

2 Rituals in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*

2.1 Domestic ritual and temple ritual in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*

2.1.1 The Vaikhānasas' entitlement to perform temple ritual

The ritual tradition of the Vaikhānasas practices both its own repertoire of domestic ritual—codified in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*—and its own repertoire of temple ritual—codified in the *Vaikhānasasaṃhitās*. During Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's life time the Vaikhānasas were evidently mostly temple priests. Yet in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* temple ritual itself is only marginally dealt with. In both *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* and *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita is primarily concerned with the domestic rituals of the Vaikhānasas. However, he does postulate a close connection between domestic and temple ritual: only a Vaikhānasa who has undergone the domestic life-cycle rituals (*saṃskāra*) is entitled to perform temple ritual. A temple priest of the Vaikhānasa tradition must have undergone the eighteen *saṃskāras* listed in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* (see 2.2). According to the *Vaikhānasasaṃhitās* these *saṃskāras* are even more important than other qualifications for the priestly office such as learnedness, knowledge of the Veda etc. (see, e.g. ĀS 3.24). Familial origin—expressed and confirmed through the *saṃskāras*—is thus presented as the primary legitimation to practice the priestly office in the Vaikhānasa tradition. Qualifications subsequently acquired such as learning, skillfulness, etc. can only be supplementary but are not the fundamental prerequisite. The Vaikhānasa *saṃskāras* thus represent, as it were, a bridge between two apparently irreconcilable “ritual disciplines.” As “vedic” rituals the *saṃskāras* confirm the Vaikhānasas' accordance with the Veda. At the same time they entitle them to carry out temple ritual, which is at best only marginally mentioned in the vedic textual corpus. This close connection of vedic ritual and temple ritual is taken further in those *saṃhitā* passages where temple ritual is equated with the performance of vedic śrauta sacrifice.¹⁴⁴ The charge of neglecting the performance of śrauta ritual and the study of the Veda (see Kane 1974b:

144 See Ramachandra Rao 1990: 72–73; Colas 1996: 49, 193, 283f., 350f.; Varadachari 1982: 107. In the *Vaikhānasasaṃhitās* the five vedic sacrificial fires are identified with the five *mūrtis* in the temple (see Krick 1977: 88; see also Colas 1996: 267ff). Another strategy is adopted in *Ānandasāṃhitā* 4.44ff. There Viṣṇu is said to have ordained that the rituals in *sūtra* and *smṛti* which are not carried out by the Vaikhānasas, are still to be considered as “being performed,” because they are performed by the Ṛṣis on the Vaikhānasas' behalf.

711) is thus countered by including temple ritual, too, in the “vedic” realm for the Vaikhānasas.

2.1.2 Temple priests as *devalakas*

Some of the Vaikhānasasamhitās and certainly the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* make clear that a legitimization of sorts through the authority of the Veda was absolutely necessary. The temple priests had long had a low status among the different Brahman subcastes, and were labelled with the pejorative term *devalaka*. In several places in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita seeks to demonstrate that the Vaikhānasas are by no means *devalakas*. The Vaikhānasas’ approach to what appears at first sight to be an irresolvable dichotomy between vedic ritual and temple priesthood will be considered here on the basis of the discussion of the idea of *devalaka* in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. In order to clarify the basic issue, a short account of the usages of the word *devalaka* follows.¹⁴⁵

Already in the oldest layers of Brahmanic literature differences between diverse Brahmans are described. These differences rest on relative purity and impurity which depends, among other things, on their activities. By no means all Brahmans are or were “priests,”¹⁴⁶ nor are all “priests” Brahmans. Those Brahmans whose activities were non-religious were often assigned a lower status by the texts (see Kane 1974b: 130). There were however also divisions which rested solely on religious or ritual differences. Some of these factors change the status of a Brahman for the better,¹⁴⁷ but some are polluting factors, which result in a diminished status. Here Kane (1974a: 132) quotes a statement of one Śāṭātpa, according to whom six groups of born Brahmans cannot be counted as such. These are, for example, Brahmans who sacrifice “for many,” who sacrifice “for the whole village,” or who are “employed by a village or town.” Here, ritual activity for others, or as a profession, is regarded negatively. However, the term *devalaka* is not used there. While *devalaka* in its original meaning referred most probably—without disparaging connotation—to a person who carries a divine image,¹⁴⁸ *devalaka* is used in a broader sense, namely as temple priest, in many

145 In what follows I rely above all on Colas 1996: 133ff.

146 I use the term “priest” here throughout for ritual specialists who perform rituals on behalf of others.

147 See, for example, the diverse categories of Brahmans mentioned in *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* 1.7 or in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.1 (see 2.2). This division is also referred to by Devala (quoted by Aparārka; see Kane 1974a: 131f.).

148 See Banerjea 1956: 40. However, in the *Sātvatasamhitā* of the Pāñcarātra tradition, which is one of the older samhitās, the meaning “bearer of an image of god” is used

smṛti texts. In many cases the texts place a negative accent on the term.¹⁴⁹ In two commentaries a passage is cited according to which devalakas “live off god’s wealth,” which here is clearly meant negatively. Some commentators on Manu distinguish more carefully, in that they do not disparage the devakala in general. According to them a devalaka is the servant of an image of god. These are differentiated on the basis of their conduct: only those devalakas who practice their office as a profession for more than three years are judged negatively.¹⁵⁰ Yāmunācārya, a predecessor of Rāmānuja, also takes a position on the devaluation of the devakalas in his *Āgamapramāṇya*. In his account the practice of worshipping of god for a living is a family tradition of the devalakas.¹⁵¹ In general a negative connotation attaches to the term *devalaka* when it is understood to refer to a professional temple priest. Other texts, such as the vaiṣṇava and śaiva āgamas and saṃhitās but also many smṛtis, put the devalaka in a low category on the basis of the school followed, not on the basis of the profession as temple priest. These devalakas are regarded as ritually impure and the doctrine represented by them is not recognized or is subordinated to one’s own doctrine. It emerged from conversation with several Vaikhānasas that today the accusation that they are devalakas is never, or only seldom, raised. However, although the term is not used, even today temple priests have a rather low status. Throughout India they are far below the diverse other Brahman subcastes in the socio-religious hierarchy.¹⁵² Only the Brahmans responsible for the funeral rituals have a lower status.¹⁵³

Then as now, this low view of temple priests is conditioned by several factors. Michaels (1994: 305–310) provides an outline explanation. The vedic religion knew no permanent temple and the place of sacrifice existed only for the

throughout in a pejorative sense. There it is said that one should neither see, touch nor speak with a devalaka. Moreover it is said of the devalaka that he earns a living by going around with the image of Viṣṇu (Colas 1996: 133; see SātvataS 21.19–20). This passage is repeated *verbatim* in the *Īśvarasaṃhitā* (22.19–20). Colas (1996: 134) points out that the old etymological derivation of the term *devalaka* as bearer of an image was probably not originally connected with the temple cult, but rather with an itinerant cult, which can still be observed in India today.

149 Thus according to Manu (ManuDhŚ 3.152) devalakas are not even to be invited to death rituals (see Kane 1974b: 711). Devalakas are also represented negatively in the *Mahābhārata* (see MBh 12.77.8, 13 App. 4.3251–2, 13.24.14 and 13.90.10).

150 See Kane 1974a: 109, note 232; see also Colas 1996: 135, fn. 2.

151 See Colas 1996: 134; see Pratap 1995: 50–51.

152 Presler (1978) gives an informative account and analysis of the efforts of the South India Arcaka Association in the second half of the twentieth century to counter the low regard for the arcakas. See also Fuller 2003: chapter 5.

153 See Bhattacharya 1896: 25; Fuller 1984, chapter 3; Reiniche 1989: 170–173.

duration of the sacrifice itself and was afterwards dissolved. By virtue of their birth, the priests were in a position to summon the gods. The maintenance of this exclusivity was made more difficult by an increasingly sedentary way of life and the ethnic and cultural mixture thus brought about.¹⁵⁴ This was accompanied by, on the one hand, an ever more polished art of sacrifice, and on the other, by an intensified critique of vedic sacrifice and the position of priests. These are the roots, Michaels argues, of the continuing Brahmanic scepticism toward temples: a temple as a permanent place for the gods requires the worshipper to leave the house which is comparatively secured against ritual impurities. It implies contact with strangers and their impurities, and the difficulty of preserving relative purity in general. Those who are permanently exposed to these impurities, the temple priests, were therefore viewed with suspicion. The acceptance of gifts, which is normally polluting, also plays an important role here. While the status of the temple priests is high in so far as they act as intermediaries between believers and god, it is nevertheless low in that contact with the devotees and their gifts is ritually polluting: the relative impurity of the giver is accepted together with the gift (see also Colas 1996: 135). Moreover, unlike the domestic priest, the temple priest is rarely in the position to choose the giver. This explains why in the above-mentioned negative judgements of temple priests in ancient Indian literature regular “payment” (gifts) to priests is criticized most of all. Other explanatory models for the low status of temple priests refer to the differences from the “ideal Brahman.” Thus Kane (1974b: 711) states that the low view of the temple priest is connected with the fact that they have neglected the “principal” duty of a Brahman, namely the performance of śrauta rituals.¹⁵⁵ The response of the Vaikhānasas to these reproaches is discussed here.

The accusation that the Vaikhānasas are *devalakas* is first countered in the *Vaikhānasasamhitās*, as Colas shows. The terms *devala* and *devalaka* are used more often in the later than in the earlier *saṃhitās*.¹⁵⁶ In what follows I summarize Colas’s findings.

154 This may also be connected with the fact that, as Baines (1912: 27) suspects, the deities worshipped in temples were originally “non-aryan” and were only gradually accepted into the Brahmanic pantheon.

155 As convincing as these explanatory models are, group-specific and regional factors are also influential in ranking within the caste hierarchy, as is clear from the example of the Brahman priests of the Mīnākṣī temple (see Fuller 1984: 49–54).

156 I could identify no response to such an accusation in the *Pāñcarātrasamhitās*. Apart from the above-mentioned passages in the *Sātvata-* and *Īśvarasamhitā* only the *Parāśarasamhitā* 1.42–43 deals with this issue: “He who worships Viṣṇu for three days on behalf of others in return for payment, is in truth to be called *devalaka*, and is excluded from all

In *Kriyādhikāra* 36.32–33 the term devalaka is used in a negative sense for temple priests who practice their office for money or material goods. Here the followers of the Vaikhānasasūtra are not explicitly excluded from this negative evaluation. In the *Prakīrṇādhikāra* we find two different definitions of a devalaka: according to *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 35.477–483 a devalaka carries out worship for money and is therefore to be excluded from all rituals. Notable here is that the fault is put on the sponsor of the ritual (*yajamāna*), whose duty it is to give the temple priests land, and not money or goods, in return for their service. In *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 18.24 a devalaka is described as a non-Vaikhānasa Brahman who worships Viṣṇu in the temple. He is excluded from all rituals. This definition is repeated almost word for word in *Ānandasamhitā* 3.23,¹⁵⁷ where it is also demonstrated in detail why the Vaikhānasas are to be excluded from this accusation. As the Vaikhānasas are explicitly said to be Vaiṣṇavas even before birth (*garbhavaiṣṇava*, see 2.2.3) and, as it were, born to do temple service, this accusation does not apply to them. In order to explain why only the Vaikhānasas are eligible to be temple priests, and cannot be devalakas, *Ānandasamhitā* 3.24ff. argues that the Vaikhānasasūtra is the only vedic sūtra which prescribes worship on behalf of others (*parārtha*) as well as worship for oneself (*ātmārtha/svārtha*).¹⁵⁸ The question of whether the Vaikhānasas may make a living from temple service is dealt with in *Ānandasamhitā* 4.84–85: Viṣṇu himself permitted the Vaikhānasas to use his goods. The possessions of the god serve not only the rituals of the shrine, but also the Vaikhānasa priests and their families. *Ānandasamhitā* 17.14 goes still further: Viṣṇu himself has said that benefitting from his possessions brings spiritual liberation to a Vaikhānasa, provided it is accompanied by worship and meditation on Viṣṇu's name. Should misfortune make it necessary, the Vaikhānasas may sell land belonging to the temple and even the image of the god (see ĀS 4.87).

Colas summarizes that in particular the later Vaikhānasasamhitās defend the Vaikhānasas against the accusation of being devakalas. The most important ar-

rituals. He who worships Viṣṇu, the rich, in order to fulfill his desires or for riches, is in truth to be called devakala and is excluded from all rituals.”

157 *Ānandasamhitā* 4.79–82 distinguishes between kalpadevalakas, karmadevalakas and śuddhadevalakas. A kalpadevalaka strives for worldly pleasures, a karmadevalaka is a temple priest who has not been initiated and has held the office for three years without having been appointed to it by an ācārya, and the śuddhadevalaka carries out worship in a village or in the houses of others, as a result of which he is excluded from all rituals. Colas (1996: 136 and note 6) suggests—with reference to the quotation from the *Saṅkarsaṇasamhitā* in DHN^D 63.10–19—that this is a borrowing from a non-Vaikhānasa source.

158 Here reference is made to *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 4.10–12; see Colas 1996: 137f.

guments are, as we could see, the “vedic” character of the tradition and the privileges granted by Viṣṇu himself.

These statements in the later Vaikhānasasamhitās pave the way for Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s understanding of devalaka. He leaves no room for doubt that the Vaikhānasas could not possibly be devalakas.¹⁵⁹ In considering the fundamental question of who then should be considered a devalaka, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita begins from a definition of the devalaka as a temple priest who, for a period of more than three years, makes a living from worship of the deity (DHN^D 52.22–23). He argues first that not all worship of a deity makes the performing person a devalaka, for this would include even domestic worship, which is repeatedly prescribed in śruti, smṛti, purāṇas etc. (DHN^D 52.24–53.2). Next he quotes some passages from the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and the *Ṛgvedasamhitā* which in his interpretation lay down that the deity should be worshipped in his five forms (*mūrti*). Defying authorities such as these is “fruitless” (DHN^D 53.6–17). Once it has been clarified that the worship of Viṣṇu does not, of itself, result in one being described as a devalaka, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita turns to the next question, namely whether in principle those who “use the goods of others” in order to carry out the ritual in the temple (DHN^D 53.17) are devalakas. This Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita denies, as this too is prescribed in many places in the śruti, smṛti and the purāṇas (DHN^D 53.18–19). As evidence he quotes the section of the *Ānandasamhitā*, according to which the Vaikhānasas can very well make use of “the goods of the deity” and may even sell the image of the deity (DHN^D 54.4–5).

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s basic position is thus clear: neither the worship of Viṣṇu in the temple, nor the living thereby derived implies that the Vaikhānasas are devalakas. Here, however, reference to other groups is missing.¹⁶⁰

The question of what then actually makes a devalaka is discussed elsewhere by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita. Descent (birth) or conduct (ethics / morality) are the alternatives suggested (DHN^D 56.1–5). Since it is nowhere stated that “birth” makes a person a devalaka, “action” is considered. Here, “action” is classified into “prescribed action” and “not prescribed action.” Actions prescribed by authorita-

159 He does not cite the relevant passages from *Kriyādhikāra* and *Prakīrṇādhikāra*, dealt with above.

160 The situation is similar in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 61.13–16, where Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita again explicitly takes up the question of whether the Vaikhānasas are to be considered devalakas. Here he quotes a passage from the *Mahābhārata* which describes the devalakas as impure persons, who are not suitable for certain rituals (MBh 13.90ff.). This passage of the *Mahābhārata* cannot, however, be referring to the Vaikhānasas for, as Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita explains, Vyāsa, the narrator of the *Mahābhārata*, has therein describes the Vaikhānasas as “dear to Indra.”

tive texts cannot possibly result in a negative judgement of the concerned persons, for this would imply that one denies the authority of śruti, smṛti, itihāsa, sūtra and purāṇa. The closing verse demonstrates that Viṣṇu himself has ordained that śruti and smṛti are to be followed unconditionally. It is explicitly stated there that the “loving devotion toward the deity” (*bhakti*) alone is not sufficient (DHN^D 56.6–7). Accordingly, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita concludes that only actions *not* prescribed in śruti and smṛti, or contravention of these regulations makes one a devalaka (DHN^D 56.8). With these two passages Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita clears the ground for his own devalaka concept. He goes into detail on this issue from page 63 of the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. Implicitly he assumes that a devalaka may be described as one who carries out “acts not prescribed in śruti and smṛti” or acts in a way contrary to them. The question remains whether what is said in śruti, smṛti and purāṇa about the Vaikhānasas is valid for all (DHN^D 63.1–3). The answer is introduced with a definition of a devalaka from within the Vaikhānasa tradition (DHN^D 63.5–9): a non-Vaikhānasa Brahman who worships Viṣṇu in the temple is a devalaka and is therefore excluded from the sacrifice. Moreover one who is born in a Vaikhānasa family but has undergone a Pāñcarātra initiation counts as belonging neither to the Vaikhānasa nor to the Pāñcarātra tradition, but as a devalaka—just like one who performs temple service out of greed, hate or blindness. Here it is not the Pāñcarātrins in general, but once again rather non-Vaikhānasa Brahmans and, for the first time, especially “apostates” from the Vaikhānasa to the Pāñcarātra tradition, who are described as devalakas. Here once again the primary criterion for settling the question of whether or not a temple priest is to be described as a devalaka is that a person must above all follow the prescriptions given in his own authoritative texts and must not act contrary to “what is said in śruti, smṛti and purāṇas.” To follow one’s own rules is each Brahman’s first duty. For the Vaikhānasas this first duty is directly connected to their descent. Although a vedic branch is not in principle connected to the family, in the case of the Vaikhānasīśākhā this is actually the case, for one can only be a Vaikhānasa when both one’s father as well as one’s mother stem from a Vaikhānasa family. Those who do not come from the Vaikhānasa tradition are excluded from the entitlement or obligation to worship Viṣṇu in the temple as a temple priest. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita later tries to lend an air of universal validity to his own concept by having recourse to other traditions. He quotes some other definitions of devalaka,¹⁶¹ offering them as evidence for his own definiti-

161 First he quotes the Pāñcarātrasaṃhitā *Saṅkarṣaṇasaṃhitā* (DHN^D 63.10–19) and the śaiva text *Śivaśekharatantra* (DHN^D 63.21–64.7). Both texts include a division between the three categories karmadevalaka, kalpadevalaka and śuddhadevalaka which are, how-

on, according to which a devalaka is a person who worships god in a way not prescribed in his śāstra or a person who worships gods other than Viṣṇu (DHN^D 64.18–19).

Then he lays the foundation for the central point of his own position: he explicitly establishes the connection between “not being in agreement with the Veda” and devalakas on the basis of an etymology of the word devalaka.¹⁶² In this way he prepares the ground for the argument that the Vaikhānasas, who have established the vedic worship of Viṣṇu, can on no account be considered devalakas. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita then cites a verse from one Atri in the text *Smṛtyarthasāra* which serves as a summary and proof of his own statements on devalaka. This verse refers to worship in accordance with the Veda and to motivation—the worship should not be carried out for material goods. Precisely these are the two key issues: on the one hand the ethicization of the entitlement to performance of temple service through the reference to the motivation, on the other hand accordance with the Veda which in the case of the Vaikhānasas refers ultimately to their descent. What is new here, however, is the element of loving devotion (*bhakti*) to Viṣṇu as a precondition for not being considered a devalaka (DHN^D 65.5–6):

The one who worships Viṣṇu in the manner prescribed by the Vedas with bhakti, without pride and greed, he is not a devalaka.

This understanding of devalaka clearly implies that nobody apart from the Vaikhānasas is eligible to worship Viṣṇu in a temple, as does the following statement (DHN^D 38.4–38.15):

The invocation of Hari in a temple by Brahmans who do not follow the Vaikhānasasūtra leads to the destruction of all the worlds. If worship is performed by non-Vaikhānasa Brahmans in the temple out of ignorance or out of greediness or

ever, differently described. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita does not, however, mention the corresponding division in the *Ānandasamhitā* (4.79ff.). He goes on to quote the corresponding definitions from the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāna*, the *Viṣṇupurāna* and a *smṛti* (DHN^D 64.8–17). I was not able to find any of these quotations in the printed texts.

162 DHN^D 64.20–24: “Moreover: ‘*dharma* is called *vṛṣa* and he who causes its destruction (*laya*), the gods know him as *vṛṣa-la*, he is lower even than one who cooks dog’s meat.’ As the word *vṛṣala* is derived in the sense of the cause of the destruction of the way prescribed by the Vedas and śāstras, so is it possible to derive the word *devalaka* in the sense of promoting the destruction of way prescribed by the vedas from the root *div*, which connotes *krīḍā-vijigīṣā-vyavahāra-dyuti-stuti-moda-mada-svapna-kānti-gati*. And as *gati* is a synonym of *mārga* (way; therefore the word *devalaka*) it being opposite to those who establish the way prescribed by the Vedas i.e. the Vaikhānasas, is completely inapplicable to them.” Here Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita refers to the root *div*, from which *deva* is derived.

even out of fear, (this leads to the) destruction of everything. If a non-Vaikhānasa Brahman performs worship in a temple, after six months he falls and even goes to the hell. If a non-Vaikhānasa Brahman, even if versed in the four Vedas together with its secondary components [‘limbs’ of the Vedas i.e. *śikṣā*, *kalpa*, *chanda*, etc.], performs worship in a temple, then that devala falls immediately. The Brahman who is a non-Vaikhānasa and worships Hari in a temple, he is called devalaka and is excluded from all (ritual) actions. One should avoid speaking with such a Brahman, to see him and especially to touch him, and even to invite him for śrāddha etc.

“The Brahman falls after six months,” “he immediately falls, he is called devala,” even if he “knows the four Vedas.”¹⁶³ Not even knowledge of the Veda (with its auxiliary sciences) protects a non-Vaikhānasa from being seen as a devalaka. Being in accordance with the Veda (*vaidikatva*), which the Vaikhānasas time and again claim for themselves, is thus only a secondary virtue, which is only effective when combined with membership of the Vaikhānasa tradition.¹⁶⁴

In Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s opinion such definitions of devala/devalaka rest on the idea of “one’s own dharma”: worship of the deity “for oneself” (*ātmārtha*) as well as “for others” (*parārtha*) is prescribed only for the vedic Vaikhānasa tradition. However, as this vedic school is inseparably bound up with the Vaikhānasas’ descent, anyone who provides service in a Viṣṇu temple who is not from a Vaikhānasa family is regarded as a devalaka. In these passages, the term nevertheless does not refer to a specifically mentioned group. Elsewhere Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita is more precise and describes both the followers of other sūtras, as well as the Pāñcarātrins, as devalakas. The context there is discussion of whether the Pāñcarātrins and those who belong to a sūtra other than the Vaikhānasasūtra follow the division of the day into five ritual sections (*pañcakāla*). Pañcakāla is a means to worship Viṣṇu, structuring the daily individual ritual, and at the same time the basic model for the daily schedule of temple rituals.¹⁶⁵ According to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita this is in fact an important criterion for being a true adherent of

163 Moreover, should it actually come about that a temple cannot be attended to entirely by Vaikhānasas, even after after six months the Vaikhānasas’ claims to worship therein is not invalidated. Measures are named for removing the impurities contracted by the image of the deity through the touch of a person outside the Vaikhānasa tradition, and the degree of impurity and thereby also the required expiation are determined by the duration of the unauthorized worship (see DHN^D 38.16–39.9).

164 Here we find a structural correspondence with the processes which Michaels (1998) has identified for Hindu religions at large: “the social order is largely determined by identifications indicating systems of kinship and community life, originally derived from sacrificial rituals and then transferred to lineage.”

165 See the detailed discussion in Rastelli 2000 and 2006: 63–90.

Nārāyaṇa. He nevertheless also mentions several other criteria, which make a person “not entitled (to temple service)” (*anadhikārin*) and thereby a devalaka (DHN^D 47.13–19):

But, in those (other) sūtras there is not even the explanation of the real meaning etc. of the twelve-syllabic (mantra).¹⁶⁶ Then by the reasoning that ‘(only where) a wall is, (can one) paint a picture (on it)’, for those following other sūtras which are devoid of the explanation of (the right way) of wearing the sacred thread, of worship during dusk,¹⁶⁷ and of invoking the Adorable One etc., there is not even the smell of the complete devotion of pañcakāla etc. (Likewise) those who follow the sūtras which propagate the worship of other gods like Rudra etc. as equal to Nārāyaṇa, because there is the absence of the knowledge about the division into four vyūhas and about the real nature of invoking the Adorable One. The devalaka character of the one who does not have the entitlement (to perform Viṣṇu’s worship) is propounded, (since) he invokes the Adorable One according to the way prescribed in other (than the Vaikhānasa) sūtras, or according to the way prescribed by the Pāñcarātra (system of worship).

Then Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita seeks to prove that the Pāñcarātrins are deficient with regard to the god(s) they worship. According to quotations from the Pāñcarātra text *Viṣvaksenasamhitā*, which are in part given in the printed edition of the text, for the Pāñcarātrins the iconography of Nārāyaṇa and Vighneśa (Gaṇeśa) are all but interchangeable (DHN^D 47.21–48.6). Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita concludes that Nārāyaṇa is not actually the highest god in this tradition. This leads him to a second point: if the Pāñcarātrins do not accept Nārāyaṇa unconditionally as their highest god, they cannot possibly perform pañcakāla (DHN^D 48.7–10). Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita thus posits a direct connection between the recognition and worship of other gods and the “correct” execution of pañcakāla.¹⁶⁸ In this understanding it is only by following pañcakāla that a person who performs temple rituals can avoid being considered a devalaka.

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita concludes by falling back on the argument developed in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 56.1–5: only those who act contrary to the instructions in the śāstras can be described as devalakas. Being a temple priest cannot in itself make one a devalaka, for otherwise the relevant rules in the authoritative texts would be meaningless (DHN^D 65.7–8). Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita moreover refutes the objection that even worship of Viṣṇu carried out in ignorance leads to heaven, and hence that worship carried out “without śāstra” or worship carried out

166 The twelve syllabic mantra is: *om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*.

167 Sandhyopāsana or sandhyāvandana; see Colas 1996: 253.

168 A similar idea is given in the *Pārameśvarasamhitā* 9.48: temples erected by Brahmans devoted to pañcakāla and the four vyūhas alone are “the best” (see Rastelli 2006: 83).

without entitlement must likewise lead to heaven, by noting that such worship is contrary to the commands of Viṣṇu (DHN^D 65.9–10).¹⁶⁹

In his *Daśavidhaheturirūpaṇa* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita presents a truly coherent concept of a devalaka. He does not question the traditional definition as a negative term for a temple priest as such. Rather he excludes only the Vaikhānasas from this definition in that implies that such criticism is quite legitimate, but only if directed at non-Vaikhānasas.¹⁷⁰ In this way he uses the accusation that the Vaikhānasas are devalakas for establishing a demarcation over against other groups, which rests on membership of their tradition and therefore also on the Vaikhānasas' birth status. While doing so he appeals to the incontestable authority of the Veda and thereby seeks to make the position of the Vaikhānasas itself incontestable. Thus he claims that the Vaikhānasas confirm with the “prescriptions in śruti, smṛti, purāṇas etc.,” which attests to their *vaidikatva*, their “being in accordance with the Veda.” Only for them it is prescribed “by the Veda” that they should worship the deity “for themselves” and “for others” (*ātmārtha/parārtha*). Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita thus constructs a specific Vaikhānasa identity, which is derived from the regulations in their authoritative texts, but which is also inseparably bound up with their group membership and thus ultimately from their origin or descent. This identity has an almost “physical” quality (see Giesen 1999: 19f.), and certainly has physical consequences: Viṣṇu himself not only commissioned the Vaikhānasas to worship him, but even allow them to live “from his goods.” Conversely Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita emphasizes repeatedly that all those who do this without the corresponding commands in their own authoritative texts are in fact devalakas. Such a line of argument in principle is applicable also to the Pāñcarātrins, whose entire saṃhitā literature—like that of the Vaikhānasas—contains regulations for the worship of Viṣṇu in the temple. Nevertheless, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita explicitly categorizes the Pāñcarātrins as devalakas, arguing that for the Pāñcarātrins Nārāyaṇa is not actually the highest god. This renders them devalakas. The Vaikhānasas, by contrast, recognize Nārāyaṇa as the highest god, as he

169 Yet another qualifying characteristic, namely taking refuge in the lotus feet of Viṣṇu (here: *viṣṇupādābhjaśraya*), is certified by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita for the Vaikhānasas in a quotation from the *Vṛddhahārītasṃṛti* (DHN^D 65.3–4). This “taking refuge in Viṣṇu” (*prapatti*) according to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita takes place in the Vaikhānasa tradition through the prenatal saṃskāra viṣṇubali (see 2.2.5.2–3). On the basis of this passage Eggers (1929: 17) suggests that the *Vṛddhahārītasṃṛti* is closely related to the Vaikhānasas. See also Krick 1977: 90f.

170 The only exception he mentions here is a Vaikhānasa who converted to the Pāñcarātra tradition.

shows in his discussion of the ritual division of the day into five sections (*pañcakāla*).

The appeal to the traditional authority of the Vedas is also reflected in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's method: he quotes above all from non-sectarian texts of almost pan-Indian significance and authority. Despite this certainly intentional non-sectarian and "timeless" approach, these passages in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* clearly point out that Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita was concerned with burning issues of his time, and was reacting to criticism of his tradition.¹⁷¹ However, on the basis of the texts of the tradition it is entirely unclear whether, and to what extent, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's explanations on this topic were received directly by his contemporaries. It is evident, however, that through his work Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita made important arguments available to the Vaikhānasas with which they later did respond to similar challenges.¹⁷²

2.2 Vaikhānasa life-cycle rituals (*saṃskāra*)

The life-cycle rituals (*saṃskāra*) of the Vaikhānasas are very important in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. Two of the "ten reasons why the Vaikhānasas are superior" refer directly to the *saṃskāras*: "5: because (the Vaikhānasasūtra) has *niṣeka* as its first ritual; 6: because it teaches the eighteen bodily *saṃskāras*." Indirect reference is also made to the *saṃskāras* in the explanation of some of the other reasons: the Vaikhānasasūtra is supposed to follow the way of the *śruti* in all (its) rituals, it teaches all its rituals with mantras, and it contains the totality of rituals together with their components. And indeed the *saṃskāras* of the Vaikhānasas do play a significant role in defining the religious and

171 It may be gathered from his remarks that profiting from the goods received by the god or the temple had also been challenged. Such criticism is probably to be expected from the donors rather than from competing groups in temple service such as the Pāñcarātrins, since they also derived their living from temple service.

172 In the literature after the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* the "devalaka" theme seldom plays a role. It is dealt with in passing in the sixth chapter of the *Mokṣapāyapradīpikā*, in Bharadvāja Nṛsiṃhācārya's *Arcanatilaka* (2.24) and in Rāghavācārya's *Gṛhyasūtradharmanirṇaya* (pp. 20f. and 48–51). Two very short works by Mahārāja Vatsapāyin Jagapatirāju Rāya (*Vaikhānasāropitadevalakatvanirākaraṇa* and *Vaikhānasadharmacandrikā*) in Sanskrit and Telugu are concerned primarily with the devalaka accusation. They use obviously identical quotations to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita and similarly come to the conclusion: "It is proven a hundred times over that the Vaikhānasas are not devalakas." The text *Vaikhānasavijaya* of Uttamur T. Vātsyasaccakravartī Vīra Rāghavācārya (Tirupati 1963), deals briefly with devalaka, without adding anything new to the discussion.

ritual identity of this group on both the conceptual level and on the level of performance.

Then as now the performance of saṃskāras is based on the way they are presented in the *Vaikhānasmārtasūtra*, which is referred to repeatedly. Before a detailed analysis of the treatment of one specific saṃskāra central to the Vaikhānasa's self-understanding, namely viṣṇubali (2.2.2ff.), a few words shall be said on saṃskāras as life-cycle rituals in general and among the Vaikhānasa in particular, since these do in fact differ from other sūtra traditions. Here special attention shall be given to the prenatal saṃskāras.

Saṃskāras are life-cycle rituals which are carried out for a male member of the three twice-born varṇas: when he reaches a new stage of life, the transition is accomplished and marked by a saṃskāra.¹⁷³ These are social as well as ritual events to which the family in a broader sense is invited. The ritual parts are led by a priest (*bṛhaspati*, *purohita*, *ācārya*). By far the best known, most costly and most important saṃskāras are the initiation of a boy into the study of the Veda (*upanayana*), and marriage (*vivāha*), which makes the Veda student into an independent householder with the right (and duty) to perform sacrifices on his own. The marriage simultaneously marks the transition of the woman into the family of her husband and is often described as “the first saṃskāra” for a woman. The rituals connected with death (*antyeṣṭi*) also remain important for both women and men.

The term saṃskāra is rendered “life-cycle ritual” here. In the older vedic literature the word saṃskāra does not appear, although verb forms derived from *saṃ-s-kr* do. These are for the most part used in the sense of “perfecting” or “making fit.”¹⁷⁴ Domestic rituals, for which there is already evidence in the vedic saṃhitās, are only later referred to by the term saṃskāra (see M.S. Bhatt 1987: 103ff.). The only gṛhyasūtra which uses the term saṃskāra for these domestic life-cycle rituals is the *Vaikhānasmārtasūtra*, the latest of the gṛhyasūtras. However, although these rituals are not termed saṃskāra in most gṛhyasūtras, these texts deal systematically and in detail with what later came to be called saṃskāras, and later works on domestic rituals refer constantly to the gṛhyasūtras when they discuss the saṃskāras and their performance. Various purposes, functions or meanings are ascribed to these life-cycle rituals. In the *Pūrvamīmāṃsāsūtra* of Jaimini saṃskāra refers to a purificatory act in the context of sac-

173 This statement is only true for Brahmanic ritual texts. In practice, however, there are in fact many life-cycle rituals also performed for women (girls) and “non-twiceborn” castes.

174 See Kane 1974a: 190f. Kapani (1992/93: 5) adds that in the brāhmaṇas the verbs *saṃ-s-kr*- and *abhi-saṃ-s-kr*- are used in close connection to sacrificial activity.

rifice. In one place *saṃskāra* stands for the specific life-cycle ritual *upanayana*.¹⁷⁵ The commentator on this work, Śabara, explains that *saṃskāras* qualify one for particular actions. According to the *Tantravārttika* the *saṃskāras* are those actions or rituals which “make one fit” in that they create new qualities.¹⁷⁶ In the extensive encyclopedia *Vīramitrodaya* of Mitrāmīśra, *saṃskāra* is defined as a special quality which inheres in the soul or in the body and which is activated through the performance of rituals prescribed in the *śāstras* (see Kane 1974a: 191).

A *saṃskāra* is thus perceived by most authors as qualifying a person for particular actions or/and eliminating ritual impurities. As Kane (1974a: 192) summarizes: “The *saṃskāras* had been treated from very ancient times as necessary for unfolding the latent capacities of man for development and as being the outward symbols or signs of the inner change which would fit human beings for corporate life and they also tended to confer a certain status on those who underwent them.” The *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* presents a hierarchy of Brahmins on the basis of the *saṃskāras* they have undergone, clearly illustrating these functions of the life-cycle rituals:¹⁷⁷

A *putramātra* (“only a son”) is one who is just born from a Brahmin out of a Brahmin woman;¹⁷⁸ he is endowed with the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka* to *jātaka*. He who is endowed with (the *saṃskāra*) *upanayana* is a *Brāhmaṇa*, because of the study of the *savitṛī* (mantra). Having learnt the *Veda*, being endowed with the *saṃskāras* relating to the body up to marriage (*pāṇigrahaṇa*), he is a *śrotriya* as soon as he is also offering the sacrifices of cooked food (*pākayajña*). One who has kindled his fire, who is keen on studying (the *Veda*), through the sacrifices of *havis* (*haviryajña*) is an *anūcāna*. Through the sacrifices to soma (*somayajña*) he is even a *bhrūṇa*. Being endowed with these *saṃskāras*, due to (the practise of) *niyama* and *yama*, he is a *Ṛṣikalpa* (“equal to a *Ṛṣi*”).¹⁷⁹ Because of (the knowledge) of the four *Vedas* with their limbs, because of *tapas* and *yoga*, he is a *Ṛṣi*. One whose highest goal is *Nārāyaṇa*, without *dvandva*,¹⁸⁰ is a *Muni*. Thus, in

175 See Kane 1974a: 190, with reference to *Pūrvamīmāṃsāsūtra* III.8.3 and VI.1.35.

176 See Kane 1974a: 190f.; see B.K. Smith 1989: 91f.

177 *VaikhSmS* 1.1: *niṣekād ā jātakāt saṃskṛtāyām brāhmaṇyām brāhmaṇāj jātamātraḥ putramātraḥ. upanītaḥ sāvitryadhyayanād brāhmaṇo. vedam adhītya śārirair ā pāṇigrahaṇāt saṃskṛtaḥ pākayajñair api yajan śrotriyaḥ. svādhyāyapara āhitāgnir haviryajñair apy anūcānaḥ. somayajñair api bhrūṇaḥ. saṃskārair etair upeto niyamayamābhyaṃ ṛṣikalpaḥ. sāṅgacaturvedatapyogād ṛṣiḥ nārāyaṇaparāyaṇo nirdvandvo munir iti saṃskāravīśeṣāt pūrvāt pūrvāt paro varīyān iti vijñāyate.*

178 On the significance of the *saṃskāras* for the mother, see 2.2.2.

179 These are the terms “discipline” and “restraint” from *yoga* (see Colas 1996: 31f.).

180 Caland translates with reference to Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s *Bhāṣya* (1929: 2 and note 35): “Being intent on *Nārāyaṇa* (i.e. *Viṣṇu*) and indifferent to opposite pairs of feelings (pleasure and pain, etc.) he becomes a *Muni*.”

consequence of the particularity of each preceding saṃskāra respectively, he becomes the most excellent, thus it is taught.

This hierarchy is thus directly derived from the saṃskāras a (potential) Brahman has undergone (*śārīra*) or has himself carried out (*yajña*).¹⁸¹ The categories Ṛṣi-kalpa, Ṛṣi and Muni have in addition special physical and mental capacities, and exclusive devotion to (Viṣṇu as) Nārāyaṇa is described as the best quality of all.¹⁸² Thus according to the *Vaikhānasaśmārtasūtra* the minimal qualification for being a Brahman is to be born as the child of a Brahman couple and to have undergone the upanayana initiation. Maintaining the daily ritual fire and performance of the several categories of sacrifices is evidently optional, as is full devotion to Nārāyaṇa.

The conception of the saṃskāras expressed here is summarized by B.K. Smith (1989: 83) as follows: “Humans [...] are the result of both their inborn potential and their realization of it, and these two components come in unequal portions. Intrinsic, inherent potential and the actualization of that potential through a personal record of ritual performance combine to create distinctions in the ‘competence’ (*adhikāra*) of particular individuals.” Humans are ritually “constructed.” They are not human by biological birth, but rather become human, or their humanity gradually develops, through the saṃskāras.¹⁸³ This applies specifically to the Vaikhānasas: the Vaikhānasas not only gradually become “better” Brahmans through the saṃskāras prescribed in their sūtra, it is only through the saṃskāras that they become Vaikhānasas at all.

Since in most grhyasūtras the saṃskāras are not labelled as such, it is left to the much later commentaries, nibandhas, paddhatis and prayoga texts to designate as saṃskāras the rituals described. In the *Vaikhānasaśmārtasūtra*, by contrast, the author of the sūtra himself lists the forty saṃskāras right in the first sentence, and classifies them as saṃskāras “relating to the body” (*śārīra*) and as

181 On the subdivision of the saṃskāras into “bodily saṃskāras” and “sacrifice” see 2.2. *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* 1.7.1–8 contains a related passage on garbhādhāna where similar categories are mentioned. This description is, however, closely connected to the actual ritual performance. There explanations are given as to how garbhādhāna should be enacted in order to ensure that the son to be born will belong to one of these categories (BaudhGrS 1.7.9–21).

182 The commentator Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin adds here that the qualifications mentioned in addition to the saṃskāras refer to the vānaprastha and sannyasin stages of life (see NVB, p. 8).

183 B.K. Smith (1989: 82–86 and 92) therefore calls the saṃskāras “rituals of healing and of construction.” See also Michaels 1998b: 88f., and Krick 1977: 74, 96.

sacrifices (*yajña*) respectively.¹⁸⁴ The *saṃskāras* “relating to the body” are the life-cycle rituals.

The eighteen “bodily” *saṃskāras* listed in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* represent a quite high number of life-cycle rituals. In other *gṛhyasūtras* for the most part eleven to thirteen such rituals are listed (see Pandey 1949: 31f.). The *dharmasūtras* and *smṛtis* recognize eleven to fifteen *saṃskāras* and in most later *smṛtis* and *nibandhas* sixteen *saṃskāras* are listed. The more recent ritual handbooks, *paddhatis* and *prayogas*, still count only ten to thirteen *saṃskāras* and moreover state that several *saṃskāras* can be performed at once, provided that the appropriate acts of atonement (*prāyaścitta*) for “going beyond the proper time” are carried out. Thus according to these works the prenatal *saṃskāras* can be performed together, the childhood *saṃskāras* likewise (up to *upanayana*) and also the subsequent *saṃskāras*, which are then carried out immediately before marriage (*vivāha*). This is in fact the contemporary practice, even in families with an “orthodox” lifestyle (see Kane 1974a: 199).

The eighteen *śārīra-saṃskāras* of the *Vaikhānasas* are (1) *niṣeka*, the first sexual intercourse of the newlywed couple in the fourth night after the marriage rituals, (2) *ṛtusamgamana*, sexual intercourse during the first “fertile period” (*ṛtu*) of the married woman after the marriage rituals, which is to take place monthly from this point on, (3) *garbhādhāna*, the ritual confirmation of pregnancy, (4) *pumsavana*, a ritual securing male offspring, (5) *sīmanta/sīmantonayana*, the “parting of the (wife’s) hair” in the eighth month of her pregnancy, which is connected with the emergence of consciousness in the child, (6) *viṣṇubali*, a *bali* offering to and worship of, *Viṣṇu* as *Nārāyaṇa* (see 2.2.2), (7) *jātakarman*, birth rituals, (8) *utthāna*, when the mother gets up from childbed, (9) *nāmakaraṇa*, naming the newborn, (10) *annaprāśana*, first feeding of solid food to the child, (11) *pravāsāgamana*, the child’s first outing and return to the house, (12) *piṇḍavardhana*, “increasing of rice-balls,” i.e. the incorporation of the son into the potential ranks of the family ancestors through feeding with rice, (13) *cauḍaka/cauḷa*, the first tonsure of the child in preparation for his “second birth,” (14) *upanayana*, the initiation into Vedic studies, (15) *pārayaṇavratibandhavisarga*, taking on and giving up of different observances, connected with the various objects of study, (16) *upākarma*, the annual ritual of taking up of studies, (17) *samāvartana*,

184 Other texts which use the term *saṃskāra* for life-cycle rituals also tend to classify them. Thus the *Hārītadharmasūtra* (I, p. 13) distinguishes *brāhma-* and *daiva-saṃskāras*. The *saṃskāras* which begin with *garbhādhāna* are called *brāhma*, and sacrifices are described as *daiva* (see Kane 1974a: 193). *Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita* also refers to this classification in *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 4.6–7 and 10 (see Hüsken 2005: 178, note 93). Sacrifices are also described as *saṃskāras* in the *Gautamadharmasūtra* (7.14.20–21).

the returning home after the completion of the Vedic studies, and (18) pāṅgrahaṇa, the “grasping of the (future wife’s) hand” (marriage).

Following the list of these eighteen “bodily” saṃskāras, the sacrifices which one should perform as a married householder are named as further twentytwo saṃskāras of the Vaikhānasas.¹⁸⁵ Thus a total of forty saṃskāras are given in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. Saṃskāras for the deceased and rituals which serve to incorporate the deceased into the ranks of the ancestors are not among them, although they are also dealt with in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* (5.1–15). This is because death is a powerful cause of ritual impurity, with the result that the death rituals are usually described separately, and that the Brahmans responsible for their performance have a still lower status than the temple priests.¹⁸⁶

Before dealing in more detail with the prenatal Vaikhānasa saṃskāras, a few words shall be said on the structure of the text and on the order of the saṃskāras’ description in the *Vaikhānasasmārtsūtra*. Like many other rituals, saṃskāras can be described as consisting of building blocks: most rites are not unique to this specific event but are employed (at times in a different order) in other rituals as well.¹⁸⁷ These recurring elemental ritual units which form the “basis” of the saṃskāras are described once in the sūtra and are not explained for each saṃskāra. Instead, after the enumeration of the saṃskāras at the start of the sūtra, some general rules and the common building blocks (the preliminaries) for the life-cycle rituals are given. These are applicable to the individual saṃskāras, for which then only their specific ritual actions (the so-called pradhānahoma,

185 VaikhSmS 1.1: *yajñās ca dvādaśiṃśat brahmayajño devayajñāḥ pitṛyajño bhūtayajño manuṣyayajñās ceti pañcānām aharaharanuṣṭhānaṃ sthālīpāka āgrayaṇam aṣṭakā piṅḍapitṛyajño māsiśrāddham caityāśvayujīti sapta pākayajñāḥ agnyādheyam agnihotraṃ darśapūrṇamāsāvāgrayaṇeṣṭīś cāturmāsyo nirūḍhapāśubandhaḥ sautrāmaṇīti sapta haviryajñāḥ agniṣṭomo ’tyagniṣṭoma ukthyāḥ ṣoḍaśo vājapeyo ’tirātro ’ptoryāma iti sapta somayajñā ity ete catvāriṃśad bhavanti*. The way these sacrifices are carried out is the subject of the *Vaikhānasaśrautasūtra*. On the number of the Vaikhānasa saṃskāras and their interpretation by Bloch (1896), Caland/Vīra (1941: v), Kane (1974a: 195ff.) and Pandey (1949: 17–23), see Hüsken 2005: 157f.

186 See Parry 1994, see also Buss 2006. This is also the reason why *śmaśāna* is not dealt with at all by Gautama and in other gr̥hyasūtras. Today the death rituals and the auspicious rituals are often dealt with in separate handbooks. According to many Vaikhānasas, it is nowadays difficult to convince priests of the Vaikhānasa tradition to perform death rituals at all.

187 See, for example, Müller 1992: 35. Hillebrandt (1897: 72f.) and, more clearly, Caland (1897: 282ff., and 1908: vif.) convincingly argue that domestic rituals and sacrifices follow a definite pattern, derived from the structure of the new- and full-moon sacrifices.

“main offering”) are described in their respective sections. I follow this pattern here and first list the elements common to the prenatal saṃskāras.

According to the sūtra the performer first of all attains purity by taking a ritual bath (snāna) and ritually sipping water (ācamana; VaikhSmS 1.2–5). He is also instructed on the daily twilight rituals (sandhyā) and on how to wear the sacred thread (VaikhSmS 1.3–5). Saṃskāras should always be performed on an auspicious and meritorious day.¹⁸⁸ That it is such a meritorious day is determined by five invited Brahmans, led by an ācārya, in a ritual called puṇyāha (see VaikhSmS 1.6–7).¹⁸⁹ At the end of puṇyāha the “priestly gift,” dakṣiṇā, should be given to the Brahmans.¹⁹⁰ With this gift they take on the potential ritual impurity of the yajamāna (the officiator), and simultaneously the “fruit” of the ritual accrues now to the yajamāna, not to the priest. The saṃskāras are always accompanied by offerings into the fire (VaikhSmS 1.16–21). *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.8 gives an account of the place and requisites for the domestic fire (*āgnyāyatanam*). Each offering into the fire begins with the āghāra, an offering of clarified butter.¹⁹¹ In addition, for all bodily saṃskāras—except ṛtusamgamana¹⁹²—a nān-dīmukhaśrāddha is carried out, a sacrifice for the “happy-faced” ancestors.¹⁹³ The detailed description of the main offerings (pradhānahoma) for the individual saṃskāras begins at *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 2.3. The sequence of the life-cycle rituals described now in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* does not correspond to the list at the beginning of the sūtra: there niṣeka is listed as first saṃskāra, whereas here upanayana is dealt with first (VaikhSmS 2.3ff.). This is followed by description of the rituals which are performed daily by those who are then newly initiated (VaikhSmS 2.18). Then comes the description of the marriage rites

188 Following the detailed account of the bath, *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.2–5 reads: *snātvā puṇye 'hani saṃskārahomaṃ juhuyād iti vijñāyate*.

189 Caland (1929: 14, note 10) assumes, that these Brahmans, called “ṛtviks,” are the same as the invited “śrotriyas.” On the ācārya Caland comments (1929: 13, note 1): “The spiritual teacher of the person on whose behalf the act takes place. It is he that performs all the acts.” However, I argue that this passage does not necessarily indicate that the “officiator” (yajamāna, the father of the unborn child) does not himself perform the ritual. On this see 4.5.3–4.

190 VaikhSmS 1.7: *atra dakṣiṇādānādāne tatraivaṃ syād iti vakṣyate*. See M.S.Bhatt 1987: 103–105.

191 VaikhSmS 1.9–15; the section ends with: *... iti sarvahomānām ādir āghāro vijñāyate*. For *āgnyāyatanam*, see 4.2.

192 VaikhSmS 2.1: *atha śārīreṣu saṃskāreṣv ṛtusamgamanaavarjaṃ nān-dīmukhaṃ kuryāt*.

193 VaikhSmS 2.1–2. See also Colas 1996: 290. Nān-dīmukhaśrāddha is an offering to those generations of ancestors who have transcended the liminal, unhappy and dangerous stage of the deceased. This śrāddha is performed on auspicious occasions.

(VaikhSmS 3.1ff.). For the remaining saṃskāras only the main rites are given in detail, that is, the ritual acts which distinguish that particular saṃskāra from the other rituals in the same category.¹⁹⁴ Only these main rites as they are given in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* will be referred to here in the description of the individual prenatal saṃskāras.

2.2.1 Prenatal life-cycle rituals (garbhasaṃskāra)

At six, the number of prenatal saṃskāras (niṣeka, ṛtusamgamana, garbhādhana, puṃsavana, sīmanta and viṣṇubali) in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is very high.¹⁹⁵ It is debatable whether the prenatal saṃskāras are directed at the child or at the mother.¹⁹⁶ However, in the Vaikhānasa tradition they are understood as making the child “perfect” and “fitting” and at the same time having an effect on the mother. Thus in the hierarchy of the Brahmans presented in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.1 (see 2.2), the prenatal saṃskāras and the birth rituals refer grammatically to the mother, although they are directed at the child.¹⁹⁷ Even more explicit is Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin who emphasizes the importance of the saṃskāras for the mother in that he calls the prenatal saṃskāras kṣetrasaṃskāras “saṃskāras for the field [= for the body of the mother].”¹⁹⁸ Today it is generally assumed that the prenatal saṃskāras are directed to the child, but are carried out through the mother.¹⁹⁹

194 For the description of other rites which are not given in detail here but which nevertheless play a substantial role in the contemporary performance of these saṃskāras, see 4.2.

195 Most gr̥hyasūtras enumerate three prenatal saṃskāras: garbhādhāna, puṃsavana, and sīmanta (see Kane 1974a: 194f.). On the question whether niṣeka and ṛtusamgamana are one and the same ritual in the Vaikhānasa tradition, see Hüsken 2005: 157ff.

196 See Pandey 1969: 56; see also Kane 1974a: 205. An important question in this debate is whether the garbhasaṃskāras are to be performed in the first pregnancy only or in every pregnancy (see Pandey 1949: 62). In the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* the opinion of “some” is voiced in the prāyaścitta section: according to them the prenatal saṃskāras are only carried out in the first pregnancy (VaikhSmS 6.3: *garbhinyāḥ prathame garbhe kṛtā garbhasaṃskārās, tasyāḥ sarvagarbhāṇāṃ saṃskārā bhavantīty eke*). This is also the current practice, not only in the Vaikhānasa tradition.

197 On the present day agreement among the Vaikhānasas that children from a union of a Vaikhānasa father and a mother of a family which follows another sūtra tradition are considered “half pure,” see Hüsken 2005: 191.

198 NVB, p. 6: *niṣekād ā jātakād ity atra maryādāyām. niṣekādayaḥ ṣaṭkṣetrasaṃskārāḥ.*

199 This fact is explicitly expressed by later texts on the domestic rituals, where the “formal declaration” (*saṃkalpa*) which initiates the respective ritual, is given. The performer (husband) says: “I will endow this wife [...] with the saṃskāra [...]” (*enām patnīm [...] saṃskariṣye*).

Niṣeka²⁰⁰

Niṣeka in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is the first sexual intercourse of a newly married couple. Literally niṣeka means “pouring (of semen).” However, the term niṣeka is not uniformly used in the gṛhyasūtras for this first sexual intercourse. Other gṛhyasūtras have instead garbhādhāna (“giving of a foetus”), ṛtusamgamana (“coming together during the fertile period”), and caturthīvrata (“vow of the fourth night [after marriage]”) or caturthīkarman (“the ritual of the fourth night [after marriage]”). The *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, in contrast, lists niṣeka and garbhādhāna and ṛtusamgamana. In the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* niṣeka is indeed different from ṛtusamgamana, and is given—among other rites—as part of the procedures subsumed under the heading caturthīvāsa (VaikhSmS 3.8). Niṣeka is “the first saṃskāra” of an unborn child in the Vaikhānasa tradition, as is clear from the opening sentence of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*: “We will now explain the saṃskāras, which begin with niṣeka” (*atha niṣekādīsaṃskārān vyākhyāsyāmah*).²⁰¹ This use of the term niṣeka may be inspired by Manu’s *Dharmaśāstra*: in three śloka he uses the expression *niṣekādi*^o to summarize the saṃskāras, albeit without describing them (ManuDhŚ 2.16, 2.26 and 2.142).

In the subsequent Vaikhānasa literature niṣeka has long remained an important topic. Thus the Vaikhānasasaṃhitās frequently refer to niṣeka as the first saṃskāra of the Vaikhānasas when defining the characteristics of a priest (*arca-ka*) who legitimately carries out the rituals in a Viṣṇu temple: *vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādīkriyānvit*^o, “endowed with the saṃskāras as laid down in the Vaikhānasasūtra, beginning with niṣeka.”²⁰² The saṃskāras beginning with *niṣeka*

200 In a 2005 article, I track the textual history and present day concept of *niṣeka*, which played an important role in establishing and maintaining the uniqueness and superiority of the Vaikhānasa tradition within the vaiṣṇava groups of South India. The summary given here is mainly based on this article (Hüsken 2005).

201 See also VaikhSmS 6.1: *atha niṣekādīsaṃskārānāṃ prāyaścittaṃ vyākhyāsyāmah*, “we now will explain the atonement for the saṃskāras beginning with niṣeka.” However, there is also evidence that occasionally within the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* ṛtusamgamana and niṣeka are treated as one and the same ritual (VaikhSmS 6.2). Moreover, some passages indicate that the impregnation (*niṣekalṛtusamgamana*) in some cases is also referred to as garbhādhāna (see VaikhSmS 3.11 and 12). This hints at a potential interchangeability of the terms for these prenatal saṃskāras. It is possible that niṣeka as the first cohabitation of the newly married couple initiates the regular monthly sexual union during the fertile period of the wife, and thus is directly connected to procreation, but also contains the aspect of defloration. Thus it encompasses two aspects which are also expressed separately by the terms caturthīvāsa and ṛtusamgamana.

202 This phrase frequently appears in the saṃhitās; see ĀS 4.73ab, 9.2ab, 11.13cd, 13.37cd, YA 51.2cd, 51.33cd, SA 27.10ab, 65.122cd, KhA 1.38cd, 16.3ab, 41.6cd, KrA 1.22cd,

are then contrasted with the initiation (*dīkṣā*) of other vaiṣṇava groups. Only rarely is niṣeka not explicitly mentioned there. However, not a single passage in the entire *Vaikhānasasamhitā* literature dwells upon the question as to how and when niṣeka is performed.

Nevertheless, in the commentarial literature the question is frequently discussed whether niṣeka is identical with ṛtusaṃgamana or garbhādhāna. Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin rejects this opinion. He claims that the first sexual intercourse of the newly married couple, which is described under the heading *caturthivāsa* in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8, is in fact niṣeka, whereas the other rites given there are *caturthivāsa* “proper.” Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, in his *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* and in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* labels niṣeka as the first saṃskāra and as a peculiarity of the *Vaikhānasas*. It is therefore, he argues, a characteristic mark of those who are able and eligible to perform the worship of Nārāyaṇa.²⁰³ Niṣeka is the first of the saṃskāras, but is described in the chapter on marriage (*vivāha*), because it is the ritually performed sexual intercourse described in the *sūtra* under the heading *caturthivāsa* (*VaikhSmS* 3.8). At the same time Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita offers an alternative procedure, during which the “intercourse” simply consists of uttering the mantras, applicable at a marriage with a girl before maturity (*kanyā*).²⁰⁴

In the subsequent *Vaikhānasa* literature only a very few texts deal with niṣeka in more detail. One of them is Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya’s commentary on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. The other group of texts are the handbooks (*prayoga*) used by domestic priests (*brhaspati*) as guidelines for the actual performance of the rituals. Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya’s commentary on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* is very informative regarding the contemporary performance and interpretation of the saṃskāra niṣeka. While commenting on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*’s “fifth reason,” Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya explicitly says that niṣeka is performed at the end of the vow called *caturthivrata*. He clearly subscribes to the view first expressed in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, that the last sentence in the *caturthivāsa* (= niṣeka) section of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* refers to a case where the wife has not yet reached maturity. In that case niṣeka is performed by only reciting the relevant mantras, which differ from the mantras to be uttered when a man marries a grown-up woman. Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya evidently considers the “mantra-version” of niṣeka the regular procedure. How-

PrA 11.2ab, 18.4ab; see also ĀS 4.45–49 and 70–73; see also YA 23.11, and 51.33–34; see also YA 51.1–7.

203 See DHN^D 14.7–8, quoting ĀS 4.47–49, 4.72–73; DHN^D 20.6–8; 25.5–11. Only once does he mention “the saṃskāras beginning with niṣeka of the Pāñcarātrins” (DHN^D 66.9–13).

204 DHN^D 13.19–21, TPC 402.4–5 and 7–8.

ever, at the same time it is evident that he sees viṣṇubali as a much more important defining element of Vaikhānasa identity than niṣeka. In his commentary on the *Ānandasamhitā* he gives eight authoritative descriptions of viṣṇubali by different authors (see 2.2.3.3–2.2.4.7) whereas he offers not a single description of niṣeka. The idea that niṣeka as the first saṃskāra defines Vaikhānasa identity is perpetuated in the Sanskrit prayoga texts, ritual handbooks for practitioners which are in use today. In the *Pūrvaprayoga*, in use in Tamil Nadu (see 4.3.2), ṛtusamgamana and niṣeka are however depicted as one and the same ritual, whereas in the text *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* (2, p. 124; see 4.3.1) niṣeka is dealt with in the section on vivāha, under the heading caturthīhoma. There we also find a footnote on niṣeka, discussing its performance when it only consists of the recitation of mantras. Even today many Vaikhānasas share the opinion that being a Vaikhānasa is defined as “being endowed with the saṃskāras, beginning with niṣeka.” Many practising domestic priests told me that niṣeka is performed immediately after the marriage rituals, or three days later. However, nowadays niṣeka is evidently rarely in fact performed—and if so, it frequently consists of the recitation of mantras at the end of the vivāha ceremonies.²⁰⁵ In some performances the husband is made to touch the belly of the wife. However, on a conceptual level, where the main concern is the eligibility to perform the temple rituals in vaiṣṇava temples, even today it is of great importance that a Vaikhānasa is in fact “endowed with the rituals beginning with *niṣeka* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra.” Thus, while the practice as well as the meaning attributed to niṣeka evidently always were at variance, it remained important as a label for a Vaikhānasa identity among ritual specialists.

Ṛtusamgamana

In many gṛhyasūtras the first sexual union of a couple in the fourth night after the marriage ceremony and the couple’s sexual intercourse during the woman’s first “fertile period” after marriage (*ṛtusamgamana*) are combined under the concept of garbhādhāna.²⁰⁶ Since it involves three days of chastity²⁰⁷ brought to

205 A connection between the marriage age of girls and the actual performance of the niṣeka ritual is also drawn by the bṛhaspatīs. One bṛhaspati told me that in former times niṣeka was performed when the couple had not reached puberty. At that time niṣeka consisted of reciting mantras. Most probably this opinion stems from Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s expositions, which introduced a distinction between *niṣeka* as first sexual intercourse and niṣeka as act consisting of mantra recitations.

206 Thus Bodhāyana and Kāṭhaka (see also Slaje 1997: 215 and 217f.).

an end by a ritualized sexual intercourse, ṛtusaṃgamana as described in the *Vai-khānasasmārtasūtra* in fact resembles niṣeka (VaikhSmS) or garbhādhāna (other grhyasūtras).²⁰⁸ For ṛtusaṃgamana the period of chastity begins with the married woman's period, for niṣeka/garbhādhāna with the wedding ceremonies. The observances which the married woman should follow during the first three days of her period are described in *Vai-khānasasmārtasūtra* 3.9.²⁰⁹ She should not bathe for three days, eat only once a day, from an earthen or iron vessel—or out of the hands—, but never from a copper plate. She may not look at the planets, or sleep during the day. On the fourth day she cleans her teeth, bathes in perfumed water, wears a white gown, applies make-up and jewellery, speaks neither to another woman nor to a śūdra and does not look at other men, for the child to be conceived will resemble the first man she sees after her bath. Then the best nights for conception are named, and instructions are given for this saṃskāra's main ritual acts. According to the *Vai-khānasasmārtasūtra*, the central act is that a certain paste made from different plants²¹⁰ is smeared in a nostril of the wife. The *Vai-khānasagrhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* (see 1.4) adds that the paste is to be made by virgins, and that they smear it in the nose with the tip of a new garment. This is in fact current practice today. Moreover, the woman usually changes clothes after this ritual and dresses in this new sari for the remaining ceremonies.

Garbhādhāna

Following the list of saṃskāras at the beginning of the sūtra, and the commentary, Caland uses garbhādhāna as the heading for *Vai-khānasasmārtasūtra* 3.10. In fact, however, the term garbhādhāna itself is not used in this section. The ritual described there is a confirmation of pregnancy.²¹¹ It is carried out when the woman shows the following signs: swelling of the stomach, weariness, aversion toward her husband, loss of appetite, increased production of saliva, hoarseness

207 Slaje (1997: 221, note 63) notes that in some grhyasūtras the period of chastity is extended. Thus Bodhāyana (BaudhGrS 1.7.9ff.) draws a connection between the ability of the offspring to learn the Veda and the length of the period of chastity.

208 On the connection between the two rituals see Slaje (1997: 222ff.).

209 On this see Slaje 1997: 219; see also Hüsken 2001a. On menstruation as a period of fertility, see Slaje 1995: 119, 122 and 126 and 1997: 207–234.

210 The nyagrodha (fig-tree), lakṣmī and sahadēvī plants are mentioned.

211 Bloch (1896) describes this saṃskāra correctly as a “special ceremony once pregnancy is perceptible,” Caland (1929: 80) and Kane (1974a: 196) speak of a “ceremony to secure conception.”

and a quivering uterus.²¹² The main sacrifice is as follows: the husband places some barley corns into the the pregnant woman’s hand. Then he gives her the “threefold food,” namely milk, sour curds, and melted butter to eat and brushes her belly three times with a darbha grass bundle. This saṃskāra resembles the garbharakṣaṇa ritual from the *Śāṅkhāyanagrhyasūtra* (1.21.1–2) and the anavalobhana ritual of the *Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra* (1.13.1.5–7). These rituals serve to protect the embryo, and to avert a miscarriage (see Kane 1974a: 196).

The performance, timing and quite clearly also the meaning attributed to this ritual differs from the corresponding accounts in other grhyasūtras, where the first sexual intercourse of the couple during the fourth night after the marriage ceremony is called garbhādhāna. However, also the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is not consistent in this respect: it calculates the correct time for the performance of other prenatal saṃskāras from garbhādhāna, but here the “conception” of the child must be meant, not the confirmation of pregnancy which follows about three months later. A ritual confirming pregnancy can take place in the second month, or perhaps even the third month, at the earliest. Then, however, the prenatal saṃskāras sīmantonnayana and viṣṇubali cannot take place, as specified in the sūtra, “in the eighth month counted from garbhādhāna” (VaikhSmS 3.12 and 13), as this would be the tenth to eleventh month. In the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* evidently the term garbhādhāna is first used for the ritual confirming pregnancy, but in other places for the conception of the child.

Puṃsavana

The next prenatal life-cycle ritual in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is puṃsavana (VaikhSmS 3.11). The aim of this ritual is to influence the sex of the child.²¹³

212 Comparable signs of pregnancy are identified by Dr Osiander, director of the Göttingen maternity hospital in his work “Dr. Friedrich Benjamin Osianders Grundriß der Entbindungskunst, Teil 1: Schwangerschafts- und Geburtslehre” (Göttingen, 1802: 173–5): “Shivering immediately after conception, [...] aversion toward the begetter, [...] revulsion at certain foods and drinks, saliva flow and a tendency to much spitting, [...]” See Schlumbohm 2002: 131ff.

213 Zinko (1998: 218–220) states that each act of procreation as such has as its purpose the engendering of male descendants. Against this must be set the two options given in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* for ṛtusaṃgamana: if sexual intercourse takes place on an even number of days after the onset of menstrual flow, a boy will be conceived, on an uneven number of days by contrast, a girl. Moreover the choice of the nostril, into which the woman receives the plant paste, also influences the sex of the child. From this it follows that a daughter is not unwanted from the outset in principle. Already Chaudhuri (1938) notes that puṃsavana also serves to protect the child, regardless of whether it is male or

This ritual should be carried out “in the fourth month after garbhādhāna.” Zinko (1998: 220–223) discusses this saṃskāra in detail on the basis of comparison of different sūtra traditions and detects a common structure. The majority of the texts give the second to third month of pregnancy as the right time, and it should be performed under a male constellation. The objects used are mostly a nyagrodha branch, barley, mustard seeds, beans²¹⁴ and milk products. The nyagrodha stems are often crushed and the paste is put into the right nostril of the woman. In the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, however, the ritual element of the pulverizing and the insertion of the paste into the nostril is prescribed for ṛtusaṃgamana. According to the description of puṃsavana in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.11, the woman receives some barley corns and mustard seeds in the right hand (or beans and wheat in their place), together with a mixture of three dairy products (milk, sour curds, and melted butter). She eats this mixture and the husband touches her stomach while mantras are recited.

Sīmantonayana

According to *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.12 sīmantonayana (also called sīmanta)²¹⁵ is performed in the eighth month after garbhādhāna. Several meanings are attributed to this ritual: like the other prenatal saṃskāras it serves to protect the unborn child, but it is also connected to the arising of consciousness in the foetus (see Pandey 1949: 64). Hārīta says that sīmantonayana removes the “taint derived from the parents” from the foetus (see Kane 1974a: 199) and many contemporary Vaikhānasa scholars opine that while the hair is parted mantras are spoken, which call into being the consciousness of the child.²¹⁶ The process is described in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* (3.12) as follows: while mantras are recited the husband takes a porcupine quill with three white stripes, to which, with a blade of darbha grass, a branch of an udumbara plant (*ficus oppositifolia*) with shoots, leaves and unripe fruit and kuśa grass are tied. Placing this on the parting line of the woman, the officiator (yajamāna) draws it along the parting toward the rear. The woman has to wear a garland and should have applied fragrant un-

female. Moreover, in puṃsavana *puṃs* can refer to both sexes, and allows the possibility to alter the grammatical form of the mantras if a daughter was desired, he argues.

214 According to Zinko (1998: 224) the objects symbolize the male genitals.

215 A detailed discussion of the origin of sīmanta/sīmantonayana as part of the marriage rituals is given by Gonda 1956.

216 Gonda (1956: 14) refers to Vicor Henry (*La magie dans l'Inde antique*, Paris, 1904: 16) who assumed that “the parting of the hair was the path along which the soul of the child could easily enter the body of the expectant mother.”

guments on her body. The husband then touches the stomach of the woman and gives her a mixture of barley, milk, sour curds, and melted butter to eat. According to the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* the next saṃskāra (viṣṇubali) immediately follows this ritual, and in all three performances which I was able to observe and document, sīmanta was in fact carried out together with viṣṇubali. Moreover, it was also performed together with an atonement ritual (prāyaścitta) for “not carrying out the prenatal saṃskāras at the prescribed time.” This atonement ritual makes good for any other deficiency that might have occurred during the performances (VaikhSmS 6.3).²¹⁷ This ritual involved that a piece of gold (suvarṇa-garbha; ideally in the form of an embryo) was tied around the belly of the pregnant women (see 4.4.3). In Tamil Nadu sīmanta is nowadays often performed together with the “bangle ceremony” (*valaikāppu*), which is supposed to ward the evil eye off the woman and her child, and to keep the women in a cheerful mood. The importance given to women during and around this ceremony might reflect the instruction in the *Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra* (1.14.8) that “old Brahman women, whose husbands and children are alive” are authorities for this ritual (see Gonda 1956: 13).

Among the prenatal saṃskāras especially niṣeka and viṣṇubali, the first and last of the garbhasaṃskāras, play an important role in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* and the subsequent ritual literature, as they are always used to define and demarkate the Vaikhānasas’ specific identity.

2.2.2 Viṣṇubali

The phrase *vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvit*^o, “equipped with the saṃskāras which begin with niṣeka” is often used in the *Vaikhānasasaṃhitās* as an distinguishing characteristic of the Vaikhānasas over against other vaiṣṇava groups. There the expression serves to describe a person entitled to perform rituals in a Viṣṇu temple.²¹⁸ Only after niṣeka can one be a Vaikhānasa; membership of the group is established through the performance of this ritual. It is often equated with initiation (*dīkṣā*) among other Vaiṣṇavas, and the Pāñcarātrins are occasionally mentioned in this context.²¹⁹ Following a change of power relations in South Indian temples after the 11th century CE, the emphasis on identification

217 Information I could collect in the Tirunelveli district also indicates that this is nowadays the normal procedure.

218 In some *Vaikhānasasaṃhitās*, the Vaikhānasa saṃskāras are mentioned as precondition of being employed even as a cook or a helper in the temple.

219 See YA 51.4ff., KrA 1.17f. and 36.32.

and demarkation shifted from niṣeka to the last prenatal Vaikhānasa saṃskāra viṣṇubali. The Vaikhānasas evidently had to explicitly mark out their identity as distinct from and as superior to other vaiṣṇava traditions. While the formal defining characteristic (“endowed with niṣeka and so on”) was retained, the focus was actually placed on viṣṇubali. It changed in its performance, but also with regard to the meaning attributed to it. This process will be followed up here.

Viṣṇubali is the last of the Vaikhānasas’ prenatal saṃskāras named and described in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*.²²⁰ According to this text viṣṇubali is to be performed in the eighth month of pregnancy, directly after sīmantonnayana. However, already in the sūtra this prenatal life-cycle ritual shows some uncommon features: it comprises a sacrificial fire as well as a pūjā directed towards the god Viṣṇu, and includes the feeding of the god during this worship (naivedyam) as well as the feeding of the god through sacrifice within the frame of the domestic fire offering.²²¹

The commentaries on the sūtra and the prayoga texts further elaborate on the performance of viṣṇubali. There particular significance is attached to a rite which comes at the end of this life-cycle ritual, namely when milk porridge is offered to Viṣṇu, after which the pregnant wife receives the remainder. A detailed investigation of the relevant texts makes plain that after the redaction of the sūtra and before or during Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s time this rite was enriched with elements taken over from an initiation called pañcasamskāra that was prevalent among other Vaiṣṇavas. In short: the branding of the upper arms of the pāñca-samskāra initiation was included as the branding of the milk porridge in the viṣṇubali saṃskāra. This process was accompanied by a new interpretation of the ritual, according to which in the course of this rite Viṣṇu himself marks the unborn child on the upper arms. The child thereby becomes a *garbhavaiṣṇava*, an adherent of Viṣṇu while still in the womb. Viṣṇubali thus came to bear features of an initiation, while its basic characteristic as prenatal life-cycle ritual was retained. In its modified form viṣṇubali thus developed into the ritual representation of the Vaikhānasas’ specific identity: it came to express on the one hand their membership of the group of Vaiṣṇavas, and on the other their claim to superiority within these groups.

220 Two other gr̥hyasūtras mention viṣṇubali or “a bali offering to Viṣṇu” (*viṣṇave bali*): the *Bodhāyanagr̥hyasūtra* 1.11 and AgniGS 2.7 (see Krick 1977: 90 and note 85).

221 Krick (1977: 86 and 80, note 45) argues that structurally both rituals are similar, since both the vedic yajña and the Hindu pūjā serve to honour and entertain the god as a guest. Both rituals periodically renew the alliance with the god, which is interpreted and enacted as identity with the god in the course of initiation (*dīkṣā*).

On the basis of the relevant texts it will be shown here how those responsible for handing down the tradition re-interpreted the ritual according to the need of their actual socio-religious context. In this process, erstwhile innovations quickly became tradition and thereby the point of reference for succeeding (re-)interpretations.

The following passages on viṣṇubali are arranged according to content. They are taken from texts belonging to different literary genres.²²² Their authors adopt different approaches and place the emphasis differently in their interpretations.²²³ It is, however, not possible to reconstruct an historical ordering of the texts on the basis of internal evidence. Rather, it will be shown at what points viṣṇubali has changed from the way it is described in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, and to what extent these changes in ritual practices and standards are accompanied by a change in the meaning attached to the ritual. I will thus apply here a method which Strong (1992: xii) calls “exegetical exploration”: taking a particular issue as focal point for presenting and discussing the key issues of a given tradition. The different interpretations of the viṣṇubali saṃskāra in the texts reveal a wide diversity of opinion and thereby also a high degree of variation and flexibility with respect to the ritual components and their sequence. The reference point in the texts is invariably—explicitly or implicitly—the depiction of viṣṇubali in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.13. This text is therefore discussed first, and compared with the corresponding passage from the *Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra*, which also lists and describes viṣṇubali as a prenatal life-cycle ritual (see 2.2.2.1). Then follow those commentaries and handbooks which closely follow the sūtra without introducing new ritual elements (see 2.2.2.2–3). Next comes the *Vṛtti* of Vasantayājīn, which is strongly influenced by the Bodhāyana tradition, but is at the same time is also very close to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s sūtra commentary *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* (see 2.2.2.4). The next text to be discussed establishes a connection between viṣṇubali and a ‘prenatal vaiṣṇava nature’ (*garbha-*

222 The passages are taken from sūtra texts, from sūtra commentaries, from Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra saṃhitās, and from more recent ritual handbooks. The passages cited below (Sundararāja’s *Prayogavṛtti*, Vasantayājīn’s *Vṛtti*, Sañjīvayājīn’s *Nibandhana*, Veṅkaṭayogin’s *Nibandhana*, Gopānācārya’s *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*, and Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan’s *Smārtakarmānukramaṇikā*) are not preserved as independent works. The passages on viṣṇubali are quoted here as they occur in Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya’s commentary on the *Anandasam̥hitā* (ĀS [1998], pp. 95–100).

223 Some authors do not concern themselves with particular elements of the ritual. This, however, does not necessarily imply that according to these texts these rites may not or must not be performed. As is shown below, they may well have been excluded from consideration as uncontentious and taken for granted.

vaiṣṇavatva). It is the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita (see 2.2.3). This text also introduces an additional ritual element, namely the branding of the milk porridge which the pregnant woman is given to eat. This rite corresponds to the physical branding of the upper arms in other vaiṣṇava groups in the course of their initiation, called *pañcasamṣkāra*.

A brief account of *pañcasamṣkāra* among Pāñcarātrins and Śrīvaiṣṇavas plus some references to the *Vaikhānasaśaṃhitā* literature dealing with this issue will be followed by a discussion of the detailed description of *viṣṇubali* in the *Vaikhānasa* text *Ānandasamṃhitā* (see 2.2.4.2). Herein the branding of the milk porridge is clearly presented over three chapters as the ritual expression of the *Vaikhānasa*'s equivalent to the "five *saṃskāras*" (*pañcasamṣkāra*) prescribed for other *Vaiṣṇavas*. Further *Vaikhānasa* ritual handbooks will then be presented which take up the connection between *viṣṇubali* and *pañcasamṣkāra* (see 2.2.4.4–7). Last to be considered are those textual passages which not only posit a correspondence between *viṣṇubali* and *pañcasamṣkāra* but also explicitly identify *viṣṇubali* as the ritualized "taking refuge in *Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa*" (*samāśrayaṇa/prapatti*) of the *Vaikhānasa*s, a soteriological concept of Pāñcarātra and Śrīvaiṣṇava origin (see 2.2.5.1–4). The chapter ends with a depiction of the connection drawn between *viṣṇubali* and *prapatti* in the 1905 *Vaikhānasa* work *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā*, and with a short account of the views of several contemporary *Vaikhānasa* scholars from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (see 2.2.5.5).

First, however, a brief comment on mantras. In the texts dealt with here two types of these formulae can be distinguished. There are formulae which the acting priest (or main performer) has to adapt to the context through appropriate grammatical adjustment.²²⁴ These are grammatically correct and their content is directly connected to the ritual act during which they are pronounced, or to the meaning which is attached to this ritual act. Nevertheless, the understanding of

224 Thus the instructions in BaudhGṛS 1.11 [pāyasahoma]: "*amuṣmai svāhā namo*" "*muṣmai svāhā namaḥ*" *iti dvādaśabhir yathāliṅgam* indicate that the performer/priest should recite both "*Keśavāya svāhā*" and "*Keśavāya namaḥ*" and form the corresponding mantras with the other eleven names of the god, too. Another example: BaudhGṛS 1.11 [pāyasaprasāna] reads: *vyāhṛtibhiḥ puruṣam udvāsayaṃity udvāsyaṇnaśeṣam patnīṃ prāśayet*, "After he has released (the god) with (mantras consisting of) the *vyāhṛtis* (and) "I release *Puruṣa*" he gives the remainder of the food to his wife to eat." The *vyāhṛti* mantras are *om bhūḥ*, *om bhuvah*, *om suvah* and *om bhūr bhuvah suvah*. The officiator should therefore recite: *om bhūḥ puruṣam udvāsayāmi*, *om bhuvah puruṣam udvāsayāmi*, *om suvah puruṣam udvāsayāmi*, *om bhūr bhuvah suvah puruṣam udvāsayāmi* and then give the remainder of the milk porridge to his wife to eat. The term for this adaptation is *ūhaḥ*. Patañjali gives the need to be able to do *ūhaḥ* as one of the reasons for the science of grammar (see *Mahābhāṣya*, p. 1).

the mantras by those who recite them is of secondary importance: the main issue is here the correct structure, and their correct intonation during the corresponding ritual act. Except for the account of contemporary performance in 4.4, these formulae will be translated here. Mantras of the other type are quotations from the vedic saṃhitās. These are compiled in the *Vaikhānasamantrapraśna* (see 1.1) and are quoted in the ritual texts in so-called *pratīka* form, i.e. the beginning stands for the entire mantra, knowledge of which is assumed. The content of the mantra itself is also connected to the related ritual act. Thus mantras directed to the god Viṣṇu are prominent in viṣṇubali. Here, even more than in the first type of mantras, it is rather a matter of flawless and complete recitation than of understanding the content of the vedic words. Nowadays only few among those taking part in the ritual acts are actually aware of the literal meaning of these mantras, which are not translated here. Their source and full wording will be given in footnotes, and the translations of these source texts may be referred to for translations of the mantras. What Humphrey & Laidlaw (1994: 74) say of speech acts within ritualised actions in general is true also for the recitation of these mantras: “[...] the communication here is not intrinsic to the *ritual* character of these acts. It belongs rather to the ‘pre-existing’ linguistic act which has been ritualized.”

2.2.2.1 Viṣṇubali in the sūtras

Both the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* and the *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra*²²⁵ provide a detailed description of a saṃskara named viṣṇubali or “bali sacrifice to Viṣṇu.”²²⁶ The close connection between the Baudhāyana and the Vaikhānasa tradi-

225 Kane (1974a: 196 and 226f.) mentions a passage from Aṅgiras and quotations of Vasiṣṭha and Āśvalāyana in the *Saṃskāraprakāśa* which likewise refer to a ritual called viṣṇubali. As I did not have access to these works I rely on Kane’s description here. Viṣṇubali as portrayed by Vasiṣṭha (quoted in *Saṃskāraprakāśa*: 178) takes place in the eighth month of pregnancy. Āśvalāyana adds that the ceremony serves to avert harm to the foetus and to enable an easy delivery. 64 oblations of boiled rice and ghee are offered to Viṣṇu on an altar in the shape of a lotus or svastika, set up to the south of the fire. “Then to the north-east of the fire, a square plot should be smeared with cowdung and be divided into 64 squares with white dust and 64 offerings of boiled rice should be offered [...] and in their midst one ball of rice should be offered to Viṣṇu with the mantra loudly uttered ‘namo Nārāyaṇa’ and the husband and wife should partake separately of two balls of the same rice. Then the offering to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt should be made, dakṣiṇā should be distributed and brāhmaṇas should be fed” (Kane 1974a: 226).

226 Depending on context *bali* may describe a food sacrifice to gods, to divine beings or to spirits, or to the dead (for details, see Kane 1974b: 745f.). By contrast with *prasāda* (a term for offerings which are in part subsequently distributed to devotees) this refers to a gift which is not returned to those who offer it.

tions, which later is expressed as rivalry in the *Vaikhānasasamhitās*, has already been dealt with in 1.4.²²⁷ In the post-sūtra literature however, only in the *Vaikhānasa* tradition *viṣṇubali* becomes ever more prominent. Only the *Vaikhānasa*s actually perform this life-cycle ritual up to the present.²²⁸ This specific development of the *Vaikhānasa* tradition is closely connected to the fact that maybe already from the late 14th century CE onwards they sought to bind up their profession as temple priest with their specific sūtra tradition, and here especially with their prenatal life-cycle ritual *viṣṇubali*. As the description of *viṣṇubali* in the sūtra forms the basic framework for its further treatment in other texts, in what follows first the relevant portions of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* will be presented and compared in a table with the corresponding account in the *Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra*.²²⁹ The ritual is here subdivided into different phases or rites which are labeled by key words. To facilitate comparison, reference will be made to these keywords throughout this work when discussing other texts in so far as they correspond to the depiction of *viṣṇubali* in the sūtra.²³⁰

227 Krick (1977: 81ff.) moreover lists several structural similarities of *viṣṇubali* and *nārāyaṇabali*. Both rituals are given in the *Vaikhānasa* and *Baudhāyana* traditions.

228 Many *Smārta* and *Śrīvaiṣṇava* Brahmins in contemporary South India follow the *Baudhāyanasūtra*. However, as many practising *bṛhaspatīs* in Tamil Nadu told me, *viṣṇubali* is not performed among them today.

229 In the *Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra* *garbhādhāna*, *puṃsavana*, *sīmantonayana* and *viṣṇubali* are listed as prenatal *saṃskāras*. According to *BaudhGrS* 1.1 and 1.11 the *saṃskāras* “relating to the body” are included in the list of seven *pāka* sacrifices, and are in this tradition perceived as domestic sacrifices. In contrast, in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* a clear distinction emerges between the *saṃskāras* relating to the body (*śārīra*) and sacrifices (see also Pandey 1949: 29f.).

230 In what follows these key words in square brackets refer to the diverse ritual sequences in the texts, corresponding to the key words given in the table here.

<i>Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra</i> 3.13: viṣṇubali	<i>Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra</i> 1.11: ²³¹ viṣṇave bali
[introduction]	
<i>atha viṣṇubaliṃ</i>	<i>viṣṇave balir aṣṭame māsi pūrvapakṣa- sya saptamyām dvādāśyām rohiṇyām śroṇāyām vā</i>
Now (we will explain) viṣṇubali.	(Viṣṇubali is) the offering to Viṣṇu. (It is to be performed) in the first half of the eighth month, on the seventh or twelfth day during the rohiṇī or śroṇā [śravaṇa?] lunar mansion.
[punyāha]	
	<i>brāhmaṇān annena pariviṣya punyā- haṃ svasti rddhim iti vācayitvā</i>
	After having served food to the Brahmins, and having made them to proclaim that it is an auspicious day (while uttering the words:) “(May you attain well-being!” (and) “(May you attain prosperity!”, ²³²
[puruṣāvāhana]	
<i>uttaraprañidhāv agnyādīn devān oṃ bhūh puruṣam oṃ bhuvah puruṣam oṃ suvah puruṣam oṃ bhūr bhuvah suvah puruṣam cety āvāhya</i>	<i>atha devayajanollekhanaprabhṛty ā prañitābhyah kṛtvā upotthāyāgreṇāg- niṃ daivatam āvāhayati oṃ bhūh puru- ṣam āvāhayāmi oṃ bhuvah puruṣam āvāhayāmi oṃ suvah puruṣam āvāha- yāmi oṃ bhūr bhuvah suvah puruṣam āvāhayāmiti āvāhya</i>

231 A short summary of viṣṇubali is already given in BaudhGrS 1.10.13–17: *aṣṭame māsi viṣṇave āhutīr juhōti “viṣṇor nu kam” ity etena sūktena. viṣṇave baliṃ upaharati. vaiṣṇavo hy eṣa māso vijñāyate. viṣṇur hi garbhasya devatā:* “In the eighth month he commends an oblation into the fire (while he recites) the (Viṣṇu)hymn (beginning with ‘viṣṇor nu kam.’ He offers the bali offering to Viṣṇu. For this month is known as belonging to Viṣṇu. Because Viṣṇu is the deity of the foetus.” Only later, in *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* 1.11, is the performance of viṣṇubali described in more detail.

232 On punyāha, see Kane 1974a: 216ff. The punyāha rite of the Baudhāyana tradition is described in *Baudhāyanagrhyaparibhāṣāsūtra* 1.4 (pp. 127f.) and *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* 1.10 (pp. 191–193). For the Vaikhānasas punyāha is described in detail in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.6–7; see also 2.2.

After having invoked the gods beginning with Agni in the praṇidhi pot, ²³³ (placed) north (of the fire), and after having invoked: “ <i>Oṃ bhūḥ</i> (I invoke) Puruṣa, <i>oṃ bhuvah</i> (I invoke) Puruṣa, <i>oṃ suvah</i> (I invoke) Puruṣa, <i>oṃ bhūr bhuvah suvah</i> (I invoke) Puruṣa”	Now, after having done (the rites which) begin with drawing the lines, (thus assigning the place) for the offering to the god, ²³⁴ up to (placing) the praṇītā-pots (at the side of the fire pit), ²³⁵ he stands up and in front of (the fire pit) he invokes the deity Agni. After having invoked thus: “ <i>Oṃ bhūḥ</i> I invoke Puruṣa, <i>oṃ bhuvah</i> I invoke Puruṣa, <i>oṃ suvah</i> I invoke Puruṣa, <i>oṃ bhūr bhuvah suvah</i> I invoke Puruṣa!”
[nirvāpana, āghāra]	
<i>tathaiva nirvāpādyāghāraṃ hutvā</i>	<i>paridhānaprabhṛtyāgnimukhāt kṛtvā daivatam arcayati</i>
In a similar manner, after having performed the oblations, beginning with bestowing (the clarified butter to the god) up to the āghāra rite	He worships the deity, after having performed (the rites) beginning with the placement (of darbha-grass) up to the agnimukha ritual. ²³⁶
[dvādaśanāmāvāhana]	
<i>[a]gneḥ pūrvasyāṃ darbhāsaneṣu keśavaṃ nārāyaṇaṃ mādhaveṣu govindaṃ viṣṇuṃ madhusūdanaṃ trivikramaṃ vāmanaṃ śrīdharaṃ hr̥ṣīkeṣaṃ padmanābhaṃ dāmodaraṃ iti nāmabhir devaṃ viṣṇuṃ āvāhy[a]</i>	
After having invoked the god Viṣṇu on seats made of darbha-grass, east of the fire, by the names Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhave, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Trivikrama, Vāmana, Śrīdhara, Hṛṣīkeṣa, Padmanābha, Dāmodara	
[snapana]	
<i>āpo hiranya pavamānaiḥ snāpayitvā</i>	<i>āpo hi śthā mayobhuvah iti tiṣṛbhiḥ hiranyavarnāś śucayaḥ pāvakaḥ iti catisṛbhiḥ pavamānas suvarjanaḥ ity ete-</i>

233 This is the vessel named *praṇītā* in other traditions, filled with praṇīta-water (see Bloch 1896: 2).

234 This ritual preparation of the fire-place is described in Kane 1974a: 207–210.

235 The vessels with water are placed to the north and south of the fire place respectively.

236 According to HirGrS 1.2.18 agnimukha are four offerings of clarified butter to the fire, following āghāra and ājyabhāga.

	<i>nānūvākena mārjayivā</i>
he gives a bath (to the god while reciting the mantras beginning with) <i>āpo ...</i> ²³⁷ , <i>hiranya ...</i> ²³⁸ , <i>pavamāṇa ...</i> , ²³⁹	After having washed (the god while reciting) thrice <i>āpo hi śthā mayobhuvah ...</i> (and then) four times <i>hiranyavarṇāś śucayaḥ pāvakaḥ ...</i> (and reciting) this one passage <i>pavamānas suvarjanaḥ ...</i>
[arcana]	
<i>tattannāmnārcayaty</i>	<i>athād̥bhis tarpayati keśavaṃ tarpayāmi nārāyaṇaṃ mād̥havaṃ govindaṃ viṣṇuṃ madhusūdanaṃ trivikramaṃ vāmanaṃ śrīdharaṃ hr̥ṣīkeśaṃ padmanābhaṃ dāmodaraṃ tarpayāmi iti. etair eva nāmadheyair gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpaiḥ amuṣmai namo 'muṣmai namaḥ ity abhyarcya</i>
He worships (the god) by reciting his respective names.	Now he refreshes (the god) with water: "I refresh Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mād̥hava, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Trivikrama, Vāmana, Śrīdhara, Hr̥ṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, I refresh Dāmodara." And he worships these named deities with scent, flowers, incense and light (while reciting:) "Salutations to this one, salutations to that one!"
[viṣṇusūkta / vaiṣṇavasūkta]	
<i>ato devādyair viṣṇor nu kaṃ tad asya priyaṃ pra tad viṣṇuḥ paro mātrayā vicakrame trir deva iti dvādaśāhutiṛ ājyena hutvā</i>	<i>atha viṣṇava āhutiṛ juhōti viṣṇor nu kaṃ tad asya priyaṃ pra tad viṣṇuḥ paro mātrayā vicakrame trir devaḥ iti</i>
After having offered the twelve offerings with clarified butter (while reciting the mantras beginning with) <i>ato deva ...</i> ²⁴⁰ <i>viṣ-</i>	He now offers the oblations to Viṣṇu (while reciting the mantras beginning with) <i>viṣṇor nu kaṃ ...</i> , <i>tad asya priyaṃ</i>

237 This mantra is also called *prokṣamaṇtra*; ṚV 10.9.1–3{5}, TS 5.6.1.4.3=1 [TS 4.1.5.1], TA 4.4.2.4–5, AV 1.5.1, SV 2.1187, KS 16.4, VMP 1.4.19.

238 TS 5.6.1.1.1–6; MS 1.2.1: 9.12, 2.13.1: 151.7, AV 1.33.1, VMP 1.2.7.

239 TB 1.4.8.1, 2.6.3.4; VMP 1.3.9.

240 This series of six mantras is called *vaiṣṇavasūkta*. The mantras are: (1) *ato devā avantu no yato viṣṇur vicakrame pṛthivyāḥ saptadhāmabhiḥ* (RV 1.22.16.1–2{07}, VMP 1.27.85), (2) *idaṃ viṣṇur vicakrame tredhā nidadhe padam samūlhamasya pāṃsure* (RV 1.22.17.1–2{07}, TS 1.2.13.1, VMP 1.34.112); (3) *trīṇi padā vicakrame viṣṇur go-pā adābhyah ato dharmāṇi dhārayan* (RV 1.22.18.1–2{07}, 8.12.27; TB 2.4.6.1); (4) *viṣṇoḥ karmāṇi paśyata yato vratāni paspaśe indrasya yujyah sakhā* (RV 1.22.19.1–2{07}); (5) *tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṃ padam sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ divīva cakṣurātataṃ* (RV 1.22.20.1–2{07}, TS 1.3.6.2, 4.2.9.3); (6) *tad viprāso vipan yavo jāgrvāṃsaḥ samindhate viṣṇor yat paramaṃ padam* (RV 1.22.21.1–2{07}).

<i>ṅor nu kaṃ ..., tad asya priyaṃ ..., pra tad viṣṇuḥ ..., paro mātrayā ..., vicakrame ... (and) trir deva ...</i> ²⁴¹	<i>..., pra tad viṣṇuḥ ..., paro mātrayā ..., vicakrame ... (and) trir devaḥ ...</i>
	<i>jayaprabhṛtisiddham ā dhenuvarapradānāt</i>
	(the procedure) is to be followed from <i>jaya</i> up to the rite giving a fine cow (?)
[pāyasanivedana]	
<i>pāyasam ājyasamyuktaṃ havir devaṃ nivedya</i>	<i>atha guḍapāyasaṃ ghṛtamiśraṃ annaṃ nivedayati</i>
After having presented the milk porridge mixed with clarified butter to the god as offering	He now offers the sweet milk porridge mixed with clarified butter as food (to the god),
[pāyasaḥoma]	
<i>dvādaśanāmbhīr ato devādyair viṣṇor nu kādyair ājyamiśraṃ pāyasaṃ juhuyād</i>	<i>amuṣmai svāhā namo 'muṣmai svāhā namaḥ iti dvādaśabhir yathāliṅgam</i>
with (the recitation of the mantras containing) the twelve names (and the mantras) beginning with <i>ato deva</i> ... (and) beginning with <i>viṣṇor nu kaṃ</i> ..., he should commend the milk porridge mixed with clarified butter into the fire.	(reciting the mantras containing) the twelve (names) respectively: "To that one, hail! Salutations! To that one, hail! Salutations!"
[vedamantra]	
<i>ṛgyajuḥsāmātharvabhir mantrair vaiṣṇavair devaṃ saṃstūya</i>	<i>vaiṣṇavībhi ṛgyajussāmātharvabhis stotrais stutībhis stuvanti</i>
After having praised the god with vaiṣṇava mantras from Ṛg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharvaveda,	They praise (the god) with eulogies and praises, with the vaiṣṇava (mantras) from Ṛg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharvaveda

241 This series of six mantras is called viṣṇusūkta. The mantras are: (1) *viṣṇor nu kaṃ vīryā-ṇi pra vocaṃ yaḥ pārthivāni vimame rajāṃsi yo askabhāyad uttaraṃ sadhasthaṃ vicakramāṇas tredhorugāyas / viṣṇor arāṭam asi viṣṇoḥ pṛṣṭham asi viṣṇoḥ śnyaptra sthas / viṣṇoḥ syūr asi viṣṇor dhruvam asi vaiṣṇavam asi viṣṇave tvā* (ṚV 1.154.1; TS 1.2.13.3.2–7; TB 2.8.3.2; VMP 1.18.59); (2) *tad asya priyaṃ abhi pātho aśyāṃ [asthām] / naro yatra devayavo madanti / urukramasya sa hi bandhur itihā / viṣṇoḥ pade parame madhva uthsas* (ṚV 1.154.05.1–2{24}, TB 2.4.6.2 + 2.8.3.2); (3) *pra tad viṣṇuḥ tava te vīryāya mṛgo na bhūmah kucaro giriṣṭhāḥ / yasyoruṣu triṣu vikramaṇeṣv adhi-kṣiyanti bhuvanāni viśvā* (ṚV 1.154.2; TB 2.4.3.4); (4) *paro mātrayā tanu vā vṛdhāna na te mahitvam anv aśnuvanti / ubhe te vidma rajasī pṛthivyā viṣṇo deva tvaṃ paramasya vitse* (ṚV 7.99.1); (5) *vi cakrame pṛthivīm eṣa etām / kṣetrāya viṣṇur manuṣedaśa-syaṇ / dhruvāso asya kīrayo janāsaḥ / urukṣitīḥ sujanīm ā cakāra* (ṚV 7.100.4; TB 2.4.3.5); (6) *trir devaḥ pṛthivīm eṣa etām vicakrame śatarcasam mahitvā / pra viṣṇur astu tava saḥ stavī yān tv eṣaṃ hy asya sthvirasya nāma* (ṚV 7.100.3; TB 2.4.3.5 + 2.8.3.3).

[praṇāma]	
<i>namontair nāmabhiḥ pranamet</i>	
He should bow (to the god while reciting the mantras) ending with “salutations to” (and which contain) the (god’s respective) names.	
[pāyasaprāśana]	
<i>pāyasaśeṣaṃ patnīm prāśayati</i>	<i>vyāhṛtibhiḥ puruṣam udvāsayāmīty udvāsyaṅnaśeṣaṃ patnīm prāśayet</i>
He gives the remainder of the milk porridge to his wife to eat.	After he has released (the god) with (mantras consisting of) the vyāhṛtis (and) “I release Puruṣa” he gives the remainder of the food to his wife to eat.
[outcome of the performance]	
	<i>pumān asyai jāyate iti vijñāyate</i>
	It is understood that a male child is born to her.

The two texts correspond in many places, albeit that the *Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra* is more detailed than the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, especially on the preparations for viṣṇubali. In the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* it is tacitly assumed that viṣṇubali is performed immediately after sīmanta. Therefore it is not necessary to give the precise time in the [introduction].²⁴² Moreover, the performance of puṇyāha is not mentioned, as this ritual is carried out before sīmanta and the same ritual arena is used. Overall the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is shorter, for example in [arcanā]: while Bodhāyana goes into detail on the different means for worship of god, the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is content to note that god should be worshipped. Both sūtras unanimously prescribe in [puruṣāvāhana] that the god Puruṣa is to be invoked.²⁴³ The twelve forms of Viṣṇu are more often referred to in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* than by Bodhāyana.²⁴⁴ while in [dvādaśāvāhana] the god is in-

242 The eighth month of pregnancy as the time for the performance of sīmanta is specified at the start of *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.12. For the choice of the right fortnight and day further reference is made to puṃsavana (*VaikhSmS* 3.12: *atha garbhādhānādyasṭame māsi sīmantonayanam kuryāt. pakṣo dinaṃ ca vyākhyātam*).

243 As Krick (1977: 81 and note 46; 83 and note 82) remarks, there is a strong interconnection between Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa and Puruṣa. Nārāyaṇa, she argues, can be seen as Puruṣa *par excellence* and the puruṣasūkta is a central element of Nārāyaṇa worship (see Krick 1977: 91ff.).

244 As Krick argues, the worship of these twelve forms of Viṣṇu most probably did not originate in the Vaikhānasa or Baudhāyana tradition, but stems from a sacrifice which is originally described as lasting for one year, mentioned in *Viṣṇusmṛti*, *Ṛgvidhāna* and

voked in these twelve forms on the darbha seats, according to Bodhāyana he is simply worshipped once the fire has been kindled. This may also be connected with the fact that in [vaiṣṇavasūkta / viṣṇusūkta] the *Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra* prescribes the recitation of only the six mantras of the viṣṇusūkta, and not the six mantras of the vaiṣṇavasūkta for the offering of the clarified butter. By contrast the Vaikhānasas recite twelve mantras, so that each form is assigned a mantra of its own. The two sūtras also differ in [pāyasahoma] on the mantras to be used: while according to the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* the milk porridge is offered into the fire accompanied by recitation first of mantras containing the twelve names, and then while reciting vaiṣṇava- and viṣṇusūkta, Bodhāyana ordains that one should use the twelve names of the god for the sacrifice into the fire. In addition to the laudatory verses and hymns in [vedamantra], in [praṇāma] the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* requires the performer to bow before the twelve forms of the god. Further differences between the two descriptions are minor.

It is however significant that *Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra* [pāyasaprāśana] explicitly states that the god is first to be dismissed and only then is the wife to be fed the remainder of the milk porridge. Although it is to be assumed that the god is also dismissed at the end of the ritual in the tradition of the Vaikhānasas, in Bodhāyana's text this passage serves to make clear that the woman does not eat the milk porridge in the presence of the god. Here the Vaikhānasa tradition does not specify a precise end to the ritual. This fact possibly encouraged the later development of, and the emphasis on, the rite of giving of the milk porridge to the wife. A further central difference between the two texts is that the [outcome of the performance] is found only in the *Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra* where the purpose of viṣṇubali is stated. Here it is said to be, like pūṃsavana, a saṃskāra to predetermine the sex of the unborn child: "a male child is born to her." At no point in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is any statement made about the goal which is supposed to be attained through viṣṇubali. It is just this openness which permitted the interpretation of viṣṇubali as a ritual for the transmission of *garbhavaiṣṇavata* among the Vaikhānasas, of being a Vaiṣṇava already before birth, as expressed in later texts.

2.2.2.2 Viṣṇubali according to Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin

Two texts by the commentator Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin dealing with the saṃskāra viṣṇubali have been handed down. These are his commentary on the *Vaikhāna-*

Mahābhārata. Thus, a pūjā involving Viṣṇu's twelve forms replaces a one-year-long cycle of sacrifices (Krick 1977: 87ff.).

sagr̥hyasūtra, named *Vaikhānasakalpasūtrabhāṣya* (NVB),²⁴⁵ and the *Vaikhānasagr̥hyasūtradarpaṇa* (SD). While in his *Vaikhānasakalpasūtrabhāṣya* Nṛsimha Vājapeyin's primary concern is to explain some of the words and phrases used in the *Vaikhānasagr̥hyasūtra*, the *Vaikhānasagr̥hyasūtradarpaṇa* is a handbook with more details on the sequence of the rites and on points not dealt with in the sūtra. The text and translations of the sections on viṣṇubali are presented in what follows one after the other (first NVB, then SD).

Viṣṇubali in the *Vaikhānasakalpasūtrabhāṣya* (NVB)

NVB 1, 142.3–6 [saṃkalpa], [outcome of the performance]

atha viṣṇubaliḥ garbhādhānād aṣṭame māsy eva śuklapakṣe śuddhe 'hani kartavyam asyāḥ garbharaḥsārthaṃ viṣṇubaliṃ kariṣya iti saṅkalpya āghāraṃ kṛtvāvāhanakāle

Now viṣṇubali should be done in the eighth month after garbhādhāna, on a pure day of the bright fortnight. After (having expressed) the formal declaration: “I shall perform viṣṇubali for the sake of protection of her [= my wife's] foetus,” (and) after having done the āghāra, at the time of invocation (of the god)

NVB 1, 142.15–16

uttarapraṇidhāv agnyādīdevān sarvadevān āvāhayāmītyantam āvāhya. ante oṃ bhūḥ puruṣādīn āvāhya

In the praṇidhi vessel standing at the northern side (of the fire), having invoked all the gods beginning with Agni, ending with the words “I invoke ...,” and having concluded by invoking Puruṣa and the rest (with the mantras beginning with): “*Oṃ bhūḥ, ...*”

NVB 1, 142.16–17 [nirvāpa, āghāra]

yathāvāhanaṃ tathaiva nirvāpam. svāhākāraṃ ca kṛtvaivam āghāraṃ hutvānte

As the invocation, in the same manner the bestowing (of the clarified butter should be done). In the end, after having recited the syllables *svāhā* and thus offered the āghāra into the fire,

NVB 1, 142.17– 20 [dvādaśanāmāvāhana]

'gneḥ pūrvasyām caturasram hastamātraṃ taṃḍulaiḥ sthaṅḍilam kṛtvā tadūrdhve prāgrān darbhān udagantam āstūrya teṣu darbhāsaneṣu pratyānimukhān keśavādidvādaśa-mūrtīn uttarāntaṃ nāmbaliḥ devaṃ viṣṇuṃ krameṇāvāhya

After having prepared a square platform from rice to the east of the fire, cubit-sized, and after having scattered on it the darbha grass blades so that their tips point towards the east, ending (the row) on the northern side (of the platform), he invokes on these darbha grass blades the god Viṣṇu, (in his) twelve forms of which Keśava is the first, (with man-

245 Quotations here are taken from the text printed in Telugu script.

tras containing) the (twelve) names, so that they face west, ending (the invocation) at the northern side (of the platform).

NVB 1, 142.20–21 [arcana]

puṣpagandhādyaiḥ ṣoḍaśopacāraiḥ tattannāmnā praṇavādinamontenārcayati

He worships (them) with the sixteen offerings beginning with flowers and incense, with (mantras consisting of) the respective names, preceded by *om* and followed by *namaḥ*.

NVB 1, 143.1 [vaiṣṇavasūkta / viṣṇusūkta]

ato devādi viṣṇor nu kādidvādaśāhutīr ājyena hūtvā

After having poured the twelve oblations with clarified butter into the fire (while chanting the mantras) beginning with *ato deva* ... (and) *viṣṇor nu kaṃ* ...

NVB 1, 143.1–5 [pāyasaniavedana]

payasā pakvaṃ annaṃ pāyasam ājyasamyuktaṃ ghr̥tāplutaṃ hūyata iti haviḥ pratyekaṃ pātre vikṣīpya devaṃ keśavādyam sarvaṃ viṣṇuṃ nivedya samarpya dvikarmako 'yaṃ dhātuh devāya nivedya ity arthaḥ tannānneti jātyekavacanaṃ.

Milk porridge is rice cooked in milk; mixed with clarified butter is overflowing with clarified butter; what is given into the fire is havis; (and) having placed for each into a vessel (a portion of) havis, namely pāyasam. i.e., rice cooked with milk, drenched with ghee, (this being called havis by derivation from the root hū, 'to offer into the fire') because it is offered into the fire, and after having dedicated (and) presented everything to the god Viṣṇu as Keśava and so on. This root [=ni-vid] takes two (accusative) objects, (therefore) the meaning is 'having offered to the god'; with the name of (each of) the various (deities) is (a case of the use of the) singular to refer (not to the entity but to several that together form) a class.

NVB 1, 143.5–6 [pāyasahoma]

dvādaśanāmbhiḥ ato devādibhir ājyamiśraṃ ghr̥tāplutaṃ pāyasam juhuyāt.

(While reciting mantras containing) the twelve names (and the mantras) starting with *ato deva* ..., he should offer the milk porridge, which is mixed with clarified butter, overflowing with clarified butter, into the fire.

NVB 1, 143.10–11 [vedamantra]

ṛgyajussāmātharvabhiḥ caturvedasambandhibhiḥ ādibhir mantraiḥ vaiṣṇavaiḥ sahasraśīrṣādyaiḥ devaṃ viṣṇuṃ samstūya stutvā samprārthya

After having praised, eulogised (and) petitioned the god Viṣṇu with the with the Ṛk, Yajus, Sāma, and Atharva, [i.e.] with the beginnings proper to (each of) the four Vedas, (and) with the vaiṣṇava mantras, beginning with the *sahasraśīrṣā* ...

NVB 1, 143.12–13 [praṇāma]

*namontaiḥ, namaśśabdaḥ ante yeṣāṃ tair nāmbhiḥ keśavāya nama ityādibhiḥ pratye-
kaṃ praṇamed danḍavan namaskuryāt.*

with *namaḥ* in the end (means): He should bow with the names followed by *namaḥ*, that is to say, he should do full prostration to each with (their) names followed by the word *namaḥ*, [i.e. with] *keśavāya namaḥ* (for the first) and so on.

NVB 1, 143.13–16 [pāyasapṛāśana]

*pāyasaśeṣaṃ niveditaṃ ca patnīṃ pṛāśayati bhojayati (sudarśanaḡāyatrīyā śaṃkhaḡāya-
tryā krameṇa patnīṃ pṛāśayatīi lokānusāriṇāṃ keśāṃcid abhiprāyo nāsmākam).*

and he feeds his wife with the remainder of the milk porridge that was offered (to the god); he makes her eat it. (He feeds his wife (while reciting) the sudarśana ḡāyatrī and śaṃkha ḡāyatrī one after the other, according to the understanding of some who follow the popular practice, but not according to us).

NVB 1, 143.16–17 [on the fire]

*ete garbhasaṃskārāḥ laukikāḡnau aupāsanāḡnau vā kartavyāḥ pitur aupāsanāḡnau iti
eke iti vacanāt.*

According to some, these life-cycle rituals for the foetus should be done in the worldly fire, or in the aupāsana fire, according to the statement: ‘Some say in the aupāsana fire maintained by the father [of the foetus].’

Viṣṇubali in the *Vaiḡhānasagr̥hyasūtradarpaṇa* (SD)

SD 55.18 [introduction]

athāṣṭama eva māsi viṣṇubaliḥ

Now in the eighth month (of pregnancy and) only (then) is viṣṇubali (to be performed).

SD 55.18–22 [puruṣāvāhana]

*pūrvavad vadhūm upaveśya agnim upasamādhāya sarvadevāvāhanānte oṃ bhūḥ puruṣā-
dīn āvāhya*

After having made his wife sit down as before, (and) after having kindled the fire, at the end of the invocation of all the gods, he invokes (Puruṣa with the mantras) “*Oṃ bhūḥ* (I invoke) Puruṣa ...”

SD 55.20–21 [nirvāpa] [ājyabhāga]

juṣṭākārasvāhākārān kṛtvā ājyabhāḡānte

after having recited the words *juṣṭā* and *svāhā* [as components of mantras, indicating the nirvāpa], at the end of the ājyabhāga rite,

SD 55.21–56.2 [dvādaśanāmāvāhana]

*agneḥ puratas sthaṇḍilam kalpayitvā uttarāntam prāgagrān darbhān āstīrya teṣu keśa-
vādidāmodarāntān udgantam āvāhya*

after having made a platform in front of the fire, spread the darbha grass blades on it with their tips pointing east and the last one in the northern direction, and after having invoked on them (the twelve forms of god) beginning with Keśava and ending with Dāmodara; the last one (invoked on the darbha grass blade) in the northern side,

SD 56.2–3 [snapana]

āpohiraṇyapavamānais snāpayitvā

after having bathed (the god) with (the mantras that begin with) *āpo*, *hiraṇya*, (and) *pavamāna*.

SD 56.3–4 [arcana]

praṇavādibhir namontais tattannāmabhir abhyarcya

after having worshipped (the god) with (mantras containing the twelve) respective names, beginning with *om* and ending with *namaḥ*.

SD 56.4–7 [vaiṣṇavasūkta / viṣṇusūkta]

*ato devā idam viṣṇus trīṇi padā viṣṇoḥ karmāṇi tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṃ tad viprāso viṣṇor
nu kaṃ tad asya priyaṃ pra tad viṣṇuḥ paro mātrayā vicakrame trir devaḥ pṛthvīm iti
dvādaśājyāhutīr hūtvā*

after having offered into the fire the twelve oblations of clarified butter (while reciting the mantras beginning with) *ato deva...*, *idam viṣṇuḥ ...*, *trīṇi padā ...*, *viṣṇoḥ karmāṇi ...*, *tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṃ ...*, *tad viprāso ...*, *viṣṇor nu kaṃ ...*, *tad asya priyaṃ ...*, *pra tad viṣṇuḥ ...*, *paro mātrayā ...*, *vicakrame ...*, (and) *trir devaḥ pṛthvīm ...*,

SD 56.7–8 [pāyasanivedana]

ghṛtamiśṛitam pāyasaṃ keśavādibhyo nivedya

after having offered the milk porridge mixed with clarified butter to the (twelve forms of the god, namely) Keśava etc.

SD 56.8–9 [pāyasaḥoma]

dvādaśanāmabhir ato devādyaiś ca pāyasaṃ hutvā

after having offered the milk porridge into the fire (while reciting mantras) with the twelve names and (the mantras beginning with) *ato deva ...*

SD 56.9–10 [vedamantra]

ṛgyajussāmātharvabhir mantrair vaiṣṇavair viṣṇusūktena samprārthya

With the (opening verses) of the Ṛg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharvaveda and with the vaiṣṇava mantras, (and) with the viṣṇusūkta,

SD 56.10–11 [praṇāma]

namoṃtair nārabhiḥ praṇamya

after having prostrated (while reciting the mantras containing the twelve) names, in which *namaḥ* comes at the end,

SD 56.11 [antahoma]

puṇyāham antahomaṃ hutvā

after having offered the puṇyāha (and) the antahoma,

SD 56.11–12 [pāyasapraśana]

śeṣaṃ pāyasaṃ patnīm praśayed

he should feed the remaining milk porridge to the wife.

SD 56.12–13 [on the fire]

garbhādhānādiviṣṇubalyantam aupāsanāgnau kartavyaṃ laukikāgnau iti eke.

(The offerings during the life-cycle rituals) beginning with garbhādhāna up to viṣṇubali should be commended into the aupāsana fire; (and) according to some, into the worldly fire.

Both Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s treatments of viṣṇubali are more detailed than that of the sūtra but remain very close to it. Thus in both [introductions] the eighth month is named as the right time, with NVB even adding the fortnight and day from the sīmanta- and puṃsavana sections of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. In these texts viṣṇubali clearly follows sīmanta: the sacrifice of clarified butter in the [introduction] of NVB is made into a fire which is apparently already burning, and SD prescribes in [puruṣāvāhana] that the sacrificial fuel should be commended into the fire. Furthermore in [dvādaśanāmāvāhana] both texts give details with regard to the position and sequence of the twelve “darbha seats” for the god on the platform, as well as the prescribed order for the invocation of the god. The ritual element of the “bathing” of the god in [snapana] seems to be the only rite which is described in more detail in the sūtra than in Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s works.

However, one element is introduced by Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin, namely the wording of the formal declaration (*saṃkalpa*). According to NVB [introduction] the officiator [= father of the unborn child] should say: “I perform viṣṇubali for the sake of protection of her [= my wife’s] foetus.” Protection of the unborn child is thereby specified as purpose of this life-cycle ritual. This clearly differs from the connection which the other commentator, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, establishes between viṣṇubali, the idea of a “prenatal vaiṣṇava nature” (*garbhavaiṣṇavatva*),

and the prenatal “taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa” (see below 2.2.3–6). Moreover, while in other texts the feeding of the wife with the remainder of the milk porridge in [pāyasapṛāśana] develops into the central moment of the ritual, it is precisely this rite which Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin in his SD has follow only *after* the ritually marked end of viṣṇubali. The final sacrifice called antahoma marks the end of the ritual, and the god is dismissed.²⁴⁶ By placing [pāyasapṛāśana] after [antahoma] Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin indicates that the feeding of the wife is a rather minor event. It might well be that he instituted this demarcation quite carefully, for in NVB [pāyasapṛāśana] he refers to it in the following remark which is placed in parentheses, probably by the editor:²⁴⁷ “He feeds his wife [while reciting] the sudarśana gāyatrī and śaṅkha gāyatrī one after the other, according to the understanding of some who follow the popular practice, but not according to us” The mantras sudarśana gāyatrī and śaṅkha gāyatrī are directed to the disk (*cakra*) and conch (*śaṅkha*). The custom described foreshadows the marking of the milk porridge with the disk and conch before it is administered to the wife, as described in the *Ānandasamhitā* and in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*. There it is clearly stated that the milk porridge is branded with the heated metal symbols of disk and conch while the two so-called sudarśana mantras and the two pāñcajanya mantras are recited. Whether the custom mentioned by Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin represents an early stage or a regional variant of the marking of the milk porridge cannot be decided.²⁴⁸ It is, however, crucial that Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin explicitly distances himself from this custom (“... but not according to us”). It may well be that Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin represented a rather purist current among the Vaikhānasas, which opposed the growing Śrīvaiṣṇava influence on the Vaikhānasa tradition and which therefore also set itself against the adoption and integration of ritual elements which were felt to be foreign to that tradition.

246 In other sūtra traditions this part of the ritual is called ucchiṣṭahoma or sviṣṭakṛddhoma. On the factors which demarcate the ritual, such as saṅkalpa at the start and antahoma or visarjana (the “dismissal” of the god) as the endpoint for ritual actions see Michaels 2005.

247 The editor Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya does not explain why the sentence is placed in parentheses. It might also be that this sentence is itself a remark of the editor. I regard this, however, as improbable, for Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya himself was a vehement advocate of the idea of the prenatal vaiṣṇava nature of the Vaikhānasas (see 1.3) and his own father speaks similarly of the branding of the milk porridge with the heated symbols of the cakra and śaṅkha (see 2.2.4.7).

248 It might well be that Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin did not live under direct Śrīvaiṣṇava influence. In some places (especially in southern Tamil Nadu) even nowadays disk and conch are either drawn with a darbha blade on the milk porridge, or the sudarśana and pāñcajanya mantras are spoken over the milk porridge before it is administered to the pregnant woman.

2.2.2.3 Sundararāja's *Prayogavṛtti* (SR-vṛtti)²⁴⁹

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.15) [introduction]

viṣṇubalāv api sakālotpanne ahani

(When) the right time and day comes, during the (performance of) viṣṇubali as well,

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.16) [puruṣāvāhana]

āghārādipariṣecanānte praṇidhāv uttare oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam ityādināvāhya

at the end of the sprinkling of the āghāra etc., after having invoked (the god Puruṣa) in the praṇidhi pot on the northern side (of the fire) with (the mantras) “*Oṃ bhūḥ* (I invoke) Puruṣa ...” etc.

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.17) [nirvāpa, āghāra]

nirvāpānte tais tair ājyaṃ svāhā taṃ hutvā

At the end of the bestowing [clarified butter, and] after having offered clarified butter into the fire with the respective [mantras ending with] *svāhā*,

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.17–21) [dvādaśanāmāvāhana]

agneḥ purato vrīhibhis taṇḍulair vā kṛte sthaṇḍile kūrcaṃ uttarāgram nidhāyottaramukhaḥ prāṇān āyamyā gandhākṣatapuṣpayutair adbhiḥ praṇidhim āpūrya tatpraṇidhijale bhagavantaṃ dhyātvā tasmāt sthaṇḍile tajjalaṃ pavitreṇādāya srāvāyan dvādaśamūrtin āvāhayet. keśavam āvāhayāmūtyādi. asti ced grhārcābimbam agneḥ pūrvato viṣṭare prānimukhaṃ sthāpyārcayen nāmamantraih

after making the platform with vrīhi or taṇḍula rice in front of the fire, (and) after having placed the kūrca bundle[s] on it in such a way that the tips are in the northern direction, and after having restrained his breath while facing the northern direction, he fills the praṇidhi pot with water containing scent, unbroken rice grain and flowers. After having meditated upon the Adorable One in the water of that praṇidhi pot, and while pouring the water from it on the sthaṇḍila after taking it with a pavitra, he should invoke the twelve forms of the god (with the mantras:) “I invoke Keśava” and so on. If there is an idol wor-

249 The text is mentioned by Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya both in the introduction to the Telugu edition of the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* (p. 2) and in the foreword to the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* (p. iv). Caland mentions a copy of the Telugu manuscript in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library in Madras (Ms. No. 1610; Triennial Catalogue 2.1, Sanskrit C, p. 2272) in the edition of the *Vaikhānasaśmṛtīsūtra*. According to Eggers (1929: 18) the *Vaikhānasaśmṛtīmīmāṃsā* of Śiṅgārācārya (Ducr.C.Ms.Nr. 1608b) also mentions the *Grhyaprayogavṛtti* of Sundararāja. By his own report, Paṇḍit A. G. Krishnamacharyulu (Narsapur, West Godāvārī District, Andhra Pradesh) is likewise in possession of a manuscript of this text. I did not consult the manuscripts, therefore I am not aware of any indication of the text's or even the manuscripts' dates. The text given here is quoted in Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya's commentary on the *Anandasamhitā* (ĀS [1998] 95.15–27).

shipped in the house, then after placing it on spread darbha grass in front of the fire, facing western direction, he should worship it with the mantras of the (twelve) names (of the god) [i.e. I.e. the twelve mantras each consisting of one of the twelve names in the dative case followed by *namah*].

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.21–22) [snapana]

pādyādināpohiraṇyapavamānais snānam

(He should perform) the bathing (of the deities) with water for washing feet etc., and with (the mantras beginning with) *āpo ...*, *hiranya ...*, (and) *pavamāna ...*,

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.22) [arcana]

annadānācamanakādyantāni (ca) nāmnāivārcayet.

and he should worship (the god) with (mantras containing the twelve) names (using) food, water for rinsing the mouth etc. at the end,

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.22–23) [vaiṣṇavasūkta]

athāto devādyair vaiṣṇavaiṣ ṣaḍbhiṣ cājyaṃ hūtvā

after having now offered the clarified butter into the fire while (reciting) the six vaiṣṇava mantras, beginning with *ato deva...*,

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.23) [pāyasanivedana]

devasya saghṛtaṃ pāyasaṃ nivedayati.

He offers to the god milk porridge with clarified butter.

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.23–24) [pāyasaḥoma]

athāgnau saghṛtapāyasaṃ dvādaśanāmabhir ato devādibhir viṣṇor nu kādibhiṣ ca juhōti.

Then he offers milk porridge with clarified butter into the fire, (while reciting the mantras containing) the twelve names and (the mantras) beginning with *ato deva ...* and (the mantras) beginning with *viṣṇor nu kaṃ ...*

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.24–25) [arcana]

punar devasya pānīyācamanatāmbūlādīni datvā puruṣasūktena

Again, after giving the god drinking water, water for rinsing the mouth, betelnut etc., (while reciting) the puruṣasūkta,

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.25–26) [praṇāma]

dvādaśanāmabhir namaskāraṃ kṛtvā patnīm api praṇāmayet.

after having bowed while reciting the (mantras containing) the twelve names, he makes his wife bow as well.

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.26–27) [pūṇyāha / antahoma]

puṇyāham antahomaṃ ca kurvīta, dvādaśāvarān brāhmaṇān bhojayitvā,

He should perform the puṇyāha and antahoma rituals. After feeding twelve good Brah-
mans,²⁵⁰

SR-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 95.27) [pāyasaprāśana]

viṣṇuniveditaśeṣaṃ pāyasaṃ patnīm prāśayitvā.

he should feed the wife with the rest of the milk porridge offered to Viṣṇu.

Sundararāja in his *Prayogavṛtti* gives more details and differs slightly from Nṛ-
siṃha Vājapeyin on the placement of the twelve forms of the god in [dvādaśanā-
māvāhana]. Moreover, here a domestic image (if available) is mentioned in the
ritual prescriptions and more details are given regarding the worship of the
twelve forms of Viṣṇu in [snapana] and [arcana]. Sundararāja clearly agrees
with the *Sūtradarpaṇa*'s [pāyasaprāśana] on one decisive point, namely the
feeding of the wife outside the actual ritual frame, after the [antahoma] and even
after the concluding feeding of the “good Brahmins.”²⁵¹

2.2.2.4 Vasantayājīn's Vṛtti (VY-vṛtti)²⁵²

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 96.11–15) [introduction] [purpose of the performance]

*atha viṣṇubalir iti. viśeṣakālanirdeśābhāvād anantaravād api atra ca garbhādhānādy-
aṣṭame māsi garbharakṣārthaṃ viṣṇubalir iti. tasmād garbhādhānādyāṣṭame māsi pūr-
vedyur abhyudayaśrāddhaṃ kṛtvā puṇye nakṣatre sīmantasyānte tantrayitvā viṣṇubaliṃ*

250 During nārāyaṇabali twelve Brahmins are invited who then represent the twelve forms
of Viṣṇu (see Krick 1977: 81ff.).

251 This closeness of Sundararāja's presentation to that of Narasiṃha Vājapeyin might indica-
te that the author of this passage is Sundarayājīn Paramaikāntin (Sundararājaka Bhaṭṭārya
/ Sundararājiṣendra / Sundararājācārya; see Appendix 1) who is named in three gurupa-
ramparās after Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin and Bhāskara Bhaṭṭa, and before Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita.

252 Vasantayājīn's *Vṛtti* is mentioned by Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya in his introduction to the
Telugu edition of the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* (p. 2) and in the foreword to the *Tātpar-
yacintāmaṇi* (p. iv). A *Vaikhānasasaṃhitāvyaḥkhyāna* is cited in the India Office
Library Catalogue as a work of Vasantayājīn. The “Censure of the Pāñcarātra” (*Pāñca-
rātranirākāra*; SVUOI: 4965/2, 4984) is likewise ascribed to one Vasantayājīn. Accord-
ing to Eggers (1929: 18), this text was used by Śīngarācārya. It is however unlikely that
one and the same person is in question here, for the author of the vṛtti does not discuss
pañcasamskāra at all in connection with viṣṇubali.

*kuryāt. atra bodhāyanavacanam yathaitad dhṛto baliharanam viṣṇave 'ṣtame māse sap-
tamyām dvādaśyām rohiṇyām śrāvaṇe veti.*²⁵³

(The section beginning with) “Now (begins) viṣṇubali”: in the absence of the direction for a particular time (for its performance in the sūtra), and also because it is (to be performed) immediately after (sīmantonayana), and because here it is stated: “in the eighth month after garbhādhāna,” (he should perform) “viṣṇubali for the sake of the protection of the embryo in the eighth month after garbhādhāna etc.” After having performed the abhyudayaśrāddha²⁵⁴ on the previous day, in an auspicious lunar mansion, at the end of sīmanta, he should perform viṣṇubali as a *tantram*.²⁵⁵ Bodhāyana has taught: “This namely is if offered (into the fire); it is the offering of bali to Viṣṇu. (It is to be performed) in the eighth month, during the seventh or twelfth day in the rohiṇī or śrāvaṇa lunar mansion.”

VY-ṛtti (ĀS [1998] 96.15–17) [puruṣāvāhana] [āghāra]

*uttarapraṇidhāv agnyādīn ityādi? nirvāpyāghāram hutvetyantam. āghārahomakāle tad-
uttarapraṇidhau devān agnyādisarvadevān āvāhya oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam ityādyaiś caturbhir
viṣṇum api āvāhya*

(Now the explanation of the sūtra-passage) beginning with “(invoking the gods with) Agni as first in the praṇidhi pot, placed north (of the fire)” and ending with “after having bestowed and then offered the clarified butter into the fire.” At the time of the āghāra-homa, after having invoked all the gods, beginning with Agni, in that praṇidhi pot placed north of this fire, and also having invoked Viṣṇu through the four (mantras) beginning with: “*Oṃ bhūḥ* (I invoke) Puruṣa ...”

VY-ṛtti (ĀS [1998] 96.18–21) [nirvāpa, āghāra]

*tathājyaṃ nirvāpya āhutiś (hutvā) caruṇā homāntam āghāram hutvātha sīmantonayana-
nānamtaram tad eva vyāntahomam? kṛtvādītenvamamsthā ityādyair antahpariṣekam ca
kṛtvā dvau ca tantrayitvā punar adītenumanyasvetyādyair mantrair ādipariṣekam ca kr-
tvā viṣṇubaliṃ kuryāt.*

253 This is an abbreviated quotation of BaudhGrS 1.11: *yathaitad dhute baliharanam. [...]
viṣṇave balir aṣtame māsi pūrvapakṣasya saptamyām dvādaśyām rohiṇyām śroṇāyām
vā* “This namely is if offered (into the fire); it is the offering of bali ... (viṣṇubali is) the
offering for Viṣṇu. (It is to be performed) in the eighth month, on the seventh or twelfth
(day) of the bright half of the month, during the rohiṇī- or śrāvaṇa (?) lunar mansion.”

254 Abhyudayaśrāddha is another term for nāndimukha, see 2.2.

255 Professor Sanderson informs me that in Mīmāṃsaka technical language a *tantram* is a
subsidiary action (*aṅgam*) that needs to be done only once and thereafter serves all principal
actions (*pradhānam*). This is probably the sense of *tantrayitvā* here. The idea is that
when he begins the viṣṇubali he does not need to repeat the subsidiary or subsidiaries that
were performed at the beginning, i.e. before the sīmanta, but can go straight on to the viṣ-
ṇubali, the initial performance of the *tantram* serving this principal action too. A subsidia-
ry (*aṅgam*) is an action necessary to the success of the principal (*pradhānam*).

Likewise, having bestowed the clarified butter, having offered the oblations into the fire, he performs the end of the homa, the āghāra, with the caru oblation. Now, immediately after śimantonnayana, he performs the anthoma for it, and after having performed in between the sprinkling (of water around the fire) with (the mantras) beginning with “Aditi, you gave your consent! ...,” and having provided for the two [rituals as separate acts?], he again performs the sprinkling of water (around the fire) in the beginning (while reciting the mantras) beginning with “Aditi! Give your consent! ...” (Now) he should perform viṣṇubali.

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 96.21–22) [puruṣāvāhana]

uttarapraṇidhāv oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam ityādyaiś caturbhir viṣṇum āvāhayāmūti āvāhy[a]

After having invoked Viṣṇu in the praṇidhi pot, placed north (of the fire), through the four (mantras) beginning with *oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam* ..., (and ending with) “... I invoke”

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 96.22) [nirvāpa, āghāra]

ājyaṃ nirvāpya caturājyāhutīr hutvā,

After having bestowed the clarified butter and having offered into the fire four offerings of clarified butter,

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 96.22–97.6) [dvādaśanāmāvāhana]

agneḥ pūrvasyām darbhāsana iti ḡrḥārcanārthaṃ tad viṣṇor bimbaṃ yađi syād agneḥ pūrvasyām viṣṭare sādhipāse darbhāsane pratyaṃmukhaṃ tad bimbaṃ sthāpayitvā bim-bābhāve svarṇasakalaṃ kūrcam vā nidhāya tasmin kūrcāḡsatādbhiḥ praṇidhim āpūrya tadapsu taṃ devaṃ sakalaṃ dhyātvā kūrcā vādbhir dvādaśanāmabhir devaṃ viṣṇum āvāhya

(Now the explanation of the passage) ‘on the darbha grass seat, placed in front of the fire’: if an idol of Viṣṇu for worshipping in the home is available, then, after having placed this idol on a scented darbha grass seat in front of the fire, with the face (of the idol) in westward direction; or in the absence of an idol, after having placed on (the grass spread) either a piece of gold or a kūrcā bundle, (and) after filling the praṇidhi pot with water, with a kūrcā bundle and with unbroken rice grains, and having visualized the deity in his manifest form in the water of that (pot) or on the kūrcā, (and) having summoned the god Viṣṇu with water using the twelve names

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.6–8) [snapana]

snāpayitvā tannāmnārcayati. āpo hi ṣṭhādyair hiraṇyavarṇādyaiḥ pavamānādyaiś ca bimbaṃ snāpayitvā tadabhāve snānam iti prokṣya

(Then follows): “after having bathed (the god), he worships him by reciting (the mantras containing) the respective names.” After having bathed the idol (while reciting the mantras) beginning with *āpo hi ṣṭhā* ..., *hiraṇyavarṇa* ..., (and) *pavamāna* ..., or, in the absence (of an idol), having sprinkled water (with a kūrcā bundle) while reciting *snānam*,

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.8–9) [arcana]

*dvādaśanāmabhiḥ pādyācamanasnānāplotavastrottariyābharanāyajñopavītācamanaṣ-
pagandhadhūpadīpārghyācamanaṣ arcayati.*

He worships (the god by reciting the mantras containing) his twelve names, with water for washing the feet, water for rinsing the mouth, bath, cloth, garment, upper garment, ornaments, the sacred thread, water for rinsing the mouth, flowers, scent, incense, light, arghya water, and with water for rinsing the mouth,

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.9–10) [vaiṣṇavasūkta / viṣṇusūkta]

*dvādaśāhutīr ājyena hutveti. ato devādyair viṣṇor nu kādyaiḥ ṣaḍbhiḥ ca dvādaśamant-
rair juhvājyena hutvā*

(Now the explanation of the passage) ‘after having offered into the fire the twelve clarified butter offerings’: after having offered the clarified butter offering into the fire with the juhū ladle (while reciting the mantras) beginning with *ato deva ...* and the six (mantras) beginning with *viṣṇor nu kaṃ ...*, (and the) twelve mantras.

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.10–12) [pāyasanivedana]

*pāyasam ājyena hutvā pāyasaṃ havir dvādaśanāmabhir devaṃ nivedya pānīyācamana-
mukhavāsaṃ dadyāt,*

(The passage) “After having offered the milk porridge with clarified butter into the fire” (means): after having offered to the god the milk porridge as oblation (while reciting the mantras containing) the twelve names, he should give drinking water, water for rinsing the mouth, and mouth-perfume.

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.12–13) [pāyasaḥoma]

*ājyamiśraṃ pāyasaṃ juhuyād iti. keśavādyair dvādaśanāmabhir viṣṇor nu kādyair man-
traiḥ ca sājyaṃ śeṣaṃ pāyasaṃ hastena juhuyāt.*

(The explanation of the passage) “He should offer into the fire milk porridge mixed with clarified butter”: he should offer into the fire with his hand [i.e. rather than with the juhū ladle] that leftover milk porridge mixed with clarified butter, (while reciting the mantras containing) the twelve names (and) the mantras beginning with *viṣṇor nu kaṃ....*

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.13–14) [praṇāma]

namontair dvādaśanāmabhir praṇāmān kṛtvā

after having made [twelve?] bows while reciting the (mantras that have) *namaḥ* as their end (and that contain) the twelve names

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.14) [pāyasaḥprāśana]

tac cheṣaṃ pāyasaṃ patnīm bhōjayati.

he gives the remainder of that milk porridge his wife to eat.

VY-vṛtti (ĀS [1998] 97.14–15) [outcome of the performance]

tasyāṃ vidvān āyuṣyabalārogyayuk chrīmānt satputro jāyata iti.

To her a wise, long-lived, strong, healthy, wealthy and good son will be born.

Vasantayājīn's *Vṛtti* has the character of a sūtra commentary rather than of a ritual handbook. Most sections begin with a short quotation or reference to the corresponding passages in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. In the [introduction] Vasantayājīn also quotes the *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* on the prescribed moment for performing viṣṇubali. In this respect it resembles the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* (see below, 2.2.3). In the section on [pāyasahoma] we find another agreement with Bodhāyana: here, unlike the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, only the recitation of the six mantras of the viṣṇusūkta, but not the vaiṣṇavasūkta is prescribed. In the final section on section the [outcome of the performance] Vasantayājīn follows the Bodhāyana tradition as well. There the birth of a "wise, long-lived, strong, healthy, wealthy and good son" is identified as the desired effect of viṣṇubali is, whereas in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* no indication of the 'purpose' of this life cycle ritual is given. Vasantayājīn relies *verbatim* on Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyīn's bhāṣya for the "formal declaration" which expresses another desired [outcome of the performance]: viṣṇubali serves to protect the foetus. Vasantayājīn, like Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, explicitly states that viṣṇubali follows immediately after sīmanta, but goes beyond it in that he comments in detail on the ritual marking of the boundary between sīmanta and viṣṇubali in his section on [nirvāpa, āghāra]. In contrast to the texts discussed up to this point, Vasantayājīn suggests in [dvādaśanāmāvāhana] that Viṣṇu's domestic image is to be used *instead* of the twelve darbha grass seats to invoke Viṣṇu's twelve forms.

Vasantayājīn's account strongly relies on Bodhāyana and closely resembles Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's presentation of viṣṇubali in his *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*. However, unlike Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, here the rite [pāyasaprāśana], the feeding of the milk porridge to the wife, is not further developed and the author does not mention the idea of garbhavaiṣṇavatva.

2.2.3 Garbhavaiṣṇavatva and viṣṇubali in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*

In contrast to the passages dealt with so far, the further extant texts on viṣṇubali speak of a "prenatal (Śrī)vaiṣṇava nature" (*garbhavaiṣṇavatva*, *garbhasya śrī-vaiṣṇavatva*) of the Vaikhānasas which is realised through the performance of the saṃskāra viṣṇubali. This concept invariably goes hand in hand with a specific rite, namely a branding or marking of the milk porridge, which the wife re-

ceives to eat after it has been offered to Viṣṇu. The first text to introduce this concept is Śrīnivāsa Dikṣita's sūtra-commentary *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* (TPC).²⁵⁶

TPC 434.3–8 [introduction] [outcome of the performance]

athetyādi. aṭha anantaram aṣṭame māsi viṣṇubaliḥ. atra bodhāyanaḥ: "yathaitad dhuto baliharaṇam. viṣṇave balir aṣṭame māsi pūrvapakṣasya saptamyām dvādaśyām rohinīyām śronāyām vā. iti. "vaiṣṇavo hy eṣa māso vijñāyate viṣṇur garbhasya devatā." iti. uk-tadināt pūrvedyuh nāndīmukhaṃ kṛtvā "asyā garbhapuṣṭyartham garbhasya śrīvaiṣṇa-vatvasiddhyartham ca viṣṇubalikarmaṇā saṃskariṣyāmi" iti saṃkalpya āghāraṃ hūtvā, āvāhanakāle.

(The explanation of the passage) beginning with "now": now, immediately after (sīman-ta), in the eighth month (of pregnancy), viṣṇubali (is performed). Here says Bodhāyana: "This offering to Viṣṇu among other offerings. The offering to Viṣṇu is (performed) in the eighth month, on the seventh or twelfth (day) of the bright half of the month, during the rohinī- or śravaṇa(?) lunar mansion" (and) "This month is known as belonging to Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is the deity of the foetus." After having performed (the rite) nāndīmukha a day before the above mentioned day, he formally declares: "... for the sake of the full development of this foetus of hers [= my wife], and for the sake of attaining the Śrīvaiṣṇava characteristics of the foetus, I make (the foetus) perfect through the viṣṇubali ritual." After having performed the āghāra, during the time of invocation,

TPC 2 434.16–17 [puruṣāvāhana]

uttaretyādi. devaṃ viṣṇuṃ. viṣṇubalikarmatvāt devaṃ viṣṇuṃ ity uktam.

(Now the explanation of the passage) beginning with "in northern direction ...". (He invokes) the god Viṣṇu. Because it is the viṣṇubali ritual, "the god Viṣṇu" is mentioned.

TPC 434.17 [snapana]

snāpayitvā.

After having bathed (the god).

TPC 434.17–19 [arcana]

tataḥ vāstrottariṣyopavītādīni dadyāt.

grhya: "hrdayād arkabiṃbād vā dhyātvāvāhya surūpiṇam / pīṭhe vā taṃḍule vātha kuśākūrce samarcayet //" iti.

Afterwards he should offer clothes, upper garments, the sacred thread etc.

The (*Vaikhānasa*)*grhya*(*pariśiṣṭasūtra*) says: "After having invoked the one who has beautiful form from his heart or the orb of the sun, after having visualized him (there), he should worship him either on a pedestal, or on rice grains, or on the bundle of kuśa grass."

256 TPC 434.1–435.12.

TPC 435.3–4 [vedamantra]

rgyajussāmetyādi. mantraiḥ vaiṣṇavaiḥ. puruṣasūktasya cāturvedikatvāt puruṣasūktena ca stotraṃ kṛtvā

(Explanation of the passage) beginning with “Rg-, Yajur-, Sāma- ...” (and) “with the vaiṣṇava mantras....” Because the puruṣasūkta is contained in the four Vedas, after having praised (the god) with the puruṣasūkta,

TPC 435.4–5 [praṇāma]

“keśavāya nāmaḥ” ityādyaiḥ namo ’ntaiḥ dvādaśanāmabhiḥ dvādaśakṛtvaḥ praṇāmya patnīṃ ca praṇāmaṃ kārayitvā

(With the mantras) “Salutation to Keśava” and so on: having bowed twelve times with (mantras containing) the twelve names and *namaḥ* in the end, he makes his wife (also) to bow (to the god),

TPC 435.5–6 [cakraśaṅkhapūjā, cakraśaṅkhatāpāna]

pūjitaḥ sudarśanapāñcajanyaḥ tasminn agnau pratāpya tābhyāṃ prahutaśeṣe pāyase ’nkayitvā

After he worshipped the disk and conch, having them then heated in that fire, he marks with them the remainder of the offered milk porridge.

TPC 435.6 [pāyasaprasāna]

pāyasaśeṣaṃ patnīm praśayati.

He gives the remainder of the milk porridge to his wife to eat.

TPC 12 435.7–12 [outcome of the performance]

sīmantena sahaiva kṛte viṣṇubalau saṃkalpya pariśtīrya pariṣicya uttaraprañidhau “oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam” ity ādinā āvāhya nirvāpaṃ kṛtvā āghārau srāvya hutvā yathākramaṃ homaḥ puruṣādibhyaḥ. śeṣaṃ pūrvavat kuryāt.

yājñavalkya: “dauhrdasyāpradānena garbho doṣam avāpnuyāt / vairūpyaṃ maraṇaṃ vāpi tasmāt kāryaṃ priyaṃ striyāḥ //” [=Yājñavalkyasmṛti 3.79] iti saṃkocenaśadhādika[ḥ].

When viṣṇubali is performed together with sīmanta, (the sequence of events is:) the formal declaration, scattering (the darbha grass blades around the fire place), sprinkling the water (around the fire place), invoking (the god) in the prañidhi pot standing north (of the fire) with (the mantras) beginning with *oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam ...*, bestowing (the clarified butter to the god), pouring the two āghāras, offering into the fire, (namely) the offering into the fire for Puruṣa and so on, in the right order. He should do the rest as before.

Yājñavalkya says: “As a result of not giving (her) whatever she craves during pregnancy, the foetus gets damaged, deformed or can even die. Therefore, that which is dear to the woman should be done.” This, in short, is the medicine etc.

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's statements on viṣṇubali in his *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* are rather short. Like Vasantayājīn, he explicitly recognizes Bodhāyana as an authority when in the [introduction] he relies on the *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* for the correct moment for viṣṇubali which is not stated in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. A further similarity to Vasantayājīn in content is also apparent in the section on [arcana]. Here Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita quotes the *Vaikhānasagrhyapariśiṣṭasūtra*, stating that the god's image can be set up for worship on a pedestal, on rice grains, or on a bundle of kuśa grass. However, the text does not mention whether the worship of Viṣṇu in his twelve forms on the darbha grass seats is substituted by the worship of the domestic image, as Vasantayājīn indicates. There is a further agreement between the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* and Vasantayājīn's text on viṣṇubali: both describe how the procedure changes when sīmanta and viṣṇubali are performed together.

In contrast to the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, where no purpose of viṣṇubali is set out, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita twice refers to the [outcome of the performance]. According to a verse quoted from the *Yājñavalkyadharmasāstra*, viṣṇubali is said to avert dangers from the foetus, and the saṃkalpa given in the [introduction] names as another aim that it aids the "flourishing" of the foetus. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita connects this with the attainment of a "Śrīvaiṣṇava nature" of the unborn child (*garbhasya śrīvaiṣṇavatvasiddhyartham*), also mentioned in the saṃkalpa. Along with this "prenatal Śrīvaiṣṇava nature" he thus introduces with a few brief words a new element into the viṣṇubali ritual, namely [cakrasaṅkhapūjā and cakrasaṅkhapratāpana]: disk (*cakra*) and conch (*śaṅkha*) are worshipped and heated in the fire. The milk porridge is then marked with these, and only then given to the wife to eat.

2.2.4 Viṣṇubali and pañcasamṣkāra

The connection Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita establishes in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* between the idea of garbhavaiṣṇavatva and the branding of the milk porridge clearly echoes the element of branding or marking which is a component part of an initiation of other vaiṣṇava groups: a branding is the first element of the so-called "five saṃskāras" (*pañcasamṣkāra*).

2.2.4.1 Pañcasamṣkāra and branding among Pāñcarātrins and Śrīvaiṣṇavas

An initiation called pañcasamṣkāra seems to have served as a conversion or initiatory ritual into the vaiṣṇava community from about the ninth century CE.²⁵⁷ It ideally consists of the following five rites:²⁵⁸ (1) branding of the upper arms of those to be initiated (*tāpasamṣkāra*) with heated metal symbols of two weapons of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, namely disk (*cakra*) and conch (*śaṅkha*),²⁵⁹ (2) applying the so-called ūrdhvaṇḍra marks on twelve places on the body (*puṇḍrasamṣkāra*),²⁶⁰ (3) receiving a vaiṣṇava name (*nāmasamṣkāra*),²⁶¹ (4) instruction in particular vaiṣṇava mantras (*mantrasamṣkāra*),²⁶² and (5) initiation into vaiṣṇava ri-

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- 257 Varadachari (1982: 418ff.) states that pañcasamṣkāra could already have been in use from around 700 CE. Raman sees pañcasamṣkāra as “marker of vaiṣṇava identity” at least since the 9th century CE (2005: 92, and note 2). Both scholars refer here to Periyālvār, *Tirupal-lāṅṅu*, verse 7. See also Jagadeesan 1989a: 120, and Jagannathan 1994: 29.
- 258 The procedure referred to here is apparently only one of many possibilities. On diverse variants in contemporary performances, see Rangachari (1931: 34ff.), Gnanambal (1971: 130ff.), and Raman 2005.
- 259 Varadachari (1982: 416) refers to certain vaiṣṇava schools that mark the upper arms not by branding but by applying sandal paste (see also Ramachandra Rao 1990: 141). This mode of marking the body with Viṣṇu’s weapons was also pointed out to me in Tirunelveli as practiced daily by Mādhvas. However, I was not able to follow this issue up for the present work.
- 260 The first puṇḍra is painted on the forehead. Smith/Vekatachari (1980: 60) say that these puṇḍras are worn for the first time in the course of pañcasamṣkāra. Thereafter they should be self-applied daily. A number of texts deal with the right method of application. They unanimously state that the twelve forms of Viṣṇu (Keśava to Dāmodara) are invoked during application (see Rangachari 1931: 35). For two examples of contemporary methods of applying these ūrdhvaṇḍras in the course of female initiation as part of pañcasamṣkāra, see Raman 2005 (94 and 99). Today, it seems, a single ūrdhvaṇḍra is applied to a male child’s forehead the first time after his first birthday, when the ritual called āyushoma is performed. The full set of twelve ūrdhvaṇḍras, however, is worn only during and after pañcasamṣkāra.
- 261 This rite is nowadays omitted in vaiṣṇava families because the initiants usually already have a vaiṣṇava name.
- 262 Nowadays the following three mantras are transmitted to a Śrīvaiṣṇava in the course of pañcasamṣkāra: 1) the tirumantra (also called mūlamantra or aṣṭākṣara): *oṃ namo nārāyaṇāya*, 2) the dvaya mantra: *śrīmannārāyaṇācaraṇau śaraṇam prapadye; śrīmate nārāyaṇāya namaḥ*, and 3) the caramaśloka (BhGī 18.66): *sarvadharmān pratityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja; aham tvā sarvaṇḍraḥ mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ* (see Mumme 1987b: 2f.). Mumme (1987b: 23ff.) reports that in addition two further so-called caramaślokas are taught today in the course of pañcasamṣkāra, namely the rāmāyaṇa

tual practice (*yāgasamṣkāra*), which occasionally takes place in connection with the transfer of a small cult image (*viṅraha*). Among these, the element of branding is seen as of special importance, for as *pars pro toto* it can stand for the whole initiation.²⁶³

How this initiation came into being has not yet been explored sufficiently. Colas (1995a: 121f.) suggests that the model of an earlier Pāñcarātra initiation could have contributed significantly to the formation of pañcasamṣkāra.²⁶⁴ One important congruence of the initiations prescribed in the early Pāñcarātrasamhitās and pañcasamṣkāra is that everybody, irrespective of caste / varṇa and gender, is eligible to be initiated.²⁶⁵ It seems that this practice went out of use and was then reinforced by Rāmānuja who made pañcasamṣkāra the initiation into Śrīvaiṣṇavism in the 11th/12th century.²⁶⁶ While in the beginning pañcasamṣkāra conferred eligibility to learn the vaiṣṇava doctrine and mantras, it later also included the acceptance of the philosophical doctrine of Viśiṣṭādvaita, with a general lifestyle based upon this doctrine. Today pañcasamṣkāra is seen as absolu-

caramaśloka and the varāha caramaśloka. This, however, seems not to be a general rule but based on local traditions.

- 263 Other terms used frequently for this branding are *taptamudrā*, *taptacakrāṅkana*, *tāpasamṣkāra*, *bahistāpa* etc. Pañcasamṣkāra is dealt with in separate Śrīvaiṣṇava treatises such as *Saccarītrarakṣā* of Vedāntadeśika, *Siddhāntacandrikā* of Paravastu Vedāntācārya, and the anonymous *Sudarśanamīmāṃsā*. The texts *Taptamūdrāṅkaṇapramāṇasamgraha* of Campakeś(av)ācārya and the anonymous texts *Pañcasamṣkāraṅkaḷ*, *Pañcasamṣkāravīdhī* and *Pañcasamṣkāraviṣayasaṃgraha* defend the practice of branding. These works were in turn the subject of commentaries in Maṇipravāla and Sanskrit (see Varadachari 1975: 461ff.).
- 264 In the Pāñcarātrasamhitās various initiations are described, and the accounts given vary from text to text, at times considerably. One cannot therefore speak of a uniform Pāñcarātra initiation. Instead, the individual texts require separate consideration, based on detailed in-depth studies. For an overview see the 1979 study by Sanjukta Gupta. Apart from pañcasamṣkāra many more philosophical and ritual motifs of the Pāñcarātrasamhitās were adopted by the Śrīvaiṣṇavas (see Colas 1995a: 121).
- 265 Krick (1977: 77) remarks that cult of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu evidently always had been remarkably inclusive. Thus, for example SāvataS 16.17–22; 19.42–45 states that everybody can receive initiation. The later Pāñcarātrasamhitās, however, distinguish clearly between an initiation that confers the right to perform ritual for one's own sake (*svārtha/ātmārtha*), and the initiation that confers eligibility to perform rituals for others (*parārtha*). The second type is not open for all and even the first type never extended beyond "pure" Sūdras. See also Hüsken 2009.
- 266 See Jagannathan 1994: 175. See also Raman (2007) on the post-Rāmānuja hagiographic accounts of pañcasamṣkāra which rather depict it as an initiation or conversion ritual of sorts of a male elite. However, as she rightly cautions, the hagiographic accounts are not to be taken literally, but rather depict an "ideal" reality.

tely necessary to be considered a Śrīvaiṣṇava, and to perform the vaiṣṇava rituals.²⁶⁷

Although Pāñcarātrins in the beginning not necessarily considered themselves Śrīvaiṣṇavas, Rāmānuja's powerful influence upon temple organisation made it indispensable for the Pāñcarātra temple priests to undergo pañcasamskāra.²⁶⁸ This development is closely connected to the ambiguous status of temple priests in general, as discussed in 2.1.2: they serve the god and at the same time serve the devotees. In order to be suitable mediators between the god and Śrīvaiṣṇavas it was evidently considered imperative that they took this initiation.

However, Pāñcarātra soon assimilated to Śrīvaiṣṇavism, and in its developed form pañcasamskāra was included in some of the later Pāñcarātrasamhitās, too.²⁶⁹ Thus, in the *Īśvarasamhitā*, pañcasamskāra is explicitly mentioned and described in the twenty-first chapter on initiation (*dīkṣāvidhi*).²⁷⁰ Pāñcasamskāra is here seen as central part of the so-called vaibhavadīkṣā, which confers eligibility to worship Viṣṇu (*ĪśvaraS* 21.1–28).²⁷¹ According to this passage the branding rite should be performed as follows. The ācārya first receives authorisation from a vaiṣṇava assembly to perform the initiation. He makes his way to the fire

267 See Venkataraman 1956: 173; Gnanambal 1971: 106; Varadachari 1982: 418.

268 See, in detail, Jagannathan 1994. The Pāñcarātra system developed in the Tamil speaking area more and more into a ritual school accentuating temple ritual more than philosophical aspects of their tradition. In contrast, the Vaikhānasa tradition from the beginning seems to have been a primarily (temple) ritual tradition, which began to develop its own philosophical profile only recently (see Colas 1995a: 214f.)

269 For the time being it must remain unclear whether the so-called cakrābjadīkṣā or cakramaṇḍaladīkṣā in the comparatively late Pāñcarātrasamhitās *Pādmāsamhitā* (caryāpāda 2.7–61) and *Viśvamītrasamhitā* (chapter 9) was taken as a model for pañcasamskāra. Although this initiation does not include branding, it has other elements in common with pañcasamskāra: according to the *Pādmāsamhitā* the ācārya should affix the puṇḍra to the forehead of the candidate, confer a new name on him on the next day and initiate him into the dvādaśākṣara and the aṣṭākṣara mantras. Another similarity between this dīkṣā and pañcasamskāra is that women and sūdras can also receive this initiation, although the mantras taught to them do not, according to these texts, include the syllable *om* (see PādmaS, caryāpāda, 2.61b–64; see ViśvamītraS 9.30ff.).

270 *ĪśvaraS* 21.283cd–284ab: *ataḥ śīṣyasya vai kuryāt samskārān pañca ca kramāt // tāpaḥ puṇḍras tathā nāma mantrō yāgaś ca pañcamah //*. Tāpasamskāra is described in *Īśvarasamhitā* 21.284–292, puṇḍrasamskāra in 21.293–317, nāmasamskāra in 21.318–325, mantrasamskāra in 21.328–441, and yāgasamskāra in 21.442–448.

271 In this chapter, however, the eligibility to do worship “for others” is confined to descendants of five Ṛṣis (*ĪśvaraS* 21.510cd–511cd, 519). H.D.Smith/Venkatachari (1980: 526 and 536) suggests that the vaibhavadīkṣā, described in the sixteenth chapter of the *Sāt-vatasamhitā*, is a precursor of pañcasamskāra in the *Īśvarasamhitā*.

place together with the pupil. There he worships the two symbols of disk and conch, which have been installed with the appropriate mantras, and which have been passed on to him by his own teacher. First, 108 offerings of clarified butter are put into the fire while the mūlamantra and the vaiṣṇavīgāyatī are recited.²⁷² The two symbols are held in the fire and are worshipped. Again the ācārya should make 108, or alternatively 28, offerings into the fire, while reciting the cakra and the śaṅkha mantras. He then meditates on god, and on his teacher-pupil succession lineage. Only then he brands first the right arm of the pupil with the disk, and then the left with the conch. In closing he sprinkles the two symbols with water and again sacrifices into the fire while reciting the mūlamantra. The use of the sudarśana and the pāñcajanya mantras, the 108 offerings into the fire,²⁷³ the meditation on god and the heating of the symbols before the marking in the *Īśvarasaṃhitā*'s description of pañcasamṣkāra tallies with the account of the branding of the milk porridge which is to be administered to the pregnant wife (*garbhacakrasamṣkāra*) in the *Ānandasamṣhitā* (see 2.2.4.2). In spite of this evident similarity the *Īśvarasaṃhitā* emphasizes quite sharply that Vaikhānasas are in no way equal to Pāñcarātrins. Thus, in chapter 19 (*prāyaścittavidhi*) it is stated that a ritual purification of the entire temple is necessary if a Vaikhānasa performs ritual there,²⁷⁴ and in chapter 21 (*ĪśvaraS* 21.587) the Vaikhānasas are even placed on the same level as Śaivas. These statements point to a strongly competitive relation of the two groups. The account of branding in the *Śrīpraśnasaṃhitā* (16.110–122) also shows considerable agreement with the Vaikhānasas' branding of the milk porridge as described in the *Ānandasamṣhitā*. Particularly noteworthy is here that after the branding the two symbols are sprinkled with milk, and in closing the god is offered a sweet. This rite recalls the milk porridge offering to Viṣṇu in the course of viṣṇubali and might thus indicate a tendency among the Pāñcarātrins to match or assimilate to the competing Vaikhānasas. Such a tendency also emerges from the second chapter of the *Parāśaraśaṃhitā*, one of the later Pāñcarātrasamṣhitās (*ParāśaraS* 2.3–70).²⁷⁵ There it is stated that all the samṣkāras should be performed according to the “vaiṣṇavaśru-

272 According to *ĪśvaraS* 21.287 the mantra concerned is *tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṃ padaṃ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ divīva cakṣurātataṃ* (RV 1.22.20.1–2{07}, TS 1.3.6.2, 4.2.9.39).

273 According to Eggers (1929: 14) the 108 offerings into the fire are also mentioned by the Vaikhānasa author Śiṅgarācārya in the *Vaikhānasasaṃgrahasṃtimīmāṃsā*.

274 *ĪśvaraS* 19.458; see Mishra 1994: 11.

275 Smith/Venkatachari (1980: 188) argue that this text was not written long before the 15th century CE.

ti,”²⁷⁶ and it is repeatedly ordained that the “way of the Veda” (*vedamārga*) should be followed.²⁷⁷ In the brief description of these saṃskāras it is stated that during the birth rituals (*jātakarman*) the father of the newborn child should draw a disk and conch on the child’s arms as well as a puṇḍra on the forehead. The symbols should likewise be drawn on the child during the name-giving ceremonies (*nāmakaraṇa*). On this occasion the child should receive a name which proves him or her to be a follower of Viṣṇu. The drawing of the two symbols should likewise be done as part of the childhood saṃskāras annaprāśana (the first feeding of solid food) and cauḷa (tonsure before the upanayana initiation).²⁷⁸ Only in connection with upanayana does the actual pañcasamskāra ritual take place.²⁷⁹ Thus in this Pāñcarātra text a close connection is established between an initiation into the Śrīvaiṣṇava fold and a person’s life-cycle rituals. In this respect the *Parāśarasamhitā*’s treatment of pañcasamskāra resembles the Vaikhānasas’ strategy.²⁸⁰ However, in contrast to the Pāñcarātrins the Vaikhānasas do not combine elements of initiation and of life-cycle rituals, but rather identify the two with each other. And while the rituals prescribed by the *Parāśarasamhitā* are to be performed after birth, the Vaikhānasas shift their process of becoming Vaiṣṇavas to the time before birth, and thus much more strongly link it with family and clan affiliation.

In any case, as is evident from the *Īśvarasamhitā* and other later Pāñcarātra-samhitās, pañcasamskāra became established as part of the or precondition to the initiations of Pāñcarātra temple priests. Today the Pāñcarātra ritual specialists in the temple have to undergo pañcasamskāra first, and then receive a further Pāñcarātra dikṣā. Pañcasamskāra, including the branding of the upper arms, is perceived as an inevitable prerequisite for learning the required mantras, for being

276 What is ment by “vaiṣṇavaśrutī” is not clear. However, it is not unlikely that the sūtras with a sectarian tendency towards Vaiṣṇavism are indicated here, such as Baudhāyana or Vaikhānasa. Another possibility is the Kātyāyanasūtra, which is frequently mentioned as the sūtra of those Pāñcarātrins who are eligible to perform ritual “for others” (*parārtha*).

277 ParāśaraS 1.12. ParāśaraS 3.10–13 adds that vedic mantras should be used by twice-born for worshipping Viṣṇu (see also ParāśaraS 3.136).

278 See also the hagiographical accounts dealt with by Raman 2007.

279 Even today pañcasamskāra is usually performed in connection with or some time after the upanayana saṃskāra.

280 In the *Parāśarasamhitā* Vaikhānasas are not generally despised, but only if they do not have pañcasamskāra, because only through pañcasamskāra does one perform prapatti (see 2.2.5.1).

able to serve the god who is present in the divine image, and to receive further initiation.²⁸¹

A close connection of pañcasamṣkāra and Pāñcarātra initiation is reflected in several passages of the Vaikhānasasamhitās (see also Colas 1996: 170). Thus in *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 30.5ff. the initiation of the Pāñcarātrins is described as branding. In this passage pañcasamṣkāra, which *inter alia* consists of branding, is thus understood as in fact being *the* initiation (*dīkṣā*) of Pāñcarātrins. *Samūrtārcanādhikāraṇa* 65.120–125 is to be understood similarly. There the vaidika Vaikhānasas are contrasted with the tāntrika Pāñcarātrins. The samṣkāras which begin with niṣeka are administered to the Vaikhānasas according to their sūtra, while the Pāñcarātrins have the samṣkāras according to other sūtras (Bodhāyana etc.) and a branding. Like the Vaikhānasas, they are to be considered Vaiṣṇavas, but are *āgneya* (literally “belonging to Agni”) in contrast to the *saumya* (literally “belonging to Soma”) Vaikhānasas (see Colas 1996: 166, 171f., 226). According to the *Kriyādhikāra* non-Vaikhānasas must have a branding / mark so that they can be employed in the temple as assistants to the priests.²⁸² In the *Ānandasamhitā* Pāñcarātrins are frequently characterised as “having a marking/branding” (see e.g. ĀS 19.13, 19.15). A process called *bahistaptacakradīkṣā* / *bāhyataptadīkṣā* consists of the heating (of a metal symbol) of the disk in the fire which is used for sacrifice in the course of the upanayana initiation. The arms of the Pāñcarātra initiants are branded with this heated disk (ĀS 8.26–29). This clearly refers to the branding element of pañcasamṣkāra and confirms the close connection of the life-cycle ritual upanayana and the initiation into the Śrīvaiṣṇava fold.²⁸³

281 See Varadachari 1982: 351; see Gupta 1979: 85–87.

282 See *Kriyādhikāra* 36.41 and 42ab. *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 18.8–14, 25 and *Yajñādhikāra* 51.36–38 state that a helper in a Vaikhānasa temple must have undergone an initiation (*dīkṣā*), without saying what it consists of. Those passages in the Vaikhānasasamhitās which describe the Pāñcarātrins as “having undergone an initiation (*dīkṣā*)” and as tāntrika, without mentioning a branding or mark, refer not to garbhavaiṣṇavatva as demarcating the Vaikhānasas from the Pāñcarātrins but either to their samṣkāras, as prescribed by the Vaikhānasasūtra, by contrast with *dīkṣā* (KhA 41.8–9, KrA 1.22), or to Vaikhānasa worship in accordance with the Veda (*vaidika*) by contrast with the “tantric” worship of those who have undergone *dīkṣā* (KrA 1.17–18; VK 73 [p. 459]; YA 51.1–7). The *Kriyādhikāra* is particularly explicit that the Vaikhānasa/Pāñcarātra distinction is first and foremost a matter of the vaidika/tāntrika difference, while it is a matter of different groups of Vaiṣṇavas where a branding and garbhavaiṣṇavatva is dealt with (see Colas 1996: 176 and note. 1, see Ramachandra Rao 1990: 154f.).

283 This close connection is also indicated by some of the hagiographical accounts dealt with by Raman 2007.

These accounts in the *Vaikhānasasamhitā*s are inevitably accompanied by a prohibition on branding for the *Vaikhānasas*, and by the idea of a “prenatal marking” of the *Vaikhānasas* which takes places during the *viṣṇubali* *saṃskāra*. At times the *Vaikhānasas* are explicitly excepted from the obligation to undergo *pañcasamskāra*: in the *Kriyādhikāra* Viṣṇu emphasizes that the *Vaikhānasas* are *Vaiṣṇavas* from the time of their birth (*garbhavaiṣṇava*), that there is no branding for them, that they undergo the rituals which begin with *niṣeka*, that there is no mantra initiation for them, and no teacher other than Viṣṇu himself (KrA 36.53–54).²⁸⁴ This passage clearly refers to the diverse elements of *pañcasamskāra*. For the *Vaikhānasas* their *vaiṣṇava* nature results from the prenatal marking as it is described in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* (see 2.2.3). A *Vaikhānasa* receives this marking even before his birth, for *Nārāyaṇa* himself inscribes this on his upper arms during the *viṣṇubali* ritual in the eighth month of pregnancy. The *Kriyādhikāra* (36.42–45) explains that the child thereby becomes a Viṣṇu’s own son, while those who undergo initiation (*dīkṣā*) are to be considered only his adopted sons.²⁸⁵ For this reason post-natal branding for the *Vaikhānasas* is explicitly rejected (KrA 36.46–47). If they nevertheless accept a brand, they become like the non-*Vaikhānasas* in as much as they may no longer carry out worship in *Vaikhānasa* temples (KrA 36.52–53; see Ramachandra Rao 1990: 47f.).

2.2.4.2 *Viṣṇubali* and *pañcasamskāra* in the *Ānandasamhitā*

The *Vaikhānasasamhitā* called *Ānandasamhitā* contains very heterogenous material. Several passages of this text may be composed possibly as late as the 13th century CE, such as, for example, the chapters dealing with *viṣṇubali* and with *pañcasamskāra*.²⁸⁶ Here, the *Ānandasamhitā* explicitly equates the branding element of *pañcasamskāra* for the *Vaikhānasas* with the branding of the milk por-

284 KrA 36.53–54: *vaikhānasā mama sūtā garbhavaiṣṇavajātakāḥ / teṣāṃ bahir na tāpo na punaḥ karaṇam āpadi // madbhaktiyuktasya madaurasasya niṣekakarmādivirājitasya / vaikhānasasyāsya na taptamudrā na mantradīkṣā na gurur mayā vinā //*

285 KrA 36.42b–45: *garbhe māsy aṣṭame viṣṇubaliṃ kuryād yathāvidhi // nārāyaṇaḥ svayaṃ garbhe mudrāṃ dhārayate nijāṃ / tatkarasthena cakreṇa śaṅkheṇa prathitaujasā // karoti cakraśaṅkhāṅkaṃ śiṣor vai bāhumūlayoḥ / vaikhānasena sūtreṇa syād ayaṃ garbhavaiṣṇavaḥ // vaiṣṇavaṃ sūtram etad dhi sarvasiddhikaraṃ param / vaikhānasās ca matputrā dattaputrās ca dīkṣitāḥ //*; on this see Colas 1996: 177f.; see also Rāmachandra Rao 1990: 45. See also ĀS 4.50–51: *kṛtamallāṃchanānāṃ ca garbhavaiṣṇavajamanāṃ / matputrāṇāṃ na cihnāni dāsās cihnasamanvitāḥ // vaikhānasā mama sūtā garbhavaiṣṇavajātakāḥ / teṣāṃ pṛthāṃ na cihnāni cakrādīnāṃ gurur na hi //*

286 On the difficulties in dating this text, which acquired its present form most probably around the 13th century CE, see Colas 1996: chapter 2, esp. 94ff.

ridge during viṣṇubali. Chapter 8 distinguishes three different categories of “marking with the disk”: (1) prenatal, (2) through applying/painting,²⁸⁷ and (3) through branding.²⁸⁸ Those who bear the marking because they have undergone the prenatal samṣkāra viṣṇubali while in the womb of a Vaikhānasa woman are born already as Vaiṣṇavas.²⁸⁹ The potential vaiṣṇava nature existing in a Vaikhānasa is activated by this marking.²⁹⁰ B. K. Smith’s (1989: 86ff.) understanding of the function of samṣkāras is in complete accordance with the Vaikhānasas’ own interpretation: the potential existing in the person is realised through the ritual.

The act of marking is called “garbhacakra” in the *Ānandasamhitā* and is said to take place in the course of the viṣṇubali samṣkāra.²⁹¹ The entire tenth chapter of the *Ānandasamhitā* is devoted to this procedure (ĀS [1998], pp. 111–123). The garbhacakrasamṣkāra propounded there is the branding of the milk porridge, which is for the first time described in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* in the section [cakrasaṅkhatāpana]. In the *Ānandasamhitā* this branding is described as an independent ritual, performed at the end of the offering of the milk porridge during viṣṇubali, that is, at the end of section [pāyasahoma]. The rite begins with a new formal declaration (*samkalpa*):²⁹²

Now the procedure for performance of the garbhacakra (ritual). After the completion of the milk porridge offering as mentioned in the viṣṇubali section of the (*Vaikhānasagrhya*-)sūtra, sitting before the god, meditating oneself as having the

287 Here *nyāsacakra* refers to an initiation for vānaprasthas (Pratap 1995: 47–49).

288 ĀS 8.1: *bhedam cakrāṅkaṅśasyaiva pravakṣyāmi tapodhanāḥ / garbhacakraṃ nyāsacakraṃ taptam cakram iti tridhā //*; see ĀS 8.13: *aukheyānām garbhacakraṃ nyāsacakraṃ vanaukasām / vaikhānasān vinānyeṣām taptacakraṃ prakīrtitam //*. According to this verse the “Aukheya” and the “Vanaukasas” count as Vaikhānasas (see Caland/Vīra 1941: xxi; Caland 1928: 239; Colas 1996: 17f. and 174, note 1). In the *Ādisamhitā*, however, the Vaikhānasas and the Aukheyas are described as different groups, says Colas (1996: 18f.).

289 ĀS 8.2–3: *cakrāṅkaṅśam caiva manūpadeśam tīrthādikaṃ śrīkaribhuktaśiṣṭam / pradātum ekaḥ prabhavaty apāpo vaikhānaso janmani cakradhārī // aṭha viṣṇubaler garbhacakraṃ cakralāñchanam / dhṛtvā vaikhānasāgarbhe sañjātā garbhavaiṣṇavāḥ //*; see Pratap 1995: 48.

290 ĀS 8.7: *bhramareṇa yathā kīto loke ’smin bhramarīkṛtaḥ / vaikhānasena tadbhinnas tad rūpaṃ prāpyate ’nkanāt //*.

291 ĀS 8.10cd–11: *vaikhānasānām sarveṣām garbhacakraṃ udāhṛtam / yo viṣṇubalisamṣkārad garbhacakraṇa lāñchitāḥ / sa garbhavaiṣṇavo jātamātray ity ucyate budhaiḥ //*; see Colas 1996: 182, note 5.

292 ĀS 10.1–3: *aṭha garbhacakraavidhiḥ. (kartā) sūtroktaviṣṇubalyuktapāyasahomānte. devasya purata āsīna ātmānām devarūpaṃ smṛtvā prāñān āyamya “mama dharmapatnyā garbhasthaśīṣor garbhavaiṣṇavatvasiddhyartham garbhacakrasamṣkāram kariṣya” iti saṅkalpya.*

god's form, restraining his breath, (the officiator) formally declares: "I perform this garbhacakraśaṃskāra for the child which is in my duly wedded wife's womb, for the sake of its realising its vaiṣṇava nature already in the womb."

The performance of the ritual then differs according to whether the symbols of disk and conch are permanently installed in a temple or domestic shrine, that is, whether they are regularly worshipped so that the divine power is present in them, or whether they have to be transformed into ritual objects specifically for this performance:²⁹³

He should quietly take the two symbols [i.e. conch and disk] made of copper etc., if they are ritually installed with a mantra in a temple near the idol for worship, or installed in this manner [i.e. with mantra] near the idol for worshipping at home. He should perform the marking (of the milk porridge) after having offered into the fire with mantras. If the ritual of installing conch and disk has not been performed, he should bring the conch and disk and, after the completion of ājyabhāga ritual, install them according to the rules. After doing this, he should sacrifice 108 offerings of clarified butter while reciting the respective gāyatrīs (directed at disk and conch). (Then) he should recite the sudarśana and pāñcajanya mantras, heat (the symbols) in the fire, mark the remainder of the milk porridge, and give that milk porridge to his wife to eat.

As in chapter 8 of the *Ānandasamhitā*, in the closing verses reference is again made to the three types of marking. These are described as obligatory for Vai-khānasas (*garbhacakra*), non-Vaikhānasas (*taptacakra*) and vānaprasthas (*nyāsacakra*) respectively.²⁹⁴

The eleventh chapter of the *Ānandasamhitā* deals with "external" marking (*bāhyacakra*prayoḡa, *bāhyacakraṅkanaprayogavidhi*),²⁹⁵ which is understood to refer to nyāsacakra for vānaprasthas, and to taptacakra for non-Vaikhānasas.

293 ĀS 10.4–6: *tāmradīnā kṛtvā ālayārcanabimbasannidhau mantreṇa sthāpītau gṛhārcanabimbasannidhau vā tathaiiva sthāpītau cet tūṣṇīm ādāya mantrair hutvāṅkanaṃ kurvāt. akṛtapatīṣṭhāsaṃskārau ce cakraśaṅkhāv ādāyājyabhāgānte vidhivat patīṣṭhāpya. ante tattadgāyatrīyāṣṭottaraśatājyāhuṭir hutvā sudarśanapāñcajanyaṃmantrāu japītvā tadagnau pratāpya pāyasaśeṣe 'ṅkanaṃ kṛtvā tat pāyasaṃ patnīm prāśayati.* Even today both possibilities exist: while Varada Bhaṭṭācārya (see 4.6.3) before each occasion installs the metal symbols of the disk and conch which he brings for the ritual performances, Anantapadmanābhācāryulu Gāru (see 4.6.2) used the symbols kept in the temple adjacent to his house. He therefore did not have to install them for each occasion.

294 ĀS 10.7: *tatsuto bhāgyavān dhanyo garbhavaiṣṇavasāñjñīkaḥ / aprākṛto mahātmāsau garbhacakreṇa lāñchītaḥ / garbhacakravihīnas tu prākṛtaḥ patitas smṛtaḥ // vaikhānasetaras tadvatpatītacakreṇa varjītaḥ / nyāsacakravihīnas ca vānaprasthas tathā smṛtaḥ //.*

295 The division into "external" and "internal" marking is reflected in the discussion in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* on "tantric" taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa and taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa "in accordance with the Veda" (see 2.2.5.2).

First, reference is made, implicitly, to the fact that for the Vaikhānasas, because of their viṣṇubali samṣkāra, all five elements of pañcasamṣkāra are already covered:²⁹⁶

Those who are endowed with the viṣṇubali life-cycle ritual [= tāpasamṣkāra] are known as “followers of Viṣṇu (already) in the womb.” Those who are endowed with the viṣṇubali life-cycle ritual carry the ūrdhvapuṇḍra (mark on their body) [= puṇḍrasamṣkāra]. Those who are endowed with the viṣṇubali life-cycle ritual are ācāryas by birth [= nāmasamṣkāra?]. Those who are endowed with the viṣṇubali life-cycle ritual have the eligibility to recite the mantras [= mantrasamṣkāra]. Those who are endowed with the viṣṇubali life-cycle ritual are eligible to perform Viṣṇu sacrifices [= yāgasamṣkāra].

A few verses later the branding of non-Vaikhānasas is explained:²⁹⁷ a member of the three twice-born classes should first sacrifice into his own fire. While he deposits the symbols of the disk and conch before an image of Viṣṇu, the ācārya ritually installs them in front of the fire. While reciting the sudarśana and the pāñcajanya mantra he offers into this fire. Afterwards he prays with mantras to the god, and presses the two heated symbols on the student’s upper arms. The student is to say: “I bear Hari’s disk and Hari’s conch for (my) liberation” and then he gets up and venerates his teacher, full of happiness. From then onwards he should be devoted to doing service to Viṣṇu. The oblations into the fire should be made in the ācārya’s sacrificial fire, or, if the ācārya is an ascetic (and thus

296 ĀS 11.1–3: *garbhavaṣṇavasamjñās te ye viṣṇubalisamṣkṛtāḥ / ūrdhvapuṇḍradharās te vai ye viṣṇubalisamṣkṛtāḥ // janmany ācāryasamjñās syur ye viṣṇubalisamṣkṛtāḥ / mantrādihikāriṇas te vai ye viṣṇubalisamṣkṛtāḥ // samṣkṛtā viṣṇubalinā viṣṇuyāgādihikāriṇaḥ //*

297 ĀS 11.20–32: *hariṃ samyak samabhyarcya pūrvoktena vidhānataḥ / dvijātīnāṃ trayāṇāṃ tu sve ’gnau svam homam ācaret // śaṅkhacakre samādāya nikṣipte harisannidhau / svāgne samīpe samsthāpya ācāryo mantram uccaran / bhūm ānanto ’gre tan mā ya iti mantradvayaṃ hunet // homād anantaraṃ devaṃ samyak samprārthya mantrataḥ / śiṣyasya bhaktiyuktasya viṣṇutattvābhikāṅkṣiṇaḥ // ānkayed ariśaṅkhābhyāṃ prataptābhyāṃ bhujadvaye // hareś cakram hareś śaṅkhaṃ dhārayāmi vimuktaye / ity uktvā sahasoithāya guruṃ natvābhivandya ca // kṛtārtho ’haṃ kṛtārtho ’haṃ kṛtārtho ’haṃ na samśayaḥ / ity uktvā nandabharito nirbharyantyadācaret / tataḥ prabhṛti lakṣmīśaikānkaryanirato bhavet // ācāryāgnau huned dhomaṃ yateś cakraṅkaṇaṃ yadi / huned devālayāgnau vā cakraśaṅkham anūnmaran // cakrāṅkaṇe ca sūdrāṇāṃ tathā saṅkara-janmanāṃ / vedakarmavihīnānāṃ tattad agnau huned gṛhtaṃ / pauraṅgnimukhaṃ kṛtvā mantraiḥ pauraṅnikair hunet // tūṣṇīṃ devālayāgnau vā cakraśaṅkhau pratāpayet / devasannidhi dīpe vā cakram śaṅkhaṃ pratāpayet // ānkayed ariśaṅkhābhyāṃ prataptābhyāṃ bhujadvaye // hareś cakram hareś śaṅkhaṃ pūjayāmi vimuktaye / ity uktvā śiḡghram utthāya guruṃ natvā prapūjya ca / kṛtārtho ’haṃ kṛtārtho ’haṃ kṛtārtho ’haṃ na samśayaḥ // ity uktvā nandabharito nirbhayas sarvadācaret / tataḥ prabhṛti lakṣmīśaikānkaryanirato bhavet //*

does not maintain a sacrificial fire), into a temple's fire. If Śūdras or offspring of a "mixed" union receive the branding, sacrifice is made into a fire that has been kindled according to the rules of the purāṇas (not the Vedas), and mantras from the purāṇas are recited instead of vedic mantras.²⁹⁸ Or, if the sacrificial fire maintained in a temple is used, the metal symbols should be heated silently. Another possibility is to heat them in the flame of a lamp in the temple's inner shrine. After being marked with the symbols, the student says: "I worship Hari's disk and conch, for (my) liberation" and then worships his teacher.

In the *Ānandasamhitā* the different types of marking are hierarchically ordered and directly connected to the right to worship Viṣṇu in the temple: while those who are not Vaikhānasas become Vaiṣṇavas through the post-natal initiation involving branding, the Vaikhānasas are already Vaiṣṇavas before birth (garbhavaṣṇava), as a result of the branding of the milk porridge during viṣṇubali. This in itself gives them the right to worship Viṣṇu in the temple, independent of their competence and capability to do so:²⁹⁹

Be he qualified or unqualified, a person born as Vaikhānasa and marked by the garbhacakra should worship Viṣṇu, others may not (worship him).

Thus membership to the group confers the right to practice as temple priest. Competence explicitly does not matter. The right to perform temple worship is a birth-right and is derived from the "marking with the disk" which precedes birth. The Vaikhānasas alone have access to this right.

The *Ānandasamhitā* even goes one step further: the marking of others can be performed by the Vaikhānasas, because for their part they are already marked with the disk before birth and, as "ācāryas by birth" (ĀS 11.1–3), they clearly are eligible to do so.³⁰⁰ This applies not only to branding, but also for the other four rites of pañcasamṣkāra, the performance of which is laid out in chapter 12

298 Colas (1999: 45ff.) notes that also according to *Samūrtārcanādihikāra* 73.17 Śūdras and Anulomas may receive the initiation described in the *Ānandasamhitā*. See also Colas 1996: 182f.

299 ĀS 8.12: *ayogyo vā suyogyo vā garbhacakreṇa lāñchitaḥ / vaikhānasodbhavo viṣṇum arcayed itare na tu ||*

300 ĀS 8.8–10ab: *avaikhānasasūtreṇa samskṛtā manuḥ bhuvi / brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyā vaiśyāś śūdrāś saṅkarajā api || vaikhānasam viṣṇumayaṃ gurum prāpyābhivandya ca / sampṛāthyānugrahaṃ tasya (tena?) taptacakrāṅkitā yadi || pramuktā sarvaṇāpēbhyo vaikuṅṭhaṃ lokaṃ āpnuyuḥ ||* In *Ānandasamhitā* 9.3–5, however, a distinction is made between those who have received pañcasamṣkāra from Pāñcarātrins (*āgamadīkṣita*), and those who have received this initiation from Vaikhānasas (*niḡamadīkṣita*); on this see Colas 1990: 27. And in fact even today a qualitative distinction is made between those marked by Vaikhānasas (as in Śrīperumbudūr) and those marked by other Vaiṣṇavas (see 3.1.2).

of the *Ānandasamhitā*. It might well be that in those instances where Vaikhānasas were forced to take upon themselves pañcasamṣkāra (see 3.1), they followed the procedure mentioned here in the *Ānandasamhitā*.

The marking with the disk and conch described in chapters 10 and 11 of the *Ānandasamhitā* thus corresponds in many ways with the account of branding as a component of pañcasamṣkāra in some later Pāñcarātrasamhitās, such as the *Īśvarasamhitā*. Thus, while the Śrīvaiṣṇavas insisted on pañcasamṣkāra as precondition for the eligibility to perform temple rituals, they are not explicitly mentioned, although their arguments are refuted. It becomes clear here one of the most important issues for the Vaikhānasas was not to accept an ācārya from outside their own tradition.

2.2.4.3 Garbhacakra versus taptacakra

The branding of the milk porridge at the end of the viṣṇubali samṣkāra in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* implicitly and, in the *Ānandasamhitā* even explicitly equals the branding of the upper arms in the course of pañcasamṣkāra. The Vaikhānasas thus take over essential elements of this initiation and interpret their version as a superior counterpart to pañcasamṣkāra, which is the initiation into the Śrīvaiṣṇava fold. However the implied critique is not directed towards the Śrīvaiṣṇavas, but rather towards the Pāñcarātrins who accept this initiation. One of the reasons for this critique is certainly the rivalry between the Vaikhānasas and the Pāñcarātrins as temple priests in South India from the 10th century onwards, which Colas (1996: 168f.) has already pointed out on the basis of inscriptions and the Vaikhānasasamhitās. In the Vaikhānasa texts an explicit contrast between the two is established in that the Vaikhānasas are exempted from postnatal branding of the upper arms. For them, physical branding is performed on the milk porridge, and transmitted to the child through the mother. This rite is integrated into the life-cycle ritual viṣṇubali. This samṣkāra thus is made to include aspects of a “sectarian” initiation (*garbhacakradīkṣā*) while at the same time retaining its character of a life-cycle ritual. However, what is made amply clear here is that anyone who does service in a temple has to have the “branding,” be it before birth or after. Like the Pāñcarātrins, the Vaikhānasas become Vaiṣṇavas through this “initiation.” However, within the group of Vaiṣṇavas they assert a claim to superiority based upon the fact that this initiation is performed as part of their vedic life-cycle ritual viṣṇubali. As this transformation of a Vaikhānasa into a Vaiṣṇava is realised already before birth, he is superior to other Vaiṣṇavas who

only receive this initiation during or after upanayana.³⁰¹ An important issue at stake is here that the Vaikhānasas do thus not accept a spiritual teacher (ācārya) from outside their own community. The marker of Vaikhānasa identity is first of all descent (via their vedic saṃskāra), but it encompasses and subordinates also aspects of a sectarian initiation (*dīkṣā*).³⁰² As we have seen, in the *Ānandasamhitā* viṣṇubali plays an important role. The last part, the branding of the milk porridge (*garbhacakra*), is described in particular detail, although this branding is not mentioned in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, nor by Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin. This obvious extension of the ritual described in the sūtra led several Vaikhānasa scholars to offer comments and explanations.

2.2.4.4 Viṣṇubali in Venkaṭayogin's *Nibandhana*

Venkaṭayogin refers openly to this discrepancy when he states that the rite of the *Ānandasamhitā* called *garbhacakra* was not instituted by Vikhanas himself, but rather by Marīci, who is one of Vikhanas' four immediate disciples. The ritual is to that extent still obligatory. The actual viṣṇubali saṃskāra must nevertheless still be performed first. At the same time, Venkaṭayogin clearly refers to the saṃkalpa given in the section [introduction] in Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's *Bhāṣya* (see 2.2.2.2), for he also states that viṣṇubali serves to protect the unborn child.³⁰³

301 This is also the reason why a Vaikhānasa—and only he—has the authority to extend initiation to others: they can even act as ācāryas for others, in that they confer an initiation which includes branding (see ĀS 11.1–3). However, this initiation conferred by Vaikhānasas does not entitle the concerned person to perform the worship of god in the temple, but only enables them to help the Vaikhānasa priests.

302 Therefore in Vaikhānasa texts other vaiṣṇava groups are only rarely ascribed an identity similarly based on descent.

303 ĀS [1998] 98.17–24: *atra venkaṭayogīyaṃ nibandhanaṃ: kiṃ ca viṣṇubalau marīcinā proktaviśeṣārtho 'pi likhyate. vaikhānasānāṃ tasyāvaśyākartavyatvāt, sa ca vikhanasā (kaṅṭharaveṇā)nukto 'pi tacchiṣyair marīcyādibhir ādareṇoktatvād avāśyam ācaraṇīya eva, marīcikalpe "atha garbhacakraavidhis. sūtroktaviṣṇubalyuktapāyasaḥomānte. devasya purata āsīna [reference to ĀS 10.1–3]" ityādi. itaḥ pūrvam api "atha viṣṇubalir. garbhādhānādyāṣṭame māsy eva śuklapakṣe śuddhe 'hani pūrvavan maṅgalasānānādīni kṛtvā patnyā saha pūrvavad āsīnaḥ prāṇān āyāmya "śrīmān gotro nāmadheyo 'haṃ śrīmato gotrasya nāmadheyasya mama dharmapatnyā garbhasaṃrakṣaṇārthaṃ viṣṇubalikarma kariṣya" iti saṅkalpyeti sa evāha [reference to NVB 1, 142.3–6].*

2.2.4.5 Viṣṇubali in Gopānācārya's *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*³⁰⁴

Here says the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* made by Gopānācārya: in this manner, after having uttered the formal declaration “(On such and such) auspicious lunar day, I perform by way of the first embryo in the womb of my rightfully wedded wife the viṣṇubali ritual for the sake of ritual perfection of all the (following) embryos.” (Then) he collects the objects for worshipping the god like scent, flowers etc., sudarśana (disk), pāñcajanya (conch), seat, kūrca grass bundle, and milk porridge etc. After performing the offering of clarified butter into the fire, after offering the milk porridge mixed with clarified butter while reciting the (mantras) *viṣṇor nu kaṃ ...* etc., and after having uttered the hymn (called) *hiraṇyavarṇā*, having said the *gāyatrī* (mantra), uttering all sudarśana mantras, (and) the six syllabic (mantra of) Sudarśana and the sudarśana *gāyatrī*, offering into the fire while reciting “To Sudarśana, hail! To Pāñcajanya, hail! To Gadādhpati, hail! To Śārja, hail! To Khadgādhpati, hail!,” praising the god with the mantras of Ṛg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharvaveda, he should salute (the god) by reciting (the mantras) beginning with Keśava and ending with “salutation to.” Having in between (the two rites) sprinkled water around the fire place (and) having performed the sudarśana *gāyatrīpūjā*, saying “I take Sudarśana,” dipping the disk into the right portion of the milk porridge (and while reciting) *ravipām*, dipping the conch into the left portion, (and) bowing (while reciting the mantras) *bhūm ānanto 'gre* (and) *tan mā yaśo 'gra*, (he) should give the milk porridge as food to his wife to eat etc.³⁰⁵

The sacrifice into the fire is framed by a ritual called *pariṣekalpariṣecana*, in which water is sprinkled around the fire in order to tame and restrict the god Agni to the fire place, and also to mark the beginning and end of a sacrifice. With “sprinkling of water around the fire place in between two sections of the ritual”

304 This *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* is not the same as the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* which is used as a ritual handbook in Andhra Pradesh today (see below, 4.3.1).

305 ĀS [1998] 98.24–99.9: *atra gopānācāryanirmitā sūtrānukramaṇikā (bhaṭṭīyaṃ): evaṃ “śubhatīthau mama dharmapatnyāḥ prathamagarbhadvārā sarvagarbhasaṃskārārthaṃ viṣṇubalikarmaṇā saṃskariṣya” iti saṅkalpya devārcanārthaṃ gandhapuṣpādyarcanadravyāṇi sudarśanapāñcajanyaśanakūrcapāyasādīni sambhṛtyāghāraṃ kṛtvā “viṣṇor nu kā” dyaire ājyamiśraṃ pāyasaṃ ca hutvā “hiraṇyavarṇā” iti śakteṇa japtvā gāyatrīm uccārya sarve sudarśanamāntrān sudarśanaśadaḥśaraṃ sudarśana *gāyatrīm* japtvā “sudarśanāya svāhā” “pāñcajanya *yāya* svāhā” “gadādhipataye svāhā” “śārjāya svāhā” “khaḍgādhipataye svāhā” iti hutvā, ṛgyajussāmātharvabhīr mantrair devaṃ saṃstūya namontaiḥ keśavādibhiḥ praṇamet, antaḥpariṣekaṃ kṛtvā sudarśana *gāyatrīpūjāṃ* kṛtvā “sudarśanam abhigṛhṇāmi” ti pāyase dakṣiṇabhāge sudarśanaṃ nikṣipyā “ravipām” iti vāmahāge saṅkhaṃ nikṣipyā praṇamya “bhūm ānanto 'gre,” “tan mā yaśo 'gra” iti patnīm pāyasaṃ annaṃ praśayed ityādi. The last two mantras are a sudarśana mantra and a pāñcajanya mantra.*

the author Gopānācārya establishes a clear separation between viṣṇubali and the rite of the branding of the milk porridge. The latter thereby achieves the status of an independent ritual, in which the worship of disk and conch plays a significant role. In contrast to the *Ānandasamhitā*'s account, the two symbols are not heated, but are simply immersed or pressed into the milk porridge on the right and left. Diverse aspects which play a role in contemporary ritual practice are here expressed. As I was told in Vānamāmalai (Nanguneri, Tirunelveli district), the marking of the milk porridge without having first heated the two symbols is a regional variant prevalent in southern Tamil Nadu (see 3.1.2). While in Gopānācārya's *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* the purpose of this saṃskāra is not expressed, the saṃkalpa mentions that this ritual is only performed during the first pregnancy, but remains effective for all subsequently born children. This is the current practice today in most sūtra traditions: the prenatal saṃskāras are nowadays enacted only during the first pregnancy.

2.2.4.6 Sañjīvayājīn's *Nibandhana* (SY-N)³⁰⁶

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.29) [introduction]

“atha viṣṇubaliḥ,” punnāmnī nakṣatre patnyā saha snātvā pūrvedyur nāndīmukhaṃ kṛtvā

(The explanation of the passage beginning with) “Now viṣṇubali.” After having bathed with the wife during a lunar mansion having a male name, (and) after having performed the nāndīmukha³⁰⁷ on the preceding day,

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.30–31) [agnimukha]

agnimukhānte dhātā dadātu na imaṃ me varuṇa prajāpate na tvac cittaṃ ca agnir bhūtānām ṛtāṣāṭ. (iti)

(he recites the mantras) *dhātā dadātu na ..., imaṃ me varuṇa ..., prajāpate na tvac ..., cittaṃ ..., agnir bhūtānām ...* and *ṛtāṣāṭ ...* at the end of the agnimukha.³⁰⁸

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.31–32) [vaiṣṇavasūkta / pañcasūktāni]

ato devādiṣaṇmantraiḥ (ca) pañcasūktāny ājyena hutvā

306 This *Nibandhana* seems to have been held in high regard by Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya. He cites it in his *Ānandasamhitā* commentary, and refers to it under the name *Prayoga-vṛtti* in the introduction to the Telugu edition of the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* (p. 2) and in the foreword to the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* (p. iv).

307 On nāndīmukha or nāndīmukhaśrāddha, see 2.2.1.

308 According to HirGrS 1.2.18 agnimukha are four offerings of clarified butter to the fire, following āghāra and ājyabhāga.

After having offered clarified butter while reciting the six mantras beginning with *ato deva ...* and the five hymns,

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.32) [puruṣāvāhana]

tataḥ pariṣecanānte vyāhrticatuṣṭaye nāmāvāhanam puruṣasya kṛtvā

afterwards, at the end of sprinkling the water around the fire place, having performed the name-invocation of Puruṣa in the four vyāhrtis,³⁰⁹

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97. 32–34) [dvādaśanāmāvāhana]

[a]param keśavādīdāmodarāntam dvādaśamūrtīnām āvāhanam uttarapraṇīdhau kṛtvā-jyena juṣṭākāraṃ tadante praṇavādisvāhāntam caturthyaṃ

after that, having invoked the twelve forms, beginning with Keśava and ending with Dāmodara, in the praṇīdhi pot, placed north (of the fire), having offered clarified butter while saying *juṣṭā*, and at the end of which (he should recite the mantras) beginning with *om* and ending with “hail!” (and the god’s names in) the dative case.

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.34–35) [vedamantra]

tena rgyajussāmādhavabhir mantrair vaiṣṇavair devaṃ saṃstūya

After having praised the god with the vaiṣṇava mantras from Ṛg-, Yajur-, Sāma- and Atharvaveda,

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.35) [praṇāma]

namontair nāmabhiḥ praṇamet.

he should bow (to the god) while reciting the twelve names, each (mantra) ending with *namah*.

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 97.35–98.4) [pāyasanivedana]

tatpāyaṣam tadājyaśeṣeṇāto devādyair viṣṇor nu kādyaiḥ keśavādīdvādaśanāmamantrair abhimantrya

Then he mixes the milk porridge with the rest of the clarified butter, recites (the mantras) beginning with *ato deva ...*, (and) beginning with *viṣṇor nu kam ...*, and the mantras containing the twelve names, beginning with Keśava.

SY-N (ĀS [1998] 98.4–5) [pāyasaprāśana]

bhūs tvayi dadāmīti patnyāḥ prāśanādānena garbhasthaśiṣoḥ pañcasamṣkārasattvaṃ siddhyati.

By giving (the milk porridge) to the wife for eating, saying “*bhūs*, I give you!,” the pañcasamṣkāra-disposition is accomplished for the child in the womb.

309 This refers to the combination of the vyāhrtis with the invocation of Puruṣa, as prescribed by the sūtra.

Sañjīvyājīn gives his version of the correct performance of viṣṇubali which is a creative account of the connection between viṣṇubali, pañcasamṣkāra and garbhavaiṣṇavatva. Although in his delineation of viṣṇubali no branding or marking of the milk porridge is mentioned, he verbatim equates the five prenatal samṣkāras from the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* with pañcasamṣkāra, “five samṣkāras.” After emphasizing that only the Vaikhānasas are garbhavaiṣṇavas and paramaikāntins, and are therefore entitled to perform public worship of Viṣṇu,³¹⁰ Sañjīvyājīn points out that in other sūtras only three prenatal samṣkāras listed, whereas the Vaikhānasas have five prenatal life-cycle rituals, namely ṛtusamgamana, garbhādhāna, puṃsavana, sīmanta and viṣṇubali. These are “five samṣkāras” (pañcasamṣkāra), and since “being endowed with pañcasamṣkāra” brings about being a Vaiṣṇava, the Vaikhānasas become Vaiṣṇavas after viṣṇubali, the fifth and last prenatal samṣkāra. Furthermore, this garbhavaiṣṇavatva is a distinctive feature of the Vaikhānasas, for the five prenatal samṣkāras are prescribed for them alone.³¹¹

Sañjīvyājīn also explains, in a similarly unique manner, why it is especially through viṣṇubali that this garbhavaiṣṇavatva is attained.³¹² Vikhanas, identified with Brahmā, marked himself by his own power, while he was still in his “mother’s womb,” that is, in the lotus flower, which grew from the navel of Nārāyaṇa. In this manner, Vikhanas became a garbhavaiṣṇava and decided to pass on

310 ĀS [1998] 97.15–18: *atra sañjīvyājīyaṃ nibandhanam: bhagavatpūjāyāṃ adhikāraḥ kasyety ākāṅkṣāyāṃ śrutismṛtisūtrapurāṇasamhitācāravihitatvaṃ bhagavatkaṅkṛyā-paramaikāntikadharmopacārādikaṃ śrīvaikhānasānāṃ garbhavaiṣṇavānāṃ eveti prasiddham.*

311 ĀS [1998] 97.19–28: *loke tāvad āpastambādīnāṃ paitṛmedhakena samṣkāreṇa saha ṣoḍaśasamṣkāreṣu garbhasamṣkāraṣ traya eva garbhādhānapuṃsuvanasīmantaṃ iti. Eteṣāṃ vaikhānasānāṃ tāvaṃ nityakarmāṇy aurdhavadaiḥikaṃ vinā śāritrasamṣkāra aṣṭādaśa, teṣu ca garbhasamṣkāraḥ pañca. kiṃ ca yataḥ? vaiṣṇavatvaṃ pañcasamṣkāravatvaṃ bhavitavyaṃ kila (tv asmata iti bhāvaḥ, tato ? mātṛgarbhasthasya śīṣor jananāt paraṃ pañcasamṣkāritvaṃ asty eva, tatprakāra ucyaṭe, vaiṣṇavasya kiṃ vā lakṣaṇaṃ. pañcasamṣkāravatvaṃ eva, tāni pañcāpi samṣkāraṇi garbha(stha)syaiva, ṛtusamgamana garbhādhānapuṃsuvanasīmantaviṣṇubalaya iti. garbhasya pañcasamṣkāraḥ. teṣv aṣṭame navame māsi śīṣujanānāt pūrvam eva viṣṇubaliḥ kartavyaḥ. tena samṣkāreṇāpi garbhasthasya śīṣoḥ pañcasamṣkāravatvaṃ bhavati.*

312 ĀS [1998] 98.5–11: *nanu viṣṇubalisamṣkāraviśeṣeṇa pañcāpi samṣkāraḥ kathaṃ siddhyanti, satyaṃ, purāvikhānāś caturmakhas [caturmukhas] svapitrā śrīmannārāyaṇe-na? svajanakāraṇanalinagarbhasthitīsamaye svadehavihitavaiṣṇavamudrāprabhāve-na garbhavaiṣṇavo bhūtvā svavihitagarbhavaiṣṇavatvaṃ svaprañṭitasūtrānuyāyināṃ vaikhānasānāṃ ucitam iti manasi nidhāya tasmīn eva sūtre viṣṇubaliḥ ity ayaṃ garbhasamṣkāro (‘tyantaṃ vilakṣaṇo) vihītaḥ, tasmāt samṣkārad garbhasthasīṣoḥ pañcasamṣkāravatvaṃ siddhyaty eva.*

this characteristic to his followers, the Vaikhānasas. He therefore instituted the samṣkāra viṣṇubali in his sūtra, so that once it has been performed the unborn child has undergone pañcasamṣkāra and simultaneously is a garbhavaiṣṇava. Through his unique description of the ritual performance Sañjīvayājīn brings viṣṇubali in line with the other prenatal samṣkāras. He adds a rite to the feeding of the wife which in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is prescribed only for garbhā-dāna, puṃsavana and sīmanta.³¹³ the milk porridge should be administered to the woman while the performer recites the mantras “*bhūs*, I give you,” “*bhuvās*, I give you” and “*suvaḥ*, I give you.” The transfer of this ritual element to viṣṇubali makes this last prenatal life-cycle ritual even more suitable to stand for all five garbhasamṣkāras.

It is quite clear that here too the question of entitlement to carry out ritual in the temple is at stake. The entire section is introduced with this question: “Who has the entitlement to do pūjā for the Adorable One?” By equating the five prenatal samṣkāras with pañcasamṣkāra, Sañjīvayājīn is entirely in line with the *Ānandasamhitā*’s strategy. The Vaikhānasas’ identity marker viṣṇubali stands as *pars pro toto* for the five prenatal samṣkāras, like the branding element (tāpa-samṣkāra) stands as *pars pro toto* for pañcasamṣkāra. Pañcasamṣkāra is here incorporated and subordinated to the Vaikhānasa concept of being Vaiṣṇavas already before birth.

2.2.4.7 Viṣṇubali in Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan’s *Smārtakarmānukramaṇikā*

This text represents a unique description of viṣṇubali, which can even be dated and placed with some certainty: Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan is Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya’s father (see 1.3). He lived in the second half of the 19th century in Ākuluma-nāḍu, near Machilipatnam, in the present Kṛṣṇā district of Andhra Pradesh.

Like Gopānācārya, Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan includes in the samkalpa the idea that the samṣkāra should only be performed during the first pregnancy. Moreover he states in the formal declaration the purpose of the ritual: “... to realise the vaiṣṇava nature of the foetus.” Like Veṅkaṭayogin in his *Nibandhana*, Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan emphasises in the samkalpa that the viṣṇubali samṣkāra is described in the Vaikhānasasūtra, while by contrast the rite which makes the unborn child a Vaiṣṇava (*garbhavaiṣṇaveṣṭi*, as Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan calls it) was

313 According to the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, these mantras are prescribed during the feeding of the woman with a mixture of milk, yoghurt and clarified butter at the end of garbhādhāna (VaikhSmS 3.10: “*bhūs tvayi dadāmi*”*ty enām trivṛtprāśayed*), puṃsavana (VaikhSmS 3.11: *pūrvavat trivṛtprāśanādīnīti vijñāyate*) and sīmanta (VaikhSmS 3.12: *pūrvavat trivṛtprāśanaṃ puṇyāhāntam ity eke*), but not during viṣṇubali.

instituted by Vikhanas' immediate disciples, namely "Bhṛgu etc." This second section of the ritual is introduced by its own saṃkalpa. Like Gopānācārya, Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan thereby emphasises that these are two ritual acts and calls the second ritual the "remainder of viṣṇubali."³¹⁴ He describes it as follows: first the performer should collect all the utensils required for the garbhavaiṣṇava sacrifice. The actual rite then begins with the sacrifice of the milk porridge into the fire used for viṣṇubali. The two symbols of disk and conch should be "properly installed" and the prepared milk porridge mixture is branded with the heated symbols. The milk porridge is then given to the pregnant woman to eat, while mantras are recited. This life-cycle ritual is valid for all the children of this woman; "through it all of them will achieve a prenatal vaiṣṇava nature."³¹⁵ Kodaṇḍarāmayajvan's description and the meaning he attributes to the diverse ritual elements thus correspond to the *Ānandasamhitā*'s description and interpretation of viṣṇubali.

2.2.5 Viṣṇubali as the Vaikhānasas' "taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa"

So far we have dealt here mainly with the branding of the upper arms and viṣṇubali as the Vaikhānasas' mose of conferring vaiṣṇavatva on the concerned persons. However, another closely related meaning attributed to the pañcasamskāra ritual is that it is identical with or goes hand in hand with "taking refuge in Viṣ-

314 ĀS [1998] 99.9–15: *atrāsmattātapādaiś śrīkodaṇḍarāmayajvabhir anuḡṛhūā smārtakarmānukramānikā: enāṃ patnīm prathamagarbhe sarvagarbhasaṃskārārthaṃ prathamagarbhasaṃskāradvārā sarvagarbhasthaśiśūnām āgarbhavaiṣṇavatvasiddhyarthaṃ śrīvaikhānasasūtroktaviṣṇubalikarmaṇā bhṛgvādibhir upadiṣṭagarbhavaiṣṇaveṣṭyā saṃskariṣya iti saṃkalpya, ity ārabhya etat paryantaṃ viṣṇubaliṃ sūtroktavat kṛtvānantaram enāṃ patnīm pathamagarbhe sarvagarbhasaṃskārārthaṃ vikhanō matānusāribhir bhṛgvādibhir upadiṣṭagarbhavaiṣṇ[aveṣṭ]yā saṃskariṣya iti saṃkalpya viṣṇubaliśeṣam ācarati.*

315 ĀS [1998] 99.15–23: *śaṅkhārimudrārcanabimbadugdhadadhīni kṣaudraṃ guḍam ājyadugdhe kūrcāsanādyarcanavastujātaṃ sampādayed dauhṛdavaṣṇaveṣṭyāṃ. kṛtvā tathā pāyasahomam ādau sūtroktavad viṣṇubalau tadagnau, hetipratīṣṭhāṃ vidhivat prakuryāt samānayet prāḡ api saṃskṛtān vā hutvā marīcyuktavadabhjapūrvadaivatyam anyāṃś ca manūvyathoktaṃ, taptair havir hetibhir āṅkayitvā mantrair haviḥ prāśayati striyaṃ tat. ityādi pūrvācāryasaṅgrhūtaslokair uktarītyā ca śaṅkhacakre gṛhārcanabimbatyādy uktvā, tasyāḥ patnyās sarvagarbhasaṃskārārthaṃ sarvagarbhasthaśiśūnām āgarbhavaiṣṇavatvasiddhyarthaṃ viṣṇuniveditacakrādibhis taptaṃ haviḥ pāyasaśeṣaṃ patnīm antarvatnīm prāśayati ityādy uktam.*

ṇu-Nārāyaṇa" (śaraṇāgati/prapatti) as a means of attaining salvation.³¹⁶ Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita evidently felt the need not only to defend the Vaikhānasa practice of not undergoing pañcasamṣkāra, but also to explain how the Vaikhānasas then take refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa. He argues that viṣṇubali is the Vaikhānasas' way of "taking refuge" and that the Vaikhānasas' "taking refuge" is superior because it is vedic, whereas other modes of "taking refuge" are tantric and therefore inferior.

2.2.5.1 Pañcasamṣkāra and "taking refuge"

The idea of "taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa" as a means of attaining salvation in all likelihood came first up among the Pāñcarātrins,³¹⁷ but was developed into a fully fledged soteriological concept and then advocated above all in later Śrīvaiṣṇava texts, after Rāmānuja.³¹⁸ In the works of Rāmānuja himself—especially in his *Śrībhāṣya*—it is rather bhakti-yoga, that is the practice of devoted love as the last stage after karma- and jñāna-yoga, which comes to the fore as the way of salvation (see van Buitenen 1956: 24). While he seems to propose two sorts of prapatti,³¹⁹ the later doctrine of prapatti is developed and advocated above all in the writings of Piḷḷai Lokācārya (traditionally dated 1264–1327 CE) and Vedānta Deśika (traditional dates 1268–1369 CE; see Raman 2002). However, in this section the content of these soteriological ideas³²⁰ is of less interest than the discussions about the connection of prapatti/śaraṇāgati and pañcasamṣkāra in the context of the right (*adhikāra*) to perform temple rituals for others (*parārtha*),³²¹ and especially the strategies of the Vaikhānasas to integrate these ideas into their own tradition while still standing out over against the rival group of the Pāñcarātrins.

It remains unclear, how precisely pañcasamṣkāra came into being and how it became connected to śaraṇāgati/prapatti. Rāmānuja seems to have established

316 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita deals with the theological-soteriological concept samāśrayaṇa/prapatti and the ritual pañcasamṣkāra separately.

317 Oberhammer (2004: 136ff.) argues that the decisive Pāñcarātra texts *Ahīrbudhnyasamhitā* (chapter 37) and *Lakṣmītantra* (esp. 17.74), which draw most likely on another, common source, an independent branch of the tradition.

318 Oberhammer (2004: 138) mentions Vatsyavaradaguru's *Prapannapārijātam*.

319 Raman says: "The first one done by the jñānī, the most superior of all the devotees. It was described in terms of a contemplative awareness (anusamdhāna) of oneself as a subordinate (śeṣa) of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva. The second sort of prapatti done by all the ordinary devotees, was a simple act of taking refuge on order to be rid of certain obstacles (...) to starting bhaktiyoga" (Raman 2007: 174).

320 See the treatment of prapatti in Raman 2007, which also includes a summary of research to date.

321 It seems that this issue has to be seen in close connection with pāñcarātric influence on this idea, an issue yet to be explored thoroughly (see Raman 2007: 174).

pañcasamṣkāra as the ritual of initiation into Śrīvaiṣṇavism, thereby also formalising and standardising this ritual.³²² This had an effect upon the Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās, the authoritative texts of this group of specialists in vaiṣṇava temple ritual. In some of these texts pañcasamṣkāra is described as the obligatory first initiation for Pāñcarātrins, especially so, if they want to perform rituals “for others” (see 2.2.4.1). Probably in the period after Rāmānuja pañcasamṣkāra also became the ritual expression of “taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa,” an inner attitude which for a believing Vaiṣṇava is the prerequisite for salvation (see Varadachari 1982: 418ff). Raman (2005: 91) takes the ritual sequence of pañcasamṣkāra to have been identified with the “taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa” since as late as the 12th-13th century.³²³

A connection between prapatti/śaraṇāgati and pañcasamṣkāra is also expressed by the later Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās, albeit that here too a quite wide diversity of opinion must be noted. According to the first chapter of the *Śeṣasaṃhitā*³²⁴ those who worship Viṣṇu and observe the ritual division of the day into five sections (*pañcakāla*) strive for salvation and have performed the “taking refuge.” They are called prapanna (ŚeṣaS 1.5–8). At the same time only those who observe pañcakāla and have undergone the initiation called pañcasamṣkāra are entitled to know the content of this saṃhitā (ŚeṣaS 1.30–37). It is also stated in this text that the act of taking refuge requires that the person involved “bears the disk and conch” (ŚeṣaS 15.259–263). It can therefore be assumed that according to the *Śeṣasaṃhitā* prapatti is performed together with or after pañcasamṣkāra. A direct connection between the branding, or pañcasamṣkāra, and salvation emerges also in the late Pāñcarātra text *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā*. The description of pañcasamṣkāra in this text corresponds in large measure to contemporary practice.³²⁵ He who bears the symbols of the disk and conch on the upper arms reaches Viṣṇu, because Nārāyaṇa himself has promised him salvation (BṛhadbrahmaS 1.2.21–67 and 1.8.19). According to *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā* 3.6.25–38, where the relati-

322 Oberhammer (2004: 50f.) argues that especially Nārāyaṇārya (ca. 13th century CE) tried to harmonize practice and belief, and that his thoughts in turn were adopted by the later Rāmānuja school.

323 While it is nowadays in some traditions accepted as practice that pañcasamṣkāra and prapatti go together, there seems to exist no actual textual reference.

324 Smith & Venkatachari (1980: 435) state that this saṃhitā is primarily directed toward the laity, and is almost exclusively concerned with different mantras. The text is taken to be a later work, because it insists on the direct connection between the concepts pāñcarātra, pañcakāla and pañcasamṣkāra.

325 See *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā* 1.7.93–109 on mantrasamṣkāra, 1.13.1–37 on tāpasamṣkāra and 1.13.1–38–154 on puṇḍrasamṣkāra. In *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā* 3.10 the puṇḍra form of the Teṅkalai school is prescribed (see below, 2.2.5.4).

on of the believer to Nārāyaṇa is described as a śeṣa-śeṣin relationship,³²⁶ true believers bear the branding (BṛhadbrahmaS 3.6.57–64; see 4.7.100). In particular, this branding frees the believer from all sins (BṛhadbrahmaS 1.5.6–42). According to *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā* 2.5.69–99 it is the duty of a Bhāgavata to bear the branding and to perform prapatti. In the *Parāśarasamhitā* the term Pāñcarātra is entirely traced back to pañcasamskāra and pañcakāla, which go hand in hand with prapatti (ParāśaraS 1.9–20). Pañcasamskāra are moreover a precondition to be able to serve as a priest (arcaka) in the temple (ParāśaraS 1.22, 3.127, 4.60–61), especially as the pañcasamskāra-dikṣā is the precondition for further initiations (ParāśaraS 4.161–163).³²⁷ In the chapter on the "conduct of the prapannas" (*prapannavṛttyācāra*, chapter 2) it is further stated that in the course of the upanayana samskāra they have their sons undergo pañcasamskāra, and that during the other preceding childhood samskāras they draw the disk and conch on the shoulders of the child. One becomes a Vaiṣṇava, according to the *Parāśarasamhitā*, by performing prapatti, regardless of which sūtra one follows.³²⁸

By being combined with pañcasamskāra, potentially, the option of becoming a Śrīvaiṣṇava and of attaining salvation through "taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa" became available to all. Yet, it involved another form of marking a boundary against those who (still) remained outside the group of Vaiṣṇavas. Ranked forms of boundary-marking developed among the Vaiṣṇavas (see Giesen 1999: 34f.): soon a distinction emerged between those who are eligible to confer pañcasamskāra and those who do not have this right. Only the descendants of the 74 Brahmins who were appointed by Rāmānuja as religious leaders (*ācāryapuruṣa*, *siṃhāsānādhipati*) were entitled to grant pañcasamskāra to other Brahmins.³²⁹ The Vaikhānasas' specific position on pañcasamskāra initiation is undoubtedly also to be understood against the background of this "popularization" of Śrīvaiṣṇavism through the possibility of conversion.

326 This concept involves the idea that the believer is "part" (*śeṣa*, *aṅga*) of the god (*śeṣin*, *aṅgin*) and contained within him.

327 This is the current practice even today, as my research in the Pāñcarātra mileu of Tamil Nadu reveals.

328 In line with this, according to the *Parāśarasamhitā*, branding is also required of the Vaikhānasas.

329 Mumme (1993: 123) explains that many descendents of these ācāryas today have inherited disciple Brahman families from their own ācāryas. They perform pañcasamskāra and lead the domestic rituals of their disciples. Today the group is, however, not in harmonious unity: they are divided amongst themselves into smaller groups which often harbour old rivalries over inherited temple honours etc. (see Varadachari 1982: 419).

2.2.5.2 Vaidika and tāntrika prapatti in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*

While a connection of this sort between pañcasamṣkāra and prapatti is not mentioned in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, it does appear in his *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. Although the term pañcasamṣkāra never appears in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita refers to this initiation by using different terms signifying “branding” to stand for it.³³⁰ The discussion of the necessity and meaning of marking with the disk and conch is introduced in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 103.1–9 by two citations. Therein first the contrary position (pūrvapakṣa) is given. It is argued there that ritual acts are futile when the initiate has no branding:

The devotee should carry according to the injunctions the disk symbol which takes away all the sins here and later (after death) destroys the circle of rebirth, made either of gold, silver, copper or of iron with eight spokes and centre and round, consisting of four flames (in four directions).

Sacrifice, gift, ascetic exercises, homa, eating (and) tarpaṇa for ancestors, (all this) done by a Brahman without the disk-mark has no result (or reverse results).

On occasion of śrāddha, gift ceremony, vrata, sacrifice, marriage and initiation ceremony, one should respect only a disk-marked Brahman and not others.

According to this statement, thus *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 103.10–11, only those who are marked with the disk etc. can be Vaiṣṇavas, but not the Vaikhānasas. In response to this Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita now shows that the Vaikhānasas are also marked. With one quotation from “śruti” and two from the *Vaikhānasasamhitās Ānandasamhitā* and *Purātantra* he explains that Nārāyaṇa himself applies the marking on the arm of a Vaikhānasa foetus (DHN^D 103.12–17). In this way Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita proves that the Vaikhānasas are Vaiṣṇavas already before birth through viṣṇubali. He then differentiates between “marking through branding” and “prenatal marking,” establishes a direct connection between marking and vaiṣṇava nature, while assuming that the element of the branding of the milk porridge is necessary component of viṣṇubali.

Then Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita connects the idea that Nārāyaṇa himself marks the unborn child with the idea that Nārāyaṇa (Puruṣa) is the highest refuge for a person. Consequently, he then identifies the prenatal marking with a prenatal “taking refuge” (DHN^D 103.19–23).

He thereby equates here two fundamentally different ideas: the prenatal boundary marking through viṣṇubali, which in principle is based upon descent

330 As Raman 2005 points out and elaborates in 2007, it might always have been the case that the five samṣkāras were not necessarily performed in their entirety.

but which in this case is understood as divine intervention (Nārāyaṇa marks the unborn child), is connected with the marking during an initiation, which involves an act of will, a decision and verifiable qualification. In order to connect destiny determined by birth and conscious decision-making, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita argues that the foetus in the eighth month of pregnancy is equipped with consciousness and with the power of choice and thus of action. He proves with quotations from diverse upaniṣads that the act of will involved in "taking refuge" can be performed already by an unborn child. He quotes from the *Garbhopaniṣad*, according to which a person is already equipped with "knowledge" (*jñāna*) and "reflection" (*dhyāna*) before birth, and which at the same time provides an example to show that the resolution (*saṃkalpa*) to perform prapatti can in fact be made before birth: while still in his mother's womb, Vāmadeva recognized the sorrowful nature of cyclical rebirth and made up his mind to take refuge in Nārāyaṇa after birth (DHN^D 103.24–104.8).³³¹ A further quotation from the *Mudgalopaniṣad* reports how Indra taught Vāmadeva about the path to salvation while the latter was still in his mother's womb, which initiated Vāmadeva's decision to take refuge after birth (DHN^D 104.9–14).

At this point Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita introduces the central distinction between two types of taking refuge, namely the "tantric" (*tāntrika*) taking refuge and the taking refuge "in accordance with the Veda" (*vaidika*). First he characterizes vaidika prapatti: it consists of the invocation of the god Puruṣa etc. which is in accordance with the Veda, and which begins with the syllable *om*. This definition clearly refers to the invocation of Puruṣa at the beginning of the viṣṇubali saṃskāra described in section [puruṣāvāhana] of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* (see 2.2.2.1). Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita thereby establishes for the first time a direct link between "taking refuge in accordance with the Veda" and the prenatal life-cycle ritual viṣṇubali (DHN^D 104.15–16). To substantiate this equivalence, he quotes a verse from "śruti" (DHN^D 104.18–19):

Through the sound *a* Viṣṇu is expressed, the lord of all worlds, Hari. Through the sound *u* (the goddess) Lakṣmī is expressed, who is carried by Viṣṇu. The sound *m* is the slave of both. This is the characteristic of *praṇava* [= *om*].

The syllable *om* (a-u-m), with which the invocation of Puruṣa in viṣṇubali begins, therefore stands for the unity of Viṣṇu, Lakṣmī and their slaves, that is, their devotees. Hence *om* stands for the devotee's taking refuge in Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī. What is more, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita continues, one is already marked with

331 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita here characteristically quotes only the resolve to take refuge in Nārāyaṇa but not, however, the resolve to take refuge in Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Maheśvara and Brahmā, which are also mentioned in the *Garbhopaniṣad* (see GarbhaU 4.4–7).

the disk and conch through the pronunciation of *om* alone (DHN^D 104.20), as he proves on the basis of a short quotation from the *Kaivalyopaniṣad* (DHN^D 104.21–22). Moreover, according to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita vaidika prapatti also involves the devotee’s constant awareness that Viṣṇu is the cause of all that is, protects everything and encompasses everything in himself (*śeṣin*), while the devotee feels himself to be a part (*śeṣa*, *aṅga*) of the divine. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s vaidika prapatti therefore consists of an enduring inner attitude with simultaneous emphasis on mantras and in particular the syllable *om*. Then he gives a brief account of tāntrika prapatti, which he attributes to the Pāñcarātrins (DHN^D 105.4–7). The concerned persons give up the Vedas and take refuge with a prayer. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita rejects this form of taking refuge, because it involves a one-off act and not an ongoing condition, because no mantras are used as part of it, and because one does not call to mind that, as a devotee, one is part of the all-encompassing divine nature (DHN^D 105.8–10; see Ramachandra Rao 1990: 77f). However, apart from mentioning a prayer, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita does not go into detail regarding the practical procedures for tāntrika prapatti, while for vaidika prapatti he clearly indicates that this takes place in the context of the viṣṇubali saṃskāra. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita only approaches the practical aspects of tāntrika prapatti indirectly, when he returns to the marking. He insists that this “marking” is by no means a ritual to be performed by all (DHN^D 105.11–13), and in particular it should not be performed by the twice-born (DHN^D 105.14–15). The vaiṣṇava saṃskāras, as he calls them, are only to be conferred on women, Śūdras and servants (DHN^D 105.16–20).³³² God is always present in the Brahmins, as they are the “dwelling-place of the gods.” If this dwelling of the gods is damaged by burning, the gods will abandon the body and the branded Brahmin will no longer have the necessary ritual purity (DHN^D 105.21–106.13). In summary, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita recognizes branding only for those who receive initiation according to a “tantric” doctrine (DHN^D 106.14–16).³³³ Those passages in authoritative texts

332 In this passage, which is marked as a quotation from the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, Upaśloka is described as devoted to Kṛṣṇa, as a disciple of Nārada, and as the teacher of the so-called sātṛvata doctrine. According to the Pāñcarātra text, *Sanat Kumārasaṃhitā* (indrārātra 3.73–83), Sātṛvata is a term for the Pāñcarātrins, because Kṛṣṇa—the teacher of the Pāñcarātra doctrine—belongs to the Sātṛvata family.

333 I could not identify any of the verses from the Skanda, Viṣṇu, Padma and Bhāgavata purāṇas quoted here in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. Chapter 224 of the uttarabhāga in the *Padmapurāṇa* deals with the branding of the upper arms. However, according to this source it is precisely a Brahmin *with* branding who is a true Vaiṣṇava (see PadmaP uttarabhāga 224.42–80).

which demand "the bearing of the disk and conch"³³⁴ therefore refer to "bearing" in the form of a mental attitude, which is accompanied by the recitation of mantras (DHN^D 106.17–24).

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita then quotes several purāṇas to the effect that those initiated in the Pāñcarātra—just like for example the Śaivas and Buddhists—are outside the vedic tradition and are therefore the lowest of Brahmans, especially since they bear a brand (DHN^D 107.1–11). The Pāñcarātra is a doctrine for those who have departed from the vedic way (DHN^D 107.12–20). Yet he concedes that it has been created as protection for those who are outside the vedic tradition (DHN^D 107.21–108.15). As a result of following the Pāñcarātra doctrine those who have deviated from the Veda must perform the corresponding acts of atonement (*prāyaścitta*; DHN^D 108.16–109.4). Following the Pāñcarātra as well as the marking with the disk and conch are connected with the moral decline of the world in the Kaliyuga (DHN^D 109.15–110.11). Therefore, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita argues, the regulations which prescribe branding are not universally valid. At least for the Vaikhānasas these rules are not valid because for them *prāyaścittas* are prescribed when they undergo a branding (DHN^D 110.13–17). Here he obviously refers to two passages in the *Ānandasamhitā* (ĀS 19.14 and ĀS 4.60). Therefore, the Vaikhānasas' marking takes place not through branding, but is rather an enduring inner condition (DHN^D 110.17–20).

In the *Daśavidhaheturūpaṇa* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita sees a direct connection between marking and vaiṣṇava nature mediated through the element of the branding of the milk porridge. He identifies this prenatal marking with the soteriological concept of "taking refuge"³³⁵ and with it introduces the central distinction between two types of "taking refuge": that which is "tantric" (*tāntrika*) and that which is "in accordance with the Veda" (*vaidika*). The vedic taking refuge is an enduring inner condition, realized with vedic mantras. It is first brought about ritually in the course of the viṣṇubali saṃskāra which also simultaneously involves the prenatal marking of the unborn child with the conch and disk. That a marking is in fact obligatory, in order to count as a Vaiṣṇava and also as an expression of taking refuge, is not in dispute for Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita. Physical branding, which takes place without mantras,³³⁶ is by contrast characteristic for "tantric" taking refuge, and is not part of the vedic tradition. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita

334 One verse from the *Ānandasamhitā* and one from the *Mahopaniṣad* are quoted as examples.

335 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita also quotes a verse from the *Vṛddhahārītasṃṛti* where taking refuge in the lotus feet of Viṣṇu is attested as a characteristic of the Vaikhānasas (DHN^D 63.3–4).

336 Here a close investigation of and comparison with Venkaṭanātha's understanding of *pratti/śaraṇāgati* would certainly be very fruitful, but is beyond the scope of this work.

thus does allow the Pāñcarātra a place among the Vaiṣṇavas, albeit only in the non-vedic realm. The Pāñcarātrins are therefore, by contrast with the Vaikhānasas, not “true” Brahmins, they are “outside the Veda” and are not entitled to perform all rituals.

2.2.5.3 Prapatti in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī*

The text *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* (VMM) is also ascribed to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita. In this text he is likewise concerned with the Vaikhānasa claim to superiority over other vaiṣṇava groups. Here the emphasis clearly lies on the identification of the “taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa” with the viṣṇubali saṃskāra. The ideas contained in the *Daśavidhaheturirūpaṇa* are further developed in the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* and Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita provides a more profound theoretical underpinning of the differentiation from other, “inferior” forms of taking refuge. This is particularly clear from the identification of the ritual elements of viṣṇubali with different aspects of prapatti. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita makes explicit here that it is only prapatti which entitles one (*adhikāra*) to perform rituals.³³⁷ In *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* 4.27 he returns to the subdivision of prapatti into the two categories, *vaidikī* prapatti and *tāntrikī* prapatti,³³⁸ introduced in *Daśavidhaheturirūpaṇa* 104.15–16. He now introduces a further subdivision: prapatti “in accordance with the Veda” is further divided into three hierarchically ranked categories, the “highest,” the “middle” and the “lowest.”³³⁹ In his concluding brief explanation, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita states that viṣṇubali is the “highest prapatti” because this act involves a sacrificial fire.³⁴⁰ If the act were performed without a sacrificial fire, it would be the “middle prapatti.”³⁴¹ Prapatti which occurs “only through a prayer” is the “lowest.”³⁴² It is not clear here what is meant if it is per-

337 VMM 4.7–13: *marīciḥ: atha nārāyaṇaikavarasya paramaikāntinaḥ prapannasyārādhanē ‘dhikāro vā? veti vicāraḥ kriyate. tatra tadārāadhanādihikāriṇaḥ prapadane ‘dhikāra ity avagamyate. ‘yathāvad adhikāriṇo yajanadānahomārcanābharanyasānabhāvanā-prabhṛtibhiḥ samārādhiṭaḥ phalaṃ diśati devānām iti hi sampradāyaś śubhaś śrutissmṛ-tigurūktibhir nayavatūbhir ābhāti naḥ’ iti bhinnakriyātvenoktatvād bhagavadārādha-kasya prapadane ‘dhikāra itī cet satyam.*

338 VMM 4.27: *prapattir dvividhā, vaidikī tāntrikī ceti.*

339 VMM 4.28–29: *tatra vaidikī trividhā, uttamā madhyamādhamā ceti.*

340 VMM 5.2–4: *śrutisiddhāṣṭādaśārīrasaṃskāreṣu garbhagatasyāṣṭame māsi viṣṇubali itī yat kriyate tad uttamaḥ; prapadanakarmatvāt homādirūpeṇa kriyamāṇatvāc ca.*

341 VMM 5.4–5: *homādibhir vihīnaṃ madhyamaṃ.*

342 VMM 5.5–7: *‘ananyasādhye svābhīṣṭe mahīviśvāsapūrvakaṃ / tadekopāyatā yācñā prapattiś śaraṇāgatir ||’ itī mahāviśvāsapūrvakatvena yācñāmātreṇa yat kriyate tad adhamāṃ. Here he is in line with Vedānta Deśika who devotes an entire chapter of his*

formed "without a sacrificial fire." Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita provides no further explanation. The description of the lowest prapatti, which occurs "only through a prayer," clearly refers to the "tantric" prapatti described in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 105.4–7, which is there ascribed to the Pāñcarātrins. Here arises a inconsistency within Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's works: on the one hand he classifies this form of taking refuge as tāntrikī prapatti (in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 105.4–7), and on the other he classifies it as the "lowest" vaidikī prapatti (in *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* 5.1–7). However, elsewhere in the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita himself ignores the subdivision into three types of prapatti "in accordance with the Veda." There we find, first, that only the Vaikhānasaś perform vaidikī prapatti (VMM 25.11–26.6). Subsequently Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita gives a somewhat more detailed account of prapatti: prapatti is "the highest" when one takes refuge in Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī in the form of a saṃskāra. If one performs the taking refuge as a permanent inner attitude, but not in the form of a saṃskāra, that is the "middle prapatti." When prapatti takes place "with great trust and in the form of a prayer," then it is a case of the lowest form of prapatti and is "tantric."³⁴³

While in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita explicitly identifies only the beginning of the viṣṇubali ritual (namely the invocation of Puruṣa with the mantras *om bhūḥ puruṣaṃ āvāhayāmi* etc.) with prapatti, in the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* his identification of individual rites goes significantly further. There he explains that with the four mantras of the invocation of Puruṣa are respectively Viṣṇu, Mahāviṣṇu, Sadāviṣṇu and Sarvavyāpin Nārāyaṇa invoked.³⁴⁴ Moreover, the invocation of the twelve forms of Viṣṇu (see above 2.2.2.1 [dvādaśāvāhana]) specifically protects the child as the twelve forms are assigned to the twelve parts of the body.³⁴⁵ Both the sacrifice of the milk porridge mixed

Rahasyatrayasāra (chapter 24) to refuting the doctrine that prapatti is simply a prayer or request (see Mumme 2007: 119). See also DHN^D 105.6–7.

343 VMM 26.26–29: *anena dvayena prapattiḥ nityatvena saṃskārarūpeṇa kriyate cet tat paramavaidikam uttamaṃ. nityatvena saṃskārarūpeṇa vinā yat kriyate tan madhyamaṃ. mahāviśvāsapūrvakatvena tadekopāyatā yācanāmātreṇa yat kriyate tad adhamam, vaidikakriyāhīnatvāt. tāntrikoktatvāc ca.*

344 VMM 8.2–5: *bhūḥ puruṣa ity anena viṣṇuḥ bhuvah puruṣa ity anena mahāviṣṇuḥ suvaḥ puruṣa ity anena sadāviṣṇuḥ, bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ puruṣa ity anena sarvavyāpī nārāyaṇaḥ. "brahmacatuṣpād bhavati"ti paripūrṇasya nārāyaṇasya prapadanārthaṃ om bhūḥ puruṣam ity ādiprayogaḥ;* on these four aspects of Viṣṇu see Colas 1986b: 135f., see Colas 1996: 112.

345 VMM 10.24–29: *iti garbhagatasya tattatkālāpekṣayā rakṣakatvena, "lalāṭe keśavāyeti, kuḅṣau nārāyaṇāya ca, hrdaye mādhavāyeti, govindāya gale nyaset. viṣṇave dakṣiṇe kuḅṣau nama ity abhidhīyate, tatpārśvabāhumadhye tu madhusūdanam eva ca, trivikra-*

with clarified butter (see 2.2.2.1 [pāyasahoma]) and the bowing to the twelve forms of the god (see 2.2.2.1, [praṇāma]) are identified with “self-sacrifice” or “self-dedication” (*ātmasamarpaṇalātmanivedana*) as part of prapatti (VMM 11.1–12.5; 14.4–24). Later in the text Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita explicitly names the elements of bowing to the god, the sacrifice of clarified butter, and the fact that an atonement is required if viṣṇubali is not performed as major factors which qualify viṣṇubali as a form of prapatti.³⁴⁶

Entirely in keeping with his emphasis on the importance of mantras in the context of vaidikī prapatti Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita identifies the ritual components of viṣṇubali with the mantras essential for “taking refuge.”³⁴⁷ The mantras concerned are the so-called tirumantra or aṣṭākṣara,³⁴⁸ the dyava mantra³⁴⁹ and the caramaśloka.³⁵⁰ These three mantras are collectively called rahasya or rahasyatraya. Their interpretation forms the subject matter of many texts (*rahasyagrantha*) from the 13th century onwards.³⁵¹ Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita here identifies the invocation of Puruṣa with the aṣṭākṣara mantra (VMM 15.17–20), and the remaining rites of viṣṇubali with the dvaya mantra.³⁵² This identification remains incomplete,

maṃ kaṇṭhadese vāmakukṣau tu vāmanam, śrīdharam bāhukevāme hṛṣīkeśaṃ tu kaṇṭhake. pṛṣṭhe tu padmanābhaṃ tu kakuddāmodaram nyaset. dvādaśaitāni nāmāni vāsudeveti mūrdhni.” This assigning of the twelve parts corresponds to the application of the twelve ūrdhvapuṇḍras. There too the twelve names are recited, one name for each part of the body. The explanation that this rite serves to protect the child (VMM 10.24 and 30) again clearly recalls Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s interpretation of the viṣṇubali saṃskāra (see 2.2.2.2, NVB [sāmkalpa]).

346 VMM 15.12–15: *ity namaskārarūpaprapadanam “namaskārātmakaṃ tasmai vidhāyātmanivedanaṃ / prapattim tām prayujīta svāṅgaiḥ paṃcabhir āvṛtām //” iti ājyākainkaryarūpeṇa prapadanapratipādanāt, akaraṇe prāyaścittavidhānāc ca, viṣṇubaliḥ iti prapadanam evoktaṃ.*

347 In several places Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita uses the term bharanyāsa to refer to the mantras required for prapatti (see VMM 1.15, 3.12 etc.). In the Vāṭakalai school today, bharanyāsa is the term used for the request that god grant refuge to the person concerned.

348 *Oṃ namo nārāyaṇāya.*

349 *Śrīmannārāyaṇacaraṇau śaraṇaṃ prapadye, śrīmate nārāyaṇāya namaḥ.*

350 BhGī 18.66: *sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja / ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ ||.*

351 On this see Mumme 1988: 73–141.

352 VMM 15.15–23: *kiṃca “oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam” ity ārabhya “namoṃtair nābahiḥ praṇamed” ityaṃtair uktatvāt rahasyatrayam api pratipāditaṃ bhavati. katham iti ced ucyate. “oṃ bhūḥ puruṣam” ityādināṣṭākṣarapratipādanaṃ; praṇavaṃ ca pratipādy puruṣaśabdena nārāyaṇaṃ pratipādy “juṣṭaṃ nirvapāmi” tyādiṣu “juṣ prīṭisevanavayor” iti sevāparatvenāvagamyamānatvāc chāṣṭākṣarapratipādanaṃ “keśavanārāyaṇam” ity ārabhya “namoṃtair nābahiḥ praṇamed” ity anena dvayapratipādanaṃ; ādau*

however, for Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita does not deal with the caramaśloka. Sundararāja therefore adds at this point in his commentary on the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī*, the *Candrikā*, at this point, that the caramaśloka is also represented by viṣṇubali.³⁵³

It is significant here to note that the diversion into vaidika and tāntrika prapatti recalls Veṅkaṭa Deśika's concern that prapatti must be vaidika. In his text *nikṣeparakṣā* he seeks to prove that śaraṇāgati is vaidika (see Venkatachari 2006: 51f.).

In order to illustrate why the Vaikhānasas are marked with the disk and conch in the viṣṇubali ritual, and why this counts as prapatti "in accordance with the Veda," Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita refers back to arguments from the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*.³⁵⁴ His discussion of the syllable *om* and the description of the "tantric" prapatti repeats almost verbatim the corresponding passages in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*,³⁵⁵ as does the explanation of the prohibition on branding for Brahmans and the identification of viṣṇubali as a marking by Nārāyaṇa himself.³⁵⁶ Even the question of the extent to which the foetus is able to consciously decide to perform prapatti corresponds to the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*.³⁵⁷ In the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita only adds that the feeding of the pregnant woman implies that the foetus also consumes the milk porridge (VMM 13.5–11).

praṇavaṃ pratipādyā madhye puruṣādiśabdaprayogān namontatvenoktatvāc ca dvaya-pratipādanam iti vā.

353 VMM 16.23–24; *anenaiva "sarvadharmān parityajya" ityādi caramaślokoktaśaraṇāgatisiddheḥ rahasyatrayam api pratipāditam bhavatīty uktaṃ.*

354 See VMM 16.26–27 / DHN^D 103.6–7; VMM 16.28 / DHN^D 103.10–11; VMM 16.29 / DHN^D 103.24; VMM 16.29–7.1 / DHN^D 104.21–24; VMM 17.3–4 / DHN^D 103.14–15.

355 VMM 17.27–28 / DHN^D 104.15–16; VMM 17.28–18.1 / DHN^D 104.17–20; VMM 18.1–5 / DHN^D 104.21–24; VMM 18.6–8 / DHN^D 105.1–5; VMM 18.9–13 / DHN^D 105.6–10.

356 VMM 19.2–14 / DHN^D 105.11–106.7; VMM 19.14–15 / ca. DHN^D 106.14–16; VMM 19.15–21 / DHN^D 106.17–24.

357 VMM 5.8–17 / DHN^D 103.24–104.8. In order to distinguish the Vaikhānasas from the Bauddhāyanins, in whose sūtra viṣṇubali is also described, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita offers the argument in the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī*, that the followers of the Bauddhāyana sūtras are no paramaikāntins in addition to the worship of Viṣṇu, since in their sūtra the worship of other gods is prescribed (VMM 6.8–21).

2.2.5.4 Prapatti and pañcasamṣkāra in the Tenkalai and Vāṭakalai schools

Diverging views on the proper ritual enactment of prapatti not only distinguish the Vaikhānasas from other Vaiṣṇavas, but also emerge indirectly from some Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās. Thus in the 15th chapter of the *Śeṣasaṃhitā* in discussing prapatti it is stated that the so-called *bāhayoga* involves bearing the disk and conch (ŚeṣaS 15.259–263), while by the term *antaryoga* certain (inner) virtues are to be understood (ŚeṣaS 15.264–280). The *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā* also distinguishes between an *antastāpa* and a *bahistāpa* in relation to pañcasamṣkāra, that is, an “inner branding” through mantras and an “outer branding” through heated metal symbols (BṛhadbrahmaS 4.1.3–15). This could reflect the discussion in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, or alternatively could be a foreshadowing, of another clash in South Indian Vaiṣṇavism, namely the splitting of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas into the two schools of the Vāṭakalai and the Tenkalai. This issue can only be touched upon here; for details other relevant works may be consulted.³⁵⁸

Between the 13th and the 15th centuries CE a division of the followers of the Viśiṣṭādvaita doctrine (the Śrīvaiṣṇavas) into two movements became apparent. Each would later establish their own works and their own teacher-pupil succession lineage.³⁵⁹ The primary differences relate to the questions of precedence with respect to the language of the tradition and authoritative texts, the question of the nature of divine grace and therefore of taking refuge in god,³⁶⁰ differences in the doctrine of “sin and forgiveness,” different degrees of integration of the non-twice-born into the system, etc. The differences between the two schools hardened to such an extent that today they form two largely endogamous vaiṣṇava groups.³⁶¹ One of the disputed points was the question of whether prapatti should take place alongside pañcasamṣkāra or not.

From a performance point of view this dispute is about the question of whether taking refuge is accompanied by a physical branding. For the Tenkalais the initiate should perform prapatti as a component of pañcasamṣkāra, submitting

358 See Govindacarya 1912; Doraiswamy Iyengar 1983; Jagadeesan 1977 und 1989; Mumme 1987a und b, 1988, 1993 und 1999; Rangachari 1931; Siauve 1978; Venkatachari 1978. See also the bibliography in Raman 2007.

359 Mumme (1988: 2) notes that the religious leaders to whom each of the schools refers, did not see themselves as founders of schools. This distinction first appears in the literature in the 16th–17th century. It is also from this period that separate guruparampāras first become apparent.

360 See Mumme 1988: 73ff. and 261.

361 See Rangachari 1956: 177f; see Colas 1995a: 121f.

himself to the god through the ācārya and praying that he may be saved through prapatti. For them, thus, prapatti goes hand in hand with their physical branding. The Vaṭakalais also practice self-surrender through prapatti as a voluntary rite, but separate from pañcasamṣkāra.³⁶² They take the stance that one's self-surrender should be done individually, and at a time when the person is mature enough to understand what he is doing. In both schools, however, it evidently remains uncontroversial that one of the preconditions for belonging to the Śrīvaiṣṇava group is branding in connection with pañcasamṣkāra. Unlike among the Vaikhānasas, it is therefore never debated whether branding is necessary, but rather whether prapatti is accompanied by branding or not.

Membership of the Tenkalai or the Vaṭakalai school and the division of the specialists in temple ritual between the Pāñcarātrins and the Vaikhānasas are essentially separate issues.³⁶³ Nevertheless the division of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas into Vaṭakalai and Tenkalai also had an effect on the organisation of ritual in vaiṣṇava temples. Membership of one or the other group is made clear through the sect marks (ūrdhvaṇḍra) worn on the forehead and on other parts of the body.³⁶⁴ These marks are in most cases also applied on the image itself and are marked on the temple walls. The temple priests also wear the ūrdhvaṇḍra and thereby show that they belong to one of the two groups. At the same time the arcaka is always also member of one of two distinct traditions of ritual practice, namely Pāñcarātra or Vaikhānasa. Colas (1995a: 123f.) notes on this issue that while the conflict between the Vaṭakalais and Tenkalais in itself only concerns the devotees, it has also had an effect on temple ritual. Thus today a Vaṭakalai Vaikhānasa priest is usually forbidden to touch the image of the god Pārthasārathi in the (Tenkalai) Pārthasārathi temple (Triplicane, Chennai). To that extent sectarian disunity has here overridden the ritual tradition. Despite such overlaps, the rift between the Vaṭakalais and Tenkalais has never permeated the whole Vaikhānasa group. This is based on the character of the Vaikhānasa tradition: this is not a philosophical school, and does not represent a particular soteriology, but is a ritual school. Whether individual Vaikhānasas belong to the Vaṭakalais or Tenkalais is therefore to some degree immaterial, as this only became important because of the respective temple's sectarian affiliation and the public pressure resulting from this, and did not primarily emerge from conviction. Thus unlike

362 See Mumme 1987b: 3; Mumme 2007: 109; see Rangachari 1931: 45f; see Siauue 1978: 9: 40, note 9 and Appendix B.

363 See Colas 1995a: 122f; see also Gnanambal 1971: 108.

364 The most visible distinguishing characteristic of the Tenkalais and Vaṭakalais is the form of the ūrdhvaṇḍra (on this see Jagadeesan 1989, chapter 5).

among other Vāṭakalai and Teṅkalai Vaiṣṇavas, among the Vaikhānasas there is intermarriage and commensality throughout the two groups. Nevertheless even today no Vaikhānasa would change which of the two groups he belonged to, Vāṭakalai or Teṅkalai, as the result of a move from one town to another. This may be connected with the heritability of temple service, which involves a hereditary affiliation of Vaikhānasa families to particular temples, which themselves are classed as belonging to either the Vāṭakalai or the Teṅkalai school.

2.2.5.5 Prapatti and viṣṇubali in the twentieth century

The *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* (“Illumination of the method to achieve salvation”; MOP), a 1905 work of the Vaikhānasa author Raghupati Bhaṭṭācārya, also deals with viṣṇubali and prapatti.³⁶⁵ The author of the *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* takes over and, in part, further develops many arguments from the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī*. In chapters 10–12 of the *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* Raghupati Bhaṭṭācārya concentrates on exegesis of the three mantras essential for prapatti.³⁶⁶ Colas (1985: 119) remarks that as a whole the *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* follows the scheme of Viśiṣṭādvaita handbooks and has much in common with the *Rahasyatrayasāra*, a Maṇipravāla text by Vedānta Deśika. Like the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* the *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* distinguishes three types of prapatti, but these are defined somewhat differently: *adhama*, the “lowest” sort of prapatti, results from simply pronouncing the taking refuge. The “middle” form of prapatti is that which takes place according to the tantra. This is not eternal, and does not have the nature of a saṃskāra.³⁶⁷ The “highest prapatti” is that which a Vaikhānasa obtains by means of the viṣṇubali ritual. Only this prapatti entitles one to worship the god. For the author of the *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* the worship of god prescribed in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is the right way to achieve salvation. Both prapatti and the capacity to perform the invocation of god (*ārādhana*) are transmitted to the foetus through viṣṇubali. The *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* also relies on arguments familiar from the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* in giving an account of the grounds for the superiority of Vaikhānasa prapatti: because it is carried out with vedic mantras, because it has eternal efficacy, because it takes the form of a saṃskāra, because it is commanded by god, because its omission would require a prāyaścitta, and because the Ṛṣi Marīci mentions this prapatti. The *Mok-*

365 For much of what follows, I rely on the 1985 study of this text by Colas.

366 Unlike the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī*, the caramasloka is also dealt with here (Colas 1985: 118).

367 MOP pp. 63–64: *tanreṇa yat kriyate tan madhyamam. nityatvābhavāt saṃskārarūpatvābhavāt.*

ṣopāyapradīpikā is much more detailed than the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* in refuting possible objections. The *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* is therefore clearly a summary of the doctrine of the late Vaikhānasa tradition (see Colas 1985: 122). According to it the invocation of god (*ārādhana*) together with bhakti (loving devotion) and prapatti is the best method for achieving salvation, and in particular for the Vaikhānasas, whose primary obligation is priesthood.

The *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* appears to be quite popular among Tamil- and Telugu-speaking Vaikhānasas.³⁶⁸ In fact the Vaikhānasas today support the view that viṣṇubali is also accompanied by prapatti. Thus according to the Tamilian Vaikhānasa scholar Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭācārya viṣṇubali corresponds to prapatti, or the śaraṇāgati of the "pupils of Rāmānuja" whose most significant characteristic is branding. The Vaikhānasa bṛhaspati Anantapadmanābhācāryulu Gāru from Machilipatnam (Andhra Pradesh; see 4.6.2) states that in the course of viṣṇubali the bṛhaspati whispers the three mantras in the pregnant woman's ear. Only after that is she given the milk porridge to eat. I was able to document an act resembling this at a viṣṇubali performance in Vijayawada (see 4.4.3). By contrast, Pārthasārathi N. Bhaṭṭācārya from Chennai states that the normal mantras in viṣṇubali already bring about prapatti for the unborn child. If then the three mantras are recited during viṣṇubali, this is *deśācāra*, that is, local custom. There is agreement, however, that for the Vaikhānasas viṣṇubali is the indispensable prerequisite for the worship of the god, just as pañcasamṣkāra is the prerequisite to Viṣṇu's worship for the Śrīvaiṣṇavas. The worship of Viṣṇu is in turn the only way to salvation. From the Vaikhānasa point of view the essential difference between their own and other traditions is that taptacakrāṅkaṇa is not one of the samṣkāras prescribed by the sūtras, whereas viṣṇubali is.³⁶⁹

368 The text has been edited three times, twice in Telugu script and once in Tamil Grantha script.

369 According to the contemporary Vaikhānasa scholar Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭācārya, the branding of others by Vaikhānasas described in the *Ānandasamhitā* only rarely is actually performed. If, however, the Vaikhānasas confer pañcasamṣkāra on others, the performance exactly resembles pañcasamṣkāra within the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition. If those who follow other traditions have pañcasamṣkāra performed by Vaikhānasas, this is for the most part carried out in the context of upanayana. This by no means entitles them to touch the image of god in the temple, or to pass on the blessing of god to the believers. In Vaikhānasa temples they may only perform auxiliary services.

2.2.6 Summary

Analysis of the diverse passages on viṣṇubali reveals that all Vaikhānasa authors draw on the sūtra, some word for word, but all in content. Many texts—such as those of Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin, Sundararāja and Vasantayājīn—remain very close to the text of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. At times a recognition of the authority of the *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra* may be noted. Clear divergences from, or additions to, the sūtra are almost inevitably provided with some explanation (see the *Nibandhana* of Veṅkaṭayogin and the *Smārtakarmānukramaṇikā* of Kodaṇḍāramayajvan). This faithfulness to the sūtra tradition connects the Vaikhānasas' hereditary profession as temple priests with their specific sūtra tradition. The majority of the texts agree with Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin in understanding viṣṇubali as protecting the unborn child. Although Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's otherwise rather "purist" attitude is not in the end generally accepted, the idea of viṣṇubali as a protective ritual is always present. Nevertheless Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin (or the editor of the text?) opposes the idea that there should be a role for Viṣṇu's symbols, the disk and conch, in the course of the viṣṇubali saṃskāra. Many other texts do not follow the commentator here, but rather expand the ritual to include the idea that through viṣṇubali the foetus becomes a follower of Viṣṇu (*garbhavaiṣṇava*). The question which immediately arises from the very concept itself, namely to what extent a foetus can actively "follow" a god, is dealt with by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita. He demonstrates that the foetus possesses a will and the capacity to make decisions while still in the mother's womb, and therefore can decide to acknowledge Viṣṇu as the highest god, and thus take refuge in him. The idea of garbhavaiṣṇavatva goes hand in hand with the introduction of a new rite into viṣṇubali: the milk porridge, which the pregnant woman is given to eat at the end of viṣṇubali, is first brandmarked with the two symbols of Viṣṇu. Here the texts represent an almost direct interaction of scholarly reflection and ritual practice. This new rite—the branding of the milk porridge—is labelled garbhacakrasaṃskāra in the *Ānandasamhitā*. This rite thus explicitly represents the performative expression of the postulated prenatal vaiṣṇava nature (*garbhavaiṣṇavatva*) of the Vaikhānasas, as against the necessity of bearing a brand. The first component of the "five saṃskāras" (pañcasamskāra), the branding of the upper arms with the heated symbols of the disk and conch (*tāpa*), is thus transformed by the Vaikhānasas into the branding of milk porridge. Thus the Vaikhānasas on the one hand resembled other vaiṣṇava groups in that they also have a branding rite, but at the same time they differentiate themselves from other Vaiṣṇavas in that they in-

tegrated this “sectarian” initiation to their prenatal saṃskāra viṣṇubali.³⁷⁰ This initiatory rite is thereby subordinated to the Vaikhānasas’ religious identity based on family descent. It is important to note that the Vaikhānasas’ authoritative texts explicitly forbid branding of the upper arms for the Vaikhānasas. The garbhacakrasaṃskāra, which is interpreted as a superior counterpart to pañca-saṃskāra, adds the criterion of descent to that of initiation as the ritual realisation of membership of the group of Vaiṣṇavas (cf. Michaels 1998b: 86ff). At the same time the integration of the element of branding into the prenatal saṃskāra viṣṇubali proved to be suitable to incorporate the Śrīvaiṣṇava soteriological concept of “taking refuge in Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa” (*prapatti/śaraṅāgati*) into the Vaikhānasa tradition, since this taking refuge took place at the same time as pañca-saṃskāra among the Śrīvaiṣṇavas, and was therefore identified with it. The Vaikhānasas took over this combination of pañcasamskāra with the specific idea of salvation through prapatti again in a modified form, and subordinated it to their code of identity which is based on on descent and which is ritually expressed through the saṃskāras contained in their sūtra. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita pursued the strategy of connecting the advantages of prenatal dedication through viṣṇubali (implying divine grace and intervention) with the advantages of initiation (implying individual decision and qualification). In the course of viṣṇubali the unborn child takes the decision to take refuge in Nārāyaṇa. To that end, in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* and the *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī*, elements of the ritualized refuge-taking are identified with ritual elements of viṣṇubali. This integration of the Śrīvaiṣṇava idea of prapatti is accompanied by a further hierarchisation of vaiṣṇava groups, in that Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita differentiates between a the superior taking refuge by Vaikhānasas which is “in accordance with the Veda” (*vaidika*) and the inferior tantric taking refuge, for example among the Pāñcarātrins.

370 Following Colas it is to be assumed that this garbhacakradīkṣā is a recent innovation, as it is only mentioned in the later Vaikhānasasaṃhitās. At the same time he notes that even the quite old *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa* knows the term garbhavaiṣṇava, although the initiation is not mentioned there. He suspects that the consumption of food branded with vaiṣṇava emblems is a more recent custom, and the representation of the prenatal initiation as a saṃskāra probably even more recent (see Colas 1996: 176f.). In this context it is interesting to note that the so-called nārāyaṇabali saṃskāra, mentioned in the Vaikhānasa and the Baudhāyana sūtras, is structured similar to a dīkṣā, connecting the deceased person with Nārāyaṇa (see Krick 1977: 77f.).

