



From the Sequence of the Sun-Goddess (*bhānavikrama*) to Time-Consumption (*kālagrāsa*): Some Notes on the Development of the Śākta Doctrine of the Twelve Kālīs

Aleksandra Wenta¹ 

Accepted: 17 August 2021 / Published online: 25 September 2021

© The Author(s) 2021

Abstract The doctrine of the twelve Kālīs is one of the earliest developments of the Śākta tradition of the Kālīkula/Kālīkrama/Mahānaya and it is well known in the later exegetical works of Abhinavagupta (10th–11th c.), Kṣemarāja (11th c.), and Maheśvarānanda (13th–14th c.). Although the twelve Kālīs have been treated to some extent in secondary literature, a systematic study of the development and reception of this doctrine has not been undertaken yet. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the Kālīkula scriptures are available in manuscript form, and methodical analysis of their contents remains a desideratum. In this article, I intend to examine selected tantric scriptures teaching the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs, focusing on the development of the constituent elements of this doctrine, as they appear in different tantric sources. This article traces the origins of the twelve Kālīs to the esoteric teaching of the Sun-Goddess, linked to the tradition of the Skeleton of Kālī (*kālīkaṅkāla/kaṅkāla*). It will argue that in the subsequent phase of the doctrine's development the solar context gradually diminished and an emphasis on the twelve goddesses' function as the destroyers of time became more and more pronounced. This tendency, in turn, influenced the codification of the twelve Kālīs as the fully-fledged doctrine of time-consumption (*kālagrāsa*), popular in the Trika and the Trika-inspired Krama sources.

Keywords Śāktism · Krama · Sun-Goddess · Kālagrāsa · Twelve Kālīs · Abhinavagupta · Goddess worship

✉ Aleksandra Wenta
aleksandra.wenta@unifi.it

¹ University of Florence (Universita degli Studi di Firenze), Florence, Italy

Introduction

The doctrine of the twelve Kālīs has been traditionally referred to as the “arising of the sequence of the wheel of Kālīs” (*kālicakrakramodaya*) and recognized as the core teaching of the northern tradition (*uttarāmnāya*/**uttaragharāmnāya*) of Śaivism. The Kashmiri exegetical writers often refer to the twelve Kālīs collectively as the ‘wheel of consciousness/energies’ (*saṃviccakra*, *ciccakra* or *śakticakra*). For the tenth-eleventh-century polymath Abhinavagupta, the founder of the Trika, the twelve Kālīs represent the “arising of the wheel of consciousness” (*saṃviccakraodaya*) unfolding in the wheel of the inexplicable (*anākhyacakra*) and they are described as such in detail in chapter IV of his *Tantrāloka*.¹ Abhinavagupta’s disciple Kṣemarāja, in his commentary (*nirṇaya*) on the first verse of the *Spandakārikā*, identifies the twelve Kālīs—called the ‘ray-goddesses’ (*marīcīdevīnām*)—with the ‘wheel of powers’ (*śakticakra*), which he glosses, in cosmological terms, as the cause (*hetu*) of the creative evolution of the universe (*vibhava*) that goes through the four stages of exertion, manifestation, relishing, and dissolution.² Kṣemarāja, probably drawing on Abhinavagupta’s *Kramastotra*,³ also adds theological interpretation to the understanding of the twelve Kālīs when he associates them with Manthānabhairava, the ancient god of the *Jayadrathayāmala*, who resides amidst the twelve goddesses as the lord of the wheel (*cakreśvara*).⁴ Among the later adaptations of the twelve Kālīs, one has to mention the concept of *kramamudrā* attested, for example, in the *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, which teaches the practice of assimilating into one’s own self the sequences of emission, permanence, and dissolution.⁵ These formulations represent, however, later versions of the *kālicakrakramodaya*, and are the outcome of the development that occurred in connection with philosophical, theological and ritualistic changes the doctrine underwent.

This article aims to examine some aspects of this development by focusing on the doctrinal changes, and, in some cases, intertextuality existing between earlier and later tantric texts attesting the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs. My analysis intends to demonstrate that the changes displayed by those sources have a double focus. On the one hand, it shows that earlier texts contributed to the set of core ideas that had a

¹ For the explanation of the twelve Kālīs as the *saṃviccakra* in Abhinavagupta’s *Tantrāloka*, see Sanderson (1986, pp. 197–204; Sanderson, 1995, pp. 70–75; Silburn, 1975).

² Kṣemarāja, *Spandanirṇaya* (p. 7): *Śakticakravibhavaprabhavam iti –śaktinām sṛṣṭiraktādi marīcīdevīnām cakram dvādaśātmā samuhas tasya yo vibhava udyogāvabhāsanacarvaṇavilāpanātmā krīḍāḍambaras tasya prabhavam hetum/*

³ In Abhinavagupta’s *Kramastotra* (v.28), the worship of the twelve goddesses in the form of rays of consciousness (*saṃvidraśmi*) is conceived as the means of worshipping Bhairava. In this way, the practitioner himself becomes Manthānabhairava churning his twelve energies as the possessor of power (*śaktimān*) and recognizes the single-taste of the entire universe (*jaḡadekarasa*).

⁴ Kṣemarāja, *Spandanirṇaya* (p. 7): *etā hi devyaḥ śrīmanmanthānabhairavaṃ cakreśvaram ālīngya sarvadaiva jagatsarādikrīḍam saṃpādayantī ity āmnāyaḥ/Sanderson (2007a, p. 356) mentions that the source of this concept may be the Kalpa of the *Mahālakṣmītantra* that is found at the end of the fourth *ṣaṭka* of the *Jayadrathayāmala*. For the Sanskrit text of this passage, see Sanderson (2007a: 356, fn. 413).*

⁵ See Kṣemarāja’s commentary on the *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, v. 19, p. 104.

direct influence on the development of the doctrine in later texts. On the other hand, doctrinal modifications call our attention to the fact that those concepts, which provided different emphases in the formulation of the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs, were directly affected by the type of discourse that appear to have been dominant at the time when a particular text was composed. With this in mind, I argue that the development of the doctrine proceeded from a more esoteric Kula/Kaula phase to a more philosophically oriented Trika-Pratyabhijñā phase. As the twelve Kālīs drifted away from their early Kula/Kaula orientations—deeply rooted in the teaching of the Sun-Goddess (*bhānavīkrama*)—, they became enveloped with a new philosophical outlook that combined the Krama notion of the four-fold sequence⁶ with a Trika notion of the cognizer, the cognition, and the cognizable, under the concept of *anākhyakrama*. This process of ‘rationalization’ reached its peak in Abhinavagupta’s formulation of *saṃviccakrodāya* where the key metaphysical concepts associated with the twelve Kālīs, such as ‘fire of time’ (*kālāgni*) or ‘great time’ (*mahākāla*), became equated with the different levels of the cognizer borrowed from the Pratyabhijñā system. Due to the abundance of textual material, most of which has not yet been edited, this study can only provide a preliminary outline of the development mentioned above, and also point to some new lines of inquiry about this understudied tantric doctrine.

The Twelve Kālīs and the Sun-Goddess in the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* and the *Jayadrathayāmala*

The doctrine of the twelve Kālīs has its roots in the esoteric teachings of the Sequence of the Sun-Goddess (*bhānavīkrama*) or the Kula of the Sun-Goddess (*bhānavīkula*) propounded by Niṣkriyānanda. Niṣkriyānanda was one of the early Krama *siddhas* and the preceptor of the Higher Krama of the Oral Instruction (Sanderson, 2007a, p. 333), who transmitted the teachings to his spiritual son, and the *siddha* whose appearance was that of a tribal (*śabara*), by the name Vidyānanda or Vidyāśabara.⁷ Both Niṣkriyānanda and Vidyānanda feature as the earliest ‘human’ teachers of the Krama tradition in the *Devīpañcaśataka*.⁸ The exposition of the *bhānavīkrama* attributed to Niṣkriyānanda and transmitted to Vidyānanda is found in the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā*, one of the two texts comprising the tradition of the *Uttaragharāmnāya (Sanderson, 2007a, p. 252). The *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* is

⁶ Depending on the tradition, the *krama*, or the method of liturgy in which the deity is worshipped through the sequence is either fourfold, i.e., arranged as *śṛṣṭi* (emission), *sthiti* (permanence), *saṃhāra* (dissolution), *anākhyā* (inexplicable), or fivefold, with *bhāsā* (luminosity).

⁷ CMSS 7.181-183: Vidyānanda dwelled in the cremation grounds and practiced nocturnal vigilance (*niśāṭana*). He was a *vīra* who was intent on the practice of the wheel (*cakrācāra*). The tradition associates him with a *śivapīṭha* called Śrīśailaṃ; to the north of which, on a mountain with many peaks was a divine cave made of gold, where Vidyānanda worshipped with the aim of attaining the “knowledge of inactivity” (*niṣkriyājñāna*). His guru, Niṣkriyānanda was pleased with him and transmitted to him the esoteric teachings of the *bhānavīkrama*.

⁸ The third *paṭala* of the *Devīpañcaśataka* refers to the worldly lineage (*manvogha*) of the Krama which begins with Niṣkriyānanda and his wife Jñānadīptyā. The transmission follows through Vidyānanda and Raktā, Śāktyānanda and ends with Śivānanda, who might have been Jñānānetra.

found in chapter seven of the twelfth century *Ciñcinīmatasārasamuccaya*. Despite the rather late date of this scripture, internal evidence indicates that the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* is likely to contain some early material on the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs, for it aligns on critical points with the *Jayadrathayāmala*, as will be shown below. Unlike other Kālikula/Kālikrama scriptures and exegetical works, the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* does not place the twelve Kālīs in the *anākhyaakrama*, but treats them independently as the central teaching of the *bhānavīkrama*. The names of the twelve Kālīs⁹ worshipped as part of the *pūjākrama* correspond to those given in the *Devīpañcaśataka*, known also as the *Kālikulapañcaśataka*, with the exception of the thirteenth Kālī in the middle, who is substituted by the goddess Kumārī. While the twelve Kālīs should be worshipped with the mantra *hrīm śrīm*, Kumārī should be worshipped at the end of the twelve (*dvādaśānta*),¹⁰ i.e., at the end of the worship of the twelve Kālīs and at the symbolic location of the yogic body that is twelve inches above the head (the place of the *praśānta*). The latter, sometimes identified with the rise of the *kuṇḍalinī*, is the place where the mantra becomes the most subtle (beyond any perception in *uccāra*).

The goddess of the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* is called Sūryakulakṛṣodarī and her name points to the early Kālikula's association with the Saura tradition that has already been mentioned by Sanderson.¹¹ She is defined in Nāgārjunian terms as being 'empty of inherent existence' (*niḥsvabhāva*). From her own nature, a wheel arises, which is established in the solar course of consciousness, consciousness being identified with the sun.¹² The wheel manifests (lit. "shines") as the reflection (*pratibimba*) eager only to devour the mirror.¹³ The text gives the following definition of the *kālikākrama* (The Sequence of the Kālīs): "Kālikākrama is the tradition of the twelve".¹⁴ In another passage, we read: "Kālī, the terrible one, she, who is black as collyrium, is the Sun-Goddess (*bhānavī*) of the twelve risen suns."¹⁵

⁹ CMSS 7.244–249: These are, (1) Sṛṣṭikālī, (2) Sthitikālī, (3) Saṃhārakālī, (4) Raktakālī, (5) Sukālī, (6) Yamakālī, (7) Mṛtyukālī, (8) Bhadrakālī, (9) Paramārkakālī, (10) Mahāmārtāṇḍakālī, (11) Rudrakālī, and (12) Mahākālī.

¹⁰ CMSS 7.249: *madhye tu paramā devī kumārī kulabhakṣaṇī/ dvādaśānte tu sampūjyā pūrvoktavidhiṃ vallabhe//*

¹¹ Sanderson (2009, p. 57) has already argued that the existence of strong solar elements in the early Kālikula scriptures can be explained to be either the result of borrowing by the Śāktas an independent Saura tradition that was known to have had their own canon of scriptures, or an independent development within the Śaiva-Śākta fold. The Śāktas worshipped the Sun under the name of Vīra or Vīreśvara, often accompanied by the goddess Bhargāsikhā. These names also employed in the Śaiva and Smārta Kashmirian scriptures in reference to the sun-god and his consort at the Mārtāṇḍatūrtha.

¹² CMSS 7.171cd-172ab: *Sā cid ā niḥsvabhāvatvāt sūryakulakṛṣodarī// tatsvarūpoditam cakram cidbhānavarkagatisthitam/*

¹³ CMSS 7.172cd: *pratibimbam ivābhātī bimbagrāsaikalampaṭam/* The employment of the mirror metaphor to describe the relationship between the main Kālī and the other twelve Kālīs is also attested in the *Tantrarājatantrāvatāratotra* by Viśvāvarta, where the *śakticakra* is compared to "a single face reflected in [twelve] mirrors" (Sanderson 2007a, p. 257). The same simile is found in the *Śrīkālikāstotra* of Jñānanetraṇātha (see below).

¹⁴ CMSS 7.160: *śṛṇu devī pravakṣyāmi kālikākramam uttamam/ dvādaśaiva param bhadre saṃpradāyam vadāmy aham//*

¹⁵ CMSS 7.205ab: *kālī kālāñjanī bhīmā dvādaśoditabhānavī/*

The solar symbol is also employed to denote the epistemological goal of the *bhānavikrama*, namely the “sun of knowledge” (*jñānārka*, *bodhabhāskara*). In one passage, a more elaborate description of the practice that leads to this goal is given:

When the act of abandoning and grasping [the perceptions], [which takes place] through the distinction of giving up and taking, has been dissolved, then the one who knows the [true] reality, seeing the sun of knowledge, may make it manifest.¹⁶

In another passage of the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā*, *bhānavikula* is compared to the wheel of destruction that is imagined, in cosmological terms, as the devouring fire of consciousness (*grāsaghasmara*) that consumes the three worlds.¹⁷ This fiery image, often termed as the fire of time (*kālāgni*) will persevere in other Krama sources and Trika scriptures and will be commonly employed to designate the all-consuming function of the twelve Kālīs.¹⁸

Among other features of the goddess Sūryakulakṛṣodarī that seem to form an important part of the *bhānavikrama* teaching is her association with the process of sensory experience. In this regard the goddess is identified with Kaulinī Śakti/Kuleśī, which points to the Kula/Kaula roots of the Kālīkula.¹⁹ Kaulinī Śakti is primarily the enjoyer of all sensory experience (*sarvabhogabhuk*). The process of sensory experience is conceptualized, in phenomenological rather than theological terms, as one of withdrawal (*saṃhāra*), in which the obtainment of the object of perception (i.e., sound, touch, etc.) generated through the bliss of relishing (*rasanā*) becomes dissolved in the activity of the sense-organs; once this activity ceases, the supreme wonder arises.²⁰ In order to explain the actual practice that helps to achieve “the supreme wonder”, the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* seems to allude to the Kaula method of sexual intercourse as follows:

Having united the sexual organs in the course of reciprocal rite, when, upon abandoning one mental state, the mind (*citti*) does not grasp another, which

¹⁶ CMSS 7.234: *hānādānavibhedena tyāgagraha parikṣayel nirikṣamānas tattvajño jñānārkaṃ saṃprakāśayet//*.

¹⁷ CMSS 7.213.

¹⁸ The image of the great fire will be retained by Abhinavagupta in the *Tantrasāra* (chap. 5, ed. Śāstrī, 1918, pp. 36–37) in his description of *dhyāna* in the *ānavopāya* during which the adept is instructed to visualize, as vividly as possible, the Great Fire of Bhairava in the form of the twelve flames of energy (i. e., *śakti-jvālā-dvādaśaka* as the twelve Kālīs). This fiery conflagration proceeds from the visualization of the three constituent parts of the cognitive process symbolized by fire, sun, and moon going through the phases of *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *saṃhāra*, and *viśrānti* in relation to the external objects.

¹⁹ Indeed, Matsyendranātha, known also as Mīnanātha, whom Jayaratha identifies as the *avatāraka* of the Kula teachings in the *pīṭha* of Kāmarūpa (Sanderson, 2007a, p. 264) appears in the mythical lineages of the Krama teachings (*siddhakrama*) of the Kaliyuga in the *Devīpañcaśataka*, where he is accompanied by his consort Koṅkāmbā and worshipped in the *sṛṣṭikrama*. The anonymous *Khapañcakastotra* also considers Matsyendranātha to be the teacher of the Kaliyuga.

²⁰ A very similar practice is quoted as the passage of the *Mahānayaparakāśa* (which however could not be identified in the texts available to us at present) in the *Mahārthamañjarīparimāla* (v. 35, p. 81): *Bhāvavṛttiṣu tāś citte cittam samvidi sā pare/ vyomny astam gamito yatra krama ullaṅghanātmakāḥ//*.

immediately arises, then, the supreme reality, which is one's own true nature, manifests.²¹

One has to notice that the practice of focusing attention on an interval between the two perceptions, similar to the one described above, also features in a number of Trika and Spanda texts, such as Abhinavagupta's commentary on the *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*²², the *Spandakārikā* (v.41),²³ and the *Vijñānabhairava* (v.62). Another point worth noticing is that the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* considers the *bhānavīkrama* to be a part of the tradition of the Skeleton of Kālī (*kālikāṅkāla*), of which we unfortunately know nothing about. In this regard, the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* avers thus:

O goddess, [I will tell you] the tradition of the Skeleton of Kālī²⁴, the one taught by the guru, its single characteristics being one's own perception, the supreme plane of the inexplicable (*anākhya*). Listen, o goddess, I will tell you the supreme sequence of the Kālīs. O Bhadra, I will tell you the supreme tradition of the twelve.²⁵

Importantly, the association of the solar Kālī with the tradition of the "Skeleton" is also attested in the fourth *ṣaṭka* of the *Jayadrathayāmala*, the tantra of the *Bhairavasrotas* where Bhairava wants to teach the goddess about the "the highest

²¹ CMSS 7.178-179ab: *Kandendriyāni samyojya parasparavidhikrame/ hitvā bhāvaṃ na gṛhṇāti yadā bhāvāntaraṃ citih// tadā tatparamaṃ brahma svasvabhāvaṃ pravartate/*

²² *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*, p. 93 (trans. J. Singh) refers to the "interval between two different determinate perceptions, one that has just been terminated, and the other that is about to arise." Abhinavagupta asserts that this interval between two perceptions is known in the tantras by various names, such as *unmeṣa* or *pratibhā*, but for him it is the *nirvikalpa samvit*.

²³ Kṣemarāja's commentary on verse 41 of the *Spandakārikā* (p. 143) has a clear 'Krama' bent; for him the bliss of transcendental awareness that arises in that moment is a result of a sudden swallowing of thought-constructs that is concomitant with the dissolution of the object of thought.

²⁴ In the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā*, the goddess Kālī described through apophatic language is referred twice as the one who devours the Skeleton. For example: CMSS 7.220cd-221: *rūpārūpāntaraṃ rūpaṃ svarūpaṃ rūpavarjitam// bhāvābhāvavinirmuktaṃ sarvatoditāṅśakalam/ tatroditā parā devī kālī kaṅkālabhākṣiṇī//* "Within the form and non-form, [the one who is] the form, one's own form, devoid of form; free of being and non-being, the undifferentiated and yet present in everything, the supreme goddess Kālī, the one who devours the Skeleton, has arisen there." In the CMSS 7.228cd-229: *tena kālīti vikhyātā kaṅkālakulabhākṣiṇī// bhāvābhāvasvabhāvasya ciccakracidā carvitaḥ/ svādasambodhāhlādēna sphurat kālikramodayaḥ//* "In this manner, she is known as "Kālī" who devours the Kula of the Skeleton. For the inherent nature of existence and non-existence is relished by the consciousness of the wheel of consciousness (*ciccakra*). The arising of the sequence of Kālīs manifests through the delight of the perfect knowledge of (its) taste." In another place, CMSS 7.204, however, the goddess Kaulinī, in the supreme expansion of her own nature, is called the energy of the *kaulakaṅkāla*, who is the fire of devouring (*tatsvarūpaparollāsavikāse sphurat kaulinī/ kaulakaṅkālakalayā grāsaghasmararūpiṇī//*). We also find the reference, in CMSS 7.11, to the sky of the Kula of the Skeleton where Rudra and his energy are churned.

²⁵ CMSS 7.160 and CMSS 7.162cd-163ab: *guruvaktragaṭaṃ devī svānubhūtyaikalakṣaṇam/ kālikāṅkālasamkrāmaṃ anākhyaṭadāṃ uttamam// śṛṇu devī pravakṣyāmi kālikākramam uttamam// dvādaśaiva paraṃ bhadre sampradāyaṃ vadāmy aham/*

Kaula teaching which is concealed within the closed hand [of the teacher].”²⁶ The goddess expresses her interest in obtaining this teaching, saying:

I am satisfied, o Lord; I have truly understood the highest goal. By your favour, o Lord of all, great Śiva, I now want to hear the Kaulārṇava teaching, called, the “Skeleton” (*kaṅkāla*) in which the goddess Kālī becomes manifest arising from the sun of consciousness (*cidarka*). She is the one who is located on the summit of Bhairava’s crest, and who radiates out in the form of the mass of [twelve] rays [i.e. *raśmipuñja*= 12 Kālīs]. O you who are venerated by the foremost of gods, o Lord, I wish to know the sequence in accordance with its two aspects, external and internal.²⁷

Although no records about this tradition seems to be currently extant, the Kālīkaṅkāla/Kaṅkāla appears to have been known to the Kaula Kramācāryas, who adopted it as part of their Kāpālika practice. In the third *ṣaṭka* of the *Jayadrathayāmala*, the wandering *vratī* addresses himself in the following words: “I am a skull-bearing Kāpālika of the skeleton (*kaṅkāli*), eager to taste the fusion of the rays (of consciousness).”²⁸ In the post-*Jayadrathayāmala* texts, references to the tradition of the *kaṅkāla* in the context of the Kāpālikas or the Kālīkula doctrine are rare. The only evidence I was able to find that clearly links it to the fully-fledged Krama practice of sensory experience, and thus may be a reminiscent of the Kālīkaṅkāla tradition, is Yogarāja’s commentary on Abhinavagupta’s *Paramārthasāra*. There we come across an explanation of the Kāpālika vow, called by Yogarāja the “skeleton posture” (*kaṅkāla-mudrā*). The hero (*vīra*) following this *vrata* assumes the skeleton-posture in which he drinks the drink of the heroes (*vīrapāna*), i.e., the essence of all entities in the universe, from the skull of the sensory objects. The skull is held in his own hands that are glossed in terms of the Kālīkula doctrine as the ‘rays of consciousness’ (*saṃvitkara*). The ‘rays’ are the goddesses that are the senses, such as the eye, the ear, etc. while the sensory experience they offer to Bhairava brings about the final repose (*viśrānti*) in one’s own consciousness.²⁹ Yogarāja’s commentary is a good example of the later

²⁶ JY 4.57v5-6: “Listen, I shall now teach you the highest secret, the highest Kaula teaching which is concealed within the closed hand [of the teacher]. The great teaching which resides among the *khecarīs*, which is free of thought-constructs, without doubt, all-including and free of dualities.” (*śrīnotu kathayīṣyāmi rahasyaṃ idam uttamam. muṣṭibhūtaṃ mahākauḷaṃ khecarāvasthitaṃ mahat, avikalpam asandigdhaṃ prapūrṇaṃ ubhayojitam*).

²⁷ JY 4.57v2-4: *trptāsmi bhagavata samyag jñātaṃ tat paramam padaṃ/ mayā tava prasādena sarveśvara mahēśvara/ adhunā śrotum icchāmi kaṅkālakhyam kaulārṇavam/ yatra sā kālīkā devī cidarkothā vijimbhate/ śekharāvasthitā yā sā raśmipuñjavirājītā/ etasmin yad kramam bāhyābhyantarabhedataḥ/ etad icchāmi bhagavan jñātum suravarārcita/*

²⁸ JY 3 (232r7) Quoted in Sanderson (1986, p. 211): *kāpāliko 'ham kaṅkāli raśmimelāpalolupaḥ/*

²⁹ Yogarāja’s commentary on the *Paramārthasāra*, p. 269, trans. Bansat-Boudon and Tripathi.

tradition associated with the exegetical works of the Kashmiri Kālikrama,³⁰ where the purpose of the sensory experience, as well as the goal of the cycle of the twelve Kālīs is the final repose (*viśrānti*) in one's own consciousness.³¹

Another striking intertextual similarity between the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā*³² and the *Jayadrathayāmala*, already noted by Sanderson (2009, pp. 57–58), is attested in the exposition of the solar teaching that distinguishes between the plurality of suns that seem to correspond to the outer sense faculties, the inner cognitive faculties and the ultimate sun beyond them. In this regard, the *Jayadrathayāmala* avers thus:

This sun has emerged from within the sun [located] within the light of illuminator. Within this sun, is [yet another] sun, which illuminates the entire universe. The universe is overflowing with the mass [of rays] of Kaulinī, who is the sun-goddess (*bhānavīkaulinī*), and who embodies the Kaula absolute. It is from there that the great mantras, which are the wombs of sixty-four Bhairavas have arisen. Not located in light, nor in the void, not in one, nor in both, not in neither, the sun, all-pervading, shines, free of all obscurations [...]. This sun, which is fearsome and terrible, shines at the limit of the fourth state of the sun with the rays that are ever arisen; those rays belong to the supreme sun, which is self-awareness. That person and him alone who realizes the wheel of the sun (*bhācakra*), overcomes time.³³

The description of the supreme sun endowed with the rays that are ever-arisen (*nityodita*), the knowledge of which leads the *sādhaka* to transcend the limits of time, is directly linked to the description of the twelve Kālīs. For the *Jayadrathayāmala* 'rays' (*raśmicakra*) stand for the twelve Kālīs.³⁴ The *sādhaka*, insofar that he established

³⁰ See the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Śitikanṭha 12.4 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, p. 133) where the object of experience is the favorite place of the goddesses of the senses (*khecariṅvāhadēvīs*) who delight in consuming it (*upabhoga*). When the goddesses of the senses have relished the field of objectivity, they offer it to Bhairava, who is consciousness (*cidbhairava*), until offering themselves, then they abandon it and come to rest. This is the foundation of the enjoyment of external objects (*viśayabhoga*). Śitikanṭha explains that in this way, the yogin is always content, thus having made contact with the *krama* (the deployment of the energies of the senses), he takes rest in the *akrama*. In other words, having made each individual sense experience one with its own nature and given up attachment to external things, he should transcend all.

³¹ (see below).

³² For the parallel passages of the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā* and the *Jayadrathayāmala*, see Sanderson (2009, p. 75 fn.45).

³³ *JY* 4:57r1-4: *raviḥ praḍīpakāloke sūryamadhyāt samutthitaḥ/ raver antargato bhānur bhāsayaty akhilaṃ jagat// bhānavī kaulinī yā sā tatpuñjabharitam jagat/ tatrotpannā mahāmantrā bhairavāṣṭāṣṭay-onayah// na prakāśe na cakāśe nobhaye nobhayojjhite/ sarvāvaraṇanirmukto sarvago bhāti bhāskarah nirmukto// sa raviḥ sūryaturyānte bhrājate raudraḍāmarah/ svasaṃvitparamādityanityoditamarcibhiḥ// bhācakraṃ bhāsitam yena sa vai kālañjaro bhavet/*. Sanskrit text quoted in Sanderson (2009, p. 57).

³⁴ *JY* 4:58r5: "Thus Kālī is known to be of thirteen kinds, in accordance with the distinction of the rays" (*trayodaśavidhā kālī vijñeyā raśmibhedataḥ*). *JY* 4:58v3-4: "When he is situated in the sun with the cycle of rays expanded, then he is established in the twelve signs of the zodiac, [and] becomes the bearer of the mass of rays; [when] he has fully internalized these [signs of the zodiac], then he becomes the lord of the Kula." (*raśmicakraṃ vikāsitam tadā raviṃ sthitā [for sthitaḥ?]/ yadā dvādaśarāśistho raśmipuñjadhāro bhavet/ tāni kālayate samyag tadā kulapatir bhavet/*). The tradition of time-wheels (*kālacakra*) of twelve spokes representing the twelve suns, the twelve of signs of the zodiac and/or the twelve months is also attested in an early Śaivasiddhānta scripture, the *Niśvāsakārikā*. For example, in v.17 of the *Dīkṣottaraprakaraṇa* section (pp. 1062 ff.) of the *Niśvāsakārikā* we find the solar identity of the

himself in the twelve signs of the zodiac, is said to embody those ‘rays’. He now manifests in the form of the sun itself, the nature of which is the expansion of the domains of the sense-faculties.³⁵ In that capacity he becomes the leader of the twelve Kālīs.³⁶ Although the *Jayadrathayāmala* talks about the *sādhaka* who embodies the twelve rays of the sun, it gives the names of the thirteen Kālīs who “emerge in the void-awareness of the rays as they begin to expand”.³⁷

Although Abhinavagupta, as we shall see below, was more interested to present the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs as the philosophical model of *saṃviccakra*, he probably knew about the solar tradition associated with the twelve Kālīs. This is hinted at in Abhinavagupta’s commentary (*vivaraṇa*) on the *Parātrīśikā*, where he adopts the solar metaphor to assert the soteriological validity of true reasoning (*sattarka*), the single method applied in the *śāktopāya*. In the *śāktopāya*, whose core are the twelve Kālīs in the *Tantrāloka* and *Tantrasāra*, cultivation of correct mental representations (*vikalpa-saṃskāra*) is purported to remove the pertinacity of duality, which is nothing else but ignorance covering one’s own true self.³⁸ The shedding away of ignorance is simultaneous with the self’s uncovering of its own luminous nature. In the *Parātrīśikā*, Abhinavagupta adopts the solar metaphor to assert the soteriological validity of *sattarka* as the method that enables an instant dissolution of ignorance, which like the flecks of clouds, cover the ‘sun of consciousness’:

Footnote 34 continued

zodiacal signs that are “equal to the sun”. In the *rāśiśaṅcāra*, the twelve spokes of the *cakra* are correlated with the vowels beginning with ‘a’. I thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out. For the similar attestations in the *Krama* and *Trika* texts, see *infra* fn. 54.

³⁵ *JY* 4:58v4-5: “Endowed with the rays he becomes free within the plurality of manifested world” (*bhavabhāvāntaranirmukto raśmiyuk*). *JY* 4.58r1: “Now, he expands as the sun itself, as the expansion of the domain of sense-faculties.” (*vṛttidhāmavikāśātmā ravir eva vijṃbhate*).

³⁶ *JY* 4.58r1-2: “Embodying the twelve, residing in the twelve, illuminating the limit of the twelve, permeating the totality of the rays of the mantras, he is the leader of the circle of Kālīs with the subdivisions of the division of the rays those [who attain this realization] shine forth” (*dvādaśātmā dvādaśastho dvādaśāntāntabhāsakaḥ mantraraśmikulakramī kālīkacakranāyakaḥ, raśmibhedaprabhedena te sphurānti*).

³⁷ *JY* 4:58r2-3: “I will tell you that sequence as it has come down through the unbroken oral tradition. The thirteen [Kālīs] emerge in the void-awareness of the rays as they begin to expand.” (*tatkramam saṃpravakṣyāmi mukhaparamparāgataṃ pronmīṣad raśmikhacitau jṃbhaty eva daśatrikaṃ*). The list of their names, then, follows: (1) Śṛṣṭikālī, (2) Sthitikālī, (3) Saṃhāarakālī, (4) Raktakālī, (5) Sukālī, (6) Yamakālī, (7) Mṛtyukālī, (8) Bhadrakālī, (9) Paramādityakālī, (10) Mārtāṇḍakālī, (11) Kālāgnirudrakālī, (12) Mahākālakulakālī, (13) Mahābhairavakālī.

³⁸ *Tantrasāra*, 4 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, pp. 24–25): “The function of true reasoning (*sattarka*) is to break the pertinacity of duality, nothing else. Because, everything is essentially the absolute consciousness (*cit*), therefore, even in the ordinary experience, the manifestation of the desired form of the body and so on, and suppression of the opposing (undesired) form, takes place—this is the meaning of repeated practice. As it has been said previously, from the supreme reality nothing can be taken away. The pertinacity of duality is not a separately existing thing, but it is rather ignorance with regard to one’s own true self. Therefore, it is said that the removal of duality takes place through mental representation (*vikalpa*). The supreme truth is that the luminous essence of the Self, progressively shedding away the form of ignorance it assumed due to its (essential) freedom, shines forth—first in the intentionality to reveal itself (*vikāsonmukha*), then in the act of self-revelation (*vikāsat*), and finally as fully revealed (*vikāsitam*). This form of self-revelation constitutes the essence of the supreme Lord. For this reason, the different limbs of yoga do not constitute here (in this process of self-revelation) any direct means. Even if they aid to reasoning, it is only the true reasoning which is the direct means (of self-realization).”.

Among all the lights of yoga, *sattarka* has been determined in the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* to be the blazing sun by which one is liberated and liberates others. And this [*sattarka*] has to be grasped and reflected upon at all times by those wise ones who, having given up the envy, so common in human beings, for a moment, want to reach the supreme. The aspirant is established in one's own self immediately after the *sattarka* [*ālocana*], and the flecks of clouds [that cover] the sun of consciousness are dissolved at once, through the relish of one's own true nature.³⁹

The aforementioned passage distinguishes between the sun-like *sattarka* as the method of realization and the 'sun of consciousness' as its goal. The former is the process of purifying reflection, which suddenly disperses the clouds of ignorance or the *malas*; the latter represents the pure luminosity of consciousness that becomes "fully revealed" through this method. In accord with Abhinavagupta's reformulation of liberation as consisting of enjoyment/savouring (*bhogamokṣasāmarasya*), the goal of this practice is the "relish of one's own nature". It is quite certain that by adopting the solar metaphor Abhinavagupta alludes to the Kālīkula doctrine of the Sun-Goddess that formed an esoteric background of the early teaching of the twelve Kālīs, but gives it, instead, a rational outlook of *sattarka*.

Post-Abhinavagupta Trika authors, such as Jayaratha and Yogarāja, were aware of the solar context linked to the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs, and did not shy away from affirming its soteriological value. One example in case is Jayaratha's commentary on Abhinavagupta's passage of the *Tantrāloka* describing the three Trika goddesses (*parā*, *aparā*, and *parāparā*), who arise as the twelve Kālīs. According to Abhinavagupta, those twelve goddesses embody the fully expanded nature of consciousness, and those who venerate those twelve are directly established in Śiva's nature.⁴⁰ Jayaratha clearly pays heed to the earlier solar tradition by quoting from a text where the twelve goddesses constitute the supreme sun of one's own consciousness (*svaṣaṃvitparamāditya*), which is the imperishable mass of light.⁴¹ Similar example is found in Yogarāja's commentary on the *Paramārthasāra*, where, in accordance with the passage of the *Parātrīśikā* quoted above, the revelation of the "sun of consciousness" is instigated by the destruction

³⁹ *Parātrīśikā-vivarāṇa*, ed. Singh (1989, pp. 73–74); trans. Singh (1989, p. 196) slightly modified: *yaḥ sarvaḥyogāyavaprakāśeṣu gabhastimān// śrīpūrvaśāstre nirmīto yena muktaś ca mocakaḥ/ etat tu sarvathā grāhyaṃ vimṛśyaṃ ca parepsubhiḥ// kṣaṇaṃ martyatvasulabhāṃ hītvāsūyāṃ vicakṣaṇaiḥ/ ālocanaḥkṣaṇād ūrdhvaṃ yad bhaved ātmani sthitiḥ/ cidarkābhralavās tena ṣaṃśāmyante svato rasāt//*

⁴⁰ *Tantrāloka* 1.107–108, (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, pp. 150–151), vol.1; (trans. Sanderson) Now, the three [goddesses] Parā, Parāparā, and Aparā mentioned above are none other than the powers of this [essential nature]. Each is manifest in emission, stasis, resorption, and the fourth. In this way, they arise as [a set of] twelve. When this [autonomous light of consciousness is experienced in the mode in which it] encompasses all of these, then it is manifest in fully expanded nature. It is this what is meant by the expression "Supreme Śiva". So, those who venerate these twelve are directly established in that [Śiva's nature].

⁴¹ *Tāv* 1.107 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, p. 151, vol.1) quotes from unidentified source saying: *dhāmnāṃ trayāṇāṃ apy eṣāṃ sṛṣṭyādīkramayogataḥ/ bhavec caturdhāvasthānam evaṃ dvādaśadhoditāḥ// svasaṃvit-paramādityaḥ prakāśavapur avayaḥ/ iti.*

of the “veil of delusion”. A person who has reached this state shines as the “sun in the guise of Śīva”, “with his rays unhindered”, “with the host of rays of consciousness”. For such a person, liberation ensues, which is described as “the state wherein his own energies are fully deployed.”⁴² This description echoes the passage of the *Jayadrathayāmala* referred to above where the *sādhaka* manifests as the sun with the ‘rays’ (i.e., the twelve Kālīs), fully expanded.

The Twelve Kālīs as the *Kalās* of Mahākālī in the *Devīpañcaśataka*

Much like the *Kālikākramapañcāśikā* and the *Jayadrathayāmala*, the *Devīpañcaśataka*—which together with the *Kālikūlakramasadbhāva* and the *Yonigahvaratantra* belongs to the groups of texts that are believed to have been revealed in the Northern Sacred Seat (*uttarapīṭha*) by Jñānanetra or Śrīnātha, known also as Śivānandanātha⁴³—knew about the esoteric teaching of the Sun-Goddess Kālī. This is attested in the seventh *paṭala*, where the text refers to the secret teaching of the supreme sun, which is the circle of consciousness (*citimaṇḍala*) located at the end of Śīva (*śivānta*). Unlike the *Kālikākramapañcāśikā* and the *Jayadrathayāmala*, however, the main goddess of the *Devīpañcaśataka*—who both embodies the supreme sun and is endowed with the twelve rays—is equated with the plane of repose of consciousness (*cittaviśrāmbhūmika*). In effect, an adept who knows this goddess attains the state of the sky-farer. The *Devīpañcaśataka* speaks of it in the following words:

I will tell you the secret and most excellent Kālikākrama. One should think of the supreme sun, whose nature is the abode, the supreme and all-pervading, endowed with sentience [in the form of] the circle of consciousness and radiant like a crore of moons. It has the brightness of the thousand fires at the

⁴² *Paramārthasāra* with Yogarāja’s commentary (trans. Bansat-Boudon and Tripathi 2011:221), stanza 56: “He whose veil of delusion has been destroyed now shines as the Sun in the guise of Śīva, that is, comes into evidence with his rays unhindered, with the host of rays of his consciousness (*cinmarīci*); and there is for him no such thing as the liberation postulated by other schools of thought, if that means going somewhere else [...]. For him, there ensues only that state wherein his own energies are fully deployed, for the constriction imposed by the sheaths of *māyā*, etc., has vanished.”

⁴³ Jayaratha calls Jñānanetra the master “who brought down the doctrine of Krama to earth” (*avatārakanātha*). The *mānavaugha* consisted of (1) Netra (Jñānanetra), (2) Rājñī (Keyūravatī), and (3) Hrasvanātha (Vāmana) *MP* (Ś) 9.5 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, p. 107). Keyūravatī is praised in Arṇasiṃha’s *Mahānayaaprakāśa* as the one who has understood the wisdom born of the sacred seat and who attained the state of a sky-farer: *śrīmatkeyūravatyākhyā pīṭhajajñānaparagā/ khacakracariṇī yeyaṃ tām ahaṃ naumī bhaktitah|| MP* (A) 154, (ed. Dyczkowski n.d. p. 62). According to Abhinavagupta, Keyūravatī, also known as Kakāradevī, was one of the three female *yoginīs* (other two being Madanikā and Kalyāṇikā) who passed on the teachings received from Śivānandanātha to Govindarāja, Bhānuka, and Eraka. The last one is the author of the *Kramastotra*, quoted in Abhinavagupta’s exposition of the *saṃviccakrodaya*, on which Abhinava wrote a commentary (now considered lost), called the *Kramakeli*. Hrasvanātha, also called Vāmana/Vāmanadatta or Vīranātha might have been the author of the *Svabodhodayamañjarī* and the *Dvayasampattivārtika*, also known as *Bodhvilāsa* (Sanderson 2007a, p. 276).

end of the eon and a splendour equal to the great sun. Established in [everything], from the worlds situated at the very bottom of the universe⁴⁴ up to Śiva, it is intent on causing all beings to arise. Through the sudden dissolution of the energy (*kalā*), there, one should know the space [that is] the circle of consciousness, which is tranquil, pure and resembling Brahmā. It is where the goddess, who is the plane of repose of consciousness, resides. She whose nature is the supreme sun has emanated with the twelve divisions. With the twelve rays, she resembles one hundred thousands rays. [...] He who knows her, immediately, in that moment, becomes a sky-farer;⁴⁵ he measures out the whole universe, and playfully devours it again. Thus, in this world, the *sādhaka* has no comparison: he who abides in the three worlds, is supreme, and on the account of being the lord, he is like Īśvara.⁴⁶

The aforementioned passage, parts of which are also found in the *Yonigahvaratantra*, proves that the solar elements in the worship of the goddess Kālī⁴⁷ were still strong in the period when the tantras of Uttarapīṭha flourished. At the same time, it is in the *Devīpāñcaśataka* where we find, for the first time, the fully-fledged doctrine of the twelve Kālīs who—as the ‘energies’ or *kalās* of the goddess Mahākālī—are worshipped in the *anākhyakrama*. Nevertheless, at this stage, the twelvefold cognitive structure of the *anākhyakrama* that became the key-concept associated with the twelve Kālīs in later scriptures is not yet attested. Like the *Jayadrathayāmala*, the *Devīpāñcaśataka* refers to the “tradition of the twelve” [Kālīs] (*dvādaśadhāmnāya*), but gives the names of the thirteen Kālīs worshipped in the *anākhyakrama*. Those twelve constitute the essential nature (*svabhāva*) of Mahākālī, who, through her own capacity, brings forth destruction and terminates

⁴⁴ For this translation of *ūhaka*, see *Tantrikābhīdhānakośa* II (Brunner, Oberhammer and Padoux, 2004, p. 304).

⁴⁵ Together with the *Yonigahvara* and the *Kramasadbhāva*, the *Devīpāñcaśataka* understands the state of the sky-farer (*khecari*) as the ultimate goal of the Kālīkula teachings while asserting emptiness as the foundation of reality through the process that negates everything it is not. In the second *pāṭala*, Bhairavī teaches Bhairava about the pervasion of emptiness (*vyomavyāpī*) by negating its identification with all things through the rhetorical structure of ‘na X, na ca vā Y’, that closely resembles the Upaniṣadic *neti-neti* approach. Parallel examples of the same stylistic device employed to describe either the nature of the goddess or the *krama* are also found in the *Kramasadbhāva* and the *Yonigahvaratantra*.

⁴⁶ DP 7.42cd-7.47ab. *kathayāmi rahasyaṃ ca kālīkāramam uttamam// cintayet paramādityaṃ dhāmarūpaṃ paraṃ vibhum/ ciccakracetanāyuktaṃ candrakotyavabhāsakam// kalpāntāgnisahāsrābhaṃ bhūrisūryasamaprabham/ ūhakaḍiśivāntasthaṃ sarvasattvodayodyatam// kalālayena sahasā praśāntaṃ cittaṃalam/ tatrākāśaṃ vijñānyān nirmalaṃ brahmasannibham// yatra sā samsthītā devī cit-taviśrāmabhūmikā/ sṛtā dvādaśabhir bhedaḥ paramārkasvarūpiṇī// rasmidvādaśabhiḥ rasmiśahasraśatasannibhā/. [...] DP 7.48-49: yo vindatī sakṛt tasyā tatkaṣaṇāt khecaro bhavet/ nirmātī viśvam akhilaṃ grasate līlayā punaḥ// na tasya sādhakasyaivam upamā bhuvī vidyate/ trailokye tiṣṭhate paraḥ prabhutvena yatheśvaraḥ//.*

⁴⁷ DP 5.14cd-5.15ab: “She, who is single and is the supreme goddess (*parā devī*) is known as Brahmasvarūpiṇī. Thus, she is [the goddess] whose essential nature is the sun with twelve divisions” (*ekaikā ca parā devī jñeyā brahmasvarūpiṇī// evaṃ sā dvādaśair bhedaḥ paramārkasvarūpiṇī*). DP 5.22-23ab: “She is the end of *phaṭ*, very fierce devouring Bhairavas-Īśvaras. In the middle of the sun, she is the bliss of stillness, she shines inwardly as the rays of consciousness. Listen to her tradition of the twelve-fold together with their names” (*phaṭkārāntā mahāghorā grasantī bhairaveśvarān/ ravimadhye nirānandā cinmarīcyantabhāṣikā// tasyā dvādaśadhāmnāyaṃ nāmabhiḥ saha tac chr̥ṇu*).

the reality of time. Each of the twelve Kālīs is called the energy (*kalā*) and as such it belongs to the goddess Mahākālī, who embodies the supreme energy (*parā kalā*),⁴⁸ called the nectar (*amṛta*).⁴⁹ Although Mahākālī still retains the characteristics of the Sun-Goddess, in that she is described as the absence of bliss (*nirānanda*),⁵⁰ abiding in the middle of the sun, where she shines as the rays of consciousness; the tendency to refer to the goddess through the discourse of emptiness is also strongly attested. Thus, we find the expressions that have a clear *sūnyavādin* orientation and define Mahākālī as the energy of emptiness, established in emptiness, made of emptiness, etc.⁵¹ Further, Mahākālī is described through the epithets that point to her transcendental nature. Thus she is the unmovable place of *bindu*, eternal, fixed, alone, a single heroine (*ekavīra*), very subtle, imperishable. She is described through the use of apophatic language as “neither the object of perception, nor the object of speech, free of attributes.”⁵² The *Devīpañcaśataka* also draws attention to another, fierce aspect of Mahākālī in which she, as the very fierce one (*mahāghora*) and the end of the syllable *phaṭ*, devours the Lord Bhairava.⁵³ This trait is also found in a number of other early and later texts, such as the *Kramasadbhāva*, *Mahānayaprakāśas* of Arṇasimha and Śitikanṭha, and Jñānāneta’s *Kālikāstotra*, where Bhairava becomes unequivocally associated with the principle of time, which the goddess successfully devours.

The *Devīpañcaśataka* gives two alternatives for the worship of the twelve Kālīs: the *saṃvitkrama* and the *pūjākrama*, the distinction still retained in Jayaratha’s commentary on the *Tantrāloka*. In the *saṃvitkrama*, the twelve goddesses are worshipped internally as the succession of one’s own cognitive process (*svasaṃvitti*). In the *pūjākrama*, the instructions are given to worship the twelve goddesses in the external ritual setting as the retinue of the thirteenth goddess located in the middle. The text refers to these as follows:

⁴⁸ The concept of *parā kalā*, although not found in the *Kālikākramapañcāśikā*, is also attested in the *Kramasadbhāva* and the *Jayadrathayāmala*, where it represents the energy of the new moon (*amākālā*) in the seventeen-syllable *vidyā* of Caṇḍayogeśvari/Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī, wherein the sixteen digits of the new moon (*kalā*) are contained. The *parā kalā* is called nectar (*amṛta*) (lit. “deathless”), because it remains as a permanent, unchanging element in the cycle of waning and waxing moon. The difference is that in the *Devīpañcaśataka* the *parā kalā* represented by the seventeen-syllable *vidyā* should be worshipped in the form of the twelve suns, either in the heart-*cakra* or externally in the twelve-spoke wheel. See, e.g., the passage of the *avatārakrama* 4.29cd-4.33. Other scriptures revealed in the Uttarapīṭha, such as the *Yonigahvaratantra* and the *Kramasadbhāva*, untypically give the names of the sixteen or even seventeen Kālīs of the *anākyakrama*, which may be explained as an endeavor to assimilate the Kālīs, in concomitance with Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī’s *vidyā* as the lunar, and not the solar energies.

⁴⁹ DP 5.11cd: *mahākālīkālākhayātā kalāmṛtamayī śubhāl*.

⁵⁰ The reference to the goddess as *nirānanda* continues the tradition of Niṣkriyānanda who teaches about the condition of ‘inactivity’ (*niṣkriyā*) as the ultimate reality. According to the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Arṇasimha (v.126), ‘inactivity’ is a characteristic feature of the *sāmbhava* state, wherein the power of mental process (*citti*) is suddenly (*sahasā*) dissolved into the great void, which is ‘without movement’ (*niḥspanda*) and has no abode. According to the *Kramasadbhāva* (3.46ab) Kālī is ‘the end of the twelve’, ‘the absence of bliss’, ‘the end of the sixteen’ and ‘mind beyond mind’: *dvādaśāntā nirānandā ṣoḍaśāntā manonmanī*.

⁵¹ DP 5.21ab: *khasvarūpā khamadhyasthā khacakre ca vyavasthitā*.

⁵² DP 5.21cd: *nirāmayā cāprameyā anuccāryā guṇojjhitā*.

⁵³ DP 5.22ab: *phaṭkārāntā mahāghorā grasantī bhairaveśvarān*.

O supreme Lord, one should worship those [twelve Kālīs] at the Brahmā-lotus, which is inexplicable and complete, at the end of the sixteen, at the end of the nine, or at the of *cit*. O Three-eyed one, worship them with the succession of one's own cognitive process (*svasaṃvitti*), or else, externally, on a red cloth. One should make a circle of emptiness with lapis lazuli powder. Outside of that [circle], on should place the circle of the twelve.⁵⁴ Having worshipped Mahākālī in the middle, one should worship the other twelve [located] on the outside, in due sequence, beginning with the east, O one delighted in yoga. [The *sādhaka*] should be wearing female clothes, or be naked; he should be wise, devoid of thought-constructs, propitious, and be an expert in the ritual procedure.⁵⁵

The *śoḍaśānta*, *navānta*, and *cidanta* are symbolic locations present in the yogic body that are often correlated with the points in the rise of *kuṇḍalinī*. The “End of the Sixteen” represents the location at the distance of the sixteen fingers above the head, and as such it is unknown to the *Svacchandatantra*, *Netratantra*, *Siddhayogēśvarīmata* and rarely mentioned in the *Tantrasadbhāva*, and the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra*. Abhinavagupta never refers to the “End of the Sixteen”. For him, the “End of the Twelve” (*dvādaśānta*) is the highest point in the ascent of *kuṇḍalinī*, and this is a standard description borrowed from the *Svacchandatantra*. The “End of the Sixteen” is, however, known to the *Jayadrathayāmala*, and the *Kramasadbhāva*. In the *Kramasadbhāva*, Mahākālī is praised as the one established at the “End of the Sixteen”.⁵⁶ It is clear that by mentioning the “End of the Sixteen” as the location to worship the twelve Kālīs, the *Devīpañcaśataka* aligns with the *Jayadrathayāmala* and not the *Kālikākramapañcāsikā*, where the reference to the more common location at the “End of the Twelve” is found (see above).

The *Devīpañcaśataka* is an important text for understanding the development of the twelve Kālīs, for it reflects a transitional point between the early doctrine of the Sun-Goddess with twelve rays and the teaching of Mahākālī with twelve *kalās*, intent on devouring time-Mahākāla. The text is also relevant for linking the teaching on the solar goddess with the concept of *cittaviśrāma* that will be adopted as the

⁵⁴ The instructions for drawing the *maṅḍala* with the central thirteenth Kālī surrounded by other twelve is also found in the fourth *śaṭka* of the *JY* 4.57v4-5 (also quoted in Sanderson, 2007a, p. 257): “Having drawn the *maṅḍala* of the goddess consisting of the great twelve [Kālīs]; he should make the thirteenth [Kālī] in their centre together with the vowels of a zodiac, and having drawn a square, O Goddess, he should fill it with red powder” (*saṃlikhya maṅḍalaṃ devīm mahādvādaśasaṃmitam/ madhye trayodaśaṃ kāryaṃ rāśivarnaśamanvitam/ raktaṇa rajasā devī caturlekhaṃ prapūrayet/*). In the description of the *Umāmāheśvaracakra* of the Trika scripture, the *Tantrasadbhāva* (seventh *paṭala*, vv.11c-14), we find the solar Mārtaṇḍabhairava in the centre surrounded by the second layer (*āvaraṇa*) of the *cakra* consisting of twelve spokes installed as the twelve *rudras* who are identified with the twelve solar vowels (devoid of four “eunuch/*napuṃsaka*” vowels, ṛ ̄ ṛ ṛ ṛ) and the twelve signs of the zodiac. I thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out. For the identification of the twelve Kālīs with the twelve vowels in other Krama and Trika scriptures, see below and fn.70.

⁵⁵ *DP* 5.47-49ab: *pūjyām etad brahmapadme nirākhye ca nirāmaye/ śo aśānte navānte vā cidante parameśvara/ svasaṃvittikrameṇaiva bāhye vātha trilocana/ rājāvartena rajasā vyomabimbaṃ tu kārayet/ bimbadvādaśakaṃ bāhye tadrūpaṃ avatārayet/* *DP* 5.52-53: *madhye pūjyā mahākālī bāhye 'nyā dvādaśa kramāt/ pūrvād ārabhya sarvās tāḥ pūjayed yoginandana/ strīveśadhārī bhūtvāsau nagnavāso mahāmatih/ nirvikalpaḥ prasannātmā pūjākarmaviśāradah/*

⁵⁶ *KS* 1.12: *arūpe asvare garbhe śoḍaśānte vyavasthite/ icchārūpasvabhāvasthe bhairaveśi namo 'stu te//*

goal of the *anākhya* by the *Mahānayaprakāśas* as well as the Trika exegetical authors.

The *Śrīkālīkāstotra* of Jñānanetra: The Twelve Kālīs and the Codification of the Twelffold *Anākhyā*

The *Śrīkālīkāstotra* of Jñānanetra marks a shift away from the descriptions of the goddess Kālī as emptiness, prevalent in the tantras revealed in the Uttarapīṭha, to the goddess representing consciousness. Moreover, Jñānanetra's ideas are strongly influenced by the concept of *sahaja* usually translated as 'spontaneity', 'co-emergent', or 'inborn'. *Sahaja* was a popular notion in the Indian Buddhist tantras, such as *Hevajra*, and it was widely associated with the 9th century *mahāsiddha* Saraha, who in his spiritual songs (*dohās*), propagated *sahaja* both as the method and the soteriological goal. Jñānanetra uses the word *sahaja* in compounds to describe the nature of the goddess Kālī. Thus, she is the 'supreme spontaneity' (*niruttarasahaja*) that emerges from Śiva's consciousness and assumes the form of pure will. She is the 'spontaneity of recognition' (*sahajasamvitti*) that can be attained by means of pure consciousness, devoid of any limiting adjuncts (*anupādhi*). She is the 'innate spontaneity' (*sahajasvarūpa*), when she divides herself thirteenfold.⁵⁷ Although Jñānanetra never mentions the twelve Kālīs directly, nor does he refer to the goddess' solar aspects, there is a sense that some of the verses refer to the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs. According to Jayaratha—who in his commentary on Abhinavagupta's exposition of *samviccakrodāya* quotes a couple of verses from the *Śrīkālīkāstotra*—, Jñānanetra was a recipient of the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs.⁵⁸ He further argues that even when Jñānanetra mentions the goddess divided into thirteen forms, he actually means the twelve, and not the thirteen Kālīs.⁵⁹ In order to substantiate his argument, Jayaratha quotes the following verse of the *Śrīkālīkāstotra*:

Hail to your form propelling the whirlpool of the manifestation of the universe, having made your innate nature thirteenfold. Your own unique nature is three-fold through distinction into emission (*prasara*), permanence (*sthiti*), and withdrawal (*vilaya*), and that is fourfold in each case by the reason

⁵⁷ ŚKS v.3, 9, and 10. For the Sanskrit text, see Silburn (1975, pp. 191–192).

⁵⁸ Jayaratha (*Tāv* 4.173; ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p. 195, vol. III) calls him the master "who brought the doctrine of Krama down to earth" (*avatāra*). According to a lost Krama text, which Sanderson (2007a, p. 273) identified as the *Kramavaṃśāvalī*, Jñānanetra had seventeen disciples, some of whom eventually began to initiate others, establishing their own lineages. According to Jayaratha (*ibidem*), the total number of disciples was nineteen. Among them were three female disciples (*yoginīs*): Keyūravātī (aka Kakāradevī), Madanikā, and Kalyāṇikā who passed the teachings to Govindarāja, Bhānuka, and Eraka.

⁵⁹ *Tāv* 4.173; (ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p.198), vol. III: *tasmāt dvādaśadhātvaṃ evātra vaktum abhipretam siddhapādānām—ity avagantavyam*, "Therefore it was intended by the *siddha* (Jñānanetra) to express here only the twelffold [nature of the goddess, when he mentioned the thirteen-fold], this is as it should be understood." For the discussion on the twelve Kālīs of the *Tantrāloka* and the thirteen Kālīs of the *Devīpañcaśata* see Sanderson (2007b, pp. 101–103).

of arising (*udaya*), preserving (*saṁsthiti*), dissolution (*laya*) and repose (*viśrama*).⁶⁰

The above passage is important for it is the first time we come across the formulation of the twelvefold *anākhyā*. Abhinavagupta clearly incorporates this very sequence into his exposition of the *saṁviccakrodaya*, where he correlates each phase of the twelvefold process with the name of a specific Kālī. He also substitutes the cosmic functions of *prasara*, *sthiti*, and *vilaya* with their cognitive equivalents, corresponding to *prameya*, *pramāṇa*, and *pramātr*.⁶¹ The *Cidgaganacandrikā* of Śrīvatsa (12th–13th century), which according to Sanderson (2007a, pp. 297) is rephrasing Arṇasimha's ideas in a more poetic style, adheres to the same model. There, the face of the goddess resembling the sun of consciousness consists of the aggregate of powers (*śaktivṛnda*) as the plane of the twelvefold sequence expanded out into the universe through the squaring of triads. These twelve reside within the abodes of the moon, sun, and fire, which are the three eyes of the goddess in the form of cognizable object, the means of cognition, and the cognizing subject.⁶²

Another concept that the *Śrīkālīkāstotra* shares with the *Cidgaganacandrikā* is the identification of the twelvefold body of Kālī with the principle of time. The *Śrīkālīkāstotra* says:

Hail to you who, having divided the body of the Kālī of Time, split twelvefold.
You then shine, making that form radiant in itself.⁶³

For Jayaratha this verse proves that Kālī maintains her true identity of all-inclusive light (*prakāśa*) even in the external projection as time. He says further that Kālī's ability to manifest time in the manner of the reflection in the mirror belongs to the goddess's nature as *anākhyā*.⁶⁴ In another passage, Jñānanetra refers to Bhairava as the form of time, who creates the world from the [first] cause to the last insect. The

⁶⁰ ŚKS v.8-9ab: *ekaṃ svarūparūpaṃ prasaraṣṭhivilayabhedatas trividham/ pratyekaṃ udayasaṁsthiti-layaṁviśramataś caturvidhaṃ tad api// iti vasupañcakasaṁkhyāṃ vidhāya sahaḥasvarūpaṃ ātmīyaṃ/*

⁶¹ The fourth *śaṭka* of the *Jayadrathayāmala* (57r5-6) can be regarded as textual antecedent to the development of this cognitive version of the twelve Kālīs: "Directing his awareness towards cognition, the object of cognition, and the cognizer as pervaded by that awareness, he achieves dissolution into the highest abode whose attribute is the absence of ego" (*jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ tataḥ jñātā jñāptigarbhanibhālayaṇ layaṃ yāti pare dhāmi nirāhaṅkāradharmiṇi*).

⁶² CDC 36-37ab: *tvānmukhaṃ tripathanetri bhātmakaṃ śaktivṛndam iha turyathāgamam (em.; yad yathāgamam)/ dvādaśa kramapadaṃ padādibhir jṛmbhitaṃ jagati taccatustrikaiḥ// mānameyamitne-tralakṣaṇāḥ somasūryadahanāś tridhāmagāḥ/*

⁶³ ŚKS v.5: *kālasya kālī dehaṃ vibhaja munipañcasamkhyayā bhinnam/ svasminvirājamānaṃ tadrūpaṃ kurvatī jayasi//*

⁶⁴ *Tāv* 4.173; (ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p. 198), vol. III: *munipañcasamkhyayā dvādaśadhā vibhaja—bahir evaṃ samullāsyā, punarapi atiriktam eva tadrūpaṃ svasmin prakāśaikaḥ rūpe*, "having divided [your body] twelvefold by counting seven and five' [means]: having manifested your nature externally, and moreover, having made that nature, which is separate, into one's own self whose nature is all-inclusive light"; *virājamānaṃ kurvatī—darpaṇapratibimbavadanātirikatatayaiva avabhāsayantī*, "making [that form] radiant' [means]: manifesting that in the manner of reflection in the mirror, as though [the reflection] was not separate from that [mirror]"; *jayasi—atidurghaṭakārīṇaikaenaiva anākhyena rūpeṇa sarvakālaṃ pariśphurasi*, "hail' [means]: you radiantly manifest at all times through your inexplicable nature, which is one and only one and accomplishes this what is difficult to accomplish."

goddess is intent on devouring the dreadful and terrible Mahākāla who has consumed the three worlds, and as such she is called the Thin-bellied (Kṛśodarī).⁶⁵ The *Cidgaganacandrikā* praises the goddess Kālī, whose twelvefold body of time is represented by the twelve vowels, and diversified in accordance with the signs of the zodiac; the same association is also present in the *Jayadrathayāmala* (see above).⁶⁶ In another verse introducing, as it were, the exposition of each of the thirteen Kālīs, which, according to Sanderson (2007a, pp. 297), is based on Eraka's *Kramastotra*, yet another identification is found. The Kālī of Time, who abides on the plane of Śiva, is defined both as the ferocious fire of time (*kālaghasmarī*) and the twelvefold sun (*dvādaśātmāravi*).⁶⁷ These appellations are absent in Jñānanetra's *stotra*.

The *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Arṇasiṃha: Devīkrama as Varṇakrama

The *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Arṇasiṃha—one of the three texts bearing the same title—represents a later stage in the development of the twelve Kālīs doctrine, filtered, as it were, through the technical terminology present also in the Kashmirian Krama exegesis. Arṇasiṃha's exposition of the twelve Kālīs, as revealed in the description of the *anākhyakrama*, is also, in many ways, dissimilar to the presentation given in the *Kālikākramapañcāśikā* or the *Devīpañcaśataka*. The most apparent difference is the absence of any reference to the Sun-Goddess. There are also noticeable dissimilarities in the overall presentation of the doctrine. First, Arṇasiṃha develops the idea of the twelve vowels that we have already encountered in the *Jayadrathayāmala* (see above) and explains the process through which the twelve vowels of the previously described wheel of light (*prakāśacakra*) become the twelve Kālīs in the *anākhyakrama*. The reference to the twelve vowels—beginning with 'a' and ending with 'ḥ', but devoid of the four neuter letters⁶⁸—, indicates that Arṇasiṃha is referring to the Sequence of Letters (*varṇakrama*), one of the three modes of the Mahānaya worship.⁶⁹ It is worth noticing that in Abhinavagupta's exposition of the *sāmbhavopāya*, we also find the twelve Kālīs being referred to as

⁶⁵ ŚKS v.6ab: *bhairavarūpī kālah sṛjati jagatkāraṇādi kīṭāntam/*. ŚKS v.13ab: *kavalitasakalajagatrayavikaṭamahākālakavalonodyuktā/*. See also the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Arṇasiṃha (v. 228cd-229, ed. Dyczkowski n.d. p.75), which also identifies Bhairava with the twelvefold time, while the goddess Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī is constantly intent on devouring him with violent force (*haṭha*).

⁶⁶ CDC 37cd: *rāsīrajīvidhibhañjitaiḥ svarair lakṣitās tava hi vipruṣo 'mbikell*.

⁶⁷ CDC 220ab: *dvādaśātmāravikālaghasmarī kālakāliśivabhūmikā varā/*.

⁶⁸ MP (A) 215ab: *akārādivisargāntā ye ṣaṇḍhasvaravarjitāḥ/*.

⁶⁹ There exists three sequences in the Mahānaya worship, present in all the three *Mahānayaprakāśas*, i.e., 1) the Sequence of Abodes (*dhāmakrama*), which relates to the particular point of concentration located in the subtle body, connected with *kuṇḍalinī* rising through the energetic centres (*cakra*), 2) The Sequence of the Letters (*varṇakrama*) is concerned with the corresponding sequence of phonemes, 3) The Sequence of Consciousness (*citkrama* or *saṃvitkrama*) corresponds to the nature of cognition in accordance with the level of purification (of consciousness), available at each stage of *sādhana*.

the twelve vowels.⁷⁰ According to Arṇasiṃha,⁷¹ however, in the *anākhyakrama*, those twelve vowels enter the process of reversion (*pratyāvṛtti*),⁷² which takes place when they, full of the relish of cognition (*ciccamatkārabharito*), are withdrawn from their objects.⁷³ Once this happens, the twelve Kālīs arise to destroy the manifested and unmanifested nature of these twelve vowels.⁷⁴ At the same time, he adopts the twelvefold structure of *anākhyakrama* and labels it as creative imagination (*kalpanā*) of the thirteenth Kālī.⁷⁵ Second, drawing on the Kaula terminology, Arṇasiṃha identifies the sequence of the goddesses (*devīkakrama*) with the ‘rays’ (*raśmayah, raśmipuñja*), which are devoid of ego, and free of thought-constructs,

⁷⁰ Although the twelve Kālīs belong to the *śaktopāya* per se, the allusion to the goddesses is also found in other *upāyas*. In the *sāmbhavopāya*—in which, as Padoux (1990, p. 193) tells us, “the disciple must become one with the precognitive impulse (*icchā*) of Śiva manifesting the universe through the supreme word or *vāc*”—the twelve Kālīs assume the form of pure “phoneme-reflections” (*parāmarśa*). In chapter 3 of the *Tantrasāra* (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, pp. 13–18), Abhinava discusses the topic of “phonematic emanation” by showing the progressive levels of actualization of speech that proceed from the undifferentiated level of speech to the differentiated level of articulated speech. At the highest level of pure “phoneme-reflection” which is the letter A or *anutara*, there are no divisions. When the division between “seed” (*bīja*) and “womb” (*yoni*) or, in other words, between vowels and consonants takes place, then, the supreme “phoneme-reflection” assumes the form of the possessor of power (*śaktimān*) and power (*śakti*). Similarly, when the “phoneme-reflection” manifests in eight classes of phonemes, then, in conjunction with the lord of the wheel (*cakreśvara*), it creates nine places of articulations (*varga*). This division is further subdivided into fifty phonemes of the Sanskrit alphabet or even into eighty-one *pādas*. Nonetheless, Abhinavagupta assures us that, in reality, only six “phoneme-reflections” exist, which nourish the universe with the power of perfect fullness. These six become twelve through the processes of expansion (*prasaraṇa*) and fusion (*pratisamcaraṇa*). Moreover, these twelve are considered to be the powers of the Lord in the form of awareness, known as the venerable Kālīkā.

⁷¹ MP (A) 212: *svaṃ svam viṣayam āhṛtya pratyāvṛttikramāgataḥ/ ciccamatkārabharito dvādaśākṣisvarogaṇaḥ//*.

⁷² The reference to the process of reversion (*pratyāvṛtti*) into one’s own nature of the cycle of cognition represented by the goddesses of the *vṇḍacakra* occurs in the *Mahānayaṇaparakāśa* of Trivandrum (7.54cd-58ab) in the context of *haṭhapāka* (“forceful maturation”). This process leads to the ultimate state of fusion (*sāmarasya*), defined as the absence of even the most latent traces of the desire-driven consciousness, and the state of repose (*viśrāma*). Theologically speaking, this state is represented by the emaciated goddess (Kṛṣṇā) who embodies the dissolution of all desires. See also verse 7.37cd-7.38ab: “In the same way, it is possible to bring [the universe] into the unobscured radiance of consciousness by the process of forceful maturation whose nature is the process of reversion (*pratyāvṛttikrama*) simply by carefully observing this [dynamic] structure of consciousness” (*tathaiva haṭhapākena pratyāvṛttikramātmanā// nirāvaraṇatām netuṃ śakyam saṃsthānaśīlanāt/*). In the verse 2.22 of the same text, *pratyāvṛtti* refers only to the withdrawal of manifested appearances (*abhāsāna*).

⁷³ In the developed Kālīkrama, the bliss of tasting (*rasanā*) has purely cognitive overtones associated with the interiorization of the object of perception: “I know that object” is the relish (*rasa*) of wonder (*camatkāra*) caused by the repose within one’s own nature. In Abhinavagupta’s model of the twelve Kālīs, this is conveyed by Sthitināśakālī (*TĀ* 4.150, ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p. 162, vol. III), who represents the *samhāra* state of *prameya*: “[The goddess] who is wishing to dissolve [that object of perception] through the relish of interiority, conceives the withdrawal of the state permanence [of the object], thus she is named Sthitināśakālī”. Jayaratha’s commentary (*Tāv* 4.150, ed. Śāstrī, 1922, pp. 162–163, vol. III) explains “interiority” [means] because of being inclined inwards towards the state of being one with the perceiver” (*antarmukhatā—antaḥ pramātrekātmatāyām aunmukhye*); “through the relish—because of delight which is the nature of wonder caused by the repose within the self as expressed by the statement ‘I know that object’” (*“jñāto mayārthaḥ” iti svātmaviśrāntīcamatkārātmano rasāt*).

⁷⁴ MP (A) 215-216.

⁷⁵ MP (A) 219-220ab.

beyond the sequence and the non-sequence, and transcending any contact with the sensory experience.⁷⁶ Third, the activity of destruction that those ‘rays’ instigate is described through the use of technical terms, such as ‘forceful withdrawal’ (*haṭhasaṃhāra*), and ‘fire of total devouring’ (*alamgrāsaikaghasmara*).⁷⁷ In another place, Arṇasiṃha also uses the term *sahasā*⁷⁸ to refer to the process of sudden withdrawal activated by the twelve goddesses. The references to *haṭhākaraṣa* and *grāsaghasmara* are also found in Niṣkriyānanda’s *Kālikākramapañcāśikā*, but they are not found in the *Devīpañcaśataka*, which only mentions the term *sahasā*. These terms are also found in other *Mahānayaprakāśas*⁷⁹ and in the Kashmirian Trika exegesis.⁸⁰ Fourth, Arṇasiṃha gives additional identification of the *anākhyakrama*, when he correlates it with the fourth state (*turīya*),⁸¹ on the one hand, and with the condition of oneness (*sāmarasya*),⁸² on the other. Finally, Arṇasiṃha postulates the existence of the thirteenth Kālī, who as the source of other twelve goddesses, presides over the great wheel of withdrawal of all things and is intent on emitting and devouring these twelve goddesses.⁸³

Arṇasiṃha’s exposition of the twelve Kālīs summarized above represents the stage in the development of the doctrine that was already drawing upon the established set of concepts, such as *pratyāvṛtti*, *ciccatatkāra*, *alamgrāsa* or *sāmarasya* found also in the Trika and the Trika-influenced Krama sources. This indicates that at the time of Arṇasiṃha, the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs was already more or less codified and it was adopted in that form as a core of the later Kashmirian Krama exegesis. Arṇasiṃha’s explanation of the twelve Kālīs had a great influence on Maheśvarānanda’s formulation of the same concept in his 13th–14th century *Mahārthamañjarī*.

⁷⁶ MP (A) 222–224ab.

⁷⁷ MP (A) 224–225.

⁷⁸ MP (A) 213. The *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum (7.25) also refers to the practice of careful attention (*avadhāna*), during which the universe suddenly dissolves: “It is precisely by paying attention to one’s own reflective awareness that the presence of the universe [extending] from the Fire of Time up to Śiva suddenly dissolves into one’s own nature (*svavimarśāvadhānenāpy ākālāgniśivāvadhil viśvasya bhāvaḥ sahasā svasvarūpe vilīyate* [em. *vicīyate*]”).

⁷⁹ See, fn. 73 above.

⁸⁰ For the *haṭhapāka*, see for example, *TĀ* 3. 260–264.

⁸¹ MP (A) 213 where *turyacakra* connotes the condition of waveless great void (*niṣtaraṅgamahāvīyoma*). The concept of *turīya*, originally found in the *Śivasūtras* (v.7) to describe the final state of yogic realization which pervades the three states of waking (*jaḡat*), sleep (*svapna*), and deep sleep (*suṣupti*), has been adopted in the concept of the twelve Kālīs from the *Jayadrathayāmala* (4.57r4) onwards: *sa raviḥ sūryaturyānte bhrājate raudraḍāmarah*, “That sun shines at the limit of fourth state of the sun, which is fearsome and terrible.” The association of the twelve Kālīs with the concept of *turīya* reached its peak in the *Mahārthamañjarīparimāla* (v.39), which clearly draws upon Arṇasiṃha’s *Mahānayaprakāśa*.

⁸² For the association of the twelve Kālīs or *anākhyakrama* with the *samarasa/sāmarasya* or *ekarasa*, see *CMSS* 7.224, *TĀv* 4.172, *MP* (Ś) 10.7.

⁸³ MP (A) 226 quoted in the *Mahārthamañjarīparimāla* (v.39, ed. V. Divedi 1992:101).

The Thirteen Kālīs as Time-Consumption (*kālagrāsa*): The *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum

The anonymous *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum, a post-Abhinavagupta scripture written by the 12th century and certainly influenced by the Pratyabhijñā school, is undoubtedly our most useful source to understand the philosophical foundation of the doctrine of the thirteen (and not the twelve) Kālīs. The text formulates this concept in terms of the practice of *anākhyakrama* built upon the notion of atemporal temporality (*kramākrama*), or, in other words, the non-sequential sequence that belongs to the single, manifesting consciousness (*saṃvit-sphuraṇa*). According to the text, *anākhyā* has two states: on the one hand, it penetrates plurality, for it contains within itself the sequences of *sr̥ṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *saṃhāra*; on the other, it is established at the same time in its own state of final repose (*viśrānti*), beyond the reality of the sequence. This finds its theological extension in the worship of the Kālīs. The *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum is clearly influenced by the Kashmirian Krama exegesis, when it associates the twelve Kālīs with the twelvefold cognitive process, as follows:

The single nature of one's own nature (*svasvarūpa*) functions as pervading the fields of the knowable (*meva*), the instruments of knowledge (*māna*) and the knower (*pramātr̥*). These three, who are being one with the phases of emission (*sarga*), permanence (*avatāra*), and withdrawal (*saṃhāra*) become fourfold through the aspects beginning with *sr̥ṣṭi*, *sthiti*, etc. The fourfold expansion starting with the *udaya*, to the final moment of the *kālagrāsa*, has a single point of repose (*viśrānti*), and that is the reason why there are thirteen goddesses [worshipped in the *pūjākrama*].⁸⁴

The text briefly touches upon the subject of repose (*viśrānti*) represented by the thirteenth goddess:

Within any [sequence comprising of *sarga*, etc.], there is a final repose, which transcends the polarity of sequence and non-sequence, and which is present as the inseparable essence that cannot be penetrated by the adjunct, which is time.⁸⁵

The argument that in any sensory perception the non-successive aspect (i.e., *viśrānti*) is inherently present ensues. By way of example, the text refers to the appearance of the colour 'blue', which seems to be external to the perceiver, and yet is only seemingly so, for the subjective experience of 'blue', which results in 'relish', is also present non-successively. The text says:

⁸⁴ MP (T) 9.15-17: *Ekam svarūparūpaṃ hi meyamānapramātr̥tāḥ* [em. –tāḥ]/ *sargāvatārasaṃhāramayir ākramya vartate// svasvarūpānugunyenā pratyekaṃ kalanāvaśāt/ sr̥ṣṭisthityādibhir bhedaś caturdhāpi tāḥ sthītāḥ// kālagrāsāntam udayāc caturdhā vibhavo* [em. vihito] *hi yah/ tasya viśrāntir ekaiva tato devyas trayodaśa* [ms. *devyātra*-]. Quoted with attribution by Jayaratha in his commentary on the *Tantrāloka* 4.125.

⁸⁵ MP (T) 9.24: *atrāntare 'pi viśrāntiḥ kramākramapadojjhitā/ kālopādher anākramya nāntarīyatayā sthītāḥ*.

Clearly, the manifestation [of consciousness] must be present in the [external perception of] ‘blue’ and that manifestation [of consciousness] is certainly located in the [subjective experience of] relish. If they weren’t present non-successively, there could be no perception of ‘blue’.⁸⁶

Thus, the non-successive aspect is posited as the underlying substratum for each of the cognitive sequence. Its function is to unify the sequences of cognition appearing within consciousness as its contents. The following verses expand on this issue by describing the non-successive aspect as something that must be presupposed in any sensory experience; the absence of which would result in the fragmentation of cognition into discrete phases, such as ‘blue’, ‘manifestation’, etc.:

If we first had the ‘blue’, then the ‘manifestation’, and then, the ‘relish’ mutually excluding one another, there would be no perception of ‘blue’. The sequence is declared to be of the nature of temporal succession; as a result of mutual exclusion, there would be no cognition in this way, because of the division between distinct parts. [Thus] it is [only] through the experience of the power of *anākhyā*, which consists of the enjoyment of partless cognition accomplished in any experience, that the worldly experience is established.⁸⁷

The philosophical analysis of *anākhyā* is complemented by a more detailed discussion of its practice. The practice of *anākhyā* is built upon the notion of time-consumption (*kālagrāsa*), whose goal is to reach the non-successive state of repose (*viśrānti*) suddenly. The *Mahānayaprakāśa* states thus: “by concentrating on the non-successive essence of time, which takes the form of coloring time⁸⁸ by succession, there is a sudden devouring of time, and this comes about through a direct sensual experience (*saṃkrama*).”⁸⁹ Time is constructed with a metric symmetry as the set of moments applicable to the sequence. However, in the midst of this regularity an unexpected split comes, namely a sudden opening that causes time to be devoured by non-time. Beneath the formal logic of this passage, there is a

⁸⁶ MP (T) 9.26: *nīle tāvat sthitaṃ bhānaṃ bhānaṃ ca kila (ms. tila) carvaṇe/ akrameṇa sthitaṃ no cen nīlasaṃvin na sidhyati//*.

⁸⁷ MP (T) 9.27-29: *ādau nīlaṃ tato bhānaṃ tataś ca yadi carvaṇam/ anyonyaparihāreṇa nīlasaṃvin na tad bhavet// kālakramātmā kathitaḥ kramas ca anyonya varjanāt/ naivaṃ kācit pratītiḥ syād vividhāṃśātmābhedaṭaḥ [em. -abha// tan nīraṃśavidābhogamayānākhyānubhāvataḥ [em. -dam]/ sarvānubhavasamsiddhau lokayātrā pratiṣṭhitā//*.

⁸⁸ The reference to the goddess, who although being the form of pure consciousness (*saṃvit*) becomes ‘coloured’ (*ārūṣitā*) by its association with the cognitive process represented by the twelve Kālīs is also found in Abhinavagupta’s exposition of *saṃviccakrodāya*. See, for example *TĀv* 4.148 (ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p. 157, vol. III), where the goddess is described as being pure (*śuddhā*), which means “not coloured by the contracting forms of subjects and the others” (*pramātrādīniyatārūpānārūṣitā*). In the description of *Samhārakālī* (*TĀv* 4.153, ed. Śāstrī 1922, p. 168, vol. III), who represents the *sr̥ṣṭi* of the *pramāṇa*, we read: “For the emission of consciousness in its state of the instruments of cognition is just this, namely, it should shine as coloured by these various objects” (*iyam eva hi saṃvidāḥ pramāṇarūpatāyāṃ sr̥ṣṭiḥ—yāt tattadarthārūṣitā cakāśyād itī*). See also, fn. 91, when the state of *nirupādāhikā* is *viśrānti*.

⁸⁹ MP (T) 9.20: *akramātmaparāmarśāt kramārūṣaṇarūpiṇaḥ/ kālasya sahasā grāsaḥ saṃkramād [em. grā(sa)saṃkramād] ittham iṣyate //*.

conviction that liberation from temporality comes—paradoxically enough—via the use of time as the vehicle for reaching the goal of *viśrānti*. The practice of *kālagrāsa* starts with engagement in ordinary sensory experience (*saṃkrama*). The text enlarges on the *saṃkrama* as follows:

The manifestation of *anākhya* is effortlessly present in whichever object of sense the ‘rays’ penetrate.⁹⁰

The concept of the senses as ‘rays’ is reminiscent of the Kaula tradition, as it echoes the passage of Niṣkriyānanda’s *Kālikākramapañcāśikā*, already referred to above, where *anākhya* is defined as being the basis of one’s own personal experience (*svānubhūti*). The sensory experience is structurally ascertained within the fourfold division that arises in the object (*parijñeya*), subject (*mātr*) and instruments of cognition (*māna*) as: (1) spontaneous effulgence (*akalitollāsa*), (2) sensual enjoyment of that (*tatsambhoga*), (3) subjective relishing (*carvaṇa*), and (4) rest (*virāma*). In all these twelve cases, there is one repose (*viśrānti*), which is free of limiting adjuncts.⁹¹ This twelvefold structure is reflected in the worship of the twelve Kālīs, wherein *pūjā* is described as the reflection (*parāmarśa*) on the twelve goddesses:

Through the power of reflection on these twelve goddesses, the state of non-differentiated awareness (*nirvikalpa*), which is devoid of latent traces of cognition, clearly manifests.⁹²

A close affinity between this cognitive aspect of worship and its ritualistic equivalent is ascertained in the next paragraph dedicated to the description of the Kaula ritual. The text refers to the worship of the twelve goddesses through the panorama of typically Kaula ritual that includes consumption of wine, meat, and sexual enjoyment of women. Both dimensions of worship serve as the means for *kālagrāsa*. In each case, *kālagrāsa* leads to one *viśrānti*, which is the thirteenth goddess. This unique explanation that correlates the twelve Kālīs with the Kaula substances is not found in other Krama texts.

In the next part, the text turns to the exposition of *kālagrāsa* represented by the twelve Kālīs of the *anākhyakrama*. The names of the Kālīs are derived from the semantic analysis of the root *kal*, which echoes a similar passage found in Abhinavagupta’s *Tantrāloka*.⁹³ Unlike in Abhinavagupta, however, these different meanings of *kal* are correlated with the ritual ‘substances’, namely, women, wine, and meat.

⁹⁰ MP (T) 9.21: *yasmin yasmin hi viṣaye saṃkrāmanti marīcayah/ tatra tatra hy anāyāsād anākhyasphuraṇaṃ sthitam//*

⁹¹ MP (T) 9.31-33: *tatra meyasvarūpasya caturdhā bhedasambhavaḥ/ ādāv akalitollāsas tatsambhogas tataḥ param// tato 'pi carvaṇaṃ tatra virāmas tadanantaram/ evaṃ mānasvarūpe 'pi caturdhā bhedasambhavaḥ// svaucityena parijñeyo mātrrūpe tathaiva ca/ atra sarvatra viśrāntir ekaiva nirupādhikā//*

⁹² MP (T) 9.34: *āsāṃ dvādaśadevināṃ parāmarśabalāt sphuṭam/ vikalpavāsanāśūnyam nirvikalpaṃ pravartate//*

⁹³ TĀ 3.352cd-53ab and 4.173 cd-175.

The first group of the four Kālīs who are intent on *kālagrāsa* in the field of the object (*prameya*) derives its name from the root *kal* in the sense of *kṣepa*, and it is applied to the enjoyment of women. *Kṣepa* (“casting forth” or “projection”) means here the “extroverted sensual desire” that arises through the contact with women. Therefore, those who are strongly attracted to women enter into the supportless state of *kālagrāsa*: some simply by seeing an attractive woman, other by touching her limbs, and other by copulation. In this way, those who are attracted to women perceive three levels of experience (i.e., *akalitollāsa*, *tatsambhoga*, and *carvaṇa*), but when time dissolves away, they attain the state of *viśrānti*, which is free of limitations.⁹⁴

The second group of the four Kālīs instigates *kālagrāsa* in the field of the instruments of cognition (*pramāṇa*) and derives its name from the root *kal* in the sense of *śabda* (“to resonate”), and *saṃkhyāna* (“to enumerate”). Therefore, those who are addicted to wine can reach *kālagrāsa* merely by seeing, touching, or drinking the wine. Once the wine is swallowed, the sense of duality is destroyed. As a result, the state of blissful relish becomes firm, without any contact with the object of experience. Through the expansion of this intermediate state (between *prameya* and *pramātrī*), which is the great experience of reflection,⁹⁵ the four Kālīs are present resting on the field of *pramāṇa*.⁹⁶

The third and final group of the four Kālīs derives its name from the root *kal* in the sense of *gati* (“to go” or “to know”). These four Kālīs arise for those who are immersed in the enjoyment of meat insofar as they penetrate the state of inner relish whose nature is the subject (*pramātrī*). Ultimately, the enjoyment of meat leads to the *kālagrāsa*.⁹⁷

Drawing upon the method of “effortless” attainment advocated in the *Svabodhodayamañjarī* of Vāmanadatta,⁹⁸ the *Mahānayaprakāśa* asserts that the practice of *kālagrāsa* is easy to attain because, in reality, both time and the devouring of time represented by the twelve Kālīs are only one thirteenth goddess, who is the final repose and the point of dissolution of all cognitions, whether discursive or non-discursive:

⁹⁴ MP (T) 9.35-40ab: *ye tu yośidvyasaninas tanmukhenaiṅva te kramāt/ kālagrāsapade samyak pravīśanti nirāśraye// kecīd darśanamātreṇa tathāṅgasparśanāt pare/ dvīndriyotpatti taś cānye viśrāmyanti nirāśraye// itthaṃ yośidvyasanināṃ tisro 'nubhavabhūmikāh/ drśyante kālavilaye viśrāntir nirupādhiḥ// sṛṣṭisṛṣṭyādibhedena catasro 'nākhyadevatāh/ prameyabhūmim āśṛitya kālagrāsaparāh sthitāh// kṣepārthasya kalerdhātor anvarthānugamāt sphuṭam/ kālīśabdaś catasrṇām devīnāṃ vācakaḥ sthitāh// kṣepo bahirmukhec chātmayoṣit sambhogajanmani/.*

⁹⁵ The text seems to be following the *Tantrāloka* (4.175), where the root *kal* in the sense of *gatau* (“to go” or “to know”) means entering into the nature of consciousness in the manner of reflection.

⁹⁶ MP (T) 9.41-45: *Evaṃ madyavyasanino ye kecijjantavaḥ sthitāh/ teṣāṃ tadāśrayeṅva kālagrāso 'bhīdhīyate// tasyāpi darśanasparśapānāyogavataḥ [-tā ms.] sphuṭam/ udrekotkarṣataḥ [em. udrekāt karṣato] drśtaḥ kālagrāsasya sambhavaḥ// praviṣṭe 'ntaḥ śīdhurase (-saṃ) bhedanirharāṅātmake/ sthairyam eti camatkāro vinā viśayaśāntim// pratibimbamahābhogamadhyabhūmivikāśataḥ/ pramāṇabhūmim āśṛitya catasraḥ kālikāḥ sthitāh// śabdasaṅkhyānavṛtteś ca kalerdhātoḥ kilārthataḥ/ sthītisṛṣṭyādibhedena caturdhā kālikodayaḥ//.*

⁹⁷ MP (T) 9.46-47: *evaṃ māṃsavyasaninām antarāśvādabhūmikāṃ [em. bhūminām] pramātrīrūpām [em. rūpām] āviśya catasraḥ kālikāḥ sthitāh// 9.46 gatiarthasya [em. gatīarthasya] kalerdhātor arthasyānugamād imāḥ/ darśanasparśasambhogavirām udrekato [em. udrekatā] matāḥ//.*

⁹⁸ For an edition and English translation of the *Svabodhamañjarī*, see Torella (2000).

In this way, with all the phenomena in all states of experience, *kālagrāsa* is easy to attain through the Mahārtha teaching, “I venerate that structure of the self in which the bliss of the awakening of consciousness has been obtained without any effort, after having correctly examined the nature of things as having no reality of their own.” In accordance with the oral teaching of the Siddhas, there is no independent reality of anything with regard to which this time, whose nature is differentiation (*kalana*), applies. This whole structure manifesting of and by itself is nothing but the expansion of the self. So what is this time, which is devoured by the bliss of the arising of consciousness and what are those twelve Kālīs, which are intent on devouring time? When these are analyzed [the conclusion is reached that], there is nothing at all. There exists only one state of repose (*viśrānti*), which is the supreme goddess, free of limiting adjunct, which is time. She is characterized as both consciousness and non-consciousness; bliss and non-bliss and absence of both (*nirbhoga*). She is the point of dissolution of all cognitions, both discursive and non-discursive. She is the one who transcends the states of sequence and non-sequence and is the expansion of those. She is unmoving, devoid of pulsation, but she also experiences all pulsation. Although she is directly perceptible to everyone with different facets, nonetheless, she is realized by various methods such as oral instruction, worship, and direct transmission. She who is figuratively called “the thirteenth” is the ground in which the twelve goddesses dissolve. Therefore, she is present as the highest object of worship, because she is that ultimate goal to be realized.⁹⁹

In the concluding verses, the text briefly refers to *viśrānti* as the state that comes about through the eradication of the residual traces arising from *vikalpas*, suggesting that *kālagrāsa* and *haṭhapāka*¹⁰⁰ lead to the same end. The conclusion also contains an idea that it is in the world of sensory experience, perceived through the prism of non-sequential sequence, where one is expected to attain liberation from saṃsāric existence. This should be read in connection with another passage where the state of liberation in life is defined as “recognition of reality as it is”:¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ MP (T) 9.51cd-61ab: *Taditthaṃ sarvabhāvānāṃ sarvānubhavabhūmiṣu// mahārthadr̥ṣṭyā sugamaḥ kālagrāso prayatnataḥ* [em. *apyayatnataḥ*] *samyagvastuvicāreṇa (samyaga-) bhāvānāṃ (-nāma-) asvabhāvataḥ // labdhābodhodayānandaṃ (-bodho*) vande saṃsthānam ātmanaḥ/ iti sid-dhamukhāmnāyayuktyā naivāsti vastutaḥ// vastusvabhāvo yatrāyamaṃ kālaḥ syāt kalanātmakaḥ/ svavisphāramayaṃ* [em. *-viśphāra*] *sarvam idaṃ saṃsthānam ātmanaḥ// iti bodhodayānandāt kaḥ kālo grasyate hi yaḥ/ tadgrāsasaṃrambhaparā yāś ca dvādaśakālikāḥ// ithaṃ vicāryamañānāṃ na kiñciditi niścayāt/ ekaiva cidacidbhogābhoganirbhogalakṣaṇā* [conj. *-abhoga*] *// viśrāntiḥ paramā devī kālopādhi-vivarjītā/ savikalpāvikalpānāṃ sarvāsāṃ saṃvidālayaḥ// kramākramapadottirṇā (kramāt-) tadābhogātmikāpi yā/ acalā spandarahitā sarvaspandopabhoginī// pratyaḥsabhūtā sarvasyās* [em. *sarvasyā*] *tathāpy* [em. *apyadyāpi*] *vividhair mukhaiḥ/ kathā* [em. *tathā*] *pūjanasaṅkrāmādy* [conj. *-krāmair*] *upāyair upalakṣitā// āsāṃ dvādaśadevināṃ svarūpavilayāvāniḥ/ trayodaśīti yā devī kathyate hy upacārataḥ// upādeya tayā saiva paropāsyā tayā sthitā.*

¹⁰⁰ For the practice of *haṭhapāka*, see MP (T) 7.36-38; 7.47-49.

¹⁰¹ MP (T) 9.14: *yathāsthitasya tasya ataḥ svarūpam upapadyate/ etatparijñānamayī jīvanmuktir nigadyate//* “Therefore, the nature of that [manifest reality] makes sense only as it is. Liberation in life is defined as consisting of recognition of this [fact].”.

The highest repose, devoid of any desires, arises through the total destruction of the most latent impressions generated by various thought-constructs. In this manner, this sequence of worship (*pūjanakrama*) [of the Kālīs] is present to all people as a direct experience in all states of phenomenal experience that take place in the state of extroversion. For the wise ones, the highest consciousness blazes up brilliantly by means of those same concrete realities, which others have rejected as factors obscuring consciousness.¹⁰²

The Absence of the Twelve Kālīs in the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Śītikaṇṭha

The last of the three *Mahānayaprakāśas*, which might have been written in the eleventh century in Kashmir (Sanderson, 2007a, p. 302), does not mention the twelve Kālīs at all; however, its exposition of the *anākhyakrama* in some respects echoes the other two *Mahānayaprakāśas*. Like the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum, Śītikaṇṭha accepts that the Ādidevī—the goddess representing pure unconditioned consciousness—manifests in three divisions (*srṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *saṃhāra*) through her *anākhyā* nature, which is coloured by the reality of the sequence (*kramārtharūṣitena*).¹⁰³ The similarity between the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum and that of Śītikaṇṭha is also apparent in the formulation of the concept of *anākhyā* as the form of repose (*viśrānti*). However, unlike the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum, which asserts a single repose for all the twelve moments, Śītikaṇṭha says that the *anākhyakrama* contains all three types of repose for each sequence, namely *srṣṭyanākhyā*, *sthityanākhyā*, and *saṃhārānākhyā*, while other sequences merely rest in their own nature and do not contain all three.¹⁰⁴ This particular way of formulating the concept of *anākhyā* is based on Abhinavagupta's *Kramakeli*, the lost commentary on Eraka's *Kramastotra*, quoted in the *Mahārthamañjarī* of Maheśvarānanda, which is also followed by the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Trivandrum.¹⁰⁵ According to Śītikaṇṭha, however, those three separate *anākhyas* represent the conditioned state (*sopādhikā*) of the fourth *anākhyā*, which is their ultimate ground, free of all limitations (*nirupādhikā*). It is in this *nirupādhikā anākhyā*, where the three conditioned *anākhyas* are brought to the state of rest in the state of unity (*sāmarasya*).¹⁰⁶ The understanding of *viśrānti* as the ground devoid of limiting

¹⁰² MP (T) 9.66-68: *tattadvikalpasambhūtavāsanāvedhasaṃkṣayāt/ sarvākāṅkṣāvīrahitā viśrāntir jāyate parā// ittham vyutthānaviṣaye [em. utthāna-] bhāvānubhavabhūmiṣu/ pratyakṣaḥ sarvajantūnām sthito 'sau (sthito*) pūjanakramaḥ// anyair āvāratatvena [em. āvāratatvena] ye bhāvāḥ parivarjitāḥ/ tair eva jñāninām ittham jāyvalīti parā citih//*

¹⁰³ MP (Ś) 10.7 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, p. 119). See also the MP (T) v. 9.20: *akramāmaparāmarśāt kramārūṣaṇarūpiṇaḥ* and *TĀv* 4.148 and 4.153 (fn.89 above).

¹⁰⁴ MP (Ś) 10.7 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, p. 119).

¹⁰⁵ The quotation of *Kramakeli* found in the *MMP* v.39 (ed. V. Dvivedi, 1992, p. 100) reads: *Srṣṭi srṣṭi sthiti srṣṭi saṃhāra srṣṭi/ Srṣṭi sthiti sthiti sthiti saṃhāra sthiti/ Srṣṭi saṃhāra sthiti saṃhāra saṃhāra saṃhāra/ Srṣṭi turīya sthiti turīya saṃhāra turīya//*. See also MP (T) 9.38ab; 9.45cd; 9.48ab for a similar arrangement.

¹⁰⁶ MP (Ś) 10.7 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, pp. 119–120).

Abhinavagupta's order of Kālīs follows the true order, so that the *saṃvitkrama* can be accomplished.¹¹⁰

Abhinavagupta's *saṃviccakrodaya* reflects an effort to offer an integrated understanding of the twelve Kālīs from the epistemological perspectives of the Trika and Pratyabhijñā systems.¹¹¹ In order to understand the conceptual ramifications of this integration, let us first look at the *Tantrasāra*, where a shorter version of the twelve Kālīs constituting the essential teaching of the *sāktopāya* is given. Here Abhinavagupta is keen to incorporate the twelve Kālīs within the Trika system. He does so by first formulating the concept of Parameśvara who in his essence (*svabhāva*) is the perfect fullness of consciousness (*pūrnatāsaṃvit*), capable of manifesting the totality of his powers. Even though Parameśvara has countless powers, there are in fact three particular powers that are capable of displaying the totality. These are the three goddesses of the Trika pantheon: *parā-śakti*, *parāpara-śakti*, and *aparā-śakti*. These three are assimilated (through the process of devouring) within another power, called *śrīparā*, which is the act of synthetic awareness (*anusamdhāna*) of the Lord. This assimilative yet transcendent *śrīparā* is renamed through the Krama terminology as "the one who attracts time" or Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī, and she is equated with the essence of subjectivity (*māṭṛsadbhāva*) of the Trika.¹¹² Each of these four powers functions threefold in creating, maintaining, and dissolving, and in this way, they are twelve Kālīs of the *saṃviccakra*.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ *Tāv* 4.149 (ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p. 161, vol. III): "Objection: How come that Śrīraktakālī and others have been named here immediately after (Sṛṣṭikālī), for, in this way, there would be the contradiction of scriptures. Answer: True, but in the *āgama*, in order to conceal the order [of Kālīs] in consciousness, they have been named in this order, scattered and disordered; just as it is also the case with the *sthītikrama* of the *Śrīpañcaśatikā*. And it is following that that the great teachers have introduced the *pūjākrama*. But here [in the *Tantrāloka*], he [Abhinava] has organized it in true order in order to conceal the order of worship. On the basis of which, the order of consciousness can be accomplished" (*tat katham iha tadanantaram śrīraktakālyādi nirdeśah kṛtaḥ, evaṃ hi āgamavirodhaḥ syāt, satyaṃ—kiṃ tu āgame saṃvitkramagopanārtham ālūnaviśṛṇatayaivaṃ abhidhānam, yathā śrīpañcaśatikē sthītikrame 'pi, yad eva cānusṛṭya mahāgurubhiḥ pūjākramah prakrāntaḥ, iha tu pūjākramagopanāya svasāyaya yaiva sthāpanam, yad adhikṛtya saṃvitkramah pariniṣṭhitim iyāt*).

¹¹¹ For the explanation of this adaptation from the point of view of the ritual structure, see Sanderson (1986, pp. 194–204 and 1995, pp. 70–75).

¹¹² In the *Tantrāloka*, Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī is *parātītā*, beyond the supreme goddess of the Trika (*tanmadhye tu parā devī dakṣiṇe ca parāparā—aparā vāmaśṛṅge tu madhyaśṛṅgordhvataḥ śṛṇu—yā sā saṃkarṣiṇī devī parātītā vyavasthitā, Tāv* III.3.69–70), but in the *Tantrasāra*, she is thought to be both the transcendent power and the sustaining ground of other three. See also Sanderson (1986, pp. 192–193 and 197–204; 1990, pp. 58–59; 2005, pp. 101–102). The supremacy of Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī is also attested in the hierarchy of cosmic principles in Abhinavagupta's *Tantroccaya* (chap. 8, trans. Sferra 1999, pp. 124–125) where she is said to be the supreme consciousness (*parāsaṃvit*), as the thirty-eighth principle (to which one rises) having gone beyond (Bhairava, the thirty-seventh principle)—making him assume his aspect as the seat (of the thirty-eighth principle).

¹¹³ *TS* 4 (ed. Śāstrī, 1918, pp. 29–30): 1. Consciousness (*saṃviddevī*) initially creates the state internally (Sṛṣṭikālī). 2. Then, she creates it also externally, fully manifest (Raktakālī). 3. When she notices its attractiveness (*rakti*), she creates further, as she desires to assimilate this state (Sthitināśakālī). 4. Then she creates doubt—the obstacle in assimilation—which she devours as well (Yamakālī). 5. □ The part of the state that is the devoured doubt, she creates, assimilating it within (Sāmhārakālī). 6. Then she creates her own nature through the ego-feeling: "the state of assimilation is only my nature" (Mṛtyukālī). 7. Then, in the process of creating her nature of the assimilator or devourer (*upasaṃhārta*), she creates the condition

The reformulation of the twelve Kālīs as constituting the *saṃviccakra* and thereby embodying the perfect fullness of awareness (*pūrṇatāsamvit*) of the Lord enabled Abhinavagupta to introduce the concept of Parameśvara as the lord of the wheel (*cakreśvara*). This, in turn, led Abhinavagupta to integrate the Trika version of the twelve Kālīs within the pan-Śaiva concept of Śiva as the Lord of Powers, prominent also in the *Śivasūtras*, *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, and *Spandakārikā*.¹¹⁴ By introducing the concept of *cakreśvara*, he was also able to assimilate the Pratyabhijñā model of “disclosure of powers” (*śaktiprakāśa*)¹¹⁵ and “discovery of one’s own powers” (*śaktyāviśkaraṇa*).¹¹⁶ In so doing, Abhinavagupta was able to uphold the Pratyabhijñā precepts, which postulated the sovereignty of Śiva as the substratum of powers.¹¹⁷

An attempt to ‘clean’ the twelve Kālīs from its esoteric jargon and integrate them within the philosophical framework of the Trika and Pratyabhijñā systems is also attested in the *Tantrāloka*. There, some of the key metaphysical concepts associated with the doctrine that we have already encountered on previous pages, such as the ‘sun’, ‘fire of time’, and ‘great time’, became associated with the stages of the cognitive cycle and included within the Pratyabhijñā hierarchy of cognizers. Thus, the twelfefold sun loses its esoteric context of the Sun-Goddess and becomes employed to simply denote the twelve instruments of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), which are dissolved in the thirteenth egoity of *ahaṃkāra*, called the ‘supreme sun’.¹¹⁸ That supreme sun, because it is still an instrument of knowledge, gets dissolved into the agent, which is the limited subject (*parimita-pramātr*), called *kālāgnirudra*. That *kālāgnirudra*, in turn, since it is only the constructed subject (*kalpita*, to distinguish it from the unconstructed one, *akalpita*), must necessarily be dissolved in the supreme subject (*para-pramātr*), called *mahākāla*, which is unconditional and unconstructed. *Mahākāla*, who echoes the characteristics of Sadāśiva in the Pratyabhijñā system, is the perfect fullness of I-ness (*paripūrṇāhaṃbhāva*), but since it is coloured by the experience to assimilate the objects—which are internal, that is to say, which exist as one with the subject, according to the principle of *sarvasarvātmakam* “everything is of the nature of everything else”—into one’s own

Footnote 113 continued

in which one part becomes a latent trace (*vāsanā*) and the other becomes part of consciousness itself (Rudrakālī). 8. Then, she creates the wheel of the senses which consists of her own nature (Mārtāṇḍakālī). 9. Then, she also creates the one who rules over the wheel of the senses (*karaṇeśvara*) (Paramārkakālī). 10. Then, she creates the māyic subject, *kalpita-pramātr* (Kālāgnirudrakālī). 11. Then, she creates the subject who has the capacity to transcend his own limitation, enjoying his own expanded nature (Mahākālakālī). 12. Finally, she creates the fully expanded form of the subject (Mahābhairavaçaṇḍograghorakālī).

¹¹⁴ See *Śivasūtras* 1.6., *Spandakārikā* 1.1., *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, v. 20. See also Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the *Parātrīśikā*’s verses 25–26, where a description of Bhairava as *cakreśvara* of the twelve ray-goddesses (*raśmi-devāta-dvādaśa*) is given.

¹¹⁵ *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-kārikā* of Utpaladeva (*ĪŚK*) 2.3.17, see Torella (1994).

¹¹⁶ *ĪŚK* 1.1.3.

¹¹⁷ *ĪŚK* 1.3.7.

¹¹⁸ *TĀ* 4.160–161 (ed. Śāstrī, 1922, pp. 175–176, vol. III): *karmabuddhyakṣavargo hi buddhyanto dvādaśātmakah/ prakāśakatvāt sūryātmā bhinne vastuni jṛmbhatell ahaṃkāras tu karaṇam abhimānaiskāśadhanam/ avicchinnaparāmarśi līyate tena tatra saḥ//*.

identity, also needs to get dissolved in the abode, which is transcendent (*akula-dhāma*).¹¹⁹ This assimilation takes place through the processes of ‘total devouring’ (*alamgrāsa*) and ‘forceful maturation’ (*haṭhapāka*). In this way, the final state is reached when only the consciousness (*cinmātra*) as the agent of knowing and doing remains, which does not enter into the state of the object of experience of any person in particular. At this level, the consciousness is one with the dissolver, and is, therefore, perfectly full. Abhinavagupta describes this ultimate stage represented by the final Kālī, called Mahācaṇḍograhakālī,¹²⁰ as follows:

All the subjects, all the means of knowledge, all the knowledges in their multiplicity, and all the objects, all this is nothing but consciousness itself (*cinmātra*) at this level. The supreme goddess is an independent freedom of self-awareness as it adopts this diversity of forms.¹²¹

This last passage shows that Abhinavagupta’s theory represents an important departure from the Krama scriptures, investigated above, where the goal of the twelve Kālīs unfolding in the *anākhyakrama* is the plane of repose (*viśrānti*) of all discursive and non-discursive thoughts. For Abhinavagupta, the purpose of *saṃviccakrodāya* is to realize the innate freedom of one’s own consciousness as the agent of knowing and doing, as it adopts the diversity of forms. This echoes the definition of consciousness attested already in the *Śivasūtras* (2.1.7): *caitanyaṃ sarvajñānakriyā paripūrṇa svatantrya*. By placing freedom as the final goal of the *saṃviccakrodāya*, Abhinavagupta makes an attempt to bring the Krama process of

¹¹⁹ Abhinavagupta’s usage of the term *akula-dhāma* to refer to the ultimate abode where the final stage of the dissolution of consciousness takes place could have been borrowed from the *Devīpañcaśataka* (7.28cd). There, the goddess Kālī is referred to as *paradhāmasvarūpiṇī* “she whose form is the supreme abode”. In another passage of the same text (2.69cd) we read that she is established in the middle, as the abode of the three abodes (sun-*pramāṇa*, moon-*prameya*, and fire-*pramātr*), and is the foundation of those three (*tridhāmadhāmamadyasthām dhāmādharaṇā padā sthitām*). The same two aspects of the goddess’ nature as both the supreme abode (*paraṃ dhāma*) and the abode that pervades the three abodes of the moon, sun, and fire, is found in the *Śrīkālikāstotra* of Jñānanetra (v.6: *Jayati śaśāṅkadīvākarapāvakahāmatrayāntaravyāpi/ janani tava kim api vimalaṃ svarūparūpaṃ paraṃ dhāma*)). Indeed, Jayaratha quotes the passage of the *Śrīkālikāstotra* (v.15) to describe the nature of the transcendent abode of Kālī as the “glory of light”, which is beyond any objectification and where the discrimination between being and non-being has been completely dissolved. One can easily notice how the concepts of *paraṃ dhāma* as the transcendent foundation and *dhāma* as the source of cognitive triad find their parallel meanings in the formulation of the concept of *anākhyā* as *nirupādhikā* and *sopādhikā* (see fn. 88 and 91 above).

¹²⁰ Compare also the description of the final Kālī in Abhinavagupta’s *Kramastotra* (v.26), where the last goddess represents the nameless state of the subject and luminous consciousness (*prakāśākhyā-saṃvit*).

¹²¹ *TĀ* 4.171-172 (ed. Śāstrī, 1922, p. 186, vol. III): *pramātrvargo mānaughah pramās ca bahudhā sthitāh/ meyaugha iti yatsarvam atra cinmātram eva tat/ iyatīm rūpavaicitrīm āśrayantyāḥ svasaṃvidah/ svacchandayam anapekṣaṃ yat sā paraṃ paramēśvarī*//

complete reabsorption of consciousness¹²² into the Trika model of creation.¹²³ In other words, he subsumes the Krama goddess Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī, who represents the reabsorption of consciousness, under the Parā goddess of the Trika, who stands for the creation of consciousness. This, in turn, validates the Pratyabhijñā model of autonomy of action, which is freedom.

Conclusion

This article has presented preliminary evidence for the development of the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs focusing on the doctrinal, and in some places, intertextual relationship existing between various tantric texts teaching it. The commonality of themes, lexical similarities, especially visible in a usage of shared technical terminology, and conceptual formulations (or lack thereof) detected in the sources presented here shows that the development of the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs was the outcome of a gradual evolution that seems to have proceeded from the early Kula/Kaula phase to the later Trika-Pratyabhijñā phase. This movement brought with itself the development as well as differentiation of a set of core ideas that received different emphases in various tantras. In the first phase, the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs was formulated in the context of the esoteric teaching of the *bhānavikrama*, which appears to have lost its importance in later scriptures. Although references to the twelve goddesses as the ‘rays’ continue to appear in later tantras, a growing trend was to present the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs as the concept of *anākhyakrama* often formulated as the practice of time-consumption (*kālagrāsa*) that leads to repose (*viśrānti*). The first text that clearly shows this transition is the *Devīpañcaśataka*, the tantra regarded by Abhinavagupta as an authority on the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs. Another important development was to present the doctrine of the twelve Kālīs or *anākhyakrama* not so much as a practice that relies on the fullest expansion of the senses, but rather as a philosophical discussion on the dynamic process of consciousness that goes through the twelvefold cycle, a tendency started with Jñānāneta. A notable exception to this rule is the *Mahānayaparakāśa* of Trivandrum, which tries to integrate the philosophical structure of the twelve Kālīs with the conceptual core of spontaneity

¹²² The *vidyā* of Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī consists of the *saṃhārabīja khphrem*, the heart of reabsorption, also known as the ‘lord of microcosm’ (*pañcapīṇḍanātha* or *piṇḍanātha*). Since reabsorption is the destruction of time, Abhinava calls this mantra Kālakarṣiṇī; cf. *TĀ* 15.533. In the fourth *āhnika* of his *TĀ*, Abhinavagupta writes: ‘This being (sat) [who appears] externally is first dissolved in the fire of knowledge. What remains then is what is left of the awareness, which is inner resonance. The condition of space being reached, by passing through the three energies, one attains to what is made of knowing, ultimately to dissolve in what is reabsorption’. Cf. *TĀ* 4.189-91, in Padoux (1990, p. 424). In his commentary, Jayaratha says that these verses give an explanation of the movement of the mind that perceives the world absorbed in the ‘emptiness’ of consciousness (*kh* because of *kha*, emptiness). In resonance (*ph*), this absorption occurs through the activity of fire of knowledge (*r*, since *ra* is the *agnibīja*); through the operation of Śiva’s three major powers, *icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā* (*e*, since it is a *trikoṇabīja*), the world is then being swallowed up into the *bindu* (since *bindu* is that point where manifestation withdraws upon itself to return to the godhead) all of which results in *khphrem*. *Ibidem*.

¹²³ The last goddess of *saṃviccakrodaya* represents fullness of consciousness (*pūrṇa*), she is called Parā, the supreme goddess of the Trika, who is represented by the syllable *sauḥ*, which is *srṣṭibīja*.

of the senses under the Kaula ritual. As a result of this process of rationalization and semantization, the key metaphysical concepts of the early Kālīkula, such as the ‘sun’, the ‘fire of time’ (*kālāgni*), or the ‘great time’ (*mahākāla*), were relegated to the function of their cognitive equivalents, as seen in Abhinavagupta’s reformulation of the twelve Kālīs as the *saṃviccakrodaya*. Abhinavagupta presents the twelve Kālīs within the integrated framework of the Trika and Pratyabhijñā systems, in which the Krama goddess Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī fuses with the Trika goddess Parā, and where the reabsorption of consciousness instigated by the twelve Kālīs leads to the realization of one’s own consciousness as the agent of knowledge and action.

Acknowledgements The article benefitted greatly from the reading classes of the *Mahānayaprakāśa of Trivandrum*, the *Jayadrathayāmala*, and the *Tantrāloka* conducted by Prof. Alexis Sanderson at the University of Oxford in Hilary and Trinity terms 2016 and in Portland, Oregon in July of 2017. All mistakes are my own.

Funding Open access funding provided by Università degli Studi di Firenze within the CRUI-CARE Agreement.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article’s Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article’s Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

MS Sources

- Ciñcinīmatasārasamuccaya (CMSS)*. National Archives, Kathmandu. MS no. 1-245 (Tantra) 411; NGMPP reel no. A 1177/7; folios 1-21, 24-26, 30-41.
- Devīpañcaśataka (Kālīkulapañcaśataka) (DP)*. National Archives, Kathmandu (=AD 1626-27). MS no. 5-358. NGMPP: reel no. B 30/26. The text provisionally edited by M. Dyczkowski was made available for public display on <https://muktobodha.org>.
- Jayadrathayāmala (JY)*, fourth *ṣaṭka*. National Archives, Kathmandu. NGMPP B 122-4.
- Kālīkāramapañcāśikā*. See *Ciñcinīmatasārasamuccaya*.
- Kramasadbhāva (KS)*. National Archives, Kathmandu. MS. no.1-76; NGMPP reel no. A 209/23. The text provisionally edited by M. Dyczkowski was made available for public display on <https://muktobodha.org>.
- Niśvāsakārikā*. Devanāgarī transcript, IFP MS T 0017B from a MS belonging to M.K.S. Bhattar Madurai; pp. 635-1152 ff. The text available on <https://muktobodha.org>.
- Tantrasadbhāva*. National Archives, Kathmandu. MS. no.1/363; NGMPP reel no.A 44/1.

Printed Editions

Abhinavagupta, *Kramastotra*, see Silburn 1975.

- Abhinavagupta, *Paramārthasāra with the Commentary of Yogarāja*, edited and translated by L. Bansat-Boudon and K.D. Tripathi, Routledge Studies in Tantric Traditions, London and New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Abhinavagupta, *Parātrīśikā Vivaraṇa*, edited and translated by J. Singh and B. Bäumer. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2005.
- Abhinavagupta, *Tantrāloka with the Commentary of Jayaratha [TĀv]*, vol. I and III, edited by Mahāmahopādhyāya Paṇḍit Mukund Rām Shāstrī, KSTS XXVII and XXX. The Research Department of Jammu and Kashmir, Bombay: Nrinaya-Sagar Press: 1918–1922.
- Abhinavagupta, *Tantrasāra*, edited with notes by Mahāmahopādhyāya Paṇḍit Mukund Rām Shāstrī. KSTS XVII. The Research Department of Jammu and Kashmir State, Shrinagar, 1918.
- Abhinavagupta, *Tantroccaya*, see Sferra 1999.
- Arṇasiṃha, *The Mahānayaprakāśa (MP-A)*, ed. and trans. M. Dyczkowski, available on <https://anuttaratrikakula.org/articles/>.
- Cidgaganacandrikā (CGC)*. *Cidgaganacandrikā by Kālidāsa*, edited by Swami Trivikrama Tirtha. Arthur Avalon Tantric Text Series (John Woodroffe), Calcutta 1937. E-text available on <https://muktabodha.org>.
- Eraka, *Kramastotra*, see Silburn 1975.
- Jñānanetra, *Śrīkālikāstotra*, see Silburn 1975.
- Kṣemarāja, *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya*. Edited with translation by Jaideva Singh. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991.
- Mahānayaprakāśa with Śitikaṅṭha's commentary (MP-Ś)*, edited by Mukund Ram Śāstrī, Śrinagar: Kashmir Śaivism Texts Studies 1918.
- Mahānayaprakāśa (MP-T)*, anonymous, ed. K. Śambasiva Śāstri, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series 130, Citrodāyamañjarī 19, Trivandrum 1937.
- Mahēśvarānanda, *Mahārthamañjarī with Parimala (MMP)*. Edited by Vrajavallabha Dvivedī. Varanasi: Sampurnananda Sanskrit University, 1992.
- Śivasūtras: The Yoga of Supreme Identity with Vimarśinī commentary of Kṣemarāja*. Translated by Jaideva Singh. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979.
- Spandakārikā with Spandanīrṇaya of Kṣemarāja*. Edited with translation, Jaideva Singh. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2005.
- Vāmanadatta, *Svabodhamañjarī*, see Torella 2000.
- Vijñānabhairava or Divine Consciousness: A Treasury of 112 Types of Yoga*. Translated by Jaideva Singh. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979.

Secondary Sources

- Padoux, A. (1990). *Vāc: The concept of the word in selected Hindu Tantras*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Sanderson, A. (1986). Maṇḍala and Āgamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir. In A. Padoux (Ed.), *Mantras et Diagrammes Rituelles dans l'Hindouisme* (pp. 169–214). Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Sanderson, A. (1990). The Visualization of the Deities of the Trika. In A. Padoux (Ed.), *L'Image Divine: Culte e Méditation dans l'Hindouisme* (pp. 31–88). Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Sanderson, A. (1995). Meaning in Tantric Ritual. In A. M. Blondeau & K. Schipper (Eds.), *Essais sur le Rituel III, Colloque du Centenaire de la Section des Sciences religieuses de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études* (pp. 15–95). Louvain-Paris: Peeters.
- Sanderson, A. (2005). A Commentary on the Opening Verses of the Tantrasāra of Abhinavagupta. In S. Das & E. Furlinger (Eds.), *Sāmarasya: Studies in indian arts, philosophy, and interreligious dialogue in honour of Bettina Bäumer* (pp. 89–148). Delhi: D.K. Printworld.
- Sanderson, A. (2007a). The Śaiva Exegesis of Kashmir. In D. Goodall & A. Padoux (Eds.), *Mélanges tantriques à la mémoire d'Hélène Brunner/Tantric Studies in Memory of Hélène Brunner* (pp. 231–442). Pondicherry: Institut français d'Indologie/École française d'Extrême-Orient, Collection Indologie.

- Sanderson, A. (2007b). Swami Lakshman Joo and His Place in the Kashmirian Śaiva Tradition. In B. Bäumer & S. Kumar (Eds.), *Samvidullāśah* (pp. 93–126). Delhi: D.K. Printworld.
- Sanderson, A. (2009). The Śaiva age: the rise and dominance of Śaivism during the early medieval period. In S. Einoo (Ed.), *Genesis and development of Tantrism* (Vol. 23, pp. 41–350). Tokyo: Institute of Oriental Culture Special Series, University of Tokyo.
- Sferra, F. (1999). The Tantroccaya by Abhinavagupta. An English Translation. *Annali*, 59(1–4), 109–133.
- Silburn, L. (1975). *Hymnes aux Kālī. La roue des énergies divines*, Institut de Civilisation Indienne. Paris: Diffusion de Boccard.
- Tāntrikābhhdhānakośa II: Dictionnaire des termes techniques de la littérature hindoue tantrique*. Ed. H. Brunner, G. Oberhammer, A. Padoux. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2004.
- Torella, R. (1994). *The Īśvarapratyabhijñākarikā of Utpaladeva with the Author's Vṛtti. Critical edition and annotated translation*. Serie Orientale Roma LXXI. Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.
- Torella, R. (2000). The Svabodhamañjarī, or how to suppress the mind with no effort. In R. Tsuchida & A. Wezler (Eds.), *Harānandalaharī, Volume in Honour of Professor Minoru Hara on his Seventieth Birthday* (pp. 387–410). Dr Inge Wezler Verlag für Orientalistische Fachpublikationen.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.