The Introduction

A remarkably wide range of original and genuine sources of the native, perennial wisdom of Bharatam (India) are gathered, edited, classified, and published at home and abroad. Eminent scientists and thinkers do look forward to the Indian culture and scriptures, spirituality and wisdom for an alternative approach in understanding the mysteries of this universe and for solutions to human problems.

This sudden demand for eastern knowledge has boosted the publishers’ market. Volumes and volumes of Yoga, Vastu, Ayurveda, and Vedic Sciences have become prestigious best sellers. Books about Tantra, studies in Tantra, and the original texts of Tantra Shastra (Tantra Shastra and Tantra are used to mean the scriptural text and Tantra Vidya and Vidya are used to mean the practice and the mantra in this thesis respectively) have become very popular. Among the many primary sources of Tantra Shastra, the works edited by Sir John Woodroffe occupy the largest display area of book stalls and libraries.

The European Approach

The West has learnt about Tantra from Woodroffe during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Philip Rawson, the author who wrote for the first comprehensive exhibition of Tantra art at the Hayward Gallery, London, in 1971, describes in his book1 the efforts of Woodroffe. He states that Woodroffe was writing for a double audience of prudery infected Europeans and the English-speaking Indians who were mostly ashamed of their own culture which contained critical elements. The European writers on Tantra in general and their Indian counterparts in particular do not address the genuine, sincere, and serious seekers of Tantra Vidya because they are not seekers and hence they do not practice it.

From admiration to apprehensions, from edification to allegations their studies swing and swing or go around. There are more quotations and translations in them than the most needed practice oriented, experience centered, systematized, and graded guidance which can be followed by those who have faith and willingness to pursue the discipline. Although it is true that a book can never substitute a guru (master), it cannot be denied that a book can lead one to a state of preparedness and receptivity towards the communications which life, the nature, and God provide. There are such books in Sanskrit and in many of the Indian languages written by advanced practitioners which provide proper direction to the seekers who have Shraddha (the culture specific attitude of the Bharateeya which prevails through intergenerational transfer of living values) towards one’s culture and its Shastras (the scriptural lore of the Sanatana.

Parampara) The king of Shivahararajadhani, Sri Rajadevanandanasimha Bahadur has brought together with great struggle the key texts on Dasha Maha Vidyas, Panchayatana Devatas, Kunrav Tantra under the title Shakta Pramoda. 2 The publisher’s note in Sanskrit is exemplary; Sri Kandiyoor Mahadeva Shastrī’s Soundaryalahari 3 in Malayalam is another example. This shraddha has come along the Vedas and the Vedas have come along the creation. It is in the very being of Purusha (the embodied soul) and it comes to manifestation through Vedic Samskaras (sacramental procedures of refinement).

There is the need for resorting to the methodology of research according to the Sanatana Parampara (the perennial lineage) which from time immemorial has been followed by every shishya (disciple). Tantra Vidya is a culture specific area of discipline wherein the being mode of the seeker’s consciousness in the presence of a guru alone makes the performance research real and fruitful. This pertains to the approach of this thesis. Even the Indian mind with European bias finds it difficult to get initiated into one’s own cultural mindset. Then what to talk of the European mind with its arrogance and pride?

The typical European approach and its consequent inability to comprehend the spiritual interior of Indian culture cannot be better displayed than through the introductory remarks of Harvey P Alper, the editor of Understanding MANTRAS. 4

“THIS VOLUME OF ESSAYS AND bibliography has been assembled in order to focus attention on the Hindu mantra, a common and vital but troubling feature of Indian culture that more often has been taken for granted than made the sympathetic and systematic reflection”. 5 But the trouble is not with the Indian culture. It is with the outsider’s mindset. Alper asserts

“Most of us who study mantras critically – historians, philosophers, Sanskritists – take the Enlightenment consensus for granted. We do not believe in magic. Generally we do not pray. If we do pray, we try to do so in a universalistic idiom.” 6

With Alperian universalistic idiom one may end up in a state of ever trying to pray but not able to be in prayer. However, Alper was able to assemble a vast array of topics for further research to create larger than the earlier volumes of critical study literature misunderstanding and helping to misunderstanding the Mantrashastra. It is not possible to stay on the European’s platform as an explorer and at the same time try to reach the deep inside of the Tantra Vidya as an outsider.

2 Rajadevanandanasimha Bahadur, Shakta Pramoda, Sanskrit, (Bombay Khemraj Snknshnadas, 1982).
5 ibid p 1
6 ibid p 3
Dr. David Frawley belongs to another class of Europeans. He exhibits a certain degree of sensibility and awareness towards being oriental. His writings reflect cultural affinity with rationally acceptable Indian spiritual precepts. A critical analysis of his book *Tantric Yoga And The Wisdom Goddesses* is given in the fourth chapter of this thesis. The Approach of this Thesis

Three things rarely come together, upon which the successful completion of the research depends according to the Indian approach. It is considered a matter of divine grace. The following verse exemplifies this:

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दुर्लभम् चयमेवतत्त्त देवानुश्रहेचतुर्कम् ।
मनुष्यात्मक् मुनिशुत्वम् महापुरुषसंख्यः ॥
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Being human always, aspiring always to get liberated from ignorance caused bondage and consequent sufferings, living under the direct contact and loving care of a Mahapurusha in the Vedic sense of the term, these are rare and they occur due to divine grace.

Seeking knowledge is a sacred endeavour for a culturally refined Indian. The reason is that knowledge is sacred to every true Indian. This sense of sanctity pervades every walk of Indian life. It is regulated by the Shraddha in the Shastras and Vishvasa (open surrender in total faith) in the guru. These do not mean loss of individuality and freedom to the Indian disciple. Instead, they lead the seeker towards more and more authenticity in the Shastras and greater and greater identity with the Parampara. When the disciple is asked to follow certain discipline, it must be performed with the awareness that one is being watched by the guru. Both the guru and the shishya are totally involved in this research. And both take the support of four factors: namely Shrutti (the Vedas), Yukti (appropriate reasoning in keeping with the sampradaya), Anubhava (direct, personal experience), and Drshtantta (a living example suitable to the context and content).

Attempt is self-effort and achievement is grace in the case of both of them. The Vedic mantra for peace invocation, *saha navavatu* (may the Lord protect both of us), reveals this dynamic aspect of performance research in the field of Para Vidya and Apara Vidya. These two broad divisions of Shastra Parampara will be discussed later in the first chapter of this thesis.

In the context of any Vidya which involves experiential learning, what is required is not the foot note, but the heart note which has the same resonance with the state of the

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This researcher's translation is provided.
9 Orally communicated by the Acharya during the traditional session of teaching at Shringeri.
10 Ed Eshadi Nau Upamshad, text in Sanskrit, com in Hindi, Harikrishnadas Goyandaka, (Gorakhpur Gita Press, Sam 2040).
guru's heart. This needs purification and attunement of the shishya. The following words of Sri Aurobindo emphatically assert that true, sincere, and wholehearted prayer never goes unanswered. The power of prayer and the power of Grace are shown to be mutually responsive.

"There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers." 11

Prayer is the higher instinct of the soul. The power of Grace is the greatest quality of the Lord. When, at the conjunction of these two powers, the great and difficult thing happens, the ensuing experience is immeasurable. The mystery of Grace is recorded by Swami Kedarnath as follows:

Now, I have opened a page of my diary and am reading:

"... the Event has passed. The disciple has died. A Master has emerged.

"... A Mystery has been revealed. Someone is weeping. There is a flood of tears in one's eyes.

"... And is entering in One's heart a Compassion which cannot be measured." 12

The same Grace fetched the well preserved precious, personal copy of Dasha Maha Vidya Sutra 13 of Sri Vasishtha Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni for a meditative study of the sutras about three and odd decades ago to this researcher. This is one of the select 
sutra texts under study. The same Compassion conferred upon this researcher the blessings to pursue meditations on Sri Matrvidya Sutra of Sri Swami Kedarnath. 14

This is the other select sutra text for the present study. Thus the performance research which has become the basis for this thesis had commenced decades ago at the dawn of adolescence. The physical presence and the spiritual guidance of upasakas (pursuers of upasana) like Ve Bra Sri G Padmanabha Shastri, Thirissur, 15 and the achara of own parents 16 brought to fore the spiritual aspirations of the past lives. The time leads the aspirant to places and persons to enhance the spiritual resources to achieve the goal. The time had made it possible for Sri Vasishtha Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni and Swami Kedarnath to get their works vouchsafed with the direct blessings of their revered Gurus.

12 Swami Kedarnath, An Epilogue to Reality (Indore Aum Ma Sri Sri Mata Anandamayi Peeth, May, 1985), p 25
14 Swami Kedarnath, Sri Matrvidya Sutram, text in Sanskrit, Int and trans in Hindi, Swami Kedarnath, (Indore Aum Ma Sri Sri Mata Anandamayi Peeth, 1985), Xerox copy in the Appendix Two to this thesis.
15 Late Veda Brahma Sri G Padmanabha Shastri, a pious upasaka of Yajur-Veda parampara, initiated the researcher into various disciplines of upasana in the childhood.
16 Late Sri N Srinivasan Embrandiri/Srinivasa Achar and Late Smt G Jalajakshi Amma are the parents who inherited the Vaishnava Sampradaya in the lineage of Sode Sri Vadrinatha Yati, the illustrious follower of Sri Madhavacharya.
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Ma Anandamayi respectively. That such great thing should happen in the twentieth century and the direct impact should percolate to the generation of the twenty first century is perhaps, in the divine scheme of events.

How old is *Tantra Vidya*?

The *Vayishhika Sutra* of Maharshi Kanada would settle the account with the matters of history. One of its *sutras* states that time does not restrain or affect the eternal categories. They do not fall within the flow of time. The *Vedas* and the *Shastras* belong to the category of eternals. *Tantra Shastra* is said to be the scripture of the Kali Yuga. The Yugas are part of a greater cycle of time which is controlled by *Eshwara*. The *Shastras* manifest at His behest. As a *Sadhana Shastra* (scripture of practices) *Tantra* bears special significance in this *Yuga*. Scholars like Woodroffe quote the relevant passages to point out the Indian view about the antiquity of *Tantra Shastra*. When did it begin? Nobody really knows about its history. This is the open confession of Philip Rawson. If the concept of *Yuga* is accepted by the West, then the B.C., A.D., demarcations of history would get reduced to insignificant specks in the vast canvas of the infinite time on the Almanac of *Jyotisha Vidya* of *Bharatam*. The Indians are repeatedly told and taught that India became independent India in 1947 A.D., and earlier to that it never existed as a singular unit. Then it would be risky to go back to the question of reality about the rock bridge which the monkeys were supposed to have built during the *Ramayana* era. Anyway *Tantra* did exist in that *Yuga*, 17, 50,000 years ago, as even the *Rama Sethu* (the rock bridge between *Bharatam* and *Sri Lanka*) is found to be very much real by the space shuttle of NASA. But NASA has renamed it as Adam’s bridge! Change the name to change the identity seems to be the idea behind this nasty conspiracy.

To get at the meaning of a verse in the *Puranas* it is necessary to approach the verse with the attitude of listening to the *Purana Purushothama* who is the *Veda Purusha* who

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17 The Silent Sage of Arunachala (Tiruvannamalai,Tamil Nadu, 1879-1950), chose to live in Sri Ramana Ashram, Tiruvannamalai ever since he started to speak in the language of Silence. This researcher was blessed with an old edition of *Dasha Maha Vidya Sutram* text by Sri K Natesan at the Sri Chakra/Samadhi shrine in the Ashram in 1983.

18 Sri Ma Ananda Mayi (Kheoda, Bengal, 1896-1982), blessed this researcher in a vision in 1983 indicating the future contact with her disciple for guidance in *Sri Chakra upasana*.

19 Maharshi Kanada, *Vayishhika Sutra* orally recited.

20 *Tat TVam Ashiranac/Tat tvam Śivaṁ viśvaṁ brahmaṁ brahmaiva viśvaṁ-aśvame tvam sarvasya tvam evaṁ brahma*.


23 Editor, "*Sethusamudram emba Kutila tantra*, Saptahik Sanatan Prabhat, Kannada Weekly, 12th to 18th April 2007, p 2, cols 1-3.

NASA Photo downloaded from the Internet is given.
NASA Picture*
Ramasethu
Rameshwaram – Srilanka
Stone – bridge;
17,50,000 years old.

* Source: Internet / e-mail received
is very much present in the present society *Satyameva Jayate* (Truth alone triumphs) is the national logos of the sovereign Republic of India. But this is veiled by the glow, glamour, and glare of corruption. This truth prevails everywhere. When *Satyam* gets concealed *Dharma* slowly loses its stand and balance. This cycle of rise of *Adharma* and fall of *Dharma* can be read in the daily life of the present society. Just take a look at the four squires (see next page) which represent the four Yugas. *Satyam* envelops all the four quarters of all the four Yugas, whereas *Dharma* keeps progressively waning Yuga after Yuga. Woodroffe and others did not seem to comprehend the dynamics of *adharma* and how the society is affected by the waxing of *adharma*. The four aspects of the social existence are marked in each squire in four triangles namely 1) *Janāṅga* (the common people), 2) *Shasakāṅga* (the administration), 3) *Nyāyāṅga* (the law and order), and 4) *Kāryāṅga* (the public service). *Adharma* creeps into the fourth triangle in the second Yuga, fourth and third in the third Yuga, fourth and third also second in the fourth Yuga respectively. Thus in the Kali Yuga the common good of the common people is at stake. The good is forced to participate in corruption, if not to partake it *Dharma* is neglected and in effect the Vedas are neglected. Once neglected, the living *Veda Parampara* cannot be retrieved as it does not have external locus, whereas the individual seekers have the facility to pursue the *Tantra Vidya* with the help of the *Yantra Shastra* and the *Mantra Shastra* in this modern age of *Kali Yuga* Anushthana Paddhati (deals with the procedures regarding the construction of and daily conduct in the spiritual interior of the temple space) is developed by the *Rshis* and the *Acharyas* to cater to the needs of the *upasakas* of *Kali Yuga*. The *Maha Sankalpa* of Maharshi Devala is a great prose work in *Sanskrit* which gives the gestalt of the physical dimension of the spiritual geography and the inscape of Bharatam Although there are other traditional texts by the *Rshis* like Bodhayana Devala's text is chosen because the major Shakti Peethas are highlighted and it explicitly displays national awareness which is very much needed today. This ten

24 Ed Snmadbhagavatam, text and note in Sanskrit (Bombay Khemraj Shrikrishnadas, 1997), p. 3-11


Chaturyugas and Dharma*

1) Janāgaṇa:
2) Sāhasrāgaṇa:
3) Nyāyaṅga:
4) Kāryaṅga:

(1) कृत/सत्ययुग:
(2) बैतायुग:
(3) द्वापरयुग:
(4) कलियुग:

* Bombay edn Shrimadbhagavatam, p. — Skandha 3, chap. 11 verse 21,
(Designed by this researcher)
page text is to be loudly recited by a true upasaka every time during the Tirtha-Kshetra-Sagara – Aranya-Vana-Peetha-Giri –Shaila-Sarovara-Yatra every day physically, whenever possible, and mentally as and when possible. Tirthaprabandha of Sri Vadiraja27 is a poem in Sanskrit on the temples and pilgrim centres along the sea shore, on mountain tops, beside the rivers across the country which he visited by foot. He has followed the Vaishnava Agama/Tantra discipline followed by Sri Madhvacharya. These two works are of great value as the effective means of intergenerational culture transfer. In Vaishnava Thurtha Kshetra Prabandha (Adhunika),28 108 select ancient temples are listed in alphabetical order. The text begins with Ashtavinayaka Kshetras in Maharashtra. Useful information regarding the route, location, accommodation and other details are given in this book. He mentions about different temples such as Daivanirmita/Swayambhu (like Varanasi and Prabhasa), Antariksha tirtha (like Pushkara), Asura nirmita (like Gaya), and those built by the kings who belong to Chandra or Surya vamsa. The spiritual values of sacredness and sanctity are to be maintained by proper performance of pilgrimage. But the policy of tourism has reduced these divine centres to picnic spots during these days. The above mentioned texts can be the pilgrim guides to promote religious tourism.

The temples are meant for the realization of the timeless Truth. To help the seekers achieve this goal, Tantra Shastra goes boldly further back to the beginning of time and space, and beyond. When did time begin? Where does space begin? These questions carry a fallacy along with them. “When” and “where” concepts are within the very time and space respectively and hence the questions are wrong. Time and space manifest within a greater and subtler reality principle than time and space according to the Vedas and Tantra Shastra. The Vedas call it सत्यम् जानम् अनन्तम् ब्रह्म (the Infinite Consciousness which is aware of its own true reality).29 The Tantra Shastra calls it Shiva-Shakti, Chidagni and by many other terms.30

The Scope

Tantra Shastra envisages the jagat (cosmos) as a यत्रम् (well integrated and interconnected dynamic system) and the जीव (living being) as a मन्त्र (incessantly breathing ह्यस) and the ईश्वर (the supreme Lord) as स्वतंत्र्येत्र (the self-sufficient, independent overlord) who maintains the cosmic law and order of manifestation and

27 Sri Vadiraja Yati, Tirthaprabandha, Sanskrit text, ed A R Panchamukhi, (Dharwad Gursarvabhauma Smt. Rajhavendratirthpratishthanam,1990),
28 M H Raghothama thirtha, Vaishnava Thurtha Kshetra Prabandha(Adhunika), Eng ,
(Mysore Smnati Bharathai Bai Prakashana, 2004),
29 Ed Eshadi Nau Upanshad ,text in Sanskrit,com in Hind,Harkrnshandas Goyandaka,(Gorakhpur Gita Press, Sam 2040),p 305
30 Ed Mantrasastra Lalita Sahasranaman ,with Bhaskararaya’s com trans Eng R Ananthakrishna 
Sastry,(Adyar The Theosophical Publishing House,1951),
The entire text is acompendium of such terms
IX
dissolution The entire Siva Sutras 31 unfold this vision. Such being the expansive scope of Tantra Shastra it requires an all inclusive and assimilative approach to study the contents of Tantra Shastra. The sutra approach of study is considered the best by the votaries of the Vedas and of the Tantra Shastra as well. The large number of Brahma Sutras 32 and their commentaries and the classical sutra works 33 on Tantra Shastra and their commentaries point towards this fact.

The select sutra texts under study in this thesis are the outcome of the internalized teachings of many masters in the field. The authors of these sutra texts have encapsulated the essence of Tantra Vidya based on their own experience. The practices prescribed by them are practical and applicable not in the daily life of din and roar in the modern fast world.

It is possible to draw sufficiently from the Nature Capital 34 to enable oneself to cope up with the modern fast life demands. Sustained attempt is made here to retain the being mode in and through the five chapters of this thesis in which the meditative study of the sutras is organized.

The Study

The first chapter discusses the roots of Tantra Vidya. Certain general terms at random are gathered in the context of Tantra Vidya. The eligibility criteria to pursue the Tantra Vidya are elucidated. What is Tantra Vidya? For whom is Tantra Vidya? What for Tantra Vidya? How to apply Tantra Vidya? These are answered. Vedic sources of Tantra Vidya are pointed out. Is Tantra Vidya vaidikam or aavadikam? Highlight on manomaya kosha with a diagram is given. Sanatana samskrita, Sanatana Dharma and Tantra Vidya are the limbs of the cultural umbrella of Bharatam. Para Vidya and Apara Vidya are depicted in a diagram and explained. The essentials of Guru – Shishya – Shastra – Sampradaya - Parampara of Tantra Vidya and common features of Shastra Paramparas are enlisted.

31 Vasugupta, Siva Sutras , text in Sanskrit, Vunasrinim com trans Eng Jaideva Singh, (Delhi Motul Banardsass,1979),
32 Ed Vedavvasavirachita Brahmasutragalu , text transht in Kannada, ed Sagn Raghavendra Upadhyaya and Udupi Ramanathacharya,(Udupi Tatvavada Samshodhana Samsat,1999),p -- tabular ref to the total number of sutras Acharya Shankara-555,Acharya Ramanuja-545,Acharya Madhva-562, these variations are found in the palm-leaf records of the first line disciples of these Acharyas

33 Sri Parasurama, Parasuramahalapuram ,text&Rameawara’s com in Sanskat,ed Late A Mahadeva Sastrn, rev enl ed Late Sakaral Yajeswvar Sastri Dave,(Baroda Oriental Institute,1979),p xii-xiii Preface 18000granthas means18000 multiplied by thirty two alphabets, would be the number of lines in the Dutta Samhita ,whereas A Mahadeva Sastrn translates grantha as verse which is untenable
34 Dr R Hansh, "Sustainable Development", Reading Material 57th Orientation Programme,(Aug 2003), p 64 “b)Here Natural environment is referred to as ‘Natural Capital’ " The term Nature Capital is adapted from this article.
Shastra – Sampradaya - Parampara of Tantra Vidya and common features of Shastra Paramparas are enlisted.

The second chapter discusses the role of upasana in purushartha. Tantra Vidya is a means of sakama and nishkama Upasana. Purushartha and sadhana in daily life are explained. Tantra Vidya as a holistic discipline of sadhana has perennial value and relevance.

The third chapter deals with the thread of upasana in the select sutras of the select sutra texts. Sutra terms are explained. Major aspects of the Dasha Maha Vidya Sutram of Sri Vasishta Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni are studied in terms of upasana. The inner dynamics of upasana and the esoteric experiences as unfolded in Sri Matrvidya Sutram of Sri Swami Kedarnath are brought to fore.

The fourth chapter provides the critical analysis of the select sutras of the select sutra texts. Their purport is analyzed by applying sixfold and fourfold criteria. Their scriptural authenticity and their concord with the Tantra lore are pointed out. A brief critical study of Dr. David Frawley’s reading of Dasha Maha Vidyas is attempted.

The fifth chapter brings out the special findings of the present study. Concept upgradation of HRD (Human Resource Development) and TQM (Total Quality Management), the missing link between HRD and TQM is identified. A new priority area – Spiritual Resources Development (SRD); Life energy concepts and resources in Tantra Shastra. Tantra Vidya demands sadachara (consistent good conduct). The outcome of performance research of the authors of the select sutra texts is briefly cited. Reinforcement of faith and reassertion of conviction through constant and uncompromising self-application and prayer are the need of the hour. The practical aspects of sadhana in the select sutras call for special attention in the modern context. Speech is a form of energy. Its applications for better and effective communication and healing open a promising area of performance research. The key words of this thesis are 1) Tantra, 2) Upasana, 3) Purushartha, 4) Samanvaya, and 5) Parampara. Their relevance is pointed out in the context of the Indian Constitution.