

Universal Consciousness and Spiritual Intelligence (With Special Reference to Kāśmīra Śaivism)

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Abstract—

***“Yasmin sarvaṃ yataḥ sarvaṃ yaḥ sarvaṃ sarvataśca yaḥ.
Yaśca sarvamayo nityaṃ, tasmai sarvātmane namaḥ’.”***

No other words are needed to describe the Ultimate seed of life better than this verse. It clearly says everything and tells that I adore to the one in whom everything is, from whom everything comes, who is everything and everywhere, who is immanent in all things, eternal, one who is self of all. This verse is sufficient to describe the underlying one and the same principle of life in maximum brevity. This underlying principle can be called as Universal Consciousness. In the philosophical realm the ideal is enunciated by Kāśmīra Śaivism as Parama Śiva. Tāntrika dictum explains ‘sarvaṃ sarvātmakam’ⁱⁱ i.e. everything is related to everything else. This awareness of interconnectedness and oneness of all things as an expression of the freedom of Parama Śiva, is extended to the ultimate degree. It implies an inner relationship which follows the principle of the reality and its reflection: bimba-pratibimba. Just as in a mirror right becomes left and left becomes right, in the order of creation, the Ultimate reality is inversed, and in order to return to the source, this inversion has to be rectified. Hence the highest principle is related to lowest and so forth, in other words: transcendence is in immanence and immanence in transcendence. Thus universal consciousness manifests itself into diverse forms of bound individuals, and for reversal and recognition, this bound individual has to rectify one’s limitations in order to achieve the highest state of Śiva, both in life and liberation. The major curiosity and point of quest is the path to rectify those limitations and inversion. This has the answer in the realm of Spiritual intelligence or in other words it can be said that Spiritual intelligence is the utmost point of dissolving the limitations; making oneself worthy to attain the Śivahood. This spiritual intelligence is ‘prajñā’. With the rise of prajñā, the differential knowledge

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vanishes and person feels the continuum of the same ultimate consciousness within and outside. Everything is totally dependent upon the thought process, so when the knowledge of 'vikalpa' consisting of differences (this is this; that is that) disappears and a single thought of 'I am Śiva' (śivo'ham) persists, person sees the world in an inclusive manner having an experience of same force within and outside. This paper is going to enlighten the interconnectedness of Universal consciousness and Spiritual intelligence based on the process of 'vikalpa-kṣaya' and 'sattarka' doctrine of Kāśmīra Śaivism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Acc. to Kāśmīra Śaivism, the universal consciousness is denoted by different terms like *cit*, *parama śiva*, *anuttara* etc. and considers all the manifestation as a reflection of pure one. This universal consciousness consists of infinite powers and is the underlying principle of whole creation. In the process of manifestation this universal consciousness itself converts self; into delimited diverse expressions which are bound into limited attributes; occupying limited powers. This thought is the fundamental on which all the answers related with the mysteries of the universe are dependent.

In Kāśmīra Śaivism, the Supreme called as 'Parama Śiva' or 'Cit', is not only 'prakāśa'ⁱⁱⁱ, but also 'vimarśa'. The word 'prakāśa' is untranslatable. Literally it means light, illumination. Just as light makes everything visible, even so that being there, everything else is. In the words of *Kaṭhapaniṣad*: '**Tameva bhāntaṃ anubhāti sarvaṃ, tasya bhāsā sarvaṃ idaṃ vibhāti**'. 'It shining, everything happens to shine. By its light alone does all this appear.' Ultimate Reality, is not only Sciousness (*prakāśa*), but a sciousness that also *scires* itself (*vimarśa*). It is not simply *prakāśa* lying inert like a diamond, but surveys itself. This sciring or surveying itself by Ultimate Reality is called *Vimarśa*^{iv}.

2. DIMENSIONS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Reality in its ultimate aspect is *Cit*^v or *Parāsaṃvit*. *Cit* or *Parāsaṃvit* is untranslatable in any other language. Generally it is translated as 'Consciousness'. But it should be clearly understood that *Cit* is not exactly consciousness. The word Con-sciousness connotes subject-object relation, knower-known duality. But *Cit* is not relational. It is just changeless principle of all changing experience. It is *Parāsaṃvit*. It has, so to speak, the immediacy of feeling where neither the 'I', nor the 'This' is distinguished. It is the 'coalescence into the undivided unity' of 'I' and 'This'. Perhaps the word 'sciousness'^{vi} may, to some extent, express the idea contained in *Cit* or *Parāsaṃvit*. To use the verb contained in consciousness, the Ultimate reality or Supreme Self is the *Self Sciring Itself*ⁱⁱ. In the words of *Pratyabhijñā Śāstra*, it is '*prakāśavimarśamaya*'.

Whether we call Ultimate Reality *Sciouness* or Consciousness, it is not something blank. It has infinite powers, and contains in a potential form all that is ever likely to be. It is the *svabhāva* or nature of Ultimate Reality to manifest. If Ultimate Reality did not manifest, it would no longer be consciousness or Self, but something like an object or not-Self. As Abhinavagupta puts it:

**“Asthāsyadekarūpeṇa vapuṣā cenmaheśvaraḥ.
maheśvarattvaṃ saṃvittvaṃ tadatyakṣyaḍ ghaṭādivat.”**

“If the Highest Reality did not manifest in infinite variety, remained cooped up within its solid singleness, it would neither be the Highest Power nor Consciousness, but something like a jar.”

We have seen that Ultimate Reality or *Parama Śiva* is ‘*prakāśa-vimarśamaya*’. In that state the ‘I’ and the ‘This’ are in an undivided unity. The ‘I’ is the ‘*prakāśa*’ aspect, and the ‘This’ or Its consciousness of It as itself is the ‘*vimarśa*’ aspect. This *vimarśa* is *svātantrya*, Absolute will or *Śakti*. This *Śakti* has been called as ‘the Heart of the Supreme’ in *Parāpraveśikā* by *Kṣemrāja* (*hṛdayam paramēśituḥ*). But *Śakti* is only another aspect of the Supreme Self. In the supreme experience, the so-called ‘This’ is nothing but the Self. There is one Self experiencing Itself. This *vimarśa* or *Śakti* is not content-less. It contains all that is to be.

**“yathā nyagrodabījasya śaktirūpo mahādrumaḥ.
Tathā hṛdayabījasthaṃ viśvametarācāram.”**

“As the great banyan tree lies only in the form of potency in the seed, even so the entire universe with all the mobile and immobile beings lies as a potency in the heart of the Supreme.”

Another example that is usually given is that of the peacock. Just as a peacock with all its variegated plumage lies as a mere potency in the plasma of its egg, even so the entire universe lies in the *Śakti* of the Supreme. The *Śakti* of the Supreme is called as *Citi* or *parā-Śakti* or *parā vāk*.

Parama Śiva has infinite *Śakti*, but the following five may be considered to be the main ones:

1. Cit – the power of self-revelation by which the Supreme shines by Himself. In this aspect the Supreme is known as *Śiva*.
2. Ānanda - This is Absolute Bliss. This is also called *svātantrya*- absolute will which is able to do anything without any extraneous aid. (*Svātantrayam ānandaśaktiḥ*). In this aspect, the Supreme is known as *Śakti*. In a sense *Cit*

and *ānanda* are the very *svarūpa* (nature) of the Supreme. The rest may be called His *Śaktis*.

3. *Icchā* – the Will to do this or that, to create. In this aspect, He is known as *Sadāśiva* or *Sadākhyā*.
4. *Jñāna* – the power of Knowing. In this aspect, He is known as *Īśvara*.
5. *Kriyā* – the power of assuming any and every form (*Sarvākārayogitvam Kriyāśaktiḥ*). In this aspect, he is known as *Sadvidyā* or *Śuddha-vidyā*.

36 Tattvas	
<p>Śuddha-tattvas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Śiva-tattva 2. Śakti-tattva 3. Sadaśiva-tattva 4. Īśvara-tattva 5. Śuddha-vidyā-tattva 	<p>Aśuddha-tattvas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Puruṣa-tattva 2. Prakṛti-tattva 3. Buddhi 4. Ahaṁkāra 5. Manas 6. Five jñānendriyās 7. Five karmendriyās 8. Five tanmātrās 9. Five bhūtas.
Śuddha-aśuddha-tattvas	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Māyā 2. Kalā 3. Vidyā 4. Rāga 5. Niyati 6. Kāla 	

3. THE THEORY OF LIMITATION

Śiva is said to have five eternal functions. They are *tirodhāna*, *srṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *saṁhāra* or *pralaya*, and *anugraha*, is, limitation or disappearance, creation, preservation, dissolution, and compassion or grace. The universe, which is the collective name of the system of limited subjects and objects, cannot come into manifestation unless *Śiva* assumes limitation. It is only by coercing His infinitude and transcendent character that *Śiva* can manifest the universe out of Himself. This power of obscuration or self-limitation is called *tirodhāna*, and the limitation takes the form of *aṇutva* or atomicity. It is also called *saṁkoca*, contraction. Because of this contraction, there is effected a dichotomy in *Śiva*, who is consciousness power. The dichotomy is that of *bodha* or consciousness on the one side, and *svātantrya* or power or independence on the other. *Bodha* tends to become devoid of *svātantrya*, and *svātantrya* of *bodha*. Though neither of them is completely devoid or empty of the other, still, for all practical purposes, we can say that there is a separation between consciousness and power. The aspect of consciousness

loses the integral self-consciousness. *Śiva* does not see the universe to be identical with Himself. And since the universe is *Śakti* originally, we can say consciousness becomes static and sterile of His creative power, and power becomes blind without awareness of Her being truly consciousness. Atomicity therefore is the condition of powerless awareness and senseless power. After the primary limitation of *aṇutva* or atomicity, *Śiva* undergoes a secondary limitation with the help of *Māyā*, and then is described as *Puruṣa*. Though *Śiva* in His own nature is eternal, all-pervasive, omnipotent, omniscient, and all enjoying consciousness, as *Puruṣa*. He is limited in time and space, and has limited knowledge, authorship, and interest or enjoyment. This fivefold limitation is derived from *Māyā* which also provides both location and object to the *Puruṣa* by evolving the physical universe. The theory of limitation states that with the increase in the bond of binding constituents, the powers of pure consciousness become delimited. When this limitation reaches at its peak, the so called dead material or non-living material is evolved. Rest of all is in between the range of living and non-living. So along with the increase in grossness the powers of consciousness become delimited. This delimitation is the basis of different stratum of creation. If this process gets removed then the creation and manifestation into so many diverse forms is totally impossible. The degree of delimitation is the determining factor to create the livings of different categories and degrees and also to create the so called non-living or dead material. Although they all are the form of consciousness but in general understanding Consciousness itself forgets to understand the true nature of itself and other forms of consciousness; and this is the biggest problem of the world today.

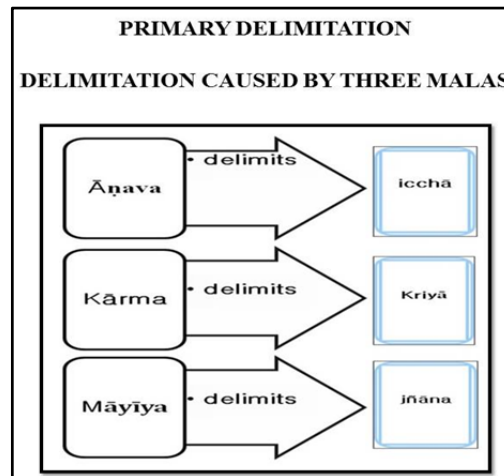


Fig. 1

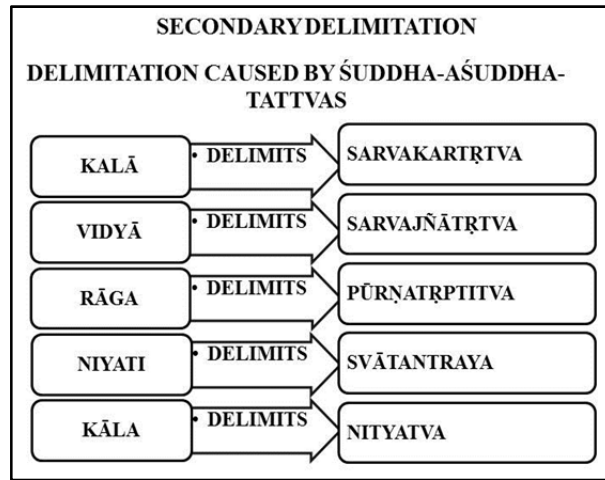


Fig. 2

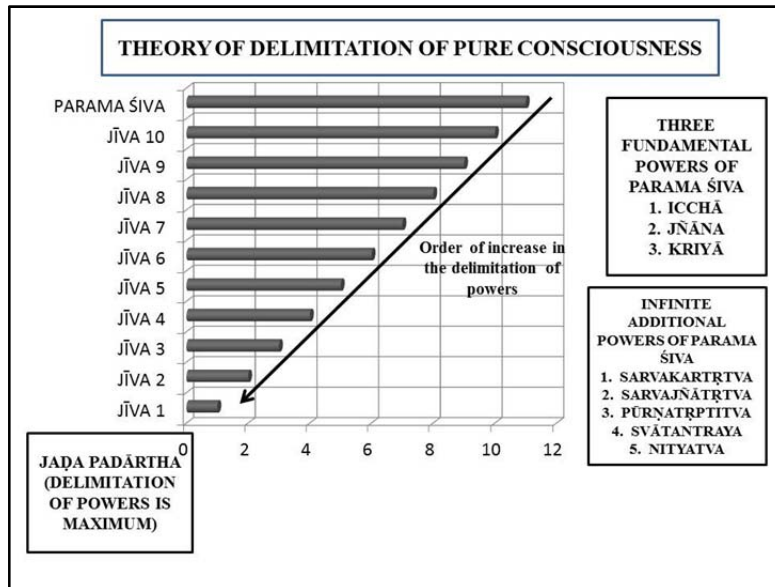


Fig. 3

4. SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

Spiritual intelligence is a term used by some philosophers, psychologists, and developmental theorists to indicate spiritual parallels with IQ (Intelligence

Quotient) and EQ (Emotional Quotient). Some have defined it by the capacity to transcend the physical and material dimensions, or by the ability to experience heightened states of consciousness; or by the ability to sanctify everyday experience; and more or less by the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve the problems.

But in the realm of Indian philosophy and Literature, the understanding of spiritual intelligence has a wide area of discussion. *Rājaśekhara* in his *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, mentions three^{viii} types of *buddhi*: 1. *Smṛti* 2. *Mati* 3. *Prajñā*. The one who is capable of memorizing the past is called as ‘*Smṛti*’, the other one which speculates the present is called as ‘*Mati*’; and the third one which foresees the subjects of future is called as ‘*Pajñā*’. The popular doctrine of *Kāśmīra Śaivism*, is known as ‘*Pratyabhijñā*’ i.e. ‘Recognition’. This doctrine states that the realization of pure one through the triad of re-appearance, memorization and recognition, is the way towards Universal Consciousness. This triad is functional when the ‘Reflection’ (delimited consciousness or individual/ *jīva/ saṃsārin*) turns towards the path of ‘*Sattarka*^{ix}’; and participates in the practices of ‘*pūjā*^x’, ‘*japā*^{xi}’, ‘*dānā*^{xii}’ and ‘*tapa*^{xiii}’ etc. which are the means to get absorbed into the involution process momentarily, slowly and steadily. This kind of practice generates ‘*prajñā*^{xiv}’ or spiritual intelligence. *Prajñā* is very strongly intermingled with Consciousness. *Prajñā* is the ‘*vivek-buddhi*^{xv}’ which means the wit of understanding and discriminating the right from wrong in a larger perspective. The emergence of *prajñā* and its relation to consciousness is just like sweetness in the milk. This means the relation is inseparable. The *viveka-buddhi* or *prajñā* or spiritual intelligence arises within the consciousness and in the flow of its advancement; reflections recognize the self.

5. VIKALPA AND VIKALPA-KṢAYA

Vikalpa is a thought construct. *Vikalpas* (*viśeṣeṇa vividhena va kalpanam*^{xvi}) are various mental counters through which man carries on the business of life. *Vikapas* may refer to various things of the external world like tree, flower, river etc. or various images, fancies, etc. of the mind. In *vikalpa*, mind sets a limit to one particular thing or idea, and differentiates it from the rest; mind constructs a ‘particular’ by means of thought which it marks off from the rest of the world or from other ideas. Each *vikalpa* has two aspects; the positive aspect consists of the idea that is selected, and the negative consists of the rest that are set aside or rejected. *Vikalpas* are concerned with particulars. Secondly, *vikalpas* are relational i.e. there is always a subject-object relationship in *vikalpas*. Universal consciousness or ultimate reality is non-relational, there is no object outside that

ultimate reality. Therefore *vikalpas* are unable to grasp universal consciousness or the ultimate one.

There is, however, one *suddha* or pure *vikalpa*, viz., the thought that 'I am Śiva'. In *Tantrasāra*, Abhinavagya gives an excellent exposition of *bhāvanā*. The aspirant should mentally seize one *Suddha* or pure *vikalpa*, viz. of the highest universal consciousness of the real self as being Śiva. One has to practice the *bhāvanā* of this pure *vikalpa*. *Bhāvanā* is creative contemplation. Imagination plays a very large part in it. One has to imagine oneself with all the faith and fervor at one's command that 'I am Śiva'. This *suddha vikalpa* eliminates all other *vikalpas*, or thoughts and a time comes when *suddha vikalpa* also ceases. Then the empirical, psychological self is dissolved, and one is landed in one's real, meta-empirical, metaphysical self or on *nirvikalpa* or thought free-state which denotes the awareness of Universal Consciousness. This process is known as *vikalpa-kṣaya*. *Pratyabhijñā* lays the greatest stress on the meditation on *pañca-kṛtya* and the practice of *vikalpa-kṣaya*. The mind is the happy hunting-ground of all kinds of ideas that rise one after another like waves upon the sea. We get involved in these ideas and are unable to get behind them to the placidity of the underlying consciousness. The practice of *vikalpa-kṣaya* is recommended for getting rid of *kṣobha* or mental agitation, and recapturing the underlying consciousness, on the surface of which *vikalpas* have their play. This cannot be done by force, for that creates resistance. This can only be achieved by alert passivity, by relaxing the *citta* or mind, by not thinking of anything in particular and yet not losing awareness.

6. SAT-TARKA

Abhinavagya traces the following steps to *bhāvanā*. A *sadguru* initiates the aspirant into the mysteries of the *Āgama*, into the irrefutable conviction of the essential self being Śiva. The second step consists in *Sattarka*. *Sat-tarka* does not mean logical chopping, but training the mind in harmonious consonance with the truth of essential self being Śiva. The *tarka* or logic which is 'sat' i.e. cannot be falsified at any of the states of time (*trikālābādhitam*) is called as 'Sattarka'. This culminates in *bhāvanā*. *Bhāvanā* is the power of spiritual attention, a total dedication of the mind to one central thought, a spiritual thrust towards the source of one's being.

Bhāvanā is finally metamorphosed into *suddha vidyā* whereby the psychological-I is swallowed up into the essential metaphysical-I. The *bhāvanā* of *laya* or dissolution of the various *tattvas* in a regressive order, of the gross into the subtle, of the subtle into the subtler, of the subtler into the subtlest etc. happens. *Sattarka* attains its standards by many means like- *Yāga, homa, japa, dāna, tapas, vrata,*

yoga etc. For attaining *nirvikalpa* stage, the complete devotion of self to Ultimate is called as *Yāga*. *Yāga* is offering of all entities to the ultimate for the purpose of attaining firm conviction in the form of determinate knowledge. “All entities are firmly established in the ultimate and there is nothing separate from that^{xvii}”. This is a sequence of direct perception of universal and known as ‘*Samvidanupraveśa*’. All the subject-object-ness, which is dependent upon the senses, has to be destroyed and burnt in the fire of knowledge and this process is known as ‘*Homa*’. Offerings into consecrated (*homa*) is the dissolution of all entities into the fire of consciousness of ultimate, who takes delight in consuming all and making them remain as the flame of the fire alone. *Homa* is for the purpose of this steady determinate conviction: “All entities are made of light”. Repetition of mantra (*japa*) is for the purpose of enlivening reflective cognitions but without being dependent on them existing as knowable externally or internally and appearing as if they are distinct from highest reality. This kind of reflective cognition of the highest reality, which is not different from one’s own self is called *japa*. *Vrata* is the perception with firm conviction that the body, a jar etc. are in essence identical with the ultimate, which is not to be attained by any other means. As it is said in *Nandiśikhā*, “The highest vow (*vrata*) is the harmony of all (*sarvaṃ sāmyaṃ paraṃ vrataṃ*).” That universal consciousness which is independent from all the thought constructs, shines forth through various forms of determinate knowledge, which possess elements of pure knowledge (*śuddha vidyā*). Yoga which is a particular type of determinate knowledge (*vikalpa*) and whose nature is the unification with one’s own innate nature, exists for the purpose of establishing one firmly in that ever shining light.

7. CONCLUSION

It is well known fact that ultimately everything is just a mental construct whether it is time or space or any kind of determinate or indeterminate knowledge. Every problem and its solution both are mental exercises. So when we meditate with a single utmost logic denoting the universal consciousness all diversified and dispersed thoughts end and a focused concentration is achieved. As much as this focused concentration deepens that much of transition in the personality and powers arises. While passing into a transition from lower to upper or gross to subtle, subtler and subtlest levels of consciousness; inculcating and advancing spiritual intelligence, reflected and delimited one moves on a journey towards the Universal Pure Consciousness. Topmost level of Spiritual Intelligence is attained in the level of *śuddha vidyā* where the bonds of *Māyā* end and the process of secondary delimitation gets reversed and rectified. After this level there is no discrimination between universal consciousness and spiritual intelligence, remains

to identify or nominate. After attaining the level of *śuddha vidyā*, when the bound individual crosses the reversal of primary delimitation also, the recognition becomes complete; then one becomes the pure, infinite and universal consciousness.

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- ^{iv} Singh, J., *Śiva-Sūtra*, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2012, pp.xx
- ^v *ibid*.
- ^{vi} Singh, J., *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2016, pp.5
- ^{vii} *ibid*.
- ^{viii} Rai, G.S., “Śiṣyapratibhe”, in *The Kāvya-mīmāṃsā of Rājasekhara*, Chaukhamba Vidyabhavan, Varanasi, pp. 23.
- ^{ix} The reasoning knowledge devoid of ‘*chala*’ etc., *Sattarka*, is pure intuition.
- ^x Worshipping a divine deity.
- ^{xi} Repetition of a holy word like “*Om*” etc.
- ^{xii} To give something.
- ^{xiii} Spiritual hardship
- ^{xiv} One awakened to the light of consciousness.
- ^{xv} Discriminative knowledge
- ^{xvi} Singh, J., *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2016, pp.131
- ^{xvii} Chakravarty, H.N., *Tantrasāra of Abhinavagupta*, Rudra Press, Portland, OR, 2012, pp. 71