

## The Notions of the Internal and the External in Utpaladeva's Ontology

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**Abstract:** The problem-based study aims to clarify the meanings of the notions of the internal and the external in Utpaladeva's ontology, which constitutes a rational core of Kashmir Shaivism, and their role in its systematization, along with the refutation of one main and two additional arguments in favor of its idealism. The first sections are devoted to analyzing what Utpaladeva understands by the impossibility for an object to exist independently of consciousness, i.e., to the notion of the internal. That required thoroughly examining the first nine verses of the fifth chapter of the first section of his main treatise. The main arguments against his so-called idealism are also stated there, and Utpaladeva's ontology itself is proposed to be considered as a refutation of idealism. The subsequent sections focus on the analysis of the notion of the external and no longer follow the structure of the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*. They are devoted to the study of the necessary conditions for the acquisition of the external status by objects, as well as its meaning and purpose. They also refute an additional argument in favor of Utpaladeva's idealism, which is based on a misunderstanding of his interpretation of the notion of *vikalpa*. The concluding sections address the issue of how the notions of the internal and the external shape the ontology of the limited subject and the "soteriology" of the Pratyabhijñā. Besides, they refute the second additional argument in favor of the idealistic nature of this doctrine and draw attention to the commonplace misconceptions on which attempts at such arguments are based, namely the tendency, on the one hand, to attribute to the limited subject the ability to cognize independently and, on the other, to deny the possibility for the universal subject to be affected by external objects. To dismantle them, an interpretation of false egoity in the Pratyabhijñā is proposed, according to which it should be considered not merely an appearance but an appearance of appearance. It is concluded that the doctrine under consideration represents the only successful attempt to confine causality within consciousness in world philosophy.

**Keywords:** Indian philosophy, Pratyabhijñā, Utpaladeva, consciousness, subject, object, internality, externality, causality, *vikalpa*.

*In the ordinary course of life, the “I” in the limited subject is not considered as the universal subject, Īśvara, etc., because of the ontological ignorance, and this doctrine is meant to fix this situation by bringing to light the powers peculiar to Him.*

***Utpaladeva. Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā***

*The worship of Śaṅkara consists in merging with His universe transcendent being due to the invalidation of the illusion of the alleged independence of limited subjects, which was created by Śaṅkara Himself.*

***Kṣemarāja. Spandanirṇaya***

*Particular results may be consequences of Parameśvara's activity or good and bad deeds of limited subjects by virtue of karma attributed to them by the same Parameśvara, but either way, they are manifestations of the absolute independence of Parameśvara.*

***Abhinavagupta. Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika***

In the course of our study of the epistemological implications of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine,<sup>1</sup> which constitutes a rational core of Kashmir Shaivism, we had to artificially limit ourselves as regards analyzing the main tenets of its ontology since our chosen approach was predominantly epistemological. Meanwhile, such points as the identity of the universal and the limited subject, the sentient status of the latter, the invalidation of false egoity, and, in particular, the claims contained in the epigraphs above, cannot be properly comprehended without referring to the basic ontological notions of the doctrine under consideration. So our previous consideration of them could not but leave several unresolved issues. The present study aims to fill this gap by undertaking an analysis of the basic ontological notions of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine, among which Utpaladeva's distinction between the internal and the external is particularly noteworthy, and thus interrupts the cycle of our epistemological works due to the adoption of a purely ontological language — although it will still fully rely on their results.

However, given that the notions of the internal and the external form the very basis of Utpaladeva's ontology, we risk reducing the entire undertaking to an exposition and analysis of the major portion of his *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*, not to mention the commentaries thereon and other related treatises. To avoid that, we are going to stick to a problem-based approach. Otherwise put, we will dwell on those issues only that seem insufficiently elucidated or misinterpreted in modern

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<sup>1</sup> Bandurin M.A. Epistemological Implications of the Pratyabhijñā Doctrine. Vox. Философский журнал, No. 42, 2023, pp. 139-E–176-E.

studies without strictly following the structure of the *karika* itself. The aim of this study is thus to analyze the notions of the internal and the external in Utpaladeva's ontology and their significance for the shaping of the Pratyabhijñā's "soteriology", taking into account the previously identified epistemological implications of this doctrine. Accordingly, the main part of it will be devoted to the analysis of these notions, and then we will return to the issues raised in the ontological section of our previous study in order to cover them more fully on the basis of all the attained results. Besides, our related task will be to refute the widespread view that the Pratyabhijñā doctrine is allegedly a kind of idealism through a critical analysis of one main and two additional arguments in its favor. Moreover, our super-task will be an attempt to interpret some fragments of the *karika* as a refutation of idealism. However, it is first necessary to say a few words about the significance of the notions of the internal and the external in the ontology under consideration.

### I. The Significance of the Notions of the Internal and the External for Utpaladeva's Ontology

The Pratyabhijñā is an ontological and "soteriological" doctrine of nondualistic Tantric Shaivism, the main purpose of which is to bring about the self-recognition of the universal subject in the limited subject through ontologically explaining the everyday practical life of the latter as permanent and actual manifestations of various powers (*śaktis*) of the former, which implies the invalidation of false egoity. According to it, reality comes down to the absolutely independent, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, and omnipresent universal subject who is identical to consciousness, becomes a universe of numerous subjects and objects while remaining himself, and additionally commits false self-concealment in the form of the limited subject so that he can recognize himself in the latter. Such an ontology assumes that the limited subject is, firstly, non-existent, secondly, primordially and actually identical to the universal subject, thirdly, a kind of sentient object as a result of its particularization, fourthly, identical to the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject, and, finally, both a universal and a collective entity that is differentiated into countless specific individuals, which status thereof is what interests the philosophers of the Pratyabhijñā first.

However, besides relying on the Agamas and a number of epistemological implications, its formulation would be impossible without developing certain technical notions, and Utpaladeva, who is rightfully considered the most prominent philosopher of the Pratyabhijñā, played here a key role. Thus, John Nemeč, stressing that the doctrine of his teacher, Somananda, lacks the very opposing notions of the internal and the external,<sup>2</sup> came to the conclusion that it is a kind of pantheistic monism, in contrast to the more formalized ontology of Utpaladeva, which is a kind of panentheistic monism.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, it is very difficult to find strict terms to describe the differences between these two doctrines since both emphasize that Śiva is simultaneously immanent

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<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the very term "*pratyabhijñā*" is found in it only once. See Torella R. The *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* of Utpaladeva with the Author's *Vṛtti*: Critical Edition and Annotated Translation. Delhi, 2002, p. XX.

<sup>3</sup> Nemeč J. The Ubiquitous Śiva: Somananda's *Śivadṛṣṭi* and His Tantric Interlocutors. New York, 2011, pp. 33–34. It should be understood, though, that monism in the ordinary sense of the term presupposes the difference between the subject and the object, or at least between the higher mind from the lower ones, even if we take Spinoza's pantheism, and so cannot be called nondualism.

and transcendent to the universe that is identical to him,<sup>4</sup> which could be called nondualistic quasi-panentheism: "quasi" because objects are considered by it as separated from their source in an illusory manner only and by the will of the source itself. Accordingly, Utpaladeva tries to emphasize this illusory aspect,<sup>5</sup> whereas Somananda, in contrast, to smooth it out. However, these are merely attempts to characterize the doctrine under consideration in Western terms, which is essentially not particularly important.

The main thing to note in this regard is that Utpaladeva gave the general philosophical notions of the internal and the external such technical meanings that the rest of the terms used by this doctrine, be they newly introduced or borrowed, virtually proved to be either reduced to these opposing notions or presupposing them. Accordingly, it can be said that they played a key role in the shaping of the Pratyabhijñā's ontology and, moreover, allowed it to become a kind of mortar binding various doctrines of Kashmir Shaivism, which found the most complete expression in Abhinavagupta's synthesis under the title of "Trika". At the same time, both the context and the form in which Utpaladeva introduces these notions are noteworthy. Even though he actually utilizes them in the first chapters of his *karika*, their full-blown exposition begins only in the first verse of the fifth chapter of the first section thereof, and both notions are introduced there simultaneously. In Rafaele Torella's translation to be used here and further on, it goes as follows: "The objects that are manifested in the present can be manifested as external only if they reside within." [ĪPK I 5.1]

Such a straightforward claim cannot but raise dozens of questions. At first glance, it looks like an assertion that something black can appear as black only insofar as it is white — and even reference to manifestation does not help much here. Besides, is the internal here called the external, or the other way round? The overall context of this verse is also not particularly illuminating. It begins a new chapter that promises to explain direct perception. In the preceding two chapters, Utpaladeva first put forward the thesis about the self-confined nature and radical non-objectifiability of cognitions and then justified the necessity for their unification on the part of the universal subject due to the impossibility of explaining the functioning of memory otherwise. The promised explanation of direct perception should follow after that, and one would expect that the topic of the unification of cognitions would be continued, but instead, we come across the verse under consideration, which, despite seemingly dedicated to the problem of perception, clearly shifts the emphasis towards pure ontology, which was previously considered only in close connection with epistemology. It thus looks like a standalone dogmatic claim comparable to the first verse of the third chapter of the first section of the *karika* but even more difficult to comprehend, as there, you can proceed from the quite well-known Indian doctrine of *svataḥ prakāśa*, whereas here, we are dealing with something completely obscure.

The way out of this difficulty is to recognize that a too strict logical link between these two chapters should not be sought at all since the new chapter should not, in fact, be considered as coming down to addressing the issue of how objects get into memory. Indeed, given that direct perception normally always occurs with the participation of memory, remembrance basically boils down to the perception itself, and, accordingly, an explanation of this process as such, along with the very possibility of parallelism between these two abilities, becomes the top priority. According

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<sup>4</sup> It would be a clear exaggeration to claim that Somananda completely deprives Śiva of a transcendent status.

<sup>5</sup> Because of which, it may even seem that he is too focused on worldly matters and is proceeding in the exact opposite direction from the stated goal.

to Utpaladeva, both are possible only if none other than the universal subject remembers, recognizes, and perceives everything.<sup>6</sup> As Abhinavagupta explains, since the subject of memory and perception is one and the same, and an object of memory, as shown by Utpaladeva in the preceding chapter of the *karika*, cannot be separate from the universal subject, an object of direct perception also cannot be separate from it, and, therefore, the difference between these two forms of cognition is reduced to their being different powers of him.<sup>7</sup> The overall logic behind all that is as follows. Utpaladeva proceeds from the fact that by the beginning of the fifth chapter of the *karika*, the existence of the universal subject should already be obvious to the reader: firstly, because he does not raise the question of his proof at all, which he considers impossible, and secondly, because he demonstrated its necessity by the example of the process of the unification of cognitions, which is indispensable for memory. Accordingly, the emphasis is gradually shifting from the object to the subject, and it is now necessary to demonstrate how a seemingly external object can be internal to the universal subject or, in other words, how the universal subject perceives seemingly external objects. The issue of the unification of cognitions is now receding into the background.

Thus, despite its epistemological facade, the fifth chapter of the *karika* suggests getting immersed in purely ontological matters. However, all that cannot be understood as a general philosophical discussion about the possibility of the existence of an object outside an abstractly understood subject since the point of departure here is precisely the existence of the universal subject — otherwise, the very statement of the problem would lose its meaning. On the other hand, the fifth chapter of the *karika* has nothing to do with transcendental idealism, as Utpaladeva did not entertain any doubts about the cognizability of things-in-themselves. Finally, for the same reason, despite the deceptive similarity of the topic, it has nothing to do with neither post-Kantian eliminativism nor attempts to "bracket" the need to know the external world as such. Nevertheless, this chapter contains a very complex and multi-layered discussion, and in order not to get bogged down in details, we will consider it primarily as a defense of the thesis about the necessity for objects to exist within the universal subject and temporarily postpone the analysis of the issues related to the external status of these objects. Its other major topics are causality and self-objectification of the universal subject through cognitions, which we will touch upon as needed.

## II. General Arguments Against the So-Called Idealism of Utpaladeva

The next verse of the *karika* serves as an explanation of the preceding one and goes as follows: "If it were not essentially light, the object would remain non-light as before; and the light is not differentiated [from the object]: being light constitutes the very essence of the object." [ĪPK I 5.2] Its first half looks somewhat clumsy due to the fact that Utpaladeva here immediately initiates a new imaginary discussion with a large number of opponents, which occupies about half of the fifth chapter of the *karika* and has reached us primarily through the commentaries of Abhinavagupta. Accordingly, the verse under consideration serves in its context as a critique of the thesis of some school of Buddhism, arguably Vaibhāṣika<sup>8</sup>, the doctrine of Kumāriḷa, the founder of

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<sup>6</sup> That is, the universal subject must unify not only cognitions but also his own powers, serving as a substrate for them.

<sup>7</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK I 5.1.

<sup>8</sup> It may be Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, or some other school of Buddhism but certainly not Vijñānavāda. See *Ratié I. Le Soi et l'Autre: Identité, différence et altérité dans la philosophie de la Pratyabhijñā*. Leiden and Boston, 2011, p. 318.

the Bhaṭṭa Mīmāṃsā school, and the objections of Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā, according to which an object must exist separately from consciousness before being perceived. Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta disagree with them and emphasize that in such a case, it would remain separate from consciousness not only before but even at the moment of perception, i.e., virtually uncognized, since under such circumstances, there would be no way to establish the "participation" of an object in consciousness on the basis of any kind of causation, whether linear or mutual — and it is also unreasonable to assert that the latter is ensured by the mere fact that consciousness supposedly illuminates objects like a lamp.<sup>9</sup> The first half of the verse is thus an epistemological admission of the impossibility of cognizing an object outside consciousness, whereas the second adds that given that perception actually occurs, that is not about mere epistemology but the very non-existence of an object outside consciousness.

The two above verses are enough to give scholars a reason to label the Pratyabhijñā doctrine as idealism. Moreover, there is quite a strong consensus on this issue. Thus, only one of the six translators of the *karika* or commentaries thereof into European languages, including Indian ones, put forward a thesis about the realism of this school, but even he did not show much vigor in defending it and, at the same time, clearly misused Western terminology.<sup>10</sup> The rest, either literally or metaphorically, call Utpaladeva's ontology idealism. Among the translators of other treatises of the doctrine under consideration, not to mention the researchers of Kashmir Shaivism in general, it is also difficult to find someone who would clearly protest against such a label. A notable exception here is Jaideva Singh,<sup>11</sup> but he did not elaborate on this topic either. All that forces us to undertake the thankless task of proving the obvious, i.e., that Utpaladeva is not an idealist but an adherent of a realist, albeit peculiar, ontology — especially given that in our previous study, we showed that his doctrine is a kind of epistemological realism regardless of the controversy in question.<sup>12</sup> To do that, we have to, at least, refute one main and two additional arguments in favor of this so-called idealism and, as a super-task, interpret some fragments of the *karika* itself as a refutation of idealism.

However, we should start with the most general considerations that do not require further reference to the text. Let us immediately dismiss several varieties of idealism, which this doctrine cannot be even theoretically. These are Platonic idealism, transcendental idealism, and post-Kantian idealism. Apart from some attempts to demonstrate the proximity of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine to Hegel's philosophy, no one doubts that. Therefore, there remains only one option — a Berkeley-type idealism, which Kant called dogmatic. It presupposes three main points: the thesis that to be is to be perceived (*esse est percipi*), the claim that objects do not exist outside consciousness, and the admission that objects consist of mental substance. In a consistent idealism of this kind, these points are inseparably intertwined.

What are the basic arguments in favor of the fact that, despite formal similarity, Utpaladeva's doctrine is not such a kind of idealism? The first thing to note in this regard is that the latter presupposes, firstly, the dualism of the mind intelligible and the sensible and, secondly, at

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<sup>9</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK I 5.2.

<sup>10</sup> See Kaw R.K. *The Doctrine of Recognition: A Study of Its Origin and Development and Place in Indian and Western Systems of Philosophy*. Hoshiarpur, 1967, pp. 358–359.

<sup>11</sup> Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam: The Secret of Self-Recognition / Translated by Jaideva Singh. Delhi, 2006, p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> Bandurin M.A. *Epistemological Implications...* pp. 158-E–162-E.

least as a target of critique, the Cartesian dualism based on it. But even the former, not to mention the latter, is not peculiar to classical Indian philosophy. Its basic attitude can be summarized as follows: it proceeds from the assumption of the perceivable supersensible that is not limited to the sphere of the mind intelligible. As for the sensible, we should recall where Plato begins. He admits that both the sensible and the mind intelligible are propositional, but the former is opinion, while the latter is knowledge. The fact that the sensible was initially understood as propositional and later even began to be considered discursive in Western philosophy must always be borne in mind — it was not for nothing that Hegel eventually declared that it is not something concrete at all but, on the contrary, abstract. For their part, Indian philosophers could agree with the latter that the sensible, taken separately from the supersensible, would indeed be abstract but would protest against labeling the mind intelligible as concrete. That is because the supersensible for them is concrete, the mind intelligible is abstract, and the so-called sensible, detached from the concrete, does not differ in any way from the abstractly understood mind intelligible. However, a major schism arose within this overall consensus<sup>13</sup>: Buddhists eventually came to the conclusion that the supersensible should be exclusively nonpropositional and that verbally mediated knowledge cannot be considered direct, whereas Brahmanists, Tantrists, and Jainists, on the contrary, insisted either that there should be a propositional stage in its cognition or that it is entirely propositional.<sup>14</sup> Further, two doctrines emerged within the large group that excludes Buddhism: according to the first, universals are accessible to direct knowledge and perceivable, while according to the second, universals, albeit accessible to direct knowledge, cannot be perceived. Otherwise put, according to the first, universals are accessible both to indeterminate and verbally mediated direct perception, while according to the second, only to indeterminate direct perception. The most eminent proponent of the former was Kumāriḷa; the most well-known defender of the latter was the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school.

To do justice to Aristotle, it should be noted that he also came close to the thesis that universals should be accessible to direct knowledge when he pointed out that an essence must first be grasped by noetic intuition as a non-predicative individual substance and only then cognized as a predicative species form. However, the very dualism of the mind intelligible and the sensible, according to which the supersensible has to be considered as reduced to the mind intelligible, did him a disservice, not allowing him to explain how one and the same object can be both predicative and non-predicative.<sup>15</sup> The noetic intuition gradually fell into oblivion, and Western philosophy has never been able to extricate itself from this dualism of the propositional spheres. In terms of Indian philosophy, Aristotle thus unwittingly ended up, as it were, between Buddhism and Nyāya. Thus, Buddhists tried to emphasize that a true object must be nonpropositional, and when we try to attribute predicates to it, we actually refer to an altogether different object. In contrast, Nyāya tried to demonstrate that the object is the same in both cases and stressed the possibility of the direct cognition of universals for that purpose. As for Aristotle, he tried to express the same thing as Nyāya did but was unable to do so because in order to be known, a sensory object, according to him, had to be considered separate from directly unknowable supersensible universals. And the

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<sup>13</sup> Which did not include only materialists who denied the supersensible as such.

<sup>14</sup> *Lysenko V.G. Neposredstvennoe i oposredovannoe vospriyatie: spor mezhdu buddijskimi i brahmanistskimi filosofami (medlennoe chtenie tekstov)* [Indeterminate and Determinate Perception: The Controversy Between Buddhist and Brahmanical Philosophers (a Careful Reading of Source Texts). Moscow, 2011, pp. 39–44. (In Russian.)

<sup>15</sup> See *Rosen S. Remarks on Heidegger's Plato*. Heidegger and Plato: Toward Dialogue, ed. by C. Partenie and T. Rockmore. Evaston, 2005, pp. 182–184.

admission of the necessity of the latter for the cognition of concrete objects will not help in this regard, as, according to Indian philosophy, an object can be considered concrete only insofar as its sensory and supersensible aspects are inseparable, whereas within such a dualism, both of them are practically overshadowed in favor of the mind intelligible. Be that as it may, it follows from all that that for Utpaladeva, the internal and the external do not stand for the mind intelligible and the sensible, respectively, especially given that he, like Kumārila, defended the thesis of the perceptibility of universals.

Well, let us admit that all that is true, but how about the fact that Utpaladeva virtually restates the three abovementioned points of the Berkeley-type idealism word for word? As we have already noted, his task is to show that objects do not exist outside the universal subject, and he does not care about abstractly understood consciousness. Accordingly, given that the universal subject is by definition outside the mind, even if it is a divine intellect, the "Absolute Spirit", or a collective mind, Utpaladeva can be formally considered as sticking to only the first two basic claims of idealism, whereas the third one is completely alien to him since, according to him, an object, although inseparable from the universal subject, does not consist of a mental substance, simply because the universal subject is not such a substance. He is thus no different from commonplace realists when it comes to emphasizing the non-mental nature of objects. However, even the *esse est percipi* principle has a different meaning for him than it had for Berkeley. Of course, formally speaking, we can say that Utpaladeva indeed defends it, but if we compare his thesis with the original one, we realize that Berkeley actually meant by it *esse est percipi qua idea aut percipere* (to be is to be perceived as an idea or to perceive ideas), whereas Utpaladeva rather implied something like *esse est percipi qua sui et percipere* (to be is to be perceived as oneself while perceiving oneself).

Moreover, if we delve into the specifics of Indian philosophy, we will find an even more devastating argument against Utpaladeva's so-called idealism. The fact is that, according to Kashmir Shaivism, there is no mental substance at all. That is due, firstly, to the fact that, according to Brahmanists and Tantrists, the mind is itself an object and, accordingly, cannot take the role of an independent sentient substance. Secondly, that is so because, as theists, Tantric Shaivites go even further in this regard. Thus, according to the dualistic Śaiva Siddhānta, the mind is incapable of discerning objects independently and so has to be controlled by a special power of Śiva called *vidyā tattva*.<sup>16</sup> Utpaladeva asserts exactly the same thing but admits only one substance in the form of the universal subject. Nevertheless, no one labels Śaiva Siddhānta as idealism, whereas the Pratyabhijñā is labeled so systematically. Even though it can indeed be said that in such an ontology, minds and objects consist of a single substance, it is so only in the sense in which, e.g., a pot and a jar are said to consist of the same clay. As a result, we can assert that the clay is one and the same but cannot claim neither that the jar consists of the pot nor that the pot consists of the jar. Accordingly, with this qualification and taking into account that Utpaladeva indeed emphasizes the non-existence of objects outside the universal subject, his doctrine should be considered a realism, albeit peculiar and nondualistic. It would seem that even the most general arguments we have given are completely bulletproof, and one can only wonder what more one can wish for. However, they still do not fully convince Indologists, and so we have to continue.

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<sup>16</sup> See Sivaraman K. Śaivism in Philosophical Perspective. Delhi, 1973, p. 241.



That is due to two main circumstances. Firstly, due to the fact that the universal subject in the Pratyabhijñā is identical to consciousness, while the term "consciousness" has a broader meaning than what it is intended to convey in this case, namely the notion of *Samvid*. Purely etymological reasonings will hardly help in this case, as this term has long acquired several essential technical connotations in the West. Secondly, that is so because Vijñānavāda — the logical-epistemological school of Buddhism, the Pratyabhijñā's kinship with which Indologists like to emphasize — has long been called idealism. Everything is aggravated by the fact that Utpaladeva himself applies the term "*Samvid*" both to the universal subject and to what Buddhists understood by consciousness. So everything fits together: when it is stressed that nothing exists outside consciousness, that cannot but be idealism; Vijñānavāda stresses that — hence, it is an idealism; as for Utpaladeva, he himself acknowledges his own idealism when he flirts with Vijñānavāda. To complete the picture, one can also recall Advaita Vedānta, which is also labeled idealism due to its illusionism and shares similarities with both these doctrines. Thus, we are faced with a complex equivocation, which, strictly speaking, calls for a correction of the definition of the term "idealism" by excluding everything superfluous from it. However, we cannot even hope someone will try to accomplish it.

Even so, feeling that difficulty, many researchers of the Pratyabhijñā, instead of preferring a more flexible term "realism", tried, on the contrary, to give more and more extra meanings to the notion of idealism, calling the doctrine under consideration realistic idealism, absolute idealism, or something else of this sort. Isabelle Ratié's terminology, who called it idealism while contrasting it with externalism, deserves special attention in this regard.<sup>17</sup> Anyone vaguely interested in epistemology will point out that this "externalism" constitutes an even more crude equivocation than "idealism" does. However, there is still a rational sense in introducing the new term because its meaning practically comes down to that of "dualistic realism"; and if Ratié had chosen the latter expression to translate the Sanskrit term "*bāhyārthavāda*", she would have been able to call Utpaladeva's doctrine not idealism but nondualistic realism.<sup>18</sup> We consider it useful to resort to such an interpretation in our further analysis.

Be that as it may, everything basically boils down to the fact that we indeed have no other word to translate the term "*Samvid*", except "consciousness", and so have to put up with this ambiguity to some degree. In particular, we are not going to criticize the basic inclusion of Vijñānavāda in the category of idealism, even though the above considerations allow us to doubt it as well. At least the counterarguments here can be challenged by quite a long list of similarities between this school and Western philosophy in general and Berkeley's idealism in particular. What is truly surprising is the attempts to interpret Vijñānavāda in the spirit of post-Kantian eliminativism and depict its idealism as merely epistemological. It is unclear where these thinkers could get conceptual tools for that, given that none of them questioned the possibility of cognizability of things-in-themselves. In particular, the above similarities include the fact that among classical Indian philosophers, Buddhists came closest to the dualism of the mind intelligible and the sensible,

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<sup>17</sup> Ratié I. Le Soi... pp. 307–308.

<sup>18</sup> However, she is not the only one who utilizes the term "externalism". An equivalent term, "external realism", is also found in the literature, but it does not allow one to distinguish between the doctrines of Utpaladeva and his opponents at all.

which led Western philosophy astray. Indeed, as we have already noted, they eventually came to the conclusion that the supersensible must be exclusively nonpropositional and that verbally mediated knowledge can be considered neither direct nor true. And since they, like all other Indian philosophers except materialists, were primarily interested in the supersensible as the basis for the cognition of the sensible, it turned out that the supersensible came down for them to sheer individual substances (*svalakṣaṇas*). A legitimate question arises as to how is that possible at all, and what such particulars are for in the first place, and the general answer to it is that, according to Buddhism, focusing on the cognition of them is a way to achieve the main goal of its "soteriology", i.e., *nirvāṇa*. And given that it denies the existence of universals due to its doctrine of the momentariness of being, this brings it closer to Western nominalism, which is also an additional argument in favor of Vijñānavāda's proximity to Berkeleanism. However, Buddhism is, so to say, a wrong-side-out-nominalism since Western nominalism was interested in the verbally mediated cognition of individual substances considered exclusively sensible for the purpose of scientific and practical mastering thereof, whereas Buddhist particulars are suitable, at very best, only for "soteriological" purposes. On the other hand, it is also noteworthy that stressing the indirect character of verbally mediated knowledge brings them somewhat closer to Western realists about universals, who, if you look closely, have always remained indirect epistemological realists. In this way, in terms of the approach to propositional knowledge, Buddhists are proved to be closer to both Western nominalism and Western realism than to Indian realism about universals, which, again, fits into the thesis under consideration.

It is also significant that Buddhists acknowledged the very possibility of the existence of particulars separately from universals since that was not the main trend in Indian philosophy at all. Thus, that was peculiar only to Buddhism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Jainism, and materialism. The rest of the Brahmanic and Tantric schools denied the distinction between universals and individual substances altogether, considering the latter as a complex combination of universals. That is what allowed them to claim that universals are perceivable even in verbally mediated direct knowledge. The most prominent exponent of this doctrine was Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. As for Aristotle, he, in particular, not only distinguished individual substances from universals but also aggravated this difference with the dualism of the mind intelligible and the sensible, which, as we have already noted, did not allow him to demonstrate that universals relate precisely to a "primary substance" grasped by the noetic intuition. Even Nyāya enjoys a less vulnerable position in this regard because, even though it also distinguished particulars from universals, it was able to emphasize that universals, albeit not perceivable in verbally mediated direct knowledge, are still accessible to direct cognition.

All that, however, has nothing much to do with Utpaladeva's ontology since he was as far as possible from the Western dualism of the mind intelligible and the sensible and proposed a doctrine of the perceptibility of universals, which is even more systematic than that of Kumarila. Besides, it shares epistemological realism, *ātmavāda*, and many other points with Brahmanical schools. Accordingly, the emphasis on its special kinship with Vijñānavāda, which many Orientalists like to lay, is somewhat surprising. Modern scholars create the impression that Utpaladeva and the Buddhists made some common cause, even though he only tried to undermine Vijñānavāda from within. One also cannot ignore the completely different motivations behind the idealism of Berkeley, the idealism of Buddhists, and the so-called idealism of Utpaladeva. Thus, Berkeley tried

to get out of an epistemological impasse, according to which sensory experience is supposedly capable of providing concepts that are related only to itself<sup>19</sup> and, at the same time, refute skeptics, materialists, and atheists. He thus at least implicitly relied on the skepticism evoked by Descartes, Locke, and other philosophers. In contrast, Buddhists did not strive to, so to speak, undermine skepticism from within skepticism. Their main goal was to refute the existence of *Ātman* and, conversely, to justify atheism based on the doctrine of the momentariness of being. Therefore, one cannot discount the fact that *anātmavāda* itself motivated their idealism to a certain extent. In particular, it is not difficult to find that only nondualistic doctrines that acknowledge the existence of *Ātman*, primarily the Pratyabhijñā and Advaita Vedānta, are labeled as idealism, whereas no one tries to characterize dualistic doctrines from this category in this way.<sup>20</sup> As for Utpaladeva, he, as an *ātmavādin*, albeit a nonclassical one, could not set such goals for himself and simply tried to demonstrate that objects do not exist outside the universal subject, the existence of which he did not intend to prove at all, due to His omnipotence. However, to identify more subtle differences between his ontology and Vijñānavāda, it is necessary to continue analyzing his *karika*.

### III. The Discussion on the Nature of Consciousness in the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Verses of the Fifth Chapter of the First Section of the *Karika*

But if the similarity between the Pratyabhijñā and Vijñānavāda is, in fact, exaggerated, why does Utpaladeva continue to rely on the Buddhist theses in the fifth chapter of his *karika*? Indeed, he practically defeated them in the preceding two chapters by demonstrating that without the unification of cognitions conducted by the universal subject, everyday practical life would disintegrate but continues to engage with Buddhist theories further. The answer to this question is given by the following verse of the *karika*, which goes as follows: "If light were undifferentiated [in itself] and differentiated [from objects], then objective reality would be confused. The object that is illuminated must itself be light; that which is not light cannot be established." [ĪPK I 5.3]

The main reason for that is that Utpaladeva accepts a thesis shared by Vijñānavāda, according to which consciousness can cognize objects only by taking on their form. This doctrine is known as *sakāravāda*. Its opposing doctrine is called *nirākāravāda*, and it is accepted by many schools antagonistic to Buddhists, including Bhaṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā, and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. It is the defense of this thesis that is one of the main goals of the verse under consideration, which, in a newly initiated discussion, quite unexpectedly forces Utpaladeva to take the side of his opponents attacked in the preceding chapters and, on the contrary, begin to criticize its half-allies in the struggle against Buddhism. In this context, the case of Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā is particularly interesting, which, along with Vijñānavāda and Utpaladeva, adheres to the *svataḥ prakāśa* doctrine, according to which a cognition must be aware of itself while cognizing its object. Abhinavagupta repeatedly stressed that if a cognition were deprived of this capability, then at the moment of perception of an object, it would be impossible to determine who exactly perceives it:

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<sup>19</sup> Bandurin M.A. The Noumenal Morass: Post-Kantian Representationalism and Its Relationalist Critique in the Light of Strong Disjunctivism. Vox. Философский журнал, No. 34, 2021, p. 24-E.

<sup>20</sup> However, using such ambiguous terminology, one can, if one desires to, hunt out elements of idealism even in Kumārila's philosophy. Moreover, by and large, one can cease sweating over that altogether and declare all classical Indian philosophers, except materialists, idealists simply because they are not materialists — Engels would have approved of such an approach.

the object would be cognized by everyone and by no one, as it were. However, in the context of the discussion about the possibility of the existence of an object outside consciousness before its perception, the acknowledgment of such a capability is now enough. Therefore, Abhinavagupta devoted special attention to the critique of Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā's theory, according to which consciousness can be compared to a lamp illuminating completely extraneous objects.<sup>21</sup> He emphasizes that this metaphor is inappropriate, as a lamp, being separate from the objects illuminated by it, still remains an object, whereas consciousness, while bringing objects to light, cannot "illuminate" something by definition completely separate from it since the very terms in which the issue is raised exclude such a possibility. The mere use of an ungrounded metaphor cannot fix this situation. Such an argument by Abhinavagupta, though, may inspire those who like to compare the Pratyabhijñā with Berkeleanism since it looks like an admission of the inability of consciousness to go beyond its limits. However, the whole point is that consciousness, according to Abhinavagupta, is not an object but the universal subject who does not have to do that at all due to its omnipotence, even taking into account that his objects do not consist of a mental substance. So attempts to identify consciousness with the mind would look in Abhinavagupta's eyes like ignoring this fact. We have thus come back to the importance of relying on what is actually meant by the term "consciousness" instead of resorting to its equivocation.

Accordingly, in the verse under consideration, as we have already noted, Utpaladeva further dissociates himself from Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā and other opponents of Buddhism insofar as they do not accept *sakāravāda*.<sup>22</sup> He thereby complements the above critique of the separation of consciousness from objects, now putting the issue not in terms of the subject but in those of the object. Thus, if consciousness is completely separate from an object, and objects are understood as distinct from each other, this difference between objects has to be immanent to the objects themselves, and consciousness, in this case, must be understood as completely homogeneous and unaffected by differences between objects even at the moment of their perception. It will again resemble a lamp that simply sheds uniform light on ready-made objects. However, the problem here is not only that such objects are imperceptible, and consciousness cannot be compared with a lamp, but also that it is impossible to distinguish between them because a homogeneous consciousness would not be able to say anything specific about them — and, by the way, would not be able to unify the corresponding cognitions.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, Utpaladeva here actually argues that any doctrine that allows for a radical separation of objects from consciousness, i.e., all those whom Ratié calls externalists and we call dualistic realists, virtually adhere to *nirākāravāda*. That, in turn, implicitly expands the list of schools in this category and strikes not only at Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, and Jainism but also Śaiva Siddhānta, Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, and even, arguably, Advaita Vedānta.<sup>24</sup>

Hence, in order for objects to be different from each other, for their respective cognitions can be unified, and for the hierarchy between the sentient and the insentient within consciousness to

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<sup>21</sup> See Ratié I. Le Soi... pp. 326–336.

<sup>22</sup> However, not all Buddhist schools share *sakāravāda*. In particular, Vaibhāṣika and Madhyamaka advocate *nirākāravāda*, but this has no direct bearing on the discussion on the so-called idealism of the Pratyabhijñā.

<sup>23</sup> IPV ad ĪPK I 5.3.

<sup>24</sup> There is not much doubt about Śaiva Siddhānta in this regard, but Vedānta and Sāṅkhya are usually considered adherents of *sakāravāda* in the literature. Either way, the main thing is not to rush to label either *sakāravāda* or *nirākāravāda* as representationalism. Both variants can be found in the literature, and both are erroneous because these doctrines are mainly concerned with the ontology of consciousness, not epistemology.

be preserved, consciousness must be differentiated in itself. Even so, some dualistic realists, partially agreeing with that, may nevertheless object that consciousness could well receive differentiation from the outside. Therefore, to strengthen his thesis, Utpaladeva resorts to a well-known doctrine called *sahopalambhaniyama*, according to which an object is necessarily perceived along with its cognition.<sup>25</sup> It was first formulated by one of the most prominent representatives of Vijñānavāda, Dharmakīrti, precisely in defense of idealism. However, we should not rush to consider it a purely idealistic claim. Firstly, because it is a kind of corollary of the older *svataḥ prakāśa* doctrine, which is adhered to by realists as well. Secondly, because it is not in itself identical to the *esse est percipi* principle but just serves as a necessary condition for it — and only in the Indian context, as the question of whether Berkeley would agree with the *svataḥ prakāśa* doctrine requires a separate study. It is interesting here that Kumārila saw the source of idealism precisely in *svataḥ prakāśa*, not in *sahopalambhaniyama*,<sup>26</sup> which became one of the main points of his disagreement with Prabhākara, who believed that *svataḥ prakāśa* is not incompatible with realism in any way.

Accordingly, if we do not follow the lead of Kumārila and Dharmakīrti<sup>27</sup> and assume that *svataḥ prakāśa* can be both realistic and idealistic, its corollary in the form of *sahopalambhaniyama* will also lose the status of a purely idealistic claim. Thus, in particular, the same Prabhākara tried to rely on this doctrine, again, in conjunction with *svataḥ prakāśa*.<sup>28</sup> Taking all that into account, it would be more correct to compare it rather with Locke's thesis, according to which the mind is capable of directly cognizing only its own ideas that do not exist outside the mind and which can thus be considered a restricted version of the *esse est percipi* principle that applies only to ideas but not objects.<sup>29</sup> However, we would have to turn a blind eye to the fact that Locke did not propose an obvious analog of the *svataḥ prakāśa* principle and that in his doctrine, the issue is put in terms of the mind and ideas, whereas Indian philosophy is rather concerned with consciousness and appearances. Indeed, it is important not to overlook the fact that, unlike Locke, neither Prabhākara, nor Utpaladeva, nor Śaiva Siddhāntins, nor Advaita Vedāntins, were representationalists.

The ones who can indeed be compared with Locke are the followers of the Buddhist philosophical school called Sautrāntika, and they are ready to join the discussion. They do not understand how *sahopalambhaniyama* can help Utpaladeva at all since both the fact that consciousness is differentiated in itself and that an object is always perceived along with its cognition can be explained by admitting that different objects are perceived as a result of different causes external to consciousness. Even though this theory is representationalist, it allows one to go beyond consciousness. However, Abhinavagupta was not impressed by such arguments because, according to him, these supposed causes of representations in consciousness must themselves be different objects outside consciousness, but an inherently undifferentiated consciousness would not

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<sup>25</sup> See *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 347–348.

<sup>26</sup> The fact that Kumārila did not criticize the classic formulation of *sahopalambhaniyama* does not change the main point. See *Taber J. Kumārila's Buddhist*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol.38, No. 3, 2010, pp. 293–294.

<sup>27</sup> According to Tibetan sources, Dharmakīrti was Kumārila's nephew.

<sup>28</sup> See *Ram-Prasad C. Indian Philosophy and the Consequences of Knowledge: Themes in Ethics, Metaphysics and Soteriology*. Aldershot, 2007, p. 71.

<sup>29</sup> *Tomida Y. Locke's 'Things Themselves' and Kant's 'Things in Themselves': The Naturalistic Basis for Transcendental Idealism*. *Studies on Locke: Sources, Contemporaries, and Legacy*, ed. by S. Hutton and P. Schuurman. Dordrecht, 2008, p. 266.

be able to perceive such objects, and we are again marking time. Here, he virtually blames Sautrāntika for defending the claim of the homogeneity of consciousness despite its aspiration to side with sakāravādins. Besides, for the same reason, he dismisses a doctrine of Vaibhāṣika, which does not agree with *sahopalambhaniyama* and tries to explain the occurrence of both an object and a cognition by a specific set of causes outside consciousness. And it is even easier for him to do that since this school is known as not defending *sakāravāda* at all.<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, if we want to explain the very fact that objects differ from each other, we have to admit that what is not consciousness cannot be cognized, as stated in the verse under consideration.

The Sautrāntikas, however, are far from conceding defeat and put forward new objections summarized in two separate verses, the first of which goes as follows: "Since consciousness-light (*bodhasya*) being undifferentiated cannot be the cause of a multiform manifestation, all this various manifestation lacking in an apparent cause (*ākasmikābhāso*) leads to the inference of an external object [as its only possible cause]." [ĪPK I 5.4] The Buddhist representationalists thus shift the emphasis simultaneously to epistemology and deeper ontology. On the one hand, they say that although the cause of the apparent diversity of objects cannot be perceived, nothing prevents us from inferring that objects that are separate from consciousness and distinct from each other still must exist as its cause. On the other hand, we even have to rely on this inference because, after all, consciousness can hardly be considered capable of differentiating itself. We should here not be confused by the initial impression that the Sautrāntikas seemingly acknowledge the homogeneity of consciousness and thereby bring grist to Abhinavagupta's mill. On the contrary, they are trying to defend *sakāravāda* and even *sahopalambhaniyama* in this way, but as realists, they merely admit that the order of appearances must be rooted in the order of things insofar as it cannot arise from nowhere. So, when they claim here that consciousness is undifferentiated, they understand this only in a restricted sense, i.e., imply that it is causally impotent. However, in terms of epistemology, it is, on the contrary, primary since there is apparent diversity in it, whereas a homogeneous consciousness could not perceive objects. In this respect, the Sautrāntikas resemble Locke, who also acknowledged the epistemologically basic order of ideas and even their dependence on the mind but emphasized the necessity for them to be brought about by mind-external causes.

They further strengthen their thesis by criticizing an alternative theory: "Not even a varied reawakening of the karmic residual traces can be taken to be the cause [of the multiform manifestations], for in that case a new question would arise: what is the cause of the variety of such a reawakening?" [ĪPK I 5.5] Here, the Sautrāntikas dismiss the objection of the Vijñānavādins, according to which the differentiation of consciousness can be explained by the reawakening of residual traces, *vāsanās*, formed as a result of current mental impressions, *saṃskāras*, and determining the fate of living beings after rebirth. Given that they are inherent in consciousness itself, there is no need to allow for objects separate from consciousness as the causes of its differentiation. In this regard, the Buddhist idealists enjoy a somewhat more favorable position than Berkeley does, who could not do without the admission of God as an element that ensures the integrity of his system since they can refer to the beginninglessness of the *saṃsāra* and compare consciousness with a dreamer. The Sautrāntikas, however, are not convinced by these arguments, and for the very same reason. Thus, if consciousness is causally impotent, the *vāsanās* immanent to

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<sup>30</sup> See *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 354–356.

it are also so and require external causes for their reawakening. Alternatively, if they are assumed to be real causes, they cannot be considered immanent to consciousness and must themselves act as objects separate from it. In any case, Vijñānavāda either is a disguised dualistic realism or refuses to explain the apparent diversity in consciousness altogether.<sup>31</sup> On top of that, the Buddhist idealists are also blamed for solipsism, and it is already more difficult for them to object to this than for Berkeley since they cannot refer to God. Besides, it can be noted that such a critique is quite applicable to post-Kantian philosophers and psychologists of the unconscious, who also see the cause of the phenomena of consciousness in some uncontrollable entity within the mind itself, as well as to their forefather, Schopenhauer. Unlike the Buddhists, though, they can always make reference to an allegedly unknowable or roundaboutly cognizable thing-in-itself. Thus, Schopenhauer considered the Will to be beyond consciousness but, at the same time, tried to confine causality within the latter, thereby virtually finding himself in the position of Vijñānavāda, unable to explain the apparent diversity of objects. However, the very attempt to explain it would be regarded by him as a misapplication of the concept of causality. For their part, the Sautrāntikas could arguably respond to him in that he is trying to have it both ways and conceive of consciousness as both active and passive by exploiting the contrast between the supposedly homogeneous thing-in-itself and heterogeneous consciousness.

These two verses of the *karika* are extremely interesting and illuminative. Firstly, in a way, they allow us to guess what Locke might have said if he had read Berkeley's treatises, which is interesting in itself. Even though Berkeley is more immune to criticism in this regard thanks to his theological doctrine, many will reasonably note that it is not a strength but, on the contrary, a weakness of his system. Secondly, they show that the entire discussion we have examined has clearly not been yet a success: most of its participants have been left with nothing, while the Sautrāntikas have beaten everyone for now. Indeed, it revolved around the following doctrines: *esse est percipi*, *sakāravāda*, and *sahopalambhaniyama*. The Vijñānavādins tried to corroborate the first thesis by relying on the second one and reinforcing the latter with the third but were shown to be dualistic realists. The dualistic realists who denied *sakāravāda* were unable to explain the "participation" of objects in consciousness, and those who tried to embrace *sakāravāda* or *sahopalambhaniyama* were disqualified due to inappropriate comparison of consciousness with a lamp and rejected for the same reason. Utpaladeva tried to utilize Vijñānavāda's arguments, but his attempt to strengthen *sakāravāda* with *sahopalambhaniyama* to defend the *esse est percipi* thesis has proved clearly weak. In contrast, the Sautrāntikas have managed to fuse all three principles into a coherent doctrine. Of course, there is no place for the full-fledged *esse est percipi* principle in it, but still, everything is quite reasonably justified. In this way, the "intellectual" discussion about the nature of consciousness clearly failed, and everything came down to the issue of causality. The weakness of the Sautrāntikas, though, is that they wanted to defend *sakāravāda* while balancing on the verge of sinking into *nirākāravāda*, and so Utpaladeva is going to take the situation into his own hands.

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<sup>31</sup> IPV ad ĪPK I 5.5; *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 384–385.

#### IV. The Fifth Chapter of the First Section of the *Karika* as a Refutation of Idealism

In light of all the above, the attempts to present the case as an attempt of Utpaladeva and the Buddhists at developing some common paradigm of idealistic nondualism look strange, even if we assume that the Vijñānavādins indeed claimed to be nondualists, as scholars quite often do. Surely, if we consider the fifth chapter of the *karika* in isolation from the preceding ones, we can get such an impression. However, as we have already noted, Utpaladeva, by and large, defeated Vijñānavāda already in the third and fourth chapters of his *karika*, where he demonstrated its inability to explain the process of the unification of cognitions necessary for the functioning of everyday practical life, and the fact that he resorts to the arguments of idealists does not make him an idealist. Moreover, the reference to *sahopalambhaniyama*, which is often considered the most important argument of Utpaladeva in the fifth chapter, has proved to be quite unconvincing in itself. So far, none of the doctrines under consideration, neither *esse est percipi*, nor *sakāravāda*, nor *sahopalambhaniyama*, has proved capable of substantiating either idealism or nondualism. Deeper ontological arguments are needed that would have to do simultaneously with the nature of consciousness and causality. In this connection, Utpaladeva begins the next verse: "That may be (*syād etad*). [But] seeing that ordinary worldly activity can be accomplished on the basis of such 'manifestations' alone, what sense is there in wanting to resort to an external reality other [than consciousness] which is not supported by reason?" [ĪPK I 5.6]

Ratié rightly noted that a new phase of the discussion begins here; however, she believes that it is the point where the adherents of Śaiva nondualism begin to speak for the first time.<sup>32</sup> But when precisely did they cease speaking? It is clear that in the preceding two verses, Utpaladeva did not speak for himself, but even if we suppose that his arguments are completely indistinguishable from those of Vijñānavāda, it is still the case that at least in the first verse of the fifth chapter of the first section of his *karika*, he claimed something unique. For their part, Abhinavagupta's commentaries are obviously not a simple paraphrase of Vijñānavāda's reasonings but thoroughly revisited and supplemented with his own arguments — especially given that they relied on Utpaladeva's lost *vivṛti* on his own *karika*, which clearly contained original thoughts.<sup>33</sup> However, even the assertion that something new is contained in the verse under consideration is weakened by Ratié's assumption that this argument is also virtually common with Vijñānavāda. Before her, Torella drew attention to the fact that the same thesis with exactly the same arguments might also be put forward by a Vijñānavādin, noting, however, that Utpaladeva's approach only resembles Vijñānavāda.<sup>34</sup> In both cases, we can again see an intention to bring the two doctrines closer together, but everything largely rests on the phrase "that may be." Indeed, what exactly may be from Utpaladeva's perspective?

That is another case where it is not entirely clear about what exactly he agrees with his opponents. It is obvious that he adduced the objections of the Sautrāntikas for a reason and believed that they are quite capable of refuting Vijñānavāda. But to what extent does he agree with them? Given that we have no evidence to the contrary, it can be assumed that he agrees with them in full,

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<sup>32</sup> Ratié I. Le Soi... p. 385.

<sup>33</sup> See Torella R. Studies on Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti*. Part IV: Light of the Subject, light of the object. *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ: Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, Part 1, ed. by B. Kellner, H. Krasser, H. Lasic, M. Torsten Much and H. Tauscher. Wien, 2007, pp. 925–939.

<sup>34</sup> Torella R. The *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*... pp. 112–114.



with the exception of the arguments against Sautrāntika that were stated before and that will be put forward later. That, in turn, implies that Utpaladeva agrees with the conclusion that Vijñānavāda is a disguised dualistic realism that, on top of that, leads to solipsism. However, we remember that even before giving the floor to the Sautrāntikas with their additional arguments, Abhinavagupta blamed them for virtually defending *nirākāravāda*. We believe that the interpretation of the verse under consideration must proceed from the assumption that Utpaladeva was not convinced by the counterarguments of the Buddhist representationalists, and his further objections are called for to show that they are not capable of vindicating *sakāravāda* anyway. Accordingly, his message is as follows: we already see that consciousness is differentiated in itself and, moreover, that everyday practical activity is actually accomplished on the basis of these appearances, whereas your reasonings only make consciousness look causally impotent without actually helping us to get out of *nirākāravāda*.

However, the new argument of Utpaladeva is not particularly convincing in itself. The Sautrāntikas themselves do not deny the apparent diversity in consciousness, but, after all, everyday practical life is one thing, and ontology is another. That is why Abhinavagupta returns to the old topic and again stresses that since objects are not perceived outside consciousness, it is because they do not exist there at all, and adds that although an object of inference cannot be literally called perceived, it is still also an appearance in consciousness and, consequently, cannot exist outside it as well. He emphasizes that this is the main argument in favor of the non-existence of objects outside consciousness.<sup>35</sup> Essentially, it is a stronger version of *sahopalambhaniyama*, which Utpaladeva implicitly relies on when he asserts that there is no sufficient reason to allow such objects. However, the very interrogative form of the verse under consideration suggests that it contains only the first part of the argument. So we should immediately proceed to the next one, which goes as follows: "Indeed, the Conscious Being, God, like the yogin, independently of material causes, in virtue of His volition alone, renders externally manifest the multitude of objects that reside within Him." [ĪPK I 5.7] In terms of meaning, these two verses constitute an inseparable unity.

At this point, many non-Indian readers of the *karika* may begin to lose patience: even if the Pratyabhijñā is not idealism, it still trades bad for worse, namely idealism for mysticism with some yogins! However, let us not rush to conclusions, as this verse is also preliminary in many ways and, moreover, symbolic — it is just that the analogy with a yogin is here completely incomprehensible to a reader who knows little about India. Its overall meaning is that consciousness should be understood as omnipotent and not requiring material causes for self-differentiation. As for the example of a yogin, it is convenient here because he supposedly knows how to create physical objects by force of his will alone, as it were, out of thin air. In the verse under consideration, though, it is emphasized that consciousness manifests objects neither *ex nihilo* nor from matter but out of itself. Such a complex position leads to the fact that studies devoted to the Pratyabhijñā sometimes stress that this doctrine denies the material cause altogether and sometimes, on the contrary, that consciousness itself acts as a material cause in it. However, these two points of view do not contradict each other.

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<sup>35</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK I 5.6.

When it comes to the polemical context of the *karika*, though, the analogy with a yogin here is called for to compete with the analogy with a mirror, which the Buddhist representationalists resort to, and hints that there is no need to consider consciousness causally impotent. On the contrary, as Abhinavagupta emphasizes, the verse under consideration proceeds from the omnipotence of consciousness that follows from its absolute independence, featured in direct perception, and does not require proof.<sup>36</sup> However, the discussion with the Sautrāntikas still continues in the next two verses, which we will cite together: "Neither can one speak of inference if the thing that is the object of this has not been formerly directly perceived (*anābhātapūrve*). This is also the case as regards the senses, whose direct perception may be said to have occurred through the perception of a reality that has the characteristics of a cause (*hetuvastunaḥ*), such as the seed etc. But the object that is outside the light [completely extraneous to it] has not been manifested to consciousness at all; thus its existence cannot be established even through inference." [ĪPK I 5.8–9]

Abhinavagupta has already stressed that an object of inference cannot exist outside consciousness, given that it is an appearance. In the verses under consideration, this argument is strengthened, and it is emphasized that it must additionally relate to an object that was previously perceived. As for the senses, also known as sense-organs, not biological organs but ontological entities — including the mind, by the way — which are considered in Indian philosophy unable to perceive by themselves and are deduced based on their respective cognitive abilities, are meant here. Utpaladeva disputes this view and insists that even the senses are perceivable by the subject insofar as their causal function is perceived, and in this regard, they are no different from ordinary objects. Accordingly, the analogy with a mirror is inadequate, firstly, because in the case of an ordinary mirror, we usually perceive both a reflection and its source and, secondly, because a consciousness-external object is understood by the Sautrāntikas as the cause of differentiation of consciousness, whereas any causal relationship is established solely on the basis of past perception and, moreover, implies a logical inference, the structure of which differs from the simultaneous perception of a reflection in a mirror and its source.<sup>37</sup> The overall message of these two verses is thus that the Sautrāntikas raise the issue of causality, but no causal relationship can go beyond consciousness either epistemologically or ontologically. Let us add that this argument is suitable for criticizing not only classical representationalism but also transcendental idealism because, no matter how much you insist on the unknowability of things-in-themselves, they are still considered the causes of phenomena, whose relation with them still have to be established. The Pratyabhijñā, for its part, allows us to assert that there is no causal problem at all because any causality, along with the inferences that express it, can only be within consciousness. The same applies to any post-Kantian teaching that explicitly or implicitly tries to remove causality from consciousness or believes that logical inference can literally lead us out of it. So, if we return to Schopenhauer, Utpaladeva, for his part, could tell him the following: even though causality is indeed confined within consciousness, it cannot be purely transcendental, and a logical inference cannot distinguish the thing-in-itself from phenomena, and therefore the Will can only be conscious and, consequently, differentiated in itself and capable of creating phenomena that are both knowable and mind-external.

At this juncture, however, the following question may arise. The arguments just given look quite abstract. Cannot they be considered separately from the claim of the omnipotence of

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<sup>36</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK I 5.7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 444–445.

consciousness and the analogy with a yogin? The answer will be no, and the new objections of the Sautrāntikas will allow us to understand why this is so. The fact is that in Utpaladeva's line of argument, the thesis of the perceptibility of universals, shared by him and rejected by all Buddhists, plays an important role, as it allows him to emphasize that the logical inference based on the observed similarity between objects must be rooted in perceived generic causality.<sup>38</sup> The Sautrāntikas decide to make a last stand, trying to point out that since causality is perceived as a universal, an external object can also be inferred as a cause of consciousness' differentiation based on this perception. However, Utpaladeva again catches them in an attempt to have it both ways. On the one hand, they, like the Pratyabhijñā and Vijñānavāda, proceed from *sakāravāda*. On the other hand, they are trying here to ignore the fact that generic causality, supposedly separate from consciousness, cannot be the cause of a specific appearance in it: firstly, because it is too abstract, useless, and imperceptible, and secondly, because they are trying to infer it on the basis of a specific appearance. Indeed, causality is either a universal in consciousness, but in this case, it cannot be unequivocally called abstract due to its perceptibility, or a synonym for the omnipotence of consciousness, but in this case, it cannot be called a universal. However, the Sautrāntikas explicitly refuse to acknowledge consciousness as omnipotent, as a result of which all these unsolvable issues with inferential causality arise.<sup>39</sup> It is also interesting that in their last reasonings, they sound suspiciously similar to Kant, who, however, could not rely on such an argument because he would then have to acknowledge the thing-in-itself as knowable and even lose a chance to maintain the transcendental approach. Finally, they try to cling to the universality of externality instead of the universal of causality. Thus, we can perceive, say, that an object is in front of a mirror or a dog is walking near the house. Accordingly, we can, by analogy, infer a consciousness-external object. Utpaladeva replies to that that the Sautrāntikas here confuse the externality as regards consciousness with the proximity between objects within consciousness. Thus, we can let a dog into the house, but that does not mean it will thereby become identical to it and cease to be a dog. However, we cannot "let" objects into consciousness because, firstly, spatial categories are not applicable to it, and, secondly, these so-called objects would, in this case, not be able to remain themselves, as their supposed *raison d'être* consists in being altogether different from consciousness. In contrast, internal objects are called internal only in the sense of their identity with consciousness. Accordingly, Utpaladeva concludes that we are dealing with an inference based on a verbal similarity, which cannot be correct by definition.<sup>40</sup> That is how the discussion ends.

The moral of the entire discussion is thus that Utpaladeva is, as it were, addressing other philosophers: either you acknowledge the omnipotence of consciousness, which allows us to confine causality within it, and the very issue of the possibility of inferring the existence of objects separate from it will then be removed, or you do not acknowledge it, but you will then be able neither to perceive nor to infer them anyway. The remaining part of the fifth chapter is devoted to a description of how consciousness creates objects within itself through self-differentiation. The main point of the argument comes down to the assertion that consciousness cannot be understood as a passive reflecting medium but only as the omnipotent and absolutely independent subject that

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<sup>38</sup> See *Torella R.* The *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*... pp. 116–117.

<sup>39</sup> *Ratié I.* Can One Prove that Something Exists Beyond Consciousness? A Śaiva Criticism of the Sautrāntika Inference of External Objects. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 39, Nos. 4–5, 2011, pp. 491–493.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 493–495.

contains all objects within himself, being the only possible source thereof, because otherwise, they could not even be perceived, whereas any other possible source of them cannot be considered omnipotent and even capable of creating them at all. However, we will not analyze it separately since we have a large number of more urgent questions to address, the first of which is what does Vijñānavāda have to ultimately do with that?

And the answer is: essentially nothing. Utpaladeva considers it powerless to justify its idealism *ab initio* and simply utilizes the suitable arguments of this doctrine that either seem to him meaningful only within the context of his doctrine or are purely logical and epistemological. That is why we see no point in emphasizing that in the sixth verse of the chapter under consideration, Vijñānavāda could agree with Utpaladeva's argument: it indeed could do it, but that would be mere words because it is not capable of justifying what Utpaladeva tries to justify. The arguments in favor of the kinship of the two doctrines are largely based on the assumption that in this discussion, Sautrāntika failed to overcome Vijñānavāda since the latter is supposedly capable of refuting its realism.<sup>41</sup> However, the central issue of its first part is *sakāravāda*, and the Vijñānavādins can in it, at best, blame the Sautrāntikas only for virtually defending *nirākāravāda* but in no way refute the existence of consciousness-external objects since the argument from *sahopalambhaniyama* is not strong enough to do that — especially given that Dharmakīrti deliberately formulated it in such a way that it was acceptable for the Sautrāntikas as well.<sup>42</sup> And in order for it to be strong enough, it is necessary to propose a relevant causal theory that does not remove causality from consciousness, which the Vijñānavādins did not have at their disposal, particularly given that they reduced true consciousness to the sphere of nonpropositional perception.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, there is every reason to assert that Utpaladeva considered it possible to refute Vijñānavāda by the resources of Sautrāntika alone and agree with the latter that Vijñānavāda is a disguised dualistic realism.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, it can be said that he views the Pratyabhijñā as the only true *sakāravāda*, given that, as we have already noted, any dualistic realism, even a disguised one, from his perspective practically implies *nirākāravāda*.

If that is indeed the case, the fifth chapter of the first section of the *karika* does not try to justify an alternative idealism but constitutes a refutation of idealism as such — of course, taking into account that there was no term "idealism" in the modern sense in medieval India. In this regard, it is more appropriate to compare Utpaladeva not with Berkeley but with Kant since both of them sought to refute both idealism and realism in favor of some kind of nonclassical realism. However, if Kant does that in order to justify transcendental idealism, which, at the same time, is empirical realism, Utpaladeva's main goal is to refute dualistic realism in order to justify nondualistic realism, and he refutes idealism only insofar as it proves to be a form of dualistic realism. As a matter of fact, few Western philosophers would argue the thesis that idealism is a sort of dualistic realism. Even Berkeley would have found it difficult to object to it since he not only distinguishes minds from

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<sup>41</sup> See *Ratié I.* The Dreamer and the Yogin: On the relationship between Buddhist and Śaiva idealisms. *Bulletin of SOAS*, Vol. 73, No.3, 2010, pp. 455–456.

<sup>42</sup> *Taber J.* Philosophical Reflections on the *sahopalambhaniyama* Argument. *Reverberations of Dharmakīrti's Philosophy: Proceedings of the Fifth International Dharmakīrti Conference Heidelberg, August 26 to 30, 2014*, ed. by B. Kellner, P. McAllister, H. Lasic, S. McClintock. Vienna, 2002, pp. 442–443.

<sup>43</sup> See *Ratié I.* Can one prove... pp. 496–498.

<sup>44</sup> The same basically applies to Advaita Vedānta, but in this case, the arguments of Sautrāntika alone will no longer be enough.

ideas but also admits God outside limited minds, thereby removing causality from limited consciousness. As for Kant and post-Kantian idealists, they themselves readily emphasized that they were realists, and given that they did not claim to be nondualists, it remains only to admit that their realism can only be dualistic.<sup>45</sup> Some may suspect us of being unfair to classical idealism, but we just consider Berkeleanism untenable because it parasitizes the defects of representationalism, which in itself is not the only option in epistemology. However, one also should not ignore the fact that Utpaladeva has so much disguised himself as a Vijñanavadin in his reasonings that before admitting his possible agreement that Buddhist idealism is by itself capable of refuting Sautrāntika, it is necessary to identify those fragments in his writings where pure Vijñānavāda speaks, and that is not an easy task, to say the least. Finally, it should not be forgotten that the thesis of the omnipotence of consciousness presupposes that the latter is, by definition, outside the mind, and so it can be considered as an argument against typical solipsists. We, however, must return to the main topic of this study.

### V. The Notion of *Vikalpa* and Its Role in Utpaladeva's Ontology

The above discussion was far from easy, but the most difficult phase is yet to come. That is so because we deliberately turned a blind eye to the fact that Utpaladeva, already in the fifth chapter and even before it, calls objects external. But if consciousness is indeed omnipotent and capable of creating objects within itself out of itself, what is the point of saying that they are external? It is clear that the very opposition between the internal and the external allows one to emphasize that objects are, in fact, internal, but that in itself is clearly insufficient since it is not a matter of spatial categories. Indeed, Somananda did not resort to such terminology in his *Śivadṛṣṭi*, and if we mentally exclude it from the first chapters of Utpaladeva's *karika*, they can be considered as a simple supplement to this treatise. To answer this question, Abhinavagupta immediately explains that objects can be considered external only in the sense that they are created by the universal subject as external to the limited subject.<sup>46</sup> It should be noted from the outset that the latter is understood here as a perceivable universal in consciousness, not as a specific individual — we will focus on this point later. That clarifies the matter to some degree but raises new questions. To reduce their number, it must be immediately said that the above discussion and direct textual evidence<sup>47</sup> indicate that Utpaladeva considers the universal subject as making internal objects external, not vice versa. It is enough here to recall once again the analyzed quote comparing consciousness with a yogin. Moreover, he explicitly emphasizes the fact that the objects still continue to remain internal. Thus, the fifth verse of the eighth chapter of the first section of his *karika* goes as follows: "External existence (*bāhyatā*) is to be considered an accessory condition (*upādhiḥ*) and not the very essence (*ātmā*) of the manifestations of being and non-being. These, therefore, insofar as they are inner manifestations, always exist. " [ĪPK I 8.5] In other words, the objectness of objects, from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, is reduced neither to their appearance as external nor to their existence separately from consciousness, which allowed us to consider it as such in the previous sections. That, in turn, means that this doctrine can be compared neither with

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<sup>45</sup> The fact that some of them were monists is irrelevant here because monism is not nondualism.

<sup>46</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK I 5.1.

<sup>47</sup> See, e.g., ĪPK I 5.7; ĪPV ad ĪPK II 4.6–7.

Gnosticism nor with Hegelianism nor even with the nondualistic evolutionism of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh since, unlike them, it does not allow the possibility that consciousness somehow sinks into its otherness in order to realize itself via humanity or to manifest itself during an evolutionary process.

However, the questions are only accumulating. In particular, the acuteness of the discussion about the possibility of the existence of an object outside consciousness was largely based on the assumption that external objects should serve as causes of the differentiation of consciousness. If the latter is capable of doing that on its own, external objects turn from causes into effects, and it becomes unclear what they are for at all. We are thus marking time. It seems that this peculiarity has always confused many researchers and translators of the *Pratyabhijñā* doctrine, who could not put up with the absence of a strict necessity for external objects in it. That, for example, can be seen in the first and so far the only complete English translation of *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī*, Abhinavagupta's short commentary on Utpaladeva's *karika*, made by the renowned Indian scholar K. C. Pandey and published in 1954. To demonstrate this, let us consider three excerpts from it. Thus, in his commentary on the seventh verse of the third chapter of the first section of the *karika*, Abhinavagupta, according to this translation, states the following: "Still this *Samvid*, because it contains the whole universe within itself, therefore, will shine with the whole universe either manifest or otherwise, because such is its nature. But it is not so.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, it follows that *Samvid* makes some objects manifest as separate from itself out of the mass of objects, which lie merged in it, as identical with it. This is called power of knowledge." [Pandey, 1954, p. 37] A little further, in relation to the same verse, there is the following fragment: "And then, as a matter of course this also has to be admitted that whatever is made manifest, is separate from *Samvid*, so is one *Samvid* from another, and so also is one object of knowledge from another; and that this (separation) however, is not really possible. Hence it is called mere appearance, because all that is created is mere appearance (*Ābhāsa*)." [Pandey, 1954, p. 38] Finally, in the translation of the commentary to the eighth verse of the fourth chapter of the *karika*, we read: "Thus, there are twenty-two forms of cognition. In these the object of cognition is not outside the light of subject. For, otherwise it would not be manifest. But this object also is to be admitted as separate from the light. For, otherwise how can it be called the object? But how can one and the same thing, at one and the same time be said to be separated from the 'light' and yet to be in the light? Therefore, naturally there has to be supposed something, the essential characteristic of which is the limited light, as the subject, because of which this mass of (real) objects, being separate from the 'limited light', may be separate from one another also." [Pandey, 1954, p. 52]

In these fragments, we can see an acute struggle between the necessity to acknowledge objects as external and the impossibility of doing so, which looks even more acute against the background of the discussion we have analyzed, in which Utpaladeva emphasized the impossibility of the existence of consciousness-external objects. However, the translation adds difficulties of its own. In particular, as Ratié discovered, in the second of them, Pandey omitted a whole fragment, which, as she correctly noted, can be translated as follows: "And (*ca*) for all that (*iyatā*), this [separation] is not unreal (*apāramāṛthika*); since it is precisely the ultimate reality of whatever is created." [Ratié, 2013, p. 387] In other words, the appearance of the differentiation between

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<sup>48</sup> That is, it is not the case that all objects are manifested at once; on the contrary, they are manifested sequentially.

subjects and objects cannot be considered unreal, even taking into account that it is false or, as Pandey put it, not really possible. This fragment is thus another evidence that the Pratyabhijñā could not actually do without distinguishing between the reality of knowledge and its truth, but that is not what concerns us here right now. In fact, the phrase "as a matter of course" is no less important in the quote under consideration. It gives an impression that there is some kind of ontological necessity in this separation of objects from the subject. It is further strengthened by the question "For, otherwise how can it be called the object?" from the third fragment, which, taken literally, seemingly implies that an object cannot be called an object unless it is external. However, all that comes in direct contradiction with the verse quoted above, according to which the objectness of objects is not reduced to their appearance as external, as well as with Utpaladeva's thesis that consciousness is absolutely independent and does not require material causes. Everything is aggravated by the fact that the fragments from the translation under consideration precede the fifth chapter of the *karika* we have already analyzed and thereby confuse the matter from the very beginning.

Therefore, it is crucial to immediately put everything in its place and emphasize that, despite certain ambiguities, the Pratyabhijñā does not consider external objects strictly necessary in the sense that without external appearance, an object cannot be considered an object. On the contrary, it is precisely the external appearance of an object that cannot be considered so if it does not reside within the subject. Thus, even Pandey himself, in the fragment under consideration, stipulates that it is one and the same object that must be both separated from and be in consciousness. Accordingly, we should not understand the matter in such a way that only an object that is separate from consciousness can be called an object: what is meant here is simply that only an object that is separate from consciousness can be called external. However, that does not solve the main problem because we have not yet explained why we are being simultaneously convinced that an object cannot be separate from consciousness and that it must still, in some sense, be so — not to mention that it is unclear what for it must be so in the first place. That is why it is important to take into account the context of the general discussion, in which Utpaladeva, again, polemics with Buddhists and, as it were, volunteers to demonstrate why an object can seem separate from consciousness, and the universal subject can seem inexistent altogether. This brings us to the very notion of differentiation.

It constitutes another equivocation, this time partly engendered by the Pratyabhijñā philosophers themselves. On the one hand, we have found out that self-differentiation into objects is simply a way of existence of the universal subject. On the other hand, from the fragments considered, we see that differentiation also means the false separation of objects from both the limited and the universal subjects. These are obviously two different meanings of the term, which are, however, conveyed by one word. Thus, in particular, after concluding the fifth chapter of the first section of his *karika*, Utpaladeva begins a new chapter dedicated to a special power of the universal subject called *apohana śakti*, which is responsible precisely for this erroneous separation. It is usually described as the power of differentiation, although Utpaladeva rather means here precisely the ability of separation. However, we remember that the notion of differentiation was employed by Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta already in the fifth chapter of the *karika*, and so the question arises whether the following chapter is devoted to something completely new or simply

develops the old topic. In other words, the question can now be posed as follows: is differentiation synonymous with what Utpaladeva calls external?

At first glance, that is indeed the case. In particular, in the new sixth chapter of the first section of the *karika*, he stresses that the main manifestation of *apohana śakti* is a *vikalpa*. This widespread Indian term is usually translated as "thought construct" or "conceptualization". Given that it implies a basic alternative with the subsequent rejection of one of the options, it can be considered the main factor of differentiation between objects. According to Buddhists, it is ultimately false, and so Utpaladeva again decides to make use of their terminology because, from his perspective, *vikalpas* are precisely what brings an element of false dualism into the nondual reality. However, he significantly expands and changes the meaning of this term, virtually producing a new equivocation. The fact is that when Buddhists used this notion, they implied that the basic relationship between consciousness and objects is direct, nonpropositional, and verbally unmediated. In contrast, Utpaladeva emphasizes that since this relationship presupposes dualism, it, albeit being direct, must be propositional and verbally mediated.<sup>49</sup> We have already noted that Buddhists disagreed with Brahmanists on the nature of direct knowledge. Here, Utpaladeva again sides with Brahmanists, more precisely, those who acknowledge the perceptibility of universals — first of all, Mīmāṃsā. Now it is time to address the fact that the knowledge we previously called verbally unmediated is originally called *nirvikalpa*, and verbally mediated knowledge is originally called *savikalpa*. It is not difficult to detect that both of these terms are derived from the word "*vikalpa*" and literally mean *vikalpa*-free knowledge and *vikalpa*-conditioned knowledge, respectively. In a way, these Indian terms facilitate our task since their translation into European languages always proves to be somewhat distorted. Thus, if we translate "*nirvikalpa jñāna*" as "immediate knowledge" and "*savikalpa jñāna*" as "mediated knowledge", we will create an impression that mediated knowledge is indirect. However, most Indian philosophers, on the contrary, try to emphasize the direct and even perceptual nature of the basic forms of verbally mediated knowledge. Accordingly, to avoid irrelevant representationist connotations, it should be stressed that it is precisely *verbally* mediated, not simply mediated or conceptual. On the other hand, if we translate these terms as "indeterminate knowledge" and "determinate knowledge", respectively, we will create an impression that indeterminate knowledge is something vague and abstract, but even Buddhists will protest in this regard because, for all Indian philosophers who acknowledge this kind of knowledge, it is concrete, as it is precisely *savikalpa* that comes under suspicion in terms of some degree of abstractness. Still, the basic point is that all philosophers who acknowledge this distinction teach that there are two phases of perception, in the first of which, there is a direct grasp of an object, and in the second one, there is a verbally mediated comprehension thereof. In doing so, Buddhists try to show that the objects of these two phases are actually different, whereas Brahmanists, Tantrists, and Jainists, on the contrary, argue that they are related to one and the same object — besides, some of them also emphasize the perceptibility of objects of direct verbally mediated knowledge.

While agreeing with the latter, Utpaladeva, however, brought something new to this scheme as well. Thus, he transferred this division to the ontological level, which allowed him to present it

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<sup>49</sup> Prueitt C. Shifting Concepts: The Realignment of Dharmakīrti on Concepts and the Error of Subject/Object Duality in Pratyabhijñā Śaiva Thought. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 45, No. 1, 2017, pp. 21–47.



not as two successive phases of perception but as two parallel statuses of self-awareness of the universal subject. Interestingly, here he allies with the ca 5<sup>th</sup>-century grammarian Bhartṛhari, who formulated the doctrine of linguistic nondualism, whom his teacher, Somananda, harshly criticized, and who, among other things, did not acknowledge *nirvikalpa* at all, considering all knowledge verbally mediated. As a result, Utpaladeva developed a very unusual scheme, according to which even indeterminate knowledge is propositional. In other words, he agreed with Bhartṛhari's thesis that all knowledge is verbal but still divided it into immediate and mediated.<sup>50</sup> In particular, he claims that self-awareness of the universal subject is verbal but still indeterminate, whereas self-awareness of the limited subject is a *vikalpa*, which practically means verbally mediated knowledge in the same universal subject.<sup>51</sup> Such an approach once again compromises the established terminology but allows one — which is of primary importance for us — to virtually identify the notions of the internal and the external with the notions of *nirvikalpa* and *savikalpa*, respectively.

All that goes very well with the thesis that an apparently external object must actually reside within consciousness but almost deprives the notion of *vikalpa* of its original meaning. As we have already seen, even in the context of Brahmanical philosophy, its meaning is very far from that which Buddhists put into it. That is even more true of the Pratyabhijñā, in the context of which we do not see any point in translating this term as "thought construct" or "conceptualization" at all: at best, that is useless and, at worst, again creates a false impression of some kind of idealism of this doctrine. From our perspective, it here practically means nothing except a determinate cognition. Moreover, we consider it possible to extend this understanding to another term, "*pratyaya*", used in the *Spandakārikā* and its commentaries, which is commonly translated as "mental representation"<sup>52</sup> but which is virtually synonymous with what Utpaladeva understands by a *vikalpa*.<sup>53</sup> The only thing that remains of the Buddhist "*vikalpa*" in his treatise is a certain degree of falsity and the *modus operandi* itself. Thus, a *vikalpa* forms a basis for the law of double negation, according to which A is not not-A.<sup>54</sup> However, all that should be understood not merely in a formal logical, or even epistemological, but, first of all, in an ontological sense.<sup>55</sup>

We are gradually approaching the most difficult point, but first, still consider it necessary to give the floor to the supporters of the idealist interpretation of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine. After all that has been said, it will be difficult for them to insist that it is a form of classical idealism, but they can now try to rely on the equivocation of the term "*vikalpa*" instead of the equivocation of the term "consciousness" and present it as some analog of the post-Kantian idealism of the Fichtean or Hegelian kind, especially given that both of them are often considered as a form of realism. It is appropriate to recall here that Dharmakīrti had another argument against the existence of consciousness-external objects. Thus, since he argued that the basic subject-object relationship is constituted by a nonconceptual error, he questioned the thesis of the dualistic realists, according to

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<sup>50</sup> From the epistemological perspective, that indicates that Utpaladeva was a radical proponent of the thesis that propositional knowledge does not have to imply propositional content. However, that also applies to some degree or another to other philosophers admitting the perceptibility of universals.

<sup>51</sup> ĪPK I 6.1; ĪPK I 6.4–5.

<sup>52</sup> See *The Stanzas on Vibration: The Spandakārikā with Four Commentaries* / Translated by M. Dyczkowski. Albany, 1992, p. XVII.

<sup>53</sup> Oddly enough, Karl Potter translated both Utpaladeva's terms, "*nirvikalpa*" and "*savikalpa*", as "representation". See *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Vol. XXIV: Kashmir Śaiva Philosophy*. Delhi, 2019, p. 211.

<sup>54</sup> It is sometimes said that it makes all the basic laws of logic possible.

<sup>55</sup> See ĪPK I 6.2–3.

which we would not be able to imagine an object separate from consciousness if such objects did not exist at all.<sup>56</sup> As for Utpaladeva, even though he insists that this relationship is a *vikalpa*, he denies the existence of consciousness-external objects as well, and therefore, one suspects that he could agree with the general conclusion of Dharmakīrti. But if that is indeed the case, there remains one step to a sort of conceptual idealism, according to which objects do not exist separately from *vikalpas* and which, moreover, can be supported by a reference to the reality of the limited subject to whom, despite the falsity of these consciousness-generated *vikalpas*, objects will appear as actually existing outside consciousness. It seems that some interpretations of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine were guided precisely by such considerations. However, they cannot do without the assumption that it is limited subjects who perceive external objects, whereas the universal subject must remain unaffected by them.<sup>57</sup> One can only wonder how much they deviate from the direct textual evidence, according to which Utpaladeva actively defends *sakāravāda* and even directly emphasizes that the universal subject is affected by external objects.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the following should be made clear from the outset: according to the Pratyabhijñā, the limited subject cannot perceive external objects since only the universal subject is capable of perceiving whatever is perceptible and, moreover, does not have to manifest himself through anyone at all.

Accordingly, taking into account all the above considerations, it cannot be unequivocally stated that the term "differentiation" and the term "external" are strict synonyms in the Pratyabhijñā. One can only say that the term "external" is synonymous with the notion of *vikalpa*, which, in turn, is only a special kind of differentiation but does not exhaust this notion. One can even find that Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta use a different set of terms to describe both. Thus, in the case of generic differentiation, the terms "*bheda*" and "*bhinna*" are more often used, and in the case of a *vikalpa*, "*apoha*" and "*viccheda*" are usually applied, which are semantically distinguished as "diversity" and "separation", respectively. Still, they were not converted into strict technical terms and are used interchangeably. Besides, when it comes to modern usage, it is difficult to deny that both meanings indicate differentiation in its various forms as well. Yet this ambiguity fuels erroneous interpretations of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine, such as the one above. Moreover, we are not sure that the difference between these notions is clearly understood by the bulk of researchers and translators of the doctrine under consideration. Among the happy exceptions, one can mention Jürgen Hanneder and Rameshwar Jha, who explicitly emphasized it. Thus, the former rightly noted the following: "One of the important points of Abhinavagupta's doctrine is what we could call a gradual transition from nonduality to duality. To indicate the intermediate (*bhedābheda*) state, the term 'differentiation' has been used instead of 'division'. Simplifying the matter slightly one might say that 'differentiation', which does not entail duality, is a process inside consciousness, whereas duality entails a projection of the already differentiated content to the outside." [Hanneder, 1998, p. 159] It must be added, though, that even this "projection" does not go beyond consciousness. Jha, in turn, noted that at this intermediate level, differentiation comes down to a pure self-negation of the universal subject, who thereby produces objects while remaining himself, whereas a *vikalpa*

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<sup>56</sup> Prueitt C. Shifting Concepts... pp. 31–32.

<sup>57</sup> See, e.g., Fritzman J.M., Lowenstein S.A. and Nelson M.M. Kaśmir to Prussia, Round Trip: Monistic Śaivism and Hegel. Philosophy East and West, Vol. 66, No. 2, April 2016, pp. 371–393; Berger S.L., Fritzman J.M., and Vance B.J. Thinking With, Against, and Beyond the Pratyabhijñā. Asian Philosophy, Vol. 28, No. 1, 2018, pp. 1–19.

<sup>58</sup> See, e.g., ĪPK I 5.18; ĪPK I 7.1.

presupposes a more coarse additional differentiation.<sup>59</sup> That is also explicitly acknowledged by Abhinavagupta himself.<sup>60</sup>

Given all that, it turns out that Utpaladeva still could not agree with Dharmakīrti in that a *vikalpa* can do without relying on already existing objects,<sup>61</sup> and, therefore, it is better not to translate "*apohana śakti*" as "the power of differentiation" if we use the term "differentiation" to describe the basic difference between them. For him, as for dualistic realists, one and the same object is cognized both in immediate and verbally mediated knowledge and so cannot be reduced to a *vikalpa* even when it is external, which completely excludes the possibility of interpreting the Pratyabhijñā in the spirit of post-Kantian idealism. However, in his understanding, that, firstly, happens simultaneously and, secondly, does not imply that objects must be external in order for consciousness to be differentiated by them. On the contrary, one can even say that in his ontology, *nirvikalpa jñāna* generates *savikalpa jñāna*. We see once again here that Utpaladeva stands beyond both dualistic realism and idealism. But what is then this dual status of an object for at all? We have not yet made much progress in comprehending this mystery of his nondualistic realism and so have to turn to the analogy with a mirror, actively resorted to by Abhinavagupta.

## VI. Clarifying the Notions of the Internal and the External Using the Analogy With a Mirror

Even though Utpaladeva, in the fifth chapter of the first section of his *karika*, plainly rejected the correctness of comparing consciousness with passive reflecting media, he nevertheless ventured to propose its analogy with a mirror, which looks somewhat less obscure than the analogy with a yogin for a modern reader. However, a complete analogy could not be drawn here since an ordinary mirror requires nearby objects to form reflections, whereas consciousness cannot even have them nearby. So we are asked to imagine a mirror capable of generating reflections on its own. Even so, the Pratyabhijñā refuses to admit this analogy as flawed, as it changes the very meaning of the idea of reflection so that an ordinary mirror, the mind, water surface, etc., in its perspective, cannot be considered as full-fledged reflecting media but only as inferior analogs of consciousness precisely because, unlike the latter, they require external objects.<sup>62</sup> This analogy was developed by Abhinavagupta, but in order not to increase the volume of this study, we will rely on his 11<sup>th</sup>-century commentator, Yogarāja, who was able to briefly summarize all the main points thereof.<sup>63</sup>

They are as follows. Consciousness can be compared to a mirror, capable of generating reflections without requiring external objects. Accordingly, in this case, reflections will act as things-in-themselves. At the same time, they will be differentiated among each other, be identical with the mirror, but still seem different from it. The most difficult point in this description is the thesis that reflections must be both different from and identical with the mirror. Yogarāja explains

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<sup>59</sup> See An Introduction to Tantric Philosophy: The *Paramārthasāra* of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogarāja / Translated by Lyne Bansat-Boudon and Kamaleshadatta Tripathi. London and New York, 2011, p. 80.

<sup>60</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK IV 7.

<sup>61</sup> To avoid overcomplication, we will call internal objects in consciousness existing, even though they cannot be called existing in themselves due to their ontological falsity.

<sup>62</sup> *Ratié I*. An Indian Debate on Optical Reflections and Its Metaphysical Implications: Śaiva Nondualism and the Mirror of Consciousness. Indian Epistemology and Metaphysics / Ed. by Joerg Tuske. London and New York, 2017, p. 216.

<sup>63</sup> See PSVi ad PS 12–13.

that this must be so because, on the one hand, reflections cannot exist without a mirror, and, on the other, they are still different from it since if a mirror were reduced to reflections, the very condition of their existence would be violated. A mirror is thus distinct from the reflections that are immanent to it. However, the whole difficulty is that in the case of an ordinary mirror, there are also objects external to it, which by themselves explain why the mirror and the reflections are different from each other. But we are asked to imagine that the cause of the difference between consciousness and objects lies in consciousness itself and that, at the same time, it does not just display objects like a crystal ball but reflects something from within itself. To somewhat facilitate this task, Abhinavagupta resorts to the analogy with a bowl-shaped mirror on which another bowl is placed that cannot reflect anything and serves only as a source of reflections but should be conceived in unity with the bottom mirror. In such a unit, reflections will not be visible from the outside, but that is not necessary since the analogy is intended to demonstrate that consciousness reflects itself from within itself while being aware of itself.<sup>64</sup> However, the difficulties do not end there because we know from the above discussion that reflections must still somehow become external, and one might even think that when Yogarāja says that reflections should differ from a mirror, he is describing this fact. But that is not how things stand: if the task of consciousness were simply to make objects external, it would resemble not a mirror but a film projector, which, moreover, would need a source for images beyond itself. Hence, everything that Yogarāja describes applies to internal objects and says nothing about their external character.

We are thus still arguing round and round, unable to explain why the universal subject needs to render objects externally manifest. If an object is, in a sense, different from consciousness already within it, then why all this talk about its external character? The analogy with a mirror seems to have even aggravated this problem, and philosophers, including Indian ones, may suspect some kind of inferiority of such a consciousness, which, in fact, should require either an analog of Platonic matter in order to manifest ideas externally or an additional material substance in order to be able to act. However, we know that Utpaladeva denies both the necessity and the possibility of a material cause outside consciousness. To clarify this situation, Abhinavagupta deepens the analogy with a mirror. Thus, he compares the universe of objects with the reflection of a city in a mirror and the activity of the universal subject in separating objects from the limited subject, which is identical to him, with the action of a chisel. Here, however, the analogies fail completely since it is utterly impossible to cut off reflections from a mirror, and the comparison with a chisel itself causes irrelevant associations with ancient philosophy and plays into the hands of erroneous Platonistic interpretations. In fact, though, Abhinavagupta here alludes to an activity more like cutting out already drawn figures from paper.<sup>65</sup> The overall meaning, therefore, is that the universal subject separates objects that already exist within him while simultaneously making some of them limited subjects, whose self-consciousness also becomes a *vikalpa*, so that these objects and subjects, supposedly cut off from him, the limited subject, understood as a universal, and from each other, can be perceived by consciousness as external to himself.<sup>66</sup> As already noted, even though this

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<sup>64</sup> There will be no light in this closed cavity either, but consciousness itself is light.

<sup>65</sup> See *Ratié I. Pāramārthika or apāramārthika? On the ontological status of separation according to Abhinavagupta. Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India Through Texts and Traditions: Contributions to Current Research in Indology*, Vol. 1, ed. by Nina Mirnig, Péter-Dániel Szántó, Michael Williams. Oxford and Philadelphia, 2013, pp. 397–398.

<sup>66</sup> See *ĪPV ad ĪPK I 6.1–5*.

process is completely real, it can only be erroneous, which makes it almost impossible to find an exact analogy for it.

Utpaladeva sees its main driving force in the imposition and subsequent negation. Thus, according to him, *apohana śakti* functions in the following way. In order to perceive an object as external, i.e., to comprehend it in a verbally mediated cognition, consciousness must first impose its opposite on it and then negate it.<sup>67</sup> This process necessarily involves the application of the law of double negation: if consciousness wants to comprehend, say, a cup as an external object, it must first impose not-cup on it and then reject the latter in the form of a perceptual judgment "this is not not-cup." It goes without saying that all that presupposes concrete objects — individual substances or, as Buddhists preferred to say, particulars — and not just sheer universals, whose existence apart from things is not acknowledged by Utpaladeva. As for the fact that it is difficult to call not-cup a specific object, this is not a problem for him since the main thing here is that all objects of the not-cup category actually exist in the universal subject who accomplishes the act of double negation.<sup>68</sup> That, in turn, implies that the not-cup category consists exclusively of objects and the limited subject particularized by means of some of them, whereas the universal subject himself is not included in it. Otherwise, he would himself undergo the negation, but that is impossible since consciousness cannot act as an alternative to either a cup or any other object. All possible alternatives thus remain at the level of objects or limited subjects. Accordingly, this whole process is not reduced neither to formal logic nor even to epistemology but is, first of all, ontological. That will become fully clear if we realize that a specific limited subject is itself a result of this process, as its self-consciousness is also a *vikalpa*, i.e., the object of a verbally mediated cognition, and so falls into the not-cup category since it implies reliance on a body, mind, psyche, etc., which are objects different from the cup.<sup>69</sup> Given all that, it is odd to read that a *vikalpa* is allegedly a thought construct, conceptualization, or mental representation. Anyway, we have not answered the main question yet because if all particulars are within consciousness, why start this process of superimposition and negation at all? At this point, we must proceed to the ontology of everyday practical life.

## VII. The Notions of the Internal and the External as a Basis of the Ontology of Everyday Practical Life

So, there should be no doubt that the internal objects of consciousness are, first of all, individual substances. In particular, Abhinavagupta's very comparison of the universe of objects with a city in a mirror implies that a city is a collection of specific objects. Still, he immediately notes that these objects cannot be used in everyday practical life, and in order to make this usage possible, the universal subject renders them externally manifest by means of his *apohana śakti*.<sup>70</sup> In the following chapters of the *karika*, Utpaladeva first stresses that it is the external appearance of an object that is a condition for the possibility of performing its characteristic causal function<sup>71</sup> and then explains that the latter is by no means intrinsic to it but is determined by the will of the

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<sup>67</sup> See ĪPK I 6.2.

<sup>68</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK I 6.3.

<sup>69</sup> See ĪPK I 6.4–5.

<sup>70</sup> ĪPV ad ĪPK I 6.3.

<sup>71</sup> ĪPK I 8.6.

universal subject, i.e., that very *apohana śakti* and his other powers.<sup>72</sup> In other words, to simplify slightly, the apparent separation of objects from consciousness comes down to the performance of their respective causal functions since its sole meaning is to make this possible.

This fact simultaneously clarifies the case and seemingly, at first glance, confuses the matter entirely. Indeed, if the "city in a mirror" already consists of specific objects, how can we say that they cannot be used in everyday practical life? After all, even the very comparison with a city suggests some practical activity — otherwise, an example of a natural landscape would be more suitable here. Now, the suspicions of Western "Platonists" and Indian dualists have every reason to deepen, and the former may begin to point out that since these objects are incapable of performing causal functions, they are not individual substances but analogs of Platonic ideas, whereas the latter may begin to object that it makes no sense to identify such useless objects with the universal subject because they will only highlight that he is not active. And it will be difficult to argue with them because, like it or not, specific objects are necessarily associated with some kind of activity or becoming. But let us not be deceived: when Abhinavagupta compares the universe of objects with a city in a mirror, he does not mean that they are inherently inactive at all. The thing is that, describing the conditions for the possibility of practical use of objects, he is talking not about the ontology of the object but about the ontology of the subject. Thus, in his small treatise called *Ajaḍapramāṭṛsiddhi*, to which Abhinavagupta often referred, Utpaladeva already drew attention to the fact that the causal function cannot be immanent to an object precisely because it depends on various subjects with their goals, who, in turn, are the manifestations of the unitary knowing and doing subject.<sup>73</sup> And then he points out that it is merely an accidental attribute of an object that already exists within consciousness, which repeats what he said in the fifth verse of the eighth chapter of the first section of his *karika* cited above and, again, allows us to say that the external character of an object and its causal function are practically the same things.<sup>74</sup> In other words, Abhinavagupta implies that specific objects within consciousness are always associated with some kind of activity, which, however, cannot be called practical without its additional false rendering outside consciousness.

Well, let us admit that what is understood here is a single process, perceived differently by the universal subject, but that does not change the fact that an individual substance is necessarily cognized along with its spatiotemporal attributes. We are told, though, that it must still reside within consciousness permanently, and it is difficult to understand this otherwise than as a virtual acknowledgment that it is actually devoid of them and, therefore, is, in fact, something like a Platonic idea. That is indeed one of the most difficult points of Kashmir Shaivism in general and the Pratyabhijñā in particular, so, believe it or not, the situation is as follows. We are indeed asked to imagine, or rather perceive, as it is hardly at all imaginable in the narrow sense of the word, a specific object outside the spatio-temporal attributes. To be precise, the latter are not going anywhere, but we should perceive them as transcendent to themselves. There is indeed something mystical in that, but the general meaning is that, as Abhinavagupta shows in *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*, *Mālinīvijayavārttika*, and other treatises, consciousness is considered by Kashmir Shaivism as differentiated at the highest level since objects understood as reflections must have a source that

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<sup>72</sup> ĪPK II 3.12.

<sup>73</sup> APS 6.

<sup>74</sup> APS 7.

cannot be homogeneous due to the very structure of such causality. Accordingly, in this school, there is neither an apophatic absolute, as consciousness is regarded as totally inclusive by it, nor a discrepancy between the thing-in-itself or essences and phenomena. Thus, it can be said that time, being a universal, is both an attribute of an object and transcendent to itself as such.<sup>75</sup> The reality of time at the supreme ontological level is repeatedly emphasized in the writings of Abhinavagupta.

A specific object, though, is characterized by origination and destruction, but we are still being convinced that it is permanent. Isn't that a clear contradiction? The answer is that the permanence of objects should be understood here not in the sense of Platonic ideas but only in the sense that they always remain identical to the universal subject, which is responsible for their creation, preservation, and destruction and is fundamentally capable of creating any previously disappeared object again. That is so because the universal subject is omnipotent, and any object is nothing but a combination of universals, albeit very complex at times. Moreover, it should be understood that all that occurs ontologically before they become external. That is why Utpaladeva draws attention to the fact that the intrinsic nature of an object remains unchanged even within the sphere of cognitions, i.e., in the flow of time,<sup>76</sup> and Abhinavagupta notes that the processes of the creation and destruction of objects occur inside consciousness and are, at the same time, erroneously manifested outside it.<sup>77</sup> Let us try to clarify all that with concrete examples.

Suppose we perceive a dog and then make a perceptual judgment "this is a dog." From the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, that means that none other than the universal subject perceives here and, therefore, does it at some intermediate ontological level, where specific objects already exist, but there is no verbally mediated knowledge yet. In Kashmir Shaivism, this level is technically called *parāpara*. However, the perceptual judgment is also made by the same universal subject, which implies the parallelism of immediate and verbally mediated perception<sup>78</sup> of an object. Still, all that does not mean that there is no dog at the level of immediate perception or that it is not a dog but something else there: even there, the dog is just itself and has all its characteristic properties. The only difference between these two levels is that at the *parāpara* level, the dog is perceived as identical with the universal I and does not differ from a cat or any other object in this respect, whereas at the *vikalpa* level, it is cognized as something supposedly separate from it. In other words, even though objects are different from each other even within consciousness, there, they have a common attribute of identity with it and are similar in this regard, while at the lower ontological level, they apparently lose it and acquire a false attribute of separateness from the subject instead.<sup>79</sup> Accordingly, when the philosophers of Kashmir Shaivism claim that any object is omniform, that should be understood in a restricted sense, not in the sense that they literally merge into a formless mass. On the other hand, when they argue that objects are separate from each other at the *vikalpa* level, it means that they have merely acquired an accidental attribute, not that they could not exist without being external to consciousness.<sup>80</sup> The so-called separateness of objects from each other is

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<sup>75</sup> See Prueitt C. Carving Out Conventional Worlds: The Work of Apoha in Early Dharmakīrtian Buddhism and Pratyabhijñā Śaivism, Ph.D Thesis. Atlanta, 2016, p. 226.

<sup>76</sup> ĪPK I 8.2.

<sup>77</sup> BP 9.

<sup>78</sup> For Utpaladeva, immediate perception is also verbal, but we will not modify the established terminology because of this.

<sup>79</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK I 8.5.

<sup>80</sup> See ĪPK I 8.7.

just another name for their erroneous externality to consciousness, within which they are already different from each other.

Further, although at the moment of perception of the dog, the universal subject comprehends a kind of cosmogonic process constituted by it and the environment, when he makes the respective perceptual judgment, he necessarily enables practical interaction with it. This does not mean that all that will result in specific physical actions, but at least there will be a fundamental readiness to commit them — even if it is an attempt to avoid the dog or run away from it. And to complete the picture, it should also be added that all that gives room for epistemological error. Thus, if we try to pet the dog to please it but hurt it instead, that will mean that we will commit an erroneous action based on false knowledge. Anyway, the overall meaning here is that the cosmogonic process takes place within consciousness in the form of interaction between specific objects, which, however, cannot be called practical in itself, and everyday practical life is added to it as an extra level. To get a clearer idea of what is being said, one can imagine a workshop in the middle of the working day, which, together with all its equipment, employees, and managers, in the perception of the universal subject, will also, first of all, be a cosmogonic process, and only secondarily a site of productive labor.

We should, however, return to the main topic. If all that is indeed the case, it turns out that everyday practical activity is just a false adjunct to the permanent cosmogonic process. But if the latter is self-sufficient, why manifest it at all? Such an explanation merely emphasizes the identity of the external status of an object and its capability of performing a particular causal function but does not answer the question of what both are for. Moreover, it presupposes a false character of everyday practical life, which in itself is unable to justify the rendering of objects externally manifest. Well, here it remains only to acknowledge that, just as only the erroneous status of epistemology can be relevant for the Pratyabhijñā's ontology,<sup>81</sup> only the erroneous status of everyday practical life can be of relevance for it — especially since that, according to Abhinavagupta, the purpose of the former is to make the latter possible.<sup>82</sup> As for why manifest it at all, there remains only one answer: in order to recognize oneself in the limited subject that is necessarily immersed in it. This is precisely the meaning of what we, at the very beginning, called the nondualistic quasi-pañentheism of Utpaladeva. In this way, his doctrine is meant to demonstrate that the everyday practical life of the limited subject is permanent and actual manifestations of the various powers of the universal subject for the purpose of self-recognition, and so can only be erroneous. Accordingly, there can be only two alternatives as regards it: it has either to be false or disintegrate.

However, all that does not make the very substance of everyday practical life particularly clear. In general terms, it can be said that it is constituted by the false self-concealment, i.e., self-imposed bondage,<sup>83</sup> of the universal subject due to non-dual activity carried out in the context of unity in diversity. The key role in all this is played by reflective awareness, *vimarśa*. Most of the *karika* is devoted precisely to explaining the meaning of the practical life and so may seem somewhat mundane. However, we cannot afford to analyze all the related issues and will dwell only

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<sup>81</sup> See *Bandurin M.A. Epistemological Implications...* p. 162-E.

<sup>82</sup> See *ĪPV ad ĪPK II 3.1–2*.

<sup>83</sup> Since the main attribute of the universal subject is absolute independence, self-concealment has to occur in the form of its opposite, i.e., self-imposed bondage.



on the Pratyabhijñā's general theory of causality. That is justified by two main reasons: firstly, the latter is directly based on the notions of the internal and the external, and, secondly, the substance of everyday practical life is largely reduced to it, given that this life is possible only as external. As a matter of fact, we have already had the opportunity to see that the main topic of even the fifth chapter of the first section of the *karika* is precisely causality, and so it is difficult to understand it without analyzing the corresponding theory. However, Utpaladeva decided not to begin his treatise with its exposition but rather to end his work with this by dedicating the entire fourth chapter of the second section of his *karika* to it. In general terms, this theory is a kind of *satkāryavāda*, i.e., it proceeds from the pre-existence of an effect in a cause, and in this respect, it is again allied with at least half of the Brahminical schools and Tantrism and opposes Buddhism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Jainism, materialism, and, according to some interpretations, Mīmāṃsā.<sup>84</sup> Obviously enough, the cause is, for him, the universal subject, and the effects are internal objects that simultaneously become external. That allowed Utpaladeva to link the very notion of causality to the notions of the internal and the external and claim that an effect is nothing else than the external appearance of an object that retains its internal status.<sup>85</sup> And given that only the omnipotent subject can do that, while an insentient substance or the limited subject cannot, any causality is naturally reduced to the volitional production of objects by the sentient agent from within himself as himself.<sup>86</sup> Accordingly, even if we admit that one object first resides within another, we cannot say that this sequence is causal, as causality involves the preservation of the internal status of an effect, and such a status can only be ensured within the universal subject.<sup>87</sup>

It follows from all that that no object can be the cause of another. To clarify this point, Utpaladeva gives two examples: a sprout is not really an effect of a seed, and a jar is an effect of neither the activity of a potter nor even of his ideas since only the universal subject can be the cause in both cases.<sup>88</sup> We should not be surprised that a potter is put at the same level as a seed here — given that his body and mind must be external objects in order to be capable of performing their respective causal functions, not only his tools and the final product are employed for the purpose of everyday practical activity but they as well.<sup>89</sup> In other words, everyday practical life, from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, is not something that is designed for use by limited subjects but something they are subjected to. But if that is indeed the case, we find ourselves in a difficult situation. Thus, our entire exposition shows that the notion of the external in Utpaladeva's ontology is always explained through other notions. First, we are told that it comes down to a *vikalpa*, then to the performance of a causal function, and then to causality for the sake of self-recognition. However, time and time again, we face the fact that each new level of explanation proves to be as futile as the previous one, and we continue to flounder about in some sort of ontological absurdism. So, now we are now being convinced that a seed is not the cause of a sprout, although, from the practical

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<sup>84</sup> The Mīmāṃsā school is difficult to typologize in this respect, and there are directly opposite views on this issue, which, moreover, sometimes deny its consensus on this matter.

<sup>85</sup> ĪPK II 4.6.

<sup>86</sup> ĪPK II 4.2.

<sup>87</sup> ĪPK II 4.15.

<sup>88</sup> ĪPK II 4.8–9.

<sup>89</sup> Abhinavagupta cites a jar as an example of an object of everyday practical life, but it should be understood that those who use it are themselves employed in it like the jar is. And the problem here is not with exploitation or the issue of technics but simply that people would not be capable of performing any function without being external objects.

perspective, we cannot but proceed from the opposite — otherwise, everyday life risks completely losing not just its meaning but the very substance. Apparently realizing that he has hit the bottom in this regard, Utpaladeva takes half a step back and still acknowledges that we have to proceed from the reality of a certain causal order, according to which particular objects seem to be the causes of other objects. However, to reconcile his two opposing theses, he had to resort to highly sophisticated and mainly epistemological arguments.<sup>90</sup>

Abhinavagupta summarized all that in the doctrine of twofold causality. Thus, according to him, causality is simultaneously absolute and fabricated, also known as imagined in the literature. The first aspect comes down to the fact that the universal subject simply appears in the form of any effect, being its only possible cause. The second manifests itself in the form of the conventional causal order created by the same universal subject as an expression of his special power called *niyati*.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, as Utpaladeva argues, we have no way to distinguish an object created by a yogin out of thin air, i.e., by force of his will alone, from its natural or artificially produced counterpart, except by referring to a mere convention — bearing in mind, though, that even the latter is a creation of the universal subject.<sup>92</sup> It is noteworthy here that Utpaladeva introduces the notion of causal order precisely in the epistemological section of his *karika*, and so there is every reason to also call this aspect of causality epistemological.<sup>93</sup> Researchers often interpret the doctrine of twofold causality as a violation of immanent causality, but we would call it backward cheating. Thus, if someone puts their opponent's rook in their pocket during a chess game while he is not looking, they violate the game rules in order to gain some degree of freedom from them. In contrast, when the universal subject fabricates conventional causality, he already has absolute freedom from any rules and resorts to cheating in the form of self-deception in order to create them for himself. That is why it turns out that he acts in the form of a seed endowed with a causal function, even though the sprout is actually created by a mere act of his will. Somananda was more straightforward in this regard and simply claimed that when an old pot cracks, it happens only because it wants to.<sup>94</sup> And since all that happens for the sole purpose of self-recognition, it remains only to proceed to the ontology of the limited subject, which is precisely an entity the universal subject has to recognize himself in. However, it is first of all necessary to complete the examination of the terminology adopted by the Pratyabhijñā doctrine.

### **VIII. The Terms of Utpaladeva's Ontology That Are Related to the Notions of the Internal and the External**

At the very beginning of this study, we noted that all the terms of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine, whether newly introduced or borrowed, are virtually either reduced to the opposition of the external and the internal or presuppose it. However, our main result in terms of clarifying the remaining key terms of Utpaladeva's ontology has so far been the conclusion that the notion of differentiation in it cannot be reduced to the notion of the external. Thus, if we use the term "differentiation" to

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<sup>90</sup> See ĪPK II 4.11–13.

<sup>91</sup> See TS VIII.

<sup>92</sup> See *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 413–416. However, that does not mean that any convention is true. To be so, it must have to do with an epistemologically true object.

<sup>93</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK II 3.8.

<sup>94</sup> See *Nemec J. The Ubiquitous Śiva...* pp. 31–32.

describe the basic difference between objects within consciousness — and it is highly difficult not to do so — we should not define *apohana śakti* precisely as the power of differentiation. Otherwise, we risk making the erroneous conclusion that it is it that is responsible for the basic differentiation of objects and falling into absurd quasi-idealistic interpretations of the doctrine under consideration. Meanwhile, the truth is that *apohana śakti* is responsible only for secondary differentiation, i.e., the separation of objects that are already different from each other, even given that they, in Abhinavagupta's words, are like one solid mass. Accordingly, they are thus erroneously separated from both consciousness and each other — and, in a sense, from themselves as well since an illusory gap between their internal and external status emerges due to the very acquisition of external status by them.

However, Utpaladeva's ontology features several other notions derived from or related to the opposition of the internal and the external, about which a word should also be said. These include "thisness", "insentient", "universe", and "manifestation". "Thisness" (*idantā*) and "insentient" (*jaḍa*) are essentially synonyms that are opposed to consciousness or the universal I — to I-ness, one could say, but that would have nothing to do with Fichte's philosophy. Accordingly, these are just other terms for an object. However, given that the latter has both the internal and the external status in the Pratyabhijñā, it should be understood that so that an object can be insentient, it does not have to be exclusively external — on the contrary, it is so, first of all, within consciousness. That is why Utpaladeva emphasizes that at the *parāpara* level, "I-ness" and "thisness", despite their apparent difference, are in complete unity, and only at a lower level of *apara* does thisness become erroneously separated from the universal subject.<sup>95</sup> As for the connection of these notions with the opposition of the internal and the external, it is revealed in the brief commentary on the eighth verse of the eighth chapter of the first section of the *karika*, which identifies the reflective awareness "I" with the notion of the internal, and the reflective awareness "this" with the notion of the external.<sup>96</sup> In other words, the internal status of an object is reduced to its identity with the universal subject, whereas the external status of an object is reduced to its false separation from it, and there is no place for spatial metaphors. However, it should be borne in mind that the reflective awareness "I" is not a complete dissolution of objects in consciousness but rather the reflective awareness "I am this", unlike the coarse and erroneous appearance "this is this".<sup>97</sup> Accordingly, thisness and the reflective awareness "this" are not the same things. Therefore, it cannot be argued that "thisness" and reflective awareness as such, i.e., *vimarśa*, are synonymous with the notion of the external: *vimarśa* embraces both internal and external thisness.<sup>98</sup> Finally, in the same fragment, Utpaladeva draws attention to another equivocation of the term "internal", the meaning of which, this time, is very close to the Western understanding. Thus, purely mental and psychic phenomena can also be called internal, but from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, they should still be considered as external as any other objects. Accordingly, the externality of ordinary objects has two kinds since it is cognized both mentally and extramentally, and the externality of the "doubly internal" objects has only one kind since it is cognized only mentally. However, Utpaladeva's ontology allowed him to claim, firstly, that both classes of objects are known in direct perception and, secondly, that even purely

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<sup>95</sup> See ĪPK III 1.3–4.

<sup>96</sup> ĪPKVṛ ad I 8.8.

<sup>97</sup> See ĪPK III 1.5.20.

<sup>98</sup> See Nemeč J. Ubiquitous Śiva... p. 34. Here, Nemeč clearly simplified the relations between the terms.

mental phenomena necessarily have a causal function simply because they appear as external. Moreover, given all that, it should be clear that the mind itself is to be considered an external object on the same grounds, not because it belongs to the class of extramental objects.

All that also applies to the notion of the universe (*viśva*), given that the latter is a collection of objects in the form of the most common universals, i.e., *tattvas*, universals of a lower order, and individual substances. However, in fact, it looks even more ambiguous than the notion of an object. The fact is that even though the universe necessarily has both internal and external status, only the external universe, which is also labeled manifest, is often called the universe. That is particularly true for translations and modern studies, but the Pratyabhijñā philosophers themselves have made some contribution to such a word usage. As a result, a false impression is created that the universe has to be external to be worthy of the name, although it would be more correct, on the contrary, to call the external aspects of the universe everyday practical life and to call the permanent cosmogonic process, to which this life is a false adjunct, the universe. This peculiarity can be explained by the fact that it was important for the Pratyabhijñā philosophers to explain the universe in terms of the fabricated causality described above insofar as the latter applies not only to individual substances but also to the *tattvas* of which the universe consists. Accordingly, Abhinavagupta says that the material cause of the external universe is *māyā tattva*, although in terms of absolute causality, it is only one of the effects created by the universal subject, and it would be absurd to argue that a particular aspect of the universe could serve as its cause.<sup>99</sup> Besides, the very structure of the *tattvas* itself can be considered the simplest argument in favor of the fact of differentiation of objects within consciousness since the universe consists primarily of various *tattvas*. And given that the external universe, according to Abhinavagupta, depends materially on one of them, it is clear that differences between them must take place even before one of them can serve as its cause. Moreover, the Pratyabhijñā's thesis that time is transcendent to itself can be applied to all the *tattvas* since they are all differentiated at the supreme ontological level to be able to serve as sources of their reflections if we again recall the analogy with a mirror. In modern literature, the *tattvas* are often classified too formally, and scholars forget about the twofold nature of causality in Kashmir Shaivism, limiting themselves only to its fabricated aspect. To fully understand the doctrine of the *tattvas* in terms of causality, one cannot do without studying Abhinavagupta's *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa* and his other treatises.

However, even if we admit the legitimacy of the notion of the external universe, we should be very cautious about calling it manifest, despite the convenience of this term, since, in fact, it turns out that the Pratyabhijñā doctrine does not have the notion of unmanifestedness, beloved by many esotericists, at all. And that is not surprising, as "manifested" is simply a synonym for the perceptible, and there can be nothing imperceptible in the universal subject by definition, given that he is omnipotent and omniscient consciousness. Accordingly, the external status is only erroneously added to the already existing appearance in consciousness, which cannot be called unmanifest.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, at best, one can only say that an object always appears as a result of a simple self-limitation of consciousness and acquires both the external and internal status, the unity of which is conventionally called manifestation (*abhivyakti*). However, it will not have an opposite, as in

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<sup>99</sup> See TS VIII.

<sup>100</sup> See Ratié I. A Śaiva Interpretation of the *Satkāryavāda*: The Sāṃkhya Notion of *Abhivyakti* and Its Transformation in the Pratyabhijñā Treatise. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2014, pp. 127–172.

Sāṅkhya, Vedānta, and other schools, even if we emphasize its external character. Indeed, if we focus on the unity of the internal and the external, we will find out that this opposite notion is impossible due to the necessary identity of the object to the universal subject. If we focus on the external status of an object, we will find out that it is impossible due to the erroneous ontological status of this status. In this way, only the absence of a specific object at the *parāpara* level, which, however, can be created at any time, can be conventionally called unmanifestedness. We are now terminologically equipped enough to proceed to the final sections of this study devoted to the ontological status of the limited subject.

### IX. The Notions of the Internal and the External as a Basis of the Ontology of the Limited Subject

Despite the substantial results achieved, there are still many difficulties awaiting us ahead, as so far, we have studiously avoided the issue of a highly paradoxical status of the limited subject in Utpaladeva's ontology, which is also defined in terms of the internal and the external. Moreover, we largely avoided it in our previous study due to the fact that the latter was primarily epistemological. So it is time to dwell on this topic, taking into account all the nuances identified. The main question here remains the same: why does the Pratyabhijñā consider the limited subject sentient? Our general answer to it, which consists in referring to the fact that the limited subject is identical in this doctrine to the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject, remains the same but needs additional explanations.<sup>101</sup> Based on the results obtained, however, only the following can be stated by now: since an object can be considered external only as regards the limited subject, the latter can only be internal, i.e., identical to the universal subject. But this does not do much in itself because we know that any object, from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, is so, and, therefore, we will thus rather emphasize that the limited subject is merely an object, which will obviously not help us explain why it is called sentient.

Of course, there will be those who will try to explain this peculiarity by the alleged ability of the limited subject to perceive external objects, but they will be mistaken. Hence, in order to get off the ground, we should take into account the following point. In fact, the limited subject in the Pratyabhijñā is considered limited not because it is a *vikalpa*, not even because it is a body or mind, but simply because the universal subject voluntarily and erroneously restricts himself in its form in order to recognize himself in it.<sup>102</sup> Accordingly, a *vikalpa*, which serves as a false self-awareness of the limited subject, as well as a body, mind, psyche, etc., are only substrates with which this "ready-made" subject is identified to complete his self-concealment. It goes without saying that all these substrates must also be created by the universal subject. All that is summarized by Utpaladeva in a separate verse in the last chapter of his *karika*, the brief commentary on which goes as follows<sup>103</sup>: "This universe springing forth as constituted by the free expansion (*jṛmbhāmāye*) of the supreme Lord, realities that are created as the object of perception — the mind, the breath, the void — in the sphere of the reflective awareness 'this', precisely these realities, which represent a part of the knowable, are caused to be considered as the fictitious I and are, on the strength of this, transformed

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<sup>101</sup> See *Bandurin M.A. Epistemological Implications...* p. 171-E.

<sup>102</sup> See, e.g., *ĪPV ad ĪPK I 6.4–5; ĪPV ad ĪPK II 3.1–2.*

<sup>103</sup> We here preferred the brief commentary to the verse itself, as it more accurately expresses the crux of the matter.

into the limited perceiving subject." [ĪPKVṛ ad IV 2] In the context of the issue under consideration, the most important phrase here is "transformed into the limited perceiving subject." In other words, the latter serves as a kind of ontological intermediary between the universal subject and the substrates with which it is identified so that, on the one hand, the identity between these two statuses of the unitary subject is ensured, and, on the other, it would be impossible to say that the universal subject literally dissolves into bodies, minds, etc., in the process of his self-concealment.

The context and inner logic of the doctrine under consideration suggest that these substrates must already be external so that the limited subject can identify with them. This, in particular, is perfectly consistent with the eighth verse of the first chapter of the third section of the *karika*, which describes the concealing function of *māyā śakti* and states that the latter manifests itself precisely when objects seem erroneously separated from the universal subject, and minds, bodies, etc., are considered as cognizing subjects.<sup>104</sup> However, if that is the case, another problem arises. As far as one can tell, the general ontology of the Pratyabhijñā implies that an object can be considered external only as regards the limited subject, but the latter must itself be an object. It seems to follow from that that it must identify with an object before the latter becomes external in order to make possible the very external status of any object. Moreover, Utpaladeva himself seems to be saying that none other than the universal subject must identify with a body, mind, etc., in order to be able to make objects external.<sup>105</sup> But the problem lies precisely in the fact that before objects become external, the limited subject cannot obtain the status of an object. Accordingly, at first glance, the following dilemma arises: for objects to become external, the limited subject must acquire the status of an object, but for it to acquire such a status, objects must already be external, and an ontological vicious circle emerges.

However, this dilemma is false because, as a matter of fact, the limited subject does not have to become an external object so that objects can become external. This is so because it is simply created by the universal subject as a perceivable universal, which makes it possible for any object to acquire the external status, and only then is it identified with some of them. As we noted at the very beginning of this study, the limited subject is of interest to the Pratyabhijñā philosophers primarily as a universal and only secondarily as a specific individual. In this doctrine, it is as transcendent to the body as for Descartes or Kant and to the mind as for Brahmanists and Tantrists. Accordingly, specific external bodies, minds, etc., are identified with the limited subject having the status of a universal, which makes possible, among other things, a social reality. Indeed, there is no problem for the Pratyabhijñā to explain the possibility that one or another object seems external as regards a restricted but numerous group of persons but not as regards another indefinite group of persons — another thing is that neither an individual nor a group of persons is capable of perceiving an external object independently of the universal subject in any case. Besides, given that the limited subject is also a collective entity, this doctrine can also explain any collective interactions and identities. Moreover, it necessarily acts as the most general collective entity so that even such broadest notions as "society", "humanity", etc., inevitably prove to be its particular varieties. The only thing to keep in mind here is that the limited subject indeed cannot become manifest even as a universal at the level of the pure universal subject and, therefore, must enjoy a status ontologically prior to external objects but still lower than the *parāpara* level, at which objects are completely

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<sup>104</sup> ĪPK III 1.8.

<sup>105</sup> See ĪPK I 6.4–5.

identical to the universal I. As for the ontological vicious circle, Abhinavagupta refutes its possibility at the very beginning of his commentary on Utpaladeva's *karika*. Thus, he emphasizes that the limited subject cannot act and cognize separately from the universal subject, and, therefore, to avoid a vicious circle, its multiplicity can only be considered false.<sup>106</sup> And it can be false only if the universal subject himself makes objects external and only after that identifies the limited subject with some of them, thereby creating an erroneous appearance of its multiplicity.<sup>107</sup> Accordingly, it should be borne in mind that the Pratyabhijñā differs from both Western and Eastern philosophy in that, according to it, all objects of the everyday world, without exception, constitute a unitary causal continuum in the form of the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject, and those doctrines that do not take into account this basic illusion and focus only on the identity of the limited subject with objective substrates inevitably fall into dualism, even if they claim to be nondualistic.<sup>108</sup>

As for Utpaladeva's alleged claim that *Īśvara* himself has to identify with a body, mind, etc., to be able to make objects external, he does not say that at all. If we look closely, that verse implies a parallelism of the cosmogonic process and everyday practical life insofar as the subject is the same at both levels.<sup>109</sup> Accordingly, it says not that the universal subject cannot make objects external without identifying with an object but that he continues the process of rendering objects externally manifest even when he is erroneously identified with an external object. Here, it is necessary to overcome the habit of gnostic interpretations instilled by Western philosophy and recall that the Pratyabhijñā doctrine does not posit the limited subject in a Hegelian manner in order to subsequently supersede the contradictions between it and the universal subject<sup>110</sup> but considers it primordially and actually identical to the latter. Otherwise, it would indeed be a poorly systematized idealism, which, moreover, would necessarily be dualistic. However, the verse under consideration is often cited precisely as a locus classicus of emphasizing this actual identity. Thus, Kṣemarāja, in his *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, relies on it to corroborate the thesis that Śiva keeps carrying out the fivefold act peculiar to him even under conditions of his false self-limitation<sup>111</sup> and further argues that the very status of the limited subject is nothing more than ontological ignorance about this fact.<sup>112</sup> All that is consistent with our thesis that the Pratyabhijñā considers the limited subjects sentient precisely because of its identity with the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject, even given that the latter is his power of self-concealment.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, even if we resort to a simple method of exclusion, it becomes clear that *māyā śakti*, on the one hand, is necessarily identical to the universal subject, performing a special function of its false limitation at the lowest ontological plane, and, on the other, is not reduced to insentient objects, even though it operates as the external universe. This alone gives reason to consider the limited subject sentient and even call it not just limited but restrictive.

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<sup>106</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK I I.3. That is precisely why specific individuals are not of particular importance for Kashmir Shaivism.

<sup>107</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK IV 3.

<sup>108</sup> See *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 550–551.

<sup>109</sup> See ĪPK I 6.4–5.

<sup>110</sup> For the doctrine under consideration, the distinction between the universal and limited subjects lies outside the mind, not within it, in part because it does not distinguish reason from understanding.

<sup>111</sup> See PH 10.

<sup>112</sup> See PH 12.

<sup>113</sup> *Māyā śakti* has both the cosmogonic and the concealing function, but the former takes a back seat here.

However, for the same reason, its sentiency will not imply the ability to perceive external objects. As we remember, it is the admission of the latter that fuels attempts at false idealistic interpretations of the doctrine under consideration. However, the situation is even more serious. In fact, it cannot be admitted that the limited subject is capable of even erroneous perception of external objects. This is so because it does not have any, even illusory, domain separate from the universal subject. Therefore, at best, it can only be said that there is an appearance of the limited subject's ability to perceive external objects. Even so, since this appearance alone is enough to justify the entire epistemology, the opposite statements are often found in the related literature. In our previous study, we ourselves admitted that the limited subject, even without being independent, is capable of erroneously, i.e., epistemologically, cognizing everyday objects, as we considered epistemology-related issues there.<sup>114</sup> The fact is that when one begins to explain the ontological status of the limited subject in the *Pratyabhijñā*, to put it mildly, it is very difficult to avoid at least tentative admission of its ability to cognize to some extent, even if we emphasize that its is capable of doing this only as the universal subject, i.e., virtually deny this ability. Indeed, when a certain difference between them is allowed — which, whatever one may say, cannot be denied — an impression of some independence of the limited subject automatically arises, especially given that we cannot but consider it sentient. And yet this ambiguity should not justify misunderstanding the fact that the limited subject does not actually have this independence and is incapable of cognizing even erroneously. However, we are not sure that all modern researchers are firmly aware of this fact, and so we often have to guess whether they merely acknowledge that the universal subject cognizes in all cases or allow for a significant difference between these two statuses of the unitary subject.

Thus, in particular, Ratié rightly points out that the illusion, from the perspective of the doctrine under consideration, does not consist in the mere appearance of differentiation within consciousness but in incomplete understanding thereof as separate from it, but assumes that it is the limited subject that is subject to this illusion.<sup>115</sup> Meanwhile, Utpaladeva says rather not that it is subject to illusion but that it is the illusion, i.e., literally consists of *māyā śakti*.<sup>116</sup> Ratié, however, being perfectly aware of that, argues elsewhere that even though the limited subject neither actually knows nor acts, it still seems to it that it knows and acts.<sup>117</sup> Pandey sees the situation in the same way.<sup>118</sup> However, such an interpretation is highly vulnerable because even if it is true that the universal subject makes the limited subject believe that it knows and acts on its own, this does not mean that it actually separates from him. And that is tantamount to saying that he makes himself think so; that is, he creates a false appearance in himself that all that seems to the limited subject, and, therefore, the so-called perspective of the limited subject can still be ignored.<sup>119</sup> If one overlooks this point, at least ambiguity is created as regards the acknowledgment of the latter's ability to cognize independently. In fact, though, it is nothing more than a kind of ontological figurehead to whom the activity of the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject is attributed. Moreover, unlike figureheads in politics or economics, it does not receive any advantages from this role due to

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<sup>114</sup> See *Bandurin M.A. Epistemological Implications...* pp. 169-E, 172-E.

<sup>115</sup> *Ratié I. Pāramārthika or apāramārthika...* p. 395.

<sup>116</sup> See, e.g., *ĪPK IV 3*.

<sup>117</sup> See *Ratié I. Le Soi...* pp. 571–572; *Idem. A Śaiva Interpretation of the Satkāryavāda...* pp. 148–150.

<sup>118</sup> See *Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Vimarśinī* of Abhinavagupta: *Doctrine of Divine Recognition Volume III / English Translation* by K. C. Pandey. Delhi, 1986, p. 172.

<sup>119</sup> See *ĪPV ad ĪPK II 4.4*.



the ultimate impossibility for it to realize its status and, on top of that, is, by definition, incapable of doing what is attributed to it. Accordingly, even if we tentatively admit that the limited subject does have some kind of cognitive autonomy, its birth defect will immediately be revealed: it will be forced to admit that its body, mind, psyche, etc., no matter individually or as a universal, are capable of acting independently, and that will imply its ignoring the basic falsity of the world of everyday practical life and immediately expose it as a manifestation of *māyā śakti*, responsible for this unitary causal continuum.

All that can be demonstrated based on epistemology. Thus, acknowledging the limited subject's ability to erroneously cognize objects can be compared to acknowledging that a clinical lunatic who considers himself Napoleon I is indeed so, simply because it seems so to him. However, in the case of the Pratyabhijñā, the problem is even deeper. The fact is that the epistemology of this doctrine is based on the *svataḥ prāmāṇya* principle, which implies that for the illusion of Napoleon to be real, both Napoleon must once have existed independently of the mind and the mentally ill person himself must exist in such a status. But when it comes to the limited subject, there is no question that it can exist independently of consciousness and have a separate self-consciousness. Nevertheless, it still has to be acknowledged as a subject in order for consciousness to be somehow substituted by it. Accordingly, the only thing left here is to identify it with bodies, minds, etc., which are supposedly separate from consciousness, and make it appear that the result of this identification is allegedly the only possible subject. Moreover, what this so-called subject will be, transcendental, empirical, collective, or some other kind, will not change the essence of the matter. However, all that is easily exposed in the light of the ontological principles of the Pratyabhijñā because it turns out that, firstly, say, this or that body is declared to be no less than the universal subject — given that there actually cannot be any other subject — and, secondly, that the body is considered capable of acting independently, i.e., to be ostensibly separate from other objects and, at the same time, to perform a particular causal function along with them due to the erroneous detachment of both it and other objects from consciousness under the influence of *māyā śakti*. In this way, the entire process occurs in the context of the fabricated causality we have already analyzed, both at the level of the *tattvas* and that of individual substances, as both the limited subject and the factors of its bondage, along with the abstractly understood false egoity, are universals, whereas specific minds and bodies are objects included in the external universe, which leaves no room for autonomy of anything other than consciousness but implies the acquisition of the external status by objects as a necessary condition for the manifestation of specific allegedly sentient individuals.

At this point, there may be objections claiming that the limited subject must be able to at least erroneously cognize, because otherwise, that will have to be done by the universal subject. But there is no problem in this at all: the universal subject indeed cognizes in all cases, and such objections are based on two gross mistakes. Firstly, they, as we noted earlier, ignore direct textual evidence in favor of the fact that he is affected by external objects, and, secondly, have to naturally admit that someone should be affected by them instead of him. However, as a matter of fact, the universal subject is not the truth, pure and simple, but the identity-in-difference of truth and error, which does not change due to the cognition of external objects given his omnipotence. Therefore, the Pratyabhijñā philosophers could say that some interpreters and modern researchers simply confuse causal impact with change and, consequently, while rightly denying the possibility that the

universal subject is subject to modification, nevertheless, contrary to the texts,<sup>120</sup> attribute this ability to the limited subject. And that is quite understandable, considering that we are talking about an ontological error, and it is very difficult to admit that pure consciousness can be subject to it. However, Abhinavagupta strongly denies the possibility for the limited subject to cognize in any sense<sup>121</sup> and, moreover, says that even it always remains unchanged, as all false activity is actually accomplished by *māyā śakti*.<sup>122</sup> As for the fragments, which can be interpreted to the effect that the universal subject is allegedly not affected by external objects, they, in fact, imply only that it, conversely, is affected by them but simply does not change, just as a mirror as such is not modified due to the presence of reflections in it. Abhinavagupta even resorts to an unusual comparison of consciousness with the sky, which is not soiled by clouds, smoke, and dust, even though it is rather imperfect since it does not grasp the essential features of consciousness admitted by Kashmir Shaivism.<sup>123</sup> Somananda, for his part, gives an opposite example, arguing that even though an object is subject to transformations immediately after its appearance, this does not mean that it loses its identity with the universal subject even for a moment.<sup>124</sup>

Nevertheless, as we have already noted, such false reasonings are the starting point of some idealistic interpretations of the doctrine under consideration. In this connection, it remains for us to consider a third possible attempt of this kind, although it will inevitably be highly unconvincing given that it is virtually a variant of the argument we have already refuted. As a reference point, the notion of correlationism, introduced relatively recently by the school of speculative realism of Quentin Meillassoux et al., can be used here. However, it should be noted from the outset that it is merely a reference point since we do not agree that this notion correctly grasps the essence of idealism as such. The fact is that in the philosophical treatises of Kashmir Shaivism and related studies, one can find enough fragments that indeed emphasize a certain correlation between the limited subject and external objects. And that is not surprising, given that, as we have found out, the former is a necessary condition for the latter. However, these formulations themselves often look rather ambiguous. Thus, for example, in his commentary on *Śivadr̥ṣṭi*, Utpaladeva points out that the nature of external objects is conditioned by the subtle body of the limited subject.<sup>125</sup> And although the notion of the subtle body in Kashmir Shaivism is devoid of any explicitly mystical connotations, meaning only a set of mental and psychic components of an individual, this does not make it any easier because idealistic connotations take the place of mystical ones. In the *Spandakārikā* as well, there are enough references to this subtle body to the effect that it plays one of the key roles in bringing about bondage.<sup>126</sup> As if continuing this topic, B. N. Pandit, in his commentary on the fifth chapter of the *karika*, came to the conclusion that even though the mind, from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, is incapable of independent activity, Utpaladeva still believes that external objects cannot exist independently of it.<sup>127</sup> All that again suggests that the doctrine

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<sup>120</sup> See, e.g., APS 22; SK 8.

<sup>121</sup> See, e.g., Hanneder J. Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Revelation: An Edition and Annotated Translation of *Mālinīśloka-vārttika* I, 1–399. Groningen, 1998, pp. 79–81; Sferra F. The *Tantroccaya* of Abhinavagupta. An English Translation. AION, Vol. 59, Nos. 1–4, 1999, pp. 115–116.

<sup>122</sup> See TS VIII.

<sup>123</sup> See PS 36.

<sup>124</sup> See ŚD I.18.

<sup>125</sup> See ŚDVṛ ad ŚD 1.41cd–43.

<sup>126</sup> See, e.g., SK 46, 49–50.

<sup>127</sup> Pandit B.N. Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Kārikā of Utpaladeva: Verses on the Recognition of the Lord. Delhi, 2004, p. 54.

under consideration is a peculiar analog of post-Kantian idealism, in which external objects, firstly, are external to the limited subject but are not independent of the mind and, secondly, artificially correlated with it by the will of the universal subject in the context of some sort of pre-established harmony.

And yet, no matter how interesting such an interpretation may be from a historical and philosophical perspective, it does not stand up to criticism. We will not repeat our anti-idealistic arguments because it is enough here to draw attention to the following. Even if we tentatively admit that all that is true — although it cannot be so simply because the Pratyabhijñā does not acknowledge the existence of a mental substance and considers the mind as just an external object along with others — the main thing here is not the correlation of an object with the mind but who exactly perceives the objects. And that is necessarily done by the universal subject. In other words, the cogency of this interpretation is again fueled by the false admission of the ability of the limited subject to cognize, which makes it a variant of the interpretation we have already discussed in the fifth section. As for the observation that external objects are correlated with it, it has some grounds and even direct textual evidence,<sup>128</sup> but its analysis requires delving into the ontological status of epistemology in the doctrine under consideration.

#### **X. The Epistemology of the Pratyabhijñā as a False Adjunct to Its Ontology**

One of the tasks of our previous study was to consider the ontological aspects of the Pratyabhijñā doctrine that directly determine its epistemology. However, given that the epistemological subject in it is identical to the ontological one, epistemology in its context can be considered in the most universal perspective, and the question of the ontology of epistemology as such can be raised. Thus, in the most general terms, its status can be described as a false adjunct to the ontology. We approached this issue in our previous study but did not have the opportunity to dwell on it in more detail. Such a status thereof determines what can be called a parallelism of the ontology and epistemology in the Pratyabhijñā, which, in turn, is the key to explaining the already noted correlation of an external object and the limited subject in it. The culmination point expressing this parallelism in the *karika* is precisely the verse we have analyzed, according to which the universal subject continues to render objects externally manifest even when he is falsely identified with an external object. This means that he ontologically creates objects and simultaneously makes them external to cognize them epistemologically on the part of himself. In these circumstances, the mind and other cognitive abilities, usually attributed to the limited subject, turn out to be included in the external universe. That is essentially what the entire correlation of the limited subject and external objects comes down to.

Is it a pre-established harmony? No, because by the latter, it is usually understood as some kind of interaction between several substances, whereas in Kashmir Shaivism, there is only one substance, and the phenomenon we are considering does not go beyond a mere cause-effect relation within it. One should also not rush to call it harmony: although it is difficult not to call a completely fabricated and orchestrated process that way, it should be borne in mind that it occurs for the sake of false self-concealment and, moreover, does not completely exclude purely epistemological errors.

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<sup>128</sup> See, e.g., PH 3; SK 28.

That is why Utpaladeva, following Somananda, calls the world of everyday practical life a mere confusion.<sup>129</sup> Accordingly, it can be said that it constitutes a harmony in terms of ontology but purposefully created disorder in terms of teleology since it is not the result of mechanical or other purely immanent causality but of permanent sentient activity. In a way, such an ontology is the opposite of Leibniz's philosophy, as, according to him, the external world develops according to physical laws but teleologically aimed at the highest good, and, according to the Pratyabhijñā, it is a direct manifestation of the activity of the universal subject but, at the same time, in a purely immanent respect, teleologically meaningless.

But what precisely is added to reality when the universal subject is erroneously identified with one or another external object but continues to render objects externally manifest? Nothing, except an ontologically false epistemological dimension. If one asks why he has to cognize objects purely epistemologically, given that he creates them himself, the answer will be that the rendering of objects externally manifest presupposes as a necessary condition the creation of the limited epistemological subject identical to himself. Without it, the process of external self-objectification in the form of self-concealment through cognitions would be impossible — not to mention the fact that the universal subject also has to recognize himself in someone, and mere objects are not suitable for this. In this connection, Utpaladeva repeatedly emphasizes that the subject of all cognitions is always *Īśvara* himself.<sup>130</sup> For his part, Abhinavagupta notes that even when the universal subject is aware of himself, this does not cancel the fact of the appearance of external objects to him.<sup>131</sup> All that, however, will be impossible to comprehend if one insists that the limited subject is endowed with the ability to cognize and that *vikalpas* are thought constructs, conceptualizations, or, worse, representations. In this case, one will have to admit that one *vikalpa* has to somehow cognize the others, and that will go against both common sense and Utpaladeva's thesis about the radical non-objectifiability of cognitions.

Still, the *karika* unequivocally states that the self-consciousness of the limited subject is a *vikalpa*. Accordingly, even if we admit that it is the universal subject who cognizes in all cases, it still turns out that he has to cognize some *vikalpas* with the help of others. What about that? The answer is that since a *vikalpa* is not a thought construct but just a cognition designed to serve as a means of self-concealment, the universal subject does not cognize some *vikalpas* with the help of others but simply additionally considers an ontologically understood cognition as an epistemological one. This process involves several conditions. First of all, the limited subject must be voluntarily created as a universal so that, in Abhinavagupta's words, there is something through which manifest objects externally.<sup>132</sup> Then, a particular set of objects has to be rendered externally manifest. In the process, for it to be able to acquire the status of an epistemological subject, some objects suitable for identification with it must be separated, on the common grounds, from objects with which it cannot be identified. During this artificial separation, a particular body, mind, etc., despite its being part of the external universe, necessarily becomes a limited subject, bringing about its particularization. That is so because a *vikalpa* operation on the principle of double negation, and

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<sup>129</sup> See ŚDVṛ ad ŚD 3.76cd–78ab.

<sup>130</sup> See ĪPK I 5.18; ĪPK I 6.8.

<sup>131</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK II 3.9.

<sup>132</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK II 3.17. This stage is summarized by Abhinavagupta in the notion of *pauruṣa ajñāna*, which he describes as the cognition of the non-Self in the Self. But the terminology should not deceive us: by the non-Self, it is here meant not so much objects as the limited subject.

when the universal subject renders externally manifest, say, a cup, this implies that everything else except him and the cup automatically falls into the not-cup category, which, despite its vagueness, necessarily consist of discrete objects and an epistemological subject particularized with the help of some of them. This is because it, on the one hand, must be manifested externally through the limited subject and, on the other, cannot be separated from the universal subject since, like all other objects, it cannot lose its identity with him. Besides, the not-cup category must include some subject from a purely formal and logical viewpoint. Accordingly, the limited subject, identified with a suitable objective substrate that is separate from the cup and other external objects, necessarily falls into it. Finally, under these conditions, a purely epistemological dimension comes into being, the essence of which boils down to the fact that the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject generates and attributes to this limited subject various judgments, such as "I am perceiving this cup", "I remember that I brought this cup from the kitchen", "this cup was given to me by my friend", "I have never liked this cup", etc. This process involves the unification of cognitions. However, despite all that, the ontological nature of the cognition itself does not change, and when epistemological judgments about its object are true, it can be said that they do not bring anything new to the ontological fact of rendering the cup externally manifest. Another thing is that they do not have to be true, even given that their cause is always the universal subject. However, the Pratyabhijñā teaches we should, in any case, concentrate on the direct indeterminate cognition of objects, not on epistemological chuff.<sup>133</sup>

If one does not understand this onto-epistemological parallelism of the doctrine under consideration, one may get the impression that *vikalpas* in it perform a purely epistemological function. One might even think that *māyā śakti* and *apohana śakti* are different powers of the universal subject, even though the latter is simply an aspect of the former responsible for rendering objects externally manifest so that the former has something to identify the limited subject with. However, as a matter of fact, *māyā śakti* generates *vikalpas*, some of which are basic, and some are, so to say, derived, or intramental. Besides, the latter category includes *vikalpas* associated with imagination, which, at first glance, are not related to extramental objects at all. That is why Utpaladeva deliberately emphasizes that both perceptible external objects and purely imaginary things are created directly by the will of the universal subject, whereas intramental and epistemological phenomena that seem dependent on direct perception<sup>134</sup> are produced by the will of the universal subject with the involvement of memory.<sup>135</sup> And, of course, nothing prevents him from also producing epistemologically false objects, which are a kind of mixture between objects of direct perception, memory, and imagination. Here, we should also not be confused by the fact that the cognition of an external object requires the participation of the mind and sense organs, although they themselves turn out to be among external objects. That can be interpreted in two basic ways. First, we can say that the mind and sense organs literally belong to the universal subject. This is one of the well-known theses of Kashmir Shaivism, defended, in particular, in the *Spandakārikā*.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> See, e.g., ĪPV ad ĪPK IV 11.

<sup>134</sup> One should not forget that despite the specifics of its ontology, the Pratyabhijñā doctrine acknowledges the dependence of indirect knowledge on the direct one. Therefore, when we talk about derived objects, it only means that they are not produced by external objects themselves but by the will of the universal subject and, nevertheless, seem dependent on them due to the process of unifying the corresponding cognitions.

<sup>135</sup> See ĪPK I 6.9–10; ĪPK I 8.9.

<sup>136</sup> See SK 6–7.

Alternatively, to put it less mystically, we can say that at a basic level, all external objects, including minds, are simply created by the universal subject in order to then make use of the mind and sense organs so that it can be declared that an epistemologically understood *vikalpa* arose with their participation — especially considering that the mind, like any other object, has to perform its respective causal function.<sup>137</sup> In other words, the necessity for the mind to participate in the formation of a *vikalpa* comes down to the mere fact of the latter's occurrence immediately after the creation of an object by consciousness, i.e., the generation of *savikalpa jñāna* by *nirvikalpa jñāna* noted earlier. All that again shows that the notion of the external for the Pratyabhijñā applies only to the subject, not to the mind, and the mind is considered an external object in it not because of its extramental status.

However, despite all these subtleties, there are three key points to be learned from the preceding two sections. First, the limited subject is incapable of cognizing even erroneously, and so it is pointless to try to comprehend the Pratyabhijñā doctrine from this subject's point of view due to the absence thereof. Secondly, it is a kind of ontological intermediary that the universal subject identifies with suitable objective substrates included in the external universe since he cannot identify with objects himself directly. Thirdly, the epistemological dimension, which subsequently appears, is a false adjunct to cognitions actually produced by the universal subject, which appears as a result of the generation of additional types of *vikalpas*, the process of the unification of cognitions, and attributing the latter to the limited subject. Given all that, one can call the particularized limited subject, which is a consequence of this process, a quasi-epiphenomenon of the *māyā śakti* of the universal subject: "epiphenomenon" because of its derivativeness, "quasi" — since neither it nor *māyā śakti* are ever separated from the universal subject. It can be said that it comes down to two components, *māyā śakti* and objective aspects — but it should be borne in mind that the latter are also manifestations of *māyā śakti*. However, it now remains for us to consider precisely its subjective aspect, related to the particularization of the limited subject, which is usually emphasized before all else.

### **XI. False Egoity and Its Invalidation in the Light of the Pratyabhijñā**

Concluding this study, it is appropriate to return to the point from which we started, namely, the epigraphs. If everything is as we have described, the following question may arise. The universal subject limits himself by a mere act of his will, then renders suitable objective substrates externally manifest and identifies the limited subject with specific minds, bodies, etc. However, it always remains identical to him as a quasi-epiphenomenon of his own *māyā śakti*. Accordingly, it turns out that the universal subject himself is ultimately identified with a body or mind. Does that mean that the latter has indeed become a subject? The answer is no. Moreover, they have not even thereby acquired the ability to act independently. A body or mind can be considered identical to the subject only insofar as it resides within consciousness. If they are understood as external to him, they can only be suitable for false subjectivity in the form of a *vikalpa*. Therefore, the limited subject identified with them is necessary not at all in order to make cognition of external objects

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<sup>137</sup> Such insubstantiality and contentlessness of the mind in the Pratyabhijñā are additional arguments in favor of the fact that the latter is not representationalism but relationalism.

possible but simply in order to act as a set of false subjects due to the suitability of minds and bodies already included in the external universe to serve as substrates for it.<sup>138</sup> However, such subjectivity still implies the erroneous involvement of the universal subject, summarized in Kashmir Shaivism in the notion of false egoity, which is the main topic of the epigraphs we have cited. Abhinavagupta explains its nature by using an example of an epistemological error. Thus, he argues that considering the body, mind, etc., as oneself is like confusing a shell with a piece of silver.<sup>139</sup> In this case, the shell acts as a locus of the error, and the "silver-in-the-shell" acts as its content. Similarly, in the case of false egoity, the "subject-in-the-body" is the content of the error, and the specific body itself is its locus. However, within this ontological error, the matter is complicated by the fact that the "subject-in-the-body" is a more complex structure than the "silver-in-the-shell" since false silver inevitably remains a mere objective appearance, whereas the "subject-in-the-body" has, firstly, to do with the subject and, secondly, to the identity of the universal and limited subjects. All that results in the fact that, given that there is nothing but the universal subject and there is no one else to be affected by this error, it is ultimately he who is apparently reduced to bodies, minds, etc., whereas the reality of the limited subject as identical to him is, as it were, obliterated. Indeed, within this error, the limited subject is at best acknowledged as completely isolated, and then not always. But even under all these conditions, of course, the only true subject remains the universal one, as without him, this entire illusion could not have occurred. Hence, unlike the case of a "silver-in-a-shell", when true silver is not cognized, the universal subject continues to be aware of himself even at the moment of fabrication and cognition of this "subject-in-bodies", "subject-in-minds", etc., as which he himself ostensibly acts.

Accordingly, the rehabilitation of the limited subject as identical to the universal subject by recognizing oneself in it becomes the main task.<sup>140</sup> However, it is complicated, among other things, by incorrect interpretations of false egoity itself in modern studies, which, again, are fueled by the belief that the universal subject allegedly cannot be affected by the self-created illusion. Thus, Kamalakar Mishra, being convinced of that, came to the conclusion that one should not proceed from a naive understanding of Kashmir Shaivism, according to which everything in the world is created by Śiva, since the limited subject allegedly has free will insofar as it has an ego.<sup>141</sup> He even regrets that this school does not have the two truths doctrine, as in Buddhism or Advaita Vedānta, because it would help to substantiate this view. However, the absence of this doctrine in it is not at all accidental, given that it does not acknowledge anyone to whom the truth of a lower level could be accessible. That is because the limited subject, according to it, is incapable of not only cognizing but also, strictly speaking, possessing an ego and, therefore, acting: the universal subject simply creates various egos as ordinary external objects and attributes them to the limited subject. Moreover, similarly, even the intention of the latter to perform some action based on consideration of various options is fabricated.<sup>142</sup> Accordingly, to clarify this point and stop trying to delegate a false but independent domain to the limited subject, one should acknowledge that false egoity in Kashmir Shaivism is not merely an appearance but the appearance of an appearance. In other words,

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<sup>138</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK IV 2.

<sup>139</sup> See TS VIII.

<sup>140</sup> See ĪPK III 2.12.

<sup>141</sup> *Mishra K.* Kashmir Śaivism: The Central Philosophy of Tantrism. Delhi, 1999, p. 287.

<sup>142</sup> See ĪPV ad ĪPK II 4.9; TS VIII.

it is the appearance peculiar to the universal subject that it seems to the limited subject that the latter is capable of knowing and acting, not just the appearance peculiar to the limited subject that it is able to do this — particularly given that it always remains a universal, and it would be odd to admit that something can literally appear to a universal. Otherwise, it will always be possible to find a way to emphasize the necessity of considering this false appearance as something of independent significance, especially if we rely on modern epistemology. Besides, such an understanding will highlight another nuance: that thanks to which the limited subject ostensibly cognizes and acts as is actually the universal subject, which is what the Pratyabhijñā philosophers are trying to stress when they claim that false egoity is, in a sense, *Īśvara* himself.<sup>143</sup> All that is summarized in the epigraphs we have given.

Accordingly, the problem comes down to the fact that the universal subject's own *māyā śakti*, as it were, competes with him in correctly understanding the ontological status of the limited subject. That is exactly what is expressed in the seventh verse of the first chapter of the third section of the *karika*, in which Utpaladeva says that *Īśvara* has two powers: the first, *vidyā śakti*, is responsible for recognizing the limited subject as identical to himself, and the second, *māyā śakti*, makes him consider it as identical to bodies, minds, etc.<sup>144</sup> The same thesis is developed in the eleventh verse of the second chapter of the third section, which states that the particularized limited subject finds itself in a subordinate position as regards objects due to the activity of *māyā śakti*, which precisely makes it her quasi-epiphenomenon.<sup>145</sup> It is interesting here that the aspect of *māyā śakti* that is especially highlighted by Utpaladeva, *kalā tattva*, is interpreted by him as a principle that "transforms" specific bodies, minds, etc. into the limited subject, whereas in the *Spandakārikā*, this same *tattva* is understood as depriving the limited subject of genuine independence.<sup>146</sup> And that is not surprising since it is implied here, on the one hand, that some object, becoming the limited subject, does not become a true subject at all and, on the other, that the true status of the limited subject is obscured by the fact that what it is identified with, again, acts as *māyā śakti*, whose task is to erroneously separate it from the universal subject. All that is summarized by Utpaladeva in the thesis that the very ostensible multiplicity of the limited subject is merely a consequence of ignorance about its true ontological status, i.e., of the universal subject's non-recognition of himself in it.<sup>147</sup> In other words, the particularization of the limited subject is fundamentally false since the universal subject, in any case, only simulates this non-recognition<sup>148</sup> with the help of false egoity in order to bring about equally false self-recognition. That explains why the limited subject is of interest to the Pratyabhijñā philosophers primarily as a universal.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> See ĪPK II 3.17; SKVi ad SK 9.

<sup>144</sup> ĪPK III 1.7. This verse is often translated to the effect that all that occurs for the limited subject, but it is better not to do so because, as we have already noted, it is incapable of realizing its status either in true or illusory terms. However, there is a reason for such interpretations, which we will specify a little later.

<sup>145</sup> See ĪPK III 2.11. This verse speaks about the ontological status of the limited subject.

<sup>146</sup> See SK 45.

<sup>147</sup> See ĪPK IV 3.

<sup>148</sup> Utpaladeva defines *māyā śakti* as a mere noncognition of non-duality on the part of Śiva. It can be understood, among other things, as artificial non-recognition of the identity of the universal and limited subjects, but we must also not forget about the cosmogonic role of this ignorance. See ŚDVṛ ad ŚD 1.7cd–8.

<sup>149</sup> Otherwise, it would be difficult to comprehend, say, Kṣemarāja's thesis that the external universe forms a "body" of the limited subject. See PH 4.



Here, it is appropriate to consider another nuance: from all our study, it should be clear that the universal subject conducts everyday practical activity as a false self-concealment, which is important not to confuse with the simple creation of objects that are a necessary condition for this activity. However, there is also the possibility of confusion between cosmogony and self-recognition. It is this mistake that was made by D. P. Lawrence, who virtually identified the notions of *vimarśa* and *pratyabhijñā*. That allowed him to claim that Śiva is allegedly performing the process of creating the universe as self-recognition.<sup>150</sup> This thesis, in turn, is fraught with several other errors. Firstly, it allows one to assert that the universal subject is capable of recognizing himself in ordinary objects, even though this is impossible by definition. Secondly, it blurs the distinction between differentiating objects within consciousness and rendering them externally manifest. Thirdly, it ignores the fact that self-recognition is, strictly speaking, false, whereas *vimarśa* can be both false and true. Finally, it does not, in fact, differ much from the erroneous identification of self-concealment with cosmogony since self-recognition necessarily presupposes self-concealment. As a matter of fact, the whole point is precisely that mere objects are unfit for self-recognition, and as a result, the universal subject has to artificially create the limited subject in order to recognize himself in it. By the way, all that constitutes another argument in favor of the sentient status of the latter: given that *Īśvara* is precisely the subject, he can recognize himself only in a subject, even if the latter has to be false *ab initio*, not in a mere object.

Thus, the overall meaning of all that is quite simple: even though the limited subject is always cognized as identical to the universal subject, this does mean neither that because of this fact, it ceases to be false nor that the universal subject thereby ceases to be true.<sup>151</sup> Their unity constitutes the identity-in-difference of truth and error, which could not be admitted without an implicit distinction between the reality of knowledge and its truth. All that directly determines the content of the act of invalidating false egoity, but before we proceed to its consideration, it is necessary to say a few words about the manifestations of this very false egoity. Among other things, it follows from the epigraphs we have cited that, even though the limited subject, according to the *Pratyabhijñā*, is incapable of either knowing or acting, the world of everyday practical life is full of good and evil deeds that can only be committed by *Īśvara* himself. That, in turn, at first glance, builds a case against him. Firstly, that means that he is both good and evil, and secondly, given that good and evil are manifestations of false egoity, that the limited subject pays for the activities of the universal subject as an ontological figurehead. It should be noted from the outset, though, that the admission of paying for what one does not do is quite typical for Indian "soteriology": you can even say for what one never did, given that this paying does not occur in the context of one life but is the very cause of the beginningless chain of rebirths. Kashmir Shaivism adheres to the basic tenets of the doctrine of *karma* but faces specific problems related to its adaptation to one's own ontology. In particular, it cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that there is a real appearance that the limited subject believes that it is reaping the fruits of its actions, or at least those attributed to it. Therefore, the *Pratyabhijñā* doctrine has no choice but to acknowledge that the universal subject indeed does good

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<sup>150</sup> Lawrence D.P. *Rediscovering God with Transcendental Argument: A Contemporary Interpretation of Monistic Kashmiri Śaiva Philosophy*. Albany, 1999, pp. 85–86.

<sup>151</sup> *A fortiori*, it cannot be the case that the limited subject becomes true due to the attribution of false egos to it.

and evil deeds. Thus, Somananda stressed that Śiva himself commits atrocities to subsequently pay for them in hell.<sup>152</sup>

As for the fact that the limited subject suffers as a result, it is interesting to note that there are two directly opposite explanations aimed at excusing Śiva in the literature. Thus, K. Mishra, proceeding from his favorite thesis that the universal subject allegedly cannot be affected by the manifestations of his *māyā śakti*, points out that the limited subject becomes different from him due to the acquisition of individuality and, therefore, takes that burden on itself.<sup>153</sup> L. N. Sharma, for his part, in his older but more competent monograph, noted that Śiva's certain indifference to good and evil stems, on the contrary, from his identity with the suffering limited subject.<sup>154</sup> This explanation is closer to the truth since the universal subject, of course, is affected by the results of good and evil deeds, pleasure, and suffering, but they are so insignificant to him that he cannot give much credit to them. And that is not surprising since they are mere purposefully fabricated appearances that the limited subject undergoes them, which, moreover, are attributed to one and the same subject in the form of a universal, resulting in a kind of meaningless intermixture of pleasures and sufferings. In other words, even though they are completely real, they do not, strictly speaking, exist. But if we conceive of the case in such a way that he indifferently observes the suffering of his creatures, then, firstly, we will overlook the ontological identity between them and, secondly, attribute negative moral characteristics to him despite the fact that he is actually characterized by none.<sup>155</sup> The only thing to be borne in mind here is that epistemology, from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, unlike many modern Western views, is not morally indifferent, and, consequently, false cognitions, according to it, necessarily entail erroneous actions that can be assessed morally. Besides, *māyā śakti* herself, whose actions are attributed to the limited subject, is, in any case, something ontologically negative, even if she were to suddenly begin to generate an unbroken epistemological truth.

But if the universal subject creates the limited subject as identical to himself by a mere act of his will without losing either his absolute independence or identity with it, then what happens at the moment of the invalidation of false egoity? The answer is: in terms of ontology, nothing; in terms of "soteriology", liberation from *saṃsāra*. The Pratyabhijñā agrees with other "soteriological" doctrines of Indian philosophy that the invalidation of false egoity must lead to liberation but equates the latter with self-recognition. However, from all that has been said, it should be clear that both self-recognition and, consequently, liberation are the prerogatives of the universal subject, whereas the limited subject has no choice but to remain in *saṃsāra* eternally due to the very specifics of its status. Accordingly, the invalidation of false egoity, from the Pratyabhijñā's perspective, does not lead to the dissolution of a false ego of a particular limited subject or all of them at once but rather to the realization of the true ontological status of all egos taken together, i.e., to the dispelling of ignorance about them. And that is not surprising because it is impossible to literally attribute an ego to the limited subject, incapable of either knowing or acting, in order to then raise the question of the possibility of its elimination. On the other hand, if such a possibility

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<sup>152</sup> ŚD I.36–37ab. In his commentary on this fragment, Utpaladeva drew attention to the fact that good and evil are manifestations of *niyati śakti*, which Abhinavagupta later called the source of the fabricated causality.

<sup>153</sup> Mishra K. Kashmir Śaivism... p. 169.

<sup>154</sup> Sharma L.N. Kashmir Śaivism. Varanasi, 1972, p. 242.

<sup>155</sup> Provided, of course, we do not consider ontological truth a moral characteristic.

existed, it would be theoretically possible to allow for the liberation of all individuals, given that the limited subject is, in any case, a universal, particularized not by one but by a multitude of egos — but that would be a contradiction in terms since bondage is a necessary condition for liberation, and if were to disappear as a phenomenon, it would be impossible to raise the question of liberation either. That is why Abhinavagupta says that complete liberation is nothing more than a clear awareness of the status of the limited subject as both bound and identical to Śiva.<sup>156</sup> For his part, Utpaladeva directly characterizes Śiva as forever bound, eternally liberated, and yet remaining beyond *saṃsāra* and *mokṣa*.<sup>157</sup> That is essentially the very identity of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* that Tantrists like to talk about.

Now, it remains only to clarify the last point, which complicates the understanding of the ontology of the limited subject. The fact is that throughout this study, we have talked about it quite abstractly, whereas Kashmir Shaivism distinguishes seven statuses of the universal subject, some of which are considered the limited subject and some are not. We are primarily interested here in his very specific status, which is located strictly in the middle of this hierarchy, which Utpaladeva characterizes as both liberated and limited. It is called *vidyeśvara* or *mantra* and belongs to the level of *śuddhavidyā tattva*.<sup>158</sup> The abovementioned seventh verse of the first chapter of the third section of the *karika* can also be interpreted as a description of the peculiarities of its perception — unlike the third, fourth, and fifth verses of the same chapter, describing *śuddhavidyā śakti*, not *śuddhavidyā tattva*, as is sometimes believed.<sup>159</sup> The fact is that a perfect balance between I-ness and thisness, described in these verses, is already being broken at a lower level of *vidyeśvara*, and it becomes impossible to say that the subject in this status is aware of their common substratum. Otherwise put, the three higher statuses of the subject express stable liberation, the three lower ones express stable ignorance, and the *vidyeśvara* level expresses irrevocable but still unstable liberation. And this instability is related precisely to the fact that the subject in this status retains the illusory limitation.<sup>160</sup> Why is it important to draw attention to it? Because the notion of the limited subject applies to it as well, but it, unlike the limited subject in a stricter sense of the term, is capable of perceiving as the universal subject.

Given all that, it should be clear that even though it cannot be said that the limited subject is capable of perceiving as such, the very notion of the latter is broad enough to create such a false impression. It is especially reinforced when reading the *Spandakārikā* and its commentaries since this treatise focuses more on yogic practice than ontology. Thus, in the commentaries to the *Spandakārikā*, it is explained that the latter is meant primarily for the so-called partially enlightened (*prabuddha*) yogis to help them gain the status of fully enlightened (*suprabuddha*).<sup>161</sup> Obviously, a yogin, especially if he is only partially enlightened, is difficult to characterize otherwise than as a limited subject, and this, apparently, explains why the *Spandakārikā* often describes the situation to

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<sup>156</sup> See TS VIII.

<sup>157</sup> SSĀ 2.17.

<sup>158</sup> See ĪPK III 2.9.

<sup>159</sup> See ĪPK III 1.3–5.

<sup>160</sup> However, insofar as Kashmir Shaivism allows the possibility of preserving a physical body even at the three highest levels of subjectivity, there is a reason to believe that this illusion manifests itself in an extremely weak form even there. Such an interpretation is not commonly accepted, though.

<sup>161</sup> See, e.g., SpNi ad SK 17. However, fully enlightened yogins are also sometimes called *prabuddha* because this term literally means enlightened, pure and simple.

the effect that he must perceive or realize something. However, it is not so simple, and that should not become a reason for falling into the delusion that Kashmir Shaivism allegedly acknowledges the ability of the limited subject to cognize something. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Vidyācakravartin, the commentator of a late Pratyabhijñā treatise called *Virūpākṣapañcāśikā* (11 or 12<sup>th</sup> century), explicitly equates the almost enlightened yogin with the status of *vidyeśvara*.<sup>162</sup> Unfortunately, he does not refer to the *Spandakārikā* in that fragment, but there is a reason to believe that this almost enlightened yogin and the partially enlightened yogin of the Spanda doctrine are one and the same.<sup>163</sup> And if that is the case, it becomes clear why this treatise appeals specifically to the limited subject: the point here is not that it allegedly must destroy its ego in order to liberate itself from *saṃsāra* but that the universal subject in the form of an almost enlightened yogin has to invalidate, i.e., expose, self-imposed egos in order to recognize himself in the limited subject in a stricter sense of the term, which is by definition doomed to remain bound.

Accordingly, given that, on the one hand, false egos constitute a multitude related to various bodies and minds and, like them, are included in the external universe, and, on the other, the limited subject is a universal to which all this multiplicity is erroneously attributed, the invalidation of false egos will consist in recognizing the primordial identity of oneself with this limited subject. It goes without saying that this can occur only provided the latter is recognized as a universal — otherwise, the emphasis will fall on its particularization, and one will move in the opposite direction. On the other hand, even though this particularization presupposes completely real substrates, this does not mean at all that those elements qua which the limited subject ostensibly cognizes and acts are capable of acting independently, whether as specific objects or some common substance separate from consciousness. This function is necessarily performed by *māyā śakti*, which is also responsible for concealing this fact by the very production of false egos. It follows from all this that the invalidation of the latter does not imply the destruction of the world of everyday practical life but, on the contrary, does not disrupt its functioning in any substantial way. All because the universal subject simply features in the Pratyabhijñā ontology in several interrelated statuses at once: in the status of subjects liberated as a result of self-recognition, in the role of eternally bound beings, and as transcendent to all of them. Therefore, when a liberated subject loses their physical body, they also acquire a status beyond bondage and liberation.

## XII. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is appropriate to summarize the main tenets of the Pratyabhijñā ontology touched upon in this study without further explanation and then evaluate the role of the notions of the internal and the external in its systematization. So, the absolutely independent, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and eternal universal subject who is identical to consciousness and is the only reality permanently conducts the fivefold act, one of the aspects of which is false self-concealment in order to recognize oneself in the limited subject. The achievement of this goal

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<sup>162</sup> See VAPV ad VAP 41.

<sup>163</sup> The primary sources of this classification of the stages of enlightenment are *Svacchanda Tantra* and *Malinivijayottara Tantra*. See Goudriaan T. The Stages of Awakening in the Svacchanda-Tantra. Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantrism: Studies in Honor of André Padoux, ed. by Teun Goudriaan. Albany, 1992, pp. 193–173.

involves several basic conditions. Firstly, he has to create a universe within himself and out of himself in the form of the most general universals, i.e., *tattvas*. Then, lower-order universals and specific individual substances have to be created. All of them, however, must be differentiated from each other already within consciousness. Nevertheless, all that is still enough neither for self-concealment nor self-recognition since objects are unfit for self-recognition in principle and unfit for self-concealment due to the fact that they remain identical to consciousness. Accordingly, they need to be rendered externally manifest as they appear inside. For this to become possible, it is necessary to first create the limited subject in the form of a perceivable universal within consciousness through which this rendering will occur. However, it will necessarily be located at a slightly lower ontological level than objects that are identical to consciousness. Then, *apohana śakti* comes into play, which is aimed at separating ready-made objects from each other and from both the limited and universal subjects. The result of this process is *vikalpas*, i.e., cognitions, which, however, should be primarily understood in the ontological sense, given that among their objects, there are bodies, minds, mental phenomena, and even emptiness. All these objects constitute a unitary causal continuum, acting in the form of *māyā śakti* of the universal subject, one of the aspects of which is *apohana śakti*. That is so because the external status of an object is a condition for the possibility of its performing a particular causal function. And given that everyday practical activity also requires the external universe, it can be said that it comes down to this very causal continuum, which Abhinavagupta called the fabricated causality.

However, in these circumstances, it can no longer be said that practical activity is what the limited subject does. It can only be what it is undergoing. But still, it must be involved in it because otherwise, this activity would not be able to serve the purpose of false self-concealment of the universal subject. Accordingly, the latter adds an epistemological dimension to this causal continuum, additionally considering ontologically understood cognitions as epistemological and attributing them to the limited subject. All that, however, does not mean that it acquires the ability to cognize independently, even if erroneously. The only thing that can be said in this regard is that such external objects as bodies and minds can serve as a locus of false subjectivity, whereas, say, stones and trees cannot, and it is they that are transformed into the limited subject, producing its particularization through false egos produced by the same *māyā śakti*. In this way, the goal of self-concealment is finally achieved since, on the one hand, the nature of the limited subject as a universal identical to the universal subject is eclipsed, and, on the other, any body or mind begins to be considered as a subject. And given that the subject remains the same despite all these activities, it eventually turns out that the universal subject himself is erroneously identified with all bodies, minds, etc. Besides, the fact that all these objective substrates virtually act within a unitary causal continuum in the form of *māyā śakti* is also obscured, and the impression is created that they are all capable of acting independently or, at least, as manifestations of some substance, allegedly separate from consciousness.

Even so, the universal subject continues to be aware of himself even in the process of false self-concealment, which is a condition for the possibility of recognizing himself in the limited subject. It presupposes the rehabilitation of the latter as a universal, to which false egos correlated with objective substrates acting as *māyā śakti* are mistakingly attributed. It implies a clear awareness of the fact that it is capable neither of acting nor cognizing in any form independently, and egos are nothing more than appearances that it thinks it is capable of doing that. This task is

facilitated by the fact that all these appearances will necessarily relate to one and the same limited subject while having claims about plurality and difference, which will expose all their artificiality and falsity. Nevertheless, such exposure of false egos will not mean the cessation of everyday practical life, even given that they are necessarily exposed all at once. That is so because, firstly, practical life is merely a false adjunct to the actual cosmogonic process, secondly, if false self-concealment, i.e., self-imposed bondage, were not brought about, the universal subject would become incapable of self-recognition, i.e., liberation, as well, and, thirdly, the only one who is capable of perceiving everyday practical life is, again, the universal subject. From all this, it should also be clear why any object appearing within him must also be rendered externally manifest: this is so simply because the creation and perception of objects internally and externally is a one and the same process, purposefully performed and differently perceived by the universal subject. Still, that does not mean that the very objectness of an object depends on its external status: the latter is merely a teleological, not ontological, necessity. That is why the Pratyabhijñā claims that any external object must preserve its internal status.

Even from this brief overview, it becomes obvious that the notions of the internal and the external play a key role in the systematization of the Pratyabhijñā's ontology. They define not only its structure itself but also the meaning of other terms utilized by it, including such basic ones as "*prakāśa*" and "*vimarśa*". Moreover, these are not just spatial metaphors but notions that establish the conditions for the possibility of certain ontological phenomena. Thus, in particular, the opposition of the internal and the external fully corresponds in the Pratyabhijñā to the opposition of *nirvikalpa* and *vikalpa*, which allows, on the one hand, to emphasize the fact of the generation of *savikalpa jñāna* by *nirvikalpa jñāna* and, on the other, to demonstrate that the performance of causal functions that are peculiar to objects can occur only at the *vikalpa* level and, moreover, to reduce the everyday practical life of the limited subject to a unitary fabricated causal continuum. In this way, the identity-in-difference of the internal and the external constitutes the basis of Utpaladeva's doctrine of unity-in-diversity, which virtually makes the notions under consideration equivalent to truth and falsity, respectively.

It may be somewhat confusing here that the Pratyabhijñā aims to explain the everyday practical life of the limited subject as a permanent and actual manifestation of the various powers of the universal subject but, at the same time, practically reduces it to a unitary causal continuum, thereby ignoring, to put it in terms of German idealism, the difference between the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of spirit. But there is nothing surprising in that: in the doctrine of self-recognition, there is neither a philosophy of nature, nor a philosophy of spirit, nor the very distinction between natural and artificial, but there is only the philosophy of a single subject performing absolutely all activities. Accordingly, the act of false self-concealment cannot be reduced to a mere philosophy of spirit, even given that it is not responsible for creating the universe. As for the fact that Utpaladeva decided to specifically distinguish the external universe, it is simply the peculiarity of what we have called his nondualistic quasi-panentheism. All that, however, allowed the Pratyabhijñā to undertake the only successful attempt in world philosophy to confine causality within consciousness. Thus, Advaita Vedānta failed in this regard due to the necessity of admitting an additional illusory substance, Berkeley failed due to the necessity of admitting God, Vijñānavāda failed due to the inability to explain the apparent diversity of objects, Schopenhauer failed due to his virtual refusal to explain this diversity while hiding behind the transcendental

method, and other post-Kantian idealists failed due to the very necessity of positing a consciousness-external thing-in-itself — provided, of course, that the latter indeed tried to do that in the first place. Only the acknowledgment of the omnipotence and absolute independence of consciousness can solve this problem, which, however, does not make the Pratyabhijñā doctrine a kind of idealism.

### Abbreviations

APS	<i>Ajaḍapramāṭṛsiddhi</i> of Utpaladeva
BP	<i>Bodhapañcadaśikā</i> of Abhinavagupta
ĪPK	<i>Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā</i> of Utpaladeva
ĪPKVṛ	<i>Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikāvṛtti</i> of Utpaladeva
ĪPV	<i>Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī</i> of Abhinavagupta
PH	<i>Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam</i> of Kṣemarāja
PS	<i>Paramārthasāra</i> of Abhinavagupta
PSVi	<i>Paramārthasāravivṛti</i> of Yogarāja
ŚD	<i>Śivadṛṣṭi</i> of Somananda
ŚDVṛ	<i>Śivadṛṣṭivṛtti</i> of Utpaladeva
SSĀ	<i>Śivastotrāvalī</i> of Utpaladeva
SK	<i>Spandakārikā</i> of Vasugupta (Bhaṭṭa Kallaṭa?)
SKVi	<i>Spandakārikāvivṛti</i> of Rājānaka Rāma
SpNi	<i>Spandanirṇaya</i> of Kṣemarāja
TS	<i>Tantrasāra</i> of Abhinavagupta
VAP	<i>Virūpākṣapañcāśikā</i> of Virūpākṣa
VAPV	<i>Virūpākṣapañcāśikāvivṛti</i> of Vidyācakravartin

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