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DIALOGUE
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Editorial Perspective

Bihar: Repeated Incompetence and Criminal Lapses in Ensuring Public Safety

Twenty-two persons died in Patna in a stampede during Chhatha festival two years ago; five during Shri Narendra Modi's rally in Patna some months earlier. The Bihar Government learnt no lesson; the tragedy revisited Bihar. The death toll in the worst ever Patna Gandhi Maidan stampede during *Ravan Dahan*, on the eve of Dashahara festival on 3rd October 2014, reached 33; over 100 persons were seriously injured. Here, it needs mention that mob control is not a recent phenomenon in India. This country manages some twenty to twenty-five times larger crowd for months together every three years during *Kumbh Mela* at Allahabad, Haridwar, Ujjain and Nashik. Our people used to behave; the self-regulatory control mechanism rarely failed. The respective State governments efficiently manage the crowd during *Kumbh*. Then, why such repeated failures in Bihar?

Post-rumour, the people, gathered in Patna Gandhi Maidan for the function, panicked; they tried to escape through an uneven gate with unfilled ditch and loosely fastened cattle trap just outside it, got entangled in the same and fell down and were trampled in the stampede. As reported, magistrates, officers and others responsible for crowd control were not present on the spot. The lack of crowd control training of the police force, inadequate lighting arrangement, closure of other gates and the official engagement to facilitate VIP movement keeping the officers and policemen busy were the other factors responsible for the tragedy. To facilitate VIP movement and to get the Chief Minister's party safely out, the public movement through Fraser Road was stopped for 15 minutes. As a result, the exhibition road, the outlet of the panicked mob, was jammed from Ram Gulam Chowk to Maurya Hotel. No senior officer was present at the time of the incident. The absence of doctors and emergency medical treatment facilities for over 100 seriously injured was yet another factor pointing towards the serious failure of

the Bihar government. These were serious lapses of a government amounting to criminality. The payments to the killed and injured and the institution of the internal inquiry have routinely followed. The State government has transferred the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police; the superintendent and some doctors of PMCH have been suspended. This followed serious intervention of the Chief Minister. What is lacking is the search for the root cause in the rotten political culture of Bihar. After all, repetition of such serious incidents at regular intervals is the syndrome of the system's failure, rather the policy collapse, and not merely the administrative lapse. In Bihar, we need coordinated action of the political and bureaucratic elite, based on the proper understanding of the problem. Blaming district administration for all the lapses terrorizes local administration; it generates administrative apathy. The risk-aversion attitude, a bureaucratic disease, leads to abnormal actions, such as forced immersion of Durga in parts of Bihar this year. It contrasts particularly with recent prompt and effective handling of the devastating floods in Kashmir and Hudhud cyclone in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

Terror and Politics in a Corner of India

An "accidental" blast, in what turned out to be a bomb-assembling base, in a house in the outskirts of Burdwan, West Bengal about 100nd October 2014, killing two and injuring one has brought many disturbing facts to light. The two surviving ladies tried to prevent entry of people inside the room, threatening them to shoot them from the window; no gun was anyway, found in the room. But they were found burning pamphlets in the room. Partially burnt pamphlets, written in Bengali script with words and phrases like "mujahid", "salam to our brothers in Chechnya" and the name of "Zawahiri", the al Qaida leader, who recently announced the opening of the outfit's branch in the Indian subcontinent, were also found in the flat. The police found gelatin sticks, 59 improvised explosive devices (hand made bombs) and 55 improvised hand grenades. They took the bombs to the bank of Damodar river 3 kms away, buried them in mud and detonated them before the arrival of forensic analysts or the officials from the NIA (National Investigation Agency). Strangely, the local police denied entry of the NIA team to the flat, who left the place after altercation. The team was, however, allowed, after the intervention of higher NIA officials, to find nothing worth investigating. Here, it needs mention that the standing operational procedure for law

operating agencies, in such cases, is to preserve all evidences from the scene of crime and not to destroy it, as the Bengal police have done. Rather than destroying the explosives, etc., they should have preserved it for forensic examination, and immediately informed IB and NIA about the incident and cooperated fully in the investigation.

In another incident near Malda in Bengal, the bombs went off in a mango orchard on 5th October 2014 injuring three youths. The bombs were supposed to be smuggled to Bangladesh for use by terror groups and radical organizations. About 15 others, who were present at the spot, managed to flee after the blast. Yet in a third incident in Kanki in North Bengal, the rumour mongering and attempt to throw cow's flesh in a temple led to communal tension, clash and rioting. The Kanki incident was the repetition of what happened at Kishanganj (Bihar) adjacent to Kanki a few days earlier. The incidents at four places within a few days point towards the possibility of plans of explosion and large-scale communal disturbances in eastern India.

In the light of the failure of the State intelligence machinery, the role of the State police in destroying the bombs, the presence of the local Trinamul office in the two-storey building where Burdwan explosion took place and party linkages with some suspected persons, the statement of Derek O'Brien, Trinamul national spokesperson in a news conference in Delhi., attempting to pitch the National Investigation Agency's probe into the Burdwan blast as an infringement of the federal structure, is unusual. O'Brien said: "Maligning the federal structure will not win the hearts of people." He further said: "The Bengal Chief Minister completely trusts the State administration to crack the Burdwan case and is confident that they will do their job. Trust is a word not found in the PM's dictionary. Nor does he trust the key members of his own administration. He thinks the CMs of all States also operate like him." Equating 'law and order' and 'national security', and unnecessarily bringing reference to the Prime Minister, exposes the confusion and loss of nerve of the party running the State. The contradictory voice of a local Trinmul M.P., who stated that "If the police had monitored the area well, such incidents could have been avoided", was nearer to the truth.

Preliminary investigations into Burdwan blast have revealed that the persons running the bomb assembling flat allegedly had links with the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB, an outlawed terror outfit). After this, Bangladeshi security analysts have drawn attention to how

the country's terror outfits could be using the Indian soil to create unrest in Bangladesh, marking a reversal of earlier Indian claims that it was facing subversive activities plotted across the border. Major General (Retd.) Mohammad Abdul Rashid, a security analyst at the Institute of Conflict, Law and Development Studies (a Dhaka-based think tank) has rightly expressed the common concern of Bangladesh and India. He stated: "We have come to know from media report that the JMB could have links with the blast. If it is true, it is a matter of great concern not only for the security of Bangladesh, but also for India." He further said: "Earlier, there used to be complaints that Indian insurgent groups were using Bangladesh territory for subversive activities in India. Now, it seems Bangladeshi terror outfits are using Indian soil to destabilize our country."

Needless to say that Major Gen. Rashid has expressed our common concern. India can not allow such multiple lapses to continue any more. JMB funded terror modules and *madrasas* openly run and produce Jihadis. The two ladies at Burdwan bomb explosion site were the product of JMB funded *madrasas*; the terror outfit produced bombs in the same building where the political party running the State government has local office, and yet the State run intelligence has no inkling of the same; even no notice of the alert sent by Central agencies were taken, then certainly something is seriously wrong.

In West Bengal, it was possible for the Jamaat-ul Mujahideen, Bangladesh (JMB), a banned Jehadi outfit, to set up terror cells under the nose of the administration; illegal *madrasas*, having links with international jihadi outfits, mushroomed over a period of time due to lack of monitoring or proper intelligence mechanism. As reported, the people engaged in terror activities enjoyed local political support. According to reports, the bomb factory at Burdwan, set up by JMB operatives, was operating since July and about 50 improvised explosive devices were dispatched to Dhaka and Assam before the blast. JMB operatives frequently crossover into West Bengal and Assam for recruitment and fund-drive; they have mobilized 150 young men to carry out attacks in Bangladesh. Involvement of a member of the Rohingya jihadi outfit of Myanmar has added an extra dimension to the whole affair. Under such circumstances, the West Bengal government should ensure full cooperation to the Central intelligence agency in its work. In any case, it should not let politics undermine security in West Bengal and the country's good relations and tie with Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Dr. B.B. Kumar

When Identity Becomes Problematic

Patricia Mukhim*

As people from India's North-East we are often confronted with the question, "Are we North-Easterners or Indians? I will not be overstating a fact when I say here that for many being "Indian" is still an alien mindset. And even within a State we still want to assert and be identified by our ethnic identities. For instance a Paite, Kuki, Hmar person or a Tangkhul or Mao Naga from Manipur would not like to be called Manipuri – a term that identifies a person with the State he/she comes from. The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor in his book *The Politics of Recognition* says, 'I am called to live my life in this way. But who does the calling?' For Taylor and others who look at communitarian aspects of society, the identity itself does the calling. The human person is born into the identity. He can hardly choose it. John Gray makes this even more specific when he says, 'Identities are a matter of fate, not choice.'

The spate of attacks on people of North-Eastern origin in Delhi and Bangalore, recently have been labelled as racist attacks, for want of a better expression. But it is important to look at the profiles of the people who commit such crimes on North-Easterners. Is the anger and fury of the attacker/s fuelled by our looks, our behaviour, our attitudes? Do they fear the North-Easterner as a potential rival for jobs/occupations? Or are they simply human beings who did what they did from fear, desperation or cruelty? Such atrocities express deep-seated human traits that are not going to be removed by the kind of conceptual therapy offered by philosophers like Amartya Sen who believe that

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attackers are fuelled by hatred for a particular religion or race or have the motivation to target people of particular races. Nor will more laws help curb these atrocities. India is a country that is unable to cope with rapid globalisation and mechanisation resulting in loss of jobs for those engaged in manual work. The 21st century seems like a century of ideas and the result of those ideas is mechanisation. More machines means lesser hands. There is desperation around us and desperation leads to rage. The attacks may or may not be calculated against people with particular looks – in this case North-Easterners.

Philosophers like John Gray believe that democracy does not necessarily guarantee freedom, if freedom is understood to mean 'living as you choose to without being judged.' Gray elucidates further saying, 'You'll see that it's not just tyrants that stand in the way of freedom. The world is full of failed and enfeebled states in which the main threats to freedom come from organised crime, ethnic conflict and militant sectarian groups.' Hence Gray argues that if one were living in some provinces of Mexico, one is likely to be more afraid of ruthless drug cartels than of corrupt and ineffectual governments. In parts of the Balkans in the 1990s, people would have to be afraid of lawless militias, operating on ethnic lines but often intertwined with organised crime. In these cases, it's a condition of near-anarchy rather than tyranny that threatens freedom. Is it correct to say then that India is in anarchy because it is unable to prevent crimes against a section of its population?

We live in a contemporary political situation where different ethnic groups and minorities demand special *recognition*. The need, it can be argued, is one of the driving forces behind nationalist movements in politics. And the demand comes to the fore in a number of ways in today's politics, on behalf of minority or "subaltern" groups, in some forms of feminism and in what is today called the politics of "multiculturalism." The demand for recognition in these latter cases is given urgency by the supposed links between recognition and identity, where this latter term designates something like a person's understanding of who they are, of their fundamental defining characteristics as a human being. The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves.

Non-recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. Recently, a similar point has been made in relation to indigenous and colonized people in general. It is held that since 1492 Europeans have projected an image of such people as somehow inferior, “uncivilized,” and through the force of conquest have often been able to impose this image on the conquered. The figure of Caliban has been held to epitomize this crushing portrait of contempt of New World aboriginals. Within these perspectives, misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need.

In order to examine some of the issues that have arisen here, I’d like to take a step back, achieve a little distance, and look first at how this discourse of recognition and identity came to seem familiar, or at least readily understandable, to us. For it was not always so, and our ancestors of more than a couple of centuries ago would have stared at us uncomprehendingly if we had used these terms in their current sense. How did we get started on this?

The birth of a democratic society doesn’t by itself do away with this phenomenon, because people can still define themselves by their social roles. What does decisively undermine this socially derived identification, however, is the ideal of authenticity itself. In order to understand the close connection between identity and recognition, we have to take into account a crucial feature of the human condition that has been rendered almost invisible by the overwhelmingly monological bent of mainstream modern philosophy.

This crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally *dialogical* character. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity, through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression.

For my purposes here, I want to take *language* in a broad sense, covering not only the words we speak, but also other modes of expression whereby we define ourselves, including the “languages” of art, of gesture, of love, and the like. But we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others. People do not acquire the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Rather, we are introduced to them through interaction with others who matter to us—what George Herbert Mead called “significant others.”

The genesis of the human mind is in this sense not monological, not something each person accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical. Moreover, this is not just a fact about *genesis*, which can be ignored later on. We don't just learn the languages in dialogue and then go on to use them for our own purposes. We are of course expected to develop our own opinions, outlook, stances toward things, and to a considerable degree through solitary reflection. But this is not how things work with important issues, like the definition of our identity. We define our identity always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us. Even after we outgrow some of these others—our parents, for instance—and they disappear from our lives, the conversation with them continues within us as long as we live.

Thus, the contribution of significant others, even when it is provided at the beginning of our lives, continues indefinitely. Some people may still want to hold on to some form of the monological ideal. It is true that we can never liberate ourselves completely from those whose love and care shaped us early in life, but we should strive to define ourselves on our own to the fullest extent possible, coming as best as we can to understand and thus get some control over the influence of our parents, and avoiding falling into any more such dependent relationships. We need relationships to fulfil, but not to define, ourselves.

6th Schedule Demand Returning

Pradip Phanjoubam*

The 6th Schedule debate is once again rearing its head in the State. Not surprisingly, a clear pattern of its cyclic recurrence is now more or less established. It would normally come about when the politics of the

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Assembly variety sinks into a lull midway into its term, and the dreary mediocrity of issueless politics begins looking for new issues to arrest people's imagination in order that the elected politicians may have something to save their political careers. This pattern of State politics is not exclusive to the 6th Schedule issue but equally true of so many others, the territorial integrity issue for instance. It is often said threats of war unite the people, and, therefore, politicians periodically employ sabre rattling as a strategy to achieve this effect whenever the public are restive and the politicians are insecure about their political careers. This is, however, not to say these issues are trivial.

It is also unfortunate that the 6th Schedule issue has also been appropriated by vested interests and made to look like an offshoot of the hill-valley friction in the State. Indeed, because of the consistent portrayal thus, it has become such, thereby something those in the hills must blindly support and, those, in the valley blindly oppose. This is unfortunate, and must cease to be so. Those of us who have watched politics in the State for at least the last two decades will remember that the 6th Schedule was almost a fait accompli in the late 1990s, at about the same time the 1997 landmark Naga ceasefire agreement was signed. Rishang Keishing was chief minister, Meijinlung Kamson was the Union Minister of State for internal security and O.N. Srivastava was the Governor. There were some token opposition from the valley communities, but not to the spirit of the Schedule but in anticipation of a compromise of the territorial integrity of the State. Rishang had managed to reassure the people the territorial integrity would not be put at jeopardy under any circumstance, and he had begun land surveys to demarcate the territories of the Autonomous District Councils (ADCs), to give the 6th Schedule a tangible shape. It was here the stumbling block was encountered. The question was whether there would be six ADCs, (five hill districts plus Sadar Hills), or only five ADCs (with Sadar Hills as part of Senapati district). There was also a third proposal, whereby there would be only two ADCs, with the four "Naga districts" as one ADC and Churachandpur district as the other ADC. Bitter opposition to either of the models was actually what proved the undoing, and not so much valley opposition, as many now so eagerly want it to be seen as.

There is no reason why there should be so much ado over the 6th Schedule. It is an autonomy model for islands of small ethnic communities buried within a larger community. They would be governed

by the laws of the State as well as those of the ADCs. Introduced in 1952, it was meant for the former undivided Assam, where the lands and communities roughly beyond the Inner Line, falling within what the British classified as “Excluded Area” (Naga and Lushai Hills) and “Partially Excluded Area” (Khasi and Jantia Hills and Mikir Hills) were given protection under the Schedule’s provisions. Nagaland refused the offer for the Naga leadership then under A.Z. Phizo thought it was a compromise to their demand for complete sovereignty, which is why Nagaland still does not have the 6th Schedule, though so many in Manipur think it does. The Lushai, Khasi, Garo, Jantia and Mikir Hills were put under the Schedule, but after these original 6th Schedule areas became States in their own rights, the ADCs lost their relevance considerably. In the Lushai hills (Mizoram), it was abolished for most part but retained in three tiny non-Mizo pockets, namely the Chakma, Lakher and Pawi (Poi). In Assam, Mikir Hills (Karbi Anglong) is still under the Schedule. In Meghalaya too the Schedule is still maintained as it was, so the three ADCs of Khasi Hills, Jantia Hills and Garo Hills almost totally overlap with the Meghalaya government’s administrative jurisdictions with the exception of the Shillong capital area which has been de-Scheduled. Some see the Meghalaya arrangement as a problem nonetheless it should be an eye opener for Manipur. If the 6th Schedule must be implemented, it can actually be to the entire State and not just the hills. Let each district have an autonomous ADC administration and let the State administration bind all these autonomous ADCs under a larger roof. As in the case of Shillong, perhaps the Imphal municipal area too could be made the only de-Scheduled cosmopolitan area. This would be a novel experiment in federalism too.

Tracking Moving Targets

The 6th Schedule of the Constitution was, as we have noted earlier, meant for the formerly undivided Assam on the peripheral hills on which lived many different, till then backward tribal communities. As the agitation for the implementation of the Inner Line Permit System in the State in the last few months have brought to the fore, the idea of delineating the unadministered Assam hills from those administered by modern laws was already a concern even during the British days. The Bengal Inner Line Regulation of 1873 was the first official documentary statement of this concern. This line as we now know was drawn

roughly along the foothills of Assam's peripheral hills, and by this system, British subjects were required to take special permission to enter these hills. By the Government of India Act 1919, these hills would come to be designated as "Backward Tracts" and by the Government of India Act 1935, they would be further delineated into "Excluded" and "Partially Excluded" areas. The "Excluded" areas, constituting of the Naga Hills and Lushai Hills, were under the direct administration of the British Governor, while the "Partially Excluded" areas, constituting of the Khasi-Jantia Hills and the Mikir Hills (now known as Karbi Anglong) were given some representations in the Provincial Assembly through nominated members and, therefore, partially responsible for their own governance. After Indian Independence, the former "Excluded" and "Partially Excluded" areas were the ones sought to be given special administrative facilities under the 6th Schedule of the Constitution. The rest, including what became of the original 6th Schedule ADCs, is now history. As to why Manipur never had either the ILP or the 6th Schedule from the beginning is because it was never part of British Assam.

In other words, these were administrative arrangements fashioned by the British and then the nascent modern Indian State, to govern formerly ungoverned or little governed areas of undivided Assam. Times have changed, and changed unrecognizably in the context of the North-East. Out of the former Assam, four hills States have been created, making the North-East a sisterhood of seven States, or eight including Sikkim, after Sikkim was incorporated within the purview of the NEC. The Inner Line is now the boundary of many of these relatively new States, and the 6th Schedule thereafter became redundant and either was abandoned or retained in parts in most of these former districts of Assam. It is amidst these that the demands for the implementation of the Inner Line Permit System and the 6th Schedule are rearing their problem laden heads in Manipur. No argument about it that needs for similar legislations could have arisen again and therefore the urgency of bringing them back to the State's discursive forums, but the trouble is, those who feel so seem to think simply bringing back these archaic laws is the panacea for all problems the State is faced with. These instruments of governance had unique historical contexts, and these contexts are hardly likely to have remained intact, therefore the extreme likelihood of these instruments being outdated and unfit for the present times. Indeed, there were many who have had an

experience of the Inner Line System, including the Chief Minister of Nagaland, saying how toothless this system is today. There are an equal number of people, say for instance in Meghalaya and Mizoram, who hold similar opinions about the 6th Schedule. Yet those demanding these systems insist on having them as they were.

The moot point is, it does not have to be these archaic laws, already kneeling under the weight of decades and even centuries of troubled existence. Instead, the better approach would be to take the spirit from them and make new laws which fit the current purposes and needs. It is a truism that times change continually, which is why each era has its own needs and makes its own demands. Ability or otherwise to recognize these needs, and make adjustments to meet the new challenges, has always been the defining criteria for survival or collapse of societies. To hit shifting targets, the need is also to shift aims correspondingly. Let it also be remembered that the tides of time not only change, but also wait for nobody.

Siva in Sanskrit Literature

Radhavallabh Tripathi*

Siva is a unique deity in Hindu pantheon. He is imbued with a variety of opposite qualities, he is terrific and re-assuring, repulsive and beautiful, wrathful and easy to please, a celibate and an epicure. He is an ascetic and fell under the charm of Parvati – the mountain girl. He is ubiquitous and he lives in the burial grounds. He burnt Kama – the god of love and he also remains ever united with his beloved Uma in the form of *Ardhanarisvara*. The wonderful thing about Siva is that he loves human beings like a father. He laughs at their follies. An arrogant Ravana raised the Kailasa Mountain to challenge him. The mountain started shaking and the terrified Uma, Siva's consort, hugged Him out of fear. This pleased Siva. But when the mountain was actually raised by the defiant Ravana above the ground and its shakings became rather inconvenient, Siva just pressed it with his thumb and Ravana was crushed under its pressure. But then Siva was pleased with his shrieks and became his mentor.

Siva is thus the God for the people – the masses. No other deity from Hindu mythology is extolled, revered and represented in innumerable folktales as Siva is. He is the most unorthodox of all gods. He transgresses all norms. In fact Siva is the Supreme Reality, where all contradictions rest and meltdown in harmony. Kalidasa has spelled out the harmony of the opposites in Him, To quote the poet's own words –

“The God Siva, who has eight forms, kindled the sacred fire,
which is one of his own forms and offered oblations in that
fire blazing with proffered timber. Even though He is the creator

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of the fruits of all sorts of penances. He was performing penance with some indescribable desire within Him.”¹

Siva carries opposite binaries – He is beautiful and ugly at the same time, He is fierce and compassionate. There are descriptions of his long matted hair and nakedness. Then there are descriptions of his decorations and beauty — crescent moon adorns his forehead, and through his locks flows the river Ganga.

The integration of contradictory elements in Siva’s form is extensively visualized in the XVI chapter of *Suklayajurveda*, known as *Satarudri*. The opposites get fused in Him –

नमो ह्रस्वाय च वामनाय च नमो
बृहते च वर्षीयसे च नमो
वृद्धाय च सवृधे च नमोऽग्रयाय च प्रथमाय च॥
नमो ज्येष्ठाय च कनिष्ठाय च नमः
पूर्वजाय च चापरजाय च नमो
मध्यमाय चाप्रगल्भाय च नमो जघन्याय च बध्नयाय च॥

*Homage to the short, and to the dwarf homage;
Homage to the great and to the adult homage;
Homage to the one who is grown up and to the one who
is growing homage;
Homage to the one who is foremost and to the one who is
first.*

*Homage to the eldest and to the youngest
Homage to the first born and to the last born
Homage to the middle most and to the immature
Homage to the one who is despised and to the one who has
sunk.*

(Yajurveda, XVI.30,32)

Through Siva, Kalidasa envisages an aesthetic principle which make all opposites melt in the beauty of harmony. Describing Siva as a bride-groom on the occasion of his marriage with Uma, the poet says–

"The funeral ashes on his body became white unguent, his skull was transformed into beautiful crest, his elephant hide became silken garment with marks of gorocan on the fringes. The eye which was on the flat bone of his forehead with a

tawny pupil set inside became the tilaka mark made by haritala. The serpent Lords coiling around various parts of his body just made small adjustments to form ornaments and the luster of the gems of their hoods was already there as it was before. And why should Hara need a crest jewel, when the infant moon was already on his head ever emitting luster— shining brightly even in the day without the dark spot?²

Siva is also the god who is not only venerated, he is equally loved and laughed at. Poets have applied their muse to reveal the extraordinary nature of Siva with a human face. Yogesvara describes the enigma of Siva's servant Bhrngin, in the following manner —

*If he is naked what need then has he of the bow?
If armed with bow then why the holy ashes?
If smeared with ashes what needs he with a women?
Or if with her, then how can he hate Love?
Poor Bhrngin, seeing these his master's contradictions
Has worried his body till there is nothing left
But the hard bones,
Knotted with tough sinew.*

(Yogesvara, Q. in Subhasitaratnakosa- 103)

The Genesis of Saivite Concepts

The roots of Saivite concepts are supposed to lie in phallic worship which was in practice amongst the aborigines in India. Siva must have emerged out of phallus. Cosmologically the phallus is connected to the primordial pillar, which forms the axis of the universe. The practice of phallic worship existed in early Indo-Aryans. It is correlated to the principle of fertility, and it goes back to Mesopotamian period. Phallic worship was prevalent in all ancient civilizations. There are phallic representations in ancient Abyssinia, Somalia and Egypt. The tribes in Africa specially in Kenya and Tanganyika have long cultivated traditions of phallic worship.

The myths about Siva assuming the form of a Kirata point out to his early association with the tribes of Vindhya region. Siva resides in mountains, with his body covered with ashes gathered from funeral pyres (*citabhasma*), wears tigers skin or elephant's hide, is fond of putting on snakes. The *ganas* or followers of Siva are also said to be possessing obnoxious characters forming a retinue of outlandish beings.

They may be exaggerated representations of the ethnic others. The macabre practice of wearing a human skull.

Saivite concepts are discernible in the Indus Valley civilization, with the concept of Siva as *Pasupati*. Amongst the *Upanisads* – *Svetasvatara*, *Jabala*, *Atharvasiras* and *Atharvasikha* propound Saiva siddhanta.

The concept of *Linga* was further developed at the ontological level, and *Linga* represented the highest level of perfection with two of its aspects the male and the female. They were also termed as *nada* and *bindu*.

Saiva Schools

Saivism developed through Agamas and Vedas and one of its philosophical system is *Saivadvaita*. Then came several sects of Siva worship – most prominent amongst these are four – *Siddhantamargins*, the *Pasupatas*, the *Mahavratadharas* and the *Kapalikas*. The *Pasupata* system is based on five principles of *Karya*, *Karana*, *Yoga*, *Vidhi* and *Duhkhanta*. The Pasupata Saivism as described in the *Mahabharata* decries caste system *Mahavratadharas* and the *Kapalikas* carried the practice of *Sivopasana* to extremes with difficult vows. Besides several other schools of Saivism sprung up later on. The *sarvadarsanasamgraha* of Madhavacarya gives the details of five amongst these *Pasupata*, *Saiva*, *Pratyabhjña*, *Rasesvara* and *Aulukya*. Some of these schools imbibed the practice of human sacrifice. Jarasandha used to sacrifice the war prisoners to Lord Siva., (MB Sabha. 21.98)

Philosophically, 26 categories are accepted in *Saiva Siddhanta*. Of these, 24 are already discussed in *Samkhya* philosophy and added to them are two *Siva* and *Sakti*.

Forms of Siva

Guru Dakshinamukrti is Siva's silent form. In the form of *Linga*, he is placed in the centre of a circular base, which represents female generative organ. This is suggestive of the union of Siva and Sakti. Sakti is creative energy and is always conceived in female form. The *Sivalinga* is also envisioned as a column of light and is called the *Jyotirlinga*.

Many *Puranas* including the *Sivapurana* relate the stories about the primordial *Jyotirlinga*. Brahma and Visnu were quarrelling as to

who is greater amongst the two, when they saw a column of light rising from the ground. Brahma in the form of a swan and Visnu in the form of a boar went far above and down to seeking its upper and lower limits which both of them could not reach. Siva then revealed before them in the form of the divine *Linga*. The other story described how the wandering Siva in naked was seen by the wives of the sages who became infatuated by the sight and overcome with lust they followed the mendicant wherever he went. The enraged sages cursed Siva to make his phallus fall on the ground. But the phallus started growing and assuming infinite proportions when dropped on the ground causing the entire universe to tremble. Siva could forgive the sages only on condition that they will worship him in the form of the *Linga*.

There was a stage when the cult of phallic worship synthesized with the idea of the cosmic pillar. *Atharvaveda* presents the bridges between the two. On one hand there is a hymn on *Skambha* (the pillar) in it, on the other it extols Rudra.

Siva and Vedic Rudra

There was a period of reluctance to admit Siva in Vedic pantheon. The worshippers of phallus are decried in *Rgveda*. There are legends about Siva being initially neglected. *Satapathabrahmana* describes his formidable characters. (1.7.3.1, II.6.2.7). R.C. Hazra refers to an episode of sages cursed by Gautama to become Vedabahya and extolling Siva.³ Daksa – the prajapati – did not invite him in the sacrificial ceremony he organised. *Satapathabrahmana* says that Siva remained behind when other gods left for heaven.

The invocation of Rudra through one hundred names in *Satarudri* (the 16th chapter of *Yajurveda*) accompanying 425 oblations is an attempt to bring Siva in vedic pantheon. Rudra is said to be the complete form of Agni, and he is the deity who brings rains and storm. But the invocations in the *Satarudri* take into account the terrific and repulsive characteristics of Rudra and then also correlate them with the sober aspects, providing ample ground for establishing Rudra as Siva. The fierce figure of Rudra culminates here into a gentle and auspicious form, which is Siva. The seer says –

*‘With that auspicious and tranquil form of yours,
sinless and shining*

*O mountain-hunter Rudra!
behold us.*⁴⁴

The traces of Rudra as a wrathful god are very much here, but he is requested to shun violence, and the characteristics of Siva get assimilated in him. He is called Nilagriva (having a violate neck) and *vilohita* (of red hue).⁵ The names such as Bhava, Sarva, Pasupai, Sitikantha, Kapardin, Girisa as well as Ugra and Bhima are attributed to Rudra, for which Siva is better known.⁶ There are places where Rudra and Siva appear to be finally merged with each other. Viz.:

नमः शम्भवाय च मयोभवाय च
नमः शङ्कराय च मयस्कराय च
नमः शिवाय च शिवतराय च।

Suklayajurveda, XVI.41

In contrast the denigration of Siva in certain quarters, there are attempts in the *Atharvaveda* to provide an honorable place to Siva. On the other hand, the initial reluctance to admit him in the orthodoxy of the gods and a tendency to treat Siva as an outsider can be detected in several pauranic akhyanas related to Siva. Siva is associated with *vratyas* – who are treated as the outcasts by the priests in vedic period. And then he is also glorified as a *vrtya* and the chief of *vratyas* in *Suklayajurveda*. The Book XV of the *Atharvaveda* also extols *vratyas*. The Brahman is conceived as a *vrtya* and Rudra is said to be the *vrtya* only (*eka-vrtya*). In this way The *Yajurveda* and *Atharvaveda* mark a period of acceptability and successive glorification of Siva.

It is however the *Svetasvaratara Upanisad*, which gave a reasoning and philosophy for accepting Siva as the Supreme Reality, who creates the Universe, and also oversees its dissolution.⁷ It repeats the maxim *na tasya pratima asti* (there is no image for Him) and establishes Siva as the ultimate essence.⁸ Then follows a long eulogy to Siva.⁹

The initial reluctance to admit Siva in the fold of Vedic pantheon continued in some form or the other in the later period as well when Siva has already been given a place in the trinity of great gods along with Brahma and Visnu. The fifth canto of *Kumrasambhava* of Kalidasa presents a debate between Siva disguised as a brahmacarin and Parvati. The former, after ascertaining the purpose of her penance condemns Siva. His arguments are – Siva is given to inauspicious things, he wears elephant hide dripping with drops of blood, he lives in cemetery

ground, he besmears himself with funeral ashes, rides on an old bull. He then concludes by saying – ‘What is there in Siva? He is ugly and uncouth because of his three eyes, the source of his birth is unknown, and his nakedness shows how rich he is! There is not a slightest trace in Siva of whatever that is sought in a prospective bride groom! Now two things have become deplorable by their desire to unite with that Siva – the shining crescent of the moon and you – the moon light for the eyes of the world. Therefore turn your mind from this unseemly desire. What a disparity is there between him of that type and you of auspicious qualities! Wise men do not expect the honour of a sacrificial post for a spear of cemetery!’

Parvati is extremely disturbed at such inappropriate remarks, and she gives a very strong refutation of all the statements made by the celibate in the following words – ‘you do not know Siva in his true nature, therefore you are talking this way. Men of lesser intelligence are zealous of the extra-ordinary and inscrutable motives of the great. An auspicious thing is sought by one who seeks to counteract adverse circumstances, or by one who longs for prosperity. What has one, who has no desire, and is the refuse of the world, to do with the impulses of the self marred by expectations? Siva may be miser, but he is the source of all prosperity, he may be living in the cemetery, but he is the Lord of the three worlds. He appears frightful, but he is known to be auspicious. Actually no one knows Him in true nature. He is a cosmic form, one cannot comprehend his character. The funeral ashes having acquired the contact of his body attain the capacity to purify. So that, when they drop down when he is dancing, the gods put them on their heads. Indra riding on his elephant, toes of both the feet of him who rides on his bull and is reduced to penury’. Parvati concludes her arguments by saying that the celibate has talked too much, but at least one thing he said is right—how can one know the source of birth of the one who is the source of the self born? She added that she does not want to enter into any further arguments, let Siva be what he is, her heart is completely absorbed in the *bhava* for him, such are the ways of love that the defects (of the beloved) do not matter there.

Tamil Traditions

In Tamil traditions, Siva is connected to Himalyas, his wife is the daughter of the mountain Sivas lived in Sivapur located in modern

horkot (now in Pakistan).¹⁰ The Tamil word chivan (shivan) means red, so does chembhu (shambhu). The *Silappadikaram*, one of the earliest Tamil classics, is full of references to the worship of Siva and Siva temples. On their way to Madura, Kovalan and Kannaki, meet a brahmana who is well-versed in Vedas. He advises them to chant two great vedic *mantras*, one of them is pañcaksaramatra (*namah Sivaya*) for the worship of Siva.¹¹ The couple also see a goddess – the female form of Siva. She was bedecked by the moon in her coiffure, had an un-winking eye in her forehead, a throat darkened by poison and was wearing the serpent Vasuki as girdle as well as elephants hide. With her foot pressing the corpse of a demon she was also holding a trident.¹²

Names of Siva

Asvalayana Grhyasutra mentions the following names of Siva — other names *Hara, Mrda, Siva, Bhima* and *Sankara*. *Amarakosa* the first authentic work in Sanskrit lexicography enumerates the following 48 names of Siva – *Sambhu, Isa, Pasupati, Siva, Sulin, Mahesvara, Isvara, Sarva, Isana, Sankara, Candrasekhara, Bhutesa, Khandaparasu, Girisa, Girisa, Mrda, Mrtyunjaya, Krttivasah, Pinakin, Pramathadhipa, Ugra, Kapardin, Srikantha, Sitikantha, Kapalabhrt, Vamadeva, Mahadeva, Virupaksa, Trilocana, Krsanuretah, Sarvajña, Dhurjati, Nilalohita, Hara, Smarahara, Bharga, Tryambka, Tripurantaka, Gangadhara, Andharipu, Kratudhvansin, Vrsadhvaja, Vyomakesa, Bhava, Bhima, Sthanu, Rudra* and *Umapati*.

Siva is called *Sambhu* for being all happiness or for providing happiness. He is *Isa, Isvara* and *Isna* for being the Lord. He is *Pasupati* and *Bhutesa* as he being the master of all beings. The most prevalent names *Siva* and *Sankara* signify his benevolence. He is *Sulin* as he holds a spear. He is *Mahesvara* for being the Chief of all gods. He is *Sarva* for being violent (A variant reading for *Sarva* is *Sarva* meaning the be all); He is called *Candrasekhara* for holding the crescent moon on his locks., He is *Khandaparasu* because he bears a particular type of spontoon as weapon. He is called *Girisa* and *Girisa* for making the mountain his abode. He is *Mrda* for imparting happiness. As he transcends death, therefore he is *Mrtyunjaya*. He is *Krttivasah* for wearing elephants' hide. *Pinaka* is the name of his bow, making him *Pinakin*. *Pramathas* are the *ganas* of Siva and to them he is *Pramathadhipa*. *Ugra* means fierce. *Kaparda* is matted locks, Siva is *Kapardin* due to them. The name *Dhurjati* also bears the same sense.

Sri means beauty. The neck of Siva is beautiful, therefore he is *Srikantha*. *Siti* means black. His neck was blackened as he drank poison and kept it stuck there, therefore Siva became *Sitikantha*. *Kapala* is the pot made of skull. Siva is *Kapalabhrta* for holding a *Kapala*. He is *Vamadeva* as he violates or transgresses all norms. He is greatest god, so he is *Mahadeva*. He has eyes in uneven number (three), so he is *Virupksa*. The term *Trilocana* would also normally mean the same, but there are several special connotations in *Trilocana* – *locana* also means knowledge. As Siva has knowledge of all the three worlds, all the three Vedas, and all three form of time and the three *gunas* or qualities (*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*), therefore he is *Trilocana*. As he placed his *retas* (semen) in fire or his semen is like fire, so he is *Krsanureta*. The term *Sarvajña* denotes his omniscience. He is blue in his neck and otherwise red through the luster of his skin, so he is *Nilalohita*. He is *Hara* as he removes the sin, *Smarahara* as he destroyed *Smara* or *Kamadeva*. He is *Bharga* for burning the evil of passion. *Tryambka*¹³ means Trilocana as above. It also means a god having three mothers – the sky, the earth and waters. Siva had destroyed three cities by shooting one arrow, so he is called *Tripurantaka*. He is *Gangadhara* for bearing the Ganga on his head. He is *Andharipu* being enemy of the demon Andha or Andhaka. He had annihilated the whole ritual of Daksa's sacrifice, so he is *Kratudhvansin*. He is *Vrsadhvaja* for having the symbol of the bull on his banner. He is *Vyomakesa* as his hair touch the sky. He is *Bhava* as he generates the cosmos. *Bhima* is terrible. *Sthanu* is unmovable. *Rudra* is the one who makes others weep. Siva being the Lord of Uma, Therefore he is *Umapati*.

There are many other epithets. A peculiar synonym for Siva is *Kalañjara* which is a term in Tantra and Yoga. Siva is a very well known as *Nataraja*. Kalidasa has used the term *Devadeva* (the God of gods) for Siva.¹⁴

Siva literally means auspicious. As Mahadeva and Mahesvara He is the Supreme Lord. He is Pasupati for being the Lord of pasus (all creatures—in Saivism the limited consciousness). He is Supreme Dancer as the Natraja.

In *Atharvaveda* Bhava and Sarva are mentioned as different deities. The terms Bhutapati and Pasupati have been used for them (*Atharva*. XI.2.1). They protect the southern and the western regions respectively. *Ugra* protects the northern, *Mahesvara* the upper and *Isana* the middle regions. Bhava is supposed to protect the *vratyas* also.

Siva is also mentioned along with Visnu in Tripitakas – Buddhist scriptures, Dighanikaya, Jatakas. Panini is familiar with *Rudra*, *Bhava* and *Sarva*. But the names *Siva* and *Sankara* are conspicuous by their absence in his *Astadhyati*.

Siva as a Yogin

In the tradition of Silpasastra, the iconography of Siva envisages him as *mahayogin*. He is depicted as meditating in utter solitude on the mount Kailasa. Kalidasa has portrayed the Siva's most sublime image as a yogin in the following words –

"At this moment (when Kamadeva was approaching to disturb his penance), Siva heard the songs of celestial nymphs, but he set himself upon concentrating his mind upon himself. Obstacles do not impede the mind's concentration in case of those who are Lords of their own souls.... And then Kama, whose body was doomed to fall now, saw Him – the self-restrained *Triyambaka*, seated on the alter below the Devadaru tree covered with tiger's skin. With his upper body erect and steady due of paryanka posture, he was sitting completely still and at ease; his both shoulders had dropped down, both his upturned palms rested on his lap, so that a lotus seemed to be blooming on his lap. His matted locks were bound by a serpent. A Rosary of *aksa* beads was hanging on his ear. He has put on the antelope skin tied with a knot, which has turned specially blue due to the contact of the colour of his neck. The pupils of his eyes were fixed and fierce, they were radiating a little. His eyebrows had become still, his eye lashes did not flicker and with his eyes the rays of which had gone downwards, he had fixed his gaze on the tip of his nose. He was like a cloud, having ceased to spill the showers, like a lake without ripples, As he had controlled his inner winds, he looked like a lamp the glow of which is un-flickering in a place where wind does not blow. Making their way from the eye in his forehead, the glows of light were emerging from his head and through them he was obscuring the glow of the crescent moon – more delicate than the fibre of the lotus. Restraining his mind's activities which have nine outlets, curbing it in his own heart through concentration, he who is known to the knower of the Vedas as eternal immutable, was seeing the self within his own self."¹⁵

Siva as a Householder

Ambika is described as the sister of Rudra in *Vajasaneyi Samhita*. (II.5). Uma, Haimavati or Paravati is introduced for the first time as the wife of Siva in *Taittiriya Aranyaka* and *Kena Upanisad*. In *Puranas* as well as in Sanskrit poetry Siva is viewed as a family man – with his wife Uma or Parvati and two sons – Kartikeya and Ganesa, and his devotee, body-guard and vehicle – Nandin. *Pramathas* are the members of his assembly. They are called *pramathas* as they can crush the enemies. The bow of Siva has two names – *Pinaka* and *Ajagava*. *Pinaka* literally means the protector. *Ajagava* has been given several interpretations. *Aja* is goat and *gava* means piercer. The arrow shot from Siva's bow pierced the goat, therefore the name *Ajagava*. Otherwise Visnu is also called *Aja*.

Siva's Anger

Siva's anger is quickly aroused, but he is equally easy to be pleased. Kalisasa has described his anger in most extra-ordinary terms–

Siva who loves his devotees, was just going to accept the rosary of lotuses when the god of flower-bow (Kamadeva) adjusted an unfailling shaft named *sammohana* (bewitching) on his bow. His calmness disturbed a little, like the ocean at moon-rise, Siva directed all his (three eyes) on the face of Uma with her lips red like the bimba fruit. The odd eyed one controlled the agitation of his senses by the might of his self control, and looking for the cause of this disturbed state of his mind, directed his eyes towards the end of the directions. Then he saw Kama – the self-born one, resting his fist on the corner of his right eye, his shoulders bent, his left foot contracted and about to shoot the arrow placed on his beautiful bow fully bent. It was difficult to see the face of Siva, as his eye brow was wrinkled and his anger was enhanced due to the disturbance in his penance. From his third eye there shot up, all of a sudden, a flame of fire with its rays ablaze. By the time the gods would cry from heaven – "O Lord, please draw back your anger! Draw back your anger!" – the fire born from the eye of Bhava burnt Madana who remained in the ashes only."¹⁶

Siva as Cosmic Dancer

As cosmic dancer, He is encircled by flames, has four arms and is dancing in ecstasy, with His left leg raised and crossing the lower body, and the right one crushing a dwarf – a symbol of *apasmara* – or destructive negligence.

The *damaru* in His hands signifies universal energy. In other hands He holds some other weapon. The third hand is raised in *abhayamudra* – conveying solace and protection. The fourth hand is slanted down in *gajamudra* — a signal to the devotees to approach the spiritual *guru* and seek his grace. His face always remains placid indicating inner peace.

Yogesvara has described this extra-ordinary dance of Siva –

*Gaurdians of quarters, move aside!
Clouds quit the sky!
Sink down on earth, to the underworld,
And mountains! Sink to earth
Remove your heaven, Brahma;
My Sambhu must have room to dance”
Such is Nandin’s heralding
And may it prove your aid.*

(Yogesvara, Subhasitaratnakosa-74, tr Daniel HH Ingalls)¹⁷

Siva as Time

Siva is also called Mahakala – the cosmic time.

In the *Sauptikaparvan* of the Mahabhānarata, Asvatthama, in a fit of rage to seek revenge approaches the camp of the Pandavas in night. He is accompanied with Kṛpacarya and Kṛtavarma. As they reach the entrance they are confronted with a dreadful apparition. He is *Mahakala*. From the whole description of this Being, we can only adjust Him as Siva – the God of Time. A daring Asvatthaman hurled his weapons on Him, and He devours them one by one. Then Asvatthaman stops attacking Him and starts a prayer to Siva. When the dreadful figure is about to attack and finish him, he submits himself to Him with a surrender. Siva says – I have been protecting Pandavas because of Kṛṣṇa. I have honoured kṛṣṇa by protecting them. Now they are assailed by Time.

The Concept of Three or Trinity

Siva is a member of the trinity of gods. They are responsible for creation, preservation and destruction. In fact they belong to the One and the same Ultimate Reality. Kalidasa says —

एकैव मूर्तिभिर्भेदै त्रिधा सा सामान्यमेषां प्रथमावरत्नम् ।
विष्णोर्हरस्तस्य हरिः कदाचित् वेधास्तयोस्तावपि धातराद्यौ॥

(Kumarsambhava, VII.44)

(There was only one form, which divided itself into three, there is no difference of hierarchy between them. Sometimes Hara precedes Visnu, some other times it is Visnu who precedes Hara, and sometimes Brahma comes before both of these and some other times both of them come before Brahma.)

Siva is also related to a number of concepts involving several trinities. Vasukalpa a very eminent poet describes the correlations of these trinities in the following way —

*Whose handiwork is the triple world
whose poetry the Vedas three
who destroyed the triple citadel
and on whose head is garlanded the triple flowering Ganges
who bears three blazing eyes as if to see
therein His triple world:
To Him, enveloped in matter's triple strand
And bearing the trident weapon
Belongs all victory.*

(Vasukalpa, SRK-30, tr. Daniel H.H. Ingalls)¹⁸

Cosmic View of Siva

Siva pervades the universe through his eight forms – the *Astmamurtis*. Kalidasa has portrayed this form of Siva —

*The water which is the first creation of the creator,
The fire – which carries the oblations duly offered,
The priest – who performs the sacrifice
The Sun and the Moon both regulating time,
The space that pervades the cosmos,
The earth which is the source of all seeds
The wind which enlivened every being,*

*These are the eight forms of Isvara – all visible
Approached with devotion
May he protect you all with these forms.*

He is also viewed as a Ultimate transcending the mundane. The poets like Kalidasa and Bana have viewed Siva from the eye of a vedantin -

*In scriptures they call him the Only One Purusa
pervading and transcending this earth and heaven
In whom the epithet Isvara is really meaningful
He lives within and The ascetics seek Him within through
the control of their senses
He is easily available through devotion
May Siva the immovable God, bring final bliss to you.*

...

*Engrained in the unique Aisvarya
Yet source of profuse rewards for the devotees
He himself wears only hide of antelope.
He has comingled with his beloved
Yet he is far above the ascetics
He bears this universe through His eight forms
But suffers no pride in Himself
May Siva dispel the darkness from out sight*

*Praise be to Sambhu, beautified
by the chowrie moon touching his lofty head,
like to the foundation pillar of the city
that is universe.*

(Bana, SRK-48, tr by Daniel H H Ingalls)¹⁹

Notes

¹ Kumarasambhava, I.57

² Kumarasambhava, VII.32-35

³ Studies in Upapurāṇas, Vol II 161n. (Calcutta, 1963)

⁴ या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोराऽपपकाशिनी ।

तया नस्तन्वा शन्तमयागरशन्ताभि चाकशीहि॥ *Suklayajurveda*, XVI.2

⁵ Suklayajurveda, XVI.7-8

- ⁶ Ibid, 28,29, 40,48,56
- ⁷ एको हि रुद्रो न द्वितीयाय तस्थुर्य त ईशनीभिः ।
प्रत्यङ्गं जनास्तिष्ठति संचक्रोचान्तराले संसज्य विश्व भवनानि गोपाः ॥
Svetasvatara Up. 3.2
- ⁸ Ibid. IV.19
- ⁹ अजात इत्येवं कश्चिद् भीरुः प्रपद्यते ।
यत्ते दक्षिणं मुखं तेन मां पाहि नित्यम्॥
मा नस्तोके तनये मा न आयुषि मा नो गोषु मा नो अश्वेषु रीरिषः ।
वीरान्मा नो रुद्र भागितो वधीर्हविष्पन्तः सदमित्त्वा हवामहे॥ Ibid, IV.21-22
भावग्राह्यमनीडाख्यं भावाभावकरं शिवम् ।
कलासर्गकरं देवं ये विदस्ते जहस्तनम ॥ Ibid, V. 14
- ¹⁰ The concept of rudra-Siva: pp. 28-29 Mahadev Chakravarti MLBD, 1986, 1994.
- ¹¹ *Silappadikaram*, XI.133, trans. By V.R. Ramchandra Dikshitar, Oxford Univ. Press, 1939, p. 176
- ¹² Ibid, XII.51-64 pp. 183-84
- ¹³ In Vedic usage, Tryambaka is spelled as Triyambaka. Kalidasa has used the term Triyambaka instead of Tryambaka to emphasise over the Vedic associate of Siva.
- ¹⁴ Kumarasambhava, I.52
- ¹⁵ Kumarasambhava, III.44-50
- ¹⁶ Kumarasambhava, III. 65-72
- ¹⁷ भो भो दिक्पतयः प्रयात परतः खं मुंताम्भोमुचः ।
पातालं ब्रज मेदिनि प्रविशत क्षोणीतलं क्षमाभतः ।
ब्रह्मन्नुन्नय दूरमातमसदनं देवस्य मे नृत्यतः
शम्भोः सङ्कटमेतदित्यवतु वः प्रोत्सारणा नन्दिनः॥ सुरको. 74
- ¹⁸ शिल्पं त्रीणि जगन्ति यस्य, कविता यस्य त्रिवेदी. गिरो
यश्चक्रे त्रिपुरव्ययं त्रिपथगा यन्मूर्ध्नि माल्यायते ।
त्रीन् लोकानिव वीक्षितुं वहति यो विस्फूर्जक्षणां त्रयं
त्रैगुण्यपरिच्छदो विजयते देवसिशूलायधः॥
- ¹⁹ नमस्तुङ्गाशिरश्चुम्बिचन्द्रचामरचारवे
त्रैलोक्यनगरारम्भमलस्तम्भाय शम्भवे॥

Visualisation of Siva as Tejas with Reference to the Tantra Literature

Nibedita Rout*

In the *Saiva* scriptural writings *Tejas* (Flame/Splendour/Light) and *Mahateja* (Supreme Light/Splendour/Fire) have been found as the two epithets of *Siva*. Furthermore, these two words are adopted in the *Vyomavyapimantra*,¹ which is one of the core mantras of the *Saiva Saidhantika* philosophy. The word *tejas* is termed as a name of *Siva*, signifying the aspect of the principle of Light and Splendour.² The similar expression is, interestingly, found in the *Linga Purana* (*tejase tejksam bhartre namastejo 'dhivyapine*).³ The *Rauravasutrasmgraha* gives beautiful explanation of the word '*tejasteja*': *Siva* is termed as *tejasteja*, for his being the cause of manifestation (*praksasakaranatvacca tejasteja iti smrtah*).⁴ However here in this article an effort has been made to shed light on the little known fact of the '*Tejas*' aspect of *Siva* with reference to the *Saiva tantra* literature.

1. *Tejas*: the principle of all-knowledge

It is interesting to note that, *Tejas* aspect of *Siva* is visualized as the 'Light of Knowledge'. In one of the early *saiva* scriptures, the *sardhatrisatikalottara-agama* (pre 6th c A.D), *Tejas* is symbolized as the 'principle of knowledge' (*vidyam tejo vijaniyad*).⁵ In the *Vyomavyapistotra*⁶ (10th century's liturgical composition), the *saidhantika* exegete, *Bhatta Ramakantha* venerates *Siva* as *Tejasteja* for he is the principle of all-knowledge and that is his splendour, so he says :

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*sarvajñataiva tejestanmurtau yasya rupamathananyat/
purvanisedhattasmai tejastejo namo astu tubhyamapi||*⁷

Similar expression is found in the *Matangaparamesvaratantra*, where *Siva* is described as the Force of Knowledge but in term of *Mahateja*.⁸ Moreover, a chapter is devoted to describe the rituals for the brilliant Light (*tejas*) of *Siva* in the *tantra*.⁹

However, the words *Patanga* and *Pinga-Pinga*, which are the constituent words of the *Vyomavyapamiantra*, adopted as synonyms of the word *Tejas* and attributed to *Siva* as epithets. *Siva*, thus is found praised by the knower of *mantras* and *tantras* in names of *Patanga* and *Pinga-pinga*¹⁰ for they are the embodiments of *Tejas*. By justifying the words *Patanga* and *Pinga-pinga* as synonyms of 'tejas', *Ramakantha* in his *Vyomavyapistotra* explains that *Siva* is called *Patanga* and *Pinga-pinga* because he destroys the darkness of ignorance/fetter like Sun by the rays of (by awakening man to god-knowledge) *diksa*.¹¹

2. Sun : The Tejas aspect of Siva

It is important to note that, in some of the *tantras*, the *Tejas* aspect of *Siva* is visualized as *Sun*¹² and his world is called *Tejas*. It is further said that this world of *tejas* is one of the highest spiritual abodes (*tejasasca dhruvesasca pramananam param padam*)¹³ in Tantric cosmology.

3. Tejas as Anugrahikasakti

Moreover *Tejas* is depicted as the Force of Compassion of *Siva* (*anugrahikasakti*), one of the Five Acts (*pañcakrtya*)¹⁴ of *Siva*.¹⁵ The source of that force of compassion is the principle of Light (*tejas*) that is *Siva*.¹⁶

4. Tejas as Kavaca

Tejas is further described as *kavaca* (the armour) that protects the life of devotees. Hence in the *Somasambhupaddhati*, *Somasambhu* states: *tejah kavacamucyate: tejah* is called armour.¹⁷ The similar expression has been found in the text called '*Sivapujastava*', where the author *Jñanasambhu* (12th c A.D.) venerates *Siva* by name of *Teja*, who is *Kavaca: tejahkavacatmane namah*.¹⁸ The similar expression is found in the *Dhyananatnavali* of *Trilocanasivacarya*: (*abhedyam paramesasya*

tejah kavacamucyate)¹⁹ The twelfth century's South Indian *Saiddhantika* exegete, *Aghorasivacarya*, in his *Pañcavarānastotra*, describes *tejas* as the fiery power of immanent Lord that protects universe and greater than the universe.²⁰ In another place *teja* is described as the instrumental force of *Siva* by which He creates the Universe.²¹

5. Tejas is Sivagni

It is interesting to note that, the *Svacchandabhairava tantra* identifies *tejas*-form of *Siva* with *Sivagni*. Thus it is said that, *Sivagni* is indeed *tejas* (Light), who is the source of all light, from whom Sun took birth (*sa tejastejasam yonih tasmajjāne divakarah*)²²).

6. Tejas is Aghora form of Siva

Not only *Teja* and *Agni* are identical but also the *Aghora* aspect of *Siva* is said to be identical with *Teja*: *aghorasteja ityukto*.²³ The *Jñānaratnavali* also quotes the similar expression from unknown source.²⁴

7. Mahateja is Sadasiva form of Siva

Mahateja (Supreme Light/splendour) is another epithet of *Siva* that we often find in many *Saiva* scriptures. The form is seen associated with the *Sadasiva* form of *Siva*. Thus in the *Svacchandatantra*, *Sadasiva*, the five faced and eighteen handed *Siva*, is described with the attribution of *Mahateja*, of great splendour.²⁵ Though in the above tantra the reference of *Mahateja* is not clear but in the latter *Saiva* literature, *Sadasiva* form of *Siva* is mentioned clearly as *Mahateja*. For instance, in the *Vyomavyapistotra*, the author, *Ramakantha* visualize *Sadasiva* as *Mahateja*, so he describes:

*sarvarthakrt mahat tat tejassas sadasivam vapur yasya/
praguktam apradhrsyam sadaiva tasmai namo mahatejah*)²⁶

“Let the veneration be to you ‘*Mahatejas*’, who has that great splendour, which is said earlier, the Almighty, embodied in the form of *Sadasiva*”.

In the *Jñānaratnavali* of *Jñānasambhu*,, *Sadasiva* is expressed as ‘*tejas*’.²⁷

These are the little known facts about the ‘*tejas*’ aspect of *Siva* that we find in the Tantra literature.

Notes

- ¹ The *Vyomavyapimantra* is a well known *saiva mala-mantra* that consists of 81 words/syllables or *pada-s*: *om| vyomavyapine| vyomarupaya| sarvavyapine| sivaya| anantaya| anathaya| anasritaya| dhruvaya| sasvataya| yogapithasamsthitaya| nityam| yogine| dhyanaaharaya| om namah sivaya| sarvaprabhava| sivaya| isanamurdhne| tatpurusavaktraya| aghorahridayaya| vamadevaguhya| sadyojatamurtaye| om namah| guhyatiguhya| gopre|nidhanaya| sarvavidyadhipaya|jyotirupaya| paramesvaraparaya| acetanacetana| vyoma vyoma| vyapin vyapin| arupya| prathama prathama| tejastejah | jyotirjyotih| arupah| anagne| adhuma| abhasma| anade| na na na| dhu dhu dhu| om bhuh| om bhuvah| om svah| anidhananidhana| nidhanodbhava| siva| sarva| paramatman| mahesvara| mahadeva| sadbhavesvara| mahatejah| yogadhipa| muñca muñca| prathama prathama| sarva sarva| bhava bhava| bhavodbhava| sarvabhutasukhaprada| sarvasannidhyakara| brahmaviyōurudrapara| anarcitanarcita| asamstutasamstuta| purvasthita purvasthita| saksin saksin| turu turu| patanga patanga| pinga pinga| jñana jñana| sabda sabda| suksma suksma| siva siva| sarvada| om namo namo namah| sivaya| om| namo namo namah| namah namah|om|. Each of them is visualized as a flower, strung together in sequences like a garland. Each word/syllable of this mantra expresses the unique quality of *Siva*. This was the main mantra which was used to achieve liberation and all success (*sarvasiddhi*). It appears to have been one of the main formulas and has been transmitted in more than one way in early Agamas, like the *Nisvasatattvasamhita*, *Sarvajñanottarantra*, *Matangaparamesvaratantra*, *Pauskara-agama*, *Rauravasutrasamgraha* (the whole 10th chapter is devoted to explain this mantra) and *Kalottara*. Not only that but the *Svacchandalaalibhairavatantra* that belongs to the left-division (*Vama-srotas*) of *Saiva* School also describes the mantra as one of the important mantras. The mantra is also found in the *Agni Purana* (the *mantra* is appeared in between the lines of the verse no. 85.13ab and 85.13cd.)*

- ² Malinivijayottara 6.5:

*sivatattvam tatah pascat tejourupam anakulam|
sarvesam vyapatveta sabahyabhyantaram smaret||*

“The principle of *Siva* is splendid in its form and calm; it pervades inside and outside of everything”.

- ³ *Linga Purana*, 1.18.7cd.
- ⁴ *Raurava Sutrasamgraha*, 10. 55.
- ⁵ *Sardhatrisatikalottara*, 8.6c.
- ⁶ *Vyomavyapistotra* is an unpublished text in manuscript forms in the IFP Manuscript Library, Pondicherry. It is a pre-10th century doctrinal-

liturgical hymn. It contains 91 verses. Each verse of this stotra justifies each name of *Siva* with philosophical interpretation. This *stotra* is unique because we find an integrated presentation of saiva philosophy (*darsana*) and its implication in rituals (*kriya*). The authorship is attributed to one *Bhatta Ramakantha*.

7. Vyomavyapistotra, 37ab.
8. Matangaparamesvara, Vidya Pada, 5. 21ab:
prabudhyate mahateja jñanasaktikrtaspadah/
9. Ibid, Kriya Pada, 3.1:
atharcanavidhanam syacchivasyamitatejasah/
Jñanaratnavali, p. 92.: vidyam tejasi yojayet;
Matangaparamesvara, Vidya Pada, 3. 25:
vidyakhyam aparam tasmattejomurter mahatmanah/
10. Raurava Sutrasamgraha, 10.85
*tejomurtyabhidhanam patanga iti mantralaksanam proktam/pinga pingeti
tejastham pravadanti mantratantrajñah/*
11. Vyomavyapistotra, 76 – 77.
12. It is noticed that the Saurasamhita, a lost saiva tantra was dedicated to Siva in form of Sun. The tantra in one of its verse insists that Siva and Sun are one:

*adityam tu sivam vindyat sivam adityam eva ca/
yas tu gaccheta yatnenapi na sidhyati// (1.15)*
13. Svacchandatantra, 10. 1174ab; 11.72.
14. *Srsti* (creation), *sthiti* (emanation), *samhara* (destruction), *anugraha* (compassion), *vilaya* (dissolution)
15. Svayambhuvasutrasamgrahah, 3.1:

*atha devadidevasya sivasyamitatejasah /
sarvanugrahika saktiramogha balasalini || 1||*
16. Pauskaraparamesvaratantra, Jñanapada, 8.18ab :
tesam eka para yoniryattejahparamesvaram/
“Siva, the Radiant is the only source of 5 fold sakti (srsti, sthiti, samhara, anugraha and parigraha)“
17. Somasambhupaddhati, 1.3.73
tejah kavacamucyate/ Light(teja) is called armor (kavaca)
18. Sivapujastava, v. 37.
19. Dhyanaratnavali, v.145
20. Pañcavarastotra, 57cd.
visvaraksakaram vande tejo visvadhikam vibhoh ||
21. SvachandaTantra, 11.2cd – 4ab:
yo asau suksmah paro devah karanam sarvagah sivah/

- nimittakaranam so atra kathitastava suvrate/
amatasmrjetsarvam jagat sthavarajngamam/
svatejasa vararohe vyoma samksobhya lilaya/*
- ^{22.} Svachchandantra, 10.869cd.
- ^{23.} Sardhatrisatikalottara, 22.12c; Dvisatikalottara tantra, 18.12.
- ^{24.} Jñanaratnavali, P. 50:
sadyaksitirjalam vamo ghorastejo naro marut/ Isah kham. “Sadya form of Siva represents Ksitih (Earth), the Vama of Jalam (water), the Ghora/ Aghora of Tejas (Splendour), the Nara or Tatpuruṣa of Vayu (Air) and the Isana of Kham (ether).”
- ^{25.} Svachchandantra, 2.93.
astadasbhujam devam nilakantham sutejasam |
- ^{26.} Vyomavyapistotra, 59.
- ^{27.} Jñanaratnavali, p. 66. (12.28cd– 29ab):
*vyaptasadasivam tattvam santaya vayurupaya /
tasyayoyapadam vyaktam vidyaya tejorupaya /*

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Concept of Siva in Vajrayana Tradition of Buddhism

G.K. Lama

Abstract

A number of deities belonging to the regular Brahmanical pantheon were assimilated into Vajrayanic worship. Heruka, Simhanada, Nilkantha and Vajrahunkara are adaptations of the benign and the malignant aspect of Bhairava and Siva. A comprehensive study of many of the Brahmanical icons and the corresponding group of Vajrayana Buddhist images will enable us to see the transference of the deities. It compelled us to believe that there was an intermingling of Buddhism and Brahmanism. As far as the deities are concerned, the mixture of both religions is also evident from them.

The word 'Vajrayana' means the vehicle of obtaining *Nirvana* through the medium of *Vajra*, another name for *Sunya*, so called because it is a thing which cannot be destroyed, cannot be cut, cannot be burnt. The mass could not master the sacred writings and even could not recite them, so the Vajracaryas invented other methods for the mass to attain an easy salvation (Bhattacharyya.1932:53). The Dharanis, which were mostly meaningless strings of words, were composed for them, and the recitation of these Dharanis promised them great merit. These Dharanis were later on, shortened into equally unintelligible Mantras and mystic syllables. Individual Mantras were assigned to individual deities, who were held to take their origin from the mystic syllables. Those votaries who could not worship their deities in accordance with the prescribed procedure were promised by the Vajracharya's perfection

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only through the muttering of the Mantras (*Khede sati Mantram japet*). Thus the position of the Vajracaryas became paramount because they showed the adamant path for *Nirvana*.

The mentality of the mass and the mentality of the Vajracaryas was in such a state that it readily grasped and assimilated the doctrines of Tantra and developed a form of religion. Yet nevertheless, the feminine element in the doctrine attracted a large number of followers and made it extremely popular and the most exquisite art, which this school developed, made it doubly attractive. The credit goes to Vajracaryas that we owe the legacy of a rich, varied and extensive Pantheon. The purely tantric gods were invariably accompanied with their consorts, who were sometimes given a separate seat in sculptures, sometimes the same seat, sometimes a seat on the lap of the gods, and sometimes they were represented in the actual embrace of the gods. The sober form of Tantra generally adopted the first three courses, but the most thorough-going form worshipped the gods in the embrace, in union with their consorts, or as the Tibetans describes it—in *Yab-yum* (Bhattacharyya. 1973:33).

The secret *Mantrayana* is hidden (Skt. *Guhya*) because it is not appropriate for the common people. It is however, fit for the advanced practitioner well versed in Emptiness, *Bodhicitta* and Renunciation (Bhattacharyya.1931:28). Various scholars have explained the word 'Tantra' in various ways. Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri says: *The word Tantra is very loosely used. Ordinary people understand by it any system other than the Vedas. But it really means the worship of Sakti or female energy. The female energy is worshipped in conjunction with male energy. The union of male and female energy is the essence of Tantra.*

It is said in *Kasika: Tanyane vistaryate jñanammaneneti tantram*, that means by which wisdom is expanded is known as Tantra. Due to lack of knowledge or confusion people hate the Tantra. See the words of *Meru Tantra : Paradravyesu Yo Andhasca, Parastrsu Napunsakah/ Parapavade Yo Mukah, Sarvada Vijitendriyah// Tasyaiva Brahmanasyatra, Vame Syat Adhikarita//* It means the Brahmana who is blind-like to see other's wealth, who is impotent-like in the matter of other's wife, who is dumb-like while criticizing someone and who has full control on his body-organs, only he has the authority to follow this path.

The monasteries of Nalanda, Vikramshila and Odantapuri have developed the latest form of *Vajrayana* before Buddhism was finally wiped out at the advent of Bukhtiyar Khilji. In the later phase of *Vajrayana*, after its destruction in India, the priests of the celebrated

monasteries took refuge in Nepal, and thus kept the torch of Buddhism still burning. Nalanda and Vikramshila were excavated and a large number of Tantric images have been unearthed, but the Odantapuri monastery has not been identified yet. If the site be also identified and excavated, it will most assuredly, yield innumerable images of *Vajrayana* deities. This year Patna Circle Branch of Archaeological Survey of India has discovered *Tiladhak* monastery at Telhara located on Bihar Sharif-Ekangar Sarai Road in district-Nalanda which was a great tantric seat as mentioned by Hiuen-tsang.

Interchanges of deities

Frequent interchanges of deities took place among Brahmanic, Jain and Buddhist traditions. Brahmanic deities like Indra and Parvati are found in the Jain pantheon; as well as Indra, Ganesa, Sarasvati, Mahakala, Bhairava etc. are famous in Buddhist pantheon. In the Brahmanic tradition deities like Tara, Manasa and Chhinnamasta were borrowed from the deities of Buddhist tradition like Mahacintara, Janguli and Vajrayogini respectively. The Jainas and the Buddhists alike borrowed Brahmanic deities in their earlier stages, but in the Tantric age, the Buddhist gods were commonly exploited. Therefore, the correct identification of images is very problematic. Scholars like Waddel, Grunwedel, Foucher, Burgess, Getty, and many others have attempted well to present a solution and gathered a considerable amount of information on Buddhist iconography. A deep study of the following texts is essential for the iconographical study of the deities of Vajrayana Pantheon: *Sadhanamala* (Earliest manuscript belongs to 1167 AD), *Sadhanasamuchhaya*, *Nispannayogavali*, *Dharmakosasangraha* (Pandit Amritananda-preserved in the Darbar Library, Nepal and Asiatic Society of Bengal), *Nispannayogambara Tantra* (Pandit Abhayakara Gupta-12th century AD), *Heruka Tantra*, *Hevajra Tantra*, *Candamaharosana Tantra*, *Vajravarahi Tantra*, *Kariya-Samuchhaya*, *Vajravali Tantra*, *Yoginijala Tantra* etc. The manuscripts of these Tantric texts are to be found either in the Darbar Library, Nepal or in the Library of Asiatic Society of Bengal or in the University Library of Cambridge.

A number of deities belonging to the regular Brahmanical pantheon were assimilated into Vajrayanic worship viz. Saraswati, Ganesa and the Saptamatikas. Brahmanic deities like Usa, Visnu, Kubera etc., came to be incorporated into Buddhism as Marici, Lokessvara, Jambhala etc. Heruka, Simhanada, Nilkantha and Vajrahunkara are but adaptations of the benign and the malignant aspect of Bhairava and Siva. A

comprehensive study of many of the Brahmanical icons and the corresponding group of Vajrayana Buddhist images will enable us to see the transference of the attributes of Indra to Vajrapani, of Brahma to Manjusri and of Visnu to Avalokitesvara etc. (Bhattacharya.2008:141).

Siva as Nilkantha (Fig. 1-2)

According to *Sadhanamala* this is a form of Lokesvara, whose complexion is yellow and who wears the crown of chignon decorated with the crescent. An effigy of Amitabha is noticed on his head. He sits in the *Vajraparyanka* attitude on a red lotus, on which is spread the skin of a black deer. He exhibits the Samadhi mudra with his two hands carrying the *Kapala* filled with a variety of gems. The god wears the tiger-skin, and bears no ornaments. His throat shows the blue pill and looking towards him are to be seen two cobras with jewels on their hoods.

The model of this deity has been taken from the Brahmanic god Siva. It is said that he has saved the world from destruction by swallowing the poison that came out from the mouth of Vasuki, the lord of serpents, while the gods and demons were churning the ocean together. The poison, if it could enter Siva's stomach, would surely have destroyed him but it remained in his throat, and as the colour of the poison is said to be blue, there is a blue spot in the white throat of the deity. That is the reason why the name Nilkantha has been attributed to Siva. As this particular form of Lokesvara has also the same name, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the model for this variety has been taken from the Brahmanic god Siva.

One image of this god has been discovered in the temple of Baudhanatha in Nepal, but here the deity appears alone without the serpents. Other image was yielded from Sarnath identified by Bhattacharyya.

Buddhist Newars residing in Nepal and also in Indian Territory worship Siva in his manifestations as Lukma Deo. It is said that Lukma Deo originated when Mahadeva gave Bhasmasur, one of his devotees, a boon which enabled him to destroy anybody by touching him. However, the receiver of the boon tried to test his power on the giver himself. Therefore, Siva had to run away for survival and hide himself under the ground and in that form he is called Lukma Deo (god in hiding).

Bhairava transformed as Heruka (Fig. 3)

He is one of the most prominent *Yidams* (Protective Deities) of the Buddhist pantheon. He is tutelary or personal protective deity. His

function is for specific purpose often as guardian of any sect and as the presiding deity of a Tantric system. He is also represented with his *Prajña* (consort) and is also efficacious if worshipped along with his consort. He is popular in Tibet in *yab-yum* form. He stands on a corpse in *Ardhaparyankasana*. He is clad in human skin and his body is smeared with ashes. He bears vajra in the right hand and a *kapala* (skull cup) full of blood in the left hand. From his left shoulder hangs the *khatvanga* (knife). He has a garland of 50 human heads; face is slightly distorted with bare fangs and blood-shot eyes. His hair is raised upwards and bears an effigy of Aksobhya. He wears a *kundala* (ear ring) and is bedecked with ornaments. His several forms in various attitudes are described in the *Sadhanamala* and *Nispannayogavali* (Bhattacharyya.1925:41).

Heruka with *Prajña* (*Vajra Varahi*) is called Hevajra (Tibetan-*Key Dorje*). There is very little difference between Heruka and Hevajra. In Tibet *Chemchok Heruka* (Supreme Heruka) is one of the deity with three faces and six arms. He represents union of wisdom and compassion. He stands on prostate figures of a male and a female. This form of Heruka has flayed skin of an elephant and man. He wears a garland of 50 severed heads. Over each face he has a crown. His consort is one-faced and two armed and possesses a *vajra*, chopper and skull bowl. He is clad in skin of leopard and wears 5 skull crowns and has a flower on the back of her hair. The *Heruka Tantra* is devoted to worship the deity (Rhie and Robert. 1991:79).

Isana

Isana or Mahadeva is one of the eight deities of the directions. The word Isana represents the north-east corner, so the deity resides in the north-east direction. He is seated on a chariot drawn by bulls. He is white in colour and holds in his two hands a trident and a *Kapala*. A half moon appears on his matted hair. He is adorned with a sacred thread of a serpent and his body is besmeared with ashes. His throat appears blue. The deity is naked having three eyes. He is worshipped in the Guru Mandala rite of Nepalese Buddhist tradition.

Mahakala (Tibetan-Gompo, Fig. 4)

This deity is worshipped by both Hindus and Buddhists. His image can be seen in the entrance of every Buddhist monastery of Kathmandu Valley. He is said to be the protector of the doctrine of Buddha. There

are many forms of Mahakala, among them two-armed, four armed, six armed and sixteen armed being the most popular one. The two-armed form of this deity carved in stone is found in large numbers in Nepalese Buddhist tradition. His body is dark blue in colour and looks wrathful bedecked with ornaments of serpents. He wears a garland of severed heads and a crown of five skulls symbolizing the five defilements. His right hand holds *Kartr* symbolizing that it can cut ego clinging and attachment and his left hand holds a *Kapala* filled with blood symbolizing the subjugation of evil ones. He wears tiger skin symbolizing the purification of desire. He has three eyes symbolizing his clear comprehension of three times. He looks ferocious against the blazing fire. His mouth is smeared with blood signifying that he is active in eliminating evils.

The characteristic feature of the Mahakala is that he, during war, can protect those relying on him since there is limitless number of retinue of spirits and ghosts under his command who are skilled in battle. He can provide sufficient foods to the needy. Separate temples with Mahakāla alone can be found in large number. It is said that Mahakala is the manifestation of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. A dark blue Hung letter emerged from the heart of Avalokitesvara which transformed into the Instantaneous Protector of wisdom. Amitabha Buddha proclaimed thus, "*Son of the family, you will have the strength of the wrathful Yama, Lord of death. You will have the mountain spirits, the yakas, the devils and the demonesses as your messengers. You will embody the great wrathful empowerments of body, speech, mind, qualities and activities of all the Buddhas throughout the three times.*" Ever since Mahakala has remained as the doctrine Protector of all the Buddha fields (Banarjee.1985:73).

Consorts of Siva

Sri Devi (Tibetan-Palden Lhamo, Fig. 5)

She is a terrifying glorious goddess. She is the consort of Yama and regarded as Brahmanic goddess Kālī. In Nepal, She is called *Caskamani*. The goddess is armed by various gods. Hevajra gave her two dice to count the life of human being. Brahma gave her a fan of peacock's feathers. Visnu gave her a lion which she wears in her right ear. Nanda gave her a serpent which hangs from her left ear. Vajrapani equipped her with a hammer. Other gods gave her a white-faced mule which is covered with the skin of a demon and the reins are of venomous serpents. The goddess sits sideways on mule. She wears a long garland of severed

heads and is clad in human skin. She has a third eye. Her right hand is raised with a trident-rod. In her left hand she holds a skull cup at the breast. She is backed by flames and also called the queen of warring weapons. She has some attendant queens riding different animals. She is always kept behind the curtain in a corner in many monasteries of Tibet.

Kali

The goddess is worshipped by the Buddhists in the form of Guheswari. She is represented by a long-necked copper jug called *anti* filled with *janda* or country liquor. Another form of the deity, *Taleju Bhavani* is very famous in Kathmandu Valley of Nepal (Fig. 6). Various Yoginis like—Vajra Yogini (Tibetan-*Dorje Naljorma*), Vajra Varahi (Tibetan-*Dorje Phagmo*), Bhairavi and Ajima are regarded as guardian deities (Tenzin and Oleshy.1988 : 42). Here I would like to give a very brief introduction of Vajra Yogini, Vajra Varahi and Ajima.

Vajra Yogini (Tibetan-Dorje Naljorma)

She personifies wisdom energy or emptiness (*Sunyata*). The goddess is depicted as naked. The colour of her body is red. She stands on a Sun disc trampling on the Bhairava and his consort. She wears bone ornaments, a crown, a skirt and a garland of fifty one human skulls. In her right hand she holds a curved knife and in left hand a skull cup for drinking blood. She is also shown in a standing bow-arrow posture dancing on a corpse.

Vajra Varahi (Tibetan-Dorje Phagmo, Fig. 7)

She is mentioned as a female incarnate in the abbess of *Yamdruk* lake monastery of Tibet and is also called as 'Diamond sow.' She has a small pig's head above her right ear. In her ordinary form she has three faces out of which the left face is that of a sow. She has eight hands which hold attributes bearing various weapons. She sits with the left leg bent while the right leg is pendant. The goddess sits on a lotus throne drawn by seven swine.

Difference between Vajra Varahi and Marici (Fig. 8)

Some people believe that Vajra Varahi and Marici both are same but during iconographical study I had noticed that Vajra Varahi is actively

associated in *yab-yum* with her consort Heruka, an emanation of Aksobhya; on the contrary Marici is regarded as a consort of Vairocana and never known to be associated with him in *yab-yum*, but always appears singly. Heruka rides a corpse lying on its breast and accordingly such a *Vahana* has been given to Vajra Varahi, but Marici is never known to tread upon a corpse. The images of Vajra Varahi always represent her as one-faced with an excrescence near the right ear, but Marici is never known to have any excrescence anywhere in her body. According to the *Sadhanas* Vajra Varahi may have four arms but Marici must have two, eight, ten or twelve arms and never have four arms. Marici always resides in the womb of a *caitya*, whereas Vajra Varahi being an abbess may reside anywhere (Waddel.1895:43).

The mantra for Vajra Varahi is “*Om Sarva-Buddhadakiniye Vajravarnaniye hum hum hum phat phat Svaha*,” whereas the mantras for Marici are “*Om Maricyai mam hum Svaha*” or “*Om Vajravetali hum phat*.” The conception of Marici has a greater antiquity than the conception of either Vajra Varahi or Heruka. The union of Heruka and Vajra Varahi is the subject-matter of the Vajra Varahi Tantra but no Tantra is assigned to Marici. Vajra Varahi stands in the *Ardharyanka* in a dancing attitude on a corpse, but Marici stands always in the *Alidha* attitude, moves in a chariot but never has the dancing attitude. Vajra Varahi has been called a Dakini or an abbess who has attained perfection, and has become a deified lady; but Marici is a goddess.

Ajima (Fig. 9)

This Buddhist goddess protects from small pox and other epidemics in children. She also represents fertility cult. She is identical with Brahmanic goddess Sitla or Hariti. Temples of Ajima and Hariti are in Swayambhu, Boudhanath and Kathesimbu in Nepal.

A comprehensive study of many of the Brahmanical icons and the corresponding group of Vajrayana Buddhist images will enable us to see the transference of the deities. It compelled us to believe that there was an intermingling of Buddhism and Brahmanism. As far as the deities are concerned, the mixture of both religions is also evident from them.

Glossary

Alidhasana : Standing attitude of heroism, in all respects similar to the attitude adopted in drawing the bow charged with an arrow. The right leg

is outstretched while the left leg is slightly bent. Differs from *Pratyaldha* in which the left leg is outstretched while right is slightly bent and placed behind. Position of Kurukulla, some Dakinis and some Yidams.

Ardhaparyanka : It is a particular sitting posture, also called *Maharajalila*. Both the legs are on the same pedestal; one of the knees is raised while the other is bent in the usual position of a Buddha. This asana should be distinguished from the *Lalitasana* in which case one of the legs is pendent, while the other is bent in the usual position of a Buddha. When both the legs are pendent, the attitude is called the *Bhadrasana*.

Bodhicitta : Will to enlighten

Caitya (Tibetan-Chorten): Represents Buddhist universe and is a Buddhist sanctuary. It has square or round spires as steps on the capital. Each one represents a heaven. The uppermost is regarded as the highest peak of Mount Sumeru, a mythical mountain when Bodhicitta loses itself in Sunya. On the four sides are depicted Dhyani Buddhas viz., Aksobhya in the east, Ratnasambhava in the south, Amitabha in the west and Amoghasiddhi in the north. Sometimes Vairocana is also depicted; otherwise he is considered as centre of the mandala.

In Tibet, Caitya is regarded as a receptacle for offerings. It is a solid conical masonry structure intended as relic-holders. It is created either in the memory of Buddha himself or some Tibetan saints. It is a massive hemisphere or solid dome called *garbha* enclosing the relics. It is surrounded by elaborate plinths and crowned by a square capital called *torana*. The spire is called *codamani* of thirteen step-like segments which represent thirteen Buddhist heavens. It is surmounted by a bell-shaped symbol called *kalasa* or holy vase. Above it is a tapering pinnacle having a lotus flower, crescent moon, globular sun and finally surmounted by a tongue-shaped spike representing sacred light or Buddha himself. Sometimes a small image of Buddha is placed in the niche.

Chhinnamasta : One of the ten *Mahavidya*, important group of female deities. Represents knowledge (Fig.-10).

Dakini (Tibetan-mkah-gro-ma): Consorts of the demonical tutelary and generals of the latter. Most common is lion-faced (Fig.-11).

Dharmacakra mudra : Preaching the Buddhist law, also called *Vyakhyana mudra*. Both hands are pressed against the breast, with the left hand lowering the right hand. Mudra of Vairocana, Maitreya and the Buddha.

Dharani: Meaningless conglomeration of syllables having one or two intelligible words, used as a charm.

Dikpalas: Guardian of four directions; Indra-East, Varuna-West, Kubera-North and Yama-South. Regents of four corners; Agni-South-east, Vayu-North-west, Isana-North-east and Nairti-South-west. These eight guardians are invoked during religious rituals, especially related to construction of buildings.

Guhyasamaja Tantra: One of the highest Yoga Tantra which claims that Buddhahood is possible within a single life time. Practice of the deities of this tantra involves sexual imagery which is appropriate for most gifted practitioners only.

Hariti: Goddess of children.

Hayagriva: One of the emanations of Avalokitesvara. He is Istadevata or Yidam. This Horse-headed deity neighs so loudly that sound pierces all false appearance of inherent existence or subtle reality (Fig.-12).

Heruka : Tantric deity not in Yab-Yum (ecstatic union). When with Sakti called Hevajra.

Hevajra : Tutelary deity accompanied with Shakti or Prajña in Yab-Yum (Fig.-13). Four, Six or Sixteen armed. One form of popular Yidam deity of highest Yoga Tantra. Hevajra symbolizes essence of wisdom or *Prajña* and great compassion.

Kapala: It is made of severed head of man or cup made of skull as a bowl. Used in Tantric rituals for having blood. It is depicted in the hand of Kali and other manifestations of Shiva-Shakti. Mahakali and Dakinis also have *kapala* in one of her hands. When *kapala* contains blood, it is called *Arak kapala* and when contain flesh it is called *mansa kapala*. Deities take blood or flesh filled in *kapalas* (Fig.-14).

Kartri: A small knife for chopping a wicked one; sometimes the edge of it is uneven like the edge of a saw. It is called *Vajrakartri* when surmounted by a Vajra.

Khadga: Sword of wisdom; a symbol of enlightenment. It destroys ignorance which is the enemy of liberation from the bond of worldly attachments. It is a special symbol of Manjusri, the Buddhist god of wisdom. The sword which he holds high in his right hand is called *Prajña khadga* i.e. sword of wisdom, which is believed to destroy the darkness of ignorance by the luminous rays issuing out from it.

Khatvanga: It is made of bone of fore arm or leg or sometimes of wood and metal. On *Khatvanga*, human skulls are shown. Generally surmounted either by vajra or *kapala* or *trisul* or banner or all of them. *Khatvanga* is held by Dakinis and Vajrayana saints. Padmasambhava always hold it in one hand (Fig.-15).

Sunya: In the absence of a suitable and more expressive word, it is translated as 'Void'. It signifies a stage of the mind after *Nirvana*, about which neither existence, nor non-existence, nor a combination of the two, nor a negation of the two can be predicated. In the Vajrayana, this *Sunya* is identified with Compassion which transforms itself in the form of divinities, of the nature of *Sunya*, for the welfare and happiness of men.

Trailokya : Pertaining to the three worlds, the terrestrial, the celestial and the infernal.

Usnisa: Protuberance on the skull of the Buddha.

Uttarabodhi mudra : Best perfection pose. All fingers locked; palm together, thumbs and index fingers touching at tips, fingers extended upward.

Vajra (Tibetan-Dorje) : It is a small metallic object also called the Thunderbolt which destroys all kinds of ignorance and enemies. It is indestructible and can not be bent or broken. It is a symbol of Brahmanic God Indra. In Tantrism, Vajra symbolizes male principle when it is held in the right hand but when it is held in the left hand, it symbolizes the female principle. The interaction leads to enlightenment. It is believed that Buddhist God got Vajra from the Brahmanic God Indra and slightly modified by closing the points of darts. Vajra of Brahmanic Gods has three flat darts, the points of which do not touch like those of Tibetan Vajras. The Tibetan variety is round and has four darts and the points are closed. Thus it appears in the form of a lotus bud. A fifth dart runs through the Centre of the Vajra, thus there are five darts. Vajra represents five bodies of Dhyani Buddhas. In Vajrayana school of Buddhism, Vajra is the symbol of *linga*.

The word Vajra is also used to designate a school of Buddhism called Vajrayana. This sect was the successor of the Mahayana, the great path. In Tibet all prayers, recitations and invocations are accompanied by several ritual objects, including Vajra, which destroys everything and which is a symbol of boundless power. The double Vajra is the attribute of Bodhisattva Amoghasiddhi and his consort Tara. Vajra stands for skill or *Upaya*. Double thunderbolt is called *Visva Vajra*. Sometimes Vajra is placed vertically on a lotus (Fig.-16).

Yab-Yum: Father-mother concept. Tibetan word *Yab* means father and *Yum* means mother i.e. in union or in company of mother or in her embrace (Fig.-17).

In Chinese tradition it is called *Yin-Yang*. *Yin* is a passive female principle of the universe while *Yang* is an active male principle of the

universe; both are interdependent. *Yin* is associated with darkness, water and the female while Yang is associated with light, activity and male.

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Fig.1: Shiva, Hanuman Dhoka



Fig. 2: Neelkanth, Sarnath



Fig. 3: Heruka, Dacca Museum



Fig. 4: Mahakal, Nepal Kathmandu



Fig. 5: Sri Devi (Palden Lhamo)



Fig. 6 :Taleju Bhavani, Nepal



Fig. 7: Vajra Varahi



Fig. 8: Marichi, Indian Museum



Fig. 9: Ajima



Fig.10: Chhinnamasta



Fig. 11: Dakiini



Fig. 12: Hayagriva



Fig. 13: Hevajra with Prajna



Fig. 14: Kapala



Fig. 15: Khatvanga



Fig. 16: Vajra



Fig. 17: Yab-yum

Antiquity of Shiva Worship

Makkhan Lal*

India and China are not only the two oldest living civilizations in the world but still remain attached to their roots. Both the civilizations have seen, in the various stages of their existence, seven other Great Civilizations – Roman, Greek, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Inca, Aztec and Maya – disappearing from the face of earth. By this simple fact one can understand the stability and all encompassing nature of both the civilizations – India and China. While the Chinese civilization continues from 1300 B.C. till date; the Indian civilization has continued with its ups and downs from 7th millennium B.C. – a time span of almost 9,000 years. Excavation of an Upper Palaeolithic shrine at the prehistoric site at Baghor, near Allahabad, and the similar shrine being in use today in the nearby village (see figs.1A and 1B) shows how the continuity, even in the shape of an abstract deity and the structure of shrine can survive almost over millennia.

Till the discovery of Harappan civilization, the antiquity and the continuity of Indian civilization was traced back only up to 6th century B.C. However, after the discovery of Harappan civilization, the antiquity of Indian civilization went back to fourth millennium B.C. A study of material remains belonging to the Harappan civilization showed that a large number of practices prevalent in India today go back to the Harappan times. Though in the early thirties material was far more meager than today, still on the basis of whatever was available John Marshall said:

“All the material of religious nature recovered at Mohenjodaro and Harappa appears to be characteristically Indian. Although, relatively meager in proportion to the extent and importance

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of the sites, this material is sufficient at any rate to make it clear that iconic and aniconic cults existed side by side, and were just as compatible five thousand years ago as they are in Hinduism today. It exhibits to our eyes, on the one hand the worship of the mother goddess, who still occupies a foremost place among the teeming village population of India; and side by side with a god whom we have seen good reason to recognize as an ancestor of the historic Siva, the principle male deity of the Hindu pantheon. On the other hand, it shows us the worship of animals and trees and inanimate stone or other objects in much the same form as it meets us in the historic times in semi-human, at others in syncretic and fabulous shape. Trees, too, are worshipped in their natural state, but their indwelling spirits are already completely anthropomorphized. The lingam and yoni, both have their places in religious scheme, as they have in Saivism and along with these emblems are other stones, apparently of a baetylic nature. Chremanthism exemplified in the worship of the sacred 'incense burners', amulets and charms are common, attesting to the existence of the demonophobia with which Hinduism has always been incurably afflicted. And there is evidence the Yoga was always playing its part as a religious practice..... They drew parallels from the clusters of varied religious practices that could be collectively designated as Hinduism and they also attempted to relate their deduction to the basics of Indian philosophical tenets", (Marshall 1931:76-77).

In this article we shall take up the antiquity of the worship of Shiva in human as well as symbolic form.

Shiva Pashupati

In the Harappan civilization several seals have been found depicting humans in perfect yogic *asana*. One such seal was found from Mohenjodaro (Fig.2). The seal under discussion was uncovered in 1928-29 at a depth of 3.9 meters. The seal is made of steatite and measures 3.56 x 3.53 x 0.76 cm. It depicts a human figure at the center seated on a platform and facing forward. The seal depicts a three-faced deity with a possible fourth face towards the back. The legs of the figure are bent at the knees with the heels touching and the toes pointing downwards.

The arms extend outwards and rest lightly on the knees, with the thumbs facing away from the body. Eight small and three large bangles cover the arms. The chest is covered with what appear to be necklaces, and a double band wraps around the waist. The figure wears a tall and elaborate headdress with central fan-shaped structure flanked by two large striated horns. The human figure is surrounded by four wild animals: an elephant and a tiger to its one side, and a water buffalo and a rhinoceros on the other. Under the dais are two deer or ibexes looking backwards, so that their horns almost meet the center. At the top of the seal are seven pictographs.

John Marshall, under whose leadership Mohenjodaro was excavated, identified the depiction of this seal as that Proto-Shiva (i.e. Shiva's earlier form as Rudra, also known as Pashupati). Marshall gives the following description of the seal and his reasons for identifying the depiction with that of Shiva Pashupati:

“... is seated on a low Indian throne in a typical attitude of *Yoga*, with legs bent double beneath him, heel to heel, and toes turned downwards. His arms are outstretched, his hands, with thumbs to front resting on his knees.... Even before the discovery of this seal Rai Bahadur Ramaprasad Chanda had pointed out the head of the male statue from Mohenjodaro illustrated in Pl. XCVIII (the famous priest-king) has its eyes concentrated on the tip of the nose, and had concluded – with remarkable intuition – that it was portrayed in an attitude of yoga.”

“My reasons for the identification are four. In the first place the figure has three faces and that Siva was portrayed with three as well as with more usual five faces, there are abundant examples to prove. Secondly, the head is crowned with the horns of a bull and the *trisula* are characteristic emblems of Siva. Thirdly, the figure is in a typical yoga attitude, and Siva was and still is, regarded as a *mahayogi*—the prince of *Yogis*. Fourthly, he is surrounded by animals, and Siva is par excellence the ‘Lord of Animals’ (*Pasupati*)—of the wild animals of the jungle, according to the Vedic meaning of the word *pasu*, no less than that of domesticated cattle.” (Marshall 1931: 53-54)

He, thus, sums up :

“Siva is not only prince of Yogis; he is also lord of the beast

(*pasupati*) and it is seemingly in reference to this aspect of his nature that the four animals – the elephant, tiger, rhinoceros, and buffalo – are grouped about him.... In the Vedic hymn *pasu* signified a beast of jungle, and it may reasonably be inferred, therefore, that at that time the deity was regarded as master of wild no less than of tame animals,” (Marshall 1931:54).

Besides the Shiva Pashupati seal several other seals have been found which depict human figures in yogic postures. One such postures depicted on the seal shows a person sitting on a *chauki* (platform) with his feet folded in such a way that sole of feet meet together, sometimes with toes downwards, and the hands resting on the folded knees (Fig.3). Such an *asana* has been described in Patanjali's *Yogasutra* as *Gorakshasana*. It is one of the most difficult *asanas* forming part of *Hathayoga* and is practiced even today by some who master various other *asanas* of *Hathayoga* (Fig.4). Though *Gorakshasana* is one of the most difficult *asanas* but we do have two more *asanas* – *Bhadrasana* and *Kundasana* — which are akin to it.

We do find various *asanas* depicted in the long history of sculptures and panels in Indian art and architecture but depictions of *Gorakshasana*, *Bhadrasana* and *Kundasana* are rare. A *Gajalakshmi* depicted on one of the Bharhut panels (kept in Indian Museum, Kolkata) shows her in *Gorakshasana* (Fig.5). Here *Lakshmi* has been shown sitting on lotus with her feet folded in such a way that soles meet together with the toes downwards. Her folded hands reach downwards and palms, also folded downwards, join together near the navel. As usual, two elephants are pouring water from pitchers.

The depiction of Goddess Lakshmi at Bharhut, belonging to Sunga period (Second century B.C.) in *Gorakshasana* leaves no doubt that the practice is the continuation from Harappan times.

Shivalingas and Yonis

From most of the Harappan sites a large number of aniconic objects, generally of stone, have been found. These have been identified as *yonis* and *lingas* representing Shiva worship (Fig.6A and 6B). These have been classified into three categories. These are: small size *lingas*; big size *lingas*; and *yonis*. Small size *lingas* (1.5 cm. to 30 cm.) are mostly made of lime stone and alabaster but miniature ones are also made of shell, faience, terracotta, and paste. The paste ones are even

painted to give a look of carnelian. These smaller ones must have been used as amulets to be carried on the person just as miniature *lingas* are carried by Saivites even today. Some of these *Sivalingas* have a hole at the base with which these might have been fixed in the yoni or even tied to a amulet. Some of these are modeled extremely realistically. However, “ninety-nine per cent of them are so conventionalized that most people would find difficulty in recognizing their phallic character.” (Marshall 1931 : 60). Large size *lingas* are more varied in size and some measure from 60 to 90 cm. in height .The large ones are made of stone and must have been kept at the place of worship/temples. “In shape they are like many of the *lingas* seen in Siva temples today.” (Marshall 1931 : 60).

A large number of ring stones have been found at various sites which have been identified as *yonis* (Fig.7). Their size varies from 1.5 cm to about 1.30 m. in diameter. While the bigger ones are made of stone, the smaller ones are made also in shell, faience or paste painted to give a look of carnelian. Some of these ring stones fit very well with *lingas* of the same material leaving little doubt that both were once part of the same.

Despite overwhelming evidence of linga worship in the Harappan civilization and most of the scholars agreeing to it, a few raised doubts regarding linga worship and argued that these objects were nothing but gamesmen used in chess. Marshall rightly pointed out that the modelling and size of some of them completely rules out the idea of their being anything else than *lingas* and *yonis*. However, the discovery of a terracotta *linga* and *yonis* made in one piece from Kalibangan excavations has finally settled the matter. This linga-yoni in one piece is exactly like we see in Shiva temples today (Fig.8).

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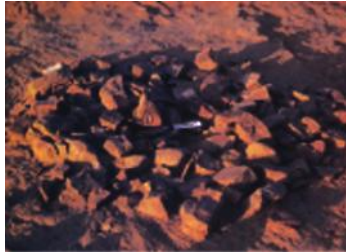


Fig. 1A Excavated upper Palaeolithic Shrine at Baghor-I.



Fig. 1B Keraiki Devi Shrine in Nearby village.



Fig. 2 Siva Pasupati Seal from Mohenjodaro.



Fig. 3 Seal Depicting Yogic Pastureyogiseal.



Fig. 4 Gorakhshasan



Fig. 5 Gajalakshmi in Gorakshasana from Bharhut.



Fig. 6A Sivalinga in-situ at Harappa Excavations.



Fig 6B Sivalingas and Yonis found at Mohenjodaro and other Harappan sites.



Fig. 7 Single piece Terracotta Sivalinga from Kalibagan.

Saivism in the Efflorescence of the Golden Isles of Indonesia

Lokesh Chandra*

The seventy-five glorious years of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan have been the heaven and jasmine of its founder and his clarion call of *Jaya Somanatha*, to bloom the cultural dreams of a renescent India, to unveil the shining peaks of our minds over the millenia. The noble vision of Kulapati Munshi became embedded in the Bhavan to keep alive the light on the horizons of history, and angelic in the wrappings of life: can flowers forget the spring? It is in tune with the founding spirit of the Bhavan to celebrate its platinum jubilee with a symposium on Abhinavagupta the great master of the Trika philosophy of Kashmir, who also formulated a new theory of aesthetics. A few weeks before Kulapati Munshi ascended the Heavenly Fields of eternal Vrindavana beyond the plane of duality, I was in Mumbai and went to see him. He lay on his couch, with his charming consort Leelavati sitting beside him. I began with an interpretation of his historic novel *Jaya Somanatha*. Somnatha was a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva as the Lord of the Moon, as the guardian of trans-oceanic merchants. The waxing and waning of the Moon has fatal effects on the waves of the oceans which toss the ships in deadly turbulence. The *Jayantika* of Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala' recounts the voyage of the seasoned steersman Supriya when the sea took a terrible aspect all of a sudden: like the earth quivering with her mountains at the time of world destruction. The sea rose up in rage, saddening the hearts of the occupants (भीतेव नौरभ्यधिकं चक्रमे विषादयन्ती

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हृदयानि तेषाम). Sup raga refers to Sopara seaport in Gujarat. Just as iva lessened the impact of the torrents of the Gang descending to earth, so does' He mitigate the tumult and turbulence, the *Sturm und Drang*, caused by the Moon (Soma). As Lord of the Moon, as Soma-n tha, he blesses marine travel with safety and assurance. Somnath was a Temple of Mariners, and even Arab merchants made offerings for safety and success in their trade. The renown of the extravagant riches of Somnath spread all over the lands of trans-national trade, whether Alexandria, Iraq, Iran or Central Asian kingdoms. Its immense opulence attracted greed and fundamentalism in 1024^{AC} when it was sacked after a fiercely contested battle in which fifty thousand defenders were killed and the invaders returned with a huge booty.

Gujarat ruled the waves from the times of the Lothal shipyard in the third millennium BC to Somnath in the 11th century AC. Ships from Gujarat had taken artisans to Indonesia to build the Borobudur. To this day Gujarat has a saying that one who goes to Java never returns. The merchants of Gujarat must have gone-to Java in large numbers as well as over a long period of time for this saying to come down to our times as a tiny chunk of racial memory. The Candi Plaosan inscription (st.14) of the 8th century states that the temple of Jina has been built by a "constant flow", of people from Gurjara (*satata-gurjara-de a-sam gataih.*). Kulapati Munshi listened in pin drop silence. Lord iva controlled oceanic turbulence by holding the Moon in his jat -mukuta, while the merchants carried Him to the Golden Islands (Suvarnadv pa) as their Supreme Deity. I went on to relate that while walking along a road in Jakarta, a beauty salon attracted my attention. Its loud signboard read: *rahayu* Rp. 1000; *Dewi Ratih* Rp. 1500, that is, if a lady wants to be charming the makeup will cost 1000 Indonesian rupiahs, and if she wished to be Dewi Ratih the charges would go up to 1500 Indonesian rupiahs. It was a reminder of the great Old Javanese kakawin (= k vya) *Smaradahana* which deals with the legend of Siva burning K madeva with the cosmic fire of His third eye, and the paragon beauty of his consort Dewi Ratih is losing color. A temple in the 8th century or a 1967 boutique in Java reminded of Lord Siva's omnipresence and of ocean-goers who were technically called *s my trika* in the *Amarako a*, and explained in Ks rasv mins commentary as *dv p ntara-g minah* 'those who go to Indonesia (*dv p ntara*). Kulapati Munshi was fascinated that Ratih is a delightful realism and she lives in the spontaneity of life. With a youthful glow over his face he glanced at Smt. Leelavati with a smile. Memories flit

across his mind. The conversation went on for three hours, in the sublimity and emotional texture of *Jaya Somanatha*. I said: *jaya Somanatha* should have been the *Jaya-ghosa* of a renascent India, but India was not, reborn, it was fathered anew. Kulapati was lost in silence, as I resumed that Indonesia inherited the luminous and indefectible synthesis of the Indic traditions, or *prabh svara citta* 'thought glittering through its essence' in aiva terms. Poet Tagore wrote in 1928: "When Natraj Shiva, the King of Dances, came here and was gratified with the worship of the people, the boon he gave to them was his dance itself. Can it be, I wonder, that all that was left for us of India were the ashes of the cremation ground with which Shiva decks himself as Lord of Ascetics?" (Letters from Java no.8' in the *Visvabharati Quarterly* 6/3.280).

The sculpted Elephanta Caves on the small island of Gh rapur , nine kilometres away from Mumbai, were captured by the Portuguese from the King of Gujarat. They have been ascribed to the Kalacuri kings (c. 600 AC) who were devotees of *iva*. The colossal bust of *iva* with three heads depicts him as the serene Absolute (central face), in a fierce aspect as destroyer on the right, and as creator on the left. Infused with so much spiritual greatness and consummate beauty of outline, cosmic tranquility, it has never been exceeded by man in the depths from which it springs. This statue is cosmic tranquility and serene creativity: did it not bless India's vast navigations at their height over the centuries. A pristine artistic rendering of *iva*'s presence at Elephanta amidst the splash of waters, as He ever brings to the world a lived time in the *Mah mrtyunjaya mantra* and as He once endowed merchants with life as did Somnath.

Shipping was well-developed in India since the third millenium BC, sufficient to ensure the journeys of Indian merchants in search of the affluent 'golden lands' of the Suvarnabh mi region, when the flow of Roman gold into India ceased. The *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* written around, 110 AC has the Greek expression *kolandiophonta* for large ocean ships of SE Asia. It is a corruption of K'u-lun-po which were castled ships. In the second and third centuries the Chinese sailed in large vessels whose technology was borrowed from Indonesia. The art of navigation was of an assuring order and Indian merchant-princes supplied Yüeh-chih or Kambuja steeds of Central Asia to Indonesia. The y pa-inscriptions of King Mulavarman, dated to ca400 AC on palaeographic grounds, speak of his father King A vavarman. The very name indicates that the father was dealing in horses, became powerful

to vanquish the clan chieftains in course of time, gave rise to an organised state, and became the founder of a dynasty. The new state was Kundunga, which seems to be Kundungal in Kozhikode in Kerala. Kundunga became K'un-lun in Chinese transcription and came to designate the whole region of SE Asia in Chinese annals. As King M Iavarman's power grew, he granted lands with economic trees, created hospitals and installed the image of his father (*vapraka*, which becomes *b p* in Hindi) in the form of *iva* (*svara*) as the palladium of the state. He sought the blessings of the Brahmanas who conducted yajñas. He erected a light-house (*k ad pa*) on the shore line of his capital. It was unique in the South Seas and gave unprecedented safety to navigation. The improvement of agriculture, a prospering economy, an efficient state organisation and technological advances like the akasapā attracted trans-oceanic trade and alongside firmly established Hinduism in SE Asia. The Chinese annals of Ma Tuan-lin say that numerous Brahmanas came to the SE Asian kingdom of P'an-pan which sent envoys to the Sung court in 424-453, 454-6, and 457-464. Hinduism spread by leaps and bounds with the stream of Brahmanas coming to bless the kings, nobles and traders.

Gunavarman from a collateral family of the King of Kashmir went to Java via Srilanka ca 420 AC. In 414 AC, an Indian vessel touched the shores of Indonesia after three months of continuous sailing with 200 passengers on board including the famed pilgrim Fa-hsien. The *Brhat-samhitā* of the 6th century has several passages bearing on stellar influences effecting the fortunes of sea-going persons.

Javanese chronicles relate that about 603 AC a king of Gujarat, forewarned of the coming destruction of his kingdom, sailed for Java with his son, five thousand cultivators, artisans, warriors, physicians and scholars, in six large and a hundred small vessels. They laid the foundations of a culture that gave rise to the earliest sanctuaries dedicated to Lord *iva*.

Vajrabodhi boarded a commercial vessel at a South Indian port that formed part of a flotilla of thirty five Persian ships, arrived at *ur vijaya* after a month, and sailed to China after a stay of five months in 719 AC. The regular sailings from India to Java contributed to Indian kings going over to Java. The Cangal Stone Inscription of King Sañjaya dated *aka* 654 (= 732 AC) mentions that established a *iva*-linga on 6 Oct. 732 at 1.00 pm. Sañjaya was a mighty monarch. A river in central Java is called *Kali enjaya*; two Javanese inscriptions bear the Sañjaya era and later inscriptions introduce a dynastic list beginning

with him. The Cangal inscription is written in eloquent kavya style and speaks of the deep faith of the King in Lord Shiva. The inscription is being quoted in full, as the first Shiva record on Indonesian soil. The impact of Shaivism on the golden isle of Java can be felt in the haunting, lift of the royal muse gushing forth from the depths of Shiva consciousness, in the flow of the Javanese inscription.

शकेन्द्रे ऽतिगते श्रुतीन्द्रिय-रसैर् अङ्गीकृते वत्सरे
 वारेन्दौ धवल-त्रयोदश-तिथौ भद्रोतरे कार्तिके
 लग्ने कुम्भमये स्थिरांश-विदिते प्रतिष्ठित् पर्वते
 लिङ्गं लक्षण-लक्षितं नरपतिश श्रीसञ्जयश शान्तये ॥ १

गङ्गोत्तुङ्ग-तरङ्ग रञ्जित-जटामौलीन्दु-चूडामणिर्
 भास्वत्-भूति-विभूति-देह-विकसन् नागेन्द्र-हार-द्युतिः
 श्रीमत्-स्वाञ्जलि-कोश-कोमल-करैर् देवैस्तु य स्तुयते
 स श्रेयो भवतां भवो भव-तमस-सर्वो ददात्वद्भूतम ॥ २

भक्ति-प्रहैर् मूनीन्द्रैर् अभिनुतम् अद्यसकृत् स्वर्ग-निर्वाण-हेतोर
 देवैर् लेखर्षभाद्यैर् अवनत-मकुटैश् चुम्बितं षट्पदाभैः
 अङ्गुल्या ताम्रपत्रं नख-किरण-लसत्-केसरारञ्जितान्तं
 देयात् शं शाश्वतं वस त्रिनयन-चरणशनिन्दित-शम्भोज-यग्मम ॥ ३

एश्वर्य-तिशयोद्भवात् सुमहतानामप्यद्भुतानां निधिस्
 त्यागैकान्तरतस् तनोति सततं यो विस्मयं योगिनाम्
 यो ऽष्टाभिस् तनुभिर् जगत्-करुणया पुष्पाति न स्वार्थतो
 भतेशश शशिखण्ड-भषित-जटस स त्र्यम्बकः पात वः ४

बिभ्रद्-धेम-वपुस् स्वदेह-दहन-ज्वाला इवोद्यज्जटा
 वेद-स्तम्भ-सुबद्ध-लोक-समयो धर्मार्थ-कामोद्भवः
 देवैर् वन्दित-पाद-पङ्कज-युगो योगीश्वरो योगिनाम्
 मान्यो लोक-गरुर ददात् भवतां सिद्धिं स्वयंभर विभः ॥ ५

नागेन्द्रोत्फण-रत्न-भित्ति-पतितां दृष्टात्म-बिम्ब-श्रियं
 सभूभङ्ग-कटाक्षया कुपितया नूनं श्रिया बीक्षितः
 यो योगारुण-लोचनोत्पल-दलश् शेते ऽम्बु-शय्यातले
 त्राणार्थं त्रिदशैस स्ततस स भवतां देयात् श्रियं श्रीपतिः ॥ ६

आसीद् द्वीपवरं यवाख्यम् अतुलं धान्यादि-बीजाधिकं
सम्पन्नं कनकाकरैस् तदमरै मन्त्रादिनोपर्जितं
श्रीमत्-कुञ्जर-कुञ्ज-देश निहितं गङ्गादि-तीर्थावृतं
स्थानं दिव्यतमं शिवाय जगतश शम्भोस्त यन्त्राद्गतम् ॥ ७

तस्मिन् द्वीपे यवाख्ये पुरुष-पद-महालक्ष्य-भूते प्रशस्ते
राजोग्रोदयजन्मा प्रथित-पृथु-यशास् सामदानेन सम्यक्
शास्ता सर्व-प्रजानां जनक इव शिशोर् जन्मतो वत्सलत्वात्
सन्नाख्यस संनतारिर मनरिव सचिरं पाति धर्मेण पथ्वीम् ॥ ८

एवंगते समनुशासति राज्य-लक्ष्मीं
सन्नाहये ऽन्वयविधौ समतीत-काले
स्वर्गे सुखं फलकुलोपच्छितं प्रयाते
भिन्दन्न जगद भ्रमति शोक-वशाद् अनाथम् ॥ ९

ज्वलन्-ज्वलन-विद्रवत्-कनक-गौर-वर्ण-द्युतिः
बृहद्-भुज-नितम्ब-तुङ्गतम-मूर्ध-शृङ्गोन्नतः
भुवि स्थित-कुलाचल-क्षितिधरोच्च-पादोच्छ्रयः
प्रभत-गण-सम्पदो भवति यस ततो मेरुवत् ॥ १०

श्रीमान् यो माननीयो बुध-जन-निकरैश् शास्त्र-सूक्ष्मार्थ-वेदी.
राजा शौर्यादि-गुण्यो रघुरिव विजितानेक-सामन्त-चक्रः
राजा श्रीसञ्जयाख्यो रविरिव यशसा दिग्-विदिक्-ख्यात-लक्ष्मीसू
सनस सन्नाह-नाम्नस स्वसरसावैव न्यायतश् शास्ति राज्यम् ॥ ११

यस्मिन् छासति सागरोर्मि-रशनां शैल-स्तनीं मेदिनीं
शेते राजपथे जनो न चकितश् चोरैर् न चान्यैर् भयैः
कीर्त्याद्यैर् अलमर्जिताश्च सततं धर्मार्थकामा नरैः
ननं रोदिति रोदितीति स कलिर नास्यङ्गिहान्यभः ॥ १२

The name of King Sann (st. 8) and Sann ha (st. 11) can be the Telugu and Kannada *sanna* or Tamil *cannam/ sannam* meaning 'minuteness, smallness, fineness' (*Tamil Lexicon*). As the son of his sister (*s nus sann ha-n mmas svasuh*, st.11) r Sañjaya succeeded him and was celebrated as the founder of the dynasty. The name Sann ha 'armoured' reminds of King P rnavarman "whose famous armour was

impenetrable to the arrows of multitude of enemies" (नाम्ना श्रीपर्णवर्मा प्रचर-रिप- शराभेद्य-विख्यात-वर्मः). The three earliest inscriptions in Java pertain to King Purnavarman, to Tukmas 'Golden Spring' (no king is specified), and to King Sanjaya. The first wave of cultural transmission to Java was Saivism, and it has left its subtle nuances in the modern language, e.g. the Ministry of Religion is *Kementriyan Agama* in Bahasa Indonesia, where *agama* is from the *gamas* of Saivism.

An inscription datable to 760 AC is connected with Chandi Badut in East Java. The principal image is the Linga enshrined in the centre of the cella of the temple. Its reconstruction drawing shows its beautiful Chandi Badut architectural style (Fon 71).

The frequent navigation of people from South India is referred to by Hui-lin (788-810 AC) in his dictionary of terms of the Vinaya sutras. Their sea-going ships could transport more than a thousand men, besides cargo. They carried on extensive trade with Indonesia, built temples to Lord Siva, and have left vast ruins of chandis. For example, the Dieng plateau with its sulphurous springs and lakes, was dedicated to a god of mountains being surrounded by montane ranges. It became the abode of Siva as the cosmic north, which is his direction from the Taittiriya-samhitā 2.6.6.5 downwards. Siva dwells on Mount Kailasa, which signifies the region of the pole star that signals unfailing stabilisation. The Dieng plateau amply qualified to be the new dwelling of Siva being to the north-west of Central Java and with mountains all around. Eight Saiva temples more or less intact and a number of foundations of temples have survived the ravages of time. Inscriptions from 809 AC and thereabout date the complex to the early 9th century. An image of Siva from Dieng holds a rosary in his right hand and has a skull and crescent in the headress (Kern p.28, pl.1). Does the skull indicate the Kapalika sect? Or is it the *Brahma iras*, the powerful *Purupata* weapon, worked by the mind, by the eye, by words and by the bow. Arjuna received the *Brahma iras* weapon from the hand of Siva (Kri 259). Did the kings of the Sanjaya dynasty sanctify their power by the skull in the head of Siva as the cosmic weapon?

Gold statuettes of Siva and Purvat have been found from Gemuruh, not far from Dieng. Their style reminds of South Indian art (Kern 34).

Chandi Prinapus to the east of Mount Sendara has a temple of Nandi, and the remains of the main temple dedicated to Siva in about 850 AC.

Not far from Borobudur was Chandi Banon of which five statues have survived. Siva and Ganesha are magnificent examples of Central

Javanese sculpture. (Kern p1. 39, p1. 2)

A standing Four-armed *iva* statue of the 9th century is placed on a small image of reclining Nandin. It was inspired by the style current in Chittagong (ancient Caityagr ma), now in Bangladesh. It is one of the few *iva* images to have stylistic influences from Bengal. Another bronze image of *iva*, with gold and silver inlay, from Central Java, has been inspired by the bronze sculptures of eastern India, in which the third eye on the forehead is inlaid in silver, while the lower lip is inlaid in gold. Gleaming eyes and the brownish patina of this icon are the intensity of the divine expression, with energy emanating from the figure. Extraordinary workmanship, sensitive modelling of the hands, rich jewelry, make it one of the finest of ancient bronzes, both in Indonesia and India. It escaped the crucible being thrown into the river Kali Wadas, from which it was discovered in 1933 by farmers taking a bath. There He is between eternity and the passing moment. (p1. 3,4).

The first work of Old Javanese according to Prof. Dr. R.H. Ng. Poerbatjaraka in his history of Javanese literature entitled *Kapustakan Djawi* (Jakarta 1952), is *Chandakarana*. It was commissioned by the *ailendra* King Mah r ja Jitendra to create literature in the Javanese language. It begins with a salutation to Lord *iva*. *iva* scholars must have played a role in the vernacularisation of literature at the *ailendra* court which was predominantly dedicated to Buddhism. This also indicates that some *ailendra* monarchs were *iva*, and the great *iva* temple of Loro Jongrang in Prambanan could have been the work of Mah r ja Jitendra. The *Chandakarana* 'Art of Writing Poetry' has a section on nine *rasa*. The Old Javanese word for *rasa* is *lano*, *l n n*, and, *rasa* which are frequently referred to in Old Javanese *k vyas*. The great scholar Poebatjaraka was the last of learned Indonesian professors who were equally conversant in traditional lore and modern European methodology. His name is *p rva* 'tradition' + *caraka* 'wanderer' : one who rambles in the pathways of Classical values. He used to write letters to my father Prof. Raghu Vira in Sanskrit in Devanagari script. When he was invited for the Buddha Jayanti in 1956 by the Government of India, he dropped into our house all of a sudden: a real *atithi*, a divine visitor, an *atithi-deva*. Father and myself were not at home, being busy in the Buddha Jayanti. My late wife Dr. Sharada Rani talked to him about OJ. literature and recited Sanskrit hymns (*stotra*). All along tears were flowing down his cheeks, transported as he was into the world of ecstasy, listening to Sanskrit, as his ancestors used to a millenium ago. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on Bhatara Guru or Agastya as an avatara of *iva* who brought civilisation.

Sanggariti in East Java dates from the 9th century and it was a *śiva* sanctum, where people came for the medicinal waters in its foundations. Four stone cists were found near its foundations during the restoration in 1941, with gold foils inscribed in the script of the 9th century. In the Musanagar sculpture of 50 BC- 50 AC *śiva* holds a medicine bottle. Healing plants are attributes of the figure of *śiva* (Kra 38-39)

The Kashmiri work *Kath -sarit-s gara* of Somadeva relates the shipwreck of Princess Gunavati on the coast of Suvarnadvipa on her way from Kataka (Kedah) to India. Sailings to and from Java were an odyssey that fascinated writers as far away as Kashmir.

Not far from Borobudur, the *śiva* temple Chandi Banon (Kern 36) has yielded magnificent sculptures of *śiva*, Ganesha, Visnu, Brahma and Agastya of the 9th century. They can be seen in the National Museum at Jakarta. It shows that *śaivism* was as powerful as Buddhism in the neighbourhood of the Borobudur.

Chandi Loro-Jongran 'Temple of the Slender Maiden' (Pravat) near the village of Prambanan was built around 900 AC as the grandest temple dedicated to *śiva*, flanked by those of Brahma to the right and of Visnu to the left. A smaller temple facing the central temple is dedicated to Nandin. The original complex contained 224 minor temples, about 14 metres high, surrounding the three temples. The three main temples constituted the central space surrounded by a wall, and the 224 *parivara* temples had the external rampart, guarding the totality of sacred space against evil forces.

The central *ikhara* of the main temple of *śiva* holds us in its enthralling height of over 140 feet, as if sprung from immortal life, a life that is immense (*pr no vir t*). The entire complex of Prambanan comprises 16 temples in the inner courtyard and 224 minor temples—a marvellous architectonic composition, reminding you of an unknown master sitting in an ancient morning to weave the trembling melodies of meditation into the permanence of stone. The temples collapsed in an earthquake about 1549 AC. Ever since this marvel has lived in the lyric of legend, recounted by endless generations of simple peasant folk.

The legend goes that Bandung Bondowoso, the son of the sorcerer Damar Moyo (Miyandara), was engaged by the king of Pengging to kill Ratu Boko, the giant king, who wished to marry his adopted son to the beautiful daughter of the king. Aided by the magic of his father, Bondowoso attacked the giant army and finally killed Ratu Boko, by heaving him bodily into a lake, where he was drowned. As a reward the

king of Pengging made Bondowoso his regent in the territories of Ratu Boko. Now Ratu Boko had a pretty daughter named Loro Jongran and Bondowoso aspired to her hand. She knew him for the slayer of her father, and fearing to refuse him outright, tried to put him off by imposing an impossible task as the price of her hand. Bondowoso must dig within one day six deep wells in six great buildings, the like of which no mortal eye had ever seen, decorated with a thousand images of the kings and legendary rulers of Prambanan. Bondowoso, the son of the sorcerer, had no difficulty in summoning sufficient gnomes to do the work and towards daybreak the task was almost finished. By a little magic of her own, Loro Jongran succeeded in preventing the placing of the thousandth statue, only nine hundred and ninety-nine being present, when the cock crowed and the time was up. Bondowoso was furious with frustration, and lacking one statue of a ruler of Prambanan, he thundered out that the daughter of a ruler would do as well, pronouncing a curse on Loro Jongran and changed her into stone. So is the legend about the establishment of the temple complex of Prambanan, called the 'Chandi Loro Jongran'.

Chandi Loro Jongran has ever been the pride of the Indonesians who to this day proclaim that even in this modern time, no nation can match the skill, such as we see at Prambanan. Since 1918 the Archaeological Service of Indonesia has been busy restoring the colossal central temple of Siva by the system of anastylosis, where each and every stone that is lying fallen near the temple or has been carried away by the village folk has to be collected, photographed and jigsawed into its appropriate placement by a painstaking and thorough study of the joinings, chisel-marks, the depicted legends and stylistic patterns. By December 1953 the reconstruction of the main Siva temple was completed a marvel of archaeological engineering.

Prambanan the cosmography of intuition. In the Prambanan complex Hindu-Javanese art reached the culmination of its florescence. In largeness of conception and daring in composition it surpassed all former creations. The 224 peripheral temples reach an imposing height of 45 feet each and represent the 224 universes of the cosmological system of the Siva Siddhanta according to the Bhuvana-kosa. While these peripheral temples may represent the Cakravada mountains, the eight temples in the inner court may be the eight pinnacles of the Meru mountain. Though a precise interpretation awaits research, it is certain that the temples and sub-temples reflect the cosmography of intuition, the symbolisation of the infinite possibilities of experience

lying in the depths of our subconscious whereby we may cross over the world of time and form. Winding through the sub-temples architecturing the manifoldness of the inner world, the visitor moves on into the unity of primordial consciousness symbolised in Siva in the central temple. It is like a journey along the spiritual path away from the world of space and time to the timeless omnipresence of cosmic consciousness. There I stood in front of the statue of Śiva, towering over me and over the moulds of time and space. In the soft transparency of the twilight of this sanctum sanctorum, I could feel the music of Sanskrit stotras sung centuries ago. As I myself recited a Sanskrit śloka, it resounded back sinking into the deeps of a mysterious wellspring of spiritual strata. The acoustics of the soaring spire, enriched by the melodies of a millenium, has a lyrical way of growing on you. There I stood in the eternal serenity of the statue of Lord Śiva, consubstantiated in Supreme Vision, me and my Śiva alone – *tad va istah śivah kevalo 'ham, śivah kevalo 'ham*. Lord Śiva of Prambanan summons India, to the serene beatitude of ecstasy. Let us go and kindle a lamp unto the sacred shades of this sanctum.

The Śivaparva of the Indonesian Mahābhārata begins with a homage to Śiva and his consort who bring into being everything after the apocalypse by their mystical union on top of Mount Kailāsa. Śiva incarnates in Java as King Dharmavama a Śiṅgah Ananta-vikram-ottunga-deva. King Śiṅgah is praised in the opening of the Bhīṣmaparva as Hari, because he is Hari 'Visnu' being the bearer of the sun, he is Hari 'sun' as the protector of the world, and he is a lion (*hari* also means lion) because of his leonine might: he is verily *Trivikrama*. The introduction to the Śivaparva is Śaiva as King Śiṅgah (985-1006) was in the lineage of the Śaiva King Sindok (929-947). This dynasty was enthusiastic in the efflorescence of the literary traditions of Śaivism, and called themselves *dharmavama*. The inscription of Sendang Kamal dated 991 mentions the composition of the code of conduct for Śaiva mendicants entitled *Śiva-sāna*.

The sea-going ships of the south (= SE region) which sailed from India and to Java are described by Chou Ch'ü-fei in 1178 AC : "the ships which sail the Southern Sea and south of it are like houses. When their sails are spread they are like great clouds in the sky. Their rudders are several tens of feet long." Navigation was fairly advanced in the 12th century and cultural transmission could forget all dangers.

The Śivapurāṇa narrates that Kṛmā alone could bring about the union of Śiva and Pṛvatī. Kṛmā accompanied by Rati went to the hermitage of Śiva and shot his flower arrow at Śiva's heart. The flame

of fire blazed forth from the third eye of the infuriated *iva* and reduced *K ma* to ashes. *Rati* was in distress and wanted to kill herself. *iva* consoled her that *K ma* would be born again. This is the theme of the Old Javanese *k vya* entitled *Smaradahana* written by *mpu Dharmaja* around 1185 AC at the court of King *K me vara* as a homage to him and his consort *r dev Kirana* who were ruling Java from Dahana (= Kadiri). *Smaradahana* continues to be a part of the contemporary repertoire of Indonesian dances, and a favorite theme for painters. (pl.5).

King *Krtanagara* of Singas ri was killed in the year 1292 in a carousel with his prime minister. A commemorative temple was built at Singas ri whose central cella has a yoni pedestal for a *linga* representing *iva*. *iva* is surrounded by his companions in the side cellas: *Durg* in the north, *Gane a* in the east (back), *Agastya* in the south, *Nand vara* and *Mah k la* in the niches on either side of the entrance in the west. The temple has a huge central *ikhara* surrounded by four tops in the four directions. They correspond to the five *ikharas* of Mount Meru (Kern p. 234, pl. 6).

King *An apati* of Singas ri died in 1248, and he was portrayed as *iva* in *Chandi Kidal* which was completed in 1260, twelve years after his death on his final *r ddha* ceremony. His hands are in a posture characteristic of deified statues. These statues were to legitimise the succession of the crown-prince as his divine right as the son of the deified father (*vaprake vara*, Kern p. 216, pl. 7, 8).

A large statue of *Mahis suramardin* (pl.9) slaying the demon *mahisa* was found from *Chandi Singas ri* dates from about 1300. A 14th century statue of the goddess from *Chandi Jawi* in which she has won the battle, the demon lies in a static position. The frequency with which *Durg* is represented in the 14-15th centuries shows her popularity. Her icon occupies the northern niche in Javanese temples dedicated to *iva*. In the 1938 excavations, a large *iva* statue was found in *Chandi Jawi*, whose superb quality is spoken of by poet *Prapañca* in his work *N garakrt gama* : "and inside a likeness of *iva*, splendid, its majesty immeasurable". The poet was in the temple in 1361 in the, retinue of King *Hayam Wuruk* of *Majapahit*.

The *N garakrt gama* mentions two *dharm dhyaksas* at the *Majapahit* court who were charged with the supervision and maintenance of religious institutions: one for the *aivas* (*aiv dhyaksa*) and the other for the Buddhists (*dharm dhyaksa kasogatan*). The chronicle relates events pertaining to the years 1359-1363. During the reign of *Hayam Wuruk alias R. jasanagara mpu Tantular* wrote the *Sutasoma*. It

is the only Buddhist *kavya* in Javanese. It continues to enjoy popularity in Bali due to its profound metaphysical speculation and didactic character. President Soekarno chose the national motto from this *kavya* when Indonesia gained freedom : *bhinneka tunggal ika* "though different they are one", emphasising that *Vairocana* and *Śiva* represent the same Absolute. The two in their deepest reality are identical. This motto of Indonesia is emblazoned on the *Garuda Pancasila*, the coat of arms below the garuda. It is a message of unity, like *e pluribus unum* 'out of many, one' in the United States.

Ivar tri-kalpa is a magnificent *śaiva kavya* in Old Javanese by mpu Tanakung of Kadiri, the son of mpu Rajakusuma. He was a master of metrics as attested by his treatise *Wrttasañcaya* on Old Javanese metres. It is popularly known as *Lubdhaka* 'the Hunter'. It is a glorification of the purifying power of the working of the *ivalinga*, on the 14th night of the dark half of the month of *mṃgha*. This poem is strikingly close to the *Padma-purāna*. A short treatise from Bali entitled *Aji Brata* 'Book of Observances' sets out the ritual of the *ivar tri*, based on this poem. It has been dated to ca. 1447 by P.I. Zoetmulder (1974: 365).

The Majapahit dynasty was the golden age of Indonesia's history. The name was translated as *Bilvatikta* in Sanskrit by the Kings of the dynasty. *Bilva* refers to the woodapple offered to Lord Śiva" on the *ivar tri*. The golden period of Indonesia's history was thus sanctified by Lord Śiva. In 1520 the Hindus of Majapahit fled to Bali where their descendants, palm-leaf manuscripts copied across centuries, rituals, and other traditions thrive till our day. The dignity of *śaiva* worship can be seen in Bali where *pedanda Siwa* or *śaiva* priest dons each item of the ceremonial dress of worship with the chanting of mantras. To cite four out of many :

Putting on the cloth (*mavastra*): *om tam mah dev ya namah*

Putting on the girdle (*masabuk*): *om am śiva-sthitik ya namah*

Putting on the upper cloth (*makampu*): *om um visnu-sad śiv ya namah*, and so on

Squatting down (*pasila pened*): *om om padm san ya namah*.

It is short ritual but there is nothing in India to compare with its solemnity, dignity, and stateliness. A *pedanda* in *śaiva* prayer:



A Pedanda Siwa, A Brahmana Priest, in Prayer

Several hymns to iva, vara, Mahe vara, Rudra, Durg are prevalent in Bali and can be read in T. Goudriaan and C. Hooykaas, *Stuti and Stava*. The yajñopavita is worn with the following mantra, which terms it ivastra:

*ivastra param vajñopavita param pavitra
 Prajapati-jyotiḥ- yusyam balam astu tejah
 param guhyam trigunam trigunam makam.*

In Bali I saw a magnificent painting (pl. 10) in the worship room of a former prince, a descendant of the Majapahit dynasty. It depicted the astamurti of iva. He had its copy drawn for me by a famous artist. In the centre are Parama iva, Sad iva and iva, representing the tri-

akti : creation (*utpatti*), preservation (*sthiti*) and annihilation (*pral na*).
iva is *utpatti*, Parama iva is *sthiti*, and Sad iva is *pral na*. Besides
the tri akti, are His cadu akti or four akti, namely, prabhu- akti,
jñ na- akti vibhu- akti and kriy - akti. They are personified into four
deities : Visnu in the north, vara in the east, Brahm in the south, and
Mah deva in the west. When the gods of the four intermediate
directions are included then the gods of the eight directions represent
the asta- akti. The cosmic power of God has two aspects: deva and
daitya. Daityas are the brothers of devas. They represent the evil aspect
of cosmic energy. They are negative power. *Caru* is offered to them in
bh ta-yajña, so that the bh ta-yajña is transformed into deva-yajña. All
the manifestations are accompanied by their bh ta- akti. Their direction,
colour, mount (v hana), akti, weapon, consort and mystic syllables are
detailed as follows :

1. V yavya (NW): ankara, green, singha (v hana), bh ta akti,
angkus (weapon), V rah , *urip* (duration), *SHI abdanya*
(sound).
2. Uttara (North): Visnu, dark green, cakra, sword (kris dandaka),
Garuda (v hana), Bh ta Karuna (demon Karuna), Dev r
(consort), *A* (sound).
3. Ai nya (NE): ambhu, blue, tri la, vilm na (v hana), Bh ta
Dandang Uddawa, *WA abdanya* (sound).
4. P rva (East): svara, white, bajra, gajah petak (white elephant
is the v hana), Um (consort), *A abdanya* (sound).
5. gneya (SE): Mahe vara, pink, D pa (weapon), varak (v hana),
Bh ta Brahm (demon), Laksm (goddess), *MA abdanya*
(sound).
6. Daksina (South): Brahm , red, danda (weapon), hangsa
(v hana), Bh ta Langlang (demon), Sarasvat (goddess), *BA*
abdanya (BA is the sound).
7. Nirrti (SW): Rudra, jingga colour, musala (weapon), misa
(white buffalo is the v hana), Bh ta Wi esa (demon), Sentani
(goddess), *MA abdanya* (MA is the sound).
8. Pa cima (West): Mah deva, yellow, n gap a (weapon), n ga
(v hana), Bh ta Lembu (demon), Kanya Lembakanya, ac
(goddess), *TA abdanya* (TA is the sound).
9. Madhya (middle): Parama iva.
10. Madhya (middle): Sad siva, pañcavarna (colour), *Ya I*
abdanya (Ya and I are the sounds), padma (lotus is the seat),
Bh ta Pañcavarna (demon).

11. Madhya (middle): iva, Nandi (v hana).
They can be tabulated as follows:

<i>direction</i>	<i>name</i>	<i>colour</i>	<i>mount</i>	<i>bh ta</i>	<i>weapon</i>	<i>consort</i>	<i>b ja</i>
1 NW	ankara	green	lion	akti	angkus	V r h	urip shi
2 N	Visnu	dark green	garuda	Karuna	sword	Dev sr	a
3 NE	ambhu	blue	vilm na	Dandang uddhava	tri la		wa
4 E	vara	white	white elephant		vajra	Um	a
5 SE	Mahe vara	pink	varak	Brahm	dupa	Laksm	ma
6 S	Brahm	red	swan	Langlang	danda	Sarasvati	ba
7 SW	Rudra	jingga	white buffalo	Vi esa	musala	Sentani	ma
8 W	Mah deva	yellow	n ga	Lembu	n gap	a ac	ta

In the painting they ae shown as follows:

1. ankara (im) NW	2. Visnu (am) N	3. ambhu (vam) NE
	centre	
	9. Param ivayam yam	
8. Mahadeva (tam) W		4. I vara (sam) E
	10. Sadasiva im	
	11. iva	
7. Rudra (mam) SW		5. Mahe vara (nam)
SW	6. Brahma (bam) S	

They are meant to allay all dangers and to vanquish all hostilities. There are eleven dhy na-mantras invoking manifestations of iva with their attributes, to overpower all enemies, internal as well as external. The mantra of vara in the east is cited as an example :

*om om asta-mah bhay ya p rva-de ya vara-dev ya veta-
varn ya vajra-astr ya sarva- atru-vin ya namah sv h / om sam
akti namo namah / (Hoo.66)*

Across the stormy and troubled sea of Time, iva has been the cosmic power of the superconscious to renew the ancient mythographies. In March 1979, Bali celebrated the Ek da a-Rudra. It was "five

hundred years since the fall of the Majapahit Empire, and the subsequent cultural 'exodus' of the Javanese Court to Bali. Hindus from Java and Bali once again joined in a ceremony aimed at 'cleansing' the world, in the grand celebration of Ekadasa Rudra. "One cannot but remember the prophecies of Patih Saptamala, the Prime Minister of the Majapahit King who chose death rather than follow his ruler into Islam. He prophesied that in five hundred years the Hindu gods would once again make their presence felt on the island of Java" (statement by Mr. Made Wijaya to *Bali Post* on 18 March 1979). The holy water for the ceremonies came from the Triple Lotus Shrine and my wife Dr. Sharada Rani carried the water of Gang from India on the special request of the Governor of Bali, Ida Bagus Mantra. The holiest of holies Pura Besakih temple was the venue of this 'once in a century ceremony', the greatest *siwa* festival in Indonesia. It is held when the Saka year ends in two zeros, that is every century. The last day of the *siwa* year 1900 fell on 28 March 1979. The number eleven means that Rudra Siva is omnipresent, in all the directions: E, S, W, N, SE, SW, NW, NE, down, up and centre. They are total space. The ceremonies bring good fortune and harmony to the world. The Minister for Religious Affairs (Menteri Agama in Bahasa Indonesia) welcomed it as "an important and historical ceremony". The word for religion in the modern language of Indonesia is *agama*, a technical term for *siwa* texts. The program of ceremonies (*pa-diwasan acara* in the national language) defined its aim as the purification of the world, both macrocosm and microcosm. It was a magnificent spectacle, on the most sacred spot in Bali, with the lights shimmering in midnight coolness. One was in the presence of primordial forces, in an effort to balance the good and evil, *siwa* and Rudra, throughout the eleven directions. The Saka year began' in March and the climax of the Ekadasa Rudra took place on the last day of the Saka year 1900 which was 28 March 1979. Bali joined the 20th century of the Saka era. *siwa* shines in the soul of Bali, as the Prime Minister of the Majapahit empire awaits the resuscitance of the pure brilliance of the divine.

The temples of Borobudur, Mendut, Pawon, Kalasan, Sewu and others convey the impression that Buddhism was dominant in Indonesia. The first expression of Dharma in Indonesia was *siwism*, and *siwa* sancta continue to be constructed till the twilight period of the Majapahit dynasty, whose fall was the end of the Classical period. While there is only one Buddhist philosophical text, the *San Hyan Kamah y nikan*, there are around a hundred philosophical works on *siwism* in Old

Javanese which have survived in Balinese palm leaf manuscripts called *lontar*, such as, *Vrhaspatitattva*, *Bhuvanako a*, *Bhuvana-sanksepa*, *Ganapati-tattva*, *San Hyan Mah jñ na*, and so on. They discuss the universe mysticism on one hand and correspondence of embodied and sound manifestations of Īva's absolute, the teachings of pañc ksara : *namah ĩv ya*, the ĩva teachings and the five states of the soul, *niskala* (Parama ĩva-Sad ĩva- ĩva) and *sakala*, the sound-quintad (*namah ĩv ya*) and the five parts of *om (n d nta-n da-bindu-ardhacandra-omk ra)*. The *Bhuvana-sanksepa* is close to ĩva-siddhanta. ĩvaism of Indonesia was derived primarily from South India. The representation of King Airlangga as ĩva and Queen Tribhuvan as P rvat (from Chandi Rimbi, late 14th century) as deification statues have parallels in South India. G nga King R j ditya built a temple to ĩva on the spot where his father was commemorated, as stated in a 9th century record. Another inscription specifies that the Chola King R jar ja I built the temple to ĩva for the lord who died. Human bones and ashes have been found at some depth below where the statue stands. They were deification of the parents of the ruling monarch as a sanctification of his regime. They were mostly ĩva (ER. 11.92).

The ĩva texts of Indonesia have extensive discussions of *sakala* and *niskala*. In the *V t la-tantra*, ĩva-tattva is of three kinds : (i) *niskala*, (ii) *sakala*, and (iii) *niskala-sakala*. ĩva is *niskala* when all is concentrated in a unity with Him. The *niskala* is the budding cause of all powers that develop the universe. The three kinds are different moments in ĩva, which remains unchanged in Himself. (Das 5.38-39). The P uputa s tras say that the self which is found in ĩva becomes static and is also called *niskala* (ibid. 141). Um pati who is one of the fourteen sages who elaborated the philosophy of ĩva Siddh nta, wrote in 1313 AC on the *sakala* and *niskala* nature of ĩva (ibid. 157). All these discussions are found in Old Javanese texts, which are still in manuscripts, but deserve critical editions and translations. Some of them predate the Indian texts and are important for the evolution of ĩva philosophy in India itself. The Indonesian text *Bhuvana-sanksepa* discusses the pañc ksara mantra *namah ĩv ya* which is the confession of faith in ĩva Siddhanta (Zoe. 368).

The *sthala-m h tmya* of the temple of r ailam describes that the daughter of the Emperor Candragupta the Maurya was so devoted to its deity Mallik rjuna that she presented jasmine flowers (*mallik*) daily to the shrine. The ailendras of Indonesia seem to have been

associated with *ra* ailam, one of the Twelve Jyotirlingas, and as the Old Javanese *Chandakarana* indicates some of them were *iva*s. The Chandi Ceto was established in the 15th century on the western slope of Mount Lawu and it has a *yena-citi* (pl. 11), and a relief of the Majapahit sun connects it to a large triangle. The triangle is described in verses 34-35 of the Bhuvana-sanksepa:

eastern angle of the triangle : Mah deva, yellow, mam, *am mam Mah dev ya namah sv h*

southern angle of the triangle: Rudra, red, *am, om am Rudr ya namah sv h*

northern angle of the triangle: *ankara*, golden, *um, om um ankar ya namah sv h* .

The identity of OM and *iva* is the immanence of the Supreme Principle where the search culminates into mysticism of resonance vanishing into silence: "where the search ends there is the abode of the Lord (= *iva*)" in the words of the Tamil *iva* sage Um pati in his *Tiru-Arul-payan* (14th century). The Indonesian poet mpu Tanakung begins his *k vya ivar tri-kalpa* with an obeisance to the God of Gods, *niskala* embodied as an icon, and ends that his poem may be a means to return to the Absolute (*nir raya*), *iva*ism went through a flowering in Java in the later decades of the 15th century, and this poem belongs to the late 15th century just before the twilight of the Majapahit empire. Today *iva* Astam rti dwells in the devotion and ritual of Bali in a regionalised form as the uncreate absolute, as well as dwells in the human body as the cosmos of eight components: five elements of space, air, fire, water and earth, the hot sun and cool moon, and eighth is man as consciousness. Large scrolls of the Astam rti in Balinese home-altars are the visual dharma whereby the earthly plane of sentience ascends into transcendence. The pictorial projection of timeless omnipresence of *iva* transmutes into spiritual metamorphosis in the mudr s and mantras of worship, and inner 'experiences become a journey into the depths: *om namah iv ya*.

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Lord Shiva Beyond the Political India

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The Asiatic cultural continuum, with India at the centre of the gravity, is a fact yet to be discovered and discoursed fully. There has been multi-directional diffusion of the cultural traits and the belief systems. Some religious and socio-cultural traits, such as ancestor worships, belief in life after death, rebirth, re-incarnation, *Karmic* theory and liberation from the life-cycle (*nirvāna* and *moksa*), used to be widespread covering entire Asia. The commonality extended in many other aspects linked to the traditional religions, what we call *Sanatan Dharma*, presently called Hinduism. The discovery of the commonality helps self-discovery and self-appraisal; it becomes an act of self-portraiture. Of course, in India, information on such topics is never given to the students, it is taboo practiced by our academics and intellectuals to have discourse on such subjects. This leads to 'Culture/tradition illiteracy', a dominant trait of English educated modern Indians. As a result, our elite have inherited lot of myths, lies and confusion from their colonial masters. Anything beyond political India, even if non-political and otherwise deeply linked, is alien for them. The denial syndrome is pervasive; it envelopes cultural, linguistic, historical and all other spheres. There is an increasing trend of replacing India for 'South Asia' during the academic discourses today; the use of the term 'Bharata' is becoming rarer in scholarly writings, which is part of the same malady.

It is a fact that religio-cultural – and even political – India has shrunk during the last two millennia. Shortening of the chronological/historical frame has also continued due to dominance of the colonial

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historiography. In reality, it was difficult for a Western scholar to extend chronology beyond 4004 BC, the limit of Biblical chronological time frame. It was especially so, when they were finalizing the writing of colonial history of India. Our own scholars should have revised their writings, which they have failed to do so even upto now.

I was to join a 16-member expedition organized by 'India Central Asia Foundation' covering 5700 km in three Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan – during September 18 to October 05, 2013. I met Dr. Lokesh Chandra a couple of days earlier to seek his advice as to how to make the journey more fruitful and enriching. His latest book on Mongolia was lying on the table. The cover page of the book depicted Chengiz Khan's flag with Shiva's *Trishula* (trident) on its mast. I was ignorant about the fact, although I knew that Mongols worship Lord Shiva as Mahakala (Mahakala). As is said, Lord Shiva, inspired Paqpa to convert Kublai Khan. It needs mention that Shiva's *Trishula* (trident) adored the flag of Chengiz Khan. The other deities worshipped by them are: Yama (the god of dead), Goddess Devi (Lha-mo; the spouse of Shiva), Kartikeya (Cam-Sran; a war god), Vaishnavana or Kubera, Brahma, 33 devas, Digpalas, 21 Taras, Hevajra, Buddha-kapala, Yamantaka, Hayagriva (a horse-necked god; seems to be connected with Vishnu, rather than Shiva; the protector of horses), etc. Incidentally, it needs mention that trident also adores the national flag of Kazakhstan. Of course, I am ignorant about its linkages. My participation in the expedition inspired me to bring a special number of this journal on 'Central Asia' and 'Lord Shiva in Asia'.

The issue on the first topic was published during January-March 2014; the second one is in your hand. This paper informs briefly about Lord Shiva in Central Asia. Other scholars have written covering various regions of Asia.

Excavation finds in Central Asia reveal the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious and historical linkages of the region with India. The figures of the Shiva (Shiva), Ganesh (Ganesha), Kumar (Kumara), Kartikeya, Brahma, Indra (with eye depicted on the hand), Dvarapalas (Dvarapalas), Vaishnavana (Vaishnavana, Kubera), Mahakala (Mahakala), Yakshas (Yaksha), Nandi (Nandi), Garuda (Garuda), Ramayana and *Amrita-manthan* (Amrita, nectar) legend, *Vishvarupa* (Vishvarupa) aspect of Lord Buddha, etc are found in various places of Central Asia, such as Khotan, Dandan-uiliq, Khadlik, Endere, Balawaste, Kucha, Tun-

huang and other places. In Afghanistan, abundant number of the sculptures of Shiva and other Hindu deities were discovered. Of course Afghanistan remained the part of the political religious and cultural India from the remote past upto the medieval period.

Shiva was a popular deity of the region. The popularity of Shaivism in the region was also due to its amalgam with Buddhism effected by Asanga, the well-known Buddhist philosopher. It needs mention that there are many common elements between Shaivism and Tantrayana, a school of Buddhism.

Shiva is portrayed with a sacred halo and a decorated sacred thread (*Yajnopavita*) and stands in *aliha* pose, clad in a tiger skin while his attendants are clad in Sogdian dress, ornamental long coat with open collar, in a fragment of a wall painting from Penjikent on the river Zervashan. Similar finds from Dandan-Uiliq and neighbouring sites in Taklamakan desert in Chinese Turkistan (Xinjiang), such as, a very interesting representation of Lord Shiva on a painted wooden panel showing him three-faced and four-armed seated cross-legged on a cushioned seat supported by two couchant bulls, reveal its east-ward extension. The rich diadem on the central head with the side ornament resembling a half moon, the third eye on the forehead, the tiger skin forming the loincloth (*dhoti*), and then the bull as his *vahana*, all symbolized Lord Shiva. Yet another panel from Dandan-Uiliq depicts a four-armed *Trimurti* form of Shiva and his *Shakti* kneeling on her right thigh. The deity sitting cross-legged, clothed in tight fitting long-sleeved white vest; traces of the third eye visible, four-armed with a massive armlet on the left arm, the other resting on thigh and holding *vajra*, and the right hand thrown round the neck of *Shakti*, has a long neck-cord tied into bows at intervals. With long and wavy hair and the crown of the Iranian type, deity's face to the left is fearful and the third eye is clearly visible. The *Shakti*, having well-drawn eyebrow, highly arched and long eyes and white complexion, is dressed in a long stole with tight sleeves to wrist; she is handing a cup, held in her right hand, to Shiva.

The figure of Shiva was found on the coins of Gondopheres, Maves and others. It appears on the coins of the Kushana rulers, Wima calling himself Maheshvara, a devotee of Mahesh. Deity Nana is identified with Amba or Uma, the consort of Shiva. It needs mention that the Kushana kings were the devotees of Shiva before their arrival in this country. Shiva was worshipped in India and Central Asia along

with Vishnu and Sun God, as revealed in famous Nicolo seal, noticed by Cunningham and deciphered by Ghirshman; it was originally in Tocharian language and script, the figure of the devotee on the seal is that of a Haephthalite chief. The seal reveals the Composite cult of Shiva, Vishnu and Surya (Mihira, Vedic – Mitra, Sun God). This confirms the fact that the religious behavior operated in the continuum frame, rather than in the dichotomy frame. As we will see, the same was true in the case of Hinduism and Buddhism in Central Asia.

Indian links with Central Asia and other parts of Asia goes to the deep antiquity. According to Toynbee, the region belonged to Sanskrit people from 1700 BC to 400AD. According to another study (*The Pulse of Asia*, Ellsworth Huntington: p.13), the Chentos, (Chinese, turban-wearers; the inhabitants of Xinjiang) are of Indian origin. He writes: "Ancient tradition relates that the original inhabitants of the Lop basin, the probable ancestors of the Chantots of today migrated from northern India. The tradition is confirmed by the fact that the earliest specimens of writing found in the ruins of the Takla-Makan desert are in the Kharosthi tongue, a language akin to Sanskrit and spoken in northern India and far from the beginning of the Christian era. Since the Mohammedan invasion of the tenth century, the ancient tongue has been displaced by the Turki language of the conquerors, which is spoken in several primitive dialects". This confirms our ethnic linkages with the region, and also that the Himalayas was never an obstacle for us. Further, it needs mention that there was ethnic-mix rather than displacement in most of the cases following the migration of a new group. The relationship between nomadic and sedentary people in the region was not necessarily hostile, as there were no protective walls around settlements during Alexander's invasion. The region had multi-time multi-directional migration.

A fragment of an inscription discovered by A.N. Bernstam in Tajikistan in 1956 refers to the cult of Narayana; it reads – *N r yaGa jayate*, Narayana be victorious. The inscription, on palaeographic ground, can be attributed to the second-first century B.C. This indicates that the Narayana cult preceded Buddhism in the region. The pre-existing Hinduism was also a factor responsible for the acceptance of Buddhism in the region. A fact needing to be accepted here is that the religions in the region, be it Hinduism and Buddhism, Vedism and the worship of Ahur-Mazda, or cults like Shaivism and Vaishnavism existed in continuum frame, rather than in conflict and dichotomy

frame. As is well-known, Narayana in Hindu scripture stands for Vishnu; Arjuna and Shri Krishna, in Mahabharata, are *Nara* and *Narayana*. But Buddha is also considered to be an incarnation (*avat ra*) of Vishnu. Such phenomena, we find in Central Asia also. Khotanese Saka documents mention 'Narayana, the Buddha; the Sogdian documents mention 'Narayana, the deva'. But, in a Tun-huang painting, Narayana on Garuda, shown as attendant of Avalokiteshvara, reveals the identity of Narayana as Vishnu. Anyway, the depiction of auspicious Vaishnava signs on Buddha's paintings in Central Asia leaves no doubt about the worship of Vishnu along with Buddha.

It is often said that who so ever came to India from outside was absorbed in Hindu society. This absorption theory needs elaboration in the light of the fact that migrants were already Hindus before their arrival in this country; and that the region from which they migrated was already a part of cultural India.

The Presence of Shiva in Thailand

Willard G. Van De Bogart*

Short History :



Lord of the Dance on a Lintel at Preah Vihear

Lord Shiva is alive and well in Thailand, but few if any know where he is. But with a little curiosity and the willingness to explore his whereabouts the results will reveal a surprising amount of presence of Lord Shiva in Thailand. Of the twelve royal festivals that still take place under the guidance of the Phra Maha Rajaguru Bidhi Sri Visudhigun, head Brahman priest to the royal family, Lord Shiva is not only recognized but is invited to stay in Thailand for ten days during the Giant Swing ceremony, which takes place in January of every year.

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But before I elaborate on the presence of Shiva in Thailand of today, some historical background is necessary to better appreciate how Shiva still holds sway even in a primarily Buddhist country.

Migrations took place across the Indian Ocean to South East Asia and South Thailand particularly from 500BC to the first century AD (Gupta, 2002), (Katsuhiko and Gupta, 2000). The interaction of beliefs which took place during this time of maritime trade originating from India mixed with the animistic beliefs found in old Siam blended to form a hybridization of religious development lasting to the present day in contemporary Thailand (Kitasara, 2005).

Therefore, the archaeological effort to find inscriptions which indicate the presence of Siva in Siam has been explored by numerous scholars. For brevity I shall only refer to the work of Dr. Chirapat Prapandvidya and Dr. Sachchidanand Sahai. Their combined research shows inscriptions as early as the 1st century AD to the 4th century AD. Examples of early Shiva statuary from the 6th century AD has also been found (Fig. 1.); and is in the collection at the National Gallery of Art in Bangkok.



Fig. 1. Ekamukhalinga 6th Century, Chaiya, Surat Thani Province. Photo Van De Bogart

During the reign of King Borommatrailokanat (1448 – 1488), it is stated in the *Lilit Yuan Phai*, the eulogy for the King, that the Hindu gods combined to create this great king and referred to him as "astau mudrri" or astamurti, the concept of Shiva as the almighty god or the universe himself, as is mentioned in the Puranas (Phromsuthirak, 2008). Shiva was given the status as creator of the universe and inscriptions of his status can be found throughout Thailand. Literary evidence for the mentioning of Shiva can be found in the text entitled *Lilit Okar Chaeng Nam*, which was a poetry book used during the Ayutthaya period from (1350 –1767 AD) (Prapandvidya, 2005). It is within this text used by the kings of this time that Shiva is described as being the supreme Lord. Over the centuries, the Brahmins held considerable influence in the Thai royal courts with ceremonies being conducted throughout the year. Dr. Sahai, in his ground breaking book on the footsteps of Shiva, "Sivapada in Khmer Art" demonstrates the influence of Shiva in Thailand (Sahai, 2013). According to Sahai, footprints make a place sacred and served as important places to establish a place for the beginning of worship and as a way to communicate with the invisible entities (Fig. 2.) The metaphor of the foot of Shiva is mentioned throughout the *Siva-Purana*, and in the Khmer empire these footprints clearly



Figure 2. Footprints of Shiva. That Ba Chong 6th-7th century. Sahai, 2011)

announced the sacred ground that existed throughout the Khmer territory, of which a portion of that territory is now called Thailand. The image of the footprint in (Fig. 2.) was found in a cave on a hillock on the left bank of the Mekong near the confluence with the Se San River (Sahai, 2011 p. 48).

Of all the temples that are now situated on Thai soil, but were at one time a part of the Khmer empire, none is more venerated and respected as is Preah Vihear. The Lord of the Dance is displayed on the lintel above the entrance to the Bhavalai, (Fig. 3.) the sacred center, *Graha*, that became the main sanctuary symbolizing the birth place of Siva who symbolically emerged out of the infinite darkness to bring human beings into existence.



Figure 3. Entrance to the Bhavalai at Preah Vihear with Lord of the Dance on lintel. Photo Van De Bogart

The symbolic significance of Preah Vihear, as the sacred site for Lord Shiva, cannot be underestimated. The disagreements on the 4.6 km of land surrounding the temple has been in dispute ever since the French defined the border between Thailand and Cambodia in the early 20th century. The temple has been closed many times and even today entry is questionable. But even with these latest border skirmishes between the Thai and Cambodian governments fighting over land disputes that the temple resides on, the foremost authority on the Khmer civilization and scientific advisor to the National Authority of Cambodia for the protection and development of Preah Vihear, Sachchidanand Sahai, has published his findings in his new book, *Preah Vihear*, which brings to light an updated overview of the history and purpose of Preah Vihear (Sahai, 2009). Sahai has conducted extensive field work and synthesis of many Sanskrit and Khmer inscriptions found throughout the temples of Cambodia and Thailand. Further inspection by Sahai focuses on the architects who planned and built Preah Vihear, but at the time of the temples construction Preah Vihear was known as Shikhareshvara. But of all the temples built, even in India, this is the only temple where Lord Shiva is attributed to being the called "Lord of the Peak". This said, the mystery of uncovering what this temple served within the Khmer Empire takes on a new understanding to what exactly was the intent of Shikhareshvara. The cosmology of the early Indian sages was carefully incorporated into every aspect of the architectural design of Preah Vihear and with a tireless uncovering of all the inscriptions making reference to Preah Vihear, Sahai has brought to life the true purpose of this ancient Khmer temple providing a beacon of light so all the world can see the glory of Lord Shiva with a hope of peace and prosperity to once again reign in the Dangrek region on which the temple was built.

From the 8th century to the 18th century, a span of a thousand years, saw the fall of the Khmer empire and slowly disappear into the jungles of Cambodia. But the rise of Thai Kings came into being in the early 14th century and they established their reign and defined the nation of Siam. It was the Brahmins who kept Shiva as their deity to be praised, honored and even to this day in the beginning of the 21st century Shiva is still included in Thai royal court ceremonies. Early ceremonies, before and during the flourishing of Ayutthaya, the royal priests would conduct the ritual of, *Sivaratri*, a purification ceremony whereby water would be let fall over the heads of the Brahmins for cleansing (Wales, 1931, p. 296-7). But of all the royal ceremonies it is the Giant Swing Ceremony

where Lord Shiva is actually invited to the earth and known as the *Triyambavay Tripavay* (Crown Property Bureau, 2013). This ceremony has been meticulously described by H. G. Quaritch Wales in his book *Siamese Ceremonies Their History and Function*, written in 1931. Quoting from Wales he says,

"According to common Siamese belief, the purpose of Triyambavay Tripavay is as follows: Once a year the God Siva comes down to visit this world and stays here for ten days.

(Wales, 1931 p.238)

But not only does Shiva come to the earth for ten days but also Chandra, Ganesha, Vishnu and even the goddess of the River Ganges. Having attended this ceremony myself, I can testify to the high degree of ritual complexity which the head Brahman priest has to perform to make Shiva's visit a successful one.

Of all the sacred ceremonies that have lasted until the present day, it is the Giant Swing Ceremony, which takes place on the 2nd lunar month called the Bidhi Triyambavay Tripavay, and during this ceremony the Brahman priests, of which there are now only 13 families remaining in the royal household, will conduct an elaborate ritual inviting Shiva to descend to this world whence he will stay for 10 days. It is during this period, as shown in (Fig. 4.), that the Triyambavay will be performed to entertain Shiva. The hymns chanted for this ceremony come from Southern India giving testimony to the long history Shiva enjoys in Thailand (Van De Bogart, 2013).



Figure 4. Phra Maha Raja Guru Bidhi Sri Visudhigun, head Brahman priest for the royal household, receiving Shiva during the Giant Swing Ceremony at the Devasthan Brahman Temple, Bangkok, Thailand, 2011. Photo Van De Bogart

Personal Account of attending the *Triyambavay Tripavay*:

The following is a firsthand account of attending this sacred ceremony.th 2011, around 8pm, I was standing in front of the Devasthanam Brahman temple on Dinso Road in Bangkok waiting to see Shiva descend from his mythical abode on Mt Kailash in the Himalayas. I wasn't alone in this quest as a small group of devotees were also waiting with anticipation. Once a year Lord Shiva is invited to earth in Bangkok during the Giant Swing Ceremony known to Thais as the Sao Ching Cha. In 2007 the Giant Swing, Thailand's most iconic symbol, was re-dedicated by HMS King Bhumibol after it had been refurbished with two newly sculpted teak wood pillars towering over 30 meters into the sky with the press covering every aspect of this royal dedication. It is during the swing ceremony that Shiva visits the earth and it was this aspect of the ceremony which prompted me to want to witness this event for myself. Before 1947 the swing ceremony was held outside where the swing was actually used, attended by the King and accompanied by regal pomp and ceremony originating at the grand palace. But today the ceremony is conducted in three small temples dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu and Ganesha inside the grounds of the Devasthanam temple. For me, however, it was my first experience of the Giant Swing ceremony, so my curiosity and excitement was amplified knowing that I was about to participate in a ritual with the sole intent to invite a Hindu deity to earth. As easy as it was to acknowledge that this was the reason for the ceremony, it was equally difficult to understand how this could be possible in a world that was filled with material pursuits in a culture predominantly composed of Theravada Buddhism. Essentially, I had to wonder how it was possible that a Brahmin ceremony, located in the center of Bangkok in the 21st century, could be inviting a Hindu god to earth. It's that very question that eventually led me to undertake a trip to India to find the answers. But first, I had to witness the ceremony in Thailand and what follows is a first hand account of the Giant Swing ceremony as it exists today and how it brought me to the roots of its creation in ancient India.

The anticipation was growing among the small crowd gathered in front of the temple as preparations were still being made inside. Then a sudden impulse overcame the crowd which seemed to pull everyone into the temple to see Shiva. We all entered a beautifully restored temple complete with gleaming white marble floors, crystal chandeliers and an altar completely festooned with aromatic flowers, fruits lining the walls, freshly cut bamboo stalks and coconuts lying on the temple

floor and the many Shiva statues looking down from a glass enclosure upon a very expectant crowd (Fig. 4.).

Never before had I attended a ceremony with the explicit intention to receive a deity arriving on earth. What I would experience was foremost on my mind as the head Brahmin took his place on a mat surrounded by the many ritual objects to be used in the ceremony. There was a small lamp placed next to a very old bark manuscript that contained the instructions for this auspicious event and from which the Rajaguru would read from.

But even before Shiva could arrive on earth the mythical gates to Mt Kailash, Shiva's home, needed to be opened and this was accomplished with extensive chanting by the Rajaguru over the course of the evening. The opening of the gates of Kailash would be like opening a portal into another world for these circumstances the entire temple space symbolized the gates for Shiva to pass through for his arrival on earth. The reading of the sacred texts and the periodic blowing of the conch shells by the other Brahmins along with the elaborate preparations made by the Raja Guru defined the atmosphere and added to the sanctity of the space in which Shiva would be received. One unique aspect to the ritual included purifying every aspect of the body. The Raja Guru spent a great deal of time on this part of the ceremony

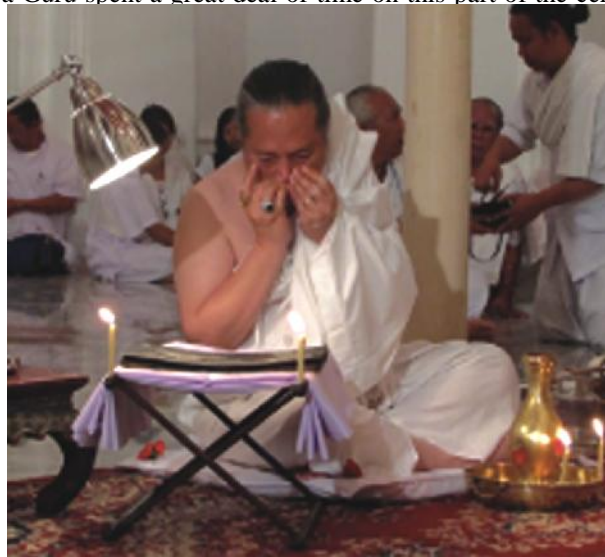


Figure 5. Raja Guru purifying breath. Photo Van De Bogart

preparing his entire human vehicle so as to be worthy of inviting Shiva to this earthly realm. Shown in (Fig. 5.) is the purification of the breath before inviting Shiva.

It is necessary that every aspect of the body is purified before the ceremony can continue including counting of the sacred masala beads (Fig. 6.).



Figure 6. Raja Guru Counting the masala beads

The Brahmins, as well as many of the devotees, are all dressed in white, lending brilliance to the temple enclosure with its new white marble floors illuminated by the crystal chandeliers. Many hours of reciting the sacred text by the Raja Guru lasted well past midnight before all aspects of creating a sacred space for Shiva's arrival were completed.

Slowly the temple enclosure was transformed into another kind of sanctum *sanctorum* separated from the world in which all of us came from. A sheath of subtle gossamer like luminous light filled the temple surroundings. The continuous sounding of the conch shells (Fig. 7.) reverberated throughout the early morning hours with only the sound of one lonely cricket penetrating the sanctity of this surreal space.



Figure 7. Brahmin blowing of the conch shell

Sitting among the devotees I had no idea what to expect as the ceremony was reaching that climactic moment when Shiva would be invited to visit the earth. The midnight hour had passed and the early morning air was cool and filled with the aromas of flowers and incense.

The time was slowly approaching when this most auspicious event would take place as the Raja Guru was making his final gestures of sprinkling the lustral waters on the offerings at the altar, raising the flaming candle stick holder up to the heavens with his right hand, and ringing a bell with his left hand as the conch shells resounded repeatedly. All eyes were focused toward the glass enclosure where all of Shiva's attendants resided (Fig. 8.). It was during this moment the world occupied by objects and things mutated into a translucent scene where the edges of reality dissolved and a curious muffled silence filled the temple. Perhaps it was due to the many hours of concentration and solemn chanting that created such an atmosphere of other worldliness. But as soon as I tried to understand my surroundings a shimmering



Figure 8. Shiva's attendants

corridor of light emanated from the high altar where the Raja Guru's sight was fixed as he awaited the arrival of Shiva. These temple rays seemed to define a path way on which Shiva could descend. All thoughts about what I thought I might witness were instantly suspended and I found myself engulfed in the height of the ritual where all the elements of sound and light here fused. It was the very moment in which any judgment about what I was witnessing left me. The combination of the ritual observances coalesced into an aura of supreme sanctity. It was a moment where awe and reverence combined diluting my logical world only to be replaced with a complete sense of being in the present moment where comprehension was not necessary but only the recognition that everything became disassociated creating a hollow cavity which became filled with unbounded luminosity.

I realized in that moment of luminosity that the one human attribute we humans possess, which is more unique than all the others, is our ability to recognize the existence of a transcendent life outside our everyday world. The boundary between sacred luminance and the

profane reality we define by our daily awareness was dissolved for a short moment, and in that moment when my own awareness returned was the same moment I recognized that I had experienced a presence beyond my capacity as a human to understand. The Brahmins knew the secret of how to reach other worlds which we read about and that are accomplished by the Rishis of India. And for all the doubts and rationalizations one could offer up to explain how such a visual apparition was achieved before the minds eye, they would still not deter the fact that for those who are devotees or just curious observers the intentions of this elaborate ritual did allow Shiva to arrive on earth. For the next ten days Shiva would be in my thoughts and become a part of my personal world until it was once again time for Shiva to return to his celestial abode on Mt Kailash during the full moon.

During those ten days my mind was occupied with the realization that I had attended a sacred ritual in which Lord Shiva was invited to this earthly plane and that I was playing a part in the ritual by acknowledging his presence. Knowledge of Shiva as a Hindu deity versus actively participating with his presence is vastly different. Each day during the waxing moon before it would again be full facilitated this recognition of how sacred rituals can influence daily thoughts especially when I could look forward to the last day when I would once again experience Lord Shiva's presence when he returned to Mt Kailash.

On the evening of January 20th the moon was full and once again I stood among a small crowd of devotees who were assembled to enter the Devasthanana temple and celebrate Shiva's return to Mt. Kailash (Fig. 9.).



Figure 9. Devasthanana Temple with devotees waiting to enter

After the ten days had passed I was again standing with the devotees at the Devasthanana temple waiting to witness the return of Shiva to his home on Mt. Kailash. There were not a lot of devotees, perhaps a hundred at the most, but once the temple doors were opened the same rush to find a place on the temple floor took place so as to witness this sacred ceremony. I immediately took a seat next to the gilded swan, *Hamsa*, as it was in the middle of the temple and I could easily see everything. The entire look of the temple had changed. The gilded swan, *Hamsa*, was suspended by braided golden ropes facing due East with the swing posts decorated with banana leaf stalks that reached high toward the temple ceiling. At the entrance of the temple was a large area covered by all the ceremonial objects that the Rajaguru would be using for the ceremony. In front of the main altar was placed a "Pasada", a small spire like shrine, which contained small replicas of the three gods Shiva, Uma and Ganesha. These gods are kept at the Grand Palace and were sent by king Bhumibol to be used in the ceremony. In years past a regal procession used to accompany these gods to the swing ceremony, but ever since the suspension of the Giant Swing ceremony in 1947 the ceremony has been conducted inside the Devasthanana temple. Actually this part of the ceremony has been conducted since the reign of King Rama I, and the small gods are from Southern India but their real age and exact origin are unknown.

The entire ritual lasts well over 5 hours and by the end of the ceremony the entire temple goes through a complete transformation with ritual objects being placed in various receptacles and in different locations. By this time I was well aware of the magic the Brahmins could offer up with their chanting and blowing of the conch shells slowly transfixing the devotees and lulling them into a world very few people are aware of in Thailand. This is an ancient Brahmin ceremony and Shiva's return had no less the magic than did his arrival. But whereas the arrival of Shiva is filled with excitement and anticipation his return is accompanied by a carefully orchestrated ritual to assure that the gods return safely and that their place in heaven is made safe for the continual blessings and protection which the Monarchy wishes for itself and all the people of Thailand. This ancient Hindu God-King relationship is still enacted in Bangkok albeit known by very few and quite reduced in its function as a guiding ceremony for the country as it once was in ancient Ayutthaya; the capital center of Thailand for over 400 years.

With that said there are aspects to this return of the gods to heaven which employ sacred ritual magic with the use of yantras. The most visible of the four yantras used in the ceremony is the one which sits directly in front of Hamsa (Fig. 10.). The yantra is inscribed on a flat stone with a mortar stone placed on top of it. During the ceremony the Rajaguru places his right foot on this stone three times before he gives the gods, which he carries in a small golden bowl, to two other Brahmans who place them in the small mandapa afixed to Hamsa's back to be carried to Mt Kailash. The symbolic gesture of the foot on the stone represents climbing Mt Kailash as told to me by the Rajaguru. But more importantly is the meaning which these yantras represent in this ceremony and why they are used. They are definitely a form of ritual magic.

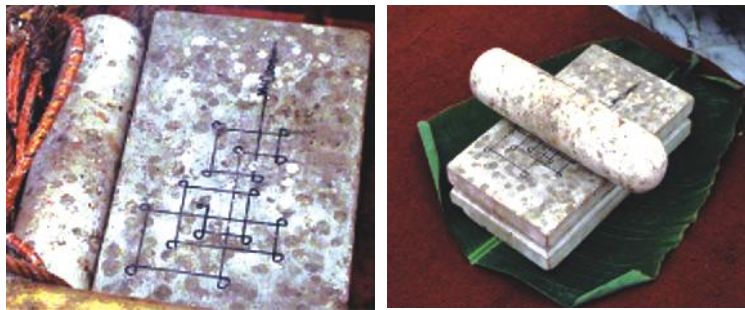


Figure 10. Yantra used symbolizing the climbing of Mt Kailash. Photo Van De Bogart

Having once experienced the magic created by the Brahmans for Shiva's arrival I was probably more aware of all the ritual procedures. The obvious preparation of the gods and the decorated swan in the center of the temple were the most prominent aspects to the ritual. If receiving the gods could be mind altering, sending them back I assumed would be equally dramatic. The difference, however, is that these miniature gods were brought out from a sacred room in the Grand Palace, and then taken to the King to be blessed and personally touched.

The yantras are used as instruments of worship which contained dynamic elements in their design, which when mixed with the chants represented the larger realm of the abode of the gods. The entire ceremony, as I came to learn, had the yantras closely woven into the mantras to act as divine instrument to gain access to the realm of the

gods. Every aspect of this ceremony incorporates the magical use of the yantra as well as the use of number. The flower yantra is an example of this, and it is placed in front of the Raja Guru while he recites the mantras from the bark manuscript (Fig.11.).

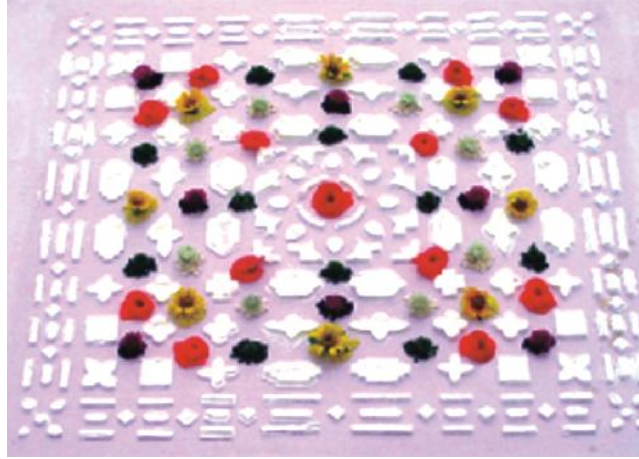


Figure 11. Flower yantra. Photo Van De Bogart

The next yantra which is extremely important is the sacred water yantra which has 6 squares representing the five metals of copper, iron, gold, silver and one which is a mixture of gold and copper called "pinkgold". The sixth cup is made of crystal which contains ether. The five metal cups represent the five sacred rivers of India; Ganges, Yamuna, Saraswati, Saryu and the Komati (Fig. 12.).



Figure 12. Sacred water receptacle yantra. Photo Van De Bogart

Also placed on this yantra is the sacred silver water pot (klasa) for pouring the lustral waters and the sacred conch shell which is also filled with holy water. The fourth yantra used in the ceremony is inside a pot called the "gumpa" and is placed next to the swinging post from which Hamsa is suspended. (Fig. 13.).

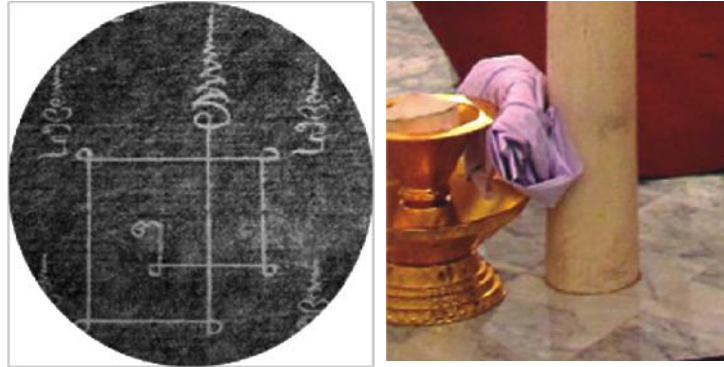


Figure 13. Swing yantra and Gumpa. Photo Van De Bogart

Unless you looked very carefully at how the Rajaguru was conducting the ritual these yantras in all likely hood would be overlooked. Once the gods are washed each one is placed on the top of



Figure 14. Bhadravitka ceremonial table showing the Prasada containing the gods. Photo Van De Bogart

the Raja Guru's head before it is set on the center of the flower yantra. The flower yantra represents the mountain in heaven and by placing the three gods at the center of the yantra assures that a safe place will be awaiting their arrival. The entire area where the Raja Guru does all this is on the "Bhadrapitaka" an area not unlike what is used at the Kings coronation (Fig. 14.).

The final journey for Shiva to return to Mt. Kailash is when all the gods are placed inside the small mandapa atop of Hamsa and it is then the ritual swinging takes place to emulate the flight of Hamsa (Fig. 15.).



Figure 15. The Swinging of Hamsa. Photo Van De Bogart

Other Locations of Lord Shiva in Thailand:

But surprisingly Shiva is not only praised inside the Brahmin temple in Bangkok but has been able to reach out and affect people in many different ways. As an example the Venerable Shi Kuan Seng, shown in (Fig. 16.) had a dream in which she was told to build the largest statue of Shiva in Thailand. Over the years the Ram-Indra temple complex grew and is now finished for all to pay tribute to Lord Shiva.



Figure 16. Ven. Shi Kuang Seng,
Siva Ramindra Temple.
Photo Van De Bogart



Figure 17. Siva Ramindra Temple with author
in Wai pose. Photo Chirapat Prapandvidya

One of the most sequestered images of Shiva lies deep within a lime stone cave in central Thailand. Guheshvara is a name of Shiva, and means Lord of the Caves. Shiva lived in a cave in the Himalayas on Mt Kailasa so his presence within a cave is a way to pay respects to Lord Shiva. I visited Wat Tham Boya in Nakhon Sawan, Thailand. The cave is known as Boh Ya Cave and is located in Khao Luang Forest Park which has a large out cropping of lime stone hills, which are filled with many caverns. Wat Tham Boya sits at the base of one of these hills with a very long stair case which ascends up the steep hill and finally reaches the entrance to Boh Ya cave.

Having a statue of Shiva in a cave in Thailand (Fig. 18.) testifies to the influence that India has had on the development of the spiritual evolution for the people of Thailand. In most cases most Thai people are not familiar with Shiva and associate him with the images of the Buddha. Nevertheless, inside Boh Ya cave you will find a wide assortment of deities from India.

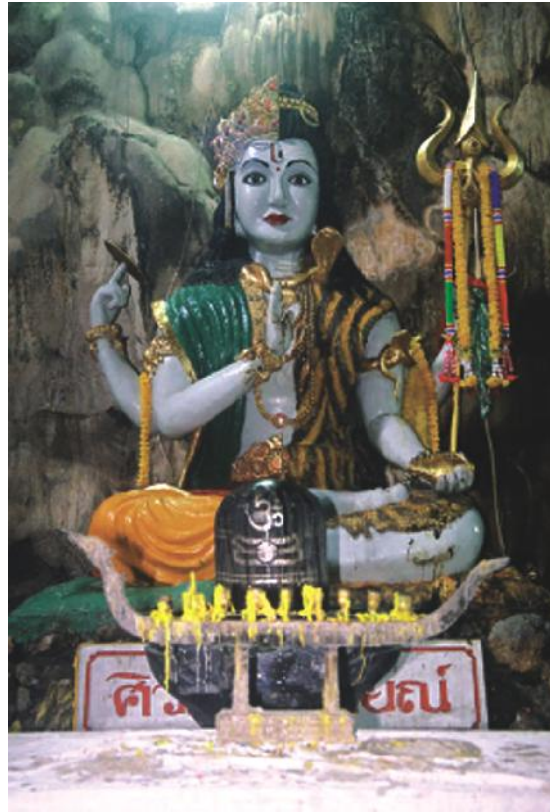


Figure 18. Lord Shiva, Boh Ya Cave Thailand. Photo Van De Bogart

The next most unlikely place to find Shiva is in his form as Ardhanarishvara (Sanskrit : अर्धनारीश्वर. Ardhan r vara), a composite androgynous form of the Hindu god Shiva and his consort Parvati. This statue is located on busy Sukhumvit Road in Bangkok near the Asoke BTS sky train station (Fig. 19.).



Figure 19. Shiva as Ardhanarishvara on Sukumvit Road, Bangkok. Photo Van De Bogart

Lord Shiva holds an honored place at the Sukhothai Traimit Golden Buddha temple in Bangkok. Inside the temple is the largest Golden



Figure 20. Hindu deities Durga, Shiva and Shanmuga at Wat Traimit, Bangkok. Photo Van e Bogart

Buddha in the world. However, outside of the main temple high atop a smaller temple is the image of Lord Shiva (Fig. 20.).

So even though Shiva is not popular in Thailand does not mean his presence is not recognized. There are many amulets, postage stamps, (Fig. 21.) and of course, many lingas where oblations are offered and prayers are given.



Figure 21, Thai postage stamp with Shiva as is on display in Devasthanana temple

Shiva's ancient presence is well established at Preah Vihear, and the National Gallery has a very diverse representation of Shiva and his vehicle Nandin, the bull. With the newer additions to the religious fabric of Thailand, which embraces the supernatural and animism, Shiva still holds a very special place and is still honored by the Brahmins at Devasthanana temple with a new restoration of the Shiva Shrine, which is over 200 years old having been built during the reign of King Rama II.

Conclusion:

The presence of Shiva in Thailand can still be experienced provided there is the intention of wanting to see the Lord of the Dance. Shiva, although originating from another continent represents the formative stages of the birth of the universe. Human like figures, attributed to Shiva, have been found on clay seals from the Harappa civilization dating back over 5000 years (Fig. 22.).



Figure 22. Ancient Harappa seal showing figure in lotus position

Our universe is comprised of forces that we only now are learning how to harness and understand. Lord Shiva has always been that deity who made those forces to take shape and give us the form we use today to peer out into the universe. Lord Shiva holds a special place in the universe where his dancing and our breath are closely related. It is for this reason Lord Shiva provides the stage on which we act out our role in the unfolding drama of the universe and if you would like to greet Lord Shiva he comes to Thailand once a year.

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The Shiva Image in Champa Iconography

Phan Anh Tú*

Abstract:

Although, ancient Cham sculptures underwent transformation under the influence of Brahmanism was presented under certain common rules — to portray gods and to reflect subjects of Brahmanism — on the other, and yet it boasts its own features and Champanization. Contrary to the Indian, the Khmer, and the Cham, the Cham sculptures reflect Shiva in the art of stone sculpture and temples. They believe in Shivaism and consider Shiva as the prime divinity of the kingdom.

Keywords: *Shiva, Champa, kingdom of confederation states, sculpture, Linga – yoni, hermits, Nandin bull, Pô Klong Garai and Pô Rôme*

Introduction

The trait of contemporary Vietnam is placed on where three kingdoms existed in the ancient time. The North of Vietnam was the territory of Đại Việt (the Great Việt), the Central Vietnam was the region of Champa kingdom and the South of Vietnam was territory of Funan kingdom. The process of Champa development history was described in the chronology with the different names of this kingdom such as Lin Yi/ Lâm Ấp (192-758), Huan Wang/Hoàn Vương (758-886) and Zhan Cheng/Chiêm Thành/Champa (886-1471).¹ The stele of King Paksadarma Vikrantavarma I (dated in the early half of VIIth century) recovered in My Sơn holy land; Duy Xuyên District (Quang Nam

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Province) depicted the legend of Champa establishment. According to the story, the Indian man named the Kaudinya (means the greatest Brahmin) who came to the location where he married the indigenous lady paramount, Liễu Diệp, the daughter of king Naga and set up a dynasty. This type of myth was popularized in Southeast Asia, for example the state founded myth of Funan kingdom was also a Brahmin Kaudinya/Hôn Diên who married Soma – the myth reflects indigenous tradition which deeply seized by matriarchy nature, had stricken roof in to the Southeast Asian region before being influenced by the Indian patriarchy civilization.

Political System in Champa

The Chinese ancient text remind the event of the year 192/193; the uprising of the Xiang Lin/Tuong Lâm district people under leadership of a chieftain called Khu Liên, gained their sovereignty and established an independent state. The latest researched results by inside and outside scholars shows that the kingdom of Champa basically founded on the system of *Mandala* or the kingdom included in a lot of alliances/a confederation state surrounded with tribute states which had the nearby bordering lines, correlated to ethnic cultures with their mother country.



Figure 1: The map of ancient Champa Kingdom. Source: www.thongluan.co



Figure 2: The map of current Vietnam territory. Source: www.bando.com.vn

The term “Mandala” is used by scholars, which describes a political and economic system founded out almost of ancient kingdoms in Southeast Asia. Each Châm minor state was basically built on the main rivers of each sub-region as a co-ordinated axis. According to the Châm state model, each minor state had three centres depending on the flowing direction of the rivers from mountain (the West) to the ocean (the East); the religious centre or holy land located on the upper river, the political centre or ancient citadel built on lower plain and usually

located in the South of river, the trade centre was the port city located on the estuary of river or ocean. Typically, the Amaravati minor state in Quang Nam has developed basically on three centres which were Thu Bon River, the Srisambhubhadresvara holy land (My Son), the Simhapura ancient citadel (Trà Kieu) and Faifo Port/Đai Chiêm Hai Khâu in Hôi An. It is reasoned that the Amaravati was the most powerful state in Champa history which occupied the Faifo trading port and conquered the other minor states for a kingdom, established the capital Simhapura in Trà Kiêu and built the holy land Srisambhubhadresvara in My Son (Trân 2004 : 2-4). Besides the Amaravati state, in the territory of Champa kingdom, the later centres were erected in Vijaya/Bình Định, Kauthara/Phú Yên – Khánh Hòa and Panduranga/Bình Thuận – Ninh Thuận Provinces.

The Brahmanism in Champa

The religions and beliefs in kingdom of Champa were in variety. The worshipped cult of Pô Iný Naga, the Land Mother Goddess is possibly considered as the Châm's primitive belief which has represented the long-standing matriarchy tradition belief in the Southeast Asian communities. Since accepting the Indian culture and civilization, Brahmanism became a dominated religion in Champa where only kings could present power in religious choice for the whole kingdom.

Brahmanism formed in India, worships three major divinities in the Trimurty, Brahma (God of Creator), Vishnu (God of Preserver) and Shiva (God of Destroyer). When being preached in Champa, the Brahmanism was turned in to a local religion basing on the Châm's ideology which allowed replacing the Indian divinities' names by the native language such as Shiva called Pônìntri, Vishnu is Pôpachôn and Brahma is Pôdêpadrôn (Bá 2005: 1). Among Brahmin divinities, the Châm might be the most venerated Shiva. The Sanskrit inscriptions in My Son Valley honoured Shiva as "... *the Lord for whole species*", "*is the roof of the Champa kingdom*", "*more respectable than Brahma, Vishnu, Indra, Surya, Asura, more powerful than Brahmin, Sri and kings.*" Another inscription described that "*the king, after making a Kosa Isanesvara, made a Mukuta for the Bhadresvara and the couple of Kosa – Mukuta which possibly compared with two victory pillars stably existed in the world as the moon and the sun*" (Ngô 1994: 120, Pham 1995: 53).



Figure 3: Truong Dinh, the superior priest of Cham Brahmanism in Phuoc Thai Hamlet, Ninh Phuoc District, Ninh Thuan Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tú



Figure 4: A Cham woman standing in the front side of her house, Phuoc Thai Hamlet, Ninh Phuoc District, Ninh Thuan Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tú

Among 128 Champa's known inscriptions, 92 ones honouring Shiva, 5 are of about Brahma, 7 about Buddha, 3 about Vishnu and 21 unknown contents (Phan 2011:20). Up to now, the well – information quarter knew that two golden made Shiva heads were recovered in Quang Nam Province but the Vietnam archaeologists haven't recovered any other divinity statues made from this rare material. Besides the inscriptions, the respecting to Shiva is also reflected in the Champa sculptural aspect.

On the hand, the ancient Cham also followed the Buddhism which flourished to the top apex in IXth – Xth century, Đông Duong Buddhist Center in Quang Nam Province is wonderful testimony of the Buddhist civilization existing in the Champa kingdom. Paralleling with the Indian religion, the ancient Cham learnt the government model impacted from Indian style which scholars pointed out its major feature was combination of royalty and theocracy on which the Cham kings were sanctified as the Shiva.

The Sculptural Themes of Shiva in Champa **Shiva presented on statues**

Difference with the Khmer culture venerating Shiva deity in the early stage, Champa was an important destination for the Shiva cult in

Southeast Asian region during her historical process. Sculpture has clearly reflected cultural and belief characteristics of the Champa residents in which Shiva is respected and considered as the Father divinity.² In the iconographical aspect, Shiva is often represented under an image of strong man, the third eye on his forehead, he wears a multi-story Kirita – Mukuta³ in complicated carvings. These features possibly reflect on the two Shiva heads discovered in Trà Kiêu ruined site and currently displayed in Museum of Vietnamese History in Hochiminh City (Fig.7). In some sculptural cases, the Shiva has been presented with a bun on his head, a crescent moon symbolizing for austerity decorated on. The distinguishing characteristic among Shiva and other gods is Shiva who always has three eyes, the legend says that his left and right eyes have symbolized the Sun (daytime), Moon (night) and the third eye on his forehead implying to the world. The serpentine images, Nagas are used as earrings and a sacred string crossing on the chest is also Shiva's features in Champa sculpture.



Figure 5: Standing Shiva, Champa art, Đông Duong style, Ca. IX-X centuries. Source: Museum of Chàm Sculpture



Figure 6: Seated Shiva, holding Linga in his hand, Champa art, Đông Duong style, Ca. IX-X century. Source: Museum of Chàm Sculpture

Besides the sculptural work, the themes related to Shiva was gathered to present on the Chàm temples, for example the temple peak imitated the Linga figure symbolising the universal axis or mount Kailasha where the Shiva has immortally dominated. The main divinity, the Chàm worshipped inside the temple was Shiva as well as the themes

related to Shivaism decorated in detail on wall surface or on the temple storeys. Brahma was dimly presented in both of the Châm sculpture and her religion. Vishnu was considered as temple guarding divinity (Drarapala). Even the Goddess, Pô Inu Naga was worshipped as the Shiva's female power (Shakti). Thus it is sure that the Shivaism which deeply influenced the Cham culture, controlled the Châm's spiritual life. When talking about the Châm sculpture, people mainly mention to the Shivaism as a deciding factor. The themes relating to Shiva is always presented decisively in every creative aspect of the Châm culture, for example: Shiva in the sculptural art, in the incipations, in the legend, in traditional dance and Shiva presented through the Châm's fire shaped sword (Kris). The Châm kings personally recognized as another form of Shiva (avatars) in the world.



Figure 7: Shiva head, late Tra Kiêu style, Ca. Xth century. Photo: Phan Anh Tuì



Figure 8: Shiva statue, Khuong My style, Ca. VIIIth century. Source: Guimet Museum

My field research resolves that in the area of Binh Đinh province and Mun Yang temple in Gia Lai province, appearing in a type of Shiva statue on meditation position, his third eye on forehead, a sacred string attached on his chest, both hands holding an elephant controlled stick and a trident. The statue recovered in Binh Đinh depicts Shiva as a young hermit on meditation but the Yang Mun statue reflects Shiva in the form of a middle-aged hermit, austere expression on his face and a forehead with full of thought. These two statues may have reflected the

most vividly about the turbulent period of Champa history in which the image of Shiva deity is mainly considered as the Châm king's embodiment.

The Shiva statue⁴ in Bình Định dating XIVth century may have reflected the king's desire to look for the virtue and ideal life, to avoid any depression of the suffered world (Fig.9, Fig.10). Possibly, the statue



Figure 9: Shiva on meditation, Champa art, tháp Mẫm style, Ca. 9th century.
Source: Guimet Museum



Figure 10: Shiva, tháp Mẫm style, Ca. 9th century.
Photo: Tyỷ Thiò Kim Hàòu

is evidence relating to a the warring and turmoil period on the homeland of Vijaya state (Đô Bàn in Vietnamese) where two Châm kings, Gangaraja and Pô Olove voluntarily left their throne for pursuing virtuous life in Ganga river. The Yang Mun statue dating in XVIIth century that was a decline period of Indian civilization on Champa territory. The consecutive military confusions on battles have left political disturbances in the kingdom of Champa which was reflected through a thin shape and old austere face of Shiva who was considered as a king, the kingdom leader (Fig.11).

The French scholars suggested that the Shiva statue in Yang Mun is representative for the final art style of Champa sculpture. Both the statues present the seated Shiva with his back leaning to a large

stone slab, similar looking as a stele. In the later dates, the Champa sculpture expressed Shiva in minimized form but the stone slab behind his back is made larger (Shiva statue in Yang Mun, king Pô Rôme statue in Hiu Đéc). When the kingdom of Champa no longer existed, the sculptural art had a lot of changes, the image of the god king decorated in front side as usual has been lost, only stone slab remains. This type of sculpture could be a precursor of Kut in the clan cemeteries of contemporary Brahmin Châm (Fig.12).



*Figure 11: Shiva, Yang Mun style, Ca. XVIIth century.
Photo: Phan Anh Tui*



*Figure 12: Kut in Pô Rôme temple, Hiu Đéc Hamlet, Ninh PhýÛc District, Ninh Thu- n Province, Ca. XVIIth.
Photo: Phan Anh Tui*

Shiva - Hermit presented on bas – relief

Some statues describe Shiva, who appears in a helmet's shape with the long beard from his chin, holding a rosary in his hand, sitting in meditation as the statues recovered in My Son, Khuong My, Bình Định and the other places are examples but the most perfected manifestation of the Shiva in human shape is Nataraja (the Lord of Dancing) which is possibly seen on the lintel of Pô Naga (Nha Trang) or Pô Klông - Giarai temples (Phan Rang), depicting the Shiva's extraordinary soft and flexible features in the (Fig.13, Fig.14). It is the form which symbolies the Shiva's absolute power and the most perfected manifestation.



Figure 13: Bas-relief describing dancing Shiva with Kinari and Gaudhva, Khỹōng Mũ style, Ca.VIIIth century. Source: Museum of Chãm Sculpture



Figure 14: Lintel describing Shiva on. Champa art, Ca. XIIth century. Põ Klong Garai temple, Ninh Thuãn Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tui

The hermit images had the same characteristics that were thoughtful faces, similar to the Lord Shiva's from the Tháp Mãm style displayed at the Museum of Chãm Sculpture and the National Museum of Vietnam History in Hà Nội (Fig.15). Some reliefs depicting the hermits were standing for prayer or religious activities that were covered by a decorated frame with two Makara heads at its ends. The most of these artifacts have been dated between XIIth and XIIIth centuries. The statues and bas-reliefs discovered in large quantities in Bình Định showed that in addition to the military victory of Vijaya state as being acknowledged in history and inscriptions, the in Champa society in the period occurred serious fluctuations affecting to its monarchy and residents. Royal and common classes felt dissatisfied with the current circumstances of their life, they nurtured the thought back to austerities, mystical life, escaping from the suffering world.



Figure 15: Bas-relief, Brahmin hermit, Ca.XIIth. excavated in: An Nhon district, Binh Dinh Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tui



Figure 16: Bas-relief, Brahmin hermit, Ca.XIIth. excavated in: An Nhon district, Binh Dinh Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tui

Shivaism symbol - Linga

Brahmanic myths and legends have dominated the Champa residents' ideology, values, traditions, customs and beliefs that reappeared more or less through the sculpture. As the Cham's view, the Shiva ruled the aspects of creation and destruction among the three Supreme Gods. Shiva has a lot of incarnations and symbols; one of his most important symbols is Linga-Yoni⁵ symbolizing male and female sexual organs. It is instrument for maintaining the breeds, representing for Shiva's creativity nature. In Champa culture, Shiva was raised to the highest position and worshipped as a supreme God. Shiva corresponded to the Cham kings' incarnation power, reaching to the highest level in the Cham's culture and awareness. Shiva statues were made in tremendous size and sophisticated design details, set up the clusters of important temples, typically in the main shrines (Vihara) or city centres. Especially, for the royal families or noble class: *"for the princes, the gesture to offer Linga for temples often aims at target to honour their noble clans. For senior mandarins in the imperial government, this is the action which aims at showing their position and power in the society."*²²



Figure 17: Linga found in Trà Kiệu, exhibiting in the Museum of Châm Sculpture, Đà Nẵng city.
Source: www.baodanang.vn



Figure 18: Mukha-Linga, sandstone, preserved in Mù Sơn site, Quảng Nam Province. Nguồn: [http: www.baodanang.vn](http://www.baodanang.vn)

Besides worshipping the natural divinities, the Châm has also respected fertility cult. Being similar to other local peoples, the Cham is interested in breeding presented by fertility elements in the folk beliefs. It can be demonstrated by numerous Linga-Yoni, symbol of breed maintaining carved in the sculptural art. The Linga-Yoni sets in the Champa sculpture were focused and carved in variety forms; “*in the Hindu influenced arts, nowhere, the Linga-Yoni, symbol of fertility and respectable worship is as common as in the Champa art*” (Cao Xuân Phổ 2004, 24). Particularly, in the Vijaya period, the Yoni bases were sophisticatedly and skillfully sculptured with vitality breasts embracing pedestals expressing for fertility desire and life power.

Linga is carved in variety of shapes and beautiful types in the Châm culture such as the cylindrical Linga on Yoni recovered in Hòa Lai, Pô Naga, the temple B1 in My Son, Chánh Lô, Bang An etc; the cylindrical Linga decorated in lotus petal designs around its body recovered in Thu Thiên; two section Linga with the round head and the square base erected in the Western temple of Pô Naga complex or two section Linga with round head and octagonal shaped base and three part Lingas essemble to Óc Eo or Khmer Lingas with the round head, octagonal body and the square base which mainly recovered in Bình Định¹, My Son, Trà Kiệu and Linh Thái...but in Cham iconography, the Mukha -

Linga (Linga with Shiva face on its neck) is very rare, which is only seen in Pô Klông Garai (Phan Rang) and Pô Saný temples (Phan Thiêt).

Linga – Yoni is important image which is worshipped in the middle of the Cham temples. Each Linga is on one Yoni but in some cases, many Lingas are erected on one Yoni as Lingas – Yoni in Phong Lê, Lingas – Yoni in the Museum of Vietnam History recovered in Phú Yên Province. There are types of Lingas which stand in a long row on a rectangle shaped base as seven Lingas on one Yoni in the temple B1, My Son. In the worshipped cult of the Cham, there are some special cases which the regulation of Linga on Yoni was replaced by a statue of divinity on Yoni as the Goddess Pô Naga statue seat on Yoni in Pô Naga temple, a king Pô Rome statue seat on a huge Yoni in the Pô Rôme temple in Huu Đuc village - Ninh Thuận Province or divinities sitting on the coils of five headed Naga which is erected on the Yoni in the temple G1, My Son.



Figure 19: Pô Rôme king statue on Yoni, Ca. XVIIIth. Origin: Pô Rôme temple, Huu Đuc hamlet, Ninh Phýc district, Ninh Thuân Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tui

The Linga and Yoni in the kingdom of Champa have been created with special features which are more for their rich quantity, variety shapes and huge sizes than any Indianized countries in Southeast Asia.

It is evidence that strongly expresses the Indian elements which have been Champanized.

Shiva and Brahmanism Divinities

In the Champa sculpture, Shiva presented with other divinities is a relatively rare case because most of the Shiva statues are separately created. Thus, the bas-relief recovered in Ýu ĐĩÁm Mahayana Buddhism temple, Thĩa Thiãn – Hu¿ Province, which fully depicted main divinities in Brahmanism pantheon, participating in Shiva’s wedding ceremony is a very rare theme in Champa sculpture.

In the bas-relief, the image of Shiva and his wife riding on the Nandin bull carved in the middle of tympana; the Shiva wearing Jata-Mukuta with his hair curls rolling to a knot on his head; jewellery on his ears and his mouth showing an easy smile; his left arm touching on his waist; the right arm holding a fire circle; his chest decorated by a jewel lozenge piece; his upper body is uncloth and the lower wearing a type of short sampot which is usually seen on the Chãm divinities. The seated Parvati was presented behind her husband, Shiva; she wears a Jata-Mukuta on her head; cloth is a long sampot type reaching her knees; her left hand putting on Nandin’s back; her right hand puts crossing her belly with the straight pointed fingers; her legs and arms wearing a lot of jewellery; her action and face express the shy and different sensation.



Figure 20:: Bas-relief in Ýu ĐĩÁm Mahayana Buddhist temple – Hu¿ City, describing the wedding ceremony of Shiva and Parvati. Photo: Phan Anh Tũ



Figure 21: Bas-relief, describing the wedding ceremony of Shiva and Parvati, Angkor Wat style, Ca. XIIth. Origin: Prasat Muang temple, Sung Noen district, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. Photo: Phan Anh Tui

Standing in front of the Nandin bull is an impressive enquiry with the left arm akimbo on his leg; the right hand holding scimitar its up straight blade and long handle; his custom is sampot wearing across his body; his head wearing Jata-Mukuta with the top point; in the upper enquiry is Brahma sitting on the lotus base raising from the lower position of scence; the Brahma with four heads, each one wearing three storeys Jata-Mukuta and his custom is the type of the short sampot like Shiva. On the left side of the bas-relief is image of Vishnu ridding on Garuda; the Vishnu depicting with four hands; the upper right hand holding a wheel (Chakra); upper left hand holding a shell (Sankha); two front arms bowling in front of his chest; the flying Garuda with two hands holding Vishnu's leg necks. The image of Vishnu ridding on Garuda is very popular in the Khmer sculpture. In the right lower angle of the bas-relief is the image of Skanda (the God of War), the second son of Shiva (Shiva's first one is Ganesa, God of Happiness) ridding on the peacock, his legs and hands embracing the peacock's neck and his hand holding an unknown weapon (might be a Vajra – thunderbolt weapon).

Through the content of the bas-relief, it is possibly realized that the Indian divinity images were faithfully presented with Indian classical patterns such as Shiva and Parvati ridding on Nandin bull; Brahma meditating on the lotus base which raising from Vishnu's navel; Vishnu ridding on Garuda and Skanda ridding on the peacock. The special feature is the whole divinities who are described to directly ride on the holy beasts which is similar to the sculptural themes in the Indian and Khmer arts. The reason is in the Champa tradition sculpture, the holy beasts are just presented on the base of the divinity statues as a symbol for confirming each divinity's title and duty. And the statues of Garuda catching Naga is always separated with human gods. Besides the bas-relief in U'u Đìem Mahayana Buddhism temple, it is hard to find out any sculptural themes which fully depicting a group of main divinities ridding on holy beasts as description of Brahmanism methodology in the Champa culture. It is suggested that the bas-relief is a masterpiece of the Champa sculptural art which portraying fully both of content and the form, according to the Indian mythical view.

Conclusion

Mostly, the Chams sculpted the images of Shiva on red sandstone. The carving on the redstone is a very hard and require skills. They are designed by the skilled Khmer sculptors. The Shiva statues of Champa usually have the rough shapes. The aesthetic elements are mainly reflected on the front side. The back portion is left untouched.

During historical period, the images of Shiva are depicted in different styles. However, most of the Shiva statues have the general features which are *Kirita-Mukuta* or *Jata-Mukuta* which sometime stylized on heads, Shiva's holy beast, the Nandin bull only carved in the statue base. The theme of Shiva ridding on Nandin as the bas-relief recovered in U'u Đìem Mahayana Buddhism is very rare work in the Champa sculptural art.

In short, the Shiva image plays a very crucial part in the Chams iconography. It is said that the carving works of Shiva are representative for the well-known ancient civilization in Southeast Asia which nowadays are not only value data source for study of the culture, the iconographical art of Vietnam in particular but also the historical source for approaching aspects of the Southeast Asian ancient society and civilization in general.

Books etc. cited :

1. Champa comes from the term Champapura that means “the Champa City”
2. The Mother goddess is Parvati who is Shiva’s consort, harmonized to earth mother–Po Naga worshipped cult.
3. The bun is plaited as a crown. Jata: bun; Mukuta: Crown wearing on divinity head.
4. Most of the Shiva statues have been excavated in Bình ĐỄnh Province is currently displayed at the Museum of Chām Sculpture in Đà Nᅡng City and the National Museum of Vietnam History in Hà Nᅡi. All of them discovered in the excavations by the French archaeologist during 1930s of XXth century and have been commonly known as the Shiva statues of Tháp Mᅡm style (or Mᅡm Tower). Since 1975, there have not been any Shiva statues discovered in Bình ĐỄnh Province. It shows the difference with Champa traditional sculptures, which has mainly focused on Shiva images, the dominated deity of the kingdom.
5. Besides the human form, the Siva has been worshipped in the form of Linga or Mukha – Linga. According the Indian myth, the Siva firstly appeared in a fire pillar of Linga shape and the symbol of Linga on Yoni are erected in the Cham temples is considered as Yang and Yin nature (Sakti) because in the Cham’ view, Siva is an androgynous divinity. Linga – Yoni is symbol of the Siva’s creation in which Siva is also called “the God of Sleeping”.
6. <http://www.champaka.info>
7. The Linga, the Shiva’s fertility symbol also did not appear in Bình ĐỄnh Province as common as other areas of the Northern Champa. Currently, the Museum of Chām Sculpture is exhibiting a set of Jata Linga - Yoni in Vijaya period. Linga was presented in a vertical pillar, which was divided into two parts, its head is round decorated Shiva’s hair tuft (called Jata); and its body in hexagon shape symbolizing Vishnu. Especially, scholars considered the Yoni pedestal as the typical style of Tháp Mᅡm with female breasts decorated around a circular lower block. In addition, I also witnessed a round Jata Linga, which was worshipped by new inhabitants, the Viᅡt group at the Thiên Trúc Temple, a Mahayana Buddhist temple belonging to the late cultural layer in Bình ĐỄnh.

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Shaivism in Ancient Cambodia

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Shaivism was the State religion of ancient Cambodia. Several epigraphical and Chinese annals testify it. Shaivism played a significant role in the foundation of early Khmer kingdoms, known as Funan, Chen-la or Pre-Angkor and Angkor. The present paper discusses the prevalence of Shaivism in the early kingdoms of Cambodia. Before discussing on Shaivism in Cambodia, it would be pertinent to throw a brief light on Indian Shaivism.

Origin of Shaivism in India

It is very difficult to trace the origin of Shaivism in ancient India. Earliest information on the Shaivism appears from the seal of Indus valley civilization in the form of Pasupati. It is quite possible that Pashupata form of Shaivism first appeared in India. It is the early form of Shaivism. The Pashupatas (Sanskrit: *Pasupatas*) are the oldest name of Shaivite group. The Pasupatas were ascetics and they were spread over Gujarat, Kashmir and Nepal. But there is plentiful evidence of the existence of Pasupata sect all over India. In Southern India, the *Mattavilasanaprahasana* tradition was prevalent during Pallava rule in seventh-century which was based on Pasupata sect in the city of Kañcipuram. Moreover, the earliest reference of Shaivism is found in the Svetasvatara *Upanishad*.¹ It is the earliest text which systematically discusses the philosophy of Shaivism.

Shiva in Cambodia

Shiva is known as one of the most important dominating gods who is well known for his destructive force as well as regenerative energy. In

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Cambodian art, he is shown with matted hair in a top knot, wearing a Brahminical cord which is sometimes in the form of serpent. In iconography, he has been shown with three eyes, one at the forehead and a crescent moon on his hair. His many attributes include a trident and an axe. His consort is Devi also known as Parvati and Uma. His mount is the bull Nandi. He is symbolically represented in the form of a Linga, a force of Shiva, worshipped widely both in India and South East Asia.²

Shaivism in the Kingdom of Funan

The Sanskrit epigraphy of Champa³ reports the dynastic origin of Funan. According to this, the Brahman Kaundinya, having received a javelin from the Brahman Asvathaman, son of Drone, threw it to mark the location of his future capital, then married a daughter of the king of the Naga, named Nagi Soma, who gave birth to the royal line.⁴ Kaundinya is a clan of Brahmins in India. The Brahmins from different parts of India migrated to South East Asia at different times. Kaundinya must have been of a saivite Brahmin. It is remarkable that a Kaundinya is credited with the writing of a commentary on Sankrit text called the *Pashupati sutra*. The early phase of Cambodian history reflects the dominance of the Brahmins of Pashupata sect.⁵ It is evident from the inscriptions that the second Kaundinya laid emphasis of the establishment of Saivite cult and introduced the worship of the deity in the form of linga. These installations were forerunners of the shrines and monasteries of the Chenla and Angkor periods which served the purpose of educational institutions, places of public entertainment and social and cultural centres.

Since the foundation of Funan kingdom, Shaivism played a significant role in Cambodia. God Shiva was worshipped in the name of *Maheshvara*. King Jayavarman's envoy to the Chinese Court named as Nagasena, a Buddhist monk, reports to Chinese emperor Wu-ti that "it was the custom of Funan to render a cult of the god of *Maheshvara* and the god makes supernatural power descend constantly on Mount Motan." The god spread goodness in the world and his beneficent act prevails on all the living beings. All the Kings receive his benefits and the entire people are at peace. It is because this benefit descends on all that his subjects are having submissive sentiments."⁶

Coedes believes that Mount Motan is identical with Ba Phnom where Vyadhapura, the capital of Funan was located.⁷ Sahai opines that

“an attempt has been made to equate Mahesvara with the Bodhisattva.”⁸ It was because of that at that both the religions i.e. Shaivism and Buddhism were co-existing. Moreover, Shaivism had strong impact on the Funan population.

A Sanskrit inscription of Rudravarman (reigning around 514 A.D.) refers to a Buddhist layman (*upasaka*). Besides, a number of references in the Chinese sources points to the Buddhism which was a well practised religion in the Funan kingdom. An image of Buddha in coral, two ivory stupas and a hair of Buddha preserved in Funan—all these stray references suggest the prevalence of Buddhism. Early Buddhist statues found from the region of Angkor Borei also points to the great popularity of Buddhism in Funan.

In North region, they were more powerful as compared to the Southern part. Although, Chinese annals refer *Maheshvara* but archaeological and antiquarian remains are silent on the prevalence of shaivite cult in the lower Mekong Valley and its delta. Moreover, the inscriptions of Wat Luang Kao, 5th century A.D., attest the popularity of Wat Phu as a shaivite seat par excellence where phallic shaped Lingaparvata had formed the nucleus of the most sacred pilgrimage. However, the political status of Wat Phu region is not known during the period of Funan, particularly before the fifth century A.D. Prof. Sahai has the view that Shaivism spread from northern centre of Wat Phu to the southern part eliminating the dominance of Vaisnavite cult.⁹ His opinion is based on the expeditions by Dangrek chiefs who annexed the territories of Funan in South. This theory is rejected by Michael Vickery as there were economic decline, a political contention in north Cambodia.¹⁰

A passage of the History of the Liang cited earlier speaks of images with two faces and four arms, which must have been of Harihara—that is, Vishnu and Shiva united in a single body.¹¹ The existence of Vishnuite cult is clear from the inscriptions of Gunavarman and his mother.

Shaivism in the Kingdom of Chen-la

The History of the Sui dynasty gives information that the kingdom of Chen-la was located to the southwest of Lin-yi. It was originally a vassal kingdom of Funan. The Sui record mentions the king She-to-ssu-na (Chitrasena) who was of Ch'a-li (Kshatriya caste) and whose ancestors has gradually increased the power of the country. Chitrasena

seized Funan and subdued it.”¹² Indeed, the History of the Sui belonging to 589 A.D. or so mentions the total conquest of Funan and the transfer of the capital of Chen-la. To the south of the capital is a mountain named Ling-chia-po-p’o, on the summit of which a temple was constructed, which was always guarded by a thousand soldiers and consecrated to the spirit named P’o-to-li to whom human sacrifices were made. Each year the king himself used to go to this temple to make a human sacrifice during the night.” George Coedes is of the view that it was the temple Vat Phu. It was the temple where first royal linga was erected in the fourth century by a Cham king Bhadravarman. It may have been chosen by Chen-la to mark its victory over Champa.¹³



Nandi, the vehicle of lord Shiva, 7-8th century, Phnom Penh

According to a Cambodian dynastic legend preserved in an inscription of the tenth century, the origin of the kings of Cambodia goes back to the union of the hermit Kambu Svayambhuva, epinymic ancestor of the Kambuja, with the celestial nymph Mera, who was given to him by Shiva. The kings of the kingdom were the progeny of the couple Kambu-Mera. The first of the kings were Srutavarman and his son Sresthavarman.¹⁴ The later named city as Sresthapura. According to the epigraphical sources, the king Sresthavarman broke the tradition of paying tribute and gradually increased the power of the country. They felt themselves strong enough during the second half of the sixth century to attack the empire to the south.

The king Bhavarman and his successors were the staunch follower of Shaivism. The inscription of Phnom Banteay Neang issued by King Bhavarman mentions the commemoration of the establishment of a Shiva linga in the name of Gambhiresvara. King Chitrasena after accession to the throne, assumed the name Mahendravarman and installed lingas on the “mountain” Shiva (Girish) and erected the images on the Nandi, the vehicle of Shiva.

As these lingas and images were set up on the occasion of “the conquest of the whole country,” we can conclude that King Mahendravarman sought the blessings of Shiva for his territorial expansion as his predecessors did.¹⁵ The epigraphic record mentions that lord Shiva was worshipped under the following names:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Bhadresvara | 2. Sambhu, |
| 3. Girisha | 4. Tribhuvanesvara |
| 5. Gambhiresvara | 6. Siddhesvara |
| 7. Nrtyesvara | 8. Vardhamana |
| 9. Vijesvara | 10. Amratakesvara |
| 11. Kedaresvara | 12. Pingalesvara |
| 13. Naimisevsara | 14. Tripurantaka and |
| 15. Prahanatesvara or Prahasesvara. | |

In the reign of Jayavarman I (657-81 A.D.), Shaivism was also placed at the prominent place and was a dominant religion. The king paid special attention to the ancient sanctuary of Ba Phnom and Lingaparvara. Due to misfortune in 713 A.D., Queen Jayadevi made donations to the sanctuary of Shiva Tripurantaka. This sanctuary was founded by prince Sobhajaya, a daughter of Jayavarman I, who married the Shaivite Brahman Sakrasvamin born in India.¹⁶ The inscription of Lobok Srot (K 134) dated 781 A.D. mentions that the king opens up with a Vishnuite formula – *om namo bhagavato vasudevaya*, but records the foundation of Shiva.¹⁷

Shaivism in the Kingdom of Angkor

In the eighth century, the Pre-Angkorian kingdom ceased to exist and its place was taken up by the Angkor Kingdom dominated by the Khmer population. Moreover, Shaivism managed to retain its important and dominant place. In 802 A.D., the foundation of Angkor kingdom was laid down by Jayavarman II. He was the most dominant king of ancient Cambodia. With his accession to the throne of Khmer empire,

a new era began in the history of Cambodia and also a very active tradition of Shaivism began. There are metaphors for Jayavarman II



Standing image of God Shiva as King's Patron deity, Bakong.

when he accessioned to the throne: “for the prosperity of the people, in this perfectly pure race of kings, great lotus which no longer has a stem, he rises as a new flower.” He was one of the most unique kings of Cambodia though he did not issue any inscription. Fortunately, the principal episodes of his reign are related in some detail in the Sdok Kak Thom (SKT) inscription.¹⁸ He began his rule with the establishment of a city Indrapura now located in the province of Thbong Khmum, to the east of Kompong Cham.

The inscription of SKT begins with homage to lord Shiva. It discusses that the real nature of Shiva is highly proclaimed without word by the subtle self of living beings. Shiva pervades the innermost region of the body and activates the sense-organs. It seems that the king was supposed to be a portion of Shiva or his incarnation; also there were direct communication between the linga and its founder king.

The SKT inscription gives detailed account of Shaivism in the Angkor empire. The King Jayavarman II started ruling from Indrapura and took into his services as royal chaplain a Brahman scholar, Shivakaivalya who followed him in all his changes of residence. This Brahmin became the chief priest of a new cult called “Devaraja”. Adhir



Shiva Linga, Phnom Kulen, Early 9th century.

Chakravarti¹⁹ opines that the immediate object of the inscription seems to record the installation of a linga or Sarva called Kamraten Jagat Shivalinga or Sarva-Jayendravarman at Bhadraketan which had earlier been known as Bhadrayogi or Bhadrayogipura. Its founder bore the personal name of Sadasiva and successively received the names of Jayendrapandita along with the title Kamraten An and Vrah Kamraten An and Jayendravarman with the style dhuli jen Vrah Kamraten An. He received a two cubit high linga (of Sarva-Jayendravarman) as a gift from the king Udayadityavarman II. There is mention in the Khmer text also of another linga of Shiva characterised as Vrah Kamraten An Shivalinga for whose service slaves were specially assigned. King Udayadityavarman II might have been its founder since it was he who ordered one of his ministers to install one linga equally described as being two cubits high.

The SKT refers the words Isvara, Sankara, Sambhu and Bhadresvara for lord Shiva and exclusively gives information on the establishment of Devaraja or “God-king” cult relating to the worshipping of Shiva. It was a ritual or ceremony mainly of Tantric in character. His Majesty (Jayavarman II reigned 802-50) installed Siva-linga as royal god in the town of Indrapura. The king, as stated above took the services as royal chaplain, a Brahman named as Shivakaivalya who was to follow him in all his changes of residence. “Originally the family of Sivakaivalya hailed from the Sruk of Satagarma and was known as the family of Aninditapura, from India. We have to establish the location of this place in India. The popularity of Kurukshetra of the Mahabharat during Angkor period and depiction of scenes of Kurukshetra on the walls of Angkor Wat can not rule out the location of this place somewhere in Haryana nearby Kurukshetra as this area has been well known for Shaivism. I would recommend this esteemed university to begin a research project on comparative study of Shaivism in India and South East Asia.

Later the king went to reign at Mahendraparvata, and the Lord Shivakalaya followed him and served as the royal priest. Later, a Brahman named Hiranayadama, learned in the magical science came from Janapada (India) at the king’s invitation to perform ritual designed to ensure that the country of the Kambuja would no longer be dependent on Java and that there would be no more than one sovereign who was *chakravartin* (universal monarch). The Brahman performed a ritual according to the sacred *Vinasika* and established a Shiva linga as Lord of the Universe (Devaraja). The Brahman taught the sacred *Vinasika*,

the *Nayottara*, the *Sammoha* and the *Siraccheda*. These are the tantric Shaivite ritual of India.

Brahmin Hiranyadama recited the complete text from the beginning to end in order that they might be written down and taught to Lord Shivakaivalya. The Brahmin also ordained Lord Shivakaivlaya to perform the ritual of the Devaraja. The King and the Brahman Hiranyadama took the oath to employ the family of Lord Shivakaivalya to conduct the worship of Devaraja and not to allow others to conduct it. The Lord Shivakaivalya, the chief priest assigned all his relatives on this cult. The cult reveal that Shiva was the main God of the king.

In 1002, Suryavarman I accessioned to the throne. He was a follower of Buddhism and earned his posthumous name Nirvanapada. Being a follower of Buddhism, no way Shaivism was neglected. The king continued the worship of Devaraja. During his reign, says SKT, the members of the priest family officiated for the Devaraja as before. He even singled out from his family a nephew of the great priest Shivacharya, named Sadashiva, had him quit the religious state, gave him one of his sisters-in-law in marriage and elevated him to the dignity of Kamsteng Sri Jayendrapandita, the first step in a career that was to become particularly brilliant during the following reign.

Suryavarman I, marked the boundary of his kingdom by setting up Shiva lingas. The epigraphical evidence reveals that the king founded four great linga shrines to the north, south, east and west of his capital. This was with a view to seek Shiva's protection of his empire in totality.²⁰

After the death of Suryavarman I, King Udayadityavarman II accessioned to the throne of Angkor in 1050. The new king conferred the semi-royal title of Dhuli Jeng ("dust of the feet") Vrah Kamrateng An' Sri Jayendravarmna on the former chief priest of the Devaraja, the Sadashiva-Jayendrapandita.²¹ On the inspiration of high priest of Devaraja, King Udayadityavarman II built a new temple mountain for the royal linga more beautiful than those of his predecessors. "Seeing that in the middle of the Jambudvipa, the home of the gods, rose the mountain of gold (Meru), he had constructed, as in emulation, a mountain of gold in the centre of his city. On the top of his gold mountain, in a gold temple shining with a heavenly light, he erected a Shivalinga in gold." This edifice, "ornament of the three worlds," has been identified by Coedes as the temple Baphuon²².

For the maintenance of the temple and regular services of the god, the king offered surplus services of slaves from other places. Brahmin Jayendrapandita is said to have performed *karmadharm* i.e. obsequies

of Vagindrapandita. He taught the king all the sciences beginning with *Arthsastra* and *Agama* beginning with *Vijaya* and ending with *Paramesvara*. The king duly receive initiation and gave magnificent honorarium to his teacher. The honorarium included ornaments including *makuta-venika*, *kundala*, *keyura*, *kanthasutra* and *urmika*. He also offered different types of utensils made of copper and time for the religious services. The SKT gives a list of articles donated to the teacher that included varieties of spices, drugs, perfumes, 1000 horses along with charioteers and bridles, 500 cows with calves, 50 buffaloes, 100 sheep and 100 pigs. The Khmer text mentions a donation of 200 elephants to the teacher. The SKT also furnishes the additional information that the king performed the ancillary ceremonies of *bhuvanadhya*, *mahotsava* and *puja* according to the sacred *Guhya* (= tantra). The SKT reveals the prevalence of *Guru-Sisya parampara* in ancient Cambodia. Brahmin Jayendrapandita had great respect for him and the teacher always performed ritual for the welfare of state.

Saran opines that the worshipping Devaraja has been an exceptional one which can be compared with the *Ashvamedha Yajna* of ancient India. The basic difference between this cult and the Indian *Yajna* is that the Cambodian kings used to personify and identify themselves with the lingas and temple.²³ To my opinion, worshipping of Deveraja does not have differences with ancient Indian *Yajnas*. Before the



Image of Uma-Maheshvara, Bantei Sri

establishment of Devaraja in Cambodia, such tantric practices were prevalent in Java as it is evident from the inscriptions of Changgala and Dinaya of Central Java. Jayavarman II in the beginning of his career took shelter in Java where he heard such practices. Siva was worshipped with his consort Parvati. An inscription refers to the installation of the statue of Uma-Maheshvara.²⁴

Worship of Siva pada

Siva pada (foot-print of Siva) was considered very sacred and its worshipping was introduced in ancient Cambodia. The worshipping of Siva through footprints has been very popular in South India during early century of the Christian era. Even nowadays, the blessings of Siva is transferred by putting footprints at the head of the devotee at Ekabranth Temple in Kanchipuram²⁵.

We learn from the record that a pious Brahmana consecrated the representation of a footprint of Siva and a cistern for the ablution of the god, on the top of a hillock. In the year Saka 526 (=604 A.D.) the representation of the divine footprint was surrounded by brick wall. Prof. Sahai²⁶ opines that Siva pada was one of the essential components of the Shaiva rituals in the Khmer kingdom. After shifting from Shaivism to Mahayanism, the Brahmanical divinities, including Siva and his footprints were incorporated into the new pantheon. Sivapada was installed at Preah Khan temple dedicated to Lokeshvara during the rule of the Buddhist King Jayavarman VII. Moreover, this sacred print at Preah Khan had secondary position as compared to the Central Buddhist figure.

Not only Siva was worshipped in ancient Cambodia but the Saivite priests were propagating the doctrines of *Shaivashastra*. The *puranas*, the *kavyas* and the *shastras*, were recited regularly during eleventh century at the time of Suryavarman.

The epigraphy refers to the experts well-versed in the whole range of *Agama* literature. A Saiva priest, Shikhantacharya, qualified as a *yogin* and well-versed in the Saiva Agamas was the Suryavarman I's chief priest.²⁷

The Saiva manuscripts were copied to facilitate the diffusion of the doctrine. An inscription of Banteay Srei dated 968 A.D. informs us that a priest copied the entire manuscript of *Kashikavritti*, a grammatical work and *Parameshvara-Shivasamhita*. The *Parameshvara* was a text

of reference in Cambodia even in the last phase of Angkor as evidenced by the inscription of Kapilapura cited above.

A Shaivite initiation known as *Naishvasa-mandal* is referred to in an inscription of tenth century. It is natural to postulate that this initiation rite was in some way derived from a Saiva *Agama* called *Nishvasa* or *Naishvasa Agama*.

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Lord Shiva Across the Northern Lands

Nirmala Sharma*

Shaivism is one of the oldest belief systems in the world. The remnants as well as existing temples in Thailand, Laos, Champa (Vietnam) Indonesia, China, Korea, Japan Central Asia and Tibet speak of the spread of Shaivism in the far corners of the world, from its origin in India. In India, the Shaiva tradition continues uninterruptedly. The twelve Jyotirlinga's situated at different centres from Kashmir to Rameshwaram stand to prove its widespread existence. The names of the regions like Telegu region;¹ Trissur² in Kerala come from names of Shiva, and Shiva temples exist in huge numbers in the map of India which also includes Nepal. Its form and traditions may though differ from region to region. The most common image is the one described in Sangam Literature, a deity with three eyes, blue throat, and matted hair decorated with goddess Ganga and a crescent moon. The supreme one with a divine consort.

Lahore museum

This three headed ithyphallic image of Mahesvara is in the Lahore museum. He is seated with his consort on the right thigh and she is offering him a drink in a cup. He has four hands; the upper right is lost while lower encircles his consort. The upper left holds a moon and lower rests on thigh. (Plate -1).

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Plate-1

Kushan

Mahesvara also appears on **Kushan coins** of Vima Kadphises. An ithyphallic image of Shiva holding a trident and a bull standing behind him is on a gold coin. On the reverse of this is bust of a king. It is inscribed in Kharosthi script with: 'King of kings, Lord of the world, Great Lord, Vima Kadphises, the Great, and the Savoir'. Similar image is on a bronze plaque from Yotkan. Mahesvara with three faces also appears on coins of Huviska and the image continues to remain until the 11th century in Kashmir with different attributes (Plate-2).



Plate-2

Common among these images are the three heads and ithyphallic types. People travelled far and wide and so did their deities. The belief and the visage of Lord Shiva has been so powerful that along the Silk Route up to the north China, the image and worship of Shiva along with his family and some other Indian deities became popular.

Gandhara:

Two interesting Saiva antiquities of the Gandhara region are housed in the Kabul museum. A head about 5th C from Kotal-i-Khair Khaneh, about ten miles from Kabul and inscribed Mahavinayaka.

Gardez, Afganistan

A marble head of Shiva found at Gardez, Afganistan of the post-Gupta provincial style depicts Shiva in his Jata-Mukuta embellished with the sun and the moon. His eyes are closed and meditative and he also had a third eye.

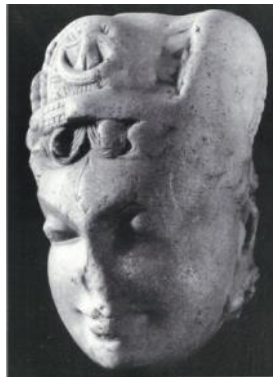


Plate-3

Penjikant

A wall painting representing Shiva was found during the course of an excavation at Penjikant on the river Zeravshan in Tajakistan. It could be ascribed to 7th C. The figure is blue in colour against a red ochre background. He has two hands, wears a sacred cord, tiger skin, anklets and stands in pratyaldha posture. A trident is on his left rearside. He stands in an arch which has a scroll border below. Two men dressed in

Sogdian attire kneel on both his sides. One holds an incense burner while the other a chowrie (Plate-4). A pottery fragment unearthed at the site was found to have inscription in north Indian script of the 7th century.



Plate-4

Margilan dates back to around the second century BC, the very beginning of the Silk Road and was originally known as Marginan. It is known for its quality of silk production. The Fargana valley was a centre for Buddhism right up until the advent of Islam. On the Andijan-Margilan road are the remains of a town. A Buddhist temple of the 7th or 8th century was found with life-sized clay statues of deities. The most striking bust image found here with a large horizontal third eye and moustache is explained as the Hindu God Shiva (Plate-5).



Plate-5. A painted clay bust of Shiva with a third eye and a moustache, Kuva, Ferghana valley, Uzbekistan, 7th to the 8th C, State Fine-Arts museum, Uzbekistan.

Kuduk-kol

A fragment of a mural from Kuduk-kol depicting Mahesvara is in the National Museum, New Delhi. He has triple faces, the right face is yellow and calm and wears a yellow turban, the centre face is blue with a third eye and wears a diadem while the left face is pink and depicting anger. The right hand which is the only one in the fragment is raised and holds a moon (Plate-8).



Plate-8

Dandan-uiliq was one of the six fortified cities or commandaries. It declined in 756 because of the second Tibetan invasion. The town was deserted in 790, when it was captured by the Tibetans. The murals and panels found here are stated to have the power to guarantee the safety of the kingdom. The Solar and Lunar cults were hieratic strength ensuring stability held in the upper hands of the multi-armed images. Along with these security symbols and images were the blessed sutras endowed with virtue and power.



Plate-9

Multi-armed, multi-headed Shiva images were found painted in this region along with images of Hariti and Kartikeya. The murals found are two triads amongst which Shiva is with three heads, ithyphallic, seated cross legged on a cushion. His two upper hands hold the sun and the moon and a black *nandi*, his vehicle adds to his identification (Plate-9). These were discovered in 1998 next to a symbolic representation of 1001 Buddhas and worshippers holding lotus stems.

Lord Buddha was of a royal descent, and his Dharma grew under the eyes of king Bimbisara and Prasenajit, and hence naturally the sutras became the embodied mind of the regnum and provided ceremonies for the protection of the state in Serindia and East Asia. The various Sutras like Lotus Sutra, Avatamsaka Sutra, Candragarba Sutra and Mahamayuri give lists of protectors of the state and the ceremonies there for. The Candragarba Sutra is likely to have been composed in some such centre as Khotan. Khotan played a crucial role in the transmission of sacred texts, deities, and ceremonies for the protection of the state. The route of transmission seems to have been from NW India to Khotan and other Serindian kingdoms and thence to China, Korea and Japan.

The flourishing production of Silk in China and how it reached Khotan through the mulberry seeds stealingly hidden in the coiffure of Princess Punesvari of China, who travelled to Khotan with them after being married to Vijaya-Jaya the King of Khotan is well known. After this, Sericulture flourished in Khotan with a number of silk weaving industries. Wooden combs used while weaving found in this region is an evidence to this. Images of deities like Mahesvara and Ganesa painted holding sericulture tools, silk yarn balls and silk yarn garlands around their neck have been votive plaques sanctified by sandal markings. Khotan has been the Silken Oasis in the womb of the merciless Taklamakan desert. To secure the flourishing trade of Silk, the people of Khotan worshipped Shiva and Ganesha for up keeping the silk industry.

This is the depiction of Maheshvara with three heads: the creator, the destroyer and the maintainer and is an ithyphallic image. It has the god of silk on the reverse. Mahesvara is blue in colour and has a blue

face while the two side faces are fair skinned. He has four hands, a third eye, matted hair and a crown. The crescent moon shines in his matted hair. He wears gold ornaments, a leopard skin and thin crinkled moustache as observed in Chinese images. He is seated in *Padmasana* on a chequered design cushion while two white bull *nandis* are seated near his feet. He has a halo and an aureole. His upper two hands hold the sun and the moon, which represent the state while his lower hands holds a ball of silk, and a shuttle. Shiva also wears a garland of silk yarns around his neck, which is an important indication that he is being worshipped for up keeping the silk industry (Plate10).

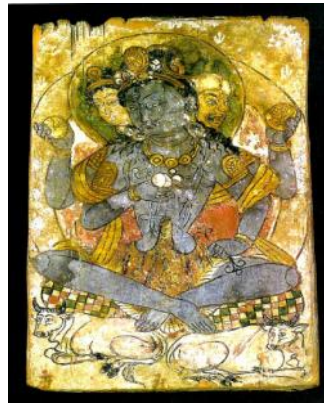


Plate-10

Kizil

Shiva and Parvati seated on *nandi* appear several times in Kizil. In cave no. 198 is an image of Shiva, and Parvati who is seated slightly behind him. Both are seated cross legged. Shiva is depicted with a third eye and four hands, out of which only three are visible. His upper right hand holds a fruit while lower two hands are folded. Parvati is also seated with folded hands. *Nandi* his vehicle is seated next to him (Plate-11). In Khotan region the cult of Shiva Mahesvara assumed a particular importance, but remained closely connected with Buddhism. Both in wall paintings and portable paintings the representation of Mahesvara is striking.



Plate-11

Tun-huang

In the celebrated Wei dynasty, the Tun-huang Buddhist Cave Shrine no. 285 at the rear wall shows an assembly of deities painted in non-Chinese style. Amongst various Gods like the Sun and the Moon, Gods on their chariots are shown frontally on the right side, pyramidally arranged are seated divinities of Hindu pantheon. Ganesa, Kumara, Siva and Vishnu. They are likely to have been done in the first phase of painting in the cave, by a group of Westerners (perhaps because the disintegration of Northern Wei regime after 520 made communicators with Central China hazardous). The cave has two inscriptions dating from the northern Wei which state that it was built around 538-9, making it Mogao's earliest dated cave. Here Shiva has been depicted with a dark body, three heads and six arms. He is on his vehicle—*nandi*, the bull. He holds the sun and the moon (Plate-12).



Plate-12

A silk painting of the 10th century from Tun-huang illustrates the thousand-armed Avalokitesvara. In his retinue is Mahesvara, who is red in colour, has upraised hair decorated with a skull. He is four armed and seated on the *nandi* in vajraparyanka posture. The *nandi* is dappled with blue spots. In his four hands he holds:

Lotus	rests on hip
Double vajra	club supported on ground

In the retinue he is on the centre left of Avalokitesvara (Plate-13 detail).



Plate-13-detail

Yun-Kang

At the Cave site of Yun-Kang, Caves 7 and 8 which were probably executed soon after 465 for a deceased Wei Emperor and his Queen are closely interrelated in design. They are situated in the middle section of Yun-Kang and generally known as "Fo-lai-tung (cave of Buddha's voice). Outside of the entrance arch of cave 7 on east side is Shiva in relief and Kartikeya on the west (Plate-14). Shiva has three faces and eight

arms and Kartikeya has five faces and six arms. The central face of Shiva wears a crown above a neatly tied jata embellished with a moon; the other two faces have no crowns. He holds the following attributes; the upper two are held aloft and hold:

Sun	moon
Bow	destroyed
Ring	destroyed
Cluster of grapes	rests on hip



Plate-14

Japan

The two Cosmograms or mandalas of Garbhadhatu and Vajradhatu are integral heritage of Japan. They are well known as Ryobu mandara. They are a pair because both of them have Mahavairocana in the centre. The Garbhadhatu mandala is based on the Mahavairocana-sutra which belongs to the carya tradition of tantras. The Vajradhatu derives from the Sarva-tathagata tattva-sangraha which pertains to the Yoga division of tantras. The Garbhadhatu mandala is designated by four names: Garbha-mandala, Garbha-dharma-mandala, Mahakaruna-garbha-mandala

and Mahakaruna-garbh-odbhava-mandala. The basic text of this mandala is the Mahavairocana-sutra whose full title is: Mahavairocana abhisambodhi-vikurvit-adhisthana-vaipulya-sutrendra-rajā (Sanskrit title translated in the Tibetan version). The text was translated into Chinese by Subhakarasimha and I-hsing in A.D. 725. The mandala consists of twelve enclosures. In the twelfth enclosure, which is the enclosure or quarter of vajras is Mahesvara to the outer left of the retinue of Nairrta (Plate-15).



Plate-15

Mahesvara is reddish-black with right hand in tarjani mudra while the left hand holds a trident. He is seated on *nandi*, his vehicle (*vahana*) with one leg folded and the other touching the ground. He is accompanied by his consort Uma who also holds the trident and is seated in the similar posture.

The illustrations of the Garbhadhatu mandala according to the lineage of Subhakarasimha (AD 637-735), brought to Japan by Enchin is extant in two scrolls copied in A.D. 1193/4. It represents Uma and Mahesvara as in (Plate-16). Similarly the illustrations of the Garbhadhatu mandala of the lineage of Amoghavjra (AD 705-744 var 770) brought to Japan by Enchin was copied in 854 and is available in a scroll copied in A.D. 1193/4, Uma and Mahesvara are depicted in a different manner (Plate-17).



Plate-16



Plate-17

In the Chinese version of the Saddharma-pundarika-Sutra, the 24th chapter mentions thirty three incarnations of Avalokitesvara. They are illustrated in zuzo-hokkekyo-bo. Mahesvara is illustrated in TZ.13.6 as a youthful deity seated on a *nandi*. His right hand is spread forward while the left holds the trident. He sits in the vajra-paryanka posture. His bija 'I' stands for Isvara (Plate-18).



Plate-18

In his notes on Garbhadhātu, Shinjaku (AD 886-927, TZ 2.93) states the Sanskrit name of Mahesvara as Rudra, the bija is 'RU' and symbol is a trident as a lotus leaf (Plate-18b).



Plate-18b

A collection of drawings by Kakuzen about 1183-1213 are prescribed in 56 scrolls at the Kakuji monastery, Kyoto. In this collection is a mandala of Mahesvara. He seated in Vajrasana with both hands in Dhyana mudra (Plate-19).

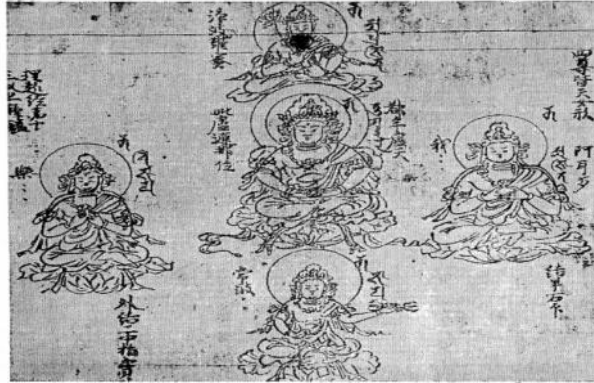


Plate-19

In the Rishukyo Sentient Beings: Potential and Response (Amoghvajra's version) the deities of the outer vajra family



Plate-20 Shuei's mandala of Empowerment for Sentient Beings, Chapter XII of Amoghavajra's text.

(Ge-Kongobu) are twenty-five in number and headed by Mahesvara. He sits in the centre, in a Tathagata form with eight of the minor deities surrounding him. In addition there are four offering deities outside these, and at the four gates of the mandala the main emblems are to be placed (Plate-20).

The Central deity, Mahesvara seated on a lotus leaf with folded hands belongs to the 17 deity naya-mandala of Mahesvara. *Rishukyo-juhatte-mandara* 122.13 'mandala of 18 sections of the Naya-Sutra' housed in the Daigoji monastery, Kyoto (Plate-21).



Plate-21\

The same cosmogram as a bija-mandala, is in the temple of the Toji monastery, Kyoto of which one scroll is kept at the Kanchi-in,

Rishukyo-mandara 124.13.

The *To-hon-nijugo-bosatsu-zo* 'Figures of 25 Bodhistvas transmitted in copies from T'ang China' has an image mentioned as Mahesvara-raja bodhisattva. He is seated on a lotus is youthful, has a bija 'MA' on top of his head. He wears a kirita mukuta. His right hand holds a *danda*, and the left holds a bloomed lotus in his upright palm placed in front of his chest (Plate-22).



Plate-22



Plate-23

In the same above text he is stated as four-armed Isvara-raja. Here he is seated on a lotus in Vajrasana and has a bija 'A' over the head. He wears a kirita mukuta. Amongst his four arms, the right above holds a Visvavajra and the left above holds a cintamani jewel. The two lower hands hold stalks of two lotus flowers near the chest with flowers blooming on both sides of the face. He is youthful in appearance. (Plate-23)

A standing Mahesvara tall with upraised hair, six hands, wearing knee-length boots and armour is in Besson-Zakki by Shinkaku (AD

1117-80, TZ 87.282), and his reference is also in Iyanaga as Dai jizai ten 1983: 758. He stands with his upper body as if proceeding forward which is also indicated by the backward direction of the drapery and also the hair. His six hands hold:

Vajra bell	Sword
__ gebaku ken-in (mudra) __	
Wheel with flames	right angled instrument

The gebaku ken-in (mudra) is common to the Japanese and Chinese Buddhist (Vajrayana, Mantrayana) tradition. It denotes the “outer bonds fist” and is posed during contemplation on the moon disc. This mudra is held in front of the chest (Plate-24).



Plate-24

Mahesvara with eight arms and three faces is seated on a bull in the Horokaku-mandara ‘Mani-vimana mandala’ (TZ.130.17). He has the following attributes:

Sun	Moon
Lotus	shield
Mace	unidentified
Noose	rests on thigh

The front face has a third eye and has a flaming halo. His left leg is folded on the bull (*nandi*), while the right touches the ground. This is an ink drawing and is in the 17 scroll at the Kanchi-in of Toji monastery (Plate-25).



Plate-25

This beautiful image of Mahesvara, painted in soft colours in the Zuzo-sho 'Selection of figures' by Yogen (AD 1075-1159, TZ 86.103) is in the ten scrolls at the Entsuji monastery, Koyasan (Plate-26). He is eight armed, *Astabhuja* and one faced, *Ekamukha*. He is seated on a bull. He has a middle-aged face, angry looks and a third eye. He has eight hands and they hold the following attributes:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| goad | trident |
| conch | wheel (<i>cakra</i>) |
| sword | club |
| sun & moon stick | fist rests on thigh |



Plate-26

Every deity in Japan has a symbolic syllable or a Bija (Jap. *Shuji*) which is the aksara-devata. The Bija of Mahesvara is TRI (pronounced as chiri in Japanese). The abbreviation of Trilocana and HUM (pronounced *umu* in Japanese) for Uma. They are written in Siddham-nagari script even today. According to the Sino-Japanese text of Mahavairocana-sutra, the Dainichikyo, the mudras are endowed with the thoughts, consecrations, dharani-mantra, all that is beyond form with a visible shape and thereby crystallising the plane of meditation. Thus Uma and Mahesvara are represented by mudras. The textbook on mudras entitled “Shingon-mikkyo-zu-in-shu illustrates them. A single mudra also denotes Uma and Mahesvara in the text ‘Bus-setsu.....nenju-giki’ 240. 318.

The richness of Mahesvara images preserved in the monastic

repositories of Japan from the 9th century to the present day is vast. This is a tiny glimpse of the same. The expression and the sensitivity of the line with its spontaneity are works of art with a purpose of devotion.

Mongolia

Standing in *alidapada* on the pericarp of the lotus is Rudra in Mongolian Kanjur 96b (AD 1717-20, LC 1991:462) as one of the guardians of the ten directions or *dasa dikpala*. In his four arms he holds the *khatvanga* and sword in the right and noose in both the left hands (Plate-27).



Plate-27

Tibet

In Tibet Mahadevadeva Mahesvara (Tib. Lha.Chen Dban Phyug.Chen.po) is the first of the thirty marshals. He is blue black in colour, wrathful, has upraised hair with skulls, vajra, snakes in his hairdo. He is the leader of thirty marshals (sde.dpon sun. cu) Kaschewsky/Tsering 1998.78.79. He is two armed; the right holds a chopper and the left a severed head. He wears shoes with nails on the soles and is seated on a ferocious lion. His consort has upraised hair embellished with skulls. Her right hand holds the trident and the left a skull bowl of blood. She wears shoes with ferocious elephant heads and is seated on a ferocious elephant. They are on the Sumeru mountain—on clouds and are surrounded with flames (Plate- 28).



Plate-28

Nispanna-yogavali,

In the Nispanna-yogavali, the mandala of Yogambara (NSP 14.36), Mahesvara guards the western gate of the outer circle. He is white in colour, has three eyes, four hands that hold a cranium, skull club (*khatvanga*) and trident in 2 hands and holds the consort by the fourth. In the mandala of Dharmadhatu Vagisvara Manju-ghosa (NSP.21.122 p.62) Mahesvara (Tib. Dban.phyug.chen.po) is in the fourth circle (vajrakula mandala). He is white in colour seated on a bull, has matted hair embellished with a moon: Two above hands out of the four are in anjali mudra above the head, lower right hand holds a trident, left hand a

cranium near the chest. In the mandala of Bhutadamara (NSP 23. 2. P.72), Mahesvara is on the east of the central circle. Standing on a bull and solar disc, ithyphallic, and has three eyes and four hands which hold a damaru, chopper, trident and cranium. In the mandala of Kalacakra, Rudra is to the left of the northern gate of the kaya-mandala (NSP 26 p. 89). He is seated on a bull, is white in colour, embraces Gauri and has four arms that hold a trident, khatvanga entwined with serpents, arrow and a bow. In the Vanmandala he is under the white left leg of Kalacakra embraced by Varahi on the south of the mandala. He is trampled by Trailokyavijaya along with Uma (NSP. 21, SM. 262). He serves as a pedestal to Ghasmari (NSP.8 HT.2.5.37) and a seat for Padmadaka (NSP.25).

In the Sarva-tathagata-tattva-sangraha translated by Danapala in AD 1012-15 (Nj 1017, 7882 to K1466) Mahesvara is mentioned with a thousand arms and a thousand eyes.

Religions have coexisted as evidenced by the above finds. Images of Shiva have been found in Gandhara, Sogdiana, Chinese Turkestan, Southern Afghanistan and in one of the principal Buddhist pilgrimage centres that bore the ancient name Nagarahara. An ancient marble *linga* was unearthed in the vicinity of Tagao. The power of the image of Shiva and his extraordinary sanctity as belonging to the far Western Land of India became the *summum bonum* of their conviction and always dwelt deep in their consciousness that Shiva could liberate them from the travails of life and guarantee the security and stability of the existing state.

Notes :

¹ Presently called Andhra Pradesh got its name from trilinga-desa, which means a region of 3 lingas at Kalahasti, Srishailam and Draksharam.

² Obtained its name from Trisiva. Sivagura and Aryamba who prayed to Vadakkunath, the presiding deity of this temple to have an offspring and were blessed with a child whom they named Sankara the well known advaitya philosopher.

Saivism in Tamilnadu

Ramchandra Nagaswamy*

Siva, the lord the south

There is a popular prayer in Tamilnadu saying “Hail ye Siva the lord of Southern Country, the god who pervades all the Countries – “Ten Nadudaya Sivane Porri, Ennattavarkum iraiva porri.” South India is the land of Shiva not in any sectarian sense of the word, but as “the most auspicious of all.” Shiva also stands for “auspicious” from the time of the Vedas and is an all inclusive faith. It is also for the reason that the Lord seated beneath the banyan tree (ala-vrksha) is the Universal teacher as Dakshinâmurthi is the most favoured form in TN, which represents the “God of the south” or the south facing god. One of the ancient legend mentioned in a two thousand years of Tamil poetry mentions that the sage Agastya came to the south at the command of lord Siva and brought with him 18 families of Royal chiefs, settled them in Tamil Nadu, taught the Pandya king of Madurai Tamil and Sanskrit, and also music and dance. Ever since, he is identified as an incarnation of lord Shiva. That led to the translation of the Mahabharata into Tamil and the Shaivism found in the Mahabharata is the one that is found established in Tamil land.

In the Sangam Age

A certain Perumdevanar (Mahadeva) sang Mahabharata in Tamil; he compiled several anthologies of Tamil poems as Vyasa compiled the

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Vedas. These Tamil songs running to over two thousand short and long poems, the creative poetry that could be rendered into music and dance by Banas and viralis ritual singers of the vedic traditions, are assigned to the first two centuries of the current era and are called the *Sangam* poems. There are innumerable references to Shiva, Subrahmanya, Vishnu, Balarama, Indra and others indicating that all Indian faith was well established several centuries earlier than the current era (BC). Siva is considered to be the leader of all the gods, the most powerful god who could annihilate all the three worlds if he is roused to anger, as he destroyed the forts of three demons known as *Tripura samhara*. At that victorious battle field, he danced as Bhairava with his consort Bhairavi, the victory dance called Pandarangam and “Kodu Kotti”. Though this legend ear Director is a vedic tradition, the r.... associated with this manifestation, in which he used the mountain as a .. (pinaka) and the great snake as the bow sting and with one arrow he destroyed the three forts of the demons and gave victory to the celestials (Devas) points out that the major legends connected with his narration in puranas were well known at the earliest stage of tamils history. He had the Bull as his vehicle and appeared as *Ardhanarishvara* and the inseparable manifestation of godhood. He was wearing matted hair and seated beneath the Banyan tree teaching the highest truth of life to sages. He was the lord who looked after the welfare of all the living being as Pashupati (ellauyirkkum iraiavan).

Siva temples

The Sangam poems also mention that there were many temples in cities among which the temple of Shiva was the foremost. Temples dedicated to Surya, Chandra, Kama, Balarama, Indra, and other Vedic deities and also the Jain and the Buddhists palli (temples - and caityas and viharas. In the temples daily worship was offered beginning with the Siva temples. The deities were taken out in procession with the image of Siva leading the procession (malu-val neduyon talavan). The temple ritual texts called *agamas* were used in the temple rituals and processions by Vedic Brahmins (viri. nul antanar.) The birth of Subrahmanya as the child of Siva and his growth in the sacred tank of Saravana on the slopes of the Himalayas was known. He was also called the child of goddess Parvati also called the most ancient goddess (Palaiyol) and

Korravai (Durga and Kumari). She was also adored as the Kanya Kumari, a vedic concept and she is said to remain doing penance at the extreme southern tip of India, now called Kanyakumari. Adoration of the goddess as supreme deity and also the Siva as Ardhanari indicate the concept of Sakta tradition as a part of Saivism was well established two thousand years and earlier.

3rd to 6th century

The age of sangam came to an end by the end of 2nd century CE. A powerful dynasty, called the Pallavas, was established in the northern part of Tamilnad with Kanchipuram as its capital. The Pallavas were great devotees of Siva who called themselves as Paramamahesvaras. Theirs was the Vedic Shaivism which included Vaishnavism and all other Hindu cults and so also called themselves as Parama Bhagavatas and Parama Brahmanyas. Some of them were called as Sivaskanda Varma and also assumed title as Shiva cudamani, ever engaged in the lotus feet of Siva. Different sects of the Saivas like Mahesvaras, Kapalikas Pasupatas, Mahavratins Rudra ganas were living side by side in TN.

6th to 9th century

During the early part of this age, Mahendra Pallava, a versatile scholar and a poet, also a lover of dance, describes the four fold *abhinaya* — *vaccika*, *angika*, *aharya* and *satvika*, classified by Bharata in his *Nritya Shastra*. Siva as Kapali performing Kapala Nritta, entering into the Bhava avesa is a concept in Kapalika system of Saivism. This appears as the invocatory verse of a Sanskrit drama composed by the Pallava Emperor, Mahendra. This gives a clear picture of Kapalika and Mahesvara schools prevalent in Tamil country around 600 CE.

A little later, we find his great grandson, Rajasimha by name, who caused all the monuments of Mamallapuram held the title Siva cudamani. He mentions in his Mamallapuram inscriptions that Siva is the primordial deity who creates, sustains and dissolves this universe and that his temple was built by the King for the fulfillment of all the desires and prayers of his subjects (*prajanam ishta siddhyaram*). The same king built the magnificent temple of Kailashanatha temple at Kanchipuram in which he proclaims that he was a follower of *Saiva siddhanta marga* and by that, he wiped out all his impurities.

The Saiva siddhantins hold that there are three impurities which are called *ahamkara*, *karma* and *maya*, which a follower of Saiva siddhantin erases to attain salvation. This is a pointed reference to the system of “Saiva siddhanta” by name followed in the Tamil Country. The Kailashanatha temple and many other temples built, stand witness to the great flowering of Saiva system that was followed in south from 6th to 9th Century.



Adityesvaram, a Memorial temple, at Tondaimanadu,
north of Madras, built in memory of Aditya chola, 10 th cent

In the Far south

In the far south, from the city of Madurai to the land's end, Kanyakumari, the Pandya rulers were equally devoted to Saiva system and have left monumental temples dedicated to Siva. A Pandya king, named Arikesari Parankusa built many temples to Siva as Candrasekara in his country and named them after his title Arikesari Isvaram. He also invited a great Vedic scholar from the Chola country who was a follower of Siddhanta sastra. Evidently the Saivism prevalent in the extreme south was also the Vedic Saiva system during that age. The monumental relics and epigraphical records prove that the whole of South India, from Thirupatti in the north to Kanyakumari in the south, the whole country was filled with Vedic Saivism.

The Bhakti movement

This must be also seen against the greatest manifestation of devotion spread by the Saiva Saints—Nayanmars and Vaishnava Alvars by their soul stirring songs. The age between 6th and 9th century, is therefore rightly called the “Bhakthi age”. All together over 12000 verses in Tamil, on Siva Bhakti, were composed in this period, which are still recited and sung in Siva temples and families, for the past 1300 years. They are melodious, pregnant with meaning and soul elevating; that in this period, the South of India was reverberating and echoing with those songs.

12000 poems: Thiru mular

Three groups of Shaivite saints need to be recalled in this great moment. The first was ‘Thirumular’ who lived probably around 5th century; they sang 3000 poems in Tamil, on all aspects of Shaivism like ritual, philosophy, sacred mantras, chakras, iconography, and the great dance of Shiva and its visualisation and the like. He is said to have come from ‘Kedara’ in the North and passing through ‘Kasi’ and other sacred *kshetras* reached Thiruvavaduturai village, where he lived and composed the three thousand verses. His life history, as per medieval tradition, is very much like that of ‘Gorakshanath’; he was a cowherd and was a *Siddha Purusha*. His work called “Thirumantiram” is divided into nine chapters, called “Tantra”. They are mystical in their diction employing “Sandhya-bhasha” to suggest hidden meanings. The Tantric

nature of this work, deals with several *Yantras* and also seed chants like “Hrim”, “Srim” and the like. The work is held in veneration as sacred uttering, hence the name “Mantras” and Vedic hymns.

Tevaram saints: Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar

The second group consists of three Saiva saints, Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar, who account for 8000 verses on Siva, in chaste poetic format called “Tevaram” i.e. “divine garlands” (deva harams) / “recitation songs on divine” and the three are called “Tevaram saints”. They moved by foot from village to village and sang and prayed the deity of the temple. The first two, Appar and Sambandar, who were contemporaries, lived in 7th century; while the third, Sundarar, lived in the 8th century. Appar, who belonged to a cultivator’s family, sang 3060 poems altogether, while Slambandar, a boy belonging to a Vedic Brahmin community, sang over 4150 poems. Sundarar, belonging to a Shaiva Brahmana family, sang around 1000 poems.

The 9 Books

These poems were compiled into 9 books. The first three books were the songs of Sambandar; the fourth, fifth and sixth books contain poems of Appar. They make pointed references to all the Puranic legends and iconographic manifestations of Siva and Vishnu, Lingodbhava, Gangadhara, Bhairava, Ardhanari, Harihara, Sadashiva, Dakshinamurthi, Tripurantaka, Gajasamhara, Andhaasura Andhalasura vadha, Jalandhara vadha, Cakradana, Ravana Anugraha, Vishapaharanar, Kiratarjuna, Vinadhara, Bhikshatana, Kama dahana, Ashtabhujja, Mahadeva, Pasupati and other manifestations with their legends mentioned in the major puranas are known. Sambandar mentions pointedly to the number of 18 great Puranas. Frequent references to the Vedas, Vedanta, six Vedangas and other agamas are found in Tevaram songs. Following the vedic tradition of singing ten or eleven verses in a hymn, they sang in all the Tevaram songs ten or eleven verses each. Sambandar and Sundarar used to add an additional verse to each hymn in which they give biographical information about themselves and in many cases the form of the poetic composition singing from the age of five as a child and lived only up to 16 years of age. Appar lived up to his 80th year while Sundarar lived upto his 32nd year.



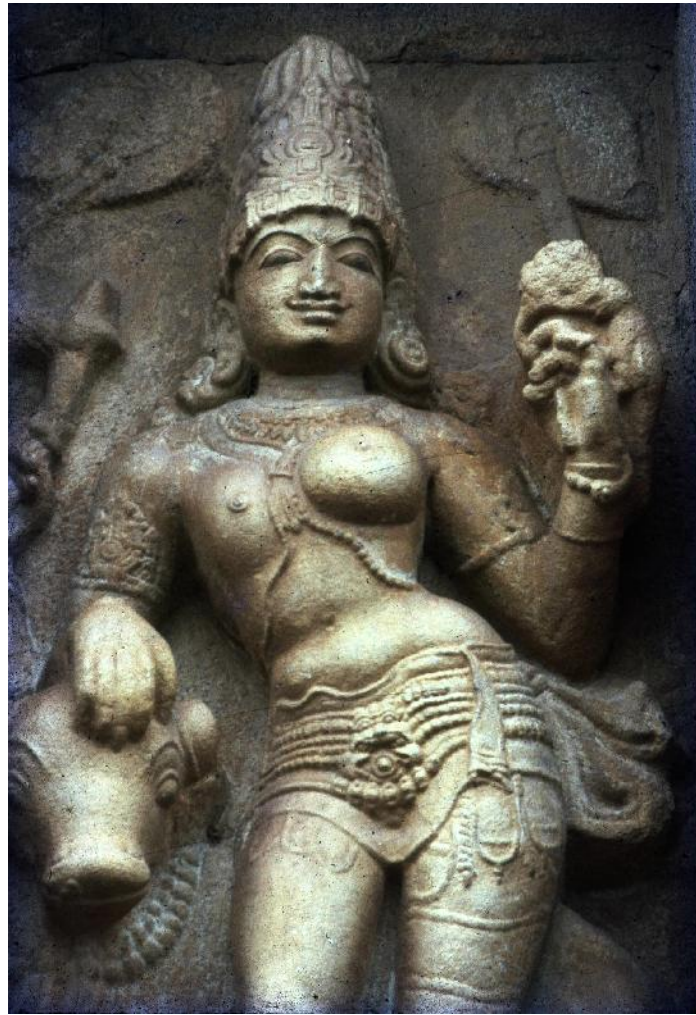
An entrance gopura, north madras, near Thiruttani. 14th cent IMG_0840

Sambandar

Sambandar has the largest number of verses sang in so many poetic forms that no one upto this day has sung like him. All his hymns were musical compositions in various formats mostly by following the sankritic traditions. He has sung songs *ekapada*, *dvipada*, *tripada*, *catushpada*, *chakra*, *gomutri*, *srotovaha*, different forms of *yamakas* etc. So much so the musicians are amazed by the variety of his compositions. All his songs are set to ancient *Pan (ragam)* system of singing, which has enabled the Tamil Country to retain the ancient pan tunes to this day. Some of such tunes are *kausikam*, *gandharam*, *pancamamm sadari*, *indalam*, *nataraga*, *natabhasha* etc. Sambandar is said to have spread Saivism through music. His musical system was the same ancient Indian music system.

Sambandar sings in most of his songs, the *agamic* nature of worshipping Siva, daily rituals like *abhisekha*, daily *aradhana*, and food offerings and also music and dance offered during *sandhis* of the day. He also gives details of daily festivals, monthly and seasonal festivals and special festivals. In one hymn he names the festivals to be

held on each month on a particular day when a star is in conjunction with the moon on that particular month. He also mentions annual festivals including the car festival. The rituals and festivals mentioned by the Tevaram saints establish that the role of Shaiva agamas, 28 in number beginning with Kamikagama, were the guiding principles in the south.



Ardhanarisvara, Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple, Chola, 11th centGKC08



Bana linga inside a shrine, at Ariyapuram, near Kanchipuram,
Vijayanagara period, 14th cent

Appar

Saint Appar, hailing from an agriculturist family, was the follower of Saiva faith. As he lost his father and mother in young age, he embraced Jaina faith and distinguished himself as Dharmasena, but soon returned to the Saiva faith persuaded by his sister. He symbolised the Saiva faith, Siva bhakti and composed over 3000 verses with maturity, deep learning and full of humility. He followed Shaiva system. In every of his hymns, he extols the Vedas and the context and almost gives many Vedic names and concepts of Siva in delightful Tamil. His poems are

unparalleled in devotion and move the devotees to tears of divine joy. They are virtually the essence of Vedantic doctrine. His mastery of poetics earned him the name Vagisa. For example he sings the glory of Siva Nataraja of Chidambaram as a unique lord who resides in the thoughts of Brahmins, who is the inner meaning of the Vedas, who is beyond the full comprehension of any, who is like sweet honey milk and effluent light.

Who is the lord of the celestials and who remain encompassing Vishnu and Brahma and the fire, the wind, roaring sea waves, and the lofty peaks of sacred hills. He is the lord of Perumbarrapuliur. “Wasted are the days when his name is not recited” says Appar. Even at the 80 years of age, he cleaned the surroundings of Siva temples with spade in hand.

Sundarar

Saint Sundarar sang Shiva as his close friend so much so he is called “the friend of the lord” (Tambiran Tolan). There is a dramatic event that says how Siva appearing as an old man and claimed Sundarar as his slave (devotee); that is found in a fresco painting of 11th century in the great temple of Tanjore. The most important contribution of Sundarar to south Indian Saivism is listing of 63 Saivite saints who lived before him and also as his contemporaries. They were deeply devoted to Shiva and praising them he claimed that he was “the devotee of devotees”. This list in a hymn called the anthology of devotees was enlarged in the 11th century by one Nambi and his list was further enlarged by Sekkilar a minister of the Chola ruler Kulothunga II in a magnificent text called “The Great Purana” (Periya Puranam) From the time of Sundarar in the 8th century the adoration of these saints became the backbone of Tamil Saivism. It symbolizes the faith that worship of the devotees of Siva is far superior to the worship Siva himself. The images of the saints were consecrated in stone and metal in all major Siva temples and their festivals celebrated in grand scale added human torch to the Saiva movement.

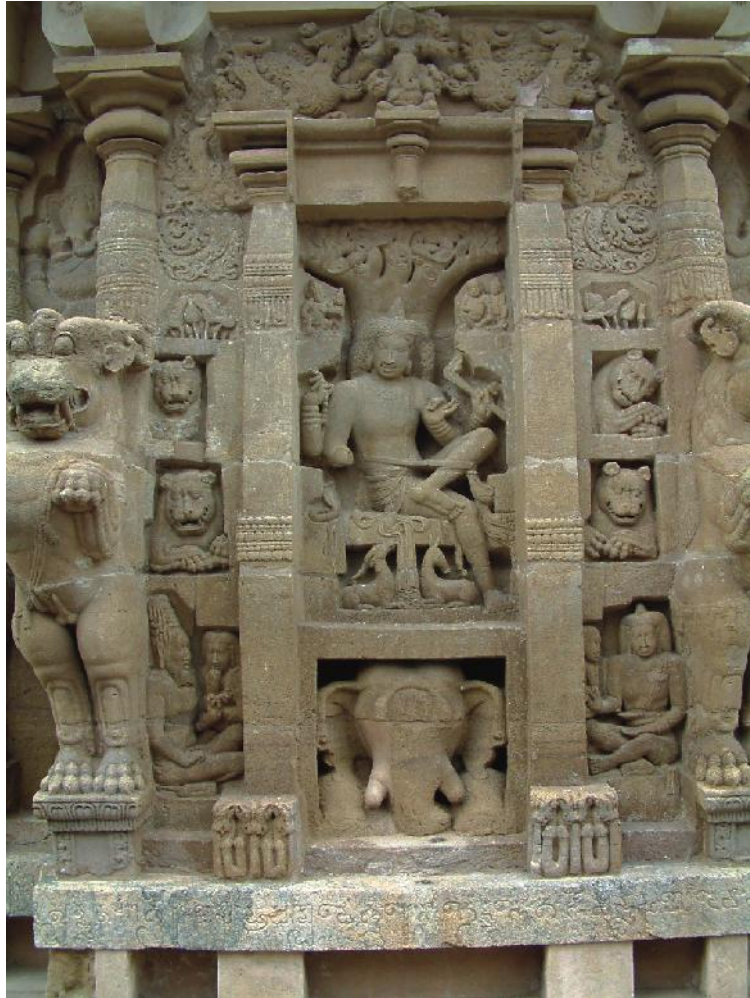


Close up of Nataraja, Gangai konda Cholapuram, Temple Chola, 11th centGKC05

Manikkavacakar

The fourth Saiva saint to sing captivating poems was Manikkavacakar who was a minister to the Pandya ruler. His songs called “Thiruvacakam” sends the devotees into raptures. The lives and poems of these four saints, Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manikka Vvacakar are virtually the temple of South Indian Saivism in which Siva is enshrined. The

temples, where these saints sang, are considered the sacred *kshetras* ever since the time of Appar and Sambandar (6th century). Their songs were considered part and parcel of daily temple rituals and are danced and recited during *aradhana* part of daily worship.



Dakshinamurthi, on the south wall of of the Kailasanatha temple,
Kanchi, C 700 CE



Dancing Ganesa, Gangaikonda Chola puram temple, stone, 11th cent

From the 10th century

From the tenth century onwards, we enter into a great age of monumental temple building. The Chola dynasty, which brought the whole Tamil country, from north to Kanyakumari in the south, embarked on building grand temples to Shiva. Aditya Chola, who ruled in the end of 9th century, built 108 temples to Siva all along the banks of the river Kaveri from its origin to the point where it joins the sea. These temples were built of granite stones many standing still and used for worship; their sculptures are superb workmanship. The temples were of modest



Kailasanatha temple, Kanchipuram, Built by Rajasimha Pallava, C 700 CE ,

height of about 35 feet. Many ancient temples, originally built of brick, were rebuilt by stone. The greatest achievement in temple building was reached in the hands of Rajaraja Chola (985-1015), who built the great temple to Shiva at Tanjore. It was conceived as the Southern Meru mountain. The super structure, rising to a height of 216 feet, is all built of granite stone. The king, having the title of “Siva pada sekharā”, built this temple with full devotion. His inscriptions, running to thousands, spread out all over his kingdom, depict him as a catholic minded king, patronising Vaishnavism, Buddhism and Jainism besides Saivism, pointing to the fact that Saivism under the Cholas was an all embracing religion.

It is known that many Tevaram hymns were lost before his time and he discovered the remaining with the help of Nambi. He also appointed fifty singers of Tevaram songs to be sung before Siva daily in the Tanjore temple, where he also appointed 400 dancing girls to dance daily in front of his god. He was the greatest patron of dance and music as part of the daily ritual and was the first to portray 108 poses of dance *karanas*, codified in Bharata’s *Natya Shastra* in sculptural form, thus paving the way for Siva’s dance assuming greatest eminence in Saiva movement.



Sa raswati, Gngaikonda cholapuram temple Chola, 11th cent GKC11

He was guided by a Saivacharya (Isana Siva) Sarva Shiva Pandita, to supervise temple layout and worship. He hailed from eastern India, Gauda desa (Bengal). An inscription in Tanjore temple says that Saivaacharyas from Gauda desa, Arya desa or Madhya desa alone should be appointed as Saiva acharyas in the great temple. From his time onwards from around 1000 CE to almost 1250 CE for two hundred and fifty years, great Saiva Acharyas from Bengal, Bihar, U.P. or Madyapradesh served as Raja gurus, royal preceptors to the Chola emperor.

Raja, raja's son, Rajendra Chola I conquered upto Gangetic plains and built the great temple "Gangai konda chola puram" and in constructing it he had the guidance of a Gauda Saivacharya. Among the notable monumental temple the Darasuram temple near Kumbakonam built by Rajaraja II and the Tribhuvanam temple also near Kumbakonam built by Kulothunga III, stand as monumental structures heralding the great height to which Saivism reached. Two Saiva Acharyas contemporary with the temple mentioned last, deserve special attention. One Srikantha Sambhu wrote a *bhashya* on the Brahma Sutras of Vyasa which is as famous as Sankara and Ramanuja bhasyas. His son is said to have interpreted the Vedantic Upanishads in terms of the supremacy of Siva. He, Isvara Siva, officiated as the chief priest in the Tribhuvanam temple as the Raja guru. The 13th century Shsaivism was greatly moulded around these Acharyas.

Following this philosophical atmosphere one Meykanda deva wrote a great work in Tamil, called "Sivajnana bodham" in the form of sutras. His disciple, Arul Nandi Shiva, wrote an exhaustive text, called "Sivajnana siddhi" further enlarged by one Umapati Shivam. These three texts constituted the core of teaching of Tamil Saivism now called the "Tamil Saiva siddhantam." Today's Saiva system follows this school of "Siva jnana bodha".

Kashmir Shaivism: Historical Roots and Philosophical Doctrines

S. S. Toshkhani

Kashmir Shaivism, or the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir as many scholars now prefer to call it, is a system of philosophy and theology rooted in the Tantric world view. What distinguishes it, is its idealistic outlook and monistic vision that conceives of the Ultimate Reality in terms of pure and undifferentiated consciousness vibrating in every atom of the universe. Describing consciousness as an all-pervasive principle that forms the ground and substratum of all existent things, Kashmir Shaivism regards the phenomenal world, with all its diversity, as its manifestation or expression. Man, according to this system of thought, is a contracted or congealed form of *Parama Shiva* or universal consciousness, the one and the only Reality. Realization of one's true nature and self as one with Shiva liberates one from the tyranny of finitude. Rejecting the otherness of God, Kashmir Shaivism asserts that there is nothing that exists apart from or outside absolute consciousness.

Central to non-dualistic Shaiva philosophy of Kashmir is the concept of the fundamental unity of the universe of diversity and the notion of mutual interrelation of all things. This unity is integral and organic as "the One is not any one thing because it is all things," as pointed out by the eminent Shaiva scholar, Mark S. G. Dyczkowski.¹ *Parama Shiva* or the Supreme Reality who makes "all varied forms of the universe to appear" as the light of consciousness, has a creative and self-referential aspect, *Shakti*, which "unfolds itself everywhere." According to Kashmir Shaivism, *Parama Shiva*, who is transcendent and immanent at the same time, manifests himself as the phenomenal world through his creative cosmic power, *Shakti*, who is in no way separate from him.

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Both Shiva and *Shakti* are two aspects of a conjoint Reality, with Shiva, as self-luminous universal consciousness being the ground and essence of everything and *Shakti*, the real source from which the whole phenomenal world and all its entities emanate. For the Kashmir Shaivite, the symbolism of the “bipolar” unity of these two cosmic entities is what constitutes the highest point of bliss in the ultimate mystic experience.

Historical Roots

Prof. Navjivan Rastogi, eminent scholar in the field of Shaiva and Tantric studies, describes non-dual Kashmir Shaivism as “the essence of the entire Tantric thought.”² Straddling over both Hinduism and Buddhism, and touching also the domain of Jain religious thought, Tantricism developed around the fourth or fifth century CE, or even earlier according to some, and began to acquire a definite shape by the 6th or the 7th century CE. As a powerful spiritual movement that deeply influenced all aspects of religious life across the country, Tantra gave a new dimension and direction to India’s medieval culture and thought. This was a period when numerous Shaivite sects belonging to diverse preceptorial lines were flourishing in Kashmir. These cults began to assume “a clearly defined, although immensely varied identity” through the emergence of a vast corpus of Tantric or Agamic texts which came to be considered as divine and revealed and looked upon as spiritual authority. Passing through long centuries of evolution, various Saiva Tantric cults “coalesced and integrated” to give shape to a new school of philosophy and practice called non-dual Shaivism which held its sway in Kashmir from the 9th century to the 13th century CE. The Agamic tradition reached its pinnacle in the 10th century CE when Shaivism’s greatest philosopher and theologian, Abhinavagupta, arrived on the scene and wove these different strands of Shaivite thought and ritual into a coherent and integrated philosophy which he called *Anuttaratrika*, or simply *Trika*. The entire medieval Shaiva tradition has been divided by scholars into two streams – the pre-Tantric *Atimarga* or the Outer Path and the Tantric *Mantramarga*, the Path of Mantra. While the Pasupata and the Kalamukhas and Kapalikas are among the sects included in the first group the Saiva Siddhantists and non-dual Kashmir Shaivites can be placed under the *Mantramarga* or the Mantra Path. There is the third sect also, which holds the Goddess as the ultimate reality. Deeply influenced by Abhinavagupta’s thought, it is

known as *Vidyapitha* with Tripura Sundari as its primary deity.

The cults that emerged from the *Agamic* texts can be classified under four main categories: the *Saivasiddhanta*, *Vamatantras*, *Bhuta* and *Garuda* and *Bhairavatantras*, representing the dual, dual-cum-non-dual and non-dual traditions of Tantric Shaivism, the last mentioned being the main inspirational source of the formulations of what came to be known as Kashmir Shaivism.

The Saivasiddhanta

While the *Bhuta* and *Garuda Tantras* are completely lost, the *Siddhantagamas*, twenty-eight in number, are aligned to the important Saivasiddhanta cult which now exists in South India alone. Having little space for speculation, the cult is devoted to the worship of Sadasiva and is largely concerned with rituals related to him and the worship of the Linga, his iconic symbol, conducted in public temples. The Saivasiddhanta cult is said to have flourished in Kashmir originally from where it is believed to have spread to the South and other places. Though dualistic in orientation, Saivasiddhanta had a great influence on the monistic Kashmir Shaivism with which it shared several features, but differed mainly at the philosophical level, Kashmir Shaivism being strictly non-dualist and idealist in outlook and the Saivasiddhanta pluralistic in its dialectics. Whereas for the non-dualistic Shaivite the highest goal is complete identity with Shiva, the Siddhantist seeker aspires only for *Shivasayujya* or nearness to Shiva. In opposition to Shaiva Siddhanta's insistence that liberation is possible only through ritual, non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir maintains that liberation can essentially be attained through meditative insight.

Bhairavatantras

The *Bhairavatantras* were so called because they are in the form of an eternal dialogue between Bhairava and the Goddess (Bhairavi), with Bhairava answering her questions about the secrets of liberation. Bhairava is considered to be the wrathful and fierce form of Shiva. But in Kashmir Shaiva tradition Bhairava, as can be seen in the sixty-four or so *Bhairavagamas* he is the highest reality, the peaceful and auspicious supreme power which creates, sustains and dissolves the universe. Abhinavagupta, the greatest Shaiva thinker of all times, interprets the term in several ways. One of his etymologies in the

Tantraloka describes Bhairava as “He Who bears all things and is supported by the universe, filling it and sustaining it on the one hand, while uttering it or conceiving it on the other.”³ According to another popular Tantric etymology, “Bhairava is He Who protects those frightened by the rounds of rebirth.”⁴

The Pasupata Cult

The earliest precursors of the Agamic Saiva groups were the Pasupatas, a sect of ascetics whose final aim in life was *dukhanta* or the end of suffering. They believed in the grace (*prasada*) of Shiva as the only path to salvation. The sect, also known as *Lakulas*, was probably founded by the famous Lakulisa or Nakulisa (Lord of the Club) who was regarded as an incarnation of Shiva. Lakulisa is was born in a Gujarat village, sometime in the second century BCE. The Pasupatas are mentioned in the Mahabharata and Patañjali’s commentary on Panini’s Sanskrit grammar. The tenets of the sect are also cited by Madhavacharya in his *Sarva-darsana-samgraha*. Though the original texts of the sect are not available, we have the surviving *Pasupata-sutras*, attributed to Lakulisha himself with the *Pañcartha-bhasya* commentary on it by Kaundinya, and also the *Ganakarika* commentary by Bhasarvajña, which tell us about the *Pasupata* doctrines and practices.

Kaundinya explains the five essential tenets of the *Pasupata* doctrine given in the *Pasupata-sutras* as, (1) *Karana* or the cause (*Pati* or the Lord), (2) *Karya* or effect, the bonded *jivas*, (3) *Yoga* or the *jivas* joining with the Lord, (4) *Vidhi* or practices and (5) *Duhkhanta* or the end of misery.⁵ These tenets are known as the *pañcarthas* and the Pasupatas, believed that these could lead them to the end of suffering and attainment of supernatural powers, and even immortality. The sutras enjoin upon the ascetic followers of the system to follow a five-phase intense spiritual discipline to achieve eternal presence of Shiva. In the first phase they would act in a totally bizarre manner, and transgress all norms of accepted social behaviour to conquer egotistical tendencies. They would intentionally court disrepute by behaving incoherently like madmen, making lewd gestures towards women and abusing people. By doing so they sought to acquire the merits of the victims of their incoherent and disagreeable behaviour and pass on their own demerits to them. The ascetics also tried to acquire Shiva-like qualities and worship him by mentally repeating the mantras of Sadyojata to Sadasiva. As the last phase of his practice, a Pasupata ascetic was required to

retire to the cremation ground till he cast off his body, liberative death being his most cherished goal.

Other Early Shaivite Sects

Two closely related skull-bearing cults, the Kapalikas and the Kalamukhas, also followed the Great Vow (*mahavrata*) of the Pasupatas. Little is known about them as no direct written texts are available about their doctrines and practices. From what we gather from references to them, mostly by their opponents, they were a tantric group of wandering ascetics who indulged in offensive and outrageous practices. According to the limited evidence available about them, they, especially the Kapalikas, were grouped collectively as *atimargis* or followers of the Outer Path. Citing Lorenzen, Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, the reputed author of *The Triadic Heart of Shiva*, says that these sects existed as early as in the first century or at the most in the fifth century. Like the Pasupatas, they too died out by the 15th century.⁶

Citing Lorenzen's study on the Kapalikas, Muller-Ortega points to the importance of the six insignia (*mudrika-satka*) as a feature in the sect's system of worship.⁷ These six insignia are the *kanthika* (necklace), the *rucaka* (another neck ornament), the *kundala* (earring), the *sikhamani* (crest jewel), the ashes and the sacred thread. They had two secondary insignia (*upamudra*) also; these are the skull (*kapala*) and the club (*khavaṅga*), which made them emerge as "typically tantric group related perhaps to the Kanphata Yogis and to the Natha Siddhas," Muller-Ortega notes.⁸

For the Kapalika ascetics it was necessary to carry a bowl shaped from a human skull while begging for alms. This had come to be regarded as a sort of trademark of the group. They would eat and drink from the skull bowl and also carry a skull-topped staff (*khatvanga*) with them wherever they went. Their head-hunting and skull-wearing rituals, their association with cremation grounds and corpses involved symbolic meanings which gradually came to be forgotten. Abhinavagupta clears a lot of confusion by reinterpreting the whole symbolism "in terms of inner phenomena of consciousness".

Our knowledge of the Kalamukha sect is even more limited, except that its adherents were not involved in such extreme tantric practices as the Kapalika ascetics did. The Kalamukhas were called so because of bearing a black stripe on the face. According to Lorenzen, they were closer to the Pasupatas than the Kapalikas and had their origins in

Kashmir. From there they began to move southward by the end of the eighth century. From the tenth to thirteenth century, they emerged as a very important sect, particularly in South India. With practically no texts surviving to inform us about the doctrines and practices of this group, whatever little we know of them is that the ascetics of this group also challenged conventional morality and social norms, not believing in the polarities of good and evil, pure and impure, right and wrong. Their ultimate aim was to seek union with Rudra.

Schools of Non-dual Shaivism

The trajectory of the development of the non-dual Shaivism can be traced in mythological time to the sage Durvasa who is said to have asked his three mind-born sons Tryambaka, Amardaka and Srinatha to spread the teachings of Shaiva non-dualism, dualism and dualism-cum-non-dualism respectively. In historical time proper, different systems based on these philosophical standpoints came into being around the fourth century, with the monistic system founded by Trayambaka transmitting the non-dualist doctrine of Trika. By the 7th century, various *Saivagamic* schools inspired by the *Bhairavatantras* had risen. According to the eminent Western scholar Alexis Sanderson, three major traditions of Shaivism emerged from the early Saivagamic environments in Kashmir. These were: “(1) Non-dualistic tantric tradition that includes various lineages of the Trika, Krama, and later Kaula, (2) a dualistic and highly conservative tradition of the Sivasiddhanta, and (3) a cult of the worship of Svachchanda–Bhairava that fell somewhere between the two other traditions.”⁹ A further development took place with an upsurge of Triadic Shaivism in Kashmir in the first half of the 9th century when the *Sivasutras* or Aphorisms of Shiva are supposed to have been revealed to the sage Vasugupta by Shiva in a dream, marking the beginning of its formal systemization. Regarded as “a unique treatise of yoga”, the *Sivasutras* provided new insights into the nature of Reality, which resulted in the emergence of two non-Tantric schools in the non-dualist milieu – the *Spanda* school concerned with the Doctrine of Vibration and the *Pratyabhijñā* school expounding the Philosophy of Recognition.

These creative developments in Shaivagamic environments represented by the emergence of five independent monistic schools, the Trika, the Krama, the Kula, the Spanda and the Pratyabhijñā, culminated in Abhinavagupta’s masterstroke of synthesizing them and reinterpreting

them according to his monistic vision in the 11th century. Bringing them together under one exegetic scheme under the rubric of *Anuttartika*, or simply *Trika*, in his monumental tome, the *Tantraloka*, and other important writings, Abhinavagupta shaped them into a coherent, well reasoned and integrated philosophical system of what is today known as Kashmir Shaivism.

All the five are major and independent schools with their own preceptorial lineages, soteriology, metaphysics and spiritual discipline. Yet they did not develop in isolation and are historically and doctrinally linked with each other, like other Tantric groups. They all have “a family resemblance” and can be seen as a collective exposition of the doctrines, concepts and spiritual practices of non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir. Abhinavagupta has classified the entire Shaiva tradition into “*tantra prakriya*” or the tantric method and “*kula prakariya*” or the Kula method, making Trika his ultimate focal point. It will be relevant therefore to examine some of the basic features of each of these schools in order to be able to understand what constitutes the essential structure and spirit of the Shaiva Tantric tradition of Kashmir.

The Trika School

Trika in its original *Agamic* context was an independent non-dual Shaivite school like the Krama and Kaula. It had such inclusiveness about it that it was said to encompass the essence of all the Siddhanta, Vama and Bhairava tantras. Realizing its potential, Abhinavagupta made it, under the name *Anuttaratrika*, a focal point of his integral monistic vision which presents the relationship of the transcendental and the immanent as aspects of the same totality. This new form of the *Trika* doctrine has now completely subsumed doctrines of all other non-dual schools of Kashmir Shaivism. However, there is little we know about the theory, ritual and preceptorial order of the original Trika in absence of textual evidence except what we learn from Abhinavagupta’s works. Its main Agamic source is the *Siddhayogesvarimata Tantra* of which the *Maliniviyottara Tantra* is a concise form.

The Trika School is so called because of its conception of several triads or threesomes it accepts as the central point around which its doctrine, system of worship and practice revolve. The primary triad comprises the three goddesses Para, Parapara and Aparapara, representing various levels of Reality. Then there is the triad of the *Agamas Siddha*, *Namaka* and *Malini* out of the 92 *Agamas* it recognizes. It is also said

to represent the essence of the three modes of knowing Reality, — non-dual (*abheda*), mono-dual (*bhedabheda*) and dual (*bheda*). The most significant triad is that of *nara* (conditioned human being seeking liberation), Shakti, the cosmic creative principle and Shiva, the Supreme Being, whose interrelationship it seeks to explore — *Nara-Sakti-Sivatmakam trikah*. It is its vision of the intimate relationship of Man, World and God that makes Trika Shaivism a unique philosophy. The basic concept of the Trika, as the entire system of non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir is popularly called, is that Shiva as universal consciousness is the ground and essence of everything, the highest reality. His creative and active power Shakti is the source from which the whole phenomenal world together with all its entities has emanated. There is nothing that exists outside consciousness, which though one also appears in the form of diversity. Being a manifestation of absolute consciousness, the world is not only real but also divine. Kashmir Shaivism is thus an affirmative philosophy that celebrates life and validates the world.

Eminent Western scholar Alexis Sanderson speaks of three major phases in the evolution of Trika.¹⁰ The initial phase, characterized by a system of ritual, constitutes of the *Siddhayogesvari mata* and related tantras “which teach of the cult of the three goddesses alone.” Then this phase is “transferred and subsumed” with the cult of Kali beyond the level of outer ritual. Finally, there is the “*Pratyabhijñā*-based” Trika, a new tradition which commenced with Vasugupta’s *Sivasutra* and Kallata’s *Spandakarika*. It found its culmination in Abhinavagupta’s three major works: the *Tantraloka*, the *Malinivijaya-vartika* and the *Paratrimśika Vivarana*. In all these he expounds the doctrine and practice of the Trika on the basis of the *Malinavijayottara Tantra* mixed with Kula elements, eventually developing “a more concentrated form of Trika worship, which focuses only on *Para*.”¹¹ Sanderson writes:

“The third phase of Trika claims to be summation of and key to all Shaiva traditions, both ‘orthodox’ and ‘heterodox’ (i.e. the Bhairavatantras, Kaulism and the Krama). After Abhinavagupta and his pupil Ksemaraja, the third phase of the Trika spread to the Tamil country. There it provided the theoretical basis for and influenced the form of Srividya.”¹²

The Krama School

Like Trika, the Krama is also one of the oldest schools of non-dual Shaivism in Kashmir. The word *krama* denotes sequence or progression

and Krama Shaivism, a system which believes in the “notion of cyclic reality,” maintains that the Ultimate Reality can be realized through a succession of stages. It perceives cosmic expansion as an unfolding of absolute consciousness through the gradual process of *srsti* or emanation, *stithi* or sustenance, *samhara*, or dissolution, *apohana* or obscuration and *anugraha* or grace, corresponding to the five-fold or four-fold functionality of Parama Shiva. The Krama system is believed to have originated towards the end of the 7th century in Uttarapitha, which most scholars identify with Kashmir. From there it spread to South India towards the end of the 7th century and other parts of the country. According to Jayaratha, the teachings of the Krama were transmitted by Shivananda, its earliest known teacher, to his three female disciples Keyurvavati, Madanika and Kalyanika, who in turn passed them on to Govindaraja, Bhanuka and Erakanatha.¹³

The school has a long history and a vast textual literature with its “scriptural prototypes” consisting principally of the *Devipañcasatika*, *Kramasadbhava*, *Kramarahasya*, *Kalikakrama* and *Kramasiddhi*. Alexis Anderson attributes the passage of Krama from its “scriptural phase to chartable history” to Jñananetra alias Shivananda and ascribes to him the period of the first half of the 9th century. The contribution of Abhinavagupata and Ksemaraja to the exposition of the Krama system is indeed immense. In the post-Abhinava era Maheshvarananda and Shitikantha carried its exegetical tradition forward to the 12th and 13th centuries with their significant contributions while Shivopadhyaya continued it to the 18th century.

Abhinava emerged as one of the greatest original thinkers of the Krama school and turned it into a mystic and metaphysical system rather than an esoteric and ritualistic process. He wrote the (now lost) commentary *Kramakeli* on Siddhanatha’s work the *Kramastotra* and also the commentary *Vivarana* on his own *Prakarana Stotra*. He also analyzed the Krama doctrine in several of his works including the *Tantraloka*, *Tantrasara*, *Malinivijayavartika*, *Paratimsika Vivarana*, and *Paryantapañcasika*. After the Abhinava era his closest disciple Ksemaraja emerged as the topmost interpreter of the Krama doctrine. All his works bear a strong impact of this cult. So strongly is he inclined towards the Krama that we find him interpreting even the Spanda philosophy in its terms. Maheshvarananda’s *Maharthamañjari* is also a very important 12th century Krama work written in the South and so is the *Cidgaganacandrika*, Shrivatsa’s commentary on

Siddhanatha's *Kramastotra*.

The Krama is a system deeply oriented towards Shakti, envisioning ultimate reality as feminine in essence and seeking intuitive realization of one's unity with it. The Krama is also known as *Kalinaya* for worshipping Kali as the highest Goddess of Consciousness, and also as the *Mahartha* or The Supreme Meaning. It is distinguished from other schools of Shaivism by its unique concept of twelve Kalis who are worshipped as phases in the cycle of cognitive energies (*sakticakra*) representing the subject, the means of knowledge and the object, or the cosmic *saktis* of knowledge (*jnana*), will (*iccha*) and action (*kriya*), engaged in the fourfold functionality of emanation (*srsti*), maintenance (*stithi*), withdrawal (*samhara*) and the state of ineffability (*anakhya*). In the centre of the *sakticakra* is Shiva as the Self or the *cakresa* or Lord of the Wheel. The yogi by contemplating on the wheel becomes liberated and identifying with *anuttrara* or the Absolute as the pair residing in the Heart of Consciousness experiences both *bhoga* and enjoyment of the senses and *ananda* or spiritual bliss.

The basic philosophical idea expounded by Krama is that of *bhedabheda* or unity in diversity, underscoring the basic identity of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness in its dynamic aspect as Shakti. The conception of *kala* or time, taken as a sequence of actions connecting the 'prior' and the 'subsequent,' holds an important place in the Krama doctrine which has been defined not in terms of "succession of time", but "succession as time" (*kalakrama*), to use Dr. Rastogi's words.¹⁴ Transcending time and realizing reality as *akrama* or the trans-sequential unity of phenomenal existence is regarded as the ultimate experience in the Krama system. It is not simply sequential time (*kalakrama*) but creative time signifying temporal as well as spatial succession (*desakrama*) in the context of *Kali Kalasankarsini* (The Destroyer of Time), as the absolute reality or supreme principle.

It is interesting to note that the Krama system presents its key concepts in terms of several pentads. These include *pañcavaha* or the five flows of "emanative spiritual energy" represented by the five goddesses Vyomavamesvari, Khecari, Digcari, Bhucari and Samharabhaksini, the *pañcaugha* or the five traditions comprising *Paraugha* or the orders of creation referring to the Highest tradition, *Divyaugha* to the divine, *Siddhaugha* to the perfected beings, *Manavaugha* to human beings, *Sisyaugha* or the lineage of disciples, *Gurupankti* or the lineage of preceptors, besides the five *cakras*, or

five cycles of cognitive energy symbolizing states of individualized consciousness, namely, *srsticakra* (the wheel of emission), *stithi cakra* (the circle of maintenance), *samharacakra* (the circle of dissolution), *anakhya cakra* (the circle of the ineffable), and *bhasa cakra* (the circle of luminosity). Transcending time and realizing reality as *akrama* or the trans-sequential unity of phenomenal existence is regarded as the ultimate experience in the Krama system.

The worshipper is enjoined upon to contemplate on these pentads as the psycho-physical structure of his being, consecrating his own body as the *pitha* or site of worship and seat of power. *Pañcavaha* is the basic pentad which is seen as the emanation of the set of five goddesses from *Vyomavamesvari* to *Bhucari*. The worshipper is to proceed to a five-phased worship of the goddesses, with each phase presided over by one of these very divinities and the worship enacting “the progress of cognition from the initial to terminal voidness.”¹⁵ This worship of the five deities presiding over the five voids is reflective of the “liberative mysticism” of all forms of the Krama system induced through “assimilative worship of Kali (The Self) in and as a ‘sequence’ (*karma*) of sets of diviner powers,” to put it in the words of Sanderson.¹⁶ The combination of metaphysics and mysticism with ritual and esotericism is the distinguishing feature of Krama tantricism.

Kula School

The Kula school is one of the most important components of the non-dualist Kashmiri Shaivite tradition. Abhinavagupta emphasizes its distinct character by setting it apart from other Tantric systems and designating it as *kulaprakriya* or ‘Kula procedure.’ He presents it as a sophisticated system of thought and practice, whose teachings are the very essence of Shaivite monism. According to Muller-Ortega, it is “not exactly a school” but rather a lineage which is linked to the Hatha Yogins, the Siddhas and the Natha Yogins.¹⁷ In fact, *Kula* tendencies are present in other systems of non-dual Shaivism tradition like the *Trika* and *Krama* also. The term ‘*kula*’ means a family, a clan or a grouping, the emphasis being not so much the merger or dissolution of individuality as on suffusing it with the idea of totality. In actual terms it refers to the absolute Reality manifesting itself in its dynamic feminine aspect of Shakti as cosmic diversity. This manifest reality or Shakti can be called *kula* from which the categories emanate and, “in

contradistinction,” Shiva, who transcends the manifested universe, is termed as *akula*.

The word *kula* also implies *yogini kula* or the clan or group of the *yoginis*, who are shown throughout Tantric literature as surrounding Bhairava and bestowing direct experience to the worshipper. *Kula* can also be taken to mean the totality of cosmic powers, with everything, even the smallest unit of the manifested reality – the whole universe, the corporeal body, the individual person, all objects — forming a part of it. Anyone who enters into the “family,” therefore, enters “the totality of things.” *Kula* thus is the ‘embodied cosmos,’ to put it in the words of Muller-Ortega. “Each manifested unit of reality,” Muller-Ortega writes, “is essentially a contraction (*samkoca*) of the totality, while simultaneously the whole, due to its freedom, remains un-contracted.”¹⁸ The highest goal for man according to the *Kula* system is to achieve the thought-free (*nirvikalpa*) state and experience the bliss (*ananda*) of the paired union (*samghatta*) of Shiva and Shakti, *Kula* and *Akula*. In *Kula* terminology, this union of Shiva and Shakti is called *kaula*, a relationship that is one of harmony and repose.

A clear historical record of the *Kula* and its textual tradition is not available. In his *Tantraloka*, Abhinavagupta links its origins with the mythical lineage of Trayambaka, the preceptor who was asked by sage Durvasa to teach the Shaiva doctrine of non-duality on the instructions of Srikantha, an incarnation of Shiva, while Amardaka was asked to spread the doctrine of duality and Srinatha that of duality-cum-non-duality. Trayambaka’s daughter founded another school known as Ardhatryamabaka, which has been identified as the *Kaula* tradition. Abhinavagupta also mentions the name of the legendary Siddha Macchandanatha or Matsyendranatha as the first expounder of the *Kula* doctrine in historical times proper. Macchanda, who is said to have been imparted the knowledge of the doctrine in a dream, is supposed to have lived in the 5th century. Post- Macchanda, the tradition was carried on in the South by Sumatinatha, the guru of Somdeva, who in turn was the guru of Shambhunatha, the great teacher of Abhinavagupta who belonged to Jalandhara Pitha and from whom Abhinava learnt the secrets of *Kula* and *Trika*.

There is not as much emphasis in the tradition on production of written texts as on practical experience. Yet there are some Tantric texts which tell us about sect and its doctrines. In addition to the *Vamkesvarmata-tantra* (available in the concise form of *Malinivijaya*

and *Malinivijayottara* tantras), *Paratrimśika* (the extant part of the *Rudrayamala Tantra*), *Jñānārṇava Tantra*, *Nitya-sodasikārṇava*, *Kalikula* etc. mentioned by K. C. Pandey, Dr. Rastogi lists them as the *Kulārṇava*, *Kuloddisa*, *Kulacudamāni*, *Kularatnamāla* etc. which, according to him, do not have much to do with the exposition of the *Kula* doctrines as such despite the prefix ‘*kula*’ attached to their names. There are also the *Kulagahvara*, *Kula-mulāvtara*, *Kula-kamala* and *Rjuvimāri*, a gloss on the *Nitya-sodasikārṇava*, cited by Silburn. Yet most of these exist in the form of only references and it is difficult, as Rastogi points out, to point out any specific authoritative texts of the *Kula* tradition proper. However, besides two very important commentaries on the *Paratrimśika*, the *Paratrimśika Vivaraṇa* and *Paratrimśika Laghuvṛtti*, Abhinavagupta has written extensively and authoritatively to explain the *Kula* doctrines and practice in his *Tantraloka* and other writings. In fact it is in their light that we can understand and analyze some of the fundamental characteristics of the *Kula* system.

The key terms constituting the conceptual framework of the *Kula* tradition besides *kula* and *akula* are *kaula*, *kauliki siddhi*, *kauliki sakti* and *kaulini*. While *kauliki sakti* is the familial power which has the capacity to emanate the cosmic ‘family’ or *kula*, the blissful paired union (*yamala bhava*) of *kauliki sakti* and *akula* is the supreme *kaula* principle (*parama kaula tattva*). *Kauliki siddhi* is the state of absorption into the supreme *kaula* principle. Abhinavagupta places the *Kula* Method under *Sambhavopaya* or the method of realization that relates to immediate attainment of the state of Lord Shiva. It is the thought-free *nirvikalpa* or non-dual condition which can be attained only as a result of strong *saktipāta* or descent of divine energy, indicating that *Kula* practice is meant only for highly advanced practitioners.

The *Kula* tradition accords a great importance to the human body as an instrument of enlightenment. Equating the body with the whole cosmos, it teaches that all the divinities, all the powerful forces, the eight divine Mothers (*asta matrka*), all reside in it. As Abhinavagupta says, all the paths, all the movements of time and space fill it,¹⁹ making it an “object of contemplation, of adoration.” These divinities within the body, he says, can be perceived by means of mantras.²⁰ By this *Kula* method of bodily enlightenment, the worshipper can master the divinities, the powerful cosmic forces operating within. Strongly non-dual in outlook, the *Kula* path has the arousal of *kundalini sakti*, or the

coiled power of consciousness, which is both a cosmic force and bodily energy, as its basic practice along with *mantravyapti* or 'pervasion of mantra'.

Kula worship is characterized by the secret left-hand practices associated with what is widely known as the Five M's i.e. offering of meat, fish and wine to the Deity and indulgence in ritual sex. This reveals an antinomian and anti-conventional character of the cult. The sexual aspect is an essential part of its group rituals which, however, have an internal symbolic level also, apart from the external level, as Abhinavagupta explains in his teachings. The ultimate purpose of these group practices, Muller-Ortega points out, is achievement of full freedom and "expansion of consciousness to its fullest possible extent."²¹ Overcoming the dichotomy between pure and impure, body and spirit, sacred and profane, enjoyment and liberation, the Kaula practitioner aims at recognizing his real nature as "blissful inner consciousness" rather than running after mere hedonistic enjoyment or gratification of the senses. *Ananda* is the key concept, which is an experience having many meanings and many levels, the highest being *jagdananda*, or universal bliss into which everything finally submerges. Bliss is experienced in the union of Shiva and Shakti, a relationship characterized by harmony (*samarasya*) and freedom (*svatantrata*).

The Spanda School

Two schools whose antecedents are not historically traceable to the *agamas* came into existence in the process of philosophical systemization of Shaiva monism of Kashmir, namely the *Spanda* and the *Pratyabhijña* schools. The preceptorial lineage of both, however, is regarded as belonging to the Trika system. Both these are idealistic schools, and yet despite difference of doctrine and terminology, both share a common philosophical ground and hold consciousness to be of definitive nature of absolute reality. The Spanda school derives its name from its root text, the *Spanda Karika* (Stanzas of Vibration) or *Spanda Sūtras* (Aphorisms of Vibration), which is ascribed to Vasugupta or his disciple, Bhatta Kallata. It is said to have been written basically to explain and elucidate some of the concepts present in the pithy aphorisms of the *Sivasūtras*, in which we see the beginnings of Kashmir Shaivism as we know it today. The *Sivasūtras* are said to have been "inspirationally" revealed by Vasugupta. Shiva himself is said to have told him in a dream to go to the Mahadeva Mountain in Kashmir where he would

find a message for the whole mankind. On going to the indicated spot at the foot of the mountain, Vasugupta found Shiva's *sutras* inscribed on a rock, as told. The secrets of the seventy-seven odd aphorisms, which consist of the essential principles of Shaiva monism in an abridged form, needed further clarification and expansion. The teachings spread through a vast commentarial literature, in particular Ksemaraja's excellent exposition through his two works *Spanda Sandoha* (*The Essence of Vibration*) and *Spanda Nirnaya* (*Determination of Vibration*). There are two more surviving commentaries—*Spanda Dipika* or *The Lamp of Spanda* by Bhagvatopala and the *vivrtti* or extensive commentary by Rajanaka Ramakantha. While Abhinavagupta has not written any commentary directly on these *Spanda* texts, references to the term *spanda* are replete in his writings.

The term *spanda* means the spontaneous vibration or pulsation of universal consciousness which is perceived as a subtle or slight movement —“*kiñcicalanam*,” as Abhinavagupta calls it — “within the fundamental core of the absolute.” It is not a motion set in time and space but it conveys the sense of an internal dynamism of the Supreme Reality itself which gives rise to the process of external manifestation. As Mark S. G. Dyczkowski says, it can, therefore, be described as a movement that “proceeds from the inner to the exterior domain of its manifestation which is created as it moves outward and is destroyed when it returns to the inner state of undifferentiated unity.”²²

Abhinavagupta defines the specific nature of the *spanda* vibration as “an overflowing” (*ucchalana*),²³ in the Self, which creates a slight motion giving rise to “a wave of the ocean of consciousness, without which there is no consciousness at all.” This *ucchalana* or overflowing “conveys the sense of a continuous dynamism within the absolute reality, a perpetual motion towards itself,” as Ortega-Muller puts it.²⁴ It presents absolute reality both in its inner thought-free state as well as its urge to manifest. *Spanda* is thus a creative movement, an internal movement from the “uncreated, un-manifested” state of the supreme consciousness to the state of external manifestation, a movement from Being to Becoming. The transition from one to another is a continual process (*satatodita*). Dyczkowski describes Being and Becoming as “the inner and outer faces of universal consciousness which becomes spontaneously manifest through its inherent power.”²⁵

The *Spandakarika* uses the terms *unmesa* (unfolding) and *nimesa* (involution) to explain this pulsating movement of consciousness from

the inner to the outer state of reality and back. The universe, it says, comes into existence when Shiva 'opens His eyes' to see it, as it were, and is dissolved when He 'closes His eyes' to see His own nature. The two phases, also described as *vikasa* or expansion and *samkoca* or contraction, are actually one. Shiva Himself manifests as diversity of the phenomenal world through His power of pulsation and yet does not sunder His unity. The *Spanda* yogi too sees the oneness of the two phases – expansion of the Self identified as Shiva assuming the form of the world of diversity and its contraction as withdrawal back into his own undivided nature – as the cosmic rhythm of the inner and outer movements of Shiva's vibrating power.

Spanda operates both in the form of particular pulsations of I-consciousness or *visesa-spanda* at the microcosmic level and as universal vibration consciousness or *samanya-spanda* at the macrocosmic or universal level. Shiva as internal reality holding together the outer manifestations is the ground of both these aspects.

According to the *Spanda* doctrine, by experiencing the vibration of universal consciousness, the yogi realizes his own essential nature (*svasvabhava*) as Shiva. He then learns to recognize his own inner *spanda* energy in the outer world which flows in all cognitions and activities. And thus through his perception of the totality of existence, he enjoys the bliss of undifferentiated awareness, free of any thought constructs (*nirvikalpa*). The yogi finds that the *spanda* energy which he is trying to experience has another name – *svatantrya*, Shiva's creative freedom. Shiva manifests Himself as the phenomenal world or dissolves it according to His free will. It is all His divine play.

The Pratyabhijñā School

With the emergence of the schools of *Spanda* and *Pratyabhijñā*, Kashmir Shaivism stepped out of the shadow of Agamic tradition into the realm of mystic experience and philosophical speculation. The school of *Pratyabhijñā* or Self-recognition represents the highest point in the development of the non-dual philosophical thought in Kashmir Shaiva tradition. It is a systematic and rational philosophy of absolute consciousness developed in the 9th century. Somananda, the pupil of Vasugupta, first formulated its foundational tenets in his *Sivadrsti* (*The Vision of Siva*), and also wrote a *vritti* or commentary on it, which is now lost. He presents the non-dual Shaiva philosophical standpoint even as he engages in strong polemical attacks on grammarians and

Buddhist logicians as well as on adversarial philosophical systems like the classic *darsanas*, whose viewpoints he refutes logically. Somananda is, therefore, called “*tarkasya karta*” or originator of reasoning in the Shaiva tradition. It is, however, his disciple Utpaladeva’s *Isvara-pratyabhijñā-karika* (Verses on the Recognition of the Lord), a profound text systematically positing the basic tenets of *Pratyabhijñā* philosophy, which became its main scripture, and from which the school derived its name. Utpaladeva refers to *Pratyabhijñā* as “*navamarga*” or the ‘New Path’,²⁶ and justifiably so as its source cannot be directly traced to the scriptural tradition of the *agamas*. Utpaladeva also wrote a commentary on his own work to clarify his views. While Somananda concerned himself with refuting dualistic notions of other philosophical systems even as he strongly argued in favour of non-dual Shaivism, Utpaladeva built up the *Pratyabhijñā* doctrine as a critique of the Buddhist doctrine of *Anattavada* or non-self. Abhinavagupta further amplified different aspects of the doctrine in his two important commentaries, the *Isvara-pratyabhijñā Vimarsinā (Laghvi Vrtti)* and the *Isvara-pratyabhijñā-vivrtti Vimarsinî (Brhati Vrtti)*.

Ksemaraja, Abhinavagupta’s closest disciple, also gave a very succinct exposition of the doctrine in his work *Pratyabhijñā Hrdayam*. These and other commentarial works authentically interpreted and analyzed the concepts of self-recognition, perfect-consciousness, appearance, *svatanatrya* etc. that Somananda and Utpaladeva had introduced for the first time. Abhinava synthesized the *Spanda* and *Pratyabhijñā* doctrines to present an authentic version of non-dualist Shaiva thought.

The term *Pratyabhijñā* is generally taken to mean “recognition” or self-recognition. Often referred to as the “philosophy proper of the Trika,” the *Pratyabhijñā* doctrine emphasizes the non-duality of Shiva as absolute consciousness. Madhavacharya underscored its importance by mentioning it as a significant philosophical system in his *Saravadasana Samgraha*, a classical work on the history of Indian religious philosophy. The central concept of the *Pratyabhijñā* is that liberation consists of the ultimate recognition of one’s own true identity as Shiva through self-awareness. The importance of the doctrine lies in the fact that it encompasses all the fundamental features common to different schools of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism and presents them as a coherent system of philosophy and theology. *Pratyabhijñā* does not just mean memory – remembrance of something that is already known;

it is recognition in the sense of knowledge of one's real identity, which is of key importance in Kashmir Shaivism.

The Pratyabhijña School uses the symbolism of light to explain the nature of the absolute. It describes the ultimate reality, or Shiva, as *prakasa* or the light of universal consciousness and identifies *vimarsa* or reflective awareness of that primordial light as Shakti. It is *vimarsa*, the "self-referential capacity," or the power of consciousness, which makes the "light of consciousness conscious of itself," explains Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega. "Shakti," says Muller-Ortega, "is responsible for the process of manifestation of all finite appearances within the infinite light." "The self-referential capacity of consciousness," he adds, "lies at the basis of the yogic *sadhana*."²⁷

Pratyabhijña conceives of Reality as *prakasa-vimarsamaya*, transcendent and immanent at the same time, the relation between transcendent Shiva and immanent Shakti being one of *samarasya* or perfect harmony. The two are in no way separate realities, but constitute poles of the same reality. *Prakasa*, the shining Light of Consciousness, not only makes all things appear, bringing countless forms into existence and imparting to them their specific nature and identity. The One appears as diversity, manifesting the whole phenomenal universe in the "vibrating radiance" of this Light, and withdrawing all phenomena into itself. Consciousness, however, is not a lifeless or inert light like that of a crystal, but a 'living light' that reflects upon its own nature and forms the substratum of all that is manifested. Shaiva philosophers like Utapaladeva and Abhinavagupta conceive of consciousness as an absolutely clean, polished mirror with the world and all its phenomena appearing as reflected images within it. These reflections in a mirror correspond to outer objects, appearing as distinct from it and from one another. Yet this is not the case, they are not so. They have no existence of their own. They are not unreal or illusory either. In case of consciousness, the reflections are not of any object outside the mirror but images of the original object which itself is a reflection created by consciousness. All the manifest forms emerge from consciousness and ultimately rest in it. Consciousness itself is aware of its being the only reality. This self-reflective awareness, according to the Theory of Recognition, is what *Vimarsa* means. It is the power by which consciousness can reflect on itself and on all the elements that appear within it.

Kashmir Shaivism is the aggregate of the different viewpoints

that developed within the fold of non-dualistic Shaiva tradition of Kashmir. The four schools mentioned here were in fact contiguous as they emerged almost side by side. “While not identical,” says Muller-Ortega, “these groups bear a strong family resemblance; in many cases, the differences seem to rest on rather minor points of doctrinal emphasis, or even on the preference for specific technical terms or ritual practices not favoured by one of the other groups.”²⁸

Abhinavagupta

Kashmir Shaivism touched its peak heights in the sophisticated philosophical writings of Abhinavagupta, one of the greatest figures of India’s philosophical and cultural history. Abhinavagupta lived in Kashmir from the middle of the 10th well into the 11th century. Obtaining mastery over every branch of knowledge available to him, he emerged as a thinker and teacher of the highest order. For the extraordinary spiritual powers he possessed from the very beginning, it was believed that he had attained the state of Bhairava himself. Among the three sources of knowledge: the guru, the scriptures and experience, Abhinava laid greatest emphasis on experience. To share his vast knowledge and spiritual insights, Abhinava took to writing and authored more than 44 works. Of these, 23 have been published. These include monumental works like the *Tantraloka*, a virtual encyclopaedia encompassing almost every aspect of Tantric Shaivism, and the *Paratrimśika Vivarana*, an exposition on phonematic emanation. The two form the “most sophisticated and comprehensive expression” of his teachings. Among his other philosophical works, two are regarded as most important: the *Isvarapratibhijñā Vimasarsini* (*Laghvi Vimasarsini*) and the *Isvarapratibhijñā Vivṛtti Vimasarsini* (*Brhati Vimasarsini*). While the first is a commentary on Utpaladeva’s *Isvarapratibhijñā Karika*, the second is a commentary on Utpala’s own commentary on the work. *Malini-vijaya-vartika*, *Tantrasara*, and *Paramarthasara* are some of his other major extant works. The *MVV* is a commentary on the first verse of the *Malini Vijayottara Tantra*. Abhinava also wrote a unique commentary on the *Gita* from the Shaiva perspective entitled *Bhagvadgītārtha Samgraha*. The *Tantrasara* is a shorter form of the *Tantraloka*, while the *Paramarthasara* outlines the essential tenets of Trika for people of lesser power of comprehension. Besides these, there are his beautiful hymnodies like *Bhairava Stotra* (The Bhairava Hymn) and *Dehastha-devata-cakra Stotram* (Hymn to the Circle of Deities in the Body).

These works represent the pinnacle of the exegesis and hermeneutics of non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir.

Abhinavagupta is also recognized as the most authoritative exponent of Indian aesthetic thought and theory of art creation. His two important works of Shaiva aesthetics, the *Dhvanyaloka Locana* and the *Abhinavabharati* made the *rasa-dhvani* theory integral to Indian aesthetical thinking.

Madhuraja Yogin, a South Indian itinerant ascetic and a disciple of Abhinavagupta informs that Abhinavagupta was unanimously recognized by all Shaiva sects of the time – Siddhanta, Vama, Yamala, Bhairava, Kula, Trika and Ekavira – as their spiritual head at the great conclave of spiritualists, yogis, *siddhas* and *yoginis* held in Srinagar during his visit. As a philosopher Abhinavagupta not only contributed significantly to all schools of non-dual Shaiva thought, he also synthesized and integrated these schools, bringing them together under a single exegetical scheme.

Some Characteristic Aspects of Kashmir Shaivism

As a philosophical system, Kashmir Shaivism conceives of the Ultimate Reality in terms of pure, undifferentiated consciousness, which it calls Parama Shiva. Consciousness, it holds, is the ground and essence of everything and vibrates in every atom of the universe. Paramashiva's creative and dynamic power, Shakti is the source from which the whole phenomenal world and all its entities have emanated. There is nothing that exists outside consciousness, which though one appears to be many. Being a manifestation of absolute consciousness, the world is not only real but also divine.

An important aspect of Kashmir Shaivism is that it does not accept any dichotomy between *jñāna* or knowledge and *kriya* or action. It recognizes both as two aspects of Shiva's inherent power, Shakti. What this implies is that Shiva as absolute consciousness is both the 'knower' and the 'doer'. He is the Supreme Subject and knows that he knows. And this knowing is an act which he constantly performs as his powers of will, knowledge and action are one. The unity of the knower or the subject of knowledge (*pramatr*), knowing or the means of knowledge (*pramana*) and the known or the object of knowledge (*prameya*), all being held together by *pramiti* or the basis of knowledge is one of the fundamental doctrines that mark Kashmir Shaivism. Awareness or knowledge (*jñāna*) is the very nature of Shiva for Shiva is the I-

consciousness of all. There is nothing that is separate from Shiva, the universe being but his self-manifestation or extension (*prasara*). Shiva or the absolute is thus independent as well as non-dual and the only reality. His self-awareness or consciousness of his own self is his very first activity. As Shiva's creative and dynamic aspect, Shakti is known as *svatantrya* or free will. She manifests and dissolves and manifests the world again out of her free will. It is because of this that Shaivism is also known as *Svatantryavada*.

Shaiva texts give an interesting analogy to explain that Shiva though himself indeterminate and without form or variety, all variety comes from him. It is called *mayarandarasa nyaya* or the analogy of the liquid present inside the egg of a peacock. Though this liquid itself has no colour, it contains potentially all the colours and patterns of the peacock's splendid plumage. Similarly all things with all their diversity are present inside consciousness in a potential form.

Shiva's act of cosmic creation points to his complete freedom (*svatantrya*) to manifest variety out of his own consciousness without sundering his unity as the absolute. This is his spontaneous and natural activity (*kriya*). Unlike the absolute of Advaita Vedanta, Shiva is not portrayed in Kashmir Shaivism as inert and passive. In Abhinavagupta's words he is the vibrating, pulsating, wondrous light of consciousness which "unfolds itself everywhere" and makes "all the varied forms of the universe to appear." Shiva's conative, creative power, his natural dynamism is what in Shaiva terms takes the form of Shakti, or the Goddess. *Svatantrya* (freedom), *vimarsa* (self-awareness), *spanda*, (vibration), *पूर्णता* (fullness), are all her various names. The Goddess is no way different from Shiva, as Abhinavagupta makes abundantly clear.²⁹ As Shiva's inherent power, Shakti is shown to have to have two aspects: the Power of Knowledge or *jñāna sakti* and the Power of Action or *kriya sakti*. These two powers are not separate or incompatible but complimentary aspects of Shiva's infinite power. Besides "power to know" and "power to act," there is another aspect of power that Shakti possesses – *iccha sakti* or the "Power to Will." In fact, there are two more denominations of Shakti in the Tantric tradition – *cit sakti* or "Power of Consciousness" and *ananda sakti* or "Power of Bliss," taking the total to five. These five are actually different names of Shakti given to her for the different roles she plays.

Kashmir Shaivism conceives of Reality as Shiva and Shakti "united in the oneness of pure consciousness." Simultaneously they open out

and evolve in the form of the universe, both mirroring each other as transcendence and immanence. It is here that the individual soul, *nara*, the third side of the triad, comes into the picture. The Kashmir Shaivite holds that Shiva is his essential nature, as of all things, but ignorance of this makes him suffer limitation, restricting his freedom of will, knowledge and action. He becomes “Shiva with amnesia.”³⁰ Still he is a “finite symbol of the infinite” and realization of his true identity by him can restore his Shivahood to him.

Cosmic Manifestation

The drama of cosmic manifestation unfolds with pure, undifferentiated consciousness opening out and evolving spontaneously into the universe through a process of self-limitation or contraction. These stages or categories (*tattvas*) number 36 in all, according to the Shaiva theory of cosmogenesis, ranging from the innermost states of subjectivity to the outermost objective forms of existence. The first five *tattvas* or categories are shown as belonging to belong to the realm of “pure creation” where there still is integration between the subject and the object. The highest among these are Shiva and Shakti, the Supreme Self and his power of self-awareness, both together representing the state of pure I-consciousness and expressing the sense of *abheda* or total non-duality. In these two states there is no objectiveness, only the awareness of *aham* or “I am” prevails, unfolding *cit sakti* or the power of consciousness, and *anandasakti* or the power of bliss. Then comes the category called Sadasiva where the idea of *idam* or ‘this’ shows up for the first time. Yet, ‘I-consciousness’ still prevails over ‘this’-consciousness’ with the dominant experience of the soul being *aham-idam* or ‘I am this’-consciousness I. Here *jñanasakti* or the power of knowledge predominates. Paul E. Murphy compares it to “the desire of an artist as the inspiration to paint a canvas arises within him or to the faint outlining sketch on the canvas before paint is applied.”³¹ The category of *Isvara* comes next which corresponds to the awareness *idam-aham* or ‘this I am.’ Here the consciousness of ‘this’ submerges the consciousness of ‘I’, and *icchāsakti* or the power of will prevails. The subject and the object are both clearly discernible in a state of perfect balance in the category *Suddhavidya* or ‘Pure Knowledge.’ Here there is an equal stress on the awareness of *aham-idam* or ‘I am this (universe)’ and *idam-aham* or ‘this (universe) am I’ and *kriyasakti* or the power of action is emphasized. With this the categories belonging

to the realm of 'Pure Creation' comes to an end and the domain of *Maya* or self-obscuration begins. This is what Dyczkowski calls "the sequence of descent into matter."³²

Maya is the principle of limitation and obscuration that separates subject from object, the "dotted line" below which the "Impure Creation" begins creating contraction and confusion. With *Maya* taking the centre-stage, Shiva 'looses' his *svatantrya* and becomes *anu* or limited individual with restricted powers of cognition and agency.

It is Shiva himself who though beyond *Maya* initiates this process of self-coagulation (*rodhana*), as without it cosmic creation is not possible at all. He suffers atomicity of his own free will to become the bound person because Shiva enjoys it as part of his sporting activity, his Lila or play of assuming diverse forms. But even while performing his part as the Cosmic Actor, Shiva remains Shiva, unaffected by limitation.

But the *Maya* of Kashmir Shaivism is not the *Maya* of Advaita Vedanta, an indefinable and inexplicable cosmic principle that creates the world of illusion superimposed on the reality of *Brahman*. *Maya* in Kashmir Shaivism is Shiva's own power of self-limitation that splits universal consciousness into subject and object and creates the delusion of separate identity.

Maya accomplishes its act of obscuration with the help of sheaths or coverings called *kañcukas*. These evolutes of *Maya* are five in number (six including *Maya* itself) and are called *kala* or limited action / aptitude, *vidya* or limited knowledge, *raga* or feeling of attachment, *kala* or the power of time and *niyati* or power of natural law. As *Maya* plays her part through these *pañca-kañcukas* or five powers of obscuration to mask Shiva's "undifferentiated luminosity," the Supreme Shiva enters the spatio-temporal sphere of finitude "through myriad diverse manifestations." Forgetting his infinite nature, he becomes the limited individual soul, bound and bereft of the ability to recognize his predicament. The *kañcukas*, it must be noted, are not ontological but conceptual entities.

The remaining 25 categories of manifestation have been adopted by Kashmiri Shaivites straight from *Samkhya* with some interpretative changes here and there. Beginning with *Purusa* or the Person – limited consciousness – and *Prakrti* or Nature, the chain ends at *prthvi* or the earth. While *Purusa* is the witness of all activities of objectivity, *Prakrti* is the principle of materiality. *Prakrti* provides *Purusa* the three *gunas*

or qualities that are the basic constituents of experience – *sattva* (purity, goodness), *rajas* (passion, activity) and *tamas* (darkness, ignorance). Both *Purusa* and *Prakrti*, according to Kashmir Shaivism, are manifestations of Shiva and Shakti. *Prakrti* is the primordial principle of materiality and from it the remaining categories of manifestation evolve. First we have the triad of *manas*, or mind, *buddhi* or intellect and *ahamkara* or ego – the apparatus of subtle mental activities. From the threesome evolve *jñanendriyas* or five perceptive faculties: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, and *karmendriyas* or the five motor faculties: voice, hands, nose, feet, anus and genitals. Lastly, there are the five subtle *tattvas* or the *tanmatras*: sound as such, touch as such, sight as such, taste as such and smell as such, and five gross *tattvas* or the *mahabhutas* : ether (*akasa*), air (*vayu*), fire (*agni*), water (*jala*) and earth (*prthvi*).

With all these *Samkhya* categories incorporated, the process of cosmic manifestation is complete with consciousness moving from inner to outer and subtle to gross and grosser form in its “descent into matter.” Conversely, in the case of “ascent to consciousness,” the movement is from the gross to subtle and subtler forms of consciousness.

Abhasavada

This leads us to another important doctrine of Kashmir Shaivism, namely *Abhasavada* or reflective manifestation. Everything that appears is, according to this theory, identified with the all-inclusive universal consciousness and is an appearance (*abhasa*) of the manifested form of the absolute. Appearances are like the waves of ocean or like reflections in the mirror, they arise and submerge where they arise from and so cannot be said to have an independent existence. They are semblances but they have a real basis. Consciousness can appear in any form by its own free will. The whole universe with all its diversity exists in the form of a pulsating potency within absolute consciousness, just as the tree exists in a seed. They, therefore, cannot be regarded as unreal. It is in this way that Kashmir Shaiva philosophy chooses to explain the so-called change that transforms the absolute into the phenomenal world of experience. The diverse appearances do not in any way compromise the oneness of the absolute consciousness. But though an object may not undergo any change, it is perceived differently by different perceivers. This accounts for the variety of our experience.

According to the *Abhasavada* doctrine of Kashmir Shaivism, all objects are existent within the all-inclusive Universal Self as *abhasa* just as reflections in a mirror. The numerous reflections cast into the mirror do not affect its reality in any way. The reflections cannot be said to be unreal even though they may be regarded as transitory. All categories of existence (*tattvas*) from Shiva to the earth are *abhasas* as they are manifestations of the highest reality. The appearances, from Kashmiri Shaiva point of view “are real in the sense that they are aspects of the ultimately real.”³³ According to exponents of the *Vivarta* theory of Vedanta, however, they are creation of *Maya* and as such nothing more than “names and forms” (*nama-rupa matra*) and can in no way be regarded as real as there is no essence (*satta*) in them. Kashmir Shaivism rejects the conception of *Maya* as an inexplicable illusory power—“*sadasadbhyam anirvacya*,” regarding it as a Shakti of Parama Shiva which veils or obscures the real nature of Shiva as a result of which he imposes limitations upon his own self and becomes *anu*, making manifestation possible. Since all appearances have emanated from Shiva himself, the ultimate reality, they are real and rest eternally in his infinite consciousness, though not in their phenomenal form.

Bondage and Liberation : The Theory of the Three *Malas* and the Ignorance Factor

The human individual is Shiva himself in bondage. After going through the sweep of the 36 *tattvas*, he suffers due to the process of self-limitation or contraction set into motion by *Maya*. Under the spell of self-imposed obscuration, he forgets his real nature as Shiva and is reduced to a state where his powers of will, knowledge and action are extremely limited and vitiated. Caught up in the whirl of karma, he loses all his freedom due to limitations arising from delusion and ignorance. The notion that ignorance is the cause of bondage and can be removed only after acquiring knowledge is supported by all systems of Indian philosophy. But in Kashmir Shaivism ignorance does not necessarily mean lack of knowledge but wrong and limited knowledge which hinders us from an insight into the reality of things – the non-duality of consciousness. However, it is regarded as a kind of stain or impurity without removing which it is impossible for embodied beings to liberate themselves.

Abhinavagupta posits two kinds of ignorance — and correspondingly two kinds of knowledge. These are spiritual ignorance or *paurusa ajñana* and intellectual ignorance or *baudha ajñana*. Abhinava defines *paurusa ajñana* as *atmani anatmabodha* or the experience of non-self in the self, and *baudha ajñana* as *anatmani atmabodha* or experience of self in non-self. We are led to think of duality as the real state of existence and lose our sense of unity with the rest of the world. This state of ignorance or restricted vision that makes it difficult for us to recognize the truth is called ***mala*** (stain or impurity) in Kashmir Shaiva terminology. According to Kashmir Shaivites there are three such *malas* or impurities: *anava mala*, *mayiya mala* and *karma mala*, each working havoc at our level of existence and causing a contraction of our powers of will, thought and action.

Anava mala is the impurity of individuality which makes the individual soul to identify itself as a limited being. The impurity is responsible for giving rise in the individual soul a sense of being imperfect and incomplete due to its failure to recognize its *purvata* or fullness, which in turn results in a craving for something it desires but has not acquired as it is outside itself. It is primordial impurity that causes the other two impurities as well. According to Utpaladeva, *anava mala* operates in two ways: “there is no freedom of consciousness” and “there is no consciousness of freedom.”³⁴ It gives rise to a sense of self in non-self as one is not aware of one’s nature.

Mayiya mala reinforces *anava mala*, the impurity of limited individuality and gives rise to a perception of duality and diversity everywhere. This sense of difference is caused by the limitation of individual soul’s freedom of knowledge which separates him from the rest of the world. In a way all the impurities are the products of *Maya* and can be as such called *mayiya mala*. Pointing to this Abhinavagupta writes :

“The name *mayiya mala* given to the impurity of seeing difference is just a name; all three *malas* are also *mayiya* by virtue of being products of *maya*.”³⁵

Karma mala is the impurity pertaining to karma or action that comes into play when the individual soul acts in a state of ignorance and imperfection. Losing his freedom and will he is “prompted by desires and fears for his personal gain” and subjects himself to good and bad acts. This embroils him in the cycle of birth and deaths. According to Utpaladeva, “*Karma mala* is the action done when the

doer is ignorant of his real nature.”³⁶

We have seen how according to Kashmir Shaiva philosophy, Shiva obscures his real nature and takes the form of a human individual suffering from self-imposed limitations that result from a shrunken state of consciousness. The Shaiva thinkers like Abhinava blame it on ignorance, which they insist arises from three kinds of *mala* or impurity. There is no escape from this state of contracted consciousness or *samkoca* and its disastrous ramifications unless we recognize our real nature as Shiva again with the help of means that expand our consciousness. This for the Kashmir Shaivite is what liberation really constitutes of and his goal is to achieve it while alive and become a *jivanamukta*. Making it clear that one’s ‘true nature’ actually means “pure I-consciousness,” the inner core of one’s being, Abhinavagupta says, “*Mokso hi nama naivanyo svarupa prathanam hi tat*”³⁷— *moksa* is nothing but awareness of one’s innate nature. Kashmir Shaivism has a whole array of spiritual means, meditations, yogic practices for such a realization. There are 112 non-ritualistic meditations given in the *Vijñana Bhairava* alone. These yogic means to achieve liberation from the state of ignorance and duality take us on a kind of return journey through the grosser to the pure and subtler planes of existence back to the state of un-differentiation. In his *Tantraloka*, Abhinavagupta divides practice under four, or rather three, categories, which he calls *Jñanacatustaya* or *upayas*. Regarded as the most important elements of Shaiva praxis, these four *upayas* or means of liberation are: **Anavopaya** or Individual Means, **Saktopaya** or the Method of Sakti, **Sambhavopaya** or the Method of Sambhu and **Anupaya** or the No-Means or Null Method.

Of these four *upayas*, *Anavopaya* or the Individual Means, as the name suggests, is concerned with *anu*, the limited, atomized individual, and is therefore associated with the physical body. Various external practices at the level of physical effort come within the scope of this *upaya*. As Navjivan Rastogi points out “notions of mantra, *mudra*, diagrams and mental installation (*nyasa*) assume implicit importance at the plane of the *Anavopaya*.”³⁸ The *Saktopaya* or the Empowered Means is associated with mental activity in which the yogi resorts to contemplative meditation to purify thought. He uses *cit-sakti* to free himself of the thought-constructs arising out of ignorance. With the help of one *suddha vikalpa* or pure thought which the yogi holds in his mind, *asuddha vikalpa* or impure thought is eliminated by constant

contemplation and the true nature of the self is revealed. The *suddha vikalpa* could be a powerful thought such as, “I am omnipotent and omniscient Shiva.” The *Sambhavopaya* does not need any exertion, but only the visualization of one’s identity with Shiva without the interference of any thought constructs. The yogi in the realm of *Sambhavopaya*, subtly directs his power of will or *iccha* and his reflective consciousness to recognize that his state is no different from Shiva’s own state of *svatantrya*. It is therefore also called *icchopaya*. *Anupaya* is more a state of being than a means of liberation and requires no or little practice. It is based on direct intuitive insight into the supreme reality without any effort, with the yogi penetrating into his real nature in a state of uninterrupted awareness due to pure grace (*saktipata*) of the highest intensity. The yogi in the realm of *Anupaya*, therefore has just to be aware of his transcendent nature through the guru’s word, and repose in his own self. Nothing has to be done or achieved, says Abhinavagupta, no *udyama* or effort is needed as the goal and the means are the same.

Although all these four categories are regarded as what Abhinavagupta calls the “means of liberation,” it need not be implied, as Dyczkowski points out, that “there is just one means to realization belonging to each category, but rather all forms of spiritual discipline are based on one or the other of these principles.”³⁹ All these lead ultimately to the same goal, which is *samavesa* or realization of one’s true nature and mystical immersion or absorption in Shiva-consciousness. All are interrelated in a manner that they can be regarded as continuation or extension of one another. This four-fold *upaya-yoga* was systemized by Abhinavagupta in his *Tantraloka* as the authentic praxis of Kashmir Shaivism as “a unique feature of the Trika path.” The Yoga of Kashmir Shaivism though patterned on the eight-limbed (*astanga*) structure of Patañjali’s yoga is actually only six-limbed (*sdanga*) in structure. It eliminates *yama* and *niyama*, and gives absolutely new interpretation to *asana* and *pranayama*. Instead it posits the unique concept of *sattarka* or right reasoning. More potent than mere logical argument, *sattarka* is supposed to rid the mind of impure thought constructs and replace them with positive and powerful thoughts. It matures gradually to what is called *bhavana*, which according to Jaidev Singh connotes the sense of “creative contemplation.”⁴⁰ Making the use of “constructive imagination,” *bhavana* implants in the yogi’s mind a liberating idea like “*sarvamevedam ahameva*” or “I alone am all this.” Leading

ultimately to *suddha vidya*, or the “Pure Knowledge” which reveals to him his true identity as Shiva, this pure *vikalpa* (purifying thought) culminates in the state of *nirvikalpa* (thought-free) consciousness, rendering all external worship, *yaga, japa, homa, mudra, dhyana* etc. as superfluous. Ultimately all contradictions and polarities dissolve, leaving the yogi immersed in the bliss of experiencing universal pulsation of pure I-consciousness.

***Shaktipata* or the Descent of Divine Grace**

Kashmir Shaivism, does not, however, consider self-effort alone sufficient for the spiritual aspirant to achieve the desired goal. It holds *anugraha* or the descent of divine grace to be a decisive factor in removing the basic ignorance that transforms Shiva into *anu* or a limited individual. It is through bestowal of grace that he cuts the veil of self-imposed ignorance and restores his original divine nature. Known as *saktipata* in Shaiva terminology, this divine grace comes mysteriously, depending entirely on Shiva’s free will, and destroys all the *malas* or impurities that stain the individual soul. As it comes freely, there is no compulsion on the flow of grace from Shiva, who can shower it on anyone he chooses irrespective of his efforts or exertion in the field of spiritual discipline.

Saktipata or *anugraha* comes freely as an eternal act of grace on the part of Shiva, the highest source of power, and is essential to undo the effect of *nigraha* or the act of self-limitation that sets into motion the process of cosmic manifestation. Shiva does not have any personal motive in showering it nor does any particular spiritual effort on anybody’s part make him eligible to receive it. It has been described as *ahetuki* or unmotivated, without any cause, which, however does not mean that it comes without any regard of worthiness or that it is an arbitrary act.

It is said that of the three *malas* — *anava, mayiya* and *karma* — that envelope the individual soul with the help of *Maya* and its evolutes, the last two, viz. *mayiya* and *karma*, can be removed by spiritual practice, but *anava*, which is the fundamental *mala* as it cripples the individual soul by imposing the limitation of atomicity, can be overcome only by *saktipata*. *Saktipata* or the unmotivated descent of Shiva’s energy is a decisive factor and a “central fact” of Shaiva yoga. Though the divine grace showered by Shiva is qualitatively the same in the case of every recipient, it varies in intensity according to the capacity of the

individual recipient. Accordingly, Abhinavgupta has classified it under three main categories in *Tantraloka* – *tivra* or intense, *madhyama* or medium, and *manda* or mild. These can be further classified into nine or even twenty-seven types according to the permutations and combinations they make. The intensity of grace varies in proportion to the recipient's spiritual progress.

The Supreme Word and the Four Levels of Speech

Fundamental to the world view of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism is its theory of language according to which the whole drama of creation and dissolution and bondage and liberation is a linguistic process. As language is an essential expression of consciousness, it is an innate capacity of man. It can act as a "primary delusionary force" by concealing from us our real identity, as it does by formulating thought-constructs; it can also be a liberating force when it mirrors the reality of our life as a manifestation of universal consciousness. Shiva's awareness (*vimarsa*) of his infinite reality itself is a kind of "emitting." The process of this emission or manifestation is shown as occurring at four levels of speech or *vak* – *para*, *pasyanti*, *madhyama* and *vaikhari*. At the highest level it is identified as the *paravak* or the supreme word and is identified with the pure, reflective I-consciousness of Shiva (*aham vimarsa*) – a level where language is "a pure potentiality co-existent with Shiva's pure cosmic ideation." It is a level beyond speech and thought and yet the source of all language. The next level is that of *pasyanti vak*, literally "the word which sees something" or "visible speech." Here word and meaning are undivided and indistinguishable, with speech at the level of "mental image prior to thought." And then there is the level of *madhyama vak* or "intermediary speech." It is subtle, inner discourse, with speech not having taken the distinct shape of words yet. The final level in this process is of *vaikhari vak* or the "manifest speech," the stage where vocal organs utter the gross everyday speech. The word and its object are now completely separate and distinct. In these four levels of speech we can see a correspondence between the manifestation of the *tattvas* (categories of creation) from the non-manifested supreme reality to the tangible world of daily discourse.

Phonemic Mysticism and Liberation through Mantra

Phonemic symbolism or what some term as phonemic mysticism is an

important aspect of Kashmir Shaivism. Abhinavagupta attaches great importance to it as it is phonemes from which mantras are structured. Every letter and word is derived and therefore inseparable from Divine Consciousness. The sixteen vowels of the Sankrit alphabet, including the *bindu* or the dot and the *visarga* or the Emissional Power, as represented in Devanagari or Sharada script, are treated as symbolic of Divine Consciousness. Playing on the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar and linguistic speculation, Abhinavagupta in his *Tantraloka* and *Paratrimika Vivarana* has associated language and the revelation of consciousness so intimately that every letter of the alphabet represents some aspect of the creative energy of Shiva. What is more, vowels as well as consonants are shown as corresponding to one of the *tattvas* of cosmic manifestation, with each *tattva* containing all the other *tattvas* and thus creating an image of totality.

As *paravak* or language at the highest level is regarded as identical with divine consciousness, Kashmir Shaivism holds that language can be used as an instrument of liberation through mantra, its smallest unit. Mantras are made up of letters and every letter or word is derived and inseparable from consciousness. A significant example of this phonemic mysticism is provided by “*aham*,” the Sanskrit word for “I”, “the very centre of consciousness.” Here the phoneme, ‘*a*’, the first letter of the Sanskrit alphabet, standing for *anuttara* or the Ultimate and *ha*, the last letter, standing for Shakti, combine to form the “most natural, innate mantra” ‘*aham*.’ The two letters contain between them all the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, the gross form of the phonetic energies residing in a potential state in consciousness. The phoneme ‘*a-ha*’ or the *visarga* represents the emissional power of the Divine *Sakti*, while *bindu*, the dimensionless dot above ‘*ha*’ represents the reflective awareness of I-consciousness. The mantra ‘*aham*’ is, thus fully charged with the divine energy of I-consciousness (*purnahanta*).

Futuristic Potential

The emphatic proclamation of Kashmir’s non-dualist Shaiva philosophy that the world and its phenomena are the manifestation of divine consciousness and not illusory, that the human individual is not an atomic, limited self but a part of cosmic totality, is reassuring for the modern man. “I am Shiva” is an assertion that could sound audacious, but it underscores the point that Man is not an isolated, forsaken entity; he is a part of cosmic forces. And the forces that operate at the

macrocosmic level also operate at the microcosmic level. What is here is also everywhere, say the *Siva Sutras*. What Kashmir Shaiva philosophers say about the fundamental unity of the universe and interrelation of things is supported by modern physics, and so is their contention that there is no dichotomy between the subject and the object.

Kashmir Shaivism is open to all without any barrier of caste, creed or gender—“*Na atra jatyadyapeksa kvacit.*”⁴¹ Unlike the cold and self-denying approach of Advaita Vedanta, it has a warm, positive, life-affirming Tantric ambience about it. Rejecting renunciation and rigorous asceticism, it reaches out to the householder and addresses the anxieties of the modern man. Its meta-concepts like *Pratyabhijñā*, *Spanda*, *Prakasa* and *Vimarsa*, *Svatantrya*, *Abhasa*, *Vak*, *Mala*, *Samavesa*, *Ananda*, have an appeal beyond the frontier of religious sects. Perhaps that is why “Kashmir Shaivism has continued to influence and inspire people in India and throughout the world,” as Sanderson says. They see in Abhinavagupta’s thought, a futuristic potential of giving today’s disoriented humanity a new sense of direction.

Notes:

1. The Doctrine of Vibration, Delhi, 2000, Motilal Banarsidass, p. 38.
2. Kashmir Sivadvayavada ki Mula Avadharanayen, Delhi, 2002, Munshiram Manoharlal, p. 1.
3. Dyczkowski, p. 7.
4. Ibid.
5. Pashupata Sutras, Ed. R. Ananthakrisna Shasti, Trivandram (Thiruanatapuram), 1940, University of Travancore, p. 10.
6. Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, The Triadic Heart of Shiva, Delhi (Indian Edition), 1997, Sri Satguru Publications, p. 32.
7. Ibid, pp. 32-33.
8. Ibid, p. 33.
9. Encyclopaedia of Religion, Editor-in-chief Lindsay Jones, 2005, Michigan (USA), vol. 13, p. 16.
10. World’s Religions, Saivism and the Tantric Traditions, London, Routledge, 1988, p. 696.
11. Ibid.
12. Encyclopaedia of Religion, vol. 12, Editor-in-chief Lindsay Jones, Michigan (USA), 2005, p. 8047.
13. Tantraloka, comm., 4 / 143.
14. Navjivan Rastogi, The Krama Tantricism of Kashmir, vol. I, Delhi, Motilal

- Banarsidass, 1996, p. 14.
15. Sanderson, *World's Religions, Saivism and the Tantric Traditions*, London, Routledge, 1988, p. 698.
 16. *Encyclopedia of Religion* vol. 12, Editor-in-chief Lindsay Jones, Thompson-Gales, Michigan (USA), 2005, p. 8045.
 17. Muller-Ortega, *The Triadic Heart of Siva*, Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications, 1989, p. 55.
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. *Tantraloka*, 28.33-380.
 20. See Muller-Ortega, *The Triadic Heart of Siva*, Indian Edition, Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications, 1997, pp. 60-63.
 21. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
 22. *The Doctrine of Vibration*, Delhi., Motilal Banarsidass, Reprint 2000, p. 28.
 23. *Paratrimika Vivarana*, p. 207.
 24. *The Triadic Heart of Siva*, Delhi, Indian Edition, Sri Satguru Publications, p. 120.
 25. *The Doctrine of Vibration*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 2000, p. 77.
 26. *Isvara - pratyabhijña Karika*, 4 / 1 / 1.
 27. Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, *The Triadic Heart of Siva*, Delhi (Indian Edition), Sri Satguru Publications, 1997, p. 96.
 28. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 29. Abhinavagupta says: "Nahi saktih Sivah bhedaṃ amarsayet", *Paratrimika Vivarana*, comment on verse 1, p.3.
 30. Swami Shankarananda, *The Yoga of Kashmir Shaivism*, Indian Edition, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 2007, p.71.
 31. *Triadic Mysticism*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1999, p. 22.
 32. *The Doctrine of Vibration*, pp. 171-172.
 33. See Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration*, pp. 52-53.
 34. *Svatantrya hanibodhasya svatantryasyabodhat /Dvidhanavam malamidam savsvarupapahantitah / Isvarapratyabhijña-karika 3. 2.4.*
 35. *Isvarapratyabhijña Vimarsini*, vol. I, Ed. Mukundaram Shastri and Madhusudan Kaul Shastri, KSTS, 1918, 3.2 .5, p. 221.
 36. *Kartaryabodhe karman tu ...Isvara-pratyabhiña-karika 3. 2. 5.*
 37. *Tantraloka I / 192.*
 38. *The Yogic Disciplines in the Monistic Saiva Tantric Traditions of Kashmir, Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantricism*, Albany USA), State University of New York Press, Ed. Teun Goudriaan, 1992, p.254.
 39. *The Doctrine of Vibration*, pp. 171-172.
 40. *Shiva Sutras: The Yoga of Supreme Identity*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Intro p. xlvii.
 41. *Isvara-pratyabhijña-karika Vimarsini*, II. 276.

Pilgrimage to Mt Kailash: The Abode of Lord Shiva

K.T.S. Sarao*

Pilgrimage to Mt Kailash has become a practice that continues to traverse the boundaries of religion, class and region. Besides Hindus, Buddhists, Jainas, Sikhs, and Bönpos who do the circumambulation¹ of this mountain, many semi-pilgrims are drawn to this place not only because it is a dangerous undertaking, but also because it offers challenge to one's endurance, patience, and financial situation. The cosmologies and myths of origin of each of the four religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Bön) speak of Kailasa as the mythical Mt Meru, the centre and birth place of the entire universe. Pilgrimage to this mountain, undoubtedly, appears as a recurrent theme at all times in the art and literature of both India and Tibet.

To the Hindus, pilgrimage is known as *tirthayatra* and is one of the five constant sacred duties (*pañca nitya karmas*), the other four being *dharma* (righteousness), *utsavas* (festivals), *samskaras* (sacraments), and *upasana* (devotional worship). It appears to have come into existence in the Indian subcontinent earlier than elsewhere in the world. For instance, there are indications that the people of Indus Civilization may have been practising pilgrimage as early as 2500 BCE. Similarly, it has been suggested that the antiquity of Lord Shiva (henceforth Siva) goes to the period of the Indus Civilization. There is evidence in the Vedic texts for the existence of renunciates who carried out spiritual practices in the Himalayas.² During the Vedic period, the

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Indian culture embraced a concept of sacred water and pilgrimage became an accepted religious practice.³ Upper reaches of Indus river i.e., Western Tibet, where Kailasa⁴ (henceforth as Kailasa), the abode of Lord Siva, is located, formed part of the geography of the *Rg Veda*. For instance, in one of the hymns of the *Rg Veda*, Lord Indra is mentioned as having “made the Indus through his power flow in a northern direction.”⁵ There is also some evidence that indicates that the different mountainous peaks of the Himalayan region were viewed as having spiritual associations as well as being the home to the Vedic deities (including Rudra, Siva of the *Rg Veda*). For this reason these mountains, including Kailasa, may have attracted religious renunciates. Thus, pilgrimage may well have been one of the many features originally introduced into the Brahmanical-Hindu religious system by the renunciates.⁶ The earliest textual indication of the existence of a fully-developed institution of pilgrimage is available in the *Aitareya Brahmana*, which praises the “Flower-like heels of the wanderer... All his sins disappear, slain by the toil of his journeying.”⁷ The two Epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, “fix the normative values of Aryan culture,”⁸ and they indicate that by the time they were composed the institution of pilgrimage had become an accepted religious practice within Brahmanical Hinduism.



Figure 1 Southern Face of Kailasa

The five Pandava brothers and their wife, principal characters of the *Mahabharata*, are known to have embarked upon pilgrimage to Kailasa towards the end of their earthly lives. However, only Yudhisthir accompanied by his faithful dog is said to have made it in the end, the rest having perished on the way. Even he lost his toe because his truthfulness had been thrown into doubt due to a paradoxical statement he had made during the Battle of Mahabharata. Similarly, Rama of the *Ramayana* is said to have paid a visit to Kailasa. In the *Mahabharata* it is stated that Vyasa, the legendary systemizer of the Vedas, had also visited Kailasa (Sabha Chapter: 43, 17). The Buddha also encouraged his monks and nuns to constantly travel and many *Jataka* stories speak of the value of the pilgrimage to holy Meru (Mt Kailasa). The inscriptions of Emperor Asoka mention him as having given up war in favour of peace and pilgrimage in the third century BCE. Legend has it that Krsna paid a visit to Kailasa. Ravana, the king of Lanka, is said to have meditated for a *kalpa* in this region at the shores of Rakas Tal, adjoining the Manasarovar, and succeeded in obtaining a boon of prowess equalling Shiva's own. According to folklore, once Ravana lifted Mt Kailasa and shook it so hard that scared Parvati (who had been upset with Shiva after a quarrel) scrambled back to Shiva's arms. This scene is beautifully described in a sculpture at the Kailasa Temple at Ellora.

Before talking about the Kailasa Pilgrimage itself, it may be worthwhile to look at some of the salient features of the institution of pilgrimage. Its most striking feature as a physical act is the movement of a pilgrim in earthly space. Of course, if the pilgrimage spot is closer to the residence of the pilgrim, the movement shall be short-term and short-distance. But it is perceived that the merit earned from the pilgrimage would be greater if the same pilgrimage spot is farther from the residence of the pilgrim and even better if it is littered with geographical features operating as physical obstructions. The various geographical features, besides bringing merit to the pilgrim, are viewed as providing protection by warding off hostile forces. Interestingly, the merit accrued from pilgrimage gets enhanced if besides the long distance and time taken, it involves undergoing and overcoming life-threatening situations. Thus, the arduous journey and the accompanying hardships and perils undergone by a pilgrim on the way bring correspondingly greater reward. In other words, the spiritual and physical endurance presented by the journey is perceived as directly proportional to merit-

making and the alleviation of sin. Thus, mishaps, extremities of weather (including sub-zero temperatures, snow storms, bitter cold, and blazing sun), bad roads, devastating landslides, avalanches, flooding, torrential rains, turbulent rivers, swept away bridges, hunger and thirst, dangerous passes over high ranges, and occasional attacks by bandits and wild animals are generally seen as enhancing the value and merits of pilgrimage. 'Both the vitality and vulnerability of the traveller give the journey the character of an initiation... the self-inflicted pain to gain entrance into a new physical and metaphysical purification.'⁹ In other words, natural and manmade hardships are perceived as instruments that help in cleansing the mind and the body of a pilgrim. Thus, for obvious reasons a genuine pilgrim is expected to choose a more prolonged and arduous route. In the classical Christian pilgrimage hardships and ordeals suffered during pilgrimage were considered so important that sometimes pilgrims carried stones on their backs. Thus, Christian pilgrims were expected to travel far barefoot and nowhere pass a second night and fast and watch much and pray fervently, by day and by night and willingly undergo fatigue and be so squalid that iron come not on hair or on nail.¹⁰ Thus, it is not surprising that considerable distance and extremely difficult accessibility have played an important role in making Mt Kailasa a classical pilgrimage destination.



Figure 2 Northern Face of Kailasa

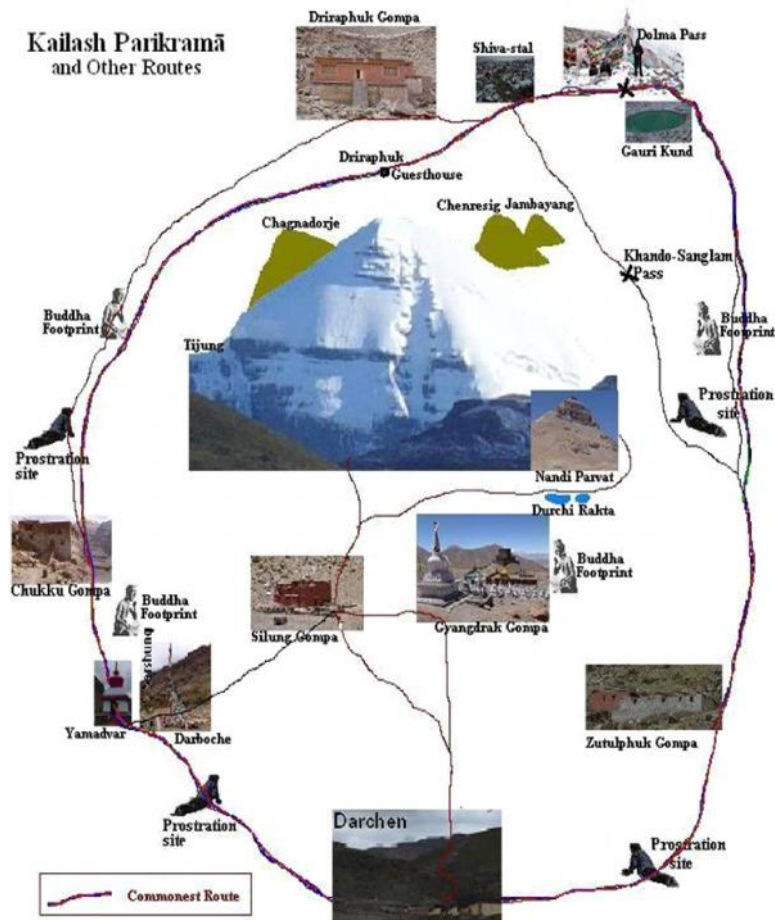
Sven Hedin mentions in his travelogue of having met a caravan of thirty-five pilgrims from Nakchu, who, with six hundred sheep and one hundred yaks, had been to the holy mountain of Gang Rimpoche (Kailasa), and were travelling so slowly that the round trip took two years.¹¹ Similarly, H. Tichy, a German, met a bunch of emaciated Sri Lankans who had been travelling for over three years on their way to Mt Kailasa.¹²

All the halting-points on the Kailasa-Manasarovar route on the Indian side of the border have temples and shrines. The pilgrims are expected to rise early in the morning for the first *upasana*. Before going to sleep, they are also expected to offer the evening *upasana*. Except some of the hard-core ones, most Indian pilgrims are generally satisfied with the evening *upasana* at the Gunji and Kalapani temples which are well maintained by the Indian para-military forces. The evening *upasana* ceremonies at these two temples are performed through chanting, wild drumming, and singing. In this, they are enthusiastically helped by the soldier-priests of the army.

Ritual bathing is an integral part of Indian pilgrimage though for the Tibetans it does not seem to hold any importance. Since the prehistoric times, Indians have viewed water as containing purificatory qualities. Almost all Indian pilgrims make it a point to have a ritual bath in the freezing waters of Manasarovar and sometimes even Gauri Kund. They believe that such a bath brings both spiritual and physical healing. The medicinal, magical, and supernatural properties of the waters of these two lakes are valued so much that almost all the returning pilgrims undergo enormous hardships in carrying home some quantity of the holy water. In fact, the most precious thing that pilgrims bring with them from a pilgrimage is the holy water for consumption and anointing.

Parikrama is another important component of pilgrimage. It is a religious practice of high antiquity in India which is performed by passing clockwise around a person of reverence or holy object. It is called *pradaksina* (to go round keeping the object of reverence on the right). This practice is equally old in Tibet where it is known as *kora*. Unlike Hindus, Jainas, and Buddhists, the Tibetan Bönpos do the *kora* anti-clockwise. For the Tibetan pilgrims the ritual *kora* of Mt Kailasa is the central activity of their pilgrimage. In strict contrast to this, for the Indian pilgrims the primary intention of their visit to a *tirtha* is to venerate the sacred place and to receive the *darsan* of the deity. The term *darsan* means seeing and/or having a spiritual communion with a

deity. This deity may be resident in the form of an image, statue, or icon in a temple's inner sanctum or in an open-air shrine. The image of the deity may be either an iconic or an aniconic form symbolizing the deity. In fact, in many well-known shrines no statues of the deities are found, but only aniconic blocks of stone or such other material. The rituals followed by the Tibetans while doing the *kora* are prostrations (*chaktsal*), offerings and the recitation of *mantra*, during which they follow the instructions prescribed by the pilgrimage treatises.



Indian pilgrims do the *parikrama* of Kailasa partly in vehicles and partly by riding ponies and yaks. Very few of them manage to do the *parikrama* on foot. However, failure to do the *parikrama* due to inclement weather or bad health is not really viewed by the Indian pilgrims as resulting in incomplete pilgrimage. Tibetan pilgrims believe that it is only by doing the *parikrama* of Mt Kailasa that they could hope to attain spiritual purification leading to the ultimate liberation. Nonetheless, the potential for enlightenment, which, according to Buddhism, all sentient beings possess, is activated by the mere sight of Kailasa.

Parikrama by prostration (*sastang dand pradaksina*) is a powerful way of showing devotion. No Indian is known to have done the *parikrama* of Kailasa by prostration. But the Tibetans do it in fairly good numbers. Some even do their *kora* sideways, advancing one side step at a time while facing the holy object. Most Tibetans prefer to do the *kora* of Kailasa in a single day, a feat lasting fifteen to seventeen hours due to uneven terrain, altitude sickness, and harsh conditions (Reinhold Messner is said to have completed the entire *kora* in twelve hours!). It is known as *nyimo-kora* (afternoon *parikrama*) or even *khyi-kora* (dog *parikrama*) for the great hurry with which it is performed. Talking about the unseemly hurry, it was pointed out by a visitor to Tibet towards the beginning of the twentieth century that one and all condemn the record-breaker, who hurries round in as short a time as possible, and they apply to him the opprobrious epithet of *khyi-kora*, the man who runs round like a dog (Sherring 1906: 280). However, most Tibetans now believe that *khyi-kora* is an efficient means of earning merit as it is easier than walking two or three days saddled with luggage.

Tibetans believe that the merit earned through *parikrama* by prostration is eight times more than the same done on foot. This form of *parikrama* of Kailasa takes up to four weeks in the open. Pilgrims are not allowed to skip difficult parts, like frozen ground or streams. In Tibet, the country people believe that if they make the... *kora* once, they will be absolved of ordinary sins. To be cleared of murder, two *koras* are required, but if the round is completed thrice, even the murder of a father or mother will be atoned for (Rawat 1973: 48). We are further told that ten *koras* can purify the defilement of one *kalpa* (aeon), after one hundred *koras* a pilgrim will attain Enlightenment in one life time, and instant *nirvana* is guaranteed after 108 *parikramas*. Most Tibetans consider at least three circuits as bare minimum, though thirteen is considered quite desirable as this makes pilgrims eligible for the

prestigious inner *kora* (*nangkor*) of Kailasa. Those who have not done at least thirteen *parikramas* of Kailasa, it is considered a sacrilege for them to either do the inner *kora* or take a short cut via the Khando Sangam-la.

In the fifth century BCE, the Buddha's exhortation to members of his organization to travel made pilgrimage an abiding practice for the Buddhists. Pali literature mentions Kelasa as one of the five mountain ranges in Himava standing around Lake Anotatta. Mt Kailasa (*kelasakuta*) is mentioned as the highest peak of Kelasa range and is of silver colour, two hundred leagues high, bent inwards "like a crow's beak."¹³ Kelasa is often used in similes in Pali literature to describe an object that is difficult to destroy,¹⁴ perfectly white,¹⁵ or very stately.¹⁶ The Buddhist text *Mahavastu*¹⁷ mentions Kailasa as the abode of the Kinnaras.¹⁸

Western Tibet, the home to Kailasa, is generally identified with Uttarakuru¹⁹ of the Pali and Sanskrit literature. A detailed description of this semi-mythical and semi-historical region is given in the *Atanatiya Sutta*.²⁰ According to this description, the people of this region did not own any property nor did men have wives of their own. The region, eight thousand leagues in extent, is always spoken of as being to the north of Jambudipa (South Asia) and thus, may be identified with Western Tibet and adjacent to the Indian territories in the Himalayas. There are no houses in Uttarakuru, the inhabitants sleep on the earth and are called, therefore, *bhumisaya* (earth-sleepers).²¹ The men of Uttarakuru surpass even the gods of Tavatimsa (Heaven of Thirty-Three) in four things: (1) they have no greed (*amama*), (2) no private property (*apariggaha*), (3) they have a definite term of life (*niyatayuka*);²² and (4) they possess great elegance (*visesabhuno*). They are, however, inferior to the men of Jambudipa in courage, mindfulness, and in the religious life.²³ Several instances are given of the Buddha having gone to Uttarakuru for alms. Having obtained his food there, he would go to the Anotatta Lake, bathe in its waters and, after the meal, spend the afternoon on its banks.²⁴ The power of going to Uttarakuru for alms is not restricted to the Buddha; Pacceka Buddhas and various ascetics are mentioned as having visited Uttarakuru on their begging rounds.²⁵ It is considered a mark of great *iddhi*-power (psychic-power) to be able to do this.²⁶ Jotika's wife was a woman of Uttarakuru; she was brought to Jotika by the gods. She brought with her a single pint pot of rice and three crystals. The rice pot was never exhausted; whenever a meal was desired, the rice was put in a boiler and the boiler set over the crystals; the heat of the crystals went out as soon as the

rice was cooked. The same thing happened with curries.²⁷ Food never ran short in Uttarakuru; once when there was a famine in Verañja and the Buddha and his monks were finding it difficult to get alms, we find Moggallana suggesting that they should go to Uttarakuru for alms.²⁸ The clothes worn by the inhabitants resembled divine robes.²⁹ It was natural for the men of Uttarakuru not to transgress virtue as they were endowed with *pakati-sila* (natural or proper virtue).³⁰

The Buddha is said to have magically visited Kailasa.³¹ According to Pali Buddhist mythology, an important battle took place around Kailasa between a yakkha (Sanskrit, Yaksa) called Alavaka and the Buddha, resulting in the conversion of the former to Buddhism. The conversion of Alavaka is considered one of the chief incidents of the Buddha's life.³² Alavaka's name appears in the *Atanatiya Sutta*, among the yakkhas to whom followers of the Buddha should appeal for protection in time of need.³³

In the present times, Kailasa pilgrimage has become an important event of commercial importance. At towns such as Darchen; hotels, shops, restaurants, and other commercial establishments thrive primarily due to pilgrimage. Kailasa pilgrimage helps greatly in Western Tibet in the circulation of goods, particularly small items of value such as semi-precious stones (bought as souvenirs at Darchen and around Manasarovar). Many transporters, pony herders, horsemen, porters, and guides earn their livelihood by working for the pilgrims, thus their avocation is a matter of interest to the local authority at Dharchula in India and at Darchen in Tibet. There are others whose commercial enterprise means that they play a vital role in what could fairly be described as the pilgrimage industry, such as market vendors, taverners, souvenir sellers, hostel and hospital workers, transporters, and pony owners. Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN) has set up a large number of guest houses on the Indian side of the Kailasa pilgrimage route to cater to the needs of the pilgrims.

Kailasa pilgrimage has also acquired great importance for both the secular and religious authorities in India who in turn seek to control and influence the pilgrims. Some of the members of Indian Parliament raise questions from time to time enquiring about various aspects of the Kailasa pilgrimage. In fact, the Indian government makes fixed donations to the KMVN as well as to the para-military forces to defray part of the costs of the Kailasa pilgrims. Provincial governments of states such as Delhi and Gujarat often offer liberal cash support and travel gear to their domiciled pilgrims. Various religious organizations

offer free food materials for the journey, apart from the tumultuous receptions, meals, and religious literature. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs, para-military authorities, and some private organizations in India give the pilgrims medallions, badges, or certificates stamped with the symbol of the shrine so that they and others would know that they have been on the pilgrimage. Some pilgrims actually add the title (Kailasi) to their names after the successful conclusion of pilgrimage to Mt Kailasa.



Figure 3 Route of the Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra organized by the Indian Government

The Government of India maintains a tight control over this pilgrimage. As the whole of trekking on the Indian side takes place in notified territory, pilgrims have to apply for a permit from the Government of India to pass through this region. The Ministry of

External Affairs makes selection of the pilgrims and appoints its Liaison Officer to lead each batch on pilgrimage. This ministry also negotiates with the Chinese government from time to time regarding management of the pilgrimage in Tibet. Through the process of systemization, the Government of India in coordination with KMVN and para-military forces has also been establishing institutions to house, feed, and instruct pilgrims. In the Indian ascetical tradition it is believed that in order to attain profound spiritual vision one must meditate and practise severe austerities by leading a life away from the mundane world of the ordinary. Leading a life in complete isolation and under extreme conditions requires mental and physical discipline of the highest order. Thus, it is not surprising that the trans-Himalayan region of Mt Kailasa is viewed as the ultimate place of extraordinary and superhuman endeavour. For instance, when Arjuna arrived at the boundaries of the Himalayas this fact is made clear to him in full measure. He is reminded that this is a place where a mortal man cannot disport himself (*Mahabharata*.III.152.5-10) and where one who has failed in austerities cannot reach (*Mahabharata*. III.142.25-30). In fact, this region is viewed as being beyond the course of humans (*Mahabharata*.III.156.21-23). Within this kind of thinking Kailasa-Manasarovar became the ultimate goal for ascetics. The extreme climatic conditions, rarefied atmosphere, and difficult terrain have added to the sublime beauty of Kailasa to such an extent that even many self-professed non-believers are known to have been deeply touched by their sight and some have even been moved to tears of joy by the sheer impression of these spots.

Political events had prevented access to Kailasa for Indian pilgrims between 1962 and 1981. But a limited number of Indian pilgrims in strictly controlled groups are now permitted every year to visit the Kailasa region via the Lipu Lekh crossing. Since 1984, other foreign travellers have also begun to travel to this region via different parts of China and Nepal. But still only a few thousand pilgrims each year visit this supremely sacred site. This has given Mt Kailasa the unique distinction of being the world's most venerated place which is the least visited. The reason for this unusual fact is that Mt Kailasa and the two associated lakes (Manasarovara and Rakas/Raksas) are located in a bleak and remote corner of Western Tibet. No planes or trains reach anywhere near the region. Pilgrims who take the Indian route have to traverse some of the remotest and toughest regions of the Himalayas. The journey requires over four weeks of difficult and often dangerous travel. The rarefied atmosphere and continuously cold weather can be

unexpectedly treacherous. Pilgrims also have to carry most of the supplies that they need for the journey. Pilgrims to Kailasa, after the difficult journey of getting there, are then confronted with the equally arduous task of circumambulating the sacred peak which includes scaling the 18,600 feet high Drölma³⁴ Pass. Before the Chinese Communists took control of Tibet, Ngari was infested with bandits. As a result of the menace of these bandits, very few people from India ventured on pilgrimage to Kailasa. Generally, it was the sadhus who were prepared to take the risk.

Various religious, economic, and geo-political forces on both sides of the Himalayas have not only been affected by the Kailasa pilgrimage but this pilgrimage itself has also been affected by them. Besides, regional concepts of political identity have been shaped by this pilgrimage. Historically speaking, from the Indian perspective Western Tibet developed from a mythical region known as Uttarakuru to the Ladakh kingdom when Zorawar Singh conquered it. And from Tibetan point of view, the Kailasa region developed from tribal territory to an independent kingdom. Eventually, this kingdom became part of both the greater Indian and greater Tibetan polity and identity. The Kailasa region is firmly rooted within the sacred geography of the Indian subcontinent. We might therefore, ask why the region did not become part of an Indian polity. Preliminary research suggests that Kailasa was, in the Indian perspective, what we might call an idealized pilgrimage site; sanctified, yet rarely visited by the ordinary pilgrim. Within Indian traditions, the site appears to have principally attracted sadhus, who, while by no means an unsystemized phenomena, were not primarily concerned with the construction of religious structures, or with involvement in local political and economic matters; and the difficulties of travel there, altitude, scarce resources, bandits and the like, discouraged non-renunciates.

Kailasa originally was a Bön sacred place which was Buddhacised with the arrival of Buddhism. This process of Buddhacisation involved the construction of new understandings of place through the ritual appropriation of existing sacred space, often by means of transferring concepts of sacred geography from Indian sources.³⁵ In this process pre-existing indigenous deities were subjugated or converted into Buddhist deities and Buddhist concepts were superimposed onto the cult of the territorial god (*yul lha*). This involved the mandalization of the landscape within the Buddhist understanding (often with the *yul lha* being incorporated into the *mandala* as a protective deity) and an

opening of the sacred centre, involving the discovery of the circumambulation path by a charismatic Buddhist figure. At Kailasa the territorial god though may have been subjugated but was not completely converted. Thus, the original *yul lha* deity was not completely superseded by the Buddhist deity (Milarepa) and the Indian model of circumambulation (moving clockwise, thus, keeping the holy object/person always on the right)—an essential ritual act of Buddhist pilgrimage—continued along with the *bon kora* of moving anti-clockwise.

According to McKay, modern Hindu understanding of Kailasa is strongly influenced by the British frontier officers at the turn of the twentieth century. “They constructed an image of Kailasa which presented it as a desirable pilgrimage centre for all types of Hindus; a construction designed to stimulate the pilgrimage in order to bring revenue to frontier districts. In the preceding centuries, however, it was apparently a site visited only by a small group of renunciates of a particular sect.”³⁶ Kailasa was largely an ideal pilgrimage place, and not seen as a destination for ordinary Indian pilgrims. In the early Indian perspective it was located beyond the periphery of the ordered world, in the wilderness which might be drawn into the known by the presence and power of Hindu renunciates travelling and practising there. But this transformation process never progressed to the point where the region developed the structures associated with a Hindu pilgrimage site, although under the British patronage that process had begun by the 1930s and 40s, only to be prevented by the Chinese takeover. Kailasa thus remained outside of the political boundaries of India.

The establishment of Anglo-Tibetan ties at the turn of the twentieth century transformed the modern pilgrimage to Kailasa-Manasarovar. The British felt that pilgrims would work as harbingers of trade and commerce. Thus, they ‘constructed an image of Kailasa which presented it as a desirable pilgrimage centre for all types of Hindus; a construction designed to stimulate the pilgrimage in order to bring revenue to frontier districts. In the preceding centuries, however, it was apparently a site visited only by a small group of renunciates of a particular sect.’³⁷ ‘British patronage led to dramatic increase in the number of Indian pilgrims to the Kailasa region after the 1920s. But it appears that whereas the early pilgrims were renunciates, Kailasa increasingly came within the range of tours of wealthy and educated Hindu pilgrims, who returned to their worldly lives after their pilgrimage. What was once a land of heroes and ascetics was now open to anyone with the necessary fitness, desire, and money.’³⁸

Lieutenant Henry Strachey, who travelled to Western Tibet in 1846, records having met two Hindu sadhus. The first, described as an 'intelligent, smart, and decent *sanyasi*,' had been roughly apprehended by the Tibetan authorities on arrival and only permitted to perform the *upasana* and ritual bathing at Manasarovar under escort. He had been refused permission to do the *parikrama* of either the lake, or of Mount Kailasa. The second sadhu, whom Strachey describes as a 'yogi' of poor appearance and a half-fool, had no such problems. Strachey attributed this to the Tibetans' not unreasonable suspicion that an intelligent sadhu could be a British agent (H. Strachey, 1848: 84). It was not so easy even for sadhus to perform pilgrimage as not only dacoits but also the Tibetan authorities created hurdles in their way. Strachey's report suggests that what we might call the 'hard-core' of pilgrims to Kailasa were still sadhus, and it is consistent with the textual evidence suggesting that this was, historically a renunciate pilgrimage.³⁹ It could be that only people with resources or those 'who did not have anything to lose' took the risk to go. A family man with poor resources could not afford either the expenses or the risks and hardships. Thus, in the pre-1959 period, commoners generally avoided going on pilgrimage to Kailasa. Wealthy people, however, were known sometimes to have hired others to perform the pilgrimage for them. Pilgrimage to Tibet besides being dangerous and expensive was also time-consuming. In the pre-1959 days, it used to take as much as three months. Now it can be performed in less than a month via the Lipu Lekh and in about two weeks via the Kodari-Zhangmu Pass of Nepal.

The perils faced by pilgrims are many, especially the high altitude, difficult terrain, and unpredictable weather. In earlier times, the problems faced by travellers, who mostly travelled alone, were even worse not only because there were hardly any good means of transport in those days, but also because not much was available by way of accommodation, food, roads, and emergency aid. One traveller towards the beginning of the twentieth century had this to say about his experience:

Once we missed our way through a forest and had to wander seven days without meeting a single human being, living only on the tender leaves of trees. I thought these things happened that I might be trained for the still more arduous labours of my visit to Mount Kailasa and lake Manas (Hamsa nd: 50).

Paucity of evidence makes it almost impossible to assess number of pilgrims, trading or otherwise, visiting Kailasa and Manasarovara up

to the twentieth century. It is hard, for instance, to know whether the treaty negotiated by the British at Lhasa in 1904 which gave Indian pilgrims free entry into Tibet had any real effect upon numbers entering. In 1907, Sherring was told that about 150 pilgrims (almost entirely sañnyasins) visited annually but that every twelve years during the Kumbha year up to 400 attended.⁴⁰ Bharati gives the figure of 600 pilgrims visiting in 1951.⁴¹ “British patronage led to dramatic increase in the number of Indian pilgrims to the Kailasa region after the 1920s. But it appears that whereas the early pilgrims were renunciates, Kailasa-Manasarovar increasingly came within the range of tours of wealthy and educated Hindu pilgrimage.⁴² Interestingly, the religious practice and pilgrimages of women are not properly documented. Before the takeover of Tibet by China, the only Indian female pilgrim known is the wife of General Zorawar Singh who seems to have lived on the banks of Manasarovara for a couple of years during the early 1840s.

To the Jains, Kailasa is Astapada, the place where the first Tirthamkara Rsabha attained liberation. We are told that he retired to the peak of Mount Astapada together with 10,000 monks. There he went into final liberation after having fasted for six and a half days. The gods cremated his body there and this made Mt Kailasa the first cremation ground of the world period. Rsabha’s son, Bharata, considered the first cakravartin of India, built a temple on Astapada. He also attained his liberation there by fasting to death. When the second Tirathamkara Ajita renounced the world, his nephew Sagara became the second cakravartin. On seeing the richness of the temple which Bharata had built, Jahnu, the eldest son of Sagara, was afraid that the temple might be robbed. Therefore he built a ravine around the temple and filled it with the water of the Ganga. Yet, by this action, the dwelling places of the Nagas were filled with water. In revenge, the Naga king sent an army who burnt with their poisoned eyes all the 60,000 sons of Sagara. After the death ceremony king Sagara sent Bhagiratha to Astapada, who again directed the Ganga towards the ocean. Thus, in the Jain tradition Kailasa is a *tirtha*. The mountain is mentioned in their hagiographies under the name of Astapada as the first liberation mountain. As in the Hindu tradition, a Jain pilgrim prepares himself by fasting, meditation, and performing virtuous deeds. During the pilgrimage he should take food only once daily, sleep on the ground, walk on foot, and remain chaste. At the holy site the pilgrims are supposed to circumambulate and make offerings. The completion of a pilgrimage to Astapada promises Jain adepts the highest transcendental rewards.⁴³

Though pilgrimages to Kailasa were made since the earliest times, yet, historically, the region does not appear to have had the structures typically associated with Hindu pilgrimage sites. Such sites are usually institutionalized. They have some sort of *dharamsalas/asramas* to house pilgrims; there are temples or at least sacred images, and there are bathing *ghats*. Resident *purohitas* or priests advise pilgrims of the appropriate prayers to be made at the site, the most auspicious days to visit, and the type of offerings to be made there, as well as the benefits deriving from these actions. But there is no record of any such structures existing in the Kailasa-Manasarovara region, at least until the 1930s. The lack of structures may partly reflect the fact that the region has been outside the political boundaries of what is now India, although theoretically it is within Indian religious geography. It is also true that there are other Hindu pilgrimage sites without such structures. Adi-Kailasa and Amarnath Cave in the Himalayas also do not have any *asramas* or other symbols of a pilgrimage site. The lack of structures in the Kailasa region raises the question of how many Hindu pilgrims actually visited this region.

As a consequence of Chinese occupation, individual mobility was greatly reduced and local practices were brought to a halt. Various policies of the Chinese authorities became an effective means to control the flow of population. In particular, the label of 'class' served to differentiate 'bad elements' from the general populace. The 'bad elements' were former chieftains, big landowners, former government officials, and monks. Pilgrimage was condemned not only as 'feudal remains,' but also as a 'waste of time' which was harmful to production. Popular pilgrimage practices among the Tibetans, though not officially prohibited, are discouraged as they may pose a potential or real threat to the clearly demarcated administrative boundaries in Tibetan regions. Now pilgrimage within the Tibetan society is declining in the sense that some locals and the Han immigrants have developed a sense of market economy with the growth of tourism. In the opinion of the authorities, this has proved the Marxian idea that "superstition will vanish as economy grows."

Notes :

- ¹ Called *kora* by the Tibetans and *parikrama* or *pradaksina* by the Indians.
- ² D. Frawley, *Gods, Sages and Kings : Vedic Secrets of Ancient Civilization*, 1st Indian edn, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995: 92.

3. Alex McKay (ed.), *Pilgrimage in Tibet*, Richmond Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998: 167.
4. Mt Kailash, various spelt as Kailasa, Kailas, Kelas, is known as Gang Rimpoche and Gang Tiséto the Tibetans.
5. 2.15.6. As Frits Staal has pointed out that if the Vedic people had followed the Indus north to the point where it flows in a northerly direction, they could hardly have failed to continue to its nearby source, which lies around 16 kilometres from Mount Kailasa (F. Staal, "The Lake of the Yaksa Chief," in T. Skorupski (ed), *Indo-Tibetan Studies: Papers in Honour and Appreciation of Professor David L. Snellgrove's Contribution to Indo-Tibetan Studies*, Buddhica Britannica Series Continua 11, Tring: Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990: 290).
6. McKay, *Op. Cit.* 168.
7. *Aitareya Brahmana*.7-15, quoted in S.M. Bhardwaj, *Hindu Places of Pilgrimage: A Study in Cultural Geography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973: 3.
8. R. Varma, *Meru and Kailasa: Reflections on a Tangible "Sacred Space"*, unpublished MA thesis, London University: SOAS, 1988-89: 13.
9. T. Lemaire, *Filosofie van het landscap*, Baarn: Ambo, 1970: 99 (quoted at McKay, *Op. Cit.*, 36).
10. B. Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, London: George E. Eyre & Andrew Spottiswoode, 1849: 411-12.
11. S. Hedin, *My Life as an Explorer*, reprint, New York: Kodansha International, 1925: 403.
12. McKay, *Op. Cit.* 46.
13. *The Paramatthajotika*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth SnA).II.437f; the *Papañcasudani*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth MA).II.585; the *Paramattha-Dipani Udanatthakatha*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth UdA).300; the *Manorathapurani*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth AA). II.759.
14. E.g., *The Jataka*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth J).V.39.
15. E.g., J.IV.232; VI.490, 515; the horse Kanthaka, the *Dhammapadatthakatha* Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth DhA). I.192.
16. E.g., an elephant's head or a big building, J.I.321; V.52, 53.
17. II.97, 109; III.309, 438.
18. According to Pali Buddhist mythology, a kinnara is a little bird with a head like a man's (J.IV.106, 254; V.456).
19. Uttarakuru is mentioned in the Pali literature as one of the four continents, the others being Aparagoyana, Pubbavideha and Jambudipa (*The Anguttara Nikaya*, Pali Text Society edn. (Henceforth A).I.227; V.59; *The Sumangalavilasini*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth DA).II.623; the *Maddhuratthavilasini*, Pali Text Society edn. (Henceforth BuA).113; SnA.II.443). These four make up a Cakkavala, with Mount Meru (Kailasa) in their midst, a flat world system. A *cakkavatti's* rule extends over all

these four continents (*The Dāgha Nikāya*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth D).II.173; DA.II.623) and his chief queen comes either from the race of King Madda/Madra (of Punjab) or from Uttarakuru; in the latter case she appears before him of her own accord, urged on by her good fortune (DA.II.626; KhA.173).

20. D.iii.199ff. See also E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, reprint, Delhi: Indological Book House, 1968: 186.
21. *The Paramattha-Dīpanī*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth ThA).II.187f.
22. One thousand years, after which they are born in heaven, says Buddhaghosa (AA.II.806).
23. A.IV.396; the *Kathāvatthu*, Pali Text Society edn.,99.
24. The *Vinaya Pitaka*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth Vin).I.27 8; DhA.III.222.
25. J.V.316; VI.100; MA.I.340; SnA.II.420.
26. The *Sarathā-ppakasīnī*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth SA).i.93; Mil.84.
27. DhA.IV.209ff.
28. Vin.III.7.
29. The *Petavatthu Commentary*, Pali Text Society edn. (henceforth PvA).76.
30. The *Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosacariya*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 41: 1951.I.15.
31. Though Buddhism entered Tibet only in the seventh century CE.
32. J.IV.180; VI.329.
33. D.III.205.
34. Drölma/Dolma is another name of Tara. With rarefied atmosphere and very windy and snowy conditions, this pass is particularly challenging to cross.
35. T. Huber, "Where exactly are Caritra, Devikoma and Himavat? A sacred geography controversy and the development of Tantric Buddhist pilgrimage sites in Tibet," *Kailash: A Journal of Himalayan Studies*, vol. XVI, nos. 3-4, 1990.
36. McKay, *Op. Cit.*13.
37. *Ibid.*13.
38. *Ibid.*180.
39. *Ibid.*177.
40. Charles A. Sherring, *Western Tibet and the Indian Borderland*, First Indian Edition, Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1974 (originally published, 1906): 144.
41. S.A. Bharati, "Pilgrimage in the Indian Tradition," *History of Religions*, 3.1, 1963: 96.
42. S. Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995 (originally published 1915): 180.
43. *Ibid.*254.

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