

RIDDLE NO. 15

HOW DID THE BRAHMINS WED AN AHIMSAK GOD TO A BLOODTHIRSTY GODDESS ?

Having started drinking and flesh eating the Brahmins did not hesitate to write puranas advocating animal sacrifices. One such Purana requires a special mention. It is called the Kali Purana. This Purana is written with the express purpose of propagating the worship of the goddess Kali. In this Purana there is an adhyaya called Rudhir Adhyaya which means the bloody chapter.

I give below a summary of the Rudhir Adhyaya. In this chapter¹ the God Shiva addresses his three sons Betal, Bhairavar, and Bhairava in the following terms:

“I will relate you, my sons, the ceremonies and rules to be observed in sacrifices which being duly attended to are productive of the divine favour.

“The forms laid down in the Vaishnavi Tantra, are to be followed on all occasions and may be observed by sacrifices to all Deities.”

“Birds, tortoise, alligators, fish, nine species of wild animals, buffaloes, bulls, he-goats, ichneumons, wild boars, rhinoceroses, antelopes, guanas, reindeer, lions, tigers, men and blood drawn from the offerer’s own body, are looked upon as proper oblations to the Goddess Chandica, the Bhairavas &c.”

“It is through sacrifices that princes obtain bliss, heaven, and victory over their enemies.”

“The pleasure which the Goddess receives from an oblation of the fish and tortoises is of one month’s duration, and three from that of a crocodile. By the blood of the nine species of wild animals the Goddess is satisfied nine months, and for that space of time

¹The chapter is translated in English by Mr. W. C. Blaquiére and will be found in the Asiatic Researches vol. pp.

This is a 16-page typed MS having modifications by the author himself. All the pages are numbered serially and the treatment of the subject seems complete.—Ed.

continues propitious to the offerer's welfare. The blood of the wild bull and Guana give pleasure for one year, and that of the antelope and wild boar for twelve years. The Sarabhas blood satisfies the Goddess for twenty-five years, and buffalo's and rhinoceros's blood for a hundred, and that of the tiger an equal number. That of the lion, reindeer, and the human species produces pleasure, which lasts a thousand years. The flesh of these, severally, gives the pleasure for the same duration of time as their blood. Now attend to the different fruits attending an offering of the flesh of a rhinoceros or antelope, as also of the fish called Rohita."

"The flesh of the antelope and rhinoceros pleases the Goddess five hundred years and the Rohita fish and *Bardhrinasa* give my beloved (i.e. the Goddess Cali) delight for three hundred years."

"A spotless goat, who drinks only twice in twenty-four hours, whose limbs are slender, and who is the prime among a herd, is called *Bardhrinasa*, and is reckoned as the best of Havyas (i.e. offerings to the Deities) and Cavyas, (i.e. offerings to the deceased progenitors)."

"The bird whose throat is blue and head red and legs black with white feathers, is called also *Barshrinasa*, and is king of the birds, and the favourite of me and Vishnu."

"By a human sacrifice attended by the forms laid down, Devi is pleased one thousand years and by sacrifice of three men, one hundred thousand years. By human flesh, Camachya, Chandica, and Bhairava who assumes my shape, are pleased one thousand years. An oblation of blood which has been rendered pure by holy texts, is equal to ambrosia; the head also afford much delight to the Goddess Chandica. Let therefore the learned when paying adoration to the Goddess, offer blood and the head, and when performing the sacrifices to fire, make oblations of flesh."

"Let the performer of the sacrifice be cautious never to offer bad flesh, as the head and blood are looked upon by themselves equal to ambrosia."

"The gourd, sugar cane, spirituous liquors, and fermented liquors are looked upon as equivalent to other offerings, and please the Goddess for the same duration of time as the sacrifice of a goat."

"The performance of the sacrifice, with a Chandrasahsa, or Gatri, (two weapons of the king) is reckoned the best mode, and with a hetcher or knife, or a sangeul, the second best, and the beheadings

with a hoe a Bhallac (an instrument of the spade kind) the inferior mode."

"Exclusive of these weapons no others of the spear of arrow kind ought ever to be used in performing a sacrifice, as the offering is not accepted by the Goddess, and the giver of it dies. He who, with his hands, tears off the head of the consecrated animal, or bird, shall be considered equally guilty with him who has slain a Brahman, and shall undergo great sufferings.

"Let not the learned use the axe, before they have invoked it by holy texts, which have been mentioned heretofore, and framed by the learned for the occasion; let those I now tell you, be joined to them and the axe invoked, and particularly so, where the sacrifice is to be made to the Goddesses Durga and Camachya."

"Let the sacrificer repeat the word Kali twice, then the words '*Devi Bajreswari, the Lawha Dandayai, Namah.*' which words may be rendered '*Hail! Cali, Cali! Hail! Devi! goddess of thunder, Hail Iron sceptered Goddess!*' Let him then take the axe in his hand, and again invoke the flame by the Calratriya text as follows:

"Let the sacrificer say: '*Hrang Hring. Cali, Cali.*' O horrid toothed Goddess: eat, cut, destroy all the malignant, cut with this axe, bind; seize; drink blood; *spheng* secure, Salutations to Cali." Thus ends the Calratriya Mantra."

"The Charge (the axe) being invoked by this text called the Calratriya Mantra, Calratri (the Goddess of darkness) herself presides over the axe uplifted for the destruction of the sacrificer's enemies."

"The sacrificers must make use of all the tests directed previous to the sacrifice, and also of the following, addressing himself to the victim."

"Beasts were created by the self existing, himself to be immolated at sacrifices. I therefore immolate thee, without incurring any sin in depriving thee of life."

"Let the sacrificer then name the Deity to whom the sacrifice is made, and the purpose for which it is performed; and by the above text immolate the victim, whose face is to be towards the north, or else let the sacrificer turn his own face to the north, and the victim's to the east; Having immolated the victim, let him without fail mix salt &c., as before mentioned with the blood."

"The vessel in which the blood is to be presented, is to be according to the circumstances of the offerer, of gold, silver, copper, brass, or leaves sewed together, or of earth, or of *tutenague*, or of any of the species of wood used in sacrifices."

“Let it not be presented in an iron vessel, nor in one made of the hide of an animal, or the bark of tree; nor in a pewter, tin, or leaden vessel. Let not the blood be represented in the holy vessel named Srub and Sruch, nor on the ground. Let it not be presented in the Ghata (i.e. an earthen-jar always used in other religious ceremonies). Let it not be presented by pouring it on the ground, or into any of the vessels used at other times for offering food to the Deity, Let not the good man who wishes for prosperity, offer the blood in any of these vessels. Human blood must always be presented in a metallic or earthen vessel; and never on any account in a vessel made of leaves, or similar substance.

“The offering of a horse, except at the Aswamedha sacrifice, is wrong, as also offering an elephant, except at the Gaja Medha; Let therefore the ruler of men observe never to offer them except on those occasions. And on no account whatsoever let him offer them to the Goddess Devi, using the wild bull called Chanrara as a substitute for the horse, when the occasion required one.”

“Let not the Brahman ever offer a lion or a tiger, or his own blood, or spirituous liquors to the Goddess Devi. If a Brahmen sacrifices either a lion, a tiger, or a man, he goes to hell, and passes but a short time in this world attended with misery and misfortune.”

“If a Brahman offers his own blood, his guilt is equal to that of the slayers of a Brahman; and if he offers spirituous liquors he is no longer a Brahman.”

“Let not a Cshectree offer an entelope; if he does, he incurs the guilt of a Brahmin slayer where the sacrifice of lions, or tigers, or of the human species is required, let the three first classes act thus; having formed the image of the lion, tiger, or human shape with butter, paste, or barley meal, let them sacrifice the same as if a living victim, the axe being first invoked by the text Nomo, &c.

“Where the sacrifice of a number of animals is to take place it is sufficient to bring and present two or three to the Deity, which serves as a consecration of the whole. I have now related to you, O Bhairava, in general terms, the ceremonies and forms of sacrifices attend now to the different texts to be used on the several different occasions.”

“When a buffalo is presented to Devi, Bhairavee, or Bhairava let the sacrificer use the following Mantra in invoking the victim.”

“In the manner that thou destroyest, Horses, in the manner that thou earnest Chandica, destroy my enemies, and bear prosperity to me, O Buffalo!”

"O steed of death, of exquisite and unperishable form, produce me long life and fame. Salutation to thee, o buffalo!"

"Now attend to the particulars relative to the offering of human blood."

"Let a human victim be sacrificed at a place of holy worship, or at a cemetery where dead bodies are buried. Let the oblation be performed in the part of the cemetery called Heruca, which has been already described, or at a temple of Camachya, or on a mountain. Now attend to the mode."

"The cemetery represents me, and is called Bhairava, it has also a part called Tantarange; the cemetery must be divided into these two division, and a third called Heruca."

"The human victim is to be immolated in the east division which is sacred to Bhairava, the head is to be presented in the south division, which is looked upon as the place skulls sacred to Bhairavi, and the blood is to be presented in the west division, which is denominated Heruca."

"Having immolated a human victim, with all the requisite ceremonies at a cemetery or holy place, let the sacrificer be cautious not to cast eyes upon the victim."

"On other occasion also, let not the sacrificer, cast eyes upon the victim immolated, but present the head with eyes averted."

"The victim must be a person of good appearance, and be prepared by ablutions, and requisite ceremonies, such as eating consecrated food the day before, and by abstinence from flesh and venery; and must be adorned with chaplets of flowers and besmeared with sandal wood."

"Then causing the victim to face the north, let the sacrificer worship the several deities presiding over the different parts of the victims body; let the worship be then paid to the victim himself by his name."

"Thus let the sacrificer worship the victim, adding whatever other texts are applicable to the occasion, and have been before mentioned."

"Let not the female, whether quadruped or bird, or a woman be ever sacrificed; the sacrificer of either will indubitably fall into hell, where the victim of either the beasts or birds creation, are very numerous, the immolation of a female is excusable; but this rule does not hold good, as to the human species."

"Let not a Brahman or a Chandala be sacrificed; nor a prince; nor that which has already been presented to a Brahmen, or a deity; nor the offspring of a prince, nor who has conquered in battle; nor

the offspring of a Brahman, or of a Cshettree; nor a childless brother, nor a father, nor a learned person, nor one who is unwilling, nor the maternal uncle of the sacrificer. Those not here named, and animals, and birds of unknown species are unfit. If these named are not forthcoming, let their place be supplied by a male ass or camel. If other animals are forthcoming, the sacrifice of a tiger, camel, or ass must be avoided."

"Having first worshipped the victim, whether human, beast, or bird, as directed, let the sacrificer, immolate him uttering the Mantra directed for the occasion, and address the deity with the text laid down before."

"Let the head and blood of a human victim be presented on the right side of Devi, and the sacrificer address her standing in front. Let the head and blood of birds be presented on the left and the blood of a person's own body in front. Let the ambrosia proceeding from the heads of carnivorous animals and birds be presented on the left hand, as also the blood of all aquatic animals."

"Let the antelope's head and blood, and that of the tortoise, rhinoceros and hare and crocodile, and fish be presented in front." "Let a lion's head and blood, be presented on the right hand, and the rhinoceros's also; let not, on any account, the head or blood of a victim ever be presented behind the Deity, but on the right, left and in front."

"Let the consecrated lamp, be placed either on the right hand, or in front but on no account, on the left. Let incense be burnt on the left, and in front, but not on the right hand. Let perfumes, flowers and ornaments, be presented in front; with respect to the different parts of the circle, where to present the offerings, the mode already laid down may be observed. Let Madira (spirituous liquor) be presented behind other liquids on the left."

"Where it is absolutely necessary to offer spirits, let the three first classes of men supply their place, by coconut juice in a brass vessel, or honey in a copper one. Even in a time of calamity, let not a man of the three first classes, offer spirituous liquor, except that made from flowers, or stewed dishes. Let princes, ministers of state, counsellors, and vendors of spirituous liquors, make human sacrifices, for the purpose of attaining prosperity and wealth."

"If a human sacrifice is performed, without the consent of the prince, the performer incurs sin. In cases of imminent danger or war, sacrifices may be performed at pleasure, by princes themselves and their ministers, but by none else."

“The day previous to a human sacrifice, let the victim be prepared by the text Manastac, and three Devi Gandha Suchas, and the texts Wadrang; and by touching his head with the axe, and besmearing the axe with sandal &c, perfumes, and then taking some of the sandal, &c, from off the axe, and besmearing the victim’s neck therewith.”

“Then let the text Ambe Ambica, &c, and the Towdra and Bhairava texts be used, and Devi herself will guard the victim who, when thus purified, malady does not approach him, nor does his mind suffer any derangement from grief and similar causes, nor does the death or birth of a kinsman render him impure.”

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“Having secured the victim with cords, and also with (Mantras) let him strike off the head, and present it to Devi, with due care. Let him make these sacrifices in proportion to the increase or decrease of his enemies, chopping off the heads of victims for the purpose of bringing destruction on his foes, infusing, by holy texts, the soul of the enemy into the body of the victim, which will when immolated, deprive the foe of life also.”

“The blood must be drawn for the express purpose of an oblation, and from a man pure in body and mind, and free from fear; it must be caught in the petal of lotus and presented. It may be presented in a gold, silver, brass or iron vessel, with the due from, the texts recited.”

“The blood, if drawn by incision made with a knife, axe or sangeul, gives pleasure, in proportion to the size of the weapon.”

“The sacrificer may present one fourth of the quantity which a lotus petal will contain, but he must not give more on any account; nor cut his body more than is necessary. He who willingly offers the blood of his body and his own flesh, the size of a grain of linseed, Masha, tila, or mudya, with zeal and fervency, obtains what he desires in the course of six months.”

He who performs sacrifices according to these rules, obtains, his wishes to the utmost extent.”

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This is the Dharma which the Kali Purana preaches.

After centuries of Ahimsa ordained by Manu here is Himsa in full blast sanctioned by the Tantras in its worst and all inclusive form—

animal and human Himsa. These Himsa practices preached in the sanguinary chapter of Kali Purana had become quite widespread. As to the revival of animal sacrifice what happens at the Kali Temple in Calcutta furnishes unmistakable proof. That this temple should have become a perfect slaughter house where daily hundreds of goats are sacrificed to appease the Goddess Kali can only be explained by the teachings of the Kali Purana. Today human beings are not sacrificed to the Goddess Kali. But it does not mean that it never happened. On the contrary there is abundant evidence to show that human sacrifice like animal sacrifice was practised as taught by the Kali Purana. Dr. Rajendralal Mitra says¹:

“The fact is well known that for a long time the rite (of Human Sacrifice) was common all over Hindustan; and persons are not wanting who suspect that there are still nooks and corners in India, where human victims are occasionally slaughtered for the gratification of the Devi. In old families which belong to the sect of the Vamacharis, and whose ancestors formerly offered human victims at the Durga and the Kali Pujas, a practice still obtains of sacrificing an effigy, in lieu of a living man. The effigy, a foot long, is made of dried milk (khira), and sacrificed according to the formula laid down in the Kalika Purana the only addition being a few mantras designed typically to vivify the image. A friend of mine, Babu Hemachandra Ker, Deputy Magistrate of twenty four Pergunnahs and author of an excellent work on the culture of Jute in Bengal informs me that in the eastern districts of Bengal this sacrifice is frequently performed; but the image instead of being slaughtered by a single individual, is cut up simultaneously by all the grown up members of the family, either with separate knives, or with a single knife held jointly by all. This is known by the name of Satrubali or “sacrifice of any enemy”. The sacrifice, both in the case of Nara Bali and the Satru Bali is performed secretly, generally at midnight. The Satrubali, however, is a distinct rite, apart from the Narabali of the Kalika Purana, and authority for it occurs in the *Vrihannila Tantra*, in which it is said, after performing certain other rites therein described, “a king should sacrifice his enemy (in an effigy) made with dried milk (khira). He should slaughter it himself, looking at it with a fiery glance, striking deep, and dividing it into two with a single stroke. This should be done after infusing life into it by the rite of Prana Pratishtha, and repeating the name of the person to be destroyed. O consort of Mahesa, he doubtless destroys thereby his enemies.”

¹Indo-Aryans Vol. II. pp. 109-111.

Now the important point to note in this connection is that Kali is the wife of Shiva. The question that arises is does Shiva accept animal sacrifice? The answer to this question is that at one time Shiva did live on animal sacrifice. This statement may come as a surprise to the present day worshippers of Shiva. But it is a fact and those who need any evidence in support of it, have only to refer to the Ashvalayan Grihya-Sutra which gives a most elaborate description of a bull-sacrifice for the appeasement of Shiva. I give below the actual text from the Ashavalayan Grihya Sutra¹. This is what it says:

1. "Now the spit-ox (sacrificed to Rudra).
2. In autumn or in spring, under the (Nakshatra) Ardra.
3. The vest of his herd.
4. (An ox) which is neither leprous nor speckled.
5. One with black spots, according to some.
6. If he likes, a black one, if its colour incline to copper-colour.
7. He sprinkles it with water, into which he has thrown rice and barley.
8. From head to tail.
9. With (the formula), 'Grow up, agreeable to Rudra the great god'.
10. He should let it grow up. When it has cut its teeth, or when it has become a bull.
11. To a quarter (of the horizon) which is sacrificially pure.
12. At a place which cannot be seen from the village.
13. After midnight.
14. According to some, after sunrise.
15. Having caused a Brahman who is versed in learning and knows the practice (of this sacrifice), to sit down, having driven a fresh branch with leaves into the ground as a sacrificial post, (having taken) two creeping plants or two kusa ropes as two girdles, and having wound the one round the sacrificial post, and tied the other round the middle of the animal's head, he binds it to the sacrificial post or to the girdle (which he had tied to that post) with (the formula), 'Agreeable to him to whom adoration (is brought), I bind thee'.
16. The sprinkling with water and what follows is the same as at the animal sacrifice.
17. We shall state what is different.
18. Let him sacrifice the omentum with the Patri or with a leaf-thus it is understood (in the Sruti).

¹S. B. of East. Vol. XXIX p. 255-259 (Max-Muller).

19. With (the formula), 'To Hara, Mrida, Sarva, Siva, Bhava, Mahadeva, Ugra, Bhima, Pasu-pati, Rudra, Sankara, Isana svaha'!
20. Or with the last six (parts of that formula).
21. Or with (the formula), 'To Rudra svaha'!
22. Let him make Bali offerings towards the four quarters (of the horizon, to each on four rings of Kusa net-work, with the formulas), 'The hosts, Rudra, which thou hast towards the eastern direction, to them this (offering is brought). Adoration to thee! Do no harm to me ! 'In this way the assigning (of the offerings is performed) according to the different quarters (of the horizon).
23. With the following four hymns he should worship the four quarters, viz., 'what shall we do Rudra,' 'These prayers to Rudra,' 'To thee, O father,' 'These songs to Rudra with the strong bow.' (Rig-Veda I,43, 114; II, 33; VII, 46).
24. (This) worship to the quarters (of the horizon (is performed) at all sacrifices to Rudra.
25. The husks and chaff (of the rice), the tail, the skin, the head, the feet (of the sacrificial animal) he should throw into the fire.
26. He should turn the skin to some use according to Samvatya.
27. To the north of the fire, on rows of Darbha grass, or on rings of Kusa network, he should pour out the blood (of the sacrificial animal) with (the formula) 'Hissing ones! Noisy ones! Searching ones ! Seizing ones ! Serpents ! What here belongs to you, take that.'
28. Then, turning to the north (he assigns it) to the serpents (in the words) 'Hissing ones! What here belongs to you take that'.
Then the serpents take whatever has flowed down there of blood or of the contents of stomach and entrails.
29. All names, all hosts, all exaltations belong to him—to a sacrificer who knows that, he gives joy.
30. Even to a man who only with words sets forth (some part) of that (ceremony), he will do no harm; thus it is understood (in the Sruti).
31. He should not partake of that (sacrifice).
32. They should not take anything belonging to it into the village. For this God will do harm to (human) creatures.
33. He should keep away his people from the vicinity (of the place where he has sacrificed).
34. On an express injunction, however, he should partake (of that sacrificial food) for it will bring luck.
35. This split-ox sacrifice procures wealth, (open) space, purity, sons, cattle, long life, splendour.
36. After he has sacrificed, he should let loose another (animal).

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37. He should not be without such an animal.
 38. Then he will not be without cattle—thus it is understood (in the Sruti).
 39. Muttering the Santatiya hymn, he should go to his house.
 40. If disease befalls his cattle, he should sacrifice to that same God in the midst of his cow-stable.
 41. A mess of cooked food, which he sacrificed in its entirety.
 42. Having thrown the sacrificial grass and the Agya into the fire, he should lead his cows through the smoke.
 43. Murmuring the Santatiya hymn, he should go in the midst of his cattle.
 44. Adoration to Saunaka; Adoration to Saunaka!"

Today Shiva does not accept animal sacrifice. This change in the form of worship of Shiva is the result of the acceptance by the principle of Ahimsa. Having changed from *himsa* to *Ahimsa* the Brahmans changed Shiva from a *Himsak* God to an *Ahimsak* God. The cult of Kali has come into being long after Shiva had become an Ahimsak God. Never the less Kali his wife was made an himsak Goddess. The result is that we have a cruel contrast of a bloodless god having a blood-thirsty Goddess as his wife. Isn't it a riddle? Why did the Brahmins do such a thing?

