

How public was Śaivism?

Alexis Sanderson

Introduction

The study of Śaivism in its many forms is certainly one of the areas within Indology that invites and benefits from a sociological perspective. However, in its infancy the subject suffered from the myopia that has hampered progress in many other areas in the study of Indian religion. I refer to the tendency to read texts with insufficient attention to their human context, avoiding questions that should be at the forefront of any attempt to understand their meaning, questions such as: What can the body of prescription and interpretation that make up this text or group of texts tell us about the position and aspirations of the authors and their audiences in the larger pattern of Indian society at that time? How far were these aspirations realised? How widespread were the practices that they prescribe? What impact did these forms of religion have on the adherents of other traditions? How were these traditions established and propagated? To what extent did they engage with and influence religion in the public and civic domains? What do these texts tell us about how the various groups that produced them saw each other?

It is easy to understand why such questions tended to be overlooked. The principal reason is that the texts do not foreground these issues, since awareness of them could be taken for granted when the texts were composed. Though this unstated lived context was a large part of the texts' meaning, the perception of this fact was further hindered, if not completely blocked, by the tendency of scholars to limit their interest to a single tradition and often to one strand of one tradition in one region of the Indian subcontinent. We had specialists of what was called the Śaivism of South India or the Śaivism of Kashmir, and their interest tended to be focused on

ritual or devotion in the former case and on esoteric mysticism or philosophy in the latter. There was little consciousness of the need to question the integrity of such disciplinary and regional divisions, to seek a larger picture of the historical processes that led to the two clusters of learned Śaiva literature and practice stranded in modern times at opposite ends of the subcontinent; and this hindered the development of a sociological perspective, because it was largely when one looked at the nature of the coexistence of these traditions and their views of each other that such issues tended to come more sharply into focus, prompting one to go back to the texts to see if there were not material relevant to these issues that one had been overlooking.

In my own work I have tried to find this larger picture. I started in the 1970s with precisely the limitations I have described. After studying Sanskrit I spent several years in Kashmir reading the texts of what I knew as Kashmir Śaivism and meeting regularly with Swami Lakshman Joo (Rājānaka Lakṣmaṇa), the last surviving exponent of that tradition, to put to him the questions that this reading was constantly throwing up. In this way, with his more than generous assistance, I came to see the system from the inside as it was understood then.

This was an immensely valuable start, but as I progressed, I began to formulate more and more questions that could not be answered from the surviving knowledge base and so realised the need to go beyond it.

In the first stage of my further endeavours I was mostly focused on searching for manuscripts of scriptural sources that the Kashmirian authors had drawn upon in constructing their system of doctrine and practice but which had ceased to be copied in later centuries and had therefore disappeared, it seemed, without trace. By this time I was familiar enough with the system to have located several of its exegetical fault lines and to have seen that most of these were at points at which it seemed that elements of diverse origin had been welded together into a supposedly seamless whole. I hoped that by gaining access to texts that contained these elements prior to their Kashmirian systematisation or independently of it I would gain insights into how the systematisation had proceeded, to catch it in the act, as it were, and thereby achieve a better understanding of the Kashmirian authors' intentions, much of which surely resided in seeing how they were

using these sources, sometimes no doubt simply incorporating their testimony but at other times redirecting it to serve purposes that only the confrontation of source and interpretation would reveal. Moreover, in the magnum opus of the Kashmirian tradition, the *Tantrāloka* of Abhinavagupta, these scriptural materials were mostly presented in the form of paraphrases and these were often ambiguous for modern readers, since we, unlike Abhinavagupta's target audience, were unable to read these paraphrases with their sources in our memories or at least accessible.

So my work shifted its focus eastwards along the Himalayas to the Kathmandu valley, a stronghold of Tantric Śaivism from early times, with an abundance of early palm-leaf manuscripts of Nepalese and East Indian Śaiva texts, many of them dating from before or around the time of the Kashmirian authors, mostly preserved in Nepalese collections but also in libraries in India and Europe. My efforts were rewarded by the discovery of a good number of scriptural texts that had been lost in Kashmir and the realisation of the relevance of others that were known to exist but had not been read in depth or read at all. Many gaps still remain, but the materials I was able to assemble over the years have thrown a flood of light on the nature of the Kashmirian Śaiva project and at the same time opened to view a much more diverse panorama of Śaiva traditions, leading to many new questions about their history and distribution, and the nature of their coexistence. Kashmirian Śaivism of the kind that had attracted my initial interest was now beginning to be contextualised as one element in a much larger picture.

Once this process had begun it was natural, if not inevitable, that I should also start considering the question of the relations between the largely Śākta-oriented Śaiva traditions of my Kashmirian, Nepalese, and East Indian sources and the rich non-Śākta Saiddhāntika Śaiva tradition that had survived in the Tamil-speaking South. Here too early Nepalese manuscripts played an important role. It soon became apparent that though the two Śaiva traditions I had encountered at the beginning of my research at opposite ends of the subcontinent, the Śākta Śaivism of Kashmir and the non-Śākta Śaivism of the South, seemed to occupy different universes in modern times, they had in earlier centuries been intimately connected. In short it soon became clear that South Indian Saiddhāntika Śaivism, though

greatly enriched and diversified in its South Indian setting, was rooted in a tradition that had been dominant in much of the subcontinent, including Kashmir, and had spread beyond it into large parts of mainland and maritime South East Asia, in the centuries before and during the production of the Kashmirian Śākta Śaiva literature. It also became clear that it was necessary to understand the latter as attempting to synthesise its Śākta-oriented traditions with this established Śaiva mainstream in a multitiered hierarchy within which all levels of Śaivism were accepted as valid, the hierarchy residing in the belief that while the mainstream Siddhānta constituted the public, institutionalised face of Śaivism, the more Śākta systems offered private, more powerful methods of transcendence and supernatural effect.

It also became evident that both of these forms of Śaivism were much more than methods followed for personal salvation. Both were sustained by predominantly royal patrons who looked to enhance their power, the Siddhānta predominantly through the legitimation and sacralisation of royal authority and the Śākta Śaiva traditions by offering rituals of state protection particularly in times of danger. It is this service to patrons that explains the emphasis that we find in most of the practice-oriented Śaiva literature on rituals that aim to bring about such supernatural effects (*siddhiḥ*) as the warding off of dangers present or predicted (*śāntiḥ*), the restoration of vitality (*puṣṭiḥ*), the blocking, routing, or destruction of enemies (*abhicāraḥ*), and the control of rainfall.

To be beginning to understand the internal dynamics of Śaivism in such ways was definite progress; but this commitment to contextualisation could not proceed solely within the boundaries of the Śaiva traditions. It was necessary also to seek to understand how the Śaivas had understood and negotiated the relationship between their Śaiva obligations and those of mainstream Brahmanical religion and the extent to which the latter had accepted or rejected its claims. As one would expect, it became clear that this relationship was subject to change and was far from constant across the range of the Śaiva traditions in different regions and periods and that the history of Śaivism was in important respects the history of this unstable relationship.

Nor was the picture complete with the Śaiva traditions that I have mentioned so far. On the one hand there were also earlier Śaiva systems that

had left traces in the record, whose connections with the better documented traditions that followed them remained to be understood; and on the other there was a vast mass of literature articulating what we may call the lay Śaivism of the general population as opposed to the systems developed by religious specialists that had been engaging my attention. How should we understand the relationship between this Śaivism and those systems? Were the latter the source of this literature of lay devotion? Or should we rather see the Śaivism reflected in that literature as an independent phenomenon on which the more publicly engaged of the systems that I had been studying were dependent, even parasitic? I now incline to the latter view.

Finally there were questions concerning the relationship between the non-lay Śaiva systems and those of their principal rivals for patronage: the Buddhists, Vaiṣṇavas, and Jains. My work in that domain has, I believe, demonstrated that the Śaiva systems exerted a powerful influence on all three of these religious groups, causing them to develop ritual systems along Tantric lines derived from Śaiva models.

The picture that has been emerging is based primarily on textual sources, but these are not just the works of high learning and the scriptural texts that they interpret. There are also many much humbler and often anonymous works, mostly unpublished, that set out ritual procedures for the guidance of Śaiva officiants and other initiates. The great value of these materials is that they are as close as written prescriptions can be to a record of actual practice in specific communities. They therefore enable us to see which systems have been prevalent or left their mark. The elevated works of scholarship, such as the *Tantrāloka* of Abhinavagupta, present a wealth of information concerning this or that Śaiva system, but they do not enable us to know how widely these systems were adopted. By locating and examining materials of this humbler variety in the regions of the subcontinent in which they have survived we can hope that a differentiated pan-Indian history of Śaivism will emerge.

Nor is it sufficient to study the kinds of sources that I have mentioned so far. I have learned much that I could not learn from these prescriptive texts by reading inscriptions that record grants to religious officiants and foundations. These enable us to build up a picture of the patronage of the religion and its dissemination through the subcontinent; and in conjunction

with the study of material evidence in the form of temples or their remains and religious images they give us some idea of the strength of Śaivism in specific regions over time in relation to its rivals. They also provide on occasion a corrective to the tendency of the texts to idealise, revealing, for example, a degree of routinisation and mundane motivation that the texts tend not to acknowledge. Finally, there is much to be learned from modern ethnographic accounts of surviving religious practice and institutions. The Kathmandu valley and the Tamil South, where Śaiva traditions of both Śākta Śaiva and Saiddhāntika have survived, have much to teach us in this regard. One cannot simply read the present or recent past back into the early centuries of these traditions; but ethnographic data can prompt us to interrogate the textual evidence of the past in ways that might otherwise be overlooked.

The main constituents of Śaivism

In what follows I shall touch on all four of the divisions that in my present understanding make up the territory of the religion: lay Śaivism, the Atimārga, the Mantramārga, and the Kulamārga.

There is a primary dichotomy here between lay Śaivism and the other three, which we may distinguish from it as forms of initiatory Śaivism that demanded a much deeper commitment and promised much more. While lay Śaivism offered its observant adherents temporary translation at death to the paradise of Śiva (*śivalokaḥ*, *rudralokaḥ*, *śivapuram*), the systems within the Atimārga, Mantramārga, and Kulamārga promised their initiates the attainment of final liberation, either at death or in the case of the Śākta-oriented systems even in the midst of life, and, in addition, in the Mantramārga and the Kulamārga, the means of bringing about the supernatural effects already mentioned and of attaining before final liberation entry into paradises far more elevated than that of the laity.

The terms Atimārga and Mantramārga are taken by me from the literature of the latter. The Atimārga in that testimony covers certain forms of Śaiva ascetic discipline that predate the emergence of the Mantramārga and coexisted with it. In our earliest testimony it comprises two systems: the Pāñcārthika Pāśupata and the Lākula, also called Kālamukha. While the

Pāñcārthika Pāśupata Atimārga and the Mantramārga seem radically different in many respects, what we now know of the Lākula tradition has shown that many of the key features that set the Mantramārga apart from the Pāñcārthika Atimārga were already present in the Lākula Atimārga, revealing the earliest Śaivism of the Mantramārga to have developed out of it.

Later doxography adds a third division of the Atimārga, that of the Kāpālīka followers of a system known as the Somasiddhānta. My current view of this addition is that it evidences a Lākula tradition that incorporated into the Atimārgic framework radically new forms of Śākta worship that would have a lasting impact on the non-Saiddhāntika Mantramārga and Kulamārga by being carried forward into those traditions.

The Mantramārga comprises the Saiddhāntika Śaiva tradition and Śākta-oriented ritual systems primarily focused on the propitiation of various goddesses and Bhairava. While the former was more publicly engaged and generally stayed within the boundaries dictated by Brahmanical criteria of ritual purity, the non-Saiddhāntika Mantramārga drew its power from ritual transgression of these boundaries.

The same applies to the Kulamārga, which inherited the Śākta traditions that had entered the Atimārga with the Kāpālīka development, stressing collective orgiastic worship, initiation through possession, the ritual consumption of meat and alcoholic liquor, and sexual contact with women regardless of caste.

Many of these Kaula elements are also to be found in texts of the Śākta-oriented Mantramārga. This lack of a clear boundary is not unique to the relation between the Mantramārga and the Kulamārga. The labels attached by our texts to the various traditions are used by them as though they apply to quite distinct unchanging entities. But in reality, the boundaries between the various branches of the Śaiva tradition were contested and shifting as the ascetic groups and householder communities that adhered to them worked to elevate their status in relation to each other or to achieve greater acceptance in Brahmanical society. We may never be able to see even the majority of these shifts, but we should remain alert to the fact that our texts are snapshots of an ever-changing situation. Moreover, while the learned exegetes tended to stress the separation between their own traditions and the others, we should not let this close our minds to evidence of a greater

degree of interaction, cofunctionalty, and hybridisation than reading the works of the learned systematisers leads us to expect. Here the humble manuals are revealing, since they show precisely the blurring of boundaries that the learned condemn.¹

I turn now to the topic indicated by the title of my lecture: “How public was Śaivism?”. Evidently one cannot claim to have a realistic picture of a religion if one does not have some sense of where the boundary lies between the private and the public, of how far the activities of adherents of the religion are publicly visible or at least publicly significant. For even rituals considered secret and conducted away from the public gaze may nonetheless be designed to have an impact in the public domain, not through being witnessed but through being known to have occurred. Thus, for example, in the case of the king, a status-enhancing Tantric ritual conducted in private may become a very public event by being framed by military parades and marked by a public holiday. Our sources tend to be parsimonious in revealing this civic dimension of the religion. One can read much without encountering it since the texts are focused on what the solitary individual initiate should do. But evidence is nonetheless present. I shall be drawing attention to some of it in what follows.

Lay Śaivism: joint agency and civic spectacle

I begin with the distinction between lay Śaivism and initiatory Śaivism, that is to say, between a Śaivism open to lay people (*upāsakāḥ*), who by adopting it were not thought to have radically changed their position in relation to orthodox Brahmanism, who were not considered to have taken on a religious identity that challenged the reach of Brahmanical authority, and who did not claim to have done so, and the Śaivism of other groups whose members by taking a personal initiation (*dīkṣā*) did consider themselves to have risen above the domain of religious efficacy proper to the mainstream religion and to have gained access to a personal liberation not accessible in their view to the followers of Brahmanism or its non-initiatory Śaiva inflections.

¹ For a detailed review of these traditions and their literatures, see SANDERSON 2014.

The literature for initiates in the Mantramārga distinguishes two categories of lay Śaivas: (1) those who enacted their devotion to Śiva following orthodox Brahmanical authorities, either (1a) liturgies addressed to the Vedic Rudra, such as the lost *Rudrakalpa* of the Kāthas, or (1b) forms of worship of Śiva taught in the Purāṇas, thus either Śrauta (1a) and Smārta (1b), and (2) those who opted for what appears to have been an intensified form of lay commitment by following the injunctions of scriptures that we may call the Śivadharmas texts, principally the *Śivadharmas* and the *Śivadharmottara*, which instruct lay Śaivas on the forms of personal observance appropriate to them and exhort them to dedicate a considerable part of their wealth to the support of the religion.²

For some time, before I had given these texts a more than cursory examination, I assumed that this Śivadharmas literature must have emanated from within the community of the initiated as a means of securing lay sup-

² For this distinction between the modalities of lay Śaivism, see, e.g., Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha, *Mataṅgavṛtti* on *Vidyāpāda* 4.49–50: *upāsakair anugrahasādhana-prāptinimittam mataṅgamunineva pūrvam śrutyādivihitena* (em. with the Kashmirian mss.: *śrūtau vihitena* ed.) *śivadharmoditena vā vidhineśvaropāsanaiva kāryā*. “Lay devotees must, like the sage Mataṅga, first worship Śiva with the procedure ordained in Śruti or with that taught in the Śivadharmas texts as the means of receiving the means of [Śiva’s] grace.” See also *Kiraṇavṛtti* on *Vidyāpāda* 6.22d–12: *tarhi kiṃ tair nityam anuṣṭheyam. laukikena rūpeṇa śivadharmoditena vā yathāśakti devagurutadbhaktaparicaraanādikam eva svataḥ putrabhṛtyādipreṣaṇena vā*. “So what is the religious duty of these people [who are exonerated from the post-initiatory duties]? It is such activities as serving Śiva, the *guru*, and their devotees to the extent of their ability, either themselves or [if that is not possible] by sending their sons or servants [as proxies], either in the mundane modality or in that taught in the Śivadharmas texts.” *Mataṅgavṛtti* on *Vidyāpāda* 26.58–59b defines the mundane modality of observance as such activities as chanting hymns, singing, and bowing down to an image of Śiva, either a *liṅga* or anthropomorphic. I have preferred the reading *śrutyādivihitena* seen in the Kashmirian mss., not because they are generally more reliable than the South Indian witnesses used by the editor Bhatt, though they are, but because the reading *śrūtau vihitena* that he has adopted is less satisfactory. For it is implausible that Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha would have restricted the non-Śivadharmas option to Śrauta worship. For the Śrauta forms of worship envisaged by the Kashmirian Saiddhāntikas, see Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha, *Mrgendravṛtti* on *Vidyāpāda* 1.6. These include the lost *Rudrakalpa* of the Kāthas (p. 16, ll. 7–8: *tathā hi *kāṭhake sūtrapariśiṣṭīye rudrakalpe*, “in the Kāṭhaka Rudrakalpa that is a supplementary text of the [Kāthas’ *Yajña*] *sūtra*).”

port. I have rejected that perspective now. My view is that these texts cannot plausibly be attributed to teachers of any of the initiatory systems. Although they show awareness of the Atimārga or the Mantramārga or both, they certainly cannot be read as teaching watered-down versions for the laity of either of these initiatory Śaivism. There are too many discontinuities for that to be plausible. One can imagine that if *gurus* of the Atimārga or Mantramārga were to create a system for the laity, they might have omitted reference to the higher levels accessible to initiates, but not that they would have put forward a worldview such as we see in these texts which shows little continuity with the doctrines of either the Atimārga or the Mantramārga. I now consider that this literature represents a mainstream tradition within the Śaiva community on which the much smaller communities of initiates were parasitic, that they latched on to these traditions and imposed their authority on them, usually with royal patronage, becoming in this way the officiants of various Śaiva institutions which had their own independent histories. A strong indication of the proposed independence of this tradition can be seen in the program of deities installed in Śaiva temples, for this is quite distinct from the programs ordained for worship in the initiatory systems and remained largely unchanged when control of these foundations passed from the Atimārga to the Mantramārga.³

Many features set the Śaivism of the Śivadharma corpus apart from that of the initiatory traditions, but that which is most striking in the present context concerns the beneficiaries of the pious activities that are advocated. In initiatory Śaivism those who perform the rituals prescribed are acting as individuals for their own personal benefit or that of named clients. But in the Śivadharma corpus, the person performing the activity or having it performed, commonly the king, is considered to be acting not only in his own right but also as the representative of the community that he heads, so that the rewards of his piety are shared. Here, then, ritual is not a purely private and personal affair but has a strong social and civic dimension.

I shall give two examples of this concept of action for the group. The first speaks of the benefits of what it calls the *ṣaḍaṅgavidhiḥ* (“the six-element rite”), a simple form of *līṅga* worship requiring the offering of six

³ SANDERSON 2003–2004: 435–444.

products of the cow to be performed by the king and by extension by others that is the subject of the first chapter of the *Śivadharmottara*. The relevant passage is as follows:

Through this six-element rite the deity becomes propitious. In both this world and the next he bestows all that one desires. So a king who is a devotee of Śiva should worship Śiva with this rite. He will rescue twenty-one generations [of his patriline]. Establishing them in heaven, he will ascend himself [above that level] to the eternal abode of Śiva. Moreover, every honest minister who has been employed in the king's service will proceed together with him to that great and illustrious paradise (*śivapuram*). After he has enjoyed endless pleasures [there] together with all his staff, he will in due course return to this world and become a universal sovereign who will rule the whole earth.⁴

The second passage concerns a ceremony taught in the second chapter of the same text in which the king is to have a sacred text copied and then donate it to a *guru*:

The donor will dwell in the paradise of Śiva for as many thousands of aeons as there are syllables in the manuscript of the scripture of Śiva [that he has donated]. Having rescued ten generations of his patrilineal ancestors and the ten that will follow him,⁵ he will establish them, his

⁴ *Śivadharmottara* 1.87c–91: *anena vidhinā devaḥ ṣaḍaṅgena prasīdati* || 88 || *iha loke pare caiva sarvān kāmān prayacchati* | *ṣaḍaṅgavidhinā tasmān nṛpatiḥ pūjayec chivam* || 89 || *śivabhaktaḥ samuttārya kulānām ekaviṃśatim* | *svarge sthāpya svayam gacched aiśvaram padam avyayam* || 90 || *aśaṭhāḥ sarvabhṛtyāś ca devakārya-niyojītāḥ* | *prayānti svāminā sārddham śrīmac chivapuram mahat* || 91 || *bhuktvā bhogān sa vipulān bhṛtyavargasamanvitaḥ* | *kālāt punar ihāyātāḥ pṛthivyām ekarād bhavet* ||.

⁵ Similar promises are found in mainstream Brahmanical sources. See, for example, *Manusmṛti* 3.37: *daśa pūrvān parān vaṃśyān ātmānam ekaviṃśakam* | *brāhmīputraḥ sukrataḥṇ mocayaty enasaḥ pitṛn*. “When a son by a woman married by the Brāhma rite (*brāhmīputraḥ*) performs a meritorious action, he frees from sin the ten heads of his patriline before him, the ten after him, and himself as twenty-first.” Commenting on this, Medhātithi allows the claim that future generations can

mother, his father, and his chief wife in heaven and then go on to Śiva. He will go to Śiva's world by virtue of this gift of knowledge attended by his harem and accompanied by all his ministers.⁶

But the light that this body of texts for the laity sheds on the transpersonal

be freed from sin is mere *arthavādaḥ*, that is to say, a promotional statement that is not to be taken literally. But he accepts the principle that a pious act can free one's predecessors from sin, since to deny this would be to deny that *śrāddha* ceremonies performed for one's ancestors are efficacious. I am not aware of any place in the Śivadharm literature in which this issue of the rites of the living benefitting unborn descendants has been addressed directly. But it can be argued that it has been covered by the claim that none of Śiva's statements are *arthavādaḥ*, that all are to be understood as literally true and that this should be kept in mind especially with regard to what the texts have to say about the consequences of meritorious and sinful actions. See *Śivadharmottara* 1.39–42, 44abv: *vidhivākyam idaṃ śaivaṃ nārthavādaḥ śivātmakaḥ | lokānugrahakartā yaḥ sa mṛṣārthaṃ kathaṃ vadet || 40 sarvajñāḥ paripūrṇatvād anyathā kena hetunā | brūyād vākyam śivaḥ śāntaḥ sarvadoṣavivarjitaḥ || 41 yad yathāvasthitaṃ vastu guṇadoṣaiḥ svabhāvataḥ | yāvat phalaṃ ca puṇyaṃ ca sarvajñas tat tathā vadet || ... 44 tasmād īśvaravākyāni śraddheyāni vipaścītā | yathārthaṃ puṇyapāpeṣu tadaśraddho vrajed adhaḥ*. “This teaching of Śiva consists [entirely] of literally true statements (*vidhivākyam*). There is no Śaiva *arthavādaḥ*. How could [Śiva], the saviour of all beings, utter a falsehood? For what reason would Śiva lie, he who is omniscient because he embraces the whole of the real, who is at peace in his transcendence, and free of all defects? Being omniscient he must relate every thing as it is by nature, with its virtues and defects, including the [actions that he advocates as] virtuous and the rewards [he promises to those who do them]. ... Therefore the learned should put their trust in [all] the statements of Śiva concerning meritorious and sinful actions as corresponding to reality. If one lacks that trust, one will descend [into the hells].” See also *Tantrāloka* 4.232ab: *nārthavādādiśaṅkā ca vākye māheśvare bhavet*, “One should entertain no doubts about the teachings of Śiva, suspecting, for example, that they are *arthavādaḥ*,” and *Tantrāloka* thereon: *yad uktaṃ “vidhivākyam idaṃ tantram nārthavādaḥ kadācana | jhātīti pratyavāyeṣu satkriyāṇāṃ phaleṣv api” iti | tathā: ... nārthavādaḥ śivāgamaḥ*. “As has been stated [by Śiva himself]: ‘This teaching (*tantram*) consists [entirely] of statements of fact. It is never *arthavādaḥ* particularly [in its statements] with reference to sin and the rewards of pious actions;’ and ‘The scriptures of Śiva are not *arthavādaḥ*.’”

⁶ *Śivadharmottara* 2.78c–81: *yāvadakṣarasamkhyānaṃ śivajñānasya pustake || 79 || tāvad kalpasahasrāṇi dātā śivapure vaset | daśa pūrvān samuddhṛtya daśa vaṃśyāṃś ca paścimān || 80 || mātāpitṛdharmapatnīḥ svarge sthāpya śivaṃ vrajet | śāntaḥpura-parīvāraḥ sarvabhṛtyasamanvitaḥ || 81 || rājā śivapuram gacched vidyādānaprabhāvataḥ |*

aspect of religious action is not limited to what may be inferred from its belief that pious activity benefits the group lead by the individual who carries out or commissions that activity. One of the severe limitations imposed on our understanding by most accounts of ritual in the texts of the initiatory forms of Śaivism is that they are generally concerned only with what a single individual, initiate, or officiant is having to do and say. They very seldom pull back to show us what is happening around this officiant that might involve other agents and even extend into the civic space. This is less so with the Śivadharm literature. For the *Śivadharmottara*, concerned as it is with forms of ritual that involve and benefit groups, does offer some intriguing views of this wider picture, opening a window on to the extension of ritual action into the civic domain. Its account of this ritual of text donation is rich in this regard. After describing how the new copy of the scripture should be prepared, the text tells us that after its completion a *pūjā* should be performed and the night passed in festivities. Then:

śivavidyāvimānaṃ ca kuryāt prātaḥ suśobhanam
 47 *pañcāṇḍakaṃ tribhaumaṃ ca dāruvaṃśādinirmitam*
vicitravastrasaṃchannaṃ sarvaśobhāsamanvitam
 48 *vidyāsanasthaṃ tanmadhye śivajñānasya pustakam*
hemaratnacitaṃ divyam athavā dantaśobhitam
 49 *vicitracitrayuktaṃ vā bahirutkīrṇakambikam*
pārśve carmasamāyuktaṃ dr̥ḍhasūtranibandhanam
 50 *sampūjya gandhapuṣpādyaiḥ pūrvoktavidhinā budhaḥ*
samutkṣipyānayed bhaktyā tad vimānaṃ śivāśramam
 51 *susthitaṃ rathamukhyena puruṣair vā balānvitaiḥ*
chatradhvajapatākādyair vimānais tūryanisvanaiḥ
 52 *maṅgalair vedaghoṣādyaiḥ sadhūpaiḥ kalaśaiḥ sitaiḥ*
cāraṇair vandibhir vādyaiḥ strīsaṃgītair vibhūṣitaṃ
 53 *cārucāmarahastābhiś citradaṇḍaiś ca darpaṇaiḥ*
mahatā janasaṅghena purataś ca mahīpatiḥ
 54 *dharmavṛddhyai svayaṃ gacchet sarvaśobhāsamanvitaḥ*
athavā hastiyānasthaṃ kṛtvā pustakam ānayet
 55 *rājamārgena mahatā nagarāntaḥ pradakṣiṇam*
sarvāyatanapūjāṃ ca svadhanaiḥ kārayen nṛpaḥ

56 *daśa dikṣu balim dadyān nagarasya samantataḥ*
mārge 'pi purato gacchan balim dadyān nirantaram
 57 *gandhapuṣpākṣatonmiśram udakaṃ ca tadānugam*
gaccheyur yatayaś cātra sarvāyatanavāsinaḥ
 58 *purataḥ śivavidyāyāḥ śivamantram anusmaret*
śuklāmbaṛadharāḥ sarve bhavyeṣu puravāsinaḥ
 59 *ucchrayeṣu patākāś ca janāś taddeśavāsinaḥ*
grhadevāṃś ca sampūjya kāryaś cāpy utsavo grhe
 60 *brāhmaṇān bhojayeyuś ca grheṣu grhamedhinaḥ*
annapānair janapadā yātrām kuryuḥ śivāśrame
 61 *acchedyās taravaḥ kāryāḥ sarvahiṃsām nivārayet*
bandhanasthāś ca mokṭavyā varjyāḥ krodhādiśatravaḥ
 62 *akālakaumudīm kuryād divasadvayam īśvare*
śivāyatanam āsādy vimānasthaṃ tam arghayet
 63 *puṇyāhajayaśabdaiś ca mahatā tumulena ca*
sthāne saṃskṛte rāmye śivasya purataḥ śanaiḥ
 64 *sthāpayitvā guror bhaktyā tat praṇāmya nivedayet*
śāntyarthaṃ ekam adhyāyaṃ gobrāhmaṇamahībhṛtām
 65 *rāṣṭrīyanagarāṇāṃ ca vācayed vācakottamaḥ*
chandolakṣaṇatattvajñaḥ satkavir madhurasvaraḥ
 66 *gāndharvavid vidagdhaś ca śreṣṭhaḥ pustakavācakaḥ*
śāntitoyena rājānaṃ samutthāya gurus tataḥ
 67 *śirasy abhyukṣayed īṣat tatrasthaṃ ca janaṃ tataḥ*
avadhārya jagacchāntiṃ punar ante nṛpasya ca
 68 *ācāryabhojanaṃ cātra nṛpaḥ kuryāt sadakṣiṇam*
svayam atraiva bhuñjīta sāntaḥpuraparicchadaḥ
 69 *kāryā ca bahudhā prekṣā bhuktavatsu janeṣu ca*
evaṃ kṛte mahāśāntir nṛpasya nagarasya ca
 70 *deśasya ca samastasya jāyate nātra saṃśayaḥ*
ītayaś ca praśāmyanti na ca mārī pravartate
 71 *śāmyanti sarvaghoraṇi praśamanti bhayāni ca*
unmūlyante grahāḥ sarve praṇaśyanti ca śatravaḥ
 72 *upasargāḥ pralīyante na durbhikṣabhayaṃ bhavet*
vināyakāś ca naśyanti saubhāgyaṃ paramaṃ bhavet

73 *rājyavṛddhiś ca vipulā nityaṃ ca vijayī nṛpaḥ*
vardhate putrapautraiś ca matir dharme ca vardhate
 74 *vidyādānaprasādena nṛpasya ca janasya ca*

Śivadharmottara 2.46c–74. A = University Library, Cambridge, ms. Add. 1694, f. 47r4–; B = Add. 1645, ff. 42r4–; C = Bodleian Library, Oxford, ms: Or. B 125, ff. 55v2–; D = National Archives, Kathmandu, m. 3–393 (NGMPP A 1082/3), *Śivadharmottara* ff. 5v3–; E = National Archives, Kathmandu, ms. 6–7 (NGMPP A 1028/4).

47a *tribhaumaṃ ca* ACE : *tribhūmaṃ ca* B : *tribhūmaṃ vā* D **49a** *vicitracitrāyuktaṃ vā* BD : *vicitravastrayugmaṃ vā* A : *vicitracitravastraṃ vā* C : *vicitracitramvā* E **49c** *pārśve carmasamāyuktaṃ* BD : *pārśvenaścarmasamāyuktaṃ* A : *pārśve carmasusamāyuktaṃ* C : *pārśvacarmasusamāyuktan* E **50b** *budhaḥ* ACE : *punaḥ* BD **50d** *śivāśramam* ABDE : *śivāśrame* C **51a** *rathamukhyena* ABD : *rathamukhena* C : *rathamukhyai* E **52b** *sitaiḥ* BCDE : *śubhaiḥ* A **52d** *strīsamgītair vibhūṣitaṃ* BE : *strīsamgītaiḥ subhūṣitaiḥ* CD : *strīsamgītair anekadhā* A **54a** *dharmavṛddhyai* ADE : *dharmavṛddhaiḥ* BC **54b** *sarvaśobhāśamanvitaiḥ* ABE : *sarvaśobhāśamanvitaiḥ* C : *sarvaśobhāśamanvitaṃ* D **55b** *nagarāntaḥ* CE : *nagarāntaṃ* BD : *nagarānta* A **55d** *nṛpaḥ* ABD : *budhaḥ* CE **56b** *nagarasya samantataḥ* ABDE : *nagarasyāsamantataḥ* C : *nagarāntaḥ pradakṣiṇam* E **56c** *gacchan* BD : *gacched* ACE **57b** *tadānugam* ABCE : *tadānugaḥ* D **57c** *gaccheyur yatayaś cātra* A : *gacchet pūrvaṃ tataḥ paścāt* BD : *gaccheyus tatparā sarve* C : *gaccheyus tatpuraṃ paścāt* E **58b** *anusmaret* BE : *anusmaran* ACD **59c** *grhadevāś ca sampūjya* ABDE : *grhadevā svayaṃ pūjyā* C **61b** *sarvahiṃsām* BCDE : *satvahiṃsām* A **62b** *īśvare* ABDE : *īśvaraṃ* C **63b** *tumulena* BCDE : *maṅgalena* A **63d** *śivasya purataḥ śanaiḥ* AC : *purataḥ śanaiḥ śanaiḥ* B **64a** *guror* AE : *guruṃ* BCD **64b** *tat* AE : *taṃ* BCD • *nivedayet* ABD : *nivesayet* CE **65d** *madhurasvaraḥ* ABCD : *madhurasvanaḥ* E **66d** *samutthāya gurus tataḥ* ABD : *samutthāya punar guruṃ* E : *saṃsnāpya ca punar guruṃ* C : *samutthāpya punar guruḥ* E **67a** *abhyukṣayed īśat* CE : *abhyukṣayet tena* A : *abhyukṣayed īśaṃ* B **69a** *bahudhā prekṣā* B : *bahudhā pekṣā* A : *vividhāprekṣā* E **70c** *praśāmyanti* ACDE : *praṇāśyante* B **71a** *sarvaghorāṇi* BCDE : *sarvarogāś ca* A **73d** *vardhate* ABCD : *varṭtate* E

Early next morning [the king] should prepare a beautiful shrine for the scripture of Śiva. It should have five spires and three stories, and be made of materials such as wood and bamboo. It should be draped with lengths of cloth of many colours and provided with every adornment. In it [he should place] the manuscript of Śiva's teaching on a text-throne. It should be splendid in appearance, inlaid with gold and precious stones or adorned with ivory, or it should be beautified with a charming painting, or have [two] boards that are engraved on their outer faces.⁷ It should be bound in leather and have a strong cord to secure it. After making offerings to it of scented powders, flowers, and the rest following the aforesaid procedure, the wise [monarch] should lift that shrine and with devotion bring it to the Śaiva monastery (*śivāśramam*) firmly secured on a superior vehicle or [carried] by strong men [on their shoulders], beautified with parasols, flags, and banners, palanquins (*vimānaiḥ*),⁸ and the sound of musical instruments, with such auspicious sounds as the chanting of the Vedas, with burning incense, and fine vases, with singers and bards, with instrumental music, with singing by women, [with women] holding beautiful fly whisks, with mirrors with elegant handles. To promote the faith, the king himself should lead the procession decked out with every adornment together with a large crowd. Alternatively he may conduct the manuscript [to the hermitage] after placing it provided with every adornment in a howdah on an elephant (*hastiyānastham*). Following the great royal highway the king should proceed in a clockwise direction within the [boundaries of

⁷ My translation "or have [two] boards that are engraved on their outer faces" is no better than a guess, because the word *kambikā* in the Bahuvrīhi compound *bahirutkīrṇakambikam* is unknown to me in any relevant sense. My guess is guided by the fact that the text speaks of the *kambikā*- being engraved on the outside. I note, stepping outside my competence, that KITTEL's dictionary of Kannaḍa gives as one of the meanings of *kambi* "a plate with holes for drawing wire" (1894: 368a7–8). Boards used for manuscripts commonly have holes through which the binding cord can pass; see, for example, the illustrations in FOGG 1996: 48, 119, 121, 127, 132, and 137.

⁸ *vimānaiḥ*. I am uncertain of the meaning intended here. The word *vimānam* means a vehicle of various kinds, terrestrial or aerial, a bier, a palanquin or sedan, a palace, a temple, or a shrine. My decision to take it to refer to a palanquin is a guess.

the] capital, and he should have offerings made at every temple at his personal expense. He should make *bali* offerings in the ten directions all around the city, and as he proceeds make such offerings continuously along the route, following these with water mixed with scented powders, flowers, and unhusked rice grains. With him here should go the ascetics that live in all the temples. [As he walks] in front of the [manuscript of] Śiva's scripture he should meditate on Śiva's [six-syllable] *mantra* [*oṃ namaḥ śivāya*]. All the inhabitants of the capital should be dressed in white and those that dwell in the region (*taddeśavāsinah*) should erect banners. After making offerings to their house gods, people should hold festivities in their homes. The married heads of households should feed Brahmins in their houses with food and drink. The populace should go on pilgrimage to the hermitage [attached to the temple] of Śiva. The king should enact a ban of the cutting down of trees, forbid all harm [to living beings], release those being held in prison, avoid the [six] enemies beginning with anger, and arrange for an extra-calendrical *kaumudī* festival (*akālakaumudī*) for two days in honour of Śiva (*īśvare*).⁹ When he has reached the [main] Śiva temple, he should

⁹ The term *kaumudī* refers to a joyful festival celebrated on the full-moon day of the months of Kārttika. An *akālakaumudī* is an extra-calendrical (*akāla*-) festival of the same kind decreed to mark some auspicious occasion such as a king's victory in war. The *Ur-Skandapurāṇa*, a text of the sixth or seventh century, describes such a non-calendrical *kaumudī* festival in some detail (75.11–47). It is decreed by Hiranyākṣa, leader of the Asuras, to be held for eight consecutive days and seven nights in honour of Śiva to celebrate his victory over the gods. A proclamation is made in every square and assembly hall in his city. Guests are invited from far and wide. The streets are to be cleaned and annointed. The citizens are to bathe with full submersion and put on previously unworn clothes and flower-garlands. Singers and dancers are to perform. Banners must be raised in every private home, in the streets, and in the markets. Houses must be annointed. Flowers must be strewn in them and garlands draped. Brahmins should be fed and text-recitations staged. The Vedas should be chanted and “auspicious day” declared throughout the city. At night oil lamps must be kept fuelled and burning on the royal highway and in every home. Young men should stroll about in the company of young women, enjoying themselves, laughing, singing, and dancing. There should be performances of drumming and the wives of the Asuras must dance. Offerings of all kinds must be made to Śiva. Domestic animals should be slaughtered and the best of Brahmins fed. Whoever

prostrate before the god and make an offering of guest-water to him in the shrine. Then with shouts of “auspicious day” and “victory” and amid great noise he should slowly set down [the shrine] in a pleasing and ritually well-prepared place in front of Śiva and then donate that [manuscript] to the *guru* after bowing before him with devotion. An excellent cantor should then recite one *adhyāya* of the text for the warding off of dangers from cows, Brahmins, the king, and the inhabitants of the country and capital. The cantor should be of the finest quality. He should be a scholar who has a thorough understanding of the metres and he should be a fine poet, with a melodious voice and a knowledge of music. The *guru* should then rise and wet the king on his head with a little of the water prepared for the warding off of danger (*śāntitoyena*), and then all the people assembled there. Having asserted the removal of danger from all (*avadhārya jagacchāntim*), he should end the ceremony by doing the

does not obey will receive corporal punishment. On each day of the festival, Hiranyākṣa bathes [a *liṅga* of] Śiva with the five products of the cow and pure, fragrant oil, pouring over it vessels filled with milk, ghee, yoghurt, and other liquids, flowers, fruits, seeds, jewels, scented ash, and water, a thousand vessels of each. He then feeds Brahmins, and honours them with gifts. The other Asuras do the same. The festival is clearly non-calendrical though the text refers to it only as *kaumudī* rather than as an *akālakaumudī*. However, that expression is used to describe the revelries with which the Asuras Sunda and Upasunda celebrated their having been granted a boon from Brahmā (*Mahābhārata* 1.201.29: *akālakaumudīm caiva cakratuḥ sārvaśāntikām | dāityendrau paramaprītau tayoś caiva suhrjjanah*).

The element of compulsion to which this mythological narrative refers no doubt reflects historical reality. The extent to which religious observance in early medieval India was not a matter of personal choice is an issue that has received insufficient attention. Considering the ability of the king to mobilise the citizenry for an event such as this narrative assumes, one can readily understand the emphasis that the *Śivadharmottara* places on converting the king to the religion of Śiva. For, it says, if he is converted, the rest of the population will follow, out of respect for his authority and out of fear: *jagaddhitāya nṛpatiṃ śivadharme *niyojayet* (B : *nivedayet* A) || *tan-niyogād ayaṃ lokāḥ śuciḥ syād dharmatatparaḥ | yaṃ yaṃ dharmāṃ naraśreṣṭhaḥ samācarati bhaktitāḥ || taṃ taṃ ācarate lokas tatprāmāṇyād bhayena ca* (A f. 43v3–4; B f. 39v1–2). “For the good of all, [the *guru*] should establish the king in the Śivadharmā. If the king commands it, these people will be pure and devoted to religion. Whatever religion the king follows with devotion the people follow, because they consider him authoritative and fear [his displeasure].”

same for the king. The king should then feed the *guru* and give him a fee. He should eat there himself in the company of his harem. When the people have eaten, he should mount spectacles of many kinds [for their entertainment]. When all this has been done in the manner stated, there will follow without a doubt a warding off of all ills (*mahāśāntiḥ*) from the king, the capital, and the cities of the [whole] realm. Calamities will cease. Plague will not take hold. All horrors will disappear along with all dangers. All possessing spirits will be rooted out. Enemies will perish. Natural disasters will fade away. There will be no danger of famine. Impeding spirits will be destroyed. The greatest good fortune will prevail. There will be a vast expansion of the realm and whenever the king goes to war, he will be victorious. He will have ever more sons and sons of his sons; and by grace of this donation of knowledge both the king's and the people's respect for the faith will grow.

So here we are shown a ceremony of a very public kind, one which displays to the inhabitants of the capital in unambiguous terms an enactment of the king's empowerment by his Śaiva *guru*. Here there is no Tantric secrecy. All could witness the king's progress with the enthroned text round his capital in the company of the Śaiva ascetics who reside in its temples,¹⁰ see the king's meeting with the *guru* at the latter's residence, hear the recitation of the text, see the *guru* blessing the king with the water to ward off ills, and, if they were fortunate enough to be within range, feel drops of this liquid being scattered over themselves. One imagines an eager even ecstatic crowd pressing forward for this privilege. There is no indication here of anything happening behind closed doors. On the contrary, the public is obliged to turn out to participate in this civic event; and the beneficiaries are not only the king himself but all his subjects. As we shall see, sources of the Mantramārga mention the king's going to meet his *guru* in full military parade and returning to his palace in the same way, mounted

¹⁰ That is to say, ascetics who reside in *maṭhas*, also called *śivāśramas*, attached to these temples, and perform or supervise the performance of the rituals that take place in those temples. The *Śivadharmottara* gives a detailed description of the design of a *śivāśrama* (2.137–162).

on an elephant, with the citizenry lining the route. Perhaps we should imagine a similar arrival and return in this case too.

Initiatory Śaivism: *sādhakas* and *ācāryas* in the Atimārga

I turn now to initiatory Śaivism and, within that, to the Atimārga. To what extent were the forms of Śaivism so classified engaged in the public domain? If we look at the literature of the first of the strata of the Atimārga, the Pāñcārthika Pāśupata tradition, and look only at the earliest of our sources, namely the *Pañcārthabhāṣya*, the commentary of Bhagavat Kaunḍinya on the *Pañcārtha*, otherwise known as the *Pāśupatasūtra*, we get a picture of ascetics seeking complete detachment from the world of Brahmanical values, openly courting abuse by apparent rejection of those values in order to intensify their separation from that world. Yet we have evidence from inscriptions of Pāñcārthika ascetics who appear to be powerful and well-integrated members of society. One might take this as evidence that the religion attested in these epigraphical records has fallen from its textual ideals, losing its original vitality in a process of domestication. But this inference requires the assumption that Kaunḍinya's account of Pāñcārthika practice is comprehensive. It certainly seems to be. It recognises two kinds of practitioner, whom it terms *sādhakas* and *ācāryas*. It outlines the ascetic practices required of the *sādhaka* and tells us little about the *ācārya* other than his role as teacher and initiator; but one may be forgiven for assuming that since the *ācārya* or *guru* is the *sādhaka*'s superior and no alternative discipline is prescribed for him, he would be a person who had gone through the *sādhaka*'s discipline and then been elevated to the office of *ācārya* in recognition of his superior spiritual attainments. However, there is an obvious flaw in this reasoning. For the *sādhaka*'s discipline is described as one of progressive isolation, culminating in his ending his life in a cremation ground by means of a meditation technique in which he was to cut the connection between his soul and his body. It follows that the *ācārya* could not be a person who had completed the discipline of the *sādhaka* but rather one who had perhaps begun it but had turned aside from it at some point in order to take up the role of teacher and initiator. Nothing to this effect is found in the *Pañcārthabhāṣya*. But this is

not the only authoritative text of the Pāñcārthikas that has reached us. We also have the *Gaṇakārikā* and a commentary on it (*-ratnaṭīkā*) attributed to a certain Bhāsarvajña; and this commentary contains a passage, presented as a dialogue between teacher and disciple, that clarifies the difference between the *sādhaka* and the *ācārya* and does so in terms that remove the need to assume that the inscriptions, which are referring to *ācāryas* rather than *sādhakas*, testify to a decline in the rigorousness of the Pāñcārthika ascetic discipline:

O Lord, is the observance of all the injunctions of the *Pañcārtha* the only means of attaining the end of suffering? No, that is not the only means. It is also possible for a person to attain it even though he does not have the capacity to put all those injunctions into practice, if [as a holder of the office of *ācārya*] he properly favours [through initiation and the rest] such outstanding Brahmins as approach him as candidates. Why? Because he is [thereby] safeguarding the tradition. For by doing so he enables many who seek to attain the end of suffering through the power of that tradition to achieve their goal. By this means he accumulates merit that will bestow infinite reward. It is through this [merit] that he will attain union [with Rudra] and thence, through [Rudra's] favour, the end of suffering.¹¹

The *ācārya*, then, is declared here to be a person who lacks the capacity to follow the ascetic discipline. His role is rather to maintain the tradition by enabling others to follow it. He is nonetheless promised the liberation that the *sādhaka* achieves by adopting and completing that discipline through the argument that by executing his duties he will achieve infinite merit, merit, that is, that will somehow transcend the limitation of religious merit

¹¹ *Gaṇakārikāratnaṭīkā* p. 2, ll. 7–12: *kiṃ nu bhagavan pañcārthasamastaniyogānupālānād eva duḥkhāntaḥ prāpyata iti. ucyate. na kevalaṃ tataḥ kiṃ tu samastaniyogānuṣṭhānaśaktivikalenāpi brāhmaṇaviśeṣāṇāṃ śiṣyatvenopagatānāṃ samyag-anugraha-karaṇād api duḥkhāntaḥ prāpyate. kasmāt. sampradāyarakṣaṇāt. sampradāyaṃ pālayatā hi tatsampradāyasāmarthyena duḥkhāntaṃ gamiṣyatāṃ bahūnāṃ api duḥkhāntaḥ saṃpādito bhavati. tato 'nantaphalapuṇyopacayaḥ. tato yogaprāptau prasādād duḥkhānta iti.*

as generally understood in India, namely that however great it may be it is finite and can bestow only a finite reward. The *ācārya* is revealed, then, as a figure standing at the interface between the world of the inner community of liberation-bent ascetic *sādhakas* and the outer community of merit-accumulating lay devotees; and this is underlined by a passage in this text which is more specific about how the *ācārya* is to accumulate the infinite merit that will carry him to the *sādhaka*'s goal. He is to achieve this not only by initiating and instructing would-be *sādhakas* but also by being the public face of the tradition, making himself available to lay devotees, conversing with them (*sambhāṣanam*), or simply granting them the sight of his person (*darśanam*).

Ratnaṭīkā on *Gaṇakārikā* 1cd, p. 3, ll. 6 and 12–14: *suparīkṣitam brāhmaṇam dīkṣāviśeṣeṇa pañcārthajñānaviśeṣeṇa ca śiṣyaṃ saṃskurvan saṃskartā ity ucyate. sa ca tajjñair mukhyata eva gurur ucyate. gurur ācāryaḥ śraddhāvatām āśramiṇām darśanasambhāṣaṇādibhir api pāpaghnaḥ puṇyātīśayakārī cety arthaḥ.*

[The *guru*] is one who prepares a Brahmin [for the path], after thoroughly examining him, by bestowing on him the superior initiation [of this tradition] and, once he has become his pupil [through initiation], prepares him by imparting the superior knowledge contained in the *Pañcārtha*. This is the primary sense in which the learned use this word. But the *guru* or *ācārya* also destroys sin and generates superior merit by such means as showing his person to those members of the community of householders who have faith [in Śaivism] and conversing with them.

There is therefore no reason to read the inscriptions as evidence of a decline. For the followers of the Atimārga that they reveal to us are not *sādhakas*. They are *ācāryas*.

The contrast between the world of the *sādhaka* and that of the *ācārya* at the interface with the laity is even more striking in the Lākula and Kāpālīka forms of the Atimārga, since Śaiva textual sources reveal that the obser-

vances of their ascetics were more extreme, involving such practices as using a human skull as a begging bowl, carrying a staff topped by a human skull, living in cremation grounds, wearing a sacred thread made from twisted hair gathered from corpses, and rejecting all Brahmanical restrictions on food and drink.¹² We can see this contrast clearly in the case of the Lākulas, also called Kālamukhas, followers of the Lākula division of the Atimārga, since they are recorded in an extensive body of inscriptions in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra. The stark contrast between their epigraphic and textual representations has been noted, in reliance for the latter on a brief characterisation found in the South Indian Vaiṣṇava authors Yāmuna and Rāmānuja, and has been explained away by the hypothesis that these influential theologians were attempting to discredit their Kālamukha rivals by attributing to them the extreme practices that characterised the Kāpālikas.¹³ We also have a number of statues of Kālamukha ascetics from this region that confirm the contrast. These Kālamukhas have the appearance of Śaiva ascetics, but with no sign of skull begging bowls, skull staffs, ornaments made from human bone, or sacred threads made of twisted human hair taken from corpses.

In the light of the evidence of the commentary on the *Gaṇakārikā*, we can now read this contrast not as evidence of expurgation but rather as evidence that we are looking here not at *sādhakas* but at *ācāryas* at the tradition's interface with Brahmanical society. It may well be the case that Kālamukha *sādhakas* or some division of them had moderated their ascetic discipline. But we cannot infer this from the appearance of their *ācāryas*.

This laxity of the *ācārya* in comparison with the *sādhaka* is much more than a matter of external appearance. Inscriptions show us *ācāryas* of the Atimārga as owners of property – and this is as early as the fourth century CE – with the funds that enable them to make endowments of their own. Moreover, we find endowments for religious foundations that are not strictly within their own tradition. If *ācāryas* were bound by the restrictions that apply to *sādhakas* this would be highly irregular. For when a person took

¹² SANDERSON 2006: 163–166.

¹³ LORENZEN ²1991: 4–6. GHURYE too noted the discrepancy (²1964: 128) but interpreted it as evidence that by the twelfth century, the date of his evidence, the sect had purged itself of the objectionable practices mentioned by Yāmuna and Rāmānuja.

initiation to begin the Pāñcārthika discipline, he was required to own nothing thereafter other than the basic accoutrements required for his ascetic observance, and he was required to undertake to discontinue the worship of his ancestors and all other gods. Indeed he was required in the course of the ceremony to request their pardon for abandoning them now that he would be offering worship to Rudra alone. But in our epigraphical evidence, and in its earliest period, we find Pāñcārthika *ācāryas* founding shrines for the worship of the Mother-goddesses, deities who lie very much outside the focus of the tradition as recorded in our prescriptive sources.¹⁴ In later times, when epigraphic evidence is more plentiful, we also find them married, passing on office through hereditary lines to their sons. In the thirteenth century in the west of Saurashtra at Somnath Patan, a major Pāñcārthika stronghold, we see king-like *ācāryas* in charge of the sacred city, with the means of establishing new foundations, engaging in major building projects, and building fortifications.¹⁵ These are very far from the ideal of the *sādhaka* presented in the prescriptive texts.

I have mentioned the *ācārya*'s contact with the laity. Naturally this extended to interactions with the monarch, such as we have seen in the passage of the *Śivadharmottara* presented above. Here too we see a major departure from the ascetic discipline of the *sādhaka*, who is expressly forbidden to have any dealings with the court.¹⁶

¹⁴ This epigraphical evidence is found in seven copper-plate grants of Mahārāja Bhulūṇḍa of Valkhā (modern Bagh in the Dhar District of Madhya Pradesh), part of a hoard of 27 plates discovered there in 1982 and published in 1990. The seven were issued in years 50 to 59 of an unstated era. This might be the Kalacuri, in which case the dates would correspond to 299–308 CE. But on palaeographic grounds it is more probable that it is the Gupta, in which case the years covered by these grants are 370–379 CE. They refer to unnamed Pāśupatas as being among those with rights to enjoy, cultivate, and inhabit the temple lands granted; and one issued in year 56 (376 CE) records a gift of land made by the Mahārāja to support the worship of the Mothers in a temple of those deities (*mātrsthānadevakulam*) that, we are told, had been established by a Pāśupata officiant or teacher (*pāśupatācārya*) called Bhagavat Lokodadhi. For the inscription, see RAMESH & TEWARI 1990: 21–22 (no. 10); SANDERSON 2009: 52, n. 28.

¹⁵ See the Somnāthpattan Prasasti of 1169 CE (OZHÂ & BÜHLER 1889) and the Cintra Prasasti (ed. BÜHLER, EPIGRAPHIA INDICA 1: 32).

¹⁶ *Pañcārthabhāṣya*, p. 22, ll. 14–15: *ato 'trāsamvyavahāras tantre siddhaḥ. samvyavahāraś ca dvividhaḥ. tad yathā krayavikrayasamvyavahāro rājakula-*

Ascetics and householder initiates in the Mantramārga

The learned literature of the Mantramārga or Tantric Śaivism encourages the impression that this division of the Śaiva religion, unlike the traditions of the Atimārga, was Śaivism brought from the domain of ascetics into the domain of those in the midst of the social world, a Śaivism designed to accommodate them. There is much truth in this perception. It is certainly the case that unlike the Atimārga the Mantramārga was open to men in the world. They could receive initiation without having to abandon their Brahmanical obligations, merely adding above these a new and more exacting layer of Śaiva observances; and they could aspire as initiates to become *gurus* by receiving the *ācārya* consecration (*ācāryābhiṣekaḥ*).

However, this did not entail the exclusion of ascetics from the Mantramārga's forms of the religion. The Śaiva asceticism of the Atimārga was carried over into the Mantramārga, and although the doctrinal apparatus and rituals underwent fundamental changes in this process, ascetic *guru* lineages continued to flourish. This is not apparent from the works of such learned authors as Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha, Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha, Abhinavagupta, and Kṣemarāja, the Kashmirian giants of the Śaiva exegetical traditions both Saiddhāntika and Śākta Śaiva. For these were evidently writing for an audience consisting largely if not exclusively of householders. But the epigraphical record enables us to see that the alliance of otherworldly asceticism and royal power exemplified in the passage cited above from the *Śivadharmottara* remained central to the Mantramārga's public self-presentation. For it is ascetic *gurus* of the Saiddhāntika tradition that appear repeatedly in our inscriptions in the role of the royal preceptor (*rājaguruḥ*) who empowers the king through Śaiva initiation; and it appears to have been believed that the more unworldly the ascetic the greater the empowerment that the king could expect. The ideal, therefore, would be to induce an illustrious hermit to agree to be enthroned as the royal preceptor in a *maṭha* in the king's capital. Whether such a transformation was ever achieved cannot be determined now. But it was certainly believed to

saṃvyavahāraś ceti. "Therefore it is established in this teaching that practitioners should not engage in transactions. These are of two kinds: buying and selling and having dealings with the royal palace."

have occurred, as we can see from the account of the ninth-century Guru Purandara, the royal preceptor of a king Avantivarman and founder of two major Saiddhāntika monasteries, at Mattamayūra and Araṇipadra in the old princely state of Gwalior, given in an inscription found in the remains of the second of these monasteries, composed to commemorate works undertaken there by a certain Vyomaśiva, a spiritual successor of Purandara four preceptorial generations later:

Then came the Guru Purandara,¹⁷ befitted a *guru* had the gravity that comes from the highest wisdom, whose teachings concerning the duties [of Śaiva initiates] are never to this day contradicted by scholars learned in the way of discipline, whom the glorious and virtuous king Avanti[varman] made efforts to bring to this land, because he desired to receive [Śaiva] initiation and had heard from one of his agents that there was a certain holy ascetic in the vicinity of Uttamaśikhara shining in unimaginable glory, shedding his radiance like the sun. Avantivarman then went to [Purandara], who was practising austerities in Upendrapura, and having striven to win his favour succeeded in bringing him back to sanctify his kingdom.¹⁸

¹⁷ Saiddhāntika ascetics have initiation names, generally ending in *-śiva* or, in our earliest evidence, also *-jyotis*. So Purandara might seem not to be an initiation name. However, I propose that, since Purandara is a name of the deity Indra, it is a familiar substitute for the initiation name Indraśiva that is attested elsewhere in Saiddhāntika records. The Bangarh Praśasti of Mūrtiśiva reports that a Saiddhāntika *guru* of this name was given a monastery (*maṭha*) near Koṭivarṣa in Northern Bengal by the Pāla king Mahīpāla (r. ca. 977–1027) (v. 9: *śrīmān indraśivaḥ ... samabhavac chiṣyo sya puṇyātmanaḥ | yasmai ... -maṭhan dadāv iha mahīpālo nrpas tattvavit* (SIRCAR 1983). An Indraśiva is anthologised in *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* 742; and another Indraśiva is reported as a royal preceptor (*rājaguru*) in an inscription in the Dharwar District (SOUTH-INDIAN INSCRIPTIONS 11: 156). It appears from the first of the verses I have cited here, v. 10, that this *guru* was the author of a ritual manual, a Paddhati, for the guidance of initiates. But I am not aware of any other reference to it.

¹⁸ The identity of Upendrapura is not known to me, but it is probable that it was in Mālava, since EPIGRAPHIA INDICA 20: 11, an inscription of 1110 CE issued by Naravarman, the Paramāra ruling that region, speaks of the village of Kadambapadraka in the Mandāraka Pratijāgaraṇaka in the Upendrapura District (ll. 5–6: *upendrapuramaṇḍale mandāraka pratijāgaraṇake mahāmaṇḍalikaśrīrājyadevabhujyamānakadambapadrakagrāme*). It is likely that it was founded by the early Paramāra

Then, having served him with devotion he duly received Śaiva initiation [from him]. The wise king then presented him with the best part of the wealth of his kingdom as *guru*'s fee and so brought his human birth to fulfilment. In the splendid town of Mattamayūra the sage then caused a richly endowed Meru-like monastery to be built, a treasury of jewel-like ascetics, the fame of which has reached [throughout the continent] to the oceans. This foremost of sages, himself unmatched in his virtues, built and richly endowed a second and most splendid monastery, [this] hermitage of Araṇipadra.¹⁹

Initiating the monarch and the spread of the Saiddhāntika Mantramārga

The often very large amounts of revenue that kings would make over to their royal preceptors as payment for initiation must have been a more than

king Upendra to bear his name (*svanāmnā*). In the account of the Paramāra lineage given by Padmagupta in the *Navasāhasāṅkacarita*, Upendra is the first historical king mentioned in the lineage after the “Ādirāja” Paramāra (11.76–80). His foundational status in this dynasty is suggested by the tradition reported there by Padmagupta that he sanctified the land with golden *yūpas* commemorating his Śrauta sacrifices (11.78: *akāri yajvanā yena hemayūpāṅkitā mahī*). Uttamaśikhara is otherwise unknown, as is this king Avantivarman.

¹⁹ EPIGRAPHIA INDICA 1: 41 (the Ranod inscription, ed. F. Kielhorn), vv. 10–15:

10 *tasmāt purandaragurur guruvad garimṇaḥ*
prajñātirekajanitasya babhūva bhūmiḥ
yasyādhunāpi vibudhair itikṛtyaśamsi
vyāhanyate na vacanaṃ nayamārgavidbhīḥ
 11 *vandyaḥ ko 'pi cakāsty acintyamahimā tulyaṃ munir bhāsvatā*
rājann uttamaśabdapūrvaśikharābhyarṇam prakīrṇadyutiḥ
dīkṣārthīti vaco nīsamya sukṛtī cāroktam urvīpatir
yasyehānayanāya yatnam akaroc chrīmān avantiḥ purā
 12 *gatvā tapasyantam upendrapūrve pure tadā śrīmadavantivarmā*
bhṛṣaṃ samārādhy tam ātmabhūmiṃ kathaṅcid āṇya cakāra pūtām
 13 *athopasadyāpya ca samyag aiśīm dīkṣāṃ sa dakṣo gurudakṣiṇārtham*
nivedya yasmai nijarājyasāraṃ svajanmasāphalyam avāpa bhūpaḥ
 14 *sa kārayām āsa samṛddhibhājāṃ munir maṭhaṃ sanmuniratnabhūmiṃ*
prasiddham āvāridhi merukalpaṃ śrīmatpure mattamayūranāmnī
 15 *punar dvitīyaṃ svayam advitīyo guṇair mmunīndro 'raṇipadrasaṃjñam*
tapovanaṃ śreṣṭhamaṭhaṃ vidhāya preṣṭhaḥ pratiṣṭhām paramāṃ nināya.

sufficient inducement to surrender an ascetic's tranquillity for this publicly conspicuous role. With the funds thus acquired, the Saiddhāntikas were quickly able to expand their power across the subcontinent, founding new monasteries and installing their disciples in them as *guru* abbots who would repeat the process, creating a far-reaching network of branch-organisations.²⁰ In this way there arose major *gurus* whom inscriptions report to have been the *dīkṣāgurus*, the initiating preceptors, of not one but numerous kings spanning the Indian subcontinent, exercising in this way a religious authority that spread far beyond the borders of a single kingdom.²¹

The initiating of kings became, then, the principal motor of the spread of the Saiddhāntika Mantramārga. However, to accomplish this required a major adjustment to the institution of Śaiva initiation. The benefit promised to all initiates was that the ceremony would destroy the bonds of the soul on a subliminal level in such a way that one would achieve liberation at death. But until death came the initiate was obliged to adhere to a new life of regular and time-consuming ritual obligations added to the Brahmanical. Such a life of intensified observance was evidently incompatible with the duties of a ruling monarch. So the Mantramārga circumvented this obstacle on the back of the doctrine that it is initiation itself that frees the soul rather than a particular lifelong routine of post-initiatory duties. This enabled them to claim that only those who were able to take on the usual post-initiatory duties need be required to do so and that those who were unable to take them on, notably the monarch, could be freed of them yet still reap the reward of initiation. It was enough according to the Saiddhāntikas that such a king should continue to observe the much less-demanding duties of a lay Śaiva monarch as prescribed in the Śivadharma literature, the essence of which was to support the faith and its institutions.²² Kings, then, were offered the benefit of initiation without the inconvenience of a regular initiate's lifelong routine. Moreover, as though in admission that the promise of liberation at death might not provide a sufficient incentive, we find inscriptions praising royal initiation as a means of enhancing the king's prestige and military might.²³

²⁰ SANDERSON 2009: 263–268.

²¹ SANDERSON 2009: 267–268.

²² See here n. 2.

²³ SANDERSON 2009: 258–259.

Consecrating the monarch in the Saiddhāntika Mantramārga

By the tenth century at the latest, the practice of bestowing Śaiva initiation on monarchs was extended through the creation of a Śaiva version of the Brahmanical royal consecration ceremony (*rājyābhiṣekaḥ*) for an initiated king and his chief queen. We have a rich description, unfortunately somewhat lacunose, of this new ceremony in our earliest surviving ritual manual for the use of officiants of the Saiddhāntika tradition, the *Naimittika-kriyānusaṃdhāna* of Brahmaśambhu, completed in Śaka 860 (937/8 CE).

I wish to draw attention to two features of this ceremony. The first is its hybrid character. Properly Śaiva and Brahmanical elements are combined and the royal weapons, royal standards, and royal armour are added to the recipients of worship, embedding the power of the esoteric Śaiva elements in an exoteric, more public context. Moreover, although the ceremony is added to the Saiddhāntika repertoire as a variant of the consecration of a *guru* (*ācāryābhiṣekaḥ*) or *sādhaka* (*sādhakābhiṣekaḥ*), the stated purpose of the ritual remains that of the Brahmanical ritual, namely to consecrate the monarch to his non-Śaiva office as the person responsible for the preservation of the Brahmanical order of the caste-classes and religious disciplines,²⁴ and for this purpose the consecration *mantra* is not Śaiva at all. Rather it is the Brahmanical text prescribed for this purpose.²⁵

The second feature I wish to bring to your attention is the fact that this account, like that of royal text donation in the *Śivadharmottara*, gives us a rare glimpse of the impressive public setting of what we might otherwise

²⁴ *Naimittikakriyānusaṃdhāna*, f. 74v1, 4.118: *varṇānām āśramāṇām ca guru-bhāvāya bhūpateḥ | yo 'bhiṣekavidhiḥ sopi procyate dīkṣitātmanaḥ*. “I shall now also teach that [form of the] ritual of consecration whose purpose is to empower the king, once he has been initiated, to be the guru of the caste-classes and religious disciplines.”

²⁵ This is the *mantra* for periodic royal reconsecration, beginning with the words *surās tvām abhiṣiṅcantu*, that is given by the sixth-century Varāhamihira in 47.55–70 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the well-known classic on divination. He reports there that he is basing his account of this ritual on that of the Elder Garga (47.2), who received it from Bhāguri. He refers, I presume, to the *Gargasamhitā*, a huge treatise on divination whose first version, according to PINGREE (1981: 69), was composed during the first century BCE or CE. I am unable at present to ascertain whether or not this royal consecration text is found in that work.

have taken to be a purely private event. I give here a brief synopsis of the account.

In a large pavilion constructed for the ceremony equipped with various altar platforms, the *ācārya* should worship the Lokapālas and their weapons in vases filled with river water. Then he should worship Śiva, Agni, the [royal] weapons, and the [royal] banners on the altar-platforms. He should summon, gratify, and worship the eight Śaiva Cakravartins from Ananta to Śikhaṇḍin,²⁶ in vases set up on another platform, and, in vases below it, the Rudras, Mātr̥s, Gaṇas, Yakṣas, Grahas, Asuras, Rākṣasas, and Nāgarājas.²⁷

In the Śivāgni, a sacrificial fire consecrated through the transformation of the deity Fire (*agniḥ*) into Śiva, he should make 108 oblations to each of the deities and put out *bali* offerings for the various classes of supernaturals in each of the directions.²⁸ This ends the preparatory rites.

The king should be brought into the pavilion accompanied by his [chief] minister (*mantrī*) and his chaplain (*purohitaḥ*) and then the chief queen (*devī*) accompanied by an elderly female companion (*vṛddhasakhī*). When they have been made to offer worship to Śiva, the Fire, the [royal] weapons

²⁶ These are the deities more commonly called the Vidyēśvaras. See, e.g., *Rauravasūtrasaṃgraha* 2.9–13; *Matanṅgapārameśvara*, *Vidyāpāda* 5.5–16, *Svacchanda* 10.1103c–1104, *Tantrāloka* 8.342–343. In Saiddhāntika scriptural texts, they are commonly required to be worshipped surrounding the core *mantra*-group (*garbhāvaraṇam*) consisting of Śiva and his ancillaries, with the Lokapālas and the Lokapālas' weapons forming two outer circuits, as in *Niśvāsamūla* 4.4c–5: *pūrvoktena vidhānena madhye devaṃ tu pūjayet || vidyēśvarān dvitīye tu lokapālāṃs tṛtīyake | caturthe pūjaye 'strāṇi gandhapuṣpair yathākramam*. “Following the aforesaid procedure, he should worship in the [proper] order Śiva in the centre, the Vidyēśvaras in the second [circuit], the Lokapālas in the third, and the weapons in the fourth.”

²⁷ *Naimittikakriyānusamdhāna* 4.129–133: *sravantīvāripūrṇeṣu yathālaṃkārahāriṣu | ghaṭeṣv abhyarcya lokeśān sāstrān *indrapurāḥsarān* (corr. : *indrapurasarān* cod.) || 130 *śivam agniḥ ca hetīś ca *ketūṃś* (conj. : *ketuś* cod.) *ceśādivēdiṣu | saṃnidhīkṛtya saṃtarpya pūjayet cakravartināḥ* || 131 *udagvedīśiraḥstheṣu kalaśe-śūktalakṣmasu | *anantādiśikhāṇḍyantān antān* (corr. : *antā* cod.) *digvidikṣu yathākramam* || 132 *tasyās tadvad *adhaḥstheṣu* (corr. : *adhasstheṣu* cod.) *rudramātrgaṇārthadān | *grahāsurapalāśākhyān palāśākhyān* (conj. : *palāśākhyā* cod.) *bhogināṃ adhipān api*.

²⁸ *Naimittikakriyānusamdhāna* 4.137: *śatam aṣṭottaraṃ hutvā pratyekaṃ ca śivānale | digbhūtagaṇasaṅghebhya dattvā dikṣu bahirbalim*.

and the [royal] banners, the *ācārya* has them spend the night sleeping in the pavilion. He says a prayer that an auspicious dream may be seen by the king, his queen, their companions, or himself.²⁹

After sleeping there himself, the next morning he examines the dreams and counters with oblations any that are inauspicious. He then summons the deities that are the guardians of the hall of sacrifice and worships them as before. He pours oblations to Śiva, to the royal weapons, the royal banners, and the king's armour (*kaṅkaṭāṇi*). He makes offerings to the Viḍyeśvaras on their platform as before and to the Rudras and the others in the vases. Then he spreads the skins of a fighting bull and a cat on each of the platforms.³⁰ A lacuna of one folio follows. But the missing action was no doubt to prepare the platforms to receive the king and queen for their consecration, since such skins are required in Brahmanical sources to cover the platform before the king sits on it to receive the consecration to his office (*rājyābhiṣekaḥ*).³¹

²⁹ *Naimittikakriyānusamdhāna* 4.138–146: *tatas tam avanīnātham anāhāram anākulam | snātaṃ candanalīptāṅgaṃ sitrasragvastrabhūṣaṇam || 39 praveśya dvāramārgeṇa dakṣiṇena pracetasah | sārddhaṃ mantripurodhābhyāṃ śivam arcāpayet kramāt || 140 devīm *vṛddhasakhīṃ cāsyāḥ* (em. : *vṛddhasakhī cāsyā* cod.) *saumyenaivāmbhasaḥ pateḥ || praveśya pātayec chambhor niyamasthām padābjayoh || 141 śivāgnihetiketūnām kārītābhyām athārcanam | pañcagavyaṃ caruṃ tābhyām dattvā ca dvijaśodhanam || 142 sthāpayitvā tu tau tatra sarakṣau vedikādvaye | *prthak* (corr. : *prtha* cod.) *prākśīrasau mahyām samyatau kṣaumaśayayoh || 143 yad vā tatpratimau viprau śivabhaktāv upoṣṭau | śubhasvapnāvabodhāya tayor vaṃśakramāgatau || 144 *samabhyarcyāpi* (conj. : *samabhyarcēpi* cod.) *saṃhṛtya śivam sthaṇḍilato nale | tatra hutvā ca carvādi doṣāṇām upasāntaye || 145 nṛpasyāmuṣya devyā vā tadāptānām mamāthavā | svapnaṃ śubhāśubhaprāptihānīlīṅgaṃ pradarśaya || 146 ity adhyeṣya praṇamyāpi pūjayitvā prarocya ca | tattraiva rodhayed yāvac caturthābhiṣeca*nam* (corr. : *na* cod.).

³⁰ *Naimittikakriyānusamdhāna* 4.147–152: *athādhvaraśraman tasmin nirasya niśi nidrayā | prātar nityavidher ante sādhusvapnān niśamya ca || 148 samāvarjita-sarvāṅgaṃ gośakṛddi + + + + | nṛpābhiṣecanāyālam adhiṭiṣṭhed gurus tataḥ || 149 tatra *yajñasadahpālān yajña* (corr. : *yajnaḥ* cod.) *āmantryeṣtvā ca pūrvavat | kāraṇaṃ kāraṇānāṃ ca tarpayī[tvā + + +]kam || 150 hetīn astreṇa ketūmś ca varmaṇā kaṅkaṭāṇy api | sugandhapuṣpadhūpādyair naivedyāntaiḥ prapūjya ca || 151 anantādīṃś ca ved + + + + vedyāś ca pūrvavat || rudrādīṃś ca ghaṭeṣv iṣtvā vedyor ūrdhvam athāstaret || 152 brhadukṣṇo 'tiśūrasya vṛṣadamśasya carma ca | caturṇām aśu.* With this f. 76v ends.

³¹ *Brhatsaṃhitā* 47.43–44: *ādāv anaḍuhas carma jarayā saṃhṛtāyuṣaḥ | praśasta-*

When the text returns, the king is being consecrated with the liquid from the vases, and Brahmins are being made to chant the consecration benedictions (*abhiṣekāśiṣaḥ*) “known in mundane usage (*loke*) and in the Veda” and [then] “the verses taught by the Ṛṣis.” The last are then given in full and they are the Brahmanical royal consecration *mantra* taught for this purpose by Varāhamihira in his *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*.³²

After his consecration, the king is to give the pavilion and its ritual equipment to the officiants, make large donations of money to the Brahmins and of mounts to the bards. There follows an account of the spectacle of the king’s return. He is to come out of the pavilion with his queen, mount a fine elephant or white horse and, shaded by a white parasol with a golden handle and fanned with white chowries, set forth to return to his palace in a procession with his army of elephants, chariots, cavalry, and infantry (*caturaṅgabaloṣaṭaḥ*), all obstacles removed by the row of war banners (*ketumālayā*) that precedes him fluttering in a favouring breeze, and acknowledging his being showered with parched grain by women of good family positioned on platforms on the tops of their whitewashed mansions. He should reenter the palace “worshipped by the citizens with their long eyes wide in wonder that surpass the beauty of blue lilies.” The heir-apparent should be consecrated to his office in the same way.³³

lakṣaṇabhṛtaḥ prācīnagrīvaṃ āstaret || tato vṛṣasya yodhasya carma rohitam akṣatam |
simhasyātha tṛtīyaṃ syād vyāghrasya ca tataḥ param. “First he should spread the hide of an ox that possesses auspicious characteristics, that has died of old age, with the neck to the west, then the undamaged red hide of a fighting bull (*vṛṣasya yodhasya*). That of a lion should be third and that of a tiger should follow.”

³² *Naimittikakriyānusaṃdhāna* 4.167–168: + + + + + + + + [ā]dibhir
alaṃkṛtaiḥ | satkriyānantaraṃ bhūyaḥ kalaśair abhiṣecayet | 168 loke vede prasi-
*ddhās ca viprān etarhi pāthayet | abhiṣek*āśiṣaḥ* (em. : *āsikhaḥ* cod.) *ślokaṃ*
*ṛṣi*proktāṃś* (corr. : *proktāś* cod.) *ca tad yathā.* The verses of the consecration text follow (4.169–181).

³³ *Naimittikakriyānusaṃdhāna*, f. [84?]r1–5, 4.269c–276b: + + + + + + + + +
mbarabhūṣaṇaḥ || 270 deśikebhyah sayajñāṅgaṃ dattvā taṃ yajñamaṇḍapam |
prabhūtaṃ vasu viprebhyo vāhanāni ca vandinām || 271 pūrvadvāreṇa niḥkramya
svamahīṣyā samanvitaḥ | ārūḍho bhadramātaṅgaṃ athavā vājinaṃ sitam || 272
ātapatreṇa śubhreṇa hemadaṇḍena copari | nigṛhītāṭapaḥ śvetair vījyamānaś ca
**cāmaraiḥ* (em. : *cāparaiḥ* A) *|| 273 caturaṅgabaloṣaṭaḥ purataḥ ketumālayā |*
*astaviḅghno *nukūlena dhūtayā mātariśvanā || 274 saudhāgravedikāsthābhiḥ kula-*
*patnībhir ādarāt | prayuktaṃ lājavarṣaṃ ca manyamāno *bahu* (conj. : *vaha* cod.)

That the king should appear in a full military parade shows the extent to which the Śaivism of the Mantramārga had succeeded in spite of its Tantric and therefore esoteric character in making itself visible in the public domain. Though the ceremony of consecration takes place within a closed pavilion, the whole population of the city is mobilised to witness that the ceremony has occurred; and the impact on the populace is magnified by the king's processing back to his palace in a full military parade.

That this was the norm in the case of royal Tantric ceremonies is indicated by similar prescriptions found in other sources. A guide for the initiation of the Amṛteśa form of Śiva based on the *Netratantra*, which has come down to us in a Nepalese manuscript, rules as follows:

Then [on the day] after [his initiation] the pupil should [go] with a joyful heart accompanied by his wives and sons, with his ministers, soldiers, and mounts [and] offer himself before his *guru* in thought, speech, and, above all, in deed.³⁴

There can be no doubt that the initiand envisaged in this guide is the king, since the compound *sabhr̥tyabalavāhanaḥ*, which I have translated “with his ministers, soldiers, and mounts,” can have no other reference and is in any case a stock epithet in metrical descriptions of monarchs.³⁵

There is further evidence in the account of rites concluding the initiation ceremony prescribed by the Saiddhāntika scripture *Bṛhatkāḷottara*. For that states that the *guru* should close the initiation by sprinkling with the water from the vase of the weapon-*mantra* (*astrakalaśaḥ*), one of the two main vases prepared in the course of the ceremony, the horses, elephants, chariots, and soldiers of the army “in order to remove all obstacles and to ensure

prīyam || 275 *praviśet svapuram pauraṁ arcyamāno vikāśibhiḥ* | *nīlanīraruha-cchāyātaskarair āyatekṣaṇaiḥ* || 276 *anenaiva vidhānena yuvarājābhiṣecanam*.

³⁴ Viśveśvara, *Amṛteśadīkṣāvidhi*, f. 16v6, vv. 44–45b: 44 *sabhāryaḥ sasutaḥ paścāt sabhr̥tyabalavāhanaḥ* | *śiṣyaḥ prahr̥ṣṭamanasā guror agre nivedayet* || 45 *ātmānam manasā vācā karmaṇā ca viśeṣataḥ* |. **45a** *ātmānam* em. : *ātmanā* cod.

³⁵ See, e.g., *Mahābhārata* 1.63.14; 3.82.63; 3.195.10; 7.123.15.

victory in battle.”³⁶ Evidently the initiation being described here is that of a monarch; and it seems reasonable in the light of the other passages cited to understand from this remark that the king would have come for the ceremony in a full military parade.

The Mantramārga, then, in spite of its Tantric emphasis on secrecy, had found ways of ensuring that the rites with which it empowered the monarch were fully public events of the kind that occasioned national holidays. Indeed the very secrecy of its rituals must have heightened the impression made by these events on the populace, who could believe that their monarch had emerged having received an empowerment of such intensity that the ceremony itself, unlike the Brahmanical royal consecration, had to be concealed from the uninitiated, that his power and consequently their security had been enhanced to a degree not possible by more exoteric means.

The Śaiva-Brahmanical social order

I have said that the Śaiva adaptation of the royal consecration ritual prescribed by Brahmasambhu in his *Naimittikakriyānusaṃdhāna* served the Brahmanical purpose of consecrating an initiated Śaiva monarch in his traditional role as the *varṇāśramaguruḥ*, the guardian of the Brahmanical order of caste-classes and religious disciplines. But it should be understood that what is envisaged here, indeed what is enacted by the ritual, is not a purely Brahmanical social order but a two-tiered Śaiva-Brahmanical hierarchy within which the monarch’s duty is not only to maintain the boundaries that separate the castes and disciplines but also to ensure that Śaivism is maintained as a higher level of religious observance above the Brahmanical, one that does nothing to destabilise the Brahmanical social order but which offers members of that social order a means of transcendence not available through its religious practices. This obligation is no more than implicit in the *Naimittikakriyānusaṃdhāna*; but it is fully expressed in the following passage of the *Mohacūḍottara*, a Saiddhāntika scripture whose specialised subject matter is *pratiṣṭhā*, the design and consecration of tem-

³⁶ *Brhatkāḷottara* f. 45v2–3 (22.24c–25b): **hastyāśvarathayodhānām yodhānām* (em. : *yodhyānā* cod.) *secanam astravāriṇā | kartavyam vighnaśamanam saṃgrāme jayakāraṇam*.

ples, monasteries, images, royal palaces, and new settlements. Indeed we are told that if he maintains the Brahmanical social order in this modified form his kingdom will prosper. The unstated corollary is that if he does not it will not:

4.275 *prajāpālaḥ smṛto rājā tasmān nyāyayaṁ tu rakṣaṇam*
varṇānām anupūrveṇa dharmam deśāpayen nṛpaḥ
 276 *śrutismṛtipurāṇāni āgamā dharmadeśakāḥ*
etaiṣa yo vartate rājā sa rājyaṁ bhuñjate ciram
 277 *purāṇam bādhyate vedaiḥ āgamaḥ ca taduktayaḥ*
sāmānyam ca viśeṣam ca śaivaṁ vaiśeṣikaṁ vacaḥ
 278 *bādhyabādhakabhāvena no vikalpyam vicakṣaṇaiḥ*
yad yathāvasthitam vastu sarvajñas tat tathā vadet
 279 *āgamānām bahutve tu yatra vākyadvayaṁ bhavet*
kiṁ pramāṇam tadā grāhyaṁ pramāṇam sāmikam vacaḥ
 280 *†granthād granthāntaram tīkā† sāpekṣanirapekṣayoḥ*
samādhānaṁ tayoḥ kāryam arthāpattiyādisādhanaḥ
 281 *evaṁ jñātvā surādhyakṣa nirvṛtiṁ paramāṁ vraja*
evaṁ dharmānvite rājñi svarāṣṭre sarvadā śivam

Mohacūḍottara, ff. 21v6–22r2

278b *vikalpyam* conj. : *vikalpaṁ* cod. **278d** *tat tathā* conj. : *tat tadā* cod.

Tradition declares that the king is the protector of his subjects.³⁷ Therefore it is right that he should protect the caste communities and ensure that they are instructed in their duties, each according to its station. The sources that convey these duties are Śruti, Smṛti, Purāṇa, and the [Śaiva] scriptures (*āgamāḥ*). If the king abides by these, he enjoys a long reign. [The correct order of authority in which they should be applied is as follows.] The Vedas [comprising both Śruti and Smṛti] take precedence over the Purāṇas, and the [Śaiva] scriptures take precedence over the teachings of the Vedas.

³⁷ See the Brahmanical sources given in SANDERSON 2009: 244, n. 594.

There is the common [Brahmanical authority of Śruti, Smṛti, and Purāṇa] (*sāmānyam*), and then there is the special (*viśeṣam*). The Śaiva [scriptures] (*śaivam*) are the latter (*vaiśeṣikaṃ vacaḥ*). [So] the learned should not doubt their authority when they find that they conflict with [a Brahmanical injunction]. Being omniscient, [Śiva] can only state everything just as it is.³⁸ Given the plurality of scriptural authorities, whenever there is a question as to which of two [conflicting] statements takes precedence, he should adopt that which has been taught by Śiva. He should reconcile the two, whether self-sufficient or depending for the understanding of its meaning on [examination in the light of] other sources of the same kind, related sources, and, [where they fail], learned exegesis, by applying such modes of reasoning as presumption (*arthāpattiḥ*). Understand this, O Indra, and thereby attain the ultimate bliss. When the king understands the duties of religion in this way his realm will always prosper.

Public engagement in the non-Saiddhāntika Mantramārgic ritual systems

In comparison with the Saiddhāntika Mantramārga, the Mantramārga's non-Saiddhāntika cults seem to have been rather less engaged in activities in the public domain. Saiddhāntika *gurus*, for example, appear to have dominated officiation in the Mantramārga's very public and prolonged rituals for the consecration of temples and fixed substrates of worship, notably the consecration of the major temple and its *liṅga* that any Śaiva king worthy of the name would establish in his name to mark his reign.³⁹ In

³⁸ My emendation of *tat tadā* to *tat tathā* restores proper syntax by balancing the *yad yathā* of the subordinate clause. But it also has the support of a close parallel in *Śivadharmottara* 1.41: *yad yathāvasthitam vastu guṇadoṣaiḥ svabhāvataḥ | yāvat phalaṃ ca puṇyam ca sarvajñas tat tathā vadet*. The parallel also supports the optative *vadet*. It might otherwise be tempting to emend *tathā vadet* to *tadāvadat*, making this a statement that Śiva *has* taught things exactly as they are.

³⁹ A Śiva installed in a fixed *liṅga* was given a two-part compound name whose first half would generally be that of the founder and whose second half would be -*īśvara*. Thus, for example a Śiva founded by an Avantivarman would be named Avantīśvara. If the deity were a Viṣṇu then the name would be Avantisvāmin. The purpose of such naming was not merely to immortalise the founder. It also served a

marked contrast, Abhinavagupta, speaking for the non-Saiddhāntika Mantramārga in his *Tantrāloka*, insists that the *mantras* of his tradition must never be installed in fixed images, which is to say, in the relatively public environment of the temple, where their worship would be the responsibility of no one individual. They may be installed only in small, mobile substrates for the personal cult of an individual initiate:

2 *eteṣām ūrdhvaśāstrokta-mantrāṇām na pratiṣṭhitim*
bahiṣ kuryād yato hy ete rahasyatvena siddhidāḥ
 3 *svavīryānandamāhātmyapraveśavaśālinīm*
ye siddhiṃ dadate teṣām bāhyatvaṃ rūpavicyutiḥ
 4 *kiṃ ca śāktasamāveśapūrṇo bhoktrātmakaḥ śivaḥ*
bhogalāmpatyabhāg bhogavicchede nigrhātmaḥ
 5 *śāntatvanyakkriyodbhūtajighatsābr̥ṃhitaṃ vapuḥ*
svayaṃ pratiṣṭhitaṃ yena so 'syābhoge vinaśyati
 6 *uktaṃ jñānottarāyām ca tad etat paramēśinā*
śivo yāgapriyo yasmād viśeṣān mātṛmadhyagaḥ
 7 *tasmād rahasyaśāstreṣu ye mantrās tān budho bahiḥ*
na pratiṣṭhāpayej jātu viśeṣād vyaktarūpiṇaḥ
 8 *ata eva mṛtasyārthe pratiṣṭhānyatra yoditā*
sātra śāstreṣu no kāryā kāryā sādḥāraṇī punaḥ

Abhinavagupta, *Tantrāloka* 27.2–8

2b *pratiṣṭhitim* em. : *pratiṣṭhitam* WZYN **2c** *kuryād yato hy ete* WN :
kuryāt tato hy ete Z K_{ED} **4a** *kiṃ ca* Z K_{ED} : *kintu* WNY • *śāktasamāveśa* W :
śāktapadāveśa NY : *coktaṃ samāveśa* Z K_{ED}

legal purpose. Giving a personal name to the deity installed in the principal idol of a temple enabled it to be the locus of the foundation's juristic personality. It was then possible to appoint officials who could, when necessary, go to court to defend its legal rights, notably its right to whatever properties and revenues had been gifted to it by the founder, and any later donors, to fund its activities.

He should not install in the public domain (*bahiḥ*) these *mantras* that have been taught in the higher scriptures, because it is by their remaining hidden that they grant success. The success that they bestow abounds in the power that comes from [their] ability to lead one into the vastness of the bliss that is their inner vigour. For such *mantras* to be installed externally [in fixed substrates] is for them to fall from their nature. Moreover, when Śiva is fully expanded [as Bhairava] through immersion in Śakti he tastes the offerings of food and drink with much greater eagerness to devour them, and if his pleasure is ever interrupted [through omission] he will be eager to punish. If a person installs a deity form that is energised by this urge to devour that arises from rising above the tranquil transcendence [of the Saiddhāntika *mantras*], he must feed it without fail. If he does not do so he will be lost. It is this that the Supreme Lord refers to in the *Jñānottara[samhit]ā* in the words:

Śiva is all the more attached to his offerings when [as Bhairava] he is the midst of the Mothers. For this reason, an initiate should never install the *mantras* [taught] in the esoteric scriptures outside his private cult, particularly not with anthropomorphic form.

This is why the installation [of a Bhairava] on behalf of the deceased that has been taught elsewhere must not be done with [the *mantras* of] these [non-Saiddhāntika] scriptures. It should be done instead with one of the exoteric *mantras*.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Seven such *mantras*, termed universal (*sādhāraṇāḥ*), are listed by Abhinavagupta in *Tantrāloka* 22.20: *praṇavo mātṛkā māyā vyomavyāpī ṣaḍakṣaraḥ | bahu-rūpo 'tha netrākhyah sapta sādharmaṇāḥ amī*. “The following are the universal *mantras*: OM, the syllabary, HRĪM, [the 81-unit] Vyomavyāpimantra, OM NAMAḤ ŚIVĀYA (*ṣaḍakṣaraḥ*), Bahurūpa (the 32-syllable Yajurvedic Aghoramantra), and OM JUM SAḤ (Netra, Mṛtyuñjaya).” The Saiddhāntika Vidyākāṇṭha also lists seven but with the Prāsāda in place of the Netra in *Bhāvacūdāmaṇi*, f. 4v16-5r2, quoting an unidentified source: *sādhāraṇena mantreṇeti. sādharmaṇā mantrāḥ sapta. yad uktaṁ samhitāntare “praṇavo mātṛkā <māyā> vyomavyāpī ṣaḍakṣaraḥ | *prāsādo (corr. : prasādo cod.) bahu-rūpaś ca sapta sādharmaṇāḥ smṛtā” iti*. The Prāsādamantra is HAUŪM, the seed-syllable of Śiva in the Saiddhāntika system of the *Kālottara* recensions. See *Sārdhatṛiśatikālottara* 1.11 and Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha

The last verse of this passage establishes that the *mantras* of “the higher scriptures” that should not be installed in fixed, non-private substrates of worship are not just those of the Trika, the Śākta system being expounded in the *Tantrāloka*. For the scriptural source to which Abhinavagupta is referring here without naming it is *Netra* 18.120–121, which enjoins the installation of a Bhairava image accompanied by two, four, or eight Śaktis in the cremation ground on behalf of a deceased and cremated initiate. The *mantras* that should not be installed in this case are not those of the Trika but those of the worship of Bhairava taught in texts of the Mantrapīṭha. From this we can infer that the prohibition was intended to apply to the whole range of non-Saiddhāntika *mantras*.

How strictly observed, one is bound to ask, was this boundary between the outer world of public installations, recognised as the domain of the Saiddhāntika Mantramārga or of non-Saiddhāntika officiants using Saiddhāntika procedures, and this strictly private world of non-Saiddhāntika practice? After all, the separation between the two is presented to us through a prohibition; and a prohibition is more likely to be designed to stop a practice that was current than to prevent a practice that was not.

I am aware of one major case in which this prohibition was not observed, and I suspect that there are others that further work with ritual manuals, inscriptions, and ethnographic data may bring to light. The case to which I refer to is that of the South Indian *Brahmayāmala* tradition. For that has its roots in the non-Saiddhāntika cult of the goddess Aghorī and her Śaktis taught in the *Picumata/Brahmayāmala* but has the nature of a temple-based cult in the hands of non-Brahmin officiants whose primarily purpose was state protection.⁴¹

Other cases that may well be of this kind are the cults of the royal goddesses Siddhalakṣmī, Guhyakālī, and Kubjikā, who have several inaccessible but conspicuous temples in the Kathmandu valley.⁴² If these Tantric cults among the Śaiva Newars of the Kathmandu valley did cross the line drawn by Abhinavagupta, then they no doubt did so as elements of a

thereon, giving HAUŪM; also Trilocanaśiva, *Siddhāntasārāvali*, vv. 33 and 36. Kṣemarāja recognises all eight as *sādhāraṇā mantrāḥ* in *Netroddyota* vol. 2, p. 10, ll. 9–17.

⁴¹ SANDERSON 2007: 277–278 and 2014: 30–32, 40–42, and 50–52.

⁴² SANDERSON 2003–2004: 366–372.

broader process that is widely attested, namely the co-opting of non-Saiddhāntika Śaiva cults by royal patrons for the protection of their persons and the state.

I have drawn attention to a number of such cults in previous publications, notably the state cult of the goddess sisters Jayā Vijayā, Jayantī, and Aparājītā and their brother Tumburu[bhairava] that was established in the Khmer realm early in the ninth century to guarantee the state's enduring independence;⁴³ the cult of Svachhandabhairava incorporated in the *Uttarabhāga* of the *Līṅgapurāṇa* as a means of warding off danger from the king and restoring him to health;⁴⁴ the elaborate ritual of consecration for victory (*jayābhiṣekaḥ*) that co-opts the goddess pantheon of the *Kubjikāmata*, which is taught in the same Purāṇic source;⁴⁵ and the cult of Bhadrakālī practised by the Paippalādin Atharvavedin officiants of Orissa to enhance the power of kings and protect them when they go into battle, which has co-opted the *mantras* of the Kaula Kālikula tradition.⁴⁶

The Kulamārga and the state

With the examples of the application of non-Saiddhāntika cults to the empowerment of the monarch and protection of the monarch, I have crossed from the Mantramārga into the Kulamārga, since that is the territory of the Kālikula and the cult of Kubjikā. Here more than in any other area of Śaiva practice, the reader of the learned literature might expect to find worship operating in an entirely private world cut off from and indeed concealed from mainstream religion. For these were extreme cults that involved orgiastic celebrations, contact with women of low caste, the consumption of meat, alcohol, and other impure substances,⁴⁷ and they surely needed to keep their heads down if they were to avoid the hostile intervention of state authorities. There certainly was a degree of hostility; but as the examples cited indicate this may have been stronger in the case of mainstream Brah-

⁴³ SANDERSON 2003–2004: 355–358; 2005b: 236–238.

⁴⁴ SANDERSON 2005b: 235.

⁴⁵ SANDERSON 2005b: 236.

⁴⁶ SANDERSON 2007: 255–298.

⁴⁷ On these substances, see SANDERSON 2005a: 110–114, n. 63.

manical thinking than it was among actual and potential royal patrons. The notion that the transgressive cult of the Mothers was an effective source of state protection is well illustrated in the South Indian *Brahmayāmala* tradition and in the cults of the royal lineage goddesses of the Kathmandu valley. Indeed this view is made explicit in the treatment of Kaula worship given in the Kashmirian *Netratāntra*, a text devoted to the rituals to be performed by a variety of Śaiva officiants who had moved into the territory traditionally reserved for the king's Brahmanical chaplain (*rājapurohitah*):

The [Mothers] should be worshipped with abundant offerings for the warding off of danger from all living beings by one desiring power in accordance with his particular aim. As for the *gurus* of kings, O goddess, they should worship them with special lavishness. For it is by their favour alone that any king on this earth enjoys sovereignty in good fortune, with all his enemies destroyed.⁴⁸

Thus while it appears that it was Saiddhāntika officiants that were the public, institutional face of the Mantramārga, interacting in a manner visible to the public with royal and other patrons in the context of such ceremonies as initiation, royal consecration, and the installation of fixed images in royal and other temples, presenting themselves as protectors of the Brahmanical

⁴⁸ *Netra*, f. 30v3–4 (K_{ED} 12.6c–8): *sarveṣāṃ caiva śāntyartham prāṇināṃ bhūtim icchatā || 7 || bhūriyāgena yaṣṭavyā yathākāmānurūpataḥ | viśeṣeṇa tu yaṣṭavyā bhūbhṛtānāṃ tu daiśikaiḥ || 8 || āsām eva prasādena rājyaṃ nihatakaṇṭakam | bhu-ñjate sarvarājānaḥ subhagā hy avanītale ||. 6c sarveṣāṃ caiva N : sarveṣāṃ eva K_{ED} 7b yathākāmānurūpataḥ K_{ED} : yathākarmānurūpataḥ N 7c viśeṣeṇa tu yaṣṭavyā N : viśeṣād devi yaṣṭavyā K_{ED} 7d bhūbhṛtānāṃ tu N : bhūbhṛtām api K_{ED}.*

I have edited the text here on the basis of a Nepalese palm-leaf ms. of 1200 CE, which transmits the text as it was prior to the expurgation of most of its non-Paninian forms that we see in the Kashmirian mss. that are the basis of K_{ED}. For my reasons for judging that this is a Kashmirian text and one that was composed between about 700 and 850 CE, probably towards the end of that period, see SANDERSON 2005: 273–294. The colophon of the ms. reports that the ms. was penned by a Paṇḍita Kīrtidhara who was commissioned to do so by Viśveśvara (f. 89r4–5: *saṃvat 320 caitra śu di 9 śanidine viśveśvareṇa likhāpitam idaṃ pustakam || paṇḍitakīrtti-dhar<eṇ>a likhitam mayā*). It is probable that the commissioner was the Viśveśvara to whom we owe the *Amṛteśādīkṣāvidhi*.

social order, it was by no means the case that the non-Saiddhāntika Śākta-oriented cults of the Mantramārga and Kulamārga were entirely domains of private spiritual practice. For learned Kashmirian authorities such as Abhinavagupta and Kṣemarāja this may seem to have been the case, because they place such stress on these cults as means of liberation. But they do not suppress evidence that these cults were also engaged in rituals designed to protect the king, the royal family, and indeed their subjects from all forms of misfortune. What is known of the role of Tantric ritual in the Kathmandu valley strongly supports the notion that while such ceremonies were no doubt carried out away from the public gaze, the populace was not unaware of their occurrence, especially when they were embedded in calendrically fixed ritual complexes in which the whole populace participated in the manner exemplified by Brahmaśambhu's account of royal consecration. Indeed in Newar society, in which Tantric rituals have played a vital role down to modern times, major calamities such as the massacre of the Nepalese royal family in 2001 have been attributed by traditionalists to failure to perform or perform correctly some Tantric ritual considered vital to their welfare and that of the whole community. As we have seen, Abhinavagupta warns of the danger of neglecting the worship of such deities. Where the cult is entirely private, as it is in the context in which Abhinavagupta refers to it, the only person endangered is the individual who has committed himself to it. Where the cult is for the benefit of all, the welfare of all, from the king down, is jeopardised.

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