With Profound Respects to
Svāmi Lakṣmaṇa Joo
Who unsealed my eyes.
Vijñānabhārava is a very ancient book on Yoga. It closely follows the basic principles of Śaivāgama. It contains 112 types of yoga. There is hardly any other book on yoga which has described so many ways of approach to Central Reality that is present in each man as his essential Self. It is both extensive, and intensive in the treatment of the subject of yoga.

An English translation of this excellent work is being provided for the first time. The text that has been adopted is mainly the one that is published in the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies. At a few places, however, slightly different readings yielding better sense have been incorporated as suggested by Svāmi Lakṣmaṇa Joo.

Each verse of the Sanskrit text has been printed in both Devanāgarī and Roman script. This is followed by an English translation and a number of expository notes which will go a long way in elucidating the main idea of the verse.

A long Introduction explaining the basic principles of the yogas described in the text has been provided in the beginning. A glossary of technical terms has also been added at the end.

Since the yogas recommended in the book are based on the tenets of the non-dualistic Śaiva Philosophy, the reader will do well to read the author's Introductory Portion of either the Pratyabhijñāḥdayam or the Śiva-sūtras before taking up the study of the present book.

I express my sincerest gratitude to Svāmi Lakṣmaṇa Joo who has kindly taught this book to me word by word. My thanks are also due to Shri Dinanath Ganj who has kindly helped me in the preparation of the index to important Sanskrit words and the alphabetical index to the verses.
INTRODUCTION

IMPORTANCE OF VIJÑÂNABHAIRAVA

There have been, in India, two main ways of approach to Reality or the Essential Nature of Self, viz., Vivekaja marga and Yogaja marga—the path of distinction or discrimination and the path of union or integration. Pātañjala yoga and Śāṅkara Vedānta have adopted the Vivekaja marga by which the Puruṣa or Ātmā (the Self) is isolated from Prakṛti (in the case of Pātañjala Yoga) or from Māyā (in the case of Vedānta). The word Yoga does not mean union in Patañjali’s system; it means samādhi or intense abstract meditation (as Vyāsa puts it in his commentary, ‘yuji samādhau’). Śaivāgama has adopted the Yogaja marga in which the goal is not isolation of the Self from Prakṛti or Māyā but the integration of the individual Self to the Universal Self or Bhairava and the realization of the universe as the expression of His Sakti or spiritual Energy. The ideal of Śaivāgama is not the rejection of the universe but its assimilation to its Source.

Vijñānabhairava is an excellent exposition of the yogaja marga. Hence its importance. It has been referred to as Āgama,1 Śivavijñānapoṣiṣad,² and Rudrayāmalasāra³ by Abhinavagupta. Yogarāja has referred to it as Śaivopaniṣad.⁴ Kṣemarāja has referred to it at many places in his commentary on Śiva-sūtras.

It is clear that it has been acknowledged by the great exponents of Śaivāgama as a very authentic work on yoga.

THE TEXT

Vijñānabhairava has been published in the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies with an incomplete commentary of Kṣemarāja, and complete commentaries of Śivopādhyāya and Bhāṭṭa Ānanda.

In the above text, the following remark appears on page 16, after the 23rd verse, “ita uttarāṁ Śrī Śivopādhyāyakṛtā vīrtiḥ”

i.e. "after this, the commentary is by Śivopādhyāya. "Even in the life-time of Śivopādhyāya, the full commentary of Kṣemarāja was not available. It is not known whether Kṣemarāja did not live to complete his commentary, or whether his commentary after the above verse has been lost. All that can be said is that it has not been so far traced."

Śivopādhyāya is greatly influenced by Śāmkara Vedānta. So his commentary is not reliable. Bhaṭṭa Ānanda is even more avowedly a follower of Śāmkara Vedānta. His commentary is, therefore, even far more removed from the original intention of the text. In the preparation of the present edition, these commentaries have not been translated.

THE DATE OF VIJÑĀNABHAIRAVA AND THE COMMENTARIES

Vijñānabhairava is a part of the ancient Tantras. It is held in high esteem in Śaivāgama. Abhinavagupta calls it Śiva-vijñāna- upaniṣad.

The text of Vijñānabhairava claims to be the quintessence of Rudrayāmala Tantra which means union of Rudra with His Śakti (Spiritual Energy). The authentic text of Rudrayāmala Tantra is not available. So it is not possible to say how far the text of Vijñānabhairava corresponds to that of Rudrayāmala Tantra.

Tantras contain descriptions of ritual practices, sacred formulae (mantras), mystical diagrams (yantras), gestures (mudrās), postures (āsanas), initiations (diṅḍā), yoga or mystic practices. Vijñānabhairava is purely a manual of mystic practices in accordance with Śaivāgama.

In the present state of our knowledge, it is impossible to give the exact date of Vijñānabhairava. The earliest reference to it is found in Vāmananāth’s Advayasampatti-vārttika. It is likely that Vāmananātha may be the same as Vāmana, the celebrated writer on Poetics who flourished during the reign of King Jayāpida of Kashmir (779--813 A.D.). If that be so, then it can be easily said that Vijñānabhairava was very well known in the 8th century A.D. Perhaps, it may have been compiled a century earlier.
So far as the commentators are concerned, Kṣemarāja flourished in the 10th century A.D. In the colophon of his commentary, Bhaṭṭa Ānanda mentions the date of the completion of the commentary according to which he flourished in the 17th century A.D.

Śivopādhyāya says in the colophon of his commentary that it was finished during the reign of Sukhajivana. This means that he flourished in the 18th century A.D.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VIJÑĀNABHAIRAVA

Vijñānabhairava consists of two words, vijñāna and bhairava. We have first of all to understand the esoteric significance of Bhairava. Kṣemarāja in his Udyota commentary gives a description of the esoteric meaning of Bhairava. The sum and substance of it is that Bhairava is an acrostic word consisting of the letters, bha, ra, and va; bha indicates bharana or maintenance of the universe; ra indicates ravanā or withdrawal of the universe; va indicates vamana or projection i.e., manifestation of the universe. Thus Bhairava indicates all the three aspects of the Divine.

This has been clarified by Abhinavagupta in Tantraloka III, verses 283—285 in which he describes the three aspects of the Divine as sraṣṭā (manifester of the universe), viśvarūpatā, Bhairava in His cosmic essence in whose consciousness the entire universe differentiated in six ways (sudadhvā) is reflected, and Bhairava as prasama in whose flame of mahābodha (universal consciousness), everything is dissolved.

While Bhairava has three aspects, He from the point of view of the mystic, is that Ultimate Reality in which prakāśa i.e. Light of Consciousness and vimarṣa or Eternal Awareness of that Light are indistinguishably fused. In other words, Bhairava is parama Śiva in whom prakāśa and vimarṣa, Śiva and Śakti, Bhairava and Bhairavi are identical. Bhairava or Parama Śiva embraces in Himself transcendence and immanence, Śiva and Śakti. It is this Bhairava that is the goal of the seeker.

The svarūpa or essential nature of Bhairava is vijñāna or bodha or mahābodha, cit or caitanya the main characteristic of which is svātantrya or absolute freedom revealing itself in icchā, jñāna,
and kriyā. It is to this Vijnānabhairava that the seeker of spiritual life has to be integrated.

The entire manifestation consisting of subject and object is a mere reflection in this vijnāna. Just as a city in a mirror appears as something different from the mirror, though it is nothing different from the mirror, even so the universe though appearing different from vijnāna is nothing different from it.

In verses 2 to 6 of Vijnānabhairava, the Devī mentions certain well-known statements about Bhairava and wants to know His parāvasthā—highest state or essential nature. Bhairava categorically rejects the various well-known opinions about His highest state and pithily but with luminous clarity states in verses 14 and 15 what His essential nature consists in:

"Parāvasthā (the highest state) of Bhairava is free of all notions pertaining to direction (dīk), time (Kāla), nor can that be particularized, by some definite space (deśa) or designation (uddeśa). In verity that can neither be indicated nor described in words. One can be aware of that only when one is completely free of all thought-constructs (vikalpas). One can have an experience of that bliss in his own inmost Self (when one is completely rid of the ego, and is established in pūrṇāhantā i.e. in the plenitude of the divine I—consciousness).

That state of Bhairava which is full of the bliss of non-difference from the entire world (bharitākārā) is alone Bhairavi or Śakti of Bhairava."

That state is Vijnāna—a state of consciousness which is nirvikalpa, free of all thought-constructs. This Vijnānabhairava is the goal of man.

Parādevī or Bhairavi is only the Śakti (Power or energy) of Bhairava. Just as there is no difference between fire and its power of burning, even so there is no difference between Bhairava and Parādevī. Parādevī has been called Śaivī mukha or means of approach to Śiva.

DHĀRANĀS OR YOGA PRACTICES

The Devī now enquires, “By what means can this highest state be realized?” In reply to this, Bhairava describes 112 dhāranās.
In Patanjali, the word *dhāraṇā* is used in a somewhat limited sense viz; ‘fixation of mind on a particular spot.’ In Vijñānabhairava it is used in the wide sense of fixation or concentration of mind or *yoga*. The word *yoga* is used both in the sense of communion (with the Divine) and the means (*upāya*) for that communion. So 112 types of *yoga* or means of communion with Bhairava have been described in this text.

Unfortunately, no word has been profaned so much in modern times as *yoga*. Fire-walking, acid-swallowing, stopping the heartbeat, etc. pass for *yoga* when really speaking they have nothing to do with *yoga* as such. Even psychic powers are not *yoga*. *Yoga* is awareness, transformation of the human consciousness into divine consciousness.

Vijñānabhairava mentions 112 *dhāraṇās* or types of *yoga*. It is a book on *yoga*, not on philosophy, but its system of *yoga* can be better understood if one is acquainted with its metaphysical background. The reader would be well advised to go through the author’s Introduction either in *Pratyabhijñāhridayam* or *Śiva-sūtras* in order to get an idea of the metaphysics on which the present *yoga* system is based.

The means of communion with Bhairava have been classified under four broad heads in *Śaivāgama*, viz., *anupāya*, *sāmbhava*, *sākta* and *ānava*. These have been described in detail by the author in the Introduction to the *Śiva Sūtras*. In this book, in the notes under each *dhāraṇā* it has been indicated whether it is *ānava* or *sākta* or *sāmbhava*. *Anupāya* literally means ‘no means’, ‘without any means’ which has, however, been interpreted by Jayaratha as *tṣat upāya* i.e. very little means. Just a casual hint by the guru or the spiritual director is enough for the advanced aspirant to enter the mystic state. Such a rare case is known as that of *anupāya*. *Ānava*, *sākta* and *sāmbhava* are definite techniques. These are, however, not watertight compartments. The aspirant has to pass from the *ānava* to *sākta* and finally from the *sākta* to the *sāmbhava* state.

Vijñānabhairava has utilized all the traditional techniques of *yoga*-postures, *mudrās* or gestures, development of *prāṇaśakti*, awakening of *kuṇḍalini*, *mantra japa* or recital of words of power or sacred formulae, *bhakti* (devotion) *jñāna* (realization through
understanding), meditation, bhāvanā (creative contemplation). It even uses certain techniques of very non-formal nature, e.g., looking vacantly at the dark night, high mountains, watching the condition of consciousness in a see-saw movement, the condition of consciousness before falling asleep, intently looking at a vase without partition, etc. It has recommended one hundred and twelve dhāraṇās ad modum recipientis (according to the mode of the recipients) keeping in view the fitness or competence of the aspirants so that any technique that may suit a particular aspirant may be adopted by him.

The ultimate goal recommended by the text is identification with Bhairava—undifferentiated universal consciousness which is the heart (hrdaya), nectar (amrta). Reality par excellence (tattva or mahāsattā) essence (svārūpa), Self (ātman), or void (śūnyatā) that is full. This involves the following processes:

1. Perfect interiorization so that one is absorbed in the heart of the Supreme.
2. Passing from vikalpa or the stage of differentiating, dichotomizing thought-construct to nirvikalpa stage of thought-free, non-relational awareness.
3. Disappearance of the limited pseudo-I or ego which is only a product of Prakṛti and the emergence of the Real Universal I (pūrṇāhantā) which is divine.
4. Dissolution of citta or the individual mind into cit or universal Consciousness.

This is the essence of yoga according to Vijnānabhairava.

IMPORTANT BASES OF THE DHĀRAṆĀS RECOMMENDED

The important bases of the dhāraṇās recommended in the text are the following:

1. Prāṇa:

Indian thought believes that between the body and the mind or between the material or physical energy and mental energy, there is prāṇa which is an intermediary link between the two. The word prāṇa has been variously translated as the vital force,
biological energy, bio-plasma, etc. It has been a moot point in western Philosophy and Psychology as to how mind which is psychic in nature affects the body which is physical or material in nature. According to Indian Philosophy, between the body and manas or mind, there is prāna which serves as a link between the two. Prāna is not mind; it is insentient, but it is not like gross physical energy. It is subtle biological energy which catches the vibrations of the mind and transmits them to the nerves and plexuses and also physical vibrations to the mind. By controlling the mind one can control the prāna, and by controlling the prāna, one can control the mind.

According to Śaivāgama, prāna is not something alien to saṁvit or consciousness, but the first evolute of saṁvit (consciousness) Prāk saṁvit prāne parinatā. In the process of creation saṁvit or consciousness is at first transformed into prāna. So prāna is a phase of consciousness itself.

The word prāna is used both in the general sense of prānanā or prāna-sakti or life-principle or life-force and in the specific sense of various biological functions. This life-force expresses itself in breath. Prāna or the life-force cannot be contacted directly. It is only through breath that prāna or life-force can be influenced. So the word prāna is generally used for breath also though sometimes the word vāyu (as prāna-vāyu) is added to it. In this context the word prāna is used for the breath that is exhaled, and apāna is used for the breath that is inhaled. The word prāna is thus used in three senses—(1) in a general sense of prāna-sakti or life-force, (2) in a specific sense according to the various biological functions, and (3) in the sense of breath.

The breath is associated with inhalation and exhalation. The very first dhāranā (described in verse 24) utilizes the two poles of respiration, viz. 1 dvādasānta—a distance of twelve fingers from the nose in the outer space where prāna or exhalation ends and hṛt or the centre inside the body where apāna or inhalation ends. One has to concentrate on these two points. After some practice, he will realize the state of Bhairava.

Similarly, verses 2,3,4,5,6,7 etc. describe how prāna can be utilized in various ways for realizing the nature of Bhairava.
• Several dhāraṇās utilize the awakening of prāṇa-śakti in the susumnā for the realization of spiritual perfection. It is by the efflorescence of prāṇaśakti in the susumnā or the medial channel of prāṇa in the interior of the spinal column that kundalini awakens when one has the experience of the union of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. Verses 35, 38, 39 etc. refer to such dhāraṇās. Notes on these verses should be carefully read.

Uccāra is the natural characteristic of prāṇa. Uccāra means expression in the form of nāda or sound-subtle, inarticulate, or unmanifest and moving upward. The unmanifest, inarticulate sound or nāda is known as varṇa. Abhinavagupta says:

उक्तो य एष उच्चारसत्त्व योज्यै स्पुतर्न स्थितः ।
प्रयत्ननुकृतिप्रेयो ध्वनिविवर्णः स कथ्यते ।

(Tantrāloka V, 131)

“From the uccāra of the general prāṇa, there vibrates an imperceptible, inarticulate sound which is known as varṇa.”

Svacchanda Tantra says:

नास्योज्जारस्यता कक्ष्यत्वतिहत्ता न विचते ।
स्वयमुज्ज्वर्ते देव: प्राणिनामुरसि स्थितः ।

(VII, 50)

“There is none who sounds it voluntarily, nor can any one prevent its being sounded. The deity abiding in the heart of living creatures sounds it himself.

Abhinavagupta gives the following description of this nāda:

एको नावात्मको वर्णः स्वर्णविवभाग्यान् ।
सोज्ञस्तमितरूपतवादनाहत ैहोदितः ।

(Tantrāloka VI, 217)

“There is one varṇa in the form of nāda (sound vibration) in which lie all the varṇas (letters) latently in an undivided form. As it is ceaseless, it is called anāhata i.e. unstruck, natural, spontaneous, uncaused. As all the varṇas (letters) originate from this nāda, therefore, is it called varṇa proleptically. Vide verse 38 of the text.

How are we to know about this inarticulate sound? In the following verse, Abhinavagupta throws a hint as to how we can form an idea of it.
"The \textit{sṛṣṭi bija} and \textit{samhāra bija} are its main forms". In the words of Jayaratha main forms mean \textit{pradhānam abhivyakti-sthānam} i.e. the \textit{sṛṣṭi bija} and \textit{samhāra bija} are the main spots of its revelation. \textit{sa} is the \textit{sṛṣṭi bija} or the mystic letter denoting expiration and \textit{ha} is the \textit{samhāra bija} or the mystic letter denoting inspiration.

In verses 155 and 156 of \\textit{Vijñānabhairava} is given the process by which this \textit{nāda} expresses itself in the breath of every living creature. "The breath is exhaled with the sound \textit{sa} and then inhaled with the sound \textit{ha}. Thus the empirical individual always recites this \textit{mantra \textit{hamsaḥ}} (verse 155). Throughout the day and night he (the empirical individual recites this \textit{mantra 21,600 times. Such a \textit{japa} (recitation) of the goddess is mentioned which is quite easy to accomplish; it is only difficult for the ignorant.}" (verse 156).

This \textit{hamsaḥ mantra} is repeated by every individual automatically in every round of expiration-inspiration. Since the repetition is automatic, it is known as \textit{ajapa japa} i.e. a repetition of the \textit{mantra} that goes on spontaneously without anybody's effort. This \textit{hamsaḥ} (I am He i.e. I am Śiva or the Divine) is the \textit{ādi prāṇa} i.e. initial \textit{prāṇa} which is the first evolute or transformation of consciousness.

There are two ways in which this \textit{prāṇic mantra} can be utilized for the awakening or rise of \textit{Kuṇḍalint}. One is \textit{anusandhāna} or prolonged mental awareness of this automatic process which has been referred to above. Another way is conscious \textit{japa} or recitation or repetition of this \textit{mantra} as \textit{so'ham} or simply \textit{aum} (ॐ). This requires a further elucidation.

In the descending arc of the creative activity from consciousness to inconscient matter or in other words from the conscious creative pulsation of the Divine \textit{Śakti} known as \textit{parāvāk} or \textit{vimarsa} at the highest level down to \textit{vaikhart} or gross speech at the level of the living being, there is a movement downward from the centre of Reality to the periphery in the successive form of \textit{parāvānti}, (the spiritual logos in which the creative
process is in the form of nāda), paśyantī (vāk-śakti, going forth as seeing, ready to create in which there is no difference between vācyā (object) and vācaka (word), madhyamā (śabda) in its subtle form as existing in the antahkarana prior to its gross manifestation), vaikhart (as gross, physical speech). This is the process of srṣṭi or the outward movement or the descending arc. In ordinary japa (muttering of mantra or sacred formula), the process is just the reverse. In this the sound moves from vaikhart through madhyamā towards paśyantī and parāvāṇī.

Ordinarily, japa starts in vaikhart form (vocal muttering). It depends entirely on the will and activity of the person who does the japa. After constant practice of japa for some years, an extraordinary thing happens. A time comes when the japa does not depend on the will and activity of the reciter any longer. It now goes on automatically inwardly without any effort on the part of the reciter. It becomes an ajapājapa. When this proceeds for a long time, the prāṇa and apāṇa currents that normally move in a curvilinear way on the idā and piṅgala channels become equilibrated; the kuṇḍalint now awakens; the equilibrated current now flows upward in the susumnā i.e. in the interior of the spinal column. This upward movement is known as uccarāṇa. Prāṇa and manas are so closely associated that manas also acquires upward orientation along with it.

As the kuṇḍalint rises, there is the experience of anāhata nāda-automatic, unstruck sound. The kuṇḍalint passing through the various cakras finally joins the Brahmarandhra, and then nāda ceases; it is then converted into jyoti (light).

2. Japa:

This has already been described in connexion with the sādhanā or spiritual praxis of prāṇa above. The praxis of japa has been mentioned in verses 90, 145, 155, 156, etc. Praṇava japa leading to the development of the various śaktis or manifestation of spiritual stages is recommended in verse 42. This is explained under a separate head.

3. Bhāvanā:

In Tantrasāra, Abhinavagupta gives an excellent exposition of bhāvanā. Man’s mind manifests itself in all kinds of vikalpas
or thought — constructs. Vikalpa is the very nature of mind. If that is so, the aspirant should mentally seize one Suddha or pure vikalpa, viz. of the highest I-consciousness, of the real Self as being Šiva. He has to practise the bhāvanā of this pure vikalpa. Bhāvanā is creative contemplation. Imagination plays a very large part in it. One has to imagine oneself with all the faith and fervour at his command that he is Šiva. This suddha vikalpa eliminates all other vikalpas, or thoughts and a time comes when the suddha vikalpa also ceases. Then the empirical, psychological self is dissolved, and one is landed in one’s real, metempirical, metaphysical Self.

Abhinavagupta traces the following steps to Bhāvanā. A sadguru or Self-realized spiritual director initiates the aspirant into the mysteries of the āgama, into the irrefutable conviction of the essential Self being Šiva. The second step consists in sat-tarka. Sat-tarka in this context does not mean logic-chopping, but training the mind in harmonious consonance with the truth of the essential Self being Šiva. This culminates in Bhiivanī. Bhāvanā is the power of spiritual attention, a total dedication of the mind to one central thought, a nostalgia of the soul, a spiritual thrust towards the source of one’s being.

Bhāvanā is finally metamorphosed into suddha vidyā whereby the psychological I is swallowed up into the essential metaphysical I. Verse 49 lays down the bhāvanā of the essential Self. In a few other verses also, the verb form of bhāvanā, e.g. bhāvayet, bhāvyah, etc. has been used. The bhāvanā of laya or dissolution of the various tattvas in a regressive order, of the gross into the subtle, of the subtle into the subtler, of the subtler into the subtlest, etc. is recommended in verse 54.

4. Šūnya (void) :

Contemplation of šūnya or void is another basis of dhāranā recommended. Verses 39, 40, 45, 58, 122, etc. refer to the contemplation of the void. Contemplation over šūnya or the void is explained in some detail under a separate heading.

5. Experience of Vastness or Extensive Space :

Experience of a vast, extensive space without any trees, etc. has no definite, concrete object as ālambanā or support for the
mind. In such a condition, the vikalpas or thought-constructs of the mind come to a dead stop, and supersensuous Reality makes its presence felt. Verse 60 of the text describes this state.

6. Intensity of Experience:

Even in the intensity of sensuous experience, one can have the experience of the Divine, provided one is careful to track the joy felt on such occasions to its source. The text gives several examples of the intensity of experience.

The first one is of the joy felt in sexual intercourse mentioned in the verses 69-70. It should be borne in mind that this example is given only to illustrate the intensity of experience in union. From physical union, one's attention has to be directed to spiritual union. This does not advocate sexual indulgence. The notes on these verses should be carefully read. The mystic experience of Tao in Chinese esotericism is described in a similar strain. The following lines will amply bear it out. “Thou knowest not what is love, nor what it is to love. I will tell thee; love is nothing other than the Rhythm of Tao.

I have said it to thee, it is from Tao that thou comest; it is to Tao that thou shalt return. Woman reveals herself to thy eyes and thou thinkest that she is the end towards which the Rhythm leads thee, but even when this woman is thine and thou hast thrilled with her touch, thou feelest still the Rhythm within thee unappeased and thou learnst that to appease it thou must go beyond. Call it love if thou wilt; what matters a name? I call it Tao.

The beauty of woman is only a vague reflection of the formless beauty of Tao. The emotion she awakens in thee, the desire to blot thyself out in her beauty...believe me, it is nothing else than the rhythm of Tao, only thou knowest it not....Seek not thy happiness in a woman. She is the revelation of Tao offering itself to thee, she is the purest form in Nature by which Tao manifests; she is the Force which awakens in thee the Rhythm of Tao—but by herself she is only a poor creature like thyself. And thou art for her the same revelation as she is for thee. It is the expression of Tao who has no limit nor form, and what thy soul desires in the rapture which the vision of it causes thee,
this strange and ineffable sentiment, is nought else than union with that Beauty and with the source of that Beauty— with Tao.

Thy soul has lost its beloved Tao with whom it was formerly united and it desires reunion with the Beloved. An absolute reunion with Tao—is it not boundless Love? To be so absolutely one with the Beloved that thou art entirely hers and she entirely thine—a union so complete and so eternal that neither life nor death can ever separate thee, so peaceful and pure that Desire can no longer awake in thee, because the supreme happiness is attained and there is only peace, peace sacred calm and luminous. For Tao is the Infinite of the soul, one, eternal and all-pure.”

(Quoted in Mother India of January, 1979 from Arya, June, 1915).

Sex is an example of the joy of intensive experience derived from sparsa or contact.

Verse 71 which describes the intensive experience of joy at the sight of a friend or relative is an example of the pleasure of rūpa or visual perception. Verse 72 gives an example of the joy of rasa or taste and verse 73 gives an example of the joy of sabda or sound.

7. Mudrās and Āsanas:

Various mudrās are recommended as helpful in dhāraṇās. Mudrā is a technical term meaning a particular disposition and control of the organs of the body as a help in concentration. Various mudrās for this purpose are described in verse 77.

Āsana means posture. Several āsanas are helpful in dhāraṇā. Such examples are given in verses 78, 79 and 82.

The following concepts have to be clearly grasped in order to be able to understand the dhāraṇās recommended in Vijnānabhairava.

Kṣobha:

The word Kṣobha means mental agitation, disquiet, turmoil. Verse 74 says that wherever there is tuṣṭi or mental satisfaction or joy, there the mind should be fixed. In all such joys or intensive experience, it is implied that the fixation of the mind should be without kṣobha or mental agitation. When one is deeply
moved by some beautiful object e.g. a beautiful woman, the attitude should be "This beautiful tabernacle houses Śiva who is my own essential Self." It is this attitude which leads to the right dhāraṇā based on aesthetic experience. If one's mind is agitated by such experience and he is carried away by sense-pleasure, he cannot have the proper dhāraṇā. He will be unable to utilize that experience for yogic purposes. As Spandakārikā puts it: "व्यव क्षेत्रः प्रकृतः तत्त्व ग्यात् परम् पदम्" (I, 9)

"When the mental turmoil disappears, it is only then that the highest state is attained."

This mental turmoil is caused because of our identification of our Self with the mind-body complex and its claimant and clamorous desires. When one is convinced that the mind-body complex is not the Self, but rather the Divine presence within the mind-body complex is the Self who is Śiva, then every attractive object is considered to be only the expression of Śiva Himself, then the mental turmoil ceases and the mind is fixed on Śiva whose expression that object happens to be.

**Vikalpa:**

A *vikalpa* is a thought-construct. *Vikalpas* are various mental counters through which man carries on the business of life. *Vikalpas* may refer to various things of the external world like tree, flower, river, etc. or various images, fancies, etc. of the mind. In *vikalpa* mind sets a limit to one particular thing or idea, and differentiates it from the rest; mind constructs a 'particular' by means of thought which it marks off from the rest of the world or from other ideas. Each *vikalpa* has two aspects; the positive aspect consists of the idea that is selected, and the negative consists of the rest that are set aside or rejected. *Vikalpas* are concerned with particulars. Secondly, *vikalpas* are relational i.e. there is always a subject-object relationship in *vikalpas*. Reality is non-relational, there is no object outside Reality. Therefore *vikalpas* are unable to grasp Reality.

There is, however, one *śuddha* or pure *vikalpa*, viz., the 'thought that I am Śiva'. By the *bhāvanā* or creative contemplation of this
vikalpa, all other vikalpas are eliminated. Finally this vikalpa also disappears and one is landed in a nirvikalpa or thought free state which denotes the awareness of Reality.

MADHYAVIKĀSA (THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MIDDLE STATE):

When the prāṇa or exhalation arising from the centre of the body does not return from the dvādaśānta (a distance of 12 fingers in the outer space) for a split second and the apāna or inhalation arising from the dvādaśānta does not return from the centre for a split second, this is known as madhyadasā. By intensive awareness of this madhyadasā, there is madhya vikāsa or the development of the middle state.

The madhya vikāsa can occur through several means, either by one-pointed awareness of the pauses of prāṇa and apāna (vide verse 25) or by means of the dissolution of all vikalpas (vide verse 26) or by retention of prāṇa and apāna (vide verse 27) or by vikalpa-kṣaya, Śakti-sāṅkoca and śakti-vikāsa, etc. as recommended in the 18th Sūtra of Pratyabhijñāḥdayam or in the gap between two thoughts when one thought ceases and another is about to arise as recommended in Spandakārikā. (III, 9).

Sūtra 17 of Pratyabhijñāḥdayam says: "मध्यविकासात्त्वं विकासः" which means “By the development of the madhya (middle or centre) is there acquisition of the bliss of Cit”

What is this madhya (middle or centre)? Kṣemarāja explains it in the following way in his commentary on the above sūtra.

“Samvit or the Universal Consciousness is the centre of every thing, for everything depends on it for its existence. In the empirical order samvit is at first transformed into prāṇa. Assuming the role of prāṇaśakti, resting in the planes of buddhi, body etc. it abides principally in the madhya nāḍī, in the innermost central channel of prāṇa in the spinal column. When the prāṇaśakti in the central channel develops or when the central Universal consciousness develops in any other way, one acquires the bliss of universal consciousness and becomes liberated while living.”

So madhya-vikāsa means the development of the meta-empirical or universal consciousness. In such a state citta or the
individual empirical consciousness is transformed into citi or the met-empirical consciousness.

ŚŪNYA:

The word śūnya means void, a state in which no object is experienced. It has, however, been used in various senses in this system.

Madhyadhāma or the central channel in the interior of the spinal column has generally been called śūnya or sometimes even śūnyātiśūnya (absolute void). The word śūnya occurring in the verse No. 42 of Vijñānabhairava has been interpreted as unmanā by Śivopādhyāya. In verse 61 madhya has been interpreted as śūnya by Śivopādhyāya. Kṣemarāja has interpreted śūnya as māyā and śūnyātiśūnya as mahāmāyā in his commentary on VII, 57 in Svachchanda Tantra. At some places, Śiva is said to be śūnya or śūnyāti-śūnya.

The main philosophical sense of śūnya, however, is given in the following verse quoted by Śivopādhyāya in his commentary on verse 127 of Vijñānabhairava:

"सर्वालम्बन्धगर्भं सर्वस्त्रैरशशाशः ।
सर्वकल्पेशाशः शून्यं न शून्यं परमार्थः।"

That which is free of all supports whether external existents like jar or flower or internal existents like pleasure, pain or thought, that which is free of all tattvas or constitutive principles, of the residual traces of all kleśas, that is śūnya. In the highest sense, it is not śūnya as such (i.e. as non-existence). Avidyā, asmitā, rāga, dveṣa, and abhiniveśa i.e. primal ignorance, the feeling of I-ness, attraction, repulsion and fear of death are considered to be kleśas.

Śivopādhyāya has further given a long quotation from Vimarṣa-dīpikā which means that Śiva is full and free and fundamental ground of all that is known as vold, from whom all the tattvas arise and in whom they are all dissolved. Since Śiva or the foundational consciousness cannot be described in words or any determination of thought, therefore, is He called śūnya.
The most explicit explanation of śūnya is given in Svachchanda Tantra in the following verse:

"अभ्यासः शून्याद्विवृक्तं सून्यं चाभाव उच्यते।
प्रभावःः स सूमुद्विस्तो यश भावःः क्षयं गता:॥
सत्तामात्रं परं शान्तं तत्परं किमपि स्थितत्म॥

(IV. 292 - 293)

"That which is said to be śūnya (void) in this system is not really śūnya, for śūnya only means absence of objects. That is said to be abhāva or absence of existents in which all objective existents have disappeared. It is the absolute Being, that state which abides as transcendent and absolute peace."

Kṣemarāja in his commentary on the above explains aśūnya or non-void as cidānandaghana—parama—śivatattvam i.e. parama Śiva (absolute Divine Reality) who is a mass of consciousness and bliss, mahāsattā as prakāśātmaṇaḥ hi sarveśām bhāvabhāvānām sattā i.e. the Light of Universal Consciousness, the Reality which is the source of both existents and non-existents and abhāva as na vidyate bhāvaḥ sarvabh prameyādi prapañco yatra i.e. that in which the manifestation of all objective phenomena ceases. The core of the meaning of the word śūnya is that in which there is no objective existent.

ŚŪNYA—ṢATKA (THE GROUP OF SIX ŚŪNYAS):

Svachchanda Tantra recommends contemplation over six voids (IV 288—290). The first śūnya which is known as ārdhva śūnya or higher śūnya is the stage of śakti; the second is the adhaḥ or the śūnya which is the region of the heart; the third is the madhya or the middle śūnya which is the region of throat, palate, middle of the eye-brows, forehead and brahmarandhra. The fourth śūnya is in vyāpini, the fifth in samanā and the sixth in unmanā. These have to be contemplated as void and rejected. Finally the aspirant has to pass over to Parama Śiva who is the subllest and the highest void, free of all conditions (sarvāvasthā-vivarjitam), who is śūnya only in the sense that he is transcendent to all manifestation and defies all characterization by the mind. The other voids are sāmaya i.e. meant to be abandoned. It is only in the highest śūnya i.e. parama śiva that the mind should finally rest. The other śūnyas are means for the
attainment of the highest śūnya (paraśūnya-pada-prāpti-upāyabhūtāḥ).

Vyāpini, samanā, etc. are explained under praṇava and its saktis.

PRAṆAVA AND ITS ŚAKTIS:

The word praṇava is interpreted in various ways—(1) praṇūyate—the Supreme Self that is lauded by all, (2) praṇān avati—that which protects the vital forces, (3) prakarśena navikaroti—that which renovates every thing, renews the soul as it were. There are various kinds of praṇava—śākta praṇava, śaiva praṇava and Vedic praṇava. It is used as mantra which means a sacred formula which protects one by reflection (mananāt trāyate iti mantraḥ).

The Vedic praṇava is aum which is repeated as a powerful mantra. Svacchanda Tantra describes in detail the various saktis or energies of aum. It tells us how by the recitation of aum, there is the upward functioning of prāṇa (the life force) and ascension of Kuṇḍalini.

In Śaivismagama, it is maintained that universal consciousness (samvid), in the process of manifestation, is at first transformed into prāṇa or life force and that is how life starts. On the arc of ascent, by the proper recitation of aum, prāṇa again becomes pure consciousness (samvid) while the empirical consciousness (citta) returns to its essence, the absolute consciousness (citi).

Dhāraṇā No. 19 described succinctly in verse 42 and touched upon briefly in verses 154-156 of Vijñānaabhairava tells us how the uccāra or upward movement of praṇava, from gross utterance, to subtle vibration (spandana) and finally to mental reflection, leads us on to Śiva-consciousness. A detailed description of this dhāraṇā is given below:

By a long practice of true and concentrated uccāra of aum the energy of breath is introverted in the form of madhya sakti or middle energy known as haṁsa or kuṇḍalini which rises in eleven successive movements without the least effort of the will. These movements are given below:

1 to 3: The first three movements consist in the recitation of
a, u, m—‘A’ is to be contemplated in the navel, ‘u’ in the heart, ‘m’ in the mouth.

A, u, and m are recited in the gross form. The time taken in the recitation of each of these is one mātra or mora.

4. After this appears bindu which is nasal resonance indicated by a point in ः and which symbolises concentrated energy of the word. The phonemes rest in it in an undivided form. It is a point of intense light. Since there cannot be any gross utterance of the mantra after aum, the bindu becomes from this stage an activity which operates by itself. Henceforward, there is no utterance but only the rise of the prānic energy in a subtle form of vibration (spandana) which becomes subtler and subtler as it proceeds onwards. The energy of the bindu appears as a point of light in the middle of the eye-brows. The subtlety of the prānic energy in bindu measured in terms of time would be ⅓ of a mātra or mora. The time occupied in uttering a short vowel is called a mātra. Kṣemarāja in his commentary on the fifth verse of Vijñānabhairava says that bindu is a point of light which is identified in an undivided form with all objective phenomena.

5. Now bindu is transformed into nāda (subtle, inarticulate sound), and the predominance of objectivity inherent in it gradually disappears. It then assumes the form of ardhacandra (half-moon) and appears in lalāṭa or the forehead. The subtlety of its vibration consists in ⅔ of a mātra or mora.

6. After this, when objectivity inherent in bindu completely disappears, the energy assumes the form of a straight line and appears in the upper part of the forehead. The subtlety of its vibration consists in ⅛ of a mātra. It is known as nirodhikā or nirodhint (lit., that which obstructs). It is so-called, because it prevents the undeserving aspirants from entering the next stage of nāda and the deserving ones from slipping into dualism.

7. Nāda. It is a mystical resonance and extends from the summit of the head and expands through the susumnā i.e. the central channel. It is anāhata i.e. spontaneous sound, not produced by percussion and is inarticulate. It never sets i.e. it always goes on sounding in all living creatures.

The subtlety of its vibration consists in ⅛ of a mātra.
8. **Nādānta**—This is an aspect of energy beyond nāda. It is extremely subtle and resides in brahmarandhra which is a little above the top of the head. The subtlety of its vibration consists in 1/32 of a mātrā.

After the experience of this station, the sense of identification of the Self with the body disappears.

9. **Śakti** or Energy in itself. There is a feeling of ānanda or bliss in this stage. Its mātrā is 1/64. Śakti is said to reside in the skin.

10. The next stage is that of vyāpint or vyāpikā. It is all-penetrating energy and fills the cosmos. Kṣemarāja says that in this the limits of the body are dropped and the yogi enjoys the experience of all pervasiveness like the sky. It is said it is experienced at the root of the sikhā or tuft of hair on the head. Its mātrā is 1/128.

11. **Samanā**—When the vyāpint stage is reached, all spatial and temporal limitations have been overcome, and all objectivity has disappeared. Then the stage of samanā is reached which is only bodha or the energy of illumination which is, as Kṣemarāja puts it, only an activity of thinking without any object of thought. (mananamātrātmaka—karaṇarūpa-bodhamātrāvaśe samanā com. on V. 5 of V.B.) Samanā resides in the sikhā or tuft of hair on the head. Its mātrā is 1/256. It is through this śakti that Śiva carries on the five acts of manifestation, maintenance and withdrawal of the universe and veiling of Self and revealing of Self through grace.

If the yogi who has reached the stage of samanā directs his attention towards the universe, he acquires the supernormal powers of omnipresence, omniscience, etc., but if he is indifferent towards these powers, and directs his attention to still higher realm of existence, he reaches unmanā śakti and is then united with parama Śiva—Absolute Reality.

The yogi who rests contented in samanā śakti has only ātma-vyāpti which is explained by Kṣemarāja as śuddhaviṣṇu-nakevalatā i.e. the isolation of pure consciousness. (Svācchanda Tantra p. 246). He cannot attain Śivavyāpti which is the state of identification with parama-Śiva.

13. **Unmanā.** The stage above samanā is unmanā. It is the ultimate energy beyond all mental process. Kṣemarāja explains
it thus—unmanam-utkrāntam-utkarṣam ca manaḥ prāptam yatram tadunmanam i.e. ‘unmanā is that state in which manas or mental process is transcended and it reaches its highest excellence. Unmanā is the highest śūnya (void), not śūnya in the popular sense, but in the sense of the disappearance of all objectivity. It is Sattāmātram which, as Kṣemarāja explains, is the Light of Universal Consciousness which is the fount and source of every thing.

According to some it is to be contemplated in the last part of the tuft of hair on the head, and its mātrā is 1/512. According to Svacchanda Tantra, however, it is amātra, without any measure, for being outside the province of manas (mentation), it is beyond time.

As has been said above, the yogī whose consciousness rises only upto samanā has ātmavyāpī only i.e. he has an experience of the pure Self completely freed of limitations of māyā and prakṛti. But this is not the highest goal of man according to Śaivāgama. According to it, the highest goal is Śiva-vyāpī or Śivatva-yojanā—identification with Śiva who is all-inclusive. It is only by rising to the stage of unmanā that one can be identified with the svātantrya-śakti (absolute freedom) of parama Śiva.

Manas (mental process) is characterized by saṃkalpa—determinate thought and purpose, and the knowledge obtained by saṃkalpa is in a successive order being in time whereas unmanā which is above thought-process and is identified with svātantrya-śakti knows all things simultaneously (manaḥ kramato jnānam, unmanam yugapat sthitam, vindate hyatra yugapat sarvajñādi-guṇān parān. Svacc. Tantra V. 394-395).

CONCLUSION:

Vijñānabhairava gives the quintessence of all the dhāraṇās in the following verse:

“मानसं चेतना शक्तिरात्म चेति चतुष्पद्यम्।
यदा प्रिये परिक्रियाणं तदा तद्दैवरं वपु:।।” (838)

Citi, the dynamic universal consciousness in its descent towards manifestation assumes four forms for appearing as a limited individual viz; (1) Cetanā which, as Sivopādhyāya
Vijñānabhairava

explains in his commentary, means buddhi in this context (2) mānas—manas with its characteristic activity of saṃkalpa or thought-constructs (3) śakti which, in this context, means prāṇaśakti which constitutes the support of the body and empirical life, and (4) ātmā which, in this context, means jīvātmā, the ego or the empirical self conditioned by the above three.

This is the arc of nimeṣa or avaroha-descent of the dynamic universal consciousness (citi) into individual human life. It is only at the human stage that unmeṣa or adhyāroha—ascent towards the higher life is possible. When the above four are dissolved (parikṣēṇam) into cit (the Higher Universal Divine Consciousness), it is only then that one attains to bhairava—consciousness.

Kṣemarāja in his commentary on 21st śūtra of section III of the Śiva-śūtras quoting this verse says, Avikalpakarūpena... samvedanena... samāviśet. K tyrk? magnaḥ śārīraprāṇātiprāmātām tatraiva citcamatkārarase majjanena prasāmayan.

“One has to enter the divine consciousness by thought-free, non-relational awareness. How? By dissolving the personal self consisting of the body, prāṇa, etc. in the savoury sap of the Universal Divine Consciousness.”

The chrysalis of the ego has to split before one can enter the sanctum sanctorum of the Divine Presence. In the words of Kaṭhopaniṣad Yogaḥ prabhavāpyyau Yoga is both dissolution and emergence—both death and rebirth. One has to die to live. It is a divine filiation and cannot be described in any human language, for it is reality of a different dimension. In the beautiful words of Dr. Anand K. Coomaraswamy, “The condition of deification is an eradication of all otherness.” It is for this consummation that 112 dhāraṇās have been described in Vijñānabhairava.
VERSE 1

SRIDEVYAWACH

Bhūtāṃ deva mayā sarvāṃ saṃyamalasyabhavaṃ.
Trikabhedam aṣeṣaṇa sārāt sāravibhāgaśaḥ // 1
Adyāpi na nivṛtto me samśayaḥ parameśvara //

TRANSLATION

Bhairavī,¹ the sakti of Bhairava² says (uvāca) O deva³ (divine one) who in manifesting the universe and treating it as your play are my very self, I have heard in toto all the scriptures which have come forth from the union of Rudra⁴ and his pair sakti⁵ or which are the outcome of Rudrayāmala Tantra, including the Trika together with its divisions.⁶ I have heard the Trika which is the quintessence of all the scriptures and also all its further essential ramifications.⁷

But O supreme Lord, even now my doubt has not been removed.

NOTES

1. Bhairava is the word used for Supreme Reality. Its synonym is Parama Śiva. Bhairava means the terrible one who destroys the ego. The word Bhairava consists of three letters bha, ra and va. The hermeneutic etymology of Bhairava gives the following interpretation:

   ‘Bha’ indicates bharāṇa—maintenance of the universe; ‘ra’ indicates ‘ravaṇa’—withdrawal of the universe; ‘va’ indicates ‘vamana’—projecting or letting go of the universe i.e. manifestation. Thus, Bhairava indicates all the three aspects of the
Divine, viz., srṣṭi (manifestation), sthiti (maintenance) and saṁhāra (withdrawal).

Bhairavi is the sakti of Bhairava. The works of Āgama or Tantra are generally written in the form of a dialogue between Bhairava and His sakti Bhairavi or between Śiva and His consort Pārvatī or Śivā. In all these works, Bhairavi or Śakti puts a question in the form of inquiry and Bhairava or Śiva answers the question raised.

This is the Indian way of saying that these scriptures are a revelation. A relevant question arises in this connexion, “Bhairavi or Śakti of Bhairava is non-different from Bhairava; then what is the sense in a dialogue between the two? It requires two to enter into a dialogue, but when Bhairava and Bhairavi are non-different, (i.e. are not two), how can there be a dialogue between them?” The answer is that anugraha or grace is one of the five aspects of Bhairava (srṣṭi, sthiti, saṁhāra, tirodhāna, anugraha). His anugraha is represented by His sakti. In order to extend His grace to humanity, He reveals certain fundamental spiritual truths which may be inapprehensible to man in his present stage of evolution. All these truths lie in a latent form at the parāvāk level where object and word, truth and its manifestation, idea and its expression are in an indistinguishable unity. In order that these truths may be available to man, the anugraha (grace) aspect of the Supreme Divine assumes the role of Devī or Bhairavī who puts questions from the paśyantī level and receives answers at that level. Both the questions and the answers are transmitted in vaikhaṛīt form (human language) in order that man may be able to comprehend them. The dialogue between Bhairava and Bhairavī is a methodological device for revealing truths existing at the parāvāk level in vaikhaṛīt or human language. A dialogue containing questions and answers is the most realistic and lively form of bringing home to the listener or reader subtle truths which are not easy of comprehension.

2. The word in Sanskrit is uvāca which is past tense and means ‘said’, but as the question is perennial and the answer contains eternal truth, it is taken in the sense of present tense. The parāvāk level is beyond the category of time. So the division of past, present, future, month, year, etc. cannot be applied to it.
At the pāsyanti level, the parā level appears anterior. Therefore the truth of parā level is expressed at the pāsyanti level in past tense. Time is relative only to limited beings. To the Divine, there is no division of time. In his case, it is eternal now.

3. The word deva is derived from the root div which has many meanings, to manifest, to play, etc. Kṣemarāja in his commentary on this word says, “विश्ववाचकोतनंक्रियाविदितत्वं स्वातं” “O my very Self whose nature it is to display His sport in the form of the manifestation of the universe. The devi calls deva as ‘my very Self’, because the devi is not different from the deva.

4. Rudra: Bhairava or Śiva is called Rudra, because ru stands for ruk (disease), and dra stands for drāvi (melter, dissolver). As Kṣemarāja puts it Rudra is samastarugdrāvi. Rudra is one who dissolves all the ills (of life).

5. Yāmala means ‘pair.’ Kṣemarāja says “Rudratacchaktisāmarasyātmano yāmalā” i.e. Yāmala connotes the union of Rudra and His Śakti i.e. prakāśa and vimarsa. It is in this aspect that the highest scripture is revealed. He quotes the following verse in support of his statement:

श्रवण्विन्द्रहाचार्यांताज्ञवात्मरकारणात्
ध्वनिरिप्य विनिष्कान्त शास्त्रं परमदुर्लक्ष्मम्

“The most inaccessible scripture has come out in the form of word from Śiva who is the supreme source, who is free of all division and agitation and whose form is invisible.

Rudrayāmala is also the name of an ancient Tāntrika work which has not yet been properly edited.

6. Trikabhedam: Kṣemarāja explains this in the following words: “तिक्रस्य पराविश्वशक्तिन्ययसारान्ययशक्तिशिबात्मनस्तत्वत्वयस्य भेदो ज्ञान-
क्याप्राधान्यतराविश्वान्तरतिपादनेन स्वभासान्तय यत्।”
Trika denotes the triple divisions of Śakti, viz; parā (phase of highest identity, transcendent), parāpara (identity in difference; intermediate), and apara (immanent). This expresses itself in the triple division of Śiva, Śakti and nara (jīva—living creatures). This division is further complicated by the fact that in apara or nara level, only kriyā (activity) is predominant, in parāpara or
Śakti level and in para or Śiva level both jñāna and kriyā (knowledge and activity) are predominant.

It should be borne in mind that the sphere of nara extends from prithivi tattva to māyā tattva; the sphere of śakti extends from suddha vidyā upto Sadāśiva and the sphere of Śiva includes only Śiva and Śakti.

7. Sārāt-sāravibhāgaśāh: Trika is the sāra or quintessence of all the scriptures. In support of this Kṣemarāja quotes the following verse:

वेदादिम्यः परं शैवं शैवद्रामं तु दक्षिणम् ।
दक्षिणात्यतरं कौलं कौलत्यतरं तिक्षम् ॥

"The (dualistic) Śaiva system is superior to the vedas and other scriptures, the system pertaining to the left-handed path is superior to the (dualistic) Śaiva one: the system pertaining to the right-handed path is superior to the left-handed one; the Kaula system is superior to the right-handed one and Trika is superior to the Kaula system. "Since Trika is superior to every other system or scripture, it has been designated as sāra, the quintessence of all philosophical systems and spiritual praxis.

The (dualistic) Śaiva system is characterized by external rituals. In vāma or left-handed path, the emphasis is laid on Self-consciousness in the midst of sensuous experience of form, sound, touch, taste and smell. In daksīṇa or right-handed path, emphasis is laid on meditation. In Kaula system, the emphasis is laid on the realization of universal consciousness. In Trika, the ideal is not only the realization of the essential or divine Self but also jagadānanda in which the world is realized as the bliss of the Divine made visible.

What is sārāt-sāravibhāga i.e. further essential ramification of the above quintessence? This is what Kṣemarāja has to say on his point.

तत्तापि भिष्मालीन्युत्तरादिक्रमात् शान्तप्रकर्षोपदेशोतक्षसं उत्क्रष्टम् The correct reading is तत्तापि भिष्मालीन्युत्तरादिक्रमात् शान्तप्रकर्षोपदेशोत्क्रष्टम् उत्क्रष्टम्. Even here (i.e. even in Trika) there is the successive gradation of high, higher and highest on the basis of the teaching of successive pre-eminence of jñāna (gnosis). Siddhā emphasizes Kriyā (rituals and
active meditation); *Namaka* emphasizes *jñāna* (knowledge); *Mālini* emphasizes both *jñāna* and *Kriyā*. These constitute further division in *Trika*.

**THE ORDER OF PRESENTATION OF THE SUBJECT MATTER**

From the first verse beginning with 'Śrutam deva' upto the seventh verse, ending with 'chindhi samśayam', the *devi* enumerates her doubts. From 'sādhu, sādhu,' a part of the seventh verse up to the 21st verses ending with *Śivaḥ priyo*, Bhairava briefly answers her questions. Then from the 22nd verse, beginning with *Deva, deva* up to the 23rd verse, ending with *brūhi bhairava*, the *Devi* requests Bhairava to expound to her the means by which one can realize the Highest Reality.

In answer to the above inquiry from 24th up to 138th verse, Bhairava expounds to her 112 *dhāranas* or types of yoga by which one can realize the Highest Reality. After this, the *Devi* raises a few more questions, and *Bhairava* answers them. Finally, the *Devi* expresses her satisfaction over the answers and becomes united with *Bhairava*.

**VERSES 2-4.**

कि रूपं तत्त्वतो देव शब्दराशिकलामयम् || २ ||
कि वा नवात्ममेवेन चेष्वे चेष्वाङ्कति ||
त्रिशिरोपेमिशिः वा कि वा शक्तिव्यासकम् || ३ ||
नाबबिनुस्यं वापि कि चन्द्रार्धिनिरोधिकाः ।
चक्राक्षुद्धमनस्य वा कि वा शक्तिव्यक्तम् || ४ ||

*Kiṁ rūpaṁ tattvato deva śabdaraśikālāmayam // 2*
*Kiṁ vā navātmbhedena bhairave bhairavākṛtau / Triśirobhedabhinnam vā kiṁ vā śaktitrātmaκam // 3*
*Nādabindumayaṁ vāpi kiṁ candrārdhanirōdhikāḥ / Cakrārūḍham anackaṁ vā kiṁ vā śaktīsvaṛūpakam // 4*

**TRANSLATION**

Oh God, from the point of view of absolute reality, what exactly is the essential nature of Bhairava? According to
Bhairava Āgama (Bhairave²), (1) does it consist of the energies of the multitude of letters (śabdarāṣikālāmayam³) ? or (2) does it consist of nine different forms (navatmabhedena)⁴ for the realization of the essential nature of Bhairava (Bhairavākṛtau) ? (3) or does it consist of the specific mantra that unites in an integral form the three divisions as delineated in Triśirobhairava⁵ (triśirobheda-dabhinnam) (4) or does it consist of three Śaktis⁶ (presiding over the previously mentioned three tattvas) ? (5) or does it consist of nāda (power of mantra inseparably present as vimarśa in all the words) ? or of vindu (power of mantra inseparably present in all the objects of the universe as Prakāśa⁷ (6) or does it consist of ardha-candra, nirodhikā⁸ etc ? (7) or does it consist of some mysterious power residing in the Cakras (energy centres in the body) ? or the vowel-less sound of ha⁹ (8) or does it consist of purely Śakti ?¹⁰

NOTES

1. 'Bhairavākṛtau' does not mean 'Śiva of terrible form.' Bhairavākṛtau means Bhairavasvarūpāya. It is a locative case in the sense of nimitta (purpose). So 'Bhairavākṛtau' means for the realization of the svarūpa or essential nature of Bhairava.

2. 'Bhairave' here means in Bhairava Āgama, according to Bhairava Āgama.

3. The first question of the Devi is: The world consists of objects. Each object is denoted by a word (Śabda). Śabda-rāṣi is the multitude of words which is according to the Sanskrit language, from 'a' (अ) to 'kṣa' (क्ष). Kalā means the vimarśa or creative energy of the Divine. These energies are anuttara, ānanda, icchā, jñāna and kriyā. By these are created the various letters from 'a' to 'kṣa'. These letters give rise to the various tattvas (constitutive principles) of which the universe is constituted. For detail, see the author's translation of Śiva Sūtras. Note No. 10 under Sūtra 7 of the II section.

The letter 'A' indicates Prakāśa or Śiva, the letter 'Ha' indicates vimarśa or Śakti. Thus Aham includes all the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. This Aham or 'I' denotes the Highest
Reality in which there is complete union of Śiva and Śakti, and which includes the entire subjective and the objective world.

The Divine in His aspect of non-manifestation is known as Parama Śiva or Bhairava or Parama Brahma, in His aspect of manifestation, the Divine is known as Śabda Brahma. In this first question, the Devi wants to know whether Vijñāna or Bodha Bhairava is Śabda Brahma.

4. The second question of the Devi is whether the essential nature of the Supreme is of nine forms (navātma) of mantras. These as described in Netra Tantra are the following:

(1) Śiva, (2) Sadāśiva, (3) Īsvara, (4) Vidyā, (5) Māyā, (6) Kalā, (7) Niyati, (8) Puruṣa, (9) Prakṛti. According to others, these are (1) Śiva, (2) Śakti (3) Sadāśiva, (4) Īsvara (5) Śuddha Vidyā, (6) Mahāmāyā (7) Māyā, (8) Puruṣa (9) Prakṛti. These are nine forms from the point of view of tattvas (constitutive principles). From the point of view of mantra, the nine forms are


5. Triśirobhairava is the name of a Tantra work which is now lost. It summarizes the entire manifestation under three broad categories viz., Śiva, Śakti and Nara (jīva or living being). In the third question, the Devi wants to know whether the nature of the Supreme consists of the integral combination of these three categories as symbolized by the mantra sauh (शै):. This specific mantra is known as Parabijā, Hīdaya bija or Prāsāda. Sa (ष) of this mantra symbolizes the tattvas from earth to māyā (31 tattvas of Śaiva philosophy); au (ॐ) symbolizes Śuddha vidyā, Īsvara and Sadāśiva and the two dots of the visarga (ः) symbolize Śiva and Śakti. For details, see the author’s Note No. 2 under the first Sūtra of the Second section of the Śiva-sūtras. Now of the three categories of Nara, Śakti and Śiva the ‘S’ (ष) of the mantra Sauh (शै:) covers Nara, au (ॐ) covers Śakti, and the visarga (ः) covers Śiva. So the 31 tattvas of Śaiva Āgama are covered by Nara; the three tattvas viz., Śuddha vidyā, Īsvara and Sadāśiva are covered by Śakti, and the other two tattvas are covered by Śiva.

6. In the fourth question, the Devi wants to know whether the nature of the Supreme consists of the three Śaktis-Parā (transcendent in which there is no distinction of Śiva and Śakti), Aparā
(immanent) and Parāparā (Intermediate between the two) presiding over the categories or principles mentioned above (in Note 5). The svātantra ya śakti (severign power) of the Divine is known as parā (transcendent), that very Śakti wishing to create a universe of successive order is known as parāparā (both para and apara) and appearing as a universe of successive order is known as apara (immanent).

7. Nāda in this context means the vimarśa present in all the words (vācaka) and vindu means the prakāśa present in all the objects (vācyā).

As Kṣemarāja puts it in his commentary, Yadi vā sarvamantracaakra-sāmānyaviryaātmaka-viśvavācyāvibhāga — prakāśarūpavindu aśeṣavācakāvibhāga-vimarśa-parāmarśamayanādātmakam.

In the fifth question, the Devi wants to know whether the essential nature of Bhairava is nāda-vindu—vindu which symbolizes light or prakāśa (Śiva) and which is present in an undivided form in all objective phenomena and nāda which symbolizes vimarśa śakti that is present in an undivided form in all the words (which signify objective phenomena).

8. In the sixth question, the Devi wants to know whether the essential nature of Bhairava consists of ardha-candra nirodhikā etc. which are a further proliferation of nāda-vindu. Nirodhikā in the plural (nirodhikā) is meant to express ‘et cetera’. The ‘et cetera’ refers to nādānta, sakti, vyāpint, samanā, and finally unmanā.

Vindu (a point) which is present as undivided light in all objective phenomena (vācyā) is transformed into nāda (interior sound). As has been said above, Vindu is concerned with objective phenomena (vācyā). When it is transformed into nāda, the predominance of objectivity is slightly diminished, then arises the stage of ardha-candra where sakti appears in a curved form like demimoon. After that when the curved nature of all objectivity ceases completely, then arises nirodhikā, of the form of a straight line. Nirodhikā means obstructor. This energy is so called because she obstructs undeserving aspirants from entering into nāda, and prevents the deserving ones from straying away into the state of difference. When the pervasion of nāda by letter begins to abate, then the next stage of energy is known as
nādānta which is characterized by extremely subtle sound and which means the termination of the stage of nāda. When the stage of nāda ceases completely, then the next stage is that of Śakti which is characterized by a sensation of spiritual delight. When that sensation of delight is not confined within the limit of the body, but expands all round like the sky, then that stage is known as Vyāpī (i.e. all-pervasive).

When the idea of all positive and negative existents ceases completely and only manana or the faculty of mentation remains, then the stage of samanā is achieved.

Finally appears the unmanā stage which transcends all mentation, which achieves Śiva-consciousness and is characterized by the consciousness of unity of the entire cosmos. Here there is the unison of Śiva and Śakti. This is the stage of Parama Śiva who is niśkala or transcendent.

The first question is concerned with mātrkā, the second and third are concerned with mantra, the fifth and sixth are concerned with mantra-virya or power of mantra. The fourth is concerned with the three Śaktis of the Divine.

9. In the seventh question, the Devī wants to know whether the essential nature of Bhairava is some mysterious power present in the cakras (energy-centres) in the form of letters or is it anacka i.e. vibrating as vowel-less ha in the form of prāṇakundalini. Prāṇāśakti present in Susumnā ceaselessly and spontaneously goes on vibrating as ha in a vowel-less form. This is known as anacka kalā of prāṇāśakti. It is known as anāhata nāda i.e. a vibration without any stroke or blow. It goes on vibrating spontaneously. No body produces it and nobody can prevent it from vibrating. It is known as hamsa or prāṇakundalini.

10. In the eighth question, the Devī wants to know whether the essential nature of the Supreme is pure changeless Energy (Śakti).

Cakrāruḍha may also mean “Is it Kuṇḍalinī situated in the malādhāra cakra” or “Is it the Aham or the divine I-consciousness resting on the collective whole (cakra) of letters beginning with ‘a’ and ending with ‘ha’?”
VERSES 5-6

Parāparāyāḥ sakalam aparāyāśca vā punah/
Parāyā yadi tadvat syāt paratvam tad virudhyate// 5
Nahi varṇavibhedena dehabhedena vā bhavet/
Paratvam, niṣkalatvena, sakalatve na tad bhavet// 6
Prasādam kuru me nātha niḥśeṣam chindhi samśayam//

TRANSLATION

(The Devi puts a further question)

Is the nature of parāparā śakti (transcendent-cum-immanent Energy) and aparā śakti (immanent Energy) sakala i.e. consisting of parts or is the nature of parā śakti (transcendent Energy) also sakala? If the nature of parā śakti (transcendent Energy) is also sakala, then it would be incompatible with transcendence.¹

Paratva or transcendence cannot be consistent with the division of letters and colour or of bodies (na hi varṇavibhedena, dehabhedena vā bhavet paratvam); paratva or transcendence consists only in indivisibility (niṣkalatvena); it (transcendence) cannot co-exist with sakala (a composite of parts) (sakalatve na tad-bhavet).² Oh Lord bestow your favour on me, and remove my doubt completely.

NOTES

1. Parā, parāparā, aparā.

Svāstantrya śakti, the Absolute Sovereign power of Parama Śiva is parā i.e. transcendent. Every thing at that level is in the form of samvit or consciousness. This is the level of absolute non-dualism (abheda). This is parama Śiva's parā śakti.

Where there is bhedabheda i.e. both identity and difference or identity in difference that is known as parāparā śakti. Just as an elephant or a city seen in a mirror is both identical and different from the mirror, even so is the position of parāparā
śakti, Where everything appears as different from each other, that is the level of aparā śakti.

2. There can be Sakalatva or aspect of division in parāparā and aparā. If sakalatva or divisibility is assumed to be an aspect of parā also, then that would be incompatible with the very nature of parā which is completely transcendent to division. In Parātrimśikā, etc (p. 124) does the sakala aspect which has been described for the meditation of certain mantras concern only aparā devī and parāparā devī or also parā devī? If it concerns parā devī also, then it would be flagrant contradiction in terms, for by its very definition parā is nīkala or transcendent to division or parts. How can sakala go with nīkala? This is what the Devī wants to know.

VERSES—7-10

Bhairava uvāca
Sādhu sādhu tvayā pṛṣṭaṁ tantrāsāram idam priye// 7
Gūhanīyatamam bhadre tathāpi kathayāmi te/
Yatkinicit saklaṁ rūpam bhairavasya prakīrtitam// 8
Tad asāratayā devi vijñeyam śakrajalavat/
Māyāsvapnopamaṁ caiva gandharvanagarabhramam// 9
Dhyānārtham bhraṅtabuddhīnāṁ kriyādāmbaravartināṁ/
Kevalam varṇitam pūṃsāṁ vikalpanihatātmanām// 10

TRANSLATION

Bhairava said

Good! Good! Dear one, you have put questions which pertain to the very quintessence of Tantra. Though, the matter is
most esoteric, oh auspicious one, yet shall I explain it to you. Whatever has been declared to be the composite form (Sakala)\(^1\) of Bhairava, that oh goddess should be considered as insubstantial (asāratayā), as phantasmagoria (lit. as the net of Indra), as magical illusion (māyā), as dream, as the mirage of a town of Gandharvas\(^2\) in the sky. The sakala aspect of Bhairava is taught, as a prop for meditation, to those who are of deluded intellect, who are interested in ostentatious performance of rituals, it has been declared for those people who are a prey to dichotomising thought-constructs (vikalpanihatatmanām).\(^3\)

NOTES

1. All manifestation from gods down to the mineral is known as sakala. Sakala is the sphere of māyā tattva. It consists of bheda—difference or division. The essential nature of Bhairava cannot be known by means of sakala which consists of difference and division.

2. Gandharvas are said to be celestial musicians who are believed to have their town in the sky which is entirely imaginary even so is the sakala form of Bhairava.

3. If the reading is taken as vikalpanihatatmanām it would mean 'who are established in dichotomising thought-constructs'.

VERSE 11-13

\begin{align*}
\text{Tattvato na navātmāsau śabdārāśir na bhairavah/} \\
\text{Na cásaú triśirā devo na ca śaktitrayātmakaḥ//} \ 11 \\
\text{Nādabindumayo vāpi na candrárdhnirodhikāḥ/} \\
\text{Na cakrakramasambhinno na ca śaktisvarūpakāḥ//} \ 12 \\
\text{Aprabuddhamatinām hi etā bālavibhiṣikāḥ/} \\
\text{Mātrmodakavatsarvam pravṛtttyartham udāhṛtam}// \ 13
\end{align*}
TRANSLATION

In reality, Bhairava is neither of the form of nine (navātma), nor a multitude of letters (śabdarāsti) nor of the three heads (triśirā) nor of three śaktis, nor consisting of nāda and bindu, nor of ardhacandra, nirodhikā, etc., nor is His essence concerned with the piercing of the (six) cakras, nor does śakti or Energy constitute His essence.¹

(Then why have these been described by the scriptures as Bhairava’s essence at various places ?)

The above concepts are used for those whose intellect is not yet mature enough to grasp Reality (in its highest aspect), Just as a bogy is used to frighten away children from their obstinacy for getting some worthless or undesirable thing. These concepts play the same role as the bonbon of the mother. They are meant to induce the aspirants to tread the path of righteousness and spiritual practices in order that they may ultimately realize the nature of Bhairava which is non-different from their essential Self.²

NOTES

1. For the explanation of the various alternatives given above see the notes under the verses 2-4.

2. As a bogy is used to frighten away children from their obstinacy for getting a worthless and undesirable thing, even so these concepts are used for dissuading men from sense-pleasures. As mothers offer a bonbon to children to induce them to pursue a right course, even so these concepts are used to induce men, to tread the path of righteousness.

VERSES 14-17
[If the sakala aspect of Bhairava does not reveal His essential nature, then what is His niskala aspect by knowing which one may have an idea of His parasthā (the highest state).]

Bhairava now describes the niskala (transcendent) aspect of the Supreme in the above four verses).

Paravasthā (the highest state) of Bhairava is free (unmukta) of all notions pertaining to direction (dik), time (kāla), nor can that be particularized (avišeṣini) by some definite space (deśa) or designation (uddeśa). In verity (paramārthatah) that can neither be indicated (vyapadeśum aṣakyā) nor described in words (akathyā).

[Then is it impossible to have any experience of her? Bhairava anticipates this question and answers that in the following verse].

One can be aware of that only when one is completely free of all thought-constructs (vikalponmukta-gocarā). One can have an experience of that bliss in his own inmost self (when one is completely rid of the ego, and is established in pūrṇahantā i.e. in the plenitude of the divine I-consciousness).

That state of Bhairava which is full of the bliss of non-difference from the entire universe (bharitākārā) is alone Bhairavi or Śakti of Bhairava.
Vijñānabhairava

That should, in verity, be known as His essential nature, immaculate (*vimalam*)⁴ and inclusive of the entire universe (*viśvapūraṇam*). Such being the state of the highest Reality, who can be the object of worship, who is to be satisfied with worship.⁵¹⁶.

That *nīkala* state of Bhairava which is celebrated in this way is alone the highest state. That is declared as *parā devī*, the highest goddess, *parā* or highest not only in name, but because that is actually her highest form (*pararūpeṇa*).¹⁷

NOTES

1. Kṣemarāja in his commentary (*vivṛti*) says that *vyapadesṭum aśakyā* (cannot be indicated) hints at the fact that she cannot be talked about even in *madhyamā* (subtle) speech (*madhyamājālpā-viṣayā*), and *akathyā* (indescribable in words) hints at the fact that she can far less be described in ordinary human language (*vaikharyāpyavyāvartāvīyā*).

2. The 14th verse hints at the highest state of Bhairava in a negative way. It transcends direction, time, space and designation. It cannot be characterized or described in any human language.

The 15th verse hints at that state in a positive way. It says that though it is beyond description, it is not beyond experience (*anubhava*). There are two indispensable conditions (both of which are interconnected) under which one can have an experience of it. (1) It can be within the range of experience if one can rid oneself of all thought-constructs (*vikalponmuktagocari*). The activity of mind consists in all kinds of thought-constructs. When one can get rid of thought-constructs, the mind is stilled. In that hour of silence emerges the essential Reality from behind the veil. It is the mind that acts as a veil, a barrier, a screen. Mind is the slayer of the Real. Truly has it been said “Be still, my heart, and know.” (2) If one can get rid of the ego, the false, artificial ‘I’ and take a plunge in his inmost essential Self, he will have the experience of a delight which beggars description, a peace that passeth all understanding (*antaḥ svānubhāvānandā*). Truly has it been said “He saveth life who loseth it.”
This is śāmbhava yoga. Though the parāvasthā (highest state) of Bhairava cannot be described, it can be experienced.

3. That state of Bhairava is plenary state, a universal, all pervasive delight of creativity (bharitākāra). It is this which is His sakti or Bhairavi which is not exclusive of the universe but inclusive of it. It is only when we miss the whole and cling to the part, the sakala aspect of Bhairava that we stumble.

4. Kṣemarāja says in his commentary that Bhairava's essential nature has been characterized as vimala (immaculate) because though it manifests the universe on its own screen, it is not veiled by it (svabhityābhāsita-jagadānācchāditam).

5. When the essential nature of Bhairava is recognized as our own inmost self, the distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped disappears and there dawns a sense of non-dualism.

VERSES 18-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Śakti-śaktimātotorṇabhratam</th>
<th>Amev: Svaroja Chīta: II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abtastalakṣāyārtifatariyatam:</td>
<td>Pratim: II 96 II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N bhūtevaśīkā Īaṅkā: Śakti: Vyātemaiva Vidhāyate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavlan Ṣanātatava Prārambojyah Praveṣāne II 96 II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Śakti-śaktimātotorṇabhratam abhedaḥ sarvadā sthitah/
Atas taddharmadharmitvat parā saktiḥ parātmahah// 18
Na vahner dāhhikā saktīḥ vyatiriktā vibhāvyate/
Kevalaṁ jñānasattāyām prārambhōyam praveṣane// 19

TRANSLATION

Since there is always non-difference between Śakti and possessor of śakti (śaktimān) therefore being endowed with His (i.e. Śaktiman's) attributes Śakti becomes the bearer of the same attributes. Therefore being non-different from para (the highest i.e. Bhairava) she is known as parā (the highest i.e. Bhairavi). 18

The burning power of fire is not accepted as separate from fire even after full consideration (even so the parāśakti is not separate from Bhairava). Only it is described in a distinct way as a preliminary step for the listener towards its knowledge (lit., towards entry into its knowledge) 19
NOTES

1. Śakti means power, capacity to effect something.
2. Just as Bhairava has the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, etc., even so His Śakti Bhairavi has the same attributes.
3. The power of burning of fire is not anything separate from fire. Only it is described separately so that one may get acquaintance with fire after which one can find out its other attributes. Even so parāśakti is not anything separate from para (the supreme). Parāśakti is described separately so that she may prove as a first step towards the realization of para or Bhairava.

VERSES 20-21

शक्त्यवस्थाप्रविष्टस्य  निर्विभागेन  भावना ।
तदसौ सिवरुपी स्वातं  सैवी मुखमिहोच्यते ॥ २० ॥
यथालोकेन सैवस्त्य किरणमिर्तकरस्य  छ ।
जातये विविभागावि तद्विज्ञक्या  शिवः  प्रिये ॥ २१ ॥

Śaktyavasthāpraviṣṭasya nirvibhāgena bhāvanā /
Tadāsau Śivarūpi syāt śaivi mukham ihocyate // 20
Yathālokena dipasya kirāṇair bhāskarasya ca /
Jñāyate digvibhāgādi tadvac chaktyā Śivaḥ priye // 21

TRANSLATION

When in one who enters the state of Śakti (i.e. who is identified with Śakti), there ensues the feeling of non-distinction (between Śakti and Śiva), then he acquires the state of Śiva, (for) in the āgamas (iha), she (śakti) is declared as the door of entrance (into Śiva) (Lit., Śakti is like Śiva’s face)² 20. Just as by means of the light of a lamp, and the rays of the Sun, portions of space, etc.³ are known even so, Oh dear one, by means of Śakti is Śiva (who is one’s own essential Self) cognized (i.e. re-cognized). 21

NOTES

1. Just as one recognizes a person by his face, even so one recognizes Śiva by His Śakti who is like His face.
2. Et cetera included forms, figures.

3. There are three points suggested by this simile: (1) Just as the flame of the lamp is not different from its light; just as the rays of the sun are not different from the sun, even so Śakti is not different from Śiva. (2) Just as through the lamp or the sun, objects of the world are perceived, even so through Śakti the universe is known. (3) Just as to perceive the light of the lamp, another lamp is not required; just as to perceive the sun, another sun is not required; they are known by their own light. Even so, Śiva is known by His Śakti who is not different from him.

**VERSES 22-23**

Sri Devi uvaca

Devadeva triśūlānka kapālaṅkabhiṣaṇa /
Digdesakālaśunyā ca vyapadeśavitā // 22
Yāvasthā bharitākārā bhairavasyopalabhyate /
Kair upāyair mukham tasya para devi katham bhavet // 23
Yathā samyag aham vedmi tathā me brūhi Bhairava /

**TRANSLATION**

[Now that the essential nature of parādevī (Supreme goddess or Śakti) has been hinted at, Bhairavi wants to know how that essential nature can be realized.]

O God of all gods, bearing the emblem of the trident,¹ and having cranium as your ornament,² how can that Supreme goddess (the Highest Śakti) who transcends all notions of direction, space and time and all manner of description be known? By what means can that complete state of Bhairava which is full of the bliss of non-difference from the universe (bharitākārā) be realized? In what way is the parādevī (the Highest Śakti) said to be the door of entrance into Bhairava? Please tell me in the Vaikhari form (in human language) that which I know fully
well at the parā level\(^3\) or please instruct me in such a manner that I may understand it fully.

NOTES

1. Bearing the emblem of the trident (triśūla). Bhairava is said to be bearing the trident, because the three spikes of the trident represent icchā (will), jñāna (knowledge) and kriyā (activity) which are the main characteristics of Bhairava.

2. Bhairava is generally represented as having a cranium bowl in his hand. This kapāla or cranium-bowl symbolizes the universe consisting of words and objects which betoken Bhairava’s svā-tantraya (absolute freedom) and caitanya (supreme consciousness).

3. Being the parā sakti (Highest Śakti) of Śiva, she already knows the truth at the parā (highest) level, but she wants Bhairava to tell it to her in the Vaikhart form (gross speech, human language). Vedmi—I know is present tense. If she knows, why does she request Bhairava to tell it to her? The explanation is that she knows it at the parā level, at the transcendental level, now she wants its exposition at the empirical level.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 1]

VERSE 24

श्रीमहरवे उवाच

उद्भव प्राणो ह्राधो जीवो विसर्गतमा परोन्यरेत ।
उत्पत्तिद्वितयस्याने, परमाद्भिरता स्थिति: ॥ २४ ॥

Urdhve prāṇo hy adho jīvo visargātmā paroccaret /
Utpattidvitayasthāne bharanād bharitā sthitih // 24

TRANSLATION

Bhairava says:

Parā devī or Highest Śakti who is of the nature of visarga\(^1\) goes on (ceaselessly) expressing herself upward (ūrdhve) (from the centre of the body to dvādaśānta\(^2\) or a distance of twelve fingers) in the form of exhalation (prāṇa) and downward (adhāh) (from dvādaśānta to the centre of the body) in the form of inhalation (jīva or apāna).\(^3\) By steady fixation of the mind
(bharaṇāt)⁴ at the two places of their origin (viz., centre of the body in the case of prāṇa and dvādaśānta in the case of apāna), there is the situation of plenitude (bharītiḥsthitih which is the state of parāsakti or nature of Bhairava).⁵

NOTES

1. Visargātmā—who is of the nature of visarga. The word visarga means letting go, projection or creation, i.e. who is creative. The creative function of the Divine includes two movements—outward and inward or centrifugal and centripetal. In living beings, the outward or centrifugal movement is represented by expiration or exhalation; the inward or centripetal movement is represented by inspiration or inhalation. Parā or parā devī or Parā ṣakti is designated as Visargātmā, because it is by this rhythm of centrifugal and centripetal movement that she carries on the play of life whether in the macrocosm or the microcosm. This movement is known as uccāra or spandana or ceaseless throb of Parādevī.

In Sanskrit, visarga is represented by two points or dots one above the other. One point in this case is dvādaśānta where prāṇa ends and the other is the hṛt or centre of the body where apāna ends. It is because of these two points also that Parasakti is known as visargātmā.

2. Dvādaśānta—literally meaning 'end of twelve' indicates the point at a distance of 12 fingers from the tip of the nose in the outer space where expiration arising from the centre of the human body, and passing through the throat and the nose ends. This is known as bāhya dvādaśānta or the external dvādaśānta.

3. The apāna or inhalation is called jīva, because it is the inhalation or return movement of the breath that is responsible for life.

4. Bharaṇāt here means by close observation or one-pointed awareness. Awareness of what? Śivopādhyāya in his commentary clears this point in the following way:

"Bharaṇāditi — nityonmiṣadādyasphurattātmabhairavtyaṣaktyupalaksanāt. i.e. bharaṇāt here means by an intent awareness of that who by implication is the ever-risen initial flash of the sakti of Bhairava."
5. The dhārāṇā or the yogic practice referred to in this verse is the following:

There are two points or poles between which respiration goes on constantly. One of these is dvādaśānta in the outer space where praṇa or exhalation ends and the other hṛt or the centre inside the body where apāna or inhalation ends. At each of these points, there is viśrānti or rest for a split second. The breath does not actually stop there totally but remains in the form of a throb of sakti in suspended animation and then again the breathing process starts. One should contemplate over the sakti that appears in the period of rest and should remain mindful of it even while the breathing process starts. By constant practice of this dhārāṇā, he will realize the state of plenitude of Bhairava (bharitā sthitī).

As this practice is without any support of vikalpa, it is Śāmbhava upāya.

There is another important interpretation of this dhārāṇā. In inhalation, the sound of ha is produced; in exhalation, the sound saḥ is produced; at the junction point in the centre the sound of m is added. So the whole formula becomes ‘Hamsaḥ’. The parādevi goes on sounding this formula or mantra ceaselessly in every living being. Hṛdaya or the centre is the starting point of the sound ha and dvādaśānta is the starting point of the sound saḥ. By contemplating over these two points, one acquires the nature of Bhairava. This would be an ānava upāya. Saḥ represents Śiva; ha represents Śakti; m represents nara. So in this practice, all the three main elements of Trika philosophy, viz, Śiva, Śakti and Nara are included.

[Dhārāṇā 2]

VERSE 25

Maruto'ntar bahir vāpi viyadyugmāṇivartanat
Bhairavyā bhairavasyettham bhairavi vyajyate vapiḥ // 25
TRANSLATION

Of the breath (exhalation or prāṇa) arising from the inner i.e. the centre of the body (ḥṛt) there is non-return for a split second from the dvādaśānta (a distance of twelve fingers from the nose in the outer space), and of the breath (inhalation or apāna arising from dvādaśānta i.e. the outer space, there is non-return for a split second from the centre of the body (ḥṛt)). If one fixes his mind steadily at these two points of pause, one will find that Bhairavī the essential form of Bhairava is manifested at those two points.

NOTES

1. The pause of prāṇa in the dvādaśānta is known as baiḥī kumbhaka or external pause. The pause of the apāna in the internal centre of the body is known as antāḥ kumbhaka or internal pause. By the anusandhāna or one-pointed awareness of these two pauses, the mind becomes introverted, and the activity of both prāṇa and apāna ceases, and there is the upsurge of madhya dasā i.e. the path of the madhya nāḍī or suṣumnā becomes open.

2. If one mentally observes the above two pauses, he realizes the nature of Bhairava. This is ānava upāya inasmuch as this process involves the dhyāna or meditation on the two kumbhakas or pauses of prāṇa and apāna.

[Dhāranā 3]

VERSE 26

Na vrajen na viśec chaktir marudrūpā vikāsite /
Nirvikalpakatayā madhye tayā Bhairavarūpatā // 26

TRANSLATION

When the middle state develops by means of the dissolution of all dichotomising thought-constructs the prāṇa-sakti in the
form of exhalation (prāṇa) does not go out from the centre (of the body) to dvādaśānta, nor does that śakti in the form of inhalation (apāṇa) enter into the centre from dvādaśānta. In this way by means of Bhairavi who expresses herself in the form of the cessation of prāṇa (exhalation) and apāṇa (inhalation), there supervenes the state of Bhairava.

NOTES

1. In this dhāraṇā, prāṇa (exhalation) and apāṇa (inhalation) cease and madhya daśā develops i.e. the prāṇaśakti in the suṣumnā develops by means of nirvikalpabhāva i.e. by the cessation of all thought-constructs; then the nature of Bhairava is revealed.

Śivopādhyāya in his commentary says that the nirvikalpa bhāva comes about by Bhairavi mudrā in which even when the senses are open outwards, the attention is turned inwards towards inner spanda or throb of creative consciousness which is the basis and support of all mental and sensuous activity, then all vikalpas or thought-constructs cease. The breath neither goes out, nor does it come in, and the essential nature of Bhairava is revealed.

2. Dvādaśānta means a distance of 12 fingers in the outer space measured from the tip of the nose.

3. The difference between the previous dhāraṇā and this one lies in the fact that whereas in the previous dhāraṇā, the madhya daśā develops by one-pointed awareness of the pauses of prāṇa and apāṇa, in the present dhāraṇā, the madhya daśā develops by means of nirvikalpa-bhāva.

Abhinavagupta has quoted this dhāraṇā in Tantrāloka v.22 p. 333 and there also he emphasizes nirvikalpa-bhāva. He says that one should fix one’s mind with pointed awareness on the junction of prāṇa, apāṇa and udāṇa in the centre, then prāṇa and apāṇa will be suspended; the mind will be freed of all vikalpas, madhya daśā will develop, and the aspirant will have the realization of his essential Self which is the nature of Bhairava.

Śivopādhyāya says that since this dhāraṇā takes the help of madhyadaśā, it may be considered to be an āṇava upāya. But the development of madhyadaśā is brought about by nirvikalpa-
bhāva in this dhāranā. From this point of view, it may be considered to be śāmbhava upāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 4]

VERSE 27

Kumbhita recitā vāpi pūritā vā yadā bhavet /
Tadante sāntanāmāsau śaktyā sāntaḥ prakāśate // 27

TRANSLATION

When the Śakti in the form of exhalation (recitā) is retained outside (at dvādaśānta), and in the form of inhalation (pūritā) is retained inside (at the hṛt or centre), then at the end of this practice, the Śakti is known as Śāntā or tranquillized and through Śakti Śanta Bhairava is revealed.

NOTES

1. By means of continuous practice of kumbhaka or retention of breath in the above way, physical and mental tranquillity is experienced, and madhya dasā is developed. The sense of bheda or difference between prāṇa and apāna disappears. That is why this prāṇa śakti is known as śānta.

2. On account of the disappearance of bheda or difference between prāṇa and apāna the Śakti is known as Śānta or which in this context means ‘subsided’, ‘ceased’.

3. Bhairava (the divine self) is called Śānta (peaceful) because He transcends all the limits of name and form and in Him there is no trace of difference or duality.

This dhāranā is a variety of Ānava upāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 5]

VERSE 28

ā mūlaśiṁkaṇṇāmaṁ sūkhṣmat śūkhṣṭarāṭṭhitākām ∥
chintayetāṁ dhvayaṅkante śāmyṛto phṛtobhav: // 28 //
Meditate on the Sakti arising from the mūladhāra cakra, scintillating like rays (of the sun), and getting subtler and subtler till at last she dissolves in dvādaśānta. Thus does Bhairava become manifest.

NOTES

1. Sakti here refers to praṇāśakti that abides as prānakunḍalinī in the interior of the body. Kuṇḍalinī lies folded up in $3\frac{1}{2}$ folds in Mūladhāra.

2. Mūladhāra cakra is situated in the spinal region below the genitals. A cakra is a centre of prānic energy located in the prāṇamaya kośa in the interior of the body. This dhāranā refers to the rise of Kuṇḍalinī which goes in a flash into dvādaśānta or Brahmarandhra (the cakra at the top of the head) and dissolves in it. This is known as cit-kunḍalinī or akrama kunḍalinī i.e. kunḍalinī that does not pass successively through the cakras but goes directly to Brahmarandhra.

3. Dviṣṭkānte (twice six) means dvādaśānta at the end of 12 fingers. This dvādaśānta refers to Brahmarandhra which is at a distance of 12 fingers from the middle of the eye-brows (bhrū-madhya).

4. In dvādaśānta or Brahmarandhra, Kuṇḍalinī gets dissolved in prakāśa or light of consciousness abiding in Brahmarandhra. In that prakāśa is revealed the nature of Bhairava.

Inasmuch as this dhāranā depends on the bhāvanā of prāṇa šakti, this is āṇava upāya. Netra Tantra, however, takes it a Śambhava upāya. (VIII, p. 200).

[Śādhana 6]

VERSE 29

उद्गच्छन्ति तत्कालं प्रतिच्छः कमत्क्रमम् ।
उध्वं मुष्टिवर्य यावत् तावदन्ते महोदयः ॥ २६ ॥
Udgacchantim taditrupam praticakram kramat kramam/ 
Ūrdhvam mūṣitrayam yāvat tāvad ante mahodayaḥ// 29

TRANSLATION

Meditate on that very lightning-like sakti (i.e. Kundalini), moving upwards successively from one centre of energy (cakra) to another upto three fists i.e. dvādaśānta.¹ At the end, one can experience the magnificent rise of Bhairava.²

NOTES

1. This dvādaśānta also refers to Brahmarandhra.
2. This refers to the rise of Kundalini piercing successively through all the cakras or centres of energy till at last, it dissolves in Brahmarandhra. This is known as prāṇa-kundalini. The difference between this dhāraṇā and the previous one consists in the fact that, in this dhāraṇā the Kundalini moves successively through the cakras and then finally dissolves in Brahmarandhra, whereas in the previous dhāraṇā, the Kundalini shoots forth from mūlādhāra directly in Brahmarandhra and gets dissolved in it without passing through the intervening cakras. Jayaratha quotes it in his commentary on Tantrālōka (v.88). This is Sāktopāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 7]

VERSE 30

Kramadvādaśakam samyag dvādaśākṣarabheditam / 
Sthulasūkṣmaparasthityā muktvā muktvāntataḥ Śivaḥ // 30 //

TRANSLATION

Twelve successively higher centres of energy¹ associated with twelve successive letters² should be properly meditated on. Each of them should at first be meditated on in a gross phase, then leaving that in a subtle phase and then leaving that also in the
supreme phase till finally the meditator becomes identified with Śiva. 30

NOTES


These are known as dvādaśasthāna or twelve stations.

These are stages of the rising kuṇḍalini. They are correlatives of twelve vowels. The first four stages or stations or centres of energy are lower (apara) and concern bheda or difference.

i. Janmāgra is at the level of the generative organ. Since the generative organ is concerned with janma or birth of individuals, therefore the centre of energy at this level is known as janma, or janmādhāra (basis of generation) or janmasthāna (the station which is involved in generation) or janmāgra (janmāgra means the point or head of the generative organ.)

ii. Mūla, generally known as mūlādhāra or the root centre. This is in the spinal centre of region below the genitals.

iii. Kanda, a bulbous or tuberous root, so called, because it is a tangle of many nerves.

iv. Nābhi or navel. The Maṇipūra cakra is situated near it.

After this, the following five are concerned with subtler energies known as bhedābheda or parāpara.

v. Hṛd or heart.

vi. Kaṇṭha—the cavity at the base of the throat.

vii. Tālu—palate

viii. Bhrūmadhya—centre between the eye-brows.

ix. Lalāṭa—Forehead.

In the following three stages, the energy is of the form of para or abheda.

x. Brahmaṇandhra—The apex of the cranium.

xi. Śakti—pure energy which is not a constituent of the body.

xii. Vyāpini—the energy which appears when Kuṇḍalini finishes its journey.
2. The twelve successive letters are the following twelve vowels:

1. a, 2. ā, 3. i, 4. ī, 5. u, 6. ū, 7. e, 8. ai, 9. o, 10. au, 11. am, 12. aḥ. These vowels have to be meditated on in the above twelve stages of the kūṇḍalini.

This dhāraṇā in the gross form consists of ānava upāya, and in the subtle and supreme form, it consists of śāktopāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 8]

VERSE 31

तयापूर्याःशु मूर्धान्ति भड़ व क्वा भृक्षेपसेवना।
निविकल्प व मनः कुत्ता सर्वोत्त्वं सर्वगोद्गामः। ॥ ३१ ॥

Tayāpūryāśu mūrdhāntaṁ bhaṅktvā bhrūkṣepasetunā /
Nirvikalpaṁ manah kṛtvā sarvordhve sarvagodgamaḥ // 31

TRANSLATION

Having filled the mūrdhānta¹ with the same prāṇic energy quickly and having crossed it with the help of the bridge-like contraction of the eye-brows², one should free one's mind of all dichotomizing thought-constructs. His consciousness will then rise higher than dvādaśānta and then there will appear the sense of omnipresence.

NOTES

1. Mūrdhānta here means dvādaśānta i.e. Brahmārandhra, a space covered by twelve fingers from the middle of eye-brows.

2. Just as a river is crossed by means of a bridge, even so the prāṇic energy has to be crossed over by an esoteric technique of bhrūkṣepa. Then that prāṇic energy will be converted into cit-śakti, and the aspirant's consciousness will rise higher than that of the Brahmārandhra and he will have a feeling of omnipresence. The esoteric technique of bhrūkṣepa was a closely guarded secret among the mystics and is now practically lost.

This is Śāktopāya.
Vijñānabhairava

[Dhāraṇā 9]

VERSE 32

śākhyaśāṅgārītādṛśyārṇवं: śūnyapāṇakam

ध्यायोस्तुन्तरे सून्ये प्रवेशो हुवये भवेत ॥ 32 ॥

Śikhipakṣaiś citrarūpair maṇḍalaiḥ śūnyapaṇcakam /
Dhyāyato' nuttare śūne praveśo hṛdaye bhavet // 32

TRANSLATION

The yogī should meditate in his heart on the five voids¹ of the five senses which are like the five voids appearing in the circles² of motley feathers of peacocks. Thus will he be absorbed in the Absolute void.³

NOTES

1. Five voids or śūnya-paṇcakam. This means that the yogi should meditate on the five ultimate sources of the five senses, i.e. the five tanmātras, sound as such, form as such, etc. which have no concrete appearance and are mere voids.

There is also a double entendre in śūnya-paṇcakam. Just as there are five holes in the circles of the feathers of the peacocks—one above, one below, one in the middle, and one on each side, even so the yogi should meditate on the five ultimate sources of the sense i.e. the five tanmātras as five voids.

2. Circles—maṇḍalas. There is a double entendre in the word maṇḍala also. In the case of the peacock, it means the circles in the feather; in the case of the yogi, it means the senses. (maṇḍaṁ rasasāraṁ lānti iti maṇḍalāṇi—those that carry the quintessence of the five objects of sense are maṇḍalas, i.e. the five senses).

3. The Absolute void is Bhairava who is beyond the senses and the mind, beyond all the categories of these instruments. From the point of view of the human mind, He is most void. From the point of view of Reality, He is most full, for He is the source of all manifestation.
[Dhāraṇā-10]

VERSE 33

ईद्रशेन कमेण्व यत्र कुट्रापि चिन्तना ।
शृण्ये कुड्ये परे पाले स्वयं लोणा वरपद ॥ ३३ ॥

İdṛśena kramenaiva yatrakutrāpi cintanā /
Śūnye kuḍye pare pātre svayam līnā varapradā // 33

TRANSLATION

In this way, successively, wherever there is mindfulness on whether void, on wall, or on some excellent person, that mindfulness is absorbed by itself in the supreme and offers the highest benefaction.

NOTES

1. Just as there is concentration in successive steps on gudādhāra (mūlādhāra), janma, kanda, nābhi, hrdaya, kaṇṭha, tālu, bhrūmadhya, lalāṭa, brahmarandhra, sakti and vyāpini in one's own body, so concentration in successive steps may be practised outside one's body also e.g. on some vast empty space, on some high wall, etc.

2. Parepatre—pātre here means fit, competent person, pare pātre means on some excellent competent person, e.g. on a pureminded competent pupil.

3. The highest spiritual experience is here said to be the highest benefaction.

The above dhāraṇā begins with Āṇava upāya and finally merges in Śāktopāya.

[DHARANA 11]

VERSE 34

कपालान्तरं नयं तिष्ठतोलोचनः ।
कनेन मनसो वाह्यल्लक्षणलक्षणमुक्तम् ॥ ३४ ॥
Kapālāntarmano nyāśya tiṣṭhan militalocanaḥ
Krameṇa manaso dārḍhyāt lakṣayet lakṣyam uttamam //34

TRANSLATION

Fixing one's attention on the interior¹ of the cranium (kapāla) and seated with eyes closed,² with the stability of the mind,³ one gradually discerns that which is most eminently discernible.⁴

The word kapāla means 'cranium.' There is also an esoteric meaning of his word. Śivopādhyāya quotes the following verse from Tantrakosa in this connexion.

"Kaśabdena parāśaktiḥ pālakaḥ Śivasamjñāyāḥ
Śiva-Śakti-samāyogāḥ kapālaḥ paripāthyate" //

"The word ka signifies parāśakti or the supreme divine Energy, and the word pālā meaning 'protector' signifies Śiva. The whole word kapāla is therefore, used in the sense of union between Śiva and Śakti." Śiva and Śakti in other words, stand for prakāśa and vimarśa i.e. Light of Consciousness and its awareness. According to this interpretation the translation of the above verse would stand thus:

"Having fixed one's mind inwardly on the union of Śiva and Śakti,⁵ and seated with eyes closed, gradually with the stability of the mind, one discerns what is most eminently discernible."

NOTES

1. 'On the interior means 'on the Light that is ever present inside'.
2. 'With eyes closed' means 'detached from the external world and completely introverted.'
3. The mind is, at first, very fickle, but by constant practice, it acquires stability and then one can concentrate with steadiness.
4. This means that one becomes aware of the Highest spiritual Reality.
   By this practice, the sense of difference gradually diminishes; and one begins to view the entire universe as an expression of Śiva.
   This dhāraṇā comes under Śāktopāya.
[Dhāraṇā 12]

VERSE 35

मध्यनादि मध्यसंस्था बिसुत्त्रहरुपया ।
ध्यातन्तत्त्वोमया वेया तया देव: प्रकाशते ॥ ३५ ॥

Madhyanādi madhyasamsthā bisūtraḥharūpayā /
Dhyātāntarvyomayā devyā tayā devaḥ prakāśate ॥ 35

TRANSLATION

The medial nādi¹ is situated in the middle. It is as slender as the stem of a lotus. If one meditates on the inner vacuity of this nādi, it helps in revealing the Divine.²

NOTES

1. Nādi here means the ‘prānic channel’.
2. Prāṇaśakti exists in Suṣumnā or the medial nādi. If one meditates on the inner vacuity existing in this medial nādi the prāṇa and apāna currents get dissolved in the Suṣumnā, the udāna current becomes active. Thus the kuṇḍalinī rises, passes through suṣumnā, and piercing the various centres of energy (cakras), finally merges in Sahasrāra. There the yogī experiences spiritual light with which he feels identified. This is what is meant by saying that the Divine is revealed by the aid of the interior prānic force residing in Suṣumnā. The same idea has been expressed in the following verse of Spandakārikā:

Tadā tasmin mahāvyomni pralinaśaśibhāskare.
Suṣuptapadavanmūḍhaḥ prabuddhaḥ syādanāvṛtaḥ.
(Verse 25)

When the moon (apāna current of vital energy) and sun (prāṇa current of vital energy) get dissolved and the yogī enters the Suṣumnā, the yogī who is after supernormal powers becomes befuddled like one who is fast asleep, but the one who is not under such an influence is wide awake and experiences spiritual Light.

This begins with Ānava upāya and ends in Śāktopāya.
By stopping the openings (of the senses) with the weapon (astra) in the form of the hands, by which are blocked the eyes (and other openings in the face) and thus by breaking open (the knot in the centre of the eye-brows) the bindu is perceived which (on the development of one-pointedness) gradually disappears (in the ether of consciousness). Then (in the centre of the ether of consciousness), the yogi is established in the highest (spiritual) state.

NOTES

1. 'Kararuddhadrgastra' is a kind of karana used in ānava upāya. Karana is thus defined Karanam dehasanniveśa-viśeṣ-ātmā mudrādivyāpārah. I.e. 'disposition of the limbs of the body in a particular way, usually known as mudrā i.e. control of certain organs and senses that helps in concentration'. Here the karana specified is by means of the hands. The ten fingers of the two hands are used in this mudrā. The ears are closed with the two thumbs; the eyes are closed with the index fingers; the two nostrils are closed with the two middle fingers; the mouth is closed with the ring-fingers and the little fingers. This is what is meant by saying "By stopping (the openings of the senses) with the weapon in the form of the hands." The openings of all the jñānendriyas or organs of sense are closed.

By this device consciousness is closed to all exterior influences and the vital energy is confined within.

2. The vital energy, by closing the various openings of the senses, rises up towards the centre of the eye-brows and reach-
ing there ruptures the knot or tangle of nerves in which a very significant energy is locked up.

3. When the centre of the eye-brows is ruptured by the vital energy that rises up from within, a point of brilliant light is perceived. This is the bindu or vindu which means a dot, a globule, a drop, a point. It is written both as bindu and vindu.

4. As soon as the bindu is perceived, the yogi has to concentrate on it. When the concentration develops, the bindu begins to disappear gradually and finally vanishes in the ether of universal consciousness (cīdākāśa). This is said to be paramā sthitih, the highest state of the yogi.

There are five stages in this dhāraṇā, viz. (1) dvāra-rodhanam or stopping the openings of the senses with the fingers of the two hands, (2) bhrūbhedaḥ—by closing the openings of the senses, the vital energy that is pent up within rises to the centre of the eye-brows, and ruptures the tangle of nerves situated in that centre; (3) bindudarśanam—when the centre of the eye-brows is pierced by the vital energy, then a bindu or point of light that is imprisoned within it is released and the yogi perceives it mentally (4) Kramat-ekāgratāprakāśāt line saṃvidgagane i.e. when the bindu is concentrated upon, it gradually begins to disappear and finally vanishes in the ether of consciousness, (5) tanmadhye yogināḥ paramā sthitih-bhairavābhivyaktih—in that ether of consciousness, the yogi realizes the highest state, that is to say, in that is revealed the essential nature of Bhairava.

Svāmī Lakṣmaṇa Joo, however, gives a different interpretation of this dhāraṇā. He maintains that bhrūbhedaḥ is lyahlope paṅcamī which means ‘after having ruptured the tangle of nerves in the middle of the eye-brows’. This is to be achieved by concentration on the central spot of the eye-brows. When this is effected, a drop of light will be visible there. After achieving this result, the openings of the senses have to be blocked by the above mudrā, then praṇa śakti will arise in the susūmnā which will mount up towards Brahmārandhra. This will hasten the dissolution of the drop of light in Brahmārandhra and in that state the yogi will realize his essential Self. This is an āṇava upāya ending in śaktopāya.
VERSE 37

\[ \text{Dhamantal:} \text{kşobhasambhūtasūkṣmāgnitilakākr̥tim /} \\
\text{Bindum śikhānte hrdaye layānte dhyāyato layah // 37.} \]

TRANSLATION

The yogi should meditate either in the heart or in \textit{dvādaśānta} on the \textit{bindu} which is a subtle spark of fire resembling a \textit{tilaka} produced by pressure on the \textit{dhāma} or \textit{teja} (light existing in the eyes). By such practice the discursive thought (\textit{vikalpa}) of the yogi disappears, and on its disappearance, the yogi is absorbed in the light of supreme consciousness.

NOTES

1. The word śikhānte (end of the tuft of hair on the head) here means \textit{dvādaśānta} or \textit{brahmarandhra}.

2. \textit{Tilaka}—a small round dot of sandalwood paste applied on the forhead by the Hindus as a mark of devotion to a deity.

3. When the eyes are pressed, certain sparks appear. The yogi should mentally seize the \textit{bindu} (point) which is one of the sparks appearing in the eye by pressure, and should meditate on that \textit{bindu} either in the heart or \textit{dvādaśānta}. By this practice, his habit of dichotomising thought (\textit{vikalpa}) will disappear, and when that disappears, he will be established in the essential nature of Bhairava.

The word \textit{dhāma} in this context means the light in the eye, or the word \textit{dhāma} may be interpreted as the subtle sparks of light of a lamp that appear at the time of the extinction of its light.

This is an Āṇava upāya.
VERSE 38

Anāhate pātrakarṇe bhagnaśabde sariddrute /
Śabdabrahmaṇi niṣpātāḥ param brahmādhitgamcchati //38

TRANSLATION

One who is deeply versed and deeply bathed or steeped in Nāda which is Brahman in the form of sound (śabdabrahmaṇi niṣpātāḥ), which is vibrating inside without any impact (anāhate), which can be heard only by the ear that becomes competent by yoga (pātrakarṇe), which goes on sounding uninterruptedly (abhagnaśabde) and which is rushing headlong like a river (sariddrute) attains to Brahman (brahmādhitgamcchati).

NOTES

1. There is a double entendre in niṣpāta. It means both well-versed and well bathed (ni-snāta) i.e. deeply steeped.

2. Anāhata nāda literally means unstruck sound. It is a sound that goes on vibrating within spontaneously without any impact. About ten such kinds of nāda (sound) that vibrate within growing subtler and subtler are referred to in books on Yoga. Here the reference is to the subtlest nāda that vibrates in praṇaśakti present in suṣumnā. Prāṇaśakti is, in the universe, representative of parāsakti, the śakti of Parama Śiva. It is the eternal energy of consciousness, the spiritual spanda.

When Kuṇḍalini rises, one is able to hear this. The yogī has to concentrate on this sound which is at first like that of a handbell, then subtler like that of a flute, then subtler still like that of viṇā, and then subtler like that of the buzz of a bee. When the yogī concentrates on this nāda, he forgets everything of the external world, is gradually lost in the internal sound and is finally absorbed in cidākāśa i.e. in the vast expanse of consciousness. This is what is meant by saying that he attains to Brahman. This kind of yoga is known as varṇa in Ānava upāya of Śaiva yoga,
as nādāmuskandhāna in some of the older upanisads and Nātha
tradition, and surati śabda yoga in Kabira and other mediaeval
saints.

3. Pātrakarṇe means that this inner spontaneous sound is
not audible to every ear but only to the ear that is made com­
petent to hear it under the guidance of a guru.

This is an Āṇava upāya.

[ Dhārāṇā 16 ]

VERSE 39

प्रणवाविसमुच्छारात् प्युताती शून्यचावनात् ||
शून्यया परया शक्त्या शून्यतासेति वैरविव || ३६ ||

Praṇavādisamuccārāt plutānte śūnyabhāvanāt/
Śūnyayā parayā śaktyā śūnyatām eti bhairavi. 39//

TRANSLATION

O Bhairavi, by perfect recitation of praṇava or the sacred
syllable Aum, etc and by contemplating over the void at the end
of the protracted phasea of it and by the most eminent energy
of the void,a the yogi attains the void.a

NOTES

1. Et cetera refers to other praṇavas. There are chiefly three
praṇavas—(1) the Vedic praṇava, Aumī. (2) the Śaiva praṇava,
Hūm and (3) the Śākta praṇava, Hrīm.

2. Pluta or the protracted form is an utterance of three
mātrās or moras. Just as the crow of the cock is at first short,
then long and then protracted, even so there are three phases
of the recitation of Aumī—short (hrasva), then long (dirgha) and
then protracted (pluta).

The usual practice in the recitation of Aumī is contemplation
of ardhaçandra, bindu, etc. up to unmanā after the protracted
phase. In the present verse, Bhairava is referring to a different
practice. He says that at the end of the protracted phase of the
recitation, do not contemplate over ardhaçandra, bindu, etc., but
over Śūnya or void. Śūnya or void here means free of all external or internal objective support, of all tattvas, and of all residual traces of kleśas. Gross objects like jar, cloth etc. are external support of the mind, pleasure, pain, etc. are the internal support of the mind, and residual traces are the vāsanās of avidyā, asmitā, rāga, dveṣa and abhiniveśa. Śūnya or void means that which is free of the above conditions. In other words, the mind has to be made nirvikalpa, free of all vikalpas, of all thoughts.

3. The most eminent energy of the void is the energy of the parāśakti.

4. Attaining the void means attaining the nature of Bhairava, which is free of difference, duality and vikalpa.

This begins with Ānava upāya and ends in Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRANA 17]

VERSE 40

Yasya kasyāpi varṇasya pūrvāntavā’nanubhāvayet / Śūnyayā śūnyabhūto’ sau śūnyākāraḥ pumān bhavet // 40

TRANSLATION

The yogi should contemplate over the previous condition of any letter whatsoever before its utterance and its final condition after its utterance as mere void. He will, then with the help of the power of the void, become of the nature and form of the void.

NOTES

1. Power of the void is the power of parāśakti.

2. Of the nature and form of the void means that the yogi will become completely freed from identification with the prāṇa, body, etc. as the Self.

This is Śāktopāya ending in Śāmbhava upāya.
VERSE 41

If one listens with undivided attention to sounds of stringed and other musical instruments which on account of their (uninterrupted) succession are prolonged, he will, at the end, be absorbed in the ether of consciousness (and thus attain the nature of Bhairava).

NOTES

1. The resonance of musical notes lasts for a long time and being melodious it attracts the attention of the listener. Even when it stops, it still reverberates in the mind of the listener. The listener becomes greatly engrossed in it. A musical note, if properly produced, appears to arise out of eternity and finally to disappear in it.

2. When the music stops, it still vibrates in the memory. If the yogi does not allow his mind to wander to something else, but concentrate on the echo of the music, he will be absorbed in the source of all sound, viz; parāvāk and thus will acquire the nature of Bhairava.

VERSE 42

If one listens with undivided attention to sounds of stringed and other musical instruments which on account of their (uninterrupted) succession are prolonged, he will, at the end, be absorbed in the ether of consciousness (and thus attain the nature of Bhairava).
TRANSLATION

By the uccāra\(^1\) of all pindamantras\(^2\) which are arranged in an order of gross letters and which go on vibrating in subtle forms beginning from bindu, ardhacandra, nādānta, etc. and ending in śūnya or unmanā one verily becomes Śiva or it may mean that by parāmarśa or reflection on the pindamantras which are arranged in the order of gross letters as Śūnya or void up to samanā, one attains unmanā state i.e. Śiva.

NOTES

1. Uccāra here does not mean uttering or muttering but moving upward from gross utterance, to subtle spandana (vibration) and finally to mental reflection.

2. Pindamantra is that in which each letter is separately arranged and which usually there is a connecting vowel at the end. Aum is pindamantra, Navātma or the following mantra consisting of nine letters is a pindamantra.

H, R, Kṣ, M, L, V, Y, Ṇ, Īṁ (ह, र, क्ष, म, ल, व, य, न, आँ)

3. In a pindamantra, there is first the muttering of the gross letters, e.g. aum (in case of prānava), and ‘h’ to nūṁ in case of navātma mantra, then reflection on the subtle spandana in the form of bindu, ardhacandra, etc. and finally contemplation on śūnya or unmanā. When by this process the yogi’s mind finally attains to unmanā, he becomes identified with Śiva.

Taking the mantra aum for example, Śivopādhyāya in his commentary shows how its recitation points to the mounting of prāṇaśakti step by step from the navel upto dvādasānta.

‘A’ (आ) of Aum has to be contemplated on in the navel, ‘U’(उ) in the heart i.e. the centre, ‘m’ (म) in the mouth (or according to some in the palate or roof of the mouth), bindu in the centre of the eye-brows, ardhacandra in the forehead, nirodhint in the upper part of the forehead, nāda in the head, nādānta in Brahmaramдра, sakti in the skin, vyāpint in the root of the sikhā (tuft of hair on the top of the head), samanā in the sikhā, and unmanā in the top of the sikhā. Beyond this, there is the vast expanse of consciousness which is Bhairava. The yogi is now identified with Bhairava.
In the navel, centre and mouth, a, u, m, are recited in their gross form. The time taken in the recitation of each of these is one mātrā or mora (time occupied in uttering one short syllable). From bindu upto samanā, the time occupied is ardhamātrā or half a mora. Unmanā is beyond time.

This is Ānava upāya leading to Sāmbhava state.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 20]

VERSE 43

निजवेहे सर्वविवक्ष्य युगपदायवेदिवत्
निर्विकल्पमनात्तस्य वियस्सर्व प्रवत् ॥ ४३ ॥

Nijadehe sarvadikkam yugapad bhāvayed viyat / Nirvikalpamanās tasya viyat sarvam pravartate // 43.

TRANSLATION

If in one’s body, one contemplates over śūnya (spatial vacuity) in all directions simultaneously (i.e. without succession) without any thought-construct, he experiences vacuity all round (and is identified with the vast expanse of consciousness).

NOTES

Two conditions are laid down for this contemplation, viz. (1) yugapat and (2) nirvikalpamanāḥ. The contemplation on the void in all directions has to be done simultaneously and the mind has to be stilled completely. If the Yogi succeeds in fulfilling these two conditions, he will attain to the śūnyatiśūnya plane, to the plane of absolute void in which all differences and distinctions are totally absent.

This is Śākta upāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 21]

VERSE 44

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं युगपदायवेदिवत् ॥
सरीरनिरपेक्षिण्याश्च शून्यमनाप्रवत् ॥ ४४ ॥
Vijñānabhairava

Prṣṭhaśūnyam1 mūlaśūnyam yugapat bhāvayec ca yaḥ / Šarīranirapekṣīṇyā śaktyā2 śūnyamanā bhavet // 44

TRANSLATION

He who contemplates simultaneously on the void above and the void at the base becomes, with the aid of the energy that is independent of the body, void-minded (i.e. completely free of all vikalpas or thought-constructs).

NOTES

1. Prṣṭhaśūnyam here means the void above.
2. Šarīranirapekṣīṇyā śaktyā means with the aid of prāṇa-sakti.

This dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 22]

VERSE 45

 пуत्तसस्य मूलसत्वं हृच्छुन्यं भवयेत्त्वरस्य।
 युगपन्नविकल्पत्वानिविकल्पोदयस्त: || ४५ ||

Prṣṭhaśūnyam mūlaśūnyam hṛcchūnyam bhāvayet sthiram/
Yugapan nirvikalpatvānirvikalpodayas tataḥ || 45.

TRANSLATION

In him who firmly contemplates over the void above, the void at the base and the void in the heart, there arises at the same time, because of his being free of all vikalpas, the state of Śiva who is above all vikalpas (nirvikalpodayaḥ).

NOTES

In his commentary on the verse 45, Śivopādhyāya says that prṣṭhaśūnyam suggests that the yogi should contemplate over the pramātā or the subject as void, mūlaśūnyam suggests that he should contemplate over the prameyas or objects as void, and hṛc-chūnyam suggests that he should contemplate over pramāṇa or knowledge as void.

This dhāraṇā is also Śāktopāya.
[Dhāraṇā 23]  
VERSE 46  

तनूदेशे शुन्यतेषः क्षणात्रां विभावयेत् ।  
निविकल्पं निविकल्पो निविकल्पस्वपुष्पमाक् ॥ ४६ ॥  
Tanūdeśe śūnya-tatvā kṣaṇamātram vibhāvayet /  
Nirvikalpaṁ nirvikalpo nirvikalpasvarūpabhabhāk // 46  

TRANSLATION  

If a yogi contemplates over his body believed to be the limited empirical subject as void even for a while with an attention freed of all vikalpas (thought-constructs), he becomes liberated from vikalpas and finally acquires the state of Bhairava who is above all vikalpas.  

NOTES  

This verse points to three stages of the yogī. Firstly, he contemplates over his body in a vikalpa-free way, secondly, by this practice he develops the tendency of being usually free of vikalpas (nirvikalpaḥ). Lastly, if this tendency is prolonged, he enters the state of Bhairava who is above all vikalpas, whose very nature is nirvikalpa (nirvikalpasvarūpabhabhāk).  
This is Śākta upāya leading to Śāmbhava state.  

[DHāraṇā 24]  
VERSE 47  

सर्वं वैहृंगतं प्रथमं विभावयं मृगेश्वरे ।  
विभावयंतस्तस्तस्त्यं भावना सा स्थिरं भवेत् ॥ ४७ ॥  
Sarvaṁ dehagatam dravyam viyadvyāptam mṛgeśwane /  
Vibhāvayet tatas tasya bhāvanā sa sthirā bhavet // 47  

TRANSLATION  

O gazelle-eyed one, (if the aspirant is incapable of śūnyabhāva immediately), let him contemplate over the constituents of his
body like bone, flesh, etc. as pervaded with mere vacuity. (After this practice), his bhāvanā (contemplation) of vacuity will become steady, (and at last he will experience the light of consciousness).

NOTES

This contemplation is also Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRĀPĀ 25]

VERSE 48

Dehāntare tvagvibhāgam bhittibhūtam vicintayet / Na kiṃcid antare tasya dhyāyann adhyeyabhāg bhavet // 48

TRANSLATION

The yogi should contemplate over the skin-part in his body like (an outer, inconscient) wall. “There is nothing substantial inside it (i.e. the skin)”¹; meditating like this, he reaches a state which transcends all things meditable.²

NOTES

1. Every man is habitually identified with his body. When the yogi develops the practice of detaching his consciousness from the limits of the body, he develops a sense of all-pervasiveness.

2. When by the above practice, the yogi attains cosmic consciousness, then he experiences Śiva-Vyāpti; he is completely identified with Śiva. The sense of a separate limited experient disappears. Now there is no object for him to meditate on. The very distinction between subject and object disappears. In the words of Bhairava Himself Evamvidhe pare tattve kah pūjyah kaśca trpyati (Verse 16) “When the Highest Reality is realized, who is the object of worship; who is to be satisfied with worship.”
This is Śāktopāya leading to the state of Śīva, leading from śūnya (void) to mahāśūnya (the vast void).

[Ḍhāraṇā 26]

VERSE 49

हृद्याकाशे निलाक्षाः पद्मसम्पुटाद्यागः।
अनन्याचेता: सुभागे परं सीताश्वमाण्यायत् ॥ ४६ ॥

Hṛdyākāśe nilākṣaḥ padmasampūṭamadhyagaḥ /
Ananyacetāḥ subhage param saubhāgyam āpnyat // 49.

TRANSLATION

He whose mind together with the other senses is merged in the interior space of the heart,¹ who has entered mentally into the centre of the two bowls of the heart-lotus,² who has excluded everything else from consciousness³ acquires the highest fortune⁴, O beautiful one.

NOTES

1. The word hṛt or heart does not mean the physical heart. It means the central spot in the body above the diaphragm. It is an etheric structure resembling lotus, just as the physical heart resembles a lotus. In the centre of this etheric heart resides cit — the consciousness which is always a pramātā or subject, never a prameya or object. It is this centre which is the essential Self of man and macrocosmically the centre of all manifestation. The word used in the original is hṛdaya which means both ‘pertaining to the heart’, and ‘pleasant’.

2. The lotus is like two hemispherical bowls blended into one. Śivopādhyāya says in his commentary that the upper bowl of the heart lotus represents pramāṇa or knowledge and the lower bowl represents prameya or object. The madhya or centre of this heart-lotus represents the pramātā or knower, the Self. It is in this centre or the Self into which the yogī has to plunge mentally.

3. This means who is one-pointed.
4. Śivopādhyāya explains param saubhāgyam (highest fortune) as viṣvesvaratā - svarūpam paramānandam which means the highest bliss consisting in the lordship of the universe. Kṣemarāja has quoted this verse in his commentary on sūtra 15 of Section I of Śiva-sūtras. He also explains saubhāgyam as viṣvesvaratāpattiḥ or acquisition of the lordship of the universe. This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 27]

VERSE 50

Sarvataḥ svaśarirasya dvādaśante manolayat / Dr̥ḍhabuddher dr̥ḍhibhutam tattvalakṣyam pravartate// 50

TRANSLATION

When the body of the yogi is penetrated by consciousness in all parts and his mind which has become firm by one-pointedness (dr̥ḍhibhūtām) is dissolved in the dvādaśānta situated in the body, then that yogi whose intellect has become firm experiences the characteristic of Reality.

NOTES

It is not quite clear what exactly is meant by the dvādaśānta of the body. In the body the dvādaśāntas (a distance of 12 fingers) are from the navel to the heart, from the heart to the throat, from the throat to the forehead and from the forehead to the top of the cranium. Probably, it refers to Brahmarandhra, the dvādaśānta from the forehead to the top of the cranium.

Ānandabhaṭṭa says in his commentary Vijñānakaumudi that ‘dvādaśānta’ may mean śūnyātiśūnya or the cosmic void or it may mean the madhya nādi of the body i.e. suṣumnā.

The dhāraṇā is one of āṇavopāya leading to Śāktopāya.
VERSE 51

If one fixes one’s mind at dvādaśānte again and again (pratikṣaṇaṁ) howsoever and wheresoever, the fluctuation of his mind will diminish and in a few days, he will acquire an extraordinary status.

NOTES

1. The mind has to be fixed at any dvādaśānta from the body whether it is the superior or ūrdhva dvādaśānta or Brahmarandhra or bāhya dvādaśānta i.e. in exterior space at a distance of 12 fingers from the nose, or āntara dvādaśānta i.e. the interior dvādaśānta in the centre of the body, etc.

2. Śivopādhyāya explains this as asāmānya parabhairava-rūpatā i.e. the incomparable and ineffable state of Bhairava. This is Āṇavopāya.

VERSE 52

(Uttering the formula aum ra-ksa-ra-ya-um tanum daḥayāmi namaḥ), one should contemplate in the following way “My
body has been burnt by the fire of kālāgni rising from the toe of my right foot." He will then experience his (real) nature which is all peace.  

1. Kālāgni Rudra is the universal destroyer. The aspirant should imagine that his whole body is being burnt by the flames of Kālāgni Rudra. The idea is that all the impurities that are due to the limitation of the body have to be destroyed by Kālāgni Rudra who destroys all impurities, sins, etc.

2. Kālapada is a technical term for the toe of the right foot.

3. By this practice, the aspirant feels that his impurities have been burnt away and thus he experiences his essential Self which is all peace and joy.

This is an Ānava upāya.

[ Dhāraṇā 30 ]

VERSE 53

एवमेव जगत्संव वर्धं ध्यात्म विकल्पतः ||
अनन्यचेतस: पुंसः पुंसाव: परसे प्रवेदत् || 53 ||

Evam eva jagat sarvaṁ dagdham dhyātvā vikalpataḥ /
Ananyacetasaḥ pumśaḥ pumbhāvaḥ paramo bhavet // 53.

TRANSLATION

In this way, if the aspirant imagines that the entire world is being burnt by the fire of Kālāgni and does not allow his mind to wander away to anything else, then in such a person, the highest state of man appears.

NOTES

1. In the previous dhāraṇā, it was one’s own body that had to be imagined as being burnt by kālāgni; in the present dhāraṇā, it is the entire world that has to be imagined as being burnt by Kālāgni.

2. The highest state of man is as Śivopādhyāya puts it in his commentary, aparimitapramāṭbhairavatā—‘the nature of Bhairava that is the Infinite Subject.’ It is this nature that the aspirant will acquire by this dhāraṇā. This dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.
VERSE 54

स्वेते जगतो वापि सूक्षसूक्ष्मतराणि च।
तत्त्वानि यानि निलयं ध्यात्वाते ध्यायते परा॥ ५४ ॥

Svadehe jagato vāpi sūkṣmasūkṣmatarāṇi ca /
Tattvāni yāni nilayaṁ dhyātvānte vyajyate parā //54

TRANSLATION

If the yogi thinks deeply that the subtle and subtler constitutive principles of one's own body or of the world are being absorbed in their own respective causes,¹ then at the end, parā devī or the supreme goddess is revealed.²

NOTES

1. This verse refers to the technique of vyāpti or fusion by which the gross tattva (constitutive principle of manifestation) is reabsorbed into the subtle, the subtle into the subtler, the subtler into the subtlest, e.g. the pañca-mahābhūtas—the five gross material principles are to be contemplated as being absorbed into the tanmātrās (primary subtle elements of perception), the tanmātrās into ahaṁkāra (the I or ego-making principle), this into buddhi, this again into prakṛti and so on till all are finally reabsorbed into Sadāśiva. Then Śakti or what has been designated as parā devī (the supreme goddess) is revealed. This kind of vyāpti or fusion which has been described in this verse is known as ātmavyāpti.

   There is another stage of vyāpti, known as Śivavyāpti which will be described in verse 57.

2. At the appearance of parā devī, the entire cosmos appears as nothing but the expression of that universal Divine Energy. Everything is surrendered unto Her and the sense of difference disappears.

   This verse refers to Śāktopāya.
VERSE 55

If prānasakti which is gross and thick, is made frail and subtle (by yogic discipline, particularly prāṇāyāma) and if a yogi meditates on such sakti either in dvādaśānta or in the heart (i.e. the centre of the body) by entering mentally into it, he is liberated and he gains his (natural) sovereign power.

NOTES

The reading of the last line as given by Abhinavagupta in Tantraloka (Ā XV, verses 480-81) is different. It is suptah svācchandyam āpnuyāt. Kṣemarāja reads the last line in Spandaniniyā (p. 56) as svapnasvātantryam āpnuyāt which is practically the same as Abhinavagupta’s.

According to Svāmi Lakṣmaṇa Joo, the traditional interpretation of this verse is the following:

Pīnām indicates that the breath has to be inhaled or exhaled in a gross way i.e. with sound and durbalām indicates that the inhalation or exhalation has to be done slowly. According to the above reading the meaning of the verse would be “If the yogi practises breathing (both inhalation and exhalation) with sound and slowly meditating in dvādaśānta and in the heart (centre), goes to sleep, he will acquire the freedom to control his dream i.e. he will have only the dream that he desires to have.”

This is Anava upāya leading to Sāmbhava state.
Vijñānabhairava

Bhuvanādhvādirupeṇa cintayet kramaśo’khilam /
Sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā yāvadante manolayaḥ //56.

TRANSLATION

One should contemplate step by step on the whole universe under the form of bhuvana and other adhvās1 (courses) as being dissolved successively from the gross state into the subtle and from the subtle state into the supreme state till finally one’s mind is dissolved in Cinmātra (pure consciousness).2

NOTES

1. According to Trika philosophy the whole universe consisting of subjective and objective aspects is a proliferation of the svātantrya sākṣi or parāvāk under six forms known as saḍadhvā which means six routes or courses (ṣaṭ = six) adhvā = route, course). Three of them are under the vācaka (indicator) side which is the subjective or grāhaka aspect of manifestation; the other three are under the vācyā, the indicated or objective side.

At the level of parāvāk, vācaka and vācyā, sabda and artha, word and object are in a state of indistinguishable unity. In manifestation, these begin to differentiate. The first adhvā or step of this differentiation is the polarity of varṇa and kāla. Varṇa at this stage, does not mean letter, or colour, or class. It means a measure index of the function-form associated with the object, and kāla means an aspect of creativity. Varṇa is the function-form and kāla is predicable. This is the first adhvā of the polarisation of parāvāk. This adhvā is known as para (supreme) or abheda, for at this stage, there is no difference between varṇa or kāla, the creative aspect.

The next adhvā or step in the creative descent is the polarity of mantra and tattva. This level of creativity is known as parāpara or bhedabheda (identity in difference) or sūkṣma (subtle). Mantra is the basic formula of tattva: tattva is the principle or source and origin of the subtle structural forms.

The third and final polarity is that of pada and bhuvana. This level of manifestation is known as that of aparā (inferior) or
bheda (total difference between the vācaka and vācyā) or sthūla (gross). Bhuvana is the universe as it appears to apprehending centres like ourselves. Pada is the actual formulation of that universe by mind reaction and speech.

The trika or triad on the vācaka side is known as kālādhvā i.e. of temporal order, and the trika or triad on vācyā side is known as deśādhvā or of spatial order.

The saḍadhvā may be arranged in the following tabular form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>VĀCAKA OR ŚABDA</strong></th>
<th><strong>VĀCYA OR ARTHA</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The subjective order; the temporal order, phonematic manifestation.</td>
<td>The objective order; the spatial order; cosmogonic manifestation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para or abhedā level.</td>
<td>Varna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parāpara or bhedābheda or sūkṣma level.</td>
<td>Kalā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apara or bheda or sthūla level.</td>
<td>Mantra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pada or bheda or sthūla level.</td>
<td>Tattva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhuvana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these, each preceding adhvā is vyāpaka i.e., pervasive, inhering (in the succeeding one) and each succeeding adhvā is vyāpya i.e. capable of being pervaded by the preceding one. So there is vyāpyavyāpaka relationship among these.

2. The dhāraṇā or the yogic practice recommended here is that the yogi should practise the bhāvanā or imaginative contemplation of the succeeding gross (sthūla) adhvā being dissolved in the preceding subtle (sūkṣma) adhvā. The gross (sthūla) manifestation, viz., pada and bhuvana should be earnestly imagined as being dissolved in their preceding subtle (sūkṣma) origins, viz., mantra and tattva; mantra and tattva, the subtle adhvā, should in turn, be earnestly imagined as being dissolved in their preceding supreme (para) origin varṇa and kalā. Finally these should be imagined as being dissolved in parāvāka or parāśakti, and parāvāk in Śiva i.e. cinmātra or vijñāna (pure consciousness) which alone is Bhairava or the ultimate Divine principle.
Kramaśaḥ in the verse means step by step, i.e. the first step should consist of the practice of the bhāvanā of the sthūla or gross manifestation being dissolved into the subtle (sūksma) one. When by sufficient practice of this bhāvanā, the yogī is fully convinced that this solid seeming world (bhuvana) and gross speech (pada) are only an appearance of a much subtler process of mantra and tattva, he should take the next step which would consist of the bhāvanā of the subtle (sūksma) mantra and tattva as being dissolved into the supreme (para) aspects of vara, kalā, and so on.

When the yogī has sufficiently practised the bhāvanā of the dissolution of the entire manifestation into cit or vijñāna, he will attain to the plane of Bhairava and his manas or citta will be automatically dissolved into cit (pure consciousness). This is known as laya bhāvanā (creative contemplation pertaining to dissolution). This ascent to the Divine is known as āroha or adhyāroha krama, the process of ascent. The 13th sūtra of Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam expressly says that citta finally becomes citi. This is known as cittapralaya or the dissolution of the empirical individual mind into the Divine.

The difference between this dhāraṇā and dhāraṇā No. 30 in verse 54 consists in the fact that the dhāraṇā described in verse 54 leads the yogī only upto the subtle sakti where parā devī reveals Herself, but this leads the yogī upto the utmost plane of Śiva where the individual mind completely dissolves into the universal consciousness. In verse 54, the aim was the realization of the Supreme Power that is the source of the gross manifestation of the universe. In verse 56, the emphasis is on the transformation of the individual consciousness by its dissolution into the universal Divine Consciousness (Manolaya or cittapralaya). So, this is Sāktopāya leading to Śāmbhava state.
Asya sarvasya viśvasya paryanteṣu samantataḥ / Adhvapraṇakriyayā tattvam śaivam dhyātvā mahodayaḥ //57

TRANSLATION

If one meditates on the Śaiva tattva¹ (which is the quintessence) of this entire universe on all sides and to its last limits by the technique of śaḍadhvā² he will experience great awakening.³

NOTES

1. Śiva is both prakāśa and vīmaṛṣa, both the light of Consciousness and the consciousness or awareness of that consciousness. Śaiva tattva is the svarūpa or essential nature of Śiva. Meditating on Śaiva tattva means meditating on the svarūpa (own form, essential nature) of Śiva who is both prakāśa and vīmaṛṣa.

2. The śaḍadhvā has two sides—Vācaka and vācyā. The vācaka side—varṇa, mantra and pada are an expression of prakāśa, the vācyā side—kalā tattva, and bhuvana are an expression of vīmaṛṣa.

In the previous dhāraṇā No. 32 in verse 56, the technique of the śaḍadhvā was used for tracing back the entire universe of subjects and objects to its source, the Central Reality. Here the technique of śaḍadhvā is to be used for realizing the svarūpa or essential nature of this Central Reality. The technique of śaḍadhvā is incomplete if it simply ends in re-integrating the universe to its source. It has still to realize the śaiva tattva, the nature of the Central Reality which is both prakāśa and vīmaṛṣa in one and the source of both the vācaka and vācyā of the śaḍadhvā.

Again in dhāraṇā No. 30 (verse 54), the technique of tracing back the constitutive principles was used for ātmavyāpti, for the fusion of manifestation into the essential Self which, according to the Trika system, is a lower ideal. Ātmavyāpti emphasizes prakāśa which does not necessarily include the universe. In verse 57, the ideal of realization that is emphasized is Śiva-vyāpti, fusion into Śiva who is both prakāśa and vīmaṛṣa. It is the Reality that is inclusive of the universe. In this realization, the universe is not negated but seen sub specie eternitatis, under the
form of the Eternal, as an expression of the vimāra aspect of Śiva.

3. This great awakening is the realization of the svarūpa or essential nature of Śiva who is both prakāśa and vimāra.

The difference between the previous dhārāṇā (in verse 56) and this one (verse 57) lies in the fact that in the previous dhārāṇā the dissolution of both the objective and subjective order was to be contemplated one by one successively (kramataḥ) i.e. first the dissolution of the gross into the subtle, and then of the subtle into the supreme, whereas in the present dhārāṇā (verse 57) the dissolution of the entire world (asya sarvasya viśvasya) has to be contemplated simultaneously and integrally into Śiva tattva. As Śivopādhyāya puts it, Bhuvanādiadhvaparyante!u jagata~ Siva vinā na kiñcit iti jagad rūpam tyaktvā, śivameva dhyāyato mahodayaḥ syāt. The reality of this world is nothing apart from Śiva. Therefore this world should be viewed not as the world (i.e. as something different from Śiva) but as the modality of Śiva. Therefore it is Śiva alone who has to be contemplated on. Thus there will be mahodaya i.e. great spiritual Awakening. This dhārāṇā is Śākṭopāya.

[ Dhārāṇā 35 ]

VERSE 58

Viśvam etan mahādevi śūnyabhūtaṁ vicintayet /
Tatraiva ca mano līnāṁ tattvālayābhājanam //58

TRANSLATION

O great goddess, the yogī should concentrate intensely on the idea that this universe is totally void. In that void; his mind would become absorbed. Then he becomes highly qualified for absorption i.e. his mind is absorbed in śūnyātisūnya, the absolute void i.e. Śiva.
NOTES

This dhāraṇā is the first of a number of dhāraṇās on śūnya (void) which will come later on in the book. This is Śāktiopāya leading to Śāmbhava state.

[ Dhāraṇā 36 ]

VERSE 59

Ghataśīrṣaḥ Janāṃ vṛttiv śīśitaśvasthaktaṁ vinirdhīṣyetaṁ
Tattvam tatśaṁāgatvā tattvātātmayā śvetam \ 59 //

Ghataśīrṣaḥ Janāṃ vṛttiv śīśitaśvasthaktaṁ vinirdhīṣyetaṁ
Tattvam tatśaṁāgatvā tattvātātmayā śvetam \ //59

TRANSLATION

A yogi should cast his eyes in the empty space inside a jar or any other object leaving aside the enclosing partitions. His mind will in an instant get absorbed in the empty space (inside the jar) When his mind is absorbed in that empty space, he should imagine that his mind is absorbed in a total void. He will then realize his identification with the Supreme.

NOTES

Casting one’s gaze into the empty space inside a jar is a device for preparing the mind for getting absorbed in total void. When the mind is absorbed in the empty space of the jar, the aspirant should imagine that the empty space has extended into a total void. Thus his mind will be absorbed in the absolute void i.e. Śiva.

This is Śāmbhava upāya.

[ Dhāraṇā 37 ]

VERSE 60

Nirvāṇaṁ kṣaṇiprāśaṁ vṛttiv vinirdhīṣyetaṁ
Vilīne manasaṁ pāve vṛttīśve: prajāyate \ 60 //

Nirvāṇaṁ kṣaṇiprāśaṁ vṛttiv vinirdhīṣyetaṁ
Vilīne manasaṁ pāve vṛttīśve: prajāyate \ //60//
One should cast his gaze on a region in which there are no trees, on mountain, on high defensive wall. His mental state being without any support will then dissolve and the fluctuations of his mind will cease.

NOTES

1. The idea is that when the mind dwells on a vast vacant space, then being without the support of any definite concrete object, the mind gets absorbed in that void.

2. When the mind is absorbed in a vast open space, its vikalpas or thought-constructs come to a dead stop. That is the moment when the Light within makes its presence felt and the aspirant realizes that there is a deeper Reality than what is open to the senses.

Abhinavagupta quotes the first line of this verse in his Parātrīṃśikā (on p. 136) and confirms that, in such a moment, there is Bhairavabodhānupraveśa (entry into Bhairava-consciousness).

This type of fixed gaze into vast vacant space without any thought-construct or objective support for the mind is known as drṣṭibandhanabhāvanā. As there is neither meditation nor japa (recitation of mantra), nor any meditation involved in this dhāraṇā, this is Śāmbhava upāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 38]

VERSE 61

उभयोंप्रसर्योभिनि ध्यात्वा मध्यं समाभयेत् ।
युगपच्छ हुयं त्यत्तु वा मध्ये तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६१ ॥

Udbhayor bhāvayor jñāne dhyātvā madhyam samāśrayet /
Yugapac ca dvayaṁ tyaktvā madhye tattvam prakāśate //61
TRANSLATION

At the moment when one has perception or knowledge of two objects or ideas, one should simultaneously banish both perceptions or ideas and apprehending the gap or interval between the two, should mentally stick to it (i.e. the gap). In that gap will Reality flash forth suddenly.

NOTES

The reading jñātvā instead of dhyātvā has been adopted by Jayaratha in Tantrāloka I, p. 127. This reading gives better sense.

The above is Śākta upāya. Our mind is always caught up in perceptions or ideas. We are prisoners of our own ideas. Behind all the activities of the mind lies Reality which gives life to our mental activity. That Reality cannot be viewed as an object, for it is the Eternal Subject and ground of all experience. If we do not allow our mind to be carried away by the perceptions or ideas succeeding each other incessantly but rather let our mind dip in the gap between the two perceptions or ideas without thinking of any thing, we will, to our surprise, be bathed in that Reality which can never be an object of thought.

This is known as nirālamba bhāvanā or creative contemplation without any object as support for the mind. This verse has been quoted as an example of nirālamba bhāvanā in Netra Tantra (pt.I.p.201). This is also Śūnya bhāvanā—an example of the mind sounding its plummet in the depth of the void.

The sudden flash of Reality by this practice has been designated unmeṣa or opening out in Spanda-Kārikā. Abandonment of the two perceptions or ideas that precede and succeed the gap is known as anālocana or non-observation. The two ideas have not to be pushed aside by effort but have to be abandoned by a smooth, gentle non-observation. This is a very important and unfailing dhāranā for the grasp of Reality or nature of Bhairava.
When the mind of the aspirant that comes to quit one object is firmly restrained (niruddha) and does not move towards any other object, it comes to rest in a middle position between the two and through it (i.e. the middle position) is unfolded intensely the realization of pure consciousness in all its intensity.

NOTES

The previous dhāranā advises the aspirant to reject two positive objects, perceptions or thoughts (ubhayor bhāvayoh) and contemplate on the middle i.e. the gap between the two. In the present dhāranā, the aspirant is advised to contemplate on the middle or gap between one positive bhāva or object and another negative bhāva i.e. another bhāva which the aspirant has not allowed to arise in the mind. This is the main difference between the two dhāranās. The result is the same, viz.; the emergence of the essential Self or the nature of Bhairava.

Abhinavagupta refers to this in verse No. 84 in Tantrāloka pt. I

| अत्मा धर्म: इत्यूक्त: शिवामृतपरिप्लुत: । |
| प्रकाशाशरसितं ज्ञान भावाभावादिमथ्यत: ॥ |

It is ātmā (self) alone who is the essential nature, full of the ambrosia of Śiva. The knowledge that one derives by contemplation on the middle between two objects or between one positive and another negative object abides in the light of the self.
The following commentary of Jayaratha leaves no room for doubt that the above verse of Abhinavagupta refers to the two dhāraṇās mentioned in Verse No. 61 and 62 of Vijñānabhairava.

"भावद्वस्य भावाभाष्योऽव्य वर्तीकाले मध्यं तद्विशा वच्चेदद्वेतुं शून्यमुलभ्य तद्भावाभाववादि युगपद्यक्त्वा तत्तैव सावधानस्य परमोपेये शिवामृतपरिप्लुते परमात्मनि वृत्तिर्जिते इति"।

"The middle state i.e. the gap between two positive objects or between one positive and another negative object is śūnya or void which is the ground of the determination of both. In him who apprehends that void and abandoning simultaneously both positive perceptions or positive and negative perceptions fixes his attention on that alone arises that stability in the Highest Self (paramātmani) who is the highest objective and who is full of the ambrosia of Śiva. In confirmation of the above explanation Jayaratha quotes the verses 61 and 62 of Vijñānabhairava.

Like the previous one, this dhāraṇā is also Śāktopāya.

The reading adopted by the text printed in the Kashmir Series is bhāve nyakte, which means ‘when the mind is fixed on an object which was never seen previously like Śiva with three eyes, Viṣṇu with four arms’. Bhāve tyakte is, however, a better and more authentic reading as is evident from Jayaratha’s commentary quoted above.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 40]

VERSE 63

सर्व वेदं चिन्मयं हि जगद्वा परिभाष्येत्।
युगपद्यवकल्पन सत्ता परमोदयः॥ ६३॥

Sarvam deham cinmayam hi jagad va paribhavayet /
Yugapan nirvikalpena manasā paramodayah //63.

TRANSLATION

When an aspirant contemplates with mind unwavering and free from all alternatives his whole body or the entire universe
simultaneously as of the nature of consciousness, he experiences Supreme Awakening.

NOTES

There are two important conditions in this contemplation. Firstly, it should be done *nirvikalpena manasā*, with an unhesitating, unwavering mind free from all doubts and alternatives. Secondly, it should be *yugapat* i.e. simultaneously, in one sweep, not in succession, not in bits.

*Paramodayaḥ* or the Supreme Awakening referred to means that he realizes that the entire universe is enveloped in Divine Light.

This is a *Śākta upāya*.

[Dhāraṇā 41]

VERSE 64

वायुद्वायस्य सांघटावत्तव्य बहिर्न्ततः ।
योजी समत्वविज्ञानसमुदगमनाजनम् ॥ ६४ ॥

Vāyudvayasya saṅghāṭād antarvā bahir antataḥ /
Yogī samatvavijñānasamudgamanabhājanam // 64

TRANSLATION

By the fusion (*saṁghāṭta*) of the two breaths, viz., *prāṇa* (expiration) rising inwardly in the centre and *apāna* (inspiration) rising externally in *dvādaśānta*, there arises finally a condition in which there is complete cessation of both whether in the centre or in the *dvādaśānta*. By meditating over that condition of void in which there is no feeling of either *prāṇa* or *apāna*, the *yogī* becomes so competent that there arises in him the intuitive experience of Equality (*samatva-vijñāna-samudgamana*)

NOTES

This is an *Āṇava upāya* leading to *Śāktopāya*. 
VERSE 65

Sarvāṃ jagat svadeham vā svānandabharitam smaret
Yugapat svāmrtenaiva parānandamayo bhavet

TRANSLATION

The yogī should contemplate the entire universe or his own body simultaneously in its totality as filled with his (essential, spiritual) bliss. Then through his own ambrosia-like bliss, he will become identified with the supreme bliss.

NOTES

1. Simultaneously (yugapat) means ‘with totality of attention,’ in one sweep of attention, not in bits.
2. ‘His own bliss’ means ‘his own essential spiritual or divine bliss’ (cidānanda), not the pleasure derived from sense-objects.
3. The word mrtena or ambrosia points to the fact that there is no change in this bliss. It is eternal.

Kṣemarāja has quoted this verse in Śiva-Sūtra vimarśini at two places, in I, 18, and III, 39.

According to Svāmī Lakṣmaṇa Joo, the word ‘vā’ occurring in this verse should not be taken in the sense ‘or’ but in the sense of ‘ca’ i.e. ‘and’ (samuccaya). So the first line of the verse would mean ‘The yogi should contemplate the entire universe and his body simultaneously in totality as filled with his spiritual bliss’.

This dhāraṇā is also Śāktopāya.

VERSE 66

This dhāraṇā is also Śāktopāya.
**TRANSLATION**

O gazelle-eyed one, by the employment of magic, supreme delight arises (in the heart of the spectator) instantaneously. (In this condition of the mind), Reality manifests itself.

**NOTES**

When a spectator beholds some wonderful magical performance, his ordinary normal consciousness is raised to a plane where there is no distinction between subject and object, where it is freed of all thought-constructs and is filled with reverential awe, with mute wonder and ineffable joy. At that plane of consciousness is revealed the essential nature of Bhairava. This is only one example. When by contemplating on any scene—vast, awe-inspiring, deeply moving, the mind is thrown into ecstasy and mute wonder, it passes into nirvikalpa state, then that is the moment when suddenly and instantaneously Supreme Reality reveals itself.

This is an example of Sākta upāya.

According to Svāmī Lakṣmana Joo, this verse can have another meaning also. The word 'kuhana' also means 'tickling the arm-pit'. So the verse would mean, "O gazelle-eyed one, by tickling the arm-pit, there occurs instantaneously a great joy. If one contemplates over the essential nature of joy, Reality manifests itself."

[Dhāraṇā 44]

**VERSE 67**

सर्वलोकोनिविन्दनः प्राणशक्तियोपवेया शान: ।
पिपिलस्त्पश्वेलायं प्रथते परसं सुखम् ॥ ६७ ॥

Sarvasrotonibandhena prāṇaśaktyordhvaya śanaiḥ /
Pipilasparśavelāyāṃ prathate paramam sukham // 67
TRANSLATION

When by stopping the opening of all the senses the current of all sensory activity is stopped, the *prāṇasakti* moves slowly upward (in the middle *nādi* or *suṣumnā* from *mūlādhāra* towards *Brahmarandhra*), then in the upward movement of *prāṇasakti*, there is felt a tingling sensation (at the various stations in the middle *nādi*) like the one created by the movement of an ant (over the body). At the moment of that sensation, there ensues supreme delight.

NOTES

The main point in this *dhāraṇā* is that when *prāṇasakti* moves upward, there is the awakening of *Kūṇḍalinī* which moves upward towards *dvādaśānta* i.e. towards *Brahmarandhra*. This slow and gradual movement of *prāṇasakti* or of *kūṇḍalinī* gives a sensation like that of the movement of an ant over the body. This sensation at the time of the ant-like movement of *prāṇasakti* is very pleasant.

Śivopādhyāya says that the upward movement of *prāṇasakti* can be achieved by *kumbhaka prāṇāyāma*. He quotes Patañjali’s *Yoga-sūtras* (II,49-50) which say that *prāṇa* can be made *dirghasūksma* (prolonged and subtle) by *kumbhaka prāṇāyāma* (restraint of breath). This would be *ānava upāya*. But Patañjali does not refer to *Kūṇḍalinī* yoga. Śivopādhyāya’s quotation from Patañjali in this context is irrelevant.

What the *dhāraṇā* actually means to say is that when the openings of all the senses are stopped and the mind is kept free of all thought-constructs (*nirvikalpa*) the *prāṇasakti*, becomes active in the *suṣumnā*, and as the *kūṇḍalinī* rises slowly towards *Brahmarandhra*, one feels like the sensation of an ant creeping over the body. At that time, the yogī experiences the movement of *kūṇḍalinī* from one station to another and is overjoyed.

[ *Dhāraṇā* 45]  

VERSE 68

वहनेविषयं मध्ये तु चित्तं सुखमयं क्षपेत् ।  
केवलं वायुपूर्णं वा स्मरानन्देन युक्त्यते ॥ ६८ ॥
Vahner viśasya madhye tu cittaṃ sukhamayaṃ kṣipet
Kevalaṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā smarāṇandena yujyate // 68

TRANSLATION

One should throw (i.e. concentrate) the delightful citta in the middle of vahni and vīṣa bothways whether by itself or permeated by vāyu (prānic breath), one would then be joined to the bliss of sexual union.

NOTES

Vahni and vīṣa are technical terms of this yoga. Vahni stands for saṅkoca (contraction) by the entrance of prāṇa (in meḍhra-kanda which is near the root of the rectum), Vīṣa connotes vikāsa or expansion. Vahni refers to adhāh kuṇḍalini, and vīṣa to urydhvakuṇḍalini. Īrdrhva kuṇḍalini is the condition when the prāṇa and apāna enter the susumnā and the kuṇḍalini rises up. Kuṇḍalini is a distinct sakti that lies folded up in three and a half valayas or folds in Mūlādhāra. When she rises from one-three-fourths of the folds, goes up through susumnā, crosses Lambika and pierces Brahmārāndhra, she is known as Īrdrhva kuṇḍalini, and this pervasion of hers is known as vikāsa or vīṣa.

Adhāh kuṇḍalini—Its field is from Lambika down to one-three-fourth of the folds of kuṇḍalini lying folded in the mūlādhāra. Prāṇa goes down in adhāh kuṇḍalini from Lambika towards mūlādhāra.

The entrance of prāṇa into adhāh kuṇḍalini is saṅkoca or vahni; rising into īrdrhva kuṇḍalini is vikāsa or vīṣa. Vahni is symbolic of prāṇa vāyu and vīṣa of apāna vāyu. Entering into the root, middle and tip of adhāh kuṇḍalini is known as vahni or saṅkoca. Vahni is derived from the root vah—to carry. Since prāṇa is carried down up to mūlādhāra in this state, it is called vahni.

The word vīṣa does not mean poison here. It is derived from the root viṣ ‘to pervade.’ Vīṣa, therefore, refers to prasara or vikāsa (expansion).

When the prāṇa and apāna enter the susumnā, the citta or the individual consciousness should be stopped or suspended
between the *vahni* and *viṣa* or in other words between the *adhāh kunḍalini* and the *ūrdhva kunḍalini*.

*Vāyupūrṇa* or full of *vāyu* means that the *citta* should be restrained in such a way that *vāyu* may neither pass out through the nostrils nor through the male organ and the anus. *Citta* and *vāyu* are inter-connected. Restraint of the one brings about the restraint of the other.

*Smarāṇanda* or bliss of sexual union: When the *citta* can be restrained between the *adhāh* and *ūrdhva kunḍalini*, one has the joy of sexual union. This is inverted union. Sexual union is external; this union is internal.

This *dhāraṇā* is *Anava upāya*.

[Dhāraṇā 46]

VERSE 69

ಶಕ್ತಿಸಂಪರ್ಷ್ಟವಾದಸ್ಥಲ- ಶಾಕ್ತಾವೇಶಾವಸ್ಥಾನಿಕಮ್; ।
ವಸುಂಬರ ಶಾಂತಸ್ವಶಸ್ತ್ರ ತತ್ತುಂಬರ ಸ್ವಾಧ್ಯಿಮುಖತೆ ॥ ६४ ॥

Śaktisaṅghamasāṁkṣubdhaśaktyāvesāvasānīkam /
Yat sukham brahmatattvasya tat sukham svākyam ucyate // 69

TRANSLATION

At the time of sexual intercourse with a woman, an absorption into her is brought about by excitement, and the final delight that ensues at orgasm betokens the delight of Brahman. This delight is (in reality) that of one's own Self.

NOTES

1. This absorption is only symbolic of the absorption in the Divine Energy. This illustration has been given only to show that the highest delight ensues only at the disappearance of duality. Sivopādhyāya quotes a verse which clarifies the esoteric meaning of this union.
"Just as being locked in embrace with a woman, one is totally dissolved in the feeling of one-ness (unity) and one loses all sense of anything external or internal, even so when the mind is dissolved in the Divine Energy, one loses all sense of duality and experiences the delight of unity-consciousness. The Śruti (scripture) speaks of the union with a woman only to illustrate the union with the Divine. It is only a fool who takes this illustration as an injunction for carnal pleasure.

2. The delight is that of one’s own Self. It does not come from any external source. The woman is only an occasion for the manifestation of that delight.

This dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRANA 47]

VERSE 70

Lehanāmanthanākoṭaiḥ strīsuḵasya bharat smṛteḥ /  
Saḵtyabhāve’pi deveśi bhaved ānandasamplavaḥ // 70

TRANSLATION

O goddess, even in the absence of a woman, there is a flood of delight, simply by the intensity of the memory of sexual pleasure in the form of kissing, embracing, pressing, etc.

NOTES

Since the sexual pleasure is obtained simply by memory even in the absence of a woman, it is evident that the delight is inherent within. It is this delight apart from any woman that one should meditate on in order to realize the bliss of the divine consciousness.

This dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRANA 48]

VERSE 71

Āṇavān māhītī pārte bṛṇte va bāṇḍhve ciraṭ ।  
Prāṇānīsmuṣyaṁ ḍhāyaṁ tāḷṭvastanānaḥ pravet- // 71 //
Anande mahati prāpte dṛṣṭe vā bāndhave cīrāt /
Anandam udgataṁ dhyātvā tallayas tanmanā bhavet // 71

TRANSLATION

On the occasion of a great delight being obtained, or on the occasion of delight arising from seeing a friend or relative after a long time, one should meditate on the delight itself and become absorbed in it, then his mind will become identified with it.

NOTES

On the occasion of such great delight or intensive experience, one should lay hold of the source of such experience, viz, the spanda or the pure spiritual throb and meditate on it till his mind is deeply steeped in it. He will then become identified with the Spiritual Principle. Such an experience vanishes quickly, therefore, one should seize it mentally as soon as the experience occurs.

This dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.

[DHāraṇā 49]

VERSE 72

Jagdhipānakṛt tollāsarasānandavijrmbhanat /
Bhāvayed bharitāvasthām mahānandas tato bhavet // 72

TRANSLATION

When one experiences the expansion of joy of savour arising from the pleasure of eating and drinking, one should meditate on the perfect condition of this joy, then there will be supreme delight.

NOTES

If the yogi meditates on the perfect condition of the joy that arises even from the satisfaction of physical needs, he will feel
that the source of this joy is also the divine spanda, and being absorbed in it, he will experience supreme spiritual bliss. This dhāraṇā is also Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 50]

VERSE 73

गीताविवस्यास्तवाद-समस्तौख्यकतात्मणः
योगिनस्तत्तमत्वेन मनोह्वेस्तवात्मता // ७३ //

Gitādivisayāsvādāsamaukhyaikatātmanah /
Yoginas tanmayatvena manorūdhīes tadātmatā // 73

TRANSLATION

When the yogī mentally becomes one with the incomparable joy of song and other objects, then of such a yogī, there is, because of the expansion of his mind, identity with that (i.e. with the incomparable joy) because he becomes one with it.

NOTES

In verses 69-73, Bhairava says that one can turn even a sensuous joy into a means of yoga. In the above verses examples of all sorts of sensuous joy have been given. Joy of sexual intercourse is an example of the pleasure of sparśa (contact); joy at the sight of a friend is an example of the pleasure of rūpa (visual perception); joy of delicious food is an example of rasa (taste); joy derived from song is an example of the pleasure of sound (śabda).

In each of these, the emphasis is on the meditation of the source of the joy which is spiritual. Leaving aside the various sensuous media, the aspirant should meditate on that fountain of all joy which only trickles in small drops in all the joys of life.

In verses 69-72, the examples given are only those of physical delight. In verses 73, the main example is of aesthetic rapture that one feels in listening to a melodious song. According to Śaiva aesthetics, there can be aesthetic rapture only when the
person experiencing that rapture has *samid-viśrānti* i.e. when his mind is withdrawn from everything around him and reposes in his essential Self. Aesthetic delight is, therefore, a greater source of the experience of the spiritual Self.

This is *Sāktopāya* leading to *Sāmbhava* state.

[Dhāraṇā 51]

VERSE 74

\[\text{VERSE 74} \]

Yatra yatra manas tuṣṭir manas tatraiva dhārayet /
Tatra tatra parānandasarūpam sampravartate // 74

TRANSLATION

Wherever the mind of the individual finds satisfaction¹ (without agitation), let it be concentrated on that. In every such case the true nature of the highest bliss will manifest itself.²

NOTES

1. *Tuṣṭi*, lit., satisfaction indicates deep, moving joy, not agitation of the mind. *Tuṣṭi* refers to that deep delight in which (1) one forgets every thing external, in which all thought-constructs (*vikalpas*) disappear (2) and in which there is no agitation (*kṣobha*) in the mind.

2. One has to plunge in the source of the delight. One will then find that it is the Divine, the Essential Self of all.

This is *Sāktopāya*.

[Dhāraṇā 52]

VERSE 75

\[\text{VERSE 75} \]

Anāgatāyāṁ nidrāyām pranāṣṭe bāhyagocare /
Sāvasthā manasā gamyā parā devi prakāsate // 75
TRANSLATION

When sleep has not yet fully appeared i.e. when one is about to fall asleep, and all the external objects (though present) have faded out of sight then the state (between sleep and waking) is one on which one should concentrate. In that state the Supreme Goddess will reveal Herself.

NOTES

1. The intermediate state between sleep and waking is the nirvikalpa state, i.e. a state in which all thought-constructs have disappeared. This is the turiya or transcendental state of consciousness.

2. By concentrating on this thought-free state of consciousness, one will have an experience of the essential nature of Self which transcends all thought-constructs. Thus one will have an experience of the divine nature. It is this Divine nature which has been called parā devī, the Supreme Goddess.

This is also Sāktopāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 53]

VERSE 76

तेजसा सुर्यदीपादेराकाशे शबलीकुटे ।
दृष्टिनिवेशया तत्रैव स्वात्मरूपं प्रकाशते ॥ ७६ ॥

Tejasā sūryadipādērākāśe śabaliṅkte /
Dṛṣṭir niveśyā tatraiva svātmarūpam prakāśate // 76

TRANSLATION

One should fix one's gaze on a portion of the space that appears variegated with the rays of the sun, lamp, etc. At that very place, the nature of one's essential Self will manifest itself.

NOTES

1. Etcetera includes moon with whose light the sky appears variegated at night.
2. Under such circumstances, the yogī casts off the limitation of the objective consciousness and experiences the infinity of the spiritual consciousness.
This is Aṇava upāya.

[Dhāraṇā 54]

VERSE 77

करण्किञ्च्या कोदनाया भंरव्या लेलिहणया।
खेचर्या वृष्टिकाले च परावप्तिः प्रकाशते। ॥ ७७ ॥

Karaṇkīnyā krodhanayā bhairavyā leliḥānayā /
Khecaryā drṣṭikāle ca parāvāptiḥ prakāśate // 77

TRANSLATION

At the moment of the (intuitive) perception (of the universe), there is manifested the supreme attainment through the Karaṇ-kiṇī, Krodhanā, Bhairavi, Lelihānā and Khecarī mudrās.

NOTES

Drṣṭi-kāle is explained by Svāmī Lakṣmaṇa Joo as ‘on the occasion of the yogic practice.’ Mudrā (posture) is a technical term meaning a particular disposition and control of the organs of the body as a help in concentration. It is called mudrā because it gives the joy of spiritual consciousness.

Karaṇkiṇī mudrā is so-called, because by it the yogī views the world as mere karaṇka or skeleton. It views the physical body as dissolved in the highest ether. It is the mudrā of jñāna-siddhas i.e. of those who have become perfect in jñāna or spiritual insight.

Krodhanā is a mudrā expressive of krodha or anger. It assumes a tense, tight posture. It gathers up all the twenty-four tattvas from the earth upto prakṛti into the corpus of mantra. It is the mudrā of mantra-siddhas i.e. of those who have become perfect in mantra.

Bhairavi mudrā consists in keeping the eyes fixed externally without blinking but making the gaze turned towards the inner Reality.
It withdraws everything into the inner Self, and is the \textit{mudrā} of the \textit{melāpasiddhas}. \textit{Melāpa} means the ‘supernatural power of the union of the energies of the various organs’. It also means the meeting of the \textit{siddhas} and \textit{Yoginis}. Those who have become perfect in this matter are known as \textit{Melāpa-siddhas}.

\textit{Lelihānā} is the \textit{mudrā} in which the \textit{yogī} tastes the entire universe in his nature of essential I-consciousness. It is the \textit{mudrā} of the \textit{Śākta-siddhas}.

\textit{Khecari} literally means that which moves in the sky or empty space. \textit{Kha} or ‘empty-space’ is a symbol of consciousness. There are four kinds of \textit{Khecari mudrā}. One kind is the \textit{mudrā} referred to in \textit{Hatha-yoga-pradīpikā}. It consists in turning the tongue backward towards the palate inside the cranium. The second kind is the one described by Kṣemarāja in \textit{Śiva-Śūtra-vimarsini} under \textit{sūtra} 5 of the 2nd section.

“A \textit{yogī} should be seated in the \textit{padmāsana} (lotus posture) erect like a stick and should then fix his mind on the navel and should lead the mind up to \textit{kha-trayas} or the three \textit{saktis} (\textit{sakti}, \textit{vyāpini}, and \textit{samānā)}, situated in the space in the head. Holding the mind in that state, he should move it forward with the above triad. Putting himself in this condition, the great \textit{yogī} acquires movement in the head.”

The third kind of \textit{khecari} is as described in \textit{Viveka-mārtanda}. ‘The tongue should be turned back inside the cranium. The gaze should be directed towards the centre in between the eye-brows’.

The fourth or the highest kind of \textit{Khecari mudrā} is that state in which the \textit{yogī} remains in Śiva-consciousness all the while, in which his consciousness moves in all beings.

This is the \textit{mudrā} of the \textit{Śāmbhava-siddhas}.

This \textit{dhāraṇā} is \textit{Śāmbhava upāya}.

[\textit{Dhārāṇā 55}]

VERSE 78

\textit{mūdṣaṁsaṁ sīphājēṇe haṭṭpaṁte niśrābhyaśaṁ ।}
\textit{niśdāya tātpratikṣeṇa pāra pūrṇaṁ mārīṣvete ॥ ७८ ॥}
Mṛdvāsane sphijaikena hastapādau nirāśrayam /
Nidhāya tatprasaṅgena parā pūrṇā matirbhavet // 78

TRANSLATION

The aspirant should seat himself on a soft (cushioned) seat, placing only one of the buttocks on the seat and leaving the hands and the feet without any support. By maintaining himself in this position, his intelligence will become highly sāttvika and endowed with plenitude.

NOTES

1. He should sit in a very relaxed position.
2. His mind will acquire perfect ease in this position and therefore rajas (agitation of the mind) and tamas (cloth) will disappear. His mind will experience perfect equilibrium (sattva). This is an Ānava upāya.

[ DHĀRAṆĀ 56 ]

VERSE 79

उपविश्यासने सम्यक्ष्ट बाहु कृत्वार्धकुञ्जके /
कक्षायोम्यि मनः कुर्वेन् शममायाति तल्लयात् ॥ ७६ ॥

Upaviṣyāsane samyag bāhū kṛtvārdhakuccitau /
Kakṣavyomni manaḥ kurvan śamam āyāti tallayāt // 79

TRANSLATION

Sitting comfortably on his seat and placing the two arms in the form of an arch overhead, the aspirant should fix his gaze in the arm-pits. As the mind gets absorbed in that posture of repose, it will experience great peace.

NOTES

This posture has been recommended for making the mind at ease. In this posture, one feels great peace. This is an Ānava upāya.
VERSE 80

Having fixed his gaze without blinking on a gross object, (and directing his attention inward), and thus making his mind free of all prop of thought-constructs, the aspirant acquires the state of Śiva without delay.

NOTES

1. The word upari meaning ‘on’ is understood after bhāvasya. So this means fixing one’s gaze on a gross object.
2. Nirādhāra or without a prop means free of all thought constructs (vikalpas). It is these vikalpas that serve as a prop for the mind.

This is Bhairavī mudrā and the upāya is Śāmbhava.

VERSE 81

If one maintains the mouth widely open, keeping the inverted tongue at the centre and fixing the mind in the middle of the open mouth, and voices vowel-less ha mentally, he will be dissolved in peace.
NOTES

1. This refers to *Khecari mudrā* which is described in the following way in Vivekamārtanda:

   कपालकुहरे जित्वा प्रबिष्टा विपरीतग।
   ध्रुवोर्तस्तर्तंता दृष्टिमुष्टा भवति खेचरी॥

   When the inverted tongue is made to enter the cavity of the cranium touching the palate and the gaze is fixed between the eye-brows, it is *khecari mudrā*.

2. After effecting this *mudrā*, one should keep his mind fixed on the middle of the open mouth.

   Prāṇa goes on sounding *hamṣaḥ* inwardly automatically without cessation. When the tongue is inverted and stuck to the palate, the palatal *sa* cannot be pronounced: *ha* alone of the formula ‘hamṣa’ remains. This *ha* has to be voiced in a vowelless manner. Since it is not possible to utter vowel-less (*anacka*) *ha* physically, the *dhāranā* says that it should be uttered mentally. As the vowel-less *ha* symbolizes *prāṇa śakti*, its mental repetition develops *prāṇa śakti* or *madhya dasā* and thus one attains the state of his essential Self and experiences peace.

   This is *Ānava upāya*.

[Dhāranā 59]

VERSE 82

श्रासने शयने स्थितवा निराधारं विभावयन्।
स्तवेदेहि मनसि क्षीणे, क्षणात् क्षीणाषयो भवेत्॥ ८२॥

Āsane śayane sthitvā nirādhārāṁ vibhāvayan /
Svadeham, manasi kṣiṇe, kṣaṇat kṣiṇāsayo bhavet // 82.

TRANSLATION

Seated on a (soft) seat or bed, one should contemplate one’s body as without support. By this contemplation when all props of one’s thought vanish i.e. when one’s mind becomes free of thought-constructs, then in an instant, all his old (undesirable) mental dispositions (lying in the unconscious) will also vanish.
NOTES

Though seated on a soft seat or bed, the aspirant should contemplate with firm belief that his body is without the support of any seat or bed whatsoever. In this way his mind will become free of thought-constructs which act like props, and when his mind becomes thought-free, then his habitual tendencies of thought (vāsanās) lying in the unconscious will also vanish.

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 60]

VERSE 83

व चलासने स्थितस्थाया शनेवं देहचालनात् ।
प्रशाले मानसे भावे देवि दिव्योधमानुयात् ॥ ८३ ॥

Calāsane sthitasyatha śanair vā dehacālanāt /
praśānte mānase bhāve devi divyaughamāpnuyat // 83

TRANSLATION

O goddess, owing to the swinging of the body of a person seated on a moving vehicle or owing to self-caused swinging of his body slowly,¹ his mental state becomes calmed. Then he attains divyaugha² and enjoys the bliss of supernal consciousness.

NOTES

1. If one is seated in a cart or on horse-back, or an elephant or in any other moving vehicle, then owing to the movement of the vehicle, his body begins to swing to and fro, or he may himself make his body swing. In such a condition, he experiences a peculiar kind of joy, and his mind becomes introverted. Owing to the introversion of the mind, he experiences great peace which may give him a taste of divine bliss.

2. The word augha literally means flood, stream. In the context of yoga, it means ‘continuous tradition of wisdom’. Three kinds of augha are mentioned in the tantras—

Mānavaugha siddhaugha divyaugha.
The traditional jñāna (spiritual insight) obtained through human gurus (spiritual directors) is known as mānavaugha, that obtained through siddhas (perfect masters who have gone beyond human condition) is known as siddhaugha, and that obtained through devas (gods) is known as divyaugha.

This again is Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRANA 61]

VERSE 84

आकाशम विमलम पश्चन्त्र कुत्स्र ढृष्टिं निरस्तराम
स्तवधात्मा तत्क्षणाहैं भृरबं बपुरान्युषात

Ākāśam vimalam paśyan kṛtva dṛṣṭim nirantarām /
Stabdhātma tatkṣaṇād devi bhairavam vapur āpnyāt // 84

TRANSLATION

If one making himself thoroughly immobile1 beholds the pure (cloudless) sky² with fixed eyes,3 at that very moment, O goddess, he will acquire the nature of Bhairava.

NOTES

1. This means that the sense of the body should vanish and all thoughts and emotions should be completely arrested.
2. Looking at the sky has been recommended, because on account of the vastness of the sky, the beholder is apt to be lost in a sense of infinity.
3. With fixed eyes means without blinking.

This is Śāmbhavopāya.

[DHĀRANA 62]

VERSE 85

लीनं मूर्छितं वियत्तवं भृरवचन्तं भायेत्
तत्तवं भृरवाकारं तेजस्तत्तवं समाविषेत्

Linam mūrdhni viyat sarvam bhairavatvena bhāvayet /
Tat sarvam bhairavākāratejastattvam samāviṣet // 85
TRANSLATION

The yogi should contemplate the entire open space (or sky) under the form of the essence of Bhairava and as dissolved in his head. Then the entire universe will be absorbed in the light of Bhairava.

NOTES

If the yogi by bhāvanā (creative contemplation) imagines the vast sky as expression of Bhairava and as being dissolved in the space inside his head, the space in his head will become the symbol of the infinity of Bhairava and he will feel that the entire universe is bathed in the Light of Bhairava.

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 63]

VERSE 86

Kīncij jñātaṁ dvaitadāyi bāhyālokas tamaḥ punah / Viśvādi bhairavam rūpam jñātvānantapraकāśabḥṛt // 86

TRANSLATION

When the yogi knows the three states of consciousness, viz. viśva (waking) in which there is limited knowledge productive of duality, (2) taījas (dream) in which there is perception of the impressions of the exterior, (3) prājña (deep sleep) in which it is all darkness as (only) the form of Bhairava (bhairavam rūpam), he is then filled with the splendour of infinite consciousness.²

NOTES

1. As (only) the form of Bhairava means as the expression of the turiya or the fourth state of consciousness which is Bhairava.
2. In ordinary life, there is always subject-object duality. In the turīya or the fourth state of consciousness, the sense of duality disappears. It is the Light of the Essential Self or Bhairava. That is why it is said to be the splendour of infinite consciousness.

When the yogī knows all the three states as only the expression of the fourth state which is the state of Bhairava, he is filled with the Infinite Light of Bhairava.

This is Anava upāya leading to Śāmbhava state.

[Dhāraṇā 64]

VERSE 87

Evam eva durniśāyāṃ kṛṣṇapakṣāgame ciram / Taimiram bhāvayan rūpam bhairavāṃ rūpam eṣyati // 87

TRANSLATION

In the same way, at (completely) dark night in the dark fortnight, by contemplating for long over the (terrible) circumambient darkness, the yogī will attain the nature of Bhairava.

NOTES

Contemplation over darkness at dark night in the dark fortnight has been recommended, because in such darkness, distinct objects are not visible. So there is nothing to distract the attention.

When one contemplates over darkness for long, one is filled with a sense of awe and uncanny mystery and easily slips into the mystic consciousness. It is at such an hour that the Light of Bhairava makes its appearance and one acquires the nature of Bhairava.

This is bāhya timirabhāvanā or contemplation over external darkness with open eyes. This dhāraṇā pertains to Śāktopāya.
Similarly, (even during the absence of dark fortnight), the aspirant should at first contemplate over terrible darkness in front of him by closing his eyes, then later should contemplate over the dark, terrible form of Bhairava in front with eyes wide open. Thus will he become identified with Him.

NOTES

This verse points to the transition from nimilana to unmilana samādhi. If after the nimilana samādhi, the aspirant goes into unmilana samādhi i.e. contemplates over the form of Bhairava with eyes wide open, he will find his mind swallowed up in the nature of Bhairava and will realize his identity with Him.

This is Śāktopāya again.
a void that transcends all duality and there itself his essential Self is revealed.

NOTES

As the particular organ of sense is unable to establish contact with the external world, there arises a feeling of vacuity in that organ. Then the aspirant becomes introverted. He gets absorbed in that void where the duality of subject and object does not exist, and forthwith the essential Self of the aspirant is revealed. This dhāraṇā pertains to Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 67]

VERSE 90

Abindum avisargam ca akāram japato mahān /
Udeti devi sahasā jñānaughāḥ paramēśvarāḥ // 90

TRANSLATION

If one recites the letter a without bindu or visarga then, O goddess, Parameśvara—a magnificent torrent of wisdom appears suddenly.

NOTES

Bindu in this context indicates the anusvāra or dot on a letter which is the symbol of nasal pronunciation. Visarga indicates two dots placed one upon the other immediately after a letter which symbolize the articulation of a letter with h sound. Thus a (a) with bindu would be ओ (aṃ), and a (a) with visarga would be ओ: (ah).

In sounding ‘a’ with anusvāra i. e. as aṃ there will be inhalation (pūraka) and in sounding ‘a’ with visarga i. e. as ah there will be exhalation (recaka). The above dhāraṇā says that the letter a should be recited without a bindu i. e. without an anusvāra, and also without a visarga (without the h sound) i. e. neither
with inhalation nor with exhalation (neither with pūraka nor with recaka). This implies that the letter ‘a’ (अ) should be recited in a kumbhaka state i.e. in a state of the retention of the breath as ‘a’ (अ).

Śvāmī Lakṣmaṇa Joo interprets kumbhakasthasya occurring in the commentary in a different way. According to him kumbhakasthasya here means cakita mudrāyāṃ sthitasya i.e. in the posture of cakita mudrā. In this posture, the mouth is wide open and the tongue is held back. In this posture ‘a’ (अ) can neither be recited with anusvāra nor with visarga. The aspirant will be automatically compelled to contemplate over ‘a’ only mentally.

In sounding ‘a’ with anusvāra i.e. as am there will be inhalation (pūraka, and in sounding ‘a’ with visarga i.e. as ‘aḥ’, there will be exhalation (recaka). The above dhārana says that the letter अ (a) should be recited without a bindu i.e. without an anusvāra, and also without a visarga (without the h sound) i.e. neither with inhalation nor with exhalation (neither with pūraka, nor with recaka). This implies that the letter ‘a’ (अ) should be recited in a kumbhaka state i.e. in a state of the retention of the breath as ‘a’ (अ).

Why of all letters has particularly ‘a’ (अ) been selected for recitation? The reason is firstly that the letter ‘a’ (अ) is the initial letter of the alphabet; it is the source and origin of all other letters; it is neither generated out of any other letter, nor is it dissolved in any other letter. Secondly, it symbolizes anuttara the absolute, the state which is beyond description, the state in which Śiva and Śakti are in indistinguishable unity. The recitation of ‘a’ (अ), therefore, betokens the longing of the soul for Śiva-śakti-sāmarasya (the state of the harmonious fusion of Śiva-śakti) a nostalgia for its ultimate source.

Thirdly ‘a’ (अ) represents aham, the perfect I-consciousness of the Absolute. Therefore, the contemplation of a establishes one in the absolute I-consciousness of Śiva.

Lastly the recitation of ‘a’ (अ) without anusvāra or visarga in a kumbhaka state or in cakita mudrā makes the mind nirvikalpaka i.e. freed of all dichotomizing thought-constructs and suddenly in this state appears Parameśvara (the highest Lord), the flood of divine wisdom.

This is Ānava upāya.
VERSE 91

When one fixes his mind freed of all props on the end of the visarga of a letter coupled with visarga, then (being completely introverted), he enters the eternal Brahman.

NOTES

Abhinavagupta says that visarga connotes the creative power of the Supreme:

श्रुत्तरं परं धाम तदेवाकुलस्यते।
विसर्गस्तत्स्य नाथस्य कौलिकी शक्तिश्चत्यते॥

(Tantraloka, III, 143)

"Anuttara is the highest plane of Reality. That is known as akula. His state of manifestation or emanation (visarga) is the kauliki power kauliki sakti of the Supreme Lord.

Śivopādhyāya quotes another verse to show that visarga is the creative power of the Supreme and it is out of this visarga that the entire cosmos emerges:

श्रुत्तत्स्य परा चेत्यं कौलिकी शक्तिश्चत्मा।
स एवायं विसर्गस्तु तत्सात्त् जातिमिवं जगत्॥

"The highest Sakti of Akula (śiva) is known as Kauliki. The kauliki sakti is the same as visarga. It is from visarga that the entire world has emanated.

Visarga is represented in writing by two dots placed perpendicularly one upon the other immediately after a letter and in speech it is represented by the sound h. The sound h represents the creative energy.
Now when the aspirant fixes his mind on the end of the visarga which is the symbol of manifestation, his mind is detached from all manifestation and easily slips into the void. He is now steeped in the silence of Brahman.

This dhāraṇā starts in Āṇava and ends in Śāktopāya.

VERSE 92

Vyomākāraṁ svam ātmānam dhyayed digbhir anāvṛtam / 
Nirāśrayā citiḥ saktiḥ svarūpaṁ darśayet tadā // 92

TRANSLATION

When one concentrates on one’s self in the form of a vast firmament, unlimited in any direction whatsoever, then the citi śakti freed of all props reveals herself (which is the essential Self of the aspirant).

NOTES

1. One has to concentrate on one’s Self as a vast sky unlimited by any form, adjunct or direction.

2. In such a frame of mind, the citi śakti—the divine power of consciousness is freed of all thought-constructs and shines in its nirvikalpa state which is the essential nature of Self. Thus the aspirant is established in his essential Self.

This is Śāktopāya.

VERSE 93

Kiñcid aṅgaṁ vibhidyādau tīkṣṇasūcyādinā tataḥ / 
Tatraiva cetanāṁ yuktvā bhairave nirmalā gatiḥ // 93
If one pierces at first any limb (of one’s body) with sharp-pointed needle etcetera, and then concentrates on that very spot, then (owing to the intensity of one-pointed awareness) one has access to the pure nature of Bhairava.

NOTES

In intensity of attention whether due to pleasure or pain, there is one-pointedness of the mind and in that state the nature of the essential Self is revealed.

This dhāraṇā starts with Anava upāya and ends in Śāmbhava state.

[DHāraṇā 71]

VERSE 94

Cittādyantaḥkṛtir nāsti mamāntar bhāvayed iti / Vikalpānām abhāvena vikalpair ujjhito bhavet // 94

One should contemplate thus: “Within me the inner psychic apparatus consisting of citta, etc. does not exist”. In the absence of thought-constructs, he will be (completely) rid of all thought-constructs (vikalpas) and will abide as pure consciousness (suddha caitanya) which is his essential Self.

NOTES

When one becomes fully convinced by bhāvanā (contemplation) that he is not his psychic apparatus consisting of manas, buddhi, ahamkāra (mind, the ascertaining intellect, and the ego) with which he is always identified, then his mind ceases to form vikalpas (thought-constructs) and his essential nature which transcends all vikalpas is revealed.

This is Śāktopāya.
VERSE 95

Māyā vimohini nāma kalāyāḥ kalanaṁ sthitam /
Ityādidharmaṁ tattvānāṁ kalayan na prthag bhavet \ 95

TRANSLATION

"Māyā is delusive, the function of kalā is limited activity (of vidyā, it is limited knowledge, etc)," considering the functions of the various tattvas (constitutive principles) in this way, one does not remain separate any longer.

NOTES

Abhinavagupta thus defines Māyāsakti:

"Sarvathaiva svarūpaṁ tirodhatte āṇute vimohini să" I.P.VI.II.17.

"She veils the essential Self and thus proves delusive."

"मेदे स्वेकरसे भातेभृक्तयानातत्मनीकिते ।
शून्ये बुद्धो शरीरे वा मायाशक्तिच्विज्ञम्भते॥

I.P.V.III. 1, 8

"The power of Māyā shows itself in manifesting undiluted diversity and in bringing about the identity of Self with the not-Self such as śūnya (void), buddhi and the body."

The yogi fully understands that Māyā subjects every one to her charm. She brings about a sense of difference in life which is essentially one whole, and through her kaṅcukas (coverings). viz. kalā, vidyā, rāga, kāla, and niyati, effects limitation in respect of activity, knowledge, desire, time, causality and space.

Being fully aware of the limited functions of the tattvas and the delusive power of Māyā, the yogi does not lose sight of the wholeness of Reality and, therefore, does not cut himself adrift
from it. Rather by unmlana samādhi, he views the entire manifestation as the expression of Śiva and is thus chockful of a deep sense of relatedness.

If the reading Kalayan nā prthag bhavet is adopted, the meaning would be “(such a) person (nā) becomes isolated (prthak) and is established in his essential Self.”

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 73]

VERSE 96

शगितोष्णं समुद्द्वास्तव लोक्यं शमं नयेत्।
यत् एव समुद्द्वूता तत्सन्त्वेव लोयेत्। ९६॥

Jhagíticchām samutpannām avalokya śaṃm nayet /
Yata eva samudbhūtā tatas tatraiva liyate // 96

TRANSLATION

Having observed a desire that has sprung up, the aspirant should put an end to it immediately. It will be absorbed in that very place from which it arose.

NOTES

When the mind of the aspirant becomes introverted, and he considers his essential Self as completely separate from desire which is only a play of the mind which is not-self, then desires dissolve in the mind even as waves rising on the surface of the sea dissolve in the sea itself.

If another desire arises, the best means of putting an end to the desire is to shift the attention from the desire to the underlying spiritual Reality, the creative moment between the two desires, known as unmeṣa.

This is Śāktopāya leading to Śāmbhavopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 74]

VERSE 97

यदा मनोष्णं नोत्स्वन्ता ज्ञातं वा, कस्तवास्तिस्म व॥
तत्स्वतोऽऽ्वं तथाप्रूतस्तत्ततुस्तत्तमना भवेत्। ९७॥
Yadā mamecchā notpannā jñānam vā, kas tadāsmi vai /
Tattvato'ham tathābhūtas tallīnas tanmanā bhavet // 97

TRANSLATION

When desire or knowledge (or activity) has not arisen in me, then what am I in that condition? In verity, I am (in that condition) that Reality itself (i.e. cidānanda or consciousness-bliss). (Therefore the aspirant should always contemplate “I am cidānanda or consciousness bliss”). Thus, he will be absorbed in that Reality (tallīnas) and will become identified with it (tanmanā).

NOTES

The desire, knowledge and activity of the ego are not the desire, knowledge and activity of the essential Self. When the aspirant realizes and practises the bhāvanā of the essential Self who is always pure consciousness-bliss, he will rise above his ego and will be dissolved in his essential Self.

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 75]

VERSE 98

इच्छायामयया जाते जाते चित्तं निवेशयत् ।
अत्मबुद्ध्यान्यचित्तस्तत्तत्त्वार्थवर्षनम्॥ ६८ ॥

Ichhāyām athavā jñāne jāte cittām niveṣayet /
Ātmabuddhyānanyacetās tatas tattvārthadarśanam // 98

TRANSLATION

When a desire or knowledge (or activity) appears, the aspirant should, with the mind withdrawn from all objects (of desire, knowledge, etc.) fix his mind on it (desire, knowledge, etc.) as the very Self, then he will have the realization of the essential Reality.
NOTES

When the mind is withdrawn from the object of desire, knowledge, etc. and is fixed on the desire, knowledge as the very Self, as a *sakti* of the divine, then the mind is rid of *vikalpas*, and the aspirant has the realization of Reality.

This is *Śāmbhava upāya*.

[Dhāraṇā 76]

VERSE 99

निर्निमित्तं भवेज्ञानं निराधारं भ्रामात्मकम् ।
तत्त्वतः कल्पितादेवंतवमावी शिवः प्रिये ॥ ॥

Nirnimittam bhave jñānam nirādhaṃram bhramātmakam /
Tattvataḥ kasyacin naitad evambhāvī śivaḥ priye // 99

TRANSLATION

All knowledge is without cause, without base and deceptive. From the point of view of absolute Reality, this knowledge does not belong to any person. When one is given wholly to this contemplation, then, O dear one, one becomes Śiva.

NOTES

This *bhāvanā* is the device for entering the heart i.e. the mystic centre of reality. Abhinavagupta designates it as *Sarvātma-saṅkoca* in *Tantrāloka* (V, 71) and Jayaratha in his commentary, quotes this verse as an example of *sarvātma-saṅkoca*. This consists in rejecting everything external and entering completely within oneself by means of *nimmlana samādhi*—‘ecstasy with closed eyes.’ The reality of every object is rejected and also its association with the subject (*kasyacin naitad*).

In this way, both *jñāta* (knower, subject) and *jñeya* (known, object) are rejected. Only *jñāna* or *vijñāna* remains which is Bhairava. Vijñāna is the base of everything subjective or objective and that is the sole Reality.

This is Śāktopāya.
VERSE 100

Vijñānabhairava

[Dhāraṇā 77]

VERSE 100

चिद्वर्ण  सर्वेष्टेषु विशेषो  नास्ति  कुन्यकित्
प्रत्यथ  तत्मयं  सर्वं  भावयत्वविनिज्जनः ।

Ciddharmā sarvadeheṣu viśeṣo nāsti kutrācita
Ataśca tanmayaṁ sarvam bhāvayan bhavajij janaḥ ॥ १०० ॥

TRANSLATION

The same Self characterized by consciousness is present in all the bodies; there is no difference in it anywhere. Therefore, a person realizing that everything (in essence) is the same (consciousness) triumphantly rises above transmigratory existence.

NOTES

Kṣemarāja has quoted this verse in his commentary on the first sūtra of Śiva sūtras and has aptly pointed out that Caitanya or consciousness does not mean simply jñāna or knowledge but also kriyā or autonomous activity.

A person who realizes that the Self characterized by consciousness is the same in all from Sadāśiva down to the tiniest worm has become identified with that essential Self and acquires the consciousness of samatā (essential oneness). He is, therefore, liberated and is no longer subject to birth and death.

This is Śāmbhavopāya.

[DHāraṇā 78]

VERSE 101

कामकोशलोभामोहमात्माव्यायोऽवचे
बुद्धिः निःस्तिमितं कुल्या तत्तत्त्ववाश्यते

Kāmakrodhalobhamohadamātsaryagocare
Buddhim nistimitāṁ kṛtvā tat tattvam avasīṣyate ॥ १०१ ॥

TRANSLATION

If one succeeds in immobilizing his mind (i.e. in making it
one-pointed) when he is under the sway of desire, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance and envy, then the Reality underlying these states alone subsists.

NOTES

When an aspirant is under the domination of any strong emotion, he should dissociate his mind from the object of the emotion and concentrate deeply on the emotion itself, without either accepting it or rejecting it. He should withdraw his mind from everything external and turn it within even as a tortoise withdraws its limbs within its shell on the occasion of a great danger. When he is thus intensely introverted, the passion becomes calmed like a charmed snake; all vikalpas are shed like leaves in autumn. Such abrupt introversion puts the aspirant in contact with the infinite spiritual energy surging within known as spanda and then he is filled with the bliss of divine consciousness (cidānanda). This means is known as ātma-saṅkoca or śakti-saṅkoca. Thus even a strong passion may lead a cautious yogi to spiritual bliss.

This is Śāmbhavopāya.

[Ḍhāraṇā 79]

VERSE 102

इन्द्रजालमयं विश्वं यस्तं वा विचिन्तकर्मवत् ।
स्माहा ध्यायत: सर्वं पश्यत्तथां लुभोंगम्: II १०२ II

Indrajālamayaṁ viśvam vyastam vā citrakarmavat /
Bhramadh vā dhyāyataḥ sarvam paśyataśca sukhodgamaḥ // 102

TRANSLATION

If one perceives the cosmos as mere jugglery conjured up by some magician or as the configuration of a painting, or as illusory as the movement of trees, etc. (appearing to people seated on a moving boat), and contemplates deeply over this fact, then he will experience great happiness.
NOTES

Jayaratha, in his commentary on V. 71, in Tantrāloka, quotes this verse also as an example of śarvātmasaṅkoca. This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 80]

VERSE 103

Neither should one dwell on suffering nor on pleasure. O goddess Bhairavi, it should be known what Reality subsists in the middle of both (the opposites).

NOTES

Both pleasure and suffering are the characteristics of antahkaraṇa or the inner psychic apparatus. That which is beyond the pair of opposites like suffering and pleasure, which abides unaffected by both, which witnesses both without being involved in them—that is Reality, that is the essential Self. One should concentrate on and be identified with that Reality.

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 81]

VERSE 104

Vihāya nijadehāsthāṁ sarvatrāsmīti bhāvayan ī
Dr̥dhena manasā dr̥ṣṭyā nānyekṣiṇyā sukhi bhavet ī 104 ī
TRANSLATION

After rejecting attachment to one’s body, one should, with firm mind and with a vision which has no consideration for any thing else, contemplate thus, “I am everywhere”. He will then enjoy (supernal) happiness.

NOTES

In this dhāraṇā, there are two main ideas, one negative and another positive. The negative one is, “I am not my body, nor am I confined to any particular place or time”. The positive one is, “I am everywhere.” By this practice, one becomes identified with Śiva-saktī and acquires cosmic consciousness.

In verse hundred, one has to practise the bhāvanā of cit or consciousness in all bodies, in every form of existence. In the present dhāraṇā, one has to practise the expansion of his own consciousness in all forms of being.

Śivopādhyāya points out in his commentary a further difference between the idea contained in verse 100 and the present one. In the present verse, the bhāvanā recommended is sarvam idam aham—“All this is myself” which is the parāmarśa or consciousness of sadāśiva or Īśvara. In verse 100, it is cit or consciousness as such whose omnipresence has been emphasized. In other words, the plane referred to in verse 100 is that of Śiva, whereas the plane referred to in the present verse is that of Sadāśiva or Īśvara.

This is Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRĀṆĀ 82]

VERSE 105

Ghaṭādau yac ca vijñānam icchādyam vā, mamāntare 
Naiva, sarvagataṁ jātam bhāvayan iti sarvagaḥ // 105

TRANSLATION

“Knowledge, desire, etc. do not appear only within me, they
appear everywhere in jars and other objects." Contemplating thus, one becomes all-pervasive.

NOTES

In this verse, *icchā* or desire has reference to action. This verse points out the fact that *jñāna* and *kriyā* are not the monopoly only of the human being. They are universal i.e. common to everything in the universe. This *dhāraṇā* suggests that if one contemplates over the fact of knowledge and desire being common to every existent in the universe, he will acquire the consciousness of unity. Man usually thinks that there is nothing common between him and a jar or a tree, but if he comes to realize that *jñāna* and *kriyā* are the common characteristics of all manifestation, that all are co-sharers of this divine gift, he will shed his insularity and feel his kinship with all.

This *dhāraṇā* is *Śāktopāya*.

As Abhinavagupta puts it in *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimārśini*

"प्रकाश एवास्ति स्वात्मनः स्वपरात्मभि।"

(I.P.V.I.1.5)

"It is one and the same Self that shines as one's own self as well as selves of others."

And in this connexion, he quotes the following verse of *Somananda* from *Śivadiśṭī* :

"वं ददात्मानं वेदिति वेदन्स्यहं च घटात्मनं।
सबाष्णात्मानं बेदिः स वा वेदिति मदास्मानं॥
नाना भावः स्वमात्मां जान्नास्ते स्वयं शिवः॥"

"The jar (is one with myself at the time of my desire to know and therefore) knows as one with myself. I am one with the jar in knowing. I know as *Sadāśiva* and *Sadāśiva* knows as myself. It is *Śiva* alone who abides knowing Himself through all the existents."

After this quotation, Abhinavagupta makes the following concluding remarks :

"तदैव येषा ताळकप्रवाद्यांसुपुतधरशोभायो न्यूतोऽस्मिन् संवेदनयते,
ते इत्यतेव ब्राह्माणसिद्धवरं विद्वानो घटशरीराःसुखतदभवावन तत्तैव निमज्जयन्ति
ईश्वरसमाविष्टा एव अभवति।"
Thus those who have not been altogether soiled by the dust of the chatter of logicians in the matter of this knowledge get absorbed in Īśvara (the Divine) when they realize through the above the identity of the individual Self with Īśvara (the Divine) and merge everything such as jar, body, prāṇa, pleasure and even their non-being in Him.

[The verse 106 does not contain any separate dhāraṇā. This only gives the special characteristic of a Yogi and re-inforces the idea contained in the previous dhāraṇā.]

VERSE 106

prāṇāprahārasingvit: samānaḥ sabdehiṁvānām. ।
 yogināṁ tu visēṣo’sti sambandhe sāvadhānatā ॥ 106 ॥

Grāhyagrāhakasmāvittih sāmānyā sarvadehinām /
Yogināṁ tu viṣeṣo’sti sambandhe sāvadhānatā // 106

TRANSLATION

The consciousness of object and subject is common to all the embodied ones. The yogis have, however, this distinction that they are mindful of this relation.

NOTES

The object is always related to the subject. Without this relation to the subject, there is no such thing as an object. Ordinary people get lost in the object; they forget the Self, the knower. The real knower is the witnessing awareness from which the subject arises and in which it rests. The yogī is, however, always mindful of that witnessing awareness which alone is the subject of every thing, which is always a subject and never an object.

[Dhāraṇā 83]

VERSE 107

svaṃprastavāpyo sarvāntamudāvatet ।
apēkṣāṃ svārāraṣṭa bhūkta vyāpi vināṃpravet ॥ 107 ॥
One should, leaving aside the need of his own body (in other cases), contemplate that the (same) consciousness is present in other bodies as in his own. Thus he will become all-pervasive in a few days.

NOTES

A body is not necessary for thinking or for consciousness. Everybody has an experience of consciousness apart from the body. In dream, one has consciousness apart from the gross body; in deep sleep, one has consciousness apart from the subtle body (sūkṣma-śarīra); in the fourth state of experience (turīya) one has consciousness apart from the causal body (kāraṇa śarīra). So it is clear that a body is not a necessary medium for consciousness. Knowing this from his personal experience, the aspirant should contemplate that his consciousness is not confined to his own body, but is all-pervasive. Thus he will realize the all-pervasiveness of consciousness which is the nature of Bhairava. This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 84]

VERSE 108

Having freed the mind of all supports, one should refrain from all thought-constructs. Then, O gazelle-eyed one, there will be the state of Bhairava in the Self that has become the absolute Self.
NOTES

1. ‘All supports’ includes both external support such as perception of objects and internal support such as imagination, fancies, concepts, pleasure, pain, etc.

2. He should be completely rid of Vikalpas. Savikalpa (activity of mind with thought-constructs) is the state of the psychological individual or the empirical self; nirvikalpa (activity of consciousness without dichotomising thought-constructs) is the state of the spiritual Self, the witnessing Consciousness of all the states.

This is Śāmbhavopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 85]

VERSE 109

सर्वज्ञ: सर्वकर्ताः च व्यापकः परमेश्वरः।
स एवाहं शंक्यतरं इति वायुविभवेणिंधवः। ॥ १०६ ॥

Sarvajñāḥ sarvakartā ca vyāpakaḥ paramēśvaraḥ /
Sa evāhaṃ saivadharmā iti dārdhyāc chivo bhavet // 109

TRANSLATION

The Highest Lord is Omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. “Since I have the attributes of Śiva, I am the same as the Highest Lord.” With this firm conviction, one becomes Śiva.

NOTES

This is the dhāraṇā of the first phase of pratyabhijñā or recognition. Man is Śiva already in essence. The essential Reality in him has put on the mask of jīva. When the jīva intensely recognizes his essential Reality, the mask is thrown off. The stage of vilaya or veiling disappears; anugraha (grace) is operative now, and the jīva becomes Śiva (that he was in reality).

This is Śākta upāya.
VERSE 110

Jalasyevormayo vahner jválābhaṅgyaḥ prabhā raveḥ / Mamaiva bhairavasyaitā viśvabhaṅgyo vibheditaḥ // 110

TRANSLATION

Just as waves arise from water, flames from fire, rays from the sun, even so the waves (variegated aspects) of the universe have arisen in differentiated forms from me i.e. Bhairava.

NOTES

This is the dhāraṇā of the second phase of pratyabhijñā. The first phase of pratyabhijñā (recognition) consists in recognizing the jīva (the empirical self) as Śiva, the identity of the individual Self with the Universal Self. The dhāraṇā of this phase has been given in the previous verse (109). The second phase consists in recognizing the fact that this glory of manifestation is mine. This consists in recognizing the identity of the universe with the Self. The present verse gives the dhāraṇā for this recognition.

This is also Śāktopāya.

VERSE 111

Bhrāntvā bhrāntvā śarireṇa tvaritam bhuvi pātanāt / Kṣobhaśaktivirāmeṇa parā samjāyate daśā // 111

TRANSLATION

When one whirls his body round and round and falls down
swiftly on the earth, then on the cessation of the energy of commotion, there appears supreme spiritual condition.

[Dhāraṇā 88]

VERSE 112

\[ ब्राह्मारेण्वपवाणक्याज्ञानांचितत्वणे वा \]
\[ जातशक्तिसंवाधेन-नोभान्ते मैरवं बुधः \]

Āḍhāreṣv əthava’ saktya’jñānāccittalayena vā /
Jaṭāṣaktisamāveśakṣobhānte bhairavam vapuḥ // 112

TRANSLATION

If on account of lack of power to apprehend objects of knowledge or on account of (sheer) ignorance, there is dissolution of mind leading to absorption in (anāśrita sakti), then at the end of the cessation of commotion brought about by that absorption, there appears the form of Bhairava (i.e. His essential nature) 112.

NOTES ON 111 & 112

Both of these verses refer to the condition of mind at the end of some intense commotion. Verse 111 refers to a state of mind brought about by commotion set up by physical condition. Verse 112 refers to a state of mind brought about by commotion set up by intellectual impasse.

When there is a deep stirring of the mind either by some physical condition, or by some obstinate questioning or doubt, then after the momentary commotion has ceased, the normal mind is completely stilled; vikalpas (thought-constructs) are laid to rest, and there is an invasion of truth from a higher plane of consciousness. At such a moment is revealed the essential nature of Bhairava.

The Dhāraṇā in 111 is Śāmbhavopāya, that in 112 is Śāktopāya.
Vijñānabhairava

[Dhāraṇā 89]

VERSES 113-114

Sampradāyam imam devi śrīnu samyag vadāmyaham /  
Kaivalyaṁ jāyate sadyo netrayoḥ stabdhamātrayoh // 113  
Saṃkocaṁ karnayoḥ kṛtvā hy adhodvāre tathaiva ca /  
Anackam ahamām dhyāyan viśed brahma sanātanaṁ // 114

TRANSLATION

O goddess, listen, I am going to tell you this mystic tradition in its entirety. If the eyes are fixed without blinking (on the reality within), isolation (kaivalya) will occur immediately. 113.

Contracting the openings of the ears and similarly the openings of the anus and penis (and then), meditating on (the interior, impactless sound—anāhata dhvani) without vowel and without consonant, one enters the eternal Brahman. 114

NOTES

Stabdhamātrayoh netrayoḥ refers to Bhairavi or Bhairava mudrā in which the eyes are open outside without blinking, but the attention is turned on the Reality within. In such a state one is freed of all vikalpas (thought-constructs) and is identified with Śiva.

Kṣemarāja has quoted this verse in his Udyota commentary on Svachchanda Tantra (vol. II. p. 283), and interprets it in the following way:

“निर्वैक्यसत्यब्रह्मदृष्टिवर्धे: शास्तो विगलिताभिलाषप्रकृष्णसकलविकल्पसंजानि:”

“Rejecting the sight of the external world by Bhairavi mudrā, the aspirant enjoys peace inasmuch as his desires are abolished and the entire net-work of vikalpas is destroyed.”

It should be borne in mind that the kaivalya (isolation) recommended by the non-dualistic Śaiva philosophy is different
from the one advocated by Śaṅkhya yoga. In accordance with its dualistic standpoint, Śaṅkhya-Yoga believes that there is nothing common between puruṣa and prakṛti, and, therefore, kaivalya, according to it, means complete isolation from Prakṛti, and, hence, from the universe. In Śaiva philosophy, it means the disappearance of the externality of the world and its contraction in Śiva with whom the experient is identified in Kaivalya.

The imperceptible, inaudible, unstruck sound without a vowel or consonant would be ś i.e. the bindu (dot) only minus the vowel 'a'. The bindu by itself represents Śiva. The inaudible sound without consonant or vowel would be pure visarga ः; i.e. the visarga without 'a'. This pure visarga represents sakti. Since the interior sound being anāhata cannot be heard and being without vowel or consonant cannot be uttered, it can only be meditated upon. Since bindu, without vowel or consonant represents Śiva, this particular meditation is meant to assist the jīva (the empirical soul) to return to Śiva.

By the above practice, the yogi enters brahma sanātanam i.e. the Īśadabrahman who, as the origin of all sound and therefore of all manifestation, is eternal and above all difference and manifestation. By practising the above dhāraṇā, the yogi acquires wonderful vitality which enables him to enter Brahman who represents the union of Śiva and Sakti and thus of ānanda (supreme bliss) and svātantra (supreme autonomy). This is what Abhinavagupta says in parātrīṃśikā:

parabrahmamaya-Śiva-sakti-saṁghaṭṭānandasvātantryaṣṭiparā- bhaṭṭārikārupe'nupraveśaḥ (p. 50)

The dhāraṇā in 113-114 is of Śāktopāya.

[Ḍhāraṇā 90]

VERSE 115

Kūpādike mahāgarte sthitvopari nirikṣaṇat
dhāraṇaś ca ca sāmyaka cittalayā śphutam // 115 //
TRANSLATION

If one stands above a very deep well, etc., and fixes his eyes (on the space inside the well without blinking) his understanding becomes freed of *vikalpas* (thought-constructs) completely, and immediately he definitely experiences dissolution of mind.

NOTES

If the yogi fixes his gaze (without the blinking of the eyes) for a long time on the space inside a deep well or on the summit of a mountain, he feels giddiness and has a sense of fear. In this state, *spanda* or the inner dynamic Reality throws him off his normal consciousness and if he has already developed *mati* or intuitive understanding by pure living, it is freed of *vikalpas* and in an instant, his normal consciousness is dissolved in a consciousness of higher dimension, and he experiences surpassing peace.

This is Śāmbhava upāya.

[Ḍhāraṇā 91]

VERSE 116

Yatra yatra mano yāti bāhye vābhyantare'pi vā /
Tatra tatra śivāvasthā vyāpakatvāt kva yāsyati // 116

TRANSLATION

Wherever the mind goes whether towards the exterior or towards the interior, everywhere there is the state of Śīva. Since Śīva is omnipresent, where can the mind go (to avoid Him).

NOTES

This verse has two aspects, one metaphysical, the other mystic. The metaphysical aspect maintains that everything in the universe-subjective or objective is Śīva. The mystic aspect says
that since everything is Śiva, the aspirant need not be perturbed if he is unable to concentrate on some mysterious Universal Reality. Whatever attracts the mind, whether it is something external like a jar or some colour like blue, yellow, etc. or whether it is something internal—an emotion, a thought, let that be taken as Śiva with full conviction and be made an object of meditation. The result will be surprizing. The particular object or emotion or thought being meditated upon as Śiva can no longer stand out as something different from Śiva, something isolated from the Universal stream of consciousness but is bound to appear as that Universal Consciousness itself in that particular aspect. It will thus drive away from the mind of the aspirant all selfish and sensuous desire, it will free his mind of useless vikalpas (thought-constructs) and will ensure his entry into the divine consciousness.

This is Śāktopāya.

The same teaching has been emphasized in Spandakārikā (II, 3, 4, 5).

[DHĀRAṆĀ 92]

VERSE 117

Yatra yatrākṣamārgeṇa caitanyam vyajyate vibhoṁ /
Tasya tanmātraparimābhāvam cillayād bharitāmatā // 117

TRANSLATION

On every occasion that the consciousness of the Omnipresent Reality (caitanyam vibhoṁ) is revealed through the sensory organs since it is the characteristic only of the Universal Consciousness, one should contemplate over the consciousness appearing through the sensory organs as the pure Universal Consciousness. Thus his mind will be dissolved in the Universal Consciousness. He will then attain the essence of plenitude (which is the characteristic of Bhairava).
NOTES

Normally, every sensation appearing through a sense organ is considered to be a characteristic function of that sense-organ. This dhāraṇā says that every sensation whether external or internal should be considered not merely as a psycho-physical fact but as an expression of the Universal Consciousness. The aspirant should contemplate over every sensation in this light. Just as every reflection or image appearing in a mirror is nothing different from the mirror, even so the whole world that appears in the Light of the Universal Consciousness is nothing different from it. Apart from that Universal Consciousness, it has no being whatsoever. When the yogi contemplates over every manifestation in the above light, his mind is dissolved in that Universal Consciousness which is the essential substance of this universe, and thus he attains the nature of Bhairava.

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 93]

VERSE 118

क्षुताधन्ते भये शोके गहवरे वा रणादृढ़ते ।
कुतूहले क्षुधाधन्ते ब्रह्मसत्तामयः दशा ॥ ९९५ ॥

Kṣutādhyante bhaye śoke gahvare vā raṇād drute /
Kutūhale kṣudhādyante brahmasattāmayī daśā // 118

TRANSLATION

At the commencement and end of sneeze, in terror, in sorrow, in the condition of a deep sigh or on the occasion of flight from the battlefield, during (keen) curiosity, at the commencement or end of hunger, the state is like that of brahma.

NOTE

The word gahvara means both a cavern or deep sigh. As most of the conditions mentioned are psychophysical or emotional the word gahvara has been taken in the sense of deep sigh,
Whether it is an insignificant condition like sneeze or hunger or highly significant condition like terror, keen curiosity or flight from the battlefield, whenever the ordinary normal consciousness receives a sudden jolt or shock, it is thrown back to its inmost depth and comes in contact with *spanda*, the pulsation of the deepest consciousness, the source of his being. It is a sudden and momentary state, but if the person is wide awake, he clings to it. From that moment, his life is completely changed. He becomes spiritually oriented; his energies are released from the hold of the trivialities of life and are free to dive into the deeper recesses of consciousness. If one seizes this momentous opportunity, one enters the sanctuary of the higher life. If one simply lets it go by, one has lost the opportunity of his life, for this condition does not usually return.

Spandakārikā has mentioned a similar condition in the following verse:

\[
\text{अत्तुक्कः प्रहुप्तो वा, कि करोमीति वा मृणोः।}
\text{धाबन्व यत्पदः गच्छेतां स्पन्दः प्रतिष्ठितः।} (I 22)
\]

“When one is in extreme anger or experiences surpassing joy, or is in a state of impasse, not knowing what to do, or has to flee for his life, then in that (supremely intensive) state (of mind) is established the *Spanda* principle, the creative pulsation of the divine consciousness.

This is *Sāmbhava upāya*.

[Dhāraṇā 94]

VERSE 119

\[
\text{वस्तुः स्मयमाणेषु द्रष्टे देशे मनस्त्वजेत्।}
\text{स्वास्तीरोऽनिराघारं क्रत्वा प्रसरति प्रभृ।} II 116 II
\]

Vastuṣu smaryamāneṣu driṣṭe deṣe manas tyajet /
Svaśāriṁ nirādhāraṁ kṛtvā prasarati prabhuḥ // 119

TRANSLATION

At the sight of a land, when one lets go all the thought of the remembered objects (and concentrates only on the experience
which was the basis of that memory) and makes his body supportless, then the Lord (who as the experience was the basis of the memory) appears.

NOTES

On remembering a particular object, the aspirant should ignore the memory of the object and fix his mind on the original experience which is the basis of the memory. At the same time, he should detach himself mentally from the body, i.e. the psychosomatic organism in which the memory and the residual impressions are stored. In this state, his mind will be freed of I-consciousness and the deposit of the residual impressions (vāsanā) and will be restored to its pristine form of pure Experience, pure Consciousness. This pure Consciousness or Experience is the nature of Bhairava.

This is Śāktotpāya.

[Śāraṇaḥ 95]

VERSE 120

Kvalcit vastuni vinyasya sanair drśtim nivartayet /
Taj jñānam cittasahitam devi ślavyālayo bhavet //120

TRANSLATION

O goddess, if one, after casting one’s gaze on some object, withdraws it and slowly eliminates the knowledge of that object along with the thought and impression of it, he abides in the void.

NOTES

The aspirant can eliminate the knowledge of the object along with its impression either (1) by śūnyabhāvanā or (2) by bhairavi mudrā.

1. Śūnyabhāvanā is the imaginative contemplation that the whole world is unsubstantial, mere void. When the whole world
is believed to be void, naturally a particular object in the world will also become void.

2. *Bhairavimudrā* is a pose in which the eyes are open externally without blinking, but the attention is turned to the inner essential Self. Though the eyes are open, the aspirant sees nothing of the external world.

This *dhāranā* teaches that the aspirant should fix his attention only on his essential Self and withdraw it from everything else so that the external world loses its hold on him.

This is *Śāktopāya*.

[Dhāranā 96]

VERSE 121

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{भक्त्युद्रेकादिरक्त्स्य यादृशो जायते मति: } & \\
\text{सा शक्ति: शाह्सकों नित्यं भावयेत्ता तत्: } & \text{शिव: } 121
\end{align*}
\]

Bhaktyudrekād viraktasya yādṛśi jāyate matiḥ /
Sā saktiḥ śāṅkari nityam bhāvayet tām tataḥ Śivaḥ // 121

TRANSLATION

The sort of intuition (*mati*) that emerges through the intensity of devotion in one who is perfectly detached is known as the śakti of śāṅkara. One should contemplate on it perpetually. Then he becomes Śiva Himself.

NOTES

One who is perfectly detached i.e. is not attached to sensuous pleasures and is devoted to God develops *mati*. The word *mati* is used in a technical sense here. It means pure spiritual intuition that is dynamic. This *mati* is full of beneficent power (*śāṅkari śakti*) that can transform and consecrate life. That is why this *dhāranā* recommends contemplation on *mati*.

There are four steps in this *dhāranā*. (1) one's value of life has to be totally changed. He should be completely detached from sensuous pleasures and trinkets of life. (2) He should be devoted to God. (3) Through the above two, the mind of the aspirant
will become purified, and then will emerge mati which is spiritual intuition full of the power to transform life. She can remove all obstacles in the path of the aspirant. (4) The aspirant should perpetually contemplate on this mati (nityam bhāvayet tām). She will completely transform his life, and then his mind will be dissolved in Śiva (tataḥ Śivaḥ).

It should be borne in mind that bhakti or devotion does not mean simply offering of flowers and burning incense. It means viewing God in all life and dedication of oneself to the Divine in word, thought and deed.

This is Śāmbhava upāya.

[DHāraṇā 97]

VERSE 122

वस्तवतरे बेद्यमाने सर्ववस्तुः शून्यता ।
तामेव मनसा ध्यात्वा विदितोपि प्रशाम्यति ॥ १२२ ॥

Vastvantare vedyamāne sarvavastuṣu śūnyatā /
Tām eva manasā dhyātvā vidito'pi praśāmyati // 122

TRANSLATION

When one perceives a particular object, vacuity is established regarding all other objects. If one contemplates on this vacuity with mind freed of all thought, then even though the particular object be still known or perceived, the aspirant has full tranquillity.

NOTES

When the aspirant contemplates on vacuity with mind freed of all thought, there is only the light of consciousness (cit-prakāśa) present and nothing else. There is no object to attract his attention. The result is that his differentiation-making mind is now at stand-still. The sense of difference disappears from his mind. So even when the particular object which he had perceived is still present in the field of his consciousness, his differentiation-making mind is dissolved and he experiences wonderful peace.
The present dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.

Though there is some similarity between this dhāraṇā and the dhāraṇā No. 95 described in verse 120, yet there is one particular difference between them. In Dhāraṇā No. 95 when one has known or perceived a particular object, he withdraws his attention from that particular object and contemplates over the śūnyatā or vacuity of that particular object and the impression connected with it, whereas in the present dhāraṇā No. 97, the aspirant, after perceiving one particular object, contemplates over the vacuity of all other objects.

Both the dhāraṇās, however, pertain to Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 98]

VERSE 123

किम्चिज्ञाया स्मृता शुद्धः सा शुद्धः: शम्पुबर्षाने ।
न शुचिर्हुशुचिष्ठस्वाल्पनिभक्षयः सुधी भवेत् ॥ १२३ ॥

Kīmciijñāir yā smṛtā suddhīḥ sā suddhīḥ śambhudarasane /
Na śucir hy aśucis tasmān-nirvikalpaḥ sukhi bhavet || 123

TRANSLATION

That purity which is prescribed by people of little understanding is considered to be only impurity in the Śaiva system. It should not be considered to be purity; rather it is impurity in reality. Therefore one who has freed himself of vikalpas (dichotomizing thought-constructs) alone attains happiness.

NOTES

The purity criticized in this verse refers only to physical purity like washing, bathing, etc. The Śaiva system referred to is the Trika system. This system does not lay any special store by external physical purity. It considers only mental purity to be real purity. Physical purity depends only on vikalpas—differentiating thought-constructs and is centred round the body. Therefore, the Trika system considers it only an impurity from the higher spiritual point of view. It does not condemn physical purity as such. It condemns it only when it is considered to be
a passport to the spiritual life, when it is boosted at the cost of moral and spiritual purity.

In reality, that cannot be considered to be purity at all which is based on *vikalpas* and the body. In the real sense, he alone is pure who has freed himself of *vikalpas* (*nirvikalpaḥ*), and he alone can enjoy real happiness.

According to Svāmī Lakṣmaṇa Joo, the reading of this verse should be “Kiñcijñair yā smṛtā śuddhīḥ sā śuddhīḥ śambhuddarśane. Na suchir nāśucis tasmān nirvikalpaḥ sukhi bhavet.”

“That which is considered to be purity by men of little understanding is in Trika philosophy neither purity nor impurity. One who rises above *vikalpas* (alone) is really happy.” The real purity is not of the body. It consists in rising above *vikalpas* and getting absorbed in the supreme I-consciousness.

This *dhāraṇā* is Śāktopāya.

**VERSE 124**

*Saṃvāl Bhairavaḥ: Saṃmaṇyeśvapi Gocarah: //
Na ce Tebhāṣyānārāśe Paryāsāt śīrtha Gatiḥ // 124 //

“The reality of Bhairava is apparent everywhere—even among common folk (who do not possess any particular sense of discrimination). One who knows thus, ‘There is nothing else than He’ attains the non-dual condition.

**NOTES**

This *dhāraṇā* does not require any particular practice of meditation. *Bhairava* is an ever-present Reality to one who has an intense deep-rooted conviction of two things—viz. (1) everyone uses the first personal pronoun ‘I’. Even ignornuses are conscious of this ‘I’.
As Mahesvarananda puts it:

"य जानन्ति जड़ा ग्रंधि जलहार्यांगि यं विजानन्ति।
यस्य नमस्कारः स कस्य स्फुटे न भवति कुलनाधः।"

(Maharthamañjarī, verse—4)

"He whom even ignomines know, whom even portresses of water know well enough, to whom alone every one makes a bow, who is Master of sakti (power)—where is the person to whom He is not evident."

How does every person know Him? He knows Him in the I-consciousness which is common to all. The pseudo-I which every body has to use willy-nilly is only a symbol of the non-dual Eternal ‘I’ throbbing in the heart of every creature. This Eternal ‘I’ is vijñāna or cidānanda—consciousness-bliss. This is Bhairava. Thus He is known internally to every body.

2. He is known externally also through His Sakti—power or Energy, His manifestation in the cosmos.

He who thus knows Bhairava both internally and externally is fully convinced of the fact that there is nothing else than Bhairava. He is a God-intoxicated person. To him, Bhairava is an ever-present Reality. He is identified with Bhairava and thus enjoys the non-dual state perpetually.

This dhāraṇā is an example of anupāya.

[Dhāraṇā 100]

VERSE 125

सम: श्रद्धो च भित्रे च समो मानावमानयोः।
ब्रह्मण: परिपूर्णवादिति ज्ञात्वा लुहो भवेत् ॥ १२५ ॥

Samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca samo mānāvamānayoḥ /
Brahmaṇaḥ paripūrṇatvāt iti jñātva sukhi bhavet // 125

TRANSLATION

Because of the conviction that everything is full of Brahman (who is also the essential Self of all), the aspirant has the same attitude towards friend and foe, remains the same both in honour and dishonour, and thus because of this conviction (viz.,
the conviction of the presence of Brahman everywhere), he is perpetually happy.

NOTES

Because of the conviction of the presence of Brahman (the Divine Reality) everywhere, the aspirant develops the consciousness of samatā (equality), and, therefore, has the same attitude of goodness towards all, is neither elated when he receives honour, nor is depressed when he is subjected to dishonour. The same idea occurs in Gītā V, 18 and XIV, 25. All mental agitation disappears in his case. Being even-minded, he enjoys perpetual happiness.

This is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 101]

VERSE 126

Na dveṣam bhāvayet kvāpi na rāgam bhāvayet kvacit / 
Rāgadveṣavinirmuktau madhye brahma prasarpati || 126 //

TRANSLATION

The aspirant should neither maintain the attitude of aversion nor of attachment towards anyone. Since he is freed of both aversion and attachment, there develops brahmabhāva or the nature of the divine consciousness (which is also the nature of the essential Self) in his heart.

NOTES

The consciousness of samatā (equality) is the main point in both these verses (125 and 126). The only difference between the two is that in dhāraṇā No. 125, the aspirant has to acquire samatā by contemplating on the positive presence of Brahman everywhere, whereas in dhāraṇā No. 126, he has to acquire samatā by rejecting the attitude of both aversion and attachment.
Both these dhāranās are Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 102]

VERSE—127

Yaścetāḥ yaśvāṣān yaścetāḥ yaśvāṣān

Tattvasārāḥ śāstvāḥ tatvāt bōggaṁsātvam: II 127 II

Yad avedyaṁ yad agrāhyāṁ yac chūnyāṁ yad abhāvagam /
Tat sarvam bhairavam bhāvyam tadante bodhasambhavah

TRANSLATION

"That which cannot be known as an abject,¹ that which cannot be grasped (i.e. that which is elusive), that which is void,² that which penetrates even non-existence³ all that should be contemplated as Bhairava. At the end of that contemplation will occur Enlightenment.

NOTES

1. The Ultimate Reality has been called avedya or unknowable in the sense that it is vedaka i.e. the Eternal and Ultimate Subject of everything and cannot be reduced to vedyā or object.

2. Void or śūnya, Śivopādhyāya in his vivṛti (commentary) quotes the following verse to show in what sense the word śūnya is taken in Trika philosophy:

"सर्वालंबनं दशंस्च सर्वतत्त्वं विशेषतः।
सर्वक्लेषाशयी: शून्यं न शून्यं परमार्थं: II"

"That which is free of all ālambanas, of all tattvas, of the residual traces of all klesas, that is śūnya or void. It is not void as such in its highest sense.

The word ālambana means 'support'. It is either an objective existent like a jar or blue colour etc. or an internal existent like pleasure or pain or a thought etc. Bhairava or the Highest Reality is called śūnya in the sense that He cannot be characterized or limited by any of these objective or subjective characteristics.
He is free of all \textit{tattvas} or constitutive principles. All constitutive principles derive their existence from Him. Therefore, He cannot be characterized by these.

He is free of all \textit{kleśas} and their residual traces. The \textit{kleśas} are \textit{avidyā} or primal ignorance, \textit{asmitā} or ego-sense, \textit{rāga} or attachment, \textit{dveṣa} or aversion, and \textit{abhiniveśa} clinging to particular forms of life, fear of death.

The Highest Reality is called \textit{śunya} or void, because it is free of all these, not because it is not Real.

3. Both existents and non-existents owe their stance to that Highest Reality. It is the common ground of both existence and non-existence. Śivopādhyāya quotes in this connection the following significant verse from Mahārthamañjari:

\begin{quote}
“क: सद्भावविशेषः कुसुमाद्भवति गणकुसुमस्य।
यत्त्फुरणानुप्राणो लोक: स्फुरणं च सर्वसामान्यम्॥” (Verse 32)
\end{quote}

“What is the difference between an existent flower and a sky-flower (which is non-existent). The universe derives its life from the (divine) creative flash (\textit{sphurāṇa} or \textit{sphurattā}) and that flash is the same everywhere. It is the common ground of both the existent and the non-existent.”

The power of the Supreme viz. \textit{svātantra ṣakti} known as \textit{sphurattā} or \textit{mahāsattā} is present everywhere and is the common ground of everything existent or non-existent. In the words of Utpaladeva:

\begin{quote}
सा स्फुरत्ता महासत्ता देशकालाविशेषिणी।
सैषा सारतत्त्व प्रोक्ता हूदयं परसेन्धिनः॥
(I. P. I Verse 14)
\end{quote}

“This power of Universal Consciousness is the inner, creative flash which, though in itself unchanging, is the source of all change, it is \textit{mahāsattā} or absolute being inasmuch as it is free to be anything, it is the source of all \textit{bhāva} or \textit{abhāva} (existent or non-existent). It is beyond the determinations of space and time. It being the essence of all is said to be the very heart of the Supreme Sovereign.”

Abhinavagupta’s commentary on this is very enlightening. He says,
The word *sattā* or being is, in this context, used in a technical sense. It does not mean simply being. "It indicates the essential nature of the agent in the act of being i.e. freedom in all actions. It is called *mahāsattā*, because it pervades even the sky-flower (which is non-existent)."

This *dhāraṇā*, therefore, exhorts the aspirant that he should contemplate on *Bhairava* as totally free of all distinctive thought-constructs, as foundational Consciousness whose essential nature is *mahāsattā*, the absolute freedom to appear in any way. He will then have full enlightenment.

This *dhāraṇā* is *Śāṁbhavopāya*.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 103]

VERSE 128

नित्ये निरास्रये शून्ये व्याप्के कल्नोजित्ते।
बाह्याकासे मनः कुल्मा निराकारां समाविषोत्। 128

*Nitye nirāśraye śūnye vyāpake kalanojhitē / Bāhyākāse manaḥ kṛtvā nirākāśaṁ samāviśet // 128*

TRANSLATION

One should fix his mind on the external space which is eternal, without support, void, omnipresent, devoid of limitation. (By this practice) he will be absorbed in non-space.

NOTES

Two important points have been made out in this *dhāraṇā*. Firstly, since it is not easy to concentrate on abstract void, the aspirant has been advised to concentrate on the vast, illimitable external space. *Khaṭ or ākāśa*, the endless external expanse of vacuity has generally been held to be the symbol of void, *Brahman*, purity, immensity. Therefore, by prolonged practice of concentration on the boundless external space, one acquires the capacity of concentrating on supportless, objectless, vacant
reality. After this, one can, with facility, concentrate on the inner, supportless, objectless Reality, the spiritual consciousness, the met-empirical Self or ātman and thus can have the samāveśa or absorption into the nature of Bhairava which transcends all spatial, temporal and empirical modalities.

Secondly, in the previous verse Bhairava has been designated as śūnya or śūnyā-dhāma, the very abode of void. In the present verse, He has been designated as ‘nirākāśa’ transcending all void (attiśūnya) or aśūnya (non-void), the base and foundation of the void itself and therefore mahāsāmānya, mahāsattā.

This dhāranā is Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 104]

VERSE 129

यत्र यत्र मनो याति तत्तत्तैव तत्क्षणस्।
परित्याज्यानवस्थित्या नित्तरज्ञस्ततो भवेत्॥ १२८॥

Yatra yatra mano yāti tattat tatraiva tatkṣaṇam /
Parityajyānavasthityā nistaraṅgas tato bhavet // 129

TRANSLATION

Towards whatever object the mind goes, one should remove it from there immediately by that very mind, and thus by not allowing it to settle down there i.e. by making is supportless, one will be free from agitation (of the mind).

NOTES

The agitation of the mind can be removed by vairāgya and abhyāsa, i.e. by disinterestedness and practice i.e. by withdrawing one’s interest from other things and by repeated concentration on the object of meditation. Both the negative and the positive method should be practised together. The negative method consists in withdrawing the attention from the object that distracts it and the positive method consists in concentrating on the particular object of meditation.
As Bhagavadgītā puts it:

“यतो यतो निष्चरति मनस्चन्द्रतलमस्थिरम्।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदत्मन्येव वस्स नयेतु॥”

(VI. 26)

“In whichever direction the fluctuating and unsteady mind moves, it should be held back from that direction and brought under the control of the Self.”

This is Śāktrapāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 105]

VERSE 130

मया सर्वं रवियति सर्वं भयपकोशिले।
इति भरवश्वस्य सत्ततोण्वारणाणिष्व: || १३० ||

Bhayā sarvam ravayati sarvado vyāpakō’ khole/
Iti bhairavāśabdasya santatoccāraṇāc chivaḥ // 130

TRANSLATION

Bhairava is one who with His luminous consciousness makes every thing resound or who being of luminous consciousness joined with kriyāsakti comprehends the whole universe, who gives everything, who pervades the entire cosmos. Therefore by reciting the word Bhairava incessantly one becomes Śiva.

NOTES

The hermeneutic etymology of the word Bhairava has been given in various ways in Trika philosophy. The important interpretations are given below.

The word ‘Bhairava’ is composed of four letters—‘bhā’ + ‘ai’ + ‘ra’ + ‘va’ (भा + ए + र + व). ‘Bhā’ + ‘ai’ (भा + ए) by the rule of sandhi (i.e. euphonic junction of final and initial letters) becomes bhai (भै). This bhai together with ‘ra’, ‘va’ becomes bhairava (भैरव). Each of these letters connotes certain important ideas.

Bhā (भा) is a word by itself which means ‘light’ i.e. the light of consciousness in this context; ai (ए), according to Trika philosophy is symbolic of kriyāsakti (the power of activity);
rava connotes ravayati which, in this context, means vimarṣati i.e. comprehends. So according to this etymology Bhairava means “He whose light of consciousness joined with his power of activity (‘bhā’ + ai i.e. bhai) comprehends (ravayati) the entire universe is His Self”.

In Parātrimsikā, Abhinavagupta gives another interpretation of Bhairava viz., ‘Bhairavo bharaṇātmako mahāmantraravātma-kāśca” (p.63), i.e. ‘Bhairava is one who supports and protects the cosmos and (constantly) sounds the great mantra of ‘I’ (aham).’

In Tantrāloka, Abhinavagupta gives many interpretations of ‘Bhairava’ of which the main ones are the following three:

1. He supports the cosmos inasmuch as He makes it appear on Himself as substratum and maintains it and also appears in the form of the cosmos (bhriyate savimarṣataya). This interpretation is based on the root bh which means both dhāraṇā and poṣaṇa i.e. support and maintenance.

2. He constantly sounds the great mantra of ‘I’ (ravarū-paṭaśca).

3. He offers intrepidity to those who are terrified by the cycle of transmigratory existence (samsārabhiruḥhitakṣt).

Each letter of Bhairava is symbolic of His three main activities; Bha is symbolic of bharaṇa or maintenance of the universe; ra is symbolic of ravāṇa or withdrawal of the universe; va is symbolic of vamana or projection of the universe.

The two adjectives of ‘Bhairava’ viz., sarvadaḥ (bestower of all) and vyāpakaḥ, (all-pervasive) are also connected by implication with two letters of Bhairava, viz., ra and va; ra is symbolic of the root rā which means to give, to grant, to bestow. He is called sarvadaḥ, because he bestows everything (sarvaṁ rāti) ‘va’ is symbolic of vā which means ‘to be diffused’ Bhairava is called vyāpaka because of the diffusion of His presence everywhere.

It should be borne in mind that the word uccāra in the verse does not mean mechanical repetition of the word Bhairava. Uccāra in this context denotes the sounding of the interior prāṇaśakti which is the representation of saṁvid or consciousness.
This prāṇaśakti rises from the heart (centre) and through suṣumna reaches dvādaśānta or Brahmarandhra where it is united with prakāśa or Bhairava.

This Dhāraṇā is Śāktopāya.

[DHĀRAṆĀ 106]

VERSE 131

Aham mamedam ityādi pratipattiprasaṅgataḥ/
Nirādhāre mano yāti taddhyānapreraṇāc chami // 131

TRANSLATION

On the occasion of the assertion, “I am; this is mine, etc.,” the thought goes to that which does not depend on any support. Under the impulsion of the contemplation of that (tat), one attains (abiding) peace.

NOTES

Nirādhāra or supportless is pūrnāham, the absolute ‘I’ which is nirvikalpa (above all thought-constructs). Even when a man considers the pseudo-I to be the Self, there is present behind the pseudo-I, the absolute ‘I’, the nirvikalpaka or the thought-free Self which is ever-present consciousness—bliss both in the ignorant and the wise. So when a man asserts the pseudo-I to be the Self, his mind sub-consciously reflects the real, the absolute, the thought-free I which is eternally vibrating in him behind his psycho-physical I. The present dhāraṇā exhorts the aspirant to lay hold of that absolute, thought-free I, and then by the creative contemplation (bhāvanā) of that thought-free I, (taddhyānapreraṇāt) his savikalpaka mind will ultimately be absorbed in nirvikalpaka state, and thus he will attain abiding peace.

The word dhyāna (meditation) in this context is equivalent to bhāvanā (contemplation). This dhāraṇā is, therefore, Śāktopāya.
By Śāktopāya, a *suddha vikalpa* ultimately ends in *nirvikalpa* which is the essential nature of Bhairava. The *tat* (that) in *taddhyāna* refers to *nirādhāra*. This *dhāranā* advises the aspirant to lay hold of the *nirādhāra* and contemplate over that (*tat*) as his real Self. Surely this contemplation will also be a *vikalpa* (dichotomizing thought), but it will be *suddha vikalpa* (pure *vikalpa*) which by Śākta bhāvanā will ultimately end in *nirvikalpa*.

In *Tantraloka* I (Verses 214-215) Abhinavagupta points out how by Śākta upāya, *savikalpa* is finally transformed in *nirvikalpa*.

"The consciousness of the empirical individual is limited to *buddhi*, *manas*, and *ahaṃkāra*. Though this functions in thought-forms in the manner of *māyā* whose main characteristic is the making of differentiation, yet in reality, it is also inspired by will, etc. If the limited ego of the empirical individual (*ahaṃkṛti abhimāna*) adopts a *vikalpa* or thought (function of *manas*) like the following, “I am present everywhere, everything is in me” then *adhyavasāyakramena* by constant, persevering determination (function of *buddhi*), his *vikalpa* though dominated by *māyā* ultimately ends in *nirvikalpa* (thought-free, intuitive apprehension)."

This *dhāranā* pertains to Śāktopāya.
TRANSLATION

"Eternal, omnipresent, without depending on any support, all-pervasive, lord of all that is"—meditating every instant on these words in conformity with their sense, one attains his object (i.e. has fulfilment)

NOTES

By constantly pondering over the implication of these words, the mind of the aspirant becomes chockful of the essential reality of Śiva. By comprehending perfectly the sense of nitya and vibhu, the aspirant comes to realize that the essential nature of Bhairava and so also of his essential Self transcends 'time', and by meditating on the significance of vyāpaka, he realizes that it transcends 'space' also. By meditating on nirādhāra, he realizes that the nature of Bhairava and so also of his essential Self is nirvikalpa i.e. 'transcendent to thought'.

So by meditating on these characteristics of Śiva, he has Self realization. Thus he becomes kṛtārtha, his aim in life is fulfilled, for knowledge of Self is the highest aim one can entertain.

This dhāraṇā pertains to Śāktopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 108]

VERSE 133

Atattvam indrajālabham idam sarvam avasthitam / Kim tattvam indrajālasya iti dāṛhyāc chamām vrajet //133

[Dhāraṇā 109]

VERSE 134

आत्मनो निविकारस्य कच्च ज्ञातं कब च वा किया ।
ज्ञानायत्रा बहिर्भावा अत: शून्यमिवं जगत् // १३४ //
This whole universe is without any essential reality like a magical spectacle. What is the reality of a magical spectacle? If one is fully convinced of the non-essentiality of the universe in this way, he attains to peace.

TRANSLATION OF VERSE 134

In the unchangeable Self, how can there be knowledge or activity? All external objects are dependent on knowledge; therefore this world is void.

NOTES ON VERSES 133—134

Both the above verses refer to the unreality of the world. The first one says that the world is like a magic show; therefore, it has no reality. The second one teaches the unreality of the world on the basis of non-knowledge and non-activity. The Self is one mass of consciousness without any division or differentiation. There can be no change in it. Both knowledge and activity are a kind of change. Therefore, knowledge and activity cannot be possible in Self. All external objects of the world are dependent on knowledge (and activity). As knowledge and activity are unreal, so the world that is dependent on these is also unreal, mere void. By contemplating in the above ways, one acquires peace.

It has to be borne in mind that the knowledge and activity mentioned in this verse refer to the knowledge and activity of the limited, empirical individual whose knowledge and activity are permeated by a sense of difference, and pertain to the world full of changes.

In the essential Self there is absolutely no change or difference. Therefore, the knowledge and activity of the empirical individual belong only to the psycho-physical self, not to the essential Self. The knowledge and activity (jñāna and kriyā) which are the characteristics of the essential Self are šaktis (jñānašakti and kriyā-šakti) by which alone there can be any knowledge.
or activity. Secondly, they are not dependent on the antahkaranā (buddhi, manas and ahamkāra) and jñānendriyas and karmendriyas (organs of sense and action) just as the knowledge and activity of the empirical individual are. Thirdly, they are not prompted by any sense of difference.

Both the above dhāraṇās are Śāktopāya

[DHāraṇā 110]

VERSE 135

Na me bandho na mokṣo me bhītasyaitā vibhiśikāḥ / Pratibimbam idam buddher jaleśviva vivasvataḥ // 135

TRANSLATION

There is neither bondage nor liberation for me. These (bondage and liberation) are only bogies for those who are terrified (on account of the ignorance of their essential nature). This (the universe) appears as a reflection in buddhi (the intellect) like the image of the sun in water.

NOTES

The Self is pure consciousness (cinmātram). It is not limited by space and time. The question of bondage or liberation can arise only in the case of an entity that is limited by space and time.

Just as the image of the sun appears inverted in water, even so it is the limited buddhi (in which the Self is reflected) that poses as the Self and considers itself bound or liberated. Both bondage and liberation are the imaginative constructs of buddhi. Self which is pure consciousness transcends these imaginative constructs.

Abhinavagupta throws a flood of light on this question in Iśvarapratyabhijñāvimārsini (IV. 1,2)

"तत स्वसूचिपदिपी बुद्धिविद्वाचधकात्मना ।
ब्रृहःकारपरामशंपं नीतेन्तनेन तत् ॥"

“Tathā svasūcchendrapāṇe buddhiprakārāh kātmanā.
Bṛhāṅkāraparāmśyaṃ nītēmenēn tatu.”
“In His light of Consciousness, the Lord makes, in the objective world created by Himself, buddhi etc. function as subject, i.e. as the substratum of pseudo-I-consciousness, because they can function as limited subjects.”

Abhinavagupta’s gloss on this Kārikā runs as follows:

The Highest Lord, resting within His own self, in the luminous mirror of His Self manifests within Himself by the power of His perfect freedom, the objective aspect of the world which is limited in its nature. In the midst of this creation, there are the objects, such as prāṇa, buddhi, body, etc. They are objects and are to be referred to as this. But they can appropriately function as subjects in relation to objects which are separate from them. Therefore, as they cannot completely cast off objectivity, so they shine as illumined with assumed and imperfect self-consciousness, as ‘I am Devadatta,” “I am Caitra”, etc.

When the aspirant is fully convinced that the question of bondage or liberation arises only for the psychophysical self, not for the metaphysical Self, he rises above the vikalpas of the psycho-physical self and is immersed in the nature of Bhairava.

According to Svāmi Laksmaṇa Joo, jivasya (of the empirical subject) in place of bhitasya is a better reading, because bondage and liberation are bogies for all empirical subjects.

This dhāraṇā pertains to Śāmbhavopāya.

[Dhāraṇā 111]

VERSE 136

इन्द्रियद्वारकं सर्वं सुखदुःखदास्वाद-धम्मम्।
इतीनिद्रयापि संत्यज्ञ स्वस्थः स्वात्मसंत्त: वर्तते॥ १३६॥

Indriyadvārakam sarvam sukhaduḥkhaāsāngaṁ /
Itindriyāṇi smṛtyajya svasthā śvātmanī vartate // 136
TRANSLATION

All contact with pleasure and pain is through the senses, (knowing this), one should detach oneself from the senses, and withdrawing within should abide in his essential Self.

NOTES

All pleasure, pain, etc, derived through the senses are not the characteristics of the cidadmā, the essential met-empirical Self, but only of the empirical, psycho-physical complex miscalled Self. When one is centred in his essential Self, one automatically gets freed from the peremptory demands of the senses.

The previous dhāranā teaches that it is necessary to rise above the activity of the buddhi (the intellect) and be poised in one’s essential Self. The dhāranā mentioned in the present verse teaches that it is necessary to detach oneself from the activities of the senses also which lead us on towards the pleasures of the external world. This is to be effected principally through sakti-saṅkoca which has been defined in the following words in Pratyabhijñāhārdayam.

“शक्ति: संकोचः—इन्द्रियहारिण प्रसरत्या एव श्राकुञ्चनकरणेण
उत्तमंकरणम्।”

“Sakti-saṅkoca consists in turning in towards the Self, by the process of withdrawal, of that consciousness which is spreading externally through the doors of the senses (towards the objects)”. Sakti saṅkoca is the technique of introversion or interiorization. By this practice, one becomes svastha, i.e. poised in oneself and the attractions of the world do not trouble him any longer. He is freed from the opposites of pleasure and pain and abides in his essential Self which is the nature of Bhairava. In the words of Yoga-vāsiṣṭha

“अते त्य चिद्विवलसान्ता मनोबुद्धीनिन्ध्यादय:”

(VI. Su, 78, 31) “On the luminous emergence of cit (the spiritual consciousness, the essential Self), the wayward activities of the manas, buddhi and the senses come to an end.”

This is Śāktopāya.
VERSE 137

Jñānaprakāśakāṁ sarvāṁ sarveṇātmā prakāśakāḥ
Ekāṁ ekasvabhāvatvāt jñānam jñeyam vibhāvyate

TRANSLATION

All things are revealed by jñāna i.e. the knowledge or Self and the Self is revealed by all things. By reason of their nature being the same, one should contemplate on the knower and the known as one and the same.

NOTES

“All things are manifested by knowledge (jñāna).” In this, knowledge or jñāna stands for the jñātā or the knower. So the verse means to say that all the things known (jñeyā) are revealed by the jñāna or knower (the jñātā) and the knower or ātmā is revealed by the known.

As Ucchusmabhāirava puts it:

“यावन वेदका एते ताबदेया: कर्म प्रिये।
वेदकं वेदेनेकं तु तत्त्वं नात्स्यन्यचिस्ततः।”

“O dear one, so long as there are no knowers (selves, subjects), how can there be the known (object)? The known and the knower are really the same principle. Therefore, there is nothing which is inherently impure or insentient.”

When the aspirant seriously and earnestly contemplates over this fact, he is implanted in the nature of Bhairava.

Śivopādhyāya quotes another verse to re-enforce the significance of the present dhāraṇā:

“प्रकाशामानं न पुष्कु प्रकाशात्
स च प्रकाशो न पुष्कु विमर्शात्।
नान्यो विमशोहिमिति स्वरूपाद्
प्रहुविमंशोहिम चितेकुपः।”
"All manifestation is not separate from the light of consciousness. The light of consciousness is never separate from I-consciousness. The I-consciousness is nothing else than Self and Self is simply cit or pure consciousness."

Thus contemplating over the fact that the Subject, object and cit constitute the same reality, one attains to the nature of Bhairava.

This is Śāktopāya.

According to Svāmi Lakṣmaṇa Joo, there is another reading of this verse prevalent in the Śaiva tradition:

"Jñānam prakāśakam loke ātmā caiva prakāśakaḥ / Anayor aprthagbhāvāt jñāne jñāni vibhāvyate." //

"In the world, jñāna or knowledge reveals things and the Self is the source of all revelation. Since there is no difference between the Self and Jñāna (knowledge), the jñānt (knower or Self) is revealed in the jñāna (knowledge)."

CONCLUSION OF THE DHĀRAṆĀS

VERSE 138

मानसं चेतना शक्तिरत्मा चेति चतुर्वयम् ।
यदा प्रिये परिश्रीएं तत्वा तद्परवर्तवं वेषः ॥ १३८ ॥

Mānasam cetanā śaktir ātmā ceti caatuṣṭayam /
Yadā priye parikṣiṇam tadā tad bhairavam vapuḥ // 138

TRANSLATION

O dear one, when the ideating mind (manas), the ascertaining intellect (buddhi), the vital energy (prāṇaśakti) and the limited empirical I—this set of four dissolves, then the previously described (tat) state of Bhairava appears.

NOTES

Parikṣiṇam or the dissolution of manas, buddhi, etc. means that they are transformed and appear in the words of Śivopādhyāya citcamatkāram āpannam as delightful aspects of the pure, universal consciousness.
This verse sums up the entire cosmic process. There is first gradual nimeśa or evolution of the universal Dynamic Consciousness (citi) into inconscient matter. This is the arc of descent (avaroha). Citi assumes four forms for appearing as limited individual life, viz., (1) Cetanā, ascertaining intellect (buddhi), (2) manas, ideating mind, (3) prāṇaśakti or vital energy which keeps the body and the mental faculties in proper form, (4) the ego or the empirical self (designated as ātmā in the present verse). All these which form the inner life of the individual are usually summed up under the word citta, the individual consciousness. Kṣemarāja maintains very clearly in sūtra 5 of Pratyabhijñāhrdayam that “Citi (universal consciousness) itself descending from the state of cetana (uncontracted conscious stage) becomes citta (individual consciousness) inasmuch as it becomes contracted (saṅkocini) in conformity with the object of consciousness.”

Gradual unmeśa or evolution begins from the stage of the animal. Here life is mostly bahirmukhi or extroverted. There is only slight development of mind. Life at the human stage is on the arc of ascent (adhyāroha). Man alone is given the opportunity of mounting to the summit of the spiritual life provided he is prepared to surrender his ego.

The Trika philosophy proclaims that citta (individual consciousness) can be transformed into citi (universal consciousness). Pratyabhijñāhrdayam says that cittameva antarmukhibhāvena cetanapadādhyārohāt citiḥ (sūtra, 13)—“citta itself by inward movement becomes citi by rising to the status of cetana.” The status of cetana is the nature of Bhairava which is our own essential Self. It is for this consummation that the various dhāraṇās have been recommended in Vijñānabhairava. When the aspirant has reached a stage where he fully realizes that buddhi, manas, prāna and the ego are only formations of Māyā for carrying on the individual life, that they are only the instruments of Self and do not constitute his essential Self, then he is poised in his essential Self which is the nature of Bhairava, then these instruments reflect the life of the Spirit and can no longer hamper its expression.
**VERSES 139-140**

Nistaraligopadesana satam uktam samáṣataḥ /
Dvádaśabhhyadhikam devi yajñátvā jñánavij janaḥ // 139
Atra caikatame yukto jāyate bhairavaḥ svayam /
Vācā karoti karmāṇi sápanugrahakārakah // 140

**TRANSLATION**

O goddess, I have described hundred and twelve dhāraṇās (yogic practices) in which there can be no surge1 in the mind. Knowing them, one can be a perfect gnostic person-139. If one is established even in one of these practices, he will become Bhairava in himself. He can effect anything by word alone. He will have the power to confer benediction or malediction2—140.

**NOTES**

1. *Nistaraṅga*—without any surge in the mind i.e. in which the mind becomes nirvikalpaka—freed of thought-constructs. Jayaratha in his viveka commentary explains it as *svātmanātvisrāntyā śāntarūpā* (Tantrāloka III. 5, p. 349). i.e. resting in one’s essential Self, full of peace.

2. Since he becomes identified with Śiva, the source of all power, he can effect anything he desires.

112 dhāraṇās have been described in order that the aspirant may choose any according to his capacity. Bhairava says that even if one dhāraṇā is properly understood and practised by the aspirant, he will be established in his essential Self and will attain perfect peace.

**VERSES 141-144**

Ajñāmārtamātmeti sādāḥ uvāca bhairavaḥ // 141
Yoginīnām priyō devi svarūpa-pakāśī // 141
Jīvānāpya vidhūkṣṭoṣah kubjavaṇīpya n ligyate //
O goddess, the aspirant (who has become efficient in any one of the above dhāraṇās) gains freedom from old age and mortality, and becomes endowed with aninā and other powers. He becomes the darling of the yoginīs and master of all melāpakas.

He is liberated even while living, and carrying on all the activities (of life), he is not affected by them.

The goddess said “Great lord, if such is the nature of the Supreme Śakti, then in the admittedly established rules of spiritual life, who would be invoked in recitation and what will be the recitation? Who, O great lord, would be meditated on, who would be worshipped, who is to be gratified? To whom is oblation to be offered? For whom is sacrifice to be performed? And how is it to be accomplished?

Bhairava says in reply, O, gazelle-eyed one, this practice (referred to by you) is exterior and pertains only to gross forms.
NOTES

1. Añimā and other supernormal powers are the following:
   (1) Añimā—the power of becoming as small as an atom.
   (2) Laghimā—the power of assuming excessive lightness.
   (3) Mahimā—the power of increasing the size.
   (4) Prāpti—the power of obtaining everything.
   (5) Prākāmya—the power of fulfilling one’s desire without any resistance; irresistible will.
   (6) Vaśitva—the power of bringing all the elements and material objects into subjection.
   (7) Iśītṛtva—the power of producing and destroying the elements and material objects.
   (8) Yatrakāmāvasāyitva—the power of fulfilling all resolves.

2. Darling of the yogints—one sense of this expression is that he becomes the master of the Śaktis (powers) like jñāna (knowledge), kriyā (activity), ānanda (bliss). According to the Kaula tradition, there is another sense of the yogints. A male practitioner of yoga was known as vira or siddha and a female one was known as yogint. From this point of view, the sense of the above would be “He becomes the favourite of the yogints.”

3. Melāpakas—The word melāpaka means uniting, conjunction. In this context, Ānandabhaṭṭa interprets it as sakalasya asya vedya-vedaka-ādi-rāśeṣh khiltkṛtasvabhāvaḥ i. e. “one who has risen above all the distinctions of the knower and the known etc., and has thus acquired the nature of Bhairava.” According to the Kaula tradition melāpaka means the gathering or union of the siddhas and the yogints.

4. The question of Bhairavī was “who is para devī or the highest śakti (power) of the divine?” The answer that Bhairava has given is that para devī is only the śakti or nature of Bhairava that everything in the universe is only an expression of that nature and that out of the 112 dhāraṇās described, if any one masters even one dhāraṇā, he would attain that divine nature.

Bhairavī now puts a further question “If every thing in the universe is only an expression of the divine and if the aspirant by practising to perfection any one of the dhāraṇās becomes divine, then what becomes of the distinction between the devotee
and the object of devotion which is an established tenet and fully accepted by religion?

The answer to this question of the _devi_ is found in the next verse.

**VERSE 145**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bhūyo bhūyaḥ pare bhāve bhāvanā bhāvyate hi ya} & / \\
\text{Japaḥ so’tra svayam nādo mantrātmā japya idṛṣaḥ} & / 145
\end{align*}
\]

**TRANSLATION**

That creative contemplation which is practised on the highest Reality\(^1\) over and over again is in this scripture _japa\(^2\)_ (recitation in reality). That which goes on sounding spontaneously (inside) in the form of a _mantra_ (mystic formula) is what the _japa_ is about.\(^3\)

**NOTES**

1. _Pare bhāve_ (the highest Reality) referred to in this verse is the absolute I-consciousness. The import of this I-consciousness is beautifully expressed in the following verse by Utpaladeva:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{prakāśasyatmaśvabhāvenitya hṛitamānyo hī kārīt: ।} \\
\text{úkṣā c sāvā vishśāntiḥ: svarpaśānaśirotyaḥ: ।} \\
\text{svātātmyeśa kīrtūtī śrīṇaś āśvatarāpi ca ।}
\end{align*}
\]

_(Ajaḍapramāṭsiddhi-22-23)_

"Resting of all objective experience within the Self is what is meant by I-feeling. This resting (within the self) is called autonomy of Will, primordial doership and universal sovereignty because of the cancellation of all relational consciousness, and of dependence on anything outside oneself."

2. _Japa_ is not the muttering of some sacred formula. _Japa_, in its real sense, is the _bhāvanā_ or contemplation on one’s
essential Self. Kṣemarāja in his commentary on III, 27 of the Śiva-sūtras puts the idea of japa beautifully in the following words: “स्वात्मदेवताविषयमान्वितावत्ततात्मा जपे जायते”. “Japa consists in the repetition of constant contemplation on the deity that is one’s own essential Self.” In that connexion, he quotes the present verse of Vijñānabhairava.

Abhinavagupta also gives expression to the same idea about japa in Tantraloka (I, 90).

“तत्त्वरूपं जप: प्रोक्तो भावाभावपदच्चु:।”

“Japa freed of all ideas of ens and non-ens is the constant contemplation of Siva’s nature.”

Jayarāṣṭra commenting on this verse says:

“शत्य शिवस्य स्वरूपं परावाक्वभावम् श्रात्मरूपम् भूयोभूय: परामृष्ठमान जप:। शतं एव भावाभावपदच्चु: पूवोक्तनीत्या तन्मध्यसुरुत् परामर्षमावसार: इत्यर्थ: ।” (I. p. 315).

“Constant mindfulness of the nature of Śiva which is parāvāk or Self is japa, the essence of which consists in the mindfulness of the reality which shines in between both bhāva (ens) and abhāva (non-ens)”. Immediately after this, Jayarāṣṭra also quotes the present verse of Vijñānabhairava.

3. Japa (recitation) consists in the repetition of mantra. What is the mantra here. The second half of the verse clarifies what this mantra is. It is the svayāmānīda, i.e. it is the mantra so’ham (I am Śiva) which the inward prāṇaśakti ceaselessly goes on sounding by itself in every living creature. It is this automatic mantra which has to be contemplated on, and it is this that is real japa.

VERSE 146

ध्यानं हि निश्चलं बुद्धिनिराकारं निराभयं।
न तु ध्यानं शरीरालिङ्गन्हृस्ताविकल्पना॥ १४६॥

Dhyānāṁ hi niścalā buddhī nirākārā nirāśrayā /
Na tu dhyānāṁ śarīrākṣimukhahastādikalpanā // 146

TRANSLATION

Unswerving buddhi\(^1\) without any image\(^2\) or support\(^3\) constitutes meditation. Concentration on an imaginative representation
of the divine with a body, eyes, mouth, hands, etc. is not meditation.

NOTES

1. Buddhi is the immediate and determinative aspect of consciousness.
2. Without any image means without an idol or yantra (diagram), etc.
3. Nirāśrayā or without support means without the help of a particular spot to meditate on such as hrdaya (centre) mūlādhāra or nābhi (navel), etc.

Abhinavagupta has defined dhyāna (meditation) in a similar strain in Tantrāloka (I, 89). Jayaratha in his commentary on dhyāyate paramam dhyeyam occurring in verse 89 says, paramam dhyeyam śivalaksanam paramakaraṇam dhyāyate svātmābhedena parāmrṣyate i.e. “the object of meditation is Śiva who is the supreme source of all manifestation and who is to be meditated on as non-different from one’s own essential Self.” This is what is meant by dhyāna or meditation in this system. Immediately after the above comment, Jayaratha quotes the present verse of Vijnānabhairava.

VERSE 147

पूजा नाम न पुष्पाद्वृक्ष भति: किवते वुहा ।
निर्विकल्पे महाभ्योभिन सा पूजा ह्यावराल्लयः ॥ १४७ ॥

Pujā nāma na puspādyair yā matih kriyate drśhā /
Nirvikalpe mahāvyomni sā pujā hy ādarāt layaḥ // 147

TRANSLATION

Worship does not mean offering of flowers, etc.¹ It rather consists in setting one’s heart on that highest ether of consciousness which is above all thought-constructs.² It really means dissolution of self with perfect ardour (in the Supreme Consciousness known as Bhairava).
1. Et cetera includes burning of incense, lighting a candle, blowing of conch and other gross forms of worship.
2. The highest ether of consciousness means viñña or the supreme spiritual consciousness which is Bhairava.

In the same strain, Abhinavagupta gives an excellent description of worship in the following verse in Tantraloka:

पूजा नाम विभिन्नस्य भावोंस्यापि संगति: ।
स्वतन्त्रविमलानत्तमेरीविधिविदात्मना ॥

(IV. 121)

Jayaratha elucidates this beautiful verse in the following words:

"विभिन्नस्यापि �uppercase rूपसदेवर्त्वोऽवृद्धि देशकालावनविलिक्षिप्तशिरोऽपूर्ण-परसविदात्मना या संगति: एकीकारः सा पूजा।"

(IV, p. 123)

"Worship consists in the unification of the different streams of sense experiences like form, colour, savour, etc. with the infinite (ananta), free (svatantra), immaculate (vimala) consciousness of Bhairava which is above the limitation of space, time, etc. (desakālādyanavacchinna), entirely unconditioned (nirupādhi), perfect and highest consciousness (pūrṇa—parasamvid)."

Immediately after the above comment, Jayaratha quotes the present verse of Viññānabhairava.

VERSE 148

अत्रेकतमयुक्तिस्ये योत्पद्येति विनाहिनस्।
परिताकारताः साध्व तृणित्वत्यन्तपूर्णता। १४५।।

Atraikatamayuktiste yotpadyeta dinād dinam /
Bharitākāratā sātra tr̥ptir atyantapūrṇatā // 148

TRANSLATION

By being established in even one of the yogas described here, the plenitude of spiritual consciousness that goes on developing day after day until it reaches its highest perfection² is known here³ as tr̥pti (satisfaction).
1. This means the attainment of the essential nature of Self.
2. The highest perfection is the attainment of Vijñāna (the supreme spiritual consciousness) which is Bhairava.
3. ‘Here’ means ‘in this yogic tradition.’

VERSE 149

Mahāśūnyālaye vahna bhūtākṣaviśayādikam/
Hūyate manasa sārdham sa homaḥ cetanā-srucā // 149

TRANSLATION

When in the fire of Supreme Reality (i.e. Bhairava) in which even the highest void is dissolved, the five elements, the senses, the objects of the senses along with the mind (whose characteristic is dichotomizing thought-constructs) are poured, with cetanā as the ladle, then that is real oblation (homa).

NOTES

Three things are required in a sacrificial oblation (1) fire (2) substances that are poured into the fire (3) a ladle in which the substances to be poured are placed.

In a real spiritual homa, (1) the Supreme Reality or Bhairava is the fire. (2) It is into this fire that the body constituted by the five elements, the senses, the objects of the senses together with the manas i.e. all that constitutes the Empirical personality is to be poured and sanctified.

(3) Cetanā functions as the ladle. That word cetanā is untranslatable. It is intermediate between citi, the supreme Universal consciousness and citta, the individual, empirical mind. Cetanā is the intuitive consciousness which serves as anusandhātri—that which leads and unites the citta with citi.

There is another reading in place of cetanāsrucā, viz. cetanā ca sruk, adopted by Kṣemarāja which means cetanā functions as the ladle. There is no difference of meaning between the two readings.
VERSES 150-151

यागोऽत्र परमेशानि तुष्टिरानन्वलक्षणा ।
क्षणलस्वप्नापनां व्रणलस्वर्त्य पार्वति ॥ १५० ॥
हत्याक्षिसमावेशस्तत्त्वेऽं भावना परा ।
अन्यथा तस्य तत्त्वस्य का पूजा कश्च तुष्यति ॥ १५१ ॥

Yāgo’tra parameśāni tuṣṭir ānandalakṣaṇā /
Kṣapāṇat sarvapāpānām trāṇāt sarvasya pārvati // 150
Rudraśaktisamāveśas tat kṣetram bhāvanā parā /
Anyathā tasya tattvasya kā pūjā kaś ca tṛpyati // 151

TRANSLATION

O supreme goddess, sacrifice in this system simply means spiritual satisfaction characterized by bliss. O Pārvati, the absorption into the sakti of Rudras is alone real kṣetra (place of pilgrimage) inasmuch as this absorption destroys all sins (kṣapaṇāt), and protects all (trāṇāt). This constitutes the highest contemplation. Otherwise in the case of the (non-dual) Reality, how can there be any worship and who is it that is to be gratified?

NOTES

All the rituals of the ordinary religious life are interpreted in Vijnānabhairava in a higher spiritual sense. Japa (recitation of mantras) has been interpreted as contemplation on the highest Reality (in verse 145). Dhyāna (meditation) has been interpreted as unswerving buddhi without the aid of any image or support (in verse 146). Pūjā (worship) has been interpreted as firm fixation of the mind on mahāvyoma (highest Reality) (in verse 147). Trpti has been interpreted as plenitude of spiritual consciousness (in verse 148). Homa (oblation) has been interpreted as pouring of the senses together with their objects in the fire of Supreme Reality (i.e. Bhairava) (in verse 149).

Now in verses 150-151 yāga or sacrifice has been interpreted as the bliss of spiritual satisfaction. Kṣetra or place of pilgrimage has been interpreted in a higher sense. The word Kṣetra is composed of two letters kṣa and tra. kṣa symbolizes kṣapaṇa...
or destruction of all sins by absorption in the śakti of the Rudras, known as anāśrita śakti, and tra symbolizes trāṇa or protection inasmuch as one who merges himself in this śakti receives her protection.

VERSE 152

स्वतंबरनवचिन्मात्रासारः स्वतमा हि सर्वतः।
. अवेशानं तत्स्वहृद्ये स्वतमनः स्नानमौरितम् ॥ १५२ ॥

Svatantrānandacinmātrasāraḥ svātmā hi sarvataḥ /
Āvesanam tatsvarūpe svātmanah snānam iritam // 152

TRANSLATION

The essence of Self consists universally in autonomy, bliss, and consciousness. One's absorption in that essence is said to be (real) bath.

NOTES

Bath is considered to be an important purificatory step in every ritual. Bhairava says that the usual physical bath does not lead to real purification. It is the spiritual bath which consists in a plunge in the essential Self characterized by autonomy, bliss and consciousness that alone can lead to real purification.

Abhinavagupta expresses this mystic bath beautifully in the following lines in Tantrāloka:

उल्लासिस्बोधन्तुमस्तद्विज्ञविश्ववन्नानोतिदि ।
सितसंस्मिने देहस्य मजजं स्नानमुच्यते ॥ (IV, 116-117)

"The intuitive perception of Reality (jñāna) that flashes forth by its light is like fire. Both the objective and subjective spheres of experience are like fuel. When this fuel of the objective and subjective spheres of experience is burnt completely by the fire of jñāna and the perception of the essential Self results in the form of white ashes, then an immersion of the limited, empirical self in that essential Self is alone said to be the real bath."
VERSE 153

Yair eva pūjyate dravyais tarpyate vā parāparaḥ /
Yaś caiva pūjakaḥ sarvaḥ sa evaikāḥ kva pūjanam /// 153

TRANSLATION

The offerings\(^1\) with which worship is done, the objects\(^2\) with which the Highest Reality (\textit{para}) together with His highest \textit{sakti} (\textit{parā}) is sought to be satisfied, and the worshippers are all (really speaking) one and the same.\(^3\) Whence then this worship?

NOTES

1. Offerings—like flower, incense, etc.
2. Objects—like milk, honey, sweets, etc.
3. There is only one non-dual Reality. Flower, honey, and the worshipper who worships with these are non-different from Bhairava who is worshipped. When all are one and the same Reality, what is the sense in this so-called worship?

VERSE 154

Vrajet prāṇo viṣey jīva icchayā kuṭilākṛtiḥ /
Dirghātmā sā mahādevi parakṣetram parāparā /// 154

TRANSLATION

\textit{Prāṇa} or the breath of exhalation goes out and the breath of inhalation (\textit{jīva}) enters in, in a curvilinear form. They do so of their own accord (\textit{icchayā}). The great goddess (\textit{prāṇaśakti} or \textit{kundalini}) stretches up (\textit{dirghātmā}). Being both transcendent and immanent, she is the most excellent place of pilgrimage.
NOTES

As Kallāṭa puts it prāk saṁvit prāṇe parinatā. In all living creatures, the divine consciousness is, at first, converted into prāṇa. This is known as prāṇaśakti. Its two main forms in all living beings are known as prāṇa and apāna. Prāṇa is the breath of exhalation and apāna that of inhalation.

In Śaivāgama, the letter ह (ha) is the symbol of prāṇaśakti. In Śāradā script of Kashmir, the letter 'ha' is written in a curvilinear fashion. Both prāṇa and apāna move in all living beings in a curvilinear way. That is why prāṇa and apāna have been designated as kuṭilakṛtih (of curvilinear form) in the verse. The letter ha which is written in a curvilinear fashion, therefore, very correctly represents prāṇaśakti.

The apāna breath (inhalation) has been very significantly denominated as jīva (life). Apāna or inhalation is the breath that returns inside after the prāṇa or exhalation. If apāna or the breath of inhalation does not return, the living being is bound to die.

The word icchayā in the verse has been used to signify the fact that prāṇa and apāna move out and move in, in a curved way of their own accord. This kind of movement is automatic, natural.

Prāṇaśakti lies in three and a half folds round the centre-mūlādhāra in a curved way like a sleeping snake. In this form, it is known as kuṇḍalini. When it lies in a dormant way, the kuṇḍalini śakti is known as aparā, simply immanent in life, not yet active.

So long as kuṇḍalini is aparā, there is always a sense of difference.

Apāna or the breath of inhalation that enters the centre inside produces the sound ha automatically, and the breath of exhalation that goes out to dvādaśānta produces the sound ‘saḥ’ automatically. At their junction in the centre an anusvāra on ha is also added automatically. Thus this mantra haṁsaḥ (हसः) goes on sounding in every round of prāṇa—apāna in every living being. This is known as ajapājapa (a recitation that goes on automatically in every living being without effort on the part of any one). This mantra means ‘I am he’ i.e. ‘I am Śiva. When
this automatic mantra is consciously and repeatedly contemplated on by the aspirant, it automatically becomes so’ham (that am I). By constant contemplation of this mantra, Kundalini rises and stretches upward i.e. is elongated. That is why she is called dirḡhātmā (elongated). Traversing through the intermediate centres, she enters Brahmārandhra, and then arises unity consciousness in the aspirant. In this condition, she is known as parā (the highest, the most excellent, the transcendent). Since she is both transcendent and immanent, she is called parāparā. Because she inheres in the Supreme consciousness and also carries on the life of the world consisting of pramātā (subject), prameya (object) and pramāṇa (the cognitive relation between the two), therefore, she is rightly called parāparā. Because she is the sakti of Mahādeva (Śiva, the great lord), therefore, she is known as Mahādevī (the great goddess).

She is called parakṣetram, the most holy place of pilgrimage, because she destroys all the sins of the seeker (kṣapānāt) and because she protects all (trāṇāt). It is this mystic holy place that the seeker must resort to and not geographical places like Kurukṣetra or Banārasa.

VERSE 155

प्रस्यामनुचरन् तिष्ठन्त महानन्दमयेष्येवरे ।
तया बेव्या समाविष्टः परं भरवमान्ययात् ॥१५५ ॥

Asyām anucaran tiṣṭhan mahānandamaye’dhvare /
Tayā devyā samāviṣṭaḥ param bhairavam āpuyāt // 155

TRANSLATION

In that great goddess there is the great joy (of the conjunction of ‘sa’ and ‘ha’ i.e. of the mantra so’ham) which is like a yajña or sacrifice (of vimarśa or I-consciousness). Pursuing it and resting in it (i.e. in the joy of the mantra (anucaran tiṣṭhan), one becomes identified with the great goddess and thus (through her) one attains to bhairava.
NOTES

This verse only completes the sense of the previous one. The importance of the hamsaḥ or so’ham mantra has already been discussed in the notes on the previous verse. By constant contemplation on this mantra, one becomes identified with the goddess kundalini and thus through her, one attains the nature of Bhairava.

VERSES 155 (repeated)—156

सकारेण बहिःर्याति हुकारेण विशेषत् पुनः ।
हंसहंसलेययमुं मंत्रं जीवो जापति नित्यशः ॥ १५५ ॥
वदु-शतानि विवा रात्रि सहस्रायणकिविशिष्टः ।
जयो वेद्या: समुद्विष्ट: सुलभः दुर्लभः जड़ेः ॥ १५६ ॥

Sakāreṇa bahir yāti hakāreṇa viṣet punah /
Hamsahamsatyam mantram jivo japati nityaṣaḥ // 155
Ṣat ṣatāni divā rātrau sahasrāṇyekavimśatīḥ /
Japo devyāḥ samuddiṣṭaḥ sulabho durlabho jaḍaiḥ // 156

TRANSLATION

The breath is exhaled with the sound sa and then inhaled with the sound ha. (Thus) the empirical individual always recites this mantra hamsaḥ. 155

Throughout the day and night, he (the empirical individual) recites this mantra 21,600 times. Such a japa (recitation) of the goddess is mentioned which is quite easy to accomplish; it is only difficult for the ignorant. 156

NOTES

The present verse 155 is not printed in the edition of Vijnānabhairava published in the Kashmir series of Texts and Studies. But this has been quoted by Kṣemarāja in his commentary on III. 27 of the Śiva-sūtras. This is definitely required, for without it, the sense is incomplete. Therefore, with out disturbing the arrangement of the number of verses as given in the available edition of Vijnānabhairava, the verse as quoted by Kṣemarāja has been given above.
In verse No. 156, the reading of the last line as adopted in the available edition of Vijñānabhairava is as follows: prāṇa-syānte sudurlabhaḥ. In this edition, it is the reading of Kṣemarāja that has been adopted.

The mantra hamsaḥ is repeated by every individual automatically in every round of expiration—inspiration as the verse 155 clearly says. "The incoming breath produces the sound ha and the outgoing breath produces the sound saḥ spontaneously. "It is recited automatically in a natural way without any one’s conscious recitation. Hence it is called ajapā-japa i.e. automatic recitation. It is also known as hamsa mantra. The ha of this mantra represents śakti and saḥ represents Śiva; am in hamsaḥ represents the living individual (jiva). This is known as trika mantra also, as it includes in itself the three realities of Śiva, śakti and nara or jiva. The aspirant has to concentrate on am, the junction point of ha and saḥ.

One round of inspiration-expiration takes 4 seconds. So there is automatic japa of hamsaḥ 15 times in a minute. In one hour, there is (15 × 60) 900 repetitions of this japa. In a full day and night, there are (900 × 24) 21,600 repetitions of this japa.

Kṣemarāja quotes the verse No. 156 in Svachchandatantra (VII. p. 20) and there also he adopts the reading given here. He has quoted the verse No. 156 in connexion with the following verse of Svachchandatantra:

"प्राणाप्राणाः सदालस्ते: साधकः परतत्वविनः।
तत्स्थायं जय उदिष्ट्यत: सिद्धिमुक्तिकल्पनादः: ॥" (Verse 56)

"The advanced aspirant always reposes in prāṇahamsa i.e. the prāṇašakti in susumnā and thus realizes the highest Reality. Because this prāṇa is associated with the universal I (ahaṁ) which is the very quintessence of all the mantras, therefore, it is known as prāṇahamsa. The japa or recitation of hamsa mantra is indicated for him i.e. he who is absorbed in this mantra always sounds it automatically. It gives both supernormal powers and liberation."

If the reading prāṇasyānte sudurlabhaḥ is adopted, the meaning would be “on the occasion of the last breath i.e. on the
occasion of death, one’s identification of himself with this ajapājapa is difficult i.e. it is only the fortunate few who owing to excess of meritorious acts are able to maintain their identification with the ajapājapa at the last moment.”

VERSES 157-160

Ítyetat kathitam devi paramāmṛtam uttamam /
Etac ca naiva kasyāpi prakāśyam tu kadācana // 157
Parāsiṣye khale krūre abhakte gurupādayoh /
Nirvikalpamātinām tu virāṇām unnatātmanām // 158
Bhaktānām guruvargasya dātavyām nirviśaṅkayā /
Grāmo rājyam puram deśāḥ putradārakutumbakam // 159
Sarvam etat parityajya grāhyam etan mrgeksaṇe /
Kim ebhir asthirair devi sthiram param idam dhanam / 160

TRANSLATION

O goddess, I have explained to you this teaching which leads to the highest immortal state. This should never be revealed to any and every one, particularly to those pupils who belong to another tradition, who are mischievous, cruel, and wanting in devotion to their spiritual teachers. On the contrary, this teaching should be imparted without the least hesitation to those whose minds are free from oscillating opinions, to viras, to magnanimous ones and to those who are devoted to the line of spiritual teachers.

O gazelle-eyed one, renouncing all these, viz., one’s village, kingdom, city, and country, son, daughter, and family, one
should lay hold of this teaching. What is the good of the above evanescent things? This is the lasting treasure.

NOTES

1. Unworthy pupils may misuse these teachings. So these should not be imparted to them.

2. *Nirvikalpamātīnām* here does not mean ‘whose minds are freed of all dichotomizing thought-constructs’. This is the highest stage. If they have already reached that stage, they do not require any teaching. The word *vikalpa* also means alternation, indecision, alternating opinion. It is in this sense that the word has been used here. So, here it means ‘those who are free from oscillating opinions’.

3. The word *vīra* does not mean ‘hero’ here. It means *viśeṣeṇa trayati ātmānam iti vīraḥ* i.e. ‘one who is self-controlled.’ According to Śivopādhyāya, it means ‘one who has cut asunder all doubts.’

VERSES 161-162

Prāṇā api pradātavyā na deyaṁ paramāmṛtam ।
Śrī devi uvāca
Devadeva mahādeva paritṛptāsmi śaṅkara ॥ 161 ॥
Rudrayāmalatantrasya sāram adyāvadhāritam ।
Sarvaśaktiprabhdanāṁ hṛdayaṁ jñātām adya ca ॥ 162 ॥

TRANSLATION

Even life may be renounced, but this teaching which is like most excellent ambrosia should not be imparted (to undeserving one).
The goddess said

O great god, O god of all the gods, O benefactor, I am fully satisfied. Today, I have understood with certainty the quintessence of Rudrayāmalatantra¹, and also the heart of all the grades of śakti².

NOTES

1. The tantra that teaches the union of Śakti with Śiva. This is also the name of a book which teaches about the above union but which is now lost to us.

2. The grades of Śakti are (1) parā—highest, transcendent undifferentiated, (2) parāparā, the intermediate, unity in diversity (3) aparā, immanent, bringing about a sense of difference.

VERSE 163

इत्युक्तवानन्दिता देवी कण्ठे लग्ना शिवस्य तु ॥ १६३ ॥

Ity uktvānanditā devī kaṇṭhe lagnā śivasya tu // 163

TRANSLATION

Having said the above, the goddess who was steeped in delight,¹ embraced Śiva.²

NOTES

1. She was steeped in delight, because all her doubts were resolved.

2. She was now established in her non-dual state; she became one with Śiva.
GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

A—Ā (अ—आ)

Akula : Śiva.
Aṇu : Infinitesimal point, the limited, empirical individual.
Advaya : One without a second.
Adhvan (Adhvā) : journey, way, course.
Adhvaḥ-kunḍalinī : The field of kunḍalinī from Lambikā to one-three-fourths of its folds, in the Mūlādhāra.
Anacka : Consonant without a vowel.
Anāhata : Interior automatic sound without any impact.
Anugraha : Grace.
Anuttara : The Incomparable, the Highest; the letter ‘a’ (अ).
Anusvāra : Nasal sound on the top of a letter; representation of Śiva.
Antarvyoma : The interior space where prāṇa and apāna are dissolved.
Apara : Lower, immanent.
Apāna : The breath of inhalation going down towards the anus. Soma and jīva are synonyms of apāna.
Amṛta : Ambrosia; the spiritual state in which further involution in matter is annulled.
Artha : Object, goal, sense, perfect comprehension of reality.
Ardhacandra : Lit., demi-lunar; the second stage in the ardha-mātra (half of a mora) in the japa or recitation of Aum; subtle energy of sound.
Ardhendu : -do-
Avasthā : State; condition.
Avikalpa : Intuitive apprehension, free of all thought-construct.
Aśūnya : Non-void.
Aham : I, absolute I.
Ahanā : The state of absolute I; interiority: I-consciousness.
Ahaṁkāra : Ego, ego-hood; the I-making principle.
Ākāśa : Space; ether; the sky; the infinite.
Āgama : Revealed text, traditional knowledge.
Åñavopāya: The means whereby the anu or the empirical individual uses his own karaṇas or instruments i.e. senses, prāṇa and manas for self-realization. It includes disciplines concerning the regulation of prāṇa, rituals, japa, concentration, etc.

Ātman: Self.
Ānanda: Spiritual bliss.
Āveśa: Entry; absorption.
Āśaya: Disposition of mind; antaḥ-karaṇa or the psychic apparatus; mental deposits lying in the unconscious.

I—I (१—२)

Icchā: Will; desire; impulsion, Icchā-śakti—the power of will.
Idam: This, object.
Idantā: Thisness, objectivity.
Indrajāla: Lit., the net of Indra; magic; Illusion.
Indriya: Organ of sense.

U—Ū (३—४)

Uccāra: Function of breath that rises up; the upward thrust or buoyancy of breath.
Udaya: Rise; awaking.
Udāna: The prāṇa that rises up in the suṣumnā at spiritual awakening.
Udyama: Emergence of Spiritual Consciousness.
Unmanā: The supramental śakti, the highest energy of pranava.
Unmeṣa: Unfoldment; jagadunmeṣa—unfoldment of the world-process; svarūpaunmeṣa—unfoldment of spiritual consciousness.
Unmilana samādhi: that state of the mind in which, even when the eyes are open, the external world appears as Universal Consciousness or Śiva.
Upādhi: Limiting adjunct or condition.
Ūrdhva kuṇḍalini: the risen-up kuṇḍalini when the prāṇa and apāna enter the suṣumnā.
Ka (क)

Kañcuka : Covering of Māyā.
Kanda : A bulbous organ, situated near the anus.
Kaṇṭha : The cakra at the base of the throat.
Kalā : Energy; creativity; limited agency; phase of manifestation; part of letter or word.
Kāla : Time; the category of time or time-principle.
Kālāgni : Kālāgni Rudra—The Universal Destructive Fire that destroys all impurities, sins, etc.
Kuṇḍalinī : The bio-psychic energy which in its inactive form lies like a snake folded up in three and a half folds round the mūlādhāra cakra at the base of the spine.
Kula : Undifferentiated Energy;
Kuṭilākṛti : A curved form in which prāṇa flows before the awakening of Kuṇḍalinī.
Kumbhaka : Retention of breath.
Kuhana : Magic or tickling of the arm-pit.
Kevala : Alone, isolated.
Kāivalya : Aloneness; isolation; aloofness from the influence of prakṛti or māyā.
Koṭi : Point, initial or final.
Kramamudrā : A successive occurrence of nimilana and unmilana samādhi; the condition in which the mind by the force of samāvesa swings alternately between the internal (essential Self) and the external (the world which now appears as Śiva).
Kriyā : Activity; the power of activity.

Kṣa (श)

Kṣetra : Holy place; place of pilgrimage.
Kṣobha : Agitation.

Kha ( ह)

Khecarī mudrā : Vide the note on Khecarī under the verse 77.

Ga ( ग)

Grāhaka : Knower; subject.
Grāhya : Known; object.
Cakra: Centre of prānic energy. It is through the various cakras or centres of prānic energy that Kuṇḍalini passes when she rises from Mūlādhāra and enters Brahmarañdhra.

Camatkāra: The bliss of pure I-consciousness.
Cit: Absolute Consciousness.
Cidākāśa: The ether of consciousness.
Cidghanā: Mass of consciousness.
Cidānanda: Consciousness-bliss.
Cidānandaghana: Mass of Consciousness-bliss.
Citkalā: Energy of consciousness.
Citprakāśa: Light of consciousness.
Citi: The consciousness-power of the Absolute that brings about the world-process.
Citta: Empirical mind.
Cittāvīśrānti: Repose of the empirical mind in the higher consciousness.
Citta sambodha: Awakening of the individual mind.
Citta pralaya: Dissolution of the empirical mind in the higher consciousness.
Cintā: Thought, idea.
Cetanā: Consciousness; consciousness intermediate between the highest level and the ordinary empirical consciousness.
Caitanya: Absolute Consciousness characterized by svātantrya, absolute autonomy and jñāna (knowledge) and kriyā (activity).

J: The world process; the universe.
Jagadānanda: The bliss of the Self or the Divine appearing as the universe; the bliss of the Divine made visible.
Japa: Recitation.
Jāgrat: The waking condition.
Jīva: The living being; the individual soul; the empirical self.
Glossary of Technical Terms

Jivanmukta: One liberated while yet alive.
Jivanmukti: Liberation while one is alive.
Jñāna: Knowledge; spiritual realization, the Śakti of Śiva; the specific śakti of Īśvara.
Jñānin: The gnostic; one who has obtained spiritual realization.

T (त)

Tattva: Thatness, the very being of a thing; constitutive principle; category of Reality; Ultimate Reality.
Tantra: A scripture in general; Science of the cosmic spiritual forces, revealed work.
Tantrika: Follower of Tantra; pertaining to Tantra.
Tirodhana śakti: Power that obscures Reality.
Turya or Turiya: The fourth state of consciousness beyond the state of waking, dream and deep sleep, and stringing together all the states; integral awareness; the metaphysical Self, distinct from the psycho-physical or empirical self; the śākṣī or witnessing consciousness.
Turyātita: The state of consciousness transcending the Turiya state; the state in which the distinctions of the three, viz., waking, dreaming and deep sleep states are annulled; the pure blissful consciousness in which there is no sense of difference, in which the entire universe appears as the Self.
Trika: The system or philosophy of the triad—(1) Śiva, (2) Śakti and (3) Nara—the bound soul, or (1) para, the highest, non-different from Śiva, (2) parāpara, the intermediate state of identity in difference, (3) apara, the state of difference; the lower.

Da (द)

Darśana: Intuitive vision; system of philosophy.
Dārdhyā: Firmness of mind or concentration.
Drāḍha: Stable in concentration.
Drṣṭi: Comprehensive vision.
Diś: Direction.
Deśa: Space; region.
Dvādaśānta: Distance or end of 12 fingers. This is measured in various ways: (1) A distance of 12 fingers from the tip of the nose in outer space is known as bāhya dvādaśānta. (2) A distance of 12 fingers from the bāhya dvādaśānta to the centre (ḥṛdaya) of the body is known as āntara dvādaśānta. (3) A distance of 12 fingers from ḥṛdaya upto Kaṇṭha. (4) There is a dvādaśānta from the palate to the middle of the eye-brows. (5) There is a dvādaśānta from the middle or centre of the eye-brows upto Brahmarandhra. This is known as ārdhva dvādaśānta. This distance is of use only when the kūṇḍalinī awakens.

Dha (ॐ)

Dhyāna: meditation.
Dhyānī: meditator.

Na (ॐ)

Navātma: Of nine forms. For details, see note No. 4 under verse 2.
Nādi: subtle channel of prāṇa.
Nāda: interior spontaneous sound.
Nāda-bindu: The first creative pulsation and its compact mass; the creative sound and light; Sakti and Śiva.
Nādānta: Subtle energy of praṇava.
Nibhālana: perception; mental practice.
Nimeśa: closing of the eye: involution; dissolution of the world.
Nimilana samādhi: the inward meditative condition in which the individual consciousness gets absorbed in the Universal consciousness.
Niyati: limitation of cause-effect relation; Spatial limitation.
Nirādhāra: without support-objective or subjective.
Nirāśraya: without any prop or base.
Nirodhikā or nirodhini: a subtle energy of praṇava.
Nirvikalpa: higher consciousness free of all thought-constructs.
Niveśa or niveśana: entry into the Universal Consciousness.
Niśkala: partless; undivided. Śiva above manifestation or creation.
Nistaraṅga: free of undulation or commotion.

Pati: Śiva; a liberated individual.
Para: the highest; the Supreme.
Para pramātā: the highest experient, parama Śiva.
Parama Śiva: the Highest Reality, the absolute.
Paramātmā: the supreme Self.
Paramārtha: highest reality; essential truth: the highest goal.
Parāmarśa: Seizing mentally, experience, comprehension, remembrance; referring or pointing to: a letter; consciousness of a letter.
Parāpara: intermediate stage of Śakti; both supreme and non-supreme; both identical and different; unity in diversity.
Parāvāk: the unmanifest Śakti or vibratory moment of the Divine; Logos; cosmic ideation.
Parā Śakti: highest Śakti of the Divine; citi.
Paśu: the bound soul; the jīva; the empirical self; the individual.
Paśyanti: the Divine view of the universe in undifferentiated form; vāk Śakti, going forth as seeing, ready to create in which there is no differentiation between vācyā (object) and vācaka (word).
Puruṣa: the Self.
Puryaśṭaka: the city of the group of eight i.e. the subtle body consisting of the five tanmātras, buddhi, manas and ahamkāra.
Pūrṇa: perfect; full of divine consciousness.
Pūrṇāhantā: the perfect I-consciousness of Śiva; non-relational I-consciousness.
Prakāśa: the light of consciousness, the principle of Self-revelation.
Prakṛti: the primordial source of objectivity from buddhi down to earth.
Pratibhā: The illumination of the I-consciousness of Śiva; a synonym of parāvāk;
Pratyabhijñā : recognition.
Pramātā : The knower; the subject: the experient.
Pramātṛtā : knowership.
Pramāṇa : means of knowledge; knowledge.
Prameya : Object of knowledge.
Prasara : expansion; manifestation of Śiva in the form of the universe through His Śakti.
Prāṇa : In general the vital energy; specifically, the vital breath in exhalation.
Prāṇaśakti : Vital energy; bioplasma.
Prāṇana : the animating principle, the principle of all the prāṇas.
Prāṇāyāma : breath control.

Ba (अ)

Bindu : written also as vindu—a point, a metaphysical point; concentration of luminous energy; compact mass of śakti gathered into an undifferentiated point ready to create; paraḥ pramātā—the highest experient; the anusvāra or nasal sound indicated by a dot on a letter indicating the fact that Śiva in spite of the manifestation of the universe is undivided; symbol of Śiva; a sakti of prāṇa.

Buddhi : the intellect; the ascertaining intelligence; sometimes the higher mind; the super personal mind; intuitive aspect of consciousness by which the essential Self awakens to truth.

Bodha : Enlightenment; spiritual awakening.

Brahma : the highest reality (existence-consciousness-bliss).

Brahmanādi : suṣumnā, the madhya nādi, the central subtle channel of prāṇa.

Brahmarandhra : Sahsrāra cakra; the prāṇic centre at the top of the head.

Bha (भ)

Bhakti : Devotion.
Bharitā : plenitude, fulness.
Bhāva : existence—both internal and external; existent; object.
Glossary of Technical Terms

Bhāvanā : Creative contemplation; powerful employment of imagination.
Bhuvana : world.
Bheda : difference.
Bhairava : The Highest Reality, bha indicating bharana or maintenance of the world, ra ravana or withdrawal of the world, and va, vamana or projection of the world.
Bhairavi : Śakti of Bhairava.
Bhairava or bhairavi mudrā : The posture in which the gaze is turned outwards without the twinkling of the eyes, and the attention is turned inwards.
Bhrūmadhya : the centre or middle of the eye-brows.
Bhoga : experience, sometimes used in the narrow sense of enjoyment.
Bhoktā : experient.

Ma (म)

Mati : understanding; intuitive intelligence.
Madhya : centre; the central consciousness; the pure I-consciousness; the suṣumnā or central pranic nāḍī; internal; gap, middle.
Madhyadhāma : Suṣumnā, also known as brahmanāḍī.
Madhyama-pada : the central or middle state.
Madhyamā : Śabda in its subtle form as existing in the mind or antahkaraṇa prior to its gross manifestation.
Madhyāsakti : Saṁvit-śaktī, the central consciousness-power.
Manas : the internal sense, the empirical mind.
Mantra : a sacred or mystic formula for recitation.
Mantra-virya : the power of Mantra.
Marut : Breath (exhalation or inhalation).
Mala : dross; limitation which hampers the free expression of the Spirit.
Mahābodha : the great awakening, the grand illumination.
Mahāmantra : the grand mantra of the supreme I-consciousness.
Mahāvyāpti : the grand fusion; the grand pervasion.
Mahāsattā : the Highest Reality which is absolute Light and freedom and the source of all existence.
Mahāśūnya : the great void.
Māyā : the finitizing or limiting principle of the Divine; Illusion.
Māyātattva : the principle of veiling the Infinite and projecting the finite; the source of the five kañcukas.
Māyāpramātā : the empirical self, governed by Māyā.
Māyāsakti : the power of Divine for finitizing or limiting.
Māyiya mala : limitation due to Māyā which gives to the soul its gross and subtle bodies.
Mukti : liberation.
Mudrā : Yogic posture as aid in concentration, that which gives the bliss of spiritual consciousness.
Mūlādhāra : the prāṇic centre below the genitals.
Meya : object.
Mokṣa : liberation.
Moha : delusion.
Yugapat : simultaneously.
Yogi : one who is seeking to or has been able to unite with the Universal consciousness.
Yogindra : the great yogi who has attained the śāmbhava state.
Yogini : the divine energy of Bhairava.

Ra (ऋ)

Rajas: the principle of motion, activity and disharmony, a constituent of Prakṛti
Rasa: Flavour; aesthetic rapture
Rāga : Passion; intense desire for and attachment to an object; one of the kañcukas of māyā on account of which there is limitation by desire.
Rudrayāmala : intimate union of Rudra and His Śakti.
Rūpa : Form; essence.

La (ऌ)

Laya-nilaya : absorption.
Līna : absorbed.

Va (ऌ)

Vapus : (bhairavasya) form; the nature of Bhairava, cosmic essence.
Glossary of Technical Terms

Varṇa: letter; sound of letter; subtle energy of speech.

Vahni: a technical word of Śaiva Yoga, meaning entering completely into the root and half of the middle of adhaṅkuṇḍalini.

Vācaka: word; indicator.

Vācyā: object; the indicated.

Vāmeśvarī: the divine sakti that emits i.e. projects the universe out of the Absolute and produces the reverse consciousness of difference.

Vikalpa: idea, ideation; dichotomising thought-construct.

Vikalpanam: the differentiation-making activity of the mind.

Vikalpa-kṣaya: the dissolution of Vikalpas.

Vikāsa: efflorescence; unfoldment; development.

Vijñāna: consciousness; supreme consciousness.

Vidyā: limited knowledge; pure knowledge (cf. Śuddha vidyā sakti).

Vibhūti: splendour: supernormal power.

Vimarsana: intuitive awareness.

Viyat: space; sky.

Vilaya: concealment.

Viṣa: a technical word of Śaiva yoga, meaning entering into the remaining half and wholly into the top of adhaṅkuṇḍalini right upto the portion where urdhva-kundalini ends (from the root viṣ to pervade).

Viśrānti: rest; peace.

Viśva: the all; the cosmos; the universe.

Viśvamaya: viśvātmaka—immanent.

Viśvottirṇa: transcendent.

Visarga: Śiva’s power of projection of the universe; sakti; two dots placed perpendicularly one upon the other after a letter, giving the sound ha.

Virya: virility, vitality; mantra-virya the virility of mantra.

Vaikharī: Śakti as gross word or speech.

Vṛtti: mode, fluctuation.

Vaiṣamya: difference, disquietude of duality.

Vyāna: the pervasive prāna.

Vyāpta: completely pervaded.
Vyāpti: pervasion; fusion in the whole, in Śiva.
Vyāpini: all-pervasive energy of praṇava.
Vyutthāna: lit.; rising, coming to normal consciousness after trance.
Vyāmohitatā: delusion.
Vyoma: sky; the infinite sky of consciousness; antar vyoma, the space in the mystic centre.

Śa (ष)
Śakti: Power, identical with Śiva; Śakti as a door of entrance into Śiva (verse, 20); woman (verses 69-70)
Śakti-pāta: descent of the divine Śakti, grace.
Śakti-vikāsa: unfoldment of śakti; concentration of attention on the inner consciousness even when the senses are open to their respective objects.
Śakti-saṅkoca: withdrawal of attention from sense activity and turning it towards the inner reality.
Śabda: word; sound.
Śabda brahma: Sound in its absolute state; ultimate Reality in the form of vibration of which human word is a gross representation. In this state, thought and word are one.
Śabda-rāśi: totality of words.
Śāktopāya: the means of approach to the Divine through Śakti, the ever-recurring thought of oneself being essentially Śiva or the supreme I-consciousness.
Śāmbhavopāya: the direct approach to Śiva: sudden emergence of Śiva-consciousness without any vikalpa by a mere hint that one's essential Self is Śiva.
Śikhānta: Brahmarandhra.
Śiva-Vyāpti: fusion with Śiva; absorption of the universe in Śiva.
Śuddha vidyā: the fifth tattva counting from Śiva, the stage in which there is identity in diversity.
Śuddha adhvā: the pure course; the extra-mundane existence - the first five tattvas;
Śūnya: void, the state in which no object is experienced.
Śūnyātiśūnya: absolute void.
Śūnyatā : vacuity.
Śūnyapramātā : the experiencer of the void: pralayākala.

Sā (ॐ)

Ṣaḍadhvā : the six forms of manifestation — three on the subjective side, varṇa, mantra and pada and three on the objective side, kālā, tattva, bhuvana.

Ṣaṣṭha-vaktra : lit. the sixth organ or medhra kanda near the root of the rectum.

Sa (ॐ)

Saṃkalpa : resolve; the synthetic activity of thought.
Saṅkoca : contraction of Śakti, the means to enter the heart or mystic centre.
Saṃvīd-saṃvitti : Consciousness; universal consciousness.
Saṃskāra : the residual traces of the mind lying in the unconscious.

Sakala : all the jivas from gods down to the mineral who rest in māyā tattva. They have no knowledge of the real Self and their consciousness is only that of diversity.

Sattā : existence; ultimate reality
Sattāmātra : pure existence, mahā sattā—transcendental reality.
Sādāśiva : the third tattva, counting from Śiva. At this stage the I-experience is more important than the this-experience. Icchā or will is predominant in this tattva.

Samatva-samata : equality, perfect harmony.
Samanā : the energy of praṇava below the highest.
Samarasa : one having the same feeling or consciousness, identical.

Saṃhāra : withdrawal, reabsorption.
Saṃsāra : transmigratory existence: world-process.
Saṃsārin : transmigratory being.
Saṃādhi : collectedness of mind, trance.

Samāna : the vital vāyu that helps in assimilation of food, etc. and brings about equilibrium between praṇa and apāna.

Samāvesa : total absorption.
Samāpatti: Sometimes synonym of samādhi, consummation, attainment of psychic at-one-ment.
Sarvakartṛtvā: omnipotence.
Sarvaga: omnipenetrant.
Sarvajñā: omniscient.
Sarvajñatva: omniscience.
Sāmarasya: identity of consciousness—union of Śiva and Śakti.
Sāra: quintessence.
Siddhi: Supernormal power.
Suṣupti: the condition of dreamless sleep.
Suṣumnā: the middle or central prānic nāḍī or channel.
Sūkṣma: subtle.
Srṣṭi: letting go, manifestation, emanation.
Stabdha: immovable.
Sthiti: maintenance (of the universe); spiritual station.
Sthūla: gross.
Spanda: divine activity, the dynamic aspect of Śiva; primordial creative pulsation.
Sphurattā: flashing consciousness.
Svatantra: autonomous; of absolute will.
Svātantrya: the absolute autonomy of the Supreme.
Svapna: the dream condition.
Svarūpa: one's own form; real nature: essence.
Svasthiti or Svasthā: staying in one's essential state.
Svātma: one's own Self.
Svecchā: Śiva's or Śakti's own Will; synonymous with svātantrya.

Ha (ḥ)

Ha: symbol of Śakti; the divine energy as imperceptible, spontaneous sound in the living being.
Haṭhapāka: persistent process of assimilating experience to the consciousness of the experiert.
Haṃsā: the prāṇa and apāna breath—apāna sounding inaudibly as 'ha' and prāṇa sounding inaudibly as saḥ with the anusvāra (aṃ) at the junction point forming haṃsāḥ which sounds in every living being spontaneously every
moment. This is known as ajapā japa, because every living being goes on repeating it automatically without any conscious effort on his part. When one consciously observes this process, it is known as hamsa mantra. By conscious repetition it gets converted into soham (I am He i.e. Śiva). Hamsaḥ is also symbol of a jīva, the empirical individual. Hṛdaya : heart, the mystic centre, the central consciousness.
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