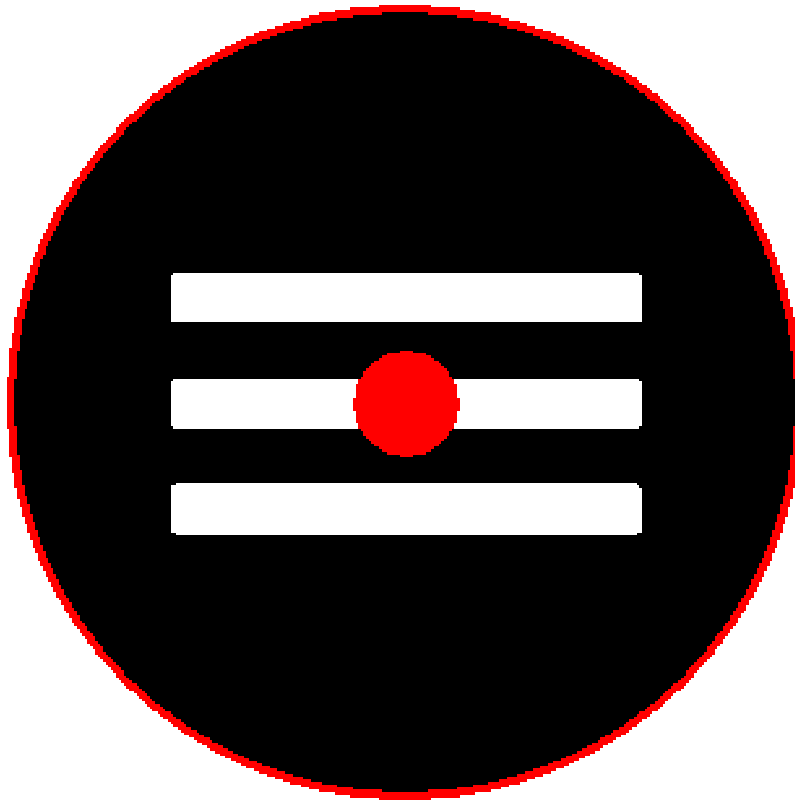


# FROM SHIVA TO BHAIRAVA

Notes and Commentaries on  
Nine Tantric Concepts of Divinity



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## Preface

The aim of these notes and essays is to introduce the basic gods and god concepts of tantra religious philosophy. In doing so it seeks to dispel the myth that this philosophy was either 'polytheistic', or - as it is more usually maintained - a form of 'non-dual' or 'monistic' theism with SHIVA as its principal divinity. Unfortunately this remains the standard interpretation of Kashmir 'Shaivism' or 'Shiva-ism' - recognised as the highest expression of tantric religious philosophy. The problem is that the Western theological terms such as 'theism' and 'atheism', 'monotheism' and 'polytheism', as also the Eastern concepts of monism or 'non-dualism' (*ad-vaita*) fail to do justice to the essence of Kashmir Shaivism. That is because the latter posits subjectivity, consciousness or awareness itself as the absolute or divine. I argue that this in no way implies the pre-existence of a divine *being* (theism) or *beings* (polytheism). For it is a deeply rooted Western philosophical prejudice that subjectivity, consciousness or awareness must necessarily be seen as the private property of a *pre-existing being or subject* ('empirical' or 'transcendental'). From the standpoint of 'absolute subjectivism' on the other hand, all beings whatsoever, whether human or divine, are understood as *individualisations* of that absolute awareness *field* that is the true essence of divinity. The different gods and god concepts of tantric religious philosophy therefore, do not constitute a 'polytheistic' pantheon of divine beings but rather serve as symbolic personifications of aspects of that ultimate and divine awareness field which went by the name of *parameshavara* or *paramshiva* - itself neither a *divine being* nor a Buddhistic void devoid of being and consciousness, but rather 'being-consciousness' as such (*samvit*) - this being understood as the very *field-condition* for the emergence and actualisation of all possible beings.

As regards the notions of 'monism' or 'non-dualism' (*ad-vaita*), here both Eastern and Western thinking has remained implicitly bound to a false concept of 'duality' which confuses difference and distinction on the one hand with non-unity or separation on the other. Thus monistic unity is equated with 'non-duality' and duality and with 'non-unity'. In contrast, I reinterpret the so-called 'absolute non-dualism' of Kashmir Shaivism in terms of the concept of *inseparable distinction* deriving from the dialectic phenomenology of Michael Kosok. In this fundamentally new interpretation of tantric metaphysics, the absolute awareness field is understood as a field of

elements, *each* element of the field being defined by its very distinctness from all the other elements which make up its field-context of emergence. The elements neither merge into *indistinction* nor exist as *separable* elements, events or entities of any sort. Instead each is united to all others by virtue of its very distinctness from them – like the distinct faces of a cube, or the many faces of the ‘self’ - understood as faces of the divine awareness field itself. The absolute awareness field itself is a field of *inseparable distinctions*, as much defined by the elements and entities that emerge within it - by its multiple faces and personifications - as the latter are defined by the common field of emergence or actualisation.

A variety of terms have been used to name the central philosophical principle of Kashmir Shaivism. These include not only ‘absolute non-dualism’, but ‘absolute dynamism’ or ‘dynamic absolutism’. The latter terms do indeed come closer to its essence, implying as they do that there are no static pre-given aspects of reality such as Brahman and Maya, Essence and Appearance, Subject and Object, whose relation needs to be defined in terms of duality or non-duality. Instead it is their very dynamic relation that constitutes their essence, *and* that of the absolute awareness field itself, under whatever god name it is referred to. For that awareness field is itself essentially a field of *dynamic interrelatedness* - interweaving all elements and entities within it. This dynamic interweave is that ‘loom’ which constitutes one of the root meanings of *tantra* – understood not simply as a tradition of yogic philosophy and practices but as the absolute reality which that philosophy and its practices are designed to reveal.

In his book on ‘The Specific Principles of Kashmir Shaivism’ B.N. Pandit points out that terms like ‘philosophy’ are poor translations of the Sanskrit term *darshana* – which refers to systems of thought in which intellectual reasoning serves principally to refine and give expression to revelatory intuitions based on meditational disciplines or *yogas*. Overused terms such as ‘dualism’ and ‘non-dualism’ are also totally inadequate in giving proper expression to the hidden message of Kashmir Shaivism. My interpretation of the god concepts of *tantra* follows the interpretative or ‘hermeneutic’ tradition of *varttika* as applied by *Abhinavagupta* and all the other chief authors and interpreters of Shaivist scriptures and treatises. This means interpreting what was said in those scriptures and treatises, interpreting what they left unsaid - and above all interpreting in new terms all that remains *imperfectly* said within them.

## Interpreting the God Concepts of Tantra

“To enter a new conceptual world always means to learn a new language.”

“...the Sanskrit word *Ishvara* has often been rendered by the familiar and nowadays totally ambiguous word ‘god’. However the concept ‘god’ has far too many definite associations for us ever adequately to reflect the Sanskrit concept of *Ishvara* [‘lord’]. Thus ‘the lord’ is neither the creator nor destroyer of the universe, nor is he judge over good and evil, right and wrong, nor supreme arbiter of human fates.”

Georg Feuerstein, *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*

*Through tantric religious philosophy, mythological gods were understood and experienced through metaphysical god concepts. The combination of mythological symbols and metaphysical god concepts created the framework for meditational practices aimed at achieving divine comprehensions. Every true comprehension of the divine is both a divine comprehension of self and divine self-comprehension. The tantric divinities or gods are the naming mantra of such divine comprehensions, achieved through personal and inter-personal experience of trans-personal god-concepts. What follows is a new interpretation of nine of the most basic mythical divinities and metaphysical god-concepts of tantric religious philosophy.*

**SHIVA** (*Ish, Ishvara, Paramishvara, Paramshiva*) names the comprehension that *awareness as such* is ultimately the sole ‘agent’, ‘self’ or ‘subject’ – that all ‘selfhood’ or ‘I-ness’ is essentially the *self-manifestation* of an infinite field of awareness of subjectivity. This divine awareness field has the qualitative character of light. This is the light of awareness (*purusha, prakasha*) in which all that is present or *actual* first comes to light – *presencing* itself in awareness. The essence of what we call ‘space’ is the *co-presence* of phenomena within a field of awareness. The *co-presence* of all that is, was and will be in the divine field of awareness that is SHIVA is what gives that field the character of both light and unbounded spatiality. The divine *light* of awareness that is SHIVA not only embraces the actuality or presence of all beings but also reaches into their most *darkly concealed* potentialities of being. In doing so it nourishes these potentialities and *brings them to light*.

**KALI** (*Mahakali, Mahadevi, Ma Kali, Drgdevi*) names the comprehension that the womb of all that is present or actual is a field of inexhaustible *potentiality*. Within this womb each potential being or consciousness bears its own innermost impulse to *be* and to actualise its own potentialities of being - which are as inexhaustible as the womb from which they are borne. KALI is both the divine ‘darkness’ of potentiality, and the immanent impulse that ‘impels’ all beings to be – to emerge from the womb of pure potentiality or ‘non-being’. All beings come to light from within the ‘dark’ womb of the MA KALI. The unbounded field of potentialities that is MA KALI has the character not of an extensional space of awareness in which all beings are co-present, but of a non-extensional or intensional space of awareness through which they *presence*. Though all space-time universes emerge from the dark womb of MA KALI – this womb does not itself belong to extensional *space-time* but is an intensional space. Intensional space is made up of rising and falling intensities and densities of *presence* that constitute the *source* of what we experience as both time and matter (rising intensities being experienced in time as the future becoming present or materially manifest and falling intensities as the present becoming past and mere ‘memory’). The imminent relation of KALI is not only to *darkness*, and the primordial impulse to be, but also to *time* and to cycles of emergence (presencing) and submergence or withdrawal (loss of intensity of presence). All these aspects of KALI find expression in the various derivations of the Sanskrit *kal* – which include the adjective ‘dark’, the verb ‘to impel’, and the noun ‘time’ (*kala*).

**SHAKTI** (*Parvati*) is a general tantric term for the feminine aspect of divinity in its multiplicity – every manifest and material phenomenon being understood as the expression of a primordial capacity (*shak*) associated with a particular goddesses, *devi* or *shakti*. SHAKTI is the essence of time understood as very process of *presencing* or *actualisation* itself - the actualisation of all beings from the dark womb of potentiality that is KALI. SHAKTI, as the presencing or actualisation or ‘Becoming’ of beings, requires SHIVA - the light of awareness in which all potentialities first come to light and in this way are released into actualisation. Presencing also requires the innate impulse or *intent to be* latent within ‘Non-Being’ as potentiality. This is symbolised by KALI. Personified as the goddess PARVATI, SHAKTI is the eternal consort of SHIVA, and it is their procreation that is the aware vitality of all creation.

**PARAMSHAKTI.** If space is essentially the *co-presence* or ‘Being’ of all beings in the field or light of awareness that is SHIVA and SHAKTI is their presencing or ‘Becoming’ within that field, then PARAMSHAKTI (both the supreme SHAKTI and totality of all SHAKTI) is the *continuous and simultaneous presencing of all that is present*. That which is present never ceases to presence. The divine light of awareness that is SHIVA therefore, is not only a spatial field of co-presence but a “spacious present” which embraces all of time, a time-space in which all that is, was, will be - and could be - is eternally and continuously actualising or presencing itself (SHAKTI).

The *religious* symbolism of tantric philosophy is therefore at the same time a deeply *scientific* symbolism – for the inter- and intra-relation of the basic tantric god-concepts symbolise a deep ‘metaphysical’ or ‘paraphysical’ understanding of the relation of space, time, energy, matter and *consciousness* – an understanding that transcends or goes beyond (*para- / meta-*) ordinary physics. Modern ‘physics’ (a term that derives from the Greek *physis* - to ‘emerge’ or ‘arise’) began by accepting only the reality of that which was already present or *actual* as ‘matter’ in space. It sought to reduce the *process of presencing or actualisation* (Greek *energein*) to the notion of ‘energy’, conceived as some actually existing or already present phenomenon. Only through quantum physics has it attempted to conceive reality in terms of *probabilities* and *potentialities* as well as actualities. Most physical and technological notions of ‘virtual particles’ or ‘virtual’ realities however, reduce the realm of potentiality to the something actual. Necessarily so, because in essence potentialities can have *reality* only in awareness – as when we are aware of our own *potentiality* to speak or act in different ways.

In all these respects, the metaphysics of tantric religious philosophy was scientifically far in advance of the physics of today. In particular, though relativity theory established an intrinsic link between gravity, light and the curvature of space, neither classical physics, quantum physics or relativity theory included awareness or consciousness in their equations - despite the fact that even light and all that is actual is something only visible or measurable *in the light* of awareness and of conscious conceptions of it – both symbolised by SHIVA. Similarly, by conceiving darkness only in terms of *absence* of light, it has failed to understand the intrinsic relation

between darkness and the realm of potentiality symbolised by KALI - thus leaving open the ‘mystery’ of the so-called ‘dark matter’ and ‘dark energy’. Whilst it may be hard to credit that religious myths and symbols may contain deeper scientific knowledge than today’s ‘hard’ science, that is only because “science *is* the new religion” (Martin Heidegger) and is itself a system of *mythical constructs* in the form of mental models and quantitative mathematical symbols. Unlike the powerful religious symbols that are their mythical counterparts however, our new scientific mythologies and religion are quite incapable of serving to evoke a direct *qualitative experience* of the deeper realities they symbolise – realities which do indeed have to do with the fundamental nature of divinity as such.

The well-known overlap, cross-identity or *interweaving* of the multiple Hindu and Tantric gods has to do with their dynamic inner relation to one another. Thus SHIVA is the pure light of awareness which is the field-condition for our experience of all actual phenomena and beings. Yet pure awareness is also an awareness of pure potentiality or power - making the pure *awareness* that is SHIVA also the pure *power* that is KALI, and the pure *process* of actualisation that is SHAKTI.

### **The Experience of Tantric God-Concepts in the Afterlife**

In *The Afterlife Journal of an American Philosopher* (transmitted via Jane Roberts, author of the SETH books) William James describes his own direct experience of an *omnipresent field of awareness* in terms entirely resonant with the interweaving god concepts of tantric religious philosophy - describing it as an “atmospheric presence” and “knowing light” (SHIVA) from which spring all manner of colours (SHAKTIS) and which constitutes the essential cloth or fabric from which all beings are woven (‘fabric’ or ‘weave’ being a root meaning of *tantra*). He feels this *divine light* (SHIVA) as something whose innate knowing awareness lovingly nurtures and *brings to life* (SHAKTI) the creative potentials (KALIS) lurking in every “nook and cranny” of his being. James’s sense of its essential mood as one of “divine active passivity” fits perfectly with the classical image of a pale SHIVA lying prostrate at the feet of a wildly dancing KALI - as if his very passivity (the active passivity of pure awareness) were rousing her immanent vitality to an impassioned frenzy of movement.



“The living often equate death with darkness, for how can the dead see? How can the spirit have vision disconnected from the organs of sight? Yet here I am, surrounded by illumination that emanates from everywhere – colours more sparkling than any I knew on earth, a light of enchanting varieties, not even or monotonous but seemingly alive in its own fashion. It emanates from what I see, but also seems to be inherent all about me, whether or not there is anything to be perceived otherwise.”

“...it is more mobile and possesses qualities not normally associated with light. I would say it was a knowing light, everywhere existing at the same time, at once...it appears out of itself at every conceivable point in the universe. Physical perception ‘sees’ only a small hint of this light, and from it springs all of the lights and colours physically visible.”

“Nowhere have I encountered the furnishings of a conventional heaven, or glimpsed the face of God. On the other hand, certainly I dwell in a psychological heaven by earth’s standards, for everywhere I sense a presence, or atmosphere or atmospheric presence that is well-intentioned, gentle yet powerful, and all-knowing.”

“Each person, living or dead is somehow a unique materialisation or actualisation, psychologically ‘perfect’, of this basic, loving condition or atmospheric presence.”

“The psychology, if one can use the word in this regard, of such an atmospheric presence is such that it ever seeks the most creative, expansive, loving expression, in such gargantuan terms that our usual ideas of motivation utterly fail us... and I feel within myself the coming birth of a new kind of creativity, involving all of my own characteristics, abilities and idiosyncrasies, as if each nook and cranny of my knowing being was preparing its own delightful surprise expansion, and further expression.”

“The words ‘psychological growing medium’ come to mind, as if this atmosphere promotes psychic growth to the most advantageous degree, or provides the spiritual and psychological medium arousing the creative development of even the smallest incipient seeds of personality”.

“Qualities and characteristics that I never suspected I possessed now surface within me so that I feel to myself like a garden ever coming to growth, containing far more flora and fauna than I ever realised; as if earlier I had identified with only one crop of abilities that I called my own.”

“I can think of no more challenging activity than the exploration of what I can only call divine psychology”.

“It is as if this atmospheric presence were a psychological repository for all possible subjective beings, of such import that no one could comprehend these at once or in any combination of ‘times’... a repository of individuation and perceptive abilities. As all required elements for life spring up from the ground of the earth, which also nurtures them, this medium seems to perform the same services, only giving birth to psychological entities and the entire universe that sustains them.”

“There is no demanding quality to the atmospheric presence or its light, yet it seems possessed of what I can only call a divine active passivity... This presence is responsive. I am sure that it reacts to me, yet while it is everywhere, it is not obtrusive but again, like the summer day, it is more like a delightful medium in which all living is bathed...I suspect that the dimensions of its existence reveal themselves or are revealed according to the attention one accords them.”

“It is as if the universe were a multidimensional cloth with infinite patterns, and figures that did not remain flat but sprang alive, lived, moved and died, and came alive again, while the fabric of which they were made never wore out but miraculously revitalised itself and rewove its parts...And I know that I am cut from the same cloth”.

## Tantric Concepts of God and Creation in SETH

In 'The Seth Material' (Jane Roberts), the trans-human entity or 'energy-personality-essence' describing himself as SETH gives a new and evocative account of the 'story' of creation, but one which at the same time provides a perfect example of the basic triadism of tantric god-concepts or 'aspects'.

"Now - and this will seem like a contradiction in terms – *there is nonbeing*. It is a state, not of nothingness, but a state in which probabilities and possibilities are known and anticipated but blocked from expression. Dimly, through what you would call history, hardly remembered, there was such a state. It was a state of agony in which the powers of creativity and existence were known, but the ways to produce them were not. This is the lesson that *All That Is* had to learn, and that could not be taught. This is the agony from which creativity originally was drawn, and its reflection is still seen.

...Yet the agony itself was used as a means, and the agony itself served as an impetus, strong enough so that *All That Is* initiated within Itself the means *to be*.

...The first agonised search for expression may have represented the birth throes of *All That Is*. Pretend then, that you possessed within yourself the knowledge of all the world's masterpieces in sculpture and art, that they pulsed as realities within you, but that you had no physical apparatus, no knowledge of how to achieve them; that there was neither rock nor pigment nor source of any of these, and you ached with the yearning to produce them. This, on an infinitesimally small scale, will perhaps give you...some idea of the agony and the impulse that was felt.

Desire, wish and expectation rule all actions and are the basis for all realities. Within *All That Is* therefore, the wish, desire and expectation of creativity existed before all other actuality. The strength and vitality of these desires and expectations then became in your terms so insupportable that *All That Is* was driven to find the means to produce them.

In other words, *All That Is* existed in a state of being, but without the means to find expression for Its being...The agony and the desire to create represented Its proof of Its own reality. The feelings, in other words, were adequate proof to *All That Is* that *It was*.

At first, in your terms, all of probable reality existed as nebulous dreams within the consciousness of *All That Is*. Later, the unspecific nature of those 'dreams' grew more particular and vivid. The dreams became recognisable, one from the other, until they drew the conscious notice of *All That Is*. And with curiosity and yearning, *All That Is* paid more attention to its own dreams.

It then purposely gave them more and more detail, and yearned toward this diversity and grew to love that which was not yet separate from itself. It gave consciousness and imagination to personalities while they were still but within Its dreams. They also yearned to be actual.

Potential individuals, in your terms, had consciousness before the beginning or any beginning as you know it, then. They clamoured to be released into actuality, and *All That Is*, in unspeakable sympathy, sought within Itself for the means.

In its massive imagination, It understood the cosmic multiplication of consciousness that could not occur within that framework. Actuality was necessary if these probabilities were to be given birth. *All That Is* saw then, an infinity of probable, conscious individuals, and foresaw all possible developments, but they were locked within It until It found the means.

This was in your terms a primary cosmic dilemma, and one with which It wrestled until All That Is was completely involved and enveloped within that cosmic problem. Had it not solved it, All That Is would have faced insanity, and there would have been, literally, a reality without reason and a world run wild.

The pressure came from two sources: from the conscious but still probable individual selves who found themselves alive in a God's dream, and from the God who yearned to release them.

On the one hand, you could say that the pressure existed simply on the part of God, since the creation existed within Its dream, but such tremendous power resides in such primary pyramid gestalts that even their dreams are endowed with vitality and reality.

This then, is the dilemma of any primary pyramid gestalt: It creates reality. It also recognised within each consciousness the massive potential that existed. The means, then, came to It. It realised It must release the creatures and probabilities from within Its dreams.

To do so would give them actuality. However it also meant 'losing' a portion of Its own consciousness, for it was within that portion that they were held in bondage. *All That Is* had to let go. While it thought of these individuals as Its creations, It held them as a part of Itself and refused them actuality.

To let them go was to 'lose' that portion of Itself that had created them. Already It could scarcely keep up with the myriad probabilities that began to emerge from each separate consciousness. With love and longing It let go of that portion of Itself, and they were free.

...All That Is therefore, 'lost' a portion of itself in that creative endeavour, *All That Is* loves all that It has created down to the least, for it realises the dearness and uniqueness of each consciousness which has been wrest from such a state and at such a price. It is triumphant and joyful at each development taken by each consciousness, for this is an added triumph against that first state, and It revels and takes joy in the slightest creative act of each of Its issues.

It, of Itself, and from that state, has given life to infinities of possibilities. From Its agony, It found the way to burst forth in freedom through expression and in doing so gave existence to individualised consciousness. Therefore It is rightfully jubilant. Yet all individuals remember their source, and now dream of *All That Is* as *All That Is* once dreamed of them. And they yearn toward that immense source....and yearn to set It free and give It actuality through their own creations.

The motivating force is still *All That Is*, but individuality is no illusion. Now in the same way do you give freedom to the personality fragments within your own dreams and for the same reason. And you create for the same reason, and within you is the memory of that primal agony – that urge to create and free all probable consciousness into actuality.

I have been sent to help you, and others have been sent through the centuries of your time, for as you develop, you also form new dimensions, and *you* will help others.

These connections between you and *All That Is* can never be severed, and Its awareness is so delicate and focussed that Its attention is indeed directed with a prime creator's love to each consciousness.

All portions of All That Is are constantly changing, enfolding and unfolding. *All That Is*, seeking to know itself, constantly creates new versions of Itself. For this seeking Itself is a creative activity and the core of all action.

Consciousness, seeking to know itself, therefore knows you. You, as a consciousness, seek to know yourself and become aware of yourself as a distinct individual portion of All That Is.

There is no personal God-individual in Christian terms... and yet you do have access to a portion of *All That Is*, a portion highly attuned to you....There is a portion of *All That Is* directed and focussed within each individual, residing within each consciousness.

Each consciousness is therefore cherished and individually protected. This portion of overall consciousness is individualised within you.

...This portion is also aware of itself as something more than you. *This portion that knows itself as you, and as more than you is the Personal God, you see.*

...You are co-creators. What you call God is the sum of all consciousnesses, and yet the whole is more than the sum of its parts. God is more than the sum of all personalities and yet all personalities are what He is.

In this account of Seth, “All That Is” is a god-concept entirely cognate with SHIVA. The story begins with His awareness of ‘non-being’ in the form of the countless and ever-multiplying creative potentials lurking within His field of awareness. The creative potentialities take the form of multiple potentialities of awareness i.e. countless potential *consciousnesses* each endowed with their own unique qualities of awareness and indeed their own immanent potentialities of awareness. For All That Is to truly BE, He in turn must give birth to all potential beings from within the ever-swelling womb of potentiality or ‘non-being’ (KALI). In this way he can also recognise himself and come to be through them (a direct parallel to the tantric philosophy of Shiva’s ‘Self-Recognition’). Yet while All That Is still “thought of these individuals as Its creations, It held them as a part of Itself and refused them actuality.” Thus All That Is needed to release them into *autonomous self-actualisation*. This letting go is the release or birth from the womb of KALI of an infinite multiplicity of autonomously self-actualising beings and the source of all actualities. In gendered terms, only through the recognition and release of their potential for independent self-actualisation can *divine awareness* in the masculine form of SHIVA release these self-actualising *potencies* or SHAKTIS from their source in the great womb of potentiality that is KALI.

## The Experience of Tantric God Concepts in Everyday Life

**“God is more than the sum of all personalities  
and yet all personalities are what He is.”**

Seth

All personalities being what He is, SHIVA is the sole agent, and yet that supreme agent in turn is not a particular divine being that is aware but is awareness as such. SHIVA is the sole agent, and yet that supreme agent in turn is not a particular divine *being* that is *aware* but is awareness as such. The human ego experiences itself as initiating action, but as separate and unchanged by those actions. From this arises the concept of a divine agent separate from the actions it initiates. Yet, agency is not essentially the initiation of action by a pre-existing agent, and nor is creation the willful act of a divine creator independent of its creations. Agency is essentially that which permits the autonomous self-actualisation of potentials within fields of awareness. The absolute agent is therefore SHIVA understood as the ultimate awareness field within which all action unfolds as a process autonomous self-actualisation (SHAKTI) of latent potentialities (KALI). Creation is essentially the emergence of all actualities within a divine awareness field - a field aware of, and pregnant with, its own immanent creative potentials. Divine awareness gradually came to be and recognised itself as a being only through giving birth to the beings pregnant within its awareness as potential patterns and qualities of awareness – potential consciousnesses. An experience of this god-concept, a comprehension of awareness as the sole agent of all action, nevertheless comes into conflict with the most basic conceptual patterns of everyday language itself, in particular the word ‘I’. When John uses conventional syntax to say “I see an orange wall” he is not simply reporting an ‘objective’ perception. For in truth the very subject of this perception and of all perception – the real ‘I’ that sees the orange wall - is not ultimately John or any other person or being but *awareness* as such – ultimately it is ‘God’ understood through the god concept of SHIVA. Then again the orange wall is no mere passive *object* of perception. Were the divine truth of everyday sensory perception to find expression in language we would have to say the following. “It Johns”. Here the ‘It’ denotes subjectivity or *awareness as such*, taking shape as the consciousness of John – or of any one. That deals with the subject of the sentence. But what of the object?

Here we would have to say, “It oranges”. For in reality the actual colour orange is nothing merely present as the property of some ‘thing’ such as a wall. Actuality is not presence but presencing, actualisation. The perception of ‘orangeness’ is a potentiality of awareness that presences in awareness through a continuous process of *oranging*. The potentiality of awareness *to orange* is KALI. The actualised capacity to orange is a SHAKTI. The same applies to both the wall that ‘is’ orange and the person who perceives the orange wall. It is not that the wall is made of ‘matter’. Rather awareness itself *matters* in the shape of a wall – *it walls*. Awareness not only *oranges, walls* and *Johns*. It also *sees* itself *walling* and *oranging* through John and within the *space* of awareness that is John’s field of vision. As long as John continues to conceive his experience in the terms of ordinary language “I see an orange wall” - he reduces himself to an isolated human subject perceiving an orange object. In doing so he deprives himself of an experience of his own divine subjectivity or awareness – the divine awareness that *walls* and *oranges* and holds open a space of awareness in which it can behold itself *walling* and *oranging*.

Conversely however, were John to truly meditate his seeing of the orange wall in these terms, he would begin to *experience* the orange he sees as an *oranging* of divine awareness, begin to experience the space around him as a space of divine awareness, and begin to experience his own body as an embodiment of divine awareness. Then he would also begin to know his own self or ‘I’, its seeing eyes, and their object of sight as the medium of a divine ‘I’ looking out through his eyes - knowing itself as him, as the space around him as that which *oranges* and *matters* before his eyes as the ‘wall’. In this way he would come to know awareness or SHIVA as both the subject and object of his sight and know both himself, the orange wall and his *seeing* of it as examples of SHIVA’s countless autonomous actualisations or SHAKTIS. By intensifying his divine awareness of the orange as an *oranging*, the intensified light of his awareness illuminates the orange more strongly and intensifies his experience of its *oranging*. Indeed the whole flavour or feeling tone of his awareness would itself begin to *orange* – taking on precisely the same flavour or feeling tone as that manifest in the *oranging* of the wall. He would not only be aware of the orange as a sensory quality but instead begin to experience that sensory quality as the actualisation of a sensual quality of awareness itself – a soul quality. He would experience the *oranging* as the actualisation of a potential

colouration of *soul* through a *sensory* colour. Relishing the sensual soul quality or *rasa* of the orange, he would experience the quintessential quality of awareness most associated with SHIVA and with *tantra* as such – a quality of divine and sublime sensual bliss – *ananda*. He would experience his own body - the body aware of this sublime sensual bliss – not as a physical body but as a body of awareness and bliss. A body that is not bounded by the flesh but embraces the entire sensory universe (MAYASHAKTI). Experiencing this divine body he could also experience his divine self, not only *conceiving* of SHIVA as a divinity, or worshiping an image of that divinity but embodying that divinity. Thus following the tantric maxim – ‘to worship a divinity is to become that divinity’ - he would be able then to inwardly know, feel and utter the truth of the supreme religious *mantra* of ‘tantra’:

**“I am SHIVA, of compact mass of awareness and bliss, and the entire universe is my body.”**

### **‘SHIVA-SHAKTI’ - the Tantric Concept of Divine Sexuality**

**SHAKTI** names the entire domain of sensory experiencing, understood as an expression, emanation or manifestation of the soul – of awareness. If KALI is the field of potentiality in which all things are rooted, then SHIVA is the nourishing light of awareness in and through which they flourish, flower and blossom in all their sensory glory (SHAKTI). There can be no ‘tantric’ heightening or intensification of sensual and sexual experience without the conjugation or coupling of pure, non-sensory awareness (SHIVA) and sensory experiencing (SHAKTI). For it is only through their coupling that awareness can take on its own sublime sensual qualities – this being the essence of true sensual bliss (*ananda*). The sexual conjugation (*maithuna*) of SHIVA and SHAKTI (personified by SHIVA’S consort, the goddess PARVATI) constitutes the divine couple (*yamala*) that is SHIVA-SHAKTI. SHIVA-SHAKTI is thus the symbol of a divine and sublime sensual bliss which unites the *active receptivity* of pure, quiescent awareness (the divine masculine, personified as SHIVA) with the *receptive activity* of sexual activity, play and enjoyment (the divine feminine personified as PARVATI). SHIVA *delights* in the intensification of SHAKTI – sensory experiencing and enjoyment - brought about through the *light* of

his awareness. For only then is he able to *relish* the bliss of *rasa* - those innately sensual qualities of awareness itself that first come to light through coupling of pure awareness and sensory experience. Only those religious philosophies in which *the couple* is raised to the status of an independent god concept can be regarded as truly 'tantric' - symbolising the fact that masculine and feminine aspects of divinity (awareness and vitality, receptivity and activity, soul and sensuality) are both *distinct and inseparable* - neither merging into *indistinction* nor existing as *separate* forces or divinities. The cave in which SHIVA and SHAKTI make love however, is itself a symbol of a third domain of divinity - the great womb or cavity of KALI, a womb which entirely circumscribes the manifest universe. KALI is herself the source of 'serpent power' or 'KUNDALINI' - the sensual qualities of inner fire, warmth, darkness, light, colour and sound that rise from the womb or SHAKTI-YONI - through penetration by the SHIVA-LINGA, the pure nectar of sensual *awareness*.

## **SHIVA-SHAKTI and the Dialectics of Divinity**

### **An Interpretation of Kashmir Shaivist Tantra through the Dialectical Field Phenomenology of Michael Kosok.**

Subjectivity or awareness is an immediate *field of presence* in which latencies or potentialities are constantly emerging or *coming to presence*.

'SHIVA' is awareness in its *field* character. 'SHAKTI' is the presencing or actualisation of any element or 'phenomenon' within the field of awareness that is SHIVA. Field and phenomenal elements are inseparable - the field being a field *of* phenomenal elements and all phenomenal elements being elements *of* a field.

An 'element' is essentially any bounded 'identity' or 'unit of consciousness' - from an atom to human being or an entity.

Yet like a circle on a blank sheet, each such element is defined just as much by the 'transcendental' field within which it emerges (SHIVA) as by the 'immanent' space or field it contains.



The circle as circle is neither SHIVA nor SHAKTI, field nor element. It is a dynamic boundary state of element *and* field, circle and surround – it is SHIVA-SHAKTI.

Shaivism is the understanding that every element (SHAKTI) emerging within a field is a self-manifestation of that field and therefore of SHIVA.

Yet since the ‘transcendental’ field is made up of and inseparable from the elements, that emerge within it, SHIVA cannot exist without SHAKTI. They are distinct but inseparable.

‘Shaivism’ is the recognition that since every bounded element or unit of consciousness is a *self*-manifestation of the divine awareness field itself, each being’s ultimate or divine ‘self’ is none other than SHIVA.

But herein lies a fundamental paradox - a paradox recognised in ‘Kashmir Shaivism’ but that can only be fully understood through the dialectical phenomenology of Michael Kosok.

For as the divine awareness field, SHIVA ‘himself’ can only gain a sense of ‘I-ness’ or ‘selfhood’ through the individualised units of consciousness or ‘I’-entities that constitute the field.

For again, Shiva, as a ‘transcendental’ or source field is not a field in any way *separable* from the potencies (SHAKTIS) that emerge and are actualised as distinct elements or ‘beings’ within it.

My understanding of the dynamic relation of awareness and beings, field and elements - of ‘Shiva-Shakti’ - rests on a synthesis of Michael Kosok’s revolutionary *phenomenological* exposition and *formalisation* of the ‘dialectical logic’ of Marx and Hegel. This formalisation took the form of the “dialectic matrix” – a square, *ninefold* grid of *triadic* relationships:

## The Dialectic Matrix

$+ [+A]$	$- [+A]$	$\pm [+A]$
$+ [-A]$	$- [-A]$	$\pm [-A]$
$+ [\pm A]$	$- [\pm A]$	$\pm [\pm A]$

Following this formalisation of dialectical logic, the relation of field and element, Shiva and Shakti, can be understood in terms of nine distinct interrelationships:

1. **The field as field (*Shiva*)**
2. **The elements as elements (*Shakti*)**
3. **The immanent field *within* each element (*Shiva within Shakti*)**
4. **The elements *within* each field (*Shakti within Shiva*)**
5. **The field as a *field of elements* (*Shiva as Shakti*)**
6. **The elements as *elements of a field* (*Shakti as Shiva*)**
7. **The relation of field and elements (*Shiva-Shakti*) as a *self-relation of the field to itself* mediated by the elements within it (*Shiva-Shakti as Shiva*)**
8. **The relation of elements and field as a *self-relation of the elements to themselves* through the field that they constitute (*Shiva-Shakti as Shakti*)**
9. **The entire ‘transcendental’ field of elements (*Shiva-Shakti*) as something ‘immanent’ within each and every element of the field (*Shakti-Shiva*).**

SHIVA and SHAKTI, are not ‘things in themselves’. They are not separable ‘elements’ that exist ‘in’ multiple relationships to one another. Instead they are elements *of* a singular dynamic relation, SHIVA-SHAKTI. This singular dynamic relation is the universe as divine ‘intercourse’ or ‘sex’. Paradoxically however, intercourse or sex *as such* is neither masculine nor feminine, and therefore ‘beyond gender’. It is not an *external* relation or interaction of *separable* masculine and feminine beings, qualities or soul aspects that exist *in* a fixed relation to one another. Understood dialectically, what we call ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ are both aspects *of*

that dynamic relation we call 'sex'. And understood tantrically, sex is nothing specifically human. Instead the universe *is* nothing but divine intercourse or sex. In my own *new* tantric religious science and philosophy, the essential *medium* of this intercourse lies in those sensual *field-qualities* of awareness I call 'qualia' or 'soul qualities'. Its vehicle is the 'soul-body' - a sensual *field-body* of awareness. Here, the very terms *field-quality* and *field-body* are synonyms of SHIVA-SHAKTI. Here 'SHIVA' symbolises the field dimension of awareness as such. 'SHAKTI' symbolises the actualisation of potential qualities of awareness through the emergence of individualised beings or units of awareness within that field. The divine awareness field that is SHIVA both *embodies* itself in the form of such bounded units or beings, and constitutes their 'transcendent' field of emergence *as* embodied beings. SHIVA is the both the purely transcendent and bodyless awareness of Bodyhood that embraces every body and being in the universe and the awareness *immanent* in each body as its very Being – each body being essentially but a bodily shape taken by the divine awareness field itself.

KALI symbolises the dark domain of Non-Being in contrast to both Being and beings. Non-Being is not a realm of nothingness but a primordial womb of *potentiality* – all those potential patterns, qualities and individualised units of awareness that are pregnant as *beings* within the field of awareness that is SHIVA, that are constantly coming to presence and *being* actualised within that field as SHAKTIS , and that are also constantly *multiplied* through the dynamic interrelation of field and element that is SHIVA-SHAKTI. MA KALI is divine mother and sustainer of the “dialectic matrix” - that *great matrix of sensual and sexual interrelatedness* that is SHIVA-SHAKTI – a matrix whose warp and woof is the very meaning of *tantra* as 'loom'.

## More on MA KALI – the ‘Dark Mother’

**MA KALI** is the ‘Dark Mother’ - the dark secret of matter and the secret of dark matter. She personifies the inwardness that flows through and forms all matter, and constitutes its hidden core. This core links every material unit with the realm of inexhaustible potentiality that constitutes its own unbounded inwardness. As inexhaustible inner potentiality, KALI is the source of both infinite creativity and destructiveness, for since the realm of potentiality can never find full expression in any actuality, being or body, it is both the creative womb of all structure or patterns of identity and awareness and that which dooms them to ‘creative de-struction’ i.e. to a process of *transformation* which allows them to give birth to new, as yet unborn potentials (like the cracking of an egg from within that allows the chick to hatch, the breakdown or loss of an individual’s sense of self, allowing a new sense of self to emerge, or the collapse of an entire civilisation which allows a new one to emerge). All seemingly sequential or temporal processes or cycles of transformation or metaphorphosis - with their phases of appearance and disappearance, emergence and submergence, coming into being and passing away – are but the extensional, material expression of waxing and waning *intensities* of awareness. The domain of potentiality is a domain not of spatial *extensionality* but of unbounded inwardness or ‘intensionality’. It is made up of *intensities of awareness* capable of forming infinite patterns – comparable to tonal or musical patterns - and from which all patterns of ‘energy’ and ‘matter’ arise. The massively *density of intensities* that constitute this realm of unbounded inwardness – the reality of Ma Kali – find manifestation only through gravitational densities of matter so great, that they have collapsed into themselves into ‘black holes’ with a ‘singularity’ at their core. In standard *physical-scientific* terms, a black hole is ‘black’ because at its ‘event horizon’ its gravitational pull is so great as bend space itself around it - allowing no light to escape but only a sound – a fundamental tone (*Om*). From a *metaphysical* perspective however, the apparent outer surface of every visible body in space is also ‘event horizon’. For like the outer surface of the human body, every physical body conceals an unbounded and invisible *psychical* interiority along with invisible psychical ‘events’. At the ultimate core of all material bodies lies a type of singularity – a central point (*bindu*) and a central *tone* linking it to the realm of unbounded inwardness and inexhaustible potentiality that flows through and forms all matter, and into which all matter returns.

## 'SPANDA' – the Pulsating Heart of Divinity

**SPANDA** (*spandashakti*) is the most impersonal and purely metaphysical of tantric god concepts, being a pure concept of the Absolute itself as the foundation of all realities. Various translations as a 'throbbing', 'vibration', 'quivering' or 'slight movement' it represents the concept – and experience – of a primordial tension and pulsation. The words *tone* and *tension*, *extension* and *intension*, *tend*, *attend* and *intend*, all have their root in the Latin *tendere* – to 'stretch' or 'span'. In my new *Spanda Karikas* I have reinterpreted the tantric concept of *Spanda* as a primordial *tension* – like that of a string or membrane *spanning* the fundamental domains of 'non-being' and 'being', potentiality and actuality. It is SPANDA that is the very *source* of that 'fundamental tone' that resonates within all things and throughout the entire field of divine awareness. Space is essentially 'co-presence'. Time is essentially 'presencing'. The fundamental tone is the very tension *between* the domains of potentiality and actuality that first *stretches* and *holds open* a 'time-space' of temporal *presencing* or actualisation (Shakti) within awareness (Shiva) and an extensional 'space-time' of simple *co-presence* in awareness.

From the perspective of SPANDA metaphysics, space can be compared to the resonant cavity of a musical instrument such as a violin, and the tension of SPANDA to the slight movement or pulsation of a single stretched string. This tone is no mere mechanical oscillation or audible sound tone. Instead it is a fundamental tonality of awareness itself – comparable to the fundamental mood or *feeling tone* out of which a poem or symphony arises. The fundamental tone that is SPANDA however, has the pulsing or quivering character of a primordial *heart-beat*. This is not the heart of a being, human or divine. It is the pulsation of that heart that *is* divinity and yet beats within every being. As the very ground of our being SPANDA can be heard as silent sound, throbbing from deep within the bowels of the earth, like its own innermost heartbeat. And yet SPANDA is also the physically inaudible sound that each and every thing or thought, being or body IS. The pulsation of SPANDA is not only the very ground of our being but that which sings our souls into being, and imbues them with their own unique bodily shape and tone. As such, it is also the source of all sounded speech and song. In this sense SPANDA is also the tantric and Sanskrit equivalent of the Greek LOGOS - the primordial 'Word' that is ever becoming

'Flesh'. The literal meaning of SPANDA as 'slight movement' is not insignificant however. For the very slightest of our own actual bodily movements in space emerges from a vast field of potential movements and can be felt to subtly alter the entire tone of our being. The 'slight movement' of SPANDA is the *trembling of actuality with potentiality* and of *potentiality within actuality* that can be felt at any time, in any space, by any being, but only from a meditative state of absolute inner silence and stillness. For like the anatomical heart, it is only in inner stillness and silence that the throbbing pulsation of SPANDA - or its rapidly quivering heights of high-pitched vibration - can be felt.

If we substitute the term 'virtual' for 'potential' we find the sonic or rather *resonant* relation between the realms of the potential or virtual on the one hand, and that of the actual on the other, most insightfully expressed by Brian Massumi in his account of the thinking of the French philosopher Deleuze:

The virtual and the actual are co-resonating systems. As the actual contracts a set of virtual states into itself at a threshold state, the virtual dilates. When the actual passes a threshold, bifurcates toward a specific choice, and renounces other potential states, the virtual contracts back and the actual dilates. When one contracts (resonates at a higher intensity), the other dilates (relaxes). Each side has its own local-global correlations, resonances and tensions between nucleating subpopulations that respond individually and together.

To every actual intensity belongs a virtual one. Actual intensity has extension (form and substance), virtual intensity does not: it is a *pure intensity*. The virtual has only intension. That is not to say it is undifferentiated. Only that it is indeterminate in our spatiality. Every one of its dense points is adjacent to every point in the actual world, distanced from it only by the intensity of its resonance and its nearness to collapse. This means that it is also indeterminate in relation to our temporality. Each of its regions or individuals is the future and the past of an actual individual: the states it has chosen, will choose, and could have chosen but did not (and will not). All of this is always there at every instant, at varying intensities, insistently. The virtual as a whole is the future-past of actuality, the pool of potential from which universal history draws its choices and to which it returns the states it renounces. The virtual is not undifferentiated. It is hyperdifferentiated. If it is the void, it is a hypervoid in continual ferment.

## The Tantric View of VISHNU and the Vedic Gods

The traditional Vedic trinity of god - BRAHMAN, SHIVA and VISHNU - associated BRAHMAN with the primordial source of creation, SHIVA with forces of destruction and VISHNU with stability and preservation. *Shaivas* and *Vaishnavas*, and *Shaivist* and *Vaishnavist* sects of Hinduism have traditionally been at odds with one another. Like KALI, VISHNU is portrayed as dark, blue or black – as is his *avatar* or incarnation - KRISHNA. From a tantric point of view however, VISHNU is the exact *counterpart* of KALI, symbolising *neither* the creative *nor* the destructive pole of immanent potentiality, but rather a stable balance between the two. There is nothing innately ‘evil’ about destructiveness (otherwise every storm or earthquake would have to be regarded as evil. Nor is there anything necessarily ‘good’ in creativity (e.g. the over-productivity of capitalism which creates ecological devastation). That is why, in the traditional mythology, VISHNU incarnates through a new *avatar* whenever the forces of creation and destruction become imbalanced and the world finds itself once again engaged in a war of ‘good’ against ‘evil’. The essential inner bearing or *mudra* of VISHNU is a state of meditative poise that combines openness with groundedness or rootedness. He symbolises that bearing which allows the self to *preserve* a sense of its basic identity even whilst undergoing a process of change or transformation. In more general terms, VISHNU is the balance between action (and thereby change) on the one hand, and identity on the other – a balance which Seth defines as a subtle ever-shifting imbalance that *is* our “consciousness of self”. VISHNU forms an implicit part of the pantheon of tantric god concepts as I have interpreted them, representing the divine awareness field as a subtle and continuous *balancing* between actuality, presence or ‘Being’ – identity - and the inherently transformative process of actualisation, presencing or ‘Becoming’.

## The Basic Triadic Ontology of Tantric God Concepts

‘Ontology’ is a Greek-derived philosophical term that refers to the inner nature or word (*logos*) of being (*ontos*). Pure awareness embraces a primary ontology triad (Trika) of three *fundamental realms or domains of reality* - ‘Being’ or actuality, ‘Non-being’ or potentiality, and ‘Becoming’. The unity of these three realms lies in the immanent and dynamic activity of ‘Be-ing’ - of continuous ‘creation’ - manifestation, realisation or presencing - that occurs within awareness. Be-ing is that activity by which all potential beings are constantly freed released into actuality - and thereby into their own autonomous process of Becoming - from the realm of potentiality or ‘Non-Being’. The Pure Power of Action that is ‘Shakti’ is thus inseparable from the Pure Awareness (Shiva) through and within it is released from the realm of potentially or ‘Non-Being’ symbolised by Kali. In summary then:

- (a) All beings only *come to be* or *be-come* in an absolute or divine *field* of pure awareness.
- (b) As the *field-condition* for the actualisation, coming-to-be, and ‘becoming’ of all potential beings, Awareness is itself the essential ‘Be-ing’ of those beings.
- (c) In letting beings *come to be* within it, the absolute awareness field achieves its own self-reflexive awareness or *Self-being*.
- (d) The Self-being of Awareness is also the absolute, foundational *Self* of every being.
- (e) *Non-being* is not nothingness but that awareness of potentiality which first allows all potential beings to be – to achieve their own independent Self-being and awareness.

The ‘Being of Awareness’ is termed *Sat-Chit*. It embraces the basic ontological triad of Non-Being, Being and Becoming unified as the pure Action of presencing or ‘Be-ing’. Action or Be-ing is at the same time the divine ‘word’ or ‘speech’ (Greek *logos* / Sanskrit *vak*) that is identical that finds expression the primary *onto-logical* triad. It is that ‘word’ through which the divine awareness utters or ‘speaks’ the primary threefold. This can be expressed in terms of a ninefold triad of triads - three primordial *mantra* (Greek *logoi*) each with a threefold intonation:

**I am this.** Pure awareness of self as *awareness of otherness* - of this and all other beings.

**I am this.** Pure self-awareness as reflexive awareness mediated by awareness of otherness.

**I am this.** The very *self-being of awareness* as an *awareness of other beings*.



SHAKTI is the 'inner word' of that vibrating relation which links the self-being or 'I' of each individual being with that of the pure awareness field as such - each aware of its selfhood through a continuous process of Becoming Other. Its intonations are:

**It is I.** It (the pure awareness field) *individualises or serves* itself in the form of my 'I'.

**It is I.** *It alone* (pure awareness) is that which individualises or serves itself as my 'I'.

**It is I.** Its *being* is that process of *becoming* my 'I' and that of others.

The *logos* or *mantra* of KALI is the most profound and powerful expression of Non-being, understood as an awareness of all that is non-actual – no actual being and 'no-thing'. This realm of Non-being or 'no-thingness' however, is not an insentient void but an awareness of infinite *potentialities* or potencies of being. Its intonations are:

**I am not this.** I am not this, that or any element of my *actual* experience of things.

**I am not this.** My 'I' is not any element of my *experienced self* or 'I'.

**I am this not.** My very Being is this Non-Being - a pure awareness of infinite *potentialities* of being of a sort that negates and transcends all actual beings and selves.

For as Abhinavagupta declared in his *Tantraloka*, supernatural *siddhis* or spiritual *powers* are given to the one who, under all circumstances maintains through recollection and in every circumstance the attitude that:

**"I am not, neither does another exist. I am only potencies."**

These potencies are the SHAKTIS that dwell within the dark womb of potentiality that KALI - brought to autonomous self-actualisation within the absolute field of awareness that is SHIVA. Though philosophy has traditionally opposed the concept of 'Being', understood as static, *unchanging* presence, with that of 'Becoming' - understood as a process of constant flux or *change* - in reality essence of *both* Being and Becoming is neither the simple, unchanging *presence* of things in awareness, nor their constant change, but rather their continuous *presencing* or 'Be-ing'. The *unity* of all three realms of Awareness – Non-Being, Being and Becoming lies in 'Being' understood as Be-ing – the pure Action (Shakti) that is inseparable from pure Awareness (Shiva) and as the same time its divine speech, the goddess VAK.

## Nine Basic Tantric God Concepts

**SHIVA** – the divine awareness field as a dimension of *spatiality* or co-presence (Being).

**SHAKTI** – the divine awareness field as a dimension of *temporality* or presencing in awareness (Be-ing).

**PARAMSHAKTI** – the divine awareness field as a *spacious present*, a time-space of simultaneous *co-presencing* or actualisation embracing all worlds.

**KALI / MAHAKALI / DRGDEVI / BHAIRAVI** – the divine awareness field as ‘non-being’ – the reality of pure potentiality that is the womb of all that is. KALI symbolises the innate drive of non-being towards the actualisation of all possible beings and all their potentialities of being – a drive to *be* that rightly overcomes everything in its path.

**BHAIRAVA** - the male personification of KALI. The withdrawal of SHIVA as awareness from the domain of actuality, his re-absorption or regression into the womb of potentiality that is KALI, and his embodiment of the terrifying intensity and drive to actualisation of all the still unactualised and potentials she bears within her as BHAIRAVI.

**SPANDA / SPANDASHAKTI** – the primordial tension between potentiality and actuality that spans and holds open all spaces of awareness and in which actuality itself trembles or quivers with potentiality, only to be released or expressed as the constant creative action of divine speech – **PARAVAK**.

**SHIVA-SHAKTI / YAMALA** the blissful intercourse of SHIVA and SHAKTI as the divine sexual couple (*yamala*) - whose very coupling symbolises the sensual unity of pure awareness (SHIVA) and the vitality of its actualisation (SHAKTI) in our lived experience.

**VISHNU** – the divine awareness field as a delicate balancing of actuality, presence or Being on the one hand and transformative actualisation, presencing or Becoming on the other - allowing basic identity to be preserved through processes of change.

**PARAMSHIVA / ISHVARA / PARABRAHMAN** – the divine awareness field *as such* and in *all* its seven categorical domains or dimensions – *Spatiality, Temporality, Temporo-Spatiality, Intensionality, Sexuality, Pulsation and Identity*.

## BHAIRAVA-BHAIRAVI

*Bhairava* holds within Himself the entire universe by reducing all the *Shaktis* to sameness with Himself and inasmuch as He completely devours within Himself the entire mass of ideation (which is responsible for the sense of difference).

Jaideva Singh *Shiva Sutras*

BHAIRAVA (meaning ‘terrifying’) is both a name of SHIVA and a supreme tantric mantra of divinity, one deriving from a whole variety of syllabic elements – *bhi* (fear), *ir* (impel or drive), *bhr* (fill or fulfil), *bha* (shine forth), *ru* (bellow or roar), *ravana* (withdraw), *av* (shelter or protect), and *va* - to ‘exhaust’ - as airy incense smoke exhausts and rises above fire, reducing it to ash. The most important of all the traditional tantric treatises is called the *Vijnana-Bhairava* – meaning the inner knowing (*Vijnana*) that is identical with *Bhairava*. Similarly, one of the most important tantric mudras or compartments is called *Bhairavamudra* “With one’s gaze turned inward, whilst looking out, eyes neither opening nor closing, this is Bhairava’s mudra, kept secret in all the Tantras.” (Kshemaraja). When SHIVA, instead of emanating the *light* of awareness, withdraws into himself, descends into and entirely *submerges* his awareness in the womb of MA KALI, there *emerges* the terrifying form of BHAIRAVA - the masculine equivalent of KALI herself as BHAIRAVI. The intra-uterine unity of BHAIRAVA-BHAIRAVI (or MAHAKALA-MAHALALI) is the dark counterpart of the sexual unity of SHIVA-SHAKTI - not the actualisation but the *embodiment* of pure potentiality or power in all its aggressive intensity. Just as the pure awareness of SHIVA lacks any intrinsic qualities except light and spatial *extensionality*, so does the dark face of SHIVA that is BHAIRAVA lack any intrinsic qualities beyond its own black density of brooding intensity. The demonic intensity depicted in images of BHAIRAVA however, implies no malign or ‘evil’ intent towards others. For *in-tent*, by its very nature, is that which tends inward not outward. We experience the god concept of BHAIRAVA when we withdraw all thought or ideation from the actual, submerge our awareness in the depths of unbounded inwardness and allow nothing to emerge from it (SHAKTI). Whenever the products of creativity begin to restrict the very process of creativity itself (SHAKTI), then is SHIVA called upon to return to the womb of potentiality that is KALI, experience the dense black intensity of these potentialities as her terrifying power (BHAIRAVI) - and *embody* that intensity as BHAIRAVA. All destructive ‘evil’ and violence in this

world flows from fear and terror in the face of such intense feelings of black depression and rage – feelings that arise from a sense of felt but unfulfilled or blocked potentiality. From the fear and terror results an inability to follow those dark feelings - to actively *de-press* and *submerge* our awareness in the womb of KALI and to actively *embody* the *regressive-aggressive* intensity of pure potentiality - as BHAIRAVA. Fearing and therefore unable to fully follow and feel, bound and embody the power *of* this regressive-aggressive intensity of feeling, people divert it into a will to power *over* others - or else let it explode into violence and destructive mayhem. In place of BHAIRAVA then, we have ‘terror’ and ‘terrorism’ in all its forms – violence and death inflicted *on* the bodies of others. BHAIRAVA is thus a tantric god concept for today, symbolising a healing regression to that primordial womb of potentiality or ‘non-being’ from which emerges the innate drive of each being towards the aggressive actualisation of all its potentialities of being – a drive to *be* that overcomes everything in its way and is therefore seen as ‘destructive’.

## **SHIVA, Tantra and The Nameless Divine**

*There is no reality outside awareness.*

Awareness is not the attribute of a being.

All beings are individualised patterns or gestalts of awareness.

Like silence, awareness is nameless.

Though ‘silence’ is a naming word, silence as such is not a word or name.

Since all beings arise as individualisations of awareness, they too are essentially nameless.

But there is also sound within silence – inner sound.

Awareness is never moodless but always ‘mooded’ - tuned by a particular TONE.

All reality is made up infinite felt tonalities of awareness.

God is not a being. God does not ‘have’ moods.

God is made up of infinite moods or tonalities of awareness –feeling tones - and made up also of infinite potential shapes, forms or patterns of feeling tone.

A sound *is* a form, shape or pattern of tone. An inner sound is a form, shape or pattern of feeling tone. Every form, shape or pattern is an inner sound of silence. Inner sound is *feeling tone* given form, shape or pattern

Every shape, form or pattern given to feeling tone lends it a particular sensual quality. All sensory qualities and phenomena are therefore the expressions of those sensual qualities of feeling tone that arise as it is given shape, form and pattern as inner sound.

God has no form. God is formless. Yet formless is not emptiness, but infinite formative potentiality. Awareness *forms* itself into individualised patterns or gestalts, thus actualising its own infinite formative potentials. Since all forms are essentially shapes or patterns of feeling tone – inner sounds – awareness *inwardly sounds* itself into individualised patterns or gestalts, thus actualising the infinite formative potentials of feeling tone.

There are no actual or potential realities outside awareness. The One Tone is the fundamental tension spanning the dimension of potential and actual realities within the ultimate reality of unbounded awareness. SPANDA is the One Tone spanning the dimensions of actuality and potentiality within the unbounded awareness field that is The Divine. All tones are expressions of and contained within the One Tone.

Within the One Tone lie all tones and all possible combinations thereof.

A language is composed of a *finite* alphabet of letters and sounds and yet is the source of *infinite* words, sentences and combinations thereof. God is like language – neither finite nor infinite but trans-finite. All languages and all realities are the expression of divine alphabets of inner sound. TANTRA is the divine ‘loom’ of language that weaves patterns of inner sound from alphabets of inner sound.

Alphabets of inner sound are what give form to sensual qualities of feeling tone as sensory qualities - such as visual form and audible sound, lightness and heaviness, solidity and diffuseness, warmth and coolness, light, darkness and colour. Just as all tones are expressions of soundless feeling tones, so are all sounds the expression of inner sounds - soundless shapes, forms or patterns of feeling tone.

All sensory forms and shapes, patterns and qualities are the expression of shapes, patterns and qualities of *feeling tone* – giving itself form through *inner sound*.

Just as a letter is the silent face of a sound, so is each ‘person’ one face (*persona*) of the divine awareness field - one *personification* of that field as it is patterned and shaped through sound (*per-sonare*). All speech gives expression to those alphabets and patterns of inner sound, through which awareness personifies itself. Through individualising and personifying itself, awareness gives expression to its own infinite formative potentials, the infinite patterns, shapes and qualities latent within feeling tone.

Awareness is essentially nameless. Beings, since they are individualisations of awareness, are also themselves essentially nameless. Beings do not have names therefore. Beings *are* names - composed from *alphabets of inner sounds*.

All beings are soundings of the inner silence that is awareness. All gods too, are soundings of that God or divinity that is not a being - but is simply unbounded awareness.

There is nothing outside God, because there is nothing outside awareness. God *transcends* all actual beings realities because awareness includes awareness of infinite *potentiality*. *God is* immanent within all beings and actualities as their own awareness, as its own unique and fundamental tone, and as its own infinite formative potentials – given form through combinations of inner sound, through *mantra*. All beings are living *mantras* of that divinity that is itself no being but is unbounded awareness - ever sounding and resounding, forming and transforming itself as the music of feeling tone.

**SH**...the sound of hushed and hushing silence.

**I**...the ex-tending, all-spanning creative tension present with silence.

**V**...the vibration of actuality trembling with reverberant potentiality.

## The Nasadiya Suktam

### Creation Hymn of the RigVeda

There was neither non-existence nor existence then.  
There was neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond.  
What encompassed?  
Where?  
In whose protection?  
What water was there - deep, unfathomable?

There was neither death nor immortality then.  
Of night or day there was not any sign.  
That One breathed without breath, all by its own impulse.  
Other than that there was nothing beyond.

Darkness was enclosed by darkness in the beginning,  
All this was water without distinction.  
The One that was concealed within nothingness,  
That One arose through the power of heat.

Desire came upon that One in the beginning,  
That was the first seed of mind.  
Seer-poets, searching in their hearts with wisdom  
found the bond of existence and non-existence.

Their vision ray span a cord across being and non-being.  
Was there below?  
Was there above?  
Bearers of seed there were, there were powers.  
There was impulse below, there was bearing forth above.

Who know the truth?  
Who will here proclaim it?  
Whence this birth?  
Whence this creation?  
The gods came afterwards, with the creation of this universe.  
Who then knows from whence it emerged?

That out of which creation emerged,  
Whether it created itself or did not,  
He who surveys it in the highest heaven,  
He surely knows - or maybe He does not!

## **KSHETRAJNA - Lord Krishna and the 'Field Knower'**

### **From the Bhagavad Gita:**

The field denotes this body, and wise men call one who knows it the field-knower. Know me as the field-knower in all fields - what I deem to be knowledge is the knowledge of the field and its knower.

Hear from me in summary what the field is in its character and changes, and of the field-knower's power.

Ancient seers have sung of this in many ways, with varied metres and with aphorisms on the infinite spirit laced with logical arguments.

The field contains great elements, individuality, understanding, unmanifest nature, the eleven senses, and the five sense realms.

Longing, hatred, happiness, suffering, bodily form, consciousness, resolve, thus is this field with changes defined in summary.

Its hands and feet reach everywhere; its head and face see in every direction; hearing everything, it remains in the world, enveloping all.

Lacking all the sense organs, it shines in their qualities; unattached, it supports everything; without qualities, it enjoys them.

Outside and within all creatures, inanimate but still animate, too subtle to be known, it is far distant yet near.

Undivided, it seems divided among creatures; understood as their sustainer, it devours and creates them.

The light of lights beyond darkness it is called; knowledge attained by knowledge, fixed in the heart of everyone.

So, in summary I have explained the field and knowledge of it; a man devoted to me, knowing this, enters into my being.

Arjuna, know that anything inanimate or alive with motion is born from the union of the field and its knower.

He really sees who sees the highest lord standing equal among all creatures, undecaying amid destruction.

Seeing the lord standing the same everywhere, the self can not injure itself and goes the highest way.



## The Field Body and Body Fields

### A New Tantric Philosophy for our Time

Traditional yogic and tantric philosophies have tended to contrast an undifferentiated, transcendental field of pure awareness on the one hand, and a phenomenal world of sensory qualities on the other. The field has been seen as *immanent* in all phenomena, or the phenomena themselves seen as mirror-like material emanations or reflections of the field – often described as the light of awareness (*prakasha*).

The ‘field-phenomological’ philosophy of The New Yoga is founded on a basic acknowledgement of the scientific and religious truth (largely only *implicit* in traditional yogic and tantric philosophies) that awareness has a non-local or ‘field’ character. Awareness in other words, is not the property of any localised subjects or selves, material bodies or spiritual beings. Instead all finite bodies and beings - and all phenomena they perceive within their own more or less bounded fields of awareness - are the self-manifestation of that absolute, unbounded field of awareness or ‘subjectivity’.

Soul, quite simply, is awareness in its field character – intrinsically unbounded. What we call the ‘individual’ soul is a bounded area or region of this unbounded field. The boundary is what we call ‘self’, comparable to a circle drawn on a blank sheet. That does not mean that the *soul* is essentially bounded however. For the circle is defined just as much by the unbounded space or field of awareness surrounding it as by the space of awareness it surrounds. Indeed the inner field or ‘soul space’ of the circle is itself essentially unbounded, for its very centre or core is like a black hole linking it with the unbounded field of awareness surrounding the circle of the self.

As for the circle that is ‘the self’ – this is the more or less fluid and flexible *field-boundary* of awareness that is the very essence of ‘the body’. We are not isolated souls, enclosed within our bodies and looking out through the peepholes of our physical senses. First and foremost we sense with our bodies as a whole, the body as a whole being essentially a *unified field of awareness* embracing both our outer and inner world, both our outer and inner fields of awareness.

The philosophy of **The New Yoga** makes *fully explicit* the field character of awareness as such. In this way, like the old yogic and tantric philosophies it acknowledges an ultimate awareness field as divinity - the source of all that is. Unlike the old yogic and tantric philosophies however, the philosophy of **The New Yoga** offers a wholly original new insight, one that bridges the traditional contrast between a spiritual-transcendental field of undifferentiated or ‘pure’ awareness and a world of differentiated sensory and bodily experiencing and of material existence or nature (*prakriti*). This original philosophical insight, based on profound meditational practice and experience, is the recognition that awareness, *besides* having a pure and undifferentiated character corresponding to empty space or the pure ‘light of awareness’ (*prakasha*), also has its own infinite variety of *innately sensual* qualities, its own infinite variety of *innate bodily shapes* and indeed its own *innate and immaterial substantiality*.

## The New Metaphysics of Awareness

1. **Awareness** is not a by-product of matter or energy. Instead, just as matter is the perceived *outwardness* or ‘actuality’ of energy, so is awareness the very *inwardness* of energy – the realm of potentiality from which it springs.
2. **Awareness** is not a product of the body or brain. How can it be, since bodies and brains have reality only *in* our awareness?
3. **Awareness** is not bounded by our physical bodies. How can it be, since our awareness of the space around our bodies is nothing itself but a space *of* awareness?
4. **Awareness** is not the property of a localised ‘subject’, ‘self’, ‘ego’ or ‘I’ – How can it be, since all localised ‘subjects’ of awareness only know themselves as centres of a *non-local* space or ‘field’ of awareness?
5. **Awareness** is not a blank sheet on which we receive impressions of an external sensory world. How can it be, since awareness has its own *innate sensual qualities* – such as the sensed light and darkness, levity and gravity, colour and tone of our moods, or the sensed density or diffuseness, clarity or dullness of our everyday consciousness?
6. **Awareness** is immaterial, but it is nothing shapeless, disembodied or insubstantial. How can it be, since our own body is nothing but the sensed bodily shape and substantiality *of* our awareness?
7. **Awareness** is not a product of energetic patterns or material forms, of genetic or molecular patterns or biological forms. How can it be, since pattern and form are themselves nothing material or energetic - you can no more pick up or hold the *pattern* of a molecule, cell or biological form than you can pick up or hold the pattern of a geometric form, the roundness of a circle or the squareness of a square?
8. **Awareness** is not a pattern or form, but it forms or crystallises itself into patterns, just as it also flows in draughts and currents like air and water, mixes and merges in streams, radiates and ripples in and out like waves of energy, diffuses and densifies like matter.
9. **Awareness** does not require any energetic, material or ‘aetheric’ medium in which to take form or flow, radiate or ripple in waves, move or communicate. Awareness *is* the aether.
10. **Awareness** does not require physical time or space to move. How can it, since our very awareness of physical motion in space and time is preceded by motions of awareness, occurring in times and spaces of our awareness? The Olympic diver preparing to dive does not first move his body and *then* become aware of this physical movement. On the contrary, the precise physical movement of his body in space and time is the expression of a precisely rehearsed inner motion of his bodily awareness as such.

11. **Awareness** is not simply awareness of some *localised* ‘thing’ that is already *present* - ‘out there’ or ‘in ourselves’ - thus enabling us to focus on it and reflect on it in thought. How can it be, since all things and all thought – all phenomena whatsoever that we experience - only *come to presence* within *non-local* spaces or *fields* of awareness?
12. **Awareness** is not bound by our experience of phenomena – whether things or thoughts, percepts or concepts, sensations or emotions, drives or impulses. How can it be, since just as our awareness of an experienced object *is not* that object neither is our *awareness* of experiencing any phenomenon the same thing as that experienced phenomenon?
13. **Awareness** is not a relation of a subject to an object. How can it be, since all localised subjects or objects of awareness only arise within non-local fields of awareness? Objects are the outward form taken by innate field-patterns and field-qualities of awareness or subjectivity. Awareness is a relation of *subject to subject*, within fields of awareness. Objects are only the localised manifestation of *inter-subjective* awareness.
14. **Awareness** in its ‘pure’ or ‘transcendental’ character is not like a insentient void of empty space. On the contrary, empty spaces are spatial fields of *awareness*. Just as our own awareness embraces not just our own bodies but all other bodies in the space around us, so does the absolute awareness field that is SHIVA embrace the totality of bodies in cosmic space, including our own. These bodies do not happen to be ‘in’ space. They are themselves embodiments of awareness, which not only surrounds them as outer space but is immanent within them all.

**“I am SHIVA, of compact mass of awareness and bliss, and the entire universe is my body.”**

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