

## Verses 12-13

दर्पणबिम्बे यद्वन्  
 नगरग्रामादि चित्रमविभागी ।  
 भाति विभागेनैव च  
 परस्परं दर्पणादपि च ॥ १२ ॥  
 विमलतमपरमभैरव-  
 बोधात् तद्वद् विभागशून्यमपि ।  
 अन्योन्यं च ततोऽपि च  
 विभक्तमाभाति जगदेतत् ॥ १३ ॥

*darpaṇa-bimbe yad-van*  
*nagara-grāmādi citram avibhāgi |*  
*bhāti vibhāgenaiiva ca*  
*paras-param darpaṇād api ca || 12 ||*  
*vimalatama-paramabhairava*  
*-bodhāt tadvad vibhāga-śūnyam api |*  
*anyonyam ca tato'pi ca*  
*vibhaktam ābhāti jagad etat || 13 ||*

Just as variety in the form of a city, village, etc., when seen in a mirror is not separate [from the mirror], yet it [the variety of objects] appears differentiated [in the mirror] as a city, village, etc., and also as different from the mirror. Similarly the universe, though not existing as different from the pure self-experience of the highest Bhairava, appears as the world, differentiated and different from [Bhairava], the supreme *tattva*.

## Yogarāja's commentary on verses 12-13

When reflected with all their distinct traits and individual features in a clear mirror, a city, a village, hamlets, the walls surrounding them, buildings, fields, big rivers, rivulets, fire, trees, mountains, animals, birds, men, women, etc., all appear to relinquish their separate existence and give up their traits. But even while manifesting themselves as non-different from the mirror, they retain their individual existence and are manifested individually with their characteristic traits. A jar is manifest [in the mirror] differentiated from cloth, and vice versa. All the objects reflected in the mirror are perceived there, differentiated from each other. Nothing is perceived in the mirror as existing apart from it, the reflecting medium.<sup>1</sup>

[In our ordinary experience] the world of objects [whose reflections are] perceived as existing identified with the mirror are also perceived as different from the mirror. Does the mirror then disappear while reflecting an object like a jar? The reply given is: No, this is not the case, because the objects reflected in the mirror are manifested not only as having a dependent existence but they also exist apart from and independent of the mirror.

Likewise the mirror, despite holding reflections within itself, actually exists as distinct from and independent of its reflections, and is cognised as such. The mirror, in becoming identified with the reflection of objects, does not thereby lose its independent existence, which would render it unperceivable. Despite persons having the experience of objects in a mirror, the knowledge that "this is a mirror" remains an uncontradicted experience.

Objects like a pot [though appearing in the mirror] do not characterise the mirror [or change its essential nature], causing us to have the experience "this is a pot-mirror" or

"this is a cloth-mirror," thus obliterating the very existence of the mirror as a reflecting medium.<sup>2</sup> Neither do the differences caused by space or time in such cases result in the obliteration of the mirror's independent existence. Therefore it must be recognised that the mirror, possessing the capacity for reflecting different objects, remains always a mirror, and thus no damage is done to the theory of reflection.

If it is argued that when an elephant is perceived as existing in a mirror it is only a case of delusion because no object can really exist in a mirror, the author replies that, undoubtedly, this is a case of delusion. But this example only proves the veracity of the theory of reflection. As for the nature of this delusion, it will be discussed later.

As in the example of a city reflected in a mirror described above, after the dissolution of all impurity [from one's vision], the universe is experienced as non-different from [that which illumines and reveals it]: the illumination-nature of the highest Bhairava, which is the absolutely pure light of consciousness of the supreme Lord Śiva, accompanied by the highest bliss.

The universe thus revealed is composed of experiencers and the experienced [subjects and objects], which are distinct from each other and are of infinite variety. However, the universe, despite its being completely identified with the experience of the supreme Lord at this stage, is also distinct from the [supreme Lord's] experience of it, just as the reflections in a mirror are different from the mirror itself.

Similarly, the illumination nature [of the Lord], which holds reflected within its bosom the entire universe, shines [independently], thereby transcending the universal manifestation as the experiencer of all. As in the mirror, the differentiation caused by space and time really does exist in the external world and is manifested there as such, but this

does not affect the true nature of illumination [just as a mirror exists unaffected by the reflection of diversity]. Thus the experience, which is in the form of unity-cum-diversity, remains essentially one unified experience like the reflection in the mirror.

[The analogy discussed above has its limitations.] The distinction between the manifestation of objects through their reflection in a mirror and the manifestation of the universe by the light of consciousness which is endowed with Śakti lies in the fact that the objects like the city and so on are external to the mirror when these are reflected in its clear surface. Moreover these objects are not created by the mirror during the process of reflection. Therefore, the perception in the mirror that "this is an elephant" is undoubtedly a delusion.

The divine illumination, which is endowed with the [creative] Śakti, experiencing the universe [projected upon] its own Self as the canvas [or reflecting surface] out of its own free will, has consciousness as the material cause. [It is the consciousness of the supreme Lord which transforms itself into the universe out of his own free will and projects the universe on the canvas formed by the divine illumination.] The self-manifestation by the supreme Lord as the universe is what constitutes the creative power in the supreme Lord. This self-knowledge is the distinguishing feature of the divine Illumination, differentiating it from the inert reflecting power of the mirror. This has been explained by the author Abhinavagupta in his *Vivṛti-vimarśinī* [commentary on Utpaladeva's *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā*] in the following way:

*Just as the diversity of the universe is reflected in a mirror, in the same way the entire universe is manifested in the pure Self. The pure illumination is able to cognise [this diversity] with the help of vimarśa[-śakti], his inherent creative power and the power of awareness, but a mirror is not able to experience the diversity.*

Thus there is no room left for differentiation [of the real from the unreal] or delusion on the part of the supreme Lord in his experience of existent objects which are actually his own creations.

But the experience of distinction [between the real and the unreal] by limited experiencers indicates the negation of their absolute nature, and this constitutes delusion. [Delusion exists for limited experiencers who are devoid of creative Śakti, but it has no existence for the supreme Lord, who is endowed with Śakti by virtue of which he creates the universe.] The fullness that is non-dual by its very nature, when negated [as is the case with limited subjects] is called *akhyāti* (literally, non-knowledge or imperfect knowledge). When fullness is absent, the duality that is only the negation of fullness is manifested. Only then is there the cognition of duality and discreteness. Thus the theory of reflection does not suffer from any kind of blemish.

*Yogarāja's introduction to verse 14*

After discussing the nature of supreme reality and stating the status of the universe composed of thirty-six *tattvas* identified with the illumination, the author examines the nature of each *tattva* arranged in the order of creation or emanation in the following verses:

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