6.0. **Play of consciousness: cidvilāsa**

The knowable (*prameya*) is known by the knower through the knowledge. A thing perceived cannot exist independent of consciousness (of the perceiver), because the thing sensed itself is based on consciousness. So, the whole universe is filled with consciousness.

ālambya sahvidāṁ yasmāt samvedyāṁ na svabhāvatāh/
tasmāt sahviditaṁ sarvamīti saṁvinmayo bhavet//

"Because a thing sensed is itself based on consciousness and because it cannot be said to exist as sensed independently of that consciousness, the whole (knowable, *prameya*) is the object of that consciousness. Thus one should realize one's identity with consciousness."

The knowable, the knower, and the knowledge, collectively are the manifestations of consciousness. So, the universe appears within the field of the Universal consciousness.

The outburst of a shower of sparks propels a rocket. Similarly, the effulgence of consciousness makes us conceive of any *prameya*. *Prameya* is not away from, or independent of, the *pramātā*. When we see, hear, touch or smell anything, on the background of all our experiences, there is the presence of consciousness. It is the sine-qua-non of all *prameyas*, *pramātā* or *pramā*. The shooting of an arrow is nothing but the pulling of the string on its blow. Likewise, a *prameya* is nothing but the reflection of consciousness: *kenesitam patati presitaṁ manah*": "By whom missioned falls the mind shot to its mark" – translates Sri Aurobindo.
Consciousness emits a sort of light by dint of which something becomes visible. The rays emitted from a candle is nothing but the transformation of the wax. Similarly, each avabhāsana or appearance is nothing but the light of Consciousness. If water is sprinkled constantly on the plants in a garden throughout the night, the brightness of green colour dazzles on the leaves of those plants in the morning. Such dazzling green colour reveals nothing but ‘water’, which is transformed to the greenery, the grossest form, called ‘earth’. Thus, earth is the gross form of water. Similarly fire is the essence of water and air is the transformation of fire. Ultimately these lead to Consciousness which flashes as the ultimate reality. Therefore, the first aphorism of the Śivasūtras, the basic work of Kashmir Saivism, declares:—“Caitanyamātmā”.

“Every appearance bespeaks Consciousness.”

Ātmā not only refers to the self; but Ātmā also connotes the nature of Reality. This has been very aptly explained by Kṣemarāja:

“Every appearance owes its existence to the light of Consciousness. Nothing can ever have its own being without the light of Consciousness. The nature of the entire universe consisting of both existent objects or nonexistent but imagined objects, is Consciousness”.

Abhinavagupta in Paryantapañcāsikā composes the same truth of prameya:

_tadevaṁ bhairavaṁ jñānam ajñānamapi yanmayam/
saivāsau bhairavī sattā asattāpi ca yanmayū/₃

The constituents of all things, even the ignorance and the nonexistent, is not away from knowledge. There is one homogeneous existence present within the constitution of everything, which embraces knowledge to hold them all. Utpalācārya says exactly the same thing:
"Worldly affairs cannot be possible without the unification of cognitions. Their unification is due to their oneness with the light of consciousness. And that is the one subject-perceiver."

Sri Abhinavagupta substantiates such description of the nature of prameya in the following manner. "A thing can appear due to the light of Consciousness. prakāśa eva arthasya ātmā yaḥ prakāśaḥ sa sarvasya prākāśatvam prayacchati."

The appearing (avahhasana) is itself this Light which bestows on all things their manifest nature. So, light is the nature of phenomena. It is the self-showing luminosity that constitutes the essence and ultimate identity of phenomena. Nothing is outside the gamut of consciousness. "acetitasya kasyāpi satvahāvai".

Every prameya, each action, thought, sorrow, stress, loss, gain, absence or presence, anxiety, tension and perception or perplexity, the gamut of the whole experience or the universe, is a play of Consciousness: cid-vilāsa. So sings Bhattakallata. "In the word, object and thought, there is no such state which is not Śiva. The enjoyer in the form of enjoyable, resides ever everywhere". "tena sabdārthacintāsu na sāvasthā na yaḥ sивah bhoktaiva bhogya-rūpena sadā sarvatra samsthitah."

Since the enjoyable is the enjoyer, the prameya becomes here the pramātā. Upāya is not the upāya, but upeya is the upāya (upāye nāgrahah kāryah upeyā bhairavāṣthitiḥ). When pramātā is targeted as the prameya, then the prameya is dissolved. In the next moment, the pramātā is transferred to prama. When the means of such prama is traced, the prama is also lost. What remains is only the means of knowledge which is aptly
compared with light. Finally we find only that existence of light which is pervaded in all.” The illuminator (prakāśaka), the illuminated universe and the illumination (prakāśa) which illumines it, i.e. the Universe, light and self are one”. The group of subjects, the various means of knowledge, the multiple kinds of knowledge and the objects of knowledge -- all this is Consciousness alone. "prakāsyate’nena prameyajätamiti prakāsah pramanām”.

Since there remains no distinction between the prameya, pramātā and pramā in the highest reality of this system, there shines only one reality -- self-consciousness--cid-vilāsa i.e. the dance of Śiva is filled everywhere. Further details of “Dance of Śiva” are dealt in the Section “Prakāśa and Vimārsa” (6.2).

6.1. The equation of the prameya and the pramātā

A beautiful equation of the prameya with regard to the pramātā has been developed in Kashmir Saivism. Prameya and pramātā are frequently termed as ‘this’ (idam) and ‘I’ (aham), grāhya and grāhaka, vedya and vedaka, bhogya and bhoktā and so on. The object of knowledge is “what to know”. It includes everything: from earth to heaven, real to imagined, stone to divine and existent to non-existent. Everything is to be known. Nothing should be excluded from the ken of knowledge. The question, “what is to know” includes “what not to know”. Within the purview of knowledge, the Tantries include all, even that which is excluded from knowledge. It is because, the knower ought to know what remains outside the purview of knowledge, i.e. Knowledge includes what not to be known. The knower should know which is non-existent-
But by knowing all, by getting all, nothing is gained and the thirst of the mind is not quenched. Sw Yukteswara Giri warns his desciple, Mukunda, “Suppose you obtained mastery over all the worlds, you acquired everything. Still your heart shall not be satisfied.”

The mind will again be disturbed, because all the objective realm is only a very fragmental aspect of the soul. Prakṛti may be controlled, but the soul is much above the nature. The Saivites of Kashmir not only cross over the realms of the duality, but they ascend seven plains of existence -- the seven prameyas and seven pramātās – in order to arrive at the last prameya, the final state, getting which nothing more remains to know. So, they explain the process and the mechanism of how the objective world is separated from the subjective entity while giving a very good equation of the prameya and the pramātā. For them, the object (prameya) lies within the subject (pramātā). The difference is seen by a lay man, not by a Yogi, who sees them in a perfect unity, in a non-dual state:

\[ \text{grāhyagrāhakasamvitti sūmanya sarvadehinām/} \\
\text{yoginām tu viśeṣo 'yam saṁvandehe sāvadhanatā/}^{16} \]

6.2. **The seven levels of prameya and pramātā**

Prameya, the object of knowledge depends on the pramātā, the perceiver. As the sphere of the awareness of the perceiver expands, the nature and the number of the prameya he experiences increases “anurūpagrāhyagrāhakabhīdāt”. “Science teaches us for example, in some animals there is no specialized sense organs but when stimulus is
often given to a particular part of a body, that part gets specially sensitive to it and a particular organ is developed." Man from birth is not aware of many things. His sense organs are constantly trained to perceive many many things, like different sounds of a language or music, pulsation of heart beat, as the medical students are trained to observe by their ear or eyes through a microscope or stetho. Similarly, the range of human experience expands so rapidly by stimulating and relaxing a part of one’s body, and also by the techniques of maintaining the awareness of the perceiver on a particular point, that the whole universe is felt to be really wonderful. He could ascend to the level of a superman. The recent research on foundations of Parapsychology reveals the limitations of material sciences which study the cosmology, micromolecules and the cell organells etc. It declares: “careful consideration of these pervasive historical themes broadens our horizons, by deeply accepting the idea that virtually all of our present-day assumptions and theories will be discarded later, as they are shown to be either mistaken, misleading or severely limited, we become more open to new (really new) data, assumptions and conceptualizations”.

The prameya for a Kashmir Saivite, therefore, is many fold (tannānā). It differs according to the difference of the planes of the pramātā. There can be infinite number and quality of pramātās. So also correspondingly there are infinite number and quality of the prameyas. A key to open all the infinite prameya, pramātā and pramā etc., has not been out of the reach of the Saivites. They ascend to the highest ultimate reality, where they discard the difference of the knower, the knowable, the knowledge and the means of knowledge. The Universe is not different from the highest state which is known as ParamaŚiva. He is both the
means and the end, immanent and emanent. However, for practical purposes, the Universe is explained in thirty six principles. These are graded into seven planes of prameyas and correspondingly their seven planes of pramatās. Broadly these are of three kinds: (1) Impure, lying in difference (2) Impure-cum-pure, lying in difference-cum-Universal and (3) pure, lying in Universal state. These pramatās are (1) Sakala (2) Pralayākala (3) Vijnānākala (4) Mantra (5) Mantramehāvara (6) Mantramahēvara and (7) Śiva pramatā. These have been described in almost all works of Kashmir Saivism in a descending order i.e. from Śiva to earth. A great Saint of 20th Century, Sw. Laksman Jee explains them in an ascending order, from sakala to Śiva, from earth to the highest. The first one is sakala, an impure creation.

6.2.1. Impure creation: sakala

In the ordinary mode of perception, a common man while perceiving any object, say a jar, becomes aware of that ‘jar’ only. He is not aware of his own awareness who perceives the jar and who is present throughout his perception and behind his perception. So, the prameya here is the ‘object’ only. The subjective state is merged in the objective state and a complete objective state is perceived.

The prameya he knows includes all (sakala), starting from earth to the nature (prakṛti) including the twenty five realities i.e. all the dualities and differences. It is bound by senses and cause effect relation. These objects activate the thought-constructs of the perceiver who becomes stained with the good and evil deeds by the attachment and hatred. He (the pramatā) is under the influence of indiscrimination for which the pramatā accrues intense misery by the prameyas.
If the attention of the pramātā is turned back from the object and is fixed on the source of his perception, i.e., on the awareness of the perceiver, then the perceiver perceives his subjective awareness only. Here the perceiver is aware of himself as the perceiver where the objective element is lost sight of and the perceiver only remains. But the perception of the difference is so innate that such subjective awareness he experiences, is not the pure subjective awareness. It is not completely away from objectivity; because, it supposes the object on its background as the counterpart of his subjective awareness. It is common that when a person thinks of the awareness of the perceiver, the perceived is also found to be existing in the background of his perception though not vividly, yet it is there. So this state is called Sākala, “the state of prameya, the state of the object of perception”.

6.2.2. State of void: pralayākala

When the first state of the impure subjective awareness is crossed over, then the perceiver finds only void—a void like that which is observed at the time of comatose (mūrcchā) state. It is like deep sleep devoid of dream. This prameya is a void, because there exists neither the object nor the subject, but a complete negation of the world of which the perceiver is not aware of. The perceiver is named 'sūnya-pramātā or pralayākala-pramāta, because all the objects and the subjects are dissolved here. The perceiver loses his self-awareness and he does not experience his state of this voidness even. He loses his consciousness and knows nothing. Though the pramātā is now devoid of the kārmamala, a limitation of activity, yet, he is bound with the limitations of māyā (i.e. difference) and limitations of consciousness called māyīya and ānava impurities.
6.2.3. Pure and impure creation: vijñānakāla

If one does not lose his consciousness in the state of pralayākāla but knows his being presence and simultaneously remains aware of that state of void, then the prameya he experiences belongs to Vijnānakāla-pramātā. He loses here his activity (kartrtvā) and not aware of his free will, so he is away from his real nature. This pramātā sometimes knows that awareness which is void, called inactive awareness and some other times though his awareness is active, he is not aware of his active awareness. Hence, he is unaware (akala) of his consciousness (vijñāna). For this reason, the percipient is called vijñānakāla. He resides on the state of mahāmāyā. It is a semi-tattva. It veils the freedom of the pramātā. It does not allow to be aware of his free will. So he is away from his nature. Such limitation is due to the presence of the ānavamala. The percipient has a clear knowledge (suddhaprakāśa) but he is devoid of pure, full I-consciousness. He also experiences all the pralayākalas and the sakalas. The prameyas are (1) neither experienced as different from him (since there is no limitation of māya) nor (2) they create any impressions on the pramātā due to the lack of the limitation in action (kārmamala). Still the pramātā remains in a limited consciousness (with ānavamala). He is in the state of a co-relation between the limited and universal experience.

The three pramātas from sakala to vijñānakal come under a lower state, called the state of ‘Impure’ and ‘Pure-impure’ creations respectively.
6.2.4. The prameyas of the pure creations

Before considering the prameyas of the pure creations, a difference between the three, i.e. pure, impure and pure-impure creations must be drawn. The impure tattvas, consisting of twenty five in number “is the limit of the Vedāntin’s understanding”. They say, “there are only twenty five tattvas. Yet in Saivism nothing as yet has happened. All of these tattvas exist in the field of māyā, in the field of objectivity” writes Sw. L. Jee. The pure prameyas i.e. the experient’s experience of the pure objects are not objective, as these objects are neither limited nor in difference. These are Universal, ideal having no time, space and difference. The pramātā is free of all the three malas (limitations): (1) ānava which is a limitation in consciousness (2) māyīya, a limitation in knowledge and kārmā, a limitation in action. So they have supersensuous experiences. These have been compared with the supersensuous creations as the Nayayikas believe in the earthly, the watery, the airy, the fiery and the ethereal beings and classify them according to any one of the five elements as the chief constituent of their bodies. The pramātās of the pure creations are (1) Mantra (2) Mantrēśvara (3) Mantramaheśvara and (4) Śiva pramātā.

Mantrapramātā

The knower (pramātā) is called mantra, when by contemplation (manana), he is protected (trāyate) from the duality. “At this level the puruṣa actually realizes his own svātantra, the real self. The nature of such experience is, “I am Śiva, this Universe is in duality. This Universe is unreal, I am Śiva” Here, the experincer (aham) and the experienced ideal Universe (idam) become equiposed (aham-aham, idam-idam).
Both the subjective and the objective aspects share an equal status in the two fold awareness: “I am this” and “this is me”. It is full of bliss, full of consciousness, full of independence (will), full of knowledge and full of action. The pramātā experiences himself as the whole Universe and the whole Universe as himself. Such experience is not permanent. It comes and goes. Sometimes the prameya he experience is “aham-aham”, “I am everywhere”; some other times, when his consciousness is damaged a little, he experiences “idam-idam”. The Universe is felt false, unreal. Such experience is both limited and Universal. Though the objective reality (idam) is separated from the subject (aham), yet both are the parts of one self. The experience is not held on two different bases (adhikarana), but on a single base. The emphasis is on both the sides: object and subject (samanādhikarana). It is a synthesis (samgamana) of both the object and subject: “the world is” and “I am” (‘I’ and ‘this’: “idam ca aham ca”). It is a pure, spiritual ideation without objective manifestation. It is identity within difference. The experience is pure (śuddhavidyā). Since this experience does not last long, it becomes temporal. It is neither stable nor certain. So the puruṣa has to rise towards the more certain prameya, the purer knowledge.

6.2.5. The prameya of the mantresvarapramātā

Once the pure, Universal prameya is perceived, the perceiver automatically moves upwards in mastering the total perception, from pure to purer and then from purer to the purest. The process of being established and confirmed in the perception of the totality takes now three more steps for the three pramātās. The first is the mantreśvara, who experiences on the level of manifestation called Ṣvara-tattva.
The pramātā experiences the purer subjective prameya at this level as “This Universe is my own expansion. This Universe is not an illusion, it is my own expansion”\(^\text{29}\). The experience of the prameya or paramārśa is symbolically said “idam-aham” i.e. the Universe as his own expansion. The pramātā unites the state of Universe with the state of his own consciousness. Therefore it is a predominance of “this” (object) over the self consciousness (I). He becomes the master (Īśvara) of the previous pramātā (mantra). His experience takes the shape of “This-I am”. The Universe is not now false but it turns now to be the expansion of his self, as true as he himself. It is more stable. Consciousness is identified with the Universe as unmanifested ‘Idam’. ‘Idam’ is subjectified by consciousness. Consciousness is subjectified as it were, as a point (for Īśvaratattva is said “bindu”). Therefore, the “object” is dominated over the subject which has still not completely manifested. Manifestation of consciousness is still required. It is not the purest. Here the power of knowledge is dominant.

6.2.6. The prameya of the mantramāheśvara

The next state of manifestation is called Sadasiva level. Here the subjective experience progresses to dominate the objective experience, encapsulated in the form of an ideal Universe. The total experience is “I-this” i.e. “I myself am this whole Universe, Oh myself, I am this whole Universe”\(^\text{30}\). It is symbolized as “aham-idam”. It is the last state of the Universe to be merged with the absolute consciousness. So it is just a faint trace of objectivity appeared in the pervasive undivided consciousness of Śiva and Śakti. The prameya “I am this” is an experience of the
identity of the consciousness with the Universe \((\text{Viśvata}dāmya)\). It is more solid, more valid and confirmed. The pramatā becomes omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. Yet there is the predominance of consciousness (I-ness) over the ideal Universe (this-ness). So it is not the final enlightenment.

6.2.7. **Śiva as the pramatā and prameya**

The last state of prameya is Śiva and the perceiver also becomes no other than Śiva. Both his subjective and objective realities are equipossed. There is nothing outside Śiva. The perception is the Universal I. This-ness is gone. Prameya is dissolved in His I-ness. This is the state of perfection, the Supreme anāśrita-Śiva who can descend and rise at his will, whereas an individual cannot.

6.3. **A dance of Śiva: light and delight (prakāśa and vimarśa)**

While considering “what to know” in the context of the prameya in the first Section (6.1), it is observed that the whole Universe is a play of consciousness where the three, i.e. the illuminated Universe, the illuminator and the illuminating light are One. Now, it is considered “Why one should know”. The question “what to know”, which implied the nature of the prameya, reveals that one should know all, even the knower. It is because the knower and the known are one. Now, the question “Why should we know” also forwards the same answer: the knower and the known are one, i.e. a state of non-duality. The prameya, therefore not only concerns ‘what to know’ but “why one should know”.

The question “why one should know at all” is not concerned with the purpose of knowing; but it concerns the intrinsic nature of knowing, i.e., “what the cause of knowing is”. Saivite’s speciality lies not only in answering this question but also in upholding the entire system as the description of the nature of knowing. It may be called “knowledge diffusion” or “knowledge matrix” with the help of which the cause of knowledge is explained.

“One should know”; because it is the intrinsic nature of consciousness. It is inborn in the subject. A conscious being (cetana) is one who conscires or thinks, i.e., who has consciousness (cetana). But caitanya is he who is absolutely free to know. Caitanya does not mean consciousness (cetana) but the word has a suffix “syan”, which speaks of a power. It connotes absolute power or freedom to know. So caitanya is not only self-illuminating but it is also self-manifesting: prakāśa and vimarsa, light and delight. When consciousness is identified with light, that light is not like the rays of the sun, moon or lamp.

Consciousness not only illumines things, but it is the source or mother of all things, “caitanyamātmā”. This is the speciality of Kashmir Saivism. “That in which all this creation is established and from whence it arises is nowhere obstructed”. This reminds us the tatastha definition of Brahman given by the Advaita Vedantin. But the Saivite maintains that had consciousness only one aspect, i.e. the self-illumination aspect (prakāśa) without the power of self-manifestation (vimarsa) then the ultimate reality, namely Śiva, would have been inert like a pot and would have lost His sovereignty. “To know” is the special nature of consciousness. It is called “will” as the Upanisads declare “tadaiksata”. This ‘will’ is the freedom to exhibit His bliss. It has the freedom to cre-
ate, to manifest outside and inside what lies within—as an artist does (kalaslaghyaya sūline).

The mechanism of knowing or experiencing is in the form “I am this” (Universe)³³. This experience is undivided, timeless, spaceless and Universal. It is the nature (ātmā) of all beings and things. This is the power—a desire which creates a temporary difference between “I-ness” and “this-ness” without making them completely separate. It makes as if a vibration (abhisandana) to differentiate the prameya and pramātā.

“The ‘I’ side of experience is that in which the self rests in the light of one’s own self without looking towards another. The ‘this’ side of experience is that where the object becomes the self appearing as nonself to itself”³⁸. The self-illumination and the self - manifestation (ātmaprakāśana and ātmavimarsana) which were perfectly blended into a complete whole, are as if separated (abhinnapi bhinnamiva)³⁹ from each other. A distinction between the prameya and the pramātā is made due to this power to know. One aham is now bifurcated into two ahams: subject-aham and object-aham.

This phase is termed with many words, like aham-vimarśa, akrtrima aham visphuranam, prtyavamarśa, parāmarśa, spanda, ēkṣaṇa, unmukha, etc.
It may be compared with one seed sprouting into two leaves. Not only consciousness but also manifestation is the nature of reality (caitanyamātmā). Knowledge and action are not different: anyonyāviyukte jñānakarmaṇī. Knowing, reflecting or manifesting is the action. It constantly continues. This is called Vimarśa which is pure knowledge and action.

\[
\text{sa eva vimrśatvena niyatena maheśvaraḥ} \\
\text{vimarśa eva devasya śuddhe jñānakriye yataḥ}
\]

6.3.1. Cidānanda

The existence aspect or 'sat' of 'cit' is not counted as a separate aspect, because existence is implicit in consciousness. Consciousness being the essential reality of ourselves and all other qualities being non existent, manifestation or the matter of happiness obviously refers to consciousness alone. It is this reflective aspect of consciousness which is felt as bliss or ānanda. Ānanda is not away from consciousness. It is the heart, freedom, sovereignty, inseparable aspect of the Supreme Prameya- (anyonyāviyukte jñānakarmaṇī).

It is his own reality 'sva-svabhāva'. He is both free and conscious. "Reality is (as if) duality in nature... Exclusion of one leads to nihilism... Absolute is not predominance of Śiva or Śakti, but perfect identity. Prameya is sāmarasya, ekātma, abhinna and abheda. "abhede bhedanam bhedē ca abhedanam". prakāśa is vimarśa, light is delight.

'Aham-vimarśa' is not anuvyavasāya of Nyaya philosophy where the subject becomes the object of knowledge. Anuvyavasaya is the knowledge of knowledge viz., I know that I know. In vimarśa, the subject 'I'
does not become the object of knowledge; but the action of knowing is upheld. It happens before the phenomenon of knowledge occurs. It is called the ‘freedom’ of consciousness or the bliss aspect of consciousness. Here, the activity (karma) of knowing is bliss (ānanda) for which the Vivekananda Yogas propounded that karma-yoga is related with the ānandamaya kośa. The Taittiriyopanisad declares “ānandai khalu hi imāni bhūtāni jāyante...”. The word ānanda is always attached to the names of sanyasis in India, such as Cidananda, Śivananda and Satyananda. This shows that both the Advaitic systems, Vedanta and Tantra, fully agree with consciousness as bliss.

Ānanda or bliss is the expansion of consciousness (cīdsphūra) or flash of consciousness (camatkāra) which is the intrinsic nature of consciousness. Bliss as the vibration of consciousness is observable in nature also. The degree of bliss felt by a lower animal, say a snail, worm etc., is more than what the plants and stones feel and it slowly rises higher and higher in the higher animals like cows and monkeys and lastly it manifests itself in the highest degree at the level of human beings. At the level of human beings even the amount of manifestation of consciousness or bliss is not proportionate with the amount of material growth acquired by a king, a professor or a trader. It is not measured by how much one works nor by what one does; but it depends upon “how” the person works. By acquisition of more wealth, power or position, the degree of consciousness or bliss is not heightened, as the measure of an angle is not increased by the increase of the length of its lines. The consciousness of an individual may be compared with a molecule (anu) whose total circumference is 360°. This totality is not covered by enhancing the aim and objective lines of the accepted angle, i.e., not by increasing the
quantity (or the length) of his work. It increases by the extent of the 
repose of the accepted line, i.e. by the quality of his work. The increase 
of the length of the lines of an angle does not expand the angle. The 
multiplication of zeroes to one zero yields zero. The President may be 
hated and a worker may be loved. "So, what work we do is not impor-
tant but how we do it matters most... when done with the attitude of 
duty, the intensity of attachment is almost absent, unattached action starts 
and we become more happy and less miserable in our interactions". In 
this way the 'svatantrya' or freedom which is known as Bliss, is related 
to Karma Yoga. In each and every throb of will (bliss) there is action. In 
every throb and each spark of one's activity, the subject feels such de-
light (camatkāra) that during his wakefulness, dream or sleep, he abides 
in the rapturous bliss. Thus Kṣemārāja writes on the context of the five-
fold activities of the Lord in his Pratyabhijñāhrdayam that camatkāra is 
a synonim for vimarśa (camatkārāparaparyāyavimarśana). Since 
vimarśa or śakti is the nature of consciousness, so consciousness is noth-
ung but a radiation of bliss which flashes always even in dissolution 
(sanīhāra).

The Śaivites describe that the manifestation (avabhāsana) is itself 
the light which bestows on all things their delight or manifest nature. The 
manifestation of light is like the retrieval of a lost treasure, the do-
main of universal non-duality. The state of bliss in freeing one from ac-
cumulated multiplicity is like putting down a burden. "sarvādvaitapadasya vismṛtinidheḥ práptih prakāsodayah".

So the light of the prameya is not like the light of the sun, the 
moon or fire, nor the delight is like that of acquiring wealth, taking alco-
hol or cohabitation with a woman. But it is the delight - sings the saint
Abhinava-gupta, - which is now echoed in the writings of Aurovindo, Paramahansa Yogananda, Muktananda and all saints—as Love: "He constantly pulsates with bliss in the hearts of all".47

This pulsation of consciousness is nothing but the dance of Śiva reflected in each atom of the universe. The matter is like the power, Kāli (sākṣī) manifested on Śiva consciousness. The object is the consciousness embodied in solid matter48. As Kṣemarāja writes:- “The vibrating power of awareness (spanda-sākṣī) is the bliss which is the wonder of the one compact mass of 'I' consciousness embracing the endless cycles of creation and destruction. His true nature is the manifestation of the expansions and contraction of the perceiver and the perceived which represents the entire pure and impure creations".49

This is the consciousness (pratibhā) which manifests in a variety of forms of diverse objects. (tattpadārthakramarūṣita). It is infinite and changeless (akrama and ananta). He (that prameya) is Maheśvara.50

Thus "matter" is like the power Kāli (sākṣī) manifested on the substratum of Śiva consciousness.

6.4. Non-duality: jīva is Śiva

The goal is the recognition of 'jīva' as the Supreme being. The individual being appears to be a limited form of the Supreme consciousness due to the māyāsākṣī or veil of Śiva.51 Once it is removed, the soul becomes free and looks upon the knowable (meya or prameya i.e. the common objects of perception) as one with himself, whereas the bound (baddha jīva) sees it altogether apart from himself.

meyam sūdhāraṇam muktah svātmabhedena manyate/
maheśvaro yathā baddhaḥ punaratyantabhedavat/52
In the Spandakārikā, the individual soul is said omniform, “because with all bodies it assumes conceptual identity and it continues to create such conceptions (like the Lord)”\textsuperscript{33}. That very subject (pramāṇā) is the highest Lord, because of this ever existing vimarśa of free nature. The vimarśa is nothing but the sportive Lord’s transcendental power of knowledge and action”.

\textit{sa eva vimṛṣatvena niyatena maheśvarah /}
\textit{vimarśa eva devasya śuddhe jñāna- kriye yataḥ/\textsuperscript{34}}

This identity of the ātman with Śiva is recognized as the realization of one’s own self. So Utpalacārya says, “He, who realizes his identity with the universe (and universal self) and knows “all that exists is my glory, attains the highest Lordship even when his determinate cognitions (are also) arising, i.e. even when he is experiencing the determinate cognition and functioning in this world as a normal man”\textsuperscript{35}.

\textit{sarvo mamāyam vibhavartyevam pariṣṭānatah/}
\textit{visvātmano vikalpanāṃ prasare'pi maheśatāḥ/}

In this way the identity of the soul with the Supreme prameya is laid on all Śaiva scriptures. \textit{“ityadinā śivātivayorebheda eva uktat”\textsuperscript{36}}.

\textbf{6.5. Siddha: an accomplished fact}

“Consciousness is complete within itself and exists in all eternally. This entire world is the play of consciousness. For this reason, one does not have to undergo any kind of practice to attain the Supreme principle”\textsuperscript{37}. The reality is not created by some means. It is ever existing in a perfect state. It is not to be performed, but it is to be unveiled. Just as the wind disperses the clouds but does not create another blazing sun,
even so, the śādhanās have no ability of their own to reveal the wisdom of the self, because that principle is self-existent, perfect and always manifest*. Consciousness as the nature of self is siddha. No one can dispel it since it is uncovered,
caitanyamātmāna rūpam siddham jñāna-kriyātmakam/
tasya nāvratārūpata śīvatvam kena vāryate//

In the anupāya section it is explained how the absolute cannot be accomplished by any endeavor. “A lamp cannot reveal the sun”- is the famous line. The prameya is ever manifest, already perfect, not to be accomplished. So, it is siddha, no more it remains as a sādhyā, nothing can be added to it.

6.6. Five fold activity: pañcakṛtyakārītvam

“This is the distinction between the non-dualism of the Śaivism from the non-dualism of the Brahmavadins,” says Kṣemarāja, “that in the Highest Reality “Lord Śiva” continues performing the five fold activity.

These are (1) creation (2) preservation (3) destruction (4) limitation or concealing and (5) grace or act of revealing his nature.

Due to the power of freedom (svātantraśakti) Paramā Śiva always reverberates with the five divine attributes: cit, ānanda, icchā, jñāna and kriyā.

The five fold activity is the constant manifestation of His five powers: eternity (nitya), omnipresence (vyāpaka), perfection (pūrṇatva) omniscience and omnipotence. Tirodhāna or concealment is the state in
which the creation remains within Him in a potential form before it is created again. Bestowal of grace refers to the total absorption of the creation into universal consciousness, eliminating all impressions and all opportunities for subsequent remembrance.  

If the Lord does not perform any act, then what for is He endowed with His šakti? His activities like creation etc., confirm His eternal possession of šakti. This is the cardinal point that contemplation on the acts of consciousness, reveals the nature of consciousness. Once the nature of consciousness (Śiva) is revealed, it is nothing but liberation.

ata eva ye sada etat paśyanti te svarūpavikasamayaṁ viśvam jānaṁ jīvanmukta ityamnāta/ ye tu na tathā te sarvato vibhinnāṁ meyajātam paśyanto baddhatmānaṁ.

"Therefore, those who always ponder over this (five fold act of the Lord), knowing the universe as an unfoldment of the essential nature (of consciousness), become liberated in this very life. This is what the (sacred) tradition maintains. Those who do not ponder like this, seeing all objects of experience as essentially different, remain for-ever bound". 

In a wonderful way the scriptures describe the manner of creation made by consciousness. The creation of art by an artist is nothing but the expansion of consciousness. Similarly, when a conscious being is able to perceive anything, that perception is his creation. It is so because it is the consciousness becoming external while making objects appear so by dint of attention. When consciousness retains that perception, it is his maintenance. When consciousness makes another object appear at another point of space and time, it is His act of absorption (sāthhāra). The appearance of difference is His act of concealment (vilaya) and appearance of identity with consciousness is His act of grace.
Abhinavagupta writes the same thing in his Vivrtivimarśinī:

\[
\text{tena tena pramātṛa saha aikyaṁ śṛjyate, anyena pramātṛa aikyaṁ samhṛtiyate, ghatādimātrariṇe sthitiḥ kṛiyate, pūrṇasvarūpanimānāt tirobhāva adhiyate, tāvai ābhāse aikyāvabhāsanapūrṇatvāvitaranād anugraha kṛiyate}^66. \\
\]

Thus the Paryantāpancaśūkā reminds: “sarga sthapamsaṁhāranugrahānigrahakramāt/ pañčakṛtyāni kurvānaḥ śivo 'hamiti viśvaset//”^67.

Even in the state of His delimitation, He continues to exhibit these five activities in a limited sphere and form. To that extent, an individual’s essential Śiva-hood persists and it should help him to believe in his essential Śiva-hood

6.7. Trinity: The climax of Indian thought

Whether in the system of Śuddhādvaita or Śivādvaita, Indian mind concerns on the trinity: (1) The prosperity of the society, (2) The development of individual being and (3) the unfoldment of the divinity within the being. These are termed in the Gītā as the kṣarapurūsa, aksarapurūsa and puruṣottama. These three divisions of One Being concerns with the progress of the society (Marxism), humanity and spirituality. This is the puruṣottama cult, the trinity, which is the sine-qua-non of the teachings of all the masters: Satyānanda’s mantra, Śivānanda’s sangha, Muktananda’s Siddhayoga. Yogananda’s kriyā, Vivekananda’s Vedānta, Caitanya’s bhakti and Aurobindo’s integrity.

Paramāśiva in the Trika system flashes forth in three forms: as (1) para, the subtlest “kalā”, (2) paraṇa in subtle form and (3) aparā in the gross form.
The highest reality, *Paramāśiva* disunites himself as the three points of a triangle and He himself resides at the middle of the triangle in the form of *parāśītvā*. These three forms are the transformations of the three absolute divine powers viz., will, knowledge and action. These are jointly named as *Īṣikā*. The highest reality, Śiva is above the three *Īṣikās* for which It is termed as *parātrīśikā*. This is what we find from the commentary on the Supreme reality called *anuttara* given in the *Parātrīśikāvivarana*, the masterpiece of Abhinavagupta. The saint-philosopher here puts forward sixteen explanations of the Highest reality which enlighten us as the superb presentation of the great master.

6.8. *Anuttara*: Supreme reality

Śiva, as the ultimate reality, is very well represented in the concept of *anuttara*. The saint philosopher Abhinavagupta presents sixteen elucidations of *anuttara* in his superb work *Parātrīśikā*. Some of the elucidations can be considered as follows:-

1. **Pre-eminent**: "*na vidyate uttaram (adhikam) yataḥ*". *anuttara* is that above which there remains nothing more. The thirty six *tattvas* owe their existence to Him. So He is above all.

2. **Ineffable**: *anuttara* is that where there is neither question nor answer. Language cannot reach there. So there is no other answer (*uttara*) except Him, the perfect consciousness.

3. **Unsurpassable**: *uttara* is surpassing or liberation. One passes from level to level, like the levels of body, life, intellect, void etc. At the highest state, everything is Śiva. So one is liberated here in this world. He has not to cross this level.
4. **Uncrossable**: Mounting on cakras is possible on a lower level. At the level of anuttara there is no cakra (plexus) to cross on.

5. **Unlimited**: By uttara something is limited in the manner of telling this or that. anuttara is unlimited.

6. **Supreme Being**: Etimologically the root 'ana' means to breathe., Ana with the suffix 'kvip' makes the word ana which means anu or the empirical being having breath as his self. So anuttara is that which has the superiority over all other living beings like the deha-pramāta, śunya-pramātā etc.

7. **Culmination of Expansion** (Visarga): 'A' is the power "bliss" (śakti), 'nut' means impulsion and tara is flotation. So anuttara is the bliss of waveless ocean of consciousness abiding in cīt. It is the culmination of expansion (visarga) or vimāraśa, the power "śakti".

6.9. **The eight forms of Śiva**

The real nature of Paramaśiva as the prameya, is not easily comprehensible, "na viṣvamūrteravadhāryate vapuḥ"- speaks Kālidāsa in the speech of Umā, the consort of Śiva. While speaking so, even Umā is unable to comprehend Him, as He is immanent and emanent as well: "viṣvamayam viṣvottirṇani ca tattvam". He is not counted as a separate category by Utpalacārya as He stands above all the thirty six tattvas. In his immanent aspect He is well known by His eight forms (aṣṭamūrti).

The eight forms are: (1) the five gross elements, (2) the two vital airs in the shape of the sun and the moon and (3) the empirical self i.e. the limited consciousness called the mind or fire. The Vedas support it: "sa rudraḥ sa mahādevaḥ so agnih, sa u sūryaḥ sa u eva mahāyamah".
These three (physical, vital and psychic) forms make up the eight forms of Śiva. Life pulsation traverses through eight modalities. The sleeping babe, Rudra is the ninth one: "tānyetāni aṣṭau agnirūpāṇi, kumāro navamah". This reveals his emanent, tattvātīta aspect. He is samvitbhattaraka, turiya consciousness, maheśvara- as lauds Utpalacārya:
agnisomaravibrahmaviṣṇusthāvarajangama/
svarūpavahurūpāya namah samvinmayāyat
e
Commenting on this verse Kṣemaraja nicely explains His immanent and emanent aspects of the eight Forms and His primary nature as the Supreme consciousness.
evam ca agnisomasūryasthāvarajangamāṣṭamūrtitayā visvamayatvam".

Sri Śankaracārya composes in the Daksināmūrtistotra, the eight forms of Śiva in one line as Kalidāsa composes it in four lines of his famous Śākuntalam, namely "yā srṣṭi srasturādyya..."
Sri Śankara writes: "bhūrabhamśyānalo-nilambarangaharnātho
himansuh pumān".

It reveals that the eight forms of Śiva, which depicts the emanent aspect of the prameya of Pratyabhijnā philosophy, has been a common doctrine throughout the cultural history of India.

6.10 The Supreme consciousness: Viṣṇānabhairava

Like the eight forms of Śiva (aṣṭamūrti), there are thousand epithets in the compositions like Śivasahasranāma. In some way they describe the nature of the prameya. But such descriptions do not reveal the essence of the Reality, says the Viṣṇānabhairava, one of the source texts of Kashmir Saivism.
These concepts are used for those whose intellect is not yet mature enough to grasp the Reality (in Its highest aspect). Just as a bogey is used to frighten away children from their obstinacies for getting some worthless or undesirable thing, these concepts play the same role as the bonbon mother. They are meant to induce the aspirants to tread the path of righteousness and spiritual practices in order that they may ultimately realize the nature of Bhairava which is not different from their essential self. The highest state is free of all notions (pertaining to the space and time), free of all particulars (aviseṣqi) and designation (uddeśa). It is beyond description. One can experience It only as his own inmost self when he is free from all thought-constructs. Thus the Vijñānabhairava describes that there can neither be any worshipper (describer) nor any worshipped (description). Since the essential nature of the Reality is full of the bliss of non-difference from the entire universe (bharitakāra), such state of the absolute leads to that aspect of the Reality which is known as Śakti, the heart of Śiva. So, the āgama says:

\[
evan bidha-bhairavasya yāvasthā parigīyate/
\]
\[
sā parā pararūpeṇa parā devi prakīrtita//
\]

That state of Bhairava which is said as the Supreme reality (parā), full of bliss of non-difference from the entire universe, is alone called the great goddess Śakti (purādevī).

6.11. **Tattvātīta: beyond categories**

_Prameya_ as Parama-Śiva is not counted as a category by Utpalācārya, as He stands above all the tattvas. Śakti-tattva is not, in essence, a separate entity as it emphasizes the vimarṣa aspect of
Śivatattva. So there is no Śaktitattva in IPK. Vimarśa is the power of perception or concretization, the external aspect of Śiva-tattva. The word vimarśa though not available in Śivasūtras nor in Spandakārikā, yet the commentators frequently use it. Somananda uses it for the first time. But it is implicit in the Śiva-sūtras and Utpalācārya clearly exposes it as the sportive Lord’s transcendental powers of knowledge and action.