

The Twelve Kālīs and Utpaladeva's Appraisal of the Sensory Experience

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The Twelve Kālīs and Pratyabhijñā

THE DOCTRINE of the Twelve Kālīs constitutes one of the earliest developments of the Kālīkula/Kālīkrama. Moreover, it represents the most esoteric teaching in the entire Kashmiri Śaiva tradition predominant in the Kashmir region in the early medieval period. The tenth-eleventhth century Kashmiri Abhinavagupta understands the Twelve Kālīs to be the most elevated esoteric aspect of his Trika system. For him, She Who Draws Time to Herself (Kālasaṅkarṣaṇī), the goddess of the Kālīkrama, is Beyond Parā (Parātīta) of the Trika goddesses consisting of the Supreme Goddess (Parā), the Middle Goddess (Parāparā) and the Lower Goddess (Aparā), that underline the doctrinal foundation of his Trika system.¹

According to Abhinavagupta, it was Utpaladeva himself who appears in the spiritual lineage that transmitted the Doctrine of the Twelve Kālīs to him. The ninth-century Somānanda,² the author of *Śivadṛṣṭi* and thus, the first preceptor of the Pratyabhijñā system

¹ Cf. TĀ III.69 and Jayaratha's commentary.

² According to Sanderson, that Somanānda might have not been the author of the *Śivadṛṣṭi*. If he were, Abhinavagupta would have addressed him in a more reverential way, as he often does in other passages by affixing the respectful *pādāḥ* to Somanānda's name, [Sanderson 2007: 353].

was, according to Abhinavagupta, a disciple of the Krama teacher Govindarāja who, before dying, passed to him the Doctrine of the Twelve Kālīs taught in the *Devīpañcaśatikā* (*Kālīkulapañcaśatakā*). This doctrine was transmitted by Somānanda, through his spiritual lineage of Utpaladeva and Lakṣmaṇagupta, down to Abhinavagupta.³ Utpaladeva did not directly refer to his spiritual heritage coming from the Krama's descendants (probably due to intentional promotion of non-tantric evaluation of the tradition founded on the rational basis). Still, his emphasis on the sensory experience saturated with the lunar nectar, systematically developed in the *Śivastotrāvalī* (*ŚSĀ*), the *magnum opus* of the Kashmiri Śaiva devotional literature, has strong affinity with the Kālīkrama's assessment of the sense-organs. The word "strong" is used here to acknowledge the fact that the Krama system constitutes the important foundation of the Pratyabhijñā, as well as the Trika and Spanda schools.⁴ Perhaps not only these reasons were present in the minds of Utpaladeva's interpreters — Kṣemarāja and Maheśvarānanda — who elaborated on the essential teachings of Utpaladeva in the light of the Krama — Mahārtha. Especially worth mentioning is Kṣemarāja who, in his commentary on Utpaladeva's *ŚSĀ*,⁵ is firmly committed to establishing the veracity of the Krama system.

On the other hand, the thirteenth-century Maheśvarānanda in his commentary (*Parimala*) on his own *Mahārthamañjarī* (MM) — the south Indian version of the Kālīkrama, set up in the pervasive Pratyabhijñā framework, uses quotations from the *ŚSĀ* in the context of the scriptural justification of the secret Kaula ritual (*kulayāga*) which he regards as the practice of the empowered means

³ Cf. ĪPV [ĪPV_r?] [Torella 1994: xiv].

⁴ Cf. Sanderson 1988: 668-89; Torella 1994: xiv.

⁵ I am immensely grateful to Bettina Bäumer for her suggestion to read Kṣemarāja's commentary on the *Śivastotrāvalī* (*ŚSĀ-K*) which she kindly put at my disposal.

(*sāktopāya*).⁶ This interesting configuration displays a certain result, namely, the indistinct correlation between the Krama and the Kaula⁷ “logically” provable by the axiomatic system of the Pratyabhijñā;⁸ for example, the Twelve Kālīs as the representation of the reflective awareness (*vimarśa*).

The Doctrine of the Twelve Kālīs is centred on the mystical experience embodied in the Twelve Suns known as the Sequence of the Sun-Goddess (*bhānavī-krama*)⁹ which is said to be the essential teaching of the northern transmission (*uttarāmnāya*). The Twelve Kālīs represent: (1) the dynamism of the cognitive act (*saṁvit-cakra*, *saṁvit-krama*); (2) the universal pulse of consciousness (*sāmānya-spanda*); and (3) the twelve divinized sense-organs (*prakāśa-cakra*, *marīcidevatā-cakra*, *raśmi-cakra*). Within this conceptual scheme, the Twelve Kālīs stand for the method (*krama*) and the tool (the senses) of the cognitive process that give rise to the reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) that is the capacity of pure luminous consciousness (*prakāśa*, *bhāsa*) to reflect upon its infinite nature. The category of *vimarśa* constitutes one of the major preoccupations of Utpaladeva established in his commentary (*Vṛtti*) on the Īśvarapratyabhijñā-Kārikā (ĪPK) where he defines *vimarśa* as the power of the activity of consciousness (*cittikriyāśakti*).¹⁰ In this sense, the Twelve Kālīs constitute the analytical model of

⁶ MM, stanza 58.

⁷ Ibid. commentary on stanza 68.

⁸ A similar example of the Pratyabhijñā’s apodicticity within the Krama-Kaula construction is found in the anonymous *Mahānāyaparakāśa* edited in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series (MP-T).

⁹ The *Kālīkramapañcāśikā* attributed to Niṣkriyānanda whom *Devīpañcaśatikā* acknowledges as one of the first preceptors of the Kālīkrama tradition describes the core of the Kālīkrama teachings in the following words: “Kālī is the energy of the Sun (*bhānavī*) consisting of the Twelve Risen Suns. Terrible, she manifests Time. This is the Kālīkārama.” Cf. CMSS MS Kh, MS Gh 7.205ab.

¹⁰ Cf. ĪPV 1.5.14.

the cognitive process where emphasis is placed on the cognitive energies themselves — the sense-organs and thoughts accompanying sensory perception, pointing the way to mystical communion with the phenomenal reality. Activated on the basis of the purification of thought-constructs (*vikalpa-saṃskāra*), the Twelve Kālīs give rise to the awakening of pure knowledge (*śuddha vidyā*). This entrance to the condition free of thought-constructs (*nirvikalpa*) is granted when the intellect “attains to the state of intrinsic purity as a reflecting medium”,¹¹ in this case, all that remains is the universal agent of mental representations. Therefore, “he who, having all as his essence, thus knows: ‘All this multiform deployment is mine’, he, even in the flow of mental constructs, attains the state of Maheśa”.¹² In this way, also the individual subject who, though continuing to produce mental constructs deriving precisely from the power of the Lord — “mine is this multiform deployment of the *saṃsāra*” — this subject, too, permeates the universe without any differentiation and transforms all the mental constructs into pure reflective awareness, attains the state of Maheśvara.¹³ Apart from this epistemic bedrock systematized by the terminology of the Pratyabhijñā, the Kālīkrama, along with the Twelve Kālīs core, constitutes the highest theoretical development of the sensory experience and the hermeneutics of this process, that cannot be found in any other Kashmiri Śaiva tradition of that time. Notably, in this place where the functioning of the senses is rendered experientially positive, the Kālīkrama and Utpaladeva fuse. In Utpaladeva’s concept of devotion, the sensory experience plays a prominent part. Indulgence in the senses entails entering into the highest realization of Śiva’s nature, it is a sudden recognition (*sāhasa-abhijñāna*),¹⁴ “saturated with the pure, everlastingly flowing stream of the nectar of consciousness (*saṃvit-*

¹¹ Cf. SenSharma 1990:130.

¹² Cf. ĪPV 4.1.12, trs. Torella. This verse is quoted in the MM, commentary on stanza 60.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ ŚSĀ 9.6.

amṛta)”¹⁵ that comprises the cognition “that all is one”.¹⁶ However, apart from the frenzy dynamism performed by the religious zeal of the senses, devotion has also another dimension. Initially it appears static, suiting to the overall picture of what is called the secret doctrine of the Kālīkrama, in so far as for Utpaladeva devotion is the condition of equipoise and permanence (*sthiti*). Utpaladeva avers:

*Nothing whatsoever is to be utilized
For becoming firmly established (sthiti-kṛta) in one's own
self; luminosity is clearly apparent and eternal.
May this idea take a stronghold on me.¹⁷
Only those who are abiding in their own true selves
(svasthā), are devoted to you.¹⁸
Having settled (sthitvā) in the abode of your pure
consciousness
O, may I ever worship you, O Lord,
By means of body, speech and mind [. . .].¹⁹*

The condition of permanence (*sthiti*), apart from being only one phase of the cognitive process (*sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *saṁhāra*, etc.), also constitutes the highest state of the Goddess Kālasaṁkarṣaṇī, marking the complete stability in pure consciousness represented by the “purified cognition” of the wheel of consciousness (*saṁvit-cakra*= Twelve Kālīs)²⁰ and tasted as the lunar nectar of immortality. The

¹⁵ ŚSĀ 12.17.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. 5.25.

¹⁸ Ibid. 15.1.

¹⁹ Ibid. 17.11.

²⁰ The condition of permanence (*sthiti*) is the inexplicable (*anākhyā*), it is the sun of consciousness (*cit-arka*), the freedom of Śiva who makes creation, etc. (*sṛṣṭi*, etc.) manifest and dissolve away. Abhinavagupta drew description of the highest state of the Goddess Kālasaṁkarṣaṇī understood as the condition of permanence (*sthiti*) from the *Devīpāñcaśatikā* and the *Yonigahvaratantra*. Abhinavagupta acknowledged these two texts as the authority of the Kālīkrama.

condition of permanence (*sthiti*) unites the solar–lunar dimensions enclosed within the *vidyā* of *Kālasaṅkarṣaṇī*. Therefore, what initially seems a static establishment (*sthiti*) in pure consciousness involves astonishing richness of the sensory experience embodied in the Sun of the Twelve Kālīs. The functioning of the senses operates simultaneously in the expansive and contractive manner. When expanded, they savour the blissful nectar of the expanded consciousness represented by the Sixteen Digits of the Full Moon, in the contracted state, they relish the innermost lunar nectar of the *śāmbhava* state — the Seventeenth Digit of the New Moon.

Samvit-Mārga, Samvit-Cakra

One of the major preoccupations of Utpaladeva's theory of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) is the attempt to establish a single dynamic subject,²¹ the “I” of Śīva that manifests within a duality of *prakāśa-vimarśa*, the pure luminous consciousness (*prakāśa/Śīva*) and the reflective awareness (*vimarśa/Śakti*). The polarization of *prakāśa-vimarśa* is carried out to strengthen the experimental warrant of the ultimate non-dualism (*paramādvaita*) tied up by the knot of their intrinsic unity (*abheda*). This demonstrating procedure determines the unshaken ground for the conceptions of “transcendence” and “immanence” when viewed from the perspective of the phenomenology of perception leading to recognition of the absolute (“I” of Śīva) in the entire objective phenomena. Indeed, ŚSĀ portrays Śīva endowed with sunrays (*bhānumarīcyaḥ*)²² (due to which the singleness of the dynamic subject is preserved). Śīva is the aim, the light of pure consciousness (*prakāśa*) attainable through sunrays of the reflective awareness (*vimarśa*). Sunbeams represent the cognizance of the senses whose functioning employs the reflective awareness. For the devotee, the path of the senses (*saṁvit-mārga*) is the path to attain Śīva.²³ On

²¹ ĪPV intro, p. xxix.

²² ŚSĀ 5.8.

²³ Ibid. 1.10.

the more interiorized level of mystical absorption, the senses are transformed into the sense-divinities whose sensory perception is utilized as the sacrificial substances offered to Śiva.²⁴

*Hail to your terrible wheel of the goddesses of the senses
(śakti-vṛnda)!*

*Who, by making an offering of the sense-objects,
Worship you through the enjoyment of delight.*²⁵

In the commentary on this verse of the ŚSĀ, Kṣemarāja defines *śakti-vṛnda* as the wheel of consciousness (*saṁvit-cakra*).²⁶ *Saṁvit-cakra* is extensively elaborated in chap. IV of Abhinavagupta's TĀ, in the section dedicated to the empowered means (*śāktopāya*)²⁷ denoting the Twelve Kālīs embedded in the dynamism of the cognitive process. Kṣemarāja's interpretation of *śakti-vṛnda* is unique. This term never appears in the Kālīkrama scriptures in the context of the Twelve Kālīs, in so far as it is exclusively reserved to denote the collective reality of the Kālīkrama's metaphysics known as the Wheel of the Aggregate (*vṛnda-cakra*). However, an exception is found in the *Cidgaganacandrikā* (CGC) of Śrīvatsa. In this text dating most probably from the thirteenth century, *śakti-vṛnda* refers to the countenance of the Goddess as the Sun of Consciousness in the precise meaning of *saṁvit-cakra*. According to scriptural testimony, this is the plane of the twelvefold sequence manifested in the world in the form of words and everywhere

²⁴ A similar description we find in the Mahānaya-Prakāśa (MNP) of Śitikanṭha 12.4-6: "The object of experience is the favourite place of the goddesses of the senses (*khecariṅvāhadevīs*) who delight in consuming it (*upabhoga*). When these goddesses of the senses have relished the field of objectivity, they offer it to the Bhairava who is Consciousness (Cidbhairava). Then, after offering themselves, they abandon it and come to rest. This is the foundation of the enjoyment of worldly experience (*viśayabhoga*)."

²⁵ ŚSĀ 2.23.

²⁶ ŚSĀ-K: 32.

²⁷ TĀ IV 122b-181a.

else as the squaring of the triads.²⁸ The twelvefold scheme (3 x 4 = 12) represents the processing of the cognitive energy taking place between the trinity of the knower (*pramātr*), the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), and the object of knowledge (*prameya*). Each follows the fourfold sequence of (1) projection (*śṛṣṭi*), (2) maintenance (*sthiti*), (3) withdrawal (*samhāra*), and (4) the inexplicable (*anākhya*). The attentive reflection on this sequence (*krama-parāmarśa*) that is established as the ground of all experience is the practical application of *saṁvit-cakra*. The projection of the object in the outline of objectivity, generated by the unfolding of will, is emergence (*akalitollāsa/śṛṣṭi*). Each time this will falls on the external object, the sensual enjoyment (*tatsambhoga/sthiti*) is maintained. Returning back to its own essential nature which is the withdrawal of expansion for contraction is relish (*carvaṇa/samhāra*). The final repose of the differentiated objects in the unity of consciousness, where they are mirrored as reflections indistinct from their primordial source (the absolute "I" (*pūrṇa ahaṁ*)), is the phase of the inexplicable cessation (*virāma/anākhya*).²⁹ Although the inexplicable cessation represents the state of consciousness that is free of the duality of thought-constructs (*nirvikalpa*), it still cognizes, in so far as it recognizes the movement of thoughts as the pure luminous consciousness and, moreover, comprises a cognition: "all this is my glory". In this way, the inexplicable cessation retains the activities of the senses and cognition but endows them with a new status close to their divine nature.

Sunbeams of Devotion

Utpaladeva uses the sense-organs as a framework for his eulogy of devotional experience in a way that their most exalted commitment is the fullness of their realization. Devotion commands the

²⁸ *tvanmukhaṁ tripathanetri ! bhātmakaṁ śaktivṛndam iha turyathāgamam
(yad yathāgamam) | dvādaśa kramapadaṁ padādibhir jṛmbhitam jagati
taccatustrikaiḥ || — CGC 36*

²⁹ MNP-T 9.28-9.33.

experience through the senses, generating the magnetic field of blissful elation which grows in intensity as religious passion increases. Perhaps more striking, authenticity of devotion is provable by the sensory rapture that permeates the subjective and objective contents of the cognitive process. As Utpaladeva tells us: “those only are your true devotees who experience the subject and object through an expanded fund of sensation”.³⁰ The entire spectrum of sensorial intensity embedded in the devotional “methodology”, “the sunbeams of devotion”,³¹ as Utpaladeva calls it, brings forth a constitutive evaluation of the sensory experience permitting a mystical absorption (*samāveśa*). Both Utpaladeva and Kṣemarāja equate devotion (*bhakti*) with possession³² (*āveśa*) and mystical absorption (*samāveśa*)³³ in a way in which devotional commitment of the senses is highlighted in the perspective of the sensory involvement that leads naturally to immersion in exalted moods (*rasa*) resulting in mystical communion with the absolute. At this stage, the sense-organs unfold in accord with their innate spontaneity extracting from the objective sphere the essence, the subtle portion, as fragrance, colour, sound, etc. which serves as a means leading to intimate union with pure consciousness, represented by the relishing of taste (*rasa*). This savoury awareness of the senses is indicated by usage of such terms as: the bliss of tasting (*rasana*), relish (*carvaṇa*), enjoying a flavour (*āsvāda*). They convey the idea of universal interpenetration to the point of final absorption. Relishing the savour is the image of assimilation and the means for increase of power. Working at the intersection of

³⁰ ŚSĀ 16.27.

³¹ Ibid. 7.6.

³² Ibid. 16.6. Also Abhinavagupta in his commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana describes *bhakti* as “absorption (*āveśa*) in that Lord whose nature is the highest form of the self”, in *The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with the Locana of Abhinavagupta* [ed. Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan 1990], quoted in Smith 2009: 346.

³³ ŚSĀ-K 5.13.

semiotic and symbolic, the act of tasting is ontologically the activity of dissolution (*carvaṇa* = *samhāra*) that exemplifies interiorization of the objective content (the *krama* rest in the *akrama*). Destruction by licking carried out by the network of the rays of the senses (represented by the Twelve Kālīs) intent on universal dissolution, appears commonly in the scriptures of the Kālīkrama tradition, standing for the epitome of reflective awareness (*parāmarśa*). As Torella pointed out,³⁴ the act of savouring, represented by such terms as *carvaṇa*, *āsvāda*, *rasana*, is complementary to *vimarśa* and its derivatives.

Apart from palatable absorption, there is yet another notion implied by the image of devotionally-imbued senses that also posits an all-encompassing relatedness in virtue of which the senses lead to recognition of the unity-in-difference (*bhedābheda/kramākrama*). The notion is that of pervasion (*vyāpti*). Because of their pervasive nature, the sense-organs transform into magnetic tools operating within the field of devotional enchantment. The pervasion of the senses, the concept of the intertwining of all things where the lower is pervaded by the higher that contains it, lies at the foundation of the Kālīkrama tradition.³⁵ Sunrays symbolically represent the pervasion of the senses. As much as solar energy, the sunbeams of the senses illumine the world both partially (as every individual thing) and collectively. The solar radiance spreads outwards, precisely this distribution in all directions refers to the activity of pervasion.³⁶ This symbolizes the fact that everything is made manifest by the light of consciousness and, as such, attains its true being by realizing its unity with all. As the instrument of pervasion (*vyāpti*), the senses have a capacity of merging things in their intrinsic unity. On that level, the senses have already lost their differentiated character and became indistinct from the supreme "I". The supreme "I" is a subject having recognized the

³⁴ Cf. ĪPV: 118-19.

³⁵ MNP-T 2.34, 2.39.

³⁶ *Kālīkulapañcaśatikā* (*Devīpañcaśatikā*) 4.6-4.8, MS no. 5-358.

movement of the senses as the activity of pure consciousness. Therefore, the activity of merging evokes the dynamic character of pervasion that, on the ground of the Kālīkrama, is enacted by the senses which are actually the partisans of the energized union (*mahāmelāpa*).³⁷ This synthesis articulates the locus of the identity within the dynamism of the senses, which, acting in an all-permeating manner (*vyāpaka*), are compelled to savour the unifying taste of non-dual consciousness (*sāmarasya*) in each and every moment of perception.³⁸ Utpaladeva is clear in his intention that seeks to affirm the constitutive character of the senses engaged in union at the culminating point of his eulogy of devotion. Immersion in the functioning of the senses penetrating the objective and the subjective content with the intention of their endless conjunctions is implied in Utpaladeva's concept of the great festival of worship (*mahotsava*). As Utpaladeva tells us:

*I pay homage to Śiva, who
During the festival of dissolution
Is passionately and tightly embraced by Śivā (Pārvatī, Śakti)
Through whom the entire universe is enjoyed
By means of drinking, eating and decoration.*³⁹

³⁷ MNP-T 2.25.

³⁸ Ibid. Ananataśaktipāda in his commentary on the *Aphorisms on the Mad Lord (Vātūlanāthasūtra)* explains that the great union (*mahāmelāpa*) taking place between the *siddhas* and *yoginīs* in the ritual assembly (*cakra*) is the mutual connection between the perceiving subject (*grāhaka*) and perceived object (*grāhya*) conjoined within and by means of the circle of sense-organs. *Siddhas* and *yoginīs* represent deities of the sense-organs and the object of the senses fused in pulsating union during every particular act of cognition. In this way, the great union (*mahāmelāpa*) is the great fusion (*mahāsāmarasya*) abiding constantly and everywhere in the absolute void of consciousness (*niruttaracidvyomni* — *man*?) where differentiation between objectivity and subjectivity ceases completely. Cf. *Vātūlanāthasūtra* with Ananataśaktipāda's *Vṛtti* (KSTS 29), Bombay, 1923, verse 5.

³⁹ ŚSĀ 16.29.

*O, hail to the great festival of worship
 Inexplicable and sweet
 From which even tears that fall
 Bring forth the savour of the immortal nectar.*⁴⁰

In the context of tantric practice, *mahotsava* stands for the code of sensorial excess, referring to the performance of the great banquet where the *siddhas* and *yoginīs* come to unite (*melāpa*) with the sole aim of generating nectar (*amṛta*). Indeed, Maheśvarānanda favours this interpretation by establishing Utpaladeva's *mahotsava* at the centre of his Kaula-Krama definition of the empowered means (*śāktopāya*).⁴¹ However, withholding the urge for setting apart the implications of the purely ritualistic kind, we put forward the "cognitive" interpretation, pronouncing the *siddhas* and *yoginīs* to be representations of the deities of sense-organs and the objects of senses fused in the pulsating union that activates the unfolding of the nectar of bliss. The nectar of bliss represents the expanded form of consciousness characterized by the outpouring of the energies of the senses saturating and permeating the world of phenomenal existences from within and without. The stream of overflowing energy experienced through the penetrating rush of the senses brings forth the pervasion that is essentially the undivided state of oneness enabling everything to emerge, to be maintained, and to dissolve within the infinite chain of interrelated conjunctions. The pervasion is implicit in the nature of the senses which enjoy themselves in expansion and contraction of their intrinsic energies encapsulating all things in their essential unity.

⁴⁰ ŚSĀ 17.1.

⁴¹ In this way Maheśvarānanda specifies that practice of the empowered means (*śāktopāya*) is based on the application of the *kulayāga* which results in tasting the nectar and ultimately leads an aspirant to the experience of absorption into the supreme bliss of the *śāmbhava* state. Cf. MM stanza 58.

Pūrṇa: The Lunar Nectar of Bliss

Intense longing for the spiritual experience of the perfect fullness (*pūrṇa*) manifested in the lunar nectar, the immortal wine, permeates all levels of the ŚSĀ. The most richly evoked by Utpaladeva is the meaning of *pūrṇa* referring to the supreme condition of *śāmbhava*.⁴² This notion is exemplified in the oozing of the full nectar of immortality (*amṛta-pūrṇatva*)⁴³ that fills and satisfies the world of phenomenal existence with bliss. The perfect fullness (*pūrṇa*, *paripūrṇa*) is the realization of the ontological identity between the world of the phenomenal existences being indistinct from Śiva's pure consciousness, as expressed in the statement: "the whole world is your perfect fullness".⁴⁴ Moreover, the attainment of the perfect fullness (*pūrṇa*) by the senses is a necessary condition for their deification that endows the faculties of the senses with the "brilliantly emissive splendour".⁴⁵ *Pūrṇa* often associated with the lunar symbolism illustrates the self-regenerated source that simultaneously empties and fills itself with the moonlight nectar. The apotheosis of the outward saturation is symbolized by the full moon; on the contrary, the pinnacle of the inward refilling is marked by the new moon. Both dimensions seem valid in Utpaladeva's exposition of the lunar nectar that carries the experience of bliss.

1. *Pūrṇa* — the full moon of the sensory experience

Even while resting on their objects

The faculties of the senses provide

*The devotees with the immortal wine [. . .]*⁴⁶

In the Kālīkrama's hermeneutics of the senses, the experience of objectivity obtained by the solar functioning of the sense-organs is embodied in bliss whose form is lunar nectar. When the sunrays

⁴² ŚSĀ 2.9.

⁴³ Ibid. 2.27.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 6.6.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 17.43-44.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 17.16. (tr. Bailly).

of the sense-organs are filled with pure desire (*icchā*) towards their outward outpour, they bring the emanation of sensory experience to its fullness. The nectar of bliss arises from the will of making the sensory experience complete. In this state the “condensed consciousness” is experienced as a fivefold object of sense. Ten rays of the sense-organs along with the mind (*manas*) and the intellect (*buddhi*), treated as one, make eleven. In this way, the bliss of the sensory experience arises sixteenfold. Sixteen is the symbolic number of the full moon of objectivity, and its form is nectar; it is the bliss because it is based on the great bliss of the object of desire that finds its fullness.⁴⁷

2. *Pūrṇa ahaṁ* — the new moon of the perfect fullness of I-ness

Reverence to him

Whose unique activity is the destruction

Of the great darkness of delusion

Whose luminosity transcends all other lights

*Whose symbol is the moon.*⁴⁸

The Lord who is free of thought-constructs (*nirvikalpa*) [. . .]

The perfect fullness of the highest bliss (*mahānandapūrṇa*).⁴⁹

The perfect fullness of I-ness (*pūrṇa ahaṁ*) constitutes the aim of the Pratyabhijñā system in so far as it represents the supreme condition of *śāmbhava*. It is a state free of thought-constructs (*nirvikalpa*) where the trinity of the cognitive process (the subject, object and means of knowledge) are identified with pure consciousness (*cinmātra*). This identification is supported by taking delight in their single flavour (*ekarasa*). *Pūrṇa ahaṁ* is the state of repose (*viśrānti*) wherein the activities of mind and senses, free from their differentiated character, are empowered to operation by the power of bliss (*ānanda-śakti*). The relation between the perfect fullness of I-ness (*pūrṇa ahaṁ*) and the dynamism of the cognitive

⁴⁷ MNP-T 5.1-5.12

⁴⁸ ŚSĀ 11.15.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 6.4.

process enclosed within the functioning of the senses is described in terms of catoptric symbolism. *Pūrṇa ahaṁ* represents the mirror-like (*bimba*) substratum for the absolute freedom (*svātantrya*) supporting the unity of the play of the cosmic reflections (*pratibimba*) deployed in the cognitive process. With emphasis on the reabsorbing character of Śiva who presides over the cosmic dissolution, the perfect fullness of I-ness (*pūrṇa*) is symbolically depicted by the seventeenth lunar digit of the new moon, and not by the full moon. The seventeenth lunar digit represents the perfect fullness of the inward realization that contains the lunar nectar of immortality which pours down into the manifestation of the objective reality.

3. *Pūrṇa* — the composite of the transmental (*unmanā*) and “with mind” (*samanā*).

*Wherever I go with body, speech, and mind
All that is you only
May this ultimate truth indeed
Become fully realized (paripūrṇa) in me.*⁵⁰

Looking closely at Utpaladeva’s sensorial code of mystical experience, we can notice that the perfect realization (*paripūrṇa*) experienced as the savour of the immortal nectar (*amṛta*) is a fusion of two states. The one, the expansion of the senses pulsating with bliss, is balanced by the second state enclosed within the image of serenity of the *śāmbhava*. In the *Kālikrama*, they correspond respectively to the states known as “with mind” (*samanā*) and the transmental (*unmanā*). The state “with mind” stands for the sensual enjoyment of sense-perceptions experienced as wonder (*camatkṛti*), which gives rise to the outlet of the senses by which an adept apprehends the beauty of the sensory world in the form of sound, touch, etc.; this is the sequence (*krama*) of the current of the senses, flowing both inside and outside, experienced as the bliss of tasting

⁵⁰ ŚSĀ 6.3.

(*rasana*).⁵¹ When this activity ceases to exist, and dissolves away, it enters into the state of transmental, the non-sequence (*akrama*). The state of *unmanā* is the form of the eternally cognized illumination where various cycles of perception shine in identity with Śiva's pure consciousness.⁵² In the interiority of the transmental, the consumed objectivity is relished as nectar (*amṛta*). By means of this nectar, the inner outpouring of the senses takes place and one experiences the world of phenomenal existence as if submerged in divine libation. The fusion of these two states unfolding in the mode of the non-sequential sequence (*kramākrama*) is rooted in the supreme condition of permanence (*sthiti*) that lies at the foundation of the Kālīkrama's hermeneutics of the sensory experience.

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