

TRIPURĀ  TALLIKĀ

SARVĀNANDA TARAṄGINĪ

“Waves of an all Encompassing Bliss”

❁ *The* STORY OF SARVĀNANDA ṬHĀKUR ❁

BY ŚIVANĀTHA BHAṬṬĀCĀRYA



*Translation of the Bengali retelling of the 1st part of
Sarvānanda Taraṅgiṇī containing the story of Sarvānanda.*

1ST ED
- JULY 2024 -

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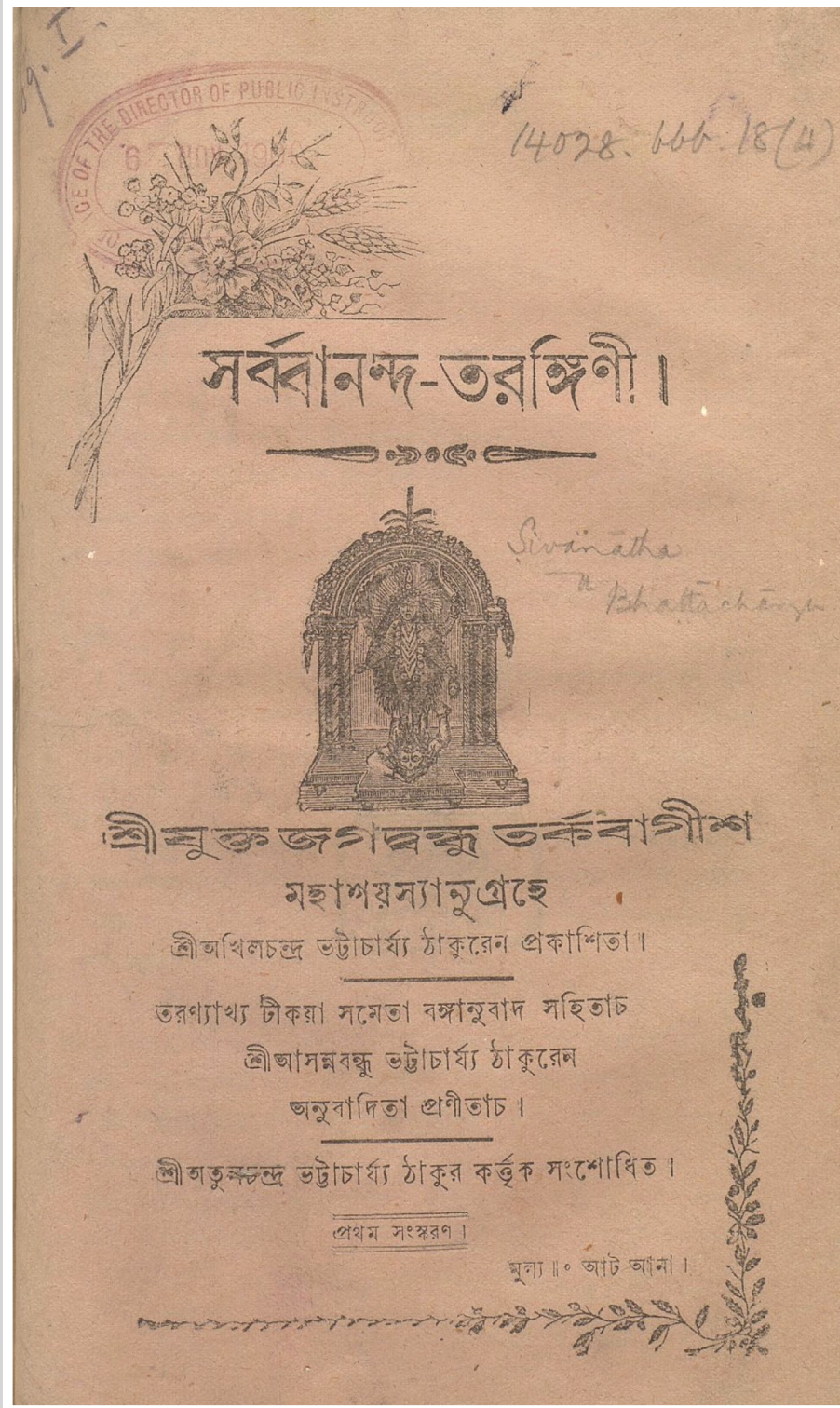
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Sarvānanda Tarāṅgiṇī

(written by Sarvānanda's son Sivanātha Bhattachārya).

Biography of Sarvānanda along with account of Śaiva Tantric doctrines and rites, in dialogue form. Sanskrit text, with a Sanskrit commentary in Bengali script and a Bengali translation by Asannabandhu Bhattachārya Thākura. Edited by Atula-chandra Bhattachārya. pp. 86. [Comillah, 1909.]

INTRODUCTION



Sarvānanda Ṭhākur (15th-16th cent. CE) remains a relatively unknown figure beyond Bengal, nonetheless he plays a pivotal role in the broader Tantric tradition according to which he is first person to realize the *siddhis* of the 10 Mahāvidyās (*sarvavidyā*)¹.

Despite being completely illiterate, he attained spiritual enlightenment through the blessings of the Divine Mother by reciting a mantra while seated on the corpse of his servant Pūrṇānanda. Sarvānanda and his descendants are also known by the name *Sarvavidyā*, as all forms of the Mother were revealed to him. His legacy continues to be revered, and his descendants maintain a substantial following throughout Bengal to this day.

Several key texts - *Sarvollāsa Tantra*, *Navāvaraṇa Pūjā Paddhati*, and *Tripurā Arcana Dīpikā*, are attributed to him, with the last two highlighting his connection to the Śrī Vidyā tradition. His profound experiences and contributions were recognized by Arthur Avalon² and depicted in Robert Svoboda's "*Aghora*"³. Dr. Alexis Sanderson mentions that the earliest dateable evidence of the ten Mahāvidyās known to him "is to be found in the Śakta *Sarvollāsatāntra* compiled by Sarvānandanātha."⁴

Sarvānanda's life and spiritual accomplishments are chronicled in the *Sarvānanda Taraṅgiṇī*, in the form of a dialogue between a *daṇḍī sannyāsi* from Kāśī and the King/zamindar (landowner) of Mehār region (present day Bangladesh). This work, penned by his son Śivanātha, not only details Sarvānanda's miraculous story of liberation but also devotes time to discussion of key tantric concepts contained in *Sarvollāsa* and *Jñānārṇava* tantras. Furthermore, *Sarvānanda Taraṅgiṇī* contains six rare stotras spontaneously recited at pivotal moments of the story by its key characters.

Tripurā Tallikā has secured a rare 1909 copy of the first edition⁵ of this seminal work, which features (1) the main text in Sanskrit scripted in Bengali alongside a commentary, as well as (2) a narrative retelling of the main story in Bengali. This publication includes the translation of the latter, which marks the first time the full narrative of Sarvānanda's life is translated into English, offering readers a unique glimpse into the life of this remarkable saint.

¹ Sri Sri Kalibari Temple in Mehār region of Bangladesh where Sarvānanda attained his *siddhis* became a place of pilgrimage to the people of Bengal and an annual festival is held there to commemorate his attainment on Makar Saṅkrānti (January 14th).

² Shakta and Shakti, Sir Arthur Avalon (ch. 13).

³ Aghora: At the Left Hand of God, Svoboda, Robert E (pp. 71-3).

⁴ Atharvavedins in Tantric Territory, Alexis Sanderson - "In *Sarvollāsatāntra* 3.10-29 he cites a passage from the *Jñānārṇava*, a text with the form of scripture, that teaches the creation of Mahākālī (= Dakṣiṇakālī), Tāriṇī (= Tārā), and Ṣoḍaśī (= Tripurā) and that the last is the first of a set of eight of whom the others are the remaining seven of the set of ten Mahāvidyās."

⁵ The book was edited by Atulacandra Bhaṭṭācāryya Ṭhākur and the Bengali translation completed by Āsannabandhu Bhaṭṭācāryya Ṭhākur.

BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SARVĀNANDA'S STORY



In Mehār, King Dāsa meets Daṇḍiṣvāmī, a *sannyāsin* from Vārāṇasī on a pilgrimage following a distressing incident. The hermit shared how he had seen a Bengali Brahmin in Kāśī engaging in alcohol and meat consumption, leading the *sannyāsis* to condemn him. This event caused the hermits to perceive impurities in their own food, leaving them famished and driving them to seek sanctity in other holy sites. The King, upon hearing this tale, realized that the Brahmin in question was Sarvānanda, his esteemed Guru. He cautioned Daṇḍiṣvāmī against criticizing Sarvānanda, highlighting his revered spiritual status and the divine favor he enjoyed of being considered a son by the Goddess herself.

The King then shared the story of Vāsudeva, a sage who, after performing severe austerities at Kāmākhyā pīṭham and receiving a promise of divine liberation from the Goddess, reincarnated as his own grandson, Sarvānanda, destined to achieve the vision of the ten great wisdom goddesses in Mehār.

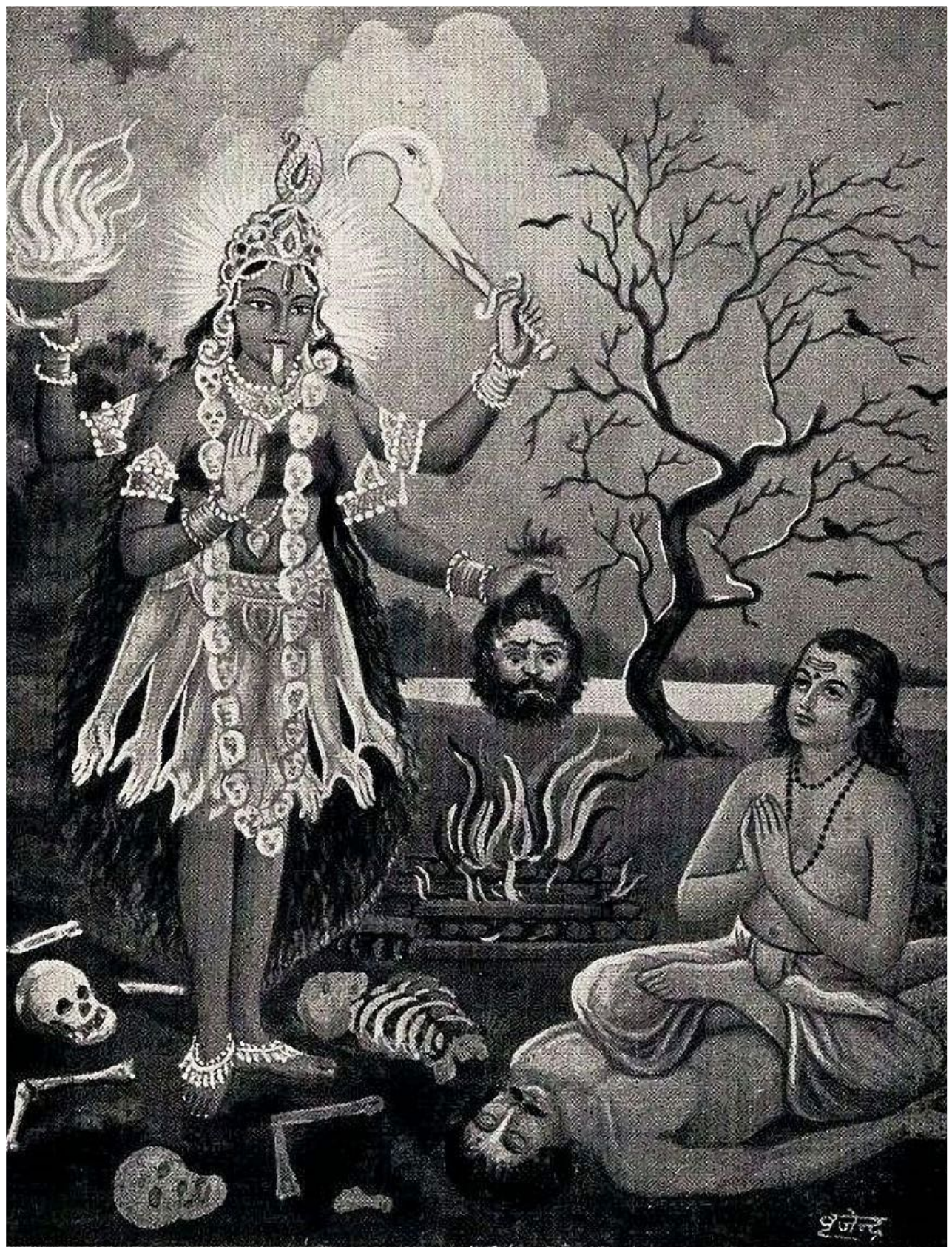
Sarvānanda, naive and detached from worldly knowledge, was ridiculed in a royal assembly for mistaking the new moon day for the full moon day, prompting him to go to the forest to collect palm leaves for writing to further his education. There he met Lord Śiva, disguised as an *avadhūta*, who instructed him to chant a powerful mantra under a Jīna tree, seated on a corpse, on a Friday at the end of the month of *Pauṣa*, on a moonless night to summon the Universal Mother and gain spiritual perfection, *siddhi*.

After receiving the divine mantra, Sarvānanda was overcome with ecstasy, wandering home while singing of his profound experience. His servant Pūrṇānanda, hearing the instructions from him and finding him in a state of bliss, led him later that night to the holy site above the *Mātaṅgeśvara Liṅga*, established by the sage Mātaṅga, which he had heard about with Vāsudeva (Sarvānanda's grandfather and previous incarnation). There, Pūrṇānanda with the power of yoga left his body to aid Sarvānanda by serving as the corpse seat for the ritual. Following his servant's guidance, Sarvānandanātha chanted intensely atop his body, culminating in a divine encounter where the Divine Mother resurrected Pūrṇānanda and revealed her ten forms.

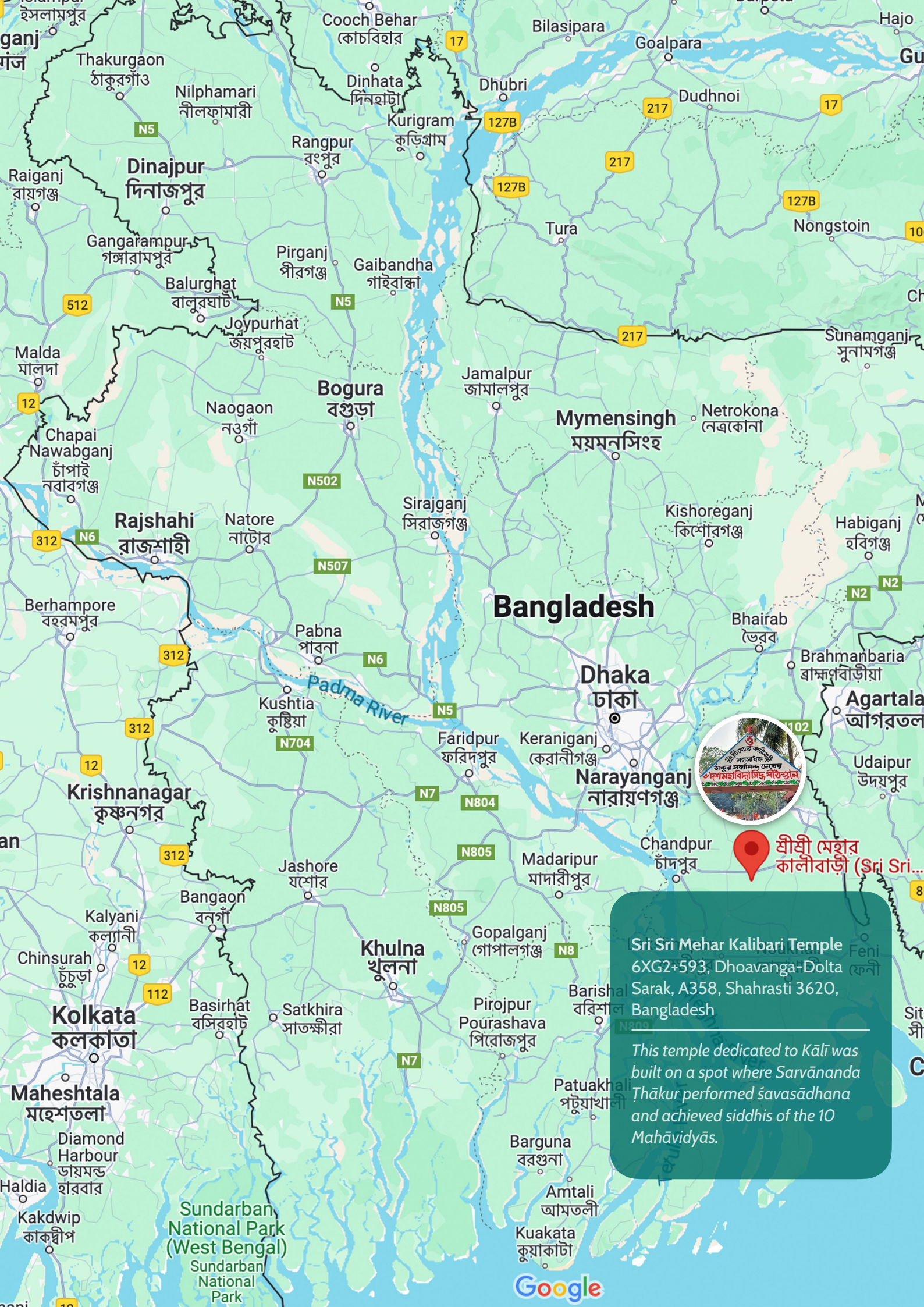
Following this miracle, one winter, the King gave Sarvānanda a valuable shawl, which the sage then gifted to a prostitute he met on his way home. This act led to public criticism of his character. The next day, Sarvānanda, angered by this, sent his nephew, Ṣaḍānanda, to retrieve an equivalent shawl from his wife. Despite his urgent requests, she moved on to other tasks and didn't respond. In a miraculous response, the divine hand of the Goddess emerged from the doorway and handed Ṣaḍānanda a shawl identical to the one given away.

The two identical garments, one given to a courtesan and another received from the Goddess, caused astonishment when presented in the assembly; none could tell them apart. Disillusioned by the treatment he received, Sarvānanda decided to leave Mehār along with his servant Pūrṇānanda and his nephew Ṣaḍānanda. Before departing, he pronounced a curse: his own family line in Mehār would end in the 22nd generation, and that of the King would cease in the 15th generation. Sarvānanda with his companions settled in Senhaṭṭa, where he led a righteous life, remarried, and had a child. Then, renouncing the householder stage of life, he moved to Vārāṇasī, becoming an *Avadhūta*, accompanied by Pūrṇānanda and Ṣaḍānanda. The story concludes here, without providing additional details about subsequent events.

The Bengali commentator adds that after learning about the divine deeds of Sarvānanda Daṇḍiṣvāmī went back to Kāśī. There, they offered him various praises and sought forgiveness, resolving their misunderstandings and ultimately finding peace. Sarvānanda's final state, like that of great sages, is unknown; he disappeared from public view in Vārāṇasī. His whereabouts and condition remain a mystery.



Goddess Kālī and Sarvānanda Thākur.
Hindu Print Kalyan (Hindi magazine) Gita Press, Gorakhpur.



শ্রীশ্রী মেহার কালীবাড়ী (Sri Sri...)

Sri Sri Mehar Kalibari Temple
6XG2+593, Dhoavanga+Dolta Sarak, A358, Shahrasti 3620, Bangladesh

This temple dedicated to Kālī was built on a spot where Sarvānanda Thākur performed śavasādhana and achieved siddhis of the 10 Mahāvīdyās.

Bangladesh

Dhaka
ঢাকা

Narayanganj
নারায়ণগঞ্জ

Dinajpur
দিনাজপুর

Rajshahi
রাজশাহী

Bogura
বগুড়া

Mymensingh
ময়মনসিংহ

Khulna
খুলনা

Kolkata
কলকাতা

Sundarban National Park (West Bengal)
Sundarban National Park

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OPENING VERSES

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. śrīgurur pādpadma kariyā smaraṇ
sarvvānanda-taraṅgiṇī kariba barṇan
Remembering the lotus feet of Śrī Guru,
I shall describe the waves of complete bliss,
the <i>Sarvananda-Taragini</i>.</p> | <p>6. sarvvānander jīvanī āṛ stavamālā yat
pūrṇānand stava saha hayeche vinyast
The biography of Sarvānanda and his
hymns, Together with the hymns of Pūrṇā-
nanda, are arranged here.</p> |
| <p>2. śivanāth sarvvānand sūta gurudās
sarvānanda-taraṅgiṇī karilā prakāś
Śivanātha, the servant of the Guru and the
son of Sarvānanda, revealed the waves of
complete bliss, the <i>Sarvananda-Taragini</i>.</p> | <p>7. sei sab stava yevā paḍe kimvā śune
janmārjjit pāp tār khaṇḍe seikṣaṇe
Whoever reads or listens to these hymns,
Their sins accumulated over lifetimes are
destroyed instantly.</p> |
| <p>3. sūkṣmaguru, tejoguru, sthūlaguru āṛ
śiver bhāṣit guru e tin prakār
The subtle guru, the radiant guru, and the
physical guru, These are the three types of
gurus spoken of by Śiva.</p> | <p>8. paḍile paḍite icchā haya punaḥ punaḥ
gadyete likhība sab kare tanna tanna
Upon reading, there arises a desire to read
again and again, I shall write them in prose,
detailing each one.</p> |
| <p>4. gurur caraṇ dās varṇite akṣam
bedādi śāstreo yāhā hayani sakṣam
The feet of the guru are beyond the capa-
bility of this servant to describe, Even the
Vedas and other scriptures are not compe-
tent to do so.</p> | <p>9. grantha samāpti āśe nami mātāḥ! caraṇe
varade o varaprade! vāsanā pūraṇe
At the conclusion of this book, I bow down
at the feet of the Mother, the bestower of
boons and grantor of wishes, please fulfill
my aspirations!</p> |
| <p>5. śāstramate rahiyāche likhā saviśeṣ
keval siddhir kathā kariba prakāś
Remaining true to the scriptures, I will
write the essentials, Only discussing the
matters of spiritual accomplishment.</p> | |

PRAISE OF THE GURU

After worshipping the lotus feet of the Guru, a book named *Sarvānanda Tarāṅgini*, which contains the life history of the great soul Sarvānanda Deva and the events of the *siddhis* (spiritual powers) of the 10 great wisdom goddesses like Kālī, is presented.

2-3. Śiva has said that the Guru exists in three forms: gross, subtle and luminous. Among them, the one who is like Śiva and Śakti, indivisibly present in the *brahmarandhra*, the ultimate form of Brahman, the cause of all causes, manifest like the waxing and waning of the moon, and having the form of the two letters “Ha” and “Sa”, is the subtle Guru. The supreme knowledgeable yogis meditate upon this form of Brahman, the subtle Guru.

4-5. He who is the form of supreme bliss, the embodiment of the highest truth, who is knowledge incarnate, free from the dualities of happiness and sorrow, and who, like the sky, is clear and invisible yet can be understood through *mahāvākyaś* by the wise, who is non-dual, pure, eternal, steady, and witnesses all, beyond emotions and self, beyond the three qualities (*rajas, tamas, sattva*) - I bow to that supreme blissful form of the Guru.

6. He who is eternal, pure, beyond appearance, unchanging, formless, and ever-conscious - I bow to that eternal blissful Guru.

7-10. When a soul, through the eye of knowledge, perceives the radiant, eternal supreme Brahman reflected in its heart, it repeatedly utters the sound “*Soḥam, Soḥam.*” Thus, the deluded soul unconsciously chants “*Haṃsa*” (meaning Swan, but also referring to the sound of breath) 21,600 times during the day and night with each inhalation and exhalation. Later, understanding this sound as “*Soḥam*” and realizing its meaning, when the consonants of this phrase are discarded, what remains is the primal sound “*Om*”, which is believed by all beings in heaven, earth, and the netherworld to permeate everything, and this “*Om*” represents the supreme Brahman or the form of God. I salute the Guru, who is beyond the *Bindu* (point) and *Nāda* (sound), separate from time, sound, and space, and the true form of the supreme Brahman.

11. In the lotus of the heart, situated in the center of the pericarp, on a lion throne, one should meditate upon the divine form of the Guru. He is adorned with a crescent moon, bestowing truth/being (*sat*), consciousness (*cit*) and bliss (*sukha* i.e. *ānanda*) as also granting the one's desired boon.

12-13. [The Guru] who is adorned in white garments and anointed with white paste (i.e. sandalwood), with a divine form ornamented with pearls, and his divine energy (Śakti) seated on his left side, with his gentle smile, he is a storehouse full of compassion. I perpetually worship the revered Guru, who is blissful and the source of bliss, serene, embodying knowledge, endowed with the consciousness of his own Self, the king of yogis, worshipful and the healer of the disease of worldly existence.

14. The gross form [of the Guru] is the bestower of mantras, worthy of praise and worship, he has two arms (i.e. the human form), by his command/direction both the subtle and radiant forms are revealed.

15. He who is the gross [form of the Guru], indeed is the bestower of the mantra, the bestower of knowledge and the remover of impurities. For destroying the darkness of delusion, he is the one sun for the whole world, endowed with thirteen manifest qualities.



16. The great soul about whom I am narrating had a vision of the lotus feet of Goddess Bhavānī through penance at a place named Mehār in Bengal.

17. Who revealed the highly secretive *vīrācāra* practice in Kāśī; I bow down to the lineage of that Sarvānandanātha and to the supreme Guru Mahādeva related to that lineage of Sarvānanda Deva (in the form of Vāsudeva since birth), as I narrate the entire story of his life.

THE KING & THE DAṆḌĪ

18. In the region of Mehār, there was a handsome, famous, righteous King, deeply devoted to his chosen deity, bearing the title ‘Dās’. He always governed his subjects with justice.⁶

⁶ Even today, the descendants of King Dās proudly reside in the region of Mehār.

19-20. At one time, an ascetic (known as a Daṇḍisvāmī) had left Kāshīdhām (Vārāṇasī) intending to visit various pilgrimage sites and, during his travels, arrived at the aforementioned palace in Mehār. Upon seeing him, the King reverently bowed down to the hermit's lotus feet and humbly inquired about the reason for his visit.

21-22. Observing the Daṇḍisvāmī, the King said, "Today my birth has found its purpose, and the rituals I have been performing have borne fruit since I have been blessed to see such a noble visitor with my own eyes. O Divine One! You are well-versed in all *dharmas* and scriptures, so why have you abandoned Kāśī, which is considered the sole gateway to liberation, and come here?"

23-25. The Daṇḍisvāmī replied, "O great King! There was a Brahmin from Bengal who had adopted the *sannyāsa āśram* having a fondness for alcohol and meat wandered around Kāśī. We once saw this Bengali Brahmin's descendant indulge in alcohol and eating fish and meat and we admonished him. From that day on, all we could see in our food and drink was meat and alcohol. Therefore, all of us ascetics, famished without food, decided to journey to other pilgrimage sites. I intend to go and visit Candraśekhara."

26-28. Having heard the Daṇḍisvāmī's tale, the King, with a voice choked with devotion, fell prostrate before the hermit and said, "O Daṇḍi! Do not criticize that Divine Guru who is equivalent to the Supreme God. By the grace of the Goddess, he is omnipresent and the embodiment of all actions. He has been blessed to witness the 10 great wisdom goddesses directly. Moreover, the Goddess herself has promised always to regard my Guru as her own son."

THE STORY OF VĀSUDEVA

29. Hearing the King's words, Daṇḍi said, "O Great King! How did your revered Guru achieve spiritual powers? What intense penance did he undertake? And how did the divine mothers like Kālī manifest themselves before him? Please describe to me all that you know about this."

30. The King replied, "O Daṇḍi! I am entirely incapable of adequately describing the greatness of my Guru. Right now, you must be famished, so I will briefly tell you the story. Listen."

31. "In a city named Pūrvasthalī situated on the banks of the river Suradhunī in the western region, there lived a great sage named Vāsudeva, who hailed from a Brahmin lineage. One day, as Vāsudeva was deeply engrossed in chanting mantras on the banks of the Ganges, a divine voice from the heavens addressed him, saying, "O eminent Brahmin! Someone from your lineage will achieve greatness in the region of Mehār in Bengal. Be steadfast; after all, you have invoked me in your heart."

32. Having heard the divine voice, Vāsudeva, along with his family and his beloved disciple Pūrṇānanda, left his residence and moved to the region of Mehār, governed by the Dās lineage.

33. That very Vāsudeva, took birth as his grandson, Sarvānanda, who seemed incapable in many matters. Through intense penance, Sarvānanda received blessings from the divine Mother Bhavānī."



34. Daṇḍi then inquired again, "O King! How did the great sage Vāsudeva become his own grandson? And through what rigorous penance did he get the vision of the Eternal Goddess? What blessings did the Goddess bestow upon him when She appeared before him? I am eager to hear the entire tale. Please narrate it in detail."

35-36. The King said, "O Daṇḍi! Listen; after the great sage Vāsudeva had settled in Mehār for some time, there seemed to be no fruition of the earlier divine prophecy. Therefore, taking his disciple Pūrṇānanda with him, he went to Kāmākhya. There, he gradually gave up food, water, leaves, fruits, and various other worldly concerns."

With great devotion and rigorous penance, when he began to invoke the Supreme Knowledge, the divine Goddess, in her compassion, appeared to him in a dream and commanded, "O child! Do not invoke me with such intense austerities anymore, for in this life, at this place, your desires will not be fulfilled. Previously, for the purpose of mantra *siddhi* of goddess Bhavānī, the great *lingam* established by sage Mātāṅga, which is now hidden in the age of Kālī, will be the place where you, in the form of a descendant (reincarnated as a grandson), will attain the *siddhi* of the 10 great wisdom goddesses by being mounted on a corpse. That sacred spot is located at the base of the Jīna

tree in the Mehār region of Bengal. And there, at midnight, your descendant will achieve *siddhi*.”⁷

37. Vāsudeva, enlightened by this divine message, informed his faithful servant Pūrṇānanda of the entire matter and, with the desire to be reborn as the son of his own son Śambhunātha, relinquished his physical body through yogic power and was soon reborn as Śambhunātha's son, the accomplished Sarvānandanātha.

THE GRAVE MISTAKE

38. Just as in a poet's poem or an author's writing, time swiftly passes by, similarly, Sarvānandanātha grew rapidly from childhood to youth. But even in his youth, he was so ignorant that he had no worldly knowledge. He remained mostly detached from worldly affairs. It was in this state of his son that his father, the great Śambhunātha, passed away. Seeing Sarvānandanātha's indifferent attitude, his elder brother, the learned Āgamācārya, shortly after his father's death, arranged Sarvānandanātha's marriage with a charming young woman named Vallabhā to attract him towards worldly life.

Upon the marriage arranged by Sarvānandanātha's elder brother, in due course, Sarvānandanātha fathered a son named Śivanātha. From his childhood, Śivanātha was extremely enthusiastic about learning and possessed profound intelligence. In a very short time, he became highly knowledgeable in various scriptures and was respected as a distinguished scholar among the scholarly assembly at the royal court.

Meanwhile, Pūrṇānanda, having learned all the details as told by Vāsudeva at Kāmākhyā, returned to Mehār. Knowing that *siddhi* would be achieved in this place through the son of Śambhunātha (i.e. Sarvānandanātha), Pūrṇānanda took great care in nurturing both sons of Śambhunātha (Āgamācārya and Sarvānandanātha).

Once, when Sarvānanda was present in a royal assembly surrounded by many distinguished scholars, someone challenged him to determine the lunar date of the day. Sarvānandanātha, dis-

playing his ignorance, replied, “Today is the day of *pūrṇimā* (full moon).” In reality, it was the day of *amāvāsyā* (new moon). Witnessing such ignorance, the scholars in the assembly began to ridicule him.

39. The King, hearing his Guru's son being ridiculed in his presence, became deeply distressed and agitated. He called Śivanātha and advised that [his father] Sarvānandanātha should not to attend the royal court again.

40. Upon hearing this, Śivanātha, disheartened, revealed everything to his Mother. Consequently, Sarvānandanātha, now back home, began to face repeated scoldings from his brother, wife, and son. The harsh words of everyone stung his heart like a furious serpent. Overwhelmed by the venom of these words, Sarvānandanātha grew impatient. A sorrowful situation arose, and tears flowed incessantly from his eyes. He became acutely aware of his ignorance and, with a heavy heart and a desire for knowledge, left his home to enter a dense forest.

MEETING THE MYSTERIOUS AVADHŪTA

41-43. Subsequently, in that dense forest, Sarvānandanātha, with a desire to write, climbed a tall palm tree to gather leaves to be used as paper. Just then, atop the tree, he encountered an angry cobra, hissing and ready to strike. But Sarvānanda, without showing the slightest fear, boldly grabbed the snake by its head and, using the sharp base of a palm leaf, severed its head, throwing the body to the ground. At that very moment, due to the merits of Sarvānanda's many lifetimes of asceticism, the great Lord Śiva – adorned with divine ash, his body draped with matted locks and donned in the attire of a wandering monk – descended to the forest floor near the base of the palm tree. He saw the freshly severed snake's head and then looked up to see a man perched atop the tree. The supremely compassionate wanderer addressed him, “O mighty one! O most intelligent! O brave and wise one! Who are you? What great deed have you ascended this tree to accomplish? And what do you wish to practice?”

⁷ At the present time, a deep tunnel exists at the place where Mātāṅga Muni established the *śivaliṅga*. It is said that in the Kālī Yuga, this Mahāliṅga entered Pātāla (the netherworld) through this tunnel. This place is still renowned as Mātāṅgāśrama because it was established by Mātāṅga Muni (present day Sri Sri Kalibari Temple).

Come down from the tree, young one. I will help you fulfill your desired task.”

44-45. Sarvānandanātha, intelligent and the best among the twice-born (Brahmins), seeing him, descended from the tree, bathed, and approached the *avadbūta*. He bowed to him, saying, “O merciful teacher in a human form, I bow to you.” Then, Sarvānandanātha continued, “O Supreme Lord in the guise of a *sannyāsi*! I am the grandson of Vāsudeva and the son of Śambhunātha. My name is Śrī Sarvānandanātha. I am extremely foolish and illiterate. In the royal assembly, surrounded by scholars, I was ridiculed for mistaking the new moon day (*amāvāsyā*) for the full moon (*pūrṇimā*). When I returned home, I was repeatedly scolded by my brother and others. Distressed and seeking knowledge, I came to this forest to gather palm leaves and climbed this tree.”

46. The *avadbūta* said, “O Child! Come near to me. I will bestow upon you a mantra that grants all accomplishments. Once you have this, you won’t need to pursue any further education and

there will be no need to gather any leaves for writing.”

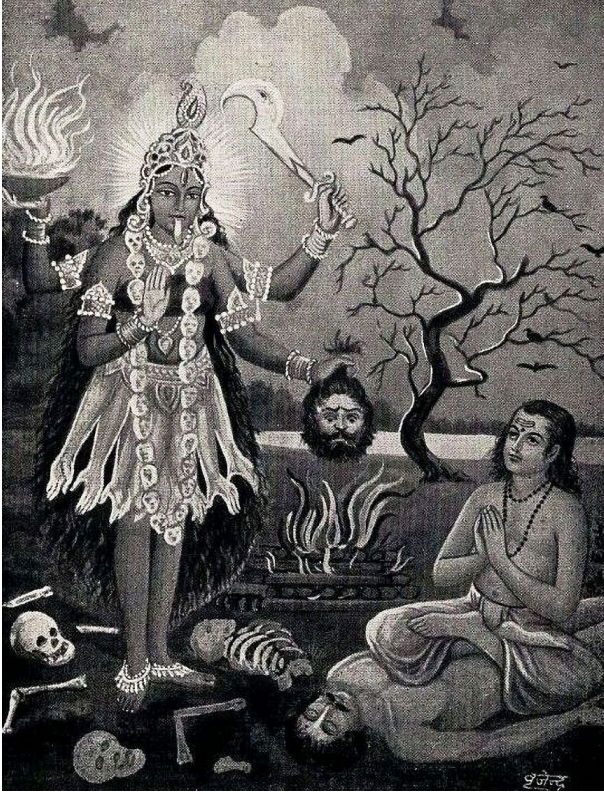
47-48. Moved by Sarvānandanātha’s devotion, the compassionate Mahādeva, in the guise of a *sannyāsi*, whispered a powerful mantra into Sarvānandanātha’s ear. He also said, “In Mehār, during a dark moonless night, in the dense forest at the base of the Jīna tree, on the last day of the month of Pauṣa, on a Friday, at midnight, the Universal Mother, though unseen, will manifest through you. At that specified time, sitting on a corpse, chant this all-powerful mantra I have given you and meditate on the Goddess. She will be pleased with you and grant all your desires.” Having imparted this knowledge, Mahādeva disappeared.

ŚAVA SĀDHANA

49. Sarvānandanātha, who had performed penances in previous lives, was overjoyed to receive this Brahma mantra from the Lord of the Gaṇas (i.e. Śiva). The waves of joy emanated from the heart of Sarvānanda, making him elated. He



The Jīna tree in the Sri Sri Mehar Kalibari Temple (Bangladesh)



experienced goosebumps, tears of joy, and an overwhelming emotion. His senses were completely engaged in unparalleled ecstasy. Completely intoxicated with this joy, Sarvānanda began to wander, singing about the aforementioned matters, and started heading towards his home.

Meanwhile, the devoted servant Pūrṇānanda began searching for Sarvānanda in various directions. After a long search, he heard a human voice from a nearby dense forest and moved towards that direction. Soon, he encountered Sarvānanda,

who was deeply engrossed in an unprecedented ecstasy. Pūrṇānanda was astonished and suddenly remembered the words spoken by Vāsudeva at Kāmākhyā and realized that their wish would be fulfilled that very night.

Subsequently, Pūrṇānanda advised Sarvānanda to keep the whole matter a secret. At the appointed time that night, Pūrṇānanda summoned Sarvānandanātha and they both made their way through the dark forest to the specified location at the base of the Jīna tree.^{8,9}

50-51. There, at the specified location of Mātāṅgeśvara *śiva[linga]*, Pūrṇānanda, the chief attendant, encouraged Sarvānandanātha and said, “O child, I will now assume the form of a corpse. You should sit upon it, free from all fears, and with a focused mind, chant your sacred mantra and meditate on the Goddess. This will fulfill all your desires. But remember, O virtuous one, you must keep my promise. When the Goddess, pleased, offers you a boon, do not ask for anything specific. Say that you are under the servitude of your attendant and are unaware of what boon to ask for. I, your servant, know what is needed.” Having said this, Pūrṇānanda, through the power of great yoga, separated his soul from his body and lay motionless.¹⁰

52. Following Pūrṇānanda's instructions, Sarvānandanātha sat upon the established corpse over the Mātāṅgeśvara Śivaliṅga and fearlessly began chanting his chosen mantra with concentration.

⁸ According to some accounts, Pūrṇānanda, aware of Sarvānandanātha's impending accomplishment, had instructed him to wait secretly in the dense forest that night. Thus, Sarvānandanātha was waiting in hiding, as per Pūrṇānanda's instructions.

⁹ There's a folklore about this place that states, “When Sarvānanda and Pūrṇānanda were wandering in the dense forest in search of the Jīna tree, they couldn't find it despite their efforts. After a while, they encountered a saintly dervish, adorned with various ornaments, who was a devout follower of the Islamic faith. This esteemed dervish, while deep in meditation, became aware that these two individuals were on a significant quest searching for the Jīna tree. Recognizing their purpose, the virtuous dervish called them over, pointed out the specific Jīna tree with his fingertip, and showed them the way. Following his directions, they reached the base of the Jīna tree.” This is why the dervish is revered for his role in their journey.

Rāstī Sāheb is the name by which he is known. To this day, the mausoleum (graveyard) of this great soul, known as Rāstī Sāheb's Dargah, sits by the banks of a massive pond adorned with red lotuses. It is revered by both Hindus and Muslims alike as a sacred pilgrimage site. The descendants of this great soul are still respected by all. They still receive an annual stipend of 365 rupees from the government.

¹⁰ Knowing from Vāsudeva at Kāmākhyākṣetra that the achievement of *siddhi* would occur while mounted on a corpse, Pūrṇānanda had been practicing yoga with the desire to become the corpse for the ritual.

THE APPEARANCE OF DEVĪ

53-55. While Sarvānandanātha was engaged in his chanting during the deep hours of the night, a pure, fiery, and luminous object, resembling the moon and sun, emerged from his heart lotus and spread throughout the entire forest. As this fiery orb became more intense, he began to see the reflection of his beloved deity in it. Upon closer observation, he could clearly see the true form of his chosen deity, and he began to meditate on her with joy.

The deity, indescribably beautiful, compassionate towards devotees, with a gentle smile, lotus-like clear face, eyes as beautiful as blue lotuses, always merciful, giver of desired boons to the devotees, bearer of auspiciousness and peace, radiant like a hibiscus flower, cool as the rays of a million moons, with soft lotus-like hands, and eyes shining like the moon and sun, is the Mother of the three worlds, perpetually joyous and bestower of *dharmā* (righteousness), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (desire), and *mokṣa* (liberation).

This Goddess spoke to Sarvānandanātha, “Dear child! Choose your boon quickly, for the night is fast passing. [Kāśī,] the primary city of Śiva, the auspicious Lord of Spirits, has become destitute. From this day forth, I promise that you are verily my dedicated son. Wherever you are and whatever is in your mind that you do and it will be carried out/accomplished by me.”

SARVĀNANDA PRAISES THE GODDESS

56. After hearing these words of Devī, Sarvānanda bowed down and began to praise the Goddess.

57. Sarvānanda said, “Oh Mother! You who ensnare living beings in the ocean of delusion and makes them to dance herself, whose *māyā* bewilders even knowledgeable ones like Brahmā, Hari, and Hara. By Your slight grace, yogis easily attain the fruits of yoga, and for Your devotees, statuses like being Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva become insignificant; I bow to You.”¹¹

58. Even the Vedas, Āgamas, and even Śaṅkara cannot fathom the end of Your unparalleled form. Oh Mother! How can an ordinary human with limited intelligence possibly comprehend Your form?

59-60. O Mother! Within Your radiant aura, the brilliance of millions of suns is eclipsed, just like countless stars near the full moon. You embody both the individual soul (*jīvātmā*) and the supreme soul (*paramātmā*), manifesting as both female and male forms as per the contemplator's thought, and You are the infinite form, both with and without desires. I bow to You.

61-2. O Mother, the one who embodies infinite forms of fire! You are Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva; You are the wind, You are the moon and the sun, You are Yama and You incarnate as all the deities in this world. Mother! You descend to the earthly realm to perform all the sacrifices and yet enjoy them in heaven. O Mother! When pleased, You grant liberation by cutting off worldly bonds, and when angered, You destroy the three worlds.

Who can comprehend Your infinite play, O Mother? You create and destroy in an instant. You are visible and then, suddenly, You are not. Your divine play is beyond understanding.

63. O Mother, this worldly existence is fraught with sorrow for living beings. Constantly, these beings suffer various forms of misery in this relentless world. But for the wise, this world serves as a field for the expansion of the fire of wisdom. For any creature who attains Your grace, this worldly existence becomes full of substance, a source of joy and wisdom.

64. O Mother, the origin of the three qualities (*triguṇa*)! Happiness and sorrow are beyond the control of living beings as they are continually plunged into sorrow against their will. Thus, I am not the doer of joy and sorrow, nor are the preserver of the world like Viṣṇu, nor Śiva or Brahmā. You alone, O Mother, are the controller of the three qualities.

65-6. O compassionate Mother! You are all-powerful, the maiden of the world, the Mother and nourisher of all. You are the Vedas and the one known

¹¹ In the source text, the numbering unexpectedly restarts at this point. For clarity and ease of reference, we maintained consistent numbering through to the end of the text.

through the Vedas, deeply hidden yet evident to all. O Mother, You are the supreme swan (*Hamsab*) for ascetics. For the devotees of Viṣṇu, You are the foremost soul (*Puruṣa*). For the Kaulas, You are the ultimate power (*Śakti*), Indeed, You are also the divine devotion (*Bhakti*) for them.

O Mother, You are both the one and the many, visible at one moment, and gone the next. Who can fathom Your infinite play?

67. O Yōgāmyā, the Mother of the three worlds! Even the sages and seers, who have renounced everything and constantly meditate upon You day and night, are unable to perceive You, despite millions of eons spent in meditation. Hence, what can I say about ordinary humans with limited intellect and a short lifespan?

68. O Mother! Your lotus feet are elusive for yogis and beyond reach for the ordinary minded. Yet those who yearn to serve at Your feet surely attain liberation, for Your lotus feet are known to be the sole raft to cross the ocean of worldly existence. No sage or great soul speaks of any other means to transcend worldly suffering.

69. O Mother, as long as one's mind doesn't dwell even momentarily on Your lotus feet, enemies, sins, and malefic planets cause various sufferings. But once the mind stabilizes at Your feet, all these adverse forces become like friends, neither inflicting pain nor pleasure. Such is Your glory.

70-1. What merit lies in donating thousands of cows adorned with jewels? What's the benefit of performing the *aśvamēdha* (horse) sacrifice? What gain is there in residing at holy places like Kāśī? And what virtue is achieved through meditation and yoga practice spanning eons? But if one's mind rests even briefly on Your feet, all desires and virtues are fulfilled. Those constantly engaged in Your service need not be anxious about immense wealth, for such concerns are futile and disgraceful, as You are the Rājarājēśvarī (supreme empress). Yet, even Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are enchanted by Your *māyā* and remain restlessly agitated. Is it any wonder then for ordinary humans?

72. O Mother! You are beyond the comprehension of ordinary beings. Therefore, seekers with undivided concentration worship You through mental offerings. Even supreme beings like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are not capable of grasp-

ing Your immeasurable radiance with external rituals. Hence, we contemplate upon that Supreme form of Yours with utmost reverence.

73-7. O Mistress of the three worlds! The gods like Īśa are Your attendants. Pure water, the essence of mantras, is Your *pādyā* (water for washing feet), the mind is Your *arghya* (offering), the nectar flowing from the thousand-petaled lotus at the crown is Your *ācamānīya* (water for sipping), the ultimate truth is the fragrance, the senses are flowers, the wind is incense, the fire is the lamp, and the abundant food filling the universe is Your *naivedyam*. The ocean of nectar is Your drink, and mountains of delicately prepared meat are Your food. The lunar orb is Your parasol, the wind Your fan, the sun Your mirror, and the sound emanating from the unstruck center is like the ringing of a bell. The celestial maidens, by offering betel, make things enjoyable for You. The great sages' captivating music and dance are pleasing to Your ears, and various sounds made by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva seated on the stage are hymns to You. Bhairava and other gods who consume the remnants of Your offerings are filled with bliss, and the 10 great wisdom goddesses (*Daśamahāvīdyās*) joyfully sprinkle that nectar from a pot filled with it from above. Amidst this joyous anointment, You, the grantor of fearlessness, surrounded by gods, become visible. In haste, all Your companions run about, busy collecting the materials for worship. Thus adorned by the gods, with a slight smile, Your form radiates light in all directions. I am fulfilled even by this brief glimpse of Your form. O Mother! Even Brahmā, Hari, and Hara are unable to be constantly devoted to Your worship; therefore, it is redundant to say that ordinary humans are completely incapable.

78. O Three-eyed One! Even though neither the inhabitants of the earth nor the celestial gods can contemplate Your form, it's not appropriate to be content with not thinking of Your form. For there is no other way to diminish suffering in this world except for contemplating Your lotus feet. O Mother! Whether one is capable of visualizing Your form or not, the important thing is the desire to serve at Your feet. Those whose hearts are firmly devoted to the service of Your feet, they are truly liberated. This is stated in the Nigama, Āgama, and Vedas, and I also firmly believe in this matter.



DEVĪ OFFERS TO GRANT A BOON

79. After hearing such praises from Sarvānanda, the Goddess, giver of supreme joy and fulfiller of devotees' wishes, said, "Child! Abandon this sweet hymn that delights my heart. I am the one who grants liberation to beings, annihilating their sins and virtues. In My hands lie both the selfless and desired boons, as well as protection. At this moment, in the fullness of night, I am exceedingly restless due to the separation from my lord (Śiva). Therefore, quickly make your desired boon known to me, and I will surely grant it to you."

80-1. Sarvānanda replied, "Mother! What more should I ask for when the vision of Your lotus feet, worshipped even by Hari, Hara, and Brahmā, has already been granted to me? If still, you wish to bestow another boon, I am unaware of it; it is known only to this sleeping servant before you. So, grant the boon as per his desire."

82-3. The compassionate Goddess said, "O child, Pūrṇānanda! Awake, for you have attained liberation today. Now, abandoning the yogic sleep, behold My supreme form and ask for the desired boon." After saying this, the Goddess touched Pūrṇānanda's head with her foot, and he became conscious. Upon seeing the Goddess's lotus feet, he began to praise Her according to his wish.

PŪRṆĀNANDA PRAISES THE GODDESS

84. Pūrṇānanda said: "O Three-eyed Goddess! Your feet, as radiant and beautiful as the full moon of the autumn season, adorned with shining nails and resounding with the sound of an-

klets - feet that even Brahmā, Hari, Hara, and other gods offer their respects to - upon which our eyes, like bees, have settled. What boon is there left to be granted? Therefore, what more can I ask for at Your feet?

85. After many years of austerity, even yogis do not see You, who are 'Paramātparātara' (the highest of the high), the subtle Brahman form, the body of Sadāśiva, and served by Brahmā, Hari, Hara, and other gods. Seeing You directly assures me that my intense austerity in past lives to behold Your lotus feet is now fruitful.

86. O Mother of the universe! The five elements - earth, water, fire, air, and ether, as well as the three qualities - *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, are all Your manifestations. When You reveal yourself, all of these come into existence, and when You contract into Your subtle form, they all return to their subtle state. O Mother, You are the primal nature (Brahmaprakṛti). The evidence of Your feet being worshipped in the heart of Mahādeva (Śiva) is proof of this.

87. O Supreme of the supreme! Those who, with a clear mind, engage in the service of Your feet, remember Your name, and partake in Your pure foot water, remain engaged in these devotions even in the age of Kālī. They are freed from all sins and after enjoying the supreme pleasures of this life, achieve the ultimate goal which is attainable only by *sāttvik* sages.

88. O Mother, who holds the true form of creation! Some sages interpret You as Prakṛti, while other vedantists describe You as the Ātmā. Some again refer to You as both. We cannot accept two differing views regarding this, as even the eternal souls with inherent qualities, when deluded by Your *māyā*, believe themselves to be mere mortals lost in the quagmire of life. So, what more can a petty-minded man understand?

O Mother! Your infinite play is hard to comprehend. One moment it exists, the next it's gone.

THE REQUEST TO SEE DEVĪ'S 10 FORMS

89. O Mother, bestower of grace upon Your devotees and the creator of the three worlds! Having beheld Your immaculate, pure form, worshipped by the greatest yogis, I am blessed. But if Your

mercy extends to us, I ask for this one boon at Your pure lotus feet: please grace us with the vision of Your 10 supreme forms.

90. Subsequently, the King said to Daṇḍivāmī, “O Daṇḍin! Listen. Thereafter, out of compassion towards the devotees the Supreme Goddess appeared in ten forms: Kālī, Tārā, Ṣoḍaśī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Bhairavī, Chinnamastā, Dhūmāvatī, Bagalā, Mātaṅgī, and Kamalā in front of Her great devotees Sarvānanda and Pūrṇānanda. Upon seeing Her, both Sarvānanda and Pūrṇānanda started praising the Goddess.”

ADYĀSTAVA (THE PRAISE OF THE FOREMOST)

91. Sarvānanda said, “With a dense form, Her face adorned with streams of enemy blood, with flowing hair, wearing a playful necklace on her neck, She is the consort of Hara (Śiva). She is expansive, insurmountable, She plays amongst the divine assemblies and is equal to the deities. In the region of Mehāra, She is renowned as the Mother of the universe, the vision of the elusive.”

92. Pūrṇānanda said, “She, the Mother of gods like Brahmā, whose breasts are like the wish-fulfilling tree Kalpavṛkṣa, face radiant like a lotus, thighs resembling the graceful banana tree, breasts ornately shaped like pots, eyes darkly lined by eyeliner, the savior of the world, the supreme, dispeller of fears. I have achieved my purpose by witnessing the divine form of the Mother of the universe in this grand realm.”

93. Sarvānanda said, “From whose face blood of demons flows, feet colored with red lac, hair free and long reaching the ground, creating darkness like the night, adorned with a garland of demon heads, clothed as the sky, holding a sharpened sword and severed head of a demon, such a universal Mother resides in my heart.”

94. Pūrṇānanda said, “O Mother! You are the one who delights Mahādeva, the knower of the mysteries of divine love-play. You are the one attainable through yoga by all the meditative beings on earth and the bringer of welfare to the world. You bestow the ultimate creation through the showering of nectar and celestial blessings. And You are the protector of Hari, Hara, Indra, and other gods, who bow at Your feet.”

95. Sarvānanda said: “O Mother! You are the benefactor of well-being to those who take refuge in Your feet, bearer of the heads of slain demons, instilling fear in enemies, and dressed for battle, with a complexion like dark clouds, producing terrifying sounds in the battlefield, and moving gently like a majestic elephant, radiating supreme joy.”

96. Pūrṇānanda said: “O Mother! You destroy the demons with Your sharpened weapons, reside in a beautiful abode atop the lofty peaks of the Himalayas, and are like a boat crossing the ocean of worldly existence. You are the consort of Mahādeva, and the sound of Your ankle bells immerses everyone in a sea of joy.”

97. Sarvānanda said: “O Mother! You are like a fierce sun destroying the darkness of worldly afflictions, radiating beauty with the brightness of a hundred suns, adorned with free-flowing hair, and wearing a girdle of severed hands around Your waist.”

98. Pūrṇānanda said: “O Mother! In the battle between gods and demons, You appear terrifying with a lolling tongue, wearing a garland of severed heads around Your neck and a belt of severed hands at Your waist. May that awe-inspiring Kulakāminī, reside in my heart.”

99. Sarvānanda said: “O Mother! You destroy the foes of the gods with a sharpened trident in Your left hand, roar fiercely like thunderous clouds during the apocalypse, and reside in the heart of Mahādeva. O gracious Mother, bless this unworthy servant with the vision of Your divine feet.”

TĀRĀSTAVA (THE PRAISE OF TĀRĀ)

100. Sarvānanda said: “O Jagadīśvarī Tāriṇī! Your feet shine with the brilliance of a hundred million suns, adorned with exquisite crowns of jewels on the heads of gods like Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and resonate sweetly with the sound of bright ankle bells.”

101. Pūrṇānanda said: “O Jagadīśvarī Tāriṇī! Your feet cool the burning pain of those tormented by the fire of worldly desires, granting them peace. You are the creator of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Mahādeva, the embodiment of Śiva-Śakti, and the destroyer of all fears.”

102. Sarvānanda said: “O Jagadīśvarī Tāriṇī! Your feet are beautified like springtime with various beautiful flowers, buzzed around by intoxicated bees, filled with sweet melodies. You are responsible for the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe.”

PŪRṆĀNANDA ASKS FOR A BOON

103-6. Pūrṇānanda said: O granter of the desires of devotees! At Your feet, the humble servant *śūdra* Pūṇa prays:

- (1) May there be constant unwavering devotion to Your lotus feet in the lineage of Sarvānanda.
- (2) O Jagattāriṇī! The mantra that has enabled me to behold the divine form of Your feet, may it remain the root-mantra for that lineage forever.
- (3) Let there be no adversity in this lineage.
- (4) O Mother! Your own servant has been extremely humiliated; therefore enlighten him with all forms of knowledge and protect him from shame.
- (5) Illuminate the world with the light of the full moon from Your toenails.
- (6) May those who malign or harm his lineage face destruction of wealth and lineage.
- (7) May Sarvānanda, his lineage, and disciples prosper and be free from misfortunes.

Those who recite or listen to Sarvānanda’s hymns devoutly, may they develop devotion to Your feet.

THE EFFECT OF DEVĪ’S DARŚAN

107. The King said: “Afterwards, Bhagavatī, pleased with the hymns of Sarvānanda and Pūrṇānanda, granted them all their wishes, illuminated the universe with her toenail’s radiance and departed to be with Śiva.”

108. “I have recounted the full story of the miraculous deeds of Sarvānanda Deva. If one criticizes Sarvānanda Ṭhākura, it’s akin to insulting Śiva. O wise one! Therefore, do not speak ill of him.”

109. Daṇḍiśvāmī again asked Dāsarāja, “O King! The *siddhi* that Śarvānanda Deva accomplished in

seclusion, how was it revealed to the public? Please explain it to me in detail.”

110-1. The King replied, “On that day (the day of the *siddhi*) during the third part of the night, all my subjects saw a flawless moon shining in its full glory and were astonished. At that moment, I could not ascertain whether this miraculous event was auspicious or inauspicious. Finally, all the Brahmins and scholars declared it as a divine occurrence.”

THE STORY OF THE SHAWL

112-5. “From that day, Śrī Sarvānanda Deva, devoid of his previous restlessness, began moving about quietly and calmly, avoiding conversation with anyone. After some time, during winter, I saw Sarvānanda Deva without winter clothes and offered him a valuable shawl. While returning home with the shawl, he encountered a fallen woman who cunningly asked him for it. Sarvānanda joyfully gave it to her. The woman displayed the expensive shawl I had given to Sarvānanda, causing people to doubt his character and malign him. Next day, when Sarvānanda came to my palace without winter clothes, I asked him to bring the previously given shawl, and people started criticizing him. Hearing this, Sarvānanda, with reddened eyes in anger, ordered his nephew, Śaḍānanda, to quickly fetch the shawl from his wife.”

116-8. Śaḍānanda obeyed his uncle’s command and went home, repeatedly shouting, “Auntie, quickly give the shawl!” However, Sarvānanda’s wife, Vallabhā Devī, was busy with other tasks and did not hear Śaḍānanda’s calls. Frightened by his uncle’s anger, Śaḍānanda continued to loudly demand, “Give my uncle’s shawl!” In response to this, the compassionate, boon-bestowing, and world-saving Goddess, extended her hand out of the house through the upper part of the door and gave Śaḍānanda a shawl identical to the previous one.

119-20. Upon seeing such a captivating hand whose nails shone like millions of suns, fires, and moons, brilliantly illuminating; which was adorned with beautiful golden bracelets studded with gems, Śaḍānanda began to extol the Devī with utmost astonishment, as if in a trance of ecstasy.

ṢAḌĀNANDA PRAISES THE GODDESS

121. ṢaḌānanda said: “O full-moon personified, the beautifully attired, Supreme Goddess! By the extraordinary fortune of the King, You have graced this place of Mehār, blessing all residents with fortune and fulfillment.

122. O embodiment of bliss and knowledge! On the moonless night, You revealed Your radiant moon-like nails, blessing me with the sight of Your hand by Your grace, making me truly fortunate.

123. O Enchantress of the Universe! Great sages like Brahmā and other yogis, despite meditating upon You ceaselessly, are unable to comprehend the extent of Your beauty and qualities. Hence, O Eternal One! How can an ordinary human with limited intellect praise You?

124-5. O Devī! You are the Mother of the universe, the daughter of creation, the universal creator with many forms, and the unique protector. You are the primal cause of the world, the compassionate one, and the sole savior of the universe. You are also the creator of even the creator. O Mother! You are the doer of all, the destroyer and sustainer of all, the intellect and the embodiment of pure consciousness. Even though You are distinct from all things, You are still present in everything.

Mother! Who can understand Your infinite play? This water, this air, this living being and more, in how many forms, O Mother, have You roamed? Understanding Your infinite plays is indeed a heavy task.

126-7. The King said, “When ṢaḌānanda was praising the Goddess, at that time, the elder brother of Sarvānanda, Āgamācārya, arrived and having seen such behavior of ṢaḌānanda, asked him, “O child! What has happened? Whom are you praising? Who gave you this garment from an empty house? Speak the truth to me, ṢaḌānanda! Why are you speaking like a madman?”

128-9. ṢaḌānanda replied, “He who, in hope of attaining the lotus feet of the Goddess, repeatedly gave up his body at places like Nīlagiri, the banks of Sindhu river, Badrikāśrama, at the confluence of the Ganges, in Kāśīdhāma, and Kāmākhyākṣetra, and finally incarnated in Mehār as the son of the great Śambhunātha. This same Sarvānandanātha witnessed the Goddess in her ten forms with his own eyes here in Mehār. On the new moon night,

the Goddess’s toenail, resembling the moon’s rays, appeared like a full moon, enchanting the King and others. I have witnessed Her clothed palm by Her slight grace and have been enraptured by the sight of Her feet.”

130-1. King continued, “After hearing the entire account from ṢaḌānanda, we have come to know of the miraculous deeds of the sage, which I have now shared with you in detail. Listen further; ṢaḌānanda then brought the garment given by the Goddess to the assembly. The garment that was given to the courtesan was also retrieved and brought to the assembly. Seeing that both garments were identical in every aspect, everyone, including myself, was astonished. I couldn’t discern which one I had given, as both looked exactly the same.”

SARVĀNANDA DECIDES TO LEAVE MEHĀR

132-3. Subsequently, Sarvānanda Deva renounced the said garment and, before leaving, proclaimed that “in 15 generations, the lineage of the King and in 22 generations, my own lineage will perish.” Believing it improper to reside in this untrustworthy disciple’s town, he decided to move elsewhere, taking his servant Pūrṇānanda and his nephew ṢaḌānanda with him.

134-6. Upon hearing this news, Sarvānanda Deva’s wife, Vallabhā Devī, distressed and anxious, approached her husband, prostrated at his feet, and implored, “O Deva! Protect me, show mercy to your servant. O Prāṇavallabha (life’s beloved)! I am ignorant of hymns and meditation of the left-handed path, and you are supremely compassionate, so please rescue me from this worldly torment. O Parameśvara! I am powerless to obstruct your departure, hence kindly grant the potent mantra, as told by Śiva, to Śivanātha and deliver me from this worldly suffering.”

137. After listening to Vallabhā Devī’s sincere pleas, Sarvānanda Deva, satisfied, told her, “O beloved! You will soon attain liberation; have no to fear.” After bestowing this blessing upon Vallabhā Devī, he joyfully imparted the mantra in Śivanātha’s ear.

138. Śivanātha, having received the mantra, touched the feet of his guru, Sarvānanda, and offered many praises.

ŚIVANĀTHA PRAISES SARVĀNANDA

139. Śivanātha said: “O Merciful One! I salute You, the non-dual; I remember You, the non-dual; I worship You, the non-dual and the embodiment of the Supreme Brahman; I bow to You, the Supreme Brahman residing within the heart; I salute You, the revealer of the vital force within the body; I pay homage to You, the luminous non-dual Supreme Brahman; I bow to You, the compassionate and significant one; You are formless, eternal, endowed with attributes, conscious-soul, and grantor of boons to seekers, I salute You. O Lord! Save me from the ocean of existence.”

SARVĀNANDA BLESSES HIS FAMILY

140-4. Pleased with his son’s praises, Sarvānanda Deva, the Parameśvara, said, “My son, listen carefully to my boon:

- (1) The *ātmaśikṣā* (self-knowledge) in the form of the mantra, will reside in the heart for 11 generations.
- (2) Those who follow *vīracāra* will surely realize the desired knowledge in their heart lotus.
- (3) Then, in the path of devotion, realization will occur in dreams.
- (4) However, without *vīracāra*, this knowledge will never be pleased.
- (5) Upon the completion of the 22nd generation, the most profound knowledge, once concealed, will again become revealed and return.

(All these boons have been granted by Sarvānanda Deva to his lineage.)

TRIP TO SENHAṬṬA & VĀRĀṆASĪ

145. The King narrated, “Having said this, the Kulānātha (head of the clan), Sarvānanda, accompanied by Pūrṇānanda and Śaḍānanda, joyfully departed to a place named Senhaṭṭa. There, he settled down and produced a virtuous son. His descendants from the second marriage are still present in that region.

146-7. After residing there for a long time and reaching the age of fifty-two, Sarvānanda renounced his household life and went to Vārāṇasī. There he adopted the practices of *vīracāra* (consumption of alcohol, fish, meat, etc.). Seeing him abandoning the traditional practices, you, the ascetics (Daṇḍis) admonished him. Hence, your current situation has arisen; hence, O Daṇḍi, now that you are aware of Sarvānanda’s life, go to Vārāṇasī and seek his forgiveness to resolve your misunderstandings.”

REPENTANCE OF DAṆḌISVĀMĪ

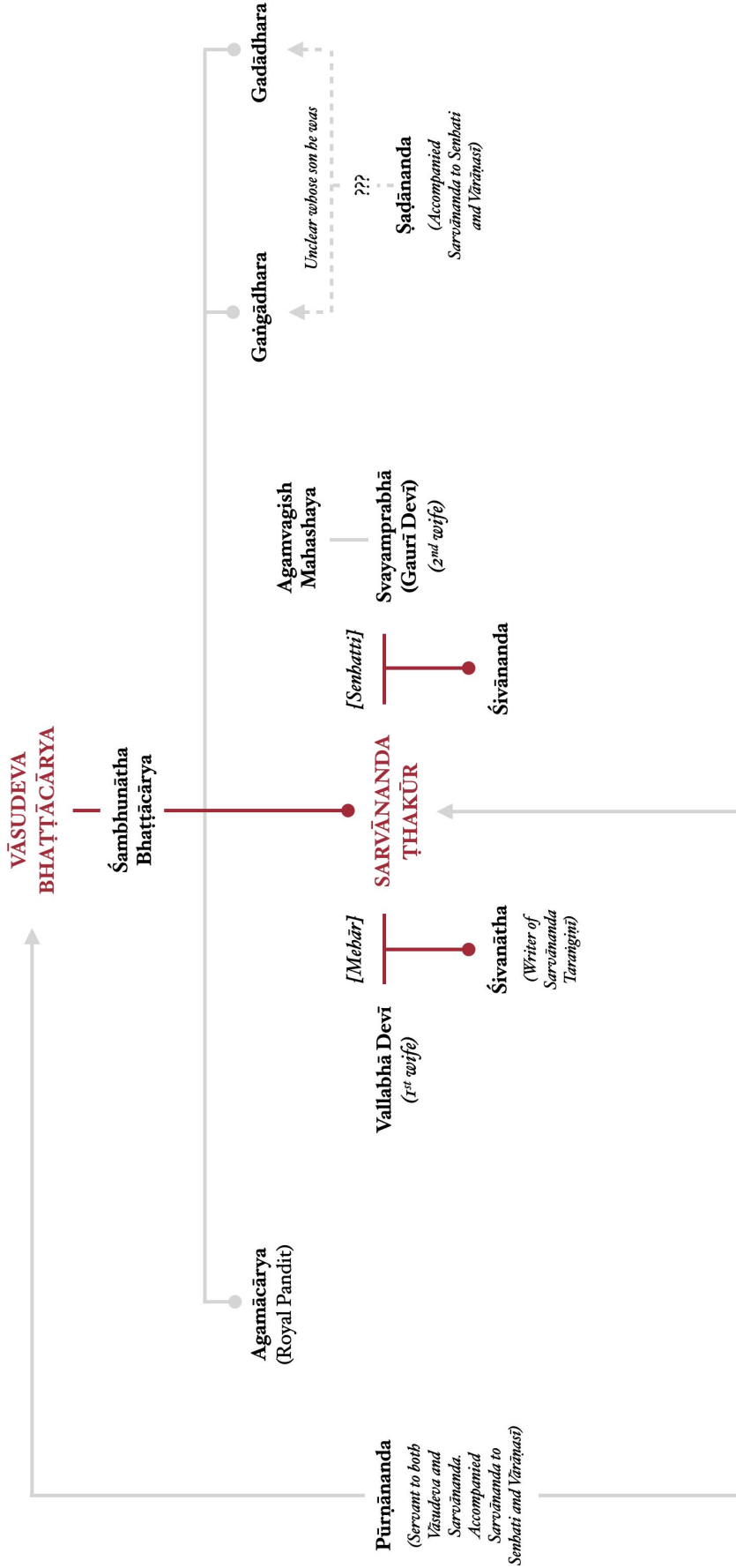
Subsequently, having learned about the divine deeds of Mahātmā Sarvānanda from King Dāsārāja, Daṇḍisvāmīs went to Kāśī and, with various praises, sought forgiveness. By doing so, all their prior misconceptions were cleared, and they ultimately found peace.

Sarvānanda’s final state, like that of great sages, is unknown; he disappeared from public view in Vārāṇasī, taking Pūrṇānanda and Śaḍānanda with him. His whereabouts and condition remain a mystery. He is believed to have attained absolute bliss and now exists in an *Avadhūta* state along with Pūrṇānanda and Śaḍānanda serving him.

Thus ends the biography of Sarvānanda,
written in Bengali by Śrī Āsannabandhu Bhaṭṭācārya.



APPENDIX I: SARVĀNANDA'S GENEALOGY



APPENDIX 2: SARVĀNANDA'S PRANĀMA MANTRA & DAṆḌYĀṢṬAKAṀ

- Sarvānanda's Pranāma Mantra -

**namastubhyaṃ sarvānandaṃ namaste sādhakottamam |
namaste kula-nāthāya kula-kaulīnya-dāyīnam ||
mātṛ-kṛpā-dhanya-puruṣa-pravaram |
daśa-mahāvīdyā-pratyakṣa-dakṣiṇam ||
mātṛ-śaktyābhāṣa-bimbīta-tantra-rājam |
namaste mehāra-tīrtha-candraṃ siddha-vareṇyam ||**

I bow to you Sarvānanda, to you the best of worshippers (*Sādhakas*), I bow. I bow to you Lord of the Kula, bestower of nobility upon his family/the Kula. The best of men blessed with the grace of the Divine Mother, Who was able to have the direct perception of the Ten Great Vidyās (*Daśamahāvīdyā*). The King of the Tantras which reflect the Words of Śakti, the Divine Mother, I bow to you the Moon of the Sacred Land of Mehār, the Best amongst the Attained Ones (*Siddhas*).



Sarvānanda's pādukas from
the Kāmarūpa Maṭh

Danḍyāṣṭakam [Eight Verses Composed by the Danḍī]¹²

1 **sadā śuddhabuddhaṃ parajñānarādhyam
guṇādhāramādyam gurum viśvavandyam |
jvaladdhemavarṇam śaraccandravaktram
paramānandamagnaṃ bhaje sarvavidyam ||**

I always worship Sarvavidya¹³, eternally pure and wise, revered for transcendent knowledge, the source of all qualities, the beginning of everything, the Guru venerated by the world, glowing with the color of molten gold, his face shining like the autumn moon, deeply immersed in supreme bliss.

2 **sarojākṣijvālam mahāśaṅkhamālam
bhavānyāṃśajātam svaśaktyā sametaṃ |
samantādyatinām stutaṃ smeravaktaṃ
mahādevatulyam bhaje sarvavidyam ||**

I worship Sarvavidya, adorned with luminous lotus-like eyes and a skull garland, born as an aspect of the Goddess Bhavānī, along with his own Śakti, praised by hermits all around him, always smiling, and equal to Mahādeva.

3 **yadajñānato jñānamajñānatulyam
yatinām yato'bhūnmanogranthibhedah |
yadālokanāllocanam syāt pavitraṃ
bhaje taṃ sadānanditam sarvavidyam ||**

Due to being ignorant of him, knowledge itself would be the same as ignorance, he is the self-control of the ascetics, cutting the knots of the mind. From gazing upon him, the eyes become pure, I worship him, the perpetually blissful Sarvavidya.

4 **yadambhojavaktācchubhām sādhuvaṇīm
vadannāvike prādurāsīdbhavānī |
tamekaṃ mahāpūruṣam śuddharūpaṃ
cidānandamagnaṃ bhaje sarvavidyam |**

From his lotus like mouth came forth excellent and auspicious [hymns of] praise, saying "Oh Goddess who steers the ship [across the ocean of existence] (i.e. Tāriṇī)", Bhavānī manifested before him. I worship that one great pure being, deeply immersed in the consciousness and bliss, Sarvavidya.

5 **samuddhṛtyabāhūvadan vāravāram
vadāmi tvamīśaḥ tvamīśaḥ tvamīśaḥ |
kalau muktimārgaprabodhārtha eṣa
tvadīyāvātāraḥ pradīptapracāraḥ |**

Holding my hands high, I call out repeatedly fervently, "O my lord, my master!" In the Kālī Yuga, your incarnation and its widespread teachings have been illuminated solely to enlighten the path of liberation.

6 **bhavantam bhajanto janā bhāgyavantaḥ
svakarmakṣamāḥ svaḥpadaṃ prāpnuvan-
taḥ | ahaṃ mānuṣastvām na jānāmi tattvaṃ
tvamasmān bhavadbhaktiyuktān kurusva |**

Those people who worship you are fortunate; exhausting their own karma, they attain their heavenly abode. I, being a mere human, do not know your true nature; please let us be filled with devotion to you.

7 **pratiṣṭhā gariṣṭhā śrutā sarvaloke
mṛto jīvito dāsa eṣo'pyayatnāt |
amāyāṃ yadā prādurāsīcchaśāṅkas-
tvadanyānyabhūtaṃ na te sādhyamasti |**

You are widely renowned and esteemed, you [and your deeds] have been heard all over the world - Your servant [Purnānanda], even having died, still lived! [You could] make the full moon appear on the day of the new moon, so then there is nothing else which is impossible for you!

8 **iti sarvavidyāṣṭakam sanmukhoktaṃ
paṭhet prātarutthāya śuddhāntarātmā |
bhavettasya tuṣṭo guruḥ sarvadarśī
sadā pādapadmāgratattvaprakāśī |**

If one recites this *Sarvavidyāṣṭakam*, which was spoken with truth, upon rising in the morning, with his inner self pure, the all-seeing Guru, eternally illuminating the ultimate truth with his lotus feet, would be pleased with them.

iti danḍyāṣṭakam stotraṃ samāptaṃ ||

Thus, the hymn known as *Danḍyāṣṭakam* is completed.

¹² The text of the *Danḍyāṣṭakam* given in the source text is generally in good condition, with the exception of several corrupted words and a missing word. We have made an effort to restore these words to their most likely meanings.

¹³ Sarvānanda Ṭhākura, possessor of all esoteric knowledge or *Vidyā-s*

APPENDIX 3: SARVOLLĀSA TANTRA

The following are excerpts from the 1953 introduction to Sarvollāsa Tantra written by Dinesh chandra Bhattachāryya.

The *Sarvollāsa*, which is being published for the first time, is a remarkable compilation of a foremost Bengali mystic belonging to the *Vīra* cult of the Tantra. The book commanded a moderate circulation among the privileged Śāktas of East Bengal, though it was, for obvious reason, a sealed book to the lay man and its present publication, for the same reasons, has not found favour with a section of the public, some of whom have gone the length of cursing it. ...The late Sir John Woodroffe, who had secured a copy for himself, first cited from it in his paper on “*Shakti and Shakta*” (Modern Review 1917) subsequently reprinted in the several editions of his famous book of the same name.

It was at Senhāti that Sarvānanda compiled this book which is remarkable in more than one respects. The title of his father-in-law Āgamavāgīśa suggests that he was also a great Tāntrik scholar and probably Sarvānanda got his materials from the latter's rich collection of original Tantras. Except the two small verses at the beginning and the prose head-lines in the different chapters, the book does not contain a word of Sarvānanda's own composition and consists entirely of quotations from various original works.

- The Contents of the Sarvollāsa Tantra -

The contents of this rare collection of Tāntrik texts are given in the *ullāsanirṇaya* and will appear from the following brief sketch.

- | | | | |
|-------|---|-----|--|
| 1. | Nature of the ultimate Cause (<i>prakṛti</i>), the three-fold <i>atman</i> and the ultimate Reality (<i>brahma</i>); origin and propagation of faux and other Tāntrik Scriptures including the Vedas. | | alised) <i>paśu</i> and a <i>vibhāva vīra</i> respectively: Symbolic marks (<i>tilaka</i>) on the forehead. |
| 2. | List of the 64 leading (<i>pradhāna</i>) Tantras. | 17. | Instruments of worship, including <i>Yantras</i> , real as well as substitutional; |
| 3-5. | Śākta theories of creation. | 18. | The Śākta (i.e. Vīra), cult of the ‘right-hand’ sort (<i>dakṣiṇācāra</i>) consisting essentially of worshipping a Śākta with the <i>pañcatattva</i> : warning against false Vīras. |
| 6. | Śākta theories of dissolution. | 19. | The <i>ādyatattva</i> (drinking of wine) varying with the three classes of Sādhakas; prescribed only within Secret Circles of two kinds <i>divyacakra</i> and <i>vīracakra</i> . |
| 7. | Psychic attitude (<i>bhāva</i>), the essential element of Tāntrik practices. | 20. | The elements of a Secret Circle (<i>cakra</i>)—its venues, the prescribed seats, the presiding guardian (<i>cakreśvara</i>) &c. |
| 8. | Three-fold nature of <i>bhāva</i> . | 21. | Competency for admission to a <i>cakra</i> , removal of castebondage; list of articles required therein. |
| 9. | The corresponding cults (<i>ācāra</i>) beginning with <i>paśuvācāra</i> i.e. the Vaidik cult. | 22. | Different vessels (of wine): philosophy of the <i>pañcatattva</i> . |
| 10. | Various Gurus. | 23. | Nature and origin of the <i>ādyatattva</i> (wine), quite different from the ordinary prohibited drink. |
| 11. | Essential attributes of Gurus. | | |
| 12-4. | The Vaiṣṇava cult: nature of <i>bhakti</i> or devotion and of <i>bali</i> or religious sacrifice. | | |
| 15. | The Śaiva cult. | | |
| 16. | Two-fold substitutes of <i>pañcatattva</i> , prescribed in the cults of a <i>vibhāva</i> ‘(un-re- | | |

- 24-6. Sanctification of a Śākti (woman) and of wine and its vessels.
27. The three subsequent *tattvas* - meat, fish and fried cereals and their sanctification.
- 28-9. Characteristics and rules of purification of a Śākti.
30. Smoking of hemp of 4 different sorts (*samvidāpāna*), prescribed with wine; its sanctification.
- 31-2. Wine-cups for an worshipper within a Secret Circle and their purification; their number, arrangement and offering.
33. Special offering to Vaṭuka, Yoginis and other deities: the *Kula*-lamp.
34. Ceremonies-five-fold *nyāsa*, *prāṇāyāma* &c. — in the taking up of the wine-cups.
35. Prayer hymns of each cup in different rounds of 3, 5 or 9 cups.
- 36-7. The five ceremonies of contemplation and various parts of the 'inner' worship preceding the 'outer' worship.
38. Quantity of wine.
- 39-40. The 'sports' in the performance of the fifth *tattva* and their different aspects.
- 41-2. Two classes of worshippers - the followers of the Path of Action (*krityāmāgi*) and Seekers of Bliss (*ānandārthī*): Bliss from the fifth *tattva* for the former alone and the latter, identical with the followers of the Path of Knowledge (*jñānamāgi*), discards rites.
- 43-4. Ecstasy followed by copulation.
45. Hymn of Bliss (*Ānandastotra*) from the *Kulārṇāva*, a powerful advocacy of the *kulācāra*.
46. Ceremonious ablution (*abhiṣeka*) necessary for all entrants into the ritual.

47. The peculiar *bhāva* of the 'right' ritual (*dakṣiṇācāra*).

Vāmācāra

48. The 'left side' ritual and its peculiar *bhāva*, worship with the *pañcatattva* and *svapūṣpa*, the varieties of the latter and its purity.
49. Sanctification of *svapūṣpa*; the five finger-modes (*mudrā*); origin of the *pañcatattva*.
50. Characteristics of *Kula* women; the 'hidden' Lady (*guptā*) within the body and the visible (*vyaktā*) one: their worship.
- 51-2. Union with both, within and without and under the peculiar *bhāva* of *vāmācāra*.

Siddhāntācāra

- 53-60. The 'true' ritual based on the realisation of the identity of individual soul (*jīva*) with Śiva and of Śākti with the latter.
- 54-6. Three kinds of Bliss.
57. Glory of Śākti.
- 58-9. The *hamsabīja* and its three-fold meditation.
60. The divine ritual (*divyācāra*) and its distinction from *kaulācāra*.

Kaulācāra

61. Its nature and its ritual.
62. Prakṛiti: Her manifestation: the three Guṇas etc.
63. Nature of Brahman-evolution, the 24 *tattvas* and the Śāktis: process of dissolution and final liberation.

- *The list of the 64 Tantras given in Sarvollāsa Tantra* -

In the second chapter there is a valuable list of the 64 Tantras with the categorical statement that each of them is complete in 64 Paṭalas. The *Sarvollāsa* also was modelled after them and was originally complete in 64 *Ullāsas*, but all the manuscripts hitherto discovered omits the last *Ullāsa*, whose existence is only warranted by the *ullāsanirṇaya*¹⁴. It contained, according to tradition, the exact Mantra and its *Sādhana* which secured *Siddhi* (or *jīvanmukti*) for the compiler and is said to have been taken away by Sarvānanda with himself when he went to Benares, though a few of his descendants proudly claim to possess its copies separately which are kept back by all means from the public view. It is, therefore, practically lost to the public.

Most of the 64 Tantras mentioned in the second chapter have been cited in the body of the book and some of these texts are extremely rare and valuable. The largest number of quotations are made from the *Jñānāryāva*, the *Kulārṇāva* and the *Samayācāratāntṛa*.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Kālī Tantra | 23. Kumārikā Tantra | 45. Varadā Tantra |
| 2. Muṇḍamālā Tantra | 24. Mahat Tantra | 46. Tantra Cintāmaṇi Tantra |
| 3. Tārā Tantra | 25. Kaulārṇava Tantra | 47. Kālivilāsa Tantra |
| 4. Nirvāṇa Tantra | 26. Kālikākulasarvasva Tantra | 48. Haṃsa Tantra |
| 5. Śivasāra Tantra | 27. Kālikākālpa Tantra | 49. Cidāmbarataṭa Tantra |
| 6. Vīra Tantra | 28. Vārāhī Tantra | 50. Vijñāpana Tantra |
| 7. Liṅgārcana Tantra | 29. Yoginī Tantra | 51. Phetkārīṇī Tantra |
| 8. Latārcana Tantra | 30. Yoginīhṛdaya Tantra | 52. Nityā Tantra |
| 9. Todala Tantra | 31. Sanatkumāra Tantra | 53. Uttara Tantra |
| 10. Nīla Tantra | 32. Tripurāsāra Tantra | 54. Nārāyaṇī Tantra |
| 11. Rādhā Tantra | 33. Yoginīvijaya Tantra | 55. Ūrdhvāmnāyaka Tantra |
| 12. Viśvasāra Tantra | 34. Mālīnī Tantra | 56. Jñānadīpa Tantra |
| 13. Bhairava Tantra | 35. Kukkuṭa Tantra | 57. Gāndharva Tantra |
| 14. Bhairavī Tantra | 36. Śrīgaṇeśa Tantra | 58. Kuñjikā Tantra |
| 15. Siddheśvara Tantra | 37. Bhūta Tantra | 59. Tantra Muktabalī Tantra |
| 16. Mātṛkābheda Tantra | 38. Uḍḍīśa Tantra | 60. Bṛhat Tantra |
| 17. Samaya Tantra | 39. Kāmadhenu Tantra | 61. Śrīkrama Tantra |
| 18. Guptasādhana Tantra | 40. Vīrabhadra Tantra | 62. Yonī Tantra |
| 19. Mātṛkā Tantra | 41. Vāmakeśvara Tantra | 63. Kāmākhyā Tantra |
| 20. Māyā Tantra | 42. Kulacūḍāmaṇi Tantra | 64. Prokta Tantra |
| 21. Mahāmāyā Tantra | 43. Bhāvacūḍāmaṇi Tantra | |
| 22. Akṣayā Tantra | 44. Jñānārṇava Tantra | |

¹⁴ *tripaṣṭau brahmaṇe jñānam, jīvanmuktastataḥ paraṃ
catuḥṣaṣṭau samākṣatra granthollāsayatboditaḥ*

- Significance of the Title *Sarvavidyā* -

Sarvānanda attained *Siddhi* by *śavasādhana*, which is referred to in the *Sarvollāsa* in a cryptic manner under the description of *kaulācāra* in *ullāsa* 61. He evidently professed in the fullest sense of the term what he has collected in his compilation and what, according to his son Śivanātha, he preached at Benares (“*vyakto yena kṛtaḥ kāśyāṃ vīrācāraḥ gubyakaḥ.*” *Sarvānandataranᠠḡinī*). Śivanātha also states that when the *Sarvānandataranᠠḡinī* was written Sarvānanda was still living at Benares and led the life of an *Avadhūta* which we take to be synonymous with the *Kaula*, the highest rank of the Tāntriks¹⁵. Most of the editions of Śivanātha's memoir publish a *Dandyaṣṭaka*, otherwise called the *Sarvavidyāṣṭaka*, which contains a pen-picture of Sarvānanda by one who must have actually seen him. We cite one verse which points unmistakably to his profession:-

*sarajākṣi-jālam mahāśankha-mālam
bhavānyamśajātam svasākyā sametam |
samantādyatīnām stutam smeravaktraṃ mahāde-
vatulyam bhaje sarvavidyam || (v. 2)*

The inner Sādhana of a saint like Sarvānanda will never be known to us, but there seems to have been a distinctive feature in it, which marks him out as a class by himself, His name *Sarvavidyā* suggests and Śivanātha's memoir supports that, unlike the general class of Tāntrik saints, he had a “vision” not of a particular form of the Supreme Deity, but of something like a synthetic form of one and all powerful Śakti separate from and yet absorbing within Her all the other forms of particular deities (Kālī, Tārā and others). The missing last *ullāsa* of the *Sarvollāsa* might have thrown light on the point.



¹⁵ *santyaḡya svānamācāram gatvā vārāṇasīm purīm |
avadhūtavadā cāramācaratadbunā mudā ||*

As a sort of commentary to this and the next cited verse from the quays we quote a few words from an unpublished work—the *Śyāmācañcandrikā* of Ratnagarbha Sārvaabhauma:-

*yat mahāśankhajapamabbibitaṃ tat siddhapara, avadhūtaparamiti kecit |
na caitadavadhūtādīnām strīsaṅgitvameva nāstīti vācyam,
avadhūtāśrame stbitvā bhairavācāratatparaḥ |
vannābam kulyogena prasīdāmi na saṃśayaḥ ||
iti kulacūdā-maṇivacanāt ||*



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