

## THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN ŚAIVA SIDDHĀNTA

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### Introduction

The philosophical system of the Tamils, based on the Śaiva Āgamas, Upaniṣads, Tirumurais and Meykaṇṭa Śāstras, is known as Śaiva Siddhānta. Siddhānta<sup>1</sup> literally means the established conclusion, and in its extension of meaning it denotes any system of philosophy. Śaiva Siddhānta indicates the philosophy of those who worship Lord Śiva as the Supreme Being. This system of philosophy has been very popular in South India as evidenced from the great temples dedicated to Lord Siva and the mine of source materials embedded in the Tamil language.<sup>2</sup> It is a living system taking its origin in the Indus Valley Civilization.

As opposed to Vedānta (i.e. the Conclusion of the Vedas), Śaiva Siddhānta is called Āgamānta (i.e. the Conclusion of the Āgamas). The primary Śaiva Āgamas are twenty-eight in number. Early available references to the Āgamas are found in the Śāntiparva of Mahābhārata and Bādarāyaṇa's Vedānta Sūtra.<sup>3</sup> A.P. Karmarkar is of the opinion that the Āgamas are older than the Vedas.<sup>4</sup> Tirumantiram (500 A.D.) preserves the quintessence of the Śaiva Āgamas and it is the earliest extant Tamil treatise on Śaiva Siddhānta. The name 'Śaiva Sid-

<sup>1</sup>"That which stands many tests and is finally established is known as Siddhānta." Vide, M. Arunachalam, *Śaiva Siddhānta Journal*, Volume III (Madras, 1968), p. 91.

"Siddhānta means proved doctrine . . . According to Uddyotakara, Siddhānta means the knowledge in the specific form of 'ascertaining the true implication of a system' (śāstrārtha-niścaya). Vide, Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *Gautama's Nyāyasūtra and Vātsyāyana's Bhasya*, Part I (Calcutta, 1967), p. 18.

Though Siddhānta is a common name denoting any system of philosophy, it is generally used to denote the Śaiva Siddhānta only. Vide, *Tirumantiram*, 8.15.1, 17, 25, etc.

<sup>2</sup>"Dr. Pope, who gave much thought to this system, regards it as 'the most elaborate, influential, and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India' . . . The earliest Tamil works, like *Tolkāppiyam* refers to Arivars or the seers who chalked out the path to freedom and bliss. . . The twenty eight Śaiva Āgamas, especially the parts dealing with jñāna or knowledge, the hymns of the Śaiva saints, and the works of the later theologians form the chief sources of Southern Śaivism."

Vide, S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II (London, 1971), pp. 772-3.

<sup>3</sup>R. Ramanujachari, *Śaiva Siddhānta*, (Annamalainagar, Annamalai University, 1948), p.2.

<sup>4</sup>A.P. Karmarkar, *The Religions of India*, (New Delhi, 1951), p. 276.

dhānta' occurs in this text for the first time.<sup>5</sup> Tiruñāṇa Campantar (7th century A.D.) extols Lord Śiva as 'Ākamac Celvar' (the Rich One who revealed the Āgamas).<sup>6</sup> He also mentions that the people of Kōkaraṇam (a place in the Karnāṭaka state in South India) professed the faith of Śaiva Āgamas.<sup>7</sup> His contemporary Saint Tirunavukkaracar points out in one of his hymns that the Lord revealed the Āgamas to His consort beneath the *marutam* tree in the shrine at Tiruviṭaimarutūr.<sup>8</sup> Cuntarar (8th century A.D.) praises the Lord as the 'Ancient One' who revealed the Āgamas to the celestials.<sup>9</sup> He also refers in one of his last hymns to the chanting of Śivanāma by those who were well-versed in the Āgamas.<sup>10</sup> In one of his inscriptions, Rajasimha Pallava (691-729 A.D.) is mentioned as 'ākamappiriyaṇ' (lover of Āgamas) and 'caiva cittāntattir pērarivu uṭaiyavaṇ' (one, who has immense knowledge in Śaiva Siddhānta).<sup>11</sup> References to Āgamas are many in Tiruvācakam.<sup>12</sup> In this work, the author Māṇikkavācakar (800-900 A.D.) mentions that the Lord revealed the Āgamas to His consort in the Mount Mahendra.<sup>13</sup> He has also indicated the superiority of the Agamas over the Vedas

<sup>5</sup> *Tirumantiram*, 5.1.3.

<sup>6</sup> *Tēvāram*, 3.57.10.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.79.6.

The Karnāṭaka state is the centre of Vīra Śaivism, a cult especially based on Vīra Āgama, one of the nine Āgamas mentioned in *Tirumantiram*. Campantar also mentions that the Vedas, Angas and Agamas are compiled by Śiva Himself. Vide, *Tēvāram*, 3.23.6. Further, he differentiates between Āgamas and Mantras which denote the Vedas. Vide, *Ibid.*, 3.39.2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.15.4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.84.8.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.100.8.

<sup>11</sup> i. M. Irācamāṇikkapaṇ, *Pallavar Varalāru* (Madras, 1956), pp. 152-3.

ii. T.V. Mahalingam, *Kāñcipuram in Early South Indian History*, (Madras, 1968), p. 123.

"This is the earliest epigraphical reference to Śaiva Siddhāntamārga." *Ibid.*, p. 123, f.n.

<sup>12</sup> *Tiruvācakam*, 1.4, 2.9-10, 17-20.

The Āgamic concepts such as *mummalam*, *iruvinaṭ oppu* etc., are also found in the text. Vide, *Ibid.*, 2.111-3, 19.7, 30.7, 43.2, 51.9; 30.1. Reference to the five-fold malas is also found. *Ibid.*, 6.29.

<sup>13</sup> The second hymn of *Tiruvācakam* (i.e. *kīrtti Tiruakaval*) enlists the sacred places of Śiva. Among them, Mount Mahendra tops the list. The Lord is known as *Makēntira verpaṇ* (2.100-101), and '*Cōti Makēntira-nātan*' (43.9) Professor Paul Wheatley has identified this mountain in South East Asia. Vide, *His Lecture on "The Kings of the Mountain"*, (Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya, 1980), pp. 1-2.

But the traditional scholars on the authority of *Rāmāyaṇa* of Valmiki and of *Kampan* and also *Sivadharmotra* considered that the said Mount existed somewhere in the south of Potiyil Hills.

Vide, K.S. Navanītakiruṭṭiṇa Pārati, *Tiruvācakam āraycci Pērurai*, (Madras, 1954), p. 74.

According to Maṇaimalai Aṭikal, the Mount Mahendra is found somewhere in the Andhra Pradesh. Vide, *Tiruvācaka Virivurai*, (Madras, 1948), p. 79.

in the *Civapurāṇam*, the preface to *Tiruvācakam*.<sup>14</sup> In the opening portion of this hymn, he says that the Lord Himself is the *Āgama* conferring the bliss on His votaries. In a subsequent passage of the same hymn, he declares that the Lord transcends the triple dimensions of height, breadth and depth untouched by the *Ṛgvedas* assuming the subtlest form.<sup>15</sup> References to the *Āgamas* in the *Meykaṇṭa Śāstras* are many.<sup>16</sup>

The *Śaiva Siddhānta* is mainly the outcome of *Āgamic* tradition. But, this does not mean that it rejects the Vedic tradition.<sup>17</sup> The *Vedas* are held to be the general source for almost all the systems of Indian philosophy including *Śaiva Siddhānta*. The *Āgamas* form the special source for this system. Most of the *Āgamas* contain four portions dealing with *cariyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. It is essential to note that the *Pinkalantai Nikaṇṭu* (800 A.D.), a metrical lexicon in Tamil, categorically states that *Āgama* means *jñāna*.<sup>18</sup> From this, it may be understood that the *jñāna* portion of the *Āgamas* is very significant as it actually deals with the basic principles of *Śaiva Siddhānta*.

Chronologically speaking the *Sangam* classics (300 B.C. to 300 A.D.) are older than the *Tirumūrais* (500 A.D. — 1200 A.D.) and the *Meykaṇṭa Śāstras* (1200 A.D. — 1400 A.D.). They bear ample testimony to the spiritual supremacy of Lord Śiva.<sup>19</sup> Some of the principles of *Śaiva Siddhānta* would be traceable in them. In the Buddhist Tamil epic, *Maṇimēkalai* (450 A.D. — 500 A.D.), there is a chapter that deals with the various schools of Indian philosophy which were current during the period of its author, Cāttaṇār. Among them, the *Śaiva* system

<sup>14</sup> *Tiruvācakam*, 1.14.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.34—5.

<sup>16</sup> i. *Tirukkaliṟruppaṭiyār*, 5.

ii. *Civañāna cittiyār*, 1.2.46; 8.2.13, etc.

According to Civañāna muṇivar, *Civañānapōtam* is a translation of *jñānapāda* of *Raurava Āgama*. But, modern scholars differed from him and suggested that it should be an original work in Tamil.

<sup>17</sup> *Tirumantiram*, 8.15.28.

There is a Tamil verse of unknown authorship stating the close relationship of the various scriptures. The substance is this: "The Veda is the cow and the *Āgamas* are its milk; the *Tēvāram* and *Tiruvācakam* is the extracted ghee and *Civañānapōtam* of *Meykaṇṭar* is the relish of that ghee."

*Tiruñāpacampantar* also praises the Lord as *vētavētāntaṅ*, i.e. the essence of *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*. Vide, *Tēvāram*, 3.35.4.

<sup>18</sup> *Pinkala nikaṇṭu*, (Madras, 1890), p. 236.

<sup>19</sup> *Akanānūru*, 181.

*Puraṇānūru*, 6.17—18, 55.1—6, 56.1—2, 11, 91.5—6, 166.1—4.

*Maturaikkāñci*, 453—455.

is also included.<sup>20</sup> The exponent of this system is known as *Śaiva vādi* (one who debates or argues for the cause of Śaivism) and through him Cāttaṅār expressed some of the doctrines of *Śaiva Siddhānta*. It is interesting to note that Mādhva (1238 A.D.) in his *Sarvadarśana Saṁgraha*, presented the principles of *Śaiva Siddhānta* under the caption, 'Śaivadarśana'.<sup>21</sup>

The heyday of *Śaiva Siddhānta* is the period of the Imperial Colas. The temples, being the centre of arts and religion, were constructed in accordance with the prescriptions of the *Śaiva Āgamas*. Nānāmīrutam (12th century A.D.), a classical text on *Śaiva Siddhānta* was written by Vākica Muṇivar in the style of *Sangam* Tamil.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, two more works viz., *Tiruvuntiyār* and *Tirukkalirruppattiyār* were composed respectively by Uyyavantatēvar of Tiruviyalūr and of Tirukaṭavūr. Then commences the renowned *Meykaṇṭār* school of *Śaiva Siddhānta*.

Meykaṇṭār (13th century A.D.) is highly esteemed to be the first systematic exponent of the Siddhānta philosophy. His immortal treatise *Civañānapōtam* and its metrical commentary *Civañāna Cittiyār* by his disciple Aruṇanticivam form the foundational bedrock upon which the edifice of the existing *Śaiva Siddhānta* is erected. Another great exponent Umāpaticivam (14th century A.D.), the disciple of Maraiñāna Campantar, nurtured the system by his contribution of eight works on the subject.<sup>23</sup> Among them, *Civappirakācam* and *Tiruvārūṭpayan* are held in high esteem. Civañāna Muṇivar (1800 A.D.), the commentator of the *Siddhānta* canonical works, is respected to be the official interpreter of the system.

Śaiva Siddhānta is a theistic philosophy. It contains both religion and philosophy. It is also known as pluralistic realism, since it accepts more than one reality to be eternal entities. It deals with the three eternal realities, viz., *Pati*, *Paśu* and *Pāśa*. All categories that are perceived and conceived are brought under these three. *Pati* indicates the Supreme Lord. *Paśu* denotes the myriad souls. *Pāśa* refers to the triple bonds of *āṇava*, *karma* and *māyā*. All the three realities are ever-existing. Like God, *paśu* and *pāśa* are not created. Among the three, *pati* alone is independent, ubiquitous, omniscient and omnipotent. The soul's faculties are restricted and constricted from the very beginning due to the envelopment of the root evil, *āṇava*. In order to eliminate this evil, the Lord out of His mercy

<sup>20</sup> *Mañimēkalai*, 27.86-95.

<sup>21</sup> *Śarva darśana saṁgraha*, Chapter VII.

<sup>22</sup> This treatise has been critically edited along with the old commentary and with valuable comments by the *Siddhānta* scholar, Avvai, S. Duraisamy Pillai and published by the Annamalai University in 1954.

<sup>23</sup> Among his eight works, *Uṇmainerjvilakkam* is ascribed by Professor Anavaradavinayagam Pillai to *Tattuvanātar* of *Cirkālī*.

creates the world from *māyā*, the primordial matter and provides the desolated souls with the necessary equipment just to enable them to engage in activities with the ultimate purpose of casting away the evil and to gain eternal union with Him.

With this background, an attempt is being made here to outline the concept of God as found in *Śaiva Siddhānta*. Only after having understood the existence of God, one would aspire to know about His nature in order to develop a sense of devotion to realise and reach Him. First, let us consider the important proofs for His existence.

### Proofs for the Existence of God

*Śaiva Siddhānta* is firmly rooted on revelation. Like all other theistic schools, it gives due importance to Scripture to prove the existence of God. The biography and literature of the *Śaiva Nāyanmārs* disclose the fact that they came into direct communion with God. For them, God was not a subject of investigation, but an object of experience. Their personal experience with the Lord is beautifully portrayed in the emotional outpourings of their devotional literature. But there are some systems of Indian philosophy which do not accept verbal testimony as a valid source of knowledge. To them, citations from the religious hymns do not carry any weight. God is held to be transcending all limits of our knowledge. He is super-sensuous. So, sense-perception is naturally to be eliminated to prove His existence. Some other means agreeable to both the parties are to be sought. Inference is admitted as a sound source of valid knowledge by all systems except Cārvāka. So, the exponents of *Śaiva Siddhānta* endeavour to establish the existence of God through inference that leads one from the seen to the unseen.

### Cosmological argument

Vāḱicamuṇivar, the author of *Ñāṇāmirutam* presents cosmological argument based on inference to prove the existence of God.<sup>24</sup> According to this argument, the aggregation of the gross elements commencing from earth and various objects like mountain that constitute the universe should have a creator, because these components are products without comparison. The example given to support the proposition is that of a pot. The syllogism of this argument requires some elucidation. A product is one which is subject to division and which undergoes changes. Each one of the contents of the phenomenal world is divisible and mutable. Since the products are inert and non-intelligent, they require an all-intelligent being for their division and changes characterised by production, existence and destruction. Since the intelligence of the souls is limited and they get the knowledge only after

<sup>24</sup> *Ñāṇāmirutam*, 57.1-3.

getting a body, they could not effect the changes and classification all by themselves. Any product for its inception requires the co-operation of three causes, viz., the material cause, the instrumental or auxiliary cause and the efficient cause as evidenced from the empirical experience. For the production of a pot, clay is the material cause, the potter's wheel and other instruments are the auxiliary cause, while the potter is the efficient cause. The world is a product and its production also involves three causes. *Māyā*, the primordial matter is the material cause. Śiva's inseparable Śakti and the root *karma* of the souls form the auxiliary cause, while Śiva Himself is the Efficient Cause. Śiva through the instrumentality of His Śakti causes the universe to emerge from *Māyā*.

According to *Śaiva Siddhānta*, God does not create the souls or the primordial matter which are eternal like Himself. Eternity does not mean equality. Just like the potter who cannot create clay but can effect only the pot, so also the Lord creates only the manifested world and not its primal core, i.e. *māyā* which is ever existing. In *Śaiva Siddhānta*, creation means the *kāraṇa rūpa* (i.e. the causal form of *māyā*) assuming the *kārya rūpa* (i.e. the effected form of *māyā*), while destruction means the *kārya rūpa* returning to its original state of *kāraṇa rūpa*. There is no complete destruction. *Kārya rūpa* is fleeting and ephemeral, while *kāraṇa rūpa* is a reality.

Though the cosmological argument attempts to prove the existence of God, it is not free from defects. Standing from the side of a novice, the author of *Ñāṇāmirutam* finds some drawbacks in the theory of causation. The first remark is as follows:<sup>25</sup>

A man, who has noticed the co-presence of a pot and its maker at one place, notices only the pots at a different place and not their maker. His previous knowledge of concomitance of the potter and pot educates him in the second instance to infer that there should be a potter, even though he was not seen there. But with regard to the universe, if one has ever seen the creator and the universe existing side by side, then if he happens to witness a different universe without the presence of its maker, he could very well infer the existence of its author. This riddle is resolved by the author through an illustration.<sup>26</sup> A person observes the concomitance of a small column of smoke and fire in a kitchen and similar places. In a different situation, he happens to notice a large column of smoke on the summit of a mountain. It is reasonable for him to infer the existence of large fire in the invisible part of the mountain. Despite the difference in the volume of smoke, the common feature in both cases being smoke, which is always con-

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.4-8.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.9-18.

comitant with its cause viz., fire, forms the symbol of inference. If it is admitted that the world is a product, then there is little hesitation to account for its creator. Whether the product is a small one like the pot or a stupendous one like the universe, it requires a producer. Further it is to be understood that analogy is always partial and one should not read complete agreement between the objects of comparison and objects compared. The purpose of the above comparison is to indicate that every product, whether it is small or big, requires causal agency and to exhibit the known in order to infer the unknown.

However, the reality of God cannot be grasped completely by cold logic or subtle philosophical theories which only provide the clue of understanding the absolute reality.

The second remark<sup>27</sup> is with regard to the nature of ether which is incorporeal (*arūpa*) and hence would not be a product, even though it forms part of the universe. But, Vākīcamuṇivar rejects this view stating that even the ether is undoubtedly a product, since a product is characterised by its quality and ether has sound for its quality. Further, the sound potential, being an aspect of ether, is mingled in the remaining four gross elements (i.e. air, fire, water and earth). For this reason, these elements are said to be the constituent members of ether. So, ether is divisible. What is divisible should be a product. Since these products have origination, they are subject to decay and their changes account for an efficient cause.<sup>28</sup>

### The Meykaṅṭār School

The cosmological argument advanced by Vākīcamuṇivar is further developed in the *Meykaṅṭār* school, as noticed in *Civañāṇa pōtam* and *Civañāṇa cittiyār*.<sup>29</sup> The first aphorism in *Civañāṇa pōtam* purports to prove the existence of God through analogical reasoning.

The world is inert and non-intelligent. It undergoes three operative functions viz., production, maintenance and destruction. Among the three, through the first two functions it assumes *sthūlarūpa* (i.e. concrete, visible form), while through the last one, it resolves into its original *sūkṣmarūpa* (subtle, invisible form). Since the world is inert, it cannot dissolve into its causal form and also it cannot manifest again all by itself. So, the reality of the phenomenal world comes out of the ground of God whither it is resolved and whence it re-emerges. The reason for the

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 57. 19–20.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.21–23.

<sup>29</sup> i. *Civañāṇapōtam, Cīrrurai*, (Madras, kalakam edition, 1981), pp. 8–20.  
ii. *Civañāṇacittiyār*, (Madras, kalakam edition, 1973), 1.1–17.

dissolution is to give rest to the wearied souls and for the recreation is to enable them to exhaust their *āṇava*. The cosmic changes could be effected only by one who is changeless. From the seen world, the reality of its author viz., the unseen God, is to be inferred.

The first aphorism like the rest is terse and cryptic. It contains three parts known as *adhikarāṇa*, each of which is formulated in a syllogistic form. Let us consider them one by one.

### First Adhikarāṇa (Part I)

The proposition or thesis (i.e. *pratiṣṭhā* or *svapakṣa*) is that the phenomenal world, identified as he, she and it, undergoes threefold changes viz., production, maintenance and destruction.

The *prima facie* view or antithesis (*pūrvapakṣa* or *parapakṣa*) questions the validity of the above statement raising the doubt whether the universe undergoes the aforesaid changes.

This member of the syllogism represents the view of the opposing systems. The *Lokāyatās* of the Non-Vedic group and the *Mīmāṃsakas* of the Vedic group envisage that the world is eternal and it is improper to state that it suffers changes and for this reason it requires an intelligent agent known as God.

The rejoinder to this objection to pass for a conclusion is known as *Siddhānta* which is supported by two other members viz., reason and example. To establish the original proposition, the following three reasons are adduced by the *Śaiva Siddhāntin*.

1. The sense-perceived universe is made up of various parts. It is a composite whole. A composite is conditioned by a cause or causes. The component parts that constitute the universe are conveniently classified on the principle of gender, i.e., masculine, feminine and neuter. A particular object in the universe is a 'he', or 'she' or 'it'. 'He' or 'she' denotes only the physical features of the sentient beings for there is no gender in the soul, while 'it' indicates the in-organic and non-sentient beings. This sort of classification or division, regularity and design could not be self-made. Therefore, it is suggested that there must be a classifier or designer.

2. Each one of the component parts in the entire universe differs from one another. There is difference between two men, two women and two things. There is no sameness even between two homogeneous things. There are innumerable kinds of things belonging to inert matter. Manifoldness and materiality are the significant features of the phenomenal world which could not self-exist. *Śaiva Siddhānta* postulates the difference in the *karma* of the individuals for the difference in their being. There should be an intelligent cause to effect the diversity and mutability of things in the universe.



3. The sense-perceived objects that constitute the visible universe are liable to undergo changes and transformations. That which is cognized through the means of determinate perception is known as *acētanapirapañcam* (insentient material universe) which is classified as he, she and it. These things being the object of determinate perception are subject to change. So, the phenomenal world as it appears could not be considered as an entity, since an entity could not be divided into parts, and also it should not suffer change which occurs only in that which is made up of parts.

To sum up, since the phenomenal world is classified into three broad divisions, each of which is manifold and different from one another undergoing transformations and also becoming the subject of determinate perception, there must be an omniscient being to effect the changes.

The example to support the aforesaid reasons is that of a cloth. In the cloth, the manifold inert yarns constitute the warp and woof which, being the component parts of the cloth, suggest the existence of its weaver. The weaver of the universe is God.

This syllogistic inference is admissible only to the *Mīmāṃsakas* who accepted *anumāna* as a valid source of knowledge. But, the *Lokāyatas* (the Indian materialists) do not accept *anumāna*. Their only source of valid knowledge is perception. In order to convince them, the *Śaiva Siddhāntin* employs *pratyakṣa* (perception) to establish his original proposition viz., that the universe is subject to threefold changes. The adduced reason is as follows:

“Because origin and end lay on the sides of the existing thing”.

Without origination, the particular thing could not have come into existence. So existence indicates its previous position of origination, for without origination existence is impossible and inconceivable. It is followed by destruction. Mere observation or perception is enough to instruct the *Lokayata* that the sense-perceived things undergo three-fold changes as mentioned above. Since the component parts are subject to change, the universe being the whole should naturally undergo the same changes. To explain this point, an analogy is given:

A particular kind of plants, fruits or insects appears in a particular season and goes out of existence at the end of it. This process is repeatedly seen. So also, the phenomenal world which is ephemeral comes into existence, stays for some period and again resolves back to its original state.

### Second Adhikarana (Part II)

This *adhikarana* is intended for those, especially the *Sāṃkhya*s, who admit that the universe undergoes changes, but do not accept an intelligent agent to effect the changes. The members of the syllogism pertaining to this second part of the argument are the following:

Proposition: 'The world exists.'

Reason: Because there is no origin to that which does not exist.

Example (negative): Like the hare's horn.

In the calf of a cow and in the young one of a hare, the horn is not found. When the calf grows, the horn is seen visibly in its head. But, in the case of the hare, the horn is absent completely at all times. This indicates that which is not could not come into existence like the hare's horn, and also it implies that what were already there in abstract and unseen from (*sūkṣma*) is evolved into a concrete and visible form (*stbūla*) like the calf's horn. The effect is emanated from its cause in which it existed already implicitly. The essence of effect is not different from its cause. This concept is known as *Satkāryavāda* in *Saiva Siddhānta*. The rational basis of this concept may be exemplified. From clay only a pot could be produced and not a cloth. From a timber, a chair could be made and not a jewel. The significant relationship between the cause and effect is to be considered.

The *Satkāryavāda* out of logical necessity postulated the existence of the primordial entity (the material cause) known as *māyā* – the seed principle out of which the parts that form the universe are evolved and into which they again resolve. *Māyā* is a very subtle entity in which the phenomenal world exists implicitly before its manifestation, just like a big banyan tree is latent in a minute, tiny seed, prior to its evolution.

Next, the *Saiva Siddhāntin* proceeds to postulate the existence of the efficient cause and instrumental cause. The syllogism for this postulation is as follows:

Proposition: The existing world has a creator.

Reason: Because that which exists could not be produced without a creator.

The *Sāṃkhya*s held that the world would evolve by itself from the primordial matter, and hence no need for a creator. Though they accepted *Satkāryavāda*, they did not accept an efficient cause. The *Saiva Siddhāntin* points out the defect in their argument and stresses on the necessity of threefold causes for the production of anything that we have already noted. One could amplify the examples. A pot requires a potter, a chair a carpenter and a book an author. But one cannot question who is the creator of God, for it would lead to infinite regress. That is why the Absolute is depicted in the Tamil devotional literature as one having no father and mother.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup>i. *Cilappatikāram*, 5.169.  
ii. *Tiruvācakam*, 12.3

After proving the existence of God, the Śaiva Siddhāntin proceeds to propound that the efficient cause should be the Universal Destroyer. The syllogism for this argument follows thus:

Proposition: There is no evolution except in dissolution.

Reason: Because it (the evolved world) becomes dissolved there (in involution).

Even if one accepts the efficient cause for the creation of the world, views differ with regard to the agency in the theistic schools. The *Pāñcarātras* held that the protecting agent, Vāsudeva should be the efficient cause, while the *Brahmavādins* maintained in its place the creating agent, Brahmā. According to *Śaiva Siddhānta*, these are petty deities and they are only the evolved souls. By virtue of their accumulated merit, they obtained the authority from the Mahādeva (Lord Śiva) to create and to protect. Further, the elements and worlds existing in the five *kalās* viz., *Nivṛtti*, *Pratiṣṭhā*, *Vidyā*, *Sānti* and *Sāntiyatīta* are respectively absorbed by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Ananda and Sadāśiva under the mandate of Lord Śiva who actually actuates the Mahāsamhāra (the Great Cosmic involution) through the agency of Sadāśiva. So, the operative agents stand to Lord Śiva what the ministers to the emperor. There may be many directed agents to carry out the various activities; but, Lord Śiva is held to be the directing overall agent. K. Sivaraman in his dissertation explains this concept of Supreme God thus:<sup>31</sup>

“The entire universe with its creators, conservers and destroyers is under Śiva’s control even as dried leaves whirl under the control of a stormy wind . . . The Destroyer is the only transcendent Being (*tattvātīta*), transcending all *tattvas* . . . The designation of the Supreme Reality as Destroyer is metaphysical as it is also mystical. The Concept of Destroyer represents God as the Universal Being. Everything is ‘nought’ (*śūnya*) before Being. God is not something or someone which exists along with the totality of beings. He is Being itself . . . The Destroyer stands for eternity which truly transcends temporality . . . Only the Destroyer is the Death of Death (*kālakāla*), the realm beyond the realm destroyed, and is the ultimate foundation of ontological courage in the face of anxiety of transitoriness.”

During the period of *Mahāpralaya*, the whole universe with all its contents including the aforesaid minor gods are dissolved in Him. Hara (another name for Śiva) is the Universal Destroyer who is the ground of the dissolved universe. The phenomenal world is resolved in its material cause, *Māyā*, which takes its ground under the feet of the Lord. The relationship between the material cause (*māyā*)

<sup>31</sup> K. Sivaraman, *Śaivism in Philosophical Perspective*, (Delhi, 1973), pp. 47–50.

and the efficient cause (the Lord) is described as *abhinnābhāva*, i.e., inseparable union like that of Vyāpaka and Vyāpya (the Pervader and the Pervaded) and that of *ādhāra* and *ādheya* (the Supporter and the Supported).

### God as the Material Cause

The material cause *māyā*, its product the world, and the ground of *māyā*, viz., Lord's Śakti, are compared to the seed, its shoot and earth.<sup>32</sup> If the seed comes into contact with the moist earth, it becomes capable of manifesting a shoot. So also, if *māyā* reposing at the feet of the Lord receives the Divine Will of His Śakti, it becomes capable of manifesting the world. If there is no moisture in the earth, the seed could not shoot. Likewise, if there is no will of Lord's Śakti, then *māyā* could not evolve. The world is evolved from *māyā* with the will of Lord's Śakti which functions in accordance with the individual's *mala* to endow the concerned souls with the different types of psycho-physical organisms.

But some passages in the *Tirumurai*s and *Āgamas* reveal that the world is emanated from God Himself.<sup>33</sup> These portions are taken in a literal sense by some people who argue that God forms not only the efficient cause but also the material cause.<sup>34</sup> Such misunderstanding would go against the same literature which describe Him to be immutable. Though the Lord transcends all the elements that constitute the universe, He is simultaneously immanent in them. His immanence should not be mistaken for material causality. Civañānamuṇivar,<sup>35</sup> the able exponent of *Śaiva Siddhānta* submits an illustration to explain the figurative expressions in the texts. The lotus actually germinates from its root and not from the mud though it gets the name *pañkajam* which really means that which is born of mud. Similarly, the world is evolved directly from its root *māyā* and not from God. Nevertheless, it is figuratively said that the world is proceeded from God who actually provides the ground for *māyā*. So, the material universe (i.e., non-intelligent principle) could not originate from the Intelligent Principle, viz., God.

If God is held to be the material cause, the product (i.e., world) also should resemble Him in content and quality. Since there are many imperfections and

<sup>32</sup> *Civañānapōtam*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>33</sup> i. *Tiruvācakam*, 3.44, 4.137–141, 5.15, 70; 22.8, etc.  
ii. *Civañānapōtam*, p. 16.

<sup>34</sup> i. *There can be only one final conclusion*, (Hawaii, Kauai Aadheenam, The Saiva Siddhanta Church, 1983), pp. 11–12.  
ii. *Monism and Pluralism in Śaiva Siddhānta*, (Ibid., 1984), pp. 16–20.

<sup>35</sup> i. *Civañānapōtam*, p. 16.  
ii. *Civañānacittiyār*, 1.2.48, and its commentary by Civañānamuṇivar.

defects in the world, they are also to be accounted from the material cause. Since God is conceived to be absolutely perfect, impeccable and immutable by nature, He could not be postulated to be the material cause which is subject to changes. The defects and diverse features are due to *āṇava* and *mūlakarma* of the souls.

However, K. Sivaraman attempts to explain the material causality in order to reconcile the two views in the following passage of his dissertation.<sup>36</sup>

“The intelligent agent of the world is not as such the material cause of the world but only as related to the non-intelligent *māyā* . . . It is efficient cause which is also material cause by virtue of its being inseparably qualified by *māyā* . . . Just as the hair and the nails, etc., are not born of the body alone (insentient) or the soul alone (sentient), so the universe is born not of *māyā* alone or Maheśvara alone, but of the Embodied Unity which is accordingly described as the ‘womb of all elements’ and also as the Supreme Lord, the Mighty etc. . . .” His interpretation obviously confirms the sole causality of God.

### Third Adhikaraṇa (Part III)

This *adhikaraṇa* is devoted to clarify whether the efficient cause of the universe is one or many. Śaiva Siddhanta advocates monotheism, and so it does not subscribe to the view of polytheism. The syllogism is as follows:

Proposition: The Universal Destroyer is the Primal  
Mover of the universe.

The second *adhikaraṇa* concludes that the primary God to the universe is the Universal Destroyer. This *adhikaraṇa* examines the view of the polytheists. They argue that the production of a chariot involves many carpenters and the creation of a more wonderful and stupendous universe naturally should require more than one God. But their concept is refuted by the Śaiva Siddhāntin maintaining his proposition.

Reason: Because the souls that cognize things through determinate perception have no independence without the Universal Destroyer, who transcends such a kind of perception.

Śaiva Siddhānta subsumes all the minor gods and the spiritually elevated souls under the category of *paśu*. There are also the defective souls. They are all dependent on Lord Śiva who alone is independent, omniscient, omnipotent and ubi-

<sup>36</sup> K. Sivaraman, *op. cit.*, pp. 112–115.

quitos. Though there are many carpenters in fashioning a chariot, all of them are directed by one master carpenter. So also, the deities are not autonomous and they discharge the assigned duties under the overall supervision and direction of the Supreme God Śiva. The released souls which obtained godliness (śivatvam) would not be accounted for the cosmic functions, for they are held to be in constant enjoyment of eternal bliss of the Lord which is the summum bonum of their spiritual sojourn.

### Another Version of Cosmological Argument

There are many types of cosmological arguments propounded by the western thinkers to prove the existence of God. One of them is the argument from motion. It is as old as Plato and Aristotle and it is fashioned by St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>37</sup> According to this argument, the things in the universe are movable and they require a mover. There are two kinds of movers, viz., the primary and secondary. If there is no primary mover, then there is no subsequent movers. For instance, the book is moved by hand which in turn is moved by the consciousness of one's self. To avoid infinite regress, it is postulated that there should be a First Mover who causes everything to move, but Himself is not moved by anything. Movement of an object indicates passing from one place or condition to another. It is always associated with variation, mutation, limit and contingency. The ultimate force or Prime Mover should be free from mutation, limitation and temporality, and that is the eternal reality.

According to Plato, the power that generates motion should be logically anterior to the power that gets it and passes it on. This primal force is the uncaused cause. His disciple, Aristotle envisaged that change implied an unchanging absolute source of motion which could be designated as God.

This sort of cosmological argument is not unknown to Śaiva Siddhānta.<sup>38</sup> The commentator (before 1700 A.D.) of *Ñānāmīrutam* presents from the contents of the text the following five-membered syllogism:

Proposition: The universe should have a creator.

Reason: Since it is inert, its evolution and resolution would become impossible without an intelligent being.

Example: Like the vehicles such as a chariot etc.

Application: The vehicles could not move by themselves. They require a driver to move them.

Conclusion: So also, the universe requires a mover who actuates it in accordance with the Moral Law.

<sup>37</sup> John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion*, (New Jersey, 1973), pp. 71–73.

<sup>38</sup> *Ñānāmīrutam*, 58.4–7.