

Kashmir Shaivism

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Kashmir Shaivism

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1 Introduction

Kashmir Shaivism has penetrated to that depth of living thought where diverse currents of human wisdom unite in a luminous synthesis.

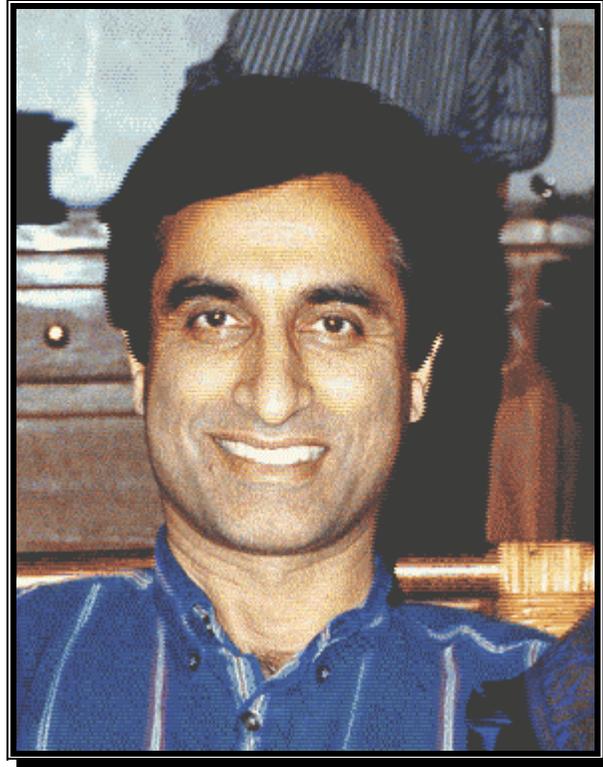
- Rabindranath Tagore

Shaivism of Kashmir has developed between the eighth and the twelfth centuries of the Christian era. This comparatively younger philosophy has tried to explain all such ambiguities which the ancient philosophers have failed to resolve. Like *Advaitavedanta* it is monistic, like *Vaishnavism* it is theistic, like *yoga* it is practical, like *Nayaya* it is logical as also appealing like Buddhism. **Kashmir Shaivism** is, therefore, idealistic and realistic in essence, strongly advocating a pragmatic approach to life.

Tantras have been revealed by Lord Shiva through his five mouths namely *Ishana*, *Tatpurusha*, *Sadyojata*, *Vamadeva*, and *Aghora*. These very five mouths represent his five energies namely *Chitshakti* (consciousness), *Anandashakti* (Bliss), *Ichhashakti* (will), *Jnanashakti* (knowledge) and *Kriyashakti* (Action) respectively. When these aforesaid five energies of Lord Shiva unite with each other in such a way that each of these takes bold of the rest simultaneously, they reveal sixty four *Bhairvatantras* which are purely monistic. This very approach explained in these Tantras is called **Kashmir Shaivism** or *Trika* philosophy.

2 Shaivistic and Bhakti Roots of Kashmiri Religion

Subhash Kak



Subhash Kak

To understand the religious divide in the Vale it is necessary to go back to the Shaivite roots of the popular religion. It is important to note that this tradition fits squarely within the greater Indian tradition. The Rigveda presents a monistic view of the universe where an understanding of the nature of consciousness holds the key to the understanding of the world. This is further emphasized in the Upanishads, the six philosophical schools, Buddhist and Jain philosophy, the Shaivite and the Tantric systems. Of course this emphasis varies. And sometimes seemingly different terms represent the same central idea. For example the *śūnyata* (void) of Madhyamika Buddhism and the *brahman* (universe) of the Upanishads are forms of the monistic absolutes. Two opposite metaphors thus represent the same central idea. Likewise the dualism of *Sāṃkhya* and of the Jains is correctly seen as projection of a monistic system of universal consciousness that manifests itself in the categories of the physical world and sentience. A grand exposition of the system, that explains how different perspective fit in the framework, is contained in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Even the Iranian religion of Zarathushtra may be seen as reformulation of the earlier Vedic tradition (Boyce 1975) in the same sense that Vaishnavism is.

Kashmir Shaivism, reached its culmination in the philosophy of Abhinavagupta and Kshemaraja (tenth to eleventh century AD) (Chatterji 1914, Dyczkowski 1987, Gnoli 1968, Kaw 1969, Pandey 1963, Jaideva Singh 1977, 1979, & 1989). Their *trika* (three-fold) school argued that reality is represented by three categories: transcendental (*para*), material (*apara*), and a combination of these two (*para para*) (Lakshman Jee 1988). This three-fold division is sometimes represented in terms of the principles *śiva*, *śakti*, and *anūpati*, *paśa*, *pasu*. *Śiva* represents the principle behind consciousness, *śakti* its energy, and *anū* the material world. At the level of living beings *pasu* is the individual who acts according to his conditioning, almost like an animal, *paśa* are the bonds that tie him to his behaviour, and *pati* or *pas*

upati (Lord of the Flock) is siva personified whose knowledge liberates the pasu and makes it possible for him to reach his potential. The mind is viewed as a hierarchical (krama) collection of agents (kula) that perceives its true self spontaneously (pratyabhijna) with a creative power that may be viewed as being pulsating (spanda). This last attribute recalls the spenta of the Zarathushtrian religion, where this word represents the power of creation of Ahura Mazda. Thus Kashmir Shaivism appears to have attempted a reconciliation of the Iranian religion with its Vedic parent.

The Pratyabhijna (recognition) system is named after the book Stanzas on the Recognition of Ishvara or Shiva which was written by Utpala (c 900-950). It appears Utpala was developing the ideas introduced by his teacher Somananda who had written the earlier Vision of Shiva. In Shaivism in general, Shiva is the name for the absolute or transcendental consciousness. Ordinary consciousness is bound by cognitive categories related to conditioned behavior. By exploring the true springwells of ordinary consciousness one comes to recognize its universal (Shiva). This brings the further recognition that one is not a slave (pasu) of creation but its master (pati). In other words, an intuition of the true nature of one's consciousness provides a perspective that is liberating.

For the spanda system the usual starting point is the Aphorisms of Shiva due to Vasugupta (c 800). His disciple Kallata is generally credited with the Stanzas on Pulsation. According to this school the universal consciousness pulsates or vibrates and this ebb and flow can be experienced by the person who has recognized his true self.

Abhinavagupta wrote a profound commentary on Utpala's Stanzas on Recognition. Shaivite philosophy may be said to have reached its full flowering with his philosophy. Abhinava also wrote more than sixty other works on tantra, poetics, dramaturgy, and philosophy. His disciple Kshemaraja also wrote influential works that dealt with the doctrines of both the schools of Recognition and Pulsation. Abhinava emphasized the fact that all human creativity reveals aspects of the seed consciousness. This explains his own interest in drama, poetry, and aesthetics.

According to the ancient doctrine of Samkhya physical reality may be represented in terms of twenty-five categories. These categories relate to an everyday classification of reality where prakrti may be likened to matter, and purusa to mind. Kashmir Shaivism adds eleven new categories to this list. These categories characterize different aspects of consciousness.

Any focus of consciousness must first be circumscribed by coordinates of time and space. Next, it is essential to select a process (out of the many defined) for attention. The aspect of consciousness that makes one have a feeling of inclusiveness with this process followed later by a sense of alienation is called maya. Thus maya permits one, by a process of identification and detachment, to obtain limited knowledge and to be creative.

How does consciousness ebb and flow between an identity of self and an identity with the processes of the universe? According to Shaivism, a higher category permits comprehension of oneness and separation with equal clarity. Another allows a visualization of the ideal universe. This permits one to move beyond mere comprehension into a will to act. The final two categories deal with pure consciousness by itself and the potential energy that leads to continuing transformation. Pure awareness is not to be understood as similar to everyday awareness of humans but rather as the underlying schema that the laws of nature express.

Shaiva psychology is optimistic, scientific, secular, and liberating. At the personal level it emphasizes reaching for the springwell of creativity (sakti) and the schema underlying this creativity (siva). The journey leading to this knowledge may be begun in a variety of ways: through sciences, the arts, and creative social activities. But this exploration of the outside world is to be taken as a means of uncovering the architecture of the inner world. Shaiva psychology also reveals that the notion of bhakti, which has played a central role in the shaping of the Indian mind during the past millennium, may be given a focus related to a quest for knowledge.

The intellectual theories of Kashmir Shaivism were given popular expression by the great mystic Lalleshvari or Lalla (1335-1376). Her sayings, vakya, form the basis of much of the Kashmiri world-

view that emerged later. But from Lalla onwards the emphasis did shift to the devotional aspects of Kashmir Shaivism (Temple 1924, Odin 1994). The notion of recognition of one's true self was exalted to the central role in the popular religion including Kashmiri popular Islam that views her va kya and the sayings of her disciple Sheikh Nur-ud-din (1377-1438), Nanda Rishi , as sources of spiritual wisdom. Two of Lalla's va kya that have been adapted from Bamzai (1962) are given below:

1)

I saw myself in all things

I saw God shining in everything.

You have heard, stop! see Shiva

The house is his, who am I Lalla.

2)

Shiva pervades the world

Hindu and Muslim are the same.

If you are wise know yourself

Then you will know God.

"Lalla is as much a part of Kashmiri language, literature, and culture as Shakespeare is of English" is the assessment of Kachru (1981). Says her own pupil Nanda Rishi:

That Lalla of Padmanpor-she drank

Her fill of divine nectar;

She was indeed an avata r of ours.

O God, grant me the self-same boon!

(Kaul 1973)

Nur-ud-din was followed by a large number of Rishis from both the Hindu and the Muslim communities. The Islamic Rishis provided the leadership to the popular religion of the Kashmiri Muslims.

By the end of the nineteenth century the Kashmiri Hindus were about seven percent of the population of the Vale. Within the community itself a two-fold division had taken place by this time. Those who specialized in the secular sphere, studied Persian and undertook administrative employment, became known as the karkuns ; others who did priestly duties requiring knowledge of Sanskrit were termed bhasha bhatta (Sender 1988, Madan 1989). In recent years this sub-division is disappearing and karkun values have become the dominant ethos of the community.

Source:

The Poplar and the Chinar: Kashmir in a historical outline
by Subhash Kak

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3 Kashmir Saivism

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Kashmir Saivism, with its potent stress on man's recognition of an already existing oneness with Siva, is the most single-mindedly monistic of the six schools. It arose in the ninth century in Northern India, then a tapestry of small feudal kingdoms. Maharajas patronized the various religions. Buddhism was still strong. Tantric Shaktism flourished toward the Northeast. Saivism had experienced a renaissance since the sixth century, and the most widespread Hindu God was Siva.

According to the traditions of Kashmir Saivism, Lord Siva originally set forth sixty-four systems, or philosophies, some monistic, some dualistic and some monistic theistic. Eventually these were lost, and Siva commanded Sage Durvasas to revive the knowledge. Sage Durvasas' "mind-born sons" were assigned to teach the philosophies: Tryambaka (the monistic), Amardaka (the dualistic) and Shrinatha (monistic theistic). Thus, Tryambaka at an unknown time laid a new foundation for Kashmir Saiva philosophy.

Then, it is said, Lord Siva Himself felt the need to resolve conflicting interpretations of the Agamas and counter the encroachment of dualism on the ancient monistic doctrines. In the early 800s, Shri Vasugupta was living on Mahadeva Mountain near Srinagar. Tradition states that one night Lord Siva appeared to him in a dream and told him of the whereabouts of a great scripture carved in rock. Upon awakening, Vasugupta rushed to the spot and found seventy-seven terse sutras etched in stone, which he named the Siva Sutras. Vasugupta expounded the Sutras to his followers, and gradually the philosophy spread. On this scriptural foundation arose the school known as Kashmir Saivism, Northern Saivism, Pratyabhijna Darshana ("recognition school"), or Trikashasana ("Trika system"). Trika, "three," refers to the school's three-fold treatment of the Divine: Siva, Shakti and soul, as well as to three sets of scriptures and a number of other triads.

Kashmir Saivite literature is in three broad divisions: Agama Shastra, Spanda Shastra and Pratyabhijna Shastra. Agama Shastra includes works of divine origin: specifically the Saiva Agama literature, but also including Vasugupta's Siva Sutras. The Spanda Shastra, or Spanda Karikas (of which only two sutras are left), are both attributed to Vasugupta's disciple Kallata (ca 850-900). These elaborate the principles of the Siva Sutras. The Pratyabhijna Shastra's principle components are the Siva Drishti by Vasugupta's disciple, Somananda, and the Pratyabhijna Sutras by Somananda's pupil, Utpaladeva (ca 900-950). Abhinavagupta (ca 950-1000) wrote some forty works, including Tantraloka, "Light on Tantra," a comprehensive text on Agamic Saiva philosophy and ritual. It was Abhinavagupta whose brilliant and encyclopedic works established Kashmir Saivism as an important philosophical school.

Kashmir Saivism provides an extremely rich and detailed understanding of the human psyche, and a clear and distinct path of kundalini-siddha yoga to the goal of Self Realization. In its history the tradition produced numerous siddhas, adepts of remarkable insight and power. It is said that Abhinavagupta, after completing his last work on the Pratyabhijna system, entered the Bhairava cave near Mangam with 1,200 disciples, and he and they were never seen again.

Kashmir Saivism is intensely monistic. It does not deny the existence of a personal God or of the Gods. But much more emphasis is put upon the personal meditation and reflection of the devotee and his guidance by a guru. Creation of the soul and world is explained as God Siva's abhasa, "shining forth" of Himself in His dynamic aspect of Shakti, the first impulse, called spanda. As the Self of all, Siva is immanent and transcendent, and performs through his Shakti the five actions of creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing. The Kashmir Saivite is not so much concerned with worshipping a personal God as he is with attaining the transcendental state of Siva consciousness.

An esoteric and contemplative path, Kashmir Saivism embraces both knowledge and devotion. Sadhana leads to the assimilation of the object (world) in the subject (I) until the Self (Siva) stands revealed as one

with the universe. The goal-liberation-is sustained recognition (pratyabhijna) of one's true Self as nothing but Siva. There is no merger of soul in God, as they are eternally nondifferent.

There are three upayas, stages of attainment of God consciousness. These are not sequential, but do depend upon the evolution of the devotee. The first stage is anavopaya, which corresponds to the usual system of worship, yogic effort and purification through breath control. The second stage is shaktopaya, maintaining a constant awareness of Siva through discrimination in one's thoughts. The third stage is shambhavopaya in which one attains instantly to God consciousness simply upon being told by the guru that the essential Self is Siva. There is a fourth stage, anupaya, "no means," which is the mature soul's recognition that there is nothing to be done, reached for or accomplished except to reside in one's own being, which is already of the nature of Siva. Realization relies upon the satguru, whose grace is the blossoming of all sadhana.

Despite many renowned gurus, geographic isolation in the Kashmir Valley and later Muslim domination kept the following relatively small. Scholars have recently brought the scriptures to light again, republishing surviving texts. The original parampara was represented in recent times by Swami Lakshman Joo. Today various organizations promulgate the esoteric teachings to some extent worldwide. While the number of Kashmir Saivite formal followers is uncertain, the school remains an important influence in India. Many Kashmir Saivites have fled the presently war-torn Valley of Kashmir to settle in Jammu, New Delhi and elsewhere in North India. This diaspora of devout Saivites may serve to spread the teachings into new areas.

Saivism is not a single, hierarchical system. It is a thousand traditions, great and small. In the broadest sense Saivism is life itself. Philosophically it may be understood as six major traditions with many similarities and a few differences.

In the search for peace, enlightenment and Liberation, no path is more tolerant, more mystical, more widespread or more ancient than Saivite Hinduism. Through history Saivism has developed a vast array of lineages and traditions, each with unique philosophic-cultural-linguistic characteristics, as it dominated India prior to 1100 from the Himalayas to Sri Lanka, from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. Here we seek to present the essential features of six major traditions identifiable within the ongoing Saiva con Saiva Siddhanta, Pashupata Saivism, Kashmir Saivism, Vira Saivism, Siva Advaita and Siddha Siddhanta.

It should be understood that this formal and somewhat intellectual division, however useful, is by no means a comprehensive description of Saivism, nor is it the only possible list. In practice, Saivism is far more rich and varied than these divisions imply. Our discussion of these six schools and their related traditions is based upon historical information. There are wide gaps in the record, but we do know that at each point where the veil of history lifts, the worship of Siva is there.

The Saiva Agamas form the foundation and circumference of all the schools of Saivism. The system of philosophy set forth in the Agamas is common to a remarkable degree among all these schools of thought. These Agamas are theistic, that is, they all identify Siva as the Supreme Lord, immanent and transcendent, capable of accepting worship as the personal Lord and of being realized through yoga. This above all else is the connecting strand through all the schools.

Philosophically, the Agamic tradition includes the following principle doctrines: 1) the five powers of Siva: creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing grace; 2) The three categories, Pati, pashu and pasha-God, souls and bonds; 3) the three bonds: anava, karma and maya; 4) the three-fold power of Siva-iccha, kriya and jnana shakti; 5) the thirty-six tattvas, or categories of existence, from the five elements to God; 6) the need for the satguru and initiation; 7) the power of mantra; 8) the four padas: charya, kriya, yoga and jnana.

As we explore the individual schools and lineages within Saivism, keep in mind that all adhere to these doctrines. Our discussion necessarily focuses on the differences between one school and another, but this is not meant to obscure the overwhelming similarity of belief and practice among them.

Agamic philosophy and practices are conveyed to the common man through other channels, one of which is the Saiva Puranas. These oral collections of stories about the Gods are interspersed with Agamic philosophy.

A second channel is the Saivite temple itself, for the construction of the temples and the performance of the rituals are all set forth in the Agamas-in fact it is one of their main subjects. The priests follow manuals called paddhati, which are summaries of the instructions for worship contained in the Saiva Agamas, specifically the shodasha upacharas, or sixteen acts of puja worship, such as offering of food, incense and water. A third channel is the songs and bhajanas of the sants, which in their simplicity carry powerful philosophic import. A fourth is the on-going oral teachings of gurus, swamis, panditas, shastris, priests and elders.

Such matters of agreement belie the fact that Saivism is not a single, hierarchical system. Rather, it is a thousand traditions, great and small. Some are orthodox and pious, while others are iconoclastic and even-like the Kapalikas and the Aghoris-fiercely ascetic, eccentric or orgiastic. For some, Siva is the powerful, terrible, awesome destroyer, but for most He is love itself, compassionate and gentle.

For nearly all of the millions of Siva's devotees, Saivism is not, therefore, a school or philosophy; it is life itself. To them Saivism means love of Siva, and they simply follow the venerable traditions of their family and community. These men and women worship in the temples and mark life's passages by holy sacraments. They go on pilgrimages, perform daily prayers, meditations and yogic disciplines. They sing holy hymns, share Puranic folk narratives and recite scriptural verses.

Still, it is useful for us all to understand the formal streams of thought which nurture and sustain our faith. Now, in our brief description of these six schools, we begin with today's most prominent form of Saivism, Saiva Siddhanta.

4 Kashmir Saivism and its Echoes in Kashmiri Poetry

B. N. Kalla

In this paper, I propose to discuss at some length the salient features of what is known today as Kashmir Saivism. Towards the end, I shall talk about the influence of this school of religious thought on Kashmiri poetry. In that context, I shall refer to some vaakhs of Lal Ded and shruks of Nunda Rishi for illustrative support.

Kashmir Saivism, like Mahayana Buddhism, has played a key role in the assimilation of different cultures in Central Asia, while adopting the logic of the Buddhist Acharyas; it refuted the fundamental concept of Shunyavad and looked upon the creation of the absolute as real and as the manifestation of the light of intelligence or universal consciousness. It took the cardinal principles of social equality, individual liberty, absence of dogma and rituals from Buddhism. Like Mahatma Buddha being considered the saviour of mankind, the Saivas regarded the absolute Parma Siva as the creator, preserver and absorber. In his different aspects, he manifests his shakti and withdraws it when His free will (Swatantrya) demands it. The individual is a mini shiva, who, when he recognizes his true self, becomes one with the universal consciousness. Somananda, the father of Pratyabhijna' philosophy, hailed from Tibet and naturally influenced the thought and ideology of those who lived in Central Asia.

The growth of Islam in Central Asia found a fertile soil there. It was influenced not only by the ideology of the Buddhists but also by that of the Saivas in and outside Kashmir. Their Mathikas (Centres of theological discourse) seem to have been easily accessible to the sufis who were deeply interested in the Buddhist thought. As a result of the synthesis of Buddhism and Islam, Sufism adopted a liberal outlook quite in agreement with the tenets of Saivism. It laid great emphasis on Self-recognition, the pratyabhijna doctrine of the saivas. Like the latter it denounced idolatory and caste and advocated individual freedom in attaining realisation. Though the sufis, like the vedantis, regarded the world as illusory and transitory, this view came closer to the saiva philosophy, with respect to its fundamental principle of an individual's free will and his potential to recognize his true self.

Saivism is the most ancient faith of the Indian people. We find its roots in one form or another in the prehistoric period of the Indus valley civilization, Though basically pre-Aryan and pre-vedic in its origin, it developed by stages in the vedic religion and became one of the most vital elements of Hinduism in the age of the Epics and Puranas.

From very remote times, Brahmins of Kashmir had been performing vedic rituals which are predominantly vaisnavite in character. The worship of Shiva and Shakti also had become very popular in this land right from the prehistoric ages. There are many prehistorical shrines of Siva in Kashmir.

Kashmir Saivism has achieved distinction as the monistic Saiva philosophy of the Tryambaka school, being the most valuable contribution of Kashmir to the Indian culture. This philosophy had basically originated in the trans-Himalayan areas near the Kailasa around the 4th century A.D. Traymbakaditya, a disciple of the sage Durvasa, was the first teacher of this school. Sangmaditya, the sixteenth descendant in the line of Tryambaks, settled in Kashmir in the eighth century A.D.

Different Saiva scriptures as Malinivijaya tantra, Swacchanda, Netra, Mrigendra etc. were later revealed to different teachers of this school in about a century. Somananda, the fourth descendant of Sangmaditya, 'churned' the ocean of scriptures and extracted from it the 'nectar' consisting precisely of the principles of the monistic saiva philosophy of Kashmir in the 9th century. He expounded those principles in a logical style in his work Sivadrsti, which is the first philosophical treatise on the subject. Utpaladeva, the chief disciple of Somananda, developed this philosophy further in his Isvarapratibhijna and in some works like Sambandhasiddhi, Isvar Siddhi etc. The principles of this philosophy were later explained clearly and interpreted by Abhinavagupta, the grand disciple of Utpaladeva, in the later part of the tenth and the beginning of the 11th century.

The Sivasutras were revealed to Vasugupta, a teacher in the school of Tryambaka, in the 8th century. Kallata, a disciple of Vasugupta, composed the Spanda-Karika in which he explained the principles contained in the Siva-sutras.

In view of the above facts, the saiva philosophical movement reached its zenith from 8th century A.D. to the 12th century A.D. Really, it was a golden age in the field of Indian philosophy, involving the emergence of a new thought in this field. The Saiva monism of Kashmir has a pragmatic approach towards the problems of philosophy. It is not idealistic like the Advaita Vedanta and Buddhism. The universe, according to it, is neither like a mirage nor like the child of a barren woman. It is real for all practical purposes. It exists in the absolute reality in the form of pure limit-less and all comprehending consciousness. That consciousness is called Parama Siva. The universe is nothing but an objective manifestation of His divine powers. He is a reality and his powers are his essence. So his powers are also a reality and the manifestations of those powers too are a reality. He has an ever pure and limit-less consciousness which is full of godly powers and does not undergo any change even when the activities of creation etc. are going on. This is His static aspect in which he is called Siva. The manifestations of His God-head are comprehended in His shakti. Both are merely two aspects of one and the same absolute, all powerful and independent reality. As the rays of the moon are not different from the moon, similarly shakti or power of Siva is not different from the power-holder (shaktiman). Thus Siva, the male principle in its quiescent state, is whole and absolute, but in its manifested state, it becomes shakti, which is a part and parcel of its nature. The whole, though a part of it as shakti is separated from it, still remains full. Its fulness never ceases. The one becomes many in its active state but at the same time it holds its oneness and perfection. The same idea is explained in this verse:

<verses>

According to the Vedanta philosophy, the manifestation of the universe is explained to be false and has been denied in the long run, but in Kashmir Saiva philosophy, the manifestation is regarded as based on shakti. Nobody can deny this fact. The apparent world to the saiva philosophy is a thing of enjoyment while in the vedanta system it is false and illusory. Saiva advaita explains that the universe already exists in Siva. Thus the world is the expansion of shakti which is not different from Siva.

Kashmir Saivism accepts no restrictions based on caste, creed, colour and sex etc. Every person can have access to it, both to its theory and to its practice. In practice, it does not prescribe the profession of monks but advises one to live the life of a householder and to practise, side by side, the Saiva yoga for the sake of self-realization. It does not advocate sannyasahood. It prohibits all suppression of one's emotions and instincts and advocates the path of their sublimation, It does not ignore the worldly and heavenly aims of life consisting in objective enjoyments. It rather advocates a path aimed at both Bhukti (Enjoyment) and Mukti (Liberation), which can be pursued side by side. Too much of discipline regarding food etc. has not been considered to be absolutely essential.

As mentioned above, Kashmir, Saivism was in vogue here for about five centuries from the 8th to the 12th. Kashmiri poetry did not, remain untouched by its influence. The first specimen of Kashmiri poetry is Shitikantha's Mahanaya Prakasha of the '13th century AD., which is in fact the first work of Saivism in the Kashmiri language. This influence has remained prevalent even upto the present time.

The 14th century witnessed a political upheaval in Kashmir, Kuta Rani, the last ruler of Kashmir was murdered by Shahmir. Consequently, he proclaimed himself the Sultan of Kashmir in 1339 A.D. Thus the Hindu rule was uprooted from the soil of Kashmir for about 500 years. It was during this period that Islam spread in Kashmir. Suppression, destruction, demolition of temples and massacre of the Hindus were the policy of the fanatic Sultans of Kashmir. Successive Sultans of Kashmir adopted the policy of Sikandar But-Shikan (iconoclast) except for Zain-Ul-Ab-Din /Budshah (1423-1474 A.D.). The only ray of hope for the suppressed masses was the message of the Sufis.

Sufism was introduced here by the Sayids and their followers who came from Persia and Central Asia to settle down here in the 14th century. The spread of Sufism side by side with that of Saivism (Pratyabhijna

philosophy) brought about the growth of a composite humanitarian thought in the valley. This composite Saiva-cum Sufi philosophy consciously or unconsciously has influenced the people of Kashmir.

We cannot ignore the remarkable contribution of Laleshwari or Lal Ded (B. 1335 A.D.) in the field of the Kashmiri Language. She was the first Kashmiri poetess who expersed the Saiva philosophy in a charming poetic style in the modern Kashmiri language. She was followed in the tradition by many mystic poets, both Hindus and Muslims. She preached this philosophy in the language of the masses (the then Kashmiri) and not in Sanskrit. She denounced rituals, narrow-mindedness, fanaticism and the debasing distinction of caste. Moreover she gave the message of universal brotherhood, peace and love based on the, Upanishads. What follows now are a couple of vaakhs of Lal Ded along with their translation

<verses>

Shiva is all-pervading (present in each particle), never differentiates between a Hindu and a Muslim. If you are intelligent, know thy own self, that is God-realization.

<verses>

Lalla willingly entered through the gardengate, there, joy ! I found Siva united with Sakti; ' there and then I got absorbed, drinking at the lake of Nectar. Immune to harm am I, dead as I am to the world, though still alive.

Lalla entered the Samadhi. In that state, what did she see? Siva, the Transcendental Being, united with his power of manifestation, Sakti. She was now totally free from all kinds of doubts based on the sense of duality. The nectar of bliss was within her easy reach, not in drops but in the form of a lake. She attained (parmananda) the state of the highest bliss.

<verses>

You are the sky and you are the earth. You are the day, the atmosphere and the night, You are the grains, the sandal (wood), flowers and water; You being everything yourself, What can be offered to you in worship.

Everything in the universe is Divine manifestation, and parma siva inheres in all that exists. His nature has primarily two-fold aspects, an immanent aspect in which He pervades the universe, and a transcendental aspect in which He is beyond all universal manifestations.

Nunda Rishi was one of the Sufi poets of Kashmir who was a younger contemporary of Lalla. He is considered the founder of the Rishi cult in the valley. He introduced a new poetic form in Kashmir- the shruk comparable to Lalla Vaakh. His shruks (slokas) are very popular among the Kashmiris. Nunda Rishi's philosophy is very akin to pratyabhijna philosophy according to which parma siva can be realized in one's own self. This is precisely what Nunda Rishi also says in the following shruks:

<verses>

He is in me, I am in Him. I experienced bliss in his company. It was futile of me to seek Him in an alien land. I found- Him in my own country-my own self.

Nunda Rishi completely identifies himself with the Absolute Reality. It is through his merger with Him that he attained bliss. This is clarified by him further in another shruka :

<verses>

He is here, He is there, He pervades all. He is all-in-all, concealed and transcendent. (in the form of pure consciousness).

In the following verses, Nunda Rishi refers to his search, for the divine - an inward quest (the mystics talk of) :

<verses>

I forsook everything and took shelter in you. When I got hold of you in my own self, I merged with you. (in that state there is no duality at all. Nunda Rishi thus realized absolute reality in himself)

<verses>

Oh God ! bless me with the boon that I may scale the Kailas. (This indicates the strong urge of Nunda Rishi to merge with the absolute reality, so that he attains the very seat of the Supreme.)

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[The author, Dr. B. N. Kalla, is well-known for his writings. He is a reputed scholar of Sanskrit, conversant with Kashmir Saivism]

Source: Patrika

5 Kashmir Shaivism

R. K. Sapru

5.1 Hymn to Shiva Shakti

Param Shiva, Shiva Shakti, thou art the mother divine. Grant me thy devotion, remove all obstacles and show thy might.

Thou art the transcendental super energy of the nature of absolute bliss. Thou art the root energy of the universe and the ordinary nature of the embodied.

Thou art the power of universal ambition, all encompassing knowledge, again thou art the universal power of execution.

In the form of Brahma, though art responsible for the creation of the world; in the form of Vishnu, the world is sustained by thee and again thou take the form of world destroying power.

In the garb of Maya, Shiva, the ultimate Truth is concealed by thee, but in the form of Divine grace thou revealth the ultimate truth (Shiva). Again thou art the independent sovereign power.

Thou art the Energy in the form of three Gunas or mental moods, and thou the ruling power above these Gunas. Thou art the conscious power of Shiva.

Manifestation of the mind, intellect and ego are the wonders of your power. Thou art the all limiting power.

Thou art the five sense powers, the five powers of action. Again thou art the fivefold prana (vital force) in the human being.

Thou art the five subtle and the five gross elements, and thou the power in a mystic sound formula.

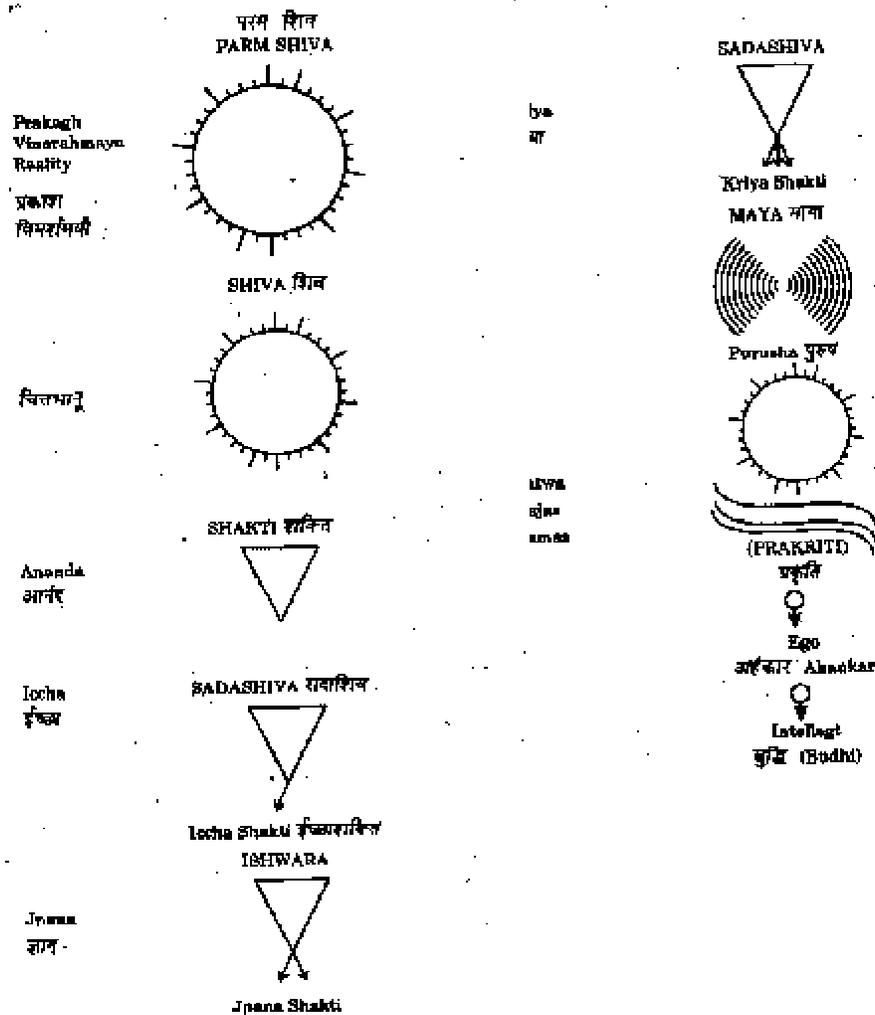
Thou art the four stages of manifestation of articulate speech. Again thou art the source of primal sound 'OM'.

Thou art the concealed serpent power at the base of the spine. Thou art responsible for her play in the middle sushumna channel.

Thou art the very form of nectar in the spiritual centre at the crown of the head. Again thou art all effulgence.

Manifestation of form out of formless is thy miraculous power. Thou art knowable power.... My adoration to thee.

5.2 The Chart of Cosmology according to Kashmir Shaivism



SPECIAL FEATURES

PARAM SHIVA

- Supreme self of Pure consciousness surveys itself.
- It is transcendental and extra cosmic reality.
- This pure SUN of consciousness called Param Shiva has non-relational and immediate awareness of I, 'I' and 'the other' aspects of consciousness are in indistinguishable unity.

SHIVA

- SHIVA is the changeless principle of all changes.
- By its shining everything else shines.
- Inter-cosmic, Immanent Reality, supporting dynamic energy in the background.
- Container of everything.

SHAKTI

- The dynamic energy aspect of Shiva as his I-consciousness.
- If Shiva is the container, what is contained therein is his Shakti.
- The sovereign Power to create.
- Absolute bliss is her essential nature.

SADASHIVA

- a) The Sadashiva has power of the will to create.
- b) In its experience as 'I' am this. The 'other' side, i.e., the universe to be, is quite hazy.

ISHWARA

- a) The power of knowledge is prominent here as 'the other' side of 'this am I' consciousness is quite distinct.

SHUDDHAVIDYA

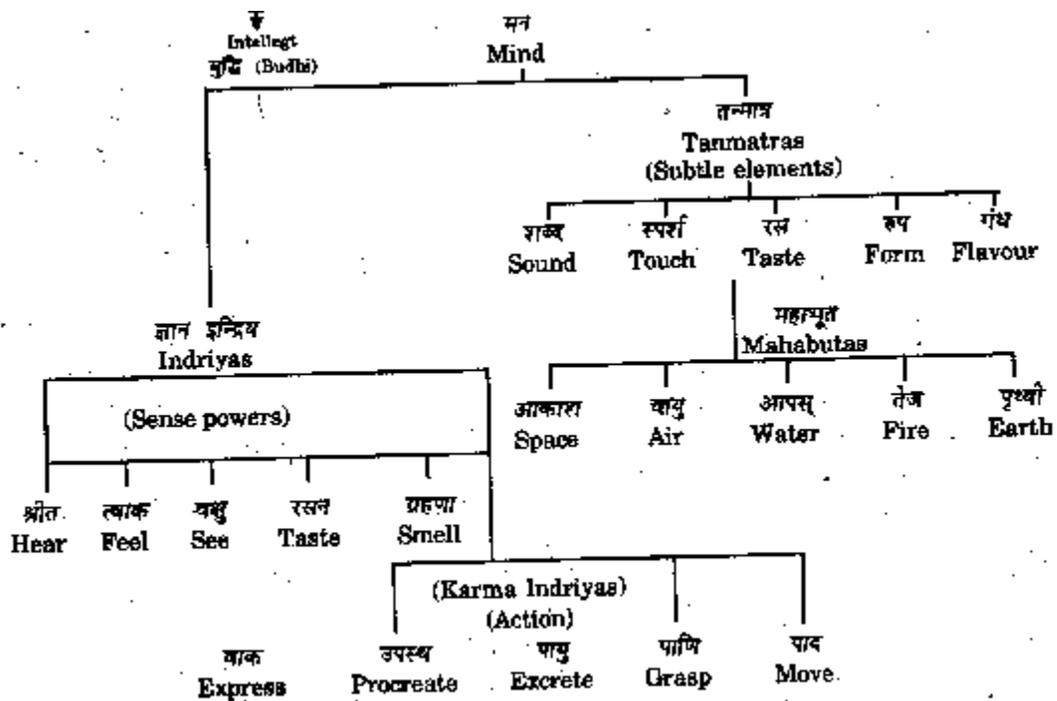
- a) The power of assuming every form.
- b) 'I' and the 'other' are quite distinct and prominent but 'this' is still felt as part of the self.

MAYA

- a) The principle of delimitation; contracting infinite into finite.
- b) The make-believe power of Nature, excluding 'the other' side of experience from the 'I' side of universal experience.
- c) Maya draws a veil over the self owing to which he forgets his self. The five products of Maya are (i) Kala (ii) Vidya (iii) Raga (iv) Kaal (v) Niyati.

PURUSHA and PRAKRITI

Shiva under the influence of Maya and her Kanchukas loses his universal nature, and becomes a limited individual soul. Subjective side of Shiva under the influence of Maya is Purusha and its objective side is Prakriti.



Source: Patrika

6 Saivism in Prospect and Retrospect

Dr. C. L. Raina

The circuitous upper valley of Vitasta, is the famous Kashmir in the Himalayan region. There are Harimukh (Haramukta) and Amarnath mounts, branches off from the great Himalayas a little further east, proceeds due south and encircling the sources of Vitasta, turns north west, where it is called Pir Pansal or Panchaldhara now Banihal range). These lesser mountains of the Himalayas surround the valley of Kashmir on all sides; leaving only a narrow outlet for the Vitasta at Baramulla. Kashmir valley is thus surrounded by the Himalayas and Vitasta has been the life and source for the socio-economic welfare of Kashmir. The climate of Kashmir is fine to suit the spring, summer and autumn season while the winter season makes the inhabitants of Kashmir to be in their homes. At the fag end of winter Kashmiri Hindus observe the Maha Shivaratri with great pomp and show associated with the belief and tradition of the union of Siva and Shakti. Many mythological stories are connected with the celebration of the Maha Shivaratri popularly known in Kashmir as Herat. Should we believe that Harmukta, Amarnath cave or Ma Shivaratri are the impact of Saivism for which Kashmir enjoys a special position in the globe for giving a dynamic philosophy of day to day living ? Is it closely related to Vedanta System or the Sankhya System or its obligation is due to Shakti worship that we see in every corner of Kashmir or because of the impact of Tantra fold prevalent in Kashmir. Kashmir is one of the Shakti pithas among fifty pithas mentioned in Lalita Sahasranama. Such questions need a rationalistic approach of study rather to believe in tradition and myth.

Dr. Radhakrishnan has very truly said that spiritual life was the true genius of India. Those who made the greatest appeal to the Indian mind were not the military conquerors, not the rich merchants or the great diplomats but the holy sages, the rishis who embodied spirituality at its finest and purest. The great sages and seers or the holy men had the vision to realise the truth according to the need and requirement of the time. Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahuda Vadanti stands true in the highly rationalistic age. It is, therefore, no wonder why Kashmir could give its own philosophy of Saivism.

Philosophy in its widest etymological sense means " love of knowledge. " It tries to know things that immediately and remotely concern man. What is the real nature of man ? What is the end of this life ? What is the nature of this world in which he lives? Is there any creator of this world ? How should man live in the light of his knowledge of himself, the world and God ? These are some of many problems that have been discussed threadbare in the Siva philosophy. It is easily intelligible because it does believe in the existence of matter and spirit. Life is worth knowing and hence worth enjoying. There seems to be vision of truth (darshana). According to Rabindranath Tagore in " The Spirit of India, " " Brahman is Truth, Wisdom and Infinite-Satyam, Jnanam Anantam Brahma. Peace is in Brahma, goodness is in Brahma and the unity of all things. He who is one, who is above all colour distinctions, who dispenses the inherent needs of men of all colours, who comprehends all things from their beginning to the end. Let Him unite us to one another with wisdom which is the wisdom of goodness.

The Saiva philosophy is typical of the entire range of Hindu thought. It subscribes to the belief in three padarths or categories viz., God, Soul and the bonds and thirty six tatvas (principles). It varies from idealistic monism and the pluralistic realism. It recognises thirty six principles as against the twenty four of the Sankhya and Yoga system. Panchratra also recognises twenty four principles. According to Pauskara Agma- "The Advaita Vedanta reckons thirty six principles, but the new principles in this scheme are not independent principles, being for the most part, modification of one principal, Vayu the cosmic force. "

We have the five gross elements known as "Mahabutras"- ether, air, fire, water and earth; the last possesses the five qualities of sound, touch, colour, taste and odour; ether has sound alone. These qualities are called " Tanmatras ". According to "Paushkara-Agma " and Sivajnanamahapadyam, it is very much of an idealistic view of substance. The tanmatras are themselves evolutes of that variety of individuation (ahankara) wherein the quality of darkness and inertia (tamas) is predominant. This variety of " Ahankara " is also called bhutadi, since it is indirectly the cause of the elements. According to

Sankhya " manas " is recognised to be an organ of both sense and action. Ahankara is itself derived from " Buddhi " or intellect. It is the determining faculty and self-derivative. Buddhi, Ahankar, manas and chitta constitute the internal organs. Thus the twenty four impure principles are known as " Bhogyakanda."

Further, in Saiva system, there are seven mixed principles where Mula Prakriti is termed as " Prakriti-Maya ". It is the product of " Ashudda Maya and it evolves primarily into three principles- Kala (Time), Niyati (Destiny) and Kala. Time is an independent Principle. In experience, we observe that even when all necessary causes are present, the effect is not produced except with the passage of time. We find that time matures and time heals. Destiny sees that every soul has its due in the matter of the enjoyment of its appropriate fruit. Kala is the instrument whereby the darkness that envelopes souls is removed in part. It has two functions to evolve into "Mula Prakriti " and on the other into Vidya (knowledge) and Raga (attachments) Kala, Niyati, Kala, Vidya and Raga are termed as five sheaths or pancha kanchukas. According to Tattva Traya Nirnaya the five Kleshas are called Pumsatva Mala or human impurities and the soul is admitted to be known as Purusha Tattva.

The pure principles are five. Siva Tattva is the first of these and the cause of the rest - Shakti, Sadasiva, Ishwara and Shuddhvidya. Shivatattva is one, pervasive and eternal, it is the resultant of both knowledge and action and happens to be the cause of other pure principles. It is not however to be identified with Siva. Neither Siva himself nor his inherent Shakti can be directly the cause of any principles as they would then be the cause liable to transformation and affected by interness. Thus Shivatattva is an evolution through " Maha Maya " or cosmic force quite different from "Ashuddh maya" as mentioned earlier. Dr. Burnett has translated the Aghora Siva's commentary on the Tattva Prakasha in the following manner " Even the realistic school has to admit maya to be a parigraha shakti. While, however, the idealistic school draws what seems to be the natural inference and compares the product to the reflection in a mirror.... Aghora Siva condemns it as an interpolation According to him There is an order of evolution and involution even among the pure principles.

Souls are naturally infinite, pervasive and omniscient, yet they experience themselves as limited, finite and little knowing. This is due to the bonds of " anava " Karma and Maya. Souls which have all the three kinds of bonds are called Sakalas. Those for whom Maya alone has been resolved by the involution of the worlds in the periodical deluges are called Pralaya Kalas.

God is pure, omnipotent, omniscient, gracious, eternally free from bonds. He is both the material and the efficient cause of the world; through his Shaktis. He is the material cause and in His own nature the efficient cause. Souls in their essential nature are the same as God but their potencies are concealed by beginningless " Anava. " The ignorance of souls can be removed partially through the bodies, instruments provided by " Ashuddha Maya "- the physical world around us. God functions through His own energy called the energy of concealment (Tirodham Shakti). Through mere momentum or through the residue of Prarabdha Karma, the physical body may persist for a while after spiritual illumination; but it does not fetter the enlightened soul since it is not cognised as such. The attainment of Sivatva may be understood as complete merger in Siva or the realisation of an identity of essence in spite of difference in existence.

The origins of Saivism or the roots of Saivism are found in pre-Aryan society. The hold of Saivism extends not only over the whole of India, from the Indus valley to Bengal but beyond the northern mountains to central Asia. The characteristics of Saivism are the exaltations of Siva above all other gods, the highly concrete conception of the deity and a close relationship between Siva and his devotees. On the one hand, Siva is identified with the eternal Absolute, formless. On the other hand, he is the God of all gods, potent for good and evil. He is " Girish ", " Ishan " and " Maheshwara " the supreme Lord. In Rig Veda, he is known as Rudra,

<verses>

" Prostrations to the Lord, the Master of the Universe, the great God, the three eyed one, the destroyer of Tripura, the extinguisher of the Trika fire and the fire of death, the blue-necked one, the Victor over

Death, the Lord of all, the ever peaceful one, the glorious God of gods. He is attained by Tapas or austerity and comes to our refuge and frees us from all bondage."

In the Yajur Veda ~Taittiriya Samhita, " VI 2 3, however we meet with stories concerning Rudra's exploits such as killing the "Asuras" and destroying their "Tripura."

Due to the advancement of Hindu mathematics, it has been felt to simplify the highest Truths in the symbolic fashion. Lingam has been the emblem of Siva. Is the Sivalinga a phallus? The worship of the Linga as a symbol once started, there was little to prevent a confusion in the popular mind between this and the cult of phallus and legends came to be invented of the origin of the worship of Linga as the phallus of Siva. Barth is of the opinion that these lingas are perhaps the least offensive to look at. Anyhow, they are the least materialistic and if the common people make fetishes of them, it is nevertheless true that the choice of these symbols by themselves to the exclusion of every other image was, on the part of certain founders of sects such as Basava, a sort of protest against idolatry. In other words, the Puranic exaltation of Linga worship over image worship, the former leading to release and the latter only to some variety of prosperity. The Linga purana version is due to Siva becoming a pillar of fire, whose top and bottom could not be seen by Brahma and Vishnu.

Siva is known as Pashupati (the lord of creatures). Abhinav Shankara in his Rudrabhashya lays the foundation for the tenets of Saivism concerning pati, pashu and pasha (bondage). Kaivalya Upanishad describes Sivayoga as a means of release. Saivism closely agrees with the Sankhya in its dogmatics and with the Yoga school in its practical discipline.

Role of Shakti in Saivism is clear from Lalita, Bhawani and Rajina Sahasranam. Sri Chakra worship stands a witness to the unification of Shakti and Siva. Sri Chakra is the symbol of the infinite.

Sri Aurobindo in his book-philosophic work Savitri-has sung the praises of the symbol of the infinite as under:

***The unseen grew visible
to student eyes,
Explained was the immense
Inconscients Scheme
Audacious lines were traced
upon the Void;
The infinite was reduced to
Square and Cube
Arranging symbol
and significance
They framed the Cabbla of Cosmic Law,
The balancing line discovered of
Life's technique
And structured her magic and
her mystery.
- Savitri (11:11)***

Consciousness in the spirit and it is responsible for the Truth and Bliss. Arunopnishad says : " Realise in us the microcosm, Thy form of Macrocosm. Make me know again ". In Saiva system we can't ignore the Shakti, the energy force of Siva.

Shankara in Soundarya Lahari explains the unification of Siva and Shakti in the following fashion:

<verses>

Sri Chakra is verily the macrocosm as well as the microcosm, is the body of the two in one, Siva Shakti. Sri Aurobindo emphasised it as under:

***"This is the knot that ties together the
stars;
The two who are one and the Secret of***

***all power,
The two who are one are the might and
right in things "
- Savitri (1.4)***

In Kashmir Saivism is known as " Trika Philosophy " or Trika Shasua. Trika Shastra symbolises the same Trayambhaka Sampradaya or Rahasya Sampradaya. Trika accepts the most important triad Siva, Shakti and Anu or atom (matter) or again Siva, Shakti and Nara or lastly of the goddesses Para, Aparā and Paratpara. It also explains nondual (abheda), non-dual cum dual (bhedaabedha) and dual (bheda).

This system has two main branches Spanda and Pratibijna. The Trika is also known as " Svantryavad ", " Svantantriya " and Spanda expressing the same concepts. Abhyasvada is another name of the system. It is called Kashmir Saivism, because it enriched its culture, literature and spiritual integrity.

The Trika is a spiritual philosophy. Its concepts are experience concepts. Its greatest exponents are yoginies of high stature who showed wonderful insight into abstruse points of philosophy.

(Pratybigna-Karika I-38)

This system is a statement based on experience about the nature of Reality and a way of Life. Among the Agamas, Malinivijaya, Sivachanda, Vignān Bhairva, Ananda Bhairva, Mrigendra, Matang, Netra Svayambhu and Rudrayamala happen to be the chief ones, they were written to stop the propagation expounding a purely advaitic metaphysics of Siva Sutra revealed to a sage called Vasugupta (9th century).

The Pritigna Shastra is really the philosophic branch of Trika. Siddha Somananda, the disciple of Vasugupta is credited with adopting the method of giving an elaborate treatment of his own views. Parmartha Sara and Tantra Sara both by Abhinava Gupta and Pritibigna Hridya are three but important works of the school: Tantraloka.

According to the Trika, the Shastras have eternal existence. It means wisdom, self-existent and impersonal. It is also known as ' Shabda ' and ' Vak. ' Shastra is authority according to Tantrasara, told or revealed by the Supreme Lord. Therefore, Shabda creates or manifests every thing. Reality is ineffable and beyond any descriptions. Trika tries to formulate a philosophy about its nature. Siva and Shakti are not two separate realities. Kalidasa in Raghu Vamsa refers to Siva and Shakti as " Jagtah Pitarau Vande Parvati Parameshwarau ". Like fire and its burning power, Siva and Shakti are the same identical facts though they are spoken of as distinct (Siv Drishti III. 7). Shakti is known as Swantriya and the principles of universal manifestation of five fold aspects as Chit Shakti- the power of self consciousness entails Ananda enjoyment and wonderment on the part of Siva, bliss gives rise to Ichha, desire to create, then Jnana or knowledge leading to Kriya Shakti will to act. According to Tantrasara, some times, Chit and Anada Shaktis are kept in background; Icha, Jnana and Kriya are taken to be the principal powers.

Universe is Siva's Krida or play. Siva's self imposition of limitation upon Himself and also His breaking the fetters and returning to His own native glory are both Krida and play. Siva as Shakti manifests Himself as a correlated order of knowers, knowables and means of knowledge. The limited individual is subject to ignorance, which according to Trika is two fold viz. paurasha and bandha. The descent of the force of grace achieves two purposes: first pasa-kshya, the destruction of fetters and secondly Sivatva yoga - the restoration of Shiva-hood. The most important of this is Diksha or initiation. The Trika says that is a result of Shaktipat, one is brought to a real Guru. It awakens the " kriya-shakti " in the limited soul. There are four " upayas " or means of attaining the supreme goal. They are "anupaya; Sambhava, Sakta and Anav upaya ". Due to Shaktipat or descent of grace in a very intense degree, everything needed for the realisation, beginning from the liquidation of the atomic impurity down to the recognition of the state of Paramashiva may be achieved by the aspirant immediately and without going through any Sadhna or discipline. Samvid is the only reality, knowledge of duality is nothing in itself and can be removed through the rise of Shuddha Vikapa of Nirvikalpa. "

Dhyana means meditation in the hear space or " Hriday-Akash " on the Supreme Reality. By the process of meditation the whole field of knowables is swallowed up and absorbed into the knower. Uccara means

the directing the pranta or vital force upwards in the process of meditation. Through these already experienced means, the limited individual attains the rich treasures of his own true Self.

The Trika does not stop with the deliverance of the Soul from Maya from the delusion of duality. It goes to the concept of the divinisation of the Soul which means the recognition of its own identity with Parmashiva.

The Trika philosophy promises to satisfy both matter and spirit. It does not give independent reality to Prakriti. It is a stage in the evolution of the universe out of parmashiva. The Trika is a virgin field of research and will repay the most conscious labour of philosopher for many years to come.

7 Salient Features of Kashmir Monistic Shaivism

Prof. M. L. Kokiloo

Shaivism of Kashmir has developed between the eighth and the twelfth centuries of the Christian era. This comparatively younger philosophy has tried to explain all such ambiguities which the ancient philosophers have failed to resolve. Like Advaitavedanta it is monistic, like Vaishnavism it is theistic, like yoga it is practical, like Nayaya it is logical as also appeasing like Buddhism. Kashmir Shaivism is, therefore, idealistic and realistic in essence, strongly advocating a pragmatic approach to life.

Tantras have been revealed by Lord Shiva through his five mouths namely Ishana, Tatpurusha, Sadyojata, Vamadeva, and Aghora. These very five mouths represent his five energies namely Chitshakti (consciousness), Ananda shakti (Bliss), Ichhashakti (will) Jnanashakti (knowledge) and Kriyashakti (Action) respectively. When these aforesaid five energies of Lord Shiva unite with each other in such a way that each of these takes bold of the rest simultaneously, they reveal sixty four Bhairvatantras which are purely monistic. This very approach explained in these Tantras is called Kashmir Shaivism or Trika philosophy.

Veda, Shaiva, Vama, Dakshina, Kaula, Matta, and Trika are the seven Acharas (systems) recognised by Kashmir Shaivism. The most popular among the seven Acharas has been the Trika system. What does this Trika mean ? Trika means trinity of Nara Shakti and Shiva as is given in Tantras. Nara means an individual, Shakti means the Universal Energy and Shiva means the Transcendental Being. Thus a soul recognizes himself as Shiva by means of the realization of his Shakties - the powers of God-head. Therefore this Trika system advocates the practical path towards complete self-realization. To make it more clear, this three fold science of spirit is based on the three energies of Lord Shiva namely Para, Parapara and Aparapara. Para energy is subjective energy of Lord Shiva and it is regarded as the supreme. Parapara energy is cognitive energy of Lord Shiva and is called as intermediate. Aparapara energy is objective energy of Lord Shiva and it is known as inferior energy. Thus the Trika philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism advocates how a human being, engrossed in the inferior objective energy of Lord Shiva, can be taken upwards viz. towards the supreme energy of Lord Shiva through his cognitive energy. For this journey, undertaken to attain the real Transcendental state of self, Trika philosophy has laid down three means within the ambit of cognitive energy. The first and the supreme expedient is called Shambhavopaya. The intermediate expedient is known as Shaktopaya and the third expedient is called Anvopaya.

7.1 Shambhavopaya

It is a unique way of yoga. All the mental activities cease to exist in it. In Shri Purva-Shastra the definition of Shambhavopaya is given as under

<verses>

Shambhavopaya is a path, shown by the supreme master, in which the knowledge of the ultimate reality comes through the practice of emptying one's mind completely of all thoughts. Thus it is called as Nirvikalpayoga because no vikalpa i.e. a mental idea in name and form emerges in it. It is a way of keeping one's mind completely motionless and calm, yet awake. It materialises by one's strong will, therefore it is called as Ichhopaya or Ichha yoga by Shri Abhinavagupta in his 'Tantrasara' a book, in which the precise summary of 37 chapters of Tantraloka has been condensed in lucid style. By practising this yoga a 'Sadhaka' feels that sudden charge of supreme energy of Shaivahood which remains for a little while in the initial stage and automatically goes stronger and stronger day by day by constant Abhyasamental drill. In this way Shambhavopaya is the direct means to absolute liberation. According to monistic theory of Kashmir Shaivism Shambhavopaya is meant only for those great souls who have developed their awareness of Chit consciousness through the Anugraha of the master to get enthroned on this spiritual height, three ways have been advocated which are as under:

1. Vishwa chit pratibimbatvam
2. Paramarshodayakrama
3. Mantradhayabhinnatvam

By the first way a 'sadhaka' feels that the entire gamut of reciting an incantation, consists of six successive stages namely: varanadhva (syllabic) , Padaadhva (consisting of words) , Mantradhva (incantative) , Kaladhva (Instantative), Tattvadha (contential), Bhavanadhva (peripheric) are reflected in the mirror of one's own consciousness and by this awareness he enters the universal consciousness. After perceiving it, a seeker gets Shambava Samadhi (mental equipoise). By the second way i.e. Paramarshodayakrama, a realizer understands that the entire field or sounds, words and sentences is nothing but the supreme self. By developing this attitude in his own mind, his innate faculties are focussed towards the Shambav Samadhi. By the third way i.e. Mantradhayabhinnatvam an aspirant practises the state at the universal 'I'-consciousness.* By the Continuous awareness of upper consciousness, individual's "I" consciousness automatically vanishes and it is united with God-consciousness- where 'sadhaka' is one with subjective energy of Lord Shiva. Thus Shamabavopaya is that path where 'sadhaka' gets rid of the recitation of Mantras, of different types of 'sadhana' and concentration on particular deity. According to Kashmir Shaivism there is another higher method than Shambavopaya, which is known as Anupaya.

In Shri Malinivijay Shaivagam, it is explained as under:

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*In this context the three stages of a word coming to life-Jyeshtha, Raudri and Amba deserve also attention - Shivasutra, II. 3. (Ed.)

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<verses>

Higher than Shambavopa is another means known as Anupaya. It is effortless effort and method less method. It is named as Anandopaya also. The literal meaning of Anupaya is the means without any means. The negative suffix in this word signifies complete minuteness and not total nothingness, just as in the word Anudara. Shri Abhinavagupta says in "Tantraloka" "atr anudara kanya itivat nanolparthatvam." This Anupaya yoga is the highest, the final and the direct means to liberation. A mere touch or a mere glance of the one who is in the state of Anupaya makes one's entrance pure to the kingdom of Transcendental Bliss. Just as a Poisonous snake emits the venomous effect to a person from a great distance, similarly a great yogi residing in Anupaya state sends the seeker, who has intense devotion for the Lord into the same state owned by him, by his mere glance or touch without making any difference between the master and the disciple. In Tantrasar Shri Abhinavagupta explains this Anupaya in the following words

<verses>

The supreme Lord, is self-effulgent, soul personified of the Real self. what can be the means to attain this supreme Bliss ? Godly unity is no means as Godly-unity is a momentary feature not a permanent one. Knowledge is no means as He is ever luminous. Unsheathing of various covers are no means as it is unthinkable for Him to don any cover. What can be the means to find Him? As the means also are devoid of self - entity without His existence. Therefore the entire 'unique chit' (consciousness) cannot be judged by the time factor, cannot be covered by the space, cannot be limited by names etc., cannot be controlled by the words, cannot be made clear by arguments. Thus from time factor to the field of arguments that Independent Supreme Bliss from 'I' consciousness, by its free will for attainment of godly unity merges into universal consciousness. When a seeker is firmly entrenched in this state he is in continuous harmony with the Godhead without any external means. So there is no need of chanting Mantras, performing various kinds of worship, doing austere penance, or undergoing any other form of meditation for him.

These various forms of means are not sufficient enough to throw light on that unlimited samvit. Can we see the bright sun by the limited ghata (clay pot)? When a seeker having an all-pervading outlook of this kind, contemplates constantly in this way, gets immersed in the Supreme self of Lord Shiva in no time.

7.2 Shaktopaya

It is a yogic practice of thought only. In this the seeker has to develop concentration upon God-consciousness by means of a special initiating thought unfolded by the master. The definition of Shaktopaya is given in Shri Malinivijaya Tantra as under:-

<verses>

When the aspirant concentrates on the particular thought of God-consciousness without the support of Pranayama and chanting of mantras etc, he develops that consciousness uninterruptedly. That state is called Shaktopaya.

The particular thought like 'I am all consciousness', 'I am all', or 'I am Transcendental Bliss', must be firmly adjusted in mind with such an awareness that no other thought comes to displace it. Aspirant established in this state of awareness enters the state of Transcendental consciousness and passes from duality to unity.

Shaktopaya does not involve any objective 'Dhyana' intellectual meditation, or anything of that sort. It is an expedient of very high order and is meant for those who possess unflinching devotion and sharp intellectual acumen. It is solely meant for those who are not capable of undergoing Nirvikalpa yoga of Shambavopaya, because of the deep-rooted mental impressions of the impure vikalpa (thought-aberrations).

This Shaktopaya is called Jnanopaya also, because the mental activities of meditation are the most important factors in it. Thus it is an indirect means to complete liberation.

7.3 Anvopaya

Anvopaya is that expedient which is concerned with 'anu' a limited being, signifying his mental effort to get rid of the ignorance of his true nature. In this means all the faculties of understanding are to be concentrated upon particular objects other than the self, and the self is to be experienced with the help of those particular objective entities. In Shri Purvashastra Anvopaya is explained as under:

<verses>

To understand this definition squarely we have got to explain it point wise. 'Uchhaar' connotes an awareness during inhalation or exhalation, when the consciousness of the realizer flows in between these two breaths in harmonious collusion. 'Karan' connotes that mental practice; which is developed through the grooming of organs of the senses and actions. It is conducted in the actual perception of one's field of activities in daily life. 'Dhyaan' means the experience of one's endless nominal and phenomenal nature through abstract meditation on one's understanding. 'Varna' is the incessant practice based on Dhvani (sound) which comes to the aspirant within hearing at the time of meditation. When a seeker plants his consciousness on the heart, navel or the space between the two eye-brows, simultaneously reciting the mantra through mind only, is known as the practice of 'sthaankalpanaa'. The lowest types of this form are the as the practice Lingam, the altar and the image etc.

This expedient is known as Kriyayoga or Kriyopaya, because concentration on object in this yoga involves sufficient mental effort. Thus action plays phenomenal part in reaching upto this mental stage.

In fact, a seeker with the help of inferior methods like Pranayama or chanting of Mantra etc. has to develop God-consciousness in this third path known as Anvopaya, because he is endowed with inferior capacity of mind and meditation.

Thus this triple action, reaction and interaction of mind and perception with consequent follow-up mental drill in this system of Shaivism has given it the name of 'Trika'.

Acharya Somananda (first half of the ninth century A. D.) has given a historical account about the origin of monistic Shaiva school of Kashmir in his monumental work "Shiva Drishti". He says that in the age of

'Kali' when all the sages left this world and went to some place known as 'kalaapigraam', the teachings of the mysteries of Shaiva faith came to a stop. Then Lord Shri Kanthanatha advised His disciple sage Durvasa to start afresh the system of the practice of Shaivism in the world. He in turn imparted essence of the monistic Shaiva faith to a disciple of his named 'trambkaditya'. In this way fourteen generations passed and this knowledge was spelt out by the respective Gurus systematically. The fifteenth preceptor contrary to the faith in celibacy of previous teachers, married a Brahmin girl who gave birth to a male child namely 'sangmaditya' who was the sixteenth teacher in the line. While on pilgrimage, he came to Kashmir and settled here permanently. Various sages, seers, scholars and authors blossomed in this school after its advent to Kashmir valley. Sangamditya's son and disciple was "Varshaditya" and his son and disciple was "Arunaditya" who carried on this system further. The nineteenth teacher was "Arunaditya's son" 'Ananda' and his son and disciple was 'Somananda', who was the twentieth Acharya in this line.

Shri Abhinavagupta also gives the historical account of monistic Kashmir Shaivism in his extra-ordinary work 'Tantraloka'. He says that three Siddhas (masters of perfection) namely 'tryambak', 'aamardak' and 'srinaath' came to this mortal world under the control of 'Srikanthnatha'. These three Siddhas, who were proficient in the monistic, the dualistic and the monistic cum dualistic Shaiva philosophy respectively established three separate schools of Shaivism; 'tryambaknatha' initiated another line through his will born daughter. This school of thought was known as Ardha-Tryambaka. Monistic system of Kashmir Shaivism is actually the school of Trayambakanatha. In fact Shaiva literature of Kashmir, available at present, belongs only to this very school of Trayambakanatha.

Many centuries after Trayambakanatha, the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism was taught by four great teachers namely Somananda, Erakanatha, Sumatinatha and Vasuguptanatha. These teachers have established four different schools which are as follows:

1. Pratyabhijna school,
2. Krama school,
3. Kula school,
4. Spanda school.

Pratyabhijna means recognizing one's own self once again. This represents a mental act by which one realizes and reunites with the original state i.e. universal consciousness. In 'Shivadrishti' Acharya 'Somananda' explains this pratyabhijna philosophy systematically. Shri Utpaladeva, the esteemed disciple of Acharya 'Somananda' presents vividly this very system in his famous book 'Ishvarapratyabhijna.' He defines pratyabhijna as under:

<verses>

just as a bride who has heard all about her bride-groom and even has seen him many a time, does not recognise him unless he is shown to her, similarly an individual who has read and heard much about his being, which is nothing but Shiva- the universal does not recognize himself unless he is guided by the Master. This sort of recognition is known as Pratyabhijna.

Krama school of Shaivism was expounded by Erakanatha. Its main purpose is to develop such strength of awareness that one transcends the circle of spaces time and form and finally raises himself to the state of universal consciousness. By realizing that state one enters the kingdom of Param-Shiva the Transcendental Being. The discipline of Anavopaya discussed earlier is concerned with this system of Kashmir Shaivism.

Kula school of Kashmir Shaivism was taught by Sumatinatha. The purpose of this doctrine is to rise above individual energy and assimilate the Blissful Energy of totality. Thus it is the highest thought which explains the state of universal Being; from which the whole universe emerges and then merges in it. All practices of "Shambhavopaya" discussed earlier are connected with this system of Kashmir Shaivism. Spanda school was heralded in Kashmir by Vasugupta natha. This system directs the seeker to concentrate on each and every moment in this world, even the Vibration of a blade of grass carries one to

God consciousness. In Shri Vijnana Bhairava a traditional treatise of this school, one hundred and twelve ways are explained to attain the spanda state by meditating on the centre of mental or physical acts. All the practices of 'Shaktopaya' explained earlier, are connected with this system of Shaivism.

In fact these four schools are not different from each other, because all these systems take an aspirant to the universal God consciousness, the goal being the same, even when the ways are varied.

To sum up, the thought of Kashmir Shaivism is great, world affirming and universal. No Philosophic theory has so far presented complete view of the truth as is presented by the monistic Shaiva philosophy of Kashmir. The principle of Svatantrya (self-dependence) called as the principle of highest monism is the main doctrine of this philosophy. The arguments for accepting this mental discipline are so convincing, so satisfying and so appealing that once an aspirant tastes their nectar, naturally disdains other philosophic systems. This philosophy deals with the minutest and subtlest principles of life. It treats problems of man and the universe by the method of analysis and synthesis. The Shaivistic way of arguments is logical and psychological and is supported by all kinds of every day experiences. The greatest quality of Shaiva philosophers is that they invite criticism of opponents and after threadbare discussion they silence them with counter arguments. Like its theoretical side, the practical side of Shaivism is still more palatable, without inflicting any pain on his body, without suppressing the emotions and instincts, without controlling his breath and in that drill suppressing his mind in Dhyanayoga, a realizer has been enjoined to enjoy life within limits as per humanistic laws, and to replenish the taste of spiritual attainments by means of Shaivistic yoga which is simple and interesting. He has been exhorted to attend to worldly pursuits and simultaneously yoke himself to self-realization. Thus the Shaivistic path is a sure and a steady path with very little danger of degradation, because the conflict between matter and spirit has been avoided herein. The ultimate aim of Shaivism is self-dependence in each and every respect, which aim can be achieved in the realization of God-consciousness.

It is very unfortunate that such a complete and developed system of philosophy making a happy compromise between Immanence and Transcendence, Self and Super-self, Finite and Infinite, domain of man and kingdom of Heaven, has not so far become known to the whole of the world. Future shall have to make amends for this inexcusable lapse by propagating this school of thought with pronounced meaningfulness.

Source: Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture

8 Shaivism & Kashmir's Doctrine of 'Recognition' (Pratyabhijna)

Dr. R. K. Kaw



Dr. R. K. Kaw

8.1 Part I

Kashmir Shaivism & Its Three Divisions: Kashmir Shaivism on the whole, represents a particular religio-philosophical school of the valley. There are three main divisions of the school corresponding to the division of its literature into three Shastras : (1) the Agama Shastra, (2) the Spanda Shastra and (3) the Pratyabhijna Shastra. No. (1) Agama Shastra is believed to be of divine origin. To this class chiefly belong the following works : Malini, Vijya or Vijayettara, Svachchanda Tuntram, Vijnana Bhairava, Ananda Bhairava (lost), Mrgendra, Matahga, Netra, Naishvasa, Svayambhuva, Rudra-yamala, Vidyarnava, etc. Shiva-sutras which were revealed later by the sage Vasugupta are said to be the most important part of the Agama Shastra. The next two divisions of the Shaiva Shastra emerged as a result of development of human thought concerning the main Shastra of divine origin (Agama Shastra). The line of thought was developed by two acharyas Bhatta Kallata (9th century) and Somananda, contemporary of Vasugupta (850-900 A.D.), in two different directions while Kallata handed down the doctrine as a system of religion, Somananda supplied the logical reasoning in their support and thus founded a system of Advaita philosophy of the Shaivas on the basis of what was at first , taught as a system of faith. Thus there appeared the other two Shastras, (2) Spanda-shastra founded by Kallata and (3) Pratyabhijna-shastra commenced by Somananda. The three Shastras, all together, are generally known as Trika Shastra (a shastra comprising three classes). It is rightly observed that, out of these three, Pratyabhijna only is the 'philosophy proper of the Trika'. There has been a controversy among scholars regarding the name of the philosophical system of Shaiva Shastra. They think that all these names Trika, Spanda and Pratyabhijna are the designations of one and the same system. These scholars seem not only to have not observed the distinction between these different systems, but have failed to notice that Pratyabhijana system only is the philosophical school of the Kashmir Shaivas. The special literature that developed around the two schools Spanda and Pratyabhijna is given in brief as follows :-'Spanda Karika' and its 'Vrtti' by Kallata, Vivrti by Ramakantha, Pradipika by Utpala, , Spanda-Sandoha' by Kshemaraja and 'Spanda-Nirnaya' also by Kshemaraja are the main works of Spanda school. 'Shivadrashti' by Somananda, 'Ish. Pratyabhijna Karika' with 'Vrtti' (gloss) and 'Siddhitrayi' by Utpaladeva, 'Pratyabhijna-Vimarshini' (in two volumes), 'Pratyabhijna-Vivrti-vimarshini' (in three volumes) and 'Paramarthasara' by Abhinavagupta, 'Pratyabhijna-hridayam' with commentary by Kshemaraja and 'Bhaskari', a commentary on Pratyabhijna Vimarshini', in two volumes, by Bhaskaracharya, comprise mainly the Pratyabhijna Shastra. All these works are

published in Kashmir Series of 'Texts and Studies (KSTS), except Bhaskari, Vols. I and 2 which are published as Nos. 82 and 83 of 'The Princess of Wales Sarasvati' Bhavana Texts, Allababad, 1938, 1950'.

8.1.1 Distinctive Features & Contents of Trika Shastra (in brief)

Shaivism comprehends all those systems of thought which evolved from Shaivagamas and Shaiva Tantras. A Shaiva system means any system based on Shaiva Tantras or Agamas. Sixty-four systems of the Shaiva cult are mentioned in the Shaiva scriptures of Kashmir which include the Trika as one of them. As said above, Trika is a triad, a group of three divisions of Kashmir Shaivism, Agama, Spanda and Pratyabhijna. These three Shastras can broadly be divided into two systems only, a system of religion or particular faith of Shaivas, which can significantly be distinguished as Shaivism, and a system of philosophical thought grown in Kashmir among the followers of Shaivism or Shaiva cult, which is rightly known as Pratyabhijna Philosophy. It was Pandit Madhusudan Koul the learned editor of KSTS, who for the first time pointed out in his Preface to Ish. Pratyabhijna Vimarshini, Vol. I, that Pratyabhijna is the philosophy proper of the Trika system. The philosophical content of the Trika is first presented as Pratyabhijna system by Madhavacharya in his Sarvadarshana-samgraha (14th Century) on the basis of title of the main treatise of the system, Pratyabhijna Karika by Utpaladeva. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan also includes 'the Pratyabhijna system' as one of the philosophical systems in his Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, for the apparent reason.

The Kashmir Shaivism as a whole, including the faith and philosophy of the school, is presented in Trika Shastra. It is so called (Trika) as, according to Paratrimshika, it deals with the triple principle, Shiva, Shakti and Anu; or Pati, Pasha and Pashu; or Nara, Shakti and Shiva; or Para, Apra and Parapara. It is called Trika for the reason that its chief authority is the triad consisting of three chief Agamas, Siddha, Namaka and Malini (Tantraloka I, 36), or for another reason that it includes all the three systems, Bheda (dualism), Abhedha (non-dualism) and Bhedabheda (dualism-cum-non-dualism). It is also called Trika for the reason that it teaches the threefold method of Agamic realization, viz. Shambhavopaya, Shaktopaya and Anavopsya. It has also been already stated that Trika is a triad consisting of Agama, Spanda and Pratyabhijna schools of Kashmir Shaivas. The terms referred to in this para, which are derived from Agamas, cannot be explained in this short article. (See, K. C. Pandey, Abhinavagupta An Historical & Philosophical Study, 170 ff. and J. C. Chatterji, Kashmir Shaivism, 1 fn. 2)

8.1.2 Agama Shastra

Georally speaking, Agama-Shastra is mostly Sadhana-Shastra; i. e., it mainly deals with ritualistic and mystic practices. Usually, every Agama consists of four sections or Kandas (1) Vidya or Jnana Kanda (Section dealing with secret knowledge), (2) Yoga Kanda (Section dealing with Yoga discipline, processes of concentration and breathing exercises-pranayama), (3) Kriya Kanda (Section dealing with action, viz, ritualistic performances) and (4) Carya Kanda (Section pertaining to forms of worship). The works belonging to Agama Shastra of Kashmir, mentioned above, include in their dogmatic contents certain philosophical speculations also. Some of them are mostly devotional. Some of them give the rudiments of Kashmir Shaivism and teach certain methods, mystical practices (upayas) for achieving lower and higher Siddhis (occult powers) and the glories of liberated life. These methods prescribed in various Shaivagamas are called Shambhavapaya <missing text> Shastra of Trika generally gives an exposition of these three methods or ways (upayas) of realization.

The Shiva-sutras are believed to be a Rahasyagama-shastra-samgraha (a compilation of secret Agama Shastra) being a work of Shiva Himself. They, therefore, form the most important part of the Agama Shastra to which is attributed divine authorship. According to tradition, recorded by Kshemaraja, the sutras were found, by the sage Yasugupta inscribed on a rock at the foot of Mahadeva mountain, about 12 miles from Srinagar. It is said that Shrikantha, an incarnation of Shiva, wishing to do a favour to suffering humanity by the revelation of the traditional sacred lore which unfolds the three means of emancipation, appeared once before Vasugupta in a dream and told him about these sutras engraved under a big stone

and also the way to reveal them. The sutras were thus revealed to Vasugupta who copied them to teach to his disciples. The sutras are divided in three sections, dealing with the three means of liberation, Shambhava, Shakta and Anava. Guru Vasugupta taught them to Kallata and others. Kallata taught them to Kshemaraja who added a commentary, called Vimarshini, to the sutras.

The very first sutra emphatically declares that man's consciousness in its essential nature, is Atman (Caitanyam atma) and the Atman itself is Shiva, the great Lord. Maheshvara (atmaiva shivah). Apart from & few highly philosophical declarations made in the Shiva-sutras as a protest against the nihilistic doctrines of certain schools of Buddhism and against the doctrine of dualism (bheda) taught by some schools, they constitute a practical treatise devoted to the unfoldment of the three ways of liberation (upayas), mentioned above, (upaya-pra- kashanam). They also give the rudiments of Kashmir Shaivism, such as malas (impurities) and pasas (fetters), characteristics of various types of perceivers, transmigratory subjects, Pati (free-soul) and Pasu (soul under bondage), different state of common perceivers and extraordinary states (turya, the fourth state and turyotita, beyond the fourth state) as experienced by the Yogis, and so on.

8.1.3 Spanda Shastra

The original text belonging to this Shastra (Spanda-karika) and the literature that subsequently developed on it, have already been<missing text> seem to be the work of Kallata. The Spanda-shastra lays down the main principles, as enumerated in the Shiva-sutras, in a greater detail and in a more amplified form, without giving philosophical reasonings in their support. In fact, the Spanda system owes its origin to the Shiva Sutras and concerns itself with their elucidation and popularisation. The author describes Spanda as that power of consciousness which infuses life into the physical senses. An object when sensed has no basis apart from consciousness. Spanda Karikas (verses) are 51 in number in which the fundamental principles of Shavism, as aphoristically given in the Shiva Sutras, are epitomised. The basic idea underlying the Spanda-Shastra is that Shiva's Spanda (energy) out of its own nature manifests on the background of its own pure self the whole universe comprising the thirty-six tattvas (principles or categories of objective reality) from the earth upto Parama Shiva. According to this doctrine, the world is a play of energy force or vibration, which appears to be in confirmity with the modern science. It is not an illusion, the result of error in perception (avidya) as the Vedantins suppose. Their doctrine that 'vishva yan-na tad eva brahma' (what is not the world, that is Brahman) is rejected by the Spanda school.

8.1.4 Pratyabhijna Shastra

It is not necessary to give glimpses of Pratybhijna Shastra here, as it is separately dealt with in detail in the Part II of this paper which is exclusively concerned with this philosophical school of Kashmir. Here it will be remarked that metaphysical reasoning (tarka) is the essence of a philosophical system. It is this philosophical content of the system that Utpaladeva presents in a bold relief, and in a systematic order, relevating the religious dogmatism of the school to a subordinate position, having devoted only a few sutras of his work (in Agamadhikara) to the latter aspect of the school. Pratyabhijna has been admitted to be a taraka shastra (a system of logic and philosophy).

8.1.5 Tantraloka - a Compendium of Trika Shastra

Tantraloka, by Abhinavagupta, includes the contents of all the three branches of Kashmir Shaivism (Trika-Shastra), viz. Agama, Spanda and Pratyabhijna in a summarised form. The Tantraloka is a most voluminous work of Abhinavagupta, composed in verse, and forms an encyclopaedia of the Trika Shastra. The Tantra-sara, by the same author, is just a brief summary of the Tantraloka, written in easy prose. It is an excellent introduction to Tantraloka. The first Ahnika (Chapter) of Tantraloka is chiefly philosophical. It opens with an explanat:on of the first two Shiva-sutras and defines the key-word 'Caitanyam'. This Caitanyam is emphatically declared to be the Atman, 'the one nuclear core in every personality, the one

central point of reference in each and every experience, the deepest depth of the sub-conscious in each vividly conscious personal ego'. The same chapter of the work gives also the definitions and explanations of various other terms. The next four chapters of the work deal, in detail, with the same three upayas (methods or ways of realization) which constitute the three sections of the Shiva-sutras. According to Abhinavagupta, the three means or methods described are those of Abheda (non-dualism), Bhedabheda (dualism-cum-non-dualism) and bheda (dualism) respectively. The Pratyabhijna is said to be another way of realization, a way of mere knowledge (awareness) and reasoning (tarka), denominated by him as 'Anupaya marga' viz., requiring no practical performance of any kind, ritualistic, mystic or yogic, or even devotion and worship of any sort. Abhinavngupta says, this last method (Anupaya-marga) is the highest of all the methods, called also Anuttara, i. e. above the first three methods (tato pi paramam jnanam upayadi-vivarjitam..anuttaram ... ihocyate). Various philosophical topics like time, space, the nature and division of the thirty-six 'tattvas' (principles of creation), the principle of 'Maya' and its five offshoots, etc., are also dealt within the different chapters of this work. The rest of the work deals with various ritual practices and forms of worship.

8.1.6 Philosophical nucleus of Trika-Shastra

Trika Shastra, comprising the said three divisions of Kashmir Shaivism, represents, in its philosophical context, a concept of positivism in a theistic outlook in contradistinction to the absolute monism of Vedanta. According to the school, Shiva, the Ultimate Reality, is the prolific cause and 'essence and identity' (Self) of every thing. He abounds in bliss and consciousness (nirvrta-cit) and is endowed with sovereignty of will, omniscience and omnipotence (aniruddha-iccha-pra- sarah prasarad-drkkriya sivah). He is everything and yet beyond everything, or He is both immanent (Vishvamayah) and transcendent (Vishvottirna). Time, form and space do not limit him, for He is above all mutation and change. 'Pashu' (a living being) being the fragment of the inter-related whole is no other than Shiva Himself, but is in a state of limitation and self-forgetfulness. Recognition of the state of Shivahood (divinity) restores the original state of absolute perfection to an individual (Pashu). This is his state of Moksha (liberation). The Pasu has taken on three impurities (Malas) which are responsible for obscuring the divine within him. When these three impurities get dissolved, he realizes the divine within him in its crystalline purity.

8.2 Part II

8.2.1 Pratyabhijna School and its Teachers

In fact, the religio-philosophical school of Kashmir Shaivism is very old. Though its inception or introduction in Kashmir is shrouded in mystery, it was prevalent there long before the time of Ashoka (273-232 B. C.). Eighth and ninth centuries of the Christian era seem to have witnessed a religious upheaval in Kashmir. This followed a philosophic renaissance in the valley. Kashmir was then a meeting ground of the various philosophical currents. It is from the confluence of the then prevailing thought-currents flowing from various schools of Buddhists, Vaidikas, the Shaivas and Shaktas, the Vaiyakaranas (Grammarians) the Samkhyas, the Naiyayikas, the Vedantins and the expounders of the Yoga system, that a monistic school of philosophy, distinctly known as Pratyabhijna Shastra emerged in the valley among the followers of Shaiva cult. The Kashmir Shaivas, the originators of the Pratyabhijna system, have incorporated in it most of the ideas from the said systems and have propounded their various doctrines in a technique of their own derived from the Shaivagamas, which distinguish the system from the other systems.

Somananda was indeed the founder of the Pratyabhijna School which takes its name from the 'Pratyabhijna karika' by Utpaladeva, the disciple of the former. The credit of being the founder of the school goes to Somananda, for the reason that it is he who, for the first <missing text> a treatise (prakarana) on Shaiva philosophy. Utpaladeva was in fact the systematiser of Somananda's thought. Like Shankaracharya, a commentator of Badarayana's School of Vedanta, Abhinavagupta

(another luminary among the celebrities of Kashmir Shaivism) gets the credit of being the expounder of Pratyabhijna system. We are in possession of his two commentaries? one short namely 'Vimarshini' and the other long (Vivrti-vimarshini), on the 'Pratyabhijana Karika' of Utpaladeva. Somananda flourished in the later part of the ninth century A. D., Utpaladeva in the first part of the tenth century and Abhinavagupta in the last part of the tenth and the first part of the eleventh century.

8.2.2 Inception of Pratyabhijna Philosophy

Notwithstanding his devotion to the secret doctrine of monistic Shaivagamas handed down to him traditionally from his ancestors, Somananda revolted against the prevailing schools of thought, including certain sections of Shaivas themselves. He summarily criticised the various schools of Buddhism, the Jainism, the Samkhya, the Nyaya and Vaisheshika, the Vaivakarana and the monistic Vedanta. It appears that Somananda was against the traditional ideas about the divinity, the meaning and purpose of life, the human activities and behaviours on earth, the real significance of 'moksha' (salvation or liberation) and the like. Somananda seems to have conceived of re-interpreting religio-philosophic thought in vogue in his day and laid the foundation of a new school in its pristine purity, eclectic in its essence and containing the noble truths and glorious spiritual and humanistic values of ancient Vedantic thought. This new school came later to be known as 'Pratyabhijna School' (the doctrine of Recognition) after the title of the main treatise on the system, composed by Somananda's disciple Utpaladeva. The doctrine propounded in this school is indeed a reform and revaluation or reappraisal of Indian religio-philosophical thought.

8.2.3 Brief Idea of Pratyabhijna Doctrine

The strict sense of the term 'Pratyabhijna' is recognition, but in the system, it comprehends the sense of awareness, consciousness, realization, 'knowledge in practice' or practical use of knowledge. Pratyabhijna school thinks that man is ignorant (unaware) of the very nature of one's own Self (Shiva-Atman), viz. his inner being, the profounder faculty within him, and its power of 'Iccha' (Will), 'Jnana' (knowledge, Thought) and 'Kriya' (Action), viz., man's abilities with which he is endowed by Providence. The school believes that the powers (saktis) or abilities with which man is born in this world, comprise his supreme (divine) inheritance. It is only then, when he becomes aware of his divine inheritance, that he can make the best use of it in making his life successful and felicitous.

Pratyabhijna is, in its essence, a deep and systematic study of man as microcosm and the world he lives in as macrocosm. In it, there is a perfectly scientific analysis of all the human faculties, man's entire physical, mental and spiritual organisms and that of the One Objective Reality (Parama Shiva) into thirty six primary realities indispensable for the constitution of the universe and processes of creation, etc. The system being broad-based, tackles all the problems of human interest and lays great stress on the spiritual values of life. It is thus a school of 'Spiritual Pragmatism'.

Utpala, the second teacher of the system, tells us that the Pratyabhijna philosophy is revealed to him by the grace of the Lord (katham cit asadhya maheshvarasya dasyam), and it is for the good of humanity (janasya upakaram icchan) that he expounds the doctrine. He says with emphasis that man should recognise himself, viz., be aware of his inner being (Self) and his deeper faculties of 'knowledge' and 'action' (drkkriyatmika Sakti), if he desires to make his life all prosperous and blissful (samasta sampat samavapti hetum tat pratyabhijnam upapadayami). Our profounder faculties remain hidden from us due to lack of knowledge or experience and owing to innate forgetfulness (moha) on our part. The Pratyabhijna is directed to removing the veil of ignorance from us and turning our attention towards the deeper faculties within us. The teacher believes that the faculties of thought and action comprise the very life of man (jnanam kriya hi bhutanam jivatam jivanam matam). In the real sense of the term, knowledge in that which is transformed into action, or practical use of which is made in one's life. Pratyabhijna says (hints) with emphasis that knowledge put into action or practice is really meaningful.

8.2.4 Supreme Inheritance of Man

Conception of the macrocosm in the Pratyabhijna system is based on a very deep study of the microcosm. The system believes that 'Maheshvara', the Great Lord or Divine Father of all this creation, endowed with 'Mahesvarya' or Svatantrya-Shakti' (Sovereignty or Thought and Action) with which he executed the acts of creation, etc. of this orderly world. This 'Svatantrya-Shakti' or creative power of the Lord is two-fold, comprising 'Prakasha' and 'Vimarsha', viz. power of manifestation and power of perception or concretisation, functioning respectively as Universal Consciousness (Psychical Power) and Universal Energy (Physical Power or Objective Reality), technically called 'Shiva' and 'Shakti'. The former, i. e. Universal Consciousness assumes three forms: Power of Remembrance (Smrti-shakti), Power of Knowledge (Jnana-shakti) and Power of Differentiation (Aphana-shakti). The latter, i. e. Universal Energy functions as Power of Action (Kriya- Shakti) of the Lord. This is governed by three universal laws of Nature - the law of Division (Bhedabheda), the law of Perception (Mana-tat-phala meya), and the law of Causation (Karsna karya). The Transcendental Lord (Vishvottirna) thus concretises or materialises Himself into this created world (becomes Vishvamaya, the cosmos) by evolving thirty-six 'Tattvas' or primary realities from the One Objective Reality, the primordial natural force principle or Prima Materia of all things. As the Lord is conceived to be endowed with Svatantrya-shakti, viz. Sovereignty of will and psychical and physical powers to make Him potent to execute all creative activity which accounts for the emanation of macrocosm with ever-new creations of infinite sentient and insentient beings from His Own Self or Being, so is every individual created being (as microcosm) endowed with its potential powers (faculties) of will, cognition and action, including psychical powers of remembrance, knowledge and differentiation (Samrti-shakti; Jnana-shakti and Aphana-shakti) and its physical powers (Kriya-shakti) as supreme inheritance from his Divine Father-Maheshvara to make him potent to perform all creative activity in his life time. It is 'recognition' or awareness and right use of one's divine faculties (supreme inherence) with which man is born in this world that make his life felicitous and blissful (evam atmanam estasya samyag jnana - kriye tatha, janan yathepsitan pashyan janati ca karati ca). The fact is that the Self (being a spark of the divine) is the pivot of one's life and Self-recognition is the means of achieving one's all fortunes and success in life (samasta-sampat samavapti-hetum; janasya-ayatna siddhyartham).

8.2.5 Pratyabhijna Values (human & spiritual)

Pratyabhijna is one of the greatest humanistic movements of Kashmir, which might well be called the 'Philosophy of Humanism'. It is a wonderful synthesis of nearly all earlier systems of India's philosophic thinking, and is completely free from 'negativism' and 'escapism' of certain schools of Vedantins and from the 'nihilism' of some Buddhist schools. It is most realistic in its attitude to life. It is a most dynamic system in which emphasis is laid on what is called Svatantrya, the complete autonomy of thought and action as the goal of life. It may also be called a school of Spiritual Pragmatism, because its doctrines have a practical bearing upon human interests, besides having its main direction to the spiritual elevation of humanity, Pratyabhijna lays emphasis on human values and cardinal virtues as are given, in brief, below:

8.2.6 Spiritual & Moral Values in Pratyabhijna

According to Pratyabhijna, human beings are by nature divine. They are the sparks of the divine, children of God. The whole mankind forms one family (manavah bandhavah sarve). It is by self discipline (culture) and clean moral life that man can unveil the divine qualities in his personality. Love of God in this school means love of human beings, of one's fellow -men. He who loves God, loves everybody and looks on all men as equals. Love of God is to be translated into service of one's fellow - men and into such acts are as conducive to the good and benefit of one and all. Gentleness, righteousness, sympathy, friendliness and honest dealings with one another are qualities or virtues necessary for good life. Pratyabhijna promotes the eternal values of peace and freedom and human dignity beneficial to the

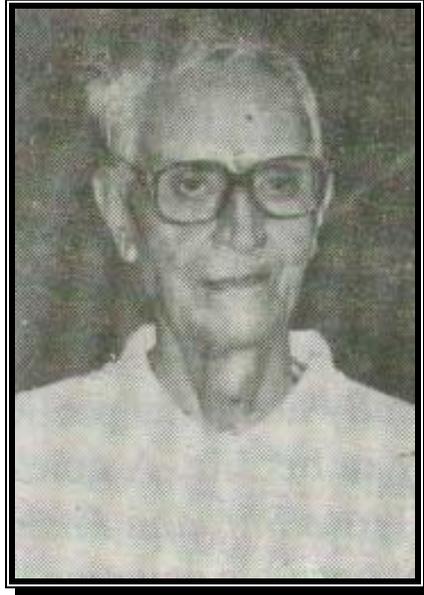
common man in their application to life. These values are stated in terms like 'sarva-shivata' (which signifies that the personality of every human individual is divine or sacred), 'sarva-samata' (meaning that all men are born equal) 'sarva - svatantrya' (i.e. all men are born free) and so on. Thus the doctrine lays emphasis on 'liberty, equality and fraternity' which is the famous motto of 'the civilized world today. Above all, Pratyabhijna directs man to working for peace and tranquility of the world (Vishva-Shanti) an following that as truth which is conducive to the good and benefit of the whole humanity.

Source: Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture

9 Fundamental Aspect of Vedanta and Kashmir Shaivism

(A comparative view of the two Philosophies)

Jankinath Kaul "Kamal"



Late Shri Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal'

The six systems of Hindu Philosophy are Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Saankhya, Yoga, Mimaamsa and Vedanta. There are also many other schools of thought in India, but all are the variations of these six systems termed the Hindu Philosophy. To understand this clearly, we have to realize that the basis of all the schools of Indian Thought is the same which we call the Ultimate Reality, Supreme Consciousness, Brahman, Siva, Allah or God. All these schools of thought several conclude on common concepts which are :-

- i) All accept the central cycle of Nature, which is without beginning or end. This consists of vast phases of Creation, Sustenance and Dissolution.
- ii) All accept that life and death are but two phases of a single cycle to which the soul is bound. This is because of the ignorance of the true nature of things.
- iii) All accept Dharma as the moral law of the universe that accounts for these central cycles of Nature, as well as the destiny of the human soul.
- iv) All agree that knowledge of the self is the path to freedom and that Yoga is the method to attain final liberation.

All the schools of thought are, thus, but the fundamental interpretations of the Ultimate Reality. They are so inter-related that the hypothesis and the method of each is dependent upon that of the other. They are, in no way, contradictory to one another, as they all lead to the same practical end, the knowledge of reality and liberation of soul.

<verses>

'To get rid of evil and to attain permanent and supreme bliss', is the innate desire of every creature in the world.

Here is an attempt made to study a comparative view of the two schools of Indian thought, namely the Advaita Vedanta of Shankara and the Kashmir Shaivism, as these have great affinities with one another. Both advocate monism. Fundamentally, they have a single conception, but each develops it individually to suit particular minds. The physical reason for their individual development, apart from that of the mental, may be due to Historical background and Geographical situation of each.

Badarayana, probably, founded Vedanta in the plains of India while Durvasa expounded Trika Shaiva in the Himalayan ranges, the two being sobre and sentimental respectively. Vedanta is an enquiry into the nature of the Ultimate Reality while Shaivism discusses the nature of this ultimate Reality and explains the cause of the initial impulse in nature. The sources of Vedanta are Vedas and those of Shaivism are the Tantras, which give supplementary explanations to Vedic thought. Both are said to be of divine authorship. No doubt, they are the revelations favoured to great sages and seers of this ancient land. But neither objects the postulates of either of these.

Both of these evolved philosophies seem to have had prevailed in this beautiful land of Kashmir since the very early times i.e. the first century A. D. or earlier. This is evident from a keen observation of the performances of daily and occasional rites and rituals by the Kashmiri Pandits even upto this day. Hymns from the Vedas and recitations from the Tantras are included in all kinds of such performances, simultaneously. Even later hymns like Mukundamala- a hymn to Lord Vishnu, and Sivamahimnastotram- a hymn to Lord Siva - the supreme deities of the two philosophies, are recited and worship offered simultaneously by devotees in traditional way. By this we understand that people in this land of Kashmir have from the very early times been accommodating perhaps because of their gift of intelligence from Nature. They always assimilated what came their way. According to Dr. Aurel Stien, "the Brahmins absorbed Buddhist Faith and lived in harmony with their brethren who were converted to this faith in the valley. Thus the old religion here seems to have been polytheistic, of course, with special inclination towards ritualistic Shaivism.

Kula system of Shaivism, advocating the highest form of Siva had been introduced here in the fourth century A. D. Krama system of Shaivism, connected with Raja-Yog, and Kundalini Yoga, which stress that vital air and mind are interdependent, also had been introduced here early.

Then, Sankaracharya (788-820 A. D.) visited this valley in the first two decades of the ninth century. He only re-established the true faith of Upanishads called the Vedantas. To check further deterioration caused by the split in Buddhism, he explained the Upanishads in a system on the basis of Brahma Sutras in his commentary. He gave Vedanta Philosophy the right footing when he wrote his valuable commentaries on the ten principal Upanishads and the Bhagwadgita. He composed a number of hymns to different deities like Saraswati, Krishna, Skanda and so on, to give the unilateral direction to multi-farious faiths in the whole country. He gave practical instructions that worship of different deities leads to the same goal, the Ultimate Truth on realization.

In his hymn to Dakshinamurti, Sankara's conception ultimate reality is the same as that of Pratyabhijna, reintroduced by Somananda and Utpalacharya, in Kashmir. To examine a comparison, let us study the following:

<verses>

"He, in whom this universe, prior to its projection was potentially present like a tree in a seed, and by whom it was wrought to its multiform by the magic, as it were, of His own will or in the manner of a great Yogi out of His own power, to that Supreme Being, embodied in the auspicious and benign Guru, I offer my profound salutation."

And

<verses>

"By His own will the Supreme Lord, the essence of Knowledge (Supreme Consciousness) projects causelessly like the Yogi into this multiformal world."

Again, in the first stanza of the Dakshinamurti Stotra, Sankar, says:

<verses>

which means: "Who, by Maya as by dream, sees Himself the universe which is inside Him, like unto a city that appears in a mirror, (but) which is manifested as if without."

In the commentary to this stanza in his book entitled 'The Hymns Of Sankara', Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan points out: "It is to be noted that in this hymn Sankara employs certain key-terms and concepts of the Pratyabhijna system known popularly as Kashmir Shaivism. The illustration of the mirrored city is found in the pratyabhijna works". Thus the people of Kashmir seem to have been influenced by the Vedanta Philosophy of Sankara as well as by the ancient Shaivism which later developed into Kashmir Shaivism.

Earlier two great Shaiva families of Sangamaditya and Atrigupta had migrated into Kashmir, when King Lalitaditya (699-736 A. D.) ruled here. They practised Tantric Shaiva rituals. These had already influenced the thought of people here when Shankara's Tantric Philosophy spread and influenced the Trika also. This leads us to think that Shankara must have had personal touch with some founder-writers here. To illucidate this we quote the following passage from the book entitled 'Abhinavagupta - An Historical & Philosophical Study' by Prof. Dr. K. C. Pandey :

"On the authority of the Rajatarangini (Ch. V, 66) we know that Bhatta Kallata, the pupil of Vasugupta, was a contemporary of Avantivarman, King of Kashmir (855-883 A.D). There he is referred to as 'Siddha.' It is, therefore, evident that at that time he was an old man of established reputation. Vasugupta, the teacher of Kallata, therefore, it is natural to suppose, belonged to the preceding scholastic generation extending from about 825 to 850 A. D. We shall, therefore, not be wrong if we say that Vasugupta gave a systematic form to the philosophical ideas of the monistic Tantras in his Siva Sutras in the next decade after Shankaracharya's visit to Kashmir towards the end of the second decade of the 9th century A. D." - (Page 154)

Thus, the mixed faith that the people of Kashmir had professed so far developed into a philosophical system when Vasugupta and Somananda gave Spanda and Pratyabhijna thoughts during the middle and latter part of the 9th century respectively. The Trika system of philosophy which had appeared on this earth through Durvasa, was in this way re-introduced by Siva's will, for the welfare and spiritual development of the people of Kaliyuga. Srimat Swami Lakshman Joo, in one of his lectures on Kashmir Shaivism says, "Like Vedanta, this system endeavours to remove the innate ignorance that separates the individual from the universal."

Then, what are the points of difference between these two established philosophies?

There is no difference so far as the aim of both is concerned. Both the monistic philosophies aim at the realization of the Ultimate Reality, which one calls Parabrahman and the other calls Parama Siva. So Paramasiva or Parameshwara is that ultimate Reality, which the Vedas declare as "This world came out from the Eternal Existence which is one, the only and without the second."

<verses>

But there are points of difference in so far as their composition is concerned. On the basis of Sankhya, the two philosophies hold that the universe comprises of tattwas (or categories).

Twenty three are common in both:

Five Bhutas - (Elements)

Five Jnanendriyas (Organs of cognition)

Five Karmendriyas (Organs of action)

Five Tanmatras (subtle elements)

Three Antahkaranas (internal organs)-Mind, Intellect & Ego.

The points of difference are:

i) In Vedanta the twenty-fourth category is Prakriti and the twenty-fifth is the Purusha, which is known as the Supreme Being (Parameshwara). He is ever pure and is not tainted with the stain of worldly corruption, just as no amount of dirt can ever alter the chemical purity of gold in a gold ring. Therefore, soul or self in Vedanta means the universal Soul, Paramatman or Supreme Spirit. This is identified with Purusha, the efficient cause of the manifest world. It brings all change by its mere presence as the sun brings forth the spring flowers.

Trika, on the other hand, adds thirteen more tattwas to the twenty-three of Sankhya. These are:

Prakriti - the world of difference which has the quality of being affected,

Purusha - the limited individual,

Six Kanchukas or sheaths - They are the limiting adjuncts on the individual in respect of space, Knowledge, interest, time and authorship.

So far this is all impure knowledge.

Five more tattwas are considered to be in the field of Pure- knowledge. These are the five energies Parama Siva called consciousness, bliss, desire, knowledge and Action. Kashmir Shaivism postulates the single reality of Siva with two aspects - one Transcendental and the other Immanent like two sides of one and the same coin. The first is beyond manifestation. But both are real as the effect cannot be different from the cause. It is said:

ii) Vedanta discusses the relationship of God, Matter and World. The central theme of the Vedanta Sutras is the philosophical teachings of the Upanishads, which concern the nature of these three relative principles. This includes the relation between the universal soul and the individual soul. Shankaracharya explained, for the practical purposes, this union in his monumental commentaries in the 8th century A. D.

The system of Kashmir Shaivism deals with the three-fold principle of God, Soul and Matter, which gives it the name Trika. Vasugupta (9th century A. D.) received the Siva- Sutras by inspiration and explained these to preserve for man the principle of monism which existed in the Tantras, also known as Agamas. This revived an understanding of truth in its ultimate form.

iii) In Vedanta, Maya, is a means of operation. It is not a substance. It is the force which creates illusion of non-perception in nature. It is the dividing force or we may call it the finitising energy which creates form in the formless. The world is known as Maya because it has no reality. It is only an appearance of fleeting forms. The real is never affected by the unreal as the ground is never made wet by a mirage. Maya is ignorance (avidya) when it operates the individual mind. It vanishes when the knowledge of reality dawns just as the morning mist dissipates on rising of the sun.

In Kashmir Shaivism Maya is the power of contraction of the five universal modes of consciousness, called the Kanchukas or sheaths. The power of contraction works thus:

Eternal Existence contracts into time

All-pervasiveness contracts into Space

All-completeness contracts into desire

All-knowledge contracts into limited knowledge

and, All-powerfulness contracts into limited power

Maya-shakti, as it is called here, produces Purusha and Prakriti which together establish the dual world of mind and matter. Here it is termed Maya-Granthi, as it becomes the cause of bondage. As un- divided power of Siva, Maya is not separate from the reality either. As the gross power of consciousness it is called Maya-Shakti, which grants liberation to the contracted soul. The influence of Maya is evident in the law of Nature. Every period of action is followed by a period of rest just as sleep follows action.

iv) In Vedanta we are required to pass through the four-fold discipline which consists of: viveka - Discrimination vairagya - Dispassion shat-sampat - Right conduct (six-fold) :- a) Mental quietness; b) Taming the mind; c) Abstinence; d) Endurance; e) Confidence; and f) Steadiness.

mumukshutwa - Desire for liberation. (Tattwabodha of Shankaracharya) 2(b).

There are also three kinds of students who advance towards self-realization. They are those :

- i) who act with zeal and faith,
- ii) who act for the good of humanity,
- iii) who are immersed in meditation.

But in Shaivism it is said:

<verses>

There is no consideration of first being worthy of it. There is no restriction of caste, creed of colour for getting admission to this shaiva order. This naturally must mean that it is the intelligent who can grasp this advanced philosophy, being the latest development on all the others. For the fine intellects no restriction is imposed. But there are grades in Diksha-initiation. They are :

1. Samayik - when the disciple is given the training of proper discipline.
2. Putrak - when spiritual knowledge is imparted to the disciple.
3. Acharya - when the disciple becomes Acharya (preceptor) and imparts knowledge to other disciples.

And

4. Siddha- - The perfect being. (vide Tantraloka) 3 (c)

v) Divine Grace is anugraha in Vedanta and shaktipaata in Kashmir Shaivism. Both the philosophies understand it to be unconditional. They are in complete agreement on this point. Vedanta says that intellectual power, study of the Vedas and even spiritual instruction are persuaded by divine grace alone :-

<verses>

'It is by Lord's grace that one is led to monistic practices.'

Again, the Upanishads declare:-

<verses>

'Atma can be realized by him whom He favours and to whom He reveals Himself.'

In Shaivism also it is Shaktipaata that makes self- recognition possible.

<verses>

'One is directed towards the preceptor as if tethered with a rope' .

<verses>

'There is no human effort to earn shaktipaata'.

It is the independent will of Lord Siva to grant shaktipaata or divine grace to any one at any place and at any time.

vi) Badarayan's viewpoint is the outcome of the various schools of thought of his day, as there existed Ashmarthya, Audulomi, Kaashakritsna and others who had held different views previously. His is the accepted classic of the Vedanta system to-day. It was endorsed and expanded by Gaudapada and Shankaracharya through Maandukya karikas and Prasthanatrayi respectively. Vidyananya held the same view in his Panchadashi.

Likewise, we find that the polytheistic faith with greater inclination towards Shaivism developed into Kashmir Shaivism or Trika philosophy with the advent of Vasugupta and Somanandanatha. This peculiar philosophy developed in Kashmir and includes almost all the previous thoughts. It was further adored by Kallata, Utpalacharya and later by Abhinavaguptapada. Siva-Sutra, Sivadrishiti, Spanda, Ishwara-pratyabhijnnavimarshini need special mention in this context. Besides this, Abhinavagupta's Tantraloka and Paratrimshika Vritti form the encyclopaedia of Kashmir Shaivism.

To sum up, if we study both these philosophies with interest and zeal, we shall find that both lay stress on the practical aspect, which is realization of the Self. Both enable all to realise the teachings during one's own lifetime. Their individual developments lead to the common goal - Realization of the Supreme

Reality - where there is no experience of dualily and hence no sorrow. It is the state of absolute bliss. It is the stateless state. The vedas declare :-

<verses>

'Truth is one but the wise give it in many ways'.

Although Kashmir Shaivism can hardly be grasped until all the six systems of philosophy are comprehended, yet no such system of India will be complete without this. No doubt, Tantras suffered a great criticism from the western and eastern scholars, due to their esoteric or symbolic character. But thanks are due to Sir John woodroffe (Arther Avalon), who was the first to defend the outraged Tantras. In the foreword to his book entitled 'The Garland of Letters', Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan (professor Emeritus, Centre of Advanced study in philosophy, University of Madras) writes :-

"The decent Indian mind that had developed a deep-rooted prejudice against the Tantras became awake to their excellence after the pioneering work of this great foreigner."

He made their meaning clear and helpful for understanding the culture of India. Therefore, it is imperative that this line of traditional literature should properly be understood. Then it will be convincing to the common man that Kashmir Shaivism gives the detailed analysis of the ultimate Reality, which Vedanta already explained on the basis of Saankhya Philosophy.

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Source: Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture

10 Tantricism in Kashmir

Acharya Dina Nath Shastri



Acharya Dina Nath Shastri

Nature has lavishly endowed Kashmir with certain distinctive favours which hardly find a parallel in any alpine land of the world. Set in the womb of the Himalayas and gifted with beautiful and inspiring natural scenery, it emerged as a highly advanced seat of learning from very early times, taking its place along with the famous Universities of Taksasila and Nalanda. Ramparts of high mountains and seclusion of the land helped her to preserve the life and conditions of early times which it is rather difficult to resuscitate in regard to other such mountainous regions. To the poets like Bilhana and others it was Sardadesh, the land of goddess Sarada; and it was even believed that goddess Saraswati actually lived here and hence the Sardapitha was also known as Sripeetha for conferring sarvajna degrees. Srichakra worship seems to have originated from this concept of the poets here regarding the characteristic learning of the land. It was only natural that the savants and rishis should indulge in exercises of the highest order of metaptysical speculation.

The cultural heritage of Kashmir is, therefore, very rich and derives its inspiration and strength both from her natural environs and the rich literature and literary traditions alike. Usually, the literature of a country reflects the unique and most distinctive characteristic of her people and sheds light on the varied aspects of the numerous subjects developed in the language of that area. Thus with the growth of Tantra-sastra that forms one of the important branches of the general sastras like Kavya, Natya, Vyakarana and Vedanta, scholars have put forth their divergent opinions regarding the genesis and growth of this sastra. All are, however, agreed on the point that the Vedas are the source of all these sastras and that Sabda sastra or Vyakarna (grammar) is their expression and basic source material.

Along with the growth of a number of religious sects, numerous treatises were written to expound the basic tenets of a particular religion. The Tantra-sastras also were composed to solve the knotty riddles and secret esotericism of Dharma. There are many manual, of tantras on the diverse religious sects still extant, though some are no doubt lost to us. The date of composition of these manuals cannot be determined with any certainty. The internal evidence, however, reveals that these are anterior to the treatises on Indian philosophy and posterior to the Vedas. Some would, however, even attribute a much earlier date to tantras in comparison to the Vedas. It may safely be assumed that whatever was evolved in the form of religious literature seems to have been first developed in the form of Tantra-sastra. A few scholars would go even to the extent of saying that in view of the complexity of the issues and problems discussed therein, these hold a place alongside the Vedas. This is so because the essence of the mantras of the Tantra-sastra is not in any way inferior to those of the mantras or hymns found in the Vedas, Some of the religious principles

of India are based upon the Principles of Tantra-sastra and in the Tantric-base there occur glimpses of philosophic doctrines. Among the extensively ramified aspect of India's speculation 'the Tantras are characterised by a catholicity of outlook and are free from all personal, communal or race restrictions'. They assign a very important place to women in religion and account for the growth of the Sakta cult. Justice Sir John Woodruffe (whose pen-name is Arthur Avalon) was the first to point out the philosophical and practical value of the Tantras and how the worship of Shakti as World Mother gradually displaced Vedic ritualism.

Bengal, Assam, Gujarat and Kashmir were prominent centres of Tantric cult and theories. Even in Buddhism Vajrayana Saktha had its basis in Tantra sastra. The Tantric cult was current in Tibet, and also in Kashmir. The Tantra is referred to in the works of acknowledged Vaisnava sastra; the Deve Bhagvata in the ninth skando speaks of it as a Vedanta and Saivism got ascendancy over Buddhism. The experiences gained in the Sakta cult and Saivism find a clear exposition and manifestation in treatises on Tantras. Most of these are now lost. Nevertheless, the rituals bear a clear imprint of these tantric influences. This is amply justified by Nilamata-purana where certain rituals and sacrifices are prescribed for all the people of the valley. Khitsari amavasya etc. are the case, in point. In fact, certain calamities in the post-Kushana period were attributed to the giving up of these practices and accepting Buddhist philosophy. The adherents of the Sakta and Saiva cult today are the direct descendants of the Tantric group of followers. With the decline of Buddhism, the Sakta cult came into prominence and even the Vajrayana branch of Buddhism found expression in Baudha-Tantra. It developed along with the Tantric cult which had already taken deep roots in the soil. This is supported by a study of Saivism itself, the rise of which is held by consensus to be the 6th century of the Christian era. The Baudha-tantra (Vajrayana branch of Buddhism) also flourished along with the Tantric principles in Kashmir. A study of the Saiva-sastra reveals that the Tantric literature that had developed much earlier in the 6th century was based upon the main principles of Isvaraduyavada. These principles have been explained at length in different forms in Saivasastra and have been rightly characterised as Trika-sastra. It took the name of Trika as it included the elements of Agama, Pratyabhijna & Spanda Sidhanta. Agama Sastra is included in the Tantra-shastra which implies the description and analysis of a particular sectarian sastra. Etymologically it has its roots in 'tanu' with the termination : 'tra' and gives the exposition of a particular religious cult or esoteric character of the rituals. Agama-sastra was in use much earlier than Tantra-sastra and the noblest principles stated therein have found expression in a masculine form through the mouth of Lord Siva, whereas the Tantra-sastra confirms the expounded subject in the form of a male-female dialogue, viz. the akhyanas dialogue between Siva and Parvati. The Tantra sastra which concerns itself with the subject through Para-sakti is called Sakta-tantra and the same Para-sakti is known as Tripurasundari in Tantra-sastras. All that was regulated in the world in three different manifestations was called Tripura and the collective energy of Brahma, Visnu and Mahesh was known as Tripura or Sri Tripurasundari which is also variously known as Mahasaraswati, Mahalakshmi and Mahakali,

During the mediaeval period in Kashmir much stress was laid on Bhairava-yaga and Bhairava worship. These are closely related to Tantra sastra. But the texts dealing with them are now no longer available. Anandeswara, Mangalesvara, Hatkesvara, Purnaraja Bhairava, Turska-rajha bhairava, Visvakshina, Jayakasina and Mahakala-the eight Bhairavas etc. and their worship was Tantric in nature. Bhairavayamal Tantra, Anandabhairava Tantra, Utsusma Bhairava and Hatkesvara Samhita etc. that are known to us through stray references only and could confirm the prevalence of the eight Bhairava cults are also not available. The Rudrayamal grantha that deals with the source of hymns and thousands of names of the various gods and goddesses is available only in a fragmental form. A fragmented but defective edition of this book has been published from Calcutta and a few incomplete Mss are preserved in the archives of Nepal, Varanasi and Kashmir. Like other Pauranic parvas (festivals), the Kashmiri Pandits had a number of Tantric parvas too which are now not existing. These included Bhairavparva, Matsyabali, Vastusupatibali, Margasirsabali etc. A study of the Rajatarangini reveals that other tantras were also prevalent in Kashmir but the Pandits did not hold them in high esteem. The main subject of these was

maaran (To kill), mohan (To hypnotize), uchhaTan (To apply witch craft). The Satakapala Akhyana of Chakropala of Akahara was Tantric in character.

The Tantric cult was in vogue in Kashmir before the spread of Buddhism, Savism and Vaisnavism. Its literature is now not procurable. There is no gainsaying the fact that even before the prevalence of the Vedic religion, the Tantra cult was a dominant creed and this explains the existence of Tantricism in the various activities of Vedic rituals. The sixth century saw the emergence of Siva philosophy which had its roots in the contemporary Tantric literature and Baudha Tantras. In course of time it led to the development of a refined and highly evolved Saiva-advaitavada. The main Tantras which fall under the group of Agamas are: Svachhanda Tantra, Mainivijaya, Netra Tantra, Vamakesvari, Rudrayamal and Vijnana Bhairava. The subject matter of these is closely related to the exposition of the Trika cult. Of these the Svachhanda Tantra, Malinitantra, Netra Tantra, Mrgendra Tantra, Vijnana bhairava, Vamakesvara tantra have been published by the Kashmir Research Deptt. Besides tantraloka based on Advaita Saiva-sastra has also been published by the same department in 12 volumes. A brief description of the published tantras is given as follows. The unpublished Tantra literature preserved in the Kashmir Archives is : 1) Munimatamanimala (Vamadeva), 2) Subhagarcharatnam, 3) Agamakalpalata (Yadunath), 4) Siva-nrtya, 5) Kaula Kantahala, 6) Sakti-Sangam, 7) Yoga-ratnavali (Nag-arjuna), 8) Saubhagya Ratnakara. In Svachhanda Tantra a clear exposition of Tantra-sastra is given in all its aspects of 'diksa', 'asana' 'panchakrtya', 'panchamukhas', mandala rudra, bhuvana, nari, guru- disciple, mantra, sadadbvarnan etc. These are Agamika Tantra sastras which have been published in six volumes by the Kashmir Research Deptt. The contents of Agamika-tantra deal with Parmasivaswarupa Bhairava. Like Tantraloka, Svachhanda Sastra is an encyclopaedia of Saiva-sastra and is in itself a standard manual. Vidyarnava Tantra as written by Vidyanymuni, the disciple of Pragalbhatacharya (the disciple of Vishnu sharma). Their tradition has come down to us from the Jagatguru Shankaracharya. Vidyarana Tantra was a composition of Vidyarana. A description of Tripura or Tripurasundari is given therein: the three main activities of creation etc. Parmasiva has been eulogized and this represents the energy of Brahma, Visnu and Rudra. These, as mentioned above, are manifested in Mahasaraswati, Mahalakshmi and Mahakali. Thus in the form of a 'male-female', dialogue a very apt description is given of Siva-Sakti worship. Tripurasundari is not only the Sundari of three worlds but is also the sole directing force of the activities of the Trinity and of the five different kinds of forces to the east, west, south and north and the higher regions in the form of Unmani, Bhogini, Kumbika, Kalika and Maha-Tripurasundari of the upper regions. The said 'grantha' is in the form of hymns in worship of Maha-Tripurasundari. It has too large sections dealing with the numerous mantras etc. in praise of Maha-Tripurasundari, in Her twenty different forms.

The date of composition of Vidyarana Tantra is fixed at 1130 of Vikrama era corresponding to 1073 A. D. It is a huge compendium which draws freely from the following tantras, most of which are not available now : Agastya-Sainhita, Phetakarini Tantra, Dakshinmurti-kalpa Yogasasta, Vamekesvar, Sarda, Kalimata, Tantra-rajya, Dakshinamurti Sainhita, Bhairavi Tantra, Sidha-Saraswata Tantra, Uttar Tantra, Kularanva, Pingalamata, Sivayamala, Brahayamala, Rudrayamala, Kulaprakasa Tantra, Narada Pancharatra, Yogini Tantra, Vayani Samhita, Aksa-sastra, Sarada-Tilaka, Nila Tantra, Srikrama Narayaneya, Brhat Narayaneya, Satatapa-samhita etc, regarded as an encyclopaedia of Tantra-sastra and its literature. It was once published by the Kashmir Durbar but is now completely out of print. The original copy of it was available in the private library of Maharaja Harisingh and the MSS Library of Jammu Rughnath Mandir. I too had purchased a copy of it for the Research Library, Srinagar, under the kind patronage of Shri P.N. Pushp.

10.1 Devi Rahasya

This is also a huge grantha of a kind of specific Tantra-sastra. Along with it has been published Udharkosa, a grantha for mantrodhara, quite unique as a type. The first half includes 25 patalas (paragraphs) and has been composed in the form of adhyayas (chapters) deal mainly with the bhijamantras of gods and goddesses, worship of the crematorium, madya suddhi purification of wine and

madyapan vidhi, (drinking method) maesamskara etc. The other half known also as Rahasyayiya, contains 35 (adhyayas) chapters. Panchangas mentioned therein are: Jawalamukhi, Sarika, Maharajna, Bala, Tripura, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Tara, Bhvaneswari, Matangi, Bheda and the bijamantras related to these goddesses and six other mantras of other goddesses. These are : Bhadrakali, Turi, Chhinamasta, Dakshina, murti, Svama, Kalaratti. All these goddesses are included in the pantheon of the Hindu goddesses. In the third section Varahi, Vajra-yogini, Kameshwari, Gauri, Annapurna, Sarada etc. are included along with basic mantras and bjamantras. The mantras of Ganesa, Vatuka Kumara, Mrtyunjaya, Kartaviryarjuna, Sugriva, Hanumana, and those of navagrahas are also included. Similarly, the basic mantras of Varnamala and the mantras of navagrahas as also those of Bhvani, Baguemukhi, Indrakshi, Khechari too find a place therein. The dhyana-dharana of these goddesses and grahas are also included. It appears to be a large section of Rudryamala Tantra. Udharkosa is in the form of a dialogue between Daushinamurti and his disciple Akshyaya. It is a publication of the Kashmir Research Deptt. (1941)

10.2 Brhat Nila Tantra

It is so called because it supplies every information in connection with the worship of Nila Sarasvati. The eleventh chapter of the Tantra describes at length how the Goddess of Wisdom became Nila (blue).

The Tantra is written in the form of a dialogue in which Mahakalabhairava appears is the speaker and Mahakali as the listener.

It contains twenty-four chapters. Contents of these are briefly mentioned in the first chapter. The Tantra is evidently later in composition than the Gandharva-Tantra to which it refers and the Durgasaptasati.

In this Tantra the Devi requests Dhairava to reveal the Nilatantra as promised at the time the Kalitantra was revealed. The Bhairava redeems the promise and declares that the Tantra which he is to reveal should be duly preserved and concealed, as that leads to many blessings. Firstly, he briefly mentions the important topics of the Tantra and then begins the description of Tara in all her forms with the way in which She is to be worshipped.

The mantra of Nila Saraswati, consisting of five syllables, reads Om, Hni, Stri, too, fut of this Vasistha is the sage, Vrhati the metre, Nila Saraswati the deity and the object acquisition of poetic power. Practitioner of the mantra is advised to perform the bathing etc. in the right manner according to both forms, vedic and tantric.

This chapter describes the piya or worship of the Nila Sarawati. It is to be done in out-of-the-way places, such as deserts, cremation-grounds, jungles, hills and hillocks. Worship of the deities: Ganesa, Kshetrapala, Yogini and Vatuka with Bhaam, kshaam, yaam, vaam comes at the beginning. While entering the altar Brahma and Vastupurusha receive their worship. Devi is to be meditated upon as occupying the seat of jewels at the foot of the desire-granting tree. Water required for worship is to be purified with the mantra of <verse>.

10.3 Gandharvatantra

It gives, with elaborate details, instructions in ritualistic worship purifications, mantras, yantras, mudras, asanas and the like. It also provides, in eleventh chapter, forms of meditations on Kundalini and prescribes Pranayama as almost the panacea of all ills. This Tantra is extremely rich and predominately Shakta in nature and philosophically of trika outlook.

10.4 Vijnana Bhairava Tantra

This is commented on partly by Ksemaraja and partly by Shivopadbyaya. This is a text of the Tantra Shastra of Agamic nature being a conversation between Shiva as Bhairva and Shakti as Bhairvi. The theme of the text is explained by Shiva himself. Main topic of the text is 112 yoga dharamas; the forms of Dhyana are elaborately mentioned therein. It is based on the famous Rudrayamala Tantra.

10.5 Uddamareswara Tantra

This Tantra is a book of magical formulas and practices and also prescribes a number of medicinal drugs.

10.6 Vamakeswari Mata Vivarana

This is Agama Shastra. It deals with philosophical thought as well as rituals, mainly the latter. It gives a clear explanation of Shakti as Tripura-Sundari, whose worship, in various forms, it prescribes.

10.7 Malini Vijaya Tantra

This work belongs to Agama Shastra and according to Abhinavagupta is the most important Agama treatise for trika system of Shaiva philosophy. It is a conversation between Shiva and Shakti.

10.8 Malini Vijaya Vartikam

This is a running commentary of above work by Abhinavagupta and is written in simple Sanskrit in the Anushup meter.

10.9 Netra Tantra

This (with a commentary of Kshemaraja) is published in two volumes in a dialogue form between Shiva and Shakti. The conversation introduces a question from Shakti that all the eyes are full of water, how is that from Thine eye, Thou Divinelord, there sprang forth the great fire which burnt every thing ? The whole book is mainly an answer to this question.

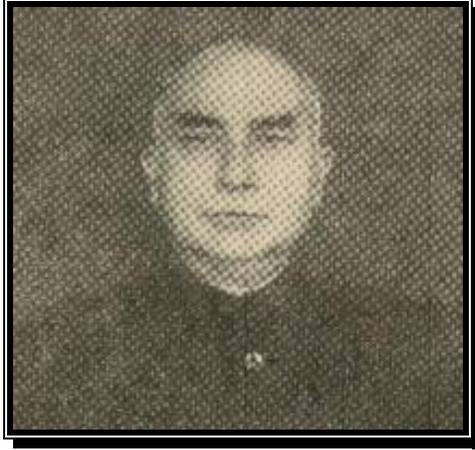
10.10 Mrgendra Tantra

It deals with an Agamic nature of Tantra. There is a dialogue between sage Aanta and his disciple. It is depicting the pluralistic thought of Saiva School.

Source: Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture

11 Kashmir Tantrism

Justice Shiva Nath Katju



Justice Shiva Nath Katju

Tantra Shastra is one of the most misunderstood subjects not only in India but throughout the world. In popular thought and imagination a Tantrik is a person who dabbles in strange, awful and mysterious rites involving visits to cremation grounds and use of wine and women. He is feared also because he is credited with powers of inflicting harm as also of bringing relief and good fortune. The so-called Tantriks run a flourishing business catering to the needs of politicians, men in trade and industries and in other walks of life. Very often most of such Tantriks, after acquiring some powers by elementary Tantrik practices, use them for petty monetary gains. For a time they show good results but they are side - tracked from the path of spiritual advancement and have to content themselves by giving magic shows and demonstrations of cheap miracles. As a matter of fact, an earnest Tantrik practitioner avoids being caught in the mesh of sidhis and keeps his eyes fixed on his spiritual objective very often preferring anonymity.

Tantra Shastra is part of the Dharma Shastra of the Hindus and has its roots in the Vedas. Western scholars in their anxiety to put the age of Hindu Civilization later to the Greek Civilization have attempted to put the age of Rig Veda to 2000 B.C. and this too seemingly has been done reluctantly and out of generosity. The tragedy is that Indian scholars who take their inspirations from their western teachers and masters have toed the Western line of thought. If Rig Veda goes back only to 2000 B. C. then the period of Shri Ramachandra and of Mahabharta have all to be squeezed in between 2000 B. C. and the birth of Gautam Buddha. A more glaring instance of the western myth is the Aryan invasion of India. Every text book of history starts with that myth which has no basis. It is assumed as a geometrical maxim that Aryans were not Indians and they entered into India from some country other than India. The question then arises as to where did they come from. Then the hunt begins and we are confronted with different theories about the original home of the Aryans and here the wise and pompous scholars are not agreed at all. We have the Central Asian, Caucasian & Lithunian theories, regarding the original home of the Aryans. Even such a profound scholar like the late Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was so overwhelmed by the weight of western opinion that he too propounded his Arctic theory on the basis of the long drawn twilights indicated by some Rig Vedic Richas on 'Ushas' and said that the Arctic Region was the original homeland of the Aryans. It has to be categorically stated that the Indian tradition as also the Vedic literature clearly supports the view that the homeland of the Aryans was Sapta Sindhava viz. the land covered by the River Sindhu Indus and its tributaries.

It is now admitted that in some remote past the land south of the present Punjab and Haryana and the north of the Vindhya was covered by sea. The Rajputana desert has the Sambhar lake which has salty water indicative of its marine past. It is now well recognised that the Himalayan mountain ranges are,

from a geological angle, of comparatively recent origin and marine fossils have been found in its rock stratas. History is silent as to when did that happen. Sahara and Gobi deserts were in times past cradles of human civilisation and as a result of intensive grazing the soil became barren and ultimately turned into deserts wiping off the old civilisation of which no traces are left. Again, due to geological changes land between Europe and Africa which connected the two continents got submerged under water when the Atlantic ocean broke through the strait of Gibraltar. We know nothing of these dead and past ancient civilisations.

The Red Indians of North America use Swastika as a symbol. The surprising fact is that they also pronounce it as Swastika as we do. It is said that the American Red Indians are descendants of Asian Tribes who entered America through the Behring strait in some remote past. History is silent as to when that happened. Our known recorded history hardly covers three to four thousand years.

We go further three thousand years back for our sketchy information about Ancient Egypt. The Egyptian pyramids still remain a mystery. Results of archaeological excavations in Sumer Akkad and Mohenjodaro have thrown some light, though dim, on the history of those regions. Beyond 4000 and 5000 B. C. is the era of darkness which is sought to be penetrated by the valiant efforts of anthropologists, archaeologists, and we hear of such phases in human history as stone age and copper age. It is now said that human beings first appeared on our planet five million years back. How they, evolved is still a controversial subject. Some say that we evolved from a type of sea fish which had a verbeta like ours. Another widely believed theory is that apes were our ancestors. McGlashan, one of the renowned psychologists of the world, in his recently published book, "The savage and beautiful country", which deals with the working of human mind, has suggested that just as we are now sending human beings in outer space similarly by a reverse process the human species, on our planet came from some planet of our galaxy. Madame Blavatsky, the founder of theosophical movement has propounded the same view.

In short we are so dazzled by the scientific and technological advancement made during the last three or four centuries that we faithfully believe that ours is the most progressive era of our world history and the human beings who inhabited our planet six or seven thousand years back were savages and primitive men. Our self-conceit makes us unable to realise that we are totally ignorant about the past beyond the aforesaid limits. McGlashan says:

"A time will come once more when the whirling machinery will grind to a halt, the harsh music cease and the roundabout riders step down stiffly from their apocalyptic beasts. Looking round for his friends of the inner world, everyman will, see them, too, in troops of gray shadows, slipping silently away. One by one the lights of the fair ground will go out, and every man will be left at last, as at the shadowed close of so many earlier civilisations, to find his own way home, by himself, in the dark".

So civilisations have grown and blossomed and then faded away on our planet. We hear now of continental drifts; shifting of land masses breaking old continents and forming new ones. No one knows the history of the people who lived on land that has now been submerged under seas. Time has devoured them all. In this respect the Hindus are unique. Their memories, thoughts and traditions go back to the dawn of creation itself and the time when man first appeared on this planet. The Rishis heard the Vedas with the appearance of human beings on our Earth. Today the Hindus are not those people whose history may be sought to be built up on inferences drawn from ancient ruins and relics of the past. With all the ups and downs that the Hindus have faced in the then history they have gone on marching in tune with KALA, the devourer of all, still chanting the primeval songs that were passed on by the Rishis from generation to generation. The Hindu does not begin from any popularly known starting point of era such as B. C., A.D., Vikram or Shaka. He calculates his day from the beginning of creation itself viz. the start of Brahma's day. The universe which we call Srishti begins and lasts till the close of a Brahma's day and there is Pralaya at night. The creation restarts from the dawn of the next Brahma's day. After hundred such days of Brahma there is the Great Dissolution - Mahapralaya. After its end srishti starts again and so the cycle goes on and on.

<verses>

**"Those yogis know the essence of time who are aware of the fact that Brahma's day extends to a thousand Mahayugas and similar is the extent of one night of Brahma's day."
- Geeta VIII-17**

The four Yugas viz. Satyayuga, Treta, Dwapar and Kaliyuga make one Mahayuga. This concept is not any hidden or secret doctrine. On the other hand, every Hindu who performs the daily Sandhya recites the following Sankalpa at the start of his worship:

<verses>

"Today, the first half of the second Prahar of Brahma's Day in Vaivaswat Manvantar and Shvetvarah Kalpa in the land of Aryas in the holy Bharat-Khand of Jambudweep and the first charan of Kaliyuga, in so and so Samvatsar, Month, Paksha, Tithi, Day, I of such and such Gotra and name....."

One day of Brahma is equal to a Kalpa and 14 Manwantars make one Kalpa.

Kali	1 x 432000 human years
Dwapar	2 x 432000 human years
Treta	3 x 432000 human years
Satya	4 x 432000 human years
Total	43.2 lakhs of years = one Mahayuga

One day of Brahma or 1 Kalpa, is $100 \times 43.2 = 432$ crores of human years.

One Manwantar is equal to $432000000/14$ human years = 30.858 crores.

We are at present in the seventh Manwantar Vaivaswat after the elapse of 27 Mahayugas and in the beginning of 28th Kaliyuga of the presently running Brahma's Day. The current Kali year is 5081.

Manus change in every Manwantar and they have particular names. The manu of the presently running manwantar is Vaivaswat and the manwantar is named after him. Since one Kalpa is one day of Brahma's life there are thirty Kalpas in every month of his life which have separate names.

The late Shrimad Upendra Mohan, the great scholar, sage and savant of Bengal has said in his remarkable book "Reason, science and shastras":

"The same Yugas, the same Manus, the same Kalpas, the same Brahma constantly return through time eternal, therefore the calculation of the creation, of its age, its life and its destruction is constant in correct to the minutest fraction of the time, unlike stupid modern science which does not know what it talks and flounders on from statement to statement through a quagmire of ridiculous falsehoods. Now which is right? The changeless shastras or the ever changing science....."

The Hindus know according to the calculation of the shastras that the present age of the earth is 198 crores of years. This calculation is changeless and unchangeable - it is God's spoken word and therefore the truth which is

<verses>

[That which remains the same at all times - the past, the present and the future, that which is permanent and unchangeable under all conditions, that which is eternal is called truth. It admits no ebb nor flow]

In the sombre and awe - inspiring dance of time the origin and flow of Tantra Shastra and Shiva Shakti upasana has to be seen. It must be, stated at the outset that "Tantricism in Kashmir" is not any separate system which is distinct from the general frame-work of Shakta Agams. On the contrary, it is a part of it.

Kashmiri savants and sages however made important and lasting contributions in interpreting the Agam Shastra and more so in expounding the world famous Shaiva Darshan (Shaiva Philosophy). According to our Shastras the Vedas are revealed to the Rishis in every Satya Yugas and they are gradually withdrawn in the succeeding yugas and very little of them is left in Kaliyuga. There are 21 branches of Rigveda, 109 of Yajurveda, 50 of Atharva veda and 1000 of Sam veda. Only 2 of the 1000 branches of Sam Veda are now extant in this world and the rest have been withdrawn. Rig Veda, Atharva Veda and Yajur Veda have similarly been depleted. It is not possible for men of Kaliyuga either to perform the long-drawn vedic yagnas or derive benefit from it. So Mahadeva in His infinite mercy revealed the Tantras for the men and women of our age. But the principles of Tantrik worship, particularly Shakti worship, were known to a section of spiritual practitioners even in the Yugas preceding Kaliyuga and they ran parallel to the vedic sadhana system. Tantric rites are 'kriyatmak' and have to be practised. Having their roots in the Vedic system they are comparatively short and easier to perform than the Vedic Yagnas and they are highly potent and give quick results and raise man to godhood. Even in Satayuga, Treta and Dwapar the Tantric practitioners were frowned upon by those who followed the orthodox form of Vedic rituals. These differences gave rise to the cool relations between Daksha Prajapati and Mahadeva. At that time the daughter of Daksha was the Divine consort of Mahadeva. Shrimad Bhagwat (3rd Skandh, 4th. Adhyaya) refers to the strained relations between Mahadeva and Daksha Prajapati. Their relations had been so embittered that when Daksha Prajapati decided to perform a big Yagna he did not invite either Mahadeva or the latter's consort. The episode is described in enchanting language in Puranas and by poets.

Mahadeva and Sati, as she was called in view of what happened later, were sitting on Mount Kailasa, when Sati observed the Devas going with their retinues in Akash (sky). She enquired from Shiva as to what was happening. Mahadeva said the Devas were going to her father's house to join the yagna there. She was pained to hear of the yagna of which she had not been informed. She asked as to why Mahadeva was not participating in the yagna. Mahadeva said that her father was annoyed with him and they had not been invited. She insisted on going to her father's house inspite of the fact that she had not been asked to come by her own father. Mahadeva tried to persuade her not to go saying that even a daughter should not go to her father's house when she had not been so asked. Sati persisted and when Lord Mahadeva was not inclined to accede to her wish to go uninvited to her father's house She projected Her dazzling form as Mahamaya in all directions, 4 in four directions on surface, 4 upwards in four directions, one above and one below, ten in all Her aspects of Kali, Bagla, Chinnamasta, Bhuvaneshwari, Matangi, Kamala Dhumavati, Tripursundari, Tara and Bhairavi. They are the Ten Mahavidyas and the Tantrik worship of Shiva-Shakti in its upper reaches revolves on them or any of their other aspects. In fact they are the different entrance gates around the base of the mountain on which a Tantrik practioner starts on his climb to the summit where the Mahavidyas all merge into one and he worships at the alter of the Creatrix of all who keeps on creating, preserving and dissolving the Universe. She has three forms viz. Para Rupa which no one knows, Mantra Rupa which is Her subtle form, and lastly, Her physical which are described in Her strotas in Tantra Shastras and Puranas.

She is very graphically described in "Durga Saptashati" by Rishi Medhas. Commonly called the "Chandi Path" its recitation is believed to be very effective and the Hindus all over India and also, in other countries recite it individually as also collectively. All its Mantras are Siddha Mantras. It is the story of Emperor Surath and Samadhi Vaishya which cuts the barriers of Time and Space. Both of them were in distress and seek the refuge of Medhas Rishi. It describes Surath as:

<verses>

In swaroch manvantar (the second Manvantar in the cycle) born in Chaitra vansh was Emperor Surath who ruled on Earth. Having been defeated by his enemies he entered a dense forest and came to the ashram of Medhasa Rishi. While the Emperor was in the Rishi's ashram Samadhi Vaishya, who was a prosperous merchant but was in adverse circumstances, also came in the Ashram. They related to each other their tales of woe and misfortune and eventually met the Rishi and put questions to the Rishi and asked the cause of their acute mental distress. The Rishi spoke of Devi Bhagwati who is the cause of all;

<verses>

She, the Mahamaya, forcibly puts the minds of even the wise into hazen. She creates the Jagat and when she is pleased. She grants liberation to men.

"Astonished, Emperor Surath asked who is that Devi whom you call Mahamaya How did she come into Being, what is Her sphere of working, what is Her form and character. I want to hear all about Her.

The Rishi replied:

<verses>

"Even though She is ever present, personifies in Herself the entire Jagat, is the cause of all, She manifests Herself in different forms and now that you have come to me - so listen".

The Rishi spoke of the appearance at the time of 'Deluge' when Brahma sitting on a lotus, which had its roots in the navel of Vishnu who was asleep, saw himself being furiously attacked by Asura Madhu and Kaitabha. He prayed to the Devi to save him. The famous ode of Brahma begins thus:

<verses>

He prayed the Devi to free Vishnu from Her mesh of sleep. The Devi thereupon released Vishnu from sleep and the latter fought against the two Asuras and killed them. Here the Devi did not fight Herself but acted through Vishnu.

The second chapter of the Saptashati refers to the powerful Asuras led by Mahishasura who had subdued the Devas and had himself became Indra. The Devas led by Brahma approached Shiva and Vishnu for protection. Plight of the Devas greatly infuriated Shiva and Vishnu and their anger caused effulgence to burst out from their faces and similarly the Teja of the Devas also appeared and the entire effulgence uniting produced the form of a Dazzling Lady whose radiance spread to the three lokas (triloki)

<verses>

The Devi fought several Asuras of the legions of Mahishasura and killed them. Finally Mahishasura came in person to fight the Devi and after initial encounters assumed the form of Mahisha and attacked the Devi. The Devi became furious and refreshed Herself by superfine drink-wine:

<verses>

and said -

<verses>

"Shout, shout, boastfully you fool ! till I take madhu (wine).

Superfine drink and wine has, relevance to the use of wine by Tantrik practitioners on special occasions. After a grim fight with Mahishasura the latter was slain by the Devi;

<verses>

"The Devi by Her great sword cut off the head of Mahishasura. Delighted to see Her victorious, the Devas prayed to Her as Sura Devi

<verses>

The hymn in praise of the Devi by the Devas is soul stirring. It pleased the Devi who was in the form of Bhadra Kali, and She granted the Devas prayer to come to their help whenever they were in trouble.

The last Act in the Drama starts with another deadly combat between the Devas and the Asuras when two mighty Asuras - Shumbha and Nishumbha overpowered Indra as also Surya, Chandra, Yama and Varuna. They again prayed to the Devi to save them. This is another famous hymn in Durga Saptashate. While the Devas were praying to Her she passed by in the form of maiden-Parvati-and asked the Devas as to whom

they were praying. As soon as she put that question there emerged Shiva from Her own body and said that the Devas are praying to Us;

<verses>

Having come out of the body of the Devi She is known and venerated in the universe as Kaushiki;

<verses>

As a result of Kaushiki's separation from Her body the complexion of Parvati underwent a change and became dark and stayed in the Himalyas and became known as Kali;

<verses>

Apart from the fact that Durga Saptashati occupies a very important place in Tantrik worship I have referred to it at some length because the aforesaid change in the complexion of Parvati and Her being called Kali appears to have a direct bearing on Kashmir Tantricism and the form of our Ragnya Bhawani. A notice board in the courtyard of Kheer Bhawani Kund in Tulmula says, so far as I recollect, that the Devi was Worshipped by Ravana in Lanka and was brought from there and installed in Tulmula after the defeat of Ravana by Shri Ram Chandraji. In the shrine in the Kheer Bhawani Kund Devi Ragnya Bhagwati is sitting on the left of Her Bhairava, Bhuteshwara, and Her complexion is dark. Kali is Krishna-Varna and has dark complexion. But as mentioned in the dhyana of Ragnya Bhawani Her complexion is very fair, like fresh snow;

<verses>

Has the change, as seen in Her image in the Tulmula Shrine and the description in Her dhyana, any bearing on the aforesaid narrative in the Saptashati which transformed the Parvati into dark complexioned Kali ? I met the famous sage and scholar, Swami Lakshman joo Maharaj in the summer of 1979 when I was in Kashmir. I pointedly referred to the aforesaid description of Ragnya's complexion in Her Dhyana and Her complexion in Her image in the Kheer Bhawani Shrine and asked him whether Ragnya Bhawani is Kali and if I remember rightly he said it is so. The point is interesting and requires clarification. It is generally believed that Ragnya Bhawani is Tripura Sundari. But if She is Kali also then She combines in Herself the aspects of two Mahav dyas.

I resume the narrative of the Devi's encounter with Shumbha and Nishumbha which again has an important bearing on the form of our Sharika Devi.

Parvati of dazzling beauty was seen by Chand and Mund and they reported to their Master Shumbha that a maiden of unrivalled beauty was residing in the Himalyas and she was fit, to be his queen and he should have her;

<verses>

Shumbha thereupon sent a messenger to Parvati who spoke to her about the prowess of his master and asked her on his behalf either to marry Shumbha or his brother Nishumbha. Parvati said that she was aware that Shumbha and Nishumbha were masters of the three regions - Trilok but while in a fitful mood. She had taken a view that she will marry only that person who breaks her pride in combat and proves that he is more powerful than herself;

<verses>

The messenger was astounded to hear the Devi's reply. How could a maiden like her think of defeating the powerful Shumbha and his legions in fight. He conveyed the Devi's reply to his master. Shumbha was enraged on hearing the Devi's reply and asked his general Dhumralochan to go to the Devi with his legion and bring her to him by force. When he attacked the Devi the latter burnt him by her powerful hissing;

<verses>

Her lion destroyed the asuras who had come with Dhumralochan. Then Shumbha sent the two demons Chanda and Munda to fight with her and bring her back to him by force. The two demons were well armed and had a big force with them. Seeing the force arrayed against her the Devi was enraged and Kali emerged from her forehead,

<verses>

Kali fought furiously and killed Chanda and Munda and what remained of their troops ran away. The Shumbha decided to go himself with Nishumbha with his legions and fight the Devi who had Kali by her side. Seeing the huge force of Shumbha the Devas could not remain aloof but this time the Shaktis of Brahma, Shiva, Kartikeya, Vishnu, and Indra emerging out of them joined Parvati and Kali in the fight against Shumbha. The fight raged furiously and the Devis decimated the forces of Shumbha. The fight against Shumbha's general Raktabeeja was deadly. Whenever blood flowed from his body, thousands of other Demons appeared. Parvati asked Kali to open her mouth wide and drink the blood flowing from Raktabeeja's body. Kali was addressed by Parvati as Chamunda and acting accordingly she drank the blood flowing out of Raktabeeja's body until he was slain dead by Parvati. Nishumbha resumed fighting and he was also killed. After the death of his brother and his generals, Shumbha himself confronted the Devi and said:

<verses>

"O Durga ! do not boast of your strength because fighting with the support of Devi Shaktis has swollen your pride."

The Devi replied:

<verses>

Thou wicked person ! who else besides me is there in this Universe (Jagat) ? I am one; see all these aspects of Mine re-enter in Me. On saying this all the Deva - Shaktis including Brahmani merged into Her and Ambika stood alone;

<verses>

The fight between the Devi and Shumbha was bitter and lasted for long and ultimately Shumbha was slain by the Devi. The Devas prayer to her is another stirring hymn in her praise. As mentioned earlier every Shloka in Durga Saptashati is clothed in highly esoteric language and describes the constant struggle which goes on in the astral plane between the forces of virtue and evil which the Shastras refer to as the fight between the Devas and Asuras - Devasurasangrama. It is reflected in our world as also in mankind inhabiting it.

The interesting question arises, particularly with reference to Shakti worship in Kashmir, whether the Devi referred to above who annihilated Shumbha and Nishumbha and their legions is represented in any of her aspects still existing in Kashmir and worshipped by the Kashmiris. Can it be our Sharika Bhawani !

The Deva - Shaktis, which came by her side when Shumbha himself came with his forces to fight her, were:

<verses>

Brahmani, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Narsingh, and Indrani emerging out of the Devas came by her side. The remarkable coincidence is that in the Yantra Puja of Sharika Bhagwati all the aforesaid Devis are worshipped as Matrikas;

<verses>

The names of some of the aforesaid matrikas appear in the Avaran Puja of the Yantras of Ragnya, Jwala and Bala also but not in such remarkable sequence as mentioned above.

Another remarkable coincidence appears from the following lines the Sharika Stotra in

<verses>

As mentioned above Dhumralochan, the general of Shumbha was reduced to ashes by the hissing of the Devi:

<verses>

In Sharika Bhagwati's dhyana she is shown as sitting on lion and in blood red garments with her Bhairava Vamadeva by her said

<verses>

In another dhyana of Sharika Bhawani she is shown as having eighteen arms. Do they symbolise the aspects of Kali with 10 arms and Lakshmi and Saraswati having 4 arms each, of uniting in Her. Is She the Durga of Durga Saptashati who fought against Shumbha and Nishumbha? The question has to be answered by the Savants of Kashmir.

The principal Kula Devis of the Kashmiri Brahmins are Ragnya, Sharika, Jwala, and Bala Tripur Sundari. The Shrines of both Sharika and Jwala do not contain any Murtis but are rocks (Shilas) and are not man made. They go back to hoary past. Thus it can be inferred that the Devi was worshipped in her aspects of Ragnya, Sharika and Jwala and others since time immemorial and before the epic war of Mahabharata and the dawn of Kaliyuga.

The worship of the Devi existed in the Vedic Times and prior to Kaliyuga as would appear from, the vedic Devi Sukta and any number of references in Puranas and Itihas apart from what is said in the Durga Saptashati and it so existed in Kashmir as in other parts of the country. Thus the Devi was generally worshipped as the creatrix of the universe from the very dawn of human civilisation side by side with the vedic rites which were performed by the people. The hidden Sadhana of the Devi was also known to some elite practitioners before the advent of the Kali era.

The Mahabharata was fought towards the close of Dwapar Yuga. In the conversation between Yudhishthira and Sanjaya before the start of the war the time mentioned was the prevailing Dwapar Yuga. (Bhisma Parva, Chap. X)

Calculating from the present Kaliyuga year 5081, Kaliyuga began in 3101 B.C. which is a crucial and turning point in human history on our planet.

"It is said that Kaliyuga could not begin as long as Lord Shri Krishna was touching this Earth with His holy feet and it was only after He left this mundane world that Kaliyuga commenced. [Kaliyuga Raja. Vrittantam, Bhagwat III Chap. III]

According to the tradition, It has and Puranic literature of the Hindus the Mahabharata War took place in about 3136 B. C. viz about 36 years before the commencement of Kaliyuga.

The Mahabharat is full of references to Shiva and Devi. When the rival forces were arrayed on the battlefield and before the Start of fighting Lord Krishna asked Arjuna to pray to Durga for victory

<verses>

and then Arjuna prayed to Durga in a soul-stirring hymns the opening of which is

<verses>

In this hymn the Devi is addressed in all names which occur in the Durga Saptashate and in the Puranas. Similarly there are any number of references to Shiva and Several Odes and hymns in which He is addressed in hundreds of names along with His Divine consort- the Devi in Her various aspects. Veda Vyas himself describes the glory and attributes of Shiva. He is also described as Pashupate and His worship in the form of Shivalinga is mentioned by Ved Vyas. Similarly in the Sautik Parva of Mahabharata there is the Stuti of Shankara by Ashwatthama (Chap.7) and the description of the Mahima of Shiva-Parvati and Shankara (Chap. 17). There is also the Sahsrnama of Shiva in Chap. 284. The

Anushasana Parva of Mahabharata again describes the Mahima of Shiva. The Meghavahan Parva is again full of the description of Shiva and His Stotra (Chapters 14 to 18.)

It is clear that during the time of Shri Krishna the worship of Shiva and Devi was, well known and was performed by the Hindus all over the country including Kashmir. Vitasta is mentioned as one of the Rivers of Bharat Khanda and Kashmir as one of its regions in the Bhishma Parva of Mahabharata (Chap. 9). Bhishma Pitamaha while lying on his bed of arrows after the close of the Mahabharata War told Yudhishthira about the then existing forms of Dharma in Bharat Khanda. He described them thus:

<verses>

[e.g. Sankhya, Yoga Panchratra, Veda and Pashupat]

The destruction and loss of life in the Mahabharata War was colossal. The weapons used were more lethal than what may appear from the use of bows and arrows. There is specific mention of several weapons such as Brahmastra and others which were highly destructive and very likely some kind of arrows with unclear heads were used. A large number of tribes from behind the frontiers of United India took part in the fighting. Drona Parva of Mahabharata specifically mentions the "Shaved headed" Kamboj soldiers, the Yavanas, Shak, Shabar, Kirat and Barbar tribes who took abroad part in the fighting (Ch. 19.) The influx of people from abroad caused a great social confusion in the country. And then also began the Kali era. The vedic rites became difficult and beyond the capacity of men. There is another incident on the record. Janmejaya organised a great yagna for avenging the killing of his father Parikshit, the grandson of Arjuna, by Takshak Nag. The yagna started and snakes from all regions were drawn and started falling in the burning sacrificial pits. Then a Rishi, the protector of the Nagas appeared and stopped the rites. The interruption infuriated Agni Deva and he gave a curse to the Brahmins saying that hence onwards the Vedic Mantras would be ineffective to them like a poisonless snake. Then began the age of the Tantras.

The Mahanirvana Tantra is one of the Agamas which are ranked with the shrutis. Agamas are in the form of a dialogue between Shiva and Parvati. The latter questions and Shiva replies. In Nigamas Shiva questions and Parvati answers. In other Tantras such as Damaras and Yamalas only Shiva speaks, there being no conversation between Him and Parvati. There are several Upa-Tantras and commentary on the Mul Tantras by Rishis and savants.

The Mahanirvana Tantra has a dramatic opening, Parviti says

<verses>

The Devi said : "At present Kaliyuga holds sway and causes the destruction of Dharma and prompts people to commit wicked deeds, immoral and false acts. Now influence of Vedas has gone, Smrites have also been drowned in forgetfulness and the names of various Puranas which are full of history and point to various paths will not remain known and consequently the people will turn against virtuous acts. The people of Kali will become rudderless, vain, full of Sin, voluptuous, greedy, cruel without feelings of pity and will become haughty and accustomed to using unkind words. The people of Kaliyuga will keep company of low persons, will try to acquire the wealth of others, speak ill of others, act viscusly and will become wicked. In trying to forcefully get another's wife these people will have no fear of sin. These persons will always remain poor, dirty and diseased. The Brahmins will not perform the daily Sandhya and will act like Shudras. Prompted by greed they will try to earn their living by performing forbidden acts and commit sins. They will be liars wicked persons vain, have evil tendencies and sell their daughters and will be opposed to tapas and vrat. They will flout the rubes with regard to eating and drinking and will always denounce the Shastras and virtuous men. O ! Lord of jagat, who among these people will read stotras and understand yantras and under the Kaliyuga perform Purashacharans. Men of Kaliyuga will be of very evil tendencies and will be sinful persons. How will they be reduced?" Sadashiva replied:- "Devi, you are blessed, merciful and kind and you are the well wisher of people of Kaliyuga. Whatever you have said about me is true". Then Sadashiva revealed the forms of worship which leads to liberation from bondage.

Tantra shastra has a wide connotation and it covers the Panchadeva upasana which came into vogue after the Mahabharata war with the start of Kaliyuga. The Pancha-devas are Ganesh, Vishnu, Surya, Shiva and Devi and there are separate sets of Agamas for each of them. Thus there are Ganpatya, Vaishnava, Saura, Shaiva and Shakta Agamas. In popular parlance Tantriks are supposed to be those who are worshippers of Shakti (Devi). Shakti is never worshipped alone. Every aspect of Shakti has Her Bhairava and both are worshipped together. Every Mahavidya has Her corresponding Bhairava. The same is the case With the Kul-devis of Kashmiri Brahmins. Ragnya's Bhairava is Bhuteshwar, Sharika's Bhairava is Vemdeva, Jwala's Bhairava is Mahadeva and Bala Tripura Sundari's Bhairava is Karneshwar. Similarly Shaiva's cannot ignore the consort of Shiva- the Devi and Shaiva and Shakta Upasana cannot be separated.

There are two broad forms of Shakta worship viz the Sbri Kul and Kali Kul. Kularnava Tantra is the authoritative Agam for Shri Kul and the Mahanirvana Tantra for Kali Kul. The Sammohan Tantra (Chap. VI) mentions 64 Tantras, 327 Upatantras, and several yamalas, Damaras, Samhitas and other scriptures of the Shaktas and 32 Tantras, 125 Upatantras and Yamalas, Damaras and other scriptures of Shaivas. The number of known Tantras is much less than the number mentioned and they have been either withdrawn or lost.

The question is raised as to the value and worth of the teachings of Agamas. It is answered by Sir John Woodroffe in the following words:

"In the first place there must be a healthy physical and moral life. To know a thing in its ultimate sense is to be that thing. To know Brahman, is according to Advaita, to be Brahman..... But to attain and keep this state as well as progress therein certain specific means, practices, rituals or disciplines are necessary. The result cannot be got by mere philosophical talk about Brahman. Religion is practical activity. Just as the body requires exercise, training and gymnastic, so does the mind. The means employed are called sadhana. Sadhana is that which leads to Siddhi. Sadhana is development of Shakti. Man is a vast magazine of both latent and expressed power. The object of Sadhana is to develop man's Shakti, whether for temporal or spiritual purposes. But where is Sadhana to be found. Seeing that the Vaidika Achara has fallen into practical desuetude we can find nowhere but in the Agamas and in the Puranas which are replete with Tantrik rituals."

The sway of Tantra Shastra after the Mahabharata war extended beyond the frontiers of India and included Iran, Afghanistan, Tibet, Burma and nearly south eastern Asian countries and Tantrik literature divided them into three zones viz Vishnukranta, Ratha Kanta and Ashwa Kranta. The North eastern zone came under Vishnu Krant, North western zone under Ratha Kranta and Southern zone under Ashwa Kranta. The dividing point of the aforesaid division was the eastern end of the Vindhvas. The three Krantas (schools) of Tantrik Sadhana prevailed in each of the aforesaid zones viz Kashmir Krama in Rath Krant; Bang or Gaur Krama in Vishnu Krant and Kerala Krama in Ashwa Krant. The Shakti-Sangam Tantra speaks of the aforesaid three schools:

<verses>

Eighteen regions of North East beginning from Nepal and going upto Orissa come under the sway of Gaur school; Nineteen regions from Aryavarta upto the seas come under Kerala Krama and the Kashmir Krama. Kashmir occupied remaining eighteen come under a prominent place in the field of Tantrik worship during the past Mahabharata period. Its scholars and savants were treated as authorities for the Kashmir Krama in the regions North-West of the Vindhvas. As in the parts of India there were votaries of Vishnu, Ganesh and Surya, so were they in Kashmir also but Shiva Shakti worship had a place of its own in Kashmir.

It was in Kashmir that the Adi - Shankaracharya realized the full impact of Shakti. There is controversy with regard to the age of Adi Shankaracharya. According to one view he was born in 740 A.D. while according to the Kanchi Math history the year of his birth is said to be 509 B.C. The present Shankaracharya of Kanchi Math, Jagatguru Shrimad Chandra Shekhar Sarswati Maharaj, the greatest savant of present day India, is sixty eighth in line of spiritual descent from the Adi Shankaracharya. The Kanchi records give the chronological table in the of all the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi Math together

with names and dates of assumption of office by them. In spiritual descent, on an average there are usually three holders of the office in a century. Very often a holder of office takes a boy disciple in the later period of his life and the successor if he does not meet a premature death may continue in the seat of his office for a long span of years. Among the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi Math as many as 11 Shankaracharyas including the present one have held their office for more than 60 years. Out of them the second Shankaracharya presided over the Math for 70 years, the fourth for 96 years, the sixth for 81 years, the eighth for 83 years and the fifty - third for 81 years. The present Shankaracharya has been holding his office for 68 years.

The Adi Shankaracharya dividing the country into four zones founded four Maths; Jyotir Math at Joshimath near Almora district of U. P. ; Govardhan at Puri (Orissa), Sharda at Dwarka (Saurashtra) and Shringeri in south. After installing his disciples in each of these Maths, who were also called Shankaracharyas, the Adi Shankaracharya retired to Kanchi where also he had a Math, the fifth, and another disciple of the Adi Shankaracharya became the Shankaracharya of the Kanchi Math. The Kanchi parampara also finds support from the history of the Gaudapadacharya Math or Kaivalya Math now called the Kavale Math of Saraswat Brahmins. It was founded by Swami Vivarnananda at the same time when the Adi Shankaracharya founded his Maths. Sri Gaudapadacharya's disciple was Shri Govindacharya. The latter had two disciples the Adi Shankaracharya and Swami Vivarnananda. The headquarter of the Kavale Math is near the city of Goa and the present head of the Math Shrimad Sacchidananda Sarasawati Maharaj is seventy-sixth in line of descent from Swami Vivarnananda. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of Kanchi records which give the date of Shri Shankar's (Adi Shankaracharyas) birth as 2593th year of Kaliyuga era which corresponds to 509 B. C. The aforesaid date of Shri Shankar's birth is also supported by some Jain compositions and the "Brihat Shankara Vijaya" by Shri Chitsukhacharya who was also a disciple of the Adi Shankaracharya. It would appear that the Maths founded by the Adi Shankaracharya and the Kavale Math are the oldest monastic institutions in India. All the aforesaid Shri Shankara Maths have Shri Yantras installed therein and the worship of Shri Yantras is performed according to Tantrik rites as prescribed by the Parashuram Kalpa Sutra.

Kashmir was the centre of Tantrik as also of Sanskrit learning when the Adi Shankaracharya visited Kashmir. Perhaps the Sanskrit University in Kashmir in those days was located near the shrine of Shardaaji near the banks of Krishna Ganga-now in Pakistan occupied Kashmir. The Saraswat Brahmins who left their homeland more than two thousand years back and settled in Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Gujrat, Karnataka and Kerala, have a tradition that their homeland was Kashmir. They hold Sharda Devi in great veneration. I visited the Sharda Devi shrine alongwith my late grand father-in-law, Dr. Balkrishna Kaul in the summer of 1935. My late wife Girija and members of Dr. Kaul's family were in the party. The shrine is located on a hill top like the shrine of Jwalaji. The steps leading to the top of the hill appeared to be twisted as if they had been battered by an earthquake. The question as to when did the University township cease to exist requires investigation. It was in the Shrine itself that I first met the late Pandit Shridhar joo Dhar who had become my guide and philosopher in the closing years of his life. He was the greatest living Shakta Sadhak of his days and his death last year was a great loss to the Tantrik World.

Swami Vivarnananda, founder of the Kavale Math was a Saraswat and very likely a Kashmiri Brahmin. Even in Adi Shankaracharya's times the sway of Kashmir School had extended to far south. The famous temple of Kanya Kumari is a gift of Kashmir Krama to the country. The rites performed in the temple are in accordance with the Kashmir Krama.

Hindusim, as it emerged after the carnage of the Mahabharata war, has the fullest impress of Tantras on it. In the words of Shri Aurobindo modern Hinduism is ninety percent Tantrik. It influenced Jainism and Buddhism also and there are Jain and Buddhist Tantras. Gautam Buddha denounced the Vedas and also the Tantriks. There are any number of Buddhist Jataks in which the Tantrik Brahmins are badly criticised. It appears that by that time some degenerate Tantrik Cults had come up and so-called Tantrik widely practised black magic and indulged in drinking, womanising and senseless animal killing. That led to a reaction in society and genuine Tantrik Sadheks retired in their shells. What happened then is happening even now. We hear of miracle performing Tantriks whose services are openly offered to those who pay

handsomely. One also heals of weird rites performed by Tantriks or persons belonging to so-called Tantrik cults where sex plays a part and all sorts of immoral acts are performed. Such cults are not peculiar to India. They are also to be found to a larger extent, in Europe, America and other countries of the world. There are groups and societies in Europe and America which worship Satan calling him by his old name Lucifer and in their rites every accepted norm of decent behaviour is flouted. The truth of Shastrik way has to be judged by what it lays down and not by what is twisted or degenerate aspects show. Sir John Woodroffe says:

"I refer to the well known division of worshippers into Dakshinachara and Vamachara. The secret sadhana of some of the latter (which I may say here is not usually understood) has acquired such notoriety that to most the term "the Tantra" connotes this particular worship and its abuses and nothing more. I may here also observe that it is a mistake to suppose that aberrations in doctrine and practice are peculiar to India. The west has produced many a doctrine, and practice of an antinomian character. Some of the most extreme are to be found there. Moreover, though this does not seem to be recognised, it is never-the-less the fact that these Kauli rites are philosophically based on monistic doctrine. Now, it is this Kaula doctrine and practice, limited probably, as being a secret doctrine, at all time to comparatively few, which has come to be known as " the Tantra Nothing is more incorrect....."

Here I shortly deal with the significance of the Tantra Shastra which is of course also misunderstood, being generally spoken of as a jumble of "black magic," and "erotic mysticism," cemented together by a ritual which is "meaningless mummery". A large number of persons who talk in this strain have never had a Tantra in their hands, and such orientalist, as have read some portions of these scriptures, have not generally understood them, otherwise they would not have found them meaningless. They may be bad or they may be good, but they have a meaning. Men are not such fools as to believe for ages what is meaningless. The use of this term implies that their contents had no meaning to them. Very likely; for to define as they do, Mantra as "mystical words", Mudra as "mystical gesture" and yantra as "mystical diagrams", does not imply knowledge. These erroneous notions as to the nature of Agama are of course due to the mistaken identification of the whole body of the scripture with one section of it. (Viz. Vamachara doctrine and practice). Further this last is only known through the abuses to which its dangerous practices, as carried out by inferior persons have given rise. It is stated in the Shastra itself in which they are prescribed that the path is full of difficulty and peril and he who fails upon it goes to hell. That there are those who have so failed, and others who have been guilty of evil magic, is well known."

The Sadhana of Shiva - Shakti in Tantra Shastra is graded. Initially it has two forms viz general and special. The general form is open to all. People read from scriptures, recite stotras, go to shrines and ship the deity according to Panchopachar rites or shodashopachar rites. In Kashmir the people recite the stotras of Ragnya, Sharika, Jwala, Bala, Shiva, Ganesh, Vishnu, etc. and offer worship at their shrines. They perform the rites peculiar to the Kashmiri Brahmans, such as Herat during Shivaratri, Pan for Lakshmi and worship Vatuk Bhairava on Khecher Mavas day besides performing the rites and rituals which are common among the Hindus. All these come within the category of general worship. Only after initiation in the mantra of any Devata or Devi the form of worship becomes different and acquires a special character. The aforesaid grades are described as follows in Kul Pradeep:

<verses>

They are Vedachar, Vaishnavachar, Shaivachar Dakshinachar, Vamachar, Siddhantachar, and Kaulachar in order of their graded superiority, Kaulachar being superior to all. There is nothing above Kaulachar. It is most secret and subtle and this only is the Sakshat Param tatwa which travelling from ear to ear remains always".

The aforesaid first four are paths of Pravriti and the rest from Vamachar onwards lead to Nivriti. In the first four the practitioner is in Pashubhava and from Vamachar and onwards he assumes the Veerabhava. In Vamachar worship the five makars are used viz meat, wine, fish, fried cereal and communion between man and woman. It is the use of the five makars by the shakta sadhaks which has been subjected to criticism since long as has been mentioned by Sir John Woodraffe. The shakta practioners have never

shown any anxiety to meet ignorant criticism because they were always anxious to keep their highly powerful mode of worship a close secret. The veerabhava is not meant for all. It is Raj Vidya, princely knowledge Guhya Vidya, secret knowledge which is meant only for the elite, the select few. It is full of dangers and pitfalls and even Yogins cannot easily be admitted into its secrets.

Only that person is admitted in Veerachar who has sufficient self-discipline and control over his body and senses and who would not be tempted to misuse his powers. Such misuse leads to the cultivation of Siddhis and black magic and hinders spiritual progress. The person who is qualified to handle this highly potent sadhana should be free from avarice and blind to the wealth of others, impotent for women other than his wife, dumb in talking ill of others, and should have mastery over his senses. Only such a person can safely handle the stages of Sadhna from Vamachar to Kaulachar.

There is nothing obnoxious in meat, fish and fried cereal. The Kashmiri Brahmins freely use meat and fish in 'Herat Puja', on the occasion of 'Khechir Mawas' and these are used during the Navaratri by those whose Kul Devis are Sharika and Jwala and in Shradhapuja for a departed person. Most of Kashmiri Brahmins are non-vegetarians and meat and fish form part of their diet. Wine taken in measured dose is tonic and medicine but its misuse is disastrous. There are strict injunctions of the shastra that wine should be taken only in the course of sadhana and in a restricted manner. The practice of shakta sadhana in its upper reaches awakens the dormant centres of energy in the body and raises ferment in it. During such phases the use of wine, meat, and fish becomes necessary to sustain the body lest it should break. Further, the Tantrik practitioner uses the very things which rouse sense and passion in order to subdue them. Poison is used to eliminate the poison itself. The Kularnava Tantra says:

<verses>

As for the last M, it symbolises the cosmic process of creation. It is the adaptation of the sanskrit of the Hindus - the Garbhada Sanskar. The Mahanirvana Tantra makes the emphatic assertion that in the "fifth tatwa" the participant should only be a Swakiya, the lawfully wedded wife and no one else;

<verses>

O Consort of Shiva ! in this strong Kaliyuga which has an enervating effect, for the remaining fifth tatwa viz 'maithun', only the lawfully wedded wife should be made the participant as she alone is free from all blemishes. [Mahanirvana Tantra Chap. VI- 14]

The Veerachar Sadhana and the subsequent stages leading to Kaulachar can only be safely performed by a householder. In such worship it is necessary for the practitioner to have a female partner as his shakti and the wife is the safest shakti. Solo efforts in shakti worship are always fraught with risks and dangers. Wife as shakti acts as a shock absorber and safety valve and provides a shield against adverse currents which often come in his way besides helping him in his sadhana. But Shakti worship with another woman who is not the wife - a parkiya - is fraught with great dangers which may unhinge the practitioner's mind or may even prove fatal. It may be frankly stated that the worship involving sex union with wife is always in privacy of the two and any suggestion that such acts are indulged in groups is patently absurd and needs no comment.

Lastly, the sadhak arrives in the Divya Bhava where he no longer needs the use of meat, wine etc. and the crutches of makars are discarded. Non-vegetarian diet is no longer necessary. Sex union with his shakti assumes the shape of cosmic union that takes place when the Kundalini rising from her seat in the base of the spine, the four petalled Muladhara Chakra, goes up piercing the upper Chakras viz Swadhishtana Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, and Ajna and meets her Lord in the uppermost thousand-petalled chakra, the Sahasrara. The union of the two symbolises the setting into motion the creative process in the universe. The practitioner, and such exalted sadhaks are few, reaches the top of the Everest in his spiritual climb and becomes a Kaul, an Aghorashwara. He has burnt all his Karmic bonds, there is no death or rebirth for him, neither Mangal or Amangal, nor pain or pleasure. While he is in his mortal body he is a Shiva and when he leaves his body he remains on the astral plane as long as he likes having become a sun of a solar system of his own. He carries on his wishes from the astral plane through the medium of other persons.

The shastra is full of praise for Kaulas. The line of such Kaulas has continued unbroken in Kashmir since times immemorial and they along with the few advanced Sadhaks have been directing the Kashmir Krama while the people in general carried on their general Kulapuja.

The Kashmiri Brahmins who are the only remnant left of the Hindus of Kashmir, the rest having been converted to Islam, have shown an amazing tenacity in sticking to their Vedic and Tantrik heritage. Their shakha is Kath and their veda is Krishna Yajurveda. Their grihya sutra which controls their rituals is Laughakshi, which certainly goes back prior to the Mahabharata era. I doubt if there is any other section of the Hindu community in India which has kept up its Vedic and Tantrik heritage in all its purity unaffected by the tidal waves of Jainism, Buddhism and the later equally strong Vaishnava movements led by Rarnanujacharya, Ramanand, Madhavacharya, Vallabhacharya and Nimbarkacharya. Some individuals might have been influenced by the teaching of the aforesaid Acharyas but the community as a whole firmly stuck to its old moorings.

Buddhism made a great impact in Kashmir during and after the period of Emperor Ashok but he last ditchers among the community stuck to their guns and remained steadfast.

For nearly 300 years beginning from the IX century A. D. till the commencement of XI century A.D. Kashmir remained under the spell of the brilliant sages and savants who propounded the Kashmir Shaivism and Trika Shastra. Their unbroken chain beginning from Shri Kantha and followed by Vasugupta, Kallata, Somananda, Utpalacharya, Lakshmana, Abhinavagupta, Khsemraja and Yogaraja raised Kashmir Shaivism to sublime heights. After the Adi Shankaracharya, no other sage or savant occupies such a dazzling place of honour among the Hindus than Mahamaheshwara Abhinavagupta.

Sir John Woodroffe says:

"Unsurpassed for its profound analysis is the account of the thirty - six Tattwas or stages of cosmic Evolution (accepted by both Shaivas and Shaktas) given by the Northern Shaiva School of the Agama....."

"In fact Shakta literature is in parts unintelligible to one unacquainted with some features of what is called the Shaiva Darshan."

The Trika Shastra also lays down the practical forms of Sadhana. While the culminating points in Shakta Sadhana and the Trika Sadhana are the same but the starting points are different. For a Shakta Kashmiri Brahmin his form of Sadhana is well chalked out in the Prescribed forms of worship of Ragnya, Sharika, Jwala etc. but the Sadhana mentioned in the Malinivijayottara Tantra (which lays down the Trika Sadhana) is different though there are common points. I have considered the aspects of Shaiva Darshana and Trika Shastra as also the forms of Shiva-Shakti worship at some length in my Review of the Biography of Bhagwan Gopi Nath ji of Kashmir and in a letter which I wrote to Swami Lakshman ji Maharaj, the famous Shaiva philosopher of Kashmir, which have been published in the form of a booklet.

I have tried to avoid repetition of what I have said in my "Review" and in my letter to Swamiji. But the teachings of Shaiva Darshan and Trika have raised a conflict among the Kashmiris whether, particularly in their special Sadhana, they should follow their old traditional path or giving up their Ragnya, Sharika and jwala, should follow the path as prescribed by Trika Shastra. Swami Lakshman ji Maharaj has yet to answer this question.

The advent of Islam in Kashmir wiped off the Hindus leaving only 11 families, some say 9. It is a tribute to their amazing tenacity that the few who remained blossomed again. They had occasional periods of respite particularly in the reign of Zainul-Ab-din and in phases after the Moghul conquest of Kashmir. Their plight worsened again during the Pathan rule and then improved again during the Sikh and Dogra regimes. Now again they are in low waters. Their economic condition is bad and they are facing unemployment. The younger generation, though highly educated has lost its religious moorings and has become rudderless. Kashmir is no longer the famous seat of Sanskrit learning as it was in former days. There is no Sanskrit Department in the Kashmir University. Members of our priestly class who are our traditional teachers and custodian of our religious and cultural heritage are leaving their vocations and their children are taking to other professions. The perennial source of ancient Kashmir-Krama seem to

have dried up. This has caused grave concern to shaktas all over India. The weakening of the Kashmir Krama is creating a great imbalance in Shakta worship. Sometimes back the matter was considered by the executive committee of the All-India Shakta sammelan and it expressed its serious anxiety over the prevailing conditions in Kashmir, and I as the president of the Sammelan was asked to go to Kashmir and assess the situation. I have been to Kashmir several times during the last five years and even though what I have seen has pained me but I have not lost hope. Things could not be worse than what they were when we were only 9 or 11 families left. Then we rose as if from ashes. I have not met initiates in our Kaul Sadhana besides a very few. But there are quite a number of eminent Sanskrit scholars. It is indeed a matter of regret that nearly 4000 Sanskrit manuscripts pertaining to Shakta worship and Shaiva Darshan were lying uncatalogued in some almshouses of the Research Department and Archives in Srinagar. I wrote about them to the Government of Jammu & Kashmir as also to the Union Government. Now they have been removed and handed over to the Kashmir University, which does not have a Sanskrit department. I do not know how the Kashmir University proposes to deal with them.

Tantricism and Kaulachar in Kashmir, having a hoary past, has gone on, facing ups and downs and will continue to go on. A letter which I received from late Pandit Shridhar Joo Dhar is instructive and interesting. It runs thus

AUM

S. D. Dhar

Retired Conservator of Forests.

My dear Shriman Shivaji,

Many thanks for your so affectionate letter of 27th July. Your contact with such an elevated Shakta Yogin as your Gurudev Maharaj could not be accidental. Apparently you have been carrying the seed of your spiritual Sadhana from many past births and you seem destined to be a torchbearer of our highly inspiring ancient Kaulachar. You are now in the hands of Bhagwan Gopi Nath ji Maharaj who will raise you to the highest pinnacle of self-realisation in due course. Our Kaulachar has received a great set-back in Kashmir. There is however a redeeming feature. I have come across some young aspirants who are collecting all available connected literature and conducting research in its sadhana. Their efforts will not go in vain and our spiritual resurgence is only a matter of time.

The "Trika" philosophy has its own charm. I have not studied it critically but I feel that it appeals more to the present day youth as it does not involve much of practical kriya such as Yantra Puja and all its usual rites and is mainly based on "Vimarsha". I am however confident that it will not eclipse our "Kaulachar" which has so far survived the onslaughts of Buddhism, Shaivism and Islam.

It is a well - established fact that a tree grows best in its own habitat i.e. natural environment. So it is with every human being. One's "Jati-dharma" is its natural environment and so long as he remains within fold and limits he is sure to flourish well. This is what our Avatars have stressed by example and precept. Our effort should naturally be to uphold our jati-dharma on which one's Kul-dharma is essentially based. It is very laudable that you are so determined to uphold our 'Kul-dharma' and I pray that your efforts may succeed in the renaissance of your "kaulachar". OM TAT SAT.

I am well. I trust this finds you in the best of health along with your wife and others.

With all best wishes,

Yours Own

S. D. Dhar.

There are followers of "Kashmir Krama" all over India and some of them are persons of high standing in spiritual field. But the "kashmir Krama" has to be directed by savants who spring from the soil of

Kashmir which is the natural habitat of the Directors of the "Kashmir Krama." Our Kula Devis--Rajnya, Sharika, Jwala and Bala Tripurasundari will soon fill the void.

Source: Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture

12 Kashmir Saivism

Arabinda Basu

12.1 DIFFERENT NAMES OF THE SYSTEM

In this article we shall essay a brief exposition of the vision of Reality, the destiny of man, and the way and discipline leading to that destiny, as formulated in the system of spiritual philosophy known as Trika-sasana or Trika-sastra or simply Trika, and, more rarely, also as Rahasya-sampradaya and Tryambaka-sampradaya. It must have been an important system at the time of Madhavacarya to merit an inclusion as Pratyabhijna-darsana in his compendium *Sarva-darsana-sangraha*. The Trika is a virgin field of research, and will repay the most conscientious labour of philosophers for many years to come.

The Trika is so called either because it accepts as most important the triad, *Siddha, Namaka, and Malini*, out of the ninety-two Agamas recognized by it; or because the triad consisting of Siva, Sakti, and Anu, or, again, of Siva, Sakti, and Nara, or, lastly, of the goddesses Para, Aparā, and Paratpara is recognized; or because it explains three modes of knowledge of Reality, viz. non-dual (*abheda*), nondual-cum-dual (*bhedabheda*), and dual (*bheda*).

The system has two main branches, Spanda and Pratyabhijna. Many classics of the school include the word Spanda or Pratyabhijna in their very titles. The Trika is also known as Svatantryavada, Svatantrya and Spanda expressing the same concepts. Abhasavada is another name of the system. It is called Kashmir Saivism, because the writers who enriched its literature belonged to and flourished in this area.

12.2 A SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

The Trika is a spiritual philosophy, because its doctrines regarding Reality, the world, and man are derived from a wealth of spiritual experiences, and are not constructions based upon an analysis of the ordinary experiences of man. Its concepts are, to borrow a phrase from Sri Aurobindo, experienceconcepts. Its greatest exponents were *yogins* of high stature who showed wonderful insight into abstruse points of philosophy. The substance of their teaching is not arrived at by an analysis of the ordinary cognitive, affective, and conative experiences of man, but embodies the findings of yogic ways of apprehension, enjoyment, and action.

Means of apprehension and action, other than sensory and intellectual, have always been recognized in India and other countries as being perfectly possible, indeed as within the reach of man. Various kinds of discipline, which may be generally called *yoga*, give the science of the inner being and nature of man, and the art of using the powers of knowledge and action hidden at present in unknown regions of our being and nature. The Trika, in short, is a rational exposition of a view of Reality obtained primarily through more-than-normal experiences.

12.3 LITERATURE

The system being both a statement about the nature of Reality and a way of life, the orthodox classification of its literature is into *para, apara, and paratpara*, according as the works set forth, respectively, the metaphysics, the rituals, and both the philosophy and the practical discipline enjoined by the system. We shall however, for the sake of convenience, divide it into (i) Agama-sastra, (ii) Spanda-sastra, and (iii) Pratyabhijna-sastra. Of these the first, the Saiva Agamas or Sastras, is said to have eternal existence and to have been revealed to the sage Durvasas by Siva as Srikantha. Durvasas is said to have ordered his three 'mind-born' sons, Tryambaka, Amardaka, and Srikantha, to teach the eternal Saiva philosophy (and faith), respectively, in its three aspects of *abheda, bheda, and bhedabheda*.

12.4 AGAMA-SASTRA

Among the Agamas the chief ones are *Malinivijaya, Svachanda, Vijnana-bhairava, Ucchusmabhairava, Ananda-bhairava, Mrgendra, Matanga, Netra, Naisvasa, Svayambhuva, and Rudra Yamala*. These were

i-terpreted mostly as teaching a dualistic doctrine, to stop the propagation of which the *Siva-Sutra*, expounding a purely Advaitic metaphysic, was revealed to a sage called Vasugupta (c. ninth century). This work is also called *Sivo,uanisad-sangraha* and *Sivarahasyagamasastra-sangraha*. On the *sutras* of this work there are (i) the *Vrtti* (the authorship of which is doubtful), (ii) the *Varttika* by Bhaskara, and (iii) the commentary called *Vimarsini* by Ksemaraja.

Some of the Agamas had commentaries written on them, the chief among which are the *Uddyota* on *Svaccharrda*, *Netra*, and *Vijuarra-bhairava*, and the *Vrtti* on *Matanga*. These commentaries and attempts to show that Agamas, even prior to the Siva-Sutra, taught an Advaitic doctrine.

12.5 SPANDA-SASTRA

Of the Spanda-Sastra, which only elaborated the principles of the *Siva-Sutra*, without, however, giving much logical reason in support of them, the first and foremost is the *Spanda-Sutra* or the *Synuda-karikli*, attributed to Vasugupta himself; and it is called a *Sangraha-grantha* of a compendium. His pupil Kallata wrote a *Vrtti* on this Sutra, and the two together are called *Spandasarvasva*. On the *Spanda-Sutra* we have also the *Spanda-nirnaya* and the *Spanda-sandeha* by Ksemaraja (who also wrote *Siva-Sutra-vimarsini*), the *Vivrti* by Ramakantha, and the *Pradipika* by Utpala Vaisnava.

12.6 PRATYABHIJNA-SASTRA

The Pratyabhijna-sastra is really the philosophical branch of the Trika. Siddha Somananda, probably a pupil of Vasugupta, is credited with adopting the method of giving an elaborated treatment of his own views and refuting his opponents's doctrines, and is also praised as the founder of the logic of the system. On his work *Siva-drsti*, which is the foundation of this branch, the author wrote a *Vrtti*, now lost, quotations from which are found in other works. The *Isvara-pratyabhijna* or the *Pratyabhijna-Sutra* by Utpala, a pupil of Somananda, is a summary of the philosophy of his master. This shorter work became so important that the entire system came to be known by its name even outside Kashmir. Commentaries on it, still available, are the *Vrtti* by Utpala himself, and the *Pratyabhijna-virnarsini* (*Laghvi Vrtti*) and the *Pratyabhijna-vivrti-vimarsini* (*Brhati Vrtti*) by Abhinavagupta. *Bhaskari* is a lucid and very helpful *tika* on Abhinavagupta's commentary. Paramarthasara and Tantrasara, both by Abhinavagupta, and *Pratyabhijunhrdaya* by Ksemaraja are three small but important works of the school. *Tantraloka* by Abhinavagupta with Jayaratha's commentary on it is a veritable encyclopaedia of the system.

12.7 WHAT IS SASTRA?

According to the Trika, the Sastras have eternal existence. The first thing to remember is that Sastra does not originally mean a book, it means wisdom, self-existent and impersonal. It is also known as *sabda* and *vac*. *Sabda* in the Agamic philosophies indicates a slight stir, throb, or vibration in Reality, and the eternal self-revelation of Reality is this primal and original vibration. *Vac* or word expresses something, and the self-expression of Reality is called *para vac* or the supreme Word. This self-expression of Reality is wisdom, Reality's awareness of itself. This is, from one point of view, the knowledge which descends through various levels to the intelligence of man; from another, it is the universe as the self-manifestation of Reality, not as we know it, but as it is in its original condition in Reality. This is what is meant by saying that *sabda* creates or manifests everything. It follows that there is the most intimate connection between *sabda* and *artha*, word and the object. Indeed in the original condition, the subtlest speech, the *para vac*, is the universe. It is there existent as Reality's knowledge of Itself as the universe, it is there *vanmaya*, constituted of words. But the *para vac* reveals itself as the *pasyanti vac*, the seeing word; from the side of the universe, it may be described as the universe to be, still existing in an undifferentiated condition. Further objectification reveals it as the *madhyama vac*, the middle word, which may be said to be *cittavrttis*, which are expressed through words as we speak them, and on the cosmic side, as inarticulate differentiation that waits to develop into particularization of objects. *Madhyama vac*, is the

link between the *pasyartri* and the *vaikhari vac*, that is, word of speech as uttered by the human vocal organ and referring to differentiated objects of the world. It will be noted that the more the objectification of *vac*, the less intimate is the relation between the word and the object. In the *para* or transcendent state they are identical, and it is not possible to say much about their relation. But while in the *pasyanti*, the name and the object are undifferentiated (which is not the same as identical, because the universe to be has now at least ideally emerged, though it has not as yet been alienated from the vision), the relation between them in the *madhyama* is notional, involving ideal separation only; and in the *vaikhari*, or the human level of speech, the relation between the word and the object is only conventional, i.e. we just give a name to a thing without any reason inherent in it.

The Agamas of Sastras exist originally and eternally as the *para vac* and then as *pasyanti*. Human sages and seers only receive them from the *madhyama* level. The Sastras come to them from the *madhyama vac*, flowing out from the five faces (*pancanana*) of the Deity (representing the five aspects of His power and glory, viz. *cit. ananda, iccha, jnana, and kriya*) called Isana, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojata, Aghora, and Vama. Thus the wisdom set forth in the Trika philosophy is originally the selfknowledge of Reality expressing itself, though distorted and deformed, as the Sastras as we know them. Reality must be aware of Itself or Himself, which is the same as saying that the true knowledge of Reality exists in Reality and is not built up by the human brain. And this basic or original knowledge is obtainable by men only through revelation, which means that it is self-manifest (*sveyarnprakasa*). That which exists can alone be revealed, and the revelation takes place only when some spiritual genius makes himself fit to receive it, as the result of the development of the proper faculty or faculties.

12.8 METAPHYSICAL BACKGROUND

The ultimate Reality is variously designated as Anuttara, Cit, Caitanya, Purna or Para Samvid, Siva, Paramasiva, Paramesvara, and Atman; that is, it is the Supreme, higher than which there is nothing, ineffable and indescribable as this or that or as not this or not that, pure Consciousness, Selfconsciousness, integral or supreme Experience, the benign One, the highest Good and Bliss, the supreme Lord, the Self of everything, formless and, yet, informed with all forms, and free from all limitations in space and time.

Reality is ineffable and beyond any descriptions, yet the Trika tries to formulate a philosophy about Its nature. It is to be understood that this formulation is regarding Reality as the creator or manifestor of the universe and not as It is in Itself. Thus Reality is conceived both as transcendent and immanent. As transcendent, it is described as Siva, as immanent as Sakti. Siva and Sakti are not two separate realities, but two phases or (conceptual) aspects of the same Reality. Sakti is always in the state of perfect identity with Siva, but for the purpose of clear understanding the two are distinguished in thought only. Like fire and its burning power, Siva and Sakti are the same identical fact, though they are spoken of as distinct. Considered as purely transcendent, Siva is *save*, dead as it were; but in truth there is perfect equilibrium, *samarasya*, between Siva and Sakti, and, as such, the integrality is designated Paramasiva. It is due to the limitation of language that we have to use phrases like '*between Siva and Sakti*' and '*Siva is the supreme Lord of Sakti*'. But it must be understood that the Lord and His lordliness, the Isvara and His *aisvarya*, which is another name of Sakti, are one and the same. Sakti is described as the *hrdaya* (heart), the *sara* (essence) of Siva.

Cit, pure Consciousness, Illumination, cannot be without self-consciousness, without selfillumination. Cit is also Caitanya. Caitanya is the Sakti aspect of Reality and is compared to a clear mirror in which Reality sees Itself. Caitanya is regarded as feminine, though Reality in Itself is neither masculine nor feminine. Thus Consciousness is self-consciousness. Sakti is Siva's power of turning upon Himself. We say 'Himself', because, at this stage of consideration, we are not regarding Reality as It is in Itself, but as the Lord of the universe-to-be. This is called *cit-sakti*, the power of Cit to reveal Itself and to know Itself. The Trika makes a fivefold distinction of the fundamental modes of Sakti. These aspects of Sakti are *cit. ananda, iccha, jnana, and kriya*. *Cit* is the power of self-awareness; *ananda* is the power of absolute bliss,

or self-enjoying, without having to depend on anything extraneous; *iccha* is the power of absolute will to manifest the universe out of Himself. *Jnana* is the power of knowing the inherent relations of all manifested or manifestable things among themselves and with His own self; and *kriya* is the power to assume any form. It must not for a moment be forgotten that these five are only aspects of the selfsame Sakti and not five different entities.

Sakti is also known as *svatantrya*, independence or freedom, because Her existence does not depend on anything extraneous to Herself. She is also *vimarsa*, which means various things at the same time. *Vimarsa* is vibration; it is Siva's awareness of Himself as the integral and all-comprehensive ego. When there is the reflection of Siva in Sakti, there emerges in the heart of Reality the sense of 'I' which is described as *aham-vimarsa*. This is the original *bimba* or reflection, of which everything in the universe is *pratibimba* or *abhasa*, a secondary reflection or shadow. It is at this stage that we can first speak of the universe. For the universe in the Trika conception is a system of subjects and objects, *grahakas* and *grahyas*. All subjects or knowers are reflections of the original subject, the integral 'I', which Siva is by virtue of *vimarsa*. Now the emergence of the I, *aham*, is not intelligible without the corresponding emergence of the 'it', *idam*; the *grahaka*, the apprehender, must have *grahya*, the apprehensible. That is why *vimarsa* is also described as the throb of the 'I' hording within itself and visioning within itself the world of objects. Thus the 'I' or supreme *aham* is the whole universe, not, however, as we understand it in common parlance, but in its ideal state as a 'vision' in Siva.

Once the conceptual distinction between Siva and Sakti is made, the latter is regarded as a *dharma*, an attribute, of the former. The relation between the two is one of *tadahnya* (identity). Sometimes it is said to be *samarasya* (perfect equilibrium) also, and while they are regarded as two in one, or rather one in, or one as, two, the relation of substance and attribute holds between them. Only we should understand that the implication is that the substance, by virtue of its own inherent power, becomes the attributes. Now Sakti, in Her turn, is also regarded as a substance, because all manifestable objects are taken to be inherent and latent in Her womb. They have no existence apart from Sakti, and as such are like attributes of this substance.

Sakti is *prakasa-vimarsamaya*. At the background is *prakasa* or illumination, in the foreground is *vimarsa* or vibration of *prakasa* as the sense of 'I'. *Prakasa* can be taken to be Siva, placid and transcendent, *vimarsa* or Sakti as dynamic and immanent. Keeping in mind the concept of *vimarsa* as not only Sakti in general, but also specifically as the sense of 'I', we can say that things are the same as *prakasa*, their difference being due to having or lacking in *vimarsa*. The more of self-consciousness one has, the more of *vimarsa* also one has, and is thus the nearer to Siva or pure Consciousness. Thus, while *vimarsa* is taken to be the cause of the manifestation and dissolution of the universe, it is so only in the wider sense of being Sakti and not as the reflection as 'I'. Or, in other words, while everything is a manifestation out of *vimarsa*, everything does not have *vimarsa*. A jar or a pot has no *vimarsa*, no sense of 'I', no self-awareness; that is why it is material. *Vimarsa* is defined as the *camatkrti*, wonderment of the integral 'I', and that is why the practical discipline of the system enjoins the development of the sense of the 'I' as being the whole, as identical with the universe. The individual self is also said to be *prakasa-vimarsamaya*. That is to say, the individual self is also of the nature of consciousness and has self-consciousness also. Analogically speaking, we can say *prakasa*, in the case of the individual, is the shining intelligence and also the ideas, desires, memories, etc. which are its manifestations; and *vimarsa* is the individual's awareness that 'those are mine'.

12.9 SAKTI AS THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL MANIFESTATION

Sakti in its fivefold aspect therefore is the principle of the universal manifestation. *Cit-sakti*, the power of self-consciousness, entails *ananda*, enjoyment and wonderment, on the part of Siva; bliss gives rise to *iccha*, desire, to create; desire to create cannot be fulfilled unless there is *juana*, knowledge, of what is to be created and how it is to be created; this knowledge is followed by the actual creation or manifestation,

the power of which is *kriya-sakti*. Sometimes, however, *cit-* and *ananda-saktis* are kept in the background, and *iccha*, *juana*, and *kriya* are taken to be the principal powers.

The universe originally exists in identity with Reality, which is simultaneously static and dynamic, being and becoming at the same time. The dynamic aspect or Sakti, when slightly 'swollen' as it were, manifests the universe out of Herself, as the seed does the banyan tree (*vatadhanikavat*). Thus Sakti or Siva considered not as transcendent identity, but I as immanent unity, is both the material and the instrumental cause of the universe. When there is the self-reflection of Siva, Sakti serving as a mirror, there emerges the 'ego' or the 'I' in Siva. From here starts the universal manifestation, as has been said above. Since there is nothing apart from, independent of, Siva, the elements of the universe can be nothing but Siva Himself. These constituent elements of the universe, which are 'constants' ; through *srsti* and *pralaya*, are called *tattvas* or categories. *Srsti*, which is nothing but self manifestation, is described as opening out (*unmesa*), and *pralaya* as closing down (*nimesa*), like a bud opening out as a flower, and the petals of the blooming flower closing down as the bud. *Srsti* and '*pralaya*' follow each other in a never-ending process, each successive universe being determined in its character by its predecessor by a kind of causal necessity.

12.10 SIVA'S ANUTVA THROUGH SELF-LIMITATION

This *unmesa* or opening out is in one sense a limitation of Siva, His disappearance (*tirodhana*). Siva is said to have five eternal functions They are *tirodhana*, *srsti*, *sthiti*, *samhara* or *pralaya*, and *anugraha*, that is, limitation or disappearance, creation, preservation, dissolution, and compassion or grace. The universe, which is the collective name of the system of limited subjects and objects, cannot come into manifestation unless Siva assumes limitation. It is only by coercing His infinitude and transcendent character that Siva can manifest the universe out of Himself. This power of obscuration or self-limitation is called *tirodhana*, and the limitation takes the form of *anutva* or atomicity. It is also called *sankoca*, contraction. Because of this contraction, there is effected a dichotomy in Siva, who is consciousness-power. The dichotomy is that of *bodha* or consciousness on the one side, and *svatantrya* or power or independence on the other. *Bodily* tends to become devoid of *svatantrya*, and *svatantrya* of *bodha*. Though neither of them is completely devoid or empty of the other, still, for all practical purposes, we can say that there is a separation between consciousness and power. The aspect of consciousness loses the integral selfconsciousness. Siva does not see the universe to be identical with Himself. And since the universe is Sakti originally, we can say consciousness becomes static and sterile of His creative power, and power becomes blind without awareness of Her being truly consciousness. The situation is well described as 'an inert soul and a somnambulist force'. Atomicity therefore is the condition of powerless awareness and senseless power.

After the primary limitation of *anutva* or atomicity, Siva undergoes a secondary limitation with the help of Maya, and then is described as Purusa. Though Siva in His own nature is eternal, all-pervasive, omnipotent, omniscient, and all-enjoying consciousness, as Purusa He is limited in time and space, and has limited knowledge, authorship, and interest or enjoyment. This fivefold limitation is derived from Maya which also provides both location and object to the Purusa by evolving the physical universe. We have said above that along with the emergence of the 'ego' or the 'I', that of the object or the 'it' has also to be conceived. In Siva this dichotomy is absent, because He is the integral Reality and beyond the distinction of subject and object. But because of self-limitation of Siva, there emerges, against the background of the distinctionless pure consciousness of Siva, a polarity of 'subject' and 'object', *aham* and *idam*. At the outset, the dichotomy is only ideal. But as the process of opening out or manifestation of Sakti proceeds, the distance between the two increases till they are sundered apart.

12.11 THE FIVE KANCUKAS AND THREE MALAS

It is in *asuddha-maya* that the atomic Siva is shrouded by the five *kancukas* or covers of Maya, viz. *kala*, *vidva*, *raga*, and *niyati*. This Maya is *vedyapratha*, the knowledge of difference, the creatrix of the

divorce between the subject and the object, while Prakrti, which comes simultaneously into existence with Purusa, is the power that actually manifests the universe down to material things. Maya (which is itself sometimes regarded as a *kancuka*) and the five *kancukas*, together with the twenty-five *tattvas* (including Purusa) of the Samkhya, make up the thirty-one categories that constitute the empirical world of finites. The recognition by the Purusa or the *pasu* as being in truth Siva Himself presupposes not only the transcendence of the sense of difference, but also the realization of identity with everything. It implies not only the piercing of Maya, but the progressive unification of the self with the whole universe. The five higher categories of *suddha-maya* represent the stages of this progressive unification and make up the total of thirty-six categories of the system. The atomic limitation or impurity of the bound self, *anutva* or *anavamala*, is responsible for the nonintuition, *akhyati*, of the true nature of the self, and is twofold. First, there is the rise of the non-self, or rather that of the idea of non-self in the self, leading to the false sense of the self in the non-self. Once Siva has become self-limited, He is the *pasu* who is not the Lord of everything. As limited, *pasu* is not everything, and yet, because of non-intuition, the *pasu* falsely identifies himself with what he is not. The basic limitation, *anavamala*, is reinforced by two other impurities, viz. *mayiyamala* and *karmamala*. *Mayiyamala* represents the whole I series of categories, beginning from the covers or ' *kancukas*, that create the physical organism on the subjective side, and evolves the physical world down to earth, the last of the *mahabRutas*, on the objective side. *Karmamala* is responsible for continuing the fetters of embodiment, and it is due to this impurity or *Gala* that the Purusa becomes subject to good and bad acts, and becomes entangled in repeated births and deaths.

All souls suffer from one or more of these three kinds of impurities. Three types of soul in bondage are recognized in the Trika: when a soul has only the *anavamala*, it is called *vijuanakala*; when it has both the *anava-* and *kanna-malas*, it is known as *pralayakala*; and when it has all the three *malas*, it is designated *sakala*. The *sakala* souls are embodied, and include both gods and men. All of them have bodies differing according to their planes of existence within the sphere of Maya, technically, called *mayanda*, the 'Maya egg'. The Trika accepts *mahapralaya* or great dissolution, during which all the *tatters* or categories lower than Maya are absorbed into Maya, their cause. In this state all bound souls become disembodied and without organs, and are known as *pralayakalas* or 'become disembodied during *pralaya*', but because of the persistence of the *kannamala* they may become embodied again. Souls free from both *kanna-* and *mayiya-inalas* transcend *asuddha-maya*, but do not, because of that, realize their identity with Siva. Though they have ascended to the realm of *suddhamaya* and are known as *vijnanakalas*, they still have the *anavamala* to get rid of to lose their finitude. They are free from the sense of duality, but they do not achieve the perfect integration of consciousness and power, which is the nature of Siva. This is why, it is said, the *vijnanakala* does not realize his identity with the universe, does not experience the fact that 'I am all this'. It is not possible for these souls to attain to Sivahood unless and until their impurity of atomicity is removed.

12.12 REMOVAL OF THE ANUTVA - ITS FIVE STAGES

Since atomicity is due to the self-contraction, *atmasankoca*, of Siva Himself, it can be removed not by the soul's own effort, but by some function of Him who imposed the limitation. This function of Siva is *anugraha*, compassion or grace. As a result of grace, the soul, already delivered from Maya, that is, from the false sense of duality between itself and the object, progresses towards the perfect integration of the object into itself. The '*idam*' must be absorbed into the '*aham*', for, so long as they are separate, there is no attainment of the complete 'I'ness, the *purناهanta*, by the soul, and without that there is no bliss. Thus, the soul remains limited in various ways, until the atomic impurity is removed.

The stages of the removal of atomicity are the five *tatters* or categories belonging to *suddhamaya* which, counted from below, are *sad-* or *suddha-vidya*, *israra*, *sadakhya* or *sadasiva*, *sakti*, and *siva*. From another point of view they represent, as said above, the progressive union of consciousness and power, of *bodha* and *svatantrya*.

In these *tatters*, the 'I' and the 'it' have a common substratum, *samanadhikarana*, while in Maya and below that they have different *adhikaranas* or substrata. In other words, when the soul is in any of these *tatters*, it regards the 'it' or the object to be within itself. There is the 'idea' or the sense of the object, but it is not regarded as separate in actuality. The bound soul, however, cannot regard the 'object' to be within itself. Since Siva has the inherent awareness of the universe being within His own being, the liberated soul, who attains identity with Siva, must have the same awareness. It is by the power of Maya that Siva shows whatever is within Himself as being external and separate. That is why souls, even when subject to *suddha-maya*, cannot have the sense of identity with everything. When Siva, as a result of selflimitation, regards the object as not His own manifestation, but as separate and independent, He becomes a bound soul subject to Maya. But before this actual separation is effected, there is an ideal emergence of the 'it' or the object, though it is regarded as being within oneself as the subject or '*sham*'.

In *sad-vidya* or *suddha-vidya*, though the 'I' and the 'it' are not separate, still the 'it' is more prominent. In other words, in this category there is greater ideal separation between the subject and object than in the other four higher categories. *Suddha-vidya* represents a greater emergence of the 'it' or the object. The experience in this stage, expressed as 'I am I and this is this', is like the pointing by the finger at head of a newly born baby. Truly speaking, the head is an integral part of the body, but still it is distinguished from the body. Here the diversity and difference of objective consciousness are not annulled, though they are now recognized as an experience of the subject and therefore in some way identical with it. In the *isvara-tattva*, there is perfect balance between the two, neither being more prominent than the other. The experience that the soul has in this stage is 'I am this', while that in the former may be expressed in the form 'I am I and this is this'. *Sadasiva* represents the stage where there is the sense of 'being' in the subject. But 'being' means 'being something'. Thus it is in this stage that the idea of the *idam* or 'it' first emerges. The experience of the soul in the *sadasiva* stage may be formulated as 'I am this'. Its difference from the experience in the *isvara* stage may be described as follows. In *sadasiva*, *purnahanta* or the attainment of perfect subjecthood takes the form of the complete identification of the subject and the object, while in the *isvara* stage they are not identified but held in equipoise.

The emergence of the object in the *sadasiva* stage is only nominal, it is like the faint outline of a picture, or even like the initial desire in the mind of the artist to paint a picture. Applying this analogy to the *isvara-tattva*, it may be said that there the faint outline becomes somewhat clear. In the *sakti-tattva*, again, there is merely the idea or experience of being what may be expressed as 'I am'. We cannot say that in this stage the object or the *idam* has made an appearance. *Sakti-tattva* is described as the seed of the universe, the *bija-bhumi* of all ideas or *bhavas* in the consciousness of Siva. It is also described as void (*sunya*) or great void (*mallasunya*), because nothing has manifested itself in this stage, or because it negates the 'ideal' universe in Siva; whence its name *nisedhavyapararupa* (process of negating). Or, it might be said that it negates or suppresses the unitary character of the *siva-tattva*, without which process the universe of manifoldness cannot be manifested.

In the five higher or pure (*Buddha*) *tattoos* just described, *cit-*, *ananda-*, *iccha-*, *jnana-*, and *kriyasaktis* are respectively predominant. The first throb or stir (*spanda*) of Siva is *siva-tattva*, which is only Siva's awareness of Himself as 'I'. That is why *citsakti* is said to be predominant in the *siva-tattva*. When the 'I' has the sense of being, when there is the experience of 'I am', there is bliss; in other words, *ananda-sakti* predominates in the *saktitattva*. In *sadasiva* there is the predominance of *iccha-sakti*, because there is a will in Siva to create in order to fill the void due to the *sakti-tattva*. *Jnana-sakti* is said to be predominant in the *iscaratattva*, because there is in this stage the clear identification of the subject and the object, the experience being 'I am this'. In the *suddha-vidya*, *kriya-sakti* is predominant. Here the object or the *idam* has clearly emerged, and there is separation between subject and object, between *bodha* and *svatantrya*. The stage in which the objective element, the power aspect, becomes predominant as distinct from the self or consciousness is justifiably said to have *kriya-sakti* prominent in it.

Be ginning from *suddha* - or *sad-vidya* up to *siva-tattva*, the endeavour of the aspirant soul is to absorb and integrate the object progressively into itself. The complete identification results in the realization of *purnahanta* or complete subjecthood, which means nothing but the experience of identity between the self

and the universe. Subjecthood eats up objecthood, that is, it destroys the sense of separation. This, however, does not imply that the manifold variety of the universe is abrogated, but only that the sense of separation between 'I' and the 'it', the self and the universe, is completely overcome. This has been described as 'selling' or the process of *atmasat*, that is, making the other one's own. But even in *siva-tattva* there is the taint of atomicity, at least its *samskara* or trace remains.

The souls in the different *tattvas* are given different names as knowers or *pramatrs*. Apart from *sakala*, *pralayakala*, and *vijnanakala* mentioned above, the *pramatrs* or experiencers in the five higher *tattvas*, counting from below, are respectively called *mantra*, *mantresvara*, *mantramahesvara*, *saktya*, and *sambhava*. But there is some difference of opinion on the subject.

12.13 UNIVERSE AS SIVA'S KRIDA OR PLAY

Thus, the universe is manifested with Siva Himself as the basis or foundation. And it is manifested on the basis of identity. The manifestation is compared to the sleeping of Siva. And when some spiritual aspirant recognizes himself as Siva, it is symbolically expressed as the awakening of Siva. When Siva is awake, there is no sense of a separate universe. The emergence of the universe is also called descent of Siva, and the spiritual self's journey towards Siva is called ascent. If it is asked why Siva should manifest Himself, the answer is that it is natural for consciousness to assume many forms. It is also said that Siva's self imposition of limitation upon Himself and also His breaking the fetters and returning to His own native glory are both *krida* or play.

12.14 BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

Siva as Sakti manifests Himself as a correlated order of knowers, knowables, and means of knowledge. This threefold self-division of Siva appears on the background provided by Siva Himself. It presupposes, however, a limitation imposed by Siva upon Himself. The self-limited Siva is designated the *Pasu* or the 'animal', *Jiva*, *samsarin*, etc. The signs of the *pasu* are false identification of the self with the not-self, ascribing the not-self to the self, having limited authorship, knowledge, interest, pervasion, and duration, and being subject to causality. To realise the unfettered condition, to recognise oneself as that which has become, or even is, everything, to have unlimited power to know, enjoy, and manifest self-bliss, to be infinite and eternal, to be completely free from and independent of *niyati*, that is, regulation or causality, - this is the destiny of the *pasu*. To be, or rather to recognise oneself as, Siva is the goal of the *Jiva*.

Obviously, the limited individual is subject to ignorance (*ajnana*), which, according to our system, is twofold, viz. *paurusa* and *bauddha*. *Paurusa ajnana* is the innate ignorance in the very soul of man. It is the primal limitation, the original impurity of *nnavamala*. It signifies the sense of the self in the not-self and vice versa and the separation of *prakasa* and *vimarsa*, of *bodha* and *srantrya*. This is the consequence of the limitation taken willingly and playfully by Siva upon Himself, and is not removable by the bound soul's own efforts. Siva alone can liquidate it. *Anugraha* or dispensation of grace, technically called *saktipata*, or the descent of Siva's force, breaks this limitation. How and why and when this force will descend cannot be indicated, because His nature is freedom and spontaneity.

The descent of the force of grace achieves two purposes: first, *pasa-ksaya*, the destruction of fetters, and secondly, *Sivatva-yojana*, the restoration of Sivahood, which in effect means the removal of the atomic impurity. But, in spite of this great spiritual gain coming to the soul, the *Jiva* may not know it. For he is not only a soul or spiritual substance, but has his ordinary Mayic nature attached to him. He has to know things through the instrument of his *buddhi*, his intelligence, which is gross and impure. Thus, in spite of obtaining *Sivatva*, he cannot enjoy it, for his normal consciousness is not affected by what happens to his inner soul. In those on whom the *sakti* or grace descends in great force (*drdha-saktipata-viddha*), the purification of *buddhi* may also occur immediately. But it is a rare phenomenon; so, actually speaking, the *Jiva* has to adopt other means to know and enjoy his newly won spiritual gain.

Thus, in spite of the restoration of *Sivatva*, the soul has still a lot to accomplish. *Sivah~a-yojana* only means that the soul is given by its own higher self, i.e. Siva, its lost or hidden essence of divinity. But to have the essence of divinity is not to be the supreme and integral Divine. It remains for the soul to develop in himself all the aspects of Sakti which really make Siva all that He is. The becoming of Siva in essence is accomplished by the removal of the atomic impurity, which alone can achieve full Sivahood. Here the soul achieves likeness to Siva and becomes qualified to know Reality fully and completely.

Now let us recall for a moment that the fall of the soul from the *parardha*, the higher region of the five pure (*suddha*) *tattvas*, where the separation of the subject and the object is ideal, into the sphere of *asuddhamaya*, in which the separation is actual, is due to the fact that the soul loses its integral subjecthood, *purnahanta*. The Jiva has a sense of 'I' or subjecthood even in the sphere of Maya, and that distinguishes him from material things. Indeed the Trika says that even in the condition of bondage, the Jiva fulfils the five eternal functions of concealment or disappearance, creation, preservation, dissolution, and grace, though in a very small and restricted measure. Unless it were so, the identity of the limited bound soul and the infinite free Siva could not be asserted. But in the sphere of Maya, which may be described as the region of the *idanta* or objecthood, any sense of *ahanta* or subjecthood is derived from the object or the *idam* which has separated itself from the true subject. The true subject has not the sense of distinction from anybody or anything, but the subject of the Jivas in Maya is an instrument of perpetuating distinctions and not resolving them. It is *ahankara* and not *ahanta*, egoism and not real subjecthood, that is a product of Maya which is the great *idam* in relation to the real and genuine *aham*. To attain integral Sivahood, the Jiva must recapture the all-inclusive pure 'I', which has no idea of the object, by adopting appropriate means.

The most important of these is *diksa* or initiation. The Trika says that as a result of *saktipata* one is brought to a real *guru*. *Diksa* awakens the *kriyasakti* in the limited soul which is devoid of *svatantrya*. The development of *kriya-sakti* ultimately means the soul's ability to absorb and integrate the 'it' or the object, seemingly separate from itself, within its own self. The consummation of this development is the soul's recognition and realisation of itself as the integral 'I', the enjoyment of the rapture and bliss of *purnahanta*. This is the dawning of *paurusojnana*, the true knowledge about the real and ultimate nature of the Purusa. To be able to enjoy in life this inherent, reawakened Sivahood, which was so long veiled, *baudhajuana*, or knowledge of this internal liberated condition through *buddhi*, must be attained also. This depends on the purification of *buddhi* the means of which are the study of the Sastra, *vicara*, etc. *Baudhajnana* does not mean scholarship or intellectual understanding of the scriptures or philosophy. It is a deeper discipline than a mere mental understanding. When with the rise of *baudhagnana*, *baudhajnana* is removed, there dawns knowledge, even in *oudhhi*, of the state of liberation. This is *jivanmukti* (liberation during lifetime). Even without *jivanmukti* the soul's liberation is accomplished with the liquidation of the innate ignorance of the atomic impurity. Only so long as *buddhi* is not purified and does not reflect the inner condition of freedom, the embodied being is not able to know and enjoy it.

The removal of *paurusa-ajnana* is followed by the rise of spiritual knowledge, *paurusagnana*. It is spiritual knowledge for two reasons: it is the knowledge of the spirit in all its aspects and integrality, it is also a knowledge obtained by the spiritual element in the Jiva. Though it is described in terms of knowledge, it is, to be precise, the realization of perfect and supreme *Sivatva*, that is, the state of Paramasiva, which is the condition of equilibrium, also called *yamala*, of Siva and Sakti. It is the state in which neither *prakasa* nor *vimarsa* is predominant over the other, and it is timeless eternity holding in itself endless succession. *Krama* and *akrama*, sequence and simultaneity, are both one and the same, according to the Trika; they are only two phases of the same perfect Reality. The attainment of the state of Paramasiva is also to become the Lord of *sakti-cakra*, the circle of powers. Between the initial rise of spiritual knowledge and its fullest development, when all the modes of Sakti are perfectly developed, there is such a thing as progress towards the consummation. One reason of this is that the *samskara* of the atomic impurity persists, though the taint itself is liquidated.

12.15 THE FOUR UVAYAS

There are four *upayas* or means of attaining the supreme goal. They are *anupaya*, *sambhava*, *sakta*, and *anava-upaya*. Of these the first *anupaya* (nomeans) or *anandopaya* (blissful means) does not really involve any process. Due to *saktipata* or descent of grace in a very intense degree, everything needed for the realization, beginning from the liquidation of the atomic impurity down to the recognition of the state of Paramasiva, may be achieved by the aspirant immediately and without going through any *sadhana* or discipline. Here the direct means is Sakti Herself, and a word from the *guru*, the spiritual teacher, regarding the identity of the individual with the ultimate Reality is sufficient to reveal the truth. The soul immediately realises its own transcendent nature along with the realization of the whole universe as its own glory reflected in its own integral 'I'.

Before taking up the exposition of the other means, a word about the Trika conception of *vikalpa* and *nirvikalpa* will be helpful. Our system conceives Siva as *nirvikalpa*, free from *vikalpa* or determination consisting of conceptual unification of the 'many' into the 'one', distinguishing between one object of cognition and another, and between 'this' and 'not-this', and accepting one among many stimuli received from outside. But since Paramasiva is the perfect inalienable identity, there is nothing from which it can be distinguished. Hence there is no *vikalpa* in Paramasiva who is *nirvikalpa*. In the *sambhava-upaya*, the *nirvikalpa* knowledge is awakened in the aspirant through *diksa* itself, and all *vikalpas* are immediately destroyed. Through *nirvikalpa* knowledge, the limited 'I' of the individual is united with the unlimited 'I' of its own higher self, as a result of which the 'this' or the object, so long apprehended separately from the soul, is absorbed into and unified with the 'I', which was so long limited and exclusive. This means is also called *icchopaya*, because the element of will plays a great part in it.

In the *saktopaya*, conceptual determinations or *vikalpas* have to be purified before the soul can attain to the *nirvikalpa* illumination. For this purification are needed pure intuition (*sattarka*), knowledge of the right scriptures (*sadagama*), and a genuine *guru* (*sadguru*). Getting instruction in the Agamas from a true *guru* gives rise to a succession of *vikalpas* of the same nature (*sojatiya-vikalpa*). This is *sattarka* and is the gateway to *nirvikalpaparamarsa* (apprehension devoid of determination, because determinations of the same nature form a step towards unity or oneness. It is asserted that meditation, concentration, etc. do not help the rousing of *samvid*, or consciousness. The purpose of these practices or disciplines is to wrest the *samvid* which is involved and diffused, from the body, vital airs, and *buddhi*. But since *samvid* is the only Reality, knowledge of duality is nothing in itself, and it is removed through the rise of *suddha vikalpa* or *nirvikalpa*. Through its own spontaneous freedom, *samvid* becomes its own *akhyati*, non-intuition, resulting in the denial of its own self-nature, and then, of its own accord, it blooms out as the true knowledge. The process is natural and due to *svatantrya*, and, as such, the practice of *yoga* is not a direct means towards its blooming. The right means therefore is *sattarka*, pure intuition, which can be attained through *yaga* (sacrifice), *homa* (oblation in fire), *vrata* (solemn vow), *japa* (repetition of holy word), and *yoga* (spiritual discipline).

The main point about *anava-upaya* is that personal effort, *pun~sakara*, is needed for the purification of *vikalpa*. Personal effort takes the form of certain definite disciplines. They are *dhyana*, *uccara*, *varna*, and observance of *baRya'idhi* or external injunctions. *Buddhi*, *prank* (vital force), and the body are the means of these disciplines.

Dhyana means meditation in the heart-space (*hrdayakasa*) on the supreme Reality inherent in all the *tattvas*, and also on the unification, in the supreme Consciousness, of the knower, means of knowledge, and the knowables, technically called *vahni*, *arka*, and *some* respectively. By this process of meditation the whole field of knowables is swallowed up and absorbed into the knower. Once the universe has been absorbed into one's own conscious self, it has to be manifested and externalized again, and one has to feel one's identity with the very highest, the *anuttara*; this will mean his control and mastery of the powers involved in the function of manifestation. With that achieved and without losing it, he has to have the experience of manifesting the universe, a world of objects, just as Siva does. The re-manifestation of the universe, along with the realization of one's identity with it and with its ground, viz. Siva, destroys all

sense of duality. *Uccara* essentially means the directing of *prana*, the vital force, upwards. Here also the goal is the swallowing up or the destruction of the discrete knowable and also of the universe as a whole, and thus, ultimately, the destruction of the sense of duality. The recognition of the inherent identity with the Highest, *samavesa* in *samvid*, is the ultimate aim. *Varna* is a discipline in which the *suksma* or subtle *prana* is the means of *sadhana*. In the practice of *uccara*, a kind of undifferentiated sound or *dhvani* spontaneously emerges and is called *varna*. Its form is the *bija* or seed-word of creation and destruction. Constant repetition of the *bija* results in the attainment of supreme *sambid*.

Through any of these means, the limited individual, poor in powers (*sakti-daridrah*), attains to the rich treasure of his own true Self. In point of fact, the individual all the time experience nothing but Siva, but being limited does not give any attention to his constant apprehension of Siva. When the much desired attention falls on the apprehension of the Self, which is no other than Siva; there is *pratyabhijna* or recognition of the fact that 'I am everything and simultaneously transcendent of everything, that is, nothing in particular and yet all things together'. In the state of Paramasiva, there is no emergence, nor any absorption of the universe. To recognise oneself as the *sthiti-samya*, the perfect harmony of being and becoming, is what the soul should seek after and realise.

12.16 HARMONY IS THE WATCHWORD OF TRIKA

The Trika does not stop with the deliverance of the soul from Maya, from, the delusion of duality; it goes further to the concept of divinisation of the soul, which means the recognition of its own identity with Paramasiva, with Paramesvara. This recognition is the same as realising identity with everything and also freedom from everything. Thus, in a sense, harmony is the watchword of the practical spiritual discipline of the Trika.

The Trika philosophy promises to satisfy almost all siLies of human nature, of knowledge, love, and will. Siva being unitary consciousness as such, the realisation of Siva gives knowledge of everything by identity with everything; and Siva being at constant play with His own Sakti, there is ample scope for *bhakti*, devotion or love; also to recognise oneself as Paramasiva means mastery and lordship of *sakti* and thus implies sovereign and unrestricted will.

Two points remain to be noticed. The Trika does not give an independent reality to Prakrti as the Samkhya does, for according to it, Prakrti represents a stage in the evolution of the universe out of Paran-rasiva. At the same time, it does not reduce the universe to a mere illusion out of Maya, as the Advaita Vedanta seems to do. In its Abhasavada, it reduces the universe to an experience of Paramasiva appearing to Him, not in the form in which it appears to a bound soul, but as if it were distinct like an object seen in a mirror. The theistic element, again, is brought out by the rejection of the Yoga view that release is attained by the unaided effort of the spiritual aspirant, and by the admission that the final step of liberation is provided by the grace of Siva.

Excerpts: 'THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA' - Volume IV

13 Human Upliftment through Kashmir Shaivism

Virendra Qazi

The philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism occupies a distinguished position among the various schools of religious creed and thought. It provides the complete analysis of human personality and delves into the deepest and most comprehensive psychology of man. In this way, it makes the greatest contribution to furthering of human understanding.

In fact, this universal philosophy focuses on relation between God, Nature and Man, which transcends all the barriers of time, place and diverse human-cultures. It leads to the highest level of self-realisation revealing the inner most secrets of the nature of Self. It integrates all the aspects of life, which are taken in totality. Thus, rather than negation and denial, it celebrates life. Kashmir Shaivism is the only school of Indian philosophy which can inspire us for both material and spiritual progress. Besides making valuable contribution to the Indian culture, it is the highest spiritual philosophy discovered and expressed in the world.

No doubt, Kashmir Shaivism is presently evoking deep interest in west, with lot of pioneering research work at leading universities in Europe and the United States. It is a matter of concern that nothing much is done in the land of its birth, rather land of discovery of this philosophy. We should ponder over this situation and consider the importance of this philosophy in this strife-torn world. A thrill of self confidence, the spirit of bliss, surpassing all barriers of caste, creed and gender, no look back, no regret, the inner journey, see everything as creation of God, etc - how prominently and conceptually these are emphasised in Kashmir Shaivism. It should be our solemn endeavour to present this ancient philosophy in common man's language so that a resurgence takes place with the goal of UPLIFTMENT at individual, social, national and world as a whole. We can conclude without any hesitation that Kashmir Shaivism is the religion of tomorrow.

13.1 EVOLUTION OF INDIAN RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY

It would be pertinent to look at the evolution of Indian religious philosophy. We have Carvakas School which is the basis for lowest type of thinkers in India. Here good health, long life, prosperity, pleasures, enjoyments, etc. are the only aims of this short lived life. They believe socio political systems are needed for the achievement of these aims. There is no heaven, no hell, no piety, no sin, no God no divine law. Religion, therefore, is not needed at all. This theory is, in fact, the expression of the truth perceived through senses in its grossest and crudest form.

Above the Carvaka school is Mimamsaka, which believe in the existence of heaven and hell, admission into which are the results of ones good and bad actions. Vaisnava school believes that there is still more superior place named VAIKUNTHA. Above them are NYAYA and Vaisesika philosophies which believe in soul, time, space, law of karma, omniscient and omnipotent ISVARA or PARMATAM. The finer exposition of the truth is in SANKHYA and Yoga philosophies.

13.2 JARDUST AND VEDVYAS

If we take a detour and go outside Bharat Desh, we can observe development of various philosophies and interaction of many religious creed. In the ancient Iran, King Gastasp invited an Indian Brahman "Vyas" by name for "Shastrarth" (religious discourse) with his Raj Guru Jardust. The Parsi holy book "Shoteer", gives detailed account of this interaction and praises Vyas as a very wise and learned scholar of the time.

13.3 ANAL HAQ

The various religious creeds strived for universality as is quite evident in Sufism. The revolution was created by Hazrat Mansoor. He was humiliated, made to ride a donkey through the streets and finally

hanged and his corpse burnt. His fault-Anal Haq (I am truth, God). However, in deep humiliation be addressed to people "Forget not God to see my plight, Trust in Him. He is with me like a friend. He gives me a cup which He took first Himself".

13.4 THE ALMIGHTY LORD - FROM WHOM EMANATES EVERYTHING AND WHO IS BEYOND ALL DIVERSITIES

After the detour let us come back to our present world. Don't we see a revolution-World has become one family. We talk of communication, net-working and we have surmounted all barriers that separate man from man. Similarly, people can choose their own creed, interact, analyse, approve and go their own way. However, in spite of all this, we are pained at the violent diversity and discord in the world. We are still confronted with the issue of caste, creed, language, religion and other man made barriers.

Coming to the relevance of Kashmir Shaivism for our times how would we describe our present day world ? Some call it a great paradox, beyond anybody's comprehension. Perhaps we are unable to follow this maze ? There are two phases which are quite explicit. The first one is a deep despair. Indeed, it is a deep despair which confronts us constantly. No achievement seems to satisfy us. Right from the beginning we chase the daily minimum needs and spend or waste our entire life in it. Those we feel are lucky are truly worse. They have more of dis-satisfaction, insecurity, lust for upward move, prone to scheming and outside attacks.

Now, the second phase. Really ! can this world be all that bad. Daily we can experience the morning Sun, which blesses us and dispels all darkness. The love of near and dear ones sustain us. The beauty of nature, ever motivating and ever fascinating, thrills us.

What can we conclude from these opposite, rather totally diverse explanations. It seems we have no answer ? So let us take recourse to the wisdom of our ancient seers-our ancient knowledge. The message is: good and bad are part of the same coin. Everything emanates from the Almighty Lord, the Param Shiva. And recognition of this creed means LIBERATION.

13.5 PARAM SHIVA AND HIS UNIVERSAL MANIFESTATION

PARAM SHIVA

Param Shiva is the ultimate reality who is the nature of Bliss itself and all complete in Himself. He is beyond description, beyond all manifestation, beyond limitation of form, time and space. He is eternal, infinite, all pervading, all knowing and all powerful. In fact, this reality is ineffable and beyond all descriptions.

From Param Shiva let us come to universal manifestation; let us have a look at this creation of Lord. Kashmir Shaivism postulates 36 categories of "tattvas" to explain the process of cosmic evolution. Let us keenly focus our attention to this process of universal evolution or universal experience, i.e., from God hood to Maya Shakti which is the veiling or obscuring force of nature leading to psycho - physical elements and finally the Panch Mahabhutas - five great elements : Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. Let us look further into this great descent or the process of in-evolution, i.e. from God-hood to Man-hood.

SHIVA TATTVA

The first outward manifestation of the divine creative energy in the process of cosmic evolution is called Shiva - Tattva. It is the initial creative movement of Paramasiva. Consciousness in this condition is technically called chit. Further, it is the static aspect of consciousness or like support of all things in the manifest world. It is like the bed of a river or the canvas of a painting. It can never be seen, it can only be

known by its effects. In this condition, the emphasis is on the subject without any awareness of the existence of the object. The Shiva Tattva is the chit aspect of the universal condition of Sat-Chit-Ananda.

SHAKTI TATTVA

Since the Shiva Tattva represents the passive aspect of the pure consciousness, it is dependent upon the active or dynamic aspect to bring it into being. This is called Shakti

Tattva. Shakti is the active or kinetic aspect of consciousness. Just as an artist pours out his delight in a poem, picture or song, even so the Supreme pours out his delight in this manifestation called Shakti. Just as Shiva is the chit aspect of the universal condition of Sat-Chit-Ananda, Shakti is the Ananda aspect. When Shakti is predominant, supreme bliss is experienced. As Mahesvarananda puts it beautifully in Maharthamanjari. "He (i.e. Shiva) Himself full of joy enhanced by the honey of the three corners of his heart, viz ICCHA, JHANA AND KRIYA, raising up His face to gaze at His own splendor is called Shakti".

This Shakti Tattva represents the force that produces a strain or stress on the surface of the universal consciousness. It polarizes consciousness into positive and negative, the aham and idam, the subject and object. As mentioned, Shakti or cosmic energy is said to have three principal forms to account for the three fundamental psychological steps that precede every action. Technically the first one is called ICHCHA SHAKTI, the power of feeling oneself as supremely able and of an absolutely irresistible will. Second one is the JNANA SHAKTI, the power of knowledge or knowing of consciousness which holds all objects in conscious relations with oneself and also with one another. The KRIYA SHAKTI is the power of supreme action, creating or assuming any and every form. One follows the other in logical succession, and with the prominence of each respective form in the process of the evolution of consciousness, the next three tattvas come into being. These are respectively called Sadashiv Tattva, Ishvara Tattva and Shuddha Vidya Tattva.

13.6 MAYA AND FIVE KANCUKAS (COVERINGS)

Now let us come to evolution of material universe. The power of consciousness to separate and divide is called Maya Shakti. This is the power to perceive differences. The term "Maya" means illusion. Here it is used to refer to the veiling or obscuring force of nature which creates a sense of differentiation. As such, it makes universal consciousness which is unity, appear as duality and multiplicity.

The products of Maya are the five kancukas or coverings which are KALAA (limitation of authorship or efficacy) VIDYA (limited knowledge), RAGA (from all satisfaction to feeling of interest and desire) KAALA (from eternity to limitation in respect of time i.e. past, present and future) NIYATI (limitation in respect of cause and effect).

13.7 PURUSHA AND PRAKRITI

The result of Maya and its five coverings as referred above are PURUSHA and PRAKRITI. Here the dual world of mind and matter is permanently established. In order words, although the Lord is absolutely free, he puts on Maya and her five cloaks, forgets his true nature, limits His power and reduces Himself to an individual soul which is called Purusha and its objective manifestation PRAKRITI.

13.8 BUDDHI, AHAMKARA AND MANAS

Now, let us come to the tattvas of mental operation i.e. BUDDHI, AHAMKARA and MANAS. Buddhi is the ascertaining intelligence which can be external i.e. a jar perceived through eye or internal, like images built out of the impression left on mind. Ahamkara is the product of buddhi. It is the I - making principle

and the power of self - appropriation. Manas is the product of ahankara. It co-operates with the senses in building up perceptions, and by itself, it builds images and concepts.

We are continuing to focus on the cosmic manifestations. The products of AHAMKARA are five powers of sense perception or JNANENDRIYAS, five powers of action or KARMENDRIYAS and five primary elements of perception or TANMANTRAS. The process of inevolution is complete finally with panch Mahabutas as referred earlier.

Frankly, very important position is given to Ahankara. In fact, it is the product of SHAKTI through the intermediate Prakriti which obviously is a mode of the Divine Energy. Rajas gunas is prominent here and other gunas are in subdued form. One can understand significance of Ahankara by the story of the Buddha Bhikshu Upasena. As he tried to over come this tattva by his "sadhana", his body got scattered because there was no Ahankara up-holding it.

It is Important to understand that, according to Kashmir

Shavism, this analysis of all phenomena into thirty-six tattavas has been worked out as a tool of understanding for the ever-active and inquiring mind and as a form for contemplative meditation. At higher sadhana the number of tattvas may get reduced. Finally a highly advanced Shiva Yojin may see only the Shiva Tattva in the whole of creation.

13.9 DOCTRINE OF THE FOUR STAGES IN THE MANIFESTATION OF SPEECH

The above description is an endeavor of movement from individuality to universality. In this context, it is interesting to mention about four type of speech. Speech is not only the means to convey one's ideas to others, it is also a way to understand things personally. When we choose to convey ideas to others, we generally use spoken language, known as VAIKHARI. A finer form of speech that serves as the medium for thinking and understanding, through which a person forms definite and indefinite ideas about words and their meanings, is the mental speech called MADHYAMA. It is an internal reflection of manifestation of awareness taking the form of ideas. There is a still finer level of speech, far subtler in character and resides in the inner-most part of our being. It is called PASYANTI. It is known as the "beholding speech" because through its medium enlightened people can behold all objective existence within themselves. Beyond this is PARAVAC the supreme speech or the transcendental speech. This consists of pure awareness of the self. It is also called PARAVANI.

This doctrine can also be understood by the example of an artist's creation from the grossest to the finest level. His tangible creation like a painting, etc. can be VAIKHARI and the images formed mentally, where his creation shines within him in the form of MADHYAMA. Before even this exists a subtle creative urge like a stir, or restlessness or inward flutter which is PASYANTI. Finally, at the most subtle level, the original seed of the artistic creation lies in the inner most center which is shining as PARAVAC, the Supreme speech.

13.10 BONDAGE

After discussing the cosmic manifestation in the form of tattva's and speech, let us come to bondage and liberation as per Kashmir Shaivism.

From the absolute point of view there is no bondage, yet when the Lord manifests as limited due to His own free will, He forgets His own perfection and becomes bound. In other words, bondage is nothing more than an individual's self - forgetfulness or ignorance of his own perfection. Even in the state of apparent limitation he remains pure and perfect although he is unaware of it. For the purpose of divine sport, the Absolute voluntarily accepts the limitation of self - consciousness, which give rise to limited desires. Because of these limited desires, the finite self performs various finite actions and experiences their consequences. Thus, the chain of karma leads the individual from bondage to bondage.

13.11 THREE MALAS (IMPURITIES)

This limitations which constitutes the essential nature of the finite self is called MALA, which means impurity or taint. It is a manifestation of divine free will and is of three kinds. Anava Mala is the primary or innate ignorance of the individual soul. It reduces the universal consciousness to a limited aspect. Mayiya Mala is the limited condition brought about by maya. Karma Mala is the limitation in the power of action. Anava Mala leads to Karma Mala, e.g. good or evil actions. This leads to Mayiya Mala which brings about the experience of pleasure, pain, birth and death due to the vasanas or habit energies of good and evil actions. It is the force of the vasanas that carries the jivas from one life to another.

13.12 LIBERATION

It is natural that we must strive from bondage to liberation. Libration according to Kashmir Shavism means PRATYABHIJNA or recognition of one's true nature which means the original, pure I - consciousness. This pure I - consciousness is immediate, non-relational awareness. To be integrated to the divine I is liberation. As Abhinavagupta puts it "MOKSA OR LIBERATION is nothing else but the awareness of one's true nature". The highest attainment, however, is that of Shiva Consciousness in which the entire universe appears as I - consciousness.

13.13 SHAKTIPAT AND TRIKA YOGA

We most remember that it is not simply by intellectual understanding that one gains awareness of true I - consciousness. There has to be shaktipata - the descent of divine grace.

In order to earn grace, one has to undergo spiritual discipline. This is known, as upaya or Yoga. Here we would draw a line between two prevalent systems of Yoga in ancient India and Trika Yoga of Kashmir. Ancient India had Yoga for monks like Patanjali Yoga and Hatha Yoga and Yoga for householders which had evolved into various forms. Trika Yoga on the other hand is free from all stringent restrictions and repressive discipline. It discourages torturing the body and mind or starving the senses. Abhinavagupta calling on the authority of his greatest preceptor, Sambhunatha, clearly states that the senses can only give up their fascination for wordly enjoyments through a spontaneous indifference arising from the blissful experiences that Yoga elicits. In other words, once a practitioner has discovered the inner bliss of the self, all the common sense pleasures will seem inadequate by comparison and will, therefore, no longer be a temptation. He adds that the senses are liable to adverse reactions if these are forcibly controlled.

Let us further define Yoga as per Trika system. As per MALINIVIJAYATANTRA, "The unity of one (a finite being) with another (Almighty God) is called Yoga by Siva Yogins".

The Yoga or upayas as per Kashmir Shaivism are divided under four heads having relevant emphasis viz (1) ANUPAYA (ananda or Bliss) (2) SAMBHAVOPAYA (ICCHA) (3) SAKTOPAYA (JYANA) (4) ANAVOPAYA (Kriya or action). These upayas or means have been so categorised as supreme means, medium means or inferior means, depending upon the individual potential.

As already mentioned grace of God, i.e., Shaktipata is independent of human effort. The Yoga of Patanjali starts from lowest type and ends with those of the highest type so that practitioner is led step by step into highest type of samadhi. But Abhinavagupta starts in his Tantraloka with the highest type of Yoga and comes down gradually to lower type of its practices. He is of the view that aspirant should catch hold of the highest practice and should try it. If, however, he feels that he is not capable of treading the highest path, he can come down to the path nearest to it. One may in this way come down to any lower path in accordance with his psychological capabilities.

13.14 FOUR UPAYAS (MEANS)

ANUPAYA

The first one is Anupaya. It is immediate through speediest descent of grace. Therefore, Diksha (initiation) has practically no role. In this path to liberation no active process on the part of the individual is involved. An aspirant has only to observe that nothing is to be done. Be as you are: only reside in your being. This is attributed to ANANDA SAKTI of Siva and is also called ANANDOPAYA. Here we can quote from famous Shaiva saint of Kashmir - Pandit Krishan Joo Razdan :-

**Oh Lord !
With your speediest Grace;
Make me transcend all - Will, Knowledge & Action**

SHAMBHAVOPAYA

It is also called ICCHOPAYA because it comes about by a mere orientation of the will. It is designed for advanced aspirants, who by meditating on the Shiva Tattva, attain the highest level of awareness. In this path, will predominates. It involves the practice of maintaining the constant awareness that the universe is nothing but CHITI. Even this must ultimately be transcended. Thus all mental activities stop and mind shines without any flutter of ideas. The light of pure consciousness alone shines in such practice and an aspirant discovers the pure transcendental aspect of his self in that state. All this happens by means of intuition and not by means of thinking or understanding capacities, both of which become absorbed in the pure lusture of consciousness of the self in that state. A certain type of bodily posture, as described in the sixth chapter of Bhagavadgita, becomes helpful in the beginning of the practice of this Yoga, but it is not required afterwards.

The same Yoga and mudra have also been depicted in the poetry of Kalidasa in the third canto of his KUMARS AMBHAVA.

SHAKTOPAYA

If a person feels that he is not capable to succeed in the practice of sambhopaya, he can try SAKTOPAYA which has its position just below it. It is also called Jnana upaya. Here the primary concern is to realise the self through knowledge, meditation and contemplation of ideas such as "SHIVOHAM" (I am Siva). Mental activity plays an important role in this upaya. A regular practice in mental repetition of the exactly

correct nature of the real self leads to pure and limitless consciousness in one self. Thus, a person having attained perfection in Sakta Yoga, attains the Sakta Samavesha of Sivahold and becomes fit for the practice of Sambhava Yoga.

ANAYOPAYA

We are discussing the practice of Yoga as per individuals capacities. For those who are not competent to practice the two higher type of Yoga, there is ANAVOPAYA. Anu means the psychological self, the mind body complex and this Yoga is useful to those beings who live in the field of maya. It is also called Kriya Yoga because mental activity of meditation dominates its practice. Certain objective elements are taken as the targets of meditation in this Yoga and they are imagined to be identical with Param Shiva and in this way a practitioner feels his omnipresence. Some of these objective elements are nearer to one's self and some are farther and the Anava Yoga is of several categories on this account, like budhi being nearest to self, then prana, the life force, then deha, the physical body and still further sthana, the phenomenal universe consisting of time, space and the elements which have their place in them.

13.15 DHYANA YOGA

Dhyana Yoga is the form of anava yoga which is practiced with contemplative meditation on budhi. The word 'dhyana' means contemplation. There are different forms of dhyana. For example, you are practicing dhyana when you contemplate on the lotus in your heart, or on the meaning of some mantra such as "So-HAM".

13.16 UCCARA YOGA

The word "UCCARA" means "breathing" uccara actually means concentration on the breath, the power of life force - Prana, whose functions vary depending on whether we are awake, asleep, in a transcendental state, and so on. One is supposed to meditate upon this phenomenon with the understanding that they are nothing other than one's own inner self. With practice one withdraws one's attention from the body and the mind, and focuses on the most subtle elements of pure power of prana/aprana working in its functions. This technique is quite popular with Buddhist. They have adopted it extensively. It is considered simple as compared to other techniques.

13.17 KARANA YOGA

The term karna denotes the physical body, particularly "sense organ" which are to be made the target of contemplate meditation. Physical postures are to be accompanied by special form of contemplation which will help students realize the absolute divinity of their own nature.

13.18 STHANA KALPANA

It is meditation on entities outside the person like on some particular place alongwith contemplation of non-dualistic theism. The two objects used are time and space. This Yoga carries practitioners out of the limitations of time and washes its impression and they develop an impression of eternity which becomes one with their essential nature. The practitioners realize that they are eternal.

Ritual performance of many types of initiation (DIKSA) are also considered to be aids to Trika Yoga, especially for an aspirant of lesser ability. That helps him in acquiring greater ability to practice any type of the above mentioned Yoga. Details regarding that ritual have been discussed in detail in Tantraloka, the gist of which is given in Tantrasara.

13.19 VIGYAN BHAIKAV TANTRA

It is a very ancient book on Yoga. It goes directly to the heart of the problem of the union of human consciousness with the Divine, avoiding mechanical worship, external rites and ceremonies. It is a precious gem delineating the mystic approach to the Divine. For this purpose, it makes full use of all the aspects of human life - prana, manas, imagination and intuition. It contains 112 types of yoga. There is hardly any other book on yoga which has described so many ways of approach to central reality that is present in each man as his essential self.

13.20 SPECIAL FEATURES OF SAIVA YOGA

It should be noted that Saiva Yoga is not a practice in suppression of the functions of mind as taught by Patanjali. It is a practice in uniting the individual with universal by means of interesting and blissfull practices as taught in Saiva scriptures. In fact, out-wardly one may perform the age old, traditional or vedic rituals but inwardly he has to seek the exact truth through some yogic practices taught in Trika System. Maintaining the semblance of an ordinary house holder he has not to make any show of the powers aroused through its practice. There is no restriction based on caste, creed, gender etc. in eligibility

for initiation in the Saiva yoga. Even a lowest caste can become a disciple or even a preceptor if he attains sufficient success in this practice.

13.21 DEVOTION FOR LORD

Finally, rather concluding, the only condition for saivayoga is devotion and Urge. Devotion is an essential aid to all the practices. An aspirant not blessed with devotion for the Lord can not succeed in the practice or Saivayoga. The highest knowledge of the absolute monism has been termed as the highest devotion.

Here, we can refer to Utpaladeva, who commands the greatest reverence not only for his philosophic insight or poetic genius but also for his supreme devotion to the Lord. His SIVASTOTRAVALI can rightly be called ocean of devotion.

13.22 SPECIFIC FEATURES OF KASHMIR SHAIIVISM

At this stage, let us have little summing up regarding specific features of Kashmir Shaivism. Indeed, it is a religio - philosophical system elaborated mostly in the Pratyabhijna Darsana, which means re-cognition of self. Siva voluntarily adopts self - velling and becomes a jiva. The problem for the jiva is to recognise his self as Siva. The Pratyabhijna philosophy first gives a description of ultimate reality, shows how it descends to the level of the jiva or empirical individual and how the jiva can recognise himself as Siva and become liberated.

Comparing to the Vedanta philosophy of Samkara, it accept the cosmic manifestation in totality. Some religious thinkers say "Kashmir Shaivism accepts a great challenge". Cit or Brahman is both prakasha and Vimarsha i.e. light and activity. Maya is Siva-Mayi: Divine and perfectly real. The universe is not mithya. The universe is Siva-rupa and therefore real. It is a display of the glory of the Divine.

Kashmir Shaivism adopts a realistic and utilitarian attitude. It relies on three fold authority of (a) the divine scriptures, (b) experienced preceptors and (c) One's own intuitiue self-experiences to which the highest importance has been given. In fact, an aspirant is allowed to adopt any system of practice in accordance with his individual psycho - physical aptitudes.

13.23 LINGODDHARA - DIKSA

This is a very special feature of Kashmir Shaivism. As per 17th chapter of TANTRASARA of Abhinavgupta a man of another religious denomination can, if he so desires, be initiated in Shaivism after being freed from his former belief. This has also been explained in detail in 22 and 23 chapter (AHNIKA) of TANTRALOKA.

13.24 DEFINITION

Now, let us have a clear delineation regarding the definition of Kashmir Shaivism :

Kashmir Shaivism is a process of discovery of individual soul as one with the Universal Being through a process based on :

- Correct knowledge of the exact nature of universal elements.
- Practice in Trika Yoga.
- A highly affectionate and devotional attitude towards the Absolute Reality.

We have discussed in detail the above three basis of this philosophy, i.e., 36 cosmic manifestations or Tattvas, Trika Yoga or upyas and the great stress on devotion to Lord.

13.25 RELEVANCE OF KASHMIR SHAIIVISM

Before summing up relevance of this philosophy let us have a look at the Indian philosophy in general. It is a fact that no nation can achieve its desired national aims without the help of a suitable philosophy. A deep rooted philosophy can urge

and inspire a nation towards its national aims. The ancient Indian philosophy took comprehensive view of human life and was practicable in that ancient social set up, served well for thousands of years and India continued to be a prosperous country flourishing in religion and philosophy. However, subsequently, impact of many great thinkers have led us from faith to reasoning, practice to theory, etc. We were taken from a practical path of all round progress towards an idealistic path of mere theories and suitable only for few people. The result of this idealistic approach by rulers and thinkers has been invasion and destruction at the hands of more practical and powerful foreigners.

Kashmir Shaivism is the only school of Indian philosophy which can inspire us for both material and spiritual progress. It can serve as a sound basis for our national aims of establishing a welfare state. This philosophy is to be presented in the present day style in the light of the psychology of the youngest generations of our nation. The message for them is that world should be accepted in totality. No problem of society, state, nation and individual is to be ignored. A person can not succeed in any aim of life if he shuts his eyes towards these problems. The whole life lord Krishna, as depicted in Mahabharata is a glowing example of practical Shaivism.

As a pious house holder, we have to enjoy tasteful worldly objects within the limits laid down by traditional social laws and go on practising Saiva Yoga side by side. Having attained success in the Yoga and relished the blissful experience of self-awareness, one loses interest in worldly enjoyments. This leads to self-recognition and experience of one's practical God head.

Be in world - yet away from it. As an elder person, we have to set such an example and create an inspiration for others. Here, it would be very pertinent to narrate an incident of a realised soul, a house holder. He was an elderly noble soul engrossed in his "Sadhna" most of the time. During evening people would interact with him, join the prayer, followed by little "prasad".

A bright young man had an enlightening experience with him. It started with a doubt. Why this holy man is interfering with the cosmic process ?. During distribution of "prasad", the people would narrate their urgent family concerns to which he would reply "Mother Durga will solve your problem".

One day this young man could express his doubt as he could find a movement alone with him. The noble person explained. "Look, my dear son, I am not living in some forest or hillock. I consider all the people around as my family members. I only direct their attention to God, the eternal Guide, who can give us the real wisdom to bear pleasure or pain.

"Perhaps you are not satisfied", he continued looking at his doubtful countenance. He directed him to get up and reach for the broom which was at the farthest end of room, hidden behind the door, "Dear, have a close look at the broom", he suggested. "I can see circle of threads tied around" the young man observed.

"I have since mastered the ASHAT SIDDHIS (the eight super-national powers) which are tied with the broom and kept at the farthest corner of the room", the holy man continued, "I feel you are a bright deserving young man. You verily require my blessings. Please ask any help or "aashirvad" and this broom will grant you". The young man could, thus, realise the 'level of attainment' of this holy man, who knew the real meaning of attachment and detachment.

13.26 LALLESHWARI - HER SPIRITUAL GEMS

While expounding the relevance of Kashmir Shaivism our deepest gratitude goes to Laleshwari, whose teachings give a unique opportunity to have insight into this mystic philosophy. She conveyed its essence in a simple way for benefit of the humanity.

Emanating from the basic Creed of Kashmir Shaivism she stresses positive acceptance of the material world rather than the philosophy of escapism. We can rather say that God has made man in His own image. It is His Own Maya Shakti which makes man to see differently. Therefore, real joy can be gained as we live in this world and go about our work. Avoiding suppression and denial like great puritans, we should exercise moderation in living and turning away from the ambition of wealth, power and pleasures of senses. This will prepare us for the inward journey to realize God.

We can, indeed, get the spiritual thrill by reproducing a few mystical outpourings of her heart :-

GRACE OF GOD IS INDEPENDENT OF HUMAN EFFORT.

Some Thou pushed towards Bliss Thyself !

Some struggled very hard !

Some got drunk and obsessed :

Some one's Sadhna ended in Vain !

TO REALISE HIM OVERCOME THE BARRIERS

Shiva abides in all that exists anywhere ;

Do not discriminate between a Hindu and a Musalman ;

If you are wise, recognize your true Self ;

That is the true awareness of God.

DO NOT ESCAPE THE WORLD

Some renounced their homes, some the hermitages ;

stay as you are and be firm in your mind.

Thereby you will get established in the Self ;

What is the good of smearing ashes.

MODERATION IN LIVING

Overeating will not permit you reach the goal ;

Willful abstention from food makes you conceited.

Eat moderately to be a normal person ;

*Moderate eating would surely lead to unbolting of the
Gates !*

LOOK FOR GOD WITHIN

Looking for the mystic Moon within me ;

It was--like searching for the like.

*I found Narayana (Shiva) permeating everywhere/
everything ;*

Why this sport of diversity, Oh Lord !

ON KUNDALINI

*Crossing the Six Forests, came the SHESHIKALA
oozing,
The Prakrti was sacrificed (burnt out) with the air
(Prana).
With the fire of love, I roasted my heart,
Thus SHIVA was realized by me.*

BLISS

*I, Lalla, entered through the garden - gate of my soul ;
There, O Joy ! I found SHIVA united with SHAKTI.
Overwhelmed, I got immersed in Lake of Nector.
Even though alive or dead, what can existence do unto me !*

13.27 CONCLUSION

Let us work for upliftment as our goal. With our own self - effort we should change and strive for enlightenment. Let this change permeate from man to family, to state and nation as a whole. Leading to universal good this will usher in peaceful and conflict free world.

14 Kashmir Shaivism and our Times

Virendra Qazi

The philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism occupies a distinguished position among the various schools of religious creed and thought. It provides the complete analysis of human personality and delves into the deepest and most comprehensive psychology of man. In this way, it makes the greatest contribution to furthering of human understanding.

In fact, this universal philosophy focuses on relation between God, Nature and Man, which transcends all the barriers of time, place and diverse human-cultures. It leads to the highest level of self-realisation revealing the inner most secrets of the nature of Self. It integrates all the aspects of life, which are taken in totality. Thus, rather than negation and denial, it celebrates life. Kashmir Shaivism is the only school of Indian philosophy which can inspire us for both material and spiritual progress. Besides making valuable contribution to the Indian culture, it is the highest spiritual philosophy discovered and expressed in the world.

No doubt, Kashmir Shaivism is presently evoking deep interest in west, with lot of pioneering research work at leading universities in Europe and the United States. It is a matter of concern that nothing much is done in the land of its birth, rather land of discovery of this philosophy. We should ponder over this situation and consider the importance of this philosophy in this strife-torn world. A thrill of self confidence, the spirit of bliss, surpassing all barriers of caste, creed and gender, no look back, no regret, the inner journey, see everything as creation of God, etc - how prominently and conceptually these are emphasised in Kashmir Shaivism. It should be our solemn endeavour to present this ancient philosophy in common man's language so that a resurgence takes place with the goal of UPLIFTMENT at individual, social, national and world as a whole. We can conclude without any hesitation that Kashmir Shaivism is the religion of tomorrow.

14.1 DEFINITION

Kashmir Shaivism is a process of discovery of individual soul as one with the Universal Being through a process based on :

- Correct knowledge of the exact nature of universal elements.
- Practice in Trika Yoga.
- A highly affectionate and devotional attitude towards the Absolute Reality.

It is a religio - philosophical system elaborated mostly in the Pratyabhijna Darsana, which means recognition of self. Siva voluntarily adopts self - velling and becomes a jiva. The problem for the jiva is to recognise his self as Siva. The Pratyabhijna philosophy first gives a description of ultimate reality, shows how it descends to the level of the jiva or empirical individual and how the jiva can recognise himself as Siva and become liberated.

Param Shiva is the ultimate reality who is the nature of Bliss itself and all complete in Himself. He is beyond description, beyond all manifestation, beyond limitation of form, time and space. He is eternal, infinite, all pervading, all knowing and all powerful. In fact, this reality is ineffable and beyond all descriptions.

14.2 SPECIAL FEATURES OF SAIVA YOGA

Saiva Yoga is not a practice in suppression of the functions of mind as taught by Patanjali. It is a practice in uniting the individual with universal by means of interesting and blissfull practices as taught in Saiva scriptures. In fact, out-wardly one may perform the age old, traditional or vedic rituals but inwardly he has to seek the exact truth through some yogic practices taught in Trika System. Maintaining the semblance of an ordinary house holder he has not to make any show of the powers aroused through its

practice. There is no restriction based on caste, creed, gender etc. in eligibility for initiation in the Saiva yoga. Even a lowest caste can become a disciple or even a preceptor if he attains sufficient success in this practice.

14.3 RELEVANCE OF KASHMIR SHAIIVISM

No nation can achieve its desired national aims without the help of a suitable philosophy. A deep rooted philosophy can urge and inspire a nation towards its national aims. The ancient Indian philosophy took comprehensive view of human life and was practicable in that ancient social set up, served well for thousands of years and India continued to be a prosperous country flourishing in religion and philosophy. However, subsequently, impact of many great thinkers have led us from faith to reasoning, practice to theory, etc. We were taken from a practical path of all round progress towards an idealistic path of mere theories and suitable only for few people. The result of this idealistic approach by rulers and thinkers has been invasion and destruction at the hands of more practical and powerful foreigners.

Kashmir Shaivism is the only school of Indian philosophy which can inspire us for both material and spiritual progress. It can serve as a sound basis for our national aims of establishing a welfare state. This philosophy is to be presented in the present day style in the light of the psychology of the youngest generations of our nation. The message for them is that world should be accepted in totality. No problem of society, state, nation and individual is to be ignored. A person can not succeed in any aim of life if he shuts his eyes towards these problems. The whole life lord Krishna, as depicted in Mahabharata is a glowing example of practical Shaivism.

14.4 LALLESHWARI - HER SPIRITUAL GEMS

While expounding the relevance of Kashmir Shaivism our deepest gratitude goes to Laleshwari, whose teachings give a unique opportunity to have insight into this mystic philosophy. She conveyed its essence in a simple way for benefit of the humanity.

Emanating from the basic Creed of Kashmir Shaivism she stresses positive acceptance of the material world rather than the philosophy of escapism. We can rather say that God has made man in His own image. It is His Own Maya Shakti which makes man to see differently. Therefore, real joy can be gained as we live in this world and go about our work.

Avoiding suppression and denial like great puritans, we should exercise moderation in living and turning away from the ambition of wealth, power and pleasures of senses. This will prepare us for the inward journey to realize God.

14.5 CONCLUSION

Let us work for upliftment as our goal. With our own self - effort we should change and strive for enlightenment. Let this change permeate from man to family, to state and nation as a whole. Leading to universal good this will usher in peaceful and conflict free world.