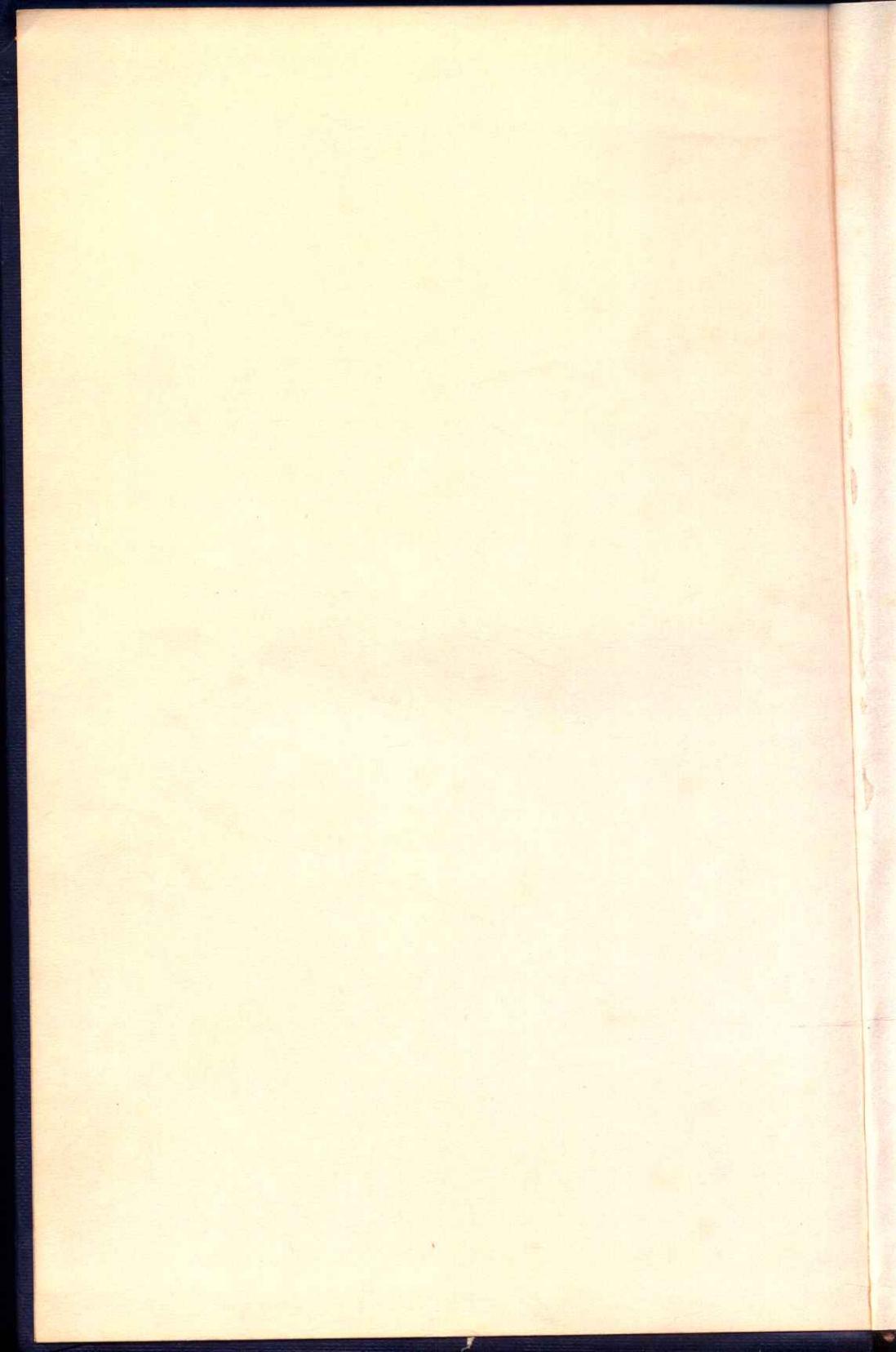


**Specific  
Principles  
of  
Kashmir  
Saivism**



**B.N. Pandit**





## Specific Principles of Kashmir Śaivism

*Specific Principles of Kashmir Śaivism* throws a clear light on the aspects of Trika Śaiva philosophy that remain either untouched or not well-clarified in other schools. Starting with a discussion of the theistic absolutism of the Trika system, B.N. Pandit guides us through Abhinavagupta's critique of the primary cosmogonic theories of his time—the materialist realism of Sāṃkhya, the momentary-idealism of Vijñānavāda, and the *vivarta* theory of Advaita Vedānta—*en route* to establishing the Kashmir Śaiva theory of theistic reflectional manifestation as a unique and supremely logical cosmogonic system.

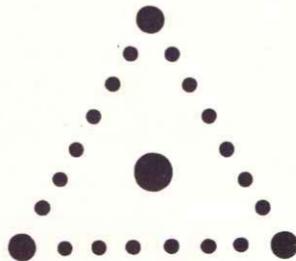
Like the topic of cosmogony, several other important principles are unique developments of the Trika system. These topics include: *Spanda*, *Śaktipāta*, the classification of beings, aesthetics, the notion of *Śabdabrahman*, the relation of the five *prāṇas* to the four states of consciousness, and Trika yoga. This book illuminates these topics on the basis of the writings of the primary masters of the school, including Vasugupta, Kallaṭa Bhaṭṭa, Somānanda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta.

In addition, the author has included a chapter on the *vilāsa* principle as expounded in the Neo-Śaiva philosophy (*Abhinava-Śaivadarśana*) of Ācārya Amṛtavāghbava. This work also includes an index, extensive glossary, and appendix of Sanskrit quotations, making it an invaluable source-book for beginners and scholars alike.

B.N. Pandit is an eminent Sanskrit scholar, holding a Certificate of Honour, awarded by the President of India. A retired professor of Sanskrit from Himachal University. Dr. Pandit is an internationally respected authority on the Trika Śaivism of Kashmir, with numerous publications in Sanskrit (8), Hindi (4), and English (4). His *Svātantrya Darpana* (*Mirror of Self-Supremacy*) and translation of Abhinavagupta's *Paramārtha-sāra* (*The Essence of the Exact Reality*) are also published by us.



# Specific Principles of Kashmir Śaivism



B.N. Pandit



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*Dedicated to*  
*Ācārya Śrī Utpaladeva*

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## Preface

The present work is a collection of articles on the non-dualistic Śaivism of Kashmir that is intended to clarify certain philosophical and theological principles central to this philosophy. Most of these principles are specific to Śaiva non-dualism and its Trika system of yoga and are not commonly included in other schools of thought. In a few cases, these concepts have been discussed in various other philosophies, but Kashmir Śaivism has its own distinctive approach to these issues.

It is the author's intention that this work on Śaivism serve as a guidebook for the general reader interested in learning more about the philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism as taught and explained by its ancient authors. While this book was not intended to be a scholarly treatise, nevertheless there are details included which should be of interest to scholars and readers already familiar with the philosophy.

Because these chapters were designed as individual articles, the basic points of the philosophy are introduced in each one as needed. Therefore, it is possible to read them independently of each other and in any order. However, there is also a logic to their order, and a general building of understanding should occur when they are read as presented.

Like all Indian philosophical systems, Kashmir Śaivism grew and developed in the presence of other schools of thought. Down through the centuries there were ongoing debates, interchanges, assimilations, and competitions among various belief systems which influenced each other powerfully along the way. Because of this, it is basically impossible to study one of these philosophies without presenting comparative material from the other major schools of the same period. Therefore, the reader will find references to Vedānta, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Buddhism, and so on, in each of the following essays.

The first chapter of this work deals with the *Parādvaita* principle of Kashmir Śaivism. *Parādvaita* is the term used in this philosophy to establish the concept of absolute non-dualism. This approach to philosophical truth sees everything in the universe as Consciousness. There is only one conscious Reality, and because of Its divine, blissful, and independent nature, It creates the universe, evolving into the trinity of all forms of diversity, unity in diversity, and absolute unity.

The second chapter presents the two closely related principles of theistic absolutism and spiritual realism, both of which are central to this philosophy. The ancient sages of Kashmir Śaivism did not look for the truth only in logic and intellectual speculation. They relied much more on their experiences during deep yogic states to guide them in understanding and clarifying age-old philosophical dilemmas. They discovered the Absolute within themselves and found that they were one with it. They studied the Self that lay beyond the mind and the ego, and found that It was divine, creative energy. God was not some distant ruler or some inert entity. These sages realized and recognized that He was within everything, was the vitality of life itself, and was always the one transcendent Reality as well. In this way Kashmir Śaivites taught the principle of theistic absolutism.

For centuries Indian philosophers have been debating whether this world is real or an illusion. In the process of watching the unfolding of their own creative energy during meditation, the sages of Kashmir found the source of all creation, and witnessed how everything in this universe evolves from this one absolute Reality into manifestation which is also real. Because all creation exists within the Absolute, they established the principle of spiritual realism.

The third chapter examines the various aspects of the states of waking, sleeping, dreamless sleep, and intuitive Self-revelation. These are known as the four states of *prāna*, and although they have been discussed by many schools of Indian thought, the Śaivism of Kashmir brings to light many things about them, which are unknown to other systems of philosophy.

The fourth chapter introduces the question, "What is life?" and discusses the various levels and states of living beings: from ordinary mortal people to various forms of heavenly beings and finally to Śiva. Kashmir Śaivism classifies seven main levels of

living beings, and has developed a categorization of the mental and physical states of each. This section also includes a discussion of the various limitations (*malas*) that affect both the mortal and heavenly beings living in these levels and states.

Grammarians belonging to the school of Bhartṛhari have recognized four types of speech. However, philosophers of Sanskrit grammar have been unable to clarify the nature and character of the subtler forms of thought-free awareness (*paśyanti*) and supreme speech (*parāvāc*). The authors of Kashmir Śaivism discovered that awareness is the basic essence of all speech as well as the foundation for creative expression. Their views on these concepts are reviewed in chapter 5.

The sixth chapter deals with the *spanda* principle of Kashmir Śaivism. This concept is not found in any other school of Indian thought. *Spanda* is the spiritual stirring of the divine essence of the Absolute. The masters of this philosophy discovered that all of creation was nothing but this extraordinarily subtle vibration or oscillation. It is *spanda* that keeps the Absolute continuously engaged in the five divine activities of cosmic creation, sustenance, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition.

The seventh chapter summarizes the classical twenty-five *tattvas* of the Sāṃkhya system and then discusses the eleven levels added by Śaivism, which go beyond *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*.

The eighth chapter describes the principle of divine grace that causes ordinary people to move beyond their limitations and seek right understanding and liberation. This philosophy has developed a thorough delineation of grace and its various forms. The basic nine types of *saktipāta* are discussed in this section.

The ninth chapter explains the yoga system of the Trika-śāstra as discussed in the *Tantrāloka* by Abhinavagupta. This form of yoga is unique to the Śaivism of Kashmir. Aside from a detailed study of *sāmbhava*, *sākta* and *āṇava* yoga, this chapter presents the different varieties and subvarieties of these three main forms of Trika yoga as well.

This is followed by a chapter on aesthetics. This philosophy contains no puritanical or restrictive doctrines. Rather, it is distinctive for embracing life in its totality. The tenth chapter examines the various spiritual practices associated with the arts, particularly music, as well as the practice of using objects and actions pleasing to the senses as aids to liberation.

Finally, the eleventh chapter brings the reader into the present century with a discussion of the *vilāsa* principle of Neo-Saivism. This concept was developed by Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava in one of his works entitled *Ātmavilāsa*. The chapter gives a short biographical account of the Ācārya, and then goes on to describe various aspects of the divine exuberance (*vilāsa*) of the Absolute as it is presented in *Ātmavilāsa*.

At the end of the book there is an appendix which should be of further help to the reader interested in the Sanskrit quotes and terminology. It is followed by a glossary of terms and index. Wherever possible we have tried to use the English equivalent to the Sanskrit term, or have included a translation within the text. The glossary also offers cross-referencing of concepts, and summaries of various categories such as the *tattvas*.

I would like to give my thanks to my daughter, Dr. Girija Sharma, who assisted me in collecting material etc. for the book. Mrs. Joan Ames does also deserve my thanks for giving the expression of the book an American look. Finally, my thanks are due to my present day students—Marcy Braverman, Jeffrey Lidke, and John Nemec—for editing the final press copy of the book.

B.N. PANDIT

*Jammu*  
15 May 1997

## Introduction

The word "philosophy" is commonly used to translate the Sanskrit word *darśana*, but in fact *darśana* has far broader implications than its English equivalent implies. By "philosophy" we usually mean that love and pursuit of superior wisdom that develops through intellectual and logical reasoning. *Darśana*, on the other hand, is a revelation or an intuitive experience of the truth brought about by the practice of yoga. The logical expression of this experience of the truth through language is considered to be a secondary meaning of *darśana*.

It is important for Westerners to bear in mind that many of the fundamental principles of Indian philosophy have arisen experientially during the practice of deep meditation, and are not just the result of logical reasoning. Indian philosophers were often great yogins as well as fine scholars, and their practice of a given philosophy through various forms of yoga was considered essential for gaining understanding of the highest truths.

Throughout the centuries, India's greatest philosopher-sages have described their experiences of the truth as they were revealed to them during the practice of yoga. These truths were then translated into various philosophical systems depending on the level of clarity that a given sage had reached, and their ability to transfer their experiences into logical form. Also, different systems of yoga brought about different states of consciousness and therefore different levels of truth were experienced.

Classical Indian philosophy generally recognizes four different states of consciousness: *jāgrat*, the waking state; *svapna*, the dreaming state; *susupti*, the deep, dreamless state; and *turiyā*, the state of intuitive revelation.\* Indian philosophers discovered, practiced, and propagated various systems of yoga which lead to different levels of revelation (*darśana*) within these states of

\*These states are described in detail in chapter 4.

consciousness. The following examples of different schools of yoga and the various levels of consciousness attained by their practitioners will serve as a background for discussing the particular *darśana* of Kashmir Śaivism.

There was a yoga prevalent in the tradition of certain ancient orders of monks known to lead to a state of subtle animation within a form of deep, dreamless sleep (*susupti*) in which the practitioner came face to face with his true Self. This Self is not to be confused with the ego, that limited sense of "I" that we refer to as my "self," with a small "s". The true individual Self is experienced through its own luminous and vibrant consciousness, thereby transcending the usual physical and mental knowing of the waking (*jāgrat*), and dreaming (*svapna*) states. This experience, called *yoga-samādhi*, has within it various levels of purity, but basically it yields a direct realization of the nature of the pure and finite I-consciousness.

A higher form of *darśana* is available to students of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga system, which followed and adopted the *saṃādhī-yoga* of Patañjali. Adept practitioners of Sāṃkhya-Yoga experience a state called *nirvikalpa-samādhi* in which they transcend the sense of ego (*ahamkāra*) alongwith the ability to think (*manas*) and understand (*buddhi*). All three psychic senses are absorbed into that yogic form of deep sleep leaving the individual Self in a thought-free (*nirvikalpa*) state. This is known as the state of aloneness (*kaivalya*) in the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali.

The *darśanas* of both these schools differ from the revelation available through the practice of Kashmir Śaivism because the practitioner does not experience the infinite and all pervading nature of the self, nor its character of divine omnipotence. What is more, Sāṃkhya-Yoga does not involve itself with the subject of God, either through *darśana* or logical exposition. Even as great a yogin as Patañjali did not consider *Īśvara* to be the Absolute God, but understood him to be just an ever-pure and ever-liberated *Puruṣa* of a unique kind who was responsible for transmitting yoga to Kapila, one of the system's earliest teachers. *Īśvarakṛṣṇa*, the builder of the current Sāṃkhya philosophy, does not even mention the name of God.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy is another example of a form of *darśana* that contrasts with Kashmir Śaivism. Practitioners of this system experience the Self as consisting of pure and calm

finite consciousness, freed from all physical, mental and sensual disturbances. In their *yoga-samādhi* they have the *darśana* of a Self-evident tranquil consciousness, free from any movement of the ego. They see themselves as attaining perfect freedom from any propensity towards either objective or subjective activity. However, they consider the phenomena of this world and its creator as entities different from the Self. As with the above schools of yoga, the path of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika does not reveal to its practitioners the divine nature of the Self, and so their assertions on the principle of theism are deduced from logical reasoning rather than from *darśana*.

Buddhist philosophers deny the existence of both, God and the individual soul. In their practice of yoga they attain such a deep state of *susupti* that they lose all sense of witnessing the constant flow of *vijñāna*, that stream of consciousness that is always present in the mind. Buddhists believe that ordinarily there is a constant fluctuation in the mind between the sense of I-ness called *ālaya-vijñāna* and the sense of this-ness called *pravṛtti-vijñāna*. They explain that this fluctuation arises due to a basic form of universal ignorance that causes each successive momentary mental movement to be affected by accumulated past impressions. According to Buddhists, this process deceives people into assuming that there is something continuous about them, like a soul, or a Self. In their state of deep *susupti*, Buddhist practitioners experience the cessation of even the subtle current of *vijñāna* and have called this state *nirvāṇa*. Literally translated, *nirvāṇa* means an extinction of the current of the light of individual consciousness. In this state of *susupti* they experience a void in which there is no apparent Self, vitality, or creative energy.

The above systems of yoga all lead the student into spiritual experiences that this author views as various states of deep sleep, or *susupti*. Let us now turn our attention to those schools whose practices offer a more refined form of *darśana*, or revelation. The yoga known as *nirodha-samādhi*, and practiced by the ancient teachers of Advaita Vedānta, leads students to the revelation of an uninterrupted state of Self-awareness. This consciousness of the Self serves as a witness to all the different levels of the deep, dreamless state (*susupti*) as well as to the stream of momentary flickers of consciousness (*vijñāna*). The Vedāntins call this continuously existing consciousness *Ātman*. They use the term

*Brahman* to stand for that aspect of all-pervading consciousness that also serves as the original foundation for all of creation. Seeing *Brahman*, the creator, as absolutely pure but inactive, Vedāntins have classically been unable to locate the source of phenomenal existence in Him. They feel that there must be some impure element, in addition to *Brahman*, which is responsible for phenomenal manifestation. They call this element beginningless ignorance (*avidyā*). The Vedāntins conceive of this ignorance as having both an individual and a universal aspect which results in people mistakenly understanding the single *Brahman* as being God, the soul, and insentient matter. According to Vedāntins, these three entities do not really exist. Just like a mirage in the desert, they appear falsely to people caught in the grip of this ignorancce (*avidyā*). They proclaim that the Self (*ātman*), also known as *Brahman*, is the only true reality, and is the eternal, infinite, and absoulte Consciousness. They describe *Brahman* as *sat* ("existence"), *cit* ("consciousness"), and *ānanda* ("blissfulness"), because they experience these states as they reside in that deep Self-awareness known as *nirodha-samādhi*.

However, according to the philosophers of Kashmir Śaivism, the revelation of the truth attained through this level of yogic absorption (*samādhi*) is still affected by the limitations of individual consciousness and inactiveness. These limitations do not allow practitioners to experience their infinite and divine *potency*. They do not understand that the same power that created the whole universe is what empowers them. This shortcoming causes Advaita Vedāntins to look for a creative source outside of *Brahman*, and to consider people who experience Him as God, soul, and all creation as being caught in ignorance.

There are several systems of yoga that lead aspirants to a still higher level of truth as it is revealed at various stages of intuitive reyelation (*turyā*), the fourth state of *prāṇa*, which leads to a spontaneous understanding of the real nature of the Self. These systems include Pāñcarātra, Śaktism, and Śaivism. The practitioners of these schools of yoga understand that all phenomena are a creation manifested by God, the absolute Consciousness endowed with infinite divine potency to create, to preserve, and to dissolve all phenomena. Within this group of yoga traditions that lead to experiences of Self-revelation(*turyā*), there are various levels of understanding of Self. Practitioners who have attained the lower

levels of *turyā* understand that everything in the world is controlled by the divine powers of God, but they conceive of all things as being separate or different from Him. These aspirants remain in the experience of diversity known as "dualism" (*dvaita*). Pāśupatas and the followers of the Vaiṣṇava philosopher Madhvācārya are examples of yogic groups that experience this form of pluralism or diversity.

Those yogins who discover the truth at an intermediate level of *turyā* experience a kind of unity within the diversity of God, soul, and world. They discover that they are one with God, but do not entirely lose their individual limitations, and so remain partly distinct from His universal aspect. This is known as the state of unity in diversity (*bhedābheda*), and at this intermediate level, the practitioners can attain the *bhedābheda* state only after death. Such aspirants are popularly known as "qualified non-dualists" (Viśiṣṭādvaitins). This group includes the followers of Rāmānuja, aspirants on the paths of Śaivasiddhānta and Śrīkaṇṭhamata, and the followers of Vaiṣṇava teachers like Bhāskara, Nimbārka and Caitanya.

Yogins discovering the truth as it is revealed at still higher levels of the intuitive state (*turyā*), experience God in everyone and everything. According to Śaivism, they shed their individuality and expand themselves into the infinite existence of God as soon as they exhaust their remaining stock of merits and demerits for this life (*prārabdha-karman*) and leave their mortal forms. Successful practitioners of Viraśaivism are examples of yogins who attain this form of revelation. Also, Vedāntic aspirants who do not allow themselves to get lost in logic, and who practice some Tantric method of yoga, can attain unity with the Absolute. The great Vedāntic teachers Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara are examples of this group.

The Śaivism of Kashmir teaches a system of yoga that leads to the highest level of Self-realization and yields a revelation of the innermost secrets of the nature of the Self. In the practice of this yoga, the student is able to pass beyond the various levels of *susupti* and *turyā* that we have been describing and finally to become immersed in the blissful experience of the Self as one with Absolute Consciousness. The student of Kashmir Śaivism discovers that what others experience as the void is actually pulsating with divine creative energy and that this creative energy

is their very essence. Further, these practitioners experience everyone (*pramāṭṛ*) and everything (*prameya*) as the Absolute Lord, endowed with infinite divine potency and joyfully manifesting the whole universe. They see everything as His divine play, and recognize that everything is actually He. This totally monistic view of the world was termed “immediate non-dualism” (*pratyakṣādvaita*) by Narasiṁhagupta, father of the famous eleventh century philosopher, Abhinavagupta. Immediate non-dualism sees total unity even in mundane perceptions. Those who live in this state of unity do actually see monism with their eyes and feel it through all their senses.

Absolute non-dualism is the basic principle of the philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism, and throughout the discussions that follow, it will be important for the reader to remember that all the principles of this philosophy rest on this non-dualistic foundation. In other words, whether we are dealing with principles of realism, theism, or absolutism, all of them are to be viewed through the lens of absolute monism. This non-dualistic view is present in the *Śivadṛṣṭi* of Somānanda where he discusses *pratyakṣādvaita* in the fourth and fifth chapters of that work. Although it has been given various names, it is most generally referred to as *parādvaita*, the supreme and absolute non-dualism. As will be discussed in chapter 1, it is significantly different from the monism of Vedānta and from other schools of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. The principle of absolute monism has neither been expressed in Pāśupataśaiva, nor in Siddhāntaśaiva, nor in Vīraśaiva, nor in the Śaivism of Śrīkanṭha and Appayadikṣita.

Aside from absolute non-dualism, the teachers and authors of Kashmir Śaivism discovered and propagated several other important principles of spiritual philosophy and theology that set it apart from most Indian systems, such as the Brahmanic philosophies, the six *darśanas*,\* the philosophies of Buddhism, Jainism, and Nāthism, the devotional schools of Vaiṣṇavism, and the Śaivism of the South.

Theistic absolutism is an example of one of these principles. There are many theistic schools of thought in the East and in the West, but all of them avoid absolutism in one way or another. Most are based on the concept of a personal God living in a

\*The six *darśanas* refer to the six classical schools in Indian philosophy: Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Pūrvamīmāṃsā, and Advaita Vedānta.

divine abode. Even the pantheists of the West who have some similarities of Kashmir Śaivism do not see God as an absolute reality beyond all phenomena. Advaita Vedānta is a school that maintains absolutism, but it does not accept theism as an absolute truth. For Vedāntins, a belief in God is caused by the misunderstanding of people caught in *avidyā*, beginningless ignorance. By contrast, Kashmir Śaivism posits that there is only the eternal existence of infinite and pure Consciousness lying beyond the reach of speech, mind, and intellect. This Consciousness is an absolute reality—the only Absolute Reality. What is more, this philosophy has established theism as the essential nature of Absolute Reality, and maintains that this experience and understanding of God explains and settles all the perennial problems that other schools have with creation and phenomenal existence.

Vaiṣṇava schools do not accept absolutism at all. The so called “pure non-dualism” (*śuddhādvaita*) theory of Vallabha, even though it is quite similar to Kashmir Śaivism in its pantheistic views, gives little attention to absolutism. The great Hindi poet Sūrdāsa, an ardent follower of Vallabha, has cleverly criticised and ridiculed absolutism in his poetic songs related to the *Bhramaragīta* episode in the life-history of Lord Kṛṣṇa. But Kashmir Saivism, even though it is every bit as devotional towards the divine entity as the school of Vallabha, insists on transcendental Absolutism when dealing with the highest and the basic eternal Reality. According to this view, the absolute is so inexplicably eternal, infinite, and pure, it cannot be perceived, imagined, known objectively, or expressed through any words, because it lies beyond the reach of all such faculties of intelligence. Abhinavagupta says the following about it:

It is very difficult to understand the character of this state. It is therefore said to be that form of transcendental reality beyond which nothing else exists (*Tantrāloka*, II.28).

Creation or manifestation is another philosophical issue that has been heavily debated among the various schools of Indian philosophy. What is the relationship between the creator and the created? The very question suggests a dualism, and many schools have developed theories of creation and creator that reflect the duality that pervades the standard intellectual process. In fact there is quite a range of approaches to this subject. Different

schools of Indian thought have established either monism, pluralism, dualism, or monodualism as the fundamental principle of their philosophy. Kashmir Śaivism alone establishes a totally non-dualistic form of theistic absolutism that ultimately includes and expands on all other theories of manifestation. This approach establishes that there is only one beginningless entity that is variously described as the Absolute, Absolute Consciousness, Paramaśiva, the Ultimate, the Lord, Absolute Reality, God, and so on. Therefore Kashmir Śaivism does not agree with the Vedāntic principle of ignorance (*avidyā*), even as an explanation for creation. Instead, it solves this key problem of monistic philosophies with the principle of *spanda*, the vibration of creative power.

*Spanda* will be explored in detail in chapter 6, but we will discuss it briefly here in relation to the issue of manifestation. Historically, this concept first enters the ancient tradition of Kashmir Śaivism in the teachings of Vasugupta. It is further explained and clarified in turn by Bhaṭṭa Kallata, Somānanda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta. (*Spanda* is mentioned in the *Anuttaraprakāśapañcāśikā* by Ādinātha, and also appears in a more ancient work by the sage Durvāsas entitled *Paraśambhuma-himnastava*, but is developed as a key theory of Kashmir Śaivism by the above mentioned philosophers.)

According to Kashmir Śaivism, the Absolute is calm and tranquil because it is free from the turbulence caused by the five *kleśas*\* of the *Yogaśūtra*. But it is not like the void or pure space on which the Buddhists base their theories, because that calm amounts to insentience. The Absolute is Consciousness. It is always Self-conscious, meaning it is always aware of itself and its divine nature. The Self-awareness of the Absolute is a subtle form of activity which has two essential qualities. First, Consciousness is Self-luminous; the light of Consciousness (*prakāśa*) requires no other source of illumination. This is Its aspect of *jñāna* or knowing. Second, the process of becoming aware of Itself (*vimarśa*) is the Absolute's aspect of action (*kriyā*). The action is a kind of subtle stir that gives rise to joy and the creative impulse. This subtle movement is not a physical motion or any form of mental restlessness. Rather, it can be described as a spiritual

\*Ignorance, egotism, attachment, aversion, tenacity of mundane existence (a spontaneous urge based on the first four, in Śaivite view).

stirring that corresponds to the sensation everyone has at moments of direct self-awareness during peak experiences.

This stirring of Self-awareness is *spanda*. It makes Absolute Consciousness vibrant and expansive, and it is this activity that is the basic source of all creative manifestation. Everything that exists, sentient and insentient, is a result of this stirring of *spanda*. Even the Vedāntic theory of beginningless ignorance is thus a creation caused by the *spanda* of Absolute Consciousness. The five divine activities of cosmic creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration, and revelation are basically the outward manifestations of the divine powers of God brought about through *spanda*, God's essential nature. This theory of creation is one of the most important spiritual discoveries of Kashmir Śaivism.

There are a number of important philosophical theories that are woven into this view of creation. God, while appearing as all phenomena, does not undergo any change at all in His basic character. There is no change in the Absolute because all manifestation brought about by *spanda* occurs as a reflection. In other words, the divine powers of God, becoming reflected outwardly through the vibrative nature of *spanda*, appear as all phenomena. This principle of reflective manifestation is the cosmogonical principle of Kashmir Śaivism and is a corollary to the principle of *spanda*.

Kashmir Śaivism asserts that all phenomena that ever appear in the universe enjoy an eternal existence within Absolute Consciousness. Because time and space do not exist for the Absolute, these phenomena do not exist within Consciousness in the same way that things exist in a room. Rather, they exist and shine within the Absolute as pure Consciousness. For example, a plant exists in a seed in the form of the potential of the seed to appear as a plant. The whole universe exists within Absolute Consciousness in the form of its divine potency. Consciousness is capable of appearing as anything and everything in the universe by Its own free will. Therefore, the philosophy asserts that all things have an eternal and absolutely real existence within pure and absolute Consciousness. This approach is known as spiritual realism and is another example of a theory that is particular to Kashmir Śaivism.

Spiritual realism is considerably different from the realism of other philosophical systems, for instance the material realism of

the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya schools. Also, this realism should be differentiated from certain forms of idealism in both India and Europe. These idealists generally consider phenomenal existence to be the outward manifestation of past mental impressions appearing like things in a dream. According to Kashmir Śaivism, the things of this world are not a dream because they enjoy a concrete existence in time, present a common target for the activities of many people, and serve a particular function. The things of this world are real for all practical purposes. In other words, the authors of Kashmir Śaivism have worked out a pragmatic realism.

Bondage and liberation is another important issue that Kashmir Śaivism has clarified in a unique manner. Most of the other schools of Indian philosophy assert that all beings are responsible for their own misery and can only attain liberation through their own efforts. But Kashmir Śaivism, while advocating personal effort for the attainment of freedom from limitation, finds the basic source of both bondage and liberation in the divine creative expression of God. In this philosophy, the world and our lives are often described as a divine drama or play in which *Paramaśiva* is the sole producer, director, and cast of characters. He is everything wrapped up in one. It is He who, in the initial part of His divine play, obscures His divinity and purity, appears as an ordinary person with limitations, and becomes progressively denser and more ignorant as a result. But in the final part of this play, He bestows His divine grace on the person He appears to be. This person then turns away from misery, becomes interested in spiritual philosophy, comes into contact with a teacher, receives initiation into spiritual practices (*sādhanā*), attains correct knowledge of the theoretical principles of absolute non-dualism, practices yoga, and develops an intense devotion for the Lord. Finally this person recognizes that he is none other than the Lord Himself.

This play reveals the principles of obscuration and divine grace known as *nigraha* and *anugraha*. These terms have been mentioned in certain other schools of Indian philosophy, but have been developed philosophically in Kashmir Śaivism alone. The topic of divine grace, known as *śaktipāta*, has been intricately analysed into twenty-seven main forms in Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka*. No other philosophical system has produced such a

detailed study and understanding of *śaktipāta*.

Kashmir Saivism also developed an integrated and effective method of spiritual practice that includes intense devotion, the study of correct knowledge, and a special type of yoga unknown to other systems of practical philosophy. These three approaches are meant to be carefully integrated to produce a strong and vibrant practice. Yoga is the main path that leads to Self-realization, theoretical knowledge saves yogins from getting caught at some blissful but intermediary level of spiritual progress, and devotion provides them the strength and focus with which to digest correctly the powerful results of yoga and so avoid their misuse. This is a practice for both the mind and the heart. The teachings offer a fresh and powerful understanding of life that develops the faculties of the mind, while the devotional aspects of Kashmir Śaivism expand the faculties of a student's heart. Combined together, both faculties help students reach the highest goal to which Śaiva yoga can lead them.

The yoga system of Kashmir Śaivism is known as the Trika system. It includes many methods of yoga, which have been classified into three groups known as *sāmbhava*, *sākta*, and *āṇava*. *Sāmbhava* yoga consists of practices in direct realization of the truth, without making any effort at meditation, contemplation, or the learning of texts. The emphasis is on correct being, free from all aspects of becoming. This yoga transcends the use of mental activity. *Sākta* yoga consists of many types of practices in contemplation on the true nature of one's real Self. *Āṇava* yoga includes various forms of contemplative meditation on objects other than one's real Self, such as the mind, the life-force along with its five functions (the five *prāṇas*), the physical form along with its nerve-centers, the sound of breathing, and different aspects of time and space.

Trika yoga teaches a form of spiritual practice that is specific to Kashmir Śaivism. This system, along with its rituals, has been discussed in detail in Abhinavagupta's voluminous *Tantrāloka*, which is one of the world's great treatises on philosophy and theology. Unlike many other forms of yoga, the Trika system is free from all types of repression of the mind, suppression of the emotions and instincts, and starvation of the senses. It eliminates all self-torturing practices, austere vows or penance, and forcible renunciation. Śaiva practitioners need not leave their homes, or

roam as begging monks. Indifference (*vairāgya*) to worldly life is not a precondition for practicing Trika yoga. Sensual pleasures automatically become dull in comparison with the indescribable experience of Self-bliss. This is a transforming experience that naturally gives rise to a powerful form of spontaneous indifference to worldly pleasures. Finally, regardless of caste, creed, and sex, Trika yoga is open to all people, who through the Lord's grace, have developed a yearning to realize the truth, and who become devoted to the Divine.

This collection of essays has been written in accordance with the teachings and writings of five great philosopher-sages from the Kashmir Śaivite tradition. The first is Vasugupta, a truly advanced yogin who attained the highest levels of Trika yoga. Like all these ancient masters, through his practice of yoga he attained a direct realization of the principles and doctrines of Śaiva monism. As there are no books authored by Vasugupta\*, we must assume he remained mostly absorbed in the practices themselves and in teaching the Trika doctrines to disciples like Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa, who learned the essence of the theory and practice of the *spanda* principle from him and went on to develop it in his *Spandakārikā*. Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa wrote several other works on Kashmir Śaivism most of which have been lost. *Spandakārikā* and *Spandavṛtti* are his only two works that are still available. He was followed by Somānanda and Utpaladeva, both of whom were his younger contemporaries. All three of these teachers were great yogins who had direct realizations of the philosophical truths, contained in the Śaiva monism of Kashmir. They were also considered masters of the Trika system of Kashmir Śaivism and of the Kaula system started by Matsyendranātha. None of their works on Kaulism is available at present, but references to these books, and quotations from them, prove that they had mastered this system as well. It is clear that they were also well-read scholars, and extremely knowledgeable about the various philosophies of that period.

These sages were followed by Abhinavagupta who was also a great yogin and thoroughly versed in all the learned traditions of his time. He studied and practiced a number of philosophies

\*Śivasūtra is a revealed text.

outside his own chosen area of devotion in order to expand and perfect his knowledge. He was not only a master of both the Trika and Kaula systems of Tantric *sādhanā* but was in complete command of their ritual aspects as well. His *Tantrāloka*, dealing with the philosophy, theology, and ritual of the Trika and Kula\* systems of Tantric *yoga-sādhanā*, is a unique work on these subjects.

These are the five great authors of Kashmir Śaivism whose authority on the subject is unquestionable. They were followed by many scholars, writers, and practitioners who continued to expand the depth and breadth of this philosophy. They wrote commentaries and books useful for beginning students, a teaching tradition which is still being used in Kashmir. The works and commentaries of these later scholars are very helpful in studying the works of the above-mentioned masters of Kashmir Śaivism. However if one compares these later works with the teachings of the original five, it becomes clear that the views and interpretations of the later commentators are not always entirely correct. For this reason, I have chosen to take the material for this book from the original five great authors of Kashmir Śaivism, and have not relied on the views of their followers.

Contemporary students and scholars of this philosophy generally begin their research with the works of Kṣemarāja. This author feels that Kṣemarāja did little to clarify the subject matter. He apparently wanted to supersede his predecessors in popularity as a scholar and a writer and so developed a complicated and obscure style in order to impress readers with his greatness as a learned man and writer of complex issues. Further, his writing betrays a strong prejudice against the truly great and effective teacher, Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa, whom Abhinavagupta mentions with great respect. It appears that Abhinavagupta recognized this tendency in Kṣemarāja and was critical of it. Even though Kṣemarāja was the most efficient scholar and writer among all the known disciples of Abhinavagupta, the great teacher never includes his name among his disciples in any of his works. It is possible that the above-mentioned shortcomings were the cause

\*Kula and Kaula are the same word in different grammatical form.

of Abhinavagupta's indifference towards as prolific a disciple as Kṣemarāja.\*

This collection of essays covers a variety of important principles specific to Kashmir Śaivism that have been discussed and clarified by its ancient masters. Generally most of their original texts are available only in Sanskrit, and if translated, are all too often written in an abstruse style of Indian logic. Those people who are seeking the truth, who do not know Sanskrit, or who are not familiar with Indian logic, require a text in English that will clarify the wisdom of Kashmir Śaivism. The work in hand is an attempt to fulfil this purpose.

\*Kṣema, the cousin of Abhinavagupta, mentioned by name in the *Tantrāloka*, is without doubt Kṣemagupta, who is definitely different from Kṣemarāja. Kṣemarāja did not belong to the family of Guptas, but to a family of scholars who had produced great Śaivas like Bhaṭṭa Bhūtirāja, Helārāja, Indurāja, Ādityarāja, etc.

## CHAPTER 1

### Parādvaita, the Absolute Non-dualism

While monism is one of the central principles of most Indian philosophies, it is interpreted differently by philosophers from various schools. The most popular school of monism is the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkarācārya. However, many Indian philosophers take exception to this school's concept of monism. For example, Vallabhācārya, an ancient Vaiṣṇavite philosopher, calls his own principle "pure non-dualism" (*śuddhādvaita*), because in his view Advaita Vedānta explains the problem of phenomenal existence on the basis of two mutually different and independent entities. The first entity is known as *Brahman*, the pure consciousness, and the second is *avidyā*, or inexplicable ignorance. Both are said to be beginninglessly existent. For this reason Vallabhācārya taking *māyā* as the paver of *Brahman*, does not consider Advaita Vedānta to be a pure monism.

Abhinavagupta, the great eleventh century sage of Kashmir Śaivism, also finds several logical and psychological defects in Śaṅkara's school of Vedāntic monism and therefore calls his monism *parādvaita*, or absolute non-dualism. He uses this term specifically to differentiate it from Advaita Vedāntic monism, which he thoroughly examines and criticizes in several of his works. An example of this can be found in his *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* where he says that "the principle of the absolute existence of *Brahman*, along with *avidyā* as his *upādhi* (an adventitious element attached to Him), cannot be accepted as a definite principle of pure monism," because it implies the eternal existence of two entities, *Brahman* and Universal ignorance (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī*, III.404). This amounts to a clear dualism.

Criticizing the principle of *avidyā* as being the source of creation, Abhinavagupta says:

There is self-contradiction in saying that *avidyā* is indescribable and

in describing it as the entity that assumes the whole infinitely varied display of phenomena. To say that finite beings are deluded by the beginningless ignorance brought about by *avidyā*, the divine power of God, implies that such a power is surely describable, and it is actually described in that way. Besides, a non-substantial entity could not have the capacity to manifest such an extraordinary show. If it is really capable of creating, then it must be a truly existent entity and not an apparent and indescribable one (*ibid.*, 80).

In the very beginning of that voluminous work, he also criticizes another theory of creation, the principle of false appearance (*vivarta*). This theory has two aspects. First, it can refer to the appearance of some non-existent phenomenon like a dream or a mirage. According to this aspect, the universe does not exist, but only appears as an existent reality. *Vivarta* can also refer to the appearance of something that is other than it seems, as when a rope is mistaken for a snake, or a shell for silver. According to this aspect of *vivarta*, *Brahman* exists, but appears falsely as God, finite soul, and insentient matter. In Abhinavagupta's words:

It has been said that *vivarta* is the manifestation of an unreal entity. How can it be unreal when it is manifested? This anomaly has not been given due consideration (*ibid.*, 1.8).

To sum up, Abhinavagupta is saying that an entity that appears clearly and creates the whole universe must be something real and substantial and should be describable as such.

In his commentary on *Parātriśikā*\*<sup>1</sup>, Abhinavagupta insists that his philosophic view about the creative nature of absolute reality should not be confused with the views of either Sāṃkhya or Vedānta, as it is specifically a Śaiva view alone (*Parātriśikāvivarana*, V.181).

Explaining the creative nature of *Brahman* as taught in Śaivism, he says:

*Brahman* is one compact whole, that power of bliss that projects itself externally by a kind of spilling out of the universal creative potency lying within. Infinite Consciousness gets evolved into all phenomenal

\*On account of mistakes committed by some copyists and certain previous editors, the works named *Parātriśikā* and *Parātriśikāvivarana* are today known as *Parātrimśikā* and *Parātrimśikāvivarana*; but the author uses the correct names in the work in hand.

existence just as the word *Brahman* means both the all-pervading infinite and the evolved entity (ibid., 221).

Comparing these Śaivite views on *Brahman* with those of Advaita Vedānta, he adds:

The *Brahman* of Śaivism is not the same as that of Advaita Vedānta which comes very close to the final principle of nihilistic Buddhism (ibid., 221).

*Īśvara-pratyabhijñāvimarśinī* is Abhinavagupta's most important work on the theoretical aspect of Śaivism. In discussing this issue there, he criticizes both the Advaita Vedāntins and the teachers of Buddhist idealism, known as Vijñānavādins, when he says:

Finding the contradiction between unity and diversity quite irreconcilable, some thinkers (i.e., Vedāntins) stated that apparent diversity was inexplicable because of its being basic ignorance (*avidyā*), while others (i.e., Buddhists) said that diversity was false because it was an outcome of mental ideation (*samvṛti*). Thus both of them deceived themselves and others as well (*Īśvara-pratyabhijñāvimarśinī* with *Bhāskarī*, II.131).

In another context in the same work, he discusses the topic in considerable detail and argues as follows:

If it is argued that the unity of absolute Consciousness is a reality, and that (the appearance) of diversity is due to the disturbance caused by *avidyā*, then it is not possible to resolve who is responsible for this defect of ignorance (*avidyā*). For on the one hand, how could *Brahman*, who is pure knowledge, assume the form of ignorance? And on the other hand, in reality there is no other creature to whom ignorance could occur (ibid., II.201).

Abhinavagupta refuses to accept *avidyā* as an inexplicable entity. He argues:

If *avidyā* is said to be inexplicable, it is not clear to us for whom it is inexplicable. On the one hand, its essential character becomes manifest, and, on the other hand, it is said to be an indescribable entity. How absurd is it? If this means that its existence cannot be explained or justified through logical arguments, then we ask what kind of logic is it that could contradict direct experience? How can an entity, which shines in experience, be unjustifiable? (ibid., 202).

Next Abhinavagupta introduces a supposition about creation characteristic of Advaita Vedānta.

*Brahman*, the pure Consciousness, shines alone as an existent truth in *nirvikalpa* cognition, a direct experience free from ideation, and phenomenal diversity appears as a result of mental ideation (ibid.).

He refutes this argument as follows:

Who conducts such ideation? If *Brahman* conducts it, He becomes stained by *avidyā*. None other than He exists, so who else could conduct it? (ibid.).

A further argument on this point is then presented in these words:

How can a distinction be established that knowledge without ideation is real while knowledge with ideation is false, when both of them shine with equal brilliance? (ibid.)

The Advaitins might finally attempt to take shelter in the authority of Vedic scriptures, but Abhinavagupta refutes this also as follows:

If it is argued that unity is established on the basis of scriptural authority with disregard for mundane knowledge, then it is pointed out here that scriptures themselves hold authority in the field of diversity and have diversity as their character (ibid., 203).

The whole discussion is finally concluded by Abhinavagupta in the following passage:

If the absolute monistic existence of pure Consciousness is accepted, then its independent activity of bearing diverse forms can not be explained at all. But all this can be justified and explained if it be accepted as endowed with freedom in the form of Self-awareness (ibid.).

This is how Abhinavagupta presents and discusses the views of Śaṅkarācārya's school of Advaita Vedānta. One can easily understand why Abhinavagupta felt the need to differentiate the non-dualism of Kashmir Śaivism from the apparent monism of the followers of Śaṅkarācārya, while coining the term *parādvaita* in the process of these debates.\*

It should be pointed out that the main difference between the Vedāntic monism discussed and accepted by Śaṅkarācārya, and the *parādvaita* developed by the authors of Kashmir Śaivism, is

\*In order to fit the new term into couplet form, he occasionally used synonyms like *paramādvaita*, *paramādvaya*, *parādvaya*, or simply the word *advaya* which was convenient in metrical composition (see Appendix to chapter 1 for examples).

probably more a difference of logic than of faith. As we have already seen, Vedāntic teachers place the source of phenomenal existence outside of absolute Consciousness and view its creative power as dependent on the external element they call ignorance (*avidyā*), while *parādvaita* teachers insist that this creative power is the essential nature of absolute Consciousness and the source of all phenomenal manifestation.

Vedāntic teachers like Śaṅkarācārya, and Gaudapāda may have expressed this dualistic approach in their logical discourses, but their belief system and practice was undoubtedly somewhat different. Both were devoted theists like the authors of Śaiva monism, and they both used various forms of spiritual practice that were similar to the *sākta upāya* of Kashmir Śaivism. Both of them used Tantric methods in their spiritual practice (*sādhanā*).\*

However, since these teachers were interested in refuting Buddhist logic, they studied it thoroughly and in the process became influenced by many of the Buddhist arguments. Since the above-mentioned shortcomings in their philosophical approach were also present in the logic of their main opponents, the Buddhist logicians, the Advaitins ignored them and made no attempt to remove them. After all, debaters need not pay attention to inconsistencies held in common.

It should also be noted that Śaṅkarācārya did not live long enough for his logical thinking to reach full maturity. One reason that the deficiencies pointed out by Abhinavagupta appeared in Śaṅkarācārya's logical works may be that he composed most of them when he was still in his twenties. Further, most of the prominent post-Śaṅkara Advaitins ignored the works of the great Vedāntic teachers on *practical* aspects of the philosophy and concentrated instead on their *logical* works. These later Advaitins focused mainly on debating and logic instead of practising the philosophy in order to experience an actual realization of *Brahman*. Śrīharṣa, one of the greatest writers of Vedāntic logic, goes so far as to boastfully declare his preference for logical debate over practice.

\*These facts become evident when one reads their Tantric works on practical Vedānta, e.g., *Vidyāratnāsūtra* and *Prapañcasāra Tantra*, and are particularly evident in their hymns to the Mother Goddess, e.g., *Subhagodayastuti* and *Saundaryalaharī*.

The tendency to focus on the intricacies of logical argumentation caused Advaita Vedānta to drift towards a point very close to the nihilism of the Buddhists. It was because of this trend in Advaita philosophy that Abhinavagupta felt the need to clarify the theistic and absolutist monism of Kashmir Śaivism which had been previously discovered and developed by Somānanda and Utpaladeva.

Although there is no doubt that the seeds of such nihilistic thinking are present in the passages of some important logical works of Śaṅkarācārya, still, his prominent works on *practical* Vedānta deserve due consideration, as does his young age during the period in which he composed the commentaries on the *Prasthānatrayī* (*Upaniṣads; Brahmasūtra; Bhagavadgītā*).

It is with an open-minded approach to the basic principles of other schools of philosophy that Abhinavagupta states in his *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī*, "If a Vedāntic aspirant identifies *avidyā* with *māyā* and takes the latter as the divine potency of *Brahman*, he also can attain the highest perfection." (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī*, III.405). He makes similar remarks about Lord Buddha's teachings and lays the burden of the blame for any logical confusion on the later commentators (ibid.).

According to this supreme monism of Abhinavagupta, absolute I-consciousness is the only entity that exists. It is infinite, eternal, perfect, and pure Consciousness, endowed with divine creative power. This creative power is essentially vibrant in nature and is actively engaged in the manifestation of relative unity and all diversity. (The term "relative unity" is used here because manifested unity has only relative oneness when compared to the absolute unity of infinite I-consciousness in which all creation is considered to be present and absolutely real.) A perfect yogin, established in *parādvaita*, sees one Absolute God in all diversity and unity. In this philosophy, diversity is not considered to be an illusion like "the son of a barren woman," but is as real as relative unity. Absolute reality itself shines in both the manifestations of relative unity and diversity. As Abhinavagupta says:

It is not being said that diversity does not exist at all in this (understanding of) non-dualism. The manifestation of diversity has been accepted even in that which is devoid of all differentiation (*Mālinivijayavārtika*, I.108).

This divine creative power is the basic and essential nature of monistic I-consciousness.\* In their exploration of consciousness during deep states of meditation, Śaiva yogins discovered that this divine essence was infinitely blissful and playful as well as vibrant. Because of its divine and playful nature ancient philosophers called it God, and Śaivites called it *Paramaśiva*.

Creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration, and revelation are the five main acts in the divine play of the lordship of *Paramaśiva*. He creates, preserves, and absorbs all phenomena. In the process, He conceals his real nature and appears as finite beings. He causes these beings to become increasingly identified with their limited individual egos. After undergoing births and deaths in innumerable species, He finally realizes his true nature as lordship, thus concluding His divine play. All this is the manifestation of His divine power, and is not in any way different from Him. Thus a finite being is not different from God, who is simply hiding in this form. In the words of Abhinavagupta:

But Almighty God, being able to do even the impossible, and possessing pure independence, is skilled in playfully concealing His real Self (*Tantrāloka*, IV.10).

According to this absolute non-dualism of *parādvaita*, He and He alone exists in all the various scenes of this play. All creation has its real and eternal existence within God in the form of the divine potency of His pure consciousness. Once creation becomes manifested as apparent phenomenal existence, it has a beginning and an end. Even so, perfect yogins see only the existence of one Absolute God in both the apparent phenomenal existence and the pure noumenal existence of absolute Consciousness. Śiva yogins must not only *know* this truth, they have to actually *feel* it as well. Then and then alone do they attain perfect and complete Self-realization.

God is God in both His noumenal and phenomenal aspects. A poet is a poet even when he is in deep sleep. A supreme ruler, though involved in mundane activities or quietly resting, is still a ruler. Similarly, way God remains fully Himself, complete with His divine power, even when He appears in His noumenal aspect. Therefore, it is due to His essential nature that He is God, not

\*Scholars sometimes refer to this godly essence as "godhead," however, it will be referred to as "lordship" or "divine essence" in this book.

because of His relation with phenomenal existence. This is the main difference between the *advaita* approach of Śaṅkarācārya and the *parādvaita* approach of Abhinavagupta.

God, while appearing as all phenomena, does not undergo any change or transformation—called *parināma* by the post-Śaṅkara Vedāntins. According to Abhinavagupta, all phenomenal manifestations take place in the manner of a reflection. He teaches realism (*satkāryavāda*), but his realism is neither a material realism nor does it involve any process of *parināma*. All of creation is merely an outward reflection of the divine powers of God. His powers shine in Him as "I" but their outward reflections appear as "this". This is the secret of the reality of all phenomena. In this way the *satkāryavāda* of Abhinavagupta can be considered a form of spiritual realism. All creation is the materialization of the divine will of God. It is a wonderful and divine transmutation brought about by God through His own free will.

There is nothing lacking in the playful nature of God, because He is not only full but overflowing (*paripūrṇa*). All the external manifestations of God's divine potency spill out from this blissful fullness. God projects His powers outward not because of any need, but because it is the basic nature of His infinite and divine potency to do so. A person might ask why this is God's nature, but it is useless to question or challenge the essential nature of a thing. It would be absurd to ask why fire is warm, or why it shines, or why it burns, and so on. Fire, devoid of such qualities, would, quite simply, cease to be fire. A piece of unlit charcoal is just a lump of charcoal and would never be mistaken for fire. Similarly God, devoid of the vibrant manifestation of His divine creative power, would be reduced to the position of an insentient entity. In the words of Abhinavagupta:

If Almighty God had remained forever in one form, He would have to give up His consciousness and creative power, thus becoming an insentient article like an earthen water vessel (*Tantrāloka*, III.100-101).

The manifestation of contradictory concepts like bondage and liberation, relative unity and diversity, ignorance and knowledge, etc., are simply parts of God's divine drama. Abhinavagupta says:

These twin concepts of bondage and liberation are the essential character of Almighty God, because, in fact, the concept of differences does not exist in him at all (*Bodhapañcadaśikā*, 14).

Another difference between the *advaita* and *parādvaita* approach is that while Advaitins can experience monism only in the state of *samādhi*, *parādvaitins* experience it even during mundane transactions. Because of this, Narasimhagupta, the father of Abhinavagupta, called it *pratyakṣādvaita*, immediate (perceived) non-dualism. As Abhinavagupta says:

The great teacher, Narasimhagupta, having ripened his intellect in the art of correct contemplation, calls this the non-dualism that can be perceived through one's external sense (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.763).

Abhinavagupta uses a special type of logical reasoning that he calls *sattarka*. All prevalent logic (*tarka*) is based on those conventions that have evolved out of the mundane experiences of people working within the usual confines of the mind and emotions (*māyā*). By contrast, *sattarka* is based on the intuitive experiences of yogins who transcend limited existence and experience reality at the plane of unity in diversity (*vidyā*).

Abhinavagupta teaches that an insentient object cannot prove or assert its existence through its own power, but requires the help of a sentient being to witness it and to say that it exists. This brings to mind Berkeley's famous dilemma of the tree falling in the forest. If no sentient being is present, does the tree falling make a noise? The Kashmir Śaivites would say, "Yes. There is noise, because it all happens within and is witnessed by Absolute Consciousness."

In this philosophy, sentience alone is said to have an independent existence. It proceeds to some insentient object, assumes its form, and appears as that object as well. The manifested insentient object itself is thus considered real. However, such an object is considered to be in a more real and pure form when it shines within the consciousness of some living being where that object can actually be said to exist. Finally, the insentient object is eternal and therefore absolutely real (*paramārtha-sat*) only within infinite Consciousness itself (see chapter 2 for a further discussion of realism). Whether finite or infinite, it is consciousness alone which can appear as a knowing subject, as all the instrumental means of knowing, and as all known objects. This proves two things: (1) Consciousness alone has an independent existence, and (2) Consciousness alone shines as the whole phenomenal world.

This approach to the truth through the intuitive vision of unity in diversity (*sattarka*) clarifies the non-dualism of divinely potent Consciousness, and shows that this Consciousness has the power to assume the forms of unconscious entities and to shine in their forms as well. As Abhinavagupta says:

Therefore, only the *ātman* (Self) shines (everywhere) taking as its form the whole objective existence known as the universe, and appearing as all this without any break.

The object, being itself of the nature of consciousness, is also wholly immersed in the light (of consciousness); since the ultimate truth is merely that the light (of consciousness) shines, what distinction could there be between omniscience and its absence? (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśini* with *Bhāskarī*, I.51).

Here Abhinavagupta shows that the supposed difference between finite and infinite consciousness is commonly based on the phenomenal existence of the objects of consciousness such as the body, the senses, and the brain. However, because these objects owe their existence to, and emerge out of, Consciousness itself, they can hardly be capable of forming sound judgements about that Consciousness.

Instead of depending on conventional logic, *sattarka* is based on the authority of intuitive experiences of supreme monism realized during the practice of yoga. The views and teachings of Abhinavagupta may initially be considered illogical by certain scholars of Western philosophy, but exposure to this method might also lead them to take a closer look at the essence of their own form of logic, which depends solely on the mind and the mind's ideation for its authority.

As we pointed out in the Introduction, there is an important difference between Indian *darśana* and Western philosophy. Basically, Indian philosophy (*darśana*) derives from intuitive realizations of truths, while books dealing with these truths are considered *darśanas* in a secondary sense. In Indian philosophical systems, logic is used only in the writings of this secondary form of *darśana* in order to present and debate the truths gleaned during yogic experience. By contrast in the West, philosophy is basically a tradition of worldly wisdom and logic developed through ordinary intellectual abilities. Because there is no yogic practice involved, this use of the intellect is essentially the only method that Western philosophy has for arriving at truths.

Abhinavagupta explains the *parādvaita* principle of Kashmir Śaivism at several places in his prominent works and discusses it from several points of view. In his opinion, scriptural passages which express this principle do not need to employ the inclusive/exclusive implication method (*bhāgatyāga-lakṣaṇā*) as commentary or explanation. He says:

Just as students not acquainted with certain synonyms are taught as follows: 'A *pādapā* (tree) is a *bhūruha*, and a *ghaṭa* (pot) is a *kumbha*', so it is said that the Almighty Lord is this whole phenomenon (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.929).

By this he simply means that the "definition" of God does not add any new predicate about Him, but simply substitutes a synonym —like saying a "rug" is a "carpet".

*Parādvaita* neither accepts diversity nor rejects it totally. Though diversity is not an absolute reality, yet it has its roots in such a reality. Abhinavagupta says:

The absolute monism is that principle that neither refutes nor establishes diversity (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.123).

He asserts that no apparent diversity can in any way disturb the absolute unity of the Lord Who shines brilliantly due to the blissful luster of His Pure Consciousness (ibid., I.621).

Adopting the view of supreme non-dualism, Abhinavagupta says that *parādvaita* is that principle wherein monism, dualism, and monodualism appear equally as the manifestations of one and the same divine reality:

The real non-dualism is that philosophical view that sees only one Truth in diverse statements like "This is diversity, this is non-diversity, (that is unity) and, this is both diversity and unity" (ibid., I.626).

According to Abhinavagupta, a yogin who is established in the understanding and experience of supreme non-dualism, sees only one reality shining in all mutually opposite entities like pleasure and pain, bondage and liberation, sentience and insentience, and so on, just as an ordinary person sees both a *ghaṭa* and a *kumbha* as only one thing (a pot) expressed through different words (*Tantrāloka*, 11.19).

Seeing through the lens of supreme monism, Abhinavagupta says that the Lord can appear as anything and everything in the

universe, because He enjoys full independence and is capable of bringing about even the impossible.

The Almighty Lord, is thus, by virtue of His perfect independence, capable of doing the impossible. In what form does He not, the master of all masters, appear? (*Tantrāloka*, I.92)

Elucidating this principle still further, he says that the Lord shines Himself in different ways as (1) uncovered Truth, (2) disguised Truth, and (3) partly hidden truth (*ibid.*, 93).

Laying further emphasis on the absolute theistic nature of monistic reality, he asks:

Who can make the shallow water of a tank overflow the brim? It is (only a spring), full up to the brim, that can send off flowing streams (of water) on all sides (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.245).

Emphasizing the principle of supreme non-dualism, he says that the single absolute Consciousness, being endowed with independent creative power, appears itself in wonderfully varied forms (*ibid.*, I.76). He adds that it is pure Consciousness alone that appears in the form of all different phenomena (*ibid.*, I.86).

Aside from the differences with Advaita Vedānta discussed earlier, Abhinavagupta's principle of *parādvaita* should also not be confused with the *bhedābheda* or *viśiṣṭādvaita* principles of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava schools of southern India for the following reasons:

1. *Parādvaita* maintains an absolutist view in its metaphysics and ontology and this is not popular with Śuddhādvaitins like Vallabha, or with Viśiṣṭādvaitins like Rāmānuja, Śrīkanṭha, etc. Bhedābhedadvādins like Nimbārka and Caitanya, along with the Śivasiddhāntins do not support absolutism either.

2. According to Abhinavagupta, *Paramaśiva* is not some form of personal God living in a superior heavenly abode like *Vaikunṭha*, *Goloka*, *Divya-vṛṇḍāvana*, or *Rudraloka*. All these abodes, along with their divine masters, are simply the playful creations of *Paramaśiva*. As we have already seen, He produces these abodes by means of the reflective manifestaions of His divine powers. By definition these creations have a beginning and an end; only *Paramaśiva* is eternal.

3. The final liberation in the *parādvaita* view is a state of perfect and absolute unity far more profound than even the

highest type of *sāyujya*, or *sālokya*—the forms of liberation known to these other schools.

4. Creation by *Paramaśiva* involves no transformation (*parināma*) either in God or in his creative energy (*Śakti*). It is instead a wonderful transmutation that causes no change whatsoever in the source.

5. The *parādvaita* of Kashmir Śaivism does not accept any kind of *svagatabheda* or interior variety of *Paramaśiva* that impairs his essential unity the way that the Viśiṣṭādvaitins, for example, see this variety in their eternal truth, which they call *Nārāyaṇa*.

The *parādvaita* of Kashmir Śaivism is clearly a logical non-dualism because it sees only one absolute reality in all phenomenal and noumenal entities. It sees perfect unity even in mundane transactions. The mind of a Parādvaitin becomes double-edged. It conducts worldly transactions through its outward edge and remains immersed in the absolute unity through its inward edge. Great royal sages like Janaka and Śrīkrṣṇa are examples of yogins who have been described as established in *parādvaita*.

It might be argued that the pantheism of some Western thinkers resembles the *parādvaita* of Kashmir Śaivism, but this theory falls apart because of the non-absolutist character of pantheism. These Western thinkers do not see the existence of God beyond all phenomena. As we have seen, in the view of Abhinavagupta, all phenomena are merely the outward reflective manifestations of the Absolute. These phenomena rise and fall like waves on the ocean of a perfectly pure, independently playful, and divinely potent Consciousness, the only absolute and eternally existent reality.

This philosophy, which contains so many valuable and important principles, has remained more or less confined to the small valley of Kashmir. It is surprising that it never gained real popularity among great scholars in cities like Varanasi. Only a few scholars from India's plains developed interest in *parādvaita*, but they tended to concentrate their interests on the works of later authors like Kṣemarāja and Bhāskarakanṭha, both of whom present defective versions of the philosophy. This has also been the problem with research in this field during the present century. Most modern scholars have followed these authors of secondary importance, which has resulted in the continuation of various confusions and philosophical loopholes.

Other scholars have started to see some of the important differences between the Vedāntic form of monism and the Śaivite non-dualism. Nevertheless, Vedānta remains the deep-rooted faith of most of them, and this naturally influences their writings. Sanskrit scholars still spend much of their time and energy on the logic of Vyākaraṇa, Nyāya and Vedānta, apparently not drawn to the Self-realization offered through the *sattarka* of Śaivism. Thus Śaivism has yet to find real acceptance in the academic institutions of Sanskrit learning, even in Varanasi, the city of Śiva.

## CHAPTER 2

### Theistic Absolutism and Spiritual Realism

In this chapter we will examine theism and realism, two important principles of Kashmir Śaivism which are central to this philosophy and set it apart from other schools of thought. In India, both of these topics have been vociferously debated and written about for centuries. Some schools argue that creation's form is not real but an illusion, others deny the presence of divinity or a God, and still others try to establish the theory of a personal God living in a divine abode. The ancient authors of Kashmir Śaivism eloquently addressed these various arguments in an attempt to correct what they saw as misconceptions about Absolute Reality.

Theistic absolutism and realism are the basic ontological principles of Kashmir Śaivism. In this philosophy everything that exists is real, and yet is spiritual as well, because everything is the manifestation of an absolute reality, described as pure, eternal, and infinite Consciousness. According to the ancient authors of this philosophy, the essential features of Consciousness are Its infinite, divine, and joyful vitality, and the inclination to manifest Its powers of creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration, and revelation. The vibrant, creative quality is the divine essence of God. Consciousness is also described as luminous. It illuminates Itself and is always aware of Itself and everything within It.

The ancient masters refer in various ways to this One creative force out of which everything emerges. It is known most commonly as the Ultimate, Absolute Reality, Consciousness, *Paramaśiva*, and God. Yet, according to Kashmir Śaivism, *Paramaśiva*, cannot be fully described or clearly thought over because, being infinite in nature, He cannot be confined to any thinking or speaking ability. No words can fully describe Him, no mind can correctly think about Him, and no understanding can perfectly understand Him. This is His absoluteness, and Kashmir

Śaivism considers this absoluteness to be one of His key attributes. Because the Absolute cannot be fathomed with the intellect or through ordinary logical reasoning and philosophical speculation, the ancient masters relied on revelation (*darśana*) in deep yogic states to arrive at their understanding and truths of Reality. Working from the foundation of absolute non-dualism, they discovered *Paramaśiva* within their own consciousness; looking within they found the Whole. They were able to transcend the ordinary limited vision of the individual self, and to discover the universal Self. Since this Self of each individual is claimed to be none other than the Absolute, and because God and the Self are understood as one, this philosophy is truly theistic.

What is this Self, and how did the Śaiva philosophers of Kashmir experience It? They assert that the Self alone has absolute existence. This Self is within every human being, and in recognizing and experiencing It within ourselves, we are actually at one with the divine. What is more, the Self exists within us at all times, whether or not we recognize and experience It. As living beings we are always aware of our own existence, and the experience of existing is always present in us. Further, we never require the help of any aids in feeling our own existence. Even when we are in a state of deep, dreamless sleep in which the senses and the knowing mind and intellect are no longer functioning, the Self continues to experience Itself as a witness to this state. Had the Self not existed as a witness during this time, how could we, upon awaking, recollect the void experienced in deep sleep? Thus the Self is always self-existent, self-evident, and self-conscious, and is Itself Its own proof.

Śaiva philosophers, relying on their experiences of deep revelation (*turyā*) during meditation, assert that the Self is Consciousness, and that Consciousness is actually a kind of stirring. It is not physical or psychic in nature, but is described as a spiritual stir or urge. All living beings feel in themselves this urge in the form of a will to know and to do, and so we are always inclined towards knowing and doing. We can recognize this urge in all forms of life, even in a healthy newborn baby, or in a chick just hatched out of an egg.

Knowing, the first urge, is itself an action, or something we do. The act of doing, the second urge, cannot occur without knowing. Yet neither of them is possible without willing. Willing

is a sort of extroverted stirring of the above mentioned natural and subtle urge of Consciousness (*Śivadr̥ṣṭi*, I.9, 10, 24, 25).\*

This stirring appears as a vibrative volition known in Kashmir Śaivism as *spanda*. It is neither a physical vibration like sound or light, nor mental movement like desire, disgust, or passion. Rather, it is the spiritual stirring of Consciousness whose essential nature is a simultaneous inward and outward vibration. The inward and outward movements of *spanda* shine as subjective and objective awareness of I-ness and this-ness respectively. The inward stirring shines as the subject, the Self, the transcendental experience of the pure "I", while the outward stirring illuminates the object, the other, the immanent "that-ness" and "this-ness" of phenomena. Because of this double-edged nature of *spanda*, the pure Self is experienced in both its transcendental and immanent aspects by yogins immersed in the state of Self-revelation (*turyā*).

Beyond *turyā*, one can experience the state of *Paramaśiva*, known as pure Consciousness (*turyātīta*). *Paramaśiva*, the Ultimate, is that Self illuminated within us by the glowing awareness of Its own pure Consciousness. There It shines as "I", which transcends the concepts of both transcendence and immanence. It is "I" and "I" alone. It is the infinite and absolutely perfect monistic "I", without any sense of "this-ness" at all. Śaivism uses the term *samvit* to describe this pure "I". *Samvit* consists of that superior luminosity of pure Consciousness, which is known as *prakāśa* and as its Self-awareness, known as *vimarśa*. The "I", existing as *samvit* and *saṁvit* alone, is absolutely pure potentiality, and is the real Self of every living being. *Samvit* is not the egoistic "I". The egoistic "I" revolves around four aspects of our being: (1) *deha*, the gross physical body, (2) *buddhi*, the fine mental body, (3) *prāṇa*, the subtler life force, and (4) *śūnya* (the void of dreamless sleep), the most subtle form of finite, individual consciousness.

The essential nature of *saṁvit* is the subtle stir of *spanda*. The introverted and extroverted movements of *spanda* cause *saṁvit* to manifest itself in both the noumenal and phenomenal aspects of creation. These two aspects of *saṁvit* are known in Śaivism as Śiva (transcendent) and Śakti (universal). Śiva and Śakti are the two names given to the monistic Absolute (*Paramaśiva*) when It is being considered in Its dual aspects of eternal and transcendent

\*This discussion is dealing with the triad of knowledge (*jñāna*), action (*kriyā*), and will (*icchā*), the three fundamental powers of Universal Energy.

changelessness (*Śiva*), and the ever-changing and immanent manifestation of universal appearances (*Śakti*).

This theistic absolutism is significantly different from approaches to similar issues in other Indian philosophies. Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, for example, is a theistic philosophy, but it is pluralistic in view, while Kashmir Śaivism posits an absolute non-dualism. Vijñānavāda does not accept the principle of theism at all. Advaita Vedānta accepts the apparent (*prātibhāsika*) existence of *māyā* in addition to the real existence of *Brahman*, thus creating another variety of dualism. Kashmir Śaivism asserts that *māyā* is not separate in any way, but is simply an essential divine power of Absolute *Brahman*.

The Vaiṣṇavas differ from the Kashmir Śaivas in their approach in two significant ways. They postulate a theory of a personal God, living in a divine abode, ruling like a supreme monarch over all heavenly and worldly beings while elevating His devotees to the position of citizens of His divine domain. According to Kashmir Śaivism, such a God is actually just one of many superior deities who rule at various levels (*tattvas*) and are part of the infinite outward manifestation of the Absolute.

Another important difference is the Vaiṣṇavite viewpoint that the universe is the transformation of the divine power of God who is distinct from that divine power and who remains unchanged Himself, whereas the Kashmir Śaivite position maintains that God and His divine power are actually one entity, not two. Śaivas say that *Śiva* and *Śakti* are just two names given to the transcendent and immanent aspects of the monistic Absolute, so that a change or transformation of *Śakti*, as proposed by the Vaiṣṇavites, would automatically mean an identical transformation of *Śiva*. However, Śaivas do not accept that there is any transformation of either *Śiva* (the transcendent) or *Śakti* (the immanent). Rather, they explain that the immanent aspect of Consciousness is an outwardly reflectional manifestation of the inwardly existent divine powers of the transcendent (*Śiva*).

A similar difference occurs with pantheistic schools of the West. While both Śaivas and pantheists see God in each and every phenomenon, Śaivas teach that God is the transcendental reality as well. Pantheists view God as being continually transformed into phenomenal existence, while Śaivism does not accept the notion that God is transformed in any way. Because of its avoidance of absolutism, pantheism is actually more closely aligned with

Vaiṣṇavism than with Śaivism. However, if you could join pantheism and absolutism into one principle, the resulting combination would come closer to the theistic absolutism of Kashmir Śaivism.

As we have shown, this philosophy posits a transcendental Absolute that is theistic in nature. This Absolute is not some separate divine source, but is identical with the Self of every being. Nor is It just some inert, Self-absorbed form of Consciousness. It is vibrant, luminous, Self-aware, and above all, creative.

In order to better understand the spiritual realism of this philosophy, let us now examine the creative aspect of Consciousness and how the Absolute manifests this world. In Kashmir Śaivism, the theory of reflection is used to explain the creation of the universe. The great sages of this tradition explain that all phenomena, including all objective, subjective, and instrumental entities,\* are actually reflections of the divine powers of God, shining inside His spiritually luminous, infinite Consciousness. These sages compare this creative reflecting process to what goes on in a mirror. They argue that God is like a mirror in that reflections shining in Him do not transform Him in any way. A mirror, bearing infinite numbers of reflections, still remains a mirror and does not undergo any change or transformation because of what is reflected therein. God, bearing the whole psycho-physical existence as reflections, is also not involved in any transformation of His essence. He remains pure Consciousness alone while appearing as infinite phenomena. The whole universe exists in the transcendental aspect of God, shining there as infinite, pure, and blissful I-Consciousness. It shines within Him as Him alone, and not as anything other than Him, not even as parts of a whole as Rāmānuja described it. The Universe exists in Him as pure Consciousness alone, just as all milk products are present in milk in the form of milk alone. All that is, shines within Him as "I" alone. In Him there is no trace of "this-ness" or "that-ness". Rather, it is the outward reflections of His divine powers that appear as "this-ness". This is evident in the Sanskrit word for reflection, *pratibimba*. The prefix *prati* denotes something as *pratipa*, of opposite character. As "I-ness" is the basic

\*References is to *pramāṭṛ* (subject), *prameya* (object), and *pramāṇa* (the act and the means of cognition).

character of the divine powers of God, then their reflections do not appear as "I" but as "this".

However, this mirror metaphor is not completely satisfactory as it does not apply in another aspect of this reflection theory. A mirror is unconscious and therefore is unaware of its own existence and of the reflections shining in it. Also, it cannot independently cause various reflections to shine in itself, but depends on outer objects to come within its reflecting range. God, being total consciousness, is at all times both aware of Himself, and of the reflections shining within Him. Being absolutely independent and free, He is able to create infinite reflections on His own, and does not require any external agent to help manifest the reflections. He does not require any help from the so called *prātibhāsika māyā* of the Advaita Vedānta, or the *vāsanā* of the Vijñānavāda school. He bears within Himself the reflections of His own divine powers, and these appear as the *tattvas* from Sadāśiva to Pṛthvī (see chapter 7). These *tattvas* include everything in the world, and all of it is nothing other than the outward reflection of the divine essence of God.

Having explained the reflective process of creation, it is important to clarify that there are stages to creation, and levels of reality to each one. Initially, before the creation process even begins, everything that will exist shines as pure "I" within *Paramaśiva*. This is known as the stage of *Śakti*. At this stage all things are at their finest and purest and are considered by the philosophy to be absolutely real (*paramārtha-sat*).

While all of creation exists in *Paramaśiva*, it does not shine there in its phenomenal form. Rather, it exists there as the divine potency of *Paramaśiva* and shines as pure consciousness of a totally monistic character. Just as a whole plant exists in a seed in the form of the seed alone, so does all creation exist in infinite and omnipotent *samvit* (*Paramaśiva*) in the form of *samvit* alone. A seed is a seed by virtue of its capacity and potentiality to appear in the form of a plant. Thus a plant lies in its seed in the form of the potency of the seed. Similarly, all phenomena lie in *Paramaśiva* in the form of His divine potency. How could a plant sprout out of a seed if all of its parts were not already existent in that seed? In the same way, the whole universe has an eternal existence within the infinite *samvit* of *Paramaśiva* (existing there as His *Śakti*) because

He has the power and potential to appear in the form of all phenomena (*Śivadṛṣṭi*, III.2, 3).

The unmanifested existence of all phenomena starts to appear as real objects at the initial step of phenomenal evolution. As we have explained, this creation is brought about by *Paramaśiva* through His divine essence (lordship) in the manner of a reflection. At that initial stage of manifestation the phenomena shine faintly inside the luster of pure I-consciousness and appear there as a faintly shining "this-ness". This is just like the sprouting state of a seed. Both the seed and the sprout appear there, but both appear as one inseparable whole. That is the state of "unity in diversity" in which all phenomenal existence is a reality and is not some illusion like the well-known example of "the son of a barren woman." This is the stage known as *vidyā*. All objects are still considered real at this stage, but they are considered less refined as they begin to take on physical or mental density.

The stirring of *spanda*, which is also operating at the stage of *vidyā*, next appears outwardly at the third stage known as *māyā*. This is the stage of clear and distinct manifestation of diversity in which I-ness and this-ness shine as two different entities. According to Kashmir Śaivism, phenomena at this level are also real, and in their most dense form.\*

Many schools of philosophy have interpreted the nature of *māyā* in various ways. Kashmir Śaivism maintains that the manifestation of objective existence at the stage of *māyā* is based neither on the imagination of any finite being nor on any flux of mind as conceived by idealistic thinkers of other philosophical schools. It is not a dream based on imagination that functions through our mental apparatus. But the basic objective existence of undiversified this-ness becomes manifest only through the outward stir of the *spanda* of absolute Consciousness, shining first at the stage of *vidyā* and then reflecting outward its inner divine powers at the stage of *māyā*. All this occurs without any kind of mental functioning.\*\*

\*Idealistic philosophies often refer to *māyā* and its evolutes as "illusory". Kashmir Śaivism insists that all things simply evolve from their subtle and absolutely real form as potential or spirit, into the density of the still-real physical level.

\*\*This outward manifestation of the inwardly existent phenomenon is called *kalanā* in Śaivism, while imagination is called *kalpanā*. *Kalpanā* is the result of mental agitation, while *kalanā* is just an objective manifestation of a thing which is already existent within the subject, and by having identity with the subject, shines there in the form of I-ness.

*Paramaśiva*, through His divine will, manifests the play of descent from the stage of *śakti* to those of *vidyā* and *māyā*. In the second part of this play, He manifests an ascension from the stage of *māyā* to those of *vidyā* and *śakti*. He appears to be always descending and ascending in countless forms through these stages of existence. But, because all this play is manifested by Him as a reflection, He does not diverge in the least from His state of changeless Absolute existence shining as pure, infinite, and potent I-consciousness. His divine powers become reflected outwardly as objects that are actually inside the pure luster of His absolute Consciousness.

All existence appears as the manifestation of the stages of *vidyā* and *māyā* along with the infinite variety of subjects and objects shining therein. *Paramaśiva* just wills to appear as finite phenomena and appears like that. For example, He loses Himself by appearing as people unaware of their own divinity. Then when He wills to recognize His real nature, these same people recollect their divine character and absolute identity with God. This is the play of God losing and finding His own treasure.

The whole of creation, all beings, and all means of knowing and doing are nothing but the materialized will of the Absolute. The universe is not the creation of any individual or universal mind because manifestation starts long before the process of any mental functioning. The existence of all phenomena is therefore not idealistic or dreamlike in character. It is absolutely real at the stage of *śakti* where it shines as Absolute subjective consciousness. It is real at the stage of *vidyā* where it appears as the objective form of infinite consciousness. Then it is still real at the stage of *māyā* where it shines in its objective reality. If all this phenomena were not real, it would not have any lasting results, and beings would not find it desirable. What is more, phenomenal existence serves as a common target of the activities of all beings, whereas phenomena existing in dreams, etc., are absolutely individualistic in their character. The universal utility of a phenomenon is the proof of its reality.

Those philosophical thinkers, who propagate idealism and say that the world is unreal like a dream or mental hallucination, are deceiving themselves and others as well. This non-existentialist

viewpoint has had unfortunate side effects in India.\* So long as we live with limitations, in *māyā*, we have to understand that all its multifarious varieties are *real* and act accordingly. These cannot be neglected.

In Śaivism, only certain concepts like "horns of a hare," "son of a barren woman," "flowers in the sky," etc., are considered to be unreal because these things don't actually exist or serve any practical purpose. However, even such things may be accepted as real in poetic imagination where they can be artistically used. In contrast to the above imaginary entities, the manifest universe is considered to be relatively real (*vyāvahārika-satya*) because of its utility. However, the physical universe is not considered to be *paramārtha-sat*, or *absolutely real* (the way it is in the *śakti* stage),\*\* because it is a created reality that will eventually come to an end. At the individual level, we do not have any dealings with physical objects residing outside the luster of our individual consciousness. We can interact with objects only while they shine inside our knowledge, and our knowledge is a manifested form of our consciousness. Objects are a reflection of our knowing power (*jñāna-śakti*), appearing inside the mirror of our understanding sense. Objects shine there in the form of ideas, made up of word-images known as *vikalpa-jñāna*. Ideation, or ideas are formed by us with the help of our mind and understanding, and only these ideas can clearly illuminate an object. Through our ideation arise all the names and forms that provide us with the knowledge of an object. In other words, our conceptual and determinate knowledge is encompassed by the field of ideation alone, and all mundane transactions are conducted with the help of ideation formed by

\*Because so many of India's teachers, thinkers and rulers have been caught up for centuries in this idealistic approach to life, the country has been left open again and again to invasion and destruction at the hands of more practical and powerful foreigners. The total neglect that our leaders have displayed for such political movements has resulted in: (1) frequent invasions by foreign people of fanatic religious beliefs, (2) the destruction of India's most prominent cultural centers and national treasures, (3) centuries of slavery and foreign rule, and (4) the consequent degradation of the Indian people.

\*\*There are three stages of existence: (1) *Śakti* stage, containing Śiva and Śakti *tattvas*, (2) *Vidyā* stage consisting of *Sadāśiva Iṣvara*, *Śuddhavidyā tattva*, and (3) *Māyā* stage containing all the rest of the *tattvas*.

us in accordance with conventional traditions regarding the relation between words and their meanings.\*

Ideation is thus the basis of all definite mundane knowledge. The whole of phenomenal existence shines in the *vikalpa* knowledge. The existence of phenomena outside this knowledge cannot be proved because even if it is inferred to exist outside ideation, such inferential knowledge *itself* consists of ideation.

*Vikalpa-buddhi* or *saṃvṛti* are the two terms used to convey the concept of ideation. The latter term is more popular in Buddhist philosophy. As the existence of all phenomena is based on *saṃvṛti* it is known as *saṃvṛti-satya*, or truth (*satya*) based on mental ideation. This is one kind of truth. The other is known as *paramārtha-satya* or absolute truth. Abhinavagupta asserts the validity of both these forms of truth. About *saṃvṛti* he writes:

*Saṃvṛti* is the name given to mental ideation (accompanied by a word image). The phenomenon can, no doubt, be said to be a reality based on such ideation; it is indeed a reality of a specific kind (and is not falsehood) (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, II.2-3).

Utpaladeva asserts that all phenomena are real both inwardly in pure I-consciousness, and outwardly in the field of *māyā*. About this he says:

All the apparent entities, having consciousness as their basic character, exist eternally only within (infinite) consciousness. At the same time, having an outward manifestation through *māyā*, these entities exist as well in outer phenomenon (*Īśvarapratyabhijñā*, I.viii.7).

All phenomena truly—absolutely and infinitely—exist in pure and absolute Consciousness alone. The existence of phenomenon in *māyā*—in time and space—is due to the process of reflective manifestation (*ābhāsa*). According to Śaivism, all phenomena are simply *ābhāsas*, or manifestations. What is more, as discussed above, ideation is the basis of all our knowledge of the phenomenal world, and as ideation itself appears in the form of all objects, it is itself a sort of manifestation or *ābhāsa*.

The principle of ideation as a manifestation is known as *ābhāsavāda* in Kashmir Śaivism, and could perhaps be rendered by the Western term “phenomenology”. This concept is sometimes

\*Knowledge without ideation is called *nirvikalpa*. *Nirvikalpa* does not clarify either the name or the form of any object.

taken by scholars as a form of idealism, but these scholars have failed to take into account the above-mentioned views of the great authors of Śaivism. Objective entities, though consisting of manifestation and ideation, are in fact real because of their utility, their constant existence in the past, present, and future, and their being the common targets of the knowledge and action of all beings. As Utpaladeva asserts,

Ideas like action, relation, universals, substance, directions (in space), time, etc., do have a real existence due to their continuity and utility and are based on the concept of unity in diversity (ibid., II.ii.1).

All the *tattvas* from *Sadāśiva* to earth are *ābhāsas* and are not to be considered false like "the sons of barren women". They are in fact real according to the pragmatic view of Kashmir Śaivism. Being always existent inside absolute Reality, and shining there in the form of pure I-consciousness, they cannot be considered unreal. Their existence within *Paramaśiva* in the form of His divine potency is their absolute reality. It is only their objective manifestation that is a creation and that has a beginning and an end. But even then this empirical reality, though it is a truth based on mental ideation (*samvṛti-satya*), is nevertheless still a reality according to Abhinavagupta (ibid., II.ii.3).

The absolute reality of all phenomena is considered a spiritual reality as well because all things have eternal existence within the divine potency (*Śakti*) of *Paramaśiva*. Since the stages of *vidyā* and *māyā* are the extroverted reflections of *Śakti*, and since *Śakti* is an absolute reality, all phenomena are to be taken as real by us who also appear in the field of such *ābhāsas*. In summary, even though the universe is manifested in three different levels of reality, it is real at all the three stage of *śakti*, *vidyā*, and *māyā*, and this realism is referred to in Śaiva monism of Kashmir as "spiritual realism".

This realism is quite different from that of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, and from Buddhist realism (Sarvāstivāda). Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, posits a theory in which all matter in the form of atoms is to be accepted as an eternally real substance existing outside the knowing subject, its I-ness, and its understanding. This is a type of gross materialistic realism with which Kashmir Śaivism does not agree. Śaivism insists that even atoms do not exist outside

the light of consciousness and, like other created elements, are just an outward manifestation of the Absolute.

Sāmkhya-Yoga teaches a comparatively subtle form of material realism. *Mūlaprakṛti* or undiversified objective existence, containing the whole universal existence in an unmanifested form, is considered to be an eternally existent reality by this philosophy. It is basically a subtle substance that takes on the forms of all the instrumental and objective elements that constitute the universe. Kashmir Śaivism accepts both the principles of atoms and *mūlaprakṛti*, but does not consider them to be realities existing separately from I-consciousness. Rather, it teaches a theory in which both such entities are said to be merely outward manifestations of the divine power of the Absolute I-consciousness, appearing as *ābhāsas* at different stages of Its Self-extroverted divine play.

The Sautrāntika and Vaibhāṣika schools of Buddhism posit a theory of two independent realities flowing concurrently. These realities are: (1) ever-changing currents of momentary consciousness (*vijñāna*) appearing as mind (*citta*), and (2) currents of momentary matter becoming evident in the light of *vijñāna*. The mind goes on appearing moment by moment in its different states, and matter flows on in the form of momentary material entities. Both of them flow independently and yet go on cooperating with each other. The idealists (Vijñānavādins) refute the theory of the separate existence of mind and matter. According to them, material existence is simply an outward manifestation of ideas caused by past mental impressions which then appear like dreams.

Kashmir Śaivism agrees with Vijñānavādins in refuting *bāhyarthavāda*, the theory that matter has a real existence outside and independent of consciousness. But unlike *vijñānavāda*, it does not hold that material existence is like a dream. As already discussed, Kashmir Śaivism posits a theory called *ābhāsavāda*, the theory of manifestation. Accordingly, all phenomena are seen as *ābhāsas*, or the reflections of the Absolute's divine powers, brought about by Its free and joyfully creative will known as the divine essence. A reflection cannot be said to be nonexistent. It is therefore a reality—not an *absolute* reality (*paramārtha*), but a manifestation (*ābhāsa*) limited by time and space.

The universal reflection is not the reflection of the mental ideas of any being because the universe at its earliest stages of growth is basically the manifestation of the powers of pure I-consciousness, shining at a stage that precedes the manifestation of any mind or mental apparatus. The absolute I-consciousness, being charged with the stir of *spanda*, manifests simple this-ness at the stage of *vidyā*. Then in *māyā*, the next stage of the play of extroversion, this-ness appears as an entity different from I-ness. *Māyā*, being shaken and thus goaded and directed by Lord Anantanātha, the lord of this expands itself into the *tattvas* of limitation (the five *kañcukas*), with which the infinite I-consciousness is reduced to utter finitude. This I-consciousness then appears as the *puruṣa* of the Sāṃkhya philosophy and his limited objective element of "this-ness" starts to shine in the form of *prakṛti*, the cosmic energy. That energy, being shaken and thus goaded and directed by Lord Śrikanṭhanātha (see chapter 4), undergoes change (*parināma*) and becomes transformed into the instrumental and objective *tattvas*, including mind. Nothing in this process is created and nothing is destroyed. Everything becomes manifested through an evolutionary transformation of the basic insentient *tattva* called *mūlaprakṛti*, and everything becomes dissolved into it again through a devolutionary transformation.

In the above description of manifestation, the Sāṃkhya philosophy enters with the appearance of *puruṣa*, that system's highest *tattva*. The final stages of this manifestation include the principles of Sāṃkhya realism that have been accepted in Kashmir Śaivism with the following clarifications: (1) *mūlaprakṛti* is directed and driven to this two faceted transformation by Śrikanṭhanātha; (2) both *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, the two *tattvas* of creation, are manifested in this form by Lord Anantanātha; (3) the basic creation of "this-ness" is the objective manifestation of the divine creative power of the absolute I-consciousness (*Śakti*), in the process of its extroverted play.

Objective existence is thus a reality at all levels from pure *Śakti* to the most gross objective phenomena in the universe. The same phenomena that appear objectively in the universe are already existent in pure and absolute Consciousness in the form of its divine spiritual power called *Śakti*. This spiritual realism is a hallmark of the non-dualistic Śaivism of Kashmir. It can be considered pantheistic in outlook because a perfect Śiva yogin

sees God and God alone in each and every phenomena. But, as we have shown, Kashmir Śaivism is also considerably different from the pantheism of the West. First, the Śiva yogin sees God as that absolute Consciousness that transcends all phenomenal existence, while pantheists do not agree with this principle of absolutism. Second, the Śiva yogin does not accept the concept of any transformation of God into phenomena, understanding the process to be a mere reflective manifestation of His divine powers, while pantheists believe that God actually becomes the phenomenal universe and is to be realized as such. Vaiṣṇava pantheists believe in a personal God who lives in a divine abode, but Śaiva monists assert that such a God is only a deity created by *Paramaśiva*.

As we have shown, Śaiva monism proclaims that God is actually one absolute I-consciousness, which contains all of creation in the form of His divine essence or Lordship. This creation is real and all of it is infused with that one Consciousness. These theories of realism and theism may not be entirely compatible with modern Western philosophy, and the methods for establishing them may not be familiar to the Western reader. Nevertheless, for many centuries these points have been well documented and tested by Śaiva yogins who experience revelations of the truth (*darśana*) during the practice of yoga.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Four States of Prāṇa

In Indian philosophy the life functions such as breathing are known as *prāṇa*, or life-force. Entities who possess *prāṇa* are known as *prāṇins*, or living beings, and substances that lack this power are considered to be inanimate.

However, certain entities, which are basically inanimate in character, appear to be animate while conducting the functions of life for the living beings who identify them as being part of themselves. For example, we tend to think of our physical body, along with its various limbs, organs, and senses as being animated. According to Indian philosophy, our body is actually an inanimate entity, a material substance that has the power of animation extended to it by our I-consciousness. We make the mistake of thinking of our bodies as being conscious and part of our own living self. Actually, it is our I-consciousness, the animate being within, who conducts all the functions of life and uses these inanimate parts of the body as Its instruments of action in the world. Being used and pervaded by our life-force, these inanimate substances merely behave and appear to be animate.

*Prāṇa* is that subtle life-force that interacts most closely with consciousness and is the means by which consciousness conducts its activities of knowing and doing in all levels of animate beings. This subtle life-force functions in all seven types of beings from *sakala*, a worldly or heavenly soul bound in all the three types of bondage, to *akala*, the pure being absolutely free from all bondages (see chapter 4 for a discussion of these levels of beings). *Prāṇa* appears in five aspects, known in Śaiva monism as: exhalation (*prāṇa*), inhalation (*apāna*), equalized breath (*samāna*), rising *kundalini* (*udāna*), and the vibrantly shining Subject (*vyāna*).

These five *prāṇas* appear in four different states of consciousness known as: (1) *jāgrat*, the waking state, (2) *svapna*, the dreaming state, (3) *susupti*, the deep sleeping state, and (4) *turyā*, the state of Self-revelation. The manifestation of these four states of *prāṇa* rises and falls within infinite Consciousness, the source of all the functions of *prāṇa*. This Consciousness, though generally not counted among the four states of *prāṇa*, is sometimes considered to be the fifth state, known as (5) *turyātīta*. Pure Consciousness is understood to transcend even the *turyā* state.

There has been some confusion among philosophers about the distinction between *turyā* and *turyātīta*. The *turyā* state of *prāṇa* should be referred to as the "Self-revealing" state of *prāṇa*, but is very often mistakenly described as "transcendental" *prāṇa*. Only *turyātīta* should be called "transcendental", because the word *atīta* means a reality that transcends something. Since *turyātīta* transcends even *turyā*, the fourth state of *prāṇa*, only this highest state of Consciousness should be considered transcendental. To call *turyātīta* a pure state is not sufficient because purity is the nature of *turyās*\* as well.

In the first state of *prāṇa*, known as the waking state (*jāgrat*), our bodies and senses are physically active and primarily focussed on interacting with the exterior environment. To put it another way, we use our body with its various organs, senses and breath as instruments for the assimilation and elimination of objects available in the world around us. While awake, we take in and eliminate food. We assimilate sounds through our ears and emit sounds through our mouths. This exchange process actually goes on with all the organs and senses, including the inner systems of the body. In Āgamic philosophy, the eliminating function is called *prāṇa* and the assimilating one is called *apāna*. Since these two functions of *prāṇa* are constantly operating in the activity of breathing, the out-going breath is known as *prāṇa* and the incoming breath is called *apāna*.

In Kashmir Śaivism these terms do not just refer to exhalation and inhalation but also describe a broad range of concepts. All elimination of interior or exterior objects is considered to be *prāṇa* and all assimilation is thought of as *apāna*. The process of assimilating or gathering one's thoughts into speech is thus

\*Āṇava, māyiya, and kārma malas. See chapter 5.

*apāna*, while the process of speaking is a form of elimination or diffusion, called *prāṇa*. The mind taking hold of an idea is *apāna*, while letting go of the idea is *prāṇa*. Therefore, these two functions of *prāṇa* work through both our physical and mental organs.

It should be clear from the above discussion that the term *prāṇa* has two levels of meaning. As first introduced it is used to mean subtle life-force—the essence that keeps our bodies alive. More specifically, *prāṇa* is used to refer to the out-going breath or the out-going aspect of the mind, body, and senses.

The inner states of *prāṇa*—dreaming (*svapna*), sleeping (*susupti*), and Self-revelation (*turyā*)—can also be present during the waking state. For example, we may have a sudden flash of Self-realization (*turyā*) while experiencing some powerful emotion during waking existence. However, for most people this amounts to a transitory peak experience, and our waking existence, with its orientation fixed primarily on the external world, remains dominant. We may get temporarily lost in day dreams and other internal states, but these come and go while our waking existence remains constant. While in the waking state we are usually not satisfied by merely thinking about objects like food and drink. We are satisfied only when we actually eat, drink, and taste physical objects.

In summary, the process of assimilation and elimination, working through the instruments of our physical and mental organs, and interacting with the world around us, is called *jāgrat*, the waking state. The outer material world, in which all beings interact and work, is known as waking existence. This is the most externalized form of existence, while *jāgrat* is the most externalized state of *prāṇa*. Throughout our lives we exist in and interact with reality while in the waking state.

The second state of *prāṇa* is known as the dreaming state (*svapna*). In this state interaction with the exterior environment becomes more subtle. Obviously we continue to breathe and the mental functions of objective elimination and assimilation continue in the dream state as well. However, this process goes on without any cooperation from our exterior senses or the organs of action (*karmendriyas*). For this reason Śaivism considers all states like deep thought, imagination, fancy, meditation (*dhyāna*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*), and (*saṃādhi*) with thoughts (*savikalpa samādhi*) as

forms of dreaming (*svapna*) that may arise during our waking hours. In other words, the dreaming state is not limited to those hours when we are actual lying down and sleeping.

Even though we live through our dreaming existence solely with the help of our interior senses and organs, because of a kind of delusion based on deep impressions of our activities in the waking state, we experience our dreams as if we were conducting these purely mental activities through our exterior senses and organs. This incorrect impression is a result of our mind, but while dreaming we are not able to understand it this way. We imagine that we are awake and living through these dream experiences in our gross physical body. Activities like thinking and imagining, which we ordinarily associate with the waking state, are considered by Śaivism to be conducted solely by the interior senses and organs as part of the dreaming state of *prāna*.

It is interesting that when we experience these activities in dreams, we are momentarily satisfied even though the objects of assimilation and elimination are only imaginary. This does not happen during the waking state. Due to this aspect of the dream process, people experience pleasure, pain, wonder, satisfaction, and so on, as a result of just dreaming about various activities. Yogins can also attain higher spiritual states through a form of conscious "dreaming," because techniques of concentration like *dhyāna* are very similar to dreams in a waking state. The practice of *sākta upāya*, which results in an exalted type of Self-realization, is also a practice in a form of conscious dreaming. All this illustrates how powerful dreaming can be even in the waking existence.

According to Indian philosophy there is another aspect of the dream state that is independent of human beings and that explains the existence of spirits who function solely through their subtle bodies. These living beings conduct both the activities of elimination and assimilation by simply thinking about them. All the abodes of forefathers, gods, supergods, and so on, are believed to belong to this dream existence. Unlike our human dream world, the existence of the living beings in this independent dream state is neither short-lived nor individual in character. This dream existence is created by the superior and highly powerful ideation of some super god like Brahmā, who consists of universal consciousness, and who directs, guides, controls, and

pervades all the individuals of that existence from within. A god's age is millions of times longer than the age of a human being's phenomenal gross existence. The lives of beings residing in these dream-worlds are so long that they appear immortal to humans. Our waking existence is physical and gross in its character while the dream existence of gods is mental and subtle in character. Yet these dream-worlds constantly serve as a common phenomenal reality to the beings living in them.

In contrast to our physical existence, this dream existence is ideal. We offer oblations, sacrifices, prayers, praise, and devotional respect to the beings of this ideal existence. They in turn get satisfaction merely from the idea of having been offered such faithfully delivered oblations. This is the secret behind all religious activities like *śrāddha* (post-funeral rites to the departed soul) and *homa* (fire-oblation).

Having been created by super gods (*rudras*), these dream-worlds actually serve as real abodes to beings living in them. Though their existence also comes to an end during the dissolutions conducted from time to time by these gods, in comparison to waking existence, Indian theology considers these dream-worlds to be immortal in character.

Our bodies, senses, and organs are gross in character, but these same instruments of the functions of *prāṇa* are essentially subtle and mental in beings who inhabit the dream-worlds. Our gross bodies are called *sthūla-śarīras*, while these dream-world beings work with the help of *linga-śarīras*, or subtle bodies. *Prāṇa* functions through both of these bodies, which become coalesced through the mind. By contrast, beings in the independent dream worlds do not have gross bodies, though for various purposes and occasions they are capable of assuming any bodily form. Because of this capability, ordinary people sometimes experience visions of these dream-world bodies.

Many practices in the religions of the world lead aspirants into various forms of a subtle dream-like existence where they can experience liberation from worldly miseries and attain the pleasures they desire. The beings living in these independent dream-worlds are vastly more capable than we are of attaining enjoyment (*bhoga*) and liberation (*mokṣa*). But because even they are bound by the law of restriction known as *niyati*, the

attainment of this dream existence is not considered the most desirable goal of life.

The third state of *prāṇa* is called *susupti*, the state of deep sleep or relaxation. Traditionally it is often compared to dreamless sleep. This is a state of perfect rest. All apparent functions of *prāṇa* and *apāṇa* stop in this state as the instrumental elements (see Glossary) cease the elimination and assimilation of physical and mental objects. Individual I-consciousness shines in the void of deep sleep as the only existent entity, freed from all passions, desires, pleasures, pain, hunger, thirst, etc. While this state brings about a temporary relief from misery, all the impressions of unhappiness remain in an inactive and unmanifested state. In the terminology of modern psychology, these miseries are pushed into the *subconscious* mind of a person.

Another aspect of this state of deep relaxation is that the activities of elimination and assimilation are reduced equally to one tranquil, individual consciousness of the Self. The particular *prāṇa* that arises in deep relaxation is called *samāna*, which expresses the equality of *prāṇa* and *apāṇa*. *Samāna* is the unified state of these two functions into which they become absorbed and out of which they emerge, over and over again. It is thus equally the resting point of both *prāṇa* and *apāṇa*. Being free from all mutually opposite phenomena like pleasure, pain, liking, aversion, and so on, *susupti* is a state of perfect peace and rest because it is free from all mental and physical turbulence. *Samādhi*, or meditation, is a superior and perfected variety of *susupti*. The rest experienced in meditation increases the powers of both *prāṇa* and *apāṇa* by allowing fresh energy to enter all the systems of one's body. While practising a form of yoga that leads to this state, one may experience amazing increases in both physical and mental capacities as well as a diminishing of psychophysical fatigue and mental tension. Because of these features of yoga, the Transcendental Meditation Movement founded by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi recently became popular with people who were suffering from tension and fatigue. Since this function of *prāṇa* increases the energies of one's body and mind, it is called *samāna* because it results in *samunnayana*, or augmentation in the energy of living beings.

States that result in swooning and senselessness are considered to be different types of deep sleep (*susupti*). While deep sleep is

very often simply the result of fatigue, various forms of it may also be caused by illness or the use of drugs. The blissful nature of all types of deep sleep is considered to be negative in character because it is only a temporary relief from life's turmoil.

In some cases, a more subtle form of bliss can be experienced by yogins who have learned to stop the functions of their mind, senses, and certain organs. In this form of deep sleep an intuitive realization of pure consciousness is experienced, though it remains finite in character.

According to Śaivism, the yoga system of Patañjali leads to this kind of meditative state and is considered highest type of *samādhi*. Śaiva philosophers assert that this practice does not result in the realization of universal consciousness but only in a finite form of Self-consciousness. Practitioners of Patañjali's yoga may experience relief from worldly misery, but they do not realize the potency of their divine essence. It is because of these limitations that Patañjali defines *Īvara*, or God, as just an ever-pure and ever-liberated soul who has been the preceptor of ancient yoga teachers like Kapila. Also, in Patañjali's *Yogaśūtra*, God is not thought of as the creator or maintainer of the universe, because this practice of deep sleep (*susupti*) cannot lead to the realization of divinity in this way.

According to Kashmir Śaivism there are two types of deep sleep. In one, *savedya susupti*, a person will experience some faint objective feelings of heaviness or lightness, etc. In the other, *apavedya susupti*, there is no objective feeling at all. The states of *apavarga* and *kaivalya*, as described in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya-Yoga schools respectively, are examples of two types of *savedya susupti*. The states of *nirvāṇa* as described by the Vijnānavāda and Śūnyavāda schools, respectively, are two types of *apavedya susupti*.

Each of these four states of *prāṇa* (waking, sleeping, deep sleep, and Self-realization) can be analyzed and more finely ordered into several substates. Śaivism has defined at least four varieties of each of the four main states of *prāṇa*. *Apavarga* and *kaivalya*, described by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya-Yoga schools along with two states of *nirvāṇa*, worked out in the Vijnānavāda and Śūnyavāda schools of Buddhism, are examples of the four substates of deep sleep. The schools of thought mentioned above consider these states to be perfect liberation

(*mukti*), the highest goal of life. But Kashmir Śaivism does not consider these states to be liberation. Beings who rest in all these types of *susupti* are *pralayākalas* in whom *samāna* is the active breath. They remain asleep for a whole aeon, which is equal to an age of phenomenal existence (this refers to a *kalpa*, approximately several billion years). At the close of this age, all phenomenal elements become absorbed by stages into pure cosmic energy (*mūla-prakṛti*). This is the stage of dissolution that is intermediate between two cycles of creation (*avāntara pralaya*). This dissolution stage lasts as long as the age of phenomenal existence. At the end of the age of dissolution, the cosmic energy is shaken up by Lord Śrikanṭha Śiva, and a fresh creation of the instrumental and objective elements (the *tattvas* of the Sāṃkhya philosophy) starts over again. *Pralayākalas* remain in a state of deep sleep until the beginning of this fresh creation, at which point they wake up. Lord Śrikanṭha bestows his grace on some of the *pralayākalas* by pulling them up above *māyā* in the plane of pure *vidyā* where they proceed gradually towards final liberation. The others proceed through the various courses of births and deaths in transmigratory existence according to the state of *karman* they had attained before reaching *pralayākala*-hood.

Śaivism warns its practitioners about getting caught in this sleeping state because it can cause a delay of nearly two aeons in one's spiritual evolution—this delay being caused by the huge span of time covered in the current creation and the dissolution following it. Even the states of dreaming and waking are preferable to this sleeping state. At least in these lower states one may sometimes get a chance to rise through deep sleep (*susupti*) into self-revelation (*turyā*) and beyond. But a person caught in deep sleep has to wait for ages to get another chance in the next creation.

The *turyā* state is considered to be entirely pure. In *turyā* one experiences an intuitive realization of the true nature of the Self, and so it has been called the state of Self-revelation. It is also analyzed into four substates or steps. Beings at its lowest step are known as *vijñānākalas*. They experience their true Self as nothing but pure and effulgent consciousness, free from all misery. However, they do not realize their divine potency.

According to Śaivism, this lowest step of *turyā* is the highest attainment of the practices of Advaita Vedānta. Because of the

limitations of this level, Advaitins cannot see the divine creative power inherent in absolute Consciousness. They remain at this level of *turyā* for ages until by the grace of some superior being they are elevated to a higher level of Self-realization.

At the second, higher stage of Self-realization, beings see themselves as omniscient, omnipotent, pure, and infinite consciousness, but experience objective existence as different from themselves. This substate of *turyā* is known as the state of *mantra* beings. *Vidyēśvara* is another name given to *mantra* beings because they possess *vidyā*, the correct knowledge of the Self. This is the state attained by the *dvaita* Śaivites of the Amardaka School.

The third and fourth steps of *turyā* are the states obtained by *mantriśvaras* and *mantra-maheśvaras* respectively. They are purer beings because they see all objective existence as their own self. Their Self-awareness shines as "this is myself" and as "I am this" respectively. A sense of this-ness shines more prominently in *mantriśvaras*, while I-ness shines predominantly in *mantra-maheśvaras*. The third stage of *turyā* corresponds to the *mokṣa* of the *dvaitādvaita* Śaivites of Śrināth, and that of the fourth corresponds to *advaita* Śaivism of Tryambaka.

The *prāṇic* capacity that reveals the Self in all four types of pure beings in *turyā* is called *udāna*. It leads practitioners higher and higher towards perfect Self-realization while objective manifestation becomes increasingly refined in them. *Udāna* has been described metaphorically as a spiritual fire that burns the dirt of mental images (*vikalpas*) and leads to ideation-free (*nirvikalpa*) realization of the Self.\*

All four types of beings in this Self-revealing state, from *vijñānākala*s to *mantra-maheśvaras*, are free from ideation. These beings experience both their sense of "I-ness" and "this-ness" through a subtle, luminous Self-awareness that lies completely beyond any mental ideation. This is because they are situated in a plane that transcends all mental and physical existence.

The highest point in *turyā* is reached by beings called *akalas*. An *akala* sees only his divine, pure, and potent Self, and that alone. He is aware of only "I-ness", which is infinite, perfect, pure, omniscient, and omnipotent in character. *Akala* beings are

\* *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*, III, 2.20.

therefore called Śivas. Their Consciousness contains everything in itself, or to put it another way, everything lies within them in the form of pure Consciousness. Because of the purity of realization reached by *akalas*, the authors of Śaivism used the term *vyāna* to describe the fifth function of *prāṇa*. *Vyāna* is all pervading pure Consciousness, the effulgent luster of limitless subject. It is the purest type of consciousness which shines in those beings, pure *akalas*, who see I-ness alone.

Although we have been describing subtle beings who reside at levels transcending ordinary mental and physical existence, these hierarchical levels of existence are also considered to be potential states for human beings who have a powerful commitment to spiritual growth.

The four states of *prāṇa* (*jāgrat*, *svapna*, *susupti* and *turyā*), which function in the range of beings from *sakala* to *akala*, rise and fall in the transcendental, absolute, infinite, and pure Consciousness called *turyātīta*, the truth that transcends even the Self-revealing state of *prāṇa* (*turyā*). As has already been said, this transcendental truth (*turyātīta*) should not be counted as one of the states of *prāṇa* because all these states belong to it, emanate out of it, and get absorbed back into it. It is the final truth of everything thought over or talked about. It is not a state, but the ultimate Reality that shines in each of the four states, from *turyā* to *jāgrat*.

## CHAPTER 4

### Life—Its Nature and Seven Levels of Beings

What is life? This is a question that has been troubling people all over the world for as long as we have records of human thought, and doubtless long before that. This problem has been approached in many different ways. Some thinkers have taken growth and reproduction to be the basic signs of life. Others have included hunger, thirst, the states of sleeping and waking, and the feelings of pleasure, pain, wonder, disgust, etc., as basic signs of life. The activities of objective knowing and doing have been singled out as life's essential signs by some thinkers, and others claim that consciousness alone is its true essence. Let us look at each in turn.

Growth and reproduction are, no doubt, signs of living organisms in this physical existence, because the living bodies of animals and plants grow and reproduce. However, growth by itself is not a sufficient criteria because scientists have shown that lifeless matter can also grow (think about crystals, for instance). Even a living body should not be taken to be animate simply because it grows or reproduces. As discussed in chapter 3, the body is animate because of something else, which for the time being is related to it. Had life been the body's own essence, then the physical form would never die. Life should be thought of instead as a force that enables the body to grow and to reproduce. Growth and reproduction are simply examples of the effects of life's presence in an organism and should not be considered the essential nature of life itself.

There are difficulties with the other suggested definitions of life as well. Hunger and thirst, and the functions of one's interior senses like pleasure and pain, are experienced in the waking and dreaming states only. Life continues in deep dreamless sleep even though these functions cease entirely. Therefore these qualities also cannot be considered the essential signs or definitions of life.

The same problem exists when we consider the activities of objective knowing and doing. These functions also vanish in a state of deep sleep. We continue to be alive in deep sleep even when we are doing nothing and our awareness of objects has vanished. Therefore, ordinary knowing and doing cannot be taken as the essential features of life.

There is, however, an interesting point about knowing that needs to be clarified. Obviously, some element of knowing must exist even in a state of dreamless sleep, because when we wake up, we retain various impressions of the absolute nonexistence of any objective element in that state. Had we not experienced such nonexistence, we could not recollect it upon awaking. It is because of this experience of a void, and its impressions on us, that we can afterwards recollect that we did not perceive anything objective in deep sleep.

What is happening in this situation? According to Kashmir Śaivism, when we are in deep sleep we experience the existence of our own subtle Self\* freed from all objective knowing and doing. This Self, which we experience while in deep sleep, is not the physical body, nor the mental apparatus, nor any senses or organs, nor the forces of gross animation, nor even the understanding capacity. It is the simple and pure sense of I-consciousness that transcends all the above-mentioned gross and subtle elements.

The sages of Kashmir Śaivism made themselves masters of understanding this I-consciousness. They repeatedly experienced and examined its essence while in deep states of meditation, and then described it in their philosophical writings. Through the centuries these sages have arrived at the same point of understanding: we are luminous consciousness. We can say the basic nature of consciousness is luminous, because it shines and makes itself apparent without the help of any inner or outer means of knowledge. This "I" is, therefore, Self-luminous. What is more, anything that ever appears to us in our experience does so through the grace of this inner luminosity, and this luminosity is always conscious of its own existence. Consciousness pervades all the three states of sleeping, dreaming, and waking. Life devoid of

\*We will differentiate this Self from the regular concept of individual, personal self or ego, by use of capital "S" for the transcendent "Self."

consciousness has never been experienced in any of these states. So, what is the essence of life? It is nothing but consciousness.

Having focused on the essence of life, let us now look at various aspects of consciousness. In Kashmir Śaivism, consciousness is described as a kind of stirring that is always Self-evident. This being Self-evident denotes a subtle kind of knowing. It is a subjective knowing as opposed to the objective knowing mentioned above. Consciousness can also be described as an activity because it is experienced by yogins as a kind of stir (*spanda*). It is also an activity because it becomes evident and aware of itself and this quality of being apparent and aware can be denoted by a verb.

The basic Self-consciousness of a living being is a kind of inward-directed knowing and doing. Knowing is itself a subtle activity which involves an element of luminosity. Doing, on the other hand, cannot exist without the element of knowing. Put differently, if there is no doing, how can there be knowing; if there is no knowing, how can there be doing? So knowing and doing can be accepted as the two essential aspects of consciousness. Both these aspects of consciousness exist inseparably in it. Therefore this subtle subjective knowing and doing can be taken as two essential signs of all life.

All living beings have the capacity to know and to do. It is their basic nature to always be inclined to know and to do. Knowing one's transcendental Self in the dreamless state constitutes an activity in this sense. In deep sleep the main life function is the activity of subjective knowing. In the dreaming state, some objective knowing and doing is present as well, and the life-force functions through the interior senses and organs which, in this inner state, are exclusively mental in character. By contrast, the senses and *manas*, the knowing mind, are not functioning at all in an absolutely dreamless state. That is to say that mind, though aware of its existence, does not know anything else during the dreamless state. Therefore the life-force, or *prāṇa*, must reside in some entity which transcends even the mind (*manas*) and other interior senses. As we have shown, Śaivism describes this entity as the pure consciousness of the transcendental Self of a living being. It is referred to as individual Self-consciousness because it is not aware of its universal aspect. The functions of *prāṇa*, which are focused at a very subtle level of subjective knowing and doing in the deep sleep (*susupti*) state, expand increasingly outwards in

the dreaming and waking states. The life-force extends itself through the mental body in the dreaming state (*svapna*), creating dream images and a false sense of reality. In the waking state (*jāgrat*), these life functions spread to the physical body, and its various senses and organs become directed outwards to interact with the real world. In these two exterior states objective knowing and objective doing predominate, while in the fully interior dreamless state both these activities of life are solely subjective in nature. In short, all life is consciousness. Knowing and doing are the two mutually inseparable aspects of consciousness that form the essence of all life at all stages of existence.

As we discussed in chapter 3, human beings are basically the creatures of the waking state (*jāgrat*), though we have occasional experiences of the other states of life as well. According to the principles of Indian philosophy, there is a hierarchy of types of existence where superior forms of life, or spiritual beings, are manifested. For example, the dreaming existence (*svapna*), where gross matter does not exist, is considered vastly superior to our physical existence. Beings who belong to that existence work and function in a manner that precisely resembles our dreaming experiences. They are engaged in a subtle mental form of doing and knowing. They experience pleasure and pain, and have all the same types of emotions and instincts that we have, but they are free from the limitations of a physical body. Like us, they are subject to passions of all sorts and continuously seek fulfilment. They also experience thirst and hunger, but of course do not require any actual water or food. All aspects of their bodies are absolutely subtle and consequently free from the usual demands of physical existence. Their ability to achieve both sensual and spiritual goals is far superior to mortals on the physical plane. These beings are not as susceptible to death and disease, and appear immortal next to us. But, as we have seen, they also eventually face dissolution and transmigration. The different types of heavens, as conceived in various sects of Hinduism as well as in other religions of the world, can be understood as different regions or different worlds of this dream existence. Beings residing in these heavens are what we commonly know as gods, demigods, supergods, etc.

The deep sleep state (*susupti*) is of a still more superior existence. It transcends even the subtle existence of heavenly worlds. Life in

this realm consists of a calm and luminous consciousness whose only limitation is a sense of subtle ego or individuality. Beings in this realm do not have objective experiences, nor are they conscious of any emotions, instincts, or passions. They rest in the calmness of the void of pure space while experiencing a type of absolute tranquillity. The only function of their life is to be constantly aware of this calm individual Self-consciousness that is only limited by a mild sense of ego. At the mortal level, those who have attained liberation as taught by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya and Buddhism are examples of beings in the deep sleep state (*suṣupti*).

Sometimes, when people experience an intense emotion, they forget their individual ego and temporarily merge into universal Self-consciousness. At times like this, people experience a powerful sense of unity with everything in their environment, become free of all worries and cares, and are temporarily immersed in the blissfulness of the inner Self. This is sometimes referred to as a "peak experience" in the West. In Indian philosophy it is known as the state of intuitive revelation (*turiya*). This is the fourth state of life. While the sleeping state transcends all physical and mental existence, the state of revelation (*turiya*) allows a person to experience a blissful state of unity with the infinite diversity of all creation. The bliss experienced in this state is positive in nature, and is not simply that absence of all pleasure and pain experienced while in deep sleep. During revelation one feels infused with the blissful glow of one's own pure consciousness. But this state is often so short-lived that we are unable to examine and understand what has happened to us. It often leaves only a faint impression in our being, and even the memory of it may eventually fade away. However, practice in yoga, devotion, and various other spiritual activities can help to increase the duration of the experience of this state of Self-revelation.

A superior type of existence belongs to this fourth state. Beings who exist in this state enjoy the constant bliss of their pure and Self-luminous consciousness. The most highly evolved beings in this fourth kind of existence have already merged the whole objective universe into their individual subjective consciousness, and have also merged their individual Self-consciousness into that infinite and universal consciousness, out of which everything emanates and into which everything gets absorbed. As a result,

they enjoy a state of unbounded, eternal, blissful, and absolute monistic unity that pulsates continuously with pure consciousness. The spiritual pulsation of this infinite and pure consciousness is known as its divine essence. It alone is the basic cause of the creation and dissolution of the four types of existence discussed above. It alone is the source of all the divine activities of creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration, and revelation. This infinite consciousness is called God because of its infinite capacity and eternal propensity towards these five divine activities.

There are many spiritual practices taught by saints, seers, sufis, *siddhas*, devotees, etc., which can lead to different levels of the above-mentioned fourth state of existence. As a result, ordinary people who are unusually adept and devoted in their practice can experience the divine powers of their real Self and their absolute unity with eternal consciousness. Such people are perhaps rare, but it should be kept in mind that the superior type of existence that arises in the state of Self-revelation is not restricted to non-worldly beings.

Having established that the essence of life is consciousness, whose aspects are subjective knowing and doing, we may now ask another related question: From where did life emerge? This is another question that has always puzzled the world's great thinkers. Scientists say that life is a special quality and function of certain material substances, and is brought about by specific changes in the material conditions and circumstances of these substances. To date, scientists have not been able to explain these conditions fully, and have not said anything definitive about how life emerges in material substances. How could consciousness evolve out of matter?

According to the monistic Śaivism of Kashmir, the reverse is true—matter evolves out of Consciousness. Absolute Consciousness, divinely omnipotent and essentially playful and vibrant in nature, manifests Itself both as lifeless phenomena and as life at all the different levels of existence. This is one of the basic principles and metaphysical truths of this school of philosophy.

As already discussed, life is consciousness. It has two aspects: luminosity (*prakāśa*) and Self-awareness (*vimarśa*). This Consciousness is absolutely powerful and is the one source of everything in the universe. All of creation lies within Consciousness in the form of divine potency. According to Śaivism, this Consciousness is

essentially playful and so hides its powers in various ways. In so doing, it appears in the form of an infinite variety of living beings with different abilities to understand and control their lives. *Jada* is the term given to insentient objects, in which knowing and doing, the two main aspects of sentience, do not get manifested at all. Otherwise, as Abhinavagupta has pointed out, there is nothing that is basically different from absolute Consciousness (*Tantrāloka*, I.332). A perfect Śiva yogin sees everything in the universe and beyond as only one absolute, divinely potent and perfectly pure Consciousness.

(Various dualities may appear in the use of words like "sentient" and "insentient" as these are traditionally needed and used for worldly transactions, but this does not alter the above non-dualistic vision of a true Śiva yogin. These dualistic linguistic traditions have been formulated by ordinary people living in the field of *māyā* and working under the influence of worldly limitations (*kañcukas*). The views on the origin and the real nature of life discussed above are based on the yogic realizations of highly evolved ancient masters of Śaiva yoga. These truths can be realized and verified at any time by any one who undertakes with real devotion and discipline the study and practice of this philosophy.)

We will now examine the seven categories of living beings explained in Kashmir Śaivism. As an introduction, it is important to understand various terms and concepts used in this aspect of the philosophy. Phenomenal existence is constituted by the triangular arrangement of *pramāṭṛ*, the subject who is capable of knowing, *prameya*, the object that is known, and *pramāṇa*, the process of knowing. Knowing, being itself an activity, includes the element of doing as well. All of creation is made up of *pramāṭṛ*, *prameya*, and *pramāṇa*. This trinity lies within absolute Consciousness, called *Paramaśiva*, and is manifested outwardly by Him through the extroverted play of His divine essence.

The subjective element (*pramāṭṛ*) has been classified in Śaivism into seven main categories. Although these categories are mentioned in the Āgamas of southern India, they have been discussed philosophically in Kashmir Śaivism alone.

God Himself creates the first five *tattvas* from Śiva to *vidyā*. Having created the first two, Śiva *tattva* and Śakti *tattva*, He appears in these *tattvas* in the forms of śāmbhava and śākta beings

respectively. These beings never lose awareness of their infinite and pure I-consciousness, and are always one with their infinite and divine potency as well. The aspects of Śivahood and Śaktihood shine predominantly in these two types of beings. But since Śivahood and Śaktihood are just two aspects of one truth, and share the same perfect I-consciousness, they are included in the same category of beings known as *akalas*. (The term *akala* can be understood as follows: *kalā* is the name given to the primary evolute of *māyā*. Since both *sāmbhava* and *sākta* beings always remain free from *kalā* and all its evolutes, they are called *akalas*, or beings free from *kalā*.) *Akalas* are perfectly pure beings, aware only of their subjective self, which is infinite, pure, and divinely potent I-consciousness. They have no awareness of any form of object (*prameya*) or process of knowing (*pramāṇa*). Because they are the beings living in this state of perfect unity, they are popularly known as *Sivas*.

God, manifesting objective existence within the luminous purity of His infinite consciousness, also creates the last three of the five *tattvas* belonging to the plane of *vidyā*. These are known as *Sadāśiva tattva*, *Īśvara tattva* and pure *Vidyā tattva*. The beings living in these three *tattvas* have different experiences of reality. Beings created by Him in *Sadāśiva tattva* see the faintly shining objective element of "this-ness" within their infinite subjective I-ness and become aware of themselves as "I am this" (*aham idam*). Beings at this level are known as *mantra-maheśvaras*. The element of this-ness starts to shine more prominently in the beings in *Īśvara tattva*, and they become aware of themselves as "this is my Self" (*idam aham*). These beings are also considered pure and are called *mantrēśvaras*. The concept of unity in diversity, which these two categories of beings experience, is known as *śuddhavidyā*. This term describes that pure luminosity of their consciousness, which serves them as their instrumental element (their body, senses, mind, and organs).

*Māyā* is the only "impure" *tattva* created by *Paramaśiva* Himself. It serves as an *āvaraṇa*, that is, a veil to conceal the real qualities (purity, unity, divinity, potency, etc.) of I-consciousness. The Lord spreads a very subtle covering made of *māyā* over the pure beings living at the lowest level of the plane of *vidyā*, thereby creating the fourth category of beings known as *mantras*. They are aware of their pure, infinite and divinely potent I-

consciousness, but having come under this thin cover of *māyā*, they see objects (the element of this-ness) as different from themselves. The element of this-ness is the *Māyā tattva* out of which the whole diverse ("impure") aspect of existence is created by the Lord when he descends to this level in the form of *Anantanātha*. *Anantanātha* is the master of *māyā* and the deity worshiped by *mantra* beings, working under his administration. This lower stage of the *vidyā* plane is known as *mahāmāyā*, the abode of *mantra* beings. Since these beings are not confused about the nature of their true Self, they are considered to be masters of the correct knowledge of the Self. Because of this they are also called *Vidyēśvaras*, counted among *pati* beings.

All four categories of living beings mentioned above—*Śivas* or *akalas*; *mantra-maheśvaras*; *mantriśvaras*; and *mantras*, or *vidyēśvaras*—are included in the category of pure creation. This category is created by God Himself, without his delegating power to any of His incarnations like Lord *Sadāśiva*, *Īśvara*, or *Anantanātha*. In *vidyēśvara* beings, limitation (*māyā*) appears merely as a viewpoint of diversity which causes them not to see the element of this-ness as identical with their true Self. This is the thinnest veil of *māyā* known as *māyiya-mala*. But, as has been said above, *vidyēśvaras* are considered to be part of pure creation because they do not descend to transmigratory existence.

These four types of beings all exist in the awareness of their purity, their infinity, and above all, their divine potency. Some of them, following the will of Lord *Paramaśiva*, assume positions of authority in the administration of divine activity. Some live for aeons in the plane of pure *vidyā*, continually enjoying the blissfulness of their pure and potent existence until they reach a state of perfect satisfaction. Finally, they are able to shed the thin cover of individuality and see themselves as none other than *Paramaśiva*, thereby expanding themselves and becoming one with the Absolute Lord. *Mantra-maheśvaras* generally remain merged in their experience of blissful purity and potency, to a great extent, and so do *mantriśvaras*. *Mantras*, being aware of diversity, are usually involved in divine administration, conducting the activities of creation, etc., according to the will of *Paramaśiva*. *Mantras*, acting out of graciousness, also help worldly beings along the path leading to liberation. According to Śaivism, five divine beings named *Īśāna*, *Tatpuruṣa*, *Sadyojāta*, *Vāmadeva*, and

Aghora, who imparted the Śaiva Āgamas to saints (*siddhas*) in this world, are examples of beings who belong to this *mantra* category.

The five divine activities of the Lord are more effectively conducted by the deities of a still lower level; for instance, by Śrīkaṇṭhanātha and Umāpatinātha, who are the incarnations of Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka descended to the plane of *prakṛti*.

*Māyā*, which only causes a mild loss of unity consciousness in *vidyeśvara* beings, grows to its full limiting potential in all the remaining *tattvas*, which are the impure creations of Anantanātha (see *tattvas* in Glossary). At the level of *māyā* creation, limitation takes the form of *āṇava-mala* ("the impurity of individuation") which hides the infinite nature of beings in *māyā* and reduces them to the position of *anu*s or beings having extreme finitude as their essential character. *Āṇava-mala* is that impurity that makes beings think of themselves as limited in nature. Instead of seeing themselves as absolute Consciousness, they identify themselves with the small individuated self, or subtle ego.

There are two types of *āṇava-mala*. The first type occurs when God, appearing as an ordinary person (*anu*), conceals His nature of pure consciousness and becomes identified with basically insentient substances like the body and the mind. According to Kashmir Śaivism there are four of these substances:

1. The physical body, made of material substances, helps us conduct mundane activities.
2. The mental body, consisting of the subtle organs, the senses, and the mind with its predominant element of *buddhi* (the understanding capacity). These allow us to have various mental experiences of pleasure, pain, etc., as well as definite ideas about the world around us.
3. The life-force that allows us to feel hunger, thirst, slumber, wakefulness, etc.
4. The finite I-consciousness, known as the void state (*śūnya*), which allows us to continue functioning in the sleeping state.

The second type of *āṇava-mala* goes beyond misidentification of the Self with some insentient substance, to the experience of having one's actions and knowledge limited. In this form of *āṇava-mala*, we feel that we are only capable of knowing and doing a certain finite amount. As a result, we lose our natural state of omniscience and omnipotence.

The more subtle *māyiya* impurity, which causes people to focus on diversity rather than unity, grows into its full-fledged form in the plane of *māyā*. Consequently beings there can only see the separation between: (1) a subject and an object, (2) one subject and another subject, and (3) one object and another object. What is more, these beings, deprived by *māyā* of their perfect Self-sufficiency, imagine themselves to be imperfect and deficient. The resultant lack of confidence causes them to continuously attempt to compensate for their shortcomings with a constant passion for external objects and events known in Śaivism as *lolika*. *Lolika* continuously wells up within people who are restricted by feelings of Self-limitation (the *āṇava* impurity). The resulting distractions and misunderstandings keep such people bound to limited forms of ordinary knowledge and action, and they do not realize their own true potential.

In the state of *māyiya-mala*, the deeds committed by a person are always either good or bad according to the law of *niyati* that governs the ordinary person. The impressions of such deeds constantly drive people from one life to another in the endless cycle of transmigration. They are driven by the hope that their acts will accomplish what they most desire. But according to Kashmir Śaivism, all actions are performed by the Lord Himself. To put it another way, at every level of existence His all-pervading divine will controls and drives everyone from within. But, because He has created an egotistic belief in everyone, we imagine that we ourselves are acting and knowing.

These egocentric feelings about our actions and the above mentioned residual impression of past actions (*karma-saṃskāras*) are known as *kārma-mala*, the impurity of *karman*. This impurity makes people responsible for the deeds they commit, and that responsibility drives them endlessly through the cycles of transmigratory existence. This egocentric concern with our actions (*kārma-mala*) is thus the cause of everyone's greatest miseries. It is based on dualistic vision (*māyiya-mala*), and also results from both types of *āṇava-mala*—a mistaken identity with the ego, body, etc., and a generalized sense of finitude and limitation.

*Āṇava* is actually the root cause of all our miseries because it is the basic reason that we think of ourselves as limited, and this sense of limitation is the main cause for staying bound in mortal

existence. It should be noted here that *mantra* beings are not subject to these feelings of limitation (*ānava-mala*). Even though they are subject to subtle experiences of diversity (*māyīya-mala*), they are included in the category of pure and liberated beings.

According to this philosophy, all finite beings, from amoebas to heavenly gods, suffer from *māyīya-mala*, both types of *ānava-mala*, and *karma-mala*. They are known as *sakala* beings and are considered to be bound souls caught in transmigratory existence. *Sakala* beings exist in the plane that has evolved out of a sense of limited creative power or authorship (*kalā*), and are bound by all its evolutes. These beings reside in their physical bodies in the waking state, and in their mental bodies while in dreaming existences.

Beings residing in deep sleep (*susupti*) are known as *pralayākalas* because they remain free from *kalā* and its evolutes up to the end of the aeon of the next *pralaya*. A *pralaya* marks the dissolution of all mental and physical entities back into cosmic energy, known in Śaivism as *mūla-prakṛti*. When Lord Śrīkaṇṭhanātha proposes a fresh creation of mental and physical *tattvas*, he shakes up the cosmic energy, disturbing the equilibrium of *guṇas*. This awakens all the *pralayākalas* from their long deep sleep, and propels them again into transmigration according to the status of their karmic deeds before they had attained *pralayākala*-hood. Some of them, having a sufficient amount of yoga practice to their credit from their previous life, are graced by Śrīkaṇṭhanātha and allowed to evolve into higher realms.

*Pralayākalas* are thus also bound beings. They, along with *sakalas*, are considered to be limited beings belonging to the impure existence of *māyā*. *Pralayākalas* are bound by both types of self-limitation (*ānava-mala*). They are also affected by egocentric concerns and the weight of past actions (*karma-mala*), but it remains suspended and will not affect them as long as they remain in deep sleep (*susupti*). Similarly, they are affected by dualistic vision (*māyīya-mala*) only when they come back to waking existence. Otherwise, the *pralayākala*'s freedom from *māyīya* impurity is proved by their vision being free of any diversity.

From the Śaivite point of view, practitioners of Buddhism can attain *pralayākala*-hood in the state of *apavedya-susupti*, or deep

sleep, which is free from all objective experiences. Successful practitioners of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika can also attain the *pralayākala* state, as can most of the followers of Sāṃkhya-Yoga systems. Some of these practitioners, who remain vigilantly aware of their own being as pure Consciousness, attain the state of the next higher level of beings known as *vijñānākalas*. All people in this state feel themselves to be pure and infinite Consciousness, free from all mental and physical limitations. However, they do not appreciate an awareness of their divine potency. They experience themselves as absolutely inactive pure Consciousness and so do not recognize their inner divine essence. Because they do not realize the divine stirring of *spanda* as their own true nature, they suffer from the second type of self-limitation (*āṇava-mala*).

Most practitioners of Advaita Vedānta attain the state of *vijñānākalas* and after death continue to exist there until the next fresh creation emerges out of cosmic energy. At the time of this fresh creation, Lord Śrīkaṇṭhanātha causes some of them to descend into transmigratory existence to conduct the divine activity of grace (*anugraha*) on the bound *sakalas*. But most of them are graciously pulled up by the Lord and are admitted to the plane of pure *vidyā*. But those Vedāntins who experience themselves as *cidānandalaharī* (the surge of the blissfulness of Consciousness), do not enter into the state of *vijñānākalas*, but move up quickly to the higher states of pure *vidyā*. *Vijñānākalas* exist at a level between pure and impure beings. They are considered to be bound beings as long as they do not move out of *māyā*.

People who have evolved to the point of seeing all objective phenomenon as one with themselves are considered to be masters (*patis*). These beings dwell in the state that is often described as "unity in diversity." People who view objects as different from themselves and who are bound by *kleśas*, *karmans*, etc., are metaphorically called *paśus*, meaning bound cattle. *Akalas*, *mantra-maheśvaras*, and *mantreśvaras* are definitely *patis*. *Mantras*, though seeing objective existence as different from themselves, are also included among *patis*, because they are free from *karman*, and *kleśas*, etc. *Sakalas* are definitely *paśus* and so are *pralayākalas*, because they are bound by *paśas*, or chains of *māyā*. *Vijñānākalas* are those *paśus* who are waiting for admission to *pati*-hood.

Each of the seven categories of living beings mentioned above can be further analyzed into many sub-varieties. For instance, *sakala* beings have been classified into fourteen varieties: eight types of gods, five types of lower animals, and one type of human being (*Spandakārikā*, 53). It should also be noted that certain ancient masters, who wrote about Kashmir Śaivism, placed *akala* beings in two separate groups, *śāmbhavas* and *śāktas*, and thus brought the number of beings to eight instead of the seven we have described here.

In summary, infinite Consciousness is the original source of all life, which according to the principles of Kashmir Śaivism, manifests as seven main types of living beings. These universal truths have been discovered and transmitted through the direct intuitional experiences of great Śiva yogins like Somānanda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta.

## CHAPTER 5

### Four Types of Speech

Bhartṛhari, the originator of the philosophy of Sanskrit grammar, says in his *Vākyapadīya*: "The eternally existent *Brahman*, being the changeless essence of speech, appears in the form of the phenomenal substance out of which the process of universal existence proceeds" (*Vākyapadīya*, I.1).

How does word or speech become mind and matter? Over the centuries since Bhartṛhari, many grammarians have tried to elucidate the principle of *śabdabrahman* as divinely potent *Brahman*, the One who speaks and creates the Universe. Some scholars said that *Brahman* uttered the word *bhū*, meaning "earth," and the earth actually came into existence. They also quoted various scriptural passages like "having uttered 'earth', he created the earth" (*bhur ity īktvā bhuvam asyat*) in an attempt to explain creation. But none of these writers has presented a convincing, logical or psychologically sound explanation for the principle concerned, and *śabdabrahman* has remained a mystery to the successors of Bhartṛhari.

However, the authors of Kashmir Śaivism, especially Somānanda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta, have explained in detail the concept of *śabdabrahman*. Their ability to understand and convey this spiritual concept was due to their practice and mastery of Śaiva yoga. This practice awakened in them a deep intuitive understanding that allowed them to experience directly the essence and truth of this particular principle and of spiritual philosophy in general. In this chapter we will present a summary of their views regarding *śabdabrahman* and a discussion of the four categories of speech as set forth in their philosophy.

Speech is not only the means to convey one's ideas to others; it is also a way to understand things personally. When we choose to convey ideas to others we generally use spoken language, known as *vaikhāṇī*, or its written version. The Sanskrit word *vikhara* refers

to the hard, gross form of a being, which serves as the abode for *vaikhārī*. Thus *vaikhārī* is gross speech.

A finer form of speech that serves as the medium for thinking and understanding, through which a person forms definite and indefinite ideas about words and their meanings, is *madhyamā* mental speech. A word, its meaning, and the undifferentiated idea of both, are always closely combined in our understanding. We never form any idea without mixing it with some word-image, known as *abhilāpa*, which shines within our consciousness as the essence of the idea. Such word-images penetrate and pervade both definite and indefinite ideas, and are in fact the essence of our ideas. This term *madhyamā* means both interior and in-between. It is considered interior speech because it has the subtle body (*puryaṣṭaka*) as its abode. *Madhyamā* is considered in-between because its abode lies between the fields of *vaikhārī* (gross physical body) and *paśyantī* (the inner form of a being consisting of pure Consciousness).

As we have said, *madhyamā* speech contains a word-image, a word meaning, and a unified idea of both shining together within Consciousness. There is also a mutual diversity of these three elements in *madhyamā*, though they are not as distinctly separate as in *vaikhārī*. If we carefully contemplate our thought process we can become aware that our ideas, our word-images, and the objects understandable through these words and images, are actually three different elements having a close mutual relationship. It is because of this that Vyāsa differentiates these three elements of speech by saying, *gaur iti śabdah, gaurityarthah, gaur iti jñānam*, (*Yogabhāṣya*, 1.42) or "the word 'cow,' the object as a cow, and the idea of a cow." All three elements of *madhyamā* shine simultaneously inside the faculty of a person's understanding, but they shine there as three different elements, bound together by a sort of mutual inseparability. In this case, inseparability does not mean unity. Rather, it is a constant relationship inside the field of diversity.

The ancient authors of Kashmir Śaivism have further clarified the principles of speech in the following way. Awareness is, in reality, the basic essence of all speech. We think of and talk about only those things of which we are already aware. Then, when we choose to make others aware of these things, we speak about them. Awareness, or *vimarśa*, is thus the basic source of all

speech, while the activities of thinking, understanding, speaking, and writing are just the outward manifestations of awareness. It should also be noted that the closely related act of listening is actually aimed at forming further awareness.

*Madhyamā* is thus an internal reflectional manifestation of awareness taking the form of ideas. It is also an outward-directed activity because it shines as something other than the thinking subject (*pramātr̄*). As previously mentioned, *vaikhārī* is the reflection of awareness in a still grosser form of outwardness. When *vaikhārī* spreads out in the form of sound, it develops in the listener a type of awareness similar to that which exists in the mind of the speaker. In this way, the whole process of *madhyamā* and *vaikhārī* revolves around awareness, or *vimarśa*.

There is a still finer level of speech known as *paśyantī*, which resides in the innermost part of our being and is far subtler in character than *madhyamā*. *Paśyantī* is known as the "beholding speech" because through its medium enlightened people can behold all objective existence within themselves. Since *paśyantī* is found within the pure being of a person, beyond mind and everything mental, the tendency to make distinctions among words, word-meanings, and the idea of both, has little or no effect in this form of speech. In other words, *paśyantī* shines in a state that transcends all types of ideation, or *vikalpa*, because ideas are formed by the mind. *Paśyantī* beholds objective existence in its undiversified form of simple "this-ness" (*idantā*), but in the process does not form any idea, or *vikalpa* about it. *Paśyantī* shines within as a pure Self-awareness and appears as "I am this" (*aham idam*), where the aspect of this-ness is very faint. This is known as the stage of partial unity. Since all the three elements of mental speech shine in *paśyantī* in an undiversified form, and since both the beholding subject (*aham*), and the beheld object (*idam*), are present in *paśyantī*, clearly there exists an awareness of more than one element. Therefore, this form of speech is said to belong to a stage of partial diversity as well.

Whereas *vaikhārī* and *madhyamā* consist of sounds and ideas that clearly fall into the concept of speech, one might wonder why the word "speech" is used in connection with *paśyantī*, which is conducted by awareness alone. Being the medium of revelation of the finer essence of all existence, *paśyantī* is still considered to be a form of speech (*vāc*), because speech is broadly defined in

the philosophy as a medium of non-perceptual and non-inferential revelation. Even the most subtle form of awareness may eventually express itself through speech. Also, *paśyantī* is conceived of as speech because, even in its unspoken form, it is still a subtle form of self-expression of the beholder.

Words, images of words, and ideas shine in a definite order in both *vaikhāri* and *madhyamā* forms of speech. But no successiveness of any kind appears in *paśyantī*. At this level, speech is therefore defined as *akramā* or *samḥṛ̥tra-kramā*, that is, speech in which the order of successiveness becomes totally dissolved. It has further been defined as *svarūpa-jyotiḥ*, the self-luminosity of the beholding subject.

There are several ways to experience the *paśyantī* state. An attentive and sensitive person can have a momentary glimpse of it during some powerful emotional experience involving anger, joy, wonder, bewilderment, etc. But usually these episodes, sometimes known as peak experiences, are so short-lived, and most people's minds are so sluggish, that no real introspection or understanding of what has happened is possible. An extremely attentive person can experience the *paśyantī* state in between the arising of two ideas. Pure I-consciousness will be experienced as shining in this gap as the essential connecting link of the two ideas. A clear realization of *paśyantī* can be experienced through the practice of Śaiva yoga. When, through the practices of meditation, one's mind becomes free from all ideas and even the activity of thinking, it becomes one with the luminosity of the pure consciousness of the Self. The resulting state of Self-awareness of unity in diversity (*paśyantī*) becomes apparent through its own luminosity, provided the practitioners do not lose themselves in dreamless sleep. A Śiva yogin also experiences *paśyantī* in the presence of that kind of pure perception, known as *nirvikalpa-saṃvedana*, which arises before mental ideation. An advanced Śiva yogin can easily realize and relish *paśyantī* on all such occasions.

In summary, *paśyantī* is that Self-awareness in which both I-ness and this-ness shine simultaneously. They are knit together by a relation known in the philosophy as "unity in diversity." "I am this" (*aham idam*) is the form of this Self-awareness. Since it beholds this-ness, it is called *paśyantī*, the beholding Self-awareness.

There is another type of awareness beyond *paśyantī* known as *parāvāc*, the supreme speech, which does not behold any thisness, but shines beholding nothing but itself. It shines as the luminous revelation of just one thing—the pure subjective I-consciousness transcending all physical and mental means of knowledge. The pure awareness of the Self shines in *parāvāc* as the infinite, eternal, all-containing, perfect, pure, and divinely potent subject "I". It is not a subject in relation to any object, but only an absolute and independent subject. To put it another way, the experience of being this subject does not depend on any form of relationship with an object. However, it is within the perfectly independent power of infinite consciousness to manifest objects at will. But, unless this process of creation begins, no object at all appears in *parāvāc*, the supreme speech. It shines only as I-ness (*aham*), and never as this-ness (*idam*). All objective existence remains merged within this I-consciousness, just the way all the elements of a plant lie merged in its seed.

Again one might wonder how something so subtle could be considered speech. It must be remembered that awareness is the essence of all speech and that speech is a means of revelation. Since the pure luster of this I-consciousness is actually infinite awareness, and since it reveals to us the correct and true nature of our real Self, *parāvāc* is included as the most subtle form of speech. This is the supreme and transcendental speech consisting of pure awareness of the real Self. This infinite Self-awareness, enlightening the supreme truth is considered to be *parāvāṇī*, the supreme speech. Utpaladeva writes about it in the following way:

Self awareness is the very soul of consciousness. It is spontaneously arising supreme speech (*vāc*) and is that Self-dependence of the Absolute God, which is known as His supreme Lordship. It is a kind of vibrative activity, and is the supreme basic existence, unconditioned by time, space, etc. Being the real essence of the supreme Lord, it is said to be His heart. It is by virtue of this self-awareness that He manifests Himself as objective existence (*Īśvarapratyabhijñā*, I.5.13-15).

This all-inclusive, pure and infinite consciousness, being the source of the manifestation of all phenomena, is also known as absolute *Brahman*. The word *Brahman* is derived from the root *vb̄hi-vṛddhau*, meaning evolution or expansion. Since this Self-awareness evolves into all phenomena as if it were a reflection, it is called *Brahman*, the reality that evolves in this manner.

Abhinavagupta, in his *vivarana* or *Parātriśikā*\* explains this as follows:

*Brahman* is that infinite and all-prevading reality that has evolved (into phenomenal existence). This is not the same as the *Brahman* of that form of Vedānta which is similar to *śūnyavāda* (*Parātriśikāvivarana*, 221).

As we have seen, awareness is an illumination that serves as the source of all speech. And in turn, speech (*vāc*) consists of words that are called *śabdas*. This is the evolution of pure, subtle awareness into the gross, physical form of words. If we reverse the process and move from the gross level to the subtle, the word *śabda* becomes refined to include the concept of *vāc*, which ultimately means divinely potent, pure, infinite, and Self-aware Consciousness. It is in this context that Bhartṛhari called the supreme *Brahman*, *śabdabrahman*.

Another way to approach the relationship between the creative process and speech is through an example from our worldly lives. Let us follow the creative process of an artist from the grossest to the finest levels. An artist's creation can be likened to *vaikhāṇ* (gross speech). Here creation is in a tangible form with which we can interact. However, an artist first forms the image of the creation mentally before producing it externally. At this stage the artist's creation shines within him in the form of *madhyamā*. Before even this mental formation of the creative idea, there exists a subtle creative urge deep within the artist's center, something that he may feel like a vague flutter, stir, or restlessness. At this even finer stage of *paśyantī* the work of art, along with all its essential elements, revolves in an unmanifested and undiversified state within this inner restlessness of the artist. Finally, at the most subtle level, the original seed of the artistic creation, including all three stages (*paśyantī*, *madhyamā*, and *vaikhāṇ*) of its outward manifestation, actually lies in the innermost center of the artist's being. The whole artistic work lies in the form of this creative power within the artist. The artist is aware of having this power, and awareness of this inner creative energy is the actual work of art in seed form, shining in the stage of *parāvāc*, the supreme speech.

\*The work is currently known as *Parātriśikā*, because of the mistakes committed by early editors. However Abhinavagupta presents the title of the work as *Parātriśikā*.

*Brahman*, the almighty God, is the greatest artist, and all of creation—the whole of phenomenal existence—is His divine art. It lies within Him in an unmanifested form. Creation shines there in its noumenal aspect consisting of pure and divinely potent infinite I-consciousness. The Absolute Reality is fully aware of the divine power or potency lying within it. This awareness of creative energy is *parāvāc*, the basic source of the unlimited blissfulness of the Absolute.

As this process unfolds, the surges of blissful awareness take the form of *paśyantī*. At this stage the Absolute Reality becomes activity inclined to manifest Its divine powers outwardly, and simultaneously the manifested elements start to shine faintly in an undiversified form. This restless inclination of Self-awareness is the basic *paśyantīvāc*. The appearance of undiversified manifestation becomes clear and distinct at the next outward step of *paśyantī*. These are the *Sadāśiva* and the *Īśvara* stages respectively. The still further outward vibratory activity of *paśyantī* gives rise to definite images of creation in the *madhyamā* type of awareness. These *madhyamā* images are followed by their actual outward creation, known as the *vaikhāṇī* state of awareness. In this way, the original essence of the whole creation, initially shining as divinely potent and pure Self-awareness, becomes manifested through various types of speech, and by stages takes up the different forms of phenomenal existence.

According to the ancient masters of Kashmir Śaivism, this process is the concept that the grammarian Bhartṛhari meant to convey. This philosopher's careful use of words is a clue to his intentions on the topic. For instance, because all phenomena are manifested in the same way that a reflection appears in a mirror, pure I-consciousness does not actually become transformed into phenomenal existence. Therefore, Bhartṛhari used the word *vivartate* ("appears," "manifests") so that he would not have his approach confused with the Sāṃkhya theory of *parināmavāda*, which posits that original Nature (*mūlaprakṛti*) substantially becomes the material world. His point is that phenomena, which are lying hidden (*samvṛta*) in Brahman, are made manifest (*vivṛta*) in the form of the universe.

Bhartṛhari did not use the term *vivartate* in the sense in which it was used later on by the authors of Advaita Vedānta. Therefore it is likely that he did not mean to preach the doctrine that the

world is illusory (*vivartavāda*), but was attempting to establish a theistic absolutism (see chapter 2), like that expressed by the authors of the Āgamas and Upaniṣads.

The principal authors of Kashmir Śaivism accepted the basic views of Bhartṛhari, but went on to raise objection to the later grammarians' interpretation of Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadiya* on two points, the first of which asserts that *paśyantī* is itself *parā*. Both Somānanda and Utpaladeva criticized and refuted this assertion. They argued that an awareness that beholds something cannot be taken as *parā*, the absolute transcendental speech. As we have seen, *parā* by definition is only aware of "I-ness" and so cannot behold something or "this-ness". What is more, the word *paśyantī* is derived from a root signifying an action (of seeing) denoted by a transitive verb. Therefore it must hold a position below that of *parāvāni*, the transcendental and absolute monistic reality known as *Brahman* in which there is no object or "this-ness" possible.

The second objection they raised concerns the previously mentioned theory of *vivarta*. *Vivarta*, as developed later in Advaita Vedānta, has two possible connotations. First, it refers to the appearance of something that does not really exist, but appears real because of our faulty understanding or ignorance. A mirage is an example of this form. Second, our faulty understanding or ignorance causes us to superimpose an illusory form onto a real object. Imagining a rope to be a snake is a classical example of this form of *vivarta*. Applying this on a grander scale, Advaita Vedāntins claim that the phenomenal universe does not really exist, but like a mirage, only appears to be real.

The authors of Kashmir Śaivism do not agree with this theory of the Vedāntins, and have raised many objections to it. They use logical arguments as well as intuitive yogic revelations in the course of describing their vision of the truth. They state that this wonderfully complex and utilitarian universe cannot possibly have ignorance or *avidyā* as its source, because *avidyā* is a substanceless supposition while universal phenomena clearly have substance, have utility, and are real. Drawing from their experiences in deep states of yogic practice, these writers assert that all phenomena do actually exist in *Brahman*, or I-consciousness. They insist that all phenomena are externally manifested by the divine and playful stir of Absolute Consciousness,

which throbs in the form of *paśyanti* and vibrates throughout all of creation in the field of *madhyamā* and *vaikhari*. Thus they emphasize the theistic nature of absolute reality and take its basic nature of playfulness as the cause of the appearance of all creation. These authors support the principle of theistic absolutism, not *vivarta*. In their view, Bharṭṛhari was saying that *Brahman* manifests outwardly the phenomena that exist within Him in an unmanifest state. The *samvṛta* or inwardly hidden, universal substance is brought by Him to the *vivṛta*, or clearly manifest state. This theistic and monistic absolutism, and not the *vivartavāda* of the followers of Śaṅkarācārya, is thus the fundamental philosophic principle of Bharṭṛhari according to the ancient authors of Kashmir Śaivism. They take exception with the grammarian commentators on the *Vākyapadīya*, who, they claim, missed this point because they were influenced by the more commonly accepted *vivarta* theory of Advaita Vedānta.

## CHAPTER 6

### The Spanda Principle

The *spanda* principle (*spanda-siddhānta*) is one of the most important principles of Kashmir Śaivism and its development by Śaiva philosophers is a valuable contribution to Indian philosophy. While the term *spanda* has already been introduced, the present chapter will be devoted to a detailed discussion of it.

The earliest mention of *spanda* in Śaivite literature occurs in about the second century BC in the *Paraśambhumahimnastava* of Durvāsas, the sage who is traditionally considered to be the originator of the teachings of Śaiva monism. The word *spanda* occurs in this hymn in two verses of the sixth section. In one verse it is praised as being that divine quality of God that allows Him to keep all mental and physical phenomena moving in their respective courses (*Paraśambhumahimnastava*, VI.4). Another verse says that a yogin reaches liberation only after having realized his true identity as one with that superior *spanda* that keeps the whole universe in cosmic movement (*ibid.*, VI.5). These early verses would appear to be the precursors of the later philosophical views on *spanda* expressed by Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa in his *Spandakārikā* (6, 7, and 11).

The essence of the *spanda* principle was developed by Vasugupta during the early part of the ninth century in the *Śivasūtra*, a scriptural work said to have been revealed to him by Lord Śiva in a dream (*Spandavṛtti*, p. 40). Vasugupta imparted the knowledge of the theoretical and practical aspects of *spanda* to his disciple, Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa, who then went on to develop the principle in his *Spandakārikā* in the middle of the same century. Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa also wrote a brief commentary on this work. The philosophical idea denoted by the term *spanda* was further discussed by Somānanda in his *Śivadṛṣṭi* and by Utpaladeva in his *vṛtti* (a brief commentary on *Śivadṛṣṭi*) and in his *Īśvarapratyabhijñā*. However, neither sage actually used the word *spanda*. Instead,

they use related words like *sphurattā* and *prasara* to convey the same idea.

In the later part of the tenth century, Abhinavagupta explained *spanda*, its philosophical significance, its essence, and its details in several works like *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, *Parātriśikāvivaraṇa*, *Tantrāloka*, *Tantrasāra*, and *Mālinīvijayavārttika*. Other commentaries on the *Spandakārikā* were written by Rāmakanṭha, a younger contemporary of Bhaṭṭa Kallata, and by Utpalavaiṣṇava in the early tenth century. Kṣemarāja wrote a commentary on *Spandakārikā* in the eleventh century, as well as a small work entitled *Spandasandoha*, which explains the philosophical idea denoted by the term *spanda*.

The exact significance of *spanda*, and its etymological derivation, have been discussed at length by Abhinavagupta in his *vimarśinī*, or commentary, on Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñā*. He also discusses *spanda* in his *vivaraṇa*, or commentary, on the scriptural text *Parātriśikā*. In this chapter we will present a detailed explanation of these discussions on *spanda* in the light of the cosmogonic views Abhinavagupta expressed in his philosophical works.\*

Writers in English most often use the word "vibration" to denote *spanda*. Indeed, *spanda* is a kind of vibration, but it is significantly different from the nature of vibration as taught in physics. Scientists describe the vibrations of physical phenomena like sound, light, and heat as movement constantly pulsating outward through space. But *spanda* is the double-edged movement of pure Consciousness proceeding outwardly and inwardly at the same time. This "inward" and "outward" movement does not refer to particular positions in space. Identity with "I-ness," or Self, defines the inward movement, while identity with "this-ness," or objectivity (and non identity with the Self) defines the meaning of outwardness. Even though *spanda* has no physical movement in space, its essence pervades and controls matter and

\*The *spanda* principle is the very soul of the ontological views of the *Pratyabhijñāśāstra*. Abhinavagupta quotes profusely from *Spandakārikā* in his *Viśvavimarśinī* and also in his *Tantrāloka*. Two couplets of the *kārikās* are quoted in *Śivadṛṣṭivṛtti* as well. Therefore *pratyabhijñā* and *spanda* are actually two sections of one and the same scripture (*śāstra*). It is unfortunate that today's scholars still define them as two separate schools of thought simply because the pioneer research scholar, J.C. Chatterjee, mistakenly referred to them this way in the beginning of his research on the subject. As a result, modern scholars who write about Kashmir Śaivism tend to compound these mistakes.

its motion at all levels. Similarly, even though *spanda* has no mental vibration as defined by psychology, it is still the basic source of this more overt form of vibration.

The word *spanda* is derived from the Sanskrit root  $\sqrt{spadi}$ -*kiñciccalane*. *Spadi* means to throb, and *kiñciccalane* means to move just a little. If *spanda* means *calana* or movement, why add *kiñcit* (a little) to it? If it is really movement, it should be accepted as such. The epithet *kiñcit* becomes purposeless because even a little movement is a movement and denotes change in position. Therefore, littleness cannot change the basic character of *calana*. On the other hand, if it is not a movement, then the size of *calana*, be it little or great, will have no bearing on *spanda* and why include the *calana* element at all?

Raising these objections to the usual etymological explanation of the word, which is solely derived from the direct use of the root *spadi* in its strict literal sense (*abhidhā*), Abhinavagupta provides another explanation of the term *spanda* derived from the indirect use of *spadi* in its secondary sense (*lakṣaṇā*). He makes the following points:

(1) Absolute Consciousness does not in any way move or diverge from its infinite and pure essence, nor does it ever undergo any change in its basic character. Even so, although it is changeless, there is a subtle spiritual stir within pure Consciousness which means it is not absolutely static like pure space. (2) Its character is both static and dynamic. Its changelessness is its static aspect. The inner spiritual stir that moves is its dynamic aspect, and this is *spanda*. (3) Basically, it is the stir of pure awareness through which absolute Consciousness is always aware of Itself and Its divine nature. Consciousness is *prakāśa* and its Self-awareness is *vimarśa*. (4) The essential character of this stir of pure *vimarśa* is infinite bliss. (5) The stirring of this blissful Self-awareness (*vimarśa*) causes absolute Consciousness to be playful in nature, and always vitally active and engaged in the outward manifestation of Its five divine powers resulting in creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition. (6) Consciousness vibrates out its divine powers and all the elements of phenomenal existence in the form of a reflection (see chapter 2). (7) The psychic light of pure Consciousness illuminates these divine powers and all of creation, and reflects them outward through its own independent, playful, and divine will. In this way,

the five divine powers and all the outward manifestations of creation are the result of *spanda*, the blissfully active and vibrative nature of pure Consciousness.

Because all creation happens in the manner of a reflection, God does not become involved in transformation (*parināma*) or change (*vikāra*). Rather, this process of manifestation should be understood as a kind of divine transmutation, and the appearance of change occurs through the divine activity of Self-oblivion or obscuration. While evolving Himself outward as phenomena, He simply appears as if He were undergoing change, moving from His basic position of changelessness and consequently becoming all phenomenal existence. There is just a semblance of movement, which metaphorically is referred to as "a little movement," and this "little movement" is what the epithet *kiñcīt* refers to in the root  $\sqrt{spadi}$  *kiñciccalane*.

This can be understood also by looking at one's own mundane experience. When bliss arises within a person it is experienced as an inexplicable stirring, a wonderful dynamism shining and causing a marvelous charm in the inner Self. As in the case of absolute Consciousness described above, a person who is having a blissful experience does not remain motionless and empty like pure space. There is also the experience of dynamic charm vibrating within the inner Self. This is the experience of *spanda* as it shines within finite beings.

Let us now look at these key terms in a little more detail. *Paramaśiva* and His *spanda* do not denote one and the same idea about the Absolute; nor is *spanda* the same as *śakti*. There are several ways to understand the concept of *śakti*. The most refined understanding of *śakti* is that the Absolute is Śiva and Śiva is Śakti. Śiva and Śakti are just two names given to the Absolute to help clarify the concepts of transcendence and immanence that have been formed about it. Next, since all creation is an outward manifestation of the Śakti of Śiva, the word *śakti* is often used to denote creation itself. The word *śakti* is also used to denote certain steps in the process of creation. *Spanda*, on the other hand, is the blissful spiritual stir that constantly rises and falls within Śiva, by virtue of His being Śakti. Or, to put it another way, Śiva is always charged with *spanda* because he is Śakti. *Spanda* is thus the interior manifestation of Śakti, the subtle inner stir of Śakti before the outer manifestation takes place.

*Cit*, *ānanda*, *icchā*, *jñāna*, and *kriyā* are the five primary powers of God, known as the five *śaktis* of *Paramaśiva*. He is *cit* ("consciousness"), and *cit* is both Śiva and Śakti in their mutually identical position. *Ānanda* ("bliss") is the essential nature of *cit*; that essential nature is *spanda*. *Spanda* is thus the *ānandaśakti* of *Paramaśiva*. It is the double-edged, blissful, spiritual stir of that ocean of nectar that causes the surges and tides of infinitely varied phenomenal existence. There are three phases of *spanda*, which correspond to *Paramaśiva*, Śiva, and Śakti. At the highest level, the supreme vibrative activity (*paraspanda*) refers to the simultaneously active inward and outward throbings of the Absolute called *Paramaśiva*. Śiva, the comparatively static aspect of changelessness is His inward stirring, Śakti, the dynamic aspect that results in the manifestation of all creation and its infinitely diverse activities, is the outward stirring. *Paramaśiva*, the Absolute, is both Śiva, and Śakti by virtue of *spanda*, which is the Absolute's essential nature. Were it not the nature of the Absolute to move inwardly and outwardly, it alone would exist. Actually, it would not exist at all, because there would be no one to question or to establish its existence. In this case only a total void would exist. But since the Absolute has *spanda* as its nature, it manifests within itself all phenomena, appears itself in the form of all phenomena, and remains yet unchanged in its basic character.

The second phase of *spanda* reflects the aspect of purity and changelessness known as the Śiva aspect, and is called universal vibration (*sāmanya-spanda*). It has the infinite potency to manifest all changes.

The third phase of *spanda* refers to its natural inclination towards manifestation. This is the aspect of Śakti called particularized vibration or *viṣeṣa-spanda*. All phenomenal manifestation is the result of the outward movements of *viṣeṣa-spanda*.

There are four steps or levels in the extroversion of *viṣeṣa-spanda*. The power of life-force, or the alive-ness of manifestation, is the first and the most subtle outward form of particularized (*viṣeṣa*) *spanda*. Next comes that aspect of *spanda* that gives life to the senses and the organs of a being and which, through its shining vibrancy, allows them to function. The functioning of the physical body and its different systems comprises the third, and still more exterior type of *spanda*. The fourth, and most

extroverted, phase of *spanda* is the rotational movement of the insentient components of matter known as atoms.

Phenomenal creation and dissolution are the result of the outward and the inward movements of particularized *spanda*. The Lord, while producing this universal drama, hides His real nature consisting of infinity, purity, divinity, infinite potency, etc., and appears as finite beings who consider themselves limited and capable of doing and knowing just a little. This delusion is also a result of the outward movement of *viśeṣa-spanda*. The next act in the drama comes when God bestows His divine grace on finite beings. These people then find themselves turning away from ideas of their own limitation toward a path of supreme knowledge, yoga, and devotion. Such beings, advancing on the path of Self-realization, do finally recognize that they are none other than *Paramaśiva*. This realization of the truth results in that infinitely charming and sweet experience of Self-bliss. As already stated, the Lord directs the whole dramatic show of divine activities just in order to have this experience of Self-discovery. This Self-bliss is the most refined and elevated aspect of the inward movement of *spanda* and is the means to attain *sāmānya-spanda*. These movements of the Lord's *spanda* are always going on at all levels of His infinite universal drama, because it is His essential nature to do so. Such basic character is known as His world-bliss *jagadānanda* (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, II.20).

Let us now look at how the ancient sages of Kashmir have described various facets of this principle of vibration. Somānanda described the idea denoted by the term *spanda* as a unitary form of all the divine powers of Consciousness. He says that it can be realized in one's own heart in various everyday life situations: in suddenly remembering that one has forgotten to do something very important; experiencing an immense joy; confronting some sudden terror; seeing someone quite unexpectedly; uttering the sound of *visarga* (the sixteenth vowel sound in Sanskrit phonetics, written as *aḥ*—‘:’ in *māṭṛkā* yoga); running very, very fast; reading something out loud at high speed; undergoing sexual discharge in *caryā* yoga, and so on (*Śivadr̥ṣṭi*, I.9-11). Although Somānanda does not actually use the word *spanda*, he suggests the same principle with words like *sphurattā*, and *prasara* meaning throbbing and flowing (*Śivadr̥ṣṭi*, I.2; IV.94). Although Somānanda and Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa belonged to the same period, it appears that

Somānanda wrote *Śivadṛṣṭi* sometime before Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa composed *Spandakārikā*, or at least before it had become well known, and before the term *spanda* had become popular among scholars of that time.

Utpaladeva, though not using the word *spanda*, describes the principle denoted by it as "Self-awareness" and "the essence of Consciousness". He uses the following different terms\*:

(a) *parāvāc*, the supreme innermost aspect of speech, (b) *svātantrya*, perfect Self-dependence, (c) *sphuratiā*, the pulsating flash of Self-awareness, (d) *mahāsatta*, absolute existence, not conditioned by time, space, etc., and (e) *sāra*, the innermost essence of the absolute truth (*Īśvarapratyabhijñā*, I.5, 13-14).

With regard to the realization of supreme *spanda* Abhinavagupta says:

It is that all-absorbing Self-awareness of a yogin that shines in his heart causing him to feel that all of phenomenal existence is becoming absorbed into him. It is that principle that is called *sāmānya-spanda* in the śāstras, and is an activity of spilling out of the Self. It is the most subtle movement of the motionless entity. No duality shines in it. It is the surge of the ocean of Consciousness, which is always replete with it (*spanda*) (*Tantrāloka*, IV.182-84).

Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa describes universal and particularized *spanda* as the opening (*unmeṣa*) and closing (*nimeṣa*) of the eyes of God which results in the creation and the absorption of the universe. By creation and absorption he is referring to the outward and the inward movements of *spanda* (*Spandakārikā*, 1). He advises aspirants to discover that *tattva* that causes fundamentally insentient objects, like the senses and bodily organs, to function like sentient objects (*Spandakārikā*, 6, 7). He says that universal *spanda* shines not only in the infinite, but even in a finite being while he is experiencing a strong emotion like anger, joy, bewilderment, or while he is running very fast.

Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa expresses the state of wonder that comes with the realization of *spanda* saying: "How can a person who observes his own mastery over this nature (that is *spanda*), and thereby relaxes in a state of wonderful astonishment, become involved in the misery of transmigratory existence?" (*ibid.*, 11). Here he is

\*In the *Tantrāloka*, Abhinavagupta, while discussing *spanda*, explains that all of these terms are synonymous.

explaining that even a practiced yogin feels astonishment at the attainment of a state as wonderful as universal *spanda*.

In teaching the method for realizing superior *spanda*, Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa advises aspirants to discover through deep Self-awareness that Self-effulgent entity that shines in-between the ideas that are constantly arising in the mind (ibid., 41). It is pure Consciousness whose vibratory nature produces an endless chain of ideas. Every succeeding idea that arises emanates out of Consciousness through the outward stir of *spanda*, and each preceding idea becomes absorbed back into Consciousness through the inward stir of its *spanda*. He explains *spanda* as that active nature of God that keeps man in bondage as long as he does not realize its real essence, but which becomes his liberator and grants him every divine power as soon as he recognizes its truth (ibid., 48).

Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa, describing the binding and liberating effects of *spanda*, explains that the outward currents of *spanda*, emerging out of universal *spanda*, appear to be various attributes (*guṇas*), and conceal from ordinary people their real nature. As a result, these people get pushed down into fearful passages of transmigration from which it is very difficult to escape. However, these outward currents of *spanda* do not present any difficulty to those aspirants who possess the correct knowledge of their truth (ibid., 19, 20).

Non-dual Śaiva thinkers explored the truth during their highly refined spiritual practices and discovered the principle of *spanda* which explained the manifestation of all diversity within the luminous Self-awareness of one monistic absolute Consciousness. They experienced how *spanda*, which is blissful and playful in character, itself appears as all creation, while manifesting the whole show of this wonderful universal drama. The stir of the infinite joy of the Lord is this *spanda*. *Spanda*'s essential character is blissful and its final aim is the completely fulfilling realization that one's own nature is that infinite bliss. Similarly, at the mundane level of human existence, all play has joy as its essential character and joy is the aim of all play. There is much similarity between the two levels. The finite play in mortal existence is merely a reflection of the infinite playfulness of the absolute Consciousness.

*Spanda* is thus the essential nature of the absolute monistic reality known as *Paramaśiva* or *Parabrahman*. It is the divine

essence of God. All phenomenal existence has *spanda* as its source. *Spanda*, appearing at different levels, governs phenomenal existence and keeps the universe in motion. It keeps ordinary people bound to transmigratory existence. But as individuals realize its essence, they discover themselves as none other than Almighty God. In this way, *spanda* is the means for attaining Self-realization, all the highest aims of life, and perfect liberation from all misery.

## CHAPTER 7

### The Tattvas in Śaivism

The Sāṃkhya philosophy is the oldest school of Indian thought to have developed a comprehensive analysis of all phenomena into different *tattvas*\* or elements. In this chapter we will briefly review the traditional twenty-five *tattvas* of the Sāṃkhya system, and then go on to discuss the additional eleven *tattvas* worked out by the Śaiva philosophy.

Traditionally the *tattvas* has been described either from their source "down" to the grossest level of phenomenon, or, in the reverse order, from the most material "up" to the most refined level of the source. We will follow the Sāṃkhya system in the latter order. This philosophy divides gross phenomena into five elements known as the five *bhūtas*: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. These five *bhūtas* evolve out of the next subtler level known as the five *tanmātras*: odor, flavor, light-color, touch, and sound. As is obvious, these subtle elements are the basic *objects* of the five exterior senses. Collectively, these make up the first ten *tattvas* known as the "objective elements". The next thirteen *tattvas* are known in the philosophy as the "instrumental elements". The Sāṃkhyas analyze these into exterior and interior groupings. The *exterior* instrumental elements are the five organs of action and the five exterior senses, i.e.: reproduction, elimination, locomotion, handling, and expression; and, smell, taste, sight, touch, and hearing. These are the capacities of our bodily motor-nervous system known as the five organs of action (*karmendriyas*), and the five organs of perception (*jñānendriyas*) respectively. The three *interior* instrumental elements are known as the three *antaḥkaraṇas*: mind (*manas*), ego (*ahamkāra*), and understanding

\*See outline in Glossary under *tattvas*.

(*buddhi*). Up to this point we have ten "objective elements" and "thirteen instrumental" elements, or  $5+5+5+5+3=23$  *tattvas*.\*

The twenty-fourth *tattva* is *mūlaprakṛti*. It is the source and basic element out of which all these twenty-three *tattvas* grow through a process of outward transformation, and into which they are absorbed once again through the process of inward transformation. All twenty-four *tattvas* are absolutely insentient in character. Sentience is the basic nature of consciousness, which appears in the twenty-fifth and last *tattva*, known as *puruṣa*. This completes the organization of universal phenomena that was developed by the Sāmkhya school.

Śaivism accepts this analysis as far as it goes, and then proceeds beyond *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* to elucidate eleven more *tattvas*, raising their total number to thirty-six. The "lower" six of these eleven *tattvas* are considered integral characteristics of *puruṣa*, while the most refined, last five elements are pure *tattvas* transcending *māyā*, the root of all limitations. Beyond all thirty-six *tattvas* is the basic eternal Reality out of which they all emerge and into which the whole phenomenal universe becomes absorbed at the time of complete dissolution. That is the transcendental absolute Reality which serves as the non-dual substratum of all phenomena and is called *Paramaśiva* in Śaivite philosophy. It is the equivalent of the *Parabrahman* found in the Upaniṣads.

Regardless of the name applied to this absolute source of everything, it is important to remember that this philosophy insists on a complete and pure non-dualism. Everything is one thing, and that one thing is described again and again in the texts as being Consciousness. It is pure, eternal, infinite, and totally free I-consciousness whose essential nature is vibrant creative energy, which we refer to here as the divine essence. The essential character of this infinite Consciousness is described by the principal philosophers of Kashmir Śaivism as a wonderful

\* "Objective" and "instrumental" are words commonly used in these discussions to describe and differentiate between (1) elements that are insentient objects and (2) the acts of knowing and doing that flow from the subject. The mind and the hand would be called a "mental instrument" and a "physical instrument" respectively. For the sake of philosophical discussions a distinction is made between the subject, the act of knowing or doing, and the object. But, in Kashmir Śaivism there is only one pure Subject, *Paramaśiva*, who contains all such distinctions. The subject, object, and processes of connection are all *One* thing—Consciousness.

spiritual stir of blissfulness known as *spanda*. The blissful stir of *spanda* causes Absolute Reality to be continuously inclined towards the outward and joyful manifestation of its divine creative energy. This manifestation, which is brought about through the free will of *Paramaśiva* Himself, results in the appearance of all universal phenomena.

Outward manifestations of the divine creative energy appear in five stages: (1) the creation, (2) the preservation, and (3) the dissolution of the thirty-six *tattvas* and all the beings living in them, plus the activities of (4) Self-oblivion and (5) Self-recognition of these created beings.

Starting from the source of vibrant Consciousness, the first two *tattvas* of Śaivism are (1) *Śiva tattva* and (2) *Śakti tattva*. It is important to understand at the beginning that these two *tattvas* are only linguistic conventions and are not actually part of creation. According to the deep yogic experience of the sages of this philosophy, there is no difference between *Śiva tattva* and *Śakti tattva*. They are both actually one with *Paramaśiva*. They are considered to be two *tattvas* only for the convenience of philosophical thinking and as a way of clarifying the two aspects of the one absolute reality, *Paramaśiva*. These two aspects are *Śiva*, the transcendental unity, and *Śakti*, the universal diversity. The changeless, absolute and pure consciousness is *Śiva*, while the natural tendency of *Śiva* towards the outward manifestation of the five divine activities is *Śakti*. So, even though *Śiva* is *Śakti*, and *Śakti* is *Śiva*, and even though both are merely aspects of the same reality called *Paramaśiva*, still, these concepts of *Śiva*-hood and *Śakti*-hood are counted as the first two *tattvas*. These two *tattvas* are at the plane of absolute purity and perfect unity.

Below this level there appear four more *tattvas* of divine creation brought about by *Paramaśiva* Himself. Of this group, the three *tattvas* known as (3) *Sadāśiva tattva*, (4) *Īśvara tattva*, and (5) *Śuddhavidyā tattva* are considered pure, while the last divinely created *tattva*, (6) *māyā* is impure.

As we examine these *tattvas* it is important to remember that all phenomena have an eternal existence in *Paramaśiva*. All phenomena exist within *Paramaśiva* in the form of pure Consciousness alone. This Consciousness is also referred to as the Absolute, completely free and divinely potent. All phenomena lie within the Absolute in the form of its potency, just as a plant lies

in a seed in the form of the potency of the seed. It is the playful activity of absolute Consciousness that causes the outward manifestation of phenomena in differentiated form.

While the Absolute is limitless I-consciousness, the playful activity of Its divine essence manifests phenomena in the form of thisness, or objectivity. The objective manifestation of these phenomena is known as their creation. At the very first step of their creation, these phenomena appear as a single and undiversified *this-ness*. At this first stage, infinite consciousness develops and holds a unified awareness of, "I am this." Even though this initial awareness includes both I-ness and thisness, I-ness shines predominantly in it, and only the faintest tinge of thisness is manifested. All created beings dwelling at this plane experience, "I am this." These beings are known as *mantra-maheśvaras*, while the presiding deity of this *tattva* is called Sadāśiva Bhaṭṭāraka. He is actually *Paramaśiva* who has descended to this level as the master of creation. This plane of existence, with Lord Sadāśiva as the master deity, *mantra-maheśvaras* as his devotees, and "I am this" as their unified awareness, is called *Sadāśiva tattva*, the third *tattva* in the chain of thirty-six, and the first one in the process of creation.

At the next step of creation the balance of I-ness and thisness shifts. The awareness of I-ness is not lost, but thisness begins to dominate. Awareness now shines as, "This is myself." This plane of existence is known as *Īśvara tattva*, the fourth in the series. Created beings at this level are known as *mantriśvaras*, and the deity presiding over them is called *Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka*.

The vision or understanding of beings in these two *tattvas* has been described as "unity in diversity" and "diversity in unity." When the vision becomes balanced so that there is equal emphasis on I-ness and thisness, the *Śuddhavidyā tattva* comes into being. This is the fifth *tattva*, which is sometimes known as *sadvidyā* as well. There are really two levels to this *tattva*, the initial level just described, where there is a powerful balance between "I" (*aham*) and "this" (*idam*), and the more evolved level where the further outward manifestation of *śuddhavidyā* results in an awareness of clear diversity. This second stage happens without any loss of its purity and divinity. Beings created by the Absolute at this stage of creation develop an awareness as "I am I" and "this is this." They see the objective element of thisness as

separate from the subjective element of I-ness, but simultaneously retain their awareness of the purity, infiniteness, and divine potency of their I-consciousness. Because of this, they are included in the category of pure beings. This stage of clear diversity in *śuddhavidyā* is known as *mahāmāyā*. Beings living at this level are called *mantras* or *vidyeśvaras*, and the deity presiding over them is known as Anantanātha. He is in fact Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka, who has descended to this level as the divine administrator of further creation. It should be made clear that *mahāmāyā* is not a separate *tattva* but represents a lower level which is included in the *Śuddhavidyā tattva*. Creation up to and including *mahāmāyā* is recognized as pure because the beings who reside at all these levels do not forget the purity and infiniteness of their I-consciousness, nor do they lose their divine potency. So these first five *tattvas* are all considered pure and are all created by *Paramaśiva* Himself, without His delegating authority to any created deity.

There is one final *tattva* created by the Lord Himself which is considered to be "impure," that is, filled with limitation. This level is called *māyā*. As the creative energy of *Paramaśiva* evolves outward into the realm of *māyā*, it has two main effects. First, it hides the pure and divine nature of created beings residing in its plane and consequently they forget the purity and infiniteness of their I-consciousness as well as their divine infinite potency. Here they are given the name *aṇu* (lit. "atomic") i.e., finite beings. And second, they see every other entity as absolutely different from their finite I-consciousness. All other phenomena are imagined to be mutually different as well. *Māyā* is thus the plane of absolute Self-oblivion and diversity, and is the abode of finite beings. Under the influence of *māyā* people lose their state of oneness with divine potency, becoming permeated instead with feelings of imperfection and emptiness which they attempt to fill up with outer objects. In this way they develop passions and desires for objective enjoyments.

The deity who presides over *māyā* is the same Lord Anantanātha, the master of *mahāmāyā*. He "shakes up" *māyā*, causing it to expand into the next five *tattvas*. These are known collectively as the five *kañcukas*, or "cloaks," that cover the real nature of the knowing subject. They are also sometimes referred to as the elements from *kalā* to *kāla*. *Māyā* is itself the greatest of these

*tattvas* of limitation and is sometimes counted as one of the *kañcukas*, bringing the total number to six.

Along with *māyā*, these five *kañcukas* penetrate into I-consciousness, limiting people and their capacities in the following ways. As was said above, *māyā* causes us to become filled with desires for events and things to compensate for our imagined insufficiency. To enable us to fulfill these desires, *māyā* allows just a little power of action to achieve a limited amount. This limited capacity to do just a little is called *kalā*. This is the seventh *tattva*. Since doing is not possible without knowing, *māyā* also gives us just a limited capacity to know a certain amount. The finite capacity in *māyā* to know just a little is the eighth *tattva*, called *vidyā* or *asūddhavidyā* as well. In order to further limit the scope of our doing and knowing, *māyā* appears in us as *rāga*, or limited interest. *Rāga tattva* is the ninth level. Because of this limited interest, we are not inclined to pursue the full scope of our innate capabilities or to reach our highest potential. We end up knowing and doing a limited amount and placing a high value on these partial accomplishments. *Rāga* also limits the scope of our *kalā* and *vidyā*, the capacities to do and to know, causing us to limit our doing and knowing to only those objects in which we feel some interest. This *rāga* is different from attachment, which is an attribute of the intellect (*buddhi*) and is included in Sāṃkhya among its eight *dharma*s. *Rāga tattva* is narrowing the scope of our attention and activity to a few particular events and thereby excluding a great deal of our potential knowledge.

An absolute limitation in the scope of *kalā*, *vidyā* and *rāga* is caused by *niyati*, the tenth level. *Niyati* is the law of nature which establishes the order of succession in the appearance of all phenomena, i.e., the way in which a seed develops into a tree. Here the law of nature appears as the law of restriction and causation. Whereas absolute Consciousness is always present everywhere and is always interrelated to everything, under the influence of *niyati* there arises the experience of restricted scope and relationship. Here things are seen as having causes and as being sequential. These four *tattvas* only limit our field of knowing and doing, but the fifth *kañcuka* limits our very being as well. This element is the eleventh *tattva*, known as *kāla*, the sense of time. Our real Self is in fact infinite and in no way conditioned by the concept of time sequence. It is *akāla*, beyond time

sequence. But because of this particular limitation imposed on us by *māyā*, we feel that "we were, we are, and we shall be." Thus we impose on ourselves the condition of time sequence, and this conditioning is so thorough that we can't think of doing or knowing anything without this sense of time intervening.

Yet what is time? In fact, it is not something that exists independently of a knowing person. Time is simply an imagined concept. A person forms a unified conception of the different events in his environment and of his different actions, and these get woven chronologically into a sense of imagined sequence. But this sequence is merely a non-substantial concept based on our imagination. These concepts are the sense of time imposed by finite beings on themselves and on their whole environment as well. What results are feelings of "I was, I am, I shall be; That was, This is, That shall be," and so on. While the actions of finite beings are not necessarily conducted in any definite order, certain events in the environment always occur in definite succession. For instance, sunrise, sunset, phases of the moon, the seasons, the blossoming of different flowers, the ripening of fruits and harvests all happen in a regular order. Because of *kāla*, people measure events that have no order with events like these that are marked by a definite order of succession, and this imagined sense of time comes to be imposed on everything. (*Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*, II-1.3).

I-consciousness, having been reduced to utter finitude, becomes the twelfth *tattva*, known as *Puruṣa*. It is also known as *pumstattva*, *jīva*, *paśu*, *anu*, etc. All these terms refer to completely limited I-consciousness. The object or "this-ness" of I-consciousness becomes the thirteenth level known as *prakṛti*. It is also known as *mūlaprakṛti*, the basic substance, and *Pradhāna tattva*, the principal substance. *Prakṛti* is the undiversified source of all the remaining twenty-three instrumental and objective *tattvas* worked out by the Sāṃkhya philosophy. According to Kashmir Śaivism, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are actually further creations of Lord Anantanātha. Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka descends to *Prakṛti tattva* and appears there as Śrikanṭhanātha, who shakes the equilibrium of *prakṛti* and transforms it into the final twenty-three *tattvas*.

Kashmir Śaivism has accepted Sāṃkhya's concept of *prakṛti* as the combination of three *gunas* (attributes) in their absolute equilibrium. But what are *gunas* and from where do they emerge?

According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, the three *gunas* are *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. *Sattva* is enlightenment and pleasure, *rajas* is turbulence and pain, the *tamas* is ignorance and lethargy. Further, *sattva* is light, *tamas* is heavy, and *rajas* is mobile. In this way the Sāṃkhyas have explained the nature of three *gunas*, but they have not explained their source and why these particular natures arise. All other schools of thought also lack answers to these questions.

The philosopher-sages of Kashmir Śaivism have examined both of these issues and explained them in the following way. Infinite I-consciousness possesses limitless powers to know, to do, and to diversify. These infinite powers are known as *jñāna*, *kriyā*, and *māyā* respectively. I-consciousness is a monistic reality; there is no difference between these powers and the entity that possesses them. However, as infinite I-consciousness evolves and appears in finite forms, it loses the nature of unity. As *jñāna*, *kriyā*, and *māyā* diversify into the limitations of a finite being, they can no longer be considered the infinite powers of I-consciousness. At the plane of diversity these powers become simple attributes, or *gunas*. *Jñāna* becomes *sattva*, *kriyā* becomes *rajas*, and *māyā* becomes *tamas*. In this way the Śaivism of Kashmir has explained the source of the three *gunas*. (*Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*, IV.4-6).

The philosophy explains the nature of the three *gunas* as they relate to the basic nature of the Absolute. Infinite I-consciousness is all-powerful and all-blissful awareness. The finite I-consciousness of a person also experiences blissfulness during moments of happiness and clarity. These experiences of pleasure and illumination are a person's *sattva*. During deep sleep, or while dazed or intoxicated, the blissfulness of a person's existence does not shine clearly in his awareness. The resulting loss of clarity, and the ignorance and lethargy that arise, create a kind of darkness, which is *tamas*. This is an absolute lack of the awareness of Self-bliss. Finally, there are also those occasions when people have an experience of the existence of their true Self but it is incomplete, it is not the way they would like it to be. This is a mixture of blissful and non-blissful Self-awareness. This mixture of *sattva* and *tamas* causes turbulence, and consequently pain, known as *rajas*. To give an example of how *rajas* can arise, imagine a parent, after many years of separation, having a reunion with a beloved child who is lying ill in a hospital. The

awareness of the presence of the beloved child is a blissful one, while the awareness of the child's illness is the non-existence of blissfulness. The resulting stir of emotions is the pain and turbulence of *rajas*.

According to Kashmir Śaivism, the three attributes (*guṇas*) are thus basically the particulars of the viewpoint of *puruṣa*. He views the objective element, all "this-ness," through the lens of these three attributes, and experiences them as pleasure, pain, and ignorance while remaining in a state of equilibrium. No other school of Indian thought considers the *guṇas* to be such particulars of the viewpoint of *Puruṣa tattva*. All of these schools accept the *guṇas* as attributes of *prakṛti* alone. The three *guṇas* have been discussed in this way by Utpaladeva in his *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā* (IV.i.4-6), and have also been explained in detail by Abhinavagupta in his commentary on that work. This is another example of how the philosopher-sages of Kashmir Śaivism have clarified and deepened various concepts of Indian philosophy.

It is important to understand that, according to Kashmir Śaivism, this analysis of all phenomena into thirty-six *tattvas* is not an absolute truth. It has been worked out by the authors of the philosophy as a tool of understanding for the ever-active and inquiring mind and as a form for contemplative meditation. Through further analysis, the number of *tattvas* can be increased to any level. Similarly, through synthesis, they can be decreased down to one *tattva* alone. In fact this has been done in the *Tantrāloka*, where one can find doctrines of contemplation on fifteen, thirteen, eleven, nine, seven, five, and as few as three *tattvas* as well. The practitioners of the *Trika* system use only three *tattvas* in the process of a quick *sādhanā*: Śiva representing the absolute unity, Śakti representing the link between duality and unity, and Nara representing the extreme duality.\* Finally, a highly advanced Śiva yogin sees only the *Śiva tattva* in the whole of creation. However, since the contemplative practice of *tattvādhvadhāraṇā* used in *āṇava upāya* includes meditation on all thirty-six *tattvas*, that is the number commonly accepted by the Śaivas of both northern and southern India.

\*Śakti is the path through which Śiva descends to the position of Nara and the latter ascends to the position of Śiva.

## CHAPTER 8

### The Śaktipāta Principle of Śaivism

All the Vedic schools of Indian philosophy agree that the basic ignorance of human beings is without any beginning. They maintain that this ignorance has existed since eternity, but that it can be ended by means of correct knowledge. The various schools of Buddhism, Jainism, Vaiṣṇavism, and dualistic Śaivism, also agree with this philosophical principle. The monistic school of Kashmir Śaivism however, takes a somewhat different approach to the question of ignorance. It accepts the eternal existence of only one entity, and that is the Absolute, *Paramaśiva*. Being the only eternal entity, He alone is without beginning. Obviously it is impossible to trace or date the beginning of a concept like basic ignorance, but this does not mean that it has no beginning. When each and every worldly, heavenly, and superheavenly being is himself a creation and not really eternal, how can the ignorance residing in him be beginningless?

The Śaiva philosophers of Kashmir deal with this philosophical issue in a unique and interesting manner. Their view is that God is like a limitless ocean of blissful Consciousness. They have described His will as a surge of bliss through which He manifests His nature, or divine essence. This manifestation of the nature of God appears as the five-fold divine activity of creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration, and revelation. Everything that *is*, exists within Him in the form of pure and blissful consciousness. This is often likened to the way that all milk products exist in milk in the form of pure milk. Because it is His basic nature to do so, He wills himself to appear as the phenomenal world. At the time of creation, His unrestricted, independent, and playful will instantly materializes, appearing in the form of the universe in its phenomenal aspect. God is in no way transformed or changed during this creative process, but simply appears as the universe, just as a crystal appears in the different hues reflected in it. In this

way He Himself appears as the limited subject and object in countless forms. While appearing in this way, He conceals His divine nature. It is this divine activity of obscuration that marks the beginning of the basic ignorance of the individual person in whose form He starts to appear.

This ignorance grows and evolves in countless ways resulting in the amazing psychic diversity that we encounter in this world. According to Kashmir Śaivism, the appearance of ignorance and its subsequent evolution into diversity is considered the first part of the divine play of God. During the second part of this play, He enlightens individual beings and reveals to them their true and divine nature. Being enlightened by Him, these souls realize that they are one with absolute God. They see their own Self as everything, and understand that the whole richly diverse universe is actually their own creation, created by them through their own will. The whole universe becomes, as it were, a show, a play, a drama, or a reflection to such realized souls (*Paramārthaśāra*, 48-50).

This kind of revelation cannot come to people simply through their own individual effort. Peoples' efforts or goals are inherently limited because they can only be devoted to an aim that is already known. As God's nature cannot be fully known to any person, it can never become the target of anyone's effort. Just as ignorance is inspired by God, so is revelation inspired by Him. This inspiration of divine knowledge is known as His Grace (*anugraha*) or the "descent" of His power (*śaktipāta*). Only those individuals who receive the Lord's *śaktipāta* become interested in following the path of correct knowledge.

How do other schools of thought view this concept of *śaktipāta*? Śaivite philosophers in southern India, and all schools of Vaiṣṇavism, especially the Viśuddhādvaita school of Vallabha, generally agree with this Śaivite principle. The Vedāntins also accept it, but do not elaborate on it. They place greater emphasis on the individual's effort in studying, understanding, and realizing the essence of the Upaniṣads. *Śaktipāta*, according to some philosophers, depends on individual efforts that result in good actions; eradication of attachments, false knowledge, worldly propensities (*vāsanās*); purity and steadiness of mind; and the renunciation of all actions and desires. Others say that God becomes gracious to a being who practices devotion and is

dedicated in worship. Certain philosophers think that God's grace depends on chance. This chance appears sometimes in the form of *karmasāmya*, that is, the co-existence of the ripening of two mutually opposite past actions, both of which are exactly equal in power and therefore restrict each other from resulting in any *karmic* fruits. Grace is also thought to result sometimes from contact with a realized soul who reveals Absolute Truth to an aspirant.

Abhinavagupta, the greatest interpreter of the principles of the monistic Śaiva philosophy of Kashmir, rejects all these theories in his *Mālinīvijayavārttika* in the following words:

As is being said, the bestowal of the divine grace of the Lord is the result of the causes listed as follows: consumption of attachment, equipotentiality of past deeds, high merits of piety, ripening of impurities, contact with well-wishers, emotional devotion to the Lord, regular service offered to Him, religious theological practice, dissolution of the flair for enjoyments, ripening of right impressions, eradication of incorrect knowledge, renunciation of activities, falling away of passionate longings, and equanimity of mind. But all that is incorrect, because all such things (being themselves effects), must have their causes, which are to be searched out. Besides, these (attributes) are involved in other logical defects like: *anavasthā*, endlessness of argumentation; *atiprasaṅga*, unwarranted extension; *asambhava*, improbability; *abḥāva*, non-existence; *anyonyāśraya*, interdependence; *nihśreni*, classlessness; and *cakraka*, circular dependence, etc. (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.686-92).

He goes on to say that devotion itself depends on *śaktipāta*:

It is His grace that gives rise to such devotion in human beings, through which they, devoting their minds to emotional love for Him, attain the highest perfection (*ibid.*, I.697).

*Śaktipāta* does not depend on any cause other than the gracious and totally free will of the Lord. Abhinavagupta expresses this in the following words of the same work:

- (a) Therefore the grace of the Lord does not depend on any external cause (*ibid.*, I.168).
- (b) (The authority of) Lord Śiva's unfettered power of grace has therefore been accepted (by philosophers) because the state of (perfect) liberation cannot be attained otherwise, as the arguments put forth by other schools of thought in this regard are of no avail (*ibid.*, I.695).
- (c) Thus it has been said in *śāstras* like the Purāṇas that the Lord's

power of grace is absolutely independent; its dependence shall mean lack of divine essence in Him (*ibid.*, I.698).

Passages from the Upaniṣads also are in agreement with this principle of independent *śaktipāta*. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* says:

The Self can neither be realized by means of discussions, nor through intelligence, nor through the careful listening to scriptures. The Self can only be realized by a being whom It selects for such purposes, and to him alone does It reveal Its real character (*Kaṭhopaniṣad*, I.ii.22).

The *Kauśitaki Upaniṣad* also says:

It is He who directs such beings towards good actions whom He wants to lead above these mundane regions. Then it is He who directs those beings towards bad actions whom He wants to push below (*Kauśitakibrāhmaṇopaniṣad*, 3-9).

There is, however, no doubt that devotion has been highly praised by great philosophers like Utpaladeva. He describes the interdependence of devotion and *śaktipāta* in his *Śivastotrāvalī* in the following words:

O Lord, Thou art pleased through devotion on our part, and our devotion toward Thee dependeth on Thy pleasure. The way in which such interdependence can be justified is known (best) to Thee alone (*Śivastotrāvalī*, XVI.21).

This can be clarified as follows: A person's original inspiration of devotion for the Lord depends on His grace alone. Then, the devotee's increasingly refined practice of devotion prompts the Lord to exercise more and more powerful *śaktipāta*. This, in turn, increases a person's devotion, and so on. Through this type of interdependence, both grace and devotion attain complete perfection. Utpaladeva has stated this clearly in another section of the same work:

A very small fraction of grace (towards me) is present in the Lord, and something looking like devotion is rising in me. When shall these two things grow through mutual integration and attain the desired perfection! (*Śivastotrāvalī*, VIII.1).

According to Utpaladeva, completely perfect devotion is the highest stage of right knowledge and yoga, and is real liberation as well:

Devotion towards Thee is the highest aspect of pure knowledge as

well as the uppermost level of yoga. O Lord! When will my request for that (devotion) become (perfectly) fruitful? (*ibid.*, 9.9).

O Lord! Liberation is the name given only to the perfectly ripened devotion towards Thee. Therefore we, having risen to its initial stage, are heading toward liberation (*ibid.*, XVI.19).

The gradual development of this sort of devotion, culminating in a state of complete perfection, depends on the constant exercise of *śaktipāta* by the Lord.

Various philosophical objections have been raised to this understanding of *śaktipāta*, particularly since it displays partiality on the part of the Lord. Why should He pick some souls to be graced, and others to be pushed into bondage? Because Kashmir Śaivism is an absolute monism, as the Lord is Himself everyone, whether in bondage or liberation, Śaiva philosophers have no apprehension about this issue. Since the whole show of bondage and liberation is merely a reflection brought about by the supreme will of God, and since nothing in the whole universe is in any way different from Him who is Himself everything, there can be no question of partiality about the way in which He exercises *śaktipāta* on Himself. He could only be considered partial to someone if that person were different from Him. To Śaiva philosophers, the sole cause of bondage and liberation is the free will of the Lord, who is playfully manifesting this whole show in accordance with His unrestrictable will.

One may also wonder why God should indulge at all in this play of bondage and liberation which is so full of pain and misery. Śaiva philosophers address this dilemma in two ways. First, they point out that the Lord is in a state of absolute independence and freedom (*svatantrya*) where the question of why can have no bearing. Second, it is the very nature of God to be constantly engaged in the five divine activities of creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition. According to Abhinavagupta, God, shorn of this independence and the play of these various aspects, would cease to be God.

Had the Lord remained confined to His one aspect (of transcendental consciousness) then He would have given up being God and being Consciousness, (and would be) just like an insentient substance, e.g. an earthen pot (*Tantrāloka*, III.101).

There is one more objection to this principle of independent *śaktipāta* that may be raised. When the interest in liberation and

the effort on the path of Self-realization depend only on the gracious will of God, why should people bother at all about their life-style? Why shouldn't we eat, drink, and be merry and leave the whole task of liberation to God? Abhinavagupta replies to this in the following manner in his explanation (*vivaraṇa*) of the *Parātriśikā*. It is never in the hands of a person either to do or not to do something that is worthy of being done. People are always bound to do what they are destined to do. We are urged to act a certain way according to our own nature which is bestowed on us by the Lord. The exact words of Abhinavagupta are:

If it is so, then what is the use of wrongly taken trouble in activities like collecting scriptures and works, reading them, explaining and discussing them, pondering on them, and so on? This heavy burden should be shaken off. Refuge should be taken in keeping silence. The will of the Lord shall itself carry ashore the person who is to be carried there. The answer to this objection is this: "It is the same gracious will of the Lord that is leading us finally towards such contemplation (on *sāstras*). Therefore it should not be our motto to eat merrily and sleep soundly with outstretched legs, without either contemplating ourselves, or taking interest in discussions with worthy people who are blessed with the gracious activity of the Lord which is on a higher plane (than that working within us) and who have consequently developed a wisdom that is skilled in intricate thought" (*Parātriśikāvivaraṇa*, pp.126, 127).

In the *Bhagavadgītā*, the final argument used by Lord Kṛṣṇa to enlighten his devotee Arjuna is in complete agreement with Abhinavagupta's view: The Lord says to Arjuna:

O son of Kunti, being bound by your characteristic activity, you shall be destined to do that which you do not want to do on account of your delusion (*Bhagavadgītā*, XVIII.60).

A devoted aspirant, having been blessed by the *śaktipāta* of the Lord, has to proceed on the path of Self-realization and consequent Self-liberation. He is destined to attain that highest summit of realization where the graciousness of the Lord and the devotion of his devotee attain complete perfection as described by Utpaladeva in those sections of his *Śivastotrāvalī* quoted above.

Once it is clearly recognized that the whole interaction of bondage and liberation is simply the Lord's play, then life can be experienced as an amazing drama, and it is always wonderful. Had the Lord been exercising His grace and wrath according to

some limited plan for every individual, the universe would have resembled some endless industrial complex, producing sets of different types of people, mostly similar in nature and character, like manufactured goods. But because the universe is the Lord's divine drama, each and every character has his own individuality, free from any sort of repetition that might mar its aesthetic beauty.

The Lord creates the amazing diversity of characters in this divine drama through infinite variations of two of his divine activities—obscuration (*nigraha*) and revelation (*anugraha*). As we have said, He brings about the activity of revelation through His *saktipāta*, which He dispenses in numerous ways. The wondrous quality of this infinite drama is thus maintained.

Abhinavagupta, in the thirteenth chapter of his *Tantrāloka*, has analyzed the nature of the Lord's *saktipāta* into three main types: (1) *tīvra*, intense or swift, (2) *madhya*, moderate, and (3) *manda*, slow. Each of these has been further analyzed into three subtypes of swift, moderate, and slow which gives rise to nine types of *saktipāta*. The nature of these nine types, as presented by Abhinavagupta in his *Tantrāloka* and *Tantrasāra*, is discussed below:

1. Intensely intense (*tīvra-tīvra*): Aspirants blessed with this type of *saktipāta* attain spontaneous knowledge of the exact nature of the Self without any help from a worldly preceptor.

Such people need not perform any rituals, nor practice any yoga to attain this state. Their realization of the highest aspect of the Self is absolutely spontaneous. Having recognized that their real nature is one with the Absolute, they no longer want to associate with the miseries of ordinary people. They become impatient to merge into their purest aspect, to shed off their physical form and become one with the Absolute. This type of liberation is known as *videhamukti*, or liberation without having a body. Such devotees even loose interest in *jīwanmukti*, or liberation while one lives in physical form. These devotees may shed off their bodies at once or after a little time, but they do not stay for long in this world. Aspirants under the effect of the intensely intense form of *saktipāta* may also stay in their bodies, but will linger on in a state of complete inaction, insentient like a log of wood. This highest type of Self-realization results in an extraordinary ecstasy that obliterates all interest in anything

impure in nature. In this way, *tīvra-tīvra śaktipāta* brings about immediate liberation from all bondage.

2. Moderately intense (*madhya-tīvra*): This type of *śaktipāta* results in a spontaneous realization of the exact nature of the Self without the help of a preceptor's *dīkṣā* or a practice in yoga or studies of *śāstras*. Aspirants develop a spontaneous and correct knowledge known as *pratibhā* (intuition). It has been said in the *śāstras* that *yoginis*, who are actually the divine powers of the Lord, personified as mother goddesses, perform the devotees' initiations (*dīkṣā*) and inspire spontaneous intuition in them. At this point they become preceptors capable of liberating others at will.

Sometimes certain of these moderately intense initiates fail to develop a firm belief in the validity of their spontaneous knowledge and consequently they require further support from either Self-contemplation or study of scriptures or discussions with a preceptor in order to develop a firm realization. This is indispensable especially if they wish to impart their innate, independent enlightenment to others. They also develop supernatural powers called *yogasiddhis*. Though they are not interested in these powers for their own sake, they may use them to create a favorable impression and establish confidence and firm faith in the minds of certain worthy disciples. These initiates usually develop the understanding that Śiva is present in all internal and external phenomena. Some of them may also develop powers to apply curses and to grant boons.

The preceptor does not prescribe any practice in yoga for such disciples, but holds simple verbal discourses with them in order to verify the correctness of their knowledge. The individual Consciousness of the Self among these disciples sheds off all limitations of time, space, and individuality. For this group the element of devotion becomes predominant and knowledge takes a secondary position. The effect of moderately-intense *śaktipāta* appears in these aspirants in five different ways: (1) They develop an unswerving devotion for Lord Śiva. (2) Their *mantras* attain perfection and fruitfulness. (3) They attain control over all the 36 *tattvas*. (4) All their activities reach completion and fruitfulness. (5) They become master of an excellent art of poetry and attain knowledge of the essence of all the *śāstras*.

3. Weakly intense (*manda-tīvra*): This type of *śaktipāta* leads aspirants toward a preceptor whose knowledge of the Self is

perfect and complete. Such a preceptor cleanses his disciples' inner souls of all impurity through (a) a simple graceful glance, or (b) an exchange of just a few sentences, or (c) a mere touch of their body, or (d) just thinking about them. In this way the *guru* liberates the disciples from all bondage without formal initiation in any practice of yoga. Such aspirants do not develop spontaneous knowledge of Reality, but get it through the grace of their preceptor. The *guru* does not require ritual performances, but initiates the devotees by simply willing to do so. The *guru* then removes all confusion through the example of his own gracious being and through lectures. This process, which requires no rituals or ritual objects, is known as *jñānadikṣā*.

Aspirants of this third type of *śaktipāta* attain final liberation in one of the following ways:

(a) They realize that they are the Absolute, actually feel their divine essence while still residing in the physical body, and consider the body to be simply an instrument, which they skillfully use to taste the ecstasy of complete Self-realization. They become liberated while still residing in a physical form.

(b) They enjoy divine authority in the divine administration for a period of time. Then, leaving their physical body, the aspirant merges into complete 'Śiva-hood'.

(c) Once the aspirants have reached the natural limits of their lifespan, they have the ability, through a special type of *dīkṣā* to shed off the physical body at will. At this time the aspirants realize their true nature of absolute Śiva-hood, and after being completely merged with the Absolute, they attain perfect liberation.

4. Swiftly moderate (*tīvra-madhyā*): Aspirants under the influence of this type of *śaktipāta* approach a preceptor of high merit. By the performance of *putrakadikṣā* the guru adopts the disciples as daughters and sons and teaches them about the nature of Absolute Reality. Such aspirants, though possessing the correct knowledge of reality, do not actually feel the limitlessness, the purity, and the divinity of their own nature. They do not attain Self-realization while residing in their physical bodies, but only at the time of death.

5. Moderately moderate (*madhya-madhyā*): Aspirants receiving this type of *śaktipāta* develop a longing for the enjoyment of higher *siddhis*, even though they become eagerly desirous to have the realization of their Śiva-hood. They may attain the desired

*siddhis* during their lifetime, but realization of Śiva-hood comes only after death.

6. Weakly moderate (*manda-madhyā*): This type of *śaktipāta* leads devotees to a preceptor who establishes them firmly at some higher *tattva*. These devotees, after leaving their mortal bodies, attain the enjoyments specific to that *tattva* through another form of body suited to existence at that higher plane. They attain realization of Śiva-hood only after leaving that form of body also. Their liberation is thus a sort of *kramamokṣa*, that is, liberation by stages.

7. Swift-though-weak (*tīvra-manda*): Aspirants under the influence of this *śaktipāta* transcend this physical existence and attain a higher and purer type of existence in some superior world (*loka*). These aspirants have desires for, and attain, enjoyments that are greater than in the weakly moderate category. After the aspirants' passionate desires for the divine powers of that world are completely satisfied and fulfilled, they attain complete realization of Śiva-hood. This gradual form of liberation is also known as *kramamokṣa*. Swift-though-weak aspirants do not require help from a preceptor belonging to the superior world. The worldly guru alone leads them through that world to the attainment of absolute Śiva-hood.

8. Moderately weak (*madhya-manda*): People being blessed with this type of *śaktipāta* ascend to some superior world which is higher and purer than this physical one. After enjoying the pleasures attainable in that *loka*, they are once again initiated in Śaiva yoga by the presiding deity of that *loka*, and through the graciousness of that deity, they pass through various stages to finally attain the realization of absolute Śiva-hood.

9. Intensely weak (*manda-manda*): This type of *śaktipāta* also results in the attainment of some superior world. There the aspirants experience the following states: (a) residence in the abode of the Lord of that world (*sālokya*); (b) physical and mental closeness to that Lord (*sāmīpya*), and (c) partial unity with that Lord (*sāyujya*). After a long time of experiencing the divine enjoyments of that world, the aspirants are finally initiated once again into Śivayoga by the master of that world. In this category, complete realization of absolute Śiva-hood occurs by stages and takes a long time.

According to the philosophy, each of these nine types of *śaktipāta* has been further defined into high, moderate, and low speed, bringing the total number to twenty-seven. These can be further analyzed into various types as well. However, since the above discussed analysis of the major nine types is sufficiently detailed for clear understanding, great authors like Abhinavagupta have not chosen to work out a more detailed approach.

Since all people, regardless of categories, are Śiva Himself appearing in that form, all gods, supergods, masters of higher worlds (*bhūvanas*), purer beings in the plane of *vidyā*, and the superior authorities ruling there are able to exercise their grace on beings who are spiritually below them. In fact, any persons who are spiritually advanced can bestow their grace on a person who is below them in spiritual progress. The *śaktipāta* exercised by supergods like Brahmā or Viṣṇu, who wield their authority inside the plane of *māyā*, cannot lead to *mokṣa* but only to a superior type of *bhoga*. The form of *śaktipāta* exercised by Īśvara or *Sadāśiva*, or by various incarnations of them like Ananṭanātha, Gahaneśa, Śrīkanṭhanātha, or Umāpatinātha can lead to the attainment of *mokṣa*. However, this *śaktipāta* results in a gradual liberation known as *kramamukti*. Only an intense (*tīrva*) type of *śaktipāta*, exercised by God Himself, can result in quick liberation.

## CHAPTER 9

### Yoga in the Trika System

#### *Introduction*

There were two prevalent systems of yoga in ancient India, one practiced mainly by monks, the other by householders. The yoga practiced by monks developed into two main systems: the Brahmanic school of Patañjali to be practiced according to Brahmanic codes of discipline, and the non-Brahmanic system of *Hatha* yoga developed by Gorakhanātha and practiced by a wide variety of monks like the Jogins, Oghars, and Peers, who belonged to all castes and creeds. The system of yoga popular with householders was developed by *siddhas* or "perfected ones." It was patronized by great royal saints and practiced mostly by Brahmanic householders. It developed into the Tantric yoga systems of Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and later with minor variations, into Buddhism as well. This yoga evolved into various forms including the *Kundalinī* yoga of Śaivism in the South, the Pāñcarātra system of the Vaiṣṇavas, and the Vajrayāna system of Buddhism which is still practiced in the form of Lāmāism in Tibet, Nepal, and Mongolia.

The Tantric yoga of Abhinavagupta is significantly different from all of these systems. It is known as the Trika yoga of Kashmir Śaivism. Its doctrines originally lay scattered in Trika texts like the *Mālinītantra*, the *Siddhātantra*, and the *Svacchandatantra*. Some of its doctrines were contained in various ancient monistic Śaiva texts like the *Rudrayāmala*, which contains two chapters of particular importance to this system: the *Vijñānabhairava* and the *Parātrīśikā*. Trika yoga was prevalent among traditional lines of Śaiva saints in Kashmir, and its truths found expression in ancient works like the *Śivasūtra* and the *Spandakārikā*. Ancient teachers of Kashmir Śaivism practiced this yoga and made it popular with spiritual aspirants in Kashmir. The most prominent among such teachers were philosopher-sages like Vasugupta, Kallatā,

Somānanda and Utpaladeva, all of whom flourished in the ninth century AD. Śivānanda, the originator of the *kālīnaya* practice of Trika yoga (discussed below), belongs to the eighth century AD.

The Trika yoga system was academically developed at the end of the tenth century by Abhinavagupta, who collected its doctrines, and then arranged, analyzed, and systematized them extensively in several of his important works. He is thus the builder of the academic aspect of Trika yoga. His *Tantrāloka* is a unique philosophical and theological treatise dealing with the fundamentals of Śaiva non-dualism. This work also covers most of the central practices of Trika yoga as well as the ritualistic traditions that support it. Abhinavagupta's *Tantrasāra* is a prose summary of his *Tantrāloka*, but is more clearly expressed than the original work. *Tantravaṭadhānikā* is a still shorter version of *Tantrasāra*, but it appears to be the work of some other Abhinavagupta, most probably his cousin Abhinava, who is referred to in the last chapter of *Tantrāloka*. Other important works on Trika yoga by Abhinavagupta are the *Mālinīvijayavārttika* and the *Parātriśikāvivaraṇa*. His *Pūrvapāñcikā* on the *Mālinītantra* and the *Kramakeli* on Siddhanātha's *Kramastotra* were also of great importance, but have unfortunately been lost. Doctrines on Trika yoga also find expression in some of his religio-philosophical lyrics like *Anubhavanivedanastotra*, *Bhairavastotra*, *Anuttarāṣṭikā* and *Kramastotra*.

The Trika yoga philosophy that Abhinavagupta organized is also a Tantric system based on the Śaiva Āgamas. However, Trika yoga is a monistic system with a pragmatic approach. It is also more refined and sophisticated than the *Kuṇḍalinī* yoga of the south, which though included in Trika yoga, is assigned a comparatively lower position in the system.

#### *Distinctive Features*

Looking at the two systems of yoga prevalent in ancient India reveals some interesting contrasts with Abhinavagupta's school. Patañjali's system of yoga emphasizes repressing the emotions and instincts, forcibly controlling the mind, depriving the senses and organs, and observing other strict disciplines in day-to-day life. A form of meditation that calls for continuous concentration on imagined objects and also on certain energy centers in the body is the most important practice prescribed in Patañjali's

school. This approach can be practiced properly only by ascetics living in a hermitage and working under the constant guidance and supervision of a skilled preceptor. The *Hāṭha* yoga system of Gorakhanātha adds physical practices which can result in considerable torture of one's senses, organs, and whole physical system. The Tantric yoga of the south had adopted the methods of Patañjali and added the practice of rousing the *kūṇḍalinī* and directing it upwards through the spinal cord to the crown of the head. *Kūṇḍalinī* yoga is an element in the system of Gorakhanātha as well. Teachers in the south did not develop a separate system based on the Śaiva doctrines contained in the Āgamas, but adopted and revised the already prevalent system of Patañjali,

The Tantric yoga of Abhinavagupta is a particularly Āgamic system. It is free from all stringent restrictions and repressive discipline. It discourages torturing the body and mind, or starving the senses. Even methods of breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*) that cause physical discomfort have been prohibited by Abhinavagupta who says in the *Tantrāloka*:

Breath control should not be practiced if it means torture to the body (*Tantrāloka*, IV.19).

Calling on the authority of his greatest preceptor, Śambhunātha, Abhinavagupta clearly states that the senses can only give up their fascination for worldly enjoyments through a spontaneous indifference arising from the blissful experiences that yoga elicits. In other words, once a practitioner has discovered the inner bliss of the Self, all the common sense pleasures will seem inadequate by comparison, and will therefore no longer be a temptation. He adds that the senses are liable to adverse reactions if these are forcibly controlled. He puts it this way in *Mālinīvijayavārttika*:

It is so because my revered preceptor has thus advised many times during his teachings, "The emotional functions of one's senses and organs calm themselves through spontaneous indifference (towards their objects when these become tasteless for them). But, on the other hand, these become liable to adverse reactions as long as they are forcibly repressed" (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, II.111-12).

Regarding the forcible repression and control of the mind, Abhinavagupta says in the same work that a repressed mind, just like a repressed steed, attempts to break loose onto numerous

uneven paths, if driven forcibly through an unfamiliar and disagreeable course:

The mind of those aspirants who force it to give up its familiar path, runs astray, just like a steed, on millions of wrong paths (*ibid.*, II.109).

Abhinavagupta does not prescribe a hermit's life for that Śiva yogin, who is free to live without restrictions, to remain in the household, and to participate in pleasures of the senses and the mind within the limits of the currently acceptable social standards. In other words, one is free to live a normal life and at the same time to pursue some method of Trika yoga. As soon as the seeker's practice in yoga yields the experience of Self-bliss, worldly enjoyments automatically lose their power and fascination, and one's senses develop a spontaneous indifference, known as *anādaravirakti*, to former pleasures. Once seekers have become expert practitioners in the experience of Self-bliss, they are able to move freely through worldly enjoyments without any fear of spiritual pollution. Such enjoyments can actually serve to further illumine the extraordinary experience of Self-bliss. As Abhinavagupta explains:

The mind (of a Śiva yogin) does not become wet (or stained) from within, just like the rind of a dried gourd which has no opening, even if it dives deep into the water of sensual pleasures (*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.108).

While systematizing the scattered scriptural doctrines of Trika yoga, Abhinavagupta focuses only on those practices which are aimed at the attainment of Self-realization (*mokṣa*). He leaves out numerous other practices which yield supernatural psychophysical powers, because he considers all of that to be in the realm of *bhoga* (enjoyment). Among the various practices that lead to Self-realization, he chooses only the most prominent ones and leaves the correct classification of the rest to the discretion of the reader. Even with his careful distillation of the scriptural works, there are about six thousand verses (*kārikās*) in his *Tantrāloka*.

In his discussion of Trika Yoga begins Abhinavagupta begins with the most advanced approach, and then presents successively easier methods one by one in descending order. This is another example of his particular approach to yoga. His intention is to make the best and the quickest method of yoga immediately

available to all aspirants. If they succeed at the highest level, they need not go through the long chain of lower stages. However, if certain aspirants feel that they cannot handle the most advanced path successfully, then they are free to move along a more structured path and to choose any of the methods that accommodate their psychophysical capacity. The important point is that spiritual students should not assume that they are not fit for the most advanced method. Why should people resort to riding on a bullock cart when an airplane is at their disposal? If, however, they are unable to handle the superior vehicle successfully, they can choose some other more appropriate form of transportation.

In chapter 8 we discussed the importance of grace in Self-realization. While grace is of primary importance if one is to rise to the highest level, still, it is helpful to have some theoretical knowledge as well. Therefore Abhinavagupta makes a point of discussing the fundamentals of Śaiva monism in his works on Trika yoga.

One of the important characteristics of Abhinavagupta's yoga is his teaching that a yogin must maintain a non-dualistic outlook throughout the whole process, from the very first initiation all the way through to the most advanced practice of yoga. This outlook is to be maintained even during idol-worship, *linga* worship, fire worship, oblation, repetition of mystic syllables, etc. Another characteristic of his yoga is the importance of a highly developed devotional attitude towards the Lord. There are two advantages to this approach. It protects practitioners from the degenerative forces of God known as *ghoratarā śaktis* (see Glossary), and helps in assimilating the results of yogic practices so that whatever spiritual powers arise will not be misused.

#### *Definition of Yoga*

According to the Trika system, yoga is that theological practice which helps in attaining the realization of absolute unity between the practitioner and Absolute Reality, that is, between the yogin and God. As it says in the *Mālinītantra*:

The unity of one (a finite being) with another (Almighty God) is called *yoga*\* by Śiva yogins (*Mālinīvijayatantra*, IV.4).

\*The word *yoga* is derived from [the root] *yujir* = *yoge* (to become one with) and not from [the root] *yuj* = *smadhai* (to meditate upon), as asserted in the *Yogasūtrabhāṣya*.

Practitioners of yoga are advised to realize their forgotten true nature and to recognize themselves as none other than the Absolute, *Paramaśiva*. This realization is said to be readily attainable through Trika yoga, when aided by both an intense devotion for the Lord and by the correct theoretical knowledge of the pantheistic absolutism of Śaiva monism. Theoretical knowledge removes the yogins' mental confusion and misconceptions about Reality, and devotion refines their hearts so that they becomes capable of actually feeling and experiencing the truth of Śaiva monism. The yoga of Abhinavagupta is thus an integral process of developing both the head and the heart. People with no mental clarity cannot understand the truth, while those without heart cannot digest it.

By contrast, Patañjali starts the teachings of yoga from the lowest level, and intends to carry practitioners, step by step, to that system's highest experience known as *nirbija samādhi*. In this state a person's finite self-consciousness is totally stilled and undistracted by objects. One's consciousness simply shines by itself and remains motionless like the flame of a lamp burning in a place free from blowing wind. There is no knowing and no doing in such a state of mind. But yogins in this kind of *samādhi* do not have any awareness of the potency of their divine essence, nor do they appreciate their infinity. In his *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, Abhinavagupta considers this form of *samādhi* to be one of various types of *susupti*.

The sleeping state is the result of total non-recognition of the existence of one's body etc. It is short-lived and is, on that account, different (from *pralaya*, the phenomenal dissolution). It is sleep when caused by exhaustion, is swoon if brought about by some defect in some element in the body, is intoxication or madness when caused by some edible material, and is known as *samādhi* when brought about by one's own free will. These are its varieties (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* with *Bhāskarī*, II.265).

He advises aspirants to rise above *susupti* into the higher levels of the fourth psychic state called *turyā*, the state of spontaneous revelation of the divine nature of the Self.

A special and very important characteristic of Trika yoga, which is not found in other systems, is its doctrine of "possession" (*samāveśa*). In *samāveśa* practitioners are suddenly infused and possessed with Śiva-hood, and feel themselves to be omniscient

and omnipotent. This is not the kind of possession or haunting that occurs when the power that haunts and the person who is haunted are different. Rather, yogins in *samāvēśa* enter a state of unity, and their limited individual personalities get expanded into universal I-consciousness which they feel to be divinely potent in all respects. *Samāvēśa* has been defined as the immersion of the dependence of a dependent consciousness into the independence of the Independent Consciousness (*Tantrāloka*, I.73). It is actually the sudden and direct intuitive realization of one's Divine Essence, called *Īśvarapratyabhijñā*.

Sufficient practice in *samāvēśa* results in a state of *jīvanmukti* (liberation in this very life) in which a yogin develops supernatural divine powers (*siddhis*). A *jīvanmukta* can use these divine powers simply by willing them to be (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, IV.i.15) though such a refined individual would most probably avoid meddling with the natural order, or in matters of divine administration, which are the province of a long hierarchy of male and female deities at different levels of authority. This kind of yogic attainment is not considered to be an obstacle on the path of final liberation. Rather, it is said to be helpful, as it removes any lingering doubt about the divine nature of the Self, and develops a firm faith in the eventual attainment of absolute unity with *Paramaśiva* when the individual dies (*Tantrāloka*, XII. 183-85). Further, these abilities help create faith and confidence in the mind of worthy disciples who feel that the preceptor, being liberated, can liberate others as well.

*Samāvēśa* can be attained through all the various levels of Trika yoga. It is one there are highest states that is available at beginning as well as at advanced levels. However when a state of *samāvēśa* comes through a higher level of yoga it is considered to be superior because it reveals a more elevated aspect of one's Divine essence. Because of the various levels at which *samāvēśa* can be experienced, the philosophy recognizes as many as fifty varieties of Śiva-possession.

Abhinavagupta analyzes Trika yoga into three main categories known as *śāmbhava*, *śākta* and *āṇava*. *Āṇava* yoga has been further analyzed into *dhyāna*, *uccāra*, *karana*, *dhvani* and *sthānakalpana*. Finally *sthānakalpana* has been analyzed still further into six paths of objective meditation on external elements known as *saḍadhvani*. All these will be discussed briefly in the following pages.

### Śāmbhava Yoga

A practice in the direct realization of the pure and divine nature of the Self is known as *śāmbhava* yoga or *śāmbhava upāya*. In this highest form of practice, the mind's tendency to think and understand calms down. It stands still, and loses itself in the vibrant glow of pure I-consciousness. At this stage, the aspirants begin to experience their Self-bliss, and with practice, they develop a clear intuitional realization of their divine nature. *Śāmbhava* yoga is to be conducted without pressure and strain. The mind (*manas*)\* should be relaxed and rested. It is to be gently tamed rather than forced to stop its activities. The practitioner keeps a subtle form of inner awareness on the mind so that the futility of its restlessness can be fully appreciated. This subtle form of witness consciousness eventually tames the mind and the ego's wild tendencies to defend itself. All activities of imagination, contemplation, and ideation are naturally given up. Pure I-consciousness shines clearly in the resulting stillness, and the Self intuitively realizes and recognizes Itself without any help from the mind or understanding capacity. This practice results in the direct realization of one's Divine Essence through *śāmbhava samāvēśa*, and one's consequent liberation from all bondage. Through the regular practice of this *samāvēśa*, the practitioner becomes a *jīvanmukta* and develops the above-mentioned divine powers.

An intense devotion for God and the correct understanding of one's real nature are two essential aids in this direct realization of the Absolute Reality. As we have said, aspirants who do not have the correct theoretical knowledge of the truth may not be able to free their understanding from the mental habits of the limited individual age-old confusions created by *māyā* and because of this may not succeed in attaining final liberation (*Tantrāloka*, I.48-49). What is more, aspirants are liable to enter into that state of absolute dreamless sleep which is known as *apavedya-suṣupti*, mistake it for the final goal of life, and get stuck there for the rest of their existence (*Tantrāloka*, VI.152). In spite of the functions of the binding forces of the Lord, devotion enables practitioners to overcome all obstacles that arise on the path to liberation. Devotion enables people to actually feel and relish the truth

\*The word "mind" here refers to the faculty of objective thinking.

realized through the practice of this yoga, and because of devotion they will not fall prey to any temptation to misuse the supernatural powers that often develop automatically in the practice of *sāmbhava* yoga.

The Zen yoga of Japanese Buddhism, though resembling *sāmbhava* in some respects, leads practitioners towards a state of nihilistic tranquility. This happens because the Buddhist practitioners avoid devotion and all concepts of theism, and through practice in that system's beliefs they develop a concept of nihilism that deeply permeates their unconscious minds. In this way, Buddhist practice leads to the level of *pralayākala*. As was said previously, this is also the case with the Transcendental Meditation school of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, which also can take a practitioner into the state of dreamless sleep. This does not happen to Śiva yogins, because the correct theoretical knowledge allows them to aim for more refined states of enlightenment.

The highest form of *sāmbhava* yoga has not been discussed in detail by Abhinavagupta because of its esoteric character. He has hinted at some aspects of this practice in the second chapter of his *Tantrāloka* and *Tantrasāra*, where he discusses the ultimate practice known as *anupāya* yoga, a yoga without any means. When *sāmbhava* becomes perfectly ripened, it attains the position of *anupāya*. A long verse in his *Anubhavanivedanastotra* (2) describes the essence of *sāmbhava* yoga as do the first two verses of the *Anuttarāśikā* (1-2).

Though not a great deal of information about this form of yoga is available, we can find traces of it in India down through many centuries. There is a traditional posture connected to this yoga known as *sāmbhavī-mudrā*. While it is helpful in the beginning, this *mudrā* is not required after attaining proficiency in the practice. We know that the tradition of using *sāmbhavī-mudrā* with this yoga has been prevalent in India for millennia, because historians have identified this *mudrā* in the eyes of the bust of a yogin found at the ancient ruins of Mohenjodaro.

This yogic form of direct realization, aided by the *mudrā*, has been discussed at length in the sixth chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The same yoga and *mudrā* have also been depicted in the poetry of Kālidāsa, in the third canto of his *Kumārasambhava* (III.44-50). Yājñavalkya's *Smṛti* alludes briefly to it (III.198-201). It has also found expression in certain *vacanas* of the Viraśaiva saints of

Karṇāṭaka. Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava, a Śaiva philosopher of the present age, has recently discussed it in his *Siddhamahārahasya* (91, 92).

*Māṭrakā* and *mālinī* are the two types of *śāmbhava* yoga that involve the ancient Indian science of grammar. This includes a highly technical approach to the Sanskrit alphabet and the use of sound in spiritual practice. *Māṭrakā* yoga has been discussed in some detail by Abhinavagupta in his *Tantrāloka*, *Tantrasāra*, and *Parāṭriśikāvivaraṇa*. In this type of *śāmbhava* yoga one practices an intuitive kind of visualization in which the whole world is experienced as merely a reflection of one's own divine powers. All phenomena are imagined to be shining within oneself by virtue of one's own playful divine will. Practitioners of the *māṭrakā* form of *śāmbhava* yoga visualize their own divine powers shining in the form of the sixteen vowels of the Indian alphabet, and see them reflected in the form of all the phenomenal elements from earth of *Śakti*, and finally shining as the consonants from "ka" to "kṣa". All this should happen mystically without any interference from either mental conceptions or the conventional relationships that exist between the words and their meanings. Practitioners of *māṭrakā* yoga intuitively realize that all creation has risen from within them, is reflected in them, and is totally non-different from their own true Selves (*Tantrāloka*, III.280).

The second variety of this type of *śāmbhava* yoga is known as *mālinī* yoga. In this form, the same general practice is involved, except that letters are arranged haphazardly, with vowels and consonants mixed together in random order, starting from "na" and ending in "pha". This extremely mystical practice of *śāmbhava*, discussed at length in *Parāṭriśikāvivaraṇa*, is quicker in results and yields both *bhoga* and *mokṣa* (release) simultaneously (*Parāṭriśikāvivaraṇa*, 149, 154).

There are still other types of *śāmbhava* where practitioners, after having thoroughly sharpened the power of their attentiveness (*avadhāna*), turn this highly focused awareness onto their blissful consciousness in order to catch hold of this psychic state and remain there. This experience of Self-bliss is actually available to anyone in many different situations. For example, every person's pure I-consciousness shines clearly through its own brilliance for a moment in situations where there is some powerful emotion like anger, joy, astonishment, etc. (*Spandakārikā*, 22), or where

there is some delightful experience or perception (*Śivadṛṣṭi*, I-9, 11), or in between two mental ideas (*Spandakārikā*, 38), or between the waking and dreaming states. Supervigilant practitioners, possessing a very sharp attentiveness, realize the inner nature of pure Consciousness at such junctures. Then, catching hold of it with their one-pointed awareness, they try to remain firmly established for some time in that state of Self-revelation. With time and practice, these experiences of the Self last longer, and increasingly more subtle levels of the experience become impressed ever more deeply on the subconscious mind. Finally, this experience of the Self becomes the essential nature of the practitioners.

These various types of *śāmbhava* yoga which were taught in philosophical works like the *Spandakārikā*, have been discussed by Abhinavagupta in his *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛtivimarśinī* where he quotes many couplets from the *Kārikā* of Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa. There seems to have been an understanding and agreement among the sage-philosophers in this tradition about the policy to be used in writing about these most esoteric practices. While they were not kept absolutely secret, neither were they ever fully or clearly described in a single text. Abhinavagupta received these instruction from his greatest preceptor, Śambunātha. As he says in his *Tantrasāra*:

Our revered preceptor has said that a doctrine that is extremely secret in nature, should neither be clarified in a single context, nor should it be kept totally secret (*Tantrsāra*, 31).

In summary, no element of mental contemplation or ideation should enter into the practice of any type of *śāmbhava* yoga. Because it is conducted only through one's will power, without indulging in any form of knowing or doing, it is called *icchā* yoga, the yoga of simply willing. Complete perfection and regular practice in *śāmbhava* yoga yields the results and reveals the secrets of all the lower types of Trika yoga.

### *Śākta* *yoga*

Practitioners who are unable to grasp the subtleties of *śāmbhava* and progress with this method, should then turn to the next lower stage—that of *śākta* *yoga*, the yoga of Self-contemplation. In this practice one uses the mind and imagination to

constantly contemplate the real nature of the Self as taught in the philosophy of Śaiva monism. One is supposed to think repeatedly that one is everything and yet also beyond everything. All creation is one's own play. It is the manifestation of one's own divine powers, having been created through his own divine and independent will, not aided by anything else. One is to imagine oneself as omniscient and omnipotent pure consciousness (*Tantrasāra*, 21). Practice of this form of Self-contemplation carries the impression of these truths deep into both one's conscious and subconscious mind. With time and practice one comes to experience the divine and absolute consciousness as his real self. It no longer seems to be simply an imagined concept superimposed on oneself by the mind. Having developed a firm belief in the divinity, infiniteness, and purity of one's real nature, one is able to wash away past impressions of one's limitations, attain a śākta *saṁvēśa* of Absolute Reality, and develop the ability to practice śāmbhava yoga which is the only direct means of realizing the divine nature of the Self in its highest aspect. In fact, all types of Śaiva yoga have to rise to the level of śāmbhava in order to yield this highest goal of life.

To clarify, śākta is a practice in "pure ideation" (*śuddhavikalpa*), the yoga of Self-contemplation, imagination, meditation, etc., while śāmbhava is a practice in "non-ideational" (*nirvikalpa*) realization, a yoga free from all conceptual knowing and gross word images. Because śākta yoga is a practice in correct conceptual knowing, in which the practice of mental ideation dominates, it is also called *jñāna* yoga.

The *nididhyāsana* practice of the Vedānta school is similar to the śākta yoga of Śaivism. However, the post-Śaṅkara Vedāntins have increasingly stressed the importance of the philosophical theories of *vivarta*, while ignoring the practical aspects of the theology as taught by the ancient sages. Due to extensive interaction with Buddhist logicians through decades, the Vedāntins copied and assimilated a great deal from Buddhism, and slowly drifted towards a kind of situation that comes close to nihilism. They ignored the actual practice of Śaṅkara's Vedānta to such an extent that most of them today are not even aware of the existence of some very important Tantric works on Vedānta like (i) the *Vidyāratnasūtra* by Gaudapāda, (ii) the *Prapañcasāratantra* by Śaṅkara, (iii) the commentary on it by Padmapāda, (iv) the

tenth-century *Śrīvidyārnavaṭantra* by Vidyāraṇya and so on. Because of this drifting away from the practical aspects of Vedānta, many of its scholars have come to doubt the validity of Śaṅkara's authorship of *Saundaryalaharī*. One of these scholars tried to prove that Śaṅkaradeva, a Śaivasiddhāntin of the Tamil region, had been the author of *Saundaryalaharī*. These scholars apparently don't accept that the sophisticated theological doctrines contained in *Saundaryalaharī* are absolutely foreign to the simple Śaiva-siddhānta doctrines of *caryā*, *kriyā* and *yoga*.

Disciples of J. Krishnamurti and certain logicians from the West are inclined to criticize śākta yoga as being a practice in self-hypnotism. It is true that its method of practice seems to be very much like hypnotism, but in reality it is far more profound. Hypnotized people are made to forget their individual notions and to adopt new ones in accordance with the will of the hypnotizer. Whether people become stronger, healthier, and wiser depends of course on the quality of the hypnotizers (or the material being used), and what they are attempting to do with their power. There is always the danger that one set of illusions may simply be substituted for another. But according to Śaiva philosophy all of us are already hypnotized by the effects of *māyā*, by thoughts of our own limitations and inadequacies. The practice of śākta yoga, as discussed above, helps us wash away the hypnotic effects of *māyā* by means of deepening the impression of *vidyā*, the correct knowledge. Śākta yoga impresses on us our infinity, eternity, divinity, potency, etc., and dispels the false limiting impressions caused by *māyā*. This is more a process of dehypnotizing, as it removes the hypnotic effect of our limitations (*māyā*), and brings us back to our real and essential nature.

There are various other names associated with this practice of yoga. Śākta has been defined as a practice in "refining ideation" (*vikalpasamṛskāra*), that is, a process of bringing about gradual perfection in the correct conceptual knowledge of a person (*Tantrāloka*, IV.2, 3). Śākta yogins have to impress on themselves two aspects of their real nature: pure transcendental unity and universal divinity (*Tantrasāra*, 21). This is to be accomplished through several types of deep and constant imaginative contemplation known symbolically as sacrifice (*yāga*), oblation (*homa*), repetition (*japa*), vow (*vrata*), union (*yoga*) and so on.

These are all metaphorical in character.\* Another metaphorical or symbolic name given to śākta yoga is *sattarka* (*ibid.*, 23), the yoga of correct reasoning. *Sattarka* is reasoning that is based neither on any of the objective experiences of ordinary people still deluded by *māyā*, nor on the conventions and arguments set forth by them. It is a logic inspired by the direct realization of the Self by the Self, a logic started by perfect beings or *siddhas*. Still another name for this is *bhāvanā*. The root *bhu* means "to exist," and the word *bhāvanā* means "to bring into existence." Śākta yoga is a *bhāvanā* that brings into existence the correct understanding of the truth that *māyā*, with the help of imposed forgetfulness, had pushed back into the field of nonexistence (*Tantrasāra*, 21). This *bhāvanā* of Trika yoga should not be confused with the *bhāvanā* that appears in the philosophical texts of the Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya schools.

There is a special type of śākta yoga known as *kālīnaya*. It was originated by one Śivānandanātha about whom we know very little. He imparted it to his three female disciples named Keyūravatī, Kalyāṇikā, and Madanikā. We know that Govindarāja learnt it from Keyūravatī and then imparted it to the great Śaiva philosopher Somānanda. Kālīnaya reached Jayaratha through a long line of disciples. Madanika taught it to Bhanuka. It reached Abhinavagupta through the line of Ujjata, Udbhata etc. Erakanātha, the disciple of Kalyāṇikā, engaged himself in attaining supernatural powers and did not initiate any disciple in the path. This information about the origin and spread of *kālīnaya* has been provided by Jayaratha in his commentary on *Tantrāloka* (III.192-203). He bases the information on the *Kramakeli* by Abhinavagupta and quotes a long passage from it (*Tantrāloka*, V.192-93). Passages in *Kāśmīra-apabhrāmśa*, quoted by Abhinavagupta in his *Tantrasāra* and *Parātriśikāvivaraṇa*, may have been drawn from the sayings or works of the above-mentioned three female preceptors. These three highly respected yoginis may have preferred to teach in the language of the common people, as did Lalleśvarī in the fourteenth century AD. Śivānanda, being the great-grand teacher of Somānanda, may

\*For instance, the use of deep imagination to offer all existent substances to God is known as *yāga*. Imagining God to be an infinite sacrificial fire of pure consciousness and offering everything into such fire as oblation is known as *homa*, and so on (*Tantrasāra*, 25-27).

have flourished sometime in the eighth century AD. Exact dating is difficult because these yogins tended to live long lives so that their time cannot be strictly calculated at the rate of twenty-five years per generation.

The term *kālinaya* can be understood as follows. Naya can be thought of as a doctrine, and Kālī in Kashmir Śaivism is a name given to the power of the Absolute God. This power is called *kālī* because it conducts *kalanā*, the manifestation of the divine activities of God. *Kalanā* is different from and should not be confused with *kalpanā*. *Kalpanā* is imagination, conducted in one's own mind, while *kalanā* is a kind of transmutation brought about by the divine essence of God (*Tantrāloka*, IV.172-76). It is the outward manifestation of inwardly existent phenomenon.

*Kālinaya* is practiced in the following manner. In *sākta* yoga, *kālī* is visualized in four aspects. It conducts all the divine functions in the fields of (1) absolute unity, (2) unity in diversity, and (3) complete diversity. While these are its three main aspects, there is a fourth, (4) the all-pervading aspect also. Each of these aspects of *kālī* is supposed to be contemplated upon as it relates to the divine activities of creation, preservation, and absorption. (An example with creation would be: (1) the absolute unity of creation, (2) the absolute diversity of creation, (3) the unity in diversity of creation, (4) the all-prevading aspect of creation, and likewise with preservation and absorption.) In this way the number of *kālīs* is raised to twelve. These *kālīs*, constitute *śakticakra*, or the wheel of the divine powers of God (*Tantrasāra*, 28). These *kālīs*, personified as goddesses, have been eulogized in Siddhanātha's *Kramastotra*, certain *stotras* of Abhinavagupta, the *Cidgaganacandrikā* of Śrīvatsa (wrongly known as Kālidāsa), and a scriptural work named *Pañcaśatikā*, quoted by Jayaratha. All the poetic descriptions of *kālīs*, found in these works are merely symbolic in character, because the *kālī* of Kashmir Śaivism is the abstract divine power of God and not some deity with a subtle divine form, as is the Kālī in *Durgāṣaptaśati*.

Practitioners of *sākta* yoga, practicing *kālinaya*, have to imagine themselves to be the master of the wheel of divine powers. They have to visualize the divine role of these powers with respect to all of phenomenal existence appearing as the trinity of subject, object, and the intermediate means of knowing, called respectively *pramātr*, *prameya*, and *pramāṇa*. The practitioners visualize this

trinity in the twelve varieties appearing in creation, preservation, dissolution, and absolute position. Then they imagine themselves as having assimilated all these phenomenal varieties, one by one, into their own Selves through their twelve divine powers visualized as the twelve *kālīs* absorbing them. Through this practice students have to impress upon themselves their complete mastery of twelve aspects of the divine essence. This highly complex and abstract worship of *kālī* in its many forms, which employs this special kind of contemplative imagination, and which is practiced through a clear conviction that everything is One—a pure nondualism—is significantly different from the ritualistic *Kālī*-worship prevalent in Bengal.\* This is true even though both forms of *Kālī*-worship are Tantric in origin and character.

The above-mentioned varieties of *śākta upāya*, e.g. *yāga*, *homa*, etc., require a very deep and comprehensive form of contemplation, which absorbs simultaneously all phenomenal existence into the practitioner's infinite I-consciousness. This practice is so difficult that only the most accomplished yogins like Abhinavagupta can use it successfully (*Tantrāloka*, IV.278).

Sivānandanātha developed an easier type of *śākta upāya* by taking the above-mentioned twelve categories in a definite order of succession and making them the targets, one by one, of contemplative meditation and subsequent absorption. As *krama* is the Sanskrit word for succession, this easier type of *śākta upāya* came to be known as *kramanaya*. Much has been written about the *kramanaya* by different yogins, and Jayaratha quotes many of them in his commentary on the *Tantrāloka*. In fact, this *krama* method of *śākta upāya* became so popular with practitioners of the Trika system in Kashmir, that many teachers like Jayaratha mentioned it along with the Trika as an independent system. (*Tantrāloka*, V.XIII.435).

This tendency to consider the *krama* system as separate, while still somewhat prevalent in Abhinavagupta's time, was actually only indicative of the popularity of *kramanaya* practice. Had it actually been an independent system of theology, it would not have been discussed in such detail as an integral part and important variety of *śākta upāya*. Besides, the main principle of the twelve *kālīs* has been applied not only to *śākta upāya*, but to

\**Kālī*-worship in Bengal usually involves bloody animal sacrifices at the foot of the *mūrti* (statue of the deity).

*sāmbhava* as well (*Tantrāloka*, III.250-53). It has also been discussed as an important element of the *dhyāna* type of *āṇava upāya* (*Tantrāloka*, II.23-27; *Tantrasāra*, 36).

Abhinavagupta quotes several passages from Āgamas, while referring to different systems of *sādhanā*, such as Vāma, Dakṣiṇa, Kula, Mata, Trika, etc. Such passages occur in his commentary on *Parātriśikā* (V.92). Jayaratha does this as well (*Tantrāloka*, V. I.48-49). In none of these scriptural passages is there any mention of *krama* as an independent system of philosophical practice.

J.C. Chatterjee, the pioneer research scholar who worked on Kashmir Śaivism, was mistaken in announcing *krama* as an independent system of theological practice, and unfortunately most of today's research scholars have adopted his view without taking the above-mentioned facts into consideration.

In summary, the *krama* doctrine of the twelve *kālīs* is an important element of all three *upāyas* and an integral part of the Trika system. As such it cannot be considered an independent system of practice. This variety of *sākta upāya*, standing within the Trika system, has enjoyed special popularity among the ancient practitioners of Kashmir Śaivism.

When students perfect the practice of *sākta* yoga, their practice automatically attains the status and character of *sāmbhava* yoga. According to the philosophy, the *sāmbhava* and *sākta* methods of yoga are meant only for those aspirants whom Lord Śiva has blessed with a forceful divine grace. Only these special devotees find the intense interest and quickly attain success in the practice of these two superior types of yoga. *Sāmbhava* is also known as *abhedopāya*, the monistic means of salvation, and *sākta* is called *bhedābheda upāya*, the monodualistic means (*Tantrāloka*, I.230).

### Āṇava yoga

Āṇava yoga is known as *bheda-upāya*, the means that is workable at the level of diversity. Its various forms are meant for aspirants who are not capable of directly adopting the practice of the two higher types of yoga. In Śaivism, *āṇu* is the name given to finite beings, ordinary persons bound by their limitations, and *āṇava* is the form of yoga that is useful to these beings living in the field of *māyā* (*Tantrāloka*, I.221). To further clarify these three yogas, *āṇava* is the name given to objective meditation, while both *sākta* and *sāmbhava* are subjective in character. The exact

nature of the subject is to be realized directly through *śāmbhava*, while it is to be contemplated upon through the subjective imagination in *śākta*. In *āṇava* yoga the focus changes from the subject to the object. Practitioners have to meditate upon certain objects and have to contemplate their essential nature as described in the philosophy of Śaiva non-dualism. All these objects are to be seen as nothing other than the Absolute. Since such meditation is an action which demands considerable mental effort on the part of yogins, and since such effort (*kriyā*) becomes more predominant in *āṇava* yoga than the element of knowing, *āṇava* is also known as *kriyā* yoga, the yoga of action, otherwise *jñāna* and *kriyā* go hand in hand.

In *āṇava* yoga there are two categories of objects to be meditated upon, e.g., those lying inside one's self (*grāhya*) and those existing in the external world (*bāhya*). All of these objects of meditation are ranked according to merit depending on their distance from the subject. Meditation on the object nearest to the subject is considered the highest type of *āṇava* yoga while that conducted on the farthest away object is considered the lowest in merit. *Buddhi*, the understanding capacity, *prāṇa*, the life-force, *deha*, the physical form, and *dhvani*, the sound of breathing, are the *grāhya* objects arranged in the descending order of their merit (*Tantrasāra*, 43). These constitute the four types of internal objects for meditation in *āṇava* yoga. The fifth type is called *bāhya*, the external objects, which are time and space. Time and space are each considered in three aspects, which causes *bāhya* yoga to have six subvarieties called *sadadhvan*, or the six paths of meditation on external objects. All these are to be discussed briefly in the following pages.

### *Dhyāna* yoga

*Āṇava* yoga, when practiced with contemplative meditation on *buddhi*, is called *dhyāna* yoga or *buddhi* yoga. This is completely different from the *dhyāna* yoga of Patañjali. One has to imagine the trinity of knowing subject (*pramāṭṭi*), knowable object (*prameya*), and the means of knowing (*pramāṇa*) as one unitary whole, identical with one's own I-consciousness. Then one has to visualize it as a radiantly shining and burning fire of consciousness, encircled by the flames of the wheel of divine powers, the twelve *kālīs*, stationed in one's heart. Next it is to be visualized as

proceeding out through any of the body's orifices like the eyes, ears, nose, etc., and falling on objects coming within its range, one by one. The practitioners, employing their deepest powers of imagination, further visualize it as creating, sustaining, absorbing, separating and assimilating the objects concerned as fire assimilates fuel. These activities of *buddhi* are imagined to be the divine activities of God appearing in the form of the practitioners. A regular practice in this contemplative meditation on the functions of their own understanding capacity will thoroughly impress on the practitioners their true nature as the Divine Essence (*Tantrasāra*, 36-37). They will then attain an *āṇava samāveśa* of Śiva-hood, and become worthy of practicing *sākta* yoga as well.

### *Uccāra yoga*

Next in proximity to the subject is the power of life-force called *prāṇa*. *Prāṇa*'s functions vary depending on whether we are awake, asleep, in a transcendental state, and so on (see chapter 3). The elimination and assimilation of objects through breathing, speaking, thinking, working, understanding, etc., constitute the functions of *prāṇa* in the waking and dreaming states because both the activities of elimination and assimilation are present while we are awake and dreaming. (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, III.ii.19; *Bhāskarī*, 271-73).

In the more interior state known as dreamless sleep, both *prāṇa* and *apāna* become dissolved into a unitary function known as *samāna* (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* with *Bhāskarī*, II.273). It is experienced as an inner vibration.

The fourth function of *prāṇa* is known as *udāna*. It is the activity of intuitive revelation of the real nature of the Self and is experienced vividly by yogins in the *turyā* state. Ordinary people do not usually have experiences of such intuitive revelation. Yogins feel it as a sensation moving through the spinal cord. All ordinary thinking becomes quieted during intuitive revelation and is replaced by a nonconceptual Self-realization which is experienced as an inner glow or radiance (*ibid.*, 275).

The fifth function of *prāṇa* is known as *vyāna*. It has been described as the total brilliance of the limitless Subject shining infinitely in the transcendental state of *turyātīta* (*ibid.*).

Practitioners of *uccāra* yoga have to meditate upon: (1) their own individual I-consciousness, (2) its solitary existence as it

becomes freed from objects and means of knowing, (3) *prāṇa* and *apāṇa* moving together, (4) *samāna*, (5) *udāna*, and (6) *vyāna*. One is supposed to meditate upon all of these objects with the understanding that they are nothing other than one's own inner Self. One withdraws one's attention from the body and the mind, and focuses on the most subtle elements of the pure power of *prāṇa* working in its five functions as described above.

More exact descriptions of how this is done are not available in any of the existing texts. It is supposed to be learned directly from an experienced yogin serving as a preceptor. When *uccāra* yoga is practiced with the six objects mentioned above, it results in six varieties of Self-bliss which are mentioned below in their ascending order of merit: (1) *nijānanda*, (2) *nirānanda*, (3) *parānanda*, (4) *brahmānanda*, (5) *māhānanda*, and (6) *cidānanda* (*Tantrāloka*, V.44-50). Beyond these six stages of Self-bliss lies the infinite bliss known as (7) *jagadānanda* (ibid., 50, 52). It is this form of Self-bliss that causes the Absolute to manifest its power through the five divine activities (*Tantrāloka*, V.53; *Mālinīvijaya-vārttika*, I.893-95). All other types of bliss simply arise from the faintest glimpses of *jagadānanda* which is itself the climax of all experiences of Self-bliss.\*

Aside from Kashmir Śaivism, no other school of thought has produced such a thorough analysis of the various levels of Self-bliss. With regular practice, *uccāra* yoga will lead to a superior type of immersion into the Self (*ānava samāveśa*) and to a highly evolved state of liberation in this life-time. Success in this practice also enables practitioners to advance to more refined types of yoga.

Along with the experiences of Self-bliss described above, the practitioners will feel some peculiar sensations along the central nervous system inside the spine. These sensations are known in other Tantric systems as the movements of *kūṇḍalinī*, the subtle power of *prāṇa* (*Tantrāloka*, V.111). This power can be aroused by several types of psychophysical exercises and practices through which it is made to move upwards through the spinal cord. However, in the *uccāra* yoga of the Trika system, all this happens automatically, without any effort or complication. In this system

\*For details consult Glossary under *uccāra* yoga.

there is no need to torture the body with difficult practices in order to taste the fruits of *Kundalini* yoga. They are simply the natural outcome of *uccāra* yoga.

Practitioners of this yoga aim at recognizing the infinite, perfect, divine, and blissful consciousness of the Self, and at becoming firmly established in it. In the process of becoming more adept at this yoga, practitioners will pass through five increasingly refined levels of Self-experience known as *ānanda*, *udbhava*, *kampa*, *nidrā*, and *ghūrṇi*. Abhinavagupta explains these discernible signs of progress in *uccāra* yoga as follows:

1. At the first level we will have just a flash of Self-realization in which we experience a faint touch or momentary face-to-face contact with the perfectness of our real Self. This contact produces a fleeting yet wonderfully sweet taste of Self-bliss. This is *ānanda*.

2. At the second level of progress, we will have a short but powerful experience of the psychic light of pure consciousness shining like lightning beyond our ordinary body-consciousness. This contact causes the physical body to experience a sudden upward emergence or jerk (*udbhava*).

3. Up until this level, our pure I-consciousness and our body-consciousness are integrated, like muddy water which has particles of earth so thoroughly mixed into it that we cannot discriminate between the two elements. But as we feel ourselves becoming established in our divine powerfulness, and body-consciousness becomes increasingly feeble as a result, our bodies may start to tremble. This trembling is known as *kampa*.

4. Then, as the lifelong egocentric belief in our identity with the physical body becomes fully dissolved through inner awareness, we may start dozing if we are unable to remain firmly established in pure consciousness. This is "sleep" (*nidrā*).

5. Finally, becoming well established in our real nature, and recognizing our Self in its universal aspect, we may feel a mild whirling movement in the head. This is caused by ecstasy and is called "dizziness" (*ghūrṇi* or *mahāvyāpti*), an absolute all-pervasiveness.

This sophisticated and highly evolved system of *prāṇa* yoga is unknown in other schools of yoga in which the concept of *prāṇa* is limited to the function of respiration. Although the terms *samāna*, *udāna*, and so on, are prevalent in other systems of yoga,

their significance has been most clearly explained in the philosophical texts of Kashmir Śaivism.

### *Karana yoga*

The term *karana* denotes the physical body which, along with certain nerve centers in it, is to be made the target of contemplative meditation. This practice includes many types of *mudrās* prevalent in *hatha* yoga. These physical postures are to be accompanied by special forms of contemplation which will help students realize the absolute divinity of their own nature. *Kuṇḍalinī* yoga is part of this practice. Abhinavagupta has not clearly explained *karana* yoga and its method. He says that it is a mystic practice that should only be learned through the verbal teachings of a preceptor (*Tantrāloka*, 130). It appears that *karana* yoga is very quick in yielding supernatural psychophysical powers that are likely to be misused by unworthy practitioners. Because of this danger, Abhinavagupta keeps it a secret. Only an expert preceptor should teach this method, and only to those worthy disciples who will not misuse it. Success in *karana* yoga also results in a form of Self-immersion (*āṇava samāvēśa*), and allows the student to advance into higher types of Trika yoga.

### *Dhvani yoga*

In this context, *dhvani* refers to the sound of breathing. It is to be made the object of one's attention, and its rise and fall are to be meditated upon along with mystical syllables like *so-ham* and *haṁ-sah*. These *mantras* are to be experienced as subtly connected to the inward and outward movements of the breath. This method is also known as *varṇa* yoga (*Tantrāloka*, 131-33). This yoga is also practised by Rādhāśwāmins, and is known among them as *surat* or *ajapā* yoga. Śiva yogins add to this practice the contemplation of devotional aspects of the philosophy and the understanding of their divinity within this absolute monism. This saves them from getting led astray into the pursuit of fame and money. This practice brings about the attainment of an inferior type of Self-immersion (*āṇava samāvēśa*).

### *Sthānakalpanā*

Objective meditation on entities outside the person, when accompanied by the contemplation of non-dualistic theism, is

known as *sthānakalpanā*. The two objects used are time and space. Each of these is further considered according to the three different aspects of fineness, subtleness, and grossness. Time is an abstract entity. It is calculated and measured with the help of successive psychophysical events and action (*Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī*, III.i.3; *Bhāskarī*, II.12). The smallest unit of time that humans experience is a moment. Our experience of the duration of a moment changes according to whether we are awake, asleep, dreaming, etc. Classically, a moment has been measured to be as long as one single mental action (*Tantrāloka*, VII.25). An idea or thought is thus the basic measure of time. Ideas are accompanied by word-images and in this way words can be said to be the measuring devices of time. There are two types of word-images, conceptual and nonconceptual. The most subtle type of word-image is nonconceptual in character and is called *varaṇa*, meaning a sound or a letter. Conceptual word-images are gross in character and are represented by a full-fledged word called *pada*. In between these two there is the category of *mantra*, a mystical syllable, which also is nonconceptual in character. These are the three paths of time called *varaṇa*, *mantra*, and *pada* (*Tantrasāra*, 47).

Space is likewise considered to have three aspects, called *kalā*, *tattva* and *bhuvana*. They are respectively fine, subtle, and gross in character (ibid., 47). *Bhuvanas* are the actual abodes of beings. *Tattvas*, the thirty-six elements that encompass the universe and serve as components of *bhuvanas*. *Kalās* are the finer forms of *tattvas*. There are five *kalās* and most of them are made up of the subtle aspect of several *tattvas* grouped together. For example, *pratiṣṭhā-kalā* contains the essence of all the *tattvas* from water to *prakṛti*. The subtle form of the *tattvas* from *puruṣa* to *māyā* are contained in *vidyākalā*, and the pure *tattvas* up to Śakti lie in *sāntikalā*. Earth lies in *nivṛtti* and Śivatattva in *sāntyatitā* (ibid., 109-10). According to the Āgamas, the scriptural texts of the Trika, there are 118 *bhuvanas*. These are the three paths of meditation on space which constitute, along with the three paths of time, the six paths of meditation on outward objects known as *śadadhvan*.

Practitioners of *sthānakalpanā* yoga are supposed to contemplate, one by one, all the segments of time. Even vast aeons in their ascending order, up to the whole time of Lord Sadāśiva's existence, have to be contemplated and contained within one

movement of the breath (*ibid.*, 61). This yoga carries practitioners out of the limitations of time and washes away its impression from their subconscious minds. Consequently they develop an impression of eternity which becomes one with their essential nature. The practitioners realize that they are eternal. Similarly, they contemplate all the units of space, one by one, and visualize through deep imagination that these are contained inside their physical form (*ibid.*, 63). This practice carries students out of the limitations of space, and they thereby realize the infinite phenomenal aspect of their nature. This is one type of *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

In another form of this yoga, a segment of any of the six paths is chosen as an object of meditation. With the aid of the imagination, this segment is visualized to be the Supreme Reality, containing the whole of existence within it, and running that existence according to divine will. This object is perceived to be absolute God appearing in His transcendental and universal aspects.

Many other types of meditation on objects have been discussed in the *Tantrāloka*. The key to all forms of practice in *sthānakalpanā* is the contemplation of absolute unity and divinity as the essential nature of the object of meditation.

All varieties of *sthānakalpanā* yoga lead to a lower type of *āṇavasamāveśa*, and the development of divine powers of mastery over any of the *bhūvanas*, *tattvas*, etc. For this reason, yogins who are interested in acquiring these divine powers, prefer *sthānakalpanā* to higher types of yoga. The approach adopted in *sthānakalpanā* can be extended to all types of ritual worship and religious activities. These situations will also result in *āṇavasamāveśa* and can be recognized as still lower varieties of *sthānakalpanā*. Ritual performances of many types of initiation (*dīkṣā*) are also considered to be aids to Trika yoga. As with the above forms, these rituals should include contemplations of the absolute divinity of the worshiper, the worshiped, and the means of worship. The realization that everything is actually one thing, and the deep contemplation of this absolute non-dualism is also supposed to be carefully practiced in all forms of this yoga.

Even though Trika yoga contains so many extraordinary concepts and practices, there are very few people who have the keen interest and dedication to undertake this sophisticated and

challenging type of yoga. This must have been the case even in Abhinavagupta's time, for he says:

It is only the black bee and not the honey bee which has an enormous appetite for the fragrance of the *ketakī* flower. (Similarly) only those rare people who are guided from within by the grace of God, find interest in the absolutely non-dualistic worship of *Bhairava*, the one perfect whole of everything (*Tantrāloka*, IV.276).

## CHAPTER 10

### Aesthetics in Kashmir Śaivism

Aesthetics has played an important role in the development of many elements of religion, theology, and philosophy in India. In Hinduism, God is not some distant, austere, disciplinarian ruler of the universe who causes devotees to shudder in awe. Instead, He is thought of as an intimate and loving master who is extremely beautiful and loveable. This is also the case with most of the popular deities of the Hindu pantheon who are the administrators for the Supreme. Even the goddess Kālī, whose form appears to be terrifying, is, in fact, considered an embodiment of affection and compassion. In the eyes of her devotees, there is wonderful beauty even in her terrible appearance.

Historically, Indians have applied aesthetic principles even in religious rituals. The Indus Valley people worshiped their deities with dance. Vedic fire altars were constructed according to aesthetic norms. R̥gvedic poetry, sung in praise of various forces of nature, personified as gods with human-like forms, is rich in aesthetic value, as are the astronomical calculations, which have long been used to ascertain the proper times to begin various religious and secular functions. Āgamic works on Śaivism and Śāktism contain wonderfully rich and beautiful descriptions of different Tantric deities. It is indeed difficult to find any Tantric deity who does not possess some powerful aesthetic charm for the devotee. Further, the aesthetic value of objects to be offered during the worship of these deities is such an important aspect of the Āgamas that some otherwise prohibited offerings and rituals have been freely prescribed.

The aesthetically pleasing practices of song, music, and dance became very popular in Vaiṣṇavism in the medieval period. Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* is a typical example of this era. Cave paintings at Elora and Ajanta testify to the importance attached to

beautiful religious images in India during the Buddhist age. Ancient temples and images at places like Khajuraho display a highly developed aesthetic sense in the art of stone carving.

Finally, the aesthetic outlook of Indian philosophers and theologians reached its full expansion in the Tantric system of spiritual practice (*sādhanā*). *Vāmācāra*, a typically Tantric system of theology, prescribes the use of various objects pleasing to the senses that are otherwise totally prohibited in Brahmanic Hinduism. Because these objects and rituals were pleasing to the senses, the system was given the name 'Vāma', as the basic meaning of the word *vāma* is 'beautiful', as in *vāmāngī* (a lady with beautiful form), *vāmalocanā* (she having beautiful eyes), *vāmoru* (she with beautiful thighs), and so on.

Most of the aesthetically rich elements of *Vāmācāra* became highly refined in the *Kaulācāra*. This Tantric system of theology represents the true apex of aesthetic development in religio-theological practices. Many of these beautiful Kaula practices were adopted by the most prominent ancient sages of the Trika system of Kashmir Śaivism. Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa's description of the *dūtī* (a female assistant of a Kaula preceptor), quoted in the *Tantrāloka* (XXIX.123-24), along with quotations from Somānanda's commentary on *Parātriśikā* (*Parātriśikāvivaraṇa*, 52), prove that these masters of Kashmir Śaivism successfully practiced some of the most exquisite and sophisticated forms of the Kaula spiritual path (*sādhanā*).

Abhinavagupta devotes the whole of chapter twenty-nine of the *Tantrāloka* to Kaulism. He pays high tribute of Macchandanātha, the originator of the Kaula system. In several of his important works, Abhinavagupta writes about Śambhunātha, a teacher for whom he shows immense respect and great indebtedness, who was the master of the Jālandharapīṭha at Kāṅgrā, a center for Tantric practices in the Punjab. Śambhunātha was the leading authority on many esoteric practices of the Trika system, and was well known as the greatest master of the Kaula system of Tantric theology. In the *Tantrāloka*, Abhinavagupta also pays tribute to Bhagavatī, Śambhunātha's *dūtī*. According to Madhurāja, Abhinavagupta himself kept two *dūtīs* by his side. Also, while describing the beauties of Pravarasenapur (modern Srinagar), Abhinavagupta mentions the abundance of wine in four different colours, representing the four superior Tantric deities Even the

great Śāṅkarācārya, who organized various orders of Hindu monks, and himself followed a puritanic form of discipline, chose the beauties of poetic art in the text *Saundaryalaharī*, to describe the beautiful form of his favourite Tantric deity Tripurasundarī. This occurred because, as we discussed in chapter 1, he was actually a Tantric practitioner. *Saundaryalaharī* represents his heart, his belief, and his practice, while his logical writing represented his mind and powers of debate when challenged by the views of his philosophical antagonists.

While aesthetic richness has prevailed in Indian spiritual life from ancient times, there has also been a parallel puritanical aspect among Indian people. This puritanism was prevalent in various traditions of monks, and evolved into the systems of Buddhism and Jainism. Monks of these two religious paths prohibited the use of objects that were pleasing to the senses, and prescribed forcible control of the mind and senses, suppression of the emotions and instincts, and renunciation of worldly enjoyments. Those monks who became experts in this austere type of penance often developed supernatural psychic powers like telepathy and hypnotism. Even though Patañjali denounced the attainment of such powers (*siddhis*) as being impediments to liberation (*Yogaśūtra*, IV.36-37) still they tended to have considerable influence on people from all walks of life. Brahmanic thinkers were influenced as well, but wisely accommodated the ideals and practices of these monks by placing them into the renunciatory and seclusionary periods of a practitioner's later lifetime (the third and fourth stages which follow the student and householder stages).

Tantric theologians did not accept puritanism. Instead they propagated a spiritual path that focused on the simultaneous attainment of enjoyment (*bhukti*), and liberation (*mukti*). They accepted both of them as the goal of human life, and developed philosophies and methods that could be followed equally by both monks and householders. They did not approve of any form of forcible control or repression of the mind, emotions, and senses, but rather emphasized that such practices could create adverse reactions that might simply deepen a practitioner's bondage.

For the most highly qualified practitioners, these Tantric masters prescribed the path of Trika yoga, which could yield both

*bhukti* and *mukti*, could lead to the realization of one's divine essence, and eventually to the highest state of perfect liberation after death. In exceptional cases with aspirants who were naturally capable of controlling their minds without force, they taught an esoteric form of Tantric theology that prescribes the use of various aesthetically pleasing objects and practices that lead spontaneously to states of bliss. This practice is known as the five *makāras*, and it is supposed to produce the attainment of both *bhukti* and *mukti* more quickly than other paths. The use of these otherwise prohibited objects and actions is said to bring about a quicker mastery in the practice of the *sāmbhava* and *śākta upāyas* of the Trika system. It was because of its effectiveness that the great masters of the Trika system adopted and used these Kaula practices. They have been recommended in couplets 69-74 of the *Vijñānabhairava*, an important scriptural work on the Trika system.

These particularly esoteric forms of Tantric *sādhanā* are so sophisticated and require so much spiritual training that they can rarely be successfully practiced by ordinary aspirants. Classically, they have been reserved for the most advanced and steadily centered devotees, those "few on whom Lord Śiva has bestowed his divine grace." Abhinavagupta refers to this in his *vivaraṇa* on *Parātriśikā*:

Some such exceptional person alone, out of a hundred thousand people, will be able to bring my teaching to fruition (*Parātriśikā-vivaraṇa*, 281).

It is widely understood that these aesthetically pleasing Tantric practices can also be extremely dangerous to spiritual advancement. A practitioner, while indulging in the practice of the *makāras*, may fall into a web of powerful sensual enjoyments and thereby lose sight of the higher spiritual goals of life. Because of the dangers inherent in these rituals, they have never been clearly described or discussed in any of the works of the ancient masters.

Whenever there is something of real merit and truth available, there are usually false forms of it being offered at a lower price. Naturally there will be hypocrites who may try to deceive people by ostentatious displays of Tantrism and through misleading information about these practices. False gurus existed even in

Abhinavagupta's time and even he had to avoid their snares. He describes them as follows:

Being poor in intellect, wandering themselves in ignorance and delusion and catching a circle of foolish people in their grip through (falsely) aggrandizing their abilities, they delude people after binding them tightly in bondage (*Parātrīśikāvivarāṇa*).

Even I was deluded by many people like this, who felt themselves proudly to be preceptors of *tattvam* (the exact reality) even though they hadn't even experienced the essence of two syllables—*tat* and *tvaṁ* of the word *tattvam* (meaning God and soul) (ibid.).

In addition to these highly sophisticated and esoteric practices of Tantric theology, there are other aesthetically pleasing aids to the spiritual life which have held a prominent place not only in Śaivism and Śaktism, but also in other branches of Hinduism. For instance, since the earliest periods of Indian history, music has been considered an important element in spiritual practices (*sādhanā*). Chanting of *mantras* from the *Sāmaveda* has been popular with spiritual aspirants since early Vedic times. Song and dance were popular with the pre-Vedic Indians of the Indus Valley civilization. In the *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* music of the *vīṇā* is described as a powerful aid in realizing the highest Truth (*Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, III.115). Music and song are still a central part of the spiritual practice among Vaiṣṇava devotees from the lineage of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

The authors of Kashmir Śaivism also appreciated the power of music in the process of spiritual growth and so included it in the methods of *sādhanā*. For example, in the *Vijñānabhairava*, the pleasure aroused by song and music is accepted as a means to enter into the state of pure and blissful consciousness.

Yogins, experiencing their oneness with some incomparable pleasure aroused by the experience of objects like sweet songs, etc., and fixing their mental attentiveness on it, find unity with the Absolute Lord through a practice of absorption in this kind of phenomenon (*Vijñānabhairava*, 73).

Abhinavagupta explains philosophically the usefulness of the experience of music and other objects pleasing to the senses on the path of Self-realization. One form of this kind of *sādhanā* involves penetrating the innermost aspect of speech called pure awareness (*parāvanī*) by passing through the successively superior

and finer aspects of thinking (*madhyamā*) and awareness (*paśyantī*), the latter being the closest to *para* (see chapter 5 for an explanation of these types of speech). Abhinavagupta says that the subtle types of awareness (*paśyantī*) and thinking (*madhyamā*) can be realized in the melodious sounds of two different types of musical instruments. In his words from the *Tantrāloka*:

The melodious sound of certain sweet tunes is (actually) the gross *paśyantī* form of speech because the differentiation caused by various letters is not present (*Tantrāloka*, III.237).

The sound that is produced from leather covered instruments (drums, etc.), is a gross form of *madhyamā* speech, as its verbal form becomes partly clear and remains partly obscure (*ibid.*, III.241).

Abhinavagupta goes on to advise the student to focus, with the help of an esoteric method, on the finer aspects of these types of speech. This method includes focusing one's attention on the successively finer aspects of speech and thereby entering into pure awareness (*parāvāṇī*), the transcendental Self-awareness of the pure and infinite I-consciousness. He says:

The preceding mental contemplation with regard to these three types of gross speech, appearing separately as (1) "I play the *sadja* tune", (2) "I sweetly beat the small drum (*tablā*)", and (3) "I speak (outwardly)", are experienced (as the finer forms of the three gross types of speech, shining as separate entities). (These are thus the finer forms of the three types of speech.) The basic source of even these (three finer forms of speech), which is free from all impositions, is that superior trinity that shines as *Siva*, the transcendental and infinite pure Consciousness (*Tantrāloka*, III.245-47).

He adds that staying continuously aware of the blissful nature of the tune of awareness (*paśyantī*) leads one to a quick realization that blissful, infinite, and pure Consciousness is none other than one's real Self. He says:

A very quick absorption is attained in a flash during the sound of this tune, because, being so close to pure consciousness, it is quite akin to it (*ibid.*, III.239).

Madhurāja, the author of the *Gurunāthaparāmarśah*, says that Abhinavagupta always used to keep a *vīṇā* by his side, and would occasionally play it. He must have found the *vīṇā* a powerful aid in the practice of withdrawing his awareness from the world around him and focusing within on the purer consciousness of

the Self. In the text, Madhurāja says:

He (Abhinavagupta) was playing on a special type of lute with the quivering tips of the nails of his lotus like left hand (*Gurunātha-parāmarśah*, 6).

Why did Kashmir Śaivism along with other philosophies place such importance on sound? The fifth *tattva* in ascending order is ether (*ākāśa*). It is the finest of the physical objects of the senses known as the five *bhūtas*, and according to classical philosophy, sound is the special characteristic quality of ether. Sound itself, the fifteenth *tattva*, is also the finest of the five specific sense perceptions known as *tanmātras*. Therefore, among all the *tanmātras*, sound is the most effective in subduing body-consciousness and in arousing the dormant blissfulness of pure consciousness. Because music is the most pleasing of all forms of sound, it was, and is still, included as an aid to spiritual attainment in the practice of Kashmir Śaivism.

Music has another benefit as well. It is not likely that the deception of a false teacher or guru could contaminate the use of music in spiritual practices, as the simple enjoyment of music, and the pleasures of participating in its performance, are not dependent on the personality of a teacher. Music is equally available and uplifting to everyone.

Along with these outer forms of beauty and pleasure, there is also an inner aesthetic experience, traditionally avoided by puritanical schools, that arises in the practice of this philosophy. According to Kashmir Śaivism, both the transcendent and vital aspects of absolute Reality (*Paramaśiva*), should be understood and realized. Reality's transcendental aspect (*Śiva*) is experienced as something beyond all concepts and ideas:

It is very difficult to understand that (supreme transcendental) position. It is that final truth beyond which nothing else exists at all (*Tantrāloka*, II.28).

The other aspect of the Truth is that vitality and absolute blissfulness that keeps It continuously and playfully manifesting the universe along with the other divine activities.\* Absolute Reality, shorn of its divine activities, would be diminished to the

\*The five divine activities are: creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, Self-recognition.

position of the void of dreamless sleep (*śūnya*) as described by Buddhist thinkers. As Abhinavagupta says:

Had the Lord remained shining in only one way (as the transcendental consciousness alone), He would have given up his *śakti* and His being Consciousness, (and would become) just like an insentient object—like some earthen pot (*Tantrāloka*, III.100-101).

Thoughtful people, who have a highly developed aesthetic sense, find no beauty in this kind of passive and powerless Absolute because they understand it to be devoid of the divinely playful aspect of the Absolute which is infinitely beautiful. Precisely because of this infinite beauty, It is worshiped by Śaivas as *tripurasundarī*, the highest beauty which they experience at the three planes of unity (*śakti*), diversity (*māyā*), and diversely shining unity (*vidyā*). Absolute blissfulness is central to the realization of this aspect of the truth. In fact, the very process of realization itself can be positively blissful, and therefore it becomes the main goal of all the esoteric practices of Tantric Śaivism.

All of the blissful and beautiful aspects of the Absolute are present in each and every person and living thing, but they remain dormant because they are hidden behind the mask of *māyā*. In other words, we are all blinded to this inner bliss and beauty by our limited sense of who we are, and by the habit of directing so much of our attention out into the world. Everyone can have momentary glimpses of inner bliss when they experience something that is extremely pleasing to the senses and the mind. But usually these situations are fleeting and simply leave a person unfulfilled and longing for more. They then pursue the outer object in an attempt to rediscover the blissful state, not realizing that the source of bliss is within and need not be attached to an outer stimulus at all. This inner beauty can be discovered and contacted at will through simply turning our attention within, and through the various practices outlined in this *yoga*.

However, as we have already observed, this philosophy does not exclude using outer objects of beauty as a means to reach the inner source. If aspirants are extraordinarily alert at the moment of experiencing some object sweet to the senses, and blissful to the mind, they will find access to the source of their infinite blissfulness through the secret path of these momentary

experiences of sensual pleasure. This can best be attained by developing an intensely sharp and quick attentiveness, known as *avadhāna*. This form of vigilant attentiveness is not generally possessed by ordinary people, but can become available through the practice of *śāmbhava* yoga. This attentiveness, or *avadhāna*, is the master key to spontaneously opening all the doors leading to the realization of one's true nature of blissfulness. And as we have said, the very act of realizing this truth is itself blissful. This recognition of our Self as infinite beauty and joy and divine power is the main aim of all the theories and practices of Śaivism.

As was discussed in detail in chapter 9, Śaivism recommends several types of yoga practices. The most elementary type recommends meditation on specific objects along with contemplation on the real nature of these objects. This type of practice is called *kriyā* yoga or *āṇava upāya*. At a more advanced level, the subject rather than the object becomes the focus of meditation. This contemplation on the real nature of one's own Self is known as *jñāna* yoga or *śākta upāya*. A still more refined level of practice involves the direct realization of the true nature of the Self. This is known as *śāmbhava upāya*, and because it is practiced through the use of one's will power, it is called *icchā* yoga as well. Above all of these practices is the form known as *ānanda* yoga or *anupaya* yoga. Sometimes it is not considered a separate level, but simply the highest phase of *śāmbhava upāya*. It involves direct Self-recognition, and has also been called the methodless method.

According to Śaivism, *anupaya* may also be reached by entering into the infinite blissfulness of the Self through the powerful experiences of sensual pleasures. This practice is designed to help the practitioner reach the highest levels by accelerating their progress through the *śākta* and *śāmbhava* *upāyas*. These carefully guarded doctrines of Tantric *sādhanā* are the basis for certain practices, like the use of the five *makāras* (*hṛdaya*) mentioned earlier. The experience of a powerful sensual pleasure quickly removes a person's dullness or indifference. It awakens in them the hidden nature and source of blissfulness and starts its inner vibration. Abhinavagupta says that only those people who are awakened to their own inner vitality can truly be said to have a heart (*hṛdaya*). They are known as *sahṛdaya* (connoisseurs). Those uninfluenced by this type of experiences are said to be heartless. In his words:

It is explained thus—The heart of a person, shedding off its attitude of indifference while listening to the sweet sounds of a song or while feeling the delightful touch of something like sandalpaste, immediately starts a wonderful vibratory movement. (This) is called *ānanda-śakti* and because of its presence the person concerned is considered to have a heart (in their body) (*Tantrāloka*, III.209-10).

People who do not become one (with such blissful experiences), and who do not feel their physical body being merged into it, are said to be heartless because their consciousness itself remains immersed (in the gross body) (*ibid.*, III.24).

The philosopher Jayaratha addresses this topic as well when he quotes a verse from a work by an author named *Paraśastabhūtipāda*:

The worship to be performed by advanced aspirants consists of strengthening their position in the basic state of (infinite and blissful pure consciousness), on the occasions of the experiences of all such delightful objects which are to be seen here as having sweet and beautiful forms (*Tantrāloka*, II.219).

These authors are pointing out that if people participate in pleasureable experiences with that special sharp alertness known as *avadhāna*, they will become oblivious to the limitations of their usual body-consciousness and their pure consciousness will be fully illumined. According to *Vijñānabhairava*:

A Śiva yogin, having directed his attention to the inner bliss which arises on the occasion of some immense joy, or on seeing a close relative after a long time, should immerse his mind in that bliss and become one with it (*Vijñānabhairava*, 71).

A yogin should fix his mind on each phenomenon which brings satisfaction (because) his own state of infinite bliss arises therein (*ibid.*, 74).

In summary, Kashmir Śaivism is a philosophy that embraces life in its totality. Unlike puritanical systems it does not shy away from the pleasant and aesthetically pleasing aspects of life as somehow being unspiritual or contaminated. On the contrary, great importance has been placed on the aesthetic quality of spiritual practice in Kashmir Śaivism. In fact, recognizing and celebrating the aesthetic aspect of the Absolute is one of the central principles of this philosophy.

## CHAPTER 11

### The Vilāsa Principle in Neo-Śaivism

Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava, the originator of Neo-Śaivism, was born in 1903 under the name Vaidyanātha Varakale into a family of Brahmin scholars from Varanasi who were living at the time in Allahabad. The family's ancestors had originally come from Vidarbha in western Maharashtra, and for generations had been producing scholars of Sanskrit. Members of this family rarely took employment of any kind, but mostly lived on offerings from students and listeners as they taught and propagated the Sanskrit language and the holy books.

During Vaidyanātha Varakale's sacred thread ceremony in 1919, he received initiation in Śrī-Vidyā and accepted Bālā Tripurā as his favourite deity. As a result of his faithful adoration of the deity, he had a vision of sage Durvāsas who appeared before him at the dead of night in his ancestral home at Varanasi and taught him the exact method of śāmbhava yoga known to the Trika system of Śaivism. A regular practice in this yoga resulted in his intuitive realization of the main philosophical principles of what he would later discover to be Kashmir Śaivism. At this point his only exposure to Trika Śaivism had been certain hymns that he had memorised in praise of Śiva and Śakti.

Vaidyanātha Varakale, who later became famous under his pen-name, Amṛtavāgbhava, received higher education at Queen's Sanskrit College in Varanasi when M.M. Upādhyāya Śrī Gopināth Kavirāj was serving as principal. Dr. Kavirāj ji advised him to study Abhinavagupta's *Paramārthasāra*. He read it along with the commentary by Yogarāja, and found the same philosophical principles discussed in it that he had already discovered through his yogic experience. He then went on to study the *Mahārthamañjarīparimala* of Maheśvarānanda, and Bhoja's *Tattvaprakāśa*. He was very gratified to find that in these works too, his own experiences agreed with the views of these ancient masters.

In 1926, when he was working as a research scholar at the Sarasvati Bhavan Library in Varanasi, he composed *Paramaśivastotra*, a text adoring Śiva in the form of the thirty-six *tattvas*, inspired by his own personal experiences during the practice of *śāmbhava* yoga.

In 1928, he left his home and took up the life of a wandering monk. He traveled in various parts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu-Kashmir, seeing, most of the sacred places of these states. At many of these sites he experienced different types of strange and wonderful visions. Most of these he described later in his *Siddhamahārahasya*. Later on he continued his journeys in Rajasthan, Bombay, Hyderabad, and finally to Calcutta in the east. During his travels, he wrote many philosophical and religious texts, and composed secular poetry along with hymns to different deities.

During his wandering in Kashmir, he studied the works of the ancient masters Abhinavagupta, Utpaladeva, Somānanda, and others. He was always astonished to find in these texts the same philosophical principles that he had intuitively experienced during the practice of *śāmbhava* yoga as taught to him by sage Durvāsas in that vision years earlier.

Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava has become known as the originator of Neo-Śaivism. While he wrote widely on philosophy, politics, and religion, as well as composing many hymns and poems, *Ātmavilāsa*, *Vinśatikāśāstra*, and *Siddhamahārahasya* are his most important works on the non-dualistic philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism.

In this chapter we will examine *Vilāsasiddhānta*, the most important philosophical principle of Neo-Śaivism, which appears in Amṛtavāgbhava's principle work, *Ātmavilāsa*. This text was written in 1934 while the Ācārya was on tour in the Kashmir valley.

*Vilāsa* is one of those complex Sanskrit words that is exceedingly difficult to translate into one or two equivalent English words. It can be best understood as that essential nature of the Absolute that has been called *tūlā* in Vaiṣṇavism, and *aiśvarya* in Śaivism. Throughout this text we have used the term "divine essence" to approximate the complex notion implied by this principle.

The word *vilāsa* has been translated as "luxurious dalliance", but this unfortunately implies a possible decadence, or wasteful laziness. In English, dalliance can also mean amorous play or

flirtation, which is closer to the idea that this word conveys. *Vilāsa* is a strong word with no negative connotations. It implies the stirring and blissful sexual interaction with a lover who is both virile and at ease due to complete freedom and a transcendence of time. *Vilāsa* includes the idea of a playful, radiant, virile, spontaneous, and leisurely form of erotic play. It describes the amorous couple during their most enticing and rapture-filled exchange. Yet while this form of sexual encounter with the lover forms the basis of this term, *vilāsa* has far broader connotations. It implies that one's interactions with the whole environment will be infused and permeated with this expectant and exuberant quality.

More specifically, the word *vilāsa* can be divided into the prefix *vi* and the root *las*. *Las* carries many meanings, but is frequently used to denote both a dance and beauty. In this case *las* is the gentle loving dance of Pārvatī, as opposed to *tāṇḍava*, the strong and sometimes destructive dance of Śiva. The prefix *vi* is an intensifier that suggests excellence and abundance. Knowing the above conditions, we could translate *vilāsa* with the term "divine play," or "divine exuberance".

Let us now review the Kashmir Śaivite theory of creation and its central concept of divine essence, known as *vilāsa* in Neo-Śaivism. The whole universe, all phenomena and their functions, are the manifestation of the divine exuberance (*vilāsa*) of the non-dualistic Absolute. This Absolute is the only eternally existent reality, and is described as radiant, infinite, all-containing, and perfectly pure I-consciousness. It is totally aware of its own divine potency, and this awareness has been described as a kind of subtle movement or spiritual stirring called *spanda* (see chapter 6). This stirring is, in essence, that infinite blissfulness of the Absolute that sets in motion the outward illumination of Its divine nature. Consciousness starts to shine with a strong will to express Itself externally. In the initial blissful stirrings of this will, the nature of absolute Consciousness shines with omniscience and omnipotence. At the next level of manifestation this stirring starts to shine as a dramatic play. It reflects outwardly the divine powers of the Absolute, which shine as the thirty-six elements from Śiva to earth. These outward reflections appear not only as phenomenal objects but also as subjects—as all types of sentient beings. As ordinary people we embody all thirty-six *tattvas*, yet we

do not understand the divine nature of our true Self—the Absolute. We think of ourselves as being some combination of our body and mind, experience ourselves as having limited capabilities, see the world as different from ourselves, and move in cycles of transmigration according to the divine law of retribution (*karman*).

The Absolute, shining above the highest level of the thirty-six *tattvas*, bestows Its divine grace on us. At this point we become transformed, search for a teacher, develop an interest in spiritual philosophy, receive initiation, practice with intense devotion, and finally realize that we are none other than the absolute and infinite I-consciousness which is calmly delighting in the play of creating the universe. Throughout this creation, Consciousness is manifesting Its own divine powers in the form of all things which shine within it, just as reflections shine in a crystal. This realization gives us perfect satisfaction, and we feel we have finally attained the highest possible state. All this is the exuberant play of absolute Consciousness.

In the divine play, as described above, we experience the outward manifestation of the Lord's divine essence which appears as the dramatic show of the five divine cosmic activities: creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition. In Neo-Śaivism, this fivefold play of God is called the *vilāsa* of the Lord. This *vilāsa* is His essential nature, and it causes Him to continuously manifest this quality through these five divine activities.

Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava's first important text, *Ātmavilāsa*, is centered on this principle of *vilāsa*. This theory of the divine has been discussed in different contexts in all the main chapters of the text. A perfect Śiva yogin experiences everything in phenomenal existence as the *vilāsa* of his Self because all things, including himself, are simply expressions of this divine exuberance. Such yogins actually experience their own Self as none other than Lord Śiva, the absolute God. Seeing one's own *vilāsa* in all things is correct knowledge and liberation, while not seeing this is ignorance and bondage.

In the Introduction we have already shown how the Kashmir Śaiva concept of the divine differs from other schools of Indian philosophy, and the same holds true with the concept of *vilāsa* in Neo-Śaivism. According to Śrī Vāgbhava the various concepts of

theism that occur in the theistic schools, and the atheism of the atheistic schools, are simply further examples of the *vilāsa* of the Absolute. This is the case for all subjects, objects, and means of knowing. This *vilāsa* of God is thus the central theory of the Neo-Śaivite philosophy.

In the following overview of the text *Ātmavilāsa*, we can easily recognize all the main principles of the ancient non-dualistic Śaivism from Kashmir as they are reinterpreted with the term *vilāsa*. In the first verse of chapter I, Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava focuses on *vilāsa* as the cause of the divine activities of God, thus dismissing the notions of illusion (*māyā*), ignorance (*avidyā*), innate propensity (*vāsanā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), the restlessness of *rajas*, etc. as root causes of manifestation. He speaks of this *vilāsa* as being ever new and freshly charming.

In the first verse of the second chapter the Ācārya establishes the following tenets: (1) God is great by virtue of His *vilāsa* which is His essential nature; (2) Through His *vilāsa* He manifests His own Self as all phenomena; (3) He is eternally elevated to this position of authority (His divine essence); (4) He excels all other divine authorities (See Appendix 1).

In the second verse of this chapter, he clarifies that because of Its *vilāsa*, absolute Consciousness is spoken of as Śiva and Śakti, or as Lord and His divine essence. Śiva is the noumenal aspect, and Śakti the phenomenal aspect, and both are just two phases of *vilāsa*. In the third verse he says: "Vilāsa is not different from ātman, and ātman is not different from vilāsa. This is the real monism, shining as existence, consciousness, and blissfulness in their perfect unity" (*Ātmavilāsa*, II.3). Ātman is the Lord and *vilāsa* is His divine essence. These are just two ideas about one reality.

In the fourth verse of chapter II, the author points out how different philosophers are only describing the *vilāsa* of the Lord as it manifests itself at different levels of His dramatic play of phenomenal creation. It is therefore the *vilāsa* of the Lord that is discovered and described as the doctrine of "new creation" (*ārambhavāda*) by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, as the doctrine of "transformation" (*parināmavāda*) by the Sāṃkhyas and yogins, as *vivartavāda* by the Advaita Vedāntins, as *vijñānavāda* by the Buddhists, and as atheism by the atheists.

In the twelfth verse of chapter III, Ācārya clarifies that the blissfulness of the ātman arises from the awareness of His pure

and divine Consciousness. Pure consciousness is not static like physical space. It is full of the stirrings of Self-awareness, and this awareness illuminates the blissfulness of the *ātman*. Even this most subtle and essential nature of the *ātman*, this stirring of awareness, is set in motion by His *vilāsa*.

The *vilāsa* of the *ātman* is further described in chapter three of *Ātmavilāsa*. The Lord is again described as nothing but pure Consciousness, and as containing everything within Himself in the form of pure Consciousness alone (*Ātmavilāsa*, III.1). In the third verse of this chapter the author says: "Only God is truly independent because He alone shines independently through the luminosity of His own pure consciousness. All other forms of life, from Brahamā (the creator) to a lowly plant, operate under His *vilāsa*." Verses eight and nine explain how the things of this world that we experience as dualities, having been manifested by the *ātman* through His *vilāsa*, are not absolute truth. There is a wonderful and perfect reality that transcends all dualities and concepts. This transcendent reality consists of existence, consciousness, and blissfulness. "It is the infinite Self-awareness, and 'that I am'" (*Ātmavilāsa*, III.8, 9).

The fourth chapter of *Ātmavilāsa* deals with the principle of absolute and pure knowledge (*mahāvidyā*). In the first verse, Absolute Reality is called *mahāvidyā*, which, due to its *vilāsa*, manifests itself as both correct knowledge (*vidyā*), and ignorance (*avidyā*). The Ācārya points out that ignorance is not an adventitious entity (*upādhi*), somehow having its existence outside of Absolute Reality, or *mahāvidyā*, as it is being called here. Because pure knowledge has *vilāsa* as its essential nature, It appears playfully as ignorance as well as knowledge. In Neo-Śaivism, as in its ancient form, the source of ignorance is found within the *vilāsa* of the Absolute.

In the second verse of chapter four, the Ācārya explains further that both knowledge and ignorance are sentient because both have been manifested by the *vilāsa* of the *ātman*. However, because knowledge does not include ignorance, and ignorance does not include knowledge, both are imperfect. Only pure knowledge, appearing in the form of both ignorance and knowledge, and including both within itself, is perfect in character. In other words, we must look beyond the limitations at the level of creation to find and recognize the perfect source of all that is.

The fifth chapter of this work deals further with the notions of purity and impurity. Here the Ācārya explains how the Absolute, which is perfectly pure, appears itself in the form of relative purity and impurity. He says: "The everblissful Lord is an expert in raising purity to its full bloom. He, having descended (to the grossest levels) through his *vilāsa*, and ascending again (to the subtlest levels), in accordance with His own will, rises up (to perfection), experiencing His Self-bliss throughout the whole process" (*Ātmavilāsa*, IV.4).

Purity is experienced as most brilliant when it appears in comparison with impurity. The Lord, by descending to the level of an ordinary human being, creates a show of intense impurity. Then, when He raises that person up, the highest level of purity will be experienced as especially wonderful in comparison to the previous impure level. This whole cycle of devolution and evolution is explained as being merely the *vilāsa* of the Lord. A person's experience of limitation and finitude, the vision of diversity, the personal association with insentient substances like the physical body, and the feelings of responsibility for deeds committed by one's body, mind, senses, and organs, are all considered impure in Śaivism. Identity with the infinite and pure I-consciousness, a non-dualistic view toward all phenomena, feelings of omniscience and omnipotence, etc., are considered pure in Śaivism. And ultimately, the awareness of one's natural purity is not as wonderful as its realization in comparison with impurity. It is the discovery of one's real nature of absolute purity, after having been bound in impurity, which is the apex of the divine exuberance (*vilāsa*) of the Lord.

In the fourteenth verse, the Ācārya points out that the Lord never becomes involved in His deeds, but shines like a lamp as a witness to them all. Similarly, the perfect Śiva yogins see all phenomena, along with the various functions of these phenomena, as their own playful *vilāsa*. Verse twenty-four describes the perfection of their sacrifice as follows:

Perfectly pure beings, having evolved the world through their own natural *vilāsa*, and offering all things as oblations to the sacred fire of their own pure and perfect Consciousness, excel all while drinking deep the nectar of the blissfulness of their own *vilāsa*, vibrating within their heart (*Ātmavilāsa*, IV.24).

Such a yogin takes up the limitations of the world, absorbs

them into himself, and offers them into the sacred fire of pure I-consciousness. The ability to thus transform the mundane and limited into the finest and purest is the highest goal of all life.

In the sixth chapter, the Ācārya discusses the active and non-active aspects of the Absolute. The Lord performs all deeds while remaining untouched by their purity or impurity, or by responsibility for their results. God playfully conducts His five divine activities, while remaining completely free of any purpose or aim connected to the process. It is simply His nature, *vilāsa*, to keep this phenomenal play in constant motion. Because He is not involved in any goal, He remains free from all responsibility for the results. "He simply shines always as the perfect 'doer' of everything" (*Ātmavilāsa*, VI.24). All of this amazing universe, its creation, sustenance, and dissolution, along with God's Self-obscuration and Self-recognition, is nothing but the *vilāsa* of the real *ātman*.

## APPENDIX

### Sanskrit Quotations

#### INTRODUCTION

*Durvijñeyā hi sāvasthā kimapyetad anuttaram.* (*Tantrāloka*, II.28)

It is very difficult to understand the character of this state. It is therefore said to be that form of transcendental reality beyond which nothing else exists.

#### CHAPTER 1

##### PARĀDVAITA, THE ABSOLUTE MONISM

*Brahmāpiṣṭam avidyayā ṣaha tato naikānta-vādo pyayam.* (*Īśvara-pratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī*, III.404)

Since *Brahman* has been accepted as having *avidyā* (as another beginningless element) along with him, this cannot be accepted as a monistic doctrine.

*Avidyayā ityanirvācyā-rūpayā. Ayam Brahma-vado'pi naikānta-vādo, na niścītadvaita-vādaḥ iti.* (*Ibid.*)

*Avidyā* is said to be inexplicable. This doctrine of *brahma-vāda* is not a definite principle, that is to say, it cannot be accepted as a definitely non-dualistic doctrine.

*Vivarto hyasatyā-rūpa-nirbhāsanetyuktam; nirbhāsate cāsatyam ceti katham iti tu na cintitam.* (*Ibid.*, I.8)

It has been said that *vivarta* is the manifestation of an unreal entity. How can it be unreal when it is manifested? This anomaly has not been given due consideration.

*Avidyā cānirvācyā, vaicitryam cādhatte, iti vyāhatam.* (*Ibid.*, I.9)

There is a contradiction in saying that *avidyā* is indescribable and yet brings about (the manifestation of multifarious diversity).

*Eka-padena Brahma-vivartavado'pi nānyah siddah iti dhvanati.* (Ibid., 176)

His word 'one' suggests that even the other theory of the false appearance of *Brahman*, (in the form of phenomenon), can not be established.

*Paśu-pramātṛṇām astyakhyāti-rūpo mohah. Kāraṇam cāsyēvara-śaktiriti svarūpataḥ kāraṇataśca nirvācyataiva. Na khalvanirvācyākāraḥ kaścid avidyātmā mohah. Avastutvenāsyeyad-vaicitryaprathanasāmarthyā-sambhavāt. Sambhave vā pūrṇam eva vastutvam, nānirvācyatā.* (Ibid., 80)

There is self-contraction in saying that *avidyā* is indescribable and in describing it as the entity that assumes the whole infinitely varied display of phenomena. To say that finite beings are deluded by the beginningless ignorance brought about by *avidyā*, the divine power of God, implies that such a power is surely describable, and it is actually described in that way. Besides, a non-substantial entity could not have the capacity to manifest such an extraordinary show. If it is really capable of creating, then it must be a truly existent entity and not an apparent and indescribable one.

*Ityesā hi na Sāṃkhyejā nāpi Vaidāntikī dṛg, api tu Śaivyeva.* (*Parātriśikāvivarāṇa*, 181)

It is thus not the view of the Sāṃkhya system, nor that of Vedānta, but that of Śaivism only.

*Antargata-viśva-vīrya-samucchalattāmaka-visarga-viśleṣānanda-śakteyekaghanam Brahma bṛhad vyāpakaḥ bṛmhitaḥ ca.* (Ibid., 221)

*Brahman* is one compact whole, that power of bliss which projects itself externally by a kind of spilling out of the universal creative potency lying within. Infinite consciousness gets evolved into all phenomenal existence just as the word *Brahman* means both the all-pervading infinite and the evolved entity.

*Natu Vedānta-pāṭhakāṅgikṛta-śūnya-vādāvidūra-varti-Brahmadarśana iva.* (*Parātriśikāvivarāṇa*)

The *Brahman* of Śaivism is not the same as that of Advaita Vedānta which comes very close to the final principle of nihilistic Buddhism.

*Ata eva bhedābhedayor virodham duhsamartham-abhimanya-mānair ekair avidyātvena anirvācyatvam aparaīścābhāsa-lagnatayā sāñvṛitatvam abhidadhabhir ātmā paraśca vañcitaḥ (Īśvarapratybhijñāvimarśinī with Bhāskarī, II.131)*

Finding the contradiction between unity and diversity quite irreconcilable, some thinkers (i.e. Vedāntins) stated that apparent diversity was inexplicable because of its being *avidyā* (basic ignorance), while others (i.e. Buddhists) said that diversity was false because it was an outcome of *samvṛti* (mental ideation). Thus both of them deceived themselves and others as well.

*Cidrūpasyaikatvam yadi vāstavaṁ, bhedaḥ punar ayam avidyopaplavād ityucyate, tadā kasyāyam avidyopaplavaḥ iti na saṅgacchate. Brahmano hi Vidyaikarūpasya katham avidyā-rūpatā? Na cānyah kaścid asti vastuto jīvādir yasyāvidyā bhavet. (Ibid., II.201)*

It is argued that the unity of absolute consciousness is a reality, and that (the appearance) of diversity is due to the disturbance caused by *avidyā*, it is irresolvable who is responsible for this defect of ignorance. For on the one hand, how could *Brahman*, who is pure knowledge, assume the form of ignorance? And on the other hand, in reality there is no other creature to whom ignorance could occur.

*Anirvācyeyamavidyeti cet, Kasyānirvācyeti na vidmaḥ. Svarūpena ca bhāti na ca nirvācyeti kimetaḥ? Yuktyā nopapadyate iti cet, saṃvedana-tiraskāriṇi kā khalu yuktir nāma. Anupapatiśca bhāsamānasya kānyā bhaviṣyati. (Ibid., II.202)*

If *avidyā* is said to be inexplicable, it is not clear to us for whom it is inexplicable. On the one hand, its essential character becomes manifest, on the other hand, it is said to be an indescribable entity. What is it? If this means that its existence cannot be explained or justified through logical arguments, then we ask what kind of logic is it that could contradict direct experience? How can an entity, which shines in experience, be unjustifiable?

*Samvid-rūpaṁ Brahma abhinnaṁ cakāstyavikalpake, vikalpabalāttu bhedoyam. (Ibid., II.202)*

*Brahman*, the pure Consciousness, shines alone as an existent truth in *nirvikalpa* cognition, a direct experience, free from

ideation, and phenomenal diversity appears as a result of mental ideation.

*Kasyāyam Vikalpanavyāpāro nāma? Brahmanas-ced avidyā-yogo, na cānyosti.* (Ibid.)

Who conducts such ideation? If *Brahman* conducts it, He becomes tainted by *avidyā*. None other than He exists, so who else could conduct it?

*Avikalpakam ca satyam vikalpakam asatyam, iti kuto vibhāgo; bhāsamānasavyavīśesāt.* (Ibid.)

How can a distinction be established that knowledge without ideation is correct while knowledge with ideation is incorrect, when both of them shine with equal brilliance?

*Bhāsamānam-avadhīrya āgama-pramāṇakoyam-abhedah iti ced, āgamo'pi bhedātmaka eva vastubhūtaḥ.* (Ibid., 203)

If it is argued that unity is established on the basis of scriptural authority with disregard for mundane knowledge, then it is pointed out here that scriptures themselves hold authority in the field of diversity and have diversity as their character.

*Vastavam cidekatvam abhyupagamyāpi tasya kartṛtva-lakṣaṇā bhinnarūpa-samāvēśātmikā kriyā nopapadyate. Parāmarśa-svarūpam tu svātantryam yadi bhavati tadopapadyate sarvam.* (Ibid., II.203-4)

Even if the absolute monistic existence of pure Consciousness is accepted, its independent activity of bearing diverse forms can not be explained at all. But all this can be justified and explained if it be accepted as endowed with freedom in the form of Self-awareness.

*Idam hi tat parādvaitam bheda-tyāgagrahau na yat.* (*Mālinī-vijayavārttika*, I.123)

It is that absolute monism in which diversity is neither denied or established.

*Amuśmin paramādvaita prakāśātmani ko'parah.* (*Tantrāloka*, II.16)

What other entity can there be in the absolute and monistic pure consciousness?

*Paramādvaya-dṛṣṭim tat Samśrayeh saranam mahat.* (*Mālinīvijaya-vārttika*, I.693)

Please take refuge in the limitless view of that absolute monism.

*Ucyate nādvaye'muṣmin dvaitam nāstyeva sarvathā: uktam hi bhedavandhye'pi vibhau bhedāvabhaśanam.* (Ibid., I.108)

It is not being said that diversity does not exist at all in this (understanding of) non-dualism. The manifestation of diversity has been accepted even in that which is devoid of all differentiation.

*Kintu durghaṭakārītvāt/Svācchandyān-nirmaladasau;/  
Svātmaprachchādana-kṛidā/Paṇḍitah Paramēśvarah.* (Tantrāloka, IV.10)

But Almighty God, being able to do even the impossible, and possessing pure Self-dependence, is skilled in playfully concealing His real Self.

*Asthāsyad ekarūpeṇa vapuṣā cen maheśvarah:/  
Maheśvaratvam saṃvittvam tadaṭyakṣyad ghaṭādivat.* (Tantrāloka, III.100)

If Almighty God had remained for ever in one form, He would have to give up His consciousness and creative power, thus becoming an insentient article like an earthen water vessel.

*Etāu bandha-vimokṣau ca/Parameśa-svarūpataḥ;/  
Na bhidye na bhedo hi/Tattvataḥ Parameśvare.* (Bodhapañcadaśikā, 14)

These twin concepts of bondage and liberation are the essential character of Almighty God, because, in fact, the concept of difference does not exist in him at all.

*Idam sandhāna-kalikā-pariniṣṭhita-buddinā;/  
Ācāryanarasimhena/Pratyakṣādvayamucyate.* (Mālinīvijayavārttika, I.763)

The great teacher, Narasiṁhagupta, having ripened his intellect in the art of correct contemplation, calls this the non-dualism that can be perceived through one's external senses.

*Tasmād viṣayābhimatam vastu śarīratayā gr̥hitvā tavannirbhāsamāna  
ātmaiva prakāśate viccheda-sūnyah.* (Bhāskari, I.52)

Therefore, only the ātman (Self) shines (everywhere) taking as its form the whole objective existence known as the universe, and appearing as all this without any break.

*Prakāśamāna-svabhāvate viśayo'pi sarvātmanā prakāśa eva nimagna iti prakāśah prakāśate ityetāvan-mātra-paramārthatve kah sarvajñā-sarvajñā-vibhāgah.* (Ibid., 51)

Being itself of the nature of consciousness, the object too is wholly immersed in the light (of consciousness); since the ultimate truth is merely the fact that the light (of consciousness) shines, what distinction could there be between omniscience and its absence?

*Ajñāta-paryāya-pada-sthiñiñ prati/  
Prayujyate pādapa esa bhūruhah; /  
Kumbho ghaṭaśceti tathaiva bhan্যate /  
Maheśvaraḥ sarvarmidam jagattviti.* (Mālinīvijayavārttika, I.929)

Just as students not acquainted with certain synonymns are taught as follows: 'A *pādapa* (tree) is a *bhūruha*, and a *ghaṭa* (water vessel) is a *kumbha*, so it is said that the Almighty Lord is this whole phenomenon.

*Idam hi tat parādvaitam/bheda-tyāga-grahau na yat.* (Ibid., I.123)  
The absolute monism is that principle which neither refutes nor establishes diversity.

*Ata eva hi bhedo'sti na kaścid yo maheśvaram;/  
Advayaṁ samprabhindīta prakāśananda-sundaram.* (Ibid., I.621)  
Hence there is no such diversity that could cause any differentiation in the non-dual Almighty God, shining beautifully through His own blissful light of consciousness.

*Idam dvaitam idam neti/Tadidam ca dvayādvayam;/  
Iti yatra samam bhāti/Tadadvayam udāhṛtam.* (Ibid., I.626)  
The real non-dualism is that philosophical view which sees only one Truth in diverse statements like 'This is diversity, this is non-diversity, (that is unity) and, this is both diversity and unity.'

*Evaṁ svātantrya-pūrṇatvād-/Atidrghaṭa-kāryayam;/  
Kena nāma na rūpeṇa/Bhāsate Parameśvaraḥ.* (Ibid., I.92)  
The Almighty Lord, is thus, by virtue of His perfect independence, capable of doing the impossible. In what form does not the Supreme Lord appear?

*Nirāvaraṇamābhāti/Bhātyāvṛta-nijātmakah;/  
Āvṛtānāvṛto bhāti/ Bahudhā bheda-saṅgamāt.* (Ibid., I.93)

He appears clearly without any covering and appears with His reality concealed under coverings. Then, accepting infinite diversity, He appears in wonderful variety as partly hidden and partly open.

*Nimnam tadāga-pāniyam/Kah pravartayitum kṣamah;/  
Paripūrṇe tatas tasmin/Pravāhāḥ sarvatomukhāḥ.* (Ibid., I.245, 246)  
Who can make the shallow water of a tank overflow the brim?  
It is (only a spring), full up to the brim, that can send off flowing streams (of water) on all sides.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEISTIC ABSOLUTISM AND SPIRITUAL REALISM

*Samvṛtir vikalpa-buddhis, tadvaśādūcyataṁ samvṛti-satyatvam satyat-  
vasyaiva tu prakāras tat.* (*Bhāskarī*, II.46)

*Samvṛti* is the name given to mental ideation (accompanied by a word image). The phenomenon can, no doubt, be said to be a reality based on such ideation; it is indeed a reality of a specific kind (and is not falsehood).

*Cinmayatve 'vabhāsānām antareva sthitis sadā;  
Māyayā-bhāsamānānām bhāhyatvād bahirapyasau.* (*Īśvarapratyabhijnā*, I.8.7)

All the apparent entities, having consciousness as their basic character, exist eternally only within (infinite) Consciousness. At the same time, having an outward manifestation through *māyā*, these entities do exist as well in outer phenomenon.

*Kriyā-sambandha-sāmānya-dravya-dik-kāla-buddhayah;  
Satyāḥ sthairyopayogābhyaṁ ekānekāśrayā matāḥ.* (*Īśvarapratyabhijnā* II.ii.1)

Ideas like action, relation, universals, substance, directions (in space), time, etc., do have a real existence due to their continuity and utility and are based on the concept of unity in diversity.

CHAPTER 5  
FOUR TYPES OF SPEECH

*Anādinidhanam Brahma Śabda-tattvam Yadakṣaram Vivartate'rtha-bhāvena prakriyā jagato Yataḥ.* (*Vākyapadīya*, I.1)

The eternally existent *Brahman*, being the changeless essence of speech, appears in the form of phenomenal substance out of which the process of universal existence proceeds.

*Citiḥ pratyavamar'sātmā parā vāk svarasoditā;  
Svātantryametan mukhyam tad aiśvaryam paramātmanah;  
Sā sphurattā mahāsattā deśa-kālāviśeṣinī;  
Saiṣā sāratayā proktā hṛdayam parameṣṭhinah;  
Ātmānamata evāyam jñeyikuryāt....* (*Īśvara-pratyabhijñā*, I.5.13-15)

Self awareness is the very soul of consciousness. It is spontaneously arising supreme speech (*vāc*) and is that Self-dependence of the Absolute God that is known as His supreme Lordship. It is a kind of vibrative activity, and is the supreme basic existence, unconditioned by time, space, etc. Being the real essence of the supreme Lord, it is said to be His heart. It is by virtue of this self-awareness that He manifests Himself as objective existence.

*Brahma bṛhad vyāpakaṁ bṛmhitam Ca; Na tu Vedānta-pāṭhakāṅgikṛta-kevala-śūnyavādāvidūrvartī-brahma-darśana iva.* (*Parātrīśikā-vivarana*, 221)

*Brahman* is that infinite and all-pervading reality that has evolved (into phenomenal existence). This is not the same as the Brahman of that form of *Vedānta* that comes close to *śūnyavāda*.

CHAPTER 8  
THE ŚAKTIPĀTA PRINCIPLE OF ŚAIVISM

*Tena rāga-kṣayāt karma-sāmyāt sukṛta-gauravāt;  
Mala-pākāt suhṛd-yogād bhakter bhāvācca sevanāt.  
Abhyāsād vāsanodbhedāt saṃskāra-paripākatah;  
Mithyā-jñāna-kṣayāt karma-sannyāsāt kāmya-vicryuteḥ.  
Sāmyāccittasya sā śakitiḥ patatīti yaducyate;  
Tadasan nanu tatrāpi nimittāntara-margaṇāt.*

*Anavāsthātiprasaṅgā-sambhavābhāva-yogataḥ;  
Anyonyāśraya-nihśrenī-cakrakādyupapātataḥ.*

(*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, I.686, 692)

As is being said, the bestowal of the divine grace of the Lord is the result of the causes listed as follows: consumption of attachment, equipotentiality of past deeds; high merits of piety, ripening of impurities, contact with well-wishers, emotional devotion to the Lord, regular service offered to Him, religious theological practice, dissolution of the flair for enjoyments, ripening of right impressions, eradication of incorrect knowledge, renunciation of activities, falling away of passionate longings, and equanimity of mind. But all that is incorrect, because all such things, (being themselves effects), must have their causes, which are to be searched out. Besides, these (attributes) are involved in other logical defects like: *anavasthā*, endlessness of argumentation; *atiprasaṅga*, unwarranted extension; *asambhava*, improbability; *abhāva*, non-existence; *anyonyāśraya*, interdependence; *nihśrenī*, classlessness; and *cakraka*, circular dependence, etc.

*Tasyaiva hi prasādena bhaktirupatyate nṛṇām;  
Yayā yānti parāṇi siddhim tad-bhāva-gata-mānasāḥ.* (Ibid., I.697)

It is His grace that gives rise to such devotion in human beings, through which they, devoting their minds to emotional love for Him, attain the highest perfection.

*Animittas tathā cāyan śakti-pāto maheśituh.* (Ibid., I.168)

Therefore the grace of the Lord does not depend on any external cause.

*Upajagmūr ato'nāpāyinīm śiva-śaktim na ca tāṁ vinā bhavet;  
Apavarga-padaṁ yato mudhā, para-śāstreṣu vimokṣa saṃkathā.*

(Ibid., I.695)

(The authority of) Lord Śiva's unfettered power of grace has therefore been accepted (by philosophers) because the state of (perfect) liberation cannot be attained otherwise, as the arguments put forth by other schools of thought in this regard are of no avail.

*Ittham purāṇa-śāstradau, śaktih sā pārameśvarī;/  
Nirapeksaiva kathitā, sāpeksatve hyaniśatā.* (Ibid., I.698)

Thus it has been said in *śāstras* like the Purāṇas that the Lord's

power of grace is absolutely independent; its dependence shall mean lack of Divine Essence in Him.

*Nāyamātma pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena;  
Yamevaīṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas Tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanum svām.*  
(*Kathopaniṣad*, I.ii.22)

The Self can neither be realized by means of discussions, nor through intelligence, nor through the careful listening to scriptures. The Self can only be realized by a being whom It chooses for such purposes, and to him alone does It reveal Its real character.

*Eṣa hyevainam sādhu karma kārayati tam Yamebhyo lokebhya unniñīṣate.  
Eṣa u tvasādhu karma karayati tam Yamadho niniṣate.*

(*Kauśitakibrāhmaṇopaniṣad*, 3-9)

It is He who directs such beings towards good actions whom He wants to lead above these mundane regions. Then it is He who directs those beings towards bad actions whom He wants to push below.

*Tvam bhaktiyā pṛiyase bhaktih pṛite tvayi ca nātha yat;  
Tadanyonyāśrayam yuktam yathā veththa tnameva tat.*

(*Śivastotrāvalī*, 116. 21)

O Lord, Thou art pleased through devotion on our part, and our devotion toward Thee dependeth on Thy pleasure. The way in which such interdependence can be justified is known (best) to Thee alone.

*Yah prasāda-lava iśvarasthito  
Yā ca bhaktiriva māmupeyuśi  
Tau parasparsa-samanvitau kadā  
Tādṛṣe vāpuṣi rūḍhimeśyataḥ.*

(Ibid., 8.1)

A very small fraction of grace (towards me) is present in the Lord, and something looking like devotion is rising in me. When shall these two things grow through mutual integration and attain the desired perfection!

*Jñānasya paramā bhūmir yogasya paramā daśā; Tvad-bhaktir yā vibho  
karhi pūrnā me syāt tadarthitā.* (Ibid., 9.9)

(Devotion towards Thee is the highest aspect of pure knowledge as well as the uppermost level of yoga. O Lord! When will my request for that (devotion) become (perfectly) fruitful?)

*Mukti-samjnā vipakvāya bhaktereva tvayi prabho;  
Tasyām ādya-daśārūḍhā mukta-kalpā vayam tataḥ.* (Ibid., 16.19)

O Lord! Liberation is the name given only to the perfectly ripened devotion towards Thee. Therefore we, having risen to its initial stage, are heading toward liberation.

*Asthāsyad eka-rūpeṇa vapuṣā cen maheśvaraḥ; maheśvaratvam samvitt-  
vam tadyat�aksyad ghaṭādivat.* (Tantrāloka, III.101)

Had the Lord remained confined to His one aspect (of transcendental consciousness) then He would have given up being God and being Consciousness, (and would be) just like an insentient substance, e.g. an earthen pot.

*Iti ced—“Alam grantha-dhāraṇa-vācana-vyakhyāna-vicāraṇādi-mithyā-  
yāsenā. Parityājya evāyam guru-bhārah. Tuṣṇīm-bhāva-śaraṇaireva stheyam.  
Bhagavad-icchaivottāraṇīyamuttārayet.” Ucyate—“Tadicchaivānugra-  
hātmā evam-vicāraṇāyām paryava-sāyayati; Na khalu pādaprasārikayaiva  
sukham śayānair bhuñjānaiśca svayamavimṛśadbhiḥ svāpeksa-tīvra-  
tarādi-pārameśvarānugrahōtpannādhika-sūkṣma-tama-vimarśa-kuśala-  
dhiṣāṇā-pariśilana-parāṇ-mukhair vā sthātavyam, iti.”*

(Parātriśikāvivaraṇa, 126-27)

“If it is so, then what is the use of wrongly taken trouble in activities like collecting scriptures and works, reading them, explaining and discussing them, pondering on them, and so on? This heavy burden should be shaken off. Refuge should be taken in keeping silence. The will of the Lord shall itself carry ashore the person who is to be carried there.” The answer to this objection is this: “It is the same gracious will of the Lord which is leading us finally towards such contemplation (or śāstras). Therefore it should not be our motto to eat merrily and sleep soundly with out-stretched legs, without either contemplating ourselves, or taking interest in discussions with worthy people who are blessed with such gracious activity of the Lord which is on a higher plane (than that working within us) and who have consequently developed a wisdom that is skilled in intricate thought.”

*Svabhāvajena kaunteya, nibaddhah svena karmanā;  
Kartum necchasi yan mohāt, kariṣyasyavaśo’pi tat.*

(Bhagavadgītā, XVIII.60)

O son of Kuntī, being bound by your characteristic activity, you shall be destined to do that which you do not want to do on account of your delusion.

### CHAPTER 9 YOGA IN THE TRIKA SYSTEM

*Prāṇāyāmo na kartavyah śarīram yena pīḍyate. (Tantrāloka, IV.91)*

Breath-control should not be practiced if it means torture to one's physical form.

*Tathāhi gururādikṣad bahudhā svaka-śāsane,  
Anādara-viraktyaiwa galantīndriya-vṛttayah.  
Yavattu viniyamyante tavattavad vikurvate.*

(*Mālinīvijayavārttika*, II.111-12)

It is so because my revered preceptor has thus advised many times during his teaching, 'The emotional functions of one's senses and organs calm down themselves through spontaneous indifference (towards their objects when these become tasteless for them). But, on the other hand, these become liable to adverse reactions as long as they are forcibly repressed.'

*Svaṁ panthānam hayasyeva manaso ye nirundhate,  
Tesām tatkhaṇḍanāyogaṁ dhāvatyutpatha-kotibhiḥ. (Ibid., II.119)*

The mind of those aspirants who force it to give up its familiar path, runs astray, just like a steed, on millions of wrong paths.

*Nimajjāmānamapyetad mano vaisayike rase,  
Nāntarārdratvamabhyeti niśchidraṁ tumbakam yathā. (Ibid., I.108)*

The mind (of a Śiva yogin) does not become wet (or stained) from within, just like the rind of a dried gourd which has no opening, even if it goes deep into the water of sensual pleasures.

*Yogam ekatvam icchanti vastuno'nyena vastunā.  
(Mālinīvijayatantra, IV.4)*

The unity of one (a finite being) with another (Almighty God) is called *yoga* (by Śiva yogins.)

*Suṣuptam tu dehādyanādara-kṛtam acira-kālam ca, iti viśeṣah. Tatrāpi śrama-kṛtam nidrā, dhātudoṣakṛtam mūrcchā, dravyakṛtam madonmā-dādi, svātantrya-kṛtam samādhīr ityavāntara-bhedāḥ.*

(*Bhāskari*, II.225)

The sleeping state is the result of total non-recognition of the existence of one's body, etc. It is short-lived and is, on that account, different from *pralaya*, (the phenomenal dissolution). It is sleep when caused by exhaustion, swoon if brought about by some defect in some element in the body, is intoxication or madness etc. when caused by some edible material, and is known as *samādhi* when brought about by one's own free will. These are its varieties.

*Nātirahasyam ekatra khyāpyam na ca sarvathā gopyam iti hi asmad-guravah.* (Tantrasāra, 31)

Our revered preceptor has said that a doctrine which is extremely secret in nature, should neither be clarified in a single context, nor should it be kept totally secret.

*Ketakī-kusuma-saurabhe bhṛśaṇi Bhṛṅga eva rasiko na makṣikā,  
Bhairavīya-paramādvayārcane Ko'pi rajyati Maheśa-coditah.*

(*Tantrāloka*, IV.276)

It is only the black bee and not the honey bee which has an enormous appetite for the fragrance of the *ketakī* flower. (Similarly) only those rare people who are guided from within by the grace of God, find interest in the absolutely non-dualistic worship of Bhairava, the one perfect whole of everything.

## CHAPTER 10

### AESTHETICS IN KASHMIR ŚAIVISM

*Lakṣaiko'pi sa kaścideva saphaṭī-kurvīta yatnam mama.* (*Parātriśikā-vivaraṇa*, 281)

Some such exceptional person alone, out of a hundred thousand people, may be able to bring my teaching to fruition.

*Bhrāmyantō bhramayanti manda-dhiṣānāś te jantu-cakram jaḍam;*  
*Svātmikṛtya guṇābhidhāna-vaśato baddhvā dṛḍham bandhanaiḥ.* (Ibid.)

Being poor in intellect, wandering themselves in ignorance and delusion and catching a circle of foolish people in their grip through (falsely) aggrandizing their abilities, they delude people after binding them tightly in bondage.

*Bahubhir api so'hameva bhramitas tattvopadeśakam-manyaiḥ;* *Tattvam iti varnyugamapi yeṣāṁ rusanā na pasparśa.* (Ibid.)

Even I was deluded by many people like this, who felt themselves proudly to be preceptors of *tattvam* (the exact reality) even though they hadn't even experienced the essence of the two syllables—*tat* and *tvam* of the word *tattvam*, (meaning God and Soul).

*Gitādi-viṣayāsvādā/sama-saukhyaikatātmanah;/*

*Yoginas tan-mayatvena/Manō-rūḍhestadāmatā.* (*Vijñānabhairava*, 73)

Yogins, experiencing their oneness with some incomparable pleasure aroused by the experience of objects like sweet songs, etc., and fixing their mental attentiveness on it, find unity with the Absolute Lord through a practice of absorption in this kind of phenomenon.

*Tatra yā svara-sandarbhā-subhagā nāda-rūpiṇī;*

*Sā sthūlā khalu paśyantī Varṇādyā-pravibhāgataḥ.*

(*Tantrāloka*, III.237)

The melodious sound of certain sweet tunes is (actually) the gross *paśyantī* form of speech because the differentiation caused by various letters is not present.

*Yattu carmāvanaddhādi kiñcit tatraiṣa yo dhvanīḥ;*

*Sa sphuṭāsphuṭā-rūpatvān Madhyamā sthūla-rūpiṇī.*

(*Ibid.*, III.241)

The sound which is produced from leather covered instruments (drums, etc.), is a gross form of *madhyamā* speech, as its verbal form becomes partly clear and remains partly obscure.

*Asmin sthūlatraye yattad anusandhānamādīvat;*

*Pṛthak pṛthak tat tritayaṁ sūkṣmamityabhiśabdyate.*

*Śadjaṁ karomi madhuraṁ vādayāmi bruve vacaḥ;*

*Pṛthagēvānusandhāna-trayāṁ samvedyate kila.*

*Etasyāpi trayasyādyāṁ yadrūpamanupādhimat;*

*Tat param tritayaṁ tatra Śivāḥ paracidātmakah.*

(*Ibid.*, III.245-47)

The preceding mental contemplation with regard to these three types of gross speech, appearing separately as (1) I play the *śadja* tune, (2) I sweetly beat the small drum (*tablā*), and (3) I speak (outwardly), are experienced (as the finer forms of the three gross types of speech, shining as separate entities. (These are thus the finer forms of the three types of speech.) The basic source of even these (three finer forms of speech), which is free from all impositions, is that superior trinity which

shines as Śiva, the transcendental, and infinite pure Consciousness.

*Tadasyāṁ nāda-rūpāyāṁ samvitsavidha-vṛttitāḥ;*  
*Sājātyā tanmayībhūtir-jhagityevopalabhyate.* (Ibid., III.239)

A very quick absorption is attained in a flash during the sound of this tune, because, being so close to pure Consciousness, it is quite akin to it.

*Vāma-śrī-pāṇi-padma-sphurita-nakha-mukhair vādayan nāda-vīṇam.*  
*(Gurunāthaparāmarśāḥ, 6)*

He (Abhinavagupta) was playing on a special type of lute with the quivering tips of the nails of his lotus-like left hand.

*Dur-vijñeyā hi sāvasthā/ Kimapyetad anuttaram.* (Tantrāloka, II.28)

It is very difficult to understand that (supreme transcendental) position. It is that final truth beyond which nothing else exists at all.

*Asthāsyad ekarūpeṇa vapuṣā cen Maheśvarah,*  
*Maheśvaratvam samvittvam/Tadatyakṣad ghaṭādivat.*

(Ibid., III.100-101)

Had the Lord remained shining in only one way (as the transcendental consciousness alone), He would have given up his divine essence and His being Consciousness, (and would become) just as an insentient object, like some earthen pot.

*Tathā hi madhure gīte sparśe vā candanādike;*  
*Mādhyasthya-vigame yāsau hṛdaye spandamānatā.*

*Ānanda-śaktih saivoktā yataḥ sahṛdayo janah.* (Ibid., III.209-10)

It is explained thus—The heart of a person, shedding off its attitude of indifference, while listening to the sweet sounds of a song or while feeling the delightful touch of something like sandalpaste, immediately starts a wonderful vibratory movement. (This) is called ānanda-śakti and because of its presence the person concerned is considered to have a heart (in his body).

*Yeṣāṁ na tanmayībhūtis te dehādinimajjanam;*  
*Avidanto' magna-saṃvin-mānāś tvahṛdyāyā iti.* (Ibid., III.240)

People who do not become one (with such blissful experiences), and who do not feel their physical body being merged into it, are said to be heartless because their personal consciousness does not become merged into blissful pure Consciousness.

*Ye ye bhāvā hlādina iha dṛṣyāḥ subhaga-sundarā-kṛtayah;  
Teṣām anubhava-kāle svasthiti-paripoṣṇam satāmarcā.* (Ibid., II.219)

The worship to be performed by advanced aspirants consists of strengthening their position in the basic state of (infinite and blissful pure Consciousness), on the occasions of the experiences of all such delightful objects which are to be seen here as having sweet and beautiful forms.

*Ānande mahati prāpte dṛṣṭe vā bāndhave cirāt;  
Ānandamudgataṁ dhyātvā Tallayas tanmanā bhavet.*

(*Vijñānabhairava*, 71)

A Śiva yogin, having directed his attention to the inner bliss which arises on the occasion of some immense joy, or on seeing a close relative after a long time, should immerse his mind in that bliss and become one with it.

*Yatra yatra manas-tuṣṭir manas tatraiva dhārayet;  
Tatra tatra parānanda-svarūpaṁ sampravartate.* (Ibid., 74)

A yogin should fix his mind on each phenomenon which brings satisfaction (because) his own state of infinite bliss arises therein.

## CHAPTER 11

### THE VILĀSA PRINCIPLE IN NEO-ŚAIVISM

*Abhinava-ramaṇīyam saccidānanda-kandam  
Sva-nava-nava-vilāsollāsanaika-pravīṇam:  
Anubhava-surahasyam maṅgalam maṅgalānam  
Adhi hṛdi Parameśam maunamevāśraye'ham.* (*Ātmavilāsa*, I.1)

Through the means of absolute silence (of speech, mind, intellect, etc.), I take the shelter of the Supreme God in my heart, because He, having a beauty which is always fresh, is the bulbus root of existence, consciousness and blissfulness and is the only true master of bringing the ever fresh exuberance of His (divine) play to full (outward) bloom. He is the innermost secret of Self-experience, and is the auspiciousness of everything that is auspicious.

*Svātmānam sva-vilāsenā viśva-rūpeṇa bhāsayan:  
Nityoditah Ko'pi devo jayatyatmā Parah Śivah.* (Ibid., II.1)

Ātman, the Absolute God, *Paramaśiva*, having eternally risen as some wonderful divine authority, excels all. Through His own

luxurious *vilāsa* (exuberant play), He manifests His own Self in the form of the whole universe.

*So'�am vilāsa evāsyā śaktirityudito budhaiḥ:  
Śivaśakti-svarūpābhyaṁ vyavahārāya kalpe.* (Ibid., II.2)

It is that *vilāsa* of God which wise people call *Śakti*. Divine dealings through Śiva-hood and Śakti-hood, as well as these usages in academic activities, are also based on only that *vilāsa* of God.

*Vilāso na svato bhinno/ vilāsādapi na svayam:  
Tadetat saccidānandam/ advaitaṁ pāramārthikam.* (Ibid., II.3)

*Vilāsa* is not different from *Ātman*, and *Ātman* is not different from *vilāsa*. That is the real monism shining as existence, consciousness, and blissfulness in their perfect unity.

*Taistair dārśanikais-tattad-rūpenāyam nirūpyate:  
Ayameva vilāso'sya/ sphuṭam satyonubhuyate.* (Ibid., II.4)

That very *vilāsa* of the Lord is explained differently by different philosophers, and the experience of these very differences is, in fact, itself this same *vilāsa*.

*Ātmaika eva sadrūpaḥ kartṛtvādi-vaśād-ayam:  
Cid-rūpatvam vimṛṣati svānandāya Vilāsataḥ* (Ibid., II.12)

*Ātman*, the only existent reality, becomes aware of His consciousness for the purpose of illuminating His blissfulness. This happens through His *vilāsa* and his infinite powers like omnipotence.

*Svatantrah saccidānandaḥ svātmārāmo Maheśvaraḥ,  
Paramo'hammaho-rūpi/svavilāso jayatyasau.* (Ibid., III.1)

The Almighty God excels all. Having existence, consciousness, and blissfulness as His form. He enjoys ecstasy independently within Himself, and shines by virtue of His own *vilāsa* as the Self-brilliant, infinite, and universal I-consciousness.

*Ā-brahma-stamba-paryantaṁ yadvilāsa-vaśānugam;  
Svaprakāśah sa Bhagavān svatantrah paramārthataḥ.* (Ibid., III.3)

God alone is truly independent because He alone shines independently through the luminosity of his own pure Consciousness. All other forms of life, from Brahma (the creator) to a lowly plant, operate under His *vilāsa*.

*Jīvatā Śivatā caiva/ sāpekṣā svavilāsataḥ:  
Apāramārthikī nūnam/ kalpyate svātmanaiva hi.  
Avasthā-dvitayātītam/ paripūrnām kimapyaho:*

*Saccidānanda-svarūpam/ ahamtattvam tadasmyaham.* (Ibid., III.8-9)

The mutually related concepts of *jīva*-hood and Śiva-hood are two comparative and interdependent concepts. Having been manifested by the Ātman through His *vilāsa*, these are not the absolute truth. There is a wonderful and perfect Reality, transcending both these concepts. It consists of existence, consciousness, and blissfulness, and is infinite Self-awareness. That am I.

*Sva-vilāsa-svarūpā sā/ vidyāvidyā-svarūpiṇī:*

*Mahāvidyā mahāmāyā/ paripūrnā jayatyasau.* (Ibid., IV.1)

Prostrations to that *Mahāvidyā*, the absolute and correct knowledge, which, being basically the *vilāsa* of the Ātman, excels all because It appears itself in the forms of relative knowledge and ignorance (*vidyā* and *avidyā*). It is all perfect in itself, and, being divinely potent, It is able to make possible even that which is utterly impossible.

*Vilāsollasitattvena/ Vidyāvidye to cetane.*

*Apūrṇatvād jade te sto/ jaḍājade ime tataḥ.* (Ibid., IV.2)

Both *vidyā* and *avidyā* are sentient by virtue of their having been brought to full bloom by the *vilāsa* (of the Ātman). However, being imperfect, these are partly insentient as well.

*Sva-vilāsenāvarūdhah/ āruru-kṣuh svayecchayā:*

*Ārohate sadānando/ nairmalyollāsa-paṇḍitah.* (Ibid., IV.4)

The ever-blissful Lord is an expert in raising purity to its full bloom. He, having descended (to the grossest levels) through His *vilāsa*, and ascending again (to the subtlest levels), in accordance with His own will, rises up (to perfection), while experiencing His Self-bliss throughout the whole process.

*Sva-vilāsen sarvāṇi Kurvan karmāṇi sarvadā;*

*Dīpa-vat sākṣimātro'yaṁ/ vyavahārāya kalpate.* (Ibid., V.14)

While always carrying out all His transactions through His *vilāsa*, and like a lamp, being merely a witness to everything that occurs, He conducts all His divine activities in the midst of His exuberant dance.

*Nija-sahaja-vilāsollāsitāṁ viśvarūpāṁ*  
*Anupama-citi-vahnāvāhutīṁ homayantah;*  
*Nija-vilasita-pūrṇānanda-piyuṣa-pānair*  
*Adhi-hṛdi vija-yante pūrṇa-nairmalya-bhājah.* (Ibid., V.24)

Perfectly pure beings, having evolved the world through their own natural *vilāsa*, and offering all things as oblations to the sacred fire of their own pure and perfect consciousness, excel all while drinking deep the nectar of the blissfulness of their own *vilāsa*, vibrating within their hearts.

*Kurvam sadaiva vasudhādi-śivānta-tattva/*  
*Rupamprapañcamakhilam sva-vilāsa-mātrāt;*  
*Kartṛtva-leṣa-rahitaḥ khalu yo'dvitiyah*  
*Svātmā sadaiva nanu rājati pūrṇa-kartā.* (Ibid., VI.24)

The Ātman, being without a second, constantly conducts the manifestation of the *tattvas* from earth to Śiva through His *vilāsa* alone, while for ever remaining totally free of all responsibility for any deeds. He simply shines always as the perfect doer of everything.

## Glossary

**Ābhāsa:** Manifestation; emergence; real phenomenal appearance without the sense of “illusion”.

“Creation is nothing but the manifestation without of what is within.” There are four states of universal Consciousness in the process of manifestation: bliss (*ānanda*), will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and action (*kriyā*).

See *Samāvēsa* for reverse process of immersion.

**Ābhāsavāda:** The theory of manifestation in the Trika philosophy which states that all phenomena are the manifestation of the objective reflections of the divine powers of the absolute I-consciousness.

**Abhinavagupta:** The most famous sage-philosopher of Kashmir Śaivism. He lived in the second half of the tenth century and the first quarter of the eleventh century AD. Abhinavagupta is widely recognized as the central theoretician of Indian aesthetics. His treatises on drama, dance, music, and poetry have significantly shaped the appreciation of these disciplines ever since. He was also a profound mystic, having mastered the doctrines of the orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy, as well as Buddhism and Jainism in the process of arriving at his own comprehensive philosophic synthesis. Some of his most famous philosophical works include: *Mālinīvijayavārttika*, *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*<sup>1</sup>, *Tantrāloka*, *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśini*, *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśini*, and *Tantrasāra*.

**Advaita Vedānta:** *Advaita* meaning “not two;” *Vedānta* meaning “end of the Veda,” or “the final principle of the Veda.” *Vedānta* was originally the name given to the Vedic philosophy of the Upaniṣads. Later the name became associated with the Advaita Vedānta of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkarācārya (about the eighth century AD). This philosophy teaches that Consciousness, or Brahman, is the only reality, and that everything else is

<sup>1</sup>Wrongly published as *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*.

manifested by false impressions based on *avidyā*—beginningless ignorance.

**Āgamas:** Lit. “tradition”. A traditional doctrine or sacred work, or a collection of such doctrines, held to be divinely inspired and handed down from generation to generation. Also a Tantra or work inculcating the mystical worship of Śiva and Śakti. A non-Vedic scriptural work.

**Aghora:** A divine being. An example of the five masters of *mantra* beings.

**Aham:** I, or I-ness. Consciousness of the true Self. The beholding subject. Primordial *mantra*.

**Aiśvarya:** Lordship; Godhead; the Creative Divine Essence of God.

**Ajapā yoga:** A form of *dhvani* yoga in which the practitioner combines the use of *mantra* with the breath. Also known as *varṇa* yoga and *surat*.

**Akalas:** Perfectly pure beings aware only of their infinite, pure, all inclusive and divinely potent I-consciousness, and having no awareness of any object (*prameya*) or act of thinking (*pramāṇa*). They are pure subject. *Akalas* are part of pure creation and will not experience transmigration.

Also called Śivas, they take the form of Śāmbhavas in the *Śiva-tattva* domain, and become Śāktas in the *Śakti tattva* domain.

Śiva-hood and Śakti-hood are the predominant states.

Life-force at this point is called *vyāna*. See *vyāna* and *prāṇa*. Domain is the *Śiva* and *Śakti tattvas*.

Also see *pramāṭṛ* and *tattva*.

**Akrama:** Speech in which the order of succession becomes truly dissolved. Śākta yoga.

**Ālvārs:** Tamil Vaiṣṇava saints possessing true devotion for God.

**Anādaravirakti:** Spontaneous indifference to objective enjoyments due to the experience of Self-bliss in the practice of *yoga*.

**Ānanda:** Bliss. Along with *sat* (being), and *cit* (consciousness), these qualities describe the infinite Lord, or Brahman, in Advaita Vedānta.

A term used to describe the first of five outward signs of the experience of self-bliss in *uccāra* *yoga*. These are: *ānanda*, *udbhava*, *kampa*, *nindrā*, and *ghūrṇī*.

**Anantanātha:** Master of *māyā*. Deity worshiped by the level of beings called *mantra* (see *pramāṭṛ*). Incarnation of God Himself

who descends to the level of *mahāmāyā* in the form of Anantanātha and shakes up *māyā* towards further creation.

**Ānava-mala:** Impurity of finitude. Impurity (*mala*) pertaining to a bound soul (*anu*), i.e. the innate ignorance of the full range of beings from heavenly gods to all worldly creatures including human beings. *Ānava-mala* causes the loss of supreme Consciousness and freedom, hides the infiniteness of beings residing in *māyā*, and reduces them to *anus*, depriving them of their divine essence.

There are two types of *ānava-mala*:

1. Finitude in I-consciousness.
2. Finitude in the capacity to know and to do.

See *māyīya-mala*-impurity of diversity, and *karma-mala*-impurity of responsibility

**Ānava samāveśa:** Immersion into the Absolute Self at the level of *ānava* yoga. There are many varieties and levels of this experience of one's divinity, depending on what form of yoga is being used, and the maturity of the student involved.

**Ānava yoga:** Objective meditation. Yoga to be practiced by beings of lower merits. Also known as *kriyā* yoga and *bhedopāya*, the means workable at the stage of diversity. (*Ānava* is from *anu* or finite being.) Mental effort on the part of the yogin is more predominant than with *sākta* or *sāmbhava* *upāyas*. Objects of meditation are either internal (*grāhya*), or external (*bāhya*).

*Grāhya* objects are: *buddhi* (understanding), *prāṇa* (life-force), *deha* (physical form), and *dhvani* (sound of breathing), in descending order of merit.

*Bāhya* objects are: time and space, which are each taken in 3 aspects. These equal six subvarieties called *sadadhvan*, or six paths of meditation on external objects.

*Ānava* yoga conducted through meditation on *buddhi* is called *dhyāna* yoga, on *prāṇa* it is called *uccāra* yoga, on *deha* it is called *karaṇa* yoga, and on *dhvani* it is called *dhvani* or *varṇa* yoga.

*Ānava* yoga meditation conducted on *sadadhvan*, or the six paths of external objects, is called *sthānakalpanā*.

**Antahkaraṇa:** The inner organ. This term is used for *tattvas* 14, 15 and 16 in descending order known as the three mental factors: *buddhi*, *manas* and *ahamkāra*. See *tattva* for a complete listing.

**Anus:** Infinitesimal point. Beings having extreme finitude as their essential nature. The *māyāpramāta*, dominated by *māyā*, in other words, a finite being. Even gods in heaven are considered to be *anus*.

**Anugraha:** Grace. The inspiration of divine knowledge that comes from God is known as His *anugraha* or *śaktipāta*. Revelation. Divine grace. This is often opposed to *nigraha*, obscuration or divine wrath.

**Anupāya or Ānanda yoga:** The highest type of yoga, above even *śāmbhava upāya*. Spontaneous realization of the Self without any special effort. *Śāmbhava upāya* attains the position of *anupāya* in the state of its complete perfection.

**Apāna:** Inhaling breath. All assimilation. One of the vital airs. Also see *Prāṇa*.

**Apavedya-suṣupti:** A state like deep sleep which is free from all objective experience. A final goal of practical Buddhism.

**Ārambhavāda:** The theory of new creation propounded in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

**Āsana:** Posture; seat. It is one of the steps in the yoga of Patañjali and the *haṭha* yoga of Gorakhanātha. Yoga aimed at focus, *ekāgratā*=one-pointedness. Also, a seat or mat on which one sits for meditation.

**Avadhāna:** Supervigilant attentiveness. Intensely sharp and quick awareness.

**Avāntara pralaya:** The age of dissolution of both physical and mental existence.

**Āvaraṇa:** A cover to hide and to conceal the real character of purity, unity, divinity, potency, etc. of I-consciousness.

**Avidyā:** Ignorance. Beginningless ignorance. See *vidyā*.

**Bāhya:** External objects of meditation used in *kriyā yoga* or *ānava yoga*. *Bāhya* yoga is the practice of meditating on these outer objects. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Bahyārthavāda:** The theory of the real existence of matter and material phenomena outside an independent consciousness. One of the schools of Buddhism.

**Bhartṛhari:** An ancient Sanskrit grammarian. The originator of the philosophy of Sanskrit grammar.

**Bhaṭṭa Kallata:** One of the great sage-philosophers of Kashmir Śaivism. He lived during the reign of King Avantivarman of Kashmir (AD 855-83), was a pupil of Vasugupta, and an elder

contemporary of Somānanda. He was recognized as a master of the Trika and Kula systems and was accepted as a great authority by Abhinavagupta. There is some question about whether he or Vasugupta wrote the *Spandakārikā*, but Bhaṭṭa Kallatā did write a commentary on this text. He is the author of the following books: *Spandasūtra*, *Spandasarvasva-Tattvārtha-cintāmaṇi*, *Madhvuvāhinī*, *Tattvacitāra*, *Svasvabhāva Sambodhana*. (The last four books are known only through references.)

**Bhāva-samādhi:** Trance attainable by means of rousing the emotions and carrying them to a climax. Popularly known as *kīrtan*. Practiced and taught by the Vaiṣṇava Saint Caitanya whose system of *sādhana* includes music, song, dance, etc., and aims at a kind of *bhāva-samādhi*. This practice has been followed by the great poet Jayadeva, Paramahamsa Rāmakṛṣṇa and Ānandamayī Mā.

**Bhedābheda:** Unity in diversity.

**Bhoga:** Pleasure, enjoyment, experience.

**Bhūtas:** The elements in gross existence: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. The first five *tattvas* in ascending order=objective elements. See *tattva* for a complete listing.

**Bhuvanas:** The abodes of beings. According to the Trika *śāstra*, there are 118 *bhuvanas*.

*Bhuvana* also refers to the gross form of space which serves as one of the six paths of meditation (*śadadhvan*) in *sthānakalpanā* yoga, a subdivision of *āṇava* yoga. In *śadadhvan*, *tattva* is the subtle form of phenomenon, *bhuvana* the gross one, and *kalā* the most fine.

See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Bindu:** In the yoga practices of Śaktism, Śakti is visualized as *bindu*, a brilliantly shining dot in the centre between one's two eyebrows. Concentration on luminous energy.

The source of light is visualized by Śakta as *bindu*.

In Trika, *bindu* corresponds with Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka and *nāda* with Sadāśiva. *Nāda* and *bindu* are thus the primary results of the outward *spanda* of *kalā*, the divine power of Śiva.

**Brahmānanda:** The fourth of six levels of Self-bliss experienced in *uccāra* yoga. See *nijānanda* for a complete listing. *Brahmānanda* is experienced by means of resting consciousness on the infinite, all-prevasive, and equalized function of the life-force termed *samāna-prāṇa*.

**Buddhi:** The understanding capacity. The intellect; the ascertaining intelligence; sometimes called the higher mind; the super-personal mind.

In Sāṃkhya philosophy, intellect, the third of the twenty-five *tattvas* (or the second of twenty-four *tattvas*) in descending order.

**Cārvākas:** Atheistic materialists. Also called *Lokāyatikas*.

**Cidānanda:** The bliss of pure universal Consciousness. The highest form of six varieties of Self-bliss experienced in *uccāra* yoga. See *nijānanda* for complete listing.

**Cidānandalaharī:** The surge of the blissfulness of consciousness. *Sakti* of Śiva.

**Cit:** The Absolute; foundational Consciousness. Along with *sat* (being), and *ānanda* (bliss), these qualities describe the infinite Lord according to Advaita Vedānta.

**Citta:** In the Trika system, the empirical mind of the individual in the broad sense of mental or psychic apparatus. The mind or conscious self of modern psychology.

Thinking, reflecting, imagining, thought, recollection, intelligence, reason etc.

*Citta* is composed of *buddhi* (discriminating intelligence), *manas* (perceiving intelligence), and *ahamkāra* (Self-appropriating intelligence). Same *antahkarana*.

**Darśana:** Philosophy. Revelation or intuitive experience of the truth brought about by the practice of yoga. The logical expression of the truth through language is a secondary type of *darśana*.

**Deha:** Ordinary body; gross physical body.

**Dhāraṇā:** Fixing the mind at any particular part of the body, such as the heart, where the deity is to be contemplated.

Concentration: the sixth step in the practice of Pātañjala yoga. This practice is not complete as a yogin will experience distractions still coming and going.

**Dhvani yoga:** Āṇava yoga practiced through meditation using the sound of breathing. The rise and fall of the breath is meditated upon through the mystic syllables *so'-ham* and *ham-sah*.

Also known as *surat* yoga, *varṇa* yoga, and *ajapā* yoga.

Through *dhvani* yoga the practitioner attains an inferior type of *āṇava-samāvēśa*. This method is practiced by Rādhāswāmins

who, very often, get involved in the pursuit of name, fame, etc.  
See *ānava yoga*.

**Dhyāna:** Meditation. The seventh of eight steps in the practice of Patañjala yoga. Technique of holding to one idea as the object of continuous contemplation without any break into this concentration by dissimilar ideas. Monistic Śaivism says this is not a direct means to Self-realization.

**Dhyāna yoga:** Ānava yoga conducted through a contemplative meditation on *buddhi* is called *dhyāna* yoga or *buddhi* yoga. This is not the same as the *dhyāna* yoga of Patañjali.

Practice involves imagining the trinity of knowing subject (*pramātṛ*), knowable object (*prameya*), and the means of knowing (*pramāṇa*) as one unitary whole and as identical with ever brilliant I-consciousness. This the yogin visualizes as encircled by the flames of the wheel of divine powers stationed in his heart. He then visualizes it as (1) creating, (2) sustaining, (3) absorbing, (4) separating, and (5) assimilating an outer sense object as fire assimilates fuel. These activities of *buddhi* are to be imagined to be the divine activities of God appearing in the form of the practitioner. In other words, he practices his nature as one with the Godhead. See *ānava yoga*.

**Dīksā:** From *dā*, to give, and *kṣi*, to destroy. The gift of spiritual knowledge destroying ignorance. The initiation ceremony in which the guru imparts spiritual knowledge to a disciple and purifies the residual traces of his limitations.

Preparation or consecration for a religious ceremony, undertaking religious observances for a particular purpose. Dedication, initiation.

**Five divine activities of Godhead:** Creation, preservation, dissolution, Self-oblivion, and Self-recognition: *sṛṣti*, *sthiti*, *samhāra*, *pidhāna*, and *anugraha*.

**Five functions of prāṇa:** Throwing out or eliminating (*prāṇa*), assimilation (*apāṇa*), equalizing (*samāṇa*), washing away of ideation (*udāṇa*), realizing one's Self (*vyāṇa*).

**Five organs of action:** The powers of speaking, grasping, locomotion, procreation, and excretion.

**Five primary powers of God:** (1) *Cit-śakti*—power of awareness; (2) *ānanda-śakti*—power of blissfulness; (3) *icchā-śakti*—independent and irresistible will-power; (4) *jñāna-śakti*—power of knowledge; and (5) *kriyā-śakti*—power to do and undo.

**Five pure tattvas:** In descending order: Śiva, Śakti, Sadāśiva, Īśvara, and Vidyā (also known as Sad- or Śuddhavidyā).

**Five senses:** (1) power to hear (*śrotra*), (2) power to feel (*tvak*), (3) power to see (*akṣi*), (4) power to taste (*rasanā*), (5) power to smell (*ghrāṇa*).

**Five tattvas of limitation:** Also called five *kañcukas*. The *tattvas* that limit the scope of doing, knowing, desiring, etc. of a finite being. These are listed in their descending order down from *māyā*: (1) limited active power (*kalā*), (2) limited capacity to know (*vidyā*), (3) limited interest in knowing particular objects and in doing particular actions (*rāga*), (4) the law of restriction (*niyatī*), (5) the concept of time sequence with respect to one's self and all one's activities (*kāla*).

**Ghoratārī Śaktis:** The degenerative forces of God. Also: terrible (*ghoratārī*) and powers (*śakti*). These are powers taking the form of deities (*śaktis*) with negative aspects who push people (*jīvas*) towards a downward path in transmigratory existence (*samsāra*). According to the non-dualistic system of Kashmir Śaivism, these are simply a partial manifestation of the Absolute.

**Ghūrṇi:** The fifth of five levels of experience which mark a student's progress in *uccāra* yoga. At this level the student will experience a mild whirling movement of the head.

**Grāhya:** Object of experience. Internal objects for meditation used in *kriyā* or *ānava* yoga. See *bāhya*.

**Icchā:** Divine will. One of the three fundamental forces or powers of the Universal Energy, the others being: the power of knowledge (*jñāna-śakti*), and the power of action (*kriyā-śakti*).

**Icchu:** See *Vindu*.

**Idam:** This or This-ness. The beheld object. See *aham*.

**Indriya:** Bodily power; power of the senses and organs.

**Instrumental element:** A nonanimate entity used by Consciousness to interact with the exterior environment, i.e., bodily parts, organs, and senses.

**Īśāna:** Divine Being. One of the five main *mantra* Beings.

**Īśvara:** Incarnation of God Himself. God descended to the fourth *tattva*.

**Īśvara tattva:** Principle of identification. This-ness shines predominantly, though I-ness is still present. "This is myself." In the order of creation, *Īśvaratattva* is the fourth of the five

manifested *tattvas* down from *Paramaśiva*. Beings residing in these five *tattvas* are part of pure creation and will experience no transmigration.

No.	Tattva	Beings residing there	Master deity
1.	<i>Śiva</i>	Śāmbhavas (Akalas)	Śiva Bhaṭṭāraka
2.	<i>Śakti</i>	Śāktas (Akalas)	Śakti (Parā Bhaṭṭārakā)
3.	<i>Sadāśiva</i> or <i>Sādākhyā</i>	Mantra-maheśvaras	Sadāśiva Bhaṭṭāraka
4.	<i>Īśvara</i>	Mantreśvaras	Īśvara Bhaṭṭāraka
5.	<i>Śuddhavidyā</i> ( <i>Mahāmāyā</i> )	Mantras or Vidyeśvaras	Anantanātha

(Note: See *tattvas* for complete listing.)

**Jada:** Insentient.

**Jagadānanda:** Infinite Self-bliss. This lies beyond the six levels of Self-bliss that arise in the practice of contemplating the functions of *prāṇa* in *uccāra* yoga.

The experience of the Self, free from all limitations. State of *anuttara*, the experience of perfect freedom, *svātantrya*. Also see *prāṇa*.

**Jāgrat:** Waking state. First of the four states of animation. Outermost state of animation.

The four states of animation are: *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *susupti*, and *turyā*. *Turyātīta* is sometimes considered the fifth state of animation.

**Jīvanmukti:** Liberation in this very life.

**Jñānendriyas:** The five exterior senses. The five *jñānendriyas* are *tattvas* sixteen to twenty in ascending order. Also called *indriyas* (powers) of senses-perception—the senses in the physical body. The power or capacity of the senses of smell, taste, sight, touch, and hearing.

(See *tattvas* for a complete listing.)

**Kaivalya:** A state of liberation in the Sāṃkhya system which is seen as a special type of sleeping state by Śaivism and thus not the highest attainable state. The finite I-consciousness is left absolutely alone by its mental and physical apparatus in *kaivalya*.

**Kalā:** One of the five *kañcukas*, or cloaks of *māyā*, which causes an individual to feel limited. The seventh *tattva*. *Kalā* causes beings to feel limited with respect to what and how much they can accomplish.

A term used in Śāktism meaning the spiritual stir of *kalātīta*, or Lorship. *Kalā*, appearing as an extroversive stir, manifests *vindu* in two forms known in Śāktism as *nāda* and *bindu*, or sound and light.

The finest aspect of space and one of the six paths of meditation (*śadadhvan*) used in *sthānakalpanā* yoga. *Kalās* are the finer forms of *tattvas*. The five *kalās* in ascending order are: *nivṛtikalā*, *pratiṣṭhākalā*, *vidyākalā*, *sāntikalā*, and *sāntyantītā*. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Kāla:** One of the five *kañcukas*, or cloaks of *māyā*, which causes an individual to feel limited. *Kāla* is the eleventh *tattva* and causes a person to begin to feel separate from the Absolute due to the experience of time sequence. Also a sense of limited duration.

**Kalanā:** Outward manifestation of inwardly existent phenomenon. Objective manifestation of something already existent within the subject. Activity; dynamism, both outward and inward.

**Kalātīta:** Beyond *kalā*. The term in Śāktism for Absolute Consciousness, or *parāsaṁvit*. When *kalātīta* is charged with the divine will (*kalā*) to manifest outwardly, this is termed *vindu* in Śāktism.

**Kalīnaya:** A special type of *śākta* yoga. See *śākta* yoga.

**Kalpanā:** Imagination. Creations of imagination caused by the flutter of the mental apparatus.

**Kampa:** The third level of experience which marks a student's progress in *uccāra* yoga. A trembling of the body.

**Kañcukas:** Sheaths or cloaks of *Puruṣa*.

Five principles of subjective limitation. Limiting *tattvas* which cover and cloak Consciousness.

In descending order the five *kañcukas* are:

7. *Kalā*—Limitation in authorship or doing.
8. *Vidyā*—Limitation in awareness or knowing.
9. *Rāga*—Limitation in interest or estimation.
10. *Niyati*—Limitation in restriction or causation.
11. *Kāla*—Limitation in time sequence or duration.

In the unfolding of the *tattvas*, time enters for the first time with *kalā*. *Niyati*, the law of causation, causes absolute limitation in the scope of *kalā*, *vidyā*, and *rāga* of a finite being. The law of nature (*niyati*) appears as the law of restriction. These four *tattvas* limit the field of knowing and doing for a person, but *kāla*, limits a person's very being as well.

**Kapila:** Originator of Sāṃkhya philosophy. One of the most ancient sages of India, mentioned in the Upaniṣads and in the *Mahābhārata*.

**Karaṇa yoga:** Āṇava yoga conducted through meditation on the physical body (*deha*). This form includes many types of *mudrās* prevalent in *haṭha* yoga.

*Kundalinī* yoga is a variety of *karaṇa* yoga.

Abhinavagupta says this form of yoga must be learned through verbal teaching. This practice is often kept secret because it is very quick in yielding supernatural, psychophysical powers which are likely to be misused by unworthy practitioners. Besides, having mental-cum-physical elements as its field, it can be grasped well even by unworthy but highly intelligent people.

*Karaṇa* yoga also results in a form of *āṇava-samāvēśa* and develops the ability to practice higher types of Trika yoga. See *āṇava* yoga.

**Karma** or **Karman:** Act, action, performance, business. Work, labor. Former deeds as leading to inevitable results; fate as the certain consequence of deeds in a previous life.

**Kārma-mala:** Impurity of responsibility based on egotistic functioning. The cause of the greatest and heaviest miseries of finite beings. *Mala*=impurity. *Mala* of limited action.

*Kārma-mala* is based on *āṇava-mala* (impurity of finitude) and on *māyīya-mala* (impurity of diversity). See *āṇava* and *māyīya-malas*.

**Karma-saṃskāras:** Impressions left in our being as a result of deeds performed under the sway of *kārma-mala* or the impurity of responsibility.

**Karma-sāmya:** Coexistence of the ripening of two mutually opposite past actions both of which are exactly equal in power and therefore restrict each other from resulting in any fruits.

**Karmendriyas:** The five organs of action. *Indriyas* are the powers or capacities of action, or the powers of the motor-nervous system when they appear in the body.

First five *exterior* instrumental elements in the *tattvas*. They come in ascending order after the five *bhūtas* and the five *tanmātras*, *tattvas* one through ten.

11. Power of capacity—to rouse ecstasy (*ānanda*) and reproduction (*upastha*).

12. Power of discarding or voiding—*pāyu*, anus, bladder.
  13. Power of locomotion or walking—*pāda*, feet.
  14. Power of handling—*hasta*, hands.
  16. Power of expression—*vāc*, vocal organs.
- (See *tattva* for a complete listing.)

**Karuṇā:** Compassion.

**Kevala:** A being who is absolutely all alone. A being left alone by *buddhi* and all its evolutes, such as the senses, the organs, etc. A *jīvanmukta* becomes *kevala* at death according to Sāṃkhya yoga.

**Kleśas:** Pain, affliction, distress. In yoga philosophy, the five *kleśas* are named: *avidyā*—ignorance, *asmitā*—egotism, *rāga*—attachment, *dveṣa*—aversion, *abhiniveśa*—urge for knowing and doing in accordance with the previous four *kleśas*.

(Note: This is the definition of *abhiniveśa* as expressed by the teachers of Kashmir Śaivism. Tenacity of mundane existence is just one example of *abhiniveśa* and not its basic definition.)

**Kramamokṣa:** Liberation by stages.

**Kramamukti:** Gradual liberation.

**Krama-naya:** A variety of *śāktopāya*, having been popular with the Śaivas of Kashmir.

**Krama yoga:** A special variety of *śāktopāya* discovered and propagated by Sivānandanātha. Known as *krama-naya* as well and thought wrongly at present to be an independent system of *sādhanā*.

**Kuṇḍalini:** The subtle power of *prāna* moving upwards through the spine experienced by yogins during Self-bliss.

**Lilā:** Play; an essential nature of the Absolute.

**Lolikā:** Constant passionate thirst or flair for the outward objects of this world. This state is basically caused by *āṇava-mala*. A feeling of insufficiency in one's self.

**Lord Sadāśiva:** An incarnation of God Himself. The Lord descended to the highest stage in the plain of *śuddhavidyā*. He is ever Śiva even while seeing a faint reflection of objectivity; *sadā* + Śiva.

**Madhyamā:** Mental speech. Ideation. Thinking. *Madhyamā* is an internal reflective manifestation of awareness (*vimarśa*) taking the form of ideas. Going from gross to refined, the second level of four stages of speech. The term *madhyamā* means interior or in-between as it lies in the subtle body (*puryaṣṭaka*)

between *vaikhari* and *paśyantī*.

Three elements of *madhyamā*:

1. Word-image.
2. Idea or word-meaning.
3. Objects understandable through 1 and 2.

See *vaikhari*, *paśyantī*, *parāvāc*, and *puryaṣṭaka*.

**Mahānanda:** The fifth of six levels of Self-bliss experienced in the practice of *uccāra* yoga. See *nijānanda* for complete listing.

**Mahāpralaya:** Total dissolution of the whole manifested existence.

**Mahat:** The unlimited universal cognitive faculty. The first transformation of *prakṛti* at the first step of evolution in the Sāṃkhya philosophy. *Sattva* is predominant in *mahat*.

When Śrīkaṇṭhanātha shakes up the equilibrium of *prakṛti* the *rajas* element, because of its restive nature, disturbs the equilibrium of the three *gunas* in *prakṛti*, and pushes up *sattva* which is lighter in nature. *Sattva* thus comes to predominate in *prakṛti* which gets transformed into *mahat*. *Mahat* in turn gets transformed into *ahamkāra*, or ego.

*Buddhi* is individual understanding while *mahat* is universal understanding.

**Mahāvidyā:** Absolute pure knowledge. *vidyā* = knowledge, *avidyā* = ignorance.

**Mahāvyāpti:** A yogic state experienced in *uccāra* yoga, that causes a whirling sensation in the head. See *ghūrnī*.

**Mala:** Impurity; innate ignorance; dross; limitation which hampers the free expression of the spirit.

The three *malas*: (See separate listings).

1. *Ānava-mala*: Impurity of finitude, subtle impurity: two kinds.
2. *Māyīya-mala*: Impurity of diversity—thinner impurity of *māyā*.
3. *Kārma-mala*: Impurity of responsibility—grossest impurity.

**Mālinī yoga:** A variety of *sāmbhava* yoga in which the practitioner visualizes his divine powers shining in the form of randomly arranged letters of the alphabet beginning with “na” and ending with “pha”.

**Manas:** Mind. The internal sense, the empirical mind. That aspect of the mental apparatus that coordinates the work of the senses, gathering images, perceptions, and rousing multiple concepts. The thinking sense.

**Mantra:** A subtle, nonconceptual word-image used in the practice of meditation. A mystical syllable. See *varna*.

The expert being who has realized the *Śuddhavidyā tattva* but has not yet shaken off *māyā*.

**Mantra-maheśvara:** A being at the fourth and highest level of *turyā*. The I-ness or Self-awareness shines predominately as "I am This" in such a being. See *pramāṭ* for full listing of seven types of beings.

**Mantreśvaras:** Beings at the third step of *turyā*. They see objective existence as their ownself. "This-ness" and "This is myself" predominate. See *pramāṭ* for full listing of seven types of beings.

**Mātrikā yoga:** A variety of *sāmbhava* yoga in which the divine powers of a practitioner are mystically intuited through the Indian alphabet, the sixteen vowels and the consonants arranged from "ka" to "kṣa".

**Māyā:** The sixth *tattva* in descending order. The limiting, Self-forgetting power. Sometimes included as the sixth *kañcuka*, *māyā* imparts the limitations of the five *kañcukas*. *Māyā* is the only impure *tattva* created by God Himself. It is the abode of finite beings, and the plane of absolute Self-oblivion and diversity.

Lord Anantanātha shakes up *māyā* and it, having been shaken, expands itself into five elements from *kalā* to *kāla*. *Māyā* is the greatest of these *kañcukas*, or cloaks.

See *kañcukas*, and *tattva* for complete listing.

**Māyiya-mala:** Impurity of diversity. The thinnest impurity of *māya*. Beings at this level feel a threefold diversity or the mutual difference between: subject and object, subject and subject, and object and object. Beings effected by *māyiya-mala* feel Self-insufficiency and diversity.

See *āṇava-mala*, *kārma-mala*.

**Mokṣa:** Emancipation, liberation from bindings. It is of several degrees and stages.

**Mukti:** The same as *mokṣa*.

**Nāda:** In ordinary usage *nāda* means sound. The first flutter of the outward creation of *vindu*. *Nāda* evolves into *bindu*. *Nāda* is an outward manifestation (along with *bindu*) of the *kalā* of *parāsaṃvit* descended to the position of the divine power of *vindu*. *Nāda* is awareness that appears as sound in its

extroversion and is thus the source of all names formed of sounds.

**Nādabindumaya:** The whole phenomenal existence consisting of name and form.

**Nidrā:** The fourth level of five different yogic experiences that mark a student's progress in *uccāra* yoga. Loss of body consciousness that may result in drowsiness.

See *ānanda*, *ubbhava*, *kampa*, *nidrā* and *ghūrṇi*.

**Nigraha:** Obscuration. Also, divine wrath, *pidhāna*. See *anugraha*.

**Nijānanda:** The first of six levels of Self-bliss experienced in the practice of *uccāra* yoga. Ecstasy experienced through a direct realization of finite individual (consciousness).

The six levels are *nijānanda*, *nirānanda*, *parānanda*, *brahmānanda*, *mahānanda* and *cidānanda*.

*Jagadānanda* is the infinite aspect of Self-bliss that lies beyond these six.

**Nirānanda:** The second of six levels of Self-bliss experienced in the practice of *uccāra* yoga. Ecstasy experienced through the realization of the absence of relative knowing and doing.

**Nirbija Samādhi:** The highest yogic experience of Patañjali's system of yoga. *Susupti*-like state of mind.

**Nirvikalpa:** Knowledge without ideation. Higher Consciousness which is free of all thoughts. A Śivayogin sees *paśyantī* on the occasion of the rise of that pure perception and understanding which is for the moment free from mental ideation. This is known as *nirvikalpa-saṃvedana*. See *vikalpa*.

**Nivṛtti:** One of the five *kalās*. *Kalās* are the finest aspect of space as defined in *śadadhvan*, the six paths of meditation on outward objects. *Nivṛtti* contains solid phenomena, earth. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

The five *kalās* in ascending order are: *nivṛtikalā*, *pratiṣṭhākalā*, *vidyākalā*, *sāntikalā*, and *sāntyaśitākalā*.

**Niyama:** Disciplines, sacred injunctions:

1. Purity—ways of purifying body, types of food.
2. Serenity—keeping the mind serene and self-contented.
3. Austerity—penance.
4. Study—knowing principles of yoga and philosophy.
5. Worship of God and guru.

*Yamas* and *niyamas* have not been recommended by Kashmir Śaivism.

*Niyama* is the second step on the eight-fold path of Pātañjala yoga: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*.

**Niyati:** Law of restriction. The tenth *tattva* in descending order. One of the five *kañcukas*. The term is used to describe the limits of beings living in the realms of dream existence i.e.: forefathers, gods, etc.—and in the waking existence of gross worlds.

The deeds committed by a person (*anu*) are either good or bad according to the law of *niyati* which is an integral part of an *anu*.

**Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika:** The Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika were originally two separate schools. They both followed the socio-religious system of the Vedic tradition, practiced Pāśupatism, developed common metaphysical principles, and were known for their often wild devotional form of Śaiva yoga. This system has been described as dualistic Śaivism, and was a theistic philosophy that arose out of dualistic Pāśupata. It subscribed to a form of materialistic realism which taught that all matter in the form of atoms is an eternally real substance existing outside the knowing subject.

**Pada:** A word. A conceptual word-image. The gross form of time which is one of the six objects of meditation (*sādadhvani*) in *sthānakalpanā* yoga, a subdivision of *āṇava* yoga. See *varṇa*.

**Prārabdha-karman:** That portion of past deeds which bears fruit in one worldly life.

**Parādvaita:** Absolute monism. This term was coined by the great sage-philosopher Abhinavagupta as a way of differentiating the monism of Kashmir Śaivism from the monism of Advaita Vedānta.

Abhinavagupta used this term in various forms:

1. *Paramādvaita*,
  2. *Paramādvaya*,
  3. *Parādvaya*,
  4. *Advaya*,
- (See *Pratyakṣādvaita*.)

**Parādvaitin:** One who practices absolute monism.

**Paramārtha-sat:** Absolutely real.

**Paramaśiva:** Absolute Consciousness for Śaivas.

**Parānanda:** Superior bliss. The third of six levels of Self-bliss experienced in the practice of *uccāra* yoga. It is aroused by

focusing the awareness on the function of life-force known as *prāṇa*.

**Parāśamvit:** Transcendental Consciousness—used by Śākta writers as well. *Parāśamvit* is also known as *kalatīta*, the spiritual stir of divine essence (Godhead) as it transcends *kalā*. *Parāśamvit* is the *Paramaśiva* of Śaivism, and the *Parabrahman* of the Upaniṣads.

**Parāvāc:** The supreme speech. Transcendental speech. This is really a type of awareness which does not behold anything but itself. Shines only as *aham*. No *idam* is present. Consists of pure awareness of the real Self.

Also called *parāvāṇī*.

See *Vaikhāṇī*, *Madhyamā*, *Paśyantī*, and *Parāvāṇī*.

**Parāvāṇī:** The transcendental Self-awareness of the pure and infinite I-consciousness. The innermost aspect of speech.

**Pariṇāma:** Transformation.

When milk changes into curd it is transformed, undergoing *pariṇāma*. Ordinarily, it cannot return to its original state except when it is eaten by a cow and yielded again as milk. There is another kind of *pariṇāma* which occurs when a piece of gold is transformed into a ring. In this form of *pariṇāma*, the ring can easily be transformed back into a gold piece. While curd is simply curd and not milk, a ring is both a ring and gold. Gold does not become obscured in the ring. Cosmic energy becomes transformed into matter, and at some time matter shall be transformed into cosmic energy. All these are examples of *pariṇāma*.

One of four types of change:

1. *Āgama*—coming in or addition
2. *Apāya*—going out or loss
3. *Pariṇāma*—transformation
4. *Vikāra*—modification

Numbers 1-3 are destructible.

**Pariṇāmavāda:** The Sāṃkhya doctrine of transformation.

**Paripūrṇa:** (1) Full above the brim with bliss and playfulness. Adjective used to describe God. (2) Filler of the phenomenal universe giving or grading its phenomenal existence or filling it with the concept of existence—*sattā*.

**Pāśas:** Bondage. Chains of *māyā*.

**Pāsus:** Bonded cattle. The bound souls; *jīvas*; enslaved beings.

The term used to describe beings at the lowest three levels of *pramāṭr*: *vijñānākalas*, *sakalas*, and *pralayākalas*. See *pramāṭr*.

**Paśyantī:** Finest level of speech. Speech conducted by awareness alone. Speech consisting of pure awareness at the stage of partial unity. The beholding subject (*aham*) and the beheld object (*idam*) are both evident in *paśyantī*. There is no successiveness in *paśyantī*—the order of ideas dissolves.

Also see *vaikhārī*, *madhyamā*, *parāvāc*, *parāvāṇī*.

**Patañjali:** One of India's great ancient philosopher-sages and the founder of a Brahmanic system of yoga. Author of the *Yogaśūtras*. His philosophy, known as *astāṅga*, or eight-limbed yoga, is composed of the classical eight steps: see *yama*. This description of the stages of practice has been incorporated in many forms of yoga.

**Patis:** Masters. Opposite of *paśus*. See *pramāṭr*.

**Pidhāna:** See *nigraha*.

**Prakāśa:** The light of Consciousness. Self-evident psychic luster. Luminous, as opposed to darkness (*aprakāśa*). That aspect of the Ultimate which serves as a substratum for all manifestation. See *vimarṣa*. Consciousness is *prakāśa* and its self-awareness is *vimarṣa*.

**Prakṛti:** Undiversified source of all the twenty-three instrumental and objective *tattvas* as worked out by the Sāṃkhya philosophy. Also called *mūlaprakṛti*, basic substance, or *pradhānatattva*, principle substance. Sāṃkhya philosophy considers *prakṛti* to be: nature, material, unconscious, and a single entity, in contrast to *Puruṣa*, which is spirit, spiritual consciousness, and multiple.

**Pralaya:** The state of universal dissolution.

**Pralayākalas:** One of the seven types of beings. Beings resting in *suṣupti*. They are so named because they remain free from *kalā* and its evolutes up to the end of the aeon of the next *pralaya*, the dissolution of all mental and physical entities into *mūlaprakṛti*, the cosmic energy.

*Pralayākalas* are bound to *āṇava-mala* (lack of independence). They are not affected by *kārma-mala* or *māyiya-mala* as long as they are in *suṣupti*, but these *malas* are revived when they come back into waking existence.

*Pralayākalas* are awakened from deep sleep by Lord Śrīkaṇṭha-nātha Śiva who shakes up cosmic energy and disturbs the balance of the three *guṇas* causing these beings either to

return to transmigratory existence in accordance with their past *karman* or to ascend to some higher plane through his grace.

See *akalas* for full listing of seven types of beings.

**Pramāṇa:** Instrumental element helpful in knowing.

**Pramāṭṛ:** Subject capable of knowing. Agent of cognition. *Pramāṭṛ* has been classified in Śaivism into the following seven main categories.

<i>Pramāṭṛ</i>	<i>Domain</i>
1. <i>Akala</i>	Śiva and Śakti tattvas
2. <i>Mantra-maheśvaras</i>	Sadāśivatattva
3. <i>Mantriśvaras</i>	Īśvara tattva
4. <i>Mantras or Vidyēśvaras</i>	Mahāmāyā or Vidyā tattva These first four, being, considered pure, are <i>patis</i> , and do not undergo transmigratory existence.
5. <i>Vijñānākalas</i>	Lower plane of mahāmāyā
6. <i>Pralayākalas</i>	māyā to <i>prakṛti</i>
7. <i>Sakalas</i>	Gross existence known as <i>Pārthiva aṇḍa</i>

These last three categories are bound and limited beings known as *paśus* or *aṇus*, and are considered impure.

**Prameya:** Object that is known. An object. Also see *pramāṭṛ* and *pramāṇa*.

**Prāṇa:** Vital air. Subtle life-force. Out-going breath. Elimination of all interior or exterior entities. Life-functions.

The five *prāṇas* or five states of *prāṇa* are *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *suṣupti*, *turyā* and *turyātīta*.

In the practice of *uccāra yoga*, *prāṇa* has six functions and levels of experience associated with them:

<i>Prāṇa</i>	<i>Level of Experience</i>
1. <i>Śūnya</i>	<i>Nijānanda</i>
2. <i>Prāṇa</i>	<i>Nirānanda</i>
3. <i>Apāṇa</i>	<i>Parānanda</i>
4. <i>Samāṇa</i>	<i>Brahmānanda</i>
5. <i>Udāṇa</i>	<i>Mahānanda</i>
6. <i>Vyāṇa</i>	<i>Cidānanda</i> <i>Jagadānanda*</i>

\* *Jagadānanda* is not counted as one of the six as all have their being in it and arise from it. See *akala*.

According to the philosophy of Trika system of yoga:

1. *Nijānanda* corresponds with the revelation of one's individual self-consisting of pure, individual I-consciousness.
2. *Nirānanda* represents the realization of that I-consciousness as being quite free from all manifestations of any knowable objects (*prameya*) and any means of knowing (*pramāṇa*).
3. *Parānanda* is the result of the realization of the essence of the eliminating and assimilating functions of the life-forces (*prāṇa* and *apāṇa*).
4. *Brahmānanda* shines along with the realization of the unity of all objects (*prameya*) and means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*).
5. *Mahānanda* corresponds with the process of the absorption of all types of ideation into the fire of pure consciousness.
6. *Cidānanda* dominates the realization of the pure and blissful Self-consciousness unstained by even the slightest element of inanimate manifestation.

Beyond the experience of these six degrees of blissfulness lies the realization of that limitless and pure aspect of the Self-bliss which, having no limitation of any kind, vibrates in its aspect which shines as being ever augmented by the nectar-like universal pure consciousness.

#### **Prāṇa, States of:**

*Jāgrat*—waking state

*Svapna*—dreaming state

*Suṣupti*—sleep state or dreamless sleep

*Turyā*—self-revelative state.

*Turyātīta*—transcendental state

Corresponding functions or activities of *prāṇa* are:

*Prāṇa*—experienced in *jāgrat* and *svapna*

*Apāṇa*—experienced in *jāgrat* and *svapna*

*Samāna*—experienced in *susupti*

*Udāna*—experienced in *turyā*

*Vyāna*—experienced in *turyātīta*

**Prāṇāyāma:** Breath-control, breathing exercises. The fourth step in the eightfold path of Pātañjala yoga.

**Pratibhā:** Intuition. Correct knowledge received spontaneously through *śaktipāta*.

**Pratibimba:** Reflection. *prati*, or *pratīpa* = of opposite character.

**Pratiṣṭhākalā:** One of the five *kalās*. *Kalās* are finer aspects of the *tattvas* as defined in *śaḍadhvan*, the six paths of meditation on

outward objects. *Pratiṣṭhākalā* contains the essence of all the *tattvas* from water to *prakṛti*. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Pratyāhāra:** Withdrawal. The fifth step in the eightfold path of Pātañjala yoga. The senses are controlled so that they do not interfere. The practice of having the senses follow the mind. According to non-dualistic Śaivism, *pratyāhāra* is not a direct means to Self-realization. The first five steps, *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, and *pratyāhāra*, are the physical part of the path. The last three steps are *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*. Even these are related to mental planes and not the real mind-transcending Self, according to Kashmir Śaivism.

**Pratyakṣādvaita:** The view of monism even in mundane things. This word was coined by Narasimhagupta, father of Abhinavagupta.

**Puruṣa:** I-consciousness reduced to utter finitude. Limited I-consciousness. Also called *pumstattva*, *jīva*, *paśu*, *aṇu*. These can be translated as "souls". See *Prakṛti*.

*Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* are creations of Lord Anantanātha.

Kashmir Śaivism places the three *guṇas* basically in the viewpoint of *Puruṣa* who extends them to *Prakṛti*.

**Puṣṭi:** The Lord's divine grace. When the Lord applies his *puṣṭi* on some blessed soul, that person develops a loving devotion for the Lord. *Puṣṭi* is a term popular in the Vaiṣṇavism of Vallabha.

**Puryāstaka:** The subtle body. It consists of the five subtle objective elements of the exterior senses (*tanmātras*: smell, taste, color, touch and sound), the intellect (*buddhi*), the mind (*manas*), and the ego (*ahaṅkāra*).

**Putrakadikṣā:** Form of initiation in *tīvra-madhya śaktipāta*. One of the types of initiation leading to the desired enjoyment (*bhukti*) and final liberation (*mukti*). A disciple initiated through *putrakadikṣā* is afterwards called and accepted as a son of the concerned preceptor.

**Rādhāswamins:** Practitioners of *surat* or *ajapā* yoga.

**Rajas:** A constituent of *Prakṛti*; one of the three *guṇas*. *Rajas* is the principle of motion, activity, passion, and pain.

**Rājayoga:** Such yoga practice which does not involve any suppression or repression of any physical system of one's body. The practice of focusing the mind on the Self so that the vital airs, *prāṇa* and *apāna*, cease automatically. This results in

*udāna* entering the *suṣumnā* and rising to *brahmarandhra* which brings about the experience of the Self free from objective limitations. *Rāja* yoga is of several types. It yields supernatural capabilities and can lead to final liberation. The yoga of the Trika system is the most perfect and the highest one among all the systems of *rāja* yoga. It is considered a direct means of Self-realization, unlike the usual eightfold path of yoga.

**Rāmānuja:** One of India's great philosopher-sages (eleventh century) who developed a system known as "qualified nondualism". Alongwith Śaṅkara and Madhva, he was one of the chief commentators on the *Vedāntasūtra*, 555 *sūtras* which attempt to systematize the teachings of the Upaniṣads. Rāmānuja taught that the One, called Brahman, has two forms: selves and matter. He stressed the importance of devotion (*bhakti*).

**Sabda:** Sound. Words. Bhartṛhari has called the supreme Brahman, *Śabdabrahman*, the word *śabda* meaning divinely potent, pure, infinite, and Self-aware consciousness.

**Sadādhvan:** The six paths of meditation on outward objects. See *sthānakalpanā* *yoga*.

**Sadāśiva tattva:** The first *tattva* in the process of creation. Principle of Being. I-ness shines predominately with only a faint impression of this-ness. Beings who reside at the *tattva* are called *Mantra-maheśvaras*. The presiding deity is Sadāśiva *Bhaṭṭāraka*.

All beings who reside here experience "I am this."

See *tattva* for complete listing.

**Sadvidyā tattva:** The fifth *tattva* in descending order. "I am This" is experienced where "I" and "This" are in perfect balance. This is the experience of unity-in-diversity. Also known as *Śuddhavidyā tattva*.

**Sadyojāta:** A divine authority in the *mantra* category.

**Sahṛdaya:** A person having a heart.

**Sakala:** Seventh out of seven categories of subject or agent of cognition (see *pramāṭṛ*). Perfectly bound souls. This group is considered impure, and are also called *aṇus* or *paśus*. They suffer both types of *āṇava-mala*, and *māyiya* and *kārma-malas* as well. *Sakalas* exist in the plane evolved out of *kalā* (*tattva* number seven down, number thirty up) and are bound by all its evolutes.

**Śākta samāveśa:** The realization of one's Divine Essence at the level of *śākta* yoga. See *samāveśa*.

**Śākta yoga:** Also called *jñāna* yoga and *śākta upāya*. Yoga of self-contemplation. This is a practice in constant contemplative ideation and imagination of the real nature of the Self. This practice brings *śākta samāveśa* of the Absolute, and develops the ability to practice *sāmbhava* yoga. *Śākta* is a practice of *śuddhavikalpa*, which involves correct conceptual knowing. Because of this it is also called *jñāna* yoga.

Also called *sattarka* = correct reasoning; *bhāvanā* = to bring into mental existence.

There is a special type of *śākta* yoga called *kālīnaya*: The practitioners visualize the phenomenal trinity of *pramātr*, *prameya*, and *pramāṇa* elements of the wheel of divine powers in twelve varieties of Kāli. They contemplate these powers as being their own, and impress complete mastery of the wheel onto themselves. This is not the same as the usual Kāli worship of Bengal, etc. Such *Kālīnaya* is wrongly taken as an independent system of Śaiva yoga, though it is actually a variety of *Śākta*.

*Śākta* is known as *bhedābheda upāya*: The monodualistic means.

**Śaktipāta:** The gracious activity of God, inspiring divine knowledge in a being. In the thirteenth chapter of the *Tantrāloka*, Abhinavagupta gives its three main types: *tīvra* (swift), *madhya* (moderate), and *manda* (slow).

These three evolve into nine varieties: (1) *tīvra-tīvra*, (2) *madhya-tīvra*, (3) *manda-tīvra*, (4) *tīvra-madhya*, (5) *madhya-madhya*, (6) *manda-madhya*, (7) *tīvra-manda*, (8) *madhya-manda*, and (9) *manda-manda*.

**Sālokya:** The state in which a practitioner attains citizenship in the abode of the Divine (personal God).

**Samādhi:** Literally, resolution; collecting the mind so that all its fluctuations are stilled; also, trance. The last of the eight steps of Pātañjala yoga. The state where the mind merges with the object of contemplation in such a way that the distinction among the subject, object, and means of contemplation completely disappears. There are several types of *samādhi*.

The three main types are: *svavikalpa samādhi*, *nirvikalpa samādhi*, and *nirbijā samādhi*.

In the Trika, *samādhi* is accepted as a highly superior variety of the dreamless sleep state (*suṣupti*).

The eight steps are: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*.

**Samāna:** Unification of *prāṇa* and *apāna*. The third life-function wherein the activities of *prāṇa* and *apāna* are reduced to one, tranquil, individual Self-awareness. This is experienced in *susupti*.

During the state of spiritual bliss called *brahmānanda*, the internal function of *prāṇa* becomes balanced, and assumes the form of *samāna* in the heart. Movements of vital air also stop in *samāna*.

Both the *prāṇa* and *apāna* functions of vitality become dissolved into one unitary type of Self-vibrating interior activity which is known as *samāna*.

See *uccāra* yoga.

**Samāveśa:** Total absorption and immersion of an individual's consciousness into the Divine. The immersion of the dependence of a dependent consciousness into the independence of the independent Consciousness, and the consequent merger of the former into the latter. Something like a haunting of a practitioner by Śiva-hood.

It is a sudden and direct intuitional flash of realization of one's Lordship (Divine Essence). There are fifty varieties of *samāveśa*. Literally it means complete or perfect immersion. *Samāveśa* is sometimes used instead of *upāya*. This is the reverse of *ābhāsa*, or manifestation. There are four types of immersions (*samāveśa*), from gross to subtle they are *kriyā* or *āṇava*, *jñāna* or *śākta*, *icchā* or *śāmbhava*, and *ānanda* or *anupāya*. See *ābhāsa*.

**Śāmbhava yoga:** Also *śāmbhava upāya* and *icchā* yoga. A practice in direct realization of the pure and divine nature of the Self. The mind is rested and relaxed, not forced to stop. I-consciousness is realized intuitively. Intense devotion plus correct understanding are two essential aids. *Śāmbhava* is *nirvikalpa* realization. *Śāmbhava* is known as *abhedā-upāya*, the monistic means of salvation.

See *mātrikā* yoga, and *mālinī* yoga as examples of various types of *śāmbhava* yoga. It is to be conducted through will-power, *icchā* yoga.

No element of mental contemplation or ideation is involved in any type of *śāmbhava* yoga. This way reveals the secrets of all lower types of Trika yoga.

**Śāmbhava samāvēśa:** The realization of one's Divine Essence at the level of *śāmbhava* yoga. See *samāvēśa*.

**Śāmbhavi mudrā:** One of the highest techniques of the practical *sādhanā* of Śaiva monism which results in the direct realization of the Absolute as the essential nature of the Self. It serves as a powerful aid to the practice of *śāmbhava upāya*.

In this *mudrā*, the practitioner assumes an erect physical posture in the lotus position (*padmāsana*), and with eyes half-shut and relaxed, he allows his gaze to fall gently towards the tip of the nose, while stilling the thought-process of the mind. The mind should by itself stand still like a flame of a lamp shining in a windless place, and remain alert even while becoming lost in the vibrant light of the pure Consciousness of the Self. The practitioner should not become unaware and enter into the state of dreamless sleep (*susupti*).

This *mudrā* is introduced by a special type of *nāḍī-sodhana prāṇāyāma* which should be learned from one's practical preceptor, and includes a practice of keeping the tongue in position closely against the palate though not in the manner of *khecarī*.

Sometimes the *śāmbhavi mudrā* causes the emanation of light from the forehead, or lightness of body resulting in levitation, and so on.

**Samṝtakramā:** Speech in which the order of successiveness is totally dissolved. Such speech is termed as *paśyantī*.

**Samvit:** The pure "I". The absolutely pure real Self of every living being. The infinite and absolutely perfect monistic "I" consisting of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*.

*Samvit* is experienced clearly in *turyā* and perfectly in the *turyātīta* state.

**Samvṝta:** Inwardly hidden universal substance.

**Samvṝti:** Ideation; the mental covering of pure consciousness. This term is used mainly by Buddhists.

**Samvṝti-satya:** Truth based on mental ideation. This is as opposed to *Paramārtha-satya*, or absolute truth.

**Śāntikalā:** One of the five *kalās*. *Kalās* are the finer aspects of the thirty-six *tattvas* as defined in *sādadhvani*, the six path of meditation on outward objects. *Śāntikalā* contains the pure *tattvas* up to *śakti* i.e.: *sadvidyā*, *īśvara*, *sadāśiva*, and *śakti*. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Śāntyatītā:** One of the five *kalās*. *Kalās* are the finest aspect of space as defined in *śaḍadhvan*, the six paths of meditation on outward objects. *Śāntyatītā* is the finest and contains the *Śiva tattva*. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Śāstra:** A philosophical text. Also *sāsana*.

**Sat:** Existence. Being: Along with *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss), these qualities describe the form of the infinite Lord as defined in Advaita Vedānta.

**Satkāryavāda:** The theory of causality for the Sāṃkhya School. The theory of phenomenal realism.

Contrast with *Asatkāryavāda* of the Nyāya school, and *Pūrvaparibhavavāda* of the Buddhists.

**Sattarka:** A special form of logic used by Abhinavagupta. *Sattarka* is based on the intuitive experiences of yogins who transcend *māyā* and see reality at the plane of *vidyā*.

*Tarka*, or regular logic, is based on human conventions evolved from the mundane experiences of ordinary people working within the domain of *māyā*.

Sometimes *sattarka* is called *sadvidyā*—the correct mental knowledge.

*Sattarka* at its highest level is known as *bhāvanā*. *Sattarka* is called *bhāvanā* when it penetrates through the veil of ignorance and grasps the true subjective nature of what appears to be objective.

**Sāyujya:** Union with God. The state in which the practitioner realizes his identity with the Divine while still maintaining his individual existence.

**Self-bliss:** Six varieties of: *nijānanda*, *nirānanda*, *parānanda*, *brahmānanda*, *mahānanda*, *cidānanda*, and *jagadānanda*. See *uccārya* yoga.

**Siddhas:** Fully enlightened beings.

**Siddhi:** Some power, usually supernatural, attained by an advanced yogin.

**Śiva yogin:** A practitioner of yoga who considers Śiva as the Absolute. Followers of Śaiva monism.

**Somānanda:** One of the great sage-philosophers of Kashmir Śaivism from the latter half of the ninth century AD. The great-grand-teacher of Abhinavagupta, and a younger contemporary of Bhaṭṭa Kallāṭa. His works include:(1) *Śivadr̥ṣṭi*, a systematic philosophical presentation of the Śaiva monistic and theistic

absolutism; (2) *Parātriśikāvivṛti*, his commentary on the *Parātriśikā* (not available now).

**Spanda:** The stir of vibrative volition. *Spanda* is neither a physical nor a mental movement, but is a spiritual activity of Consciousness which vibrates in and out simultaneously. The inward and outward movements of *spanda* shine as subjective and objective awareness of I-ness and this-ness.

The divine transmutation of Godhead is due to *spanda*. Outward manifestation (the universe) is basically due to the blissfully active nature of the Absolute, called *spanda*.

*Spanda* is not the same as Śakti. It is the manifestation of Śakti. *Spanda* is the stir of the ānandaśakti of Paramaśiva.

*Sāmānya spanda*—The Śiva aspect of purity and changelessness which has the infinite potency to manifest all changes.

*Viśeṣa spanda*—The Śakti aspect—the Absolute's natural inclination towards the manifestation of changes. All phenomenal manifestation is the result of the outward movement of *viśeṣa spanda*. The power of life-force is the most important outward form of *viśeṣa spanda*.

Other words for the *spanda* principle used by Somānanda and Utpaladeva: *sphurattā*, *prasara*, *parāvāṇī*, and *mahāsattā*.

**Spandakārikā:** One of the foundational texts of Kashmir Śaivism. The question of authorship is controversial. *Spandakārikā* has been attributed to Bhaṭṭa Kallatā, but Kṣemarāja attributes this work to Vasugupta. In fact, *Spandasūtra* is the same as *Spandakārikā*. Its author is Bhaṭṭa Kallatā, and not Vasugupta. Rāmaṅkāṇtha's commentary on the word *gurubhāraṭīm* in the fifty-second couplet of the *Kārikā* makes this fact quite clear. In the couplet Vasugupta has been called the preceptor of the author of *Spandakārikā*. *Spandakārikā* is simply an amplification of the fundamental principles of Kashmir Śaivism, as presented in the *Śivasūtra*.

**Śrīkanṭhanātha, Lord:** Śiva; See Anantanātha.

**Sthānakalpanā yoga:** A form of āṇava yoga conducted on external (*bāhya*) objects. Objective meditation on outward entities, accompanied by contemplation of monistic theism. These entities are time and space, and each has three aspects of fineness, subtleness, and grossness, making six paths in total. See āṇava yoga.

Three paths of time:

Fine: *varṇa* = nonconceptual, a letter or sound.

Subtle: *mantra* =mystical syllable, nonconceptual.

Gross: *pada* = conceptual word-image.

Three paths of space:

Fine: *kalā* = finer forms of the *tattvas*.

Subtle: *tattva* = thirty-six elements serving as components of *bhuvanas*.

Gross: *bhuvana* = the 118 abodes of beings.

Together these six paths are known as *śadadhvan*.

All varieties of *sthānakalpanā* yoga yield a lower type of *āṇava-samāvēsa* (see *samāvēsa*) and develop divine powers of mastery over any of the *bhuvanas*, *tattvas*, etc.

**Śuddhavidyātattva:** Principle of correlation. True, pure knowledge.

Awareness of unity-in-diversity and that of diversity-in-unity. This represents the viewpoint of beings residing in the *Īśvara* and *Sadāśiva* *tattvas*. At its lowest level it is known as *Mahāmāya*, the viewpoint of clear diversity adopted by pure beings called *vidyeśvaras*.

The experience is that of "I am I" and "This is This." As beings in this state retain their identity with pure I-consciousness, and do not lose their divine potency, they are considered pure. There is perfect balance between "I" and "This".

The term *śuddhavidyā* is also used for the viewpoint of unity in diversity. It is the instrumental element of *mantriśvaras*, and *mantra-maheśvaras*.

*Mahāmāya* is not a separate *tattva*, but is included as part of *Śuddhavidyā*.

Three levels of *Śuddhavidyā* in their descending order are:

1. The experience of "I am this" at the level of *Sadāśiva tattva*, the viewpoint of *mantra-maheśvaras*.

2. The experience of "This is myself" at the level of *Īśvara tattva*, the viewpoint of *Mantriśvaras*.

3. The experience of "I am I, and this is this." The viewpoint of *mantra* beings known as *vidyeśvaras*. Anantanātha is the presiding deity.

**Śūnya:** The void of dreamless sleep. The subtle, finite, and individual consciousness of the Self experienced in *susupti*; in other words, finite I-consciousness transcending psycho-physical existence.

*Śunya* serves a limited being (*anu*) in his functions during the sleeping state.

**Surat yoga:** Also known as *dhvani* yoga, one of the *grāhya* forms of *āṇava* yoga, in which practitioners focus their attention on the breath which is combined with a *mantra* such as *soham* or *hamsah*. Also *ajapā* yoga.

**Susupti:** Sleeping state. Dreamless sleep free from all turbulence. All apparent functions of *pṛāṇa* and *apāṇa* cease. Third of four states of life-force: *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *susupti*, and *turyā*.

*Apāṇa* and *pṛāṇa* balance in *susupti* into a state called *samāna*. This state is refreshing and energizing.

In Kashmir Śaivism there are 2 types of *susupti*:

1. *Savedya susupti*: This is equivalent to the *apavarga* state of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, and the *kaivalya* state of the Sāṃkhya yoga school.

2. *Apavedya susupti*: This is equivalent to *nirvāṇa* in the Vijnānavāda and Śunyavāda schools.

Beings in the *susupti* state are known as *pralayākalas*. This term refers to the fact that these yogins remain free from *kalā* and its evolutes up to the end of the aeon of the next *pralaya*, the dissolution of all mental and physical entities into cosmic energy (*mūlaprakṛti*).

**Svagatabheda:** Internal variety of God as proposed by Rāmānuja, or as it occurs in Nārāyaṇa according to the Viśiṣṭādvaita.

This concept refers to difference as it exists within oneself, i.e., this hand is both me and not me. The whole phenomenon is different from God and yet is His own form. God alone shines as *Īśvara*, as *jīva*, and as lifeless matter. These three elements are mutually different and yet these are part and parcel of one supreme reality.

**Svarūpajyotiḥ:** The psychic Self-luminosity of the beholding subject.

**Svātantrya:** Freedom. Free will. It is the experience of perfect freedom.

**Svātantryaśakti:** The power of freedom. A key expression of the *Pratyabhijñā* terminology. This phrase is used to describe the Universal Self when all of its powers are included. This term is so commonly used in this system that *Pratyabhijñā* is often called *Svātantrya-siddhānta*.

The *svātantrya* aspect of Universal Consciousness has been

given different names in various branches of monistic Śaivism, including: *caitanya sphurattā*, *spanda*, *mahāsattā*, *parāvāc*, *parā*, *cit-śakti* etc. In *Tantrāloka*, *svātantrya*, *cit*, and *vimarśa* are all referred to as *anuttara*.

**Svapna:** Dreaming state. One of the four states of life.

**Tanmātras:** Subtle elements which are the basic objects of the five exterior senses. These comprise *tattvas* six to ten, counting from the most gross manifestation up to *Paramaśiva*.

The sense objects of: smell (odour); taste (flavour); colour (light); touch (feel); and sound (audibility).

These five, along with the five *bhūtas*, make up the ten objective elements. See *tattvas* for a complete listing.

**Tantras:** Āgamic scriptures. Sacred texts of the Śaiva and Śākta schools. The adjectival form is Tāntric. A text is Tāntric if it is considered revealed or divinely inspired, but it is in no way attached to the Veda.

**Tatpuruṣa:** A divine *mantra* being. One of the five aspects and forms of Śiva.

**Tattveśvaras:** The five *tattveśvaras* are the presiding and governing deities of the five pure *tattvas*:

Five tattveśvaras	Tattvas	Pure, beings residing there
Śiva	Śiva	Sāmbhavas
Śakti	Śakti	Sāktas
Sadāśiva	Sadāśiva	Mantramahēśvaras
Īśvara	Īśvara	Mantriśvaras
Ananta	Vidyā	Mantras or Vidyēśvaras

**Tattva:** Truth. *Tat*=that, *tva*=ness > Thatness. The real essence that pervades a group of phenomenal entities. In Kashmir Śaivism there are thirty-six *tattvas* which are all the manifestation of *Paramaśiva*.

The thirty-six *tattvas* in ascending order are:

five *bhūtas* and

= the ten objective elements

five *tanmātras*

five *karmendriyas* and

= the ten exterior instrumental elements

five *jñānendriyas*

three *antahkaranas*

= the three interior instrumental elements

<i>mūlaprakṛti</i>	= Cosmic energy. These first twenty-four <i>tattvas</i> are considered insentient.
<i>Puruṣa</i>	= Soul, sentience. The first <i>tattva</i> of the Sāṃkhya system.
five <i>kañcukas</i>	= Cloak-like elements hiding the pure and divine nature of consciousness.
<i>māyā</i>	= The uppermost impure <i>tattva</i> , the source of the five <i>kañcukas</i> .
five pure <i>tattvas</i>	= Pure because of lying above <i>māyā</i> . The last eleven are <i>tattvas</i> added by Śaivism.
<i>Paramaśiva</i>	= Basic eternal reality beyond all thirty-six <i>tattvas</i> .

The thirty-six *tattvas* in descending order are:

*Paramaśiva*

A. Five pure *tattvas*:

1. *Śiva tattva*
2. *Śakti tattva*
3. *Sadāśiva tattva*
4. *Īśvara tattva*
5. *Sadvidyā tattva* (Also known as *Śuddhavidyā*.)

B<sub>1</sub>—6. *Māyā* < The first impure *tattva*; source of next *tattvas*, the basic sheath.

B<sub>2</sub>—Five sheaths of limitation (*kañcukas*):

7. Activity, authorship (*kalā*)
8. Knowing capacity (*vidyā*)
9. Interest (*rāga*)
10. Restriction (*niyati*)
11. Time sequence (*kāla*)
12. *Puruṣa*
13. *Prakṛti*

The thirteen instrumental elements:

C. Three interior instrumental elements (*antah karaṇas*):

14. Intellect faculty of judgement (*buddhi*)
15. Imagination (*manas*)
16. Personal ego (*ahamkāra*)

D. Five exterior organs of perception (*jñānendriyas*):

17. Hearing (*śravanendriya*)

18. Feeling-by-touch (*sparsendriya*)
19. Seeing (*darśanendriya*)
20. Tasting (*rasanendriya*)
21. Smelling (*ghrāṇendriya*)
- E. Five organs of action (*karmendriyas*)
22. Voicing or expressing (*vāgendriya*)
23. Handling (*hastendriya*)
24. Locomotion (*pādendriya*)
25. Rejecting, discharging (*payvindriya*)
26. Resting in rapture, re-creating (*upasthendriya*)

The ten objective elements:

- F. Five subtle objective elements (*tanmātras*):

27. Sound (*śabdatanmātra*)
28. Feel (*sparsatanmātra*)
29. Color (*rūpatanmātra*)
30. Flavor, taste (*rasatanmātra*)
31. Odor (*gandhatanmātra*)

- G. Five gross objective elements (*bhūtas*):

32. Etheriality, ether (*ākāśa*)
33. Aeriality, air, atmosphere (*vāyu*)
34. Formativity, fire (*agni*)
35. Liquidity, water (*āpas*)
36. Solidity, earth (*prthivī*)

Also: *Tattva* is the subtle form of space which is one of the six paths of meditation (*śadadhvan*) on outward objects used in *sthānakalpanā* yoga. The thirty-six elements serve as components of *bhuvanas*, the abodes of beings and the objective phenomena.  
See *sthānakalpanā* yoga, *kalā*, *bhuvana*.

**Tirodhānaśakti:** Divine power that obscures Reality.

**Trika:** Also *Trikaśāsana* and *Trikaśāstra*. These are various names for the practical aspect of the non-dualistic Śaivism of Kashmir.  
**Tripurasundarī:** The highest beauty seen by Śaivas in the three planes of: unity-> *śakti*, diversity-> *māyā*, diversely shining unity-> *vidyā*.

**Turyā:** Fourth state of *prāṇa* = Self-revelation.

Four states of *prāṇa*:

*Jāgrat:* waking state

*Svapna:* dreaming state

*Suṣupti:* sleeping state, deep sleep

**Turyā:** self-revelation

(*Turyātīta:* transcendental state)

Within *turyā* there are four steps: (1) *vijñānākala*, (2) *mantra* or *vidyēśvara*, (3) *mantrēśvara*, (4) *mantra-maheśvara*.

The fourth function of *prāṇa*, *udāna*, is the activity of intuitive revelation of the real nature of the Self, and is experienced vividly by yogins in the *turyā* state.

**Turyātīta:** State of pure Consciousness transcending even *turyā*.

State of *Paramaśiva*, the perfect monistic "I". In this state one is Conscious of "I" and "I" alone. This is the final truth. See *samvit*.

*Turyātīta* should not be counted as one of the states of *prāṇa* because all states belong to it, emanate out of it, and get absorbed back into it.

*Vyāna*, the fifth function of *prāṇa*, is the effulgent luster of limitless subject shining infinitely in the transcendental state of *turyātīta*.

**Uccāra yoga:** Ānava yoga conducted through meditation on *prāṇa*, the life-force which is analysed into six varieties:

(1) One's own individual I-consciousness. (2) This consciousness freed from objects and the means of knowing. (3) *Prāṇa* and *apāṇa* moving together. (4) *Samāna*. (5) *Udāna* and (6) *Vyāna*. All six are to be contemplated upon as being the very Self of the practitioner who withdraws his attention from the grosser elements like his physical body and focuses it in the forms of the most subtle elements consisting of the pure power of *prāṇa*.

(See *ānava* yoga.)

*Uccāra* yoga results in six varieties of Self-bliss listed in ascending order:

*nijānanda*, *nirānanda*, *parānanda*, *brahmānanda*, *mahānanda*, *cidānanda*, and *jagadānanda*—the infinite aspect.

Six varieties of *uccāra* yoga are respectively higher in the character of their blissfulness. These types, in ascending order, are as follows:

(1) Practice in relaxing (or concentrating) on one's individual I-consciousness is the first step in such *prāṇa-uccāra* yoga and the natural blissfulness characteristic of this practice is called *nijānanda*. (2) Relaxation practiced on the emptiness of one's individual I-consciousness is another type of *uccāra* yoga. It

gives rise to a sort of self-bliss called *nirānanda*. It is higher in standard in comparison with the previous one. (3) Practice in relaxation on the rise of one's activity of *prāṇa* which absorbs delightfully the whole objective existence contained in *apāna*, results in the rise of such blissfulness on the self which is called *parānanda*. (4) A still sweeter relaxation on one single and common aspect of all infinite number of objective existence produces a still superior type of self-bliss which is called *brahmānanda*. (5) A highly dominating, fiery type of life-force which reduces to ashes all the notions of the wonderfully different ideas of *prameyas* (objective entities) the *pramāṇas* (means of knowing) is termed *udāna*. (6) The still higher, pervasive life-force, called *vyāna*, being ever free from all outward *upādhis* and not having any dependence on anything inanimate in character, gives rise to the self-bliss which does not require the help of any inanimate entity for its illumination; nor does it at all include anything inanimate in character. It is called *cidānanda*. (7) That infinite and supreme blissfulness which shines through its universal pervasiveness, which is ever effulgently augmented by the supreme nectar of perfect and pure consciousness, and in which the practices like contemplation do not find any important utility, has verily been told to me [Abhinavagupta] by my master Sambhunātha as being *Jagadānanda*. This is the basic infinite bliss of the absolute consciousness. (See *Tantrāloka*, V.444-52.)

The fruits of *kundalinī* yoga are the natural outcome of *uccāra* yoga. A regular practice of *uccāra* yoga yields a superior form of *āṇavasamāveśa* and leads an aspirant to a higher state of liberation in this life.

While practicing *uccāra* yoga, the aspirant proceeds through five gradually higher stages of Self-experience:

1. *Ānanda*: Just a flash of Self-realization and a taste of bliss.
2. *Udbhava*: Momentary access to the psychic light of pure Consciousness shining like lightning beyond his normal awareness which causes his physical body to get a sudden upward jerk (*ubdhava*).
3. *Kampa*: The trembling of the body as ordinary awareness is overcome by experiences of divine powerfulness and as the age-old identification with the gross body appears to be at the verge of dissolution into pure consciousness.

4. *Nidrā*: The practitioner will start feeling drowsy as long as he is not yet fully established in pure Consciousness.

5. *Ghūrṇī* or *Mahāvyāpti*: A mild whirling of the head caused by ecstasy from realizing the universal aspect of one's Self-consciousness and from being well established in one's real nature.

**Udāna**: The life-function working in the *turyā* state. Self-revelative life-force metaphorically described as a spiritual fire that burns the dirt of mental ideas (*vikalpas*) and leads to idea-less (*nirvikalpa*) realization of the Self.

Yogins experience *udāna* as a sensation moving through the spinal cord. All conceptual cognitions get dissolved in it, and non-conceptual Self-realization shines with increasing luminosity. The *Śakti*, or vital power that moves up through the *susumna* during spiritual awakening.

Also see *prāṇa*.

**Udbhava**: upsurge or emergence. The second of five levels of experience which mark a student's progress in *uccāra* yoga.

**Umāpatinātha**: Incarnation of Īśvara Bhāṭṭāraka descended to the plane of *guṇa tattva*, the disturbed aspect of *Prakṛti*. Śiva of the epics and Purāṇas of India.

**Upādhi**: A limiting condition. A condition or adjunct having its existence outside absolute reality. A foreign element attached to the Divine, i.e. *avidyā* (ignorance) is referred to as His *upādhi*.

**Utpaladeva**: One of the very important philosopher-sages of Kashmir Śaivism who lived near the end of the ninth century and into the first half of the tenth century AD. He was the son of Udayākara and the pupil of Somānanda. He wrote several very important works on the philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism. His *Īśvarapratyabhijñā* is the most important work on the subject. His religio-philosophic poetry is as important as his logical works.

**Vaikhārī**: Spoken speech or its written version. One of four levels of speech: (1) *vaikhārī*, (2) *madhyamā*, (3) *paśyantī* and (4) *parāvāc*.

**Vairāgya**: Indifference. Spontaneous indifference toward sensual pleasures.

**Vajrayāna**: The system of Tāntric Buddhism which is still living in

the form of Lamaism in Tibet and Mongolia. It is Tantrism adapted to Vijñānavāda, an idealistic school of Buddhism.

**Vāmadeva:** A divine *mantra* being. One of the five divine forms of Śiva.

**Varna:** A non-conceptual word-image, a letter or sound. The subtle energy of speech. See *pada* and *mantra*.

**Varna-yoga:** A form of *dhvani* yoga which combines awareness of a *mantra* with the breath. *Dhvani* yoga is one of the four forms of āṇava yoga where the object of meditation is internal (*grāhya*). See āṇava yoga.

**Vāsanā:** According to the theory of Vijñānavādins, *vāsanā* is that series of past impressions which serves as the capacity and natural tendency of the stream of momentary self-consciousness to become the innumerable sensations, etc., which make up our daily thought process. The *vāsanā* is momentary, like the stream of consciousness. Each *vāsanā* produces a distinct sensation. These sensations combine to produce the variety of cognitions we experience each day.

**Vasugupta:** One of the great sage-philosophers of Kashmir Śaivism. He lived near the end of the eighth and into the first half of the ninth century AD. Vasugupta inspirationally received the *Śivasūtras*, which became the foundation text of the Trika system. He discovered the method of the realization of *spanda*, the essential nature of the real Self of a being.

**Vidyā:** The power of discrimination. One of the five sheaths of limitation (*kañcukas*) and the eighth *tattva* according to Kashmir Śaivism. The limited power of knowledge. Limited power to know just something.

In the *Vidyātattva* one experiences “I know this,” where “I” and “this” are two distinct and quite separate elements. “I” refers to a limited subject, and “this” refers to a limited object. This is in contrast to the *Śuddhavidyā tattva*, where “I” and “this” are in perfect balance and not yet limited in any way.

See *Śuddhavidyā*, or *Sadvidyā tattva*.

**Vidyākalā:** One of the five *kalās*. *Kalās* are the finest aspect of space as defined in *śaḍadhvan*, the six paths of meditation on outward objects. *Vidyākalā* contains the essence of the *tattvas* from *Puruṣa* to *māyā*. See *sthānakalpanā* yoga.

**Vidyeśvara:** A category of souls or beings also known as *mantras*.

Beings at a lower step of *turyā*. This group is part of pure creation and will have no transmigratory existence. See *Turyā*, *Pramātr̄*.

The *vidyeśvara* (*mantra*) sees the Self as omniscient, omnipotent, pure, and infinite Consciousness, but considers objective existence to be different from the Self.

These beings who are aware of diversity, generally work in the divine administration and conduct the divine activities of creation, etc. They help and inspire others to liberation.

Five examples of this category are: Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, and Aghora. These divine beings imparted the Śaiva Āgamas to enlightened beings (*siddhas*) in the world.

**Vijñāna:** Knowing. A Buddhist term. Also, Consciousness.

Stream of consciousness, or the constant flow of flickers of consciousness. *Vijñāna* is often called *citta*, or "mind," as well.

**Vijñānavāda:** The name of an idealistic school of Buddhism.

**Vijñānavādin:** The name given to members of an idealistic school of Buddhism. The "sensationalists". They do not believe in the existence of either the external world or the self beyond mind.

**Vijñākalas:** Beings who are aware of their pure and infinite Consciousness, free from all psychic and physical coverings, but do not yet experience awareness of their divine potency or the powers of Godhead.

Fifth of seven categories of *pramātr̄*: *akalas*, *mantra-maheśvaras*, *mantrēśvaras*, *mantras*, *vijñānākalas*, *pralayākalas*, and *sakalas*.

*Vijñānākalas* operate at the lowest level of *turyā*, and see themselves as pure Consciousness which is inactive. Because of this they suffer from the second kind of *āṇava-mala* i.e. practitioners of Advaita Vedānta, according to the non-dual Saivism of Kashmir.

*Vijñānākalas* are on the border between pure and impure beings, and are considered to be bound or limited until they move out of *māyā*.

**Vikalpa:** Ideation; determinate knowledge; dualizing thought.

Also: *Vikalpabuddhi* or *smṛti*—mainly used by Buddhists.

*Samvṛtisatya* = the truth based on ideation (as opposed to) *paramārtha-satya* = absolute truth.

See *nirvikalpa* = knowledge without ideation.

**Vikāra:** Modification.

**Vilāsa:** A term used in the Neo-Śaivism of Ācārya Amṛtavāgbhava to describe the Divine Essence of the Lord (Godhead). *Vi*Las is a Sanskrit root with many meanings. It is similar to *līlā*, or play, has erotic overtones, and is often used for dance and poetry. Dance here implies *lāsyā*, the gentle and erotic dance of Pārvatī, as opposed to *tāṇḍava*, the strongly masculine, even destructive, dance of Śiva. The prefix *vi* is an intensifier which heightens the character of *lāsa*. *Vi* is excellence or abundance. This term could be translated as "divine vitality," "beatific exuberance," or "divine play".

**Vimarśa:** Self-awareness or Self-consciousness. *Vimarśa* is the Self-referential capacity of Consciousness. It is also the *śakti*, or power, of Consciousness.

Consciousness is *prakāśa*, and its Self-awareness is *vimarśa*. The stir of *vimarśa* keeps absolute Consciousness always active and engaged in the outward manifestation of its divine powers. The essential character of this stir of pure *vimarśa* is infinite bliss.

**Vindu:** Finer aspect of *bindu*. Immensely powerful charge of divine will. Absolute Consciousness (*kalātīta*), charged with this divine will to manifest itself outwardly, is called *vindu* in Śāktism.

Pāṇini suggests the fact that the transcendental truth when charged with *icchā*, or divine will, is called *vindu*. See *vindur icchuḥ* (Sūtra-pāṭha, II.ii.169).

**Vivarta:** Appearance. A clearly manifested state.

*Vivarta* is a theory developed by Advaita Vedānta which Kashmir Śaivism does not accept. *Vivarta* is the appearance of something that does not exist at all, as in a mirage, or is a delusive appearance of a particular thing in the form of something else, as in a rope being mistaken for a snake.

**Vivartavāda:** Theory of the visionary appearance of a phenomenon popular among monks and scholars of the Śāṅkara school.

**Vivṛta:** Clearly manifest state.

**Vyāna:** The fifth function of animation. It is the brilliance of the limitless Subject shining infinitely in the transcendental state known as *turyātīta*.

The five functions of animation are: *prāṇa*, *apāṇa*, *samāna*, *udāna*, and *vyāna*.

**Yama:** Self-control. This is the first step on the eightfold path of classical yoga and includes various restraint and the five moral precepts: (1) *ahimsā*, "non-injury", (2) truthfulness, (3) not stealing (4) sexual abstinence, (5) non-possession.

The eight steps in Pātañjala yoga are: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*.

Kashmir Śaivism does not attach any importance to these eight steps in the yoga taught by Patañjali, and does not accept them as the means to final and perfect liberation.

**Yogasiddhi:** Supernatural powers developed by yogins experiencing powerful levels of *saktipāta*.

**Yogasūtra:** Famous philosophical text by Patañjali.

**Yoginī:** Female deity. Yогin's divinized female counterpart. Partner of a *siddha* or *vīra* (heroic aspirant).

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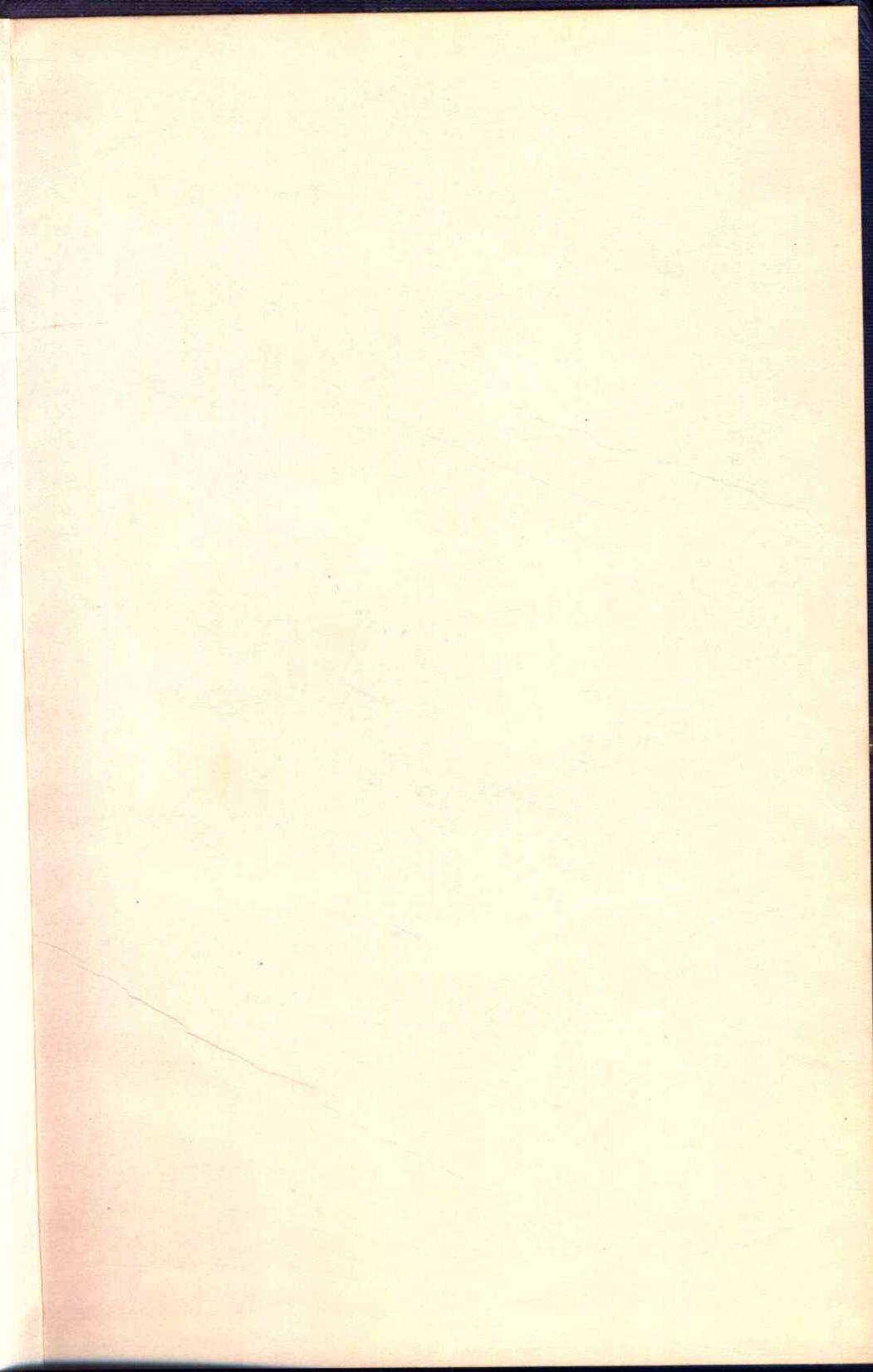
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