CHAPTER VI

Philosophical Traditions in
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PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITIONS IN SKANDA PURANA

It is already noted while discussing the religious traditions in Sk.P. that, the Purāṇas have continued the spiritual heritage of the ancient Indian tradition. As a part of that rich heritage, there has been a treasure of philosophical thinking. The Purāṇas show an awareness that men differ with regard to their religious faith, disposition, devotion and level of spiritual attainment. The Purānic seers understood this as a stern reality. Therefore they did not rigidly prescribe the same code of conduct and religious practices for the enlightened and the unenlightened. For a lay-man they prescribed without any distinction of colour, caste or creed the religious vows which were conducive to the suppression of the ego and then spiritual realisation. They advocated a distinct set of religious duties to those who were higher up in the ladder. According to them, it is the race of god which rather than the 'path' taken by the seekers, which can console and guide the people in all walks of life. The philosophical ideas discussed in the Purāṇas are meant for those people in the higher rungs of the ladder who alone can understand and find in the philosophical ideas a significant background for their religious practices. The common topics discussed are the nature of the supreme, the nature of renunciation, devotion, universal love and faith, the nature of spiritual attainment, disinterested service to god and man and the different ways of attaining...
spiritual enlightenment like Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti. They also have reflections on the essential nature of spirit, the primal matter and its evolutes, cosmogony and cosmology. All these topics are presented in the light of the different systems of Indian Philosophy.

Sk.P. refers to all the systems of Indian Philosophy like Nyāya-Vaisēsika¹, Sāṅkhya-yoga², Purva-mīmāṃsā³ - uttaramīmāṃsā⁴, Śaiva and Śākta schools. It also refers to various theories like Svabhāvavāda⁵, Śūnyavada⁶, Parināma vada⁷, Vivarta Vada, Māyāvāda⁸, Vijñāna Vāda, Pākhanda vāda⁹, etc. But it presents a synthetic view of all of them. There are many passages wherein the important problems connected with philosophy like cosmology, cosmogony, the secrets of devotion as a way of attaining liberation, the problem of emancipation and role of God (Śiva) as the controller of world order¹⁰, are discussed. The different ways of life like the ways of knowledge (Jñāna Mārga)¹¹, Renunciation (Sanyāsa)¹², austerity (Tapas), Devotion (Bhakti Mārga)¹³, mental-discipline (Yoga mārga)¹⁴, duty (Śvadharma mārga) spiritual equilibrium (Ātma-upamyo)¹⁵,

². Ibid., III/l/43-40, II/lx/18.24.
³. Ibid., I/l/4,91.
⁴. Ibid., III/l/43.40.
⁵. Ibid., I/l/40.
⁶. Ibid., I/l/31; I/iii/l/18.
⁷. Ibid.,
⁸. Ibid.,
⁹. Ibid., II/vii/22.34.
¹⁰. Ibid., II/32-54.55; I/ii/5.88.
¹¹. Ibid., III/l/43.40, I/iii/l/1.17.
¹². Ibid., I/iii/l,8; 16.
¹³. Ibid., III/iii.2.
¹⁴. Ibid., I/ii/55, I/iii/l/11.
¹⁵. Ibid., 46.
action (karma-marga)\textsuperscript{16} are referred to and a way of practical philosophy (anuṣṭhāna vedānta) is suggested through out. Sk.P. teases the verbose pundits who insist on dry logic in vedānta. It categories people into two-fold, (1) some who are desirous of emancipation and (2) some who are desirous of cleansing the mind. Some just read and mutter vedānta by words but they do not simply practice or experience it (Vācā Paṭhanti Vedāntam tūṣnīm nāṃbhavanti te)\textsuperscript{17} such Brahmins by their ignorance, drown in the vast ocean of Vedānta filled with great crocodiles called ‘Pūrvapakṣa’ and weeds in the form of Siddhāntas. They take to Vedānta to cleanse their mind but end up in quarrels\textsuperscript{18}.

Hence in this chapter, the philosophical tradition will be presented giving a brief account of the philosophical problems discussed, the main tenets of ‘Saiva and Śakta’ schools of philosophy presented and the different ways of life suggested in the different Khandas of Sk.P., having Saiva tradition as the main theme.

Firstly, we will discuss the different philosophical problems like cosmology, the cause of the universe, the problem of the path and the problem of emancipation, as presented in Sk.P.

\textsuperscript{16} Sk.P. I/7.8.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., I/1/20.17b.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 3 - 6.

Pūrva Pakṣa mahāgrāhe siddha⊥ajhaṣa sanskule,
Vedāntābdhāvihājñānam Muhьяnti patita dvījāḥ.
1. COSMOLOGICAL SPECULATION IN SKANDA PURĀNA:

Before the actual account of the cosmological speculation in Sk.P., it is necessary to give a brief history of Cosmological thinking from the time of the Ved for the entire account of it in Sk.P. is an adaptation of that fund of ideas.

The philosophical speculation of the Vedic seers regarding the process of creation had reached a pattern of perfection in the 'Nāsadīya hymn' (Rgveda X.129). What is the ultimate source of the universe? This was the burning problem which stirred the mind of the sages. In the beginning, there was neither 'Sat' nor 'Asat'. Then only the Absolute (Brahman) breathed. Further, noncence, desire, moral and non-moral actions contributed to the further course of creation in the universe. They produced the whole universe together with the upper and neither regions. The created objects were two-fold viz., (1) the individual self as the subject of the experience of pleasure and pain and (2) things which were the objects of pleasure and pain (retodhā āsan mahimānā āsan (Rgveda X.129.5)).

The Rta Sūkta of the Rgveda states that, the supreme being practiced severe penance with a view to bring this universe into existence. From such a supreme being, Rta and Satya took their birth. The Purusasūkta gives the grand concept of a cosmic puruṣa.

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20. Ibid. X.90.
In the hymns addressed to Visvakarman it is stated that, Visvakarman, the divine architect, destroyed the whole creation. Thereafter arose in the Almighty the divine urge for creation. He then brought into existence the different cosmic orders. In the ultimate stage, he entered into them. The Purusa Sukta states that, the entire universe was covered by the supreme Purusa and from him 'Virāt' was born. It is from Virāt, the other creation proceeded.

In Atharvaveda, a hymn (XIX.53) dedicated to Kāla (Time) states that, Time is identical with the supreme spirit. It brings forth the sentient and non-sentient beings. Time has brought into existence the cosmic order with all its different gradations. This Time is the begetter of Prajāpati, Brahma, etc.

The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (XI.1, 6, 1.11) states that before creation, the whole universe remained undifferentiated and identified with water. The vast sheets of waters wrapt the entire earth together with the inhabitants. The constant desire of the presiding deities of waters manifested itself into the manifold universe. They practiced penance and a golden egg was born which was split into two by Prajāpati. Then they furthered the creation.

In the Upaniṣads, the cosmological theories centre round two main ideas viz., (1) the materialistic

21. R.V.X. 81.49
and (2) the spiritualistic. The first view traces the origin of the universe is traced from any one of the following basic elements viz., water, air, fire, space, non-entity, priemval egg and vital air. According to the second view, the whole creation emanated from the absolute Brahman. The Svetasvatara Upanisad states that, Siva is the supreme Brahman and from him the world ensues.

Sāńkhyan view:

It is with regard to the secondary creation we have to consider the Sāńkhyan view of creation which the Purāṇas have adopted. Cosmological speculation is the very core of the Sāńkhyanites, who are realists. They found that the whole material and physical order of the phenomena was constituted by the union of three distinct but co-operative forces called Guṇas viz., Sattva, Rajas, Tamas. When these Guṇas remain in equilibrium they receive the designation Prakṛti which when disturbed by the presence of the passive Puruṣa brings forth the creation of 23 tattvas starting from Mahat and ending with Pañcabhūtas.

The above account of the cosmological speculation from Vedas down to the Sāńkhya system, is intended to show that the cosmological speculation reflected in the Sk.P. are all taken from the Vedic and Upanisadic sources with

22. Svetasvatara Upanisad. 3.9.
the grafting of the Śāṅkhyā cosmology and with Śiva orientation given to them. This point will be clear from the following account from the Sk.P.

**IN THE SKANDA PURĀNA:***

It has been laid down in Sk.P. that Śiva is the ultimate reality. He is immutable, boundless and omnipresent. The whole universe is pervaded by him. The expressions 'visvarūpa', 'visvātmā'²⁴ are referred to as synonyms of Śiva. He is pure and immaculate in his essential nature. He is beyond all the qualities. But when a desire to create (Sīrksā) appears in his mind the creative begins and he assumes the form of Visvarūpa, etc. It is with this end in view that His Sakti assumes the form of the primal matter (Prakṛti), Spirit (Purusa) and time (kāla)²⁴(a).

Prakṛti is the state of equilibrium of gunas viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Śiva with his will creates a reciprocal interaction among these three gunas through his Sakti. In the first stage of creation, He brings into existence Brahmā as the creator of this universe from the right limb of his body, Viṣṇu as the preserver of this universe from the left portion of his body and His Rudra aspect with the power of destruction of this world order, from the middle portion of his body²⁵.

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²⁴. Sk.P. I/1/31.73.
²⁴(a) Sk.P. I/1/32.40; VII/iii/61.1.
²⁵. Ibid., VII/iii/68.5-V/1/2; VII/ii/2.18;
also Nārada Purāṇa I/iii/28.31.33.
In the next stage of creation, the equilibrium of prakṛti becomes disturbed and consequently Mahat (the intelligent principle) is brought into being. From this Ahaṅkāra (the principle of ego) originates. Then from this evolve the Manas, five Jñānendriyas, five Karmendriyas and Pañcatanmātras (five subtle elements). From the Pañcatanmātras, the pāncamahābhūtas (the five great elements) evolve.

Further, Brahmā sets in motion the 'Tāmas-Sarga' consisting of the animals of lower order. Then he brings forth the Devas (with predominance of Sattva) and human beings (with predominance of Rajas). After this, he creates Dakṣa, who further the process of creation. The entire universe is completely filled up with the progenies of Brahmā, viz., gods, Asuras and men 26.

This activity of creation and pro-creation goes on in the fourteen lokas, viz., Bhūḥ, Bhuvah, Svah, Mahah, Janah, Tapah and Satyam (the upper worlds) and Atala, Vital, Sutala, Talātala, Mahātala, Rasātala and Pātāla (the nether worlds). Brahmā creates mountains and all other things necessary for living in these worlds. He locates the Meru mountain in the centre of the universe, the abode of the divine beings and then places the Lokāloka mountain on the extremity of the earth. Between these two mountains are placed the islands viz., Jambū, Plakṣa, Sālmālī, Kuṣa, 26. Sk.P. VII/1/21; IV/1/18.
These islands are surrounded by the seven oceans, viz., Salt, Water, Curd, Milk, etc. Siva is the ultimate goal and embodiment of knowledge. He is the Almighty and performs the three specific duties of creator, preserver and destroyer.

Thus an account of the cosmological ideas in the Sk.P. is given in brief. It is interesting to note here, as already indicated, that this account is an adaptation of the cosmological ideas found in the rich heritage from Rgveda down to the Sāṅkhya system. This can be noted as given below.

A perusal of the cosmological account in the Sk.P. and comparing it with the Rgveda account, shows how the Sk.P. account has combined into a whole, the several cosmological and cosmogonical ideas found in the different creation hymns of Rgveda and used them in asserting Siva as the creator of the universe. 27(a)

It may be noted here that the views of Atharva Veda that Time is also a factor responsible for creation were endorsed by Manusmṛti and other Dharmasāstras. This view was later accepted by Purāṇas. It may be noted that in the Sk.P. Kāla is represented as an aspect of Māyā along with Prakṛti and Purusa, from the triad of which the creation of the beings ensues. 27(b)

27. Sk.P. I/1/6.12.
27(a) Ibid., I/1/26/13.
27(b) Ibid., I/1/32.
The cosmological ideas contained in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads are an expansion of the ideas contained in the Rgvedic creation hymns in a subtle form. It is to be noted that the two lines of thought in the Upaniṣads is reversed in the Sk.P. by transferring the genesis of the primary creation to the Absolute Being viz., the Supreme Soul, and the material creation (secondary creation) to the triple manifestation of the Supreme Soul viz., Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra. In Sk.P. the supreme soul is stated to be Śiva and from him Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra were born and from them the secondary creation came into being.

The view of the Sāṅkhya in particular, has been accepted by almost all the Purāṇas. This was probably because of the reality which it ushered on the world and the teleological nature of creation of the world by Prakṛti for the emancipation of the passive Purusa. Only the Absolute was put on top in the hierarchy of creation by the Purāṇas to uphold the spiritual essence of this universe and Prakṛti was made a part and parcel of Supreme Purusa. In Sk.P. Śiva is considered to be the 'Paramapuruṣa' and Devi (Sakti) is the Prakṛti, who is an integral part of Śiva in his role as a creator.²⁸

²⁸ Sk.P. I/1/7, 32; I/1/32.11.
The pūrānic conception of devolution of the universe is also interesting. It is stated in Sk.P., that during the ultimate destruction, Śiva the Almighty would assume a ferocious form. First, He would break the seven lokas and then the Ānđa (egg). Then He would enter the unborn ultimate abode, where there will be no air, no space, no fire, no earth where only Śiva the Almighty will be with His powers. Śiva the Almighty orders Umē, the Parāsakti to withdraw the world. Then Śiva would cause a deluge and create the Ekaṅṛṣava. Śiva would make Parāsakti into Kālaratri, who would eat all the jīvas, prajāpatis etc.²⁹

Sk.P. interestingly states that the right face of Śiva is Rudra, which has long incisors, deep mouth, red eyes, long tongue, a serpent as the head-dress and a necklace made of the heads of the Asuras. The concept of Pratisarga or destruction of the universe brings into mind the modern scientific conception of "Nemesis". In this regard, Dr. Rahal says that "Nemesis plays a role in evolution similar to that played by death in the world, making possible the introduction of young blood". Müller and his colleagues suggest different names to Nemesis. "Nemesis after the Greek goddess who reluctantly persecutes the excessively rich, proud and powerful. Kāli the black, after the Hindu goddess of death and destruction, who nevertheless is infinitely generous and kind.

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Indra, after the Vedic god of storm and war, who uses a thunderbolt (comet) to slay a serpent (Dinosaurs), there by releasing life giving water from the mountains.30

The difference between the scientific and Purānic view is that of the periodical occurring of creation and destruction as stated by the Purāṇas. Purāṇas state that such a cyclic cosmic event is prompted by divine action. It is this combination of the theology and cosmology which is a unique contribution of the Purānic philosophy.

Professor Laurie John in his book 'Cosmology Now' says: "In the introduction to Chapter I, I referred to the comparison between cosmology and theology. By now, it will be clear that these two edifices of intellectual endeavour stand on the common ground of experience but do not interact at all. This far from satisfactory situation places the cosmologist in a dilemma. As a scientist, is he morally justified in adopting not scientific categories of thought in order to entertain theological concepts. Concepts he often needs to give himself some comfort in an otherwise alien universe?"

We have already noted that the Purānic philosophers have based their view of the universe on the idea of comfort and not conflict, which the scientists are searching for.

Sk. P. refers to the dance of Śiva as a symbolic form of creation. The dance of Śiva in the form of Nāṭarāja is well-known as a cosmic dance particularly in South Indian Saivism. Regarding the dance of Śiva, 'Fritz-of-Copra' in his book 'Tao of Physics' says thus: "The dance of Śiva is the dancing universe, the ceaseless flow of energy going through an infinite variety of patterns that melt into one among. Modern Physics has shown that the rhythm of creation and destruction is not only manifest in the turn of seasons and in the birth and death of all living creatures, but is also the essence of all inorganic matter. According to quantum field theory, all interactions between the constituents of matter take place through the emission and absorption of virtual particles. More than that, the chance of creation and destruction is the basis of the very existence of matter since all material particles self-interest by emitting and re-absorbing virtual particles. Modern Physics has revealed that every sub-atomic particle not only performs energy dance, but also is an energy dance, a pulsating process of creation and destruction. For the Modern Physicist, then Śiva's dance is the dance of sub-atomic matter. As in Hindu mythology, it is continual dance of creation and destruction introducing the wide cosmos, the basis of all existence and of all natural phenomena."

33. Ibid
Thus it can be observed that the purānic conception of cosmology as presented in Sk.P., breathes a new spirit. The theological and cosmological conflict which the scientists and philosophers could not solve and the comfort which both could not achieve, is achieved by the purānic thinkers through the media of myth and this is not running away from the problem but realising it and solving it as it is and as it ought to be, by harnessing into the divine agency. What the modern scientists think in terms of mystery is represented in terms of divine power in the Purānas. This is in turn a line of thinking which has come to the Purānas from the ancient tradition of the Vedas.

THE MATERIAL CAUSE AND THE INSTRUMENTAL CAUSE OF THE UNIVERSE:

The question regarding the Material cause (Upādāna Kāraṇa) and the instrumental cause (Nimitta Kāraṇa) of the universe, is already referred to in the above account of the cosmological speculations in the Sk.P. Generally, god is considered to be the one Supreme from whom the entire universe emanates and into whom it gets absorbed. This shows that god is the cause of this universe. The bone of contention among philosophers is in the direction of defining and determining the causal nature of god. The question is - Is god the material cause or the instrumental cause or both? The different philosophical systems have held different views on this question. Apart from
the Sāṅkhya view which has wielded influence on almost all the systems of philosophy, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view of holding the material cause as different from the instrumental cause, has persisted in some Vedānta systems as well as other schools.34

Some of the Śaiva systems like Pāṣupata, Miśra-Rudra, Gānapatya, Saura, Śākta, Mahesvara and Kāpālika consider that, Śiva is only the efficient cause of the universe and not the material cause.34(a) These schools are obviously toeing the line of the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika system. The Dvaita system, among the Vedānta schools holds Brahman as the instrumental cause and Prakṛti (of the Sāṅkhya) as the material cause of the universe. This line of thinking is not followed by the Purāṇas in general and Sk.P. in particular. The Sk.P. is especially indebted to the Vedānta systems of Saṅkara, Rāmānuja, Śrikantha and Śrīpati.

As regards the Advaita view propounded by Śaṅkara, Brahman is the 'Vivartopādāna Kāraṇa' and His Saguṇa aspect as Iśvara is the Nīmitta Kāraṇa of the universe. Rāmānuja holds that Brahman is both the material and the instrumental cause of the world. He calls Brahman as Nārāyaṇa. Śrikantha and Śrīpati give a Śaiva orientation to the view both and say that, Parāśiva-Brahman is the material as well as the instrumental cause.

34. Śaṅkara Bhāṣya, Brahmāsūtra II/2.7.37.
34(a). Śrīkara Bhāṣya on Brahmāsūtra II/2/8/37.
In Śrīkaṇṭabhaṣya and its commentary viz., Śivārkamanidīpikā also, it is stated that Śiva is both the efficient and material cause of this universe (Ihādikaraṇe Paramēśvarasyānūmānāt siddhistasyānunāsatahassiddham nīmittatva meva kevalam nopādānatvam iti matam nirākriyate)

In Śrīkarabhaṣya, a different viewpoint is given according to which Śiva is both the material cause and efficient cause of the universe. It is stated, there "Pātyuḥ paramēśvarasya śruti siddha jagadubhayakāraṇat-vasyāpi". He refers to a section of Śaiva philosophers who do not admit this view - "Tadāgamanistāstanmatābhi-praya' nabhijñā ekadesinastāntrikān kevalanimitattavam vedanti".

It seems this dichotomy of views stemmed from considering some Śaiva schools as (1) Vedic and (2) some as non-vedic. It is contended that those Śaiva schools which admit that Śiva is both the efficient and material cause are Vedic Śaiva schools and those which accept the view that Śiva is the efficient cause of the universe are non-vedic schools. This viewpoint is expressed by both Śrīkānta and Śripati while commenting on Brahmaṣūtra II.2.35. Here the view that, the Absolute Brahmān cannot be taken to be the material cause of the universe entails the admission of the fact that the universe is the transformation of the Brahmān, is criticised. It is stated by

35. Śrīkaṇṭabhaṣya. Appayyadikṣitar’s Commentary – Śivārkamanidīpikā – Brahmaṣūtra II/2.35.
36. Śrīkaṇṭabhaṣya. Brahmaṣūtra II/2.0.37.
the opponents that this view goes against the Vedic view of the immutability of god. Therefore we have to accept the view that God is the efficient cause of the universe.

To solve such a tangle, more than once, eminent commentators turn their attention to the Pūrāṇas, which bring forth a compromise between the two views. According to Sk. P. when we state that Śiva is the material cause of the universe, it is not Śiva who transforms, but it is the 'śivasakti' (the power of consciousness of Śiva) which undergoes transformation, Śiva remains beyond and beside the sphere of transformation. It goes to the credit of Sk. P. that it does not make a distinction between Vedic and non-Vedic schools of Śaiva philosophy in this regard.

It states that Śiva has to be understood and worshipped with the help of different Agamas and that Śiva is the material and efficient cause of the universe. One who meditates on Śiva thus achieves final emancipation and bliss.

Thus the Sk. P. can be considered as belonging to the Śaiva tradition in its philosophy. In the cosmological speculations Śiva is described as the cause of the creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe. As the cause of the universe, Śiva is represented as the material as well as the instrumental cause by the Sk. P., which closely follows the Śaiva Vedantic traditions represented by Śrīkantha and Śripati.

38. Prakṛtya tatviditam subhrum aham tistam tattvataḥ.
Many philosophical systems are highlighted in the Sk. P. Among them, the philosophical systems of the Śaiva tradition can be traced to the Vedic times. The Taittirīya Āranyaka\textsuperscript{39} tells us that the whole universe is the manifestation of Rudra. This conception had its further development in Upaniṣads like Svetāsvatara\textsuperscript{40}, the epic Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{41} and the Purāṇas, wherein Rudra-Siva is considered as the Supreme Brahman, the knowledge of which would bring emancipation.

Saṅkarācārya and Rāmānujaśārya refer to different Śaiva schools like Pāśupata, Kāpālikā and Kālāmukhas in their commentaries on Bādarāyaṇa’s Brahmasūtra\textsuperscript{42}. Madhavācārya in his ‘Sarvadasana Saṅgraha’ refers to the four philosophical schools of Saivism viz., Lakulīśa, Pāśupata, Śaiva, Pratyabhijñā and Rasesvara. In South India, the Śaiva philosophical tradition had its development mainly in Śaiva Siddhānta and Viśvaśaiva Schools.

The worship of Śakti dates back to Rgveda\textsuperscript{43}, where she is praised as the supporter of the earth. It had its development in the later Śakta philosophical schools.

\textsuperscript{39} Taittirīya Āranyaka, 9, 6.
\textsuperscript{40} Svetāsvatara Upanisad, 3, 10; 5, 21.
\textsuperscript{41} Mahābhārata, Sāntiparva - 139, 49 - 59.
\textsuperscript{42} Brahma Sūtra, II/11/36 or 37.
\textsuperscript{43} R.V.1/113, 1/136 - 3.
like Kaula, Samaya and Miśra. The tenets of these school are frequently referred to in the Mahābhārata and the purāṇas.

In the previous chapter, we have dealt with the Saiva schools like Pāśupata, Lakulīśa Pāśupata, Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas while dealing with them as religious cults. It is proposed to deal with other Saiva schools like Saiva siddhānta, Kādmīr Saivism, and Śākta schools, giving an outline of their main tenets and presenting the ideas connected with them as found in Sk.P.

**Śaiva Siddhānta:**

Śaiva Siddhānta recognises twenty-eight Āgamas. Meyakandar, the author of 'Śivajñānabodhani' belonging to thirteenth century A.D., is regarded as the first systematic expounder of Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy. According to him, Śiva is the supreme reality and is called Pati or the Lord who possesses the eight attributes of self-existence, essential purity, intuitive wisdom, infinite intelligence, freedom from all bonds, infinite grace or love, omnipotence and infinite bliss. Śiva is the first cause. His Śakti is the instrumental cause and Māya is the material cause of this world\(^{44}\). The relation between Śiva and Śakti is that of identity (tadātmya) though it is the power of the Lord. This Śakti is conscious, unchanging and eternal energy and is known as Svarūpa Śakti. Lord Śiva is omnipresent.

\(^{44}\) S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, p.723 f.
omnipotent and omniscient and he performs the five
functions of creation, preservation and destruction
extending grace (amagraha) and liberation (mukti) of the
souls as well.

The individual souls are called Pasu, for like
battles they are bound to worldly existence by the rope of
avidyā. The soul is an all-pervading eternal and conscious
agent and enjoyer of the fruits of karma. It has consciousness
the essence of which is in the act of seeing. It is
different from the grass and the subtle body and the sense
organs etc. The bound souls mistake themselves as finite
and limited in will, thought and action. In liberation,
they are restored to their original nature.

The fetters which bind the soul are called Pāsas.
Pāsas are three: Avidyā, Karma and Māyā. Avidyā is one
in all beings and is beginningless. It is also called
Ānāvāmala. Ānāvāmala is the impurity which consists in
the false notion of the soul about itself as finite or
atomic and confined to the body and limited in knowledge
and power. It is Avidyā because it makes the soul ignorant
of its inherent glory and greatness. Karma is produced by
the deeds of the soul. It is subtle and unseen and is the
cause of the mixture of the conscious with the unconscious.
This is the Kārmikāmala. The souls differ accordingly as
they are sullied by these three kinds of Pāsas. In order
to get liberated, the soul has to get rid of these three
impurities caused by these three Pāsas, for which god's grace is absolutely essential. After the removal of Pāsa by god's grace, the soul becomes one with Śiva. Mey Kandar says that just as water dissolves and becomes one with it, similarly the liberated soul merges in God and becomes copervasive with him⁴⁵. This Śāyujya with Śiva is the real liberation. Emphasising the ethical virtues as the ground work to receive god's grace, Siddhiyar says: "they have no love for God who have no love for all mankind"⁴⁶

VASMIRA: SAIWISM

The Kashmir School of Śaivāsm is known as Pratyabhijna or Trika or Spanda School. The system claims to be based on Śaiva-gamas. Vasugupta, Abhinavagupta and Somananda are some of the chief exponents of this school.

This system speaks of thirty-six tattvas of Cosmic manifestation⁴⁷. Śakti has five important aspects viz., Cit, ānanda, iccha, jñāna and kriyā. From the interaction of Śiva with these five Šaktis, there arise, the five transcendental tattvas, viz., Śiva, Śakti, Sadāśiva, Īsvara and Śuddhavidyā. Māyā tattva is the sixth tattva which makes the infinite appear as finite. This Māyā gives rise to five Kanchukas, viz., Kalā (power), Vidyā (knowledge) 'rāga (attachment), Kāla (time) and niyati (space). By the

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⁴⁵. Śiva jhānabodham, IX.2; xii.3, also Tiruvāsāgam, XXV.9.
⁴⁶. xii.2. as quoted in Siddhānta Dipika.
⁴⁷. This is common to all Śaiva systems, such as Śaiva-Siddhānta, ViṣṇuSaiva, etc.
agency of these Māyā makes the Infinite Śiva appear as finite purusa, which is the twelfth tattva. The other twenty-four tattvas are the same as the tattvas of Sāmkhya school, viz., Prakṛti and its evolutes.

Śiva is the only reality, the one without a second. He is infinite consciousness and absolute independence. By the force of his will he creates everything. By the wonderful power (Śakti) inherent in him, God appears in the form of souls and constitutes objects for their experiences. The only reality is the unlimited Pure Self, the one and only substratum of the universe, whose vibration (spanda) is the cause of all distinctions. Śiva is the transcendental and eternal background of this universe. In his transcendental aspect, he is known as Viśvottirna and in his immanent aspect he is the Viśvātma. His Śakti has infinite aspects of which cit, ānanda, icchā, jñāna and kriyā are the most important. In fact, Māyā is neither the material cause of the universe nor the principle of illusion. It is that aspect of the power of Śiva through which He manifests himself as many. The individual soul is pure consciousness and as such identical with Śiva. It is the ultimate reality under conditions of self-limitation. Plurality of souls is not final. The world is not apart from Śiva and the soul is not different from Śiva.

It is the 'Pratyabhijñā' (recognition) of this reality that is essential for obtaining liberation48

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48 Śivanūtra 12, 3; Paramārthaśāra, p.51.
Recognition overcomes bondage. This is the meaning of the upaniṣadic assertion - "Tat tvam asi". The liberated soul becomes one with Śiva and ever enjoys the mystic bliss of oneness with the Lord.

SĀKTA SCHOOLS:

Sākta schools are mainly based on different Tantras which are also called āgamas. Kaula, Samaya and Miśra are the three important schools of Sākta philosophy. The different Tantras and the Purāṇas gave a definite shape to the Sākta doctrines and made them popular. Bhaskarārya, and Lakṣmīdhara are the eminent Sākta writers. The Kaula school is considered a Vāma Marga. But the use of the Mudras as a part of the spiritual practices of the Kaulas shows their real significance. Kula means Sakti or Kundalinī and Akula means Śiva. He alone is a "Kaula" who succeeds in uniting Sakti and Śiva. In the Sākta school, the external marks are condemned in spiritual practices.

The Kulārṇava Tantra says: "If the mere rubbing of the body with mud and ashes gains liberation, then the village dogs who roll in them would have attained it." Mahānirvāṇatantra says: "The highest is the union with Brahma; the middle is the meditation on Brahma, the lower is the praise of the Lord and the recitation of hymns; and the lowest is the external worship".

49. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, XIV. 122.

"Uttamobrahmasadbhāvo dhyāna bhāvastuvamadyamah;
Stutirjapōdhamabhāvo bahiṇpūjādhamādihamā.
Sakti is the power of existence, knowledge and bliss of Brahman and is inseparable from it. Siva is the indeterminate Brahman and it is the Maya of Sakti which makes him determinate. The whole world of matter and souls exists in Sakti, which is the inseparable power of Siva. The souls mistake themselves as finite and many, due to the influence of Maya. Liberation is due to the knowledge that the soul is non-different from Brahman. It is the knowledge of Sakti which helps to gain the real knowledge.

In the Saktta systems, the mystic side of Yoga is emphasised. The sacred, secret and divine Tantras and Mantras are made use of in the spiritual uplift of the soul. It is the awakening of the Kundalini, Sakti and piercing of the six Chakras by practice that leads to ultimate knowledge. The practice of 'Nadayoga' is one of the means to achieve the ultimate liberation. The philosophica ideas connected with the Saiva and Saktta schools of philosophy as presented in Sk.P. may be better understood from a passage coming in the Kedara Khanda. In this passage which is in the form of a dialogue between Yama and Siva, it is said that: 'those whose sin has come to an end, they have pure feelings (Visuddhabhavo) in their mind. They will have a greater desire to go to a holy tirtha and have the blessings of noble people. Because of the impressions caused in the previous births (Janmabhyaena) the beings

50. Saradatilaka Tantra, I-26, I-11-12.
51. Sk.P. I/1/31, 28 - 76.
will have their intellect totally directed towards Śiva only at the end of many births. (Bhūnām janmanāmante mayi bhāvo' nuvartate)°°. Therefore meritorious are those who have devotion towards Śiva. Women, children, Śūdras, Svapacās and even the irreligious, although born among the sinners, will become pure human beings due to the impressions of the past lives. By pure mind, they become experts in all the subjects°°. Even gods like Indra and the Lokapālas assumed their positions because of the power of providence and past actions. Visit to all the tirthas, performance of sacrifices, making of charity etc., have to be done to cleanse one's mind. It is in a pure mind that the self-reflects (Manasā bhāvito hyātmā). Śiva exists in all the beings as the self. (Ātmā ahaṁca sarveṣām prāṇinām hi vyavasthitah)°°. He is always established in pure thought (Bhāvasaṁsthah). He is the self of this moveable and immoveable world without any difference (Nirantarāh). He is beyond all paradoxes (Dvandvātītaḥ) without any objectivity (Nirvikalpa), established in Himself, eternal and without any desire. He is changeless (Kūṭasthāh) and free of any distinction and sub-divisions°° (of the Kalpas). He is to be understood by enlightenment (Bodhabodhyah). He is endless (Anantāh). Forgetting that He is of such

52. Sk.P.1/1/31(a).
53. Ibid., 33.
54. Ibid., 31, 38(b).
55. Ibid., 40.
nature of pure consciousness, all the beings caught in the

cycle of births and deaths see Him differently. He is both

Brahma and Visnu.

Brahma, Visnu and Siva are only the modifications

of Gunas (Trayo’mi’iguṇakārīnaḥ). The three viz., Brahma,

Vismu and Siva are the creator, sustainer and destroyer of

the world respectively and nothing else. It is by action

covered with ahaṅkāra (ego) the trio of Brahma, Visnu and

Siva are made to work. The gods, men, birds and beasts,

intellectuals also are prompted by the same. In creation,

because of the gunas these animals etc., are differentiated

well. Having fallen into the mirage and being controlled

by Māya (Māyāya vaśīkṛtāḥ), all the gods, intellectuals,

pseudo-intellectuals and the wicked ones despising each

other, engaged in false arguments, overpowered by the three

gunas, caught in the cycle of birth and death (Shavasam-

pannāḥ), being unable to see the truth, passionate,

possessing desire, anger, fear, jealousy, intoxication,

being extroverts, indulging in quarrel and brickbats, they

do not see the truth (Atatvajñetī). Differentiating the

truth from the untruth which is made of gunas (gunabhedaḥ),

one should see the one ultimate truth in ‘that’ object

which is beyond the gunas (Gunaštīteca vastavarthe para-

mārthaika darsanam)56 in which there is differentiation

and unity, passion and detachment, anger and peace, and

which is the ultimate abode (Taddhāmaparamam). Words canno

56. Sk.P. I/1/31. 49(b)
explain 'It' because they are transient like a pot (Nata
dadhāsayate sarvā) because sound has the ultimate goal of
leading to action (sabdhi jāyate dharma pravr̥tti paramo
yatah). Where all dualities (dvandvāni) like action
and inaction merge, that is the permanent abode. That is
called the 'knowledge' by the knowers, which is without
parts (Nirantaram) and without guṇas, which is of the
nature of consciousness (jñāptimātram), which is without
blemish (movement), modifications and any desire, which is
of the nature of existence (sattamātram), which is knowable
through knowledge, self-accomplished (Svasiddham) and
self-luminous, which has auspicious refulgence capable
of being experienced through enlightenment (Bodhagāmyam)
and which is sought to be realised as the Self (essence)
of all. Having known that which is beyond all and which
is to be realisable through knowledge, one becomes esta-
bled in the Self and lives with equanimity. Having
crossed the samaśra which has no beginning and root
(Anādimūlam), filled with Māyā, and unfit to be compre-
hended (thought over) because of Māyā, those who are
without selfishness and attachment, reach the Nirvikalpa
state.

The entire creation is rooted in differentiation
(Samsṛtiḥ Kalpanāmūlam) which is considered and accepted

57. Sk.P.I/1/51(b).
58. Ibid., 54(a).
59. Ibid., 55.
60. Ibid., 56(a).
eternal like the nectar. Those who transcend these differentiations, reach the ultimate goal. Like the super-impositions of silver on a shell, of a snake on a rope and of water in a mirage, what is false is always false (Mithyā Mithyaiva Nānyathā)\textsuperscript{61}. Success (Siddhi) is full of independence and dependence is false. A dependent one is bound and the independent one is released. Knowing that the 'self' is one and (eko hyātmā)\textsuperscript{62} and having got rid of the 'ego' and 'differentiation', how can one be bound like a flower in the sky or hare's horn, by mere knowledge and Samsāra? What is the use of telling by many futile words? Overcoming their attachment, those intellectuals who desire to reach the ultimate abode after having controlled their passion and senses, shedding their greed, anger and desire, reach 'It'. But as long as desire, greed, passion and jealousy persist, those who merely depend upon verbal knowledge (sabdamātraika bodhakāh) cannot obtain that goal\textsuperscript{63}.

Yama intervened and said: "O Lord! from words, words alone come. Real knowledge is beyond words. How words can be considered as non-eternal? Brahma in the form of 'Aksara' (imperishable) is the supreme and words are constituted by letters (aṅgaras). Without words, how can anything be stated. All this has to be explained for the

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 57, 58.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 59(a).
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 63.
establishment of what is to be done and what is not to be done.

Śiva said: "Listen to the ultimate words, by listening to which nothing remains to be known. All the blemishless sages were advocates of knowledge. They practised the path of knowledge. The knowers know the real nature of knowledge. Having known what is knowledge, what is to be known and the means of such knowledge (Jñānagamya), the path of knowledge, the seeker and the desired object of knowledge, it can be understood that, the Supreme Self which is one, is seen to be many, because of the differentiating intellect like the earth seen from a revolving object. Therefore a seeker should know by means of hearing (from a teacher) and by mediating upon the absolute with ease, by a method well-tested (suprayogena). Knowing definitely the Self by Self, one is released from the clutches of Samsāra. The moveable and the immovable world is nothing but Maya and this Samsāra is also made of Māyā, which is of the nature of ego. Getting over this one is released. This world is aimless like the breast of a goat. This Samsāra is futile, without light and without any substance and hence, is smoky. Therefore with all efforts, one should meditate in the Self.

64. Sk. P., I/i/31.166.
65. Ibid., 71.

"Yathā bhrarikādṛstre bhrāmyate ca mahi yama;
Tathatmā bhedabhuddhyāca pratibhātyanekadhā."

66. Ibid., 72(b), 73(a).
67. Ibid., 76(b).
The passage presented above sums up all the important tenets of the Śaiva schools and Śākta schools of philosophy. The three Śaiva schools and Śākta schools accept the authority of Āgamas. Sk.P. asserts that Śiva has to be realised by the different āgamas (āgāmar vividhaiaḥ bodhayāḥ). The Śaiva Siddhanta view is well presented in Sk.P. in stating that it is the grace of Lord Śiva which is the cause of liberation. By acknowledging the Absolute and transcendental nature of Śiva, the stand of Kāśmira Saivism is emphatically echoed. In stating that women, Śūdras, Adharmas, Śvapacas become experts by means of Samskaras and they become eligible for liberation by the grace of Lord Śiva, the Śākta ideology is faithfully presented. The passage shows a tilt towards Kāśmir Śaivism in as much as it dilates much upon the transcendental nature of Śiva. But the overall view of the passage is independent of all these schools and it is a synthetic view, in keeping with the puranic view of world order, which stresses the essential unity of Spirit. This is the cultural value reflected in Sk.P. The same spirit of synthesis is evident in the appreciation of the various paths to Mokṣa as presented in Sk.P.

PATHS LEADING TO MOKSA:

Sk.P. represents the varied facets of Indian culture and philosophy with a spirit of synthesis. The

68. Sk.P., I/1/32, 1(b).
different systems of religion and philosophy are represented in the Sk.P., as shown in the previous chapters. All philosophical systems aim at elucidating Moksa, the ultimate in life. As regards the paths leading to Moksa, they examine many. But the synthesis of these paths is the most effective means to Moksa. This is the attempt which we come across in the Sk.P.

In the age of Rgveda, the path of action was resorted to. The seers of Rgveda worshipped all the powers of nature as gods and sought their blessings through emotional songs and prayers. The seeds of devotion were sown and the path of action sought the blessings of devotion through prayers in the Vedas.  

The path of action took a strong foot hold in the institution of sacrifice. The free spirit was to a certain extent fettered by this slant towards mechanical manoeuvring of cosmic agencies. A revolt towards spiritualism took place and this revolt was presented in the Upaniṣads.

The Upaniṣads introduced salvation as the highest aim of life. They also laid stress on the life of renunciation and held that it was the cream of life.  

70. Ibid., p.135.  
71. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol.I.  
72. Ibid.
As indicated by the story of Jābāla, the inner virtues of man got more recognition than the external ones like birth, caste, creed etc. Jābāla's father was unknown and when the preceptor asked him about his caste, he spoke the truth. The path of truth prevailed.

Further stress was laid on the mental strength of man. The realisation of Atman, the inner soul of man, was held to be the ultimate goal, i.e., Mokṣa. This gave way to the path of knowledge.

The Dhārma Sūtras and Smrīta.s admitted caste system with rigidity and gave importance to birth and occupation. Thus they compromised between the path of action and renunciation. They laid down that, all the four stages of life viz., Brahmacarya, Gṛhastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyāsa were necessary for a fuller life. The four castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaisya and Śudra representing knowledge, military strength, commerce and service, were regarded as the essential units for the welfare and stability of society. Each and every caste was assigned specific duties and rights and the King was enjoined to protect them. As for the aim of life, Mokṣa, i.e., liberation came to be regarded as the fourth one along with Dharma, Artha and Kāma and it was prescribed as the main pursuit of the fourth stage of life, viz., Sanyāsa.

But still the lower order in society was kept out of the way to Mokṣa because of the fortifications of

73. P.V. Kane, History of Dharmaśāstra. Vol.V.
the citadel of knowledge by the echelons. It is the
Purānas and Tantras which gave a jolt to this concentra-
tion and monopoly and kept open the path to Mukti for even
the downtrodden by means of their devotion towards God.
They liberalised the stringent rules applicable to the
different paths of spiritual life like Karma, Jhāna,
Bhakti, Sannyāsa and stressed that one may take up any
path, one chose to and achieve the goal of life. 74

A special mention should be made here of
Bhagavadgītā, which is a part of Mahābhārata. Bhagavad-
gītā presented a history of the different paths of life
like Karma, Jhāna, Bhakti, etc., as they came down from
the Vedic times. All the reputed philosophers of India
like Saṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha, Śrīkantha etc.,
recognised it as the fountainhead of Indian Philosophy and
culture and commented upon it. Indeed it is one of the
three bedrocks of Vedānta philosophy (Prasthāna trayā)
the other two being Upaniṣads and Bādarāyana’s Brahma
Sūtras. Saṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka, Caitanya,
Bhāskara and Śrīkantha have developed their systems
through their Bhāgyas on the Bhagavadgītā. Bhagavadgītā
effects a harmonious combination of the three ways of
life, viz., the path of knowledge, the path of devotion
and the path of action along with the paths of renunciation,
austerity, Yoga, Svādhiṣṭāna, etc. 75

74. Sk.P. /I/14/11.4
75. Bhagavadgītā, XIII.24,25.
The Purāṇas took this ideology of the Bhagavad-gītā and developed it further in relation to the personal deities like Brahma, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sakti. The three ways of life viz., knowledge, action and devotion which may be taken to be the symbolic representations of human endeavour to achieve power, knowledge and happiness were combined in the 'Sacchidānanda' concept of the personal deities. Brahma symbolised knowledge, Śiva with his Sakti symbolised power and Viṣṇu with his consort Lakṣmi symbolised happiness. Later when the Purāṇas grew in number the three symbolised ideals were attributed to all the gods and goddesses-who were described in the respective purāṇas gloriifying either Brahma, Śiva, Viṣṇu or Devī.

Sk.P. divides men into three categories, according to their nature, as Sāttvika, i.e., men of pure intellect, Rājasika, i.e., men of action and Tāmasika, i.e., men of dull nature (inertia) 76.

Men of pure intellect are satisfied by logical proof. They are seekers of truth. They follow the path of knowledge. They believe that the external world is only a fake manifestation of the Supreme Reality (Brahman). When the true nature of the Supreme Reality as one with the inner reality in man (Ātman), is realised, the external diversity disappears 77. But Sk.P. warns that extremism

76. Sk.P., 1/1/5.
77. Ibid., 43.
in logic is a hindrance to the realisation of the spiritual truth.
Men of action are dominated by their external desires. Only when they practise detachment and do their duty as service to God, they can also achieve the goal of life.

The third category of men, i.e., men of inertia, neither have the patience to pursue the truth nor have the 'passion' to achieve the goal with detachment. What they have is emotion, pure and simple. With their emotional attachment directed towards God, they follow the path of devotion. With their firm faith in God, they realise the ultimate goal. Sk.P. refers to many sub-divisions and sub-paths attached to the three main paths, as suited to the different temperaments of the people.

The above notions connected with the different paths leading to the final goal of life as reflected in Sk.P. will be briefly presented, showing the harmonising character of Sk.P. in this regard.

THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE: (Jñānamarga):

The highest goal of life, viz., emancipation, can be achieved by following the path of knowledge. Knowledge does not mean the knowledge of worldly objects.

78. Sk.P., I/1/5.67.
79. Ibid., I/1/2.79 - 81.
80. Ibid., I/1/3.20 - 22.
81. Ibid., I/1/31.
but the knowledge of the Absolute Reality which is inherent in our soul and also that knowledge which helps one in understanding the spiritual basis of the world.\(^2\)

Sk.P. considers the moral and spiritual virtues like humility, integrity, non-violence, patience, uprightness, service to the teacher, purity of body and mind, steadfastness, self-control, the realisation that birth and death are evil, non-attachment, meditation in solitary places, continuous awareness of the spirit and insight into the ultimate truth as the foundation of the path of knowledge.\(^3\)

One attains immortality by knowing Siva, the Supreme Brahman, one and the only one without beginning and end. The Supreme Brahman is described as having hands, feet, eyes and face in all directions. It envelops everything and yet remains beyond. It is on side and in side all movable and immovable objects. It cannot be comprehended by the ordinary senses. It is far away, yet near. If one realises it, it is here in the cavity of the heart. It is the light of all lights.\(^4\) Thus, it may be noted here that the Sk.P. summarises these ideas as found in the Puruṣašūkta (R.V.X.90), the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavadgītā in a spirit of synthesis.

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\(^2\) Sk.P., I/1/31, 61 - 68.
\(^3\) Ibid., I/1/31 - 61 - 62.
\(^4\) Ibid., I/11/40, 101 ff.
The real cause of bondage is the ignorance of the real nature of the three gunas, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, born of Prakrti. This is the Māyā of God which is difficult to cross. The Absolute has two forms, i.e. the 'Apara' and 'Para'. In His 'Apara' form, He manifests Himself as having the eight bodies in the form of earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and ego. The 'Para' form is the soul by which this universe is supported. All actions are done by Prakrti, but an individual, who is deluded by egoism, considers himself as the doer (Karta). But one who realises the basic truth that the gunas are the doers and not Atman, he realises the truth and then going beyond all thus, he enjoys immortality.

Thus Sk.P. as far as the ultimate reality is concerned, teaches non-dualism and differs from the school which holds the theory of the duality of spirit and matter. It also differs from non-dualism where the mind, i.e., pure consciousness, is real and the matter is unreal, as it upholds the reality of both as emerging from the same reality. Here we can find the closeness of the Sk.P. ideology with that of Śiva-Advaita (of Śrīkantha and Sripati) or Kāśmir Śaivism.

86. Ibid., I/11/40.95.
87. Ibid., I/1/31.48(b), 49(a), see also Bhagavadgītā XII.7-11, VII 14; III.27; XIII.29.
THE PATH OF RENUNCIATION (SANYASA-MARGA):

The true knowledge is incompatible with action. Hence true knowledge always pre-supposes renunciation. But renunciation is not a negative state, but a positive way of life. The secret of renunciation according to Sk.P. lies in mental giving up and not merely in physically giving up. Sk.P., which advocates asceticism as a cult upholds the true spirit of Sanyasa as shown by Siva. A natural Sanyasin, is a person who neither hates nor desires. A true Sanyasin, like Siva has no emotional repugnances and is not emotionally pursuing physical or mental pleasures and is untouched by pain. He lives in a pure Sattva. He acts in furtherance of his aim of union with the Divine. He lives only for this positive purpose.

Giving up is not the giving up of the world of action, but of the fruits attached to it. Actions like sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be given up, but on the contrary they should be performed without selfishness.

Traces of Sankara's concept of 'Sanyasa' can be found in this. But Sk.P. emphasises the social side of renunciation in as much it advocates the efficacy of sacrifice (yajña), charity (dāna) and austerity (Tapaś) which are to be undertaken by a Sanyasin for the good of the world.

89. Sk.P. I/1/41.
90. Awasthi A.B.L., St.Sk.P. Part IV, p.201.
92. Ibid., 23(b).

'Na Karmaṇam phalaṁ kāṅkṣā śivasyārādhanaṁ hi tat'.
THE PATH OF AUSTERITY (TAPOMĀRGĀ):

Closely connected with the ways of knowledge and renunciation is the way of austerity or Tapas. The social implications of this concept will be discussed in the next chapter. Tapas is not extreme or violent indulgence in torturing the body. But it is the control of the body, mind and speech in service of God and society. Sk. P. abhors the violent austerities which are not ordained by scriptures. But it advocates the efficacy of the Mahavrata, viz., the Pāṣupata-vrata, which is a kind of Yoga known differently as Śiva yoga, Śaṅkara yoga, Śāmbhavi yoga and which is intended to realise the Absolute nature of Śiva and achieve mukti.

THE PATH OF DEVOTION (BHAKTI-MĀRGĀ):

Bhakti is devotion, which is a kind of expressing personal relationship or love to a personal god whom a devotee has chosen. The problem of Bhakti is specially discussed in Sk. P. and the other Purāṇas. Sk. P. like Bhagavadgītā, states that even the most sinful aspirant was entitled to liberation with his sins washed through the grace of God. The path of devotion is chosen by a devotee, because it is nearer to his social life. A lover, a father, a master and a friend forgive the offence committed by the beloved, son, slave and friend respectively and bestow their grace on them. The relation between a

5. Ibid., V/1/33.113.
devotee and his god is of such a type wherein the god forges the sins committed by the devotee and bestows his grace on him. Sk.P. has numerous legends in which it is stated that Siva bestowed his grace on a devotee due to his devotion whether he was robber, gambler, lepor or a goblin.

THE PATH OF SIVA BHAKTI:

Sk.P. considers 'Siva Bhakti' as the surest and safest means to achieve liberation, irrespective of caste, creed and sex. Hence it is necessary to consider the concept of 'Siva Bhakti' as presented in Sk.P.

Patañjali refers to 'Sivabhāgavatas' in his Mahābhāṣya. This establishes the antiquity of the association between the 'Bhakti tradition' and the 'Saiva Tradition'. A perusal of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads shows that, emotional surrender of oneself to divinity, i.e., Bhakti, is the easiest path to realise the supreme. The Vedas advocated the performance of sacrifices with prayers, as a ritualistic means to establish rapport between God and man. The Upaniṣads used meditation as the media for communication with God. In the epics and Purānas the 'vratas' combined in them the ritualistic aspects of the vedic sacrifices and the Upāsanā aspect of the

97. Ibid.
Uranıṣadic meditations and paved the way for 'Bhakti' as a safe and sure means to the realisation of God.  

Sk.P. depicts 'Siva Bhakti' in all its aspects with various illustrations. The whole universe is Siva (Sarvam Śivamayam). Siva is the ultimate cause of all the things. The knowledge that I am one with Siva (Sivoham) is regarded as the recollection of Siva (Sivasmaramanam). The faith that Siva represents all the dietics collectively and that His worship involves all the fruits of scriptures, receives the designation of Bhakti (Devotion). It is stated that, as water is considered the very life of all beings, so is Bhakti, the cultivation of devotion looked upon as the life of all varieties of spiritual attainment.

It is by faith and devotion towards Siva that, a person can expect to achieve the four ends of human life, namely, (1) Dharma, (2) Artha, (3) Kāma and (4) Moksa. The performance of even a thousand horse sacrifices and other actions (karmas) ordained by Vedas will be in vain if they are devoid of Sivabhakti. Sivabhakti yields all desired objects of worldly life.

In this world, everything is unreal and only Siva, the Supreme, is static, permanent and the ultimate essence of this bio-physical existence. Such a realisation comes...

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100. Ibid., I/11/54, 128; I/11/11/14.12, 1/11/12.
103. Ibid., I/14/34 = 113, 197.
through the constant association with the devotees of Siva."

One who follows the traditional duties laid down by scriptures, reaches the abode of Siva, the highest destination of life. Siva when worshipped with devotion bestows upon the devotee the desired objects. Action performed without the knowledge of the supremacy of Siva, can not lead to the realisation of Siva. The actions become fruitful by Bhakti, (Bhaktyā Siddhyanti Karmāni) and this knowledge leads to mokṣa (emancipation) (Jhānena-mokṣamāvāpyate).

It is stated in Sk.P. that the paths of knowledge and action demand the rigid observance of cut and dry rules and regulations, which exert inexplicable hardships upon the individual. Their communication and transaction are exclusively restricted to the sphere of intellect. But devotion is simple and it has a universal appeal. It combines in itself, both action and knowledge. Actions produce grace and gratification of Siva which gives birth to deep devotion towards Siva, the ultimate cause of mokṣa (emancipation). Sk.P. speaks of ten types of Bhakti depending upon the preponderance of the three basic 'gunas', viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. But it does not deal with

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106. Ibid., III/1/9 = 29.30, iii/5.11-13.  
107. Ibid., VII/1/10.64.
these different kinds of Bhakti in detail. The recitation of mantras and bijāksaras are considered as bringing Śiva-<br>bhakti and also Mukti. Śiva is worshipped not only for salvation but even for the attainment of certain desires (bhukti). Sk.P. has many instances wherein in spite of their lack of virtue 'people were blessed with higher spiritual attainments by virtue of Śivabhakti.

The Stotras and various vratas of Śiva, which are mentioned in the Sk.P. as constituting the very core of Śivabhakti have been already discussed in detail. The stotras of Śiva in Sk.P. can be classified as follows:

(1) The stotras recited by gods like Brahma, Viṣṇu, Indra, Yama when they were in distress or when the help of Śiva was essential for the success in a task, (2) stotras recited by the gods when they were troubled by demons like Vṛtra, Bali, Rāvana, Namuci, etc., (3) Praising of Śiva by the gods after the success in their task, out of gratitude to Śiva, (4) Praises by Demons like Vṛtra, Bali, Rāvana, Andhaka, Tripura, seeking Śiva's grace, (5) The hymns by epic heroes or human devotees, (6) The praises of Śiva by devotees out of ecstatic joy, (7) The praises by sages like Bhṛgu, Dādhīca, Nārada, Mārkandeya.

In many of these stotras, we find many of the philosophical ideas such as (1) Śiva as inscrutable power, (2) Śiva as the controlling power of the world, (3) Śiva as

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108. Sk.P., I/1/18, 20(b).
109. "Śivātparatāro nāsti bhūktimukti pradāyaka".
the presiding deity of speech, (4) Śiva as full of compassion, (5) Śiva as omnipotent, (6) Śiva as residing in all the letters of the alphabet especially in 'Om'.

Thus the aspects of Sivabhakti dealt with in Sk.P. are such as leading the devotee to the bliss of final emancipation.

**THE PATH OF YOGA (RĀJAYOGA OR ASTĀNGA YOGA):**

Another way of life leading to the highest goal is the path of Yoga known as 'Astāngayoga' or 'Rājayoga', as laid down by Patañjali. Sk.P. deals with 'Astāngayoga' in a few chapters. It is stated that a yogin should devote himself to the practice of Yoga continuously remaining in privacy and alone, controlling his senses and mind without any desire for possession. Placing oneself in a clean place on a firm seat which is neither too high, nor too low, made of Kusa grass and covered with deer skin and a cloth one should concentrate upon the highest goal.

Controlling the unsteadiness of mind and senses, one should practice yoga for purifying oneself. Holding the body, head and neck erect, looking steadily at the tip of his nose and not looking away in any direction, with perfect calm, without fear, and directing the mind to Lord Śiva, one should practice Yoga. A man who thus practices Yoga constantly attains peace which leads him to an ultimate release.

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111. Sk.P., I/11/13.5.
112. Ibid., VII/11/18; VI/263.
113. Ibid., I/11/54.128.
The eight steps of Yoga viz., Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhyāna, Dhāraṇa and Samādhi are elaborately described in Sk.P. 114.

THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL EQUANIMITY (SAMATVA):

One can achieve salvation by following the way of equanimity. Bhagavadgītā says that one should perform action maintaining equanimity of mind in success or failure; happiness or unhappiness; for equanimity is called Yoga (Samatvam Yoga Ucyate). This idea of equanimity was important for the purpose of shaping one's conduct in religion and for religious and spiritual development. During the age of Sk.P., due to external aggressions and internal divisions the necessity of spiritual equanimity was felt and it could be achieved only through the path of religion which was an emotional trend between people of different creeds. All persons were treated equally in the pursuits of religious and spiritual development and all objects were deified emphasising the essential divinity and unity of the world. All this required a mental discipline to withstand pleasure or pain, respect or disrespect, poverty or prosperity. The Sk.P. has many instances wherein such equanimity was shown. The episode of Bali, to which we have already referred to in one such. Bali remained calm even when he was diverted of his kingdom and prosperity. 116.

114. Sk.P., VI/262, 263.
115. Ibid., I/1/31, 106.
116. Ibid., I/1/18.
THE PATH OF ACTION (KARMA MARGA):

Disinterested action is considered better than the renunciation of action. Action done with the knowledge that Siva is the ultimate Brahman leads to the highest goal (salvation). The Sk.P. strongly criticizes dry action which is ostentatious and based on the letters of the Veda.

THE PATH OF DUTY (SVADHARMA MARGA):

Many social problems would have been solved, if every individual understood his responsibility and carried out his duty with care and social commitment. In the theory of varna and asrama dharma, each individual has certain duties according to his svabhava (nature) ordained by God. If one does his duty in accordance with his nature, is righteous and dedicates it to God, one's duty becomes a means of spiritual perfection. All men are not equal in their capacities but all men are equally necessary for society and their contributions from their different stations are of equal value to society.

That a person acquires religious merits by pursuing his occupation with faith in tradition is illustrated in Sk.P. in the episode of Nandabhadra, a Vaisya who carried on his business activities justly with a strong faith in the eternal Vedic tradition.

117. Sk.P., I/1/2.
118. Ibid., III/3/29-30.
119. Ibid., I/11/40.
THE PATH OF DETACHMENT (VIRAKTI-MĀRGĀ):

One may be detached physically by mentally attached. Even the continuous performance of action, pursuit of knowledge, unfluctuating devotion, generous charity and visit to all the holy places, would not really take person towards the highest goal, if he is not honest in his ways of life. Sk.P. asserts the necessity of understanding the essence of all (Sara) and according to it, one who abandons desires and who performs his actions free from longing and without any sense of egoism, attains peace. This is the divine state; having attained this, one is not bewildered. Having reached such a stage one attains the bliss divine.

THE PATH OF FELLOW-FEELING (ĀTMAUPAMYA-MĀRGĀ):

It is not enough if one is detached by himself, one should also see the supreme as residing in all beings. Then only one would not injure others. Having known that all this is a manifestation of Śiva, one shall not discriminate one from the other. This fellow-feeling (atmaupamya) is the corner stone of puranic philosophy. Sk.P. time and again insists on the necessity of such a feeling in society of such a feeling in society which alone would bring both physical and spiritual prosperity to one and all.

120. Sk.P., I/11/42.63(b), 64(a).
121. Ibid., I/11/43.29(b).
122. Ibid., III/14/51.65 - 66; V/1/5.51.
Thus a brief account of the different paths to spiritual advancement is presented according to Sk.P. It is true that Sk.P. does not toe the line of any particular path or any school of philosophy, but considers all paths of spiritual elevation in the context of social awareness and responsibility.

THE NATURE OF EMANCIPATION:

The thinkers of ancient India mobilised their intellectual resources to their utmost capacity to discover the path leading to the realisation of the highest goal of human life. They were conscious of the existence of universal sorrow and suffering. So their chief concern was the eradication of pain and the achievement of everlasting bliss by mankind. The thought of a supernal bliss loomed large before the vision of the seers. This aspiration for a higher bliss is seen in the Vedas, Upanisads, different philosophical systems like Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya-yoga, Mīmāṃsā, the epics, the Purāṇas and the Tantras. The concept of Mokṣa or final beatitude was the foremost aim which inspired the Indian seers on their religious and spiritual pursuits. The impact created by them has been crystallised in the Purāṇas, which aim at educating the people at large.

In fact, the Purāṇas had before them a great task of re-interpreting the Vedic thoughts for the easy understanding of the masses. So the idea of emancipation is
elaborated in the Purāṇas with a view to attract the masses towards it by showing a path which is easy for them to follow. Although the different paths of Mokṣa have been described in the Purāṇas, one path which is emphasised time and again is that of visiting holy places and worshipping God with devotion. This is quite in keeping with the spirit of the Purāṇas which are mainly devoted to the glorification of the holy places and the deities associated with them. Sk.P. is a fine example of such a kind Purānic ideology of the path of Mokṣa. Many times while discussing the glory of a Tirtha, a question is asked: Which is the way to get mokṣa (emancipation) without the study of Vedas (i.e., the performance of Karma) and without acquiring any kind of (special) knowledge (i.e., the study of Śāstras)?

The answer given is that, 'a visit to a tirtha or ksetra and worshipping god with devotion, is such a means of acquiring mokṣa.123 Holy places like Bahūdaka tirtha, Setu Ramesvara, Dharmāranya, Kedāra, Avanti, Prabhāsa and especially Kāśi are considered as 'Muktikōsthas' in Sk.P., i.e., the sacred places where Muktī can be attained.

Sk.P. maintains that the self is of two types viz., (1) Supreme self (Pramātman) and (2) Individual self (Jīvātman). The supreme self is absolute in its

123. Sk.P., V/1/32.
124. Ibid., V/1/6, 21-35.
nature and as such is bereft of any qualities. The individual self which is created by Śiva associated with Sakti, is covered with Māyā in the form of ego which bind it. As such, it differs from the supreme self. The Jīvatmān has many births too. The Supreme Śiva is one and the entire universe is the manifestation of Him. Śiva, the eternal self, resides in the body as a Sāksin (witness). The one Śiva appears to be many due to Māya which is neither real nor unreal. The knowledge of this basic truth dispels the darkness of ignorance and delivers the individual self from the ever revolving cycle of birth and death. Sk.P. lays emphasis on the practising of meditation as an invaluable means for the attainment of enlightenment and final emancipation. The eight varieties of spiritual exercises (Aṣṭāṅga yoga) which are accessories to the uplift of the soul to the highest contentment are frequently mentioned and elaborated, as well. In the highest state of Yoga, more than any other God; the meditation upon Śiva is considered very effective. Meditating on Śiva thus, for a long time, one gets the final emancipation. Even if one does not perform the dhyana of Śiva, just by the grace of Lord Śiva or visiting a place holy to Śiva one gets mokṣa.

It may be observed here that, either action or knowledge can lead to emancipation. In the light of this observation, it may be asked as to how a mere visit to a

125. Sk.P., I/1/31; I/1/9-125.
126. Ibid., III/1/35.
holy tirtha bring Moksa. In Sk.P., all kinds of emancipation viz., Jīvanmukti, Videhamukti\textsuperscript{127}, Sārūpya and Sāyujya\textsuperscript{128} in a tirtha or a kṣetra, are described. The necessity of devotion towards god is very much stressed. The grace of God is contributory to emancipation. The conception of divine grace can be traced to the Upanisadic sources. In Katha Upanisad, it is stated that the 'Absolute Self chooses the worthy individual self on Its own accord and reveals Himself',\textsuperscript{129} Thus the Purānic conception of emancipation is not antagonistic to the concepts of Karma and Jñāna. It combines Bhakti with Karma and Jñāna and evolves a co-ordinated path leading to divine grace, which in turn leads to emancipation.

It may be noted here that, the attainment of divine grace is behind the emphasis on the visit to holy places as a means to emancipation. There is, no doubt, an element of exaggeration in saying this. Yet from the point of view of the masses this is necessary in as much as it draws them to the holy places where a certain religious culture can be inculcated into their minds. The spontaneous influence of a religious atmosphere prevailing in the holy places is necessary for the masses to turn their attention towards God and have an emotional attachment towards divinity. It is this culture which can inspire them to take to certain religious practices with devotion.

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\textsuperscript{127} Sk.P.I/11/13.207-208; III/11/5.65-66.
\textsuperscript{128} III/1/48.
\textsuperscript{129} Katha upanisad, ii.23.
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This can lead them to Moksa. Hence the path to Moksa as highlighted in the Sk.P. appears to be very simple, but involves a spontaneous awareness of divinity in the minds of the masses in such a way as to make them turn to the practices (Karma) and the knowledge of the greatness of God (Jnāna). Once they are put on this path, they are sure to reach the goal. This is the secret of the purāṇic teaching pertaining to the path to Moksa. The attraction towards the holy places on the part of the masses lies in the fact that it inculcates an indigenous culture which aims at emancipation of man. From another point of view the socio-cultural atmosphere prevalent in the holy places is so attractive as to guard the masses against foreign cultures and foreign religious influences. In advocating the path to Moksa in the form of visit to holy places, has the double objective of creating an awareness of God in the hearts of the masses and of guarding them against external influences.