BRILL

INDO-IRANIAN JOURNAL 67 (2024) 155–190

IIJ

brill.com/iij

Transmitting Awareness (*saṅkrānti*)

A Point of Contact in Abhinavagupta's Śaiva Aesthetics

James D. Reich | ORCID: 0000-0003-4137-8416
Philosophy and Religious Studies Department, Pace University, New York, NY, USA
jreich@pace.edu

Ben Williams | ORCID: 0000-0003-0113-6965
Department of Religious Studies, Naropa University, Boulder, CO, USA
bwilliams@naropa.edu

Received 4 August 2023 | Accepted 24 January 2024 |
Published online 4 March 2024

Abstract

On the basis of a parallel passage in Abhinavagupta's commentaries on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*, this article considers the ways in which Abhinavagupta theorized "transmission" (*saṅkrānti*) in his descriptions of aesthetic experience and the reception of knowledge in non-dual Śaiva philosophy. We argue that this notion of transmission, in which the lines between author and qualified audience are blurred, is indebted to a number of earlier sources that explain the way in which knowledge and liberation are transmitted, most significantly the Kaula Śākta traditions in the immediate background of Abhinavagupta's tantric exegesis. Here the terms *saṅkrānti* and *saṅkramaṇa* are employed in descriptions of initiation, the transferal of lineage, and a Guru's awakened awareness passing into the body of a disciple. In Abhinavagupta's parallel passages, he expands upon this notion of "transmission" by showing how it can emerge even when a teacher/poet and a student/audience are separated by time and space. In both accounts, what allows an ideal audience to internalize or identify with a teaching or text is an act of participation that effectively dissolves the limitations of time, space, and individuality. Interestingly, in both the aesthetic and non-dual Śaiva context, this process of transmission unfolds through an indirect mode of expression that cannot be reduced to reasoning. The article concludes with an exploration of the purpose of Abhinavagupta's vision of transmission, particularly related to the notion

Published with license by Koninklijke Brill NV | DOI:10.1163/15728536-06702005
© JAMES D. REICH AND BEN WILLIAMS, 2024 | ISSN: 0019-7246 (print) 1572-8536 (online)

that texts can encode, preserve, and, in the presence of a sensitive audience, reenact the awareness of their authors, even after lineages break or traditions fragment.

Keywords

transmission – Śaiva philosophy – Indian dramaturgy – aesthetics – emotion – Śaiva Tantra – ethics

1 Introduction

In the *Abhinavabhāratī*, a commentary on Bharata's dramaturgical text *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Abhinavagupta famously begins his theory of aestheticized emotion, or *rasa*, by drawing an analogy to Vedic scripture. When hearing statements about people in the past who performed difficult sacrificial rituals, some people, those who are "qualified", gain an awareness that they themselves should undertake such an action. This happens, Abhinavagupta explains, by means of a "suppression" of the time and grammatical tense in the Vedic statement and a "transmission" to the reader, so that a reader can take up the attitude ascribed to others in the passage and express it as their own. Similarly, Abhinavagupta argues, when a "qualified" person reads poetry or sees a play, the beauty and arrangement of the words act in such a way that the particularity and temporal setting of the characters is set aside, and this allows a transmission in which the reader experiences the emotional beauty of the play or poem.

Hugo David has recently uncovered important precedents for this passage in the earlier philosophers Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, Śabara, and Maṇḍanamiśra. However, David also notes that one key aspect of this passage, the notion of "transmission" (*saṅkramaṇa/saṅkrānti*) has no precedents in these sources.[1] But although David is right that the term has no precedents in these sources, it *does* have precedents. In fact, it happens to be an important concept in the Kaula Śaivism that Abhinavagupta inherited and that he elaborates elsewhere in his corpus. It also happens to be central to a parallel account of reading and religious experience that Abhinavagupta gives in the beginning of what we will call his "religious philosophical" (rather than strictly tantric) works namely, his

1 David (2014), 147. David translates *saṅkrānti* in this article as "transfer." Our choice of translating it as "transmission" will become clear below.

vimarśinī commentaries on Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*. This latter parallel was first noted by David Lawrence.[2]

In this paper, we will trace out the connections among these accounts of reading and the earlier Kaula concept of transmission. In doing so, we hope to reveal a deep and important aspect of Abhinavagupta's lifelong intellectual project, which can be read as a creative solution to the particular anxieties inherent in a Kaula model of revelation and religious authority. In short, Abhinavagupta, across various works, was deeply concerned with the ways in which texts can—long after their authors have died—reproduce the experience of the author in the mind of readers and can therefore substitute for the living presence of that author. This, we will show, is rooted in a Kaula understanding of the self as porous and interpenetrable, which runs against the views of other contemporaneous models of the self as fundamentally autonomous, and isolated. Finally, we will show that for Abhinavagupta, producing such an experience requires not simply precise explication, but some sort of half-hidden or indirect mode of communication, which loosens one's (seemingly) fixed, individual identity, and which may be inferential in its early stages, but which is never reducible simply to reasoning one's way to a conclusion.

2 *Abhinavabhāratī*

Before we look at the first passage from the *Abhinavabhāratī*, here is a brief summary of Abhinavagupta's ideas on aesthetics. Abhinavagupta's aesthetic theory in general is rooted in his understanding of reflexive awareness, which, for him, is the essence of subjectivity. Emotions are ways of apprehending the world. But during aesthetic experiences, the mind is prompted to turn around and reflect more explicitly on its own emotional movements. Furthermore, because the conditions of a poem or a theater strip the individual of any need to accomplish anything, and because they decenter his individual personality, the audience member is put in touch with their own emotion in such a way that they experience it outside the boundaries of their own identity. This means that aesthetic experience, because of its reflexivity, is a form of subjectivity, but not a form of individuality. It is transpersonal subjectivity. In addition, by virtue of being a state of awareness that has let go of objects and focused more on itself, it is inherently pleasurable. This is because Abhinavagupta defines pain as a feeling of lack or need, and the more the mind lets go of attention to objects (which

2 Lawrence (2008), 18–19.

it never fully possesses) and rests in its own experience (which is always complete and immanent), the more pleasure it feels. Abhinavagupta describes this experience using the term *rasa*, which can be translated as aestheticized emotion. He also describes it as a *process* of savoring or relishing; a kind of dynamic, unfolding state akin to an action but with no need to accomplish anything outside of itself.[3]

This is the basic model that is at play in the passage of *Abhinavabhāratī* we want to discuss, where Abhinavagupta begins explicating his own theory of *rasa* after recapitulating and "purifying" the views of other theorists on the same subject. Here is our translation of the passage, which we will go on to compare with the parallel found in his *vimarśinī* commentaries on the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*:

> Therefore, let the purified truth [of *rasa*] be stated! It has been taught by Bharata himself. There is nothing new in it. For he says: "They generate the goals of poetry, so they are called *bhāvas*, [literally: 'generators']" and the goal of poetry is *rasa*. To explain: in statements such as "They sat through the night" and "He placed [it] in the fire," a qualified person, who is characterized by possessing a particular goal, has a bare cognition, which appears first and in which [a Vedic ritual is] powerfully praised. Immediately after that there is an additional [cognition] in the form "let me offer [into the fire]," which takes place by virtue of suppressing the time to which [the original statement] referred. That [additional cognition] has the nature of a transmission (*saṅkramaṇa*), etc., [and] is described through technical terms such as intuition (*pratibhā*), development (*bhāvanā*), injunction (*vidhi*), and initiative (*udyoga*), according to one's philosophical system. In the very same way, from language that is essentially poetic there is an additional cognition for a qualified person. And here a qualified person is one whose heart is overflowing with pure intuitive imagination. And for such a person—after perceiving the meaning of a sentence from verses such as "the lovely bending of the [deer's] neck …" "Umā, for her part [dropping flowers from] her black locks …" "Śiva, a little [disturbed] …"[4] a direct awareness arises in the mind in which the particular aspects of a given statement such as its time [location and tense] have disappeared. And the things that appear in that cognition, like a young

3 These ideas, which are deeply connected to Abhinavagupta's wider theology, are all more fully fleshed out, with evidence, in Reich (2021), 58–133.

4 These are citations of the following works of Kālidāsa, in this order: *Abhijñānaśākuntala*, 1.2; *Kumārasambhava* 3.62; *Kumārasambhava* 3.67.

> deer and so forth, lack a particular form, [and] the actor [who portrays] "It is afraid" is not ultimately real, and because of this, the fear that appears is a higher form (*param*), untouched by time and space. Therefore, the Fearful *rasa* is different from cognitions like "I am afraid," "the enemy, or friend, or stranger is afraid," which are full of obscuration because of being regulated by the will to acquire something or push it away (*hānādi*), which generates [ordinary] pleasure and pain. It is grasped by a cognition that is free of obscurations … When there is the complete melting away of causes of limitation such as time, place, and [being an] individual knower, which are both real and set down in the poem, that generalization ripens even further, within that context [of dramatic elements].[5]

Now, the main point of the Vedic examples here is that they demonstrate the melting away of particularities, specifically time, so that the attitudes and actions of people in the past become the attitudes and actions of contemporary readers.[6] The Vedic statements exemplify this because they are third-person statements about the past ("they sacrificed") that become, under these conditions, first-person statements in the present ("I sacrifice" or "I should sacrifice"). The conditions in question that make one "qualified" center on having a particular goal that would make one interested in the ritual and its results to begin with. But they also involve being able to transcend or suppress time and other particularities, at least cognitively. In the context of aesthetics, the qualifica-

5 Our text is from Gnoli (1985), 12–13, with one alternative reading in brackets from David (2014), 128: *tarhy ucyatām pariśuddhatattvam | uktam eva muninā na tv apūrvaṃ kiṃcid | tathā hy āha kāvyārthān bhāvayantīti bhāvā iti tatkāvyārtho rasaḥ | yathā hi "rātrim āsata," "tām agnau prādāt" ityādāv arthitādilakṣitasyādhikāriṇaḥ pratipattimātrād atitīvraprarocitāt prathamapravṛttād anantaram adhikaivopāttakālatiraskāreṇaiva "āsai" "pradadāni" ityādirūpā saṃkramaṇādisvabhāvā yathādarśanaṃ [pratibhābhāvanāvidhyudyogādibhāṣābhir] vyavahṛtā pratipattis tathāiva kāvyātmakād api śabdād adhikāriṇo 'dhikāsti pratipattiḥ | adhikārī cātra vimalapratibhānaśālihṛdayaḥ | tasya ca "grīvābhaṅgābhirāmam" iti "umāpi nīlālaka" iti "haras tu kiṃ cit" ityādivākyebhyo vākyārthapratipatter anantaraṃ mānasī sākṣātkārātmikāpahastitatattadvākyopāttakālādivibhāgā tāvat pratītir upajāyate | tasyāṃ ca yo mṛgapotakādir bhāti tasya viśeṣarūpatvābhāvād bhīta iti trāsakasyāpāramārthikatvād bhayam eva paraṃ deśakālādyanāliṅgitam, tata eva bhīto 'ham bhīto 'yam śatrur vayasyo madhyastho vetyādipratyayebhyo duḥkhasukhādikṛtahānādibuddhyantarodayaniyamavattayā vighnabahulebhyo vilakṣaṇaṃ nirvighnapratītigrāhyaṃ … bhayānako rasa | … yasyāṃ vastusatāṃ kāvyārpitānāṃ ca deśakālapramātrādīnāṃ niyamahetūnām anyonyapratibandhabalād atyantam apasaraṇe sa eva sādhāraṇībhāvaḥ sutarāṃ puṣyati.*

6 The connection between the disappearance of time and the efficacy of injunctions is an idea that David has shown comes ultimately from Maṇḍanamiśra (though it is not Maṇḍanamiśra's own view), and this is likely the source from which Abhinavagupta is drawing. See David (2014), 141–142.

tions are different, since here, having practical goals is an obstacle and not a prerequisite, but there is a similar requirement that one be able to transcend particularities. Aesthetic qualifications involve having "intuitive imagination," or "intuition," which for Abhinavagupta means primarily an ability to sympathetically resonate with others, generating a concordance of the heart (*hṛdayasaṃvāda*). In the *Dhvanyālokalocana*, he explains that this kind of intuitive sympathy is the opposite of being aloof or indifferent (*tāṭasthya*):

> [The connoisseur] who apprehends the [elements of the scene] does not apprehend them indifferently, but rather in total dependence upon his connoisseurship, which is also called the 'concordance of the heart' [*hṛdayasaṃvāda*] … [a capacity] whose life-breath is a form of savoring that corresponds to a state of total identification.[7]

It is this sympathetic identification that allows a sensitive audience to savor the shared aesthetic experience, beyond time and beyond the delimiting scope of individual identity.

Furthermore, although he does not make it explicit here, the *rasa* that the audience savors is, for Abhinavagupta, the same *rasa* that the author or playwright had experienced when writing. The audience is not merely experiencing a *rasa* that is similar to the author's. They are in fact (if they are connoisseurs) experiencing the exact same *rasa* that the poet had experienced. And this *rasa* is, ontologically speaking, the very substance of the poem itself. It has "spilled outwards" from the poet to become the poem; it has taken on outward form *as* the poem. When the reader of a poem "totally identifies" with this *rasa*, they are achieving, through the poem, a kind of fusion with the poet himself as well as with the subject of the poem; this is the "total identification" referred to above.[8]

---

7 *Dhvanyāloka* 155–156: … *vibhāvādikaṃ pratipadyamāna eva na tāṭasthyena pratipadyata 'pi tu hṛdayasaṃvādāparaparyāyasahṛdayatvaparavaśīkṛtatayā … tanmayībhavanocitacarvaṇāprāṇatayā*.

8 See Reich (2021), 58–133. This is a deep and constitutive aspect of Abhinavagupta's aesthetics, and best understood through a general study of his aesthetics alongside his religious ideas. But if a smoking gun is required, we can give one from each of his aesthetic texts. In *Dhvanyālokalocana*, Abhinavagupta describes how the first poet, Vālmīki, spontaneously created the first poem when he himself experienced a *rasa* (and not simply an ordinary emotion) that "spilled outward" into the form of fixed verses. *Dhvanyālokalocana* 86: *rasaparipūrṇakumbhoccalanavac cittavṛttiniḥśyandasvabhāvavāgvilāpādivac ca … niyantritaślokarūpatām prāpta* "like a jar filled with nectar overflowing, [or] like one's mind-state gushing forth into a cry of lament … [Vālmīki's *rasa*] attained the form of fixed verse." A few pages (*Dhvanyālokalocana* 92) later he describes the audience's reception of this *rasa* as follows: *pratipattṝn prati sā pratibhā nānumīyamānā, api tu tadāveśena bhāsamānety arthaḥ* |

The last important point to note in this passage from the *Abhinavabhāratī* is that this re-experiencing of the poet's emotion happens, according to Abhinavagupta, through a process of "transmission," *saṅkramaṇa*, which is enabled precisely because of the melting away of particularities.[9] And in fact, this is

yasmād uktam asmadupādhyāyabhaṭṭatautena—nāyakasya kaveḥ śrotuḥ samāna anubhavas tataḥ "[The poet's] imagination is not inferred but rather shines forth to the audience due to it entering into them. That's why our teacher Bhaṭṭa Tauta said: 'character, poet, and audience all have the same experience.'" (Note that *āveśa*, which we translate as "entering into," can also mean "possession by a spirit or deity," and is a term laden with meaning in tantric contexts.) In *Abhinavabhāratī* (1:294) ad *Nāṭyaśāstra* 7.38 he says, glossing a verse of Bharata's: *evaṃ mūlabījasthānīyāḥ kavigato rasaḥ | kavir hi sāmājikatulya eva … tato vṛkṣasthānīyaṃ kāvyam | tatra puṣpasthānīyo 'bhinayādinaṭavyāpāra | tatra phalasthānīyaḥ sāmājikarasāsvādaḥ | tena rasamayam eva viśvam*. Masson and Patwardhan (1969), 53, footnote 5, translate: "Thus, the *rasa* existing in the poet is like the seed which is the root (i.e., cause) (of a tree). For the poet is just like the spectator … Therefore a (dramatic) poem is like a tree. The activity (functioning) of the actor such as gesticulation, is like the flowers etc. The aesthetic experience on the part of the spectator is like the fruit. Consequently, everything is full of *rasa*." A more accurate translation of this last line would be "everything is *made* of *rasa*."

9 Sheldon Pollock, who is convinced that this passage is fundamentally rooted in Mīmāṃsā and in Kumārila, translates *saṅkramaṇa* as "grammatical transformation", though he admits that "the word is not attested anywhere in quite this sense" (Pollock [2010], 175, footnote 63; Pollock [2016], 386, footnote 80). Our proposal, in contrast, is that Abhinavagupta clearly intends here the (non-Mīmāṃsā) transmission of an idea from one mind to another. Sheldon Pollock goes on to speculate (ibid.) that the "*ādi*" here refers to the Mīmāṃsā interpretive principles of *adhyāhāra* and *pariṇāma*, and cites *Śabarabhāṣya ad* 1.2.1. These are hermeneutic principles for transforming ritual injunctions when they need to be applied in different contexts, for example if an injunction is to be carried over from one sacrifice to another, or from one substance to another, and must change grammatically to fit the new context. They are discussed in *Ślokavārttika* 1.54–58. But they are not used in Mīmāṃsā to transform narrative statements, *arthavāda*s, directly into injunctions. Śabara does indeed raise the possibility that such principles *could* be used to transform *arthavāda*s into injunctions. And he does this while commenting on *sūtra* 1.2.1. But he puts this proposal into the mouth of an objector who is trying to argue that *arthavāda*s are meaningless. The objector says that when we read a narrative statement like "he wept," *even if* we were to somehow use *adhyāhāra* and *pariṇāma* to try to turn these into an injunction, it would still be unclear which injunction to turn them into—whether an injunction like "one should weep" or some other injunction—and so there would be no way to determine a proper course of action simply from *arthavāda*s. Śabara's response to this is not to argue that *arthavāda*s can be directly transformed into injunctions. He accepts that they cannot. But he says that they are meaningful because they can be interpreted as *supportive* of *other* injunctions. In this particular example, "he wept" supports an injunction that is not about weeping at all. It is the injunction that "one should not give silver to the Barhis." The reason "he wept" is supportive of this injunction, Śabara argues, is because the passage goes on to say that when he wept his tears became silver, thereby implying that silver is connected to unhappiness. So, if this is the idea that Abhinavagupta is drawing on, then it is incompatible with Śabara (and Kumārila), given that Abhinavagupta seems to be saying that an *arthavāda* does indeed transform directly into an injunction. Ollett's (2016)

not merely the transmission of a mood *from* one place *to* another. It appears that way externally. But experientially, and at a deeper level of reality, what is really happening is that the author and the audience are meeting together in a realm of subjectivity that transcends space, time, and individuality, a space that Abhinavagupta frequently refers to as "the heart" (*hṛdaya*).[10] But with this last point we are getting ahead of ourselves. First, we need to look more closely at this notion of "transmission" and see, given its background, what it would have meant in Abhinvagupta's context and how he employed it.

3 Transmission

Abhinavagupta's use of the term *saṅkramaṇa* (transmission) in the *Abhinavabhāratī* clearly matches the notion of transmission he set forth in parallel passages in his works on non-dual Śaiva philosophy, the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* (ĪPV) and the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* (ĪPVV). But before elucidating these parallel usages and their implications, it is worthwhile to trace the roots of the very concept of transmission, including both in Abhinavagupta's tantric scriptural sources and in traditions that predate tantric scripture. In this abbreviated survey, we will argue that the scriptures of Goddess-

proposed solution to this problem seems to be to argue that the *arthavāda* passages that Abhinavagupta quotes do not themselves transform into an injunction but are supportive of some other, unstated injunction. This injunction would be the content of the "bare cognition (*pratipattimātra*)" that Abhinavagupta mentions, which Ollett thinks must be the cognition of an injunction (*vidhi*) that the *arthavāda* statements would have to support, thereby producing an "additional cognition," and thereby matching up with Kumārila's theory. But this is not what Abhinavagupta's passage says. He never mentions any primary injunction, or any injunction at all. He simply says that after an initial cognition in which certain ritual acts are described and praised, another surplus cognition arises which has the form of transmission, and whose content is "I should do that." The most straightforward way to read this is that the initial cognition is simply the cognition "they did this thing, and it was great." Abhinavagupta would then just be saying that when you read a statement in the third person about an amazing act of sacrifice, you can then transform it into a first-person intention to sacrifice if you obscure the tense that the third person statement was written in. On the other hand, given what Abhinavagupta says elsewhere about *saṅkramaṇa* (which is the subject of this paper), it seems equally likely that the "*ādi*" here could refer to other concepts that are important in Abhinavagupta's aesthetics, and which are often used to describe this process, such as *hṛdayasaṃvāda* and *tanmayībhāva*, though we cannot be certain of this. What we can be certain of is that the way Abhinavagupta describes it, such terms would indeed fit here quite well.

10 For more on this concept, see Sanderson (2005), 93–97; and Muller-Ortega (1989), chapter 4.

based [i.e., Śākta] lineages that came to be referred to as "Kaula" and their non-dual view of selves as porous and interpenetrating are essential to Abhinavagupta's model of transmission, which appears in his accounts of aesthetic experience and the reenactment of liberated awareness.[11]

The way in which knowledge, experience, and ideal behavior can be transmitted is a perennial concern of many philosophical and religious traditions in India. In the *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya*[12] and the *Vākyapadīya*,[13] the Vedic seers are described as wielding a unique capacity to directly apprehend the nature of reality (*sākṣātkaraṇa / sākṣātkṛtadharman*), and their verbal testimony serves as a substitute for direct experience for people lacking such rare powers.[14] In the *Yogasūtrabhāṣya*, we find a more robust model of how knowledge is passed on, one that describes a trustworthy person, a credible source of knowledge,

11 On the scriptural horizon of the Kulamārga and its distinctive modes of revelation, see Williams (2017), chapter 3.

12 *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.7–8: *āptopadeśaḥ śabda | sa dvividho dṛṣṭādṛṣṭārthatvāt*; *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya* ad *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.7–8: *āptaḥ khalu sākṣātkṛtadharmā yathādṛṣṭasyārthasya cikhyāpayiṣayā prayukta upadeṣṭā | sākṣātkaraṇam arthasyāptiḥ tayā pravartata ity āptaḥ | [...] evam ṛṣilaukikavākyānāṃ vibhāga iti* '**Testimony is the statement of a trustworthy person (1.1.7).** [Vātsyāyana's comment:] Truly a trustworthy person is one who directly experiences (*sākṣātkaraṇa*) the nature of things. Impelled by the desire to communicate that reality [to others], as it has been perceived, such a person becomes a teacher (*upadeṣṭṛ*). Direct experience is the full acquisition (*āpti*) of a reality. One who acts on the basis of that [full acquisition of a reality] is a trustworthy person (*āpta*). **That [testimony] is twofold due to having either an object that is perceptible or beyond perception (1.1.8)** ... [Vātsyāyana's comment:] In this way, [the distinction between realities beyond perception and those that are perceptible comprises] a distinction between the speech of Vedic seers and common people.' See also *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya* ad *Nyāyasūtra* 2.1.68: *kiṃ punar āptānāṃ prāmāṇyam | sākṣātkṛtadharmatā bhūtadayā yathābhutārthacikhyāpayiṣeti* 'But why is there validity for trustworthy persons? They have direct experience of the nature of things, they possess compassion for beings, [and] desire to communicate [to others] a reality as it really exists.'

13 *Vākyapadīyavṛtti* ad *Vākyapadīya* 1.5: *yāṃ sūkṣmāṃ nityām atīndriyāṃ vācam ṛṣayaḥ sākṣātkṛtadharmāṇo mantradṛśaḥ paśyanti tām asākṣātkṛtadharmebhyo 'parebhyaḥ pravedayiṣyamāṇā bilmaṃ samāmananti* 'The Vedic seers, who directly experience the nature of things and see the *mantra*s, perceive that subtle, eternal, speech that is beyond the range of the senses. Inasmuch as they plan to make that [divine word] known to others who lack direct access to the nature of things, they set down for transmission an image [of that subtle, sense-transcending speech].' This translation is highly indebted to the one found in Aklujkar (2009), 24–25.

14 The "epithet" *sākṣātkṛtadharman* applied to a trustoworth author (*āpta*) in the *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya* is also discussed in Ruegg (1994), 413–414, where he shows that it has a much earlier precedent in the *Nirukta* of Yāska. We are indebted to an anonymous reviewer for this reference.

directly transmitting their awareness to another person.[15] The word given for this transmission is *saṅkrānti*. This mode of transmission is more experiential, since it does not require the audience to trust the extrinsic authority of a sage's visionary capacity but consists rather in an act of sharing their own awareness (*svabodha*).

These earlier ideas of a direct transmission of the awareness of a teacher to their pupil are further developed in some lineages of Śaiva and Śākta tantra, particularly those that Abhinavagupta elaborates in his own writings, as we will discuss below. But the more ritually and socially conservative Śaiva tantric tradition, the Śaiva Siddhānta, reject this sort of transmission, since it implies a kind of intersubjective permeability that does not tally with their orthodox view of isolated, autonomous selves. Sanderson contrasts the Śaiva Siddhānta view of subjectivity to that of the Śākta traditions on this very point:

> The staider Siddhānta stressed in accordance with its metaphysical pluralism (*dvaitavādaḥ*) the primacy and irreducibility of individuals acting for their own benefit, so aligning itself in the wider context of religious values with the autonomism of the brahmanical Mīmāṃsaka ritualists … so the Siddhānta, as it chose to draw closer to this polarity of brahmanical thought, found itself disinclined to justify those areas of established Śaiva practice in which individualism was blurred.[16]

Abhinavagupta's Kaula model of transmission, on the other hand, is at odds with the radically autonomous self of the Śaiva Siddhānta, and is based on metaphysical presuppositions and ritual and yogic technologies in which the boundaries between individuals certainly can and should be blurred. The famously transgressive teachings and practices of these Śākta traditions—sexual rituals, intoxication, graveyard and corpse imagery, rejection of caste purity, embrace of pariahdom, etc.—are intimately connected to this rejection of the autonomous self, which underpins mainstream Brahminical models of caste and social order.[17] It is partly for these reasons as well that these tra-

15 *Yogasūtrabhāṣya* ad 1.7: *āptena dṛṣṭo 'numito 'rthaḥ paratra svabodhasaṅkrāntaye śabdenopadiśyate* 'A reality that is seen or inferred by a trustworthy person is taught through language to transmit (*saṅkrānti*) to others his own awareness [of that reality].'

16 Sanderson (2007), 247–248.

17 In an early article Sanderson theorizes that Abhinavagupta's model of a self—termed the "Kālī self"—is a response to Brahmanical values obsessed with purity. He shows how this Kālī self is derived and yet departs from earlier Bhairava and Goddess cults that were the purview of "exorcist visionaries" in search of power. Upon this background of the "culture of the cremation grounds", Abhinavagupta overlays a non-dual cosmology, which neces-

ditions are more esoteric and less public and institutionalized than the Śaiva Siddhānta.

To get a better sense of the ontological—not to mention sociological—contrast between these two models, it may be helpful to turn to the Śaiva Siddhānta critique of this view that selves are porous and that awareness, knowledge, and karmic merit can be shared. Such a critique is made by two exponents of the Śaiva Siddhānta, Sadyojyotis, in his *Paramokṣanirāsakārikā* ('Stanzas on the Refutation of Liberation according to Others'), and Rāmakaṇṭha, in his commentary thereon. The target of the Saiddhāntikas's critiques in these debates are the Pāśupatas, a group of ascetics devoted to Śiva whose teachings and practices predate and offer an important background to tantric forms of Śaivism. In Sadyojotis's presentation, the Pāśupatas claim that liberation culminates in a moment in which Śiva transfers or transmits (*saṅkrānti*) his own divine qualities to the individual self.[18] The Pāśupata that Sadyojyotis is presenting introduces an analogy to this process of liberation—the well-established fact that the knowledge of teacher can be transferred to a disciple.[19] Sadyojyotis responds that this transmission of knowledge is metaphorical at best; what really takes place in such instances is that in virtue of the teacher's instruction, the disciple has a distinct but similar cognition to that of the teacher.[20] Their reason for this claim is important: if it were the exact same knowledge in the teacher now recapitulated in the disciple, the teacher would no longer possess it; it would be passed on or transferred, like a baton in

sitates the internalization of hordes of female goddesses and yoginīs, now reenvisioned as powers of the adept's own universal awareness. On this Kālī self, and the way it draws from this earlier antinomian background, see Sanderson (1985), 202.

18 *Paramokṣanirāsakārikā* v. 13cd: *nodāharaṇasadbhāvo guṇasaṅkrāntisādhane* 'No example exists for proving the transference of qualities.' On this stanza, Rāmakaṇṭha comments: *īśvaraguṇā muktau saṅkramanta iti guṇasaṅkrāntiḥ* '*Transference of qualities* refers to [the view that] the qualities of the Lord are transferred at liberation.' Edition and Translation of Watson, Goodall, Sharma (2013).

19 *Paramokṣanirāsakārikā* v. 14: *nanu svabodhasaṅkrāntau dṛṣṭaṃ śabdopadeśanam | śāstre 'pi jñānasaṅkrāntir vihitā sā kathaṃ bhavet* 'Surely [we] observe verbal teaching to be for the sake of the transference of [teachers'] own knowledge. In *śāstra* too the transference of knowledge is enjoined. How would that [enjoined transference of knowledge] be [appropriate, if transference of qualities were not possible]?' Edition and Translation of Watson, Goodall, Sharma (2013).

20 *Paramokṣanirāsakārikā* v. 15abc: *vijñānam upadeśāt tu tādṛg anyat prajāyate | saṅkrānti-śabdaḥ sādṛśye* 'But [that is incorrect because] owing to teaching, a cognition that is of the same nature [but] distinct arises. The word 'transference' can be used [metaphorically] when there is similarity, [but there is no actual transference].' Edition and Translation of Watson, Goodall, Sharma (2013).

a relay race. Since this is not the case, Sadyojyotis argues, there is no scope for transmission taking place, in a literal sense.

Interestingly, Abhinavagupta says that this actually *is* what happens to teachers of the Śaiva Siddhānta, whom he deems mere ritual functionaries (*karmin*) and distinguishes from gurus "endowed with direct insight into reality" (*jñānin*) who are in his own Śākta lineage. When the ritualist preceptor transfers their power to a newly consecrated guru his own authorization goes with it. That is to say, he no longer preserves his independent status as a Śaiva *ācārya*.[21] The Śākta guru of insight, by contrast, having empowered another person to assume the role of guru, can carry on teaching the scriptures, initiating disciples, etc., without any restrictions. The metaphor he adopts is one lamp having the capacity to ignite many others, a metaphor he uses often for transmission, and one which Sadyojyotis explicitly rejects.[22] For Abhinavagupta, following a paradigm immanent in the Pāśupatas's notion of liberation and developed significantly in the Kaula scriptures he revered, *saṅkrānti* is when the qualities, state, knowledge, or very awareness of one being ignite simultaneously in another without being extinguished in the former. The flame of knowledge that burns in a guru and a disciple or initiand is one and the same.[23]

Transmission—and the lineage of enlightened masters, or Siddhas, who carry it on—is also central to the Krama, a Kaula lineage that Abhinavagupta furtively acknowledges as the ultimate source of his own tantric exegesis.

---

21 *Tantrāloka* 23.25: *jñānahīno guruḥ karmī svādhikāraṃ samarpya no | dīkṣādyadhikṛtiṃ kuryād vinā tasyājñayā punaḥ* 'A ritual officiant is a Guru who is devoid of insight [into reality]. After transferring his own religious authority [to another], he should not exercise his [previously] authorized duties, such as initiation, without the command of that [teacher he consecrated].'

22 *Tantrāloka* 23.26cd–28a: *tataḥ prabhṛty asau pūrvo gurus tyaktādhikārakaḥ || yathecchaṃ vicared vyākhyādīkṣādau yantraṇojjhitaḥ | kurvan na bādhyate yasmād dīpād dīpavad īdṛśaḥ || santāno …* 'From that moment on, this original guru [of insight], [although] his authority has been reliquished, can [still] act as he wishes. Free of constraints, continuing to perform scriptural discourses, initiation, and so on, he is not restricted since a succession (*santāna*) of this kind is [transmitted] in the way that one lamp [is lit] from another.' For Sadyojotis's rejection of this metaphor, see Watson, Goodall, Sharma (2013), p. 310.

23 We don't mean to say that the metaphor of the flame *per se* is widespread in Kaula sources. Merely that the paradigm it is based on—that transmission is a literal process of the penetration of one mind or even body by another and the subsequent existence of the same knowledge in two places—is widespread in Kaula sources. Examples incude the *Timirodghāṭana* and *Ūrmikaulārṇava*. *Timirodghāṭana* 6.5, for example, reads: *sabāhyābhyantare dehe sarvajantuṣu saṃsthitā | sadācāryopadeśena paradehe tu saṃkrame⟨t⟩* 'That [divine power] resides in the bodies of all beings, within and without. By the teaching of a true teacher, it may be transmitted into another body.' For an illuminating investigation into these sources in relation to this very theme, see Wallis (2014), 250–270.

This tradition, whose principal scriptures are Kaula in orientation,[24] enumerates a number of Siddhas as lineage holders, together with their consorts, and describes the lineage they carry on as being "transmitted" down through them.[25] In fact, this tradition, which is highly influential on Abhinavagupta's own model of revelation,[26] comes to organize itself according to three core methods: inner worship of the circuit of Goddesses (*pūjā*, *pūjana*), oral transmission of pithy teachings often attributed to the Yoginīs of Uḍḍiyāna (*kathā*, *kathana*), and a direct mind-to-mind transmission of enlightened awareness, which it terms *saṅkrama* or *saṅkramaṇa*.[27] Here the vehicle of transmission is not verbal instruction but simply the glance or gesture of a Siddha. A later

24 Here we are referring to the *Kālīkuladevīpañcaśataka* and the *Kālīkulakramasadbhāva*. The *Jayadrathayāmala*, which may contain some of the earliest Krama scriptural material, is a complex case, given that is a stratified compendium of numerous ritual systems focused on Kālī, some of which are not Kaula in orientiation.

25 This lineage is described at *Kālīkuladevīpañcaśataka* 3.15cd–17: *niṣkriyānandanāthaś ca jñānadīptyā sahaikataḥ || vidyānandaś ca raktā ca dvitīyaḥ kathitas tava | śaktyānando mahānandaḥ tṛtīyaḥ siddhapūjitaḥ || śivānando mahānandaḥ samāyātaś caturthakaḥ | khagendrādyādisiddhānāṃ kathitā gurusantatiḥ* 'The first [couple] is Niṣkriyānanda accompanied by Jñānadīpti. The second is taught as Vidyānanda and Raktā. The third set that is venerated by the Siddhas is Śaktyānanda and Mahānandā. The fourth Śivānananda who is full of bliss and Samayā. The guru lineage of the Siddhas beginning with Khagendra[nātha] is thus taught.' This passage is cited in *Tantrālokaviveka* introducing *Tantrāloka* 29.43–46ab and mentioned in Dyczkowski (2009), volume 2, 315, footnote 1. The *Ciñciṇīmatasārasamuccaya* provides a brief narrative of the first guru in this lineage, Niṣkriyānanda, "transmitting" (*saṅkrānta*) the Krama teachings to Vidyānanda. We will only cite the relevant lines, but the whole passage runs for multiple verses. *Ciñciṇīmatasārasamuccaya* 7.187–188ab: *bhaktiṃ tīvratarāṃ divyāṃ kṛtvā śābararūpadhṛk | tasya tuṣṭo munivaro niṣkriyānanda uttamaḥ || amoghavāṇyā tasyaiva saṅkrāntaṃ kālikākramam* 'After performing the most intense divine devotion [to the Goddess], the eminent and foremost sage, Niṣkriyānanda, pleased with that [Siddha] with the appearance of a tribal [i.e., Vidyānanda], transmitted the Krama [tradition] of Kālī to him through a powerful voice.' This translation benefits from the one found in Dyczkowski (2001), 44, footnote 4. We also thank Shaman Hatley for his help with this passage.

26 See Williams (2017), chapter 4.

27 This is thematized in the later triad of Krama texts that share the title *Mahānayaprakāśa*, but a scriptural source for this rubric of "worship, oral instruction, and direct transmission" can be found in the *Yonigahvara*. See *Yonigahvara* (ff.34^{v}3–35^{r}2): *samyak mahāśāsanasaṃ pradāyaṃ pūjākathāsaṅkramapūrvam evam | saṃprāpya kaulottarasārabhūtam abhūtapūrvam atha *kāraṇādeḥ* (conj.: kāraṇādīṃ Cod.) | 493 *devī śrīvīra*siṃhākhyā* (corr.: saṃhākhyā Cod.) *svāminī *prasphuṭā* (corr.: prasphaṭā Cod.) *bhuvi* 'Having thus duly received the unprecedented tradition of the Great Teaching that is the essence of the Kaula Uttar[āmnāy]a from the first of the Cause-deities through worship, oral instruction, and direct transmission, the holy Vīrasiṃhasvāminī became visible on earth …' Translation and emendations of Sanderson (2007), 263, footnote 92.

Krama work, the Trivandrum *Mahānayaprakāśa*, defines this direct mode of transmission (*saṅkramaṇa*) as "a sudden unfolding of enlightenment brought about by a non-verbal fusion with the Guru's awareness, which needs no additional practice to establish and maintain it."[28]

Abhinavagupta himself unambiguously adopts this background understanding when he employs the term *saṅkrānti* in the *Tantrāloka* to describe the way in which the awareness of a master can be directly transferred into a disciple who is worthy of grace. For example, in his typology of methods of bestowing initiation that ultimately confers embodied liberation to a disciple, he includes direct transmission (*saṅkramaṇa*).[29] And in the liberatory initiation rite that is given to someone who is close to death, which effectively releases them from the body, "direct transmission" (*saṅkrānti*) from the Guru is also listed as a salient method.[30] Jayaratha, Abhinavagupta's commentator, glosses *saṅkrānti* in this verse, in harmony with the Kaula understanding referred to above, as the act of the guru's awareness directly "entering into another's body."[31]

One of Abhinavagupta's most compelling descriptions of the process of transmission centers around a debate about the source of the revealed teachings of tantric Śaivism. Here he presents a model wherein an original, primordial guru transmits this revelatory insight through a lineage of teachers. Importantly, he highlights that in each phase of the transmission (*abhisaṅkrānta*), the liberating awareness manifesting or being recapitulated within future teachers is identical:[32]

---

28 Sanderson (2007), 311.

29 *Tantrāloka* 13.227cd–229ab: *asyāṃ bhedo hi kathanāt saṅgamād avalokanāt || śāstrāt saṅkramaṇāt sāmyacaryāsaṃdarśanāc caroḥ | mantramudrādimāhātmyāt samastavyastabhedataḥ || kriyayā vāntarākārarūpaprāṇapraveśataḥ* 'There are distinctions in this [initiation, depending on whether it is] based on oral instruction, being in the company [of the guru], a glance, a scriptural discourse, direct transmission (*saṅkramaṇa*), awareness of the observance [that all initiates, regardless of former caste] are equal, the initiatory food offering, the power of such things as a mantra or gesture, a ritual, or [the yogic practice] of penetration into the inner vital force. Such modes can arise individually or in concert.'

30 *Tantrāloka* 13.234cd–235: *abhyāsayuktisaṅkrāntivedhaghaṭṭanarodhataḥ || huter vā mantrasāmarthyāt pāśacchedaprayogataḥ | sadyonirvāṇadāṃ kuryāt sadyaḥprāṇaviyojikām* '[The Guru] may enact that [initiation] that bestows "sudden liberation" (*sadyonirvāṇa*), which immediately separates [the recipient's] life force [from the body] by means of a practice, an expedient, direct transmission, piercing, striking, fixing, oblations, the power of mantra, or through the procedure of severing the bonds.'

31 Jayaratha's *viveka* ad *Tantrāloka* 13.234cd–235: *saṅkrāntiḥ parapurapraveśādiḥ*.

32 *Tantrāloka* 16.259cd–261ab: *pūrvapūrvakramād itthaṃ ya evādiguroḥ purā || sañjalpo hy abhisaṅkrāntaḥ so 'dyāpy astīti gṛhyatām | yas tathāvidhasañjalpabalāt ko'pi svatantrakaḥ || vimarśaḥ kalpyate so 'pi tadātmaiva suniścataḥ*.

> This scriptural discourse, which was originally transmitted from the first Guru (*ādiguru*) through a sequence of successive [teachers], should be accepted as existing even today. Any liberating awareness, which is posited as arising through the force of such a scriptural discourse, is definitely ascertained as identical to that [original awareness].

To conclude: unlike the Śaiva Siddhānta theorists, who contend that disciple and guru are irreducibly distinct souls and thus the transmission of knowledge between them is metaphorical at best, Abhinavagupta, drawing on Kaula and Krama sources, understands transmission as a single liberated awareness, shared across generations of masters whose minds and even bodies are not fully separate or autonomous. In this way, he conforms to the esoteric Kaula and Krama approach that characterizes the true nature of the guru as being authorized and legitimated not on the basis of institutionalized public procedures, but through merging with a transpersonal principle. In this tradition, the ultimate nature of the guru is nothing but the undivided transmission of awakened awareness freely leaping across time and space, lighting up one body after another and ultimately putting into question the notion of a bounded, autonomous individual self. In a later Krama source, the *Kaulasūtra*, the word used in this redefinition of the guru as transmission is *saṅkramaṇa*.[33]

4 Looking to the ĪPV

Thus, we see that there is a rich and complex sense of transmission in Abhinavagupta's tantric theory, which derives from earlier tantric and even non-tantric sources, and that involves blurring the boundaries between master and disciple as the disciple experiences, or re-experiences, the teacher's own enlightened awareness. But is it this rich sense of transmission that is at play in the *Abhinavabhāratī* passage? What if he is simply using the term in a more prosaic sense here, without deliberate connection to the other, tantric idea? After all, the term does appear in the *Dhvanyāloka* and *Dhvanyālokalocana* in a simple

33 *Kaulasūtra* 1–2: *avicchinam ovallikramāyātamarīcisaṅkramaṇam evaiko guruḥ | tadupalabdham eva tattvam eko devaḥ*: "There is one Guru who is nothing but the unbroken transmission of the rays [of awakened awareness] that are received through the sequence of lineage. There is one deity who is nothing but the reality perceived through that [transmission]."

technical sense, in discussion of forms of poetic manifestation (*dhvani*) where the literal meaning is "transferred" (*saṅkramita*) to another meaning.[34]

But it is not this simple, narrow, technical sense that is at play in the *Abhinavabhāratī*, and this becomes clear when we turn to Abhinavagupta's religious philosophical (rather than purely tantric) works. These texts contain the same ideas as the *Abhinavabhāratī* passage above, a parallel logic, and even utilize similar examples to describe the process of transmitting experience through texts by making historically distinct beings coeval. And here the connection to the tantric background and the relevant semantic properties of transmission are clear and unmistakeable. In other words, we can see these religious philosophical works as a kind of bridge between aesthetics and tantric notions of tradition, showing that the concept of transmission through reading that Abhinavagupta had in mind in his aesthetic works is deeply connected, for him, to his ideas about transmitting liberating knowledge.

First, a word on what these "religious philosophical" texts are. Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta's teacher's teacher, originally composed a philosophical work, the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* ('Stanzas on the Recognition of Śiva', hereafter "ĪPK"), which dialectically expounds on the liberating "recognition" of Śiva as the true essence of one's own subjectivity. In this non-dual system, the religious aspirant is not to understand Śiva as an object of worship, nor are they to achieve something they don't already have. Rather, they must simply recognize that they themselves are Śiva appearing in limited form; or perhaps more accurately, Śiva must recognize that he himself is the religious aspirant in an apparently limited form. This takes place by means of revealing to the disciple that his own powers of cognition and action already are Śiva's powers, thus prompting the recognition. Although this involves very abstract philosophy, and actually takes the form of an inferential proof, Śiva is not ultimately encountered here as an object of knowledge (*prameya*), inferred or otherwise. The inferential arguments only help reveal a kind of awareness that is already there but is hidden.

34 See for example *Dhvanyāloka* 2.1: *arthāntare saṅkramitam atyantaṃ vā tiraskṛtam | avivakṣitavācyasya dhvaner vācyaṃ dvidhā matam* 'In forms of poetic manifestation where the literal meaning is not intended at all, that literal meaning it is either completely effaced, or else transferred to another meaning.' Ollett (2016) claims these two terms in the *Abhinavabhāratī* mean that Abhinavagupta must be employing a model of *lakṣaṇā* there. But this cannot be right. For one thing, these two processes are mutually exclusive in *lakṣanā*, whereas in the *Abhinavabhāratī* they work together. For another, *lakṣanā* requires the primary meaning to be "blocked", and there is no such blockage in the examples in *Abhinavabhāratī* passage, or in the process of generating *rasa* that it describes.

To the series of verses that make up this text, Utpaladeva added two layers of commentary: the first a shorter commentary called the *vṛtti*, and the second a longer commentary called the *ṭīkā* or the *vivṛti*, which has been lost except for small portions, and which goes into more detail about arguments against other systems of Indian philosophy. Abhinavagupta's subcommentaries on both of Utpaladeva's two auto-commentaries are still extant. One of them, on the root verses and *vṛtti*, is called the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* (ĪPV), and the other is a longer commentary on the lost *ṭīkā*, called *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* (ĪPVV). These two works likely straddle the *Abhinavabhāratī*, the ĪPV being written earlier, and the ĪPVV afterwards.[35]

Importantly, in his ĪPVV, Abhinavagupta lines up Utpaladeva's three levels of text and commentary (root verses, *vṛtti*, and *vivṛti*) with Bhartṛhari's famous "levels of speech"—Paśyantī, Madhyamā, and Vaikharī—the stages through which language must pass for it to be communicated. He also refers to a fourth and ultimate level of speech added by certain tantric lineages, Parāvāc, and identifies it with the heart of the author himself, Utpaladeva. Isabelle Ratié translates the passage in question, which is commenting on the very first verse of Utpaladeva's text, as follows:

> Here is what [Utpaladeva] means: at the ontological level (*tattva*) that is Parāvāc the universe exists while being free of any separation. In Paśyantī its differences are only faintly outlined. In Madhyamā its differences develop. In Vaikharī it is manifest with its differences made evident, since its form is realized as [fully] differentiated. In the same way, [this treatise] has a different efficacy for each [kind of] recipient [of the treatise's teach-

35 In the *Abhinavabhāratī* Abhinavagupta cites his *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* (which he describes as a *vivaraṇa*, a general term he gives for a commentary, which he also uses to describe his commentary [*locana*] on the *Dhvanyāloka* in the same text). See *Abhinavabhāratī* ad *Nāṭyaśāstra* 14.3–4: *iha bhāvānāṃ sattāsaṃbandhanijalakṣaṇārthakriyākāritvādikṛtaṃ yat sattvaṃ tat pradhānakabodhatvabhūtaṃ śapathaśaraṇaṃ tasya bodhasya pāramaiśvaryaṃ svātantryaṃ pratyavamarśātmakam eva jaḍavailakṣaṇyadāyīti vibhaktam **asmatparamagurupādaiḥ pratyabhijñādau asmābhiś ca tadvivaraṇe** bhedavādavidāraṇādau ca*. In the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* (ĪPVV), Abhinavagupta cites the *Abhinavabhāratī* at ĪPK 1.4.5: *tac ca utpannaṃ sukhaduḥkhādi taiḥ sākṣātkriyate anyagrāhakavat saṃvedyate yathoktam **abhinavabhāratyām***. This renders the following chronology: ĪPV→*Abhinavabhāratī*→ĪPVV. However, as Elisa Ganser has noted [Ganser (2021), 48, footnote 92], there is a possibility that Abhinavagupta composed two or all three of these works simultaneously, and so one should exercise caution in tracing Abhinavagupta's shifting views based on this chronology. Note, Ganser introduces an error by misreading the date of the ĪPVV from Sanderson's article as 1050; the date that Sanderson records is 1015.

> ings] (*adhikārin*). Thus, at the ontological level of Parāvāc, the ultimate reality is the awareness of the treatise's author who is not distinct from Śiva; it exists in a state of [pure] identity and it is designated by the word "heart" because it is the essence [of everything]. [It] is the [same reality that] exists in the aphorism[s] (*sūtra*) as a faint outlining (*āsūtraṇā*) of differentiation, an [outlining] consisting in a flashing forth characterized as being understandable by those people who are [already] capable of being led to the highest [truth]. In the *vṛtti*, on the other hand, this same [reality] has unfolded; and in the *vivṛti* it is made fully evident by [stating] objections and refuting [them] (*ākṣepapratisamādhāna*), [and] its differentiation is characterized as being understandable by all people.[36]

As will become clearer, the implication of this passage is that the very first verse of the text, which expresses the author's own awareness of his identity with Śiva, in other words, his "heart", contains the entire meaning of the text *in nuce*. Therefore, anyone who reads it (or hears it through the oral transmission of their guru—reading and hearing being overlapping activities in this world)[37]—and fully understands it (as rare as such an audience may be), will internalize the meaning of the entire text, that is, will understand that they themselves are Śiva, and are not different from Utpaladeva (or anyone else). What we want to show is that for Abhinavagupta, such a "reading" or reception of the text comprises a *direct transmission* of Utpaladeva's fully-awakened awareness, which is effectively "re-enacted" within such a recipient.

---

36 Ratié (2021), 9–10. The text is ĪPVV 1:16: *etad uktaṃ bhavati yathā paravāktattve vibhāgahānyā viśvaṃ sthitaṃ paśyantyāmāsūtritabhedaṃ madhyamāyām unmīlitabhedaṃ, vaikharyāṃ bhinnaparāmṛśyamānarūpatayā sphuṭībhūtabhedāvabhāsaṃ tathaiva bhinnānām adhikāriṇāṃ bhinnām arthakriyāṃ vidhatte. tathā paravāktattvasthāne śivābhinnaśāstrakārasaṃvedanaṃ tādātmyena yat vartamānaṃ paramārthatattvaṃ sāratvāc ca hṛdayaśabdavācyaṃ tat parapratipādyajanaviṣayatāpattiyogyatālakṣaṇasphuraṇātmakabhedāsūtraṇayā sthitaṃ sūtre vṛttau tu tad eva unmīlitaṃ vivṛtau tu ākṣepapratisamādhānadiśā sphuṭībhūtaṃ sarvajanapratipattiyogyatālakṣaṇabhedaṃ bhavati*. See Ratié (2021), 7–18, for a fuller explication of this passage, where she explains that in lining up the treatises with the levels of speech, Abhinavagupta is following Utpaladeva.

37 Although manuscripts enjoyed an extensive and often surprisingly quick circulation in premodern India, "reading" was often a communal, not a private, activity, and the distinction between "reading" a text and "hearing" it read was likely negligible, as they were largely interchangeable. Even reading to oneself probably involved reading out loud and simultaneously "listening" to the text as one read aloud. Modern reading practices, including private and silent reading, were likely only broadly instantiated after the printing press, and even then, traditional forms of reading aloud from palm-leaf manuscripts persisted (and still do) in regions such as Tamil Nadu. See Venkatachalapathy (1994). We thank Janet Um for this reference.

The ĪPV passage where this becomes clear is also part of the commentary on the very first verse of the ĪPK, which when compared with the *Abhinavabhāratī*, provides a unique window into Abhinavagupta's views on the reception of both poetry and liberating teachings, which, while inhabiting distinct genres and modes of experience, move through time and human lives in a similar fashion.

In the opening verse, Utpaladeva says that, having himself attained the state of being servant of Śiva and desiring to benefit humanity, he will now give rise (*upa* + √*pad*)[38] to the recognition of Śiva. Here is our translation of this invocation:

> After inexplicably becoming a servant of Lord Śiva, and desiring the benefit of humanity as well, I will bring about for them the recognition that is the cause of the attainment of all success.[39]

Abhinavagupta, in the course of his long commentary on this verse, explains how Utpaladeva's benediction effectively claims identification with ultimate reality, Śiva, and conveys his ardent intention to transmit that very same recognition to all humanity. He also describes the structure, mechanism, and phenomenological process of that transmission in exactly the same terms as the reception of a work of literary or theatrical art in the *Abhinavabhāratī*. He explains:

> At the time of hearing this verse [the benediction of Utpaladeva], students definitely become one with Śiva through a sequence in the transmission (*saṅkramaṇa*) of its meaning. To explain: from hearing the word 'humanity' [there is the awareness] "we are beings who suffer birth and death, and we are not mentally detached. This [teacher, Utpaladeva], having become a servant of Śiva and desiring to benefit us, brings about the recognition that is the cause of the attainment of all success. And therefore, we ourselves have attained this very [recognition]." This is exactly the way that the transmission of the meaning of a *śāstra* to a qualified individual, [a transmission that is] like the reflection in a mirror, becomes

38 This verbal root, in the causative form *upapādayāmi*, also has connotations of providing a rational proof, which is clearly an intended meaning, given that the text that follows is dedicated to that task. The meaning "bringing about" in our translation is indebted to Rafaelle Torella's reading. See Torella (2002), 85, footnote 2: "The main meaning of the causative here is *samarthācaraṇa*, i.e., to act in such a way as to bring about the production of a certain action (in this case the awakening of recognition)."

39 ĪPK 1.1.1: *kathaṃcid āsādya maheśvarasya dāsyaṃ janasyāpy upakāram icchan | samastasaṃpatsamavāptihetuṃ tatpratyabhijñām upapādayāmi.*

the object of an optative or imperative verbal command (*liṅ* or *loṭ*). The meaning of the third person [in that case] culminates in the meaning of the first person, but not through indifference, because that would result in the negative consequence that both qualified and unqualified audiences would have the same cognition. For example, in the sentence "those who desire good health should take myrobalan," or "you should take it," there is a second stage in the transmission (*saṅkrānti*) of the meaning of the sentence, in the form "we should take it." This happens to a qualified individual—that is, only to one who considers the attainment of the actual goal [good health], which represents the third stage and occurs in the future, to be already realized by him [or "to pertain to him"]. This is because he has entered into [an awareness] of his true nature, untouched by time, and therefore partakes in the beautiful awareness that is expanded consciousness, because he is identifying with his own fullness. But the other type of person has a lack of qualification, which is essentially indifference, since [the statement] does not assume this form [of first-person awareness] … By means of this verse, the [author] has brought disciples face-to-face with Śiva and illuminated for them the purpose [of the text], etc.[40]

40 ĪPV (1:26–28) ad *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* 1.1.1: *etacchlokākaraṇanasamaye ca śiṣyāṇām etadarthasaṅkramaṇakrameṇa parameśvaratādātmyam eva upajāyate tāvat | tathā hi janasyety ākarṇanād vayaṃ te jananamaraṇapīḍitā aparyudastavṛttayaś cāsmākam ayam upakāram icchan maheśvarasya dāsyam āsādya samastasaṃpatsamavāptihetuṃ tatpratyabhijñām upapādayati | tataś ca* [*tat*]*pratyabhijñām evaṃbhūtāṃ vayaṃ prāptā eveti | ittham eva hy adhikāriṇi śāstrārthasya bimbapratibimbavat saṅkrāntir loḍliṅādīnāṃ viṣayībhavatīti prathamapuruṣārtha uttamapuruṣārthe paryavasyati na tu tāṭasthyenādhikāryanadhikāriṇoḥ pratipattau viśeṣābhāvaprasaṅgāt | ārogyakāmāḥ śivāṃ sevantāṃ sevadhvam iti vā vākyārthasya sevāmahai ity evaṃrūpeṇa adhikāriṇi* [*dvitīyā kakṣyā*] *saṅkrāntau* [*tṛtīyakakṣyām*] *eva bhāvikoṭipatitām api puruṣārthasaṃpattim akālakalitasvarūpānupraveśena svātmīkṛtām abhimanyamāne tata eva vitatasaṃvitsundaraparāmarśe pūrṇatābhimānapratilambhād anyasya tu anevaṃrūpatvenaiva* [*anadhikāritā*] *tāṭasthyaprāṇā iti … etena ślokena īśvarasāṃmukhyaṃ vineyānāṃ prayojanādipratipādanaṃ ca kriyata iti*. The passage is from the KSTS edition of the ĪPV, but all words in brackets are alternative readings taken from the Bhāskarī edition (1:44–46), which replace the KSTS readings in each case. [Note: we take *saṅkrāntau* to govern *dvitīyā kakṣyā* (a second stage in the transmission), and take everything after *saṅkrāntau* to be modifying the word *adhikārin*. *Adhikārin* itself is in the locative because it is the place *to which* the meaning is being transmitted. This makes sense to us and is also in line with the *Bhāskarī* subcommentary on this passage, p. 45: *tad āstām avāntaram etat atigahanaṃ ceti sthitam etat. etena ślokena īśvarasāṃmukhyaṃ vineyānāṃ prayojanādipratipādanaṃ ca kriyata iti*.]

Here, we are told that when a qualified disciple hears Utpaladeva's benediction they do not remain aloof or indifferent, and thus their cognition does not simply remain as a third-person statement: "He will give rise to recognition." Rather, due to transmission, the cognition becomes a first-person awareness, "I give rise to recognition," meaning that the disciple has now identified with Utpaladeva's role and has thereby internalized his awakened state, described at the beginning of the passage as "becoming one with Śiva."[41] And this is tantamount to "coming face-to-face" with Śiva.

It is also explicitly defined by Abhinavagupta as a re-experience of Utpaladeva's own enlightened awareness:

> With the intention of transmitting to others the state of identity with [Śiva] whose powers have been perceived in his own revealed Self, and considering that success, free from obstacles, is preceded by communicating his own identity [with Śiva], the author [Utpaladeva] states his purpose [for composing the text]. He does this with the intention of engendering the capacity for merging with (*tādātmya*) Śiva [in his audience].[42]

To explain more clearly how this transmission takes place, Abhinavagupta, as he will again in the *Abhinavabhāratī*, turns to examples of texts that incite action. But initially, in the ĪPV, he draws not on Vedic sacrifice but on an

41 ĪPVV (1:22) ad *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* 1.1.1 clarifies more explicitly how this works: *śrotāpi prathamata etadvākyaṃ paṭhann eva evam antaḥ parāmṛśati aham adhunā evaṃvidhalokottararahasyopadeśabhājanatvaprāptyanumitād eva parameśvaraprasādān maheśvaradāsyaprāpaṇāpūrvikā pratyabhijñā yā amunā vyākhyātrā upapādyate tatra adhyeṣaṇatatsamarthācaraṇarūpaṃ prayojakavyāpāraṃ karomi yena aham api ācāryapadaprāptiyogyatayā parameśvaradāsyaṃ tān janān api prāpayya janopakāram icchan iti* "The audience, first studying this statement, has this inner awareness: 'I perform the act of instigation whose nature is bringing about the capacity to cause someone to act with respect to the recognition that was brought about by that explicator, which was preceded by his attainment of being a servant of Śiva by the grace of the supreme lord, which is inferred by the attainment of being a fitting receptacle of such an ultimate esoteric teaching. By that act of instigation, I too, given that I am now capable of taking on the mantle of teacher, am desiring the benefit of humanity, having caused those people also to become a servant of Śiva.'" In other words, the reader ideally realizes that they are the subject, rather than just the object, of Utpaladeva's salvific activity.

42 ĪPV (1:4) introducing *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* 1.1.1: *granthakāro 'parokṣātmani dṛṣṭaśaktikāṃ parameśvaratanmayatāṃ paratra saṃcikramayiṣuḥ svatādātmyasamarpaṇapūrvam avighnena tatsampattiṃ manyamānaḥ … parameśvaratādātmyayogyatāpādanabuddhyā prayojanam āsūtrayati.*

Ayurvedic medical prescription: one who seeks good health should use myrobalan.[43] Abhinavagupta describes three stages in the transformation of this statement. The first stage is directed at the reader, "One should use it" or even "You should use it." The second stage is when the reader has, through transmission, internalized this awareness: "I will use it." The third stage takes place in the future, when the result of eating myrobalan—the health it engenders—takes place. For Abhinavagupta, the point of this example is that the transmission between the first and second states—the uptake by the reader in the form of a first-person intention—only happens for a "qualified" individual, and a qualified individual is one who is not indifferent, which ultimately means here that they have the capacity to completely internalize Utpaladeva's intention to liberate them, and effectively transcend time. This seems to be a fancy way of saying that they consider the future result to be something that actually applies to *them*, and not to someone else or to some future version of them. In the case of the ĪPK, the transcendence of time goes the other direction too—it makes Utpaladeva's past existence coterminous with the moment of reception by the

43 This particular example is loaded and has a long and complex history that we regrettably cannot fully explore here. Suffice it to say that Ayurveda as a source of efficacious advice is explored philosophically in both early Nyāya and in Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*, but the issue at stake there is the nature of authority and not the philosophy of injunctions per se. Kumārila, though he mentions Ayurveda offhandedly a few times, also neglects to treat it as a source of injunctions that needs to be theorized in its own right. The first Mīmāṃsaka to really take Ayurveda seriously as a source of injunctions, phrased in the optative and analogous to Vedic injunctions, is Maṇḍanamiśra in *Vidhiviveka* (pp. 169–170). Here he categorizes Vedic injunctions as a form of trustworthy advice in the same way as Ayurvedic advice. But he does not use the example of myrobalan. The first philosopher to actually use the specific example of eating myrobalan when discussing Ayurvedic injunctions is Jayantabhaṭṭa, who treats the example as particularly problematic for both Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara theories of injunction—both of these types of theorists, in Jayanta's estimation, need to *deny* the analogy between Vedic injunctions and the medical advice to eat myrobalan in order to defend their own theories. See *Nyāyamañjarī* 2:96–133, as well as Raghunathan (2010). Abhinavagupta was demonstrably aware of all this background, and with Jayantabhaṭṭa in particular—he even borrows specific ideas on injunctions from Jayantabhaṭṭa (see ĪPV 2:133 and also 1:17, which borrow directly from *Nyāyamañjarī* 2:132. See also ĪPV 2:20–21, where Abhinavagupta follows Maṇḍanamiśra in assimilating commands to advice and argues, perhaps following Prabhākara, that it is the suppression of time that allows for people to imitate others in the past). We think it highly likely, therefore, that he is taking this example of using myrobalan from Jayanta, and that he is aware—and expected his readers to be aware—that Jayanta had shown it to be problematic from both a Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara perspective. This further undermines the claims of Pollock (2010) and Ollet (2016) that Kumārila is the only or even the central source for Abhinavagupta's ideas on textual transmission, and lends credence to the argument of David (2014) that Jayanta and Maṇḍanamiśra are both key sources here.

reader. Rather than simply transmission from one place to another, what is really happening, at a deeper level, is that guru and disciple are both entering into the "heart" of Śiva, beyond time and space.

In other words, only someone who understands that their self transcends time and identifies with the future self who achieves the goal will actually succeed in transforming the third-person advice into a first-person intention. In the case of the ĪPK, this qualification applies to someone who identifies with the "humanity" to be helped in the verse, and who therefore feels themself to be the recipient of the compassionate activity declared in Utpaladeva's benediction, leading them ultimately to identify with Utpaladeva himself. Trust is presumably a further prerequisite. In the case of medical advice, most people only follow the prescription of a doctor that they trust. In the case of the ĪPK, the implication is that trust in Utpaladeva is a prerequisite for this transmission[44] and part of the inference itself, specifically confidence that he is truly a liberated being endowed with the capacity to liberate others. Finally, the fact that this process is also described in the passage as a reflection (*pratibimba*) only further underscores its connection to Abhinavagupta's aesthetics, where a literary connoisseur's heart/mind is more than once described as similar to a highly polished mirror.[45]

5 Setting Them Side by Side

In these examples, transmission is what allows the reader to internalize statements in a text—to feel them as their own by loosening divisions in time, space, or particularity and identifying with others, be it an author, a character, humanity as such, or one's future self. In the case of Utpaladeva and the case of a poem, it is the experience of the author that is being transmitted. Both the *Abhinavabhārati* and the ĪPK commentaries describe this shift as a

44 Jayaratha, Abhinavagupta's learned commentator on the *Tantrāloka*, sees Abhinavagupta's own self-reference in *Tantrāloka* 1.16 as a way of establishing his trustworthiness as an author. This very notion of "trustworthiness" as applied to Utpaladeva is also seen in Abhinavagupta's commentary on the ĪPK, where he argues that this is the function of Utpaladeva's self-reference as the son of Udayākara in the final verse of the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*. See Abhinavagupta's *vimarśinī* ad *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* 4.18.

45 *Dhvanyāloka* 38: … *kāvyānuśīlanābhyāsavaśād viśadībhūte manomukure varṇanīyatanmayībhavanayogyatā* … 'When the mirror of the mind is polished by the practice of studying poetry, [connoisseurs] are capable of totally identifying with what is being described …' Gnoli (1985), 89–90: *vimalamukurakalpībhūtanijahṛdayaḥ … sāmājiko* 'The spectator … whose own heart has become like a stainless mirror …'

third-person statement becoming a first-person awareness, both specify that it only happens to a qualified audience, and both describe this transmission event with the term *saṅkramaṇa*. Interestingly, this particular type of transmission only takes place through indirect expression. It is well known that in his aesthetics, Abhinavagupta follows earlier theorists in insisting that *rasa* cannot be stated directly and can only be indirectly implied. But he also seems to have the same attitude with respect to religious works, where he says in multiple places that the most important things cannot be said directly and should only be hinted at in texts (and thereby successfully transmitted). For example, speaking of Utpaladeva's opening verse, he says:

> And understanding of the literal words is often fitting because it is beneficial to all people, for it instantly goes to the heart of everyone without exception. But the implied meaning is only for the few, since not everyone can reflect upon the [higher] reality of speech that manifests through one's own intuitive insight (*pratibhā*), and a phenomenon devoid of the reflective nature of speech is as good as non-existent.[46]

He also says the same thing rather explicitly towards the end of his *Tantrasāra*. Speaking of his reference to the highly esoteric Goddess Kālasaṃkārṣaṇī as the true basis of all reality (a claim he rarely makes explicitly), he writes: "This meaning, having been spread out across various texts that I have composed, in commentaries, independent works, hymns, and others, should be carefully examined. An important matter should not be divulged all at once, nor should it be kept completely secret."[47]

Another more interesting parallel between *rasa* and the type of recognition transmitted by the ĪPK is that both can be aided by inference in the early stages, but neither is reducible to inference, and neither culminates in a mere inferential awareness. We have already mentioned how this works in the ĪPK—the inferential proofs laid out in the text assist or aid in eliciting an enlightened awareness that is not just the apprehension of an object but a (non-inferential) re-apprehension of one's own subjectivity. But this is also the case in the aes-

46 ĪPV (1:9) ad *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* 1.1.1: *svaśabdaparāmarśaś ca sarvajanahitatvād yuktiyuktaḥ sa hi sarvasyaiva jhaṭiti hṛdayaṃgamo 'rthākṣiptas tu katicid eva prati svapratibhoditavāktattvāvamarśāsaṃbhavād vāktattvāvamarśaśūnyasya ca prakāśasyāprakāśakalpatvāt*. The concluding formulation here echoes Bhartṛhari *Vākyapadīya* 1.116. We thank an anonymous reviewer for noting this connection.

47 *Tantrasāra* chapter 4, pp. 30–31: *eṣa ca arthaḥ tatra tatra madviracite vivaraṇe prakaraṇastotrādau vitatya vīkṣyaḥ | na atirahasyam ekatra khyāpyaṃ na ca sarvathā gopyam*.

thetics as well. In the *Dhvanyālokalocana*, for example, Abhinavagupta says: "savoring [*rasa*] … in drama is distinct from ordinary inferential awareness, although it uses that [inferential awareness] as a means in the initial stages."[48]

Finally, there are ethical dimensions to all of these examples, even in the aesthetics. In the ĪPK the ethics is rooted in the fact that identifying with Śiva is simply the highest and most valuble goal to which one can aspire. And though in literature Abhinavagupta gives pride of place to pleasure over mere ethical training, the pleasure he has in mind is not ethically neutral. It is intimately connected, through the notion of propriety (*aucitya*), to the ethical evaluation of situations, and to an education in the proper emotional responses that different situations merit—that some types of actions or relationships are proper and pleasing and others lack beauty and propriety, or that they are only pleasing when properly connected to feelings like laughter or disgust.[49] This means that, although the ethical lessons of literature are not reducible simply to statements like "One should behave like Rāma and not like Rāvaṇa,"[50] they are nevertheless ethical lessons, and they are the types of general awareness about situations that *could* be paraphrased as injunctions. Moreoever they lead people to act ethically in real life situations, even after the aesthetic experience is over.[51] In fact, Abhinavagupta tells us that "Princes and so forth, who must

48 *Dhvanyāloka* 187: *rasanā … laukikānumānapratīter vilakṣanā | tāṃ ca pramukhe upayatayā saṃdadhānā*. A similar comment is made in *Abhinavabhāratī*. See Gnoli (1985), 91.

49 Leavitt (2011); Cuneo (2015); Reich (2021), 125–131. A similar point is also made by Bansat-Boudon (1992), 403.

50 *Dhvanyāloka* 190: *yathā rāmas tathāham ity upamānātiriktāṃ rasāsvādopāyasvapratibhāvijṛmbhitārūpāṃ vyutpattim ante karoti* 'In addition to the anology it furnishes that we should behave like Rāma [and not like Rāvaṇa], it produces in the final result an expansion of one's imagination which serves as the means of tasting the rasa.' This is the translation of Cuneo (2015), 77.

51 Gnoli (1985), 90: *sāmājiko deśakālaviśeṣaṇāparāmarśena 'evaṃkāriṇām idam' iti liṅātmakavidhisamarpakasaṃvijjātīyam eva … śubham ācaraty aśubham samujjhati* 'Without considering the particulars of time or space, the spectator [enjoying an awareness] that 'this happens to those who do such and such' … which is the same type of awareness that yields injunctions that have the optative mode as their essence … [consequently] he does the good and avoids the bad [in real life].' Note the indirect connection here between the awareness and the injunctions. The awareness is not itself an injunction. It is simply the *type* of awareness that injunctions are rooted in. Note also that Abhinavagupta is following Maṇḍanamiśra here in collapsing the difference between injunctive and descriptive statements, and also that he is employing his own favored model of injunctions here, in which abstract and timeless statements of causal fact ('if one does x, y will happen') are primary, and yield injunctions, which are essentially just a different way of stating a fact, under the right circumstances ('you, who want y, should do x'). Conceptually, the connection between aesthetics and ethics is rooted in Abhinavagupta's particular form of

be ethically trained [because] they possess the ability to accomplish the aims of all their subjects, are given ethical instruction in the four [types of] human goals (*puruṣārtha*) by means of 'entering into the heart.' And 'entering into the heart' is fundamentally the relishing of *rasa*."[52] Now, it seems as if Abhinavagupta is saying here that *rasa* enters into the heart of the princes and somehow seduces them into acting properly. This makes sense, and this is how the line has typically been interpreted.[53] But it is equally possible, perhaps even likely given everything this study has brought to light, that it is rather *the princes who are made to enter into 'the heart'*—the heart being Abhinavagupta's term for that mode where time, space, and individuality melt away but transpersonal subjectivity remains—and that this is the basis for their moral training, which is ultimately a transmission from an author that such and such a situation or relationship is properly pleasing, or sad, or funny. It is even possible that Abhinavagupta is being deliberately coy or ambiguous here, writing simultaneously for a general audience, who will simply read it as the *rasa* entering the hearts of the princes, and for initiates who know his deeper theology, and know what the 'the heart' really is.[54] In any event, what is revealed by this comparison of Abhinavagupta's aesthetics to his religious works is that this kind of ethical training, just like Vedic statements and Ayurvedic statements, can only be "transmitted" by the dissolution, or at least the loosening, of time, space, and ego.

To be sure, there are important differences between all these examples. The aesthetics and the ĪPK do not lead one to directly and personally internalize,

---

non-dual theology: the elements of the ordinary world are not separate from Śiva, nor are they merely an illusion; they are how he takes form, and enlightenment does not discard them but appreciates them in their true nature. In the same way, the elements of a literary scene, which contain ethical relationships, are not separate from the *rasa* at the heart of the scene but are the way it takes shape. So relishing the *rasa* and relishing the (ethical) form that it takes are not separate. See Reich (2021), 125–131, for an examination of how this works. See also Cuneo (2015).

52 *Dhvanyāloka* 336: *atha cāvaśyaṃ vyutpādyāḥ prajārthasampādanayogyatākrāntā rājaputraprāyās teṣāṃ hṛdayānupraveśamukhena caturvargopāyavyutpattir ādheyā | hṛdayānupraveśaś ca rasāsvādamaya eva*.

53 For example, see Ingalls, Masson, and Patwardhan (1990), 437, and Reich (2021), 126.

54 Sanderson (2005) describes another example of Abhinavagupta simultaneously referring to the ordinary and esoteric meanings of 'the heart' in his famous opening verse to the *Tantrasāra*. It's true that he refers to "the heart" many times in the aesthetics in the ordinary sense. But across his oeuvre he also refers to the "heart" many times in this deeper sense, and these references are not irrelevant. See also the opening benediction of the *Dhvanyālokalocana* where Abhinavagupta refers to a higher, transpersonal reality called "*sarasvatyās tattvam*" in which both poet and connoisseur participate, and which ultimate constitutes their very nature (*kavisahṛdayākhyam*). For a later elaboration of this same idea by Jayaratha (13th cent.), see Reich (2020).

as an individual, a statement in a text. It is not as if one thinks "I am Rāma who is sad because of losing Sītā," or, "I, personally, as an individual, am Śiva." Nor do aesthetics lead one to undertake an action that is only instrumentally valuable, as in the examples of Vedic sacrifice and Ayurveda, where one undertakes an action that is not itself pleasant for the sake of future happiness. In the case of studying the ĪPK and aesthetics, it is not as if one is led to undertake an action that is separate from its future results. Rather, in these cases, the attitude or cognitive action adopted is itself the result, and it is intrinsically blissful. Nor is *rasa* the same as the kind of experience a qualified reader receives from studying the ĪPK; it does not fundamentally liberate the audience, and Abhinavagupta distinguishes the levels of bliss inherent in *rasa* and *mokṣa* at various points, although both are characterized as otherworldly (*lokottara*) experiences.[55] Moreover, as we have mentioned, implication and indirect statements seem to be quite more important in the ĪPK and in the aesthetics, whereas they are much less so in the Vedic and Ayurvedic examples. So Abhinavagupta is not strictly equating all these experiences. Rather, he is relying on a common conceptual apparatus—transmission—to explain all of them; to explain how it is

55 This idea that literature leads to a preliminary and non-ultimate form of bliss that is superseded by the ultimate bliss of devotion to God is found in *Dhvanyāloka* 3.43b: *yā vyāpāravatī rasān rasayituṃ kācit kavīnām navā dṛṣṭir yā pariniṣṭhitārthaviṣayonmeṣā ca vaipaścitī | te dve apy avalambya viśvam aniśa nirvarṇayanto vayaṃ śrāntā naiva ca labdham abdhiśayan tvadbhaktitulyaṃ sukham* 'After devoting myself to that wondrous (*kācit*) fresh insight of poets that is engaged in relishing the aesthetic sentiments and the insight of intellectuals that correctly reveals the domain of objects, and ceaselessly contemplating the world, I have become weary. [Indeed,] a joy that is equal to devotion to you, O [Viṣṇu] lying upon the ocean, was certainly not found [in these endeavors].' Abhinavagupta's commentary on this verse expands on the hierarchy of enjoyments that the verse alludes to. See the *locana* ad *Dhvanyāloka* 3.43b: *evaṃ prathamam eva parameśvarabhaktibhājaḥ kutūhalamātrāvalambitakavipramāṇikobhayavṛtteḥ punar api parameśvarabhaktiviśrāntir eva yukteti | sakalapramāṇapariniścitadṛṣṭādṛṣṭaviṣayaviśeṣajaṃ yat sukhaṃ yad api lokottaraṃ rasacarvaṇātmakaṃ tata ubhayato 'pi parameśvaraviśrāntyānandaḥ prakṛṣyate tadānandavipruṇmātrāvabhāso hi rasāsvāda ity uktaṃ prāg asmābhiḥ | laukikaṃ tu sukhaṃ tato 'pi nikṛṭaprāyaṃ bahuttaraduḥkhānuṣaṅgād* 'It follows that [this stanza applies] to a person who was first engaged in devotion to Parameśvara, who then out of curiosity dedicated himself to the occupation of both poet and philosopher, [only to] once again [realize] that coming to rest in devotion to the Parameśvara is the best. The bliss of reposing in God is superior to both the joy that arises from accurately determining different objects, both seen and unseen, by means of every instrument of valid knowledge as well as the otherworldly joy that consists in relishing aestheticized emotion, for the relishing of *rasa* is [but] a reflection of a drop of that [bliss of reposing in God]. We have set this forth earlier. However, worldly joy is generally even lower than this [relishing of *rasa*], because it is enmeshed in countless [forms of] suffering.'

that texts can lead readers not to "aloof" understandings of their contents, as if they were inert objects to be regarded from a distance, but to an internalization and re-experience of the meaning of the texts themselves. And in the case of both the ĪPK and poetry, the meanings that are thus transmitted are meanings that were first experienced by authors, and which then "spilled over" into the text, where they were preserved for posterity, frozen, as it were, to be later melted by the appropriate reader back into their true, liquid form. Textuality, therefore, can be a mode of transmission, in the full tantric sense.

6 Conclusion: Textuality and the Protection of Lineage

To conclude, we would like to reflect on why Abhinavagupta would have been so interested in exploring ways that texts can stand in for the living presence of authors and ultimately perform a function that was originally the provenance only of enlightened gurus during initiatory encounters?

The answer to this, at least in part, may be found in a consideration of the anxieties and threats facing Abhinavagupta's form of Kaula Śaivism. Abhinavagupta was cognizant that lineages of revealed truth are often ruptured or fall into obscurity, a fact that he narrates about in his own received lineage in the *Tantrāloka*.[56] In Abhinavagupta's tradition, what fends against the risk of dilution or a break in the lineage[57] is the intervention of individual Sid-

56 *Tantrāloka* 36.12–14: *teṣāṃ krameṇa tanmadhye bhraṣṭaṃ kālāntarād yadā | tadā śrīkaṇṭhanāthājñāvaśāt siddhā avātaran || tryambakāmardakābhikhyaśrīnāthā advaye dvaye | dvayādvaye ca nipuṇāḥ krameṇa śivaśāsane || ādyasya cānvayo jajñe dvitīyo duhitṛkramāt | sa cārdhatryambakābhikhyaḥ santānaḥ supratiṣṭhitaḥ || ataś cārdhacatasro 'tra maṭhikāḥ santatikramāt | śiṣyapraśiṣyair vistīrṇāḥ śataśākhaṃ vyavasthitaiḥ* 'When, during the intervening period, there was break (*bhraṣṭa*) in the lineage of these transmitters, [three] Siddhas, on the command of Śrīkaṇṭha, descended (*avātaran*): Tryambaka, Āmardaka, and Śrīnātha, each proficient in the nondual, dual, and nondual-cum-dual teachings of Śiva, respectively. Of the first lineage, a second is known through the line of his daughter. That is the well-established lineage called the Ardhatryambaka (Half-Tryambaka). And for this reason, on the basis of these lines of transmission, three-and-a-half orders proliferated through the [works of] generations of disciples who established innumerable branches.'

57 Here is a collation of citations that reference a "break" or "corruption," either of scriptural transmission or its Kashmirian reception (key terms are highlighted). *Śivadṛṣṭi* 7.108: *kalau pravṛtte yāteṣu teṣu durgamagocaram | kalāpigrāmapramukham* ***ucchinne*** *śivaśāsane*; *Śivasūtravārtika* 1.9–1.10ab: *daivākarir bhāskaro 'ham antevāsigaṇeritaḥ | yasmād* ***āgamavibhraṃśād*** *bhrānter bhramitabuddhayaḥ || sukumārā atas tāni sūtrāṇi vivṛṇomi ca*; *Śivasūtravimarśinī* second opening verse: *āsamañjasyam ālocya vṛttīnām iha tattvataḥ | śivasūtraṃ vyākaromi gurvāmnāya****vigānataḥ***; *Śivasūtravimarśinī* introductory passage: *kadācic cāsau dvaitadarśanādhivāsitaprāye jīvaloke rahasyasaṃpradāyo* ***mā vicchedīty*** *āśayato*.

dhas who transmit esoteric knowledge—a common motif across Kashmirian religious literature in these centuries. The continuity of his tradition is totally contingent on the stewardship of these Siddhas, rather than on the existence of impersonal institutions, and the event of these Siddhas' awakening is therefore foregrounded as a model to be reenacted by future masters. Gurus in this model of religious authority are tasked with "reenacting" revelatory truths in the form of a "sudden unfolding" in the "visionary consciousness" of their own inner reality.[58] In Kaula sources, this 'internal' revelation, can be directly transmitted through the mere presence of the master, often through a glance or speech.

However, Abhinavagupta was clearly aware that a person-centered lineage less grounded in institutionally-based codes and observances is more susceptible to interruptions if these masters die prior to the successful transmission of their innate awakened awareness. His model of transmission, wherein the author's consciousness is encoded in texts, arguably serves as a direct means for the revelatory power of his lineage to outlive the actual living presence of any generation of teachers. His most direct statement that a text itself can serve this function is the extraordinary claim found in the first chapter of the *Tantrāloka*:

> The wise person who constantly studies these thirty-seven chapters [of the *Tantrāloka*] becomes a living embodiment of Śiva … And it would be no surprise if a limited individual became one with Śiva by the [mere] glance of such a person![59]

Here Abhinavagupta directly states that the study of his text is enough to reach the goal of his system, embodied liberation, and furthermore, that the ardent student of his "words" will thus be endowed with the capacity to *transmit* this

58 This summarizes a point made by Alexis Sanderson, in his description of the Krama model of revelation that involves a reenactment of the awakening of the founding Siddha Jñānanetra in subsequent generations of masters. See Sanderson (2007), 307. For an explanation of how this relates to Abhinavagupta's theory of revelation, see Williams (2017), 258–260, particularly footnote 624.

59 *Tantrāloka* 1.284cd–286ab: *iti saptādhikām enāṃ triṃśataṃ yaḥ sadā budhaḥ | āhnikānāṃ samabhyasyet sa sākṣād bhairavo bhavet || saptatriṃśatsu saṃpūrṇabodho yad bhairavo bhavet | kiṃ citram aṇavo 'py asya dṛśā bhairavatām iyuḥ*. At the conclusion of the text, Abhinavagupta also reiterates this claim that the *Tantrāloka* itself has the power to bestow liberation. See Tantrāloka 37.32–33ab: *itthaṃ dadad anāyāsāj jīvanmuktimahāphalam | yathepsitamahābhogadātṛtvena vyavasthitam || ṣaḍardhasāraṃ sacchāstram upādeyam idaṃ sphuṭam* 'On account of the ease with which it bestows the great goal of liberation while living in the manner [just described], [and] well-established as a [text] that grants the ultimate [supernatural] enjoyments one could desire, this [*Tantrāloka*], the essence of the Trika, is a genuine systematic treatise that must certainly be adopted.'

awakening to others. Read together with our examination of the descriptions of the process of transmission in the *Abhinavabhāratī* and ĪPV, we are presented with a detailed account of the essential conditions and actual mechanisms by which such a textual transmission can take place, which would help ensure the preservation of charismatic lineages beyond the lifetimes of their gurus.

A preliminary account of the logic of Abhinavagupta's deployment of the concept transmission (*saṅkrānti*) across genres is now clear. In the *Abhinavabhāratī*, Abhinavagupta collates a number of terms from different philosophical systems to describe the process of aesthetic experience, but, as we have argued, he draws the notion of "transmission" from his tantric sources, and he rehearses this first, perhaps, in the ĪPV. This is because transmission provides a key for understanding how the very same experience can be transmitted or shared across time via a text. Put another way, it helps elucidate a mode of experience in which time dissolves and multiple beings have access to a transpersonal form of subjectivity. After composing the *Abhinavabhāratī*, he further adapts this phenomenological account of reading within the context of non-dual Śaiva philosophy in the ĪPVV.[60]

In doing so, Abhinavagupta works out new theoretical models for the transmission of knowledge within his tradition, showing how a text or its oral representation, including his own, can stand in the place of its author. Even if the lineage were to break, Utpaladeva's and Abhinavagupta's liberated consciousness, crystallized into the form of textual artifacts just as a poet's mood is crystallized into a poem, can thus be reanimated and reexperienced by future generations.

Once again, this account assumes the presence of anxieties surrounding the loss of a particular tradition that Abhinavagupta made extraordinary efforts to construct, as his *Tantrāloka*, *Tantrasāra*, and *Tantroccaya* clearly demonstrate. But anxiety may be too strong a word, since Abhinavagupta has a perspectival approach when it comes to the methods of awakening that comprise his tradition. From the important and ontologically real perspective of the diversity of the universe, subject to the passage of time, lineages can be lost, and creatively addressing the fragility of such a lineage through transmission is vital. But from the non-dual perspective, in which both the path and goal are one and nothing can produce or obstruct the light of consciousness, Abhinavagupta explicitly transcends any simplistic or literal notions of "transmission," going as far as to say that transmission doesn't ultimately exist because it relies upon a dualis-

60 Although, as we mention above, this textual chronology is not definitive given the possibility that Abhinavagupta may have composed some of these works simultaneously.

tic view of a transmitter and recipient divided by time and space. One of his hymns based on this view of a pathless path spells this out:

> In light of the Unsurpassable, what is this talk of a path in which worship, the worshipper, and the object of worship are distinct realities? To whom is transmission (*saṅkrāma*) given? By what means? How can there be gradations of immersion? Differentiated reality can no longer be separated from the unity of consciousness in the form of an "other." Alas! Everything is pure by nature in your direct experience, so don't senselessly worry![61]

Crucially, this non-dual vision does not exclude the reality of plurality and the transactional world.[62] The world of multiple agents and streams of knowledge, in which the fate of his own lineage figures, is, in Abhinavagupta's view, simply another way in which the unifying light of universal consciousness shines, and the difference between beings and different loci of awareness do not ultimately divide that light. This is, in fact, why individual beings can be so porous in the first place, and can bleed and blend into each other—they were never really separate to begin with. And yet, although this view might lead to apathy about the endeavor of preserving lineage (after all, who is there to preserve it for, really?), we see throughout Abhinavagupta's writing a deep investment in refining understanding, perfecting knowledge systems that can be passed on, and in constructing massive compendiums of ritual and metaphysical speculation. This is because, although non-duality is real, duality also, is real. And within the *real* diverse world that is structured through time, without which all notions of tradition become redundant, *saṅkrānti*, as Abhinavagupta reimagines it, becomes a potent vehicle for guaranteeing the enduring presence of the most esoteric and non-institutional streams of knowledge, no longer subject to the contingency of small esoteric communities, not to mention broader social

61 *Anuttarāṣṭikā* v. 3: *pūjapūjakapūjyabhedasaraṇiḥ keyaṃ kathānuttare saṅkrāmaḥ kila kasya kena vidadhe ko vā praveśakramaḥ | māyeyam na cidadvayāt paratayā bhinnāpy aho vartate sarvaṃ svānubhavasvabhāvavimalaṃ cintāṃ vṛthā mā kṛthāḥ.*

62 One of his most clear statements, to this effect, can be found in the *Mālinīvijayavārttika*. See *Mālinīvijayavārttika* 1.628–629: *na hy advayaṃ dvayāveśabādhenāsmābhir ucyate | tvatpakṣopagamo hy eṣa syād dvayaṃ tad dhi susphuṭam || idaṃ dvaitam idaṃ neti tad idaṃ ca dvayādvayam | iti yatra samaṃ bhāti tad advayam udāhṛtam* 'For we do not teach nonduality as contradicting the inclusion of duality. In fact, we provisionally accept your position—dualistic reality is vividly clear. "This is dual," "this is non-dual," and "this is unity in diversity." When we say "nondual" it refers to that [reality] in which all these [truths] equally shine.' We would like to thank Mrinal Kaul for bringing our attention to this passage.

and political vicissitudes and turmoil, which Abhinavagupta's Kashmir most certainly witnessed.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Christopher Wallis, Daniele Cuneo, Hugo David, and the two anonymous reviewers of this journal for their valuable input on this article.

References

Primary Sources

Anuttarāṣṭikā of Abhinavagupta. In appendix C of Pandey, K.C. *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study*. 2d ed. Varanasi, India: Chowkhambha, 1963.

Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana. *Dhvanyāloka with the Locana of Abhinavagupta and the Bālapriyā of Rāmaśāraka*, Ed. Pattābhirāma Śāstri. Kashi Sanskrit Series no. 135, Benares: Chowkamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1940.

Ciñcinīmatasārasamuccaya. Provisionally edited by Mark Dyczkowski on the basis of NAK MS no. 1–767, NAK MS no. 1–245, and NAK MS no. 1–145. Muktabodha Indological Research Institute.

Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī of Abhinavagupta. 2 vols. Edited by Mukund Ram Sastri. KSTS 22, 33. Srinigar, 1918–1921.

Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī of Abhinavagupta. Doctrine of Divine Recognition by Abhinavagupta with the Bhāskarī by Bhāskara. 3 vols. Edited by K.A. Subramania Iyer and K.C. Pandey. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986.

Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī of Abhinavagupta. 3 vols. Edited by Madhusudan Kaul Sastri. KSTS 60, 62, 65. Srinigar, 1938–1945.

Kaulasūtra of Guru Bhaṭṭaśrī-Śitikaṇṭha. BORI 445 of 1875–1876; paper, Kashmirian Devanāgarī.

Mālinīvijayavārttika of Abhinavagupta. *Mālinīvijayavārttika of Abhinava Gupta*. Edited by Madhusudan Kaul Shastri. KSTS 31. Srinagar, 1921.

Nyāyamañjarī of Jayantabhaṭṭa, with *Tippanī—Nyāyasaurabha* by the Editor. 2 vols. Ed. K.S. Varadacharya. Mysore: Oriental Research Institute (Oriental Research Institute Series 116 &
139). 1969 (vol. 1) and 1983 (vol. 2).

Nyāyasūtra of Gautama. Edited by Taranatha Nyayatarkatirtha. *Nyāyasūtra with Vātsyāyana's Nyāyabhāṣya*. Calcutta Sanskrit Series, 18 & 19. Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing & Publishing, 1936–1944.

Nyāyavārttika of Uddyotakara. Edited by Anantalal Thakur. *Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika of Bhāradvāja Uddyotakara*. Nyāyacaturgranthikā Vol. 2. New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 1997.

Śivadṛṣṭi of Somānanda. Edited by Madhusudan Kaul Shastri. *Śivadṛṣṭi of Somānanda with the vṛtti by Utpaladeva*. KSTS 54. Srinagar, 1934.

Śivasūtravārtika of Bhāskara. Edited by Jagadisha Chandra Chatterji. *Shiva Sūtra Vārttika by Bhāskara*. KSTS 4. Srinigar, 1916.

Śivasūtravimarśinī. Edited by Jagadish Chandra Chatterji and Rāmacandra Gadāri. *Śivasūtravimarśinī being the sūtras of Vasugupta, with the commentary called Vimarśinī by Kṣemarāja*. KSTS 1. Srinagar, 1911.

Tantrāloka of Abhinavagupta. Edited by Mukund Ram Sastri (Vol. 1), Madhusudan Kaula Shastri (vol. 2–12). *The Tantrāloka with Commentary by Rājānaka Jayaratha*. Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies 23, 28, 30, 35, 29, 41, 47, 59, 52, 57, 58. Srinagar, 1918–1938. Allahabad: Indian Press.

Tantrasadbhāvatantra. Partially and provisionally edited by Mark Dyczkowski, Muktabodha Indological Research Institute.

Tantravārttika. In *Mimamsadarśana*, Ānandāśrama SanskritSeries, vol. 97. Poona:
Ānandāśrama, 1970 (2nd ed.).

Timirodghāṭana. (MS) NAK 5–690 33 NGMPP A35/3. Transcription and partial draft edition by Somdev Vasudeva.

Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari. Edited by K.A. Subramanya Iyer. *Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari with the Commentaries Vṛtti and Paddhati of Vṛṣabhadeva, Kāṇḍa I*. Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, 1966. *The Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari with the Commentary of Puṇyarāja and the Ancient Vṛtti, Kāṇḍa II*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983. *Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari with the Commentary of Helārāja, Kāṇḍa III, Part I* [Samudeśas 1–7]. Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, 1963. *Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari wtih the Prakīrṇaprakāśa of Helārāja, Kāṇḍa II, Part II* [Samudeśas 8–14]. Poona: Deccan College, 1973.

*Vidhiviveka*h of Śrī Maṇḍana Miśra, with the Commentary *Nyāyakanikā* of Vācaspati Miśra.
Ed. Mahāprabhu Lāl Goswamī. Benares: Tārā Printing Works (Prācyabhāratī Series 8). 1978.

Yājñavalkyasmṛti. A Treatise on Dharma. Ed. Patrick Olivelle. Murty Classical Library of India 20, 2019.

Yogasūtrabhāṣya. In *Vācaspatimiśraviracitaṭīkāsaṃvalitavyāsabhāṣyasametāni Pātañjalayogasūtrāṇi, tathā bhojadevaviracitarājamārtaṇḍābhidhavṛttisametāni pātañjalayogasūtrāṇi*. Ed. Kāśinātha Śāstrī Āgāśe. Pune: Āanandāśramamundraṇālaye, Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 47,1904.

Secondary Sources

Aklujkar, Ashok. "Veda revelation according to Bhartṛ-hari." In *Bhartṛhari: Language, Thought and Reality*, pp. 1–97. Edited by Mithilesh Chaturvedi. Proceedings of the International Seminar Delhi, December 12–14, 2003. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2009.

Bansat-Boudon, Lyne. *Poétique Théâtre Indien: Lectures du Nāṭyaśāstra*. Publications de L'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 169. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1992.

Cuneo, Daniele. "Rasa: Abhinavagupta on the Purpose(s) of Art." In *The Natyasastra and the Body in Performance: Essays on Indian Theories of Dance and Drama*, pp. 72–88. Edited by Sreenath Nair. New York: McFarland, 2015.

David, Hugo. "Action Theory and Scriptural Exegesis in Early Advaita-Vedānta (1): Maṇḍana Miśra on upadeśa and iṣṭasādhanatā." In *Scriptural Authority, Reason, and Action*, pp. 271–318. Edited by Vincent Eltschinger and Helmut Krasser. Proceedings of a Panel at the 14th World Sanskrit Conference, Kyoto, September 1–5, 2009. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2013.

David, Hugo. "Time, Action and Narration. On Some Exegetical Sources of Abhinavagupta's Aesthetic Theory." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 44 (2014): 125–154.

David, Hugo. "Pratibhā as Vākyārtha? Bhartṛhari's Theory of "Insight" as the Object of a Sentence and Its Early Interpretations." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 49.5 (2021): 827–869.

Dyczkowski, Mark S.G. "The Inner Pilgrimage of the Tantras: The Sacred Geography of the Kubjikā Tantras with Reference to the Bhairava and Kaula Tantras." *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre* 12 (2001): pp. 43–100.

Dyczkowski, Mark S.G. *Manthānabhairavatantram: Kumārikākhaṇḍaḥ: The Section Concerning the Virgin Goddess of the Tantra of the Churning Bhairava*. 14 volumes edited, translated, and annotated by Mark Dyczkowski. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts & D.K. Printworld, 2009.

Ganser, Elisa. *Theater and Its Other: Abhinavagupta on Dance and Dramatic Acting*. Gonda Indological Studies, volume 23. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2021.

Gnoli, Raniero. *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*. Varanasi, India: Chowkhamba Press, 1985.

Goodall, Dominic & others. *The Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā: The Earliest Surviving Śaiva Tantra*. Volume 1. A Critical Edition & Annotated Translation of the Mūlasūtra, Uttarasūtra & Nayasūtra by Dominic Goodall in collaboration with Alexis Sanderson & Harunaga Isaacson, with contributions of Nirajan Kafle, Diwakar Acharya & others. Institut français de Pondichéry, École française d'Extreme-Orient, Departement of Indian and Tibetan Studies, Asien-Afrika-Institu, Universität Hamburg. Pondicherry: Ashram Press, 2015.

Kataoka, Kei. "Bhaṭṭa Jayanta on the purpose of Nyāya." 南アジア古典学 1 (2006): 147–174.

Lawrence, David. "Abhinavagupta's Philosophical Hermeneutics of Grammatical Persons." *The Journal of Hindu Studies* 1 (2008): 11–25.

Leavitt, Guy. "The Social in Kashmiri Aesthetics: Suggesting and Speciously Savoring Rasa in Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta." In *South Asian Texts in History: Critical Engagements with Sheldon Pollock*, pp. 267–292. Edited by Yigal Bronner, Whitney Cox, and Lawrence McCrea. Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2011.

Masson, Jeffrey L., and Moreshwar V. Patwardhan. *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics*. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969.

Muller-Ortega, Paul. *The Triadic Heart of Śiva: Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

Ollett, Andrew. "Ritual Texts and Literary Texts in Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics: Notes on the Biegnning of the 'Critical Reconstruction'." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 44 (2016): 581–595.

Pollock, Sheldon. "What Was Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka Saying?: The Hermeneutic Transformation of Indian Aesthetics." In *Epic and Argument in Sanskrit Literary History: Essays in Honor of Robert P. Goldman*, pp. 143–184. Edited by Sheldon Pollock. Delhi: Manohar, 2010.

Pollock, Sheldon. *A Rasa Reader: Classical Indian Aesthetics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.

Raghunathan, Rajam. *Why Do I Do as You Say?: The Theory of Command Utterances in Classical Indian Philosophy*. PhD Dissertation. Harvard University, Cambridge, 2010.

Ratié, Isabelle. *Utpaladeva on the Power of Action. A First Edition, Annotated Translation and Study of* Īsvarapratyabhijnāvivrti, *Chapter 2.1*. Harvard Oriental Series, volume 96. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2021.

Reich, James D. "Bhaṭṭanāyaka and the Vedānta Influence on Sanskrit Literary Theory." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 138.3 (2018): 533–557.

Reich, James D. (2020). "Poetry and the Play of the Goddess: Theology in Jayaratha's *Alaṃkāravimarśinī*." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 48.4 (2020): 665–674.

Reich, James D. *To Savor the Meaning: The Theology of Literary Emotions in Medieval Kashmir*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

Ruegg, David Seyfort. "La notion du voyant et du 'Connaisseur Suprême' et la question de l'autorité épistémique." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens und Archiv für indische Philosophie* 38 (1994): 403–419.

Sanderson, Alexis. "Purity and Power Among the Brahmans of Kashmir." In *The Category of Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, pp. 190–216. Edited by M. Carrithers, S. Collins and S. Kules. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Sanderson, Alexis. "A Commentary on the Opening Verses of the Tantrasāra of Abhinavagupta." In *Sāmarasya: Studies in Indian Arts, Philosophy, and Interreligious Dialogue in Honor of Bettina Baümer*, pp. 89–148. Edited by Sadananda Das and Ernst Furlinger. Delhi, India: D.K. Printworld, 2005.

Sanderson, Alexis. "The Śaiva Exegesis of Kashmir." In *Mélanges tantrique à la mémoire d'Hélène Brunner*, pp. 231–442. Edited by Dominic Goodall and André Padoux. Pondicherry, India: Institut Français d'Indologie / École Française d'Extreme-Orient, 2007.

Torella, Raffaele. *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā of Utpaladeva with the Author's Vṛtti: Critical edition and annotated translation*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002.

Venkatachalapathy, A.R. "Reading Practices and Modes of Reading in Colonial Tamil Nadu." *Studies in History* 10 (1994): 273–290.

Wallis, Christopher. *To Enter, To be Entered, To Merge: The Role of Religious Experience in the Traditions of Tantric Shaivism*. PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 2014.

Watson, Alex, Goodall, Dominic, & Anjaneya Sharma. *An Enquiry into the Nature of Liberation: Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha's Paramokṣanirāsakārikāvṛtti, A Commentary on Sadyojyotiḥ's Refutation of Twenty Conceptions of the Liberated State* (*Mokṣa*). For the First Time Critically Edited, Translated into English and Annotated. Pondicherry, India: Institut Français de Pondichéry, École Française d'Extreme-Orient, Collection Indologie 122, 2013.

Williams, Ben. *Abhinavagupta's Portrait of a Guru: Revelation and Religious Authority in Kashmir*. PhD dissertation. Harvard University, Cambridge, 2017.