CHAPTER 3

EVOLUTION OF ŚAKTI IN KASHMIR ŚAIVISM
Kashmir Śaivism although has expanded its popularity as a well-developed philosophical school of Tantra, it is appropriate and also important to address it as a religious-philosophical system. The wider spread of the system through numerous sub-schools and unique conceptions basically had the religious identities\(^1\) of their own. They have constantly undergone changes through the frequent encounters in the internal and the external atmospheres of the system. It may well be noticed that Śakti is an imminent fundamental principle of great prominence in all the schools of Kashmir Śaivism.

As the injunctive position of the principle of Śakti- in its highly philosophized contexts- had already been explained, the view going to be explored through the present chapter is the changing facets of Śakti, in distinct sub-schools of the philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism. It is clear that the philosophical part of this tradition is an extension or a later development of the cultic phase, the specific history of which goes back to the pre-historic times.

Conventionally, the analysis of evolution of any idea in any discipline has been accounted as an endeavour which generates

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\(^1\) Tantrism is known commonly as 'South Asian religious philosophy', as its inherent religious nature has been mixed up with the philosophy emerged in a later time. This is a misconception that in its primitive stages the aboriginal cults had no rational elements and it was orthodoxy which provided them the real thought systems. But the present scholar reasonably finds some sort of philosophical world-view in Tantrism's earliest phase itself. Arvind Sharma reminds to wipe out two misconceptions regarding this topic that: 1. The primal religions have no philosophy and 2. Primal religions are not qualified as religions, in order to initiate an intellectual space in the book, *A Primal Perspective on the Philosophy of Religion*, Springer, Netherlands, 2006, p.2.
effective philosophical comparison between distinct contexts\(^2\) through which the evolution occurred. Hence, no doubt, the present interrogation focusing on Śakti- the concept which has never been addressed as a religious philosophical principle\(^3\) is significantly relevant. The attempt here is to present the changing status and nature of Śakti through the four major streams of Kashmir Śaivism viz., Kula, Krama, Spanda, and Pratyabhiṣiṇī. All these four are accepted in the present study as chronologically successive sub-schools, even though the history of the schools of Śaivism is divergent according to different scholars.

\(^2\) Some clear assertions about the evolutionary history of religious concepts are made by Eckart Voland and Wulf Schiefenhovel (Eds.), The Biological Evolution of Religious Mind and Behaviour, Springer, Berlin, 2009, p.191ff.

\(^3\) Studies on the concept of Śakti in Kashmir Śaivism started in the second half of twentieth century are very few in numbers. S. K. Das in his work, Śakti or Divine Power, University of Calcutta, 1934 discusses mainly about the expressions of Śakti on the basis of Mālinivijayottaratantra (MVUT) and its discussion starts from the theory of Vedic origin and ends in the linguistic aspects. The works like that of Richard. F. Cefalu (Śakti in Abhinavagupta’s Concept of Moksha, Fordham University, 1974) and Pandit Rajamani Tigunite (Śakti The Power in Tantra: A Scholarly Approach, Himalayan Institute Press, USA, 1998.) are merely significant in their titles. Gerald James Larson ("The Sources for Śakti in Abhinavagupta’s Kashmir Śaivism: A Linguistic and Aesthetic Category", Philosophy East and West, Vol. 24, No. 1, January 1974, pp. 41-56.), tries to stress on the linguistic and aesthetic roots of Śakti in Abhinavagupta. Yet Śakti has been studied only as a religious or as a pure philosophical category. Navjivan Rastogi, through his two articles, ("Śakti" in Kashmir Śivādvayavād Ke Mūl Avadhāraṇāyem, D. K. Printworld, Delhi, 2007 and “Notion of Śakti in Kashmir Śaivism”, 2011) points out the religious philosophic nature of Śakti- but not in a detailed manner. Vague descriptions of the same can be found in Alexis Sanderson (See, “Śākta Procedures for Weather Control and other Supernatural Effects through Power over Nāgas: Gāruḍika Passages in the Śākta Jayadrathayāmala” and “The Śaiva Literature”, Journal of Indological Studies, Kyoto, 2014, No. 23, pp.1-113.) The studies which concentrate on Tantric goddess studies show a tendency to subsume the philosophical nature of Śakti to its religiosity.
Kula: The Earliest Śakti-oriented School of Kashmir Śaivism

Studies on Tantric tradition frequently mention Kula as the earliest Śakti-centred stream. Modern scholars- from Teun Gaudriaan to James Mallinson- usually consider it as an independent system. But they have been trying to present it with least attention to the chronological details about the contents of Kula, which makes it hard to decide whether it is Śakti-centred or Śiva-centred. Refuting such ambiguity logically on the basis of the earliest extant sources, the present study views Kula as a system with a high significance of Śakti. It demands a glance into the early phase of Kula. There are many conceptions about the origin of Kula including a mythical account that ascribes the Kula tradition in Kali age to Macchanda or Matsyendranātha who flourished not much later than 5th century CE. But the earliest available literary sources on Kula date back to 7th century CE.

4 NavjivanRastogi addresses this problem and says that as the mode of practice of Kula ritualism is found extended to both Śaivas and Śāktas in the same form, the development of the stream of Kula should be agreeable to the Śāmbhava and Śākta views. Kaśmir Śaiv Sanskriti men Kul aur Kram Mat, D.K Printworld, Delhi, 2011, p.18. Acceptance of Kula as the earliest Śaiva stream- in spite of accommodating the Śaiva traditions like Pāśupata into the domain of Tantrism- may be noted as a part of a ‘politics’. For details, see Chapter. 5 of this study, p.157.

5 See, K.C. Pandey, Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study, Chowkhamba Amarabharati, Varanasi, 2006, p.546. cf. Pandey’s contradictory observation in Ibid., p.489; which suggests that no other writer is there prior to Somānanda who wrote on Kula. More authentic references for the early existence of Kula system are available in the early scriptures like Devipaśaṣṭātikā (Dev.Pañ), which have been referred to by Somānanda himself. The existence of Kula tradition before 9th century CE could also be found out from the suggestion provided by Mallinson- through examining the reference to Matsyendra of Nath tradition as the exponent of later development of Kula system called Paścimānāya- and the evidences for the transformation of Tantrism into the doctrinal literatures of Śramaṇa tradition in 4th century CE. For more details, see N. N. Bhattacharya (Ed.), Tantric Buddhism, p.27; R. S. Sharma, Early Medieval Indian Society, Orient Longman, Hyderabad, 2001, p.246. On the other hand he says that it stands automatically discarded in the light of the references found in Dev.Pañ. As
Katherine Ann Harper in this regard observes that “Most of the Śākta Tantras, including some of the oldest, declare themselves be appropriate to the Kula tradition.”

This clearly hints at the importance and hoariness of Kula as a Śakti-centred system. As the meaning of the term Kula suggests, the system represents a family or a clan of practitioners—probably females—who used to perform obscurantist rituals to attain supernatural powers. These rituals were usually performed in the cremation grounds, and hence it was also reckoned as a branch of Śaivism, derived from the Kāpālika or ‘cremation ground asceticism.’

Somananda’s date is calculated (as 9th century CE,) his reference about Dev.Pañ.is the solid evidence for the pre-existence of Krama and Kula Tantrism. One thing is clear that before the commencement of contemporary studies of Siddhayogeśvarīmata (SYM) by Judit Torzsok (Siddhayogeśvarīmata: The Doctrine of Magic Female Spirits, D.Phil Thesis, Merton College, Oxford, 1999; and Brahmayāmalatantra (BYT) Shaman Hatley (The Brahmayāmalatantra and Early Śaiva Cult of Yoginis, Ph.D Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2007.) respectively, there were no specific historically or chronologically packed data about the early existence of Śakti-centred Kula system.


7 Shaman Hatley, Op.cit., p.33, refers to an early Śākta Tantra, named Yoginīlakṣaṇa for explaining the tendency to classify even the goddesses according to clans. The women practitioners are being amalgamated with the main stream mātris also seen in the early texts. For instance, see, BYT, IV. 888–899. These may be considered as the evidences for the appropriation techniques of Tantrism as discussed in the Chapter 5 of this study, p.157 ff.

8 Recent researches in the Sofia University with the aim of deconstruction of patriarchy, mainly concentrates on the rituals of dianic witch craft devoted to the divine feminine nearly similar to Kula renderings and it has been studied as having the reproduction of primitive structure and undercurrents. For details, see. http://www.sofia.org. For new research applications of Goddess studies, see Lolana Patricia, “Literature of the Sacred Feminine: Great Mother Archetypes and the Re-emergence of the Goddess in Western Traditions” VDM Verlag, Nov. 2009, p.74ff.

9 In fact, Kāpālika-s might be viewed as directly related to the performance characteristics of early cult of mother goddess by considering their usage of skull cremation grounds as the major reasons. Refer to, David. B. Gray, “Skull Imagery and Skull Magic in the Yogini Tantra”, Pacific World, Vol. 3, No. 8, pp. 21-39. Earliest texts such as BYT, SYM etc. contain the references about the cremation ground practices in a broad manner, For instance see SYM ch.13.
Some scholars hold the view that Kula tradition should be considered as a re-emergence of the early South Asian cult of mother goddesses and a derivative of Kāpālika school as well.¹⁰ The present study wishes to follow this approach in a slightly distinct way i.e., by postulating a possible developmental history of the system. The term re-emergence here presupposes a state, in which the revitalisation and preservation of primitive tradition are necessary. It is well known that the most archaic cultic tradition was feminine-centred. Kāpālika is the ascetic system originated as a branch of the earliest stream of Śaivism in India i.e., Pāśupata.

The nature and content of Pāśupata tradition clearly indicate its inclination towards the Brāhmaṇic elements. The creation of a Śiva-centered ascetic system may be treated as the foremost attempt by Brāhmaṇism to ‘internalize’ Tantra. But Pāśupata and its sub sects were not much accomplished in their duty assigned by Brāhmaṇism. It was also coined by means of aggressive approaches of Brāhmaṇic orthodoxy even towards its ‘affectionate stream’ called Pāśupata (which is thought to be as the parent school of Kāpālika-s).¹¹ While examining the

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¹⁰ Raffaele Torella (Ed. and Tr.), Theīṣvarapratyabhijñākārikā, p.1.
¹¹ The similarities and continuities in the characteristics of ritualistic ancient beliefs indicate the transformation, of an exclusive belief in the creative power - the supreme mother, through the ages. For an account of the theory of early origin of mother goddess cult, see N.N. Bhattacharya, Op.cit., passim. Moreover this argument stands against the proclamation by Alexis Sanderson who says, "We find that feminine rises stage by stage from subordination to complete autonomy'. See "Saivism and Tantric Traditions", S. Sutherland et.al (Eds.), The World's Religions, Routledge, London, 1988, p.668; The Lākulas: New Evidence of a System Intermediate Between Pañ cārthikapāśupatism and Āgamic Śaivism, 2015, p.7. See also H. V. Dehjia, The Yoginī Cult and Temples: A Tantric Tradition, National Museum, New Delhi, 1986, for the affirmation of posterior position of Śākta tradition thus; "The Śākta traditions share all basic
postulation of ‘pan Indian religious substratum’, Geoffrey Samuel points out that,

The religious substratum requires some kind of pre-existing goddess cult- a Śākta or at least a proto-Śākta tradition which was gradually incorporated into Śaivite and Buddhist practice. 

Subsequent discussion focuses on the representation of Śakti in this particular school which will be beneficial to the assertion that the Kula stream of Kashmir Śaivism was the re-emergence of a pre-existing goddess cult. The Śakti-centredness of Kula tradition is examined here concentrating mainly on its metaphysical aspects.

**Metaphysical Framework of Kula System**

Religious cults certainly hold their own deliberations about the things related to the existence of human being which later got advanced to the form of philosophy. Indeed Kula cannot be treated as a pure philosophical system, for its being an exponent of the metaphysics through an arena of multifarious ritualistic practices. Modern scholars try to distinguish the ritualistic character (especially of Tantric streams) into two; one grounded on mental equanimity and the other on physical elements with Śaiva traditions. Moreover, the chosen tantric texts show that the goddesses gradually replace the male-gods structures, and thus the goddess-oriented traditions are posterior”. Cf. Geoffrey Samuel, *Op. cit.*, p.254. Go through the observations that the imagery of cremation ground is the central role of fierce goddess and the Kāpālika or Śākta materials are more in contrast with the Anuttarayoga. Shaman Hatley also opines that, Saptamātri-s “appear to represent a transformation of the mothers into Saiva, tantric goddesses.” *Op. cit.*, p.137.

12 Alexis Sanderson, David Sayfort Ruegg and Francesco Sferra had a series of discussion about the root of the origin of South Asian Tantric systems. The prominent conclusion produced from it was about a common religious substratum which acts as the foundation of later developments such as Śaivite and Buddhist Tantrisms. (For details, see, "Some Considerations on the Relationship between Hindu and Buddhist Tantra-s", 2013, www.scribd.com.)

equanimity. They might not satisfy the necessities of developed philosophies which commonly give importance to the 'internal.' Hence, the present attempt is not to transform the structural external sense of rites into mere internal meaning with the help of interpretative approach, but to readout the real nature of ritual as holding some philosophical aspects which surround the magnitude of the principle of Śakti.

It may be noted that the key objective of all the Kula practices is the attainment of super natural powers which help the practitioner to consume all the sovereignties known as Siddhi-s, in specific, Kaulikisiddhi. Being ambiguous and obscure, Tantra has been defined by Madeleine Biardeau as centred on the goals of Šaivism. Whereas David Gordon White admits an overarching definition of Tantric doctrine;

For an analysis of later exegetical tendencies to implicate the meaning into the esoteric tendencies of early systems for the indirect establishment of the superiority of philosophical 'internality' over the ritualistic 'externality', see. Alexis Sanderson, Meaning in Tantric Ritual; Judit Torzsok, "Search for Meaning in Tantric Ritual in the Šaiva Scriptures', Dominic Goodall and Andre Padoux (Eds.), Tantric Studies in Memory of Helene Brunner, Institute of Français De Pondichery, 2007, p.472 ff.

Judit Torzsok discusses about the questions raised against the meaning of the ritual practices in Tantrism, and arrives at the conclusion that the kula rituals reject most external rites as meaningless. Ibid., p.478. This must be viewed as the later response (that holds certain aims) to the primary exegetical tendencies; q. v. Chapter, 4 in this study, p.125.

Kula the supreme goddess is synonymous with Śakti. For the theory about the origin of Pāśupata, see Alexis Sanderson, The Lākula-s, p.10 and D.N. Lorenzen, New Data on the Kāpālikas, Motilal Banarsidass, 1992, pp.231-238.

The fact that about two third of the SYM is devoted to illustrate various magic of Siddhi in Kula practice: "सर्विसिद्धिमयं ब्रह्मेश्वरस्मिन्यायम्" I. 17 cd; "परेयमनया सर्विसिद्धिमयं देविकर्मकलोदयायम्" III. 46,52cd; "शक्तितां देविकर्मिनिश्चितविषविभायकर्मम्" III. 53cd; "सर्विसिद्धिमयं नृणाम्" VII. 1 cd; "साधकस्य मिाभागिः सर्विसिद्धिमयं देविकर्मकलोदयायम्" XII. 21 ab; Also see, "कुलजा देविकर्मिनिश्चितविषविभायिका" BYT, I. 47 cd. Though numerous types of supernatural powers and their effects have been mentioned in the texts like SYM, it is difficult to trace back the original patterns of purely earliest Kula practices. Only such references can only be analyzed as the earliest available ones which closely related to the primal features of the cult.
[Tantra is]... an attempt to place kāma, desire, in every sense of the word, in the service of liberation... not to sacrifice the world for liberation's sake, but to reinstate it, in varying ways, within the perspective of salvation. The use of kāma and all aspects of this world to gain both worldly and supernatural enjoyments (bhukti) and powers (siddhis)... whereby he feels integrated within an all-embracing system of micro-macrocosmic correlations.\textsuperscript{18}

It represents the centrality of the idea of siddhi in the domain of Tantrism.

The cult of Yoginī-s is central to the Kula tradition.\textsuperscript{19} The female practitioners as well as the teachers of the Kula rituals, who are the authorities of all the siddhis, are called Yoginī-s. They are actually characterized in their multiplicity than individual identities, and hence are reckoned with in distinct forms such as an ordinary woman; a supernatural human being or a female deity.\textsuperscript{20} Along with this complexity in definitions, strong possibilities are there to transform

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} David Gordon White, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.16.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Yoginī-s might have existed even before the term started to indicate them. But the scholars like H. V. Dehjia try to adhere on to the perception that the Yoginī-s originated from the Śaivite Tantrism.
\item \textsuperscript{20} For eightfold polythetic cultural classification of Yogini-s, see. David Gordon White, \textit{Kiss of the Yoginī}, University of Chicago Press, 2003, p.23: ‘The Yoginis whose cults were central to Kaula practice had the following features: (1) they were a group of powerful, sometimes martial, female divinities with whom human female witches’ were identified in ritual practice; (2) their power was intimately connected to the flow of blood, both their own sexual and menstrual emissions, and the blood of their animal (and human?) victims; (3) they were essential to Tantric initiation in which they initiated male practitioners through fluid transactions via their “mouths”; (4) they were possessed of the power of flight; (5) they took the form of humans, animals, or birds, and often inhabited trees; (6) they were often arrayed in circles; (7) their temples were generally located in isolated areas, on hilltops or prominences and were usually round and often hypaethral; and (8) they were never portrayed as practicing yoga for the simple reason that yoga as we know it had not yet been invented.’ Also cf. Shaman Hatley, “What is a Yoginī?: Towards a Polythetic Definition”, Istvan Keul (Ed.), \textit{Yogini in South Asia: Interdisciplinary Approaches}, Routledge, New York, 2013, pp.23-30.
\end{itemize}
them into the earliest forms of Śakti. The activities like manifestation, encounters, protection and flight assure the same.

Khecaratva: an Archetype of the Concept of Freedom

The representation of Śakti grouped under the category of Yoginī-s is comprised of goddesses called Ḍākinī, Devī, Dūtī, Mātri, Śakinī, Bhūcarī and the ultimate Khecarī. Yoginī mainly is concerned with the supreme status called Khecaratva, the capability or nature of moving on the sky. Shaman Hatley’s view, in this regard is paraphrased herein;

Yoginī-s are the female practitioners who attained the power to fly along with the competency to precede the other Kula votaries. Nevertheless, there is much taxonomy of these ‘semi-divine sorceresses’ in the knowledge and belief systems of early medieval India, the archetypal form of Yoginī is the sky-traveller who obtained the ultimate phase of the Kula practices.21

Khecarī, the practitioner having the power to move on the sky, is the model for other women practitioners. Kula scriptures repeatedly use the expressions Khecaratva as well as Khecarīsamatā to indicate the supreme juncture of the follower of Kula.22

Attainment of this highest capability credibly indicates the freedom to travel. The female who possesses the paramount freedom

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also represents the chief competence of Śakti in the processes like creation. Such thoughts may be correlated and analyzed with the human instinct to invoke the heights by which the traditional goals like heaven situating in the heights are aimed. Similar concepts in Shamanism have also been assessed as primordial rituals.23

**Transitions in the Cultic Model: Audial and Visual Identities of Śakti**

As mentioned earlier, no early belief systems remain static for a prolonged time. By the influence of specific historical moments, Kula tradition also has undergone some new shaping’s within it. Even though such changes occur in a comparatively later period, their inclusion therein was necessitated by the depiction of Śakti without misplacing its prominence. Such developmental tendencies, according to Sthaneswar Timalsina, are the methods for replacing the philosophical substructures like Sāṅkhya and these help to modify the awareness about the ideas like language, body etc. He also believes that similar

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23 It has commonly been observed that the earliest traditions such as Shamanism share some gnostic elements with Tantric cults. ‘Magical flight’ is one among the various rites of ascent performed by Shamans. Peter O Liere, by referring to Mircea Eliad, suggests that: “...rites of ascent includes tree climbing, ladder climbing and magical flight. Eliad is particularly concerned with magical flight, because as an activity it encapsulates the mythological character of Shaman who through technical powers, unites himself with heaven and sacred time...in supposed practices, Shamans can transform themselves into birds, or by force of will fly bodily up into the sky” in *Gnostic Contagion: Robert Duncan and the Poetry of Illness*, Wesleyan University Press, Connecticut, 2002, p.148. While evaluating such resemblances for the launch of antiquity of Tantrism; This may be compared with the idea introduced by Geoffrey Samuel, which claims the origin of the term Shaman itself was from the word Śramaṇa, see, Geoffrey Samuel, *Op.cit*, pp.113ff; 239.
transitions occurred in the systems like Kula would have been the cause of deconstruction of the cultural constructs.\textsuperscript{24}

Thus, this development has been made through the ascription of verbal as well as visual identities to Śakti. The varṇadevatā-s (alphabet goddesses) termed as Māṭrkā and Mālinī and trikadevatā-s (goddesses of triad) viz., Parā, Aparā and Parāparā, represent the audial and visual temperaments respectively.

The arrangement of alphabets in a specific order- known as mantra- is the key factor which contributed the language or knowledge to the spiritual circles of Tantrism. Gradually mantra obtained hegemony over heterogeneous ritualistic practices.\textsuperscript{25} So the early beliefs formulated audial manifestations of Śakti viz., Māṭrkā and Mālinī.

Many Śaiva texts” Sthaneswar Timalsina observes “insist on the fundamental ambivalence of the word, which permeates every level of human activity. The powers of the word, often conceived as the powers that preside over the various alphabetical classes, may lead man to freedom or enmesh him even more in the samsara.\textsuperscript{26}

Mālinī is the goddess one who possesses a garland made with Sanskrit alphabets rearranged in particular order beginning with ‘na’ and ending with ‘pha’ (nādiphāntakrama). This sequence of phonemes represent the body parts of goddess Mālinī in the earlier surviving

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid}, p.58.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Idem}.
scriptures, where as some ritualistic treatises considers it as a complete mantra. The audible phonemes are transformed to visual graphemes to represent the body parts of Malinī with the help of Gupta version of Brāhmī alphabets. Somadeva Vasudeva argues that the goddess embodied in the nādiphāntakrama was conceived of as a ‘synaesthetic icon’. In addition, he equates the appearance of Mālinī- emerged through the fusion of phonematic sound and graphemic shape- with the monistic Śaivite conceptions of ‘lōlībhāva’ which is identical with laya, saṅghaṭṭa, yāmala and sāmarasya.

Māṭrīkā is traditionally defined as the matrix or source of all the mantras and texts made of alphabets. She is also identified as the power which created the whole universe. Sometimes Māṭrīkā denotes some other concepts such as the vowels, a specific mantra and so on. Nisvāsatattvasaṃhitā (Niś.Saṃ) says that innumerable mantra-s and Śāstra-s were produced from Māṭrīkā:

मातृकासंभवा: सर्वं नार्तिमण्ट्रम: परम्।

Māṭrīkā represents the alphabets staring from ‘a’ to ‘ha’ or ‘kṣa’. Mālinī is another alphabetic deity which is the disordered version of Sanskrit alphabets known as nādiphāntakrama.

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28 See Ibid, p.536 for the figure of tentative recreation of synaesthetic icon made up of Gupta characters.
29 BYT, VII.35cd ‘expresses that born from the letter māṭrīkā’; “ञ्ज्ञानविधानं मातृका”, ŚŚ, I. 4; “मातृकाविष्णुहि येनस्य हर्षविध्वंस्य विन्दितं। अष्ट्रे च तत्त्वेऽहं स संसाराधिकुस्मते।” Niś.Nay. I.75cd, 76ab
30 Niś.Nay, I.41. Excluding the references in the Niśvāsottara (Niś.Uk) Māṭrīkā has never denoted as an independent deity; Mālinī is more familiar through the distinct texts.
Alphabet goddesses herald the practitioner to identify the audial identity of Śakti through mantroddhāra and nyāsa. Likewise, says Somadeva Vasudeva,

All of the texts homologize the phonemes with the Goddess’ body-parts, thus it is clear that this must be the one essential feature which cannot be separated from the nādiphāntakrama in the minds of the redactors.

The Trika goddesses Parā, Aparā and Parāparā are also the distinctive core of the pantheon of comparatively later Kula system. The visual construct of the Śakti seemingly incorporated the alphabetic conceptions into it in this later developed phase. They are presented in SYM as follows:

अर्धाक्षरद्वैयं तस्या: ज्ञेयमन्यं समासत: ।
कारणं सर्वसिद्धीनां परापरपदा स्मृता: ॥
अपरा त्र्यक्षरा ज्ञेया अर्धाक्षरपरामिता ।

31 It shouldn't be treated as a chaotic disorder as argued by Somadeva Vasudeva, *Op. cit.*, p.518. A perusal of the verses 75-80 of *Kubjikāmatatantra (KMT)* which discusses the supremacy of alphabet goddess over Śiva would expose that the present description could be a product of the mind-set of the author, who is inclined to the establishment of the supreme as Śiva:

"कर्णाशिरसं भद्रे स्वयंभून्ताः श्रवणीति: पति: मन्महसम्मवेदीन्तत्स्मेवोत्सप्तितानि मया ॥
वर्णरूपविदाहत्तत: युक्त: वर्णान् स्वकानिधि । प्रसारं वर्णमालां तु तत्कारस्वरुपवियम्भम् ॥
पूर्वबीजनुभूताः प्रसुपारमण्डली । कुतः सर्वं गतत: वर्णाः चारतात्तितिः सुरेशर: ॥
परं विस्मयास्तः क्षणेकं विप्रकेशम् । लोलभुतसं ते सर्वं जीवितत्वे लघु हाति: ॥
अहो देव्या: प्रथायस्तु इति चिन्ता जगत्यते: । स्तुनोति विविधाः स्तोत्रे: देवो भुवनमालिनीम् ॥" q. v. Chapter 5 of this study, pp.138-139.

32 Mantroddhāra is the extraction of mantra-s, while nyāsa is the placing of mantra-s in the body parts of the practitioner.


34 Judit Torszok, thus comments: “... In addition, it also provides the iconographic details of the three goddesses which may be viewed as a later phase of the primeval Kula school of Tantrism.” Also see, *Ibid.*, pp.vi-ix.
Parā is the highest of three goddesses and had been presented as ‘Sarvākāramayī’; whereas Parāparā and Aparā hold inferior positions, compared to it.

The above discussion is mainly intended to analyse the early circumstances of the stream of Kula. Apparently Kula may have been incorporated into the ambit of Kashmir Śaivism in a later period and it has the primitive roots in the early cult of Mother-Goddess. Metaphysical speculations of Yoginī-s, Khecarīsamatā etc. also are of obvious indicative of the supreme position of Śakti and always act as the background of later developments in the lore of Śaiva Tantric philosophy. The later conceptions like alphabet and Trika goddesses also have significance as the reflective of the Śākta nature.

The discussion here further concentrates on the next stream of Śaivism that slightly relocates the nature of Śakti without making any change in its superlative position.

**Krama: A Soteriological Emergent of Kula**

The usual debates on Krama formulate a deceitful data about the time of its origin mainly with the help of widely accepted mythical theories. The best instance in this regard is Christopher Wallis who in

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35 SYM, III. 34; 37.
36 Ibid., III. 38ab.
his recent work defines Krama as a subgroup of Kālīkula school originated after 10th century CE. It must be noted that the early works such as Dev.Pañ and Kramasiddhi (Kr.Sī) give clear evidences to the pre-existence of this school. Krama- the system which held on to the cyclic structure of the path to reality- is the cult of Kālī. In the commentary of TĀ, Jayaratha proposes a two-fold classification of Tantric schools thus:

1. Tantraprakriyā- consisting of Krama, Trika and Pratyabhijñā and 2. Kulaprakriyā which exclusively includes Kula.

Krama, in the present study is considered as a branch sprouted from early Kula School and hence deserves to be addressed Kaula in the sense of that which originated from Kula. By standing on the point that Krama is Kaula system, its meaning may be determined as the successive stages or cyclic movement of the life process starting from the birth and ending in death. The awareness about the functionalities of time and the emergence of the concepts having much more philosophical character, are considered merely as a development from the preceding stream of thought. That is why Dev.Pañ recognises the Krama as superior to Kula:

कालिकाक्रमपूर्व तु सारं कौलं कुलोत्तरम् ।
अनस्तभितत्तत्सारं कौलज्ञां महादृभुतम्।

39 The term Krama is used in different meanings in different contexts.
40 Dev.Pañ, I. 49.
As a result, the thrust area of this system can be linked with the time (kāla) which resembles with the notion of the principle- ‘Kālī’. According to K. C. Pandey,

The Krama system is very much allied to the Kula system so much so that the teachings of this system are referred to as the Kaulikīvidyā in Niśāṭanatantra. It is recognised to be an aspect of the Kula system which was revealed by the Kālī in her incarnation as Vāmeśvarī. Hence for this additional action also, Kālī is called Vāmeśvarī or Vyomavāmeśvarī.41

From Birth to Death: Shifted Pattern of the Tantric Accent

The Tantric concept of Śakti as supreme mother who brings life into the world, slightly changes here as the deity of death. Even though there developed a unique metaphysical concept in the Krama system is known as Kālasaṅkarṣiṇī, it explicitly shows the relation with the Kula absolute Khecarī. Many references are available to the close connection between Saṅkarṣiṇī and Khecarī:

खेचरीहृदयाब्जस्थं पारस्पर्यक्रमोदितम् ।
व्योमेशीविन्दुभावस्तं खेचरीभिरराधितम् (रनिणितिम्) ॥42

Nonetheless, Saṅkarṣiṇī is bestowed by Khecarī-ś. Kalīkrama mainly represents the forms of Śakti, with great emphasis on the process of destruction. Here the Kālī in various forms is performing the

42 Dev.Pañ, II. 58. Also see, III.50cd: “ध्यायेत्परमेशा खचरत्र्स्य िसििदाम्”; Mahārthamañjariparimala (MMP), p.188: “अनुप्रिर्श्य योगेन खेचरीखिचतौखसा” ।
processes of withdrawal through the stages prayoga (emission), samyoga (persistence) and saṃhāra (destruction)\footnote{Dev.Pañ., II. 48.}

The contemplative practices in this system leads to the supreme goddess Kālasaṅkarṣīṇī. Aleksandra Wenta in this regard observes,

Mental stability, so comprehended, reaches significantly farther, or we might rather say, to the final destination, for, it terminates with the ultimate realization of the nature of Kāli.\footnote{See Alexandra Wenta, “Imagery of Withdrawal, Violence and destruction in the Kālikrama”, 
Journal of Kashmir Studies, Vol. VI, No. 1, p.51.}

*Kramasadbhāva* (KS), one of the fundamental texts of the Kālikrama avers: “Lay hold of this strength, the essence of mental firmness (dhairyasadbhāva), which is named Kālikā, and stainless (nirañjanā)” Kālasaṅkarṣīṇī, the essence of the saṃvartamaṇḍala and of Kālikula exists (acts) as the fourteenth goddess. Kālī-ś of this Krama, represent the importance of withdrawal than creation or sustenance. Otherwise every creative process ends in the destruction followed by it. The principle here embodied mainly is death and the next is time related to death. The Reality is not only the power of creation instead, it emphasizes on the circle of life and death.

Kālasaṅkarṣīṇī is the reality of Krama system which provides evidence to the change in the thought from birth to death. The major images and analogies present in the Krama scriptures such as cremation
ground, skull, and blood symbolize the same. Alexandra Wenta quotes a passage bestowed to represent the imagery of kālāgni:

> Once the fire of time has been made dense, the supreme radiant energy dissolves away. The light of consciousness, the supreme secret, has arisen as the sun of Kula (12 Kālī-ś). It has 12 days and endowed with good power, it shines like many suns. It is the life of the living being and it illuminates the living beings which are of that same nature. In this same way the power of the fettered soul increases.\(^{45}\)

**The Concept of Śakticakra and Twelve Kālī-ś**

The concept of wheel probably denotes the awareness about the time which constantly undergoes variation. Early non-orthodox beliefs of the entire world were conceded the cyclic structure of time, and linked it with the feminine power.\(^{46}\) Krama school, through the image of cakra (wheel) represents, sequential as well as the closed character of worldly existence, apart from the orthodox concept that view life as a linear entity.

There are differences in the opinion about the classification of the stages as four or five. Navjivan Rastogi adhering to the ideas articulated in the works like TĀ and TĀV arrives at similar assertion regarding this


\(^{46}\) Geshe Luhndub Sopa, *The Wheel of Time: the Kālacakra in Context*, Snow Lion Publications, USA, 1991, p.3, says, “Despite an ancestry that may be pre- Vedic and indigenous to the Indian subcontinent, was articulated rather late in the course of Indian religious history. It probably began as an unorthodox, doctrinally ambiguous and magically oriented movement that gradually was absorbed by and adopted to more established religious traditions.”
issue. Usually the categories seen in this connection are srṣṭi, sthiti, samhāra and anākhyā. Krama metaphysics is always based on the progression from determinate phase to indeterminate one. These are also interpreted as the three modes viz., pramāṇa, prameya and pramātṛ. The present study does not agree with the incorporation of twelve Kālī-ś into this rigid range of epistemological triad.

The members of this cakra-ś of Kālī-ś or Kālikā-ś are also recognized as the successive stages of realization. The first among them is Srṣṭikālī. As the name indicates she represents the duty of creation: “यस्यान्ते शामते सा तु सृष्टिकाली तु या स्मृता” In this level the Śakti represents only the power devoted to the peculiar procreative function. K.C. Pandey is of opinion that, “when the will to create arises in her and the ‘would be’ creation shines in outline objectively within her, is called Srṣṭikālī.” Second one Sthitināśakālī also known as Sthitikālī is the subsequent one by and in controversial with the one-sided process of creation:  

यन्त्रोत्पत्ति तु सा देवी पुनस्तत्रेव लीयते।  

47 Navijvan Rastogi, Krama Tantricism of Kashmir, p.58.  
48 Dev.Pañ, V. 25 ab.  
49 K. C. Pandey, op.cit., p.513. Navijvan Rastogi just like K C Pandey, interprets srṣṭikālī as supreme consciousness (parā samvid) which is engaged in the duty of creation in the form of object (prameyagata srṣṭi). For details, see Navijvan Rastogi, Kashmir Śivādvayavād mem Kram aur Kul Mat; “Metaphysics and Tantric Esotericism of Krama: an Analytical Exposition,” Part. 3, p.372. This may be considered as a replica of Abhinavagupta’s attempt to represent Kālī-ś in terms of subject-object level and means of realisation. As coined by Jayaratha, मानं नाम मेयोपरिजजतमेर् भर्तेि मानात्मना च बहिमुखेि मातेइ सूकरेिद इिति । TĀ, III. 160. But in the Kramastotra (Kr.St), Abhinavagupta presents the same in a distinct manner i.e., by glossing the Srṣṭikālī to the concept of aunmukhya, Ibid., 15-16 q. v. Chapter, 2 in this study, p.46.
Sthitikālī is usually known as one who abides in every corpora and she reaches where the origin was and hence Kr.St explains it as ‘Sāṃsārikī sthitī’.51 Saṃhārakālī is the next stage where the Kālī stands for the complete disaster- hindrance into the dissolvent. Thus, these three Kālī-ś represent the processes creation, sustenance and annihilation.

Raktakālī, the fourth one, along with the seventh and tenth Kālī-ś viz., Mṛtyukālī and Mārtaṇḍakālī stands for the function of creation. In Dev.Pañ, Raktakālī is defined as the fragment (Kālī) that has been turned out into this world. Mṛtyukālī is exemplified as one who goes up to the end of Mṛtyu i.e., the fragmented aspect of death. Mārtaṇḍakālī is the eighth Kālī who is related to the emerging sun, with a light and is succeeded by Kālāgnirudrakālī.

The specific forms she possesses are her own. Mahākālakālī is with the light of hundred suns. Mahābhairavacāṇḍograghorakālī killed all the Bhairava-ś and exists as the supreme reality. Rudrakālī is also the goddess of death which is also related to the ultimate process of ending. Paramārkakālī is with the form of bliss and of Parāparā.

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51 Kr.St, V.16; See also Tā, III.162-‘3, and Viveka on the same as: “सैर्समांसविद्वद्वां तां प्रमाणस्वरूपं रक्तपरमपदां मन्दिति अन्तःप्रभावकालतयोन्नयं ज्ञातो समस्य इति स्वात्विश्वासितमकालसु अखंतमिच्छु आत्मसादिककीयः”
Basing on these facts it may reasonably be ascertained that the Krama is a derivative of Kula- the earliest stream. The conceptions such as Kālī and Śakticakra accentuate on the Śakti-centeredness of the system. The change indicated here is from the thought structures of its primordial and maternal schools i.e., the aboriginal mother goddess and Kula system respectively.

**Spanda: The Doctrine of Visible Śaiva Inclination**

Spanda is as an exclusive system, germinated under the sphere of Kashmir Saivism, centered on the idea of vibration or pulsation. The development and establishment of this doctrine occurred basing on the single fundamental treatise called *Spandakārikā* (*Sp.K*), supplemented by the interpretations of various commentators.\(^5\)

The entire development of this may be dated back to 8th to 11th centuries CE. Spanda, as the term indicates, introduced a doctrine based upon the concept of vibration. It is viewed as an attempt to elaborate the Śaiva Tantrism from Śakti-oriented features of Kula and Krama streams, to a ‘broader context of theology and spirituality’.\(^6\) But the real thing

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\(^5\) The earliest commentary on *Sp.K* attributed to Kallaṭhāṭṭa is *Spandavṛtti* (*Sp.Vṛ*), upon which Rājānakarāma wrote an extended explanation named as *Spandavivṛti* (*Sp.Vī*). Afterwards Bhaṭṭotpala (Bhagavadutpala or Utpalavaiśṇava), a Vaishnavite scholar, composed the *Spandapradīpikā* (*Sp.Pra*), an endeavour to draw some parallels between Pāñcarātra and Śaiva traditions. A stagnation created by Abhinavgupta follows these commentaries and after a short period, Kṣemarāja- his direct disciple- produced two commentaries viz., *Spandasamdoha* (*Sp.Sam*) and *Spandanirnaya* (*Sp.Nī*). The early stage of development and decline of this particular tradition marked its own spot in core of the ambit of Śaivism.

\(^6\) The ‘broader context’ is the usage by Dyckskowski; for details about the discussion on this, see,
occurs here is the deviation from its real nature i.e., the Śākta inclination.

Though the ŚDṛ of Somānanda is commonly known as the fundamental treatise on the philosophy of Śaiva monism, its basic traits abide in the earlier texts on Spanda viz., Sp.K and ŚŚ, attributed to Vasugupta and the primary commentary Sp.Vṛ ascribed to Kallāṭa. Kallāṭa is also considered as the author of Sp.K. The reason behind the attribution of Kallāṭa as the author may be his decisive approach towards the nature of Spanda. Mark S. G. Dyczkowski asserts:

The Stanzas and Kallāṭa agree that the ego - the 'I' - is relative. From one point of view, it is the ahamkāra which is a part of the inner mental organ that processes, coordinates and identifies the sensory data supplied by the senses. There it functions as the mental faculty whereby perception, memories, ideas, the body and all else that is directly associated with the internal, i.e., subjective aspect of consciousness, is felt to be one's own. Again, it is the notion of self (ahampratyaya).

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54 The present study upholds Vasugupta as the founder of Spanda - the new stream, and Kallāṭa as the author of its fundamental treatises viz., Sp.K and ŚŚ. Most discussed problem in the realm of the Śaiva exegesis is about the authorship of these texts. Modern scholars like Alexis Sanderson, Lilian Silburnetc disagree with the opinion of Bhāskara (c. 925-975), Utpalaviṣṇava, and Rāmakaṇṭha (c 950-1000), that Kallāṭa was the composer of Sp.K. See Sanderson, Review on Śivasūtra et Vimārsini de Kṣemarāja (Etudes sur le Saivisme du Cachemire, École Spanda: Traduction et Introduction), p.161. For more detail see Ibid., pp.4-6.

55 Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, The Doctrine of Vibration, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1989, p.39. A comparison of this may be made with Vrajvallabh Dwivedi’s evaluation and understanding of Spanda. He points out that the belief in the supremacy of Śiva and of Śakti was the two points of view prevailed among the Kashmir Śaivites. The followers of the former i.e., Śaivites, accredit the authorship of Sp.K to Vasugupta and of the latter considered Kallāṭa as the author. For details, see Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, The Stanzas on Vibration, State University of New York Press, 1992, p.49 ff.
In fact, evidences available for the antagonism worked out in the early medieval orthodox mindset were against the popular and well-flourished Buddhist Tantra which was a fine synthesis of Śākta Tantric and yogic rituals. The origin of such a new school- with an emphasis on yogic elements and the mere dislike to the feminine principle-exposes conflict against the hindrance and development of Buddhism in the domain of Tantra. Dyczkowski’s remark as,

He was devoted to Lord Śiva and his heart was purified by the many sound traditions transmitted by perfect yogis and yoginis and so refused to accept what he considered to be the inferior teachings of other yogis (Buddhist Tantric) like Nāgabodhi.

This makes clear that the Brāhmaṇic rivalry against Buddhism persuaded the perspectives of Śaiva traditions. The tendencies to be noticed in this context are the demeaning of popular tenets, the upsurge of exploring the social situation which necessitated the

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56 Buddhist Tantra made great use of the teachings of the early Śakti-centred schools and the fundamental concepts of Tantrism, which are Tantric in its fundamental nature. See Alexis Sanderson, Origin of Vajrayāna, passim. cf. Francesco Sferra, loc. cit.

57 Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, Op.cit., p.11. Nāgabodhi was the Buddhist saint who wrote a commentary on Guhyasamājatantra, the earliest text on Tantric Buddhism. Alex Wayman, dated back him to 7th century CE or earlier than that. The Buddhist Tantra itself had an inclination towards the Śākta tantric concepts. The representation of Tārā- the feminine deity originated in c. 6th century CE might be connected to the Kaula aspects, and of course it influenced the purānic concepts of goddesses. While accepting the time period of Nāgabodhi as 7th c., the implications of Tārā or Śakti in his interpretation may be the cause of “inferiority” of his thought system. The Śaivite and other Brahmanical movements against Buddhism lead to its decline in India. Steven Weignberger refers to a sage named Vajrabodhi- disciple of Nāgabodhi- who transmitted the Tantric Buddhism into Tibet. For more details, see N. K. Singh, A. P. Mishra (Eds.), Encyclopedia of Oriental Philosophy and Religion, vol.10, pp.872-875; Alex Wayman (Tr.) Guhyasamājatantra; Steven Weignberger, “The Yoga Tantras and The Social Context of Their Transmission to Tibet” in Chun-Hua Buddhist Journal, 2010, 23, pp.131-166. cf. Davidson Ronald. M, Indian Esoteric Buddhism: Social History of Tantric Movements, pp.30-35.
destabilization of Śakti, and recommendation of a patriarchal power system. As a result Śakti, until then, which had been the pivotal principle in Śaivism in fact, was replaced by the masculine supreme reality- Śiva which clearly is reflected in Sp.K;

यस्योन्मेषषिष्म्यां जगते प्रलयोदयो।
तं शक्तिचक्रविभवप्रभवं शड्करं स्तुमः॥

(We praise that Śaṅkara who is the source of the powers of the wheel of energies by whose expansion and contraction the universe is absorbed and comes into being.)

This introductory verse of Sp.K indirectly speaks to the followers of Kaula teachings, that there exists a supreme reality greater than their Śakti. Thus, the treatise is devoted to explain the nature of the experiencer (bhoktr) and his/her indifference with the supreme, and concludes with the establishment of Śiva as the deity of the wheels. The concept depreciated here i.e., the wheel of energy, comes under the doctrine of Krama and it leans towards the positing of Krama as the parental system of Spanda. Sp.Sam says,

अथ च शक्तिचक्रस्य करणेश्वरीचक्रस्य यो विभवः विचित्रसृष्टिसंहारादिकारित्वं,
तस्य प्रभवं क्रमार्थिवभासनकारित्वकृतमक्रमकमहाप्रकाशमयम्।

59 For similar tendencies to posit Śiva in the place of supreme, see “न सावश्च न य: शिवः”, Ibid., 29ab; “शिवस्य पशुवतिन्नै”, Ibid., 48ab.
It has been frequently repeated that the Spanda system is close to Krama for its unmistakable emphasis on the dynamics of reality, and rightly so because the word 'Spanda' itself, as Spanda commentators point out, indicates the 'movement of consciousness.' Even so, there is an inherent influence of Śakti in the unconscious of this tradition. Corresponding references such as the suṣumnā, śabdarāśi, siddhyupapādana etc., also are of assistive to trace this Śākta inclination.

Śākta Nature: The Inherent Unconscious of Spanda

Discussion on the Śākta nature of Spanda is a common trend among the scholars of Śaivism. Some among them adamantly try to establish that the absolute in Spanda theory is Śiva. Though the principle of Śakti is basically of dynamic character, the representation of Spanda- the vibration- as Śakti, does not create any surprise. Even then the similarities and relationship between Krama and Spanda lead certain scholars to reopen the matter of Śākta nature.61

Vrajvallabh Dwivedi considers the Spanda as a branch of Krama system and he emphasizes that Sp.K in any rate, expounds Śākta philosophy.62 Following him, Navjivan Rastogi in his magnum opus, Krama Tantricism of Kashmir puts forward a firm conclusion that;

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61 S. Rajendra offers a divergent view saying that it is not right to connect Spanda with Krama. For details see, S. Rajendra, Spandakārikā- A Study, Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, Varanasi, 1993.
The supremacy of the absolute vis-a-vis the same of the Absolutic Dynamism i.e., Śakti or Kālī, is a matter of controversy in view of the fundamental role assumed by the latter in the Krama system, whereas the supremacy of the Absolute has never been questioned in the Spanda with all its accent on the dynamic aspect i.e., Spanda, that is Śakti.63

The concept of Śakticakra needs more elucidation for the reason that it is the central point again in the sixth and seventh verses which run as:

यत: करणवर्गोऽयं विमूढोऽमूढवत्स्वयम्।
सहान्तरेण चक्रेण प्रवृत्तिस्थितिसंहल॥
लभले तत्त्वायलेन परीख्यं तत्त्वमादरात॥
यतः स्वतन्त्रता तत्य सर्वन्त्रयमकृत्रिमा॥

(That principle should be examined with effort and reverence because this its uncreated freedom prevails everywhere by virtue of it the senses along with the inner circle although unconscious behave as if consciousness themselves and move towards their objects, rest there and withdraw from them.)64

The previous attempt to include the illustration of Śakticakra in the first verse, as examined already, was indicative of the position of preceding school. Whereas the inner circle mentioned here has a wider

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63 Navjivan Rastogi, Krama Tantricism of Kashmir, p.53. On contrary, none among the traditional teachers directly expressed any Śākta tendency except Pradyumnabhaṭṭa. Kallāṭa through his shorter commentary, and Utpalavaṭṣṇava through the Sp.Pr., proposed the suggestive similarities between Spanda and newly originated Pratyabhijñā School. Ksemaraja as suspected by modern scholars never depicted himself as a Śākta interpreter of Spanda. As such any of the post scriptural commentators as well as the authors of Spanda did not accept Spanda as a system of feminine dynamic principle called Śakti. But still not a single enquiry has been focused on the basic treatise, Sp.K which is the work to provide some references about the oblivious influence of Śakti on the doctrine of Spanda.

64 Sp.K, 6-7; Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, Stanzas on Vibration, p.XV.
Śākta nature. Kṣemarāja provides some unambiguous supporting statements like:

परमेश्वरस्य महाप्रकाशात्मनो विमलस्यायेकव परामर्शशिक्तः
किरिवचताभासस्य पराप्रक्षुरता इति स्फुरता इति उपरिपतिः
उद्योग इति हर्मभिनितिः चारिनीतिः परायत्यायदत्सोंताशः
आगमेषु उद्घोष्यते। 65

Some definitions are also found as transformed into the corresponding higher philosophical standards. 66

Even though it is arranged in a sporadic way, the exploration of the ultimate experience of sentient individual preserves a chance to be analyzed through a Śākta perspective. There are three contexts where the means of knowledge are predominantly reviewed. One is the declaration of the master who acknowledges the cognition of unusual things (such as that of past, future, hidden and distant) which can easily be attained by the Yogin because he is firm in his inherent power, which is nothing but his own vital nature: It is said in Sp.K as;

यथा ह्यथो दृष्ट: सावधानेशि। चेतस।
भूयः स्फुटतनो भाति स्वबलोध्योगभावितः। 67

65 Sp.Sam, p.7. Also see ibid., p.12: “अस्तित चाकम्। लेल्हाना यदा देवी सदा पूणाम च भासले।
उत्खिर्दिश विबोधाभ्यं श्वितिरविभाष्यति प्रभोः।”
66 “शक्तिक्र्मं मन्त्रगणो मुद्रासूच्यति। “किंच शक्तिचक्रं खेचरस्त: गोचरस्त: विक्षरौं.
भूयं यदि: बाह्यायन्तरभेदेभिः नानायोगिनीगणा।” For a detailed discussion on the eleven-fold interpretation of Śakticakra, see Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, Op.cit, pp.67-72.
Madhusudan Kaul Sastri translates the *Sp.N* on this stanza as;

In spite of mental attentiveness a thing is seen dimly owing to such difficulties as distance etc. It becomes not only clear, but also clearer when observed minutely through one’s own visual power.\(^68\)

This power of awakened Yogin is the vitality of mantras which serve as the means to perform rituals. Mantras are the ordered arrangements of phonemes which together signify the deity. They are considered as the methods having innate omniscience - the power itself. Therefore indeed the senses of the individual soul must be made conscious only through his contact with his own inner strength.\(^69\)

Power (bala) is the common element among these three contexts that made such a connected interpretation. Philosophically reviewing, these three verses (36, 26 and 8 respectively) are dealing with a core theory that logically is pertinent to the status of Spanda in the domain of monistic Śaivism, for the reason that the thought shared here (i.e., the individual’s neediness to attain the supreme) is adequate to the schema of doctrinal values of the subsequent stream of Śaivism; and exceeding it, the stress on the nature of Śakti remarkably reveals the inherent Śākta character of Spanda. But still not a single inquiry has been focused on the basic treatise *Sp.K* which is capable to provide some references about the oblivious influence of Śakti on the doctrine of Spanda.

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\(^68\) Madhusudan Kaul Shastri (Ed. and Tr.), *The Spandakārikā-s of Vasugupta with Nirṇaya by Kṣemarāja*, KSTS, 1925, p. 107.

Re-presenting ‘Vibrating Consciousness’ as ‘Vibration of Consciousness’  

The theory of Spanda was developed before the launch of the thought of I-consciousness as Śiva. As the commentaries on the fundamental Spanda scripture were composed after the pure monistic philosophical openings, there arises a problem that Spanda is whether the ‘vibrating consciousness’ or the ‘vibration of consciousness’ (i.e., if itself is consciousness or is the nature of consciousness). Understanding Spanda as vibrating consciousness will be antagonistic to the philosophy of Monistic Śaivism which introduces the reality as having transcendental as well as immanent nature to the alteration in the traditional mode of representation of the ‘freedom of’ supreme reality. That is why it is induced to figure out the vibrating reality as the vibration of reality. For instance, the opening verse of Sp.Saṃ conceives this as:

अकलत्महिं मः क्षमादिसादशिश्वन्तः
कलयति हृदि विश्वं वित्रसंयोजनामिः।
प्रथयति च विचित्रा सूचित्संहारलीला
स जयति शिव एकः स्पन्दवन्स्वप्रतिष्ठः॥

70 In the translation of 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} verses of \textit{Spandakārikā}, Dyczkowski uses the term ‘vibration of’ and it is what proliferated such a problem that whether Spanda is ‘Vibrating consciousness’ or ‘Vibration of Consciousness’.

71 See S. Rajendra, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.34. The modern scholars of Kashmir Śaivism used to exhibit the freedom of Śiva in a sentence that he has the capability to decide ‘to be or not to be’. This statement has been questioned in the discussion session of the Trika Workshop at Lukhnow in 2011. The problem arouse was if Śiva himself decided to ‘not to be’, then there will be the non-existence of himself; but it is impossible to have non-existence of the supreme with respect to the doctrine of Kashmir Śaivism, the experts including D. B. Sensharma, K. D. Tripathi and Navjivan Rastogi elucidated the problem by clarifying the statement with a slight change as ‘to become or not to become’
(Śiva whose glory is unmeasured, measures out in his heart, the
universe from earth to Sadāśiva and variously conjoining (aspects
of his nature), he emanates the wonderful play of emission and
withdrawal. He the one pulsating and established in himself, is
victorious.)

Explaining this benedictory verse, Kṣemarāja directly moves to
glorify the freedom of supreme Śiva. It is nothing else than his
sovereignty, which is the power of creative freedom (svātantrya) and
hence is to be recognized with the ultimate reflective awareness
(Vimarśa). Because the freedom is equated with the power of will, the
impossibility to objectify Śiva (for the process of manifestation) can
certainly be equated with characteristics of the will. Then the freedom
becomes constantly occurring entity and the supreme consciousness
becomes indifferent from the vibration.

The verses 7, 10 and 11 also comprises the dispositions that
intend the vibration of consciousness. The descriptions like ‘uncreated
freedom’ (svātantrya), the form of ‘universal agency and perceiving
subjectivity’ (jñātṛtvakarṭṛvalaksṇaṇa) and nature ‘that which sustains
all things’ (adhiśṭhātrsvabhāva) in the aforementioned verses find Śiva
as the transcendental consciousness that holds the power of vibration.

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73 अकलित इति न कलितः कलनाविषयीकर्तृतमशक्यः स्वस्वरूपादादृशः इवदत्तेयतायायामप्रकृतितो वा महिमा
विश्वाभिन्नपरामर्शस्ववात्मन्यशक्यव्याल्ल ऐश्र्यं यस्य। Sp.Sam, p.1.
74 यत्स्तन्त्रता तत्स्त सर्वेत्येक्रृत्रिमा॥
तत्तदस्तिदित्सतं सर्वं ज्ञात्तति च करोति च इ॥
तत्तमध्यदेशदेशस्य स्वभावमवलोक्यन्न।
स्मयमा इवाच्य स्तत्तस्यें कुसृशितः कुकत्॥: Sp.K, v. 7cd, 10 and 11.
Similarly, explanation of the supreme as the abode of the two states called agent and the product of action clearly categorises power as inferior and its possessor as superior;

अवस्थायुगलं चात्र कार्यकर्तुत्तरशिब्दितम्।
कार्यता क्षियणि तत्र कर्तृत्वः पुनरक्षयम्॥

The supreme state according to Spanda is that where neither pleasure nor pain exists. There is neither subject nor object and moreover no absence of consciousness. The principle having such a state is defined as nothing but mere illumination (prakāśaikaghana). Even though this is the form of Śakti, it is recognised as Śiva.

Kṣemarāja divides the Sp.K into three parts viz., svarūpaspaṇda (vibration of one’s own nature), sahajavidyodayaspaṇda (vibration of the arising innate knowledge), vibhūtispaṇda (vibration of powers). Perhaps the similar classifications are very much illustrative of the sturdy concerns towards the determination of the expression-‘vibration of consciousness’.

In total, Sp.K as the fundamental scripture of new philosophical stream, which was strictly forced to follow the necessities created by the

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76 The first section consists of twenty five verses (1-25), second of seven (26-32) and the third part consists of 19 verses (33-51). cf. Bhāskara’s way of classification of ŚS. Rājānakarāma schematizes the same into four parts: Instruction Concerning the Tenability of (the Self’s) vyatirekopaṇattirdeśa (Independent Existence), vyatiriktaśvabhāvopalabdhi (Direct Perception of One’s Own Independent Nature), viśvasvabhāvaśaktyupapatti (Tenability of the Power of One’s Own Universal Nature) and abhedopalabdhi (Perception of Unity).
then circumstances, exclusively formulated the absolute masculine-Śiva. On the contrary, Spanda espouses the Śākta nature in its inner core as acquired from the antecedent Śakti-centred systems. Thus, if the real nature of Spanda is known, then the ultimate reality, relentlessly acting as a sentient supreme, could only be addressed as the ‘vibrating consciousness’ rather than the ‘vibration of consciousness’. Hence the tools of earlier Śakti-centred schools might had been used to reveal the actual features dormant in the system. But the commentators and modern interpreters vehemently used the metaphysical doctrines of Pratyabhijñā for their exegesis of Spanda.

The Trans-regional organisation and a consequent standardisation of its rituals and doctrines made Śaivism an indispensable part of the early medieval polity. Pan-Indian socio-religious order acted as the principal force behind the rise of Śaivism over the Vaiṣṇavism, Jainism and Buddhism. The cause behind the rise of Śiva-centeredness of Śaivism was its treatment by the Buddhists like Nāgabodhi. Thus although Spanda was originated to explore a pure and advanced Śaivite thought, the inherent nature of the idea of Śakti inhabits the tradition.

**Pratyabhijñā: the Realistic Idealism of Kashmir**

Pratyabhijñā is a distinct system which spaced out itself from the involuntary influences followed in the Spanda way of thinking. It
cleverly incorporated the popular medieval Sanskrit philosophical deliberations which apparently are capable to discuss the major intellectual problems of the whole humanity. Vasugupta’s ŚŚ and Somānanda’s ŚD are the earliest treatises which provide a sturdy platform for Utpaladeva’s ‘new path’.77 Unambiguously this new path was formulated to lead all humanity to soteriological realisation. Utpaladeva explains in the first verse of his treatise:

कथिजचदासाद्य महेश्वरस्य दास्यं जनस्यायुपकारमिच्छन्।
समस्तसम्पत्तिमापितिहेतु तत्प्रत्यिभिज्ञामुपपादयामि॥

(Having somehow been caused to obtain servitude to the great lord and desiring the benefit of humanity, I am establishing the recognition of him, which is cause of obtaining all prosperity.)78

Pratyabhijñā is the recognition involved in the fusion of what appeared formerly and what appears now, as in the judgement “this is the same Caitra”, as emphasised by Abhinavagupta: “प्रत्यिभिज्ञ च भाष्ट्रभासमानरूपानुसवानानामिका स एवायं चैत्र इति प्रतिसंधानेन अभिमुखिभूते वस्तुनिः ज्ञानम्।”79 It explicitly aims at the establishment of the supreme reality Śiva who is perceived as a single, omniscient, and omnipotent

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77 Utpaladeva was the writer to use the term Pratyabhijñā for the first time. He qualifies his own philosophy as a new path: इति प्रकटतिः मया सुगुणं एष माया नवः।

महागुणभूच्यते स्म शिवदेविपास्यायाम्। IPK, 4.1.16.


conscious principle. The supreme Śiva manifests as the universe through his power and the first manifestation, Śakti.

In Pratyabhijñā, Śakti is a highly philosophical entity which occupies the position under the supreme reality called Śiva. This fundamental idea of Śakti (possessed by Śiva) is followed by almost all the teachers of Pratyabhijñā with slight differences. Pratyabhijñā corpus occasionally conceives Śakti as the inevitable nature of Śiva - the Supreme; while in other particular contexts Śakti is presented as an entity, which is completely identical with Śiva. Above all to these, the masculine principle Śiva logically transcends Śakti, the feminine principle.

Śakti as the Overarching Nature of Śiva

The demonstration of Śakti as the integral nature of the supreme Śiva is possibly shared by more or less by all the renowned scholars of Pratyabhijñā. This divine nature of Śiva’s perfect freedom (expressed as ‘vimarśa by Utpaladeva in a posterior time) provides the ground for Śiva to his own self-realisation. Pratyabhijñā accentuates on the theory that the universe as a whole is the manifestation of the supreme reality. According to Pratyabhijñā, everything is made of consciousness i.e., Śiva and he is the cognisor of all these diversities through the means which is also indifferent from him. This theory is

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80 Vasugupta tried to explore a philosophical Śakti, for that he equated the mythological character with the Śakti; whereas Somānanda was involved in establishing the theory of indifference between Śakti and Śaktimān. Utpaladeva explicitly viewed Śakti as a tool, through which Śiva manifests as the universe and the limited individual discovers the reality. It is Abhinavagupta who espoused all the modalities of Śakti, and absorbed it into his unique version of Śaivite monism.

81 According to Pratyabhijñā, everything is made of consciousness i.e., Śiva and he is the cognisor of all these diversities through the means which is also indifferent from him. This theory is
Śiva. And his Śakti is the controlling factor in the process of universal emanation. Thus Śakti, in a clearer sense, can be defined as the conscious nature of Śiva’s egoity and creative tendency. That is why Navjivan Rastogi describes that,

Śakti was deployed by way of the most effective strategy for promoting an all-affirming (i.e., transgressive and inclusive both) model of non-dualistic absolutism.82

Representation of the universe in terms of Śakti is an unexceptional method in the domain of non-dualistic Śaivism. Many terms like Śaktiprasara, Śaktisphāra, Śaktiprakāśana etc. are used to describe the divergent universe by the quantifiable Śakti.84 ŚS, likewise postulates the universe as contrasted to its actuality, when the wheel of powers is united.85

Utpaladeva also attempts to elucidate Śakti as Vimarśa, the essence and the of heart of Śiva:

सा स्फुरत्ता महासत्ता देशकालाविशेषणी।
सैषा सातत्या प्रोक्ता ह्रदयं परमेष्ठिनः॥

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84 See ŚD, I. 3. as “अनिन्द्रच्छाप्रसरः प्रसरदृष्टक्रयः शिरः”
85 ŚS, I. 6. See Mark S. G. Dyckowski, Op.cit., p.67 ff. for more discussion,
(It is the luminous vibrating, the absolute being, unmodified by space and time; it is that which is said to be the heart of the supreme lord, in so far as it is his essence.)

Śiva assumes the nature of various Śakti-s with respect to the duties to be done by him. Thus Somānanda points out that,

When he is in the form of a lysis, in the experience of his conscious beatitude to the exclusion of all else- in this state indeed he is at once will, knowledge and action- then these three powers which are in their most subtle form, are in a state of perfect union."

As indicated earlier, Śakti is the essential aspect of sentient limited beings to discover the reality as their own self. In such case too Śakti is the nature of the supreme in the form of limited immanent form. ŚD renders that liberation happens then, when the Śakti-s dissolve into Śiva takes place. Utpaladeva, following the common opinion of Āgamas, points out that no one can speak of Śiva without Śakti, as Śiva would then be insentient. Raffaele Torella says,

If they are Śaktis, Śiva is the possessor of Śaktis though being inseparable from them; he is the only real Śakta in ways infinite as his powers (iv.4-5). If they are states, he is their substratum. (iv.51).

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86 ĪPK, I. 1. 5. 14. The same is reckoned as Māyā in latent literature of Śaivism as John Nemec notes, “The extensive reference to the power of Māyā is almost entirely missing in ŚDr. Somānanda rather speaks of Śiva’s nature as consciousness and as manifesting itself in the form of multiple realities. This he does through his threefold powers of will, cognition and action. .. the nature of his strict pantheon.” The Ubiquitous Śiva, p.100 ff.


88 ŚDr, I. 6.

89 Raffaele Torella (Ed. and Tr.), The Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā, p.16.
ŚDr extended the discussion about the representation of Śiva as the substratum and Śakti as its being.

Śakti as Identical with Śiva

The possibility for the existence of possessor as distinct from the power is explicitly denied in this context and established that the Śakti is considered to be indifferent from Śiva who is also known as Śaktimān (Śaktimān). Interpreting the ŚŚ, which expresses that the universe is the aggregate of Śiva’s powers is Mark S. G. Dyczkowski opines as;

The universe is Śiva in the form of his absolute energy and because the yogi is similar Śiva (in all respects), the power of his consciousness is fully expanded... it is one’s own consciousness alone that manifests itself in this way and that as the wonderful diversity of all things, like one who is free to desire whatever he likes. Thus because the power (of consciousness) and its power are one, it is Śiva himself who manifests in this way.90

ŚDr pronounces that there is no separate existence for Śiva and Śakti:

न शिवः शक्तिरहितो न शक्तिव्यतिरिक्तिणी।
शिवः शक्तिस्तथा भावानिच्छया कर्तुमीदृशान्।
शक्तिशक्तिमतोभेदं: शैवे जातु न वर्ण्यते॥

(Śiva does not exist apart from Śakti. Śakti is not different (from Śiva). And Śiva is empowered to create such entities at will. In Śaivism, no difference whatsoever between power and the one possessing the power is described.)91

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Following this, Somānanda answers to the arguments hypothesized as that of the opponents’ made through some analogies.

न हिमस्य पृथक्क्षेत्रं नाग्नेरौष्ण्यं पृथग्भर्ेत् ।
मन्त्रस्तंभनतायां हि नासी वक्षस्तदोच्यते ॥
हेमादिबहुस्वरं तदद्रव्यं तेव्यभिचारितम् ।
यद्धौष्ण्यव्यतिरेक्तचे दृष्टान्तो दाहकाश्रयात् ॥

(Coldness is not separated from snow; heat cannot be separated from fire. Indeed (one might object that)a fire is not said to be one when in the state of being paralysed by mantra. Like gold etc., it is a brilliant substance. If you argue that these prove the erroneousness of our argument, (we reply:) the example would be a valid one if they were missing their heat, because fire depends on being something that burns.)

Somānanda tries to assimilate Varṇadevata-s (which are the forms of Śakti acquainted in the Kula stream) into Śiva. The estimations such as ‘sa ca... maheśvarārūpa’ also propose the indifference between Siva and Śakti.

The fundamental desire to create the universe occurs within Śiva and afterwards, the activity originates and finally, the subject rises who recognizes it as the reality. Interestingly, these three forms of Śakti-s have been identified with Śiva. The remaining two Śaktis are also allocated to this context as said by John Nemec;

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93 शैले वाच इन्द्रियत्वम् अथ नादातिनादित्वम्।
तदम्यासे फलायायति: सुक्षममन्त्रस्वरूपम्। ॥ Ibid, III.10.
As long as the erroneous condition of the world of transmigration, in which Śiva's oneness is not recognised, does not arise Śiva's nature is so great i.e., . . . Accordingly all the five powers definitely exist, although in a unified form, at that time, since they are able to produce the objects associated with worldly activity.94

However, as formulated by John Nemec, the conception of indifference between Śiva and Śakti could absolutely be credited to Somānanda's pantheistic perspective, whereas Utpaladeva, being a panentheist, holds quite different observation in this matter:

Somānanda's reluctance to dichotomizing distinctions between subject and object; between that which is transcendent and that which is immanent or between Śiva and the phenomena he creates, is a feature of Śivadrśti, that distinguishes it in the history of Pratyabhijñā philosophy. Utpaladeva's monism involving the identification of pairs and poles- 'I' and 'that'; light and its reflection; agent and object. Somānanda instead articulates a monism involving a single ubiquitous, cycling vortex of power(s) of activity with which Śiva is fully forever identified.95

Śiva's Transcendence over Śakti

The aforementioned proclamations (of Śakti as the nature of Śiva and as identical with Śiva) are hardly tenable within the schema of Pratyabhijñā. In fact these speculations certainly lead to the final one i.e., the supreme omnipotent, omniscient and transcendental reality-

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95 John Nemec, "The Evidence for Somānanda's Pantheism", Journal of Indian Philosophy, p.12. Nemec's view in this respect is agreeable partially, because the very approach towards the indifference between Śiva and Śakti seems meticulous as he has observed. Some minor suitable attempts are there in Utpaladeva also. For instance, see: "सोऽयिमत्येर्वस्यन्तर् परामृश्चिति अध्ययनसाया या परमेश्वरशस्त्रस्मृतिः विमर्शितो आत्मव्यवस्थाय अहमित्त्वविश्वविश्वस्य-लेख भाषिः, न तु कदाचिदिद्वीद्न्तया विशिष्ठव्यक्तिः भाषिः ... तत्सात् सर्व स्वर्णे विमर्शितो प्रकाशशात् अविशिष्टाक्षर्वविश्व्य एव इति।" ĪPV, l. 5.20, Bhāṣ. Vol.1, p.295.
Śiva. Śiva-centredness of Pratyabhijñā always subordinates Śakti (to an inferior status) even though he remains as Śiva and manifests as everything else with the help of Śakti.

The Śaivite concept of freedom could be redefined in this context as autonomy; because, the ‘possession of power’ is associated with the autonomy (freedom to act in his own will) of power-holder (Śaktimati). The ŚS denotes Bhairava as ‘upsurge’ to establish Śiva as the possessor of all the Śakti-s that act as the sources of all activities; “उद्यमो भैरवः.”

Śiva is recognized as the possessor of the powers of action and knowledge. Kartṛtva and Jñātṛtva are presented as clearly transcending the corresponding powers (Kriyā and Jñāna). Just like this, the action of Cit is equated with the possessor of Cit: “चित्रक्रया चित्रिकर्तृत्वा।”

The important discussion about Śiva’s transcendence over Śakti subsists in the second and third chapters of ŚD which were written for the refutation of grammarian’s idea of Śabdabrahman. Somānanda firmly repudiated Pradyumnabhaṭṭa who treated Śakti as the supreme reality.

David Peter Lawrence precisely scrutinizes the aforesaid tendencies and observes,

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96 ŚS, I. 8; cf. Sp.Śam, p. 5.
97 ḠP, I. 5. 11.
98 See ŚDṛ, III. 1-3.
As the appellation "non-dual Śaivism" suggests, in this stream of tantric Śakti is encompassed by or, as Sanderson would say, "overcoded" within the metaphysical essence of the God Śiva. Śiva is the śaktiman, "possessor of Śakti," encompassing her within his androgynous nature as his integral power and consort. According to the predominant non-dual Śaiva myth, he out of a kind of play divides himself from Śakti and then in sexual union emanates, embodies himself within, and controls the universe through her.  

This assumption seemingly leads to the diplomatic concept propounded later on by Abhinavagupta i.e., the concept of pairing (yāmala). It is being considered under the portion of the description of fullness (pūrṇatā) by some scholars. For instance, Navjivan Rastogi assumes saṅghaṭṭa as a ‘self-dissolving’ fusion between being and its substrate. Both the supreme reality and the power are constituted of fullness.

Consequently, the Pratyabhijñā thought on the principle of Śakti is assorted likely into the above mentioned attitudes. The primal importance of the Śakti has been slipping as the nature of supreme reality even in the phase of Spanda itself. Correspondingly Pratyabhijñā tried to expose Śakti as indifferent from Śiva. Further, the approach has been transmitted inventively into the illustration of Śakti as the gateway or tool to the reality.

100 TĀ, III. 68: “तयोयवद्यामलं रूपं स संघट्ट इति स्मृतः”
Thus, to sum up, Śakti has had a prime religious philosophical position in the earliest school called Kula. In the initial stage, Śakti was presented as having the semi-divine or even human forms. Subsequently, the later developments in Kula itself changed Śakti into more divinized form and across which the audial and visual models of goddesses have evolved. Krama, depicts Śakti in relation with the control of the time as well as death. Next two are the branches which gave immense attention to the male supreme reality called Śiva, by subordinating the position of Śakti. There Spanda shows an unconscious allegiance to Śakti; whereas Pratyabhijñā skillfully upholds Śakti in its multifarious doctrinal concepts in accordance with the metaphysics of recognition. In fact the analysis made here reveals the philosophical characteristics and prominence of Śakti in the earlier schools and the shift of Śakti’s position to a demeaned state in later streams.