

THE SHIVA SUTRAS

In My Understanding

V. Susan Ferguson





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*These pages are dedicated to all who long for their Freedom,
Moksha, Jivan Mukti! May we find our Way Home. We meet in
the Heart.*



*"This whole universe has come into existence just
to carry you to God consciousness." - Swami
Lakshmanjoo, The Shiva Sutras*

Immersing my days in this sacred text is a source of unending joy for me, which I hope is contagious. It is my hope that my sincere, if somewhat humble impressions of these great sutras will encourage you to read their superbly powerful words of wisdom. I am not a scholar. You will find your own treasure hidden among these threads.

John and Denise Hughes, the hearts of the Universal Shaiva Fellowship, have been very kind in giving me permission to quote from Swami Lakshmanjoo's Shiva Sutras, The Supreme Awakening. Swami Lakshmanjoo was also the source for Jaideva Singh's wonderful translation.

I am endeavoring to use as few Sanskrit terms as possible and will not include many of the more complex understandings in Kashmir Shaivism. You will want to study these for yourself, and become familiar with the Sanskrit terms in the translations and commentaries by Swami Lakshmanjoo and Jaideva Singh.

The Shiva Sutras will serve as a brilliant unerring guide for you on your way Home. May you find the God within you. We Meet in the Heart.

The Shiva Sutras – My Understanding

After reading the Shiva Sutras for many years now, I have become convinced that they share a rarified place of reverence and universal importance close to the Bhagavad Gita.

The Bhagavad Gita is a text directed to everyone – it is of value to any and all who want to understand the meaning of life and their place in the Cosmos. It is the ultimate user's manual for the human condition. This perfect precise jewel is the brilliant synthesis of previous Sanskrit texts, the Vedas and the Upanishads. The sheer genius of the Bhagavad Gita continually amazes me.

While the Bhagavad Gita also contains instructions for those who seek Liberation, the Shiva Sutras to my mind appear to be more directed to those who are actively practicing and devoting their lives to this end, the goal. The Shiva Sutras will reveal what you may expect on your way Home and when you arrive.

Every time I reread these verses, I see and learn something quite new and different and this has convinced me of their sacred value and importance. Each time I approach them they reveal deeper nuances of wisdom. Of course their power to enlighten me is relative only to my own consciousness at the time I read them. That is their magic and the proof of my required necessity to be receptive and thus able to absorb what they transmit.

Here I will be writing in my own words what these verses evoke in my consciousness. The reason for this effort is the hope that my humble study – I am not a scholar - will encourage the readers to find the essence of these sutras for themselves. And frankly, this excursion is for my own

pleasure and the joy of immersing myself in the inimitable Wisdom of Kashmir Shaivism.

I will use these two translations as my guide:

* Swami Lakshmanjoo: Shiva Sutras, The Supreme Awakening, With the Commentary of Kshemaraja, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, and edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2002.

* Jaideva Singh: Siva Sutras, The Yoga of Supreme Identity, Text of the Sutras and the Commentary Vimarsini of Kshemaraja Translated into English with Introduction, Notes, Running Exposition, Glossary and Index; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1979 and reprints.



In the preface to the Jaideva Singh translation, he talks about the difficulties he faced and how he was “afraid of setting pen to paper lest I should do injustice to this great scripture.” Singh approached his old guru, Swami Lakshmanjoo in Kashmir who agreed to help. “He taught me the sutras together with the commentary of Kshemaraja and gave luminous exposition of some very knotty problems. I am deeply beholden to him [Swami Lakshmanjoo] for unraveling the meaning of this difficult text.”

Because of Swami Lakshmanjoo’s contribution to the Jaideva Singh translation, these two books work well together. While Swami Lakshmanjoo is the consciousness of the enlightened master and has these verse imbedded in his very being as his own experiential Knowledge, the Jaideva Singh translation is excellent from the point of view of the student longing for enlightenment. We can learn from both.

The Jaideva Singh version also has a lovely Glossary of Technical Terms in the back, which is very useful as the terminology of Kashmir Shaivism is quite unique and the Sanskrit words the reader may be familiar with in Vedanta or other schools will not have the exact same meaning. This is natural because Kashmir Shaivism considers the other schools of thought to be incomplete.

The Shiva Sutras: In my Understanding

In heartfelt humility I offer you my understanding of the Shiva Sutras in the sincere hope that you will be moved to read and study them yourself. I am not a scholar, only a lover of God.

As we are currently in the Twilight of the Kali Yuga, it is imperative that those of us who wish to return Home into the Oneness to fully utilize the time remaining to us. Remember that the Kali Yuga is the best and easiest Cycle of Time to reach enlightenment. States of consciousness that would take much more time and effort in the previous cycles are more accessible now. I wish you all Victory over Delusion. We meet in the Heart!





Encoded, Layered & Veiled Meanings within Sanskrit Words

Sanskrit is a language that is somewhat like a secret code, an encryption that can compress multiple layers of meaning in one sound. Early civilizations like the Anasazi, the Celts, the Indus Valley, and the Australian Aborigines used symbols to encode knowledge that would have been easily understood by the people who were a part of these traditions. Similar symbols are reported found engraved on bits of crashed UFOs. One symbol alone can contain metaphysical principles, wisdom, events, and even warnings - the meaning of which would have been orally transmitted from one generation to the next over the centuries. Remember that writing itself is a symptom of the Kali Yuga.

One Sanskrit word can have a confluence many meanings; some are very subtle with layers of information encoded within them. These layers are understood in accordance with and relative to levels of consciousness. As Jesus said, 'For those who have the ears to hear, let them hear!' This approach applies to the Sanskrit texts. The Kashmir Shaivite texts are particularly veiled in this respect. They were never intended for people who were only curious and had no real inclination or disposition for the journey to God consciousness.

The language in the Kashmir Shaivite texts is intentionally veiled and meant only for the real seekers who had been chosen and instructed by a qualified teacher, the guru. Even in early times most people could not read Sanskrit, just as today there are very few. So the student would have been dependent on the master.

This is similar to music as no one would think of learning music only from a book. A music teacher, who is also a master with a developed ear and a profound knowledge of music, is essential for any serious achievement. The great teacher will naturally take only the best students, because they are ready and can benefit.



The number of Sanskrit texts that are being translated by western scholars these days are a wonder indeed – to name only a few: Boris Marjanovic, Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, Mark Dyczkowski, Lilian Silburn, Andre Padoux, Raffaele Torella, Alexander Wynne, Lyne Bansat-Boudon, John Nemec, Don Handelman and David Shulman.

I personally am grateful to all of them, especially after my own humble turtle-paced endeavors to learn this very grammatically complicated language. In India they allow 15 years for the student to master Sanskrit. However in the process of reading numerous and varying translations, the problems become evident.

No one can translate these texts with just a dictionary.

I have the super edition of the M. Monier-Williams ‘Sanskrit to English Dictionary’ and I was overjoyed the day it arrived. What a herculean achievement this dictionary was! In the introduction, the primary author Monier Monier-Williams briefly reveals the difficulties he faced in executing this “colossal monument of industry and scholarship” as well as “trials of health and weariness of spirit” which made this a life long effort, which finally came to an end a few days before his death in 1899. We are exceedingly grateful to him and to all the scholars who have contributed to our understanding of Sanskrit and the treasures of wisdom therein concealed.

However again I will say that after reading many translations and translators you realize that these texts cannot be known by mere scholarship, no matter how prestigious, even with the best dictionaries and multiple cross-references to other textual usage. To begin with, English is a language of commerce and the subtle textured layered meanings encoded within one Sanskrit word cannot be fully and precisely translated into a very limited linear language such as English.

Kashmir Shaivism epitomizes this barrier. The teachings emerged in the wonderful magical world of the Kashmir Valley, which was once the intellectual and artistic center of the world and attracted brilliant men and women from many lands including China, Greece, and Tibet. The people of Kashmir were cultured and loved learning; and along with the enchanted perfection of its natural beauty, snowy mountains, pristine lakes and rivers, green forests and valleys - all made Kashmir a womb for creative thinking.

“For 2000 years Kashmir has been the home of Sanskrit learning and from this small valley have issued masterpieces of history, poetry, romance, fable and philosophy...For centuries it was the home of the greatest Sanskrit scholars...no scholar could be considered learned enough till he had associated himself with the illustrious learned men in Kashmir. [S.Sapru]” Kashmir was Shangri La – now lost.

Shaivism is said to have an eternal existence like the Vedas and this is not the place for its history, which can be learned in K.C. Pandey’s study of Abhinavagupta. The teachings were passed from master to disciple and important invaluable texts - from Vasugupta’s Shiva Sutras to Somananda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta, to name only a few for the sake of brevity. These men were enlightened masters and what they left in this darkening world is from another realm, a higher consciousness.

The entire body of Kashmir Shaivite thought was collected and presented in a superb expression of the Sanskrit language by the polymath Abhinavagupta (950-1020 AD) in his magnum opus the Tantraloka. Abhinavagupta was a brilliant thinker, astute philosopher, sensitive poet, mystic, and enlightened master. He is acknowledged by India herself as perhaps India’s greatest mind. He is a rare pleasure to read.

The enlightened masters who wrote these texts intentionally veiled the true meaning, which was only intended for the chosen, advanced aspirants who had purified their consciousness. In my view, the texts of Kashmir Shaivism reflect the transmission of the eternal wisdom that would have been known to all in the Satya Yuga.

As the Moslems began to invade and finally captured Kashmir, this invaluable Kashmir Shaivite wisdom had to be hidden and protected. In our current Kali Yuga, these Sanskrit texts reveal the sacred understanding of our real nature as the Oneness and also provide true enlightening ‘means’ (upayas) for the journey Home.

When scholars, however well meaning and good hearted, attempt to translate the Kashmir Shaivite texts, their translations are often filled with confused ambiguity that sometimes comes close to real understanding - and occasionally is abstruse and bewildering. Understanding this confusion among the translations has taken me a few years of acquiring and reading stacks of books, some of which were very helpful and others useless. I am hoping to make clear and simple what I have been fortunate enough to learn.



I began to read the Shiva Sutras in 1997. Thankfully the Jaideva Singh edition was easy to obtain. In those days I had no idea who Swami Lakshmanjoo was and even the word ‘swami’ had rather negative connotations for me that carried the memory of those ambitious bogus snake-oil-peddlers who had come to the USA and passed themselves off as enlightened masters.

In my preliminary readings I did not notice that the introduction to Jaideva Singh’s translation of the Shiva Sutras mentioned Swami Lakshmanjoo: “He taught me the sutras together with the commentary of Ksemaraja (Abhinavagupta’s pupil) and gave luminous exposition of some very knotty problems. I am deeply beholden to him for unraveling the meaning of this difficult text.”

The fact that Swami Lakshmanjoo was the only living source for the authentic meaning and interpretation of all the Kashmir Shaivite texts became more and more apparent as I read more of Jaideva Singh’s translations of the Spanda Karikas, Pratyabhijnahridayam, Paratrishika Vivarana, and others - all of which were dedicated in humility to Swami Lakshmanjoo. Other scholars who wrote books on and translated these Sanskrit texts also acknowledged Swami Lakshmanjoo as the last and only authority on these highly complex and intentionally encoded veiled profound texts.

Even now as I am writing my thoughts on the Shiva Sutras and using both the Jaideva Singh edition and Swami Lakshmanjoo's revelations, it is obvious to me which version is superior, at once both simpler and deeper. I do not question Jaideva Singh's spiritual achievements and without him I would not have ever known about these brilliant texts. I am however emphasizing the greatness of Swami Lakshmanjoo's consciousness. I feel certain that Jaideva Singh would agree.

Swami Lakshmanjoo lived in Kashmir all his life and did not bother to sell himself to the west. He was taught by Kashmir Shaivite masters, and spent his entire life reading, studying, and mastering for himself these texts. He spoke Sanskrit fluently. He was born with a photographic memory and from memory alone could spontaneously quote verses. Still the depth of his greatness is beyond that, beyond the power of words to describe. When you read and listen to him, you will come to your own understanding of his consciousness and the power he has to transmit these liberating enlightening ideas.

“Due to events of the past, the tradition and teachings of Kashmir Shaivism have remained concealed for the past eight hundred years. Swami Lakshmanjoo is the last and the greatest of the Saints and Masters of this tradition. He is like a splendid and rare jewel. He spent his whole life, beginning when he was a small boy, studying and practicing the teachings of this tradition and in so doing, has, due to his intellectual power and the strength of his awareness, realized both spiritually and intellectually the Reality of its thought.

“It is this oral teaching which is the very life of this tradition and it is Swami Lakshmanjoo who is the last living repository of this secret wealth.” [John Hughes – Introduction to Kashmir Shaivism]



Kashmir – the continuing conflict: The last Hindu king Udiyana Deva, was replaced by Shams-ud-Din in 1346, whose dynasty ruled until 1586 when the Mughul (Persian for Mongol) emperor Akbar conquered Kashmir to firmly establish Muslim influence.
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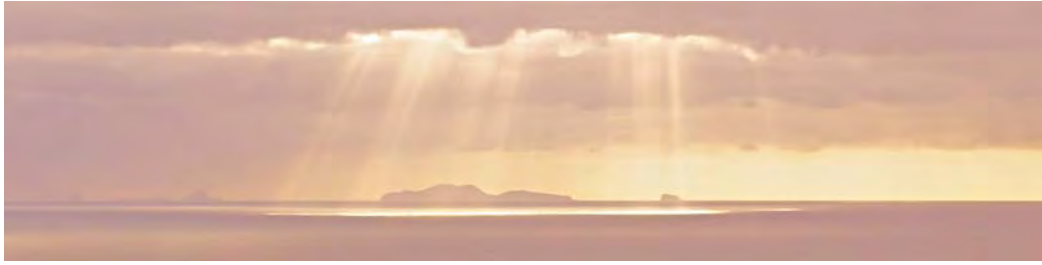
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The Origin of the Shiva Sutras

In the valley of Kashmir 860-925 AD lived Vasugupta. He was recognized as an enlightened master, and a man who possessed superior knowledge and wisdom. Fully God-realized, he was filled with a tremendous purity of heart and was intensely devoted to the Lord Shiva, the Supreme Maheshvara. He did not accept the various teachings of those masters who lived in Kashmir at that time.

One night Lord Shiva infused a dream into Vasugupta's consciousness for the purpose of restoring those secret teachings that had been lost to the world even in Vasugupta's time. The dream revealed the existence of a large special rock at the foot of Mahadeva Mountain.

Shiva told Vasugupta to go that rock and lift it, for underneath a great esoteric teaching would be found inscribed into it. Vasugupta awoke and set off to search for this sacred rock. Upon finding the rock nestled on the side of a small stream, he touched it and the mere touch of his hand caused the huge rock to at once turn over - and written on it there underneath were the Shiva Sutras.

Vasugupta was filled with wonder and joy. He began to study these sutras and over time absorbed them and shared them with his best students, always remembering that in the dream Shiva had cautioned him to reveal them only to those who are fit for grace. So it was then, so it is now.



The Shiva Sutras – One

The beginning sutra (a thread) reveals to us that everything and everyone in this entire universe is in fact the Free Will of the Supreme Consciousness. Everything is the Oneness. And the Oneness is absolute Free Will Consciousness. What more is there to know?

The Oneness takes on the temporal ‘appearance’ of Separation as the many Selves – you and me and every other being in all the Myriad Realms in this universe. We appear to be separate, but in reality are not. There is only the One, only one Self (Paramatma), one Soul.

For those of us who have not yet achieved enlightenment, this truth is difficult to ‘feel’ because we identity with our individual personality-self and not with the eternal Self within, which is always patiently waiting for us to turn inward and recognize the truth of our real being.

Once we reconnect with that Supreme Consciousness within, we realize that ‘there is no plurality of Self. Consciousness is only one Self’ [JS]. The Sanskrit word (caitanya) for consciousness is non-relational, meaning there is no subject-object relation. There is no word in English that conveys this subtle distinction.

The fact that English is inadequate to describe the metaphysical concepts in the Shiva Sutras makes conveying their meaning a real challenge. I will try my best, but now and then I will revert the Sanskrit words as defined by Kashmir Shaivism.

For example the Sanskrit word PRAKASA is defined as pure consciousness, shining, luminous, effulgence. Prakasha is not physical light, but rather the light of consciousness by which everything appears. There is no English equivalent.

The entire universe is the absolute Free Will (svatantrya) of the Supreme Consciousness. Everyone is an expression of the Free Will of the Supreme Consciousness – the good and the bad. Everything is filled with God Consciousness and therefore ‘nothing is right and nothing is wrong’ [SLJ]. It is all God.

We are the Veiled portions of the Oneness playing here in the eternal cycles of creation/expansion and contraction/dissolution of Time and Space. When we are weary of our ‘play’ we turn within and in longing seek that which we have always been. We recognize the God-within as our real Self and not the individual personal-self, our current life body data-collecting vehicle.

The means by which we come to realize our God Consciousness is also God Consciousness, because there is ‘nothing that exists and nothing that that not exist’ [SLJ] anywhere that is not God Consciousness.

We already are that which we seek! So as Swami Lakshmanjoo says, ‘then there is no need to realize anything, it is already realized.’ These kind of mind-cracking perplexing contradictions are wonderful and propel us beyond linear material-world thinking. You will come to love them.

The first verse of another Kashmir Shaivite text, the Pratyabhijnahridayam, resonates with this Shiva sutra. It uses a lovely metaphor to describe the Free Will of the Supreme Consciousness playing: ‘...the universe comes forth into being (literally opens its eyelids), and continues as existent, and when it withdraws its movement, the universe also disappears from view (literally shuts its eyelids)’ [JS].

Thus it is God’s Play – the ‘playfulness’ of the Oneness that conceals Itself, hides enfolded ubiquitous within this universe which is the appearance of temporal multiplicity we know as Life on the earth-plane.

Like lovers who have been separated and are intensely reunited, it is in this sense of Play (LILA), a sort of cosmic hide-and-seek, that the One sweetly reveals Itself to Itself over and over in varying ways throughout the endless Cycles of Time.

As the 14 Century Sufi poet Mahmud Shabistari said so beautifully - ‘Beneath the curtain of each atom lies concealed the life increasing beauty of the face of the Beloved.’

Pratyabhijnahridayam, The Secret of Self-Recognition, translated by Jaideva Singh, Sanskrit Text with English Translation Notes and Introduction; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Ltd. Delhi, 1963, 2003.

MAHMUD SHABISTARI: The Secret Garden, translated by John Pasha; The Octagon Press, London 1969.



Shiva Sutra 1.2

jnanam bandhah

This universe is the expression of God's Love. The Oneness covers Its ubiquitous immensity in the Veils of Forgetting (kanchuka) and throughout returning Cycles of Time, enjoys the journey of sweet Remembering by Its own Grace (anugraha). This playful concealing and revealing of the Oneness is the sole purpose, meaning the one and only reason for the existence of our lives and this entire universe. We are all this Oneness.

That Absolute Oneness 'lets go' and 'pours forth' (sristi) the plenum eternally implicit, immanent and inherent within It — and takes on the appearance of Separation. The Veiling process or bondage consists of limited differentiated knowledge, the appearance of distinctions, differences. Bondage is also ignorance of your real eternal state, not

knowing that your consciousness is in fact undifferentiated knowledge [SLJ], the One.

How does the Oneness veil Itself? By the infinite power of Its own Freedom (svatantrya), the Oneness ‘appears’ to become temporal multiplicity. Knowledge of endlessly mutating, fractalizing, replicating differences and distinctions is bondage.

A verse from Abhinavagupta’s PARAMARTHASARA, is translated by Dr. B.N. Pandit in this interesting way: Abhinavagupta, the enlightened genius Kashmir Shaivite, plainly states that all metaphysical and philosophical theories are “mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers.”

Why? Because – “No diversity is the real truth.” Or as Swami Lakshmanjoo might say - ultimately there is only undifferentiated knowledge.

Dr. B.N. Pandit: “The Buddhist thinkers maintain that the constant flow of momentary consciousness is the only reality. The Vedic thinkers say that the single self, penetrating inside pervading, directing and governing all minds, is the ultimate reality.

“Some Upanishadic thinkers take the power of animation as the ultimate truth, while other such thinkers say that one universal ATMAN, shining as all phenomena, is the only reality. Some other thinkers take either the psycho-physical organism or the generalities or lastly the individual as the ultimate truth.

“But all such theories are merely dialectical speculations useful in discussions and debates. None among such entities has a real existence, as all these are mere suppositions and imaginary concepts of thinkers.

“In the same way that matters like piety and sin, heaven and hell, birth and death, pleasure and pain... and so on, do never exist in reality, but appear in the Self on account of delusion (MAYA).

“No diversity is the real truth. Its existence is simply apparent. It shines in the ATMAN as reflections shine in a mirror. All this appears to be a bonded being on account of the delusion caused by MAYA.”

No matter how many systems you master and regardless of the great heights of worldly brilliance you rise to, if you have forgotten that there is only the One – you are in bondage. Therefore the state of being unaware that everything and everyone that exists is not separate from you, as the Consciousness of the One Self, is bondage also. Not knowing ‘undifferentiatedly’ is bondage [SLJ].

This differentiated knowledge includes those ways of thinking that you consider to be inferior, stupid, or evil. They are also a manifested projection of the Oneness through whatever vehicle has construed them. This is why making judgments traps you. When you judge others you are drawn into a lower frequency of consciousness that does not admit and include Oneness. Judgment will hold you in a limited frequency.

Discernment is necessary, but must carry no attachment and entrapment through emotional charge. Discernment is closer to a detached observation.

Swami Lakshmanjoo says, ‘impurity is ignorance’ and sin is only the ignorance of your true identity, meaning how far your consciousness imagines itself to be separated from the Oneness that you are and always have been.



Sanskrit word definitions from the Jaideva Singh translation of the Shiva Sutras:

Kanchuka: The coverings of Maya, throwing a pall over pure consciousness and thus converting Shiva [the Oneness] into jiva [individual soul].

anugraha: Grace.

svatantrya: Absolute Freedom of Will [of the Oneness].

Essence of the Exact Reality or PARAMARTHASARA of
Abhinavagupta

With English translation & notes by Dr. B.N. Pandit

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers; 1991, New Delhi



Shiva Sutras 1.3

yonivargah kalashariram

The third sutra in the first section continues the explanation of how the Oneness conceals Itself in Space/Time to move into the adventure of this universe. The Sanskrit texts are very precise in detailing the steps of descent, which are the result of our own Free Will. As the Oneness, we do actually want this journey, we enjoy this illusion of Separation, we like playing in our self-created worlds.

Yoni here means “the cause of the universe” [SLJ]. Yoni also means the womb (matrix) or source. As a symbol of the feminine principle, the yoni is traditionally formed into primordial symbolic sculptures and revered. Here in the context of Kashmir Shaivism, yoni is the source and cause of the universe.

From yoni emerges the “kingdom” of MAYA, the “manifestation of the differentiated world” [SLJ]. MAYA is often translated as ‘illusion’ – but the idea of a primal force of creativity is more accurate. MAYA is the Mother of all apparent forms and her modes of creativity are the three gunas – sattva, rajas, and tamas. The etymology of the Sanskrit word guna is ‘rope,’ – ropes can be tied into knots, implying that which binds and ties us into the hologram.

Sattva guna may be understood as the state of purity, goodness, and peace. When sattva dominates our consciousness, those are the moments we are open to the light of knowledge. A tranquil state will draw wisdom to you.

Rajas is characterized by passion, those activities driven by desire. Restlessness, enterprise, ambition, and greed arise from the guna rajas. When we feel cut off from the Oneness, our Source, we feel empty and from this feeling of lack and limitation we are driven to act. Deep insecurities drive us to seek material success, to acquire things as security and fill our emptiness. These actions bind us in the temporal hologram.

The guna tamas is the inertia, laziness, and stupor that arise from ignorance of our real nature. This ignorance leads to depression as we feel we are useless, incapable, and hopeless.

Locked into tamas guna, we wallow in laziness and self-pity - perhaps finding an easy escape in drugs and alcohol, rather than doing something constructive. The real crime of the pharmaceutical corporations and their serotonin inhibitors is the fact that, like demons, they rob their victims of the opportunity to evolve past depression and find the God-within.

During the manifestation of this universe, these three gunas are in a state of ‘imbalance’ - and they are constantly shifting, replacing each other as they compete to dominate our consciousness. If you apply your own awareness - that intelligence (buddhi) that allows you to discriminate - and begin to watch how the gunas generate your compulsions, over time you will be able to observe their repetitive patterns and begin to detach your consciousness from their deluding powers.

Within Maya reside the MALAS or impurities, meaning the limitations as ignorance of your own nature that keeps you in bondage. The impurity that causes you to think in terms of duality and differentiation - this is mine, this is not mine – is called mayiya mala and removes you from the awareness that everything is One.

This mayiya mala “provides the individual with the physical and psychic vehicles in which he is cabined, caged and confined” [JDS]. We identify with our body, the data-collecting vehicle we currently inhabit - and by thinking this is all we are, we become trapped.

The second word in the verse, kalashariram, describes the embodiment of actions. Kala (long A) divides temporal appearances in thought and form. “When an action enters your body, your self in knowledge, and your mind in your thought, and leaves an impression on you...” [SLJ].

Every thought and action we have throughout our life is encoded into our being in the subtle body. We cannot erase one line. The cumulative aggregate of these thoughts and actions is carried with us and propels us from one body to the next in life after life — samsara.

This impurity of action is termed karmamala and also binds us in the temporal hologram. Karma is “either good or bad. ... With good actions you will fall, with bad actions, you will fall” [SLJ]. Whatever we think and whatever we do will draw us deeper, further into manifestation.

As long as we are at the mercy of the gunas and being compelled to act through our own proclivities and compulsions, we are not free — for as long as we do not realize that we are not these habits, tendencies, and compulsions, they will bind us to our own self-created delusions.

The only way to find liberation and release from repeated births and deaths is the Realization of the God within us all - Self Recognition. Once we discern and recognize the mechanics of Maya and her gunas, we wake up and Remember that we are not the Doer of anything. There is only one Doer and that is the Oneness, our real identity.

Bhagavad Gita V.8: The knower of truth thinks, I do not do anything. “...it is only the senses operating on their objects.”

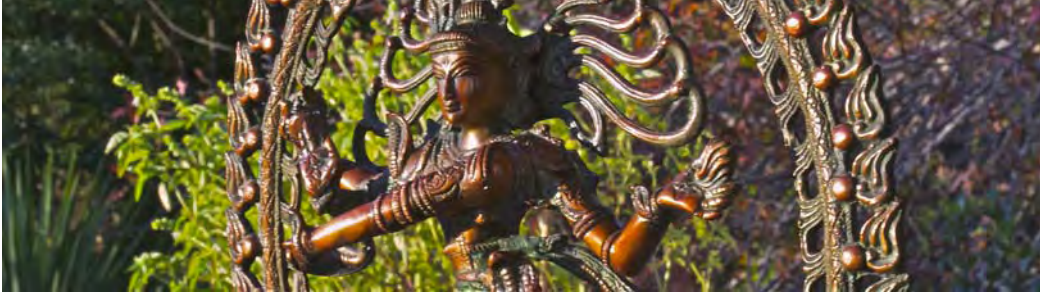
As long as we identify with the vehicle and remain deluded by illusory multiplicity, we are ‘played’ by MAYA. When we wake up, we can once again access our Free Will.



The Bhagavadgita in the Mahabharata A Bilingual Edition, translated & Edited by J.A.B. van Buitenen; The University of Chicago Press, 1981

John & Denise Hughes have given me permission to quote from Swami Lakshmanjoo’s Shiva Sutras. Thus: [SLJ]. For this honor I am deeply grateful.

<http://www.universalshaivafellowship.org/>



Shiva Sutra 1.4

Jnanadhisthanam matrika

Our universe is created by subtle ‘unknown’ sound. The Sanskrit word MATRIKA means the Universal Mother and her (Shakti) power of sound as pulsating frequencies that pervades letters and therefore all objects, which are known by the letters that make up words. Western science provides some insight into the mechanics of these ancient teachings.

While most of us feel we are living in a solid material reality because of the information conveyed to us through the five senses, the accurate understanding is that the brain processes our individual external reality as electrical impulses. As one brilliant writer [\[link below\]](#) has expressed – the world is in our brains.

We do not see the world with our eyes nor hear sound with our ears. What we take as external five-sense information is modified by the existing proclivities we have in our brain. Cells in the retina and the complex mechanisms of the ear receive electrical signals as images and sound, and transmit them to the brain. All sensory data from the five senses is essentially transformed into electric pulsation.

Each individual experiences the external world uniquely. If 10 people walk into your house, they will see 10 different environments. The artist will look at the pictures on the wall. The interior designer will be aware of the furniture, carpets, etc. The cook will head for the kitchen. Each of us inhabits our own peculiar-to-us hologram, which is projected via the DNA. We have created our unique DNA hologram over multiple life times. We are a complex and subtle collection of the impressions woven from our varied experiences throughout the Cycles of Time.

When you ‘see’ any image, what you actually see is an image produced by electrical signals received by cells in the retina and transmitted to the part of the brain that interprets them.

“... science shows us that we do not see through our eyes. The millions of nerve cells inside the eyes are responsible for sending a message to the brain... After some chemical operations carried out by retinal rods and codes, this vision becomes an electrical impulse ... sent to the back of the brain.” [link below]

Your sense organs translate the perceptions of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell into electrical pulsations. In Sanskrit the aspect of the mind that co-operates with the five senses to build up perceptions, images, and concepts is known as MANAS. Manas is not the same idea as the BUDDHI, which is the power to discriminate. The buddhi is the aspect of our intelligence that is intuitive and ultimately draws our consciousness into Wisdom.

We ‘hear’ sound because our eardrum converts pressure waves into vibrations, that then move into the snail-like inner ear called the cochlea. As these compressed waves move through the cochlea, 1000s of small hair-like nerve cells are set into motion. Each of these hair cells has an inherent response and “a natural sensitivity to a particular frequency of vibration.” [link below]

As these wave forms build, an “increased vibrational amplitude induces the cell to release an electrical impulse that passes along the auditory nerve towards the brain” [ibid.]

A recent study has shown that the neurons in the brain behave in an individual manner, meaning the same inputs can produce different outputs. We all respond uniquely.

The ancient sages knew how our senses function. In Kashmir Shaivism the world is contained in and emerges from the Divine Pulsation, the Spanda Principle. Our role in the holographic projection of this universe is explained in the theory of MATRIKA, the theory of the creative power of sound inherent in letters. “Matrika is the subtle form of gross speech” [JDS].

Writing is a symptom of the Kali Yuga, like a symptom of an illness implying the loss of wholeness. As time moved us deeper into this cycle,

those sages who were the keepers of the eternal wisdom endeavored to pass Eternal Knowledge on. They understood that in this fallen era, the best way to encode the primordial science of metaphysical principles was to personify them. Thus the mechanics of the universe and our sense organs are depicted as deities, the polarities in male and female.

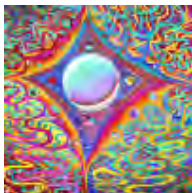
“... within the Indian tradition the gods are first and foremost the constituents of the individual’s consciousness, and only secondarily the outer processes. They may be seen as the precognitive and cognitive centres of the brain...” [Subhash Kak].

Matrika is the unknown and ‘un-understood’ [JDS] Universal Mother, the power of sound contained within letters of the alphabet. This power produces the universe. She resides in the top of the skull as the chakra brahmarandhra or sahasrara.

Matrika is the “master director” [SLJ] of the triple knowledge consisting of three limitations that allow the One to Veil Its Self and become the many. These limitations, also termed impurities (malas) are: non-fullness or feeling incomplete; the ignorance of believing in apparent differences; and the impressions of what causes you pain and pleasure that are imprinted in your memory as a result of your actions.

These three limitations or impurities are the foundations of samsara, the run around of endless births and deaths we are bound in. The job of the Mother is to give birth and as the Mother of the universe, her role is to bind us in the impure limited knowledge that generates the temporal illusory ‘appearance’ of differences.

Beginning from our original eternal state of Oneness, we conceal our true nature and forget who we are, our real Self, the immeasurable immensity. We sink into ignorance, limited knowledge, and delusion. We set sail over the vast ocean of consciousness on the wonderful and terrible journey. We wander through countless lives in our imagined state of Separation.



Sound as letters that make up words, bind us in these states of assumed apparent distinctions. We wrongly think ‘I am different from others’ and ‘this thing is mine’ and so on, thus continuing along the path away from our actual state of Being the One.

Swami Lakshmanjoo tells us that this is our own choice, our own free will (svantantrya). We become “the victim” of our every thought, the sound as words that carry us away from our “real nature of universal consciousness” [SLJ]. Thus we are “played” by this matrika Mother, who pushes us deeper into the energy of illusion (maya).

Inevitably we grow weary of experiencing pleasure and pain. We become conscious of the mechanics of our self-created delusions through that intuitive intelligence (buddhi) which allows us to cultivate the liberating state of non-attachment emphasized in the Bhagavad Gita.

This non-attachment is the key to freedom. Know that you are not the Doer. It is only the five senses operating on their objects.

As we grow in awareness, we remember our real nature as the Oneness. We learn to detach our consciousness from our ‘play’ in the Cycles of Time. We are ready to return Home.

At the moment we turn our consciousness inward, meaning our total awareness becomes focused within, the matrika Mother will become the means of subtle blissful states, the sweet revealing of our own “non-difference, omnipotence, omniscience, perfection and all-pervasiveness” [Jaideva Singh, Spanda Karikas].

The power we created to delude us will become the power that liberates us. The same matrika Universal Mother that served to conceal and delude, will now reveal and light our way Home.



KASHMIR SHAIVISM, The Secret Supreme, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 1985, 2003.

SPANDA-KARIKAS, The Divine Creative Pulsation, translated into English by Jaideva Singh; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1980. 2005.

A Peep Into The TANTRALOKA and Our Cultural Heritage, by Koshalya Walli; Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, 1998.
THE GODS WITHIN, Mind, Consciousness and the Vedic Tradition, by Subhash Kak; Munshiram Manoharal Publishers, New Delhi, 2002.





Shiva Sutras 1.5 & 1.6

Udyamao Bhairavah

Shakticakrasandhane vishvasamharah

In Kashmir Shaivism BHAIRAVA is the Sanskrit word for the Oneness. The Vedanta and other schools use Brahman, Paramatman, and Purushottama to name the Absolute Reality, the goal.

Bhairava is the combined three forces that constitute the universe: BHA indicates the maintenance of the world, RA the withdrawal of the world, and VA the projection of the world. [Jaideva Singh]

Concealed within each of us is the right to become the One, or rather we in fact return to Oneness, the Bhairava state, which is our origin. For some there is the wondrous possibility of instant enlightenment. Great souls who by active effort and the heroic sheer intensity of their one-pointed focus can expand their consciousness instantaneously in a ‘flashing forth’ of Universal Consciousness and become Bhairava. The seeker must be capable of “absorbing this kind of awareness” [SLJ]. The state of consciousness required is described as the ‘penetrative inescapable state of trance, which absorbs your individual being’ [Malinivijaya Tantra].

Bhairava merges the metaphysical principles of maintenance-withdrawal-projection of this universe into one word. Immersion into the state of Bhairava will carry you to the “highest state of consciousness” and there you will find the power of absolute Free Will – the svatantrya Shakti. In this state there is “nothing to meditate on ... There is no way to go, there is no traveling.” [SLJ] You are Home.

The One expands into multiplicity, the many through the feminine principle (maya, matrika), the Shakti that is identical with the One; but for the purpose of our temporal ‘play’ appears to be separate. This Shakti power to create, protect, and destroy has absolute Free Will because ultimately she is united with - and not in any way different from - the Oneness.

A charming metaphorical tale in the Skanda Purana [1.i.34-35] describes this beautifully when Shiva’s consort Parvati says, “Without me he is formless; for him there can be no separation from, or conjunction with, me. I have made him formed or formless, as the case may be, just as I have created this entire universe with all its gods. I just wanted to play with him, for fun, for the sake of the game, in order to play with the causes of his emerging into activity.” [D. Schulman]

The ‘gods’ are our sense organs, the mechanism by which we generate our temporal hologram – the world.

Kashmir Shaivism does not reject the world. Seekers of Union with God do not have to isolate themselves and deny sense experience. After all, the Oneness is the All - and this path embraces the universe, everyone and everything in it.

“The freedom from all our miseries, [Abhinavagupta] very boldly and emphatically declares, can neither be obtained through the renunciation of the world, nor by hatred towards this world, but by feeling the presence of God everywhere, who [God] is the innermost centre of each and every object.” [from Viresh Hughes’ foreword to SLJ’s Bhagavad Gita]

My feeling is that it would not have occurred to us to reject the world in the Satya Yuga. We were enjoying manifesting and expanding it. The practice of rejecting the world may have evolved out of our human weakness in the latter cycles of time. Those ascetics and monks who could not imbue every moment of every day with God-consciousness simply rejected ‘worldly’ experience in the hope of self-mastery. But the human mind is polarity based. Whatever we reject will grow and fester in the subconscious mind and find a way to overwhelm us.

Thus we come to the sweet understanding that every aspect of the world is in fact an entry point into the highest consciousness. Union with the Oneness, Bhairava state, allows us to feel the entire universe as that

Oneness. We become the One who is this world and we are no longer feel separate, empty. What is not God?

“There is no difference between a mystical trance (Samadhi) and the world of action (vyutthana) when the world of dualistic perception is completely digested in one’s own consciousness.” [SLJ]



Bhagavad Gita, In the Light of Kashmir Shaivism, Chapters 1-6, revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2008.

God Inside Out, Shiva’s Game of Dice, by Don Handelman and David Shulman; Oxford University Press, 1997.





Shiva Sutras 1.7-1.11

Achieving the Bhairava state of consciousness in an instantaneous “flashing forth” is experienced only by those heroic souls who apply great intensity to their return Home.

There is an old tale about a seeker who wanted to become enlightened and thus approached a spiritual master. The master was standing by a river, and smiling told the man to get into the water. Then the master pushed the man’s head down under the water and with great strength held him there until it seemed he would drown. Released at last, the man emerged gasping for breath. The master said to him: “When you want enlightenment as badly as you wanted to breathe, then come back to me and I will teach you.”

This story exemplifies the kind of dedicated focus we need to overwhelm the innumerable obstacles that conceal our real nature. As the One, we have created many illusory Veils, layers of coverings intentionally designed to make us forget our inherent fullness of being. The Sanskrit word brahman means to expand, fullness, broad.

Illusory imagined empty and incomplete feelings compel us to search for what we wrongly believe we lack, and thrust us off on our journey in Space/Time. It is all our own “play” [SLJ].

Swami Lakshmanjoo makes the adamant point that to reach this flashing forth, the aspirant must “possess active, not passive, power of meditation. ...Passive meditation...is only a waste of time.” Enlightenment is for active spiritual warriors. You must want this more than anything.

The hero yogi who experiences Universal Consciousness finds that there is “an ever present reality” [Jaideva Singh] behind the three normal states of consciousness, which are waking, sleeping, and deep sleep. This fourth state is called TURYA and it is always in the background as the

pervading witness to the other three — although most of us are never aware of this turya state.

Turya is the “all pervading oneness of God consciousness” [SLJ]. For the enlightened yogi such awareness remains regardless of whether they are awake, in dreaming state, or deep sleep. Turya is our real Self as witness. The hero who achieves turya state becomes a purifying light shining in the world. He “wanders about in this world, with the rays of his knowledge, he purifies and fills it with supreme bliss right from hell to Shiva.” [from Candrajnana text]

Awareness of the all-pervading fourth turya state brings complete mastery of all three waking, dreaming, and deep sleep states. Being in turya permits you to observe the mechanics of the five senses operating in the hologram. Your individualized sense organs are the accumulative aggregate of many lifetimes, and yet are not you. You are not the body and its operative faculties. You are the One.

Bhagavad Gita 2.58 & 59: When he entirely withdraws his senses from their objects, as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell, his wisdom insight stands firm. ...The taste (rasa, flavor) for sense objects turns away from the man who has seen the supreme highest.

This fourth state places you in the awareness of these mechanistic automatic operations that make up the unconscious compulsions of most human beings. When you become the Witness to the dance of your data-collecting vehicle, non-attachment to this temporal illusory world becomes natural. You are no longer bound by your acts. You become the independent master, the player of the vehicle and not the “played” [SLJ].





Shiva Sutra 1.12

Vismayo yogabhumikah

How can we recognize the ones who have reached God-consciousness? These fortunate souls are in a constant state of “amazement filled with joy” [SLJ].

Obviously this is not ordinary joy as experienced via the five senses. The happiness sent to the brain through the five senses is fleeting. In Sanskrit the word for happiness is often written with the word for misery and pain as one word sukhaduhkha. In this polarity universe, pleasure and pain are a package deal - one is always implied, embedded within the other.

This joy is not physical in the way that most of us are accustomed to experiencing limited ephemeral joys through the five senses. The joy of Self-Recognition that you are and have always been the One is subtle. Swami Lakshmanjoo emphasizes the idea that God-consciousness is not experienced through the five senses.

In the Paramarthasara, Verse 80 & 81, Abhinavagupta says: “Seeing everything as [his] Self, he drinks the wine of Self-Bliss filled in the whole phenomenon. ...No other aim of life remains to be accomplished after the rise of satisfaction attained through such awareness.”

The sole purpose of this universe is the concealing and revealing of the Oneness for Its own Play. Therefore the ones who have come to the end of their journey and have Realized that they are what they have long sought, have nothing left to accomplish.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna expresses the same idea: “...having been understood, nothing further remains to be known here on earth.”

In the TantraLoka Abhinavagupta states: “For one intent upon being entirely in the highest perfection, the nature of which is being liberated while still alive, except for the attainment of the seed of the Heart, there is nothing at all that is of any use” [Muller-Ortega].

Swami Lakshmanjoo says that such a yogi is “never satiated with the experience” of this joy. This amazement filled with joy is not located in a specific chakra – for example at the root of the spine (muladhara) or between the eyes (ajna). Experiences limited to these chakras are inferior to the “fullblown I-consciousness” of the One [Jaideva Singh].

Even the highest chakra in the human body, the Sahasrara, is only “the highest point in human evolution and the first step in the highest divine evolution” [Satyananda onTantra]. We must not have expectations regarding what we will experience as we move closer to Home.

Expectations based on previous five sensory joy will only block the emergence of a more subtle bliss. Think subtle!

Spanda Karika 1.11: “...then he perceives that he is one with this reality. For him, being wonderstruck and filled with wonderful joy, there is no possibility of traveling the path of repeated births and deaths.”





Shiva Sutra 1.13

Iccha sakttiruma kumari

Yoga means ‘union’ and those who are real yogis have achieved union with their real Self. This union, which is the sole reason for our universe, connects the realized ones with the Free Will (svatantrya) of the Supreme.

The Sanskrit word KUMARI expresses the idea of play — “that energy that plays in the universe, creating, protecting, and destroying it” [SLJ]. Kumari can also mean virgin in the sense of the purity that does not require any other for her enjoyment. The goddess energy, Shakti power, creates this world. She is not different from the Oneness, but takes on the temporal appearance of separateness and manifests the external hologram.

The realized Yogi gets this kind of svatantrya will - but having become the whole universe, he or she has no need for anything. Therefore he “does not, like ordinary people, possess gross desire” [SLJ]. When you are the universe, what remains to be desired?

Perhaps there are other universes to play in. This intriguing idea is suggested by Krishna himself in the Bhagavad Gita X.42: “I support this entire universe with a single fraction of myself.” So what does he do with the other ‘fractions’?

When we are done playing here, are there many other universes with completely different kinds of adventures for us to roam in? One translation of Abhinavagupta’s Paramarthasara, Verse 15, hints at this: “Maya-tattva ...is thus the substantive cause of numerous universes floating in it like bubbles in an ocean.”

Ah, the adventure of loving God is never ending!



Essence of the Exact Reality or Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta, With English Translation and notes by B.N. Pandit; Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi, 1991.

Kundalini Tantra, by Swami Satyananda Saraswati; Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India, 1984.

The Triadic Heart of Shiva, Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir, by Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega; State University of New York Press, Albany NY, 1989.





Shiva Sutras 1.14

drishyam shariram

The five senses send electrical impulses to our brain that are transformed into what we experience as everyday reality, meaning material objects, people, etc. The five senses limit us to this ‘appearance’ of our external world and thus conceal the Real.

The yogi who has reached God-consciousness transcends five sense data and experiences the Nectar Ocean of Divine Pulsation (spanda) that pervades and permeates everything and everyone.

“This whole universe is made of that liquid of consciousness and bliss (cidananda)” [SLJ]. There is only the One. This includes the yogi and his/her own body. Therefore this entire world is perceived by the enlightened as an expansion of one's own body.

Floating in the ocean of bliss filled nectar without the appearance of distinctions, differences, and the illusion of separation – the God-Realized ones come to view their body as an object, just like every other object in the external manifested world. The enlightened no longer think, “I am this and not that.” They know they are everything. They know aham idam, “I am this whole universe” [SLJ].



Shiva Sutra 1.15

Hridaye cittasamghattad drisyasvapakarsanam

In Kashmir Shaivism, the Heart (hridaya) is not the muscle that pumps blood through the body. The Heart is an ancient symbol in India and is mentioned in the Rig Veda as that which can see what the physical eyes cannot [Ortega-Mueller].

Here the word means “the light of consciousness (cit prakasha) which is the background, the basis, of the existence of the whole universe” [SLJ]. The Heart is within us all and simultaneously is the foundation of everything. When we unite our consciousness with the Heart within, we get union with this all-pervading God-consciousness.

I like to say - We meet in the Heart. The Heart is the foundational basis light of consciousness in within each and every one of us. The Heart connects us in God-consciousness. “When you make your mind enter into the light of consciousness (cit prakasha) then your mind feels this whole universe as one with that universal being” [SLJ].

Lao Tzu expresses this beautifully in his Tao Teh Ching, verse 47: “There is no need to run outside for better seeing, nor to peer from a window. Rather abide at the center of your being; for the more you leave it, the less you learn. Search your heart and see if he is wise who takes each turn: The way to do is to be.” [Witter Bynner]

What is this ‘within’ that can make us feel that the external hologram is permeated with God-consciousness? Swami Lakshmanjoo, in his explanations of the Bhagavad Gita verse IV.34, reveals the secret of our enlightenment. Ultimately we are the source of our Liberation.

Everything and every one is the Oneness. In our search for truth we follow many paths and learn from a variety of teachers – all are the One,

the same One that we are. In the end, we have to find enlightenment for ourselves alone.

We must go within to make all these teachings into the one-pointed focus that will lead to our final Liberation. The truth is not out there, because there is no out-there out there. There is only the One, permeating and pervading the All. The ineluctable truth is everywhere for those who can 'see' with the Heart!

When you begin to love and want God more than anything, these divine feelings of Love of God will purify your consciousness. That purity is your sacred sword that protects your being. A pure Heart will allow the God-within you to reveal the Wisdom of Truth to you and over time you will become that Truth. No one but you can prevent you from reaching God-consciousness. You simply have to really want it.

Abhinavagupta: "When you become purified by devotion, etc., then your own sense organs...will grant you the knowledge of Reality." You submit to the One within you. You serve the One within you as all beings. The 'masters' you seek out, the ones who know, are within you. In the end, you are your own Master [SLJ].



Bhagavad Gita, In the Light of Kashmir Shaivism, Chapters 1-6, revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2008.

The Triadic Heart of Shiva, Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir, by Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega; State University of New York Press, Albany NY, 1989.

The Way of Life, Tao Teh Ching, According to Lao Tzu, translated by Witter Byner; A Perigee Book, 1944, 1994.

Abhinavagupta's Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, Gitārtha-Samgraha, translated from the Sanskrit with Introduction & Notes by Boris Marjanovic; Rudra Press, 2002, 2006.



Who is Shiva? - and the Shiva Sutras 1.16, 1.17 & 1.18



Shiva Sutra 1.16

Suddha-tattva-samdhanadva'pashushaktih

The Sanskrit term suddha tattva “refers only to the supreme Shiva [SLJ].” The hero yogi who takes aim at the highest state of God-consciousness will experience everything in this universe as divine. In the Absolute Principle there are no impurities, no polarities, nothing right and nothing wrong.

Entrance into this absolute supreme state releases you from “the entangling energy that binds you with the wheel of differentiated perception [SLJ].” You feel that your body and all this universe are one with God-consciousness. This experience is said to make any yogic powers pale in comparison.

Who is Shiva?

In Kashmir Shaivism the Oneness, the Absolute Supreme totality of God Consciousness is conveyed by the sacred word Shiva. Brahman (Vedanta), Paramatman (Samkhya), and Purushottama are used in other

systems. The etymology of the Sanskrit word Shiva is ‘auspicious’ and ‘good’ – so we understand that Shiva is that which will benefit.

Shiva is also seen as the Destroyer. He destroys ignorance that stands in the way of the seeker of enlightenment. The path to enlightenment is arrayed with pain when we hang on to illusions that bind us in the temporal illusory hologram. In his form Shiva is the consummate ascetic, he is draped with snakes as ornaments and he enjoys the company of ghouls and demons. Everything is the One, even the darkside.

In the Mahabharata, Krishna is said to have performed intense great austerities to Lord Shiva so that the Pandavas - Yudhishtira, Arjuna, Bhima, and the twins - will be protected and win the battle at Kurukshetra. When these austerities were exhausted and used up, Shiva responded to the offerings of the other side. The propitiating enemy warrior impressed Lord Shiva by placing his own body into the sacrificial fire to Shiva. Thus in a terrible night massacre the children of the Pandavas are slaughtered in their sleep.

The stories of Lord Shiva are numerous, inspiring and fascinating. In one tale, Shiva plays the game of dice with his consort beautiful brilliant Parvati. The dice game symbolizes the pouring forth of the universe as manifestations of the Creator’s Being throughout the Cycles of Time. The creator ‘sacrifices’ oneness into multiplicity for the purpose of Play. This pouring forth of the temporal illusory hologram is the original sacrificial act.

Shiva is everything. Shiva as the metaphysical principle of the universal power of destruction is purely “the centrifugal inertia, the tendency toward dispersion, toward disintegration and annihilation [Danielou].” When we turn within and want to come Home, a multitude of self-created obstacles (impurities) require annihilation. Lord Shiva, in the image of Nataraja, dances upon the demon-dwarf MOHA delusion.





Sutra 1.17

Vitarka atmajnanam

The one who reaches God-consciousness thinks, “I am Lord Shiva, one with the universe [SLJ].” When we return Home, we merge back into that which we always are. We find that we have never been the small personal individual selves we falsely identified with through countless lives. We have always been the Oneness, which in Kashmir Shaivism is termed Lord Shiva.



Sutra 1.18

Lokananda samadhisukham

“The joy of his Samadhi is said to be bliss for the whole universe [SLJ].” The Sanskrit word SAMADHI here does not describe some kind of physical orgasmic bliss or ecstatic trance. The Oneness is not experienced through the five senses. You are lost when your mind is directed to sense-object consciousness.

Rather this Samadhi is the “maintaining continuous awareness of knowership [JDS].” The hero yogi is able to remain in an uninterrupted state of Knowing that he/she is the Oneness, Lord Shiva. This is the goal,

which is achieved in an instant for a few lucky ones - and for most over a lifetime of focused discipline.

This Samadhi infuses the entire world with the bliss experienced by the yogi. “This yogi doesn’t have to do anything. He has only to remain in Samadhi and he will carry the whole universe into that supreme bliss [SLJ].”



How do we reach Samadhi? The Mundaka Upanishad III.ii.3: “This Self is not attained through study, nor through the intellect, nor through much hearing. The very Self which the aspirant seeks is attainable through that fact of seeking: this Self of his reveals Its own nature.”

After reading 100s of books on the path to enlightenment, I have come to understand that in the end only the Will of the God within us all has the power to lift the Veils. These Veils are the creation of our God-consciousness in order to conceal Its real nature so that we as portions of the One can journey through Space/Time.

Read the Sanskrit texts. They will purify your knowledge and hone your consciousness into a higher frequency where you will be able to listen to the God-within you. Understanding your experiences in the context of your buddhi-intelligence will allow you to hold onto them and place them firmly beneath your feet as a foundation to further growth. If you do not understand your spiritual experiences, you will lose them; they will be wasted.

Go to teachers and learn from each one of them, the great ones and even those a bit confused. These men and women are also pieces of God on their own journey.

Meditate and chant the ancient sacred Sanskrit mantras as these practices will purify your being. Sanskrit does have a special power of frequency to elevate your being. Meditation will teach you to concentrate and observe the roller-coaster nature of the mind and the endless fluctuations of the gunas, which on ‘auto’ control your data-collecting vehicle.

However, it is your love for God that will serve you above all else.

Loving God and wanting God more than anything in your life will be the powerful magnetic connector that embraces you with a kind of subtle sweet ‘remembrance’ that nothing in the external hologram can match. Speaking as the Oneness in the Bhagavad Gita Chapter XII, Krishna tells Arjuna that the ones who are devoted are dear to him. Those whose thoughts have entered into the Oneness, he soon delivers from the ocean of birth and death, SAMSARA. Krishna says that it is more arduous to fix the mind on the abstractions of the unseen and the unmanifest. “Endowed with faith, devoted and intent on Me as the Supreme; they are exceedingly dear to me. [XII.20]” Love is the key.

It is a simple practical formula. In your own life, what do you think about? The foremost thoughts in your mind center and flow around those you love. Make God your Beloved, the most loved and valued object in your consciousness - and God will respond.



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Yogic Powers and the Shiva Sutras 1.19 -1.21

1.19 saktisandhane sarirotpattih

1.20 bhutasamdhana-bhutaprithaktva-visvasamghattah

Yogic powers are the subject of sutras 1.19 & 1.20. Over the years I have observed many who in the beginning are attracted to yogic practices when they learn that such disciplines will induce special powers, the siddhis. I have often thought of these siddhic powers as the proverbial carrot-in-front-of-donkey sort of enticements, which might serve to motivate the naïve or as simply seen as the ambition for power.

Swami Lakshmanjoo is very clear in stating that real yogis do not want these powers. Why? The answer is simple and logical. These special powers exist in and affect the external hologram and therefore draw your consciousness back into that illusory world. They entangle you the same illusory energies you are endeavoring to transcend by merging into the One.

SLJ: "...this kind of achievement is attained by those yogis who have attachment for the body, attachment for disciples, attachment for the public...who have slightly come down from God consciousness. For elevated yogis...do not care for these powers or for matters of the world." By achieving God consciousness and being always focused, resting in the Absolute, you will have become complete in "internal consciousness...Incompletion rises in the external world. [SLJ]"



Shiva Sutra 1.21

suddhavidyodyaccakresatva-siddhih

The real use for yogic power is the concentration of “energy of will for attaining the universal state of being. [SLJ]” In Kashmir Shaivism the aim of a focused will is to become the totality of the metaphysical principles that make up this universe - creation, destruction, and preservation (BHAIRAVA). Time and time again we are led back to this point. Entry into God consciousness is what matters. Entry into God consciousness will reveal the Knowledge within that waits for you and is your enlightenment.

The yogi then realizes that he/she was never anything but God. “Pure knowledge arises...whereby he realizes, “I am the whole universe. I am not only my body, I am one with the universe. [SLJ]”

As Abhinavagupta puts it, the yogi thinks this, “I am infinitely potent and absolutely pure consciousness. All this is my own divine play. It is being manifested by me through my divine powers. I am all this ... [Abhinavagupta/Paramarthasara].”

When you become the Oneness, why do you need to display your powers? You have realized the goal. What remains to be done?



It is not my intention here to reveal every jewel in the Shiva Sutras to you. There are many understandings and technical Sanskrit terms of the Kashmir Shaivite School that you will want to read and over time contemplate for yourself. Only you can cultivate the field of wisdom in your own Heart.

What I am hoping for is to open a small window into their value as a superb guide to your own enlightenment. I began to read the Jaideva Singh translation in 1997 and I am still learning from these pearls every time I reread them.

I listen to the Swami Lakshmanjoo CDs very often and I am amazed that I could have missed this gem or that one in an earlier listening. The Shiva Sutras are like the Bhagavad Gita in this way. You can read them throughout your life and always learn something new.

Jaideva Singh is highly regarded by other Sanskrit scholars and yet he dedicates his translations of the Kashmir Shaivite texts to Swami Lakshmanjoo. Jaideva Singh spent many summer days in Kashmir listening to Swam Lakshmanjoo at his ashram speak on these sacred texts.

Singh and many others acknowledge Swami Lakshmanjoo as the last living master, the embodiment and scholar of the tradition of Kashmir Shaivism. He was born with a photographic memory and easily learned the texts by heart. “Because of his intellectual power and strength of awareness, he realized both spiritually and intellectually...spiritual leaders and scholars journeyed from all over the world” to learn from him. [John Hughes]

One of my favorite quotes on Swami Lakshmanjoo comes from Mark Dyczkowski, the wonderful Sanskrit scholar, sitar musician, and Oxford don. Dyczkowski is talking about his experiences in Kashmir in the 1970s at the ashram:

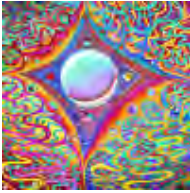
“His [Swami Lakshmanjoo] exposition of the great works of the ancient Kashmiri masters—Abhinavagupta, Utpaladeva and Ksemaraja—would fill us with wonder. Somehow he sees much more in them that could ever be grasped through mere bookish knowledge and we could all feel that behind his words lay another dimension beyond them in which he lived and from which he beckoned us to join him.”

Even though I never met Swami Lakshmanjoo, he has become my revered source of a multitude of understandings. Every text that is published by Swami Lakshmanjoo and the hours of recordings, audio and video that carry his voice are imbued with his God consciousness. The sound of his voice somehow allows me to experience on a deeper level what he is talking about. Even if it is only for a moment, I do understand.

Now it is up to me to hold on to the teachings and make them my own, in my own heart and mind.

In the Bhagavad Gita recordings, Swami Lakshmanjoo himself says that we must all find out the truth in our own consciousness. “Master means your own consciousness. You have to insert your all-force in your own consciousness. Then you’ll find it out. Don’t try to catch me. I have nothing to do with this. It is your own business to have it.”

Enlightenment is up to us in the end. The sublime depth of understanding flowing from the words of Swami Lakshmanjoo can also be found in the writings of Abhinavagupta. Only the truly enlightened masters can speak this way. We have the opportunity to listen, to ‘hear’ if we have the ears. Then we must find an adamant Will within our own consciousness and head for Home.



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Shiva Sutra 1.22 – The Ocean of Consciousness

Mahahridanusamdhanan mantraviryanubhavaḥ

Consciousness is the great ocean. “In fact, this universe is created by this supreme energy of consciousness...[SLJ].” Everything is consciousness. When we unite our consciousness with that vast ocean, we merge into the state of the supreme ‘I’ (mantra virya).

The word mantra is used here in the understanding that the universe arises from the supreme I-consciousness, which is the source of all mantras. Mantras are made up of sound as letters. The “essence of all these sounds is one sound, the soundless sound...[SLJ].”

Kashmir Shaivism contains a Theory of the Alphabet (Matrikacakra) detailing precisely the emergence of the universe through sound as letters. This universe is a reflection of the sweet free will (svantantrya) of God consciousness and it is this reflection of God’s free will “that gives rise to each succeeding letter [SLJ/Kashmir Shaivism].”

The great Ocean of Consciousness contains everything within it. When you are able to maintain in an unbroken focus the Union (yoga) of your consciousness with this great Ocean, the Shakti power of God’s free will is revealed. These Shakti powers create all knowledge, and the acts of manifestation, preservation, and destruction. The potency of the mantra of I-consciousness is experienced by uniting with the Shakti power of this ocean within you [Jaideva Singh].

Thus you come to feel how the universe is manifested from that God consciousness that you are and have always been.



Sutra 1.22 completes the first section of the Shiva Sutras, which is “the first awakening” because it pertains to the supreme means to enter into Universal God Consciousness termed SHAMBHAVOPAYA.

Swami Lakshmanjoo defines Shambhavopaya thus: “By preserving thoughtlessness...one enters into that transcendental consciousness where he finds that this whole universe has come out of sentences and sentences from words and words from letters and letters from the real ‘I’ which is Parama (highest) Shiva. ...this whole universe is reflected in his own consciousness...from within rather than from without [SLJ/KS].”

The idea that our universe is created from within us is very old in Sanskrit metaphysics. Samkhya, perhaps the most ancient system, says that the universe is made up of consciousness and energy organizing, woven together into the solidification of matter. Each of us is generating our individual hologram moment-to-moment by our own thoughts.

Everything that happens to you, you do to yourself; no one is to blame, no one but you is responsible for your life.

Shambhavopaya is meant for very advanced yogis who are able to maintain “the continuity of thoughtlessness” with an adamant focused will and the grace of an enlightened Master. Years ago I heard this merging of consciousness with a teacher described as a kind of spontaneous psychic osmosis. Consciousness is contagious for the ones who have elevated their frequency-of-being to resonate with the Liberated Master.

Kashmir Shaivism is primarily mental and delineates the manifestation of the universe in great detail using numerous specific Sanskrit terms. There are in this system 36 TATTVAS or elements: the great elements, the subtle elements, the organs of action, organs of cognition, internal organs, six coverings (concealing our real nature), and the pure elements.

It is said that the disciplined study of the tattvas will bring you closer to your own God consciousness. Yoga means ‘union’ and union with the Oneness is achieved through knowledge – by a deep love for that knowledge of God. When you study these sequences of elements you are in my view, reading the manual of how you created all this!

Swami Lakshmanjoo shares this linear-thinking shattering truth: When you arrive in God consciousness, you understand that “even though this whole universe has been created, the nature of His Self, which is full of consciousness and bliss, has not been lessened at all. Nothing has happened. He is only residing in His own point [SLJ/KS].”

Nothing has happened. You always are that which you have sought. You were never anything other than the One.



KASHMIR SHAIVISM, The Secret Supreme, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; The Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2003.





Second Section: Shiva Sutras 2.1 & 2.2

The Shiva Sutras are divided into three sections, each one relates to a particular means (*upaya*) of awakening. The first section explains *Shambhavopaya* and defines this means to your goal as the yogi “who preserves thoughtlessness” [SLJ].

The second section is concerned with *Shaktopaya*, which utilizes mental activities such as an intensely concentrated focus to transform inner forces that bring about the individual’s immersion in the Divine [K.Walla].

Shaktopaya is described as a great velocity of an unbroken chain of awareness that allows the yogi “to discover the reality between any two thoughts or actions” [SLJ].

This reality between any two thoughts or actions is understood to be the Supreme God Consciousness, the Oneness. In the Bhagavad Gita XI.20, after Krishna has revealed his Divine Cosmic Form, Arjuna says to him: “In all directions the space between heaven and earth is filled and pervaded by You alone.”



Sutra 2.1

Cittam mantrah

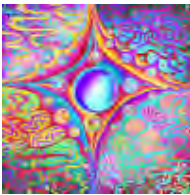
The manifested universe is contained within the One - God consciousness, but the One is not limited to or by Its external manifestation. The Oneness is ubiquitous, found everywhere permeating the external temporal illusory hologram. Thus you can use any point in the hologram to enter into God consciousness. However unless you are fully engaged in an intense effort and acutely aware, any of the ways you choose to approach the God will not be effective.

The word *mantra* here in this sutra does not mean the mere reciting of some Sanskrit words. Mantras are wonderful and they can make us feel good temporarily; but this sutra reveals the uncomfortable truth that even if we chant all day, if our mind is wandering, our efforts are fleeting at best. Our efforts must be active, intensely focused, not distracted, and not passive.

The word Mantra here refers to the “thought of a sacred word” which arises in the mind of one absolutely purified. The mantra that will bring you to the real understanding of your Self, in all Its glorious expansion, “lives in a secret world” and is recited with consciousness, not lips. [SLJ].

When with an adamant will you connect your consciousness with the God-within, then mantra serves the divinity in your mind.

“The life of all mantras is solely the energy of God consciousness. When that energy is absent, the these collections of words are useless...”
(*Tantra Sadbhavana*) [SLJ].





Sutra 2.2

Prayanah sadhakah

Once again we are reminded of the intense effort required to achieve God consciousness. There must be no pause in our effort [SLJ]. We could not expect the One, who created this entire universe for concealing and revealing Itself, to make this adventure in consciousness easy.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna that only very few succeed who try to reach God consciousness - and yet he also promises that none of our efforts are lost. Eventually all will reach the goal throughout the cycles of time.

For those who are ready now to come Home, weary of the repeating play in space/time, their efforts must be without any pause. Our western way of thinking is essentially compartmental. We have been taught to keep church separate from state. Church is on Sunday and the rest of the week, most do not think of God.

Kashmir Shaivism teaches that we must become aware of God consciousness not only permeating this entire universe - but in our every act, our every thought, in every moment throughout our days and nights, even in the dream state. No matter what we are doing, we need to remain undistracted from our goal and saturated with an unrelenting effort to find God within and indeed everywhere.

This “pauseless effort” is most easily achieved when we are “filled with intense desire and fervent longing” [SLJ]. Even the most intellectual erudite Kashmir Shaivite masters have written inspiring love poems to God. For example Abhinavagupta’s Abhinavastotravalih and the Shivastotravalih of Utpaladeva. This longing for God is known as Union through Devotion, or Bhakti Yoga in other systems.

We have all been in love, I hope at least once, and we know from our own experience that when we are in this wonderful state of sweet madness, we think of our beloved and nothing else. We happily remain in a delightful perpetual self-created euphoria by always remembering, dreaming of and longing for the one we love.

When we want God as much as we have ever wanted anyone or anything, then such ‘pauseless’ effort is not so difficult. Krishna tells Arjuna that by devotion and love of God we come to know and realize God in Truth, and this knowledge creates our entrance into God consciousness [Bhagavad Gita XVIII.55].

As Swami Lakshmanjoo says, an “intense desire and fervent longing...originating from the center of your heart. By that force, this great yogi directs his mind to that point of supreme God consciousness.”



Swami Lakshmanjoo

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Shiva Sutra 2.3 - Churning the Ocean of Consciousness

Vidyasarirasatta mantrarahasyam

Swami Lakshmanjoo reveals to us that the essence of all mantras is “the supreme knowledge of oneness.” The word mantra in this sutra does not mean those chanted sequences of traditional Sanskrit words. Here mantra refers to the supreme God, that God consciousness that permeates the universe and is the point of the formation of the collection of all sounds. “*Mantra*, in the real sense, is that supreme I consciousness [SLJ].”

There is only the One. The One takes on the appearance of two as Lord Shiva (in Kashmir Shaivism) and the Mother, who is the symbolic essence of the creative manifesting feminine principle. The Mother – *matrika shakti*, womb, matrix, yoni – is one with mantra and mantra is one with all letters, which are sounds that generate the temporal holographic universe.

Shaivite texts often take the form of Shiva speaking to his consort Parvati, who asks him questions and his replies provide the reader with eternal wisdom. In this sutra Shiva explains to Parvati that those people who are hypocrites and do not sincerely perform their spiritual practices, “because of these misdeeds” he has “extracted the splendor from their mantras” and thus their mantras become useless [SLJ]. It is your consciousness alone that makes a mantra successful.

This Mother Shakti pervades the entire universe. In the body, the Mother takes the form of *kundalini* in the center of the Heart. The Heart is not physical, rather it is “a center of awareness found everywhere in the body [SLJ].”

The Mother goddess as *kundalini* is asleep in the body and in order to awaken her as our internal awareness, we must raise the frequency of our consciousness so that it is in harmony and resonating with hers. This process is described as “churning” and it is said, “the yogi has to churn

his point of one-pointedness in the heart, without break, again and again. [SLJ].”

This sutra extensively quotes from the *Tantrasadbhava* on the experience of getting the kundalini to rise – and then declares “the energy of kundalini...puts obstacles in the way in the journey of final liberation [SLJ].” Those yogis who are satisfied with lights, visions, and limited yogic powers will not reach the supreme God consciousness that is the One. The God within seems to delight in deceiving Itself as us and placing distracting tempting trinkets on the way Home.



The Sanskrit texts build on one another, meaning texts that were written in later periods contain reflections of older texts. This idea of “churning” consciousness reminded me of the story of the gods churning the ocean, (which is in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the Puranas). This story has always fascinated me because I believe that these so-called ‘myths’ are not myths at all. They are the eternal wisdom of the previous cycles of time encoded as metaphor in histories.

If linear thinking doubt leaves you skeptical, wondering if these events actually took place, and attempting to date them, then in my view you miss the point. You will miss the great eternal wisdom embedded within these wonderful inspiring tales of grand heroes and timeless spiritual knowledge. The clock enslaves our consciousness. India wasn’t much bothered about time and dates before the English arrived.



The Churning of the Ocean of Milk, from the Ramayana, Canto XLV — in my words:

In a previous *Satyayuga*, meaning a golden era in the four cycles of time, the sons of Diti and Aditi wanted immortality. Reflecting on their dilemma, they decided to obtain an immortalizing drink from the ocean of milk by churning it.

The sons of Diti were demons and the sons of Aditi were gods. They were not strong enough to accomplish this herculean task alone. They needed each other. Using the giant snake Vasuki, the king of serpents, as a rope and the mountain Mandara as the churning rod, they began to churn the ocean of milk. For one thousand years the gods and demons together churned the ocean of milk

Now the serpent king Vasuki had many heads. Those heads began to bite the rocks on Mount Mandara, and their fangs were spewing copious venom. The churning for immortality was thus creating a deadly poison all over the surface of the ocean. This poison was called *Halahala* and it began to consume the entire universe – gods, demons, and humans.

Using telepathy the gods beseeched Lord Shiva for protection from the poison, because Shiva is the Lord of the principle of Destruction. Lord Shiva appeared before them – and soon thereafter Lord Vishnu, the principle of the Preservation of the universe.

Vishnu honored Shiva saying that because Shiva is the Jewel among gods, who takes the lead among the gods, then whatever has appeared first from the churning of the ocean is by rights the share that belongs to Shiva. Vishnu urged Shiva to accept the poison as tribute offered in precedence over others.

Hearing the praise of Vishnu and aware of the fear felt by the gods, Lord Shiva, Destroyer of the universe, swallowed up the treasure known as *Halahala* poison as though it were nectar. Shiva kept the poison held safely in his throat, which turned blue, and then departed for his own realm.

The gods and demons intent upon their immortality went on churning and Mount Mandala fell down into the Patala Loka, the lowest of all

subterranean regions. The gods begged Lord Vishnu to lift up the mountain out of the darkest depths.

Vishnu, the Preserver is also the Ruler of the senses. To lift up the mountain he became the divine Tortoise and supporting the mountain on his back, helped the gods and demons to continue churning the ocean of milk.

Eventually their churning produced the nectar of immortality, among other things. The story does not end here, but for our purposes one might see the metaphors of consciousness in this primordial tale. The snake is the kundalini latent within the human body.

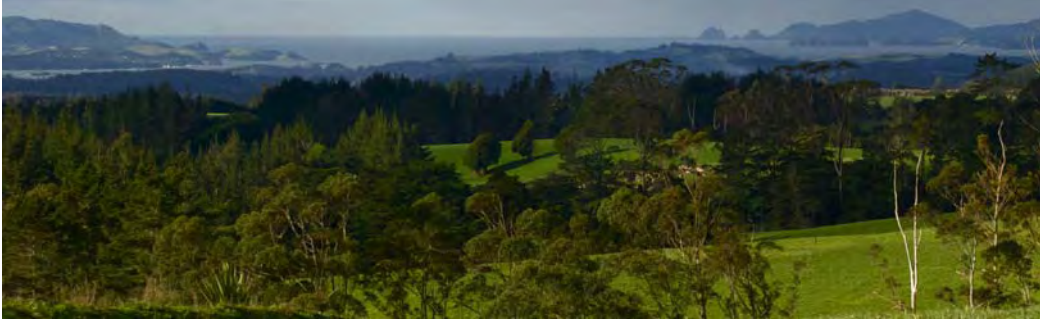
The ocean of milk is the ocean of consciousness, which must be churned by those who aspire to immortality in God consciousness. The human body is a microcosm of the universe, made up of both gods and demons, meaning positive and negative forces. The darkside will take over, poison and cover our own ocean of consciousness if we do not destroy it – thus we need Shiva as the power of Destruction.

Shiva destroys (self-created) ignorance of our Oneness with God. Shiva, as the principle of destruction, swallows the poison and keeps it in his throat until he requires it for the Dissolution of the current universe.

Our senses are said to be the gods. In Sanskrit the senses are termed *indriya* – pertaining to Indra, the king of the gods. Vishnu as the principle of Preservation becomes a tortoise, a creature that can withdraw into its shell - as we must withdraw our senses from the temporal hologram in order to realize our true identity.

Well, this is nothing I have read elsewhere. This is just my intuitive imagination running wild with a favorite story from the Sanskrit texts, connecting it to the verse in the Shiva Sutras – a bit of fun. You can draw your own conclusions. For me, the journey into Sanskrit is marvelous and unending!





Shiva Sutras 2.4 & 2.5 – Powers & the Guru

Shiva Sutra 2.4 - Limited yogic powers are barriers

Garbhe cittavikaso'visista vidyasvapnah

The Sanskrit word GARBHE here means primal ignorance [JDS] and refers to “that expansive body of the energy of illusion...MAHAMAYA” [SLJ]. This energy of illusion produces limited yogic powers, which however extraordinary, exist in the realm of illusion (MAYA).

We have all heard stories of masters who can perform dazzling paranormal acts, such as producing gifts in their hands for their disciples, flying, etc. This sutra makes it clear that such powers are limited and in fact barriers to spiritual progress. As Swami Lakshmanjoo says, “All these powers are existing in the sphere of MAYA (illusion).”

On the path Home our sincere concentrated efforts will produce these limited powers. However some aspirants get stuck in these powers and thinking themselves great, do not find the strength to get beyond the need to impress others and the inevitable consequences of spiritual ego. They need attention and adulation. Attachment to these carnival-like displays of limited powers holds them in the temporal illusory hologram and repeated cycles of death and birth.



Born in 1945, I began to meditate in my 20s. Visionary experiences always came easily to me. I saw dancing animated lights in what I call the ‘eye of my mind’ and even as a child I was able to turn everything I saw into pulsating vibrating golden light. Out of boredom, I was especially fond of amusing myself with this trick in the church I was forced to attend every Sunday.

For years I meditated in front of an altar with candles and some form of visual focus. The altar would turn into lights of lovely golden, silvery, blue, purple, and rose colors. I wrongly assumed that these cascading light shows meant I was making some progress, getting closer toward my goal. However a few years ago it hit me that time was flying by and I was in no way any nearer to enlightenment in spite of all my entertaining seductive visions.

My own personal behavior patterns had not changed. I was still attracting familiar repeating tiresome scenes into my life. I had not yet read the above verse from the Shiva Sutras, but I was convinced that something was absolutely wrong with my spiritual practice.

Even though I knew I would miss my comfort-zone visions, I blew out the candles. I stopped turning the room into pulsating light and began to meditate without relying on these external dead-end experiences. It worked!

What I was ‘seeing’ were merely the endlessly varying forms of the ‘astral’ plane light, which are as ephemeral and temporal as our five-sense solid-appearance world.

The sage Patanjali in his Yoga Sutra 3.37 expresses the same idea:

“Those lights in the center of the eyebrows and divine sounds in the center of the heart are obstacles for Samadhi.”

The Oneness is not experienced with the five senses, and It is obviously beyond and greater than any astral vision. These visions were not signs of anything - except my own ego deluding me once again in yet another, if more subtle manner.

In the late 1960s I was in an ashram of an Indian guru whose name I will not expose. I saw golden lights emanating around this man and so did about half the disciples. We were very naïve westerners, and the golden light was taken as proof to us that he was a great-enlightened master.

This great-enlightened one also had a taste for intimate dalliances with his female disciples. When I discovered this fact, I was heart broken – a

painful hard lesson for me. But I learned that all that glitters is not gold! Pretty lights, like proverbial bells and whistles, did not mean the real thing.

The world and the worldly will always see these displays of limited powers as evidence of a real master [SLJ]. Just as we in the ashram, as hapless aspirants of the 1960s era, accepted the golden light around our guru as a sign of his greatness.

“These are all just a disturbance in the state of real being and are to be avoided by those yogis who wish to become fortunate.” [Spanda Karika 3.10]





Shiva Sutra 2.5 - Flying in the Holographic Universe

Vidyasamutthane svabhavike khecari sivavasta

When the yogi realizes that these limited powers of seeing lights and hearing sounds are nothing more than useless obstacles on the path Home, then these distracting toys disappear and the real state of God consciousness emerges. “...effortlessly...then this yogi flies into the ether of supreme knowledge [SLJ].”

This state is termed KHECARI (pronounced ka-char-ee) and literally means, “that which moves in the sky or empty space [Jaideva Singh].” However, here moving in space indicates the idea of the universe as a hologram and ‘movement’ implies the existence of the whole within every part. When you are in one location, you are in all.

“When you are treading the way of totality, you must see the totality in a piece of the totality. Take one part of the universe and see the whole universe existing there [SLJ].”

The idea of the holographic universe was accepted metaphysical truth by these Kashmir Shaivite seers, such as Vasugupta who found the Shiva Sutras beneath a rock at the foot of Mahadeva Mountain and lived around 800 AD. In my view, these metaphysical truths have always been known even if only by a few down through the cycles of time.



In the west Michael Talbot and physicist David Bohm have contributed to our understanding of the universe as a hologram. Talbot explains Bohm's theories saying, "...objective reality does not exist...despite its apparent solidity the universe is at heart a phantasm, a gigantic and splendidly detailed hologram."

Again Talbot: "Bohm believes the reason subatomic particles are able to remain in contact with one another regardless of the distance separating them is not because they are sending some sort of mysterious signal back and forth, but because their separateness is an illusion. He argues that at some deeper level of reality such particles are not individual entities, but are actually extensions of the same fundamental something."

Could this 'fundamental something' be the Oneness, God consciousness, Paramatman, Parabhairava, that sages and seers have seen since the beginning of time?

Talbot: "In a holographic universe, even time and space could no longer be viewed as fundamentals. Because concepts such as location break down in a universe in which nothing is truly separate from anything else, time and three-dimensional space...would also have to be viewed as projections of this deeper order. At its deeper level reality is a sort of superhologram in which the past, present, and future all exist simultaneously."

Even time and space break down, dissolving when the aspirant reaches a level of consciousness in which apparent multiplicity and the "agitation of that differentiated illusion... fades into nothingness [SLJ]."

When you become aware that limited yogic powers are obstacles to your progress, you shed them and thus your consciousness is free to fly in the state that Knows everything is everything. All is the One - and you are that Oneness.



The Universe as a Hologram

by Michael Talbot

Does Objective Reality Exist, or is the Universe a Phantasm?



Shiva Sutra 2.6 – The Real Guru

gurupayah

Achieving God consciousness is the goal and in this sutra we are told that the guru is the means. Sadly in the west, we have seen a parade of false gurus. Swami Lakshmanjoo says that the real guru is one who can reveal to you “the reality of God consciousness” - not one who asks for money or labor.

The real masters are those who have experienced and Become the Oneness, that Immutable Imperishable Absolute Supreme Truth. The guru or master serves as a reservoir of truth that will carry the disciple “across the ocean of all doubts [Spanda Karika 4.1].”

Guru simply means teacher. If it were not for the dedicated men and women who spend their lives studying and teaching the ancient wisdom, we would have no access to such knowledge. These individuals deserve our respect. Surely it is easy to understand that in an ashram, where many people are living and eating together, there must be order and rules as there are in any institution.

In the Malinivijaya Tantra text there is a teaching interpreted by some to mean, “the master is not a worldly being. For them, the master is, in the real sense, the supreme energy of Lord Shiva. [SLJ]” This energy of Shiva is the ubiquitous Oneness. Perhaps our teachers are waiting patiently eternal within us all - and if we are aware, they are simultaneously everywhere.



“It is your own business to have it.”

In Swami Laskhmanjoo’s recorded teachings, he often says that certain experiences or states of consciousness will come to the aspirant by the grace of the guru. However in the DVDs of Abhinavagupta’s commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita recorded in 1990, the year before his death, this master of Kashmir Shavism revealed something deeper.

In the context of Chapter IV.34, in which Krishna tells Arjuna that by respect and humble submission, by enquiry and service, the ones who Know will teach you. Abhinavagupta interprets these ‘knowing ones’ as your own sense organs, meaning the mechanics of consciousness, your discriminating intellect (buddhi) and the senses within you that receive and collect the enlightening data that will lead to your Liberation (*moksha*).

Ultimately you are your own master. Swami Lakshmanjoo reasons this out simply: Krishna is the greatest master, yet he is directing Arjuna to go to a master – when standing right before Arjuna is the ultimate master, Lord Krishna, who speaks as the God within us.

As Swami Lakshmanjoo says, “It is just a joke! Master means your own consciousness. You have to insert your all-force in your own consciousness. Then you’ll find it out. Don’t try to catch me. I have nothing to do with this. It is your own business to have it.”

Realizing our real nature as God consciousness is achieved by our own efforts. We lift ourselves up out of delusion by our Self, the God-within [Bhagavad Gita VI.5]. We cannot wait passively for some magic touch or look that will carry us into our goal. We are responsible for our own enlightenment - and with great courage and dedication, we must take up this task of inserting our all-force into our own consciousness.



No one has ‘done’ this deluded state to us. We are self-deluded. The Oneness has taken on the appearance of differentiation as us, in order to play this divine drama of concealing and revealing Itself to Itself. “This whole universe has come into existence just to carry you to God consciousness [SLJ].”

We are lost in our own self-created illusions that we enjoy – until one day we see that all these wretched pleasures quickly evaporate. External world pleasures are not lasting and are always followed by pain, disappointment and disinterest. We become bored with the sour adventure of repeated deaths and births [*samsara*] and begin to look within. “To be *samsarin* means being deluded by one’s own powers because of ignorance of that [Pratyabhijnahridayam, Sutra 12].”

We created all this temporal illusion. We are the architects of our own holographic entrapment. Like spiders, we spin our own webs. So it simply makes sense that in the final analysis, it is completely up to us to release our consciousness from our clever self-imposed snare and wake up!

There may be many teachers both good and bad on the way Home. However my view is that if anyone but the God-within us could give us our final enlightenment, then we would be indebted to them for all eternity. I do not believe God would consider that condition of debt as a state of real liberation. We would simply be in yet another web.



Unlike so many Indian gurus, Swami Lakshmanjoo remained in Kashmir quietly teaching the ones who came to him. He wore simple clothes, did not have long flowing hair and beard, and was not seated on a golden throne. My feeling is that he taught only those who had the capacity to learn, meaning the ones who had the ears to hear.

I was not fortunate enough to have met Swami Lakshmanjoo, but I have learned an avalanche of wisdom from listening to his voice, the nectar sounds captured by the heroic diligence of John and Denise Hughes.

Do learn from everyone. Knowledge (*jnana yoga*) is imperative and your spiritual experiences will only remain with you when you understand what they mean in terms of their value relative to your progress. Yet, in the end this business of Liberation and reaching God consciousness is solely up to you, as it should be.



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Shiva Sutra 2.7 – Matrikacakra

The Theory of Letters that Expand the Universe & Quantum Reality

It is said that enlightenment will dawn on those who understand the mechanics of the Matrikacakra. Therefore we may be motivated to study elemental powers and their correlations to the Sanskrit letters, which produce the splendid sacred waveforms that create our universe.

Matrikacakra theory precisely explains how the Sanskrit alphabet as root-vibration brings about the expansion of the entire universe, the temporal illusory hologram. Matrika is the hidden mother - the creative energy that generates the external world from subtle to gross. She is 'hidden' because she remains unknown to us when we are lost in our desires, forgetting who we are.

“Matrika Shakti is the power of sound that is the matrix of the cosmos, and manifests as the letters of the alphabet. Matrika is the subtle force behind thought and speech. [Chetanananda].”

Swami Lakshmanjoo says that this knowledge can only be attained by the grace of the master. I agree, as the Matrikacakra theory is profoundly elaborate, encompassing the entire process of manifestation - and in reverse, the dissolution of the external holographic universe. A trusted teacher who has mastered this knowledge would be infinitely valuable. For those who wish to pursue this knowledge with more diligence, beyond the explanation in the Shiva Sutras, I list three key books below.

Abhinavagupta also assures us that the process of learning the theory of Matrikacakra will bring enlightenment and liberation from our self-

deluded state of repeating births & deaths. In the introduction to his superlative treatise, the Para-Trishika-Vivarana, Abhinavagupta says:

“The aim or purpose of the Shastra (teaching) is liberation of all experients...who have become entitled for the unsurpassable (anuttara)...and unification with perfect I-consciousness [the Oneness], which is the delightful flash of one’s own essential Self and is the achievement of one who by realization of his essential nature regards the entire multitude of categories of existence, supposed to be bondage, as mere different aspects of his sportfulness which is the expression of the abundance of his delight.”

I will not go through the entire theory, but here is a short introduction with some beginning thoughts. The existence of the entire universe is encoded within the 50 letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. There is a similar theory using Hebrew letters [see link below].

The universe is made up of 36 elements known as TATTVAS in Sanskrit. The universe begins with the Shiva tattva. The fact that Shiva is here identified as an element/tattva, in my view, points to Shiva - who is often personified for the purpose of communicating timeless wisdom - as a metaphysical principle, the element/tattva that contains all the other elements. The 50 (Devanagari) letters in Sanskrit represent these 36 elements.

Swami Lakshmanjoo cites two of Abhinavagupta’s works, the Tantraloka and Paratrisika, to elucidate the Shiva tattva: “The first movement of supreme I-consciousness is unparalleled undifferentiated totality. And when it moves forward with the intention of creating His glory in the external world, it takes the formation of Bliss (ananda).”

Tattva means ‘thatness’ or principle, reality; it is the very being of a thing. Shiva represents the Oneness, the element (tattva) that contains all the other elements within it. There is only the One.

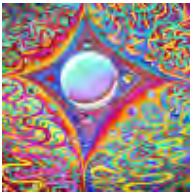
Within the Shiva tattva are said to be five energies, which are encoded within the vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet. The first energy of the highest (anuttara) consciousness is represented by the vowel equivalent of ‘a’ in English. The long ‘â’ represents the second energy, which is the blissful state (ananda).

In the third energy the subtle state of will (iccha) is represented by the letter ‘i’ – emphasis on the word subtle; while the gross state of will (iccha) is represented by the long ‘î’. The letter ‘u’ is the energy of knowledge (jnana); and the long ‘û’ refers to the appearance of a *lessening*. As Shiva expands and moves out into manifestation, it is said

that there is “the apprehension of the lessening of that supreme consciousness and supreme bliss that is His own nature [SLJ].”

This apprehension of a lessening is only ‘apparent’ as the state of Shiva, the Oneness, is in fact never altered, diminished, or lessened. The totality of God consciousness remains eternal, imperishable, and immutable. “This whole universe...is no universe at all...it is the expansion of your own nature, nothing else. In reality nothing is created at all [SLJ].”

The fifth energy of the Shiva tattva is the energy of action and is represented by the four letters: e, ai, o, and au. They indicate degrees of vividness – beyond the realms of the subtle. Lord Shiva exists vividly in the external manifestations of this universe. “If you want to see Lord Shiva, see him in blades of grass, he is there existing vividly...if you want to perceive the state of Shiva as it ought to be perceived...you must enjoy this universe [SLJ].”



In Kashmir Shaivism, Shiva is always moving, in motion; he is the embodiment of movement [SLJ]. This movement is described by the word SPANDA for which there is no English equivalent.

In Spanda, we again confront the idea of ‘apparent’ states, in this case apparent movement. For “the Supreme transcends all notions of space and time...Spanda, therefore...is the throb of ecstasy of the Divine I-consciousness,” which even though it appears to be moving, does not change at all and therefore is “spiritual dynamism without any movement in itself” but serves as the ultimate cause of all movements [Jaideva Singh/Spanda Karikas].

Abhinavagupta defines Spanda thus: “...Spanda is only a throb, a heaving of spiritual rapture in the essential nature of the Divine which excludes all succession [JDS/SK].” Interesting that Spanda is described as dynamic rapture, which reflects the idea of the ecstatic creative potency of God’s Being. This rapturous fullness must find expression in expansion, just as we seek to express our own experiences of overflowing love and joy.

Spanda’s non-movement/movement is said to expand and then contract. It is centrifugal as it moves out from the center, and then centripetal as it once again seeks that center. These alternating currents of rhythmical expansion and contraction, openings and closings are the metaphysical

creative vibration-pulsations of the universe. The matrix emits the throb of pulsating waveforms, endless fractals, manifesting innumerable apparent multiplicities - as you and me and the entire universe.

Paul Eduardo Ortega-Muller describes the movements and effects of Spanda beautifully in his classic book, *The Triadic Heart of Shiva*: “The Ultimate is Spanda: it vibrates, it expands and contracts; it manifests and reabsorbs; it is full of waves and waveless; it is full of bliss and yet suffering occurs; it plays a game of hide-and-seek with itself in which ignorance alternates with knowledge, and in which enjoyment and liberation can coincide.”



The metaphysical concepts expressed long ago in Kashmir Shaivism have correlations in quantum physics. Nick Herbert's 1985 bestseller, *Quantum Reality* clearly explains quantum theorems. For example Niels Bohr's Copenhagen interpretation states, “There is no deep reality...The world we see around us is real enough...but floats on a world that is not as real.” In Kashmir Shaivism, the vivid world lies upon the subtle one.

Physicist David Bohm who is well known for his interest in consciousness and his theories of the Implicate Order says, “Reality is an undivided wholeness...a new notion of unbroken wholeness which denies the classical analyzability of the world into separately and independently existing parts...The inseparable quantum interconnectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality.” There is only the One.

The particle-wave concept also has metaphysical implications. When an electron is observed it looks like a particle - but in “between observations, the same electron spreads out like a wave over large regions of space. This alternation of identities is typical of all quantum entities...[N. Herbert].”

The frequency-level of our consciousness alters our perception of the external in every moment of time. Our consciousness changes the data transmitted through the five-senses as electrical impulses to our brain. The way we observe/see anything is filtered through our consciousness and therefore affects what we experience as our holographic reality. On a

deeper level, we are what we believe. Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita XVII.3 says, “Man is made of faith (shraddhas). Whatever faith he has, thus he is.”

Another quantum reality is: Consciousness creates reality. This theorem was supported by the famous world-class mathematician John von Neumann, whose mathematical genius was behind “the concept of the stored-program computer; today’s computer scientists refer to all computers from pocket calculators to giant IBMs as von Neumann machines.”

The quantum reality that ‘consciousness creates reality’ is implied in the ancient teachings of the SAMKHYA: “The universe is made up of two fundamental elements, consciousness and energy...Matter is merely organized energy...The Samkhya envisages 84,000 degrees of the manifestation of consciousness in matter, starting with infinitesimal particles, then atoms...[A. Danielou].”

Kashmir Shaivism: Our hologram is entirely based on our consciousness, what we believe, think, including our subconscious and the words (sounds) we speak. "Consciousness shines in various external and internal forms. There is no existence of objects apart from consciousness. Therefore the world is simply a form of consciousness." [Kalikakrama, as quoted in the *Shiva Sutras* translated by Jaideva Singh]

Quantum physicist Werner Heisenberg asserted, “there is no deep reality” and that (subtle) unmeasured world “forms a world of potentialities or possibilities...These tendencies are continually on the move, growing, merging, and dying according to exact laws of motion...But despite all this activity nothing ever actually happens there.”

In these quantum theorems, western science approaches the soul of the seers of Kashmir Shaivism and eternal metaphysics. The non-moving movements of the Shiva tattva as Spanda are continually expanding and contracting, coming into being and dissolving back into non-existence. While in truth, nothing was ever created.

The state of Shiva, the Oneness, is in fact never altered, diminished, or lessened. The totality of God consciousness remains eternal, imperishable, and immutable. “This whole universe...is no universe at all...it is the expansion of your own nature, nothing else. In reality nothing is created at all [SLJ].”



For those who wish to pursue, beyond the excellent Shiva Sutras, the study of the Theory of Matrikacakra with greater diligence:

Abhinavagupta PARA-TRISIKA-VIVARANA, The Secret of Tantric Mysticism, English translation with notes and running exposition by Jaideva Singh; Sanskrit text corrected, notes on technical points and charts dictated by Swami Lakshmanjoo; edited by Bettina Baumer; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1988/2000.

Abhinavagupta, A Trident of Wisdom, Translation of the PARATRISIKA VIVARANA, by Jaideva Singh, with a forward by Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega; Edited by Bettina Baumer; State University of New York Press, 1988.

Abhinavagupta's Hermeneutics of the Absolute Anuttaraprakriya, An Interpretation of his Paratrisika Vivarana, by Bettina Baumer; Dedicated the Swami Lakshmanjoo, the last Master of Anuttara Trika; Forward by Andre Padoux; Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla; D.K. Printworld Ltd., New Delhi, 2011.



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Quantum Reality, Beyond the New Physics, by Nick Herbert; Anchor Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., New York, 1985.

The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.

While the Gods Play, Shaiva Oracles and Predictions on the Cycles of History and the Destiny of Mankind, by Alain Danielou; Inner Traditions International, Vermont, 1987.



Shiva Sutra 2.7

Matrikacakra, The Theory of Letters that Expand the Universe & Everything Consists of Everything Else

“Matrika means letters or lettered sound. It is through matrika that all human activities are carried on.” Shiva dwells in the heart of all letters. All letters are the inner life of Shiva, the expression of that Supreme Creative Consciousness, the “cosmic creative stress” which through its divine pulsation (*spanda*) brings about the emanation, projection, expansion, and dissolution of the universe. [Jaideva Singh/Shiva Sutras]

Even after a Dissolution, when the universe is unmanifest, the universe remains implicit as seed (*bija*) eternally within the One. Just as the fluid in the egg of a peacock contains the totality of profusion of its adult magnificence and beauty, so does the entire manifested multiplicity of this universe remain implicit in the Oneness, Lord Shiva. The universe repeatedly becomes manifest during the Cycles of Time and returns to its state of being implicit, inherent, latent, unexpressed after a Dissolution.

From this cyclical concept of the manifested and then un-manifested universe as consciousness always lying implicit in the One, we might imagine that all the four Cycles of Time (*yugas*) exist simultaneously, one nested within another, as merely ‘apparent’ temporal holograms.

The universe is nothing but consciousness. This idea of the universe being eternally implicit brings the theory of David Bohm's Implicate Order to mind. In his implicate (enfolded) order "space and time are no longer the dominant factors determining the relationships of different elements. Rather an entirely different sort of basic connection of elements is possible, from which our ordinary notions of space and time, along with those of separately existent material particles, are abstracted as forms derived from the deeper order."

The universe is consciousness. "In fact, this universe is created by this supreme energy of consciousness...[SLJ]." The energy of consciousness (*cit shakti*) is one of the five great energies of the Oneness, Shiva. These five great energies are termed wheels (*cakras*) because they move like wheels.

In Kashmir Shaivism the Oneness is referred to as Shiva - and Lord Shiva has these five great energies: consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge, and action. These five energies are not discrete, not individually separated from each other. Each one of the five energies contain the other four and are continually interplaying with and within one another.

Perhaps musical chords and scales reflect this idea of one containing the others and the interplay between them to create something new. One note contains all the other notes. One note, for example a G, in one octave resonates and vibrates with all the other Gs in every octave. And these resonating sounds as musical notes, harmonious or dissonant, create chords and are constantly combining to make the sounds of symphonies, songs, ragas, etc.

Music illuminates the connection between metaphysical principles and physical reality. Alain Danielou: "Music was therefore justly considered by the ancients as the key to all sciences and art – the link between metaphysics and physics..." In music, "By the artificial construction of harmony we can go beyond the phenomenon of sound vibrations and perceive not sounds but immaterial relations through which can be expressed realities of a spiritual nature. We can thus lift the veil by which matter hides from us all true realities."

"Beneath the curtain of each atom lies concealed the life increasing beauty of the face of the Beloved." - The Secret Garden, Mahmud Shabistari.

The basic metaphysical principle here is: SARVAM SARVATMAKAM – which means that **‘Everything consists of everything else’** [Jaideva Singh – Paratrishika Vivarana]. Shiva, the Oneness, is ubiquitous, immanent within everything, permeating the entire universe from the galaxies to your teaspoon or toe. All the great five energies of Shiva contain the other four. Everything is everything.



The world is simply a form of consciousness

The energy of consciousness (*cit shakti*) creates the five great elements: ether, air, fire, water, and earth. One element is predominant in each, while again each of the five elements contains all the other four. “So in each and every energy of Lord Shiva, all five energies exist.” [SLJ]

The five elements are the result, the manifestation and creation of the energy of consciousness, the Shakti power of CIT (pronounced chit). This creative Shakti-energy-power is personified as the goddess and is not different from Shiva.

“By the power of her own will she (*cit shakti*) unfolds the universe upon her own screen (i.e. in herself as the basis of the universe).” [Jaideva Singh – Pratyabhijnahridayam]

"Consciousness shines in various external and internal forms. There is no existence of objects apart from consciousness. Therefore the world is simply a form of consciousness." [Kalikakrama, as quoted in the Shiva Sutras translated by Jaideva Singh]

Thus in Kashmir Shaivism, the universe has no material cause other than consciousness. The world is simply a form of consciousness. Matter is consciousness. Matter might be imagined as condensed consciousness that creates the ‘appearance’ of solidity.

There is more space in an electron than there is matter. “The space which an electron occupies is only one fifty-thousandth in diameter of its distance from the nucleus; the rest of the atomic interior is empty. If the nucleus were enlarged to the size of a dried pea, the nearest electron would circle around it at a distance of about 175 yards. ...it is doubtful

whether it is permissible to say that the electron ‘occupies space’ at all. ”
[Arthur Koestler-The Sleepwalkers]

Rene Guenon in ‘The Reign of Quantity’ makes some wonderfully startling observations concerning the idea of matter: “...the idea of ‘matter’ is therefore as illusory as it possibly could be, since it corresponds to no reality of any kind...it could be said that materialization exists as a tendency.”

Guenon prefers to use the word ‘solidification’ indicating an ongoing process as we descend into the depths of the Kali Yuga. He remarks that in the previous cycles of time we all possessed faculties which allowed us “to pass beyond the bounds” of the sensible world (i.e. the five senses). In our current era, “never have either the world or man been so shrunken, to the point of their being mere corporal entities, deprived...of the smallest possibility of communication with any order of reality!”

The universe is consciousness and created by consciousness. Matter is consciousness. Everything is consciousness and everything is everything. The parts contain the whole and interact with one another. Nothing is discrete.

The power of consciousness is CIT SHAKTI and here she is known as Matrikacakra, the lady that generates the letters. The Sanskrit letters contain the creative energy that manifests the universe. The cit shakti holds the entire universe within itself. “Every letter of the (Sanskrit) alphabet represents energy in some form.” [Jaideva Singh – Paratrishika]

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “In perceiving, you should not perceive things one by one. See what is in the beginning and see what is in the end (simultaneously). Take the first letter and the last letter and combine them and you have perceived the whole universe. ...unite them by means of taking them in one point.”

To Become the One again, we need to learn to collapse our linear thinking and move beyond conditioned ideas of space and time, leaving behind all preconceptions of mechanical laws such as cause & effect. Think in terms of Totality – weave the beginning and end into one.

“Whatever is perceived is PRAKASHA (the light of consciousness). It is the state of the universal ‘I’. Carrying all that is perceived to your own nature, to that point of the Self, and establishing it there is called SVANTANTRYA (the absolute freedom).” [SLJ]

In Jaideva Singh’s translation of the Shiva Sutras, he says this about the difficult and complex Matrikacakra theory: “If a man wants to understand

the mystery of life, if he wants to turn to the source of his being, he will have to understand the mystery of Matrika (lettered sound). Matrika not properly understood only confines us to the feverish activities of life, and thus becomes a source of bondage. If properly understood, she becomes our savior.”

The sole reason and motivation to immerse your consciousness in the theory of MATRIKACAKRA is for your own Liberation, your own freedom from repeating cycles of birth & death. Understanding these ancient sacred teachings will reveal the nature of the universe to you, and the processes by which it is manifested and dissolved, and very soon will lead you to the Home you in fact never left!



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Shiva Sutras 2.8, 2.9 & 2.10 – The Fire of God Consciousness & Samadhi

In his closing commentaries on the previous sutra, Swami Lakshmanjoo speaks of the Heart. He says that this entire universe is the external heart of the state of Shiva, while the internal heart of the state of Shiva abides in our own body. This is not the physical heart. Everything is consciousness and the internal heart is consciousness, the state of “perceiving and that is all pervading. It pervades the whole body [SLJ].”

Heart (*hridaya*) is the deepest consciousness, the center of reality, the light of consciousness in which the entire universe is rooted [Jaideva Singh – Pratyabhijnahridayam]. Because the whole is contained in every part, this center pervades the entire universe and our body. “The individual mind intently entering into the universal light of foundational consciousness sees the entire universe as saturated with that consciousness.” [Jaideva Singh – Shiva Sutras]

Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega has explored the Heart as a symbol in Kashmir Shaivism to an enlightening depth in his book ‘The Triadic Heart of Shiva’ (1989). I highly recommend this book as an excellent introduction to Kashmir Shaivism and its greatest genius Abhinavagupta.

Muller-Ortega says that according to Abhinavagupta, the Heart in Kashmir Shaivism is the very Self of Shiva and the Goddess (Devi), who is not different from Shiva. The Heart is the abode of their union, and pure consciousness as well as unlimited bliss. “As consciousness the Heart is the unbounded infinite light (*prakasha*), as well as the absolute

freedom (*svatantrya*) and spontaneity (*vimarsha*) of that light to appear in a multitude and variety of forms.”

Muller-Ortega writes that the Heart is the ocean of consciousness, the ocean of light as consciousness. The eternal pulsation-vibration (*spanda*) of Shiva’s being drives the entire process of manifestation and dissolution.

Lao Tzu’s famous first verse in the ‘Way of Life’ sums it all up succinctly: “Existence is beyond the power of words to define.” Terms may be used, but none are absolute. Kashmir Shaivism uses various Sanskrit words as ‘approaches’ to understanding the One. The Oneness as Shiva with, and not separate from, Shakti becomes woven into endless multiplicity. What words can describe the visible and invisible intricacies of the power beyond our comprehensions that sets into motion that which is immovable?

God consciousness must be experienced. Not by mere words can God consciousness - the totality of the immeasurable, immutable, eternal, imperishable - be known. You must Become that. Only by your own immersion, devotion, intensity of intention and focus can you come to experience the Oneness. By no other means can God consciousness be known.

The wonderful illuminating Sanskrit terms found in Kashmir Shaivism are approaches. “Kashmir Shaivism is the mystical geography of awareness.” [John Hughes - from his introduction to Swami Lakshmanjoo’s Shiva Sutras]

If at first you find these terms non-linear and confusing, you must not be concerned. Understanding will come as you embrace these brilliant, yet still imperfect efforts to categorize and contain the cosmic energies that interplay and interact together to weave and unweave waveforms that appear as this universe. The One God consciousness never ceases to be the Oneness, and is simultaneously all multiplicity.





Shiva Sutra 2.8

Sariram havih

For those who have understood the Theory of Letters, *Matrikacakra*, which was discussed in sutra 2.7 explaining how the Sanskrit alphabet as root-vibration brings about the expansion of the entire universe – those dedicated yogis will find “the Kingdom of God consciousness everywhere [SLJ].”

We have three bodies: gross, subtle, and subtlest. The gross body is experienced in waking state, the subtle body in the dreaming state, and the subtlest in the state of deep sleep. We make the mistake of believing that these three bodies are our real identity. We put ‘I consciousness’ on these three states and think, ‘I am my body.’ Even after death, our consciousness remains identified with and attached to the spirit body.

As we understand how the universe and everything in it is generated by sound as letters, we can remove this ‘I consciousness’ from the three bodies. Symbolically we offer them into the fire of God consciousness, “causing them to be digested in the fire of God consciousness.” When we have done this, made this symbolic offering, then “only God consciousness and no other consciousness remains. The yogi finds the kingdom of God consciousness everywhere [SLJ].”

The teachings of Kashmir Shaivism echo earlier Sanskrit texts and this idea of offering the mechanics of our individual ego-consciousness into fire is found in the Bhagavad Gita IV.27: The way of action of great yogis is the offer all the actions of the organs of senses and all the actions of breathing completely in the fire of the one-pointedness of God consciousness. [SLJ]



Shiva Sutra 2.9

Jnanamannam

When we come to experience the universe as the Oneness, then it is said that the food of such a yogi is differentiated perception. In other words, everything that the five senses transmits to our brain as the multiplicity of solidified matter is ‘digested’ as food.

I believe that what this verse implies is that when we reach union with the One, we are so exalted and in such a state of subtle bliss that we feel completely full. We are no longer interested in the food provided by the five senses. We are filled in God consciousness.

“He is always intoxicated in his own self because of the knowledge of his real nature gives him complete satisfaction. [SLJ]”

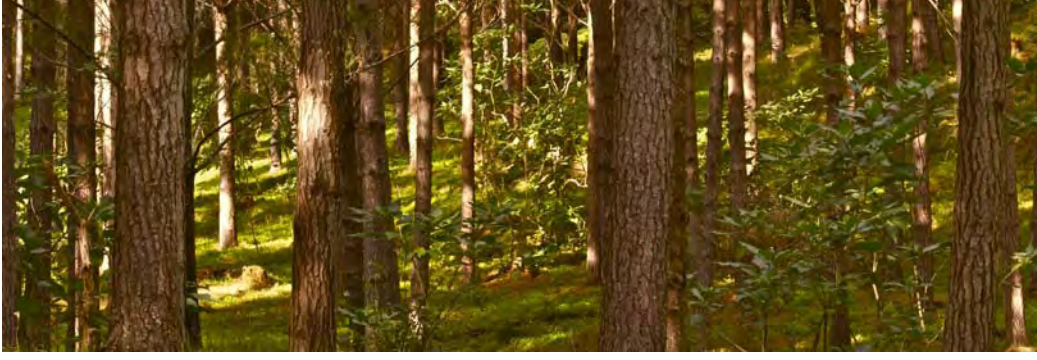
Here we are also reminded that we can lose this state of awareness. “If you lose awareness, then you are gone. You have destroyed the reality of life. [SLJ]”

Here Swami Lakshmanjoo says something I find particularly interesting. He expresses the idea that placing awareness on anything alters it. He expresses the mysterious idea that if you are fully aware of what you are thinking, you won’t think anything. “If you are aware of what is happening next, nothing will happen.” He uses a potent example and says that if you are aware that you are dying, you will not die.

In physics this is known as the observer effect, because it is understood that observing a thing changes it. In quantum physics a highly controlled experiment demonstrated that a beam of electrons was affected by being observed. “The experiment revealed that the greater the amount of watching, the greater the observer’s influence on what actually takes place.” [Science Daily link below]

For the ones seeking enlightenment, we must understand that only a continual unbroken great awareness will hold the sought after state of God consciousness. When I was young, people often said that in spiritual life we experience ‘one step forward and two steps back.’ This experience of going in-and-out of God consciousness is described in the Shiva Sutras. We can and often do lose what we have earned – and we must then regroup and with even greater intensity win back our God consciousness.





Shiva Sutra 2.10

Vidyasamhare tadutthasvapnadarsanam

Among all who meditate, who has not dozed off during meditation? Swami Lakshmanjoo explains that when we cannot maintain awareness we enter into the dreaming state.

The more familiar Sanskrit term SAMADHI used to describe the state from which we may fall into the dreaming state. *Samadhi* is defined as one pointedness; concentration; absorption; union; a calm, desireless fixity; a unifying concentration; equal mind; (from the verb-root dha meaning “to hold” - and the prefixes: Â and sam meaning “together completely”).

Swami Lakshmanjoo defines *samadhi* as absorption, the mystical trance in which you experience God consciousness. My understanding is that *samadhi* has variations and is very subtle, not experienced through the five senses.

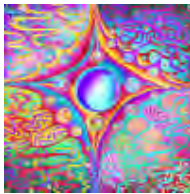
Later in the Shiva Sutras, verse 3.6, Swami Lakshmanjoo quotes a verse from the Lakshmi Kaularnava Tantra 8.18: “When such a yogi experiences the state of universal consciousness of Lord Shiva, not only in his internal state of consciousness of self but also in the very active life of the universe, this is called real *samadhi*.” God is everywhere!

These insightful distinctions are what make the Shiva Sutras so valuable to those who are practicing. What good are our experiences when we don’t understand them? Experiences can be squandered and lost, when we do not have the knowledge to accept and affirm their reason and place in our spiritual development. The Shiva Sutras give us precise markers on the path Home.

When you cannot maintain awareness the energies, which hold us in the temporal illusory hologram, will ‘play’ with us. They will bring all kinds of enticements into our consciousness and direct our focus back to illusory ephemeral desires. This is their job. The Creator is so immensely powerful that It must create endless ways to ‘trick’ Itself - as us - into remaining in the holographic universe It created for Its own ‘play’ of concealing and revealing.

Those aspirants who acquire special yogic powers (*siddhis*) are also tempted and often derailed. They are so pleased with their new powers that they become lost in their enjoyment of a variety of *siddhic* carnival acts. “Having weakened his power of going forward, through the attainment of these yogic powers, all obstacles of life play with him. [SLJ]”

Again and again in the Shiva Sutras we are warned off yogic powers. They come, but they act as hindrances to the real thing, God consciousness. In the Bible Jesus was always reluctant to perform miracles. Here the message is clear: “Do not become attached to yogic powers, be detached from them.” [Malini Vijaya Tantra - SLJ]



SHAKTOPAYA - a means to enter God Consciousness

The second Section of the Shiva Sutras is the understanding of one ‘means’ (*upaya*) of realizing your God consciousness known as *shaktopaya* in Sanskrit. This originates from the energy of knowledge. In *shaktopaya* you meditate on your own nature, the God within you. “This meditation is not accomplished through the recitation of mantra. It is only accomplished with thought. You must maintain awareness... [SLJ]”

The secret here is an unbroken awareness of the God within you that simultaneously permeates and pervades everything, this entire temporal illusory universe and everything in it.



The Way of Life, Tao Teh Ching, According to Lao Tzu, translated by Witter Byner; A Perigee Book, 1944, 1994.

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Jaideva Singh: Siva Sutras, The Yoga of Supreme Identity, Text of the Sutras and the Commentary Vimarsini of Kshemaraja Translated into English with Introduction, Notes, Running Exposition, Glossary and Index; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1979 and reprints.

Quantum Theory Demonstrated: Observation Affects Reality
ScienceDaily (Feb. 27, 1998)

www.sciencedaily.com/releases/1998/02/980227055013.htm





The Shiva Sutras – The Third Section – The Means to Enlightenment & Why Learn Kashmir Shaivism?

In Kashmir Shaivism there are three basic ‘means’ (*upayas*) and one more, which is quite unique in that it is not a means at all. For most, the journey to union with God moves through these three means (*upayas*), again and again until we are able to hold our consciousness in the final state of realization – the state of ‘Knowing’ we always have been that God consciousness which we sought.

The first section in the Shiva Sutras dealt with the first means, *shambhavopaya*; and is for very advanced aspirants who are able to maintain thoughtlessness in continuity. *Shambhavopaya* originates from the energy of Will (*iccha*) and thus requires an intensely focused will.

For example in *shambhavopaya*, the intricate mysterious mechanisms of the Matrikacakra theory of Letters that create this universe are revealed spontaneously. Here the yogi enters into “that transcendental consciousness where he finds that this whole universe has come out from sentences and sentences from words and words from letters and letters from the real ‘I’ which is Parama Shiva (the Oneness).” [SLJ – Kashmir Shaivism, The Secret Supreme]

This state of ‘thoughtlessness’ is said to be almost automatic and comes from the grace (*anugraha*) of an enlightened Master - or from the ‘master’ within you. Swami Lakshmanjoo, who left this world in 1991, has said that his grace will come through his recorded teachings made in Kashmir during his lifetime. I personally have experienced this ‘nectar’ in various degrees, so I know that it is true that the sounds coming from his voice have the power to vivify the teachings and alter consciousness.



The second section of the Shiva Sutras relates to the next means of achieving God consciousness – *Shaktopaya*, which originates from the energy of knowledge (*jnana*). The aspiring yogi must raise his/her consciousness to the point that the wisdom can be absorbed of the Master who is within or a living teacher.

“In *shaktopaya*, the yogi does not have to recite mantras or use his breath to be aware or concentrate on any particular spot. [SLJ-KS]” Here centering on the “reality between any two actions or any two thoughts” results in an “unbroken awareness” which leads you into God consciousness. [SLJ]

Swami Lakshmanjoo refers to the three sections in the Shiva Sutras as Awakenings. The third section/awakening is concerned with *anavopayah*, which is termed the ‘inferior’ means to enter into God consciousness and uses imagination. It is the longest section with 45 sutras that explain various techniques - such as the process of concentrating on breathing, the organs of sensation (the five senses, etc.), contemplation, and concentrating on a particular place. It also informs the aspirant of the possible consequences of these practices, how we achieve elevated states and yet often lose what we attain.

These three means of achieving God consciousness are explained in greater detail in Swami Lakshmanjoo’s book, ‘Kashmir Shaivism – The Secret Supreme.’ This book serves as a sort of reference-dictionary or shortened encyclopedia of Kashmir Shaivism. It is said to be a condensed version of Abhinavagupta’s magnum opus The Tantraloka, in which the enlightened Kashmiri genius, superb writer and poet, Abhinavagupta collected and brilliantly arranged all the wisdom of Kashmir Shaivism.

Swami Lakshmanjoo’s ‘Kashmir Shaivism – The Secret Supreme’ is the result of a series of lectures given by 1971-1972 in response to John and Denise Hughes who fortunately for us, in those days long past, asked to be taught Kashmir Shaivism.

There is one final means (*upaya*), which has to be everyone’s favorite because you don’t have to do anything. It is called *anupaya* and is actually no ‘means’ at all. In *anupaya* “nothing is to be done. Be as you are. If you are talking, go on talking...Do not do anything, only reside in your being. [SLJ-KS]” Fun, and of course easier said than done! Obviously this is for the very advanced yogi and one who is just on the

edge of, or already in God consciousness. Still the idea of doing nothing to achieve what you already are is very appealing.



Why should we learn Kashmir Shaivism?

Why bother with all these Sanskrit terms that describe the systems by which the universe is manifested and help us to understand the mechanics of our own consciousness. After all, this is not five-sense western science.

I feel that the state of the world these days is a reflection of the effects of western science. In spite of the comforts and advances that science has contributed to our current civilization – the fact remains that we are effectively poisoning our own planet. This has happened in a very short time, within my lifetime of 65 years. We are contaminating the land, air, ocean and the waters that we depend on for our survival. You know this.

Unless we change our consciousness, it seems that the Earth herself may soon reject us as a species. It is my personal view that the most important achievement, the greatest goal for any of us is a higher consciousness. An elevated awareness in you will in turn change others by the process of contagion, a kind of psychic osmosis.

There will be those who will achieve the highest goal of total Liberation (jivan mukti). While many who aspire may not reach the final goal, they will become greater in their own understanding and awareness of our

intrinsic relationship to the Oneness. Yet they will influence and alter the world around them, and what is certain is that allowing the God within to permeate our very being and thinking does have the power to change the world.

I have seen this for myself. Yes, I want complete enlightenment, liberation from the endless cycles of birth & death (*samsara*). And every step I take towards that goal makes my life better not only for me, but also for those I love - and for the planet. As Krishna says, do this for the Well-Being of the world (*loka-samgraha*). What would this world be like if our leaders were enlightened men and women - or even partially enlightened? What if they understood and allowed the God-within them to permeate their thoughts and actions, just as Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita relied on Krishna before the great battle.

Awareness is everything. Kashmir Shaivism is telling us that God is ubiquitous, immanent, permeating everything. God is not far away from us, not up in the clouds or seated on a golden throne high in some inaccessible heaven. God is within us. There is nowhere to 'ascend' to. We have no distance to cross, except in our own consciousness. God is Love. God is waiting eternally within our Hearts, waiting patiently for us to turn and embrace that which we always are.

Awareness sets us free. Consciousness has the power to be conscious of its self! As we learn these systematic understandings of the mechanics of the manifested universe, and come to understand how our own consciousness operates as if on automatic (through the *gunas*), this acquired awareness will expose the processes by which we have ensnared ourselves in the temporal illusory hologram. Kashmir Shaivism gives us the means to observe and thereby master our careless compulsions. We can become aware of the fact that thoughts and words as sound entrap us in our own webs of self-generated illusions.

As long as we remain oblivious of the various reckless ways we as individuals 'imagine' our world, the inevitable consequences will always be the same – ever repeating cycles of birth and death. Only by uniting with the God-with can we free ourselves from the illusory entanglements we create.

KASHMIR SHAIIVISM, The Secret Supreme, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 1985, 2003.



Shiva Sutras 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3 – Entanglement in Sense Impressions & the Subtle Body



Shiva Sutra 3.1

Atma cittam

Atma cittam describes the mind that has become entangled in the various sense impressions, which make us believe that our individual egos are the ‘doers’ and that life is about satisfying our endless desires for things, people and power. We forget that we are the Oneness and this state of delusion leads to entanglement “in the wheel of repeated births and death. [SLJ]”

Atma is the Sanskrit word usually taken to mean the Self, the individual soul within each of us. The use of the word ‘soul’ is misleading in the context of Indian thought. In the west we have been taught to believe that each of us has an individual soul and when we die our unique-to-us soul goes to heaven or hell, or even nowhere.

However the understanding of Atma in the Sanskrit texts is this: There is only one Atma. There is only one soul. In the final, deepest, and ultimate level of being, there is only one soul. Atma is the Oneness, God consciousness, which takes on the temporal appearance of separation and limitation, to conceal and reveal Its nature, and play in Time and Space

One root meaning of Atma is “to move constantly. Owing to primal ignorance of its real nature...it moves on to various forms of existence.

[Jaideva Singh]” The Oneness has taken on the temporal ‘appearance’ of multiplicity as you and me and endless diversity.

Citta is that “mind which is eternally saturated with the impressions of sensual pleasures. This individual is attached to the three intellectual organs – mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), and ego (*ahamkara*). [SLJ]”



Shiva Sutra 3.2

Jnanam bandah

Here we have forgotten our real nature, which is God consciousness, and have fallen into the illusion that we are separate from the Oneness. This false delusional state is the result of the three intellectual organs. Our intellect selects what we might want, our mind tells us how we can get what we want, and attachment to the results is produced by our ego – “I have done this. This is mine.”

“For this limited individual, all knowledge is bondage. [SLJ]” Deluded by our limited intellectual organs, all knowledge is experienced as differentiated, and therefore entangles us deeper and deeper into multiplicity, our self-created temporal illusory hologram.

In the Bhagavad Gita XVI.13-15, Krishna describes the snares of egoistic thinking: The deluded ones are strangled by 100s of nooses of expectation and think ‘I have gotten this, this is mine, I will get my desires, I have slain my enemies – who is equal to me?’ While the wise understand the mystery that he/she is not the Doer.

Our subtle body (*puryastaka*) is individual. As we move from one life to another we build and add to our subtle body, which is the accumulation of all our various desires and cravings deposited in it as residual traces (*vasanas*) of our every thought, desire, and act. It is this subtle body that we mistakenly identify with.

It is our subtle body that drags us into lifetime after lifetime to find a suitable environment, a body to satisfy the as yet unfulfilled desires we are attached to. We are magnetized to the specific frequencies that resonate with the totality of our consciousness.

The experience of differentiated knowledge leads to desires that entrap us in repeated births and deaths (*samsara*). All desires eventually lead to pain. Everything in this universe is temporal and comes to an end. Even the rich, brilliant, and beautiful get old and die. Eventually we all lose everything.

In the Bhagavad Gita V.22, Krishna tells Arjuna that pleasures are born of sense contact, and are in reality nothing more than wombs of pain (*duhkha-yonayas*); and because they are temporal, not lasting, not eternal, the one who is wise is not attached to these pleasures.

Swami Lakshmanjoo comments on this same verse to help us understand how an enlightened yogi views pleasure: "...he thinks...these enjoyments (*bhogas*) which are placed before me, they are fine...I can have them; but I am not particular to have them. If they are there, let them be there. If they are not there, well and good, I won't have them...I am not attached. [SLJ's BhG]" The one who is enlightened does not think he/she must have anything.

Here in simple language the idea of 'non-attachment' is illustrated for us. When we achieve God consciousness, enlightenment, there is an inevitable detachment from the drama of all things – the 'coming and goings' of the external world. What do we need when we have become Everything?

The capacity for non-attachment is the natural outcome of being elevated beyond self-created illusory delusions. We have moved beyond thinking we are our current individual identity and our subtle body. We have become aware and observe the mechanics that compel our attachment to unending webs of entanglements. We are free from being "played and entangled by the wheel of repeated births and deaths. [SLJ]"





Shiva Sutra 3.3

Kaladinam tattvanamaviveko maya

In Kashmir Shaivism we learn that when we experience the world as differentiated multiplicity, we are consequently pushed further into delusional entrapments. We descend. As long as we think that we are one with our body and God is not— then our own senses, mind, intellect, and ego will draw our consciousness ever deeper into the webs of bondage.

This movement down in consciousness is reversed when we realize the truth. Finding God within you reverses this process. “And when you know that all bodies are my bodies and all bodies are universal bodies and you know you possess a universal body, knowing, ‘I am God,’ then you are truly elevated. [SLJ]”

It is as if we are stuck in a sort of cosmic elevator, a lift. Our confused perceptions will cause us to descend into limited understanding. Going down. Until we realize that we are one with everything, then our perceptions, the five senses, the intellect, etc., will serve to enlighten us. We will perceive God everywhere in all. Going up!

Swami Lakshmanjoo translates the Spanda Karika 1.20 thus: “For those who are fully aware of God consciousness, organs of action and organs of the intellect lead them to that supreme state of God consciousness. For those who are not aware, these same organs deprive them completely of that God consciousness.”

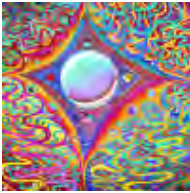
These ‘organs’ are the instrumental mechanisms by which the Creator intentionally binds Itself in Time and Space; they become the means of Liberation once we realize they are just our own elaborate brilliant hidden tricks. I often think of this as a switch. Either you are in God consciousness and feel one with the world, or you are not and feel separate, insecure, and fearful.

Real knowledge lies within. The God within you does not need to learn any lesson, or to master algorithms and become a rocket scientist. The

God within already knows everything. The God within does not need to evolve, and is ubiquitous thus there is nowhere to ascend to. The God within is now and always All. Therefore shifting or switching our consciousness into ‘that’ which we have always been, opens the door to the knowledge that liberates.

When knower and knowledge are one, the God within will reveal the eternal secret to you. Until then we continue to live in MAYA’s energies of illusion - and MAYA is “the personified will of the supreme will. [Vijnana Bhairava - SLJ]” God is deluding Itself to enjoy playing as multiplicity.

God conceals Its real nature and then reveals Itself within each and every one of us throughout the cycles of time. This universe is the Divine Play of God. We are God! We forget.



Bhagavad Gita, In the Light of Kashmir Shaivism, Chapters 1-6, revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2008.

The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.

SPANDA-KARIKAS, The Divine Creative Pulsation, translated into English by Jaideva Singh; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1980. 2005.

Vijnana Bhairava, The Manual for Self Realization, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2007.



Shiva Sutras 3.4 & 3.5 – The Means to Transcend Limited Perception

God is everything and everyone, including you. If you feel now and again that I am repeating the same idea - that is because there is only this one idea. The first Shiva Sutra 1.1 says that God consciousness is “the reality of everything. [SLJ]” The difficulty comes in getting that understanding beyond the intellect and into our very being, so that the ever expanding nectar sweetness of the God within is felt every moment, in our every thought and act.

The third section of the Shiva Sutras offers the aspirant practical means (*upayas*) to achieve God consciousness. Ways of maintaining awareness in breathing, reciting mantras, and other disciplines are explained. This is called *anavopayah*, which is said to be the ‘inferior’ means because it utilizes the external, literally the five elements - earth, water, fire, air, and ether; and requires more effort.

The Vijnana Bhairava Tantra is another Shaivite text that will help you on your way Home. It gives the aspirant 112 ways to achieve God consciousness. The most accurate version of Swami Lakshmanjoo’s teachings on this text is the one recorded and transcribed by John Hughes, the Universal Shaiva Foundation.

Swami Lakshmanjoo describes these 112 ways as giving sugar to a child with medicine. He says that no one can take the “medicine where you have to do nothing.” By this he means that in fact there is nothing to be done – we are all already the Oneness, what he terms God consciousness, Parabhairava. However to remove the Veils of Maya we have placed on our own consciousness, most of us must take the medicine by these means, practices and disciplines, as support to achieve our real nature. [SLJ - Vijnana Bhairava Tantra]

I will not describe the details of many of these means, especially breath techniques. I feel it is best for you to get them personally from Swami

Lakshmanjoo's writing. He says that these kinds of meditations are found in every Tantra text of Shaivism. I am not qualified to instruct you in these exercises. I would not know what might suit an individual, as we are all very different and require the kind of means suited to our particular personal proclivities.



Shiva Sutra 3.4

Sarire samharah kalanam

The mind wanders ceaselessly. Anyone who has ever tried to meditate or even sit in silence for a time has discovered what a wild horse monster the mind can be. In the Bhagavad Gita VI.33 & 34, Arjuna doubts his ability to follow Krishna's teachings because he knows how difficult controlling the mind can be. Arjuna does not see how an evenness of mind can be achieved permanently, because the mind is unstable and wandering, harassing, unyielding, and as difficult to control as the wind.

Krishna agrees with Arjuna that the mind is arduous to control, but reassures him that such equilibrium is possible through means - upayas. Later in Chapter XVIII.37, Krishna tells his friend that in the beginning our efforts may feel like poison, but turn to nectar as we move beyond the clutter and impatience of our chaotic thoughts and find peace, tranquility, and serenity. The implication is that in the beginning this is not so easy for most of us. But the effort brings a reward greater than all the gold, success, and power in this external temporal world.

Here in the Shiva Sutras we are introduced to the idea of a means to God consciousness by taking your thoughts through specific sequences in order to discipline the mind, thereby purifying your thoughts from delusion. These methods will "curtail this limitation of being. [SLJ]"



Our hologram is divided into five circles or enclosures, from gross to subtle. We are told to use our imagination to move from the gross

manifestation to the subtle. We do this by putting the effect into the cause, moving from one circle of manifestation to the next, which lies within it – like layers of an onion - until we reach the cause of all the layers and find there is only One.

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “...take your attention from the gross orbit to the subtle orbit and then to the subtlest orbit, absorbing one into another.”

In the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra, verse 56, there is a similar instruction. “Just take the gross formation of the world and make it enter in it subtle formation of the world through imagination...take that subtle formation of the objective world in its most subtle formation...by making the journey successively from gross (*sthula*) to subtle (*sukshma*), and from subtle to subtlest (*para*)...he transcends the state of mind, he becomes un-minded. That is his Samadhi. [SLJ]”

The same effect is achieved by reading the Kashmir Shaivite Sanskrit texts. They all say essentially the same thing – everyone and everything is God! But by reading and rereading these timeless words of wisdom your consciousness will finally get the message that differentiated perception is the Illusion (Maya) you can transcend. Your consciousness will be elevated and come into resonance with the eternal Truth within you.

For those who have active noisy minds or are intellectually inclined, these methods are useful. They serve to lead us into right thinking about our universe and who we are in it. There are further instructional details in this sutra which you will want to access for yourself.



The achievements of those who have become un-minded are extolled by Krishna in Chapter Twelve of the Bhagavad Gita. The ones who have reached the imperishable (*aksharam*), that which is beyond definition (*anirdeshyam*), the unmanifest unseen (*avyaktam*), the all pervading (*sarvatragam*), unimaginable and inconceivable (*acintyam*), the unchanging (*kutastham*), the immovable (*acalam*), the eternal (*dhruvam*); who have controlled all the senses and become even minded, rejoicing in the welfare of all beings – they attain God consciousness.

Krishna then says that attaching the mind to the Unmanifest is difficult (*duhkham*). However our innate simple human feelings of love can also be a means to reach God. By becoming devoted to God in our Hearts, we

learn that the God within us is everywhere and soon our consciousness enters into that which we always are – the One.

The trick is to always think of God. The old Indian adage is ‘God is the pot!’ meaning everything we see, touch or hear is God. When you are washing the dishes think of the plates and water as God. When a friend is angry with you, see them as God, perhaps a bit lost and confused in that moment – but God nonetheless. See the light of the soul, which is also your soul, in their eye. See God in every eye.

Soon the subtlest feelings of Love will fill your Heart and expand that delightful nectar into every corner of your Being. These subtle feelings are beyond all others, beyond the five senses and the intellect, beyond words to describe. Krishna tells Arjuna, “Henceforth you shall dwell in Me” [BhG XII.8], in God consciousness, in Parabhairava.



Shiva Sutra 3.5

Nadisamhara-bhutajaya-bhutakaivalya

In this sutra, Swami Lakshmanjoo explains a breathing technique that removes our awareness from the gross elements and diverts our attention away from the five senses. I recommend the recordings of these teachings in the Shiva Sutras made by John Hughes years ago in Kashmir. You will know what is useful to you.

In the beginning of our journey Home, most of us need to practice disciplines that will lead us into more the subtle realms. You will not always need these ‘inferior’ means and someday may find that the God within you has opened your Heart to the ultimate Reality that you are and always have been the Oneness. These inferior means of concentration and realization often lead to the other two. Where one ends, another may begin.

You will not need to meditate or practice breathing or read books or anything, but simply remain in God consciousness. Swami Lakshmanjoo says that when his disciples really understand what he is teaching them, they won’t want to listen to him anymore! He has a wonderful sense of humor about all this. I sometimes feel Swami Lakshmanjoo looked at

people with a gently amused sense of wonder at the endless array of predicaments God gets Itself into. But that is just my intuition.



Vijnana Bhairava, The Manual for Self Realization, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2007.

The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.





Shiva Sutras 3.6 & 3.7 – Yogic Powers are a Barrier to God Consciousness



Shiva Sutra 3.6

mohavaranasiddhih

Moha means delusion and ignorance; *moha* is *Maya*, the veil of illusion that is drawn over the undifferentiated Oneness to produce the appearance of differentiated multiplicity. The Sanskrit term *Maya* is the personified will of the supreme Will of the Oneness, God. *Maya* “carries your consciousness away from the reality of the Self. [SLJ]”

Various supernormal powers come to the yogi after achieving success in the practices of meditation, concentration, controlling the breath, etc. Most westerners have been led to believe that these paranormal powers are good, a reward, and the desirable consequence of hard work on the path. However the Shiva Sutras say that these *siddhic* powers are merely another product of the illusory veils of *Maya* covering our consciousness, and therefore they prevent us from experiencing the real supreme state of God consciousness.

Laksmi Kaularava Tantra 11: “The one who is directed toward these limited yogic powers is carried away from the consciousness of Lord Shiva (the Oneness) and is not capable of experiencing His nature.” [SLJ]

Is this a sort of last temptation? Does the God-within offer the aspirant super powers just before he/she reaches the goal as a final test for Itself? The journey Home is the sole purpose for this universe and we may be assured that its Creator has made this adventure of consciousness both interesting and challenging, a walk on the proverbial arduous razor's edge – and simultaneously a breeze. Realizing our own nature as eternal God consciousness can happily be described as a 'breeze' because from another point of view, we were never changed, never differentiated, never limited, we are never anything other than the One.



The yogi who is not seduced by these *siddhic* powers will continue on the path with yogic practices such as meditation, etc., but will “not be caught in the grip of these limited yogic powers. [SLJ]” Holding God consciousness in continuity, without any break, is the ultimate great challenge for those who seek liberation from the endless cycles of birth and death. These *siddhic* powers will only distract you and trap your consciousness in the realm of the temporal illusory hologram.

“When he holds the consciousness of Lord Shiva in continuity, eternally, without any break... When such a yogi experiences the state of universal consciousness of Lord Shiva, not only in his internal state of consciousness of Self but also in the very active life of the universe, this is called real *Samadhi*. [SLJ - Laksmi Kaularnava Tantra 8.16 & 17]”

We must continually feel the presence of the God within us, allowing that nectar of Being the One to expand and fill our every cell. This is the evolution of our experiential understanding of the Real. Eventually we come into feeling and experiencing God consciousness everywhere, in every corner of the universe, in all the shining stars and wandering clouds that fill the skies, in every singing bird and honey bee, and each individual human being, man, woman, and child. The entire universe is the temporal ‘appearance’ of the One as multiplicity.

“The unreal has no existence, the Real never ceases to be. [B.Marjanovic – Bhagavad Gita II.16]” What we take as ‘real’ is in fact temporal, fleeting, illusory. It is real enough to the five senses and the conditioned mind, but only the God consciousness within is eternal, the only Real. We come to feel this as truth, and these feelings set us free from worry and attachment to the myriad of holographic projections we have generated from our own deluded (*moha*) consciousness.

Shiva dances on the dwarf of delusion in the famous elegant Nataraj statue. Knowledge of our real nature - the Oneness, Parabhairava, God Consciousness - liberates us from our self-created webs of ignorance. We must learn to remain in this understanding always - as Swami Lakshmanjoo says, in continuity!



Shiva Sutra 3.7

Mohajayad anantabhogat sahajavidyajayah

We will reach God consciousness only when the last impressions (*samskaras*), including even the most faint and elusive remaining impressions of Maya's illusory veils are completely overcome and destroyed. This is our journey. "Illusion is this completely differentiated universe filled with impressions and experiences. [SLJ]"

We experience God consciousness within - and also as pervading the whole universe. Our adventure is not completed when we find God only within ourselves, we must experience the feeling that God is everywhere.

The ability to feel God within you is the beginning, however it is still a form of bondage because you perceive the outside world as being different from you. You judge people as different from you, good/bad, etc. Everyone is God and you are God, therefore everyone and everything is an extension of that which you have always been and always will be – the Real.

The world is not impure. Impurity is only the false perception of the differentiated limited mind conditioned by temporal predispositions accumulated through the good and bad experiences of multiple lifetimes. We each carry in our subtle body (*puryashtaka*) our past-life collection of judgments about what brings pleasure and what brings pain.

"The mind (*manah*) is only the collection of differentiated knowledge (*samkalpa*). It does not matter whether it is pure knowledge or impure knowledge. Both of these exist in limitation, in the cycle of the mind in bondage. [SLJ]"

Svacchanda Tantra 5.394: “When you progress beyond the idea (*samkalpa*) of good and bad, of pure and impure, then actually, when you think deeply about it, there is no difference between individual consciousness and God consciousness. [SLJ]”



Abhinavagupta’s Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, Gitārtha-Samgraha, translated from the Sanskrit with Introduction & Notes by Boris Marjanovic; Rudra Press, 2002, 2006.

NATARAJ: Shiva Dancing on Moha – Ignorance & Delusion





Shiva Sutra 3.8 – Expanding into the Entire Universe

Jagrat-dvitiya-karah

Our Real nature is God consciousness, the Oneness, Parabhairava. As we move along the path Home, our Real nature within continues to expand, moving our awareness ever further and deeper out into this entire universe.

Everything and everyone in all the myriad worlds, even energies we might judge as evil or negative, all are manifestations, extensions of the one God consciousness of which we as individuals have always been a temporal expression.

“Whatever is found in this universe is existing in universal consciousness. So there is nothing to eliminate, nothing to separate from your consciousness. [SLJ]”

The Sanskrit word *jagrat* means the ‘waking state’ and this sutra says that for the yogi who has understood the Reality of the ubiquitous all-pervading Oneness, the waking state is just another form of God consciousness and an expanded awareness of our Self.

“In speaking of the waking state, the dreaming state and the state of sound sleep are also included. So for such a yogi, these three states, which are experienced in daily life, are not other than universal God consciousness. [SLJ]”

There comes a moment in our journey when every moment and everything in life becomes sacred. God is everywhere, permeating everything. Even the simplest acts and perceptions of our daily routine life can be experienced as God consciousness and therefore can provide entry into the subtle blissful states of our Real Being – *Samadhi*.



Play each note as if it is a universe...

India's traditions consider the world sacred. In a recent biography of the greatest living master of the bamboo flute, the bansuri, Hariprasad Chaurasia, there is a wonderful example of this understanding of the sacred in the mundane.

In search of the deepest subtleties of classical Indian music, the raga, Hariprasad found his guru in Annapurana Devi, the wife of the famous sitar player, Ravi Shankar. Hariprasad was already quite successful and famous in India's film world when he approached this reclusive lady for instruction. She made him prove his dedication as if he were a beginner, making his every effort an arduous challenge.

His patience was rewarded with her superlative wisdom. Annapurana taught Hariprasad that he must play each note as if it is a universe.

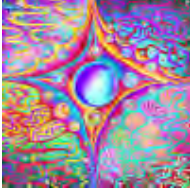
How would this kind of superhuman concentration and focus of our five-sense attention manifest in our own everyday life? Wouldn't time slow, and each and every moment become the potential for God to reveal Its concealed beauty and bliss in every bit of sensory data transmitted from the external world to our brain. We would see and hear God everywhere. We would move through our days nestled in peaceful bliss.

"Beneath the curtain of each atom lies concealed, the life increasing Beauty of the face of the Beloved. [Mahmud Shabistari]" God is not found only in places of worship, in grand cathedrals or magnificent temples; nor is God confined to our limited ideas of what we imagine to be sacred. God is everywhere. Everything and everyone is sacred. When the Heart is opened - the universe and every atom in it, is felt sacred.

The universe is the Creator's Cosmic Sacrifice. God 'sacrifices' Its Oneness in the expanding and contracting, revealed and concealed manifestation of infinite energies, power and will. When we offer God anything, our prayers or a flower, we are returning that 'sacrifice' to the Source of its origin. When we surrender our small identity ego and offer our limited consciousness to the God within, we are returning the

sacrifice of what is manifested into the Ocean of Consciousness. We are going Home.

“In this universe, there are only two aspects found – energy and the energy holder. Of these two, it is energy that is held in each and every part of the universe because this universe is, in fact, the existence of energy. And the energy holder is Maheshvarah (the Great Lord, the One) himself alone. [Sarvamangala Shastra – SLJ]”



When you become that which you always were and are, God consciousness, you will not need to read or listen to the Sanskrit texts or other sources of wisdom. They will no longer hold your interest. In the Bhagavad Gita II.52, Krishna says: When with an enlightened intelligence (*buddhi*), you have crossed over the delusion-thicket (*moha-kalilam*), then you will be disenchanted – the Sanskrit word actually translates as disgusted - with the teachings you have already heard, and even those you have yet to hear.

As Swami Lakshmanjoo has said: When you actually understand what I am teaching you, then you will not want to listen.



Swami Lakshmanjoo

Hariprasad Chaurasia, Romance of the Bamboo Reed, A Biography by Uma Vasudev; Shubhi Publications, Gurgaon, Haryana, India, 2005.

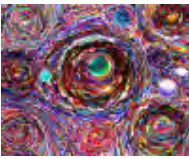
MAHMUD SHABISTARI: The Secret Garden, translated by John Pasha; The Octagon Press, London 1969.

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Shiva Sutras 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, & 3.12 - The Players and the Played



Shiva Sutra 3.9

nartaka atma

The idea of the universe as a dance or drama goes back to *Samkhya*, the philosophy systematized by the sage Kapila in the sixth or seventh century BCE. *Samkhya* is said to be the pillar of many branches of Indian philosophical and metaphysical thought. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna connects his teachings to Arjuna into *Samkhya* thinking; and its roots are said to go back to the Vedas and the Katha and Svetashvatara Upanishads.

In the Samkhya Karika, verse 60, the moment of enlightenment is described in terms of a dancing girl. She dances for the audience only when her performance is desired. When the audience, as the observer, realizes that she is merely a girl dancing, performing, acting - she will cease to perform. In other words when the observer is no longer entranced in and deceived by her graceful seductive movements, she has been 'seen' and knowing that her arts of illusion are finished, she will not dance again.

The dance of Maya's power of Illusion will cease for us, as observers of the universal drama, when we come to understand - through a focused discerning awareness - that what we have taken as Real, was in fact our own deluded limited consciousness projecting our desires out into the hologram.

Here in Shiva Sutra 3.9, the Sanskrit word *narataka* means the dancer or actor on the world stage and *atma* is the Self, the God within. The God within you is the observer enjoying the ‘universal dance’ of Its own making. Everything you experience in your own life “birth, death, joy, sadness, depression, happiness, enjoyment. All this forms part of the universal dance, and this dance is a drama. [SLJ]”

Just as an actor knows they are playing a role in a play, so the God within us is ever aware that although we are entranced and mesmerized - these scenes of our lives are just the ‘play’ of Its universal drama. When you realize that your drama has been created by you, through the mind and the five senses, then you are like the actor who knows that he is only playing yet another role. The drama does not affect you – you can take off the mask and go Home.

“The actor is he who conceals his real nature. [SLJ]” The actor within you is God, and all this that entraps us in its beauty and drama is the ‘Play’ of God consciousness. “His real action is his being in his own universal God consciousness in each and every moment of revealing his differentiated forms. [SLJ]”

I understand that many find this idea of God’s ‘play’ cruel. What kind of God finds the death of thousands of innocents play? Consider the idea that all beings are God dwelling within the living and the dying. This is a polarity universe. The Oneness both enjoys all our creative hopeful achievements and suffers every demonic catastrophic event throughout the Cycles of Time.

“A colossal universal drama ...”

In truth, the only real understanding of the magnitude of God’s awe-filled polarity based universal drama is to Become that God consciousness for yourself. Once you ‘switch’ into the state of Being God consciousness, every pain and doubt will be transmuted to Joy, to the bliss (*ananda*) of understanding it was all your doing all along. You become the ‘player’ and cease to be ‘played’ by self-created Illusion. That bliss waits within us all.

“So, this entire universe is actually the result of a colossal universal drama which is taking place. And who is the hero in this drama? Here the part of the hero is played by the internal soul who is also the universal soul in disguise. [SLJ]”



Shiva Sutra 3.10

rango'ntaratma

Ranga is the stage, the place where the universal soul can play out innumerable roles. *Antaratma* is the internal soul that has taken the form of the subtle body (*puryashtaka*). The subtle body carries the residual traces of our good and bad deeds from one life to another. [Jaideva Singh]

We are each the perfect composite of our every thought, act, and deed in all our previous lives. There is no place for a blame-game in this thinking. We are each responsible for everything that happens to us, for both our talents and abilities, and our darkest compulsions and inevitable tragedies.

“There, in that field of drama, the internal self steps in and begins his dance, revealing this drama of the world by infusing the movement (*spanda*) of his organs...all of this is his play. In actual fact, he is neither laughing nor dreaming nor sad nor joyous – he is one, just as he has always been. [SLJ]”

The internal soul is acting in the three states – waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. The awareness of these three is important in Kashmir Shaivism because we must become conscious in all three.

“By entering into the subtle body (*puryashtaka*) found in the dreaming state, he journeys in each and every womb in this universe. He is known as the interior self (*antaratma*). [SLJ – Svachchanda Tantra 11.85]”



Shiva Sutra 3.11

prekshakani indriyani

The sense organs are essentially the audience, the spectators of the universal drama. The Sanskrit word used for the sense organs is *indriyani*, and comes from the word Indra who is the king of the gods who are said to dwell in heaven. The gods in fact live in you, in every one of us as the sense organs. These are the five senses - sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell; and the mind with its intelligence that can discern; and the ego that is imbued with the sense of 'I am' and therefore can experience differentiated limited perception and feel separate from the One.

“Thus, for a yogi, the observers of this drama are his own (sense) organs (*indriyani*). [SLJ]” While people who have not reached God consciousness are lost in their self-created dramas, the yogis who have remembered their Real nature are “not overwhelmed in this way because they are absolutely aware of what they are doing in this world. [SLJ]”

The enlightened yogi does not evaporate into white light. Rather he/she continues life in a heightened state of awareness, observing the acts and thoughts transmitted through the senses. “He knows whatever happens in this world, it is just play. [SLJ]”

When the God within you is concealed and you are self-deluded, the sense organs exist to draw you out into Time and Space, to experience ‘the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune’ in the temporal illusory hologram. The moment you reach God consciousness, the God within reveals that you have always been That - and in a sort of cosmic reversal, your sense organs become the vehicle for your Return to unending Bliss, your Real eternal state.

“When that reality of the Self is revealed by these (sense) organs, the inherent difference (*vibhagam*) is totally destroyed and vanishes. His organs become filled with universal joy and absolute independence (*svantantrya*). [SLJ]”



Shiva Sutra 3.12

Dhivasatsattvasiddhih

For the yogi who attains the “reality of his supreme intellect” he achieves the state “where he feels and experiences that he is actually acting in this world. [SLJ]”

By observing the patterns of our behavior, over time we will come to see how they repeat and repeat again and again. We realize that we have existed in a sort of prison-like-blueprint that always compels us to repeat the same patterns in the same way. This ‘cage’ of compulsions appears to do what is always does, no matter how we try to control it.

When we observe these confining patterns, we begin to detach from them and they no longer have the power to provoke our reactions. We come to feel that this is only one role of many, perhaps hundreds that we have played throughout the cycles of time. Remembering our past lives will make this very evident. The individual personality self in this current life is only one of hundreds. We can drop the role.

Our blueprint-like patterns of behavior are described by Krishna in the final Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, XVIII 59-61. Krishna tells Arjuna that even if deluded by ego, he thinks “I shall not fight” such resolve will be hopeless in vain because his own nature (*prakriti's gunas*) will command and control him.

Our inborn material nature will always drive us into habitual actions and compulsions. “The Lord abides in the hearts of all beings, and by the power of Illusion, causes them to wander as if fixed on a machine.”

The Sanskrit word is *yantra-rudhani*: *yantra* is a machine like mechanism and *rudhani* suggests that we are attached or mounted on a machine, which J.A.B. van Buitenen translates as the water-wheel. This mechanism is the collection of all the remnants of tendencies we have accumulated throughout all our lives, the *samskaras*. These ‘residual impressions’

compel each of us to act in predictable ways as if helpless within an inescapable enclosure, a matrix of our own making.

The enlightened yogi realizes that he/she is not that machine, matrix, *yantra-rudhani* of compulsions. He is not the actor, not the Doer. These wise ones are the ‘heroes’ who have Become God consciousness, Parabhairava.



Samkhya Karika of Isvara Krishna, Translated by Swami Virupakshananda; Sri Ramakrishna Math Printing Press, 1995.

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The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.

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Shiva Sutras 3.13 & 3.14 - Maintaining God Consciousness in Continuity & the Future



Shiva Sutra 3.13

Siddhah svatantrabhavah

The Sanskrit word *siddha* here means ‘achieved,’ and is not translated as perfection or super normal powers. For the yogi who has achieved “the state of absolute independence. That absolute independence lies in all knowledge, all action, and all will. [SLJ]”

Here we are told what can be expected when we achieve God consciousness, and become that absolute freedom and independence that is our real nature, and the eternal unchanging state of the Oneness.

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “By this absolute independence this yogi makes the whole universe dependent on him...Whatever he will in this universe will take place.”

Authentic enlightenment does bring serious power. However as we have already seen in previous sutras, the use of these powers and attachment to them is perilous to the yogi. On the one hand we are told that Becoming God consciousness will bring super powers, and on the other hand we are repeatedly warned against using them. They will keep us from God consciousness.



Shiva Sutra 3.14

Yatha tatra tathanyatra

In Kashmir Shaivism the display and use of acquired super paranormal powers is discouraged. What is far more valuable, and indeed an absolute necessity, is the practice of maintaining God consciousness in continuity.

“For this yogi (who has achieved absolute independence) there is no difference between the independence experienced in *Samadhi* and the independence experienced in the external state. [SLJ]” Living in the everyday external world is the same state experienced in *samadhi*.

Our experience of God consciousness cannot be only imagined. “That reality of the Self, where un-artificial (not imaginary) universal independence will shine, should be sought with great reverence. [SLJ – Spanda Karikas 1.7]”

It must be authentic. In our every moment, walking, talking, washing, and sleeping – we are to remain in God consciousness. Everything is the Oneness. When we reach the state of our Source, we find everything in the external world, even the most mundane is pulsating with That, the eternal immutable imperishable Is-ness.

Even the five senses are now imbued with awareness and in a sort of cosmic reversal, they also will carry us Home. There is nothing that is not God. When we are in God consciousness and perceive the external world from that awareness, the entire woven holographic universe, which consists of endlessly polarizing waveforms and is simultaneously waveless, will offer entry into our Real nature.

Our journey does not end with the liberating experience of enlightened awareness and “the reality of independence, which is absolute freedom.” The enlightened ones must remain active for the remainder of their lives. This activity is the “great task” for the ones who have achieved God

consciousness “to realize the truth of Reality again and again, again and again, so that in the end, he becomes one with Shiva (God consciousness, Parabhairava, the Oneness). [SLJ]”

Our efforts must not cease, must be relentless. We are told that even when we achieve these very high states of union (*yoga*), we might yet once more fall into partial delusion. However, through our own efforts and an intensely focused will, “again and again, again and again” we reach the truth of Reality.



I believe that there are many of you who after experiencing individual union with the God-within will then be able to help set things right in this increasingly terrible world. This is my own personal view. Many will not feel this ‘destiny’ or may feel too old to take an active part in the changes that are upon planet Earth. But I believe that there are indeed many of you who were born with the God-given abilities to bring about change grounded in the sacred Truth.

Strengthened with this Knowledge of ‘the truth of Reality’ these sacred warriors will find the way to their destiny. In the spirit of Divine Non-attachment, with no thought of personal gain, glory, or reward, these enlightened ones will find innovative and productive ways to re-balance and re-harmonize our world. This is my belief, my hope.

Their great task will not only be the ‘living’ in the everyday world and leading the way for the emergence of higher frequency waveforms to heal the terrible assault that has been inflicted on the planet - but their task will also be to maintain in continuity a state of enlightened God consciousness. In such a state of being and living, our sense organs will no longer use and delude us, but can be utilized to infuse a higher consciousness into this world

“These sense-activities of mine may, in their joy, have full play in their objects. But, O Lord, grant that I may not have the temerity of losing even for a moment and even slightly the enjoyment of the bliss of identity

with thee.” [A verse from Utpaladeva’s Shivastotravali VIII.5 as quoted in Jaideva Singh’s translation of the Spanda Karikas]

This idea of living and acting in the world is one of the great teachings in the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna urges Arjuna to fight against evil, but with non-attachment. This non-attachment is the inevitable result of Becoming one with our own innate God consciousness, the God-within each and every one of us. When we realize the God-within us, we understand that God indeed dwells in the Heart of every man, woman, and child and that the entire planet is sacred. When we harm anything, we harm ourselves.

God is not outside us, far away on some cloud or high heaven. God is within each of us, ubiquitous, permeating this entire universe. Krishna reveals the truth that God lives within the Heart again and again in the Bhagavad Gita:

II.30: The eternally indestructible Self is in the body of all.

IX.29: I am the same in all beings.

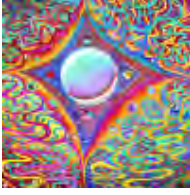
XIII.17: The Light of Knowledge is seated in the Hearts of all.

XV.15: I dwell in the Hearts of all beings.

Take courage from Krishna’s words and the God within you. Knowledge of the Eternal Wisdom will in time restore harmony. Earth’s waters will be clean again, her air pure, and our bodies and the soil free of contaminating chemicals. The state of the planet is reflecting the state of our human consciousness. We have forgotten the God-within us and have no understanding of the underlying metaphysical principles that govern the universe.

It is my heartfelt hope that many of you will find the God-within you and lead this sad dark world back into balance. In the Satya Yuga, the first cycle of time, we are all in an enlightened state. This is our authentic and quite natural consciousness. So it will be again.

“...it can be said in all truth that the ‘end of a world’ never is and never can be anything but the end of an illusion.” [Rene Guenon – The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times.]



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Shiva Sutras 3.15 & 3.16 - The Seed of the Universe & Immersion in Consciousness



Shiva Sutra 3.15

Bijavadhanam

The Sanskrit word *bija* means the seed and cause of this whole universe. The understanding that everything manifested is contained in a single seed is reached in higher states of consciousness, *Samadhi*.

The Oneness manifests as all the worlds, as the glory that is Earth's Nature, and in each and every being – and yet all that is contained, eternally present in a single seed, *bija*. This is the greatness of the free will (*svantantrya*) of Shiva, God consciousness, *Parabhairava*.

Para means the highest and Bhairava is the combination of the three metaphysical principles in one word: BHA indicates the maintenance of the world, RA the withdrawal or dissolution of the world, and VA the projection of the world. [Jaideva Singh] Thus Parabhairava expresses the three metaphysical principles that are the foundational essence, the cosmic forces that make up our universe.

Bija is the seed and cause of the universe; *bija* is “the supreme energy of Shiva, *svantantrya shakti*. [SLJ]” The term *shakti* is synonymous with power and is the manifesting power of Shiva. Because the power of *shakti* manifests everything, she has many Sanskrit words that describe various nuances of her aspects. Here she is *bija*, the cause of the universe in seed form.



Shakti is also *spanda* the creative pulsation of Shiva, the foundational consciousness, motion-less movement.

The movements, vibration and pulsation of *spanda* are only apparent – the temporal appearances of illusory forms emanating from the eternal motion-less stillness that is the One. The manifest is simultaneously un-manifest, because the Oneness is never affected or changed by the appearance of the universe. These contradictions are useful and challenge us to alter our conditioned linear thinking.

Bija is to be continually meditated on in the intense focused practice of a “break-less awareness.” Swami Lakshmanjoo tells us that the aspirant must “put your mind and your intellect on a point that is to be meditated on, again and again, in continuity, without pause.”

This capacity to achieve a break-less awareness will come after your realization. “Because before you have realized it, you won’t have the strength of awareness to do it in continuity. At the time you realize it, that strength of meditating on it in continuation comes spontaneously. [SLJ]”

This achieved spontaneity will make us active. “...after you realize the reality of the Self...you will remain fully active for the remainder of your life. [SLJ]”

The path Home is sometimes bewildering and often presenting the chicken or the egg puzzle – which comes first? Are our ‘achievements’ the result of our own endeavors, or are they merely God’s grace? Is our heartfelt devotion for God a result of our own will, or is it the will of God

that immerses us in such feelings. Is the intensity of a disciplined focus our own doing? Or is this intensity the grace of God within?



Shiva Sutra 3.16

Asanasthah sukham hrade nimajjati

The yogi who is seated in the real posture (asana) of the supreme energy of awareness effortlessly dives in the ocean of nectar. [SLJ] In this sutra Swami Lakshmanjoo explains that the physical postures (asanas) are “only imagination. The real *asana* actually exists when you are truly residing in the state of absolute awareness, the awareness of Self.”

Everything is consciousness. A yogic posture without its equivalent consciousness is meaningless. The external trappings of a spiritual life are fraudulent without real understanding from experience. In my experience, flowing purple robes, mystic ornaments, and a profusion of symbols do not indicate true enlightenment. For example Swami Lakshmanjoo wore simple clothes, his hair was cut short, and he did not preside over his disciples from a golden throne. His consciousness was all.

The Sanskrit word *sukham* here indicates that the yogi has reached the stage where his practice is “effortless” which “means that without exerting any effort in respect to breathing or yogic exercise, contemplation of meditation, he remains seated in that posture. [SLJ]” This posture symbolizes the state of consciousness of those heroes who have entered into God consciousness.

At this point in the journey the external means of spiritual practice are no longer necessary. Without any effort, the yogi in an internal way “immerses himself in the ocean from which the universe rises and expands. [SLJ]” You dissolve into and become one with, immersed and imbued with the nectar that is the ocean of consciousness. Your consciousness enters into God consciousness. All words are mere attempts to describe the subtle feelings that are beyond words, beyond the five senses and the intellect.



The teachings in the Sanskrit texts use the words ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ in a unique way. It can be confusing at first. The Oxford dictionary defines the word subjective as ‘based on or influenced by personal opinions.’ This usage is more often heard in the west.

The word ‘subject’ is also used in English grammar as the word that performs the action of the verb. So when the texts talk of the ‘subjective consciousness’ they are referring to the subject, or I consciousness – and not a personal subjective opinion. The thinking in the Sanskrit texts is connected and interwoven into Sanskrit grammar, and so a grammatical reference is natural and to be expected.

The word ‘objective’ has the same difficulty. In the dictionary it can be defined as ‘not influenced by personal feelings or opinions: historians try to be objective.’ While the meaning of the word ‘object’ is ‘a physical thing that can be seen or touched’ or ‘a person or thing to which an action or feeling is directed.’

In the Sanskrit texts, the word ‘objective’ refers to the external manifested universe – that which is outside and projected by the subject. The subject is the interior ‘doer’ and the object is the external, what is done.

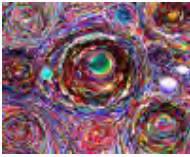
When we reach the state of God consciousness, we become the state of the revealer – the subject, subjective consciousness. We are no longer in the state of what is revealed – the objective universe.

The sequence of events described in this sutra are that the yogi moves from external means and realizing his/her own nature as the One – to an internal means, which relies on thought and Grace, and thus moves into the “supreme nectar” of dissolving in the Ocean of God consciousness.

SPANDA-KARIKAS, The Divine Creative Pulsation, translated into English by Jaideva Singh; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1980. 2005.



Shiva Sutras 3.17 & 3.18 - Consciousness Congeals in the Shape of Time & Space



Shiva Sutra 3.17

Svamatra-nirmanam apadayati

Svamatra means “the essence of consciousness that coagulates, i.e. that creates. [Jaideva Singh]” This universe, everything we experience via the five senses and the mind, is the coagulated energy of the Oneness. When you look out at the external, whatever is around you in your room, driving in a car, or walking up a mountain trail – everything you perceive, see, hear, smell, touch, and taste, are the temporal forms of God’s coagulated energy and consciousness.

“Beneath the curtain of each atom lies concealed the life increasing Beauty of the face of the Beloved.” [Mahmud Shabistari] Objects are coagulated consciousness. “Objects are determined by Consciousness. [JDS]”

The cosmic ‘stuff’ that underlies the forms that appear solid is compared to water - and all that appears solid is compared to snow as condensed and crystallized water. In Tantra it is said that for the one who “realizes what reality lies in water and its solidified formation snow, nothing remains undone in this world. [SLJ]”

In essence there is no difference between water and snow. Snow is coagulated frozen water. Another way of understanding this is to see the vast ocean. Waves are continually forming, cresting and subsiding on the ocean. In the same way, in the ocean of consciousness waves are forming the appearance of temporal solidity, cresting, crossing and interacting

with other waves, and subsiding into stillness. The universe is eternally being created, sustained, and dissolved.

For the enlightened yogi who has become immersed in God consciousness, who has dived into that ocean of nectar, “he can create whatever he thinks, whatever he desires. [SLJ]” When we allow the God-within to emerge and we enter into that state of totally independent free will, then we become the ‘player’ in the material and the subtle worlds.

“When one’s own consciousness congeals in the shape of time and space, that is the measure for the creativity of consciousness. [SLJ]” You become one with space and time, therefore you create not from the external, objective universe, meaning the limited, the ‘thing’ side of the manifested material world. In the state of God consciousness, your “reality of being becomes this universe [SLJ]” and you create through subjective consciousness – the God-within.

Because the yogi experiences the objective world as the product, the creation of his subjective consciousness, he can create whatever is desired. [SLJ] The external world is the projection of all the desires of every being throughout the cycles of time. This world exists to fulfill our every desire. This is why the principle of desire KAMA is considered to be so powerful in the Sanskrit texts.

If we do not fulfill our desires in this life, we transmigrate to a body that will provide the abilities, talents, and circumstances to meet our requirements. The consciousness of most humans being is a veritable whirlwind of insatiable desire. Compelled by desire, we want a thing, power, money, or person - and after having achieved that, we move on to the next desire.

All desires have polarity consequences. The nature of Desire is its temporality. Our pleasure never lasts. Our victories simply do not endure. In the end, with the exception of wisdom, death robs us of everything we have gained. This is expressed in the Sanskrit words *sukha-duhkha*, meaning pleasure and pain, which are often written as one word. The ancient seers understood that one follows the other.

In the west, we have been taught to ignore this fact of reality. We have been conditioned to believe that we can ‘have it all.’ However the wise know the ultimate emptiness of being little more than a consumer. Unless we are programmed and entrained, people cannot be deluded and driven into buying the endless do-dahs, the gadgets and trinkets of conspicuous consumption. Things cannot make us happy. Perhaps this current cycle of desire is coming to its end.

The one who has understood that there is no difference between water and snow, between the appearance of the universe and the energies (*shakti*) of consciousness that form it, for that yogi “nothing remains undone in this world. This is his last birth. Liberated, while living (*jivanmukta*), he won’t again enter into the wheel of repeated births and deaths. [SLJ]”

Krishna asserts this same idea in the Bhagavad Gita VII.2: When Arjuna learns what Krishna is teaching him, when he has realized and understood the truth, then nothing remains to be known in this world. In other words, Becoming God consciousness is all there is to know! This universe is created solely for the purpose of concealing and revealing the Oneness, the ‘play’ of Parabhairava. “This whole universe has come into existence to carry you to God consciousness [SLJ].”

Abhinavagupta expresses a similar thought in his *Paramarthasara*, verse 81, when he says that – ‘No other aim of life remains to be accomplished after the rise of satisfaction attained through the awareness and Realization of the Truth.’ [B.N. Pandit]





Shiva Sutra 3.18

vidya-avinase-vinasah

“When knowledge of being is established in continuation, and is therefore permanent, then the reality of repeated births and death no longer exists, [SLJ]” We are free from *samsara*, free from the cycles of birth and death, and we no longer are pulled again and again through time, by the desires lodged in our subtle body, into incarnating in this universe.

For Its own ‘play’ and by Its absolute free will, the Oneness has veiled Itself in each of us, every man, woman and child. By our every thought and act, we have woven the webs of our temporal illusory hologram. We have wrapped our awareness in layers of delusion and buried our real nature, God consciousness, deeper and deeper in bewildering, meaningless conflict and confusion.

Just as a spider produces silk webs from its own body – the spinnerets on its abdomen - so do we project the ephemeral holograms of our own desires, anger and fear. No one does anything to us. Our every thought and act, moment by moment, has generated these self-created snares. Our lives are solely our responsibility. There are no victims. There is only Parabhairava concealed, waiting to be revealed.

We will not find what we are searching for in the external temporal universe. Whatever we gain will become tiresome. Our possessions and victories lose their glamour and inevitably become stale, boring. In the end, death takes our every fleeting attempt to grasp pleasure, safety, and comfort. The real Joy and Bliss lies within in the soul. Eventually everyone will turn inward Home, as we all weary of this *sukha-duhkha* pleasure-pain polarity world.

There will come a moment for all, when on the deepest levels of our being, each one will realize that the adventures of this world are cyclical, endlessly repeating up-down cycles. We have lost our God consciousness in the adventures offered by Time and Space where there is no lasting Peace. In the Bhagavad Gita IX.33, Krishna tells Arjuna: Having attained

this unhappy unpleasant world which is impermanent and perishable – devote yourself to the God-within.

It is the grace of the God-within that brings us to this point of understanding. As Swami Lakshmanjoo says: “This whole universe has come into existence just to carry you to God consciousness.” When the goal has been achieved, permanently in continuity, there is nothing else to be done.

“For the one who has abandoned the world along with its diversity, including the perception of right and wrong, and who realizes that the blades of grass, leaves, rocks, both animate and inanimate from Shiva to the element earth (*prithvi*), all existent objects and nonexistent (imaginary) objects are one with Lord Shiva (the Oneness, Parabhairava). He (the enlightened yogi) is never born again into this world.” [Sri Kantha Shastra – SLJ]



MAHMUD SHABISTARI: The Secret Garden, translated by John Pasha; The Octagon Press, London 1969.

PARAMARTHASARA of Abhinavagupta, with English translation & notes by Dr. B.N. Pandit, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers; 1991, New Delhi

The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.

The Bhagavadgita in the Mahabharata, A Bilingual Edition, Translated & Edited by J.A.B. van Buitenen; The University of Chicago Press, 1981



Shiva Sutras 3.18 & 3.19 – One Collective Sound



Shiva Sutra 3.18

Vidya ‘vinashe janmavinashah

When we fully realize our own innate God consciousness, we never have to return to the repeating cycles of birth and death. “When this pure knowledge of consciousness is established in continuity, the birth (*janma*) is gone forever. [SLJ]”

As we learn to remain in our own higher consciousness and be the observer of our thoughts and acts, we become liberated from all birth that inevitably leads to death. The cause of birth is said to be, “Action attached with ignorance... [SLJ]”

It is only when we have wrongly identified with the ego that we remain enmeshed and tied in the webs of our self-created temporal illusory holograms. Thinking that we are the body, the five senses and the mind gives us the false idea that we are separate from the One, and at the mercy of differentiated perception.

Enlightened yogis perform actions without attachment. The steadfast yogi, the knower of truth, thinks ‘I do not do anything!’ [Bhagavad Gita V.8]. Actions without attachment do not bind us in illusion. Thus we liberate our Souls from birth and death.



Shiva Sutra 3.19

Kavargadisū maheshvaryadyah pashumatarah

For most yogis, the journey Home is a series of reversals. Just as the Oneness is forever expanding and contracting, moving out as the manifested universe and returning within through periodic dissolutions; so we experience feeling united in and with our God consciousness, and then falling back into our self-created states of delusion and differentiated perception.

There are moments, perhaps days of total emersion in God consciousness; and yet if we lose our focused awareness, we can ‘fall’ again into ignorance. When we allow this to happen, the very forces that have moved us toward enlightenment will again turn into Maya’s powers of illusion and hold onto our consciousness with a vengeance.

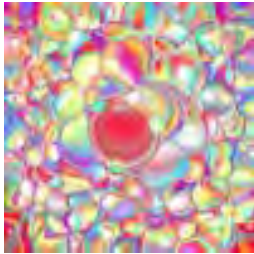
Swami Lakshmanjoo: “... if, through negligence, the yogi who has already perceived his own nature allows his awareness to ebb, then he become the object of those mothers of beasts (*pashu-matarah*).” They ‘play’ with him, meaning they push him into greater delusion.

The Sanskrit texts often refer to ignorant human beings as beasts. While this may feel a bit harshly derisive, the term ‘sheeple’ has become common in the west to describe the herd of humanity who are easily controlled and manipulated because they have interest no in becoming intelligently aware of current social, economic, and political realities.

This idea of man being a ‘beast’ is found in the one of the primary Upanishads, the Brihadaranyaka. I have quoted this passage at the top of my website for many years now. Its meaning has deepened for me over time - and I now understand that the ‘gods’ are my own sense organs, the five senses and the mind, etc. The purpose of the sense organs is to bind our consciousness in this manifested differentiated universe. Brahman is another Sanskrit word for the Oneness, God consciousness, Parabhairava.

“And to this day, [those] who...know the self as I am Brahman [the Oneness], become all this universe. Even the gods [our own sense organs]

cannot prevent his becoming this, for he has become their Self. ...if a man worships another deity thinking: He is one and I am another, he does not know. He [who does not know] is like a sacrificial animal to the gods. As many animals serve a man, so does each man serve the gods. Even if one animal is taken away, it causes anguish to the owner; how much more so when many are taken away! Therefore it is not pleasing to the gods that men should know this [that they are the Oneness].” – Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I.iv.10



How does the Oneness manage to bind Itself into limited and differentiated forms? People who are ignorant of their own God consciousness are called ‘beasts’ (*pashu*). What are the ‘mothers of beasts’ in this sutra? How do our sense organs keep us bound in ignorance?

The answer is sound, which begins as transcendent sound. The supreme energy Shakti, which is always one with the Oneness, and “which is the supreme transcendental speech (*Paravak*), descends to the field of the universe, she first becomes will (*iccha*), then knowledge (*jnana*) and then action (*kriya*). [SLJ]”

Shakti becomes letters, the vowels and consonants that make up words, and the words that make up sentences. What we think and say, and our investment in the reality of and attachment to what we think and say, actually does serve to bind us in our own self-created illusory webs. The spoken word is sound.

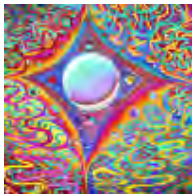
While many of us might consider how we speak in order to improve communication with others and the results thereby achieved - most of us never think about what we say. However, the understanding given here by Swami Lakshmanjoo is on another and far deeper level.

This is my understanding of what he is saying in his explanation of this sutra: In God consciousness, we are in a state of awareness that receives and perceives sound – letters, words, and sentences – as the fusion, amalgam, and equilibrium of all frequency waveforms of the One. This

awareness of the One within each and every frequency of the spectrum of sound liberates us from reacting to what is ‘said’ in ways that would drag us back into duality.

We understand that on the deepest level, all words are the sounds of the emanations of God consciousness. This awareness keeps us away from the pernicious ‘delusion-thicket’ snare of making judgments – this is good, this is bad. Everything is God. Words lose their power to trigger reactions that bind us back down into polarity and differentiated perception.

“To derive meaning, you have to attach your individual consciousness. When individual consciousness is not attached to these letters, words, and sentences, then you will become one with Lord Shiva (God consciousness, the Oneness). [SLJ]”



The example of two reactions to a simple sentence is given. If someone says, ‘Get a bucket of water’ you can “observe this is only the flow of consciousness in its own nature. The word ‘get’ will have no meaning. It is only the letters g-e-t and nothing else. There is no meaning in the separate letters. To derive meaning, you have to attach your individual consciousness. [SLJ]” This is possible for yogis who have transcended the power that these sounds, as letters and words, have over their consciousness.

The second reaction is one we would consider more ‘normal’ and is seen as the reaction of the ignorant. “For those ignorant people, those beasts, these letters, words and sentences pierce their minds...[SLJ]” Our senses and mind are pierced, penetrated and conquered by these sounds, which cause conditioned and conditioning reactions of various emotions, happy and sad.

The ignorant are like ‘beasts’ and react in predictable, conditioned, habitual, and compulsive behavior patterns. We have all observed these patterns in our own behavior. The enlightened yogi has the awareness to perceive the sound of letters-words-sentences as being Divine, the Oneness - all sounds are God consciousness. The yogi is no longer ‘played’ by these. These ‘mothers of beasts’ no longer has any power over such a yogi.

Jaideva Singh summarizes this sutra thus: "...even if a person has realized the truth, he is, if he happens to be heedless, deluded by...deities (the sense organs – ‘the mothers of beasts’) governing the limited individuals by means of the application of words that influence his mind.”

There are eight mothers of beasts: the five senses, the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), and limited ego (*ahamkara*).

“In the center of the subtle opening in the crown of the head (brahmarandhra) is situated the supreme energy (Shakti) of Lord Shiva, (she is) the Divine Mother, surrounded by the eight mothers of beasts. In their hands, they hold the noose, which entangle and bind one with limitation, keeping one from the unlimited state. These supreme terrible (*mahaghora*) *shaktis* create disturbance and ignorance again and again, and are very difficult to conquer.” [SLJ - Timirodghata Tantra]



One collective sound - the Vijnana Bhairava - Verse 41

In these sounds [of stringed instruments] you will find separate sounds, but if you go into the depth of this hearing, you will see that collectively one sound is proceeding from the instrument, one collective sound.

This can be heard by anyone [but] only the man with awareness can rise with the sound.

It can be heard by anybody, but you have to maintain that awareness.

And that collective sound is continuous, without any successive movement.

It is continuous, without breakage, although it is successively put down [sounded], because the player puts that finger successively on those strings.

The one who is one-pointed on that one collective sound, after contemplating on that collective sound, in the end, he becomes one with the supreme ether of consciousness.



VIJNANA BHAIKAVA, The Manual for Self Realization, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, Edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2007.

Bhagavad Gita, In the Light of Kashmir Shaivism, Chapters 1-6, revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2008.

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Shiva Sutras 3.20, 3.21, 3.22 & 3.23 – Turya State

Shiva Sutra 3.20

Trisu caturtham tailavadasecyam

There are four states In Kashmir Shavism: the waking state (*jagrat*), the dreaming state (*svapna*), the state of deep sleep (*susupti*), and a fourth state called TURYA which is “filled with pure knowledge, pure light, and the ecstasy and joy of *turya*. ... The state of *turya* is found in all these three at the moment of entry and at the moment of exit. [SLJ]”

Yet most people are absolutely unaware of *turya*. Jaideva Singh defines *turya* as the witnessing consciousness and the transcendental Self.

Swami Lakshmanjoo comprehensively explains *turya* in Chapter Sixteen of his book on Kashmir Shaivism. “Between the three states of the individual subjective body, waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, there is a gap.” When you pass from one state to another, from waking to dreaming or from dreaming to dreamless deep sleep, you enter into this ‘junction’ called *turya*.

Perhaps one approach to glimpse the understanding *turya* is an experience I believe most aware self-reflective people are familiar with. In those subtle very elusive and quickly vanishing moments when we are first coming up out of deep sleep or even the dreaming state, many may feel that we have been given some insight or inspiration. Often this is

very helpful and offers the resolution to an important problem or even practical advice. It is as if we are receiving guidance from our soul deep within or the inspiration for a creative endeavor.

Turya “cannot be experienced by focusing on it because whenever you gaze on this junction, waiting for it to happen, it will never happen. [SLJ]” So *turya* is elusive and yet is said to be “already found in the states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep.” The three states are compared to swords and the fourth *turya* state is their sheath and thus “they are united with each other. [SLJ]” *Turya* is united with the other three states even though we are not aware of this fact.

In this sutra the imagery of pouring oil is used to illustrate that the state of *turya*, the ‘witnessing consciousness’ of the God-within, must be ‘sprinkled’ onto the other three states so that they “may acquire the condition of complete identification with it (i.e. *turya*). [Jaideva Singh]”

Just as oil spreads on a smooth “surface, adhering to it, so in this way a yogi must expand the state of *turya* into the other three states. [SLJ]” Kashmir Shaivism teaches that our awareness of God consciousness will eventually permeate not only our waking state, but also the dream and dreamless deep sleep states.





Shiva Sutra 3.21

Magnah svacittena praviset

How do we achieve permeating these three states with the fourth - *turya*? Swami Lakshmanjoo says that we must become merged in the Being of the Oneness. “When you have developed I-ness on the body of wakefulness (the gross body), on the body of dreaming (*prana* – vital air, life breath), and on the body of deep sleep (the subtle spirit body – *puryastaka*), then that ‘I’ consciousness is to be merged in the nectar of the ecstasy of consciousness. [SLJ]”

This type of means for achieving God consciousness is *shaktopaya*, which is based in knowledge, a firm awareness, and does not involve saying mantras or breathing exercises.

Jaideva Singh: “By means of this (*shaktopaya*), one takes the plunge into the 4th State (*turya*) by silencing the mind, by detaching oneself from the body, *prana*, etc, by sheer awareness of the pure I-consciousness (the Oneness). The aspirant enters the secret chamber of transcendental consciousness with a spontaneous immediacy of feeling as the baby slips into its mother’s arms.”

Our sense organs, the five senses and the mind, control our every impulse in each moment. If we observe this phenomenon, we can detach our consciousness from the power our senses have to wrap us in self-created webs of delusion. The trick is to observe how they operate on us through external objects. The mechanics of the senses are a perpetual ‘sales’ job. They own us – we have to reverse that.

Jnanagarbha Stotra: “When in ordinary daily life one repels the actions of the mind and shatters dependence on the senses, by which one is enslaved, causing one to follow them according to their every wish, and instead diverts his senses towards God consciousness, then by your (God’s) grace he instantly achieves that supreme state of God

consciousness, which floods him with the unparalleled nectar of bliss (ananda). [SLJ]”

Here the suggestion is made that slipping into God consciousness can be instantaneous and require no effort on our part at all. All distances between our temporal selves and God consciousness are in fact illusory. Eventually we come to know this.



Shiva Sutra 3.22

Pranasamacare samadarshanam

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “When his breath begins to slowly move out toward the external state, then he also experiences the pervasion of God consciousness there.”

The transcendent state of *turya* is found to permeate the other states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. All states are experienced as God consciousness and the yogi feels that his breath is filled with a supreme fragrance. He is “a king of yogis. He never loses his God consciousness... (which) endures in each and every state of his life, whether it be waking, dreaming, or deep sleep.”



Shiva Sutra 3.23

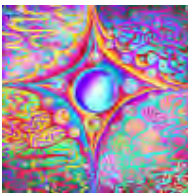
Madhye 'varaprasavah

However, there are unfortunate yogis who cannot hold onto God consciousness in the waking state, dreaming and deep sleep states. The cause of this is explained in the Malinivijaya Tantra:

“Due to the impressions he has of what others think of him or expect from him and of his wanting to help others...he is played...played by every aspect of daily life. Therefore, the one who desires to achieve the highest being should not be attached to these outer impressions. [SLJ translation]”

Jaideva Singh translates this quotation from the Malinivijaya Tantra to read: “Even when one has obtained some impression of the transcendental state, if one is not on the alert, then the *vinayakas* induce him to transient pleasures.” *Vinayakas* are defined as beings that create obstacles in spiritual progress by offering temptations. These ‘transient pleasures’ may be tendencies which are the consequence of spiritual pride.

Swami Lakshmanjoo elaborates in more detail the behavior of the yogi who is attached to these outer impressions such as caring about what others think of him or being in need of wanting to help them. He says that the yogi may want “to satisfy them with boons (gifts), he may lose his temper and become careless and uneven-minded, (thus) blocking his flow of God consciousness...(and) he is played.” Therefore we should not become attached to these impressions and the subtly deceptive *vinayakas* that seduce us away from the treasure of our God consciousness.



Perhaps Swami Lakshmanjoo did not want to cloud our thoughts with visions of beings that tempt us away from God consciousness. We have

understood that everything is God consciousness - therefore even the 'entities' that distract us and derail us from our Path are also God. The concealing binding energies and obstacles that hold our consciousness in illusory states and drag us back into delusion are also God and therefore produced by and within us. The 'enemy' is us!

Swami Lakshmanjoo seems to be more intent on the practical consequences of these impressions. Being attached to what others think of us, and the need to help others are seen as seductive traps. If we are genuinely immersed in the Oneness, there can be no feelings of insecurity that would leave us needy, vulnerable to the judgments of others.

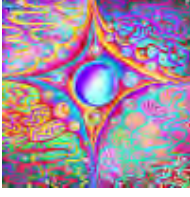
However, I believe that the "need to help others" is even more insidious and subtle. All masters are helping others - and many are generous not only with their time and wisdom, but also often heal the sick.

Swami Lakshmanjoo was financially independent and never took money from his disciples. He taught freely to those who sought him in Kashmir. He did not like to use his *siddhic* powers and warned others of their dangers, but on occasion he did heal sick people who came to him and often gave money to those who needed it.

So I don't believe he is saying we should not help others. Rather I feel that he is saying we should not 'need' to help others. In other words, helping others should not be a factor of our own weakness - our need to shore up feelings of insecurity and helplessness. Helping others must not be ego based. We help others because do so is in harmony with our own God consciousness.

The idea of God's absolute Free Will *svantantrya* also becomes relevant here. God is everyone waiting patiently within us always. Swami Lakshmanjoo is quite clear in the teaching that God will wake up in each of us only when God is ready to do so. In fact, the longing for God consciousness, the willingness to seek wisdom and devote our lives to any practice is perceived as a 'symptom' that God has already bestowed Grace on an individual. Being drawn to a life of devotion to wisdom and the Path Home are the effects, not the cause.

Therefore we must face the fact that no one really needs our help, because they already have all the help they require – which is of course the God-within them! Everything is already always in each of us! We help others because it is in harmony with our own God consciousness – not because we need to feel needed. There is a difference.



Shiva Sutras 3.24 & 3.25 – Falling back into Maya's Webs of Illusion

Shiva Sutra 3.24

Matra-svapratyaya-sandhane nastasya punarutthanam

In this sutra we again are reminded that even after experiencing God consciousness, the yogi may fall back into differentiated perception. The universe operates through the modes of continual expansion and contraction. Our journey Home seems to follow along similar lines.

“Due to God’s energy of *Maya*, the minds of yogis are diverted by force towards worldly pleasures and away from God consciousness. [SLJ – Svachhanda Tantra]”

God’s energy of maya is the same power of illusion that binds our consciousness in the temporal hologram. My own intuitive reflection on the reason for this is that when we enter into God consciousness, Maya’s powerful energies, which produce the differentiated perceptions that serve to bind us in time and space, remain in their momentum. Maya is accustomed to perpetually generating these deceptions. Neglected, Maya has no way to release and express its power. When we fall back into her influence, it may feel even stronger than before.

It is said that when you reach enlightenment you will be astonished that you ever forgot - and amazed at the intensity of effort it takes the Creator to bind Itself in delusion and separation. There is no source of power in this universe other than the infinite immeasurable immutable power of the Oneness. What God has Veiled and concealed by Its own free will, cannot be unveiled and revealed by our small personality ego-self.

When we fall back under the influence of Maya’s illusion, we are counseled to think: “This whole universe is one with myself,” and

perceive the “fullness of God consciousness in each and every object...”
In this way we again become “one with the glory of God consciousness.
[SLJ]”

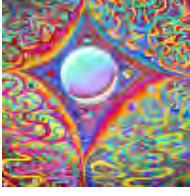
Everything is consciousness. By redirecting our consciousness into immersion in the Oneness that dwells in our own Heart, we return to the state of God consciousness.

There is a similar understanding in Abhinavagupta’s Paramarthasara. We are told that we must constantly think, “I am infinitely potent and absolutely pure consciousness. All this is my divine play. It is being manifested by me through my divine powers. I am all this... [B.N. Pandit]”

One of my favorite verses in the Bhagavadad Gita is XII.7. This verse contains the Sanskrit phrase: mayyavesitacetasam. The pronunciation is mah-yee-ahvay-sheetah-chay-tah-sam. It means ‘those whose consciousness has entered’ into the Oneness. In other words when you direct and immerse your own consciousness into God consciousness you are Home.

Once you are ‘inside’ you will understand and feel that there never was anything other than God consciousness. As the waves on the ocean continually rise and fall, the dance of history and all innumerable variations of temporal appearances are nothing more than the cyclical motion of God’s play in Time and Space. Here there is no fear, no death. Only eternal Bliss will remain.





Shiva Sutra 3.25

Shivatulyo jayate

Kashmir Shaivism uses the Sanskrit word Shiva as the Oneness, God consciousness. Shiva is not a deity residing in a far away heaven or on top of a Himalayan mountain peak. Shiva is the eternal Oneness that permeates and pervades everything and everyone.

In this sutra we are told that as long as we are in our body, some separation will exist. Thus we do not become completely one with Shiva, we become just like Shiva with “pure independent consciousness and independent bliss. [SLJ]”

Swami Lakshmanjoo says that even the enlightened yogi will have “headaches, experience muscle pain, stomach aches” etc. Obviously Shiva would not suffer such ailments. “so, as long as the yogi possesses a body, he can only be like Shiva, not one with Shiva. [SLJ]”

This does not mean that we should cast off the body and make an effort to die. The enlightened ones must stay in their body until the time allotted to that body runs out. There is in each body what is called *prarabdha karma* and this is the karma that “has brought your body into being and is based on the actions of your past lives. [SLJ]” This karma has to be lived out, endured also by the enlightened yogi.

The karma that brought your body into being is to be “enjoyed” and it “cannot be cast aside or abandoned. ...this body is to be maintained until the time of death. [SLJ]”

Abhinavagupta’s Paramarthasara, Verse 94, also says that while the enlightened yogi remains in the physical body, he has “all the mundane experiences of pleasure, pain, etc.” However these experiences do not at all alter his God consciousness - and from “within he is pure and has a firm belief in his purity and divinity...firm in his real nature at the time of death and that results in his absolute and perfect liberation after death. [B.N. Pandit]”

This would shed light on all ‘Hollywood’ fantasies of sainthood, along with the confused idea of new age ascension. Since there is no up and down in God consciousness, therefore there can be nowhere to ascend to. The experiences of the enlightened take place in consciousness. Everything is consciousness.

The Samkhya Karikas also reflect this understanding. In verse 67 we are told that by the attainment of Perfect Wisdom, meaning God consciousness, all causal powers lose their efficacy and yet due to the momentum of past impulses, the Spirit remains in the body. The remaining years are compared to the potter’s wheel that continues to revolve even when the potter has ceased his efforts at revolving the wheel due to the momentum of the past impulse.

Because the yogi is immersed in God consciousness, these remaining years in the physical body cannot produce any karma, any ‘fruit’ in the form of experiences that might result in rebirth. The heat produced by the Knowledge of the Truth is said to burn away the seeds of karma.

The enlightened are no longer bound by their actions. “The enlightened have abandoned the fruits of their acts (karma), and are liberated (moksha) from the bondage of rebirth. They go to the place free from pain.” [Bhagavad Gita II.51]

“...the place free from pain” sounds good.

PARAMARTHASARA of Abhinavagupta, with English translation & notes by Dr. B.N. Pandit, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers; 1991, New Delhi

The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.

Samkhya Karika of Isvara Krishna, Translated by Swami Virupakshananda; Sri Ramakrishna Math Printing Press, 1995.



Shiva Sutras 3.26, 3.27, 3.28 & 3.29 - Secrecy is the Secret!

Shiva Sutra 3.26

Sariravrittir vratam

In the previous sutra we learned that enlightened yogis remain in the physical body until death. The moment of death for each and every physical body is allotted by its particular destiny. The liberated do not evaporate into white light or ascend to any heaven - rather they wait until the time allotted to that individual body ends. And during this period the mere maintenance of the body is said to be a ‘virtuous’ act.

“Just to exist in his body is a virtuous act...because while he remains in his body, he is intent only on performing the supreme worship of Lord Shiva (the Oneness, God consciousness) in each and every action of his life. [SLJ]”

Immersed in God consciousness enlightened yogis perceives the whole universe as their own Self. The God-within permeates and pervades all, and therefore every act in every moment becomes imbued as the Sacred. Those who have achieved God consciousness will worship God everywhere, while talking, eating, sleeping, and all the mundane activities of normal every day life.

Even though they seem like ordinary human beings, the enlightened ones are not ordinary. They are “somewhere else...although this yogi’s body is existing in the inferior field of individuality, this yogi is actually established in God consciousness. [SLJ – Svachchandra Tantra 4.389]”

The enlightened ones appear as ordinary men and women. They are not surrounded by white light, and do not need flowing robes or magical ornaments to tell the world they have become God consciousness. They

may appear ordinary. They may be walking by us and we might never notice them. However they are not like us, they are not at all ordinary.



Swami Lakshmanjoo explains the very concrete reasons why humility and even secrecy are essential for the enlightened. The enlightened must not publicize their achievements. “He must be known to the world as an ordinary person. As long as he does not publicize his spiritual state, he is there. Otherwise he is carried away from God consciousness. [SLJ]”

Our individual experiences with the Oneness belong only to us. The good and noble man never reveals to others the intimate details of his love for the woman he adores and respects. So we too must keep our own moments of sweet subtle bliss in the secret part of our Heart.

I’m sure that most of you have actually experienced this for yourselves. The moment you tell your friends of some wonderful inner experience, you realize that you cannot properly convey its essence; and in doing so you feel that somehow the essence of the experience has been squandered, lost to you. And what is worse, telling your dear ones often only serves to make them feel a sad envy.

The cause of this is as usual - God. It seems that the Creator has placed many checks and balances along the path of our return to God consciousness. Just as the *siddhic* powers can become insidious traps that draw us back out into delusion, so displaying our enlightenment before the world is fraught with unintended consequences.

Ghoratari, Ghora & Aghora Shaktis

The Oneness has created three types of energies. The first category of energies is known in Sanskrit as *ghoratari*. They are inferior because their function is “to cause the individual to enter into the depths of the darkness of ignorance. [SLJ]” We are all familiar with these *ghoratari* because even though we may never have been conscious of their activities, they have been manipulating us all our lives and holding our consciousness in *Samsara*, the repeating cycles of birth and death.

Ghora energies are the second and medium class of energies. The *ghora* shaktis “cause one to stand still. These energies will not allow the individual to enter into the state of God consciousness. [SLJ]” Jaideva Singh defines these energies as the *Shaktis* that draw the embodied soul into worldly pleasures. Each of you will know them as you experience

them personally, and because they know precisely how to seduce in accordance with our inherent weaknesses.

The third and supreme class of energies is termed *aghora* and they carry us to God consciousness. We must move above the other two, and win the support and grace of these wonderful *aghoras*. Secrecy is the secret! The enlightened yogis who keep their achievements to themselves are embraced by these *aghora* energies.

“The supreme *aghora* energies of God consciousness always embrace that yogi who lives in such a way that he remains absolutely unknown as a yogi. They carry him to God consciousness, where he is forever established...because this state of God consciousness has come forth from a secret point and he is residing in a secret way of life. [SLJ – Kulapancasika Shastra]”

My understanding of this need for secrecy is that God consciousness is subtle, beyond the sense organs, the five senses and the mind. It is beyond words to describe. Even though we learn from many, ultimately we seek God consciousness alone in the cavern of our own Heart. We come Home alone in secrecy. Therefore secrecy is the essential key to holding onto our treasure.

“That yogi, on the other hand, who is known to everyone as an elevated yogi, is not embraced by these *aghora* energies. They shun him and consequently, he is carried away from God consciousness. [SLJ – Kulapancasika Shastra]”

The enlightened yogis must continue to walk along the ‘razor’s edge’ for while they remain in a body they can be seduced back into partial delusion. Spiritual pride is an ever-looming pernicious danger. Humility is our greatest and only sword against the abyss of spiritual pride.

Even his disciples must not know the depth of the master’s realizations. “The master must absolutely conceal his spirituality within his nature and not expose it to anyone. [SLJ]” Thus we see how easily great masters can fall.





Shiva Sutra 3.27

katha japah

The enlightened yogi remains in God consciousness and therefore the ordinary talk of daily life is experienced as the recitation (*japah*) of mantra [SLJ].

When you have reached Home, the Oneness, God Realization, and become immersed in your real nature, every moment of even your ordinary daily life is imbued with God consciousness. Your everyday conversation is felt to be a prayer, an offering, your mantra.



Shiva Sutra 3.28

Danam atma jnanam

“During the remainder of his life, his reason for living is giving his real knowledge of God consciousness to others. [SLJ]” For the rest of his life the enlightened yogi lives in the fullness of his consciousness. This state of enlightened Being has the power to destroy differentiated perception in others who are ready to come Home.

Some yogic heroes are said to have the power to “reveal the reality of God consciousness to others by merely looking (*darshana*) or touching. [SLJ]” However only those who have become enlightened and who can live immersed in God consciousness can help to illumine others.



Shiva Sutra 3.29

Yo'vipastho jnahetusca

Only the master who has become the player of the wheel of energies (*shaktis*), and is no longer played, can “become the cause of inserting knowledge in others. [SLJ]” Aspirants who are under the influence of *maya* and are played by the sense organs cannot impart wisdom to others. They are not able to protect themselves from delusion, so how can they possibly protect others? [SLJ].

The Sanskrit for this ‘wheel of energies’ is *Shakti Chakra*. This wheel consists of the energies of cognition and action. These energies are ‘played’ by masters who are immersed in God consciousness. As ordinary people we are ‘played’ by these energies that lead us from one ephemeral desire to the next.

We are played by the five senses and seduced by what we see, hear, etc. so that we are always dragged around from one sense experience to the next. Eventually we realize that none of these pleasures is fulfilling, nothing lasts, and every pleasure turns to pain, as old age, sickness and death steals every temporal illusion from us.

The master knows and lives in the Reality that all these sense experiences are like mirages in the desert. They are merely the illusory appearances of the One taking form in time and space, varying frequencies of waveform rising and subsiding on the Ocean of Consciousness. The master is not seduced by these fleeting appearances. He/she is not “played” by their siren song.

Swami Lakshmanjoo: Shiva Sutras, The Supreme Awakening, With the Commentary of Kshemaraja, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, and edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2002.

Jaideva Singh: Siva Sutras, The Yoga of Supreme Identity, Text of the Sutras and the Commentary Vimarsini of Kshemaraja Translated into English with Introduction, Notes, Running Exposition, Glossary and Index; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1979 and reprints.



Shiva Sutras 3.30 & 3.3 1- Nothing exists that is not God Consciousness



Shiva Sutra 3.30

svashakti-pracayo'sya visham

Jaideva Singh defines the Sanskrit in sutra 3.30 as:

visham – universe

sva – his

shakti – power

pracayah – unfoldment, elaboration

The enlightened master perceives this whole universe as “the embodiment of, and not separate from, his innumerable energies. So as that master is said to be just like Shiva (the Oneness, God consciousness), this whole universe is his own collective energy. [SLJ]”

Everything is everything. There is nothing but the Oneness. All appearances of form, sound, etc. are temporal manifestations on the Ocean of God consciousness, perceived by our sense organs that transmit data to the brain. Beneath all ‘appearances there is nothing but God consciousness. The enlightened feel that they are one with the universe, one with the All.

“Consciousness shines in various external and internal forms. There is no existence of objects apart from consciousness. Therefore, the world is simply a form of consciousness. [Jaideva Singh – Kalikakrama]”

The enlightened become unlimited. They are said to possess all knowledge and this “knowledge is found everywhere, inside and outside, because without knowledge, an object cannot exist. [SLJ – Kalikakrama]”

Knowledge itself is here equated with God consciousness. Everything is God consciousness therefore all objects are filled with knowledge and could not exist without this knowledge, which is God consciousness.

“If you think that in practicing yoga, God consciousness is to be possessed and that which is other than God consciousness is to be discarded, that is not the proper understanding...you must unite these two together. [SLJ – Kalikakrama]”

The enlightened know that the external world is not separate from God consciousness. The external world is the manifested temporal appearance and ‘play’ of the Oneness. The two are not separate. The mundane is also sacred. God consciousness exists within everything.

“Beneath the curtain of each atom lies concealed the life increasing Beauty of the face of the Beloved. [Mahmud Shabistari]”

The realization that each and every experience in our everyday life is sacred, offers us the opportunity to find God consciousness everywhere in every moment. Thus our lives become a continual intimacy with that which we have always been.

You may find entry into God consciousness in the simplest act. As they say in India, God is the ‘pot’ and when you wash dishes you may find God shining there. When you dust, you may see God in the dust. The birds are God singing to you and the plants in your garden are also pulsating with God.

A favorite love song becomes God whispering of Its love for you and this world. The stars in the dark night are shining twinkling with the Light of God consciousness. The sounds of a rushing river and the tides of the ocean are resounding the energies of That which dwells within your Heart. You will find your own Self as God consciousness everywhere and that makes life beautiful and perfect beyond all imagination.



Shiva Sutra 3.31

Sthiti-layau

For the enlightened yogi God consciousness is found everywhere, and in every state of consciousness. God consciousness exists in the waking state, the dreaming state, and the dreamless state of deep sleep; and it is the state in the gaps between these three called TURYA state. Nothing exists that is not God consciousness. There is no existence apart from God consciousness.

This world is said to be three fold. The state of creation is the objective external world, which shines “vividly in your sphere of organs” [SLJ]. We perceive the external world through the five senses that transmit data to the brain. The brain receives and sorts these electric signals with the mind-buddhi-intelligence as solid, cold, etc., determined by our individual proclivities accumulated in previous lives. [See link below].

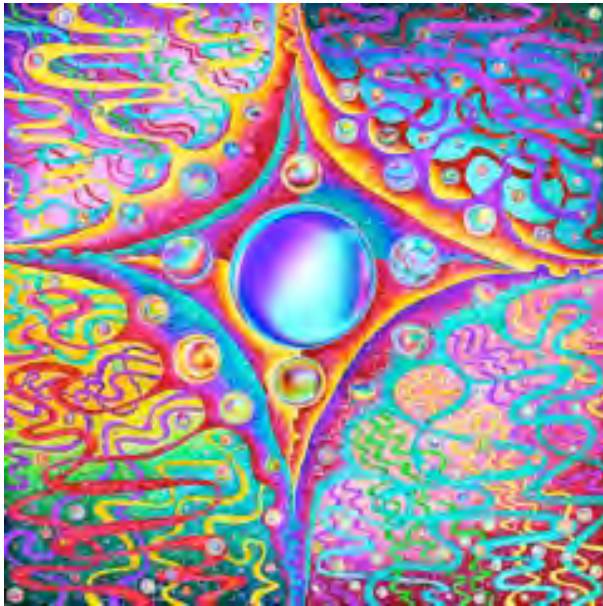
The enlightened yogi feels that he is one with this vivid state of creation, and also with that God consciousness which appears in the mind as ‘impressions’ of this objective world. “Initially, this universe is revealed to you by the energy of action. And after this universe shines before you, the knowledge of the universe remains for some time as an impression in your objective consciousness. [SLJ]”

This universe is seen by an enlightened master as not only the “expansion of his energy in its creation, it is also the expansion of his energy in the impressions of the objective (external) world left in your mind and in the void state where these impressions are absorbed. [SLJ]”

When these impressions are dissolved and there is nothing but Voidness, God consciousness remains. The enlightened are also one with this state where there is nothing. “For such an elevated soul, these two states (the impressions of the external world and the dissolution of all such impressions) are only the expansion of his energies and nothing else. [SLJ]”

The enlightened are said to experience their real nature, which is God consciousness, expanded everywhere in these three states: the created objective external world, the impressions that remain in the mind of this objective world, and in Voidness when all impressions of all created objects have been dissolved.

MAHMUD SHABISTARI: The Secret Garden, translated by John Pasha;
The Octagon Press, London 1969.





Shiva Sutras 3.32 & 3.33 - The God-within is unchanged, untouched, and unaffected by any act or thought.

Shiva Sutra 3.32

tat pravritavapyanirasah samvettribhavat

The enlightened yogi feels that this “entire universe is the expansion of his own glory. [SLJ]” Having entered into God consciousness and Become immersed in his true nature, the Oneness, the yogi experiences the powers of creation, protection, and destruction. These three metaphysical forces characterize the functions of the Oneness, which in Kashmir Shaivism is named BHAIRAVA.

The Sanskrit word *Bhairava* is a composite of BHA, meaning the maintenance and protection of the world; RA - the destruction and withdrawal of the world; VA – the creation or projection of the world. Those who have achieved entry into God consciousness feel expanded into these three omnipotent metaphysical principles.

The yogi experiences and expands his own awareness into these three universal powers, but he is not changed by their fluctuations. The enlightened are appeased, nestled in the Heart of their own Self. For “him the reality of the Self remains...This yogi is never separated from the state of the Knower...the bliss of TURYA. [SLJ]” The truly enlightened remain in Bliss.

The state of the ‘Knower’ implies that his consciousness is never again lost in the external world of objects. As the Knower he is beyond these three states of creation, protection, and destruction. He is not altered by the recurring cycles of these three metaphysical forces. The happy implication of this understanding is the enlightened yogi is not affected and destroyed when the world is dissolved in any cyclical Dissolution.

“There is no creation and there is no destruction of that Self (the yogi). Therefore, if that being is one with this universe, then in reality, nothing is destroyed. It is imagined that ignorance is created and ignorance is destroyed, but ignorance itself cannot exist without knowledge of truth. So ignorance cannot be created or destroyed because it is one with the real nature of the Self. [SLJ – Kalikakrama Shastra]” Even ignorance is the Oneness.

The Knower always exists, while the known is created, sustained, and inevitably destroyed throughout the cycles of time. The Real nature of the Self, the God-within can never be altered in any way. The Oneness is eternally beyond all temporal appearances of fluctuating cyclical frequency waveforms cresting and subsiding on the Ocean of Consciousness.

“In the two states which are termed ‘doer’ and ‘done’ the aspect known as done is destroyed, while the aspect known as doer always remains and can never be destroyed. Only that force, which is the effort to create that which is to be done (the external hologram), is destroyed. [SLJ - Spanda Karika]”

The known and the ‘done’ can be destroyed. The Knower and ‘doer’ as the God-within Self remains unchangeable. The God-within is pure, untouched, unaffected by any act or thought. Nothing that the small personality identity-self has done over its multiple lifetimes has touched or altered the God-within ever.

The Oneness is never altered

If God could somehow be diminished by our actions, the universe would quickly collapse. The Oneness can never be altered. All temporal manifestations of multiplicity and five-sense material solidity are powerless to increase or diminish the absolute Totality. The One remains the eternal invisible substructure that upholds the world and transcends the sense organs and is beyond all words to describe.

The Creator desires to create Maya’s illusions of ignorance and delusion in order to Veil Itself for the purpose of generating this universe as a Divine Play, a sort of virtual reality hologram. The Oneness has absolute free will - and intentionally conceals and reveals Its own nature in all living beings, us as we move through time from one desire and adventure to another.

This is the point where many balk. Why would the imperishable, immutable, immensity that is now and forever the perfection of God

consciousness, Veil Itself in the ephemeral illusions that ultimately conclude in misery, sickness, and death? I can only answer in this way – when you are in God consciousness, the question does not arise.

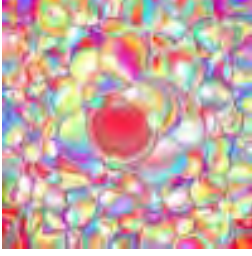
God consciousness is not experienced with the sense organs, the five senses, the intellect (*buddhi*), and the mind. You can utilize the sense organs to ‘approach’ an understanding of the Oneness, but any true experience will transcend these. So the question does not arise.

However even when you are not in God consciousness, ask yourself if you have enjoyed being alive. Even the most unfortunate has no wish to relinquish life. Intense instincts for survival overwhelm depression. Most of us have treasured memories, accomplishments, and feelings of having learned or created in ways that elevated us and brought us feelings of joy. Is Life worth the sorrow and suffering? Most will answer yes.

After enjoying so many lives you become weary of the ‘play’ and feel that you have seen it too many times. Bored and tired of all conversation, the constantly shifting knowledge of the external manifestation, and all worldly pursuits of wealth, beauty, power – it is then that you know that you are ready to find your way back Home. You have sailed on the Ocean of Consciousness quite long enough and eternal Bliss becomes very appealing once again.

Krishna tells Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita II.52: When your enlightened intelligence shall cross over the delusion-thicket, then you shall become disgusted with what you have heard and what is yet to be heard. As Swami Lakshmanjoo puts it: “You will be hearing you own voice.”





Shiva Sutra 3.33

Sukha-duhkhayor bahirmananam

The Sanskrit words *sukha* meaning pleasure and *duhkha* pain are often written as one word. “Pleasure-and-pain is a metaphor for everything that exists in this world. [SLJ]” The sages of India understood that pain inevitably follows pleasure. In this sutra we learn that for the enlightened yogi, pleasure-pain are considered as something external.

Established in God consciousness, the enlightened one no longer identifies with the body, which is seen through the state of non-attachment as ‘this’ temporal vehicle that is external to his ‘real’ Being. We have all moved through time-space in many diverse bodies. The yogi makes the distinction between the ‘this consciousness’ of the body - and the ‘I-consciousness’ of the God-within, the Knower, the subject as opposed to the object.

The body is perceived as an external object, separate from his being. Joy and sadness are also experienced just like an object, separate from his being. [SLJ] The understanding implied is that the yogi has achieved the state of non-attachment to the body and its sense organs. He has destroyed attachment to the subtle body (*puryastaka*), which has kept him bound in *Samsara*, the repeating rounds of births & deaths.

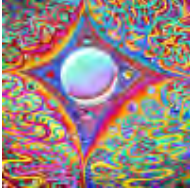
In the Bhagavad Gita II.58, Krishna uses the image of a tortoise withdrawing its limbs to illustrate non-attachment. Standing firm, established in Wisdom, the yogi withdraws the senses (*indriyani*) from their objects, like the tortoise withdrawing its limbs. Even the ‘taste’ (*rasa*) for the objects of the senses ‘turns away’ from the ones who have reached God consciousness [II.59].

Even though the enlightened are still engaging with and moving among the objects of the senses, they are nevertheless unaffected tranquil within the Self [II.64]. Wisdom stands firmly established in those who have withdrawn their senses from their objects [II.68].

Such a yogi “is never individual being, he is always universal being, he experiences his nature as universal being and not as individual being. [SLJ]”

“Those yogis who have crossed the boundary of individuality, who have achieved the real state of universal being...although in their daily lives they experience pleasure and pain, these experiences do not affect them at all. [SLJ – Sri Pratyabiijnana]”

Here we understand that the enlightened do experience pleasure-pain; but unlike ordinary human beings, they remain unaffected by these sensations, emotions, and even corporal illness, pain and death. They have achieved a state of detachment from these by remaining in God consciousness.



SPANDA-KARIKAS, The Divine Creative Pulsation, translated into English by Jaideva Singh; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1980. 2005.

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Shiva Sutras 3.34, 3.35, 3.36 & 3.37 – Expanding into God Consciousness



Shiva Sutra 3.34

Tadvimuktastu kevali

Immersed in God consciousness, the enlightened yogi is free from the experiences of pleasure and pain that characterize everything that exists in this polarity world. Such a fortunate yogi is ‘separated’ from the pairs of opposites that are the never-ending episodes of the external temporal.

“All those states, like the perception of pleasure and pain and the thoughts associated with them, have arisen out of imagination. That differentiation is actually the great illusion of duality. [SLJ – Kalkakrama Stotra]”

The enlightened are “established in real seclusion. [SLJ]”

The ideas of seclusion and ‘being alone’ have a unique implication in the Sanskrit texts. When we become the One, we are said to be truly alone. However, if we have Become the Oneness, God consciousness, then it is evident that we are the All. We have transcended the state of individuality.



Shiva Sutra 3.35

Mohapratishamhata tu karmatma

Moha means ‘delusion’ in Sanskrit. Again we are warned of what may occur if we allow delusion to destroy our immersion in God consciousness. “The past, present and future actions (karmas) of this yogi, whose God consciousness has been destroyed by the illusion of duality, will control him and make him their plaything. [SLJ]”

“Only the states of good and bad appear to him, which are unfortunate and which, when experienced, cause supreme pain to shine within him. Because of this, he has become an absolutely unfortunate being. [SLJ – Kalikakrama Shastra]”

The fallen yogi seems to experience the polarities of the external manifested world to a more extreme degree. Perhaps this occurs by the contrast of having previously felt absolute Freedom. Or is this intensity of being ‘unfortunate’ rather the God-within nudging the poor yogi to come back to the Real, and return to his/her immersion in God consciousness.

When you have tasted Home for even fleeting moments, the allure of temporal five-sense rewards lose their seductive glamour. Nothing in the external world compares to God consciousness.





Shiva Sutra 3.36

Bhedatiraskare sargantarakarmatvam

The fallen yogi rallies all inner effort and “drives away the field of differentiated perception. [SLJ]” The enlightened live in the external world that is produced by differentiated perception, but must remain ‘unattached’ to these perceptions. This non-attachment is practiced in the mind and eventually differentiated perceptions subside and God consciousness again expands in and fills the yogi’s being.

In this sutra Swami Lakshmanjoo inserts the understanding of three states that the yogi, who has conquered delusion and succeeded in entering sustained God consciousness, enters consecutively. These three states are defined as follows in chapter one of his book ‘Kashmir Shaivism, The Secret Supreme’:

Shuddha vidya – exists when the yogi realizes his own nature and yet that realization is not stable. It is flickering and moving. “Sometimes you realize it, sometimes you forget it.”

This *shuddha vidya* state consists of an entirely subjective impression, meaning you are the ‘subject’ and not the objects, the objective external. “I am Shiva, this universe is in duality. This universe is unreal, I am Shiva (the Oneness, God consciousness).” But we cannot hold on to this awareness in continuity. It flickers and fluctuates.

Ishvara – is defined as a purer subjectivity. This comes as the realization that “This universe is my own expansion. This universe is not an illusion, it is my own expansion.” When we are not in God consciousness we are deluded by the power of Maya’s illusions that transmit the five-sense hologram to our brain. When we are immersed in God consciousness, the ‘illusion’ of this world is understood as our own expansion - and therefore is not mere illusion, but rather our own Divine Play.

Sadashiva – is an ever more refined state in which you realize “I am this whole universe.” The universe is not merely your ‘expansion’ – it is you yourself.



Shiva Sutra 3.37

Karana Shakti svato'nubhavat

As ordinary individuals we all have the 'power' to create in the dream state and also in our imagination. The truly enlightened yogi who is firmly united with the Oneness, experiences the Universal power to create - and "he can create whatever he desires in the waking world and these worlds which he has created can also be experienced by others. [SLJ]"

The yogi who in continuity has become fully immersed in God consciousness, and has conquered the experience of falling back into the allurement of differentiated perception, is said to experience the power of creation. Just as the Oneness has the power to create and destroy, so the enlightened yogi experiences these powers.

I am reminded that the Shiva Sutras have again and again warned us against using *Siddhic* yogic powers. One wonders what the implications are of using the God-like powers of creation and destruction. We assume that in the highest states of Union with the Oneness no misuse of such awesome power could exist. When the yogi has Become the All, what is there to want?





Shiva Sutras 3.38, 3.39 & 3.40 – The ‘trick’ & The Final Return to Pain



Shiva Sutra 3.38

Tripad ady anuprananam

Swami Lakshmanjoo here further guides the enlightened yogi in the process of expanding his/her God consciousness. As the yogi emerges from Samadhi, meaning the bliss filled state of God consciousness, the yogi must “insert the absolute bliss of that state into the other three states of consciousness – waking, dreaming and deep sleep – and in time, these four will become one without distinction.” [SLJ]

We are told that there is a ‘trick’ of awareness that is more effective than breath techniques, prayer, or worship. This ‘trick’ involves maintaining an intense awareness at the moment your senses perceive any sensation. If you have the “power and capacity to hold that moment, then you will gain entry into God consciousness.” [SLJ]

The moment that God consciousness shines in any perception is compared to the flash of lightning. “So even if your sense perceptions are covered by the energy of illusion, at the time when you enjoy any sensation, God consciousness is momentarily shining like a flash of lightning.” [SLJ]

This flash of lightning lasts only for a moment, therefore it is up to the yogi to hold it and expand it in consciousness. “Although this God consciousness rises for only one moment, you have to give life to it and sustain it with awareness...hold it internally by keeping your consciousness introverted, not extroverted. It is with introverted consciousness that you will be successful.” [SLJ]

This technique is also explained in the Vijnanabhairava Tantra 15 & 69. The Vijnanabhairava Tantra is a text that gives the aspirant 112 yogic techniques to reach God consciousness. It is a user’s manual for those who seek liberation. If we are able to intensely focus our awareness into a single moment of any sense perception, even everyday experiences such as hearing a song or making love can carry you to God consciousness.

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “This whole universe has come into existence just to carry you to God consciousness. It is not meant to push you down. This universe is meant for your upliftment.”

I love this sentence – “This whole universe has come into existence just to carry you to God consciousness.” What a wonderful thought! It is as if the Creator has left secret clues and hidden doors everywhere. These entry points can open up and reveal our Real nature and they are found everywhere in this universe. It is up to us to recognize them, if only we have ‘the-ears-to-hear.’

Even the experience of intense grief or sadness can act as the ‘trick’ to open you to the Oneness existing everywhere, within everything. God is always present. “There is nothing that can conceal God consciousness.” [SLJ – Spanda Karika 1.25]

God is ubiquitous, permeating and pervading everything in this entire universe. The Oneness could reveal Itself in Its entirety and totality instantaneously at any moment. Only the Free Will (svantantrya) of the Oneness, Parabhairava, has the power to conceal Itself. God consciousness waits eternally patiently within each and every aspect of the manifested temporal illusory hologram, ‘beneath the curtain of each atom.’ God consciousness conceals Itself and longs to reveal Itself.

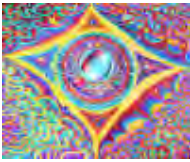


Shiva Sutra 3.39

Citta sthitivaccharira karana-bahyesu

The enlightened yogi must insert God consciousness in the waking state, dreaming, and deep sleep states. The objective world, the body, and every act of life are to be infused with God consciousness.

Vijnana Bhairava 65: “You must infuse your consciousness with the awareness that this whole universe or your own body has been simultaneously filled with your own state of bliss. Through this bliss, you will become melted in supreme bliss.” [SLJ]



Shiva Sutra 3.40

Abhilasadbahirgatih sambahyasya

Once again the enlightened ones may fall back into delusion. It seems that our journey Home is not always so direct and that each time we move into God consciousness, the forces of Maya have the power to pull us back into illusory differentiated perception. Is this the final test?

Here we are told that the yogi comes to have a feeling of incompleteness and so a desire arises in him to fill that emptiness. Perhaps imagining that he/she has ‘missed’ something, and seeking to fill the empty feeling in his being, the yogi again turns his awareness out into the external world. Thrown back down into the realm of the five senses and the ego, the yogi is again dependent on and at the mercy of the wheel of energies that carry him in delusion from “one state to another state, from one life to another, from one womb to another.” [SLJ]

The consciousness of that yogi is diverted toward worldly pleasure and internal awareness is lost. Swami Lakshmanjoo has said that when you

know you are lost, you are not lost. When you are not aware that you are lost – then you are truly lost.

Then the yogi experiences only pain and sadness ...

Kalikakrama Shastra: “When by means of differentiated thought (*vikalpa*), that self is covered by ignorance, then he is unable to perceive this whole universe...as one with God consciousness...he becomes the object of the two states, good and bad, and this causes him to experience only pain in his own nature. Thus even pleasure is experienced as that pain...they experience only pain and sadness.”

It may be that this inability to experience any pleasure and happiness in the external five-sense world may in fact be a sort of fail-safe for the enlightened ones who have lost their way. Perhaps this is the Creator leading the yogis, who have come so close to their final destination, back into immersion in the Oneness. It may be seen as a blessing, a mysterious form of Grace.

Vijnana Bhairava, The Manual for Self Realization, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2007.

SPANDA-KARIKAS, The Divine Creative Pulsation, translated into English by Jaideva Singh; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1980. 2005.

MAHMUD SHABISTARI: The Secret Garden, translated by John Pasha; The Octagon Press, London 1969.





Reversals on the Journey & Shiva Sutra 3.41- The Final Return

The third section of the Shiva Sutras teaches us that the aspirant will experience reversals. The old adage for the spiritual seeker is ‘one step forward, two steps back’ and the Shiva Sutras explain this in precise detail. We learn that we may expect these reversals back into differentiated perception and delusion on our journey Home even at the higher levels of consciousness.

In sutra 3.19 we are told that even after experiencing the pure Knowledge of the Self, when the yogi allows this knowledge of his real being to subside then the sense organs once again will overwhelm him and make his consciousness ‘just like beasts.’

The sense organs are the five senses, the mind, the intellect (*buddhi*), and the limited ego, meaning the small personality identity-self we wrongly identify with. These sense organs respond to the sounds of letters, the matrix, *matrika*, and is called ‘the mothers of beasts’ – beasts are the ignorant human beings.

In Kashmir Shaivism ignorance relegates human beings to the equivalent of beasts. The world is entirely made up of consciousness and only a higher elevated consciousness will lift you above the compulsions and robotic reactive impulses that characterize the herd mentality.

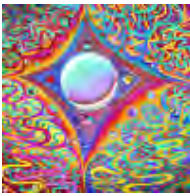
These ‘mothers of beasts’ are said to rob the yogi of the “reality of consciousness” and “take charge of holding them.” [SLJ] The yogi again attaches his consciousness to the sound of letters that are words, and the words that make up sentences, and these sounds influence his consciousness pulling him back into differentiated consciousness and delusion (*moha*).

Sutra 3.24 explains that when the yogi comes out of Samadhi, bliss consciousness, he must learn to maintain awareness of God consciousness in the external objective world. At this point the energies of Maya's power of illusion may divert the yogi's attention to worldly pleasures and away from God consciousness. The yogi must insert his own experiences of God consciousness into the external objective world, which is in fact nothing but God consciousness, the Oneness, *Parabhirava*.

Sutra 3.35 reveals that the yogi who does not maintain awareness of God consciousness is shrunk by illusion and becomes the 'plaything' of pleasure and pain. When his "God consciousness has been destroyed by the illusion of duality" [SLJ], his own past, present, and future actions, his karmas, will make him their 'plaything.' He becomes "an absolutely unfortunate being."

And finally in 3.40 we are told that the yogi who falls from God consciousness, experiences the five-sense realm as only pain. At this stage of the journey, when the yogi loses his awareness and reverts to the external manifested world to fill up feelings of imagined emptiness – he will find only pain. Nothing in the temporal five-sense world can again bring him pleasure.

Kalikakrama Shastra: "When by means of differentiated thought (*vikalpa*), that self is covered by ignorance, then he is unable to perceive this whole universe...as one with God consciousness...he becomes the object of the two states, good and bad, and this causes him to experience only pain in his own nature. Thus even pleasure is experienced as that pain...they experience only pain and sadness."



Why do these reversals take place?

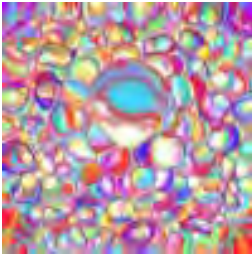
An essential aspect of God consciousness is described by the Sanskrit word *VIMARSHA*. In his book 'The Triadic Heart of Shiva,' Paul Muller-Ortega's explanation of *vimarsha* is thus:

"*Vimarsha* can be understood as a doubling back of consciousness on itself...consciousness is always self-referential." Consciousness expands itself by being "self-referential, it is turned back on itself." It literally

doubles back on itself in order to assimilate, blend, and merge its existent waveforms.

Paul Muller-Ortega: “*Vimarsha* can be understood as a doubling back of consciousness on itself in which the internal wave motion (*spanda*) inherent in consciousness is in synchrony with itself...imagine that one particular ‘current’ within the ocean of consciousness surges onto another current of consciousness, the two currents, or more precisely, the movement of the various *Shaktis* (forces-powers), blend in synchronized fashion. This process results in an evenness, a perfectly synchronized blending and merging of these currents in a balanced way...”

Consciousness doubles back on itself - and so we might imagine that as we approach the final Liberation, our path is not direct straight Home; but rather doubles back to assure an ‘evenness’ pervades as our journey is woven into the ultimate immersion in the Ocean of God consciousness.



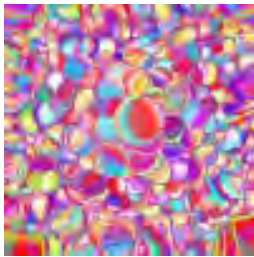
What happens to the fallen yogi?

The above sutras describe the reversals the aspiring yogi may encounter on the path Home. In the Bhagavad Gita VI.37-45, Arjuna asks Krishna what happens to the lost yogi who has fallen away from Union with God consciousness.

Arjuna expresses his concern that even when one has faith, but has no control over his mind and thus cannot attain perfection, is he not destroyed like the vaporous cloud that vanishes. Fallen, confused, and having no solid ground to stand upon – what will happen to him?

Krishna answers him thus: No one who is virtuous is ever destroyed – ‘neither on earth or above.’ Such a yogi attains the auspicious worlds of ‘merit’ and there he dwells for ‘endless’ years. After this merit-based period, the yogi is born into a family that is happy and illustrious. Or he may be born into a family of wise yogins. However Krishna says that such a birth is more difficult to attain, perhaps, even more so in the Kali Yuga in my view.

The wisdom and knowledge he had acquired in previous births will eventually come back to him. Even if he shows no tendency to pursue a spiritual path, his own previous practices will emerge, indeed even against his will. Thus the fallen yogi will return and through his preserving effort, controlling the mind, cleansed and perfected through many births, he will move into total immersion with God consciousness.



Shiva Sutra 3.41

Tadarudhapramites tatksayajjiva samksayah

The fortunate yogi has here reached the end of the Journey Home. The enlightened understand that there never was a path or a journey because the ‘appearance’ of any distance of separation from God consciousness never existed. We have always been the Oneness, God consciousness, Parabhairava – the creation, dissolution, and sustaining principles that hold the temporal illusory holographic universe.

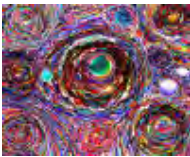
Kashmir Shaivism and Abhinavagupta emphasize this idea that in reality no separation ever existed. Paul Muller-Ortega explains that the tradition asserts - “nothing ever really emerges from Shiva (the Oneness).” What we have been experiencing and taking as ‘real’ are in fact only

‘appearances’ of solidity in a hologram projected by the matrix, *matrika*, the goddess Shakti power.

“Here knowable objects are in essence nothing more than the absolute consciousness, but with the difference that objects which appear to be solid and separate are in reality discrete areas of patterning set up by the internal (waveform) interferences of the Shaktis (matrix-power-forces).” [P.M-O]

These ‘appearances’ are only waveform patterns crossing, emerging in the Ocean of Consciousness - which is never altered by any temporal illusory perturbation. We have never left God consciousness. We are always That. There never was anything to realize, no journey, no Path, no distance between us and our real nature God consciousness.

Therefore we understand that “it is not that we must travel far beyond the manifested world in order to locate the interior universe of the Ocean within the Heart. To speak of distance of return, of a path, may be useful aids for the spiritual practitioner; in reality, however, all objects, all beings, all possible experiences are continuously and eternally bathed in that Ocean.” [P.M-O] There is nowhere to ascend to! We are already Home. Entry into God consciousness is everywhere.



At this point all desire vanishes and “the state of being a limited individual has ended.” [SLJ] The feelings of emptiness that led to desire have now been overcome and the yogi is firmly established in his own real nature, God consciousness.

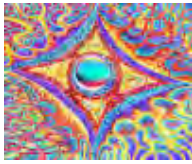
Immersed in our true state we no longer identify ourselves as the physical and psychic bodies, the sense organs, and the mind-intellect-ego. Thus the state of individuality comes to an end.

The idea of an end of the individuality is an obstacle especially for most westerners who have been brought up on the fantasy of the rugged individual. It is said that the enlightened become totally immersed in the Oneness and lose all sense of their unique individuality. However one might consider the trade off from being one small portion of the Oneness to the Universal All a good deal!

Swami Lakshmanjoo: “Here, for this yogi, this imagination has become true. If you, with continuous awareness, imagine this universe is nothing

but your own self, your own nature, then by continuing to meditate in this way, a time will come when you will become one with God consciousness.”

By fixing our consciousness on ‘the timeless’ point we may destroy the sphere of time. Time does not exist in God consciousness. Time is only a function of the ‘appearance’ of separation and differentiated perception. And yet the enlightened do not immediately leave the body.



Bhagavad Gita, In the Light of Kashmir Shaivism, Chapters 1-6, revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2008.

The Bhagavad Gita, translated by Winthrop Sargeant; State University of New York Press, 1994.

The Bhagavadgita in the Mahabharata, A Bilingual Edition, Translated & Edited by J.A.B. van Buitenen; The University of Chicago Press, 1981

The Triadic Heart of Shiva, Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir, by Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega; State University of New York Press, Albany NY, 1989.





Shiva Sutras 3.42 & 3.43 – The Enlightened Have No Fear Of Death



Shiva Sutra 3.42

Bhuta-kancuki tada vimukto bhuyah patisamah parah

The enlightened yogi has reached immersion in God consciousness and returned to his state of origin, that which he always had been all along. However, we are told that he does not immediately leave his physical body. “He is said to be BHUTA-KANCUKI, (meaning) covered by the five elements. This means he maintains his physical frame externally and not in his internal consciousness.” [SLJ]

The enlightened yogi is “absolutely liberated (vimuktah) from the misery of repeated births and deaths.” Eventually he leaves the body and thereupon becomes one with Shiva. Before leaving the body he is said to be ‘just like’ Shiva, the Oneness, God consciousness. As long as he remains in the physical body there is some difference between him and the Oneness. [SLJ]

Even though he is firmly established in God consciousness, he endures whatever inclinations to illness are genetically carried in his body. He “experiences all the physical symptoms associated with the body” such as headaches, etc. However, he “does not insert ego or I-consciousness into the physical body, nor does he say, ‘I am this body.’ He thinks, ‘This body is the frame, let it remain like this, what do I care?’” [SLJ]

Thus we understand that the enlightened are not disposed to reverse the aging process or even heal their sufferings. Perhaps such efforts might again entangle their pure consciousness in differentiated perception. Rather they use their immersion in God consciousness to remove any focus from the physical body. Therefore they do not experience pain and suffering as anything more than an external occurrence as if it is happening to a machine.

In the same way as we might observe an old car slowly breaking down, the enlightened yogi does not identify with the symptoms of the body as it moves toward decrepitude and death. In the Sanskrit text the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.iv, we are given the understanding that death is not experienced as pain and suffering for those who have cultivated the sense of non-attachment to the body.

Those who have ‘let go’ of their ego identification with the body, their current life and attachment to dear ones, experience an easier death. Those who are strongly attached and consider the body as their sole identity experience greater suffering. In fact the more you are attached to your body, the more pain you will feel at the time of death.

The Pain of Death/Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.iv

For the ordinary unenlightened ones, the degree of pain experienced at the time of death is said to reflect the level of attachment to those desires that have been driving us throughout life. Individuals who are holding onto to the anguish of unfulfilled desires are said to endure greater pain.

This understanding is evidence of why forgiveness is often urged at the time of death. Those who are trapped in desires of exacting revenge on others are themselves more vulnerable to suffering. We all know that

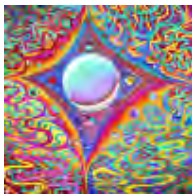
some fortunate people pass peacefully, while others suffer in protracted agony. Desires born in greed, anger, and hatred produce great pain not only during our lives, but also at the time of death.

The path to a painless death is said to be renunciation of desire. The more you ‘let go’ of your attachment to things and people, based on your attitude towards them, the less painful will the moments of your death be.

Habit becomes memory.

The letting go of desires, and not wanting anything, is not likely to occur in the last moments of life unless we have cultivated this understanding over time in our repeated patterns of thought. Habit becomes memory. This consciousness of non-attachment develops over time in the mental renunciation of all desires, through practice and our actions in daily life.

What you do in every moment every day contributes to the totality of your consciousness. That totality generates the quality of your death and the location - as consciousness - you will find yourself in after you leave this plane.



Death for the enlightened yogi is nothing to be feared. The enlightened one “thinks, ‘I can take off this physical frame at any time I like.’ This body is just a case covering him. He does not insert his I-consciousness into that body...so he is absolutely free.” [SLJ]

This process of returning Home is not about miracles, affecting material objects and attachment to the preservation of the physical body. As a friend of mine likes to say – Matter does not matter! This wild journey is only in consciousness. In the deepest levels of reality, nothing exists that is not consciousness.

Years back in my own explorations I came up with the phrase ‘data-collecting vehicle’ to describe the human body and the sense organs. In a similar vein, in the Kularatnamala Tantra the body is compared to a machine: “...the remaining portion of his life is just like a machine.” [SLJ]

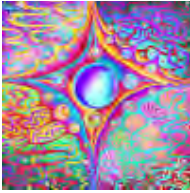
The enlightened yogi is said to live always immersed in God consciousness and views the body as separate, a machine, like the sheath that covers a sword. ‘I am not my body.’ He is not interested in his body and lives only mechanically in it. [Jaideva Singh]

Liberated in an instant

Swami Lakshmanjoo says that the wise person who is established for only one second in that supreme God consciousness becomes liberated. This intriguing idea is expressed in two related texts.

Netra Tantra: 8.8: “If one realizes the state of supreme God consciousness for only a fraction of the time it takes to blink one’s eyes, then from that very moment, he is said to be completely liberated and will not come again into this world.”

Kulasara Shastra: “...If the word of that real nature of God consciousness travels only in sound from one ear to another, not in actual existence, then when the sound of that word has entered the other ear, that word will liberate him instantly. This is the greatness of that supreme state of God consciousness.”



Shiva Sutra 3.43

Naisargikah pranasambandhah

The Sanskrit word PRANA means the life breath and vital force, breathing in and out. PRANANA is the breathless-breath.

In Sanskrit there are many words that describe various aspects of the subtle thinking of the ancient seers. There are no equivalent words in English. In fact the limits of the English language may actually be a barrier to higher consciousness. While you may not feel inclined to master Sanskrit grammar, learning a few of these brilliant terms will elevate your consciousness and accelerate your journey Home.

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains that the Sanskrit word PRANANA is the “seed of breathing in and out.” He gives the example of a child in the womb. “In that child, there is no breathing, there is only life. This breathless breath is the breath of life.”

The universe is created through the powers of Maya, the matrix, matrika, and her various energies, the forces of Shakti powers. Shakti is always one with Shiva, the Oneness - but she ‘appears’ to be separate for the purpose of manifesting the universe.

The energy of that *pranana*, which lies in the womb and produces the child, is this Shakti power-energy. Here Swami Lakshmanjoo calls this power the Goddess. “At the first movement of that energy, this supreme Goddess is transformed into this kind of breath (*pranana*). And then that breath (*pranana*) is transformed into the second movement of breath, which is breathing in and out (*prana*).”

So we understand that the sequence of life entering the child in the womb begins with a breathless breath (*pranana*), which is the seed of breathing in and out (*prana*). From this the Goddess is said to hold the “state of limited being and then also enters into the objective (externally manifested) field. So this attachment with the breath that appeared at the beginning is the glory of her (absolute free will) *svantantrya*.” [SLJ]

This understanding of our ‘attachment’ to the breath hopefully explains sutra 3.43, which states that it is the nature of the enlightened yogi to “travel with the breathing movement.” Therefore when he returns from the eternal state of God consciousness “the connection with breathing in and out occurs naturally.” [SLJ]

The unspoken implication here is that when the yogi is immersed in God consciousness, breathing is either slowed down or somehow experienced very differently. The breathless breath is the first movement of the Goddess Shakti energy toward attachment with the body. It is the ‘glory’ of her free will that allows life in the body to occur.

Swami Lakshmanjoo has talked about this experience of the slowing of the breath, or the breathless-breath, which happens automatically in God consciousness, in his other recorded teachings. However, he says that this slowing of the breath just happens naturally – and thus we are made aware that such an experience cannot and perhaps should not be forced.



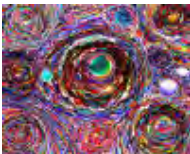
In Kashmir Shaivism the Oneness is Shiva, God consciousness. Shiva and his Goddess Shakti are eternally united as one and never separate. In the ‘appearance’ of separateness, Shiva creates an entire class of bliss-filled energies (*shaktis*). This class of energies, which is filled with supreme bliss, is called MAHA-GHORESVARI (pronounced Maha-ghor-esh-wari).

This class of energies is said to cause fear in the ignorant and is destructive for those who are unaware. But for the enlightened, who are filled with bliss, these energies are creative. They destroy the Sphere of Time. The *Mahaghoresvari* serves those who are aware and have reached God consciousness. “This energy of Lord Shiva, which is none other than his consciousness, creates and destroys the sphere of time by entering the path of breath...for those who are elevated.” [SLJ]



"The whole world finds asylum in your divine effulgence, in the Ocean of Consciousness, in the Heart that exists within all, in the vital principle of Life (*pranana*), in the assemblage of emerging and subsiding waveform-waters, and in courageous valor. May we return to immersion in that sweet-flavored wave that is the Essence of your Being."

- *The above is my intuitively imagined, transposed version of a prayer in the Rig Veda, Fourth Mandala, Sukta 58, Verse 11.*



What Happens When We Die: Parts 1,2, & 3 from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.iv

<http://www.metaphysicalmusing.com/articles/2010/2010.htm>

Rig Veda Samhita, Sanskrit Text, English Translation & Notes According to the Translation of H.H. Wilson and Bhasya of Sayanacarya; Indica Books and Parimal Publications, Varanasi, India, 2002.



Shiva Sutras 3.44 & 3.45 – This Universe exists only as congealed foam in the Ocean of Consciousness & The Conclusion



Shiva Sutra 3.44

Nasika-antarmadhya-samyamat, kimatra, savyapasavya-saumnesu

Sutra 3.44 describes the difference between the enlightened yogi and ordinary people. The enlightened are always established “in the center of that internal consciousness and in the center of that central breath.” [SLJ]

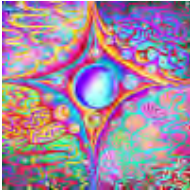
“This person is established in, and glorified by, that supreme *Samadhi* where for him, there is no external state of dualistic consciousness.” [SLJ]

Differentiated perception has disappeared for the enlightened yogi. Everywhere he looks, he only sees the Oneness taking various appearances as waves forming and subsiding on the Ocean of consciousness. The feeling of separate ‘thing-ness’ has no reality. All

objects and other sense perceptions are waveforms emerging and subsiding, contracting and expanding, coagulating and dissolving on the Ocean of consciousness.

Beneath all and every ‘appearance’ is the One, God consciousness, Parabhairava state. The enlightened move through the remaining days of life immersed in such awareness, in God consciousness, their real nature.

Vijnanabhairava 106: “Subjective knowledge (the subject, the knower) and objective knowledge (the objects, the known) are the same for all living beings, except there is one difference for yogis. In both ways of knowing, yogis always remain aware.”



Shiva Sutra 3.45

Bhuyah syatpratimilanam

“This yogi simultaneously and repeatedly experiences the revealing state and the concealing state of the objective world.” [SLJ]

We were never anything other than God consciousness. Beneath all temporal ‘appearances’ of differentiated perception, there is nothing that is not God consciousness. The enlightened ones return to their Real state of being, their own nature, that which we have always been. So this return feels familiar. God consciousness is not ‘fresh or new’ for the fortunate yogi.

The whole world enters into his own nature and he experiences the world as if it has risen inside him. He experiences the ‘concealing’ aspect of his own nature. Then he experiences the ‘revealing’ aspect of his own God consciousness and the world “again merges in his own self. And this happens over and over again, not once, not twice, but repeatedly.” [SLJ]

Perhaps as the enlightened walk and talk in an ordinary way, they are actually experiencing the emergence and subsiding of the externally manifest world. However for them the experience of the two, the concealing and revealing of the objective world, is simultaneous. Even though they are in their physical body, in consciousness they are out of the reach of Time.

In Svachchanda Tantra 10.371, the yogi's state is compared to fire. Just as the fire which "has risen from wood, has become absolutely pure, filled with glamour and shining with flames" does not again enter into the wood, so the liberated yogi does not fall back into differentiated perception. [SLJ]

We are Home!



Conclusion by Kshemaraja

This commentary on the Shiva Sutras is the work of Kshemaraja, the student of Abhinavagupta. In his conclusion, Kshemaraja says that he has written his commentary for the "sake of destroying the differentiated perception of this universe."

Kshemaraja says that his commentary has "the power to generate curiosity to realize Shaivism in the minds that have no curiosity." The study of this text will expand and generate great change in our intellect. "By merely tasting this nectar, the fear of birth, old age, and death is removed."

When "that rare soul realizes that this universe is only existing as congealed foam in the ocean of nectar of universal consciousness, then he has become one with Lord Shiva (the Oneness)."

The Shiva Sutras will "cause you to quickly overcome differentiate universal perception."

I agree!



Swami Lakshmanjoo

<http://www.universalshaivafellowship.org/>

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Jaideva Singh: Siva Sutras, The Yoga of Supreme Identity, Text of the Sutras and the Commentary Vimarsini of Kshemaraja Translated into English with Introduction, Notes, Running Exposition, Glossary and Index; Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1979 and reprints.

Vijnana Bhairava, The Manual for Self Realization, Revealed by Swami Lakshmanjoo, edited by John Hughes; Universal Shaiva Fellowship, 2007.





A few Sanskrit terms: The various schools such as Vedanta, etc. have different meanings for many Sanskrit words. Here I have given you the general meaning, but mainly the Kashmir Shaivite understanding - and occasionally mine.

A

Ahamkara: the state of I-ness, the I-making principle, the I-feeling; the [delusional] idea that you are an individual ego, separate and distinct from the Oneness. Ahamkara is the small personality ego-self identity; that limited ‘I-consciousness’ which feels that it is separate and distinct from the unlimited I-consciousness that is the Oneness, Parabhairava, meaning God consciousness. [VSF]

Ananda: bliss, the nature of Shakti is bliss, delight.

AntarAtma: The conditioned inner soul consisting of the subtle body (puryastaka); different from the gross physical body that covers the soul. [Jaideva Singh]

Anu: literally means ‘atom’ and refers to the limited individual (jiva) who breathes and is conditioned by the body.

Anugraha: the act of Grace. “The act of unfolding or revealing His (God’s) nature” accomplished by the individual, but dependent on the will of God. There are nine levels of Grace. [Swami Lakshmanjoo in Kashmir Shaivism] My understanding is that Grace is God consciousness expanding within you, revealing and allowing you to recognize that your Real nature is the Oneness. [VSF]

Anutarra: the Highest, Supreme; the Sanskrit vowel ‘a’.

Atma: the inner Self, soul, not the limited individual ego; from the root verb meaning ‘to move constantly.’ [Jaideva Singh]

Avidya: primal ignorance consisting of the feeling of imperfection that leads to extroversion (looking for completion in the temporal illusory hologram).

B

Bandha: bondage, limited knowledge; bondage due to primal ignorance.

Bhairava: the Highest Reality; BHA – sustain, support & maintenance of the world, RA – withdrawal & dissolution of the world, VA – creation & projection of the world. [Jaideva Singh]

Bhakti: devotion.

Bhakti yoga: Union with God through devotion. [Explained by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter XII.]

Bhuvanadhva [SLJ]: “the Path of all the worlds” and these worlds are said to number one hundred eighteen. Not one planet, rather this whole cosmos is called one world. One hundred eighteen of these worlds have been ‘seen’ found by Shaivite yogins in Samadhi. [Kashmir Shaivism]

Bindu: a point, metaphysical point.

Bindu [Abhinavagupta’s thinking as understood by Paul Muller-Ortega]: The point (bindu) or dot (vindu) that stands within the Heart; a point whose nature is the vibrating hum (nada) and is found in all living beings. Bindu comprises both an undivided light and a sounding vibratory roar. The bindu is at once pure illumination (prakasha) as well as the vibratory sound (vimarsha) generated as that vibratory sound continuously maintains self-consciousness by referring back into itself. The bindu is spoken of as pure consciousness. [‘The Triadic Heart of Shiva’]

Buddhi: discriminating intelligence, the intellect, the discriminative faculty; from the root-verb budh, meaning ‘to enlighten, to know.’ [John Grimes]

C

Cakra /pronounced chakra/: literally ‘wheel,’ the collective whole of the Shaktis; there are seven cakras (wheels of light) in the human body; from the root-verb car meaning to ‘move.’ [J. Grimes]

Cit /pronounced chit/: the Absolute, foundational consciousness; the consciousness that is the unchanging principle of all changes [Jaideva Singh].

D

Deva: gods, celestial beings, one who shines, from the verb-root div meaning ‘to shine.’

Devas [SLJ]: the ‘gods’ are your own sense organs - the five senses, the mind (manas), the intellect (buddhi), and the individual ego (ahamkara).

H

Hrydaya: the Heart as the center of the Self and God consciousness. It is within and simultaneously everywhere, ubiquitous.

Hrydaya - defined by Abhinavagupta in Muller-Ortega:

The Heart is the very self of Shiva [the Oneness], of Bhairava, and of the Devi, the Goddess who is inseparable from Shiva. As consciousness the Heart is the unbounded, infinite light (prakasha) as well as the freedom (svantantrya) and spontaneity (vimarsha) of that light to appear in a multitude and variety of forms.

The Heart is the ultimate (anuttara), which is both utterly transcendent to and yet totally immanent in all created things. The Heart embodies the paradoxical nature of Shiva that is the plenum, that is the unbound fullness and simultaneously an inconceivable emptiness.

The Heart is in a state of perpetual movement, a state of vibration (spanda), which is continually contracting and expanding, opening and closing (unmesa-nimesa), trembling (ullasita), quivering (sphurita), throbbing, waving, and sparkling (ucchalata). The Heart is the Ocean of Consciousness and creates the emission of the entire universe. [Paul Muller-Ortega – The Triadic Heart of Shiva]

I

Ichha: will

J

Jagat: the world, cosmos.

Jiva: the individual soul, an embodied portion of the Oneness.

Jivanmukti: being Liberated (mukti) while still living in the body.

Jñana: Wisdom Knowledge; from the verb-root jña, meaning ‘to know.’

K

Kancuka /pronounced kanchuka/: The five coverings of Maya that conceal the Oneness: 1) time bound, 2) attachment that comes from the feeling of emptiness, 3) limited knowledge, 4) place bound (the Oneness is and ‘feels’ ubiquitous), 5) the impression of limited creativity.

Kula: the embodied cosmos, Shakti manifesting herself in 36 tattvas.
[Jaideva Singh]

Krama: a sequential order, stages; God realization through worshipping aspects of the Divine Goddess in sequence.

Khecari /pronounced khe-cha-ree/: one who moves in space (kha), which is the vast expanse of consciousness.

L

Lila: play, sport, divine play; the idea that creation is a play of the divine, existing for no other reason than the mere joy of it. [J. Grimes]

Loka: a world or plane of existence.

M

Mala: limitations; the three impurities: karmamala – impressions connected with actions, mayiya mala – creates differentiation in one’s own consciousness, anavamala – the feeling of being incomplete.

Mantra: sacred words used in chanting; from the verb-root ‘man’ meaning to think, “that which saves the one who reflects.” Jaideva Singh’s etymology of mantra: manana – pondering over the highest light of I-consciousness; trana – protection by terminating the transmigratory existence full of difference.

Matrika-cakra: theory of the alphabet (see Shiva Sutra 2.7).

Maya: the power of illusion, the principle of appearance; the beginning-less cause that brings about the illusion of the world.

Maya [SLJ]: The kingdom of Maya (illusion) is the state in which we have come down from undifferentiated knowledge, and we are no longer aware that everything is filled with divinity. We have become one with that Maya, the [temporal] illusion of differentiated perception (of the 31 elements – the tattvas); and thus are absolutely deprived of our real nature, which is undifferentiated God consciousness.

Maya tattva: The principle that throws a veil over pure consciousness and is the material cause of physical manifestation, the source of the five coverings (kancukas). [Jaideva Singh]

Mukti: liberation from bondage, also Moksha.

P

Para: the Highest, the Absolute, Supreme.

Pashu: the bound individual, literally ‘beast.’

Prakasha: shining, luminous, effulgence, illumination. Literally light; the principle of Self-revelation; consciousness; the principle by which everything else is known. [Jaideva Singh]

Prakriti: the element known as ‘nature’ that creates the three gunas. [SLJ]: the three gunas emerge from Prakriti, the field where the three tendencies, the three qualities, rajas, tamas, & sattva arise and flow forth.

Rajas: action, passion; one of Prakriti’s three gunas. Rajas means attachment which results from not being full, it leaves the impression in purusha that he is not full, not complete, and he must have this or that to become full; he feels he is incomplete, which gives rise to ambition, greed, aggression. [SLJ]

Tamas: the principle of inertia and delusion, one of Prakriti’s three gunas.

Sattva: the ‘quality’ that is truth, pure, goodness, illuminating; one of Prakriti’s three gunas. [Being in the Sattvic (pronounced sat-wic) state will elevate your consciousness and allow the God within you to reveal all wisdom and Knowledge – VSF].

Pralaya: the dissolution of manifestation, periodic cosmic dissolution.

Prana: vital energy, life breath.

Pranana: the breathless breath.

Purusha: the limited soul, bound and entangled by the five kancukas. In Shaivism Purusha is the unrealized soul that responds to Prakriti, and is bound and limited; purusha becomes the ‘victim’ plaything for Maya; deluded by the veiling of his own nature, purusha takes on limited individuality. [Swami Lakshmanjoo - Kashmir Shaivism]

Puryastaka: the subtle body (the physical body is the temporal manifestation of the subtle body). “Entering into the puryastaka and moving about in all forms of existence, the Self is to be known as the inner soul (antarAtma), bound by the residual traces of good and evil deeds. [Svacchanda Tantra XI, 85 - Jaideva Singh] These ‘residual traces’ are known as Samskaras or Vasanas and are embedded in the subtle body

and draw the soul into its future lives through repeated births and deaths, Samsara. [VSF]

Puryastaka: composed of the five Subtle Elements (the five senses tanmatras: smell – gandha, taste – rasa, form – rupa, touch – sparsha, sound - shabda), manas (mind), buddhi (the discriminating intellect), and ahamkara (the ego, attributing any action or knowledge to yourself, as in “I have done this”). [SLJ]

S

Sabda: sound, sound as word.

Samadhi: one-pointedness, absorption, a unifying concentration; collectedness of mind in which there is a cessation of the fluctuations of the mind. [Jaideva Singh]

Samvit: Supreme consciousness.

Samsara: the wheel of repeated birth & death, transmigration.

Shakti: power, energy, potency; Shiva’s power to manifest.

Aghora Shaktis: The Shaktis that lead the aspirant back to God consciousness; they inspire the empirical selves (jivas) towards the path of Liberation (moksha).

Mahaghora or Ghora Shaktis: the Shaktis personified as deities that push the individual soul (jiva) towards a downward path in Samsara; the deities (as seats of the sense organs) who hover about the consciousness – the psychic center above the head (Brahma-randhra) – with a ‘terrible noose’ and delude people constantly. [“Strangled with hundreds of nooses of expectation, giving into desire and anger...” The Bhagavad Gita XVI.12 - J.A.B. van Buitenen translation.]

Shaktipata: spiritual awakening through the descent of divine grace.

Shiva: literally auspicious, the Divine foundation, ultimate Reality.

Shuddha-vidya tattva: “This exists when purusha actually realizes his own nature and yet that realization is not stable; it is flickering, it is moving. Sometimes you realize it, sometimes you forget it.” [SLJ - Kashmir Shaivism]

Siddhi: power, supernatural powers attained through yogic practices. These yogic powers exist in the sphere of Maya and thus are obstacles to be avoided by the yogi.

Susupti: dreamless sleep.

Spanda: apparent motion in the motionless Shiva (the Oneness) which brings about the manifestation, maintenance, and withdrawal of the universe. [Jaideva Singh]

Svatantrya: the absolute Free Will of God, [God is the Oneness that pervades and permeates All - VSF]

T

Tattva: That-ness, a principle or category (from ‘tat’ - that); the elements.

Turya: the fourth state of consciousness beyond the waking, dream and deep sleep states; the witness consciousness.

V

Vasanas: residual traces of acts and impressions, tendencies, conditioning; also called Samskaras.

Vimarsha: self-referential consciousness, awareness. Vimarsha is the capacity of consciousness to be conscious of itself; vimarsha continuously doubles back on itself to engender self-referential consciousness. [Muller-Ortega]

Visarga: emanation, creation, the power of emission.

Y

Yoga: union

Yoni: womb, source; metaphorically the entire universe is created, emerges, explodes, shoots forth from the Divine Yoni, the matrix.

U

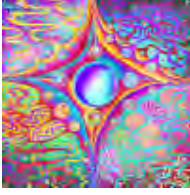
Upayas: the ‘means’ to God Realization, skillful means, means of liberation, technique, way, path, means of approach. In Kashmir Shaivism there are four upayas; each preceding step may lead to the next naturally:

Anavopaya: (also called kriyopaya), the means that is dependent upon concentration, mantra, breath, and other techniques; external aids.

Shaktopaya: (also called jñānopaya), the means by which God consciousness is achieved through grace and one-pointedness; recognition of one’s own essential unity is sought.

Shambhavopaya: (also called icchopaya), thoughtlessness is the means; knowledge of the ultimate Reality arises through a mere exercise of will power.

Anupaya: (the highest) effortless spontaneous God Realization; you do not have to do anything; for very advanced aspirants. [According to Swami Lakshmanjoo, sometimes Lord Shiva, the Oneness, just simply grants this kind of spontaneous Grace to the seeker, even to a few of those who might not be seeking! It is cosmic ‘play’ – Lila.]



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May we find our way Home!

We meet in the Heart.

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