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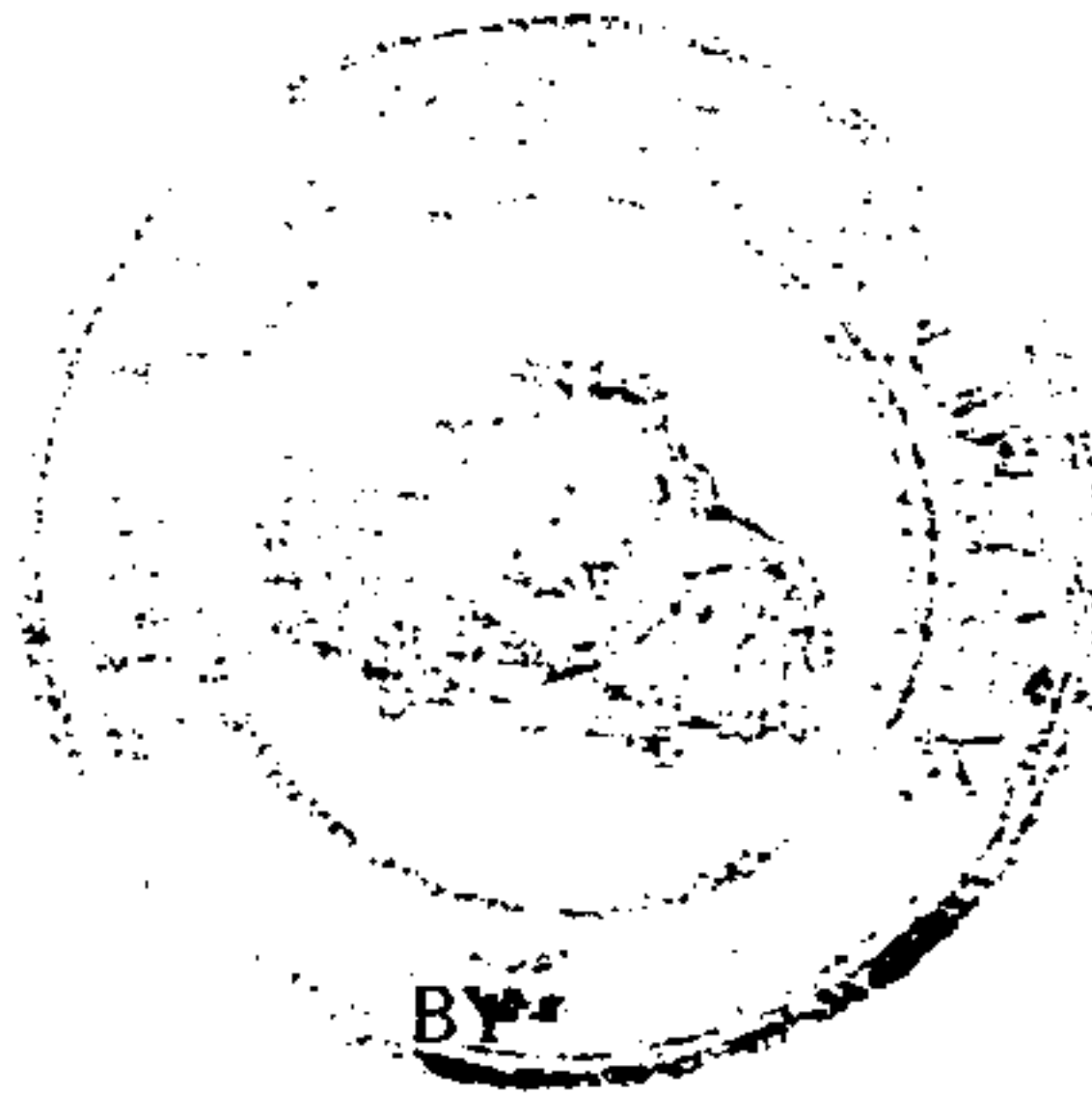
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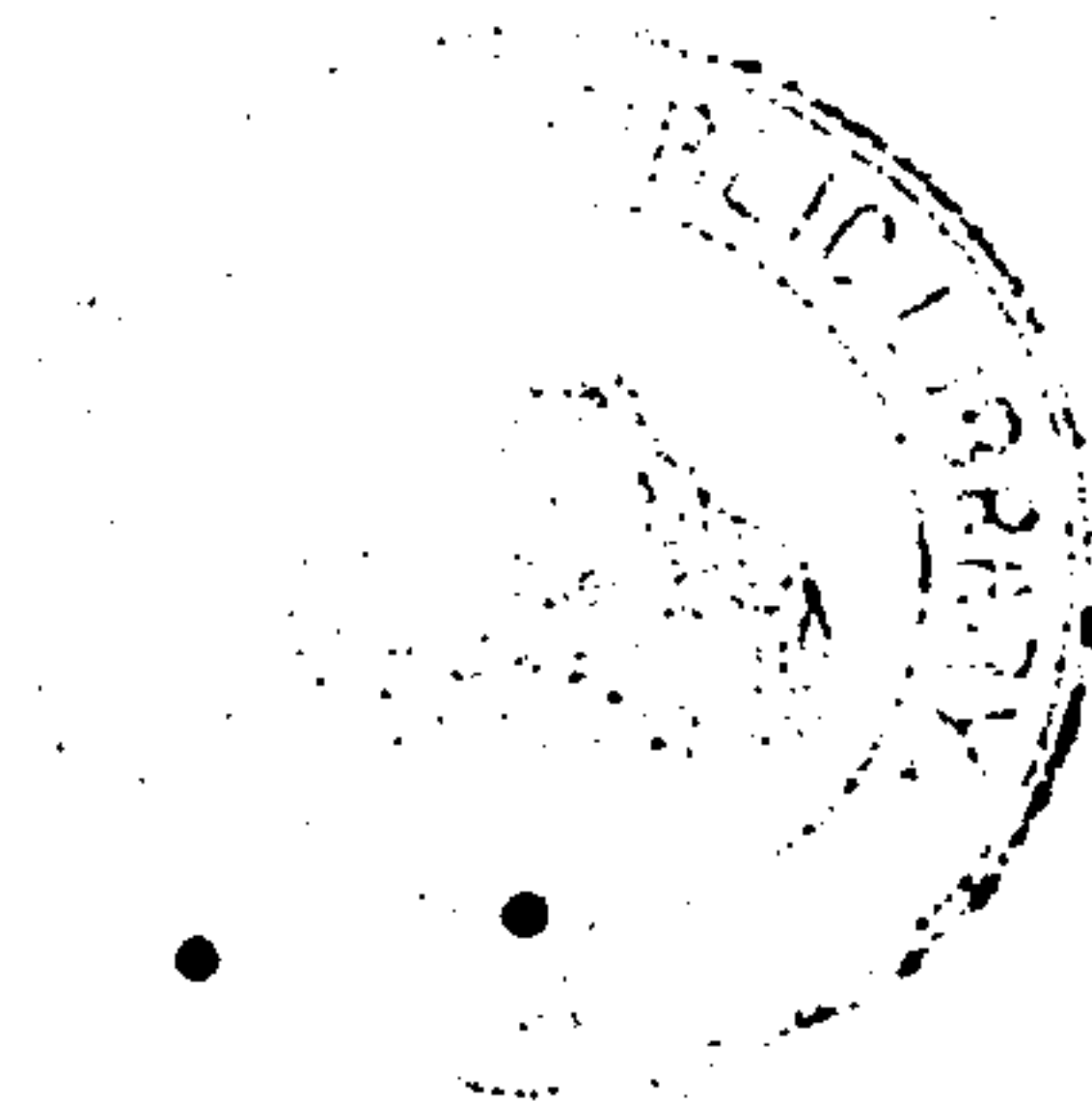
MANTRA SHĀSTRA

PART II

(Shakti—Potency to Create. Nāda—The First Produced Movement. Bindu—Shakti Ready to Create)



ARTHUR AVALON



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A STUDY IN THE MANTRA SHĀSTRA.

(SHAKTI—POTENCY TO CREATE).

BY

ARTHUR AVALON.

In my three previous articles I have referred to Shakti, Nāda, Bindu. In this and the two next I will deal in greater detail with each of these three concepts of Shakti. One of the clearest accounts known to me of the evolution of Shakti is that given in the authoritative Tāntrik Prakarana called Shâradâ (also spelt Sâradâ) Tilaka by Lakshmanâchâryya. This work was formerly of great authority in Bengal. Its value is greatly increased by the commentary of Râghava Bhatta. As this work with its commentary is of prime importance—and is cited throughout these articles, I may here note the following account which Lakshmanâchâryya gives of himself at its close. Mahâbala a great sage was succeeded by his son Âchâryapandita, a Deshika (Tantrik) Guru. His son Srîkrishna Deshika had a son Lakshmana Deshika who wrote the Shâradâ Tilaka. Râghava in his commentary called Padârthâdarsha says that Lakshmana was the disciple of Utpalâchâryya who was the disciple of Somânanda, who was the disciple of Vasumanta, who was the disciple of Shrîkantha. This is the Gurupangkti of Lakshmana. His disciple was the great Kashmirian Abhinava Gupta, the author of Paramârthasâra. The latter's disciple was Kshemarâja the author of the Shivasûtra-Vimarshinî. The date generally assigned to Abhinava Gupta is the eleventh century. Therefore S. J. Akshaya Kumâra Maitra, Director of the Varendra Anusandhâna Samiti, who has supplied me with these details of the Gurus and Shishyas of the author concludes that the Shâradâ was written at the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century. Râghava mentions 1510 as the age of his commentary. Taking this to be the Vikrama Samvat we get 1454 A. D., as its date. These details serve another purpose. There are persons who insist on a total disconnection between the Shaiva and Shâkta Tantras. Lakshmanâchâryya was a member of the Kashmirian Shaiva School and his work was as I have stated of great authority among the Bengal Shâktas.

The Shâradâ (Chapter 1, verse 7) says : "From Sakala Parameshvara vested with the wealth of Sat, Chit, Ānanda issued Shakti ; from Shakti came Nâda ; and from Nâda issued Bindu. (Sachchidânanda-vibhavât sakalât parameshvarât âśichchhaktistato nâdo nâdâd bindu-samudbhavaḥ). Parameshvara is here Shiva Tattva. He is Sakala, because, He is with the creative Kalâ or Shakti. As already explained Shakti, when Vyashtirûpâ, that is individualised, is called Kalâ. Shiva is always with Shakti. But in the supreme state, Shakti is unmanifest and exists in its own (Svarûpa) form as Being-consciousness-Bliss, (Sachchidânandamayî, Chidrûpinî) undistinguishable from Shiva. Sakala Shiva is thus Saguna Brahman. He is said to be vested with the wealth of Sat, Chit, Ānanda or Being-consciousness and Bliss to show that His association with Avidyâ does not deprive Him of, or affect, His own true nature (Svarûpa). Shiva has two aspects. In one of these He is the Supreme Changeless One who is Sachchidânanda and Sachchidânandamayî. This is Parâsamvit. In the other He changes as the Universe ; change being the experience of the Jîva so created. The cause of such change is Shiva Tattva inseparably associated with Shakti Tattva.

"There issued Shakti." This is a Shakti Tattva of the Thirty-six Tattvas. Shakti evolves Nâda, and Nâda, Bindu. These are aspects of Shakti preparing to create the Universe and are dealt with in future articles. Here I am concerned with Shakti Tattva only : that is, with that form of Shakti which is specifically so called ; since Nâda, Bindu and the rest are all but names for different aspects of Shakti.

It may be asked how can Shakti be said to issue from that which was already with Shakti. Râghava Bhatta explains that the author here follows the Sângkhyan principle of the appearance of realities from realities (Sadutpattivâda) and speaks of the condition of readiness (Uchchhûnâvassthâ) of Her who being without beginning or end existed in a subtle state identified with Chaitanya in dissolution (Yâ anâdi rūpâ chaitanyâdhyâsena mahâpralaye sūkshma sthitâ). Adhyâsa is the attribution of the nature of one thing to another according to which something is considered to be what it is not. In other words during dissolution there is some potential principle in the Brahman which, as manifest, appears not to be consciousness (Chit) but which owing to the absence of operation during the dissolved (Laya) state is identified with Chit. The distinction is very subtly marked by the Sanskrit word Chit for Shiva and Chidrûpinî for Shakti. Chit is there in either case, for ultimately there is nothing but Consciousness. But that principle which in

creation manifests as seeming Achit is in itself Chidrûpinî. One is consciousness and the other is a principle in the form of consciousness. I prefer to look at Shakti from the Consciousness aspect which is Her own form (Svarûpa) and to say that Shakti in dissolution is what She really is, namely, Chit. In creation consciousness as Shakti has power to veil its own true nature and when subject to this power we attribute unconsciousness to it. The substance in either case is this :—In dissolution Consciousness and Bliss alone is. Then without derogation to the changelessness of consciousness there is an apparent dichotomy into subject and object, that is, Consciousness and Unconsciousness. Shakti is conceived as ready to create the Universe composed of Gunas as its effect (Kâryya). In other words, pure Consciousness becomes the world-experience. The Prayogasâra says "She, who is eternal and all pervading, the Genetrix of the Universe issues from Him," Vâyaviya-Samhitâ says "By the will of Shiva, Parâ Shakti is united with Shiva-tattva and at the beginning of creation appears from It just as oil from sesamum seeds when pressed." The Pancharâtra is also cited by Râghava Bhatta as saying "The Parama Purusha at the beginning of creation seeing that She who is Sachchidânandarûpinî is the source (Ādishthâna) of the manifestation of all Tattvas makes manifest eternal Prakriti." These statements like all our accounts in such matters are pictorial thinking, being necessarily imperfect attempts to explain the manifestation of activity of Consciousness.

Cause and effect are really one but appear different. The first aspect of Shakti is its causal (Kârana) aspect. But this again may be analysed into the various stages of its capacity and preparedness to create. These stages are marked by certain names which again are mere labels denoting states of Shakti. Thus Nâda and Bindu are names for those aspects of Shakti which are more and more prone to creation (Uchchihûnavasthâ). Nâda and Bindu are but two states of Her fit for creation (Srishtyupayogyâvasthârûpau). Shakti Tattva is the first kinetic aspect of Brahman. Shakti then becomes more and more kinetic until as Bindu, Shakti is Īshvara Tattva. This Bindu differentiates into the Triangle of Divine Desire called the Kâmakalâ upon which there is that Brahman Sound (Shabda-brahman) which, bifurcating into Shabda and Artha, are Shakti in its aspect as effect (Kâryya) or the manifested Universe of Mind and Matter. This Tantrik account gives firstly an apparent "development" in the causal body of Shakti being in the nature of a resolution of like to like; and then a real development (Parinâma) of the effects (Kâryya) produced from the causal body. The

whole is necessarily described after the manner of a gradual process stated in terms of our own psychological experience. But such a process exists only in time which first appears with the Sun and Moon. Bhāskararāya in his commentary on the Lalitā Sahasranāma (Verse 117) cites Gorakshanātha as saying in his Mahārthamanjarī "In a moment the world is created and in a moment it is destroyed."

Shakti Tattva and Shiva Tattva are inseparable (Santata-Samavāyini) the former being only the negative aspect of the latter. Both exist even in dissolution, the first emanation proper being Sadākhyā which corresponds with Nāda in the above mentioned verse. Shiva Tattva is defined in the Tattva Sandoha as follows :—
"That beyond which there is none other, moved of His own will in order to create the whole world. The first movement (Spanda prathama) is called the Shiva Tattva by those who know."

Yad ayam anuttaramūrtinijechedhayākṣhīlam idam jagat
srashtum paspande sah spandah prathamah Shivatattvam uchyate
tājñaih.

As the Vimarshinī on the Pratyabhijñā says—It is the "I-experience not looking towards another" (Ananyonmukhaḥ aham-pratyayaḥ). It is the self-side of experience, Prakāsha or Jñāna-mātrā, which is such, because of the negation of all objectivity or not-self by Shakti Tattva. For this Jñāna-mātrā She as Vimarsha Shakti provides through gradual stages the objects of its experience. Her function is negation (nishedha-vyāpāra-rūpā shaktiḥ) of all objectivity so as to produce the mere subjective knowing (Prakāsha-mātrā) which is the Shūnyātishūnya. She then evolves from Herself the objective world in order that it may be the content of the Shiva consciousness. She is pure Will ever associated with Shiva. She is the seed of the whole Universe of moving and unmoving things then absorbed in Herself.

Ichchhā saiva svachchhā santatasamavāyini satī
Shaktiḥ sacharācharasya jagato bījam nikhilasya nījanilīnasya
(Tattva Sandoha. V. 1.)

She is thus called the Womb (Yoni), or Seed-state (Bījāvasthā) and by the Parāpravesikā "Heart of the Supreme Lord" (Hridayam Parameshituh). The Yoginī-hridaya Tantra says that men speak of the Heart of Yoginī. She is Yoginī because She is connected with all things both as cause and effect. This Yoginī is knower of Herself (Yoginī Svavid). She is called the Heart: for from the Heart all issues. She is the Heart of the Universe: the pulsing movements of which are Herself as Shakti. What

more can be said than the words of the Yoginî-hridaya "What man knows the heart of a woman, only Shiva knows the heart of Yoginî."

In the Pratyabhijnâ-Hridaya it is said, "The auspicious supreme Shiva desiring to make shine forth the Universe existing as one with Himself displays Himself first in the form of the Very Void which is the self-existent Shiva in the form of the experience of the unity of consciousness (that is there is no objectivity) and of undifferentiated illumination (that is Prakâsha or Jnâna). He then next appears in the form of diverse experiencers consisting of an infinite endless number of Tattvas, worlds and beings which are in the nature of a blooming forth of Consciousness and Bliss." (Shrî-parama-shivah svâtmaikyena sthitam vishvam avabibhâsayishuh pûrvam chid-aikyâkhyâtimayânâshrita-shiva-paryâya-shûnyâtishûnyâtmatayâ prakâshâbhedenâ prakâshamânatayâ sphuratî ; tatah chidrasâshyânâtârûpâshesha-tattva-bhuvanabhâva-tattat-pramâtrâdyâtmatayâpi prathate).

The substance of the matter may be stated thus :—Whilst from the static transcendental aspect (Parashiva, Parâshakti), Consciousness changelessly endures there is from the kinetic creative aspect (Shiva-Shakti) a polarisation in consciousness, the poles of which are Shiva and Shakti representing the Aham and Idam aspects of experience. Owing to this polarisation there is in lieu of the unitary experience a division into the knower, knowing, and known, Mâtri Meya, Mâna, as it is called. Consciousness then indentifies itself with the products of its own kinetic Shakti, that is with mind as the subject of experience and with matter as its object. This polarisation is explained in the Shâkta Tantras by the illustration of the grain of gram (Chanaka). Under the sheath of the grain of gram two seeds are found in such close union that they appear when held together, as one. With, however, the tearing of the outer sheath the two halves of the seeds fall apart. These two seeds are said to be Shiva and Shakti and the encircling sheath is Mâyâ. Like all attempts to explain the unexplainable the illustration is, to some extent, defective for in the gram there are two separate seeds—but Shiva-Shakti are an undistinguishable unity. The commentator on the Shat-chakranirûpana (Vol. II of my Tantrik Tests) cites the following :—(V. 49). "In the Satyaloka is the formless and lustrous One. She is like a grain of gram devoid of hands, feet or the like. She has surrounded Herself by Mâyâ. She is Sun, Moon and Fire. When casting off (Utsrijya) the covering, She divides in two (Dvidhâ bhivâ) becomes intent on creation (Unmukhî) and then by differentiation of Shiva and Shakti arises

creative ideation (Srishti-kalpanâ)". By "differentiation" is meant the polarisation of consciousness into subjective (Prakāśha) and objective (Vimarsha) aspects. The Self sees another. The same commentator cites the Prapanchasāra Tantra as saying that the Parabindu divides into two parts, of which the right is Bindu, the male, Purusha or Hang, and the left is Visargah, the female Prakṛiti or Sah. Hangsah is the union of Prakṛiti and Purusha and the Universe is Hangsa. In, however, the Mss. in which my edition of this Tantra is based (Vol. III Tāntrik Texts) it is said that Parabindu divided by Kāla becomes threefold—Bindu, Nāda, Bīja. The difference is of no moment for this Bindu (Kāryya) is Shiva and Bīja is Shakti, and Nāda is merely the relation (Mithah samavāya) of the two. The combined Hangsah indicates the same relation as is expressed by Nāda. In the Kulachūdāmanī Nigama (Chap. I, VV. 16-24, Vol. IV, Tāntrik Texts) the Devī says of the first stage "I, though in the form of Prakṛiti lie hidden in Being—consciousness-bliss (Aham prakṛitirūpā chet sachchid-ānandaparāyanā). Then in the initial creative stage when Karma ripens the Devī in the words of the Nigama "becomes desirous of creation and covers Herself with Her own Māyā." This is the appearance of the kinetic Shakti. The same doctrine is stated with greater or less detail in various ways. Unitary experience, without ceasing to be such, is yet, as Jīva polarised into the dual experience of the Mayik world. Consciousness as Chit-Shakti and Māyā-Shakti projects from itself, in a manner conformable with our own psychological experience, the object of its experience. The Mayik experiencer (Māyāpramātrī) takes what is one to be dual or many. This is the division of Shiva and Shakti which are yet eternally one. All action implies duality. Duality is manifestation. Manifestation is nothing but an appearance to consciousness. As there is ultimately but one Self, the Self appears to Itself; that is consciousness is polarised. These two poles are the continuity of the "I" (Aham) and its ever changing content which is "This" (Idam).

Just as there is absolute rest and a world movement, so Shakti or Creative Consciousness is itself of twofold aspect, static and dynamic. Cosmic energy in its physical aspect is potential or kinetic the first being that state in which the equilibrated elements of Power hold each other in check. It is not possible to have one without the other. In any sphere of activity, according to these views, there must be a static back ground. If one Spiritual Reality be assumed it cannot be actually divided into two. It is possible, however, that there should be a *polarisation* in our experience

whereby what is indivisibly one and the self, appears as many and the not-self. How? The answer is *Mâyâ*, that Power of Her whereby what is impossible to us becomes possible. *Mâyâ* is *Shakti* but *Shakti* is not to be identified only with this form of It. In the thirty-six *Tattvas*, *Mâyâ* is a particular and comparatively gross form of *Shakti* which appears after the evolution of the *Sadvidyâ Tattva*. It is defined as that *Shakti* which is the sense of difference (*Bhedabuddhi*); that is the power whereby the individual consciousness, distinguishing itself from others, considers itself separate from them. *Shakti* is understood differently in the *Shâkta Tantra* and in *Shangkaras Mâyâvâda*; a matter of primary importance from the point of view of *Sâdhanâ* and with which I will deal on some future occasion. Whatever be the description given, all accounts must end in the inconceivable *Shakti* (*Achintyâ Shakti*). She the One, the primordial *Shakti* (*Âdyâshakti*) appears as many; and so the *Shâkta Sâdhaka* saying "Aham Devî nachânyosmi (I am the Devî and none other) thinks to himself "Sâham" (I am She).

NÂDA—THE FIRST PRODUCED MOVEMENT.

Shakti-tattva dealt with in the preceding article is really the negative aspect of the *Shiva-tattva*. Though spoken of separately, the two are indissolubly one. *Shakti-tattva* as the *Tattva-sandoha* says is the Will of *Shiva* as yet unmanifest :—

Ichchhâ saiva svachchhâ santatasamavâyinî satî shaktih.

Sacharâcharasya jagato bîjam nikhilasya nijanilînasya.

These two Principles (*Shiva-shakti Tattva*) are the ultimate Potency of creation, and as and when they (considered as one *Tattva*) commence to act, the first movement towards manifestation takes place. After the previous restful state of *Shiva-Shakti* there follows the union for the purpose of creation of the two principles which are *Shivatattva* and *Shaktitattva*. So it is said in the *Shâkta Tantra*, "*Shiva-Shakti-samâyogât jâyate srishtikalpanâ*" (From the union of *Shiva* and *Shakti* arises creative ideation). This union and mutual relation is called *Nâda*. As the relation is not some substantial thing apart from *Shiva* or *Shakti*, *Nâda* is really *Shiva-Shakti*; passing from the state of mere potency into that of the first creating movement, from which at length, when finally perfected, the whole universe is evolved. The *Shâkta Tantras* frequently employ erotic symbolism to explain the creative process. This has

led a missionary author to the conclusion that "throughout its symbolism and pseudo-philosophisings there lies at the basis of the whole system... ..the conception of the sexual relationship as the ultimate explanation of the universe." An American author reviewing one of my works has called it "a doctrine for suffragette monists"—"religious feminism run mad." Both statements are examples of those depreciative misunderstandings which are so common in western descriptions of eastern belief and which seem so absurd to anyone who has understood the subject. How can "sexual relationship" which exists on the gross plane of matter be the ultimate explanation of That which has manifested not only this but all other relations and subjects. As for "feminism" and the supposed priority of the feminine principle, the doctrine has no more to do with either than with old age pensions or any other social question. We are not dealing with the biological question whether the female antedates the male principle, or the social question of the rights of Woman, but with those ultimate dual principles, aspects of the one active Consciousness, which projects from Itself both man and woman and all other dualities in the universe. Shiva and Shakti are one and neither is higher than the other. But how are European writers to be blamed when we find a distinguished Indian Sanskritist affirming that according to Shākta doctrine "*God is a woman*" (the italics are mine).

Shakti is spoken of as female, that is, as Mother, because that is the aspect of the Supreme in which It is thought of as the Genetrix and Nourisher of the universe. But God is neither male nor female. As the Yāmala says for the benefit of all such ignorance "*neyam yoshit na cha pumân na shandah na jadah smritah.*" These are all symbolisms borrowed from the only world which we ordinarily know—that around us. As for the charge of pseudo-philosophy, if it be that, then the same criticism must apply to the Advaitavâda Vedânta. For the Shākta Tantra is the Sâdhanâ-shâstra of Advaitavâda presenting the teachings of Vedânta in its own manner and in terms of its own ritual symbolism. Thus it is said that Nâda is the Maithuna of Shiva and Shakti and that when Mahâkâla was in Viparîta Maithuna with Mahâkâlî (a form of Maithuna again which is symbolical of the fact that Shiva is Nishkriya and Shakti Sakriyâ)—there issued Bindu. For Maithuna others substitute the logical term Mithah samāvâyah as a description of Nâda which is Kriyâshakti. Before the appearance of Shabda there must be two. Unity is necessarily actionless. Two involves a third—which is the relation of both; a Trinity of Power which

is reflected in the Trimûrti of the Mayik world as Brahmâ, Vishnu, Rudra.

From Nâda came Mahâbindu and this latter defferentiated into the Tribindu which is Kâmakalâ, the Mûla of all Mantras. In Pralaya, Shiva and Shakti exist as the "two in one"; Shiva as Chit, Shakti as Chidrûpinî; the Parâ Shakti—not being different or separated from Shiva (Avinâbhâvasambandha) and being undivided supreme Chit-Shakti (Akhandaparachichchhakti).

The Shâradâ-Tilaka (1-7) then says :—from the Sakalaparameshvara vested with the wealth of Sachchidânanda (Sachchidânandavibhavât) appeared Shakti (Shakti Tattva); from Shakti, Nâda and from Nâda, Bindu (Mahâbindu). Sakala means with Kalâ; that is the Brahman with what the Sângkhya calls Mûlaprakriti, that which the Vedânta calls Avidyâ and the Shâkta Tantras or Agamas call Shakti. On the other hand Nishkala Shiva is Nirguna Shiva or that aspect of the Brahman which is unconnected with the creative Shakti; just as Sakala Shiva is the Brahman so associated, Shiva in either aspect is always with Shakti; for Shakti is but Himself; but whereas the Shakti associated with Paramashiva is Chidrûpinî and Vishvâtîrnâ or beyond the Universe, the Shakti which is associated with the creative Shiva is that which appears as the Universe (Vishvâtmaka). The Parashakti is one with Chaitanya at rest. The other aspect which ripens into Nâda and Bindu denotes the "swollen" condition of readiness (Uchchhûnâvasthâ) of Her who existed in a subtle state in the great dissolution (Mahâpralaya). These two Shaktis (Nâda, Bindu) are stages in the movement towards the manifestation of the Self as object, that is as the Universe. In these the mere readiness or potency of Shaktitattva to act develops into action. In Nâdashakti therefore Kriyâ predominates. When we speak of stages, development and so forth we are using language borrowed from the manifested world which in the sense there understood are not appropriate to a state prior to manifestation; for such manifestation does not take place until after the appearance of the Purusha-Prakriti Tattva and the development from the latter of the impure Tattvas from Buddha to Prithivî. But a Sâdhanâ Shâstra, even if it had the power to do otherwise, could not usefully use terms and symbols other than those borrowed from the world of the Sâdhaka. The Prayogasâra says that the Shakti who is "turned towards" the state of liberation (Nirâmayapadonmukhî) awakes as Nâda and is turned to Shiva (Shivonmukhî) at which time She is said to be male (Pungrûpa). For then She becomes Hang in Hangsa. She who was one with Parashiva in Pralaya as the coalesced "I" (Aham) and "This"

(Idam) now in Her creative aspect as Shaktitattva transforms Herself into Nâda. Nâda is action (Kriyâshakti rūpâ). In simple language, potency and readiness to create, (Shaktitattva) becomes for the first time active as Nâda and then more so as Bindu which is a further development of Kriyâ Shakti dealt with in the next article.

According to Râghava Bhatta in his Commentary on the Shâradâ some writers do not speak of Nâda, though the author of the Shâradâ does so in order to indicate the sevenfold character of Târa. The Nâda state is however indicated by those Âchâryyas who speak of Kâla. So it is said "in the Kâlatattva which is Sound" (Ravâtmani kâlatattve). In the Hymn to Bhuvaneshî also it is said "Obeisance to Thee who art called Tattva in the character of Sound" (Namaste ravatvena tattvâbhidâne).

Nâda occupies the same place in the Mantra scheme as the Sadâkhyâ Tattva of the 36 Tattvas, for Bindu is Îshvara Tattva. As Consciousness reaches forth to enjoyment and the "I" is separated from the "This," what was mere diffusive consciousness as Sadâkhyâ Tattva is objectified into the all-embracing Âkâsha the Guna of which is gross Shabda ; that is something experienced as an objec' apparently different from and other than ourselves.

Nâda which etymologically means "Sound" is a technical term of the Mantrashâstra. The latter Shâstra is concerned with Mantravidyâ, and Mantra is manifested Shabda which also literally means "Sound." By "Sound" of course is not meant gross sound which is heard by the ear and which is the property of the Kâryyâ-kâsha developed as a Vikriti from the Prakriti Tattva which, with the Purusha Tattva, occupies the place (though without its dualities) of the Purusha and Prakriti of the Sângkhyas. Gross sound belongs to the impure creation as a Guna of Âkâsha or the ether which fills space. To avoid misconception, it is better to use the word Shabda which with Artha is manifested in the "Garland (or Rosary) of Letters" (Varnamâlâ) with which I will deal on some future occasion.

Nâda is the most subtle aspect of Shabda, as the first putting forth of Kriyâshakti. Paranâda and Parâvâk are Parâshakti. Nâda into which it evolves is the unmanifested (avyaktâtma) seed or essence (Nâdamâtrâ) of that which is later manifested as Shabda, devoid of particularities such as letters and the like (Varnâdivishe-sharahitah). It develops into Bindu which is of the same character. From the Mantra aspect as the source of Shabda this Mahâbindu as it differentiates to "create" is called the Shabdabrahman. Bindu

when differentiated is also the source of the Vikritis or Tattvas and of their Lords (Tattvesha). In its character as Shabdabrahman it is the source of the manifested Shabda and Artha (Shabda-shabdārthakâranam). Shabdabrahman is thus a name of Brahman as the immediate creative source of the manifold Shabda and Artha.

What Shabdabrahman is, has been the subject of contention, as Râghava Bhatta's Commentary shows. It is sufficient to say here (where we are only concerned with Shabdabrahmâtmaka Bindu so far as it is necessary to explain Nâda) that Râghavabhatta rightly says that Shabdabrahman is the Chaitanya in all beings (Chaitanyam sarvvabhûtânām). This cosmic Shakti exists in the individual bodies of all breathing creatures (Prânî) in the form of Kundalinî (Kundalîrûpâ). Nâda therefore which assumes the aspect of Bindu is also Chaitanya and Shakti. Nâda is thus the first emanative stage in the production of Mantra. The second is Bindu, or Shabdabrahman; the third is Tribindu (Bindu, Nâda and Bîja) or Kâmakalâ; the fourth is the production of Shabda as the Mâtrikâs which are the subtle state of the subsequently manifested gross letters (Varna); and the last is these gross letters, (Sthûlashabda) which compose the manifested Shabda or Mantra composed of letters (Varna) Syllables (Pada) and sentences (Vākya). Thus Mantra ultimately derives from Nâda which is itself the Kriyâshaktirûpa aspect of Shiva-shakti who are the Supreme Nâda (Paranâda) and Supreme Speech (Parâvâk). The Prayogasâra says "Oh Devî that Antarâtmâ in the form of Nâda (Nâdâtmâ) itself makes sound (Nadate svayam) that is displays activity. Urged on by Vâyû (that is the Prânavâyû in Jîvas) it assumes the form of letters." Nâda again is itself divided into several stages, namely, Mahânâda or Nâdânta, the first movement forth of the Shabdabrahman; Nâda when Shakti fills up the whole Universe with Nâdânta; in other words the completed movement of which Nâdânta is the commencement; and Nirodhinî which is that aspect of Nâda in which its universal operation having been completed, it operates in a particular manner and is transformed into Bindu, which is the completion of the first movement of Shakti, in which She assumes the character of the Creative Lord of the Universe (Ishvara Tattva). Nâdânta considered as the end and not the commencement of the series is that in which there is dissolution of Nâda (Nâdasya anta layah). Above Bindu, the Shaktis which have been already given in previous articles become more and more subtle until Nishkala Unmanî is reached which, as the Yoginîhridaya says, is uncreate motionless speech (Anutpan-nanishpandâvâk), the twin aspects of which are Samvit or the

Void (Shûnya Samvit) and Samvit as tendency to manifestation in a subtle state (Utpatsuh samvid utpatyavasthâ sūkshma). Unmanî is beyond Kâranarûpâ Shakti; where there is no experience (Bhânam) or Kala or Kalâ nor of Devatâ or Tattva, in the sense of category, as that which distinguishes one thing from another. It is Sva-nirvânamparam padam, the Nirvikalpaniranjanashivashakti which is Guruvaktra.

Nâda and Bindu exist in all Bîja Mantras which are generally written with the Bindu above and the Nâda below, for this is the form of the written Chandrabindu. In however some of the old pictorial representations of Ongkâra the real position of Nâda is shown as being over Bindu as an inverted crescent. Thus the great Bîja, Hrîm (ॐ) is composed of Ha, Ra, I and Ma. Of these Ha=Ākāsha, Ra=Agni, I=Ardhanārīshvara and M=Nādabindu. The five Bhûtas are divided into two groups Amûrtta (formless) and Mûrtta (with form). Both Ākāsha and Vāyu belong to the first group, because until the appearance of Agni as Rûpa, there is no colour and form. Agni therefore heads the second division. When Ākāsha is with Agni there is form; for Ra is the first manifestation of Rûpa. This form is in Ardhanārīshvara the combined Shiva-Shakti who hold all in themselves. The first three letters represent the Ākāra or form aspect. The Mantra receives its complete form by the addition of the Mâhâtmya which is Nâda-bindu which are Nirākâra (formless) and the Kârana (cause) of the other three in which they are implicitly and potentially contained; being in technical phrase Antargata of, or held within, Bindu which again is Antargata of all the previously evolving Shaktis mentioned. The meaning of the Bîja Mantra then is that the Chidākāsha is associated (Yukta) with Rûpa. It is thus the Shabda statement of the birth of General Form; that is Form as such of which all particular forms are a derivation. Hrîm is, as pronounced, the gross-body as sound of the ideation of Form as such in the Cosmic Mind.

The degree of subtlety of the Shaktis preceding and following Nâda is in the Mantra Shâstra indicated by what is called "the utterance time" (Uchchâranakâla). Thus taking Bindu as the unit: Unmanî is Nirākâra and Niruchchâra, formless and without utterance, undefined by any adjective: being beyond mind and speech and the universe (Vishvottîrîhâ). The Uchchâranakâla of Samanî (so named Manahsahitatvât: on account of its association with mind; the preceding Shakti Unmanî being tadrहितâ or devoid of that,) is 1/256, of Vyâpikâ 1/128 and so on to

Nâdânta 1/32, Nâda 1/16 to Ardhachandra which is 1/2 of Bindu and to Bindu itself.

Nâda is thus in Mantra Shâstra that aspect of Shakti which evolves into Bindu which later as differentiating into the Tribindu is called the Shabdabrahman who is the creative source of Shabda and Artha and thus of the revealed Shabda which Mantra is.

I would in conclusion meet an objection, which I have heard urged, namely that the Mantra Shâstra treats its subject with unnecessary complexity of detail. It is undoubtedly difficult and requires careful study. Simple minds may be satisfied with the statement that God created the world. Veda too gives an explanation of the cosmic problem in two words "He saw" (Sa aikshata). But who saw, and what, and how did He see? How also if there be only One came there to be anything to see? And what is to see (Îkshana). For the process is not like looking out of a window and seeing a man passing. "He" is Consciousness which is in Itself (Svarûpa) actionless. How then did "It" see and thus become active? Because It has two aspects one (Nishkalashiva) in which It is actionless and the other (Sakalashiva) in which it is Activity as the embodiment of all the Sangskâras. In this last aspect it is called Shakti. The latter term denotes Active Consciousness. How can one and the same thing have two contradictory aspects? We cannot say, otherwise than by affirming Svabhâva. By way of analogy we can refer to what psychology calls dual and multiple personalities. The ultimate Reality is alogical and unexplainable (Anirvachanîya). That it is one and not two is, it is said, proved by Veda and the actual experience (Svânubhava) had in Yoga. What is "seeing"? It is not the observing of something outside which was there before it was observed. "Seeing" is the rising into consciousness (void of objects) of the memory of past universes existing in the form of the Sangskâras. Before this can occur, Consciousness must obscure to itself its nature and (though in truth an unity) must experience itself as an "I" observing a "This" which it has through Mâyâ Shakti projected outside Itself. There is no answer again to the question how this is possible except inscrutable Shakti (Achintya Shakti). But just as a man rising from deep sleep has first a more or less bare awareness which is gradually filled out with the thought of self and particular objects; consciousness coming to itself, so that in the waking state it again recognises the world which had vanished utterly in dreamless slumber; so it is with the Cosmic Consciousness. Just as man does not pass at once from dreamless slumber to the fullest waking perception; so neither does

the Cosmic Consciousness. It passes gradually from its dreamless slumber (Sushupti) state which is the general dissolution (Mahā-pralaya) to the waking state (Jāgrat) which is consciousness of the gross universe. The degrees in this emanative process are the Tattvas described in the last article. Manifestation, which is nothing but presentation of apparently external objects to the inner consciousness, is, as experienced by the limited consciousness, gradual. The seeds of the "I" and "This" are first formed and then grown. The first principal stage is that before and in Ishvara Tattva or Bindu and which therefore includes Nāda. The second is that of the world-consciousness arising through the agency of Mâyâ-shakti. These two stages are marked by two principal differences. In the first the "This" (Idam) is seen as part of the self, the two not being differentiated in the sense of inner and outer. In the second the object is externalised and seen as different from the self. In the first, when the Self experiences itself as object, the latter is held as a vague undefined generality. There is, as it were, an awareness of self-scission in which the self as subject knows itself as object and nothing more. The degrees in this process have been already explained. In the second not only is the object defined as something which appears to be not the self, but there are a multiplicity of objects each marked by its own differences; for Mâyâ has intervened. The whole world-process is thus a re-awaking of the Cosmic Consciousness from sleep to the world, into which at Dissolution it had fallen; and the Tattvas mark the gradual stages of re-awakening, that is re-awakening to the world, but a falling into sleep so far as true Consciousness is concerned. So in Kundalīyoga when Kundalinī sleeps in the Mūlādhāra man is awake to the world; and when She awakes, the world vanishes from Consciousness which then regains its own state (Svarūpa). There is no reason to suppose that, judged in the terms of our present experience, the change is other than gradual. But how, it may be asked, is this known or what the stages are; for were we there? As individuals we were not; for we speak of that which preceded the formation of the Sakala Jīva Consciousness. But Jīva was there as the plant is in the seed. It is the one Shiva who displays himself in all the Tattvas. Those who fall back into the seed have experience of it. There are, however, two bases on which these affirmations rest. In the first place there is correspondence between all planes. "What is without, is so manifested because it is within"; not of course in the exact form in which it exists without but in the corresponding form of its own plane. We may therefore look for instruction to our daily life and its psychological states to discover both the elements and the working of

the cosmic process. These also disclose a gradual unfolding of consciousness from something in the nature of mere awareness to the definite perception of a variety of multiple objects. But the normal experience is by its nature limited. That normal experience is, however, transcended in Yoga-states when consciousness becomes Nirâlambapurî, that is, detached from worldly objects: the experience wherein is (in part at least) available for the instruction of others. Secondly the Shâstras are records of truth beyond the senses (Atîndriya Tattva). The Tattvas are not put forth as mere speculative guesses or imaginings of what might have been. When, however, supersensual truth is described in language it is necessarily expressed in terms, and with the use of symbols, of present experience. That experience is had under conditions of time and space and others. We know and speak of mere potency ripening into actuality, of potential energy becoming more and more kinetic, of shifting states of consciousness, and so forth. These are matters the knowledge of which is drawn from the world around us. But this does not necessarily make them wholly untrue or unreal as applied to higher planes. One of the commonest errors is to raise false partitions between things. The experience is real for it is Shiva's and His experience is never unreal. It is according to its degree (that is on its plane) real; an expression (limited though it be) of the ultimate Reality Itself. We can think in no other terms. But it is also true that these terms and symbols, having only complete validity on our plane, are no longer wholly true for Consciousness as it rises from it. But other forms of Consciousness must take their place until the Formless is reached. The Tattvas explain (limited though such explanation be by the bounds of our thought and language) the modes through which the returning Consciousness passes until it rests in Itself (Svarûpavishrânti) and has Peace. And so the Buddhist Mantra-yâna aptly defines Yoga in the sense of result, (which in Tibetan is called rNal-rByor) as the "Finding rest or peace". This final state, as also those intermediate ones which lie between it and the normal individual world-consciousness, are only actually realised in Jnâna Yoga (by whatsoever method Jnâna is attained) when the mind has been wholly withdrawn from without and faces the operative power of Consciousness behind it (Nirâmaya padonmukhî).

But here we are dealing with Mantrayoga when the mind is thinking the states which Jnâna, in whatever degree, realises as Consciousness. The Mantra Shâstra looks at the matter, of which we write, from the standpoint of Mantra that is of manifested Shabda its object. Kundalinî is both Jyotirmayî, Her Sûkshma-

rūpā ; and Maniramayī Her Sthūlarūpa. We begin with the latter. All things are then defined in terms of Shabdārtha and of the various causal forms which precede it. The first of such produced forms is Nāda which becomes Bindu and then on the differentiation of the Tattvas the "hidden sound" (Avyaktarava), the Logos or Cosmic Word utters "the Garland of Letters" (Varnamālā) of which all Mantras are formed. It traces the degrees in which the ideating Cosmic Consciousness becomes, as Supreme Speech (Parāvāk), the Genetrix of the subtle and gross Shabda which are the Mātrikās and Varnas respectively. That Supreme Speech (Parāvāk) is without idea or language, but is represented as gradually assuming the state in which it utters both and projects from Itself into the sensual world the objects (Artha) which they denote. The actual manifestation of these from Parashabda through Pashyantī, Madhyamā and Vaikhari, will be described in another article.

The practice of Mantra Yoga not only gives, from a merely intellectual standpoint, an understanding of Vedānta which cannot ordinarily be had by the mere reading of philosophical texts ; but also produces a pure Bhāva ripening into Mahābhāva through the purification of mind (Chittashuddhi) which such practice (according to the rules of Sāadhanā laid down in the Tantras or Mantrashāstra) gives, as one of its Siddhis. What the Western, and sometimes the English educated Indian, does not understand or recognise, is the fact that the mere reading of Vedantic texts without Chittashuddhi will neither bring true understanding or other fruitful result. The experienced will find that this apparent complexity and wealth of detail is not useless and is, from an extra-ritual standpoint, to a considerable extent, and from that of Sāadhanā wholly, necessary. A friend of mine was once asked by a man in a somewhat testy manner "to give him a plain exposition of the Vedānta in five minutes." It takes years to understand perfectly any science or profession. How can that, which claims to explain all, be mastered in a short talk ? But more than this ; however prolonged the intellectual study may be, it must, to be really fruitful, be accompanied by some form of Sāadhanā. The Tantra Shāstra contain this for the Hindu, though it is open to him or any other to devise a better if he can. Forms ever change with the ages, while the Truth which they express, remains.

BINDU OR SHAKTI READY TO CREATE.

From Nâda, previously described, evolved Bindu (Nâda-bindu-samudbhavah). What then is Bindu ? Literally the term means a "drop" or a "point" such as the Anusvâra breathing. But in the Mantra Shâstra it has a technical meaning. It is not, as a distinguished Indian Sanskritist called it merely a "drop." It is not that "red drops" mix with "white drops" and so forth a description of his which reminds one more of the pharmacy or sweet shop than the Shâstra. This and other statements betray an ignorance of Indian tradition and a mental attitude alien to Indian thinking which distinguishes so many of those whose souls have been captured in the net of an English education. Those who speak another's language and think another's thought must see to it that their own Indian self is not, through the dangers to which it is thus exposed, lost. But even an educated Western, ignorant of the Shâstra, but with a knowledge of the history of religious thought would have perceived the significance of the term Bindu when he had learnt that one of its literal meanings was a "Point."

In an anonymous Mystical Work published in the eighteenth century by one of the "French Protestants of the Desert" called *Le Mystère de la Croix*, it is said (p. 9). "Ante omnia Punctum exstitit ; non to atomon, aut mathematicum sed diffusivum. Monas erat explicite : implicite Myrias. Lux erat, erant et Tenebrae ; Principium et Finis Principii. Omnia et nihil : Est et non."

"Before all things were, there was a Point (Punctum : Bindu) not the Atom or mathematical point (which though it is without magnitude has position) but the diffusive (neither with magnitude nor position). In the One (Monas) there was implicitly contained the Many (Myrias). There was Light and Darkness : Beginning and End : Everything and Nothing : Being and Non-being (that is, the state was neither Sat nor Asat)." The author says that the all is engendered from the central indivisible Point of the double triangle (that is what is called in the Tantras Shatkona Yantra) regarded as the symbol of creation. "Le Tout est engendré du point central indivisible du double triangle." This "Point" is one of the world's religious symbols and is set in the centre of a Shatkona as above or in a circular Mandala or sphere. On this symbol St. Clement of Alexandria in the second century A.D. says that if abstraction be made from a body of its properties, its depth, breadth, and then length "the point which remains is a unit, so to speak, having position ; from which if we abstract position there is the notion of unity" (Stromata V.12. Ante Nicene Library Vol,

IV). Again Shelley in his "Prometheus" says "plunge into eternity where recorded time seems but a point."

Where does the universe go at the Great Dissolution (Mahâ-pralaya)? It collapses so to speak into a Point. This point may be regarded as a mathematical point in so far as it is without any magnitude whatever but as distinguished from it, in that it has in fact no position. For there is then no notion of space. It need hardly be said that this is a symbol, and a symbol borrowed from our present experience cannot adequately represent any state beyond it. We only conceive of it as a point as something infinitesimally subtle which is in contrast with the extended manifested universe which is withdrawn into it. This Point is Bindu. But this again is to make use of material images borrowed from the world of objective form. Bindu is an aspect of Shakti or Consciousness; therefore it is interpreted also in terms of our present consciousness. As so interpreted and as Īshvara Tattva, which it is, Shakti is called Bindu; because here consciousness completely identifies itself with the universe as unmanifested Idam and thus subjectifies it and becomes with it a point of consciousness. Thus by way of example the individual mind is completely subjectified and exists for each of us as a mathematical point (and so it is spoken of by some as being of atomic dimension) though the body to the extent to which it is not subjectified appears as an object or extended thing. We never conceive of our own minds as extended because of this complete subjectification. In the same way the consciousness of Īshvara completely subjectifies the universe. He does not of course see the universe as a multiplicity of objects outside and different from Himself; for if He did He would be Jivâ and not Īshvara. He sees it as an object which is a whole and which whole is Himself. In Sadâkhyâ Tattva "Otherness" (Idam) is presented to Consciousness by Shakti. This Idam is then faintly perceived (to use the language of the Vimarshinî on Īshvara-Pratyabhijnâ III. 1, 2) "in a hazy fashion (Dhyâmala-prâyam) "like a picture just forming itself" (Unmîlita-mâtra-chitra-kalpam); seen by the mind only and not as something seen without by the senses (Antah-karanaika-vedyam). The object thus vaguely surges up into the field of consciousness in which the emphasis is on the cognitive aspect or "I" (Aham).⁶ This however is not the "I" or "this" of our experience, for it is had in the realms beyond Mâyâ. The "This" is then experienced as part of the Self. In Īshvara Tattva all haziness gives place to clarity of the "This," which is thus seen completely as part of the Self; the

emphasis being on the "This." After equal emphasis on the "I" and "This" in Shuddhavidyâ Tattva the two are wholly separated by Mâyâ. When therefore the Yogî passes beyond the Mâyik world his first higher experience is in this Tattva.

Nâda and Bindu are states of Shakti in which the germ of action (Kriyâ-shakti) so to speak increasingly sprouts with a view to manifestation producing a state of compactness of energy and readiness to create. Râghava Bhatta (Comm. Shâradâ I. 7) speaks of them as two states of Shakti which are the proper conditions (Upayogyâvasthâ) for creation. They are like all else aspects of Shakti, but are names of those aspects which are prone to and ready for creation (Uchchhûnâvasthâ). Bindu is said to be the massive or Ghanâvastha state of Shakti. The Prapanchasâra Tantra says that Shakti is seized with the desire to create and becomes Ghanîbhûtâ (Vichikîrshu ghanîbhûtâ). Thus milk becomes Ghanîbhûta when it turns into cream or curd. In other words Shakti is conceived as passing gradually from its subtle state through Shakti-tattva and Nâda (in its three stages) and becomes what is relatively gross or massive as Power which is fully equipped to pass from the stage of potency into that of active manifestation. That stage is Bindu which is called Mahâbindu or Parabindu to distinguish it from the other Bindus into which it subsequently differentiates.

The commentary of Kâlîcharana on the Shatchakranirûpana (see my Tantrik Texts, Vol. 2, V. 4) citing Todala Tantra (Ch. VI) says that the Supreme Light is formless; but Bindu implies both the Void (Shûnya) and Guna also. Bindu is the Void in so far as it is the Supreme Brahman. It implies Guna as being the creative or Shakti aspect of the Brahman which subsequently evolves into the Purusha and Prakriti Tattvas of which the latter is with Guna. The commentary to V. 49 states that this Bindu is the Lord (Ishvara) whom some Paurânîkas call Mahâvishnu and others the Brahmapurusha; and (V. 37) that Parabindu is the state of "Ma" before manifestation; being Shiva-Shakti enveloped by Mâyâ. As to this it may be observed that the letter M is male, and Bindu which is the nasal breathing sounded as M is the unmanifested Shiva-Shakti or Ma which is revealed upon its subsequent differentiation into the three Shaktis from which the universe proceeds. Bindu as the cause is Chidghana or massive consciousness and Power in which lie potentially in a mass (Ghana), though undistinguishable the one from the other, all the worlds and beings about to be created. This is Parama-Shiva and in Him are all the Devatâs. It is thus this Bindu which is worshipped in secret

by all Devas (V. 41) and which is indicated in its different phases in the Chandrabindu (Nāda, Bindu) Shakti and Śhānta of the Om and other Bīja mantras.

This Bindu is in Satyaloka which, within the human body, exists in the pericarp of the thousand-petalled Lotus (Sahasrāra) in the highest cerebral centre. It is, as I have already said, compared to a grain of gram (Chanaka) which under its outer sheath (which is Māyā) contains the two seeds (Shiva and Shakti) in close and undivided union.

Kālīcharana (V. 49) thus cites the following : " In the Satyaloka is the formless and lustrous one. She is like a grain of gram devoid of hands, feet and the like. She has surrounded Herself by Māyā (that is She is about to create by the agency of this Power of Hers). She is Sun, Fire and Moon. She being intent on creation (Unmukhī) becomes twofold (Dvidhā bhītvā) and then, by differentiation of Shiva and Shakti, arises creative ideation (Srishtikalpanā). Shiva and Shakti are of course not actually divided for they are not like a chupatti or some other material thing. It might seem unnecessary to make such obvious remarks did not experience tell me of the absurd misunderstandings which exist of the Scripture. When we read that God "is a woman," that the Shākta Tantra is "Feminism" with a doctrine similar to that of Prof. Lester Ward's primacy of the female sex that "the conception of the sexual relationship is the ultimate explanation of the universe" and so forth, no caveats, however obvious, are unnecessary. What of course is meant is that whereas in Pralaya, Shiva and Shakti existed as one unity of consciousness, They in creation, whilst still remaining in themselves what they always were, project the universe which is Shakti; and then we have the Paramātmā and Jīvātmā consciousness which seem to the latter to be different.

Although Parabindu and all which evolves from It are nothing but aspects of Shakti and in no wise different from It, yet as representing that state of Shakti which immediately precedes creation, it is this state of Shakti which is said to be the cause of the universe of name and form (Nāmarūpa); concepts and concepts objectified; or Shabda the word and Artha its meaning. The states of Shakti preceding Bindu are those in which the Bindu state is in process of being "evolved" according to what we may call an Avikrita Parināma and when evolved it is the cause of the universe. Really they are merely aspects of one and the same pure Shakti. This is not an evolution in time. As Plotinus says, the universe "was formed according to intellect (here the Cosmic

Power or Prapancha Shakti which manifests as Mahat) and intellect not preceding in time but prior" (in the sense that cause precedes effect). This again, as all descriptions, (in so far as they are applicable to the transcendent Shakti) is imperfect for sequence of cause and effect involves to our minds the notion of time. This Supreme Bindu as containing in Himself all Devatās is the ultimate object of adoration by all classes of worshippers (V. 44) under the name of Shiva, or Mahāvishnu or the Devī as those call It "who are filled with a passion for Her Lotus Feet." The sectarianism of the lower mind, still existent in both East and West, is here shown to be a matter of words (the fight for which is of such interest to many) and is reduced to its real common denominator. As the Lord says in the Gītā, whomever men may worship all such worship comes eventually to Him.

Parabindu is thus the Head of every line of creation; of the Tattvas or Vikritis from Buddhi to Prithivī and their Lords (Tattvesha) and of the Shabda or Mantra creation; all belonging to the Vikāra Srishti or Parināma Srishti. The development after the manifestation of Prakriti is a real evolution (Parināma) for Consciousness has then been divided into subject and object in time and space. What is spoken of in terms of a development in the Ishvara body is not that. There Shakti assumes various aspects with a view to create but without manifestation. Shaktitattva, whilst remaining such, assumes the aspects of Nāda and Bindu.

The next stage is thus described in the Shāradā Tilaka (Ch. I) as follows :—

Parashaktimayah sākshāt tridhāsau bhidyate punah
Bindur nādo bījamiti tasya bhedāh samīritāh
Binduh shivātmako bījang shaktir nādestayor mithah
Samavāyah samākhyātah sarvāgamavishāradaih.

(That which is supreme Shakti again divides Itself into three, such divisions being known as Bindu, Nāda, Bīja. Bindu is said to be of the nature of Shiva and Bīja of Shakti, and Nāda is the mutual relation between these two, by those who are learned in the Āgamas).

One Ms. I have seen has Bindur nādātmako, but the commentary of the Shatchakra (V. 40) explains this as Shivātmako. These form the three Bindus (Tribindu). Nāda here again is Trait d'Union, the Yoga of the other two Bindus as the Prayogasāra calls it. (See Rāghava's Comm. to V. 8 of Ch. I Shāradā).

These are Shiva, Shiva-Shakti, Shakti. By this it is not to be understood that Shiva or Shakti are ever altogether dissociated but the aspects may be regarded as Shiva or Shakti pradhâna respectively. Bhâskararâya in his valuable commentary on the Lalitâ Sahasranâma says "From the causal (Kâraṇa) Bindu proceeds the effect (Kârṇya) Bindu, Nâda and Bîja. Thus these three which are known as supreme, subtle and gross arose." (Asmâchcha kâranabindossâkshâttramena kârṇyabindustato nâdastato bîjam iti trayam utpannam tadidam parasûkshmasthûlapadairapyuchyate, V¹132).

One text of the Prapanchasâra Tantra says that the Parabindu divides into two parts, of which the right is Bindu, the Male Purusha or Hang, and the left Visarga the Female Prakriti or Sah making the combined Hangsah. Hangsah is the union of Prakriti and Purusha and the universe is Hangsah. In however the Ms. on which my edition of that Tantra is based (Tantrik Texts, Vol. III) it is said that the Bindu (Para) divided by Kâla becomes threefold as Bindu, Nâda, Bîja. Substantially the matter seems one of nomenclature for the two Bindus which make Visarga become three by the addition of the Shiva Bindu. Moreover as Hang is Shiva and Sah is Shakti, the combined Hangsah implies the relation which in the Shâradâ account is called Nâda. So it is also said from the first vowel issued "Hrîm," from the second Hangsah, and from the third the Mantra "Hrîm, Shrîm, Klîm," the first indicative of general form; the second being a more Sthûla form of Âkâsha and Agni (Sha = Âkâsha; Ra = Agni) held as it were within the "skin" (Charma) of the enveloping Ardhanârîshvara: the third commencing with the first and last letters including all the 24 Tattvas and all the fifty letters into which the general Form particularises itself.

Parabindu is Shiva-Shakti considered as undivided, undifferentiated principles. On the "bursting" of the seed which is the Parabindu the latter assumes a threefold aspect as Shiva or Bindu, Shakti or Bîja and Nâda the Shiva-Shakti aspect which, considered as the result, is the combination, and from the point of view of cause, the inter-relation of the two (Shâradâ V. 9) the one acting as excitant (Kshobhaka) and the other being the excited (Kshobhya). The commentary on V. 40 of the Shatçhakranirûpana speaks of Nâda as the union of Shiva and Shakti; as the connection between the two and as being in the nature of the Shakti of action (Kriyâshaktisvarûpâ). It is also said to be that the substance of which is Kundalî (Kundalinîmaya). All three are but different

phases of Shakti in creation (Comm. V. 39) being different aspects of Parabindu which is itself the Ghanâvasthâ aspect of Shakti.

Thus in the first division of Shakti, Nâda, Bindu, Nâda is the Maithuna or Yoga of Shiva and Shakti to produce the Parabindu which again differentiates into threefold aspects as the Shaktis, though in grosser form, which produced it. Though the Gunas are factors of the gross Shakti Prakriti, they are in subtle form contained within the higher Shaktis. This Shakti as the first potentially kinetic aspect about to display itself is the Chit aspect of Shakti and Chit Shakti is, when seen from the lower level of the Gunas, Sâttvik ; Nâda is in the same sense Râjasik, for Shakti becomes more kinetic gathering together Its powers, as it were from the previous state of barely stirring potency, for the state of complete readiness to create which is Bindu and which in the aforesaid sense as Ghanâbhûta foreshadows that Tamas Guna which at a lower stage is the chief factor which creates the world, for the latter is largely the product of Tamas. Each aspect of the Tribindu again is associated with one or other of the Gunas. These divisions of aspect from the Guna stand point are not to be understood as though they were separate and exclusively concerned with only one of the Gunas. The Gunas themselves never exist separately. Where there is Sattva there is also Rajas and Tamas. In the same way in the case of the three Shaktis Ichchhâ, Jnâna, Kriyâ from which the Gunas develop, one never stands by itself, though it may be predominant. Where there is Ichchhâ there is Jnâna and so forth. And so again Shakti, Nâda and Bindu are not to be severed like different objects in the Mayik world. In each there is implicitly or explicitly contained the other. Parameshvara assumes (for the Jîva) successively the triple aspects of Shakti, Nâda, Bindu, Kâryya Bindu, Bîja, Nâda, thus completing by this differentiation of Shakti the sevenfold causal sound-forms of the Pranava or Ongkâra ; namely Sakala Parameshvara (which is Sachchhidânanda for even when the Brahman is associated with Avidyâ its own true nature (Svarûpa) is not affected) Shakti (Shaktitattva) Nâda (Sadâkhyâ Tattva) Parabindu (Īshvara Tattva) Bindu (Kâryya) Nâda and Bîja. It is not clear to me where (if at all) the Shuddhavidyâ Tattva comes in according to this scheme, unless it be involved in Nâda the Mithah samavâya ; but the Purusha-Prakriti Tattvas appear to take birth on the division of the Parabindu into Shiva and Shakti or Hang and Sah ; Hangsah being the Purusha-Prakriti Mantra.

The first impulse to creation comes from the ripening of the Adrishta of Jîvas on which Sakala Parameshvara puts forth His

Shakti (which means Himself as Shakti) to produce the Universe wherein the fruits of Karma may be suffered and enjoyed. All the above seven states are included in, and constitute, the first stage of Ikshana or "Seeing" and is that state in which Shabda exists in its supreme or Para form (Parashabdasrishti). She who is eternal (Anādirūpā) existing subtly as Chidrūpinī in Mahāpralaya becomes on the ripening of Adrishta inclined (Utsuka) for the life of form and enjoyment, and reveals Herself on the disturbance of the equilibrium of the Gunas. As the Vāyaviya Samhitā says "Parā Shakti through the will of Shiva is revealed with Shiva Tattva (for the purpose of creation). Then She manifests as the oil which is latent in, exudes from, the sesamum seed." Parameshvara is Saguna Shiva or the Ishvara of Vedānta Philosophy with Māyā as His Upādhi. He is Sat, Chit, Ānanda in Māyā body and endowed with all Shaktis (Sarvavedāntasiddhantasārasaṅgraha 312, 313, 315). There is, as the Panchadashī says, (3-38), a Shakti of Shiva which is in and controls all things which have their origin in Ānanda or Ishvara. When Ishvara is moved to create, this Ishvara-shakti or Māyā which is the aggregate of, and which yet transcends, all individual Shaktis issues from Him and from this Māyā issue all the particular Shaktis by which the universe is evolved and is maintained. The same substance is, to a large extent, to be found in all accounts under a variety of presentment or symbols; even where there are real differences due to the diversity of doctrine of different Vedāntic schools. This is not the case here: for the account given is a Sādhana presentment of Advaitavāda. The Shākta Tantra teaches the unity of Paramātmā and Jīva though its presentation of some subjects as Shakti, Māyā, Chidābhāsa is different (owing to its practical view point) from Shankara's Māyāvāda. On this matter I may refer my readers to the article which I recently wrote on Shakti and Māyā in the second number of the *Indian Philosophical Review* (Baroda).

The three Bindus constitute the great Triangle of World-Desire which is the Kāmakalā; an intricate subject which I must leave for a future issue. The three Bindus are Sun, Moon and Fire and the three Shaktis Ichchhā, Jñāna, Kriyā associated with the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas. I do not here deal with the order or correspondence which requires discussion. From them issued the Devīs Raudrī, Jyeshthā, Vāmā and from them the Trimūrti Rudra, Brahmā, Vishnu.

The three Bindus are also known as the white Bindu (Sitabindu), the red Bindu (Shonabindu) and the mixed Bindu

(Mishrabindu). These represent the Prakâsha, Vimarsha and Prakâsha-Vimarsha aspects of the Brahman which are called in the ritual Charanatritaya (The Three Feet). The Gurupâdukâ Mantra in which initiation is given in the last or Shadâmnâya Dîkshâ represents a state beyond the Shukla, Rakta and Mishra Charanas. So it is said in Shruti that there are four Brahmapada, three here and one the Supreme which is beyond.

As is the case in many other systems the One for the purpose of creation is presented in twofold aspect for, Unity is actionless and their relation involves a third aspect which makes the Trinity. But this apparent differentiation does not derogate from the substantial unity of the Brahman. As the ancient Rudrayâmalâ (II. 22) says : "The three Devas Brahmâ, Vishnu, Maheshvara are but one and formed out of My body."

Ekâ mûrtistrayo devâ brahmavishnumaheshvarâh
Mama vighrahasangkliptâh srijâtyavati hanti cha.

From the differentiating Bindu are evolved the Tattvas from Buddhi to Prithivî and the six Lords of the Tattvas (preceding from Parashiva the seventh) who are the presiding Devatâs of mind and of the five forms of matter. Here on the diremption or dichotomy of Consciousness, Mind and matter are produced. That is Consciousness functions in and through the self-created limitations of mind and matter. It was on this division also that there arose the Cosmic Sound (Shabda Brahman) which manifests as Shabda and Artha. This is the Shabda-brahman ; so called by those who know the Âgamas.

Bhidyamânât parâdvindor âvyaktâtma ravo' bhavat,
Shabdabrahmeti tang prâhuh sarvâgamavishâradâh.

(Shâradâ Tilaka I-11).

It will be observed that in this verse the first Bindu is called Para and to make this clear the author of the Prânatoshinî adds the following note: "By Parabindu is meant the first Bindu which is a state of Shakti (Parâdvindorityanena shaktyavasthârûpo yah prathamabindustasmât). Shabda-brahman is the Brahman in its aspect as the immediate undifferentiated Cause of the manifested and differentiated Shabda or language in prose or verse ; and of Artha or the subtle or gross objects which thought and language denote. It is thus the causal state of the manifested Shabda or Mantra.

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