

Dikṣā in the *Tantrāloka**

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A cursory reading of the *Tantrāloka*¹⁾ may give an impression that the *dikṣā* is treated there only as a sort of appendix—especially coming after the brilliant philosophical disquisitions of the first volumes—because the initiation is just a formality necessary to proceed to the study of Sacred Scriptures by which one can enter into the path of salvation. Is this really the case? Should we take literally such phrases of Abhinava as “Knowledge is [obtained] from Scriptures and they are not to be heard by the non-initiated, so for him (the initiated) there is only application of purification (*samskriyā*) by the *dikṣā*” (*TA*. xv. 12)? Do they not appear to contradict the clearly expressed idea that the *dikṣā* gives liberation by itself and that the significance of the *dikṣā* differs according to different types of disciples? In this paper, I will investigate different meanings of the *dikṣā* and its mechanism.

First, I will describe and analyze the ordinary *dikṣā*²⁾, whose meaning consists in ensuring salvation after death for ordinary disciples. Secondly, I will treat the *kaula dikṣā*, which is a direct means for the experience of unity with Śiva. Thirdly, I will discuss the *dikṣā* as a part of the *āṇava-upāya*, constituting in this way an integral part of the system of the four *upāyas*. Finally, I will show the relationship between the system of the *upāyas* and the stages of *śaktipāta* and thus situate the *dikṣā* in the soteriological system of Abhinavagupta, who tried to offer adequate methods of salvation for the whole range of disciples, from those who are highly talented in mystical ways to those who do not even seek salvation.

I. Ordinary *dikṣā*

The *dikṣā* is said to have different effects on the disciple according to his (and the *guru*'s) intention (*vāsanā*) (TA. xv. 23a)³². Disciples are thus classified into four divisions: those who want enjoyment (*bu-bhukṣu*) are called 'sādhaka', and they are of two types, namely, ① *śivadharmīn sādḥaka*, who are free from worldly prescriptions, and ② *lokadharmīn sādḥaka*, who follow worldly laws of purity (TA. xv. 23b-24a); those who want liberation (*mumukṣu*) are also of two kinds: ① *nirbija (-dikṣita)*, who are exempt from observances (*samaya*), for example children, women, foolish and licentious men etc., and ② *sabija (-dikṣita)*, who can keep observances (TA. xv. 24b-26). For the *sabija-dikṣita* and the *śivadharmīn*, the teacher purifies all the *karmans* of the past and the future but not those constituting the present life (*prārabdhī*) (TA. xv. 27-8). For the *nirbija-dikṣita*, the restriction of observances (*samayācārapāśa*) should also be purified during the *dikṣā* (TA. xv. 31). Thus a *nirbija-dikṣita* can infallibly attain (if he has *bhakti* for Śiva and the *guru*) liberation at the moment of death, while a *sabija-dikṣita* can fail if he has not kept the observances (TA. xv. 33-34). For a *lokadharmīn* the teacher purifies only the bad *karmans* of the past and the future so that the disciple can enjoy the results of good *karmans*, obtain *siddhis* in the next life and attain liberation after several lives in the upper worlds (TA. xv. 29-30). However, a *śivadharmīn* should practise the worship of a *mantra* (*mantrārādhanā*) to obtain *siddhis* in this life (cf. Sv.T. iv. 84, cited ad TA. xv. 26). I will return to this classification when I take up the subject of the *śaktipāta*, but what I would like to retain at present from the above statements is the fact that they explain the mechanism of the *dikṣā* only by its effect on *karman*. But, does this explanation, given for the classification of disciples, agree with the reality of the *dikṣā* ritual which should ensure liberation? For, what is most

important for attaining liberation is the purification of the *aṅgava-mala* (which is *ajñāna* in Kashmir Śaivism) and the impurity by *karman* (*kārma-mala*) is only of the lowest order among the three impurities (*aṅgava-mala*, *māyīya-mala* and *kārma-mala*)⁴¹.

So, we must analyze the ritual itself to understand what the *dikṣā* really is, for Abhinavagupta. I will first describe briefly the ensemble of rituals constituting the *dikṣā* and then analyze its nature. Mme. Brunner's study and translation of the *Somaśambhupaddhati*⁵², whose *dikṣā* ritual is not so different from the ordinary *dikṣā* of the *Tantrāloka*⁶³ at least on the level of what is done (though not its interpretation), permit me to dispense with details. Before a brief description of the *dikṣā* rituals, I give below the program of the main actions of the *dikṣā* in the order of their performance with reference to the text of the *Tantrāloka*.

The program of *dikṣā* rituals

- 1) Preparatory rituals (*adhivāsana*)
 1. ablution (*snāna*) (*TA.* xv. 46-79)
 2. purification of the body by the ordinary *nyāsa* followed by purification of ritual materials and worship of deities outside the ritual pavilion (*TA.* xv. 115b-183a)
 3. entering the ritual pavilion (worship of the guardian deities at the entrance and elimination of obstacles) (*TA.* xv. 183b-193)
 4. purification of the body by special *nyāsa* (*TA.* xv. 232b-258)
 5. internal worship (*TA.* xv. 295b-366)
 6. external worship (*bahīryāga*) (*TA.* xv. 367-388a)
 7. preparation of the fire (*agnikārya*) (*TA.* xv. 388b-436a)
 8. preparation of the ritual porridge (*caru-saṃsiddhi*) (*TA.* xv. 436b-445a)
- 2) *Samayadikṣā*
 1. purification of the disciple (*TA.* xv. 445b-456a)

2. hand of Śiva (*śivahasta*) (TA. xv. 456b-463)
 3. divinatory dreaming (*nidravidhi*) (TA. xv. 474b-494a)
 4. ritual of twice-born (*dvijatvāpadana*) (TA. xv. 494b-521a)
 5. imparting observances (*samaya*) (TA. xv. 521b-613a)
- 3) *Nirvāṇa-dīkṣā*
1. tracing of the *maṇḍala*, *pūjā* on the *maṇḍala*, preliminary sacrifice and the *nyāsa* of the *adhvan* (TA. xvi. 2-96)
 2. purification of *tattvas* (*tattva-śuddhi*) (TA. xvii. 7b-78a)
 3. unification with Śiva (*yojanā*) (TA. xvii. 78b-91)
 4. creation of pure *tattvas* (*śuddhatattvasṛṣṭi*) (TA. xvii. 100-111)
- 1) Preparatory rituals (*adhivāsana*)

The aim of *adhivāsana* is for the *guru* to enter into the state of Śivahood in order to become able to give grace in the form of the *dīkṣā*. The teacher must have the steadfast conviction 'I am Śiva', and also the disciple must believe 'he is Śiva' (TA. xv. 42b-43a). As this conviction of his being Śiva must be very strong, the teacher must prepare himself by a gradual process beginning with external rituals such as ablution and *nyāsa* etc. (TA. xv. 39b-42a). And as being near Consciousness (= Śiva) is to be pure (cf. TA. iv. 240b-241a), this process of acquisition of Śiva-consciousness is conceived as purification. Formulating this in the reverse order, Abhinava re-interprets all the traditional purification rituals as a means for the *guru* to acquire the conviction of being Śiva himself.

1. ablution

The mechanism of ablution is explained in two ways: first, the satisfaction (*tuṣṭi* = *camatkāra*) caused by external purity can bring about the penetration into Consciousness (TA. xv. 44-6); secondly, it is the power of the *mantra* that burns away the impurity (*mala*) (TA. xv. 47).

This power of the recited *mantra* inflames the eight *mūrtis* of Śiva (earth, water, fire, wind, ether, the sun, the moon and *ātman*), and ablu- tion is immersion in them (*ibid.*). The purifying *mantra* is the *mūla- mantra* Parā, though other *mantras* can be employed (Parāparā in the wind ablu- tion, see J. p. 33-4). For a *vīra*, these eight *mūrtis* can be of *vīra* form (which concerns mostly the *śmaśāna*, see J. *ad TA.* xv. 67-8) and there is also an ablu- tion by wine (*TA.* xv. 66-75a).

2. Ordinary *nyāsa* (*sāmānya-nyāsa*)

Outside the ritual pavilion, the teacher must practise the ordinary *nyāsa* in order to purify himself before the worship which takes place outside (*bāhya-yāga*) (*TA.* xv. 115b-116a). This *sāmānya-nyāsa* is effec- tuated by Mātṛkā and Mālinī, of which the latter is specially celebrated as destroyer of all the *adhvans*⁷⁾ (*TA.* xv. 127b-130a). After performing the same *nyāsa* to the water pitcher (*argha-pātra*) and offering appro- priate ritual homage to it, he purifies all the ritual materials by sprinkling with the water of the *argha-pātra* (*TA.* xv. 146 and 180). Then he worships the attendant deities (goddess of the directions etc.) outside by *oṃ* and *namas* (*TA.* xv. 181-183a).

3. The teacher worships various deities at the entrance, and once inside the ritual pavilion, he eliminates obstacles by *astra mantra* (*TA.* xv. 183b -193).

4. Special *nyāsa* (*viśeṣa-nyāsa*)

He should imagine the fire of *astra mantra* burning the body from the toe upwards thus destroying his egoity (*ahantā*), while he rests in the pure *cidātman* (*TA.* xv. 232b-237). Then a special set of *nyāsa* is performed to create a new body made of pure *tattvas*. This set consists of two series of sixfold *nyāsa*, which will create, according to the au- thor's arithmetic, $(6 \times 6 =)$ 36 *tattvas* (*TA.* xv. 259b-261a). The first

sixfold 'śaiva' *nyāsa* consists of ① Navātman, ② Mātṛkā, ③ three *tattvas* (*śiva*, *vidyā*, *atma*)⁸⁾, ④ 8 Aghora etc., ⑤ Bhairavasadbhāva, ⑥ Ratiśekhara; the other sixfold 'śakta' *nyāsa* consists of ① Parāparā, ② Mālinī, ③ three *śaktis* (Parā, Parāparā, Aparā), ④ 8 Aghori etc., ⑤ Vidyā-āṅga, ⑥ Mātṛsadbhāva. After the *nyāsa* he should worship his body with flowers etc. (TA. xv. 276b-278a), purified by the water of the *argha-pātra* specially purified by the same special *nyāsa* (TA. xv. 288b-294).

5. Inner worship (*antaryāga*)

The teacher must now transform his *prāṇa*, *buddhi* and *śūnya*⁹⁾ into the throne of Śiva by performing the *nyāsa* of 37 *tattvas* on his *prāṇa* from the *mūladhāra* to the *dvādaśānta* (TA. xv. 295-7a). This throne (*śivāsana*) thus constituted by the *nyāsa*, has the shape of a *triśūla* whose three prongs are *śakti*, *vyāpini* and *samanā* on which three lotuses of *unnant* (37th *tattva*) rest (TA. xv. 313-4). After paying homage to the throne and to his *guru* and his predecessors (TA. xv. 320b), he first worships the three Bhairavas with their respective Śaktis (see above, he must repeat the two sets of sixfold *nyāsa* here; TA. xv. 326a) on the three lotuses and then in the center the Goddess Parā (who is also called Kālasaṃkarśini; TA. xv. 332) with her *āṅgas* etc. In this inner worship, attendant deities as her *āṅgas* and the *lokapālas* etc. are worshipped together with the Parā, their existence being imagined at the top of her head (TA. xv. 331a, 333). To this ensemble of deities (*mantracakra*) in the form of a blazing fire offerings should be made at the navel, the heart, the throat, the palate, and the upper *kuṇḍa*. On this occasion, the *adhvan* to be used in the *dikṣā* ritual should be honoured, on the teacher's body, as the principal path. Thus transforming himself into Śiva he can proceed to the external worship (TA. xv. 366).

6. External worship (*bahiryāga*)

This is a repetition of the worship of Śiva as described above, on

the *maṇḍala* (TA. xv. 387b-388a), but as it is done externally it is preceded by *kṣetragraha*, Gaṇeśa-*pūjā*, worship of the pitchers etc. (TA. xv. 369-387a).

7. Preparation of the ritual fire (*agnikārya*)

This ritual consists of identifying the fire with Śiva (TA. xv. 389b-391a and 395): after purifying the fire inwardly (by means of *prāṇa*, TA. xv. 412-414a) or by external rituals (TA. xv. 398-411), the teacher should practise *homa* (pouring clarified butter into the fire, while reciting a *mantra*) for the *mūla-mantra* (TA. xv. 418-420a).

8. Preparation of the ritual porridge (*caru-saṃsiddhi*)

The *caru* (ritual porridge) should be cooked by the teacher himself or by his disciples, on a separate fire started from the above-mentioned one (TA. xv. 412a and 436b-437a), and should be offered to the gods in the ritual fire to purify it (TA. xv. 438-444a). The rest is then divided into six parts (of which four are offered to the *sthaṇḍila*, to the two pitchers and to the fire, and two are kept for consumption by the teacher and the disciple afterwards) (TA. xv 444b-445a).

2) *Samaya-dikṣā*

1. Purification of the disciple

The teacher then asks for permission from Śiva to perform the *dikṣā* proper and goes outside the ritual pavilion to purify the disciple. After giving the disciple the *caru*, *pañcagavya* and a toothpick, followed by the divinatory ritual with the toothpick,¹⁰⁾ outside the ritual pavilion, the teacher blindfolds the disciple and leads him before the *sthaṇḍila*. He puts into the cup of the joined palms of the disciple flowers and jewels and makes him throw them onto the *sthaṇḍila*. And after filling the disciple's hands again, the *guru* takes off the blindfold. At this moment

the disciple sees with awe the *sthaṇḍila* brightened by the power of the *mantra*, and he is penetrated by the *mantra* (*mantra-āveśa*, *TA*. xv. 451b-452a and *J. ad* 456a). The author explains that the disciple 'sees' the presence of the *mantra* because he is purified by the *śaktipāta*.¹¹⁾

2. *Śivahasta*

The teacher performs the *nyāsa* of the *mantracakra* filled with all the *adhvan*¹²⁾ on his righthand; then he puts this hand on the disciple's head and his entire body, where the teacher has previously effectuated the *nyāsa* of the *adhvan* to be purified (*TA*. xv.457b).¹³⁾ In this fashion, the disciple is united to the *īśvaratattva* and becomes a *samayin*.¹⁴⁾

This ritual is not described in the *Mālinvijayottaratantra*, which Abhinavagupta uses as the basis of his *Tantrāloka*. Here he follows the *Dikṣottara* (vii. 103-113a). He cites also a passage of the *Devyāyāmala*, according to which the disciple becomes a *samayin* merely by seeing the *śivahasta*, while he will be instantly liberated and die if he is touched by it on the head (*TA*. xv. 460-3).

3. Divinatory dreaming (*nidrāvidhi*)

The teacher enters into the heart of the disciple and climbs up (with the *ātman* of the disciple) to the *dvādaśanta* and returns to the heart. This will ensure clearness of the dream for the disciple. The teacher also does the same thing for himself; and they go to sleep. Early next morning, both the teacher's and the disciple's dreams are interpreted, though that of the former is more important, as his consciousness is superior to that of the latter. God, fire, beautiful women, drinking wine, eating raw meat, all such joyful things¹⁵⁾ are said to be auspicious. If the dream were to prove inauspicious, he would have to perform *homa* 108 times.

4. The ritual of the twice-born (*dvijatvāpādana*)

The teacher teaches the disciple worship of deities such as *mantra*, and the disciple performs it. Then the teacher enters, by his *prāṇa*, into the heart of the disciple and goes up to the *dvādaśānta*, passing four other *cakras* (throat, palate, between the brows, forehead) on the way. At these six *cakras*, he touches six deities (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, Sadāśiva, Śiva), and he performs eight *saṃskāra* rituals at each *cakra*. Thus forty-eight vedic *saṃskāras*¹⁶⁾ are accomplished for the disciple and he is purified by coming into contact with Consciousness at the *dvādaśānta* (*TA.* xv. 495-6). In this way the disciple becomes a *dvija*, which is explained as a mental state (*ciddharma*, *TA.* xv. 511b). He is said to become a part of Rudra (*rudraṃśa*), by coming into union with Śiva at the *dvādaśānta* for a brief moment (*TA.* xv. 519-520a).

By this the disciple is said to be qualified for the study, hearing (oral instruction), the daily *pūjā* (*nitya*) and serving the *guru* in the *pūjā* (*TA.* xv. 520b-521a), though this is a redundant affirmation, as the disciple was qualified for all these by the *śivahasta* (see *J.* ad *TA.* xv. 459 citing *Sv. T.* iv. 79).

5. Imparting observances (*samaya*)

The teacher teaches the disciple eight groups of observances (each consisting of eight objects of injunctions): what should not be said, what should not be done, what should be guarded as secret, what or whom should be worshipped, what or whom should be propitiated, what or whom should be meditated upon, what should be done away with, those who should be subtly deceived. Among the other prescriptions, most interesting are perhaps the complete negation of the consciousness of caste (*TA.* xv. 595-603) and those concerning sexual rituals (*TA.* xv. 552-9).

3) *Nirvāṇa-dikṣā*

1. Tracing of the *maṇḍala*, *pūjā* on the *maṇḍala*, preliminary sacrifice, and the *nyāsa* of the *adhvan*

Having accomplished all the *adhivāsana* as described above¹⁷⁾ the teacher must trace a *maṇḍala* early on the following day (*TA*. xvi. 2). The *maṇḍala* used in the *nirvāṇa-dikṣā* is a *triśūla-maṇḍala*,¹⁸⁾ where three Bhairavas and three Śaktis are worshipped on each point of the three prongs. After this a sacrifice (*viśeṣa-pūjā*, *TA*. xvi. 26a) should be performed. Though vegetable offerings are admitted, animal sacrifice is recommended because it is a kind of *dikṣā* for the sacrificial victims as they can be liberated in this way (*TA*. xvi. 59b-62a).

Then, the teacher, after receiving the order from Śiva, identifies himself with Śiva, taking the sixfold form of *maṇḍala*, fire, two pitchers, the disciple and himself. After performing the *nyāsa* of the *adhvan* to be purified on five of the above-mentioned, he then proceeds to that on the disciple¹⁹⁾. After this he ties three knots symbolizing *kārma*-, *māyīya*- and *āṇava-mala*, around the arms, the throat and at the top of the *śikhā* of the disciple respectively.

2. Purification of *tattvas* (*tattva-śuddhi*)

As Abhinavagupta chooses the Path of *tattva* among the ten paths possible (*ṣaḍadhvan* and the path of one, three, nine *tattvas* and that of four *aṅḍas*: *TA*. xvi. 164-165a), he here calls *tattvaśuddhi* what should be more generally referred to as *adhvaśuddhi* (*TA*. xvii. 121b). The purification of *adhvan* can be brought about by simply performing the *nyāsa* of the purificatory *mantra* on the *adhvan* (*TA*. xvi. 97), or by the *nyāsa* of the purificatory *mantra* alone without that of the *adhvan* (*TA*. xvi. 98). I will examine these two ways of purification later, so here I will restrict myself to a description of the case of the purification

of *tattvas* by means of the ritual of birth (*janana*) with external *homa*²⁰ in which the disciple's *karman*s are destroyed by an anticipated experience of them.

First, the teacher evokes the *tattva* of earth by its *mantra* in the fire and performs the *tarpaṇa* to it (*TA.* xvii. 8b-9). The same procedure is repeated for the *māyā-śakti* (in the form of Vāgiśvari) which will be the womb for the births of the disciple in the *tattva* of earth. The teacher takes the *ātman* of the disciple into his heart, so that the disciple can be born in the *māyā-śakti* (*TA.* xvii. 30b-33). As the disciple's *ātman* remains in contact with the body, he does not die.

The ritual of birth consists of four stages, which are: (1) *garbhādhāna*, (2) *janana* (*bhogabhokṛtva*), (3) *bhoge laya*, (4) *pāśaccheda*. In the first stage, by the *garbhādhāna*, many bodies belonging to the *tattva* of earth are produced; in the second, by the *janana*, the disciple becomes the subject of enjoyment; in the third, by the *bhoge laya*, he is merged with the enjoyment; and in the fourth, by the *pāśaccheda*, all the bonds of the *tattva* of earth are severed (*TA.* xvii. 36-47). These rituals are accomplished by oblations into the fire, with the *mantras* of (1) Aparā (2) Parāparā (3) fifteen *mantras* beginning with Pibani²¹ and (4) Parā, in respective stages. After the *pāśaccheda*, the teacher evokes the Master of the *tattva* of earth and being unshakeable in the awareness of himself as Śiva, orders the Master not to make obstacles to the progress of the disciple toward the pure state (*TA.* xvii. 48-9)²². The teacher again joins the disciple's *ātman* to his own heart and then reunites it with the heart of the disciple. Then after releasing the *māyāśakti*, he meditates on the *tattva* of earth as coalescing with that of water (*TA.* xvii. 61). By this process of coalescence, the whole series of *tattvas* will be merged with Śiva in the end and will be purified (*TA.* xvii. 62).

Repeating the same process for each *tattva* up to the *kalā-tattva*, the teacher cuts off the knot at the arms and burns it with a *pūrṇāhuti* so that all the *karman* is burnt away (*TA.* xvii. 65-70a). When the

māyā-tattva is purified, the tied knot at the throat is burnt with the *māyā*;²³⁾ finally, when the *sadāśiva-tattva* is purified, the *śikhā* is cut off with the knot and consumed with the *aṇavamala*.²⁴⁾

3. *yojanā* (unification with Śiva)

The teacher unites the disciple thus purified and the supreme Śiva. This unification is accomplished essentially by a *pūrṇāhuti*. Linking his own *prāṇa* with that of the disciple and meditating on all the *adhvan* of space and time as being in the *prāṇa* and the *prāṇa* in the *śakti* and the *śakti* in the pure Consciousness, which is nothing but Śiva and the same as the consciousness of the disciple and the fire etc. the teacher pours the oblation into the fire, climbing up to the *dvādaśānta-cakra* where he unites the disciple and Śiva (*T.A.* xvii. 78b-82). This process is compared with the movement of an object reflected in a mirror, like a swan flying up from the surface of the water while its reflected image is 'sinking' in the water (*T.A.* xv. 431). For a disciple who seeks enjoyment (*bubhukṣu*), he performs once again a *pūrṇāhuti* to join the disciple with a lower *tattva* whose *siddhis* he can enjoy afterwards.

4. *śuddha-tattva-sṛṣṭi* (creation of pure *tattvas*)

When the *dikṣā* is done as a *sabija-dikṣā*, which is the normal case, the teacher must bring about the creation of pure *tattvas* for the activities of the disciple for the rest of his life. Offering a *pūrṇāhuti*, he meditates on the pure *tattvas* as flowing out of the sea of Consciousness of Śiva so that all the *tattvas* of the disciple partake of His nature. For example, the five senses are for perceiving Śiva, the hand for grasping Him, the foot for going towards Him, and the mouth for singing hymns in His honour, etc.

4) The essential nature of the *dikṣā*

As we have seen above, *tattva-śuddhi* (*adhva-śuddhi*) and *yojana* are two main rituals of the *nirvāṇa-dikṣā*. And as the *tattva-śuddhi* consists, in its form most frequently practised as described above, of the purification of the disciple's *karman* by allowing him to experience in advance its future effects, it may appear that the *dikṣā* is constituted by two principal phases which ensure, respectively, purification and unification. First one is purified (separated) from mundane impurities (*karman*) and then united with the divine (*śivatattva*). Though this formulation agrees with the general pattern of 'rite de passage', this would be a simplistic view of the process which has undergone a long historical development.

We should first examine what this 'purification of *adhvan*' really means. Is this actually a case of the purification of *karman*? Certainly this is one of the aims pursued by the *dikṣā*, as is clearly stated by Abhinava himself: "[By the *dikṣā* the teacher should] bring about the non-existence of all the *karman* of the past and of the future for those who are indifferent and want *mokṣa*" (*TA*. xv. 27). Though the purification of *karman* is necessary to attain liberation, it is not the main object of the *dikṣā*, for if one has ability in knowledge and *yoga*, even a *samayin*, whose *dikṣā* does not contain the purification of *karman*, can attain liberation (*TA*. xvi. 297-298a). For such a person the *dikṣā* is only an initiation ritual which enables him to proceed to the study of *śāstras* and to various techniques of self-realization in life. Also we should not forget that the *dikṣā* is also a direct means to liberation at the moment of death: "*dikṣā* is the means of liberation and of enjoyment, by itself (*svayam*) and as a means of purification (*saṃskārayogāt*)" (*TA*. xv. 1b-2a). Jayaratha glosses this passage in the following way: in the case of *mumukṣu*²⁵, '*svayam*' concerns the *nirbija-dikṣita* and '*saṃskārayogāt*'

concerns the *sabija-dikṣita*, who thus obtains the qualification for knowledge and *yoga* and attains liberation through them (*TA.* vol. 9, p. 2). However, it is inconceivable that everyone who has received the *sabija-dikṣā* will be able to attain the *jīvanmukti*. Therefore Abhinava says that those who do not gain the desired results through knowledge and *yoga* should rely on the *guru*, because the *dikṣā* liberates them by itself even without inner knowledge (*TA.* xvi. 298b-300a). How then does the *dikṣā* bring about the liberation at the moment of death?

First, as I have mentioned above the ritual of *janana* is not the only means of accomplishing the *dikṣā*. The purification of *karman* can be brought about also by simple *nyāsa* of purificatory *mantras* without the *homa* rituals. In such cases, the teacher begins with the *nyāsa* of the *adhvan* to be purified on the body of the disciple and then performs the *nyāsa* of purificatory *mantras* on the *adhvan*. Even in this case of the purification without *homa* rituals, the teacher can imagine various births of the disciple in the womb at each successive stage of the selected *adhvan* (*TA.* xvi. 238-9). But when one seeks to accomplish this purification only by the *nyāsa* of *mantras*, one can do it without imagining the different births: the teacher should do the *nyāsa* thinking "I draw out [the disciple] from here" (*asmād uddharami*) (*TA.* xvi. 245). He draws out the disciple from a lower *tattva* (or a stage in another *adhvan*) and leads him into the next *tattva*, and thus repeating this process he brings the disciple to Śiva (*TA.* xvi. 196b-198a). The purification of *karman* is not envisaged here. Moreover, even in the case of the *dikṣā* with *janana*, it is said that the purification of *karman* has no sense if separatedness (*prthaktva*) [from Śiva] is not destroyed by the process of merging two *tattvas* (*TA.* xvii. 62-3). The efficacy of the *dikṣā* consists in this gradual process of climbing up the ladder of *adhvan*: "Even if there is unsteadiness of mental activities because of their diversity, by gradual unification with each element there certainly will be the ascent (*rūḍhi*) culminating in the attainment of the nature of

Śiva. 'This tattva is of this nature and I draw the disciple upwards from here'; if there is an awareness of such an orderly progression [upwards], even a thickheaded person can attain the nature of Śiva. And the disciple, seeing the teacher participating in the grace of Śiva [obtained] by such a gradual process, also attains Śivahood by identifying himself with the teacher and by the power of *bhakti*' (TA. xvi. 196b-199a).

Similarly, the ritual of *yojanā* also consists in reaching progressively higher levels of reality culminating in union with Śiva. In the 17th chapter, Abhinava says that the teacher should imagine the existence of all six *adhvans* in the *prāṇa* to perform the *yojanā*, and he does not mention the various stages in the upward motion of the *prāṇa*. But in the 15th chapter (TA. xv. 433-436a), he refers to the *yojanā* ritual of the *Triśirobhairavatāntra*, according to which all the 36 *tattvas* (including a few stages at the top) are passed through in the movement of the *prāṇa*. A far more elaborate way of imagining the passage of *prāṇa* in the *yojanā* is described in the *Svacchandatantra*, according to which the teacher must be conscious of 13 kinds of ladders of reality (Sv.T. iv. 231-407).

Among these, the ladder consisting of the 'rungs' of the *mantra Om* (A, U, M, *bindu*, *nāda*, *nādānta* etc., cf. Sv.T. iv. 255-6) is undoubtedly very ancient. It is probable that the yogic technique of meditation on *Om* (meditate on the ascent of the *ātman*, making it correspond to the stages of pronunciation of *Om*), called '*haṃsoccāra*' in the *Svacchandatantra* (Sv.T. iv. 257-262), is at the origin of the ritual of *yojanā* and of the notion of *pada-adhvan* and *mantra-adhvan*. '*Pada*' means component parts of a single *mantra*, such as 'A' or 'U' in *Om* (cf. *padārthabheda*, Sv.T. iv. 334-356a), in the *Tantrāloka* the *Parā mantra* '*Sauḥ*' is divided into 'S', 'au' and *visarga*, which correspond to all *tattvas* till *māyā*, those till *śakti* and Niṣkala Śiva respectively (TA. xvi. 219b-220a)²⁶. As for the *mantra-adhvan*, which consists of *vaktra-mantras*

and *aṅga-mantras* in the *SP.*, we find it constituted, in the enumeration of six *adhvans* in the *Sv.T.* (iv. 241b-257a-1), by the eleven stages of *Om* (where the *pada-adhvan* is composed of 81 *padas* of the *vidyā-rāja*)²⁷⁾.

Leaving aside the problem of the historical development of the sixfold *adhvan*, in so far as the *yojanā* ritual is the ascent from the lowest level of reality (*mūlādhāra*) to the highest level (*Śiva* at the *dvadaśānta*), it has exactly the same meaning as the *tattva-śuddhi*, although in the *yojanā* there may not be the gradual awareness of ascent, owing to the shortness of the time taken to complete this process (one span of expiration). The *yojanā* is thus a repetition and confirmation²⁸⁾ of the purification of *adhvan* (*adhva-śuddhi*), which is the main ritual of *nirvāṇadā-dikṣā*.²⁹⁾

However, we should keep in mind that this 'purification' is not 'doing away with' or 'being separated from' as it would be for the dualists³⁰⁾. It is a process of ascent, in which, when one climbs up to a higher stage, the lower stage is absorbed in the higher, and finally all the inferior stages of reality are absorbed in *Śiva* and not discarded as impure. Accordingly, the word '*adhvan*' is explained in two ways: *adhvan* means 'path' for those who have a dualistic view because it is the way for reaching the state which should be attained gradually, but for those who are awakened (*prabuddha*) it is what should be enjoyed, i.e. what is eaten (*adyate*) (*TA.* vi. 30). Thus to bring about the conviction of purity of all things (= oneness with *Śiva*), the creation of pure *tattvas* follows the *yojanā* ritual.

In this way, the *dikṣā* is essentially the application of the sixfold *adhvan* on the disciple by the teacher, who first applies it to himself in the *adhivāsana* three times, by ordinary *nyāsa*, by special *nyāsa* and by *antaryāga*. And this is the reason Abhinava emphasized the existence of the sixfold *adhvan* in the Hand of *Śiva*, as we noticed above. Though the *adhvan* is potentially contained in any 'hand of *Śiva*' in the form of the

śivāsana, Abhinava had to emphasize this because he considered the *adhvan* as the essential element in any *dikṣā* ritual, even in the *samaya-dikṣā*, by which the disciple is united with the *īśvara-tattva* through the path of *adhvan*. As for the *dvijatvāpādana*, which is another main constituent of the *samaya-dikṣā*, it has two aspects, one similar to the *janana* ritual and the other similar to the *yojanā*. As the disciple goes through all the rituals in the life of a brahman, it is a miniature *janana* ritual. As it is the ascent from the heart to the *dvādaśānta*, it has the same structure as the *yojanā*, particularly as it is similar to 'kāraṇatyāga' (surpassing six Kāraṇa deities from Brahmā to Śiva) (*Sv.T.* iv. 263-7), though 'surpassing the six and entering into the seventh (*Paramaśiva*)' does not exist in the *dvijatvāpādana*.

But what effect does this ascent to Śiva produce on the disciple? The teacher has a clear experience of this climbing upwards, but the disciple does not experience this in a direct way except in the case of the *dikṣā* where the effects are immediately perceptible (*pratyaya-dikṣā*), in which he sees each world he passes through (*TA.* xvi. 244). Abhinava explains this by distinguishing two sorts of knowledge, that of *puruṣa* (*pauruṣa-jñāna*) and that of *buddhi* (*bauddha-jñāna*). For Kashmir Śaivism, what is called 'mala' (original impurity) which is the fundamental cause of *samsāra*, is nothing but ignorance, but it is not the ordinary ignorance of *buddhi* (*bauddha-ajñāna*) at the mental level, it is the ignorance of soul (*pauruṣa-ajñāna*)³¹¹ situated in the depths of one's being. This knowledge or ignorance of soul is of a non-differentiated (*avikalpa*) nature (*TA.* i. 38a), while the *bauddha-jñāna* (or *-ajñāna*) is differentiated (*vikalpa*, see J. ad *TA.* i. 24, vol. 1, pp. 56-7). This is the reason mere textual knowledge does not bring about liberation. It is the *dikṣā* which destroys the *pauruṣa-ajñāna* (J. ad *TA.* i. 43, pp. 80-1), and one who has received the *dikṣā* will be liberated at the moment of death (*TA.* i. 43). If he should succeed in destroying also the *bauddha-ajñāna*, he becomes a *jīvanmukta* (*TA.* i. 44).

So, the ascent to Śiva in the *dikṣā* does not exercise an influence on one's ordinary consciousness, it works on the non-differentiated level of one's consciousness, or perhaps one may say on the 'unconscious'³²⁾. It is the unconscious experience of union with Śiva, by the process of ascent, which destroys our unconscious ignorance, i.e. our *aṇava-mala*. However, there is another aspect of the *dikṣā*, which the disciple perceives consciously, and which produces an effect similar to that of a play on an audience. Seeing the acts and hearing the words³³⁾ of the teacher who plays the role of a spiritual guide of the soul in the journey through the different stages of reality, and partly identifying himself with the teacher, the disciple is assured of the certainty of his liberation at the moment of death. In this sense, the more numerous and precise the teacher's acts and words are, the more certain the disciple's conviction becomes; so Abhinava recommends reliance on as many rituals as time and means permit (*TA*. xvi. 195b-196a).

II. *Kaula dikṣā*

The 29th chapter of the *Tantrāloka* describes the *kula* rituals (*kulaprakriyā*), and the *dikṣā* according to this chapter³⁴⁾ has an immediate effect on the disciple, contrary to the ordinary *dikṣā*. First I will examine the *dikṣā* in question and then the *kula* rituals in general.

1) Description of the *Kaula dikṣā*

1. *Samaya-dikṣā*

Suitable candidates for receiving the *kaula dikṣā* are very few (one in a hundred thousand, *TA*. xxix. 187a), and as the one who is to be initiated is referred to as '[the teacher's] own disciple (*svaśiṣya*)' (*ibid.*) it is possible that this *dikṣā* is done redundantly, after an ordinary *dikṣā*. The disciple, on whom the teacher has performed the *nyāsa* of the *adh-*

van to be purified (TA. xxix. 20a), enters the ritual pavilion, after being sprinkled with the water invigorated by the *rudraśakti* (*mālinī* between Parā or Mātṛsadbhāva). The teacher contemplates the hands of the disciple so that they become radiant with the *rudraśakti*. He puts a flower into the hands of the disciple, and then depriving them of the disciple's own *śakti*, he meditates on the *rudraśakti* in the form of a hook pulling them. In this way, moved by the *śakti*, the disciple blindfolds himself with a piece of cloth and then throws the flower on the *sthaṇḍīla*³⁵⁾, so that the teacher can decide the *kula* (affiliation with a particular deity) of the disciple by the fall of the flower. The disciple, still under the influence of the *śakti*, removes the blindfold and makes a bow to the deity thus chosen;³⁶⁾ the teacher then honours the *devicakra* at the hands and on the head of the disciple, visualizing the *devicakra* on the head as it attracts its counterpart at the hands. Thus the hands are pulled up towards the head and fall on it³⁷⁾. It is this involuntary movement of the hands by the *śakti* of Śiva which is called the hand of Śiva (*śivahasta*). In the same way (still moved by the *śakti*) the disciple should offer the *caru* to the deity. Then, taking the *caru* and the toothpick, he throws the latter on the ground. The degree of the *śaktipāta* (descent of the divine energy of grace) is judged from the consistency of his actions: if he worships the same deity as chosen by the act of throwing the flower and if he offers the *caru* to the same etc. (J. ad TA. xxix. 197a), then he is considered to have received a high degree of *śaktipāta*.

Another variety of the *samaya-dikṣā* consists in giving to the disciple the *caru* made according to *kula* prescriptions, i.e. made of *semen* and blood etc.³⁸⁾ and sprinkled with wine (*vāmāmṛta*). Should he take it with steady hands he is united with a *śaktigotra*, and should he take it with trembling hands he is recognized as a *samayin*³⁹⁾.

2. *Nirvāṇa-dikṣā*

There is no essential difference between the *nirvāṇa-dikṣā* of the *kula* rituals and the ordinary one without *janana*. It is the purification of *adhvans* by the power of *mantra*: the purificatory *mantra* (here *Mālinī*) burns away all the *adhvans* and merges with *Śiva niṣkala* (in the case of *mumukṣu*) or *sakala* (in the case of *bubhukṣu*) (*TA.* xxix. 201b–206). The particularity of the *kaula dikṣā* consists in its having visible effects: the disciple might fall down (*TA.* xxix. 202a and 210); or he might experience bliss (*ānanda*), jumping (*udbhava*), quivering (*kampa*), sleeping (*nidra*), shaking (*ghūrṇi*), depending on where the *rudraśakti* penetrates—*citi*, *vyoman*, *prāṇana*, *antartanu* and *bahirtanu* respectively (*TA.* xxix. 207–8)⁴⁰. In other cases, he sees all the stages of the *adhvan* he passes through (*TA.* xxix. 217–218a); furthermore, he might even reveal all the *śāstras* (218b), including unknown ones (J.).

2) Analysis of *Kaula-dikṣā*

Thus the salient characteristic of the *kaula dikṣā* lies in the fact that it gives immediate conviction of its efficacy (*sapratyaya*) in the form of penetration of the divine power (*śaktipāta* or *āveśa*). When no such signs appear, the teacher should cast away such a disciple like a stone (*TA.* xxix. 211a). These external signs must have been considered originally as evidence of divine grace. In his commentary on the *Somaśambhupaddhati*, Trilocana quotes a passage which lists as signs of *śaktipāta* ① immediate liberation (*sadyomukti*)⁴¹, ② fainting (*mūrccā*), ③ quivering (*kampa*), ④ thrill of the hair (*romāñcaka*) (*SP.* iii. p. 7, [7a]). Though the purification of *adhvan* is pursued in a similar way to that of ordinary *dikṣā*, it would appear that the *kaula dikṣā*'s main purpose is to obtain these visible effects. These effects have much in common with ecstatic (in the case of *ānanda* etc.) and shamanic (in the case of seeing *adhvan*) experience. The former is reminiscent of the

modern cult of Devi in which some devotees are possessed by the goddess and show such signs as fainting or trembling. As for the latter, the *Brahmayāmala* (33rd *paṭala*)⁴²⁾ says that the disciple sees his ancestors in hell and himself in the *ākāśa* during the *dikṣā*, which may be compared to the journey of the shaman through hell towards heaven. It is clear that manifestations of a lower degree of *śaktipāta* such as shaking of the body have no more importance than as testimony of his certain liberation in the future. But if the disciple has a really deep experience such as *ānanda* or seeing the *adhvan*, it will be a great help towards realizing the *jīvanmukti*.

It is not only the experience during the *dikṣā* ritual proper, but that of the entire ritual setting constituted by other acts of worship (*kulayāga*) that induces various states approaching liberation. Though the *kaula dikṣā* is preceded by the sexual rituals (*dautavidhi*) (*TA.* xxviii. 78), I will not treat of them here, because it is only the teacher who practises these in the *dikṣā*: the disciple is not yet qualified for them⁴³⁾.

The *kulayāga* is defined at the beginning of the 29th chapter as follows: "For one who sees all things in such a way and who has destroyed all his doubts, *yāga* is like this. Whatever a *vīra* does to confirm such nature by thought, word and deed is called *kulayāga*" (*TA.* xxix. 5-6) (J. glosses 'in such a way' by 'as the immense essence of Śiva and Śakti', p. 5, 1.3). Thus those who are fit to perform the *kulayāga* must consider everything as Śiva without any doubt whatever and must prove this by their action. Therefore, it is emphasized that one should be emancipated from the ordinary distinction of pure and impure: there are consequently no *adhivāsas* such as ablution in the *kula* ritual (*TA.* xxix. 8); on the contrary one must use the materials prohibited by the ordinary *śāstras* (*TA.* xxix. 10). These prohibited materials are represented by three M's, which are *madya* (wine), *māṃsa* (meat) and *maithuna* (sexual intercourse) (*TA.* xxix. 98b) and the users of these are called 'brahmācārin'. They who only taste these in an ordinary way and those who

refuse them in the *kulaprakriyā* from false self-consciousness, these two types of men are equally *paśu* and fall into hell (TA. xxix. 99-100a). Among the three M's, two (*madya* and *māmsa*) are subsidiary causes of *ānanda* while the third (*maithuna*) is the effect itself, that is, *ānanda* (TA. xxix. 97b-98a). The importance of wine is much stressed as an ancillary cause (TA. xxix. 11-13). However, with regard to the materials used in the ritual, Abhinava considers the nature of the *argha* water as the essential element of this *yāga* (TA. xxix. 17). This *argha* water is composed of wine and the *kuṇḍagolaka*, which (though not stated explicitly) is obviously the mixture of *semen* and female sexual fluid—the result of sexual union between the teacher and a *śakti* (female partner) (TA. xxix. 15a).

These two, wine and the *kuṇḍagolaka*, are said to be the cause and the effect of *ānanda* (TA. xxix. 22a). In this way, one of the characteristics of the *kula* ritual consists in using ordinarily detestable materials, and for some this can be an effective way to obtain *jīvanmukti*: in the case of the ritual of taking the *caru* with *vāmamṛta*, which I mentioned in connection with the *samaya-dikṣā*, if the disciple takes it without fear he attains the non-discriminative (*avikalpa*) consciousness of spontaneous intuition (*nirupāya*) (J. ad TA. xxix. 200, vol. xi, p. 130, l. 10-13), and Jayaratha reminds us that the eating of *caru* (*carubhojana*) can be a subsidiary method to the state of *anupāya* (J. refers to a verse cited in his commentary to TA. ii. 2, p. 2, l. 13).

So, the *kaula dikṣā* has a powerful effect on the disciple, as it forces the disciple to transcend the opposition of pure and impure, so deeply rooted in the Indian mentality, thus causing a violent shock to the mind of the disciple who is in this way led to acknowledge the unity of Śiva and the whole of mundane existence. Though the intensity of this experience varies according to the individual, it can be an effective way to salvation in life, not a mere initiation as the ordinary *dikṣā* is, for those who seek *jīvanmukti*.

I think that this type of *dikṣā*, which gives a glimpse of a higher order of reality to the disciple, accompanied by certain typical reactions which the teacher recognizes, was probably the original form of the *dikṣā* ritual: first, as mentioned above, there is the resemblance with shamanistic and ecstatic cults; secondly, comparison with similar cults would seem to favour the supposition that this religion begins first as a movement restricted to an esoteric circle examining disciples by such *dikṣā* to find out if they really have the psychological talents to experience mystical union⁴⁴). The later development of the ordinary *dikṣā* which I described first must be the result of the process of popularization of Śaivism. So now, I would like to show how Abhinavagupta conceives the entire system of salvation and to situate the *dikṣā* within it.

III. Place of the *dikṣā* in the hierarchy of *upāya* and *śaktipāta*

1) *Dikṣā* as an *āṇava-upāya*

No one seems to have paid enough attention to the phrase of Jayaratha at the beginning of the 6th chapter of the *TA*⁴⁵), where he says that all subjects treated in chapters 6 to 12 belong to *sthānakalpana* and those treated in chapters 15 to 37 belong to the *bāhya* part of *sthānakalpana* (J. *ad TA*. vi. 1, p. 2, l. 1-6). Abhinava himself says at the beginning of the 6th chapter (*śl.* 1) that he will speak about the *sthānakalpana* and at the end of the 12th chapter (*śl.* 26) he affirms that he has explained the *āṇava-upāya*. *Sthānaprakalpa* is the outermost subdivision of the *āṇava-upāya* which is constituted by *dhyāna*, *uccāra*, *varṇa*, *karāṇa* and *sthānakalpana*. So this agrees perfectly with the statement of Abhinava that he treats of the four kinds of knowledge (which are the four *upāyas*: *anupāya*, *śāmbhava-upāya*, *śākta-upāya* and *āṇava-upāya*) in the *Tantrāloka* (*TA*. i. 245).

This means that the *dikṣā*, discussed in chapters 15 to 21 and 29,

belongs to the *āṇava-upāya*. But is there any theoretical basis for this classification? Abhinava rearranges five subdivisions of the *āṇava-upāya*, listed in the *MV*, according to the theory of four *parimita-pramātṛ*: *dhyāna* is based on the *buddhi-pramātṛ*, *uccāra* and *varṇa* on the *prāṇa-pramātṛ*, *karaṇa* on the *deha-pramātṛ* and *sthānaprakalpa* on the *bāhya-pramātṛ*⁴⁶⁾. But at the beginning of the 6th chapter he again divides the *sthānaprakalpa* into three which are based on *prāṇa*, *deha* (body) and *bāhya* (external objects). *Prāṇa* is further sub-divided into five (*prāṇa*, *apāna*, *udāna*, *samāna*, *vyāna*), *deha* into two (*antardeha* and *bahirdeha*) and *bāhya* into eleven (*maṇḍala*, *sthaṇḍila*, *pātra*, *akṣasātra*, *pustaka*, *liṅga*, *tūra*, *pusta*, *pratimā*, and *mūrti*) (*TA*. vi. 2-4a). Apart from the fact that he begins at once to go into the *sthānaprakalpa* based on *prāṇa* (which is the *kāla-adhvan*)⁴⁷⁾, he does not refer to this division afterwards. The mention of *prāṇa* and *deha* as subdivision of *sthānaprakalpa* contradicts the above division of the *āṇava-upāya*, but it is highly probable that Abhinava intended, by referring to *prāṇa*, to introduce the *kāla-adhvan* as the first of all *adhvans*. As the main subject treated in chapters 6 to 12 is indeed the *adhvan* (*śaḍadhvan* and *kāla-adhvan*) and as the *dikṣā* is nothing but the application of *adhvan* to the disciple, it is clear that Abhinava considered *adhvan* as the essential element in the *sthānaprakalpa*.

This is easy to understand, because the most usual way of turning any object into a support for worship (which is the literal meaning of *sthānaprakalpa*) is by transforming it into Śiva's throne (*śivāsana*). This *śivāsana*'s main components are the 36 *tattvas*, the *adhvan* chosen by Abhinava for the *dikṣā*, and Jayaratha identifies the constitution of the *śivāsana* with the *nyāsa* of *adhvan* (*J. ad TA* xv. 297b, vol. ix, p. 147). This throne of Śiva is not only projected onto the external objects such as *maṇḍala*, but also onto the initiate's own body, as I have mentioned concerning the *antaryāga*, because he can not worship Śiva without becoming Śiva. Moreover, the meditation of *adhvan* can be by itself an

effective way to liberation: the initiate transforms, by meditating on his body filled with all the *adhvans*, himself and the whole of existence into Śiva (TA. xii. 6-8)⁴⁸). It is in view of this sort of utilization of the *adhvans* that Abhinava describes them in chapters 6 to 11—though their description serves as a guidebook for the teacher to lead the disciple up to Śiva during *dikṣā*.

Thus Abhinava shows the *adhvan* to be the essential component of *sthānaprakalpa*: he treats of them first for those who can practise their meditation by themselves, and then, from the 15th chapter onwards, of the *dikṣā* which is the application of the *adhvan* on the disciple by the teacher for those who can not practise by themselves⁴⁹). This case of the *dikṣā* corresponds to the 'mūrti' subdivision of *sthānaprakalpa*, which Jayaratha glosses by 'śiṣyātmā' (ad TA. xii. 3, but ad TA. vi. 4 by 'gurvādisambandhini'). And after the *dikṣā* the disciple applies the *adhvan* to himself (on his 'mūrti') in the daily ritual (*nitya-pūjā*) because he must become Śiva to worship Śiva. Thus the *dikṣā* serves also as the model of the subsequent *nitya-pūjā*, which is the foremost duty for devotees.

Here arises the problem of distinguishing the disciples who must rely on the teacher from those who need not. Their qualifications (*adhikāra*) depend on the various degrees of *śaktipāta* received, which I will now examine.

2) *śaktipāta*

We have seen that in the *kaula dikṣā*, *śaktipāta* manifests itself in visible signs such as fainting etc. If my hypothesis on the development of the *dikṣā* ritual proves to be correct, those who would be newly initiated had to show these signs to prove their aptitude for mystic experiences in order to be accepted within the restricted circle of adepts, who constituted the original nucleus of the cult. This circle was to widen

into a popular movement, becoming gradually an established religion and incorporating the more ordinary devotees of Śiva. In this situation, new criteria for assessing a disciple's fitness had to be introduced. On the other hand, as the teacher is an incarnation of Śiva on earth, if the *dikṣā* were to end with no outward sign of the disciple having received the grace of Śiva, the authority of the teacher would be undermined. For these reasons the *śaktipāta* had to be re-interpreted and interiorized⁵⁰. Henceforward, the *śaktipāta* is thought to take place, not at the moment of the *dikṣā*, but before the *dikṣā*⁵¹. A postulant's desire to be initiated by the *dikṣā* is in itself considered to be the clearest sign that he has received the *śaktipāta* of Śiva. So, it is said that *bhakti* towards Śiva is the *śaktipāta* ("*śive bhaktir eva śaktipātaḥ*", *TA*. xiii. 118a)⁵².

1. Degrees of *śaktipāta*

In the 13th chapter of the *TA*. nine degrees of *śaktipāta* are presented as follows:

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <i>tivra</i> — <i>tivra-tivra</i> — <i>madhya-tivra</i> — <i>manda-tivra</i> (intense scale) | <i>madhya</i> — <i>tivra-madhya</i> — <i>madhya-madhya</i> — <i>manda-madhya</i> (medium scale) | <i>manda</i> — <i>tivra-manda</i> — <i>madhya-manda</i> — <i>manda-manda</i> (mild scale) |
|---|--|--|

Those who receive the highest degree of *śaktipāta* (*tivra-tivra*) die immediately and attain salvation. So they need neither *upāya* nor *dikṣā*. Some may die shortly afterwards, others still later, which makes three subdivisions. Jayaratha says that this should be applied to all nine thus making 27 degrees altogether⁵³.

By the *madhya-tivra śaktipāta* (medium on the intense scale) all ignorance disappears, and one obtains liberation without the teacher (*TA*. xiii. 131b-132). There are two main subdivisions of this degree: one is the case of the teacher (as he who receives this degree of *śaktipāta* is automatically considered as teacher) called '*sāṃsiddhika*' or '*akalpita*'; the other is the case of one called '*akalpita-kalpaka*'. The former (*akal-*

pita) acquires intuitive knowledge (*prātibha*) totally by himself, but as he will have to depend on the *śāstras* to help others he is said to be initiated by deities who are really nothing but his consciousness (TA. iv. 43a). In the case of '*akalpita-kalpaka*' (literally 'not made [but self-made]'), he is not dependent on the teacher (so he is '*akalpita*'), but as his '*prātibha*' is not perfect, he must, to confirm this *prātibha*, rely on various techniques described in the *śāstras* (*bhāvanā*, *dhyāna*, *japa*, *svapna*, *vrata*, *huti* etc.; TA. iv. 53 and TA. xiii. 142b-143a). He is said to be initiated by the *japa* of the Goddess Raktā (TA. iv. 65a)⁵⁴ or, if his *śaktipāta* is a bit less intense, he should practise the *dikṣā* to himself in the imagination (TA. xiii. 143b-144). The *madhya-tivra śaktipāta* corresponds to *anupāya* (cf. TA. xiii. 157), but in the case of *akalpita-kalpaka* one can depend on any method belonging to the other three *upāyas* to confirm one's intuitive knowledge.

The *manda-tivra śaktipāta* (mild on the intense scale) is defined as follows: "Owing to the force of the mildly-intense *śakti*, by the union with the power of the will of Śiva, the desire to approach a good teacher is born" (TA. xiii. 218). If the degree of *śaktipāta* is high, the disciple will obtain an '*akalpita*' (see above) teacher, if low, a teacher with ordinary *dikṣā* (*saṃskṛta*) (TA. xiii. 224a). It is also said that a disciple who gets an '*akalpita*' teacher will attain *jivanmukti* at the moment of the *dikṣā* (TA. xiii. 225-6). This *dikṣā* given by an '*akalpita*' teacher may be practised in various ways such as conversation (*kathana*), simple meeting (*saṅgama*), gazing (*avalokana*), explanation of *śāstras*, *saṅkramana*⁵⁵, performing acts of equality (*sāmyacaryāsaṅdarśana*)⁵⁶, *caru* (*kuṇḍagolaka* according to J.), (by the greatness of) *mantra* or *mudrā*, *kriyā*, penetration into the inner *prāṇa* (*antarākārarūpaprāṇapraveśa*) (TA. xiii. 227b-229a). The mention of *caru* refers, if Jayaratha is correct, to the *kaula dikṣā* as we have seen above.

Also it is probable that penetration into *prāṇa* refers to the *vedha-dikṣā* described in the 29th chapter (236-281). So we can say that the

kauladīkṣā is especially meant for those who receive this degree of *śaktipāta*, the most intense of the *manda-tvra* division, though other types of *dīkṣā* can serve this purpose too as is clear from the mention of 'kriyā'.

As for those who get a 'saṃskṛta' teacher, though there is no explanation, they must be able to attain *jīvanmukti* after a period of practice: firstly because it is characteristic of the *tvara-madhya śaktipāta* (the degree just below) that it does not permit the recipient to attain the state of Śivahood during his lifetime; secondly, the text of the *MV.* which is the basis of Abhinava's definition of the degrees of *śaktipāta* (*MV.* i. 44-5, cited at *TA.* xiii. 202-3) says "[the disciple guided to a good teacher] serves him, and having satisfied the teacher, is initiated by him; the disciple attains Śivahood at the moment [of the *dīkṣā*] or after a period of enjoyment (*upabhogād vā*) or on his death (*dehapatāt*)". The first case of the disciple who achieves union with Śiva in the course of the *dīkṣā* corresponds to that of obtaining an 'akalpita' teacher, so the second (*upabhogād*) must correspond to the case of those who obtain a 'saṃskṛta' teacher. Abhinava explains that the third (*dehapatāt*) is the case of the immediately liberating *dīkṣā* (*sadyonirvāṇada dīkṣā*) (*TA.* xiii. 234b-239). This *dīkṣā* is given only to those who are on their deathbed and who have shown signs of having received *śaktipāta* (urgent requests of the dying or of his family or of his friends, see *TA.* xix. 5). This *dīkṣā* is classified as the case of the *manda-tvra śaktipāta* (mild on the intense scale) perhaps because the interval between obtaining the latter and salvation is very short.

The *tvara-madhya śaktipāta* (intense on the medium scale) is defined as follows: "in the case of the *tvara-madhya*, one can not know with certainty one's Śiva-nature after the *dīkṣā* ritual, as one only becomes Śiva at the moment of death" (*TA.* xiii. 240b-241a). This corresponds to the case of ordinary *putrakas* who cannot attain *jīvanmukti*.³⁷⁾

Those who have received the *madhya-madhya śaktipāta* (medium on

the medium scale) “remain *bubhukṣu* though they want to attain Śivahood, and they become Śiva after having enjoyed [the *tattva*] to which they are joined [by the teacher in the *dikṣā*]” (TA. xiii. 242b-243a). This is the case of the *sādhaka*, whom the teacher attaches at the end of the *dikṣā* (after having united him to Śiva by the ritual of *yojanā*) to an appropriate *tattva* (earth for example), profound meditation on which the *sādhaka* practises after the *dikṣā* ritual and obtains various *siddhis* concerning the *tattva* in question.

In the case of the *manda-madhya śaktipāta* (mild on the medium scale) the enjoyment of *siddhis* concerning the relevant *tattva* joined occurs not in this life but in the next. At the end of that reincarnation he will be united with Śiva (TA. xiii. 243b-244a). However, there are gradations to this degree with the result that more than one reincarnation may intervene and also the enjoyment (of the *siddhis*) may be more or less intense (TA. xiii. 244b-245a). Jayaratha says that these two degrees correspond to the *śivadharmīn sādhaka*, though the latter seems to agree more with the definition of the *lokadharmīn sādhaka* given elsewhere (TA. xv. 30).

In the case of *tivra-manda*, *madhya-manda* and *manda-manda śaktipāta* (intense, medium and mild on the mild scale respectively) the disciple becomes increasingly desirous of the enjoyment of more mundane pleasures. However, he can still attain Śivahood in the end, after a long interval (TA. xiii. 245b-246a), even though he might have to wait till the dissolution of the universe, i.e. its re-absorption into Śiva.⁵⁹ According to Jayaratha, the above three degrees correspond to the *lokadharmīn sādhaka*: by the power of the *tivra-manda* he achieves union with Śiva automatically after an extended period of enjoyment of similar pleasures in future lives; in the case of the *madhya-manda*, to attain Śiva he must be initiated again by the lord of the world (*bhuvaneśvara*) where he will be reborn; in virtue of the *manda-manda* he must pass through various states of enjoyment such as *sālokya*, *sāmīpya* and *sāyu-*

jya in the upper worlds until he is again initiated and attains the ultimate goal, oneness with Śiva (J. *ad loc. cit.*).

Conclusion

TA. xv. 1b-2a, as mentioned in the section on the nature of the *dikṣā* (p. 57), declares that the *dikṣā* is a method for liberation and enjoyment by itself (*svayam*) or as a means of purification (*saṃskāra-yogād vā*). According to Jayaratha, it is a method for liberation by itself for the *nirbija-dikṣita*, a method for enjoyment by itself for the *lokadharmīn sādḥaka*, a method for liberation as *saṃskāra* for the *sabija-dikṣita*, and a method for enjoyment as *saṃskāra* for the *śivadharmīn sādḥaka*. But this interpretation goes against the tenor of the text as we have seen above. The *dikṣā*, mainly the *kaula dikṣā*, is a direct means for liberation for those who have the privilege of an 'akalpita' teacher; for dying people, the *sadyonirvāṇadā dikṣā* has a similar efficacy. In the case of the postulant who gets a 'saṃskṛta' teacher through the *mandatīvra śaktipāta*, the *dikṣā* has no other function than that of rendering him apt for proceeding to various techniques, if he is destined to attain *jīvanmukti* in this life. As only a small part of the disciples initiated can reach this state, for the ordinary disciples for whom liberation turns out to be an unattainable goal in this life (this would mean they have received the *tīvra-madhya śaktipāta*) the importance of the *dikṣā* consists in its effect of ensuring salvation at the moment of death. For the *śivadharmīn sādḥaka* (*madhya-madhya śaktipāta*) also, the *dikṣā* serves the same function of ensuring salvation at the moment of death, though his main concern is to obtain *siddhis* in this life. For this purpose, he must practise 'mantrasādḥana' (TA. xxix. 227) in normal cases, though the *vedha-dikṣā*⁵⁹) described in the 29th chapter (236-281) is said to endow the *sādḥaka* with *siddhis* immediately (TA. xxix. 236). For those who receive the *manda-madhya śaktipāta* (*lokadharmīn sādḥaka*), the

dikṣā promises enjoyment of *siddhis* in the next reincarnation and salvation after that period. As for the lowest three degrees of *śaktipāta* (*manda*), the fact that candidates must receive the *dikṣā* in a higher world in order to attain Śivahood suggests, contrary to the interpretation of Jayaratha, that they give access not to the *nirvāṇa-dikṣā*, but just to the *samaya-dikṣā*.

Though Abhinavagupta's main concern is for the group of elites who wish to attain liberation in this life, he by no means neglects the ordinary *bhāktas* who form the basis of these elites. Seven of the twelve volumes of the *Tantrāloka* describe various *upāyas* for those who can practise these methods by themselves, the chapters on *adhvan* being also useful to the teacher guiding his disciples in the *dikṣā*. The *dikṣā* is in effect the lowest of these graded *upāyas* for those who can not attain Śivahood by themselves. Nevertheless, the Kashmiri philosopher's purview includes all sorts of disciples, even those who do not seek salvation. In fact, Abhinava devotes a substantial portion of his text to a detailed discussion of the *dikṣā* ritual and of related subjects. For the vast majority of disciples, the *dikṣā* is of the utmost importance, not only in its being the cause of liberation at the moment of death, but also in its serving as a model for daily *pājā* as it consists mainly of *adhva-śuddhi*. By systematizing the four *upāyas* which correspond to the disciples' aptitudes determined according to their varying degrees of *śaktipāta*, he offers an all-encompassing system of salvation for disciples of diverse natures and tendencies.

Abbreviations:

J. — Jayaratha's commentary on the *TA*.

MV. — *Mālinīvijayottaratantra*, *Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies*, No. 37. 1922.

SP. — *Somaśambhupaddhati*, see note 4.

- Sv. T* — *Svacchandatantra*, *KSTS*. No. 31, 38, 44, 48, 53, 56, 1921-1935.
TA. — *Tantraloka*, see note 1.
TS. — *Tantrasāra*, ed. Bani Prakashan. 1982, reprint of *KSTS*. No. 17.

Notes:

- 1 *The Tantraloka of Abhinavagupta With commentary of Rājānaka Jayaratha*, *Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies*, NO. 23, 28, 30, 36, 35, 29, 41, 47, 59, 52, 57, 58, 1918-1938.
- 2 I say here 'ordinary *dikṣā*' in contrast with '*kaula dikṣā*', although the latter term is found only once (*TA*. xv. 589b, as a citation from the *Ūrmitantra*), and the former is of my own making.
- 3 The teacher questions the disciple on his desire and, carefully judging his nature, he performs the *dikṣā* accordingly; see *TA*. xv. 34b-35a.
- 4 Mme. Brunner makes the same point concerning the *dikṣā* in the *Somaśambhupaddhati* (*Somaśambhupaddhati*, troisième partie, publication de l'Institut Français d'Indologie, No. 25. III, pp. xxii-xxvii).
- 5 For the reference, see the preceding note. For the preparatory rituals, part I and part II of the same work should also be consulted.
- 6 There is no sharp rupture between the tradition of the South and that of the North. Moreover, the *SP*. is greatly influenced by the *Svacchandatantra* (see *SP*. III. p.liv. l. 16-26), which is generally acknowledged to be a work of the North and which was recognized as an authority concerning *dikṣā* according to J. (*TA*. vol. ix, p.14, l.3-6).
- 7 *Adhvan* means literally 'way' or 'path', i.e. 'the way to Śiva' and often called '*ṣaḍadhvan*' 'the sixfold Path' which consists of *varṇa*, *mantra*, *pada*, *kalā*, *tattva* and *bhavana*. The first three are called '*vācaka-adhvan*' and the second '*vācyā-adhvan*'. Both *mātrkā* and *mālīni* are *varṇa*. In the *dikṣā* the teacher chooses one of the six and goes along it, guiding the *ātman* of the disciple, until he reaches Śiva, see: André Padoux, *Recherches sur la symbolique et l'énergie de la parole dans certains textes tantriques*, PIFI. fasc. 21, 1975, pp. 261-291.
- 8 According to the school of Lakṣmaṇagupta, each *tattva* consists of a Bhai-

- rava (Navātman, Ratiśekhara and Bhairavasadbhāva, respectively) (J. *ad TA.* xv. 247).
- 9 There are five lower manifestations of Consciousness called ‘*parimita-pramātr*’ (*śūnya*-, *buddhi*-, *prāṇa*-, *deha*-, and *bāhya-pramātr*). But usually only the first four are mentioned. Here, as the body is already purified by the ordinary *nyāsa*, the purification of the first-mentioned three must follow. For the notion of *parimita-pramātr*, see below p.68 and note 46.
- 10 If the toothpick falls to the East, the North, the North-East, the West, or stands upward, it is auspicious, otherwise the teacher should practise 108 *homas* (*TA.* xv. 447).
- 11 *TA.* xv. 453-454a and 456a. In the *nitya-pūjā*, the ensemble of the deities invoked are seen reflected on the *shaṅḍila* (*TA.* xxvi. 41-2). Cf. also *SP.* III. pp.90-91, n. 235. *Sv. T.* iii. 128 says that the disciple falls to the earth like a rod after this ‘vision’ of the deity. Kṣemarāja explains that this falling down takes place owing to the loss of subjectivity in the body etc. (*dehādi-pramātrtāpahastanāt*), and shows the disciple’s fitness for being penetrated by Śiva (*Sv. T.* vol. 1, p.211). See below (p.64) concerning these external signs of *samāveśa* and *śaktipāta*.
- 12 It seems that the existence of the *adhvan* in the *śivahasta* is referred to only in the *Dikṣottara* (vii. 105a) and in the *TA.* For this point see below p. 60.
- 13 We are not informed when this *nyāsa* is to be performed. As there should be a preliminary purification of the disciple outside the ritual pavilion (which is effectuated perhaps by an ordinary *nyāsa* as in the case of the *guru* himself), it is probable that the *nyāsa* of the *adhvan* takes place on this occasion. Cf. *SP.* III. *samayadikṣāvīdhi*, *śl.* 50 and 97-103.
- 14 *TA.* xv. 459 and 463. So, the disciple becomes a *samayin* twice, once after the *śivahasta* and again at the end of the *dvijatvāpādana*. In later southern texts these two rituals will constitute ‘*samaya-dikṣā*’ and ‘*viśeṣa-dikṣā*’ respectively; see the arguments of Mme Brunner on the possible development of the *dikṣā* in *SP.* III. pp.xxx-xxxiii. As there is no mention of the *śivahasta* either in the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* or in the *Picumata* (*Brahmayāmala*) (33rd *paṭala*), it is probable that there co-existed from the beginning two

types of *dikṣā*, one consisting of the *śivahasta* (*Śivadikṣavidhi* of the *Pārva-kāraṇa-āgama* [chap. 145] seems to correspond to this case), the other being an ascent through the *adhvan* (a typical description of which is found in the 33rd *paṭala* of the *Picumata*). It may have been the latter which furnished the model for the *dvijatvapadana* as a preliminary ritual to meet the demands of Brahmans who considered the *dvijatva* as an indispensable qualification for disciples. Apart from the problems of development, the redundancy of rituals causes no embarrassment to Abhinava who rather recommends it to intensify the disciple's experience of Śivahood.

- 15 It seems that Jayaratha did not consider eating raw meat as disgusting, because he refers only to 'being decapitated etc.' as the unpleasant things included in the list of 'mostly joyful' items given by Abhinava (J. *ad TA.* xv. 487), though eating cooked meat is inauspicious (J. *ibid.*). Eating raw meat or drinking blood (which is also auspicious) is characteristic of dreadful *yoginīs*, and to call these 'joyful' can be considered as a clear recognition of man's need to violate taboos.
- 16 The list is given at *TA.* xv. 498-505.
- 17 As the main ritual takes place the following day, the *adhivāsana* must also contain the toothpick ritual and divinatory dreaming etc. Cf. also *SP.* III. pp. 206-226.
- 18 See *MV.* ix. 2-31 and *TA.* xxxi. 62-85a to know how to trace the *maṇḍala*.
- 19 This *nyāsa* begins at the feet (the lowest stage = the earth *tattva* etc.) and proceeds stage by stage up to the head (the next highest stage = the *sadaśiva-tattva* etc.), culminating in the *nyāsa* of the highest stage, i.e. Śiva, which encompasses the whole body (*TA.* xvi. 101b-105). There are three ways of measuring the body: *apara*, *parāpara* and *para*, which have 84, 96 and 108 *aṅgulas* (1 *aṅgula* is about 2 cm), respectively. *Apara* is based on the material body (84 *aṅgulas* is the height up to between the eyebrows); but in the case of the other two, a sort of spiritual body is supposed. Thus a prolongation of 12 *aṅgulas* is reckoned from between the eyebrows up to the *brahmarandhra* in the *parāpara* measure, and another distance of 12 *aṅgulas* is added up to the *dvadaśānta-cakra* in the *para* measure (see *TA.* xvi. 99-100 and 110-112a).

- 20 The *dikṣā* can be practised with or without *janana* and with external rituals (*dravya*) or without (*vijñāna*). In addition to these four varieties, there are various combinations of purificatory *mantras* and *adhvan* to be purified, 8,540 possible ways of performing the *dikṣā* being reckoned (TA. xvi.164-168a). Multiplying this number again by various combinations of intention etc., a total of 597,800 is achieved (TA. xvi 186).
- 21 Eight *mantras* from Pibānī to Aghorī, six *aṅga mantras* and Parā *mantra*. For the formation of eight *mantras* of Aghorī etc. from the *mantra* of Parā-parā, see TA. xxx. 20-26a.
- 22 If the teacher wants to purify the other five *adhvan* separately, considering that they are not included in the chosen one, he should do so with the Aparā *mantra* and three oblations for each *adhvan* (TA. xvii 50-1).
- 23 In the case of the *nirbija-dikṣā*, this is followed by another *pūrṇahuti*, in order to 'burn away' the *samaya-pāśa*, i.e. to remove in advance all future obligations of the disciple (TA. xvii. 72).
- 24 Above the *śuddhavidya-tattva*, the womb is *Vidyāśakti* and not *Vāgīśvari*. Note that it is only the *tattvas* up to the *sadāśiva-tattva* which are purified, which is natural for Kashmir Śaivism but not so for the Śaiva-siddhānta (cf. SP. III. iii. 194, p. 326).
- 25 In the case of *bubhukṣu*, 'saṃskārayogāt' concerns the *śivadharmin* and 'svayan' the *lokadharmin*. For the latter the purification of bad *karman* only, brings about automatically the experience of future pleasures; but it is not the cause of the liberation obtained afterwards.
- 26 In SP. III. (pp. 240n-243n), the *pada-adhvan* consists of 94 parts of a *mantra* called 'vyomavyāpin' made up of 114 words. TA.'s main *pada-adhvan* is constituted by the parts of *mātrkā*, which is nothing but 50 phonemes (*varṇa*) of the Sanskrit 'alphabet', but *mātrkā* can be regarded as a single long *mantra*. TA. also teaches *pada-adhvan* of the Parāparā *mantra* (38 syllables divided into 19 *padas*) and that of Aparā *mantra* (three words forming three *padas*) (TA. xvi. 213-219a).
- 27 In SP. III. (see planche V), the *mantra-adhvan* is composed of the five Vaktra-mantra and the six *aṅga-mantra*, and the Vaktra-mantra nearly always correspond to the Kāraṇa deities situated in the *cakras*. TA.'s *mantra-adhvan*

- is the same as the *pada-adhvan*; this is because the *varṇa* (as *mātrka* and as *malini*) has a great importance in this system.
- 28 Note that the *parṇahuti*, the main element in the *yojana* ritual, is nearly always added after a *homa* to confirm its effects and to make up for imperfections.
- 29 So, the term '*adhvasaṃsuddhi*' can be used to signify the *dikṣā* (see for example *TA*. xxix. 200 and J.'s commentary on that passage, or *MV*. ix. 62b).
- 30 Cf. *SP*. III. p. xxii.
- 31 For the distinction between the two kinds of knowledge, see *TA*. i. 36-45, which stresses also their interaction, which is the basis of all the *upāyas*.
- 32 In the 9th chapter of the *TA*. (62-63), *mala* is defined as 'desire without object' (*niṣkarmā abhilaṣitā*) or 'sentiment of incompleteness' (*apūrṇaman-yatā*).
- 33 For example, phrases such as 'I draw up this man from this *tattva*' or the order to the Master of the *tattva* 'Master of *tattva*, by the order of Śiva, you should not put obstacles on this *putraka*'s path to the pure stage' (*TA*. xvii. 49). These may be understood as a 'speech act', but I think they may also be compared to a shaman's dramatic narration of his soul's journey beyond the terrestrial sphere to his audience. Abhinava himself uses the simile of a spectacle (*prekṣaṇaka*) to explain the efficacy of participation in a collective ritual on special occasions (*parvan*) in obtaining heightened consciousness (*TA*. xxviii. 20b-23a).
- 34 As the text itself does not give a definite designation to this *dikṣā*, I call it '*kaula dikṣā*' just for convenience' sake, though the term '*kula dikṣā*' would be equally possible. The distinction between '*kula*' and '*kaula*', a problem yet to be clarified (See *TA*. xiii. 300b-301 and 320b-321a), does not exist in this chapter.
- 35 On the *śhaṇḍila*, three Goddesses Parā, Parāparā and Aparā are worshipped on the three vertices of a triangle, and Kuleśvarī (the *iṣṭadevatā* who may be one of the above three) is worshipped at the center (*TA*. xxix. 131 and J. *ad* 46a).
- 36 It is not clear if the deity is chosen only from the three Goddesses, be-

- cause around them are also present the eight Aghorī etc. and the eight Mātr (TA. xxix. 52-3), and the flower might fall on one of the latter.
- 37 This movement is said to give immediate conviction ('*sadyahpratyaya-kāraka*', TA. xxix. 194b and MV. xi.22).
- 38 It is said to be made of *pañcaratna* which are *śivāmbu* (water fortified by the *mantra* of Śiva as in the normal case?), *retas* (semen), *rakta* (blood), *nānājya* and *viśvanirgama* (J. ad TA. xxix. 198b). I have no idea what the last two terms stand for.
- 39 TA. xxix. 198b-200. See below p.66 and p.71.
- 40 These manifestations occur according to the degree of *śaktipāta*: the highest *śaktipāta* is attested by *ānanda* and the lowest by *ghūrṇi*. These five signs are explained in TA. v. 100b-105a. Perhaps '*udbhava*' should be translated by 'levitation, ('*pluti*' but J. glosses by '*ūrdhvam gamanam*', TA. vol 3, p. 413)?
- 41 Transcription No. 170 of the Institut Français d'Indologie reads '*sadyo-mūrti*'. The passage cited by Trilocana is as follows:
- "tataḥ prabhṛti mukto 'sau yadāhṛtaśivecchayā /
kintu dikṣādibhir līngaiḥ na vinā jñāyate tu saḥ //
yeṣāṃ śartrīṇāṃ śaktiḥ pataty api nīvṛttaye /
teṣāṃ tallīṅgam autsukyam muktāu dveṣo bhavashītau //
bhaktiś ca śivabhakteṣu śraddhā tacchāsake vidhau /
anenānumitīḥ śiṣṭahetoḥ sthūladhiyām api //
iṣadardhanivṛtte tu rodhakatve tamahpateḥ /
bhavanty etāni līṅgāni kiñcicchiṣṭe ca dehinām //
caturthaśaktipātena tulyenaiva phalaṃ prati /
... tivratarasthitā tīvro mandatarāpi vā //
sadyomūrtā mūrchayā vā kampād romāñcatas tathā // iti"* (T. 170, p. 181-2).

The 2nd, 3rd and 4th *śloka* of the above passage are found in the *vidyā-pāda* of the *Mrgendra-tantra* as V. 4-5 and 8 (the above text is emended accordingly for the concerning *ślokas*). According to this passage, taken as a whole, when the *śakti* descends causing the cessation ('*nīvṛttaye*') of the obstructing force, there are such signs as 'desire for liberation' etc., while

the four signs such as fainting etc. appear only when the cessation of the obstructing force is incomplete (*‘iṣadardhanivṛtte tu’*). As long as even a small part remains of the power that binds the initiate to *samsāra*, *sadyo-mukti* is impossible. So, the context does not support the reading *‘sadyomukti’* in the above case. It is possible that the reading *‘sadyomūrti’* is the correct one: the *Mrgendratāntra* (*vidyā-pāda*, iii. 14a), explaining the name *‘Sadyojāta’*, says that the god bestows a new body to *yogins* (*‘sadyo mūrtir yogināṃ vā vidhatte sadyomūrtiḥ’*). This body is made of *mantra* and resembles that of the god (*‘proktavanmantramayasvamūrtisadrśtīm tanum’*, commentary of Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇakaṇṭha). *‘Sadyomūrti’* may stand for such a sudden ‘transfiguration’ into a divine body. Apart from the above passage, similar lists containing ‘immediate liberation by death’ are numerous: “*dehapatās tathā kampam paramānandavarṣaṇe / svedo romāñca ityetaś śaktipātasya lakṣaṇam /*” (*Siddhāntasekhara*, naimittika kāṇḍa, dikṣāvidhi, śl. 54, p. 149 in the *Manon-manigranṭhamālā* series edition). It is possible that the author quoted by Trilocana has taken such a list without much thinking about the implied theoretical contradiction.

- 42 I have consulted only one manuscript: Ms. No. 3-370 / Śaivatantra 129 in the National Archives in Kathmandu (33rd *paṭala* is contained in Folio 156a-166b).
- 43 J. says that *ādiyāga* (= *dautavidhi*) is done to obtain the ritual material (*dravya*, which must be *‘kuṇḍagolaka’*) (J. *ad TA*. xxviii. 41).
- 44 See the hypothesis of A. Sanderson in ‘Purity and power among the Brahmans of Kashmir’ in *The category of the person—Anthropology, philosophy, history*, Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- 45 When the first draft of this article was completed, Navjivan RASTOGI’s *Introduction to the Tantrāloka* (Motilal Banarsidass, 1987) came to my notice. There the author refers to this passage and rightly recognizes *ṣaḍadhvan* as the unifying basis of the *sthānaprakalpa* (chapter Four, III. (f), pp. 191-3).
- 46 I follow here the order of the *TS*. (chapter 5, pp. 35-6), which is more logical than that of the *TA*. (where *varṇa* comes after *karāṇa*). There are five sorts of *parimita-pramātṛ* including the *śūnya-pramātṛ*, which is not used to purify the *vikalpa*, as there is no *vikalpa*, in it (*TA*. v. 16b-17a).

The *śānya-pramāṭṛ* corresponds to *māyā-tattva*, the *buddhi-pramāṭṛ* to *vidyā-tattva*, the *prāṇa-pramāṭṛ* to *puryaṣṭaka* (five *indriyas*, *manas*, *ahaṅkāra*, *buddhi*), the *deha-pramāṭṛ* to the body, and the *bāhya-pramāṭṛ* to external objects (which are the lowest manifestations of Consciousness); though the *buddhi-pramāṭṛ* is often identified with the *buddhi-tattva* and in that case the *prāṇa-pramāṭṛ* is situated higher than it. For different ways of understanding these *pramāṭṛ*, see *Īśvara-pratyabhijñānākārikā*, i. 6. 4, iii. 1. 8, iii. 2. 11-17, and the relevant commentaries of Abhinava.

- 47 By the *kāla-adhvan*, the cycle of respiration is gradually identified with day, month, year etc, and finally with the Jupiter cyclic year (*TA*. vi.63-129).
- 48 ‘*evaṃ viśvādhvasampūrṇaṃ kālavāpāracitritam / deśakālamayasṭandasadma dehaṃ vilokayet // tathā vilokyamāno ’sau viśvāntardevatāmayaḥ / dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca tarpyaś ca tadāviṣṭo vimucyate // ithaṃ ghaṭaṃ paṭaṃ liṅgaṃ sthaṇḍilaṃ pustakaṃ jalam / yad vā kiṃcit kvacit paśyēt tatra tanmayatāṃ vrajet //*’ (*TA*. xii. 6-8)
- 49 At the beginning of the 11th chapter of the *Tantrasāra* (which corresponds to the 13th chapter of the *TA*.), it is said that for some the teachings in chapters 1-12 of the *TA*. are sufficient to obtain liberation, but others must have recourse to the *dikṣā* (p.115).
- 50 This process of interiorization is reflected, it seems to me, in the devaluation of external signs such as fainting etc., which I referred to in the note 41 above. These signs are regarded, by Trilocana and by the author of the passage quoted, as having only secondary importance, compared with the more subtle indications such as ‘desire for liberation’ etc.
- 51 Mme. Brunner remarks on the existence of the same change of interpretation concerning the moment of *śaktipāta*, but between Somaśambhu and Aghoraśiva (*SP*. III. p. viii.). I think this change has taken place long before, it is just that Somaśambhu keeps the older opinion in spite of the mutation of the situation.
- 52 Jayaratha glosses as follows: ‘*Śīve bhaktir eva śaktipāta iti liṅgaliṅginor abhedopacarāt / bhaktir hi nāma asya prāthamikaṃ cihnam / yad uktam “tatraitat prathamam cihnam rudre bhaktiḥ suniścala” (MV. xiv. 8) iti*’ (*TA*. vol. 8, p. 79, 1.9-12).

- 53 J. *ad TA.* xiii. 132.
- 54 Abhinava cites here a passage of the *Brahmayāmala*. Raktā is one of the four *śaktis* of Bhairava Kapāliśa, who is the main deity in the *Brahmayāmala*.
- 55 Perhaps this refers to the technique of transmitting Consciousness directly to the disciple through the senses ('*vṛttim ātmagām / cakṣurāḍau saṅkramayed yatra yatrendriye guruḥ* //' *TA.* xxix. 234), which is a means of *kaula abhiṣeka*.
- 56 J. glosses this: 'by disregarding the difference of *jāti* etc'.
- 57 J. *ad TA.* xiii. 245a. Note that J. does not speak only about the *nirbija-dikṣā*.
- 58 *TA.* xvi. 310-311a says that it is at the moment of the cosmic dissolution (*pralaya*) that he attains union with Śiva.
- 59 As for the *vedha-dikṣā*, see L. Silburn, *La Kuṇḍalini ou l'Énergie des Profondeurs*, Paris, 1983, pp. 107-126.

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