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Concept of Manifestation Process in Kashmir Shaivism

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Abstract

This paper examines the concept of manifestation process in Kashmir *Shaivism* from *Shiva tattva* to *Prithvi tattva* and their transcendental and immanent predicates (*Prakrti* and *Purusa*). This paper also shows that the ultimate reality, *Paramshiva*, manifests itself into various forms which likely represent the theory of causation. This research paper also provides answer to two questions; First, how ultimate reality with its thirty-six principles or elements manifest in various forms and what types of forms 'Descent' attains from the 'universal self'? Second, how manifestation process takes place from the 'cosmic self' (universal consciousness) to a 'limited self' (*Jiva*)? Since, this paper is based on philosophical exploration of manifestation process and contains interpretation and argumentation of *Pratyabhijna* philosophy only; it excludes manifestation due to *Yogas (Upayas)* and *Karmas*. Moreover, it explains the *Trika* form of reality (*Shiva/God, Shakti/World, and Nara/Man*) and also the identity between 'ascent' and 'descent'. Manifestation further investigates the union of *Shiva* and *Shakti* with *Maya* and displays its character (*Prakashvimarshmaya*). This work further tries to describe the contribution of Abhinavagupta in the concept of manifestation.

Key terms: Kashmir Shaivism, Manifestation Process, Shiva, Shakti, Abhinavagupta, Tattvas, Pratyabhijna Philosophy, Self.

Introduction

Kashmir *Shaivism* is also known as *Pratyabhijna* philosophy or *Trika* philosophy. It lays emphasis on three constitutes of reality i.e. *Shiva* (God), *Shakti* (world), and *Nara* (man). It is a



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philosophy of argumentation and discussion. Manifestation process is a mechanism of appearance (effect) from ultimate reality (cause) which is the seed or embryo of the causation. Kashmir *Shaivism* is divided into three parts; *Agama Shastra*, *Spanda Shastra* and *Pratyabhijna Shastra* and only *Pratyabhijna Shastra* have philosophical significance. It is the nature of ultimate reality (*Paramashiva*) to manifest or to appear in various forms. 'Creatures have the essence of divinity. It would neither be the highest power nor consciousness but something like a jar. Creation is nothing but the Lord's manifestation' (B. Boudon, 2011). In the process of manifestation, the supreme Lord (*Paramashiva*) creates limited beings by concealing His own Self (*tirobhava*) through *kancuka tattvas*, and the *malas*. He reveals Himself by bestowing to unlimited souls. The entire process of concealment and revelation is the result of the autonomy (*svatantrya*) of the Lord. (Abhinavagupta, 2012). Ultimate reality in Kashmir *Shaivism* is a non-relational consciousness where there is no distinction of subject and object, 'I and this' i.e. *Aham* and *Idam*. Kashmir *Shaivism* gives an account of category of thirty-six elements which are prominent to describe the cycle of manifestation process in the world. It is both immanent (creative) and transcendental (*vishvottirna*) in its nature. Manifestation or 'world process' has been discussed and simplified in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo's concept of 'ascent' (lower to higher) i.e. from matter to higher mind. Vedanta philosophy gives an account of twenty-five elements or *tattvas* which works efficiently in the process of manifestation. In addition to this, Sankhya accepts twenty-five elements or *tattvas*.¹ However, Tantrism is non-dualistic as it holds the existence of only one reality, the 'Consciousness'. This one reality, the consciousness is manifesting itself in various forms of 'knower' and 'known'. According to Tantrism, the whole world of manifestation is manifesting out of itself (consciousness) and is manifesting in itself. The whole process of creation and dissolution occurs within the nature of universal consciousness. In Tantric metaphysics, *Shiva tattva* manifests itself in the form of other *tattvas*, as the one *rasa*, the *Santa rasa*; it assumes the form of other *rasas* and finally dissolves in itself.²

¹The word *Tattva* derived from the root 'ta', which means 'to spread, extend, or expand'. *Shiva Sutra* of Jaidev Singh has defined *tattva* as the inherent principle or the source of subtle structural forms.

²See K. P. Mishra. (2006), p. 1.



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Since *Shaivism* is a part of Kashmiri mysticism so it is a spiritual process but could be understood with physical reflection. 'Descent' in Kashmir *Shaivism* can be represented as:

Descent → Godhood (higher) → Manhood (lower)

However, manifestation in Sri Aurbindo's philosophy is an 'ascent process' which starts from lower to higher reality.

Ascent → Manhood (higher) → Godhood (lower)

'Matter' and 'form' are immanent and transcendent; immanent in the sense that 'matter' is the cause of 'form' and transcendent in the context that 'form' can transcend 'matter'. In Kashmir *Shaivism*, manifestation is the causational process and *Shiva* is the aspect of potential energy of consciousness and *Shakti* is the kinetic one. *Paramashiva* is *Spanda* in which *Shiva-Shakti* are the points of its oscillations. The vibration (*Spanda*) is nothing but the manifestation of consciousness, which appears in the form of the appearance of time. Therefore, this diversity that occurs in dreams and imagination does not create any contradiction with the time.³

If we concentrate on the manifestation in *Pratyabhijna* philosophy, it seems that *Shiva* and *Shakti* are like the 'form' and 'matter' of Aristotle. While as, *Pratyabhijna* philosophy treats 'matter' (*Shakti*) as an active aspect which is dynamic in nature and 'form' (*Shiva*) as passive aspect of consciousness i.e. static in nature. *Shiva* and *Shakti* are the 'cosmic mates'. *Shiva* is the *chit* aspect of the universal condition of *sat-chit-ananda*. *Shakti* is the *ananda* aspect. Universe exists in *Shiva* but only in potential form. Therefore, it presupposes that from *Shiva* to earth, every *tattva* has the form of the thirty-six *tattvas*. The theory of causality espoused in *Pratyabhijna* philosophy is *satkaryavada*, according to which, this effect pre-exists potentially in the cause. Therefore, every *tattva* is present in the other, either as in potency/matter (*Prithvi*) or in actuality (form). The last *tattva* of manifestation process, *Prithvi* (earth) is concealed in *Shiva*,

³See Abhinavagupta, *Tantrasara*, ed. by B. Marjanovic, p. 96.



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the first *tattva* is present in actuality/form. *Prithvi* is nothing but the 'form' of *Shiva*.⁴ Kashmir *Shaivism* implies that 'matter' (*Shakti*), which is potentiality in activity and 'form' (*Shiva*) is actuality in prototype, develop universal predicates in human beings in the 'world processes'.⁵

Kashmir *Shaivism* developed the distinct yogic method of *Pratyabhijna*, impulsive recognition, based on *Shakti* to find out one's identity with God. In the beginning of creation, *Shiva*, who is the 'universal consciousness', manifests Himself through a special power as the first cause of creation. Then, he manifests through his second power as the countless individual souls who, because of a veil of impurity, disregard that they are the embodiment of *Shiva*. (Lakshmanjoo, 2011)

Lawrence believed that it is a trend in South Asian religious and philosophical traditions that they explained the correspondence of ultimate reality of God or 'Self' to the multiplicity of limited subjects and the objects of their experience that make up the world.⁶

Fritzman (2016) articulated that *Shiva*'s manifestation is that the universe can be copied as a sine wave. *Shiva*'s manifestation is an everlasting cycle. It is functional to begin, for a descriptive reason, with the supreme (*Anuttara*), *Shiva who is* an un-manifest singularity. *Anuttara* encompasses *Shiva*, his power of manifestation *Shakti*, and his manifestation of the universe.

J. C. Chatterji wrote in his work *Kashmir Shaivism* that manifestation process in *Trika* system is the expression of the *Paramashiva*, the highest reality, who is nothing but consciousness, pure and simple. This process of manifestation may be called a process of experiencing out i.e. looking to our daily life of thinking and experiencing out, or what may be called 'psychical reproduction' or 'mental reproduction', exercising the word 'mental' in the widest sense. Strictly, this process of manifestation is 'shining out' which is *Abhasana* or *Abhasa* and this is in reality only a form of what is the *Vedanta* known as *Vivarta* which further appears in diverse forms.

⁴See L. B. Boudon. (2011), p. 86.

⁵Paul Eduardo, & Muller Ortega. (1989), p.97

⁶ Lawrence, D. P. (2005), pp. 583-584



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One of the great exponents of Kashmir *Shaivism* was Lal Ded. Her *Vākhs* express the manifestation process and these *Vākhs* denote the relation between ‘man’ (*Nara*), God (*Shiva*) and ‘world’ (*Shakti*). She described manifestation process as ‘the indivisible consciousness which pervades everything.’⁷ Here, I will quote her *Vākhs*, expressing the realm of manifestation process.

Thou wert absorbed in Thine Own Self
Hidden from me;
I passed whole days in seeking Thee out
But when I saw Thee in mine own self
O joy! Then Thou and I
Disported ourselves in ecstasy
I traversed the vastness of the void alone,
Leaving behind me reason and sense,
Then came upon the secret of the self;
And, all of a sudden, unexpectedly,
In mud the lotus bloomed for me.
Like a tenuous web Shiva spreads Himself,
Penetrating all frames of all things,
If while alive, you cannot see Him,
How can you see Him after death?
Think deep and sift the true Self from the self.⁷

In the above *Vākhs*, Lal ded tries to say that one has to apprehend the flourishing of the flower upon the unclean ground covered with litter, mud and dirt i.e. something worthless, which signifies human body. One has to start with brute matter, the lower *prakrti*, the manifested universe in order to recognize the higher ‘Self’ within the flower and then to submerge in the lake of immortality that is inclusion into the ‘Divine’. However, it is necessary to recognize that

⁷ See Jayalal Kaul, (1973), pp. 115, 122, 133.



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one is essentially the vibrating light of consciousness. This light (*prakash*) is eternally recreating and rejuvenating itself through the eternal processes of manifestation.

The Chitta (the mind), is ever new
The ever changing moon is new
And ever new the shore less expanse of waters that I have seen
Since I, Lalla, have secured my body and mind,
(emptied it of dead yesterdays and tomorrows unborn),
I live in the ever-present now
(and all things always are to me)
For ever new and new⁸

In the above *Vākh*, Lal dedh wants to say that vibration is not a physical process or in the sense of movement, a creative power of universal consciousness which is beyond all human perceptions.

According to *Advaita Vedanta*, *chit* or *Brahman* is only *prakash* (light) or *Jnana* (knowledge). It is *nishkriya* which means inactive. Here, in this system, the activity belongs to *Maya* and *Ishvara* assumes activity only when He is affected by *Maya*. *Maya* is *anirvichaniya* (indescribable). However, *Avidya* is removed by *vidya*, and when this happens, there is *mukhti* or liberation. *Vidya* is the consequence of *shravana*, *manana*, and *nididhyasana*.

In Kashmir *Shaivism*, *Chit* is both *Prakash* and *Vimarsha* (light and activity). Therefore, it has both the knowledge (*Jnatrtva*) and doership (*Kartrtva*). *Maheshvara* has *Svatantrya*. Therefore, activity belongs to Him. *Maya* is not something which affects *Maheshvara* or *Shiva*. *Maya* is His own *Shakti* by which he brings about multiplicity and difference. Even in case of *Jiva*, the five - fold activity of *Shiva* never ends which is the emanation or projection (*Srsti*), maintenance (*Sthiti*), withdrawal (*Sanihara*), concealment of the real nature (*Vidya*), and grace (*Anugraha*).

⁸ Ibid., p. 133-134.



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Nomenclature of thirty-six *Tattvas* in World Process

***Shuddha Tattva* (*Tattvas* of universal experience 1-6)**

1. *Shiva Tattva*: In this *tattva*, *chit* or consciousness is predominant.
2. *Shakti Tattva*: In this *tattva*, *ananda* or bliss is predominant.
3. *Sadashiva Tattva*: In this *tattva*, *ichha* or will (I-consciousness) is predominant.
4. *Ishvara Tattva*: In this *tattva*, *jnana* or knowledge is predominant.
5. *Vidya* or *Suddhavidya* (*Sadvidya*) *Tattva*: In this *tattva*, *kriya* or action is predominant.

***Shuddha Tattva* (*Tattvas* of limited individual experience 6-12)**

6. *Maya Tattva* → in this *tattva*, consciousness of relativity, difference and plurality is predominant.
7. *Kalā Tattva* → in this *tattva*, reduction of universal authorship of universal consciousness occurs and it brings limitation with respect to the authorship or efficacy.
8. *Vidya Tattva* → in this *tattva*, reduction of the omniscience of universal consciousness occurs and brings about the limitation in knowledge.
9. *Rāga* → in this *tattva*, reduction of all the satisfaction of the universal consciousness occurs and it brings desire for particular things.
10. *Kāla* → this *tattva* reduces the eternity of the universal consciousness and leads to limitation of time i.e. division of past, present and future.
11. *Niyati* → this *tattva* reduces the freedom of the universal consciousness and leads to bring the limitation in cause, effect, space and form.
12. *Purusa Tattva* → this *tattva* reduces the subjective power and knowledge of the universal consciousness and brings limitation in divine perfection.

***Ashuddha Tattvas* (*Tattvas* of mental operation, sensation and materiality 13-36)**

13. *Prakrti* → this *tattva* reduces the objectivity of the universal consciousness and brings limitation in the Divine matter.

Tattvas of Mental Operation



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14. *Buddhi Tattva* → *Buddhi tattva* helps in determining intelligence and brings reflection in internal and external objects.
15. *Ahankara Tattva* (product of *Buddhi*) → it is the I-making principle and the power of self-appropriation.
16. *Manas Tattva* (product of *Ahankara*) → it cooperates with the senses and builds perception, images and concepts.

Tattvas of Sensation (Jnanaindriyas)

17. *Ghranindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of smelling.
18. *Rasanindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of tasting.
19. *Caksurindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of seeing.
20. *Saparshindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of feeling.
21. *Shravanindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of hearing.

Tattvas of Action (Karmindriyas)

22. *Vakindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of speaking.
23. *Hastindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of handling.
24. *Padindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of locomotion.
25. *Payvindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of excretion.
26. *Upasthindriya Tattva* → it develops the power of sexual action.

Tattvas of Perception or Reflection (Tanmatras)

27. *Shabdh-Tanmatra Tattva* → it develops primary element of sound.
28. *Sparsh-Tanmatra Tattva* → it develops primary element of touch.
29. *Rupa-Tanmatra Tattva* → it develops primary element of color.
30. *Rasa-Tanmatra Tattva* → it develops primary element of flavor.
31. *Ganda-Tanmatra Tattva* → it develops primary element of smell.

Tattvas of Materiality (Puncha-Mahabhutas)

32. *Akash Tattva* → it is produced from the material of space.
33. *Vayu Tattva* → it is produced from the material of motion.



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34. *Teja Tattva* → it is produced from the material of heat.
35. *Apas Tattva* → it is produced from the material of fluids.
36. *Prithvi Tattva* → it is produced from the material of solidity.

Manifestation Process Mechanism

Abhinavagupta regarding manifestation says: “If the highest reality did not manifest in infinite variety, but remained cooped up with its solid, singleness. It would neither be the highest power nor consciousness but something like a jar”.

Manifestation (*Abhasvada*) includes thirty-six *tattvas* or elements starting from *Shiva tattva* and ends in earth (*Prithvi*). This manifestation is the process of ‘descent’, which means that higher descends into lower i.e. the higher reality manifests into the infinite variety. It manifests into different essences: omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. Not only this, it is the nature of ultimate reality to manifest in various attributes or universals. *Paramshiva* manifests itself into this world. The manifestation of beauty manifests into beautiful things, ultimate knowledge, bliss, power, mercy, action and all other attributes and essences. Ultimate reality manifests into the world of objects.

Ultimate reality = *Paramashiva* = *Prakashvimarshmaya*

So far as *Pratyabhijna* philosophy is concerned, ultimate reality manifests into three of its categories, i.e. ‘man’, ‘world’, and ‘God’. Knowledge manifests into ‘man’, action manifests into the ‘world’ and bliss resides in the ‘God’. According to Abhinavagupta, “ultimate reality manifests into diverse realities like beauty, wisdom, truth, blessing and so on.” Even liberation is the manifestation of one’s own energies realized by cutting the knot of ignorance but in this paper we are not dealing with it. We are dealing only with the metaphysics and epistemology of Kashmir *Shaivism*⁹. Manifestation is the conglomerate of ‘matter’ and ‘form’, the principle of materiality is the ‘prime matter’ and principle of formality is the ‘substantial form’. The ‘prime

⁹ L. B. Boudon, *An Introduction to Tantric Philosophy*, p. 15.



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matter' is material and indeterminate and the 'substantial form' is formal and determining, while *Shakti* is 'matter' and *Shiva* is its 'form'. Manifestation lies in potentiality and its 'form' is activity. Potentiality is the capacity of act, like Hydrogen has the act of Hydrogen. Oxygen has the act of Oxygen, but both have the potency for water. They are actually Hydrogen and Oxygen but their potentiality is water. Nuts are actually plants but in potentiality they are seeds. Manifestation is the process of expression of ultimate reality into its ultimate form. Kashmir *Shaivism* accepts thirty-six *tattvas* or elements in the manifestation but it is finally reduced to only two, *Shiva* (form) and *Shakti* (energy) where *Shiva* is *prakash* aspect and *Shakti* is the *vimarsha* aspect. *Vimarsha* is the power of doership of *Shiva*. Mere *Prakash* cannot be the nature of reality. However, even diamond is *prakash* but the diamond does not know itself as *prakash*. *Vimarsha* is that aspect of *prakash* by which it knows itself. It is this I-consciousness of ultimate reality that is responsible for the manifestation, maintenance and re-absorption of the world.

For *Sankara*, *Brahman* is the only *prakash* or *jnana* (light or illumination), without any *vimarsha* or activity that it has to invoke the help of *maya* for the manifestation of the universe.¹⁰ Nonetheless, *brahman* is devoid of any activity, it is only *Ishvara* that can manifest into the universe. *Samkhya* and *Vedanta* mentioned that *purusa* or *atma* is *nishkriya* (inactive). *Shiva* expresses itself into *Ichha* (will) which immediately transforms itself into *jnana* (knowledge) and *kriya* (action).

Pratyabhijna philosophy is spiritualistic and materialistic in its thirty-six elements or *tattvas* which universally combine together to give rise to evolution or manifestation. So far as *Pratyabhijna* philosophy is concerned, it lays emphasis only on two causes that are 'matter' and 'form'. Causation is necessary in manifestation. A thing would not manifest without cause. To manifest means to appear or evolve when something manifests, it manifests from something logically. When we say that 'S is P' or 'P is S', P is the object which manifest from S. While S is the *Shakti* element and P is the *Shiva tattva*. Manifestation process of Kashmir *Shaivism* depends on thirty-six *tattvas* or categories which are classified into *Shudha tattvas* (*tattvas* of universal

¹⁰ Shankaracharya's Philosophy is known as *Santa-Brahmavada* or *Kevala-dvaitavada* or mostly known as *Maya-Vedantavada*. However, *Pratyabhijna* philosophy is known as *Ishvaradvayavada*.



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experience 1-6, which are *Shiva, Shakti, Ishavra, Sadashiva, Shudha-vidya, Shudhashuddha tattvas* (tattvas of limited individual experience 6-12, which includes *Maya, Kāla, Vidya, Raga, Kalā, Niyati*), *Ashudha tattvas* 13-36 includes *Praktri, Purusa, tattvas* of mental operation (*Buddhi, Ahankara, Manas*), (*Jnanainriyas*; hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting, smelling), (*Karmiendriyas*; voicing or expression, handling, locomotion, discharge, resting in rapture), (*Tanmatras*; sound, feel, color, flavour/taste and odour) and *Tattvas* of materiality/*Panch-mahabhutas* which includes earth, water, fire, air and ether.

The magnificent Lord of *Gauri* manifests into the unlimited and mirror image of his own self. The 'supreme river of creative action' (*kriya*) which is splendidous with the fluid-relish (*rasa*) of his own *Shakti* and the locus of numerous, ever occurring waves between the two banks of the subjective aspects cognizers (limited), and the objects of cognition reveal to us the supreme truth.(Abhinavagupta, *Ishvarapratyabhijnnavimarshini*)!

Manifestation starts with the *Sadashiva* which is the first manifestation (*Abhasa*), in this universal experience, both the subject and object are consciousness and consciousness becomes perceptible to itself. The experience of *Sadashiva*, in which *Ichha* or will is predominant, is "I am this" or "I am *Shiva*". 'Divine Will' is the expression of 'self-consciousness'. This 'Divine Will' in *pratyabhijna* philosophy is known as 'absolute sovergnity'. The manifestation of this 'absolute sovergnity' or 'freedom of Divine Will' has been defined by Abhinavagupta as 'the Lord *Paramshiva*', 'the absolute reality' whose own being is consciousness of the nature of *prakasha* and *vimarsha*, who is undeniable over present reality. It appears as a subject from *rudra* down to immovable entities like blue, pleasure etc. which appear as separate but in reality they are not separate and this is because of the glory might of *Svatantrya* (free will) which is inseparable from *Samvit* (universal consciousness) and does not conceal in any way the real nature of the 'Supreme'.

This is the exposition of *Svatantryavada* (the doctrine of *Svatantrya*). To explain the theory of appearance in Kashmir *Shaivism*, Abhinavagupta classified it with both the transcendental and immanent aspect of ultimate reality which is both *prakash* (light) and *vimarsh* (activity), while *prakash* is *Shiva* and *vimasha* is *Shakti*. Likewise, in West, Aristotle identified light with 'matter'



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(‘matter’ possess passivity but contains the world), *vimarsh* with ‘form’ (‘form’ is active and works). *Shakti* (nature) is active; *Shiva* (light) is inactive. So, *Shakti* is the unconscious and *Shiva* is the conscious.¹¹

We could understand this process well with Aristotle’s ‘matter’ which is only the capacity to make things possible in manifestation and ‘form’. It is the function or projection which manifests in infinite varieties. In nature, the egg is a bird in capacity; the bird is its activity. ‘Supreme Being’ is pure ‘form’ without ‘matter’. ‘Potentiality and activity’, ‘matter and form’, ‘capacity and function’, are terms that are synonymous to the terms of *Shaivism* like *Prakash*, *Vimarsh*, *Shiva* and *Shakti*.

According to Spinoza, God is not the ‘author of nature’ but the nature itself. There is indeed reason in nature but it is unconscious. The spider weaves its web without having the slightest notion of geometry. The animal develops without having the faintest concept of physiology and anatomy, is unconscious. God is in the world and the world is in Him. Spinoza explained manifestation process in two categories i.e. *Nature Naturans* (active principle) which implies, ‘Nature doing what nature does’. *Nature Naturata* (passive principle) implies that the nature already created God in both body and mind. *Shiva tattva* without *Shakti tattva* is empty, *Shakti tattva* without *Shiva tattva* is blind.

Pratyabhijna philosophy is the recognition of the ‘individual self’ and he who has identified one’s own self will recognize God. It is this ‘I-consciousnesses or ‘I-awareness’ which is responsible for the universe. I-consciousness is a phenomenon of the *Shiva* element and the *Shakti* element. All the thirty-six *tattvas* in manifestation process are absolutely reduced to the ultimate reality of *Shiva* and *Shakti* (*Prakash* and *Vimarsha* or universal consciousness). Abhinavagupta rightly says that “as the great banyan tree lies only in the form of potency in the seed even so the entire universe with the entire mobile and immobile beings lie in potency of the heart of the Supreme”. *Shakti* is *Shiva’s aham-vimarsha*, i.e. intentness to create. Just as the peacock lies in the potency of plasma of its egg even so the entire universe lies in the *Shakti* of

¹¹Paul Eduardo, & Muller Ortega, *Heart of Siva*, p.95.



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the Supreme. The *Shakti* of the Supreme is called *Citi* or *Para- Shakti* or *Para-vak*. All manifestation is therefore only a process of experiencing out creative ideation of *Shiva abhasa*, the germination of all the manifestation. The beauty, majesty, power, knowledge and will lies in the plasma of the *Shakti* which works for the nature of *Shiva tattva*. Everything is inside the field of *Shakti* which is in the form of infinite variety. In the *Big Bang theory*; everything was present in the mass of undifferentiated and undetermined gases or inside the atom. This everything includes plants, sun, moon, earth, structure, energy, geometry etc, in high energy and pressure, this undifferentiated and undetermined world process transformed into differentiated and determined. When the egg or being of the evolution is in infinite form, this is *Shakti* and when *Shakti* transforms this 'infinite form' into finite beings it is known as *Shiva*. Even though, it seems that the growth, shape, size and fate of the universe lied in the egg of the Nebula (mass of gases) or inside the atom, where as in Kashmir *Shaivism*, the growth, shape, size and fate of the universe lies in the atoms of this universe, named as *Shakti* which is the egg of *Shiva*. It is the joy, bliss or *ananda* of the *Shakti* to manifest or create. Essence is the principle of determination which makes a thing what it fundamentally is. Same is the case with *Shiva*, which is the 'essence' and 'essence' is also called as 'form'.

'Prime matter' is material and indeterminate and 'substantial' is act and potency. There is a good example by which we can understand manifestation process. Suppose we have iron and we want to make spade, axe, clipper, bow, knife and so on from it. For these things, we will go to the blacksmith who puts our indeterminate mass of iron into fire and then makes spade, axe, clipper, knife, etc. He will change the indeterminate into determinate or 'matter' into 'form'. So, from this example, we can understand that 'form' resides in 'matter' but this process is incomplete without the intervention of agent and that agent in Kashmir *Shaivism* is the *Svatantrya* of *Paramashi*. In Aristotle's philosophy, it is the 'unmoved mover' or 'the efficient cause'. Thus, there are seven components in manifestation process of Kashmir *Shaivism* that are necessary for the ultimate reality (universality) to manifest into various forms (particulars) and these are:

- i) The subject of manifestation process (*Shiva*).



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- ii) The object of manifestation process (*Shakti*).
- iii) The conjunctional element of manifestation process (*Pasu/Nara*).
- iv) The *svabhav* (nature) of pure actuality or *paramshiva*.
- v) The harmony between *Shiva* and *Shakti* ('matter' and 'form'), sometimes we call it the equilibrium between three *gunas* viz., *satvas*, *rajas*, and *tamas*.
- vi) The stability and sequence during concealment and projection.
- vii) Continuity in what is manifested.

Therefore, all essence of *Shiva* resides in *Shakti* and due to manifestation of the one's real self, *moksha*, virtues, knowledge, power appears in *Shakti*.¹² Supreme speech also manifests through the conjunction of *Shiva* and *Shakti*.¹³ Moreover, Abhinavagupta in *Tantrasara* said that the four states of life or stages of consciousness with their *Shakti* are walking, dreaming, deep sleep and *turiya*. These are also the manifestations of the consciousness which are the product of knowledge.¹⁴

Abhinavagupta says about manifestation process in *Tantrasara* as:

Paramshiva is perfect and full with his five *Shaktis*. These *Shaktis* are inseparably united with their Lord and are manifested in five aspects by His free will. These five are: *cit*, *ananda*, *iccha*, *jnana*, and *kriya*. The five principles, namely *Shiva*, *Shakti*, *Sadasiva*, *Isvara*, and *Suddhavidya* are the manifestations of the *Shaktis* mentioned above. It should also be noted that *Shakti* is one and is affluent with all the *Shaktis* but due to dominance of one over the other, distinctions are also observed among them. For example, in *Siva tattva*, consciousness (*cit*) is predominant; when *ananda* becomes dominant, it is called *Shakti tattva*. The lords of the five pure principles are *Shiva*, *Shakti*, *Sadasiva*, *Isvara*, and *Ananda*. These five, beginning with *Shiva* and ending in *ananda* have their respective *gatis* or hosts (Abhinavagupta, 2012, p. 20).

¹² Abhinavagupta. (2002). *Tantrasara*, pp, 1-4.

¹³ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 27.



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Manifestation process of Kashmir *Shaivism* is rich in their metaphysics. *Shaivism* recognized thirty-six categories for the manifestation. The *tattvas* of *Shaivism* are also termed as ‘categories’ or ‘principles’ which constitute the manifestation process. *Tattvas* are the metaphysical constitutive of the manifestation.¹⁵ It is the absolute reality (ultimate reality) in itself which manifest in the form of phenomena through its power of beauty, courage, energy, knowledge, truth, and justice. The *Sabda-Brahmavada* is a monism of the *bhedabheda* category. The process of the Lord’s manifestation is nothing but the progressive display and differentiation of His supreme energy (*Shakti*).¹⁶ Abhinavagupta has rightly said about manifestation process as:

The light is one, and it cannot ever be divided, and for this reason there is no possible division capable of sundering the non-duality, the Lord, beautiful with light and bliss. But (someone might object) space, time, forms, knowledge, qualities, attributes, distance, and so on are usually considered to be diversifying elements. Not so (we reply), because that which so appears is nothing but the light. If the light were not such, then non-duality would be useless. Difference then is only a word devoid of reality. But even if we admit a portion of reality to differences, then according to what we have said, it will have its basis only in non-duality. This is a pot, this is a cloth, and the two are different one from the other. The two are different from other cognizing subjects; the two are different even from me. All these notions are nothing but ‘the one light’, which by its own intrinsic nature displays itself in this way.¹⁷

From the ninth to twelfth century, in Kashmir, interrelated roots were dedicated to Shiva. The monistic roots consider that everything is *Shiva* and that the universe is His manifestation. Although these roots are theistic, maintaining that *Shiva* is similar to a

¹⁵ John. K. Ackrill. (2002), p. 1-10.

¹⁶ Cf., L. B. Boudon, *An Introduction to Tantric Philosophy*, p. 15.

¹⁷ Paul Eduardo, & Muller Ortega, *Heart of Siva*, p. 97



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person with agency, they also claim that *Shiva* necessarily manifests Himself, and that He has no consciousness of His manifestation. Somananda, Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta are the major philosophers of the *Pratyabhijna* root in Kashmir. Starting with Utpaladeva, the *pratyabhijna* espouses the Satkaryavada's theory of causation, according to which an effect pre-exists within its cause; as a consequence, the *Pratyabhijna* maintains that the universe, as the effect that pre-exists in *Shiva* itself, has no ability to produce effects. (Sari L. Berger, 2018, p. 1)

The *Pratyabhijna* reveals that persons can attain *moksha* through a series of meditative rituals that conclude in the recognition of their being the *Shiva* Himself. This recognition is *moksha*, viewed from the *Shiva*'s perspective of ultimacy, the person is *Shiva*. At the moment of recognition, individuals perceive that they are the 'cosmic Self', *Shiva*, and their individual selves are facets of *Shiva*'s manifestation as the universe is. In the *Shivadrsti*, Somananda compares *Shiva*'s manifestation of the universe to a king who plays the role of an infantryman, performing a foot soldiers duty.

From this experience of manifestation process, there is a flash of 'attention' from 'this' to 'I'. This 'this' is to be understood as 'all-this'. This is all very dissimilar from the absolute hush and motionlessness of the 'divine water' which is in the *Ishavara tattva*. Despite the fact that in these *tattvas* there is this motionlessness, in the *Shuddha Vidya* state, there is a movement and action or what is in a lower stage of manifestation, correspond to these. In the *Shuddha Vidya*, therefore, the *kriya* aspect of the Divine *Shakti* is the most manifesting one.

Even language and words are the manifestation of the Divine. According to Hughes, in his introduction of *Self-Realization in Kashmir Shaivism: The Oral Teachings of Swami Lakshmanjoo*; the very essence of manifestation is just 'for the fun of it'. He states, 'it (the cosmic universe) is a world created by the Lord in play, for the fun of it.' In creating this world



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God loses Himself in it just for the joy and excitement of finding Himself. In actuality, the Lord and the path is therefore, a journey of rediscovery filled with joy and excitement.¹⁸

Conclusion

Manifestation has a significant role in Kashmir *Shaivism* or *Pratyabhijna* philosophy. In Kashmir *Shaivism*, all the thirty-six *tattvas* are reduced to matter/*Shakti* (naturally destined to produce) and form/*Shiva* (naturally predestined to figure or prototype of elements). Each *tattva* of the thirty-six *tattvas* is the archetype of one another.¹⁹ Kashmir *Shaivism* emphasized the doctrine that God manifests Himself in various forms. 'All is God and God is all' or we can interpret it like 'God is everywhere and in all things, there is God'. God manifests in universe with its infinite variety. He is omnipresent and omniscient. Nevertheless, Kashmir *Shaivism* believes that God (*Shiva*) and nature (*Shakti*) are the one. They have same attributes and the existence of God is derived from the existence of the Nature/ World.²⁰ This doctrine is called Pantheism which was accepted in West by the rationalist philosopher Spinoza and in the Arabs by Ibn-Arabi who called this belief (Wahadat-al-wajud/Unity in existence).²¹ There are some differences in the doctrines of manifestation process in *Shaivism*, Pantheism and Wahad-ul-wajud but here we will not elaborate it as the topic will extend. Moreover, it is a belief of the people that God is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, and is qualified with many attributes or essences but as we know in *Shaivism*, God and his attributes are identical.²²

¹⁸ See project report of Wilson, K. (2008). *Tantric Sound: The Non-dual Saivism of Kashmir's Manifestation and Liberation In Sanskrit Words, Deities, Tattvas, and Cakras*. The Ohio State University, pp. 80-90.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

²⁰ Paul Eduardo, & Muller Ortega, *Heart of Siva*, p.31.

²¹ Spinoza (1632-1677) accepts pantheism which maintains that God and Nature are one. Spinoza accepts only one substance that possesses two attribute' on the physical side it is nature and on spiritual side, it is God. There is genuine difference between the Shaivism's concept of 'God and nature' and Spinoza's concept of 'God and nature; Spinoza's God and nature is only substance (Causa-sui) not the God whom People worship but the God and Nature of shaivism is the Shiva and Shakti who by universal mating form the Paramshiva. So, in Shaivism God and nature can be worship but in Spinozism, God can't be worshiped.

²² Ibn-Arabi (1165-1240) can be considered the founder of Wahadat-al-Wajud; the oneness of being or the oneness of God. It also meant (unity of existence). He highlights tawhid as his guiding principle and gives wajud a special



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To know the existence of one's Self is to know God that is why followers of *Shaivism* are concentrating on self-realization. *Shiva* and *Shakti* are the one and identical and manifests in infinite variety i.e. God's beauty into human's beauty, God's majesty into human's majesty, God's cognition into man's knowledge, God's wisdom into man's wisdom, God's purity in human purity, God's chastity in individuals chastity, and so on.²³ Hence, God's essences ultimately descends into human's character in worship which is the fundamental truth about Shaivism. Hence, *Shaivism* followers are worshipping *Shiva-linga* which is a symbol to illuminate and manifest God's grace. Thus, *Shiva* (consciousness) and *Shakti* (kinetic energy) with its cosmic principles manifest into infinite variety. Manifestation from the last *tattva Prakrti* up to first *tattva Shiva* results in the 'Descent of the universe'. Therefore, in *Trika* system; *Shiva*, *Shakti* and *Nara* can be represented as:

Shiva → absolute Unity

Shakti → link between unity and duality

Nara → extreme duality

Pratyabhijna philosophy maintains that everything is the manifestation of *Shiva-Shakti*, the absolute consciousness which plays the part of the material cause in *Sankhya-Yoga* also permitting the universe as a relative autonomy from *Shiva*. The *Pratyabhijna* would touch the thought of such manifestation process thinkers such as Heraclitus, Aristotle, Hegel, Whitehead, Charles Hartshorn, and John B. Cobb.

Therefore, in the manifestation process, the *Shiva tattva* and *Shakti tattva* stay united to each other. The one as the pure light of the experiencing principle, as only the *Chit*, realizing itself as the pure 'I' without the experience of even 'am', much less of a universe whose light can shine upon and reveal the real glory of the highest reality. Thus, the term '*Abhasa*' is used for

prominence in his philosophy. It was utterly obvious to him that there is no real Being but God and that everything other than God is unreal Being. Wajud is the unknowable and inaccessible ground of everything that exists.

²³ God here meant *Paramshiva*, (merge of *Shiva* and *Shakti* with other *tattvas*).



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manifestation or appearance. But this manifestation is in a limited way. Each type of manifestation has some kind of limitation i.e. everything in existence is an arrangement of *abhasas*. Just as in a mirror, different images of a city, village or street appear distinct from one another and in the mirror, though they are non-distinct from the purest consciousness of *Paramashiva*, it appears different both in respect of its multiple objects and that of the universal consciousness.

Manifestation or appearance of the 'world process' is explained with the analogy of perception in a mirror. Manifestation is not distinct from *Shiva* and yet seems to be different. Like in a mirror, a tree, a village, a city, or a river appear diverse from the mirror, but are honestly speaking, nothing diverse from it. So, the world reflected in the universal consciousness is nothing different from it. Manifestation is the ideation of the universal consciousness appearing external to the empirical subject.

Manifestation process occurs like the waves rising in the sea of the 'universal consciousnesses. Just as there is neither loss nor gain to the sea with the occurrence and non-occurrence of the waves, likewise, there is neither down nor up to the 'universal consciousnesses because of the occurrence and non-occurrence of the appearance. However, the 'universal consciousness' unchanging from the occurrence or non-occurrence of the *abhasas* is nothing but the external projection of the Divine.

Consequently, the divine Being whose reality is *chit* (universal consciousness) makes compilation of things, that are internally limited, to appear as external by His will without any external material. Even as a *Yogi* makes his mental objects appear outside by his mere will. *Srsti* only connotes manifesting the outside, which is contained within the Divine, that does not require any external material for it. This is carried out by His mere 'will power'. Thus, it is the 'universal consciousness' that transforms itself in the form of subjects and objects.

Hence, the followers of *Shaivism* are worshiping *Paramashiva* only to develop manifestation of God's beauty, power, justice, knowledge, courage and so on, into their individual self *Jiva*.



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