

PHILOSOPHY

SAKTI

THE POWER IN TANTRA

A SCHOLARLY APPROACH

At the core of Tantra lies the idea of divine power (*sakti*), which manifests in various ways, including the mysterious *kundalini-sakti*. This monograph is a thorough and much-needed analysis of the concept of "divine power" on the basis of Laksmidhara's sophisticated Sanskrit commentary on the *Saundarya-Lahari*, a key scripture of the great Srividya tradition. Pandit Rajmani brings to this task a penetrating intelligence, embracing scholarship, and practical experience in the Srividya tradition, which is a very important branch of Tantra that is only now becoming accessible to Western students. Both scholars and serious students of Tantra, Yoga, and the history of religion will find this book of immense value.

- Georg Feuerstein, Ph.D.



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Pandit Rajmani Tigunait, Ph.D.



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To my beloved teachers

Dr. Hari Shankar Tripathi
University of Allahabad, India
and

Dr. Wilhelm Halbfass
University of Pennsylvania, USA

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Introduction

IN THE SPRING OF 1982, soon after I completed my doctorate of philosophy from the University of Allahabad in India, my gurudeva, Sri Swami Rama of the Himalayas, began to say, "You should do another Ph.D. at one of the Western universities." At first I thought that he was joking. Later his tone of voice changed - it was no longer a remark but an order. One day he called me and said, "You are too obstinate. Why are you not listening to me?" I asked him why another Ph.D. was necessary. With a smile he said, "Because you have not gone through enough pain. If you do not do your Ph.D. here in America, I will send you to Europe and I will not see you until you have completed your Ph.D. there." Without further argument I joined the Asian Studies department of the University of Pennsylvania, and after completing the course work I began a dissertation on my favorite subject, Tantrism.

In the process of writing the dissertation I was faced with a struggle between Eastern and Western approaches to research work. I was trained not to criticize previous masters and commentators, but instead to understand them with respect and faith. If their presentation did not make sense, I was trained to doubt my own ability to comprehend the subject and to make further attempts to study it by myself or with the help of learned teachers. I was taught to believe that a

commentator represented the tradition of the scripture involved, and that whatever the commentator said was always in conformity with the original text. Since my first dissertation was written at an Indian university, these inherent tendencies did not become obstacles in obtaining my degree.

At the University of Pennsylvania I had to reorient my attitude toward an academic undertaking. I began my research work under the supervision of Professor Wilhelm Halbfass, an unmatched scholar of Indian philosophy. His kindness and wisdom gave me the strength and clarity to cultivate an analytical mind. Professors Ludo Rocher and George Cardona not only opened the door to a comparative study of different branches of philosophy, but also helped me think in a Western way without dismantling my Indian way of thinking. Professor Alexis Sanderson at All Souls' College, Oxford, taught me how to be precise and how to build a thesis on the basis of pure fact, and after spending some time with him I realized I did not need to abandon my faith in the practices described in the scriptures in order to be a scholar. Although I did not enjoy the hairsplitting logic and nitty-gritty details of academic work, I developed great respect for scholars when I realized they are conduits for transmitting knowledge without distortion or biased interpretation. This present work, *Sakti: The Power in Tantra*, is a direct derivative of my dissertation. *The Concept of Sakti in Laksmidhara's Commentary on the Saundaryalahari in Relation to Abhinavagupta's Tantraloka*. For its existence I am greatly indebted to my professors at the University of Pennsylvania.

Since early childhood I have been drawn to Tantric studies, especially to the role of Sakti, the Divine Mother, in the attainment of inner and outer prosperity. My doctoral work at the University of Allahabad and at the University of Pennsylvania gave me an opportunity to study the vast range of Tantric literature in both the traditional and the Western

analytical styles. These academic studies, coupled with experiential knowledge gained from the Tantric adepts, enabled me to realize that the secret of success, be it worldly or spiritual, lies in the unfoldment of sakti, the power that lies dormant in the core of our being. All spiritual traditions, particularly Tantra, aim at awakening sakti. Without having an in-depth knowledge of the role of sakti in spiritual unfoldment, the study and practice of any spiritual tradition is like farming barren ground. That is why I undertook this endeavor, and that is why I am presenting the findings to serious students of Tantra and kundalini yoga.

The liberal use of Sanskrit terms in this text may make it difficult reading for those who are not familiar with the language, but there is no other way to convey the meaning. I am confident that this work will brighten the horizon of Tantric philosophy and practice and dismantle a number of misunderstandings surrounding Tantra, the worship of Sakti, and the yogic practices related to kundalini and the cakras. After reading *Sakti: The Power in Tantra*, a student of Tantra will understand that Tantric wisdom and practices are far more meaningful and profound than is commonly understood today. This text clarifies how Tantric philosophy and practice unify the concepts of yantra, mandala, mantra, cakra, kundalini, and deities, as well as ritualistic and meditative practices. It explains the relationships between different branches of Tantra and tackles the controversial issues concerning the right- and left-handed Tantric practices. But even though the subject matter compressed into this work focuses mainly on the concept of sakti, it opens the door on a vast range of Tantric philosophy and practices. Each time I read the manuscript I feel inspired to undertake further Tantric studies, especially those of a nonacademic nature. I hope all students of Tantra will be similarly inspired.

CHAPTER 1

A Brief Discussion of the Concept of *Sakti*

Parameters of This Study

The school of Srividya is the most important branch of Sakta Tantrism because of its well-defined philosophical position, its literary standards, and its coherent doctrines. Historically, it seems to be the first branch of Saktism to have been systematized. Unlike other branches of Sakta Tantrism, the adherents of the Srividya school made an attempt to create a coherent structure of speculative ideas and give a philosophical explanation for the practices outlined in this system.¹

The concept of sakti in Srividya is essential to the study of Indian religious thought because it elucidates the general problem of causality in Indian philosophy and religion. More specifically, this concept provides deeper insight into Saktism, Saivism, and other branches of Tantra. It holds an

important place throughout Tannic literature, especially in Saktism and Saivism. Sakti also appears in Pancaratra Agama, Vyakarana Agama, Mimamsa, Vedanta, and even Kavya Sastra, although the meaning varies. These sources express a variety of views on this concept; they introduce elaborations and often employ idiosyncratic terminology.

In spite of the key role of the concept of sakti, as yet there has been no comparative, philological study of sakti's role in two of the most prominent Tannic systems, Saivism and Saktism. Neither has there been a focused study of sakti in Kaulacara-dominated Kashmir Saivism, in the Samayacara-dominated Srividya tradition of Saktism, nor in the writings of Laksmidhara or Abhinavagupta, the outstanding exponents of Samayacara and Kaulacara philosophy, respectively.

Prominent Tantric texts such as the *Netra Tantra* (hereafter cited as *NT*), *Svacchanda Tantra* (hereafter cited as *SVT*), *Malinivijaya Varttika* (hereafter cited as *MVV*), *Saradatilaka* (hereafter cited as *ST*), *Nityasodasikarnava* (hereafter cited as *NS*), and *Yogini Hrdaya* (hereafter cited as *YH*),² offer elaborate but incoherent discussions on the nature and function of sakti. All these texts present theories of mantra, yantra, devata, matrka, and cakras in the human body, and connect them to sakti. However, neither these Sanskrit texts nor modern studies of Tantrism and Saktism reveal how the basic concept of sakti originated; how the *pratibha*, *rasa*, *dhvani*, and *camatkara* of Sanskrit poetics, or the *pratibha*, *pasyanti*, and *kalasakti* of Vyakarana Agama were assimilated into the mainstream of Saktism; how the mystical doctrines of mantra, *devata*, yantra, and *matrka*, were integrated into the concept of sakti; or whether the concept of sakti itself developed in an effort to synthesize these theories. There are elaborate discussions on the concept of

sakti, but there is no conclusive definition of the term, even in Saktism itself. Sakta scriptures launch directly into explanations of *sakti's* multilevel role in the attainment of spiritual/mystical experiences, leaving the definition of the term itself vague. Therefore, a study of the concept of sakti in Srividya and an explicit interpretation of the usage of the term in wider Sakta literature, as well as in the literature of Saivism, Pancaratra Agama, Vyakarana Agama, and Sad Darsana, would be invaluable in illuminating the character of Saktism in general.

To date, the field suffers from the following difficulties:

1. The historical and literary boundaries of Saktism are not well defined;³

2. The relationship among the principal branches of Tantric literature within which one can attempt to locate the sakti-related materials and pinpoint the precise view of sakti in a given tradition or subtradition of Tantra is not well understood;⁴

3. There is a scarcity of critically edited texts and, in most cases, a lack of thematic and comparative studies of available texts;

4. There are no clear and indisputably established criteria to define what characteristic(s) make a text Sakta, and especially what characteristics distinguish Sakta texts from the texts of monistic Saiva Agama;⁵

5. There is insufficient historical data about Sakta texts and the exact tradition or subtradition of Saktism they represent; accurate criteria for distinguishing primary from secondary texts are also lacking;⁶ and

6. There is no easy access to the secret oral interpretation, the province of initiates, of which a given text is a part.⁷

Because of these difficulties, the field of the present study is confined to the concept of sakti in the Srividya school. A

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survey of the literature shows that the most coherent and elaborate discussions of *sakti* occur in texts belonging to the Srividya, or Tripura, school of Saktism.⁸ We further confined our study to one specific text - the Saundaryalahari⁹ (hereafter cited as *SL*), and again, more precisely, to one of its commentaries, the Laksmidhara¹⁰ (hereafter cited as *LD*) by Laksmidhara. We made this selection not only because it enables us to avoid the difficulties enumerated above, but also because *LD* is a brilliant commentary on a well-known Sakta/Srividya text. The commentator is one of those scholars and staunch adherents of Tantrism who clearly proclaims his affiliation with the exact branch of Sakta Tantrism that he practices - the Samayacara school of Srividya. To support his view that *SL* belongs to this school, Laksmidhara draws on both Tantric and Vedic sources. In the process, he outlines the general principles of Saktism, and highlights what he believes to be the most important factors in the Samayacara school of Saktism.

Due to his affiliation with Sankaracarya, which he establishes by writing a commentary on *SL*, a scripture attributed to Sankaracarya, and his devotion to the Vedas, which is apparent in his commentary, Laksmidhara's voice has become influential in the living tradition of Sankaracarya. Although the historical origins of the primary text, *SL*, may be ambiguous, Laksmidhara's influence on the Srividya tradition, especially the Samayacara branch of it, is indisputable.

Using *LD* as a basis for this study permits us to concentrate on the general meaning of the term *sakti* in Sakta and non-Sakta traditions and its specific meaning (or the terms that replace it, such as *samaya*, *sadakhya*, and *candrakala*), in the Samayacara school of the Srividya tradition. This text-based analysis of the term *sakti*, as well as the concept it conveys, can help us understand *sakti*'s precise role, at least in one sect

of Saktism (i.e., Samayacara), in contrast to the notions of sakti that we get from a collection of texts whose sectarian affiliation is often unclear. Furthermore, in recent years, a contemporary scholar, Douglas Renfrew Brooks, has undertaken a thorough study of Bhaskararaya's commentary on the *Tripura Upanisad*. Using this text as a base, he arrives at an understanding of Srividya in general, and the Kaula aspect in particular. This enables us to focus on Laksmidhara, who propounds Samayacara, the counterpart of Kaula.

The Concept of Sakti in Early Literature

In order to clarify the notion of sakti in Laksmidhara's writings and to place his approach in philological and historical perspective, it is necessary to examine how the word sakti has been used in early literature, such as the Vedas, Upanisads, and Puranas, as well as in later Indian philosophical literature. As Gerald J. Larson observes, the term sakti "is used in a bewildering variety of ways ranging from its use as a way of expressing the ultimate creative power of being itself, all the way to its use as a way of expressing the capacity of words to convey meaning (*artha*)."¹¹ Tracing its origin from the verb root sak (or sakl saktau), the word sakti simply means "the power to produce an effect, capability, efficiency or potency." However, the meaning derived from this etymology is too vague and general to describe the use of the word sakti in the wide variety of contexts in which it is employed. According to Sayana's belief, in the *Rgveda* this word occurs in the sense of "capacity";¹² as *vajra*, the thunderbolt; *karma*, the power to act;¹³ and as the proper name of a type of weapon.¹⁴ In each of these instances, the term means not a goddess but a force.

It is only when the term sakti becomes identified either

directly or by implication with Aditi, Gna, Sarasvati, and vak in the Samhitas and with Uma Haimavati, prakrti, and maya in the Upanisads, that sakti finds a significant place in ancient Indian mythology and philosophy. The earliest clear statement employing the term sakti to describe the nature of her relationship to the Absolute Truth appears in Svetasvatara *Upanisad*: sakti is said to be vividha, manifold; jnana, knowledge; bala, power; and kriya, the capacity to act; these characteristics are intrinsic to her.¹⁵

Due to its varied and incoherent subject matter, Pauranic literature cannot be treated as a ground for delineating a unified notion of sakti, nor can it be entirely disregarded. This is especially true for Puranas such as Markandeya, *Brahmanda*, *Brahmavaivarta*, *Narada*, *Devibhagavata*, and *Kalika*, which are extensively Tantric.¹⁶ For example, in the *Durga Saptasati* (hereafter cited as DS), which is a portion of *Markandeya Purana*, Sakti is the intrinsic power not only of *brahman*, the absolute reality, but also of all the gods, i.e., Brahma, Visnu, Siva, Indra, Agni, Varuna, Yama, etc. Due to her association with these gods, she appears in a variety of forms and thus is given different names.¹⁷ Almost without exception in Pauranic literature - for example, in DS and "Lalitopakhyaṇa" of the *Brahmanda Purana* (hereafter cited as *BP-L*) - Sakti is accompanied by a god, who is her consort, and in that case, her name, form, weapon, and functions correspond to those of the god.¹⁸ Quasi-etymologically, the basic characteristics ascribed to Sakti are *aisvarya*, lordship, and *parakrama*, valor.¹⁹ In the Puranas she is said to be identical to *brahman* ("*brahmamayi*" or "*brahmatmaka rasatmika*");²⁰ she is unmanifest, absolute *prakrti* ("*avyakṛta parama prakṛti*"). Sakti, as *prakrti*, is the cause of the whole universe; in fact, the manifest world is not separate from her.²¹ As transcendental Reality ("*para paranam parama paramesvari*,"

DS 1:62), she is indescribable ("unuccarya," DS 1:55) and unthinkable ("rupam acintyam," DS 4:5). At the same time, the entire universe, including its hierarchy of deities, emerges from her and ultimately dissolves into her.²² It should be noted that in these Pauranic sources, sakti is treated both as a goddess and as a philosophical category. For example, in many of the *stotras* in DS²³ and *BP-L*,²⁴ she is described as a deity who was born (or at least emerged) in a particular time and place, but at the same time, she is also said to be formless and transcendent.

The Concept of Sakti in Various Philosophical Schools

When we turn our attention to the uses of the term sakti in various philosophical schools - such as Mimamsa, Nyaya, Advaita Vedanta, Vyakarana Agama, and Kavya Sastra - we find that one of her roles - that of deity - vanishes. Let us take, for example, references to sakti in Mimamsa. Prabhakara's group of Mimamsakas are also referred to as Saktivadins, those who adhere to the theory of sakti. According to the Saktivadins, everything in the world possesses some sort of sakti, which cannot be perceived although it can be inferred. Mimamsakas argue that although fire produces heat, under the influence of certain mantras the same fire fails to produce that effect, although in both cases, the fire as such remains the same. This indicates that there must be something in the presence of which the fire blazes, whereas in its absence it cannot burn:

To this imperceptible something, Prabhakara gives the name of 'Shakti' or Force. In eternal things, it is eternal, and in transient things it is brought into existence along with them. It differs from 'samskara' in that this latter is transient in eternal things also.²⁵

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The concept of *apurva* as held by Mimamsakas parallels this concept of *sakti*. In the words of Ganganatha Jha:

By Kumarila's view the *apurva* is "a capability in the principal action, or in the agent, which did not exist prior to the performance of the action, and whose existence is proved by the authority of the scriptures." Before the Sacrifices laid down as leading to heaven are performed, there is in the Sacrifices themselves, in the first place, an incapability of leading to heaven, and in the second place, in the agent, that of attaining to heaven. Both these *incapacities* are set aside by the performance of the sacrifice; and this performance creates also a positive force or capacity, by virtue of which heaven is attained; and to this latter force or capability we give the name *apurva*.²⁶

The *Naiyayikas*, on the other hand, refute *sakti* as a special category of power or causal efficiency.²⁷ According to Sankarasvamin:

The causal efficacy (*Sakti*) which some postulate to explain causation, is nothing more than the collection of causal factors (*samagri*) sufficient to produce the effect. Likewise, lack of causal efficacy (*asakti*) is merely the absence of one of the necessary conditions for production. However, once an effect is produced, it can remain in existence even though its *samagri-sakti* disappears.²⁸

Karl H. Potter summarizes the Naiyayika opinion about the theory of causality, explaining how Naiyayikas dismiss the concept of *sakti* as proposed by Saktivadins (Mimamsakas). However, in his analysis of Udayana's *Nyayakusumanjali*, Potter states:

Udayana becomes very permissive at this point; in fact, he goes so far as to say that if one wants to he *can* admit an additional category of causality (*karanatva*), and that this new category may be considered to be the old causal efficacy under another name.²⁹

On this issue George Chemparathy writes, "The Naiyayikas, too, admit potency (*saktih*), but only in the sense of causality (*karanatvam*)."³⁰ The main issue in a long chain of debates between the Mimamsakas and the Naiyayikas is whether *sakti*, the unseen latent potency, alone is the main cause behind an effect or whether several conditions jointly produce the effect. Mimamsakas hold the prior view and the Naiyayikas, the latter. However, in order to explain how different conditions combine to aid different causes in producing an effect, Naiyayikas propose the theory of *adrsta*, which is somewhat similar to the concept of *apurva* held by the Mimamsakas.³¹ Candramati's *Dasapadārtha Sastra*, an early Vaiśeṣika text dating from A.D. 640, also mentions *sakti* as one of the ten *padārthas*.³² Here *sakti* means the potentiality that allows things to function.

Sankaracarya, a strict Advaita Vedantin, proposes Brahma Advaitavada, the doctrine that there is only one reality (*brahman*), without a second. However he refers to *sakti* as the sole factor behind the creation or manifestation of the universe. For example, in *Brahmasutra-Bhāṣya* (hereafter cited as *BS-B*) Sankaracarya writes: "Without Her, the creatorship of the great lord Paramesvara cannot be explained."³³

In this particular passage, Sankaracarya, commenting on *sutra*, "tad-adhīnatvad arthavat" (1:4.3), attempts to prove that although it is *sakti* through which *paramesvara* creates the world, she has no existence independent of *paramesvara*, *brahman*. In his philosophy, *sakti* - variously known as *maya*, *avidya*, *prakṛti*, or *jadasakti* is an impenetrable mystery - is responsible for the evolution of the universe, but she, herself, cannot be said to be either existent or nonexistent. As Sankaracarya states:

Brahman is definitely endowed with all powers, Saktis. . . . Although Brahman is the only Reality, due to its union with

unique and numberless powers, multifarious effects (the universe of multiple objects) evolve from Brahman, just as from milk (evolves yogurt, butter, etc.).³⁴

In these two passages, as well as in many others,³⁵ Sankaracarya uses the term *sakti* as well as the concept, but leaves its role and metaphysical status ambiguous in relation to *brahman*.

In these references, however, Sankaracarya is unwilling to accept *sakti* as an entirely independent reality, for he will then have to explain *sakti*'s nature as well as its relationship to *brahman*. If he is to explain the existence of the empirical world, he cannot completely deny the existence of *sakti*, but if he is to maintain the integrity of his nondualistic model, he cannot accept it as an independent reality either. To overcome this dilemma, Sankaracarya modifies the basic doctrine of causation - *Satkaryavada*, the theory according to which an effect must exist in its cause prior to its manifestation. However, he modifies this theory by claiming that the effect is but an illusory appearance, having its cause in that which already exists. Thus, he still adheres to the theory of *Satkaryavada*, although not in the sense of *Parinamavada* as held by *Sankhya*, according to which the actual effect comes from the preexisting actual cause, but rather in the sense of *Vivartavada*, the theory of illusory effect appearing from a real cause.³⁶

Furthermore, without giving a concrete definition, Sankaracarya uses the term *sakti* interchangeably with *mayasakti*, *avidya*, and occasionally even *prakṛti*. In expounding his main thesis, *Brahmadvaitavada*, he devotes more space to discussions of the unreal nature of *sakti*, *mayasakti*, and other synonymous terms than he does to discussions about *brahman*,³⁷ a fact which leads adherents of other schools to refer to him as a *Mayavadin* rather than a *Brahmavadin*.

Vyakarana Agama, on the other hand, not only acknowledges *sakti*, but also assigns it a higher position than do the Vedantins. In Advaita Vedanta, the absolute reality, *brahman*, is devoid of all qualities and distinctions; somehow through a mysterious union with *mayasakti* (which is substantially neither real nor unreal and is thus simply indescribable), the world of multiplicity evolves.

In Vyakarana Agama, *sabdabrahman*, the eternal verbum is the Supreme Reality. During the evolution of the objective world, *avidya*, which is one of the powers of *sabdabrahman*, veils the unitary nature of *sabdabrahman* and projects the plurality of the phenomenal world. However, in order to prevent several projections from occurring simultaneously, Bhartrhari, the foremost philosopher of Vyakarana Agama, posits the concept of *kalasakti*. In regard to *kalasakti*, Gaurinath Sastri states:

The *kalasakti* of the grammarian is a Power of the Eternal Verbum by virtue of which the latter is described as the Powerful. It should be noted, however, that though the Eternal Verbum and *kalasakti* stand in the relation of a substance and an attribute, yet they are essentially identical and not different from each other. In fact the two may be regarded as two moments or aspects of one and the same Reality. The difference between the Eternal Verbum and *kalasakti* and, for the matter of that, all *Kalas*, is a mere appearance, an intellectual fiction, without a foundation in reality.³⁸

There are many other powers of *sabdabrahman* known as *kalas*, but all are controlled (*sarvah paratantrah*) by this unrestricted sovereign power known as *kalasakti* (*kalakhyena svatantryena*). Due to the control of *kalasakti* over other *saktis* (*kalas*), different projections or transformations occur sequentially rather than simultaneously.³⁹ *Kalasakti*, as we will see, plays an important role in the doctrine of Srividya.

In Indian poetics (Kavya Sastra), the term *sakti* is used in an entirely different sense. In his work, *Kavyaprakasa*, Mammata defines *sakti* as "unique potential identical to the seed of the essence of a poet, *kavitva bijarupa samskara visesa*."⁴⁰ While considering *dhvani*, suggestion, to be the heart (atman) of Kavya, Anandavardhana relates *dhvani* to *pratibha*, which signifies the supernatural (*alokasamanya*) intuitive power that enables the word and meaning of the word to flash in the mind of the poet or the reader.⁴¹ In Kavya Sastra, the term *pratibha* refers to *sakti*.⁴²

In systems other than Saktism and Saivism, the concept of *sakti* was developed in an effort to solve the problem of causality. Within their specific philosophical orientations, these other systems assign *sakti* just enough importance to logically explain causality without compromising the supremacy of their main doctrine (which may be *apurva*, *adrsta*, *brahman*, or *sabdabrahman*). While in other systems *sakti* remains subservient, in Saktism the situation is reversed: *sakti* becomes the major theme, the very center or even the only truth, and other concepts are secondary.

In literature that is not devoted exclusively to philosophy, such as the Puranas and Tantras, *sakti* assumes various names and forms. According to Pauranic and Tantric sources,⁴³ she appears in personified *form* primarily in two circumstances: to reward her devotees or to punish demons. Either before or after her appearance, devotees recite hymns of praise (*stotras*) in her honor, which elucidate both her personified and philosophical/metaphysical nature.⁴⁴ Thus, for the sake of study, we can say that there are two facets of *sakti*: the goddess and the philosophical category. In the *stotras*, the two facets are inseparably mixed, forming a single identity. As a goddess, she assumes multiple forms that are beautiful (e.g., Kamesvari or Lalita), terrifying (e.g., Kali),

heroic (e.g., Durga or Candika), and even inhuman (e.g., Varahi and Narasimhi). This facet constitutes the mythological and theological aspect of Saktism whereas the second facet, i.e., sakti as philosophical category, constitutes the speculative aspect of Saktism.

The Concept of Sakti in Contemporary Works

When we turn our attention to a focused study of sakti in the writings of contemporary scholars, we find a number of works and articles addressing general problems of Saktism. However, they rarely examine the precise meaning or role of sakti within a given text or tradition, nor do they compare and contrast this concept in other texts or traditions. Sudhendu Kumar Das, in his work *Sakti or Divine Power*,⁴⁵ focuses his discussion on the concept of sakti in Kashmir Saivism and Vira Saivism, although he does attempt to trace the origin of sakti in the Vedas and Upanisads. Although he cites Saivite texts, his study is neither objective nor analytical from an historical or philosophical standpoint. However, he does conduct a thorough survey of the literature and draws his material from a wealth of textual sources.

Jadunath Sinha's *Shakta Monism*⁴⁶ addresses topics such as siva, *kulakundalini*, *sakti*, nada, bindu, creation, the individual self, and so on. Unfortunately, he simply gathers and translates quotations from a number of sources (such as the Upanisads, Puranas, and the texts of Saiva and Sakta Agama) without raising any questions and, thus, without stating any points of distinction. Pushpendra Kumar, on the other hand, focuses mainly on the different forms of sakti in the Puranas in his book *Sakti Cult in Ancient India*. Evaluating the merit of this work, David Kinsley writes that this book, "though lacking in interpretive depth, provides a wealth of

textual sources concerned with goddess worship and goddess mythology in the medieval period."⁴⁷

The writings of Gopinath Kaviraj⁴⁸ are considered to be some of the most authoritative works not only in the area of Saktism but also in all of Tantrism. However, he focuses mainly on philosophy and does not cite his sources. In an attempt to construct the philosophy of Saktism, Kaviraj apparently fuses ideas that are unique to subschools of Saktism or Saivism and presents them as general concepts. Without any serious examination of his assumptions, subsequent Indian writers⁴⁹ such as Kailasa Pati Misra, Baladeva Upadhyaya, Kamalakar Mishra, and Sangam Lal Pandey used his work as a model and thus produced general works on Saktism that are duplicative and contain very little original material.

Hindu Tantrism (hereafter cited as *HT*) by Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, and *Hindu Tantric and Sakta Literature* (hereafter cited as *HTS*) by Gupta and Goudriaan, although general works on Saktism, are of great merit. These studies cover a vast range of Sakta history, philosophy, and religious practices; they also provide literature surveys and scrutinize some important Sakta texts. *Myth, Cult and Symbols in Sakta Hinduism* by Wendell Charles Beane and *The Saktas: An Introductory and Comparative Study* by Ernest A. Payne are comparative studies that give special attention to the manifestation of Sakti as Kali and Durga.⁵⁰ Although the historical account of Saktism given by scholars N. N. Bhattacharyya⁵¹ and D. C. Sircar⁵² is thorough, their remarks, according to Teun Goudriaan, "are necessarily speculative, not based upon a direct study of Sanskrit sources . . . and the same can be said of the publication by the well-known epigraphist and historian D. C. Sircar."⁵³

Other works of great value are those of Douglas Renfrew Brooks, Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, Paul Eduardo Muller-

Ortega, Andre Padoux, and Jaideva Singh.⁵⁴ Except for Brooks, these scholars focus primarily on Saivism, and it is in that context that they study the nature of sakti. The works by Brooks are the only ones that focus exclusively on the Srividya school of Tantrism. His doctoral dissertation, "The Srividya School of Sakta Tantrism: A Study of the Texts and Contexts of the Living Traditions in South India" (hereafter cited as "Srividya School"), traces the historical development of Srividya from the earliest available sources in Sanskrit and Tamil. It also examines the historical and theological materials as they are interpreted by the followers of Srividya in South India.

In another work, *The Secret of the Three Cities: An Introduction to Hindu Sakta Tantrism* (hereafter cited as *Three Cities*), Brooks provides a general introduction to Sakta Tantrism and the tradition of Srividya; he undertakes a detailed analysis of Srividya, using Bhaskararaya's commentary on the *Tripura Upanisad* as a basis. Because Bhaskararaya, although a Vedic Brahmin, was a strong proponent of Tantrism, especially the Kaula branch of Sakta Srividya Tantrism, Brooks has ample opportunity to highlight the Kaulacara school of Srividya, an opportunity that he uses to full advantage. However, because Bhaskararaya was a prolific writer of independent works as well as a commentator on several Tannic texts that do not belong exclusively to the Kaula aspect of Srividya, his writings cover a vast range of materials on Sakta, especially the Srividya tradition. Thus, while translating and analyzing Bhaskararaya's commentary on *Tripura Upanisad*, Brooks naturally discusses the characteristics of Hindu Tantrism in general and Sakta Tantrism in particular, pointing out some of the distinctions between the Kaulacara and Samayacara divisions of the Srividya school. However, like Bhaskararaya,

he remains focused on the Kaula school.

In his latest book, *Auspicious Wisdom: The Texts and Traditions of Srividya Sakta Tantrism in South India* (hereafter cited as *Auspicious Wisdom*), Brooks continues exploring the ideas he presented in *Three Cities*, elaborating on the Kaula aspect of the Srividya tradition. However, this recent work does not focus solely on Bhaskararaya and his commentary on *Tripura Upanisad*, but draws on a wider range of sources, thus providing a more comprehensive view of the history, philosophy, and practice of Srividya.

Within the confines of the present study, it is neither possible nor relevant to conduct an examination of all these issues; therefore, we have chosen to focus on the concept of sakti in the writings of Laksmidhara, a brilliant commentator on the *SL*. Because Kashmir Saivism is allied to the Srividya school of Saktism to which the *SL* belongs, we have elected to include the concept of sakti as expounded by Abhinavagupta, the greatest exponent of the Trika school of Kashmir Saivism. Because Abhinavagupta's writing is more comprehensive than Laksmidhara's, only his *Tantraloka* (hereafter cited as *TA*)⁵⁵ has been selected for this study.

The present work, however, is not intended to be a comparative study of Laksmidhara and Abhinavagupta. The purpose of examining Abhinavagupta's *TA* alongside Laksmidhara's commentary is to provide a more stable context, a context which makes it possible to examine Laksmidhara's notion of sakti with less historical and philosophical ambiguity. Because several relatively satisfactory studies have already been done on Abhinavagupta, relevant historical facts and, to some extent, philosophical doctrines have already been outlined.⁵⁶ Thus, the inclusion of *TA* helps to establish a boundary within the vast body of Saiva Agama, while still permitting the exploration of the historical and philological

connections of Laksmidhara's concept of sakti in the as-yet-unexplored Sakta literature.

Before we begin our examination of Laksmidhara's view of sakti, it is important to establish a general understanding of this concept in the wider context of Saktism. Only then can we explore its specific implication in the Samayacara school of Saktism expounded by Laksmidhara.

CHAPTER 2

Laksmidhara's Commentary in a Wider Context

The Origin and Historical Development of Tantra

The *SL*, which is generally attributed to Sankaracarya, glorifies and exalts Tripurasundari, a purely Tantric goddess who is virtually unknown in popular Hinduism. This goddess is worshipped or meditated upon in the Srividya tradition, a subbranch of Sakta Tantrism.¹ In the absence of its commentaries, *SL* can hardly be treated as a Tantric text, as it is basically a stotra text, consisting of devotional verses dedicated to the goddess Tripurasundari. Many other stotra texts of this kind, such as *Subhagodaya* (hereafter cited as *SU*), *Tripurasundari Mahimna Stotra*, *Parasambhu Mahimna Stava*, *Pancastavi*, *Saubhagyasudhodaya*, *Cidvilasastava*, and *Subhagodayavasana*, contain more significant Tantric materials than does *SL* itself. Beginning with Laksmidhara, the commentaries on *SL* highlight, expound, and stretch the Tantric

elements to such a degree that if the text and the commentaries are treated as an integral work, this becomes one of the most prominent texts of Sakta Tantrism. It is the weight of these commentaries, along with the popularity of its purported author, that makes *SL* the most influential Tannic text among scholars and practicing Srividya adherents alike.

The history of the Srividya tradition must be studied within the historical context of the origin and development of the main body of Tantrism. Further, in order to do justice to the study of *SL* and its commentaries, especially Laksmidhara's, we must locate their historical niches within the broad spectrum of the Srividya school of Sakta Tantrism. However, the vast and variegated nature of Tantric literature, as well as the popular beliefs and practices of present-day adherents, make it extremely difficult to accurately define Tantra, which, in turn, makes it difficult to accurately locate the Srividya tradition within the context of Tantrism.

One of the main difficulties in defining Tantra, as Padoux observes, arises from the sensational connotations that the term has acquired.² In the beginning of the century, Tantra was believed to be a conglomeration of bizarre and unconventional religious disciplines consisting of sorcery, exorcism, and orgiastic practices. According to early scholars, it occupied an obscure niche within the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jaina religions of India. But as research progressed, a broader range of Tantric material came to light that supported the view that Tantra, far from being an unconventional religious practice limited to a small group, was actually a common element in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. However, because many Tantric texts are still in manuscript form and thus have yet to be edited and studied, general assertions about Tantrism necessarily remain inconclusive. The problem becomes more complex because not

every text labeled "Tantra" is actually Tantric and not every text containing Tantric materials carries the word "Tantra" in its title. As Padoux writes, "There are so many gaps in this field of research that all definite assertions must be avoided."³

Although in the past fifty years many studies have been conducted in the field of Tantrism, the volume and breadth of Tantric literature is so enormous and its effect on Indian religion and spirituality so great that this field is still in its infancy. The definitions offered by scholars to date do not give a comprehensive understanding of Tantrism but rather provide only a general idea of what Tantrism is about. In Goudriaan's opinion, the word "Tantrism":

... is mainly used in two meanings. In a wider sense, Tantrism or Tantric stands for a collection of practices and symbols of a ritualistic, sometimes magical character.... In a more restricted sense, it denotes a system existing in many variations, of rituals full of symbolism, predominately - but by no means exclusively - Sakta, promulgated along "schools" (sampradaya) and lines of succession (parampara) by spiritual adepts or gurus. What they teach is subsumed under the term sadhana, i.e., the road to spiritual emancipation or to dominance by means of kundalini yoga and other psychosomatic experiences.⁴

Even though Tantrism does not hold the Vedas in high regard, and even frequently condemns them, it still embraces a number of Vedic theories and practices. Ritual worship and meditative techniques associated with numerous deities from the Vedas, Brahmanas, and Puranas appear in this literature, although they are presented in a Tantric manner. While emphasizing the practices related to yantras, *mandates*, and mantras, Tantric texts also include discussions on such diverse topics as the nature of absolute reality; the process of

evolution, maintenance, and dissolution of the universe; the evolution of sound or word in four progressive states - *para*, *pasyanti*, *madhyama*, and *vaikhari*; the different centers of consciousness in the human body known as *cakras*; methods of awakening the *kundalini* sakti, the primordial force that lies dormant in the human body, practices for propitiating different gods or goddesses at different *cakras*; and *panca-makaras* and *satkarma* sadhana (*marana*, *mohana*, *vasi-karana*, *stambhana*, *vidvesana*, and *uccatana*).⁵ This vast literature even contains instructions on building temples and consecrating images of the deities, as well as information on places of pilgrimage and the exact ritualistic or meditative practices to be performed there. Practices concerning the application of herbs, gems, minerals, and astrology are also brought into the fold of Tannic spirituality.

In contemporary Indian languages, such as Hindi, Tamil, Marathi, or Bengali, the term "Tantra" connotes black magic, spiritual or religious practices involving sex, and manipulation of psychic powers or evil spirits to seduce women, defeat or injure opponents, or mesmerize others. Even though Tantra usually carries a negative connotation among the masses of India, Brooks observes:

The word "Tantra" ... is frequently used to conjure notions of effective black magic, illicit sexuality, and immoral behavior. It is also clear, however, that Tantrics are considered "powerful" people. Recently, a popular movement in modern India links the cure of "sexual problems" experienced by married couples to specialists who openly call themselves "Tantrics." Thus, the terms "Tantra" and "Tantric" gain a more positive set of connotations but retain their popular associations with eroticism, alchemy, and magic. The multiple meanings of the term and its historical uses present a historical set of interpretive problems. There is no way, it seems, we can escape the fact that the term "Tantra" is charged with emotional power and controversy.⁶

That Tantra reached the West shrouded with the same or even more elaborate connotations is evidenced in the writings of Omar V. Garrison, Robert K. Moffet, and Marcus Allen.⁷ In fact, these negative implications, as well as those which Brooks calls "positive connotations" are neither new to contemporary communities nor totally baseless. Even the Tantric texts in Sanskrit, whose chronology remains obscure, are replete with all sorts of practices - positive, negative, socially acceptable or unacceptable, philosophically sound or rooted in superstition.

Here, for the sake of remaining focused and gaining a better understanding of the relationship among the principal branches of Tantra, we need only to identify "a standard Tantric sadhana," (if possible). In this context, the term "standard Tantric sadhana" means the practices that are described in acclaimed Tantric texts, such as *Saradatilaka*, *Kularnava Tantra*, *Nityasodasikarnava*, *Yoginihrdaya*, *Tantraraja Tantra*, *Netra Tantra*, and *Tantraloka*, and which have their basis in philosophy and are upheld by a recognized tradition.

"Standard Tantric sadhana,"⁸ as Sanjukta Gupta says, "consists of two parts: ritual worship (puja) and meditation (yoga)."⁹ But these two constituents are also found in almost all existing religions in India today, and the practices of idol worship; occultism; visiting holy shrines; and propitiating god(s) through the means of mantra, yantra, pictures and icons, are found in almost all denominations. Due to these shared characteristics, it is difficult to distinguish Tantrism from existing popular faiths. In fact, Tantric elements are found in Jainism, Buddhism, and almost all the offshoots of Hinduism, such as Vaisnavism, Saivism, Saktism, and so on.¹⁰ Furthermore, adherents of Tantrism neither claim to follow Tantrism as an independent religion, nor renounce the

religion in which they were born and raised. Due to the intermingled nature of Tantric and non-Tantric traditions, Agehananda Bharati goes so far as to say:

It is not advisable to try to list here the differences between tantric and non-tantric forms of Hinduism and Buddhism, simply because they are not of a philosophical order. In other words, there is nothing in Buddhist and Hindu tantric philosophy which is not wholly contained in some non-tantric school of either. . . . It is on the ritualistic or contemplatively methodical side that differences arise, and these are indeed fundamental. In a similar fashion the non-tantric monists or Saivites (Samkaracarya and his school, or the Southern Siva-Agama teachers), pronounce and emphasize the oneness of Siva and Sakti, and so do the Hindu tantric Sakta schools - they do not add any speculative innovation to their non-tantric antecedents - but they do different things and practice different *sadhana* (contemplative exercises). There is thus no difference between tantric and non-tantric philosophy, a speculative eclecticism is pervasive; there is all the difference in the practical, the *sadhana-part* of tantrism.¹¹

Bharati's claims that "there is nothing in Buddhist and Hindu tantric philosophy which is not wholly contained in some non-tantric school of either" and "there is all the difference in the practical, the *sadhana-part* of tantrism" seem to be overgeneralized and may be only partially true. If we take into account such texts as *Saradatilaka*, *Kularnava Tantra*, *Nityasodasikarnava*, *Yoginihrdaya*, *Tantraraja Tantra*, *Netra Tantra*, and *Tantraloka*, which are clearly identified as Tantric, we cannot agree that the philosophical contents of these texts are contained in non-Tantric schools and the texts belonging to them. And even the *sadhana* - whether the contemplative exercises or the rituals - described in these texts have their exact parallels in some non-Tantric texts.

Furthermore, at present, we have no standard criteria for defining exactly which texts can be called purely Tannic and which non-Tantric within a given division or subdivision of Hinduism. Tantric ideas are scattered throughout non-Tantric sources. For example, traces of the philosophical ideas and ritual practices found in Saiva Tantric texts can be seen in the Vedas, the Brahmanas, and the Upanisads. In the Puranas, we find many of those ideas further elaborated, but whether the Puranas should be treated as texts belonging to the Tantric or non-Tantric part of Hinduism is still controversial.

On the other hand, at least for the past millennia, there have been authors and practitioners who claimed that their works or practices are Tantric, although in most cases without making a sharp distinction between themselves and their non-Tantric counterparts. Furthermore, a number of praiseworthy studies have been conducted in the field of Tantrism in the twentieth century although, again, without defining the exact boundary of Tantrism. Thus, in spite of all these ambiguities, there still seems to be a general, though unspoken, consensus regarding what constitutes Tantra. It is on the basis of this unspoken consensus that scholars commonly use the terms Buddhism or Bauddha Tantrism (or the more frequently used terms Tantric Buddhism or Buddhist Tantrism), Jainism or Jaina Tantrism, and Hinduism or Hindu Tantrism.

The question of which philosophical theories and religious or spiritual practices distinguish Tantrism from other philosophical or religious schools of India remains unanswered. Goudriaan states that "the decision at what point a text or sect begins to be called 'Tantric' is very difficult. The traditions of the relevant groups sometimes contradict each other."¹² At the very beginning of *HTS*, he defines Tantra as "a systematic quest for salvation or for spiritual excellence by realizing and fostering the bipolar, bisexual divinity

within one's own body." According to him, this quest for salvation can be accomplished by such specific means as practicing *kundalini* yoga, reciting mantras, worshipping the deity in a yantra, and related practices. He also states that such practices constitute the nature and characteristics of Tantrism.

Attempting to clarify some of these issues by turning to the origin and history of Tantra only serves to highlight the nature of the problem. N. N. Bhattacharyya¹³ and B. Bhattacharya¹⁴ claim an extreme antiquity for Tantrism on the basis of archaeological findings in the Indus valley that resemble linga, yoni, and a human in a yogic (sitting) pose, all common elements of Tantrism. Based on this oversimplification and gross generalization of what constitutes Tantrism, Saktism, and Saivism, they attempt to prove the antiquity and prevalence of Tantrism not only in India, but also in Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and several other countries bordering on the Mediterranean.¹⁵ Goudriaan undercuts these hypotheses¹⁶ and proposes that "the safest way to assess the *terminus ante quem* of the crystallization of Tantrism into a system is to ascertain the date of the oldest Tantric texts."¹⁷ However, dating the Tantric texts is not an easy task; the history of Tantrism proposed by early scholars is constantly under dispute. For example, Farquhar and Eliade believe that Tantra existed in a well-developed form by the sixth century A.D., but this position is now challenged by Goudriaan.¹⁸ At this stage, we can only agree with Padoux that because of the number and magnitude of the gaps in this field:

... all definite assertions must be avoided.... Tantric Hinduism would have emerged progressively through a process of ongoing evolution over an extended period of time, granted, however, that we know nothing as to the nature and modalities of the process, and that we do not know how and when it started.¹⁹

The history of Tantrism can safely be established only after determining which portion of the literature (e.g., Pancaratra Agama, Saiva Agama, The Atharvaveda,²⁰ *Brahmanda Purana* and *Markandeya Purana*, and texts from Jaina and Buddhist Tantra) to include within the fold of Tantrism. If Tantra includes Pancaratra Agama and Saiva Agama, then the existence of Tannic literature can be traced to the fifth century A.D., which is also the time when Buddhist Tantric texts began to appear.²¹ Unfortunately, neither of these sources establish a chronology for the origin and development of Tantrism. However, the relative antiquity of Tantrism can be postulated from the fact that Hindu, Jaina, and Buddhist Tantrism could not have developed separately. All of these divisions of Tantrism must have had some common source from which they derived their Tantric elements, modifying them in accordance with their specific religious orientations. Tantric elements, therefore, must have predated the period in which the Tantric scriptures were written, and certainly predated the time when Tantrism, as such, gained independent literary status.²²

In *Three Cities*, Brooks comments that Tantric texts gained this independent status around the ninth century, although the concepts and practices set forth therein had then-antecedents in ancient wisdom traditions, shamanism, yoga, alchemy, and other folk practices, whose adherents may have involved themselves in religious rituals containing elements of asceticism, eroticism, and goddess worship. Whether these diverse traditions and their "Tantric" elements were rooted in the Aryan subculture that was flourishing on the Indian subcontinent or had their origins elsewhere, they were eventually assimilated and elaborated by brahmins with close ties to the Vedic tradition and absorbed into the rich Indian culture.

In this work, which is both recent and authoritative. Brooks states that by the eleventh century, the influence of Tantric concepts and practices on mainstream Hinduism was unmistakable. The evidence for this lies in the frequency with which the concepts and practices of Tantric Yoga are set forth in the works of non-Tantric writers, as well as in the involvement of people from all strata of society in a broad spectrum of Tantric practices for the purposes of achieving goals ranging from the acquisition of supernatural powers, sexual prowess, material goods, and physical immortality to the attainment of liberation while still in the physical body and an experiential realization of God.

Brooks also cites Goudriaan's observation that it would be a mistake to define as Tantric only those texts that proclaim themselves as such. Tantric literature is not a homogenous body, rather it assumes a Tantric identity by setting out a diffuse complex of ideas, tenets, and rituals whose universal and denominational "Tantric elements" are recognizable in the different religions and schools that embody various forms of Tantric practices.

This is not to say, as Brooks points out, that Tantric practices are limited to religious tenets and practices - Tantrism can be understood only if it is placed in cultural and historical contexts that locate these teachings within a larger belief system. One such "larger belief system" within which Tantra can be located is the Vedic tradition, which is rooted in Sanskrit sources. Brooks calls the Tantrics who have close ties with this tradition "Vaidika Tantrics" because they:

. . . identify themselves as part of the coherent and continuous legacy of Vedic tradition. They stand in contrast to those Hindu Tantrics who openly disdain Vedic traditions and especially the predominant position of brahmins in the interpretative process. While it is true that influential streams within Hindu Tantrism

are not represented in this typology, the catholic definition presented here does provide a working paradigm for the majority of sects that develop a Sanskrit-based form of Tantric Saktism.²³

As stated earlier, Tantra is not confined to Hinduism, but can be found in Buddhism and Jainism, the other principal indigenous faiths of India. Regardless of the different and often contradictory ideologies and doctrinal systems, we can with confidence identify the Tannic streams in these religions by identifying shared patterns of behavior and belief. One such shared pattern is the concept of sakti.

The Development of Saktism

Sakti holds a significant place in Tantric Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, and subschools of Hinduism, such as Vaisnavism, Saivism, and Ganapatya.²⁴ Some scholars consider the inclusion of Sakti to be the factor that designates a denomination as Tantric; as a result, Tantrism and Saktism are sometimes considered to be identical. However, Goudriaan, who agrees with Payne, points out that Saktism and Tantrism are "two intersecting but not coinciding circles."²⁵ It is true that branches of Tantrism such as Vaisnavism, Saivism, and Buddhism have incorporated Sakti, but she is always accompanied by a male partner, who is thought to be incapable of initiating any action or movement, but nevertheless occupies a higher position than Sakti in all Tantric sects, with the exception of Saktism. In Saktism, Sakti is dominant and the male partner is simply an inactive figurehead. Therefore, goddess worship in branches of Tantrism, such as Vaisnavism and Saivism, can be called "dependent Saktism," according to N. N. Bhattacharyya, whereas the latter form can be called "independent Saktism." This independent Saktism, according to Bhattacharyya, "had already

made its appearance in Gupta age" and is an entirely female-dominated religion in which the male partners remain subordinate to the goddesses.²⁶

Referring to N. N. Bhattacharyya, Goudriaan remarks:

It makes sense to distinguish an "independent" from a "dependent" variety (Bhattacharyya, *Sakta Religion*, p. 73). In the latter case, the *sakti(s)* is (are) worshipped within the fold of another denomination (like Vaisnavism and Jainism) without constituting the essence of its creed or practice, while in the Sakta sect proper, *sakti* is the chief divinity.²⁷

The origin and early development of Saktism is still a matter of dispute. Studies to date focus mostly on Sakti as a goddess, and on the myths, symbols, and rituals associated with her. Based on recent archaeological findings at Baghor in Central India, J. Desmond Clark postulates the existence of Sakti worship at numerous sites belonging to the Upper Paleolithic, Neolithic, and early Mesolithic periods. Clark reports:

These groups use this same style of colorful natural stone with concentric geometric laminations, often in the form of triangles, as a symbol for the female principle or the Mother Goddess.... We believe that there is a very strong possibility that this structure and the stone represent a shrine to the Goddess of female principle, Sakti, which was built by the group of Upper Paleolithic hunter-gatherers ... lies between 9000 and 8000 B.C. If this interpretation and dating prove correct and our identification of the shrine is substantiated, then this antedates by several thousand years the next oldest religious structure of this kind in South Asia, and is evidence of the remarkable continuity of religious beliefs and motifs in the Indian sub-continent.²⁸

From the beginning of social evolution, according to N. N. Bhattacharyya, primitive man in agricultural societies

worshipped the divine force in female form. Bhattacharyya argues that it is natural to associate creativity, fertility, productivity, and receptivity with women and, therefore, to conceive the invisible, supernatural force(s) as female. Bhattacharyya believes the association of the human generative organs with fertility and productivity is the basis for the tendency to conceptualize the earth, rivers, and many other aspects of nature or natural forces, as feminine and therefore to worship them in the female form. Bhattacharyya classifies the early concepts of the goddess in the following categories: tribal divinities; goddesses of mountains, lakes, and rivers; the destroyers of evil; goddesses of healing; goddesses related to the animal world; community goddesses; protectors of children; earth mothers; and corn mothers.²⁹

In early Vedic literature, the worship of the divine in female form holds a less significant place than the worship of male gods. There are references to female divinities such as Aditi, Usas, and Sarasvati, but by no means can the Goddess's status be compared with male deities such as Indra, Varuna, Agni, Mitra, and others. In the *Rgveda*, a female deity, Aditi, is not only called the mother of all gods, she is also said to be heaven, space, mother, father, and son, as well as all which has existed and all that will exist. Such a statement, however, does not necessarily mean that her position was higher or even equal to the position of male gods, such as Indra, Agni, or Visnu.³⁰

Scattered references to the Goddess throughout Vedic literature imply the existence of Sakti worship, but such references are not strong enough to prove the existence of an independent Sakta cult. In his work, *Sakti or Divine Power*, Das gathers references to sakti from the Samhitas, Puranas, and Upanisads and tries to show a gradual development of the sakti concept in Vedic literature. According to him,³¹ all

principal gods of the Vedic pantheon have a sakti basis; *saci*, for example, is a Vedic word denoting the divine power of the gods. *Gnas*, wives of the gods, or fertility goddesses, represent the earliest concept of sakti. According to Das, these *gnas* finally merge into *vak*. In the *Brahmanas*, this *vaksakti* in union with *prajapati* is said to be the creator of the universe and the Gods. In later Vedic literature, *vak* is identified with *Sarasvati*, the goddess of learning. The concept of *vak* and *Sarasvati* continues to expand in the Upanisadic period and can be observed in the *Kena Upanisad* and the *Svetasvatara Upanisad*. In the *Kena Upanisad*, she appears as *Uma Haimavati* and is described as the highest power, superseding all the gods.³² In the *Svetasvatara Upanisad*, she is *para* (transcendent), and the powers of *jnana* (knowledge), *bala* (might), and *kriya* (action) are intrinsic to her.³³

Another scholar, Kaviraj, divides Saktism into three major periods: (1) ancient or pre-Buddhistic, going back to prehistoric age; (2) medieval or post-Buddhistic extending to about A.D. 1200; and (3) modern, from A.D. 1300 to the present.³⁴ Unfortunately, Kaviraj's threefold division of Sakta history does not provide any clue to origin or early development, nor does it designate when the pre-Buddhistic period ends, or the medieval or post-Buddhistic period begins.

In regard to the second period, Goudriaan points out, "perhaps we have to consider this period to be closed with the disappearance of Buddhism as a major religion from India."³⁵ The second period, the medieval or post-Buddhistic, which according to Kaviraj is the most creative period in the history of Tantrism, would then cover a period of approximately 600 to 1000 years, ending around A.D. 1200. Although, it is extremely difficult to establish a precise history, this may be the period that Bhattacharyya considers to be "independent" Saktism. For example, it is in this period that the *Brahmanda*

Purana and *Markandeya Purana* were produced.³⁶ Most of the Sakta and Saiva Agama texts, and the commentaries on them, belong to this period.³⁷ As Kaviraj points out, the modern period that covers from A.D. 1300 until the present "too has been productive, but with a few brilliant exceptions most of the works produced in this period are of secondary character and include compilations, practical handbooks and minor tracts dealing with miscellaneous subjects."³⁸

The texts composed during the second period not only give a general idea of Saktism, but also present the subdivisions and the unique characteristics distinguishing them from each other. Tantric texts such as *Kubjika Tantra*, *Rudrayamala*, *Catuspitha Tantra*, *Jhanarnava Tantra*, *Devibhagavata*, and *Kalika Purana* (and even Buddhist Tantric texts: *Hevajra Tantra* and *Sadhanamala*) mention several *pithas*, shrines or centers of sakti worship; usually fifty, fifty-one, or one hundred and eight *upapithas* (secondary shrines) and four *mahapithas* (great shrines) are named.³⁹ The concept of *upapithas* and *mahapithas* is most often connected with the story of the death of Sati, Siva's wife.

According to the legend, Siva was so stricken with grief at his wife's death that he roamed aimlessly with the corpse on his shoulders. To free him from his attachment to the corpse, Visnu followed him, gradually severing the limbs. The sites where the pieces of Sati's body fell subsequently became *upapithas* or *mahapithas*. There is no agreement in respect to either the number of these *pithas* or the exact distinction between the *upapithas* and *mahapithas*.⁴⁰

According to scholars, with the passage of time, some of the local goddesses, which were the presiding deities of these shrines, gained prominence and became major deities in Saktism known as *mahavidyas*.⁴¹ They are: Kali, Tara, Sodasi (or Tripurasundari), Bhuvanesvari, Bhairavi, Chinna-

masta, Dhumavati, Vagalamukhi (Bagalamukhi or Valgamukhi), Matangi, and Kamala.⁴² Describing the characteristics of these *mahavidyas*, S. Shankaranarayan writes:

Each Vidya is distinct and distinguishable from the other. Each is a particular Cosmic function and each leads to a special realization of the One Reality. The might of Kali, the sound-force of Tara, the beauty and bliss of Sundari, the vast vision of Bhuvaneshwari, the effulgent charm of Bhairavi, the striking force of Chinnamasta, the silent inertness of Dhumavati, the paralysing power of Bagalamukhi, the expressive play of Matangi and the concord and harmony of Kamalatmika are the various characteristics, the distinct manifestations of the Supreme Consciousness that has made this creation possible.⁴³

There is a rich literature related to each of these mahavidyas, especially Kali, Tara, and Tripurasundari. The Tantric worship of all of the mahavidyas follows a standard format; differences are observed only in the structure of the yantras in which they are worshipped, and in the names and the sequence of the deities subordinate to each mahavidya (avarana *devatas*). From a philosophical perspective, these *mahavidyas* lack distinguishing features and, with the exception of the terms employed to indicate philosophical categories, all present the same doctrines. Scattered references to them can be found in Pauranic literature, but the usage of the term mahavidya itself, as well as the goddesses belonging to that category, first appear in the Tantric texts, such as the *Mundamala Tantra*, *Todala Tantra*,⁴⁴ *Saktisangama*⁴⁵ and *Sakta Pramoda*.⁴⁶ Most of these texts, according to the criteria set by Kaviraj, probably belong to the third period of Saktism. Thus, the rise of mahavidyas cannot be accurately traced, but probably occurred after A.D. 1300.

However, none of these Tantric texts are exclusively devoted to one particular mahavidya. To date there has been no

serious study delineating the boundaries between the mahavidyas in terms of pinpointing either their distinguishing features in ritual worship or the philosophical principles that permit a particular vidya to stand as an independent school of Saktism. There is a standard format for worshipping these mahavidyas: all have their corresponding yantras. The central *bindu*, the dot of the yantra, represents the mahavidya, and the surrounding triangles, petals, circles, and squares are occupied by secondary deities of that particular mahavidya. Among the schools associated with the ten mahavidyas, it is Srividya and to some extent the Kali mahavidya that have developed an elaborate and sophisticated ideology compatible with other systems of thought, such as Vyakarana Agama and Kashmir Saivism.⁴⁷

An Overview of Srividya

In order to draw a literary boundary for Srividya, it is important to note the other terms that also refer to the same mahavidya. *Mundamala Tantra* uses the term Sodasi rather than Srividya to describe the Goddess of this sect, whereas the most popularly used word for this mahavidya is Tripurasundari or Mahatripurasundari. The words Kamesvari, Rajarajesvari, Tripura (Tripurasundari or Mahatripurasundari), Subhaga, Lalita, Sodasi, and Kamakala are interchangeably used to denote this mahavidya, but no one has ever paused to examine whether they refer to identical aspects.

Goudriaan considers Sodasi to be "an aspect of tripurasundari,"⁴⁸ and Tripurasundari herself, according to him, is "the most important Tannic form of Sri/Laksmi."⁴⁹ These two statements indicate that Sodasi simply refers to an aspect of Tripurasundari which means Sodasi is a subdivision

of Tripurasundari, not representing the entire mahavidya as such. Tripurasundari, on the other hand, is a form of Sri, or Laksmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, who most often appears as the consort of the god Visnu.⁵⁰ The association of Tripurasundari with Sri or Laksmi compromises her status as an independent *mahavidya*. Also, the tenth *mahavidya*, Kamala, or Kamalatmika, who is also the same as Sri or Laksmi, then becomes indistinguishable from Tripurasundari.

Goudriaan probably identifies Tripurasundari with Sri/Laksmi because the usage of the term Sri in front of vidya may have led him to assume the association of this mahavidya with Sri, meaning Laksmi. In addition, the followers of Visistadvaita Vedanta, worship Sri or Laksmi in the center of *sricakra*. The Mahatmyakhanda of *Tripura Rahasya* (hereafter cited as *TR-M*) gives a mythological explanation of how Laksmi and the term sri became associated with Tripurasundari. When Tripurasundari appeared in front of Sri (another name for Laksmi) and granted her a boon as a result of her prolonged meditation, Laksmi asked for *sayujyamukti*, a state of liberation that would allow her to become one with Tripurasundari. Because without Laksmi, Visnu will fail to protect and maintain law and order, Tripurasundari substituted another boon, "From now on, I will be addressed by your name, Srividya: The city of Sri, Sripura, will be my city; the cakra of Sri, *sricakra*, will be my cakra; and the *pujakrama* of Sri will be my *pujakrama*. From now on, the *suktas* of Sri will be Sri Sodasividya and because of the oneness between us, I will be known as Maha Laksmi."⁵¹ According to Laksmidhara, the *tripurasundari* mantra, having the bija *srin* as its sixteenth letter, is known as *srividya*.⁵²

These references may indicate the association of

Sri/Laksmi with Tripura. However, they do not substantiate the claim that Tripurasundari is an aspect of Laksmi or vice versa. Rather, the references may indicate the historical inclusion of Laksmi in the Srividya tradition with Tripurasundari. In the *Tripura Rahasya*, Tripurasundari is also known as Rajarajesvari, Kamesvari, and Sodasi or Srimaha Sodasaksari.⁵³

Among the Puranas, *Brahmanda Purana*, especially the second half, known as "Lalitopakhyana," is exclusively devoted to the glorification of Tripurasundari. Interestingly, the second half of this Purana, which focuses on the manifestation of Tripurasundari and her warfare with Bhandasura, is known as "Lalitopakhyana" (the tale of Lalita), rather than "Tripuropakhyana." But, throughout the "Lalitopakhyana," the word *tripura* is used more frequently than *lalita*. For example, in one of the most famous prayers to Tripurasundari, traditionally known as "Lalita-Sahasranama" (the one thousand names of *lalita*), the words *tripura*, *tripuresi*, *tripuramba*, and other similar variations are used frequently, while the word *lalita* occurs only once. Other famous Tantric texts also prefer *tripura* over other terms. For instance, NS⁵⁴ and YH⁵⁵ use the term *tripura* and do not mention the terms *srividya*, *rajarajesvari*, *subhaga*, or *samaya* at all. YH uses the term *kamakala* once.⁵⁶ Similarly, *Kamakala-vilasa* refers to *Kamakala* and *Tripurasundari*.⁵⁷

Gandharva Tantra (hereafter cited as GT) in *Tantrasahgraha, Part III* (hereafter cited as TS-III), which most often refers to this mahavidya as Tripurasundari, mentions Lalita only once but identifies Tripura with Durga. According to GT, due to her unsurpassed beauty, Durga is known as Tripura.⁵⁸ Laksmidhara in his commentary on the SL also identifies Durga with Tripuramahavidya.⁵⁹ Adherents of Tripurasundari, such as Laksmidhara, Bhaskararaya, Siva-

nanda, Amrtananda, and recent propagators of the tradition, such as Kaviraj and Swami Hariharananda Saraswati (more popularly known in North India as Swami Karpatri), presume that all these terms refer to the same mahavidya and therefore they consider any text that propagates the worship of the goddess under any of these terms to be a Srividya text.

In fact, in its *srīcakra* schema, Srividya covers a large number of goddesses that are associated with other mahavidyas as well. This leads to an unresolved hypothesis: did such a schema develop in an attempt to bring all the deities to one fold, or did this system with its intricate theory of *sakti's* multiple manifestations develop independently, with later adoptions of some of the subordinate *sakti's* by the followers of other mahavidyas? If the latter, did some of the subordinate deities of *srīcakra* rise to the status of independent *mahavidyas*? For example, Tripurabhairavi, who is simply a *cakra nayika* and the leader of the eighth circuit of *srīcakra*, is also classified as the fifth independent *mahavidya*. Bhuvanesvari, the fourth *mahavidya*, on the other hand, is sometimes recognized as Rajarajesvari, another name for Tripurasundari.⁶⁰

According to Sanjukta Gupta's observation, "the famous ten goddesses (*dasa mahavidyas*) are direct or indirect manifestations of one or the other of these three."⁶¹ By "these three," Gupta means Kali, Tara, and Tripura/Sri. On the basis of the attributes described in the Tantric texts, Chinnamasta, Bagalamukhi, and Dhumavati are closer to Kamli and Tara, whereas Bhuvanesvari, Bhairavi, Matangi, and Kamala are closer to Tripurasundari. In this matter, Shankaranarayan also observes:

. . . they are distinct and unique, they have among themselves many characteristics in common. Kali, Chinnamasta, Dhumavati and Bagalamukhi have the common characteristics of Power

and Force, active or dormant. Sundari, Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Matangi and Kamalatmika share the qualities of Light, Delight and Beauty. Tara has certain characteristics of Kali and certain others of Sundari and is correlated to Bhairavi, Bagalamuldii and Matangi in the aspect of Sound-Force expressed or impeded. Thus the ten Maha Vidyas fall into three broad divisions of discipline. . . .⁶²

Furthermore, in the Tantric texts *Prapacasara Sahgraha* (hereafter cited as *PSS*)⁶³ and *Srividya Tantra*,⁶⁴ the *bija* mantra of Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Matangi, and Kamala are added to the main Srividya mantra, creating variations in the Srividya mantra and subsuming these *mahavidyas* under the greater fold of Srividya.⁶⁵ This tendency indicates Srividya's overpowering influence on other *mahavidyas*. In this sense it can be stated that of the ten *mahavidyas*, Kali, Tara, and Tripurasundari are the most prominent.

The Srividya school built around Tripurasundari holds a more important place than those schools built around Kali and Tara for three reasons: its literary standard, its well-defined and coherent doctrines, and the inclusion of Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, and Kamala within its fold.⁶⁶ Furthermore, this is the only school in Tantrism that emphatically claims its association with the Vedas; the adherents of this mahavidya were and still are Hindus well versed both in the Sanskrit language and in a wide range of philosophical literature. In fact, the latter factor helped the Srividya branch of Sakta Tantrism develop a sophisticated philosophy and metaphysics.⁶⁷

Tracing the mythological origin of Srividya still leaves us with considerable historical ambiguity. However, we can also find references to the Srividya mantra, Srividya rituals, and Srividya theology in the literature that is not particularly

related to the Srividya sect of Saktism. Traditional adherents of Srividya - both ancient and modern - in an attempt to demonstrate the Vedic origin of Srividya repeatedly quote passages from the *Rgveda* and the Upanisads. The main function of such references is to demonstrate how the Srividya mantra is derived from the various mantras of the *Rgveda*, or more specifically, how the worship of *srīcakra* and the concepts related to fifteen or sixteen nityakalas and the name of the vidyesvara of the Srividya mantra occur in the Vedic literature.⁶⁸ To a nonbeliever, however, this evidence is not convincing because this tendency - i.e., to lend authenticity and antiquity to a doctrine or sect of one's preference by quoting passages from the Vedas and by interpreting them on the basis of one's own etymology or even pseudo-etymology - is common among almost all sectarian commentators and adherents of any given doctrine in India, not only Srividya. Such references and interpretations do not help to determine the origin of Srividya-related practices.

So far, the best account of the historical evidence for the Srividya tradition is given by Brooks.⁶⁹ Brooks points out that ritualistic elements of Srividya, such as the use of mantras, mudras, and nyasa, which are common to all forms of Saktism were in vogue long before they appeared in written sources of Srividya texts. Ritualistic and meditative practices that are unique to the Srividya branch of Saktism, such as the correlation between Lalita or Tripurasundari and *srīcakra* and Sodasi or the *pahcadasaksari* mantra are first mentioned in *Devi Bhagavatam*, *Kalika Purana*, *Linga Purana*, and *Brahmanda Purana*. These Puranas are constantly cited by traditional followers of Srividya to demonstrate its antiquity, which, considering the nature of the Pauranic materials, may not be a valid means of establishing historicity. Even if we accept this traditional viewpoint, it still

does not take us beyond the eighth or ninth century.

AS Brooks observes, "Evidence that Srividya is plainly visible in literature from before the eighth century is at best suggestive and certainly not conclusive."⁷⁰ In Tamil sources, Srividya worship, and that only in its prototypical form, can be found in approximately the sixth or seventh century A.D. Tamil *siddha* master Tirumular, in his *Tirumantiram* makes "explicit reference to the *srividya* mantra in its fifteen syllables according to the kadimata interpretation."⁷¹ He also describes the goddess Tripura and tripura cakra but does not establish any connection between Tripura and Srividya or between tripura cakra and *sricakra*.⁷² In other sections of *Tirumantiram*, Tirumular mentions the cakra or a portion of it which is associated with the worship of *Nataraja* at Cidambaram.

He goes on to describe the variety of siva cakras, including *sammelanacakra*, which is associated with the secret form of *Nataraja*. According to Brooks, this *sammelanacakra* can be linked to *sricakra* and *Nataraja's* consort and Siva-kamasundarfto *Tripurasundari* or *Srividya*. If this link is correct, then there is strong evidence of the existence of the presence of Srividya elements in Saiva temple worship from at least the sixth century.⁷³ However, the existence of the Srividya element within the Saiva temple cult does not give any indication of whether or not the Kaula aspect of Srividya had been incorporated in the South Indian Srividya cult.

So far, all this above-mentioned evidence refers to the period of composition for the *srikula* aspect of Srividya, whereas the development of Srividya elements in the Kashmiri tradition and its association with Kaulism may have already taken place in Kashmir and other parts of North India. Although Brooks does not provide any solid evidence, he believes that:

It had moved south by the time of Tirumular and perhaps earlier if the evidence at the Cidambaram temple is conclusive. This would lead us to believe that mantra and yantra development within Srividya comes from a period before the sixth century. If Kalikula sources are, as Goudriaan says, well before the Srikula then these elements in prototypical or unsystematic forms too must be pushed back to a period before the sixth century. This hypothesis is hardly novel but it is perhaps the first time it has been presented with at least some historical and literary references.⁷⁴

Soon after the sixth or seventh century, Srividya begins to emerge in written form. Based on Padoux's observations in *Recherches sur la symbolique et l'energie de al parole dans certains textes tantriques*, Brooks asserts "Srividya, like other Sakta sects, incorporates practically the entire speculative foundation of Kashmiri Saivism into its theology."⁷⁵ The connection between *Vamakesvara Tantra (VT)* (of which NS and YH are the two parts), which is a Srividya text, and its commentators - Jayaratha (Isvarasiva, whom Jayaratha mentions as an early commentator of VT), Sivananda, and Punyananda - clearly shows "that Srividya had taken a fully mature written form by the twelfth century."⁷⁶

Furthermore, all these commentators belong to Kashmir Saivism and therefore their association with VT reinforces the historical ties, or at least a close interaction between Kashmir Saivism and the Srividya branch of Sakta Tantrism. Exactly when and how Kashmir Saivism arrived from the North and became popular in South India remains an open question, but according to Brooks' belief, "the process is certainly complete before Bhaskararaya."⁷⁷

Also according to Brooks, evidence of the existence of Srividya elements can be traced from Tirumular's writings, Nataraja's temple at Cidambaram, the commentaries of

Jayaratha and other Saivite scholars on the Srividya text, VT, all the way to Bhaskararaya. Even if he is correct and all this evidence is conclusive, it still does not help fill the gap of approximately seven hundred years between Tirumular and Bhaskararaya in the truest sense. However, the assimilation of Srividya practices in the Safikaracarya order could provide a more precise historical perspective.

Throughout India, contemporary Srividya adherents, whether or not they officially belong to the Sankaracarya order, frequently mention Sankaracarya and his grandteacher (*paramaguru*) Gaudapada as practitioners of Srividya. Despite the fact that most historians dismiss authorship of SL, the Prapancasara (*PS*) and the Lalitatrīṣaṭibhāṣya (*LTSB*), the majority of Srividya practitioners and swamis of the Sankaracarya order consider these texts to be authentic works of Adi Sankara. Srividya adherents hold these texts and Gaudapada's Srividya *Ratna Sūtras* and *Subhagodaya* in high regard.

Evaluating the pros and cons of the arguments regarding Sankaracarya's authorship, Brooks concludes that these texts could have been written by heads of Sankaracarya's *mathas* and that *PS* "can be dated no later than the eleventh century, and possibly much earlier."⁷⁸ Similarly, Brooks asserts that "LTSB was composed in one of the Sankara mathas sometime between the eighth and eleventh centuries."⁷⁹ When and how Srividya practices entered the nondualistic, Vedanta-based Sankaracarya order remains unknown, but that they occupied an important place in the spiritual lives of the followers of Sankaracarya after the eleventh century is an established fact.⁸⁰ In all Sankaracarya monasteries, from the twelfth century on, Srividya practice, in the form of either worshipping an image of Srividya (under the names Tripura, Lalita, or Rajarajesvari) or worshipping śricakra.

had become part of the daily service.

In this particular respect, adherents of the Sankaracarya order somehow manage to reconcile their nondualistic Vedanta with nondualistic Srividya despite the significant differences between the two. Doctrinally, they are Advaita Vedantins and thus they do not hold devotion (*bhakti*) and worship (*upasana*) in high regard. But practically, they take devotion to *Tripurasundari* and ritual worship of *srīcakra* seriously. This tendency seems to have existed in Sankaracarya's monasteries at least from the time of Vidyaranya.⁸¹

Presently there are a good number of Srividya practitioners who belong neither to the Saivite nor Sankaracarya orders in the strict sense, but rather to the broad range of Hinduism. Most are householders and, with few exceptions, highly educated smarta brahmins. As Brooks observes:

In Srividya, the majority of historical writers are *smarta* brahmins; that is, they identify with traditions that follow the exoteric rituals of the so-called *Smtis* (i.e., *grhya*-, *srauta*-, and *dharmaśāstras*) and worship the *pañcāyatana devatās*, that is, the five divinities (Surya the Sun god, Siva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, and Durgā or Devī). All deities, however, are treated in sectarian terms as manifestations or aspects of the Supreme Deity, whoever that may be.⁸²

Occasionally, one may encounter Srividya practitioners, at least in North India, the northeastern part of the Himalayas, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, who officially belong to the order of Ramanujacarya or to Avadhuta Pantha, which mythically begins with Dattatreya. Baba Ramamagaladasa, a *vaisnava swami* in Ayodhya, was a famous Srividya teacher. A number of Srividya practitioners, mostly householders, who studied with Baba Ramamagaladasa, worship Sri or Gopalasundari (instead of Tripurasundari) while using *srīcakra* as the basis of their practice. In none of these cases

do the Srividya practitioners publicly claim their exclusive identification with the Srividya cult. Ordained swamis publicly identify themselves with their order, whereas in private they practice and teach Srividya. Srividya practitioners who are not swamis are usually householders and practice Srividya without isolating themselves from their religious background.

Srividya's interaction with two significant traditions, Saivism and Advaita Vedanta, helped it develop intricate philosophical theories and gain social acceptance, which were and still are missing in other branches of Saktism. It is on the ground of Saiva philosophy and metaphysics that Srividya writers pulled together Srividya elements, which were scattered throughout Vedic, Upanisadic, and Pauranic sources. Using Kashmir Saivism as a model, Srividya adherents gave a philosophical interpretation of different facets of Srividya, such as yantra, mantra, *guru*, *matrka* (letters of the Sanskrit alphabet), the main goddess, Srividya or Tripura and subordinate deities (*avarana devatas*) and tried to demonstrate the oneness among these facets.

Srividya's association with Sankaracarya's followers, who were staunch supporters of the Vedas, helped it become accepted by those who disdained Tantra and Saktism as "non-Vedic." However, assimilation of Saivism, which is purely Agamic and dominated by Kaula rituals in practice, and the Advaita Vedanta of Sankara, which is purely Vedic/-Upanisadic and puritan (i.e., completely opposed to Kaula rituals), gradually prepared the ground in which the two branches of Srividya grew. One group of Srividya practitioners upheld Saiva-based Kaulism or simply embraced it as a part of normal Srividya practice. The other group totally rejected Kaulism, replacing it with what they called Samayacara. Thus, the two schools - Kaulacara Srividya

and Samayacara Srividya - came into existence.

Generally, the word "Kaula" or "Kaulism" refers to the mainstream of Tantrism that consists of the most frequently disputed ritual elements, that is *pancamakara* - *madya* (wine), *mamsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), *mudra* (gesture), and *maithuna* (physical union); *kamakaladhyana*, the meditation on, or worship of, the female organ; and the inclusion in rituals of aspirants of both sexes from all castes. From its literary inception until it became associated with the Sankaracarya order, Kaula practices did not seem to be an issue in Srividya, although we do not exactly know whether or not the Kaula elements existed in Saiva temples and the early phase of the Srividya cult before the introduction of Kashmir Saivism in the south. Furthermore, *pancamakara* and *kamakala* worship are merely part of the external rituals. Other rituals, such as offering water, flowers, incense; lighting the lamp; and the *bilva patra*, the invocation and the prayers to the main as well as the subordinate deities, are also intrinsic characteristics of Kaulism.

In the early phases of Srividya, Kaula practices, excluding *pancamakara* and *kamakala*, may have been adopted by Srividya practitioners. The inclusion of *pancamakara* might have been the result of the gradually increasing influence of Kashmir Saivism. As this process continued, people from all walks of life may have been attracted to it, some embracing the worship of the goddess Srividya along with every other aspect of Kaulism and some embracing only those elements of Kaulism which did not include *pancamakara*. If *Subhagodaya* and the *Srividya Ratna Sutrās* are actually the works of Gaudapada, and *SL* is the work of Adi Sankaracarya, then we can safely postulate that in the eighth or ninth century there existed a mild form of Kaula-influenced Srividyam. In his works, Gaudapada describes the anthropomorphic form

of Srividya, *sricakra*, and her worship, which is of course ritualistic, but at the same time, gives a yogic interpretation of all these concepts and proposes a process of internalizing the rituals. It is he who first uses the term *samaya* for srividya, the term *samaya* for the path that leads to her realization, and the term *samayin* for one who follows that path. Obviously, he does not attempt to highlight distinctive features of Samayacara to distinguish it from the Kaula-dominated Srividya, which was probably more prevalent at that time.

Sankaracarya takes this issue a step further in SL, clearly stating that the sixty-four tantras (Catuhsasti Tantra), which expound Kaulism, are subordinate to the group of five Tannic texts (Subhagamapancakam), which he considers to be the only valid Tantra. He calls that Subhagamapancakam Tantra, *Te Tantram*, "your Tantra," implying that those sixty-four Tantric texts do not expound her essence. He also introduces the concept of srividya under the term *samaya* in a more elaborate manner than do the texts attributed to Gaudapada. Sankaracarya places great emphasis on the realization of srividya through yogic means, but he also dedicates the majority of the verses in praise of the external form of the goddess. Such a long, detailed description of the anthropomorphic form of the goddess is a clear indication that her worship was widespread, at least in South India. It is plausible that Kaulism, along with *pancamakara* and other similar elements, may not have entered Sankaracarya monasteries due to their Vedic/puritan orientation, but this could not prevent the inclusion of Kaula elements in Srividya outside the monasteries.

Inclusion or exclusion of Kaula elements in Srividya did not seem to be an issue of particular importance until the sixteenth century. Before Laksmidhara,⁸³ even Sri-

vidyam adherents of the Sankaracarya order, such as Padmapada (if he is actually the author of *Vivarana Commentary on Prapancasara*), Vidyaranya Yati, and the authors of *Kalyanavrsti Stotra* and *Kanakadhara Stotra*, all of whom bore the name "Sankaracarya," express no interest in this matter. It is Laksmidhara who first introduces Samayacara as a totally independent branch of Srividya and draws a sharp distinction between Kaula and Samaya schools of Srividya.

According to Laksmidhara, Kaulacara or Kaulism means taking delight in external *puja*, ritual worship.⁸⁴ Considering it to be an opponent's view (*purvapaksa*), Laksmidhara neither accords Kaulacara any respect nor feels any compulsion to review the literature that expounds Kaulism before condemning it.⁸⁵ As will be seen, Laksmidhara's description of Kaulism cannot be taken as an accurate account of Kaulism as a whole; obviously he denigrates it to lend more credence to the Samayacara he propounds.

The Kaula-Samaya Dispute

Before we undertake any further analysis of Laksmidhara's opinion regarding Kaula and the sharp distinction he draws between it and his self-proclaimed Samaya views, we need to have a general understanding of Kaula-oriented Srividya discipline. Kaula *sadhakas* draw the *sricakra* on a piece of bark or cloth, or inscribe it on a gold, silver, or copper plate, or on a wooden board. During the ritual, they use articles such as water, flowers, incense, rice, yoghurt, honey, fruit, and cooked food. This group believes in the oneness of Srividya and *kundalini*, but does not emphasize experiencing it. Prior to the external *sricakra* worship, this group performs *manasa puja* (mental worship); this is especially true of the Vamacarins, left-hand Kaulas, prevalent mostly in Eastern

India, i.e., in Assam and Bengal. Manasa puja consists mainly of *pranapratishta* (meditating on the presence of the goddess in one's heart),⁸⁶ *bhuta suddhi* (purification of the bodily elements), *nyasas* (visualizing *matrkas*, or letters, and different parts of the yantra, mantra, and the limbs of the deity in the different parts of one's own body),⁸⁷ and the performance of *antaryaga* (inner offering).⁸⁸

Through this kind of manasa puja, Kaula sadhakas aim to establish a state of oneness between the different parts of their bodies and those of the goddess or *sriyantra*, in which the goddess resides. The prayers recited during this worship remind the *sadhakas* of the oneness of Tripurasundari and *kundalini*. But in actual practice they simply worship *srīcakra* and the deities residing therein, without attempting to work with *kundalini sakti*, which requires yogic disciplines. These elements of *srīcakra* worship are common to all Kaulas - those who incorporate the five *makaras* and those who do not.⁸⁹ Kaula *sadhakas* who incorporate the *pancamakaras* (popularly known as *vamacarins*, left-handed tantrics), in addition to performing the above-mentioned *srīcakra* worship, also worship the deity in the form of *kundalini* in their own bodies. After performing rituals, along with mantra recitations for tattva *suddhi* and purification of both the elements in their own bodies and the external elements - wine, meat, fish, and cooked food - they offer these external elements into the fire of *kundalini*, which, according to them, resides at the base of the spine in the *muladhara cakra*. Of course they consume these articles, just as any ordinary person would. It is their contemplative awareness that makes them feel or believe these items are being offered into the fire of *kundalini* at the *muladhara (cidagnikunda)*.⁹⁰

The Samaya group, on the other hand, of which Laksmīdhara is the sole representative, considers the human body to

be a sricakra and, thus, does not need to draw it externally. The Samaya method of Srividya practice is purely *yogic*. Their main focus is awakening kundalini and uniting her with siva in sahasrara, the highest cakra, which is found in or above the head. According to Laksmidhara, Srividya practitioners of the Samaya group experience the oneness of *cakra*, mantra, deity, guru, and their own *atma* while leading *kundalini* from the lower to the higher cakras.⁹¹

Before attempting to analyze how accurate Laksmidhara's observations are regarding Samayacara and Kaulacara and how correctly he places the two within the broader spectrum of Tantrism, we need to examine his opinions as set forth in his commentary on *SL*. According to Laksmidhara:

L Kaulacara is *avaidika*, antinomian to Vedic dharma, whereas Samayacara is purely Vedic.⁹²

2. Kaulacara involves external rituals. These practices require knowledge of the seer, meter, and so on of the mantras employed. The Samayacara style of worship, on the other hand, is totally internal. It involves the experience of oneness with the goddess and, as such, does not require an aspirant to have the knowledge of either the seer or the meter.⁹³

3. In the Kaulacara branch of Srividya, the practitioners worship the goddess in the muladhara, and the kundalini residing therein is called Kaulini, whereas the followers of Samayacara worship *sakti* and siva in the sahasrara and therein they are called Samaya and Samaya, respectively.⁹⁴

4. The adepts of the Kaula path worship Kaulini, who is identical with the *kundalini sakti* in the muladhara while she is still asleep. Such a worship is *tamisra*, full of darkness. The moment *kundalini* is awakened, Kaula *sadhakas* attain liberation. Following the path of vamacara, their worship is accompanied with meat, honey, fish, and many such articles. Some others - *uttara-kaulas*, *ksapanakas*, and *digambaras* -

literally worship the triangular-shaped female organ. According to *Samayacarins*, the worship of the goddess in the six lower *cakras* is not required. Rather, the sahasrara is the only *cakra* in which she can be worshipped. Worshipping her in the sahasrara consists of experiencing the fourfold oneness known as *catur-vidhaikyanusandhana*.⁹⁵

5. Kaula followers draw *srīcakra* according to *saṃharakrama*, the method of withdrawal. In their system, there are five triangles with the apexes pointing upward and four with their apexes pointing downward. *Samayins* draw a *srīcakra* according to *sṛstikrama*, the method of creation; in their system, there are four triangles with their apexes pointing upward and five with their apexes pointing downward.⁹⁶

6. Kaulas regard the group of sixty-four Tantric texts as authoritative, whereas, according to samayins, the five Tantric texts known as *subhagamapāncaka* are the only authentic texts.⁹⁷

7. According to Kaulas, sixteen *nityakālas* are of primary importance in Srīvidya practice, whereas in *Samayamarga*, they are of secondary importance.⁹⁸

8. Kaulas propose a ninefold oneness between *bhairava* and *bhairavi* whereas *samayins* propose fourfold or sometimes fivefold oneness between *Samaya* and *Samaya*.⁹⁹

Lakṣmidhara's claim that Kaulacara is Avidika and Samayacara is purely Vedic seems to be only partially true. To substantiate this claim, he deliberately chooses passages from the Vedas and gives his own commentary on them to support his samayamata, ignoring other Vedic passages that support Kaula-oriented ideas.¹⁰⁰ In Upanisadic literature, one finds references to meat and sex as part of Vedic rituals.¹⁰¹ Claiming a particular set of spiritual disciplines to be Vedic or non-Vedic only on the basis of these elements is superficial. Furthermore, Kaulas do not consider themselves to be

avaidika; rather they adopt many Vedic mantras in their *cakra puja*.¹⁰¹ "Kaula tantrics," as Brooks correctly observes, "who are also 'conservative' Vaidikas admit the Upanisads and other Kaula-oriented sources into their canon by interpreting potentially scandalous prescriptions in two ways. They treat them either (1) as nominally acceptable symbolic acts to be performed with 'harmless' substitutes (*pratinidhi*) - such as milk for wine, or a fish-shaped ritual spoon for the offering of fish - or (2) they perform them entirely as internal, purely mental forms of discipline or sacrifice (*antaryaga*)."¹⁰³

The distinction that Laksmidhara draws between Kaulacara and Samayacara on the basis of their external and internal modes of worship is not correct either. It is true that Kaulas hold external worship in high regard, but they do not condemn internal worship. On the contrary, in many cases, they acknowledge the value of internal worship. Thus, this particular issue cannot be treated as a distinguishing characteristic.¹⁰⁴ AS Brooks clearly states: "In contemporary Srividya, however, this internal/external distinction along Samaya and Kaula lines is blurred. Self-proclaimed Samayins continue to perform external rituals despite Laksmidhara's protestations, though they continue to reject any of the potentially controversial Kaula elements, such as the *pancamakaras*."¹⁰⁵

In order to highlight the importance of the *sahasrara cakra*, Laksmidhara equates *sricakra* with the *sahasrara cakra* and recommends that *samayins* confine their worship to the goddess who resides there. At the same time, he denigrates the *muladhara cakra* and by assigning the *muladhara cakra* as the center of worship for the Kaulas, he also denigrates them. But the fact is, Kaulas worship *sakti*, not only in the *muladhara*, but also in other *cakras* as well. In fact, quoting

Svacchanda Tantra, a Saivite text,¹⁰⁶ Bhaskararaya, a Sri-vidya adept of Kaulamarga, describes the *sahasrara* as the residence of the goddess. According to the majority of Saiva and Sakta Tannic texts, "Kaula" means sakti and "Akula" means siva and the union of both is called "Kaula." Bhaskararaya, possibly relying on *Tantraloka*, indicates that the essence common to both sakti and siva is called kaulini.¹⁰⁷

The issue of which Tantric texts belong to Kaula and which to Samaya is not pertinent. The five Tantric texts which Laksmidhara claims are Samaya-oriented are now extinct and other texts, such as Vamakesvara *Tantra* and the Yamala *Tantras*, which he quotes frequently in his commentary, are replete with Kaula-oriented ideas and practices.

The idea of attaining the experience of oneness with the goddess or identifying oneself with the goddess and even the "fourfold oneness" is not unique to *samayins*. Before and after Laksmidhara, all Tantric adepts - whether following the Samaya or Kaula paths - aspired to union with the ista devata.¹⁰⁸

Considering all these facts, it appears that the Samaya-Kaula opposition is primarily concerned with two *acaras*, systems of conduct and cultural values. One is puritan, the other liberal. One insists on vegetarianism, the other does not. Furthermore, this Samaya-Kaula debate seems to be one-sided: it is Samayacarins, including Laksmidhara, who constantly oppose Kaula without considering what Kaulacarins themselves have to say. Furthermore, it is Laksmidhara and the Samayacarins who follow him who insist on demonstrating the Vedic origin of Samayacara and making a sharp distinction between the two schools, whereas the more convincing fact is - as Mark S. G. Dyczkowski,¹⁰⁹ Goudriaan,¹¹⁰ and Brooks observe - that Kaulacara is an older tradition

than Samaya, and that in the early stages of Sakta Tantrism, there does not seem to be any outstanding or distinguishing characteristics separating Samayacara from Kaulacara.¹¹¹

Apparently Laksmidhara considers Kaulacara to be synonymous with Vamacara, and Samayacara synonymous with Daksinacara. But Samayacara and Daksinacara, according to his strict definition, cannot be synonymous, since Daksinacara simply refers to a system of conduct which upholds the view of using only Daksina, "conventionally right" articles, such as flowers, bilva leaves, and so on, as opposed to the wine, meat, sex, etc., of Vamacara. The mere exclusion of the articles of Vamacara worship, however, does not make the Kaulacara style of *sricakra* worship identical to that of the Samayacarins. Nevertheless, after Laksmidhara, the terms Samayacara and Daksinacara became synonymous. As a result, devotees performing ritual worship of *sricakra* in the monasteries of the Sankaracarya order consider themselves to be Samayacarins/Daksinacarins, not Kaulacarins. Thus, Laksmidhara's discussion has nothing to do with Samaya and Kaula, but with the difference between the Vamacara and Daksinacara aspects of Kaula itself.

Goudriaan clarifies this issue beautifully in the following manner:

The antithesis Vama-Daksina is covered also, and still more specifically, by the terms Samaya and Kaula. Samaya 'Convention' has several meanings, but in the present context Samayacara, as we say, means the practice of internal worship as advocated by Laksmidhara and his followers while the Kaulas (according to the Samayins) conduct external worship including revolting acts, while contenting themselves with worshipping the internal Kundalini only in the Muladhara, the lowest cakra (Kaviraj, *Tantrika Sahitya*, 42, 45f.). Not all Samayins lived up to this distinction (Chakravarti, *Tantras*, p. 56). This

opposition mainly obtains in Tripura worship; in practice, every Samayin seems to be a Tripura worshipper, but this can by no means be said of every Kaula. Indeed, the term Kaula largely transcends the opposition to Samaya. Within the Kaula school, Samaya may have quite another meaning, as for instance when the KT (11, 99f.) asserts that one becomes a Kaulika only when being aware of the Samayas, i.e., the secret meanings of mantras and details of conduct.¹¹²

In summary, we can safely conclude that Laksmidhara's understanding of the distinctive features of Kaula and Samaya appears unclear and is often misleading. He may be simply stating the doctrines he learned from the oral tradition, expressing a regional belief regarding Srividya¹¹³ or even assigning his own opinion to the kind of Srividya that was in vogue in the monastic order of Sankaracarya. None of these factors, however, diminish his accomplishment of systematizing the philosophy of Srividya and providing a philosophical foundation for the practices he advocates.

Most of the philosophical doctrines, theories, and practices that center around yantra, mantra, *cakra*, deity, and *saktipata* are found, in rudimentary form, in Vedic and Pauranic literature. We also find elaborations of these concepts in Saiva, Sakta, and Pancaratra texts, but until Laksmidhara, no sakta adherent had organized these elements into a structurally coherent philosophy. It is the way in which he puts them together, building a philosophy parallel to other schools, that is revolutionary. Later Srividya adherents, including Bhaskararaya, whether they identify themselves as Samayins or Kaulacarins, agree unanimously with the philosophy of Srividya, as outlined by Laksmidhara.

As has been said before, all the elements that Laksmidhara discusses are found in earlier literature. Laksmidhara must have studied and made use of such sources, but he cites

only those which he considers to be of his tradition. He completely ignores the Saivite sources, especially those which are classified as Kashmir Saivism and which bear an enormous similarity to his material. If Laksmidhara comes from South India, where Kashmir Saivism flourished long before his time, and if he was also the author of *Saiva Kalpadruma*, a work in which the author states that he is a worshipper of Siva at Ekamra (Bhuvanesvara, Orissa), then his affinity with Saivism is established. This affinity becomes even more evident when, in his own commentary on *SL*, he clearly identifies *mahavedha*, the highest kind of Srividya initiation, as Saiva.¹¹⁴

In the closing remarks of this commentary, Laksmidhara makes a statement which also demonstrates his association with Saivism: "Sankaracarya is gone. Viramahesvara is gone. Who can understand my exertions in the piercing of six cakras!"¹¹⁵ Viramahesvara is not an epithet of Sankaracarya, because this epithet is never applied to Sankaracarya anywhere else. Furthermore, in the introduction to the first verse of *SL*, Laksmidhara gives Sankaracarya the epithet *Sankara-bhagavatpujyapadah*, as was customary among all Advaita Vedanta writers. Therefore, Laksmidhara must be referring to a Saiva adept, perhaps to Vasava, as this epithet is frequently applied to him.

Because Kaulism and Saivism are closely associated with each other, Laksmidhara seems to deliberately conceal his connection with Saivism. But he cannot ignore Saivite philosophical ideas, because by his time such ideas had become an integral part of Srividya.¹¹⁶ Thus, he retains the Saivite doctrines that had seeped into Srividya, synthesizing them with the Vedic *acara* of the Sankaracarya tradition, calling this synthesis "Samayacara." Of course, this synthesis is more complex than the above statement suggests. There are

several points of difference between Laksmidhara's Samayacara Srividya and the Trika philosophy and sadhana of Kashmir Saivism. A study of Laksmidhara's commentary on the *SL* is the key to identifying the features distinctive to the concept of sakti in the Samayacara-dominated Srividya tradition.

The Saundaryalahari

The *SL*, usually attributed to the strict Advaita-Vedantin, Sankaracarya is one of the most famous *stotra* texts and a standard literary work. On the basis of its philosophical and religious content, the text belongs to the Srividya tradition of Sakta Tantric lore. The religious popularity of this text and the respected place it holds in the Indian community is described accurately by W. Norman Brown:

This work is one of the most widely used devotional texts of modern Hinduism. Many people employ it daily throughout the year; large numbers know some or all of its stanzas by heart. Manuscripts of it abound in every part of the country - north, south, east, west, central - and it is one of the relatively few works which have been embellished with manuscript paintings. There are numerous lists of magic diagrams (yantra) and mystic seed syllables (bijaksara) for use with the separate stanzas and prescriptions of accessory paraphernalia and methods of reciting the stanzas. . . .¹¹⁷

Many different versions of the *SL* are found throughout India, and disagreement on both the number of verses and their sequence is apparent in the numerous printed editions. The most comprehensive critical edition of the original text is by Brown. This edition outlines some of the basic teachings, such as the concept of the material world, the soul, human self-fulfillment, and the means for attaining the

soteriological goal. He does not take the commentaries into consideration, nor is the scope of his study limited to one particular field of scholarship, either literary, philosophical, spiritual, or religious.

The text has been edited and translated into the various provincial languages of India (Hindi, Bengali, and Tamil, etc.), and English as well. But as Brown points out, "All have been made primarily for religious use, only secondarily or not at all for scientific study."¹¹⁸ Thus, without exception, the translators stretch and distort the contents with a panegyric style, saying that they are explicating that which is esoteric and implied.

The *SL* consists of one hundred (sometimes one hundred and three) verses in the *sikharini* meter. The text is generally divided into two parts. The first part, consisting of the first forty-one verses, is known as "Anandalahari," "The Wave of Bliss." However, R. Anantakrsna Sastri and Karra Ramamurthi Garu point out that some commentators consider that Anandalahari consists of only thirty or thirty-five verses; others put the number at thirty-five; and still others believe that the Anandalahari portion consists only of verses 1, 2, 8-11, 14-21, 26, 27, and 31-4L¹¹⁹ The title "Saundaryalahari," however, is widely and popularly used for both the second part and the text as a whole.

As far as the authorship of the *SL* is concerned, Indian tradition almost unanimously ascribes it to Adi Sankaracaiya, the first Sankara.¹²⁰ However, after surveying the pros and cons of the various positions held by different scholars, Brown draws the following conclusion:

. . . The author cannot be identified. Its ascription to Sankara was to win it prestige . . . a speculative theory can here be suggested . . . if the Saundaryalahari happened to be composed in one of the mutts by one of the heads of the mutt, all of whom

assume the name Sankara, it would have been relatively easy at some later time for it to gain ascription to the great Sankara-carya Bhasyakara. From one mutt it would have spread to all others and to the Saiva-Sakti cults generally. This theory, being only a theory, may have small merit, but it is perhaps better than no theory at all.¹²¹

In spite of the questions raised by contemporary scholars, the traditional view ascribing the text to Adi Sankara prevails (at least in India), and faithful followers consider it to be his work.¹²² While the question of authorship remains open, as far as the *SL*'s status goes, Brown correctly says, "the Saundaryalahari, whoever wrote it, is a great work of religious literature."¹²³

Content of the Text

The *SL* is essentially a work of devotional poetry and does not concentrate on developing a new system of thought. The philosophical or metaphysical elements it conveys are incidental, for the author's main intent is to express the depth of his devotion to the goddess Tripurasundari. It is the commentators who stress the metaphysical subtleties and elaborate on them. In attempting to explicate the underlying philosophical ideas, they connect them with the specific discipline and worldview of Saktism.

The majority of verses are dedicated to describing Tripurasundari's physical beauty. This description is visual, but the reader often is reminded, especially by the commentators, to be aware that the individual soul, mantra, yantra, and *kundalini* are identical to her. In most of the philosophical verses, the goddess is presented as formless and absolute. Thus Advaitavada (nondualism) seems to be the main philosophical thrust, and the special focus of this text is to explic-

itly demonstrate the unity of the above-mentioned concepts.

The author may have had some distinct philosophical ideas in mind during the composition of the *SL*, but their actual presentation in the text is disjointed. Themes are fragmented, forcing commentators to discontinue the thematic flow of the commentary in order to follow the numerical order of the verses.

Commentaries and Translations

Tantrika Sahitya, the most recent catalog specializing in Tannic texts and manuscripts, lists forty-one commentaries on the *SL*. However, this catalog does not specify where these commentaries are to be found; it simply collects information from older catalogs, some of which were prepared almost a hundred years ago. Many of the manuscripts mentioned in those catalogs may no longer exist. It was possible to obtain only thirteen commentaries. Among them, ten are edited and published; three are still in unedited manuscript form.¹²⁴

So far, no study has been done with the intention of explicating the commentaries themselves. Swami Visnutirtha's *Saundarya-Lahari Ka Hindi Anuvada* and S. Subrahmanya Shastri and T. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar's *Saundarya-Lahari* of Sri Samkara-Bhagavatpada are general works that derive their materials from *LD*, as well as from other commentaries such as Kaivalyasrama's *Saubhagyavardhani* and Kamesvarasuri's *Arunamodini*. The most outstanding of the available commentaries are Laksmidhara's *LD*, Kaivalyasram's *Saubhagyavardhani*, and Kamesvarasuri's *Arunamodini*. Ramakavi's *dindima* and Anandagiri's *Anandagiriya* also deserve mention because they occasionally present unique interpretations oriented towards Sankhya and mantra

sadhana, respectively. Laksmidhara, Kaivalyasrama, and Kamesvarasuri attempt to extract and elaborate upon the meaning of the original text within the limits of Sakta philosophy, while Ramakavi compromises between Tantra and Sankhya doctrines, identifying *sakti* with *prakṛti* and *śiva* with *puruṣa*. Anandagiri, on the other hand, attempts to demonstrate how a number of *śrividya* mantras or mantras of secondary Śrividya deities are derived from or represented by the verses of the *SL*.

Because of the depth of knowledge it displays in regard to Samaya philosophy and practice, Laksmidhara's commentary on the *SL* holds a place similar to that of Sankara's commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* or Vyasa's on the *Yoga Sūtras*. Laksmidhara gives a detailed treatment of the Samaya method of Śrividya *sadhana* and philosophy. He rejects the views of the Kaula and Misra groups, considering them to be un-Vedic and unworthy. He draws heavily on the *Subhagodaya* of Gaudapada, for which he claims to have written a commentary. The version of *SU* published in the appendix of NS cites Sivananda as its author and mainly focuses on describing an external method for ritualistic worship of *śricakra*. This version, consisting of a mixture of *anustup* meter and prose, contains almost nothing related to Samayacara. Another version of the *SU*, consisting of fifty-two *sikharini chandas*, is published in the appendix of Shiva Shankar Awasthi Shastri's *Mantra Aur Matrkaon ka Rahasya* (hereafter cited as *MMR*),¹²⁵ and gives Gaudapada as its author. There is a great similarity between the Gaudapada *SU* and some of the verses of the *SL*; this is particularly evident in LD, not only in the usage of terms but even in the duplication of complete phrases.

However, Laksmidhara, in his commentary on the *SL*, quotes the *SU* which is in *anustup* meter, not in *sikharani*.¹²⁶

Further, the material that he quotes is not found in Sivananda's *anustup chanda* nor in the prose version of *SU*. These contradictions lead us to believe that there must have been another version of *SU* by Gaudapada, most probably in *anustup* meter, which was commented upon by Laksmidhara and quoted in his commentary on the *SL* verses 11, 32, and 41. Whatever the case may be, the present version of *SU* ascribed to Gaudapada, published in the appendix of *MMR*, is one of the most significant Samayacara texts, and it either utilizes Laksmidhara's exposition (if it is later than Laksmidhara's text) or vice versa.

In addition to *SU*, Laksmidhara draws heavily on the *Vamakesvara Tantra* (*Catuhsati*), *Sanatakumarasamhita*, *Arunopanisad*, *Vasistha Samhita*, and the texts of Vedic lore, such as *Taittiriya-samhita*, *Taittiriya-brahmana*, *Taittiriya-ranyaka*, *Taittiriya-upanisad*, and *Yogakundali Upanisad*.¹²⁷ As stated earlier, *SL* simply consists of devotional verses dedicated to the goddess Tripurasundari and contains so little Tantric material that it hardly qualifies as a Tannic text.¹²⁸ It is Laksmidhara who brings in Tantric ideas and magnifies them in his commentary on *SL*, especially verses 1,8-11, 14, 31-32, 34-36, 40-41, 92, and 99. Most of the other verses describe the anthropomorphic form of the goddess and carry little philosophical weight. By selecting only those verses which serve his purpose, Laksmidhara clearly demonstrates that he is a sectarian commentator. His interest lies in expounding the theories related to *sricakra*, the *srividya* mantra, the *cakras* in the human body, *matrika*, the awakening of *kundalini*, and attaining the direct experience of the union of *siva* and *sakti* in the *sahasrara*. He attempts to pull together all these components and unite them under one main concept, *sakti*. Unlike other Tantric scriptures, commentators, and writers of independent texts, Laksmidhara insists on

using the specific terms *samaya*, *sadhakhya*, and *candrakala* with precisely defined meanings. By conducting a philological analysis of these terms, and thus understanding the process through which their general meanings resolved into the specific meanings we encounter in LD, we may gain a better insight into the historical and philosophical development of Sakta Tantrism as a whole.

CHAPTER 3

General and Specific Views of *Sakti*

An Overview of Sakti in Prominent Srividya Texts

If we are to identify the distinctive characteristics of *sakti* in Laksmidhara's commentary on the *SL*, it is first necessary to have a general view of *sakti* in other texts of the Srividya tradition. Because it is neither feasible nor desirable to scrutinize all of the Srividya literature, we have selected the following texts for this present study: *YH*, *NS*, *SU*,¹ *SL*, and the writings of Durvasas,² Kalidasa,³ Sivananda,⁴ Amrtananda,⁵ Vidyananda,⁶ Punyananda,⁷ and Bhaskararaya.⁸ Other texts which are useful in tracing the distinctive characteristics of *sakti* or which show a philological or historical progression in the use of the term itself will occasionally be consulted.

In these texts, the names *tripura* (*tripurasundari* or *mahatripurasundari*), *samvit*, and *citi* (*para citi*) are used interchangeably to indicate the highest reality. According to these sources, she is pure, unalloyed consciousness, and the

only reality. For example, in NS she is described as samvit, identical to atman (*atmasvarupa*); she is also the same as existence, *satsvarmupa*, and consciousness and bliss, *cidanandarpa*. Apart from her, nothing exists.⁹ In fact, the word *tripura* itself, according to NS, refers to the state of reality that transcends the entire manifest world.

In an effort to prove *sakti's* transcendental status, NS gives an etymological, or more accurately, pseudo-etymological, meaning of the term *tripura*: she is called *tripura* because she is the source of, and transcendent to, "three cities," or the symbolic triad of the triple world. She transcends the three *bindus* - *iccha*, *jnana*, and *kriya* (will, knowledge, and action); the three *sariras* - *sthula*, *suksma*, and *karana* (the physical, subtle, and causal bodies); the three *avasthas* - *jagrat*, *svapna*, and *susupti* (the waking, dreaming, and sleep states of consciousness); the three *pithas* - the shrines *odyana*, *jalandhara*, and *kamagiri*; the three *matrkas* - *vaikhari*, *madhyama*, and *pasyanti*; the three *murtis* - *brahma*, *visnu*, and *siva*; the three *nadis* - *susumna*, *pingala*, and *ida*; and the three *puras* - *manas*, *buddhi*, and *citta*. With more elaboration and variations, the term *tripura* has also been interpreted in texts such as *Setubandha*, *Artharatnavali*, *Cidvalli*, *Tripurararanava*, *Kalika Purana*, and Bhaskararaya's commentary on *Lalita-Sahasranaman*.¹⁰

The intention behind the pseudo-etymological interpretations in all these texts is obviously to demonstrate that this term carries considerable philosophical weight and that *tripura* includes in herself every aspect of this threefold creation while remaining transcendent. Bhaskararaya captures the totality of *tripura's* diverse forms and characteristics in three different categories: *sthula*, *suksma*, and *para* (gross, subtle, and transcendent).¹¹ Based mainly on Bhaskararaya's commentary on the *Bhavanopanisat*, Brooks¹² considers the

anthropomorphic form of the goddess to be gross, the mantric form to be subtle, and the *susumna* nadi, or the kundalini sakti traveling through the *susumna* nadi, to be transcendental. Thus *tripurasundari* simultaneously exists at three levels - gross, subtle, and transcendent. There are threefold spiritual disciplines (*upasti*) that correspond to these three levels of existence: *kayiki*, *vaciki*, and *manasi* - physical, verbal, and mental.

According to a majority of Srividya texts, as well as to all Saivite texts, there are thirty-six tattvas covering the entire range of the unmanifest and manifest world, from the earth element to the subtlest tattva, known as *siva*, pure illumination. There are two doctrines - Abhasavada (or Pratibimba Vada) and Parinamavada (more appropriately Sakti Parinamavada) - which explain the relationship between samvit or *tripura* and the world. According to the theory of Abhasavada, which is expounded in most of the Srividya texts, samvit is like a mirror and the universe is like a reflection appearing in it. However, unlike a physical mirror that only reflects external objects placed next to it, this mirror contains the whole universe inside herself, and through her intrinsic autonomous power (*svatantryasakti*) makes them appear as though they are outside her.¹³

According to the *Tripura Rahasya* (*Jhana-khandma*) (hereafter cited as *TR-J*),¹⁴ this system does not tolerate the idea of the universe appearing outside citi or *samvit*, for such a proposition would contradict the very basis of its nondualistic model. But if the universe is inside rather than outside the mirror, then what is the relationship between *samvit* and the world? If the relationship is *aupadhika* (conditioned or accidental), then it necessarily implies the simultaneous existence of more than one principle. The other option is *samavaya* (inherence) *sambandha* - a relationship in which

two different things such as *dravya* (substance) and *guna* (attribute) appear so unified that they represent one whole.¹⁵ This relationship is also known as *ayutasiddha* or *avinabhava* (sine qua non) *sambandha*, i.e., the relationship in which neither can exist without the other. This kind of relationship points to an essential oneness of the universe with *citi* (consciousness).¹⁶

According to Parinamavada, as held in the Varivasya-Rahasya (hereafter cited as VR),¹⁷ SL, SU, and NS, the universe is a transformation or manifestation of *tripura*. As NS states, "One single, unmanifest *tripura* remains by herself in bliss and becomes manifest."¹⁸ "Just as before germination, a sprout, stem, leaves, flowers, and fruits substantially (*sadatmana*) exist in the seed, likewise, before its manifestation, the universe exists in Tripura."¹⁹ In fact, *tripura* (the cause), and the phenomenal world (the effect), are two different states of the same truth known as *saktyavastha* and *parinatavastha*.

According to Vrajavallabha Dviveda, the doctrine of Parinamavada held in these Srividya texts differs from the Parinamavada in the Sankhya system. According to the Parinamavada of Sankhya, the world evolves from *prakrti*. When the equilibrium of *prakrti's* three intrinsic characteristics - *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* - is disturbed, *prakrti* is transformed into the phenomenal world. In that evolutionary state, *prakrti* becomes *vikrti* (distorted or contaminated), and is no longer pristine. According to Parinamavada as propounded in Srividya texts, *citi* manifests in the form of the universe without losing her pristine nature (*avikrta sati*). This is accomplished through her own unrestricted power of sovereignty (*sva-svatantryena*).²⁰ To make a clear distinction between the Parinamavada of Sankhya, and the Parinamavada of the Srividya school, Vrajavallabha Dviveda calls the former

Prakṛti Parinamavada and the latter Sakti Parinamavada.²¹

According to the theories of both Abhasavada and Sakti Parinamavada, there is only one reality, sakti, and the universe is either a mere appearance or an actual transformation of her. In both doctrines, the world does not exist apart from sakti: it is either an appearance without a substance of its own or a manifest state of unmanifest sakti. It is important to note, however, that although all of the above-mentioned texts begin by referring to the highest reality primarily by the terms *tripura*, *samvit*, and *citi*, they soon start using the generic term sakti, sacrificing precision in the process.

Because these texts use sakti loosely and do not fully define it, it remains ambiguous in Sakta doctrine. For example, NS considers *tripura* to be paramasakti, the highest sakti. She is also matrka, the cause of the triple world.²² *Tripura* is also said to be the one within whom all thirty-six tattvas exist inseparably.²³ In elaborating the concept, Sivananda explains that all thirty-six tattvas exist in *tripura*, just as the entire tree in its unmanifest form exists in the seed.²⁴ According to him, her unmanifest state is called *saktyavastha*, and the universe is her manifest state, *prapancavastha* or *parinatavastha*.²⁵ According to this statement, *saktyavastha* is the highest state, and *parinatavastha* is the immanent state of one nondual reality, *tripura*. The obvious conclusion is that except for *tripura*, who is transcendent, sakti cannot be the highest reality because she is one of the *tattvas*.

However, in the following verses, the text suddenly drops the term *tripura*, replacing it with *siva* and *sakti*.²⁶ The commentators Sivananda and Vidyananda follow suit: they replace the term *tripura* with the terms sakti or *vimarsasakti*. They also introduce the terms *paramesvara* or *siva*. Thereafter, instead of discussing whether it is *siva* or sakti who actually replaces *tripura*, and speculating on which of

the two is highest, they focus their discussion on proving the oneness of sakti and siva. Interestingly, here both Sivananda and Vidyananda, while commenting on NS, which is clearly a Srividya text, use Saiva terminology and quote from Saiva texts such as *Isvarapratyabhijnnavimarsini*, *Sanketapaddhati*, *Bodhapancadasika*, *Sarvamangalasastra*, and even *Vakya-padiya*, the *Vyakarana Agama* text.²⁷

Commentators on Srividya texts frequently quote from Saivite texts, which indicates that both traditions rely on a common source for their philosophical inspiration. However, the tendency to refer to the ultimate truth by the term *tripura*, which according to Srividya followers embraces all categories including the two highest, sakti and siva, and the tendency to keep emphasizing the oneness of sakti and siva, may indicate the existence of an analogous dualistic tradition. That tradition, as Professor Sanderson points out, is Saiva-Siddhanta, a dualistic Saiva school, still in existence in South India.²⁸ However, it is to be borne in mind that even Siddhantins accept the inseparability of siva and sakti. Their dualism lies in the distinction of *pasu/pasa* and *pasupati*. Srividya and Saiva texts, even in an attempt to expound a perfectly clear and logically sound nondualistic philosophy, use the terms *tripura*, *srividya*, *samaya*, *anuttara*, and *yamala*. Because the terms siva and sakti have a long history and are deeply ingrained in the literature and in the popular faith, these texts retain them, although sometimes these terms carry the notion of oneness and other times the notion of duality. However, to ensure the integrity of their nondualistic model, they repeatedly emphasize the oneness of the two.

Consequently, Srividya and Kashmir Saivite texts usually begin the exposition of their doctrines by using the terms *tripura* and *anuttara*, but soon drop them to focus on proving

the oneness of sakti and siva. For example, in NS 4:4, the term *tripura* refers to the highest reality, which transcends all thirty-six categories. Later, in NS 4:6, *tripura* is replaced by the term *sakti*, which according to general Sakta and Saiva doctrine represents the thirty-fifth category of reality. The commentators then go into a detailed explanation of the oneness of sakti and siva, constantly repeating the phrase, "without sakti, siva cannot create the universe." However, neither the text nor the commentators explain why siva or even his *vimarsasakti* need to be considered as the ultimate cause of the universe, as they themselves have evolved from *tripura*. Rather, in NS 4:10-12, *tripura* is said to be *ekaiva* (only one) and *parama* (absolute) sakti; she is *paramesvari* (the highest lord); she is the same as *brahma*, *visnu*, and *isa*, or *jnana-sakti*, *kriyasakti*, and *icchāsakti*. It is this *tripura* who creates the universe.²⁹ This discussion from NS and the commentaries *Rjuvimarsini* and *Artharatnavali* is typical of Srividya literature. Similar tendencies and the attendant philosophical problems are found in other texts as well.

In other words, Saiva and Srividya texts employ a variety of terms to refer either to the highest reality or to a particular category of reality, but are not consistent in the usage of their terminology. The terms *tripura*, *samvit*, *citi*, *samaya*, and *sadakhya kala* in Srividya and *sanghatta*, *anuttara*, and *yamala* in Kashmir Saivism have exact meanings and are always used precisely. However, other frequently used, though less precise, terms include sakti, *vimarsasakti*, *spandasakti*, *kamakala*, *siva*, *paramesvara*, or *mahesvara*. Discussions related to these less precise terms are an integral part of Saiva and Sakta literature.

Sakta texts in the Srividya school never mention sakti without siva; similarly Saivite texts never mention siva without sakti. However, each maintains a distinct position

relative to these two terms: Saivite texts consider siva to be the highest reality but retain sakti alongside siva; Sakta texts accept sakti as the highest metaphysical truth but recognize siva as her inactive partner. These two approaches are popularly known as Sivaparamyavada and Saktiparamyavada, respectively.³⁰

On the *other* hand, texts such as Kamakala-Vilasa (hereafter cited as KKV), *VR*, *SL*, and *SL*TM adhere to the view that in the manifestation of the universe, both sakti and siva play equal roles, and in that sense, neither the supremacy of sakti over siva nor of siva over sakti can be established. With the exception of *BP-L*, *DS*, *TR-M*, and *TR-J*, all the Sakta texts we have reviewed offer equal status to sakti and siva. Sakta texts such as the *SL* and *SU*, whose overall tone seems to advocate the supremacy of sakti, also mention the inseparability and equal status of sakti and siva. The inclusion of siva, therefore, naturally prompts further analysis into the nature of sakti, especially in relation to siva.

In Kashmir Saivism as well as in Saktism, siva, or consciousness, is considered to be the highest reality. Unlike the *brahman* of Vedanta, siva is endowed with *vimarsa* (self-awareness) and *sphuratta* (reflective awareness). Both systems consistently deny any difference between consciousness and the self-awareness intrinsic to it. Pure *consciousness* is referred to as *prakasa* (pure illumination); its intrinsic self-awareness is termed *vimarsa*. *Prakasa* and *vimarsa*, illumination and the self-awareness of illumination, are called siva and *sakti*.³²

In Saivism, although siva is the highest reality, sakti is considered to be the heart of siva, the creative force behind the appearance of the universe (*hrdayam paramesthinah*); thus, in essence, they are one.³³ To emphasize this point, Abhinavagupta states that neither is sakti dependent on sak-

timat (siva) nor is siva dependent on sakti. Commenting on Abhinavagupta's *TA*, Jayaratha says that essentially siva and sakti are the same. The apparent difference created by the two terms is merely a matter of semantics.³⁴

The View of Sakti in Saundaryalahari and the Laksmidhara

Turning our attention to the *SL*, we notice that this text assigns the highest metaphysical status to sakti, but recognizes siva as well. At the outset, the *SL* expounds the supremacy of sakti over siva, assigning her the highest metaphysical position. As the text says, "If siva is united with sakti, He is able to exert his powers as Lord; if not, the God is not able to stir."³⁵ Thus, the ability of siva to perform an action depends on his union with sakti.

At this stage, the text does not clarify the relationship between siva and sakti. However, it clearly indicates that although *siva* is the deva (lord), he is powerless without sakti. It gives the impression that spanda (the process of stirring), which in Saivism and Saktism results in the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of the universe, is the work of siva and that he accomplishes it with the help of sakti. In *SL* 24-26, 55, 92, 96, and 97, sakti is described as the highest sovereign power and highest reality, while siva is simply a figurehead. In *SL* 34, however, siva is neither a figurehead nor secondary to sakti; rather the two are of equal status. But in *SL* 35, the tone changes again, and sakti appears to be the sole source of creation, maintenance, and annihilation. The entire manifest world and all its governing forces are manifestations of her. In keeping with this, in *SL* 55, sakti is said to be the only source of creation and annihilation; when she closes her eyes, the universe dissolves and the moment she

opens them, the universe manifests. However, in *SL* 9, she is described as the wife of siva, although in *SL* 97, she is the wife or queen of the transcendent *brahman* and is endowed with unlimited power.

These simple and fragmented statements regarding sakti and her position in relation to siva evoke a series of questions: if sakti is superior to siva, then how can they be either identical or hold equal status? If they are one and the same, then why does *SL* use two different terms, siva and sakti, instead of just one? Why does it portray siva as inactive and powerless, while portraying sakti as a vibrant, active force, thereby implying a distinction between the two? Although *SL* itself does not address these issues, Laksmidhara undertakes the task of expounding a coherent doctrine, thus resolving these apparent contradictions.

Laksmidhara prefers the terms *candrakala*, *samaya*, or *sadakhya* to sakti. He uses the words sakti and siva infrequently and then only to indicate the categories below the transcendent *samayam* or to explain the position of sakti in Purva Kaula or Uttara Kaula doctrines, which he refutes. In his commentary, Laksmidhara uses the terms *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva* to replace the more common terms sakti and siva. He goes on to explain how the term *suddhavidya* subsumes the content of all the terms that are directly or indirectly related to the concept of sakti, such as *buddhi*, *prakrti*, *maya*, and sakti. Similarly, he explains how *jiva*, *purusa*, and siva are subsumed in one term, *sadasiva*. Moreover, he uses the terms *samaya*, *candrakala*, or *sadakhya*, which, according to him, transcend even the category of reality covered by the terms *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva*. While expounding the doctrine of Samayacara, he consistently uses the terms *samaya*, *candrakala*, or *sadakhya*.

The terms *candrakala*, *sadakhya*, and particularly *samaya*

are rarely used in most Srividya texts. Laksmidhara, however, seems to have a special interest in these terms, especially *samaya*. *Samaya* is *avyaya*, an indeclinable word ordinarily used in the sense of "near."³⁶ The word *samaya* which is different from *samaya*, according to Monier-Williams, means "conventions, conventional rule or usage, established custom, order, precept, doctrine, occasion, time, season."³⁷ According to the Kularnava *Tantra*, as stated by Teun Goudriaan, *samayas* (plural of *samaya*) means "the secret meanings of mantras and details of conduct."³⁸ However, Laksmidhara does not use the term *samaya* as an *avyaya* to mean "near," or the term *samaya* to mean "convention or conventional rule," etc. Rather, he uses the term *samaya*, in feminine gender, and *samaya*, in masculine gender, to refer to a transcendental reality, *para tattva* or *sarvatattvatita*.

In tracing the philological origin of the terms *samaya* and *samayin*, we find they are first used in the sense that Laksmidhara uses them, in Gaudapada's *SU*. It is important to note, however, that throughout the fifty-two verses of *SU*, the word *samaya* is not used, the words *samaya* and *samayamarga* are used once, while the word *samayin* occurs eighteen times.³⁹ In *SU*, *samayin* does not necessarily mean the worshipper of *samaya*; it may mean the knower of the secret meaning of mantra and an accurate method of worship or meditation related to *subhaga*, *sadakhya*, or *candrakala*.⁴⁰ However, the terms *subhaga*, *sadakhya*, and *candrakala* themselves do not express the supremacy and transcendence of *tripura* upheld by *samayamarga*. Other terms, such as *mahakalatita*, *mahakalabhujagi*, *samayasahita*, and *kala-kalana*,⁴¹ do express this supremacy and explain the nature of *subhaga* or *sadakhya*. While using all these different terms for higher *sakti*, there is only one place in *SU* which states, "along with *samaya* (*siva*), You (*sakti*) dwell."⁴²

None of the terms so far mentioned, including *subhaga*, *sadakhya*, and *candrakala* can be equated with *samaya* (i.e., *siva*). However, the nature of the presentation requires a feminine-gender term parallel to the masculine-gender *samaya*, if samayin scholars like Sankaracarya or Laksmidhara are to build a sound philosophy based on *SU*. Thus, *SL* and *LD* adopt the terms *samaya* and *samaya* and use them more frequently than other terms to refer to the highest reality, although there is no explicit use of the term *samaya* in *SU*.

One of the most common meanings of *samaya* is "time" in general or the "time-principle" as a philosophical category. Although the words *samaya* and *kala* are synonymous, for some reason *kala*, *mahakala*, and *akalapurusa* are the most commonly used terms in philosophical and religious literature. In older literature, such as *The Atharvaveda*, *kala* is considered to be the highest reality: the universe evolves from it, exists in it, and finally dissolves in it. *Kala*, the time principle, is *sarvesvara* (god of all), and the father of *prajapati* (the creator); *kala* is *paramo devah*, absolute shining being.⁴³

This concept in its fully developed form is the central theme in the Kaulacara-dominated *kali mahavidya*, the *Kali* school of Saktism.⁴⁴ This *kali* or *kalasakti* also holds an important place in Saiva and Vyakarana Agama. (The connection between *kali* / *kalasakti* and the *samaya* of Laksmidhara will be discussed later.) In order to retain the concept expressed by the terms *kali* (or *mahakali*) and *kalasakti*, and yet maintain a distinct doctrinal identity, authors in the Srividya school use the term *samaya*. This tendency toward more frequent use of the term *samaya* and a greater emphasis on the importance of *samaya's* transcendence of the "time-principle" is apparent in Srividya literature. For exam-

ple, *Tantraraja* Tantra 36:40-66, gives a brief description of kala, the time principle, as the highest reality.⁴⁵ *BP-L* simply mentions *tripura* (*lalita*) as identical with time and its divisions.⁴⁶ Without going into detail, *TR-M* mentions the oneness of *tripura* with fourfold sabda, the "word," and states that the "word" is identical to kala, the "time-principle."⁴⁷ Thus, although the word *samaya* has not been used, the word kala has entered the mainstream of Srividya doctrine.

In *SU*, although the term *samaya* is not used, the terms *sadakhya* and *subhaga* appear along with qualifying words such as *mahakalatita*, *mahakalabhujagi*, *samayasahita*, *kalakalana*, and *kalotpattisthitilayakaram . . . sricakram*. These words indicate at least partial assimilation of the concepts of *mahakala*, *mahakali* and *kalasakti*. The *SL*, on the other hand, which derives much from *SU*, uses the term *samaya* twice (*SL* 39 and 41). Finally, *Laksmidhara* builds his entire thesis around this term in the *LD*.

Laksmidhara's View of Sakti

While setting forth his philosophy and clarifying the exact meaning of the terms he uses, *Laksmidhara* presents an overview of Saivism and Saktism. He mentions and refutes *Vayaviya Samhita*, according to which there are fifty-one *tattvas*. He also refutes the Saivite view, which holds that there are thirty-six *tattvas*. *Laksmidhara* goes on to explain how both the thirty-six and the fifty-one *tattvas* are subsumed in his scheme of twenty-five *tattvas*. Taking the issue further, he enumerates these thirty-six principles as: the five *bhutas* (gross elements), five *tanmatras* (subtle elements), ten *indriyas* (senses), *manas*, *ahankara*, *buddhi*, *prakrti*, *purusa*, *maya*, the five *kancukas* (veils of *maya*), *suddhavidya*, *isvara*, *sadasiva*, *sakti*, and *siva*. The fifteen additional

principles, which make a total of fifty-one, are: the seven dhatus, the five pranas, and the three gunas.⁴⁸

To arrive at his scheme of twenty-five, Laksmidhara states that the seven dhatus (primary constituents of the body) are subsumed in the five *bhutas* (gross elements); the five *pranas* in *vayu* (air - one of the five gross elements), and the three *gunas* (*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*) in *prakrti*. Eleven of the thirty-six remaining tattvas are further subsumed to reach twenty-five principles. Specifically, *ahankara* (ego) is subsumed by *manas* (mind); *buddhi* (intellect) by *vidya kancuka* (knowledge), which is in turn subsumed by *suddhavidya*; the *niyati kancuka* is subsumed by *sakti* and the *kala kancuka* by *suddha vidya*. The *kala kancuka* is subsumed by both *mahesvara* and *sadasiva*; *purusa* by *mahesvara*, and finally *siva tattva* by *sadasiva tattva*. Even *sakti* is subsumed in *suddhavidya*. Thus, the five *bhutas* (gross elements), five *tanmatras* (subtle elements), ten *indriyas* (senses), *manas* (mind), *maya*, *suddhavidya*, *mahesvara*, and *sadasiva* constitute Laksmidhara's twenty-five principles.⁴⁹

When united with *sadasiva*, however, *suddhavidya* herself is called *sadakhyaakala*: according to Laksmidhara, this *sadakhyaakala* is the twenty-sixth tattva and is entirely different from the two that combined to form it. This twenty-sixth *sadakhyaakala* is also *paramatman*, the supreme soul.⁵⁰ Despite the fact that in his system *sakti* and *siva* do not stand as independent *tattvas*, Laksmidhara still states that the combination of *sakti* and *siva* is the twenty-sixth transcendent *sadakhyaakala* in his commentary on *SL* 9, 11, 41, 91, and 92. Thus, it is clear what he means by *sakti* and *siva* in these instances: he must be using the terms *suddhavidya* and *sakti*, and *sadasiva* and *siva*, interchangeably.

In order to study the nature of *samaya* or *sadakhyaakala*, it is first necessary to analyze the nature of *suddhavidya*

and *sadasiva* separately, and then to consider the nature of their relationship when they are united. It is also necessary to explore how they jointly can form an entirely different reality if they are truly independent. In that joint state, do they exist as identifiable entities or not? If not, then is this *sadakhya*, the twenty-sixth *tattva*, completely dissimilar to both? Furthermore, because *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva* also stand for the *tattvas* they subsume, the study of *sadakhya* naturally involves an examination of those *tattvas* as well.

As mentioned earlier, *prakṛti* includes all three *gunas* - *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. *Prakṛti* and *niyati* are subsumed in *sakti*. *Buddhi* is subsumed in *vidya*, and finally, both *vidya* and *sakti* are subsumed in *suddhavidya*. Thus, *suddhavidya* incorporates *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*, *buddhi*, *prakṛti*, *niyati*, *vidya*, and *sakti* *tattvas*, while *siva* *tattva* alone is subsumed by *sadasiva*. Logically, therefore, *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva* must possess the qualities, characteristics, and powers of all the *tattvas* subsumed by them.⁵¹

Laksmidhara defines *suddhavidya* as *mocakajnanam*, the knowledge that grants freedom. In a broader sense, however, *suddhavidya* must also have the capacity to be, to become, or to enact all that is to be accomplished by all the *tattvas* subsumed in her. According to Laksmidhara, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are the forces of light, activity, and darkness. *Prakṛti* is the material cause of the manifest world. *Vidya* is empirical knowledge gained through the scriptures. *Buddhi* and *niyati* (*niyamika sakti*) are the cognitive and controlling powers. *Sakti* is described as the protective and creative power of *maheśvara* and *sadasiva*. Thus, *suddhavidya* is not merely a releasing power, but rather stands for all the powers and potentials that can be imagined.⁵²

The *siva* *tattva*, which is included in *sadasiva*, is *suddha-buddha-muktasvarupa* (pure, awakened, and free), whereas

sadasiva by himself is the one who carries on the functions of creation and maintenance. Right after clarifying this, Laksmidhara states that the power of *sadasiva* and *mahesvara*, termed *sakti* (which is subsumed in *suddhavidya*), is in fact the protective and creative power ("*saktih mahesvara-sadasivayoh raksanasarjanasaktih*"). This gives the impression that it is not *sadasiva* or *mahesvara* who creates and upholds the world, but rather *sakti* who carries on the functions of creation and protection. Whether *sakti* is intrinsic to them or fundamentally separate but temporarily united with them is a different issue, but as far as the creation and maintenance of the universe are concerned, it is *sakti* who is directly responsible for such phenomena, not *mahesvara* or *sadasiva*.⁵³

It seems then that *sadasiva* is simply a figurehead in this system, whereas *suddhavidya* is the main principle, possessing all the power and potential except for that of mere illumination, which is attributed to *siva*. If this is the case, then such a *sadasiva* is certainly unable to initiate any sort of activity, including the maintenance of his own self-awareness.

In regard to the relationship between *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya* (*siva* and *sakti*), Laksmidhara presents three different views: *Purva Kaula*, *Uttara Kaula*, and *Samayamata*. According to *Purva Kaula* doctrine, *sakti* is the body of *siva*, and *siva* is the one to whom the body belongs. *Sakti* is *sesa* and *siva* is *sesin*, meaning that *sakti* is the complement and *siva* is the essence. However, since they are intermingled, they reciprocally realize each other as complement and essence. As the text states:

You are the body of Sambhu with the sun and moon as your pair of breasts, your self I take to be the flawless self of Bhava, O blessed lady; hence, as you reciprocally realize each other as complement and essence, this union exists of you two experiencing supreme bliss with equal savor.⁵⁴

Commenting on this verse, Laksmidhara states that as far as their metaphysical status goes, the two are equal. They share common ground (*ubhayasadharanata*) and are of equal joy (*samarasa*). However, from two different perspectives - that of the threefold activity of creation, maintenance, and dissolution, and that of the period after annihilation - both siva (*anandabhairava*) and sakti (*anandabhairavi*) can take either a *sesin* (principal) or *sesa* (secondary) role to each other. Their *sesasesibhava* (relationship of being principal or secondary) is totally conditional; that is to say, whether siva or sakti is principal or secondary depends on whether emphasis is placed on the threefold process or on that perfectly still state that follows annihilation. In the context of creation, maintenance, and dissolution, where effort is involved, sakti (*mahabhairavi*, also known as *prakrti*) is superior (*pradhanatvam* or *sesitvam*) to siva (*anandabhairava*). But, after the dissolution, when *prakrti* exists unalloyed and *bhairavi* is withdrawn, then *bhairava* appears to be *sesin* (main), and *bhairavi* to be *sesa* (complement).⁵⁵ However, both *anandabhairava* and *mahabhairavi* refer to the supreme bliss and are essentially one; in their ninefold manifestation they are perfectly equal.⁵⁶ Thus, the *sesasesibhava* relationship is conditional rather than real.⁵⁷

In Uttara Kaula doctrine, sakti is known as *pradhana* and is considered to be the existent reality, which alone is the cause of the universe. Siva does not exist at all.⁵⁸ Here, Uttara Kaula adheres to a theory that stands between *Parinamavada* and *Vivartavada*. According to this theory, Laksmidhara writes, "Sakti superimposes the entire objective world (*prapanca*) within herself as an effect while she herself stands as cause."⁵⁹ Another commentator, Kamesvara, elaborates upon the Uttara Kaula view, stating that sakti is the nondual reality, but the moment she resolves to create the manifest world, she chooses, through her own will, to assume

two forms, i.e., sakti and siva. The dual form of sakti and siva is therefore a superimposition onto herself brought about through her own will.⁶⁰

Here one must note that Kamesvara does not say that the transcendent sakti is transformed into sakti and siva; rather he clearly states that she assumes two forms, i.e., sakti and siva, at will. By stating, "parinama sabdo 'yam vivartaparah" and "icchayaiva sisrksadikayam saktih siva iti rupadvayam angikrtam," Kamesvara clearly expresses his opinion that she does not transform herself into the sakti-siva pair, but illusively projects the pair onto herself in such a manner that they remain intermingled in every aspect of creation and, thereby, can coexist in the world which manifests from them. It is because she assumes these two forms that the concept of *sakti-siva*, mother-father, develops; otherwise she alone exists.⁶¹

In describing which particular tattva evolved from sakti and which from siva, Laksmidhara states that the five gross elements evolved from siva, and the mind (probably all the senses and the subtle elements) evolved from sakti. However, he insists that sakti, while superimposing this *prapanca* (world), still stands as the cause. This foundational state of supreme sakti is known as *adhara kundalini*.⁶²

Laksmidhara gives a brief description of sakti found in the Purva Kaula and Uttara Kaula schools only because those views are mentioned in *SL* 34-35. Because Laksmidhara claims that Sankaracarya wrote the *SL* in praise of samaya or candrakala,⁶³ therefore he believes Samayacara is the main doctrine of *SL*. Throughout his commentary Laksmidhara prefers to use the terms *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya* (rather than siva and sakti) to construct Samayacara doctrine. But in his commentary on *SL* 1, 9, and 11, he also proposes an entirely different category of reality, i.e., *samaya* or sada-

khyakala, consisting of a combination of *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya*. It is from this combination or union that the processes of creation, maintenance, and dissolution originate, never from *sadasiva* or *suddhavidya* alone.⁶⁴ In LD 9, he explains more precisely how this twenty-sixth transcendent reality known as *sadakhya* is formed:

It is *Suddhavidya* herself who, united with *Sadasiva* is known as *sadakhya*. *Atah*, therefore (or after this point), *Bhagavati*, *Suddhavidya*, transcending the twenty-four *tattvas*, unites with *sadasiva*, the twenty-fifth, and becomes the twenty-sixth, known as *Paramatman*, the Supreme Soul. In other words, when united with the twenty-fifth *tattva* (*sadasiva*), *sadakhya* becomes the twenty-sixth. This union is an entirely different *tattva*.⁶⁵

Here *Laksmidhara* does not say that the union of both *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya* forms the twenty-sixth *tattva*, *sadakhya*. Rather, he states that *bhagavati suddhavidya* rises above the first twenty-four *tattvas* (she herself being the twenty-third and *mahesvara* the twenty-fourth) and unites with the twenty-fifth, *sadasiva*. She is then addressed by the term *sadakhya*. This statement indicates the dominance of *suddhavidya* over all the other *tattvas*, including *sadasiva*, as well as her autonomy from them. Furthermore, *Laksmidhara* emphatically denies that this union contains any distinguishable remnant of either *sadasiva* or *suddhavidya* ("na *cobhayormelanam ubhayatmakam*," LD 9). He also implies that in the same way that *suddhavidya* is free to unite herself with *sadasiva* and thus become an entirely different, transcendent twenty-sixth *tattva*, she can also separate herself from *sadasiva*, thus keeping *sadasiva* as the twenty-fifth, and herself as the twenty-third, *suddhavidya*.

However, the concept that *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva*, or *sakti* and *siva*, are two separate principles is refuted by *Laksmidhara*. While quoting verses from the *Bhairava*

Yamala, Laksmidhara explains the inseparability of sakti and siva: between them there is *avinabhava sambandha*, a relationship in which neither can exist without the other.⁶⁶ Furthermore, once Laksmidhara proposes the twenty-sixth transcendent *sadakhya*kala, containing no distinguishable remnants of *sadasiva* or *suddhavidya*, then the question of whether or not they can be separated does not arise. In Laksmidhara's system, the transcendent *sadakhya*⁶⁷ alone is the nondual reality; all other *tattvas* including *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya* evolve from this twenty-sixth *sadakhya*kala or *samaya*. In a strict sense, therefore, Laksmidhara is proposing not Sakti Advaitavada, but rather *Samaya Advaitavada* or *Sadakhya*kala Advaitavada.

The purpose of proposing this twenty-sixth *tattva* seems to be to emphasize the inseparability and oneness of the two aspects of the single absolute truth. However, in *LD* 41, a discrepancy arises in Laksmidhara's delineation of *Samayacara* doctrine. In spite of the twenty-sixth transcendent *sadakhya* or *samaya* that he proposes in *LD* 1, 9, and 11, here Laksmidhara equates *samaya* with sakti, and *samaya* with siva. According to his own interpretation, "One who goes through (or has) fivefold sameness or equivalency, *samya*, with *sambhu* (*siva*) is *samaya*." *Siva* is also called *samaya* since he too has a fivefold equivalency with *devi* (sakti).⁶⁸

That fivefold *samya* is *adhithana samya*, *anusthana samya*, *avasthana samya*, *rupa samya*, and *nama samya*, i.e., they equally reside in all *cakras* and equally partake in all activities; in every aspect of creation they assume equal places, and in terms of *rupa* (personified form) and *nama* (name), they both are equal.⁶⁹ Unlike the twenty-sixth transcendent *samaya* or *sadakhya* that he proposes in *LD* 1 and 9, Laksmidhara now returns to the usual practice of Saiva and Sakta writers - using the terms sakti and *siva*, and trying

to prove that they are one and the same. He simply replaces *samaya-samaya* with *siva-sakti*. However, he does not explain how this view differs from the view of Purva Kaula as described in LD 34.

According to the description in LD 41, both *samaya* and *samaya* are of equal importance ("*atah ubhayoh asama-pradhanyenaiva samyam vijneyam*"), which may mean that neither is principal (*pradhana*) nor secondary (*gauda*) to the other. However, the phrase "*ubhayoh samapradhanyenaiva samyam vijneyam*," i.e., *siva* and *sakti* are of equal status in all respects, does not necessarily mean that they are essentially one and the same. A similar relationship is found between *anandabhairava* and *anandabhairavi* in Purva Kaula doctrine. In Purva Kaula, *anandabhairava* and *anandabhairavi* are alike ("*ubhayasadharanata*" SL 34); they both are of equal bliss or essence ("*samarasa*" SL 34). Just as there is a fivefold equivalency between *samaya* and *samaya* in the Samayacara view, in Purva Kaula there is a ninefold oneness between *anandabhairava* and *anandabhairavi* ("*navatmata dvayoh samana*" LD 34). Thus, the fivefold equivalency between *samaya* and *samaya* does not clearly explain the distinction between the Samayacara view of *Sakti* and the Kaulacara view, because the Kaulacara school also adheres to the idea of a ninefold equivalency between *anandabhairava* and *anandabhairavi*.

As far as Purva Kaula's other distinctive feature, *sesasesibhava*, is concerned (*anandabhairava* being the essence and *anandabhairavi* being the complement), Laksmidhara clearly states that *sesasesibhava* is conditional rather than real.⁷⁰ Furthermore, in several verses, Laksmidhara uses almost the same words to describe the nature of the relationship between *sakti* and *siva* in both the Purva Kaula and Samayacara schools. For instance, while

describing the oneness of siva and sakti from the Samayacara viewpoint in LD 9, Laksmidhara uses the phrase "sivasaktyor aiikyam ityahuh." Similarly, while presenting the Kaula view in LD 34, he uses a phrase with the same meaning, i.e., "paranandaparayoh aiikyam tasmadityarthah." The words "samarase samarasayukte" used for anandabhairava and anandabhairavi in Kaulacara, and the words "samapradhanyenaiva samyam" used for samaya and samaya in Samayacara convey virtually the same meaning: anandabhairava and anandabhairavi experience supreme bliss equally, and *samaya* and *samaya* are of equal importance.

Thus, on one hand, Laksmidhara discusses the nature of the absolute reality and the position of sakti and siva from the standpoint of Purva Kaula, Uttara Kaula, and Samayacara, and identifies himself as Samayacarin, but on the other hand, he does not (or cannot) maintain an airtight distinction between the Kaulacara and Samayacara views of sakti. This suggests that by the time of Laksmidhara, the Kaulamarga and Samayamarga schools (and even Misramarga, the Tannic path which combines both Kaula and Samaya) must have been in existence and had already developed noticeably distinct spiritual practices, although their separate doctrines were not yet fully formalized. This may be the reason why Saktism and nondualistic Saivism adopt such terms as *yamala* or *sadakhya* to refer to the existence of one, single, nondual reality, but still continue to use the terms siva and sakti, even though this forces them to prove that these terms do not refer to anything other than one, single, nondual reality. By describing the nature and function of sakti from the perspectives of Purva Kaula, Uttara Kaula, and Samayacara, Laksmidhara not only describes the concept of sakti in the *SL*, but also provides a model which can be used to study

other Sakta and Saiva texts. This is important because there is no Sakta text devoted exclusively to either Kaula or Samayacara doctrine.

Abhinavagupta's View of Sakti

Even texts like *SU* and *SL*, whose overall tone is unquestionably Samayacara-oriented, describe the nature of sakti from the viewpoints of Purva Kaula and Uttara Kaula. As mentioned earlier, most Sakta and Saiva texts begin by pointing to the supremacy of either siva or sakti or to the supremacy of their union, but soon change their tone and involve themselves in general Saiva/Sakta issues, i.e., whether or not sakti and siva are inseparable, whether or not they refer to two aspects of the same absolute truth, whether they play equal roles in the manifestation of the universe, etc. For example, just as Laksmidhara uses the terms *sadakhya* and *samaya* for the transcendental reality, Abhinavagupta uses the terms *yamala*, *sanghatta*, and *anuttara*.⁷¹ However, at one point, Abhinavagupta becomes deeply involved in explaining the oneness of siva and sakti. In the course of his discussion, his description sometimes comes close to that of Purva Kaula's as described in LD 34.⁷² In other places, however, his description of sakti and siva is similar to the Uttara Kaula view as described in LD 35.⁷³ The only discernible difference is that according to Laksmidhara, in Uttara Kaula doctrine, sakti alone is the existent reality and it is from her that siva and the rest of the world evolve, whereas in Abhinavagupta's *TA*, the situation is completely reversed: Abhinavagupta considers siva alone to be the nondual reality and it is from siva that sakti or a cluster of saktis and the rest of the world manifest.

Just as Laksmidhara identifies himself as a *samayin*,

Abhinavagupta identifies himself as a *kaula*. But unlike Laksmidhara, Abhinavagupta does not connect his differing explanations of siva and sakti to particular schools. In the majority of the verses of *TA*, he adheres to the concept of ultimate reality indicated by the terms *yamala*, *sanghatta*, or *anuttara*, all of which refer to the union of siva and sakti. In spite of his firmly held view of the inseparability of siva and sakti, he still occasionally expresses the view that one or the other is supreme.

For example, in some instances Abhinavagupta seems to subordinate sakti to siva. As Larson observes:

Siva or the absolute is ultimately a mystery, transcending all experience and all knowledge, but Siva or the absolute has within its nature the potency, power, or capacity of self-expression. This potency or capacity is the *svatantryasakti* ("power of freedom" or "autonomous power"), which is the origin or source for all other powers and capacities in the manifest world and which is synonymous with the *vimarsa* ("dynamic creativity") of Siva. The *svatantryasakti* is also the creative capacity of Siva as the *para-vak*, the Supreme Speech, which unfolds itself successively through the *pasyanti*, the *madhyama*, and the *vaikhari*.⁷⁴

In regard to *sakti's* position in relation to siva, Larson states:

By means of his sakti, therefore, Siva or Siva-tattva has within himself all the possibilities of the manifest and unmanifest world. He transcends his sakti, and yet sakti is inextricably a part of his own nature. As Siva comes to express his sakti or his creative power, the manifest world slowly emerges into actuality. First, sakti herself appears to become independent and holds within herself, within her womb, all manifest reality. . . .⁷⁵

. . . [furthermore,] Abhinavagupta more clearly subordinates the sakti of Siva (the *para-vak*) to the notion of *parama-siva*, the Supreme absolute, which transcends sakti. . . .⁷⁶

This conclusion is in conformity with Abhinavagupta's description of siva as found in Chapter 9 of *TA*. But elsewhere in the text, Abhinavagupta emphatically rejects the idea that siva and sakti are different, or that the former is superior.⁷⁷ Furthermore, a critical analysis of *TA* shows that Abhinavagupta posits a state that transcends both sakti and siva. He employs several terms - *yamala*, *anuttara*, and *sanghatta* - to refer to that state. Siva, sakti, and the remaining thirty-four *tattvas* evolve from, and ultimately merge into, *yamala*.⁷⁸

As K. C. Pandey points out,⁷⁹ Abhinavagupta's main concern is to expound Trika, the triad of siva, sakti, and their union (*sanghatta* or *yamala*). As there is nothing beyond this union, Abhinavagupta calls it *anuttara*. Describing the nature of *anuttara* as held by Abhinavagupta, K. C. Pandey writes:

Anuttara is that (i) which is higher than and beyond the thirty-six categories from siva to earth. The categories have their being in it, and therefore, it is superior to them. It is perfectly self-shining and absolutely independent. . . .⁸⁰

. . . *anuttara is that state in which* the union of siva and sakti is fully realized and consequently, all duality disappears. It is a state about which no talk is possible. It is neither immanent nor transcendental. This is the highest state, attainable by the follower of the Kula system. (Param Kaulam) Abhinavagupta holds this view in the highest regard. . . .⁸¹

It is important to note that just as *suddhavidya* unites herself with *sadasiva* (according to Laksmidhara) and in that state of union is called *sadakhya*kala, similarly here, *mahesvara*, the great lord, unites himself with his own *sakti* and, in that state of union, is called *sanghatta*, *yamala*, *anuttara*, and *paratrika*. This indicates that it is *mahesvara*'s choice to be united with sakti and it is he who is now said to be *anuttara*. This description indicates that siva predominates

in the *anuttara* state, just as in Laksmidhara's system *sudhavidya* predominates in the *sadakhya* state.

However, we cannot find a clear and consistent answer to the question of whether *siva* predominates over *sakti* in the *anuttara* state, whether they are equal in their subordination to *anuttara*, or whether they both completely lose their distinct identities in *anuttara*. Different and often contradictory explanations of the nature of *anuttara*, *siva*, and *sakti*, which Abhinavagupta himself and later Kashmiri scholars offer, are perhaps attributable either to personal viewpoints or to their inability to connect specific interpretations with the sub-schools to which they belong.⁸²

A Comparative Analysis of the Two Views

These differing views concerning the nature and status of *sakti* in both Saivism and Saktism can be explained by applying the model Laksmidhara used to examine *sakti's* status in the *LD*. According to this model, exclusive supremacy of *sakti* is held by Uttara Kaula, equal importance of *siva* and *sakti* is held in Purva Kaula, and the view that *sakti* and *siva* are one and the same and that there is a transcendent twenty-sixth principle is held in Samayacara. Similarly, the passages in *TA* that express the supremacy of *siva* over *sakti* belong to the first category, the passages that describe the equal status of *sakti* and *siva* belong to the second category, and the passages that express the oneness of *sakti* and *siva* and propose a transcendent thirty-seventh tattva belong to the third category. However, strictly speaking, Laksmidhara's model can only be used to describe *sakti's* nature in Saivite literature. His opinion regarding Uttara Kaula, Purva Kaula, and Samayacara cannot be taken as a standard by which to delineate Saiva doctrines. Laksmidhara represents only

Saktism and defines Uttara Kaula, Purva Kaula, and Samayacara within that general background. Therefore, according to him, sakti holds exclusive supremacy in Uttara Kaula. But in the case of TA or other Saivite texts, the passages that expound the supremacy of siva represent the Uttara Kaula view.

The concept held in Purva Kaula that sakti and siva are of equal importance remains the same in both Sakta and Saiva systems, but Laksmidhara's Samayacara model more aptly describes Abhinavagupta's anuttara, which, according to K.C. Pandey, is Abhinavagupta's "main thesis" and is generally believed to be Kaulacara doctrine. This is not to say that Laksmidhara's definitions of Purva Kaula, Uttara Kaula, and Samayacara and the nature of sakti described therein, are necessarily representative of these particular traditions and subtraditions. However, it is certain that the basic concern of earlier Sakta and Saiva literature is the practice, not the philosophy. Therefore, when these texts make a philosophical remark in passing, they do not explain which particular sect they are drawing from. Laksmidhara at least makes an attempt to create a model for categorizing different Tantric streams on the basis of Sakti's role and status.

Laksmidhara apparently creates this model on the basis of a blueprint which existed both in Saiva and Sakta Tantrism. While explaining the Uttara Kaula view and the role of sakti therein, Laksmidhara in *LD* 35 describes a special variation of Parinamavada. In that particular school, according to him, sakti is the sole reality. It is she who, through her sovereign will, superimposes the pair siva and sakti on herself, and thereafter the universe evolves from this pair. In chapters 9 and 10 of *TA*, which explain the nature of siva as the sole and absolute reality and the source of sakti and the rest of the tattvas, Abhinavagupta adheres to the doctrine of Parinama-

vada, similar to that which Laksmidhara describes in LD 35. In this particular section, Abhinavagupta omits his firmly held Abhasavada theory. Here, siva is the only deva.⁸³ Just as a sprout comes from a seed, the whole world evolves from siva and the concept of cause and effect is superimposed by his will.⁸⁴ In fact, chapter 9 is replete with passages emphasizing the supremacy of siva.⁸⁵ Abhinavagupta relates this discussion to Matangasastra or Matangamata.

In chapters 3 and 5 of *TA*, Abhinavagupta's tone regarding the roles of siva and sakti is quite similar to Laksmidhara's description of Purva Kaula. In these chapters, in addition to using the terms *anuttara* and *anuttara*, he also uses the terms *akula* and *khecara* and, parallel to these two terms, such feminine gender terms as *kauliki* and *khecari*. Quoting from Abhinavagupta and Jayaratha, Padoux explains the connection between *anuttara*, *akula*, and *kauliki sakti* and their roles in the evolutionary process:

The Absolute, *anuttara*, divides into Siva and his energy, denoted by the terms *akula* and *kauliksakti*. 'The state of union of these two,' says TA, third *ahnika*, *sloka* 68 (p.81), 'is called unifying friction (*samghatta*). It is known as the energy of bliss (*ananda*), from which the universe will be emitted.'⁸⁶

'The supreme energy of this God, *akula*, is *kauliki*, through which *kula* arises, and from which the Lord cannot be divided.' Commenting on this rather obscure stanza and referring to the *PTV*, pp. 61-62, Jayaratha (*TAV*, p. 75) states that *a*, the *kauliki* energy, is that energy of which the self, the essence, is the *akula*, the supreme deity, while belonging to and abiding in *kula*, the manifested universe. *Kula*, he says, is the body (*sarira*) of the Godhead, and its characteristic is the phoneme *a* (*akaralaksanam kulam sariram asya [akulasya]. . .*)⁸⁷

Here it is clear that *kauliki sakti*, in essence, is identical to *anuttara* or *samghatta* and in the evolutionary process

when *anuttara* divides into *akula* (siva) and *kauliki* sakti, *akula* and *kauliki sakti* still remain inseparable. Nevertheless, the phrases "*kauliki sakti* of *akula*"⁸⁸ and "his saktis constitute the whole world"⁸⁹ give the impression that *akula* is the principal (*sesin*) and his sakti is not different from him but is complementary (*sesa*), a point on which Abhinavagupta remains silent. However, the commentator Jayaratha explains the relationship between *akula* and *kauliki*: *kauliki sakti* is the body and *akula* is the one to whom the body belongs. Here Jayaratha also quotes Vamakesvarimata (Vamakesvara *Tantra*), a Srividya text frequently quoted by Laksmidhara.⁹⁰ By implication, this may be an echo of the Tantric view that Laksmidhara labels Purva Kaula.

The most notable areas of compatibility between these two doctrines is the way in which they explain the transcendence of *samaya* (in *LD*) and *anuttara* (in *TA*). Laksmidhara considers *samaya* to be entirely different from and transcendent to *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva*. Thus she is the twenty-sixth tattva, and therefore is beyond all the *tattvas* that constitute the empirical world. This transcendent *samaya* is also the source of all other *tattvas* including *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva*. Similarly, according to Abhinavagupta, the union of sakti and siva is the highest reality. Furthermore, this state is neither quiet (*santa*) nor active (*udita*), but rather is the cause of *santa* and *udita*. It transcends the empirical world and is simultaneously identical to it.⁹¹

In order to explain this paradox, Abhinavagupta introduces the idea of *svatantrya sakti*, the autonomous power of the absolute, which is intrinsic to it. Realizing that this may not be a perfectly satisfactory explanation, in his commentary on *TA*, Jayaratha explains that an immature student of Agama, *sukumarahrdaya agamika*, might find it illogical to regard the same tattva as simultaneously transcendent and

immanent.⁹² To help such a student grasp the point, Abhinavagupta posits a thirty-seventh tattva known as *anut-tara* or *parasiva*. This tattva is devoid of all divisions (*sarvavibhagatma*), is autonomous (*svatantra*).⁹³ Thus, the same tattva that refers to an inseparable, unitary state of *sakti* and *siva* is, in different succeeding stages of a philosophical analysis (*kramataratamyayogat*), said to be simultaneously transcendent (*santa*) and manifest (*udita*).⁹⁴

Moreover, to further clarify how pure knowledge is the highest reality and how it is devoid of all qualities and characteristics (*bodhamatra*), Abhinavagupta goes on to postulate a thirty-eighth *tattva*, which transcends even *anuttara*.⁹⁵ This he does only to stress that the union of *sakti* and *siva* is completely transcendent, and yet is the source of the manifest world. To explain the existence of the world without compromising the unsullied nature of *siva*, Abhinavagupta credits *sakti* with creation, maintenance, and annihilation, leaving *siva* uninvolved. Because *siva* and *sakti* are inseparable and refer to two aspects of the same reality, a category that transcends both seems to be a logical necessity. However, the categories beyond the thirty-sixth tattva are conceptual, not actual. Laksmidhara seems to be making the same point, although he considers the twenty-sixth tattva to be completely transcendent and entirely different from *sudhavidya* and *sadasiva*.

The compatibility between Laksmidhara's *Samayacara* and Abhinavagupta's *Kaulacara* becomes even clearer when we study the nature of the terms *samaya* and *annutara* in relation to *samaya* and *anuttara*. *Anuttara* is *para* (supreme or absolute) and *pratibha* (intuitive spontaneous flash).⁹⁶ Commenting on *TA*, Jayaratha explains that *anuttara* is identical to the *sakti* whose autonomous power, lordship, and indescribable wonder is unsurpassed.⁹⁷ In the next verse,

Abhinavagupta introduces the term *kauliki* which, according to him, is the power of akula, the one who is beyond all the kula tattvas, the thirty-six principles. This kauliki sakti and prabhu, the lord akula, are inseparable and it is from this kauliki sakti that all kula tattvas evolve.⁹⁸

However, in the following verse, Abhinavagupta states that the universe evolves from "the union of Siva and Sakti, which is *yamala* or *sangatta* . . . also known as *ananda sakti*."⁹⁹ In the preceding verse, he states that the *kauliki sakti* of akula is the source of the entire universe. These three verses, *TA* 3:66-68, leave no room for the slightest doubt that the terms "anuttara and anuttara, akula and kauliki, *yamala* and *sanghatta*, and *ananda sakti*" are identical and refer to the same metaphysical truth. A more interesting hypothesis, which at this stage may not be well substantiated, is that Abhinavagupta has based this particular discussion on doctrines already in vogue and the same source is later used by Laksmidhara when he discusses his Samayacara view.

In the next two verses, Abhinavagupta says, "That which transcends both the absolute and the immanent is the highest tattva. She is known as *devi*. It is the essence and the heart. He is the emission, the absolute, and the lord (Prabhu). In the sastra known as *Devi Yamala Sastra*, she is called *kalakarsini*. In *Mahadamara*, which is a section of *Devi Yamala*, she is called *sripara*."¹⁰⁰ In this particular section, Abhinavagupta's direct reference to the *Devi Yamala* and his use of the terms *kalakarsini* and *sripara* offers a valuable clue to earlier sources of the Saiva form of Kaulacara and Laksmidhara's brand of Samayacara. The contribution of the *Yamala Tantras*, which are Sakta texts, is also quite significant. Jayaratha, in his commentary on *TA* 3:66-252, quotes passages from *Vamakesvara Tantra* and uses the terms *tripura*, *srngataka*, *kamatattva*, *agni*, *soma*, *surya*, *sabdarasi*,

vaksakti, etc. In Laksmidhara's case, the materials are derived mainly from SU, Vamakesvara *Tantra*, and the Yamala Tantras. But Laksmidhara makes good use of the ideas centered around matrika and mantra, which were already well developed in Kashmir Saivism, although he does not acknowledge his sources. However, Abhinavagupta's reference to the terms kalakarsini and sripara in this particular section of *TA* and the further elaboration by Jayaratha, as well as the occurrence of the same terms in *LD* and *SU* during the discussion on *samaya's* transcendence, may be an indication of an analogous sect that contained the seeds of Saiva and Sakta doctrines and practices.

Just as the terms *anuttara*, *kauliki sakti*, and *khecari* stand for the intrinsic power of *anuttara* and *akula*, the term *khecari* stands for the power of *kha*. Brahman, another term used for *anuttara*. This *khecari sakti* of *kha* is responsible for the rise of the entire objective world. The objective world is identical to *khecari*, while on the other hand, *khecari* is identical to *kha*, *anuttara*. More clearly, the power which spontaneously and eternally vibrates in and remains identical with *kha-anuttara* is called *khecari*. Just as the highest spiritual goal in the *LD* is attained by experiencing the fivefold oneness of *samaya* and *samaya*, similarly here *khecari samaya*, experiencing oneness with *khecari*, brings about the highest spiritual realization. *Khecari samaya* means to experience the oneness of *anuttara* with the various states of mind, emotion, and the world of multiple objects. This *khecari samaya* also refers to the oneness of the individual self with the absolute.¹⁰¹

TA is replete with the terms *mahaguha*, *ama*, *sodasi*, *kundalini*, *malini*, *matrka*, and *kalakarsini* synonymously and with the concept of the oneness of *nada*, *bindu*, and *kala*, material which is the main focus of Laksmidhara's commen-

tary. The use of these common terms and the similarities in the concepts lead us to believe that these Kashmir Saivite and Srividya Sakta writers shared common sources from which they elaborated their doctrines. In the process, they added their unique interpretations and changed the tone of these materials to suit their purposes.

Saivites emphasized siva and Saktas emphasized sakti, even when they proposed the terms *anuttara* or *samaya*, thus retaining their distinct identities. This tendency also led both schools to develop distinct notions of sakti. For example, no matter how emphatically Abhinavagupta and Laksmidhara proclaim the oneness of sakti and siva, a difference in the nature and status of sakti is still apparent. Laksmidhara considers *samaya* or *sadakhya* to be absolutely transcendent; in her there is not even the slightest trace of *sadasiva* or *sudhavidya*. Even when the words *samaya* and *samaya* are used together in *LD* 41, these terms refer to sakti and siva and are never equal to *samaya*, the twenty-sixth *tattva*. From that highest perspective, there is only *samaya*; there is no *samaya*.

However, in Abhinavagupta's system, as he himself states, *anuttara*, the thirty-seventh *tattva*, is the highest reality and *anuttara* is parallel to him. Similarly, while referring to the transcendent *tattva* by using terms such as *akula* and *khecara*, he also constantly uses feminine gender terms such as *kauliki* and *khecari*. During the discussions of these terms, although he denies any difference between these feminine gender and masculine gender terms and the concepts contained in them, he continually uses phrases such as "kauliki sakti of *akula*," and "his saktis constitute the whole world." Such references convey his conviction of the supremacy of the masculine aspect. Laksmidhara, on the other hand, never uses the phrase "samaya of samaya." He occasionally uses

the phrase "*sakti* of siva," but only in those contexts where the meaning of the terms *sakti* and *siva* is perfectly clear. Thus, calling it a Samayacara doctrine, he establishes the perfect supremacy of *sakti*, which he terms *samaya*, *sadakhya*, and *candrakala*. Because *SL* itself asserts the identity of *sakti* with *srīcakra*, the *srīvidya* mantra, *kundalini*, all the *cakras* in the human body, and the anthropomorphic form of the goddess, *Lakṣmīdhara* goes on to explain exactly how these concepts can be fully equated with each other, and precisely how these concepts fit into this particular nondualistic model.

CHAPTER 4

Sakti: The Origin of Mantra, Yantra, and Deity

How Laksmidhara Builds His Main Premise

Laksmidhara's main thesis, as described in the preceding chapter, is that *samaya* or *sadakhya* alone is the ultimate reality. All the *tattvas*, including *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya*, manifest from her. She is simultaneously identical with the world she manifests and transcendent to it. She is both one with, and transcendent to, all elements, mantras, *tattvas*, *avasthas*, *devas*, the meaning of the Vedas, words, *saktis*, and *gunas*.¹ Thus, all which exists, either in its manifest or unmanifest form, is *samaya* alone. But because Srividya adherents meditate on the *cakras*, do *japa* of the *srividya* mantra, worship *sricakra* (the personified form of *tripura*), or both, it becomes essential for Laksmidhara to explain how all these components fit into the concept of nondual, transcendent *Samaya*.

As a first step, he asserts the firmly established Tannic belief that mantra, cakra, guru, deity, and one's own self are essentially one. He goes on to describe how different *cakras*, aspects of mantra (in this case, the different letters of the srividya mantra), different parts of the deity's body, and the aspirant's own personality correspond to samaya's manifest and unmanifest forms. With this point as a central theme, he goes into minute detail. However, his presentation is fragmented because, as a commentator, he is forced to follow the order of the verses of the *SL*. These ideas are expressed in a scattered manner in *SL* itself, and so briefly that without commentarial help they do not form a coherent and complete philosophy.

Laksmidhara chooses only those verses for extensive commentary that contain the materials with which he is concerned. He does not comment on the remaining verses as much as he "translates" them, substituting one Sanskrit word for another. Because *SL* is, in a strict sense, neither a text of philosophy nor a ritual manual, but a literary work of devotional poems, less than a quarter of its verses contains material that Laksmidhara can use. However, as a commentator, he can neither omit verses nor change their order; thus, his discussion has an episodic quality - he is able to pursue his theme only when the text provides the opportunity. The verses that enable Laksmidhara to expound his philosophy are primarily verses 1, 8, 9, 11, 14, 31, 32, 41, 92, 98, and 99.

As the text permits, he describes the transcendent nature of *samaya* and her oneness with *srīcakra* and the srividya mantra, as well as the significance of the *srīcakra* and sakti *cakras*, which he believes to be located in the human body. His underlying goal as an expounder of pure Samayacara is to prove that ultimately *samaya* or sadakhya is absolute, that she can be propitiated or experienced only through internal

worship, and that such internal worship, in its truest sense, can only be done in the *sahasrara*, which, unlike the other cakras, does not exist in the physical body. It is in this context that he discusses the Samayacara brand of kundalini yoga and explains how the six lower *cakras* exist in the *sahasrara* and how, at the same time, the *sahasrara* transcends them all. As part of this discussion, Laksmidhara goes on to stress that the universe and the human body are one and the same, and that the *sahasrara cakra* is beyond.

In an attempt to substantiate this viewpoint, Laksmidhara quotes extensively from prominent Tantric texts, such as NS and YH (which he calls Vamakesvara *Tantra* or *Catuhsati Tantra*), SU, Bhairava *Yamala*, Rudrayamala, KKV, and even the *Yogakundali Upanisad* (hereafter cited as YKU).² All of these texts make references to yantra worship and internal meditation. They equate the human body with the universe and hold the highest spiritual achievement to be the realization of the oneness of mantra, yantra, devata, and one-self. Laksmidhara also quotes the Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanisads, but because those sources do not directly support his view, he supplements these references with his own commentarial interpretation. For example, in LD 32 in order to substantiate his claim that each of the fifteen days of the fortnight is assigned for the practice of one of the letters of the fifteen-lettered srividya mantra, which are identical to fifteen nityakalas, Laksmidhara quotes phrases from the Taittiriya *Brahmana*. Those phrases may have had an entirely different meaning and ritual application in their original context, but Laksmidhara borrows them and reinterprets them in a manner that supports his thesis.

Although Tantric and Vedic sources refer to the gate of *brahman* (*brahmadvara*); the oneness of nada, bindu, and kala; descriptions of para, pasyanti, madhyama, and vai-

khari; and the highest reality's transcendence of the triple world, none expands these concepts into a full-fledged doctrine. With *SL* as a ground, Laksmidhara uses the material in these sources to build a rationale for the esoteric elements of Samayacara practices. The foundation for asserting the oneness between samaya and kundalini sakti is his basic premise that pindanda, the individual body, and brahmanda, the whole universe, are identical, an assertion he makes in his commentary on verses, 14, 41, and 99.³

Although this commentary is much better organized than that of most other Tantric texts, Laksmidhara's presentation is still choppy and repetitious in places because of the limitations imposed by the order of the verses. It is disproportionately expanded in some places and truncated in others. If we are to get a clear understanding of his hypothesis and to analyze the exact nature of sakti-samaya in various contexts, it is necessary to collect the information scattered throughout this commentary and group it by topic. Only then can we study the accuracy and coherence of Laksmidhara's equations between sakti and her various forms - such as *kundalini/cakras*, *srīcakra*, mantra, the deity, and the individual self.

Sakti and the Cakras in the Human Body

Because Laksmidhara holds that the whole universe evolves from *samaya* and that the universe is but the transformed state of *samaya*, everything - including the *cakras*, *srīcakra*, the *srīvidya* mantra, *matrka*, and each individual human - originates from the same source and shares the same process of evolution. According to Laksmidhara, all the *tattvas* of the manifest world are found in the body. The centers of these *tattvas*, as well as their governing forces, are

called *cakras*. In Laksmidhara's system there are six *cakras*: *muladhara*, *svadhisthana*, *manipura*, *anahata*, *visuddhi*, and *ajna*, which are the centers of earth, water, fire, air, space, and mind, respectively.⁴ Each of the first five *cakras* also include *tanmatras*, subtle elements, corresponding to their gross counterparts. Thus, the first five *cakras* are also the centers of smell, taste, form, touch, and sound. Similarly, the sixth *cakra*, *ajna*, is the center of the ten senses.⁵ These *cakras* correlate with the entire manifest world, whereas the *sahasrara*, the seventh *cakra*, corresponds to pure, transcendental *samaya*. Just as *samaya* is the source of, and transcendent to, the entire world, *sahasrara* is the source of, and transcendent to, all the *cakras*. To stress the transcendence of *sahasrara*, Laksmidhara states that this particular *cakra* is beyond the universe as well as beyond the human body.⁶ It is in this *cakra* that *suddhavidya* and *sadasiva* are eternally united. This unitary state is the twenty-sixth tattva, known as *samaya* or *sadakhya*.

Excluding the *sahasrara* from his *cakra* system, Laksmidhara divides the six *cakras* into three parts, each containing a pair. These three divisions are known as *agneyakhandā* (the fiery division), *saurakhanda* (the solar division), and *somakhanda* (the lunar division). These three divisions are centered in three *granthis*, knots - namely *rudragranthi*, *visnugranthi*, and *brahmagranthi*.¹ Quoting *Rudrayamala*, Laksmidhara states, "The whole universe consists of fire, the sun, and the moon."⁸ "The moon, sun, and fire pervade individual bodies as well as the universe."⁹ He again reminds the reader that the *sahasrara* is beyond both the human body and the universe.¹⁰ Then Laksmidhara begins a discussion equating *samaya* and *sahasrara*, the twenty-four evolute and the lower *cakras*, but before reaching a conclusion, abruptly begins discussing *sriyantra* and its con-

nection with the *cakras*. Apparently he assumes that the reader is already familiar with the concept of the oneness of the *cakras* and *srīcakra* because it is not until his commentary on verse 41 that he explicitly states that the *cakras*, *srīcakra*, *srīvidyā* mantra, the deity, and one's own self are identical. Furthermore, many of the details that establish the precise equation and substantiate the oneness of these components are not described until verses 92 and 98.

Perhaps Laksmidhara's main reason for adopting this particular style is his desire to continually affirm that there is little or no place for an external *srīcakra* in the Samayacara school of Srīvidyā. However, because in the majority of Srīvidyā texts, including *SL*, the greater part of the philosophy and practices center around *srīcakra* and the personified form of the deity, thereby supporting Kaulism, he must find a way to place such ideas within the framework of Samayacara. From the standpoint of the metaphysics of the Samayacara school, *samaya* or *sadakhya* is absolute, existing in everything everywhere, yet is still beyond. From the standpoint of one's personal spiritual sadhana, she is the transcendental sakti residing in the *sahasrara* and is to be experienced directly. Thus, to gear the discussion towards Samayacara, every component of philosophy or practice - be it mantra, yantra, deity, guru, disciple, etc. - must ultimately be connected to the *sahasrara* and the *sahasrara* to *samaya* or *sadakhya*.

As shown in Chapter 3, Laksmidhara proposes the theory of twenty-five *tattvas* as opposed to the fifty-one *tattvas* of Vayaviyā Sammhita, which includes the thirty-six *tattvas* of the Saiva Agama. The five lower *cakras* cover the realm of the five gross elements and the five subtle elements. The sixth, the ajna *cakra*, covers the ten senses and the mind. Beyond this sixth *cakra* is the *sahasrara*, which is the residence

of, or is identical to, the transcendental sadakhya. Thus, the six lower cakras cover only twenty-one tattvas. In Laksmidhara's scheme, the remaining four tattvas, i.e., maya, suddhavidya, mahesvara, and sadasiva, find their place neither in the six lower cakras nor in the seventh. Rather, he assigns them to the brahmagranthi, which is also known as *brahmadvara* or *brahmanadi*.¹¹ According to Laksmidhara, unlike the other twenty-one *tattvas* from earth to mind, these four *tattvas* are not part of the manifest world, yet because they evolve from *samaya* and are involved in the process of creation, maintenance, and annihilation, they are not totally transcendent either. Neither are they part of the empirical world because they are the governing and directing forces of all worldly phenomena. Similarly, *brahmagranthi* or *brahmanadi* belongs neither to the realm of the six lower *cakras* nor is it an integral part of the *sahasrara*. Rather, according to Laksmidhara and the sources he cites in his commentary, it is located above the ajna cakra and below the *sahasrara*.¹² The question then arises: if it is not part of *sahasrara*, is it still beyond the universe?

Laksmidhara undertakes the task of clarifying this paradox by returning to the topic of the four tattvas when he explains the personified form of the goddess Tripurasundari. In the grand imagery of the goddess, as described in *SL* itself, there is a special island consisting of gems and surrounded by the ocean of ambrosia. Her mansion, made of wish-fulfilling gems, is situated in the center of a nipa grove. She sits on her royal couch in the innermost chamber of this mansion. She herself is sadakhya and the four tattvas are the couch. Because of their extreme proximity to the transcendent *samaya*, they are still above the world and thus above the six cakras.¹³ It is important to note that these four *tattvas* are similar to the concept of *pancabrahman* or *brahmapancaka*, the five brah-

mans of Kashmir Saivism. In Kashmir Saivism, these five brahmans are neither part of the manifest world nor are they considered to be transcendent.¹⁴

Remaining true to his basic premise that the universe and the human body are one, Laksmidhara explains how the various esoteric planes of existence are equated with the different cakras. According to him, the muladhara is the plane of andhatamisra, the plane of blind darkness; *svadhisthana* and manipura are misraloka, the plane that is a mixture of light and darkness; anahata is *dyotirloka*, the plane of light; visuddhi is candraloka, the plane of the moon, and ajna is *sudhaloka*, the plane of nectar. The thousand-petaled lotus, sahasrara, is jyotsnamayaloka, the plane identical to the light that is sadakhyakala, the eternal plane transcending all twenty-five tattvas.¹⁵ This twenty-sixth transcendent sadakhyakala is also known by the terms saragha, sricakra, and *sudhasindhu*.¹⁶

Sakti (Samaya) and Kalasakti

The next and the most intriguing of the concepts that Laksmidhara expounds are the relationship between kalasakti and samaya and how kalasakti fits into cakra theory. According to Laksmidhara, this universe is created by the 360 rays of kalasakti. These rays refer to the 360 days of the year. Both are called kalas. In fact, the concept of 360 kalas is based on the solar calendar, whereas the concept of dividing the time into fifteen kalas (a fortnight) is based on the lunar calendar. Here, because Laksmidhara considers time as an entity for the sake of his advaita vada, he must demonstrate where kala or kalasakti fits in the scheme of manifestation that he posits. *Kalasakti* is identical to samvat-sara (year) and prajapati (the lord of created beings).¹⁷

Demonstrating the relationship between *kalasakti* and *samaya*, Laksmidhara states that from the *samaya*, which resides in the transcendent candrakalacakra (i.e., *sahasrara cakra* or bindu), numberless rays emanate. The sun, moon, and fire collect 360 of these rays, from which they create and illuminate the entire universe. *Samaya* resides above the rays that constitute this universe and the human body.¹⁸ This statement clearly indicates that the *kalasakti*, which is identical to *samvatsara* and *prajapati*, is lower in status than *samaya*; *kalasakti* refers to only 360 rays out of an infinite number which emanate from *samaya*. *Kalasakti*, with its 360 rays, covers only twenty-one elements, from earth to mind, thus remaining below *samaya* and the four remaining higher *tattvas*, which exist in the *brahma nadi* above the *ajna cakra*.

Laksmidhara further elaborates this concept by dividing and distributing these 360 rays among the various *cakras*, thereby reconfirming the equivalency of the universe and the human body. First, he divides all the rays into three categories: *saura*, *agneya*, and *soma*. One hundred eight *kalas* belong to *agneyakhanda*, 116 to *saurakhanda*, and 136 to *somakhanda*. More specifically, 56 *kalas* correspond to the *muladhara*, the center of the *prthivi tattva* (earth element) and *gandha tanmatra* (smell); 52 correspond to the *manipura*, the center of the *jala tattva* (water element) and *rasa tanmatra* (taste); 62 correspond to the *svadhisthana*, the center of the *agni tattva* (fire element) and *rupa tanmatra* (form); 54 correspond to the *anahata*, the center of *vayu tattva* (air) and *sparsa tanmatra* (touch); 72 correspond to the *visuddhi*, the center of *akasa tattva* (space) and *sabda tanmatra* (sound); and 64 correspond to the *ajna*, the center of *manas tattva* (the mind and the senses). Four *tattvas* - that is *maya*, *suddhavidya*, *mahesvara*, and *sadasiva* - as well as the twenty-sixth, *samaya*, remain above these 360 *kalas*.¹⁹

Just as Laksmidhara tries to equate all possible Tantric concepts with *samaya* and the tattvas that evolve from her, he also tries to create the same equation between those Tantric concepts and *kalasakti*. For instance, according to him the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet correspond to the 360 kalas of *kalasakti*.²⁰ Interestingly, in this context, Laksmidhara uses the terms *kalasakti* and the masculine gender term *mahakala* interchangeably, clearly stating that 360 kalas are identical to *mahakala*. He also establishes an equation between the 360 kalas (corresponding to the solar calendar) and the fifteen kalas that refer to the fifteen days and nights of the fortnight. All these Tantric concepts (i.e., the fifty letters, the 360 kalas, and the fifteen kalas that are identical to each other) belong to the immanent aspect of reality, whereas *sadakhya* or *srividya* transcends them all.²¹ In the course of this discussion, Laksmidhara introduces the concepts of *nada*, *bindu*, and *kala*. According to him, *para*, *pasyanti*, *madhyama*, and *vaikhari* collectively are called *nada*; *bindu* refers to the six cakras, and *kala* means the fifty letters or the 360 days of the year.²²

As discussed in the preceding chapter, *SU*, which is one of Laksmidhara's main sources, does not use the term *samaya* at all, and the words *samaya* and *samayamarga* are each used only once. In *SL*, the term *samaya* occurs only twice, but Laksmidhara favors it over all other terms that are synonymous with *tripura* or *srividya*. He may prefer this because it is his intention to assimilate the concept centered around *kala*, *mahakala*, *kali*, and *mahakali* without associating himself with the schools in which these particular concepts are prominent, be they the *kali mahavidya* of Saktism, the *krama* school of Saivism, or the *Vyakarana Agama*.

It is unlikely that Laksmidhara, whose knowledge of Tantra is evidently quite profound, would have been unfam-

miliar with the Tantric texts on the subjects he is treating in such depth. For instance, according to *ST*, *kundalini sakti* is the same as *sabdabrahman* and identical to the fifty letters that manifest from *sabdabrahman*. This *kundalini sakti* is also the source of the whole universe.²³ Similar descriptions regarding *kundalini* and *sabdabrahman* are found in *Bhutasuddhi Tantra* in *Tantrasangraha, Part III* (hereafter referred to as *TS-III*).²⁴ Just as Laksmidhara explains the concepts of *sahasrara*, the fire, sun, and moon, and the process of manifestation and dissolution, connecting them all with *samaya*, the *Nirvana Tantra* in *TS-II* connect these same concepts with *kali*.²⁵ Similar discussions also occur in *Vatulasuddhakhya Tantra*, *Anubhavasutra*, *Virupaksapanca-sika*, and *Tripurasundarimahimnastotra* in *TS-I*; *Todalatantra* and *Kamadhenu Tantra* in *TS-II*; *Laghustuti*; *Carcastuti*; *Ambastuti*; *Sakalajanastava*; *Tripurasundaridandaka*; *Saubhagyahrdastotra*; *Saubhagyasudhodaya*; *NS*; *YH*; *KKV*; and *VR*.²⁶

In *Vyakarana Agama*, the *kalasakti* of *sabdabrahman* plays a significant role in the manifestation of the world. According to the observations of Gaurinath Shastri, *sabda-brahman* and *kalasakti* are two aspects of the same reality. It is through *kalasakti*, which is the power of *sabdabrahman*, that the twofold but simultaneous process of manifestation occurs. Through *kalasakti*, *sabdabrahman* manifests into *pasyanti*, *madhyama*, and *vaikhari* and simultaneously, corresponding to these three, the objective world manifests.²⁷ In Laksmidhara's system, however, *para* (a step beyond the *pasyanti* of *Vyakarana Agama*), *pasyanti*, *madhyama*, and *vaikhari* refer to the immanent world. The combination of these fourfold stages of *vak* is called *nada*.²⁸ *Tripurasundari* is beyond this fourfold *nada*.²⁹ Thus, according to Laksmidhara, *sabdabrahman*, which is the highest reality in

Vyakarana Agama and kalasakti, which is the intrinsic power of sabdabrahman and consists of 360 kalas, is only a fraction of the infinite kalas that emanate from samaya. Clearly, by considering kala or mahakala to be identical to the 360 rays of kalasakti and insisting at the same time that samaya is the source of *kalasakti*, Laksmidhara assimilates these ideas while still maintaining the supremacy of his philosophy.³⁰

Sakti and Sricakra

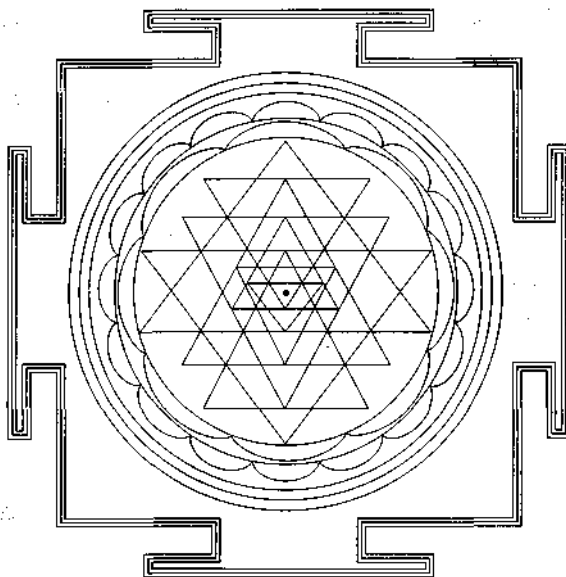
The most complex and intricate topic that Laksmidhara undertakes is *sricakra* and its systematic equation with the *cakras* in the human body. In general, *sricakra* is used as a map for explaining the multilevel universe and the process through which it evolves. Because the places and roles of the group of saktis are described along the visual patterns of *sricakra*, it is also a geometrical representation of Srividya mythology. While adhering to the doctrine of Samayacara, Laksmidhara faces the challenge of accommodating the complex *sricakra* system in his *cakra* theory and of providing an interpretation for all the mythological elements contained in it. Faithful followers of srividya consider *sricakra* not just as a locus for worshipping Tripurasundari and other secondary deities, but also as an emblem of Tripurasundari. Thus, according to them, *sricakra* is not simply a map of creation nor a symbol of the goddess and cluster of goddesses, but actually is the goddess. Therefore to make *sricakra* fit perfectly into the *cakra* theory, Laksmidhara is obliged to explain exactly which part of *sricakra* is the transcendental *samaya* and which parts can be equated with the remaining tattvas. He also must explain how suddhavidya and *sadasiva* are united in the *sricakra* and how, from their unitary state,

the universe/*srīcakra* itself evolves. Furthermore, he must explain how this complex process fits in the *sahasrara* and his scheme of six *cakras*.

Realizing that this is the most essential aspect of his presentation, Laksmidhara launches into this discussion in his commentary on the first verse of *SL*: *śiva* means the four triangles of *srīcakra* (with the apex pointing up) and *śakti* means the remaining five triangles (with the apex pointing down).³¹ The combination of these two sets of *cakras* forms the *srīcakra*, and it is from the *srīcakra* that the process of manifestation, maintenance, and dissolution begins.³² According to Laksmidhara, this is neither a symbolic nor a figurative statement - worldly existence is actually derived from *srīcakra*.³³ This terse and seemingly incomprehensible hypothesis is explained further in the rest of the text and commentary.

The structure of *srīcakra* can be described in the following manner:³⁴ in the center is the *bindu*, a dot, surrounded by *trikona*, a triangle. *Vasukona*, a group of eight triangles surrounds the central triangle. This group of eight triangles is in turn surrounded by *dasarayugma*, two sets of ten triangles. These two sets of ten triangles are surrounded by *manvasra*, a group of fourteen triangles. The fourteen triangles are surrounded by *nagadala*, a circle of eight petals, which is then surrounded by *sodasara*, a circle of sixteen petals. Then comes *vṛttatraya*, three circles, surrounded by *sadanatraya* or *bhūpura*, three squares with four gates facing the four directions.³⁵ Thus, *srīcakra* consists of nine layers or circuits, with a *bindu* in the center transcending all the layers.

Laksmidhara says that *trikona*, *vasukona*, *dasarayugma*, and *manvasra* are the *śakti cakras*. *Astadala*, *sodasadala*, *vṛttatraya*, and *bhūpuratraya* are the *śiva cakras*.³⁶ According to this description, the four *śiva cakras* of *srīcakra* are outside



Sricakra

the sakti cakras. In Laksmidhara's own words, "The siva cakras are extracted (*akrsya*) and placed (*sthapitani*) inside the sakti *cakras* in the form of the bindu. Here, one may recall the Uttara Kaula view, which holds that siva is subsumed in sakti. Laksmidhara explains this view by subsuming the siva *cakras* in the sakti *cakras*. This expresses the supremacy of sakti, as held in Uttara Kaula.³⁷

Laksmidhara elaborates on the oneness of sakti and siva further by identifying and pairing each of the specific siva *cakras* with a sakti cakra. He explains that there is oneness between bindu (siva *cakra*) and the central triangle *trikona* (*sakti cakra*); between *astakona*, the group of eight triangles, and *astadalambuja*, the group of eight petals; between

dasarayugma, the two sets of ten triangles, and *sodasa-dalambuja*, the group of sixteen petals; and finally between *caturdasara*, the group of fourteen triangles, and *bhupura*, the outer square.³⁸

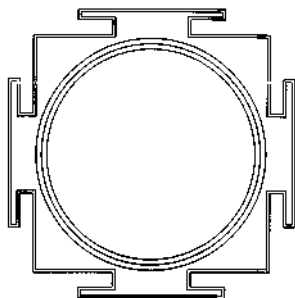
Later in his commentary, Laksmidhara traces the exact correspondence between each *cakra* of *srīcakra* and the *cakras* in the human body. According to him, *trikona* (the central triangle) corresponds to *muladhara*; *astakona* (the group of eight triangles) corresponds to *svadhisthana*; *dasara* (the first set of ten triangles) corresponds to *manipura*; *dvitiyadasara* (the second set of ten triangles) corresponds to *anahata*; *caturdasara* (the group of fourteen triangles) corresponds to *visuddhi*; *sivacakracatustaya* (the group of four *siva cakras*) corresponds to *ajna*; and the *bindu* corresponds to the *sahasrara*.³⁹

As is immediately apparent, this sequence and its correlation with the *cakras* in the human body is not logical. There are nine *cakras* in *srīcakra*, but according to both SL and Laksmidhara, there are only seven *cakras* in the body. This undermines the strength of his model, especially when according to other Tantric texts, such as *YH* and its commentaries (i.e., *Dipika* and *Setubandha*) and *Gautamiya Tantra*, there are two additional *cakras* located between *ajna* and *sahasrara*. These two *cakras* are variously known as: *akula cakra* and *indu cakra*, *visu cakra* and *talū cakra*, or *kailasa* and *rodhini*.⁴⁰ By including the two additional *cakras*, these texts build a more convincing case for the oneness of the *cakras* in *srīcakra* and those in the human body.

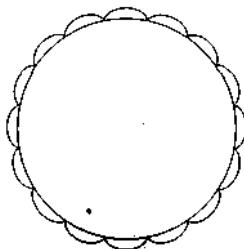
After equating the *cakras* of *srīcakra* with the *cakras* in the human body, Laksmidhara establishes the oneness between *srīcakra* and the body itself. In this respect, he divides the human body in *ayurvedic* fashion, according to which the body has nine basic *dhatu*s (constituents): *tvak* (skin), *asrk*

(blood), *mamsa* (flesh), *medas* (fat), *asthi* (bone), *majja* (marrow), *sukra* (white, i.e., semen), *prana* (vital force), and *jivadhātu* (individual self). According to him, the first five are the *sakti cakras* and the last four are the *siva cakras*. The tenth is *paramasakti*, the highest *sakti* and is identical to the *bindu* of *srīcakra*. She is *isvari*, the ruling lady of the body.⁴¹

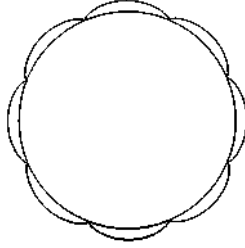
Lakṣmīdhara also explains how the deities residing in the various circuits of *srīcakra* symbolize different aspects of the human being and what they mean in his *Samayacara* system. Each of the nine *cakras* has one presiding goddess, subordinate goddesses, their corresponding male counterparts, *mudras*, *saktis*, and *yoginis*. These nine *cakras* are made of triangles, petals, squares, or circles, each of which is presided over by a *sakti* or a group of *saktis*. All nine *cakras* have specific names. The meaning of the names is indicative of the power of that *cakra* and the function it performs. The nine *cakras*, the goddesses, and the different aspects of the human personality corresponding to them, are as follows:⁴²

First Cakra; *Trailokyamohana*, Enchanter of the Triple World

<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Animasiddhi	<i>niyati</i> , past motivation
Laghimasiddhi	<i>sringara</i> , love
Mahimasiddhi	<i>karuna</i> , pity
Isitvasiddhi	<i>raudra</i> , fury
Vasitvasiddhi	<i>bibhatsa</i> , disgust
Prakamyasiddhi	<i>hasya</i> , mirth
Bhuktisiddhi	<i>vatsalya</i> , parental love
Ichhasiddhi	<i>vira</i> , heroism
Praptisiddhi	<i>adbhuta</i> , wonder
Sarvakamasiddhi	<i>santa</i> , tranquility
Brahmi	<i>kama</i> , worldly desire
Mahesvari	<i>krodha</i> , anger
Kaumari	<i>lobha</i> , greed
Vaisnavi	<i>moha</i> , delusion
Varahi	<i>mada</i> , pride
Indrani	<i>matsarya</i> , jealousy
Camunda	<i>punya</i> , virtues
Mahalaksmi	<i>papa</i> , nonvirtues
Sarvasanksobhini	<i>muladhara</i>
Sarvavidravini	<i>svadhisthana</i>
Sarvakarsini	<i>manipura</i>
Sarvonmadini	<i>anahata</i>
Sarvamahankusa	<i>visuddhi</i>
Sarvakhecari	<i>ajna</i>
Sarvabija and Sarvayoni . . .	two <i>lambikagras</i>
Sarvatrikhanda	combination of all <i>cakras</i>

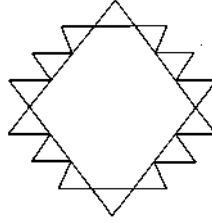
Second *Cakra*: *Sarvasaparipuraka*, Fulfiller of All Expectations

<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Kamakarsini	<i>prthivi</i> , earth
Buddhyakarsini	<i>jala</i> , water
Ahankarakarsini	<i>tejas</i> , fire
Sabdakarsini	<i>vayu</i> , air
Sparsakarsini	<i>akasa</i> , space
Rupakarsini	<i>srotra</i> , ears
Rasakarsini	<i>tvak</i> , skin
Gandhakarsini	<i>caksu</i> , eyes
Cittakarsini	<i>jihva</i> , tongue
Dhairyakarsini	<i>ghrana</i> , nostrils
Smrtyakarsini	<i>vak</i> , speech
Namakarsini	<i>pada</i> , feet
Bijakarsini	<i>pani</i> , hands
Atmakarsini	<i>payu</i> , organ of excretion
Amrtakarsini	<i>upastha</i> , generative organ
Sarirakarsini	<i>manovikara</i> , modifications of mind

Third Cakra; *Sarvasanksakana*, Agitator of All

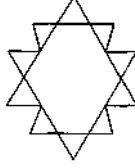
<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Anangakusuma	<i>vacana</i> , speech
Anangamekhala	<i>adana</i> , grasping
Anangamadana	<i>gamana</i> , locomotion
Anangamadanatura	<i>visarga</i> , evacuation
Anangarekha	<i>ananda</i> , enjoyment
Anangavegini	<i>hana</i> , renouncing
Anangankusa	<i>upadana</i> , receiving
Anangamalini	<i>upeksa</i> , indifference

Fourth Cakra: Sarvasaubhagyadayaka, Provider of All Auspiciousness



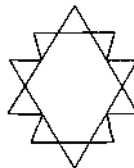
<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Sarvasanksobhini	alambusa
Sarvavidravini	kuhu
Sarvakarsini	visvodara
Sarvahladini	varuna
Sarvasammohini	hastijihva
Sarvastambhini	yasovati
Sarvajambhini	payasvini
Sarvasasankari	gandhari
Sarvaranjini	pusa
Sarvonmadini	sankhini
Sarvarthasadhini	sarasvati
Sarvasampattipurini	ida
Sarvamantramayi	pingala
Sarvadvandvaksayankari	susumna

Fifth Cakra: Sarvartbasadhaka, Accomplisher of All Purposes

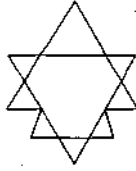


<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Sarvasiddhiprada	prana
Sarvasampatprada	apana
Sarvapriyankari	samana
Sarvamangalakarini	udana
Sarvakamaprada	vyana
Sarvaduikhavimocini	naga
Sarvavighnanirvarini	kurma
Sarvamartyuprasamini	krkala
Sarvasarvangasundari	devadatta
Sarvasaubhagyadayini	dhananjaya

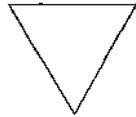
Sixth Cakra: Sarvaraksakara, Protector of All



<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Sarvajna	<i>recaka</i>
Sarvasaktimayi	<i>pacaka</i>
Sarvaisvaryaprada	<i>sosaka</i>
Sarvajnanamayi	<i>dahaka</i>
Sarvavyadhivinasini	<i>plavaka</i>
Sarvadharaśvarupini	<i>ksaraka</i>
Sarvapapahara	<i>udgaraka</i>
Sarvanandamayi	<i>ksobhaka</i>
Sarvaraksasvarupini	<i>jrm bhaka</i>
Sarvepsitaphalaprada	<i>mohaka</i>

Seventh *Cakra*: Sarvarogahara, Remover of All Illness

<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Vasini	sita, cold
Kamesvari	usna, heat
Modini	sukha, pleasure
Vimala	duhkha, pain
Aruna	iccha, desire
Jayini	sattva
Sarvesvari	rajas
Kaulini	tamas

Eighth *Cakra*: Sarvasiddhiprada, Giver of All Accomplishments

<u>Name of Goddess</u>	<u>The Human Aspect Corresponding to the Goddess</u>
Kamesvari	prakrti
Vajresvari	mahat
Kaulini or Bhagamalini . .	ahankara

Ninth Cakra: Sarvanandamaya, Identical to All/Perfect BlissName of Goddess

Samvit or
 Lalita or
 Sadakhyakala or Atman
 Kamesvara

The Human Aspect
Corresponding to the Goddess

During this lengthy discussion on the oneness of *srīcakra* and the human body, Lakṣmidhara also brings up the equation between the sixteen *nityakalas*, which, according to him, are located in the bindu and the square that surrounds the bindu and the ajna cakra.⁴³ During this discussion, he also equates these sixteen *nityakalas* with the sixteen letters of the *srīvidya* mantra.

Then, in order to demonstrate that all the *matrkas*, the phonemes of the Sanskrit language, are subsumed in the *srīvidya* mantra, he opens a whole new discussion. He goes on to describe which Sanskrit letters correspond to which letter of the *srīvidya* mantra, which particular aspect of the *srīvidya* mantra is equivalent to each of the *nityakalas*, and which *nityakalas* correspond to which particular day of the fortnight. He explains how the 360 *kalas* described previously fit into the theory of the 16 *kalas* corresponding to different aspects of the external moon and the esoteric moon. Finally, he explains the equivalency between all these concepts and the *cakras* in the human body.

Sakti and the Srividya Mantra

There are many variations of the *srividya* mantra, depending on which letter the mantra begins with, who first practiced the mantra, and how many syllables the mantra contains.⁴⁴ The variation that Laksmidhara gives in his commentary on *SL* 32 is called *kadividya* and originally consisted of fifteen syllables. He completes the mantra by adding the syllable *srin* and calls it *sodasi* or *srividya*.⁴⁵ The first fifteen syllables refer to the immanent world, which manifests from *samaya*, and the sixteenth refers to *samaya* itself. The fifteen syllables are further divided into three *kutas* (parts):

Ka e i la hrim
ha sa ka ha la hrim
sa ka la hrim
srin

Equating this mantra with the *cakras* in the body, Laksmidhara states that the first *kuta*, from *ka* to the first *hri*, corresponds to *agneyakhandā*, the two lowest *cakras*; the second *kuta*, from *ha* to the second *hri*, corresponds to *saurakhandā*, the two middle *cakras*; and the third *kuta*, from *sa* to the third *hri*, corresponds to *somakhandā*.⁴⁶ The last syllable, *sri*, which constitutes the fourth part of the mantra, corresponds to *candrakalakhanda*.⁴⁷

According to Laksmidhara, the *srividya* mantra in general, and this version in particular, encapsulates the entire range of *matrkas*. The Sanskrit alphabet has fifty, fifty-one, or sometimes only forty-eight syllables and, according to Laksmidhara, each syllable coincides with a syllable of the fifteen-syllable *srividya* mantra.⁴⁸ Laksmidhara begins this discussion with the statement that there are fifty letters in the Sanskrit alphabet, all of which are subsumed in the fifteen

syllables of the mantra.⁴⁹ But, while giving details and explaining exactly how they are subsumed, he reduces the number to forty-eight, thus creating three equal sets of sixteen. The two extra letters are ha and ksa. According to his interpretation, ha, the seed syllable of space, is subsumed in the space of the bindu, and ksa, which is a combination of ka and sa, does not need to be treated separately.⁵⁰ The first set includes the sixteen vowels; the second set, the sixteen consonants from ka to ta; and the third set, the remaining sixteen consonants from tha to sa. Laksmidhara also presents a terse and inventive discussion to support his thesis that all the syllables from a to ksa are included in the srividya mantra. He does this by proving the existence of the pratyahara "aksa" in the srividya mantra. According to him, the first ka of the srividya mantra implies that it is preceded by sixteen vowels, which begin with a, whereas ka itself, being a component of the syllable ksa, represents ksa as well. Thus, in the first letter of the srividya mantra, i.e., ka, the pratyahara "aksa" is found. Thus the pratyahara "aksa" represents all the Sanskrit syllables from a to ksa.⁵¹

In an attempt to prove that all Sanskrit phonemes are present in the srividya mantra, Laksmidhara gives another interpretation of the mantra. According to him, in the third division of the srividya mantra (i.e. sa, ka, la, hrīm), the syllables ka and la stand for the word kala. The word kala itself stands for all the phonemes. Thus, all the *matrkas* are included in the *srividya* mantra.⁵² In Laksmidhara's own words:

Thus, the sixteen nityas are identical to the sixteen syllables found in the mantra; sixteen syllables are identical to fifty syllables, and fifty syllables are identical to the *kalas* of sun, moon, and fire. On the basis of their association with sun, moon, and fire they are threefold.⁵³

Laksmidhara also equates various syllables of the *srividya* mantra with *sricakra*. For example, the three hrims and the last syllable, *srim*, are subsumed in *bindu* (which represents the four siva cakras). All the matrkas are also included in the various parts of *sricakra*, such as the four antasthas (*ya*, *ra*, *la*, and *va*) and four usmnas (*sa*, *sa*, *sa*, and *ha*). Together, these eight syllables are identical to *astakona*, the eight-tri-angled *cakra* of *sricakra*. With the exception of every fifth syllable of each group (*varga*), all the twenty syllables from *ka* to *ma* are included in the *dasarayugama* (the two sets of ten triangles). The fifth syllable of each group (i.e., *na*, *na*, *na*, *na*, and *ma*) are nasal sounds and are included in the *bindu*. With the exception of *anusvara* and *visarga*, the remaining fourteen vowels are included in *caturdasara*, the fourteen-triangled *cakra* of *sricakra*. *Anusvara* and *visarga* are included in the *bindu*.⁵⁴ Thus, all Sanskrit syllables are included in the *srividya* mantra and *sricakra*, and, thereby, in the *cakras* in the human body.

In the context of the *srividya* mantra, the lunar month, which has two fortnights, each consisting of fifteen days, is considered to be the standard measurement of time. Each day and night of the fortnight is considered to be one *kala*, known as *tithi*, in the lunar calendar. These fifteen *kalas* or *tithis* are represented by and worshipped in *sodasara*, the circle of sixteen petals, corresponding to the *visuddhi cakra*.⁵⁵ The names of these fifteen *kalas* or *tithis* and their corresponding deities are as listed on the following page.⁵⁶

The first five *kalas* correspond to the *agneyakhanda*, the second five to *saurakhanda*, and the third five to the *somakhanda*.⁵¹

Equating the *kalas* with different *tattvas*, Laksmidhara states that the first *kala*, *darsa*, is identical to *siva tattva*,

<u>Kala or Tithi</u>	<u>Presiding Deity</u>
Darsa	Tripurasundari
Drsta	Kamesvari
Darsata	Bhagamalini
Visvarupa	Nityaklinna
Sudarsana	Bherunda
Apyayamana	Vahnivasini
Apyayamana (?).....	Mahavidyesvari or Mahavajresvari
Apyaya	Raudri
Sunrta	Tvarita
Ira	Kulasundari
Apuryamana	Nilapataka
Apuryamana (?).....	Vijaya
Purayanti	Sarvamangala
Purna	Jvala
Paurnamasi	Malini
[Cidrupa Sodasi	Cidrupa or Sodasi]

drsta to sakti tattva, darsata to mayamtattva, visvarupa to suddhavidya, and sudarsana to jala tattva (the water element). All five of these tattvas correspond to agneyakhanda, the two lowest cakras in the body; agni, fire, is the presiding deity. The next six kalas - apyayamana, apyayamana, apyaya, *sunrta*, ira, and *apuryamana* - correspond to fire, air, mind, earth, space, and vidya tattva, respectively, and constitute the saurakhanda, the three middle cakras. Here, surya, the sun, is the presiding deity. The remaining four kalas - *apuryamana*, *purayanti*, *purna*, and *paurnamasi* - which are identical to mahesvaratattva, *paratattva*, *atma-tattva*, and *sadasivatattva*, respectively, form the somakhanda, the two highest cakras. The presiding deity of this

khanda is the moon. The presiding deities of all fifteen *kalas* their corresponding tattvas, deities, and *khandas* of the *cakras* are collectively *Kamadeva* and *Kamesvari*. The sixteenth *kala*, *sodasi* or *sadakhya*, is not identical to any tattva other than itself.⁵⁸

In his commentary on *SL* 32, Laksmidhara makes two contradictory statements within one paragraph. First, he distributes these fifteen *kalas* into three equal divisions. Later, he assigns five *kalas* to the *agneyakhanda*, six to the *saurakhanda*, and only four to the *somakhanda*. Laksmidhara attempts to resolve this problem by stating:

. . . *Apuryamanakala* (the eleventh) although situated in the *somakhanda* is subsumed in the *saurakhanda*. Since *apmyamanakala* is a sub-branch of *irakala*, there is oneness between the *ira* (the tenth *kala*) and *apuryamana*.⁵⁹

However, this does not provide a reasonable explanation for why the *apuryamana kala*, which belongs to the lunar division, should be subsumed in the solar division, nor why the *apuryamana kala* is a branch of *ira kala*. A better reason may be his intention to identify each of the *kalas* with each syllable of the *srividya* mantra, which is divided into three parts, each consisting of five, six, and four syllables.

Regardless of his reason for distributing the *kalas* unequally, two more problems remain: first, as stated earlier, in order to demonstrate equivalency between the fifteen syllables of the *srividya* mantra and the fifteen days of the fortnight, Laksmidhara equates the 316 *kalas* with the 15 *kalas* of the moon (a fortnight). By dividing 360 *kalas* by fifteen, each day of the fortnight, or each letter of the *srividya* mantra will be equal to 24 *kalas*, rays, or days of the lunar calendar. Because the first *kuta* of the *srividya* mantra consists of five letters, it will share 120 *kalas*; the second *kuta*, which consists of six syllables, will share 144 *kalas*; and the

third *kuta*, which consists of four syllables, will share only 96 *kalas* of the solar calendar. Meanwhile, Laksmidhara also equates these three *kutas* with the three *khandas* of the *cakras*. During the discussion on the *cakras* cited earlier, he clearly stated that 108 *kalas*, or rays of *kalasakti*, pervade *agneyakhanda*; 116 pervade the *saurakhanda*; and 136 pervade the *somakhanda*. Laksmidhara also states that there is oneness between the first *kuta* of *srividya* and the *agneyakhanda*, the second *kuta* and the *saurakhanda*, and the third *kuta* and the *somakhanda*. Therefore, the number of *kalas* assigned to the *kutas* of the *srividya* mantra and the *khandas* of the *cakras* must match. But in Laksmidhara's presentation, they do not. For example, if Laksmidhara assigns five *kalas* each of the three *kutas*, then each *kuta*, and therefore their corresponding *cakras*, will consist of 120 *kalas*, which contradicts the number of *kalas* Laksmidhara has assigned to the three *khandas*. In order to match the number of letters in each *kuta*, he assigns the *kalas* unequally, i.e., five *kalas* to the first *kutas*, six to the second, and four to the third, yet he still fails to make a perfect equation between the *srividya* mantra and the *cakras* on the basis of the *kalas*.

The second problem lies in Laksmidhara's statement that fifteen *kalas* rotate around *sodasara*, the sixteen-petalled *cakra* of *srīcakra*, which corresponds to the *visuddhi cakra* in the human body.⁶⁰ This contradicts his statement that these same fifteen *kalas* are also distributed among all six *cakras*.⁶¹ Moreover, in considering these fifteen *kalas* to be at the *visuddhi cakra*, Laksmidhara also contradicts his earlier statement that the moon at the *ajna cakra* has fifteen *kalas*.⁶²

In spite of these contradictions, Laksmidhara preserves *samaya's* transcendence by keeping the sixteenth syllable, *śrīm*, above the first fifteen syllables and their threefold divisions.⁶³ When the light of the eternal sixteenth *kala*

"flashes forth" and manifests as fifteen kalas either at visuddhi or at ajna cakra, she remains transcendent, serving as the source of evolution for those fifteen *kalas*. Laksmidhara makes a point of explaining the process of the evolution of the universe from samaya at the levels of both the microcosm and the macrocosm. Throughout his lengthy discussion on *kundalini*, *cakras*, *sricakra*, and *srividya* mantra, he tries to prove his main premise, which he stated at the outset of his commentary: the universe actually evolves from *sricakra*, and that *sricakra* is but a combination of the four siva *cakras*, the five sakti *cakras*, and the innermost *bindu*, representing *samaya*, the transcendent sadakhyakala. From this unitary dyad of suddhavidya and *sadasiva*, represented by the bindu, the pattern of triangles, petals, circles, and squares that constitute *sricakra* evolves. By equating the different components of *sricakra*, their presiding deities, and their mantras with the cosmos and the human being, Laksmidhara demonstrates the oneness of all.

Sakti and the Personified Form of the Goddess

Although Laksmidhara condemns external worship, he comments on those verses of the *SL* that are exclusively concerned with the description of the physical beauty of the goddess, Tripurasundari. In order to justify the Samayacara viewpoint, Laksmidhara explains how this personified form of the goddess fits into theory of the cakras in the human body or the *cakras* of *srickara*, and how they are identical to each other. He describes the personified form of srividya and its philosophical implications in *LD* 7, 8, 92, and 97. From these verses and his commentary on them, the following description emerges.

In the center of the ocean of nectar, there is an island of

gems bordered by groves of heavenly trees. On this island, in a grove of nipa trees is a mansion. In that mansion, the goddess, Srividya, as a wave of consciousness and bliss, reposes on a couch, which itself is made of four gods. *Paramasiva* serves as the mattress. The goddess has four arms and three eyes and is most beautiful. She is as radiant as thousands of rising suns. In her four hands she holds a bow, arrows, a noose, and a goad.

According to Laksmidhara, the ocean of nectar is the *bindu* of *srīcakra*, comparable to *sahasrara*. The heavenly trees are the five downward-facing triangles in *srīcakra*. In the center is the *devi's* mansion made of wish-yielding gems. The four gods who make up the couch are *brahma*, *visnu*, *rudra*, and *isvara*. *Sadasiva* himself is the mattress on which the *devi* sits.⁶⁴ Quoting from Vamakesvara *Tantra*, Laksmidhara describes the meaning of the different weapons of the goddess: "pasa (noose) and ankusa (trident) are identical to raga (attachment) and dvesa (aversion). Her bow and arrows are the mind and the five tanmatras. She resides in the *cakra* made of *karanendriya* (the active senses), and she herself is identical to *samvit*, pure consciousness."⁶⁵ Demonstrating the oneness of the goddess with *kundalini sakti*, Laksmidhara quotes from Bhairava *Yamala*: "After penetrating the circle of siva, the sun, in *sahasrara*, she, the *kundalini sakti* makes the circle of the moon melt or drip. Inebriated with the supreme bliss dripping from the nectar produced by that (union), the wife of kula (*kundalini*), leaves the kula, *susumna nadi* (or all *kulatattvas*) and comes to the highest shower, i.e., enjoys the highest bliss."⁶⁶ Similar imagery is found in *SL* 10:

With streams of nectar flowing from between your feet sprinkling the universe, [recreating] through the power of reciting the sacred text that produces the six [cakras which had been dis-

solved when Devi regressed to the sahasrara by the kula path], again you reach your own abode and into the form of a serpent, in three and a half coils, you convert yourself and sleep in the kulakunda hollow.⁶⁷

The commentators Kamesvarasuri, Narasimhasvamin, and Gaurikanta elaborate slightly on the symbolism of the personified form of the goddess. For instance, according to Kamesvara, the *bindu*, which is located above the four siva cakras and below the five sakti cakras, is the ocean of nectar. In the center is a garden of celestial trees: kalpa, santana, *haricandana*, *mandara*, and *parijata*. He also names the nine gems that are used in the *devi's* mansion. By interpreting the words *sura*, *dvipa*, and *nipa*, he brings the visual imagery closer to the theory of the *cakras*. For instance, he states:

Jiva, the individual soul, perfectly or beautifully shines and therefore is called *sura*. Since *jiva* exists in the body from toe to head, and in its absence the body cannot survive, *jiva* is called *vitapin*, the garden [the ground where different kinds of plants of life can grow]. Furthermore, by virtue of being the abode of gods, *muladhara*, etc. *chakras* are like islands which are made of gems or shine like gems. . . .

Due to their function of going out and coming in, the five main *pranas* - *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, and *samana* - and the five secondary *pranas* - *naga*, *kurma*, *krkara*, *devadatta*, and *dhananjaya* - carry a body; therefore (these *pranas* are called) *nipa*. Or the aforesaid presiding gods of the senses are called *nipa* because (they) nurture or protect the body.⁶⁸

Narasimhasvamin⁵⁹ compares *sricakra*, which he calls *srsti cakra*, with the ocean of nectar; *saubhagya* (*saubhagya-dayaka cakra*, the fourteen-triangled *cakra* of *sricakra*) with the celestial garden, and *dasarayugala*, the two sets of ten triangles with the island of gems and garden of *nipa* trees, respectively. *Astara*, the eight-triangled *cakra* of *sricakra*, is

identical to cintamanigrha, the mansion made of wish-yielding gems; *trikona*, the central triangle is identical to the couch, and the bindu is identical to *sadasiva*.

Asserting that brahma, *visnu*, *rudra*, *isvara*, and *sadasiva* are the different parts of the devi's couch, Gaurikanta says that since they are pretas, i.e., they have attained unsurpassed closeness with the body of the devi, they are viewed as part of the devi's couch. This imagery indicates both their supremacy over all tattvas and the devi's supremacy over them.⁷⁰

Laksmidhara is obviously not particularly interested in creating a perfect parallel between the personified form of the goddess and other facets of srividya. Because he is exclusively concerned with Samayacara, he is naturally not inclined to dwell on the personified form of the goddess and her worship. He is aware of the fact that no matter how much emphasis is placed on the symbolic meaning of the goddess, the very concept of the goddess itself carries a dualistic notion: she exists as a being in time and space; she is different from those who worship her; the ritual objects offered her are different from her; and worship itself is an action directed toward her. That is why Laksmidhara clearly states: ". . . this is a ritual worship. Ritual is comprised of actions and (therefore) should not be respected."⁷¹ Right after this statement, he begins his commentary on *SL* 42 by writing: "Thus after thoroughly explaining the doctrine of Samayacara, [now the author of the Saundaryalahari] describes samaya's [physical beauty] from crown to feet."⁷² This statement implies that the content of the Saundaryalahari, from verse 42 onward, is not related to Samayacara doctrine. This is probably the reason why, with the exception of verses 92 and 99, Laksmidhara simply gives a word-for-word translation of the verses from this point on.

To reiterate, Laksmidhara concentrates only on those verses of *SL* that can be related to Samayacara doctrine. The essence of Samayacara lies in this theory of samaya's nondual existence and her transcendence over sadasiva (siva) and suddhavidya (*sakti*) and all other *tattvas*. Because samaya alone exists, even in the practical realm, the *cakras* in the body, *sricakra*, the srividya mantra, the matrkas, the kalas, individual beings, and the entire universe are identical to samaya. As far as the soteriological goal is concerned, it can be attained only by awakening *kundalini* and leading her from the muladhara to the sahasrara, where she unites herself with siva. According to Laksmidhara, all these philosophical and spiritual elements are exclusive characteristics of Samayacara.

Discussion and Analysis

As stated earlier, Laksmidhara apparently created this model while using the blueprint which already existed both in Saiva and Sakta Tantrism. However, we do not know exactly where the different pieces of this blueprint were originally developed, nor the process through which these pieces coalesced and attained the form in which we encounter them in Laksmidhara's writings. One method of analyzing the sources from which this particular concept of Samayacara and *sakti* may have been derived is to divide the literature into four distinct groups: the texts that Laksmidhara acknowledges in his commentary; the Saiva and Sakta texts he must have read, but does not explicitly acknowledge; the texts of Pancaratra Agama that contain related concepts; and the texts of Vedic literature.

To begin with the texts he acknowledges, we find his premise that pindanda, the individual body, and *brahmanda*,

the universe, are identical in a fairly developed form in NS, YH, and YKU.⁷³ Similarly, the elaborate treatment of cakra theory that appears in LD 9-11 and 14, is reminiscent of passages in SU, YH, and YKU,⁷⁴ which thoroughly expound the concept of *kundalini*, *cakras*, and the system of *nadis*. These sources also contain passing references to the correlation between the esoteric planes of existence and the *cakras*. These same texts also make frequent mention of the oneness of the *cakras* with the human body, *sricakra*, the srividya mantra, devata, guru, and one's own atman.⁷⁵ The concept of *kala*, which is only implied in SL but has become a significant component of cakra theory in LD, can also be traced to these sources.⁷⁶

Turning our attention to the Saiva and Sakta texts Laksmidhara must have been familiar with but does not acknowledge, we encounter in SVT the concept of the oneness of *bindu*, *kala*, *nada*, mantra, jiva, siva, and *kala*.⁷⁷ Just as Laksmidhara⁷⁸ considers siva (*sadasiva*) to be identical with *nada*, subsuming it in *sakti*, SVT⁷⁹ also considers *nada* and *sadasiva* to be synonymous and places *nada* in the center of *sakti*. A parallel to Laksmidhara's concept of *sadasiva* residing in *brahmanadi* and *sadakhya's* transcendence is found in SVT.⁸⁰ According to SVT, *sadasiva* is situated in the *brahmanadi* and *paramasiva* transcends the *brahmanadi*. Laksmidhara's method of raising *kundalini* and piercing the *cakras* and his concept of *nadis*; the movement of *prana*; the human body being comprised of *soma*, *surya*, and *agni* and their oneness with *kala*; and the whole universe being pervaded or created by *kala* echoes SVT.⁸¹ Similarly, in NT one finds a detailed description of *nadis*, *kundalini*, *nada*, *bindu*, *kala*, and *cakrabhedana*, and piercing the *cakras* - all characteristics of Samayacara.⁸²

As discussed previously, Abhinavagupta's treatment of

these subjects is amazingly close to Laksmidhara's. For example, he uses the terms *sadakhya*, *sodasi*, and even *srividyā*. While discussing the nature of kundalini *sakti*, the method of awakening her, and her union with siva in *sa-ha-srara*, he calls kundalini *sakti* "visvadhara," the ground of the universe.⁸³ Like Laksmidhara, Abhinavagupta states that an aspirant leaves the path of *ida* and *pingala*, enters *susumna*, pierces all the lower *cakras*, and enters *brahmabīla*, i.e., *brahmanadi*.⁸⁴ Eventually, he rises above *sadasiva* and the other four *brahmans* who reside in *brahmanadi* and goes to the Highest, which he terms *sadakhya* *bhuvanam*.⁸⁵ *Para devī brahmanī*, who resides in *brahmanadi*, obstructs the path. A *yogin* penetrates that obstruction in order to go above.⁸⁶ Laksmidhara's description of kundalini, *sadasiva*, and the other *tattvas* as part of the devī's couch, *sakti* as the source of *kala*, the concept of *matrika*, the oneness between the human body and the body of *saṃvit* are similar to those found in *TA*, especially chapters 15 and 29.⁸⁷

Next, we come to the texts of Pancaratra Agama, which are replete with the information that Laksmidhara discusses in *LD*, although he never mentions them. Because there are more than a dozen Pancaratra texts, some of which are voluminous, it is not possible to discuss all of them, nor is such a discussion relevant. Therefore, we have selected the Laksmi-Tantra,⁸⁸ hereafter cited as *LT*, as representative.

LT not only gives the essence but also elaborates on the contents of three major texts: *Sattvata Samhita*, *Jayakhya Samhita*, and *Ahīrbudhnya Samhita*. *LT* combines the philosophical concepts of *Sattvata Samhita* and the ritualistic aspects of *Jayakhya Samhita*. It is also one of the most important Pancaratra texts, as it gives a clear and systematic treatment of Pancaratra theories. In regard to the *sakti* principle, it shows a striking similarity to Saktism, yet remains

Vaisnavite in tone, synthesizing various concepts current in Pancaratra and other Tantric traditions. Just as Laksmi-dhara's doctrine was to do later, this text attempts to blend Sankhya ideology with monistic Vedanta.

LT stands out among the vast body of Pancaratra texts because of its exclusive treatment of sakti in the form of the goddess Laksmi. This is one of the few Pancaratra texts that is cited by prominent Sakta commentators such as Bhaskararaya in his commentary on Lalita-Sahasranama, Nagesa Bhatta on DS, and Appaya Diksita on *Candrakala-stuti*.

According to *LT*, Laksmi, who is the supreme goddess, is identical to *iccha*, *jnana*, and *kriya*. She is *pancakrtyakari*, the force responsible for the fivefold functions, i.e., creation, maintenance, destruction, concealment, and grace.⁸⁹ She is *maharajni*, the great queen.⁹⁰ She is *hrllekha* (probably the three *hrims* of the *sridaya* mantra), *paramatmastha* (dwelling in *paramatman*, the highest self), and cit sakti, the power of consciousness.⁹¹ She is *sarvasaktimayi*, consisting of all *saktis*. She is the leader of sakti *cakra*. She resides in the interior of agni and soma, and she is *madhyamarganuvartini*, traveling through the central path that is *susumna*.⁹² Similarly, *LT* describes the concepts of *brahma pancakam* (five brahmans); the rays of agni, surya, and soma; and the concept of bindu, samvit, matrka, and brahmarandhra or brahmagranthi.⁹³ Like *LD*, *LT* also mentions the oneness of *matrkas* and agni, surya, and soma.⁹⁴

According to *LT*, Laksmi is called *mahayoni*, the great *yoni*, the source of evolution, and Trilokajanani, the mother of the three universes, yet she is para, the transcendent.⁹⁵ However, as Sanjukta Gupta writes in the introduction to her translation of *Laksmi Tantra*, *LT* establishes "the supremacy of *laksmi* as a philosophical principle, ranking, if not higher

than Visnu, then at least as equal to Him. This is achieved by emphasizing the mystic tenet of unity in duality, the two-in-one accepted by the Sakta sects."⁹⁶ Describing the nature of sakti in *LT*, he writes, "Sakti is inherent in God just as light is inherent in the moon. She is inseparable from God yet not absolutely identical with God. . . ."⁹⁷ In *LD*, the analogies of the moon and moonlight, and fire and the heat of the fire are given to explain the inseparability and oneness of sakti and siva, whereas in *LT*, they are used to demonstrate only inseparability. The next statement, "She is also the selfhood of the supreme Self (paramatmam), i.e., of God. In other words, Laksmi, God's Sakti, is his essential nature. She is the divine presence. She forms the so-called body of Narayana, consisting of six divine or ideal qualities (gunas)."⁹⁸ Similarly, Laksmi is sakti and God is the possessor of the divine power (*saktimat*) - a concept similar to Purva Kaula doctrine, as mentioned by Laksmidhara.

Finally, we come to Vedic literature. Passing references to Srividya-related concepts such as *soma*, *kala*, and *sodasi* are found in the Samhita portion of the Vedas. *RV* clearly states that there is a distinction between the soma obtained from herbs and the soma known only to the knowers of brahman. The latter resides in heaven (divi) and it is through that soma that the children of Aditi (adityah) and the earth and moon are sustained.⁹⁹ Praying to *soma*, the seer of the mantra says, "O deva, shining being [i.e., soma], they drink you, and immediately you grow again. Air is the protector of soma, [and you, soma, are] the creator of the years and months."¹⁰⁰ One might link this simple statement to the candrakala of *LD*, which is also the creator of years and months (*samvatsara*). The *Yajurveda* uses the term *sodasi* in conjunction with a statement about *trini*, *jyotisim* (three rays) penetrating the whole universe. This may be a reference to the rays of the

sun, moon, and fire.¹⁰¹ *The Atharvaveda*, contains references to the concept of *kala* as *isvara* and *prajapati*, and even the creator of *prajapati*.¹⁰²

These passing references and the mere mention of these terms do not constitute evidence that the roots of the Samayacara doctrine lie in the Vedas, although commentators, including Laksmidhara, make this claim. They do this by extracting words, phrases, and entire passages from these ancient sources and interpreting them in a manner that supports the point they are trying to make. It is a common practice for the commentators on Indian philosophical texts to stretch the content and add materials to such a degree that the commentary becomes an independent treatise in itself. In writing such treatises, the commentators impose their ideas on the main text and validate them by quoting older texts, whose credibility has already been established. Sankaracarya's *BS-B*, Abhinavagupta's *PTV* and *MVV*, and Ksemaraja's *Vimarsini* on the *Siva Sutras* and his *Uddyota* commentaries on *SVT* and *NT* are typical examples. Laksmidhara's *LD* is no exception. For example, to demonstrate that the theories of *cakras*, *srīcakra*, and *srīvidya* mantra have their roots in the Vedas, Laksmidhara offers references from the *Taittiriya Samhita*,¹⁰³ *Taittiriya Brahmana*,¹⁰⁴ and *Taittiriya Upanisad*.¹⁰⁵ However, the only direct connection between those passages and *Srīvidya* doctrine is Laksmidhara's own interpretation.

If such interpretations are accepted as a valid means of locating *Srīvidya* elements in Vedic literature, we can find hundreds of such references. For example, all of the mantras from the *RV* that constitute the *Sarasvati Rahasya Upanisad*,¹⁰⁶ *Vak Sukta*,¹⁰⁷ and *Sri Sukta*¹⁰⁸ can be used as a source of *Srīvidya*, or at least *Sakta*, ideas. Even though contemporary *srīvidya* adherents, especially those who are formally

associated with the Sankaracarya order, claim a Vedic origin for Srividya in the same fashion that Laksmidhara does, this claim has by no means been substantiated. The historical connection and interaction between the Vedas and sad-darsana (Nyaya Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, and Vedanta), as well as between the Vedas and both Jainism and Buddhism, is well known. The nature of the relationship and the process of interaction between Tantra and Veda (Agama and Nigama) has so far not been fully understood. It still remains a mystery how two streams of literature - Vedic and Tantric - which were parallel in most cases and which developed in the same socio-political, cultural, economic, and geographical setting, remained so aloof from each other. Even when we come across shared ideas, we have no way of knowing how a Tantric adherent could have adopted them, especially when these ideas did not continue to develop in the traditions that are definitely based on the Vedas. For example, the concept of *soma*, which according to the *RV*,¹⁰⁹ is consumed by the gods, appears in *Sambapancasika* in *TS-I*¹¹⁰ in almost the same language, although it does not appear elsewhere in Vedic-oriented literature.

Despite the fact that philosophers remained adamant about the ideas they advocated, vigorously refuted other ideas, and thus helped maintain distinct philosophical doctrines, the process of interaction and exchange of ideas naturally continued among the masses and the mystics. Laymen - Buddhist, Jaina, and Hindu alike - assimilated a variety of ideas such as multiple forms of the goddesses and gods, rituals, *siddhis*, *nirvana*, *sunya*, *moksa*, *samadhi*, and *brahman*. Spiritual seekers, especially those who placed no particular importance on religious or sectarian affiliation, served as vehicles for blending the prevalent ideas of their day. Most such spiritual seekers or mystics had little

interest in propagating what they knew and did not commit their thoughts and experiences to writing. However, a few of them wrote books, and in some cases fragments of their teachings were preserved by their devotees, either in oral or written form. The literature related to such figures, including Gorakhnatha and other saints of the natha tradition, Kabira, Tulasidasa, Nanaka, Namadeva, and Jñanesvara - all of whom shared the yogic ideas mentioned in *LD* and other Saiva/Sakta texts - is representative of the ideas prevalent in the mainstream of Indian spirituality.

Today this literature is usually classified as *santa sahitya* and is found in all the older forms of Indian vernacular. In addition to *bhakti sadhana*, one of the major characteristics of this literature is yoga and mysticism. Every single component of yoga sadhana and experience is ultimately connected to *nada*, *bindu*, or *kala* and these, in turn, are connected to *sakti*. Although philosophy was not their main concern, these saints and mystics expressed their opinions regarding ultimate truth. It is in that context that they mention the metaphysical position of *nada*, *bindu*, or *kala*, human life, the world, and the highest truth. Just as one can discern slightly different roles of *sakti* within the general ideology of Saivism and Saktism, these variations are also apparent in this literature. In spite of Lakṣmidhara's lack of acknowledgment of these sources, he clearly was familiar with them and endeavored to formulate a coherent philosophy that accommodated all these yogic principles. He denounced Vamācāra and other forms of Tantra, which were associated with *digambaras*, *ksapanakas*, and *kapalikas*, and claimed that *Samayācāra* is purely Vedic. Thus he established it as distinct, although it already existed as a prominent aspect of the general body of Sakta Tantrism. In *Samayācāra* doctrine, he includes the concepts of *nada*, *bindu*, *kala*, the oneness among mantra,

yantra, cakras, the deity, and the human being, and other mystical components of Yoga and Tantra.

Laksmidhara is the first to meticulously unite all these concepts and give a systematic account of Samayacara doctrine and practice. He uses *SL* as a tool and acknowledges *Subhagodaya* and *Vamakesvara Tantra* as a source of inspiration, but extracts "Samayacara" concepts from Saiva and Sakta texts, and possibly from Pancaratra Agama and Santa Sahitya.

Unlike other Sakta texts, *LD* provides a rationale for considering all these different components to be identical. Philosophically, he expounds the theory of nondualism, according to which there is only one reality, which he terms samaya, sadakhya, candrakala, sodasi, and srividya. These terms explicitly transcend the level of reality usually indicated throughout Saiva and Sakta texts by the terms siva and sakti. In a strict sense, therefore, Laksmidhara proposes Samaya Advaitavada or Sadakhya Advaitavada, according to which sakti, known by the term sadakhya, alone exists. Laksmidhara's concept of sakti is distinguished by three major characteristics: he uses definite terms - samaya, sadakhya, or candrakala - to indicate the transcendental form of sakti. His occasional use of the term sakti is always in a specific context which is self-explanatory. He clearly defines the metaphysical position of *samaya/sakti*: it is a unitary state of suddhavidya and sadasiva, which is purely transcendental. This unitary state does not contain the slightest trace of its two components. It is completely different from, transcendent to, and the source of suddhavidya, sadasiva, and the rest of the empirical world. Even in the realm of *sadhana*, *samaya* alone exists. The different components of *sadhana*, such as yantra, mantra, the *cakras*, and the deity, are identical to her.

Thus, Laksmidhara is the first Srividya adherent to make an attempt to give a philosophical interpretation of the elements pertaining to *sadhana*. His clear description of the *sakti* concept, which he terms *samaya*, and its metaphysical status in relation to *siva*, can be used as a model to delineate the philosophy of *sakti* in other schools or subschools of Sakta Tantrism. Other Tantric schools have made fragmentary attempts to provide a philosophical interpretation of components of their *sadhana*, but, due to the lack of a comprehensible philosophical structure, such interpretations remain incomplete. It is not necessarily the philosophy, but rather the methodology he uses, nor is it necessarily what he expounds, but his method of expounding it that can be used to study the specific characteristics of a particular subschool of Sakta Tantrism, as well as the distinctive notions of *sakti* therein.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion: The Significance of Laksmidhara's Concept of *Sakti*

LAKSMIDHARA'S WRITINGS on sakti cannot be properly appreciated in isolation from the traditions which he drew upon and later influenced. Srividya is historically and philosophically the most important branch of Sakta Tantrism on the basis of its well-defined philosophical position, its high literary standards, and its coherent explanations for the practices outlined in this system. In philosophies other than Saktism and Saivism, the concept of sakti has played a role subordinate to the system's prevailing supreme principle (e.g., apurva, adrsta, brahman, or sabdabrahman). Sakti, in these systems, grew out of the effort to logically explain causality. In most Saiva and Sakta texts, however, the function assigned to sakti is far more central. Asserting the

supremacy of either siva (consciousness) or sakti (the creative force behind the appearance of the universe), or of their union, these texts concern themselves with such fundamental questions as whether or not sakti and siva are inseparable, whether or not they refer to two aspects of the same absolute truth and whether they play equal roles in the manifestation of the universe.

So significant is the philosophical and metaphysical category represented by sakti that this concept has been employed by some scholars as a means of designating a denomination as Tantric or non-Tantric. As a result, Tantrism and Saktism are sometimes considered to be identical, though it would be more correct to describe them as intersecting, rather than coinciding, traditions. Tantric branches such as Vaisnavism, Saivism, and Buddhism have indeed incorporated the concept of sakti, but she occupies a subservient position compared to her male partner, even though all Tantric sects postulate that he is incapable of initiating any action or movement.

The Srividya school of Sakta developed on the ground of Saiva philosophy and metaphysics, and incorporated elements from Vedic, Upanisadic, and Pauranic sources. As such, its system represents an important coalescence and clarification of some of the most prominent ideas in Indian philosophy.

Built around Tripurasundari, one of the ten mahavidyas (great goddesses), the school of Srividya holds a more prominent position than those built around the more famous goddesses, Kali and Tara, in part because of Srividya's inclusion or assimilation of other major goddesses within its fold. Because this is the only school in Tantrism with explicit ties to the Vedas, and because of its interaction with two significant traditions, Saivism and Advaita Vedanta, Srividya gained

the social acceptance that has eluded the other branches of Saktism. The adherents of Srividya were and still are Hindus well versed both in the Sanskrit language and in a wide range of philosophical literature - factors which helped Srividya to develop a sophisticated philosophy and metaphysics, and which continue to this day to lend considerable prestige and respectability to the sect.

Srividya texts, not surprisingly, explored the concept of sakti in some detail, providing a foundation for the philosophy that Laksmidhara would later systematize. Sakti was variously known as *tripura*, *tripurasundari*, *mahatnpurasundari*, *samvit*, *citi*, and *paraciti*, these terms being used interchangeably to indicate the highest reality. The *tripurasundari* simultaneously exists at three levels, the gross, the subtle, and the transcendent, which correspond, respectively, to the anthropomorphic form of the goddess, the mantric form, and the *susumna nadi*, or the kundalini sakti traveling through it. A threefold spiritual discipline (*upasti*) corresponds to these three levels of existence - *kayiki*, *vaciki*, and *manasi*, i.e., physical, verbal, and mental.

Two doctrines - Abhasavada and Parinamavada - developed to explain the relationship between *samvit* or *tripura* and the world. The former, which is found in most of the Srividya texts, posits that *samvit* is like a mirror and the universe is like a reflection appearing in it. This mirror contains the whole universe inside herself, and through her *svatantryasakti* (intrinsic autonomous power) makes them appear as though they are outside her. The latter doctrine maintains that the universe is a transformation or manifestation of *tripura*. Indeed, *tripura* (the cause) and the phenomenal world (the effect) are two different states of the same truth. Both of these doctrines assert that there is only one reality, sakti, and the world does not exist apart from her. It is

either an appearance without a substance of its own (Ahhasavada) or a manifest state of unmanifest sakti (Pari-namavada).

These concepts demonstrably influenced subsequent writers of the Sakta tradition; however, as did previous works, the texts use the term sakti loosely and do not fully define it. Thus the notion of sakti remained fundamentally ambiguous in Sakta doctrine until the appearance of the LD, and with it, a new branch of Srividya. Both the name and the main tenet of this branch, Samayacara, derive directly from the LD, which expounds the premise that samaya (the transcendental union of siva and sakti) is the ultimate reality.

Laksmidhara wishes to posit Samayacara as a totally independent branch of Srividya by drawing a sharp division between this and the older, Saiva-based school known as Kaula. The conflict arose primarily from an opposition between two *acaras* (systems of conduct and cultural values): Samaya is puritan and vegetarian; Kaula is liberal and non-vegetarian, and includes the most frequently disputed ritual elements (*pancamakara*). The dispute, however, is related in a mostly one-sided manner by Samayacarins, including Laksmidhara, who do not take into account what Kaulacarins themselves have to say.

This partisanship on the side of Laksmidhara does not, however, take away from his enormous accomplishment of systematizing the philosophy of Srividya and of providing a coherent foundation for the practices he advocates. The lasting significance of his work may be inferred from the fact that although the *SL* itself hardly qualifies as a Tantric text, Laksmidhara's commentary so convincingly explicates it in light of Tantric ideas that the *SL* has come to be seen as a central document of Tantrism.

Among the many virtues of his commentary is its exact

and highly discriminating use of terminology. Unlike other Tantric writers, he insists on using *sakti* and the related terms *samaya*, *sadakhya*, and *candrakala* with precisely defined meanings. Another notable strength is the comprehensiveness of his system - a system that attempts to correlate all categories of existence and action, and to place them in relation to their ultimate cause. His objective is to demonstrate the main premise that *samaya*, or *sadakhya*, alone is the ultimate reality. But because *Srividya* adherents meditate on the *cakras*, do *japa* of the *srividya* mantra, and/or worship *sricakra* and the personified form of *Tripura*, Laksmidhara undertakes to explain how all these components fit into the concept of nondual, transcendent *Samaya*. As a first step, he asserts the firmly established Tantric belief that mantra, *cakra*, guru, deity, and one's own self are essentially one. He goes on to describe in detail how these elements correspond to *samaya*'s manifest and unmanifest forms.

In building his argument, Laksmidhara (1) expounds the relationship between *samaya* and *kalasakti*, i.e., the 360 rays that create the universe; (2) systematically equates *sricakra* with the *cakras* in the human body, thereby relating the deities residing in the various circuits of *sricakra* to different aspects of the human being; (3) explains how the *srividya* mantra encapsulates the entire Sanskrit alphabet, and equates the mantra with *sricakra*; and (4) justifies how the personified form of the goddess *Tripurasundari* corresponds to the *cakras* in the human body and the *cakras* of *sricakra*, and explains how these are identical to each other.

The LD is as subtle in its arguments as it is comprehensive in its subject matter. Literature up to this time attempted with varying degrees of success to explain how *siva* and *sakti* could be, in essence, one, even as one power or the other was held to be the ultimate truth. The *SL* itself accords primary

status to sakti - asserting that "If siva is united with sakti. He is able to exert his powers as Lord; if not, the God is not able to stir" - but in some verses it assigns them equal status. It is these thorny contradictions - if sakti is superior to siva, or vice versa, then how can they hold equal status? if they are identical, why use two different terms? - that Laksmidhara addresses, and he resolves them in a more coherent, philosophically sound manner than can be found elsewhere in the literature.

In constructing the Samayacara doctrine, Laksmidhara affirms the inseparability of *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya* - neither can exist without the other - while proposing an entirely different category of reality, i.e., *samaya* or *sadakhya*, which arises from a combination of *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya*. It is from this combination or union that the processes of creation, maintenance, and dissolution originate, never from *sadasiva* or *suddhavidya* alone. The transcendent *sadakhya* alone is the nondual reality; all other *tattvas*, including *sadasiva* and *suddhavidya*, evolve from this.

Many concepts expounded by Laksmidhara are echoed in *TA* by Abhinavagupta, even though the latter identifies himself with the Saiva-based Kaula tradition. Abhinavagupta's main concern is not to discuss sakti alone but rather to expound Trika, the triad of siva, sakti, and their union. This union - beyond which there is nothing - he calls *anuttara*, which is analogous but not exactly equivalent to *samaya*.

The philosophies of these two writers are compatible in the way in which they explain the transcendence of *samaya* or *anuttara*. Yet no matter how emphatically Laksmidhara and Abhinavagupta proclaim the oneness of sakti and siva, a difference in the nature and status of sakti is still apparent. Laksmidhara considers *samaya* or *sadakhya* to be absolutely

transcendent, with no trace of *sadasiva* or *suddhavidya*, whereas *Abhinavagupta* views the masculine aspect as ultimately supreme. We cannot find in *TA* a clear and consistent answer to the questions of whether *siva* predominates over *sakti* in the *anuttara* state, whether they are equal in their subordination to *anuttara*, or whether they both completely lose their distinct identities in *anuttara*.

The *LD*, however, is consistent on this point. It is also comprehensive because it takes into consideration, and analyzes, all of the theories of *sakti* at the time. His nondualistic theory is buttressed by clear descriptions of the metaphysical relationships among *siva*, *sakti*, and the transcendent form of *samaya*. His methodology includes careful philological analysis of terminology that had previously been ambiguous. And he synthesizes various philosophical writings, including Vedic, Upanisadic, and Pauranic sources, in constructing his own doctrine. For all of these reasons, the methodology developed by *Laksmidhara* can serve as a useful model for studying the specific characteristics of the various subschools of *Sakta Tantrism*, particularly the distinctive notions of *sakti* therein. Although the historical origins of *Laksmidhara's* primary text, *SL*, may be ambiguous, his influence on the *Srividya* tradition, especially the *Samayacara* branch of it, is indisputable.

Abbreviations of Texts

BP-L	Brahmanda Purana
BS-S	Brahmasutra Sankarabhasyam
DS	Durga Saptasati
GT	Gandharva Tantra
HT	Hindu Tantrism
HTS	Hindu Tantric and Sakta Literature
KKV	Kamakalavilasa
LD	Laksmidhara
LT	Laksmi Tantra
MMR	Mantra Aur Matrkaon ka Rahasya
MVV	Malinivijaya Vartika
NS	Nityasodasikarnava
NT	Netra Tantra
PTV	Paratrimisikavivarana
RV	Rgveda
SL	Saundaryalahari
ST	Saradatilaka
SU	Subhagodaya
SVT	Svacchanda Tantra
TA	Tantraloka
TR-J	Tripura Rahasya (Jnanakhanda)
TR-M	Tripura Rahasya (Mahatmyakhanda)
TS-1	Tantrasangraha, Part I
TS-2	Tantrasangraha, Part II
TS-3	Tantrasangraha, Part III
VR	Varivasyarahasya
YH	Yogini Hrdaya
YKU	Yogakundali Upanisad

Texts Quoted by Laksmidhara

Amarakosa (LD 71, 74)
Mankhaka Sutra (LD 3)
Arunopanisad (LD 10, 32, 40)
Astadhyayi (by Panini) (LD 57, 59, 60, 67, 82)
Bhairavayamala (LD 8, 9, 14)
Bharatamata (Bharata-na ya-sastra) (LD 51, 69)
Bhagavatamatarahasya (LD 9)
Brhadaranyakopanisad (LD 11)
Caranagama (LD 99)
Carcastotra (by Kalidasa) (LD 41, 82)
Dohalakautuka (LD 85)
Isopanisad (LD 11)
Kamika (Kamikagama) (LD 11)
Karnavatamsastuti (by Laksmidhara) (LD 41)
Kathopanisad (LD 14)
Kamakalavidya (Kamakalavilasa) (LD 34)
Malatimadhava (LD 6)
Naisadha (Mahakavya) (LD 47)
Nitivakyamrta (LD 95)
Purusasukta (LD 97)
Purnodaya (LD 32)
Rgveda(LD 5)
Raghuvamsa (LD 6)
Rudrarahasya (LD 9)
Rudrayamala (LD 11)

Srisukta (LD 11, 17)
Sukasamhita (LD 41)
Sakalajananistotra (LD 99)
Sanandanasamhita (LD 31)
Sanatkumarasamhita (LD 11, 19, 32)
Sarvajnasomesvara (LD 67, 74)
Sasthi Tantra (LD 99)
Samudrika (Sastra) (LD 69)
Siddhighu ika (LD 40)
Subhagodaya (LD 11, 17, 32, 41, 99)
Taittiriyaabrahmana (LD 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 32)
Taittiriyaasamhita (LD 11, 40, 99)
Taittiriyaaranya (LD 11, 14, 32, 40, 41, 97)
Taittiriyaopanisad (LD 11, 37, 41)
Vasistha Samhita (LD 31, 84)
Vagbhatta (LD 53)
Vamakesvara Tantra (Catuhsati) (LD 1, 2, 5, 8,
10, 16, 19, 20, 27, 31, 35, 41)
Vayaviasamhita (LD 11)
Yogadipika (LD 9)
Yogakundali Upanisad (LD 10)

Transliteration Errors

Proper transliteration used in this text

Anandalahari Tika
Bhattojidsita
Brahmasutrasarikarabhasya
Devibhagavata
Devi Pancastavi
Dipika
Gautamiya Tantra
Kamadhenu Tantra
Ksemaraja
Malinivijaya
Nirvana Tantra
Nityasodasikarnava
Paratrimshika
Prapancasarasangraha
Rgveda Samhita
Sambapancasika
Sayanacharya
Svacchanda Tantra
Saradatilaka
Subhagodaya
Todal Tantra
Tripura Rahasya
(Jnana Khanda)
Tripura Rahasya
(Mahatmyakhanda)
Tripuropanisad
Yajurveda

Spelling used in the notes and bibliography

Anandalahari Tika
Bhattojidikshita
Brahmasutra-Sankarabhasya
Srimaddevibhagavata
Devi Pancastavi
Dipika
Gautamiyatantra
Kamadhenu Tantra
Ksemaraja
Malinivijaya
Nirvana Tantra
Nityasodasikarnava
Para-Trimshika
Prapancha Sarasara Sangraha
Rig-Veda-Samhita
Sambapancasika
Sayancharya
Swacchanda Tantra
Saradatilaka
Srisubhagodayastuti
Todalatantra
Trpura Rahasya
(Jnana Khanda)
Tripura Rahasya
(Mahatmya Khanda)
Tripuramahopanisad
Mula-Yajurveda-Samhita

Proper name

Variations in published texts

Abhinavagupta

Abhinava Gupta

Bhaskararaya

Bhaskara Raya
Bhaskararaya Makhin

Gopinath Kaviraj

Gopinath Kaviraja
Gopinatha Kaviraja
Gopinatha Kaviraja

Kamesvarasuri

Kamesvara Suri
Kamesvarasurin

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. ". . . the worship of Tripurasundari, the most important Tantric form of Sri/Laksmi, naturally occupies a well-defined position and comes in early. This is not due to its being chronologically [sic] the first. . . but because the system is conspicuous by the literary standard of at least part of its texts, and by the mere coherence and elaboration of its doctrine. Tripurasundari is the foremost benign, beautiful and youthful, yet motherly manifestation of the Supreme Sakti. Her *sampradaya* (sometimes called *saubhagyasampradaya*, 'tradition of sweet happiness'), although presumably not the oldest, seems to have been systematized at a relatively early date. Its formulations are characterized by a high degree of technicality cultivated in order to serve an intellectualistic desire for subtle symbolism." Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Sakta Literature* (hereafter cited as *HTS*), in *A History of Indian Literature*, vol. 2: *Epics and Sanskrit Religious Literature*, ed. Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), p. 58.
2. *Netra Tantram with Commentary by Kshemaraja* (hereafter cited as NT), ed. Madhusudan Kaul Shastri, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 46 (Bombay: Tatva Vivechaka Press, 1926); *Swacchanda-Tantra* (hereafter cited as SVT), ed. with notes by Madhusudan Kaul Shastri, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 31 (Bombay: Nirnaya-Sagar Press, 1921); *Sri Malinivijaya Varttikam of Abhinava Gupta* (hereafter cited as MVV), ed. with notes by Madhusudan Kaul Shastri, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 32 (Srinagar: Kashmir Pratap Steam Press, 1921); Laksmānadesikendra, *The Sardatilaka by Laksmānadesikendra with the Padarthadarsa Commentary by Raghavabhatta* (hereafter

- cited as ST), ed. with introduction by Mukunda Jha Bakshi, Kashi Sanskrit Granthamala, 107, Tantra Sastra Section, no. 1 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963); *Nityasodasikarnava with Two Commentaries: Rjuvimarsini* by Sivananda & Artharatnavali by Vidyānanda (hereafter cited as NS), ed. Vrajavallabha Dviveda, Yoga-Tantra-Granthamala, vol. 1, ed. Baladeva Upadhyaya (Varanasi: Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1968); and *Yogini Hrdaya with Commentaries: Dipika of Amrtananda and Setubandha of Bhaskara Raya* (hereafter cited as YH), 2d ed., Sarasvati Bhavana Granthamala, vol. 7, ed. Kshetresachandra Chat-topadhyaya (Varanasi: Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1963).
3. What Saktism is and whether it stands as an independent system of the philosophy of religion has not been established definitively. For example, Pushpendra Kumar offers a general definition, "Saktism is the worship of sakti or the female principle," in *Sakti Cult in Ancient India: With Special Reference to the Puranic Literature* (Varanasi: Bhartiya Publishing House, 1974), p. 1. Goudriaan offers a contradictory view of Saktism: "Sometimes it is incorrectly identified with 'the cult of female deities in general.'... To this should be added that inseparably connected to her is an inactive male partner as whose power of action and movement the Sakti functions It is, therefore, not enough to say that Saktas worship the female as the ultimate principle." *HT*, p. 7.

The problem is further complicated by the difficulty in determining whether literature in which the concept of sakti appears belongs to Saktism or not. For example, although sakti as both a simple term and a comprehensive philosophical category appears in the Upanisads and Puranas, they cannot be regarded as Sakta texts. Although there is an independent body of literature (Sakta Tantras) wherein sakti philosophy and *sadhana* are exclusively advocated, significant discussions on sakti can also be found in Saivite and Vaisnavite Agamas and Puranas. This makes it difficult to draw a definite boundary around Saktism from the perspective of either history or literature.

Gopinath Kaviraj clearly acknowledged this difficulty: "The

Sakta literature is extensive, though most of it is of mixed character. Siva and Sakti being intimately related, Saiva and Sakta Tantras have generally a common cultural background, not only in practices but in philosophical conceptions as well." Gopinath Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Thought* (Burdwan: The University of Burdwan, 1966), p. 177.

4. Discussing this issue in great detail, Goudriaan points out: "The historical position of the term Tantra in the Tantric tradition is therefore not entirely clear and we may assume that it only gradually came to be closely affiliated with Sakta and Sakti-oriented Saiva literature." *HTS*, p. 7.

In the same chapter, he also points out how difficult it is to draw a demarcation line between different traditions of Tantrism or even to find a chronology of original Tantras and secondary Tantras; for details, see *HTS*, pp. 1-10.

According to Brooks' observation, the kind of attention Tantric Saktism has received from scholars is insufficient and disproportionate; for details see, Douglas Renfrew Brooks, *The Secret of the Three Cities: An Introduction to Hindu Sakta Tantrism* (hereafter cited as Brooks, *Three Cities*), (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), Preface ix and nn. 2 and 3 on pp. 209-210.

5. ". . . it should be kept in mind that the distinction of Saiva/Sakta cannot always be clearly drawn. Saktism, the belief in and worship of the Supreme Principle as a female force or Sakti... as it were, grew into maturity under the cover of Saivism where Siva holds a similar position. This holds good at least as far as the literary development of Sakta ideology is concerned . . . it is unavoidable that some attention is also paid to tantrically oriented works which focus on the worship of Siva or other male gods. There is no clear line of demarcation; both denominations can be distinguished but not separated." Goudriaan in *HTS*, p. 2.

See also Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 11, and Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Thought*, p. 177.

6. Goudriaan in *HTS*, pp. 2-4.
7. While working with the Srividya school of Sakta Tantrism in South India, Brooks shares his experience: "It is only in the living and oral tradition and through critical historical study

that a more complete picture of practice and interpretation emerges." Douglas Renfrew Brooks, "The Srividya School of Sakta Tantrism: A Study of the Texts and Contexts of the Living Traditions in South India" (hereafter cited as "Srividya School") (Ph.D. dissertation. Harvard University, 1987), p. 8. For details, see pp. 6-8.

Brooks also cautions:

What Tantric texts Say, *what Tantrics say they do*, and what they *actually do* are not necessarily the same. We must not only learn to read Tantric texts and gain the confidence of Tantrics who will discuss their traditions, we must be able to criticize their interpretation and observe their practices for ourselves. . . . To go beyond a literary and speculative understanding of Tantrism and to probe a text's meanings, one must gain broad access to the secret and initiated lines of oral interpretation of which a given text is a part. . . . How insightful and accurate can a study be if the picture drawn of the whole tradition is necessarily limited by the scholar's view of an oral tradition known only partially? At best, each study is limited by the scholar's own access to living oral sources of interpretation. Brooks, *Three Cities*, pp. 7-8.

8. Sanjukta Gupta, Dirk Jan Hoens, and Teun Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism* (hereafter cited as *HT*), in *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, ed. Jan Gonda (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), p. 46; see also Goudriaan in *HTS*, p. 58.
9. [Sankaracarya?] *The Saundaryalahari or Flood of Beauty: Traditionally Ascribed to Sankaracarya* (hereafter cited as *SL*), trans., ed., and presented in photographs by W. Norman Brown (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).
10. Laksmidhara, *Laksmidhara: The Commentary on the Saundaryalahari* (hereafter cited as *LD*), in *Saundaryalahari of Sri Sankaracarya with the Commentary of Laksmidhara*, 4th rev. ed., critically edited by N. S. Venkatanathacharya, Oriental Research Institute Series, 114 (Mysore: Oriental Research Institute, 1969).
11. Gerald James Larson, "The Sources for Sakti in Abhinavagupta's Kashmir Saivism: A Linguistic and Aesthetic Category," *Philosophy East/West* 2A (January 1974): 41-55.

12. "Etenagne brahmana vavrdhasva sakti va yatte cakrma vida va . . ." *Rgveda* 1.31.18 (hereafter cited as RV). Commenting on this mantra, Sayanacarya writes, "Sakti va vida asmadiya saktya," thus interpreting sakti as "capacity." *Rig-Veda-Samhita: The Sacred Hymns of the Brahmans, with the Commentary of Sayanacharya*, 4 vols., ed. F. Max Muller (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1966), 1:31:18. [Note: All references to the *Rgveda* are given by *mandala: sukta: mantra*.]
13. "Pra te purvani karanani vocam pra nutans maghavan ya cakartha. Saktivo yadvibhara rodasi ubhe jayannapo manave danu citrah." RV5:31:6. According to Sayanacarya, "Saktivah saktiman saktir vajram karma va"; sakti means vajra or karma.
14. "Dirgham hyankusam yatha saktim vibharsi mantumah." RV 10:134:6.
15. "Parasya saktir vividhaiva srutyate svabhaviki jhanabalakriya ca." *Svetasvatara Upanisad*, in *Upanisat-Samgrahah: Containing 188 Upanisads*, ed. with Sanskrit introduction by J. L. Shastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), 6:8.
16. Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, *The Canon of the Saivagama and the Kubjika Tantras of the Western Kaula Tradition* (hereafter cited as *The Canon of the Saivagama*) (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), p. 8.
17. "Tato' tikopapurnasya cakrino vadanattatah. Niscakrama mahattejo brahmanah sankarasya ca . . . nagaharam dadau tasyai dhatte yah prthivimimam. Anyairapi surair devi bhusanairayudhaistatha." *Durgasaptasati with Seven Sanskrit Commentaries: Durgapradipa, Guptavati, Caturdhari, Santanavi, Nagojibhatti, Jagaccandracandrika, Damsoddhara* (hereafter cited as DS) (Delhi: Butala & Co., 1984), 2:9-30.
 18. When Sakti appears with a particular god, she assumes the same name and form as that god. For instance:
Brahmesaguhavisnunam tathendrasya ca saktayah.
Sarirebhyo viniskramya tadrupaiscandikam yayuh.
Yasya devasya yadrupam yatha bhusanavahanam.
Tadvadeva hi tacchaktir asuran yoddhum ayayau.
DS 8:12-13.

In some instances, Sakti creates her male partner from her own body and his physical appearance and weapon, etc., resemble that of Sakti's. For example, see "Lalitopakhyana" of *Brahmanda Purana* in *Brahmanda Purana of Sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipayana Vyasa* (hereafter cited as *BP-L*), ed. J. L. Shastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), and "Pradhanika Rahasya" in *Durga Saptasati* (Gorakhpur: Gita Press, n.d.), PP-195-197.

19. "Aisvarya vacanah sasca ktiḥ parakrama eva ca. Tatsvarupa tayo datri sa saktiḥ parikirtita." *Srimaddevibhagavatam Mahapurana*, ed. Ramatej Pandeya (Kashi: Pandit-Pustakalaya, n.d.), 9:2.10.
20. "Sa devī parama saktiḥ parabrahmasvarupini . . ." *BP-L* 10:90; "Jaya brahmamaye devī brahmatmakarasatmake . . ." *BP-L* 13:3; furthermore: "Yadadvaitam param brahma sadasadbhavavarjitam . . . tvameva hi prasamsanti panca brahmasvarupinim." *BP-L* 15:6-9.
21. "Hetuḥ samastajagatam trigunapī dosair na jñayase hariharadibhirpyapara. Sarvasrayakhilam idam jagadam-sabhutam avyakṛtaḥ parama prakṛtiḥ tvamadya." *DS* 4:6. Also see *BP-L* 13:5-28 and *Srimaddevibhagavatam Mahapurana*, 9:1.5-8.
22. "Ekaivāham jagatyatra dvitīya ka mama para. Pasyaita dusta mayyeva visantyo mad vibhutayah. Tataḥ samastasta devyo brahmanipramukha layam. Tasya devyastanau jagmure-kaivasit tadambika." *DS* 10:3-4.
23. "Nityaiva sa jaganmurtistaya sarvamidam tatam. Tathapi tat-samutpattir bahudha sruyatam mama . . . utpanneti tada loke sa nityapyabhidhiyate" *DS* 1:47-48; also see *DS* 1:54-69; 2:9-12; 4:1-26; 5:38-43; 11:1-34.
24. "Jayadevī jaganmatarjaya devī paratpare. Jaya kalyāṇanīlaye jaya kamakalatmike . . . Prasīda viśveśvārī viśvavandite prasīda vidyēśvārī vedarupinī. Prasīda mayamāyī mantravi-grahe prasīda sarveśvārī sarvarupinī." *BP-L* 13:1-28.
25. Ganganatha Jha, *The Prabhakara School of Purva Mimamsa* (Allahabad: n.p., 1911; reprinted, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), p. 91.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

27. Jayanta Bhatta, *Nyaya-Manjari: The Compendium of Indian Speculative Logic*, vol. 1, trans. Janaki Vallabha Bhat-tacharyya (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), pp. 81-85.
28. *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology: The Tradition of Nyaya-Vaisesika Up to Gangesa*, ed. Karl H. Potter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 340.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
30. George Chemparathy, *An Indian Rational Theology: Introduction to Udayana's Nyayakusumanjali* (Vienna: Gerold & Co., 1972), p. 49.
31. Gopikamohan Bhattacharyya, *Studies in Nyaya-Vaisesika Theism* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1961), pp. 18-28.
32. H. Ui, *Vaisesika Philosophy According to the Dasapadartha-Sastra: Chinese Text with Introduction, Translation and Notes*, 2d ed., edited by F. W. Thomas, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, vol. 22 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1962), pp.10, 123-126.
33. "Nahi taya vina paremesvarasya srastrtvam siddhyati. Saktirahitasya tasya pravrttyanupapattih." *Brahmasutra-Sankarabhāṣyam with the Commentaries: Bhasyaratnaprabha of Govindananda, Bhamati of Vacaspatimisra, Nyaya-Nirnaya of Anandagiri* (hereafter cited as *BS-B*), ed. J. L. Shastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), 1:4.3.
34. "Paripurnasaktikam tu brahma . . . tasmad ekasyapi brahmano vicitrasaktiyogat ksiradivat vicitraparinama utpadyate." *BS-B* 2:1.24.
35. "Asya jagato namarupabhyam . . . janmasthitibhngam yatah sarvajnat sarvasakteh karanad bhavati." *BS-B* 1:1.2.
"Ekasyapi brahmano vicitrasaktiyogat utpadyate vicitro vikaraprapancam ityukam. Tatpunah katham avagamyate vicitrasaktiyuktam param brahmeti. Taducyate. Sarvopeta ca taddarsanat. Sarvasaktiyukta ca para devatetyabhyupagan-tavyam. Kutah. Taddarsanat. Tatha hi darsayati srutih sarvasakti yogam parasyah devatayah." *BS-B* 2:1.30.
36. Although Sankaracarya proposes the theory of Vivartavada, occasionally he uses the term *parinama*, such as "*parinama-prakriyayam*," *BS-B* 2:1.14; and "*vicitraparinama utpadyate*" *BS-B* 2:1.24.

37. ". . . Nahi taya vina . . . avidyatmika hi bijasaktir
avyaktasabda nirdesya paramesvarasraya mayamayi
mahasusuptih . . ."BS-B 1:4.3.
38. Gaurinath Sastri, *The Philosophy of Word and Meaning: Some Indian Approaches with Special Reference to the Philosophy of Bhartrhari* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1959), p. 13.
39. Ibid., pp. 12-16, 28-44.
40. "Saktirnipunata lokasastrakavyadyaveksanat. Kavyajna-siksayabhyasa iti hetustadudbhave." (*Kavyaprakasa* 1:3). "Saktih kavivabijarupah samskaravisesah. Yam vina kavyam na prasaret, prasrtam vopahasaniyam syat." (*Sampradaya Prakasini* of Srividyaakravartin). Mammata, *The Poetic Light: Kavyaprakasa of Mammata: Text with Translation and Sampradayaprakasini of Srividyaakravartin*, vol. 1, 2d rev. ed., trans. R. C. Dwivedi (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977).
41. Anandavardhana, *Dhvanyaloka of Anandavardhana*, with a foreword by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, trans. and ed. K. Krishnamoorthy (Dharwar: Karnatak University, 1974), 1:1 and 6 and 2:20-23.
42. Kanti Chandra Pandey, *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study*, 2d ed., rev. & enl., Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies, vol. 1 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963) pp. 692-732; also see Gopinath Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Thought*, pp. 1-44, and Jagadish Chandra, *Dhvaniprasthana mem Acarya Mammata ka Avadana* in Banaras Hindu University Sanskrit Series, vol. XI, ed. Biswanath Bhattacharya (Varanasi: Banaras Hindu University, 1977), pp. 41-44.
43. For instance, in *DS* 1:78-87, 2:4-8, 5:7-82, and 13:12, and *BP-L* 12:61-68, sakti is evoked. Then in *DS* 1:89-91, 2:10-13, 5:84-87, and 13:13-15 and *BP-L* 12:69-75, she materializes in response. On other occasions (i.e., in *DS* 8:12-23), she appears instantly in order to destroy demonic forces.
44. For examples of *sakti*'s intermingled characteristics as a goddess and a philosophical category, see the following sources: *DS*, 4:2-27, 5: 9-82, 11:3-35; *BP-L* 13:1-28, 30:11-42; *Tripura Rahasya: Mahatmya Khandam, with Hindi Translation* (hereafter cited as *TR-M*), Gurumandal Series, no. 28 (Calcutta:

- Gurumandal Granthamala, 1970), 8:2-30, 30:17-28, 40:11-21.
45. Sudhendu Kumar Das, *Sakti or Divine Power: A Historical Study Based on Original Sanskrit Texts* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1934).
 46. Jadunath Sinha, *Shakta Monism* (Calcutta: Sinha Publishing House, 1966).
 47. *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987), s.v. "The Hindu Goddess," by David Kinsley, pp. 53-54.
 48. Gopinath Kaviraj, *Bharatiya Samskriti Aura Sadhana*, vol. 1, vol. 2, 2d ed. (Patna: Bihara-Rastrabhasa-Parisad, 1964); *Tantrika Vanmaya Mem Saktadrsti*, 2d ed. (Patna: Bihara-Rastrabhasa-Parisad, 1963); and *Aspects of Indian Thought*, pp. 175-215 and 216-228.
 49. Kailasa Pati Misra, *Kasmira Saiva Darsana: Mula Siddhanta* (Varanasi: Arddhanarisvara Prakasana, 1982); Baladeva Upadhyaya, *Bharatiya Darsana: An Authentic and Comprehensive Exposition of the Doctrines of the Different Schools of the Indian Philosophy-Vedic and Tantric*, 2d ed., foreword by Gopinatha Kaviraja (Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia, 1979), pp. 431-527; Kamalakar Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition* (Varanasi: Arddhanarisvara Publications, 1981); and Sangam Lal Pandey, *Bharatiya Darsana ka Sarveksana* (Allahabad: Central Book Depot, 1981).

Kaviraj's voice can be heard even in the writings of notable modern scholars in the field, such as Teun Goudriaan. As Brooks remarks:

It is evident, for example, that Goudriaan's contribution in *HTSL* depends to a large extent on Dwiveda and Kaviraj and that his remarks on the authorship and content of texts are frequently based on manuscript catalogues and bibliographical sources such as Kaviraj's *Tantrika Sahitya*. This is not to suggest that all of his study is based on these compilations (he, in fact, does not discuss how he proceeded with his work) but it is certain that certain errors are merely repetitions of other's work he deems reliable.

50. Wendell Charles Beane, *Myth, Cult and Symbols in Sakta Hinduism: A Study of the Indian Mother Goddess* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977); Ernest A. Payne, *The Saktas: An Introductory*

- and *Comparative Study* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979).
51. Narendra Nath Bhattacharyya, *History of the Sakta Religion* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1974); *The Indian Mother Goddess*, 2d ed., rev. & enl. (New Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1977).
 52. D. C. Sircar, *The Sakta Pithas*, 2d rev. ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973).
 53. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 5.
 54. Douglas Renfrew Brooks, *Auspicious Wisdom: The Texts and Traditions of Srividya Sakta Tantrism in South India* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); *The Secret of the Three Cities*; and "Srividya School"; Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, *The Canon of the Saivagama* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); *The Doctrine of Vibration* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987); and *The Stanzas on Vibration* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega, *The Triadic Heart of Siva: Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir* (Albany: State University of New York, 1989); Andre Padoux, *Vac: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras* (Albany: State University of New York, 1990); and Jaideva Singh, *Abhinavagupta: A Trident of Wisdom* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989); *Spanda Karikas* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980); *Pratyabhijnahrdayam* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1963); and *Siva Sutras* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1963).
 55. Abhinavagupta, *The Tantraloka of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Jayaratha* (hereafter cited as *TA*), 8 vols., enl. ed., edited by R. C. Dwivedi and Navjivan Rastogi (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987).
 56. K.C. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*; V. Raghavan, *Abhinavagupta and His Works* (Varanasi: n.p., 1980); B[alajin] N[ath] Pandit, *SriKasmira Saiva Darsana* (Jammu: Shri Ranbir Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapitha, 1973); Misra, *Kasmira Saiva Darsana*; Harvey Paul Alper, "Abhinavagupta's Concept of Cognitive Power: A Translation of the Jnanasaktyahnika of the Isvara-pratyabhijnavimarsini with Commentary and Introduction" (Ph.D. dissertation. University of Pennsylvania, 1976).

CHAPTER 2

1. Tripura, or Tripurasundari, is one of the ten *mahavidyas* in Sakta Tantrism, although the term *srividya* is currently more popular. The term *srividya* might have become widely used as a consequence of the text, *Srividya Ratna Sutrani* by Gaudapada, (if this text is really by Gaudapada, the teacher of Adi Sankara). But oddly enough, Sankara does not use this term even once in SL. According to Laksmidhara, the term *sri* is connected with the *bijaksara srim* found in the most sacred mantra of Tripurasundari: ". . . sribijatmika vidya srividyeti rahasyam . . ." (LD 32). This mantra has sixteen syllables, the sixteenth, *srim*, being the most secret. Because the mantra has sixteen letters, another term for this mahavidya is Sodasi, the vidya consisting of sixteen letters. For the mythological origin of this term, see LD 32; also see *TR-M* 53:42-47.
2. Andre Padoux, *Vac: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras*, trans. by Jacques Gontier (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), pp. 31-32.
3. Ibid., p. 31.
4. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 6.
5. John Woodroffe, *Principles of Tantra: The Tantra-Tattva of Sriyukta Siva Candra Vidyarnava Bhattacharya Mahodaya*, part 1, 5th ed. (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1978), 71; also see Goudriaan in *HT*, pp. 7-9; and Brooks, *Three Cities*, pp. 3-5.
6. Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 5.
7. Omar V. Garrison, *Tantra: The Yoga of Sex* (New York: Causeway Books, 1964); Robert K. Moffet, *Tannic Sex* (New York: Berkeley Publishing Corp., 1974); and Marcus Allen, *Tantra for the West*, (Mill Valley, CA: Whatever Publications, 1981).
8. "Standard Tantric *sadhana*" here means the practices that are described in acclaimed Tantric texts (such as the *Sarada-tilaka*, *Kularnava Tantra*, *NS*, *YH*, *TA*, or *Tantraraja Tantra*), upheld by a recognized tradition, and accompanied by a sound philosophy.
9. Gupta in *HT*, p. 121.
10. The Aryasamaja alone seems to be free from Tannic influence. Although Sikhism did not originally believe in idol wor-

ship, temple construction, or pilgrimages to holy shrines, it has replaced these Hindu Tantric elements with the worship of the Grantha Sahib (their holy scripture), *gurudvaras*, and pilgrimages to their own holy places, such as Harmandir Sahib, (Golden Temple) in Amritsar and Hemkunt Sahib in the Garhwal Himalayas. Moreover, recitation of *Grantha Sahib*, *Japji*, and *Sukhamani*; *japa* or *simaran* of *nama*, the holy name or a mantra; and practice of *nada yoga* can be considered to be Tantric elements.

11. Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (New York: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1970), pp. 16-17.
12. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 9.
13. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Sakta Religion*, p. 6.
14. B. Bhattacharya, *Saivism and the Phallic World*, 2 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., 1975), pp. 709-711.
15. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Sakta Religion*, p. 6.
16. In Goudriaan's words, "But while dealing with such hypothetical matters, it is very easy to overshoot the mark by undue generalization." *HT*, p. 17.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
18. "Returning to the question of the antiquity of Tantric literature, we have to admit that the answer still quite escapes us. Assumptions made up till now were based upon hypothetical reasoning, outright guesswork, or faulty datings of manuscripts, but we can as yet hardly produce something better. Farquhar held that Sakta ritual and theology were already developed in about 600 A.D., but he based himself mainly on a faulty dating of a manuscript of the *Kubjikamatatantra*. Eliade says that Tantrism is present everywhere in India from the sixth century onwards; this is presumably based on unproven early dates for the Pancaratra text *Jayakhyasamhita* and the Buddhist *Guhyasamajatantra*." *HTS*, p. 20.
19. Padoux, *Vac*, p. 31.
20. *The Atharvaveda*, introduction by M. C. Joshi, trans. Devi Chand (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1982).
21. "There is a possibility that Hindu Tantric literature existed already in the fifth cent. A.D. or even earlier. . . . Of the early Buddhist Tantras, the Guhyasamaja has been dated - on

scanty evidence - as early as the third cent. A.D. (B. Bhattacharya). Tantric elements like Dharanis (spells in a certain kind of structured prose) were included in Buddhist texts which have been translated into Chinese in the fifth century." Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 20.

22. "Without doubt both Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism were based upon older traditions handed down and developed by people who perhaps in some cases did not care much about their denominational position. Moreover, it seems certain that the Buddhist doctrinal tradition can never have developed an offshoot so completely foreign to itself like Tantrism on its own accord. The Tantric deities and practices in Buddhism must have been derived from other sources, viz. Brahmanic ritual and doctrinal speculation, yoga culture of the siddhas, or popular beliefs often introduced in Hinduism and Buddhism alike." *Ibid.*, p. 21.
23. Brooks, *Three Cities*, pp. 4-5.
24. Demonstrating the popularity of the goddess worship, Bhattacharyya writes: "It was so deep-rooted in the Indian mind that even in sectarian religions such as Vaisnavism and Saivism, etc., the female principle had to be given a prominent position. Even the basically atheistic systems like Buddhism and Jainism could not avoid this popular influence. Later Buddhism is, in fact, nothing but a disguised Tantric cult of the female principle." Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Mother Goddess*, pp. 222-223.
25. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 6.
26. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Sakta Religion*, p. 73; also see *idem*, *The Indian Mother Goddess*, p. 223.
27. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 7.
28. J. Desmond Clark, Johnathan Mark Kenoyer, J. N. Pal, and G. R. Sharma, "Baghor I: A Possible Upper Paleolithic Shrine in Central India," *Anthro Quest* 24 (Winter, 1982): 13.
29. Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Mother Goddess*, pp. 1-9, 35-76.
30. *Aditirdyauraditirantariksamaditirmata sa pita sa putrah. Visve deva aditih pancajana aditirjatamaditirjanitvam. RV 1.89.10.*
31. Das, *Sakti or Divine Power*, pp. 7-58.
32. Kena *Upanisad*, in *Upanisat-Samgrahah*, chaps. 3 and 4.
33. *Svetasvatara Upanisad*, in *Upanisat-Samgrahah*, 6:8.

34. Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Thought*, p. 177.
35. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 18.
36. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Sakta Religion*, p. 77.
37. Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Thought*, p. 177.
38. Ibid.
39. Sircar, *The Sakta Pithas*, pp. 17-42.
40. Ibid.
41. Goudriaan in *HT*, pp. 36-38.
42. "Kali tara mahavidya sodasi bhuvanesvari, Bhairavi chinna-masta ca vidya dhumavati tatha. Bagalamukhi siddhavidya matangi kamalatmika. Eta dasa mahavidyah siddha vidyah prakirtitah." *Mundamala Tantra*, in *Tantrasangraha Part III*, (hereafter cited as *TS-III*), ed. by Dr. Ramaprasada Tripathi in *Yogatantra-Granthamala*, vol. 6 (Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1979), 1:7-8.
 [Note: In *TS-III*, there are two versions of *Mundamala Tantra* entitled *Prathamamundamala Tantra* and *Dvitiyamundamala Tantra*. This reference is from *Dvitiyamundamala Tantra*; also see Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 65.]
43. S. Shankaranarayan, *The Ten Great Cosmic Powers: Dasa Mahavidyas*, 2d ed. (Pondicherry: Dipti Publications, 1975), pp. 6-7.
44. "Srnu carvangi subhage kalikayasca bhairavam... . kamalayah daksinamse visnurupam sadasivam. Pujayet paramesani sa siddho natra samsayah." *Todalatantra*, in *Tantrasangraha, Part II* (hereafter cited as *TS-II*), ed. by Gopinaha Kaviraja in *Yogatantra-Granthamala*, vol. IV, (Varanasi: Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1970), 1:1-16.
45. "Kali" fara chinnamasta sundari bagalamukhi. Matangi bhuvana laksmi dhumra tripurabhairavi. Eta eva mahavidya siddhavidya yugantarata. . ." *Saktisahgama Tantra*, ed. by Rama Datta Shukla (Prayag: Kalyan Mandir Press, n.d.), 1:101-102.
46. Rajdeva Nandana Simha, *Sakta Pramoda* (Bombay: Khe-maraja Srikrasnadasa, Sri Venkatesvara Steam Press, 1973); see also Goudriaan in *HTS*, pp. 70, 81, 97, and 145, and in *HT*, p. 65.
47. Douglas Renfrew Brooks, *Auspicious Wisdom: The Texts and Traditions of Srividya Sakta Tantrism in South India*

(hereafter cited as *Auspicious Wisdom*), (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. xv.

48. Goudriaan in *HTS*, p. 86.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

50. In the Yajurveda, Sri and Lakshmi have separate identities, though both are closely associated as consorts of Purusha (Narayana), but in the Khila of RV(Sri-sukta) one single deity is addressed as both, the two names being used interchangeably.

The word "Laksmi" occurs in *RV* only once (10:71.2); "Sri" occurs 82 times. The concept of Sri came into prominence much earlier than the concept of Lakshmi. Sri in Vedic literature was more an inner quality and deeper power. Lakshmi was associated with physical signs (*lakshanas*) of auspicious presence, especially on the face and in speech.

51. "Aradhita vatsaranamarbudanyake vinsatih.

Prasanna chandayamasa varena tripura para.

Taya vrtanca sayujyam tatah praha parambika.

Vatse tvaya vina visnuraprabhuh paripalane.

Sri vidyetyahamakhya sripuram me puram bhavet.

Sri cakram me bhaveccakram srikramah syanmama kramah.

Sri suktam etad bhuyanme vidya srisodasi bhavet.

Mahalaksmityaham khyata tvattadatmyena samsthita."

TR-M, 53:42-47.

52. ". . . etasyaiva bijasya nama srividyeti. Sribijatmika vidya srividyeti rahasyam. . ." *LD* 32, p. 83.

53. "Kamesvari tvam devasca bhavet kamesvarastatha.

Rajarajatmanam nastvamisanaccapisampratam.

Rajarajesvari tvam vai rajarajesvarastavayam.

Tvam vai tripurasundari caisa tripurasundarah."

TR-M 55:74-75.

54. ". . . caturajakosabhutam naumi sritripuramaham." *NS* 1:12;

"... yabhirviracitabhistu sammukham tripura bhavet." *NS* 3:2;

"... Tripura parama saktiradya jataditah priye." *NS* 4:4;

"... Tripura trividha devi brahmavisnvisa rupini." *NS* 4:11;

"Ramate svayam avyakta tripura vyaktim agata ..."

NS 4:16; ". . . Evam devi tryaksara tu mahatripurasundari."

NS 4:18.

55. ". .. *Trividhastripuradevyah sanketah paramesvari.*" YH 1:6;
". . . *kathitastripuradevyah jivanmuktipravartakah.*" YH 1: 86.
56. ". . . *cakram kamakalarupam prasaraparamarthatah.*"
YH 1:24.
57. "*Iti kamakalavidya devicakrakramatmika seyam.*
Vidita yena sa mukto bhavati mahatripurasundarirupah."
Punyanandanatha, *Kamakala-Vilasa with Commentary of*
Natananandanatha (hereafter cited as KKV), ed. Sadashiva
Mishra, trans. Arthur Avalon, *Tantrik Texts*, vol. 10, ed.
Arthur Avalon (Calcutta: Agamanusandhana Samiti Sanskrit
Press Depository, 1922), 8; "*Vadyapi tadrgatma suksma sa*
tripurasundari devi. . ." KKV 19; "*Asina vindumaye cakre sa*
tripurasundari devi. . ." KKV 37; also see KKV 25 and 54.
58. "*Vajresvari trtiya ca turya tripurasundari.*" *Gandharva Tantra*
(hereafter cited as GT), in *Tantrasangraha, Part III*, (hereafter
cited as TS-III). References to Tripura found in GT 2:9, also
see 2:32; 7:45-68; Lalita in GT 7:72. Identifying Tripura with
goddess Durga GT 2:10-11 says: "*Tripureti samakhyata . . .*
durga sa paramesvari. Tripureti samakhyata saundaryatisayat
tatha."
59. Altering Sarikara's opinion about the goddess appearing at
manipura in her usual personified form (i.e., holding *dhanus*,
bana, *pasa*, and *ankusa* in her four hands), Laksmidhara de-
scribes her as Dasabhuja, the goddess with ten hands holding
ten different weapons in LD 41, p. 121. This description of
Dasabhuja seems to be referring to Durga.
60. Motilal Sharma, "Dasa Mahavidya," in Kalyana; Sakti Anka
(Gorakh Pur: Gita Press, Samvat, 1991), p. 112.
61. Gupta in HT, p. 122.
62. Shankaranarayan, *The Ten Great Cosmic Powers*, p. 9.
63. Girvanendra Saraswathi, *Prapancha Sarasara Sangraha of*
Girvanendra Saraswathi, pt. 1 (hereafter cited as PSS), ed. K.
S. Subramania Sastry, Tanjore Sarasvati Mahal Series, no. 98
(Tanjore: Shri S. Gopalan, 1962), chaps. 8, 9, and 12.
64. Vidyaranya, *Srividyanava Tantra*, ed. Bhadrashil Sharma,
(Prayag: Kalyana Mandir Press, 2023 Vikrama Samvat),
chap. 7.
65. Two bijas most commonly serving as part of the *srividya*
mantra, sri and hri, without their *bhuta-lipi* nasalizations.

occur together as early as the *Taittiriya Upanisad* (1:11.3) and as late as DS (1:79). Sri is also contrasted with Lakshmi in DS 4:5. The *Devyatharva Sirsa* identifies Durga as part of Srividya.

66. Goudriaan in *HTS*, p. 58 and Gupta in *HT*, p. 122.
67. Brooks, *Auspicious Wisdom*, p. xiv.
68. For example, see Laksmidhara quoting *RV*, *Taittiriya Samhita*, *Taittiriya Brahmanma*, and *Taittiriya Aranyaka* in LD 5, 18, 32, 40, and 99.
69. Brooks, "Srividya School," pp. 83-181.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
73. *Ibid.*, pp. 93-95.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 106. Alexis Sanderson gives a succinct history of Saivism in Kashmir. According to him, there were two "radically opposed" schools of Saivism during the tenth century A.D.: nondualistic Trika-Krama and dualistic Saiva Siddhanta. The nondualistic Trika-Krama school was influenced by the "Kapalika culture of the cremation grounds and the erotico-mystical soteriology of the Kaulas." In order to stay "pure," the Saiva Siddhanta rejected the *acara* (conduct) of the Kapalikas and Kaulas. However, between the two extremes of nondualistic Trika-Krama and dualistic Saiva-Siddhanta, another Saiva school existed which, according to Sanderson, was the principal one in Kashmir. It worshipped *svacchandabhairava* and his consort, *aghoresvari*. Subsequently, the Trika-Krama school and the cult devoted to *svacchanda-bhairava* consolidated, which resulted in what is now popularly known as Kashmir Saivism. Meanwhile, as Sanderson writes:

The new nondualism also entered the Kaula cult of the goddess Tripurasundari, or Srividyam, which rose to eminence in Kashmir during the eleventh century. This Kashmirian tradition of the Srividyam, which, by the twelfth century, had spread to the Tamil country, came to be adopted in the Trika circles with the result that the Trika

became less a system of Tantric worship than a matrix of metaphysics and soteriological theory. (*Encyclopedia of Religion*, s.v. "Saivism in Kashmir," by Alexis Sanderson.)

77. Brooks, *Srividya School*, p. 116.
78. Ibid., p. 131.
79. Ibid., p. 134.
80. Ibid., p. 147.
81. Brooks, *Auspicious Wisdom*, p. 73-74.
82. Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 67
83. According to Goudriaan (*HTS* 147-148 and *HT* 26 and 44) Laksmidhara is probably also the author of *Saiva Kalpa-dhrama*, who, in the colophones, says he is a worshipper of siva at Ekamra (Bhuvanesvara, Orissa). In the colophones of his commentary on the SL, Laksmidhara mentions Gajapati Virarudra (Prataparudra Gajapati) of Orissa as his patron. This association would place him in the early sixteenth century A.D. The compiler of the *Bibliography of Indian Philosophies*, Karl H. Potter, mentions that an Advaita text, *Advaita Makaranda*, is also catalogued under Laksmidhara but so far no one has suggested the possibility that the author of this text was also the author of *LD*.
84. "*Kulacaro nama bahyapujaratih*." *LD* 8, p. 16.
85. Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 28.
86. Gupta translates the word *pranapratistha* as "meditating on the replacement of the worshipper's mundane self by his divine self." Gupta in *HT*, p. 140.
87. Ibid., pp. 143-144.
88. Ibid., pp. 145-146.
89. *Vaidiki sandhya; siva puja*, the worship of *siva*; the ritual worship of *sracakra* preceded by *antarmatrakanyasa*, *bahirmatrakanyasa*, *vasinyadinyasa*, *pithanyasa*, *Rsyadinyasa*, and the worship of each *cakra* of *sracakra* while offering water, sandalwood paste, flowers, incense, candles, fruits, sweets, betel leaf, etc., are common in *sracakra* worship whether the practitioner belongs to the left or right hand Kaula group. This part of *sracakra* worship is common even among so-called *samayacarins* today. The main difference between these two groups is that the *vamacarins* worship

srīcakra from left to right (i.e., clockwise) whereas the *dakṣiṇacarins* do the opposite. Further differences are based on the specific line of gurus (*parampara*). What really distinguished *vamācarins* from *dakṣiṇacarins* and *samayins* is the *cakra puja*, which is usually performed at night under the direct supervision of the teacher. This *cakra puja* involves purification of *bindu*, the ritual wine (often done by *cakresvara*, the Tantric master); an invocation of, and offering to, *anandabhairava* and *anandabhairavi*; *marjana*, cleansing the body, subtle elements, senses, and mind with purified wine; and *bindu-svikara*, accepting the bindu (offering the wine to the soul, which is identical to *brahman*). Then the actual worship with the *pancamakaras* begins. New initiates are allowed to worship *śakti* only up to the fifth chalice. A master, who is *puṇabhiskta*, can go to the seventh chalice. Only the adept of the highest calibre (*samrajyabhiskta*) can go all the way to the eleventh, and final, chalice if he wishes.

[Note: I gathered this information from a Tantric adept, Prāmāthana Natha (known locally as Dolai Baba), and his students at Kamakhya, Assam.]

90. While sitting in a meditative pose, the aspirant balances the chalice on *trikhanda mudra*, which is formed by extending the thumb, index finger and little finger, and folding the remaining two fingers against the palm. He recites the following prayer before offering the wine to the fire of *kundalini*:
Ahanta patra bharitam idanta para-mamrtam. Parahantamaye vahnau juhomi siva rupadhrk. . . . Srikundalirupacidagni-kunde vacam sudhancaiva samarpayami.
91. "*Samayacaro nama antarpujaratih . . . sa kundalini punah svasthanam etya svadhisthanam prapya svapititi tatparyam.*" LD 8, pp. 16-17; and "*Atra samayimatam nirupyate . . . ata eva samayimate bahyaradhanam durata eva nirastam . . .*" LD 41, pp. 117-119.
92. "*Tantrastake traivarnikanam sudradinanca adhikarosti. . . tat-pratipadakam tantram kaulamargah . . .*" Ibid. 31, pp. 78-79; and ". . . tattu avaidikamargatvat smarnarham api na bhavati. . ." Ibid. 41, p. 117.
93. "*Bahyapujayam eva rsichandahprabhrtijnanapurvakatvam . . . kartavyam iti niyamyate . . .*" Ibid. 32, pp. 96-97.

94. "*Kaulah adharacakrapujaratah . . .*" Ibid. 32, p. 97; and "*Atah tesam adharacakram eva pujiyam. Tatra sthita kundalini saktih kaulini ityucyate . . . samayinam sahasrakamale samayayah samayasya ca sambhoh puja.*" Ibid. 41, pp. 116-117.
95. "*Tesam satcakrapuja na niyata apitu sahasrakamala eva puja . . . samayinam caturvidhaikyanusandhanam eva bhagavatyah samaradhanam . . .*" Ibid. 41, p. 119.
96. "*Samharakramena lekhanam kaulamarga eva . . . srstikramastu samayamargah . . .*" Ibid. 11, pp. 32-33.
97. "*Catusasthya catusasthi sankhyakayaih mahamayasambaradibhih . . . iti pancasamhitah subhagama-pancakam . . .*" Ibid. 31, p. 73.
98. "*Tatra subhagamapancake sodasanyitya nam pratipadanam mulavidyanam antarbhavam angikrtya ahgataya. . . candrajnanavidyayam sodasanyityah pradhanatvena pratipadita iti. . .*" Ibid. 31, pp. 78-79.
99. "*Ato navavidhaikyam bhairavibhairavayoh jnatavyam iti kaula mata rahasyam . . .*" Ibid. 34, pp. 100-105; and "*Samayanama sambhuna samyam pancavidham yatiti samaya . . . pancavidham sayam . . .*" Ibid. 41, pp. 117-119.
100. "It is hardly surprising that the *samayin* Laksmidhara does not mention the Kaula-oriented *Tripura Upanisad* in his work. As a result, we have no way of assessing his opinion on the use of the term 'Upanisad' for Kaula-oriented texts. This too is hardly surprising since he mentions Kaula sources only in general terms so that he can distance the Samaya school from their teachings and assert the supremacy of Samaya ideology and disciplines." Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 28.
101. "*Esam vai bhutanam prthivi rasah . . . tasmast striyam adha upasita . . . tasya vedirupastho lomani barhiscarmadhisavane samiddho madhyatah . . . mamsaudanam pacayitva sarpismantam asniyatam Isvarau janyitavai auksena varsabhena va.*" *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*, in *Upanisat-Samgrahah* 6:4:1-18.
102. For example, *vamacarins* recite the following Vedic *mantras* at various stages of *cakra puja*: "*Om ardraṃ jvalati jyotiṃ ahamasmi jyotiṃ jvalati. . .*" *Mahanarayanma Upanisad* in *Upanisat-Samgrahah* 5:10; "*Om yaschandasaṃ rsabho*

visvarupa . . ." Ibid. 7:5; also see *Taittiriya Upanisad*, in *Upanisat-Samgrahah*, 1:4.1.

103. Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 29.
104. "Kaulas who favor external forms of ritual and sanction the use of the convention-defying behaviors also accept the superiority of ritual internalization (*antaryaga*). Bhasmkararaya, for example, in his Upanisad commentaries discusses at length the transformative qualities of external worship and the necessity of gradual internalization. Contemporary practitioners explain this position by saying that external rites should continue in order to maintain discipline and as an example for those who may never reach the higher state of internalization." Brooks, *Auspicious Wisdom*, p. 24.
105. Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 29.
106. Saiva texts, such as SVT 4:360-402 with Ksemaraja's *Uddyota* commentary, and *NT* chaps. 7 and 8 with Kshemaraja's *Uddyota* commentary, as well as the writings of Abhinavagupta, which are major sources of Kaula *sadhana*, give a thorough treatment of *kundalini sakti* and the *cakras* and describe the methods of awakening *kundalini* and leading her to the highest *cakra* while piercing the six lower *cakras*. Furthermore, the followers of Kaula *sadhana* seem to have a great respect for Vedic exhortations as evinced in the *cakra puja*, during which Vedic mantras are recited during the offering of wine, meat, fish, and roasted grains.
107. Brooks, *Auspicious Wisdom*, p. 23.
108. The idea of a Srividya practitioner aspiring to achieve a state of oneness is clearly found in Srividya texts that are not necessarily Samayacara oriented. Referring to Amrtananda's *Yoginihrdayadipika*, Brooks writes, "Kaulas are those who identify five elements in their spiritual lives, the so-called *sripanackam* frequently referred to by contemporary practitioners: (1) the Self (*atman*) identified with the universal Brahman; (2) the guru; (3) the *srividya*, that is, the fifteen-or sixteen-syllable mantra; (4) Srimata or the Auspicious Mother, that is, Devi in her beneficent aspects; and (5) the *sricakra*. . . . In the *Setubandha* Bhaskararaya continues this line of thought when he says that a Kaula is one who has made the identification of knower, knowing, and the object

- of knowledge with the conscious self, the same definition he gives for a Srividya adept." Ibid., p. 22.
109. Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987), pp. 9-14.
 110. "The Samaya-Kaula opposition is, however, primarily one of Acara 'systems of conduct,' not of the literary tradition." *HTS*, p. 18; for further details see also pp. 49-52 and Goudriaan in *HT*, pp. 45-46.
 111. Gopinath Kaviraj, *Tantrika Sahitya: Vivaranatmaka Granthasuci*, Hindi Samiti Granthamala, 200 (Lucknow: Rajarsi Purusottama Dasa Tandana Hindi Bahavana, 1972), p. 49.
 112. Goudriaan in *HT*, p. 45.
 113. "We are left either to conclude that Laksmidhara and his Samayacara did not survive, that it was absolutely secretive, or that it produced only a theoretical interpretation of key Srividyam elements with no corresponding practical formulations. In fact, contemporary Samayins - who are our only clue to the historical practice - do not follow Laksmidhara's interpretation to the letter and do not create ritual handbooks to meet the rather special situation arising with the *srīcakra*'s repositioning." Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 220.
 114. "*Mahavedhah saivah sadakhyayah prakasa rupo . .*" LD 41, p. 120.
 115. "Gato'yam sankaracaryo viramahesvaro gatah. Sat cakrabhedane ko va janite mat parisramam." LD 100, p. 204.
 116. At some point in the history of interaction between Srividya and Saivism, these two systems came so close to each other that many of the Srividyam texts look like Saivite texts, and vice versa. For example, Srividyam texts, such as commentaries on *YH* and *TVS* by Saiva adepts, *KKV* and *Cidvalli*, and *TR* (Jnannakhandā) are heavily Saivite in tone. On the other hand, Saivite texts such as *Paratrimśika* and *Malinivijaya Varttika*, are heavily Sakta in tone. Consequently, the commentators from both groups use these texts as their common source.
 117. *SL*, p. v.
 118. Ibid., p. vi.

119. [Sankaracarya?] *Saundarya-Lahari of Sri Samkaracarya with Commentaries: Saubhagya vardhani of Kaivalyasrama, Laksmidhara of Laksmidharacarya, Arunamodini of Kamesvarasurin*, foreword by G. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, trans. and notes by R. Anantakrsna Sastri and Karra Ramamurthy Garu (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1957), p. 11.
120. [Sankaracarya?] *Saundarya-Lahari (The Ocean of Beauty) of Sri Samkara-Bhagavatpada*. 3rd. ed., trans., and commentary by S. Subrahmanya Sastri and T. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1965), pp. 9-13; [Sankaracarya?] *Saundarya-Lahari ka Hindi Anuvada*, 3rd. ed., trans., and commentary by Visnutirtha (Rishikesh: Yogasri Pitha, 1970), p. 18.

Commentators such as Laksmidhara, Kaivalyasrama, Kamesavasuri, Acyutananda, and modern Indian adherents such as S. Subrahmanya Sastri, T. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar, and Swami Visnutirtha, consider Adi Sankara to be the author of SL. Brown mentions another view: "The dissident human ascription is found in the commentary called Sudhavidyotini, whose author's name is variously given as Arijit or Aricchit. He says that the *Saundaryalahari* was composed by his father Pravara or Pravarsena, a king in the Dramida country, son of a king named Dramida by his learned (vedavati) wife; this king had a minister named Suka. Even this tradition has its miraculous elements. King Pravara is otherwise unknown to me and Arijit's claim cannot be strengthened by supplementary evidence." SL, p. 25.

121. SL, p. 30.
122. "These disputes have never reached a satisfactory historical conclusion. From at least the fifteenth century, Sankara is clearly identified with Srividya tradition and the contemporary Sankara *mathas* in both North and South India support the belief that he was a Srividya adept (but not solely a Srividya worshipper). Bhaskararaya and other Srividya adepts do not distinguish Sankara who authored the *Brahma-sutrabhasya* and other strictly *advaitic* works, from the Sakta-oriented Sankara who penned *Saundaryalahari*, though they are also not particularly interested in the former." Brooks, *Three Cities*, p. 273.

123. SL, p. 30.

124. Laksmidhara's *Laksmidhara*, Kaivalyasrama's *Saubhagya-vardhini*, Kamesvarasuri's *Arunamodim*, Anandagiri's *Anandagiriya*, Madhava Vaidya's *Tatparyadipini*, *Padarthacandrika* (author unknown), Ramakavi's *dindima Bhasya*, Narasimhasvamin's *Gopalasundari*, and Gaunkanta's *Anandalahari Tika* are published in *Saundaryalahari of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpadacarya with Commentaries (in Sanskrit): Laksmidhara, Saubhagyaavardhani, Arunamodim, Anandaginya, Tatparyadipini, Padarthacandrika, dindima Bhasya, Gopalasundari and Anandalahari Tika*. ed. A. Kuppuswami (hereafter cited as *Saundaryalahari*, ed. A. Kuppuswami), (Tiruchirapalli: The Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Government of India, 1976).

The following three commentaries were obtained from the India Office Library, London: Acyutananda Sarman, *Anandalahari Tika* (Vyakhya), (Calcutta, 1885) Microfilm, VT 396(c); Mahadeva Vidyavagisa Bhattacharya (*Anandalahari Tattvabodhini* (Sanskrit MS 2624, ff.61, Egging 2524:I.O. 2196, n.d.). Jagadisa Tarkalankara, *Anandalaharivyakhya* (Sanskrit MS 2623 ff.58, Egging 2623:I.O. 659, n.d.).

125. Gaudapada, *Sri Subhagodayastuti*, in app. I of Shastri, Shiva Shankara Awasthi, *Mantra Aur Matrkaon ka Rahasya: Significance of Mantras and Matrkas According to Tantrism* (hereafter cited as *MMR*), Vidyabhawan Rastrabhasha Granthamala, 95 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Vidyabhawan, 1966), 241-249.

126. "*Paropi saktirahitah saktah kartum na kihcana . . . saktah syat paramesani saktya yukto bhavedyadi.*" LD 11, p. 29. (Note: With a slightly different rendering, the same verse is found in TVS 4:6. For complete citation see Note 26 of Chapter 3.)

127. For a complete list of the texts quoted by Laksmidhara, see pages 150-51.

128. It is to be noted, however, that the traditional adherents of Srividya, especially those who are initiates in the order of Sankaracarya, claim that SL is one of the most profound Tantric texts and contains all important tenets of Samayacara. The text of an interview with Swami Veda

Bharati, an acclaimed Srividya practitioner, demonstrates this traditional view:

On the basis of internal evidence in SL, it would be inaccurate to say that SL is not a Tantra text proper. Although it is a very short text, the Ananda-Lahari (AL) portion alone effectively states in summary form all the central tenets of Samayacara. One might go so far as to say that larger texts of Samaya as well as the oral tradition elaborate on what has already been stated in SL. One may safely assume then, that SL is a full statement of Samayacara in a versified "*sutra*" form, which the other texts as well as the commentators like Laksmidhara only expand and expound in further detail.

To cite some examples:

1. Where the theory of the philosophy of *sricakra* is given in verse 8, the description fits not the *muladhara* but the *sahasrara*. Even though verse 9 starts with the *muladhara*, its goal is to conquer, subdue, and subordinate (*jitava*) the Kula path and to dwell in the *sahasrara*. It could be interpreted, by *dhvani* theory, to suggest that followers of Samaya should defeat the adherents of Kaula. Given the dialectic tradition of the philosophers of India, such an interpretation is on a firm historical basis.
2. In verse 10, what grace is sprinkled on the lower *cakras* comes from her feet at the highest pedestal. Verse 11 provides the biggest proof where *sricakra* is drawn according to the Samaya tradition with five sakti triangles and four siva triangles.
3. In verse 14, the location of the *devi's* feet is again at the highest pedestal.
4. In verse 21, even though the force in the agni, *surya*, and *candra* mandates are her form, she herself dwells beyond these. And in verse 25, all the deities stand honoring her there.
5. Verse 26 conforms to the *yoga sutra* tradition of *sama-dhi*. As all the deities and elements are dissolved in the process of *prati-sarga*, the supreme force dwells in fullest joy. Here, by *dhvani*, the author again challenges the adherents of the Kaula system as following temporary forces.

6. Verse 27 is of course the fullest possible definition of *antaryaga*, and the total refutation of external ritual.
7. In verse 31, any power that comes to the *kula* seat in the *muladhara* (*ksiti-tala*) is by the grace of her who is far above the dependencies (*para-tantra*) that are produced by practices on the *kaula* path.
8. In verse 33, again, the *yaga* is in *sivagni*, in *sahasrara*.
9. It is significant that even though a number of descriptions of the *kundalini* path begin with the *muladhara* in *AL* (e.g., verse 9), where actual meditation process is taught in verses 35-41, the description begins at the sixth *cakra*, completely opposite to the *Kaula* system of meditation.
10. It is clearly reiterated in verse 36, as was said in verse 21, that the *devi* is beyond the three sections into which the *cakras* are divided: the *agnimandala*, the *surya mandala*, and the *candra mandala* (*ravisasisucinam avisaye*).
11. While describing the techniques for meditating on the *cakras*, *SL* mentions the word "samaya" twice and this term is used in the cases of the two *cakras* - the *muladhara* and the *svadhisthana* - which the *kaulas* consider their domain.

My remarks, which are certainly not exhaustive, clearly demonstrate that *SL* is a Tantric text and offers a complete knowledge of theory as well as practice, which a practitioner of *Samayacara* requires.

CHAPTER 3

1. Here we have selected the version of the *Subhagodaya* (hereafter cited as *SU*) found in the app. of Awasthi, *MMR*.
2. Durvasas, *Tripurasundarimahimnastotra*, found in app. 1 of Awasthi, *MMR*, pp. 211-219.
3. Kalidasa, *Pahcastavi* (the group of five *stotras* entitled "Laghustuti," "Ghatastava," "Carcastuti," "Ambastuti," and "Sakalajanastava") found in app. 1 of Awasthi, *MMR*, pp. 250-268.
4. Sivananda, *Rjuvimarsini*, commentary on *TVS*.

5. Amrtananda, *Dipika*, commentary on *YH*.
6. Vidyananda, *Artharatnavali*, commentary on *NS*.
7. Punyananda, *KKV*, along with Natanananda's *Cidvalli*, the commentary on *KKV*.
8. Bhaskararaya, *Setubandha*, commentary on *YH*, and Bhaskararaya, *Varivasya-Rahasya and its Commentary Prakasa*, 4th ed., edited by Pandit S. Subrahmanya Sastri (Madras: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1976).
9. TR-M30:17-21; *Tripura Rahasya (Jnana-khandma* (hereafter cited as *TR-J*) Swami Sri Sanatanadevaji Maharaja (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1967). 4:94, 99-100; 15:90-91; 18:29-45, 59, 64-65, 77-86; 22:67-69, 79-81, 112.
10. In his introduction to *NS*, pp. 84-86, Vrajavallabha Dviveda gives seventeen different meanings of the term "*tripura*" compiled from: *NS*; Vidyananda's *Artharatnavali*; Bhaskararaya's *Setubandha*; Natanananda's *Cidvalli*; *Tripuraranava*; *Kalika Purana* and Bhaskararaya's *Saubhagyabhaskara*, a commentary on *Lalita-Sahasranaman*. These sources derive the meaning of "*tripura*" not through the etymology (*vyutpatti*) of the word, but through pseudo-etymology (*nirukti*). The purpose of such pseudo-etymological interpretation is simply to indicate that *tripura* pervades and transcends the threefold world.
11. "Iha khalu sritripurasundaryah sthulasuksmapararupabhedena trividhayah upastirupah kriya api trividha kayiki vaciki manasi ceti." Bhaskararaya, *Bhavanopanisat*, in *LD*, app. 2, p. 269.
12. Brooks, *Srividya School*, p. 183.
13. "*Desakalakarahi aniantritasvabhavatvat. . . samvideva mahatripurasundaripadabhilapyā. Samvideva bhagavati svantah sthitam jagad bahih prakasayati. . .*" Vrajavallabha Dviveda in the introduction to *NS*, pp. 84-85.
14. "*Srstau va pralaye vapi nirvikalpaiva sa citih. Pratibimbasya bhava vapyabhava veva darpanah. Evamvidhaikarupapi citih svatantryahetutah. Svantarvibhasayed bahyam adarse gaganam yatha.*" *TR-J* 14:57-58.
15. "*Nityasambandhah samavayah. Ayutasiddhavrthti. Yayor dravyayor madhye ekam avinasyada vastham aparasritam*

- evatisthate tavayutasiddhau. Yatha avayavavayavinau gunaguninau kriyakriyavantau jativyakti visesanityadravye ceti.*" Annambhatta, *Tarkasangraha* (Varanasi: Harikrsnani-bandhabhawanam, 1969), p. 107.
16. "*Tatha citir jagatsatta tatah sarvam citirbhavet, Adhikam bhasate yattu tannairmalyamahatvatah.*" *TR-J* 11:54; "*Darpanapratibimbanam cidatmananyata yatha. Cidatmapratibimbanam cidatmananyata tatha.*" *TR-J* 11:63; "*Yadastiti bhati tattu citireva mahesvari. Evam jagaccidatmarupam te samyagiritam.*" *TR-J* 11:85.
17. Sri Bhaskararaya Makhin, *Varivasya-Rahasya* (hereafter cited as *VR*), ed. with English translation by Pandit S. Subrahmanya Sastri (Adyar: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1976).
18. "... *tena catena santusta punarekakini sati. Ramate svayamavyakta tripura vyaktimagata ...*" *NS* 4:15-16.
19. "*Bijavasthayam ankurakandapatra puspaphaladivat saktiyavasthayam antah sadatmana vartate karyarupah prapanca iti.*" *Rjuvimarsini* on *NS* 4:5.
20. "*Prakrtiparinamavade gunanam samyam vaisamyam upaiti, atra tu svatantra citih svasvatantryena avikrta sati tattadrupena svatmanam prakasayatiti na vaisamyavakasah.*" *Vrajavallabha Dviveda* in the introduction to *TVS*, p. 90.
21. *Ibid.*
22. "*Tripura parama saktiradya jataditah priye. Sthulasuksmavibhedena trailokyotpattimarka.*" *NS* 4:4.
23. "*Kavalikrtanissasatattvagramasvarupini. . .*" *NS* 4:5.
24. "*Bijavasthayam ahkurakandapatrapuspaphaladivat saktiya vasthayam antah sadatmana vartate karyarupah prapanchah ...*" *Rjuvimarsini* on *NS* 4:5.
25. *Ibid.*
26. "*Paro hi saktirahitah saktah kartum na kincana. Saktastu paramesani saktya yukto yada bhavet. Saktya vina sive suksme nama dhama na vidyate . . .*" *NS* 4:6-7.
27. *Rjuvimarsini* and *Artharatnavali* on *NS* 4:5-7.
28. See Chapter 2, pp. 44-45 of this manuscript.
29. "*Esa sa parama saktirekaiva paramesvari. Tripura trividha devi brahma visnvisarupini.*"

*Jnanasaktih kriyasaktiricchasaktyatmika priye.
Trailokyam samsrjatyesa tripura parikirtyate."*
NS 4:10-12.

30. "*Tathapi naitena sa saktiparamyavaditi bhramaitavyam ...
sivaparamyapaksapati tvam atmano vyanakti. . .*" Vrajaval-
labha Dviveda in the introduction to NS, p. 90.
31. "*Sa jayati saktiradya nijasukhamayanityanirupamakara.
Bhavicaracara vijam sivarupavimarsanirmaladarsah."* KKV 2,
see also VR 2:67-68, as well as the *Prakasa* commentary; SL
34,35, and 41; and SU 44.
32. *Siva Sutras: The Yoga of Supreme Identity: Text of the Sutras
and the Commentary Vimarsini* by Ksemaraja, trans. with in-
troduction and notes by Jaideva Singh (Delhi: Motilal Banar-
sidass, 1979), 1:1; Ksemaraja, *Pratyabhijnahrdaya*, 2d ed.,
trans., notes, and introduction by Jaideva Singh (Delhi: Moti-
lal Banarsidass, 1979) sutra 1; and also see YH 1:9-11, KKV
1-3, and VR 1:4.
33. ". . . bahusaktitvamapyasya tacchaktyaivaviyukta. ...
tenadvayah sa evapi saktimatparikalpane. . . . ko bhedo vas-
tuto vahanerdaghrpakrtvayoriva. Na casau paramarthena na
kincidbhasnadrtē. Nahyasti kincittacchiktitaadvabhadepi
vasta vah." TA 1:68-71; see also TA 3:106-10; and Abhinav-
agupta, *MVV*, ed. with notes by Madhusudan Kaul Shastri,
Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 32 (Srinagar: Kasmir
Pratap Steam Press, 1921), 1:17.
34. "... evam saktimacchabdayavaharopi nayam, sopi hi param
saktilakshanamarthamurankrtyaiva vartate . . ." Viveka com-
mentary on TA 2:24-26.
35. "*Sivah saktya yukto yadi bhavati saktah prabhavitum na
cedevam devo na khalu kusalah spanditum api. . .*" SL 1.
36. Bhattojidikshita, *Vaiyakarana Siddhantakaumudi of
Bhattojidikshita*, 5th ed., edited by Gopala Shastri Nene,
Haridas Sanskrit Series, 11 (Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit
Series Office, 1977), see "Avyayaprakarana" under sutra
"Svaradinipatmavyayam."

It is to be noted, however, that SL 39 and 41 use the ac-
cusative (*samayam*) and instrumental (*samayaya*) forms of
samaya, respectively. It is agreed that *samaya*, also as a femi-
nine gender noun, has not been included in lexicons. All this

proves is that the lexicons have failed to notice the particular philosophical usage of the term.

37. Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary: Etymologically and Philologically Arranged with Special Reference to Cognate Indo-European Languages*, new enl. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899; reprint ed., Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1981), s.v. "samaya" and "samaya."
38. Goudriaan, *HT*, p. 45; also see *TA* 4:64, 15:459, 19:31, 35, 48, 55, and 29:197 and 199.
39. The term *samayin* occurs in *SU* 3, 7, 12, 13, 15, 22, 28-32, 35, 38, 40-42, 45, and 51; the term *samaya* in *SU* 7; and the term *samayamarga* in *SU* 49.
40. The term *subhaga* occurs in *SU* 52; *sadakhya* in *SU* 24, 35, and 36; and *candrakala* or *aindavakala* in *SU* 1, 5, 20, 23, 26, and 49.
41. ". . . mahakalatitam kalitasaranikalpitanum . . ." *SU* 1; ". . . kulam tyaktva rauti sphutati ca mahakalabhujagi. ." *SU* 6; ". . . suryasasinor agamyē rasminam samayasahite tvam viharase." *SU* 7, and "Mahakaulestasmanna hi tava sive kalakalana." *SU* 9.
42. "... samayasahite tvam viharase." *SU* 7.
43. "Kalo asvo vahati saptarasmih sahasrakso ajaro bhumiretah. Tamarohanti kavayo vipascitas tasya cakra bhuvanani visva. Sapta cakran vahati kala esa saptasya nabhiramrtam nvaksah. Sa ima visva bhuvananyahjayat kalah sa iyate prathamō nu devah." *The Atharvaveda* 19:53.1-2.
"Kale tapah kale jyestham kale brahma samahitam.
Kalo hi sarvasyesvaro yah pitasitprajapateh."
The Atharvaveda 19:53.8.
For details, see *The Atharvaveda* 19:53.1-8 and 19:54.1-5.
44. Beane, *Myth, Cult and Symbols*, pp. 150-168; and Motilal Sharma, "Dasa Mahavidya," in *Kalyana: Sakti Anka*, pp. 98-105.
45. John Woodroffe, *Tantraraja Tantra: A Short Analysis*, 3rd. ed. (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1971), pp. 118-121.
46. "Kalamuhurtakasthaharmasartusaradatmane .. ." *BP-L* 13:6.
47. ". . . caturvidha sabdamayi parasaktirvijrmbhate." *TR-M* 58:9;
"Sabdah kalamayah sarvo . . ." *TR-M* 58:25.
48. "Kecittu ekapancasata tattvanyahuh . . . gunah sattvarajas-

tamamsi..." LD 11, pp. 28-29.

49. "*Etesu sarvesu tattvesu katicana tattvani kutracid antarbha-vanti. . . etani panca vimsati tattvani sarvasammatani.*" Ibid., p. 29.
50. "*Suddhavidya tu sadasivena yukta sadakhyakaleti vyavahryate. Ato bhagavati caturvimsati tattvanyatikranta sadasivena pancavimsena sardham viharamana sadvimsatattvatmatam apanna paramatmeti giyat. . .*" LD 9, p. 20.
[Note: Although Laksmidhara does not cite the source of his commentary on SL 9 and 11, he is clearly echoing SU 2-5.]
51. See footnote 49 of Chapter 3.
52. Ibid., p. 29.
53. Ibid.
54. SL 34.
55. "*Yada srstisthitilayesu anandabhaira vasya paranandasanjnikasya paracitsvarupayasca mahabhairavyah prayatnah utpadyate, tada bhairavipradhanyat pradhanam prakrtisabda vacya mahabhairaviti, tasyah pradhanatvam sesitvam; anandabhairavasya apradhanatvam gunabhavah sesatvam. Yada sarvopasamhare prakrteh tanmatravasthitau bhairavyah svatmani antarbhavat bhaira vasya sesitvam tada bhairavyah sesatvam id.*" LD 34, p. 105.
56. "*Anandabhairavamahabhairavyoh tadatmye siddhe navatmata dvayoh samana.*" Ibid.
57. "*Atah sesasibhavah apeksikah.*" Ibid.
58. ". . . Uttara kaulamate pradhanameva jagatkartr. Pradhanatvadeva sesabhavo nasti sivasabhavat.. ." LD 35.
59. ". . . Evam prapancam karyarupam svasyam aropya karanarupena avasthita . . ." Ibid.
60. ". . . bhavena icchaya bibhrse icchayaiva sisrksadikayam saktih siva iti rupadvayam angikrtam." Arunamodini on SL 35, published in Saundaryalahari, ed. A. Kuppuswami, p. 317.
61. "*Anyatha tvam evaiketyabhiprayah.*" Ibid.
62. "*Atah manah prabhrtinam saktiparinamah, tattvanam svarupaparinamah. Evam prapancam karyarupam svasyam aropya karanarupena avasthita. Sa ca adharakundalini ityabhidhiyate.*" LD 35.
63. "*Itha khalu sankarabhagavatpujyapadah samayatattvavedinah*

samayakhyam candrakalam slokasatena prastuvanti."

LD 1, p. 2.

64. "*Sivasaktyormelanam sadvimsam sarvatattvatitam tattvantaram iti purastannivedayisyate. Tasmannmelanadeva jagadutpattisthitilayah, na kevaladeveti ..*" Ibid., p. 3.
65. "*Suddhavidya tu sadasivana yukta sati sadakhyakaleti vyavahriyate. Ato bhagavati caturvimsati-tattvavanyatikranta sadasivena pancavimsena viharamana sadvimsatattvatmatam apanna paramatmeti giyate. Etad uktam bhavatisadakhya kala pancavimsena sadasivena milita sadvimsa bhavati, melanasya tattvantaratvat. Na cobhayormelanam ubhayatmakam."*
LD 9, p. 20.
66. "*Avinabhavasambhandham yo janati sa cakravat...*
avinabhavasambandhah tasmadbindu-trikonayoh." Ibid., p. 22.
67. ". .. sarvatattvatitam tattvantaram .. ." LD 1, p. 3;
"*Tasya tadatmyarupatvat tattvantaram eveti rahasyam."*
LD 9, p. 20;
"*Atasca sarvatattvatitam sivasaktisamputam. Tasmadeva jagadutpattih."* LD 11, p. 29.
68. "*Samayanama sambhuna samyam pancavidham yatiti samaya. Samayatvam sambhorapi-pancavidhm samyam devya saha yatiti. Atah ubhayoh samapradhanyenaiva samyam vijneyam."* LD 41, p. 117.
69. In LD 41, Laksmidhara continues explaining how and in which particular verses of SL these fivefold "equivalencies or samenesses," *samya*, have been described: *Adhithana-samaya* means "equivalency or sameness in foundation," i.e., the *cakras* where sakti and Siva equally reside. Sakti and Siva are eternally united in the *sahasrara* as well as in all six other *cakras*, as mentioned in verses 9, 36-41.

Anusthana-samaya means equivalency in function or activity. In the process of manifestation, sakti and siva participate together and play equal roles. In verse 41, the world consists of both father and mother, siva and sakti.

Avasthana-samaya means taking their places equally in every aspect of the universe. During the cosmic dance (*mahatandava*), which is followed by the withdrawal or destruction of the world, sakti and siva play equal roles. As they participate in the dance, *sakti* performs in the delicate, *lasya*

style and siva in the vigorous *mahatandava* style in verse 41. Dancing side by side, siva, as the eternal consuming fire (*samvarta agni*), angrily burns up the world with his fierce gaze, while sakti through her glance, moist with compassion, provides the cooling antidote in verse 39.

Avasthana-samaya has also been described by the phrase *yamaradhyam bhaktya* in verse 36, the phrase *sasikirana-sarupya saranim* in verse 37, and the phrase *sphurannanaratnabharana parinaddhendra dhanusam* in verse 40.

Rupa-samya and *nama-samya* mean equivalency in form and name. Equivalency in form is demonstrated by the fact that in their personified forms as *kamesvara* and *kamesvari*, or as *anandabhairava* and *anandabhairavi*, they resemble each other. Their color, complexions, facial expressions, physical gestures, weapons, etc., are alike. Similarly, their names *kamesvara-kamesvari*, *anandabhairava-anandabhairavi*, and *samaya-samaya*, etc., match.

In commenting on verse 41, Laksmidhara quotes specific words from various verses of SL which, according to him, describe the oneness in name and form of sakti and siva. For instance, the words *taditvantam* in SL in verse 40 refer to both *taditvan*, masculine-gender siva and *taditvati*, a feminine gender sakti. Similarly, *hutabhukkanika* in verse 78, *suddhasphat ikavisadam* in verse 37, and *tapanasasiko tidyutidhaiam* and *param sambhu* in verse 36 describe their oneness in name.

70. "Anandabhairavamahabhairavyoh. paranandaparasanjayoh tadatmye siddhe navatmata dvayoh samana. Atah sesasesibhavah apeksikah . . ."LD34.
71. ". . . tadubhayayamalasphuritabhavavisargamayam hrdayamunutamrtakulam mama samsphuratat." TA 1:1; "Tayoryadyamalam rupam sa sanghatta iti smrtah. Anandasaktih saivokta yato visvam vijrmbhate." TA 3:68; also see 3:143, 201-208, 234.
72. "Saktimananjyate yasmanna saktirjatu kencit. Iccha jnanam kriya ceti yatprthakprthaganjyate. Tadeva saktimatsvaih svairisyamanadikaih sphutam . . ." Ibid., 3:106-107.
73. ". . . Rupam bhati param prakasanividam devah sa ekah

sivah. *Tatsvatantryarasatpunah sivapadadbhede vibhate param yadrumam bahudhanugani tadidam tattavam vibhoh sasane.*" TA 9:1-2; "*Vastutah sarvabhavana kartesanah parah sivah . . .*" TA 9:8; ". . . ekaikatrapi tattvesmin sarvasak-tisunirbhare. Tattatpradhanyayogena sa sa bhedo nirupyate. Tadhahi svasvatantratvapariurnataya vibhuh." TA 9: 51-52

74. Larson, "The Sources for Sakti," pp. 51-52.

75. Ibid., p. 44.

76. Ibid., p. 49.

77. "*Naisa saktirmahadevi na paratrasrito yatah. Na caisa saktimandevo na kasyapyasrayo yatah.*" TA 2:24; Also Notes 33 and 72 of this chapter.

78. "*Vimalakalasrayabhinavasrstimahajanani bharitatanusca pancamukhaguptarucirjanakah. Tadubhayamalasphuritabhavavis-argamayam hrdayamnuttaramrtakulam mama samsphurat.*" TA 1:1, also see 3:66-103, and 3:136-234.

79. K. C. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 590.

80. Ibid., pp. 636-637.

81. Ibid., p. 643.

82. In describing the nature of *anuttara* and its intrinsic components, Padoux writes:

We have not been able to find a satisfactory translation of *anuttara*. One could say unexcelled or unsurpassed. R. Gnoli translates it by 'Senza Superiore.' Abhinavagupta, at the beginning of the PTV (pp. 19-32), gives sixteen different interpretations or sixteen possible ways of apprehending the senses and meanings of *anuttara*. . . . One could also be tempted to render *anuttara* as 'transcendent,' except that there is no such thing really as transcendence in nondualistic Saivism. As we shall see later on, there is, for Abhinavagupta or Jayaratha, a particular interplay between transcendence and immanence. The primary principle, the *anuttara*, is both *visvottirna*, beyond manifestation, unimpeded pure consciousness, and *visvamaya* or *visvarupa*, assuming the form of the universe, that is, pervading it, being its essence or substratum. It can be envisaged as either or both of them.

Such a conception of the primary principle of the universe is not, of course, peculiar to Abhinavagupta and is much ear-

- lier than he. Padoux, *Vac*, p. 235.
83. "... devah sa ekah sivah." *TA* 9:1.
"... kartesanah parah sivah." *TA* 9:8.
84. "... karyakaranabhavo yah sivecchaparikalpaitah." *TA* 9:7.
85. Some of the specific verses that indicate the supremacy of siva are *TA* 9:1, 7, 8, 21, 35, and 38.
86. Padoux, *Vac* p. 244.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
88. "*Akulasyasya devasya kulaprathanasalini. Kaulini sa para saktiraviyukto yaya prabhuh. TA* 3:67.
89. "*Saktayo jagat krtsnam saktimamstu mahesvarah ... TA* 5:40.
90. Jayaratha, Viveka on *TA* 3:67, pp. 76-78.
91. "*No santam napyuditam santoditasutikaranam param kaulam ... TA* 29:117.
"... santoditatmakam dyamatha yugapadudeti saktisaktimatoh." *TA* 29:19.
"... ubhayamapi vastutah kila yamalamiti tathoditam santam." *TA* 29:120.
92. "... sukumarahrdayanam agamikanam sammoho ma bhuditi. ... vastutastu sthitameva sarvatattvanam abhidhanam." Viveka on *TA* 11:28.
93. "... yattu sarvavibhagatma svatantram bodhasundaram. sapta trimsam tu tatprahustattvam parasivabhidham ..." *TA* 11:21-22.
94. "*Kramataratamyayogat saiva hi samvidvisargasamghattah. Taddhruvadhamanuttaramubhayatmakajagadudaranandam. No santam napyuditam santoditsutikaranam param kaulam ... santoditatmakam dvayamatha yugapadudeti saktimatoh. TA* 29:116-119.
95. "... tasyapyuktanayad vedyabhavet'ra partikalpite. Yadaste hyanavacchinnam tadastatrimsam ucyate." *TA* 11:22-23.
96. "... tam param pratibham devim sangirante hyanuttaram." *TA* 3:66.
97. "... niratisayasvatantryaisvaryacamatkaramayi." Viveka on *TA* 3:66.
98. See Note 88 of Chapter 3.
99. "*Tayoryad yamalam rupam sa sanghatta iti smrtah-*

- Anandasaktih saivokta yato visvam visrjyate."* TA 3:68.
100. "*Paraparatparam tattvam saisa devi nigadyate.*
Tatsaram tacca hrdayam sa visargah parah prabhuh.
Deviyamalasastre sa kathita kalakarsini.
Mahadamarake yage sripara mastake tatha." TA 3:69-70.
101. K. C. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 682-686.

CHAPTER 4

1. "... sivasaktayor melanam sadvimsam sarvatattvatitam
 tattvantaram iti. .. tasmanmelanad eva jagadutpattisthiti
 layah . . ." LD 1, p. 3; "... anekakoti brahmandapin-
 dandavacchinnamayukhanam uparyeva vartamanatvat. . ."
 LD 14, p. 49; and "... sarvabhutatmakam sarvaman-
 tratmakam sarvatattvatmakam sarvavasthatmakam sar-
 vadevatmakam sarvavedarthatmakam sarvasabdatmakam
 sarvasaktyatmakam trigunatmakam trikhandam trigiunatitam
 sadakhyaparaparyayam . . ." LD 32, p. 96.
2. *Yogakundali Upanisad* (hereafter cited as YKU) in *Upanisat-
 Samgrahah*.
3. "... Tacca pindandabrahmandayoh aikyanusandhanama-
 himna . . . ayamarthah-pindandabrahmandayoraikyam
 jnatavyam... "LD99, pp. 200-201; "... Te ca maricayah
 asmin brahmande pindande ca sastyuttarasatasankhyatah
 evam anantako tipindandabrahmandesu . . ."LD 14, p. 49;
 and "*Brahmandasthita-pindandasthita-candra suryayoh*
aikyat. . ."LD41, p. 122.
4. "... Muladhara-svadhithana-manipuranahata-
 visuddhyajnatmakani satcakrani. . ."LD9, p. 19.
5. "*Etani prithvyagnijalapavanakasamanastattvatmakani. Tani*
tattvani tesu cakresu tanmatratayavasthitani. Tanmatrastu
gandharuparasasparasabdatmakah. Ajnacakrasthitena man-
*astattvena ekadasendriyaganah sangrhitah."*LD 9, pp. 19-20.
6. "*Pindandamatitya vartate sahasrarakamalam ...*"
 LD 14, p. 48.
7. "... Adharasvadhithanamanipuranahatavisuddhyajna-
 ckratmakam sricakram trikhandam somasuryanalatmakam.
Muladharasvadhithanacakradvayam ekam khandam.

*Manipuranahatacakradvayam ekam khandham.
Visuddhyajnacakradvayam ekam khandam. Atra prathama-
khandopari agnisthanam. Tadeva rudragranthirityucyate.
Dvityakhandopari suryasthanam. Tadevavisnugranthi-
rityucyate. Trtiyakhandopari candrasthanam. Tadeva
brahmagranthirityucyate."* LD 14, p. 47.

8. "Agnisomatmakam cakram agnisomamayam jagat.
Agnavantarbabhau bhanuh agnisomamayam smrtam.
Trikhanda matrkacakram somasuryanalata makam..."
LD 11, p. 34.
9. "Evam somasuryanalata pindandabrahmande avrtya vartante."
LD 14, p. 48.
10. "Pindandabrahmandayoraikyata pindandavrtireva
brahmandavrtiriti rahasyam. Evam pindandamatitya vartate
sahasarakamalam. Tacca jyotsnamayo lokah. Tatratyascan-
drama nityakalah." Ibid.
11. "Tava upari mayasuddhavidyamahesvarasadasivatmakat-
attva-catustayam brahmagranthyantarabhavi..."
LD 92, p. 186.
12. There are two reasons to believe that the *brahmagranthi* is
situated above the ajna cakra and below the *sahasrara*:
1. Laksmidhara clearly states: "*Trtiyakhandopari can-
drasthanam tadeva brahmagranthi*," "at the top of the third di-
vision is the place of the moon and that is the *brahmagranthi*."
LD 14. He uses a similar passage in LD 99: "*Ajna cakrante
ekam brahmagranthyatmakam*." "At the end of the ajna cakra
is the *brahmagranthi*."
2. By stating "*Manastattvatmake ajnacakre catustastih*"
(LD 14), he completes the enumeration of 360 *kalas*, which in
different proportions belong to the six *cakras* of the fiery,
solar, and lunar divisions. These 360 *kalas* constitute the
world. By mentioning that their place is at the top of ajna,
cakra and by considering them to be the components of the
goddess' couch, (LD 8 and 92), Laksmidhara must mean that
they are between the *ajna* and *sahasrara cakras* and that is
where the *brahmagranthi* could be located.
13. "*Tanyeva mancasya catustpadani. Suddhavidyayah
sadasivatattvabhinivesat tacchayapattya sahasrakamalan-
tatah sivah sadasivatma anuragavasat suddhavidyayah*

samvalanat tadatmyam pratiyate." LD 92, p. 186; "*Sivadinam mancopadhanatvapataadgrahavasthapannatvam kamarupatvaddevanam atyantassannasevartham ..*" LD 8, p. 17.

14. Padoux, Vac, pp. 309-312.

15. "... *Adharam andhatamisram. Svadhisthanam tu suryakirana samparkat misralokah. Manipurastu agnisthanatve' pi tatra sthite jale suryakiranapratibimbat misraka eva lokah. Anahatam jyotirlokah. Evam anahatacakra paryantam jyotistamomisrako lokah. Visuddhicakram candro lokah. Ajnacakram tu candrasthanatvat sudhalokah, anayorlokayoh suryakiranasamparkat jyotsna nasti. Sahasrakamalam tu jyotsnamaya eva lokah. Tatra sthitascandro nityakala yuktah ... kala sadakhya.*" LD 32, pp. 85-86; and "*Tacca jyotsnamayo lokah. Tatrasyascandrama nityakalah.*" LD 14, p. 48.

16. "... *Baindavasthanam sudhasindhuh saragha iti bahudha prapancitam purvameva.*" LD 41, p. 117; "*Sahasrakamalam bindvatitam baidavasthanatmakam sudhasindhvapara-paryayam sarghasabdavacyam.*" LD 41, p. 120; ". . . *sirassthitam candramandalam sarvayogasastraprasiddham. Tattu samayinam mate sricakrameva.*" LD 10, pp. 23-24; and ". .. *Baindavaparaparyaya-saraghasabdavacya-sudhasindhau sivasaktyor melanam iti.*" LD 92, p. 186.

17. "*Idam atranusandheyam-srividayyah candrakalavidyaparana-madheyayah pancadasatithirupatvat sastyuttaratrisatam mayukhah divasatmakah, tena samvatsaro laksyate. Tasya kalasaktyatmakasya samvatsarasya prajapatirupatvat, prajapateh jagatkartrtvat, maricinam jagadutpattilayakaratham.*" LD 14, p. 49.

18. ". . . *Suryacandragnayah bhagavatipadarabindodbhutananta kotikiranamadhye katipayan kirananaahrtya bhagavatiprasada-samasadita jagatprakasanasamarthyat jaganti prakasayanti. Atasca sarvalokatikrantam candrakalacakram baidavasthanam iti.*" Ibid.

19. "*Atredam anusandheyam adharasvadhistanamanipurana-hatavisuddhyajna-cakratmakam sricakram trikhandam somasuryanalatamakam. Manipura svadhistanacakradvayam ekam khandam. Manipuranahatacakradvayam ekam*

*khandam. Visudhyajnacakradvyam ekam khandam . . .
adharackare mahitattvatmake vahneh satpanasajjjalah ..."*
LD 14, pp. 47-48.

20. "Para trikonatmika pasyanti astakonarupini. .. kalah pancasat, sastyuttaratrisatasankhyaka va." LD4I, pp. 119-120.
21. ". . . pancasadvarnatmaka-sastyuttara trisatasankhyapariganitamahakalatmaka-pancadasakalatita sadakhya srividhyaparaparyaya citkalasabdavacya brah-mavidyaparaparyaya bhagavati nadabindukalatitam bhaga-vatam tattvam iti tattvavidrahasyam." Ibid., p. 120.
22. In Tantric literature the terms nada, *bindu*, and *kala* are used in a variety of ways. Nada usually refers to unarticulated primordial sound, which manifests in three stages, *pasyanti*, *madhyama*, and *vaikhari*. It is also the potentiality of *sabdabrahman*. *Bindu* means "drop." It refers to the concentrated or condensed state of energy, the foundational energy from which the empirical world emerges. *Bindu* is the central point in *sricakra*. In the Goraksanatha school, it also means "mercury, sexual energy, and a mystical state of meditation which a *yogi* penetrates before reaching the *sahasrara*. *Kala* refers to the power of particularization, delimitation, or the capacity of the nondual *sakti* to assume many forms. For details, see Padoux, *Vac*, pp. 89-124 and Brooks, *Three Cities*, pp. 248-249.
23. "... *bhidyamanat parad bindoravyaktatma ravo' bhavat.*" ST, 1:11; "*Sabdabrahmeti tam prahuh sarvagama visaradah . . .*" ST, 1:12; ". . . *caitanyam sarvabhutanam sabdabrahmeti me matih.*" ST, 1:13; "*Sarvadevamayi devi sarvamantramayi siva. Sarvatattvamayi saksat suksmatsuksmatara bibhuh.*" ST, 1:55; "*Tridhamajanani devi sabdabrahmasvarupini. Dvicatvarimsad varnatma pancasadvarnarupini.*" ST 1:56; "*Gunita sarvagatresu kundali paradevata. Visvatamna prabhuddha sa sute mantramayam jagat.*" ST, 1:57; "*Sa prasute kundalini sabdabrahmamayi vibhuh.*" ST, 1:111; and ". . . *kramenanena srjati kundalini varnamalikam.*" ST, 1:113.
24. "*Sabdabrahma param brahma sabdastishanti tatra vai...saktih sarvesu devesu devisu ca sucismite.*" *Bhutasuddhi Tantra*, in TS-III, ed. Ramaprasada Tripathi. Yogatantra-Granthamala,

- vol. 6. (Varanasi: Sampurnananda Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1979), 3:46-48.
25. "... mahakali paramatma canakara rupatah ... hartapadadi rahita candrasuryagnirupini." *Nirvana Tantra* in *TS-II*, 10:26-53.
 26. *Todalatantra* in *TS-II*, 2:2-14, 8:11-22; *Kamadhenu Tantra* in *TS-II*, 1:7-10, 8:6-23, and 10:25, 27, 30; *Vatulasuddhakhya Tantra* in *Tantrasangraha, Part 1* (hereafter cited as *TS-I*), ed. Gopinatha Kaviraja, *Yogatantra-Granthamala*, vol. 3 (Varanasi: Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1970), 3:1-3 and 5:2, *Anubhavasutra* in *TS-I*, 6:44-56; *Virupaksapanca-sika* in *TS-I*, 21; *Durvasas, Tripurasundarimahimnastotra*, found in app. 1 of Awasthi, *MMR*, 6, 27-28; *Kalidasa, Laghustuti* in *Ibid.*, 1-2, 15-16; *Kalidasa, Carcastuti* in *Ibid.*, 16-17; *Kalidasa, Ambastuti* in *Ibid.*, 3, 6, 18-20, and 25-27; *Kalidasa, Sakalajanastava* in *Ibid.*, 7-19, 26-28, and 34-35; *Dipakanatha, Tripurasundaridandaka* in the app. of *TVS*, 1 and 26; *Sivananda, Saubhagyahridayastotra* in *Ibid.*, 3-5; *Saubhagyasudhodaya* in *Ibid.*, *NS* 1:1-13; *YH* 1:13; *KKV8-25*; and *VR* 1:5, 32-36, 2:83-109.
 27. Sastri, *Philosophy of Word and Meaning*, pp. 29-37 and 62-65.
 28. "Nadah parapasyantimadhyamavaikharTrupena caturvidhah iti pragevoktam." *LD* 41, p. 119.
 29. "Nadatitattvam tu tripurasundaryadisabdabhidheyam ..." *Ibid.*
 30. "Asyarthah ye mayukhah sasthyuttaratisatasankhyakah sarirani kalatmakani sastyuttaratisatasankhyakani dinani, tanyeva samvatsarah, samvatsaro vai prajapatih iti sruteh." *LD* 11, p. 37; "Tasya kalasaktyatmakasya samvatsarasya prajapatirupatvat, prajapateh jagatkartrivat, maricinam jagadutpatti-stiti layakaravam. Te ca maricayah asmin brahmande pindande ca sasthyuttara sankhyakah ... atasca sarvalokatikrantam candrakalacakram bairdvasthanam iti." *LD* 14, p. 49; and "... Sastyuttara-trisatasankhya-pariganita-mahakalatmaka-pancadasakalatita sadakhya srividya ..." *LD* 41, p. 120.
 31. "... sivasabdena navayonicakramadhye caturyonyatmakam ardhacakram ucyate. Saktisabdena avasistam pancayonyatmakam ardhacakram ucyate." *LD* 1 p. 3.

32. "... *etasmaccakradeva jagadutpatti-sthiti laya bhavanti. . .*" Ibid.
33. "... *iti siddhanuvadah na tvaropastutih . . .*" LD 14, p. 49.
34. In commenting on SL 11, Laksmidhara gives various methods of drawing *sricakra*. The first one is called *samharakrama*, "the order of dissolution or withdrawal." According to this order, the *sricakra* is drawn from the outer to the inner, i.e., first one draws the outer circle and then the other progressively more internal *cakras*. Another method is called *srstikrama*, "the order of creation." According to this method, *sricakra* is drawn from the inner to the outer, from the subtle to the gross. According to Laksmidhara, Samayins worship the *sricakra* of *srstikrama*.
35. SL 11 and LD 11.
36. "... *Trikonastakonadasakonayugala-caturdasakonatmakani sakticakrani. Astadalsodasadalamekhalatrayabhupura-trayatmakani catvari sivatrakani.*" LD 11, p. 31.
37. "*Ityadau sakticakrani trikonastakona-dasaradvitaya-caturdasakonatmakani pancacakrani. Sivatrakani tu astadalsodasadalamekhalatritaya-bhupura-trayamkani. Atah sakticakranam bahyatah sivatrakani. Sivasya bahyatvayogat tani sivatrakani bindurupenakrsya sakticakrantare sthapitani. Ata eva binduh sivatkracatustayatmakah sakticakresu pancasu vyasnvanah samapatah iti sivasaktyoraikam iti kecit.*" LD 9, p. 21.
38. "*Anye tu bindutrikonayoraikam, astakonastadalambujayoh, dasarayugmasodasadalambujayoh, caturdasarabhupuray-oraikam, anena prakarena sivasaktyoraikamahuh.*" Ibid.
39. "*Atasca trikonam adharah, astakonam svadhisthanam, dasaram manipuram, dvitiyadasaram anahatam, caturdasaram visuddhikram, sivatkracatustayam ajnacakram, bindusthanam caturasram sahasrakamalam iti siddham.*" LD 32, p. 86.
40. "*Akule visusajne ca sakte vahnau tatha punah. Nabhavanahate suddhe lambikagre bhruvo'ntare.*" YH 1:25; and "... *Akuladisu purvoktasthanesu paricintayet. Cakresvarisamayuktam navacakram puroditam . . .*" YH2:8. Also see Amrtananda's *Dipika* and Bhaskararaya's *Setubandha* on these verses of YH.

According to *Gautamiya Tantra*, these additional *cakras* are known as *kailasa* and *rodhini* and are located above the *ajna cakra*: "*Dvidalam hasadyaksarasam-yuktam pankajam sumanoharam. Kailasakhyam tadurddhe tu rodhini tu tadurdhatah.*" Maharshi Gautama, *Gautamiyatantram*, ed. Bhagiratha Jha, Krishnadas Prachyavidya Granthamala, 5 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1977), 32:56.

41. "*Nava yonayo navadhatvatmakah. Tatha caktam kamikayam-tvagasrnmamsa-medosthidhatavah saktimulakah. Majjasuklapranajivadhatavah sivamulakah. Navadhaturayam deho navayonisamudbhavah. Dasami yonirekaiva para saktistadisvari. Iti Dasamo yonih baindavasthanam, tadisvari tasya dehasyetyarthah.*" LD 11, p. 27.
42. The description of the deities in various *cakras* given in the present work is based on LD 11, 17, 31, and 32, and *Bhavanopanisat* with Bhaskararaya's commentary.
43. The particular formation of *srīcakra* in which the bindu is surrounded by a square instead of being surrounded by the central triangle belongs to the variation of *srīstikrama* of *srīcakra* accepted by the *śamāyacarins*, as Laksmidhara claims. According to the most popular variations of *srīcakra*, the *bindu* is located inside the central triangle. In accepting this particular variation, Laksmidhara is clearly establishing the supremacy of *sakti* by stating that "all *siva cakras* are extracted and placed in the *bindu*." See LD 9, p. 21 and LD 32, p. 86.
See also Brooks, *Three Cities*, "Appendix: The Cakras of the Body and the Sricakra."
44. The three most famous variations of the *srīvidya* mantra - known as *kadivīdya*, *hadivīdya*, and *sadivīdya* - all consist of fifteen letters. They begin with the letters *ka*, *ha*, and *sa*, from which they derive their names. In addition, there are variations of the *srīvidya* mantra named after the person first practicing them: Munupasita, Candropasita, Kubreropasita, Lopamudropasita, Manmathopasita, Agstyopasita, Nandikesopasita, Suryopasita, Visnupasita, Sanmukopasita, Sivopasita, and Durvasasopasita. Some of these mantras con-

sist of fifteen, seventeen, eighteen, twenty-two, twenty-eight, and thirty-two letters and are also named accordingly - *pancadasaksari*, *saptadasaksari*, and *astadasaksari*, etc. PSS, pp. 222-229.

45. See chap. 2, n. 1.
46. "*Purnodayamatanusarena tu-somasuryanalatmakataya cakrasya trikhandatvam evam mantrasyapi trikhandatvam suprasiddham. Candrasya kalah sodasa indukhande antarbhutah.*"LD 32, pp. 87-88.
"Atredam anusandheyam-sivah saktih kamah ksitiriti varnacatustayam agneyam khandam. Ravih sitakiranah smarrah hamsah sakra iti varnapancakam sauram khandam. Ubhayoh kandayoh madhye rudrasthaniyam hrllekhabijam. Paramaraharaya iti varnatrayena saumyam khandam nirupitam. Saumyasaurakhandayor madhye visnugranthistnaniyam bhuvanesvaribijam."LD32, pp. 81-82.
47. "*Turiyam ekaksaram candrakalakhandam. Saumyacanrakalakandayor madhye brahmasthaniyam hrllekhabijam.*"LD32, p. 82. ". . . eko varnah sodasakalatmakah pradhanabhuta iti. . ."Ibid.
48. ". . . evam mantrena sarva matrkah msangrhitah iti." LD 32, p. 87.
49. "*Etah pancasatakalah pancasadvarnatmakah pancadasaksarimantre antarbhutah.*"LD 32, p. 86.
50. "*Tatha hi-sodasasvarah kadayah tantah sodasa, thadayah santasca sodasa. sodasatrikam sodasanityasu antarbhutam. Hakarah akasabijam baidavasthane nilinam. Lakarah antasthasvantarbhuto'pi kakarena pratyaharartham punargrhitah. Ksakarastu kakarasakarasamudayarupatvat. Kakaradayah santah sodasanityasu antarbhutah svarasahitah.*" LD 32, p. 87.
51. "*Akarena pratyahrtaah ksakarah aksamaleti giyate. Atah ksakarena sarva matrkah sangrhitah bhavanti.*"Ibid.
52. "*Ata eva antimakhande sakalahrim iti kakaralakarayoryoge kalasabdanispattih, kasayoryoge ksakaranispattiriti, evam mantrena sarva matrkah sangrhitah iti tatparyam.*"Ibid.
53. "*Atasca sodasanityanam mantragata-sodasavarnatmakatvam, sodasa varnanam pancasadvarnatmakatvam, pancasadvarnanam suryacandragnikalatmakatvam surya-candragnirupena trikhandm iti aikyacatustayam anusand-*

heyain."Ibid.

54. "*Evam cakramantrayorapi. Yatha hrinkaratryam sribijam ca sivacakracatustayatmakatrikone bindurupena antarbhutam. Sakaleti varnatrayena sangrhitamatrka, aksamatmika, matrka ubhayamapi yathayogam cakre antarbhutam. Tathahi-antasthascatvarah, usmanascatvarah-evamastau varnah vargapancaman vihaya dasarayugme antarbhutah. Vargapancamastu anusvararupena bindavantarbhutah. Caturdasare caturdasasvara antarbhutah. Anusvaravisargayoh bindavanrbhavah.*" Ibid.
55. "*Tastu visuddhicakre sodasare pragadikramena sodasadiksu paribhramanti.*"LD 32, p. 89.
56. This particular description is based on LD 32, pp. 87-89, and represents the view of Samayacarins who draw and worship *srīcakra* in *srstikrama*. In LD 31, however, Laksmidhara explains the specific ways of demonstrating the oneness of *nityakalas*, the tithis of the fortnights, with *srīcakra* and the *srividya* mantra when *srīcakra* is drawn and worshipped in three other ways: *meruprastara*, *kailasaprastara*, and *bhuprastara*.
For details, see: "*Idanim sodasanityanam srīcakre angataya antarbhavo nirupyate . . . ityadisloka-vyakhyānavasare kathitani.*"LD31, pp. 79-80.
57. "*Ata eva darsadikalanam trikhandatvam spastam. Darsa drsta darsata visvarupa sudarsana-esa agneyah khandah. Apyayamana apyayamana apyaya sunrta ira-esa saurah khandah. Apuryamana apuryamana purayanti purna purnamasiti-esa candrah khandah tritiro nirupitah.*" LD 32, pp. 88-89.
58. "*Darsa kala sivatattvatmika. Drsta kala saktitattvatmika. Darsata kala mayatattvatmika. Visvarupa kala suddhavidyatattvatmika. Sudarsana kala jalatattvatmika. . . . nityakala sadakhyatattvatmika.*"LD32, p. 89. While describing the nature of *sodasi*, the sixteenth kala, in the beginning of the paragraph, Laksmidhara states: "*sodasyah cidrupatmi-kayalḥ kalayah sadakhya-tattvarupatvat adhidevantantaram nasti.*"LD 32, p. 88.
59. "*Apuryamanayah kalayah candrakhandantssthitaya api saurakhande antarbhavah. Irakalaprabhedatvat*

60. "Stastu visuddhikakre sodasa-sivah pragadikramena sodasadiksū paribhramanti," LD 32, p. 89.
61. "Purnodayamatanusarena tu-somasuryanalatmakataya cakrasya trikhandatvam evam mantrasyapi trikhandatvam suprasiddham. Candrasya kalah sodasa indukhande antarbhutah." LD 32, pp. 87-88.

"Atredam anusandheyam-sivah saktih kamah) ksitiriti varnacatustayam agneyam khandam. Ravih sitakiranah smarah hamsah sakra iti vamapancakam sauram khandam. Ubhayoh kandayoh madhye rudrasthaniyam hrlekhabijam. Paramaraharaya iti varnatrayena saumyam khandam nirupitam. Saumyasaurakhandayor madhye visnugranthisthaniyam bhuvanesvanbijam." LD 32, pp. 81-82.
62. "Ajnacakragatacandre pahcadasakalah pratiphalanahca." Ibid., p. 86.
63. "Sricakrarupacandrabimbe ekaiva kala sa paramakala . . . sadakhyakala srididyaparaparyaya nada bindukalati ta." Ibid.
64. "Bindusthanam sudhasindhuh pancayonyah suradrumah. Tatraiva nipasreni ca tanmadhye manimandapam. Tatra cintamanikrtam devya mandiram uttamam. Sivatomake mahamance mahesanopabarhane. Atiramyatare tatra kasipusca sadasivah. Bhrtakasca catuspada mahendrasca patadgrahah." LD 8, p. 16.
65. "Pasankusau tadiyau tu ragdvesatmakau smrtau. Sabdasparsadayo banah manastasyabhavaddhanuh. Karanendriyacakrastham devim samvit svarupinim . . ." LD 41, p. 124.
66. ". . . sivarkamandalam bhittva dravyantindumandalam. Tadudbhutamrta-syandi-paramanandanandita. Kulayosit kulam tyaktva param varsanam etya sa. Iti bhairavayamale vamakesvaramahatantre." LD 8, p. 16.
67. Brown, SL 10.
68. "Atha ca susthu rajate prakasata iti suro jivah; sa eva vitapi, apadamastakam vistirya vartamanatvat tasya vatya vestanena parito vrte dhrte; tadabhavah dehashthityabhavah. Kinca manimaya manivatprakasamanah dvipah devatanivasa-

sthanatvad dvipatulya muladharadisthanavisesah . . . Nayanti sarliam gamanagama-navyaparairiti nipah pranapanavyano-danasamanakhya mukhyapranah, nagakurmakrkaradevadat-tadhananjayopapranasca; nitaram pad sariram iti va nipah purvokta indriyadhistanadevatasca . . ."Arunamodini on SL 8 in *Saundaryalahari*, ed. A. Kuppuswami.

69. "*Srsticakram sudhasindhuh saubhagyam suravatika. Dasarayugalam ratnadvipam nipavanam tatha. Cintamanigrham ramyam astaram paramesvari. Trikonam mancarupam tu bindukam tu sadasivah.*" Narasimhasvamin, *Gopalasundari*, on SL 8, in *Saundaryalahari*, ed. A. Kuppuswami.
70. ". . . pretah prakarsena itah devisarira-samsargatisayam praptah." *Anandalahari Tika* on SL 8 in *Saundaryalahari*, ed. A. Kuppuswami.
71. "*Iyam upasana. Vidhihkriyatmako nadaraniyah.*"LD41, p. 124.
72. "*Evam samayamatam samyak prapancya samayayah bhagavatyah kiritaprabhrti padantam varnayati. . .*"Ibid..
73. "*Ganesagrahanaksatrayoginirasirupinim. Devim mantramayfm naumi matrkam pitharupinim.*" NS 1:1; also see YH 2:57-68; and YKU 1:81, 2:49, 3:13, and 3:22.
74. "*Yada candrarkau nijasadanasmrodhanavasat asaktau piyusaravana harane sa ca bhujagi. Prabuddha ksutkrudha dasati sasinam baindavagatam sudhadharasarahi snapayasi tanum baindavakale.*"SU 4; and "*idam kalotpattisthiti-layakaram padmanikarm trikhandam sricakram . . . sastramuditam*" SU 50; also see YH2:69-72; and YKU 1:67-86, 2:42-49, 3:1-35.
75. ". . . tatha mantrah samastasca vidyayamatrasamsthitah . . . sivagurvratmanam aikyanusandhanat tadatmakam .. . ittham mantratmakam cakram devatayah param vapuh." YH 2:47-56; also see KKV 8 and 15-17; SU 4, 10-13, 38, and 50.
76. "*Bhavani tvam vande bhavamahisi saccitvapuh parakaram devim amrtalaharim aindavakalam . . . mahakalatitam kalitasaranikalpitanum sudhasindhorantarvasatim anisam vasaramayim.*" SU 1; "*Kumari yanmandram dhvanati ca tato yosid apara kulam tyaktva rauti sphutati ca mahakalabhujagi . . .*" SU 6; "*Satam castau vahneh satamapi kalah*

- sodasaraveh . . . mahakaulestasmanna hi tava sive kalakalana" SU9; also see KKV 17; and NS 1:1.*
77. *"Evam bindukala jneya nadasaktyatmikasca yah. Vyapinyadyatmika yasca vyapyavyapakabhedatah . . . Tasminyuktah pare tattve sarvajnyadigunanvitah. Siva eko bhaveddevi avibhagena sarvatah." SVT 4:245-402; see also 5:56-86.*
78. *"Tanmadhyagatasivatattvam nada ityucyate." LD99, p. 197.*
79. *". . . nade vacyah sadasivah . . ." SVT 4:265.*
80. *"...murdhvam devah sadasivah. Tattvadvrayasamayukto yavadbrahambilam gatah . .. Unmana tatah. Tatparam tu param tattvam pramanaparivarjitam." SVT 4:346-348.*
81. *"Pradhana dasa yah prokta nadyasca varanane. Tasam madhey tu devesi vayavo ye vyavasthitah...." SVT 7:13-158.*
82. NT chaps. 7 and 8.
83. *". .. nirodhikamimam bhitva sadakhyam bhuvanam param ... Nadah susumnadharastu bhitva visvamidam jagat. Adhah saktaya vinirgacchedurvasaktya ca murdhatah. Nadya brahmabile linah tam bhitva codharvakundali. Saktih suptahisadrsi sa visvadhara ucyate iti sodasabhuvaneyam tattvayugam santyatita syat." TA 8:386-427.*
84. Ibid.
85. *"Nirodhikamimam bhitva sadakhyam bhuvanam param." Ibid., 8:386.*
86. *"Susumnordhve brahmabila samjnnavaranam tridrk. Tatra brahma sitah suli pancasyah sasisekharah. Tasyotasange para devi brahmani moksamargaga. Roddhri datri ca moksasya tam bhitva cordhvakundali." TA 8:394-395.*
87. *". . . sabdarasirmalini ca Siva saktyatmakam tvidam." TA 15:133; "Mayottirnam hi yadрупam brahmadinam puroditam. Asanam tvetadeva syannatu mayanjananjitam . . . Sadasivam mahapretam murtim sardhraksaram yajet. Paratvena paramurdhve gandhapuspadihbhistviti." TA 15:308-322; ". . . madhyaga kila ya devi saiva sadbhavarupini. kalasankarsini ghora... . Para tu matrka devi malini mad-*

hyagodita. Madhye nyasyetsuryarucim sarvaksaramayim-param." TA 15:331-333; "Kundam saktih sivo lingam melakam paramam padam. . . . Madhyasthanalagumphi-tasarojayugaghattanakramadagnau. Madhyasthapurna Sundarasasadharadinakarakalaughasanghattat." TA 29:141-152; "Deha eva param lingam sarvatattvatmakam sivam. Devatacakrasanjutam pujadhama taduttamam. Tadeva mandalam mukhyam tritrisulabjakrakham. Tatraiva devata cakram bahirantah sada yajet." TA 29:171-172.

88. *Laksmi-Tantra: A Pancaratra Agama* (hereafter cited as LT), ed. and introduction by V. Krishnamacharya (Adyar: Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1959).
89. *"Tadevam paramonmesarupaham vitatodaya. Icchajnanakriyarupa pancakrtyakari vibhoh." LT 27:14.*
90. *"Maharajni tathaivaham anayaiva trayipara. Rgyajuhsamasanghate cintye saure ca mandate." LT 25:42.*
91. *"Hrilekha paramatmastha ya saktirbhuvanesvari. Cicchaktih santirupa ca ghosani ghosa sambhava." LT 25:46.*
92. *"Mulabhutam parahantam visnostaddharmadharminim. Sarvasaktimayim tam mam sakticakrasya nayikam. Prakasanandayor antaranusyutam anusmaret. Agnisomad-vayantahstham madhyamarganuvartinim." LT 45:99-100.*
93. *"Catasro dharana jneyasta etastattvakovidaih. Sadiksantam tu vijneyam visuddham brahmapancakam." LT 19:16; also see 28-32; 23:45; 32:36, 44, and 60; 35:33, 45, and 70; and 40:5-6.*
94. *"Subhairvarnamayaih padmairagnisomamayaih krtam. Bibhratim vanamalanca kanthatpadavalambinim." LT 23:2\$.*
95. *"Kuryad vikasitancaiva mudraisa balasudana. Mahayonyabhidhana ca trilokajanani para." LT 45:110.*
96. *Laksmi Tantra: A Pancaratra Text*, trans. and notes by Sanjukta Gupta, *Orientalia Rheno-Traiectina*, vol. 60, ed. J. Gonda and H. W. Obbink (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), xxii.
97. *Ibid.*, xxv.
98. *Ibid.*
99. *". . . divi somo adhisritah. Somenadityah balinah somena prthivi mahi. Atho naksatranam esam upasthe soma ahitah.*

*Somam manyate papivan yatsampimsantyosadhim.
somam yam brahmano vidurna tasyasnati kascana."*
RV 10:85:1-3.

100. "Yattva deva prapibanti fata apyayase punah.
Vayuh somasya raksita samanam masa akrtih." RV 10:85:5.
101. "Yasmanna jatah paw anyo asti ya avivesa bhuvanani trini
jyotismsacate sa sodasi." *Mula-Yajurveda Samhita*, ed. Siddhesvara Bhattacharya. Banaras Hindu University, Sanskrit Series, vol. 8 (Varanasi: Banaras Hindu University, 1973) 37:9:9.
102. "Kalo asvo vahati saptarasmih sahasrakso ajaro bhumiretah.
Tamarohanti kavayo vipascitas tasya cakra bhuvanani visva.
Sapta cakran vahati kala esa saptasya nabhiramrtam
nvaksah.
Sa ima visva bhuvananyanjayat kalah sa iyate prathamam nu
devah." *The Atharvaveda* 19:53:1-2.
"Kale tapah kale jyestham kale brahma samahitam.
Kalo hi sarvasyesvaro yah pitasitprajapateh."
The Atharvaveda 19:53:8.
For details, see *The Atharvaveda* 19:53:1-8 and 19:54:1-5.
103. "Tasmacchudro yajne anavaklptah" quoted in LD 11, p. 42;
"Tadesabhyukta apam rasamudayammsan surye sukram
sanabhrtam apam rasaya yo rasah. Tam vo grhnamyut-
tamam." quoted in LD 40, p. 114; and "Tasmadrudrah
pasunam adhipatih." quoted in LD 99, p. 195.
104. "Lokasya dvaram arcimatpavitram jyotismadbhrajamanam
mahasvat. Amrtasya dhara bahudha dohamanam caranam no
loke sudhitam dadhatu." quoted in LD 10, p. 25; "Samvatsaro
vai prajapatih,m" quoted in LD 11, p.37; and "Ayanca
lokasya dvaram arcimat pavitram" quoted in LD 14, p. 49.
105. "Brahma sivo me astu sadasivom" is quoted in LD 11, p. 40;
"Tasmad va estasmadatmana akasasambhutih." quoted in
LD 37, p. 108; and "Atmana akasah sambhutih akasad
vayuh vayoragnih agnerapah adbhayah prthivi" is quoted in
LD 41, p. 123.
106. The ten mantras that constitute the *Sarasvatirahasya Up-*
am'sadare taken from RV6:61:4; 5:43:11; 1:3:10-12;
1:164:45; 8:100:10-11; 10:71:4,, and 2:41:16.
107. RV 10:125:1-8.

108. RV Khailikani Suktani 8:1-29.

109. *"Satyenottabhita bhumih suryenottabhita dauh.
Rtenadityastisthanti divi somo adhi sritah.
Somenaditya balinah somena prthivi mahi.
Atho nakskatranamesam upasthe soma ahitah.
Somam manyate papivan yatsampisamtyosadhim.
Somam yam brahmano vidurna tasyasnati kascana.
Acchdvidhanairgupito barhataih soma rakshitah.
Gravnamicchrnvantisthasina te asnati parthivah.
Yattva deva prapibamti tata apyayase punah.
Yajuh somasya rakshita samanam masa akrtih."*
RV 10:85:1-5.

110. *"Yasmin somah surapitrnarairanvah piyamanah ksinah
ksinah pravisati yato vardhate capi bhuyah. Yasmin veda
madhuni saraghakaravadbhanti cagre taccandomsoramita-
mamrtam mandalastham prapadye."* Sambapancasika in
TS-I 8, p. 28.'

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Pandit Rajmani Tigunait, Ph.D., is a disciple of Sri Swami Rama. Since 1980 he has been the spiritual director of the Himalayan International Institute, which his master founded in 1971. He is a scholar of Sanskrit and the ancient scriptures. A specialist in Vedic and tannic studies, Pandit Tigunait holds two Ph.D.'s, one from the University of Allahbad in India and the other from the University of Pennsylvania in the United States.

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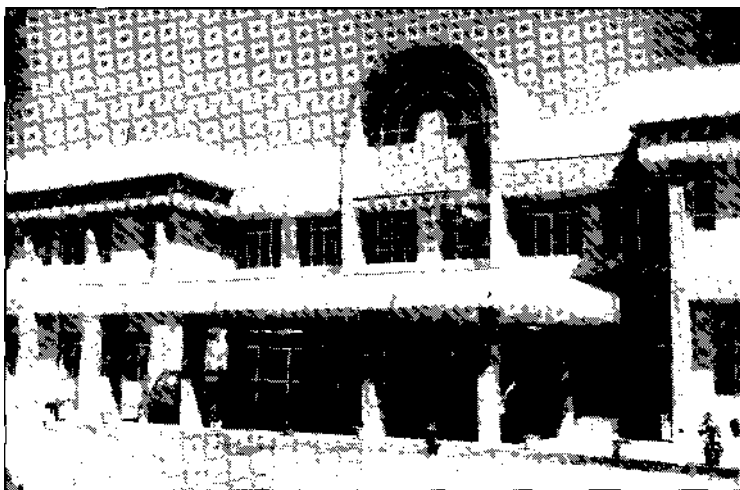
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