PROBLEMS IN KASHMIR SHAIVA PHILOSOPHY AND TANTRA

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Indian knowledge tradition is the rich tradition as it casts light into all the aspects of mini and macrocosm. Although the areas have been examined in Western tradition also, but the main problem of Western tradition is its approach of behaviorism. Behaviorism, materialism and so on are the fundamental approaches of this tradition, which keep restricted the vision at the surface reality. That's why in the study of consciousness, consciousness is nothing more than mind in West. Consciousness is understood as epiphenomenon of material process in psychology and in philosophy also. But in Indian tradition, the canonical texts interpret disciplines with different approach in compare to Western tradition. Unfortunately this tradition has been presented with biased view under the colonial effects. Now, to remove this misinterpretation, there is a new trend of reinterpretation of Indian tradition. Indian philosophical tradition has been attacked for impoverishing effect through denial of physical reality. But this allegation does not fit on the tantric tradition, which is the parallel stream to the Vedas. The tantric schools accept reality of the physical phenomenon also. Even, in the contemporary Indian philosophy, Aurbindo encompasses both materialism and spirituality. That's why he is very close to the tantric tradition. There are so many allegations of the occidental tradition against the oriental tradition, which may be answered through the Tantras, like Tantra possesses same ultimate goal of liberation, but it does not support abandoning the world like the Advaita Vedanta, Buddhist philosophy and Jaina philosophy. Liberation is not a real element; it is the presence of complete knowledge, so there is no need of abandoning the world. This article is an attempt to expound the peculiarities of the tantric tradition, particularly the Kashmir Shaiva Tantra and philosophy. Kashmir Shaiva Tantra is the rich source for so many research areas. Abhinavagupta (10th century), the most versatile philosopher of Kashmir Shaiva, did rigorous works which throw light into different problems. Kashmir Shaiva tantric school did not get proper attention till some years before. In the 19th century, study of *Tantras* and their philosophy have been started. There are the sets of facts which are the hurdle for studying the tantras, are to be analyzed. Certainly understanding theories of Abhinavagupta theories is not an easy task due to his eclectic teaching.

The chief characteristic of Indian knowledge tradition is that the schools of different disciplines do not keep restricted themselves with the certain field. That's why a poetician examines his literary theory on the basis of philosophical fundamentals. And a philosopher examines theories on the basis of analyzing grammatical tools. Abhinavagupta is personage who is the philosopher, poetician as well as the tantric. Thus, the impact of his traits is reflected in his texts either *NŒya§Œstra, DhvanyŒlokalocana, I§varapratyabhij–Œvimra§ini, TantrŒloka* and so on.

Abhinavagupta holds command on many disciplines simultaneously. The influence of these disciplines is seen easily in his works, like the theory of *dhvani* is directly related to the aesthetics, literary theory or sahitya shastra. He puts the essence of this theory in his philosophical and tantric arguments.

Kashmir Shaiva is philosophical as well as tantric school, so, it keeps so many divergent ideas together. It reveals open-ended questions on ·*adŒºga yoga*, aesthetics, cognitive science, feminism, psychology, philosophy of language, poetics and so on. Particularly, the texts of Abhinavagupta throw light into these issues in a deeper way. His texts *AbhinavabhŒrat´, DhvanyŒlokalocana* are related to the domain of aesthetics and poetics. *DhvanyŒlokalocana* is explained under the shadow of *parâ vâk, pa§yant´, madhyamŒ, vaikhar´.* In the last of each chapter, essence of these elements is exclusively elaborated. The *Vij–Œnabhairava* examines the *yoga* and opens the door for the study of mind as well as *AbhinavabhŒrat´* dwells with the cognitive science. In the tantric and philosophical texts, *vimar§ana, ŒbhŒsana, h¨daya, svarasodita parâ vâk, camatkŒra, dhvani-* all of these nomenclatures throw light into the aesthetics aspect of this school. Even, the structure is explained under the frame of aesthetic methodology. The text ê*ivasètra* is abound with the aesthetic description, like- *nartaka ŒtmŒ* (III.9), *raºgo'ntarŒtmŒ (III.10).* It is the valuable source for the philosophy of language also since the metaphysical constituents *prakâúa* and *vimarœa* open the door for such types of research. An overall assessment of the position of Abhinavagupta on the §*abda* in Indian tradition has not yet been attempted. There is no research work either in the form of scholarly monograph or thesis or dissertation or edited volume, which presents the philosophy of language of Kashmir Shaiva. Only references are mentioned for the further study in Kashmir Shaiva philosophy of language, like the T.V.R. Murti gives a glimpse on this important problem in his paper of *The Philosophy of Language in the Indian Context* in this way- The Vedanta, Mimamsa, the Sankhya-Yoga and the school of Grammar and Kashmir Shaiva, among others, are loyal to this tradition"[1] . In the whole article, he mentions to the Kashmir Shaiva only once.

The concept of *mantra* is taken in different manner. *Mantra* as the main problem in terms of religious and philosophical studies is pursued with three perspectives- social, cultural and historical. The investigation of *mantra* is confined to the limits of lingual parameter, like its phonetic structure, semantic problem and so on. From the semantic point of view, some questions like, 'are mantras meaningful?' 'If yes, what sort of meaning they have?' Answer of the former question is somehow knowable on the basis of *mantra* either vedic or tantric, but the complex aspect is defining the latter question i.e. sort of meaning, which applies equally well to all possible cases. One can apply the same reasoning, on one hand, to a *mantra* that appears, when one reads or hears it, to have some more or less obvious meaning,

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[1] Murti, T.V.R., *"The Philosophy of Language in the Indian Context"* in *'Studies in Indian Thought'*, p. 362

and, on other hand, to a series of vedic *stobhas* or to a tantric *mantra* made up of a syllable or a group of syllables, forming neither a sentence nor a word? Moreover, sometimes, meaning of tantric *mantras* can be somehow understood by the interpreted meaning in the text, like the *aham mantra*, while the essence of some *mantras* can be known only by practice of *yoga*. Thus, there is a problem of getting the proper meaning of *mantras*. Another open-ended problem is the layers of meaning of *mantras*. Harvey P. Alpher points out toward the problem of the linguistic utterance of *mantra.* He raises this problem-

I believe that one could frame an argument to demonstrate the linguistic nature of mantra, but I do no attempt to do so here. Another possibility might be to argue that ostensibly non-linguistic mantras must be understood analogically with those that are linguistics, rather than vice versa. Or one might argue that the utterance of mantra is a linguistic act in that it functions linguistically[2].

In the same article, he focuses into some new perceptive of tantric mantras comparing with the Game theory of Wittgenstein. In his words-
I draw upon the Wittgensteinian tradition because I believe that it provides a useful point of departure for the description of the mantra. Wittgenstein's late works-posthumously published 'Philosophic Investigations (1953)', On Certainty (1972) and Zettle (1967b)-may be read as sketching out the grounds for a typology of linguistic uses. They suggest a strategy for discriminating among the different ways in which words are used that can help establish whether a peculiar sort of utterance, such as a mantra, makes sense or is merely gobbledygook. In other words, Wittgensteinian categories may provide a philosophical vocabulary in whose terms one can establish whether a linguistic, whether it has a meaning, reference, and point, and, if so, what are the meaning, reference and point[3].

In the same direction of linguistic domain, one of the relevant issues concerning *mantra* is its intentionality *(vivak·Œ)*, since Mimamsa school stands with the intentionality of language. It often means more than what is actually said. So, does mantric utterance possess any intentionality? Stall brings out comments on Vedic rituals regarding the intentionality of *mantra*[4] and denies its participation. Unlike to this, Padoux does support intention of tantric ritual, but the intention of the user of *mantra* is accepted rather than mantra's intention. Accordingly, how a *mantra* can be used without some reason? It is not uttered as an involuntary noise but for a purpose: an intention is surely is always there. More specifically, tantric texts on *mantra*§Œ*stra* always assign a use (viniyoga), and thus a purpose to *mantra*. Clearly such an intention is not that of the *mantra* but of its user. It can be attributed only metaphorically to the *mantra* itself. An ambiguity as to where the intentionality lies, however, is kept up in such systems as the *Shaiva* non-dualist ones, which treats

[2] Alper, Harvey P., "The Cosmos as Œiva's Language Game" in 'Understanding mantras,' p. 285, end note num: 9.
[3] Alper, Harvey P., "The Cosmos as Œiva's Language Game" in 'Understanding mantras', p. 252.
[4] Staal, Frist, "Vedic Mantras" in 'Understanding Mantras', p. 119.

consciousness and mantras as identical at their highest levels.' According to Oberhammer-
By means of wish to contemplate or experience—effects in the meditating subject—an intentionality that opens him radically for encountering the reality of Œiva[5] .

The *mantra* appears as strengthening this intentionality. According to Oberhamer, it is a means for the contemplation of the godhead. The characteristics, *mantras* possess, differ from ordinary language as they do not abide entirely by its rules, sometimes as to their forms, always as to their use. *Mantra* can be understood as a tool of action and thought-producing or thought sustaining devices. The inner organization of *mantras* and especially, their phonetic structure are more important than their obvious meaning. They are the part of ritual performances outside of which they cannot really be understood. There are cases where mantras are the deity's *vâcaka* in Vedic performances. All these peculiarities inspire to call it as magical formula by and large. But the term magical formula misrepresents the concept since the magic word signifies the art of producing illusion. Although, magic indicates into the art of producing a desired effect or result through the use of incantation or various other techniques that presumably assure human control of supernatural agencies or the forces of nature. The term like supernatural or natural is an ambiguous term as these Western terminologies are not able to connote the South Asian concepts fully. Andre Padoux strictly refuses using this inappropriate translation since *mantra* is not related to such a limited area of magic, but how? The answer is found in the statement of Padoux-

One might be tempted simply to consider mantras as examples of the magical use of language. But, the explanation by magic alone, though useful, seems inadequate. First, because the uses of mantras are not restricted to what may legitimately be called magic, which, even in Tantrism, is only a limited part of a vast amount of practice and speculation on the holy or sacred, of which magic is but a profane or profanatory handling. Second, and even more important, because, the distinction between magic and religion, always a difficult one, is practically impossible in the case of Tantrism, where one can seldom know where the domain of the holy ends or what exactly is profane[6] .

The word magical always restricts the power of *mantra*. It is the misinterpretation of the term *mantra*. Same way, the term linguistic formula restricts it with so much limited sense. Fundamentally, mantra is very powerful concept which cannot be understood as a simple magical formula or linguistic formula. Even, in Kashmir Shaiva philosophy, *mantra* is established as an essential characteristic of the consciousness. That essential characteristic of consciousness becomes the potency of mantras which is practiced at lower level. The potency of *mantra* is called *mantrav´rya* technically. In this way, *mantra* can be examined under the domain of metaphysics, ontology,

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[5] Padoux, Andre, " *Mantras-What are They?*" in '*Understanding Mantras*', p. 307.
[6] *Ibid,* p. 303

epistemology, rituals and meditations in this school.

In addition, the historical development is itself a relevant area. In this context, first part of late K.C. Pandey's work, *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Studies* and recently published *Kashmir Ki Shaiva Sanskriti main Kula and Krama Mat* of the contemporary scholar Navjivan Rastogi and Sandersons's works are helpful to understand the foreground for the research study. The works of Gopinath Kaviraj is also significant from the point of view of historical, sociological and theoretical. The perspective of the interrelation of Kashmir Shaiva with the Buddhist school, Nyaya Vaisheshika, Mimamsa in respect of the development of thought and place of origination is another problem. Interpretation of theories from ritual approach of Kashmir Shaiva*,* interrelation between Pancaratra Agama and Kashmir Shaivagama, ontological study in terms of comparing the Vedanta and Sankhya yoga, Bhartrihari's impact on Trika system, study of vyakarana in relation to the Abhinavagupta, ontological status of *upŒyas*, relationship of Pratyabhij–Œ with the Nyaya school, ontic status of *padŒrtha*, study of *v´rya* in terms of aesthetics, importance of *pratibhŒ* in aesthetic and philosophy are problems which are still untouched.

In this way, the monistic Kashmir Shaiva philosophy and Tantra is significant to the indological research. The materials which are available in the texts of the Kashmir Shaiva are able to answer to many allegations against Indian knowledge tradition as well as it provides new dimensions to the Indian philosophy.

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