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INTRODUCTION BY

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KASHMIR ŚAIVISM

DIFFERENT NAMES OF THE SYSTEM

IN this article we shall essay a brief exposition of the vision of Reality, the destiny of man, and the way and discipline leading to that destiny, as formulated in the system of spiritual philosophy known as Trika-śāsana or Trika-śāstra or simply Trika, and, more rarely, also as Rahasya-sampradāya and Tryambaka-sampradāya. It must have been an important system at the time of Mādhavācārya to merit an inclusion as Pratyabhijñā-darśana in his compendium *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha*. The Trika is a virgin field of research, and will repay the most conscientious labour of philosophers for many years to come.

The Trika is so called either because it accepts as most important the triad, *Siddha*, *Nāmaka*, and *Mālinī*, out of the ninety-two Āgamas recognized by it; or because the triad consisting of Śiva, Śakti, and Aṇu, or, again, of Śiva, Śakti, and Nara, or, lastly, of the goddesses Parā, Aparā, and Parātparā is recognized; or because it explains three modes of knowledge of Reality, viz. non-dual (*abheda*), non-dual-cum-dual (*bhedābheda*), and dual (*bheda*).

The system has two main branches, Spanda and Pratyabhijñā. Many classics of the school include the word Spanda or Pratyabhijñā in their very titles. The Trika is also known as Svātantryavāda, Svātantrya and Spanda expressing the same concepts. Ābhāsavāda is another name of the system. It is called Kashmir Śaivism, because the writers who enriched its literature belonged to and flourished in this area.

A SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

The Trika is a spiritual philosophy, because its doctrines regarding Reality, the world, and man are derived from a wealth of spiritual experiences, and are not constructions based upon an analysis of the ordinary experiences of man. Its concepts are, to borrow a phrase from Sri Aurobindo, experience-concepts. Its greatest exponents were *yogins* of high stature who showed wonderful insight into abstruse points of philosophy.¹ The substance of their teaching is not arrived at by an analysis of the ordinary cognitive, affective, and conative experiences of man, but embodies the findings of yogic ways of apprehension, enjoyment, and action. Means of apprehension and action, other than sensory and intellectual, have always

¹ *Pratyabhijñā-kārikā*, I. 38.

been recognized in India and other countries as being perfectly possible, indeed as within the reach of man. Various kinds of discipline, which may be generally called *yoga*, give the science of the inner being and nature of man, and the art of using the powers of knowledge and action hidden at present in unknown regions of our being and nature. The Trika, in short, is a rational exposition of a view of Reality obtained primarily through more-than-normal experiences.

LITERATURE

The system being both a statement about the nature of Reality and a way of life, the orthodox classification of its literature is into *parā*, *aparā*, and *parātparā*, according as the works set forth, respectively, the metaphysics, the rituals, and both the philosophy and the practical discipline enjoined by the system. We shall, however, for the sake of convenience, divide it into (i) Āgama-śāstra, (ii) Spanda-śāstra, and (iii) Pratyabhijñā-śāstra. Of these the first, the Śaiva Āgamas or Śāstras, is said to have eternal existence and to have been revealed to the sage Durvāsas by Śiva as Śrīkaṇṭha. Durvāsas is said to have ordered his three 'mind-born' sons, Tryambaka, Āmardaka, and Śrīkaṇṭha, to teach the eternal Śaiva philosophy (and faith), respectively, in its three aspects of *abheda*, *bheda*, and *bhedābheda*.

ĀGAMA-ŚĀSTRA

Among the Āgamas the chief ones are *Mālinīvijaya*, *Svacchanda*, *Vijñāna-bhairava*, *Ucchuṣma-bhairava*, *Ānanda-bhairava*, *Myendra*, *Mataṅga*, *Netra*, *Naiśvāsa*, *Svāyambhuva*, and *Rudra Yāmala*. These were interpreted mostly as teaching a dualistic doctrine, to stop the propagation of which the *Śiva-Sūtra*, expounding a purely Advaitic metaphysic, was revealed to a sage called Vasugupta (c. ninth century). This work is also called *Śivopaniṣad-saṅgraha* and *Sivarahasyāgamaśāstra-saṅgraha*. On the *sūtras* of this work there are (i) the *Vṛtti* (the authorship of which is doubtful), (ii) the *Vārttika* by Bhāskara, and (iii) the commentary called *Vimarśinī* by Kṣemarāja.

Some of the Āgamas had commentaries written on them, the chief among which are the *Uddyota* on *Svacchanda*, *Netra*, and *Vijñāna-bhairava*, and the *Vṛtti* on *Mataṅga*. These commentaries are attempts to show that Āgamas, even prior to the *Śiva-Sūtra*, taught an Advaitic doctrine.

SPANDA-ŚĀSTRA

Of the Spanda-śāstra, which only elaborated the principles of the *Śiva-Sūtra*, without, however, giving much logical reason in support of them, the first and foremost is the *Spanda-Sūtra* or the *Spanda-kārikā*, attributed

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to Vasugupta himself ; and it is called a *saṅgraha-grantha* or a compendium. His pupil Kallaṭa wrote a *Vṛtti* on this *Sūtra*, and the two together are called *Spanda-sarvasva*. On the *Spanda-Sūtra* we have also the *Spandanirṇaya* and the *Spanda-sandoha* by Kṣemarāja (who also wrote *Śiva-Sūtra-vimarśinī*), the *Vivṛti* by Rāmakaṇṭha, and the *Pradīpikā* by Utpala Vaiṣṇava.

PRATYABHIJÑĀ-ŚĀSTRA

The Pratyabhijñā-śāstra is really the philosophical branch of the Trika. Siddha Somānanda, probably a pupil of Vasugupta, is credited with adopting the method of giving an elaborate treatment of his own views and refuting his opponents' doctrines, and is also praised as the founder of the logic of the system. On his work *Śiva-dṛṣṭi*, which is the foundation of this branch, the author wrote a *Vṛtti*, now lost, quotations from which are found in other works. The *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā* or the *Pratyabhijñā-Sūtra* by Utpala, a pupil of Somānanda, is a summary of the philosophy of his master. This shorter work became so important that the entire system came to be known by its name even outside Kashmir. Commentaries on it, still available, are the *Vṛtti* by Utpala himself, and the *Pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (*Laghvī Vṛtti*) and the *Pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* (*Bṛhatī Vṛtti*) by Abhinavagupta. *Bhāskarī* is a lucid and very helpful *ṭīkā* on Abhinavagupta's commentary. *Paramārthasāra* and *Tantrasāra*, both by Abhinavagupta, and *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* by Kṣemarāja are three small but important works of the school. *Tantrāloka* by Abhinavagupta with Jayaratha's commentary on it is a veritable encyclopaedia of the system.

WHAT IS ŚĀSTRA?

According to the Trika, the Śāstras have eternal existence. The first thing to remember is that Śāstra does not originally mean a book, it means wisdom, self-existent and impersonal. It is also known as *śabda* and *vāc*. *śabda* in the Āgamic philosophies indicates a slight stir, throb, or vibration in Reality, and the eternal self-revelation of Reality is this primal and original vibration. *Vāc* or word expresses something, and the self-expression of Reality is called *parā vāc* or the supreme Word. This self-expression of Reality is wisdom, Reality's awareness of Itself.² This is, from one point of view, the knowledge which descends through various levels to the intelligence of man ; from another, it is the universe as the self-manifestation of Reality, not as we know it, but as it is in its original condition in Reality. This is what is meant by saying that *śabda* creates or manifests everything.

² 'Śāstram ca paramēśvarabhāṣitam eva pramāṇam'—Śāstra is authority told or revealed by the supreme Lord. *Tantrasāra* (Kashmir Ed.), p. 4.

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It follows that there is the most intimate connection between *śabda* and *artha*, word and the object. Indeed in the original condition, the subtlest speech, the *parā vāc*, is the universe. It is there existent as Reality's knowledge of Itself as the universe, it is there *vānimaya*, constituted of words. But the *parā vāc* reveals itself as the *paśyantī vāc*, the seeing word; from the side of the universe, it may be described as the universe to be, still existing in an undifferentiated condition. Further objectification reveals it as the *madhyamā vāc*, the middle word, which may be said to be *cittavṛttis*, which are expressed through words as we speak them, and on the cosmic side, as inarticulate differentiation that waits to develop into particularization of objects. *Madhyamā vāc* is the link between the *paśyantī* and the *vaikharī vāc*, that is, word or speech as uttered by the human vocal organ and referring to differentiated objects of the world. It will be noted that the more the objectification of *vāc*, the less intimate is the relation between the word and the object. In the *parā* or transcendent stage they are identical, and it is not possible to say much about their relation. But while in the *paśyantī*, the name and the object are undifferentiated (which is not the same as identical, because the universe to be has now at least ideally emerged, though it has not as yet been alienated from the vision), the relation between them in the *madhyamā* is notional, involving ideal separation only; and in the *vaikharī*, or the human level of speech, the relation between the word and the object is only conventional, i.e. we just give a name to a thing without any reason inherent in it.

The Āgamas or Śāstras exist originally and eternally as the *parā vāc* and then as *paśyantī*. Human sages and seers only receive them from the *madhyamā* level. The Śāstras come to them from the *madhyamā vāc*, flowing out from the five faces (*pañcānana*) of the Deity (representing the five aspects of His power and glory, viz. *cit*, *ānanda*, *icchā*, *jñāna*, and *kriyā*) called Iśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Aghora, and Vāma. Thus the wisdom set forth in the Trika philosophy is originally the self-knowledge of Reality expressing itself, though distorted and deformed, as the Śāstras as we know them. Reality must be aware of Itself or Himself, which is the same as saying that the true knowledge of Reality exists in Reality and is not built up by the human brain. And this basic or original knowledge is obtainable by men only through revelation, which means that it is self-manifest (*svayamprakāśa*). That which exists can alone be revealed, and the revelation takes place only when some spiritual genius makes himself fit to receive it, as the result of the development of the proper faculty or faculties.³

³ 'Veda' also originally means not a book, but knowledge, impersonal and unconstructed. Veda is referred to as *nitya-vāc*, the eternal Word. See, for instance, *R.V.*, VIII. 64. 6, where