  śrojaśe varṣe dīkṣāṁ kuryāt samāhitāḥ*

**PLACE OF DĪKṢĀ**

Tantra prescribes the following place of Dīkṣā:

Gośāla (Cow-house), Gurugrha (Residence of the Guru), Devāgāra (Temple), Kānana (Forest), Puṇyakṣetra (Holy places), Udāna (Garden), Nadiśīrā (Bank of river), Dhātri-Vilva-Sāmpa (Under myrobalan and bel tree), Parvatāgra (Top of hill), Gaṅgāta (Bank of the Gāṅgā) etc.99

Following places are specially prescribed for Dīkṣā100

Puṇyaśīrtha Kurukṣetra, Four Pithas i.e., - Oḍḍiṣyāna, Jalandhara, Pūrṇagiri, Kāmarūpa; Prayāga, Śrīneri and Kāśi.

Restricted places are101 –

Gayā, Bhāskarakṣetra, Virājaśīrtha, Candraparvata, Chittaṅgaṅg, Mātāṅga, Kanyāśrama.

**TIME OF DĪKṢĀ**

Tantra texts differ on the point of the proper time of Dīkṣā.

Bright fortnight is considered much auspicious. Till the fifth lunar day of the dark fortnight is also preferred –

*śuklapakṣe  śroha dīkṣā kṛṣṇe apyapāṇicāddināḥ*102

---

98. ŚĀKT, 2/1 ; RTN, 3/1.
99. BTS, p. 54.
100. Ibid, pp. 52-53.
101. YOG, 2/6/177-178; BTS, p. 54.
102. BTS, p. 49.
According to Agastya Samhita, both the fortnights are auspicious for initiation:

śuklapakṣe tu krṣṇe va dīkṣā sarvatra  śrohanā

Some auspicious tithis are —

Dark 5th, Dark 14th, Bright 6th, 9th and 11th.

Besides these, Solar and Lunar eclipses are given much importance for initiation.

Yogini Tantra says that during the period of Solar and Lunar eclipses, Yugādyātithi and Manvantara tithi, fourth, fifth, eighth and fourteenth Lunar days are auspicious. The Āṣṭamī and Caturdāsī are for Śaktidikṣā and Caturthi for Ganeśadikṣā.

According to Gautamīya Tantra, during Parvayoga and Solar-Lunar eclipses, Dīkṣa ceremony is to be performed.

According to Yogini-hṛdaya, nothing is to be calculated during Solar and Lunar eclipses.

Tantra says that no time is to be calculated if the initiation takes place in Puṇyatīrtha, Kurukṣetra, Four Pithas, Prayāga, Śrīgiri and Kāśi.

Tantra further says that nothing is to be calculated in the Bodhana of Durgā Pujā, Āsokāṣṭamī and Rāmanavami.

103. Agastya Samhitā as quoted in BTS, p. 49.
104. BTS, pp. 50-51
105. YOG, 2/6/171.
106. As quoted in BTS, p. 51.
108. ROT, p. 68
109. BTS, p. 53.
DIKŚĀ PROCESS

On an auspicious day prescribed by the almanac tallying with the horoscope of the Śiṣya, the Guru initiates his Śiṣya. On the day just before the initiation the Śiṣya observes fast, lies on bed of Kusa grass and utter the Mantra or Mantras as directed by the Guru.

In the beginning, the Śiṣya waves articles of worship before the Guru and welcomes the Guru by uttering the Mantra.

\textit{aum arccayisyāmo bhavantam}

‘I worship you’. The Guru says - \textit{aum arccaya}, Worship me. Then the Śiṣya worships the Guru with Upacāras. After it, the Guru performs all the necessary rituals. Performing all the relevant rituals, the Guru says the Mantra into the right ear of the Śiṣya for three times and into his left ear for one time. In case of woman Śiṣya and Śūdra Śiṣya the Guru says the Mantra into left ear for three times and one time into the right ear.

The Śiṣya has to offer Dakṣīṇā (honorarium) to the Guru after the performance of all the rituals.

\textit{gurave daksīnāṁ dadyāt yatha vibhava-vistaraiḥ}

\textit{tataḥ siddho bhavenmantri nātra kāryā vicāraṇā}

Nādi Cakra, Kulākula Cakra, Rāṣi Cakra, Nakṣatra Cakra, A-ka-da-ma Cakra Ṛdhani – Cakra are also calculated before initiation.

110. Ibid, p. 93.
111. ROT, p. 63.
112. BTS, p. 93.
113. Ibid, p. 93.
115. MT, VII, 5/15.
116. RUY, 2/126-140; TP, p.28.
KINDS OF DĪKṢĀ

Tantra stresses on human psychology. Individual differences, which are an important feature of Modern Psychology, are recognized in Tantra. The Guru knows the ability of the Śiṣya and confers only that Dīkṣā on a Śiṣya which he deserves as the Guru has the capacity of grading them. As there are individual differences among the Śiṣyas, Dīkṣā is divided into different kinds on the basis of the differences.

According to Yoginī Tantra117 Dīkṣā is of two types – (i) Sādhārā and (ii) Nirādhārā.

\[ \text{dvidhā dīkṣā ca sādhārā nirādhārā tathaiva ca} \]

Sādhārā has the right to Nitya, Naimittika and Kamya.118 Nirādhārā is the granter of liberation.119

According to some scholars120, Dīkṣā is of three fold – (i) Sāṃbhavi, (ii) Sākti, and (iii) Māntrī.

According to Śāradātilaka121, Dīkṣā is of four types – (i) Kriyāvatī, (ii) Varṇamayī, (iii) Kalāvatī, and (iv) Bedhamayī.

According to Kulārṇava Tantra122, Dīksa is of three types – (i) Sparśākhyā Dīkṣā, (ii) Dṛk Dīkṣā, and (iii) Manas Dīkṣā.

117. YOG, 2/6/163.
118. Ibid, 2/6/163.
119. Ibid, 2/6/164.
120. TIB, p. 20.
121. ŚĀṬ, 4/3.
122. KNT, 14/34.
According to the same Tantra, Dikṣā is of two types - (i) Vāhyā (External), Abhyantara (Internal).

Tantra has mentioned the names of other Dikṣā. They are as follows -

Moksaprada Dikṣā is divided into seven - (i) Kriya Dikṣā, (ii) Varna Dikṣā, (iii) Kalā Dikṣā, (iv) Sparśa Dikṣā, (v) Vāg Dikṣā, (vi) Drg Dikṣā, (vii) Mānasā Dikṣā etc.

Besides these, we find other names of Dikṣā. They are - (i) Samayā, (ii) Sadhikā, (iii) Putrikā, (iv) Vedhakā, (v) Puruṣa-Ācāryā, (vi) Nirvānā.

We find other names of Dikṣa - (i) Sambhavi Dikṣā, (ii) Kauliki Dikṣā, (iii) Paśupāsa-mocana-kārinī Dikṣā.

DIKṢĀ AND WOMAN GURU

Tantra has glorified the position of women by allowing them to hold the most honourable post of Guru. The Woman Guru must be qualified with the following qualities.

Sādhvi (Chaste), Sadācārā (Virtuous), Gurubhaktā (Devoted to Guru), Jitendrāyā (Self-restrained), Sarvamantrārthatattvajñā (Knower of all the meanings of Mantratattva), Suśilā (Good natured), Sarva-laksāṇa-sampannā (Having all qualities), Jāpikā (Engaged in uttering Mantras), Padmalocanā (Lotus-eyed), Ratnālaṁkārasamjukta (Wearer of jewels and

123. Ibid, 14/78.
124. Ibid, 14/39.
125. Ibid, 14/40.
126. Ibid, 14/56.
127. Ibid, 14/67.
128. RUY, 2/107-109
ornaments), Svarṇabhārana-bhūṣitā (Ornamented with gold), Śāntā (Pacified). Kulā (Born of noble family), Kulajā (Born of Kaula family), Candrāsya (Moon-faced) and Sarvabuddhiḥ (Experienced in all knowledge).

Tantra asserts that it is better and auspicious for a Sadhaka to be initiated by a Woman Guru. If he is initiated by his mother, it will bring him in eight times more benefits

\[ \text{striyo dikṣā śubhā proktā matuscāṣṭagupā smṛtā.} \]

A widow cannot be a Guru. But a widow having sons can be a Guru and initiate a Sadhaka into the Tantric Cult.

\[ \text{putriṇī vidhāvā grāhyā} \]

The role of mother as Guru occupies an important position in Tantra. If a son is initiated by his mother by her own Siddha Mantra, he will surely enjoy the world and then will attain salvation.

**Dīkṣā AND HUSBAND**

A husband cannot initiate his wife into the Tantric Cult.

\[ \text{na patnīm dīkṣayet bharta} \]

If the husband is initiated by Siddha Mantra, then he is able to initiate her.

\[ \text{siddhamantro yadi patistadā patnīm sa dīkṣayet.} \]

129. Ibid, 2/111.
130. RUY, 2/110.
131. Ibid, 2/111.
133. Ibid, 2/86.
134. Ibid, 2/87.
DIKṢĀ, FATHER AND DAUGHTER

A father cannot initiate his daughter -

*na pita dīkṣayet sutām.* 135

DIKṢĀ, FATHER AND SON

A father cannot initiate his son -

*na putraṇca dīkṣayet.* 136

But a father can initiate his son if it is Siddhamantra.

According to *Matsyasūkta*, a father can initiate his eldest son if he is specially qualified. 137

*nija-kula – tilakāya jyeṣṭhaputraya dadyāt*

DIKṢĀ AND BROTHER

A brother cannot initiate a brother 138

*tathā bhrātā bhrātaraiṁ naiva dīkṣayet*

But a brother also can initiate a brother by a Siddhamantra. 139

4. MANTRA

In all religious traditions, the words spoken in rituals are regarded as a special subclass of the entire corpus of possible utterances, in terms of their author, content, form, mode or context of delivery and so on.

135. Ibid, 2/86.
136. Ibid, 2/86.
137. Matsyasūkta as quoted in TTT, p. 345.
138. RUY, 2/86.
139. As quoted in TTT, p. 344.
There is no doubt that the role of Mantras is fundamental to Hinduism. The quoted words from *Principles of Tantra*, “From the mother’s womb to the funeral pyre - Hindu literally lives and dies in Mantra” sound very pompous nowadays. Nevertheless, they express a truth that for Tantric Hinduism - and for a thousand years, most Hinduism has been either Tantric or Tantricized - is underlined by the fact that Mantramāṇastra is often taken as a name for Tantramāṇastra. The doctrine of Tantra is that of the Mantras.

In Tantra, the position of special importance is assigned to mantras. The Mantram element has its most diversified play in Tantra. Mantrasadhana is the main theme in Tantra.

Tantric deities have three forms - as personifications (Devatāmūrti), as symbolic diagrams (Yantramūrti) and as sound (Mantramūrti). The sonic form of deity is a Mantra. Out of the Mantra is produced its deity.

**MEANING AND DERIVATION OF MANTRA**

Mantra is primarily a concentrative ‘thought form’ composed of nuclear syllables based on the esoteric properties believed to be inherent sound vibrations.

Mantra is also ‘sound formula’ formed by carefully ‘stringing together’ selected primordial vibrations (Bīja) according to their natural and cosmological relationship.

140. UM, p. 296.
141. SER, p. 83; HOD, v, ii, p. 1098.
142. CHI, iv, p. 250: Article - The Spirit and Culture of the Tantras.
143. TW, p. 132.
144. TY, p. 51; FUL, p. 182.
‘Man’ of ‘Mantra’ comes from the first syllable of Manana or thinking and from ‘Tantra’ or liberation from the bondage of the Sāṁsāra or phenomenal world.

The root ‘man’ which means to think, is also the root word of ‘Man’ (Mānava), who alone of all creation is properly a thinker. Mantra is the manifested Sabda-Brahma.

Tantra says that Mantra is so called because it is achieved by mental process.

\[
\text{mananāmantraṇamityāḥ}
\]

Piṅgala Tantra\(^{147}\) says that as the thought of the total knowledge emerges from the root ‘man’ and it saves from the bondage of Sāṁsāra, it is called Mantra –

\[
\text{mananāṁ viśva-vijñānaṁ trāpaṁ saṁsāra-bandhanāt}
\]

\[
yataḥ karoṁi saṁsiddhau mantra ityucyate tataḥ.
\]

Kulārṇava Tantra\(^{148}\) says that Mantra is so called because it saves from all dangers, as the Sādhaka thereby is led to ponder over God of immeasurable refulgence that is the only principle in the world.

Prapāṇicasāra\(^{149}\) also says that Mantra is so called since it saves from all dangers.

Meru Tantra\(^{150}\) says that as Mantra is the performer of Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa, it is so called.

Agehananda Bharati summarises the definition of Mantra,

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145. SER, p. 85.
146. TTT, p. 91.
147. Piṅgala Tantra as quoted in ATV, p. 80.
148. KNT, 17/54.
149. PRAS, 5/2.
150. ME, 6/3.
A Mantra is a quasi-morpheme or a series of quasi-morphemes, or a series of mixed genuine and quasi-morphems arranged in conventional patterns, based on codified esoteric traditions, and passed on from one preceptor to one disciple in the course of a prescribed initiation ritual.151

**FORMATION OF MANTRA**

A Mantra is composed of letters. Letters and their combinations as syllables and words and Mantras are originated from Kuṇḍalinī152 which is a form of Śabda Brahma. The seed form of Śabda Brahma is Parā, the budding state is Paśyantī, the unmanifested blooming state is Madhyamā and the expressed state is Baikhari.153

Śāradātilaka describes154—

Śakti is originated from Śabda Brahmamayī-Kuṇḍalinī. From Śakti emerges primordial sound Nāda and from Nāda emerges Nirodhikā, from Nirodhikā emerges Ardhendu and again Bindu, and from Bindu, Paśyantī, Madhyamā and Baikhari sounds have been originated.

In relation to the formation of Mantra, Sir John Woodroffe offers an explanation,155

'Nada is thus the first emanative stage in the production of Mantra. The second is Bindu or Śabda-Brahma. The third is Tribindu (Bindu, Nāda and Bīja) or Kāmakalā. The fourth is the production of Śabda as Matrkās which are the subtle state of the subsequently manifested gross letters (Varṇas) and the last is these gross letters (Śūnya-śabda), which compose the manifested Śabda or Mantra composed of letters (Varna).

151. TT, p. 111.
152. ŚĀT, 1/51-53.
153. Saubhāgya Bhāskar as quoted in TMSB, p. 86.
154. ŚĀT, 1/103-104.
syllables (Pada) and sentences (Vākya). Thus Mantra ultimately derives from Nāda which is itself the Kriyā-śaktirūpā aspect of Śiva-Śakti who are the Supreme Nāda and Supreme Speech (Parā Vāk).

**MANTRA AND ITS TRANSLATION**

Mantra is intoned in the proper way according to letter (Varṇa) and rhythm (Svara). For these reasons a Mantra, when translated ceases to be a Mantra. The sounds heard and uttered in the translation are not the body of the Devatā. We are then no longer dealing with the same sound, but with a translation in another language, with other sounds giving the meaning to the intellect of the Sanskrit Mantra. This shows that Mantra is not mere individual thinking but a particular sound body of consciousness.156

**WORDS AND MANTRA**

All mantras are words, but all words are not Mantras. An ordinary collection of words is something gross. These are all else, forms of Śakti. But the Mantra of which we speak is the Devatā Himself or Herself in Mantrabody. Mantra is thus a mass of radiant energy.157

**LETTERS, MANTRA AND BODY**

All the sounds are made up of fifty or fifty one letters of the Sanskrit Alphabet. All the sounds are modes and modifications of the one power of the Mother. These letters are,159 therefore, called not the Mother Herself, but Mātrkās, the mothers who...

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156. GL, p. 306.
158. ŚAM, 1/79; GUP, 11/3, 14.
159. GĀT, 1/89; PTK, 1/4.
attend the Great Mother and approximate Her to a great extent.160

A common practice in Tantric worship is to make Mantra out of each one of the letters and associate them with different parts of the body. The idea behind it is to feel that the different parts of our body are but the objectification of the different aspects of the Great Mother.161

**TYPES OF MANTRA**

The most important type of Mantra is the Bīja Mantra or the Mantra as a seed,162 that makes visible the form of the Devatā. These Bīja Mantras cannot be called language since they convey no meaning to ordinary men.

These Mantras are generally mono-syllabic sounds. Every God or Goddess has got a Bīja Mantra. The Bīja said to be the micro-cosmic sound representation of the ultimate essence of a God or Goddess.

Some of the Bījas are given below163

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bija</th>
<th>Devata</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAUM</td>
<td>ŚIVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRIM</td>
<td>KĀLI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRIM</td>
<td>MAHĀ-LAKŚMI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRIM</td>
<td>TĀRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUM</td>
<td>DURGĀ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>SARASVATI</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAM</td>
<td>GANEŚA</td>
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<tr>
<td>KLIM</td>
<td>KṚṢṇA</td>
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<td>RĀM</td>
<td>RĀMA</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAM</td>
<td>GANŚĀ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAM</td>
<td>MANASĀ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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160. AIR, p. 97.
161. Ibid, p.36.
162. HOD, v, ii, p. 1099
163. ROT. Pp. 75-76.
Another type of Mantra\textsuperscript{164} that is frequently found in Tantra texts is the series of mono-syllabic, disyllabic and tri-syllabic words which have apparently no meaning either separately or in combination.

**MANTRA AND PRAYER**

Mantra is not the same thing as prayer. For a prayer a person may employ any words that he may choose, but in the case of a Mantra, definite letters are considered necessary which are deemed to be the forms in which Śakti manifests Herself to the worshipper.\textsuperscript{165}

**NUMBER OF MANTRA**

According to Tantra, Mantras are innumerable.\textsuperscript{166}

*Mahānirvāna Tantra* says\textsuperscript{167} –

O Beloved! There are tens of millions upon tens of millions, nay a hundred millions, nay countless Mantras that thou hast –

\[
\text{tava mantrā hyasaṅkhyaṭāḥ kotikotyarbhudastathā}
\]

According to some Tantra texts, there are seven crore Mantras.\textsuperscript{168} Some say there are nine crore Mantras.\textsuperscript{169}

Tradition recognizes the number of Mantra as infinite. But, in fact, the number of Mantras in regular use is finite.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{164} AIR, p. 37.
\item \textsuperscript{165} HOD, v, ii, p. 1100.
\item \textsuperscript{166} KNT, 15/20.
\item \textsuperscript{167} MN, 5/18.
\item \textsuperscript{168} NET, 8/49; MR, 11/64; UM, p. 433.
\item \textsuperscript{169} HOD, v, ii, p. 1099.
\end{itemize}
VARIETIES OF MANTRA

Numerous varieties of Mantra called Kavaca, Hṛdaya, Upahṛdaya, Netra, Asta Rakṣā and so forth are specified in the Tantric texts.170

DIVISION OF MANTRA

Mantras are divided into male, female and neuter.171 Masculine Mantras end in ‘HUM’ and ‘PHAT’. Female Mantras end with ‘SVĀHĀ’. Neuter Mantras end in ‘NAMAH’.

Some Tantra texts divide Mantras into two172 – (i) Saumya and (ii) Saura. Saumya Mantras are Mantras of female deities. Saura Mantras are Mantras of male deities.

MANTRA AND MANTRA CAITANYA

Mantra becomes Caitanya. Mantra without conscious force is of no consequence. Mantras that are alive with their life force, give all success173 –

\[
\text{mantrāścaitanyasaḥitaḥ sarvasiddhikaraḥ smṛṭaḥ}
\]

Bereft of all this conscious-power Mantras are combinations of mere letters.172

\[
\text{caitanyo-rahitamantrāḥ proktā varṇāstau kevalam.}
\]

Mantra-caitanya occurs when Varnamaya Śakti rises higher after piercing Śaṭcakra.175

\[
\text{ṣaṭcakraṁca tathā bhitvā śabdā-rūpaṁ sanātanaṁ}
\]

\[
\text{nāḍa-vindu-sāmāyuktāṁ ca ityait parikārtitaṁ.}
\]

170. Ibid, p. 1102.
171. KUT, 1/1-72; ATV, p. 80.
172. Prayogasāra as quoted in PT, p. 65.
173. KNT, 15/61; GAND, 29/24.
174. KNT, 15/62.
175. KUT, 5/4.
MANTRA AND KNOWLEDGE OF MEANING

The utterance of a Mantra without the knowledge of its meaning or of the Mantra method is a mere movement of the lips and nothing more.176

AWAKENING OF MANTRA

Mantra sleeps.177 Mantra is ‘awakened’ by Purascarana. Purascarana is a method of repeating Mantra with accurate rhythmic pronunciation. According to Kangkalamālī Tantra178, there are various ways for making a Mantra living. Thus it is stated that on the day of Aṣṭami, Navami or Caturdaśī or in a lonely place or on an Āsana made of human bones, one should mutter the Mantra from sunrise to sunset. After finishing the process the Sādhaka worships the Guru and pays him Dakṣinā.

REPETITION OF MANTRA AND IMPORTANCE OF 108

Mantras are to be repeated 8, 10, 108, 1008 or thousands of times or lakhs of times in order to secure full effect.179 But special emphasis is laid on 108 times.180 In this context four views are placed here –

a) A person breathes 21,600 times in 24 hours. When divided by 2 it becomes 10800 and 00 resembling 2 horizons – the North and the South poles emphasize 108 as basic.181

176. LG, p. 26; KNT, 15/60; SAR, 1/1
177. GL, p.309.
178. KAG, 5/186-190.
179. HOD, v, ii, p. 1103.
180. ATV, p.438.
181. SSI, p. 42.
b) The sky is divided into 27 Nakṣatras each having 4 sectors of 30° each. i.e.,
\[27 \times 4 = 108.\] \[182\]
c) The moon crosses 1 Nakṣatra in 54 hours which, if divided into day and night,
gives \[54 \times 2 = 108.\] \[183\]
d) Ten or its multiplies belong to the Aryan cadre and eight to the Dravidian.
When in the post-vedic age the supremacy of the Brāhmaṇa priests was
gradually declining under the pressure of heterodox sects denying the
authority of the Vedas, they had to make a compromise with the Dravidians
and the Australoids. \[184\]

**BIRTH AND DEATH OF MANTRA**

According to Tantra\[185\], Mantra is living conscious. So it has birth and death.
Hence Mantra has Jātakāśaūca and Mrāśaūca. \[186\] Mantra is to be repeated for removing
these two Aśaucas. Siddhi is obtained if a Mantra is made free from these two Aśaucas.

**FAULTY AND FAULTLESS MANTRA**

Only faultless Mantra is powerful. The Mantras that are faulty cannot protect the
Śādhaka. \[188\]

\[chintnādi-duṣṭā ye mantrā pālayanti na sādhakam\]

\[182. \] Ibid, p. 42.
\[183. \] Ibid, p. 42.
\[184. \] ROT, p. 77.
\[185. \] As quoted in KNT, p. 376.
\[186. \] Ibid, 15/58.
\[187. \] Ibid, p. 15/59.
\[188. \] ŚĀT, 2/59.
Śāradāīlaka mentions about fifty Doṣas (faults) of Mantra. It also defines those Doṣas. Kulāryava Tantra mentions sixty faults of Mantra. Tantra prescribes ten Saṁskāras for the removal of Doṣas of Mantra. Those ten Saṁskāras are -
Janana, Ṣivana, Tāḍana, Bodhana, Abhiṣeka, Vimalikaraṇa, Āpyāyana, Tarpana, Dīpana, Gupti.

USE OF MANTRA

Tantric Mantra is concerned with the Tantric rituals. So a Mantra cannot be used without some reason. It is not uttered as an involuntary noise but for a purpose. An intention surely is always there. More specially Tantric texts assign a use and thus a purpose, to Mantras. The name of the sage, the metre, the deity and the Viniyoga are mentioned in the use of Mantra.

MANTRA-SIDDHI

Besides Puraścaraṇa seven ways for Mantra-Siddhi are prescribed in Tantra. They are - Bhrāmaṇa, Rodhana, Vaśya, Piḍana, Šoṣaṇa, Poṣaṇa, Dahana.

190. Ibid, 2/66-100.
191. KNT, 15/66-71.
194. HOD, v, ii, p. 1103.
Kulārṇava Tantra\textsuperscript{196} also deals with the ways of Mantra- Siddhi.

**MANTRA, DEVATĀ AND GURU**

According to Tantra, Mantra, Devata and Guru are the same.\textsuperscript{197}

\textit{devatā-guru-mantrānāṁ ekabhāvanamucyate.}

**MANTRA AND COLOUR**

Every colour has its life – sound and in turn, every sound has its form – colour. All Mantras have their corresponding colours and forms. Tantra indicates the colours of the various vital forces observable by trans-vision.\textsuperscript{198}

**POWER OF MANTRA**

Mantras have the power to remove ignorance (Avidyā), reveal truth (Dharma) and realize release (Mokṣa). \textit{Vākyapadiya} makes clear that repeated use of correct Mantras remove all impurities, purifies all knowledge and leads to release.\textsuperscript{199}

Under vivration small particles of matter group themselves into definite geometrical patterns and figures corresponding exactly to the quality, strength and rhythm of sound.\textsuperscript{200}

\textsuperscript{196}. KNT, 15/16-18.

\textsuperscript{197}. MM, 2/1/6.

\textsuperscript{198}. TAP, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{199}. As quoted in UM, p. 173.

\textsuperscript{200}. TAP, p. 18.
5. YANTRA

One of the most important characteristic items in Tantric worship is Yantra. Yantra is a diagram engraved, drawn or painted on metal, stone, paper or other material. Tantra defines Yantra\(^1\) –

\[ \text{duḥkha – nīryantarāṇḍa yantramityaḥuṣṭantra-vedinah.} \]

As it lessens sorrows, it is called Yantra. Yantra is of two kinds – (i) one to be worn on the neck, arm or lock of hair as an amulet, (ii) one taken as identical with the deity.

According to some scholars, Yantra is of the following types.\(^2\)


*Kularṇava Tantra*\(^3\) says,

Yantra is a development of Mantra and a deity is apprehended in the form of Mantra. The deity worshipped on the Yantra immediately becomes favourable. Yantra is also called because it removes all pain arising from such fault as love and anger.

Many Tantra works deal with Yantra. Some of them are *Prapāṇcasaṭāra Tantra*, *Śāradātilaka*, *Kāmakalāvilāsa*, *Nitya-ṣodāśikārṇava*, *Nityotsava*, *Tantrarāja Tantra*, *Mantra-mahodadhi*, *Kaulāvalinirṇaya* and *Meru Tantra*.\(^4\)

*Śāradātilaka*\(^5\) mentions Viyad Yantra, Vāyavya Yantra, Āgneya Yantra, Vāruṇja Yantra, and Pārthiva Yantra.

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\(^{201}\) ATV, p. 668

\(^{202}\) YSK, p. 36.

\(^{203}\) KNT, 6/85-87.

\(^{204}\) HOD, v, ii, p. 1136.

\(^{205}\) ŚĀT, 6/51-63.
Different Tantra texts mention various kinds of Yantra. Of them, Śrīcakra is the most important Yantra.

There are nine triangles, five of which have their apex pointing upwards. The Bindu is situated in the smallest triangle pointing downwards. Then there are two pairs of ten triangles, then eight-petalled lotus, sixteen-petalled lotus, then three circles, then three boundary lines with four gates, these two latter being the outer sections of the Yantra and the lotuses of eight and sixteen petals being the inner section of the Yantra. There are all 43 angles. Some works make 44. The part of the Cakra within the boundary lines is called Bhūpura. The worship of Yantra is Bahirāga.206

The Tantric Sādhaka aims at realizing his identity with the Yantra, the Mantra, the Guru and Devī. Tantra says that the Sādhaka may secure whatever he wants by worshipping Devī with Yantra.207

Yantra may be drawn up for wicked purposes. Śāradatilaka208 describes the Āgneya Yantra to be drawn on a pile in a cemetery and buried near the house of one's enemy for the latter's destruction.

The Tantrarāja Tantra209 provides that Yantras that yield all desired objects should be engraved, painted or drawn on pieces of gold, silver or copper or on cloth, birch leaf with paste of sandal wood, agalochum, camphor, musk or saffron and should be worn on the head or the arms or neck, waist or wrist or one should worship them after placing them somewhere.

206. HOD, v, ii, p. 1137.
207. Ibid, p. 1138.
208. ŚĀT, 7/55-57.
209. TART, 8/30-32.
Yantra functions as a positive physical object which enables the Sadhaka to concentrate on the meaning and significance of the Mantra he is utilizing. It is believed that when the Sadhaka concentrates upon the Mantra utilizing the particular Yantra as a physical object that Yantra becomes an idol of the Deity and the physical part of the object begins to expand within the mind of the Sadhaka. His own personality slowly gets transformed from the original quality of crudeness and becomes free from egoistic tendencies.210

6. PŪJĀ

In the most general terms both the Vedic and the Tantric rituals involve a preliminary series of transformations aimed at making the concrete elements involved in the site, utensils, offering substances and human participants fit for divine service.211

In Tantra this is followed by the worship of the Tantric Goddesses. Tantric Goddesses are specially Daśamahāvidyās – Kālī, Tārā, Śoḍaśī, Bhuvanesvarī, Bhairavi, Chinnamastā, Dhūmāvatī, Bagalā, Mātaṅgī, Kamalā.

The mode of worship slightly differs according to different sects. Some common modes of worship of Tantric deities are sorted out here.

The special feature of the Tantric Pūjā is that it is basically a personal-worship service of a single individual, often performed in the privacy of one's home. Even when a priest assisted by several attendants performs the Pūjā in a temple, the rite retains much of the same character, only now, personal devotion has become public duty.212

211. UM, p. 98.
212. Ibid, p. 98.
Puja is the best method for establishing relation between man and the Supreme Being.\textsuperscript{213}

**TYPES OF PUJA**

Puja is of three types.\textsuperscript{214} Nityā, Naimittikā and Kāmyā.

\begin{quote}
\textit{nityam naimittikam kamyam sapeksam purva-purvatah}.
\end{quote}

**PLACE OF PUJA**

The place of Puja is suitably selected. It is better to select a solitary place.\textsuperscript{215}

\begin{quote}
yatra tatra narah pujaṁ nirjane kurute ca yah
	\textit{tasyāḍatte svayaṁ devīpatraṁ puspam phalam jalam}.
\end{quote}

A Sadhaka worships Devī in the lonely place. That Devī Herself accepts leaves, flowers, fruits and water offered to Her.

**FACE DIRECTION OF THE SĀDHAKA**

Well-bathed Sādhaka sits facing the east or the north at the time of Puja.\textsuperscript{216}

A Sādhaka should salute Gaṅapati and his Guru with folded hand and worship Goddesses facing the east or the north. But in case of Śiva Puja, a Sādhaka should always worship facing the north.\textsuperscript{217}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{213} CC, p. 94.
\item \textsuperscript{214} Svatantra Tantra as quoted in ATV, p. 438.
\item \textsuperscript{215} Kālikāpurāṇa as quoted in ATV, p. 250.
\item \textsuperscript{216} Sarasamuccaya as quoted in ATV, p. 325.
\item \textsuperscript{217} ATV, p. 325.
\end{itemize}
ÄSANA OF THE WORSHIPPER

The Āsana on which the Sādhaka sits and worships, is made of either black de ■ skin, tiger's skin or yellow, red and white blankets.218

But Kālī Tantra219 says that the Sādhaka should not worship Mother Kālikā without sitting on Mṛtāsana.

BHŪTA-ŚUDDHI

The purification of elements is a necessary part of the Tantric Pūjā. It involves visualizing the refining of the worshipper's own body by a process of inwardly re-enacting the destruction of the cosmos and the re-absorption of the basic elements into primal undifferentiated matter.

The human body is composed of five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether. So the purification of body is called Bhūta-śuddhi by the scholars.220

The purification of elements in the human body with the connection of Brahman is also called Bhūta-śuddhi.221

NYĀSA

Nyāsa is the necessary part of the Tantric Pūjā. All the parts of the body are sensitized by placing the finger-tips and palms of the right hand on various sensory awareness zones. A common practice is to accompany each placing of the fingers on the body with a Mantra, so that with the Mantra's powerful resonance the adept may gradually

project the power of divinity into his own body. Tantra provides different kinds of Nyāsa.222

**MUDRĀ**

Mudrā is stressed to remove lethargy and to stimulate the body. It is a non-verbal mode of communication and self-expression. It consists of repetitive gestures and finger postures. Ritual postures of the hand provoke a subjective reaction in the mind of the adept. Mudrās are symbolic archetypal signs, based on gestural finger patterns, taking the place, but retaining the efficacy, of the spoken word. They are used to evoke in the mind ideas symbolizing divine powers or deities themselves in order to intensify the adept's concentration. The composition of Mudrās is based on certain movements of the fingers which are highly stylized forms of gestural communication.223

It is said that there are 108 Mudrās, of which 55 are commonly used. The Matsyas Mudrā is formed in offering Arghya. The Yoni-Mudrā is shown with the object of invoking the Devī to come and take Her place before the worshipper, the Yoni being considered to be Her Pīṭha or Yantra. The Upāsanā Mudrā is the outward expression of inner resolve.

**UPACĀRA**

Upacāra is of four types – (i) Aṣṭādasopacāra, (ii) Śoḍāsopacāra, (iii) Daśopacāra, (iv) Pañcopacāra. Aṣṭādasopacāra consists of Āsana (Seat of the Image), Svāgata (Welcome), Pādyā (Water for washing the feet), Arghya (Offering of unboiled

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222. Ibid, pp. 346-353.

223. TW, p. 141.

224. ATV, p. 370.
rice, flowers, sandal paste, dūrva grass etc., to the Devata in the Kuśi), Ācamaniya (Water for sipping), Snāna (Water for bathing), Vastra (Cloth), Upavita (Sacred thread), Bhūṣana (Jewels), Gandha (Scent and Sandal), Puṣpa (Flowers), Dhūpa (Incense stick), Dīpa (Light), Naivedya (Food), Darpana (Mirror), Mālyānulepana (Garland), Namaskāra (Salutation), Visarjana (Immersion).

Śoḍaśopacāra consists of
Pāḍya, Arghya, Ācamana, Snāna, Vasana, Bhūṣana Gandha, Puṣpa, Dhūpa, Dīpa, Naivedya, Ācamana, Tāmbula, Arcana-stotra, Darpana, Namaskāra.

Daśopacāra consists of
Pāḍya, Arghya, Ācamana, Madhuparka, Ācamana Gandha, Puṣpa, Dhūpa, Dīpa, Naivedya

Pañcopacāra consists of
Gandha, Puṣpa, Dhūpa, Dīpa, Naivedya.

In absence of Pañcopacāra, only Gandha and Puṣpa are required. In absence of these, only ‘devotion’ is required.

abhāve gandha-puṣpāḥbhavam iadabhāve tu bhaktitah

In case of scarcity of all Upacāras, ‘thought’ becomes Upacāra.

sarvopacāravastūnāmabhāve bhāvanaiva hi

Besides these items of worship, beating of drums, ringing of bells and presentation of songs and dance are also prescribed.

228. Ibid, p. 372.
230. Ibid, p. 408.
PUJADHARA

According to *Yoginī Tantra*, Siva Linga, Books like Caṇḍikā, Sarvatobhadra, Yantra, Pratimā, Water and Śālagrāma Śilā are the Pujadhara. In all these, Śakti is to be worshipped.

*Kaulāvaliya Tantra* says that Mother Caṇḍikā is to be worshipped in Puṣṇa Yantra as Devī resides there where Aparājita, Jāba, Śukla or Raktā Karavi or Droma flowers are available.

PRATIMĀ

Pratimā is nothing but means for aiding Dhyāna or Japa. A Sadhaka reaches the highest goal through it. Pratimā worship is a means to realisation. When we gain our ends, the means fall away.

In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, we find references to eight different types of images:

Images made of stone, wood, metal, sand, jewel and those which are in picture plastered or conceived in mind.

```
sailī dārumayī lauhī lepyā lekhyā ca saikāli
manomayī maṇimayī pratimāṣṭavidhā smṛtā.
```

The Image should be correspond to the Dhyānamantra. Inspite of criticisms against the worship of Image, it is scientifically justified.

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231. Yoginī Tantra as quoted in ATV, p. 667.
233. ROT, p. 82.
234. BGP, 11/27/12.
Some scholars justify the worship of Image with the help of the Arundhati Nyāya.235 Vyāsiṣṭha is a name of star among constellation of Ursa Major (Great Bear). Arundhati is another star which resides by the side of Vaśiṣṭha. Arundhata is not easily recognized for its small size. Vaśiṣṭha is shown first in order to recognize Arundhati. When Vaśiṣṭha is known, Arundhati is also known easily. Scholars call it Arundhati Nyāya. The significance of this symbolism is that gross form is essential to the identification of subtle form. Here lies the importance of the worship of Pratima. Symbolic form becomes conscious form.

A simile is also given by the scholars to justify the worship of Pratima.236

The milk of the cow is produced from the blood of the cow. Blood circulates through veins in the whole body of the cow. But milk is not found in any other part of the body of the cow except in buttocks.

Though the Supreme Being is omnipresent, His presence is perfectly revealed in Pratima.

Moreover, modern psychologists admit that mind cannot concept anything without its image.237

Tantric images are worshipped after the performance of all the rituals. Śakti can take any form that is imagined and worshipped by the Śādhaka. The Divine Mother (Śakti) favours the Śādhaka with Her grace and appears before the Śādhaka.238

\[
\text{seyam śaktir mahāmāyā - saccidānanda - rūpiṇī}
\]

\[
rūpaṁ vibharti vṛupā ca bhaktānugrahahe tave
\]

235. CC, pp. 94-95.
236. Ibid, p. 97.
237. Ibid, p. 98.
238. Devī Bhāgavata as quoted in HDS, p. 97.
PRĀNA-PRATISTHĀ

It is the most essential ritual in performing Pūjā. Śakti that resides in human beings is attributed to the Ādhāra of Worship. So the Sādhaka worships the Ādhāra.

The deity is not descending from the distant heaven of the Vedic cosmology but drawn out of the very heart of the Sādhaka and asked to become manifested in some concrete object in the ritual.\(^{239}\)

VISARJANA

When the worship is over, the Sādhaka re-installs Her Spirit into his body. It is called Visarjana or immersion.

\[\text{saṁhāramudrayā tattejaḥ puspaiḥ sārdham svahṛdayamānāyaḥ.}\] \(^{240}\)

7. CAKRA-PŪJĀ

The Tantric Cult is bitterly criticized for Cakra Pūjā in which Pañcamakāra Sādhana is performed. An equal number of men and women without distinction of caste\(^ {241}\) and even near blood relations secretly meet at night and sit in a circle.\(^ {242}\)

The Goddess is represented by a Yantra. There is a leader of the Cakra. The regulations are that only persons who have attained the status of Vīra are to be admitted.

The woman partner is known as Śakti. Śakti is generally selected from and among the following.\(^ {243}\)

\(^{239}\). UM, p. 112.
\(^{240}\). As quoted in HDS, p. 100.
\(^{241}\). MN, 8/195; KNT, 8/103.
\(^{242}\). KNT, 8/105.
\(^{243}\). Revaī Tantra as quoted in PT, p. 548.
Nāṭī, Kāpālikā, Vesya, Mālinī, Kaṅgkāmālinī, Caṇḍālī, Kulālī, Rajakānī, Nāpitāṅganā, Gopinī, Yoginī, Śuddhā, Brāhmaṇī, Rājakanyakā, Kocāṅganā, Saṅkhakārīna.

_Mahānirvāṇa Tantra_ favours one's own wife for the Fifth Tattva in _Cakra Pūja_.

The place of _Cakra Pūja_ must have a pleasant arona, with incense burning, and a serene atmosphere. Castor oil lamps, which produce a violet light, are considered an ideal stimulant.245

While in a Cakra, one must abjure fickleness, gossip, garrulity, spitting etc.246

\[ cakramadhye vṛthālāpāṁ cāṅcālyāṁ bahubhūṣaṇām \]

\[ nisṭhīṁyamadhyāṁḥ varṇabhedaṁ vivarjayaṁ. \]

This rite is generally to be performed secretly.247 But _Mahānirvāṇa Tantra_ says,248

When, however, the Kali Age is in full sway, the circle should not be concealed

\[ prabhale kalikāle tu na kuryoḥcakragopanam \]

There are various kinds of Cakra, such as the Vīra Cakra, Rāja Cakra, Deva Cakra and Mahā Cakra.249

This ritual begins with the initiation of the participants by the Guru or Cakreśvāra. He is the leader of the Cakra. Each Śādwhaka sits with his Śakti on his left. The Guru sits in the center of the Cakra with his Śakti.250 Thereafter, each Śādwhaka worships his Śakti uttering Mantras and touching different parts of her body.251

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244. MN, 6/14.
245. TW, p. 187.
246. MN, 8/191; KNT, 11/29.
247. KNT, 11/79.
248. MN, 8/190.
249. IT, p. 122
251. PT, p. 549.
The ritual progresses by transforming the ordinary woman into Śakti. The Sādhaka views Her as an incarnation of Śakti.

After the consumption of the first four Makāras, the Fifth Makāra (Maithuna) is consumed.252

In Cakra Pūjā, sex plays the vital role of transforming a man and a woman into Bhairava and Bhairavi respectively.253

8. KUMĀRĪ PŪJĀ

Mahākāla Samhitā says254 that Virgin worship is the best means to win Lord Śiva.

In Tantra, Kumārī or Virgin of different ages is categorized as follows255:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AGE (in years)</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AGE (in years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SANDHYĀ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KĀLASANDARBAHĀ</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SARASVATI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>APARĀJITĀ</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIDHĀMURTI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>RUDRAṆI</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KĀLIKĀ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>BHAIṆAVI</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBHAGĀ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MAḤALAKŚMI</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMĀ</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>PĪṬHA-NĀYIKĀ</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MĀLINĪ</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>KSETRAṆA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUBJIKĀ</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>AMBIKĀ</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

252. Ibid, p. 549.

253. TW, p. 184.

254. Mahākāla Saṃhitā as quoted in PPG, p. 39.

255. RYU, 6/93-96.
Kumāris are worshipped on different Tithis in the following order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITHI</th>
<th>AGE OF THE KUMARIS</th>
<th>TITHI</th>
<th>AGE OF THE KUMARIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRATIPADA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NAVAMI</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVIṬIYA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>DAŚAMI</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRĪṬIYA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>EKĀDAŚI</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>CATURTHI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>DVĀDAŚI</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAṆCAMI</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>TRAYODAŚI</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAṢṬHI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>CATURDAŚI</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAPTAMI</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>DAY OF THE FULL MOON</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>ĀṢṬAMI</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>DAY OF THE NEW MOON</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kumārī Pūjā is specially prescribed during the Navarātri festival. Nine forms of Kumārī are Hṛlekhā, Gaganā, Raktā, Matocchaṣamā, Karālikā, Icchā, Jñāna, Krīvī, Durgā.

Kumārī Pūjā is generally held on the auspicious occasions of great festivals, holidays and Mahānavamī.

In Kāmyā and Naimittikā Pūjā, only one virgin is worshipped. But in Durgā Pūjā, a group of virgins is worshipped. The most beautiful Kumārī is selected Chief Kumārī. She is worshipped first. Other virgins are also worshipped later on. The Kumārī is taken away to the temple for worship with the sounds of drum beating and music.

After performing Pūjā, the Kumārī is offered Pāḍya, Arghya, Dhūpa, flowers and scented sandals. She is given honorarium after circumambulation.

256. ATV, p. 640.
257. PPG, pp. 40-41.
258. ATV, p. 640, UDN2, p. 710
259. PPG, p. 39.
261. ATV, p. 640.
Kumārī Pūjā bears highly significant psychological importance. In India, in comparison to Western countries, the period of adolescence starts early as Indian children achieve puberty earlier because of the favourable climatic and cultural factors. Among girls the puberty period is usually between 11 to 16. Sexual development is the central fact of adolescence. It is the period of stresses and strains. The Hadow Report in England sums up:

There is a tide which begins to rise in the veins of youth at the age of eleven or twelve. It is called by the name of adolescence. If that tide can be taken at the flood, and a new voyage begun in the strength and along the flow of its current, we think that it will move on to fortune.

For the proper sublimation of sex instinct and channelization of sexual energies, Kumārī Pūjā was probably introduced by the great Tantrics who were psychologists also. It is scientifically proved that when a child remains in a mother’s womb, that mother’s behaviour influences the child in womb much. So this particular ritual concerned only with the Kumāris has much importance. If motherhood is attributed to a Kumārī during this period, ‘it will move on to fortune’.

9. BALI

Human sacrifice and Animal sacrifice were common to the Hindu tradition of worshipping some goddesses. According to some scholars, human sacrifice or offering of human flesh finds mentions in the Rgveda, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, Vājasaneyi Sūkhita and Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, at the time of performing the Asvamedha Yajna.

262. AEP, p. 279.
263. GEP, p. 153.
264. POS, p. 86.
**HUMAN SACRIFICE**

The Puranic Literature abounds in instances regarding the practice of human sacrifice. Human sacrifice was abolished by the British Govt. during their rule in India. Tantra also mentions Human Sacrifice. In *Kālikāpurāṇa* the method of human sacrifice is described. But it prohibits the sacrifice of woman. *Kālikāpurāṇa* further says that in some cases women are to be sacrificed.

Though human sacrifice is prohibited, the offering of one's own flesh and blood is still in practice. The Śādhaka's own blood is preferred.

**ANIMAL SACRIFICE**

Animal sacrifice was in vogue in the Vedic period. *Yogini Tantra* prescribes different kinds of animals for different castes. Birds are also included in Animal Sacrifice.

Different Tantra texts and works prescribe different kinds of animals and birds for Animal sacrifice.

*Yogini Tantra* prefers the following animals

Śoṣatuṇḍa, Lulāyaka, Vārāha, Chāgala, Cāmara, Khaḍgī, Kūrma, Śvetagriva Godhikā, Gandhamṛgā, Mūṣaka, Karāla, Kṣudra Mārijā etc.

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265. Ibid, p. 86.
266. YOG, 2/7/158.
267. KPU, 67/80-81, 90.
269. Ibid, 67/171-172, 182.
270. As quoted in PBS, p. 156.
271. ŚAŚ, p. 67.
272. YOG, 2/7/157-158.
273. Ibid, 2/7/158-164.
Kalika Purana mentions the following animals.274

All birds, Kacchapa, Graha, Matsya, Nine kinds of Mrga, Mahisa, Godhika, G (cow), Chaga, Ruru, Sukara, Khashi, Krishna, Sarbha, Sardula etc.

Mundamala Tantra speaks of the following animals275 —

Chaga, Meza, Mahisa, Mrga, Birds, Godhika etc.

Mahanirvana Tantra prescribes ten kinds of animal276 —

Mrga, Chaga, Meza, Lulpa, Sukara, Sallaki, Saska, Godha, Kurma, Khadgi etc.

Kumari Tantra277 and Tripura Bhairavi Tantra278 also prescribe different kinds of animal and even fish.

AGE FOR ANIMALS TO BE SACRIFICED

Age of animals to be sacrificed is also fixed in Tantra. Since the attaining of the age of six months an animal is suitable for sacrifice.279

pasparnca samasati paratasca balabhavet

SACRIFICE OF FEMALE ANIMALS

Tantra prohibits the sacrifice of female animals.280

sripaurna ca hantavyah

But Kalika Purana281 and Yogini Tantra282 allow female animals in a group.

274. KPU, 67/3-5.
275. MM, 2/4/6-7.
276. MN, 6/104-105.
278. TBT, 14/5.
279. YOG, 2/7/164.
280. TGU, p. 29 ; MN, 6/7.
281. KPU, 67/102.
282. YOG, 2/7/169.
RITES CONNECTD WITH BALI

Following rites are connected with the Animal sacrifice. Suppose a goat is sacrificed. The well-bathed goat is placed before the Devi. Uttering Bhūtāpasāraṇa Mantra, , Phāṭ Mantra, the Sadhaka worships the goat. Then he says auṃ paśupātayā vidmahe ....... Mantra in the goat’s ear. Then the Khadga is worshipped with the Mantra

brahma-viṣṇu-śiva-śakti-yutaya khadgāya namah.

Then the goat is dedicated and is placed on the land and chopped off. It is ordained that the head of the animal to be sacrificed should be chopped off by one stroke only.

chedayet īkṣyā-khaḍgena prahāreṇa sakṛt budhah

After Balidāna the flesh with blood of the goat is offered to the Goddess.

ŚIVA-BALI

Importance of Śiva-Bali is mentioned in Kaulāvalīnirṇaya. The Sadhaka who does not perform Śiva Bali is not worthy of worshipping Devī. Devī comes in the guise of Śivā. So Śivā is to be pleased.

283. ATV, p. 240.
284. MN, 6/113.
285. ATV, p. 240.
286. Matsya Sūkta as quoted in Ibid, p. 239.
288. KN, 9/44.
Sivä Bali is performed at the root of Bel tree, in the field and in the cremation ground.\textsuperscript{289}

Food consisting of mainly meat is offered at night.\textsuperscript{290}

10.\textsc{P}A\textsc{N}CA-MAK\textsc{A}RA

Generally Tantra invites attacks from all corners only for its Pañca Makāra Sādhanā. No other philosophy in the world has introduced such a Sādhanā in their rituals.

MEANING OF PA\textsc{N}CA-MAK\textsc{A}RA

Pañca-Makāra means a Sādhanā with Five Makāras. These Five Makāras are Madya (Wine), Māṁsa (Meat), Matsya (Fish), Mudrā (Grains or parched rice) and Maithuna (Copulation).

\textit{madyam māṁsām matsyāṁ mudrā maithunameva ca}.\textsuperscript{291}

Each word of Panca-Makāra begins with the Sanskrit letter ‘Ma’. So it is termed as Panca-Makāra.

Madya means wine. Tantra has discussed the process of preparing wine.\textsuperscript{292} Various kinds of wine are mentioned in Tantra.\textsuperscript{293} Madya paves the way for liberation.\textsuperscript{294} It purifies the mind.\textsuperscript{295}

\textsuperscript{289} Kulacūḍāmaṇi as quoted in ATV, p. 607.
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid, p. 607.
\textsuperscript{291} MN, 5/22; KNT, 10/5; KĀM, 2/38-43.
\textsuperscript{292} KNT, 5/18-28.
\textsuperscript{293} Ibid, 5/29-31.
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid, 5/39.
\textsuperscript{295} Ibid, 5/41.
Māṁsa means meat or flesh. Different kinds of meat are prescribed in Tantra. Meat is praised in Tantra. It is said that Brahma resides in the meat of animal, Viṣṇu in odour, Rudra in juice and Paramātmā in joy that is derived from eating flesh. Matsya means fish. Various kinds of fish are offered to Tantric Goddesses. Mudrā means grains or cooked food or parched rice. It is of different types. Maithuna means copulation. Maithuna is a union of male and female.

According to Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, the Sadhaka’s own wife is preferred for copulation. Pañca-Makāra is practised by a Sadhaka for salvation. This Sadhanā is specially prescribed for those Sadhakas who follow the codes of Vāmācāra.

ANUKALPA

According to some Tantra texts, Pañca-Makāra is for the Sadhakas of high rank, not for ordinary Sadhakas—

\[
madyaṁ māṁsaṁ tathaṁ matsyaṁ mudrā maithunameva ca
idamācaranāṁ devi paśorna divya-vīrayoh
\]

296. Ibid, 5/44.
298. Samayācāra Tantra Vacana as quoted in MCKC, p. 16.
299. YOG, 1/6/36.
300. MN, 6/9-10.
301. TMSB, p. 149.
302. MN, 6/14.
303. NV, 11/3.
304. RUY, Introduction.
305. YOG, 1/6/14.
So some Anukalpas are prescribed for ordinary Sādhakas. When the main object is not available, other object is taken in lieu of the main object. This substitution is called Anukalpa - *mukhyālābhe cānukalpa.* Following is the list of Anukalpa.

**Madya:** Milk in case of a Brāhmaṇa, Ghee in case of a Kṣatriya. Honey in case of a Vaiśya. Liquor made from rice in case of a Śudra or coconut water in a copper pot.

**Māṁsa:** The substitutes are māskalai, garlic, ginger, sesamum and salt.

**Matsya:** The Paniphala, masur dāl or white brinjal or red radish or red sesamum may be taken as the substitutes.

**Mudrā:** In place of parched kidney bean, the substitutes are paddy, rice, wheat and grain.

**Maithuna:** The offering of Karavrā and Aparājitā flowers with hands in the Kacchapa Mudrā or union with Sādhaka’s own wife.

According to *Yogini Tantra,*

**Madya:** Molasses and juice of ginger are mixed. Then it is called Sura. It is for the Brāhmaṇas. Coconut water kept in the bell metal vessel is for the Kṣatriyas. Honey in the bell metal vessel is for the Vaiśyas.

**Māṁsa and Matsya:** Salty ginger for all castes.

**Mudrā:** It is substituted for fried rice for all castes

**Maithuna:** Sexual union of different castes is prescribed as follows:

---

307. ROT, p. 25.
308. YOG, 1/6/34-39.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brāhmaṇa</td>
<td>Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
<td>Vaiśya</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In absence of these

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya</th>
<th>Vaiśya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brāhmaṇa</td>
<td>Kṣatriya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya</td>
<td>Śūdra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some scholars favour the subtle meanings of Madya, Māṁsa, Matsya, Mudrā and Maithuna. These meanings are discussed in the Sixth Chapter.

11. ŚAT-KARMA

Tantrics prescribed Śat-Karma for conquering over the obstructions and difficulties that a Śādhaka faced. But in course of time, it was misused by the pseudo-Tantric Tantra is also bitterly criticized for this Śat-Karma.

Śat-Karma is also dealt with in Vedic Literature. The Rgveda deals with spells for curing diseases and prescribes anti-dotes for various poisons. In the Atharvaveda, there are numerous hymns styled ‘Śatruṇāśana’ and charms for driving away or destroying worms that cause diseases.

309. Rgveda as mentioned in TTV, p.32; HOD, p. 1036.

310. Atharvaveda as quoted in HOD, v, ii, p. 1036.
MEANING OF ŠAṬ-KARMA

The word Šaṭ-Karma means 'six rites' or some mean it as 'six cruel rites'. Šaṭ Karma consists of Śānti, Vaśya, Stambhāna, Dveṣaṇa, Uccaṭana and Maraṇa. 311

śānti - vaśya - stambhanāṇī dveṣaṇa-uccatāme tathā
maraṇanāṇī saṁsanti šaṭkarmāṇi manḍiṁaṅh.

Śānti: Śānti means the technique by which diseases are cured of and all the outside obstacles due to the bad influence of planets are removed. 312

Vaśya: Vaśya or Vaśikaraṇa means the technique by which one can influence the mind of others. 313

Stambhāna: Stambhāna is the stupefaction that can dull the mind and senses of others. 314

Dveṣaṇa: Dveṣaṇa is the creation of ill-feeling between two parties and thereby separating them from one another. 315

Uccaṭana: Uccaṭana is a technique by which one compels other to leave his own place. 316

Maraṇa: Maraṇa means the power of killing of beings or one's enemy. 317

311. KRN, 1/9; PRT, 22/26-27; UD, 1/16; BTS, p. 561.
312. UD, 1/17; ME, 7/123.
313. Ibid, 1/17; Ibid, 7/129.
315. Ibid, 1/18; Ibid, 7/142.
316. Ibid, 1/19; Ibid, 7/147.
317. Ibid, 1/19; Ibid, 7/152.
APPLICATION METHOD OF ŠAT-KARMA

The application method of Šat-Karma is connected with Devata (Deities). Rti (Season), Tithi (Lunar Day), Vār (Day), Pañcatattva (Five elements), Mantra, Bija Mantra Varna of Devata and Mantra, Āsana and Mudrā (Gesture), Vastra Varna (Colour of cloth), Dik (Direction), Japa Dik (Direction for Japa), Lekhana Dravya (Writing articles), Śakti (Female Partner), Madya (Wine), Dravya (Articles), etc. Tantra works which deal with the application method, are:

Yoginī Tantra\textsuperscript{318}, Phetkarini Tantra\textsuperscript{319}, Jñānārṇava Tantra\textsuperscript{320}, Kulārṇava Tantra\textsuperscript{321}, Brhannīla Tantra\textsuperscript{322}, Uḍḍiśa Tantra\textsuperscript{323}, Kāmaratna Tantra\textsuperscript{324}, Mantra Vidya\textsuperscript{325}, Kubjikā Tantra\textsuperscript{326}. All the elements of the application method of Šat-Karma are mentioned here in a Tabular Form.

\textsuperscript{318} YOG, 1/4/17.
\textsuperscript{319} PTK, 7, 15, 17 Patalas.
\textsuperscript{320} JN, 20 Patala.
\textsuperscript{321} KNT, 16. Ullāsa.
\textsuperscript{322} As quoted in PT, p. 529.
\textsuperscript{323} UD, 1-8 Patals.
\textsuperscript{324} KRN, 1-10 Upadesa.
\textsuperscript{325} MTV, pp. 10-77.
\textsuperscript{326} KUT, 8\textsuperscript{th} Patala.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Devata (Deities)</th>
<th>Śānti</th>
<th>Vāśya</th>
<th>Stambhana</th>
<th>Vidvesana</th>
<th>Uccātana</th>
<th>Māraṇa</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rūti (Season)</td>
<td>Hemanta</td>
<td>Vasanta</td>
<td>Śīlāra</td>
<td>Grīmāra</td>
<td>Varāra</td>
<td>Sarat</td>
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<td>Tithi (Lunar Day)</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;, 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Pūrṇimā</td>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Kṛṣṇā</td>
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<td>Thu, Fri</td>
<td>Mon, Wed</td>
<td>Wed, Thu</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>Tue, Sat</td>
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<td>Svadhā</td>
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<td>Vajā</td>
<td>Vajā</td>
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<td>Hāṅg</td>
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<td>Varṣa of Devatās &amp; Mantra</td>
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<td>Kṛṣṇa</td>
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<td>Viṣṇa</td>
<td>Kukkuta</td>
<td>Ardhā- Svastika</td>
<td>Or Ugra</td>
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<td>Candra (North)</td>
<td>Indra (East)</td>
<td>Nīrti (South) - West</td>
<td>Vāyu (North) - West</td>
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<td>Mādhyā</td>
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<td>Svarṇa</td>
<td>Rajata (Silver)</td>
<td>Śīla</td>
<td>Tāmra (Copper)</td>
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<td>Cāṭpikā Grha</td>
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<td>Mahārāṇya</td>
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<td>Pṛthvī</td>
<td>Vyoma</td>
<td>Vāyu</td>
<td>Bhūmi or Agna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sources are –

Yogini Tantra, Kāmaratna Tantra, Uçāśa Tantra, Mantra Vidyā, Kuhjika Tantra, Paramāṇanda Tantra, Kaulāvalinirṇaya Tantra, Meru Tantra, Phetkarini Tantra, Bṛha-Tantrasāra and Āgamatattva Vilāsa.