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## KAŚMĪRA ŚAIVISM: AN ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION

The *Śiva-Sūtras* form both the philosophical and esoteric basis of Kaśmīra Śaivism. According to the *Śivasūtravimarśinī*, *Śivasūtras* are the basis of all Āgamas. Lord Śiva revealed them to Vasugupta in his dream while he was residing in his hermitage below the Mahādeva peak. This view is supported by the *Span-davṛtti* of Kallaṭa. He is also of opinion that the *Sūtras* were directly imparted to Vasugupta in his dream<sup>1</sup>. According to Bhāskara, the *Sūtras* were composed by Śiva himself but were taught to Vasugupta by a *Siddha*, a realized soul with high spiritual attainments. Bhāskara often introduces the *Sūtras* with such phrases as *śivasūtram ariracat*, or *sūtram āha Maheśvaraḥ*<sup>2</sup>. According to this version, Vasugupta did not find the *Sūtras* inscribed on a rock as has been narrated by Kṣemarāja. Thus, there is a difference of opinion with regard to their authorship. In our view, because it is often said that esoteric secrets are imparted to a developed soul in dream, Vasugupta also received initiation from Śiva by means of a dream. Śiva is indeed considered as Ādi Guru (the eternal spiritual guide). Afterwards, Vasugupta stated his revelations in *Sūtra* form.

Kaśmīra Śaivism has acquired its distinctive name of Trika-Śāsana, Trika-Śāstra or simply Trika because it deals with the triple

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1. *Labdhamahādevagirau maheśasvapnopadiṣṭac chivasūtrasindhoh*. See J.C. CHATTERJEE, *Kashmir Shaivism*, Srinagar, Research and Publication Dept., 1962, p. 27.

2. BHĀSKARA, *Śivasūtravārttika*, pp. 5, 9.

principles known as Śiva-Śakti-Aṅṅu, or Pati-Pāśa-Paśu, or Bindu-Nāda-Kalā. The phrase *naraśaktiśivātmakam trikam* occurs in *Parātrīṃśikāvimarśinī*. The Trika is known as a mystical school (*rahasyasampradāya*) which is quite different from other forms of Śaivism. It is an idealistic monism (*advaita*), but differs in fundamental principles from Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta. According to Kaśmīra Śaivism, Advaita means the eternal co-existence of Śiva and Śakti<sup>3</sup>. Paramaśiva is the fundamental reality. He is indeterminate and transcendental existence, beyond all divisibility and separability. He is all-comprehensive<sup>4</sup>. The authorship of the entire manifest and unmanifest world lies with Paramaśiva. He is the nucleus of this cosmic cycle, the supreme Controller of the world process. Kurt F. Leidecker says: «The difference of the Īśvarādvaya system from the Brahmavādins consists herein that the Cit-like Exalted One always retains the authorship of the fivefold world process»<sup>5</sup>.

Kaśmīra Śaivism accepts *Māyā* as *Brahmamayi*, *Nityā* (eternal) and *Satyarūpā* (Truth). In this school of Advaita philosophy, *Brahman* and *Māyā* become one and co-existent. By accepting the principle of *Māyā* as a reality, *Kaśmīra Śaivism* agrees on the *Absolute* as all-embracing unlike *Śaṅkara's Brahman* which is based on the principles of renunciation and elimination.

### *Paramaśiva*

Paramaśiva of the Āgamaśāstra is the perfect and profound principle of oneness. The plurality and diversity of the cosmos represent the essential spiritual oneness of Paramaśiva. He is the Absolute of Kaśmīra Śaivism, unsubjectivated Transcendentality. He is *Pūrṇāhantā*, self-luminous and pure consciousness. Just as light and heat co-exist in fire, in the same way Śiva, the universal

3. *Śivaśaktisāmarasyamayajagadānandarūpam ity artham*, Jayaratha on Abhinavagupta, *Tantrāloka* 29, 116.

4. *Paramaśivapurūṣottamaḥ, viśvasya kendram. Anandasūtram*, p. 4.

5. *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, Madras, Adyar Library, 1938, p. 50.

I-ness (*ahantā*) and Śakti co-exist in pure consciousness. To make any real distinction between Śiva and Śakti will be a logical abstraction. Paramaśiva is unaffected by the limitation of time, space and causality, and unrestricted by his Vimarśa Kriyā who is identical with himself. By virtue of his Power he is described as the Free Agent. Freedom is the essence of consciousness.

Paramaśiva is the supreme Reality. He is of the nature of bliss and complete in Himself. He holds in Himself the unmanifested universe as an idea. At the same time he transcends this ideal universe. He is Pure Intelligence as well as the one all-including Supreme Experience. J.C. Chatterjee says: «He is logical first principle but not in time»<sup>6</sup>. He is beyond the categories of existence and non-existence. He does not come within the scope of the thirty-six *tattvas* of Śaivism.

Paramaśiva is both transcendental and immanent. His transcendental aspects is called Śivatattva while Śaktitattva is the immanent principle. The duality involved in this admission of Śiva and Śakti is due to the analytical approach of mind. Kaśmīra Śaivism maintains the spiritual monism of Śiva and Śakti. Śakti is identical with Śiva as salt is with the sea-water<sup>7</sup>. Śiva is consciousness as *stasis* (*Cit*), Śakti is consciousness as *dynamis* (*Cidrūpiṇi*).

Paramaśiva is further called Mahābindu. He is without colour (*avarṇa*) and formless (*nirākāra*). Bindu has position but no magnitude. This means: Paramaśiva exists but He cannot be conceived. He is logically indemonstrable, beyond the reach of speculative mind and thought. He is the composite form of Śiva (consciousness) and Śakti (operative principle). To separate Śiva and Śakti is as impossible as to separate moving wind from the steadfast ether in which it blows. Paramaśiva is therefore Yāmalarupa. In this way, Kaśmīra Śaivism resolves the philosophical dilemma of monism and dualism. It resolves the scientists' enigma of mind and matter and the Vedāntin's problem of *Brahman* and *Māyā*.

The inalienable concomitance of Śiva and Śakti is called *Avi-*

6. *Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 63.

7. *Śaktimadaikyātmyalakṣaṇāl lavaṇāranālavat parasparamelanāt*. Jayaratha on *Tantrāloka* 3, 198.

nābhāvi. The word Avinābhāvi means «inseparable», i.e. the existence of the one cannot be proved in the absence of the other. There is no Śiva without Śakti and no Śakti without Śiva<sup>8</sup>. Paramaśiva in His transcendental aspect is beyond all manifestations; in His immanent aspect, He pervades the universe. The universe with all its infinite diversity of objects is nothing but a manifestation of the immanent aspect of Paramaśiva. This is called Śakti (operative principle), which is not in any way different from, or independent of, Paramaśiva.

All things of the universe are made of the same cosmic consciousness (*caitanya*). The transcendental aspect (Śiva) of Paramaśiva is the fundamental stuff of the cosmos. Śakti, the creative matrix, is the cause of multiplicity. She is the Vimarśa aspect of Paramaśiva. Śiva is witnessing consciousness. Śakti is the binding principle.

The material cause and the efficient cause are the cardinal principles of creative idealism. Every object has these two causes. Over and above these, there is a conjunctive principle which acts as a catalytic agent between the material and efficient cause. Śiva is the material cause. Śakti is the vital force. As the efficient cause, Śiva is the primary and Śakti the secondary factor<sup>9</sup>. Śiva is consciousness-force and all-pervading entity. Śakti is always merged in Śiva. She activates the process of creation only when Śiva offers an opportunity and grants divine permission. Hence the doership lies with Śiva. Paramaśiva, however, remains the fundamental stuff and supreme doer, the nucleus of all the nuclei, the soul of the soul and life of life. He is described as one because He can be realised by making the mind apexed or one-pointed. An apexed mind realizes Paramaśiva in the state of deep meditation, in which Mind is dissolved into Divine Consciousness. This state is called the mystic oneness of Śiva and Śakti, Kuṇḍalinī and Parabindu. Paramaśiva is attainable with the awakening of the serpent power (Kuṇḍalinī Śakti).

8. *Na śivaḥ śaktirahito na śaktiḥ śivavarjitā*. Quoted by Jayaratha on *tantrāloka* 3, 67.

9. *Anandaśtram*, p. 3.

## Ābhāsavāda

According to Śaivism, the entire creation is Ābhāsa. Creation is the result of self-movement (*spanda*) on the part of Śiva-Śakti. The world of waves and vibrations, things and beings, is the self-manifestation of the non-dual cosmic consciousness. The Supreme Reality splits itself spontaneously into two: subject and object, and again coalesce into one undivided unity of transcendentality. The former is the Illuminating (*Prakāśa*) and knowing entity, the latter is the Veiling (*Vimarśa*) and Activating entity. So long as Śakti remains merged in Śiva and does not get any scope for her activation, Śiva is unqualified and objectless. This theoretical dualism of Śiva and Śakti is symbolically represented by a grain of gram having two seeds closely joined and covered with a sheath which is *Māyā*. Creation starts only when they come apart. When Śakti starts acting and reacting, differentiation is started. This differentiation between Śiva and Śakti is the cause of creative ideation (*srṣṭikalpanā*). By differentiation is meant objectivation of the supreme Subjectivity.

In *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* it is said<sup>10</sup> that Śiva, animated by the desire of having a manifest universe which is one with Himself, first of all shines forth as the one *Cit* which is the very void detached from *Māyā*. This state of isolation of *Cit* is known as *anāśrita* Śiva (Śiva who is attached to nothing). Thereafter he is metamorphosed in the totality of suchness: worlds, entities and *Tattvas*.

Kaśmīra Śaivism expounds the philosophy of thirty-six Śaiva-Śākta *Tattvas*. *Tattva* means the created being<sup>11</sup>. The stages of creation are the stages of what might be called involution of the macrocosm and evolution of the microcosm. In the process of involution, consciousness is metamorphosed into subtle and gross *Tattvas*. J.C. Chatterjee says: «The process of the production of the *Tattvas* may, therefore, be spoken of, as it indeed is, as one of involution, the Reality of Paramaśiva being more and more involved,

10. *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, ed. K.F. Leidecker, p. 30.

11. *Tasya bhāvah tattvam. Īsvara-pratyabhijñāvimarśini*, II, p. 219 (ed. K.A.S. Iyer and K.C. Pandey).

until it reaches a stage at which it appears as the physical»<sup>12</sup>. Involution is the process of analysis: the one, Infinite Self, is transformed into innumerable entities. Each *Tattva* remains involved in its lower *Tattva*. The cruder *Tattva* is developed from the subtler *Tattva*. The subtler *Tattva* has a wider scope for the manifestation of the Spirit, the cruder *Tattva* has increasingly greater restrictions. Even in the crudest *Tattva* all the causal, subtle, ideal and spiritual principles are present. «That is to say», remarks J.C. Chatterjee, «whenever there exists a lower *Tattva*, i.e. a *Tattva* of greater restriction... there are also all the other and higher ones, in full manifestation and holding the lower, as it were, in their bosom, they existing as so many concentric circles of gradually decreasing extent — or, from another point of view, standing like a number of mathematical points occupying the same position and yet somehow maintaining their individuality, in the heart of the lower as its very life and soul»<sup>13</sup>. The whole creation is the unfolding and manifestation of consciousness (*citi*). Consciousness gets itself transformed into the following thirty-six *Tattvas*:

1. *Śiva*. *Śiva* is a consciousness-force (*citiśakti*). Consciousness is the very cause of the universe which is the process of becoming perfect. Kurt F. Leidecker says: «When the universe is in the process of becoming perfected means as much as when (all suchness) from *Sadāśiva* to the earth emerge»<sup>14</sup>. We observe that the process of becoming perfected means mergence or re-absorption of the world process into *Śiva*. When all our loves and longings, aspirations and desires are directed into Him, we attain perfection by becoming one with Him. According to the *Śivādvaita* school, the original cause of the world must be the unity of male and female principles as all beings are constituted of *he* and *she* parts. The *Śivādvaita* system forms the basis of the *Sāṅkhya* conception of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. However, according to the *Svacchanda Tantra* and its commentator *Kṣemarāja*, *Śiva-tattva* is *Aprameya* «Immeasurable»<sup>15</sup> and hence He does not come within the

12. *Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 148.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, p. 20.

15. *Aprameyaṃ tato jñeyaṃ śivalattvaṃ varānane. Svacchandatantram* 10,

purview of logical thinking and metaphysical speculation.

2. *Śakti*. Śiva is *Jñāna-tattva* and Śakti is *Kriyāśakti*. Śakti is a primordial force. She is the immanent principle of Śiva<sup>16</sup>. Reality is one and eternal, but due to the activation of Śakti, Śiva appears to have taken different forms. However, notwithstanding the operation of Śakti, Śiva does not lose his transcendentality. Although Śakti exists at all levels of manifestation and unmanifestation, even in the state of Paramaśiva, the transcendentality of Śiva always remains uncontaminated. When Śakti is merged into Śiva, She is called *Mūlaprakṛti*. Śakti or *Prakṛti* is a combination of three attributes or *guṇas* i.e. *Sattva* (Sentient), *Rajaḥ* (Mutative) and *Tamaḥ* (Static). In the state of *Mūlaprakṛti*, all the three *Guṇas* remain in equilibrium and hence Śakti is unmanifested. But the moment the equipoise is disturbed, due to the belligerent nature of the three *Guṇas*, Śakti is transformed into *Māyā*, the creative matrix. This is why in Śaivism She is addressed as cosmoform Mahāmāyā. The phenomenal world is the manifestation of her heterogeneous forms. It is nothing but her playful motivation.

3. *Sadāśiva*. From the state of Śiva-Śakti there emerges, in this *Tattva* the experience of «Being begins» (*ahamidambhāva*). It is a state of *Iness* in which the notion of being is experienced as «*I am*» and therefore it is called *Sādākhyā*<sup>17</sup>. It is the state in which the *Ichā* aspect of the Divine Śakti is predominant. In common parlance this state of *Iness* is a state of individualization, of self-awareness.

4. *Īśvara*. From the state of *Iness* the next stage of *I exist* (*idamahambhāva*) is developed. *Īśvaratattva* is dominated by *Jñānaśakti*. *Īśvaratattva* is quite different from *Īśvara*, the Lord. First there is «*I am*» and then only «*I exists*» (*I* in third person).

5. *Sad-vidyā*. The *Sadvidyā* is dominated by *Kryāśakti*. It is a state of co-ordinated cooperation between *Aham* and *Idam*, a state in which two aspects of the relation of identity are established. It is also called *Śuddhavidyā* — a state of cognition in which the true

674; Vol. V, Part B, (ed. Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, 1933), p. 281.

16. *Śaktiḥ sā śivasya śaktiḥ. Ānandasūtram* vs. 2, p. 3.

17. *Sādākhyāyam bhavam yataḥ prabhṛti sad iti prakhyā. Pratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, III, 1.2.

relation of things is realised. In this state of Sadvidyā, every individual being experiences his body, thoughts and feelings as at once diverse and different from and yet identical with himself. It is a state of pure manifestation.

6. *Māyā*. Bondage is due to the erroneous identification of the Self with the non-self which is the product of *Māyā*. Due to *Māyā*'s force of obscuration, the Self identifies himself with the object of experience, i.e. the non-self. From this moment, the five typical forms of perfect relation become imperfect and limited. *Māyā* limits the true nature of both subject and object, the Self and the universe. The supposition of *Māyā* as a principle of obscuration is both necessary and logical. For, if the ultimate Reality possesses all the five powers — *Cit*, *Ānanda*, *Ichchā*, *Jñāna* and *Kriyā* — and so is perfect in every way, and the universe is identical with it, the question remains: where does the plurality of selves with all their limitations come from, and what is the cause of the limited creation which forms the object of experience of the limited beings? Due to *Māyā*, the Self becomes the victim of *Svarūpākhyāti*. *Māyā* creates the five principles or powers known as *Kaṅcukas* (Sheaths) which limit the knowledge and power of the Self. These five are as follows: 7. *Kāla*. 8. *Vidyā*. 9. *Rāga*. 10. *Niyati* and 11. *Kalā*. With these powers, *Māyā* enwraps *Puruṣa*. The microcosm goes into a deep slumber and forgets its divine nature and origin. According to Śaivism, every microcosm is a hibernated macrocosm. This is why Śaivism lays down detailed principles of intuitional practice to arouse the dormant divinity (*Kuṇḍalinī*) in man and to make him realise that he is Śiva, the Absolute.

12. *Puruṣa*. The *Puruṣa* of Śaivism is somewhat different from the *Puruṣa* of Sāṅkhya. According to Trika, *Puruṣa* is a reflection (*ābhāsa*) of the Supreme Reality.

13. *Prakṛti* or *Bhogyā-sāmānya*<sup>18</sup>, the equipoise of the three *Guṇ*'s.

14-16. *Manas*, *Buddhi*, *Ahaṅkāra*.

17-26. Five sense organs and five motor organs.

27-31. Five *Mahābhūtas* (*Prithivī*, *Āpa*, *Tejas*, *Vāju* and *Ākāśa*).

18. *Tantrasāra*, *Āhnika*, 8.



32-36. Five *Tanmātras* (*Gandha, Rasa, Rūpa, Sparśa* and *Śabda*).

According to Trika, the entire creation is *Ābhāsa*. The phenomenal world is real in the sense that it is a manifestation of *Paramaśiva*. Creation is the result of spontaneous movement (*Spanda*) on the part of *Śiva*. *The world of waves and vibrations, things and beings, is the manifestation of the non-dual cosmic consciousness with which Māyā is in essence identical.* Gopinath Kaviraj says: «when the universe comes into being, it does so as only an image within the unique Self. The universe as such is varied but underlying it is the pure and simple unity of *Caitanya*... The manifestation of the universe, due to the Free Will (*svātantrya*) of the Absolute, is then a process of *Ābhāsa* and for the initiation of this process nothing beyond the play of the will is needed»<sup>19</sup>. The world of appearance is real in the same way as an image is real but it has no existence apart from the consciousness in which it is manifested. Its existence is only the existence of the Absolute.

According to the Śivādvaita school of Kaśmīra Śaivism, Supreme Reality is of the nature of pure consciousness, self-luminous and all-pervading. Its mystic experience is characterized by vividness, directness and bliss. *Śiva* is *Sat* (Being), *Śakti* is *Satī* (Being as a power). *Śiva* is *Cit* (Consciousness), *Śakti* is *Citi* (consciousness as force). *Śiva* is *Ānanda* (Bliss), *Śakti* is *Paramānanda-sandoharūpā* (Soul of Bliss). *Śiva* is *Brahman*, *Śakti* is *Brahmayī*. Some say that Truth is Advaita (non-dual), some others speak of it as Dvaita (dual) but it is, in the Śivādvaita view, *Dvaitādvaitavirjita*: neither the one nor the other. It is beyond dualism and non-dualism.

19. *Tripurārahasyam*, p. 11.