

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Methodological Considerations

Abhinavagupta and the Heart of Śiva

The symbol of the Heart plays a central role in the tantric writings of Abhinavagupta. As the French scholar Lilian Silburn has said about the Heart,

La position des śivaïtes kaśmiriens à l'égard du yoga et de jñāna ne se comprend bien que par rapport aux trois énergies du triangle du coeur (*trikoṇa* et *triśūla*) et dans la perspective des trois voies qui en découlent. Toute la manifestation évolue à partir de ce triangle comme un flot frémissant et pur du Coeur divin et c'est aussi, par le fréuissement de son propre coeur, que l'homme retrouve le centre du *trikoṇa*, en prenant conscience de soi.¹

This succinct statement by one of the eminent scholars of the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir sets forth the theme of this book.² We wish to understand what Abhinavagupta means by the Heart. In the process of unpacking the meanings that are condensed in the symbol of the Heart, we will gain access to the central religious vision of the great Kashmiri teacher.

Although the writings of Abhinavagupta are lengthy and complex, running through them all is a stance on reality that is derived from his own enlightenment experiences and training under his *guru*, Śambhunātha.³ This stance, or approach to reality, is so influential and pervasive in Abhinavagupta's writings that it may be called his central religious vision. It is the Heart which functions as one of the primary and unifying symbols

of this religious vision. By examining the symbol of the Heart, access is gained to a key entry point into this central religious vision.

Abhinavagupta's religious vision is intimately bound up with the symbol of the Heart on three important levels. The first is the reality of the Heart as Śiva, which refers to the ultimacy and transcendence of Śiva in the Heart. The key term here is *anuttara-tattva*, that is, the principle of the Ultimate. The second level involves Abhinavagupta's teachings about the methods and techniques that must be employed in order to approach the Ultimate reality of the Heart and transform it into a living human reality. The most direct and effortless method of realization is known as the *Śāmbhavopāya*.⁴ The third level intimates the nature of the state of realization of the Heart. This process of realization is termed *hṛdayaṅgamibhūta*, which literally means "become something that moves in the Heart," and can be more simply translated as "experiential replication." The state of realization is often called *Bhairavatā*—the condition of Bhairava.⁵ Thus, the overall structure of this study will follow these three 'levels' of the Heart: Ultimate reality, method, and realization.

In the attempt to understand the Heart, our understanding of Abhinavagupta's central religious vision will be enhanced. However, this search for understanding holds both promise and problems. We are liable to misunderstand Abhinavagupta as long as our penetration into his thought is incomplete. Indeed, Abhinavagupta defines error as incomplete knowledge (*apūrṇakhyāti*).⁶ The promise is that Abhinavagupta's thought will so engage us that we will persist in our study. Yet it must be recognized that claims to complete understanding are foolhardy, for deciphering the work of Abhinavagupta, like understanding any great thinker, is an enormous task, and ultimately must be a collective enterprise. Therefore we can engage in an initial foray, an exploratory journey, impelled by the promise of the enormous riches of the profundity of the Shaiva vision of reality.

Can we hope completely to understand Abhinavagupta? We must be fully aware that for every element of his thought we study, many more remain to be discussed before we can claim a true understanding of this great teacher and the tradition from which he stems.

We immediately encounter an important and central cross-cultural perplexity. We have been using the term *understand* in its commonly accepted denotation: to have a thorough technical acquaintance with something. The term may be used in a stronger sense: Abhinavagupta distinguishes between an understanding that is purely intellectual, and one gained from experiential knowledge.⁷ There is an important sense in which to understand the Heart actually requires replicating the journey of return that is the tantric *sādhana*: we must play Śiva's game to its most

serious and hilarious conclusion, which is the unmasking of Śiva within ourselves.

A scholarly study, however, cannot insist on such a radical form of understanding. As a consequence we must here limit the notion of understanding to a form of sympathetic perception through which we attempt to see and feel our way into the still alien universe of tantric *sādhana*. However, this limitation of understanding necessarily obscures the most important meaning of the Heart of Abhinavagupta: that a religious vision is not something simply intellectual, emotional, or imagined, but rather it is a pulsating, powerful experience that completely transforms our ordinary and routinized perceptions of reality.

Nevertheless, a scholarly study can contribute something to the collective task of interpreting and understanding the work of Abhinavagupta. In addition, it may embolden a few readers to the existential task of experiential replication. This emphasis on the importance of the experiential dimension is, of course, not unique to Abhinavagupta. It is a theme that is sounded in perhaps every Indian religious environment as far back as the *Veda* and the Vedic *soma*.⁸ Certainly, Abhinavagupta was entirely committed to the awakening knowledge of *sādhana*.⁹ He taught from a level of complete spiritual awakening with the authority of one who was considered a Śiva incarnate.¹⁰ In the opening verses of what is perhaps his most complex work, the *Parātriṃśikā-vivarāṇa*,¹¹ he clearly states that his purpose in composing the work is the fulfillment of his religious duty to awaken his disciples. As a result, it would constitute a grave error to approach his writings on the tantric *sādhana* as if they were intellectual exercises or an abstract theology rather than symbolic transcriptions of powerful religious experiences. Abhinavagupta was not just an arranger or systematizer of a received tradition, although he was very talented at these tasks. His writings on the tantric *sādhana* hold the vibrant power of radically transformative teachings which are designed to be passed on to disciples so that they too may come to awakening. In this context, Abhinavagupta stands as the enlightened *guru* treating with utmost seriousness and clarity the theoretical bases and essential techniques that bring a person to the highest possible experiential realizations.

Often, various life sketches of Abhinavagupta place great emphasis on his many different teachers.¹² The rigorous and encyclopedic training he received from them undoubtedly accounts for the refined precision and informed character of his writings. Certainly Abhinavagupta's was a universal intellect which encompassed the major disciplines of his time. However, scholars have placed less emphasis on Abhinavagupta's tantric initiation and subsequent awakening at the feet of one teacher: Śrī Śambhunātha. This teacher brought Abhinavagupta to a realization and vision

which transcended the intellect; and in order to understand Abhinavagupta's usage of the symbol of the Heart, this vision is of utmost importance. Abhinavagupta's disquisitions on the Heart must be read as transcriptions into language of the awakening he received from Śambhunātha. They form the living, experiential core of an enlightened teaching about the Tantra. At the same time, Abhinavagupta's precise and informed intellect frames this core in a systematic rendering. It is this impressive accomplishment that makes his writings worthy of sustained scrutiny and investigation.

Overall Structure and Purpose of the Book

The purpose of this book is to examine the symbol of the Heart of Śiva as it is taught in the writings of the tenth-century Kashmiri teacher, Abhinavagupta. As a potent and numinous symbol, the Heart of Śiva draws us to the center of an enormous web of meaning which reflects the religious vision of Abhinavagupta. Abhinavagupta employs the symbol of the Heart as part of a system, school, or method which he termed Kaula, or more generally, and with a wider reference, Tantra. These terms will receive sustained scrutiny later on.¹³ For now, suffice it to say that in order to enter into an examination of the Heart, we must also explore the wider context of the tantric preceptorial line known as the Kaula lineage. It is precisely in those portions of Abhinavagupta's writings that we may term Kaula that we find the Heart appearing most frequently as a symbol for the Ultimate. It is in this lineage that Abhinavagupta claims to have been enlightened.

It is interesting that most descriptions of the Kaula line refer to it as a school devoted almost exclusively to radical spiritual practices and to meditation methods, and with little or no metaphysical or doctrinal speculations of its own.¹⁴ There can be little doubt that this tradition stressed direct experience and "appropriation" (*svīkartavya*) over the more speculative activities of system-building and doctrinal argumentation. Nevertheless, practices as complex and as powerful as those utilized by the Kaulas neither develop nor are applied in a conceptual void. By deciphering the symbol of the Heart and attempting to read the meanings condensed in it, we will gain access to the conceptual matrix that surrounds the practices and methods of the Kaula lineage. In doing so we will encounter one of the earliest, most explicit, and sophisticated theoretical formulations of the processes of Hindu tantric Yoga.

We might call this study an investigation of Abhinavagupta's theology of the Heart. Yet we must exercise caution with the term *theology*. In his study of Śiva as *prakāśa* Alper comments:

I find it clearer . . . to use the phrase 'Śaivite theology' more narrowly to mean the systematic articulation of the Śaivite viewpoint in accordance with standards common to Indian philosophizing in general and the defense of that viewpoint with arguments designed to demonstrate its superiority to various alternatives. Śaivism becomes an object of sustained and critical reflection in that sense at a comparatively late date.¹⁵

It is apparent from this particular usage of the phrase "Śaivite theology" that Alper reserves the term for those portions of Abhinavagupta's opus which we can more generally characterize as philosophical, that is, the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (ĪPv) and the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* (ĪPvv).¹⁶ In these works, doctrinal schemes are systematically expounded and defended in the accepted *darśana* or *śāstra* style.

In this same context Alper also reflects Ninian Smart's observations on the relationship in Indian philosophy between religious experience and metaphysics.¹⁷

I am influenced . . . by the observation of Ninian Smart that metaphysical assertions are often disguised spiritual claims, and that therefore one may not understand a doctrinal scheme without attending to the sometimes complex 'religious activities which give [it] life and point.'¹⁸

Smart puts the matter more directly:

It involves too the assumption that the determination of metaphysics by forms of religious experience and practice occurs that way round and not conversely . . . it would be indeed odd if metaphysics, considered as sets of propositions to be entertained and believed by people, should have the enormous effect of creating out of nothing the powerful religious experiences of both great teachers and ordinary folk.¹⁹

This study does not limit itself to an examination of "Śaivite theology" in the narrow sense that Alper gives to it. If, with Alper, we are convinced that "Abhinava's theology is an organic expression of the Śaiva spirit, *rooted in a precise, specifiable set of religious experiences*,"²⁰ then our concern is with an examination of the "roots" of "Śaivite theology." We are looking for the environments where those religious experiences occurred, insofar as their descriptions can be reconstructed through the texts. There is a sense in which the tantric environments of Abhinavagupta's work are thus logically prior to the theology. Thus our search leads to the pre-theological, practical-experiential contexts which are precisely the tantric, Kaula portions of his writings.

There are references to the Heart and Kaula environments scattered

throughout Abhinavagupta's writings. There is one text, however, that is given over in its entirety to the symbol of the Heart. It is perhaps one of the most important expositions of the inner meanings of the Kaula lineage in the corpus of Abhinavagupta's extant writings. The text is the *Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛitti* (*PTlv*), also known as the *Anuttara-tattva-vimarśinī*. It is a medium length commentary on thirty-six *āgamic* verses which purport to form the last part of the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*.²¹ For the purposes of this study, the *PTlv* forms the primary textual support.²² These *āgamic* verses and Abhinavagupta's commentary on them focus on a particular dimension of religious experience: the attainment of liberation through the experience of the Heart. In discussing *āgama*-s in general terms, the Dutch scholar Jan Gonda states:

Although they do contain what might be called philosophical and theological analyses . . . they do not require systematic interpretation in the light of a traditional philosophical system . . . Their philosophical interest is limited. For their authors the attainment of the highest goal is much more essential than metaphysical speculation.²³

While this statement is generally correct, it is readily apparent, given what has been said above, that *āgamic* texts are exceedingly relevant to an understanding of theological and philosophical environments.

Of course, it is also necessary to consult relevant passages in several of Abhinavagupta's other writings, works by his close disciple and interpreter, Kṣemarāja, as well as other texts of the earlier non-dual Kashmir Shaiva traditions.²⁴ Of Abhinavagupta's writings on the Tantra, his massive and encyclopedic work, the *Tantrāloka*, contains three revealing chapters that are almost exclusively devoted to the Kaula lineage.²⁵ Also relevant are portions of the *Parātrīśikā-vivaraṇa* (*PTv*), the *Tantrasāra* (*TS*), the *Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika* (*MVv*), and the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (*ĪPv*). Brief passages in Kṣemarāja's *Śiva-sūtra-vimarśinī* (*ŚSv*) and *Parā-praveśikā* are also revealing.

The task of translation could be extended indefinitely. The riches of the *TĀ* and the *PTv* are enormous and still await further exploration. For the present, a close examination of the *PTlv* illuminates the most concentrated Heart environment in Abhinavagupta's writings and fixes the bounds of the study within manageable limits. It must be emphasized, however, that this is a study of a symbol, the Heart. While the symbol presents inexhaustible depths of investigation, it also provides the main focus and boundaries of the study. This volume does not purport to present an exhaustive study of the *PTlv*, although an examination of the Heart in fact generates analysis of a great deal of the text. Nor can this be a

complete treatment of the Kaula lineage; though again, in examining the Heart, we open up for study its central conceptual matrix.

On a more general level, the book attempts an interpretation of the functioning within the non-dual Kashmiri Shaiva traditions of the relationship between a religious symbol and the domains of religious practice and religious experience. This task requires that we examine the Heart of Śiva as a symbol of Ultimate reality, while remaining alert to the experiential dimension of the Heart which is attained by a series of powerful methods and practices. This investigation will reveal the central theoretical framework on which the Shaiva religio-mystical praxis is based. While, as we shall see, the tradition presents us with a bewildering mass of details and specificities, many of which remain to be sorted out, the outlines of the underlying theoretical structure that emerge from this mass are of an admirably elegant simplicity—which is very different from saying that they are easy to understand!

The remainder of the first chapter will treat some general methodological considerations drawn from what scholars have to say about symbolism and the study of symbols in the history of religions, and will proceed to examine some of the limitations and difficulties of any study of this nature. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a review of some of the scholarly contributions on the non-dual Kashmiri Shaivas.

In the second chapter, historical analysis will reveal three concentric circles. The first circle situates the non-dual Kashmiri Shaivas in the larger sphere of Indian religiosity. We shall see that this tradition occurs at the intersection of the Tantra and Shaiva traditions. An outline of trends in Shaivism, as they precede the developments in Kashmir, will be followed by the very important tantric components of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. Consequently, this chapter begins by offering some general comments on the nature of the Hindu Tantra, a phenomenon which is rather difficult to circumscribe. We shall then sketch out the specific tantric lineage in question, the Kaula lineage: its literature and the main components of its practices and teachings. The second concentric circle will then detail the little we know about the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva traditions themselves, especially that portion of the tradition that precedes Abhinavagupta. It will be clear that the historical currents that lead up to Abhinavagupta are by no means easy to delineate. The final circle offers an examination of the life and extant works of Abhinavagupta. This chapter also contains references to many of the important terms, doctrines, teachings, and arguments that are necessary to understand the Heart. Of course, one could write an entire book on the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva "philosophy." Our considerations here are necessarily limited by the purpose of understanding the Heart to what we might term the explanatory

framework. In fact, many of these terms and doctrines have been only superficially examined by scholars and pose important interpretive problems of their own: Śiva, *śakti*, consciousness (*saṃvid*), freedom (*svātantrya*), the thirty six *tattva*-s, the three *upāya*-s, *mantra*, and *jīvan-mukti*.

In the third chapter we will examine the symbol of the Heart in India prior to Abhinavagupta. We will look at descriptions of the reality of the Heart as they occur in the *Veda*, in the *Upaniṣad*-s, and in various Yoga texts. We shall then examine the Heart as it occurs in some of the early Shaiva texts of Kashmir.

Chapters 4 through 9 form the main body of the work. These chapters contain a look at the reality of the Heart, the methods that lead to the Heart and the nature of the realization of the Heart. The approach will be primarily conceptual, that is, terminological and textual. Given the perspective in which Śiva is the only reality, many of the terms represent aspects of Śiva's being. Each term does not have a totally different entity as an ultimate referent. The purpose of the variety of terms seems to be to emphasize specific aspects, and to allow for different nuances, different moments of the experience of Śiva, of the ways in which Śiva comes to 'recognize' himself, on the multi-levelled journey of Śiva's return to himself. All of these terms can be seen as being interrelated in an enormous web. They are all linked, like chain in chain mail.²⁶ While it is tempting to try to explicate all possible links between the terms, the task would be infinite: every new explication uncovers new links which must themselves be explicated. We shall have to be content with tracing a few of the major lines of relationship between the terms, to place them in their proper context, and to indicate the general outlines of the possible interrelationships. This study will look in depth at these areas of the 'web': in Chapter 4, we will consider the term *hṛdaya*, Heart, and the related term *anuttara*, Ultimate, including the prevalence of notions about light, *prakāśa*, and the self-referential nature of consciousness, *vimarśa*, as well as the Heart as 'center', *madhya*. In Chapter 5, we turn to the term *kula*, 'group', and the related ideas about triangularity, sexuality, and the divine pair, *Śiva-śakti samghaṭṭa*. In Chapter 6, we examine the notion of *spanda*, the concept of *visarga*, 'emission', and ideas concerning 'vibration', 'sounding', and expansion and contraction. In Chapter 7, a series of related notions about the Heart will be scrutinized. These might be termed natural metaphors for the Heart: the term *khecari*, 'moving-in-the-void', and images of the Heart as a sky, abyss, and ocean, the *soma*-moon connection along with the ideas about fire and sun, and the Heart as lotus, *padma*. In Chapter 8, we will focus on the Heart as *mantra*, especially the central *mantra SAUḤ*. The examination of the notions of *visarga* and *mantra* will lead us to the methods that produce enlightenment by relying not

on individual effort, but rather on the awakening and channelling of the power of consciousness itself. Meditation, the tool par excellence, is shown not to involve a forcible control over the mind, but an immersion, a sinking, a repose, which allows the subtle currents already operative in the mind to channel it in the direction of the *anuttara*. Finally, in Chapter 9 we will conclude with a consideration of the Heart as unitive realization, the goal of the tantric practitioner, including a look at the notions of the levels of bliss, the connection to *prāṇa*, and the ultimate experience of the universal bliss, *jagadānanda*. We will conclude with a brief look at the redefinition of the nature of enlightenment proposed by the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas and, more especially, by Abhinavagupta. The key element of this redefinition is that the strictly inward nature of ultimate enlightenment has appended to it an open-eyed state where every object is seen as ultimately formed of consciousness itself. This unitive vision of outward reality erases the polarities between inner and outer, between life and death. It also allows the *jīvanmukta* to become an embodied, powerful *siddha*, who possesses not just an ultimate vision, but is empowered by that vision to act and create as Śiva himself.²⁷ This new definition of the goal of spiritual life becomes one of the hallmarks of the later tantric tradition.²⁸

Approaches to a Symbol: Symbol and Religious Vision

The symbol of the Heart is a key entry point into the “pretheological” portions of Abhinavagupta’s writings. We should look briefly at the notion of a symbol, and what we understand to be the process of interpretation of a symbol.

There is little doubt that much of what we do in religious studies can be subsumed under the category of symbolic analysis. Ninian Smart tells us, “We can see that an essential ingredient of the modern study of religion is ‘symbolic analysis’.”²⁹ Similarly, Mircea Eliade comments, “One could say then, that all research undertaken on a religious subject implies the study of religious symbolism.”³⁰

Whether it be interpreting a text, a ritual, a myth, a sacred dance, or a piece of sculpture, we are involved in an attempt to derive meanings from various sorts of symbols. Scholars argue about exactly what is involved in this process of interpretation and what the methods involved in such interpretation should be. In spelling out the approach for this study, it is appropriate at this point to look at some of the statements scholars have made on the nature of symbols and their interpretation.

A good place to begin is with Suzanne Langer’s definition of a symbol in her important study, *Philosophy in a New Key*:

Symbols are not proxy for their objects, but are vehicles for the conception of objects. In talking about things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves; and it is the conceptions, not the things, that symbols directly mean.³¹ Wherever a symbol operates, there is a meaning; and conversely different classes of experience—say, reason, intuition, appreciation correspond to different types of symbolic mediation.³²

Langer distinguishes three types of symbols: discursive symbols, presentational symbols and artistic symbols. Discursive symbols are used in spoken and written language and as such have a vocabulary, a syntax, and the possibility of translation of one discursive symbol in terms of others. Presentational symbols, such as pictures, are wordless “presentations” of meaning. They are nondiscursive and untranslatable. A presentational symbol cannot be defined within its own system. It cannot directly convey generalities.³³

Finally, Langer tells us:

An artistic symbol—which may be a product of human craftsmanship, or (on a purely personal level) something in nature seen as a ‘significant form’—has more than discursive and presentational meaning: its form as such, as a sensory phenomenon, has what I have called ‘implicit’ meaning, like rite and myth, but of a more catholic sort. It has what L. A. Reid called ‘tertiary subject matter,’ beyond the reach of ‘primary imagination’ and even the ‘secondary imagination’ that sees metaphorically. ‘Tertiary subject-matter’ is subject-matter imaginatively experienced *in* the work of art . . . , something which cannot be apprehended apart from the work, though theoretically distinguishable from its expressiveness.³⁴

Langer’s is, of course, just one of many approaches to the nature of symbols. However, in view of her general analysis of symbols, we might ask about the nature of the specific religious symbol involved in this study, the Heart. Where does it fit into this analysis? Certainly the Heart, as a word that occurs in a text, is a discursive symbol. It is also, quite clearly, more than just a discursive symbol. We can see this when we ask: what is the meaning of the Heart, in what sense is it a ‘vehicle’? In answering this question, we become aware of the many levels of meaning that are conveyed by the religious symbol. It is not easy to say directly what the religious symbol means, because we sense in it a density, a compression of meaning, which is precisely what contributes to its power. The Heart as it appears in the Shaiva texts is surely a more “powerful” discursive symbol than the word *table*, which we encounter in ordinary conversation. As with the artistic symbol, we sense in it deeper levels of meaning, some of which may be translated into other discursive symbols. Much of the power of

the religious symbol seems to resonate nondiscursively and untranslatably in the numinosity of the symbol. What other insights does modern scholarship offer?

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz clearly relies on Langer's notion of a symbol in his discussions of culture.³⁵ Geertz defines culture in terms of symbolism.

The term culture denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life.³⁶

Geertz continues:

Sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood—and their world view—the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order.³⁷

Geertz then characterizes “systems or complexes of symbols” as “extrinsic sources of information” because

they lie outside the boundaries of the individual organism as such in that intersubjective world of common understandings into which all human individuals are born . . .³⁸

and because “. . . they provide a blueprint or template in terms of which processes external to themselves can be given a definite form.”³⁹ Geertz elucidates the important distinction between the sense in which symbols are models *for* and models *of*:

Unlike genes, and other non-symbolic information sources, which are only models *for*, not models *of*, culture patterns (i.e. systems or complexes of symbols) have an intrinsic double aspect: they give meaning, i.e., objective conceptual form, to social and psychological reality both by shaping themselves to it and by shaping it to themselves.⁴⁰

This study will show that the Heart functions clearly as both a model of Ultimate reality and a model for the attainment of that Ultimate reality.

Larson has pointed out that for the specific case of the interpretation of religious symbols, Geertz's discussion is made more relevant by Ricoeur. As Larson puts it,

Paul Ricoeur supplements Geertz's discussion when he points out . . . that "symbols" (especially religious symbols) tend always to have a "double intentionality," that is to say, a "first level" obvious and literal signification as well as a "second level" indirect and oblique signification which is "opaque," "analogical," and characterized by an "inexhaustible depth." The interpretation of a symbol or complex of symbols is, thus, never simply an exercise in translation, difficult as that is. Interpretation, rather, is an attempt to understand and give expression to the "transparency of an enigma" which any symbol or symbol-complex represents.⁴¹

Given this "double intentionality" of religious symbols, the process of interpretation is a complex one. What is most interesting to evoke is the second level of the symbol, its indirect and oblique signification. This is what gives the religious meaning its power and efficacy. Of course, this oblique level presents the greatest difficulties of interpretation.

What of Abhinavagupta's own analysis of meaning in poetic language? Agreeing with Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta accepts three levels of meaning.⁴² He tells us that a word may have three levels of signification:

1. *abhidhā*—conventional meaning
2. *lakṣaṇā*—secondary meaning
3. *vyañjanā*—suggestive meaning or resonance.

The term *hṛdaya*, the Heart, is, using Langer's terminology, a discursive symbol. In its conventional and secondary meanings, *hṛdaya* refers to our conceptions of the physical organ and essence respectively. These meanings correspond to Ricoeur's first level of signification. The second level, then, corresponds to the notion of resonance. It is this resonance—opaque, analogical, and of inexhaustible depth—that constitutes the power and potency of the religious symbol.⁴³ In addition, this resonance of some religious symbols seems to be the way in which individual symbols are able to contain, through 'compression' or 'condensation', the entire religious teaching of the environment in which they are revered. This may be termed the 'totalizing', or perhaps following Geertz, the 'synthesizing' function of the symbol. In this function, the religious symbol, though only one word of the larger language of which it is a member, has the peculiar property of being linked to, and in some sense containing within it, every other word of the language.

The historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, has written extensively on the process of interpretation of religious symbols. Several recent studies underscore the importance of the Indian tradition, especially of Tantrism in understanding Eliade's vision. In his study on Eliade, Guilford Dudley notes:

Thomas Altizer has argued that Eliade's archaic ontology remains essentially Indian in its orientation. Specifically Altizer suggests that the principle of unity behind the sacred rests on a "pre-temporal and pre-cosmic totality" to which the "coincidentia oppositorum" points in its Hindu, and specifically Tantric form.⁴⁴

In studying Abhinavagupta we are entering a peculiarly "Eliadean" universe, in which Eliade's insights and interpretations seem peculiarly apt and well suited.

Eliade summarizes his position on religious symbolism by suggesting that

religious symbols are capable of revealing a modality of the real or a structure of the World that is not evident on the level of immediate experience An essential characteristic of religious symbolism is its multivalence, its capacity to express simultaneously a number of meanings whose continuity is not evident on the plane of immediate experience This capacity of religious symbolism to reveal a multitude of structurally coherent meanings has an important consequence. The symbol is thus able to reveal a perspective in which heterogeneous realities are susceptible of articulation into a whole or even into a "system".⁴⁵

In another important study Eliade emphasizes that various symbols come to form an "autonomous system";⁴⁶ they ". . . make up a symbolic system which in a sense pre-existed them all. We are therefore . . . justified in speaking of a 'logic of symbols'."⁴⁷ He continues, "From this point of view symbolism appears to be a 'language' understood by all members of a community and meaningless to outsiders."⁴⁸

Finally, Eliade alerts us to a process which he terms the "imperialism" of certain symbols:

The "imperialism" of the victorious religious forms is also explainable by this tendency of every hierophany or theophany to become *everything*—that is, to sum up in itself all manifestations of the holy, to incorporate all the immense morphology of the sacred.⁴⁹

In our study of the Heart we will watch the unfolding of the "system of meaning" and "language" of the symbol. These scholarly insights and observations can help us, in the remaining chapters of this study, to explore the symbol of the Heart.

Limitations and Difficulties

Many of this study's limitations in scope have already been alluded to. Beyond the sheer richness of the tradition there are various limitations

and difficulties that face any investigator of these materials, and it may be useful to call attention to some of these. Perhaps the most important difficulty, for which there is no easy solution, is that the Kaula, and more generally the tantric aspects of Abhinavagupta's thought, form an undeniably esoteric tradition. This attribute of esotericism means more than that the teachings are difficult, and even at times obscure, which sometimes they are. In order to interpret the tradition properly, and not be taken in by some misleading surface meaning which has been deliberately introduced to exclude meddling souls, ideally one would have to be initiated into the tradition. However, even if it were possible to receive such an initiation, one could not really be certain that the meanings and interpretations derived from the initiation would correspond to the tradition as it was in the tenth century.

Moreover, as we shall see, the Kaula teachings are not so much a philosophy as they are a method for the attainment of enlightenment experiences. While one might wish to garner from initiation some insights to assist in deciphering difficult points of doctrine and obscure technical terms, in fact, the esotericism of the tradition does not actually lie so much with doctrine. Instead, the tradition's esoteric nature relates to its discussion and description of nonordinary states of reality. Thus it is not appropriate to approach Abhinavagupta's tantric formulations as one would approach a rational system. Rather, in approaching the tradition, we will encounter an intuitional and symbolic method that is the direct outgrowth of the phenomenology of tantric meditation.

This study's contention is that it is only through symbols that Abhinavagupta is able to convey in language the content of the enlightenment experiences. Thus the tradition is esoteric in large measure because ultimately it is necessary to undergo the process of experiential replication before the symbols will speak to us completely. Abhinavagupta makes this precise point in stating that only when the lotus of the Heart has been opened by the "descent of energy" will the truth be revealed.⁵⁰ Not even the most acute reasoning powers in the world could produce this revelation. Once the Heart has been "opened," continues Abhinavagupta, discursive thought can penetrate ever more closely to the Ultimate.⁵¹

In addition to this rather formidable obstacle which interpreters of non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism as well as of other meditation traditions must face, we must deal with the simple fact that Abhinavagupta, by his own admission, does not tell all. At several points in his texts there is the frustrating statement that the subject matter under discussion is highly secret, and that too much has already been said. The discussion of that topic then breaks off.⁵² In the *TĀ*, while discussing a controversial theory about purity, Abhinavagupta states that ancient enlightened sages kept

it secret in order not to perturb the established order of the world.⁵³ Statements of this kind lead to fruitless, yet tantalizing, speculation as to how many secrets were not recorded in the texts and were imparted only orally to select disciples.

The great fluidity of the teaching is apparent in the texts. The teachings of the Kaula current form an inner teaching in relation to the more formally philosophical outer teaching of, for example, the *ĪPv* and *ĪPvv*, where the concern is not so much the enlightenment of disciples as the argumentation of a Shaiva viewpoint vis-à-vis other Indian *darśana*-s. As a consequence, in more tantric materials, there is not so much sustained and rigorous argumentation as there is authoritative exposition which allows itself a kind of descriptive adaptability. The point is to enlighten disciples, and different and apparently contradictory versions of the same teachings do occur. Abhinavagupta learned well from the Buddhists' notions of "excellence in the choice of means"⁵⁴ and the "emptiness" or "instrumental" character of language. In the Kaula tradition there is a basic tendency to be suspicious of language. Conventional language is, after all, one of the building blocks of bondage. *Vikalpa* (verbalization) constitutes by definition the wavering, polarized state of the bound and finite person disenfranchised and separated from his powerful source. Language, however, can also be used to free a person from bondage. In this usage, language is primarily an explanatory inducement towards the liberating experience. Perhaps even more importantly, it constitutes part of the practice, in the form of "unconventional"⁵⁵ mantric language, which leads to the *avikalpa* transcendence of both duality and language itself, and involves the entrance into silence. Insofar as all philosophical structures and speculative systems are constructions of a dual, descriptive language, they must be abandoned for the *siddha* to dwell in the immediate perception of non-dual reality.

All of this is to say that Abhinavagupta is a master in his use of language. In fact, he does not despise the intellect, and his powers of argumentation are impressive. Nevertheless, he often refers to consciousness as the "shadow of one's own hat." The more we try to step on the shadow by moving towards it, the more it eludes us.⁵⁶ So too, ultimate reality cannot be circumscribed in words. It is a reality that is prior to all descriptions and to all arguments.

In addition to these rather formidable difficulties inherent in interpreting the tradition itself, there are several other obstacles. These have more to do with the current lack of accessories and aids to the study of these traditions. Many of the primary texts of the tradition have been published in Sanskrit, but these editions have not been critically edited.⁵⁷ Consequently, these Sanskrit texts are full of doubtful readings, mistakes,

and transcription errors. Where other manuscripts of the same texts are available, it is possible for the scholar to attempt to collate a version of the text. Such, for example, has been one of the great contributions of Raniero Gnoli, who has published some eight hundred emendations to the published edition of the *PTv*, a text of some three hundred pages.⁵⁸ Unfortunately, this task has not been accomplished for the major works of Abhinavagupta, much less for the other works in the tradition. Thus, the scholar must approach these published editions with a careful eye toward possible textual errors. Until the task of collecting as many manuscripts of these texts as possible and producing from them carefully and critically edited versions is carried out, large areas of uncertainty will remain with respect to the reading of these texts.

In addition, many of the crucial texts of the tradition are lost. Abhinavagupta refers to various *āgama*-s which are apparently no longer extant. Moreover, many of the texts of the tradition, including approximately half of Abhinavagupta's writings, apparently have not survived. This inestimable loss must be kept in mind, especially when making overall assessments of the nature of the tradition.

In the light of this problem, it is scarcely surprising that secondary literature on the tradition is scarce. The next section of the study will discuss the few excellent works that are available. Even among these, however, we find a dearth of introductory surveys, handbooks, or concordances of terms, and there are few attempts at a kind of overarching theoretical clarification. The bulk of the studies produced until now have been, for the most part, advanced studies of specific texts.⁵⁹

This state of scholarship should not really be surprising. The non-dual Kashmir Shaiva traditions represent the intersection of Shaivism and Tantrism.⁶⁰ Both the history and theoretical clarification of Shaivism, as well as of Tantrism, remain to be seriously addressed. There are great lacunae in our knowledge even of the historical precedents to the Shaiva traditions of Kashmir themselves. We know very little about what happened in Kashmir from the second to the ninth centuries prior to Vasugupta and the *Śiva-sūtra*-s. These are some of the preconditions that limit and indeed mold scholarship on this tradition.

Problem of "Schools" of Kashmir Shaivism

In the notes to his penetrating article on Śiva, Alper suggests that

there has been an unfortunate looseness in discussion of "schools," "sects," "traditions," and "movements" of Kāśmīrī Śaivism. All that is really clear is

that there were a series of overlapping preceptorial lines, and a plentitude of spiritual techniques available to each teacher. The exact social and ideological referent of terms such as *pratyabhijñā*, *spanda*, *Āgama*, *krama*, and *kula*, remains to be worked out, as does the systematic relationship between these groups.⁶¹

This important and insightful comment serves to balance a somewhat premature tendency by scholars to speak of the "schools" or "systems" of Kashmiri Shaivism. The distinctions and dividing lines between the different Shaivite groups simply were not hard and fast.⁶² For example, one has merely to examine the *TĀ* to see that Abhinavagupta freely intermixes doctrines drawn from the Krama and the Kula lineages. There seems to have been only limited adversarial argumentation between these groups, and initiates into one tradition apparently often complemented their practices with techniques drawn from other groups. Natural groupings probably occurred simply as a result of adherence to one or another teacher and his lineage. Yet the case of Abhinavagupta is particularly interesting, for he participated in one way or another in all of these Shaivite groups. Consequently, scholars of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism often have great difficulty in specifying what the particular doctrinal and practical differences might be between a text that avows its allegiance to the Krama lineage and one which declares itself as belonging to the Kaula tradition.⁶³

A review of the history of the tradition shows that a Spanda group occurs as well as a Pratyabhijñā group; and we learn that Abhinavagupta was taught Kula, Krama, Mata, and Trika *darśana*. The lines of demarcation that exist between these groups are only very slowly emerging now. Alper's comment is important to save us from too rigidly concretizing these groups. While not identical, the groups bear a strong family resemblance; in many cases, the differences seem to rest on rather minor points of doctrinal emphasis or even on the preference for specific technical terms or ritual practices not favored by one of the other groups.

Throughout this book the expression *non-dual Kashmir Shaivism* has been used to denote the non-dual traditions of tantric Shaivism in Kashmir. The older designation, *Kashmir Shaivism*, plain and simple is, however, deeply problematic. It was apparently first coined as the title of J. C. Chatterji's small, pioneering monograph which appeared in 1914.⁶⁴ Since that time the phrase has been almost universally employed by scholars as if there were accepted agreement as to its meaning. Unfortunately, the expression *Kashmir Shaivism* is in fact highly ambiguous and imprecise, as has been recently pointed out by Sanderson.⁶⁵ The expression is ambiguous in at least two senses: first, there were several varieties of Shaivism in Kashmir which were deeply divided, both doctrinally and

ritually. Secondly, the teachings of Shaivism as propounded in Kashmir are not exclusive to that region. Especially, varieties of dualistic Shaivism are in no way exclusive to Kashmir. Sanderson shows that there were at least three major traditions of Shaivism in Kashmir: (1) a non-dualistic tantric tradition that includes the various lineages of the Trika, Krama and, later, the Kaula; (2) a dualistic and highly conservative tradition of the Shaiva Siddhānta; and (3) a cult of the worship of Svachchandabhairava that fell somewhere in between the two other traditions. Of these three it is the first which has been generally and imprecisely referred to as Kashmir Shaivism. The problem with abandoning this expression centers on what to substitute in its place. Sanderson refers to the Tantric Shaivism of Kashmir.⁶⁶ Padoux explains the term as follows:

the non-dualist forms of Shaivism that flourished approximately between the ninth and thirteenth centuries in Kashmir and other parts of North India, but also elsewhere.⁶⁷

Alper comments:

The older, a complex congeries of movements, was centered in Kashmir. It should be noted, however, that none of the movements prominent in Kashmir called themselves, nor should they be called "Kashmir Shaivism." Systematic and philosophical reflection on the *Śaivāgamas* was highly advanced within the Shaiva traditions associated with Kashmir.⁶⁸

From these statements, it can be seen that there remain a number of problems to be worked out before a single, convenient term for the tradition is evolved by scholars. For the present the expression non-dual Kashmir Shaivism has been chosen. While it is slightly awkward, it does have the virtue of being precise in terms of the problems we have just discussed.

Brief Review of Scholarship on Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir

K. C. Pandey, in the introduction to his massive and indispensable book on Abhinavagupta, describes the difficulties he faced as a young research scholar in Kashmir in the 1930s attempting to gain access to the manuscripts of the main texts of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. He recounts how the Kashmir government denied his requests to have access to the two main libraries where the bulk of the extant manuscripts of Abhinavagupta's works are kept. At the suggestion of his brother, Pandey looked for copies of the manuscripts in private houses in Kashmir and was successful in securing the materials he needed for his study.

This is an interesting note on the difficult beginnings of modern scholarship on this tradition—all the more so because it is due to the same Research Department of the Government of Kashmir that most scholars now have access to the majority of the texts of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. Perhaps the most significant event in Kashmir Shaiva scholarship, and certainly the event that has made the rest of modern scholarship on these traditions truly possible, has been the publication (now numbering some eighty-seven volumes) beginning in the early part of the century of the *Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies (KSTS)*.⁶⁹ Here the scholar can find reprinted all of the important texts of the early Kashmir Shaiva tradition: *Śiva-sūtra-s* with various commentaries, the *Spanda-kārikā-s* with commentaries, as well as editions of the major religious-philosophical texts by Abhinavagupta (but not, interestingly, any of his works on aesthetics).⁷⁰

Unfortunately, in many cases these texts appear not to have been critically edited. Often it seems that the printed text is based upon a single manuscript. Where several manuscripts are in existence, some variant readings are noted, but no systematic effort at compiling an error-free edition appears to have been made. As a result, the reading of these complex Sanskrit texts is made even more difficult by the constant suspicion that what appears to be a particularly obscure passage is in fact a misreading or a reproduction of a scribal error.

It is disturbing to realize the real neglect under which both the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition and Abhinavagupta have lain for many centuries. Perhaps the difficulty in gaining access to the texts may account for it. Perhaps, as an esoteric tradition, it was kept barely alive by a secretive oral tradition that jealously guarded its knowledge. No doubt Abhinavagupta's fame as an aesthetician and literary critic has tended to overshadow his contributions as a Shaiva mystic and philosopher. There can be little question that the tantric nature of the tradition caused it to be neglected in favor of more puritanical and publicly acceptable formulations of Hindu spirituality, such as those found in the Advaita Vedānta.

Even today, after some fifty years of research by a handful of excellent scholars both in India and in the West, Abhinavagupta's importance is only beginning to be recognized. A figure who is perhaps second in importance and influence only to the great Śāṅkarācārya is barely mentioned in the standard surveys of Indian thought.

However, there have been three important foci of scholarship on the tradition that have been publishing their results during the last half-century. Before we turn to these three groups we should mention some of the earliest studies on the Shaivas of Kashmir.

Buhler, in his "Detailed Report of a Tour in Search of Sanskrit MSS"

(1877), gives a rather sketchy and faulty account of the Kashmir Shaiva tradition.⁷¹ Perhaps the earliest edition of a work by Abhinavagupta is of his *Locana* on Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, which was published in Bombay in 1890 by Durgaprasad Shastri, and which contains a list of other works by Abhinavagupta in the preface.⁷²

The earliest known western study of a Kashmir Shaiva text is L. D. Barnett's edition and translation of Abhinavagupta's *Paramārtha-sāra*, which appeared in 1910. Despite the errors that naturally attend upon a work which was carried out in an almost complete scholarly vacuum, it is a still-useful English rendering of this short summary text by Abhinavagupta. In fact, it was not until Lilian Silburn published her translation of the text into French that any other scholar seriously considered this work.⁷³

Another early, though still useful, study is J. C. Chatterji's *Kashmir Shaivism* (1914). Chatterji's book is divided into two sections. In the first, he attempts to set forth some historical notes and speculations about the history and dates of the tradition. In the second section he presents the theory of the thirty-six *tattva*-s. He gives this second section the misleading title, "The Main Doctrines of the System."⁷⁴ The choice of words here not only implies that there is *one system* under consideration here, but that the theory of the thirty-six *tattva*-s is its main teaching.⁷⁵ In the first section of the book Chatterji propounds an early version of a theory about the *āgamic* origins of the Trika which has proved confusing to many scholars.⁷⁶

In the following pages important studies are mentioned that have been employed in the preparation of this book. This section by no means claims to be an exhaustive bibliographical reference, for which the reader is referred to the *Handbook of Kashmir Shaivism*, which is forthcoming in this same series.⁷⁷

In the last half century there have evolved essentially three foci of research on the tradition: India, France, and Italy. In India there are the activities of the pandits of the Research Department of the Kashmir government. Also of note is the most authentic modern representative of the tradition in Kashmir, Brahmachari Lakṣman Joo, who has inspired many students, including some westerners, to look into the tradition. Silburn lists some of Lakṣman Joo's publications that, unfortunately, are difficult to locate.⁷⁸ In addition, there is K. C. Pandey's monumental study, *Abhinavagupta*. Pandey also produced a translation of the *ĪPv*, which is helpful for gaining access to this important text. Pandey additionally published several important articles and a book, entitled *Indian Aesthetics*, which deals in part with that aspect of Abhinavagupta's thought. Another early study of the tradition is contained in S. K. Das' *Śakti or Divine Power*, the second chapter of which contains a good summary of the non-dual

Kashmiri Shaiva doctrines. Navjivan Rastogi, a student of Pandey's, has produced a study of the Krama lineage which attempts an historical reconstruction of an almost lost lineage. Rastogi has also written articles on the Pratyabhijñā, on the concept of Śiva, and on the concept of Kālī. Perhaps his most important contribution so far has been his work, with R. C. Dwivedi, in the republication of the Sanskrit text of the *TĀ* which includes a very detailed introduction as well as a number of very useful appendices.⁷⁹ R. K. Kaw and L. N. Sharma have produced interesting books focussing mainly on aspects of the Pratyabhijñā philosophy. Recently, Jaideva Singh has produced four translations which will be especially useful in introducing the general reader to the primary texts of the tradition: *Śiva-sūtra-s* (with Kṣemarāja's *Vimarśinī*), *Spanda-Kārikā-s* (with the *Spanda-nirṇaya* of Kṣemarāja), *Vijñāna-bhairava*, and the *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayaṃ* of Kṣemarāja.⁸⁰ Both Singh and Sharma mention the aid they received in their work from the great scholar Gopinath Kaviraj, whose *Aspects of Indian Thought* contains much that is of interest to the scholar of non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism.⁸¹ J. Rudrappa has written an introductory survey, entitled *Kashmir Shaivism*, as well as several articles. Also worth mention is Jadunath Sinha's book, *Schools of Shaivism*, which has a chapter entitled *The Pratyabhijñā School of Śaivism*. While this work contains much useful material, it must be handled with caution, due to Sinha's rather bewildering and uncritical juxtaposition of material drawn from widely different texts of the tradition. The great Sanskrit scholar V. Raghavan has published *Abhinavagupta and His Works*. He has also edited and published the *Paryanta-pañcāśikā* of Abhinavagupta, a translation of which forms the third chapter of Pandey's *Abhinavagupta*.⁸²

In France, there are two scholars who have devoted decades of study and research to the tradition: Lilian Silburn and her former student, André Padoux. Silburn has published nine books over a quarter of a century. Already mentioned is her translation of the *Paramārthasāra* (1957). In 1959 she published a translation of the *Vātūlanātha Sūtra*, followed by translations of the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (1961), the *Stavacintāmaṇi* (1964), *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta* (1964), a translation of the *Mahārthamañjarī* (1968), *Hymnes aux Kālī* (1975), and a translation the *Śivasūtra et Vimarśinī de Kṣemarāja*. Recently she published *La Kuṇḍalinī ou L'énergie des profondeurs* (1986), a work that examines this notion in considerable detail.

These publications, all done with a strict attention to the Sanskrit and accompanied by long introductions and detailed notes, represent a wealth of information on the tradition. Silburn studied for many years with Brahmachari Lakṣman Joo. Silburn's writings on the practices and experiences of mysticism in the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir strike one as being exceedingly accurate, and as imbued with the tone of the tradition itself.

Her former student, André Padoux, has published two books, *Recherches sur la Symbolique et L'Énergie de la Parole dans Certains Textes Tantriques* (1963) and *La "Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtti" de Abhinavagupta* (1975). His first book, *Recherches*, is an encyclopedic work. It is perhaps the first sustained conceptual study of the tradition that has been produced. It stands as one of the first systematic and in-depth treatments of the notion of the supreme Word, *parā vāk*. Padoux covers the subject in such depth that he also gives full vent to the wealth of variety and detail contained in the philosophical and cosmological structures of the tradition. It is a book that combines thorough scholarship with a lively and active sympathy for the material.

In fact, *Recherches* remains not just a pioneering study of the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir but also stands as an important contribution to the larger field of tantric studies, and, as such, deserves to be much more widely read, studied, and emulated.⁸³ Padoux's second book is a first translation into French of the *PTlv* and contains a series of useful notes and explanations that are indispensable to any student of that text. Padoux has also published a number of important articles on *mantraśāstra*.

In Italy, Raniero Gnoli has made important contributions to the study of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism. Gnoli has brought to bear his considerable skills as a Sanskritist, gained as a student of Giuseppe Tucci, on several of the most difficult of Abhinavagupta's works. Perhaps his greatest achievement has been his complete translation into Italian of the *Tantrāloka* (1972), which thus opens up for others this longest and most important of Abhinavagupta's writings. Gnoli has also published complete translations of the *Tantrasāra* (1960), the *PTlv* (1965), and, in his *Testi dello Scivaismo*, translations of the *Pāśupatasūtra*-s, the *Śiva-sūtra*-s, and the *Spandakārikā*-s with Kallaṭa's commentary. His latest contribution has been to publish a translation and critical edition of the *PTv*, a difficult and seminal text by Abhinavagupta. In addition, he has presented translations of about half of the *MVT*, which is considered by Abhinavagupta to be the most important and authoritative revealed text. He has also published translations from the *Śiva-dṛṣṭi* of Somānanda, and selections from the *Abhinavabhāratī*, as well as numerous other important articles. As a Sanskritist, Gnoli's primary concern has been to attempt to correct and edit texts by gathering several manuscripts and checking variant readings. Thus, the present study of the *PTlv* has been aided by Gnoli's corrections and emendations of the text published as an appendix to his Italian translation. Gnoli has been less willing than Silburn or Padoux to enter into the sustained interpretive process of the tradition, although when he does so, as for example in his article "Alcune Technique Yoga nelle Scuole Śaiva" (1956),⁸⁴ he is highly insightful. His forte seems to be to allow the

texts to speak for themselves and to allow readers their own interpretation. Gnoli favors the view that translation *is* interpretation and has seen his main task to be there.⁸⁵

A student of Gnoli's, Raffaele Torella, has recently published a long critique of Padoux's translation of the *PTlv*. His main criticism is that Padoux has not sufficiently realized the corrupt nature of the published edition of the text, and as a result, his translation has suffered. Torella points out a number of difficult passages and presents both Padoux's "mistakes" and his own suggested readings. While the tone of Torella's "correction" of Padoux is perhaps overly strong, he does clear up several very difficult passages. Torella has promised a critical edition of this important text, and this would be welcome as a much-needed aid to further studies of the *PTlv*.⁸⁶

In addition to these three foci of intense research on non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism, which even in the last twenty years have opened up the field to other scholars in a way that was hardly possible before, we may also note important studies by several other scholars.

Alexis Sanderson is at present the most profound investigator of the meaning and historical relationships between the various Shaiva lineages in Kashmir. In a few compact and brilliant articles he has clarified a number of historical and interpretive questions that have long puzzled scholars. His article on the Trika lineage analyzes the various historical strata referred to by this term, which only in its latest meaning refers to Abhinavagupta's syncretism or synthesis of many different lineages into a "system."⁸⁷ Mark Dyczkowski's book *The Doctrine of Vibration* provides us with a detailed analysis of the Spanda branch of the tradition.⁸⁸

Larson has published two excellent articles on Abhinavagupta in which he makes an appeal for the necessity for sustained interpretation and inquiry into the meaning of the tradition. Alper has published an important article in which he pleads for sustained and thoroughgoing textual scrutiny and analysis. Masson and Patwardhan's *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics* presents the reader with many of the most crucial passages from several of Abhinavagupta's works on aesthetics. The great German scholar Erich Frauwallner provides an introduction to the *Pratyabhijñā* in his *Aus der Philosophie der Śivaitischen Systeme*. Another excellent study in German is Bettina Baumer's "Die Unvermitteltheit der Hochsten Erfahrung bei Abhinavagupta." In France, Helene Brunner has published a summary-translation of the *Netra-tantra*, one of the most important *āgama-s* of the Kashmir Shaiva tradition.

The intent here has been to mention the important centers of non-dual Kashmir Shaiva research that have been slowly making it possible for other scholars to gain a better and more comprehensive picture of the

tradition. While there are a substantial number of works, much research remains to be done. Critical editions and translations need to be prepared; but beyond that, the material must be studied in order that it yield its meaning and enter its rightful place in the larger scheme of Indian religious history.