



## ŚAIVATANTRA ADHESION

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### Abstract

*Tantra* is an important system of Indian philosophy and its close affinity to the *Vedas* is apparent. The *Tantra* scriptures themselves contain references to its Vedic origin. In this subsequent development, however, *Tantra* shows a more pronounced influence of the *Upaniṣads*, as well as of *Yoga* and the *Purāṇas*. The ritualistic worship of modern Hinduism has been greatly collared by *Tantra*, and this fact is particularly noticeable in Bengal, Kashmir, Gujarat, and Kerala. Śaivism is an ancient Indian faith in the broad sense of the term.

### Key words

*Mahābhārata* (MB), *R̥gveda* (RV), *Yajurveda* (YV), *Vājasaneyisamhitā* (VSa), *Taittirīyasamhitā* (TSa), *Kāśmīr Śaivism* (ks), *Brahmamīmāṃsabhāṣya* (Bmb), *Siddhāntaśaivism* (SS)

### Introduction

The date of *Tantra* works is difficult to ascertain exactly. It is hidden in obscurity. M. Winternitz opines that the written works in *Tantra* have survived a difficult period after the *Mahābhārata* period.<sup>1</sup>

The scriptural works on the *Śaiva*, *Vaiṣṇava* and *Śākteya Tantras* contain many classes of texts like *Samhitā*, *Āgama* and *Tantras*. The main contents of *Tantraśāstra* are related to seven different subjects, (1) creation (Sṛṣṭi), (2) dissolution of the world (Pralāya), (3) how gods are worshipped (Devatārcana), (4) how rituals could be accomplished (Sādhana), (5) details of visualizations of mantras (Puraścaraṇa), (6) the six magical practices (Ṣaṭkarma- sādhana - śānti, Vaśīkaraṇa, Stambhana, Vidveṣaṇa, Uchchāṭana, Māraṇa) and (7) the four methods of contemplation (Dhyāna-Yoga).<sup>2</sup>

Scholars are of the view that the Tantric tradition had its origin before the Vedic cult and in the earlier stages of its development; it was hostile to the prevalent Vedic tradition. Dr. K. Ragavan pillai connects Tāntrism with Lokāyata system and claims that the tradition was non-Vedic and was very older than that of the *Vedas*.<sup>3</sup> Thus one can trace the history of *Tantra* to pre Vedic period. Later it got fused with Vedic religion and assumed the characteristics of *Vaidikatantra*.

The term '*Tantra*' is generally inclusive of all categories of texts like *Samhitās*, *Āgamas* and *Tantrās*. The word '*Tantra*' is derived from the root 'tan' which means 'to expand' (Tanu-Vistāre). Thus it means all 'comprehensive knowledge' or 'expansive knowledge'.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I, Maurice Winternitz, 1996, p.578

<sup>2</sup> सृष्टिश्च प्रलयश्चैव देवतानां यथाचर्चनम्।

साधनञ्चैव सर्वेषां पुरश्चरणमेव च।।

षट्कर्मसाधनञ्चैव ध्यानयोगश्चतुर्विधः।

सप्तभिलक्षणैर्युक्तमागमं तद्विदुर्बुधाः ( तान्त्रिकं विदुः।) Quoted in *Mahānirvāṇatantra*, Ed. M.N.Dutt, 2003, p.xiii (Introduction).

<sup>3</sup> *Tantrasamuccayam* of Nārāyaṇa, Part III, p.II (Introduction)

<sup>4</sup> Unpublished PhD thesis *Prayogamañari* of Ravi, Dr.K.M.Sangamesan, Calicut University, 2004, p.4

तन्त्रं प्रधाने सिद्धान्ते सूत्रवाये परिच्छेदे।<sup>5</sup>

This means that it is really a system of doctrines in general, not a particular class of text. Besides, an etymological definition to *Tantra* is given thus:

सर्वैर्था येन तन्यन्ते त्रायते च भयाज्जनाः। इति तन्त्रस्य तन्त्रत्वं तन्त्रज्ञः परिचक्षते।।<sup>6</sup>

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan points out that *Tantra* has developed its philosophy depending on the *Sāṅkhya - Yoga* system in respect of the thirty six principles. To the famous twenty five principles of *Sāṅkhya - Yoga*, the following eleven are added: Niyati, Kāla, Rāga, Vidyā, Kalā, Māyā, Śuddhavidyā, Īsvara, Sadāśiva, Śakti and Śiva.<sup>7</sup>

In the early stages of the development of *Tantra*, there were other kinds of *Tantra* Literature called *Ḍāmaras* and *Yāmalas*. In some works, the *Tantras* are seen divided into three according to the region in which these were popular. They are *Viṣṇukrāntā*, *Rathakrāntā* and *Aśvakrāntā*.

The religiophilosophic literature of *Tantra* is classified in different ways like *Samhitās*, *Āgamas* and *Tantrās*. *Samhitās* mainly propagate the worship of Viṣṇu. There are numerous *Samhitās*, most of which remain in the Manuscript form.<sup>8</sup> *Āgamas* are the sacred texts which propagate the worship of Śiva. There are twenty-eighty *Śaivāgamas* which form the base of Śaivism. They are named Kāmika, Yogaja, Cintya, Kāraṇa, Ajita etc. The term *Tantra* in a limited sense denotes the texts of Śakteya system. The Śaktas consider Śakti or the female deity as the Supreme Being. *Tantra* deals primarily with spiritual practices and ritual forms of worship that aim at liberation from ignorance and rebirth, the universe being regarded as the divine sport of Śakti and Śiva.

One of the chief peculiarities of the *Tantra* is the prominence of the concept of female energy. *Śaivāgamas* propagate the worship of Śiva with Śakti. The Vaiṣṇava sect also considers the importance of Śakti in the name of Lakṣmī or Rādhā. In *Tantra*, the worship of Śakti has a twofold nature, gentle and fierce. Umā, Gaurī, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, etc. are imagined as gentle or pleasing forms of Durgā, Kālī etc.<sup>9</sup>

Tantric glimpses are generally mentioned in the *Mahābhārata (MB)* and *Rāmāyaṇa*. The importance of female deities was there in the Sūtra period (600BC to 200BC) itself.

स्त्रीभ्यश्च सुरा चाचाममित्यधिकम्।<sup>10</sup>

There are seven divisions of worship in *Tantra*.<sup>11</sup> They are Vedācāra, Vaiṣṇavācāra, Śaivācāra, Dakṣiṇācāra, Vāmācāra, Siddhāntācāra, and Kaulācāra. Some Scholars are of the opinion that the two divisions of Ācāra are Dakṣiṇa and Vāma. These are based on the Śakti worship. Vāmācārins worship the female deity not only symbolically, but also in the actual form of woman herself. The Pañcamakāra worship, worship with five objects beginning with the letter 'MA', 1) Madya, 2) Māmsa, 3) Matsya, 4) Mudrā, and 5) Maithuna is the important characteristic feature of Vāmācāra.<sup>12</sup> In Dakṣiṇācāra, female deity is worshipped in a gentle and pleasing form.

Mudras, Mantras, Words and Phrases, Maḥālas, Yantras, (symbolic diagram as the force at work in the universe) are all used as aids for meditation and for the achievement of spiritual and magical power in Tantric practices. Tantric practitioner may use visualizations of deities, for identifying himself with the deity so that the aspirant becomes identical with the Iṣṭadeva or meditational deity itself.

Tantric worship consists of four types of Mudrās which are Karmamudrā, Dharmamudra, Mahamudra and Samyamudra. Besides, two types of Mudras practiced in *Tantra* are Jñānamudrā and Phalamudrā. Mantras and Yantras have an important role in *Tantra*. These are used to invoke specific deities such as Śiva and Śakti. Similarly, Pūjā may involve focusing on Yantra associated with deity.

<sup>5</sup> *Amarakośa*, part III, 3.184

<sup>6</sup> *Viṣṇusamhita*, Ed. Ganapatiśāstri .T, Chapter II.10-11 Śloka

<sup>7</sup> *Indain Philosophy*, Radhakrishna .S, Vol II, pp.727, 28

<sup>8</sup> Unpublished PhD thesis *Prayogamañjari* of Ravi, Dr.K.M.Sangamesan, 2004, p.9

<sup>9</sup> *An Introduction to Hinduism*, Govin Flood,1998, pp.177-88

<sup>10</sup> *Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra* II.5.5; *Pāraskāra Grhyasūtra* III.3.11 (स्त्रीभ्यश्चोपसेचनं चकर्षूषु..)

<sup>11</sup> *Introduction to Tantrasāstra*, Arthur Avalon (Sir Jhon woodroffe), 2005, p.76

<sup>12</sup> *Feature of Tāntrism And Veda (Journal)*, Sadashiva Ambadas Dange,1972-77, p.79

## Śiva in Tāntric cult

Śaivism is one of the oldest faiths of the world. Śiva, who is often called Rudra, has been eulogised in the earliest literary work namely the *R̥gveda* (*RV*). Śiva was worshipped even earlier than the Vedic age and evidence for this is available in the ruins of the Indus valley civilization. It is true that Indra, Agni and Varuṇa are praised in a number of hymns of the *RV* and Śiva / Rudra receives only a few hymns. But in later times, Śiva rose to prominence and became the third deity of the Hindu triad along with Brahma and Viṣṇu. Probably this was the result of the fusion of the Āryan and non - Āryan faiths.

The fierce aspect of this God is Rudra while gracious and compassionate form is Śiva. The *RV* describes the anthropomorphic features of Rudra giving picturesque epithets, like fair-lipped, youthful, and tawny, dazzling and so on. He is most liberal, the most powerful and the possessor of healing medicines. He is extolled as the physician of physicians and the unconquered conqueror. Śiva was implored by the Vedic seers not to strike the humanity with His fierce weapons but to shower wealth and health.<sup>13</sup>

Śiva as a deity is early found in the *Yajurveda* (*YV*) as the benign auspicious God. In the Śatarudrīya section of the *YV*, He is invoked one hundred names.<sup>14</sup> The series of Sivas names in the ‘Rudrādhyāya’ of the *Taittirīyasamhitā* (*TSa*) and ‘Śatarudrīya’ in the *Vajasaneyisamhitā* (*VSa*) show that Śiva worship is as old as the *YV*. *AV* elevates Śiva to a higher state which is like a link between the *RV* and the latter philosophic śaivism. Three *Br̥hmaṣas*, namely *Aitareya*, the *Kauṣṭiki* and the *Śatapatha* devote much attention to Śiva.<sup>15</sup> In the *SB* and *Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa*, Śiva appears to be an amalgam of various gods like Agni, Parjanya and Paśupati.<sup>16</sup>

In the *Upaniṣads*, Brahman is the supreme principle. In the *SU*, Brahman is identified with Rudra / Śiva.<sup>17</sup> Rudra is endowed with a number of names such as Hara, Mahādeva, Īśa, Īśāna, Maheśvara and Bhagavat. The *Atharvaśiropaniṣad* (*AU*) further elevates this idea. The smearing of the body of the devotee with ashes is referred to here.<sup>18</sup>

Coming to *Mahābhārata* (*MB*), there are two Sahasranāmas of Śiva. Śiva is first adored in Śivasahasranāma by Dakṣa. Mahādeva-Sahasranāmastotra was recited by a Brāhmaṇa and then repeated by Taṇin.<sup>19</sup> In the *Purāṇas*, Śiva is the bestowed of favours and gifts to all supplicants.<sup>20</sup>

Rudra, the terrific form of the *Vedas* and Śiva, the auspicious one, of the ‘non- Vedic, ‘Dravidian’ cults battled for centuries and then blended to emerge as one deity of compromise as Śiva Mahādeva. Pre-Āryan, non-Vedic or Dravidian and came to be accepted as a continuation of the Vedic civilisation itself. Later, scholars had to concede that Śiva as depicted on some of the seals with a trident and a bull was very much a Vedic deity even as the Mother Goddess was.<sup>21</sup>

Being the God of the world, as delineated in later literature. Śiva had to be Rudra, the terrific. Hence supplications to him to be propitious to one’s children<sup>22</sup>, descendants, cattle and property<sup>23</sup> are quite in order. However, he also has a benign form - Śambhu, the beneficent one as the heavenly physician who cures one’s diseases and protects one’s cattle.

Along with the development of the concept of Rudra-Śiva, there had also been an evolution of the concept and figure of the Liṅga as the chief emblem of Śiva. The Liṅga resembles a pillar with a hemispherical top. In all directions, it is perhaps, the closest approximation to a god considered as beyond all names, forms and attributes. Some scholars find in it the remnants of phallic worship of aboriginal tribes and others feel it as a metamorphosed form of the Vedic Yūpastambha (scarified shed) gradually evolved into the now common temple. Even if a phallic origin is admitted, a third section of Scholars argue, that there is nothing wrong in it since it represents the generative principle of God as the creator.

<sup>13</sup> *RV*. X.61.7, VI.50.12, VIII.3.7, VIII.7.12

<sup>14</sup> *TSa*, 4.5.1-11 ; *VSa*, 16.1-66

<sup>15</sup> *Development of Hindu Iconography*, Banerjee J.N, pp.447-48

<sup>16</sup> *SB* I-6.1.8 (Agni), *SB*, Vol. III, Dr.Jeeth Ram Bhatt,2009, pp.126,641,703,982 (Paśupati); (Parjanya-338,704,786,877,952,1346) *TB*-3.11.4.1-2 (Paśupati),

<sup>17</sup> *SU* iii.24, *Ke U* ii.1-2; 3-6; 7-10; iv.11-12, *KU* iv.8.6.77, *PU* ii.11.9,25, *Ma U* 7.2, *CU*- 3.7.1, *BU* 1.4.11, *JU* 1.18.5

<sup>18</sup> *AU* 4,5

<sup>19</sup> *MB* XIII-48 Addhyaya, Vol.7, T.R. Krishnamacharya, 1991, and 1144-1266

<sup>20</sup> *Śivamahāpurāṇa*, Tra. Shanti Lal Nagar, 2007, p.xxxiv (Introduction)

<sup>21</sup> *The Wonder That Was India*, Ed. A.L.Bashons, London, 1956, p.22

<sup>22</sup> *RV*, 7.46.2

<sup>23</sup> *RV*, 1.114.8

Śaivism is more than a mere theology. It is a philosophy that attracted the attention of ancient and modern sages and thinkers. The sages pondered and meditated over Śiva deeply and expressed their speculations about the nature of Śiva as the ultimate reality.

Śiva is the foundation head of all arts according to *Purāṇas* like the *Vāyu* or *Brahmāṇḍā*. Śiva of the Indus Valley civilization was depicted as a Yogin. He is usually referred to as proto-Śiva.<sup>24</sup> In the *Purāṇas* and the classical Sanskrit literature, Śiva is a Mahāyogin, a Tapasvin or Yogīśvara. Ten among the eighteen *Purāṇas* uphold the supremacy of Śiva.<sup>25</sup> In *Purāṇas* and *Upapurāṇas*, there are many references of Śiva.<sup>26</sup>

### Śivamahāpurāṇa

The extent *Śivapurāṇa* is a comparatively late work. It is rather a manual of prayers and rules for the Śiva worshipers, some scholars are inclined to include it in the *Upapurāṇas*.

*Śivapurāṇa* consists of seven *Samhitās* namely Vidyeśvara, Rudra, Śatarudra, Koṭirudra, Umā, Kailāsa and Vāyavīya. The Rudrasamhitā contains five sections namely Sṛṣṭi, Sati, Pārvatī, Kumāra and Yuddha. The Vidyeśvarasamhitā in 18 chapters contain the description of the origin of Liṅga, worship of Liṅga, creation of Liṅga, Worship of Śiva by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, the Māhātmya of Śivakṣetra, and glorification of Rudrākṣa etc. The description given in the Pārvatī section of Rudrasamhitā is similar to that of the one given in the *Kumārasambhava*. In the Śatarudrasamhitā of 42 chapters, an account of twelve Jotirlingas which are declared as the incarnation of Śiva, is given. The Koṭirudrasamhitā in 35 chapters describes a thousand name of Śiva. The Kailāsasamhitā in 12 chapters takes note of the circle of worship, Mudras and Nyāsas. The Umāsamhitā contains an account of Umā's penance, marriage etc. The last Samhitā named Vāyavīya is divided into two parts namely Pūrvabhāga and Utarabhāga. The first and second parts of this Samhitā contain 30 chapters each. This *Purāṇa* was written, probably, with a view to the propagating Śaivism.

### Pāsupatasūtras

Pāsupatasūtras are another class of texts related to Śaivism. They contain the principles of Pati, Paśu and pāśa. These terms have been used by the ancient scholars related to *Pāsupatism* or *Pāśmata*. The word Pati is derived from root pā meaning 'to protect'. Śiva creates and protects all beings including god Brahma. Pāśa means 'bondage' and Śiva is believed to be capable of releasing the devotees from all bondages. It is due to Śiva's Anugraha that beings can attain Mokṣa. One cannot achieve Mokṣa on the strength of one's individual knowledge or renunciation only.

‘तमात् प्रसादात् स दुखान्तः प्राप्यतेष न तु ज्ञानवैराग्यधर्मैश्वर्यत्याग-मात्रात्।’<sup>27</sup>

यमं एवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यः। तस्यैष अत्मा विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम्।<sup>28</sup>

Śiva is the material and instrumental cause of the universe. There is another school of Śaivism based on ancient *Śaivāgamas*. Vasugupta of 825 AD belonged to Kashmir, hence the school is popularly known as *Kāśmīrśaivism* (KS). According to KS Pati is the supreme Śiva.

The other important but dualistic school is *Sidhānthaśaivism* (SS). It appears that it originated in Kashmir and was older and more popular than the school of Vasugupta. The author claims that these Sūtrās were affected by Śiva in his dream. The eldest extant author of this Dualistic school is Sadyojyoti of 19<sup>th</sup> C AD. In his Kārikas the author accepts Pati, Paśu and Pāśa as fundamental concepts.

Another famous school of Śaivism of the *Vaiṣṇavāgama* type is called *Śaivāgama*. Its famous exponent is Srīkaṅṭha. Like previous Ācāryas of other schools he tried to establish his view in *Brahmamīmāṃsabhāṣya* (*Bmb*). The principles of Cit and Acit are described in *Bmb*. The Brahman is characterized by subtle cit and the principle characterised by Acit is the effect.

<sup>24</sup> *Tantra: Its mystic and scientific basis*, Lalan Prasad Singh, Delhi, 1976, p.17

<sup>25</sup> The statement अष्टादश पुराणेषु दशभिः स्तुयते शिवः is famous.

<sup>26</sup> *Agnipurāṇa* Ch.34,72,92-96; *BP* Ch.34,39,205-06; *Devibhāgavatapurāṇa*, III.5, *KP* Ch.9-50-51; *LP* Ch.3,28.7.9; Ch.17; *Ma P* Ch.49, *MP* Chs-153-54; Ch.118.40a; *Vārāhapurāṇa* P 211.38, 39.8, 41; *Vāmanapurāṇa* Ch.I

<sup>27</sup> *Pāsupata Śaiva Dharma Evam Darśana* (Vol.II), Alokmani Tripathi, 1998, p.4

<sup>28</sup> *Kaṭopanīṣad*, Śankarabhāṣyam, 1.2.23, 1990

सूक्ष्मचिद् अचिद् विशिष्टम्। ब्रह्म कारणं, स्थूलचिद् अचिद् विशिष्टं कार्यम्।<sup>29</sup>

Another school is *Vīraśaivism* (VS) or *Śaktivaiṣṇavāgama* in Karnataka. Śrīpati Pandit, whose commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* is well known as *Śrīkarabhāṣya*. It shows that Āgamic Śaivism has the firm support of the *Brahmasūtra*.

VS regards this Siva or Pati as the same as Upanisadic Brahman. They assert the equality between the *Vedas* and *Agamas* as Siva is the author of both these works. Paśu is the individual soul. All Śaiva sects are using this term. The other synonyms used for Paśu are Aṇu, Ātma, Jīva, Pudgala, and Kṣetrajña. The *Liṅgapurāṇa* explains that as Śiva is their master, he is called Pāśupati. The term Paśu for Jīvātman seems to be first adopted by the oldest and Veda based sect called Pasupatism. Kaundinya in his commentary on the Paśupatasūtra quotes,

‘साख्ययोगेन ये मुक्ताः सांख्योगेश्वराशय ये। ब्रह्मादयस्तिर्यगन्ताः सर्वे ते पशवः स्मृताः।।’<sup>30</sup>

The term Puryaṣṭaka is adopted by Siddhāntaśaivas as is seen from Bhojadevas explanation in the *Tattvārthaprakāśa*.

पुर्यष्टकं अन्तःकरणं धीकर्मकरणानि।<sup>31</sup>

Pāśa or mala in all sects of Śaivism is explained as such. Though Jīva and Śiva are of same status and possess the same powers originally, the powers of the Jīva are restricted due to the limiting factor called Pāśa-Bandha, Mala, Ajñāna, Paśutva, Tamas all synonyms for ignorance.

अज्ञानं किल बन्धहेतुरुदितः। शास्त्रे मलं तत्स्मृतम्।<sup>32</sup>

Kārmikamala is confused by some with Karmasamskāra. But Samskāras are the effects of mental, verbal and physical acts committed by a Jīva.

Mala in SS is described as great bondage (Mahāpāśa).

कर्माख्योऽयं महापाशो दुर्मोचस्तेन जन्तवः। इतस्ततः समाकृष्य नीयन्ते पशवः इव।<sup>33</sup>

Māyikamala in SS regarded Māya as real, eternal and the material cause of the world. As Māya is real, its creation, the world also is real. This Māyikamala or Pāśa is accepted in one form or other by other sects of Śaivism.<sup>34</sup>

## Mokṣa

Mokṣa or liberation from Samsāra is considered as the goal of all schools of Indian philosophy. KS regards Bandha and Mokṣa as mere fiction, as Lord Śiva is present everywhere. This is obviously an echo of the principle in *Sākhya-kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa,

‘तस्मात्त्र बध्यतेऽद्धा न मुच्यते नापि संसारति कश्चित्।’<sup>35</sup>

Śrīkaṇṭha, an Ācārya of *Vaiṣṇavāgama*, in his *Bmb* opines that even after attaining identity with Śiva, the liberated soul does not have the higher powers of Śiva such as the powers for the creation of the universe and the like.

‘मुक्तस्य परमेश्वरसाम्येऽपि जगत्सृष्ट्यादिव्यापारवर्जम्।

एवं स्वातन्त्र्यं अस्य भोगवस्तुषु।।’<sup>36</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Brahmamīmāṃsābhāṣya*, 1.1.5, 1.27.1, Chawkamba series Varanasi, 1998.

<sup>30</sup> *Pāśupatasūtra*, Alokamani Tripathi, 1998, p.3

<sup>31</sup> *Tattvārthaprakāśika*, 1.12

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in *Tantraloka*, Abhinavagupta, Krishnanath Sagar, 1984 p.5

<sup>33</sup> *Tantrapaddhati*, 1.16, Dr. N.P.Unni, 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Ibid ‘माया वस्तुपामूलं विश्वस्य नित्यासा।’

<sup>35</sup> *Sākhya-kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, Gurudeva Īśānaśiva, 1988 p.63 (Kārikā.62)

<sup>36</sup> *Bmb* II.496, Chawkamba series Varanasi, 1998.

## Tattvas (principles)

Man has been trying to understand and decipher the riddle of the universe from very ancient times amazed at the vast, unending vista of the world. The seer of the Nāsādīyasūkta in the *RV* says,

इयं विसृष्टिर्यत आबभ्रव नदि वा दर्धे यदि वा न। योऽस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्सोऽङ्ग वेद यदि वा न वेद।<sup>37</sup>

All the Śaiva schools accept many principles of the *Sāṅkhya* system. Twenty four principles of the *Sāṅkhya* namely *Avyakta* or *Mūlaprakṛti* and its involutes *Mahat* etc along with *Puruṣa* form the basis of the universe according to the *Sāṅkhya* system. This is a sort of Śiva Śakti identity in Śaivism. But there is some difference. *Vikaras* or involutes of *Prakṛti* are the *Kṣetra* while the *Avyakta* part of *Prakṛiti* like *Puruṣa* also is regarded as *Kṣetrajaña*, ‘अव्यक्तमध्यस्य क्षेत्रस्य क्षेत्रज्ञं शृषयो विदुः।’<sup>38</sup>

Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism as well have accepted twenty four Tattvas of *Sāṅkhyas*. All schools of Śaivism accept thirty six Tattvas in general. *SS* shows a close similarity with *Advaita* School of thought *KS* is a monistic philosophy.

## Schools in Śaivism

*Kālamukhā*, *Kāpālikā*, *KS*, *Pa cult*, *SS*, *Śivadvaita*, *Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita*, *VS* etc. are some prominent schools in Śaivism.<sup>39</sup> The main tenets or broad features of these Śaiva schools are similar to those of some schools of Vaiṣṇavism. Thus the Monism of *KS* is similar to that of the *Advaita* of Śaṅkara with the exception of the special tenet of *Māyavāda* in *Advaita* system.<sup>40</sup> *SS*, which is dominant in Tamil Nadu, shares number concepts of Duality with those of *Madhva*, the promulgator of *Vaiṣṇava* Dualism. Śrīkaṅṭha’s *Śaivādvaita* is similar to *Rāmānuja*’s *Viśiṣṭadvaita*.

### Kālamukhas

Based on the fierce descriptions of *Rudra* in the *Vedas*, some strange cults emerged in course of time. The *Kālamukhas* and the *Kāpālikas* are two such sects worshipping *Rudra-Śiva* as *Bhairava* and *Caṇḍi*. The *Kālamukhas* were so called, probably because they were defacing their faces with black marks and symbols. Scholars of Śaivism consider this sect as a branch of the *Pa cult* of *Lakulīśa*, also spelt as *Nakulīśa*.

This cult was powerful during the period A.D.700-1200 in *Andrapradesh* and *Karnataka*. *Kedāreśvara* temple of *Baḷḷigāve* in the *Shimoga* district of *Karnataka* and the temple town of *Śrīśaila* near *Kurnool*, *Andrapradesh* were the strongholds of the sect. Edicts of the *C<sub>1</sub>/2* *Yukyan* Kings (11<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD) speak of royal patronage to this cult. One of their gurus *Sarveśvara* or *Śaktideva* was the master of 77 temples related to this sect. This sect was also well known for austerity and scholarship.<sup>41</sup>

However, some of their dreadful practices, like drinking wine in human skulls, smearing the body with the ashes of crematories, cannibalism and loose morals, made them outcastes in the society in course of time.

The teachers of this sect were divided into two groups: *Rāśi* and *Śakti*. *Rājarājaguru* (Circa A.D.1370), a well-known *Kālamukha* teacher, was a contemporary of the sage *Vidyāraṇya* 14<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.<sup>42</sup>

### Kāpālikas

Members of powerful Śaiva sects, the *Kāpālikas*, were christened as such because they were using a *Kapāla* or human skull, as their begging bowl. They were also wearing a garland of human skulls. They were quite active and powerful from the 7<sup>th</sup>C onwards for about 500 years in *Śrīśaila* in *Andra Pradesh* and some parts of *Tamil Nadu* like *Kāñcipuram*, *Tiruvāṭṭiyūr*, *Melapāḍi* and *Koḍumbāḷḷūr*.<sup>43</sup> Worship of *Bhairava* and *Caṇḍi*, drinking wine, eating human flesh and ash, arming themselves with a mace and promiscuous sex were common among the members of the sect.

<sup>37</sup> *RV* X.129.7

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in *History of Indain philosophy*, S.N. Dasgupta, Vol.I, P.216

<sup>39</sup> *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas, Two lost Śaivite sects*, Lorezen N. David, 1991, p.132-135

<sup>40</sup> *The Advaita Tradition in Indian Philosophy*, Chandradhar Sharma, Delhi, 2007, p.274, 277

<sup>41</sup> *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas*, David N.L., 1972, p.226-227.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p.6

<sup>43</sup> *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas*, David N.L., 1972, p.4 and *History of Indain philosophy*, p.3

According to a work called *Śabaratantra*, 24 teachers in the sect, starting with Ādinātha and ending with Malayārjuna, have been mentioned. They were fiercely anti-Vaiṣṇava<sup>44</sup>.

### **Kāśmīr Śaivism(KS)**

Though Śaivism is an old religion philosophical system prevalent in many parts of India, certain erudite and enlightened teachers from Kāśmīr developed a special branch of the same. This came to be popularly known as *KS* in the annals of philosophical literature of later periods. However, a more technical and acceptable title is *Pratyabhijñādarśana*.

*Śivasūtras* (said to have been revealed to Vasugupta by Lord Śiva himself), Vāsugupta's (8<sup>th</sup>C A.D.) *Spandakārikā*, Somānanda's (9<sup>th</sup>C A.D.) *Śivadṛṣṭi* and Utpaladeva's (10<sup>th</sup>C.1<sup>st</sup>half) *Pratyabhijñā-kārikā* are important work in *KS*. Abhinavagupta's (10<sup>th</sup> C.A.D.2<sup>nd</sup> half) *Pratyabhijñāvimarśinī* and his own independent works *Tantrāloka* and *Paramārthasāra* have made him immortal in the chronicles of *KS*. Abhinavagupta's disciple Kṣemarājā (10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>C.A.D) wrote *Śivasūtravimarśinī* and *Spandasandoha* which are some of the most important works of this system which has a voluminous literature. Bhāskara and Vardarāja were the other noted writers who have enriched this literature.<sup>45</sup>

*KS* puts forward 36 Tattvas or fundamental principles out of which the whole creation has evolved. They are divided into three main groups as Śuddhatattva, Śuddhāśuddhatattva and Aśuddhatattva. The Śuddhatattva mean pure principles and are five in number Śivatattva, Śaktitattva, Sadāśivatattva, Īśvaratattva and Śuddhavidyātattva.

The Śuddhāśuddhatattvas are six namely Māya, Kāla, Niyati Rāga, Vidyā and Kalā. The Aśuddhatattvas are twenty five in numbers. They are Puruṣatattva, Prakṛitattva, Buddhi, Ahānkāra, Manas, the five Jñānendriyas, the five Karmendriyas, the five Tanmātras and the five Bhūtas. These tenets appear to be similar to those described in the *Advaitavedānta* and the *Sāṅkhya* systems. But there are some basic differences also.

The fundamental Tattva of this system is Śivatattva, generally described as Parasaṃvit or the highest (and pure) consciousness, the same as the Nirguṇa Brahman of the *Advaitavedānta*. This Parasaṃvit is the original primeval Tattva from which all the other Tattvas have emerged. It is eternal and indescribable. The Śaktitattva is primarily the Prathamaspandana of Parasaṃvit. Ānanda or bliss is its chief characteristic. It is the primary source of all movement in further creation and the experience of 'Ahaṃ' - 'I consciousness'. Then comes the Sadāśivatattva, a further evolution of the Parasaṃvit, wherein there is an awareness of Ahaṃ and Idaṃ identifying God with the creation about to be projected. In Īśvaratattva, the forth, the consciousness Idaṃ (creation) becomes equal in prominence to Ahaṃ.

In Śuddhavidyātattva, the fifth form of Parasaṃvit, Idaṃ becomes more prominent. This is the starting point of the actual process of creation or evolution or projection. These five principles have been named Śaktyaṇḍa. Māyaṇḍa is the next group of principles. Māyā is the unique power of Śiva, which can make the impossible possible. It is not an illusory power responsible only for ignorance as in Advaita metaphysics. It is the real power by which Śiva envelops Himself, producing Bheda (differences), Nama, Rūpa and so on, where they didn't exist.

This Māyā gives rise to the Pañcakañcukas or five coverings that apparently limit the powers of Śiva and make Him appear as the Jīvātman(individual soul), subject to Kāla(time), Niyati(cause and effect relationship, law of Karma), Rāga (desire and attachment), Vidyā or Avidyā and Kalā (limited power of action).The next group of principles beginning with Prakṛti is called Prakṛtyaṇḍa. Prakṛti is the matrix of the three Guṇas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) in a state of balance. When this balance is upset, the products that gradually emerge are Buddhi, Ahānkāra, Manas, the five Jñānendriyas (organs of perception, namely, eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin or the sense of touch), the five Karmendriyas, namely, speech, hands, feet and the two organs of evacuation and the five Tanmātras (the five subtle elements of earth, water, fire, air and space).The Tanmātras, by their combination, produce the five Mahābhūtas or gross elements. Further creation proceeds from them. This group is called Pṛthvyā. The significant points to be noted in this system are, (1) Sṛṣṭi or creation is the evolution of the Śakti or power of Śiva. (2) The individual soul in bondage in creation, is also, really speaking, Śiva himself. (3) The total number of fundamental comic principles are 36 and not 25 as in the Sāṅkhya system.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas*, David N.L, 1972, p.37

<sup>45</sup> *The Advaita Tradition in Indian Philosophy*, Chandradhar Sharma, p. 249

Since the created world is evolutes of Śiva, it is not different from him. But, it also appears to have its own separate identity. Hence, this system accepts the theory of Bhedābheda between God and his creation.

Correspondingly, the Jīvātman who is called Paśu (bound soul) is also Śiva himself. By practising Pratyabhijñā (recognising his real nature as Śiva himself) the Jīva can get rid of all Āvaraṇas (coverings) and become one with Śiva. This is his Mukti or liberation. Nevertheless, this can be secured only by service to the Guru, listening to the teachings of the Śāstras, reflection on them and the practice of Yoga. But, the final deliverance can come only by Śivānugraha, technically called Śaktipāta (downward climb of Lord's power). Eventually, as per this system, it is Śiva that covers himself and becomes the Jīva, the bound soul. It is Śiva, again that recognises his real nature and 'regains' it as it were.

### **Pāśupata cult**

The cult of Pāśupati or the *Pa cult* seems to be an ancient one. The use of words 'Pati', 'Pāśa' and 'Prasāda' *cult* is based mainly on the Śaivāgamas, certain *Purāṇas* and a few minor *Upaniṣads* of the post- Vedic period. Some of the *Āgamas* are: *Kāmika*, *Ajita*, *Aṃśumān*, *Suprabheda*, *Svāyambhuva*, *Raurava*, *Mṛgendra*, *Paṣkara* and *Vātula*. The *Purāṇas* are *Vāyu*, *Kūrma* and *Śiva*. As for their authoritative nature, they have been considered equal to the *Vedas*, the *Vedāṅgas*, the *MB* and *Dharmaśāstras*.

The period of the *Āgamas* ranges from the first Century to the 14<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. They are prevalent mostly in South India, that too in Tamil Nadu. Whether these *Āgamas* or some of them at least were originally composed in Tamil and later rendered into Sanskrit is not certain.

### **Siddhāntaśaivism(SS)**

Though the word SS means the doctrine of Śaivism in general, it has come to be particularly identified with the branch of Śaivism that has been prevalent in the Tamil country over the last thousand and three hundred years. It is more a religion of devotional mysticism than a systematic and speculative philosophy, based on the compositions of the Nāyanmārs or Nāyanārs who were 63 in number and lived during the period from 7<sup>th</sup> C to 12<sup>th</sup> Cent A.D.<sup>46</sup>

The canonical literature of Tamil Śaivism as redacted by Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi (A.D.1000) is an anthology called *Tamil Veda* consisting of eleven books. The books 1, 2 and 3 were composed by by Tirujñānanabandar in 7<sup>th</sup> C. AD, The books 4, 5 and 6 by Tirunāvukkarasar in 7<sup>th</sup> C AD and the book 7<sup>th</sup> by Sundarar in 9<sup>th</sup> C. A. D. These seven collections are generally called Tevārams or Devārams.

The 8<sup>th</sup> book is *Tiruvācakam* and *Tirukkovai* by Māṇikkavācagar of 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> C. A.D. The 9<sup>th</sup> book is *Tiruvīśaippā* and *Tirupallāṇḍu* by nine different saints in A.D.900-1000. The 10 and 11 books respectively are the works *Tirumandiram* by Tirumālar in 6<sup>th</sup> C. A.D and many minor poetical works. There are also works by saints like Pattinattār, Karaikkal Ammaiyar and others. The work *Periyapurāṇam* by Sekkilar in 12<sup>th</sup> C.A.D contains several legends of Tamil Śaivites.<sup>47</sup>

The first attempt at a systematic presentation of *Tamil Śaivism* was by Meykaṇḍār (13<sup>th</sup> C. A.D.) in his work *Śivajñānabodham*, a short treatise of 12 aphorisms. It seems to be a translation in Tamil, of a Sanskrit original.<sup>48</sup>

Next in importance, considered as a classic in Tamil Śaivism, is the work *Śivajñānāsittiyār* by Aruṇandi, a disciple of Meykaṇḍār. This work along with its numerous commentaries is most widely read even now. The *Śivajñānabodham* mentions and defines the three basic concepts, Pati, Paśu and Pāśa deals with the Sādhanā for the Paśu to realise Pati and the Phala or spiritual fruit that accrues to him.

The philosophy of SS is very similar to that of the *Pa cult*, the only difference being that the former accepts 36 basic principles like KS whereas the latter accepts only 25.

<sup>46</sup> *The origin of Śaivism and its History in the Tamil Land*, K.K.Subramanian, 1985, p.71

<sup>47</sup> *Śaivasiddhānta*, Ed.Humphrey palmer, 2000, p.26

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p.21



**Vīraśaivism**

VS also known as the Liṅgāyata religion or sect is a variant of Śaivism found mostly in Karnataka region of South India. Though the more orthodox sections claim that it is an ancient religion originating from some mythical teachers like Revaṅārādhyā, Maruḷārādhyā, Paṇḍitārādhyā and others, there are others who are inclined to treat it in a figurative sense. For all practical purposes, Basavaṅṇa or Basava, who was the prime minister of the king Vijjala (who ruled A.D. 1157 to 1167) were the chief organiser and reformer of this sect.<sup>49</sup>

A galaxy of saints (numbering more than 300) of this sect like Allama Prabhu and Cannabasavaṅṇa, and women-saints like Akka- Mahādevī have enriched the Liṅgāyata movement. They revolutionised the religiousocial fabric of their times.

A special feature of VS is the supreme importance, reverence and worship given to the Śivaliṅga or God Śiva. Hence the appropriateness of the name Liṅgāyata as a religion that considers the Liṅga as the chief support or basic. After receiving it from a qualified guru in Dīkṣa or initiation, it should be worn on the body always, there by purifying every part of the body.

According to this system Śiva is the supreme God and the Liṅga is his chief symbol or emblem. The Pañcākṣarīmantra, 'Namaḥśivāya', is the redeeming spiritual formula. Pañcācāras and Aṣṭāvaraṅṇas are the main code of conduct. Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita is the philosophy behind this system. As for the process of evolution of the world, the same 36 Tattvas or principles accepted in KS have been adopted here also.

The three Malas or impurities, Āṇavamala, Māyāyamaḷa, and Kārmikamala explained earlier, are accepted here also. In order to get rid of these Malas, the individual has to take Dīkṣā (Initiation) from a duly qualified guru. Dīkṣā is a simple ritual in which the guru worships a Liṅga and then ties it round the neck of the disciple which will hang like a necklace. The Liṅga is usually encased in a silver casket. By this process, the guru gives the Upadeśa Namaḥśivāyamantra and also transmits his spiritual power to the disciple. Women also are entitled for Dīkṣā in this cult.

One who is thus initiated is expected to practise the five disciplines known as Pañcācāras and also to protect himself with eight coverings, the Aṣṭāvaraṅṇas, stipulated by the system. The Pañcācāras are (1) Liṅgācāra, worshipping daily the Liṅga given to him in Dīkṣā, (2) Sadācāra, earning money by a virtuous profession and utilising the savings for serving the needy, including the Jaṅgamas (wondering preachers), (3) Śivācāra, treating all liṅgāyatas equally as if they are Śiva himself, (4) Bhṛtyācāra, cultivating humility towards Śiva and his devotees, and (5) Gaṇācāra, zealously guarding one's religion, protesting against disrespect to one's God and religion and not tolerating cruelty to animals.

The Aṣṭāvaraṅṇas are (1) Faith and respect towards the Guru, (2) Liṅga - treating the Liṅgas with reverence and devotion, (3) Jaṅgama - respectful treatment of the ascetics and mendicants, (4) Pādodaka - purify of oneself by drinking or sprinkling oneself, with the water, with which Guru's or a Jaṅgama's feet have been washed, (5) Prasāda - accepting food sanctified in worship, (6) Bhasma - smearing holy ash on the forehead and other parts of the body as prescribed, (7) Rudrākṣa - using a Rudrākṣa rosary for Japa and also wearing it on the body, (8) Mantra - repetition of the Pañcākṣarīmantra as directed by the Dīkṣā Guru.

Since the five Ācāras and the eight Āvaraṅṇas purify a VS or Liṅgāyata by burning up all his impurities, there is no need for him to observe Sūktas in ceremonial acts to remove impurities or cremate His body after death. Hence it is buried.

**Liṅga worship in Śaivatantra**

All Śaiva sects prescribe Śiva worship as essential for attaining Mokṣa. Śaivites regard the Liṅga as the object of worship and meditation for the realization of the highest principle. Śiva Liṅga is identified with god Rudra and the faces of Śiva are found carved in the Liṅga since ancient times.<sup>50</sup> The five faces are supposed to be created by Śiva himself and they are Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna. According to the MB also there are references to Śiva having four faces like Aghora, Uṣṇīṣa, Yogi and that of a woman.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> History of Indain philosophy, Vol V, Surendranath Dasgupta, 1922, p.43

<sup>50</sup> Mayammata, Kapilavātsyānan, Vol.II, p.132ff

<sup>51</sup> Mahabharata, Anuśāsana Parvan, M.N.Dutt, 2008, Chapters 140-47.

Liṅgas with full form of Śiva inscribed are called Vighraha Liṅgas. These Liṅgas belong to the Kuśāna period. These Mukha Liṅgas and Vighraha Liṅgas expose the patent mischievous absurdity in equating Śiva Liṅga with Śiva's penis. There are also faceless Liṅgas called Sthāṇu Liṅgas. Sthāṇu form is traced to the legend recorded in different *Purāṇas* like the Liṅga, the Kūrma, the Vāyu<sup>52</sup> and others.

The Śivānubhāvasūtra defines the word Liṅga traced to two Sanskrit roots of 'li' meaning 'to dissolve' and 'gam' meaning 'to go', thus to mean 'to get manifested or created'. This concept of Liṅga is similar to the *Upaniṣadic* concept of the Brahman expressed in the Chandogyopaniṣad (*CU*)<sup>53</sup>. Thus it can be seen that Śivaliṅga is the symbol of the ultimate reality which Śaivas designate as Pati and Vedāntins as the Brahman. The Śaiva class of deities includes Śiva with his different forms, Kṣetrapāla and Bhairavas whose number is given as eight. Śiva is worshipped with the Mantra of five letters 'Namḥ Śivāya'.<sup>54</sup>

### Śaivatantra literature in Kerala

Kerala has made a substantial contribution to Tantric literature in Sanskrit. The Tantric works of Kerala provide detailed instructions for the daily rituals and special rituals related to festivals, etc. Some of these works contain the rules for performing certain domestic rituals also. Most of the Keralite Tantric works deal with various aspects of the temple architecture as well.

A good number of works relating to *Tantras*, *Āgamas* and *Samhitās* have been produced in Kerala. Many authoritative works in Malayalam in the subject and commentaries, both in Sanskrit and in Malayalam, which often supplement the text, are also written by the scholars of Kerala. A major part of the literature is unpublished, which remains in manuscript form mainly in private collections.

A scholar belonging to the Narayanamaṅgalam family famous as Nāraṇattu Bhrānta and one member in the family of Mezhatthoor Agnihotri were believed as early profounder of *Tantra* in the tradition of Kerala. But no works attributed to them is available now.<sup>55</sup>

Śaṅkaras works like *Prapañcasāra* are believed to be the earliest works on Kerala *Tantra*. Considering *Tantra samuccaya* of Chennas Narayanan Namboothiri as one of the turning points of Keralite Tantric tradition. Tantric literature of Kerala can be broadly divided into two, Pre - Tantrasamuccaya period and post - Samuccaya period. Tantric texts concentrate on the practical side of Tantric rituals neglecting the philosophical and mythological aspects of *Tantra*. *Prapañcasāra* attributed to Śri Śaṅkara, Sumati author of *Viṣṇusamhitā*, Īśāna and Śivagurudeva authors of *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati*, *Prayogamañjari* written by Ravi, *Śaivāgamanibandhana* of Murāribhatta, *Tantrasamuccaya* written by Chennas Nārāyaṇanampoothiri, *Kriyāsāra*, *Śeṣasamuccaya* attributed to Kṛṣṇaśarma etc are important Tantric works in Kerala.<sup>56</sup>

### Conclusion

The Śaivatantra tradition has a long history for pre - Vedic time up to the present time. It had its development all over India. Different sects and branches of Śaivism began prominent and popular in India in its different stages of development among them, *Kāśmir Śaivism*, especially Karma, Tula and Pratyabhijña branches are important taking into account their idealistic stand points. Equally important is the *SiddhāntaŚaivism* of South India with its philosophical base. Other than these, many sects in Śaivism like *Vīraśaivism*, *Pāśupata* system etc. also developed. Thus this Śaiva tradition especially its ritualistic Tāntric streams is very rich in India the study and research on which has much scope and importance.

<sup>52</sup> LP 1.70.323-24; KP 1.10.38 (3) 15.72; VaP 10.64

<sup>53</sup> CU 14.1 and 5.13.2, 5.14.2, Vol XV, Ed.Prof. C.Kunhan Raja, p.444

<sup>54</sup> *Tantras, Studies on their religion and literature*, Chintaharam Chakravari, 1999,p.84

<sup>55</sup> For details vide unpublished PhD thesis of *Prayogamañjari* of Ravi, Dr.K.M. Sangamesan, Calicut University, 2004, Introduction.

<sup>56</sup> For a complete list of Kerala Tantric works vide Ibid.

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