

Guptasadhana Tantra

A mantra is, like everything else, Shakti. But the mere utterance of a mantra without more is a mere movement of the lips. Shakti and Shakti, Sir John Woodroffe

This tantra is likely quite old. It is quoted as a source in the *Matrikabhedatantra*, which may possibly date from the 13th century c.e. The edition used for this abstract is No. 311 in the Chowkhamba Haridas Sanskrit series. The work is unabashedly of a Kaula slant, briefly exposed in twelve short patalas (chapters).

Chapter One

Set on the pleasant peak of Kailash mountain, Devi first says that she has heard of the greatness of the path of the Kulas, but now wants to hear more. Shiva says that as he is her slave, and out of love, he will tell her what she requests. Kulachara, he says, is great knowledge and should be concealed, particularly from those of the pashu (herdlike) disposition, in the same way that Devi would hide her sexual organs from others. Kulachara, he says, is the essence of the vedas, the puranas and other shastras, and is very difficult to obtain. Even if he had tens upon tens of millions of mouths, he would be unable to describe the magnificence of the path of Kula. Shakti, he says, is the root of the entire universe, pervading all, and she is the cause of knowledge arising in a sadhaka. Knowing Shakti brings happiness in this world and causes a sadhaka to dissolve in the body of Shakti in the next. Next, Shiva says that the Kulashakti should be worshipped with the five makaras, and describes suitable shaktis for this worship as a dancer, a Kapalini, a whore, a washing girl, a girl who cuts hair, a Brahmani, a Shudrani, a Bhopala maiden and a flower-girl. These are the nine tantrik Kulashaktis.

Chapter Two

Parvati says she wants to know about sadhana, and breaks into a eulogy of the guru. She says the guru is Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra and is the refuge. Guru is sacred bathing places (tirtha), guru is tapas, guru is fire, guru is the sun and consists of the whole universe. She asks by which mantra and in which ways the guru should be served and worshipped. She asks what his meditation image is. Shiva says that women, because of their emotional nature, should not have secrets revealed to them. Nevertheless, out of love for her, he will tell her of the meditation image and the nature of the guru. It should not be revealed to pashus, he warns. He says that just as Kula represents Shakti, so Akula represents Shiva. A person who is dissolved in Shakti is called a Kulina. This is a reference to the idea that Shiva is the witness, inert, a corpse, and it is Shakti, Kula, who creates, maintains and destroys the universe. The guru is the Kula circle, and one should bow to the guru seated in the centre of a great lotus which has the colour of an autumnal moon. He has a face like the full moon, and wears celestial clothes, and is scented with heavenly perfumes. He is united with the greatly alluring Suradevi, on his left, and his hands show the mudras giving boons and dispelling fear. He is marked with every auspicious sign, and is situated in the great 1,000 petal lotus on the head. Shri Parvati then asks to hear more. She wants to know about the meditation image of the guru's shakti. Shiva replies that she is like the red lotus, wearing beautiful red clothes, she has a slender waist, and is adorned with red jewels and a red diadem. She resembles the brightness of the autumn moon, wears beautiful shining earrings, and sits on the left of her own lord (natha). She shows the signs giving boons and dispelling fear and holds a lotus in one of her hands.

Chapter Three

Parvati asks Ishvara, whom she addresses as the giver of liberation, the lord of breath and Mahadeva, about preparatory acts (purashcharana) sadhakas must undertake. As in the *Kankalamalinitantra*, Shiva says that the way to accomplish sadhana of the great mantra is through one's own will, here described as *sveshtachara* rather than *svecchacharya*. The usual defects and rules applying to whether worship is during

the day or night do not apply. At morning, and at midday the sadhaka should recite the mantra and having performed puja should once more recite the mantra at the evening twilight. In the evening, the sadhaka is to offer food and other offerings according to his will. After doing so, the best of sadhakas should also recite the mantra at the dead of night. Together with his own shakti, he should recite the mantra. Joined with his shakti, the mantra gives siddhi, and not otherwise, Shiva says. There is no siddhi without a Kulashakti, even in thousands of millions of years. After worshipping the Kumari, a sadhaka should give her offerings of food and the like and recite the mantra 108 times. After doing so, one should give dakshina (gift) to the guru, such as gold and clothes. Unless the guru is satisfied, success in the mantra cannot be obtained. Success means that one becomes like Bhairava or Shiva himself.

Chapter Four

This chapter deals with the shakti and her characteristics. Shankara says that she may be one's own shakti or another's. She should be youthful and intelligent, and should be free of shame (*lajja*) and disgust (*ghrta*). After using the five elements according to the rule, the sadhaka should recite the mantraplacing it 100 times on the head, 100 times on the forehead, 100 times where the hair is parted in the centre (*sinduramandala* or *simanta*), 100 times on the mouth, 100 times on the throat, 100 times in the region of the heart, 100 times for each of her breasts, 100 times for the navel, and 100 times at the yoni. After doing so, the sadhaka should think of himself as one with Shiva, and using the Shiva mantra should worship his own lingam. Chewing tambula (pan), and with bliss or excitement in his heart, he should place his lingam in the yoni of shakti. He should offer his atma, together with dharma and adharma, and everything else in his nature as a sacrificer offers to fire in the susumna nadi using a mantra ending with Svaha. Then, while still joined with his shakti, he should utter the mantra 100 or 1,000 times. The full sacrifice, which here implies orgasm, he should then offer using the prakashakasha mantra, again ending with Svaha. The semen which flows from this orgasm should then be offered to the Devi. It may be noted here that this whole process, though couched in explicitly sexual terms, can also refer to the bliss when Kundalini rises through the sushumna nadi and the chakras. Whoever worships according to the previous method, says Shiva, becomes free from illness, wealthy, and equal to the god of love Kama himself. His enemies are all destroyed, and he becomes successful on earth, gaining all dominion, and equal to Shiva himself.

Chapter Five

After all this excitement, Parvati wants to know about preparatory acts, and how many times the mantra given to the disciple by the guru should be recited in the months after initiation. Shiva says that during the first month, the mantra should be recited 600,000 times, in month two 1,200,000 times, and in the third month 1,600,000 times. In months four and five, the number is 3,000,000 times for each. In month six, the mantra has to be recited 3,600,000 times, and in the seventh month, 4,200,000 times. In the eighth month, japa is 4,400,000 times, and in month nine 4,500,000 (or could be 5,400,000) times. Month ten needs recitation 6,000,000 times, while month 11 the number creeps up to 6,500,000 times. By the time the last month of the year is reached, the mantra has to be recited 10,000,000 times. Shiva says that only by reciting the mantra this many times, does it become successful. As well as worshipping the shakti in the manner described in chapter four, a sadhaka must also worship the Kumaris, or virgins, feeding them and so forth. The [*Kulachudamanitantra*](#) goes into some detail about this process. Shiva says here that without shakti, he has the form of a corpse, while when he is joined with the devi, he is Shivo-ham.

Chapter Six

The goddess says she wants to know about the Dakshina form of Kalika, who she describes as the giver of siddhi, and very hard to get knowledge of in the three worlds. Shiva says he will reveal this information, which, he says is also spoken of in the *Kalitantra* and in Yamala. He says that knowing the essence of Dakshina Kali liberates an individual from the ocean of being and says that Bhairava is the rishi who revealed the mantra, it should be pronounced in the Ushnik metre. He gives the linchpin (kilaka), shakti and other details and says that the application of the mantra is the four ends or aims of all human beings,

dharma, artha, kama and moksha. He tells the Devi that he has already given the complete mantra in the *Kalitantra*. Devi then responds by asking about different elements in puja including meditation, the place of worship the different asanas (positions, seats) called Alidha and Pratyalidha, the cremation ground, and the nights when she should be worshipped. He answers that a candidate should be an adhikari, that is competent or entitled to worship Kalika, and should do the daily puja dedicated to his or her guru, or the guru's son or the guru's shakti. Without this, the fruit of a sadhaka's puja is taken by the rakshas and the yakshas. The guru and his or her family are to be offered the fruit of the puja and satisfied in every way. The Alidha and Pratyalidha postures are the form of Kali as the destroyer and deluder of the universe, the form of Kali as fire itself, and so situated in the cremation ground. By performing these according to the injunctions of the guru, one obtains the four aims of mankind. One should do the puja, by implication in the cremation ground, at night at a time which appears to be in the second ghatika (a ghatika =24 minutes) after midnight. On a great night of Kali, one should perform puja at midnight, using the five bhavas, here meaning the five makaras, as part of vira sadhana. Worshipping at different times, and in the different velas, gives different results. Those of the divine and heroic dispositions (bhavas), should worship using the five tattvas, at midnight, to achieve the highest results and become free from time.

Chapter Seven

The chapter opens with something of a tiff between Shiva and Shakti. The goddess wants to know about the tattva, and entreats Shiva, if he has love for her, to reveal these details. Shiva replies that she herself is the supreme tattva, while he is a scatterbrain, and got it from her. Devi entreats him to speak, and he says that he has spoken of these matters in many tantras of old. He asks her why she keeps asking again and again. After another short exchange, Shiva launches into the matter in hand. He reveals a five syllabled purifying mantra which he says is hidden in all the tantras and which refers to the five elements of the hidden ritual. He then describes how this affects the different worshippers. Brahmins, he says dissolve into the supreme tattva, just as water flows into water; Kshatriyas achieve oneness (sahayoga); Vaishyas gain equality with the Devi, Shudras dwell eternally in the Devi's heaven; while others achieve equality with the (supreme) tattva. More details, he says, may be found in the *Nilatantra*, which may be the *Brihadnilatantra*, and in other places such as yamalas.

Chapter Eight

This chapter describes a chakra which may be used to decide whether a given Mantra will produce success. The then follows a description of the bases used for puja. These may be yantras, gems, images, or a Shiva lingam. Unlike some other tantras, this work recommends the puja using the lingam should be performed only when the lingam is made of a permanent substance. The Todala Tantra recommends that Shiva lingams should be made of clay. This chapter only has 22 verses.

Chapter Nine

This entire chapter is devoted to the worship of Dhanada Lakshmi. It includes her Mantra, Yantra, puja, Kavacha, and other ritual details. Dhanada bestows wealth to a devotee.

Chapter Ten

Deals with the worship of the Goddess known as Matangi. contains the hymn of Matangi, Kavacha and the Mantra. She bestows the four aims of mankind.

Chapter Eleven

This brief chapter covers the garland of letters, of 50 letters of the alphabet which make up the body of the goddess. It also deals with the physical rosary and describes the different substances from which it may be

fashioned. These include crystal, red sandalwood, and beads of the Rudraksha plant. The best rosary is made of human skulls, and as also described as the great conch rosary. Inner recitation of the mantra is more powerful than external japa.

Chapter Twelve

The Mantra known as Gayatri is described in this chapter. The fifteen verses describe the Gayatri as the greatest of all mantras. having this tantra in one's house protects from all misfortunes, and brings liberation.