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Possession, Immersion, and the Intoxicated Madnesses of Devotion in Hindu Traditions

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Religious Studies

by

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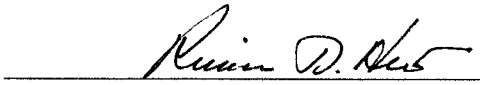

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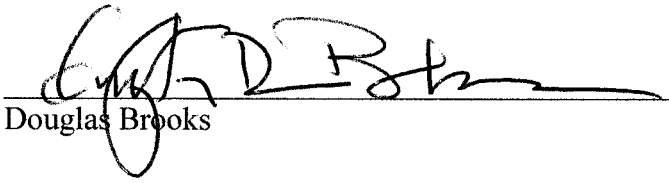

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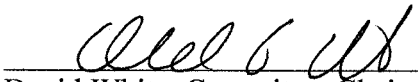

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Possession, Immersion, and the Intoxicated Madnesses of Devotion in Hindu Traditions

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To all my Teachers, past, present, and future

I have been longing to write this acknowledgement page for the past few years, and the moment has now actually arrived! It feels spectacular. This dissertation topic is exactly what I wanted to write about, and I am so thrilled to finally complete this project, which I have loved and sometimes hated since its inception. Truly, if it were not for the many people who have supported me in numerous ways, I would not have made it to this satisfying moment in my life. I would first like to thank David White, who was everything I could have asked for in a chair for my committee. He helped me refine my thinking and develop my ideas, and he gave feedback promptly on many drafts of these chapters. The thorough attention that Barbara Holdrege gave to my dissertation, including the complex philosophical ideas and numerous punctuation issues surrounding use of Sanskrit terms, was invaluable. Working through her many editorial comments this past week reminded me of when she similarly dedicated herself so whole-heartedly to helping me improve my Master's thesis. Richard Hecht's guidance, particularly his great advice about how to develop my career, has been very helpful. I wish that my old tennis partner and professor Ninian Smart could have been here to comment on my work. If I had not been so lucky to take my first class on Hinduism with Douglas Brooks, whose enthusiasm for teaching awakened the same desire in me, I would probably not have this career. One of the highlights of graduate school was the opportunity to study Sanskrit and Kashmir Śaiva traditions in New Delhi with B.N. Pandit, a wise teacher and kind man who became a surrogate grandfather to me while I was living in India. Attending two Muktabodha Indological Research Institute summer Sanskrit programs, at which Douglas Brooks and Paul Muller-Ortega led us through the complexities of Abhinavagupta's and Utpaladeva's

thought, helped me develop my ideas for this dissertation. Lakshmanjoo's translations of Kashmir Śaiva texts greatly enhanced my insight into the material. Meeting John and Denise several years ago was my great fortune. Their warmth and interest in supporting my desire to write about Lakshmanjoo enabled me to learn a great deal about him. Without having discovered Constantina Rhodes Bailly's inspiring translation of *Śivastotrāvalī*, I probably would have had to write a different dissertation. Nandini Iyer and Gerry Larson launched my love for the Sanskrit language. I would not be where I am today without my parents whose love, confidence, and constant support I have always felt, which is probably why I had the courage to pursue, and then the determination to complete, my doctorate. Their (sometimes gentle) nudging was exactly what I needed. To my wonderful friends who have been eagerly waiting for me to finish this degree, thank you for caring. I'm very glad that I no longer have to say, "I'm almost done, really." And to Ari, my beloved, you are the best. Your support and patience throughout this prolonged time that I have been trying to finish my dissertation, especially these last two crazy sleep-deprived weeks, mean the world to me. I am looking forward to living my life with you without having to think about how much I'd like to finish graduate school. I dedicate this work to all my teachers, past, present, and future.

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Abstract

Possession, Immersion, and the Intoxicated Madnesses of Devotion
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This study isolates a set of ideas from the large corpus of information on possession and *unmāda* in Indian literature and culture. I trace the history of the concept of *unmāda* from the Āyurvedic texts (ca. 3rd-7th centuries C.E.), where it is an undesirable condition, to the later nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir (ca. 10th-11th centuries C.E.), wherein the state of intoxicated devotion (*bhaktimada*) became a goal of practice (*sādhana*). In Āyurveda, although some symptoms of *unmāda* such as supranormal strength seem to be desirable, the condition caused by divinities that transgress the permeable boundaries of the human body warrants medical treatment (*pratiniṣedha*) and/or is categorized as pathology (*unmādanidāna*). The medical treatises explain that possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities invade humans and cause *unmāda*, which must be eradicated. In the later heterodox dualistic Śaiva yoga context (ca. 8th-9th centuries C.E.), *samāveśa* and *āveśa* mean a controlled type of possession by mostly female divinities that one attracts in order to extract their power (*śakti*) and assimilate their intoxication (*unmatta, mada*). Thereafter, in the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir, both *unmāda* and the associated notion of possession are again reformulated with radically different and positive significations. *Samāveśa* means immersion in the ocean of absolute consciousness. To attain this state of consciousness, the *kula-yogi* engages in transgressive behaviors to transcend limitation by ethical norms. Non-initiates see this kind of

behavior as an undesirable type of *unmāda*. But *samāveśa* can be understood as a desirable state that is sweetened by an intoxicating or mad devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). The yogi becomes "totally soaked" by his intoxication (*unmāda*) from immersion (*samāveśa*) in the blissful ocean of consciousness. Whereas the dualistic medical perspective pathologizes all types of *unmāda*, the dualistic and nondualistic Śaiva traditions expand the semantic field of this term to include their respective goals of practice (*sādhana*). Drunk in his devotion to Śiva, the yogi appears like an ordinary madman though in fact he is an extraordinary madman. Using both textual and ethnographic evidence, I show the protean nature of possession and *unmāda* throughout the history of these Hindu traditions.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Frightening yet alluring, madness fascinates us because it reveals and conceals a secret. Revelatory of a truth to some madmen and the Truth to others, madness provides false knowledge or true wisdom, both of which are veiled from observers who realize that something defies their understanding. An extreme possibility of human experience that makes us contemplate the precariousness of our own sanity, madness attracts voyeurs who define and judge it. As Michel Foucault states, "It was doubtless a very old custom of the Middle Ages to display the insane. . . . As late as 1815 . . . the hospital of Bethlehem exhibited lunatics for a penny, every Sunday. . . . Madness became pure spectacle."[1] Does this spectacle display tragic experience that darkens perception of a truth or transcendent experience that enlightens perception of the Truth? In other words, is madness an indication of ignorance or a harbinger of freedom from "consensus reality"?[2] "The madman sets sail for the other world in his ship of fools,"[3] but what kind of experience does he have in the "other world"? He undoubtedly becomes totally soaked by his journey into the ocean's depths. But is his departure an embarkation into waters that drown or purify?

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[1] Michel Foucault, trans. Richard Howard, *Madness and Civilization: A History Of Insanity In The Age Of Reason* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), pp. 68-69.

[2] For use of the term "consensus reality," see Georg Feuerstein, *Holy Madness: the Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools, and Rascal Gurus* (New York: Arkana, 1990).

[3] Michel Foucault, *Folie et Déraison: Histoire de la Folie a l'age Classique* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1961), p. 14

The post-Enlightenment West has seen the waters of the "other world" solely as an agent that drowns people in ignorance. Yet Hindu traditions have consistently maintained that these waters can drown people or buoy them up in their realization of the Truth in the state of liberation (*mokṣa*). Āyurveda, the ancient science of Indian medicine, highlights the imbalance of bodily humors (*doṣa*) that submerges a person in the "other world" of pathology. But debilitating types of madness (*unmāda*) have never precluded liberating types. For instance, the Śaiva yogi revels in madness and intoxication (*unmāda*) from his immersion (*samāveśa*) in the ocean of absolute consciousness. India has always left some space for *unmāda* to flourish; certain Hindu traditions have said that it is all right to be mad. It is post-Enlightenment Westerners and traditional Āyurvedic doctors who do not favor any type of madness, the displays of which are often indistinguishable from the vantage points of voyeuristic observers.

The English word "madness," meaning "insanity or enthusiasm," derives from the Old English term *gemāedan* ("to madden") and is etymologically related to the Sanskrit word *unmāda* ("madness"), which derives from the verbal root *mad* ("to rejoice, delight or revel in, be drunk, to enjoy heavenly bliss").[4] The definitions of these Indo-European words similarly refer both to an undesirable pathological condition and to a desirable and tremendously heightened state of being. Although "madness" and *unmāda* signify these opposite extremes of human experience, the Sanskrit word alone explicitly indicates a transcendent state by denoting enjoyment of divine bliss. Only by probing sufficiently into the definition of "madness" do we find explicit reference to a transcendent state. Largely divested of its archaic meaning today, the word "enthusiasm" originally referred to enjoyment of heavenly

[4] Monier Monier-Williams's *Sanskṛit-English Dictionary*, 1994 ed., s.v. "*unmāda*."

bliss: it is etymologically derived from the late Latin *enthūsiasmus* and the Greek *enthousiasmos*, from *enthousiazein* ("to be inspired by or possessed of god"), which is from *entheos*, (*en*, "in" + *theos*, "god"). But the theological reference has mellowed with time, and now "enthusiasm" simply refers to a very strong feeling about something or someone.

> The semantic history of enthusiasm reveals the dilution of its sacrality: "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm," said the very quotable Ralph Waldo Emerson who also said, "Everywhere the history of religion betrays a tendency to enthusiasm." These two uses of the word *enthusiasm*--one positive and one negative--both derive from its source in Greek. *Enthusiasm* first appeared in English in 1603 with the meaning "possession by a god." . . . Over time the meaning of *enthusiasm* became extended to "rapturous inspiration like that caused by a god" to "an overly confident or delusory belief that one is inspired by God," to "ill-regulated religious fervor, religious extremism," and eventually to the familiar sense "craze, excitement, strong liking for something." Now one can have an enthusiasm for almost anything, from water skiing to fast food, without religion entering into it at all.[5]

Despite the secularization of "enthusiasm" in the course of Western history, the two opposing connotations of "madness" and *unmāda* may be elicited from both the English and Sanskrit lexicons: 1) that which is deconstructive to the personality and causes unmitigated suffering; 2) that which is constructive in its deconstruction of the personality and may be exemplified by a person "in or possessed of god." Many terms in Sanskrit and vernacular Indian languages reveal the familiarity with this dual valence.[6] The litany of cognate and non-cognate terms captures the different types of experience that have been reduced in the West to the monolithic

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[5] *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed., s.v. "enthusiasm."

[6] Sanskrit words include *unmāda, unmada, māda, mada, matta, unmatta*, and *unmadita*. The term *bhaktimada* means madness from fervent devotion and *divyonmāda* similarly designates a divine madness. Many terms show the conflation between madness and possession, which are often constitutive of one another: *āveśa, devāveśa, and bhūtāveśa* are possessions that madden the afflicted person. In Bengali *bhor* is possession by a ghost, *pāgalpārā* is apparent madness, and *prema pāgal* is love madness. Hindi speakers say that a *bhāv, āveś, āveg praveś*, or *joś* takes hold of a person.

category of "madness," the sole English term that necessarily signifies pathology in our post-Enlightenment world.

In the West madness has been subject to the vicissitudes of time. The ancient Greeks valued the divine gift of bacchic frenzy, a Dionysian madness. In Hasidic Judaism crazy fools are both stigmatized and revered as emissaries who can unveil wisdom from hidden worlds; accordingly, a fool is better than half a sage because his foolishness opens him to the wisdom of hidden realities. Likewise, the fool of the medieval European court turned the world's values upside-down and in so doing was able to offer necessary wisdom to the king.

The historical developments of 17th-century Enlightenment Europe quashed positive regard for all types of madness, which Westerners then circumscribed and judged unfavorably. Since that time, madness has been reduced in its entirety to pathology. The gift of divine madness and the crazy fool were devalued as the "very old custom of the Middle Ages"[7] of segregating madmen became common. The Age of Reason created a divide between madmen and the rest of humanity in order to privilege and protect its newfound "sacred" epistemology of rational inquiry. Foucault explains, "Until the Renaissance, the sensitivity to madness was linked to the presence of imaginary transcendences. . . . But in less than a half-century, [madness] had been sequestered and, in the fortress of confinement, bound to Reason, to the rules of morality and their monotonous nights."[8] People designated by the bourgeois Enlightenment mentality as outside the boundaries of moral competency were incarcerated in asylums. They were confined and reformed and thereby prevented from disrupting the power structure that the arbiters of the

[7] Foucault, trans. Howard, *Madness and Civilization*, p. 68.

[8] Foucault, *Folie et Déraison*, pp. 89, 96.

new social order deemed to be correct. Ironically, as medical doctors continued to diagnose people, the asylum came to serve as "a religious domain without religion, a domain of pure morality, of ethical uniformity. . . an instrument of moral uniformity and of social denunciation."[9] The doctors worked to indoctrinate the patients into the established moral order, which was not to be challenged.

Only in the West has there been a nearly half-millenium old tradition of secluding madmen in asylums. Because India was not part of the 17th-century ideological revolution that glorified rational inquiry, the concept of *unmāda* was not divested of its positive connotations. In Hindu traditions the play of the gods and goddesses sometimes revolves around their *unmāda*. And today, as in the past, Hindu saints and devotees who exhibit mad behavior are at times seen (by those inside or sympathetic to the tradition) as more accomplished (*siddha*) because of it.

Positive regard for madness of divine origin persisted in India even though the Western interest in secluding madmen moved to India with the British colonial project. As early as 1795 and later in the mid-19th-century, the British built asylums and thereby imposed the concerns of the Age of Reason onto the colonized people. James Mills' Foucauldian analysis of the rise of the asylum in India is that it "does not necessarily reflect a natural moral order and would seem to reveal more about the obsessions of the British medical officer than it does about the 'insanity' of the inmates. The knowledge generated at the asylums had its own power then, the power to construct standards of normality and deviancy and of morality and immorality."[10] Representations of madmen were used not only to justify the power

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[9] Ibid, pp. 257, 259.

[10] James H. Mills, *Madness, Cannabis and Colonialism: The 'Native-Only' Lunatic Asylums of British India, 1857-1900* (New York: St. Martin's Press, inc., 2000), p. 3.

structure of the state, as in Europe, but also to defend the intervention by the colonizers in the first place. But the medical regime that provided facilities for those whom the British decided were insane was not absolutely effective in indoctrinating the disempowered people. The colonizers' domination remained more at the level of fantasy than reality. Mills states:

> The frustration of the asylum regime by the Indian staff and the resistance offered by the patients shows that while the asylum may have been established and intended as an instrument of "moral uniformity," in reality it rarely functioned as such. The patients who seem to be acting without regard to their environment are perhaps the most interesting here. Those who sneaked off for sex or who formed friendships with other patients show that within the asylum there was in practice considerable space for pursuing agendas arrived at independently of the designs of the asylum. In short, in the colonial medical institution, neither colonial power nor medical power was absolute or dominant.[11]

Whether in Europe or India, deciding who is insane and unfavorably judging the totality of madness by reducing "imaginary transcendences" to pathology says at least as much about the observers' own needs and biases as about the people who may claim to be "possessed of god." Mircea Eliade commented on Western scholars known as Orientalists, some of whom reduced the ego-transcending spirituality they found in India to their own native category of "pathology." He states:

> For the analysis of a foreign culture principally reveals what was sought in it or what the seeker was already prepared to discover. . . . When one approaches an exotic spirituality, one understands principally what one is predestined to understand by one's own vocation, by one's own cultural orientation and that of the historical moment to which one belongs.[12]

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[11] Ibid, p. 181.

[12] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom,* translated by Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series LVI (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. xiii. Written in the forward from the original edition. Edward Said was the main voice that exposed Orientalism in the book *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

Ironically, as Wilhelm Halbfass explains, the self-conscious yet audacious attempt to remove the superimposition of Western ideas onto India ensnares scholars in the trap of Eurocentrism.[13] But the anti-Orientalist critique is better than no critique at all. In today's culturally hybridized world, where some Indians are Westerners and some Westerners identify themselves as Hindus or Buddhists, many people will be studying cultures that are partially or completely other their own.

The European banishment of madness to the dark margins of society ousted the category of madness from academia, except for in departments of psychology, sociology, and anthropology, which tended to reduce it to pathology. Philip Zaleski, a scholar of Christianity who recently created a typology for studying holy folly, states, "Studies of holy folly are rare--the subject repels most scholars, perhaps by the grace of God--and as far as I know there are, at least in the Christian tradition, no typologies of the phenomenon."[14] Likewise, Georg Feuerstein's observation about the dearth of scholarship on this topic is pertinent. Referring in particular to Hindu and Buddhist expressions of religious experience, he states, "Our civilization is abysmally ignorant of, and blatantly antagonistic toward, all manifestations of ego-transcending spirituality. . . . Perhaps this pervasive fear is the underlying reason why holy madness, or crazy wisdom, has so far not even fully entered the halls of academe."[15] A non-native category of religious experience in today's society, madness is implausible to most Westerners, Westernized Indians, and traditional Āyurvedic doctors as anything but a clinical condition.

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[13] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 12.

[14] Philip Zaleski, "Holy Folly: Three Foolish Ways to Find God," in *Parabola: Myth, Tradition, and the Search for Meaning.* Volume 26, number 3. (August 2001): 27-34.

[15] Feuerstein, p. 200.

At the turn of the 20th-century, William James, one of the first psychologists, sounded the death knell of reductionism by studying the varieties of religious experience with positive regard for them, although his ideas have not become normative in academic circles. James believed that a coalescence of psychopathic temperament and superior intellect enables truths to be revealed, and he hypothesized that an elective affinity between religious experience and the "fever-process" is conducive for discerning truth. He states, "When we speak disparagingly of 'feverish fancies,' surely the fever-process as such is not the ground of our disesteem--for aught we know to the contrary, 103 or 104 degrees Fahrenheit might be a much more favorable temperature for truths to germinate and sprout in, than the more ordinary blood-heat of 97 or 98 degrees."[16] James attempted to revamp the reigning conclusions drawn about this elective affinity: whereas others reduced religious experience to pathology, he viewed pathology as potentially conducive to the ascertainment of "truths."

James's research resonates with Rudolf Otto's roughly contemporaneous theory about the "holy," which he called "the numinous feeling" (*das numinose Gefühl*). According to Otto, the numinous contains a nonrational element that may "burst in sudden eruption up from the depths of the soul with spasms and convulsions, or lead to the strangest excitements, to intoxicated frenzy, to transport, and to ecstasy. It has its wild and demonic forms and can sink to an almost grisly horror and shuddering."[17] He hoped that the theological focus on ethics would not overshadow the nonrational aspects of the numinous. Both James and Otto opposed banishing religious experience that may be tinged with pathology to the dark

[16] William James, *The Varieties Of Religious Experience* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 15.

[17] Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 12-13.

margins of society. This stance was unpopular among their contemporaries but has since begun to receive some scholarly attention.

Lest we think that post-Enlightenment culture has been completely unencumbered by medieval biases and superstitions about madness, Dominik Wujastyk reminds us that "in Europe, it was only in the eighteenth century that Enlightenment physicians finally abandoned the Biblical idea that mental illness was caused by diabolical possession."[18] And current idiomatic expressions reveal that we still have not moved completely beyond thinking in terms of possession. For example, in contemporary parlance we say, "I am catching a cold." Wujastyk suggests that this idiom inverts ancient Indian medical ideas about the possessor and possessed. He states, "Notice the inversion: in contemporary thinking, we catch a disease, but in this [Indian] text, the 'disease' catches us."[19] But in fact no inversion has taken place. To catch something, it has to be thrown at us and, in the case of a disease, land in our bodies. According to ancient notions, diabolical forces possessed or caught us, and according to modern medical notions, we are passive receivers of unseen disease-carrying entities that hurl themselves at us. A transaction occurs wherein an invisible force in the environment (for example, a virus or bacteria) inserts itself into our bodies and creates sickness. Having sneezed repeatedly just moments ago, I was reminded of another way that pre-Enlightenment ideas about demons are not so far banished from our social milieu. I was glad that the stranger sitting next to me said "bless you" after my sneezes. Maybe his blessing helped stave off the demons that threatened to enter me during the sudden,

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[18] Dominik Wujastyk. *The Roots Of Āyurveda: Selections from Sanskrit Medical Writings* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 210.

[19] Ibid, p. 210.

forceful, and involuntarily expulsions of air from my nose and mouth, liminal moments when my body was particularly permeable and hence vulnerable.

Even though post-Enlightenment society effectively banished madmen, their marginalized voices have continued to be heard in their writing, seen in their art work, and revealed in psychiatric accounts about them. At the beginning of the 19th-century, Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) wrote about the possible value of madness. He stated, "Men have called me mad, but the question is not yet settled, whether madness is or is not the loftiest intelligence—whether much that is glorious—whether all that is profound—does not spring from disease of thought—from moods of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect."[20] Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) composed a poem about the keen insight that madness brings and the resulting banishment to an asylum. She wrote:

> Much Madness is divinest Sense--
> To a discerning Eye--
> Much Sense-the starkest Madness--
> 'Tis the Majority
> In this, as All, prevail--
> Assent-and you are sane--
> Demur-you're straightway dangerous--
> And handled with a Chain--[21]

Before committing suicide at age thirty-seven, Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) painted a self-portrait of his self-mutilation, the result of a quarrel he had had with the artist Paul Gauguin. In 1933 the German psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn published a collection of art work by schizophrenics whose psychotic expressions would influence the Surrealists. The creative force of madness was not lost on the 20th-century psychiatrist R.D. Laing (1927-1989), who challenged the normative

[20] James Hughes, *Altered States: Creativity Under the Influence* (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1999), p. 124.

assumptions of our time by asserting that madness could be either breakdown or breakthrough. The psychiatrist and Professor Kay R. Jamison has recently written, from both professional and personal experience with manic depression, about the profound, exhilarating creative potential that can be unleashed from psychotic episodes. During the Age of Reason, society's judgment of madness has swung toward mental illness and away from divine inspiration, but not so far away that the "sensitivity to madness . . . linked to the presence of imaginary transcendences"[22] has been entirely eradicated.

In much of South Asia, possession has historically been a common phenomenon and *unmāda* caused by possessing divinities remains a familiar diagnosis. Desirable, intoxicating experiences of *unmāda* have also been recognized as valid forms of religious experience. These culture-bound categories do not integrate easily into normative Western understandings of self, health, and illness. Encountering such radically unfamiliar taxonomic categories has tended to create a sense of cultural cognitive dissonance. As Ariel Glucklich states, "illness is a cultural concept that travels poorly across boundaries."[23] A growing number of studies has examined possession using constructive interpretive models, although few Indologists have looked at *unmāda* using the "hermeneutics of recovery." This study will discuss these phenomena according to emic Hindu understandings and thus contribute to research in ethnopsychiatry, a burgeoning field that attempts to not reduce foreign native categories to familiar ones.

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[21] Thomas H. Johnson, ed. *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), p. 209.

[22] Foucault, *Folie et Déraison,* p. 89.

[23] Ariel Glucklich, *The End of Magic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 51.

In South Asia possession is quite a natural occurrence because the human body is seen as a vessel through which energy and divine and demonic beings easily flow. Āyurveda explains that the body is an open system, one with fluid boundaries such that permeability between the microcosmic body and the macrocosmic elements occurs with ease. David White states, "[In South Asia], the body is not so much a discrete, individual, closed system as it is a container or conduit through which energies, substances--even beings--flow."[24] Because bodies are not discrete or individual and instead are "dividual,"[25] they are not rigidly compartmentalized into segregated bounded entities, thereby making it easier for entities to penetrate each other. Thus, possession provides an opportunity for intimacy between human beings and the gods and goddesses. Kathleen Erndl states, "In order for the possession to have a cultural meaning, it must conform to a preconceived ideology. A milieu in which the line between human and divine is seen as permeable and in which the individual self is not seen as an inviolable fortress is favorable to the acceptance of possession as a phenomenon."[26]

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[24] David Gordon White, "Goddess in the Tree: Reflections on Nīm-Tree Shrines in Varanasi" in *New Discovery in the Indian Arts: Essays in Honour of Ananda Krishna*, ed. Naval Krishna (Varanasi: Bharat Kala Bhavan, forthcoming). A porous sense of self is not foreign in the West. Quoting Carl Jung, Glucklich states, "'Not so very long ago even highly civilized people believed that psychic agencies could influence our minds and feelings. There were ghosts, wizards, . . . and even gods, who could produce certain psychological changes in human beings.' A fleeting rage or thought of passion would then be attributed to an external agency that had 'invaded' the mind or soul. This kind of thinking resulted not only, or even mainly, from a primitive philosophy but from a porous sense of self lacking rigid external boundaries." See Glucklich, p. 53.

[25] McKim Marriott, *Caste Ranking and Community Structure in Five Regions of India and Pakistan* (Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, 1960).

[26] Kathleen Erndl, *Victory To The Mother: The Hindu Goddess of Northwest India in Myth, Ritual, and Symbol* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 133. Also see David Dean Shulman, *The Hungry God : Hindu Tales of Filicide and Devotion* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993). Melting is another way to talk about permeability of bodily boundaries. "The theme of the melting or dissolving (*vilīna, līnatā, galita*) mentioned in verses 1, 2, and 3 [of the *Anubhava-nivedana-stotra* by Abhinavagupta] of the world into the unitary consciousness is widespread in Śaiva mysticism." See Paul Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu: A Poem by Abhinavagupta" in *Tantra in Practice*. Edited by David Gordon White (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p.

In classical Indian literature, possession is a familiar category of experience. The earliest scriptures, the Vedas (ca. 2000-1500 B.C.E.), discuss divinities that possess other gods.[27] The *Rig Veda* explains that Jagati possessed (*ā viveśa*) all the gods (10.130.5). The *Atharva Veda* mentions the powers of the god Indra whom Soma enters (*ā viśāntīn*) (6.2.2). In classical Āyurvedic treatises (ca. 4th-century C.E.), possession is seen as the prolonged onslaught of entering (*samāviśant*) malevolent divinities that cause pathology.

In later theistic contexts, possession becomes a means to confer power on people. The incentive to become possessed is inextricably linked with the need to delimit divine and demonic power and channel it into one's own body. For instance, family members who successfully control the spirit of a deceased child can enjoy participating in the power of Śiva. David Knipe explains, "Some living family members may actually be initiated and empowered by this painful event. They become, by possessions in the processions, "something more," gaṇacārīs, part of Śiva-Vīrabhadra's closest entourage, part of the Army of God in the mythic context. They are conduits of messages from the spiritual world, momentary embodiments of the spirits *and* of the god."[28] Furthermore, a person who is possessed by the goddess Śītalā suffers from the painful symptoms of smallpox and simultaneously gains prophetic vision. In this case, illness from possession yields definitive power. Lawrence Babb states, "Victims of smallpox are believed to

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576. For references to melting, see Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusion, and other Realities*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984).

[27] Frederick Smith has counted 103 occurrences of the Sanskrit root *viś* (to enter) in the *Rig Veda*. See Frederick M. Smith, *Friendly Acquisitions, Hostile Takeovers: Deity and Spirit Possession in Classical Indian Literature and Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming).

[28] David M. Knipe, "Night of the Growing Dead: A Cult of Vīrabhadra in Coastal Andhra," in *Criminal Gods and Demon Devotees: Essays on the Guardians of Popular Hinduism*. Ed. Alf Hiltebeitel. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989): 142.

possess oracular powers, a logical assumption in view of the fact that the patient is possessed by the goddess. Informants tell of instances in which smallpox patients have been able to predict the coming of visitors who have not yet left their own houses."[29]

Although possession is a pervasive phenomenon in South Asia, classical Indology at first largely ignored it in favor of focusing on elite, intellectual religious practices. The denigration of the broad range of popular possession practices by Western Indologists discloses first and foremost what "we" have found objectionable in what "they" do. A "founding father" of sociological studies of Hinduism, Louis Dumont explained possession as a "mystic ecstasy . . . which so far we have not encountered at a learned level."[30] More recently, theorizing about possession has been undertaken through the methodologies of the Western disciplines of psychology, anthropology, or sociology, which have tended to force it into such familiar categories as schizophrenia, hysteria, or some type of mental illness or psychological cathexis as defined by psychoanalysis. And if it has not been interpreted as some kind of pathology, it has been reduced to an impossibility, something that does not really occur. Erndl states:

> Many scholarly studies of possession have struck me as rather patronizing, attempting to account for possession as a purely psychological or sociological phenomenon, not something that "really happens." I wonder if it is possible, if not to "explain" possession, at least to approach a better understanding of it by going beyond theories of individual or collective pathology, which are inadequate as interpretive models.[31]

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[29] Lawrence A. Babb, *The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), p. 130.

[30] Louis Dumont, "World Renunciation in Indian Religions" in *Religion, Politics and History of India: Collected Papers in Indian Sociology* (Paris: Mouton, 1970), p. 57.

[31] Erndl, p. 105.

We should not deny the truth claims of individuals who assume the legitimacy of possession, a normative experience according to the culture that posits it.

The "hermeneutics of recovery" rather than the "hermeneutics of suspicion" have guided the most recent studies. For instance, Isabelle Nabakov has challenged the common understanding of possession as a cathartic opportunity for people (usually women) to express psychological conflict and rebel against their powerless position in society. She argues that ritualized possession in Tamilnadu forces women to articulate an alien sense of self. She states, "Tamil women are taught, even pressured, to frame their personal predicaments within the cosmological framework of demonic possession," which is a way to impose power over women, allow the family to gain control over them, and reinforce the cultural expectation of the "good wife" (*cumaṅkalī*).[32] Also focusing on the predicament of women, Sarah Caldwell has pointed out that the same behaviors that indicate divine possession (*deva āveśam*) for males in a Kerala ritual performance context are judged to be demonic possession (*bādhā āveśam*) in females, who are prohibited from participating in the sanctioned rituals. The demonic possession of women that demotes their social status can rarely be distinguished from the divine possession of men whose social status is elevated thereby. Caldwell states, "By splitting possession into qualitatively different male and female domains, males achieve transformation and progressive orientation while women are left to cathartic, regressive behavior of low cultural status."[33] In her study of *satīs*, widows who burn themselves alive on their husbands' funeral pyres, Catherine Weinberger-Thomas

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[32] Isabelle Nabakov, *Religion Against The Self: An Ethnography of Tamil Rituals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 72.

[33] Sarah Caldwell, *Oh Terrifying Mother: Sexuality, Violence and Worship of the Goddess Kālī* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 277.

manages to see these tragic women through their Hindu eyes despite her own indignation and horror. She explains that the "woman who becomes possessed by the 'madness of the *sat*' is internalizing a behavioral pattern--from the outside world, from the collective culture."[34] Her approach to widow burning applies to the study of any religious behavior that appears to be pathological. Weinberger-Thomas states:

> [We must not] postulate that religious experience is nothing more than an epiphenomenon and that religious beliefs are nothing other than social constructs. It is my feeling that research undertaken on the basis of such presuppositions cannot help but be skewed from the outset. If one is to hope to understand a body of data from within the religious sphere, then one must, regardless of one's personal feelings on the subject, give belief systems full credit, so to speak, even if one ends up with conclusions of a very different order.[35]

But despite valiant attempts to leave suspicions behind, scholars engaged in the "hermeneutics of recovery" remain subject to cultural bias. Frederick Smith points out that the "search for evidence of possession in classical Indic texts is necessarily framed by prevailing characterizations which bear such gravity that only with great effort is it possible to escape from beneath their weight—and in doing so it is still impossible to escape their shadow."[36]

Just as possession has a long history in South Asia, so too does the concept of *unmāda*. The Vedas, the authoritative basis for many later Hindu traditions, codified ideas about *unmāda*. Concerning the positive connotation of this concept in Vedic literature, William Mahoney states:

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[34] Catherine Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes Of Immortality: Widow Burning In India.* Translated by Jeffrey Mehlman and David Gordon White. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 107.

[35] Weinberger-Thomas, p. 181.

[36] Smith, p. 1. His forthcoming book is a comprehensive historical and ethnographic study on possession in India that addresses methodological concerns.

> That the experience of ecstasy paradoxically but typically involved not only the expression of outwardly creative or expansive power is suggested by the fact that a word frequently used to describe the effect of the *soma*--the term *mada*, "exhilaration, rapture, inspiration"--is often associated in Vedic hymns with adjectives we can translate as "powerful," "vigorous," "mighty," "successful, victorious," and "speedy, direct." But the word *mada* also implies an inner recognition of inherent and often unmanifest beauty. Thus, it often appears with such adjectives connoting shimmering beauty and a pleasing, delightful appearance. In either case, the effect of the soma clarified the poet's mind.[37]

Rig Veda 10.136 discusses the long-haired ascetic, Keśin, who ingests a plant essence or drug (*viṣa*), probably Soma, that causes the gods to enter him, whereupon he flies through the air in a maddened (*unmaditā*) state of consciousness. Riding with the rush of the wind, the ascetics declare:

> Maddened (*unmaditā*) by asceticism, we have ridden the wind. Our physical bodies are all you mere mortals can see.
>
> *unmaditā mauneyena vātāṃ ā tasthimā vayaṃ*
> *śarīredasmākaṃ yūyaṃ martāso abhipaśyatha* // 10.136.3

Numerous hymns in the Rig Veda explain that ingestion of Soma by ritual specialists brings about an exhilarated, blissful condition that is similarly attained by various gods, especially Indra, who frequently drinks this intoxicant. These hymns foreshadow and sanction later ideas about divinities that enter or possess a person and in so doing madden or intoxicate him. Furthermore, the magical flight of the ascetics who ride the wind anticipates the flight of the *yoginī* out of the roofless temples in later *yoginī-kaula* practice. The inherent potential danger in these types of practice was not lost on the Rig Vedic poets who knew that the maddened condition is treacherous. *Rig Veda* 8.79.7-8 states:

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[37] William K. Mahony, *The Artful Universe: An Introduction to the Vedic Religious Imagination* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1998), pp. 87-88.

> Soma, be very kind and compassionate to us. Be good to our heart, without confusing our powers in your whirlwind. King Soma, do not enrage or terrify us. Do not wound our heart with dazzling light.
>
> *suśevo no mṛlayākuradṛptakraturavātaḥ bhavā naḥ soma śam hṛde*
> *mā naḥ soma sam vīvijo mā vi bībhiṣathā rājan mā no hārdi tviṣā*
> *vadhīḥ // RV* 8.79.7-8

The *Arthaśāstra*-s (ca. 300 B.C.E.),[38] *Dharmasūtra*-s (ca. 3rd-1st centuries B.C.E.), and *Dharmaśāstra*-s (ca. 1st-6th centuries C.E.) discuss the legal codes of conduct in classical India and shed light on the role of madmen in society at that time. These texts are concerned exclusively with people whose madness appears to cause unmitigated suffering to themselves and potentially to others. Several legal treatises explain the precautions that society took to protect the insane from self-destructive behavior and from others who would harm them. Among the duties of the king was the injunction to refrain from fighting with a person who was intoxicated (*matta*), mad (*unmatta*), or irresponsible (*pramatta*).[39] Another provision was that insane people were not to be punished for speaking falsely.[40] The penalty was reduced in criminal assaults when irresponsibility (*pramāda*), intoxication (*mada*), or madness (*unmāda*) was the cause.[41] Furthermore, an insane person who violated another's property was excused,[42] and he was exempted from being tortured into confessing his crime.[43] Manu, one of the codifiers of Hindu law, explains that a woman who violated the bounds of her marriage when her husband was irresponsible (*pramatta*) or intoxicated (*matta*) should have her possessions taken

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[38] Some scholars date Kautilīya's *Ārthaśāstra* to ca. 100 C.E.

[39] *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* 1.10.10-11.

[40] *Gautama Dharmasūtra* 5.25

[41] *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra* 3.19.

[42] *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra* 4.13.

away and be temporarily abandoned by him, but if he was mad (*unmatta*), she should keep her possessions and not be abandoned.[44]

Yet despite these special provisions, the legal texts marginalized the insane in numerous ways. With respect to their legal rights, their gifts[45] and contracts[46] were invalid. They were disqualified from inheritance rights[47] and were considered unfit for marriage.[48] They were ostracized by society since neither brahmins[49] nor householders[50] were permitted to look at them.

The *Dharmaśāstra*-s are roughly contemporaneous with the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, an Āyurvedic treatise that discusses the luminous qualities of men afflicted by deities (*devajuṣṭa*). Yet the legal texts do not mention *unmāda* caused by possessing deities that bestow positive qualities on people. Because the devotional tradition (*bhakti*) had not yet developed, there was no established structure in which to discuss or exalt a divinely inspired type of *unmāda*.

The pantheon of Hindu gods and goddesses who are paradigmatically mad constitutes an archetype that sanctions the mad behavior of devotees and saints. David Kinsley states:

> A curious theme pervades Hindu mythology. It is the theme of divine madness. . . . The gods and goddesses are often called mad or are described or portrayed as acting as if mad. Perhaps not

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[43] *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra* 4.8.

[44] *Manu Smṛti 9.78-79.*

[45] *Nārada Smṛti* 4.9-10.

[46] *Viṣṇu Smṛti* 7.10; *Manu Smṛti 8.163; Nārada Smṛti 4.137;*

[47] *Viṣṇu Smṛti* 15.33; *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* 17.52-54; *Manu Smṛti 9.201; Nārada Smṛti 16.22.*

[48] *Nārada Smṛti* 15.36-37.

[49] *Viṣṇu Smṛti* 71.30-31.

[50] *Manu Smṛti* 3.159, 161,

> surprisingly madness is also seen to be a typical characteristic of many Hindu saints, while certain cults or *sampradāyas* seem to inculcate acting as if mad or are typified by mad behavior among their adherents.[51]

According to one tradition, Viṣṇu's twenty-four *avatāras* were at one time intoxicated. To tame them, Śiva assumed the form of twenty-four Kāpālikas who then cut off the *avatāras*' heads.[52] This story and the myth of Śiva-Kapālin or Kapāleśvara, who had become a Kapālin after cutting off the fifth head of Brahmā, the creator, are charters for the mad behavior of Kāpālika ascetics.

According to certain Hindu mythological representations, the universe incorporates an element of madness, and the madness of the deities is seen as a mark of strength and freedom rather than as an indicator of weakness or limitation. For instance, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* recalls that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma slaughtered the Yādavas in an enraged fit of uncontrolled violence that staved off disorder.[53] The goddess Kālī becomes intoxicated by the blood of her victims, and she is often called *mad*. Rāmprasād praises her: "O Mother! Yours is an asylum of mad Beings."[54] Furthermore, the *Kāmikāgama* tells the story of Viṣṇu's incarnation (*avatāra*) Narasiṃha, whose uncontrolled frenzy threatens to destroy the world until Śiva slays him.[55] In separation from her lover, Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā becomes divinely mad

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[51] David Kinsley, "'Through The Looking Glass:' Divine Madness In The Hindu Religious Tradition," *History of Religions*, V 13, No. 4 (May, 1974): 270.

[52] David N. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects* (Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1991), p. 38.

[53] *Bhāgavata-purāṇa-purāṇa* 9.30.11-25.

[54] Jadunath Sinha, *Rama Prasada's Devotional Songs: The Cult of Shakti* (Calcutta: Sinha Publishing House, 1966), p. 111, no. 207.

[55] Cited in T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd ed. (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1968), p. 2, pt. 1:172.

(*divyonmāda*) and suffers from a passionate delirium (*mādana*) that causes her to tremble and hallucinate visions of him.

Śiva, the erotic ascetic yogi, is the quintessential mad deity whose antisocial habits ironically stave off cosmic disorder. Rāmprasād praises the mad god who is inebriated with hemp,[56] and the Tamil Śaivite saint Nampi Ārūrar refers to him as the mad one (*pittā*).[57] Covered in ash and wearing garlands of human skulls, Śiva regularly haunts cremation grounds or else hangs out on mountain peaks in an intoxicated state. Whereas his wife Pārvatī is a domesticating influence, the goddess Kālī encourages his lawlessness. The story about Śiva in the Pine Forest relates that Kāma, the god of desire, strikes him with an arrow, which causes him to become mad. His wild dancing and intoxicated behavior seduce and madden the wives of the sages, who then curse Śiva that his phallus (*linga*) should fall off.[58]

While normative brahmanical standards do not condone madness, and mad characters tend to dwell in peripheral places such as mountain peaks and cremation grounds, madness is nonetheless not banished ideologically to the dark margins of Indian society. Unlike Western philosophical and religious traditions, which almost exclusively privilege rational inquiry as the preeminent way of knowing reality, certain Hindu mythological traditions suggest that an epistemological shift enables us to determine that "consensus reality" is sheer madness. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* clearly expresses this idea. When Yaśodā looks inside Kṛṣṇa's mouth and sees the whole universe, she is thrown into a great quandary. "She became frightened and confused, thinking, 'Is this a dream or an illusion fabricated by God? Or is it a

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[56] Sinha, p. 162, no. 203..

[57] M.A. Dorai Rangaswamy, *The Religion and Philosophy of Tevaram* (Madras: University of Madras, 1958), book 1, p. 396.

[58] *Vāmana Purāṇa* 6.25-44, 58-77.

delusion in my own mind?'"[59] The point is that "the vision of [ultimate] reality may be the only true sanity, but it *feels* like madness. Illusion is what feels normal."[60] The certainty of our identity is thrown into question when we suddenly encounter a more expansive frame of reality. What one might originally have thought to be madness turns out to be "the vision of [ultimate] reality" that the limited mind cannot handle.

In his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Śureśvara (ca. 710-750 C.E.), a junior contemporary of Śaṅkara (ca. 700-725 C.E.), captures the dichotomous standpoints from which we may identify madness. The following verse refers to the story of Jaḍa Bharata in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that is elaborated in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa.* The liberated being named Bharata was said to be unconscious (*jaḍa)* and mad (*unmatta*) because he was free from conceptualization. Śureśvara states:

> For those who have realized the essence of reality, this world is unconscious and mad, like the malevolent beings. On the other hand, for men of this world, those who have realized the essence of reality are unconscious and mad, like malevolent beings.
>
> *buddhatattvasya loko 'yaṃ jaḍonmattapiśācavat /*
> *buddhatattvo 'pi lokasya jaḍonmattapiśācavat //*[61]

Who is mad and who is sane is up for grabs. Our "möbius universe" with infinite nested frames of reality forces us to relinquish the stranglehold we have on the belief that our own ways of defining madness and sanity are definitive.

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[59] Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Hindu Myths: A Sourcebook, Translated from the Sanskrit* (Harmondsworth, England, 1975), pp. 218-221. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 10.8.21-45.

[60] Doniger O'Flaherty, *Dreams,* p. 111.

[61] *Bṛhadāraṇyakabhāṣyavarttika* 1.4.1173. I am grateful to Sthanesvar Timalsina who found this reference for me.

The earliest Śaiva sectarian group, the Pāśupatas (ca. 2nd-century C.E.), feigned epileptic seizures and went about as if mad. Imitating Śiva's mad behavior, they intentionally courted disrepute in order to subvert the normative social structures and reinforce their renunciation of the world. The *Pāśupatasūtra* explains, "Because of the censure of others, he gives his (accumulated) demerit (*pāpa* or *adharma*) to them, and he takes the (accumulated) merit (*sukṛta* or *dharma*) from them."[62] From the Pāśupatas' perspective, acting as if mad is merely a ruse, even if, from the normative brahmanical standpoint, they appear to be afflicted by pathological madness. It is said that the yogi should wander like a ghost (*pretavaccaret*), appear ignorant (*mūḍha*), and act like a madman (*unmattavat*), keeping his sanity hidden (*gūḍha*) from view. This behavior, which Daniel Ingalls refers to as "seeking of dishonor,"[63] is similar to that of devotees in subsequent *bhakti* and tantric traditions. Pāśupata asceticism set a precedent for others to incorporate and valorize madness, although not all later instances of intoxicated devotion flirt with and subvert brahmanical norms.

Another early non-Vedic Śaiva ascetic sect, the Kāpālikas (ca. 7th-14th centuries C.E.) similarly engaged in heterodox behaviors that seemed mad according to brahmanical norms.[64] Descriptions of their traditions can be found in the Sanskrit drama, *Mattavilāsa* ("Drunken Play"), by the Pallava king Mahendravarman (ca. 600-630 C.E.). A typical Kāpālika ascetic, Unmatta-Bhairava ("Mad Bhairava"),

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[62] Quoted in Lorenzen, p. 187.

[63] Daniel H. Ingalls, "Cynics and Pāśupatas: The Seeking of Dishonor," *Harvard Theological Review* 55, 3 (1962): 281-98.

[64] The 1st-century Prakrit text *Gāthā-saptaśatī* mentions a female Kāpālikā, and the Buddhist text *Lalitavistara* (c. 1st - 2nd centuries C.E.) mentions people who smear their bodies with ashes and carry a skull and *khaṭvāṅga*. "By the sixth to seventh centuries references to Kāpālika ascetics become fairly commonplace." See Lorenzen, pp. 13-14.

advocates use of wine and women as a viable road to liberation. He is described as follows:

> A certain Kāpālika of the Śūdra caste (*jati*) named Unmatta-Bhairava (lived) there. His body was covered with ashes from a funeral pyre; his neck was ringed with a garland of human skulls; (three horizontal) streaks of lamp-black were drawn across his forehead; all his hair was fashioned into a top-knot (*jaṭā-jūṭa*); his waistband and loincloth were made from a tiger skin; a skull-bowl adorned his left hand; his right hand held a loudly ringing bell (*ghaṇṭā*); and he was chattering repeatedly 'O Śambhu-Bhairava! Aho, Kālīśa!'[65]

The mad behavior of devotees in the broad range of Hindu traditions endears them to the mad gods and goddesses. Modeling his behavior on a chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā*), the Hindu saints and yogis "[revel] in the wonderland of redemptive insanity."[66] Among the Tamil Vaiṣṇava saints known as the Ālvars (ca. 6th-9th centuries C.E.), madness is a sign of sainthood. The 10th-century Kashmir Śaiva devotee Utpaladeva is completely unabashed about his diehard devotional convictions, which he expresses succinctly and adamantly by his exclamation, "let me become mad" (*bhaveyamunmadaḥ*) (*Śivastotrāvalī* 13.8). An injunction in the *Kulārṇava Tantra* (ca. 14th-century C.E.) instructs the *kula-yogi* to behave as if maddened (*unmatta*) (9.67, 9.72). His ritualized transgressive behavior, which denies (and is said to supercede) *dharma* through the use of forbidden substances such as wine and women, causes him to be labeled as a madman. But his own transformed perspective reveals the irony that it is others who are caught in the grip of the madness that he has transcended. Likewise, the 17th-century Maharashtrian saint Tukārāma explains that the ideal devotee appears to be mad in the eyes of worldly people. The life and teachings of the 19th-century Bengali saint

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[65] Translation by Lorenzen, p. 47. Also see "A Parody of the Kāpālikas in the *Mattavilāsa*" in *Tantra in Practice*, edited by David Gordon White (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 81-96.

[66] Kinsley, p. 305.

Ramakrishna easily demonstrate the centrality of madness for this much beloved figure in the international Hindu community today. His unpredictable behavior and frenzied fits of ecstasy revealed his madness, and his exclamations that one must become mad in order to obtain the divine show his positive evaluation of that experience. A "wounded healer" whose intermittent laughing, weeping, dancing, and singing his contemporaries found to be healing and exemplary, Ramakrishna is the archetypal saint whose insufferable joy exhibits a divine madness (*divyonmāda*). As June McDaniel says about Bengali saints, "Not all the holy men are mad, but the most respected ones are."[67] And in Nepal today at festival times, devotees of Bhairava use specifically designed cups that allow them to shoot beer (a substitute for the maddening liquor of Ānanda Bhairava) into their mouths and thereby assimilate the wild energy and intoxication of Bhairava.[68] But whereas Bhairava's is a divine intoxication, his Nepali devotees may be experiencing either the nectar of the god or a drunken stupor.

The madness of the gods, goddesses, and saints has historically drawn some censure from within India despite, or precisely because of, the provisions that the society makes for it. The 7th-century text *Mattavilāsa*, which describes Kāpālika practice, expresses King Mahendravarman's contempt for this non-Vedic Śaiva ascetic sect. The 10th-century Kashmiri Śaiva yogis who engaged in heterodox *kaulika* ritual practices were persecuted even though Abhinavagupta, the systematizer of their traditions, was well-respected. Kṣemendra, a younger contemporary of Abhinavagupta, paints a satirical portrait of tantric practitioners in his *Narmamalā* ("Garland of Satire"). He depicts a motley crew of drunken

[67] June McDaniel, *The Madness of the Saints: Ecstatic Religion in Bengal* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. x.

disciples guided by a drunken master of the Kaula ritual. Kṣemendra states, "Exalting, surrounded by dogs and mad women, his body smeared with faeces, he knows the Mantras, practices alchemy, magic, and ritual intercourse. Full of wisdom, he knows the nature of lust."[69] And many centuries later, the post-Enlightenment Orientalist agenda has prompted some Indians either to deny the existence of Kaula practice or criticize the yogis whose ritualized transgressions of brahmanical norms are seen as abominations.

Overview of Study

This study isolates a set of ideas from the large corpus of information on possession and *unmāda* in Indian literature and culture. I trace the history of the concept of *unmāda* from the Āyurvedic texts (ca. 3rd-7th centuries C.E.), where it is an undesirable condition, to the later nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir (ca. 10th-11th centuries C.E.), wherein the state of intoxicated devotion (*bhaktimada*) became a goal of practice (*sādhana*). In Āyurveda, although some symptoms of *unmāda* such as supranormal strength seem to be desirable, the condition caused by divinities that transgress the permeable boundaries of the vulnerable human body warrants medical treatment (*pratiniṣedha*) and/or is categorized as pathology (*unmādanidāna*). The medical treatises explain that possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities invade humans and cause *unmāda*, which must be eradicated. However, in the later heterodox dualistic Śaiva yoga context (ca. 8th-9th centuries C.E.), *samāveśa* and *āveśa* (reconfigurations of the Sanskrit verbal root *viś* + *sam* + *ā* as abstract nouns) mean a controlled type of possession by mostly female divinities

[68] Personal communication with David White, October 2002.

that one attracts in order to extract their power (*śakti*) and assimilate their intoxication (*unmatta, mada*). Thereafter, in the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir, both *unmāda* and the associated notion of possession are again reformulated with radically different and positive significations. Herein the abstract noun *samāveśa* means the mystical experience of immersion in the ocean of absolute consciousness. To attain this state of consciousness, the *kula-yogi* engages in transgressive behaviors to subvert and thereby transcend limitation by ethical norms. Non-initiates see this kind of behavior as an undesirable type of *unmāda.* But as a goal of meditation, *samāveśa* can be understood as a desirable state that is sweetened by an intoxicating or mad devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). The yogi becomes totally soaked by his intoxication (*unmāda*) from immersion (*samāveśa*) in the blissful, scintillating ocean of consciousness. Whereas the dualistic medical perspective pathologizes all types of *unmāda*, the dualistic and nondualistic Śaiva traditions expand the semantic field of this term to include their respective goals of practice (*sādhana*). Drunk in his devotion to Śiva, the yogi appears like an ordinary madman though in fact he is an extraordinary madman enveloped in and illuminated by unitary consciousness. Swami Lakshmanjoo, a 20th-century guru who is said to be the most recent figure in an ancient lineage dating back to 10th-century Kashmir, taught nondual Śaiva yoga. His devotees say that he proclaimed his desire to be mad and that he was an intoxicated (*unmāda*) devotee of Śiva. Using both textual and ethnographic evidence, I show the protean nature of possession and *unmāda* throughout the history of these Hindu traditions.

Chapter 2 of this study examines definitions and descriptions of *unmāda* in the main Āyurvedic treatises, including the *Suśruta, Caraka,* and *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya*

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[69] Quoted in Mark S.G. Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and*

Saṃhitās. I translate passages from these three great medical texts (*bṛhattrayā*), which describe the qualities of a person who is afflicted (*juṣṭa*), assaulted (*abhidharṣaṇa*), enthralled (*vaśīkṛta*), or in some other way possessed by a broad range of entering (*samāviśant*) divinities (*devagraha*-s, "deity-seizers"; *bhūta*-s, "demons"; *bhūtagraha*-s, "demon-seizers"). Āyurvedic physicians attempt to eliminate the demonic cause of deranged behavior resulting from *unmāda* in order to improve people's lives. Even though the symptoms brought about by divinities known as *deva*-s include enviable qualities such as supranormal strength and knowledge, healing techniques are prescribed to cure the afflicted person. The demonic or divine causes of seemingly desirable symptoms, like the undesirable symptoms, must be eliminated. The positive qualities that are never rooted out of medical assessments of *unmāda* can be seen to foreshadow the later favorable evaluations of *unmāda*. As Mitchell Weiss explains, in the Āyurvedic literature the condition of a person possessed by a *deva* "is less one of devotion to the deity, but rather [that] he has been seized by and thus has become the deity. Although this condition is considered pathological in the early ayurvedic texts, in the context of later *bhakti* cults it would more likely be deemed desirable."[70]

In the medical context possession is an uncontrolled and undesirable experience brought on by malevolent possessors that inflict loathsome, prosaic, or positive qualities, all of which the Āyurvedic physicians try to eliminate. In later traditions practitioners sought to channel such spontaneous experiences into controlled types of possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) as means to replicate the desirable qualities that previously had arisen only involuntarily. In a ritual context possession

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Practices of Kashmir Shaivism (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 16.

becomes both a means for gaining divine power and the evidence of the divine power thus gained. The practitioner intentionally assimilates the intoxication (*mada*) of the possessing divinities. This is the subject of Chapter 3, which discusses yogis who seek possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) by hordes of mostly female divinities that are thought to populate the world. In the heterodox Śaiva ritual context, which is the archaic substratum of the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir, the yogi's possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) and his resulting empowerment through his madness or intoxication (*mada*) are the sanctioned indicators of his experience. Thus, the meaning of *unmāda* is reformulated as the positive experience of *mada*. The goal of ritual practice is to participate in and enjoy the power of these goddesses and in so doing stave off the loathsome symptoms that might otherwise result from uncontrollable divinities. To document possession in the archaic Śaiva context, I look at three seminal texts: the *Siddhayogeśvarīmatatantra* (*SYMT*) ("The Doctrine of Accomplished Female Spirits"), the *Netra Tantra* (*NT*) ("Tantra of the Eye"), and the *Parātriṃśikā* (*PT*) ("The Supreme Thirty").

Chapter 4 explores the concept of *samāveśa* wherein the distinction between possessor and possessed completely collapses as the yogi recognizes his interpenetration with Śiva, his identity as Śiva. Here, in the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir, the possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) of the heterodox and dualistic Śaiva context has mutated into a mystical absorption or immersion in absolute consciousness. Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula subsumes rather than dispenses with the two earlier modes of dealing with possessing divinities by reconfiguring the hordes of female divinities as so many internal energies of

[70] Mitchell Gralnick Weiss, "*Critical Study of unmāda in the Early Sanskrit Medical Literature: An Analysis of Ayurvedic Psychiatry With Reference to Present-day Diagnostic Concepts*" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1979), pp. 137-138.

consciousness. The *kula-yogi* engages in transgressive behaviors using the five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*) en route to achieving recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of his identity as Śiva. Used as a technical term that correlates with the four means, or *upāya*-s[71] to achieve direct experience of supreme consciousness, *samāveśa* is first and foremost a philosophical designation even as it points to the culmination of theistic experience. The widespread theme of immersion in consciousness (*samāveśa*) is expressed using a variety of terms, some of which are etymologically related to the key technical term *samāveśa.*[72] To organize and limit the scope of this study, I will concentrate on a single lineage (*paraṃpara*) of thinkers: Somānanda (ca. 900-950 C.E.), Utpaladeva (10th-century C.E.), Abhinavagupta (ca. 975-1025 C.E.), and Kṣemaraja (ca. 1000-1050 C.E.). In addition to examining texts written by these historical figures, I will refer to the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (ca. 8th-9th century C.E.) a text that Abhinavagupta occasionally quotes. Compiled just prior to or during the 14th-century, the *Kulārṇavatantra* also expresses ideas that are germane to Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula synthesis.

Chapter 5 demonstrates that in certain points in Kashmir Śaiva texts, *samāveśa* is inextricably enmeshed with the devotional orientation (*bhakti*) of Śaiva practice. Used as a classificatory system in the philosophical milieu, *samāveśa* gauges accomplishment attained through the various means (*upāya*-s). In the (largely co-extensive) *bhakti* milieu, *samāveśa* primarily refers to the ecstatic devotional goal of Śaiva yoga: the recognition and experience of one's union with and unity as Śiva. Certain nondual Śaiva thinkers emphasize the connection

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[71] The fourfold means (*caturvidham jñānacatuṣka*) include the following: *anupāya, śāmbhavopāya, śāktopāya,* and *āṇavopāya.*

[72] The variety of terms includes the following: *āveśa/āveśana, praveśana, anupraveśana,* and *saṃniveśa.* Other terms are *magna/majjana/nimajjana/unmajjana, vilīna/līnatā/galita/laya, vyāpti/vyāpta, mukha, viṣa, vahni,* and *vedha, viddha.*

between *samāveśa* and *bhakti* through a variety of concepts whose meanings overlap: immersion as devotion (*samāveśa bhakti*), intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), and highest devotion (*parā bhakti, paramuddāmabhakti*). This chapter explores these concepts in order to isolate the characteristic features of *bhakti* within the nondual Śaiva traditions, which invariably involve a synthesis of immersion (*samāveśa*) and intoxication (*bhaktyunmāda*). In revisiting the work of Somānanda, Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta, and Kṣemarāja, I draw primarily from Utpaladeva's poetic text, *Śivastotrāvalī*.

In chapter 6, the conclusion, I suggest further areas for research, most notably the concepts of absorption in consciousness (*samāveśa*) and intoxicated devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*) as taught by Swami Lakshmanjoo, a contemporary exemplar of the intoxicated devotee of Śiva. His devotees in India, Europe, and America identify him with Abhinavagupta, the 10th-century systematizer of the Śaiva traditions of Kashmir. The legacy of Lakshmanjoo clarifies and ties together the topics considered in this study: the concern with eliminating possessing divinities, as described in Āyurveda, persists in harmonious conjunction with nondual Śaiva cosmology.

Whether *unmāda* is viewed as an indication of pathology or a harbinger of liberation depends in part on the tradition doing the classification. It also depends on the individual person, who may or may not subject himself to, and be circumscribed by, his tradition's collective standards. What is seen as the disempowerment or empowerment of a person is determined by perspective. Normative reality is "consensus reality," which may be viewed by some people as the true culprit of unmitigated suffering. By giving alternative belief systems full credit, we empathize with another culture's or person's point of view. The

conclusions that a person ends up with, which may be of a very different order than that of the group or individual, will reveal whether he dwells inside or outside the "wonderland of redemptive insanity."[73]

[73] The relationship between mystical experience and ethics has increasingly become a topic of concern among scholars. See *Crossing Boundaries: Ethics in the History of Mysticism*, edited by G. William Barnard and Jeffrey Kripal (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002). See also Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom: Eroticism & Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001). Additionally, see Sarah Caldwell, "The Heart of the Secret: A Personal and Scholarly Encoutner with Shakta Tantrism in Siddha Yoga" in *Nova Religio*, Volume 5, no. 1, October 2001. www.novareligio.com/caldwell.pdf. Since writing this article Caldwell has suggested that an insistence upon ethics, review boards, and informed consent agreements will eliminate illegalities within guru traditions (Society for Tantric Studies Conference, October, 2002).

Chapter Two

Possessing Divinities and *Unmāda* in Āyurveda

He who is satisfied and pure and who has the appropriate scent and garlands, who is hearty and whose speech is truthful and polished, who is pious, energetic, resolute, and grants wishes, he is a man afflicted by deities (*devajuṣṭa*).

saṃtuṣṭaḥ śucirapi ceṣṭagandhamālyo nistandrī hyavitathasaṃskṛtaprabhāṣī /
tejasvī sthiranayano varapradātā brahmaṇyo bhavati naraḥ sa devajuṣṭaḥ //
--*Suśruta Saṃhitā* 6.60.8

[The *bhūta*-s producing *unmāda* cause] these characteristics in a person: greater than normal strength, heroism, valor, courage, comprehension, attention, memory, understanding, speech, and discernment.

tasyemāni rūpāṇi bhavanti tadyathā
atyātmabalavīryapauruṣaparākramagrahaṇadhāraṇasmaraṇajñānavacanavijñānāni //
--*Caraka Saṃhitā* 2.7.13

He who has indestructible speech, courage, heroism, and actions due to his knowledge and related qualities, and who has prowess, strength and other qualities, . . . he has *unmāda* caused by [the assault (*abhidharṣaṇa*) of] a *bhūta.*

amartyavāgvikramavīryaceṣṭo jñānādi vijñānabalādibhiryaḥ /
. . . bhūtotthamunmādamudāharettam //
--*Caraka Saṃhitā* 6.9.17

Due to the deities (*deva*-s), he may be known as maddened (*unmatta*) who has a placid gaze, who is serious, unapproachable, and dispassionate, who desires neither sleep nor food, whose sweat, urine, feces, and flatulence are slight, and who has a pleasant odor and a face like a full blown lotus.

saumyadṛṣṭiṃ gambhīramadhṛṣyamakopanam asvapnabho
janābhilāṣiṇamalpasvedamūtrapurīṣavātaṃ śubhagandhaṃ
phullapadmavadanamiti devonmattaṃ vidyāt //
--*Caraka Saṃhitā* 6.9.20.1

One whose face beams like a full blown lotus blossom, whose gaze is placid, who is free of anger, whose speech, sweat, odor, and urine are slight, who has no desire for food, is devoted to deities (*deva*-s) and brahmans, is pure, and has perfected speech, who seldom blinks and is charming, who grants boons and likes to wear white garlands, who enjoys rivers and being high on rocky peaks, does not sleep, and is invincible--He may be known as brought under the power of deities (*devavaśīkṛta*).

phullapadmopamamukhaṃ saumyadṛṣṭimakopanam /
alpavāksvedaviṇmūtraṃ bhojanānabhilāṣiṇam //
devadvijātiparamaṃ śuciṃ saṃskṛtavādinam /

mīlayantaṃ cirānnetre surabhiṃ varadāyinam //
śuklamālyāmbarasaricchailoccabhavanapriyam /
anidramapradhṛṣyaṃ ca vidyāddevavaśīkṛtam //

--AṣṭāṅgahṛdayaSaṃhitā 6.4.13-15

These passages from the *Suśruta* (ca. 3rd-century B.C.E.), *Caraka* (ca. 3rd-2nd centuries B.C.E.), and *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* (ca. 7th-century C.E.) *Saṃhitā*-s, the three great texts (*bṛhattrayā*) of Āyurveda, "science of life", describe the luminous qualities of a person afflicted (*juṣṭa*), assaulted (*abhidharṣaṇa*), made powerless (*vaśīkṛta*), or in some other way possessed by demons (*bhūta*-s) or by deities (*deva*-s), one type among a broad range of divinities (*devagraha*-s, "divine-seizers"; *bhūta*-s, "demons"; *bhūtagraha*-s, "demon-seizers"). The conspicuous categorization of such an accomplished and pure person amidst the unremarkable and remarkably impure people possessed by less reputable divinities is notable. In their typologies of possessors, the medical texts do not analyze, and barely even acknowledge, the marked difference between divinities that confer respectable or supranormal qualities and those that grant prosaic or loathsome symptoms. The following analysis of the chapters in the three great Āyurvedic texts (*bṛhattrayā*) that deal with demonology (*bhūtavidyā*) will discuss the paradox that luminous qualities are basically ignored, warrant treatment (*pratiniṣedha*), and/or are categorized as pathological madness (*unmādanidāna*).[1]

The Āyurvedic texts focus almost exclusively on the pathological significations of *unmāda* instead of reflecting on its dichotomous meanings. In his critical study of *unmāda* in the medical treatises, Weiss refers briefly to the

[1] The Sanskrit term "*unmāda*" can be translated as "madness, intoxication." See Monier Monier Williams, *Sanskṛit-English Dictionary,* 1994 edition, s.v. "*unmāda.*" However, whenever possible I will leave it untranslated in order to capture its native significations and not burden it with the Western understanding of (and prejudice against) all forms of madness.

dichotomous meanings. He explains that the "double meaning of the term *unmāda* . . . signifying both a state of divine ecstasy and a psychopathological condition, . . . [is] inherent in the Deva *unmāda* subtype in the ayurvedic nosology."[2] But the medical texts do not explicitly admit that *unmāda* sometimes designates a "state of divine ecstasy." And although Weiss acknowledges the double meaning, he neither accounts for it nor elaborates on it. Thus, in both the medical literature and Weiss's study, the luminous qualities of *unmāda* are marginalized. The following analysis will discuss both significations of *unmāda* and thereby show the import of its marginalized meaning.

According to Āyurveda, the word *mada* refers to a mildly undesirable experience that can lead to *unmāda*, the principal term used in the texts, which is not primarily (if at all) acknowledged as a blissful condition. With the intensification of the verbal root *mad* by both the prefix *ud-* meaning "up, over, above" and the *vṛddhi* of the short vowel *a*, *unmāda* is a classificatory term that does not explicitly or primarily denote ecstatic religious experience. Rather, it refers to the upward movement or intensification of *mada*, an unsolicited experience with negative associations that the doctors attempt to treat. Another cognate word, *unmatta* ("maddened"), the past passive participle of the verbal root *mad* + *ud*, is used synonymously with *unmāda*. None of the terms *mada*, *unmāda*, or *unmatta* is discussed in Āyurveda as a desirable effect of possessing divinities or religious practice.

The luminous qualities of a possessed person are increasingly emphasized and become more sterling and numerous in each subsequent medical text.

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[2] Weiss, p. 10.

Mentioned only once in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, such passages appear on three separate occasions in the *Caraka Saṃhitā*. The greatest synthesis of Indian medicine, the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* was affected by the influential contemporaneous tantric culture wherein the similar qualities of a yogi or devotee were judged to be proof of spiritual accomplishment (*siddhi*). This latest medical text articulates in the most glowing terms an extended list of the supranormal qualities of a person controlled by *deva*-s. Furthermore, in this treatise the number of possessing divinities far exceeds that in the earlier treatises. The largely unrecognized, desirable "symptoms" mentioned in these Āyurvedic texts foreshadow the decisively positive evaluations given to a comparable set of "symptoms" in tantric and devotional contexts.

The supranormal qualities receive little attention because Āyurveda is first and foremost concerned with the blood and pus of human physiology and with staving off pathology. The Āyurvedic physicians help people attain prosperity (*bhoga*) rather than the marks of liberation (*mokṣa*). The medical tradition is a cautious science that does not deal with people who seek to transmute their physical bodies into powerful, divine bodies. To gain acceptance and status in society, the compilers of the Sanskrit medical texts looked for clients well-established socially, not those who stood on the periphery or outside the social system, i.e. those who may appear insane in the midst of their divine intoxication. According to Āyurveda what lies beyond this life is heaven and additional lifetimes, rather than the possibility of liberation (*mokṣa*). To enjoy worldly prosperity, a person needs to be sane. The marks of insanity are not beneficial to those who want to run a society.

Therefore, Āyurveda does not have a high opinion of any type of *unmāda* including the divinely inspired intoxication caused by *devas.*[3]

The dates of the *Suśruta* and *Caraka Saṃhitās* are contested because they may both be compilations with sections of varying ages. Looking at the names of these treatises may reveal something about their origin. *Suśruta* derives from the verbal root *śru* ("to hear") and may have been compiled by those who listened well to various medical teachings. *Caraka* derives from the verbal root *car* ("to wander") and may have been compiled by wanderers, people who moved around and assimilated information from a variety of sources.[4] Alternatively, Suśruta and Caraka may have been historical figures. These ambiguities not withstanding, I believe that their proper historical order is the following: *Suśruta Saṃhitā* (ca. 3rd-century B.C.E.),[5] *Caraka Saṃhitā* (ca. 3rd-2nd century B.C.E.),[6] and *AṣṭāṅgahṛdayaSaṃhitā* (ca. 7th-century C.E.).[7] This chronology is in part based on Suśruta's use of the term *graha,* which is historically prior to the term *bhūta* that Caraka uses. Furthermore, the proliferating numbers of possessors in all three texts are historical accretions that reveal the increasing influence of popular possession practices.

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[3] I am thankful to Dr. Robert Svoboda who helped me develop these ideas. Personal communication, May 13, 2002. The medical tradition can be seen as making a political statement against shamanic and yogic interests that threaten the societal status quo.

[4] Personal communication with Svoboda,, May 13, 2002.

[5] "[T]he grammarian Kātyayana, roughly datable to ca. 250 BC (Cardona 1976: 267), mentions a grammatical rule for deriving an adjectival noun that means 'a statement by Suśruta'. It seems unlikely that this would be a different person, since the name Suśruta is virtually unique and synonymous with the present medical text. . . . [I]n Suśruta's text we have a work the kernel of which probably started some centuries BC in the form of a text mainly on surgery, but which was then heavily revised and added to in the centuries before AD 500." See Wujastyk, pp. 104-105.

[6] Wujastyk states, "[C]urrent scholarship tentatively places the composition of the earliest version of the *Compendium* in about the third or second centuries BC, although the text does not begin to be quoted widely in other parts of Sanskrit literature until the period of the Gupta dynasty (320-c. 480 AD)." Ibid, p. 40.

Each medical treatise has two or three chapters about *unmāda* that may be generated from a variety of causes, both endogamous (*nijā*) and exogenous (*āgantu*). The texts organize their discussions differently. The *Suśruta Saṃhitā* devotes a chapter to treatment (*pratiṣedha*) for possession by a comparatively small number of *graha*-s, seizers whose function is linked to pathology. Suśruta's chapter on treatment of *unmāda* deals with endogamous causes rather than possessing divinities as a root cause. The *Caraka Saṃhitā* categorizes slightly larger numbers of *bhūta*-s according to the types of *unmāda/unmatta* caused, and therapy is prescribed (*unmādacikitsita*). Neither the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* nor the *Aṣṭāṅga Saṃgraha* explicitly links *unmāda* to possession caused by the *bhūta*-s whose ranks again increase and expand geometrically in the *Aṣṭāṅga Saṃgraha.* The *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* devotes a chapter to distinguishing divinities (*bhūtavijñānīya*), discusses treatment (*pratiṣedha*) for them in the subsequent chapter, and reserves discussion about *unmāda* from endogamous and exogenous causes other than possession for yet another chapter. The *Aṣṭāṅga Saṃgraha*, which is thought to have evolved from the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā*, devotes a chapter to distinguishing *bhūta*-s and another to treating six types of *unmāda*, none of which is caused by possessing divinities.

In the three main medical texts, the concept of pathology somewhat recedes from prominence with respect to possessing divinities as a cause. For instance, the term *graha*, whose function is pathological, is most frequently used in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* and is replaced in *Caraka Saṃhitā* by *bhūta*, a term that speaks more to ontological status. The *Caraka Saṃhitā* uses the term *unmāda* to attest to the pathology caused by *bhūta*-s. Thereafter, the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* and *Aṣṭāṅga Saṃhitās*

[7] Ibid, p. 208.

no longer mention *unmāda* in conjunction with *bhūta*-s because the focus moved to distinguishing and treating the proliferated number of possessors.

Even though the Āyurvedic treatises extensively describe the imbalance of bodily humors (*doṣas*) as an endogamous cause of *unmāda*, this discussion will look solely at possessing divinities as an exogenous cause. This focus will lay the foundation for explicating the historical changes that occur in the semantic field of terms for both possession and *unmāda*. The medical tradition focuses on the dualistic concept of possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities that enter the permeable human body against the person's will. In dualistic Śaiva rituals, practitioners seek possession (*samāveśa*) by a broad range of female divinities. The focus shifts again to the concept of absorption (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness in the later nondual Śaiva traditions of Kashmir. For the yogi/devotee who recognizes (*pratyabhijñāti*) that he is immersed in the totality of absolute consciousness, possession means entrance or co-penetration between himself and Śiva, which are not ultimately distinct. The etymological link between the two terms formed from the Sanskrit root *viś* + *sam* + *ā* reveals both the connection between these concepts and the historical change: in the medical treatises the present active particle *samāviśant* conveys the activity of the possessing divinities, whereas the abstract noun *samāveśa* in the nondual Śaiva texts conveys an ontological state of consciousness. The prefix *sam*, meaning "together" or "co," comes to fruition in the nondual Śaiva context where all provisional distinctions melt away and equalize. While the medical concept of possession has endured, it came to exist in conjunction with the focus on *samāveśa* as articulated in the mystical practices (*sādhana*) of nondual Śaiva yoga.

The term *unmāda* appears in Āyurvedic and Śaiva texts in radically divergent ways. Medical treatment for all varieties of *unmāda* shifts to a Śaiva Tantric celebration of intoxication and madness of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). The overall negative valences of *unmāda* in the medical treatises shift to decisively positive ones in the devotional (*bhakti*) contexts. Far from warranting treatment, co-penetration (*samāveśa*), which can be understood as intoxication or madness (*unmāda*), became the desirable goal of nondual Śaiva practice (*sādhanā*). This experience arises for the devotee drunk on the divine nectar that precipitates from his immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness.

Āyurveda is practiced widely in India today, and its teachings are becoming increasingly popular as the international field of complementary medicine continues to grow. In light of "New age āyurveda,"[8] as Kenneth Zysk has called this phenomenon, it is particularly interesting to look at Āyurvedic discussions of possession and *unmāda*, two categorically different types of experience in the West that are not differentiated in India. Given that "[i]llness is a cultural concept that travels poorly across boundaries,"[9] the field of ethnopsychiatry must contend with the problems that arise from contact between divergent interpretive frameworks. For instance, madness caused by divinely inspired possession is a familiar Western phenomenon only in our delegitimization of it. The triumph of reason beginning with the Enlightenment ousted Plato's sanction of a divinely inspired madness. Yet Āyurvedic doctors in India and the West today treat *unmāda* caused by possession. These medical practitioners now incorporate what, from their professional

[8] Kenneth Zysk, "New Age Āyurveda." Lecture presented at a conference of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Asian Medicine held at the Welcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London, 1995.

[9] Glucklich, p. 51.

standpoint, is an anachronism since the madness of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*) is an experience that at best is subtly alluded to in the medical texts and came to fruition in later nonmedical contexts.

The following discussion of *unmāda* caused by possession will first describe the canonical Indian medical assessment of this complex category of human experience. Thereafter, I will discuss contemporary accounts of *unmāda* diagnosed by Indian and Western Āyurvedic doctors. The idea that possessing divinities cause pathological *unmāda* warrants scholarly attention since this condition is being diagnosed not only in India, but also in the West. This analysis will show that illness and health may sometimes be no more than culturally determined labels.

Āyurveda is the Indian system of general medical practice that was codified in several Sanskrit treatises beginning about two centuries after the life of the Buddha, who lived during the 6^{th}-5^{th} centuries B.C.E. Literally meaning the "knowledge or science (*veda*) of life (*āyus*)," Āyurveda is said to have emerged from Brahmā the creator in the form of eight limbs (*aṣṭāṅga*): treatment of bodily diseases (*kāyacikitsā*), surgery (*śalya*), otolaryngology and ophthalmology (*śalākya*), pediatrics including obstetrics and gynecology (*kaumārabhṛtya*), toxicology (*agadatantra*), demonology (*bhūtavidyā*), rejuvenation therapy (*rasāyana*), and aphrodisiacs (*vājīkaraṇa*).

According to the Āyurvedic three humoral theory (*tridoṣa*), which guides explanation about etiology (*hetu*), clinical features (*liṅga*), and treatment (*auṣadha*) with respect to these eight specialties, people have different tendencies of mind and are constituted by variations of the humors (*doṣa*) that include wind (*vāta*), bile

(*pitta*), and phlegm (*kapha*).[10] Each person's particular imbalance of humors requires that he or she receive individually prescribed health care. As Priyavat Sharma says, "Man is not a machine and as such can't be operated equally with a uniform law. Every person has got his own individuality and normal variations."[11] According to the humoral theory, which is the basis of this preventative medical system, an imbalance specific to the individual causes discomfort in the body. The body-mind (*deha-mānasa*) approach of Āyurveda underlies the scientific natural treatment (*yukti-vyapāśraya*) procedures, which partially replaced the earlier supranormal treatment (*daivavyapāśraya*) methods that nonetheless continue to exert influence in the medical texts.

The specialty of demonology (*bhūtavidyā*) will be the focus of the following analysis. This specialty testifies that a body of material was necessary to explain and treat illnesses such as *unmāda*, which were inexplicable using the humoral model. The field of demonology distinguishes among various kinds of malignant divinities--*devagraha*, *bhūta*, and *bhūtagraha*--whose entrance into people warrants treatment (*pratiniṣedha*) and causes pathological *unmāda*. Each medical text has its own, although largely overlapping, group of divinities that causes symptoms that need to be combated. In popular religion, which increasingly influenced Āyurveda, the *graha*-s are frequently demons that snatch children or planets whose force seizes a person. A *bhūta* is a ubiquitous divinity, the spirit of a deceased person who met

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[10] Shiv Sharma dates the *tridoṣa* theory back to the *Rig Veda*. He quotes the following: *tridhātu śarma vahataṃ śubhaspati* (*RV̇* I.35.5). See Shiv Sharma, *The System of Ayurveda* (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1993), p. 78. But this theory is in fact not so early. The three humors are not mentioned together until the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra, but even there one cannot yet speak of a "*tridoṣa* theory" as such.

[11] Priyavrat Sharma, trans. and editor of *Caraka Saṃhitā* (Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia, 1981), p. xxix.

an untimely and violent death.[12] According to the medical standpoint, owing to possession by any number of these divinities a person develops *unmāda*, pathology of mental origin that upsets the humors or pathology of humoral origin that causes mental disturbances. While the Āyurvedic texts employ similar classifications of the broad range of possessing divinities in their nuanced descriptions of the various types of *unmāda,* a detailed analysis will show interesting minor variations among them.

Vedic Antecedents

Claims made in the foundational Āyurvedic literature to descent from the Vedas were most likely the attempts of the compilers to gain legitimacy from the elite brahmanical establishment.[13] In fact, the medical tradition probably arose in a nonbrahmanical milieu. Zysk argues that Āyurveda originated in the ascetic milieu of 5th-century B.C. E. North India.[14] Although no single body of textual sources is a direct historical antecedent to the medical tradition, it is interesting to compare descriptions of *unmāda* caused by possessing divinities mentioned in the non-medical Sanskrit literature that predates Āyurveda.

The overtly positive connotations of the Vedic usage of *mada/unmada* are for the most part not compatible with the meanings in the later medical texts. The *Rig Veda* refers neither frequently nor explicitly to pathology. The terms in the *Rig*

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[12] A *preta* is the spirit of a child who died in infancy or was born deformed. Likewise, *piśāca* are understood to be a class of demons that are spirits of mentally ill men. For a detailed description of the various kinds of spirits, see J. Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* 13 vols., Edinburgh, 1908-26, vol. 4, pp. 602 ff.

[13] Wujastyk, p. 17.

[14] Kenneth G. Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India: Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (New York: OUP, 1991).

Veda first and foremost describe a person who is pervaded by a deity and is said to have attained divine status. For instance, the long-haired ascetic, Keśin, ingests a plant essence or drug, probably Soma, that causes the gods to enter him, whereupon he flies through the air in a maddened (*unmadita*) state of consciousness (*Rig Veda* 10.136.3). Vedic ritual specialists visualized the hallucinogenic *soma* plant as a god, thereby enabling it to enter the body and bring about an exhilarated, blissful condition. Whereas the *Rig Veda* encourages ingestion of the deity Soma, only infrequently referring to its potentially pathological ramifications, Āyurveda decisively warns against entrance of divinities into the human body.

Yet a noteworthy parallel exists between Rig Vedic and Āyurvedic usages of *unmāda*, which in both bodies of texts encapsulates a dual meaning. Weiss's statement about the double meaning of the term *unmāda* is pertinent here since he draws a correlation between the *Rig Veda* and Āyurveda. He states that "[t]his double meaning of the term *unmāda* [in the *Rig Veda*], signifying both a state of divine ecstasy and a psychopathological condition, remains inherent in the Deva *unmāda* subtype in the ayurvedic nosology."[15] While Āyurveda does not descend directly from the Vedas, the connotations of *unmāda* that express the opposite extremes of pathology and ecstasy are parallel. In both textual traditions, to varying degrees, *unmāda* has positive and negative associations. This protean experience was valued long before the compilation of the medical texts. In both Vedic and Āyurvedic contexts it can be seen as precursor to devotional traditions wherein its positive valences flourish.

The *Atharva Veda Saṃhitā*, the fourth corpus of Vedas after the *Rig, Yajur,* and *Sāma Veda*, has a somewhat different tone than the *Rig Veda*'s and Āyurveda's

[15] Weiss, p. 10.

discussions of possessing divinities. The thrust in this treatise is not only to stave off the attention of unwanted divinities, but also to retaliate actively and eradicate them. The imprecations, blessings, and formulae of the *Atharva Veda* are largely intended to counteract negative influences that threatened to disrupt the Vedic sacrifice. While many hymns focus on concerns such as securing a woman's love, establishing a king, and bringing abundant rain, many others are specifically demonological in nature. For instance, *Atharva Veda* 1.28 is recited to banish sorceresses that kill children. The hope is not only that the god Agni will slay them but also that they will destroy one another. Agni is summoned to burn up those who have burned.

> Hither hath come forth god Agni, demon-slayer, disease-expeller, burning away deceivers, sorcerers, *kimīdin*-s. Burn against the sorcerers, against the *kimīdin*-s, O god; burn up the sorceresses that meet thee, O black-tracked one. She that hath cursed with cursing, that hath taken malignity as her root, that hath seized on [our] young to take its sap—let her eat [her own] offspring. Let the sorceress eat [her own] son, sister, and daughter; then let the horrid-haired sorceresses mutually destroy one another; let the hags be shattered asunder.[16]

Many other hymns express the need for payback against the malevolent divinities and the desire to overpower them with one's own power. *Atharva Veda* 4.36 states, "I overpower the *piśāca*-s with power; I take to myself their property; I slay all the abusers; let my design be successful."[17] The person who chants this hymn actively pursues the agent of his or another's possession with vindictive intent. The text states, "Let perdition halter him, as a horse with a horse-halter; the fool that is angry at me, he is not loosed from the fetter."[18] These hymns contrast with those in

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[16] *Atharvavedasaṃhitā*, trans. William Dwight Whitney (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971), pp. 28-29.

[17] Translation rendered by Whitney, p. 209.

[18] Ibid.

Āyurvedic texts, which do not express the urge to exact revenge on or kill demons. The Āyurvedic physicians focus entirely on mitigating their debilitating influence and treating the symptoms.

Whereas Āyurvedic treatises describe both loathsome and luminous symptoms, which can result from possessing divinities that cause *unmāda*, *Atharva Veda* does not emphasize enviable symptoms. *Atharva Veda* 6.111, an incantation focused entirely on relieving *unmāda*, explains that a demon's power causes decidedly undesirable symptoms.

> Unbind and loose for me this man, O Agni, who bound and well restrained is chattering folly. Afterward he will offer thee thy portion when he hath been delivered from his madness. Let Agni gently soothe thy mind when fierce excitement troubles it. Well-skilled I make a medicine that thou no longer mayst be mad. Insane through sin against the Gods, or maddened by a demon's power—Well-skilled I make a medicine to free thee from insanity. May the Apsarases release, Indra and Bhaga let thee go. May all the Gods deliver thee that thou no longer mayst be mad.[19]

Unlike the hymns that focus on staving off demons by actively counteracting them, this hymn does not speak about a desire to overpower the demons that cause unmāda. Rather, the focus, as in Āyurveda, is to relieve the troubled mind of the possessed person by appealing to the gods and preparing antidotal medicines.

Śuśruta Saṃhitā

The terminology, focus of concern, and comparatively few types of possessing divinities mentioned in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* suggest that this text is the earliest of the three medical treatises. The colophon to chapter 6.60 states:

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[19] Ralph T. H. Griffith, trans. *The Hymns of the Atharvaveda* (Varanasi: Master Khelari Lal and Sons, 1962),p.. 306.

> Included in the final section of the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* is the 60th chapter on the essentials of knowledge about *bhūta*-s entitled "Treatment For the Attack of Nonhumans."
>
> *iti suśrutasaṃhitāyāmuttaratantrāntargate bhūtavidyātantre 'mānuṣopasargapratiṣedho nāma ṣaṣṭitamo 'dhyāyaḥ //*

The colophon states that the chapter will discuss demonology (*bhūtavidyā*), although the word *amānuṣa* ("nonduman") is used to indicate the possessors. The term that appears most often throughout the chapter is *graha*, which is derived from the Sanskrit root *grah* or *grabh* meaning "to seize, grasp, lay hold of."[20] Suśruta's description of *graha*-s comes from the ancient astrological tradition wherein a *graha* was anything that possesses a person and refuses to let go, such as a planet, deity, or angry spirit. This term is historically earlier than *bhūta* and speaks to the pathological function of the possessing divinity. While Suśruta acknowledges the term *bhūta*, a more abstract diagnostic category that refers to ontological status, he is focused on the nonhumans (*amānuṣa*) as seizers (*graha*), pervasive and innumerable unseen entities that lurk and wait to grab unsuspecting victims. Weiss addresses this point when he states that *Suśruta Saṃhitā* 6.60 "seems to accept the existence of demons (*graha*) as supernatural entities lacking the limitations of the abstract diagnostic catetory [*bhūta*]."[21] The following verse introduces *graha*-s as the culprits of attacks that induce pathology.

> One who has knowledge of secrets and what has not yet happened, who is unstable and impatient, or whose behavior is unlike that of a human, he may be regarded as possessed by a seizer (*graha*).
>
> *guhyānāgatavijñānamanavasthā 'sahiṣṇutā /*
> *kriyā vā 'mānuśī yasmin sagrahaḥ parikīrtyate //* 6.60.4

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[20] Sanskrit-English Dictionary by Monier Monier-Williams, 1994 edition, s.v. "*grah/grabh*." This root is etymologically related to the English word "grab."

[21] Weiss, p. 54.

Later in the chapter Suśruta explains that *bhūta* is a technical term (*saṃjñā*) used by some people instead of the word *graha.* The verse implies his preference for the term *graha.*

> The technical term used by those who speak about them (*pravaktṛ*) is *bhūta.* Therefore, he knows the *bhūta*-s, otherwise termed the *graha,* by that other [diagnostic] term.
>
> *bhūtānīti kṛtā saṃjñā teṣāṃ saṃjñāpravaktṛbhiḥ /*
> *grahasaṃjñāni bhūtāni yasmādvettyanayā bhiṣak* // 6.60.27

The text then makes a general call to quell all *graha*-s without distinguishing among them.

> With this knowledge, the doctor is very intent, desiring to calm them [*graha*-s] down. Thus, it is called "the knowledge of *bhūta*-s."
>
> *vidyayā bhūtavidyātvamata eva nirucyate /*
> *teṣāṃ śāntyartham anvicchan vaidyastu susamāhitaḥ* // 6.60.28

Choice of the term *graha* reflects an understanding of possession akin to the nonmedical or popular religious viewpoint, which was in part concerned about warding off nocturnal wanderers (*niśācara, niśāvihāra*). At the outset of the chapter, the text tells us that the nighttime wanderers will be discussed at length (6.60.3). As the numerous verses on this topic indicate, the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* is deeply concerned about the *graha*-s who ferociously attack and kill innocent victims.

> The countless attendants of these seizers (*graha*) are those who wander in the night, who devour blood, fat, and flesh, who are exceedingly terrible, and who enter (*āviśanti*) a person.
>
> *teṣāṃ grahāṇāṃ paricārakā ye koṭīsahasrāyutapadmasaṃkhyāḥ /*
> *asṛgvasāmāṃsabhujaḥ subhīmā niśāvihārāśca tamāviśanti* // 6.60.22
>
> Among the nocturnal wanderers, those whose condition is determined by the troops of deities (*devagaṇa*-s) because they share their essence, they should be known as blessed by them.
>
> *niśācarāṇāṃ teṣāṃ hi ye devagaṇamāśritāḥ /*
> *te tu tat sattva saṃsargād vijñeyāstu tadañjanāḥ* // 6.60.23

> And those who are called deity-seizers (*devagraha*-s) are impure. They are invoked and revered as if they were deities (*deva*-s).
>
> *devagrahā iti punaḥ procyante 'śucayaśca ye /*
> *devavacca namasyante pratyarthyante ca devavat //* 6.60.24

These verses clearly reflect popular fears about the malevolent nighttime divinities that grab victims. They must be invoked and revered as *deva*-s in order to be propitiated. Wandering under the cover of darkness, they are understood to be the cause of disease that is inexplicable through the three humoral model (*tridoṣa*).

Although countless classes of demons are assumed to exist and their attendants multiply even these large numbers, the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* recognizes only eight main types. The text states:

> There are innumerable classes of seizers (*grahagaṇa*-s), but the chief ones among them manifest themselves in various forms. They may be divided into eight types (*aṣṭadhā*).
>
> *asaṅkhyeyā grahagaṇā grahādhipatayas tu ye /*
> *vyajyante vividhākārā bhidyante te tathā 'ṣṭadhā //* 6.60.6
>
> Among them are the deities (*deva*-s), troops of their enemies (*śatrugaṇa*-s), celestial musicians (*gandharva*-s), tree spirits (*yakṣa*-s), fathers (*pitṛ*-s), serpents (*bhujāṅga*-s), *rākṣas*-es and *piśāca*-s. These are the eight categories of deities (*deva*-s) called seizers (*graha*-s).
>
> *devāstathā śatrugaṇaśca teṣāṃ gandharvayakṣāḥ pitaro bhujaṅgāḥ /*
> *rakṣāṃsi yā cāpi piśācajātireṣo 'ṣṭako devagaṇo grahākhyaḥ //* 6.60.7

Except for the *deva*-s all the classes of *graha*-s enter (*viśanti*) their human victims and produce symptoms with unremarkable or remarkably negative associations. For instance, a person tormented by a *gandharva* attains a nondescript or at best easy-going disposition.

> A joyful man who frequents river banks and the inner forests, who is well-behaved, who likes singing, fragrances, and garlands, who while dancing laughs right out loud and who has little to say, this man is tormented by *gandharva* demons (*gandharvagrahaparipīdita*).

*hṛṣṭātmā pulinavanāntaropasevī svācāraḥ priyaparigītagandhamālyaḥ / nṛtyan vai prahasati cāru cālpaśabdaṃ gandharvagrahaparipīḍito manuṣyaḥ //*6.60.10

Judging by this person's character, he does not seem tormented (*paripīḍita*). And interestingly, his joyful mood is neither acknowledged nor encouraged. In contrast to this person's easy-going disposition, a person afflicted by the enemies of the gods (*devaśatru*) develops somewhat distasteful qualities:

> He who is sweaty, speaks ill of the twice-born, gurus and gods, has deceitful eyes, lacks fear and has an eye for untoward ways; whose character is offensive and who is satisfied by neither food nor drink, he is afflicted by the enemies of the gods (*devaśatrujuṣṭa*).
>
> *saṃsvedī dvijagurudevadoṣavaktā jihmākṣo vigatabhayo vimārgadṛṣṭiḥ / santuṣṭo bhavati na cānnapānajātair duṣṭātmā bhavati ca devaśatrujuṣṭaḥ // 6.60.9*

A person seized by a *rakṣas* also does not attain noble stature. He is more the antithesis of brahmanical standards than the person afflicted by the enemies of the gods (*devaśatru*-s). His remarkably negative interests and qualities are described as follows.

> He who seeks meat, blood, and transformations from various liquors, who is shameless, extremely cruel and powerful, violent and immensely strong, and who stalks in the night and loathes purity, he is seized (*gṛhīta*) by a *rakṣas.*
>
> *māṃsāsṛgvividhasurāvikāralipsur nirlajjo bhṛśamatiniṣṭhuro 'tiśūraḥ / krodhālurvipulabalo niśāvihārī śaucadviḍ bhavati ca rakṣasā gṛhītaḥ // 6.60.14*

In contrast a person possessed by *deva*-s intent on bestowing divine character takes on luminous qualities and numerous accomplishments. The text states:

> He who is satisfied and pure and who has the appropriate scent and garlands, who is hearty and whose speech is truthful and polished, who is pious, energetic, resolute, and grants wishes, he is a man afflicted by the deities (*devajuṣṭa*).

saṃtuṣṭaḥ śucirapi ceṣṭagandhamālyo nistandrī
hyavitathasaṃskṛtaprabhāṣī / tejasvī sthiranayano varapradātā
brahmaṇyo bhavati naraḥ sa devajuṣṭaḥ // 6.60.8

These "symptoms" with such positive associations are largely ignored. Not only is no attention paid to them, but no attempt is made to encourage them. Furthermore, they are repudiated. The term *deva* is used in two ways that blur its meaning. It refers both to the broad category of eight types of seizers (*devagraha*-s) and to one of the eight types in particular, the deities (*deva*). Since all types should be quelled (6.60.28), this surprisingly includes even the type that grants remarkable stature to the possessed person. Even though *deva*-s bring on such luminous qualities, they are nonetheless categorized under the rubric of deity-seizers (*devagraha*-s) that are broadly construed as impure. This categorization strips all possessors of positive associations. The text states:

> Those who are called deity-seizers (*devagraha*-s) are impure, yet they are invoked and honored as if they were deities (*deva*-s).
>
> *devagrahā iti punaḥ procyante 'śucayaśca ye /*
> *devavacca namasyante pratyarthyante ca devavat //* 6.60.24

Deva-s are thus at once part of the deity-seizer (*devagraha*) rubric and a separate group. This ambiguous or inconsistent classification system reveals that the text is clearly uncomfortable about the existence of a category of divinities that is totally pure and has the capacity to bring about desirable qualities.

Only a tiny window of opportunity exists to sanction *deva*-s that bestow luminous qualities. All the *graha*-s enter people unseen (*viśanti ca na dṛśyante grahāstadvaccharīriṇam*) (6.60.19) and may alternatively be intent upon injury, sport, or divine character (*hiṃsāvihārā ye kecid devabhāvam upāśritāḥ*) (6.60.26). This statement about the possibility that a *graha* may bestow divine character (*devabhāva*) is the only time that the text admits--in a short and rather clandestine

way--the potentially positive effects of possession. Whether a seizer has one or the other intentions is indeterminable prior to the affliction. Various treatments (*pratiniṣedha*) are prescribed for all eight types of seizers (*graha*-s) when they are injurious. The procedures include making oblations and preparing mixtures of various ingredients: holy grass (*kuśa*), liquor (*surā*), or food (*bali*), depending on the specific type of *graha* that needs to be warded off. To free oneself from *deva* when they are injurious, the text suggests the following:

> On those days, to turn away *bhūta*-s that are *deva*-s having made an oblation into the fire in the *deva* temple to the deity-seizer (*devagraha*), he should offer food (*bali*).
>
> *dineṣu teṣu devāni tadbhūtavinivṛttaye /*
> *devagrahe devagṛhe hutvā 'gniṃ prāpayedbalim //* 6.60.32

Judging from the positive resulting qualities, being afflicted by the *deva*-s (*devajuṣṭa*) intent on divine character gives rise to the luminous characteristics listed above (6.60.8). No treatment is prescribed in this instance. But curiously, this opportunity for *deva*-s to show off their capacity to bring about such accomplishment in the possessed person receives scant attention. It is briefly mentioned without comment amidst the rather prosaic and maladjusted qualities caused by other deity-seizers (*devagraha*-s). The apparently divine character of a person possessed by *deva*-s is treated as a mere footnote in the larger discussion about treatments (*pratiniṣedha*-s) for the attacks of the eight main types of *devagraha*-s.

Caraka Saṃhitā

The *Caraka Saṃhitā* differs from the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* in several ways. In its discussion of the broad range of possessing divinities, the historically later term *bhūta*, an abstract category that refers to ontological status, replaces *graha*. The term

graha is used only once to mean innumerable possessions (*aparisaṃkhyeyānāṃ grahāṇām*) (6.9.21.8). This change in nomenclature is reflected in the general focus of the text, which much less frequently mentions the multitudinous nocturnal wanderers (*niśācāra*-s) that threaten to seize unsuspecting victims. Yet while the shift away from a concern with the *niśācāra*-s indicates a more philosophical stance, this later text increases the types of divinities from eight to ten and eleven in the two main chapters on *unmāda*. Ironically, this later medical treatise uses the more philosophical category even as the increased types of possessors indicate the continued influence of popular religious concerns about possession. Another difference is that the *Caraka Saṃhitā* explicitly categorizes the symptoms caused by *bhūta*-s as pathological *unmāda* (*unmādanidāna*) and explains that the goal of medical practice is to eliminate all signs of this condition (*vigatonmādalakṣana*). But just as in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, this treatise dismisses the luminous qualities produced by some possessing divinities and incongruously requires that they be eliminated.

Purportedly composed by Agniveśa and later redacted by Caraka, a court physician to a Buddhist king, the *Caraka Saṃhitā* focuses on the causes, symptoms, and treatment of bodily diseases (*kāyacikitsā*). The text includes two chapters about *unmāda*, which is defined as follows:

> *Unmāda* is known to be a disturbance with respect to the mind, intellect, consciousness, knowledge, memory, predisposition (of the body to any disease), way of living, behavior, and/or conduct.
>
> *unmādaṃ*
> *punarmanobuddhisaṃjñājñānasmṛtibhaktiśīlaceṣṭācāravibhramaṃ*
> *vidyāt* // 2.7.5

The classification system for *unmāda* in the *Caraka Saṃhitā* is the most thorough in the corpus of Āyurvedic literature. The different types are classified as curable or incurable and endogenous or exogenous. Endogenous causes stem from an imbalance of the humors (*doṣas*) and depression (*sannipāta*). As in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, the doctrine of the three humors (*tridoṣavidyā*) explains that the balance of wind (*vāta*), bile (*pitta*), and phlegm (*kapha*) is necessary for optimal health. The broader category comprises exogenous causes, which include all external influences such as poison, accidents, and--most prominent in the text--possession by a variety of divinities (*bhūta*-s) that transgress bodily boundaries. Permeability of the body during liminal periods of time such as childbirth and in liminal places such as the impurity of a cremation ground make a person vulnerable, susceptible to *bhūtas*, and therefore at risk for an onset of *unmāda*.[22] Alternatively, the divinities may simply want to play, or they may be punishing a person for any number of inauspicious actions in this or a previous life. Both endogenous and exogenous causes obstruct the flow of the *doṣa*-s, thereby weakening them and increasing the risk of *unmāda*. While improper flow of fluids in the body causes pathology (*nidāna*), it is difficult to isolate the root cause since possessing divinities also create an imbalance of the *doṣa*-s. When analysis of the *doṣas* yields no explanation, the broad range of *bhūtas* is deemed culpable. In this instance, a variety of treatments including *mantra* repetition, pilgrimage, and sacrifice is recommended. If these methods fail, exorcism may be warranted. Considering physical and mental causes together as constitutive of *unmāda*, the body-mind approach (*dehamānasa*) recommends a variety of natural (*yuktivyapāśraya*) and supranormal (*daivavyapāśraya*) treatments.

[22] See K.R. Srikantamurthy, *Clinical Methods in Āyurveda* (Delhi: Chowkhambha Orientalia, 1983), pp. 627-628.

Entitled "Pathological *Unmāda* (*unmādanidāna*)," *Caraka Saṃhitā* 2.7 lists the detestable characteristics developed in a person who suffers from the rage of a range of *bhūta*-s, inclusive of *deva*-s and others.

> Thus, these are the characateristics of one who is afflicted with exogenous *unmāda* caused by the raging of *deva*-s and the rest (*devādi*): disgust with and desire to injure gods, cows, brahmins, and ascetics; being inclined to rage; having the intent to injure men; being discontent; having a debility of vitality, comeliness, complexion, strength, and physical features; being terrified in dream and impelled by the gods and the others. *Unmāda* is the immediate consequence.

tatra devādiprakopanimittenāgantukonmādena puraskṛtasyemāni pūrvarūpāṇi bhavanti tadyathā—devagobrāhmaṇatapasvināṃ hiṃsārucitvaṃ kopanatvaṃ nṛśaṃsābhiprāyatā aratiḥ ojovarṇacchāyābalavapuṣām upataptiḥ svapne ca devādibhirabhibhartsanaṃ pravartanaṃceti tato'nantaramunmādābhinirvṛttiḥ // 2.7.11

The next section distinguishes among *bhūta*-s and specifies the ways that each of ten types enters a person. Having been disregarded or insulted by a person, the *bhūta*-s in turn bring about *unmāda* by entering a person's eyes, ears, skin, or nose, or in some other way violating his or her body.

> Further, there is a different onset according to the particular causes for the various divinities (*bhūta*) producing *unmāda*. By observing people (*avalokayanto*), *deva*-s produce *unmāda*. Teachers, elders, perfected ones, and the great seers [produce *unmāda*] by cursing (*abhiśapantaḥ*). The fathers (*pitaro*) [produce *unmāda*] by causing [a person] to see (*darśayantaḥ*) [them]. The *gandharva*-s [cause *unmāda*] by touching (*spṛśanto*). The *yakṣa*-s [produce *unmāda*] by entering (*samāviśanto*). But the *rakṣas*-es [produce *unmāda*] by causing a person to smell their raw flesh (*rākṣasāstvātmagandhamāghrāpayantaḥ*). Riding and driving *piśāca*-s also [produce *unmāda*].

tatrāyamunmādakarāṇāṃ bhūtānāmunmādayiṣyatāmārambhaviśeṣo bhavati; tadyathā—avalokayanto devā janayantyunmādaṃ guruvṛddhasiddhamaharṣayo 'bhiśapantaḥ pitaro darśayantaḥ spṛśanto gandharvaḥ samāviśanto yakṣāḥ rākṣasāstvāmagandhamāghrāpayantaḥ piśācaḥ punarāruhya vāhayantaḥ // 2.7.12

While only the *yakṣa*-s are literally described as entering (*samāviśanto*) the targeted individual, the other disregarded entities likewise violate bodily boundaries by entering through any one of several bodily orifices.[23]

In contrast to the undesirable qualities that result from the rage of all types of divinities (2.7.11), a variety of desirable characteristics of *unmāda* may also result from the various *bhūta*-s that enter in different ways, according to the following section of the treatise.

> The characteristics or symptoms (*rūpāṇi*) caused by the range of entering divinities include supranormal strength (*atyātmabala*), energy (*vīrya*), prowess (*pauruṣa*), courage (*parākrama*), comprehension (*grahaṇa*), attention (*dhāraṇa*), memory (*smaraṇa*), knowledge (*jñāna*), speech (*vacana*), and discernment (*vijñānāni*).
>
> *tasyemāni rūpāṇi bhavanti*
> *tadyathā—atyātmabalavīryapauruṣaparākramagrahaṇadhāraṇasmaraṇ*
> *ajñānavacanavijñānāni aniyataśconmādakālaḥ //* 2.7.13

After listing the reasons and times when *bhūta*-s approach a person, the text explains that they are intent on causing injury (*hiṃsā*), enjoyment (*ratiḥ*), or honor (*abhyarcanaṃ*). These various intentions explain the discrepancy between resulting symptoms that are alternatively detestable or desirable. A person struggling with a *bhūta* that intends to cause harm is said to be incurable whereas one who is entered by a *bhūta* that causes enjoyment or honor can be treated.

> Thus, there is a threefold effect of *unmāda* from *bhūta*-s that cause injury (*hiṃsā*), enjoyment (*ratiḥ*), and honor (*abhyarcanaṃ*). A person can distinguish which it is by the different manifestations in the person's behavior. He who was made *unmāda* for the purpose of injury enters fire, plunges into water, falls from the ground into a pit, strikes himself with a knife, whip, piece of wood, dirt, or his fists. He may resort to some other means to commit suicide. This person should be regarded as incurable, but the two others are curable.
>
> *trividhaṃ tu khalūnmādakarāṇāṃ bhūtānāmunmādane prayojanaṃ*
> *bhavati tadyathā hiṃsāratiḥabhyarcanaṃ ceti / teṣāṃ taṃ*

[23] The fact that the *bhūta*-s are described as entering (*samāviśanto*) is important because this term/concept is reconfigured in certain Śaiva texts as entrance or absorption (*samāveśa*) in Śiva.

prayojanaviśeṣamunmattācāraviśeṣalakṣanairvidyāt / tatra
hiṃsārthinonmādyamāno 'gniṃ praviśati apsu nimajjati
sthalācchvabhre vā patati
śastrakaśākāṣṭaloṣṭamuṣṭibhirhantyātmānam anyacca
prāṇavadhārthamārabhate kiñcit tamasādhyaṃ vidyāt sādhyau
punardvāvitarau // 2.7.15

The person who is a threat to himself is thus deemed incurable, yet this is the person who most needs treatment. Curing the effects of enjoyment and honor seems unnecessary because it simply eliminates nonthreatening symptoms. The need to treat the enviable symptoms of *unmāda* seems incongruous. The text states:

> The cures (*sādhana*)[24] for these two [enjoyment and honor] are *mantra*-s, medicinal herbs, precious stones, charms, food offerings, gifts, oblations, observances, vows, expiatory practices, fasting, obtaining blessings, prostrating oneself, traveling, and other things.

tayoḥ sādhanāni
mantrauṣadhimaṇimaṅgalabalyupahārahomaniyamavrataprāyaścittop
avāsasvastyayanapraṇipātagamanādīni // 2.7.16

The chapter in the *Caraka Saṃhitā* entitled "Therapeutics of *Unmāda* (*unmādacikitsam*)" (6.9) states with stronger terms the need to cure *unmāda*, including that caused by *bhūta*-s. The final verses express this main concern. A clear-headed person contracts neither endogenous nor exogenous *unmāda* (6.9.96). The healthy condition shows no sign of *unmāda* (*vigatonmādalakṣaṇa*)[25] in the bodily elements (6.9.97).

Particularly when we consider the luminous qualities of a person in whom a deity intending enjoyment or honor has entered, the need to cure such a person

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[24] Monier Monier-Williams *Sanskṛit-English Dictionary*, 1994 edition, s.v. "*sādhana*": "leading straight to a goal; subduing a disease, healing, cure, *Suśruta*." *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary* by Vaman Shivram Apte, 4th ed., s.v. "*sādhana*": "subduing, overcoming, subduing by charms, healing, curing." In the medical texts *sādhana* refers to a cure for disease as opposed to a spiritual practice that leads to a goal.

[25] The term *vigatonmādalakṣaṇa* in the medical context means removing the *unmāda* itself not just the signs thereof. This contrasts with the behaviors of the earliest Śaiva sectarian group, the Paśupatas (ca. 2nd-century C.E.) who display signs of madness.

seems incongruous as mentioned earlier. This chapter reiterates the positive symptoms caused by the broad range of *bhūta*-s, but herein the enviable qualities take on the added dimension of being immortal (*amartya*).

> He who has indestructible speech, courage, heroism, and actions due to his knowledge and related qualities, and who has prowess, strength and other qualities, . . . he has *unmāda* caused by [the assault (*abhidharṣaṇa*) of] a *bhūta*.
>
> *amartyavāgvikramavīryaceṣṭo jñānādi vijñānabalādibhiryaḥ /*
> *bhūtotthamunmādamudāharettam //* 6.9.17

Immediately following this verse that lists positive attributes, the text explains that the *bhūta*-s do not pollute the people they enter (*viśanti*). The text states:

> Though the *deva*-s and other divinities do not defile the body of a man with the power of their own qualities, they enter quickly and invisibly, just as a reflection in a mirror and heat in a sun-crystal.[26]
>
> *adūṣayantaḥ puruṣasya deham devādayaḥ svaistu guṇaprabhāvaiḥ/*
> *viśantyadṛśyāstarasā yathaiva cchāyātapau darpaṇasūryakāntau //*
> 6.9.18

Despite the assurance that the range of *bhūta*-s do not create impurities, the text describes qualities that mostly are not luminous.

This section lists eleven types of possessing divinities: *deva, guru, vṛddha, siddha, ṛṣi, pitṛ, gandharva, yakṣa, rākṣasa, brahmarākṣasa,* and *piśāca.*[27] This is three more than the number mentioned in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* and one more (*brahmarākṣasa*) than the list in Chapter 2.7 of *Caraka Saṃhitā.*

Some possessing divinities such as the fathers (*pitṛ*-s) cause unremarkable and vaguely negative symptoms.

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[26] Sāṃkhya philosophers describe the relationship between contentless consciousness (*puruṣa*) and materiality (*prakṛti*) using similar images.

[27] The eleven types are discussed as only eight groups because the gurus, elders, perfected ones and *ṛṣis* are seen as a single group. Thus, the number has proliferated from the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, and yet it is linked back to that text discussing eight types.

He may be known as *unmatta* by the fathers (*pitṛ*-s) who has a dull gaze and is not discerning, who tends toward sleep, craves inedible foods, lacks an appetite, has indigestion, and whose speech is hostile.

aprasannadṛṣṭimapaśyantaṃ nidrāluṃ pratihatavācam
anannābhilāṣamarocakāvipākaparītaṃ ca pitṛbhirunmattaṃ vidyāt //
6.9.20.3

The *pitṛ*-s are drawn to the following people:

The *pitṛ*-s overwhelm a person who is devoted to his mother, father, the gurus, elders, accomplished ones, and spiritual guides, usually on the tenth part and new moon day.

mātṛpitṛguruvṛddhasiddhācāryopasevinaṃ prāyo daśamyām
amāvasyāyām ca pitaraḥ // 6.9.21.3

The *rākṣas*-es cause decisively negative symptoms in people whose behavior is decisively impure.

He may be known as *unmatta* by *rākṣas*-es whose sleep is disturbed, who is adverse to food and water and is very strong even though he does not eat, who enjoys knives, blood, meat, and blood-red garlands, and who is threatening.

naṣṭanidram annapānadveṣiṇam anāhāramapyatibalinaṃ
śastraśoṇitamāṃsaraktamālyābhilāṣiṇaṃ saṃtarjakaṃ ca
rākṣasonmattaṃ vidyāt // 6.9.20.6

Rakṣas-es and *piśāca*-s overwhelm one who lacks mental clarity, who is slanderous, deceitful, and lusts for women, on the second, third, or eighth parts.

rakṣaḥpiśācastu hīnasattvaṃ piśunaṃ straiṇaṃ lubdhaṃ śaṭhaṃ
prāyo dvitīyātṛtīyāṣṭamīṣu // 6.9.21.7

The *brahmarākṣas*-es bring about a mixture of symptoms among people who do not uphold brahmanical interests.

He may be known as *unmatta* by *brahmarākṣas*-es by loudly laughing and dancing, by loathing and having contempt for gods, sages, and physicians, by reciting hymns, Vedas, and *mantraśāstra*, and by injuring himself with sticks and other things.

prahāsanṛtyapradhānaṃ devavipravaidyadveṣāvajñābhiḥ
stutivedamantraśāstrodāharaṇaiḥ kāṣṭhādibhirātmapīḍanena ca
brahmarākṣasonmattaṃ vidyāt // 6.9.20.7

> The *brahmarākṣas*-es overwhelm a person who dislikes scriptural study, austerities, discipline, fasting, chastity, and the veneration of gods, ascetic devotees, and gurus; who is either no longer a pure brahmin or a non-brahmin who says he is a brahmin; who considers himself to be a true sage, and who enjoys playing in the water of the temple, usually on the bright fifth part or when seeing the full moon.
>
> *svādhyāyataponiyamopavāsabrahmacaryadevayatigurupūjā 'ratiṃ bhraṣṭaśaucaṃ brāhmaṇam abrāhmaṇaṃ vā brāhmaṇavādinaṃ śūramāninaṃ devāgārasalilakrīḍana ratiṃ prāyaḥ śuklapañcamyāṃ pūrṇacandradarśane ca brahmarākṣasāḥ* // 6.9.21.6

A unique class among the types of *bhūta*-s, *deva*-s cause decisively enviable symptoms among people whose behavior is pure (*caukṣācāra*) and who uphold brahmanical norms. The qualities bestowed on such a person are more luminous than those in whom the broad range of divinities enters (6.9.17).

> Due to the deities (*deva*-s), he may be known as *unmatta* who has a placid gaze, who is serious, unapproachable, and dispassionate, who desires neither sleep nor food, whose sweat, urine, feces, and flatulence are slight, who has a pleasant odor and a face like a full blown lotus.
>
> *saumyadṛṣṭiṃ gambhīram adhṛṣyam akopanam asvapnabhojanābhilāṣiṇam alpasvedamūtrapurīṣavātaṃ śubhagandhaṃ phullapadmavadanamiti devonmattaṃ vidyāt* // 6.9.20.1
>
> In such cases the *deva*-s assault a man who is pure (*caukṣācāra*) and experienced in [both] austerities and his studies by focusing on his faults that can be observed usually on the first or thirteenth part of the bright lunar fortnight.
>
> *tatra caukṣācāraṃ tapaḥsvādhyāyakovidaṃ naraṃ prāyaḥ śuklapratipadi trayodaśyāṃ ca chidramavekṣyābhidharṣayanti devāḥ* // 6.9.21.1

These attributes of a person possessed by *deva*-s are comparable to the accomplishments (*siddhi*-s) of gods and yogis, even though this condition in the medical texts is classified as unsought *unmāda*. The boundaries of what is judged to be pathology shift in the various Hindu traditions. As Weiss states:

> His condition is less one of devotion to the deity, but rather he has been seized by and thus has become the deity. Although this

> condition is considered pathological in the early ayurvedic texts, in the context of later *bhakti* cults it would more likely be deemed desirable.[28]

Weiss correctly identifies the shift from medical to devotional contexts. However, he conflates the multiple ways that a devotee (*bhakta)* can relate to the deity: the extent to which a *bhakta* shares in (*bhaj*) the deity's divinity--in other words, whether he unites with or identifies with the deity--is determined by the dual or nondual context, neither one of which precludes devotion to the deity.

Caraka Saṃhitā 6.9 concludes with the unambiguous statement that a healthy condition is apparent when there is no sign of *unmāda* (*vigatonmādalakṣaṇa*) in the bodily elements (6.9.97). Even though the afflicted person does not always suffer negative ramifications, his *unmāda* requires treatment.

> But knowing the *unmāda* as delight in worshiping the deities and longing for sensual pleasure, both healing types of behavior, the doctor should treat him by means of remedies such as mantra and with a mixture of food and sacrificial offerings.
>
> *ratyarcanākāmonmādinau to bhiṣagabhiprāyācārābhyāṃ buddhvā tadaṅgaopahārabalimiśreṇa mantrabhaiṣajyavidhinopakramet //* 6.9.23

The treatise then discusses the application of medicines (*bheṣajavidhi*) (6.9.24) to cure both endogenous and exogenous types of *unmāda*. Specific treatments are such as beverages, emetics, and enemas are prescribed to balance the humors (*doṣa*-s). Many different *mantra*-s and varied preparations of ghee (*sarpis*) are employed for the removal (*vināsana*) of exogenous *unmāda* (6.9.33). Severe procedures, such as beating (6.9.81) and frightening (6.9.82, 6.9.83) the afflicted person, are sanctioned in some cases. But for *unmāda* caused by *deva*-s, *ṛṣI*-s, *pitṛ*-s, or *gandharva*-s, mild procedures such as ingestion of ghee and *mantra* repetition are

[28] Weiss, pp. 137-138.

prescribed (6.9.88, 6.9.89). These treatments are intended to ward off the symptoms caused by *deva*-type possession.

The text concludes with the paradoxical comment that a person who honors *deva*-s conquers the fear produced by *unmāda* (*jayatyunmādajaṃ bhayam*) (6.9.91). It seems that the very one who honors *deva*-s (6.9.21.1) and enjoys the resulting luminous qualities (6.9.20.1) should have no reason to fear.

> By honoring gods, cows, brahmins, and teachers, and with perfected powers, mantras and medicinal herbs, the [person suffering from] the exogenous type attains tranquility (*praśama*).
>
> *devagobrāhmaṇānāṃ ca gurūṇāṃ pūjanena ca /*
> *āgantuḥ praśamaṃ yātisiddhairmantrauṣadhaistathā //* 6.9.94

Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā

By the 7th-century C.E. ideas had changed somewhat from the time of the *Suśruta* and *Caraka Saṃhitā*-s such that it became necessary to condense the earlier materials. Vāgbhaṭa's *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā*, the great synthesis of Indian medicine, responds to this need.[29] Until the 14th-century C.E., the end of the medieval period in India, medical students memorized this treatise. In this much later text, the eighteen distinct types of *bhūta*-s outnumber those mentioned in the *Suśruta* and *Caraka Saṃhitās.* Furthermore, the description of luminous qualities resulting from possession by *deva*-s is more elaborate than in the other treatises and yet similarly receives scant attention. The continued influence of popular religion on the medical tradition is reflected by the fact that an entire chapter, called "On Distinguishing *Bhūta*-s" (*bhūtavijñānīya*), is dedicated to classifying their

[29] "[Vāgbhaṭa] was profoundly learned in the compendia of Suśruta and Caraka and the central object of his effort was to bring their teachings into unison, and to present the result in a well-organized, thematically structured composition." The teachings were brought into unison in part by combining terminiologies. See Wujastyk, p. 238.

proliferated numbers. In this treatise there emerges a different type of concern with the traditionally forbidden substances and activities that are the purview of Tantra. Having grown out of Vedic and non-Vedic ideas and practices, Tantra began to arise about the middle of the first millenium C.E.[30] More than Āyurvedic practitioners in earlier centuries, students who memorized the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* were most likely more aware of the Tantric path to supranormal powers and liberation, which sometimes involved a type of *unmāda* sought by some *bhakta*-s and tantrikas in, for instance, Bengal and Kashmir.

This chapter "On Distinguishing *Bhūta*-s" (*bhūtavijñānīya*) begins by introducing eighteen types of divinities using the term *bhūtagraha*, a synthesis of the two labels in the *Suśruta* and *Caraka Saṃhitā*s. The term *graha*, sometimes used appositionally with *bhūta*, appears seven times in this chapter to label the type of divinity possessing a person. Because the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* is a synthesis of the two earlier medical treatises, the terminologies are combined. The text states:

> He should note the individual's wisdom, discernment, speech, movements, strength, and masculinity. Whenever a man might seem non-human (*apauruṣa*), he should infer [the presence of] a *bhūtagraha.*
>
> *lakṣayejjñānavijñānavākceṣṭābalapauruṣam /*
> *puruṣe 'pauruṣaṃ yatra tatra bhūtagrahaṃ vadet //* 6.4.1
>
> By his appearance, disposition, speech, actions, walk, and so on, which make him resemble a *bhūta*, one should conclude that he is possessed (*āviṣṭam*) by a *bhūta.*
>
> *bhūtasya rūpa prakṛti bhāṣā gatyādi ceṣṭitaiḥ /*
> *yasyānukāraṃ kurute tenāviṣṭaṃ tamādiśet //* 6.4.2

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[30] David White states, "Tantra emerged out of the South Asian elite and popular mainstream some time in the middle of the first millennium C.E." See *Tantra in Practice*, edited by David Gordon White (Princeton: Princeton Universiy Press, 2002), p. 20.

The cause of all types of possession stems from the person's present and previous acts (*hetus sadyaḥ pūrvakṛta*) (6.4.3). Possible faults (*chidra*-s) that attract possessors include the ripening of an undesirable deed (6.4.6), being in a burial ground at night (6.4.6), or inadequate attention to oblations and sacred texts (6.4.8). After listing a variety of faults that place blame for possession on the person himself, the text describes the loathsome, unremarkable, and remarkable symptoms without commenting on the differences among them. All possessions, including those that yield luminous qualities, warrant treatment. "One should examine the patient for supernatural possession. The signs, which were earlier described as applying to madness, appear exaggerated. If this is the case, one should apply the medicine specified for use against supernatural beings."[31]

The *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* offers the most elaborate account of the positive qualities that result from the entrance of *deva*-s. This description probably stems from a certain amount of acceptance of, and admiration for, deity possession as sanctioned by popular religious beliefs and practices. The qualities of the person brought under the power of *deva*-s are largely comparable to the *siddhi*-s attained by perfected saints (*siddha*-s) discussed in nonmedical literature. While he or she has attained serenity, his or her behavior on society's outskirts, such as the liminal space of high rocky peaks where transgressions are sanctioned, may have been influenced by the presence of Tantra.

> One whose face beams like a full blown lotus blossom, whose gaze is placid, who is free of anger, whose speech, sweat, odor, and urine are slight, who has no desire for food, is devoted to deities (*devas*) and brahmans, is pure, and has perfected speech, who seldom blinks and is charming, who grants boons and likes to wear white garlands, who enjoys rivers and being high on rocky peaks, does not sleep, and is invincible--He may be known as brought under the power of deities (*devavaśīkṛta*).

[31] Quoted and translated by Wujastyk, p. 301.

phullapadmopamamukham saumyadṛṣṭimakopanam /
alpavāksvedaviṇmūtram bhojanānabhilāṣiṇam //
devadvijātiparamam śuciṃ saṃskṛtavādinam / mīlayantaṃ cirānnetre
surabhiṃ varadāyinam //
śuklamālyāmbarasaricchailoccabhavanapriyam /
anidramapradhṛṣyaṃ ca vidyāddevavaśīkṛtam // 6.4.13-15

The *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* was written during a time when medical practitioners had to contend with tantrikas who used forbidden substances in their ritual practices. In this text meat, fish, wine, and women are prohibited objects of desire. The Āyurvedic doctors wanted to warn people that playing with these substances and activities could lead to their downfall. The *Suśruta Saṃhitā* mentioned these objects because the innumerable attendants of *graha*-s devoured blood, flesh, and fat (6.60.22). In this latest medical treatise, in contrast, the possessed person always has a passionate taste for the forbidden (6.4.17, 22, 28, 30, 38, 42). By comparing the symptoms of a person possessed by a *rākṣasa* and *piśāca* as described in the *Suśruta, Caraka,* and *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitās,* we can trace this development.

About a person possessed by a *rākṣas,* the texts say the following:

> He who seeks meat, blood, and the varied modifications of alcohol, who has no shame, is extremely cruel and powerful, violent, and extremely strong, and who wanders in the night loathing purity, he is seized by a *rakṣas.*
>
> *māṃsāsṛgvividhasurāvikāralipsur nirlajjo bhṛśamatiniṣṭhuro 'tiśūraḥ /*
> *krodhālurvipulabalo niśāvihārī śaucadviḍ bhavati ca rakṣasā gṛhītaḥ*
> *// Suśruta Saṃhitā* 6.60.14

> He may be known as *unmatta* by a *rākṣas* who is sleepless, has an aversion to food and water, is very strong even though he does not eat, craves knives, blood, meat, and red garlands and who is threatening.
>
> *naṣṭanidramannapānadveṣiṇam anāhāramapyatibalinaṃ*
> *śastraśoṇitamāṃsaraktamālyābhilāṣiṇaṃ saṃtarjakaṃ ca*
> *rākṣasonmattaṃ vidyāt // Caraka Saṃhitā* 6.9.20.6

The objects of desire for people possessed by a *rakṣas* are largely parallel in the *Suśruta* and *Caraka Saṃhitā*s. Yet their desires pale in comparison to those of the person described in the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* whose cravings seem to be extremely passionate and out of control.

> He is said to be overcome by a *rākṣas* who is passionate and fond of red garlands, women, blood, alcohol, and meat, licks his lips and teeth upon seeing the blood or meat, and laughs when it is mealtime.
>
> *roṣaṇaṃ raktamālyastrīraktamadyāmiṣapriyam //*
> *dṛṣṭvā ca raktaṃ māṃsaṃ vā'lihānaṃ daśanacchadau /*
> *hasantamannakāle ca rākṣasādhiṣṭhitaṃ vadet //*
> *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* 6.4.28-29

The lengthy description of this person whose gaze is filled with wrath (*sakrodhadṛṣṭi*) (6.4.26) seems to create somewhat of a satirical portrait of those who incorporate the forbidden substances into their ritual practice.

Examining the symptoms of a person possessed by a *piśāca* reveals the same shift in the texts. The *Suśruta Saṃhitā* states that the impure and lustful person has a penchant for secluded places and wandering about at night (6.60.15). The *Caraka Saṃhitā* similarly mentions that this person, whose thinking is abnormal, enjoys liminal spaces such as garbage heaps (6.9.20.8). By the time of the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā*, this person is fond of garbage heaps and intoxicants and meat (*madyāmiṣa*) (6.4.30-34).

Aṣṭāṅga Saṃhitā

The *Aṣṭāṅga Saṃgraha*, although not as well written as the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā*, is ascribed to Vāgbhaṭa because of its similar content and occasional identical passages. Because it is not considered one of the three great texts (bṛhattrayā) and due to the overlapping content, we will not examine this text as thoroughly.

Interestingly, this longer treatise articulates even more clearly in its chapter "On Distinguishing *Bhūta*-s" (*bhūtavijñānīya*) the types of possessing divinities. Unlike the other texts, this one begins with a list of the types of *bhūta*-s that have innumerable followers. While use of the term *bhūta* points to a more philosophical stance, the *bhūta*-s, like *graha*-s, are night wanderers, and their proliferation has reached "infinite" capacity.

> There are eighteen principal types of *bhūta*-s. These include the following: 1) *sura*, 2) *asura*, 3) *gandharva*, 4) *uraga*, 5) *yakṣa*, 6) *brahmarākṣasa*, 7) *rākṣasa*, 8) *piśāca*, 9) *preta*, 10) *kuṣmāṇḍa*, 11) *kārkhoda*, 12) *maukiraṇa*, 13) *vetāla*, 14) *pitṛ* , 15) *ṛṣi*, 16) *guru*, 17) *vṛddha*, and 18) *siddha*. These have 100,000 various followers, and of them there are countless followers. Such is the endless world of *bhūta*-s (*ananto bhūtalokaḥ*)[who] wander in the night and consume flesh, blood, and fat.
>
> *aṣṭādaśa bhūtādhipatayaḥ / tadyathā*
> *surāsuragandharvoragayakṣabrahmarākṣasa*
> *rākṣasapiśācapretakūṣmāṇḍakārkhodamaukiraṇavetālapitaraḥ*
> *ṛṣiguruvṛddhasiddhāśca / te punaḥ pṛthak koṭiparivārāḥ / teṣāmapi*
> *cāparisaṅkhyeyaḥ parivāra ityananto bhūtalokaḥ // 6.7.2*
> *sarve 'pi ca prāyeṇāhārakāmā niśārdhavicāriṇo bhayānakā*
> *māṃsāsṛgvasāśinaḥ // 6.7.2*

Āyurveda Today

A multiplicity of Indian and non-Indian voices about Āyurveda exists today among doctors who recommend this ancient tradition in addition to, or in place of, modern allopathic medical procedures. Indian Āyurvedic physicians in India and in the diaspora tend to maintain a traditional understanding about possession and *unmāda*. Their non-Indian colleagues, however, tend to express a hybridized understanding of these concepts. Āyurvedic training for a Westerner does not tend to extricate the influence of his or her Western background, in which case it can be said that ethnopsychiatry has gone native and doubled back on itself: the Western researcher adopts the standpoint of the foreign culture yet is unable to disentangle

him or herself from Western ways of understanding mental health. These are the multiplicity of contemporary Āyurvedic voices that I will address below.

Given that the multitude of contemporary Indian voices tends to express a largely common Indian understanding of possession and *unmāda*, I will highlight a single representative voice. Dr. Pankaj Naram is a well-known Āyurvedic physician who has an extensive international medical practice that bridges two worlds, both historically and geographically. As a young man in India he studied Āyurveda with a Tibetan physician and holy man whose specialty was *marma*, an ancient system of pressure point therapy used to treat many modern ailments and diseases. Today he has a practice in Mumbai and travels regularly to the United States and Europe. Responding to the trendy search for maintaining youth, his book is entitled *How to Live to be 100 with Energy, Enthusiasm, and Tranquility.* The home page of his website used to display a photograph of what he claims are two-thousand-year-old *Siddha Veda* manuscripts, written in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Nepali.[32] When I asked him how he authenticated the age of the manuscripts, he told me that they had been passed down in his guru's family and that a dating process in Germany recently ascertained their age. Some are two-thousand years old while others are only five-hundred years old.[33] These manuscripts contain the formulas used in his products that are sold throughout the world via the internet. Adding a few extra millennia to his age of his tradition for further authentication, he states on his website that "The science known as Ayurveda is the ancient Indian art and science of health, happiness and prosperity. It is at least 6,000 years old."[34]

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[32] Amrita Veda Home Page, October 10, 2001, http://www.amritaveda.com/home.html

[33] Personal communication, February, 2002.

[34] Amrita Veda Home Page, March 25, 2003.

Dr. Naram's somewhat hybridized Indian-Western outlook from a traditional Āyurvedic standpoint makes him an interesting person to talk to regarding health care, since increasingly more people are looking into preventative medical procedures and seeking alternative diagnoses and therapies. Through his work thousands of people worldwide have received treatment for their chronic health conditions. His energy is seemingly unstoppable in his mission to treat as many people as possible. I met with Dr. Naram on several occasions for personal treatment and to discuss his beliefs about the causes of *unmāda.* What he told me reveals his conviction about the efficacy of Āyurveda in the modern world, especially since he fears that his unfashionable opinion will alienate him from others in the vaunted Western medical profession.

"I used to not believe in possession, but my experience tells me otherwise," Dr. Naram told me when I asked him if the textual understanding of *unmāda* caused by possession, as outlined in the *Caraka Saṃhitā,* is applicable in India and the West today. At first he looked slightly askance and hesitated to respond. I hoped that I was not offending him by asking this probing question that perhaps threatened to delegitimize possession as a viable cause of *unmāda.* But I was curious if this diagnosis was part of his medical vocabulary.[35] "At first I thought that certain cases were an imbalance of *vāta,* but then I became convinced that some patients were suffering from possession," he explained. He told me that there is a fourth pulse to read using *marma,* pressure-point therapy. After just a few seconds of feeling the pulse, he is able to ascertain a patient's entire medical history. One woman told me that he was able to identify the exact slipped disc in her back through a *marma*

[35] Frederick M. Smith, reviewer. "The Current State of Possession Studies As A Cross-Disciplinary Project," in *Religious Studies Review.* Volume 27, Number 3 (July 2001).

treatment. "Reading that pulse correctly will tell 100% if there is a possession. The whole medical world will go against me," he stated at the end of our conversation. Yet because of his certitude, Dr. Naram did not withhold his medical opinion that opposes normative Western sensibilities.[36]

Dr. Naram has treated numerous cases of possession not only in India but also in America and Germany. According to him, this experience is apparently not limited to cultures that view possession as a native category. But his Italian colleague and assistant, Dr. Giovanni Brincivalli has a different standpoint with respect to possession, no matter where it is said to occur. He told me about a woman in India who was said to become possessed by the goddess Devī on Fridays. She would eat burning camphor. Turning to his Western framework, Dr. Brincivalli told me that "in Western medicine there is no explanation. There is something wrong with her." When pressed about how to diagnose this woman, he mixed his terminology. "It is some kind of madness or possession. It is a virus as possession stemming from a *doṣa* imbalance," he said.[37] This Western doctor who later became trained in Āyurveda was clearly struggling to integrate the perspectives of his two professional backgrounds. In contrast to Dr. Brincivalli, Dr. Robert Svoboda, the only Westerner licensed to practice Āyurvedic medicine in India, had a much easier time shifting between cultural understandings about possession. Respecting *unmāda* caused by possession (*bhūtonmada*) as a legitimate diagnostic category, he told me, "I never thought much about possession while growing up, and once I moved to India at the tender age of twenty, I found it but a mild conceptual dislocation to be

[36] Personal communications with Dr. Naram, July 2001 and October 2001 in Santa Monica, California.

[37] Personal communication, February, 2002.

willing to entertain the Indian concept--particularly after some weird personal experiences. But then, I always felt that my innate personal philosophy was somehow distinct from the standard Western worldview, so I was as if 'ready to shift.'"[38]

The stories that Dr. Naram told me are about Indian possessed patients. He spoke about the successful treatment of a Hindu fanatic who had three "ghosts" (*piśāca*-s) of Christian fanatic women. He also spoke extensively and with much pride about his treatment of a forty-year-old Muslim woman named Salma, who finally came to see him because nothing else she tried had cured her. She had gone to the *masjid* to remove the ghost. And she had sought help from a psychologist. Her family was quite upset and insisted that she seek the Āyurvedic doctor's help. Coming to the front of the line of Dr. Naram's two-hundred patients, Salma said in a man's voice, "You want to cure me." She then proceeded to take down her pants in front of the crowd, defecate, and eat her own feces. He was mortified and worried about his reputation as he stood before a crowd of people with this woman who behaved so indecently. "Whether or not there was a ghost or if it was just her perception of a ghost did not matter," he told me. He calmly did *marma* for possessions. He touched her pressure point and communicated to Salma and the ghost whom he deemed to be inside her. After treating her for seven years, Dr. Naram purged the ghost, whom he learned was named Hamid, and now this woman sends thousands of patients to him.

According to Dr. Naram, possession is a type of *unmāda* that differs from instances when there is an imbalance of *doṣa*-s. The symptoms and the pulse reading indicate which cause of *unmāda* is present. When I asked him to explain

[38] Email communication, May 27, 2002.

unmāda caused by possession more fully he said, "We ask, 'What is the purpose of *unmāda*?' We don't say that it is either positive or negative. *Unmāda* is a powerful perception that can lead a person to become a poet or a genius. It is good to have *unmāda* sometimes, but it can get disruptive."[39] His response reveals the medical perspective that possession-induced *unmāda* can serve an unproductive or productive purpose. Dr. Svoboda would largely concur with his response. While Dr. Svoboda emphasizes that *unmāda* in the Āyurvedic worldview is almost exclusively seen as an undesirable condition, he also believes that "pathology is determined by the way the doctor and client look at it. The same symptoms can be labeled as pathology or not. If normal life is disrupted, then the possession is not harmonizing itself in the social milieu, and it is seen as pathology. Only in rare cases does a client's possession move from the realm of pathology to be regarded with respect."[40]

When I asked Dr. Naram to account for the luminous qualities of a person possessed by a *deva*, he offered the following insight. "This person is possessed but has not done enough hard work to attain real transformation. He has jumped in a dangerous way to attain these *siddhi*-s. This can harm people, so they need treatment to bring them to the ground. Only gradual work will yield real transformation. The *siddha*-s do the hard work that enables them to digest the *siddhi*." This explanation is anachronistic with respect to the earlier Āyurvedic treatises. But what is most revealing about his response is his interest in diagnosing pathology. What he looks for, and therefore what he sees, is that the individual in question has not effectively digested the possession. Yet there is awareness among

[39] Personal communication, February, 2002.

[40] Personal communication, May 13, 2002.

Āyurvedic doctors about effectively digested possession. Dr. Smita Naram, Dr. Naram's wife who also practices in Bombay and abroad, said that "specific symptoms are described to distinguish the madness of saints."[41] Her response reveals the influence of *bhakti* and tantric traditions on Āyurveda. But the main purview of Āyurveda is the maintenance of good health in this life rather than concern either with being elevated to the ranks of the gods or with liberation (*mokṣa*) from the cycle of birth and death (*saṃsāra*).

Conclusion

Indian emic notions of the ontological reality of possessing divinities serve to explain a broad range of human experience. The diverse range of symptoms of possession described in the three great texts (*bṛhattraya*-s) of Āyurveda, and within a single text, reveals the protean quality of experiences. Possession either debilitates a person or endows him with supranormal qualities, and the definitional boundary between these two outcomes is not marked clearly. Similarly, the boundaries of pathology are not consistently defined in our own culture. What is designated as mental illness continues to change with each edition of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.* With respect to the variety of contexts both in India and across cultures, what is seen as pathology depends on the way a person looks at the "symptoms." Weiss states:

> It is probable that in certain non-medical contexts such behaviors would indeed not have been considered pathological. . . . The bounds of psychopathology are not easily elucidated even in our own culture by our own indigenous institutions, and this issue may also have been significant in India during the period under study. The problems of

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[41] Email communication, July, 2001.

cultural specificity introduce an additional dimension of complexity for the non-indigenous observer.[42]

Although *unmāda* caused by possession is a concept that clearly travels poorly across cultural boundaries, it may not be as non-native as we tend to think. As discussed earlier, Western medical science has confirmed that invisible organisms exist in the air. Inhaling the wrong ones or too many of them can make us sick, in which case we might say, "I am catching a cold," a common figure of speech suggesting that an invisible pathogen has worked its way into our body. Knowing that our bodies are particularly vulnerable during the liminal moment of a sneeze, which is an involuntary reflex, we say "bless you" in order to keep invading organisms away. The origin of this saying, however unconscious or remote today, is that the blessing staves off afflicters who may attempt to launch greater attacks in the future. But if Westerners claim to be possessed, they are unilaterally deemed to be suffering from pathology, not necessarily because of the effects of a possessing divinity but because of the claim that such an experience is possible.

In the *Suśruta*, *Caraka*, and *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitās*, the term *unmāda* signifies both a state of pathology and luminosity. However, the latter is almost completely marginalized in the medical milieu. The Āyurvedic texts largely ignore the positive associations of this form of *unmāda* because they are primarily interested in maintaining equilibrium among the bodily humors (*doṣa*-s) rather than in cultivating the qualities of a perfected (*siddha*) person. Yet the development of Hindu devotional *(bhakti)* traditions, the Buddhist tradition of compassionate-beings (*bodhisattva*-s), and Tantra eventually influenced the medical world. The latest treatise, the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya Saṃhitā*, was greatly affected by the *siddha* traditions

[42] Weiss, p. 94, n. 5.

that highly value *siddhi-s*, and so this text most fully captures the radiance of a person controlled by *deva-s*. Nonetheless, it too does not encourage the development of luminous qualities because the perennial main concern of Āyurvedic physicians lies elsewhere, namely, in helping people attain worldly prosperity (*bhoga*).

Chapter Three

Seeking Possession in Dualistic Śaiva Ritual Contexts

Possession in Indian literature and contemporary Indian culture includes a vast range of possible experiences.[1] There are many important factors to consider when looking at the various types of possession: the possessor is either benevolent or malevolent; the context for possession is uncontrolled or controlled via ritual; and the resulting symptoms or qualities are loathsome, prosaic, or positive. Another defining feature to consider is whether the possessor and possessed are ontologically different (a dualistic system) or identical (a nondualistic system). Finally, it is important to note if the possession is judged to be pathological or indicative of supranormal accomplishment (*siddhi*) and/or liberation (*mokṣa*). Although these factors can combine in multiple ways, thereby giving rise to numerous kinds of experience, an historical development of three general types can be identified. Since the advent of a new type does not preclude the earlier one(s), all three types of possession can exist concurrently in a single context. The earliest type, uncontrolled possession, occurs spontaneously and according to Āyurvedic treatises, as we have seen, is said to cause pathological madness (*unmādanidhāna*) that warrants treatment (*pratiniṣedha*). Second, spontaneous experiences gave rise to controlled types of possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) whereby a person attempts to replicate the desirable qualities that previously had arisen only involuntarily. In a ritual context, possession becomes the means to gain divine power and is the evidence of divine power thus gained. The practitioner intentionally assimilates the madness or

[1] For an in-depth study of the history of possession in Indian literature and contemporary Indian culture, see Frederick M. Smith, *Friendly Acquisitions, Hostile Takeovers: Deity and Spirit Possession in Classical Indian Literature and Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming).

intoxication (*mada*) of possessing divinities. Third, possession is rearticulated in certain tantric and devotional (*bhakti*) ritual contexts as a mystical absorption in consciousness (*samāveśa*). This third type is understood at times as the madness of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), which arises in a person intoxicated from the nectar (*amṛta*) secreted by consciousness.[2]

Although these three general types are identifiable, the differences nonetheless can be somewhat ambiguous. André Padoux explains the evolution of (and ambiguity between) the second and third types of possession:

> The forms of possession that one finds [in the Tantras of Brahmins] are different from what one finds in the popular cults. . . . The person loses his ordinary personality in order to acquire this divine nature as long as the *āveśa* lasts, especially with the supernatural powers that one can assume. . . . In an idealistic context, such states are interpreted as an experience lived by the adept at a level of superior consciousness, close to or identical to divine consciousness rather than as possession by the divinity itself. . . . This is an evolution of the forms of possession. These levels are presented under the following aspects: [the first is] wild or ecstatic, which is ritualistic. Then on the next level there is a more mystical form often categorized as more spiritual or metaphysical. . . . It is not always easy to distinguish between these two sorts of possession by (or absorption in) the divinity. One often designates them by the same term, *āveśa,* but the ancient form of possession undergirds another new form, union. An ascetic will combine these two levels of possession.[3]

As we have seen, Āyurveda is a cautious science that deals with people interested in enjoyment (*bhoga)* instead of those who seek to transmute their physical bodies into powerful divine bodies. The medical establishment is first and

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[2] The third type of possession arises in meditation and ritual that bring about mystical absorption in divine consciousness (*samāveśa*). In this context, possession is reconfigured as immersion wherein no boundaries exist between the possessor and possessed because the "other" is subsumed in the Absolute. Malevolent divinities that cause pathology remain a concern in nondualistic traditions for devotees who do not recognize everything as a manifestation or reflection of consciousness. The experience of mystical absorption will be discussed in chapters four through six.

[3] André Padoux, "Transe, Possession Ou Absorption Mystique? L'*Āveśa* Selon Quelques Textes Tantriques Cachemiriens," *Puruṣārtha* 21 (1999): 133-134.

foremost concerned with the structures of the human physiology and with staving off the possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities that cause pathology. According to Āyurveda, malevolent possessing deities that spontaneously enter unsuspecting victims cause madness (*unmāda*). A dualistic system, the medical tradition discusses at length the unsought invasions of the porous human body that lead to a range of symptoms that warrant categorization as pathological madness (*unmādanidāna*) and require treatment (*pratiniṣedha*).

After the codification of the foundational Āyurvedic treatises, the rise of devotional fervor (*bhakti*) swept across India in the 7th to 9th centuries C.E. The adherents of certain *bhakti* movements sought to dissolve the boundary between themselves and their chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā*), whose benevolent or malevolent power may be directed or redirected in empowering ways. Some devotees sought to absorb the deity into their own bodies through their exchange of a glance (*darśan*). This reciprocal act of seeing (*darśan*) can be thought of as "a kind of touching" and a "form of knowing"[4] that occur through the gateways of the eyes. Likewise, ingesting leftover food (*prasāda*) from worship of the deity (*pūjā*) allows divine grace to enter the body and thereby diminish or obliterate the boundary between the chosen deity and the devotee. Controlled possession became an extremely compelling way to participate in the deity's power. Inducing possession in a group setting forged among devotees a "temporary communitas"[5] that bound the affected individuals together, which was a means of legitimizing and even privileging their

[4] Diana L Eck, *Darśan. Seeing the Divine Image in India.* (Chambersburg, Penn.: Anima Books, 1981), p. 9.

[5] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti-Structure.* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press 1969). Turner speaks about "temporary communitas" as a bonding phenomenon among people who are afflicted by unwanted possessors.

experiences. These types of practices countered the malevolent tendencies of deities that would attempt to afflict and drain power from unsuspecting people.

In contrast to the arbiters of the Āyurvedic social milieu, and one kind of response to the *bhakti* movement, yogis in dualistic Śaiva ritual contexts sanctioned and sought possession (*āveśa, samāveśa).* Because the range of divinities that afflict people with abnormal thinking and disease remained a concern in the later yogic contexts, the yogis ingeniously focused on assimilating their power instead of only succumbing to it. They were seeking neither acceptance nor status in social system based on the purity codes of the brahmanical tradition. Normative behavior was not their interest because it would not lead them to their goal. In fact, standard purity codes that regulated the brahmanical social system were seen as impediments to empowerment. The yogis purposefully stood on the periphery or outside the social system (and sometimes literally in a cremation ground) in order to achieve supranormal accomplishments (*siddhi*-s) such as transmutation of the physical body into a divine body.

Having discussed in Chapter 2 the Āyurvedic focus on possessing divinities that enter people against their will, in this chapter I will elucidate the second of the three types of possession delineated above. The dualistic Śaiva yogis chose to interact with and become possessed by hordes of mostly female divinities that populate and permeate the world. These divinities were wooed during elaborate rituals in order to participate in and enjoy their power and in so doing stave off the deities that would otherwise uncontrollably possess unwilling people. Practitioners attempted to access the power of a range of blood-sucking goddesses--*sākinī*-s, *mātṛ*-s, *yoginī*-s, *yogeśvarī*-s, *kālī*-s--who might otherwise wield their power in

malevolent ways.[6] Ironically, yogis courted and welcomed into their bodies some of the very same possessors that Āyurvedic treatises unilaterally designated as unsought invaders. As in Āyurveda, the unsought or sought possessors in this dualistic context were understood to be external entities that enter a person. However, in contrast to the interests of Āyurveda, in this heterodox Śaiva context the yogi's possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) and his resulting madness or intoxication (*mada*) were seen as the sanctioned indicators of his experience.

Explicating this kind of experience anticipates its mutation into Trika Kaula mystical absorption in absolute consciousness (*samāveśa*), which subsumes rather than dispenses with the two earlier modes of dealing with possessing divinities. The secret (*rahasya*) rituals of Trika Kaula yogis who engage in heterodox practice (*sādhana*) could not have taken place without the historically prior substrata. Divinities that were seen as external penetrators into human beings are reconfigured in Trika Kaula as internal energies of consciousness. From the latter perspective, the female divinities of the dualistic Śaiva traditions foreshadow their meditative absorption in absolute consciousness. David White encapsulates the history of the *yoginī*-s with respect to Tantric practice (*sādhanā*):

> [T]he cults of these Tantric goddesses were the medieval continuations of earlier traditions of superhuman female beings, half animal and half human, who were agents of childhood diseases, miscarriage, madness, plague, and death. . . . These beings, called Female Seizers or Female Graspers or Mothers or Female Dryads or Protectresses in earlier traditions, begin to be called Yoginī-s (they who "yoke") in a period immediately preceding that of the construction of the Yoginī temples. . . . People worshiped these fearsome, wrathful female entities to appease them, and thereby keep them away from the human sphere, and in their own habitats: wild forests, river pools, abandoned buildings, crossroads, cremation grounds. . . . What made Tantra stand out in relief against other

[6] See Alexis Sanderson, "Purity and power among the Brahmans of Kashmir," *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986): 190-216.

> forms of South Asian religious practice, and what differentiated it from a simple royal cult for the protection of state boundaries—what gave Tantra its specificity—was the body of practice that its elite practitioners, the male Tantric virtuosi who called themselves "Perfected Beings" or "Virile Heroes," or "Sons of the Clan," enacted in which they deliberately called down and drew the dreaded Yoginī-s to themselves, in an effort to harness their boundless destructive energy. . . . [When Hindu Tantra goes underground], the circles of the Yoginī temples become internalized into the *cakra*-s of the subtle body, with a Yoginī standing on each petal. The male practitioner, the yogin who awakens and arouses them internally, feeds them internally with his semen, "flies up" with them into the sky of his cranial vault.[7]

A number of texts testifies to the prevalence of dualistic concepts of possession in Śaiva devotional and ritual contexts. I will look at three seminal texts: the *Siddhayogeśvarīmatatantra* (*SYMT*), which is the foundation of the *Mālinīvijayatantra* (*MVT*), the *Netra Tantra* (*NT*), and the *Parātriṃśikā* (*PT*), which may be connected to the *Rudrayāmalatantra* (*RYT*).[8]

These texts all depict divinities in their demonic forms and describe antinomian practices with funerary trappings that facilitate the possession of participating human beings. However, the Sanskrit terms used to discuss possession by divinities differ. The *SYMT* mentions *samāveśa* most often and *āveśa* on rare occasion. The *NT* discusses seizers that seize (*gṛhṇate*), harmful beings that injure (*hiṃsanti*), possessors that are sealed onto (*mudrita*) victims, and people who are overcome (*abhibhūta*) by divinities. There is no mention of *samāveśa* in the *NT*. Only in Kṣemarāja's commentary entitled *Netratantroddyota* (*NTU*) does the term *samāveśa* appear, where it denotes an experience different from that suggested by the same term in the *SYMT*: Kṣemarāja highlights mystical absorption in

[7] David White, "Revisioning Hindu Tantra: Presentation of a New Book," UCSB Religious Studies Department Colloquium, 10/31/02.

[8] *Brahmayāmala-Picumata*, *Jayadrathayāmala*, and *Tantrasadbhāva* are other texts that document the substratum, cremation ground culture.

consciousness rather than possession by external divinities. Using different terminology than both the *SYMT* and *NT*, the *PT* uses the term *āveśa* to describe possession. Both of Abhinavagupta's commentaries on the *PT*, his *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtti* (*PTlv*) and *Parātrimśikāvivaraṇa* (*PTv*), and Kṣemarāja's *Netratantroddyota* recast the meaning of the originally dualistic texts in nondualistic Trika Kaula terms. These historically later exegeses absorb the range of external divinities summoned to empower yogis into the aestheticized interests of the Trika Kaula or Pratyabhijñā yogi who strives to experience absolute power by means of self-deification, the recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of his identity as Śiva-consciousness.

Mālinīvijayatantra and *Siddhayogeśvarīmatatantra*

The *Mālinīvijayatantra* (*MVT*) (ca. 8th-century C.E.) is both the earliest source material and the core text that informs Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula, which is expounded in his works *Mālinīvijayavārtika*, *Tantrāloka* (*TĀ*), and *Tantrasāra* (*TS*). A dualistic Śaiva Tantra, the *MVT* is important to consider because it is part of the archaic substratum of the nondual Śaiva yoga of Kashmir.[9] A discussion of this text will also help to situate our discussion of the *Siddhayogeśvarīmatatantra (SYMT)*. As the *TĀ* states:

> There is nothing here [in the *TĀ*] that was not indicated either explicitly or implicitly by the God of gods in the auspicious *Mālinīvijayottara.*
>
> *na tad astīha yan na śrīmālinīvijayottare /*
> *devadevena nirdiṣṭaṃ svaśabdenātha liṅgataḥ // TĀ* 1.17-18

[9] For an explanation of the *M V T*, see Alexis Sanderson, "The Doctrine of the Mālinīvijayottaratantra" in *Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantrism: Studies in Honor of Andre Padoux*, ed. Teun Goudriann, SUNY Series in Tantric Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992): 281-312.

The description of possession, *samāveśa*, in the *MVT* undergirds the elaboration of *samāveśa* as a technical term in Abhinavagupta's synthesis. In this text yoga is said to be a threefold possession (*samāveśoktivad yogas trividhaḥ samudāhṛtaḥ*)[10] that is a realization of one's identity (*yogam ekatvam icchanti vastuno 'nyena vastunā*).[11] The text mentions fifty types of possession (*samāveśa*) in conjunction with the fierce female deities invited to possess the yogi.[12] However, the threefold possession designated by the terms *āṇava, śākta*, and *śāmbhava*, which is discussed toward the outset of the text, will be our primary concern here because these categories later become central for Abhinavagupta.

The first of the three types of *samāveśa* discussed in the *MVT* is the most rigorous type of practice for people who need concrete aids in order to transform themselves into the deity and thereby assimilate the deity's power. Thereafter, the text mentions the increasingly less rigorous practices for those who receive a relatively more intense descent of grace (*śaktipāta*). The text states:

> The minute (*āṇava*) is known as a complete possession (*samāveśa*), which should be [achieved] by means of recitation using the breath (*uccāra),* ritual *(karaṇa),* concentration *(dhyāna),* meditation using the phonemes *(varṇa),* and positions of the body (*sthānakalpana*).
>
> *uccārakaraṇadhyānavarṇasthānaprakalpanaiḥ /*
> *yo bhavettu samāveśaḥ samyagāṇava ucyate //* 2.21
>
> He enters a possession (*samāveśa*) who discerns with his mind alone the reality that is beyond utterance. This is considered to be the powerful (*śākta*)[*samāveśa*].
>
> *uccārarahitaṃ vastu cetasaiva vicintayan /*
> *yaṃ samāveśamāpnoti śāktaḥ so'trābhidhīyate //* 2.22

[10] *MVT* 4.34.

[11] *MVT*, vol 4, p. 4.

[12] *MVT*, Chapter 2.

> For the one who is beyond the realm of thought due to an awakening by the guru, the possession (*samāveśa*) derived from Śambhu (*śāmbhava)* arises.
>
> *akimciccintakasyaiva guruṇā pratibodhataḥ /*
> *jāyate yaḥ samāveśaḥ śambhavo'sāvudīritaḥ //* 2.23

These three definitions, which are given amidst discussion of the fierce female deities invited to possess the yogi, point to wild-eyed experiences that look like states of demonic possession.[13] The ash-covered and otherwise naked practitioners offer blood and perfected nectar (*siddhāmṛta*) (i.e. sexual fluids) to the female spirits in order to gain their power. Invoking the *yoginī*-s--frightful blood-drinking and nocturnal inhabitants of the cremation ground--with the code of *mantra*-s (*mālinī)*, which are the body parts of the alphabet goddess, induces frightful behavior among possessed practitioners (*sādhaka*). When Abhinavagupta chose the *MVT* as his basic text, he superimposed a fourth category on the tripartite schema and reversed the order in which the immersions (*samāveśa*) are mentioned. In his fourfold schema, the three (plus one) definitions are recast with reference to states of meditative absorption that encompass and absolutize the untamed *yoginī*-s.[14]

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[13] Because these definitions do not appear to refer to "wild-eyed experiences," they attracted Abhinavagupta's attention and work well in his new schema of the *samāveśa*-s.

[14] Navjivan Rastogi explains, "The word *samāveśa is* generally rendered as 'immersion.' But this is a meaning acquired in the course of time. The rendering 'possession' adopted here is close both to its original sense and the sense in which it figures in the *MVT.*" See Navjivan Rastogi, "The Yogic Disciplines in the Monistic Śaiva Tantric Traditions of Kashmir: Threefold, Fourfold, and Six-limbed," in *Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantrism: Studies in Honor of André Padoux*, edited by Teun Goudriaan. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 247-280), p. 272 n. 32. Raffaele Torella similarly states: "In the earlier stages of these schools the term [*samāveśa*] must doubtless have been mainly used to mean the loss of individual identity and the paroxysm of energies which derive from being possessed by the terrible divinities linked to the funerary and sexual transgressions, evoked in the Kāpālika rites (Note 49: In the *Śaivaparibhāṣā āveśa-samāveśa* is considered to be the form of liberation peculiar to the Kāpālikas.). . . . In the later phase represented by the Trika and the elaboration of its teachings, the prevalent use of the term in its active meaning sometimes appears as a conscious declaration of new intentions - even a kind of *damnatio memoriae* of a past that has become uncomfortable for those aiming at new integrations (Note 50: This process reaches its completion with Kṣemarāja, for whom *samāveśa* as a technical term seems to have lost any specific identity). See Rafaelle Torella, *The Īśvarapratyabhijñākākikā of Utpaladeva with the Author's Vṛtti, Critical edition and annotated translation* (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1994), pgs. xxxii-xxxiii.

The *SYMT* (ca. 8th-century C.E.)[15] is the oldest section of the *MVT*, the earliest scriptural source of Abhinavagupta's Trika system.[16] The *SYMT* is a longer text that describes in great detail the context of the wild-eyed experiences of naked practitioners who consort with the frightful female divinities (*yoginīs*). According to this text, the cult of the Trika goddesses Parā, Parāparā, and Aparā maintains that one should worship with devotion (*bhaktyā pūjayet*) and thereby assimilate the power (*śakti*) and intoxication (*mada*) of the *yoginī*-s. Even though the goddesses are Ghoraghoratarā ("She Who Is More Terrible Than Terrible"), Ghorā ("The Terrible"), and Aghorā ("The Auspicious"), possession by all three powers (*śaktitrayasamāveśa*) is beneficent (*śaṃkara*). Placating them with blood and nectar (*amṛta*) offerings assuages any malevolent intentions. Having been moved by the force of their own power (*svaśaktibala*), practitioners strive to attain possession (*samāveśa*) by the *yoginī*-s who become intoxicated by the offerings.

According to the *SYMT*, the prime location to invoke the *yoginī*-s and thereby attain their power by means of *mantra*-s during ritual worship is the context of the cremation ground (*śmaśāna*) in the dark of night.[17] The text states:

> He must always dwell in a cremation ground as an ascetic, smearing his body with ashes, moderating his diet, very restrained, and bound [to the *mantra*-s] as has already been described.
>
> *śmaśānavāsī satataṃ maunī bhasmānulepanaḥ*
> *pūrvanyāsena saṃnaddho yuktāhāraḥ suyantritaḥ* //14.2

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[15] Alexis Sanderson dates this text to the 7th-century C.E.

[16] Judit Torzsok, "The Doctrine of Magic Female Spirits" A Critical edition of selected chapters of the *Siddhayogeśvarīmata* (*tantra*) with annotated translation and analysis." (D.Phil. thesis, Merton College, Oxford, June 7, 1999).

[17] This context is important in the historical progression of ideas toward Abhinavagupta Trika system: worship that leads to possession (*samāveśa, āveśa*) and intoxication (*mada*) foreshadows the concomitance between immersion in absolute consciousness (*samāveśa*) and madness of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*) in the philosophized Trika Kaula system.

Numerous verses mention that worship with devotion (*bhaktyā pūjā*) and possession (*samāveśa, āveśa)* are interdependent experiences that lead to the attainment of all worldly accomplishments (*sarvasiddhi*). At the outset of the text--which is a conversation between Bhairava and his spouse Bhairavī, who asks him for the knowledge that bestows worldly success and liberation--Bhairava explains that possession (*samāveśa*) is indispensable for the practitioner who desires to achieve these goals. He states:

> Therefore, knowing possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*), an initiate into the rites of Śiva should seek worldly success (*siddhi*). He should grasp that [*mantra*].
>
> *tasmāt siddhiṃ samanvicchec chivasaṃskāradīkṣitaḥ*
> *rudraśaktisamāveśaṃ jñātvā tadgraham ācaret //* 1.17

Indicators that the desired outcome has taken place, *siddhi*-s develop in the initiate who experiences possession (*samāveśa*) by the powers (*śakti-s*) of Rudra, which abide in and as the source (*yoni*) of the *yoginī*. When Bhairava reveals the esoteric meaning of the *mantra*, its inner power transforms the practitioner. Bhairava explicitly states that the attainment of *siddhi*-s through *mantra*-s (*mantrasiddhi*-s) is the immediate proof of possession (*sadyaḥpratyaya*) (2.6).

The *SYMT* explains that practitioners should approach a guru who has experienced possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*) and can therefore guide other people effectively.

> One should notice signs of divine behavior in the master from his possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*). Then the prescribed *mantra* is seized from him. Because of the great master's possession by the powers of Rudra *(rudraśaktisamāveśa*), the power immediately becomes visible, instantaneously effecting the proof [of the possession].
>
> *rudraśaktisamāveśād divyācaraṇalakṣaṇam*
> *ācārye lakṣayet tatra tato mantragrahaḥ smṛtaḥ //*
>
> *rudraśaktisamāveśād ācāryasya mahātmanaḥ*

śaktir utpadyate kṣipraṃ sadyaḥpratyayakāriṇī // 2.4-5

Guidance by the guru is efficacious because of the equivalence between him and the initiate who seeks to develop his potential. Bhairava explains:

> Oh Beloved One [Bhairavī]! This possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*) is seen [in the person of] the guru who is said to be my equal and who can reveal the power of the *mantra*-s (*mantravīrya*).
>
> *rudraśaktisamāveśo yatrāyaṃ lakṣyate priye*
> *sa gurur matsamaḥ prokto mantravīryaprakāśakaḥ* // 2.11

The term *āveśa* is used specifically with respect to the experience of entering (*āveśa*) the goddess in her form as the *mantra.* Bhairava explains:

> The cause of all worldly success (*sarvasiddhīnām*) is the prescribed words of the Parāparā [*mantra*]. Bestowers of worldly success in yoga, the eight [goddesses] are produced by entering (*āveśa*) into that [Parāparā *mantra*]. They are all called Yogeśvarīs or Mothers.
>
> *kāraṇaṃ sarvasiddhīnāṃ parāparapadāḥ smṛtāḥ // 2.34*
>
> *tasyāveśasamudbhūtā aṣṭau yogaprasiddhidāḥ*
> *yogeśvarīvat sarvāsāṃ sā māteva prakīrtitā* // 2.35[18]

When the yogi accomplishes entry (*āveśa*) into the *mantra*, the goddesses provide all worldly success (*sarvasiddhidāḥ).* But only persistent recitation of the Parāparā *mantra* with devotion (*bhaktyā*) effects possession (*āveśa*) by a hundred *mantra*-s, known as the mothers (*mātṛ*).

> He who repeats [the *mantra*] with devotion (*bhaktyā*) and perseverance, continually paying homage, his body becomes possessed (*āveśa*) by a hundred mothers.
>
> *mātrāśatena cāveśam śarīre tasya jāyate*
> *yaḥ samuccārayed bhaktyā namaskārābhir udyataḥ* // 3.50

The central role of devotion in the worship of *yoginī*-s is stressed in numerous verses throughout the *SYMT,* thereby revealing the inextricable link

[18] Or *yogeśvarīve* and *prakīrtitāḥ* . See annotated text by Torzsok.

between devotion (*bhakti*) and possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*). Bhairava states:

> The first sign [of possession] is said to be completely unyielding devotion (*bhaktiḥ suniścalā*) to Rudra.
>
> *prathamaṃ lakṣaṇaṃ proktaṃ rudre bhaktiḥ suniścalā* // 2.6

The text lists the various substances that the yogi uses as he worships with devotion (*bhaktyā pūjayet*).

> He should worship with devotion (*bhaktyā pūjayet*), according to ritual precepts, with flowers and fragrances, lamps, incense, purifying agents, clothes, gems and other things, and also with various foods and all kinds of *bali* offerings.
>
> *tataḥ sapuṣpagandhais tu dīpadhūpapavitrakaiḥ*
> *vastrai ratnādibhir bhaktyā pūjayet tad vidhānataḥ* // 6.33
>
> *bhakṣair nānāvidhaiś caiva balibhiḥ sārvavarṇikaiḥ . . .* // 6.34

More specifically, achieving an intoxicated state of devotion is an important goal of the ritual. Although the term intoxication (*mada*) does not appear frequently in the text, it is a natural outcome and defining quality of unyielding devotion. Firm devotion attracts the *yoginī*-s whose chief pastime is to become intoxicated. Their intoxicated state in turn transfers into the worshipers. Bhairava states:

> O Lovely-Faced One, some are naked and their hair is loosened. They are blessed, their figures are heavenly, and their eyes roll with intoxication (*madavibhrāntalocanāḥ*).
>
> *vivastrā muktakeśāś ca kāścic cānyā varānane*
> *kharūpiṇyo mahābhāgā madavibhrāntalocanāḥ* // 13.17

The *yoginī*-s' hair flails about and their eyes roll with intoxication (*mada*) while dancing wildly in the cremation ground (*śmaśāna*). Sanderson explains, "Intoxicated with wine, itself the embodiment of these powers [i.e. the *śakti-s* or *yoginī*-s that he assimilates], he [the practitioner] sought through the incantation of mantras and the offering of mingled menstrual blood and semen, the quintessential

impurities, to induce these hordes to reveal themselves."[19] Abhinavagupta explains that the wine (*surā*) drunk by the "exorcistic visionaries"[20] is the embodiment of the powers (*śakti*) (*TĀ* 29.11-13). Becoming possessed by the *yoginī*-s, the practitioner assimilates their intoxication (*mada*) and provides all worldly success (*sarvasiddhi*).

Attaining all types of worldly success (*sarvasiddhi*) occurs through transforming oneself into Bhairava (*bhairavīkṛtavigrahaḥ*) (16.34cd-37ab). The practitioner should worship the goddesses on the spokes of the wheel (*arake cakre*) as the means to become Bhairava who dwells in the wheel's center (19.6-9). The text states:

> Thus, having become the Self of everything (*sarvātmako bhūtvā)* [Bhairava], he should worship the one [Bhairava] who bestows worldly successes of all types.
>
> *evaṃ sarvātmako bhūtvā yajet sarvārthasiddhidam //* 19.6

This verse implores the yogi to conduct a particular type of worship: having become (*bhūtvā*) the Self of everything, he should worship that very Self. In other words, after identifying with the totality of what is, he should worship that totality. This prescription to worship that with which one identifies is comparable to the practice of immersion as devotion (*samāveśa bhakti*), the mystical experience of nondual reality described in Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula synthesis. In the *SYMT* the term *samāveśa* refers exclusively to possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*), a more dualistic type of merger with the deity that brings worldly accomplishments (*siddhi*) in the ritualistic context of the cremation ground. The interest in becoming Bhairava is herein expressed using the Sanskrit terms *bhairavīkṛtavigraha* and *sarvātmako bhūtvā*.

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[19] Sanderson, "Purity and power," p. 201.

[20] Ibid, p. 201.

The term most frequently used in the *SYMT* to denote possession, *samāveśa,* bridges the Āyurvedic meaning of entering (*samāviśant*) divinities and the meaning of *samāveśa* as absorption in absolute consciousness in Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula synthesis. Both *samāviśant* in the medical treatises and *samāveśa* in the *SYMT* result from external possessors. However, while Āyurveda disdains possessing divinities, in the *SYMT samāveśa* is an advantageous experience, although it is not yet the desirable Trika Kaula experience of absorption (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness.

The *SYMT* reveals the complex relationships among possession (*samāveśa*), intoxication (*mada*), and becoming the Self (*sarvātmako bhūtvā*). The principal purpose of the text is to describe the nature of the *mantra* so that practitioners can gain all worldly success (*sarvasiddhi*). In worshiping the goddesses as the *mantra*-s, the practitioner becomes possessed by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*) and in so doing assimilates their intoxication (*mada*). The end result may be that the goddesses on the spokes of the wheel lead him to the center, at which point he becomes (*bhūtvā*) Bhairava, the one who bestows success (*siddhi*) and the one to whom worship is finally directed. Thus, ironically, the practitioner identifies as the one who is worshiped. The seemingly paradoxical notion of worshiping that which is not different from oneself, and becoming intoxicated thereby, is subtly alluded to in the *SYMT.* In Trika Kaula, which internalizes the cremation ground in its ritual yogic context, this apparent paradox becomes central.

Netra Tantra

Like the *SYMT* written about two centuries earlier, the *Netra Tantra* (*NT)* (ca. 9th century C.E.) also provides a bridge between the earlier concern with

malevolent possessing divinities and the later desire to assimilate the power (*śakti*) of Śiva, who is herein variously named *Mṛtyuñjaya* or *Mṛtyujit* ("Conqueror of Death"), *Netra* ("Eye"), and *Amṛteśa* ("Lord of Divine Nectar"). Basically a demonological text, the *NT* highlights a range of female divinities whose extraction (*ākarṣaṇa*) of life from victims is a model for yogis who desire to assimilate the power of possessors. The *NT* also focuses on Śiva's form as the *mantra*, which is understood to be even more real than his embodied or iconic forms. The authoritative text for the cult of Amṛteśvarabhairava and his consort Amṛtalakṣmī, the *NT* oscillates between concern with possessors and the desire to assimilate Śiva's power and in so doing merges them: yogis counter the hordes of divinities with the *mantra* that is the power (*śakti*) of Śiva. The heterogeneous composition of the text suggests that verses about the supremacy of Śiva were superimposed onto a core text(s) concerned primarily with staving off possessing divinities.[21] While the earlier content probably dates back to the 8th to 9th centuries C.E., the later verses may be about a century later. Adhering to a dualistic Śaiva perspective, the text spans the range of popular practices such as exorcism and more elite meditation practices. *Netratantroddyota* (11th-century C.E.), Kṣemarāja's scholastic commentary on the dualistic Śaiva theology of the *NT*, recasts the meaning of the text in terms of the nondualistic Trika Kaula perspective, albeit a clear doctrinal violation of the original verses. The imitative behavior of yogis who extract the power of the divinities anticipates the experience of immersion in Śiva (*śivasamāveśa*) that Kṣemarāja discusses and that is a prominent concept in the Trika Kaula synthesis that he inherits from his master, Abhinavagupta.

[21] See Helene Brunner, "Un Tantra Du Nord: Le Netra Tantra," in *Bulletin de L'Ecote Francaise D'Extreme-Orient* (Ecole Francaise D'Extreme-Orient, Paris, 1974), pp. 125-197.

Just as Āyurvedic treatises discuss a range of possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities, the *NT* similarly expresses concern about divinities that intend to harm human beings, and more specifically, kings and children. This text focuses almost entirely on female possessors. Interspersed throughout the *NT* are numerous types of malevolent beings, though Chapter 19, the longest of the twenty-two chapters, focuses on possession and techniques for securing one's own and others' protection from unbidden intruders. The practice of *mantra* repetition (*mantrasādhana*) in particular combats the hordes of divinities that threaten to take over human beings.

Amidst the discussion of the *Netra mantra* in Chapter 2 is the first list of possessors that may be sealed (*mudrita*) onto people.

> [People] are sealed (*mudrita*) by troops of *bhūta, yakṣa, graha, unmāda, śākinī,* and *yoginī,* the *bhaginī, rudramātṛ* and others, the *dāvī, dāmarikā* and others, the *rūpikā, apasmara,* and *piśāca* in great numbers, the *brahmarakṣa* and *graha* in innumerable multitudes.
>
> *bhūtayakṣagrahonmādaśākinīyoginīgaṇaiḥ /*
> *bhaginīrudramātrādiḍāvīḍāmarikādibhiḥ //*
> *rūpikābhirapasmāraiḥ piśācaiścāpyanekaśaḥ /*
> *brahmarakṣograhādyaiśca koṭiśo yadi mudritāḥ //* 2.13-14[22]

While this list of pervasive harmful beings (*hiṃsaka*) includes types encountered in the medical treatises, it is much more heavily weighted toward female possessors. A similar list in chapter 19 mentions no male divinities yet includes all the female divinities plus an additional female intruder named Mukhamaṇḍitakā ("She Who Has An Adorned Face"): the *bhūtas, yakṣas* and *grahas, dāvī, dāmarikā, bhaginī, mātṛ, śākinī, yoginī,* and *mukhamaṇḍitakā* (19.169-170). Other lists intersperse divinities of both genders: *śākinī, yakṣa, piśāca, rākṣasa, bālagraha* (19.132-133). Even Kṣemarāja, the commentator who is first and foremost concerned with

[22] *apamṛtyubhirākrāntāḥ kālapāśairjighāṃsitāḥ /*
rājāno rājatanayā rājapatnyo hyanekaśaḥ // 2.15

recasting possession in terms of absolute consciousness, adds a number of assailants to the lists of possessors in the text. Drawing from the *Kriyākālaguṇottara*, he mentions a group of male divinities: the *devagraha, gandharva, nāgagraha, asura,* and *brahmarakṣa* (*NTU* 19.81). However, the overall emphasis is on the female possessors. For instance, among the assailants that receive the most attention, the male divinities may be slightly greater in number, but the two female types are discussed at far greater length and thus assume greater significance: *mātṛ* (19.55-62), *vināyaka* (19.62-65), *bhūtagraha* (19.68-69), *rākṣasa* (19.69), *yakṣa* (19.70), devī (19.71-77) and *skandagraha* and *ratigraha* (19.78-80). All these deities are immensely powerful. Sanderson captures the menacing nature of the numerous possessors that threaten to upset the purity of the caste-ordered community:

> Here at the ground-level of the cults of Bhairava and Kālī the Tantric deities reveal to us another aspect. They are . . . regents of hordes of dangerous and predominantly female forces which populated the domain of excluded possibilities that hemmed about the path of purity, clamouring to break through the barrier protecting its social and metaphysical self. Externally this barrier was the line between pure and impure space, on the largest scale that which separated the caste-ordered community from the pollutant cremation-grounds at its edge. Internally it was maintained by conformity to his dharma. Any relaxation of the inhibition and self-control that this conformity required was seen as opening up a chink in the armour of the integral self through which these ever alert and terrible powers of the excluded could enter and possess, distorting his identity and devouring his vital impurities, his physical essences.[23]

Although Āyurvedic texts and the *NT* share a common concern about possession, these texts diverge significantly in their conceptualizations of this protean phenomenon. For instance, in the medical context the range of possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities is said to cause pathological madness (*unmādanidāna*) that

[23] Sanderson, "Purity and power," p. 200. He explains how this ground-level develops into the later Tantric idealism: "When we go beneath the surface of this orgasmic [semanticized] Tantric idealism into the scriptural literature which it claimed to represent, we find that we have entered a world which at first sight bears little relation to that we have left."

warrants treatment. To the extent that resulting desirable qualities or perfections (*siddhi*-s) are mentioned, they are basically ignored and certainly are not to be cultivated. The practical aim of warding off malevolent divinities and ensuring a person's physical health is of paramount importance. In contrast, the *NT* explains that warding off malevolent divinities (*hiṃsaka*-s) is a means to an end rather than the end itself. The text encourages recognition of Śiva's inexhaustible power (*śakti*) in the form of the *mantra*, which counters the debilitating effects of the malevolent beings (*hiṃsaka*-s). Effective use of the *mantra* guarantees attainment of the perfections (*siddhi*-s) (19.221-225) and life itself (19.206). Increasing the number of repetitions of the *mantra* from 100,000 to ten million guarantees the practitioner (*sādhaka*) additional types of powers (*siddhi*): earthly (*bhaumī*), atmospheric (*āntarikṣī*), divine (*divyā*), and majestic (*aiśvarī*) (5.7-9).

Like Āyurvedic treatises, the *NT* uses the concept of *unmāda* to designate a condition that warrants treatment.

> The three humors take on various forms. Difficult to cure (*duścikitsa*), *unmāda* is known as a complicated conjunction [of the three humors *vāta, pitta, kapha*].
>
> *doṣatrayaṃ samāśritya nānārūpāṇi darśayet duścikitsaḥ sa unmādo vijñeyaḥ sāṃnipātikaḥ* // 19

The terms used elsewhere in the *NT*, including *kṣīva* and *unmatta*, take their meaning from the Āyurvedic discussion of *unmāda* as an imbalance of the three bodily humors (*vāta, pitta, kapha*). However, the understandings of *unmāda* diverge with respect to its cause. The medical tradition explains that possessing divinities produce madness (*unmāda*). According to Āyurveda, an otherwise healthy person succumbs to the pathological condition of *unmāda* when under attack by any number of malevolent beings. In contrast, several verses in the *NT* suggest that a

preexisting state of madness (*kṣīva, unmatta*) makes a person susceptible to the attack of seizers (*graha*), thereby entrenching the possession and madness. But only a man attracts demons due to madness (*kṣīvatvāt*) (19.35).[24] Seizers seize (*gṛhṇate grahāḥ*) men, women, and children for a variety of reasons: a man because of his excessive attraction to women (*atistrīgamanāt*), a woman for her spitefulness or disloyalty to parents or spouse, a child for his or her crying or refusal to sleep, and any person for baldness or coming into contact with a person of low caste or a corpse (19.33-44). Several verses later another list of faults mentions additional negative qualities that attract malevolent divinities: the mad (*unmatta*), those whose mind is wicked (*duṣṭacitta*), men of low profession (*pāpācāra*), the afflicted (*suduḥkhita*), the greedy (*bubhukṣita*), the selfish (*matsara*), and enemies proud of their courage (*śatravo dhairyagarvita*) (19.48). Neither the *NT* nor Kṣemarāja elaborates on the connotation of the terms *kṣīva* and *unmatta* or the distinction, if any, between them. Although the *NT* does not explain what causes the original debilitating madness, it describes in detail the ritual technique of *mantra* repetition that remedies it.

The discussion in the *NT* that focuses on possession and the means to combat it does not use the Sanskrit root *viś* ("to enter") to describe the range of divinities that enter the permeable boundaries of the human body. Whereas this verbal root appears in many forms in the Āyurvedic treatises (*samāviśant, viśanti, āviśanti*), and the *SYMT* frequently describes possession as *samāveśa*, the *NT* does

[24] This statement that targets men as attracting demons is contrary to the norm, according to which women frequently attract demons. As several scholars have shown, it is often women who attract possessors that render them mad, thereby stripping them of reason. Possession has been seen as a way for women to rebel against their powerlessness in society. Nabokov suggests that women are taught to use possession as a means to express their problems because this is another way for society to control them: since the women have 'lost their minds' they must be returned to the domesticated 'sane' roles from which they hoped to escape. See Nabakov, *Religion Against The Self.*

not use the term *samāveśa* or related terms. Only in Kṣemarāja's commentary are the terms *samāveśa* and *samāviśāmi* introduced. In the *NT* the divinities seize (*gṛhṇate*) (19.80) or injure (*hiṃsanti*) (19.90) their victims when their activity is expressed in the active voice. Alternatively, past passive participles are used to explain that people are sealed in (*mudrita*) (19.68) or overcome (*abhibhūta*) (19.70) by the range of divinities.

Another notable shift in vocabulary is the appearance of the term *kula*, "family" or "clan," as a classificatory term for the range of divinities. Various classes of demons in the medical treatises include *graha, bhūta, devagraha*, or *bhūtagraha*. In contrast to Āyurvedic treatises, in the *NT* malevolent divinities that control human beings are said to belong to a *kula*. Derived from the root *kul*, which means "to accumulate, to be of kin,"[25] the term *kula* can mean not only a family but also a universe, a world, or an individual person or body, because each of these is a unified accumulation of separate items. The related forms, such as *kaula, kaulinī, kaulika*, and *kaulikī*, and the original term *kula* become technical terms that take on a variety of specific meanings in Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula synthesis.[26] The term *kula* appears twice in the *NT* to explain that each divinity belongs to a certain family, each of which has a leader in addition to its other members. Satisfying the leader appeases all family members.

> Whenever someone is pinned [down] or sealed [in] (*mudrita*) by some member in a particular family (*yasminkule*), he can be released from all his faults only by worship of [the leader] of that family (*tatkulena*).

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[25] Monier Monier-Williams Sanskṛit-English Dictionary,1994 edition, s.v."*kul.*"

[26] Ibid. See K.C. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study* (Varanasi, India: The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963), pp. 594-597. See also Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, *The Triadic Heart of Śiva: Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989). The secret ritual known as *kula-yāga*, in which antinomian practices become a means to achieve liberation (*mokṣa*), becomes important in Abhinavagupta's system.

yasminkule yadaṃśena mudritaḥ kīlitaḥ kvacit /
tatkulenaiva ceṣṭena sarvadoṣaiḥ pramucyate // 19.80b-81a

The *NT* does not elaborate on the meaning of *kula.* And although Kṣemarāja is the disciple of Abhinavagupta, for whom this term is extremely important, he does not comment on this usage of *kula.* Instead, he provides a long quotation from the *Kriyākālaguṇottara* that names additional divinities not mentioned in the text.

The term *kula* is implicit in the extended discussion of *yoginī*-s because practitioners attempt to extract knowledge (*jñānotkarṣa*) (20.14) from them. This knowledge is called *kaulika* or *kaula* in the texts that prescribe rituals for its attainment.[27] Possession by members of the *kula*-s, or lineages, of divinities provides knowledge and fulfills the practitioner's desire for worldly accomplishments (*sādhake siddhikāmata*) (5.3). As we have seen, the *NT* lists hordes of mostly female possessors. Their capacity to extract power from victims becomes a model for worshipers who induce their own possession in order to extract knowledge (*jñānotkarṣa*). If the yogi succeeds in mimicking the *yoginī*-s, the resulting ritualistic "possession by" the deity, as opposed to a mystical "absorption in" the deity, heaps accomplishments (*siddhi*-s) upon him.

The concept of extracting knowledge (*jñānotkarṣa*) and attracting (*ākarṣaṇa*) power from hordes of female forces is not uncommon in Sanskrit literature outside the domain of Tantric texts. For instance, the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, compiled by the Kashmir Śaiva brahmin Somadeva in the 11th-century C.E., frequently narrativizes techniques for attracting (*ākarṣaṇa*) *yakṣinī*-s in order to gain powers from them. For instance, a story about two demons, the sons of Māyāsura, describes a process

[27] See *Yoginīhṛdaya, Kaulajñānanirṇaya, Tantrāloka*, chapter 29. See Alexis Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," *The World's Religions*, ed. Steward Sutherland, Leslie Houlden, Peter Clarke, and Friedhelm Hardy (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 679.

that resembles the Kaula practice of attraction (*ākarṣaṇa*). The demons explain to King Putraka that they have shoes from which the power of flying may be gained (*khecaratvamavāpyate*). After tricking the demons into relinquishing their shoes, the king put them on and flew up into the sky (*udapatadvyoma*). He eventually reached a beautiful city named Ākarṣikā.[28] The moral of this story, from a Kaula perspective, is that demons have what human beings need in order to attain accomplishments (*siddhi*-s) such as the power of flight. The demons attract people and draw them to a place named for the attraction (*ākarṣikā*) of empowered human beings. This upward movement of the king mirrors the flight of the *yoginī* and the practitioner through the open roof of the *yoginī* temple. Empowered by her substance (*kuladravya*) that was acquired during the clan sacrifice (*kulayāga*), the practitioner gains the fuel to fly as a result of his attraction (*ākarṣikā*) of her.[29] Whereas this story describes two male offspring of the demon Māyāsura who hold the secret to attaining the power of flight, in the Kaula context, as expressed in the *NT* discussion of *yoginī*-s, the hordes of divinities that have the secret knowledge are female.

The *Kaulajñānanirṇaya* (*KJñN*) (ca. 9th-10th century C.E.) by Matsyendranāth, the founder of the Yoginī Kaula, is another text that focuses on inducing divinities to enter the bodies of yogis.[30] The practice of extracting knowledge (*jñānotkarṣa*) from *yoginī*-s is prominent with Yoginī Kaula

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[28] *The Kathāsarītsāgara or Ocean of the Streams of Story*, trans. C.H. Tawney (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1968).

[29] For more about the *yoginī*'s power to fuel the flight of the yogi, see David Gordon White, "Transformations in the Art of Love: Kāmakalā Practices in Hindu Tantric and Kaula Traditions" in *History of Religions* (November 1998, Volume 38, No. 2): 172-197.

[30] For more about Matsyendranāth and the history of the Yoginī Kaula, see David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

practitioners. "Matsyendra twice mentions Vidyādharī-s [the wizards who are the keepers of knowledge] . . . in his *KJñN*; in both cases he describes techniques for attracting and sexually exciting the Vidyādharīs and other female demigods."[31] This text explains that "by whatever means, one should always devour one's object of extraction (*ākṛṣṭim*) (11.18)."[32] Granting knowledge of Bhairava, the resulting possession describes the knowledge revealed to *siddha*-s who have what can be called "seizures," possessed states into which they fall upon receiving the knowledge. Bhairava states:

> "I will now discuss to thee, in their entirety, those [teachings] that were lost [in transmission], O Goddess! [The teaching known] by the name of [Discussion of the Kaula] Gnosis came through this clan of the Yoginīs. In the [course of its] teaching [*nirnitau*], the Yoginī, together with the Goddess, was immediately sexually aroused. But, [the male] Vināyaka [and] the four Kula Siddhas [i.e. the transmitters of the tantric gnosis in the four ages, of which Matsyendra is the fourth], greatly agitated, fell to asking questions" (16.49-50a). These male figures are then described as falling into a state of possession, eventually falling stiff to the ground and babbling to themselves (16.51). Six chapters later (22.7) the text picks up where it left off: "Hearing Bhairava's speech, all of those [*siddha*-s] who had . . . transcended the Kula state of mind, had goosebumps and hair standing on end . . . . [D]elighted in mind, they all fell stiff to the ground."[33]

As we have seen, possession evolved from being uninduced to induced and controlled by the yogis who sought to participate in the power of the deity. The fact that positive qualities could potentially result from possession enabled the yogis to explore the possibility of inducing possession in order to generate a desirable outcome. Although the orientation toward possession shifts from seeing it as an undesirable situation to judging it as a desirable condition, the location or context in

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[31] White, *Alchemical Body*, p. 325.

[32] Translation rendered by White in "Transformations," p. 196, n. 82.

[33] Translation rendered by David White.

which possessions occur remains somewhat constant. According to Āyurvedic treatises, possessing divinities seek victims who dwell on the periphery of time or space. Permeability of the body during liminal periods of time, such as childbirth, and in liminal places, such as the impurity of a cremation ground, make a person vulnerable, susceptible to the *bhūta*-s, and therefore at risk for an onset of *unmāda*. For instance, people who enjoy secluded places (*Suśruta Saṃhitā* 6.60.15) and those who dwell on top of garbage heaps (*Caraka Saṃhitā* 6.9.20.8) are afflicted by *piśāca*-s. Those who enjoy being high on rocky peaks are brought under the power of *deva*-s (*Aṣṭāṇgahṛdaya Saṃhitā* 6.4.13-15). The places that are viewed in Āyurvedic texts as dangerous and hence to be avoided because powerful possessing divinities dwell there are viewed in heterodox Śaiva yoga traditions as the prime locations to find that power and extract it.

Whereas the *SYMT* unequivocally states that the cremation ground is a prime location to extract power from *yoginī*-s, the *NT* does not emphasize the funerary context. The thirteenth chapter of the *SYMT* is dedicated to the invocation of naked, blood-drinking *yoginī*-s at night in the cremation ground (*śmaśāna*). In contrast, the *NT* is not explicit about where the attraction should occur. The text's description of the range of divinities, including *yoginī*-s, at times implies that they dwell in the cremation ground where sacrificial offerings are made:

> Oh Supreme One! The *bhūtas* are numerous. The *mātṛ*-s are wicked, malevolent beings. The *yoginī*-s and *yakṣa*-s are mysterious, and the *piśācas* are insurmountable. They desire offerings and so they desire to kill and eat.
>
> *bhūtāśca vividhākārā mātaro duṣṭahiṃsakāḥ /*
> *yoginyo guhyakā yakṣāḥ piśācā duratikramāḥ //*
> *balikāmā hantukāmā bhoktukāmāstathāpare //* 20.50-51

Although the text does not say where the killing and eating take place, these practices certainly occur on the boundaries of society and perhaps in a cremation ground.

Among the different aspects of Amṛteśa is Bhairava, who has four goddesses (*devī*) accompanying him, including Raktā ("The Red One") and Śuṣkā ("The Emaciated One"), whose accoutrements suggest that they dwell in the cremation ground. The appearances of these two goddesses are reminiscent of the Kāpālikas (ca. 7th-14th centuries C.E.),[34] one of the earliest Śaiva sects that was known for its funerary interests. Taking her iconography from Cāmuṇḍā, who always rides a corpse, Raktā is mounted on a corpse (*pretārūḍha*) and carries a garland of skulls (*kapālamāla*). She has a sword (*khaḍga*), shield (*kheṭaka*), and skulls (*kapāla*), and bears a staff (*khaṭvāṇga*) (10.23-25). Also inspiring horror and dread, Śuṣkā similarly exhibits the typical trappings of those who haunt cremation grounds. She carries the sword (*khaḍga*), shield (*kheṭaka*), and a garland of heads (*muṇḍamāla*) (10.27-28). But these brief funerary references do not approach the explicit descriptions of cremation ground practice in the *SYMT*.

In addition to its demonological core, the *NT* expounds a Śaiva theology that is dualistic. The text states that the eye (*netra*) that gives this Tantra its name is Śiva's Śakti, his inexhaustible power (*śakti*), which has three aspects: will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and action (*kriyā*) (1.29). Śiva's eye (*netra*) precipitates both the nourishing nectar of immortality (*amṛta*) and the destructive fire (*tejas*) of mortality. Although these concepts do not contradict the nondualistic Śaiva position, nothing about this vision of reality presupposes or requires nondual consciousness.

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[34] The word *kapālin* first occurs in the *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* (ca. 2nd-4th centuries C.E.). Thirteenth century inscriptions on temples contain dedications to Kapāleśvara. Lorenzen believes that the Kāpāḷikas ceased to exist by about the 14th-century C.E. See Lorenzen, *The Kapālikas*, pp. 13-71.

In his commentary on the *NT*, Kṣemarāja draws out a nondualistic vision from an otherwise dualistic position that only infrequently reveals influence by Trika nondualism. He interprets the original text in light of his nondualistic Krama perspective that a circle of singular light (*bhāsācakra*) is the totality of consciousness. He concludes his commentary on the entire *NT* with the following statement:

> Victorious is the unique Eye (*netram*) of Śiva. It is white [in part] with a radiance that is innate, since it bestows the light [of reality] on everything (*ābhāsanam*). It is red [in part] because it immerses itself in awareness of whatever it manifests (*āmarśanam*). It is grey [in part] because it internalizes all that [manifestation] in [subjective] relish (*saṃcarvaṇam*). It is black [in part] because it devours [even] that [subjective awareness] (*grāsaḥ*). It is neither white nor black nor grey nor red nor not these, since it is the unity embodied as the Circle of the Absolute Light (*bhāsācakram*).[35]
>
> *viśvābhāsanataḥ sitaṃ nijarucā raktaṃ tadāmarśanāt*
> *tatsaṃcarvaṇataḥ sitāsitamalaṃ tadgrāsataścāsitam /*
> *bhāsā cakramayaikyataśca na sitaṃ naivāsitaṃ nobhayaṃ*
> *no raktaṃ naca naitadātma tadidaṃ netraṃ jayatyaiśvaram //*

Kṣemarāja fashioned this interpretation from the Krama system that informs his perspective. Alexis Sanderson explains:

> Now there is nothing in the *Netratantra* which justifies such an interpretation. The doctrine of this verse has been imported from the Krama. In fact we have here the central teaching of that cult, that liberation is obtained through the contemplation (i) that the only reality is Consciousness manifesting this cycle of projection of the object, immersion in the object, internalization of the object into the subject, and resorption of the subject, and (ii) that this process in no way sullies the pure, unlocated and timeless Light (*bhāsa*) which is its ground.[36]

Kṣemarāja at times reinterpreted the dualistic concepts of the *NT* by importing the technical term *samāveśa*, which is central in Abhinavagutpa's Trika

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[35] *NTU* 2 (22) 343. Translation by Alexis Sanderson, "Meaning in Tantric Ritual" in *Essais sur le Rituel. III*: Colloque du Centenaire de la Section des sciences religieuses de l'Ecole Pratique des hautes etudes (Louvain, Paris: Peeters, 1995), p. 55.

Kaula synthesis. According to the nondual Śaiva tradition, the experience of complete and permanent immersion (*samāveśa*) in the nondual (*advaya*) reality of absolute consciousness allows the yogi to become liberated while still alive (*jīvanmukti*). The prefix *sam,* meaning "co," comes to fruition in this context because the boundary between "self" and "other" completely dissolves as the two provisionally distinct entities of the limited self (*jīva*) and Śiva are recognized as a singular light (*prakāśa*) that has self-reflective capacity (*vimarśa*). Used this way, *samāveśa* describes the recognition of reality as it truly is after the epistemological shift to Śiva's viewpoint (*Śivadṛṣṭi*). In addition, this term is primary with respect to Abhinavagupta's classification of the various means of yogic practice (*upāya*), which correspond to various types of absorptive immersion (*samāveśa*). As mentioned earlier, whereas *samāveśa* appears repeatedly in the *SYMT* to mean possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*), it does not appear in the discussion of possession in the *NT.* Kṣemarāja's use of this term and other formulations of the root *viś* + *sam* + *ā* is a concise way to absolutize an otherwise more concrete ritual based dualistic system.

Kṣemarāja imports the nondualistic Trika Kaula understanding of the term *samāveśa* into his interpretation of the *NT* beginning with his commentary on the opening verse of the text. The *NT* states:

> Performing the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the entire universe, Śiva abides in these three states due to his Śakti. Obeisance to Śiva, the pure Self who is filled with divine nectar, the Supreme Self who far exceeds Brahma, Viṣṇu, and Īśa.
>
> *tridhā tisṛṣvavasthāsu rūpamāsthāya śaktimān /*
> *udbhavasthitisaṃhārānkṛtsnaviśvasya śaktitaḥ //*
>
> *vidhātā yo namastasmai śuddhāmṛtamayātmane /*

[36] Sanderson, p. 55.

śivāya brahmaviṣṇvīśaparāya paramātmane // 1.1-2

These verses praise Śiva as the Supreme Lord of the universe who surpasses all others. There is no equation between Śiva and a singular light of consciousness. Kṣemarāja introduces the claim of nonduality through the concept of immersion (*samāveśa*) of oneself in consciousness. He uses the first person singular verbal form *samāviśāmi* to discuss the subject who becomes completely immersed in Śiva. Furthermore, he describes Śiva as nothing but the bliss of consciousness (*cidānandaghana*), an oblique reference to nonduality.

> Obeisance to Śiva, the Supreme Self, the Auspicious One who is nothing but the bliss of consciousness. I enter (*samāviśāmi*) that [consciousness] by becoming devoted to (*prahvī*) the Self [i.e. consciousness], which is perceived by means of the body, breath, and other means.
>
> *tasmai śivāya cidānandaghanaśreyorūpāya paramātmane namo dehaprāṇādimitātmaprahvībhāvena taṃ samāviśāmi* //

This commentary on the opening verses in the *NT* describes the seemingly paradoxical coincidence of being devoted to the Self (*ātmaprahvī*) into which one enters and becomes immersed. The simultaneity of devotion (*bhakti*) and immersion (*samāveśa*) is the hallmark of nondual Śaiva yoga and is emphasized by Śaiva thinkers through a variety of concepts whose meanings overlap: immersion as devotion (*samāveśa bhakti*), intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), and highest devotion (*parā bhakti, paramuddāmabhakti*). In certain places in the literature of nondual Śaiva yoga, *samāveśa*, a technical term of philosophical significance, inextricably coincides with and highlights the devotional orientation (*bhakti*) of Śaiva practice. The *bhakti* milieu regards *samāveśa* as the mystical, devotional goal of yoga: the recognition and experience of one's union with and unity as Śiva.

In his discussion of the purification of ritual space when the practitioner inscribes the letters of the alphabet in the eight lotus petals, Kṣemarāja introduces the concept of *śivasamāveśa.* The *NT* states:

> Having made the eight petals of the lotus, he should write the phonemes of the alphabet there [on each of them].
>
> *padmamaṣṭadalaṃ kṛtvā mātṛkāṃ tatra cālikhet //* 2.19a

About the effect of this purificatory practice and the use of the Netra *mantra,* Kṣemarāja states:

> The [ultimately] pure Self attains purity through immersion in Śiva (*śivasamāveśa*). He is exceedingly great minded who knows the truth with respect to the phonemes of the alphabet.
>
> *prasannaḥ śivasamāveśaprāptanairmalya ātmā yasya . . . suṣṭhu mahāmatirmātṛkāsatattvajñaḥ //*

He wrote the commentary in light of the language mysticism developed by his teacher, Abhinavagupta. Using the fifty phonemes of the Sanskrit alphabet (*mātṛkā),* which are homologized to the table of elements (*tattva*) as a means for meditation on the continuous cosmogony, leads to immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness. Relying on this theoretical foundation, Kṣemarāja explains that knowing the truth about the phonemes of the alphabet (*mātṛkā*) accomplishes *śivasamāveśa,* which can be understood either as immersion in Śiva or becoming Śiva who is the immersion.[37]

After explaining the purification practice, the *NT* describes the *mantra* as supreme nectar, and Kṣemarāja in his commentary again relies on the concept of immersion (*samāveśa*). The *NT* states:

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[37] The *NT* is one among several texts that Abhinavagupta drew from to develop the complex practices using the letters of the alphabet (*mātṛkā*). See Abhinavagupta's *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtti, Parātriṃśikāvivaraṇa, Tantrāloka, Tantrasāra,* and *Mālinīvijayavārtika.* See also Paul E. Muller-Ortega, "Tantric Meditation: Vocalic Beginnings" *Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantrism*: Studies in Honor of André Padoux, ed. Teun Goudriaan (Albany: State University of New York Press,

> [The *mantra*] that is supreme is described as the nectar that is celebrated throughout the world. Absorbed in a small portion of this drink of immortality, he becomes the highest light of the full moon.
>
> *yattatparamamuddiṣṭamamṛtaṃ lokaviśrutam /*
> *pīyūṣakalayā yuktaṃ pūrṇacandraprabhopamam //* 2.24b-25a

The commentary explains that the supreme *mantra* knows itself through its own self-reflexive awareness. By brushing against itself, that is, immersing itself into itself (*samāveśa*), the *mantra* becomes intelligible to itself and thereby reveals its well-known celestial nectar. Kṣemarāja states:

> The "supreme" that was described is intelligible to itself by shining completely as its own true nature and by easily brushing against itself through immersion (*samāveśa*) [into itself]. "The nectar celebrated throughout the world" is well known among people because it is the origin of nectar. A small portion of the nectar, Amākhyā, Soḍaśī, and Parā, like the light of the full moon, is Śakti as self-reflective awareness (*vimarśaśakti*), absorbed in the universe because it produces the supreme nectar.
>
> *tattaditi svasaṃvedyaṃ samyaksvarūpasphurattayā*
> *samāveśasukhasadbhāvāvamarśitvāt paramamuddiṣṭam, amṛtaṃ*
> *lokaviśrutamityamṛtabījatayā loke prasiddhaṃ sakārātmakaṃ,*
> *pīyūṣakalā amākhyā ṣoḍaśī parā vimarśaśaktistayā yuktaṃ*
> *viśvasattāyāḥ parāmṛtamayatvāpādanāt pūrṇacandraprabhātulyam //*

Although the term *samāveśa* does not appear a single time throughout the discussion of seizers (*graha*) in Chapter 19 of the *NT*, it appears in the commentary about Mṛtyunjit ("Conquering Death"), the life of all *mantra*-s because it has the power to conquer death. Having explained that *mantra*-s protect people from malevolent beings, Śiva then asserts that only the essence of the *mantra*-s, Mṛtyujit, grants all desires and guarantees protection in Kali Yuga. The *NT* states:

> Due to the support of devotion alone, he succeeds here. There is no doubt.
>
> *bhaktimātrāvalambitvātsidhyatyatra na saṃśayaḥ //* 19.221a

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1992), pp.. 227-245. See also André Padoux, *Vāc: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras*, trans. Jacques Gontier (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

Once again Kṣemarāja in his commentary draws out the interdependence between devotion (*bhakti*) and immersion (*samāveśa*). With the support of devotion, the yogi succeeds (*sidhyati*) by attaining immersion (*samāveśa*).

> In his desire to attain nonduality amidst duality, that is, supreme nondualism as universal pervasion, as previously ascertained, the worshipper is supported by devotion alone. Therefore, *atra* means being here in this [devotional] state alone. He succeeds because of immersion (*samāveśa*). He trembles and strives after the desired accomplishments. As previously, there is no doubt.
>
> *dvaitādvaitajigīṣayā pūrvanirṇītaparamādvaitavyāptyā yat bhaktimātrāvalambitvamārādhakatvaṃ/tasmādatreti jīvaddaśāyāmeva siddhyati samāveśataḥ sphurati abhīṣṭasiddhiṃ ca ghaṭayati / na saṃśaya iti ca prāgvat //*

Amidst the discussion of possessors, the term *samāveśa* does not refer in Kṣemarāja's commentary to possession by external beings or the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*) as it does in the *SYMT*. Rather, it refers to the direct experience of supreme consciousness, a philosophical designation that points to the culmination of theistic experience.

In the final verses of the commentary on chapter 19, Kṣemarāja quotes a single verse that encompasses the different concerns of the *NT* and incorporates his interest in immersion in consciousness (*citsamāveśa*).

> I honor the Netra [*manta*] that gives protection and maintains the body, and that, shining, is the illumined flashing forth of immersion in consciousness (*citsamāveśa*).
>
> *prasphuraccitsamāveśonmeṣijīvāvabhāsitam /*
> *divyāṃ dehasthitiṃ kurvannetraṃ rakṣākaraṃ numaḥ //*

One core concern of the *NT* is that the Netra *mantra* should be used to protect the human body from invasion by malevolent beings. Another related focus is the supremacy of Amṛteśa, who shines forth as this *mantra*. Kṣemarāja takes this second concern a step beyond what the text says by explaining that the nature of

consciousness is to emit flashes of itself that nonetheless remain immersed within itself. He advocates the Trika Kaula position that the very nature of consciousness is immersion (*citsamāveśa*). Dualities are subsumed but not ultimately negated because consciousness has the capacity to hold multiplicity within itself (*bhedābheda/trika*).

It is striking that Kṣemarāja both opens and closes his commentary on the *NT* with the mention of *samāveśa*. In his prelude to the concluding verses, he again uses this key technical term, thereby stressing its centrality.

> From the practice of immersion (*samāveśa*) in the Auspicious Mṛtyujit [*mantra*], one [attains] the supreme light, the Great Lord [Śiva]. One becomes that [*mantra*].
>
> *śrīmṛtyujidbhaṭṭārakātmaparamadhāmasamāveśābhyāsāt tadrupa eva bhavati yogīndra iti śivam //*

The practice of *mantra* repetition (*mantrasādhana*) that, according to the *NT*, is often used to combat hordes of malevolent divinities, also serves the Trika Kaula yogi in his practice (*sādhana*), the goal of which is immersion (*samāveśa*) in nondual consciousness.

Those sections of Kṣemarāja's commentary on the *NT* that do not use the key term *samāveśa* nonetheless at times emphasize immersion in nondual consciousness. For instance, the text mentions the word *svabhittau*, "on one's own screen," a technical term that assumes the immersive nature of consciousness. In the second *sūtra* of Kṣemarāja's *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, the term *svabhittau* is used as follows:

> By the power of her own will, she (*citi*) unfolds the universe on her own screen.

svecchayā svabhittau viśvam unmīlayati // 2[38]

Svecchayā means by the power of Śakti's own (*sva*) will, not that of another, because no other exists. Furthermore, there is no material or efficient cause extrinsic to the system: the power (*śakti*) that animates the unfolding of the universe takes place on her own screen (*svabhittau*) because no other exists. This unfolding is the illumined flashing forth of consciousness as immersion (*citsamāveśonmeṣijīvāvabhāsitam*) to which Kṣemarāja refers in the closing verse of his commentary on the nineteenth chapter of *NT*. In other words, consciousness unfolds as the universe through its own illumined flashes, which necessarily become immersed in its own flashing screen. The *NTU* mentions that the appearance of the universe takes place on her own screen (*svabhittau*) (19.159b-160). Kṣemarāja's choice of this technical term, which assumes the Trika Kaula semantics of *samāveśa*, is a concise way to engage in polemics against the dualistic traditions.

Parātriṃśikā

The ritualistic practices and funerary interests described in the *SYMT* and *NT*, which exhibit a dualistic understanding of possession, can also be seen in the *Parātriṃśikā* (*PT*), a text that Abhinavagupta comments on twice in order to reformulate the earlier ideas in accordance with his own standpoint. In other words, the earlier prescribed practices of the "exorcistic visionaries" that assimilate the power (*śakti*) of the Lord (*Śiva, Bhairava, Amṛteśa*) are co-opted into the domain of nondual Śaiva Tantra through the exegeses by Abhinavagupta and his disciple Kṣemarāja.

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[38] Kṣemarāja, *The Doctrine of Recognition, A Translation of Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam with an Introduction and Notes by Jaideva Singh* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990). This usage of the term *svabhittau* indicates the nondual basis of the unfolding of the universe.

Like the *SYMT* and *NT*, the *PT* has a *yoginī* flavor to it that complements earlier understandings of possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*). Several verses mention female divinities, including the *yoginī*-s, all the mothers (*mātaraḥ sarvā*), the powerful *yogeśvarīs* (*yogeśvaryo mahābalāḥ*), and the group of *śākinīs* (*śākinīgaṇaḥ*). The text states the following about *yoginī:*

> He who is not born of the yoginī, who is not Rudra, does not clearly obtain this Heart of the God of Gods, which immediately grants both liberation and union.
>
> *etannāyoginījāto nārudro labhate sphuṭam*
> *hṛdayaṃ devadevasya sadyo yogavimokṣadam* // 10
>
> He who "remembers" during forty-eight minutes, sealed in the navel, in the *cumbaka*—"kissing pose"—such a man always binds in his own body the host of *mantras* and *mudrās.*
>
> *muhūrtaṃ smarate yastu cumbake nābhimudritaḥ*
> *sa badhnāti tadā dehaṃ mantramudrāgaṇaṃ naraḥ* // 12[39]

The kissing pose (*cumbaka*) refers to the secret Kaula ritual wherein the male practitioner extracts the clan knowledge from the female by coming mouth to mouth with her—that is, his mouth (*mukha*) receives the substance-based knowledge from her lower mouth (*yoni*).[40] As the *PT* states, the yogi will see the divinity extracted by the powers of Rudra (*ākṛṣṭaṃ rudraśaktibhiḥ*) and thereby merge with it (14).

The symbolism regarding possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) in the *PT* is the substratum of nondual Śaiva yoga. Focusing on the Tantric deity Bhairava, who frequently consumes alcohol and whose demonic mode ceases to exist in the Trika Kaula reconceptualization of him as nondual consciousness, Paul Muller-Ortega explains that the roots of Abhinavagupta's synthesis can be found in the earlier text

[39] Translations rendered by Paul Muller-Ortega in "Becoming Bhairava: Meditative Vision in Abhinavagupta's Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti," *The Roots of Tantra,* ed. Kathleen Harper and Robert Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), p. 227.

[40] See White, "Transformations."

that describes nondualistic ritualistic practices. He discusses this shift using the terms *āveśa-sādhana* and *samāveśa-sādhana.*

> On one hand, the symbolism of Bhairava is connected to *āveśa-sādhana*, that is, the cremation-ground culture of possession by hordes of demonic female deities led by the frightful, fanged deity known as Rudra-Bhairava. On the other hand, and especially in the hands of the brilliant early expositor of Hindu Tantra, the Kashmiri Śaiva teacher Abhinavagupta (tenth century C.E.), Bhairava is reinterpreted in terms of what could be called the *samāveśa-sādhana*, the Tantric-yogic exploration of the nondual consciousness. Here, Bhairava comes to mean the unencompassable and exquisitely blissful light of consciousness that is to be discovered as the practitioner's true inner identity.[41]

This division between *āveśa* and *samāveśa* would not apply to the *SYMT* in which the term *samāveśa* refers to the cremation ground culture of possession by *yoginī*-s. With respect to the *PT*, however, *āveśa* does refer to a demonic type of possession. Muller-Ortega states, "The notion of *āveśa* (verse 11) . . . in the original text seems to mean something like demonic possession."[42] The *PT* states:

> When the *mantra* has been "pronounced," the entire great multitudes of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s appear immediately before him, characterized by absorption in his own body [*svadehāveśalakṣaṇam*].[43]
>
> *asyoccāre kṛte samyaṅ mantramudrāgaṇo mahān*
> *sadyaḥ tanmukhatāmeti svadehāveśalakṣaṇam* // 11

[41] Muller-Ortega, "Becoming Bhairava," p. 213.

[42] Ibid, p. 215. The reconfiguration of these terms by Abhinavagupta will be discussed further in the following chapter, which focuses on *samāveśa* in nondual Śaiva yoga. Muller-Ortega states, "A key term that underscores the apparent exegetical divergence of the commentary from the text is the notion of *āveśa* (verse 11), which in the original text seems to mean something like demonic possession. In Abhinavagupta's commentary, *āveśa* appears to be reinterpreted to mean a state of yogic and meditative absorption, that is, *samāveśa.* Thus, in the shift from text to commentary, two levels seem to be discernible—in the original PT verses, the *sādhana* of possession emphasizing the encounter with external anthropomorphic deities separate from the *sādhaka* and, in terms of Abhinavagupta's gloss, the *sādhana* of Recognition, centering on the phenomenology of non-dual consciousness."

[43] Translation rendered by Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 215.

In addition to this single mention of the term *āveśa* in the *PT*, verse 18 in Abhinavagupta's commentary, *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtti*, uses the term *samāveśa* in virtually the same way.[44] The text explains that the yogi succeeds because of the efficacy of absorption (*samāveśa*) by the power of the *mantra* (*prasiddyati mantravīryasamāveśaprabhāvāt*). Thus, Padoux's comment that it is not always easy to distinguish between "possession by" and "absorption in" the divinity is complicated on the linguistic level because the dividing line between the terms *āveśa* and *samāveśa* is not rigid.

Conclusion

The *SYMT*, *NT*, and *PT* express the interests of heterodox dualistic Śaiva groups that sought power through ritualized possession by hordes of powerful female forces. The concerns of these texts represent the substratum of the later nondualistic Śaiva yoga traditions that incorporated, and recast, rather than dispensed with, the earlier traditions. Using different terminology--such as *samāveśa*, *gṛhṇāti*, and *āveśa*, respectively (though not definitively)--the *SYMT*, *NT*, and *PT* discuss induced possession that is both a means to gain divine power and the evidence of divine power thus gained.

These texts infrequently bring up the concomitant experience of madness (*mada, kṣīva, unmatta*), alhough when it is mentioned it is not always immediately dismissed as pathology. Rather, it may be understood as the desirable outcome of possession in a devotional (*bhakti*) context. For instance, in the *SYMT* the term *mada* denotes an intoxicated state of devotion that is not seen as pathology. Unlike the veiled references to a desirable type of intoxicated condition in the Āyurvedic

[44] A discrepancy exists in the published texts since the second half of this verse in the *Ptvivaraṇa*

treatises, the *SYMT* suggests that possession bestows intoxication, which divinizes the ritual participant who seeks empowerment by the very same forces that might equally destroy him. In the *NT*, however, the meaning of the terms *kṣīva* and *unmatta* is drawn from the Āyurvedic understanding of *unmāda* as a pathological condition. The demonological core of the *NT* is keenly aware that malevolent divinities may inflict disease and death when possessing unwilling individuals. Yet the *NT* simultaneously emphasizes that devotion alone brings all types of success, thereby suggesting the feasibility of an intoxicated type of experience. In the *PT* a desirable type of intoxication is implied because the *yoginī*-s' and Bhiarava's exploits in the cremation ground frequently involve consumption of alcohol. Thus, all three texts encourage bringing under control what would otherwise be an uncontrolled possessor that inflicts pathology. This kind of practice is a quintessentially Kaula pursuit.

The exorcism, control of, and possession by the range of female divinities discussed in the *SYMT*, *NT*, and *PT* are recast in Abhinavagupta's 10th-century C.E. Trika Kaula synthesis in terms of the internal dynamics of consciousness. In Trika Kaula the yogi realizes that the range of powers (*śakti*-s) is contained within nondual consciousness and achieves the state of Bhairava (*Bhairavatā*), a complete immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness. The practices leading to this supreme state of consciousness incorporate aspects of the earlier Kaula practices involving the ritualistic understanding of *āveśa* and *samāveśa* as possession. For instance, toward the beginning of the Trika Kaula ritual the initiate is impelled by the power of the deity (*rudraśakti*) that possesses his limbs (*TĀ* 29.187c-197b), and he thereafter exhibits a state of possession (*āveśa*) that displays ecstatic symptoms

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reads "*adṛṣṭamaṇḍalo'pyevaṃ* . The rest of the line is lost.

(*TĀ* 29.207-208). This amalgamation of practices shows that the advent of the third type of possession--mystical absorption in absolute consciousness--does not preclude the earlier types. Rather, the ultimate purpose of Abhinavagupta's synthesis is to reconfigure possession as immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness, a shift that subsumes the range of female divinities (*śakti*-s) into a totalizing absolute reality, the goddess Kālī. As we will see in the following chapters, the historical figures in Abhinavagupta's lineage, including his predecessors Somānanda and Utpaladeva and his main successor Kṣemarāja, dwell extensively on the ontological condition of immersion (*samāveśa*) in nondual consciousness.

Chapter Four

Complete Immersion in Absolute Consciousness in the Nondual Śaiva Yoga Traditions of Kashmir

According to the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir, an accomplished practitioner (*siddha*) attains liberation-while-living (*jīvanmukti*) through permanent immersion (*samāveśa*) in nondual consciousness (Śiva, Bhairava, *saṃvit, caitanya*). Practitioners (*sādhaka, adhikārin*) can be said to "play Śiva's game to its most serious and hilarious conclusion, which is the unmasking of Śiva within ourselves."[1] This revelation is "hilarious" because it unmasks the yogi as Śiva, who had playfully concealed himself in various impurities (*mala*) and veils (*kañcuka*). The yogi's re-cognition (*pratyabhijñā)* that Śiva dwells in and as his own heart (*hṛdaya*) fills him with astonishment (*camatkāra*) and bliss (*ānanda*).

Two authoritative texts, *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* (*ĪPK*) ("Verses on the Recognition of the Lord") by Utpaladeva and *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* (*PHṛ)* ("The Doctrine of Recognition") by Kṣemarāja, highlight the key concept of *pratyabhijñā.* No extant Sanskrit text contains *samāveśa* in its title.[2] Yet this concept is also important. Whereas *pratyabhijñā* is not mentioned in *PHṛ* except as an abbreviation of Utpaladeva's *ĪPK*, *samāveśa* comes up repeatedly in Kṣemarāja's commentary. Its centrality in the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions is evidenced by the fact that immersion, *samāveśa*, is the nature of consciousness, which cannot otherwise be: the waves (*ūrmi*) of the ocean (*samudra*) of consciousness constantly enfold and immerse themselves in each other. An accomplished yogi (*siddha*) experiences

[1] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart,* pp. 2-3.

[2] Kṣemarāja wrote a very short text entitled *Parāprāveśikā* ("Entrance into Supreme Reality").

himself as the supreme Lord, Śiva, who is immersive consciousness (*pārameśvaraḥ samāveśaḥ*).[3] Abhinavagupta, the 10th to 11th-century C.E. grand architect of Trika Kaula, uses *samāveśa* as a technical term in his classificatory system: the means (*upāya*-s) to the end of liberation-while-living (*jīvanmukti*) correspond to absorptive meditations, termed *samāveśa*, which although attained in different ways—through *śāṃbhavopāya* (the means of Śambhu), *śāktopāya* (the powerful means), or *āṇavopāya* (the means of limited beings)--can all effect liberation (*mokṣa*).[4]

Historically multivalent, the meaning of *samāveśa* shifts from dualistic to nondualistic valences in Śaiva traditions.[5] A transformation of its earlier meaning occurs. The dualistic Śaiva traditions arre primarily concerned with the plethora of frightful divinities that threaten to invade a human being's permeable boundaries and control him if he does not act first to control and become empowered by them. For instance, in the *Siddhayogeśvarīmatatantra* (*SYMT*), as discussed in chapter 3, *samāveśa* refers to possession by female divinities (*yoginī*-s) in a cremation ground (*śmaśāna*) in order to extract their power (*śakti*) and attain worldly accomplishments (*siddhi*-s). The *SYMT* extensively discusses possession by and of the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*). In the nondual Śaiva context, *samāveśa* means the absorption of the yogi in absolute consciousness that subsumes the innumerable powers (*śakti*-s). The internalization of the female divinities (*yoginī*-s) domesticates and sanitizes them. Abhinavagupta's philosophically reasoned Trika Kaula reformulation of earlier ideas reconfigures possession as an absorption in absolute consciousness, an immersion (*samāveśa*) in the Kālī-Self. Because all boundaries

[3] Abhinavagupta, *Tantrasāra*, chapter 2.

[4] The means (*upāya*-s) also bring about supranormal powers (*siddhi*-s).

[5] See Torella, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

ultimately dissolve in unitary consciousness, concern about an external entity attacking a person becomes moot.

Signifying the copenetration of two entities that are only provisionally distinct, *samāveśa* in its later sense means that Śiva and the yogi reciprocally enter and are entered by one another. The etymology of *samāveśa* supports this later interpretation: the prefix *sam* meaning "co, conjunction, together with" secures the bidirectional "entrance" implied by the transitive and intransitive root *viś*. Torella states:

> Here we have one of the key words of the Kashmiri Tantric tradition, which, furthermore, possesses the particular feature of allowing one to glimpse the succession, or rather, the coexistence of two different conceptions of the individual I's escape from his limits. In fact, in *samāveśa* the meanings of "to enter, to penetrate into" and "to be penetrated, possessed by" coexist, thanks to the dual transitive and intransitive sense of the root *viś*-.[6]

Muller-Ortega suggests a typology that distinguishes between *āveśa-sādhana* and *samāveśa-sādhana*, non-native terms that he coined in order to bring out the distinction between two types of practice.[7] He states that practice whose purpose is to achieve possession, or *āveśa-sādhana*, designates "the cremation-ground culture of possession by hordes of demonic female deities led by the frightful, fanged deity known as Rudra-Bhairava." Practice whose purpose is to achieve immersion, or *samāveśa-sādhana*, designates "the Tantric-yogic exploration of the nondual consciousness. Here, Bhairava comes to mean the unencompassable and exquisitely blissful light of consciousness that is to be discovered as the practitioner's true inner

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[6] Torella, p. xxxii.

[7] See Muller-Ortega, "Becoming Bhairava." He states "I should point out that the distinction between the *āveśa sādhana* and the *samāveśa sādhana* as I employ it here, is not a native category. I make distinction as a way of locating the fine line between the two domains of religious practice and ideology," p. 227, n. 2.

identity."[8] At stake is the type of entrance that takes place. Tantric-yoga is the more comprehensive practice because it subordinates possession by divinities to immersion in consciousness. The etymologies of *āveśa* and *samāveśa* differentiates the two terms. Because of the prefix *sam*, *samāveśa* more strongly denotes the bi-directional immersion in absolute consciousness that negates all provisional boundaries. But the two terms are used interchangeably in the texts to indicate both types of practice. Although *samāveśa* is used more frequently than *āveśa* in Trika Kaula, the etymologies of the two terms cannot be counted on to distinguish them semantically. And even though *āveśa* is contained linguistically in *samāveśa*, the former is not necessarily contained in the latter on the level of practice. Although Muller-Ortega's typology is helpful in distinguishing two types of practice, in Trika Kaula texts the terms *āveśa* and *samāveśa* are in actuality at times used interchangeably and therefore Muller-Ortega's distinction breaks down.

In addition to being multivalent over time, *samāveśa* is also variable in the period of the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions. "Emptying" it of certain meanings made room for "filling" it with a range of new meanings. For example, *samāveśa* is often a philosophical and scholastic designation even though it is also at times used to denote the culmination of theistic experience. In its theistic valences, *samāveśa* points to the mystical goal of Śaiva yoga, in which complete immersion (*samāveśa*) of oneself and the world in absolute consciousness is an intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). The intoxication (*mada*) sought in the dualistic Śaiva context by summoning *yoginī*-s shifts to mean an intoxicated devotion that is an immersion in consciousness (*samāveśa-bhakti*). This chapter will focus on the philosophical

[8] Ibid, p. 213.

valences of *samāveśa*, while the next chapter will examine the connection between immersion (*samāveśa*) and the intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*).

To show the interpretive shifts that occurred with respect to the term *samāveśa* and to delimit the scope of this study, I will focus almost exclusively on texts by Śaiva gurus in the most renowned ancient lineage (*paraṃpara*): *Śivadṛṣṭi* (*ŚD*) by Somānanda (ca. 900-950 C.E.); *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* (*ĪPK*) by Utpaladeva (10th-century C.E.); *Tantrāloka* (*TĀ*), *Tantrasāra* (*TS*), *Parātrīmśikāvivaraṇa* (*PTv*), *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtti* (*PTlv*), *Anubhavanivedanastotra* (*ANs*) and *Paramārthacarcā* (*PC*), by Abhinavagupta (ca. 975-1025 C.E.); and *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* (*PHṛ*) and *Parāprāveśikā* (*PP*) by Kṣemarāja (ca. 1000-1050 C.E.). In addition, I will examine the foundational text *Śiva Sūtra* (*ŚS*) (ca. 9th-century C.E.) and the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (*VB*) (ca. 8th-9th century C.E.) and *Kulārṇavatantra* (*KT*) (ca. 14th-century C.E.), "revealed" texts whose ideas are similar to those described by the aforementioned gurus. The *VB* presents meditations (*bhāvanā, dhātaṇa*) for attaining the experience of Bhairava, and the *KT* likewise offers teachings about entering the heart (*kula*).

Because Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula synthesis codifies the prevailing understanding of immersion (*samāveśa*), I will discuss his formulation first. Mentioned only sporadically in the earlier texts, the concept of *samāveśa* comes to fruition with Abhinavagupta and is developed even further by his main successor, Kṣemarāja. My analysis will keep commentaries on an original text in one place so as not to disrupt the flow of ideas that build directly on one another. Thus, Abhinavagupta's commentaries on the *ĪPK* by his predecessor, Utpaladeva, are included in the section on the *ĪPK*.

The Nondual Śaiva Yoga Narrative

The fundamental narrative of the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir encompasses what Western terminology subdivides into mythology, theology, ontology, epistemology, and soteriology.[9] It comprehensively classifies the simultaneously immanent and transcendent principles (*tattva*) of reality, explains why people find themselves thrown into the human predicament, and offers a soteriology for attaining liberation-while-living, *jīvanmukti*. Stemming from the *Śiva Sūtra*, the inaugural scripture that is held to have been revealed by Śiva to Vasugupta (ca. 875-925 C.E.), the narrative describes reality and prescribes the means to experience it directly.

Śiva is celebrated in Kashmir Śaiva traditions as the singular light of consciousness (*prakāśa*). Utpaladeva explains that Śiva alone is singular (*eka eva maheśvaraḥ)* (*ĪPK* 4.1). Similarly, Abhinavagupta states that the light is one alone and that alone is consciousness (*eka eva prakāśaḥ sa eva ca saṃvit*) (*TS* 1). Consciousness is its own light whose inherent pulsation (*spanda*) is the throb of its power (*śakti*). Because of his freedom (*svātantrya*) and desire (*icchā*) to play (*vilāsa*), Śiva limits himself (*ātmasaṃkoca*) without ultimately sundering any part of himself. The expansion (*unmeṣa*) and contraction (*nimeṣa*) of the vibration (*spanda*) of consciousness is his Self. Through his emission (*visarga*) the coagulation of light (*prakāśa*) into increasingly gross principles (*tattva*-s) gives rise to the "objective" world, which nonetheless remains singular (*advaya*).[10] From the supreme viewpoint

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[9] As with any narrative, there are different variants with various emphases. See *The Aphorisms of Śiva: The Śiva Sūtra with Bhāskara's Commentary, the Vārttika*, Mark S.G. Dyczkowski, trans. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992). See also *The Stanzas on Vibration*, Mark S.G. Dyczkowski, trans. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

[10] The nondual Śaiva cosmology superimposes eleven principles (*tattva*) onto the dualistic Sāṃkhya system of twenty-five, thereby bringing the final number to thirty-six. For a detailed explanation of the nondual Śaiva system that demotes the Sāṃkhya order of principles by absolutizing them through

(*śivadṛṣṭi*), the distinction between the "objective" and the "subjective" collapses. However, unlike the nondualism (*advaita*) of Vedānta, the supreme nondualism (*parādvaita*) of Trika Kaula affirms the reality of the manifest world. Moreover, the nondual Śaiva traditions sanction enjoyment (*bhukti*) of worldly pleasures, the efficacious ritual manipulation of which grants liberation (*mukti*) within—rather than beyond--the world.

Due to the beginningless (*anādi*) and apparent defilement (*mala*) of pure consciousness, which Śiva joyfully and playfully creates simply because he can, ignorant beings (*aṇu*-s, *paśu*-s) are bound to a skewed vision of reality that frustrates true enjoyment (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*). Limited beings do not recognize their identity as Śiva because of the impurities of individuality (*āṇava-mala*) and duality (*mayīya-mala*) and the residual impressions of past actions (*karma-mala*). To enjoy gazing as Śiva does (*śivadṛṣṭi*), yogis must recognize themselves as the light of consciousness (*prakāśa*), the primordial subject whose self-reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) is immersed in the singularity of consciousness. The *upāya*-s, the means means (*upāya)* to enter the states of meditative absorption (*samāveśa*), enable the yogi to attain recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of his identity as Śiva, the supreme knower (*jñātṛ*) and doer (*kartṛ*).

Having been shrouded by Śiva's power of obscuration (*nigraha*), the yogi, through no effort of his own, may be graced by Śiva's power of revelation (*anugraha*) and thereafter attain the power to control the continuous appearance (*sṛṣṭi*), maintenance (*sthiti*), and absorption (*samāhara*) of the universe (*TS* 11). Achieving *jīvanmukti*, liberation-while-living, corrects ignorance (*avidyā)*), the

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Śiva-tattva, see B.N. Pandit, *The Mirror of Self-Supremacy or Svātantrya-Darpaṇa* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1993), chapter. 3.

mistaken notion of alienation from the totality of consciousness. The accomplished yogi (*siddha*) revels in the bliss (*ānanda*) that flows from permanent immersion, *samāveśa*, wherein both inwardness and outwardness dissolve in the unbounded consciousness of Śiva.

The Trika Kaula understanding of liberation (*jīvanmukti, mokṣa*) subsumes the claims of liberation of other paths (*mārga*-s). Qualitatively different from what can be described as closed-eyed liberation (*nimīlana-samādhi*), the pinnacle of achievement expressed in certain Upaniṣads and Pātañjali's yoga, open-eyed liberation (*unmīlana-samādhi*) provides entry into the supreme state of consciousness. Muller-Ortega explains that this type of meditative absorption "differs greatly from the much more rigidly enclosed or purely introversive definitions of achieved mysticism found in earlier traditions of Indian thought."[11] Close-eyed liberation (*nimīlana-samādhi*) is seen as only a partial accomplishment, whereas immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness with open eyes (*unmīlana-samādhi*) yields liberation. The enlightened yogi transcends the limitations of both inward-looking awareness, wherein the mind is turned away from sensual contact, and outward-looking awareness, wherein subject/object dualism remains. Muller-Ortega describes this state as the

> paradoxical state of the yogin who does not close his eyes to the outer world, yet who never loses sight of the innermost consciousness. . . . Thus, whether it is called the *śāmbhavī mudrā* or the *bhairavī-mudrā*, this term describes a kind of bifocal mystical vision that involves the simultaneity of outer sensory perception and inner yogic vision. When this vision is achieved, the Śaivite yogin need never repudiate the outer "thisness" (*idantā*) of the objects of perception in an exclusively introversive, closed-eyed *samādhi* or meditative absorption. Instead, his outer vision is transformed so that it does not finally fall on the world's apparent "outwardness" or "manifestness." Rather, what is truly seen is the hidden interiority concealed within the world's apparent objectivity, an interiority in

[11] Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu," p. 575.

> which the separateness and duality of the world have melted into the all-pervasiveness of the paradoxical and boundaryless consciousness known as Śiva. . . . This state is described as affording access to the highest consciousness beyond both the ordinary conditions of awareness, and the states of purely introversive meditative absorption.[12]

Absolute experience of absolute consciousness is the capacity to abide in the deepest interior space even while gazing at the abundant diversity in the world. This "new definition of the goal of spiritual life becomes one of the hallmarks of the later tantric tradition."[13]

Muller-Ortega coins the term "introversive" to designate *nimīlana-samādhi*, the inward-looking type of meditative absorption that Abhinavagupta demotes to a lesser stataus than the "extroversive" state of *unmīlana-samādhi*. This neologism reformulates W.T. Stace's hierarchization of "introvertive" and "extrovertive" mystical experiences. According to Stace, extrovertive experience is an incomplete or lower degree of the introvertive experience and is "no more than a stepping stone to the higher introvertive state, and in any case is of less importance."[14] He defines the two types of mystical experience as follows:

> The essential difference between them is that the extrovertive experience looks outward through the senses, while the introvertive looks inward into the mind. Both culminate in the perception of an ultimate Unity . . . with which the perceiver realizes his own union or even identity. . . . Extrovertive uses physical senses; introvertive shuts off the senses, by obliterating the entire multiplicity of sensations, images, and thoughts, perceives the One, not as a Unity seen through a multiplicity (as in the extrovertive experience), but as the wholly naked One devoid of any plurality whatever. . . . The extrovertive experience, although we recognize it as a distinct type, is actually on a lower level than the introvertive type; that is to say, it is an incomplete kind of experience which finds its completion and fulfillment in the introvertive kind of experience. The extrovertive

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[12] Ibid, p. 575-576.

[13] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 9.

[14] W.T.Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1960), p. 49.

> kind shows a partly realized tendency to unity which the introvertive kind completely realizes. In the introvertive type the multiplicity has been wholly obliterated and therefore must be spaceless and timeless, since space and time are themselves principles of multiplicity. But in the extrovertive experience the multiplicity seems to be . . . only half absorbed in the unity.[15]

Abhinavagupta's hierarchy inverts that of Stace, whose Western bias against embodied experience prejudiced him against appreciating the "extroversive" experiences celebrated by Trika Kaula. Stace does not entertain the possibility of encompassing worldliness in the deepest interior boundless consciousness. What he calls "extrovertive" must be reformulated as "extroversive" in order to accommodate Abhinavagupta's positive regard for the yogi who sees as Śiva does (*śivadṛṣṭi*).

Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula Synthesis[16]

The Kashmir Valley in the 10th-century was the nexus of multiple streams of religious traditions. Abhinavagupta took initiation from several masters but regarded Śambhunātha as his foremost guru because he taught the esotericism of the Kaula path, the supreme path to achieve liberation. His Trika Kaula synthesis incorporates ideas and practices from earlier dualistic and nondualistic Śaiva traditions. Muller-Ortega states, "Synthesizing within itself all of the major streams that preceded it, [Trika Kaula] presents a particularly rich and dense formulation of the ancient wisdoms of India."[17] Historically situating Abhinavagupta's

[15] Stace, p. 61-62, 132.

[16] For an in-depth discussion of this topic see David Gordon White, *Kiss of the Yoginī: "Tantric Sex" in its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[17] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 200.

systematization will help elucidate his classification of the *upāya*-s and the corresponding states of immersion (*samāveśa*).

The Kaula tradition developed in part from the *yoginī* cults. Like the Kaulas who focused on the production of fluids, practitioners in the *yoginī* cults communally consumed forbidden substances such as flesh, wine, blood, and sexual fluids. By performing ritualized sexual intercourse (*maithuna*) with a *yoginī,* the male initiate withdrew the essential clan knowledge (*kaula*) that naturally inheres in her sexual fluid (*rajas, kuladravya, kulāmṛta, yonitattva*), the medium that was also the message. Both human and semi-divine beings, the *yoginī*-s enabled the initiates to gain the power of flight, and these heroic ritual specialists (*vīra*-s) in turn fueled their flight. Practicing in cremation grounds and roofless temples, the yogis sought possession by these powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāvesa*) whose eyes would roll with intoxication (*madavibhrāntalocanāḥ*) from the offerings (*SYMT* 13.17).

The founder of the Yoginī Kaula, Matsyendra (9th-10th centuries C.E.) described in his *Kaulajñānanirṇaya* the practices that became the foundation of Kaulism. Linked through deities and *mantra*-s to the Kāpālika renouncers, Kaula initiates were householders who performed the circle worship (*cakrapujā*) with five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*) in order to acquire powers (*siddhi*-s) and/or liberation (*mokṣa*). In addition to using human *yoginī*-s in the ritual, the initiates internalized the *yoginī*-s as deities of the senses in this embodied system that recognized the eight families of the mothers (*mātṛkā*-s).

The Trika Kaula developed out of the Trika in three phases.[18] In the first phase (ca. 800 C.E.), the goal of practice (*sādhana*) was to assimilate the power of the three (*trika*) goddesses named Parā, Parāparā, and Aparā. The eight mother

[18] See Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions."

goddesses (*mātṛkā*-s) in the form of apparitions and human females were also associated with this cult. In the second phase, the manipulation of impurity first incorporated the goddess Kālī alone and subsequently included the Krama sequence, the twelve Kālīs as the cycle of the nameless (*anākhyam*), the inner core of the pantheon (*TĀ* 4.171-172). The Krama rituals arose within a tradition of Kālī worship, which sometimes involved rites of spontaneous and controlled possession in cremation grounds. The third phase of Trika (ca. 900 C.E.) was Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula. When he put his philosophical gloss on the Kaula rituals, then Trika Kaula emerged. Abhinavagupta describes a blissful expansion of consciousness in which the sequence of Kālīs (*kālīkrama*) permeates and obliterates the ego of the worshiper so that he experiences the freedom of consciousness overflowing into itself. The empowered heterodox yogis expel Vedic norms to reveal Kālī as the inner nature of worship. Sanderson eloquently captures the experience of transcendence beyond "extrinsicist" motivation:

> This inhibition, which preserved the path of purity and barred his entrance into the path of power was to be obliterated through the experience of a violent, duality-devouring expansion of consciousness beyond the narrow confines of orthodox control into the domain of excluded possibilities, by gratifying with wine, meat and, through caste-free intercourse, with orgasm and its products the bliss-starved circle of goddesses that emanated in consciousness as his faculties of cognition and action. Worshipped in this lawless ecstasy they would converge into his consciousness, illumining his total autonomy, obliterating in the brilliance of a supramundane joy the petty, extrinsicist selfhood sanctified by orthodox society.[19]

Trika Kaula ritualizes its synthesis and subordination of competing doctrines. During the installation of the *maṇḍala* of tridents and lotuses (*triśulabjamaṇḍala),* the initiate embodies the hierarchy of doctrines (*TĀ* 31.62-85b).

[19] Sanderson, "Purity and Power," p. 199. The caveat that I would add to this vivid description is that there was no "lawless ecstasy" because this practice took place in a controlled ritual context.

He internalizes competing streams of thought through the mental construction of the *maṇḍala* built along the central axis of the subtle body, which contains the complete hierarchy of the Śaiva cosmos as the throne of the Trika deities. Beyond the thrones of other Śaiva systems are the Trika goddesses: Parā, Parāparā, Aparā. Worshiped as *Kālasaṃkarṣinī,* Kālī remains as pure power without her consort Śiva. Kaula is the major channel (*suṣumnā*), and other streams such as Krama, Vāma, and Dakṣiṇa are subsidiary. The "hermeneutical 'rise of kundalini'"[20] through the *maṇḍala*-throne places the Trika Kaula in a transcendent position. A spin-doctor extraordinaire, Abhinavagupta hierarchizes the mystical practices of competing religious traditions in a unifying structure that makes his competitors' doctrines necessary partial-truths of the Truth that Trika Kaula practice (*sādhana*) reveals. Mark Dyczkowski comments on the hierarchy of traditions fostered by Abhinavagupta's synthesis, in which Trika Kaula is presented as the culmination of Kaula Śaivism and of the "entire Śaivāgamic tradition."

> We understand this to mean not that Trika excludes Kaula Śaivism but that Trika, as presented by Abhinavagupta, completes it, so to say, as its finest flower. . . . From Abhinavagupta's viewpoint, Trika comes as the culmination of the entire Śaivāgamic tradition and encompasses it. . . . Trika can be, and is, an independent school although it contains, from its own point of view, all others. . . . [Abhinavagupta's exegetical method is] a "gradationist" model which establishes a hierarchy of systems, the lowest being the furthest away from the truth, and the highest the most near to it, if not identical with it.[21]

Abhinavagupta's strategies for constructing this Trika Kaula synthesis can be seen in his appropriation and transformation of Kaula sexual practices, in which ritually produced sexual fluids serve as power substances to obtain *siddhi*-s. On the

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[20] Alexis Sanderson, "Maṇḍala and Agamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir," Andre Padoux, ed., *Manatras et Diagrammes Rituels Dans L'Hindouisme* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1986), p. 186.

[21] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration,* pp. 13, 227.

one hand, he sanitizes these Kaula practices through recasting them in terms of the discourse of consciousness, in which the bliss of orgasm is displaced by the blissful expansion of consciousness. On the other hand, he allows a place in his system for the most advanced *sādhaka*-s to undertake the performance of the secret ritual, the *kulayāga*, which involves ritualized sexual intercourse with a female embodiment of the divine Śakti chosen by the guru. However, even in his discussions of the *kulayāga* Abhinavagupta is above all concerned with the internal dynamics of consciousness generated by the ritual.

Abhinavagupta's comprehensive Trika Kaula practice subordinates Kaula practices involving possession by divinities to immersion in absolute consciousness. On route to immersion, *samāveśa*, the yogi passes through a variety of possessions. For instance, installing and worshiping the deities in the *triśūlābjamaṇḍala* involves several stages of possession. Casting a flower into a particular segment of the *maṇḍala* results in initiatory possession (*āveśa*) by the chosen deity (*TĀ* 15.448-456b). In Kaula initiation, the ritual proceeds if the aspirant enters a state of possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) (*TĀV* 11 [29] 131, 5-13) that displays signs such as convulsions and loss of consciousness (*TĀ* 29.207-208). The initiate should act out his possession by the power of the deity (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*) (*TĀ* 29.187c-197b). He deifies his body with the *mantra*, which is said to possess him (*TĀ* 16.249-296b). Eventually he subordinates his individual body (*dehāhantā*) to consciousness in order to identify with the deity (*TĀ* 15.232-237). Here Abhinavagupta draws from Utpaladeva to describe the immersion (*samāveśa*) that arises after the yogi's body is subordinated.[22]

[22] See Jayaratha on *TĀ* 1.173c-174b. Utpaladeva states: "When there is subordination of insentient realities such as the void (*śūnya*) etc., the prominence of the agency and consciousness of pure consciousness (*cidātman*) is knowledge (*jñāna*) characterized by immersion (*samāveśa*) in it [i.e.pure

Abhinavagupta's Systematization of *Upāya*-s and *Samāveśa*-s

The Śaiva gurus who preceded Abhinavagupta only vaguely alluded to the means (*upāya*) to achieve immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness, and they offered scant description of this experience. Dyczkowski states, "[A]lthough three of the four categories of practice are defined in the *Mālinīvijaya*, there is no evidence to suggest that they were known, or in any way extensively applied as categories of interpretation, by anyone before Abhinavagupta."[23] We will briefly examine the doctrine of means--*anupāya* (no means), *śāmbhavopāya* (means of Śambhu), *śāktopaya* (the powerful means), and *āṇavopāya* (means of limited beings--that Abhinavagupta calls the fourfold knowledge (*jñānacatuṣka*) (*TĀ* 1.245) in order to elucidate the resulting types of immersions, *samāveśa.*

Abhinavagupta drew the structure for his doctrine of *upāya*-s from the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* (*MVT*) (ca. 8th-century C.E.), which mentions fifty types of possession (*samāveśa*) by fierce female deities invited to possess the yogi. The *MVT* lays out three types in particular that become canonical in Abhinavagupta's systematization.[24] As discussed in chapter 3, he sequence in the earlier text is from *āṇava*, to *śākta*, and finally to *śāṃbhava.*

In Abhinavagupta's hands these three types of *samāveśa* shift both semantically and organizationally. He recasts the ideas to fit his absolutizing agenda: *samāveśa* mutates from a wild-eyed experience into more clearly articulated philosophical categories that correspond to the *upāya*-s that organize Trika Kaula.

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consciousness]." *mukhyatvaṃ kartṛtāyāśca bodhasya ca cidātmanaḥ / śūnyādau tadguṇe jñānaṃ tatsamāveśalakṣaṇam // ĪPK* 3.2.12

[23] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, p. 171.

[24] *MVT* 2.21-23.

Furthermore, he reverses the order of the *samāveśa*-s and introduces the concept of no-means (*anupāya*). He first mentions the most rigorous practices for people who need concrete aids and later describes the least rigorous practice for those who receive an extremely elevating descent of grace (*śaktipāt*). A practitioner (*sādhaka*) can fall back to a less advanced *upāya* after attempting a more expedient path.

The *upāya*-s correspond to distinct types of*samāveśa* that are linked although not equated with the various methods. Because of Śiva's freedom to manifest his power (*śakti*) in manifold ways, the various kinds of *samāveśa*--s result. Abhinavagupta states, "The three kinds of *samāvesa* occur by the different [methods] of *śāmbhava, śākta, āṇava*" (*traividhyaṃ śāmbhavaśāktāṇavabhedena samāveśasya*)" (*TS* 1). The catalyst for the disciple's practice (*sādhana*), the guru shows him one of four means *(upāyacatuṣṭaya*) by which Śiva reveals himself. Each is dominated by a power of pure consciousness (*citśakti*) that has the power of bliss (*ānandaśakti*) as its essential nature. Descending from subtle to gross in the process of manifestation (*ābhāsa*), the powers (*śakti*) are will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and action (*kriya*). Abhinavagupta states:

> Due to the power of his independence (*svātantrayavaśāt*), [Śiva] causes himself to be illuminated either without the use of means (*anupāya*) or with the use of means. When using the means (*upāya*), they are constituted by will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), or action (*kriya*). The three kinds of immersion (*samāveśa*) occur by the different methods including *śāmbhava, śākta,* and *āṇava*. This fourfold way (*caturvidham*) will be explained in sequence [in the following chapters].
>
> *tatrāpi svātantryavaśāt anupāyameva svātmānaṃ prakāśayati sopāyaṃ vā sopāyatve 'pi icchā vā jñānaṃ vā kriyā vā abhyupāya iti traividhyaṃ śāmbhavaśāktāṇavabhedena samāveśasya tatra caturvidhamapi etadrūpaṃ kramena atra upadiśyate //*[25]

[25] *TS*, chapter 1.

Abhinavagupta's extensive discussion of *samāveśa* in the first chapter of the *TĀ* indicates its importance. Chapters 2 through 5 in both *TĀ* and *TS* elucidate each *upāya* and the corresponding *samāveśa*. The *TĀ* states:

> On the subject of *samāveśa* in the auspicious previously named text [*MVT*], the threefold [means] are explained authoritatively by Śiva.
>
> *tadetattrividhatvaṃ hi śāstre śrīpūrvanāmani /*
> *ādeśi parameśitrā samāveśavinirṇaye // TĀ* 1.167

Abhinavagupta quotes from *MVT* 2.21-2.23, which serve as the authoritative basis for Trika Kaula formulations concerning the *upāya*-s. To discuss immersion derived from *śāmbhava-upāya*, he uses the term *āveśa*.[26]

> For the one who is beyond the realm of thought due to an awakening by the guru, the immersion (*āveśa*) derived from Śambhu, *(śāmbhava)* arises.
>
> *akimciccintakasyaiva guruṇā pratibodhataḥ /*
> *utpadyate ya āveśaḥ śāmbhavo 'sāvudīritaḥ // TĀ* 1.168

Having defined the *śāṃbhava* type of immersion (*āveśa*), Abhinavagupta then discusses those pertaining to *śāktopāya* and *āṇavopāya*:[27]

> He enters an immersion (*samāveśa*) who discerns with his mind alone the reality that is beyond utterance. This is considered to be the powerful (*śākta*)[*samāveśa*].
>
> *uccārarahitaṃ vastu cetasaiva vicintayan /*
> *yaṃ samāveśamāpnoti śāktaḥ so'trābhidhīyate // TĀ* 1.169
>
> The minute (*āṇava*) is known as a complete immersion (*samāveśa*), which should be [achieved] by means of recitation using the breath (*uccāra),* ritual *(karaṇa),* concentration *(dhyāna),* meditation using the phones *(varṇa),* and positions of the body (*sthānakalpana*).
>
> *uccārakaraṇadhyānavarṇasthānaprakalpanaiḥ /*
> *yo bhavetsa samāveśaḥ samyagāṇava ucyate // TĀ* 1.170

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[26] The critical edition of *TĀ* 1.168 replaces the term *samāveśa* from *MVT* 2.23 with *āveśa* and changes the verb *jāyate* to *utpadyate.* These two differences maintain the *śloka* meter and do not alter the meaning of the verse.

[27] The critical edition of the *TĀ* replaces *tu* from *MVT* 2.21 with *sa.*

Abhinavagupta elaborates beyond what the *MVT* says about *samāveśa*. He provides a general definition using the term *āveśa*, which shows that he uses the terms *samāveśa* and *āveśa* interchangeably to designate the nondualistic signification. We are thus reminded of André Padoux's statement: "One often designates them by the same term, *āveśa*, but the ancient form of possession undergirds another new form, union."[28] The meaning here is immersion in nondual consciousness. Abhinavagupta states:

> According to this Tantra, immersion (*āveśa*) arises from merging (*nimajjanāt*) one's own nature and that of Śambhu, the Beneficent One (Śiva), who is eternally united with his Śakti.
>
> *āveśaścāsyatantrasya svatadrūpanimajjanāt /*
> *paratadrūpatā śambhorādyācchaktyavibhāginaḥ // TĀ* 1.173b-174a

This definition is an exegesis of its meaning in the dualistic texts:

> By this [definition], this here is the meaning [of the *MVT*]. The object to be known [Śiva] blooms (*pronmiṣat*) from within itself.
>
> *tenāyamatra vākyārtho vijñeyaṃ pronmiṣatsvayam // TĀ* 1.174b

Abhinavagupta reinterprets, according to a nondualistic standpoint, the fiftyfold possession (*pañcāśadhidhatā samāveśa*) (*TĀ* 1.186b-187a) and possession by the powers of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa*) (*TĀ* 1.192) mentioned in dualistic Śaiva texts. In his Trika Kaula synthesis even the five gross elements (*bhūta*) are not separate from Śiva.

> It is said in the dualist texts that [the five gross elements] are separate from the Supreme Lord, Śiva. This meaning of the five gross elements and other principles from the dualistic texts is abandoned.
>
> *ucyate dvaitaśāstreṣu parameśādvibheditā /*
> *bhūtādīnāṃ yathā śāstra na tathā dvayavarjite // TĀ* 1.194

Later in the chapter Abhinavagupta outlines the *upāya*-s as follows:

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[28] Padoux, "Transe," pp. 133-134.

> Nondifferentiated means is called *śāmbhava*, differentiated and nondifferentiated means is called *śākta*, and differentiated means is called *āṇava*.
>
> *abhedopāyamatroktaṃ śāmbhavaṃ śāktamucyate /*
> *bhedābhedātmakopāyaṃ bhedopāyaṃ tadāṇavam // TĀ* 1.230

The description of the *upāya*-s in *TĀ* and *TS* begins with *anupāya* (no-means), the way of bliss (*ānandopāya*), which is an empty placeholder in the three-plus-one scheme because it designates the ever-present direct experience of absolute consciousness rather than a means to it. Having been pierced by an extremely intense descent of grace (*dṛḍhaśaktipātāviddha*), the limiting sense of individuality (*āṇavamala*) shatters completely. The impurities of illusion (*māyīyamala*) and action (*karmamala*) are also thereby annihilated. Either no trigger is necessary or a single teaching, such as the smallest amount of logical discussion (*tarka*) in the form of the guru's words (*guruvacanam*), or faith in the scriptures suffices (*TĀ* 2.49). No means is required to effect permanent immersion (*tadā punar upāyavirahito nityoditaḥ asya samāveśaḥ*) because the yogi enters the self-luminous Śiva instantaneously (*svayaṃ prakāśaṃ śivamāviśetkṣaṇāt*) (*TS* 2). Whoever enters the intensity of this state experiences everything as dissolved in the Bhairava fire of consciousness (*TĀ* 2.35). The direct experience of consciousness, this methodless method (*anupāya*) is beyond succession and nonsuccession (*kramākramātīta*) and arises without any practice (*nirupāyaka*) (*TS* 2).

The concept of achieving *jīvanmukti* becomes meaningful with the practitioner who uses the means of Śambhu, *śāmbhavopāya*. This yogi has to undergo the slightest shift to become liberated. There is no qualitative difference between *anupāya* and *śāmbhavopāya*, which is itself a direct means (*sākṣāt*) (*TĀ* 1.142). Abhinavagupta explains *śāmbhavopāya*:

> The words *akiṃciccintakasya* refer to the yogi who does not have even a little thought, the one for whom the diversity of thoughts is not applicable. By this is indicated instantaneous achievement of the object to be known [Śiva].
>
> *akiṃciccintakasyeti vikalpānupayogitā /*
> *tayā ca jhaṭiti jñeyasamāpattirnirūpyate // TĀ* 1.171
>
> Immersion (*samāveśa*) with consciousness is actual identity [with that consciousness]. It is nothing but that. By that is meant that thought-free consciousness does not need to consider for support such common things as meditation (*bhāvanā*) and other things.
>
> *caitanyena samāveśastādātmyaṃ nāparaṃ kila /*
> *tenāvikalpā saṃvṛttirbhāvanādyanapekṣiṇī // TĀ* 1.178
>
> *Śāṃbhava-samāveśa* herein means having entered one's identity as Śiva.
>
> *śivatādātmyamāpannā samāveśo 'tra śāṃbhavaḥ // TĀ* 1.179a

In both *anupāya* and *śāmbhavopāya*, there is only nondualistic awareness, the direct experience of the absolute. Nonsuccession (*akrama*) characterizes *śāmbhavopāya* because the yogi who dwells in the thought-free (*avikalpa*) realm of universal subjectivity needs no form of meditation (*TĀ* 1/2.178-179a). The powers of knowledge (*jñāna*) and action (*kriya*) are fully expanded. But since the disciple on the path of Śambhu (*śāmbhavopāya*) is not pierced by the most intense *śaktipāt* and is not able to enter the state of immersion immediately (*praveṣṭuṃ na śaknoti*), he begins visualizing (*paśyan*) himself as the power of freedom alone (*svātantryaśaktimeva*). Repetition of *mantra*-s (*japa*) is unnecessary since visualization alone causes him to directly experience immersion as Bhairava (*bhairavasamāveśam anubhavati*) (*TS* 3). The yogi may join with *yoginī*-s (*yoginīmelaka*) that appear in the subtle world (*TĀ* 3.29). Otherwise he may practice "vocalic mysticism"[29] using the precognitive will (*icchāśakti*) to enter the

[29] See Muller-Ortega, "Tantric Meditation."

phones of the Sanskrit alphabet. Given that consciousness manifests objectivity via the sequence of sounds, from *a* to *ha* or *kṣa*, the ritual wherein the practitioner repeats this effulgence of sounds enables him to recognize his power to create as Śiva does. The yogi repeats these experiences to extend them (*TĀ* 3.274). These visualizations enable him to experience full "I-ness" (*pūrṇa ahamtā*), the state of *jīvanmukti* by *śāṃbhava-samāveśa*, which is devoid of discursive thought (*nirvikalpatayā śāṃbhavena samāveśena jīvanmuktatā*) (*TS* 3). This state provides experience as the supreme Lord who is the immersion (*parameśvaraḥ samāveśaḥ).* The yogi wanders about at will and praises Śiva's names and forms through transformed eyes since he has attained extroversive awareness (*unmīlana samādhi*).

The powerful means, *śāktopāya*, develops through succession and nonsuccession (*kramākrama*) and encompasses both dualistic and nondualistic (*bhedābheda*) awareness (*TĀ* 1.230). Individual consciousness, intellect, mind, and ego (*ceto-dhī-manohaṃkṛti*) intermittently maintain the field of illusion (*māyā*) in which thought-constructs persist.[30] Rigorous mental discipline (*bhāvanā*) using the power of knowledge (*jñāna-śakti*) eradicates the residual impressions of duality left after the combustion of *āṇavamala.* Dyczkowski explains, "[W]hile Mantra at the Divine level of practice *(śāmbhavopāya*) is the silent consciousness of 'I', at the Empowered and Individual levels it serves as a means to purify thought."[31] The yogi practices *mantra* repetition (*japa*) (*TĀ* 4.194) to dissolve thought-constructs (*vikalpa*-s) in pure consciousness, which eliminates the experience of duality and brings the fullness (*pūrṇatā*) of pure consciousness. But the vision of identity with Śiva fades in and out before yogis enter their highest being (*paraṃ svarūpaṃ*

[30] Commentary by Lakshmanjoo on *TĀ* 1.214. Recorded, January-March, 1976.

[31] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, p. 203. See *TĀ* 11.86-89.

praviśanti) (*TS* 3). Although the *śāmbhava* state shines in *śāktopāya*, it is at times contracted. When a yogi first comes to *śāktopāya* he has dualistic thinking (*vikalpa*). Eventually he attains nondualistic (*abheda*) awareness--"*ahaṃ vimarśa*"--which in Śaivism is not considered *vikalpa* because there is no dichotomy between "I" and "this." Abhinavagupta states:

> Just so, in the powerful means [*śāktopāya*], the discursive level of consciousness (*vaikalpikībhūmi*) including knowledge and action, which are evident, is contracted, as previously explained. The blazing power [is revealed in] the yogi who dedicates himself to dissolving what supports the contraction. Thus, he brings about the desired inner manifestation of pure consciousness (*antarābhāsa*).
>
> *evaṃ vaikalpikībhūmiḥ śākte kartṛtvavedane /*
> *yasyāṃ sphuṭe paraṃ tvasyāṃ saṃkocaḥ pūrvanītitaḥ // TĀ* 1.217
>
> *tathā saṃkoca saṃbhāra vilāyana parasya tu /*
> *sā yatheṣṭāntarābhāsakāriṇī śaktirujjvalā // TĀ* 1.218

The *śāktopāya* makes reference to the frightful female divinities (*śakti*-s) and human ritual participants (*yoginī*-s) in the dualistic Śaiva context. Abhinavagupta explains that the supreme Lord is perfect consciousness whose perfection is his *śakti* (*parameśvaraḥ pūrṇasaṃvitsvabhāvaḥ pūrṇataiva asya śaktiḥ*) (*TS* 4). Internal to consciousness in the heart of the meditators (*dhyāyināṃ hṛdi*), his innumerable *śakti*-s (*śaktayaśca asya asaṃkhyeyāḥ*) are variously named, although they are not distinct goddesses (*TS* 4).[32] Śakti's different forms, which are subsumed in the totality of consciousness, are the means by which to explore her sequence and enter into sequencelessness, the ultimate goal of practice (*sādhanā*).

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[32] They are variously named Parāśakti ("Highest Power"), Parāparāśakti ("Intermediate Power") and Aparāśakti ("Lowest Power") (*TS* 4). They may also be called Kula ("Heart"), Sāmarthya ("Strength"), Ūrmi ("Wave"), Hṛdaya ("Heart"), Sāra ("Flow"), Spanda ("Vibration"), Vibhūti ("Splendor"), Trīśikā ("Queen of the Three"), Kālī ("The Dark One"), Karṣaṇī ("The Attracting One"), Caṇḍī ("The Fierce One"), Vāṇī ("Sound"), Bhoga ("Enjoyment"), Dṛś ("Sight"), and Nityā ("The Eternal One") among other names.

Abhinavagupta's representations of the sequence of Kālīs (*kālīkrama)* as the wheel of powers (*śakticakra)* of nondual consciousness involve an internalization and sanitization of earlier Kula representations of the terrifying, blood-drinking goddess Kālī celebrated in orgiastic rituals. Muller-Ortega states:

> The Kālī-krama as envisioned by Abhinavagupta arises, to be sure, on the backdrop of the Tantric worship of Kālī as rooted in the cremation-ground culture of early forms of Hindu tantric practice, particularly in its Krama inflection. In early inflections of this cult, the worshipper invoked terrifying and blood-drinking Goddesses in the cult of the Yoginīs and Śakinīs and other female demi-goddesses to take possession of the practitioner and in this way to grant the practitioner magical powers, spiritual attainment and transcendent knowledge. As well, the early worship of Kālī appears to be deeply intertwined with the antinomian and at times orgiastically licentious sexual ritual of the Kaula or left-handed Hindu Tantra. At the same time, these religiously potent and often problematic elements of the worship of the Goddess Kālī co-existed with and, indeed, nourished—at least in the hands of the more philosophically inclined *ācāryas* of the Śaivism of Kashmir—the complex, sublime, and quite intellectualized narrations of the philosophical nature of Kālī in the theology of medieval Kashmiri tantric ideology.[33]

Abhinavagupta discusses at length the arising of Kālī's twelve hypostatizations (*dvādaśātmakatoditā*) (*TĀ* 4.145). Each Kālī in the sequence (*krama*) signifies a moment in the continuous unfolding of consciousness to its core that is beyond sequentiality (*akrama*) (*TĀ* 4.145-180a). She is known as Mātṛsadbhāva ("The True Reality of the Subject") and Kālakarṣinī ("The Extracter of Time"). Worshipped as Kālasamkarṣiṇī, she is the essence of all agents of cognition (*pramātṛṇāṃ sadbhāvaḥ*) (*TĀ* 15.347d-348). The names of the twelve Kālīs are Sṛṣṭikālī ("Creatrix"), Raktakālī ("The Impassioned One"), Sthitināśakāśakālī ("The Visualizer of the Destruction of the Creation"), Yamakālī ("The Devourer"),

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[33] Paul Muller-Ortega,"Sequence and Sequencelessness in the Indescribable Vortex Wheel of Power: The *Kālī-Krama* as *Śakti-Cakra* in the Tantric Discourse of Power in Medieval Kashmir" presented at The Society of Tantric Studies conference, 10/11/02), pp. 7-8. Quoted with permission from the unpublished manuscript.

Saṃhārakālī ("The Destroyer"), Mṛtyukālī ("The Absorber"), Rudrakālī ("The Dreadful One"), Mārtaṇḍakālī ("The One of the Sun Deities"), Paramārkakālī ("The Supreme Ray"), Kālāgnirudrakālī ("The Dreadful One Who is the Fire that Devours Time"), Mahākālī ("The Great One"), and Mahābhairavacaṇḍograkālī ("The Fierce and Terrible One Who is the Great Bhairava").

The highly secret (*atirahasya*) worship of the sequence of Kālīs (*kālīkrama*) encodes antinomian practices using forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*). As Sanderson explains, "The ritual of this system combined the ecstatic and antinomian intensity of the Kaula tradition with the worship of a series of sets of emanations of Kālī to be contemplated as the transformation of the structure of awareness as it passes through the cyclical process of cognition and withdraws into its nonconceptual essence."[34] Whereas the ritual behavior of yogis seeking the vertiginous domain of absolute consciousness appears unlawful and transgressive to the non-initiate, this behavior provides freedom (*svātantrya*) to the yogi who enters the sequence (*krama*) and emerges into sequencelessness (*akrama*). The text self-reflexively states that this highly secret doctrine should neither be revealed in one place nor kept secret in any way (*na atirahasyam ekatra khyāpyaṃ na ca sarvathā gopyam*) (*TS* 4).

The omnipresent imprinted seal (*mudrā*) of Śakti, experienced directly through her wheel of powers (*śakticakra*), indicates her immanence in the manifest world and the yogi's immersion (*samāveśa*) in her. Muller-Ortega states:

> The omnipresent hand of this divine Śakti and of her myriad sequences of unfolding are thus espied and discovered by the tāntrika in every moment, in every object, in every human situation, in every encounter with an object of consciousness, which, by this understanding, are thus imprinted and deeply stamped with the seal

[34] Sanderson, "Meaning in Tantric Ritual," p. 91.

> (*mudrā*) of the Śakti's own imperishable and divine *krama* or sequential movement. . . . All of these are seen by the Śaivite to be imprinted with the *kramamudrā*, the seal of sequentiality, the controlling intelligence of sequential patterns of unfolding movements of consciousness: the Śākti displaying her intelligence and control in the all-pervasive *krama* or sequences of being.[35]

The seal, *mudrā*, is a sign of consciousness that is the condition of liberation. Practicing the *mudrā* precipitates experience of absolute consciousness, the state to which Abhinavagupta directs praise in his *Anubhavanivedanastotra*.[36] In this hymn he addresses *śāmbhavī mudrā*, the gesture of mystical illumination that is open-eyed liberation (*unmīlana-samādhi*).

The concept of *mudrā* can be traced back to the dualistic Śaiva context that was concerned about people who are sealed by (*mudrita*) hordes of female possessors (*NT* 2.13-14). The reformulation of the root *mud* from the past passive participle *mudrita* to the noun *mudrā* radically transforms its meaning.

> Whenever someone is pinned [down] or sealed [in] (*mudrita*) by some member in a particular family (*yasminkule*), he can be released from all his faults only by worship of [the leader] of that family (*tatkulena*).
>
> *yasminkule yadaṃśena mudritaḥ kīlitaḥ kvacit /*
> *tatkulenaiva ceṣṭena sarvadoṣaiḥ pramucyate // NT* 19.80b-81a

In the earlier context, being sealed (*mudrita*) by female possessors was an affliction from which the victim could escape only by worshiping the leader of the family of divinities. In Trika Kaula the *mudrā* is a sign of consciousness that indexes the condition of liberation.

People who receive a very mild form of *śaktipāt* that sets them onto the most arduous path, *āṇavopāya*, the means for limited beings, must labor to eradicate the

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[35] Muller-Ortega, "Sequence and Sequencelessnes," pp. 27-28.

[36] See Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu."

persistent ignorant notion that the Self is finite (*aṇu*). The mind is at first completely unable to assimilate objectively perceived contents into the singularity of consciousness. Designed to assist the majority of people whose thought needs purification, this *upāya* depends upon the power of action (*kriya-śakti*), which uses supports (*ālambana*) such as the intellect (*buddhi*), breath (*prāṇa*), body (*deha*), and external objects (*grāhya vastu*).[37] The yogi struggles to control his senses, although he frequently succumbs to the whims of his ego, since absolute consciousness is hidden from view. Ascending by steps (*krama*) to realization releases successive types of bliss (*ānanda*) that gradually enable him to achieve absorption (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness. Since Śiva merely conceals his own nature in the individual (*aṇu*) rather than removes himself, the *śāmbhava* state that pervades *āṇavopāya* is recoverable (*TĀ* 1.223).

Like the other *upāya*-s, *āṇavopāya* encodes esoteric practices. For instance, the *TS* states that the body is an instrument that utilizes distinct positions for immersion in consciousness (*dehaḥ saṃniveśaviśeṣātmā karaṇaśabdavācyaḥ* (*TS* 5). On the exoteric level, this verse means that the body is an instrument that assumes numerous postures (*karaṇa*-s) in order to lead the yogi into immersion. On the esoteric level, a *karaṇa* can be a posture of sexual intercourse that involves a penetration (*saṃniveśa)* between the subject (*grāhaka*) and object (*grāhya*) (*TĀ* 5.130). This implicit reference to the *kulayāga* anticipates a discussion about the twelve Kālīs as the flames of the fire of consciousness that rest on and consume all external objects (*TS* 5). Performing the external actions (*kriya*) in the controlled ritual context is said to teach the yogi that all differentiation is interior to

[37] See Jayaratha's commentary on *TĀ* 5.6.

consciousness. Although gradual (*krama*), this *upāya* is powerful enough to bring about direct experience of absolute consciousness.

Abhinavagupta explains that *śāmbhava samāveśa* is latent in *śākta samāveśa* and *āṇava samāveśa*, the terms used to designate direct experience when the yogi relies on *śāktopāya* or *āṇavopāya*, respectively. He states that the causes may be various, but result of removing the impurities (*mala*-s) is always the same (*na bhinnā*), just as a jar can be destroyed in various ways (*TĀ* 1.166). Llikewise, the different *upāya*-s lead to the same end

> These two immersions [*āṇava* and *śākta*] lead toward the ocean that is beyond the fluctuation of thought. Indeed what does not arise from that [ocean of nondual consciousness] cannot exist.
>
> *dvāvapyetau samāveśau nirvikalpārṇavaṃ prati /*
> *prayāt eva tadrūḍhiṃ vinā naiva hi kiṃcana // TĀ* 1.226

Although unrecognized in contracted (*nimeṣa*) consciousness, the *śāmbhava* state that shines in expanded (*unmeṣa*) consciousness pervades all types of *samāveśa*. Thus, the yogi does not need to switch to another *upāya* to achieve complete absorption. When nondualistic experience arises in *āṇavopāya*, the yogi has entered the *śāmbhava* state. Dyczkowski comments on this point:

> Thus although the means are diverse and correspond to different levels of consciousness, this does not affect their ultimate goal. By practising any one of these means we can achieve both liberation and all the yogic powers (*siddhi*), which issue from the perfection of practice. Every means is, from this point of view, the supreme means.[38]

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[38] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, p. 174. See also *TĀ* 1.144b, 1.165, 1.245. Not all scholars agree that each means is supreme. For instance, Rastogi states that a hierarchical gradation exists whereby the individual means (*āṇavopāya*) leads to the next and only the non-means (*anupāya*) is the gateway to liberation-while-living (*jīvanmukti*). See Navjivan Rastogi, *Introduction to the Tantrāloka: A Study in Structure* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987). B.N. Pandit explains that "when a state of *samāveśa* comes through a higher level of yoga it is considered to be superior because it reveals a more elevated aspect of one's Divine essence." See B.N. Pandit, *Specific Principles of Kashmir Śaivism.* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1997), p. 97.

The *upāya*-s and corresponding types of *samāveśa* lead to the same end, the state of Śiva (*śivatva*). Even though some *upāya*-s may be more expedient paths than others, none is superior. Each is the appropriate starting-point for a yogi whose experience of grace initiates him into a particular practice (*sādhana*). "Developing in different ways from differing initial states, the three types of practice lead to corresponding forms of mystical absorption (*samāveśa*) that, although fundamentally identical, are distinguished on this basis."[39] Lakshmanjoo elaborates clearly and repeatedly on this point in his commentary on *TĀ* 1.167-227.

> *Śāmbhava samāveśa* is not only *śāmbhava samāveśa*. It is *śākta samāveśa* and *āṇava samāveśa* also. If you enter in *śākta samāveśa* that will become *śāmbhava samāveśa*, and if you enter in *āṇava samāveśa* that will also be *śāmbhava samāveśa* for you. . . . *Āṇava* and *śākta samāveśa* are also *śāmbhava samāveśa* in the end. . . . From the *śāmbhava* point of view, nothing is excluded. The goal is one for them all. . . . When you reach the depth of understanding what is actually the basis of *āṇava* and *śākta*, you realize that *śāmbhava* is everywhere. . . . The fruits [of practice] are not differentiated. Only the means are differentiated. The "means" are differentiated but the "meant" is not.[40]

Kṣemarāja inherited Abhinavagupta's organization of the *upāya*-s and corresponding types of *samāveśa* and transposed it onto the *Śiva Sūtra*. He views the three awakenings (*unmeṣa*) of the *Śiva Sūtra* in terms of the three *upāya*-s. Whereas the Self is experienced as consciousness (*caitanyaṃ ātmā*) (*Śivasūtra* 1.1) in *anupāya* and *śāmbhavopāya* and the mind is drawn inward to the *mantra* (*cittam mantraḥ*) (*Śivasūtra* 2.1) in *śāktopāya*, the mind appears as the Self (*cittaṃ ātmā*) (*Śiva Sūtra* 3.1) in *āṇavopāya*, the means for limited beings.

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[39] Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration*, p. 172.

Historical Development of the Concept of Immersion

In this previous section we examined Abhinavagupta's formulations concerning the connections between the *upāya*-s and the different types of immersion, *samāveśa*, in the *TĀ* and *TS*. In this section we will survey both the historical antecedents and later developments of Abhinavagupta's systematiztion in a range of Kashmir Śaiva texts. In addition to the term *samāveśa* and its cognates, we will examine the array of terms that have been used in the different texts to describe the state of immersion in absolute consciousness.

Immersion in the *Śiva Sūtra*

The *Śiva Sūtra*, which is held to have been revealed to Vasugupta (ca. 825 C.E.) at the foot of Mahādeva Mountain in the Kashmir Valley, is the primary textual foundation of the nondual Śaiva traditions of Kashmir.[41] Although the term *samāveśa* is not used in any of the text's three sections (*unmeṣa*), the concept of immersion in consciousness does appear. The text states:

> Established in the [supreme] posture, he effortlessly plunges (*nimajjati*) into the lake.
>
> *āsanasthaḥ sukhaṃ hrade nimajjati* // 3.16[42]

The term *nimajjati* (root *majj*, "to plunge or penetrate into; to immerse or submerge in water")[43] is a synonym for becoming immersed in consciousness. The yogi enters

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[40] Recorded January - March 1976.

[41] Kṣemarāja's version of the story is that Śiva came to Vasugupta in a dream and told him to look on a rock at the foot of the mountain for the *sūtra*-s. Kallaṭa in the *Spandavṛtti* says that Śiva taught the *Śiva Sūtra* to Vasugupta in a dream. In his *Vārttika* Bhāskara says the *sūtra*-s were revealed to Vasugupta in a dream by a *siddha*.

[42] The *ŚivaSūtra* with Bhāskara's Commentary, the *Vārttika*, numbers this *sūtra* 3.17.

[43] Monier Monier-Williams *Sanskṛit-English Dictionary*, s.v. "*majj*."

by plunging into the heart (*hrada*), a metaphor for the ocean of consciousness that becomes central for Abhinavagupta. In his commentary, *Śivasūtravimarśinī,* Kṣemarāja explains that the yogi plunges effortlessly (*sukham nimajjati*) into the heart (*hrada*), which is an ocean of supreme nectar (*parāmṛtasamudre).* After drowning his limitations, the yogi no longer needs practices to maintain identification as Śiva. The commentary quotes from the *NT* for clarification: "This state of Śiva established in his highest Self is said to be the highest [state]" (*sāvasthā paramā proktā śivasya paramātmanaḥ*) (*NT* 8.45).

In a slightly more oblique way, *Śiva Sūtra* 3.21 talks about entering into consciousness again using the root *majj,* which in this case designates a preliminary type of immersion:

> The yogi immersed (*magna*) [in his own nature] should enter [*praviśet*] by means of his own mind.
>
> *magnaḥ svacittena praviśet* // 3.21[44]

The immersed (*magna*) yogi should enter (*praviśet*) with the prefix *pra,* "before, in front" suggesting that the yogi should anticipate complete entrance. According to Kṣemarāja, *svacittena* means that the yogi should enter (*praviśet*) and then enter completely (*samāviśet*) through thought-free awareness (*avikalpakarūpeṇa*):

> He should enter (*praviśet*) and enter completely (*samāviśet*) by means of thought-free awareness (*avikalpakarūpeṇa*), introverted knowledge that has the astonishment of internal awareness as its nature.
>
> *avikalpakarūpeṇa antarmukhāntaravimarśacamatkārātmanā saṃvedanena praviśet samāviśet* //

[44] The *ŚivaSūtra* with Bhāskara's Commentary, the *Vārttika* numbers this *sūtra* 3.22. See Dyczkowski, *Aphorisms.* Bhāskara reads *svacitte* instead of *svacittena* and takes the *sūtra* to mean that one should plunge mentally into the phonemes of the *mantra.*

Immerson According to Somānanda

The first known exponent of Pratyabhijñā was Somānanda (ca. 900-950 C.E.) who wrote *Śivadṛṣṭi*, an intellectually rigorous and complex work that expounds the central tenets of nondual Śaiva yoga.[45] According to this text, not only is recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's identity as Śiva paramount, but so too is the associated concept of immersion, *samāveśa*. The first compound in the first verse mentions that Śiva is immersed in one's own being (*asmadrūpasamāviṣṭa*). The use of the term *samāviṣṭa* (past passive participle of root *viś* + *sam* + *ā*) in the first verse indicates its importance in the text.

> Let Śiva, who is immersed (*samāviṣṭa*) in my own being [and] who obscures himself by himself, praise Śiva in his extended form by his own power (*śakti*).
>
> *asmadrūpasamāviṣṭaḥ svātmanātmanivāraṇe /*
> *śivaḥ karotu nijayā namaḥ śaktyā tatātmane //* 1.1

Somānanda implores his own obscured true Self (Śiva) to be able to praise Śiva, who, by means of his own power (*śakti*) is the extended totality of consciousness. The commentary (*vṛtti*) by Somānanda's pupil, Utpaladeva (10th-century C.E.), reiterates that Śiva is immersed (*samāviṣṭaśca śivo 'pītyucyate*). As the immersion (*samāveśa*) intensifies, the production of *siddhi*-s increases (*yāvatyā ca mātrayā samāveśas tāvanmātrasiddhisaṃbhavaḥ*).[46]

Immersion According to Utpaladeva and His Commentators

Utpaladeva is remembered primarily for his philosophical treatise *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* (*ĪPK*), which he wrote to explain the new and easy path

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[45] For further discussion of this text, see Raniero Gnoli, "*Śivadṛṣṭi* by Somānanda" in *East and West* 8 (1956): 16-22.

[46] See commentary on *ŚD* 1.1.

(*navasukhamārga*) expounded by his great master (*mahāguru*) Somānanda in *Śivadṛṣṭi* (*ĪPK* 4.16). In this text the path of the intellect emerges as a mystical path (*mārga*) by which the yogi penetrates consciousness. The argument pivots on Utpaladeva's claims concerning the nonduality of consciousness and the possibility of achieving recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's identity as Śiva. The text addresses people who have not received initiation (*śaktipāt*), and as such attests to Utpaladeva's confidence in proving his theological thesis through epistemological means. A theistic soteriology lurks behind his philosophical agenda. Except for very brief and relatively muted excursions into the realm of devotion (*bhakti*), Utpaladeva's voice is that of a philosophically-oriented Śaiva theologian.[47]

The concept of immersion (*samāveśa*) is implicit in the *ĪPK,* although it is not systematized. For instance, the doctrine that the essence of everything is that of everything else (*sarvasarvātmavāda*) assumes the immersive nature of consciousness: the ultimate principle (*śivatattva*) transcends and yet interpenetrates the thirty-five principles (*tattva*) that continuously flash forth sequentially and simultaneously.

Utpaladeva uses the term *āveśa* once at the end of his commentary to indicate the culmination of the path (*mārga*).[48] His rigorous intellectual foray into the logical proof of the singularity of consciousness and each person's identity as the supreme Lord (*maheśvara*) anticipates his final injunction: the person who treads the new and easy path (*navasukhamārga*) becomes uninterruptedly immersed in the nature of Śiva and thereby perfected (*śivatāmayīmaniśamāviśansidhyati*)

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[47] Utpaladeva's voice as an intoxicated devotee (*bhākta*) comes to fruition in his later text, *Śivastotrāvalī.*

[48] While the term *āveśa* in the concluding section of the *ĪPK* (4.16) indicates the culmination of the path (*mārga*) and the liberated state of the yogi, three earlier occurrences of this term have no significant technical meaning (1.2.7, 1.3.1, 4.11).

(4.16). Through merely an act of recognition, the state of Śiva is attained (*pratyabhijñāmātrāt śivatālābhaḥ*) (*ĪPKV* 4.16). He who utilizes the power of his intellect will experience absorption in the state of Śiva (*śivatāveśa*) (*ĪPKV* 4.16). The very process of intellectual inquiry thus yields absorption from which the yogi becomes liberated-while-living (*jīvann eva mukto bhavati*) (*ĪPKV* 4.16).[49] B.N. Pandit, the Kashmiri scholar of nondual Śaiva traditions, states:

> The practice of the Trika Śaiva path . . . yields the recognition of one's identity with the Absolute Lord. Its regular practice results in having sudden experiences of Śivahood, or merging fully into Śiva. These are known as *samāveśa*-s, and they also result in the natural attainment of supernatural powers called *siddhi*-s. That is to say, a Śiva yogin who practices merging with God in *samāveśa* will develop powers to liberate beings at his will and can grant them desired boons as well.[50]

Working through the assertions in Utpaladeva's argument is said to provide immersion, *āveśa*, and liberation. A single dynamic subject is the unifying basis of consciousness, which is the Lord (*īśvara*, *maheśvara*). This proposition is antithetical to the experience of the limited subject whose discursive thought (*vikalpa*) ordinarily divides the world into discrete units such as "I am here" and "you are there" in a "world out there." Utpaladeva accounts for apparent externality by arguing that it is internal to consciousness or else we could not know it.

> The appearance of phenomena currently manifesting as external is possible only because they reside internal [to consciousness].
>
> *vartamānāvabhāsānāṃ bhāvānāmavabhāsanam /*
> *antaḥsthitavatāmeva ghaṭate bahirātmanā //* 1.5.1

Objects that appear in consciousness are necessarily part of that consciousness or else they would not appear (1.5.2, 5.9). There can be nothing external to

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[49] In his commentary, Abhinavagupta says there is no doubt that the yogi who attains absorption becomes liberated-while-living (*jīvanmukto na saṃśayaḥ*),

consciousness, which is completely pervasive. Sanderson remarks, "Liberation is the realisation that all this is internal to the awareness which represents it as external. Consciousness thereby throws off its state of 'extrinsicist contraction', and knows itself only as the pre-relational, pre-discursive unity of manifestation (*prakāśa*) and self-cognition (*vimarśa*)."[51] In every moment consciousness recognizes itself, and each person can therefore recognize himself as the knower (*jñātṛ*) and doer (*kartṛ*) who makes this process possible.

Utpaladeva engages the arguments of his opponents (*pūrvapakṣa*), in particular the logical school of Buddhism (*vijñānavāda*). The Buddhist challenge to the Śaiva view about the singularity and continuity of a subject (*maheśvara*) is that no eternal perceiving subject appears (*nityasya draṣṭuḥ anavabhāsataḥ*) (1.2.1-2). Utpaladeva's refutation of the Buddhist doctrine that no permanent self exists (*anātmavāda*) proceeds by investigating memory (*smṛti*). He explains that the free one (*svairin*) is the perceiver of the previously perceived object (1.4.1). The cognizing Self (*veditṛ*) is the connective agent that binds the manifestation of an object being remembered to the original perception of it (1.4.3). While the Buddhists insist that memory arises from a stream of events (*saṃskāra*), the Śaivas retort that the Buddhist account of memory is inadequate to disprove the singularity and permanence of a subject who has recognitional judgment (*vimarśa*). Utpaladeva concludes that there must be a permanent, singular subject.

> Maheśvara alone is the very Self of all creatures. He is One, whose form is universal [and] full of undivided awareness, "I am This."
>
> *svātmaiva sarvajantūnāmeka eva maheśvaraḥ /*
> *viśvarūpo 'hamidamityakhaṇḍāmarśabṛṃhitaḥ //* 4.1

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[50] B.N. Pandit, unpublished manuscript, p. 179.

[51] Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," p. 695.

Working through the proof of Utpaladeva's thesis is said to provide immersion in the state of Śiva (*śivatāveśa*).

Utpaladeva does not elaborate on the concept of immersion. Nor does he systematically discuss various *upāya*-s to attain it, as Abhinavagupta will later do, because this path (*mārga*) of intellectual inquiry is deemed to be sufficient. His single use of the term *samāveśa* (3.2.12) articulates the epistemological condition of an individual. Prior to this verse, the text discusses the thirty-six principles (*tattva*-s), the seven types of perceivers (*pramāṭṛ*-s), and the three impurities (*mala*-s). The impurity of finitude (*āṇavamala*), the impurity of diversity (*māyīyamala*), and the impurity of action (*karmamala*) work together in varying degrees to bind different perceivers to the rounds of rebirth (*saṃsāra*) and thereby prevent them from recognizing themselves as Maheśvara. For instance, a person who succumbs to the mistaken notion of having finite creative power (*kalā*), a veil (*kañcuka*) that imposes limitation, does not attain recognition (*pratyabhijñā*). The reversal of this self-obscuration (*nigraha*) is always possible, and that knowledge is characterized as immersion, *samāveśa*. Utpaladeva states:

> When there is subordination of insentient realities such as the void (*śūnya*) and so on, the prominence of the agency and consciousness of pure consciousness (*cidātman*) is knowledge (*jñāna*) characterized by immersion (*samāveśa*) in it [pure consciousness].
>
> *mukhyatvaṃ kartṛtāyāśca bodhasya ca cidātmanaḥ /*
> *śūnyādau tadguṇe jñānaṃ tatsamāveśalakṣaṇam //* 3.2.12

The prominence of free agency (*svātantryakartṛtā*) and consciousness (*bodha*) in conjunction with the subordination of insentient realities together constitute the requisite knowledge (*jñāna*) that provides immersion (*samāveśa*) in pure consciousness (*cidātman*). Utpaladeva's mention of the void (*śūnya*) refers

back to an earlier statement about reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) appearing merely as a differentiated reality that is not immersed in pure consciousness.

> Having left the plane of consciousness due to the effect of the power of illusion (*māyā*), reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) as "I" appears just as a differentiated reality such as the body, intellect, vital breath, or a fabricated reality like ether. Reflective awareness appears as the individual knowing subject, just a fluctuation (*vikalpa*) born from the manifestation of an object that is apparently different from it.
>
> *cittattvaṃ māyayā hitvā bhinna evāvabhāti yaḥ /*
> *dehe buddhāvatha prāṇe kalpite nabhasīva vā //*
>
> *pramātṛtvenāhamiti vimarśo 'nyavyapohanāt /*
> *vikalpa eva sa parapratiyogyavabhāsajaḥ //* 1.6.4-5

In the commentary (*Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikāvṛtti*) Utpaladeva embellishes his description of the knowledge characterized by immersion in pure consciousness (*jñānaṃ tatsamāveśalakṣaṇam).*

> It is said, but when the void, and so on, is in a state of subordination to pure consciousness, whose essence is agency and consciousness, then in this subject who has entered consciousness there is knowledge characterized by absorption in the power of that [pure consciousness] (*tacchaktisamāveśalakṣaṇam*).
>
> *etadeva punaḥ śūnyādi kartṛtātmano bodhasya yadopasarjanatvenāste tadāsya pramāturetad bodhamayatāmāpannasya jñānaṃ tacchaktisamāveśalakṣaṇamucyate //* 3.2.12

B.N. Pandit comments concerning Utpaladeva's reference to *samāveśa*:

> *Samāveśa* is a sudden flash of Self-realization in which the Self is intuitively felt to be pure and infinite Consciousness. One knows he is the universal power who can, in a state of total independence, conduct all universal divine activities in accordance with his free will. It is the direct realization of one's real nature as the infinite divine essence. . . . *Samāveśa* can yield liberation quickly, even while one is living in a physical form, liberation while alive being called *jīvanmukti.* This happens when the state experienced in *samāveśa* becomes possible at one's will. The development of a yogin's supernatural powers is the other main result of the *samāveśa* experience.[52]

[52] B.N. Pandit, unpublished manuscript.

Neither the verse nor commentary by Utpaladeva explicitly states that *samāveśa* yields liberation. However, Abhinavagupta expresses this idea in his commentary (*Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*) (*ĪPV*).

> The chief characteristic of *samāveśa* is that by which, a subject who remains established in the body is yet the Lord. In is said in the *śāstras* that such a person is liberated (*muktaḥ*).
>
> *tadetanmukhyatvaṃ samāveśasya lakṣaṇaṃ yena dehasthito 'pi patiḥ iti muktaḥ iti śāstreṣūktaḥ // ĪPV* 3.2.12

In his other commentary, *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikāvivṛtivimarśinī* (*ĪPVV*), Abhinavagupta explains that different types of immersion (*samāveśa*) have varying results. Some people have complete entry (*praveśa*) into their true nature (*satyasvarūpe samyag ā samantāt praveśalakṣaṇam*) (*ĪPVV* 3.2.12). The prefix *pra*, "before, in front," in *praveśa* suggests an immersion that is complete from its inception, before any time has elapsed. This state is beyond the fourth state (*turyātīta*) because it emerges out of the void (*śūnya*), the most subtle of the four differentiated insentient realities. In contrast, other people enter gradually (*samyag āviśanto*) (*ĪPVV* 3.2.12). The present active participle *āviśant* suggests an immersion that is continuous. This state is the fourth state (*turya*) because it emerges from all the insentient realities, including the void, breath, intellect, and the body. The fourth state (*turya*) can lead beyond the fourth (*turyātīta).* Torella states:

> There is a difference between the two *turyātītas* delineated by Abh. The first pertains to the *jñānin*, who reaches it instantly thanks to an intense and flashing "peak experience"; the second, by contrast, pertains to the *yogin* and is the fruit of the repeated practice of the *samāveśa*. Here the adept does not halt when his self enters into the nature of Śiva; this is merely his starting point. He slows down this identification and intensifies it at the same time, extending it gradually to all the levels of the fictitious I (body, mind etc.), which the *jñānin*, on the contrary, only abandoned.[53]

[53] Torella, p. xxxiv n. 52.

In his *ĪPV* Abhinavagupta explains that both ways to reach beyond the fourth (*turyātīta*) result in jīvanmukti.

> In the *śāstras* it is said, "Both states of liberation-while-living are *samāveśa*." Indeed the only important thing is complete entrance. Other instructions are for the accomplishment of this [liberation].
>
> *seyaṃ dvayyapi jīvanmuktāvastha samāveśa ityuktā śāstre samyagāveśanameva hi tatra tatra pradhānam tatsiddhaye tūpadeśāntarāṇi* // 3.2.11-12

Although absent in Utpaladeva's verse, Abhinavagupta brings a slight devotional flavor to his discussion of *samāveśa*. He quotes two verses from the *Bhagavadgītā* about the importance of entering into the Lord and then explains that singing hymns to the highest Lord (*parameśvarastuti*), making obeisance (*praṇāma*), offering worship (*pūjā*), and contemplation (*dhyāna*) cause various types of *samāveśa* to blossom (*samāveśapallava*). *Samāveśa* takes place at four levels according to the insentient realities (void, breath, intellect, body) that the yogi subordinates (*ĪPV* and *ĪPVV* 3.2.12). The mental construction and installation of the *triśūlābjamaṇḍala* and worship of the deities therein perfects *samāveśa* at all four levels. Sanderson explains:

> The performer of the liturgy is to understand that the phase of the ritual up to the worship of his body has accomplished possession in the lowest of these levels, and that the installaton of the *triśūlābjamaṇḍala* and the mental worship of the deities upon it which now follows will perfect this possession by establishing it in the three higher levels (the intellect or stream of cognition, the internal sensation, and the sensationless void).[54]

The four-pronged approach to *samāveśa* that subordinates insentient realities to pure consciousness is the path to complete and permanent *samāveśa*. All four occur in each *upāya* that Abhinavagupta delineates in his *TĀ* and *TS*.

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[54] See Sanderson, "Maṇḍala," p. 177. See *TĀ* 15.278b-296c.

Utpaladeva offers very little description of the different practices necessary to recognize oneself as Maheśvara. Only an unorganized semblance of *upāya*-s exists into which Abhinavagupta reads great significance and on which he imposes great detail and order. For instance, in *ĪPK* 4.11 we find a foreshadowing of *śambhavopāya* since through this practice the yogi eliminates mental constructs (*vikalpahāna*). Utpaladeva states:

> The creation of the Lord is from [his] clear manifestation [of it], whether or not it is common among practitioners. With the elimination of mental constructs (*vakalpahānena*) from concentration on a single point, the position of the Lord is achieved gradually.
>
> *sādhāraṇe'nyathā caiśaḥ sargaḥ spaṣṭāvabhāsanāt /*
> *vikalpahānenaikāgryāt krameṇeśvaratāpadam //* 4.11

The elimination of mental constructs (*vikalpahāna*) that must be repeated and extended by stages (*krameṇa*) (*ĪPV* 4.11) is the experience of the fourth state that occurs via *śāmbhavopāya.* With repetition, the yogi achieves the position of the Lord (*īśvaratāpada*) wherein there is permanent dissolution of limited individuality.

When the flow of mental constructs remains, the yogi uses *śāktopāya. ĪPK* 4.12 alludes to this experience:

> A person [who knows] even amidst the flow of mental constructs, "All this creation is mine," he, whose essence is all (*viśvātmano*), attains the state of Maheśa (*maheśatā*).
>
> *sarvo*[55] *mamāyaṃ vibhava ityevaṃ parijānataḥ /*
> *viśvātmano vikalpānāṃ prasare'pi maheśatā //* 4.12

Like the experience of *śāṃbhavopāya*, this experience may also culminate in the state of Maheśvara. However, this yogi must first eliminate discursive constructs and thereafter make permanent the intermittent flashes of the fourth state (*turya*). Torella states, "This is an alternative path to that expounded in the previous *kārikā*;

[55] Alternative readings of *sarvo* may be either *sargo* or *so'ham.* See Torella, p. 78 n. 41.

both are directed to the same aim which is to free from the bond of the *vikalpas.* In the first the *vikalpas* were gradually suppressed by fixing the *nirvikalpa.* . . . Here, on the contrary, their inclusion--and transfiguration--in the sphere of the totality of consciousness is taught."[56]

A focus in *ānavopāya* is the flow of vital breath (*prāṇa*), an internal yet objective phenomenon. About the various breaths, Utpaladeva states:

> In the waking and dreaming states the vital breath consists of both the rising inhalation (*prāṇa*) and falling exhalation (*apāna*). In the deep sleep state (*suṣupti*) the breath is called *samāna,* which is the equalization of both [*prāṇa* and *apāna*]. This [continuous breath] is like what happens during an equinox (*viṣuvat*).
>
> *prāṇāpānamayaḥ prāṇaḥ pratyekaṃ suptajāgratoḥ /*
> *tacchedātmā samānākhyaḥ sauṣupte viṣuvatsviva //* 3.2.19
>
> Moving upwards in the central path, the breath called *udāna* is the fourth state (*turya*) and consists of the oblation. This is [the breath of] *Vijñānākala*-s, *Mantra*-s, and the Lord. The supreme breath is *vyāna,* whose essence encompasses all the other breaths.
>
> *madhyordhvagāmyudānākhyas turyago hutabhuṅmayaḥ /*
> *vijñānākalamantreśo*[57] *vyāno viśvātmakaḥ paraḥ //* 3.2.20

The five breaths (*prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna,* and *vyāna*) correspond to the yogi's gradual move toward realization of the supreme Lord. The rising inhalation (*prāṇa*) and the falling exhalation (*apāna*) are equalized (*samāna*) and then directed upward (*udāna*). Absolute fullness occurs with the supreme breath (*vyāna*). The yogi can achieve the fourth state (*turya*) and go beyond it (*turyātīta*) via the completely full breath (*vyāna*). In his commentary on *ĪPK* 3.2.20 B.N. Pandit states: "In this state

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[56] Torella, p. 217 n. 27.

[57] It is unclear whether this compound should be translated as "*Vijñānākalas, Mantra*-s, and the Lord" or "*Vijñānākalas* and the Lord of Mantra-s." See Torella, p. 208 no. 33.

one tastes the revelation of one's all-pervading, omniscient, omnipotent, all-blissful, and infinite I-Consciousness."[58]

Abhinavagupta on Immersion

In contrast to Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta, as we have seen, dwells on the notion of *samāveśa*. For instance, the *Paramārthacarcā*, a short work that uses the sober language of philosophical argumentation, culminates with the declaration that those who desire to attain the highest truth (*paramārthakāmāḥ*) enter suddenly (*muhurviśanti*) into consciousness. As he argues elsewhere, Abhinavagupta explains that the light (*prakāśa*) is a single light (*ekadhāmni*) that shines (*bhāti*) with its own power (*svaśakti*) such that provisional differentiation (*bheda*) is not differentiation at all (*vibhinna*). The apparent distinctions in the fabric of consciousness are not ultimately separate or else they would not be able to appear in consciousness. Abhinavagupta compares the light of consciousness to a mirror (*darpaṇa*) or a jewel (*maṇi*) in which reflections may appear. He hopes that people will remember the verses of this text because this will cause them to suddenly enter (*muhurviśanti*) the highest light of consciousness (*bhairavīyaparadhāma*).[59]

> Having dropped other worries, [people who] desire to attain the highest truth thoroughly remember in their heart these highly meritorious seven verses. Knowing the three worlds through discussion of the highest truth (*paramārthacarcām*), they suddenly enter (*muhurviśanti*) the highest light of consciousness, Bhairava [at the time of *samāveśa*].
>
> *sadvṛttasaptakamidaṃ galitānyacintāḥ samyaksmaranti hṛdaye paramārthakāmāḥ //*
> *te bhairavīyaparadhāma muhurviśanti jānanti ca trijagatīṃ paramārthacarcām //* 8

[58] B.N. Pandit, unpublished manuscript, p. 164.

[59] Compare *muhurviśanti* to *muhurniveśya*, in Abhinavagupta's *Kramastotra*, verse 24.

Remembering these truths in the heart (*hṛdaye*) is the experience of the heart of Śiva. Discussion of the highest truth (*paramārthacarcā*) illuminates the intellect so that the heart opens to the light of consciousness. This is the experience that Abhinavagupta points to when he explains that they suddenly enter (*muhurviśanti*) consciousness.[60]

Abhinavagupta highlights the concept of immersion in his choice of metaphors that explicate consciousness. For instance, a short poetic composition entitled *Anubhavanivedanastotra* incorporates the theme of the melting, dissolving, or immersing (*vilīna, līnatā, galita*) of the world into absolute consciousness. Unlike most hymns, which are directed to a deity, this *stotra* evokes the author's experience of absolute consciousness and directs praise to that state. The text begins by describing the state of the accomplished yogi, whose mind and breath have been dissolved by being immersed (*vilīna*) in the innermost object of perception (verse 1). This attainment is said to be the supreme goal of yoga wherein the practitioner maintains his inner state of stillness even amidst the fluctuations of the world. In this state the sun and moon are absorbed (*līnatā*) in the pulsating interior of awareness (verse 2). These astral bodies are correlated with the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) and the object of knowledge (*prameya*) or the two breaths that represent the world of duality.[61] Furthermore, the bodily activities are said to have melted away (*galitā*) as have all other forms of practice (verse 4). Although similar to the concept of immersion as *samāveśa*, the terms *vilīna, līnatā*, and *galita* suggest microlevel immersions: the melting or dissolution of the mind, breath, and body are

[60] Personal communication with B.N. Pandit, January 1997.

[61] See Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu," p. 586.

specific immersions that accomplish the macrolevel immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness that is the supreme state that Abhinavagupta praises.

Abhinavagupta frequently uses the image of the ocean (*ambunidhi, sindhu, samudra, abdhi*) to evoke the experience of immersion (*samāveśa*) in pure consciousness, the process that allays the apparent tumultuousness of the waves (*ūrmi*) (*TĀ* 1.167-170).[62] With its flowing waves that continuously merge and emerge in the vast seamless abyss of water, the ocean is an appropriate metaphor for consciousness, whose unbounded (*aparimita*) nature contains the finite (*parimita*) activity of individual waves. The divisive waves (*ūrmi*-s) are the vibrations (*spanda*-s) of the ocean, the currents of manifestation. Objects that manifest in the realm of duality are provisionally finite and at the same time essentially identical to the consciousness from which they emerge. In the *TĀ* Abhinavagupta states:

> For that vibration, which is a slight motion of a special kind, a unique vibrating light, is the wave of the ocean of consciousness [*vibodhābdhi*], without which there is no consciousness at all. For the character of the ocean [*sindhutā*] is that it is sometimes filled with waves and sometimes waveless. This consciousness is the essence of all. The insentient universe has the consciousness as its essence, because its very foundation is dependent on that, and its essence is the great heart (*hṛdayaṃ mahat*).[63]
>
> *parāmarśasvabhāvatvād etasyā yaḥ svayaṃ dhvaniḥ*
> *sadotitaḥ sa evoktaḥ paramaṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat*
> *hṛdaye svavimarśo 'sau drāvitāśeṣaviśvakaḥ*
> *bhāvagrahādiparyantabhāvī sāmānyasaṃjñakaḥ*
> *spandaḥ sa kathyate śāstre svātmany ucchalanātmakaḥ*
> *kiṃciccalanam etāvad ananyasphuraṇaṃ hi yat*
> *ūrmir eṣā vibodhābdher na saṃvid anayā vinā*
> *nistarañgatarañgādivṛtter eva hi sindhutā*
> *sāram etat samastasya yac citsāraṃ jaḍam jagat*
> *tadadhīnapratiṣṭhatvāt tat sāraṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat* // 4.181b-186

[62] For a discussion of ocean and wave as natural metaphor see Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 146-151.

[63] Translation rendered by Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 146.

As we have seen, the *Śiva Sūtra* mentions the yogi who plunges (*nimajjatī*) effortlessly into the lake (*hrada*). To enter the lake or the ocean is to enter the great heart (*hṛdayaṃ mahat*). Abhinavagupta frequently refers to this experience, which suggests initiatory purification and liberation. For instance, he explains that when the fire of knowledge reveals the perception of true reality, there is an immersion (*majjana*) of the limited self in the pure Self that is said to be the real bath (*sitabhasmani dehasya majjanaṃ snānamucyate*) (*TĀ* 4.116-117). Furthermore, he states:

> The supreme Lord, the great heart where practice is abandoned, is the Self alone. He who becomes established there alone, immersing (*nimajjya*) all [into the heart], he is both pure and the purifier.
>
> *ātmaiva parameśāno nirācāramahāhradaḥ viśvaṃ nimajjya tatraiva tiṣṭhecchūddhaśca śodhakaḥ // TĀ* 15.60

The wide semantic field of the ocean metaphor makes implicit and explicit reference to the esoteric Kaula practices that generate the ambrosia (*amṛta*) that liberates. The penetration that takes place during the esoteric *kulayāga* between the yogi and his female messenger (*dūtī*) immerses the *sādhaka* in an inner bath of his own consciousness (*TĀ* 29).

The theme of immersion appears with divergent meanings in the *Parātriṃśikā* (*PT*) and the commentaries by Abhinavagupta entitled *Parātrīṃśikāvivaraṇa* (*PTv*) and *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtii* (*PTlv*). Abhinavagupta's commentaries on the orginal text reveal a significant transformation in which achieving possession by external female deities is de-emphasized in favor of experiencing immersion in consciousness, which itself contains the frenzied female energies (*śakti*-s, *kālī* -s). Muller-Ortega discusses the transmutation of ideas from the earlier to the later context:

> A key term that underscores the apparent exegetical divergence of the commentary from the text is the notion of *āveśa* (verse 11), which in the original text seems to mean something like demonic possession. In Abhinavagupta's commentary, *āveśa* appears to be reinterpreted to mean a state of yogic and meditative absorption, that is, *samāveśa*. Thus, in the shift from text to commentary, two levels seem to be discernible--in the original *PT* verses, the *sādhana* of possession emphasizing the encounter with external anthropomorphic deities separate from the *sādhaka* and, in terms of Abhinavagupta's gloss, the *sādhana* of Recognition, centering on the phenomenology of non-dual consciousness.[64]

The *PTv* states that the purpose (*prayojana*) of the text is the attainment of liberation while living alone (*jīvata eva mukti*), which results from immersion (*samāveśa*) in Bhairava. This declaration captures two aspects of entry: the entrance of grace (*anugrahaveßa*) may lead to absorption (*samåveßa*) in Bhairava.[65] Abhinavagupta revisions the meaning of verse 11 in the *PT*, which states:

> When the *mantra* has been "pronounced," the entire great multitudes of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s appear immediately before him, characterized by absorption in his own body (*svadehāveśalakṣaṇam*).[66]

> *asyoccāre kṛte samyaṅ mantramudrāgaṇo mahān*
> *sadyaḥ tanmukhatāmeti svadehāveśalakṣaṇam* // 11

In the commentary (*PTv*) Abhinavagupta uses the term *anupraveśa* (*viś* + *anu* + *pra*) to explicate the technical term *āveśa*, which in this context means entrance of the yogi into his highest nature (*parasvarūpa*). He then parses the term *svadehāveśa*. He explains that *svadā* means "what gives by its own nature," *īhā* means the expansion of the yogi's powers (*śakti*-s), and *āveśa* means "penetration by those powers." This entrance (*āveśa*) brings about a state of freedom from the will of

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[64] Muller-Ortega, "Becoming Bhairava," pp. 214-215.

[65] *PTv* in Jaideva Singh, trans., *Abhinavagupta: A Trident of Wisdom, Translation of Parātrīśikā Vivaraṇa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), p. 6 of Sanskrit text.

[66] Translation rendered by Muller-Ortega, "Becoming Bhairava," p. 227.

others (*svatantra*). The expansion of the yogi's will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*) and action (*kriya*) reveals his nature as light (*prakāśa*) and reflective awareness (*vimarśa*). This type of *āveśa* is said to arise through the enunciation of the seed syllable (*bījasyoccāre*), the heart *mantra sauḥ*, taught by Abhinavagupta. Human beings, in contrast to animals (*paśu*), may be privileged to experience the transition from concealment of one's true nature to revelation of it.[67]

The *PTlv* similarly recasts the meaning of immersion found in the original text. Harking back to the two primary powers of the Lord taught by Utpaladeva in the *ĪPK*, the powers of knowledge and action (*jñānakriyāśakti*) are the bodies (*śarīra*) of the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s. This commentary on verses 11-12 of *PT* states:

> When the seed syllable, the heart *mantra sauḥ* is pronounced (*bījasyoccāre*), through absorption (*samāveśa*) in the level of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) the variety of *mantra*-s, whose power is knowledge (*jñāna*), and *mudrā*-s, whose the power is action (*kriya*), appear before the yogi.
>
> *asya bījasyoccāre prāṇarūpatāyāṃ samāveśena tāvatkṛtamātra eva jñānakriyāśaktiśarīrā mantramudrāḥ sadya eva //*

The contemporaneous tradition of Indian alchemy (*rasāyana*) influenced discussions about *samāveśa*, which is said to produce an alchemical change in the yogi. Just as quicksilver (*siddharasa*) penetrates metal, so too does consciousness penetrate the levels of the body, mind, and breath when it becomes heated up (*PTlv* on verses 11-16). Muller-Ortega states:

> Just as the activated quicksilver transforms base metal into precious substance, so too the outward flowing form of consciousness overtakes the relative body-mind apparatus and works magical transformation upon it. This new status reflects itself not only in terms of a transformed vision of the Self and of the phenomenal

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[67] *PTv* in Singh, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 86-87 of Sanskrit text.

> universe, but also in the attainment of a divinized condition of physical embodiment.[68]

The inner alchemy transforms the yogi's vision such that the night of illusory understanding shifts to the daylight of liberated awareness. The light of consciousness expands to dispel the darkness produced by limitation. When the absorption is maintained for a certain period of time, the practitioner becomes omniscient like Bhairava (*PTIv* on verses 35-36). Absorption (*samāveśa*) reconstitutes the yogi as Bhairava, who has fully self-disclosed his inner powers (*śakti*). Muller-Ortega states that "in Abhinavagupta's interpretation, *samāveśa* refers to the inner grasping of the *śakti* which opens the *sādhaka* to a state of identity with Bhairava. By uniting with the Goddess, the *sādhaka* is said to be 'born of the *Yoginīs'* Heart,'" that is, to be reborn as Bhairava."[69] The *yoginī*-s of the *yoginī* cults are once again internalized in this reformulation.

Entrance into Bhairava in the *Vijñāna Bhairava*

The theme of immersion (*samāveśa*) is prominent in the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (*VB*), an 8th to 9th-century text that Abhinavagupta named *Śivavijñānopaniṣad* and that influenced his commentaries on the *Parātriṃśikā* (*PT*). The *VB* connects itself to the *Rudrayāmalatantra* and evidences the dual strata of cremation-ground culture and its sanitization in the philosophy of nondual consciousness. A terrifying naked deity in earlier texts, in the *VB* Bhairava is supreme consciousness,[70] and various

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[68] Muller-Ortega, "Becoming Bhairava," p. 220.

[69] Ibid, p. 222.

[70] Bhairava and Śiva are interchangeable names for supreme consciousness. Śiva in the frightful form of Bhairava commits brahminicide by killing Brahmā and thereafter is condemned to wander as a beggar.

yogic methods (*dhāraṇā, bhāvanā*) are designed to propel the yogi to experience himself as Bhairava.

The *VB* self-consciously dissociates Bhairava from his embodied (*sakala*) roots. After Devī pleads with him to reveal his essential nature, Bhairava responds by first distinguishing himself from his lowly aspect that has form (*sakala*), which he explains is used merely as an object in meditation (*dhyānārtha*) for those whose intellect is deluded (*bhrāntabuddhi*) (10).

> Alhough this is very much a secret, Auspicious one, I will tell it to you. Whatever is said to be the anthropomorphic form (*sakalaṃ rūpam*) of Bhairava, that is to be known as insubstantial, like the net of Indra, illusion, a dream, the mirage of a city of *gandharvas*, O Devī.
>
> *gūhanīyatamaṃ bhadre tathāpi kathayāmi te /*
> *yatkiñcit sakalaṃ rūpaṃ bhairavasya prakīrtitam //* 8
> *tadasāratayā devi vijñeyaṃ śakrajālavat /*
> *māyāsvapnopamaṃ caiva gandharvanagarabhramam //* 9

Bhairava's lengthy description of himself as ubiquitous (*viśvapūraṇa*) is suffused throughout the text with injunctions to enter his state of consciousness.[71] Becoming immersed in him is not tantamount to becoming lost in a space devoid of mental constructs (*nirvikalpa*). The root *viś*, with various prefixes (*pra, ā, sam*), is used repeatedly to describe the yogi who enters pulsating consciousness. A variety of noncognate synonyms also describe the process of entering the abyss of Bhairava.

Without a prefix, the root *viś* occurs in two different references in the *VB*. When the vital breath enters (*viśet*) (154), this breath of inhalation (*apāna*) automatically (*icchayā*) produces the sound "*ha*" just as each exhalation (*prāṇa*) produces the sound "*saḥ.*" On a more macrolevel, the meditator enters the eternal

[71] The irony is that the skull-bearing Bhairava is not entirely banished because it is this form that is engaged in this conversation with Devī. Form is a necessary tool used to transcend itself.

Brahman (*viśed brahma sanātanam*) (114), thereby leaving behind the *mantra*-s that may have been used to reach the final absorption.

The construction using root *viś* + *pra* describes entrance into Bhairava, who is understood to be the highest void (*anuttara śūnya*) and the heart (*hṛdaya*).

> The yogi should contemplate in his heart the five voids by means of the circles [the five senses], which appear as the various feathers of peacocks. Thereby he attains entrance (*praveśa*) into the highest void (*anuttare śūnye*).
>
> *śikhipakṣaiś citrarūpair maṇḍalaiḥ śūnyapañcakam /*
> *dhyāyato 'nuttare śūnye praveśo hṛdaye bhavet //* 32
>
> Having meditated on the power (*śakti*) that is thick and weak in the twelvefold realm of the senses, having entered (*praviśya*) into the heart, the meditator is liberated and obtains complete freedom.
>
> *pīnāṃ ca durbalāṃ śaktiṃ dhyātvā dvādaśagocare /*
> *praviśya hṛdaye dhyāyanmuktaḥ svātantryam āpnuyāt //* 55

In his commentary on the *Parātriṃśikā*, Abhinavagupta quotes *VB* verse 60 to explain that focus on a vast empty space eliminates fluctuations of the mind and leads to entrance in consciousness, which is Bhairava (*bhairavabodhānupraveśa*).

The single mention of the term *āveśa* in the *VB* refers to absorption in a female (*śakti*) and immersion into consciousness, which is one's own true Self.

> Sexual intercourse with the female (*śaktisaṃgama*) with whom the yogi is brought together brings to fruition immersion (*āveśa*) in her power (*śakti*). The enjoyment that is the true knowledge of Brahman [orgasm] is said to be the delight that is one's own true Self.
>
> *śaktisaṅgama saṃkṣubdha śaktyāveśāvasānikam /*
> *yat sukham brahmatattvasya tat sukhaṃ svākyam ucyate //* 69

The term *āveśana* is similarly used to refer to the final absorption in the ocean of consciousness.

> Indeed one's own Self is everywhere merely the flow of freedom, bliss, and consciousness. Absorption (*āveśana*) of the Self in its true nature is said to be the bath (*snāna*).
>
> *svatantrānandacinmātrasāraḥ svātmā hi sarvataḥ /*

āveśanaṃ tatsvarūpe svātmanaḥ snānam īritam // 152

The physical bath of the purificatory ritual anticipates the real purification when the yogi plunges into his own Self (*svātman*). Abhinavagupta echoes this idea in his discussion of the immersion (*majjana*) of the limited self in the pure Self that is the true bath (*sitabhasmani dehasya majjanaṃ snānam*) (*TĀ* 4.116-117).

The verb *samāviśet* is used in the VB to explain how the yogi attains *samāveśa* in Bhairava. After the yogi contemplates the vast sky as dissolved in his head (*līnaṃ mūrdhni*), the entire universe should enter the light that is Bhairava (*tatsarvaṃ bhairavākāratejastattvaṃ samāviśet*) (85). Likewise, after fixing his mind on the external space (*bāhyākāśe manaḥ kṛtvā*), the yogi should enter nonspace (*nirākāsaṃ samāveśet*), which is understood to be Bhairava (128). The subject that may enter (*samāviśet*) is either the universe or the yogi, thereby evidencing their nonduality. When contemplation no longer needs any type of support, such as the ethereal space of the sky, the yogi achieves immersion (*samāveśa*) in Bhairava. At the end of the agitation brought about by immersion in *śakti* (*jātaśaktisamāveśakṣobhānte*), there is the form of Bhairava (*bhairavaṃ vapuḥ*) (112). No verb is used to express this final absorption because Bhairava just "is." Harking back to the technical term used in the 7th-century text *Siddhayogeśvarimatatantra* (*SYMT*), the *VB* also mentions *rudraśaktisamāveśa.* But whereas the term means possession by hordes of female divinities in the *SYMT*, in the *VB* the term *śakti* is used in the singular to refer to immersion in the singular power of Bhairava that is characterized by bliss.

> Immersion in the power of Rudra (*rudraśaktisamāveśa)* is the true place of pilgrimage and the highest contemplation. O supreme goddess, sacrifice here means contentment that is characterized by bliss due to the destruction of all sins and the protection of all. O Pārvati!

yāgo 'tra parameśāni tuṣṭir ānandalakṣaṇā
kṣapaṇātsarvapāpānāṃ trāṇātsarvasya pārvati
rudraśaktisamāveśas tat kṣetraṃ bhāvanā parā // 150-151a

In addition to the term *samāveśa* and its cognates, a variety of other terms are used in the VB to describe the state of immersion in consciousness. The root *āp*, "to enter, pervade, or occupy,"[72] is used to describe the yogi who should enter the form of Bhairava (*bhairavaṃ vapur āpnuyāt*) (84). Conveying the idea of pervasive copenetration of provisionally separate constituents into each other, the root *āp* + *vi* means "to reach or spread through, pervade."[73] Of the many types of pervasions (*vyāpti*), the ideal type is *śiva-vyāpti*, copenetration in and by Śiva. Jaideva Singh states, "The ideal of realization that is emphasized is *śiva-vyāpti*, fusion into Śiva who is both *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*."[74]

> Meditating on *śiva-tattva* [which is the equivalent of] this entire universe, on all sides and to the end, using the procedure of the means [described], he will experience the final liberation.

asya sarvasya viśvasya paryanteṣu samantataḥ /
adhvaprakriyayā tattvaṃ śaivaṃ dhyātvā mahodayaḥ // 57

Several other noncognate terms describe the yogi's absorption in absolute consciousness. In verse 117 the root *lī* expresses absorption in consciousness (*cillaya*).[75] In verse 91 the root *spṛś* depicts the yogi who touches or penetrates eternal Brahman by his mind that is free of all support (*nirādhāreṇa cittena spṛśed brahma sanātanam*). In verse 20 the word *mukha* ("mouth, face, opening,

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[72] Monier Monier Williams Sanskṛit-English Dictionary, 1994 edition, s.v. "*āp*."

[73] Ibid, s.v. "*vi* + *āp*"

[74] Jaideva Singh, *The Yoga of Delight, Wonder, and Astonishment*, trans. Jaideva Singh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 54.

[75] See Monier Monier Williams Sanskṛit-English Dictionary. 1994 edition, s.v. *lī* ,"melting, dissolution, . . . absorption in."

entrance")[76] conveys the notion that Śakti is the door or entrance into Śiva consciousness. The *VB* states:

> For the one who enters (*praviṣṭasya*) the state of Śakti, there is the feeling of non-differentiation. [This yogi] becomes the form of Śiva. It is said herein that Śakti is the entrance (*mukha*) [into Śiva].
>
> *śaktyavastāpraviṣṭasya nirvibhāgena bhāvanā /*
> *tadāsau śivarūpī syāt śaivī mukham ihocyate //* 20

Finally, the concept of bathing, *niṣṇāta*, captures the sense of entering the ocean of consciousness, the preferred metaphor for Abhinavagupta. Verse 38 explains that the yogi who is deeply bathed in *śabdabrahman*, Brahman as sound, attains the supreme Brahman (*śabdabrahmaṇi niṣṇātaḥ paraṃ brahmādhigacchati*).

Entering the Heart in the *Kulārṇavatantra*

A frequently cited text in the Śaiva and Śākta tantric literature, the *Kulārṇavatantra* (*K T*) was written soon after Kṣemarāja's lifetime. Douglas Brooks's translation of the title as "Ocean of the Heart" is a post-Abhinavagupta interpretation because it was he who linked the meaning of the term *kula* to the "heart" of reality. Brooks discusses his choice of "heart" as the most apt translation:

> This translation is based, in no small part, upon a passage from the *Parātriṃśikavivaraṇa* of Abhinavagupta, which states that there exists a set of meanings that link *kula* to a reality that is the very core, the center, the heart of the Tantric deity Bhairava himself. That passage reads as follows: "For truly the *kula*, because it is identical with the essential self of the Supreme, grants that perfection. *Kula* is called the circle of rays of the splendor of the supreme Lord Bhairava, made up of the fullness of his own light."[77]

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[76] Ibid, s.v. "*mukha*."

[77] See Douglas Renfrew Brooks, "The Ocean of the Heart: Selections from the *Kulārṇava Tantra*" in *Tantra in Practice*, David Gordon White, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 348.

Like other Tantras, the *KT* is said to be proclaimed by Śiva in order to enlighten his spouse Śakti about the secrets of the universe.[78] The explanation of how to achieve enjoyment in the world (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*) from the cycle of birth and death (*saṃsāra*) emphasizes the secrecy of the *kula* path. The seventeen chapters (*ullāsa*) use esoteric language to describe the states of joy (*ullāsa*) resulting from the Kaula practice that utilizes the *kula* oblations (*kuladravya*-s), the five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*-s) (5.72). Instructing yogis in the proper methods to achieve self-realization, the *KT* discusses prohibited foods and practices for the brahmin pracititioner and then focuses on the intoxicated devotee who is immersed in the heart (*kula*). The main concern of the text is embedded in its title: to enter the ocean of the heart. Brooks explains the centrality of the notion of "entering": "To *enter* the kula, to *penetrate* the heart of the divine, is the divine's explicit wish to be united in the ecstasy of its own creative, sustaining, and dissolving experience--at once a unity and a union with its own otherness."[79] Our analysis will attempt to explicate the multiple uses of the seminal concept of "entering" as it pertains to attaining the heart (*kula*), the splendor of Bhairava.

The process of initiation (*dīkṣā*) requires the entrance or penetration of an intangible or tangible substance into the disciple's permeable bodily boundaries, such as his porous skin or another bodily orifice. Several types of initiation include the following: sprinkling with water (*abhiṣekha*), dissolution of the phonemes into

[78] Teun Goudriaan states that "many Tantras contain information on the mythical descent on earth (*avatāra*) of the body of sacred texts (*śāstra*). They are unanimous about the origin of the tradition from the Highest Being (Śiva). He proclaimed it, usually with a view to enlightening His spouse, Devī, the Great Goddess." See Sanjukta Gupta, Hoens, and Teun Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), p. 13.

[79] Brooks, "The Ocean of the Heart," p. 351. Italics are mine.

the body (*varṇadīkṣā*), withdrawal of the phonemes from the body (*kalādīkṣā*), word or *mantra* given by the guru (*vāgdīkṣā*), the touch of the guru (*sparśadīkṣā*), and receiving the guru's gaze (*dṛkdīkṣā, caryadīkṣā*). The guru's look, speech, or touch in *śāmbhavīdīkṣā* provides the knowledge that frees the disciple from ignorance or provides liberation. An esoteric ritual performed externally or internally, *siddhābhiṣeka* involves the sprinkling of sexual fluids, which brings about the state of Śiva. The entrance of the yogi into his partner (*dūtī*) during ritualized sexual intercourse (*cakrapūjā*) produces the sexual fluids that they exchange.

The rituals of initiation that bring about states of penetration (*vedha*), or entrances of energies (*śakti*) into the subtle body, enable the yogi to penetrate his own being andbecome liberated (*mukta*) (14.65).

> Initiation is said to be twofold, divided according to outward and inward [types]. Initiation into rituals is outward. The inward [type] is regarded as penetration (*vedha*) [into one's being].
>
> *dīkṣā ca dvividhā proktā bāhyābhyantarabhedataḥ /*
> *kriyādīkṣā bhavedbāhyā vedhākhyābhyantarī matā //* 14.78
>
> That joy that the awakened one experiences spontaneously at the time of initiation by penetration (*vedhakāle*), he is unable to describe it, O Īśvarī!
>
> *yadasti vedhakāle tat svayamevānubhūyate /*
> *prabuddhaḥ san na śaknoti tat sukhaṃ vaktumīśvari //* 14.62
>
> These are the revealed six states of penetration (*vedha*): bliss, trembling, birth, dizziness, sleep, and fainting, O Kuleśvarī.
>
> *ānandaścaiva kampaścodbhavo ghūrṇā kuleśvari*
> *nidrā mūrcchā ca vedhasya ṣaḍavasthāḥ prakīrttitāḥ //* 14.64
>
> O Kuleśvarī, indeed these six conditions arise at the time of initiation by penetration (*vedhakāle*). Wherever the pierced (*vedhita*) person may be, he is liberated. There is no doubt.
>
> *dṛśyante ṣaḍguṇā hyete vedhakāle kuleśvari*
> *vedhito yatra kutrāpi tiṣṭhenmukto na saṃśayaḥ //* 14.65.

Entering the ocean of the heart (*kulārṇava*) is the entrance into the Self that brings the yogi's practice (*sādhana*) to fruition. For the yogi who is immersed in the state of the singular Self (*ātmaikabhāvaniṣṭhasya*), everything is meditation (9.22). He is able to maintain *śāmbhavī mudrā*, the supreme state of consciousness by which heroic practitioners undoubtedly become Śiva (*vīrāḥ śivā eva na saṃśayaḥ*) (8.86). This *mudrā* is described as an immersion in the divine (*devāveśa*).

> Maintaining *śāmbhavī mudrā*, the yogi's outward gaze is directed inward and his eyes remain unblinking. This supreme stance of consciousness is concealed in all the Tantras.
>
> *antarlakṣyo bahirdṛṣṭirnimeónmeṣavarjitaḥ*
> *eṣā tu śāmbhavīmudrā sarvatantreṣu gopitā //* 8.85
>
> He who knows the joy of being absorbed in meditation cannot describe the [ineffable] supreme state that causes immersion in the divine (*devāveśa*). The awakened one (*prabuddha*) is absorbed in that state.
>
> *yatsukhaṃ vidyate dhyāne devāveśakaraṃ param*
> *kathituṃ naiva śaknoti prabuddhastatsamāhitaḥ //* 8.89[80]

Śiva's devotional exclamations addressed to his beloved Śakti invoke her as the "entrance of the heart," which indicates the primacy of the entrance itself. During his discussion of the secret ritual, the most expedient means to enter the heart, Śiva cries out to Śakti: "O Entrance of the Heart (*kulanāyike*)!"[81] (5.113, 8.74). The term is a triple *entendre* in this context. The penetration (*vedha*) that occurs in one's being, which may result from entrance into a female's sexual organ that in turn causes her fluid to enter him, enables the yogi to enter the ocean of the heart (*kulārṇava*).

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[80] An alternative manuscript reads *dehāveśakaram.*

[81] David White suggests the translation "O Heroine of the Clan."

Kṣemarāja's Revision of Immersion

Kṣemarāja, the foremost disciple of Abhinavagupta, inherited his teacher's Trika Kaula synthesis but had less tolerance for the antinomian practices that Abhinavagupta condoned as the most secret (*atirahasya*) means to attain *jīvanmukti.* The concept of immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness becomes most rarified in Kṣemarāja's work. This theme is prominent in his *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* (*PHṛ*), *Parāprāveśikā* (*PP*), and his commentary on the *Netra Tantra* (*NT*).[82]

The *PHṛ* is a concise philosophical defense of the doctrine of vibration (*spandaśāstra*) for people less intellectually prepared to delve into Utpaladeva's abstruse *ĪPK*. Describing the movement of the power of consciousness (*citiśakti*) from its absolute undifferentiated state into manifestation, this soteriological text discusses the re-cognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's identity as absolute consciousness. The title of the text makes implicit reference to the theme of immersion: as in Abhinavagupta's analysis, the core reality that the yogi enters is the heart (*hṛdaya*), which is homologized to the ocean (*mahodadhi*). In the invocation, Kṣemarāja states that the great ocean (of the heart) of recognition (*pratyabhijñāmahodadhi*) provides what is necessary to extricate oneself from *saṃsāra.* Immediately thereafter he mentions that devoted people aspire to immersion in the highest Lord (*pārameśvarasamāveśa*):

> In this world, there are some devoted people who are undeveloped in reflection and have not undertaken study of difficult works, but who nonetheless aspire to immersion (*samāveśa*) in the Highest Lord, which blossoms with the descent of śakti (*śaktipāta*).
>
> *iha ye sukumāramatayo'kṛtatīkṣṇatarkaśāstrapariśramāḥ śaktipātonmiṣitapārameśvarasamāveśābhilāṣiṇaḥ katicit bhaktibhājaḥ //*

[82] To maintain the flow of the discussion, I explain Kṣemarāja's commentary on the *NT* with the analysis of the original text in chapter 3.

The commentary on the first *sūtra* defines *siddhi* in terms of *āveśa*, which in this context means immersion in the Self as opposed to possession, its meaning in dualistic Śaiva texts. The *sūtra* states:

> Absolute consciousness, out of its own free will, is the means for the accomplishment of the universe.
>
> *citiḥ svatantrā viśvasiddhihetuḥ* // 1

Because consciousness wills it, the creation (*sṛṣṭi*), maintenance (*sthiti*), and reabsorption (*saṃhāra*) of the universe occur. Cyclic existence is the accomplishment (*siddhi*), the immersion (*āveśa*) consisting of self-consciousness that occurs gradually by ascending from the means of knowing to the knower who is the highest Self (*pramāṇopārohakrameṇa vimarśamayapramātrāveśaḥ*). This highly philosophical use of the term *āveśa* is totally divorced from its roots in the cremation ground.

Another rarified usage of immersion in consciousness is implicit in *sūtra* 14.

> The fire of consciousness (*citivahni*), even though covered by *māyā*, burns the fuel of known objects when it descends to the lower stage.
>
> *citivahnir avarohapade channo'pi mātrayā meyendhanaṃ pluṣyati* // 14

The burning objects of the phenomenal world are assimilated into consciousness, the gross form of each object entering its own subtle essence. Dating back to the Vedas, the term *vahni* means "fire," although a secondary usage derived from the root *vah* ("to carry") is "a technical word of Śaiva-Yoga, meaning 'entering completely' into the root and half of the middle of *adhaḥ kuṇḍalinī*."[83] Thus, the term *citivahni* may

[83] *Kṣemarāja: The Doctrine of Recognition, A Translation of Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam with an Introduction and Notes by Jaideva Singh* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 122.

refer to the complete entrance of the yogi into consciousness, his assimilation into the great interiority.

The commentary on *sūtra* 16 correlates the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*), liberation-while-living (*jīvamukti*), and immersion (*samāveśa*). The *sūtra* states:

> When the bliss of consciousness is attained, even while experiencing the body, and so on, one is stable in his knowledge of identity with consciousness. This state is *jīvanmukti.*
>
> *cidānandalābhe dehādiṣu cetyamāneṣvapi*
> *cidaikātmyapratipattidārḍhyaṃ jīvamuktiḥ* // 16

Kṣemarāja's commentary explains that "when the bliss of consciousness is attained" (*cidānanda lābhe*) means "when there is immersion" (*samāveśarūpe).* Even when the yogi rises from meditation (*vyutthāna*), his immersion (*samāveśa*) persists, and he attains *jīvamuktiḥ.* This experience is extroversive liberation (*unmīlanasamādhi*).

In the commentary on *sūtra* 18, Kṣemarāja explains that development of the central consciousness (*madhya*) produces the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*), and this experience is known as immersion, *samāveśa.* Torella refers to this verse when he states that the "process [of divesting *samāveśa* of uncomfortable associations with funerary and sexual transgressions] reaches its completion with Kṣemarāja, for whom *samāveśa* as a technical term seems to have lost any specific identity."

> Attaining the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*) results from the development of the central consciousness (*madhya*). This indeed is the *samādhi* of the highest yogi, known also as *samāveśa, samāpatti,* and other terms.
>
> *madhyavikāsāccidānandalābhaḥ sa eva ca paramayoginaḥ*
> *samāveśasamāpattyādiparyāyaḥ samādhiḥ* //

Kṣemarāja treats the terms *samādhi, samāveśa,* and *samāpatti* as equivalents. The three verbal roots, which share the same prefixes *sam* + *ā*, are relatively

synonymous: *samādhi* (root *dhā*) means "putting together," *samāveśa* (root *viś*) means "entering together or at once" and *samāpatti* (root *pad*) means "coming together."[84] Alhough *cidānanda* appears as a dry technical term, this experience is not lacking universal bliss (*jagadānanda*), as Kṣemarāja hesitatingly admits in the commentary on *sūtra* 19.

At the very end of the commentary on *sūtra* 18, Kṣemarāja mentions that the state of *samādhi/samāveśa/samāpatti* can be made permanent (*tasya nityoditatve yuktim*). He then clarifies a crucial difference between *samādhi* and *samāveśa* in his commentary on *sūtra* 19: *samāveśa* refers to the ability to experience seemingly external objects as internal to absolute consciousness even when rising (*vyutthāna*) from closed-eyed meditation, while *samādhi* refers solely to the inward -ooking state that needs to be brought into the world and thereby made permanent (*nityodita*). *Sūtra* 19 states:

> When he rises up (*vyutthāne*) [from the closed-eyed state], he finds the attainment of permanent *samādhi* by dwelling continuously in his identity as consciousness (*cit*).
>
> *samādhi saṃskāravati vyutthāne bhūyo bhūyaś*
> *cidaikyāmarśānnityodita samādhi lābhaḥ //*

The commentary states:

> A great yogi who has attained immersion (*samāveśa*) still has the impression of the essence of *samādhi* even when he rises up (*vyutthāne*) [from the closed-eyed state].
>
> *āsāditasamāveśo yogivaro vyutthāne api samādhirasasaṃskāreṇa //*

Kṣemarāja quotes the *Kramasūtra*, which mentions *kramā mudrā* as the method to achieve permanent immersion (*samāveśa*). A gesture of consciousness, *krama mudrā* is the condition by which the yogi maintains permanent *samāveśa* in the midst of opening and closing his eyes. The *Kramasūtra* states:

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[84] Monier Monier Williams Sanskṛit-English Dictionary, s.v. "*samā +dhā, samā +viś, samā +pad.*"

> The *sādhaka* (the aspirant practicing yogic discipline), [even] while gazing outward remains in *samāveśa* by *kramā mudrā*, which is characterized by inwardness. Owing to the force of *āveśa*, there takes place in this first an entrance of consciousness from the external into the internal, and [then] from the internal into the external. Thus this *mudrā-krama* is of the nature of both the external and internal.[85]

The permanent (*nityodita*) awareness of *samāveśa* is simultaneously external and internal (*sabāhyābhyantara*). The yogi becomes immersed (*samāviṣṭa*) in pure consciousness even while immersed in worldliness. Singh explains:

> For this *samāveśa* to be a full, perfect, and enduring experience, one has to practice *Krama-mudrā*. . . . By *Krama-mudrā*, the experience of identification of the individual consciousness with the Universal Consciousness has to be carried out into the experience of the outer world. This system believes that the *samāveśa* that lasts only as long as *samādhi* (contemplation) lasts is incomplete. In complete or perfect *samāveśa*, even after getting up from contemplation the state continues; the world no longer appears as mere earth, but as "clothed in celestial light," as a play of the Universal Consciousness.[86]

Sūtra 20 describes the fruit of the attainment of permanent immersion (*samādhilābhasya phalam*) that results from entering into perfectly full I-consciousness (*pūrṇāhantā veśāt*):

> Then, [through *krama mudrā*], as a result of entering the perfect I-consciousness (*pūrṇāhantā veśāt*), whose essence is light and bliss and whose nature is the power of the great *mantra*, there is the attainment of supremacy of one's own wheel of divinities (*devatācakra*) of consciousness that accomplishes the creation and reabsorption of the universe. This is Śiva.
>
> *tadā prakāśānandasāramahāmantravīryātmakapūrṇāhantāveśāt sadā sarvasargasaṃhārakārinijasaṃviddevatācakreśvaratāprāptir bhavatīti śivam //*

A less well-known text by Kṣemarāja, *Parāprāveśikā* is a brief philosophical inquiry into the singularity of consciousness and entrance into that highest reality

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[85] Quoted in Singh, trans., *Kṣemarāja*, p. 88.

[86] Ibid, p. 29

(*parāprāveśikā*).[87] Practiced long before Kṣemarāja's era, the art of entering into another person's body (*parakāyapraveśana*) as a form of controlled possession was an accomplishment (*siddhi*).[88] This power implies an expanded notion of self: the yogi goes outside of "himself" and enters another person. The concept of *parāprāveśikā* is reinterpreted by Kṣemarāja as absorption into the body of consciousness. Knowing the seed mantra of the heart, *sauḥ*, is what causes entry. Kṣemarāja concludes:

> He who knew the seed of the heart, endowed with such qualities, by means of the *tattvas*, he enters at once (*samāviśati*). Having the highest purpose and restraining the breaths, he is initiated and remaining worldly, becomes one who is liberated while alive (*jīvanmukta*). When he drops his body, he becomes the Great Lord, ParamaŚiva.
>
> *īdṛśam hṛdayabījam tattvato yo veda samāviśati ca sa paramārthato dīkṣitaḥ prāṇān dhārayan laukikavadvartamāno jīvanmukta eva bhavati dehapāte paramaśivabhaṭṭāraka eva bhavati //*[89]

Lakshmanjoo's interpretation of this verse reveals its esoteric meaning.

> Thus, whoever perceives *sauḥ*, the essence of all *mantra*-s, in the reality of *samādhi*, gains entry in that *sa*. He is, in the real sense, initiated. It does not matter if he lives and breathes like an ordinary being, if he gets hungry and attends to his bodily functions, he is actually divine, and at the time of leaving his physical form he becomes one with Śiva.[90]

Prior to this final section, the text says nothing about entry into the highest reality (*parāprāveśikā*). The extended philosophical discussion about light (*prakāśa*) and reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) and the thirty-six principles (*ṣaṭtriṃśattattva*)

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[87] The term *parāprāveśikā* (causative of root *viś* + *pra* + *ā*) literally means "that which causes entry into the highest reality."

[88] The practice of *parakāyapraveśana* is attested in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali.

[89] Translation rendered is my own. The Sanskrit text is in John Hughes, ed. *Self Realization in Kashmir Shaivism: The Oral Teachings of Swami Lakshmanjoo* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), Appendix B.

[90] John Hughes, p. 69.

anticipates the final injunction to enter the mantra *sauḥ*. Whereas the *PHṛ* briefly states that the yogi appears as if intoxicated (*kṣīva iva*) (commentary on *sūtra* 19) upon entering absolute consciousness, the *Parāprāveśikā* bypasses any mention that intoxication is concomitant with entrance into the highest reality.

Conclusion

We have come a long way from the Āyurvedic concern about possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities that inflict pathology on victims whose symptoms warrant treatment. So too have we departed from the archaic substratum of Śaiva yoga wherein practitioners court female divinities in order to control them and gain power (*śakti*) through possession by them. Although medical doctors attempt to stave off possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities while Śaiva yogis in the dualistic context encourage possession (*samāveśa*), these traditions share an understanding that the possessed person and his possessor are distinct entities. Merging with the divinity in either case means that a person's identity is taken over by an external agent.

In contrast, according to nondual Śaiva yoga, there is ultimately no external agent because duality is subsumed in absolute consciousness (*parādvaita*). The distinction between subjectivity and objectivity dissolves in the boundlessness of absolute consciousness, so external agents become relatively moot. Even a yogi's power (*siddhi*) of telepathy is not an ability to enter another person's mind. Utpaladeva explains:

> No cognitions shine in the thoughts of another even among yogis. They shine by virtue of their own self-awareness even if in the position of the object.
>
> *yoginām̐api bhāsante na dṛśo darśanāntare /*
> *svasaṃvidekamānāstā bhānti meyapade 'pi vā //* 1.4.5

The cognition of another does not shine as an object in a yogi's awareness; rather, it shines as his own cognition. In other words, the subjectivity of the yogi expands to include another's subjectivity. The commentary explains that what occurs is the identification of the yogi with the Self of others (*yoginām parātmatāpāttireva tattvam*). The yogi identifies as the other person and therefore cognizes the other's thoughts as his own. B.N. Pandit states:

> In fact, a yogin with supernormal powers does not see the mental activities of others as objective elements of his telepathic knowledge. By becoming one with others, entering their mental apparatus, and pervading their mind and senses, he witnesses the contents of their mental activities as if they were his own. Such activities shine in him as "I" and not as "this." Such a yogin can enter any number of minds and perceive through all of them simultaneously, just as a person can put into action more than one of his senses and limbs at the same time. But even a yogin does not thereby comprehend his own knowledge as an object, as "this." He rather experiences it as a subject, as "I."[91]

No matter which path the yogi follows--*śāṃbhavopāya* (the means of Śambhu), *śāktopāya* (the powerful means), *āṇavopāya* (the means of limited beings), or no path at all (*anupāya*)--his swallowing of the objective world into absolute consciousness culminate in *samāveśa*, permanent immersion in the highest reality. The bliss of the Self appearing as the universe (*jagadānanda*) is said to flow for the accomplished yogi (*siddha*). The texts that we have examined thus far discuss immersion without focusing on the intoxicating bliss (*ānanda*) that surges forth from this experience. Other works by the same authors, and other sections of these same texts, emphasize the intoxication (*unmāda*) that arises from permanent immersion in absolute consciousness. We will now turn to an analysis of the connections between immersion and the intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*).

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[91] B.N. Pandit, translation with commentary on *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* by Utpaladeva. Commentary on *ĪPK* 1.4.5, p. 34-35. Unpublished manuscript.

Chapter Five

Madnesses of Devotion in the Nondual Śaiva Yoga Traditions of Kashmir

In the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir, as we have seen, the term *samāveśa* means complete immersion in absolute unitary consciousness, the heart, also known as Śiva or Bhairava. In the classification system of four *upāya*-s--*anupāya, śāmbhavopāya, śāktopāya,* and *āṇavopāya--samāveśa* has a nontheistic valence, even though it refers to the culmination of theistic experience. In the philosophical milieu, this technical term designates various types of immersion attained through the *upāya*-s. A seminal concept, *samāveśa* has an extensive number of linguistic permutations and synonyms that highlight its centrality. Thus far we have been concerned with the nontheistic usages of the terms that refer to immersion in absolute consciousness.

In addition to its philosophical meanings in the classification system, the term *samāveśa* is also inextricably connected with the devotional orientation (*bhakti*) of Śaiva yoga. The yogi's desire to engulf himself in Śiva reflects the theistic valence of *samāveśa*. Thus, Śiva is not only the impersonal state of transcendent consciousness but also the personal deity who the yogi worships and with whom he seeks to identify. In the *bhakti* milieu, *samāveśa* refers to the devotional goal of yoga: the blissful recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of oneself as the unity of divine consciousness. The connection between *samāveśa* and *bhakti* is acknowledged with a variety of interrelated concepts: immersion as devotion (*samāveśabhakti, bhaktyāveśa*), intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), and highest devotion (*parābhakti, paramuddāmabhakti*). The highest type of devotion is

distinguished by the intoxication that arises from immersion in absolute consciousness. In nondual Śaiva yoga, the defining characteristic of *bhakti* is its synthesis of immersion (*samāveśa*) and intoxication (*unmāda*). These terms are sometimes mentioned explicitly and often are implicit in numerous texts.

In the following analysis I will revisit the works of Somānanda, Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta, and Kṣemarāja, four Kashmir Śaiva gurus in a single lineage (*paraṃpara*) that flourished in the 9th-11th centuries C.E. I will focus in particular on Somānanda's *Śivadṛṣṭi*; Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* (*ĪPK*) and *Śivastotrāvalī (ŚSĀ)*; the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (*VB*); Abhinavagupta's *Parātrīśikā Vivaraṇa* (*PTv*), *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛttiḥ* (*PTlv*), *Anubhavanivedanastotra* (*ANS*), and *Tantrāloka* (*TĀ*); Kṣemarāja's *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*; and the *Kulārṇavatantra* (*KT*). These texts do not equally stress the intoxicating quality of *samāveśa*. Even a single author stresses the devotional valence differently in separate texts. In *ŚSĀ* Utpaladeva offers the most passionate descriptions of intoxicated devotion. Abhinavagupta is more consistently a sober philosopher, although by carefully examining his works, we find that he too is intoxicated at heart. In contrast to his predecessors, Kṣemarāja focuses on the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*) without referring at all to a need for devotion (*bhakti*).

From Pathological Madness to the Madnesses of Devotion

The meaning of *unmāda* in nondual Śaiva yoga differs from that in both Āyurvedic and dualistic Śaiva contexts. According to the medical treatises, the broad range of possessing divinities (*graha*-s, *bhūta*-s) cause *unmāda* that warrants treatment (*pratiniṣedha*). The desirable qualities produced by deities (*deva*-s) are not distinguished therapeutically from the debilitating symptoms caused by other

types of divinities. Doctors attempt to eliminate all forms of *unmāda* because they compromise a person's ability to maximize worldly prosperity (*bhoga*). In dualistic Śaiva rituals, practitioners seek to extract the *mada* of a broad range of mostly female possessors. The nondual Śaiva traditions value a type of *unmāda* that is the antithesis of pathology. Instead it is an aestheticized variation on the perennial theme of assimilating the supremely blissful state of deities (*deva*-s). Possession by a divinity is reconfigured as immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness, which is understood as a plunge into Śiva sweetened by an intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). Drunk in his devotion to Śiva from practices (*sādhanā*-s) that at times involve esoteric Kaula rituals, the yogi may appear like an ordinary madman, but in fact he is an extraordinary madman enveloped in and illuminated as absolute consciousness. The concept of *unmāda* is recast so that the desirable experience of identification as the deity stabilizes alongside increasing intoxication. Outsiders may judge this experience to be a profaning inebriation or an instance of pathological madness. But insiders valorize it as the fruition of yoga, which is the opposite of a drunken stupor or pathology, although the two sometimes have a "family resemblance." Reminiscent of the euphoric state of immortality (*unmadita)* described in the *Rig Veda*, the luminous qualities resulting from possession by deities (*deva*-s) according to Āyurveda, and the intoxication (*mada*) sought by practitioners of dualistic Śaiva rituals, *unmāda* fully emerges with positive significations in certain Kashmir Śaiva texts. *Unmāda* should be understood as the intoxication or madness that arises from imbibing the nectar (*amṛta*) flowing from consciousness that is constantly recognizing its Self.

In his study of *unmāda* in Āyurveda, Weiss briefly mentions the role of *unmāda* in later Hindu traditions. Referring to a person into whom a deity (*deva*)

enters, he states, "His condition is less one of devotion to the deity, but rather he has been seized by and thus has become the deity. Although this condition is considered pathological in the early ayurvedic texts, in the context of later *bhakti* cults it would more likely be deemed desirable."[1] Although Weiss astutely points out the historical change that occurs, he obscures the details. In nondual Śaiva yoga, the yogi is devoted to the deity that he becomes.

The yoga of devotion (*bhaktiyoga*) described in the *Bhagavadgītā* (ca. 2nd-3rd century C.E.) is an historical antecedent of the *bhakti* that comes to fruition in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and devotional traditions that draw inspiration from this and other *Purāṇa*-s. The *Gītā* admonishes people to love Kṛṣṇa exclusively instead of prioritizing the yogas of knowledge (*jñāna*) and action (*karma*). But no one in this text becomes maddened with love for Kṛṣṇa. With respect to the concept of *samāveśa*, the *Gītā*, in its discussions of *bhaktiyoga*, at times characterizes the goal as the reciprocal immersion of the worshiper and worshiped in each other. The following characterization of devotion hints at this type of experience. Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna:

> But those who worship me with devotion,
> They are in me, and moreover I am in them.
>
> *ye bhajanti tu māṃ bhaktyā*
> *mayi te teṣu cāpy aham //* 9.29

In comparison to the sincere though comparatively dispassionate love for Kṛṣṇa described in the *Gītā*, the emotional *bhakti* that later spread throughout India describes a passionate love for the divine, often using erotic imagery. The path of single-minded surrender to god (*prapattibhakti*) began with the Ālvars and the

[1] Weiss, pp. 137-138.

Nāyanmārs in South India during the 6th to 9th-centuries C.E.[2] Encompassing Śaiva, Śākta, and Vaiṣṇava traditions, the practice of fervent devotion to one's chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā*) spread from South India to the far corners of India, including Maharashtra, Kashmir, Rajasthan, Bengal, and elsewhere. For instance, the Maharashtrian saint Jñāneśvar Mahārāj (13th-century C.E.) was a Nātha yogi whose devotion to Śiva was exceedingly fervent. Lālleśvarī, also known as Lallā or Lal Ded (14th-century C.E.), renounced the householder path and composed Kashmiri verses about her passionate love for Śiva. Mīrā Bāī (16th-century C.E.) was a Rajasthani Vaiṣṇava devotee of Kṛṣṇa who spent much time in the temple singing and dancing to the devotional songs that she composed. She publicly declared herself to be mad with love for Kṛṣṇa. The 19th-century Bengali saint Ramakrishna, a Śākta devotee of the goddess Kālī, similarly declared himself to be completely mad with devotion. His frenzied fits of laughter and tears exhibited his madness. In contemporary India and in the diaspora, fervent devotion continues to inspire saints and devotees.

The names of many gods and goddesses attest to the fact that intoxication that is a conspicuous aspect of their character. In the *Śivapurāṇa* a name for Śiva is Unmattabhairava ("Maddened Śiva"). Bhairava, the fierce and terrible form of Śiva, is even more intense as Unmattabhairava ("Maddened Bhairava"). The names of Kālī in the *Kālī Sahasranāma* include Kāmārtā ("She Who Is the Bliss of Passion"), Madanāturā ("She Who is Intoxicated by Kāma"), Mattā ("The Drunken One"), Pramattā ("The Cosmically Maddened One"), Mahāmattā ("She Who is Greatly Intoxicated"), Mātaṅgī ("She Who is Mad with Love"), and Madirāmedaronmādā

[2] See Friedhelm Hardy, *Viraha Bhakti: the Early History of Krsna Devotion in South India* (Delhi: Oxford, 1983).

("She Who is Intoxicated by Drinking the Wine of Divine Love").[3] The names of the goddess in *Lalitā Sahasranāma* include Madaśālinī ("She Who Is Full of Bliss"), Madaghūrṇitaraktākṣī ("She Whose Eyes are Turned Toward Bliss"), Mattā ("The Drunken One"), Mādhvīpānalasā ("She Who Is in a State of Divine Intoxication"), and Bhāvajñā ("She Who Experiences *Bhāva*").[4] By way of contrast, the goddess Lakṣmī is usually pretty tame, other than when she is called Cancala ("The Fickle or Charming One"), although this certainly does not approach the intoxication of other goddesses.

Devotional fervor among yogis is fairly common, although the nondual Śaiva yogis develop a distinctive spin. Integrating immersion (*samāveśa*) and madness (*unmāda*) is the hallmark of the tradition, which reconciles supreme nondualism (*parādvaita*) and devotion (*bhakti*). This standpoint subverts the apparent logical necessity that the deity must be an "other" for devotion to take place. The foundational, rigorously argued premise of the tradition is that Śiva is both nondual (*advaya*) absolute consciousness and the deity to whom devotion is directed. Differing from the position of Advaita Vedānta, this stance argues that nonduality does not preclude the reality of the world and the human beings in it. Creation is not an illusion but is instead the real reflection (*vimarśa*) of consciousness (*prakāśa*), which has the capacity to know itself. Diversity is the reflection that is only provisionally (from a limited viewpoint) different from Śiva. As Utpaladeva argues in the *ĪPK*, unitary consciousness is what enables the diverse objects of the world to shine at once and appear in the same field of vision. And as

[3] *Śrī Kālī Sahasranāma*, trans. Premlata Paliwal (New Delhi: Nilima Harjal, 1979).

[4] *Śrī Lalitā Sahasranāma*, trans. C.I. Suryanarayanamurthy (Bombay: Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhāvan, 1975).

Abhinavagupta informs us, it is precisely becaue everything is Śiva—absolute consciousness—that it is absolutely real. There can be nothing external to consciousness. From this theological standpoint, when the yogi achieves immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness, he enjoys the intoxicating bliss that flows from his worship of and identification as Śiva.

Somānanda's Devotion

The first verse in Somānanda's *Śivadṛṣṭi* captures the yogi's capacity for devotion to Śiva in whom he is immersed (*samāviṣṭa*).

> Let Śiva, who is immersed (*samāviṣṭa*) in my own being [and] who obscures himself by himself, praise Śiva in his extended form by his own power (*śakti*).
>
> *asmadrūpasamāviṣṭaḥ svātmanātmanivāraṇe /*
> *śivaḥ karotu nijayā namaḥ śaktyā tatātmane //* 1.1

This initial verse reveals the hallmark of nondual Śaiva devotion (*bhakti*). The invocation is quintessentially that of a nondual Śaiva yogi who is also a devotee. Most devotional traditions insist on maintaining a duality between the deity and the devotee.[5] But for this Śaiva yogi, the worshiper and the worshiped, the enterer and the entered, the obscured and the obscurer, are intermingled (*samāviṣṭa*). The desire to be co-penetrated (*samāviṣṭa*) in and by Śiva while praising him is central in this practice (*sādhanā*). Madhusudan Kaul states, "The agency used in offering the obeisance and the obstacles for the removal of which homage is paid are alike in the author's eyes consubstantial with Śiva."[6] The worshiper, the process of worshiping,

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[5] There is a nondual Vaiṣṇava tradition whose text, *Paramārthasāra*, Abhinavagupta coopted into Śaivism.

[6] *The Śivadriṣṭi of Sri Somānandanātha with the Vritti by Utpaladeva.* Edited by Pandit Madhusudan Kaul Shāstri. Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, No. LIV. Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, 1934, p. ii.

and the worshiped are identical. This tripartite (*trika*) reality is the foundation of Pratyabhijñā, the philosophy developed further by Somānanda's disciple, Utpaladeva.

The Intoxication of Devotion in Utpaladeva

Utpaladeva, one of the expounders of Pratyabhijñā, was Abhinavagupta's grandmaster. As discussed in chapter 4, he is remembered largely for his rigorous philosophical treatises, especially the *ĪPK*. But in addition to being an exemplary *jñānin*, Utpaladeva was first and foremost a consummate devotee of Śiva who gained insight into the nature of absolute consciousness through his exquisite devotion, which he constantly yearned to deepen. His poetic text, *ŚSĀ*, accessible because of its lucid discussion about the primacy of devotion, is still celebrated today by Śaiva communities in India and the United States. Utpaladeva's great-granddisciple Madhurājayogin wrote about this text in his *Śāstraparāmarśa.*

> There are thousands of streams overflowing with beautiful verses.
> But none is like the *Śivastotrāvalī*, an intoxicating stream.
>
> *santyeva sūktisaritaḥ paritaḥ sahasrāḥ*
> *stotrāvalī surasarit sadṛśī na kācit //*[7] 8

Comparing *ŚSĀ* to the *ĪPK*, B.N. Pandit explains why the hymns have endured to the present day:

> The philosophy discussed through logical arguments in *Īśvarapratyabhijñā* is reflected beautifully in [*Śivastotrāvalī*] and shines here through a charming lustre without taxing one's head. Abhinavagupta quotes its verses occasionally, just to clarify his philosophic ideas expressed through subtle logic. . . . He expresses in *Īśvarapratyabhijñā* the truth that he arrives at through the calculations of his mind and his *Śivastotrāvalī* expresses it as he feels and relishes

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[7] Pandey, p. 765. Translation rendered is my own.

it by means of direct experience attained through his heart and such expression of the truth is very often far more effective and sweet.[8]

Although the *ĪPK* grounds itself in theory and rigorous argumentation, it is not devoid of devotional interest. As Utpaladeva begins to espouse his philosophical agenda, he recognizes himself as a servant (*dāsya*) of the great Lord (*maheśvara*). This forthright declaration of his devotion parallels his statement in *ŚSĀ* about the servant of Śiva (*śivadāsa*) who identifies as Śiva (10.25). His intellectually rigorous and methodical proof of supreme nondualism (*paramādvaita*) does not preclude and actually requires the emotional register of devotion (*bhakti*). The text begins with an invocation of the supreme Lord.

> Somehow (*kathaṃcid*) having become a servant (*dāsyam*) of the great lord (Maheśvara), and also desiring to give assistance to other people, I now expound his doctrine of recognition, by which he attains all success.
>
> *kathaṃcidāsādya maheśvarasya dāsyaṃ janasyāpyupakāramicchan /*
> *samasta saṃpat samavāpti hetuṃ tatpratyabhijñām upapādayāmi //*
> 1.1.1

Utpaladeva's commentary (*vṛtti*) states:

> Having obtained the benefits from being his servant (*dāsya*), from the grace (*prasāda*) of the highest Lord (*parameśvara*), which is difficult to obtain, and being ashamed of my success alone, by the method that will be described herein, I will enable all people to recognize the Lord, by means of which attainment of the highest truth, I will gain complete fulfillment.
>
> *parameśvaraprasādādeva labdhāt yantadurlabhataddāsyalakṣmīr*
> *ahamekākisaṃpadā lajjamāno janamapīmamakhilaṃ svasvāminaṃ*
> *vakṣyamāṇopāyena pratyabhijñāpayāmi yena tasyāpi*
> *paramārthalābhena parituṣyeyam //* 1.1.1

While the concepts that Utpaladeva explains in the *ĪPK* are subject to reasoned analysis, he suggests that serving Maheśvara happens somehow (*kathaṃcit*) in a way that defies rational inquiry. The *ĪPK* is a polemical text that

[8] B.N. Pandit, *History of Kashmir Saivism* (Srinagar, Kashmir: Utpal Publications, 1989), p. 92.

nonetheless begins with the indeterminate word *kathamcit*, which can be understood as an invocation of grace (*prasāda*). This first verse suggests that grace (*prasāda*) and devotion (*bhakti*) are the foundation upon which rigorous argumentation depends. Theism is encoded into the use of reasoned analysis (*sattarka*) as a means to penetrate the realm of absolute consciousness. But this devotional stance quickly recedes as Utpaladeva launches into philosophical proof of his fundamental thesis that Mahéśvara is consciousness. As Torella notes, in the *ĪPK* "Any emotional colouring is banished."[9] Only in *ŚSĀ* does Utpaladeva's devotion to Maheśvara fully emerge. But even though he does not wax poetic in the philosophical *ĪPK*, we cannot divorce his discussion about recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) and immersion (*samāveśa*) from his basic devotional posture.

The intellectual exercise prescribed in the *ĪPK* that brings about immersion in the nature of Śiva (*śivatāveśa*) is a quintessentially devotional enterprise that intoxicates the seeker. Without the devotional impulse to prompt the intellectual quest, there could be no recognition (*pratyabhijñā*). Torella explains:

> This new and easy way [of intellectual exercise] is merely the triggering in the devout of an act of identification, which does not reveal anything new but only rends the veils that hid the I from himself; a cognition is not created but only the blur that prevented its use, it entering into life, is instantly removed. The way by which the master creates the premises for this to occur may, on the contrary, be gradual: this is what Utp. does with his work, which aims through a series of arguments at bringing to light the powers of the I and those of the Lord, until identification is triggered. The practice of such a linear (*avakra*) path is enough to enter into the nature of Śiva [*śivatāveśa*] and achieve the condition of liberated in life, which may also be accompanied by the extraordinary powers. . . . This occurs within everyday reality just as it is. The light of liberation does not cause its [reality's] colors to fade, does not cover them but brightens them, performing the miracle of eliminating otherness whilst maintaining the richness of individual flavours. . . . Says Utp.: . . . . "May I aspire to liberation by worshipping You, without

[9] Torella, p. xxi.

> withdrawing from experience and the world, and without even seeking the dominion [of the extraordinary powers], but becoming intoxicated with the abundant liquor of devotion" (XV.4).[10]

Torella's seamless move from discussion of Utpaladeva's intellectually-oriented philosophy in the *ĪPK* to a quotation from *ŚSĀ* regarding the aspiration to become intoxicated with the abundant liquor of devotion (*udriktabhaktyāsavarasonmada*) mirrors the interconnectedness between knowledge (*jñāna*) and devotion (*bhakti*) in Utpaladeva's work.

In *ŚSĀ* Utpaladeva, whose name means "The Lord Who Bursts Open Like a Flower," is completely unabashed about his fervent devotional convictions, expressed succinctly and adamantly in his exclamation to Śiva: "let me become mad!" (*bhaveyamunmadaḥ*) (13.8). He calls out to Śiva asking when his yearning for fulfillment of devotion, the highest state of knowledge and yoga, will occur.

> Oh Lord! When will my yearning for devotion, the highest state of knowledge and the highest stage of yoga, become fulfilled?
>
> *jñānasya paramā bhūmiryogasya paramā daśā*
> *tvadbhaktiryā vibho karhi pūrṇa me syāttadarthitā* // 9.9

The verses express his longing for and revelry in supreme devotion, which both depend on the grace (*anugraha)* of Śiva. Chronicling Utpaladeva's quest for permanent (*nityodita*) fulfillment of his devotion, some verses reveal his spiritual accomplishments, and others show that this journey is fraught with difficulties. *ŚAĀ* discusses supreme devotion (*paramuddāmabhakti*), immersion as devotion *(samāveśabhakti),* and intoxication of devotion *(bhaktyunmāda).* Yet the most prominent theme is the desire to become intoxicated (*unmāda*) on the wine of devotion. Drunkenness and even the desire for it depend on the grace (*anugraha*) of the great Lord Śiva.

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[10] Ibid, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

Utpaladeva explains that devotion brings bliss to everyone who lives in the world. He states:

> O Lord, even the path of worldliness is blissful for devotees who have attained your blessing and live in your realm.
>
> *labdhatatsaṃpadāṃ bhaktimatāṃ tvatpuravāsināṃ*
> *saṃcāro lokamārge'pi syāttayaiva vijṛmbhayā* // 1.3

Incorporating Pratyabhijñā doctrine, he explains that Śiva is entirely accessible even to devotees who live in the flux of the world.

> Oh Lord! Who does not see you when the world is dissolved and you stand alone? Even when there is differentiation between the knower and the known, you are easily seen by devotees.
>
> *nātha vedyakṣaye kena na dṛśyo'syekakaḥ sthitaḥ*
> *vedyavedakasaṃkṣobhe'pyasi bhaktaiḥ sudarśanaḥ* // 1.8

Available to all people, supreme devotion (*paramuddāmabhakti*) is suitable even for those afflicted with blindness and leprosy.

> Oh *svāmi*! Father of the movable and immovable, even the blind and leprous look graceful adorned with your supreme devotion (*paramuddāmabhavadbhakti*).
>
> *carācarapitaḥ svāmin apyandhāpi kuṣṭhinaḥ*
> *śobhante paramuddāmabhavadbhaktivibhūṣaṇāḥ* // 15.7

Not only is *paramuddāmabhakti* supreme among the various kinds of devotion, but it is the highest practice that subordinates yogic austerities and ritual. From the first word of the text, Utpaladeva emphasizes that it is "not" (*na*) those on other spiritual paths who deserve praise but rather the devotees who are praiseworthy. The importance of *bhakti* is underscored beginning with the first word and first verse in the first song (*ullāsa*), "The Play of Devotion" (*bhaktivilāsa*). He opens not with an invocation to Śiva, the impulse of devotion, but with praise for the devotees who are filled with the splendor of devotion.

We praise not meditators or those who recite according to the rules, but the one who is filled with devotion, who without any effort at all attains the splendor of Śiva.

na dhyāyato na japataḥ syādyasyāvidhipūrvakam
evameva śivabhāsastaṃ numo bhaktiśālinam // 1.1

Devotees are revered because they have devotion, which is the means to attain Śiva. Honoring devotees becomes indistinguishable from worship of Śiva because, from the perspective of absolute consciousness (*śivadṛṣṭi*), devotees and Śiva are identical. Constantina Rhodes Bailly explains, "It is as though the opening is the very *śaktipāta* of the piece: an initial, shocking understanding is put to us, that is, to honor the devotee foremost, for the true devotee has identified completely with Śiva."[11] Utpaladeva hierarchizes this path above others, thereby obviating the need for renunciation and ritual.

Neither yoga nor austerities nor worship is recommended on this path to Śiva. Only devotion is celebrated here.

na yogo na tapo nārcākramaḥ ko'pi pranīyate
amāye śivamārge'smin bhaktirekā praśasyate // 1.18

Because it lacks devotion, the path of knowledge is distasteful like sour wine. The following verse anticipates the lengthy descriptions of devotion, which alone yields delightfully intoxicating wine.

The highest state of intellectual knowledge tastes nothing like the nectar of your devotion. O Lord, it is like sour wine to me.

bhavadbhaktyamṛtāsvādādbodhasya syātparāpi yā
daśā sā māṃ prati svāminnāsavasyeva śuktatā // 1.11

He becomes slightly more polemical when he insists that those who tread the path of knowledge (*jñānayoga*) are inferior to those who have devotion.

What position do the followers

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[11] Constantina Rhodes Bailly, *Shaiva Devotional Songs of Kashmir: A Translation and Study of Utpaladeva's Shivastotravali* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 2.

Of the path of knowledge
Hold over these great souls
Who have vanquished the gloom of attachment and aversion
With the bright light of your devotion?[12]

rāgadveṣandhakāro'pi yeṣāṃ bhaktitviṣā jitaḥ
teṣāṃ mahīyasāmagre katame jñānaśālinaḥ // 16.16

It is as if the author of these verses were not the same person who wrote the abstruse *ĪPK*. Utpaladeva dismisses the type of knowledge gained through *jñānayoga* as inferior to the true knowledge that is attained by those who cultivate devotion.

Only those who practice the great wisdom of your devotion know the essence of both knowledge and ignorance.

bhavadbhaktimahāvidyā yeṣāmabhyāsamāgatā
vidyāvidyobhayasyāpi tā ete tattvavedinaḥ // 1.12

Utpaladeva concludes *ŚSĀ* with this declaration in the final song.

O Lord, some seek realization through knowledge, yoga, and other disciplines. This realization shines continuously only for devotees.

jñānayogādināṇyeṣāmapyapekṣitumarhati
prakāśaḥ svairiṇāmiva bhavān bhaktimatāṃ prabho // 20.14

Becoming liberated-while-alive (*jīvanmukti*) is the commonly articulated goal of nondual Śaiva yoga. But in this poetic text the reverse is true. Utpaladeva explains that the path of devotion is superior even to liberation itself. The great remedy of devotion (*bhaktimahauṣadhi*), an herb from which liberation is extracted, is the more important goal.

Let me delight in the sweet sublime bliss of your devotion,
abandoning not only mundane powers but liberation itself.

śuṣkakaṃ maiva siddheya maiva mucyeya vāpi tu
svādiṣṭhaparakāṣṭāptatvadbhaktirasanirbharaḥ // 16.4

[12] Translation rendered by Rhodes Bailly, p. 90.

The *siddhi*-s that appear on the path are byproducts. They are guides, not goals, of practice (*sādhanā*). Along with the highest state of intellectual knowledge and liberation, the *siddhi*-s pale in comparison with the experience of true devotion.

> O Lord, let me not become proud in the attainment merely of *siddhis*. The splendor of *aṇimā* and the other *siddhi*-s and even of liberation pales in comparison to devotion to you.
>
> *siddhilavalābhalubdhaṃ*
> *māmavalepena mā vibho saṃsthāḥ*
> *kṣāmastvadbhaktimukhe*
> *prollasadaṇimādipakṣato mokṣaḥ* // 19.14

Supreme devotion (*paramuddāmabhakti*) entails immersion, *samāveśa*, in which the process of devotion comes to fruition. This concept, as we have seen, functions in nondual Śaiva yoga as part of the philosophy of supreme nondualism (*parādvaita*): unitary consciousness (*prakāśa*) has a self-reflective (*vimarśa*) capacity that creates distinctions, which are nonetheless contained within and shine as undivided consciousness. Harvey Alper explains that *prakāśa* lends itself to the concept of immersion in the cave, ocean of the heart. He states, "The theology of *prakāśa* hints at the dissolution of ordinary ego consciousness, at immersion in the cave, the bottomless center of all phenomena; it seems to speak of overflowing, being brimful, of being afloat in the depths of the sea."[13] The yogi enters into the ocean of Śiva-consciousness as an intoxicated devotee. Rhodes Bailly states:

> In a cosmic sense [the devotee] enters [*samāviśati*] the realm of the transcendent body of Śiva-consciousness. . . . The experience of merging with Śiva is often described in these songs as sweetened with *amṛta*, or celestial nectar, and the path of the devotee is said repeatedly to be sweetened with the "nectar of devotion." This nectar is also an intoxicating wine.[14]

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[13] Harvey P. Alper, "Śiva and the Ubiquity of Consciousness," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 7 (1979): 385.

[14] Rhodes Bailly, pp. 23, 12.

With unabashed conviction about the superiority of this type of devotion over competing paths, such as those of the Vaiṣṇavas, B.N. Pandit states:

> The highest type of devotion . . . [is] . . . an actual experience of one's absolute unity with God in which his individual personality becomes expanded and takes the form of universal consciousness enjoying limitless divine powers of Godhead. It is termed in Śaivism as *Samāveśa-bhakti* which is far higher than the ninefold devotion of Vaiṣṇavas or even the highest *prapatti* of Vallabha's school. The practices of all objective services to the Divine fall away like dry leaves of a tree when such *Samāveśabhakti* wakes up in one's heart.[15]

Although the concept of *samāveśa* is pervasive in *ŚSĀ*, the term itself is curiously not mentioned even once. A litany of analogous terms points to the primacy of immersion. This proliferation of terminology is comparable to the many words used in the philosophical milieu to designate *samāveśa.* Wearing his "poet's cap," Utpaladeva most often chooses language that emphasizes the intoxicated aspect of devotion. Not until the work of his granddisciple, Abhinavagupta, do the terms *samāveśa* and *bhakti* coincide to explain that *samāveśa* should be understood as *bhakti.*

The *ŚAĀ* assumes that reality is interpenetrated within itself. The text states, "Everything is immersed (*āpluta*) within you alone" (*bhavataiva hi sarvamāplutaṃ*) (12.1). Since this is the nature of reality, recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's identity as Śiva necessarily involves seeing one's immersion in and as interpenetrated reality. This experience can be expressed as a union (*samāgama, sambhava*): "O Lord, union with you is joyousness. Separation is deep suffering" (*saukhyameṣa bhavatā samāgamaḥ svāminā viraha eva duḥkhitā*) (13.1). Devotion is a prerequisite for the immersive experience. Utpaladeva states: "When there is devotion to you [Śiva], there is union (*sambhava*)" (*tvadbhaktisambhave*) (15.12).

[15] B.N. Pandit, *History of Kashmir Śaivism,* p. 93.

The term *āveśa* expresses his hunger for immersion, which is comprised of complete joy and infinite devotion.

> Due to immersion in you (*bhavadāveśataḥ*), let me wander, free of all needs and desires, filled with complete joy, seeing the entire creation as you alone.
>
> *bhavadāveśataḥ paśyan bhāvaṃ bhāvaṃ bhavanmayam*
> *vicareyaṃ nirākāṅkṣaḥ praharṣaparipūritaḥ* // 6.5
>
> Truly, O Lord, I have no other plea. Let me always be immersed in unending devotion (*bhaktyāveśa*).
>
> *satyena bhagavannānyaḥ prārthanāprasaro'sti me*
> *kevalaṃ sa tathā ko'pi bhaktyāveśo'stu me sadā* // 16.6

When the devotee becomes immersed (*parilīna*) in Śiva, intoxicating honey (*madhu*) flows.

> Having become completely immersed (*parilīna*) in your lotus feet, having lost all desires, let me consume the best honey (*madhu*) and wander about at will, completely satisfied (*paritṛpta*).
>
> *bhavadaṅghrisaroruhodare*
> *parilīno galitaparaiṣaṇaḥ*
> *atimātramadhūpayogataḥ*
> *paritṛpto vicareyamicchayā* // 12.9

Utpaladeva does not systematize the variety of immersions using technical terms. However, we can see in his poetic expressions the variety of immersions in absolute consciousness that develop through the *upāya*-s--*śāmbhava-samāveśa*, *śākta-samāveśa*, and *āṇava-samāveśa*. These arise by the powers (*śakti*-s) of will (*icchā*), meditation (*jñāna*), and ritual action (*kriyā*), respectively. Although the *upāya*-s and corresponding types of immersion (*samāveśa*) are varied, they lead to the same end, the state of Śiva (*śivatva*). Immersion (*samāveśa*) is ultimately singular no matter what route a yogi takes. In *śāmbhavopāya* the devotee's immersion is automatic (*akrama*) and permanent, although he must begin visualizing (*paśyan*) himself as the power of freedom alone (*svātantryaśaktimeva*) in order to

bring his experience to complete fruition. In *śāktopāya* the vision of identity with and as Śiva fades in and out (*kramākrama*). The devotee struggles to stabilize identification with his own true Self by using meditation techniques (*jñāna*-s). In *āṇavopāya* the devotee struggles to control his senses and mostly succumbs to the whims of his ego. His immersion (*samāveśa*) develops in stages (*krama*) through ritual activities (*kriya*-s). All the immersions fade into a semblance of a fourth level, in which the devotee wanders about at will and praises Śiva's names and forms through transformed eyes. Only a person who has been pierced by an extremely intense descent of grace (*dṛḍhaśaktipātāviddha*) dwells completely in the direct experience of absolute consciousness and has nothing whatsoever to achieve. This methodless method (*anupāya*) is beyond succession and nonsuccession (*kramākramātīta*). The devotee enjoys immersion as the supreme Lord (*pārameśvara samāveśa*). From Śiva's viewpoint (*śivadṛṣṭi*) all this has already been achieved, although without recognition (*pratybhijñā*) of this reality, ignorant people mire themselves in the muck of the world.

Conjoining nondualism and devotion, the concept of *samāveśa* as *bhakti* obliterates the distinction between worshiper and worshiped, while the devotee maintains a devotional stance toward that which is none other than himself. This realization is exemplified by Utpaladeva's various exclamations, such as "Homage to Śiva, my own consciousness!" (*namo mahyaṃ śivāyeti*) (5.15). This experience can be described as a type of *nirvikalpa-bhakti,* since devotion persists despite a lack of duality.

> O Lord, where not even a trace of otherness exists, where self-luminosity is manifest everywhere, let me always reside as your worshiper there, in your city.
>
> *anyavedyamaṇumātram asti na*
> *svaprakāśamakhilaṃ vijṛmbhate*

yatra nātha bhavataḥ pure sthitaṃ
tatra me kuru sadā tavārcituḥ // 13.9

Entering (*āviśan*) Śiva does not preclude devotional worship (*pūja*) of him.

> Entering (*āviśan*) you, my own being that is the fathomless, undifferentiated one without a second and that devours all sense of duality, let me worship (*pūjayayam*) and sing praises of you always, O Lord of Umā.

tvāmagādhamavikalpamadvayaṃ
svaṃ svarūpamakhilārthaghasmaram
āviśannahamumeśa sarvadā
pūjayeyamabhisaṃstuvīya ca // 13.20

ŚSĀ indicates that being immersed (*niṣṭha*) does not guarantee permanent recognition of identity as Śiva. Pronounced shifts between duality and nonduality are typical of experience in *śāktopāya* and *āṇavopāya* before they culminate in *śāmbhava-samāveśa*. Stabilized immersion means that it persists in the four states of consciousness: waking (*jāgrat*), dreaming (*svapna*), deep sleep (*suṣupti*), and the fourth state (*tūrīya*). Utpaladeva begs to understand why his constant worship does not allow him to enjoy union with Śiva in his dreams.

> I consist of you, constantly immersed (*niṣṭha*) from worship of you. Since I am always like this, why do I not realize it naturally even when dreaming?

tvanmayo'smi bhavadarcananiṣṭhaḥ
sarvadāhamiti cāpyavirāmam
bhāvayannapi vibho svarasena
svapnago'pi na tathā kimiva syām // 11.5

On the most rigorous path (*āṇavopāya*), a devotee attempts to abandon his external supports. Utpaladeva reveals that this is his personal path.

> With desire for immersion in you (*bhavadāveśavaśena*), experiencing your form, which is light, mild, clear, and cool, may I transcend the behavior of mundane life that is dependent on material objects.

laghumasṛṇasitācchaśītalaṃ
bhavadāveśavaśena bhāvayan
vapurakhilapadārthapaddhater
vyavahārānativartayeya tān // 8.6

Fervent devotion always consists of the intoxicating bliss that flows within the body of Śiva-consciousness. Immersion (*samāveśa*) is sometimes described as a plunge (*nimajjana*) into a lake whose ambrosial waters (*sudhāsaras*) are intoxicating.

> Plunging (*nimajjanam*) into the ambrosia lake of touching your feet is always a pleasure beyond all pleasures for me.
>
> *tvatpādasaṃsparśasudhāsaraso'ntarnimajjanam*
> *ko'pyeṣa sarvasambhogalaṅghī bhogo'stu me sadā* // 5.12

Utpaladeva emphasizes that one should constantly be immersed (*magnam*) in the nectar of devotion.

> O Lord, one whose heart is not immersed (*magnam*) in the delight of your nectar has no heart whatsoever. O Almighty One, he should be despised!
>
> *tvayi rāgarase nātha na magnaṃ hṛdayaṃ prabho*
> *yeṣāmahṛdayā eva te'vajñāspadamīdṛśāḥ* // 3.7

Plunging (*majjana*) into the divine nectar quenches impassioned devotion.

> For devotees irresistibly inflamed with the fiery heat of fervent devotion, what means to *nirvāṇa* is needed other than plunging (*majjana*) into the nectar of your worship?
>
> *bhaktānāṃ bhaktisaṃvegamahoṣmavivaśātmanām*
> *ko'nyo nirvāṇahetuḥ syāttvatpūjāmṛtamajjanāt* // 17.17
>
> Dwelling in the midst of the ocean of supreme bliss, my mind absorbed (*magnacitta*) only in worship of you, let me engage in worldly affairs, all the while savoring the ineffable.
>
> *nivasanparamāmṛtābdhimadhye*
> *bhavadarcāvidhimātramagnacittaḥ*
> *sakalaṃ janavṛttamācareyaṃ*
> *rasayansarvata eva kiñcanāpi* // 18.13

Utpaladeva expresses his dire longing to become totally soaked in the ubiquitious intoxicating nectar.

> O Lord, when will I behold your perfect form that emits the flood of nectar that drowns (*nimajjayati*) the whole world?
>
> *karhi nātha vimalaṃ mukhabimbaṃ*

tāvakaṃ samavalokayitāsmi
yatsravatyamṛtapūramapūrvaṃ
yo nimajjayati viśvamaśeṣam // 19.6

As we have seen, the ocean that generates waves of bliss is a prominent image in nondual Śaiva yoga. In *Śiva Sūtra Vimarśinī* 3.45 Kṣemarāja refers to the intoxicating nature of the ocean of consciousness (*bodhasudhāsindu*). About this image, Lilian Silburn states:

> Reference to the *sudhāsindu*, the ocean of nectar that among the sixty oceans of Indian mythology is the most interior: cool [and] providing immortality, it symbolizes infinite consciousness. Its intoxicating nectar, the drink of the Vedic deities, dispenses immortality and puts an end to the limitations of existence.
>
> Allusion au *sudhāsindhu*, océan de nectar qui parmi les 60 océans de la mythologie indienne est le plus intérieur: frais, procurant l'immortalité, il symbolise la Conscience infinie. Son nectar enivrant, boisson des dieux védiques, dispense l'immortalité et met fin aux limites de l'existence.[16]

In reality nothing ever emerges from the blissfully scintillating ocean, but veils (*kañcuka*) of limitation shroud access to its ambrosia. Most people experience themselves as separate from the inner depths of the ever-pulsating ocean and therefore drown in its waves. But the intoxicating ocean buoys practitioners (*sādhakas*) who attain immersion (*samāveśa*).

The many terms for the divine nectar (*amṛta, sudhā, savarasa, madhu*) that flows from consciousness are synonyms for the wine (*madya, madira*) that intoxicates. This wine (*madya*, root *mad*) by its very nature causes intoxication (*unmāda*, root *mad*). The secret ritual known as the great festival (*mahotsava*) or the worship circle (*cakrapūjā*) uses the five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra-s)* that in Sanskrit all begin with the sound *ma*: wine (*madya*), fish (*matsya*), meat

[16] My translation of Lilian Silburn, *"Śivasūtra" et "Vimarśinī" de Kṣemarāja.* Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 47. Etudes sur le Śaivaïsme du Cachemire, Ecole Spanda. (Paris: Institut de Civilisation Indienne avec le concours de C.N.R.S., 1980), p. 112, n.4.

(*māṃsa*), parched grain (*mudrā*), and illicit coupling (*maithuna*) (*TĀ* 29). The inner intoxicating nectar releases itself during the course of the ritual and flows throughout the subtle body, thereby intoxicating the yogi.

As worship moves toward completion (*nirvṛttiprasaras*), the bliss of oneness (*aikātmya*) with Śiva deepens (17.40). The increasing states of intoxication correspond to the means (*upāya*-s) and immersions (*samāveśa*-s) in consciousness. The terms *mada, unmada, unmāda,* which successively intensify on the grammatical level, correlate to deepening stages of intoxication and immersion (*samāveśa*) that are either more or less fraught with duality. In addition to being characterized as intoxication, Utpaladeva's goal can be understood as madness, *unmada.* He is single-minded in his pursuit of the wines at hand--both internal and external--that procure this transformed state. In the following sensually tantalizing verse, he implores Śiva to let him become mad.

> While incessantly imbibing through the senses the delectable wine from worship of you, from the overflowing goblets of all manifestation, let madness overtake me (*bhaveyamunmada*).
>
> *tattadindriyamukhena santataṃ*
> *yuṣmadarcanarasāyanāsavam*
> *sarvabhāvecaṣakeṣu pūriteṣvāpibannapi*
> *bhaveyamunmadaḥ* // 13.8

Intoxication can entail a dualistic state of consciousness that is neither a temporary nor permanent experience of the unitary nature of Śiva. For instance, the term *bhaktimada* highlights dualistic experience. The grammatical construction of *mada* mirrors its exact meaning: *mada* is the least intense form of the root *mad* in that it does not include the prefix *ud-* or the elongation of the vowel *a* through *vṛddhi.* The devotee is emotional and enjoys the duality of his relationship with Śiva. This is reminiscent of a Vaiṣṇava model of devotion, such as that expressed in

Rādhā's experience of separation from her lover Kṛṣṇa and her dire longing for him. Her madness intensifies as the separation between herself and Kṛṣṇa becomes more pronounced. For Śaiva devotees, this madness produces a restless desire (*vibhramavaśa*) that is merely the means to achieve extroversive experience wherein the whole world can be perceived as consciousness even with opened-eyes (*unmīlana*). "Victory over Separation" (*vidhuravijaya*) is about the desire to go beyond false attachments and become flooded with the nectar of bliss.

> With the restless desire born from the madness of devotion (*bhaktimada*), may I perceive, through the senses alone, the entire world in the form of Śiva and every action to consist of worship.
>
> *bhaktimadajanitavibhramavaśena*
> *paśyeyamavikalaṃ karaṇaiḥ*
> *śivamayamakhilaṃ lokaṃ*
> *kriyāśca pūjāmayī sakalāḥ* // 7.8

The term *bhaktimada* in this context means a restless desire that entails duality and entices the devotee to make his intoxication permanent (*nityodita*).

When Utpaladeva reels from madness as *mada*, he still identifies with his senses. Treading the path of the individual (*āṇavopāya*), he needs to shut his eyes to block out distractions in the outer world, which he has not yet been able to integrate into absolute consciousness.

> With my eyes closed and touching your lotus feet, may I rejoice, whirling with madness (*mada*) from the wine of devotion.
>
> *tvapādapadmasaṃsparśa parimīlitalocanaḥ*
> *vijṛmbheya bhavadbhaktimadirāmadaghūrṇitaḥ* // 5.5

Utpaladeva implores Śiva to grant him permanent immersion:

> In every action, constantly let me enjoy the great bliss of intoxication (*mada*) from drinking the immortal wine from worship of you. Oh Lord!
>
> *anubhūyāsamīśāna pratikarma kṣaṇātkṣaṇam*
> *bhavatpūjāmṛtāpānamadāsvādamahāmudam* // 17.19

The "Song of Victory" (*jayastotra*) highlights the experience of duality for the devotee whose practice focuses primarily on paying homage to the multifarious names and forms of Śiva. The term *mada* is used each of the three times that madness is mentioned in this song, thereby suggesting that the lowest degree of madness results from the less expedient practice of celebrating the qualities of Śiva. Amidst these glorifications of Śiva, there is very little talk of wine and only a single mention of the great festival (*mahotsava*).

> May you be glorified, the touch of whose feet has made the whole family of cows sacred! Victory to you who is present at the gatherings of those enjoying the madness of devotion (*bhaktimada*)!
>
> *jayādharāṅgasaṃsparśapāvanīkṛtagokula*
> *jaya bhaktimadābaddhagoṣṭhīniyatasannidhe* // 14.8
>
> May you be glorified who delights in the offerings soaked with the savor of devotion! Victory to you who is pleased with the dancing of devotees unrestrained by the madness of their devotion (*bhaktimada*)!
>
> *jaya bhaktirasārdrārdra bhāvopāyana lampaṭa*
> *jaya bhaktimadoddāmabhaktavāṅnṛttatoṣita* // 14.10
>
> May you be glorified who is the only cause bringing creation, sustenance, and destruction! Victory to you, the great delight of Utpaladeva, whose play is delightful because of the madness of devotion (*bhaktimada*)!
>
> *jaya sarga sthiti dhvaṃsa kāraṇaikāvadānaka*
> *jaya bhaktimadālolalīlotpalamahotsava* // 14.23

Rhodes Bailly argues that the backdrop of this song is *anupāya*, the nonpath of the yogi who has so disentangled himself from the flux of the world that he can adore the qualities of Śiva without becoming attached and while maintaining the vision of absolute consciousness (*śivadṛṣṭi*).

> The imagery of these glorification *stotras* reflects that, by having transcended the vision of duality in the world, that is, by having identified with the absolute consciousness of Śiva, one is free then to come full circle--to adore Śiva in his many names and forms without

> the fear of becoming only attached to that singular image: for the realized devotee, Śiva is at once both immanent and transcendent.[17]

While there is no evidence to disprove this interpretation, there is also no direct evidence to prove it. Utpaladeva's adorations make no reference to the devotee who has achieved permanent extroversive awareness. With use of the grammatically weak term *mada*, and with no reference to wine, the verses seem to reflect the consciousness of the devotee whose immersion in Śiva remains in the realm of duality.

"The Play of Devotion" (*bhaktivilāsa*) mentions the nectar that creates madness, *unmade*, among worldly devotees who simultaneously abound in the freedom of Śiva's nondual consciousness. The grammatical intensification of the verbal root *mad* with the prefix *ud-*, "above, over, up" is paralleled on the semantic level. Madness as *unmada* is above and beyond that of *mada*. This term signifies an ability to mediate between dual and nondual experience. The yogi has attained either temporary or permanent extroversive awareness.

> Mad (*unmada*) from the heavenly elixir of devotion, they are victorious, beyond duality, yet always retain you as "the other."
>
> *jayanti bhaktipīyūṣarasāsavavaronmadāḥ*
> *advitīyā api sadā tvaddvitīyāpi prabho* // 1.5

The ability to witness the diversity of the world can coincide with nondual experience. Incessantly drinking through the senses (*indriyamukhena santataṃ āpiban*) (13.8) does not hinder recognition of nonduality. The devotee is simultaneously beyond duality and yet able to "always retain you as 'the other'" because his paradoxical state of extroversive awareness lets him experience outwardness as inwardness. Rhodes Bailly explains:

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[17] Rhodes Bailly, p. 22.

> Although the true devotees have overcome the worldly sense of subject-object dualistic perception, they still function as members of ordinary society. Through this perspective, however, the world-as-object becomes Śiva himself; thus the whole world is equated with the body of Śiva.[18]

Utpaladeva's yearning to become drunk on the wine of devotion far exceeds his interest in anything else such as asceticism, supranormal powers, and even the freedom that is liberation.

> My wish is to be neither a disinterested ascetic nor a worshiper of you who craves liberation. But let me become mad (*unmada*) on the plentiful wine of devotion (*bhaktyāsavarasa*).
>
> *na virakto na cāpīśo mokṣākāṅkṣī tvadarcakaḥ*
> *bhaveyamapi tūdriktabhaktyāsavarasonmadaḥ* // 15.4

Utpaladeva strives to imbibe the wine of devotion constantly in order to stabilize his immersion. At certain times (*kimapi*) but not at other times (*kadācana*) he experiences the world melting (*galati*) into the lake of nectar (*sudhāsaras*). The intermittent experience of duality and nonduality (*kramākrama*) is typical for a devotee in more advanced stages of *āṇavopāya* or in *śāktopāya*. Utpaladeva implores Śiva:

> O Lord, when touching the soles of your feet, occasionally it flashes in my mind that this entire world melts (*galati*) into an ambrosial lake. Grant this to me always!
>
> *kimapi nātha kadācana cetasi*
> *sphurati tadbhavadaṃghritalaspṛśām*
> *galati yatra samastamidaṃ sudhāsarasi*
> *viśvamidaṃ diśa me sadā* // 5.26

"Utpala laments that the realization is not yet constant, and repeatedly we encounter verses that reflect the depression and anguish of one who cannot sustain that beatific vision."[19] His angst is palpable.

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[18] Ibid, p. 30.

[19] p. 20.

If I do not constantly and adoringly drink the wine of the nectar from union with you, then for a moment I will not be a suitable devotee for you.

kṣaṇamapīha na tāvakadāsatāṃ
prati bhaveyamahaṃ kila bhājanam
bhavad abheda rasāsavam ādarādaviratam
rasayeyamahaṃ na cet // 4.18

"Breaking the Bonds" (*pāśānudbheda*) is about stabilized awareness and anticipates the ideas in the longest of all the songs, "High Regard for Divine Play" (*divyakrīḍābahumāna*), which focuses on the great festival (*mahotsava*). The devotee maintains extroversive awareness through bathing (*snāna*), an allusion to immersion in the purificatory waters of the ocean of consciousness.

One whose practice includes bathing (*snāna*) in, drinking, and otherwise enjoying the nectar of devotion, he finds much contentment in the first, middle, and last stages of life.

yasya bhaktisudhāsnānapānādi vidhisādhanam
tasya prārabdhamadhyāntadaśāsūccaiḥ sukhāsikā // 16.17

In this song, the past passive participle of the root *mad* as *matta*, "maddened," refers to permanent extroversive awareness. This adjectival usage makes madness a quality that inheres in the devotee as opposed to something external that he seeks. The devotee remains maddened despite external circumstances of triumph or defeat.

Triumphing, they laugh, and conquered, they laugh even more, those few who are maddened (*matta*) with the ambrosial drink of your devotion.

jayanto'pi hasantyete jitā api hasanti ca
bhavadbhaktisudhāpānamattāḥ ke'pyeva ye prabho // 16.3

O Lord, having a form or formless, within or without, in all ways you are overflowing with nectar for those who are maddened (*matta*) with devotion.

sākāro vā nirākaro 'ntarvā bahireva vā
bhaktimattātmanāṃ nātha sarvathāsi sudhāmayaḥ // 16.22

"High Regard for Divine Play" (*divyakrīḍābahumāna*), by far the longest song, discusses the madness of devotion in the most intense terms and mentions the esoteric great festival of worship (*pūjāmahotsava, pūjānotsava, pralayotsava*) twice as many times as the other nineteen songs combined. Utpaladeva exclaims:

> O how very savory is this great festival of worship (*pūjāmahotsava*), which yields tears the flavor of the sweet nectar of immortality.
>
> *aho ko'pi jayatyeṣa svāduḥ pūjāmahotsavaḥ*
> *yato'mṛtarasāsvādamaśrūṇyapi dadatyalam* // 17.1

Although he disdains certain types of ritual, he sanctions this one. While a normative brahmanical ritual such as chanting the Vedas is considered useless as a means to achieve the most intense form of madness, the great festival of worship using the five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*-s) is condoned as the means to catapult the devotee into a permanent state of extroversive awareness.

Explicit and oblique references to esoteric practice occur throughout *ŚSĀ* in addition to its repeated mention in "High Regard for Divine Play."

> Homage to you, Śarva, the essence of the right-handed and left-handed paths, who claims all sects and no sect whatsoever.
>
> *dakṣiṇācārasārāya vāmācārābhilāṣiṇe*
> *sarvācārāya śarvāya nirācārāya te namaḥ* // 2.19

Enjoyment (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*) are not mutually exclusive in tantric practice. This festival of dissolution (*pralayotsava*) dissolves the practitioner's attachment to the forbidden substances.

> I praise Śiva, who, during the festival of dissolution, is passionately and firmly held by Śivā [Śakti], through whom the entire universe is enjoyed by drinking, eating, and embellishments.
>
> *pānāśanaprasādhanasambhuktasamastaviśvayā śivayā*
> *pralayotsavasarabhasayā dṛḍhamupagūḍhaṃ śivaṃ vande* // 16.29

In *ŚSĀ* 20.20 Utpaladeva mentions the hero who ecstatically dances at night with parties of demons. This verse alludes to the heterodox kaula practices that take

place in the cremation grounds among Śaiva yogis who seek possession by hordes of malevolent female divinities. In the nondual Śaiva context, the dance takes place in the circle of heroes (*vīra*) who participate in the esoteric ritual (*kulayāga*).

> As if saturated by the wine of the nectar of devotion, with vital organs quivering from delight, the striving hero dances at night with parties of demons.
>
> *tāvakabhaktirasāsavasekādiva sukhita marma maṇḍala sphuritaiḥ*
> *nṛtyati vīrajano niśi vetālakulaiḥ kṛtotsāhaḥ* // 20.20

"High Regard For Divine Play" offers the clearest descriptions of the state of extroversive awareness stabilized in every action and at all times (*pratikarma kṣaṇātkṣaṇam*) (17.19).

> They are the lords of Brahmā and other gods, the recipients of success in whom the festival of worship (*pūjanotsava*) remains constant (*sthita*) even while dreaming and even in dreamless sleep when there is a loss of consciousness.
>
> *brahmādīnāmapīśāste te ca saubhāgyabhāginaḥ*
> *yeṣāṃ svapne'pi mohe'pi sthitastvatpūjanotsavaḥ* // 17.7

Utpaladeva goes on to explain that devotees who reap success from this efficacious practice are able to maintain the posture of worship in all activities and all states of consciousness.

> Devotees perform worship of you not only while doing *japa*, pouring oblations into the fire, bathing, or meditating, but in all states.
>
> *japatāṃ juhvatāṃ snātāṃ dhyāyatāṃ na ca kevalam*
> *bhaktānāṃ bhavadabhyarcāmaho yāvadyadā tadā* // 17.8

Strengthening the verbal root *mad* by adding the prefix *ud-* and elongating the vowel *a* through *vṛddhi* creates the term *unmāda,* the maximally intensified form of the term. Through unconventional worship using the five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*), the devotee becomes free (*nirargala, svātantrya*), and thereby achieves permanent extroversive awareness via the intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*).

> For those who have become free (*nirargala*) through the madness of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), although unconventional, their worship extended outward [to all activities and states of consciousness], reaches such a prosperous end.
>
> *apysambaddharūpārcā bhaktyunmādanirargalaiḥ*
> *vitanyamānā labhate pratiṣṭhāṃ tvayi kāmapi* // 17.41

The term *madonmada*, a reduplication of the root *mad*, is an alternative way to intensify the root *mad* and similarly expresses permanent extroversive awareness, corresponding to *śāmbhava samāveśa*. Referring to devotees who have become perfected (*siddha*), Utpaladeva states:

> Among these devotees, nothing remains to achieve and nothing is difficult to obtain. They merely roam about the earth, excessively intoxicated (*madonmada*) from worship of you.
>
> *na prāpyamasti bhaktānāṃ nāpyeṣāmasti durlabham*
> *kevalaṃ vicarantyete bhavatpūjāmadonmadāḥ* // 17.23

The devotees who wander aimlessly appear mad to outsiders—and they are indeed mad, albeit in a transformed way. A true tāntrika, Utpaladeva does not renounce the world but rather stays connected to it (*bhavāyānuśayīya*) as an intoxicated devotee. His use of the term *bhaktikṣīva* in *ŚSĀ* 16.7 suggests that he sanctions the display of intoxicated behavior in the world. He yearns for erratic behavior that will lead him to laugh, cry, and roar with Śiva's name on his lips.

> Let me be enraged and also stay connected to the world. Indeed, being maddened by devotion (*bhaktikṣīva*), may I laugh and weep and chant "Śiva" sufficiently.
>
> *bhaktikṣīvo'pi kupyeyaṃ bhavāyānuśayīya ca*
> *tathā haseyaṃ udyāṃ ca raṭeyaṃ ca śivetyalam* // 16.7
>
> I roar and I dance! My heart's desires are fulfilled since you, Lord, endlessly radiant, have reached me.
>
> *garjāmi bata nṛtyāmi pūrṇā mama manorathāḥ /*
> *svāmi mamaiṣa ghaṭito yattvam atyantarocanaḥ* // 3.11

Devotion (*bhakti*) in this text presents a broad range of levels of intoxication (*mada, unmada, unmāda*) and hence various degrees of immersion for yogis who take up practices specified for any of the paths (*upāya*-s). Mediating between contentful and contentless experience that subsumes diversity within itself, the intoxications can retain an affinity for dualistic sensory experience, or they can entail stabilized identification as absolute consciousness. Utpaladeva eschews normative brahmanic rituals because he knows that intense intoxication arises in the ritual context of the great festival of worship (*pūjāmahotsava*). Although liberation may occur as a result of deepening *bhakti*, for Utpaladeva it is secondary to the madness of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), which adds tremendous flavor to the final attainment.

The concept of immersion is the *sine qua non* of *bhakti* for Utpaladeva. However, as mentioned earlier, the term *samāveśa* does not occur a single time in his *ŚSĀ*. Furthermore, even though this poetic text thoroughly investigates the madnesses of devotion, Utpaladeva does not present a systematic taxonomy to analyze the various terms--*mada, unmada, unmāda*--that he employs. This is because he presumably composed each verse spontaneously and did not censor the outpourings of his heart. In contrast to his analytical mode in *ĪPK*, in these poetic hymns he does not appear to be concerned (or perhaps even able) to systematically present his emotions as this would clearly disrupt their spontaneity. Only later would his granddisciple, Abhinavagupta, the architect and systematizer of Śaiva yoga traditions, develop *samāveśa* and *parābhakti* as technical terms.[20] Utpaladeva

[20] Abhinavagupta does not systematize the words that pertain to intoxication—*mada, unmada, unmāda.*

was at times a paradigmatic *jñānin* and at other times more an archetypal *bhākta*, but in neither mode was he a systematizer.

Immersion and Devotion in Abhinavagupta

Before explaining Abhinavaguta's development of these ideas, it makes sense to discuss the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (*VB*), a text that he greatly respected and sometimes quoted in his work. This text focuses on the yogic methods (*dhāraṇa, bhāvaṇa*) that lead to heartfelt realization. The meditation techniques for attaining entrance (*praveśa, samāviśet, āveśana*) into Bhairava frequently mention the great bliss attained (*ānanda mahat prāpta*) (71) from an intensity of devotion (*bhaktyudreka*) (121). Toward the beginning of the text, Bhairava tells Devī that he wants to be satisfied as the object of her worship (*pūjyaḥ tṛpyati*) (17) since he is the highest reality. Immersion in nondual reality does not preclude worship of that reality, which taken together generate a great bliss that intoxicates the devotee. As Jaideva Singh states, "He who thus knows Bhairava both internally and externally is fully convinced of the fact that there is nothing else than Bhairava. He is a God-intoxicated person. To him, Bhairava is an ever-present Reality. He is identified with Bhairava and thus enjoys the non-dual state perpetually."[21]

Without initial devotion to his gurus, the yogi is barred even from hearing these verses (158). With an intensity of devotion (*bhaktyudreka*), the yogi may come to realize his identity as Śiva.

> The type of understanding (*mati*) that arises from the intensity of devotion in a detached yogi (*viraktasya*) is the power (*śakti*) of Śiva. One should constantly contemplate it. Then one becomes Śiva.
>
> *bhaktyudrekād viraktasya yādṛśī jāyate matiḥ /*

[21] Singh, trans. *Yoga of Delight*, p. 112.

sā śaktiḥ śāṅkarī nityam bhāvayet tām tataḥ śivaḥ // 121

Detached from sensual pleasures, the yogi maintains his devotion not simply through offerings such as flowers but through whole-hearted devotion, which enables the power (*śakti*) of Śiva to transform his understanding. In this way, he comes to identify as Śiva. An intoxicated type of devotion (*bhakti*) accompanies the attainment of the highest immortal state (*paramāmṛtam uttamam*) (157). Meditation on the joy that arises from drinking will deepen one's delight.

> One should meditate on the perfect condition of joy from the expansion of bliss arising from the occasion of eating and drinking. Then there will be supreme bliss.
>
> *jagdhipānakṛtollāsarasānandavijṛmbhaṇāt /*
> *bhāvayedbharitāvasthām mahānandas tato bhavet* // 72

The final verse of the *VB* captures the immersive and intoxicating effect of devotion. Having heard these teachings from Bhairava, Devī becomes immersed (*lagnā*) in bliss (*ānanditā*) in her embrace (*kaṇṭhe*) of Śiva (163). From the flow of universal bliss, an engulfing intoxicated devotion establishes the Devī in nondual consciousness.

In Abhinavagupta's Trika Kaula synthesis, the concepts of devotion and intoxication receive different emphases due to his principal concern with delineating the structures of consciousness, teaching methods for experiencing embodied enlightenment, and explicating the nature of the state of realization. The preeminent symbol that organizes Abhinavagupta's central religious vision is the heart (*hṛd*), which lends itself easily to the path of devotion (*bhaktimarga*). Unlike Utpaladeva who dwells on the experience of the intoxicated devotee immersed in absolute consciousness, Abhinavagupta does not concentrate as extensively on the bliss that arises from worship of Śiva. Nor does he express such passionate longing for intoxication. Yet he too conceives of the state of yogic realization in terms of its

intoxicating quality. Many scholars have discussed Abhinavagupta's understanding of the spiritual posture (*bhairavīmudrā, śāmbhavī-mudrā*) wherein the accomplished practitioner abides in absolute consciousness. Yet no work has thoroughly examined his conception of this posture as a state of consciousness that yields an intoxication of devotion. This following analysis will show that Abhinavagupta's focus on attaining *jīvanmukti* does not diminish the importance of supreme devotion (*parābhakti*) or his desire to taste the bliss of Śiva.

In Abhinavagupta's *PTlv* and *PTv* the quintessential symbol of ultimate reality is the heart, the locus of conscious yogic heartfelt realization (*hṛdayanngamībhūta*). The embrace (*saṃghaṭṭa*) of Śiva and Śakti is the heart in its simultaneous transcendent (*viśvottīrṇa*) and immanent (*viśvamaya*) vibratory stillness. Kaula practice requires an attitude of devotion in order to bring about immersion (*samāveśa*) in the heart and *jīvanmukti.* Worshiping the goddess sets Abhinavagupta's practice (*sādhana*) in motion. The *PT* states:

> He should worship the goddess, the greatly fortunate one, who is completely full of all principles, who is adorned with all limbs, blessed with the *mantra* repeated twenty-seven times.
>
> *sarvatattvasusaṃpūrṇāṃ sarvāvayavaśobhitām*
> *yajeddevīṃ mahābhāgāṃ saptaviṃśatimantritām* // 31
>
> Then he should cause her to be honored (*samarcayet*) with sweet smelling flowers, and according to his power, he should adore her with supreme devotion (*parā bhakti*) and offer up the very Self.[22]
>
> *tataḥ sugandhipuṣpaiśca yathāśaktyā samarcayet*
> *pūjayetparayā bhaktyā svātmānaṃ ca nivedayet* // 32

In his *PTlv* Abhinavagupta explains that the highest type of devotion (*parā bhakti*) is necessary to perform the sacrifice that grants immersion (*samāveśa*). He explicates the notion of *parābhakti* in terms of the three analogous concepts of

[22] Translations rendered by Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, pp. 225-226.

anupraveśa ("entrance"), *nimajjana* ("absorption"), and *samāveśa* ("immersion"). The descent of grace (*śaktipāt*) is the first cause that sets a devotee on the spiritual path. A reciprocal process between highest devotion (*parābhakti*) and immersion (*samāveśa*) renders them nearly indistinguishable. *Parābhakti* grants entrance into the heart (*hṛdayānupraveśa*) and absorption (*nimajjana*), which in turn engenders a state of humble devotion that has immersion (*samāveśa*) as its nature. This process establishes the superiority of the supreme consciousness that receives the sacrifice, which inspires additional devotional feeling in the heart. In this reciprocal process devotion creates an immersion that in turn makes continued devotion possible.

The following teaching in the *PT* provides the basis for discussion about *samāveśa* and liberation:

> O Powerful Lord, my very Self, tell me that great unconcealed secret.
>
> *etad guhyaṃ mahāguhyaṃ kathaya sva mama prabho* // 2

The secret of absolute consciousness is that its secret is not concealed at all. Yogis who attain the eyes to see what is already in plain view will discover this irony. This teaching leads Abhinavagupta to explain contentment.

> The question is whether the two types of contentment (*tṛpti*) are possible without realization. Indeed, the one type attained by absorption (*samāveśa*) consists of supranormal powers. Indeed, the other type is attained by conscious heartfelt realization. This is the state of being liberated-while-alive (*jīvanmuktatā*).
>
> *hṛdayaṅgamatāvagamanasādhyā hi tu tṛptir jīvanmuktatā*
> *tatsamāveśasādhyā hi tṛptir vibhūtirūpeti dvividhā tṛptiḥ parāmarśena*
> *vinā na bhavatīti yukta eva praśnaḥ* // *PTlv* commentary on *śloka* 2

Immersion (*samāveśa*) is penultimate to the state of being liberated-while-alive (*jīvanmuktatā*) because it may not be permanent. Abhinavagupta strives to attain both types of contentment, which will bring both enjoyment and liberation (*bhuktimukti*). He continues:

the ritual will be useful as an accessory in preparing the mind and spirit for the practice of absorption and the attainment of concentration."[23] Devotion distills the blissful essence (*rasa*) of reality so that the practitioner can offer it back in the ritual and thereby attain liberation. Conscious heartfelt realization results from having received the clan substance (*kuladravya*) from the mouth of the *yoginī* (*yoginīvaktra*). Muller-Ortega explains, "This form of refined enjoyment is directly linked to a spontaneous state of devotion (*bhakti*). The *jīvanmukta* represents the inherently unified consciousness, a point of compressed but lively infinity moving coherently and blissfully through itself, through the field of infinity."[24]

In *TĀ* Abhinavagupta explains that devotion extracts the essence (*rasa*) that is the offering in the ritual, which thereby establishes permanent joy in the Heart. Although his final aim is not devotion, and so he differs in this way from Utpaladeva whose deepest desire as expressed in *ŚSĀ* is to enjoy the intoxication of devotion (*bhaytyunmada*), Abhinavagupta does in fact partake of the same sort of devotion. His language somewhat mutes the intoxication by avoiding terms based on the verbal root *mad*, but his other terminology is germane and suggestive of this type of experience. He explains that the essence of consciousness is a mass of bliss (*ānandaghana*) that brings joy. His worship of Śiva establishes the vision of supreme nectar (*paramāmṛtadṛk*), which radiantly shines and gushes forth. Furthermore, he explains that the priceless goblet of his heart is full of the nectar of bliss (*ānandāmṛtanirbharasvahṛdayānarghārghapātra*). Abhinavagupta has his

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[23] Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart*, p. 194.

[24] Paul Muller-Ortega, "Aspects of *Jīvanmukti* in the Tantric Śaivism of Kashmir," *Living Liberation in Hindu Thought*, Edited by Andrew O. Fort and Patricia Y. Mumme (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), pp.. 187-217, 204. Knowledge about the secret rituals condoned by Abhinavagupta was common enough to garner the disapproving eyes of those who thought that *kaula* ritual practitioners were merely lascivious hypocrites. See chapter 1, pp. 25-26.

mouth agape to imbibe and feast on the supreme oblation, which continuously satisfies the supreme goddess, his very own Self whom he worships and with whom he identifies (*TĀ* 26.58-65). Universal bliss (*jagadānanda*) flashes forth everywhere (*viśvataḥ sphurat*) and is nourished by the supreme nectar (*paramāmṛtabṛṃhita*) (*TĀ* 5.50-51).

Numerous verses scattered throughout Abhinavagupta's *TĀ* explicitly mention the intoxicating drink. For instance, in the midst of describing the secret ritual he discusses Śiva's abundant wine that intoxicates (*surā śivarasa*) (*TĀ* 29.11). The intoxication of the yogi using the powerful means (*śāktopāya*) is described as follows:

> Ritual gesture (*mudrā*) is whatever bodily posture is in the heart of the yogi who staggers about (*ghūrṇita*) from being drunk (*parāsavāt*) on the abundant [wine of] self-realization.
>
> *kule yogina udriktabhairavīyaparāsavāt /*
> *ghūrṇitasya sthitirdehe mudrā yā kācideva sā // TĀ* 4.200

In *Anubhavanivedanastotra,* an ecstatic hymn to Śiva and Śakti, Abhinavagupta praises his own state of achieved mystical illumination as the permanent spontaneous occurrence of *śāmbhavī mudrā*, the sublime experience of a yogi who revels in absolute consciousness. Muller-Ortega states that in this hymn "Abhinavagupta, the sober philosopher and capable expositor of the most subtle forms of reasoned philosophical argumentation, allows himself to be seen as an intoxicated devotee of absolute consciousness."[25] But he does not mention the ambrosial nectar that intoxicates. In this hymn he is evasive about the centrality of devotion and the effects of imbibing the bliss that flows from consciousness. Yet however implicit they may be, the signs of his intoxication are unambiguous. Maintaining the stance wherein all indication of differentiation vanishes, and even

the very dichotomy between inner and outer ceases to be meaningful, the yogi tastes the unitary flavor of Śiva (*ekarasa*) at all times. Abhinavagupta communicates the direct experience of consciousness by describing its quieting bodily effects: the yogi's half open eyes do not disrupt the complete serenity of his mind (*ardhoddhāṭitalocanaḥ sthiramanā*), his pupils are unmoving, and the flow of his breath is steady and spontaneous. The alterity of his intoxication is unlike profaning intoxications and cannot possibly be indicated by linguistic approximation.

The Muted Devotion of Kṣemarāja

Like the majority of Abhinavagupta's work, the works of Kṣemarāja are more philosophical and less focused on the primacy of devotion. *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* (*PHṛ*) is primarily a philosophical defense of *spanda* and explanation of the concept of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*). He correlates immersion (*samāveśa*) and the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*) without mentioning an underlying devotional impulse. Heartfelt adoration for Śiva is largely absent even though the title of the text mentions the heart (*hṛdaya*), the locus of devotional fervor.

> The invocation directs honor to Śiva.
>
> Obeisance to Śiva, the auspicious form, who is the embodiment of consciousness and bliss.
>
> *auṃ namo maṅgalamūrtaye /*
> *namaḥ śivāya. . . cidānandaghana //*

But reverence to Śiva is not expressed with a devotional tone. The soteriological discussion is merely predicated upon the assumption of Śiva's grace (*śaktipāt*) and the implicit understanding that the play of consciousness leads to a blissful, ecstatic

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[25] Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu," pp. 583-584.

cry of recognition: "*Śivo'ham*, I am Śiva." Kṣemaraja's devotion to Śiva is muted in his explanations of Pratyabhijñā doctrine.

Using highly philosophical terminology, *sūtra* 14 discusses entrance into absolute consciousness with the commentary interjecting a modicum of attention to devotion. Immersion in the highest Lord (*pārameśvarasamāveśa*) is inseparable from adoration for Pārameśvara, who is the fire of consciousness (*citivahni*) that burns the phenomenal universe into itself (14). In his commentary, Kṣemarāja quotes the following verse from Utpaladeva's *ŚSĀ*, a text that prioritizes the path of devotion (*bhaktimārga*) above all else:

> O Lord! All beings even Brahmā, Indra, and Viṣṇu, are continuously devouring. Therefore, I adore (*vande*) the universe that consists of your form.
>
> *vartante jantavo'śeṣā api brahmendraviṣṇavaḥ grasamānāstato vande deva viśvaṃ bhavanmayam* // 20.17

Recognizing himself as none other than consciousness, which devours phenomena into itself, the yogi likewise strives to assimilate the universe into himself, to enter into absolute consciousness, and thus become the adorer and the adored.

The *PHṛ* discusses bliss, *ānanda*, as a dry technical term. For instance, *sūtra* 16 reveals the concomitance between immersion (*samāveśa*) and bliss (*ānanda*).

> When the bliss of consciousness is attained, even while experiencing the body and other things, he knows identity with consciousness. This state is *jīvanmukti.*
>
> *cidānanda lābhe dehādiṣu cetyamāneṣvapi cidaikātmya pratipatii dārḍhyaṃ jīvamuktiḥ* // 16

The commentary on *sūtra* 16 correlates the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*), liberation while living (*jīvamukti*), and immersion (*samāveśa*). Kṣemarāja explains that the concept "when the bliss of consciousness is attained" (*cidānanda lābhe*) means "when there is immersion" (*samāveśarūpe).* Even when the yogi rises from

meditation (*vyutthāna*) his immersion (*samāveśa*) persists. This is extroversive liberation (*unmīlana samādhi*) that occurs while living (*jīvamuktiḥ*).

Again using dry technical jargon, *sūtra* 17 states:

> From the development of the central consciousness (*madhya*) is the attainment of the bliss of consciousness (*cidānanda*).
>
> *madhyavikāsāccidānandalābhaḥ* // 17

The short commentary explains that the nature of consciousness is often concealed in the channels (*nāḍī*) of the body. Expressing not an iota of delight about the bliss (*ānanda*) that precipitates from this experience, Kṣemarāja moves on to the next *sūtra.*

After this relatively dry and evasive discussion of bliss (*ānanda*), the commentary on *sūtra* 19 reveals something of the intoxicated devotee. Like Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, Kṣemarāja also explains that immersion (*samāveśa*) and an intoxicated state (*kṣīva*) are concomitant.

> When he rises up (*vyutthāne*) [from the closed-eyed state], he attains permanent *samādhi* by dwelling continuously on his identity as consciousness (*cit*).
>
> *samādhisaṃskāravati vyutthāne bhūyo bhūyaś cidaikyāmarśān nityoditasamādhilābhaḥ* // 19

The commentary explains that a great yogi who has attained *samāveśa* is full of *samādhi* even after rising from meditation. Dissolving inwardness and outwardness into the singularity of consciousness is the permanent (*nityodita*) experience of immersion (*samāveśa*). Maintaining this exceptional vision as one fully entered (*samāviṣṭa*) into consciousness, the yogi enjoys reeling blissfully (*sānandaṃ ghūrṇamāno)* with the savor of stabilized immersion (*samādhirasasaṃskāreṇa*) like one intoxicated (*kṣīva*). This sole explicit mention of intoxicated (*kṣīva*) state in

Kṣemarāja's *PHṛ* invokes the intoxicated devotion (*bhaktikṣīva*) described repeatedly by Utpaladeva in *ŚSĀ*.[26]

The final *sūtra* in *PHṛ* continues the discussion about the bliss and astonishment (*camatkāra*) that accompany permanent immersion (*samāveśa*). The commentary on *sūtra* 20 explains that entrance (*veśa*) into I-consciousness (*pūrṇāhantā*) draws out a flow of bliss (*ānandaprasaranirbhara*) that culminates in the state of universal bliss (*jagadānanda*).

Unlike his predecessors, Kṣemarāja's correlation between immersion (*samāveśa*) and universal bliss (*jagadānanda*) does not refer to supreme devotion (*parābhakti, paramuddāmabhakti*). Except for his interest in writing a commentary on *ŚSĀ*, a quintessentially devotional treatise, Kṣemarāja's devotional interests are otherwise completely nonexistent in his texts.

The Intoxication of Madness in the *Kulārṇana Tantra*

Written soon after the great Śaiva masters in Abhinavagupta's lineage, the *Kulārṇava Tantra* (*KT*) discusses the ideas pertinent to these historical figures, particularly with respect to attaining a liberated state of intoxication. Setting forth a vision of the *kula* path, the *KT* elucidates the heterodox ideas and practices that Abhinavagupta condones for the *kula* yogi. Explaining initiation and ritual practices, the text discusses the yogi whose intoxication is indicative of his immersion in the heart (*kula*) of Bhairava. The guru's power (*śakti*) as grace (*prasāda*) enters the disciple thereby propelling him toward complete immersion in

[26] Kṣemarāja's folk etymology of the term *mudrā* briefly alludes to the intoxicating results of immersion (*samāveśa*). He explains that the *mudrā* distributes joy (*muda*), which has the nature of the highest bliss (*paramānaṅdasvarūpa*). Practicing *krama mudrā* precipitates the state that is full of universal bliss (*jagadānanda*).

Bhairava. During the secret *cakra* ritual, he becomes intoxicated on the literal and figurative wines at hand, and his resulting madness is said to lead to liberation.

Amidst its lengthy discussions about the importance of madness, the *KT* does not frequently mention the devotion that prompts the flow of intoxicating bliss. However, the text does state on several occasions that those who make their offerings with loving devotion (*bhakti*) are the followers of the heart (*kaulika*-s). (5.71). Only an intoxicated type of devotion brings about immersion and thereafter liberation.

> When by my grace a person has, after a long time, become firm in his feelings of devotion, he should perform the rituals, offering the libations together with the offerings as it has been taught by the Auspicious Terrifying Lord (Śrī Bhairava) and according to the instructions of the guru--for otherwise he will fall.[27]
>
> *yadā puṃsaḥ kṛtārthasya kālena bahunā priye /*
> *matprasādena bhūyācca dṛdabhakti samāgamaḥ //*
> *tadarthaṃ tarpaṇaṃ kuyadi dravyaiḥ śrībhairavoditaiḥ*
> *gurūpadeśavidhināćānyathā patanaṃ bhavet //* 6.7-8.
>
> Those persons who at the outset have no true loving devotion who then in the midst of their spiritual practice gain loving devotion, and at the end experience the expansion of loving devotion, they assimilate the inner practice of yoga.[28]
>
> *antap ravṛddhabhaktāśca antayogyā bhavanti te /*
> *uttamajñānasaṃjñāścetyupadeśastridhā priye //* 14.30

The *KT* stresses the importance of ritualized use of wine to attain an intoxicated state that is antithetical to the drunken stupor of an ignorant man who has not learned to control his senses. The state of intoxication begins in the heart with an increasing love for Śiva. The *cakra* ritual that involves use of traditionally forbidden substances is sanctioned as the means to encourage intoxication,

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[27] Translations rendered by Brooks, "Ocean of the Heart," p. 356.

[28] Ibid, p. 359.

empowerment, and revelation of divine consciousness. Repetition of the supreme *mantra* (*parāmantra*) accompanies ingestion of the forbidden substances and sexual intercourse with a woman who is said to be an instantiation of Śakti (*dūtī*).

The text invokes the Vedic injunction to drink the intoxicating Soma as a means to legitimate the *kula* path. This invoking of Vedic authority points to "the indigenous Indian roots of tantrism, which was not so much a departure from earlier forms of Hinduism as their continuation, albeit in sometimes tangential and heterodox ways."[29]

> Just as [a brahman] is directed to drink Soma during Vedic sacrifices, so [for the *kula* yogi] drinking wine and performing other duties at an appointed time gives enjoyment and liberation (*bhogamokṣa*).
>
> *yathā kratuṣu viprāṇāṃ somapānaṃ vidhīyate /*
> *madyapānaṃ tathā kāryaṃ samaye bhogamokṣadam //* 5.90

In the secret ritual context, which is ultimately deemed to be superior to the Vedic ritual, the injunction to drink wine is taken to an extreme. Performed properly by a hero (*vīra*) with correct hand positions, and not arbitrarily by a common person (*paśu*) (7.94-95), excessive drinking leads to higher rather than lower states of consciousness, and it ideally leads straight to liberation.

> He should drink, drink, and drink again, until he falls to the ground. If upon getting up, he drinks again, then he will know no rebirth.
>
> *pītvā pītvā punaḥ pītvā yāvat patati bhūtale /*
> *utthāya ca punaḥ pītvā punarjanma na vidyate //* 7.100

The *KT* discusses at great length the importance of drinking wine as a means to reveal the Self that is covered in illusion (5.75) and attain liberation (5.78). The Lord (*īśvara*) explains to Devī:

> Those who offer meat and drink to us with loving devotion create a blissful experience. Beloved to us, they are *kaulika*-s.

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[29] White, *Alchemical Body*, p. 2.

samarpayanti ye bhaktyā āvābhyāṃ piśitāsavam /
utpādayanti cānandaṃ matpriyāḥ kaulikāśca te // 5.71

Indeed wine is the terrifying divinity, Bhairava, and wine is called Śakti. Ah, the enjoyer of wine can delude even immortal ones!

madyantu bhairavo devo madyaṃ śaktih samīritā /
aho bhoktā ca madyasya mohayedamarānapti // 5.77

Having drunk wine, a man who is not adversely altered and instead becomes highly one-pointed in meditation on us, he is liberated (*mukta*), and he is a *kaulika*.

tanmaireyaṃ naraḥ pītvā yo na vikurute priye /
maddhyānaikaparo bhūtvā sa muktaḥ sa ca kaulikaḥ // 5.78

The true intoxicating substance is not the wine pressed from grapes and imbibed from a goblet, but rather the divine nectar in the crown of the head, which overflows and gushes throughout the yogi's subtle body. In the controlled ritual context, sexual intercourse (*maithuna*), which is understood to be union between Śiva and Śakti (*śivaśaktisamāyoga*) (8.109), causes the internal nectar (*amṛta*) to pour forth and thereby create an intoxicated state of liberation (*mokṣa*).

O goddess whose hips are fine, without the nectar (*amṛta*) of the vagina and penis, I am not satisfied, even with thousands of jars of wine and also hundreds of heaps of meat.

madyukumbhasahasraistu māṃsabhāraśatairapi /
ma tuṣyāmi varārohe bhagaliṅgāmṛtaṃ vinā // 8.107

Wine is Śakti and meat is Śiva. The enjoyer of that [combination] becomes Bhairava himself. The bliss (*ānanda*) produced from the union of these two is called liberation (*mokṣa*).

surā śaktiḥ śivo māṃsaṃ tadbhoktā bhairavaḥ svayam /
tayoraikyasamutpanna ānando mokṣa ucyate // 5.79

The states of intoxicated bliss cause participants in the *cakra* ritual to behave like mad men and women. This behavior carried into the public domain is intended to indicate the supremacy of the *kula* path. While his intoxication is at times the

involuntary outcome of his spiritual practice, the yogi also purposefully behaves as if mad.

> An intoxicated woman (*mattā*) grasps another woman thinking she is her own husband. Likewise, in an ecstatic state of joy each man is joined with another married woman.
>
> *mattā svapuruṣaṃ matvā kāntānyamavalambate /*
> *tathaiva puruṣaścāpi prauḍhāntollāsasaṃyutaḥ //* 8.67
>
> Each person is filled with the joy of wine, and intoxicated, they worship each other. They perform activity of various sorts, O Kulanāyikā.
>
> *manorathasukhaṃ pūrṇaṃ kurvanti ca parasparam /*
> *ityādivividhāṃ ceṣṭaṃ kurvanti kulanāyike //* 8.74
>
> O Kuleśvari, they do not suddenly show their true experience. They should dwell in the midst of the world as if intoxicated (*unmatta*), mute, or idiotic.
>
> *sakṛnnaivātmavijñānaṃ kṣapayanti kuleśvari /*
> *unmattamūkajaḍavan nivasellokamadhyataḥ //* 9.67
>
> O Maheśvari, even though he is liberated (*mukta*), the Lord of the Heart (*kuleśa*) should play like a child and behave like an idiot. The *kula* yogi should speak as if drunk (*unmatta*).
>
> *mukto 'pi bālavat krīḍet kuleśo jaḍavaccaret /*
> *vadedunmattavadvidvān kulayogī maheśvari //* 9.72

Even normal behaviors are interpreted as supranormal when they are accompanied by the intoxicating bliss of madness. In the context of the ritual, mundane activities are designated as yoga.

> Gossip becomes the fruit of *mantra* repetition, laziness becomes *samādhi*, and agitation becomes worship. This is divided as an offering to Bhairava, O Goddess!
>
> *jalpo japaphalaṃ tandrā samādhirabhijāyate /*
> *vikriyā pūjanaṃ devi cheditaṃ bhairave baliḥ*[30] // 8.59
>
> Union with one's consort (*śakti*) becomes liberation (*mukti*), conversation about the heart becomes a hymn of praise, mutual

[30] *cheditaṃ bhairave baliḥ* is an alternative reading. Another manuscript reads *uditaṃ bhairavīvaliḥ*.

contact of body parts becomes *nyāsa* [ritual placement of the deity in the body], and eating becomes sacrifice into the fire.

muktiḥ syācchaktisaṃyogaḥ stotraṃ tatkulabhāṣitam[31] /
nyāso 'vayavasaṃsparśo bhojanaṃ havanakriyā // 8.60

As the yogi swoons from his drink, he is brought to liberation and enjoys *śāmbhavī-mudrā*, immersion in Bhairava, in which distinctions between inner and outer cease.

He gazes outward but looks inward, and his eyes are unblinking. This *śāmbhavī mudrā* is kept secret in all the doctrines.[32]

antarlakṣyo bahirdṛṣṭirnimeṣonmeṣavarjitaḥ /
eṣā tu śāmbhavīmudrā sarvatantreṣu gopitā // 8.85

Liberated at all times and everywhere, consciousness collects the bliss of union (*sāmarasya*). By this [*mudrā*], the heroes truly become Śiva. There is no doubt.

sarvottīrṇā sadā 'hantā sāmarasya samākṛtiḥ /
anayollāsino vīrāḥ śivā eva na saṃśayaḥ // 8.86[33]

People who focus on contemplating themselves know somewhat [of this bliss]. But this state cannot be described, just as supreme enjoyment [is ineffable].

narāḥ kimapi jānanti svātmadhyānaparāyaṇāḥ /
tadā yatparamaṃ saukhyamiti vaktuṃ na śakyate // 8.87

Conclusion

Āyurvedic treatises give fleeting attention to the supranormal qualities of people in whom deities (*deva*-s) enter. These descriptions of possessed people who are said to suffer from *unmāda* foreshadow the desirable experiences of intoxication (*mada, unmada, unmāda*) of devotion that later became the desirable goals of

[31] *tatkulabhāṣitam* is an alternative reading. The critical edition reads *tatkālabhāṣitam* .

[32] Alternate manuscripts substitute *khecarī* for *śāmbhavī* and *śivasya samavāyinī/samabodhinī* for *sarvatantreṣu gopintā.*

practice in some dualistic and nondualistic Śaiva traditions. In Kashmir in the 9th-11th-centuries C.E. a particular type of *bhakti* developed that integrated the experience of immersion (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness with the intoxication of devotion. The Kashmir Śaiva yogis claim that immersion in Śiva-consciousness and devotion to Śiva are not only mutually compatible but, taken together, create various types of intoxication. As we have seen, the many texts written by Somānanda, Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta, and Kṣemarāja, as well as the *VB* and *KT*, place varying degrees of emphasis on devotion. According to Utpaladeva in his *ŚSĀ* all practice supports intoxicated devotion, while for Abhinavagupta and Kṣemarāja devotion supports liberation. In Abhinavagupta's hands, *kaula* practices such as those described in the *KT*, are reinterpreted in terms of the discourse of consciousness—a trend that Kṣemarāja continues. Neither of them deigns to declare an interest in being overtaken by the intoxicated madness of devotion. However, by scratching the surface of their highly refined intellectual traditions, we find some evidence that these reasonable philosophers, Abhinavagupta more so than Kṣemarāja, were also intoxicated at heart.

[33] One manuscript substitutes "*sāmarasyacamatkṛtiḥ*" for "*sāmarasyasamākṛtiḥ*"

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This historical study has explored the protean nature of possession, madness, immersion, devotion, and intoxication in a variety of Hindu traditions. Whereas Āyurveda pathologized all forms of *unmāda* caused by possessing (*samāviśant*) divinities, dualistic Śaiva yogis sought possession (*āveśa, samāveśa*) by hordes of female divinities in order to extract their intoxication (*mada*). Nondualistic Śaiva yogis reconfigured possession as absorption (*samāveśa*) in absolute consciousness, an experience that is understood by some gurus as an intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). The madnesses of devotion that come to fruition in *Śivastotrāvalī* by Utpaladeva recede in importance in the works of Abhinavagupta, who focuses first and foremost on the structures of consciousness and the state of liberation-while-living (*jīvanmukti*). With Abhinavagupta's disciple Kṣemarāja, devotion retreats into the background, although the bliss that flows from immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness remains central to the yogi's re-cognition (*pratyabhijñā*) that Śiva dwells in and as his own heart. The *Kulārṇava Tantra* dwells extensively on the madness of the intoxication that arises from absorption in the heart.

This study has focused on the "elective affinity" between the various types of madness—*mada, unmada, unmāda*—terms which derive from the Sanskrit root *mad*, and the numerous varieties of possession—*samāviśant, āveśa, samāveśa*—terms which derive from the Sanskrit root *viś*. This dynamic intersection of ideas worked its way from the 3rd-century B.C.E. medical milieu, to the 7th-8th centuries C.E. dualistic Śaiva contexts, and then to the 10th-11th centuries

C.E. nondualistic Śaiva yoga traditions. But this is not the end of this history of ideas. The teachings of the 20th-century guru, Swami Lakshmanjoo, who traces his lineage back to Abhinagupta, show that this ever-evolving set of concepts has continued to endure. Lakshmanjoo's understanding of immersion, devotion, and possession weaves together the large corpus of information examined in the previous chapters and is one of the latest and most influential voices that has brought these ancient ideas into the 21st-century.

Immersion, Devotion, and Possession in Lakshmanjoo

With tears of joy streaming down her cheeks, a retired Indian professor of English at Delhi University sat with me in her refined New Delhi home and told stories about her guru, Swami Lakshmanjoo Raina (1907-1991), a Śaiva master whose devotees claim was the last guru in the Kashmiri lineage (*paraṃpara*) that dates back to Abhinavagupta.[1] Since meeting some of his disciples in the greater New Delhi area, I have also learned about Lakshmanjoo from Hindus in the Indian diaspora and Western devotees in America. Well-versed in the Sanskrit texts of the nondual Śaiva yoga traditions, Lakshmanjoo made an effort to record his translations on audio and videotapes, which gave me direct access to his teachings and made his personality come alive.[2]

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[1] "Since its beginning the sacred lineage of Kashmir Shaivism has remained unbroken, yet due to the rise and fall of Kashmir over the past 700 years, it has been practically hidden from view. In 1860, Swami Manakak was recognized as a great Master of Kashmir Shaivism. He initiated Swami Ram (1852-1914), who became well versed in the secrets of Trika Shaivism. Swami Ram's chief disciple was Swami Mahatabakak and his disciple was Swami Lakshmanjoo (1907-1991). Swami Lakshmanjoo was the last in this unbroken chain of Kashmir Shaivite Masters." Universal Shaiva Fellowship Home Page, March 25, 2003, http://www.universalshaivafellowship.com. Devotees say that the guru will embody again, and now he offers guidance from the disembodied state. Some people believe that John and Denise Hughes' son will emerge as Lakshmanjoo's succesesor.

[2] George Vanden Barselaar, an Australian devotee who spent many years with Lakshmanjoo, is transcribing the audio and videotapes of his guru's translations of many Śaiva texts. John Hughes, an

Modeling himself on his *siddha* predecessors, Lakshmanjoo exclaimed in English while translating *Śivastotrāvalī* 13.8, "I wish I could be as mad as Utpaladeva. . . . I want madness. I want to get mad. I want to turn mad, absolutely mad, mad for your devotion (*bhaktimada*)!"[3] According to his devotees, he longed for and eventually exemplified this state of consciousness. As one devotee explained, "I always felt that he was intoxicated, even when he was shouting at someone. Just looking at him, your eyes are drinking in the vision of an enlightened being."[4] His devotees revere him as a perfected (*siddha*) embodiment of Śiva from whose mouth alone (*gurumukhād eva*) comes liberating truth.[5]

The teachings of this well-respected guru, who recently passed away (or "took final *samādhi*"), tie together the topics discussed in this study: the Āyurvedic concern with eliminating possessing divinities persists in harmonious conjunction with the nondual Śaiva concepts of immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness and intoxicated devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). The legacy of Lakshmanjoo shows that the ancient medical model and the Śaiva yoga traditions of Kashmir are compatible and are flourisghing today, even though they are now packaged in a way that appeals to contemporary seekers.

Almost nothing has been written about Lakshmanjoo, who had much to say about immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness and intoxicated devotion

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American devotee who spent fifteen years with Lakshmanjoo in Srinagar was given the task (*seva*) of publishing this work..

[3] Recorded July 29, 1978. All translations are taken from the audio and videotapes and from transcriptions of those tapes. I edited Lakshmanjoo's words in order to reduce redundancy and clarify his English.

[4] Personal communication with Denise Hughes, August 2, 2002.

[5] The common Tantric notion of the identification between the guru as the deity has been explained by André Padoux in "The Tantric Guru," in *Tantra in Practice*, edited by David Gordon White (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 41-51.

(*bhaktyunmāda*). An accomplished (*siddha*) yogi who continues to influence people today, he illuminated the obscure texts and practices of the written and oral traditions whose Sanskrit literature stretches back at least to the *Śiva Sūtra* revealed in Kashmir more than one thousand years ago. The popular magazine *Hinduism Today* briefly mentions the importance of Lakshmanjoo and his tradition:

> Despite many renowned gurus, geographic isolation in the Kashmir Valley and later Muslim domination kept the following [of gurus in the Śaiva *paraṃpara*] relatively small. Scholars have recently brought the scriptures to light again, republishing surviving texts. The original *parampara* was represented in recent times by Swami Lakshmanjoo. Today various organizations promulgate the esoteric teachings to some extent worldwide. While the number of Kashmir Saivite formal followers is uncertain, the school remains an important influence in India. Many Kashmir Saivites have fled the presently war-torn Valley of Kashmir to settle in Jammu, New Delhi and elsewhere in North India. This diaspora of devout Saivites may serve to spread the teachings into new areas.[6]

Lakshmanjoo is a respected guru in (albeit relatively small) scholarly and spiritual circles in India and the West. As Lance Nelson states, "In India itself [he] was held in high esteem by a distinguished circle of Hindu scholars in the holy city of Benares, several of whom traveled to his ashram seeking a more profound understanding of Śaiva doctrine and practice."[7] Dr. B.N. Pandit, an expert on Kashmir Śaiva traditions who studied with Lakshmanjoo, has given lectures at the New Delhi ashram. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and Swami Muktānanda, popular gurus in the 1970s who brought meditation to the West as Transcendental Meditation and Siddha Yoga, respectively, made a point of meeting him.

Lakshmanjoo's wisdom and guidance inspired Jaideva Singh's translations of Kashmir Śaiva texts. Due in part to his English translations, this specialized area

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[6] http://www.hinduismtoday.com/1994/3/1994-3-08.

[7] John Hughes, ed. *Self Realization,* p. xiv.

of study is experiencing a resurgence of interest. The dedication page in his translation of *Vijñāna Bhairava* expresses Singh's indebtedness: "Dedicated: With Profound Respect to Svāmī Lakṣmaṇa Joo Who unsealed my Eyes." Singh's translation of *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* (*PHṛ*) similarly begins as follows: "Dedicated with profound respect to Swami Lakṣmaṇa Joo, to whom alone I owe whatever little I know of Pratyabhijña philosophy." The Preface to the first edition of Singh's translation of *PHṛ* states:

> *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* serves as the best introduction to the Pratyabhijñā philosophy of Kashmir. I have had the good fortune of studying this work with Swami Lakshmanjoo, who is practically the sole surviving exponent of this system in Kashmir. Swamiji not only embodies the tradition of the school, but he has also practiced the yogic disciplines recommended by it. He has helped me not only by explaining the technical words but also in identifying the sources of most of the quotations occurring in the book. I am deeply grateful to him for his kind help.[8]

Mark Dyczkowski writes that it was "a moving sight to see this fine old man [i.e. Singh] sit before his revered teacher with the simplicity of a young child."[9]

In her *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta*, a translation of Abhinavagupta's poetic treatises, Lilian Silburn recognizes Lakshmanjoo as a learned pundit and accomplished yogi whose wisdom pierced through the veil of mundane knowledge. Studying with him helped her glean deeper insight into the *Śiva Sūtra* and its commentaries and also the *Spandakārikā* and *Vijñāna Bhairava*. Moreover, she points out, "Thanks to [Lakshmanjoo] the oral tradition, after an apparent eclipse, has been firmly renewed, because the Swami, a very learned pundit but also a true

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[8] See Singh, trans., *Doctrine of Recognition*, p. 1.

[9] Mark Dyczkowski, "An Appreciation of Jaideva Singh," in Jaideva Singh, trans., *The Yoga of Vibration and Divine Pulsation: A Translation of the Spanda Kārikās with Kṣemarāja's Commentary, the Spanda Nirṇaya* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. ix, xiii. Also see John Hughes, *Self Realization*,. p. xviii.

yogin and *jñānin*, has mystically lived that which the ancient Śaiva masters of Kashmir, and Abhinavagupta in particular, exhibited."[10]

Many other Western scholars studied with Lakshmanjoo including Alexis Sanderson, who spent significant time in India listening to his translations of texts such as the *Tantrāloka (TĀ)*. Sanderson't voice can be heard, contributing questions and comments, in the recordings that George Venden Barselaar is currently transcribing. André Padoux, Gerald Larson, and Bettina Baumer also went to meet Lakshmanjoo.

Lakshmanjoo's translations and lectures discuss the esoteric, abstruse ideas codified by the masters in the ancient Kashmir Śaiva lineage. Although his name is widely known, he has not received much recognition aside from tributes in other people's work. As Lance Nelson states, "Lakshmanjoo is a presence too valuable to remain hidden in notes and acknowledgements appended to scholarly translations."[11] The following analysis will help to bring this guru's teachings into the mainstream of scholarship on Hindu Tantric traditions.

Lakshmanjoo saw immersion (*samāveśa*) in consciousness as the intoxicating fruition of fervent devotion. Like Utpaladeva, he focused his teachings on both immersion (*samāveśa*) and devotion (*bhakti*), which he saw as interwoven aspects of the goal of practice (*sādhanā*). But as we will see, Lakshmanjoo differed from Utpaladeva and his other predecessors in that he reformulated the ancient

[10] "Grace a lui la tradition orale, aprés une apparent éclipse, s'est renouée solidement, car le swāmi, tres savant paîḍit mais aussi véritable *yogin* aet *jñānin*, a mystiquement vécu ce qu'exposérent les anciens maitres śivaites du çashemire et, en particulier, Abhinavagupta" Lilian Silburn, trans., *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 31 [Paris: Editions E. de Boccard, 1970], p. 1.

[11] Foreward in *Self Realization*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

Śaiva teachings in terms of more accessible, exoteric religious practices that would appeal to everyone.

Lakshmanjoo spoke frequently about the meaning of the technical term *samāveśa*. Commenting on the *Vijñāna Bhairava* he states, "He is liberated even in this very life cycle and actively pursues the goal of this life (*samāveśa* in Bhairava) even while doing all worldly activities."[12] In his commentary on *Śiva Sūtra* 1.1, he explains that the "penetrative state is called *śāmbhava-samāveśa*. Once it shines before you, there is no way to escape from it. You are gone in it. You are diluted in it. This trance has digested you, your individual being."[13] He provides a lengthy explanation of *samāveśa* in his discussion of *TĀ* 1.167-227. Repeating himself many times, he emphasizes that the four names for immersion (*samāveśa*) refer to a singular experience.

> *Śāmbhava samāveśa* is not only *śāmbhava samāveśa*. It is *śākta samāveśa* and *āṇava samāveśa* also. If you enter in *śākta samāveśa* that will become *śāmbhava samāveśa*, and if you enter in *āṇava samāveśa* that will also be *śāmbhava samāveśa* for you. . . . *Āṇava* and *śākta samāveśa* are also *śāmbhava samāveśa* in the end. . . . From the *śāmbhava* point of view, nothing is excluded. The goal is one for them all. . . . When you reach the depth of understanding what is actually the basis of *āṇava* and *śākta*, you realize that *śāmbhava* is everywhere. . . . The fruits [of practice] are not differentiated. Only the means are differentiated. The "means" are differentiated but the "meant" is not.[14]

In his typically eloquent manner, George Vanden Barselaar explained his guru's teaching:

> Always think that you are one with Lord Śiva. You are him. The word *samāveśa* in the *TĀ* means that a person becomes soaked in *āṇavopāya* and then immersed in *śāktopāya*, and then immersed in the ocean of *śāmbhavopāya*. Then you realize that it's all one ocean

[12] Recording date unknown—1972-1974.

[13] Recorded June 7, 1975.

[14] Recorded January - March 1976.

> with three different tides. Swamiji used the analogy of the tides. He spoke about the tides of God consciousness. The idea that it's one ocean brings the reality home that even in *āṇavopāya* you can rise in a flash because it's all one ocean. The inevitable outcome is to rise to the highest *samāveśa*. A person can be using *āṇava* means and in a flash achieve the deepest immersion. The final mergence or *samāveśa* occurs in an instant. The person falls out of eternity back into the timebound if he can't hold it. The flashing back and forward happens in *krama mudrā* between the internal fullness and the fullness of the external world. This goes on and on until such time that complete pervasion of that state happens. This is called *jagadānanda*, the highest bliss. The inside becomes the outside and vice versa. Oneness. The immersion is bliss, of course. Devotion and immersion increase together. This is what Swamiji taught.[15]

Explicating Abhinavagupta's *Parātrīśikālaghuvṛttiḥ*, Lakshmanjoo explained that immersion (*samāveśa*) is the real devotion (*samāveśarūpabhajana*). He states:

> When you get the trance of a ghost, he enters in your body, puts your consciousness away from your body and the kingdom of his consciousness takes place in your body. You become yourself the ghost. You talk like the ghost. This is *samāveśa* of the ghost. In the same way, *samāveśa* of Lord Śiva takes place. When Lord Śiva enters in some soul, the limitation of that soul vanishes and the unlimited state of conscious effulgence takes place in his soul. He becomes Lord Śiva himself. That is *samāveśa*. That is real *bhajana*. That is real *bhakti*. . . . *Bhakti* is not to do *seva*. . . . Real *bhakti* is to become one with me.[16]

Lakshmanjoo's statements, "*bhakti* is not to do *seva*" and "real *bhakti* is to become one with me," isolate the identifying feature of *bhakti* in nondual Śaiva yoga: true devotion means to become one with Śiva (*samāveśa-bhakti*). In other words, *bhakti* comes to fruition with *samāveśa*. As Somānanda states in *Śivadṛṣṭi*, Śiva ought to worship himself (*nijayā namaḥ*) while immersed in his own nature (*asmad rūpa samāviṣṭaḥ śivaḥ*).[17]

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[15] Personal communication, March 16, 2002.

[16] Recording date unknown—1975-1978.

[17] And yet, as Lakshmanjoo explains, nonduality does not preclude the existence of provisionally external entities such as ghosts (*piśāca, graha*) from entering into and taking over a person's consciousness.

Lakshmanjoo's *Kuṇḍalinī Vijñāna Rahasyam*, originally a Sanskrit lecture for pundits and scholars attending a Tantra conference in Varanasi, explains that the immersions (*samāveśa*) of *krama-mudrā* fill the yogi with supreme nectar (*amṛta*). Devotion-*cum*-immersion is an intoxicating experience.

> When a *yogī* takes the support of attentive awareness and meditates on the nature (*svarūpa*) of Śiva—which is one with the *yogī*'s own nature—and when that *yogī* achieves the state of absorption (*samāveśa*), that absorption is such that it dissolves the whole universe in his own nature. When this *yogī* meditates in this way he achieves the Creative Energy (*visarga-śakti*) of Lord Śiva and perceives the state of the supreme movement (*spanda*) of Energy in his own nature. He then gains entry into the state of *śakti-kuṇḍalinī*. . . . That *śakti-kuṇḍalinī* is described as follows in the *Tantrāloka*:
>
> The seventeenth *kalā* is filled with the embodiment of supreme nectar.
>
> *Tantrāloka* 3:138a
>
> This initiation of penetration is described in different ways in the Tantras. Here the yogi has to experience the initiation of penetration by which he rises from one *cakra* to another and simultaneously experiences these *cakra*-s in movement. By this, the eight great powers of yoga are possessed by yogis.
>
> *Tantrāloka* 29.237-238
>
> When the supreme Creative Energy [*parā-kuṇḍalinī*] is directed towards Her internal nature (*svarūpā*), where all movement ends, She there relishes Her true state—the fullness of I-Consciousness (*pūrṇā-hantā*) completely filled with God Consciousness. Then that I-Consciousness is diluted in consciousness-of-this, and consciousness-of-this is diluted in I-Consciousness. Here this fullness of I-Consciousness absorbs "thisness" and produces the oneness of internal *samādhi* and external experience (*vyutthāna*). Her own nature as the supreme Creative Energy and the world become one. They are experienced as being completely united, one with the other. There is absolutely no difference between them. This is the state of *krama-mudrā*. This is the state of *parā-kuṇḍalinī*. This is the state of *jagad-ānanda*. In the *Tantrāloka* the definition of *jagad-ānanda* is given in this way:
>
> Abhinavagupta says, "My master Shambhunātha described *jagad-ānanda* as that state that is completely unencumbered, where bliss (*ānanda*) is found shining, where it is universally strengthened by the Supreme I-Consciousness of God, and where the six limbs of yoga—*bhāvanā, dhāraṇā, dhyāna, pratyāhāra*, yoga, and *samādhi*—are no longer used or required."

In the *Krama Sūtra* it says that a yogi first enters *krama-mudrā* in the introverted state. Then, owing to the intensity of *krama-mudrā*, he emerges from the introverted state and enters into the outer, external cycle of consciousness. First, from outside, he goes inside, and then from inside he goes outside. This movement of going in and coming out and then again going in and coming out takes place by the force of the absorption (*samāveśa*) of *kramā-mudrā*, not by the effort of the yogi. Where the yogi travels from outside to inside and then from inside to outside, just to come to the understanding that outside and inside are not different aspects but one, that is *krama-mudrā*. There is one more thing for you to understand. The one who experiences this state of the absorption (*samāveśa*) of *krama-mudrā* experiences this whole universe melting into nothingness in the great sky of God Consciousness (*cid-gagana*). Although he opens his eyes and perceives that everything is melting into that state, yet—when he strives to come out of that state—it becomes very difficult for him. As it is very difficult for us to enter into that state, in the same way, it is very difficult for that yogi to come out of it. But why does he want to come out? He wants to come out for the fun of it, but he cannot come out. The intensity of God Consciousness does not let him come out. Yet he struggles to come out. Then for a moment he rises up, and after that he again, filled with intoxication, rests inside. Then, again, he strives to come out. He continues trying to come out and he gets out briefly but then again he is united inside. This happens again and again and this called *krama-mudrā*. In is just like the actions of a swing, swinging back and forth, back and forth. One moment he comes out and in the next moment he rests in his own nature. By this process of *krama-mudrā* expressing the state *of kuṇḍalinī* inside and outside, he experiences the state of absorption (*samāveśa*) of supreme (*parā*) *kuṇḍalinī*. By this absorption the yogi of the Kula system enters that state which is pure, spotless, and without blemish (*nirañjana*).[20]

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[20] Lakshmanjoo, trans. in Hughes, ed. *Self Realization*, pp. 96, 109-110, 112-114.

kalā saptadaśī tasmādamṛtākārarūpiṇī // TĀ 3.138a

vedhadīkṣā ca bahudhā tatra tatra nirūpitā /
sā cābhyāsavatā kāryā yeno'rdhvapraveśataḥ //
śiṣyasya cakrasaṃbhedapratyayo jāyate dhruvaḥ /
yenānimādikā siddhiḥ ... // TĀ 29:237-238

yatra ko'pi vayavacchedo nāsti yadviśvatah sphurat /
yadanāhatasaṃvittiparamāmṛtabṛṃhitam //
yatrāsti bhāvanādīnāṃ na mukhyā kāpi saṃgatiḥ /
tadeva jagadānandamasmabhyaṃ śambhurucitvān // TĀ 6:51-52

Krama-mudrā is the intoxicating pure (*nirañjana*) state of extroversive awareness that is full of universal bliss (*jagadānanda*). This involuntary process of "swinging back and forth" immerses the yogi in the sky of consciousness (*cidgagana*).

Lakshmanjoo discusses becoming intoxicated by the wine of Bhairava in his commentary on *TĀ* 4.200, which refers to *mudrā* as the posture of consciousness that sustains intoxication permanently, the state of extroversive awareness or open-eyed liberation (*unmīlana-samādhi*).

> *kule yogina udriktabhairavīyaparāsavāt /*
> *ghūrṇitasya sthitirdehe mudrā yā kācideva sā // TĀ* 4.200
>
> Swamiji: The one who is a yogi, existing in a body and united with god consciousness permanently, when the supreme wine of Bhairava has risen to the supreme limit, that person is fully intoxicated (*ghūrṇitasya*), his remaining in the body as *mudrā* is the real indication of yoga.
>
> Alexis Sanderson: So *mudrā*?
>
> Swamiji: *Mudrā* is not some particular position of the body as it is said in *khecarī mudrā or karaṅkiṇī mudrā, krodhinī mudrā, cakitā mudrā*. All these *mudrās* are useless there. *Mudrā* means just remaining in the body with this intoxication held by the wine of Bhairava. He can remain like this. He can walk, talk and go to a movie. This is *mudrā* for him. He is established in the real *mudrā*. He does not go into seclusion and remain on Mondays in one *āsana* or in one position for twenty-four hours. *Mudrā* in the real sense is going for a walk, talking, reading, and laughing. The only important point is that the wine of Bhairava must be there. It must fill him up and he must remain intoxicated by that.[21]

As Lakshmanjoo uses the term in these discussions, *mudrā* expresses the highest state of absorption in consciousness. An accomplished yogi's vision of the innermost consciousness is sustained even while his eyes are opened to the outside world. Paradoxically, he is able to walk, talk, laugh, and watch a movie without losing awareness of nondual reality. In other contexts *mudrā* refers to yogic

[21] Recorded September 14, 1976.

techniques such as *khecarī mudrā* (seal for moving through the void), *karaṅkiṇī mudrā* (skeletal seal), *krodhinī mudrā* (wrathful seal), and *cakitā mudrā* (trembling seal). The term *mudrā* may also mean a seal for stamping, a physical gesture as in the context of Indian dance or *haṭha yoga*, a technique used in Tantric sexual intercourse, one of the five forbidden substances (*pañcamakāra*), or, according to folk etymology, that which gives (*rā*) pleasure or happiness (*mud*) and entails giving the gift of the Self by means of the body. This protean term can also mean a reflected image (*pratibimba*) that is a bodily technique practiced in order to give rise to the original image (*bimba*) that is the condition of realization. As Lakshmanjoo uses the term *mudrā* in his commentary on the *TĀ* cited above, it is the original image (*bimba*) that gives rise to the reflected image (*pratibimba*).[22] In this highest state of realization, the yogi savors the unitary flavor of Śiva (*ekarasa*) that is like an intoxicating wine. As Lakshmanjoo explains, "The only important point is that the wine of Bhairava must be there. It must fill him up and he must remain intoxicated by that." The aim of practice (*sādhanā*) is to experience the absorption (*samāveśa*) that constitutes the posture of consciousness (*mudrā*), which continuously precipitates an intoxication of devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*).

Lakshmanjoo's commentary on Utpaladeva's *Śivastotrāvalī* highlights his interest in becoming intoxicated through fervent devotion. He departs from a literal translation of the Sanskrit when he begins to exclaim about his desire for "madness," a trope for the intoxication that devotion brings.

> The problem is that I want madness! I want to get mad! I want to turn mad, absolutely mad for your devotion! *Bhaktimada* is madness

[22] For a more in-depth discussion about the meanings of *mudrā* see Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu," pp. 576-580.

for devotion, for your love. By that madness, I must feel absolutely different and I must see absolutely differently.[23]

bhaktimadajanitavibhramavaśena pasyeyamavikalaṃ karaṇaiḥ /
śivamayamakhilaũṃ lokaṃ kriyāśca pūjāmayī sakalāḥ // 7.8

Lakshmanjoo spoke enthusiastically about his desire for intoxication or madness. This trope for spiritual accomplishment resonated well with him, perhaps because liquor was a part of his life despite the prohibition against it in Kashmir. His father, a good friend of the king of Kashmir, Maharāja Hari Singh, was in the business of importing liquor from abroad for Indians and the British. And his own guru, Swami Mahatābakāka, appreciated fine port, which Lakshmanjoo always attempted to acquire for him. He sometimes spoke playfully about imported liquors.

Swamiji: He becomes mad by drinking some alcohol that is the nectar of your worship. And that is scotch wine, from Scotland. It is not Canadian wine!

Devotee: So this *rasāyana* is that drink, which when you take it, destroys old age and death.

Swamiji: Yes, with the senses outward.

Devotee: Like an alchemical preparation.

Swamiji: Yes.[24]

When commenting on the *TĀ* 9.80-82, Lakshmanjoo distinguished between a divine type of intoxication and a drunken stupor. The liquor that does not derive from one's own consciousness can bind ignorant people to the dream state (*svapna*) and render them unconscious (*jaḍa*). He explains:

When actions are ripened by the power of the energy of Lord Śiva, this liquor (*madya*) can create intoxicating delusions of grandeur (*madam*), pain, pleasure or unconsciousness. . . . These states are infused only on people who are ignorant. These people become the

[23] Recorded July 5, 1978.

[24] Lakshmanjoo's commentary on *ŚSĀ* 13.8, recorded July 29, 1978.

> play, the football of this action of Lord Śiva. He does not infuse this act onto a person who has already realized god consciousness. . . . Once my grandmaster (Swami Ram) was taking liquor. He was caught red handed by our King who was ruling Jammu and Kashmir. In those days liquor use was prohibited by the King of Kashmir. He had the bottle in his hand and the officers asked, "Is drinking liquor right?" He answered, "Drinking liquor is right for experienced people and wrong for those who are not experienced." That is the difference.[25]

To help devotees in the West develop a worship ritual (*pūjā*) that would facilitate experiences of immersion (*samāveśa*) and intoxication (*unmāda*), Lakshmanjoo arranged a series of Sanskrit verses with English translations in a *pūjā* manual.[26] Its cover reads: "*Oṃ Juṃ Saḥ Amṛteśvara Bhairavāya Namaḥ:* Sacred Verses in Devotion to His Holiness Swami Lakshmanjoo." As we have seen, Kṣemarāja's nondualistic exegesis of the *Netra Tantra* (*NT*), the authoritative text for worshiping Amṛteśvarabhairava, removes the dualistic philosophical stance of the original text. Devotion to this form of Śiva among Lakshmanjoo's devotees can be attributed to Kṣemarāja's interpretive strategy. The *mantra Oṃ Juṃ Saḥ* Amṛteśvara Bhairavāya *Namaḥ* honors Śiva, who destroys limitations (*bhairava*) and produces intoxicating nectar (*amṛteśvara*).[27] Devotees chant the opening verses of the *NT*, which express devotion to Śiva as Netranātha, who emits nectar from his third eye.

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[25] Recorded October 26, 1977.

ataḥ karmavipākajñaprabhuśaktibaleritam //
madyaṃ sūte madaṃ duḥkhasukhamohaphalātmakam /
na ceśapreritaḥ puṃso mala āvṛṇuyādyataḥ //
nirmale puṃsi neśasya prerakatvaṃ tathocitam / TĀ 9.80-82

[26] *Oṃ Juṃ Saḥ Amṛteśvara Bhairavāya Namaḥ: Sacred Verses in Devotion to His Holiness Swami Lakshmanjoo*, edited by John Hughes, 1991. These verses are recited according to traditional Kashmiri melodies.

[27] Devotees say that recitation of this mantra destroys nightmares and provides *samāveśa.*

> I bow to that Netranātha, Amṛiteśvara, who is fond of His nectar producing third eye, and in whose glamourous body the nine openings are nine doorkeepers which are the nine incarnations of (Dvāreśā) Gaṇeśa, His son, the director of the one hundred Vāstu Devata; whose five sensations are the five classes of Masters: whose *mūladhāra cakra* consists of the ten layers of *vayu* which fill the universe; who is the Lord of Consciousness always united with His energy of Consciousness; whose six limbs are His six universal attributes, all knowingness, complete fullness, eternal knowledge, absolute freedom, inexhaustible energy, and infinite energies; and whose ten internal organs are the ten protectors of this world protecting it from all ten sides.[28]
>
> *dvāreśā navarandhragāḥ hṛidayagovāsturgaṇeśo mahān śabdādyā guravaḥ samīradaśakaṃ tvādhāraśaktyātmakam /*
> *ciddevo'thavimarśaśaktisahitaḥ ṣāḍguṇyamaṅgāalir lokeśāḥ karaṇāni yasya mahimā taṃ netranāthaṃ stumaḥ //*

Immersion in the object of devotion is an inherently intoxicating experience that reveals the oneness of consciousness. An explanatory verse in the *pūjā* manual from *TĀ* states:

> Meditating upon her, I bathe that Goddess with water which is the nectar of the ecstasy which She produces as *cit kuṇḍalinī* in *mūlādhāra cakra.* Then after bathing her, through mind I collect the flowers of absolute bliss produced by her. These flowers, with the fragrance of ecstasy, are produced by her won nature as she flows out. Then, placing these flowers in that priceless sacrificial pot, which is my own heart and which is filled with the nectar of bliss, I worship you, O Lord Śiva, along with your Śakti day and night in the temple of my body.[29]
>
> *kṛitvādhāradharāṃ*
> *camatkṛitirasaprokṣākṣaṇakṣālitāmāttairmānasataḥ*
> *svabhāvakusumaiḥ svāmodasaṃdohibhiḥ /*
> *ānandāmṛitanirbharasvahṛidayānarghārghapātrakramāt tvāṃ devyā sahadehadevasadane devārcaye'harniśam //*

The *pūjā* verses conclude with a quotation from Somānanda's *Śivadṛṣṭi* that concisely explains the interconnection between immersion (*samāveśa*) and devotion

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[28] *Sacred Verses*, p. 21. All translations in the manual are rendered by Lakshmanjoo and edited by John Hughes.

[29] Ibid, p. 19.

(*bhakti*). Being immersed (*samāviṣṭa*) in one's own nature and worshiping that very nature removes bondage and reveals one's identity as Śiva. Somānanda states:

> Let Śiva, who is my own nature, bow down to his real nature, universal Śiva, through his own *śakti* for the removal of bondage and limitation, which is none other than Śiva.[30]
>
> *asmad rūpa samāviṣṭaḥ svātmanātmanivāraṇe*
> *śivaḥ karotu nijayā namaḥ śaktyā tatātmane //* 1.1

The closing supplication to Śiva beseeches him to enter the devotee's heart:

> O Lord, although I don't know the real way of worshiping you I have worshipped you with all of my devotion. O Lord, please enter in my heart along with Pārvatī until I will adore you next![31]

Somānanda's verse exemplifies the complementarity between immersion (*samāveśa*) and devotion (*bhakti*) that remains paradoxical to those who do not see from Śiva's perspective (*śivadṛṣṭi*). The verse proclaims that union with Śiva and bowing down to Śiva, who is none other than oneself, yield spiritual accomplishment. As discussed earlier, the logic of this nondual Śaiva perspective is different from that in other devotional contexts in which a clear distinction between worshiper and worshiped enables devotion to take place. Although the nondual Śaiva perspective is an impenetrable paradox for outsiders, it is the key to true knowledge from the devotee's viewpoint. Recalling the way Lakshmanjoo explained the paradox, George Vanden Barselaar said:

> Here you are devoted to yourself. The devotion to what is out there culminates in an understanding that what you are devoted to is your own real nature. The triad is all one: the object, the mechanics, and the devotee are just one. That's why in Kashmir Śaivism there is little formal worship. There is no real ritual because your whole day is ritual. You are constantly devoted to finding the perceiver. In the end you will find out that the perceiver was always Śiva. It's a

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[30] p. 30.

[31] p. 30.

brilliant philosophy. I'm just quoting what I heard from Swamiji. That's the only way it is.[32]

Because of the intoxicating effects of immersion (*samāveśa*) and devotion (*bhakti*), an accomplished yogi's behavior may resemble that of a madman. On numerous occasions Lakshmanjoo explained the distinction between ordinary and divine madness. He believed that when a person is self-conscious about his madness, then he is not in fact pathologically mad, but rather he is divinely mad. Normative functioning in the phenomenal world (*saṃsāra*) becomes the true madness, whereas self-reflexivity about madness attained through devotion designates a kind of madness that liberates. Commenting on *Bhagavadgītā* 7.9-8.15, he explains that "as long as you are mad and don't know that you are mad, and you think that you are absolutely sane, then you are actually mad. As soon as you come to the understanding that you are mad, then you are not mad."[33] Commenting on *Śiva Sūtra* 1.2 (*jñānaṃ bandhaḥ*) he states, "When a madman is mad, completely mad, and he knows that he is mad, then he is not mad. He is aware that he is mad, and he is not mad at all. As long as he is unaware of his madness he is mad, he is considered to be mad from others' point of view."[34] Limited knowledge (*jñāna*) such as the mistaken notion of individuality is the bondage (*bandhaḥ*) that produces an unselfconscious type of madness, which obscures the possibility of recognizing the singularity of consciousness. Desirable madness results when the madman has entered (*āviṣṭaḥ*) his own nature. Lakshmanjoo states, "Such a [madman who knows that he is mad] is always sitting and residing in his own nature, in his own

[32] Personal communication, May 16, 2002.

[33] Recorded August 14, 1979.

[34] Recorded June 7, 1975.

real nature (*svasvarupavimarśāviṣṭaḥ*)."[35] His commentary on the *Dehasthadevatācakrastotram* encapsulates his perspective: "Everybody is mad except for the Śaivite *sādhaka.* He does not move astray in his mind, which is filled with awareness when directed both internally and externally."[36]

Lakshmanjoo desired to achieve divine madness. Giving a talk about intoxicated devotion prompted him to exclaim, "I want to turn mad, absolutely mad, mad for your devotion (*bhaktimada*)!" Sometimes while giving a talk, he became so moved by his devotion to Śiva that his voice would falter and tears would fill his eyes. Overcome with joy, "he didn't talk, he just wept."[37] According to a long-time devotee, he used to visit mad Sufi saints, who would also come to see him. Pointing to the state of a Sufi saint in Srinagar, he used to say, "I would like that state."[38]

John Hughes claims that toward the end of his life, Lakshmanjoo permanently merged into the Absolute. From India he called John and his wife, Denise, in the United States to say, "You know what has happened? I am no longer Lakshmanjoo. I have been promoted to the state of Parābhairava."[39] The sense among his devotees is that prior to this experience was immersed sporadically in absolute consciousness. "He would get intoxicated but not in an ongoing way. His juicy blissful state would always come and go."[40] His permanent "promotion" to the state of Parābhairava was the final, culminating attainment. He was ordinarily

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[35] Ibid.

[36] Recorded November 5, 1980.

[37] Personal communication with Bill Eastman. April 9, 2002.

[38] Personal communication with Denise Hughes. August 6, 2002.

[39] Personal communication with John and Denise Hughes. March 7, 2000.

[40] Personal communication with Denise Hughes. August 6, 2002.

relatively secretive about his accomplishments, but devotees say that being in his presence was proof enough that he was enjoying the intoxicated state. There was no need to speak about it. At that one pivotal moment, however, his intoxication spilled over so completely that he chose to be reveal that he was permanently immersed in Parābhairava.

From many people's accounts, Lakshmanjoo achieved complete intoxication from his devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*), although particularly overt displays were largely concealed until the late stages of his life when he occasionally acted in childlike ways in public. His students delighted in their guru's ecstatic state, which they maintain was eminently obvious to those who had the eyes to see it. Even from the less biased perspective of a sympathetic outsider, he exuded an uncommon luminosity. Dr. Robert Svoboda, the only non-Indian licensed to practice Āyurveda in India, had a definitive impression of this guru's state of consciousness. He said, "From my brief meeting with him one time at John Hughes' house, I could tell that Lakshmanjoo had a long and deep acquaintance with God intoxication. He showed me a video of him dancing with a Śiva *liṅga* and told me to go practice."[41] Nonetheless, not everyone who met him sensed anything unusual about him. According to some people, he appeared to be merely a learned and compassionate teacher.

Vijay Dhar, a Kashmiri devotee who lives in northern California, remembers that Lakshmanjoo used the Kashmiri word *math, macher,* or *motcher*--most likely a linguistic permutation of the Sanskrit root *mad*--to describe someone in the God intoxicated state and a crazy person in the street. He explained:

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[41] Personal communication with Robert Svoboda, May 13, 2002.

> It depended on what the person was mad about or for. A person mad for God craves the craziness. He becomes so absorbed in God that he can't feel that there is anything else but that intoxication. That's the state we're working toward and becoming. It is not something that an individual can achieve. Rather, through the grace of God you receive it. You could do so many daily practices, but really it is up to the grace of God.[42]

When I asked him about the term *samāveśa*, Vijay said that he was not familiar with the term, but that the concept of immersion was familiar. He said that Lakshmanjoo would treat devotees like Śiva because he experienced Śiva's absolute pervasiveness. He explained:

> He would bow down to devotees because he was in that intoxicated state. He saw Lord Śiva everywhere. . . . Swamiji became that level of consciousness that Abhinavagupta had achieved. Both of them are intoxicated devotees who are one with universal consciousness. Swamiji and Abhinavagupta are Bhairavahood. . . . My father told me that Swamiji once said to him, "In the time that it took you to get here through the traffic, I can circle all 118 worlds, just in the blink of an eye."[43]

Lakshmanjoo chose not to act mad in a way that would earn him societal condemnation. Never an exhibitionist interested in subverting the norms through transgressive behavior, he mostly hid his state from others. Even speaking about it, he would explain, only bolsters the ego and dilutes the experience. Toward the end of his life, when he eventually let his true intoxicated nature spill out into the world, he would say, "Don't think I'm crazy,"[44] an assurance for those closest to him that he was not suffering from pathology. Marlene Dhar, an American devotee who spent significant time with him in Kashmir, explains:

> As a boy, he would fall into *samādhi.* The intoxication was always there but he didn't look out of it. By the end of his life he was constantly living in that state. It was not just a state that he fell into.

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[42] Personal communication with Vijay Dhar. July 30, 2002.

[43] Personal communication with Vijay Dhar. July 30, 2002.

[44] Personal communicaton with John and Denise Hughes, January 17, 2000.

> It co-existed with everything like walking. Looking at him, you would think that he is special. But he wouldn't be sitting there babbling. He had a few strange behaviors, but he was never lying on the ground eating shit.[45]

During Lakshmanjoo's visit to America there was one occasion in particular that revealed his intoxication. Several people told me about the time when he had everyone dancing in the middle of the room.

> He completely exhibited that state of divine intoxication as he danced. With tear-filled eyes, he had everyone make a shape in the middle of the room. Later he said Durgā had appeared in the house. He seemed surprised, not that Durgā had appeared, but that she had appeared in America. During that period of time, he often seemed really intoxicated.[46]

Although Lakshmanjoo did not purposefully act crazy in order to expose the madness of normative reality, his rare displays of peculiar behavior caused concern among some of his Western devotees whose religious and cultural heritage lacks a paradigm for the God-intoxicated state. Some Westerners would ask why he was behaving like that. I was told that they were satisfied with the explanation that the force of his devotion needed to spill over because he could no longer contain the joy inside himself.

Perhaps the time when Lakshmanjoo's intoxication shined most luminously, and against all expectation, was as his body was deteriorating from brain cancer, an illness that he developed, according to his devotees, because of an accumulation of other people's *karma.* Many people who saw him at the latest stages of his body's decline explained that he never complained of pain because even his pain was filled with ecstasy. But even more than that, he appeared to be blissful.

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[45] Personal communication with Marlene Dhar. July 25, 2002.

[46] Personal communication with George Vanden Barselaar. July 25, 2002.

> He had more energy than any of us despite the tumors in his brain. He had boundless energy. Others would be on a morphine drip but not Swamiji. His body was rapidly going down, but we couldn't see or grasp that. He was so integrated and highly articulate. He didn't appear mad.[47]

He did not expose his intoxicated state in a garish way that would have compromised his private and restrained way of being in the world.

In order to maintain the secrecy of his tradtion, Lakshmanjoo very much kept his private life private. As discussed earlier, *kaula* ritual described by Abhinavagupta in the twenty-ninth chapter of *TĀ* may involve the heterodox practice of uniting with a female messenger (*dūtī*) in order to catapult the male practitioner into realization of God consciousness. This type of practice could certainly invite censure and/or accusations of madness. Lakshmanjoo did not forbid sexual practices for those who had mastered the restraints (*yama, niyama*) and stabilized their awareness to a great degree. Because of the secrecy (*rahasya*) of this ritual, there is no indication that he himself ever participated in it.[48]

Lakshmanjoo was not so absorbed in the intoxicating effects from immersion in absolute consciousness that he denied the power plays that occur at the grosser levels of reality. An accomplished Pratyabhijñā yogi, he also upheld the notion of possession by divinities. On one occasion he recommended that Denise Hughes chant *So'ham* and *Śivo'ham* in order to ward off the harmful energy of a powerful tāntrika who was threatening her well-being. Repeated recitation of these lines underscores the Pratyabhijñā exhortation to recognize oneself as Śiva, and it may also guarantee protection against malevolent forces.

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[47] Personal communication with Marlene Dhar. July 25, 2002.

[48] Personal communication with Denise Hughes. August 6, 2002.

According to his devotees, Lakshmanjoo judiciously used his yogic powers (*siddhi*-s) to heal people. Sometimes he performed exorcisms for them. A true guru of Kashmir Śaiva teachings, who saw the lower principles (*tattva*) of reality as real instead of as illusion (*māyā*), he integrated the range of possessing divinities into his teachings on supreme nondualism (*parādvaita*). "He looked at the universe as the physiology of God and there is nothing outside of the body of God. Swamiji was an intimate part of that physiology and knew how it functioned."[49] He attended to the mundane areas of people's lives, including their need for protection from malevolent divinities and for healing in general. For instance, although she felt hesitant to approach her guru for a worldly concern, Denise Hughes took her young sick daughter to him because none of the doctors had been able to help. After putting his hands on the child's head, she slept for eighteen hours and woke up healthy. John Pikin, a devotee and medical doctor who lives in Florida, said that he and his wife were childless until Lakshmanjoo's blessing gave them a baby. John Hughes states:

> Swamiji taught that yogic powers were naturally gained on the path to God consciousness. Both his master and his grand master had developed these powers but only used them to help people in need. He warned his devotees that such powers are a hindrance on the path to true spiritual realization; they can cause the aspirant to become sidetracked and to lose sight of the real goal. People usually came to Swamiji with philosophical questions or to have their spiritual experiences clarified. There were, however, those who came simply for help. Often they were from the poorer classes of Hindu and Muslim society, and they came to see Swamiji for many and varied reasons: a sick cow, an illness in the family, possession by evil spirits, a letter of recommendation for a job, even with the desire to conceive children. Swamiji never refused any sincere request. On many occasions he used his yogic powers, yet in such a way that the recipient was unaware of how his or her problem was resolved.[50]

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[49] Personal communication with George Vanden Barselaar. May 16, 2002.

[50] Hughes, ed., *Self Realization*, p. 15.

Lakshmanjoo's teachings encompassed the domains of both elite and popular religions as they appear (differently) in India and the West today. He balanced teachings about meditation, which tend to appeal more to the upper echelons of society, with acknowledgement of possessing divinities, which are a concern for the majority of the Indian populace that attempts to extract power from divinities instead of falling prey to their malevolent intentions. Lakshmanjoo prepared his teachings for a Western audience by translating the Sanskrit texts, making audio and video recordings of his English lectures, and visiting America toward the end of his life. The gatherings (*satsang*) of devotees for meditation and worship (*pūjā*) continue to appeal to both Western and Indian devotees who are looking for an accessible, devotionally oriented meditation practice (*sādhanā*).

Śaiva Poet-Saints

A number of other Śaiva saints wrote poetic, philosophical, and political treatises exploring the interconnection between immersion (*samāveśa*) and intoxicated devotion (*bhaktyunmāda*). Although an analysis of the array of Śaiva saints who have contributed to our understanding of these interconnections is beyond the scope of the present study, I would like to briefly mention three oet-saints whose work deserves further investigation: Lālleśvarī, Sahib Kaula Ānandanātha, and Amṛtavāgbhava.

Lālleśvarī, also known as Lallā or Lal Ded (14th-century C.E.), was a female brahmin poet and the first among the saints to compose Kashmiri verses about passionate love for Śiva. Jayalal Kaul states, "Lal Ded's *vaakh* [sayings] . . . have been a significant landmark in the linguistic transition from old to modern Kashmiri. . . . Indeed, she helped us, Kashmiris, to discover our mother-tongue and our soul as

a people."[51] Using the vernacular language to express herself, Lal Ded had a distinctive voice. She subverted social roles for women by becoming a Tantric renouncer who used wine and meat in her practices and sometimes wandered about completely naked. The path of single-minded devotion that began with the Ālvārs and Nāyanmārs had provided a viable path for women to pursue one-pointed devotion to their chosen deity instead of to a husband. Called Majnūn-i 'Āqila, a Persian term for a person madly in love with God, Lal Ded is remembered as an intoxicated devotee of Śiva. She wrote about her state of consciousness:

> I, Lalla, entered by the garden-gate of mine [sic] own mind,
> And there (O joy!) saw Siva with Shakti sealed in one;
> And there itself I merged in the Lake of Immortal Bliss.
> Now while alive I am unchained from the wheel of birth and death,
> What can the world do unto me?[52]

Sāhib Kaula Ānandanātha was a 17th-century saint about whom stories are still told among Kashmiris today, yet his work has received very little scholarly attention. A practitioner of nondual Śaiva yoga, he has a poetic style unlike that of his predecessors. His short Sanskrit work, *Śivajīvadaśakam* describes his temporary immersion (*samāveśa*) in Śiva and obeisance to the Self (*namo me*), who he had experienced as the absorber of death (*mṛtyumṛtyur*) during his temporary state of immersion (*samāveśa*). Only eight years old when he achieved this insight, Sāhib Kaula felt that his body was shattering and that he would die.[53] Among his other texts, *Devīnāmavilāsa* is a lengthy, esoteric poem that discusses the nature of the Goddess. Honored by Hindus and Muslims alike, and patronized by Muslim rulers

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[51] Jayalal Kaul, *Lal Ded* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1973), pp. 61, 85.

[52] Quoted in Kaul, p. 131.

[53] Personal communication with B.N. Pandit, Fall 1996.

because of his *siddhi*-s, he was an intoxicated devotee whose works can contribute to our understanding of Śaiva Tantra and the relationship between Hindus and Muslims in 17th-century Kashmir.

An accomplished saint (*siddha*), Amṛtavāgbhava (1903-1982) was a Maharashtrian devotee of Śiva whose "Neo-Śaivism" was greatly influenced by the lineage of thinkers that dates back to Abhinavagupta. His lengthy Sanskrit philosophical text, *Ātmavilāsa*, and other poetic treatises are studied by his few devotees, who currently maintain his ashram located on the outskirts of New Delhi. Unlike most saints, he wrote a detailed work about the dire political situation in India, which was first published in 1933 and reprinted with a Hindi translation in 1947 and 1948. A true supreme nondualist (*parādvaita*), he did not shun the world in favor of yogic retreat and was in fact quite concerned that the Vedāntin impulse among Hindus was a root cause of their powerless position in the social sphere. In *Rāṣṭrāloka* he expressed his belief that the yoke of British colonial rule diminished the possibility of advancing toward liberation (*mokṣa*). Amṛtavāgbhava taught that political independence would create an environment and society conducive to gaining spiritual independence (*svātantrya*).[54]

Concluding Reflections

The defining contribution of the nondual Śaiva yoga of Kashmir is its integration of the notions of immersion (*samāveśa*) in and devotion (*bhakti*) to absolute consciousness. This intermingling becomes a gestalt in which the parts are transfigured into a greater whole. The seemingly paradoxical claim of expressing

[54] B.N. Pandit introduced me to the work of Amṛtavāgbhava, who was his teacher.

devotion to the impersonal Absolute is not a conundrum for the accomplished practitioner (*siddha*) who experiences reality as Śiva (*śivadṛṣṭi*). In his practice (*sādhana*), each Śaiva can tread a path that interweaves in different ways the philosophical and devotional facets of this yoga.

Śaiva *siddha*-s may appear mad or may claim to be mad from the intoxicating bliss that flows from their transformed states of consciousness. Which instance of sheer madness enlightens perception of the Truth? And which darkens perception of a truth? Who should be the judge? "If insanity is defined as deviation from a psychological norm, the divine madman is truly crazy; but if a spiritual ideal is used as a yardstick, undoubtedly, it is the vast majority of us who are insane."[55] Perhaps a madman knows the Truth. Or perhaps he does not know. Either way, his experience is frightening yet alluring and raises an unanswerable conundrum, which will likely continue to fascinate us. The universe itself is a paradox, and its secret remains extremely provocative.

> *iyaṃ visṛṣṭiryata ābabhūva yadi vā dadhe yadi vā na*
> *yo asyādhyakṣaḥ parame vyomantso aṅga veda yadi vā na veda //*
> *RV* 10.129.7
>
> From whence has this creation arisen? Perhaps it formed itself, or perhaps it did not. The observer of [this creation], who is in the highest heaven, perhaps he knows--or perhaps he does not know.

[55] Keith Dowman, *The Divine Madman: The Sublime Life and Songs of Drukpa Kunley* (Clearlake, California: Dawn Horse Press, 1983), pp. 28-29.

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