

CHAPTER 3

THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT

Introducing Lakulisa-Pasupata philosophy:

The only way to reconstruct the theology and ritual of the *Lakulisa-Pasupatas*, the highly diffused sect of early Saivism, is to resort to their basic texts, the Pasupata sutras (PS)¹, along with its commentary, the *Pancharthabhasya* (PABh) by Kaundinya and *Ganakarika* (GK)² with the *ratnatika* (RT) by Bhasarvajna.

Prior to the publication of these basic texts, the only systematic account of Pasupata theology and ritual available to the scholars was Madhava's *Nakulisapasupata darsanam*, the sixth chapter of his *Sarvadarsanasamgraha* (SDS)³. Moreover there are sporadic references to their practice in Sanskrit katha literature and dramas and also a brief but fairly accurate information in the commentators remarks on the *Brahmasutra* 2.2.37, where the Vedantin refutes Pasupata Saivism

Based on such cursory information the system was commented upon by stalwarts like Gopinath Kaviraj⁴, S. Levi⁵, H.T. Colebrooke⁶, R.G. Bhandarkar⁷, E.B. Cowell and A.E. Gough who translated the entire text of SDS. Levi in his work on SDS in 1889 had earlier lamented the loss of PS and GK because it was realized that Madhava's account owed a lot to both these texts and its commentaries. Hence when finally these texts were published many scholars like K.C. Pandey⁸, J. Gonda⁹ and others took

¹ *Pasupata Sutra*, Ed by R.A. Shastri, University of Trivandrum, Trivandrum, 1940

Pasupata Sutra with Panchartha Bhasya of Kanundinya Trans. by Haripada Chakraborti, Academic Publishers, Calcutta, 1970

Pasupata Sutra, Panchartha Bhasya with commentary, Ganakarika of Bhasarvajna, Vayusamhita, Siva Purana, Brahmasutrasankarabhasya, Sankaradigvijaya and Nakulisapasupata darsan Ed. by Alokmani Tripathi, Delhi, 1998

² *Ganakarika* of Acharya Bhasarvajna, Ed by Chimanlal D. Dalal, Oriental Institute, M.S.U, Baroda, 1966

³ E.B. Cowell and A.E. Gough Ed. And Trans: 'The Sarvadarsanasamgraha or Review of the Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy by Madhava Acharya, Trubners Oriental Series, London (1882)

⁴ Kaviraj Gopinath, 'Notes on Pasupata Philosophy, Antiquity of the Pasupata Sect, The Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana Studies, Vol 9, sec II 99-106, 1934),

⁵ Levi S. 'Deux chapitres de Sarvadarsanasamgraha', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Sciences religieuses*, vol I 281 ff, 1889)

⁶ Colebrooke H.T. 'On the Philosophy of the Hindus, Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, vol I, 569-574, 1828

⁷ Bhandarkar R.G., 'Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems, Strassburg, 1913 pg 121-124

⁸ Pandey K.C. 'Bhaskari, vol 3 no. 84, The Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana Text, (Lucknow, 1954)

interest and tried to either refer to them or translate portions from them. It was finally S.N Dasgupta¹⁰ who in his pioneering work on the history of Indian philosophy first gave a brief but very useful outline of the system, based on the PABh of Kaundinya. He also discussed various problems of Pasupata Saivism and studied its connection with other schools of Indian philosophy.

Brief Summary of Pasupata Sutra as collated from various sources:

It is believed that Siva incarnated himself as *Nakulisa*, the 28th incarnation according to both *Vayu Purana* and *Linga Purana*. This incarnation is supposed to be the author of PS.

Sastri¹¹ thinks that Kaundinya the commentator on PABh may have lived between 4th -6th AD.

PS along with bhashya of Kaundinya do not give us any philosophy of Saivism per se. They deal mostly with the ritual or rather modes of life. As Dasgupta suggests it may be quite plausible that such ascetic forms of life as mentioned in these texts existed from early times and that later the philosophy of Saivism was added. Though the rituals and vidhis mentioned had hardly any visible connection with the later Saiva philosophy, they have a general anthropological and religious interest, as these forms of asceticism remain connected with the life of those who believe in Saiva philosophy, however abstract it might have become. Even in SDS of *Madhavacharya* the Pasupata system is not indentified with any form of philosophy but with different kinds of ascetic practices.

Kaundinya in the beginning of his bhasya offers adoration to Pasupati who has created the whole world beginning from the Brahman for the good of all. He says that the five subjects of discussion in the Pasupata system are:

Karya (effect)

Karana (cause)

Yoga (meditation)

Vidhi (Behaviour)

Dukhanta (cessation of sorrows)

⁹Gonda, J. *Visnuism and Sivaism: A Comparison*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1976

¹⁰ Dasgupta S.N. 'Doctrines of the Pasupata Sutras, A history of Indian Philosophy, vol V, Delhi, 1975 pp130-148)

¹¹ *Pasupata Sutra*, Ed by R.A Shastri, University of Trivandrum, Trivandrum, 1940

The teaching of Pasupata system is for the total annihilation of all kinds of sorrow and this teaching can only be communicated to proper disciples. When the disciple follows the ascetic practices recommended by the lord he attains liberation through His grace. Though there is no direct mention of *Saktipata* but the idea of grace seems to echo the same sentiment and plays a major role in Pasupata philosophy. In PS we are told that liberation comes directly from the grace of Siva and interestingly theory of Karma and rebirth is not given any importance.

The word *pasu* means all conscious beings, excluding the saints and enlightened beings. Their animality or *pasutva* consists in the fact that they are both impotent and ignorant of their true selves and this is the cause of their bondage. This bondage which means their complete dependence on the causal power is without a beginning.

The word *pasu* is connected with the word *pasa* which means 'cause and effect', technically also called *kalā*. Hence all *pasus* are thus bound by the cause and effect, the sense images and their objects and become attached to them. Moreover the word *pasu* is also derived from the Sanskrit word *pasyanti*. Though *pasus* are actually all pervasive and eternal they can only perceive their physical bodies. They do not understand the nature of cause and effect and their general understanding cannot go beyond material and visible world.

An interesting point to note is that a person regarded as fit for receiving *diksa* or initiation must be a Brahmin with keen senses and disease free body. Chakrabarti¹² observes that the caste distinction was rigidly followed, probably as a reaction against the Buddhist practices.

The word *Yoga* is used to denote the contact of self with *isvara* or god (*atmesvara-samyogo yogah*). The contact thus means that the person who was otherwise engaged in worldly affairs leads himself to the supreme object, or it may also mean that the contact is due to the dual approach of both God and the person until they meet. This *yoga* must have disinclination to worldly things as the first condition.

¹² *Pasupata Sutra with Panchartha Bhasya of Kanundinya* Trans. by Haripada Chakrabarti, Academic Publishers, Calcutta, 1970

This kind of yoga or 'union' as it is used in the text cannot be attained by mere knowledge but one has to follow a certain course of action called yoga-vidhi. Vidhi is of two orders, the principal and the subsidiary. Of these the principal is the direct means of merit, religious exercise known as carya and the subsidiary one is of the purificatory nature. It was mainly because of the nature of these *vidhis* that the system was criticized by various scholars and religious teachers including the great thinkers like *Yamunacharya*¹³, *Ramanuja* and *Sankara*.

Describing the two kinds of perceptual knowledge Kaundinya distinguishes between sense perception and self perception. Usually most perceptions occur through senses and are regarded as valid proofs (pramana) like you recognize a cow when you see one or you can sense the burning smell from the kitchen and so on. It is the individual perceiver to whom things are proved by means of the pramanas.. Now self perception means the totality of the relation that is produced by citta and antahkarana, ie the mind and the thought. Inferences (*anumana*) is based on such perceptions. This relationship between the thought, the mind and the self expresses itself in diverse forms and produces diverse impressions and memories. And these lead to other kind of awareness that is the spiritual awareness. This awareness or thought product is called *Samvid*, *Samcintana* or *Sambodha*. It is through these that true knowledge is revealed. The process of knowledge continues from the first moment of inception to the completion of knowledge. This idea of inference has been important for Indian aesthetic thought too, and this can be related to Sri Sankuka's 'Chitratraganyaya' where he clearly states that art is nothing but inference.

Turning to the practices it is said that one should collect ashes and bake them and then smear the body in the morning, midday and afternoon with these ashes. The real bathing is of course through the attainment of virtue by which the soul is purified. One should also lie down on the ashes. The ashes are to be used for bathing instead of water, both for purification and for bearing the signs of a Saiva. The ashes (bhasma) are therefore called linga or an indicatory sign of a Pasupata ascetic and distinguish him from ascetics from other sects. The pasupata ascetic may live in the village, in the forest or in any place of pilgrimage and there he may employ himself to various practices.

¹³ *Agamapramanya* of Yamunacharya, Ed. by Dr. M. Narsimhachary, Oriental Institute, M.S.U. Baroda, 1976

In introducing moral virtues great emphasis is laid on the yamas consisting of non-injury, celibacy, truthfulness and nonstealing. Next there are niyamas consisting of non-irritability (akrodha), attending to the guru, purity, light diet and carefulness (apramada). Non-injury is highly emphasized as a virtue, almost as strictly as Jains. Brahmacharya meaning all kind of sense control particularly the organ of taste and sex is suggested to be strictly followed. Any kind of association with women is strongly discouraged, hence suggesting that the followers were all young males and there was no place for a woman as a disciple in this harsh ascetic system.

The discussion about truth is quite an interesting one. The final standard of truth is the amount of good that is rendered to people by one's words. It is categorically mentioned that even a misstatement or a false statement if beneficial to all beings should be regarded as preferable to a rigorous truthful statement which benefits no one. Such a diplomatic stance is hardly understandable in such a rigorous and strict ascetic system and seems more in accordance with Kaundinya's time when the order had started gaining popularity among the royal dynasties and lay people. Pasupata system forbids all kind of commercial dealings and trades and an ascetic of this order has to earn his living by mendicancy alone.

It is emphatically laid in the text that a Pasupata ascetic should be a Brahmin and he is prohibited to address women or sudras, except under special circumstance. Under such exceptional circumstances one should purify oneself by bathing in ashes and also by pranayama and muttering of 'rudra gayatri' This is suggested for purifying the mind as there is a chance that the ascetic would get angry and thus cause injury to his mind and probably lose his concentration too.

As a fruit of all this staunch asceticism and when the mind is completely purified one attains various miraculous powers. But an ascetic is soon warned of misusing such powers and falling into decadence, the process of spiritual worship can only be done through the surrendering of oneself in one's mind to the supreme lord and one has to continue to do it without losing the focus in between. The lure to use siddhis is great but a true ascetic is supposed to overcome all that and surrender himself completely to Siva. Lord is regarded as *Sakala or Niskala*, immanent or transcendent but even in His transcendental aspect He has in Him all the powers to extend His grace to all beings. And He is the only one who can bestow the eternal liberation to a devoted ascetic who has completely surrendered to him.

The real Saiva ascetic after acquiring the miraculous powers is supposed to dispense with all the external practices so that no one can recognize him as a Saiva ascetic. Thus ignored by the society his mind will delve more in Siva. He is further asked to move about like a poor lunatic, besmeared with ashes and dirt to create repulsion in people who encounter him and treat him like an outcaste. This insult further helps him on the path of disinclination and spiritual advancement. We might simply understand it as a harsh test of one's patience and humility. When the ascetic bears the insults showered upon him by the ignorant people he rises higher and attains fortitude. Its almost like performing a hard penance in the world to rise over it and its material being. With such behaviour he is not only purified but is spiritually ennobled. Ingalls¹⁴ compares such courting of dishonor by Pasupata ascetics to the similar practice followed by Cynics of ancient Greece. Hara¹⁵ in his monumental work on Pasupata studies hints open the transferring of merit from the abuser to the abused and the use of such technique by Pasupata ascetics to gain maximum merit.

Thus when a person is firm in *Yama and Niyama* practices and meekly suffers the indignities and abuses showered on him by other people he is considered to be well established in the path of asceticism. Indra is supposed to have performed this harsh Pasupata vrata to atone for his sin of Brahma hatya

The supreme lord is referred to by many names and yoga in this text means a steady union of the soul with him. Now for this '*sayujyam*' (union) the person should be completely detached from all objects present, past and future and be emotionally attached to *Mahesvara*. The union of self with Siva must be so intimate that no physical sounds and disturbances should lead the person away. In the first stages the attachment with Siva takes place by the withdrawal of the mind from other objects and making it settle on the lord; then the association becomes continuous. This constant or continuous contact constitutes the eternity of self. The self is then regarded as unborn, in the sense that it is not born anew along with the chain of sensations and other activities of mind or in other words it remains the same through all its experiences. At this stage it is called '*Maitra*' as it can remain in the state of equanimity and in attachment with the supreme lord when all its desires, antipathies and efforts have disappeared.

¹⁴ Ingalls Daniel H.H, *Cynics and Pasupatas: The Seeking of Dishonor*, *Harvard Theological Review* 55, no.4, 1962, p.281-98

¹⁵ Hara Minoru. *Pasupata Studies* ed by Takashima Jun, Vienna, 2002

The kind of detachment referred in the text can only be attained by the control of all the cognitive and conative senses, manas , buddhi and ahankara. The control of senses here means that their activities should be directed towards good acts and they should not be allowed to stray away into the commission of evil deeds. Moreover Kaundinya categorically states that the definition of final goal as described by philosophers of Samkhya and Yoga schools is not right. According to him the teachings of both these schools are impure and to be finally liberated means to be connected with Lord siva and not to dissociate from all things as preached in these schools.

It is mentioned that a Pasupata ascetic should live on mendicancy alone and should bear all hardships like animals and be satisfied with whatever he gets , vegetable or meat by begging.. The yogin who has realized his goal is not affected by any actions or sins. He is also unaffected by any mental troubles or physical diseases. The supreme Lord has the infinite power of knowledge and action by which He controls everything, and this lord should be meditated upon in His aspect as formless (niskala) i.e., formless. In PS 5.7 it is mentioned that god is unassociated with anything that can be expressed by speech. The supreme lord is therefore called Vag –Visuddha. Interestingly at this stage cremation ground is suggested as the place to stay for the ascetic. Hence not having any association with the outside world and taking away his mind from all sense objects he concentrates on the lord. By this means all the network of causes that produce the defects are cut asunder. The defects are classified as various sensations of sound touch etc from which we get the feeling of desire, anger, greed and so on. The suffering of a man commences from the time of birth and continues throughout his life, till the time of his death so the aim of the ascetic is put a stop to his cycles of births and rebirths by fixing his mind on Siva. The self which is thus fixed in Siva becomes static (niskriya) and is also called niskala. The mind in this state is devoid of all good and bad thoughts. When this yoga ideal is reached the person becomes omniscient and he cannot be drawn to any illusory notions.

So the liberated yogin, according to this Saiva yoga, does not become a kevalin like the yogin following the Patanjali yoga, but he becomes omniscient and has no sorrows and this happens by the grace of god. A very strong hint of monotheism can be seen here. He becomes absolutely liberated in the sense that he can arrest any future aggression of evil or time and he is not dependent on anybody. In this way he shares the supreme power of the lord.

A survey of the PS with Kaundinya's bhasya suggests in all probability the same type of Lakulisa Pasupata system as referred by Madhava in SDS in 14th AD. According to Dasgupta¹⁶ it may also be the same system of pasupatas as referred to by Sankara in his bhasya on the second book of the second chapter of the Brahma-sutra. There is absolutely no reference here to maya nor to the doctrine of monism as propounded by Sankara. Even at the time of emancipation the liberated souls do not become one with Siva. The emancipation here means that by mental steadiness the devotee is in perpetual contact with Siva and this is what is meant by the word 'rudra-sayujya', used often in the text. Apparently as the text suggests, god though omnipotent has no power over liberated souls. He is the creator of world and all the living beings but the system does not make any special effort to explain how this world came into being.

As mentioned earlier Pasupata system as mentioned in this text is represented as a Brahmanical system as only Brahmins could be initiated, but gradually as the order progressed we see the inclusion from all sections of the society which gave a boost to propagation of this order but changed its basic structure.

Critical rereading of PS:

Reading PS and PABh in the light of other schools of Indian philosophy one is struck by the similarities in various concepts and terminologies with Samkhya philosophy. As for the main text PS, it comes across as a manual of rituals pertaining to Pasupata Saivism and the main philosophical discussions are presented in the commentary. Sutras as we shall see were small formulas, carrying a wealth of knowledge in them but only for the pupils who could manage to decode and expand the meaning. Reading Sutras without its commentary can prove to be an entirely futile attempt because meaning is quite cryptic. Unless one knows the context and the verbal instructions that are supplied along with these formulas one is at complete loss in making out any sense out of these aphorisms.

PS is divided into five chapters and the nomenclature of this chapterisation is based on five mantras from Taittiriya Aranyaka viz. Sadyojata, Tatpurusha, Isana, Vamdev and Aghora. After offering obeisance to Pasupati, Kaundinya in PABh says that he is writing a commentary on this Sutra, according to the traditional knowledge he has acquired through the line of the pasupata acaryas. Kaundinya is identified with Rasikara the 17th acarya of Lakulisa-pasupata line starting from Lakulisa himself.

¹⁶ Dasgupta S.N, *History of Indian Philosophy*,

The first word of the very first sutra suggests that the knowledge of PS was possibly carried verbally from guru to shishya through guru-shishya parampara. Detailed analysis of this first sutra gives some insight in the nature of the text as well as in some of its important contents.

PS 1.1 Athatah Pasupateh Pasupatam Yogavidhim Vyakhyasyamah

The first word Athatah itself is the combination of two words

Ath =Then

Atha =Therefore

“Then therefore we shall expound the Pasupata union and rites of Pasupati”¹⁷

Starting the text with words like ‘Then Therefore...’ suggests that the material in the text is the continuation of some ongoing discussion or a dialogue. Probably these sutras were only theoretical part of an all comprehensive knowledge system comprising of various disciplines. Hence seen in isolation they yield no comprehensible meaning at all.

The use of word Pasupateh is in the sense of someone from whom all the knowledge in the said scripture was received and can be very well seen as the very first teacher. It is from this ultimate Acarya that all the knowledge emanates.

The focus on the teaching aspect is very vivid in almost all the Lakulisa sculptures one comes across around the country. The tedious word to word translation and analysis in PABh is justified by the author by giving an apt example. He says that words that we see employed in the Sutra have been used in a certain context with a separate sense than what one usually understands. He further explains¹⁸,

“That is why it is said –as a man is not identified though his body is exposed, if his head is covered, so the sutra conveys no sense if its compound is not analyzed ”

¹⁷ *Pasupata Sutra with Panchartha Bhasya of Kanundinya Trans. by Haripada Chakraborti, Academic Publishers, Calcutta, 1970 p.10*

¹⁸ *Pasupata Sutra with Panchartha Bhasya of Kanundinya Trans. by Haripada Chakraborti, Academic Publishers, Calcutta, 1970p.12*

The beauty of Indian texts and literature lies¹⁹ mainly in the kind of wonderful and appropriate examples the author furnishes to justify his argument. In Dhvanyaloka , the great aesthete Anandvardhana has discussed nearly 500 such examples at length to give his discussion a sharper edge. *Anandvardhana* and his commentators and others use these examples from *Prakrit* and *Sanskrit* literatures to isolate various properties of speech that facilitate poetic communication by concealing, negating, erasing of primary sense the *mukhyartha*.

Philosophical nature of PS and PABh:

Hara¹⁹ suggests that Kaundinya took advantage of the Samkhya philosophy for the formation of his own doctrine. As mentioned earlier, PS does not have philosophical speculation as its major concern and is essentially theistic in nature and didactic in approach.

Realising that his system would look similar to Samkhya and Yoga system, the author right in the beginning starts to differentiate between them and his own doctrine. Hence both these systems become object of his harsh criticism while the pasupata claims its superiority.

The famous three-fold classification of suffering (duhkha) which is first mentioned in Samkhya-Karika repeatedly occurs in PABh and forms a very important part of the whatever philosophical idea the text furnishes.²⁰

E.g., PABh p4 line 8-10

PABh p25 lin 8-10

PABh p69 line 4-6

PABh p121 line 3-4

PABh p143 line 12-13

¹⁹ Hara Minoru. *Pasupata Studies* ed by Takashima Jun, Vienna, 2002

²⁰ Hara p.25,69,121 and 143

But at the same time the author, Kundinya repeatedly tries to belittle former philosophical system and its adherents. Right in the beginning of the commentary his bias can be seen. Distinguishing between the released souls who have attained emancipation through Samkhya and Yoga schools on one hand and Pasupata system on the other he says²¹:

“Even the people who have attained the highest state of emancipation (Kaivalya- according to Samkhya and Patanjali Yoga) are found to have experienced miseries. This preception (i.e. the Pasupata Acarya) is the best of all Acaryas because he has the direct vision of the effect (karya=world) and its cause (karana=Pasupati)”

PABh has been written in a question answer format i.e. the author asks a question and goes on answering the same. It sort of reminds us of FAQ sections in various books and websites that we come across. Probably the questions were the doubts that arose in the minds of the disciples undergoing the rigorous training. The urgent need to set pasupata system as a separate and superior to others comes across in the following quasi-dialogue²²

Q: The question raised that in other systems such as Samkhya and Yoga etc. the state of perfect isolation (Kaivalya) together with sovereignty (aisvarya) is attained by abandoning of effects and instruments just as is taught in our system, so there would be no difference?

A: The difference lies in regard to the means i.e. ati-dana (transcendent giving) ati-yajana (transcendent sacrifice) and ati-tapa (transcendent Asceticism that are to be followed by the disciples of this system- Now since means are different goals one is aspiring for has to be different

Again he asks

Q: What goal does the Brahmin achieve with these transcendent forms of giving, sacrifice and asceticism?

A: In an answer to this, the author categorically states that the goal promised by Pasupata system is much higher than what the followers of Samkhya or Yoga are promised viz. success (abhyudaya acc. to Samkhya) and perfection, isolation (Kaivalya acc. to Yoga)

²¹ Ibid

²² Hara p 115

The Pasupata aspirant who has attained the transcendent goal (ati-gati) by the transcendent means and thus is united with God (Yukta) not only outshines all the souls released by other systems but also all the gods beginning with Brahma.

Taking the dialogue further the Pasupata aspirant is supposed to have true knowledge while the ones released according to Samkhya and Yoga are here mocked as those who are in a swoon (sammurchitavat)- as they lack knowledge of themselves or anyone else and hence are misled.

Kaundinya goes on as far as stating that the aspirants who claim to have been released and to have attained peace through these systems are wrong. It is like seeing of two moons by a man with astigmatism. The correct view is that he (who is united) is simply united and not (yet) released.

Interestingly the released soul (kaivalya) is categorized as Pasu, (soul in bondage) in pasupata system.

PABh p5 line 15-16

“Those who have won the release through Samkhya and Yoga, the gods of Samkhya and Yoga indeed all creatures from Brahman down to animals are called pasu in the true tradition.

Indeed the category of kaivalya, the perfect isolation is clubbed together with profane objectives like artha, kama etc. and thus stating that duty of a pasupata aspirant is to aim at end of suffering (dhukhanta) and he should not care for ordinary purposes of merit, wealth, sensual gratification or even perfect isolation.

PABh p3 line 11-12

Siddhi in PS and YS

According to Jacobi²³

“as the Samkhya ideas formed the scaffolding of the pasupata doctrinal edifice, so also the yoga ideas constituted a similar scaffolding of its practical (ascetic and meditative edifice)”

²³ Hara 56

The text, PS is replete with the Yogic terms of self control and meditation. Terms such as yama, miyama, pranayama, ahimsa, sauca, tapas, dharana and others repeatedly appear throughout the Text, though the semantic content is not always the same as in YS of Patanjali

As mentioned earlier the word 'yoga' has different connotation in PS and is not similar to the ones in YS. It is broadly explained as 'union' between pasu and pati and is one of the five fundamental concepts 'pancharthas) of pasupata theology.

Here the aspirant approaches the god through his religious practices ²⁴(PABh p41 line 12, SDS line 79)

While the god approaches him by codana etc²⁵ (PABh p6 line 10)

Hence Pasupata yoga means a sort of communion for it is said that by virtue of this yoga the pasupata aspirant partakes of the attributes of the god Mahesvara²⁶ (PABh p41 line 17-18)

The aspirant who practices the Pasupata yoga vidhi diligently attains ashtsiddhi and also eightfold siddhi-laksana appears to him. But at the same time PABh warns the ascetic not to get too excited by attainment of such miraculous powers because it is not the ultimate goal and indulgence in them might even prove dangerous.

The concern comes across quite clearly in PS 2.12²⁷

PS 2.12 Harsa Pramadi

It has been explained in PABh as a warning for aspirants not to get too excited or overjoyed by the acquisition of this supernatural power and indeed they are literally they are asked to refrain from getting "intoxicated with delight"

This section of the text as well as the commentary is sort of confusing but the gist of the section is that the aspirant has to maintain his sanity and go on humbly concentrating on Siva and not loose focus by gaining these powers.

²⁴ PABh p41 line 12

²⁵ PABh p.6 line 10

²⁶ PABh p.41 line 17-18

²⁷ PS 2.12

The powers mentioned as tras in PS 1.21, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24, 1.25 are:

Miraculous Power of seeing, hearing, thinking and knowing from a distance

Omniscience

The possession of swiftness of thought

The quality of assuming forms at will

Ability to perform actions even without using organs

It is interesting to note that while on one hand the aspirant is strictly warned against indulging in such supernatural practices Kaundinya states that this power can be (should be) used to attract new pupils²⁸

PABh p42 linw 1-3

“ Here we may grant that after one has achieved Yoga, the material categories no longer apply, still the following matters are raised like a bright flag (ranga pataka) in order to attract the pupil”

As is evident from the above quote siddhi is not considered a goal but remains as a means or as an agency for propaganda. The need for such a strategy talks of the kind of competition that the system might have faced. This portion also reminds one of various miracles performed by Budhha and Jesus Christ for mainly gaining followers.

So simply understood it seems like the USP's of a certain practice were displayed in public to lure followers and disciples. History is full of such examples where godmen have tried to stun people with their supernatural powers for various reasons.

However for an aspirant who hasn't yet reached the final stage there can be a total downfall and losing of all the tapas if he is not cautious.

Quoting from Mahabharata (3.2.62) PABh p67 line 7-15) Kaundinya²⁹ says, “ Even at reaching on to this stage there can be a total downfall if the aspirant gets carried away by his body and bodily functions just as a charioteer even if intelligent may be carried away by ill-trained horses.

²⁸ PABh p 42 line 1-3

²⁹ PABh p67 line 7-15

Thus at this stage when the temptations are maximum the aspirant is asked to continue his practice of pasupata yoga-vidhi and it's only by the power (sakti/bala) of Mahatmya that aspirant is able to follow his goal. Explaining this concept of Mahatmya PABh says (PABh p.67 line 16-17)

“Mahatmya (greatness) is the force (virya) the strength (bala) , the power (sakti) of the asceticism (tapas) of one who has not strayed from correct conduct”

Hence in a nutshell its by avoiding the dosa of harsa (delight) by apramada (intoxication) and being protected by the guna of Mahatmya that aspirant can advance further. Such aspirants attain the infinite power as much as Siva and their position is distinctly mentioned by Kaundinya when he says that Pasupati is the lord of all pasus except the Siddhesvaras and the liberated soul is beyond the jurisdiction of Pasupati

PS 5.47 karanadhikara-ivrtti

and he possesses the excellence of Mahesvara.

PS 5.40 tatha vartamanena Mahesvaramaisvaryam praptam

It is also stated that he becomes the master of all powers of Siva, except that of creation.

At this juncture it is important to state that other systems too advised aspirants to ignore the siddhi. According to P.V Kane³⁰ out of 195 sutras of YS , 35 (3.16-3.50) are devoted to the description of siddhi”. Yet among these sutras we see one which advises yogins to ignore these siddhis i.e Y.S 3.37

YS 3.37 ‘te samadhav upasarga vyutthane siddhayah’

‘In concentration these supernatural activities are obstacles (though) they are (considered to be) in the emergent state as perfections”

Vacaspatimisra explains the sutra as follows³¹:

³⁰ Kane P.V, ‘History of Dharmasastras, vol 5 poona 1930-1950, p.1451-1452)

³¹ Ibid.

A man whose mind-stuff is emergent (vyuttthita citta) thinks highly of these perfections, just as a man born in misery considers even a small bit of wealth a pile of wealth. But a yogin whose mind stuff is concentrated (samahita-citta) must avoid these (perfections) even when brought near to him. One who longs for the final goal of life (purusartha) the absolute assuagement of the three-fold anguish how could he have any affection for those perfections which go counter to the attainment of that goal”

Hence it is clear a serious aspirant in whatever the system he adhered had to simply consider Siddhi as a byproduct and not an end in itself. Classical sanskrit literature is filled with examples of ‘false ascetics and nuns’ who got strayed from their goal and started abusing their miraculous power. Bloomfield³² has explored this area thoroughly and has come up with many examples.

Classification of the system as an *Ati-margika* one:

The height of asceticism practiced in the system becomes clear by studying the concepts of *ati-dana*, *ati-yajana* and *ati-tapas* in detail.

After warning the aspirants of the hazardous nature of sidhhi the text proceeds to explain the means (upaya) to attain the highest goal.

In answer to the question if there is any qualification concerning giving ‘dana’ PABh³³ says,

“The dana or gifting of material objects is worthless and scriptually it is considered as wrong path (PS4.18) The actual and true dana is the transcendent giving (ati-dana) and it is nothing but offering of oneself (atma-pradana) This leads an aspirant to Rudra(rudra-samipa) finally and absolutely as it brings about the final non-return (anavrtti) to the cycle of transmigration”

³² Bloomfield, ‘On False Ascetics and Nuns in Hindu fiction’, JAOS vol 44 pg 202-242

³³ PABh 56

Moreover the sacrifices agnistoma and others are classified as Kuyajana, wrong sacrifices because they are accomplished only by a process which involves activities such as seizing (samgraha) accepting (pratigraha), killing (himsa) and so forth, secondly because they bring about no greater result and results produced are temporary inferior and impure. The statement reminds us of 'Daksa Yagna' in which Siva is not invited and hence considered as an outcaste and this considering of such Yagnas as wrong sacrifices probably talks about this antagonism.

Now the type of sacrifices advocated is Ati-yajana (transendent sacrifice) performed either in the temple (ayatana) or in the world (loka). The former is a set of ritual practices peculiar to the Pasupata such as bathing in ashes and so on and the latter is a series of strange actions performed in public to deliberately invite abuse.

Ganakarika (GK³⁴):

Haradattacharya, in Gaṇ akārikā, explains that a spiritual teacher is one who knows the eight pentads and the three functions. With the kind help of Dr. Shette I have tried to summarize the essence of GK by referring to Bhasarvajna's commentary of the said text.

The disciple asks the guru that by following Pancartha will he be able to acquire the cessation of sorrows (Dukhant), the final goal of the Lakulisa-Pasupata aspirants. It is in answer to this query that the Guru expounds the importance of rituals for attaining the mantrasiddhi and also importance of the right guru who can lead an aspirant to higher planes and he himself must have reached the highest level. Here the text warns the aspirant that if the guru is not capable enough or not well initiated in the system he can lead his disciples to 'mahanaraka'. So he states categorially referring to PS that only by following rituals according to the text can one acquire dukhant. It is only by the grace of yoga that one can be totally free of sorrows but the ladder has to be climbed step by step from Jnana, Anugraha, Vidhi, Yoga and finally Moksa. All through the spiritual training the aspirant should remember all the instructions and knowledge gained by heart, so that if books are lost they don't make any mistakes and finally the aspirant is told if he does not have patience and ability to go through all the vidhis or if he gets carried away by the miraculous powers attained then there is a sure downfall.

³⁴ *Ganakarika* of Acharya Bhasarvajna, Ed by Chimanlal D. Dalal, Oriental Institute, M.S.U, Baroda, 1966 (GK)

The eight pentads of Acquisition(result of expedience), Impurity(evil in soul), Expedient(means of purification), Locality(aids to increase knowledge), Perseverance(endurance in pentads), Purification(putting away impurities), Initiation and Powers are mentioned and discussed.

Apparent Monotheism:

Now the question arises how exactly the pasupata system is different from other schools if it preaches almost the same concepts. The difference as far as I have understood lies in the total theistic flavor of the system as opposed to full or partial philosophical nature of other systems.

Trying to put the history of Indian theism in a simple perspective Swami Hiranmayananda³⁵ observes that Vedic polytheism soon developed into sort of Henotheism, where each god was elevated to a supreme position by his devotees. In the due course this led to a kind of Monotheism which on further philosophical speculations culminated in Monism. One can probably place Lakulisa-Pasupata system somewhere in the transition period between monotheism to monism as its philosophy is neither completely dualistic nor monistic. It has been classified by scholars as 'dual cum non dual Saiva system'

As noted philosophers and scholars have observed early Samkhya system is primarily atheistic (nirisvara) in its outlook. The eternal existence of souls or Purusas who are permanent and supreme is inconsistent with the infinity and creatorship of God. The Samkhya admits the godhead of certain released souls and does accept the popular gods , but they are also believed to be subjected to laws of samsara.

In YS of Patanjali that one gets a glimpse of the God in these lines³⁶

"He in whom pre-eminence reaches the zenith is god . he is not a different category but is a singular type of Purusa. He is the first teacher because unlike other teachers he is not limited by time. Though he has no desire yet out of his grace towards all beings He saves people immersed in samsara by imparting knowledge and virtue to them. He is made up of pure sattva; He is ever free and ever the pre-eminent and he is Omniscient" (Vyasa's bhasya on YS i.23-26).

³⁶ YS Vyasa's bhasya on YS i.23-26).

Use of terms like 'grace' and 'teacher' has glimpses of Pasupata concept of God.

Another school of philosophy which seem to have direct links with pasupata school is the theistic (Sasvrya) school of Naiyayikas. God in Their system is omnipotent. He is a particular kind of atman possessing benign attributes, devoid of vice, wrong knowledge and mistakes and is eternally endowed with what are known as asht siddhis (eight supernatural powers). The great Naiyayika Udayanacarya has written an elaborate logical thesis on the proofs of the existence of God in his famous treatise 'Kusumanjali'³⁷. At the beginning of his book, he says,

"What doubt can there be in God , experience of whom is admitted throughout the world?"

Thus, stressing that any proof of his existence is unnecessary and redundant from the standpoint of Naiyayikas.

Regarding his works he says,

"This logical consideration of God is tantamount to thinking (manana) about Him. It follows hearing (sravana) about Him and is undertaken as a form of worship (upasana)"

In putting forward the various inferential proofs, the author writes,

From effects, conjunction, support etc. from the use of things, from the authoritativeness of the Vedas ,from the composition of the Vedas, from sentences and from particular numbers, an immutable all-knowing God can be deduced. The first of these is the casual argument-from consideration of effects (karya) God can be deduced. The earth etc. must have a maker since they are effects like the pot. Everything that is composite must possess an intelligent cause. Without such a cause, the material causes cannot produce definite effects. Everything that is composite must possess an intelligent cause. Without such a cause, the material causes cannot produce definite effects. To be this cause entails possessing direct knowledge of the material causes, a desire to realize some aim, and power of will to accomplish this aim. God must be such a cause.

The second proof is from conjunction (ayojana) At the beginning of creation two atoms must join to form a molecule. All works require an intelligent agent. At the beginning of creation , when two atoms join together to form a dyad, even that, being a work ,must requite an intelligent agent, who must be God.

The third proof arises from the consideration of inhibition of celestial bodies from fall. Just as a piece of wood is supported in space by a bird, so also the universe is withheld from falling down by someone's support. And that someone is God.

The word etc. (adi) signifies dissolution. God is the author of the destruction of the world.

From the phrase 'use of things' (padat) it can be inferred that there must be a teacher for imparting the knowledge of using the things. As teachers are required to teach the students the crux of modern art so for the traditional arts which are current from endless time, there must be an instructor. And that instructor must be God

The next proof is to have from the authoritativeness of Vedas (prtyayatah).This knowledge is authoritative like all true knowledge. So that authoritativeness must have a cause which is God.

The Vedas are composed by somebody. Now as the authorship of Vedas cannot be ascribed to any human being, its author must be God. The further argument 'from sentences (vakyat) denotes that since the Vedas contain sentences so they must have been composed by someone

Then comes the argument 'from number (sankhya visesat). According to this argument, the magnitude of dyad is not caused by individual atoms; it depends on number because atomic magnitude is eternal and insignificantly minute. But number requires the distinguishing perception (apeksa buddhi) which must be God's

Kanada³⁸ in Kanada-Sutra state that Udayana accepts that scriptures independently prove the existence of God.Thus Vaisesika system believes inference and scriptures to be the valid means of the knowledge of God

The need to discuss these statements in detail is to show that theism had to be justified and established and lot of other systems had to be proved wrong. The scriptures were considered an authority to justify the same and that is the reason for considering them (vedas or agamas) as 'other worldly'. According to Sankara, the vedas are the only means of the knowledge of God. Reason in itself is futile. (Brahma-sutra, Ramanuja Bhasya I.1.3)

Thus it is in this time of debate and questioning that Kaundinaya must have written his commentary and his treatment of PS as a tantra (as often mentioned in PABh) clearly shows that he wanted to give another worldly and supernatural status to the text.

According to Lakulisa Pasupata system God is seed cause, the instrumental cause of the world and his will is at the root of all activities of this pasu world. Siva is also considered to be the absolute cause and the actions of the pasus (individuals) are effective only insofar as they are in conformity with the will of Siva. Hence theory of Karma so important in later Indian thought is not given any importance in this system. The pasus are but His manifestations, all effects of the same God who is omnipotent and omniscient. He grants liberation to all who properly undergo the Pasupata discipline. The final duhkkhanta' (final deliverance from sorrow) is attained only when the pasupata ascetic passes through the different stages of sadhana and reaches Rudra. What is 'mukti' to other systems is "Sayujya" to the pasupata. The liberated souls do not get merged in God, as the Vedantins aim but become united i.e., eternally associated with Siva. They remain by their mental steadiness, in perpetual contact with Siva and they never return to the cycle of birth and death.

It is important to note that the pasupata system of the PS hardly considers the importance of prakrti (the female principal) as energy (sakti), as we find in Puranic pasupata system. None of the categories of Samkhya appear to be of any relevance regarding the creation of the world. Even the concept of yoga in PS is different from the Puranic concept or Yoga-sutra of Patanjali. Here in PS as we have seen the word yoga itself has been used in the sense of continuous contact with the almighty while in the Patanjali yoga-sutras it is taken as suppression of all mental states (citta-vrtti-nirodha) which precedes Kaivalya. The yogasutras of Patanjali do not try to establish Isvara or God but only accepted it as one of its necessary postulates. Rather

interestingly none of the Indian philosophical systems have tried to establish God by any logical means except Naiyayikas who according to tradition are Saivas. Hence such an overarching importance given to the supreme deity in the Pasupata system comes across as an interesting point for speculation.

The overarching role of Pasupati the protector of all is envisaged in Kaundinya's³⁹ remark that the liberation from sorrow ie dukhanta cannot be attained by knowledge (jnana) , disinclination or total renunciation (vairagya), virtue (dharma) and giving up of ones miraculous powers (aishvarya tyaga) but only by the grace (prasada) alone. While on one hand such a statement points at complete monotheistic nature of the sect on the other it covertly criticizes the other ascetic systems like jains and Buddhists. This ultimate image of Pasupati reminds one of the so called pasupati seals from Indus valley where we see various animals flanking a horned, in some cases an ithyphallic figure identified by scholars as Proto siva. Are the animals aspiring for the divine grace which would lead them to final redemption from all kinds of sorrow is worth asking?

While discussing 'dukhanta' the final ideal of the pasupata doctrine Kaundinya states:

"tasmāt prasādāt sa dukhantāḥ prapya te / na tu jñāna-vairāgya-dharmāisvarya-tyāgamātrād ity arthah" PABh p6 line 1-2

"From this grace of god the end of suffering is attained and not from mere knowledge ,dispassion,merit , sovereignty or their opposites ..this is the meaning'

Here Prasada (Grace) is of the primary importance and outshines the philosophical concepts peculiar to Samkhya philosophy. So ultimately it lies in the hands of that final absolute to redeem the aspirant from all the miseries

A similar theistic flavor according to which God has priority to the philosophical ideas is met in Kaundinya's etymological explanation of the word 'bhava'

"Because they are created by a process of becoming (bhavana) and of causing to become (bhāvana), each cattle (pasu) becomes a god, human or animal and the lord causes them so to become.." ⁴⁰PABh p54 line 7-9

³⁹ PABh p.6

⁴⁰ PABh p74 lines 9-12

Almighty's power is not limited to obstructing the eight aspects of buddhi given in Samkhya philosophy but also is extended to transforming them. In his commentary on Kala-vikrana (an epithet of Siva), Kaundinya says

PABh p74 lines 9-12

“His being able to transform the material components means that he has the ability to join the individual souls to the material components which are called effect and instrument and join them to merit, knowledge, dispassion, lack of sovereignty etc., through a process of distributing the souls to (their respective) plaxes (of birth), bodies, bodily organs and their objects etc. and this ability is exerted in a general way, an analytical way and a specific way. Thus in view of the superiority of the Lord and inferiority of other individual souls, it is rightly said, homage to Him who transforms the material components”

Thus one realises the eight aspects of buddhi, 4 Satvikka ones viz. Dharma, Jnana, Vairagya, Aisvarya and 4 tamasic ones viz Adharma, Ajnana, Avairagya and Anaishvarya, as enumerated in Samkhya Karika appear in PABh with no differentiation between first and second group. Moreover there is no reference or importance given to jnana as distinct from and superior to rest of the aspects ie. one of the most crucial teachings of Samkhya as taught in Samkhya Karika 63, 65 & 67. Here it is the Almighty who can be seen standing far above these eight aspects while the latter though philosophical concepts are allotted an inferior rank. Even the final ideal of Pasupata, dhukhanta is attained not by dharma, jnana or so forth but simply by the grace of god (prasada)

Perhaps the apparent antagonism held against the other philosophical and theological systems to uphold the superiority to their God seems to have been best illustrated by an inscription at Balagami dated 1035 AD. In the inscription which registers grants that were made over to 'Lakulisvarapandita deva, a pasupata ascetic of great note, we read⁴¹,

⁴¹ Fleet J.F. 'Inscriptions at Ablur, EI, vol 5 (1899) p227)

“(to the holy Lakulisvarapandita) who is a saw to cleave asunder the great trees that are the Lokayatas; he who is a great Vainateya (Son of Vinita i.e., Garuda) to the large serpent that is Samkya doctrine; he who is an axe to the trees that are those who propound the Advaita philosophy; he who is a very Trinetra (siva) to burn the three cities in shape of Akalanka.”

Superconsciousness and a Theological explanation:

Since it has been established that the vidhis followed by the aspirants of Lakulisa-Pasupata order had a strong intrinsic logic and rationale of its own, it is important to understand this curious aspect with a focus on theology also. To explain such practices Swami Akhilananda says:

To explain further Swami Akhilananda⁴² states,

“Indian psychologists (yogic practitioners) have always laid great emphasis on the understanding of not merely the conscious, but also the various kinds of superconscious and extra-sensory perceptions. They have not been mere objective observers and speculative thinkers, so far as psychology is concerned, but they have also realized that the various states of mind cannot be properly understood without bringing in the subjective element, namely training of the perceiving mind. They have never been inclined toward behaviourism of the Western type. In order to understand the objective validity of the superconscious and other forms of extra-sensory perceptions (and in order to know the unconscious) one must experience these states....It is an undeniable fact that the main emphasis in Indian psychology has been on religious experiences of various types (though some non-theistic systems were developed in the process of self analysis) Both Hindu and Buddhist psychologists systematized their psychological concepts in the course of their religious experiences. As their investigation and development of mental powers progressed they discovered that the unified mind could have some experiences which were not religious, even though they were extraordinary and extra-sensory. The mind, when concentrated and trained develops tremendous power to understand and control the various gross and subtle laws of nature, though these may not be perceived with the naked eyes...The mind can also control these laws through definite discipline and training”

⁴² Swami Akhilananda, 'Extra-Sensory and Superconscious experiences by in The Cultrual Heritage of India, Vol iii ed by Haridas Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1937

He considers the Yoga-Sutra by Patanjali, Hathayoga-paradipika and various tantras like Satcakraniupana and Padukapancaka as thoroughgoing studies of various aspects of ESP (Extra Sensory Perception) in which different methods of developing these powers, which are nothing but hidden functions of mind, are described. Hence he concludes by saying that superconscious states cannot be really understood unless one experiences them. As chemical laws cannot be verified without laboratory experiments, so superconscious realization or samadhi of various types cannot be properly understood by unprepared or untrained minds, however intellectual or well intentioned they may be.