

C H A P T E R - V

MADYA (WINE) - THE RITUAL DRINK IN THE  
TANTRA TRADITION

Madya (wine) which is an indispensable tattva (element) of the Tantrik Pentad, is enjoined to be consumed by the sādhaka (worshipper) only after it has been offered to the Creatrix of the Universe in the course of the upacāra (worship) and is deemed śuddha or technically purified and consecrated with the relevant mantra-s. Such madya need not be grape-wine, but prepared from molasses (gaudī), rice (paṣṭī) or Madhuka flower (mādhvī). The Vedic manner of drinking religious offerings in company, prevails to-date in the form of cakra-pūjā amongst Tantriks who partake of liberal quantities of bhāṅg under the name of Vijayā and Amṛtā, in the course of their ritual. Moreover, with the trend towards non-alcoholism, in the Kali Age, this flexible system permits the use of coconut-water, milk and so on as the substitutes for madya, in the worship, thereby justifying the use of sweets - milk, sugar and honey, termed madhutrayam, instead of wine.

So, wine which is eulogised as the Somadhārā or lunar ambrosia, which drops from the Sahasrāra, by the Āgamasāra, along with its substitutes - coconut water, milk and madhu-trayam being a concoction of milk, sugar and honey being

liquids and consumed directly after the recitation of relevant mantra-s such as Om hr̥m kṛm kṛom, svāhā... converting them into ritual drinks, fall within the precincts of this study.

Wine (madya) which is one of the indispensable elements of the pañcatattva is declared to be essential in one form or another to perform Śaktipūjā, according to the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra (V.23-24). Despite being an intoxicating drink, the Tantrasāstra-s consider wine, not only as a preserver of life and procreation, as well as a great medicine, but also as the giver of brightness of joy and the dispeller of the darkness of gloom and sorrow. Last but not the least, drinking is often resorted to by Yogin-s with Brahmañāna, as wine is the revealer of the Self (rūpa) of Brahman, that exists in the body.<sup>1</sup>

Wine as a literal tattva is not merely, grape-wine but that which is made from various substances, such as molasses (gaudī), rice (paiṣṭī) or the Madhuka flower (mādhvī) which are mentioned by the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra (VI) to be the best. There are others, such as wine made from the juice of the Palmyra and date tree, and aniseed (maireya wine)... The Mahānirvāṇa Tantra (VI) further states that the most excellent

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1. Woodroffe J., Śakti and Śākta: Essays and addresses on the Śākta Tantra Sāstra, Madras, 1959 (1918), p.598.

is that made from sālī rice or from barley or wheat ~~and~~ which has been fried in clarified butter.

According to the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra (VI) meat, fish, mudrā offered to the Devatā, along with wine is technically called śuddhi. Wine, which is purified and consecrated along with the other tattva-s is made like unto nectar and charged with mantra-s and with the realization (Mahānirvāṇa Tantra VI.42).... The wine is no longer the gross injurious material substance but has been purified and spiritualized so that the true sādhaka looks upon it as liquid form of the Saviour Devī (Tārā Dravamayī). The joy it produces is but a faint welling up of the Bliss (Ānanda) which is the essence, it is Wine and moreover it is taken under certain restrictions and conditions.<sup>2</sup>

Bhāṅg, under the name of Vijayā and Amṛtā is used very largely, by the circle of Initiates in the worship of Kālī Devī who have even to-day preserved the Vedic practice of consuming the religious offering in company.<sup>3</sup>

As for the Tantrik pūjā at the time of manifestation of the Goddess it is said- During the supreme prevalence of Kālī, when the householders' hearts will be deeply attached to their

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2. Ibid, p.587.

3. Ibid, p.106.

household objects, madhutrayam should be used in lieu of the chief tattvas, namely - wine, milk, sugar and honey are known as madhutrayam. Considering them to be equivalent to the libations (of wine) the worshipper should offer them to God.<sup>4</sup>

So far, it is the literal use of wine as one of the articles of the pañcamakāra-s, offered in worship to the Mother of the Universe, on her appearance in natural function which has been discussed. But the literal aspect of wine is not the whole and soul of the Tantrik ritual. Rather, there is a deeper esoteric meaning to wine in this ceremony on which we focus attention.

As for what wine denotes along with its symbolic use, is expressed in the Mahānirvāna Tantra (XI.105-107) as the philosophy of the Tantraśāstra-s. Ahantāpātra-bharitam idantāparamāmṛtam parāhantāmāye vahnau homasvīkāra lakṣaṇam.

Here, there is distinction between the Supreme I (Parāhanta or Śiva) and the Individual "I" (Jīva-Aham) which is vehicled by the "This" or Vimarśa-śakti. The sādhaka is the vessel which is the Individual Ego. "Thisness is offered to the Supreme". Drinking is an offering to that Fire which is the transcendent Self "whence all individual selves (jīva-s)

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4. Bose, D.N. and Haldar H., Tantras : Their Philosophy and Occult Secrets, Calcutta, 1981 (1956), p.135.

proceed." So wine is then, Tārā Dravamayī, that is the Saviouress Herself in the form of the liquid matter...<sup>5</sup>

So, drinking, eating and the like which are the basis of life, have been absorbed by the philosophy of the Tantra- by way of ritualistic worship, wherein the performer is to be a detached appropriator or transmitter for the joy of the bhoga (of these pleasurable activities) to the Cosmic Enjoyer.

Moreover, the worldly objects which feature as elements of offering lose their materialistic character, and are meditated upon as the union with the Eternal through the 'nectar' of wine. So, this worship consists of offering to the Supreme (Parāhanta) the excellent nectar of (idanta) held in the cup of sādhaka (Ahantā). ....Meditating on Kuṇḍalinī as pervading his body to the tip of his tongue, thinking himself to be the Light which is also the Light of the Wine he takes, he says, "I am She" (Sāham) "I am Brahman", "I Myself offer offering (Āhuti) to the Self, Svāhā!" ...the consecrated wine with further ritual is poured as an oblation into the mouth of Kuṇḍalinī after meditation upon Her as Consciousness (cit) spread from Her Seat, the Mūlādhāra to the tip of the tongue.

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5. Woodroffe, J., op.cit., p.585-586.

On an overall view, it was the theoretical philosophy of the Tantra-s that was explained earlier especially with an esoteric emphasis on wine; which on attaining suddhi, is transformed into a liquid regarded as a divine manifestation)... endowed with intoxicating knowledge acquired by Yoga of the Parabrahman, rendering the worshipper senseless regarding the external world, consigning all his acts to the Lord - Kaula Tantra.

Hence, in the ultimate analysis, madya (wine) is a divya tattva for a truly sāttvika or spiritual temperament (divya-bhāva), along with māmsa (meat), matsya (fish), mudrā (cereals) and maithuna (coition) which are really names for Yogic operations;<sup>7</sup> while these pañcatattva-s, kuladravya-s or kulatattva-s as they are called, have more esoteric names... Wine is called causal water (Kāraṇavāri) or Tīrtha water (Tīrthavāri).<sup>8</sup>

Wine being the chief item for Śakti-pūjā, the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra takes all necessary precautions, of laying down stringent conditions, obviously with a view to avoid or prevent the misuse and the abuse of wine (madya).

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6. Ibid, p.580; also refer Kaula Tantra of Pañcatattva-vicāra, by Mukhopadhyaya N., p.85.

7. Ibid, p.582.

8. Ibid, p.579.

Meat, fish, mudrā offered to the Devatā along with wine is technically called 'suddhi. According to the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra the drinking of wine without 'suddhi is equivalent to swallowing poison.

The Siddha is prohibited from drinking the Arghya (wine) meant for the Devī, unless it has been consecrated by sacred formulae and ceremonies as well as offered to Her, in the course of Śaktipūjā.

Moreover, wine taken without food, has a detrimental effect, producing greater injury to health. So, another check is placed on indiscriminate drinking of wine by the Tantraśāstra-s providing that the worship of Kālikā when hungry and thirsty angers her.

Again drinking is enjoined to be continued only so long as the mind is absorbed in the Devī, he who drinks thereafter is verily a sinner, as is a drinker of wine through mere sensual carnal desires and not for the purpose of worship of the Devatā and Guru.<sup>9</sup>

According to the commentator Vimalānanda, whoever partakes of the tattva-s for self-gratification is a sinner.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Ibid, p.590.

10. Pandit M.P., Lights on the Tantra, 2nd ed., Madras, 1963 (1957), p.56; also quoted in Kulārṇava Tantra - commentator Vimalānandaswami

In this context, the Mahānirvāna Tantra (VI.195-197; VIII.171) questions, as to how it is possible for a sinner who becomes a fool through drink to say, "I worship Ādya Kālikā". In other words, immoderate drinking, disturbs seeing and thinking, thereby destroying the effect of the sacred action.

Such a worshipper of Ignorance (Avidyā) rather a sinner is punishable by the king... Severe were the penance prescribed for persons who took these things only for the sake of enjoyment. Heated wine was to be poured into the mouth of one who drank wine for the sake of pleasure, in order that his mouth might be purified. Persons using these things for secular purposes were doomed to damnation.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the Tantraśāstra-s having been cautious in taking rigid precautions regarding the use of wine, as an article of worship, it has been put to gross misuse. However, the fact remains, that wine which symbolically plays a significant role in the philosophy of the Tantra discipline also features literally as an essential element for fruitful worship. Wine being an important item of the pañcamakāra-s, it is not to be studied in isolation but along with the remaining tattva-s for an overall view of the offerings.

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11. Chakravarti, C., Tantra Studies on their Religion and Literature, Calcutta, 1963, pp.42-43.

According to the Mahānirvāna Tantra (V.23-24) it is the discipline of the Pentad which is the unique feature of the Tantrik offerings in one form or another for the fruitful worship of the Mother of the Universe. Rather, it is by the use of these pañcatattva-s or their substitutes in worship that the Universe (Jagad-brahmāṇḍa) itself is used as the articles of worship.

As the five (pañca) elements tattva-s - wine (madya), meat (maṁsa), fish (matsya), parched cereal (mudrā) and sexual union (maithuna) - which stand for drinking, eating and propagation, all commence with the letter M, they are vulgarly called pañcamakāra-s or five M's.

The Mahānirvāna Tantra (VII.103-111) states that wine which gives joy and dispels the sorrows of men is Fire, flesh which nourishes and increases the strength of the mind and body is Air; fish which increases generative power is Water, cereals grown on earth and which are the basis of life are Earth, and sexual union which is the root of the world and the origin of all creation is Ether.

They thus signify the Power (Śakti), which produces all fiery elements, all terrestrial and aquatic life, all vegetable life, and the will, knowledge and action of the Supreme Prakṛti productive of that great bliss which

accompanies the process of creation - as obtained in Haratattvadīdhiti XV, Kāmākhyā Tantra, Nigamatattvasāra IV).<sup>12</sup>

From the above context it is seen that the pañcatattva-s stand for the pañcamahābhūta-s symbolically whereby the process of creation comes about in nature. For some they also represent the five vital airs. Moreover, they are subject to substitution, depending upon the varna of the sādhaka as well as his nature. These tattva-s not only have a literal meaning but also a substitutional as well as a symbolical sense.

The Kailāśa Tantra<sup>13</sup> identifies the Pentad with the five vital airs (prāṇādī) and the Mahāpreta which support the couch of Tripurasundarī.

The pañcatattva-s do not always have their literal meaning. They differ as according to the Tāmasika (pāśvācāra), Rājasika (vīrācāra) or Sāttvika (dīvyācāra) sādhana-s respectively as well as according to the sādhaka-being a brāhmaṇa, ksatriya, vaiśya or śūdra.

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12. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.578; also refer Haratattvadīdhiti, Ch.XV, Kāmākhyā Tantra, Nigamatattvasāra IV.

13. Ibid, p.578; also refer Kailāśa Tantra (Purvākhyā, Ch.XC).

The Kulacūdāmaṇi; and Bhairavayamala<sup>14</sup> state that the substitutional tattva-s for wine, meat, fish and so on have been provided; in keeping with the caste (varṇa) of the sādhaka. In lieu of wine, the Paṣu should if a brāhmaṇa take milk, if a ksatriya ghee, if a vaiśya honey and if a sūdra, a liquor made from rice. Moreover, coconut-water in a bell-metal utensil is also taken as a substitute.

The Paṣu worships with the substitutional tattva-s and never takes wine, while the Vīra worships with wine and for the Divyas wine is spiritual knowledge. There are further modifications of these general rules in the case of the intermediate bhāva-s. While the Svabhāva Vīra is a drinker of wine, the Vibhāva Vīra worships internally with the five mental tattva-s and externally with substitutes. The Mantrasiddha Vīra is free to do as he pleases in this matter, subject to the general sāstrik rules.

Before turning to the further modifications of these general rules the Ādyatattva-s as found in the Kaulakāraçaṇḍī-dīpikā<sup>15</sup> are laid out as ādyamadya or wine is hemp (vijayā), ādyasuddhi or meat is ginger (ādraka), ādyamīna or fish is

14. Ibid, p.582; also refer Kulacūdāmaṇi, Bhairavayamala Ch.I.

15. Ibid, p.583, also refer Kaulakāraçaṇḍīdīpikā.

citron (jambīra), ādyamudrā is dhānyāja that is made from paddy and ādyasakti is the worshipper's own wife. Quoting from the Tantrasāstra it says that worship without these ādyā forms is useless.

However these five upacāra-s are to be understood in a three-fold way, as having quite another significance... the literal (pratyakṣa tattva), the substitutional (anukalpa tattva) and the esoteric or symbolic (divya tattva), madya-wine (literal), coconut-water (substitutional); intoxicating knowledge of God attained by Yoga, by which one becomes senseless of the outer world (symbolic). Māmsa-meat (literal), garlic, ginger, sesamum, salt, wheat beans (substitutional), consignment of all things to mām, 'Me' (symbolic).

Matsya - fish (literal), red raddish, white brinjal, masur (pulse), red sesamum, pānīphalam (aquatic plant), (substitutional), sense of mineness identification with oneself as a result of which pleasure and pain in the universe are shared (symbolic). Mudrā - parched cereal (literal), paddy rice, wheat, grain (substitutional); relinquishing association with evil (symbolic); Maithuna - union with woman (literal); offering of flowers with the hands formed into the gesture called Kacchapa-gesture, the union of the Karavira flower (representative of the Liṅga)

with the Aprājītā (Clitoria) flower which is shaped as and represents the female yoni and other substitutes or union with the sādhaka's wife (substitutional), union of Kuṇḍalīnī with the Śiva-Śakti in the Sahasrāra.<sup>16</sup>

So the pañcatattva-s - the essentials of Tantra-sādhana have besides their literal, substitutional and esoteric and symbolic meaning, various interpretations. They are construed philosophically as well as denoting natural phenomena. They differ as according to the varṇa (caste) of the initiate as well as his nature (ācāra) - Tāmasika, Rājasika or Divya.

Taking madya, which is literally wine, substitutionally coconut-water and symbolically intoxicating knowledge of God.

Most Tantrasāstra-s signify them as Power (śakti) of the Supreme Prakṛti productive of great bliss accompanying the process of Creation and Yogic practices of the Serpentine Power - Kuṇḍalīnī, others identify them with the pañca-mahābhūta-s, Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Ether, as also the five vital airs (prāṇādi)... and the Mahāpreta supporting the couch of the Tripurasundarī.

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16. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p. 43-44.

Sādhana is deemed to be fruitless in the absence of the Ādyatattva-s, in one form or another. Although it depends as to whether the sādhaka is a brāhmaṇa who is to take milk, a kṣatriya who is to have ghee, a vaiśya honey and a śūdra a liquor made from rice - instead of wine. According to the Ādyatattva-s, ādyamadya which is wine, literally is hemp (viḥayā). Further, the Vīra worships with wine, the Paśu is to worship with substitutional tattva-s, while wine for the Divya is spiritual knowledge. The Svabhāvavīra worships with wine while the Vibhāvavīra worships internally with the five mental tattva-s and externally with substitutes.

Tantraśāstra is a means whereby according to Indian principles, the consciousness of the worshipper (sādhaka) is actually shaped into the forms of expression. However, the Tantraśāstra prescribes its ritual only for a select few.<sup>17</sup>

It is only a Vīra, a sādhaka of the Rājasika type who is suited for the practice of this sādhana, which gives him a unique opportunity to fully work out the potencies of his nature and in the process uplift himself by making a sacrament of the activities natural to his being.<sup>18</sup>

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17. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p.43.

18. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p.43.

Moreover, such a secret ritual of the Rājasika-pūjā is prescribed for the Vīra sādhaka only so long as he remains in that state. For, a sādhaka of the Paśu type as well as the individual of the Divya type of the Sāttvika bhāva are not fit for this sādhanā and the five upacāra-s have quite another significance for them.

As for the necessary qualifications of the sādhaka, the Kulārṇava Tantra XIII points out that he must be of good character, not a slave of the palate and flesh jivhopasthāpara and in particular not lewd and lustful (kāmuka), not shameless (nirlajja), and given over to drink, gluttony and women. If he be so, he is not competent for the Tantra ritual and must be trained by other disciplines (Pāśavācāra).

Before the sādhaka is competent to perform this ritual, he must have learnt to become conscious of the Higher Śakti, within and without, purified and trained himself to be an unsullied channel for the joy of the bhoga to be transmitted to the Cosmic.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover the sādhaka is to be above all likes and dislikes and should see Brahman in all things<sup>20</sup>... Therefore, when the

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19. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p.41.

20. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.619.

Vīra eats, drinks or has sexual union, he does so, not with the thought of himself as a separate individual satisfying his own peculiar limited wants. .

Hence, as every function like eating, drinking and so on is a part of the Divine Action (Śakti) in Nature, when taking wine which exhilarates the senses and gives rise to pleasurable sensation, the sādhaka<sup>21</sup> is not meant to appropriate the joy in the pleasurable actions to himself but to the Saviour Mother - the joyously Creative Energy of Nature.

The Kaula form of worship that prescribes the use of the pañcamakāra-s ...although regarded as highly efficacious, nay as the best form of worship, has been stated in definite terms to be more difficult than all the difficult things in the world.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, it is held that the worship of the Devī leads equally to thoroughly materialistic results through magic and to the highest ideal of Nirvāṇa, so there is a strong mixture in the worship itself of the sensuous and the spiritual.<sup>23</sup>

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21. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p.41.

22. Chakravarti, C. - Tantras : Studies on their Religion and Literature, Calcutta, 1963, p. 42-43.

23. Woodroff, J., op.cit., p.117.

So, Kālīpūjā as prescribed by the Tantra-s despite being extremely difficult is not only capable of satisfying the mundane materialistic desires, but also attaining the ultimate salvation by severing chains of rebirth. In order to grasp this ritualistic system we turn to its worship.

The ritual of the pañcamakāra-s followed by the votaries, is the essential part of what is known as the Vāma Mārga - the path of 'left-hand' worship in contradiction to the adherents of the Dakṣiṇa Mārga, the 'right-hand' worship from which these elements are rigorously excluded.

As the worship of Rātrī is to be performed at night, therefore, the worship of Kālī must be a night performance. The same rules and practices as in the Vaidik Atirātra are substantially followed in the worship of the Devī Kālī, along with the liberal use of bhāṅg (under the name of Vijayā and Amṛtā) instead of drinking soma at the end of the offerings of libations.

The Mahānirvāṇa Tantra describes the practice of the Bhairava Cakra, wherein the devotee purifies and inspires each of the collected tattva-s by reiterating the mantra - Om hṛm kṛm krom,  
<sup>24</sup>  
svāhā. Thereafter... worship which takes place in such a cakra

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24. Bose D.N. and Haldar H., op.cit., p.135.

or circle, is composed of men and women, sādhaka-s and sādhikā-s, Bhairava-s and Bhairavī-s, sitting in a circle, the Śakti being on the sādhaka's left. Hence it is called Cakrapūjā.<sup>25</sup>

So far it is seen that the Tantrik ritual known as the Vāma Mārga of worship, although difficult, is efficacious in resulting in materialistic ends as well as in ultimate salvation. Moreover, such a worship of the Devī Kālī, along with the lavish use of the intoxicant bhāṅg - under the names of Vijayā and Amṛtā, is to be resorted to as a night performance. Further, such a ritual is undertaken in a circle of worshippers - of both men and women, known as Cakrapūjā. It is in the Cakrapūjā that the offering items are purified and consecrated with relevant mantra-s for ritualistic purpose.

<sup>26</sup> Ācamana or the sipping of water, finds a place in the Tantric pūjā, because the rites in this worship bear a close relation to the Vaidik practices. Having bathed, as a means of purifying themselves by uttering mantra-s as Bīja-s, and pleasing their Deva-s along with Ācamana, as a form of ablution, they sacrifice unto themselves conceiving that

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25. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.135.

26. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.103.

they are part and parcel of the Great Brahmā (T.A. X.I). The worship of Brahmā thrice daily is called Sandhyāvandana or Ahinakriya or twilight prayers or daily rites.

The usual sixteen upacāra-s of the Tantrik upāsana may briefly be enumerated - 1. Āsana (seating of the image), 2. Svāgata (welcome of the Devatā), 3. Pādya (water to cleanse the feet), 4. Arghya (offerings), 5. Ācamana (water for sipping and cleansing the lips), 6. Ācamana offered again, 7. Madhuparka (honey, ghee, milk and curds), 8. Snāna (water to bathe the Deity), 9. Vasana (garment), 10. Ābharana (ornaments), 11. Gandha (sandal-paste). 12. Puṣpa (flowers), 13. Dhūpa (incense), 14. Dīpa (light), 15. Naivedya (food for consecration and 16. Vandana (prayerful homage).<sup>27</sup>

The inclusion of Ācamana or ceremonious sipping of water as well as the Madhuparka offering of honey, ghee, milk and curds for the welcome of the Devatā both being liquids and consumed directly as also the offering of wine, with reiteration of mantra-s being changed to ritual drinks feature in this study. The Mahānirvaṇa Tantra (V.139-151, p.86ff) states: The worshipper first offers to the Devī spiritual adoration, dedicating to Her his heart as her seat,

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27. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p.32.

the nectar of his heart as the water for washing Her feet, his mind as a gift of honour, the restlessness of his senses and thoughts as a dance, selflessness, dispassionateness, and so forth as flowers, but then he offers to the Devī an ocean of intoxicating drink,<sup>28</sup> a mountain of meat and dried fish, a heap of roasted corn in milk with sugar and butter, "nectar" and other things.

Besides the "five true things" and other elements of this most sensuous worship which is calculated to produce the intoxication of the senses, and in which also bells, incense, flowers, lights and rosaries are not lacking, there is also the quiet contemplation of (dhyāna) of the Deity<sup>29</sup> and mantra-s.

Thereafter closing both the eyes and realising in meditation that everything is pervaded by the Supreme God, the worshipper should drink and eat, having at first presented it to the Goddess Kālī.<sup>30</sup> ....These modes are to be taken up and offered in the execution to the Divine Śakti, in the solemn setting of consecrated worship.<sup>31</sup>

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28. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.117.

29. Ibid, p.117.

30. Bose D.N. and Haldar H., op.cit., p.135.

31. Pandit M.P., op.cit., p.40-41.

The acme of fulfilment is reached on the disassociation of consciousness from the physical study and its identification with the Higher Consciousness of the worshipped Deity participating and delighting in the bhoga... This is what the commentary on the Kulārṇava Tantra quotes in this respect. "Ānanda is the Self (rūpa) of Brahman which exists in the body. Wine is the revealer and is drunk by the Yogins with Brahma<sup>~</sup>jñāna for the satisfaction of all Deva-s.

The Mahānirvaṇa Tantra goes further : During the supreme prevalence of Kālī, when the householders' hearts will be deeply attached to their household objects, madhutrayam should be used in lieu of the chief tattva-s - wine, milk sugar and honey known as madhutrayam. Considering them to be equivalent to the libation (of wine), the worshipper should offer them to God.<sup>32</sup>

The three chief appetites of man are eating and drinking to sustain the body and sexual intercourse. Unlike other Hindu Schools, which seek<sup>33</sup> the suppression or mere animal, worldly desires, the Tantrik method aims at transforming these desires and feelings (bhāva-s) under the prescribed

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32. Bose D.N. and Haldar, op.cit., p.135.

33. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.606.

conditions and with the Advaita-bhāva or monistic feelings. With its perfection natural desires would tend to drop away, unless their fulfilment is absolutely necessary for physical existence.<sup>34</sup>

According to the Kulārṇava Tantra, man must be taught to rise by the means of those very things which are the cause of his fall. As wine, women, fish, meat, mudrā and accessories contribute to man's fall, making him forget his duty, sinking into sin and dying an early death, they should become the instruments of his uplift, to a point at which such ritual is no longer necessary and is surpassed.

Śiva desires to employ those very poisons - whereby men have lost their manhood, in order to eradicate the poison in the human system. Poison being the antidote for poison or using a thorn to pick out a thorn. This is the right treatment for those who long for drink or lust for women.

Thus according to the Kulārṇava Tantra, practice of the Kaula path is even more difficult than walking on blades of swords, catching hold of the neck of a wild tiger and holding a snake.<sup>35</sup>

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34. Ibid, p.599.

35. Chakravarti, C., op.cit., pp.42-43.

....The intention of the Śāstra is not to unlawfully satisfy carnal desire by the way of eating, drinking and so forth, but that man should unite with Śiva-Śakti in worldly enjoyment (bhauma) as a step towards the supreme enjoyment must follow the dharma prescribed by Śiva.<sup>36</sup> Thus Śākta Darśana is said to be Avidika.

While winding up, we try to assess the use of wine as well as the applicability of this ritualistic system to modern times.

Śāktism, however underwent a series of modifications, both in doctrine and in ritual, until it reached its lowest and most degraded phase in the horrid rites of the Tantra-s. The objectionable elements of Tantric ritual caused a violent reaction in favour of the rival creed which Śāktism had supplanted. The details of Durgā Pūjā are governed by Tantric texts, but the Pūjā is one of the purest forms of worship of Śakti. The prayers and mantra-s repeated on the occasion are taken from the Tantra-s, but the Tantric practices of drunkenness, debauchery and witchcraft were at no time associated with the festival.

Not only are drops of wine sometimes sprinkled on the prasāda (sacred food) at Durgā Pūjā and thus consumed by

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36. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.617.

persons who are not vīrācārī-s but also, though this is not generally known and will not be admitted, on the prasāda, which all consume at the Vaiṣṇava shrine of Jagannath at Puri.<sup>37</sup>

Pandit Jayacandra Siddhāntabhūṣaṇa states that the practice of worship with real wine is no longer prevalent in modern Bengal. Tantriks such as the Vibhāva Vīra and Vibhāva Paśu do not take wine but otherwise worship according to the rules of the Tantra Śāstra.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover the true sādhaka does not perform the ritual for the purpose of drinking with wine, but drinks wine in order to perform the ritual.<sup>39</sup>

There are some things the ordinary man looks upon as 'unclean', and, as long as he does so, to offer such a thing would be an offence. But once he ceases to think so, these things may be offered. Thus the Tantrik makes ritual use of what will appear impure and repulsive substances to most. This is done, according to the Jñānārṇava Tantra to accustom

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37. Mukerji, A.C., Ancient Indian Feasts and Fasts, p.155. (Date and Publication place not traceable).

38. Woodroffe J., op.cit., p.579.

39. Ibid, p.588.

the worshipper not to see impurity in them but to regard them as all else, as manifestation of Divinity. He is taught that there is nothing impure in itself, in natural function, though they may be made, by misuse or abuse, instruments of impurity. Here again, impurity consists not in the act but in the intention and way with which it is done. All acts and functions - eating, drinking done with the right intention may be used as upacāra of worship. Otherwise, man would be offering his sin to god.<sup>40</sup>

This sound theory divinises the natural human functions, and by their constant association with the thought of Brahman in the mind, purifies and leads away the mind from all carnal desires.<sup>41</sup>

If when a man drinks, he can be made to regard the liquid as a divine manifestation and have thought of God, gradually such thoughts will overcome and oust his sensual desires.<sup>42</sup>

By putting aside repugnant and extremist practices and the legitimate application of the Tantrik principle (of being above all likes and dislikes and seeing Brahman in all

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40. Ibid, p.575.

41. Ibid, p.576.

42. Ibid, p.577.

things) in all daily acts of physical function within the bounds of man's ordinary dharma (duty) would result in the attainment of outstanding qualities which is the aim of the Tantrik sādhana- "He is a Hero who has controlled his senses, and is a speaker of truth; who is ever engaged in worship and has sacrificed lust, and all other passions."<sup>43</sup>

jitendriyaḥ satyavādī nityānuṣṭhānatatparaḥ /

sa vīra iti gīyate //

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43. Ibid, pp. 620-621.