

## Māyā as Śakti in Kashmir Śaivism

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*Advaita Vedanta* or *Śāntabrahmavāda* of Śaṅkarācārya<sup>1</sup> is often compared with Kashmir Śaiva philosophy<sup>2</sup> of *Īśvarādvayavāda* because both are designated by the term *Advaita* or non-dualism. However, the two systems are significantly different and the similarity is just nominal. This paper explores the principle of *Māyā* in Kashmir Śaivism which sets it apart from Śaṅkarācārya's *Advaita Vedanta* and other philosophical traditions.<sup>3</sup> We will see how, by using the principle of *Māyā* as a form of *Śakti*, Kashmir Śaiva philosophy establishes itself as an inclusive and perfect non-dualistic system while *Advaita Vedanta* of Śaṅkarācārya conceives *Māyā*, not only as an illusion and ignorance but also as a principle separate from the Supreme consciousness and, therefore, this system of *Advaita* creates a breach in its own claim to non-duality.

The orthodox schools of Indian philosophy consider the *Śruti-s* as the basis of their *darśana*,

and Śaṅkarā's doctrine of *Advaita* has its origin in the *Śruti-s*. Foundational texts for Śaṅkarā's are principal *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gitā* and the *Brahama Sūtras* - the *Prasthānatrayi*. Out of the four 'Great Sentences' (*Mahāvākyas*) from the *Śrutis*, the two—*Aham Brahmasmi* (I am *Brahman*) and *Ayamātmā Brahman* (This *ātmā* is *Brahman*)— directly establish the oneness of the *ātmā* (individual soul) and the *Brahman* (the Absolute). The four Great Sentences together state not only the identity of *ātmā* and *Brahman* but also their interchangeability. The *ātmā* experienced as particular, personal self and the *Brahman* understood or inferred as the universal expansive Absolute are one and the same and *ātmā* can be sublated into the *Brahman*. But, how does the *darśana* (philosophy) explain the unity of these two as well as the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, in answer to that, Śaṅkarā uses concept of *avidya* or *Māyā* as *yukti* (logic)

and by positing that phenomenal world is an illusion (*Māyā*), he maintains the *Śruti* proclamation —*Ayamātmā Brahman* (This *ātmā* is *Brahman*).

Further, Śaṅkarācārya depicts the universal manifestation as an illusion by positing his theory of *Brahman-vivartavāda*. The word '*vivarta*' denotes modification, transformation or transmutation. According to *vivartavāda* (doctrine of apparent transformation), all manifested phenomena are only apparent modifications ('*vivarta*') of one Reality, the unique *Brahman*. The famous analogy used for this is the false superimposition of a serpent on the reality of a rope. In other words, the world full of attributes (*nāma-rūpa*) is an illusory superimposition on the true reality of *Brahman*. At the same time, although *Brahman* alone is the sole Existence, and the manifest world, the *jagat*, is imaginary (*jaganmithyā*), yet even for its false appearance, the world is dependent on the *Brahman* for its being because in Śaṅkarā's doctrine, the *Brahman* is efficient as well as instrumental cause of the world. However, though Śaṅkarācārya establishes the cause-effect relation (*kārya-kāraṇa bhāvā*) between *Brahman* and the manifest or phenomenal world (*jagata*), but considers the world to be unreal. He explains the appearance of phenomena by giving theory of *avidyā* or *Māyā*. Hence, according to Śaṅkara, the *Brahman* is the absolute consciousness (*Cit*), it is pure light but no activity, it is *niṣkriya* (inert, inactive) and therefore, although it is a material cause, it does not create the world. All activity is due to *avidya* or *Māyā*. Since activity is illusion, the act of creation becomes an illusion too and hence cannot belong to the *Śāntabrahma*.

In this regard, Kashmir Śaiva philosophy indicates that Śaṅkara takes a very limited view of 'activity' (*karṭṛtva*) of the Absolute. Śaṅkara ascribes only pure knowledge or *Prakāśa* to the *Brahman* and makes It absolutely unaffected by activity, as mentioned above. Kashmir Śaivism, on the other hand, ascribes both knowledge or *Prakāśa* as well as activity or *Vimarśa* to the Supreme Absolute Consciousness, *Paramaśiva*. In

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fact, knowledge and activity are considered as one and the same thing in Kashmir *Śaivism*. In the very beginning of his exegetical text on Kashmir *Śaiva* philosophy, the *Īśvarapratyabhijñārikā*, Ācārya Utpaladeva,<sup>4</sup> the 10th century Kashmir *Śaiva* master declares the identical nature of knowledge and activity.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, in Kashmir *Śaivism*, both knowledge and activity are located in the Supreme Self or absolute I-Consciousness of highest Reality, the *Paramaśiva*. Here, in this *darśana*, knowledge itself is activity which means to know is to be and to be is to know. The entire creation is a process of becoming through knowing or coming into light (*Prakāśa*). When ideation (*Vimarśa*) begins in the Supreme Knower (*Parapramātā*) who is of the form of Supreme Consciousness, then corresponding forms shine forth as objectivity in Its Self.

In Śaṅkarācārya's philosophy, on the other hand, absolute knowledge is the attribute of *Brahman* but the activity happens only at the level of individual within the temporal framework. And activity is an effect of *manas* (*mind*), *buddhi* (*intellect*), and *ahaṃkāra* (*ego*) which are effects (*pariṇāmas*) of *Prakṛiti*. Thus, agency or activity is an illusion due to *Māyā*. *Māyā* comes into being due to *Avidyā*. *Avidyā* in Śaṅkara's system is indefinable (*anirvācānīya*). Thus, *māyā* and along with it the illusion of the world created by it is something separate from Supreme *Brahman*. Consequently, due to this admittance of another principle, Śaṅkara's philosophy of manifestation is not purely non-dual. The whole world is considered as unreal in relation to the Supreme principle of Absolute *Brahman*. *Brahman* alone as pure Absolute is *Sat-Cit-Ānanda* — Truth/Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. Liberation (*moksha*), according to Śaṅkarā, is achieved through annihilation of the world by acquiring true knowledge. In other words, this happens only when the illusion created by *māyā* or *avidyā* is destroyed through *vidyā* (*jñāna*). *Jñāna* is achieved by profound incessant meditation (*nididhyāsana*) on the Absolute ultimate reality of *Brahman* preceded by *śravaṇa* (listening to the scriptures or *Śruti*-s) and *manana* (reflection on teachings of scriptures). Thus, due to its denial of the manifest world and due to exclusion of the Supreme *Brahman* from the manifest creation, Śaṅkara's non-dualism is not perfect, it is rather restrictive.<sup>6</sup>

Kashmir *Śivadvyavāda*'s answer to the doctrine of apparent manifestation (*vivartavāda*) is the concept of *ābhāsavāda*-doctrine of one principle shining forth as all phenomena. Although Śaṅkara also considers the absolute, pure Consciousness (*Cit*), the *Brahman*, to be the substratum and underlying principle of the manifest world but the subtle difference between *vivartavāda* and *ābhāsavāda* is that Śaṅkara creates a gap between the cause and effect and negates the manifest world of senses.

Kashmir *Śaivism* explains the diverse world of senses as the objective formation or ideation in the Supreme Subjectivity of one Absolute Consciousness conceived as *Paramaśiva* or *Parabhairava*.<sup>7</sup> Ācārya Utpaladeva gives analogy of an advanced yogi's power of will to describe the manifest phenomenon (*ābhāsa*) as a reflection in the Supreme Consciousness<sup>8</sup>.

The analogy used to describe this phenomena in Kashmir *Śivadvyavāda* is famous as analogy of the plasma of the peacock's egg (*mayūrāṇḍarasanyāya*)<sup>9</sup>.

Hence, the appearances of the world—the objects, the subjects, the knowledge and the means of knowing etc.—are all an unfoldment of the Absolute I-Consciousness of the Supreme Knower, the *Parapramātā*. The empirical individual located in time and space is a limited knower called as the *Māyāpramātā*. The Supreme knower (*Parapramātā*) itself becomes the limited knower, (*Māyāpramātā*) out of His own Absolute Freedom by using His own power to veil His full-self. This veiling power, in Kashmir *Śivadvyavāda* is conceived as *Māyā*, the Power, the *Śakti* of the Supreme. It cannot be unreal or an illusion because nothing is outside the realm of the Supreme Knower through whom/in whom everything is known. Moreover, only that which can be known, can exist.

Thus, *Māyā* as Śiva's own *Śakti* brings about the multiplicity and differentiated-ness in the manifest creation. The universe reflects this consciousness of Śiva (*śivarūpa*) and *Māyā* as well as the universe are manifestation of Supreme Consciousness which is *Paramaśiva*.<sup>10</sup>

In their cosmogony of the universe, Kashmir *Śaivism* postulates 36 principles of origination within the Supreme Consciousness out of which, the first five belong to *śuddhaadhvan*, the pure realm of subjectivity. At the level of these five principles—*Śiva*, *Śakti*, *Sadāśiva*, *Īśvarā* and *Śuddhavidyā*—there is no objective manifestation but only subjective ideation. It is said that *Prakaśa*, the light of Supreme Consciousness and *vimarśa*, the reflective awareness of that same consciousness represented by Śiva and Śakti respectively exist in a dynamic equilibrium before the objective universe is 'reflected out' i.e. before the manifest world shines forth and emerges. The emergence of the manifest universe happens when pure subjectivity of Supreme Consciousness, *Paramaśiva* wills to objectively project differentiation in its own self. The emergence of manifest universe is expansion of Śiva's Supreme *Śakti*, which takes many forms. The Supreme *Śakti* as *Mahāmāyā* also appears in three forms: *Māyā-Śakti* which is the *Svātantrya Śakti*, the power of Absolute Freedom of I-Consciousness; *Māyā Tattva* which is one of the 36 constitutive principles and operates through its five associate coverings to create the measured or

empirical world; and the *Māyā-granthi* which creates non-discrimination (*aviveka*). This last one corresponds to the *Māyā* of Advaita which is *Moha* (illusion).

Coming back to the Supreme *Śakti* as *Mahāmāyā*, which is Śiva's own power of veiling, the *Māyā Śakti* becomes operative at the time of objective formation of the world. It veils His own pure subjective I-Consciousness through his own independent Freedom (*Svātantrya*). This power operates through its five associative principles. With their help, it effects the constriction in the Universal I-Consciousness and brings about the manifestation of empirical individual self. The realm of *Māyā Śakti* is known as *aśuddha adhvan* (lit. the impure realm), it is the realm of subjectivity cum objectivity and also that of objectivity.

This power of Supreme Consciousness *Māyā* is described as 'that which measures'. As it measures, it puts limits and creates the measured objective world, the '*meya*', which is nothing but the Supreme Consciousness in its objectification. With its five aspects, *Māyā* acts as a 'force', a power of the divine that limits the real nature of the supreme subjective consciousness who is the Supreme Knower (*parapramātā*). When the Supreme Knower acquires limited-ness then the known or the experienced also becomes limited. In other words, *Paramaśiva*, the Supreme Knower and Universal Experiencer with pure subjectivity enters into impure subjectivity. Thus, the subjectivity of this Universal Knower/Experiencer is tinged with objectivity. This is the influence of power of 'obscuration', the *Māyā*<sup>11</sup> whose operation furthers the universal manifestation creating the limited individuality of empirical measure.

The five appendages of *māyā* called as '*kanchuka-s*' ('layer'/ 'armour') are its five sheaths- *kalā*, *vidyā*, *rāga*, *kāla*, and *niyati*. These sheaths cover, constrict and veil the undifferentiated universal consciousness and lead to a differentiated relation in the absolute unity. The ideal universe is experienced as '*all this is my glory*' in the subjective realm of supreme consciousness but with the five covering of *māyā*, the '*all this*' gets constricted by veiling of creativity, knowledge, interest, time, and space affected by *kalā*, *vidyā*, *rāga*, *kāla*, and *niyati* respectively. This results in experience of limitations of five kinds. There is limitation in creativity in such a way that the individual is creative only in certain fields (*kalā*). There is limitation in knowledge which gets restricted to knowledge of only 'this' or 'that' and not of 'all this' due to *vidyā*. There is constriction or limitation in interest which is then exercised as attachment to certain things and resultant disinterest in other things (*rāga*). There is limitation or restriction in time due to rising of chronological time (*kāla*); and finally there is limitation or restriction in space by the inability to be everywhere (*niyati*). In fact, there is a

sense of lacking, deprivation, and incompleteness. There is no identification anymore with the fullness or unified universal reality that is the true nature of self and that of Supreme Self (*Pūrṇahamta*).

### ***Māyā Śakti, the Absolute Volition (Svātantrya) of the Supreme, Paramaśiva***

In Kashmir Śaivism, the state of bondage and limitation created by *Māyā* is not considered to be a derogatory state. Śaiva Masters acknowledge this to be a result of total freedom (*Svātantrya*) of the Supreme consciousness, the *Paramaśiva*. They argue the theory of *Svātantryavāda*<sup>12</sup> and make their system into a full-proof non-dual system. *Paramaśiva* in His own absolute freedom exercises His power, his *Śakti* termed here as the *Māyā Śakti* to induce limitations on His own complete and full nature (*Pūrṇahamta*), the absolute consciousness abounding with powers of full knowledge and full action (*jñātratva* and *kartratva*).

The state of limitations, which is the state of empirical individual, is also a state of consciousness albeit that of limited consciousness—this state has also its joy albeit limited joy. The limitations put by *Māyā* also limit the bliss of fullness (*ānanda*) and because the fullness is the true nature of reality of all beings, there is a continuous tendency in all beings to move towards this fullness. The *Spanda Kārikās*<sup>13</sup> states that the limited state is a state in which due to rise of ideas, the nectar of blissfulness disappears.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the natural tendency towards liberation (*moksa*) from limitations and state of feeling incomplete motivates the individual to use the means of liberation, the *upāyas*.

Although, Kashmir Śaiva system elucidates the theory of four *upāya-s* (*upāya-catushtaka*) for liberation, on a deeper level, it projects the idea of "no *upāya*", i.e. the idea that no-means are required for liberation. Therefore, *anupāya* (means of "no-means" or "little means") and *śāmbhavopāya* (means power of will or *Ichhopāya*) are considered as the highest means. The third *upāya* is *śaktopāya*, also called as *jñānopāya*. It uses right kind of thought-construct (*śuddhavikalpa* or *sattarka*) to attain the state of pure consciousness. The fourth *upāya* is known as *āṇavopāya* which uses all the means available—body, breath, void (*deha*, *prāṇa*, *śunya*), *mantra*, etc.—to the empirical being. Each succeeding *upāya* is considered as grosser than its predecessor and each successor is a stepping stone to its predecessor. Thus, the last two *upāya-s* are stepping stones to the *śāmbhavopāya* and to *anupāya*. Thus, as mentioned above, the system proposes that for liberation, the *upāya-s* or *means* are needless. Besides the concept of grace (*Śaktipāta*)<sup>15</sup>, there is another famous conception behind this notion of "effortless

liberation”—the principles of *sarvamsarvātmakam* (everything is everything else) established by Kashmir Śaivācārya Somananda (875/900-925-950)<sup>16</sup>. And this idea is related to *saravaśivatā* (everything is Śiva). This doctrine of *sarvamsarvātmakam* and the resultant idea of *saravamśivam* ascertains the essential non-dualism that nothing is external to the Universal Consciousness of *Paramaśiva* or *Parabhairava*.

The primary Kashmir Śaiva text, the *Śiva Sūtras* validates in the first sutra that the self of every being is Śiva. It states, “real nature of self is the absolute independent universal consciousness”, *Caitanyamātmā* (*Śiva Sūtras*.I.1). Further, the limited knowledge created by *Māyā* which is the cause of appearance of limitation and thereby of bondage, cannot be considered as something separate from the Supreme being or supreme state of consciousness because everything is That same I-Consciousness (*Tat-Sat*).

Kashmir Śaiva philosophy explains the state of bondage to be a result of three kinds of dross (*mala-s*)—the *Āṇava mala* (bondage due to innate sense of incompleteness), the *Māyīya mala* (bondage due to differentiated-ness) and *Kārmamala* (bondage due to activity).

The innate sense of incompleteness (*apūrṇammanyatā*) happens due to constriction of self, the other two kinds of limitations are a result of this very innate limitation (*Āṇava Mala*). The second is lack of knowledge of undifferentiated nature of being which is to see and know everything as differentiated (*bhinnavedyaprathā*). The third is to know actions as good or bad/auspicious or inauspicious (*śubhāśubhavāsanā*).

As mentioned above, the second kind of bondage is called *Māyīya mala*. This has its origin in the *Māyā* which is the source of this world. *Māyā* works through its class of elements (*yonivargah*) and thereby creates differentiated knowledge through excessive attachment, limited creativity, limited knowledge, etc. Further, *Māyā* leads the limited being into a web of activity (*kalāśarīram*) which brings us to the third kind of bondage called *Kārmamala*. *Kārmamala* works in relation to *karma*.

### ***Mātrikā*, the Energy of the Universal Mother**

The three kinds of *mala-s* discussed above, aptly translated as “vitiated knowledge” by Jaidev Singh, in turn, have their source in the *Mātrikā*, the universal energy (*Śakti*) that is infused in the letters of Sanskrit alphabet from *a* to *ṣa*. Different combinations of these letters make words (*vācaka*) and indicate the objects that relate to those words (*vācya*)—thereby giving rise to differentiated thought-constructions (*vikalpas*) in individual consciousness. This is the reason, why in Kashmir Śaivism, there is so much emphasis on attainment of a state of no-thought

constructs (*nirvikalpa*).<sup>17</sup> And this state, in turn, is equated with the *Bhairava* state because in that state His *Śakti-s* are in complete *Sāmanjasya* (identification) with Him. Inversely, if the seeker is able to attain a state where thoughts have ceased, this becomes the *upāya* to attain the *Bhairava* state. Thus *Śāmbhavopāya*, pertinently called as *abhedopāya* and *nirvikalpaka yoga* (yoga of cessation of thoughts) is the *upāya* here. Cessation of thoughts also means total merger of objective world (*vācya*) and into the subjective consciousness (*vācaka*). Kashmir Śaivism describes this as turning the *Mātrikā* energy from *MāyāŚakti* which is its limited state toward *Svātantrya*, the complete Independent state. Thus, the same principle of *Māyā* can be a limiting factor and this same *Māyā* can be a liberating factor. This has been put very clearly by Swami Lakshman Joo in his interpretation of Kṣhemarāja’s *Vimarśinī* (commentary) on the fourth sutra of the *Śiva Sūtras*, ‘*jñānādhiṣṭhānam mātrikā*’<sup>18</sup>

*Śāmbhavopāya* is about using the *Śakti* (power) of one’s own will to turn it to *Svātantrya Śakti* instead of surrendering it to the *Māyā* because when *Mātrikā*, the universal mother’s energy is turned into *Māyā Śakti*, then one can turn within to the subjective consciousness.<sup>19</sup>

In other words, when *Mātrikā*, the Universal Mother looks outward, she is responsible for the emergence of the *samsara* (world), and when she looks inward then she herself becomes a means to the emergence of supreme consciousness which is *Bhairava*. This happens through sheer “orientation of the will”. And the *Bhairava* consciousness emerges spontaneously.

Further, the three awakenings revealed in the *Śiva Sūtras* that correspond to the *Śāmbhavopāya*, the *Śāktopāya* and the *Āṇavopāya* relate the three forms of *Māyā* mentioned above *viz.* the *Māyā-Śakti*, the *Māyā-tattva*, and the *Māyā-granthi* respectively. Here, it is significant to note that the three forms of *Māyā* correspond to the three levels of the awareness. The highest level of awareness capable of *Śāmbhavopāya* relates to *Māyā Śakti*. In the next level of awareness, the mind becomes the medium to gain the knowledge of *Māyā-tattva*. The third level of awareness is gross and works through body, senses, breath etc. At this level, *Māyā* is a knot, (*Māyā-granthi*). This nuanced distinction in these forms of *Māyā* becomes clear if we look at the specific *sūtras* that describe *Māyā* in the three awakenings.

Thus, the first section, called as the first awakening, describes the power of freedom to engage the awareness in understanding of energy of the Universal mother, *Mātrikā*. This can take place in an individual with most subtle and most refined awareness. Two *sūtras*—*Jñānādhiṣṭhānam mātrikā* (1.4) and *Udyamo bhairavaḥ* (1.5)—suggest that it is the understood power of Universal Mother (*mātrikā*) which itself is *Māyā-Śakti*, which is the basis of

bondage in the form of limited knowledge about the self. Once this power is understood, then there is spontaneous flash of supreme consciousness called as *Bhairava*. Prof. Mark Dyczkowsky remarks on these *sūtras* exposit the same idea about the power of *mātrkā*<sup>20</sup>.

The second section, called the second awakening, describes arising of awareness by removal of non-discernment (*aviveka*) which is result of *Māyā*.<sup>21</sup> This awakening happens to seekers who are at a stage where the influence of *Māyā* is there but their awareness is not gross. The *sūtra*, *Garbhe cittavikāso 'viśiṣṭa vidyāsvapnaḥ* (2.4.) describes “[such a yogi’s mind] is satisfied in *Māyic*, limited powers which are only a form of common inferior knowledge which are confusing like a dream” [trans. Jaideva Singh, p. 97.]. This confusion is put to an end with the rise of awareness about the principle of *Māyā*. This is said in the next *sūtra*, *Vidyāsamutthāne Svabhāvike Khecari Śivāvasthā* (2.5). “On the emergence of spontaneous supreme knowledge, occurs that state of movement in the vast unlimited expanse of consciousness which is Śiva’s state i.e. the Supreme State of Reality” [trans. Jaideva Singh p. 99.].

The third section, which is the third awakening, describes the gross level of awareness where it is difficult to overcome the power of *Māyā* that prevails as *aviveka* (non-discernment). The *sūtra*, “*Kalādīnām tattvānāmaviveko māyā*” (III. 2) (the non-discrimination of the constitutive principles (*tattvas*) beginning from *kalā* up to *prithvi*, is the power of illusion-*māyā*) [trans. mine] and this can be overcome only by “dissolution of *tattvas* at the gross, subtle, and causal levels in the body” (III.4) [trans. Jaideva Singh, p. 135.].

From the above analysis, we can deduce that according to the Kashmir Śaiva philosophy *Māyā* is a *Śakti* which works in different forms in every empirical being. The Supreme Consciousness, *Paramasiva* or *Parabhairava* uses it of His own will to project the manifest world. Besides, in Kashmir Śaivism, the *Māyā* can become a source of liberation at various levels of awareness albeit the levels are recognized and energy of *Māyā* be used to channel the awareness beyond the thought-constructs.

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## Notes

1. *Advaita Vedānta* developed between 8th and 9th CE, and Kashmir *Śaivadvyavāda* developed between end of 9th CE and 11th CE.
  2. Vasugupta’s *Śiva Sūtras* (beginning of the 9th century), marking the revival of *Śaivadvyavāda*, is considered to be a *Sādhanā Śāstra* (spiritual treatise) and Acarya Somananda’s *Śiva Driṣṭi* (10th CE) is considered as the first philosophical text in the Kashmir *Śaivadarśana*. The latter is followed by progressively more logic-based *Śāstras* like *Utpaladeva’s Īśvarapratyabhijñārikā* and *Abhinvagupta’s Īśvarapratyabhijñāviorittivoimvarṣinī* and *Tantrāloka* (end of 10th, beginning of 11th century).
  3. Cf. As far as the Vedanta schools are concerned, Swami Vivekananda, considered to be a neo Vedantin, says, “Coming to our philosophers, we find that this word Maya has been manipulated in various fashions, until we come to the great Shankarāchārya...When the Hindu says the world is Maya, at once people get the idea that the world is an illusion... but the Maya of the Vedanta, in its last developed form, is neither Idealism nor Realism, nor is it a theory. It is a simple statement of facts—what we are and what we see around us”. Ref. Maya as Illusion in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. Vol. 2. Ch. 3.
- And within the *Śaivāgama* traditions, the *Śākta* schools also consider *Māyā* as *Śakti* but they derive their philosophical base from the *Śaivāgamas* themselves. Kashmir *Śaiva* scholar, Prof. B.N. Pandit confirms that all *Śaivadarśanas* are *Śākta* with respect to their ritual or spiritual procedures (*sādhanā prakriyā-s*) and all *Śāktadarśanas* are *Śaiva* with respect to their philosophical principles [Pandit: 2005: 214].
4. (900/925-95-975 AD). ref. Torella. Page. XX.
  5. *Kartri jñātari svātmanyādisiddhe Maheśvare / ajadātma niṣedham va siddhim vā vidadhīta kaḥ // [ĪPK.I.1.2] What intelligent being could ever deny or establish, the cognizer [the knower] and agent [the actor], the Self, Maheśvara, established from the beginning.* [Trans.Torella:2002:85]
  6. Classical *Advaita* creates two-truth doctrine to justify the presence of one underlying reality—the first is the *Parmārthika* plane of Reality which is metaphysical, ontological and Absolute truth, it explains the experience of Absolute Consciousness. The second is the *Vyāvahārika*

plane of reality which is empirical, temporal and pragmatic plane of existence, it explains the experience of phenomenal world. In Kashmir Śaivism, on the other hand, there is only one reality and that is *Paramaśiva* which explains the transcendent as well as temporal or material existence.

Cf. Swami Vivekananda, known as a neo-vedāntin projected Advaita Vedānta as the most inclusive school of philosophy. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. 2.

7. Technically, the concepts of Prakāśa and Vimarśa, the Supreme light of I-Consciousness and the reflective awareness of that Consciousness define the existence in Kashmir Śaivism. Vimarśa relates to ideation.
8. Indeed, the Consciousness Being, God, like the yogin, independently of material causes, in virtue of His volition alone, renders externally manifest the multitude of objects that reside in Him.  
[Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā. I.5.7]  
*Cidātmaiva hi devontaḥsthitamicchāvāśād bahiḥ / yogīva nirupādānamarthjātām prakāśayeta //ibid. p. 21.*
9. Jaideva Singh aptly describes it as: “In the ultimate Reality, the entire manifested variety is in perfect unity, an undifferentiated mass just as the variegated plumage of the peacock with its beautiful, rich colour lies in a state of undifferentiated mass in the plasma of the peacock’s egg” [Singh: 1963, 9th rpt. 2016:17].
10. *Māyāśaktiā vibhoḥ saiva Bhinnasamvedyagocarā / khatitā jñānasamkalpādhyavasāyādīnāmbhiḥ // ibid. P.25.*  
‘Owing to the power of maya, for the Lord it has its object a cognizable reality differentiated [from self] and is called by the names of cognition, imagination, determination etc.’ ĪPK. I.5.18. [Torella: Sanskrit.P.25, Eng.Trans.P. 124.]
11. *Tadevaṁ vyavahārepi prabhurdehādīmāviśan / bhāntamevāntararthaughamicchyā bhāsayedbahiḥ ///[IPV 1.6.7]*  
“Thus also in the course of ordinary reality, the Lord, entering the body etc., renders externally manifest by his volition the multitude of objects that shine within him.  
–At the moment of the original creation, as in the course of everyday reality, *Maheśvara*, by virtue of the power of *māyā*, by entering the body etc. conceived of as self, creates the [limited] knower and thanks to the power of doer (*karṭṛśaktiā*) gradually renders the various objects that shine within him externally manifest. Creating is precisely rendering manifest in this way (*tathābhāsanameva*). On the contrary, if he does not enter the body etc., then the whole manifestation of objective reality will take place spontaneously and simultaneously in the form of ‘I am all this’ –it is the plane of *Sadaśiva-Īśvara*.”. Trans. by R.Torella. [Torella:2002:134-35]
12. Jaideva Singh has remarked, “From the point of view of the creativity of Ultimate Reality, this philosophy [Kashmir Śaivism] is known as *Svātantryavāda*; from the point of view of its manifestation, it is known as *Ābhāsavāda*.” [Singh: 1963, 9th rpt.2016: 17].
13. The *Spanda Kārikās* (9th CE) is considered to be a commentary on the most primary text of Kashmir Śaivism, the *Śiva Sūtras*. It expounds the doctrine of vibration (*spanda*), which proclaims the divine throb or pulsation (Śakti) of Supreme Siva is the cause of creation and dissolution of

the universe. The opinion on its authorship is divided. Some scholars, like Kṣhemarāja and Swami Lakshman Joo, consider it to be the work of Vasugupta himself, while others like Bhaskāra and Bhatta Utpala (both fl.950-975 CE) consider it to be a work of Vasugupta’s disciple Kallaṭa. Ref. Jaidev Singh [Singh: 1980 rpt.2001:xiii.]

14. *‘Parāṁṛtarasāpāyastasya yaḥ pratyayodbhavaḥ / tenāsvatantratāmeti sa ca tanmatragocaraḥ // Spanda-Kārikās. 3.14*  
The rise, in the empirical individual [trapped by limited knowledge], of all sorts of ideas leads to the disappearance of the bliss of supreme immortality. On account of this, he loses his independence.
15. The means are fruitful only to the extent that they prepare the empirical individual for Śaktipāta (grace). We will not be able to elaborate the concept of Śaktipāta here. However, contrary to the popular conception that grace descends upon only a select few, Kashmir Śaivism argues that the manifest universe is an expansion of Śakti. Thus, Śaktipāta lit. “the descent of Energy” is the very principle of existence and eternally occurring.  
The 11th century Kashmir Saivism text Somasambhaddhati suggests that grace is limited to Siva worshippers. Is there a reason for change in later texts? You seem to treat Kashmir Saivism as an internally undifferentiated category. Was it really so? One would also like to know the historical time span of this school. [I have not seen this text and I could not locate it. If you have access to it, please share.]
16. Founder of the Pratyabhijñā school of Kashmir Śaivism. See. Śivadrīsti.
17. *Nirvikalpa*, as a state of thoughtlessness, also occurs in Vedānta as it does in Yoga. There is a significant difference between the *Nirvikalpa* as it is conceived in Yoga and Vedānta, and as it is conceived in Kashmir Śaivism. We can understand it as follows. Mind is an organ of thought just as eyes are an organ of sight. Vedānta believes that we are not the mind. Vedānta’s metaphysics is based on Samkhya in which senses and mind are derived from ego. In order to attain the highest state, it is the ego and the mind that have to be erased. In Yoga, the *citta vrittis* or the modifications of the mind have to be stopped (*nirodhah*) to attain the *kaivalya*, the highest state of Yoga. Now, to quell the ego and the mind, the senses and the breath must be controlled, which in turn means that *prāṇa* has also to stop because it is *prāṇa* that gives life to the senses, etc. The *prāṇa* is carried through breath, thus the breath must be controlled/ stopped. So in Patanjali, *Samyama* (combination of *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*) is attained by controlling the whole activity of body, mind, senses and breath in order to concentrate on one point that leads the *yogi* to a state beyond the thought constructs.  
However, in the Āgamas in general and in Kashmir Śaivism in particular, (*Tantrāloka*, chapt. 6.), we don’t stop breath, we just observe it. Because although the breath affects the mind and thoughts, it is not mind. In Kashmir Śaivism, it is expounded as the consciousness itself. So we observe the activity of consciousness (which is not an

object like mind or senses), it is subjectivity. As we observe and know the subjectivity (consciousness), we become the consciousness. Breathing is conceived as the rhythm and wave of the consciousness in Āgamas unlike in Patanjali where waves are of the *citta*, the mind. Thus, in Vedanta, the *Nirvikalpa* refers to a state of mind but in Śaiva Āgamas, it refers to a state of consciousness which is empty of thought content of mind but is filled with dynamism of consciousness, the *Spanda*.

This leads us back to the basic difference between these systems which lies in their conception of idea of activity- in Vedanta, Yoga and Samkhya, activity has to be shunned to attain the *Nishpanda* (waveless) state, in Kashmir Śaivism, the activity can be non-spatial and non-temporal (as indicated in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñānākārikā*, mentioned above). [As understood from the class lectures by Prof. Mark Dyczkowski on the *Tantrāloka*.]

18. "*Mātrikā*, the Universal Mother, is the master director of the triple knowledge consisting of *Āṇavamala*, *Māyīyamala* and *Kārmamala*. Here, the word *mātrikā* means *ajñāta mātā* [the understood universal mother reflected in the sounds of the alphabet]. *Ajñāta mātā* is the state where the universal energy is known in the wrong way. When Universal

energy is known in the correct way, it is simple *Svātantrya Śakti*. When it is known in the wrong way, it is the energy of illusion and it is called *Māyā Śakti*. So *Mātrikā* is both. *Mātrikā* means *ajñāta mātā* when universal energy is not known correctly and *Svātantrya* when it is known correctly. This means that *Svātantrya* controls the three instruments of bondage. *Svātantrya* is your own will! If you bind yourself or if you free yourself, both are under your control" [John Hughes: 2010: 26].

19. "One is deprived of the investigation of the inner non-difference (from the fullest I-consciousness of Śiva) and all one's knowledge is outward-turned without ceasing for a moment." [*Śiva Sūtra Vimarśinī*.I.4.]
20. "*Mātrikā* as Mantric energy is the source of the higher liberating knowledge of non-duality...*Mātrikā* is also the basis of the lower binding knowledge associated with the discursive thought when Her true nature is unknown... it deprives man of the awareness of unity and obscures Śiva's universal activity"[Dyczkowski: 1991: 15].
21. *Aviveko māyāsaṁsuptaṁ*. (*Śiva Sūtra*.1.10) [The forgetfulness and the negation of awareness is the dreamless state or māyā. Trans. Swami Lakshman Joo.]