CHAPTER - IV

Pratyabhijñā as Trika

In the previous chapter I have mentioned that K.C.Pandey and others called Pratyabhijñā philosophy 'Trika-darśana'. Why Pratyabhijñā is called 'Trika' — is a very debatable question. A few reasons may be mentioned here in this chapter.

The first is: Some presume, the word 'Trika' refers, among other things, to the triple principles with which the system deals, viz. Śiva-Śakti-ānū or Pati-Paśu-pāśa. It is said: "the phrase 'nara-śakti-śivātmakam trikam' indicates such a reason". The pati is the Lord, the pasu is jīva and the pāśa is fetter. Bondage is due to this fetter that binds the soul and makes it think that it is different from Śiva or Pati. These three being the subjects of discussion in Pratyabhijñā, it is called 'Trika'.

But this view is not apparently acceptable, for if this be so then all the Śaiva systems must be called 'Trika' as all of them deal with the triple principles — Pati, Paśu and Pāśa. But in a special sense there is a justification
of calling it 'Trika'. It has its distinctive features which are not found in other forms of Śaivism. The other forms are more or less pluralistic or dualistic; but the Kāśmīr Śaivism is a purely monistic system. In other forms of Śaivism the three constituents viz. Pati, Paśu and Pāsa are considered as distinctive forms or rather loosely connected with one another. In Kāśmīr Śaivism the only reality is Parama Śiva. Jīva is Lord Himself contracted by the māyā which is His own Śakti (māyāndha pramātā). The so-called fetters or the multiplicity are nothing but the ābhāsas of the Lord manifested by His Śakti or māyā-Śakti. Hence it is 'Trika' in the sense of being one in three or three in one or a triune reality. This supplies justification for calling the Pratyabhijñā form of Śaivism as 'Trika'. Since Pratyabhijñā of Abhinava Guptā supplies the rational basis of Kāśmīr Śaivism, Pratyabhijñā and Trika are taken as synonimous.

As for second reason why Pratyabhijñā is called 'Trika' it may be said that Pratyabhijñā stands on three legs — Āgama, Spanda and Kāśmīr Śaivism. These three are like the three prasthānas in Vedānta Philosophy, viz. Śruti-Prasthāna, Smṛti-prasthāna and Nyāya-prasthāna. The list of Āgamas are 64 in number. But many of them are lost today. Only a few are survived. These are: Mālinīvijoy Tantra, Svacchanda Tantra, Vijñāna bhairava, Netra Tantra, Mṛgendrāgama, Śiva-Sūtra etc. These Āgamas may be said to be the śruti in relation
to Śaivism as the Upaniṣads are in relation to the orthodox six systems in Indian Philosophy. In fact, it is mentioned by many scholars that the śruti is of two kinds viz. Vaidikī-śruti and Tāntrikī-śruti (Vaidikī tāntrikī caiva dvividha śrutīḥ kīrtita)². Both are equally venerated. The Tāntrikī śrutis are more or less contemporary to the Vaidikī-śruti. Here the texts are of the form of conversation between Lord Śiva and His consort Parvati. Mālinīvijaya, Vījñānabhairava, Svacchanda Tantra etc. are regarded as Tāntrikī-śrutis. The name 'āgama' is applied to both the Upaniṣads and the Tantras.

There is a commentary by Abhinavagupta on Mālinīvijaya known as Mālinīvijaya-vartika. On Svacchanda Tantra and on Netra Tantra there is a commentary by Kṣemarāja known as Svacchandodyota and Netrodyota. On Vījñāna Bhairava Kṣemarāja's commentary is available only up to the 23 verses. There is a commentary on it by Ānandabhatta who flourished in the 17th century A.D. There's another commentary by Śivopādhyāya who lived in the 18th century A.D. Rudrayāmala, a very important āgama work, is partly expounded by Abhinavagupta in his brilliant commentary known as Parātrīmśikā. Śiva-Sūtras are the most important part of the āgama Sūtra. Indeed they are spoken of as the Śivopaniṣat-saṁgraha which is again interpreted as 'Śivarahasyāgama Śāstra Saṁgraha'. It is said Lord Śiva Himself is the author of the Sūtras and said to have been revealed to the sage Vasugupta who lived towards the
end of the 8th or the beginning of the 9th Christian Century. Four of the commentaries still survived on the Śiva-sūtras: (i) The Vṛtti, (ii) The Vārttika by Bhāskara, (iii) The Vimarśinī by Kṣemarāja and (iv) The Śiva-sūtra-vārttikam by Varadārāja alias Krishnadasa.

It is not known who is the author of the Vṛtti. But almost all of its works tally with Vimarśinī of Kṣemarāja. It is, therefore, presumed that the Vṛtti may either be an extract from the Vimarśinī or it may be written earlier by Kṣemarāja and elaborated later on by him and named Vimarśinī. The Vārttika is admittedly a work of later date of about 11th century A.D. Vimarśinī, we have already said, is written by Kṣemarāja. The Śiva-sūtra-vārttikam by Varadārāja is only a rehash of the Vimarśinī in verse. Varadārāja lived towards the end of the 15th century A.D.

Next comes the Spanda-śāstra. The word 'Spanda' literally means vibration. The Śakti in Parama Śiva is essentially of the nature of a vibration. It manifests the tattvas in their transcendent as well as phenomenal forms. The transcendent or universal manifestation of Śakti are the tattvas from Śiva to Sadvidyā and the rest are the results of the vibration in the phenomenal sphere. This begins with kalā and ends with Kṣiti. As we shall discuss later on this theory of spanda is the most essential element in the Śaiva system and this explains the relation
between the transcendental unity of the Lord and the multiplicity of the ābhāsas on the phenomena. The Advaita Vedāntins could not find a natural explanation as to how the multiplicity of the world shows proceeds from the transcendental unity of the Lord. But herein lies the speciality of the monistic Śaivas that they could explain the emergence of multiplicity from the transcendental unity of the Lord and were not in anyway bound to assume a principle of anirvacanīya māyā or nescience which is indeterminate in character.

Any way the most important work of this sāstra is the spanda-sūtras, generally called the spanda-Kārikās. The sūtras (numbering 52) are based on the Śiva-sūtras, on which they form a sort of running commentary; but a commentary which only enunciates the principles, no doubt in fuller detail, still without entering much into philosophical reasoning. But opinion is sharply divided about the authorship of these Kārikās.

Bhāskara and Utpala Vaiṣṇava or Bhāttā Utpala say that the author of these Kārikās was Kallata, the chief disciple of Vasugupta. But Kṣemarāja and Maheśvarānanda maintain that Vasugupta was the author of these Kārikās. But from the concluding verse of his commentary on the Spanda Kārikās, known as Vṛtti, it is known that Vasugupta composed the Karikas and taught them to Kallata who only publicized them. According
to J.C.Chatterjee, the Spanda sūtras are attributed by Kṣemarāja to Vasugupta himself, but they were composed most likely by the latter's pupil, Kallata.

On these sūtras there is the Vṛtti by Kallata. The Vṛtti together with the sūtras or Kārikās is called the Spanda-sandoha. These are practically all of what now remains of the original Spanda Śāstra.

Kāśmīr Śaivism which is mostly known as Pratyabhijñā system is an Advaita form of Philosophy. It flourished in the valley of Kāśmīr first in the hand of Somānanda, then in Utpaladeva and then in Abhinavagupta. It is influenced mostly by the Upaniṣads. This philosophy though inherent in the Āgamas, was developed as a system only in the 8th Century A.D.

This system is called Pratyabhijñā because the main emphasis in this approach is on the recognition of self as Śiva. Śiva voluntarily adopts self-veiling by His tirodhāna Śakti and becomes jīva. Pratyabhijñā means recognition. The problem for the jīva is to recognize his self as Śiva.

The Pratyabhijñā aspect of Śaiva philosophy, therefore, first of all gives a description of Ultimate Reality, then shows how Ultimate Reality manifests itself into limited, empirical individuals and finally recognizes its essential
self and becomes mukta or liberated.

The systematic exposition of the Pratyabhijñā philosophy, however, was given by Somānanda in his Śiva-drṣṭi which consists of about 700 verses in seven chapters. It is an attempt to present the Śaiva idealistic monism or monistic idealism in a systematic philosophical form coupled with the necessary reasoning. It is said, Somānanda also was inspired by Śiva Himself in a dream and propagated systematic philosophical contents of the monistic Tantras.

There is a Vivṛti on this Śiva-drṣṭi which is supposed to be written by Somānanda. But scholar like Dr. Stein do not agree to this opinion. Kṣemarāja also wrote a commentary on a chapter of Rudrayāmala, known as Parātrimśikā Vivṛti. But Dr. K.C. Pandey says, "This (Parātrimśikā Vivṛti), as the name implies, was his (Somānanda's) commentary on the Parātrimśikā".

After Somānanda, his pupil Utpaladeva flourished the system and reached it on its apex. Utpaladeva was full of compassion for suffering humanity and after attaining siddhi, wrote his famous Pratyabhijñā-Kārikā in order to help his fellow beings to attain the highest end of life. He seems to have lived towards the end of the 9th and the first half of the 10th century A.D. It is a shorter work than the Śiva-drṣṭi which even in its existing parts contain more than
307 anushtubh verses, while the total number of verses is only 190. In this book Utpala summarised the teaching of his master Somānanda. It is spoken of as only the reflection of the wisdom taught by Somānanda. He also wrote Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā Vṛtti which was meant to clarify the ideas occurring in the Kārikā. Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Tīkā is also his another work. It is a detailed commentary on Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Kārikā. It is this that Abhinavagupta refers to as Tīkā in his introductory verses to the Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Vimarsinī. Utpaladeva also writes stotrā-valī, Ajaḍa-Pramāṭr-Siddhi, Īśvara-Siddhi with a Vṛtti on it and Samvandha-Siddhi with a Vṛtti and a Vṛtti on Somānanda's Śiva-drṣṭi. Utpaladeva proves the existence of a permanent subject as identical with Mahēśvara and put final seal on the efforts of his predecessors not only through his own power of reasoning but also by his personal example of spiritual attainments. Like Paramahamsa Ramkrishna in our own times, he was steeped in God-consciousness, and demonstrated in his own person how man could attain realization by bhakti without arduous penances or Yogic practices.

After Utpaladeva came Abhinavagupta who lived towards the end of the 10th and the 1st quarter of the 11th Christian century. Abhinavagupta was a versatile genius. He stretched out his hands on Pratyabhijñā Philosophy, Tantra, Poetics, Dramatics etc. and composed a number of hymns of
great merit. Among his immortal writings Tantraloka is a class by itself and deals comprehensively with Šaivism in all its aspects. Three of his most important works, are that on which his reputation chiefly rests. The first two of them are (1) Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Ｖimarsinī and (ii) the Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Vivṛti-Vimarsinī. They are simply the commentaries on Utpalācāryaya's Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Kārikā and Tīkā respectively. The third, the Tantraloka, professedly follows the authority of the Mālinī Vijoytantra. Abhinavagupta was both a scholar and spiritualist (Yogin). He gives personal experience first place in his writing, reason the second and to ancient authority only the third place as the basis of his views on supersensuous matters. In fact, Abhinavaragupta occupies as important place in the Šaiva tradition as is occupied by Šāmkara and Nāgārjuna in the Vedānta and Buddhist traditions respectively.

Besides Abhinavagupta, there are so many writers crowded in the horizon of this system such as, Bhāskara, Kṣemarāja, Yogarāja, Jayaratha, Shivopadhyaya etc. They give their offerings and enrich the system in a superb rank. A very important work on Pratyabhijñā literature is that of Bhāskarakaṇṭha, known as, Bhāskarī which is a detailed commentary on the Īśrara-Pratyabhijñā-Vimarsinī of Abhinavagupta. Moreover, Kṣemarāja's Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayam is also a brief sketch of this darśana and a superb gist of this philosophy.
which may be compared to 'Vedāntasārah' of Sadānanda Yogindra of Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

Another reason why Pratyabhijñā is called Trika is that as religion it has three forms - Krama, Kaula and Pratyabhijñā. Krama is a very important branch of the religio-philosophical system of Kāśmīr. It is distinct from other two systems of the Kāśmīr thought, the Pratyabhijñā and the kula. Though it has much in common with the kula system, still it is different from kula. The krama system is so called because it admits that the purification of the determinate idea (Vikalpa Sāṁskāra) is the means to the realization of the Ultimate which is of the nature of indeterminacy, and that this purification takes place in successive stages - tendency to clarity, clarity in the process of becoming, clarity, greater clarity etc. In this system the worship of kālī is an important aspect and hence it is called Kālīnaya or Devīnaya.

Krama system arose towards the close of the 7th and the beginning of the 8th century A.D. An important book of this system is Kramasadbhāva but not available now. Kramasiddhi is another book of the same system. Śivānanda is recognized to be the earliest teacher of this system and is known as Avatarakanṭha. Eraka writes a number of stotras to popularise the teachings of the system and he flourished in the 8th Century A.D.
The Krama system maintains that Ultimate Reality is conscious Energy. It is original and not generated. It is not blind but self-aware. In its creative aspect this Śakti is called Kālī, in its aspect of reabsorption, it is called Kalasankarsini, as she destroys time and death.

This system assumes Ultimate Reality to be like an ocean of conscious energy on the surface of which waves after waves arise in the form of universe after universe and are reabsorbed in it. The Universal Energy is the mahā-sattā, the very heart of the Supreme parā-śakti, the supreme Energy, the Cit-Śakti.

In order to bring home to the mind of the aspirant the dynamic conception of the universe, this system uses the symbol of cakra or wheel of energy with thousand (innumerable) rays which is called anakhya – cakra, meaning in-expressible. This conception of Cakras is a very distinctive feature of the Krama system. The cakras are moving wheels. They have been conceived on the analogy of a fire-brand moved in a circle with great velocity. The different powers or Kalās which constitute a Cakra operate in such quick succession that it is not noticed. The succession is continuous and one power or Kalā passes into another. The Krama system supports the doctrine of momentariness and says everything is subject to Srṣṭi, Sthiti etc. which
operate in such a quick succession that cannot be marked. Śakti manifests itself in the form of subjects, means of experience and objects. The manifestations appear like waves and merge again into it. It is a continuous process which not only manifested but also maintained, withdrawn and reduced to an indefinable state. But it is not exhausted in manifestation but remains unchanged.

The Kaula system originated in Kāmrūpa or Assam towards the end of the 4th Century A.D. Machhanda first propounded this doctrine in Kāmrūpa (Assam) and from there it spread to Kāśmīr and other places. K.C.Pandey observes the Kaula system came into vogue in Kāśmīr in about the 5th century A.D. The system is called kaula because its followers are called kaulas in so far as they admit kula to be the Ultimate Reality and aspire to attain oneness with it. This kula is Śiva, the highest category, in which the entire universe arises and into which it gets merge. Kula is a all-transcending light of consciousness and is essentially absolutely free. Kula is, therefore, different from Maheśvara with which the Pratyabhijñā system of Kāśmīr Śaivism is primarily concerned. K.C.Pandey observes that Kaula system is historically prior to Pratyabhijñā because Somānanda commented on the Parātrīṃśikā, which primarily presents the Kaula system and belongs to the available earlier literature. In the 10th Century Abhinavagupta had to go to Śambhunātha
in Jalandhara to learn the Kaula system of mystic practice. The works on different aspects of the Kaula system continued to be written in Kāśmīr up to the 13th century. The most famous texts of this system are the Siddhayogīs varimata, Rudrayāmalatantra, Mālinīvijoya-tantra and Parātrimśikā which is a commentary on the last part of Rudrayāmalatantra.

Kaulism presents a monistic current of the Śaiva philosophy of Kāśmīr. It does not believe in external rituals. It concentrates on esoteric practices, on sexual union associated with the ascension of Kuṇḍalinī. Kula is essentially of the nature of Saṁvid or ātman. In this system dutī and Śivarasa are considered indispensable. Kaulism is primarily concerned with the Para, the highest of the triad—Para, parāpara and apara, and emphasises the importance of the Union (Yāmala) of Śiva and Śakti. To Kaulism, the Ultimate Reality is not a mere rational postulate, is not what reason leads to, but what is realized through a discipline. The followers of Kaula system pursue the path of Sambhava.

About Pratyabhijñā we have already mentioned much. No further proceeding is needed here as we shall deal more about it in our later chapters.
As for the last and the final reason we may say that the classifications of the Real and its manifestations in both universal and phenomenal aspects as para, parāpara and apara make this system call in the name 'Trika'. The final Categories Śiva, Śakti and their union are called para. They are transcendent in nature and inseparable from each other. They are the origin or source of every creation. The Tattvas like Sadāśiva, Īśvara, Sadvidyā are the parāpara. These are intermediate between the para or the higher and apara or the lower. Here there is no difference between the 'I' and 'This'. Hence it is called the perfect or pure order (Śuddhadhvā) i.e. a manifestation in which the svarūpa or the real nature of the Divine is not veiled. The last manifestations are called apara which are 31 in numbers. They are: māyā, kalā, vidyā, rāga, kāla, niyati, puruṣa, prakṛti, buddhi, ahaṃkāra, manas, five organs of knowledge, five organs of action, five tanmātras and five matters. A detailed account of all these three will be given later on, so here there is no need of any further discussion of them.
References


