

Ten Facets of Cosmic Wisdom (In relation to power)

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The European Conference on Ethics, Religion and Philosophy 2015
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This paper discusses the nature of power as projected in the Indian philosophical notion of '*Daśamahāvidyā*' (ten facets of cosmic wisdom) — a technical term symbolizing the different faces of the Cosmic Energy that gradually elevates to the culminating point of realizing true essence of life. The metaphor is utilized for human unconscious, bottomless psyche, where self-power, though resides as the core of subjective element, yet later sublimates as craving for reformation by surrendering to the pious and the beautiful. How the so-called subjective power designated as the 'egoistic-self', transforms itself into the pure and sanctified objectivity, is the question to be discussed in this paper.

Thus, the exaggerated sense of self-importance, which generally reflects human craving for power, gets consecrated and functions as the moral guidance, and changes our 'world view' too.

Finally, this paper proposes to take into account the concept of self-centeredness as the discordant cord of human life. One needs to channelize the flow of self-energy from the domain of subjective power to the cosmic field of objective power, where there is, in a sense, decentralization of power. To bring back the vibration in life one has to take recourse to harmony or the musical melody of life through the successful balancing of all the facets of cosmic wisdom. The tussle between the harmony and conflict of power, in both individual and cosmic sphere, is shown through another concept of Indian myth — *Sura* and *Asura*, represented as divine and demonic aspects of power respectively.

Keywords: *Daśamahāvidyā*, Cosmic Energy, egoistic-self, 'world view', *Sura* and *Asura*

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Introduction

*Śivaḥ śaktyā yukto yadi bhavati śaktaḥ prabhavitum
Na cedevaṁ devo na khalu kuśalasspanditumapi*

The opening verse of *Saundaryalaharī* of Saṅkarācārya recites that *Śiva* (cosmic consciousness), united (*yukto*) with *Śakti* (cosmic energy), becomes able to manifest (*prabhavitum*) (this creation); if otherwise, this god (*devo*) knows not even how to pulsate (*spanditumapi*).

The vast universe pulsating with the stream of creativity appeals to the human mind as the source of all thought and philosophy. For the philosophical mind, shrouded in mystery as it is, the universe is a transformed reality. It stands as a complex network of various elements, each interacting with the other within its own limit and power, and reflecting the 'Cosmic Principle' through its own nature. All phenomenal changes reflect the causal principle of nature and as such, human consciousness is in constant search of the cause behind the cosmos. This notion of 'cause of the universe' has been rendered differently in different streams of thought— somewhat philosophically, sometimes scientifically, or with a religious craving of mind, or guided by an impulse for the purpose behind creation. Thus, sense and reason co-mingle with imagination to have a vision of the root cause of this universe. Whether this is rationally possible is debatable, but the urge for this search is not blind. Whatever it be, one cannot deny that this universe gives essence to one's existence and is not a purposeless entity; also that, it displays the play of Cosmic power interacting from the very atomic level to the gross sphere. Human thought-world has put forward different interpretations of the various facets of this cosmic scenario. The present paper tries to project a different line of thought in interpreting the notion of this Cosmic Power (*Mahāśakti*), also referred to as Cosmic Wisdom (*Mahāvīdyā*), in Indian philosophy and mythology, within the limited scope.

Section 1

The cosmic manifestation stands as the creation of the blissful, the *ānandamaya*; a divine cosmic sport as if manifesting itself not only in the outskirts of nature but also in the internal realm of the physical body. This concept of *ānandam* (Bliss itself) has found beautiful expositions in most of the Indian philosophical contexts. The two theistic traditions of Śaivism and Śaktism posit the concepts of *Śiva* and *Śakti*, the dual metaphysical principles in play behind cosmic creativity. Though metaphysical in nature, yet these concepts echo the rational aspect of thought that it is consciousness and matter (respectively) acting throughout the cosmos as well as regulating individual life. *Śiva*, signifies Cosmic Consciousness and *Śakti* is the Cosmic Energy, interacting with each other. The universe exhibits the power-play of both *Śakti* and *Śiva* as involved in the ecstatic joy of creation. When *Śakti* unites with *Śiva*, the *Bindu* is produced as the seed of the universe. *Śakti* in this perspective is referred to as the *Mūlāprakṛti* (primordial cause) and *Śiva*, the *Parama-Puruṣa* (Cosmic Consciousness). The union of *Śiva-Śakti* signifies the fusion of the passive and active phases of the Universal Energy. *Śiva* without *Śakti* is without any function, just as fire without the power of combustion. *Śiva-Śakti* principle not only underlies the whole universe, the macrocosm, but also regulates the vitality in the microcosm.

According to Śaivism, the cosmic power of Śiva has many different aspects. Śiva's power of self-revelation is referred to as the *Cit-śakti*, the power as manifested in Creation is the *Svātantrya-śakti*, the intent desire for creation is His *Icchā-śakti*, the profound knowledge of the whole Creation is His *jñāna-śakti*, and the power of manifesting His divinity into different forms is the *Kriyā-śakti*. This manifestation, which is otherwise the process of creation, brings forth this universe.

According to Śaktism, Śakti is the Mother who creates, sustains and dissolves this universe, while Śiva is the passive principle. From the transcendental point of view Śakti and Śiva cannot be differentiated, neither can they be regarded as either the male or female principle of Creation. It is the Supreme Consciousness that manifests as the universe. When considered in its creative aspect, Śakti is the active principle that holds this universe in Her womb before creation. Hence it is as if the feminine principle acting behind creation. As the personification of ardent desire, absolute wisdom and universal creative energy, Śakti gives birth to this universe.

In this whole cosmic network, the dual principle of creativity i.e., consciousness comingling with energy, or in other words, consciousness in union with matter, signifies the inter-relatedness of each cosmic particle. Each constituent participating in the cosmic scenario, dance to the tune of rhythmic impulse of the Śiva-Śakti union. Śiva-Śakti concept is an attempt to bring out the unity among duality. It signifies the *One* unique whole which embraces duality and manifests diversity. Also that, the positive and negative aspects of human nature so to say, has its own significance here— the creative impulse with the aid of Śakti and the destructive impulse that signifies a new beginning with the aid of Śiva. It is, as if, the journey of the soul from 'subjectivity' towards 'objectivity' and then again merging with its own 'subjectivity'. In Indian iconography this power-play of Śiva-Śakti is symbolically represented through a beautiful mythical concept of *Ardhanārīśvara* (Figure.1).



Figure.1

It depicts an image of half male (symbolizing *Śiva*, the supreme consciousness) and half female (symbolizing *Śakti*, the principle of energy) forming one complete whole. It symbolizes these dual cosmic realities in their union. Not only is this a truth in the arena of the external world, but also in the realm of the individual psyche. Reflecting both the spiritual and material aspects of the human mind, it hints at the fact that the masculine and feminine aspects of the human nature are inseparable.

Section 2

Down the ages the human mind has always opted for the Truth (*Satyam*), Goodness (*Śivam*) and the Beautiful (*Sundaram*) that which it conceives of as underlying this cosmic creativity. Thus, it can be said that with its conscious power of thought when the meditative mind could project or reflect on the macrocosmic reality within itself and its microcosmic reality within the macrocosm, there is the true harmony of the peripheral being with the world. Thus, philosophical or metaphysical expositions of such concepts need not be taken in their face value. Rather, the myth prevailing with them has to be broken to bring the real essence of these thoughts.

Śiva and *Śakti* though form the complete whole, yet conceived as two contrary principles, reflect two different aspects of the same element— the potential (signified by *Śiva*) and the kinetic energy (signified by *Śakti*). *Śiva*, the static consciousness residing in us needs to be churned by the active impulse of *Śakti*, the creative energy,

if we are to realize our true nature as conscious living beings who have their own active role to play in beautifying this world and life therein.

Put scientifically, energy is what makes change happen and can be transferred not only from one object to another, but also from one form to another. And, the speed at which energy flows is called power; it is the rate at which energy is transferred. Without going into any technicalities, it might be said here that the flow of cosmic energy with the aid of supreme consciousness is the underlying power of creation in Indian metaphysical context. The personification of nature or ascribing divinity to the cosmic forces actually brings forth the human awareness behind the belief that each being shares an umbilical relation with the cosmic power. *Śakti* is thus posited as the Primal Mother and is wisdom incarnate. Though beyond spatio-temporal limitation, yet She simply represents the cycle of time and life and fathomless wisdom encompassing the past present and future. She is referred to as *Mahāvidyā* (cosmic wisdom) and throbbing with the vitality that initiates life, she manifests both the psychical and physical flow of energy in ten different facets. These ten facets of cosmic wisdom are referred to as '*Daśamahāvidyā*'— a technical term symbolizing the different faces of the Cosmic Energy that gradually elevates to the culminating point of realizing true essence of life.

The metaphor is utilized for human unconscious, bottomless psyche, where self-power, though resides as the core of subjective element, yet later sublimates as craving for reformation by surrendering to the pious and the beautiful. Thus, the exaggerated sense of self-importance, which generally reflects human craving for power, gets consecrated and functions as the moral guidance, and changes our 'world view' too. How the so-called subjective power designated as the 'egoistic-self', transforms itself into the pure and sanctified objectivity, is metaphorically highlighted through the imaginative personifications of the notion of *Daśamahāvidyā*. These ten cosmic powers of *Śakti* are *Kālī*, *Tārā*, *Tripurāsundarī* (or *Ṣoḍāśī-Śrī Vidyā*), *Bhuvaneśvarī*, *Bhairavī*, *Chinnamastā*, *Dhūmāvatī*, *Bagalāmukhī*, *Mātāṅgī* and *Kamalā*.

Goddess *Kālī* (Figure.2) signifies the supreme Time-force and is often projected as standing on the Lord *Śiva*, Her eternal consort, who is regarded as *Mahākāla* (Cosmic Time) and since She devours *Mahākāla* Himself, She is the Supreme Primordial *Kālikā*.

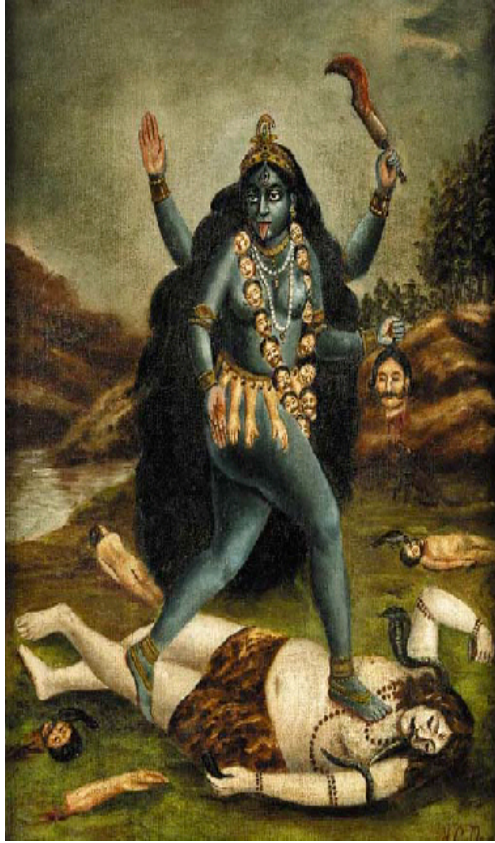


Figure.2

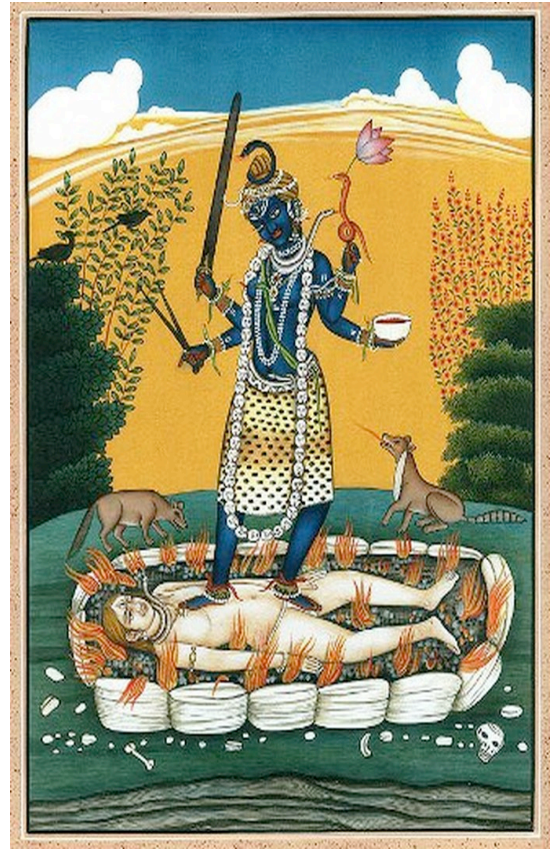


Figure.3

Her deep black tone signifies the profound darkness that prevailed before creation. She is beyond all quarters or directions of the globe. She is not clothed in usual attire; rather she is *digambarī*— one who is clothed by all the ten directions (*dik*) of globe itself. She indicates the eternal energy throbbing within every being, which when put to action can ward off the worldly ignorance with its power of knowledge.

Tārā (Figure.3) is the name for the Goddess who is the guiding light of wisdom piercing through the darkness of ignorance and salvages the ailing soul from the fluttering of worldly sorrow. She sustains the whole universe in Her cosmic womb. She is called the *Nīlā Saraswatī*, the power of speech. Her blue (*Nīlā*) complexion signifies profound knowledge. This cosmic power manifests herself when all sounds and the pride of human mind merges in cosmic silence.

Tripurāsundarī or *ṣodaśī* (Figure.4) is the power of perfection with radiant beauty pervading all the Three worlds (*Tripura*). She is conceived of as red as the rising sun and is the Mother of Love, the Divine Desire, always in union with Supreme Consciousness. She holds five arrows of flowers signifying the five sense objects, a noose representing the bond of love; whereas, contrasting enough is the goad in Her hand that represents repulsion, the sugarcane bow represents the mind. She is the will-power (*icchā-śakti*) initiating the power of self-restraint in an individual.

Bhuvaneśvarī (Figure.5) is the cosmic womb that represents conscious space and signifies the power of self-perception (*jñāna-śakti*). With all majesty She is the *Divine Mother*, and the



Figure.4

Queen of all the worlds, both internal and external. She is regarded as *Aditi*, the infinite or the indivisible, in the *Vedas*. She is the dynamic power and the entire Universe is her body. *Kālī* as time and *Bhuvaneśvarī* as space enable the manifestation of the spatio-temporal framework for the functioning of the universe. Unlike *Tripurāsundarī* who is both immanent and transcendent, *Bhuvaneśvarī* is the immanent sustaining power in the universe.

Bhairavī (Figure.6) refers to the heat of austerity (*Tapas*) and signifies the cosmic action-force (*kriyā-śakti*). She symbolizes the fire of consciousness (*Cidāgni*) ablaze in every being. Her one hand holds book, which represents true knowledge underlying the worldly grandeur. She is the ‘fierce one’, the Goddess of decay and destruction, related to death. Her ascetic image reflects the silent ever active process of aging that burns down desires and attachments.

Chinnamastā (Figure.7) presents a fearsome imagery of the Goddess who has beheaded herself, representing that aspect of cosmic wisdom which tears apart the ignorance regarding the true nature of self. Worldly beings entangled in the worldly sufferings erroneously identify the material body with the soul not enlightened by the perception of their difference. She holds her head in her hand as blood spurts forth from her neck and stands on the God of Love (*Kāmadeva*) depicted as in union with His divine consort *Rati*.



Figure.5

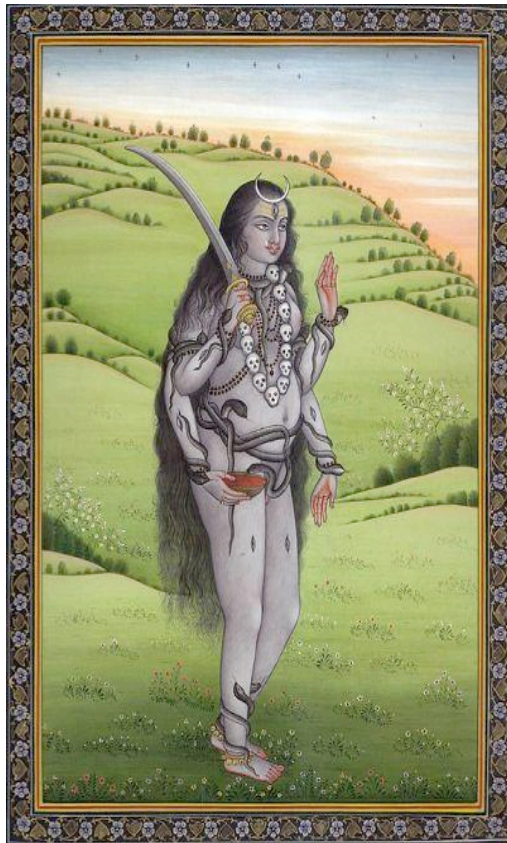


Figure.6

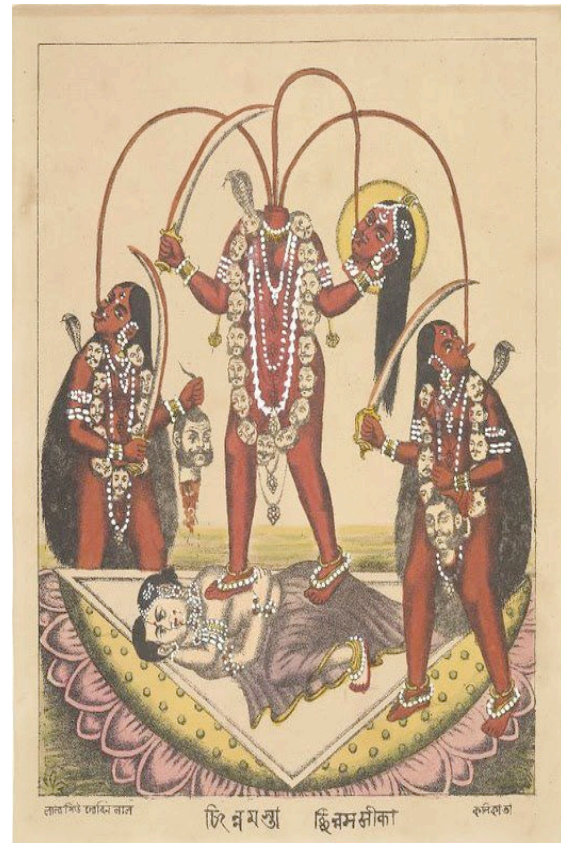


Figure.7

In this concept (Figure.7), Cosmic Wisdom disciplines the drive of desire in us by defeating the unbridled senses. All dualities and complexities have to be sacrificed and all our mental projections have to be dissolved into pure consciousness to realize the true essence of life.

Dhūmāvātī (Figure.8) reflects such imagery where though one lacks the power of enjoyment yet one is endowed with the undying passion for enjoyment. She designates the power of non-being, both before creation and posterior to dissolution. She is reflected in all those facets of life which we shun like the ailing, the destitute, the dejected etc. Her chariot is drawn by a crow that symbolizes that everything is transforming and is in the continuous process of decay. She holds a winnowing basket signifying the power of discrimination (*viveka*) that separates the grain (real) from the chaff (unreal). This image wants one to realize that whatever magnificence the senses meet with in this world is transitory and one should aspire for the hidden higher reality.

Bagalāmukhī (Figure.9) imparts the power to control the adversary and reflects the power of stupefaction. Dressed in golden yellow and with ornaments, she excels in beauty. In Her one hand She holds the tongue of an enemy and in the other holds a mace. When passion for gross enjoyment is destroyed in the individual She manifests Her power to destroy even the subtle forms of enjoyment. This means that pure wisdom is to be achieved through pure passionless spirit. She is power incarnate in demolishing the *Asura* signifying the demonic aspects of power and enhances realization of the divine, the *Sura*.



Figure.8



Figure.9



Figure.10



Figure.11

Mātangi (Figure.10), the Power of Dominion in relation to thought, signifies the ability of articulation of one's inner knowledge. Thoughts express themselves in speech through this Cosmic power. It represents the power of harmonious manifestation of the subconscious latent in thought. Portrayed with a dark complexion and a parrot in hand She invokes the power in human to mirror their highest intuitions in words.

Kamalā (Figure.11), the power of knowledge-wealth and prosperity, signifies the beauty and bliss of life. While *Bagalāmukhī* acts as the repressing power, She is the power of manifested consciousness with full effulgence. She stands as the embodiment of purity, constantly bathed by four elephants with the nectar of

immortality. According to some, the four elephants represent the four *puruṣārthas* (highest goal of human life) — *dharma* (virtue), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (desire), *mokṣa* (liberation). They also represent prudence, wisdom, thought and activity as manifested in the external world. She is portrayed with blossoming lotus which symbolizes the gradual unfolding of the latent consciousness in being. Thus, of all the *mahāvīdyās* it is the grace of *Kamalā* that gives completion to the manifested play of creation.

All these ten facets of cosmic wisdom are, in fact the self-extended power-forms of *Śakti* reflecting the functional aspects of the transcendental reality latent in every individual being. These imageries signify the alluring and yet pacifying complexities of human mind— beauty—fierceness, the pleasant—the violent, the peaceful—the dreadful, creative—destructive, the eternal—the ephemeral. Not only in the mental sphere but also in the physical sphere of an individual the interplay of these powers goes on till ultimate liberation.

Section 3

In Indian mythological thought, the structure underneath the physical body has been reflected upon differently than in other systems of knowledge. The journey of the soul for emancipation starts from the physical body itself. The microcosmic human body is as if a reality within reality; or rather reality constituting reality. An enlightened *yogī* (an ascetic) perceives this body as the reservoir of *yogic* energy i.e. spiritual power. *Śakti*, here, is referred to as the *Kuṇḍalinī-śakti* (the serpent power) is the divine psycho-spiritual energy that remains coiled and lies asleep at the base of the spine. *Mahāvīdyā Kālī* is the *Kuṇḍalinī*, the *ādhāraśakti* (the power of sustaining), the condensed primal force signifying the Goddess *Śakti* (the primal female principle of creation) awaiting her union with *Lord Śiva*, the pure cosmic consciousness. This has to be awakened if one is to experience the highest bliss that leads to emancipation. It is as if opening the doors of the inner body to a world of spiritual bliss. This female vital when awakened rises upwards passing through the various vital centres of the body that are metaphysically referred to as *cakra* which control the different functions of the body.

The *Kuṇḍalinī-śakti* starts its journey from the generating organ. The first vital centre is conceived of as located in the *mulādhāra* (*mūla* or root, *ādhāra* or support), i.e., the spot between the anus and the generating organ. *Bhairavī* resides here and it is the seat of the *brahmacakra*, the first mystical wheel that metaphorically signifies the element of earth. It is related to survival, and just as the earth provides foundation to a structure, say that of a temple, the first *cakra* acts as the foundation of the complete *cakra-system* of the body temple.

The second *cakra* is the *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra* located at the spot near the generative organ. Metaphorically signifying the element of water, it is related to all movement and change, and

is associated with the flow of emotion and sexuality. Viewed from a different perspective, it is believed by many that the primal seed of germination was sowed in water. In this context, it might be said that the second vital centre in the body controls this place of germination.

The third centre is the navel wherein is located the *nābhi-cakra*. This *cakra* signifies the element of fire and like fire is dynamic in nature. It is as if the spark of energy transformation and is associated with will-power. It motivates the individual being towards activity and a strong impulse of power. This centre is the step towards self-esteem and regulating one's ego.

The fourth stage is the *anāhata-cakra* (the unstruck) at the vital centre, the heart (*hṛdaya*). Once the flame gets ignited with the third *cakra*, the being then steps into this very core centre and thus the sacred sphere of self-reflection. *Dhūmāvātī* and *Kamalā* prevail here. It signifies the element of air that balances the mind-body-consciousness. This sphere can experience the harmonious relation of the microcosm with the macrocosm. The flow of love being enhanced there is the realization of the divinity latent in the individual.

With this unfolding of rhythmic flow of love, the ascetic enters into a realm of resonance, the fifth centre near the throat (*kaṇṭha*) the *viśuddha-cakra*, the centre of purification. *Mahāvidyā Mātāṅgī* resides in this *cakra*. Related with creativity the mystical centre signifies the element of sound. *Tārā* is the cosmic energy traversing from the navel to this *cakra*. Vibrating with the impulse of creativity, this wheel sets in self-reflective thinking and traversing through the element of air it meets with the realm of the vast space. This centre marks the gateway to creative expression, being associated with sound. With this rhythmic wheel of purification the being passes to the subtler realm from the physical sphere. It is experiencing the vibrant resonance going beyond the mere physical layer.

The sixth centre is the spot in between the two eyebrows and the *cakra* therein is the *ājñā-cakra* or the *bhrū-cakra*. *Mahāvidyā Chinnamastā* and *Bagalāmukhī* function in this *cakra*. Here the ascetic has the vision of the divine light. Often referred to as the 'third eye', this signifies the element of light and is associated with perfect vision. Endowed with insight, the ascetic transforms into a seer. In this meditational realm, the real nature of internal and external entities gets enlightened by consciousness. The intuitive faculty of knowledge pierces through the phenomenal sphere and transcends to the *beyond*. The basic questions of the philosophizing mind— 'Who am I', 'What am I' and 'Why'— seek their answers with the perfect 'spin' of this *cakra*. Thus the soul here enters the realm of illumination in all its vastness.

As the spark of wisdom gets enkindled, the soul can experience the highest blissful state and the seventh vital centre is the abode of that eternal absolute bliss. This is the *brahmaloka* or *satyaloka* located in the aperture in the crown of the head, i.e., the *brahmarandhra*. The *cakra* here is designated as the *sahasrāra-cakra* compared to a full-bloomed lotus with thousand petals. *Tripurāsundarī* resides here, the reservoir of divine delight. It is the zenith of spiritual experience where the divinity latent in a being finds complete manifestation. The individual existence merges with the divine consciousness. An ascetic's whole existence is however grounded in this very earth ; hence the seventh mystical wheel can be in full radiance only when the aspiring soul has penetrated through the six mystical domains of the inherent vitality that stretches out from the 'root support' (*mūlādhāra*) to the centre of the 'third-eye'. The thousand-petaled lotus signifies that extensive realm of consciousness which bestows upon the individual the flow of divine nectar. Bathed in this nectar the soul rises above all bondages of the ephemeral world and emerges with its universal identity. The soul is

experienced in both its transcendental and immanent aspects. The physical body of the ascetic

gets transformed into the spiritual platform wherein the soul that meditates on the seventh *cakra* enters the ecstatic realm of universal consciousness. Thus, dawns the cosmic union of the individual soul with the Supreme.

These realms of the *Cakras* have been mentioned in various Indian scriptures including the Yoga philosophical thoughts and the *Tantra* wisdom. The Indian school of yoga philosophy clearly points out that one can have perception of the internal world underneath the physical body, through meditational practices. The seven mystical *Cakras* of the microcosmic body have to be meditated upon such that the stored energy, the *Kuṇḍalinī-śakti* gets awakened and rises in the upward direction. Though these seven are the vital *Cakras*, yet some Indian scriptures also mention certain other *Cakras* — the *lalanā-cakra* or the *tālu-cakra* situated at the root of the palate, then the *mānas-cakra* situated above the *ājñā-cakra*, and there is also the *soma cakra* situated above the *mānas-cakra* and below the *sahasrāra-cakra*.

Śiva is also signified as *nāda* and *Śakti* as *bindu*— these two make the complete whole. However, in the *Śaiva Siddhānta*, *Bindu* is identified as *Śiva* and *Nāda* as *Śakti*; the ascetic can have the self- realization of the merging of *Śakti* with *Śiva*, the *nāda* in *bindu*.

According to *Tantric* philosophy, when the *yogī* (the ascetic as the ardent practitioner of *yoga*) is able to awaken the *Kuṇḍalinī*, the vital force rises upwards. With this elevation is created ‘*sphoṭa*’ the outburst of *nāda*, the inner cosmic sound. This *nāda* in its pure form is the ‘*praṇava*’ or the sacred syllable ‘*Aum*’, signifying the Supreme Reality; it represents the second *Mahāvidyā*, *Nīlā-Saraswatī*. This pure *nāda* is *anāhata* (unstuck) *nāda*, whereas the *āhata* (struck) *nāda* in the form of sentence or an expressed note is of four kinds— *parā*, *paśyanti*, *madhyamā*, *vaikhari*. The *parā-vāk* (the subtle most speech) referred to as *Śabdabrahman* originates in the *mūlādhāra-cakra* of the body. *Bhairavī* is the *parā-vāk*. With the ascent of the *Kuṇḍalinī* to the *svādhiṣṭhāna cakra* it can be perceived by the mind and is referred to as *paśyanti*, which is signified by *Mahāvidyā Tārā*. When meditating on the *anāhata-cakra*, it is comprehended by the mind as pregnated with meaning and thus, in the form of *sphoṭa*. It is called the *madhyamā*. When it is expressed with the help of the vocal organ, it is called the *vaikhari* and is audible to others. It is the *Mahāvidyā Mātāṅgī* manifesting herself as the Word expressed in speech and whose grace can bestow one with a glimpse of the subtlety of speech underlying the expressed one. In fact, the *anāhata nāda* pervades the whole universe; as such it is present in the microcosm (the body) as well. But the individual soul fettered by the pangs of ignorance fails to hear the vibrating *nāda* since their ‘*suṣumnā*’ path remains obstructed.

Now, here the *Tantric* scriptures present before us another interesting picture of the inner functioning of the body. There are three main *nāḍīs* (arteries regarded as channels of energy) – *Suṣumnā*, *Idā* and *piṅgalā*. *Suṣumnā* is the central channel that moves up the spine and lies in between the *Idā* and *piṅgalā*. The *Idā* and *piṅgalā* are arranged in a spiral pattern round the *Suṣumnā*. *Idā* is situated on the left side of the spinal cord and the *piṅgalā* on the right. The individual body exhibits the play of

cosmic creativity in its internal realm. According to modern interpretation, the *Suṣumnā* is located in the spinal cord, but ancient Vedic scriptures refer to *Suṣumnā* as the artery that rises upwards from the heart. Actually the spinal cord, pneumogastric nerve and carotid artery— amidst these three, that subtle most illuminating part which carries the sensations is the *Suṣumnā* path.

Each of the *cakra* from the *mulādhāra* to the *Ājñā cakra* — these two *nāḍis* wrap around them and meet at the sixth *cakra*. Actually these two are referred to as the dual principle of masculinity and femininity, the solar and lunar energy. They get united in the sixth *cakra* and

in the seventh *cakra* the soul experiences the pure cosmic bliss as it transcends the limits of time and space. Once the *Suṣumnā mārga* (*Suṣumnā* path) clears up and gets opened up by practicing *yoga*, the ascetic can hear the vibrating eternal *nāda* within.

Nāda is intimately associated with *bindu*, the dimensionless form of consciousness. The *bindu* located in the *sahasrāra cakra* is the *ūrdhva bindu*, the superior *bindu* and the *bindu* located in the *mūlādhāra cakra* is the *adhobindu*, the inferior *bindu*. *Nāda* relates these *bindus* via the other *bindus* of the other five *cakras*. It is believed that the *anāhata-nāda* is the pulsating life-force of the whole universe and when the ascetic has a realization of the cosmic eternal rhythm of this *nāda*, the *brahmarandhra* (the centre of vitality in the aperture in the crown of the head) opens up like a full bloomed lotus. Thus the *Kuṇḍalinī-śakti* is awakened and the vital force rises upwards to the *sahasrāra* and gets united with the *Bindu* (signifying *Śiva*). This can be done in two ways— by *haṭhayoga* and by *laya-yoga* and this concept of the *nāda-śakti* getting united with *bindu-śiva* is known as *Śiva-Śakti-yoga*. This leads to *mokṣa* or liberation.

The concept of the merging of *Nāda* and *Bindu*, though has a mythological intonation, yet bears a rational perspective. It might remind one of the notion of singularity in present cosmology which signifies that point of intense density at the centre of a black hole where matter gets crushed out of existence so to say. But then this is conceived of as the scenario prevailing before creation of the universe, i.e., the initial stage from where ‘big bang’ took place and resulted in creation.

Conclusion

Since any form of existence is rooted down to the Cosmic Power, it is the pious ethical duty of conscious human beings to acknowledge and preserve this eternal relation with the universe. Scientific studies of the universe take into account its physical, material aspect, and that too not always as an integrated whole. But, philosophical insights approach the problems both from the realistic and idealistic frame of understanding, thus taking into consideration both the objective and subjective view-points. In this, with a holistic approach towards the universe consciousness and matter receive different intonations. Here, the notion of *Eternal Being* or *Supreme Consciousness* refer to the condensed cosmic power from which cosmic explosion took place. Since it is of the nature of pure consciousness, it accounts for the flow of consciousness in this material universe. Be all these a mythological fantasy or the imaginative power of human thought, yet it is undeniable that they do reflect the human instinct in all its aspects. Undeniably, the concept of self-centeredness is, today, the discordant cord of human life. One needs to channelize

the flow of self-energy from the domain of subjective power to the cosmic field of objective power, where there is, in a sense, decentralization of power.

To bring back the vibration in life one has to take recourse to harmony or the musical melody of life through the successful balancing of all the ten facets of cosmic wisdom, which are reflected in the individual too. At different phases they seem to be distinct, but there prevails an underlying unity. To begin with *Kālī*, the symbol of knowledge-power personifies the destruction of all destitute befalling the self searching for self-identity. At this undifferentiated and diffused state there emerges the power that is pregnant with infinite possibilities, *Tārā*, to come out with a new archaic form of *Tripurāsundarī*, which sirens the beginning of *Bhuvaneśvarī*. This self-reflection not only helps to sustain one's existence but also links it with cosmos. Again, through *Bhairavī* the death of emotional dichotomy of the crude egoistic self is achieved. The new birth is reflected through *Chinnamastā*, signifying

chopping off one's own head, symbolizes self-surgery on the part of the person that crushes the fire of desire. Then the transformed-self delves deep into a 'no-man's-land-like-darkness', *Dhūmāvātī*. It marks the onset of a new identity of self. This acquired-identity strikes back by stupefying one's own enemy and glorifies itself in the form of *Bagalāmukhī*, with the power of separating the good from evil. The primordial throb, *ādyaspanda*, which originates by the self-creative power, declares one's accomplished identity through *Mātāṅgī*. Finally, *Kamalā* becomes the consciousness in self-manifestation, the beauty and bliss of self-realisation, shining in its own light.

Interestingly, this process of self-evolution is neither linear nor cyclical in nature. It can begin from any critical juncture of life and can complete the circle from individual self to the cosmos and then again from cosmos to self. It reminds one the prayer of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* —

The light that shines above the heavens and above this world, the light that shines in the highest world, beyond which there are no others— that is the light that shines in the hearts of humanity.

Thus dawns the realization...

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