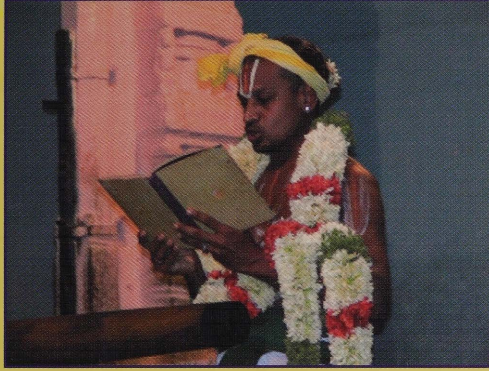


Words and Deeds



Hindu and Buddhist Rituals in South Asia

Edited by
Jörg Gengnagel
Ute Hüsken
Srilata Raman

Harrassowitz Verlag

Ethno-Indology

Heidelberg Studies in South Asian Rituals

General Editor
Axel Michaels

Volume 1

2005

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Words and Deeds

Hindu and Buddhist Rituals
in South Asia

Edited by Jörg Gengnagel,
Ute Hüsken and Srilata Raman

2005

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Publication of this volume has been made possible by the generous funding of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Council) within the framework of the Collaborative Research Centre, *Dynamics of Ritual*, at the University of Heidelberg.

Cover: Recitation during the temple-festival Brahmotsava in the Varadaraja temple in Kancipuram, Tamil Nadu (8.6.2004; Photo by Ute Hüsken).

Central Asian
Library
University of Heidelberg
Library

S A 05

Bibliografische Information Der Deutschen Bibliothek:
Die Deutsche Bibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.ddb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek:
Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available in the internet at <http://dnb.ddb.de>. e-mail: cip@dbf.ddb.de

For further information about our publishing program consult our website at <http://www.harrassowitz.de/verlag>

© Otto Harrassowitz KG, Wiesbaden 2005

This work, including all of its parts, is protected by copyright. Any use beyond the limits of copyright law without the permission of the publisher is forbidden and subject to penalty. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage and processing in electronic systems.

Printed on permanent/durable paper.

Typesetting: Quoc-Bao Do and Till Luge, South Asia Institute Heidelberg

Printing and binding: Hubert & Co., Göttingen

Printed in Germany

ISSN 1860-2053

ISBN 3-447-05152-3

Table of Contents

General Preface to the “Heidelberg Studies in South Asian Rituals”	7
Editors’ Preface	15
Gérard Colas Rites Among Vaikhānasas and Related Matters: Some Methodological Issues	23
Axel Michaels <i>Samkalpa</i> : The Beginnings of a Ritual	45
Jörg Gengnagel <i>Kāśīkhaṇḍokta</i> : On Texts and Processions in Vārāṇasī	65
Srilata Raman <i>Samāśrayaṇa</i> in Śrīvaiṣṇavism	91
Marion Rastelli Unaltered Ritual in Transformed Religion. The <i>pūjā</i> According to <i>Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā</i> 28 and the Nityagrantha	115
Ute Hüsken <i>Samskāras</i> in Theory and Practice	153
Alexander von Rospatt The Transformation of the Monastic Ordination (<i>pravrajyā</i>) Into a Rite of Passage in Newar Buddhism	199
Oliver Freiburger Resurrection from the Dead? The Brāhmaṇical Rite of Renunciation and Its Irreversibility	235
Karin Steiner Proposal for a Multi-Perspective Approach to Śrauta Ritual	257
Monika Horstmann Why Ritual? An Eighteenth-Century Debate	277
Contributors	291
Index	293

AXEL MICHAELS

General Preface to the
“Heidelberg Studies in South Asian Rituals”¹

It is the holy and written word that has attracted attention in the European study of cultures. However, this focus on scripture and the criticism of idolatry, idols and visualisations discriminated not only against cultures that did not have any written text but also against the oral and folk traditions within book religions as well as against all those social groups which remained for long illiterate, i.e. women or subaltern groups. It also widely disregarded rituals and religious practice.

For centuries, it was the book religions that were recognised as superior. New subjects such as Indology could justify themselves in the canon of academic fields and institutions, especially the faculties, only by demonstrating that non-Christian cultures were also based on scriptures. The focus on written sources in book religions was so extensive that for long scholars in the West could not adequately recognise the peculiarity of Indian, especially Vedic culture, i.e. the fact that scripture was based on a great mnemo-technical capacity for the transmission of texts or, in other words, that scripture was ideally not a written text.

There have been good reasons for the preference for written texts in book religions. It is through the book that knowledge can be easily kept, preserved and transported to other regions and, thereby, have the greatest impact on culture in the media. The holy book creates a common point of reference and, thus, a centre for religious communities. It separates texts from their subjective, regional, emotive contexts and, thus, from their creators as well as from their historical limitations. Moreover, the wisdom of books is, in principle, available to everybody, it is not necessarily related to a personal and intimate relationship between author and recipient. The book, therefore, makes the reader or listener independent of the author, preacher and priest even if in many religions the forms of reading, writing and listening have been restricted or ritualised. The principle of *sola scriptura* according to which only the reader of the Bible is responsible for

1 This contribution is partly an extract of my article Michaels 2004b.

its proper understanding and that none shall come between him and the text is basically part of the medium itself. You can find out for yourself what the scripture means which also implies that there is what Jack Goody has called the "individualizing tendency" of books (Goody 1991: 28). Finally, the book is a durable collective expression of the memory of cultures and a constant source of popularization and canonization.² Written texts or books mean cultural memory but also a culturally independent point of reference and the possibility of diversification. These many advantages imply that the medium of the written text, especially the book or, more specifically, even the printed book was and still is the most important source for the study of cultures. Moreover, if one looks at how religions and cultures are spread and mixed through the new medium of internet the power of written texts is again confirmed. In short, with regard to religion, written texts and their exegesis establish not only "sacred persistence" as defined by Jonathan Z. Smith (1982: 36–52) but also cultural persistence. They remain the best source for any historically orientated study of cultures.

The preference for written sources in the West has long led to the neglect of other forms of texts understood in a broader semiotic sense, i.e. forms of non-verbal signals and communication, e.g. visual and acoustic signs, gestures, behaviour etc. It also led to the lack of respect paid to the importance of oral texts (cp. Graham 1987) and to the anthropology of texts. It generated little concern for the context of the texts, i.e. its agents, users, readers etc. This has changed since the cultural turn in the humanities. Since then the study of texts has also become a study of the social structures that generated the texts, a study of the application of texts (for e.g. in rituals), a study of the performance and reception of texts, and a study of their historical conditions. To be sure, all this has been considered in previous indological research but due to the cultural turn in the humanities such an approach has become a theoretical programme which could be outlined as follows:

Firstly, culture is claimed as an entity that encompasses everything that is made by human beings. It is, thus, not another realm alongside others such as politics, religion or law. It is the cover term for the study of all arte- and mente-facts. Culture is defined as an assembly of complex and dynamic signs which reveal social, material and mental dimensions. Each cultural object or sign presupposes a class of users, belongs to a group of signs (texts, pictures, gestures etc.) and is generated through mental codes, but none of these symbolic forms is beyond history and can thus be established as an ahistorical entity. What is most

2 See Assmann & Assmann & Hardmeier 1983, Assmann 1997, Coburn 1984, Coward 1988, Levering 1989, Timm 1992.

important in this theory, is that it deconstructs any form of essentialism. Instead, essentialism and dogmatism are avoided, naive empiricism can no longer be applied and orientalist arguments can no longer be easily formulated. Given the great amount of works which purport to reveal the soul of India, given the holistic errors that have been presented so often and which have often been unveiled as overt or covert racist arguments, this cultural turn was not only necessary but it also helped us to focus on the agents. In doing this a number of new and fascinating topics were raised: the gender aspect, the subaltern perspective, the importance of every-day life, the relevance of rituals and the performative as well as the transformative aspects of texts. All this furthered the understanding that culture is more than high culture, and it was due to such a turn in the humanities that Indology came to question the relationship between little and great traditions and stress the importance of regional studies, field-work and vernacular languages.

Another outcome of this turn was that texts were no longer understood as monolithic documents but as produced by particular interests and conflicts. This meant that in reading texts one must also consider those who are not directly visible within the text. Texts are often produced as arguments against dissenting positions—this is particularly true of ritual and philosophical texts—and thus reflect a more or less hidden reality. Texts are not only passive store-houses of information but are also generated for reasons of power, influence, honour or prestige.

Perhaps the most fascinating result of the cultural turn in the humanities has been the growing collaboration between philologists and anthropologists. The need for such a collaboration has been stressed several times before. The indologist Sylvain Lévi, for example, did pioneering work on Nepal considering the anthropological aspect of texts to such an extent that the anthropologist Andrés Höfer wrote an article on him with the significant sub-title “What we anthropologists owe to Sylvain Lévi” in which he aptly remarked:

Lévi is generally considered as an indologist. In reality, he saw himself as an historian. Although a philologist by training and acquainted with an amazing number of languages (cf. Renou 1936: 57), the documents of the past were, for him, not ends in themselves, but sources of information to be decoded with the suspicion of the historian. As Renou (1936: 8–9) aptly states, Lévi developed a particular sensitivity for meanings hidden “beneath the words” (*un sens profond des réalités sous les mots*). In fact, Lévi extended his quest for meaning into the realms of what we now call ideology, ethnotheory and contextual analysis. [...] he kept a close watch on the social functions of his sources. What fascinated him was the intricate relationship between the author and the public, rather than the mere literary value of a source, the process which produced a source, rather than the product, the source itself. (Höfer 1979: 176)

An important reason for combining indology and anthropology is, of course, the link between tradition and modernity in South Asia—a point that has led to a number of seminal articles: L. Dumont & D. Pocock, “For a sociology of India” (1957), M. Singer, “Text and Context in the Study of Contemporary Hinduism” (1972), McKim Marriott, “Towards an Ethnosociology of South Indian Caste Systems” (1977), and St. Tambiah, “At the confluence of anthropology, history, and Indology” (1987). Dumont and Pocock argued that “the first condition for a sound development of a sociology of India is found in the establishment of the proper relation between it and classical Indology” (1957: 7), and St. Tambiah even claimed that “today virtually no South or Southeast Asian anthropologist can afford not to engage with Indology and history even if his or her work is focused on the study of contemporary phenomena” (1987: 188). However, old prejudices between anthropology and Indology have remained. Anthropologists often still believe that indologists are primarily concerned with diacritics, and indologists often still believe that the study of contemporary phenomena are popularizations and vulgarizations that do not matter, or deviations and corruptions of the ancient traditions (cp. Tambiah 1987: 188).

Given this situation, the study of rituals in South Asia had for long been sandwiched between philology and anthropology. It is only since field-work and the study of texts have been combined, that rituals are studied *in situ* by indologists and classical ritual texts are used by anthropologists. The present series tries to do this by focusing on two aspects.

Firstly, it aims at a textual and (audio-)visual description, documentation and preservation of rituals, for which South Asia offers an unparalleled richness and variety of material which falls under basically three categories: a) Vedic and post-Vedic literature on still practiced sacrifices (*yajña*, *iṣṭi*, *homa*), rites of passage (*saṃskāra*) and optional rituals (*vrata* etc.), b) performative rituals such as dance, theatre and musical performances which are partly based on a rich Sanskrit literature, and c) theoretical works on exegesis of rituals as well as texts on the aesthetics of performances developed, for instance, as a special theory of aesthetical moods (*rasa*). This material has been increasingly studied and compiled³ by a number of scholars. There have also been impressive examples of works on rituals which combine textual studies with field-work.⁴

3 See, for instance, Hillebrandt 1897, Kane 1968ff., Pandey 1969 or Gonda 1980.

4 To mention some examples: Gonda 1980, Staal 1983, Tachikawa 1993, Einoo 1993, Witzel 1986 and 1987, Tachikawa & Bahulkar & Kolhatkar 2001 on Vedic rituals, or Bühnemann (1988), Einoo (1996) and Tachikawa (1996) on *pūjā*. For further such literature on life-cycle rituals see Michaels 2004a: 71–158 and the on-line bibliography on rituals in

Secondly, the present series aims at a theoretical analysis of such rituals. Most indological studies on South Asian rituals do not refer to the general discussion on rituals.⁵ If at all, one finds a perfunctory mention of V. Turner. Other authors such as E. Durkheim, B. Malinowski, M. Douglas, I. Goffman, R. Schechner, C. Bell, C. Humphrey & J. Laidlaw, or R. Rappaport are generally non-existent in indological literature on rituals. F. Staal, J. Heesterman and B.K. Smith remain the only exceptions as far as one can gauge. However, it was a great insight of the cultural turn in the humanities that there is no way without theory, in other words, that any work of culture is already theoretical by definition. Clifford Geertz, the most famous proponent of this argument, demonstrated that culture had to be studied as texts and as creating texts. Culture can only be construed, and it is the anthropologist (or indologist) who does this job. As a consequence the interpretational work of the researcher and author becomes more and more important. Culture itself becomes a text, there is no culture without text. Culture is written, not discovered.

If, thus, Indology opens up to an intensified study of the contexts of texts, if it also accepts fieldwork as a legitimate, adequate and proper (and not just supplementary) method for an appropriate analysis of the contents, functions and productions of texts, if it tries to combine the results of the textual and contextual studies with anthropological theory, it then situates itself at the confluence of philology, anthropology and history. It is this confluence which I call Ethno-Indology, and I hope that the present series, which aims at the practice of it, can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of what people in South Asia think, write and do.

References

- Assmann, Aleida & Jan Assmann & Chr. Hardmeier (ed.) 1983. *Schrift und Gedächtnis. Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation I*. München: Wilhelm Fink.
- Assmann, Jan ²1997. *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. München: C.H. Beck.
- Bühnemann, Gudrun 1988. *Pūjā. A Study in Smārta Ritual*. Wien: Institut für Indologie der Universität Wien.

South Asia on the homepage of the Department of Classical Indology at the South Asia Institute: <http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/abt/IND/index.html>

5 For an annotated bibliography on the study of rituals see Kreinath & Snoek & Stausberg forthc.

- Coburn, Thomas B. 1948. "'Scripture' in India: Towards a Typology of the Word in Hindu Life". In: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 52: 435–59.
- Coward, Harold 1988. *Sacred Word and Sacred Text: Scripture in World Religions*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Dumont, Louis & D. Pocock 1957. "For a Sociology of India". In: *Contribution to Indian Sociology* (N.S.) 1: 7–22.
- Einoo, Shingo 1993. "Changes in Hindu Ritual: With a Focus on the Morning Service". In: *Senri Ethnological Studies* 36: 197–237.
- 1996. "The Formation of the Pūjā Ceremony". In: *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 20 [= Festschrift P. Thieme]: 73–87.
- Evison, Gillian 1989. *Indian Death Rituals: The Enactment of Ambivalence*. Unpublished PhD thesis: Oxford University.
- Geertz, Clifford (ed.) 1986. *Writing Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goody, Jack & Ian Watt 1968. "The Consequences of Literacy". In: *Literacy in Traditional Society*, Goody, J. (ed.). Cambridge, 27–68.
- Goody, Jack & Ian Watt & Kathleen Gough 1991. *Entstehung und Folgen der Schriftkultur*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Gonda, Jan 1980. *Vedic Ritual. The Non-Solemn Rites*. Leiden, Köln: Brill.
- Graham, William A. 1987. *Beyond the Written Word. Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion*. Cambridge University Press.
- Heesterman, Jan 1985. *The Inner Conflict of Tradition. Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hillebrandt, Alfred 1897. *Ritualliteratur*. Straßburg: Karl J. Trübner.
- Höfer, András 1979. "On Re-reading *Le Nepal*: What We Social Scientists Owe to Sylvain Lévi". In: *Kailash* 7: 175–190.
- Humphrey, Caroline & James Laidlaw 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kane, P. V. ²1968ff. *History of Dharmasāstra (Ancient Medieval Religious and Civil Law)*. 6 vols. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Kreinath, Jens & Jan Snoek & Michael Stausberg (ed.) forthc. *Theorizing Rituals. Classical Topics, Theoretical Approaches, Analytical Tools, Annotated Bibliography*. Leiden: Brill.
- Levering, Miriam 1989. *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Mariott, McKim 1977. "Towards an Ethnosociology of South Indian Caste Systems". In: *The New Wind: Changing Identities in South Asia*, David, Kenneth A. (ed.). The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 227–238.
- Michaels, Axel 2004a. *Hinduism. Past and Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- 2004b. "Indology and the cultural turn". In: *Text and Context in Orissa and Beyond*, Malinar, A. & J. Beltz & H. Frese (ed.). New Delhi: Manohar.

- Pandey, Raj Bali 1969. *Hindu Saṃskāras: Socio-Religious Study of the Hindu Sacraments*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Renou, Louis 1936. "Sylvain Lévi et son œuvre scientifique". In: *Journal Asiatique* 228: 1–59.
- Singer, Milton 1972. "Text and Context in the Study of Contemporary Hinduism". In: *When a Great Tradition Modernizes. An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization*, Singer, Milton (ed.). New York, Washington, London: Praeger Publishers, 39–54.
- Smith, Jonathan Z. 1982. *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Staal, Frits 1979. "The Meaninglessness of Ritual". In: *Numen* 26: 2–22.
- 1983. *Agni. The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*. 2 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tachikawa, Musashi 1983. "A Hindu Worship Service in Sixteen Steps, *Ṣoḍaṣa-Upacāra-Pūjā*". In: *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 8: 104–86.
- 1993. "Homa in Vedic Ritual: The Structure of the *Darśapūrṇamāsa*". In: *Senri Ethnological Studies* 36: 239–67.
- Tachikawa, Musashi & Shrikant Bahulkar & Madhavi Kolhatkar 2001. *Indian Fire Ritual*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Tambiah, Stanley 1987. "At the Confluence of Anthropology, History, and Indology". In: *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (N.S.) 21: 187–216.
- Timm, Jeffrey R. (ed.) 1992. *Texts and Contexts: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Witzel, Michael 1986. "Agnihotra-Rituale in Nepal". In: *Formen kulturellen Wandels und andere Beiträge zur Erforschung des Himalaya*, B. Kölver (ed.). Sankt Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, 155–188.
- 1987. "The Coronation Rituals of Nepal. With Special Reference to the Coronation of King Birendra". In: *Heritage of the Kathmandu Valley*, Gutschow, N. & A. Michaels (ed.). Sankt Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, 415–468.

JÖRG GENGNAGEL, UTE HÜSKEN, SRILATA RAMAN

Editors' Preface

The present volume brings together a collection of articles on rituals in South Asia with a special focus on what is said about rituals and how they are done. The papers presented in it emerged out of two different events: the first a panel held at the 28th Deutsche Orientalisten Tag in March 2001, the second a workshop on South Asian rituals held at Heidelberg in November 2003, sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) under the aegis of the Collaborative Research Centre (Sonderforschungsbereich) on the *Dynamics of Ritual*. Both these events enabled the serious and far-ranging discussions which have now come to fruition in this and the companion volume. Added to this series of articles is an introductory paper by Gérard Colas based on a talk given at a workshop on Indian Rituals at the South Asia Institute in December 2002. A revised and greatly expanded version of a paper on royal consecration originally given at the panel of the Deutsche Orientalisten Tag by Alexis Sanderson will appear in a companion volume of this series.

In his general preface to the *Heidelberg Studies in South Asian Rituals* of which this volume forms a part, Axel Michaels argues for the recognition of religious and ritual texts as products of their time, of specific social and historical conditions, as discourses of power of a particular interest group or groups. In other words, to read them *in* context. Simultaneously, he also makes a plea for a broadening of the definition of what constitutes a "text", to encompass not only "scripture" (often "fixed" in a prestigious lineage of textual transmission, central to Religions of the Book and to Indology as a discipline), but also "fluid" works used as scripts in actual ritual performances and, finally, purely oral texts. These considerations about the nature of texts, their relationship to performance and the specificity of the religious traditions within which the debates about them arise lie at the heart of the collection of essays which appear in these volumes.

The plea for a broader definition of what constitutes a "text" and the methodological implications of adopting such definitions become apparent when we look at a recent and highly influential study of South Asian ritual, Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw's work on Jain *pūjā* (1994). When addressing the

specific relationship between ritual texts, ritual theology and exegesis, on the one hand, and contemporary ritual practice, on the other, Humphrey and Laidlaw arrive at some seemingly commonsensical conclusions about the relationship between the two.

Both the rules people follow in the ritual, and the sources for their ideas about what they might mean, are drawn from practical instruction and a largely local didactic oral tradition, rather than the supposedly authoritative prescriptive texts. In brief, despite the existence of a sacred canon, a long history of debate on precisely these matters, and a corpus of liturgical writings [...]. [R]itual practice prescribes the ritual much more closely than does ritual exegesis. (Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: 200)

One important implication of Humphrey and Laidlaw's anthropological approach is that, in implying as it does that participants and performers of rituals take recourse to traditions of an oral, didactic kind, there is the affirmation of the need for a broad definition of the category of "text".

We find a similar plea for broadening the definition of what constitutes text or scripture in Jeffrey R. Timm's volume devoted to the context of texts (1992). In the introduction Timm defines context as the hermeneutical context of particular texts and sees traditional, native exegesis as constituting this context. Yet, he cautions against a narrow understanding of traditional exegesis as restricted to written commentaries and speaks of it as "poly-methodic". He further adds:

This methodological diversity mirrors the complexity of sacred texts, a category that is fantastically fluid [...] Connecting sacred texts with the panorama of religious projects supports [the] claim that any generalization about scripture—when it is defined as a fixed body of written material carrying normative, prescriptive status for a given religious community—is woefully inadequate. (Timm 1992: 10–11)

We agree with these scholars that broader definitions of what constitutes the "text" or "scripture" are an important step toward adequately grasping the complexity of the relationship between ritual practice and ritual texts. Yet, this is but one methodological means of understanding the relationship, particularly where rituals are buttressed by centuries of a seemingly unbroken theological or exegetical tradition. It is largely such rituals which are the focus of the two volumes concerned. The methodological solution to the relationship between text and context in such cases, proposed by Humphrey and Laidlaw, takes for granted a gap or even rupture between written, authoritative scripture and ritual practice. We argue, though, that their hypothesis stems from fieldwork based exclusively on an analysis of lay practice. Yet, the Jain tradition which is the object of their analysis as well as classical, Brahmanical ritual traditions have categories of practitioners who cannot be classified as scholastically uninfluenced or unin-

formed laity. Rather, rituals are also performed by exegetically informed lay- and religious experts who are characterized by varying degrees of access to and knowledge of the textual and exegetical levels of a ritual tradition. Hence, the study of the relationship between the text and the context of rituals must also allow for the possibility that different categories of performers can and do subjectively constitute the relationship between their ritual knowledge and ritual practice, between text and context in differing and nuanced ways.

The present volume also presupposes that a comprehensive definition of "ritual" does not exist. Influential scholarship in this regard, such as that of Handelman (1990), for instance, argues persuasively for a doing away of the term on the basis that existent definitions of ritual are abstract statements which, while establishing a set of common features that facilitate the characterization of "ritual" as signifying social order, do little beyond this to investigate the logics whereby such order is made and maintained. Buc (2001) is critical of the naïve application of the anthropological construct of this term to describe the social and religious practices of other, medieval societies. The common-sense definition we adopt, in the light of such a critical scrutiny of the term, is based upon the similar features between the different "rituals" which are examined in these volumes, which allows for a possible polythetic definition of the concept. All the rituals dealt with here are religious, they are performed by religious specialists or devotees mainly in a religious context, they are highly repetitive, they are structured and as such governed by rules, they refer to a transcendent power which is at the same time endowed with performative agency, they are complex and consist of individual elements (rites) which are grouped and arranged in sequences, they are standardized and can be subject to a certain degree of "mechanization" on the part of the performer.

The typology of those actions defined as rituals in this fashion must further incorporate other categories of classification. Among these would be, as the papers in this volume illustrate, the occasion which the ritual marks in a life (life-cycle rituals, crisis rites), the transformation in status effected (boy becomes man, novice becomes initiate, householder becomes ascetic), time and duration and degrees of complexity (a short, daily morning prayer or a complex temple ritual), and the nature and numbers of the participants involved (individuals or groups consisting of performers as well as spectators). The rituals examined in this volume incorporate one or more of all these elements.

The paper with which this volume begins reflects in the broadest terms on the issues of ritual, text and context. Gérard Colas, in contrasting the anthropological with the philological approach to the study of rituals gives us a considered critique of both methods. He points out that the anthropological approach has the

great advantage of refusing to extrapolate from text to context. However, a reliance on field observations should not induce one to read ancient texts in the light of present day practice, for this would be tantamount to assuming that such texts corroborate actual practice despite obvious discrepancies between the two. Those who are philologists, though, should be clear about the distinction between theological literature and ritual texts. The latter are often meant to be read and understood in close connection with particular ritual actions, their prescriptions being permanently connected to interpretive performances. A philological approach which narrowly and exclusively focuses on linguistic criteria is not appropriate for the study of texts composed in order to communicate a subject-matter which should be comprehensible within a milieu of ritual practitioners. Hence, Colas makes a strong plea for situating ritual texts within their historical context. The challenge his article poses is addressed in one way or the other by all the papers in these two volumes.

Four of the contributors—Raman, Rospatt, Hüsken and Gengnagel—have in common the attempt to combine ethnographic evidence with prescriptive texts. Raman compares two contemporary performances of a South Indian Śrīvaiṣṇava initiation ritual with a relatively late normative text on it and argues, on the basis of this evidence, for a close link between theology and ritual practice, since the soteriological dispute leading to a sectarian split within the Śrīvaiṣṇava community also ultimately led to differences in the performance of the ritual. Rospatt deals with a temporary ordination for male members of certain Buddhist communities in the Kathmandu valley. He compares the Buddhist ritual of ordination, the *upasampadā* as prescribed by the Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya and a medieval prescriptive account of the ritual with the present day performance of it. In doing so, he shows that the Brahmanical life-cycle ritual of *upanayana* serves as the model for the ritual of the Mahāyāna Buddhist in Nepal, since elements of the former *saṃskāra* are incorporated and subordinated within the latter, as stages to be transcended. Hüsken traces the history of a pre-natal life-cycle ritual (*niṣeka*) of the Vaikhānasa communities of South India. Through an analysis of the layers of the diverse ritual texts dealing with this ritual she shows that no clear perception of it existed in the Vaikhānasa literature. Her depiction of the contemporary perceptions about and performances of this ritual, articulated by ritual specialists, also reflects this long-standing uncertainty in the textual tradition. Gengnagel analyses processions in Vārāṇasī in relation to their textual sources, the ritual actions prescribed in these sources and their actual performance. After introducing the relevant *yātrā* texts with a focus on the Pañcakrośīyātrā, he undertakes a detailed comparison of the relevant passages, concentrating on the contemporary performance of the *yātrā*, where spatial texts

are used. The examination of the sources shows that even today ritual specialists rely ultimately on historically validated textual sources for determining correct performance.

Other papers in the first volume—those of Michaels, Steiner, Rastelli, Freiburger and Horstmann—concentrate primarily on textual materials and the study of ritual texts within their historical rather than contemporary context. Michaels focuses on the rite of *saṅkalpa*, the preliminary declaration of intention to commence any ritual, by looking at manuals of *saṅkalpa* such as the *Saṅkalparatnāvalī*, a 20th century digest on the subject. Focusing on the complexity of this rite, a complexity which is not immediately apparent, Michaels shows us what is articulated (both verbally and in gestures) in several typical *saṅkalpas*, which he sees as a rite which both contextualises as well as transcends the concrete context of its performer. Steiner's study of the Vedic *vājapeya* sacrifice adopts a synchronic approach, aiming at a hermeneutic or semantic reading of the ritual. As a framework for understanding the processual aspects of the ritual, Steiner has taken van Gennep's and Turner's model of the three phases of life-cycle rituals comprising of separation, transition and integration. She demonstrates that these phases are integral to the *vājapeya* and to *soma* rituals in general. Rastelli in her paper presents a detailed analysis of the *pūjā* described in the pañcaratric *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* and the Viśiṣṭādvaitic *Nityagrantha*. The analysis establishes that both texts give an identical description of the external features of the ritual even while there are essential differences in their cosmologies, in the purpose of the worship and in the views expressed by the texts on the relationship between god and the worshipper. Freiburger deals with the Brahmanical rite of renunciation, focusing on this rite's irreversibility. Texts such as the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads provide the basis for the institution of renunciation and codify rules which emphasise its irreversibility. However, other works such as the *Arthaśāstra* make it evident that the renouncer did, in fact, return to real life. In addition, Buddhist sources show that the return of a renouncer did not so much pose a ritual as a social problem: if persons of standing renounced without transferring their duties and property to their heirs, the household was left behind in an ambivalent state. Freiburger argues that such varied textual evidence may indicate that the Brahmanical tradition had to, in anticipation of such developments and with a view to mitigating them, strongly come down in favour of the irreversibility of renunciation even while leaving open the door to alternative procedures which contradicted this conception. Horstmann's paper details a theological debate within the Gauḍīya tradition in the 17th–18th centuries. She shows that the community, in the figure of the seventeenth century teacher Rūpa Kavirāja, threw up a leader who raised critical

questions regarding ritual which had been virulent since the founding of the community. The assumption of the Gauḍīya tradition was that the greater the spiritual level of a devotee the more the likelihood that he/she had attained a transformed state of passionate love towards Kṛṣṇa. Both Rūpa Kavirāja and his critics seemed united in the assumption that the practice of ritual for further self-fulfilment seemed inimical to one in this state. But, at this juncture, they parted ways on what the perfected devotee should do. Kavirāja argued for the further abandonment of all ritual in favour of an oscillation between a male and female identity where one became, as it were, Kṛṣṇa's female companion. The Gauḍīya tradition, as a whole rejected this stance and was careful to endorse orthopraxy and, hence, the upholding of the traditional social and religious order.

The papers also have many overlapping theoretical implications three of which are particularly prominent: "ritual transfer and transformation", "ritual and religious identity" and "ritual meaning". Hence, Rospatt deals with ritual transfer in time and space as well as from one religion to another in the transfer of the life-cycle thread ceremony from Brahmanism to Newar Buddhism. Raman shows the transfer of theological conceptions of self-surrender to God onto the Śrīvaiṣṇava initiation ritual while Rastelli, through her study of *pūjā*, describes both the increasing ritualization of devotion and the devotionalization of ritual. Michaels' paper on *saṃkalpa* shows that the ritual performer identifies himself according to spatial, chronological and genealogical criteria, where space and time are ideational and not necessarily empirical. Identifying a *saṃkalpa* as a certain kind of promissory speech-act Michaels argues that it can permit the transfer of religious ideas as well as specific sectarian and political considerations onto the ritual, thus functioning as an important means of creating flexibility within what might be seen as prescribed ritual actions. Gengnagel's paper illustrates the dynamic relationship between the descriptive, prescriptive and performative dimensions of rituals—a tension which inevitably leads to contestation and the subsequent "re-invention" of a ritual.

Several of the papers deal with the function of ritual as legitimizing religious identity and as an identity marker of groups. This is as true for the *bare chuyegu* initiation ritual described by Rospatt as for the *pañcasamskāra* initiation/conversion ritual described by Raman, the pre-natal rite of *niṣeka* described by Hüsken as the Brahmanical rite of renunciation described by Freiburger. In this context, Hüsken's paper is particularly important for raising the question of how relevant even the actual practice of such a ritual is as opposed to the mere claim of doing it. She suggests that rituals which function as identity markers need not even necessarily be performed to remain invaluable for the self-representation of a group.

Finally, several papers also consider the complex issue of whether rituals are “meaningful”, against the background of the theory of the meaninglessness of ritual acts first proposed by Frits Staal and subsequently refined upon by Humphrey and Laidlaw. Humphrey and Laidlaw understand “meaning” in a very specific sense to refer to the disconnection between the intention and identity of an act, when it comes to ritual action.

A review of Humphrey and Laidlaw’s work by James W. Boyd and Ron G. Williams in the *Journal of Ritual Studies* succinctly sums up their thesis:

Beginning with the commonplace notion that ritual acts are prescribed, Humphrey and Laidlaw focus on what happens when ordinary actions become ritualized actions. We will risk our own illustrative example. In François Truffaut’s film “The Green Room”, a morose protagonist builds a chapel full of burning candles to keep alive the memory of friends lost in the Great War; each day fresh candles must be lit from the spent ones in a prescribed way. [...] In non-ritualized cases, candles are lit to illuminate a room, to set a romantic mood, or for any number of other reasons. Illuminating a room is not the same action as setting a mood even when both acts involve lighting a candle. In other words, in the ritualized case, apparently different acts—acts done with different intentions [...] count as the same *ritual* act, whereas in the non-ritualized case, apparently similar acts (candle lightings) are differentiated by their differing intentions. (Boyd & Williams 1996: 136)

Rastelli’s paper supports this argument in that she shows that the meaning attributed to ritual can and does change without the ritual itself undergoing modification. Hüsken also concurs by demonstrating that the meaning of ritual can become divorced from actual ritual performance even while the ritual itself becomes invaluable for self-representation. In contrast to this, Raman argues that rituals change, structurally and evidently, once they are endowed with new meanings. Horstmann’s paper on the Gauḍīya tradition brings an entirely different dimension to the problematic of the meaning or meaningfulness of ritual in that it reflects on an emic discussion about this very issue. The very intensity of the Gauḍīya debate on whether ritual is necessary or not for the perfected devotee seems to indicate, at the very least, that the emotional state, or *bhāva*, could pose and was seen to pose a very real threat to and criticism of ritual.

One way of understanding and reconciling these seemingly contradictory viewpoints on rituals and their meaning was proposed by Stanley Tambiah when he stated:

But we should guard against attributing to all ritual the priority of functional pragmatics over semantics. For in periods of religious revivalism or when new cults are forged by charismatic leaders, there is a deliberate attempt to coin new

doctrinal concepts and mould new rituals bursting with meaning attached to the contents of the acts *per se*. [...] But these enthusiasms of revivalism can be relatively short-lived. Most of the time between messianic hope and indolent routine, the rituals of ordinary times carry both symbolic and indexical meanings in different mixes, and the participants too understand these meanings in varying measure, according to their lights, interests, and commitment. (Tambiah 1979: 165–66)

It is to the study of such rituals, carried out faithfully in times both of messianic hope as well as indolent routine, that these two volumes are dedicated.

Finally, we would like to thank Bao Do, Till Luge, Sarah Roeckerath and Maritta Schleyer for their invaluable help in preparing this volume. The publication of this volume has been made possible by the generous funding of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft within the framework of the Collaborative Research Centre, *Dynamics of Ritual*, at the University of Heidelberg.

Works Cited

- Boyd, James & Ron G. Williams 1996. "Review of the Archetypal Actions of Ritual". In: *Journal of Ritual Studies* 10.2: 136.
- Buc, Phillippe 2001. *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Handelman, Don 1990. *Models and Mirrors. Towards an Anthropology of Public Events*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Humphrey, Caroline & James Laidlaw 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Tambiah, Stanley 1979. "A Performative Approach to Ritual". In: *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65: 113–169.
- Timm, Jeffrey, R. (ed.) 1992. *Texts in Context. Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*. Albany: SUNY Press.

GÉRARD COLAS

Rites Among Vaikhānasas and Related Matters: Some Methodological Issues

The study of Sanskrit texts that govern technical practices raises specific issues in comparison with the rest of Sanskrit literature. This is the case with the texts on temple rituals. This workshop on Indian rituals¹ afforded me the opportunity to give my colleagues an informal talk² on some of the issues which I had to deal with when studying Sanskrit ritual handbooks.

My paper will focus on the problem of making sense out of rites. I shall look at the subject in a pragmatic not an abstract way.³ By the “meaning of rite”, I understand here a subjective attitude, that is, an urge towards, or desire for, seeing sense in rites. The issue is not so much whether rites have any intrinsic meaning (which is a rather metaphysical question equally applicable to any other human activity), but how the performer of the rite, the spectator or the exegete (who may be a modern researcher) attempts to invest them with meaning.

I shall first of all briefly introduce the Vaikhānasa ritual texts because my reflections are mainly based on these texts. Then I shall discuss the notion of rite within the Indian context. This will be followed by an inquiry into a number of issues confronting the researcher who is trying to make sense out of ritual handbooks. I shall then see how the texts themselves indicate the meaning of the rites. Lastly, I shall point out how an epigraphic study can contribute towards enriching the debate.

Vaikhānasa Ritual Handbooks

Most of the following thoughts are based on the Vaikhānasa corpus of ritual handbooks published by 1996. This corpus contains six texts which can be dated be-

1 Organized at the University of Heidelberg in December 2002. I thank Prof. Dr. Monika Boehm-Tettelbach for inviting me to participate in this meeting, and the participants for their observations.

2 This transcription includes some elements of the discussion which followed my talk.

3 Nor shall I follow the problematic raised by Staal (see, for instance, Staal 1996).

tween the ninth and thirteenth centuries, two of which were probably composed after the thirteenth century (including the *Prakīrṇādhikaraṇa* from which I shall quote), and another text (partly published) which I was unable to date. I shall call this corpus the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus in contrast to late Vedic Vaikhānasa ritual texts, which consist of the *Vaikhānasaśrauta-* and *Vaikhānasa-smārtasūtra* and which predate the medieval corpus.⁴ The Vaikhānasa medieval corpus consists mainly of prescriptive texts relating to public rites performed in Vaiṣṇava temples, such as the installation of divine images, daily services, festivals, periodical and special rites, and expiations. These rites resemble those found in texts of the traditions popularly known as Pāñcarātrāgama (which is Vaiṣṇava) and Śaivāgama, though the theological background of these three traditions differs.

The prescriptions in the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus were intended for Vaikhānasa temple priests who perform rites at the request of a patron known as *yajamāna*. The fruits of the rites accrue not only to the patron but also to the entire village or city where the temple is situated. Once the temple and its images have been installed, the welfare of the community as a whole depends upon the conservation and continuation of the enjoined regular rites. In actual fact, the establishing of worship in a new temple creates a mutual interdependence between the temple and society. Temple rites are conceived as a sort of science that aims at relieving social and natural evils such as war, famine, etc. They have a beneficial effect on action in society as a whole.

One feature which distinguishes the Vaikhānasa from the Śaiva and Pāñcarātra traditions is the fact that it forms a Vedic *śākhā* with its own ritual Sūtras. These can be dated to before the sixth century and contain both known Vedic *mantras* and other *mantras* not otherwise known. The Vaikhānasas do not see any discontinuity between their Sūtras and the medieval corpus and many Śrauta and Smārta ritual devices form part of their temple rites. However, the notion of ritual continuity between the Sūtras and the medieval corpus is contradicted by the fact that the *Vaikhānasa-smārtasūtra* is imbued with an ideology of renunciation, while the temple rites are said to be a means of attaining mundane ends such as prosperity, peace, and welfare for the individual and society as a whole. The medieval corpus forbids hermits and renunciators from regular priesthood in temples which follow the Vaikhānasa regulations.

4 For more information about the Vaikhānasa corpus, see Colas 1996. Ute Hüsken informs me that another Vaikhānasa handbook, the *Vāsādhikāra*, has been published in 1999, but I could not procure this edited text.

Defining What Is and What Is Not a Rite

Defining what is a “rite” would involve a lengthy discussion without any assurance of reaching some universal agreement. Hence, I have decided to limit myself here to an initial definition whose validity will be applicable to this article and will be general enough to be accepted by all. What I mean here by a “rite” is a prescribed ceremonial arrangement of a religious nature.⁵

S. Lévi stressed the mechanical aspect of *yajña* or *yāga* in the Brāhmaṇas,⁶ where sacrifice is an entity in itself, since the gods do not play a central role in the ritual itself. For the Mīmāṃsaka exegetes too gods had a solely linguistic reality,⁷ which reinforced the concept of a ritual “mechanism”. According to this “mechanical” perspective, a perfect performance of the Vedic sacrifice is supposed to bring the expected results by itself. Though the notion of *yajña/yāga* has been variously interpreted both in ancient India as well as by modern scholars,⁸ it consistently represents the ritualizing tendency, i.e. a building process which is bound by routine and whose efficiency is conditioned by a strict application of the technical rules of praxis rather than through a direct connection established by the performer with the gods. In contrast to this tendency *pūjā*, in the strict and literal sense of the term and in a religious context, is not a ritual but refers to devotion expressed by making offerings to a personal god, chanting his glory, making donations, etc. The Mīmāṃsaka author Śabara (4th–5th cent. C.E.) drew a distinction between *yāga* and *pūjā* but on another ground: according to him, *yāga* is based on Śruti whereas *pūjā* is based on Smṛti and on the conventional belief that gods possess a body (Colas 2004: 151–155).

At least two factors restrict the validity of the ideal and ideological contrast between *yajña/yāga* as merely a technical chain of acts and *pūjā* as the manifestation of personal devotion. Firstly, the ritualization process of *pūjā* implies a mechanization of actions, especially in public worship where professional priests are called upon to perform acts of devotion on behalf of their patrons. “Honouring”, i.e. “worshipping” tends to become a rite. Mechanization does not necessarily refer to a general historical process, but can result from standardization at

5 For an interesting discussion on the definition of “rite”, see Mauss 1968: 402–409. For a recent approach, see Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994.

6 He devoted an entire chapter to “le mécanisme du sacrifice” in his *Doctrine du sacrifice* (see Lévi 1898: 77–151). However the depiction of the Vedic sacrifice “as a purely mechanical device to be employed for the maintenance of cosmic creation” is exaggerated, as rightly pointed out by Smith (1987: 36).

7 See, for instance, Malamoud 1989: 272.

8 For more details, see Colas forthc.

an individual or local level. Vedic sacrifice, on the other hand, has not always been simply construed as a series of mechanical actions. Until it became standardized, it involved competition between different performers and the successful outcome of *yajña/yāga* was never taken for granted (Renou 1949, Heesterman 1997). Furthermore, even when the Vedic sacrifice had become standardized, it required specific inner attitudes from the performer in order to bring about the expected results (Smith 1987: 36–37).

A second factor which limits the contrast between *yāga* and *pūjā* is the commingling of both within the context of a “Hinduisation” of Vedic sacrifice despite the resistance to such tendencies, among groups or movements such as the Mīmāṃsā school.⁹ It is, of course, impossible here to describe the various aspects and dimensions of this commingling (Smith 1987: 32–38). Though the *yāga/yajña* has been preserved technically unaltered among several circles of Śrauta ritualists, it has come to be seen as a devotional practice dedicated to a deity, as is evidenced, for instance, in the work of Śaṅkara (7th–8th cent.) (Cloney 1988: 288). Another aspect of this commingling was the introduction and adaptation of *yāga* or parts of *yāga* in temple worship. Sometimes parts of *yāga* were systematically re-interpreted; sometimes they appeared to be arbitrary additions or, at least additions whose rationale is not immediately obvious to us. The technical and social bi-polarization between the performer (the temple priest) and the patron of the temple rites were interpreted along Vedic lines: the patron came to be called *yajamāna* like the patron of a Vedic sacrifice. Specific aspects of the deities came to be associated with fires whose shapes and names were of Vedic (Śrauta and Gṛhya) origin.¹⁰

The various genres of Sanskrit ritual texts such as the Sūtras, Āgamas and Paddhatis, do not encompass all the rituals or ritualized actions. If we confine our thoughts to the Vaiṣṇava temple rites alone, we note that handbooks for priests describe only some of the ritual activities of the temple, namely those which involve priests. Priests undoubtedly played an important role since they are considered to be the only people qualified to enter the *sanctum sanctorum* and touch the major images. A study of their handbooks leads the researcher to adhere, implicitly, to a spatial hierarchisation between the central cella where the priests officiate and the other parts of the temple where devotees perform other more or less ritualized actions. This leads to a distinction between a ritual core of primary importance and a periphery consisting of ritualized performances

9 Mention must also be made of the Buddhistic reinterpretation of Vedic sacrifice, both in early times and, later, within the Buddhist Tantric traditions: see Colas forthc.

10 See, for instance, Colas 1996: 119–122, 267–276.

whose ritual essence and importance is of secondary import. Such a concept in actual fact only takes into account the priestly point of view. The main concern of the priest is to conform to the techniques and prescriptions as laid down in his handbook. From the devotee's point of view, however, priestly ritual activity is of secondary importance compared to his own devotion to the deity. According to his view, which is global and less professional, the priestly rites are understood within the wider concept of devotion to the god.

But in fact, any act of worship or devotion performed by non-priests within the temple precincts tends to be ritually organized. For example, the *Kōyiloḷuku*, chronicles of the Shrirangam temple, describes the entire reorganization of worship by Rāmānuja in that temple in great detail (Rao 1961). It depicts the temple as a large devotional institution to which many different kinds of specialists are attached such as temple priests; some specialists are responsible for reciting Vedic texts, others recite Tamil devotional poems from the *Divyaprabandham*, and still others have an administrative function. The *Kōyiloḷuku* presents these various functions as privileges not as lucrative activities. Most of these activities are organized on the basis of the yearly and daily liturgical calendar, and as such could be considered as ritual. However the *Kōyiloḷuku* describes them as various expressions of devotion. This perspective envisages ritual merely as an outpouring of devotion. A second instance is that of the Araiyaars (Colas 2002: 291–306). Though the Araiyaars do not possess ritual texts, they may perhaps be considered ritual performers since their activities are closely linked with the temple images and the temple ritual calendar. Araiyaars are singer-mimes whose tradition is still alive in four Vaiṣṇava temples of South India. They perform two kinds of ritual or ritualized actions in the temple of Shrivilliputtur. One is the chanting of the *Divyaprabandham*, the other is enacting a simple story accompanied by the recital of selected poems from the *Divyaprabandham*; the main means of enactment consists of specific gestures which differ from the South Indian classical dance, Bharatanāṭyam. According to tradition, the practices of the Araiyaars arose out of the devotional performances of two Vaiṣṇava Tamil saints, Tirumaṅkai Āḷvar and Madhurakavi, enacted in the temple of Shrirangam.

The overall tendency to ritualize devotion did not take place without some ideological struggle. For instance, the Vallabha tradition in the sixteenth century viewed the conventional mode of worship such as *pūjā* as inferior, and promoted the notion of disinterested service to the god known as *sevā*. *Sevā* consists of praises chanted by the whole assembly before the image of the god, constant contemplation of the god, the donation of wealth to temples, etc. Such issues show how fluctuating the boundaries are between what is usually considered as rite and what is not.

Making Sense of the Handbooks on Temple Rites

Over the last few years I have been working with ethnologists and anthropologists at the Centre d' tudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud in Paris. I do not claim to have gained a thorough knowledge of ethnology and its methods, but this experience helped me to gain a better understanding of my work as a philologist. The study of rites based on ancient texts differs considerably from the ethnological study of them. Ethnologists do not isolate rites from their context but place them firmly within their context in order to interpret and understand them. Rites are not absolute performances in themselves. They are necessarily associated with and permeated by social, practical, and other realities, since they only take shape through and due to these factors. From the ethnologist's point of view, isolating a rite from its context is necessarily an artificial exercise, a sort of abstraction. Furthermore, ethnologists are not conditioned by a rigid discourse on ritual as suggested by textual prescriptions (though many of them take textual prescriptions into account). In this sense, they appear to have greater freedom than philologists to construct and invent concepts based on observation. Moreover, their research does not need to be based on earlier ones: they may adopt a totally different theoretical perspective on a topic previously explored by other scholars.

By contrast, indologists, that is, philologists who specialize in Indian documents, are restricted by their methodology and material to a narrower point of view. Of course, the perspective of the indologist who studies ritual texts is historical and diachronic rather than synchronic, which is the perspective adopted by the ethnologist. Furthermore, indology is still a relatively young science. It is hardly in a position to "contextualize" the object of its research. An obstacle seems to be the dearth of documentation, but if we take textual material into account, a huge quantity of Sanskrit and other ancient Indian texts remains unstudied. A sense of historical urgency haunts any honest indologist who, in order to reach a more balanced picture of the history of Indian literature, cannot confine his research to well-known texts and Indian and Western views on them which took definite shape in the twentieth century. He has to save, edit and publish many manuscript works that are literally on the point of disintegrating.

Indology has yet to invent its own instruments of textual analysis and develop its own methodology in this regard. By comparison, for instance, Greek and Latin studies show a higher degree of refinement and diversity, the result of many centuries of erudite study and, more recently, due to the impetus of contact with other disciplines. Indological research still requires a hyper-specialisation that is hide bound by the division into genres and corpuses which Sanskrit liter-

ature, and not modern scholarship, has defined at some point in its history. Each genre has its own rhetoric, its own notions and techniques which have evolved over time and which the specialist has to master. Indological studies and analyses are often conditioned by textual views which impose a rigid classification into literary genres. Hence a thorough understanding of the texts as per their tradition (which is of course necessary) should be accompanied by an objective study of their rhetoric. The difficulty in distancing himself from the textual viewpoint is yet another obstacle which hampers conceptual innovation by the indologist. Under such conditions, renewed efforts towards a periodisation of Indian classical texts irrespective of their division into genres are necessary. This will help obtain a clearer picture of how the literature evolved and pinpoint various trends as they arose over time. One issue which is both current and crucial for indology is the search for at least an approximate date for a given text and its origin.

The philologist who studies rites is not only bound by the limitations of the object of his research, but also, as we will see, by his own attitudes towards the ritual text. These differences could be serious obstacles in the dialogue between ethnologists and philologists. The philologist can derive immense advantages from the dialogue with ethnologists. The latter elaborate concepts that would be difficult to construct based on a study of the ritual texts alone. They also help us to understand what is not obvious in the textual prescriptions. Observing an actual ritual performance helps us distinguish between textual prescriptions and actual practice. My observations in South Indian temples revealed the gap between the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus and practices which are supposedly based on the texts from that corpus. While being useful for our understanding of ritual, field observations can also be misleading since they may induce us to read ancient texts in the light of present practices. Reading the texts in this manner would be tantamount to what priests often do, which is to take the ancient text as corroborating actual practice despite obvious discrepancies between the two. Since the philological approach is historical, we must disconnect the past from the present as much as possible or, at least, evaluate as precisely as possible the limits of our understanding and be aware to what extent our view of the past is conditioned by our understanding today.

It would be interesting to ascertain to what extent the present practitioners of rites consciously position themselves in relation to textual knowledge (whether derived from an ancient corpus or modern ritual handbooks of the Prayoga genre) and how they adapt this textual knowledge. I observed, for instance, that Vaikhānasa priests in a temple in the Godavari delta in Andhra Pradesh followed the prescriptions of the medieval corpus more closely than those in another temple

in Chennai. In Chennai ritual activity was characterized by a sort of exuberance, which manifested itself, for instance, during the ritual installation of an image, in the setting up of more fire-pits than sanctioned by ancient texts. The disparity between ritual attitudes in Andhra and Chennai perhaps serves to illustrate two concepts of ritual tradition and transmission, one of which deliberately clings to ancient sources, while the other accepts evolution in a more passive way. Each of these attitudes involves a specific set of values and shows how the ritual performance and its evolution or lack of evolution, is dependent on the social and intellectual background of the practitioners.

Mention must be made of the concept of “innovation” in ritual matters observable during field studies. The ritual texts do not seem to admit this as a part of the main ritual process. New features are integrated in the ritual, sometimes in the ritual texts themselves, not as something new, but tacitly, for example through an aesthetic approach to the rites. This statement requires a brief explanation. It is said that the god should enjoy the ritual actions (Colas 1996: 302–304); dancing, songs, and music are prescribed and performed for his pleasure (ibid.: 246–247). The observation of actual practices shows that aesthetic innovation plays a clearly defined role in ritual performance, whether it concerns the physical surroundings or what the priests do. For instance, a priest in Andhra Pradesh proudly explained to me how he had used modern white ceramic tiles in the cella to enhance its beauty. In Chennai, another priest drew my attention to a particular dancing gait adopted by bearers carrying the holy palanquin to the cella in the *Ādikeśavaperumāḷ* temple in Mylapore. In his opinion, this gait is connected with a legend of the temple. Aesthetic features which contribute to enhance the “main” ritual are an indirect means of introducing innovations and particular features which are gradually accepted over time while not endangering the feeling that the rites remain unaltered.

Not only ritual practices but also doctrinal interpretations by contemporary performers and exegetes can be seen to diverge from those prescribed in the texts. I would like to cite two examples in this connection. The first concerns how Vaikhānasa temple priests interpret rites. The texts of the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus which I have studied emphasize the importance of the ceremonial introduction of power (*śakti*) in the image at the end of the rite of installation (*pratiṣṭhā*). This can be said to be a main though not the only meaning which can be adduced from ancient texts in order to explain the existence of this rite of installation. But when I discussed the subject with the priests who had performed an installation rite at Rāmagaṭṭakṣetra in Andhra Pradesh, I realized that what they were seeking was not the meaning of this rite as such in ancient texts but rather their own personal understanding of what it meant, even though their

ritual performance closely followed ancient prescriptions. For instance, one of them evoked Vivekananda's views on yoga as the authority for interpreting the rite. Another priest insisted on the necessity of closely following tradition in order to achieve a successful performance of the installation, etc. Neither of them, however, mentioned the concept of power which appears to be essential for the ritual as a whole in the medieval Vaikhānasa texts. Thus a ritual notion, which appears to be important for understanding the rite by the researcher on ancient texts, has apparently lost all its weight today, although the performers believe that they are following ancient prescriptions and do in actual fact follow them.

Another example is related to the position of the pandits, "traditional scholars", whose point of view needs to be taken with caution, since they may interpret the ideology behind the ritual in an anachronistic way despite their knowledge of ancient texts. For instance, Parthasarathi Bhattacharya, the Vaikhānasa pandit in Tirupati, who has edited several texts of the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus, held that the Vaikhānasa doctrine conformed to Viśiṣṭādvaita.¹¹ If we consider that he was a Vaikhānasa pandit and, as such, a doctrinal representative of the community, his opinion was true in the latter half of the twentieth century, but a number of doctrines held by the medieval corpus are in disagreement with those in the Viśiṣṭādvaita.¹² Some pandits, who are also modern scholars, tend to see the past in an unhistorical way, as if the beliefs and techniques of the past have remained unchanged until today. As far as rituals are concerned, pandits (including erudite temple priests) can sometimes delude both themselves and modern scholars as to their understanding of ancient texts, and more so, paradoxically, the more they are familiar with the rites as performed today, since practice may have distorted their understanding of ancient prescriptions. While the ethnologist probably does not need to base his work on a clear distinction between the remote or recent past and the present, the philologist should ascertain whether "anachronistic" views expressed by a pandit stem from a received transmission (and thus represent a comparatively late understanding shared by tradition) or merely reflect a personal opinion. As we will see, modern Western scholars may also fall prey to anachronism.

11 See the introduction to his edition of the *Khilādhikāra*, p. 5; see also the note of Parthasarathi Bhattacharya cited by W. Caland (1991) in the introduction to his edition of the *Vaikhānasaśrautasūtra*, pp. xxix–xxx.

12 See, for instance, Colas 1996: 100.

Limitations and the Problems Posed in the Study of Ritual Handbooks

Ritual handbooks make no claim to be perfect works either from a linguistic or literary point of view. Their ideal is not *l'art pour l'art*. Therefore, a philological approach focusing exclusively on classical grammatical and linguistic criteria is less appropriate for their study than it is for works of classical literature to which Paninian ideals and criteria of literary excellence are applicable. Like any other work, they were composed in order to communicate subject matter which should be comprehensible within a given milieu. Nor are they always devoid of linguistic worth. Handbooks of Vedic rites, that is, Śrauta- and Smārtasūtras, are often well-written, and some of them have been commented upon. Hindu ritual handbooks attributed to historically traceable authors, not gods or mythical sages, like Nārāyaṇa's *Tantrasamuccaya* (probably 15th cent.), are also often well-written. I shall however confine myself to temple ritual handbooks in the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus, the Sanskrit of which shows a fair number of obviously irregular, easily identifiable features which are not an obstacle to their understanding. Only two of these texts have been commented upon, one of them in full (the *Ānandasamhitā*), the other one chapter only (the *Ādisamhitā*).

How can we explain the linguistic laxity found in temple ritual handbooks? The answer that the authors and readers of ritual handbooks were not "good Sanskritists" or were ignorant of classical grammatical and rhetorical rules, seems a rather short-sighted view. Ritual texts quite simply are not addressed to literary scholars but to ritual practitioners. They do not need to be written in high literary style or even a very regular Sanskrit. On the other hand, within the ritual context, the transmission of practice is as important as the transmission of the text itself. The purpose of the texts is external to their subject matter. They were composed to be read and understood in close connection with particular actions, not to be read or enjoyed for themselves. For comparison's sake, one would not expect a technical work on motorcars in the West to be read as if it were a poem by Goethe or Racine. At the same time, the comparison with modern Western technical treatises is limited, for, the Vaikhānasa handbooks lack their definiteness. They are employed in a sort of continuous dialectical relation with the person who uses them. Their prescriptions need to be permanently connected with interpretative performances. Practice is their touchstone.

Given the close connection between these handbooks and practice, the main challenge to understanding them would be the definition of their historical context. One would at first sight think that epigraphy might be of some help in determining this context. This is however not always the case as we will see later. Another, less direct approach, is to compare the teachings of a text with other

contemporary works, by highlighting the similarities and the differences. This would be of little help in defining the historical context, but would, at a more modest level, throw light on issues such as innovations in ritual, for instance. But this approach is not problem-free either since these texts were compiled separately not as a pre-scheduled set of complementary productions or a collection, even though they may have been written at roughly the same time. In building interpretations through their comparative study, we necessarily obliterate the oral explanation given by a preceptor or a teaching based on a specific local tradition, which accompanied the elaboration and transmission of the texts. We replace this context by establishing a hypothetical connection between the various texts, as if their respective authors had a precise knowledge of all the other texts and practices. This amounts to imagining a situation other than the original historical conditions which rendered the composition of this or that text necessary.

Philological work on ritual handbooks is probably more fraught with pitfalls than ethnological work, though often, it tacitly or openly claims that it is “based” on firmer ground, that is, written testimonies. The philologist is bound by the constraints and the implicit or explicit rules of the philological work and is not expected to say or write anything which could be contradicted by textual evidence. He establishes the texts in a so-called critical way. He believes and is thought to base his work on a historically stable ground. But research on historiography and orientalism over the last few decades has questioned the ideology behind this value-system. While not engaging in the debate here, we must observe that research on Indian ritual handbooks, though philological, raises more questions than other indological research.

Embarking on the study of texts such as the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus raises the question whether one should undertake the critical edition and translation of a single text from the corpus or make a comprehensive study of all the published texts.

The critical edition of ritual texts not only raises many issues specifically related to the transmission of ritual texts but also general issues related to the transmission of texts in India (Colas 1999). As I said earlier, indological research is a comparatively young field. It is unlikely that editorial practices adopted for the editing of ancient Greek and Latin texts for instance,¹³ could be applied blindly to Indian texts which have been subjected to totally different lines of transmission and conservation. Moreover, Western classical studies have developed a high degree of critical acumen applicable not only to literary but also

13 The establishing of genealogical stemmas on the basis of Indian manuscripts is highly debatable (see below), for example.

to technical and popular works. They have developed their own epistemology within the field of critical editing.¹⁴ By contrast, discussions about the methodology used to create critical editions of Indian texts are still rare, timid, and often confined to the assertions of the well-meaning editor.

Both the composition of texts and their transmission in India depends on the historical and geographical characteristics of the milieu (family, religious group, erudite or literary circle, etc.) in which they were produced. The role played by a text in a given milieu and the motivations behind its transmission also affect how it is transmitted in that milieu. The transmission of temple-ritual texts belongs to what has been called "fluid forms of transmission" (with regard to early Western technical and popular literature (Reynold & Wilson 1991: 234–237)) and is susceptible to alteration. Any observable discrepancy between prescription and practice may induce the priests to question the transmission of the text and "correct" it, and in so doing introduce a new reading which may or may not be in keeping with the other prescriptions in that particular text. Such is the case when the ritual prescription in a text is contradicted by practice or no longer applied. Local or historically new practices may give rise to interpolations which are alien to the original text. Such contradictions and interpolations may tempt the philologist to unduly suspect the authenticity of the text as a whole.

On many occasions, tracing the lines of transmission of an Indian text through its manuscripts can only be hypothetical. The material circumstances surrounding the preservation of manuscripts goes some way towards explaining the hazardous nature of textual transmission (Colas 1999). The fact that bibliophilism (in the Western sense) was not common in traditional Hindu circles, with a few exceptions, also explains this phenomenon. The haphazard nature of textual transmission often renders the establishing of stemmas (a technique much debated among philologists working on Western texts) questionable. The question of the critical edition also depends on the genre of the text,¹⁵ its popularity, in what milieu it was transmitted and other factors. Two contemporary versions of a manuscript may portray two different pictures of the text and the fact that one copy is linguistically better than the other does not necessarily indicate whether it is an earlier or later version. Nor is it easy to draw historical conclusions by comparing the readings of manuscripts from different periods; for instance an

14 For a summary of the ongoing discussions and bibliographical references, see, for instance, Reynold & Wilson 1991: 206–241; Greetham 1994: 295–347; Cerquiglini 1989: 105–116.

15 Colas 1999: 49–53. On the necessity of distinguishing genres in critically editing Western literature, see Cerquiglini 1989: 62, 78.

earlier manuscript may show readings that are less genuine than a more recent text.¹⁶ A linguistically poor copy may preserve groups of syllables, words or passages that have disappeared from certain lines of the transmission and may correspond to an earlier stage of the text, that is, before these groups of syllables, words or passages were deleted by copyists who deemed them unreadable.

The geographical differences with regard to the availability of Indian ritual manuscripts can also be misleading. Indian manuscripts have on the whole been better preserved in the Himalayas (where the climate is more conducive to their preservation) and where dated manuscripts from the ninth century or earlier can be found. By contrast, in South India the extant dated manuscripts, which were generally written on palm-leaves and subject to difficult climatic conditions, most often postdate the sixteenth century (Colas 1999: 39). Therefore, the fact that a South Indian manuscript records a later stage of a rite does not necessarily imply that the original structures of this rite came from the Himalayan areas and that this evolution did not take place in South India. This immense gap in terms of the availability of manuscripts does not so much concern Vaikhānasa texts (which have been composed probably in South India) as Tantric texts.

In addition to issues connected with the transmission of the texts, there are also those connected with the preparation of a critical edition of ritual handbooks (Dain 1997: 169–186). There are probably no ready-made attitudes to adopt with regard to critical editions of ritual texts and other texts. The practice of the heavy critical apparatus has been often criticized in Western philology (*ibid.*: 172, 174). However, in the Indian context, where the conditions of manuscript preservation are not ideal, the editor must somehow find a way of systematically providing the main variants from the extant manuscripts even though they do not represent immediately useful readings.¹⁷ That ritual texts are rarely great literary achievements does not mean that all the linguistically incorrect readings should be automatically accepted on the assumption that the original style of the text is poor. Nor does it make sense to correct systematically “corrupt” forms according to strictly Paninian grammatical rules. The quality of a critical edition depends not only on the scholarship of the editor himself or herself, but also on his or her experience in dealing with ancient texts and manuscripts and his or her openness, that is, ability to avoid preconceived views (especially his or her own) about the text and its contents.

16 “Un manuscrit récent n’est pas nécessairement un manuscrit mauvais” (Dain 1997: 146).

17 Computerizing opens new scope for critical editions in terms of flexibility, exhaustiveness and of understanding the text (Cerquiglini 1989: 113–116).

Therefore, embarking on a critical edition of a ritual text is always a complicated venture, the necessity of which is not absolute depending as it does on several factors. In the case of the Vaikhānasa corpus, critically editing and translating one of them obviously implied entering a vicious circle, because such an enterprise would have had to rely on all available Vaikhānasa texts, for which in turn we needed critical editions. The task proved impossible. The final product would have been in actual fact the result of an arbitrary process of editing which would have purified the text according to classical grammatical and metrical conventions, and the acceptance or rejection of readings on the ground of disputable criteria, and so forth. Another possible approach to the Vaikhānasa corpus consisted of studying the entire corpus of partially or uncritically edited texts and this is the approach I adopted. Its feasibility depended on a number of factors: for instance, whether a satisfactory chronology could be established, whether the corpus was composed over a short or long period of time and whether the philological quality of the published editions was reasonably acceptable or not. While the situation of parallel corpuses like Śaiva or Pāñcarātra is difficult, this is not the case with the Vaikhānasa corpus which is comparatively late and where the ritual prescriptions are generally uniform, proving that it was composed within a short time period. With the exception of one text, it was possible to establish a relative chronology on the basis of quotations both internal and external. Once this relative chronology had been established, it was easier to read the various texts critically each in the light of the other. Obvious interpolations could be detected and clearly erroneous readings could be identified in order to circumscribe textual difficulties. The conclusions drawn from such a comprehensive approach towards a reasonably well-knit ritual corpus can help further philological research. They can bring to light issues to be taken into account for critical editions of the texts from that corpus in the future.

How Do Early Texts Make Sense of Temple Rites?

How do Indian texts on rites make sense of Hindu rites? The following observations will on the whole be confined to temple rites as described in the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus. A philological study of ritual texts implies that we rely on a transmitted written documentation, which implies that we have to go through the intermediary of an organized recording or interpretation of rites by authors who sift the facts through their own phraseology and conventions. The two main written sources which one would require for understanding rites are, firstly, works dedicated to the interpretation of rituals and, secondly, works which contain ritual prescriptions.

Texts offering a systematic interpretation of temple rites are almost non-existent in Sanskrit literature. By contrast, the exegetic literature on Vedic rites is rich. Brāhmaṇas provide a variety of often symbolic interpretations. Subsequently, the Mīmāṃsāsūtras and especially the *Śābarabhāṣya* made a more systematic attempt at interpreting Vedic rites. The Mīmāṃsā school does not consider *pūjā* a ritual practice based on Śruti and does not interpret this rite as it is performed in temples. The *Tantrāloka* of Abhinavagupta (10th–11th cent.) offers a philosophical interpretation of Hindu rites, however it concerns the metaphysical significance and evaluation of Tantric systems rather than a real exegesis of rites and does not deal with public temple worship as such. In fact, we do not have a systematic discipline of interpreting temple rites, whether Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva.

The only significant source for interpreting temple rituals are the handbooks themselves. Although they aim at recording and legitimising ritual prescriptions and not at interpreting rites, they often express the intended meaning of rites in a number of ways. We may, rather artificially though, distinguish four different textual areas which provide meaning, the fourth being the richest in meaning.

The way in which the handbooks present and classify the rites reveals to some extent what meaning they attribute to them. Ritual taxonomies superimpose an overall articulate view on the rites which the texts describe. Our philological understanding of rites is determined by that view. As we saw earlier, Vaikhānasa handbooks usually distinguish between the installation of divine images, and daily service, etc. The taxonomy of rites in ritual handbooks helps the priests to systematize rituality, isolate and separate significant ritual elements, and classify rites according to their aim and function within the ritual itself. For instance, some texts divide the daily service into five sections, each of which is supposed to produce a particular effect (Colas 1996: 317). This classification leads the researcher to ask different questions. For instance, when and how did the division into several different categories of rites take place in the handbooks of temple rites?¹⁸ To what extent does this division rely upon the extant divisions found in the handbooks of so-called Vedic rites? Standardization is the foundation of taxonomy. Ritual texts themselves tend to provide standardized ritual structures, acceptable to all, while retaining their sectarian tendencies. A twofold concomitant process is at work in standardization: the tendency of rituals to evolve over time, on the one hand, and a universalising tendency, on the other. We already looked at some of the evolutionary aspects. The universalising tendency appears frequently in texts. For instance, the *Brhatsaṃhitā* (6th cent.) describes the installation rite of an image as a universal paradigm which

18 See, for instance, *ibid.*: 257–264, 314–320.

can be practised by the followers of various religious groups: Pāśupatas, Bhāgavatas (that is, Vaiṣṇavas), devotees of the sun-god, etc., and even Buddhists and Jains. The only variations within the paradigm are said to be, firstly, the priests and secondly, the *mantras*.¹⁹ Let us take another example: in the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus the ritual is presented as a homogenous structure common to all traditions. Thus, according to the *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa*, “the ritual structure (*kalpa*) is said to be common (to all traditions); it is the *mantras* which distinguish (a tradition)”. The *mantra* is considered to be the “significant” element. Furthermore, the Vaikhānasa texts constantly distinguish between “general” (*sāmānya*) rules and “particularities” (*viśeṣa*), that is, particular rules (Colas 1996: 199). In fact, “particularities” in some cases at least, could be significant innovations which thus receive textual legitimacy. They could also be ancient unwritten practices inserted in the text at a later date, as secondary rules, while not affecting the rules of the text as a whole.

This attempt to achieve standardization seems to show that ritualists tended to reduce rites to a regular structure, which was recurrent among religious groups in its main aspects, but which varied in detail. In this structure which is supposedly common to all rituals, the significant variants are the god who is worshipped and the corresponding *mantras*, etc., depending on the religious tradition. On the other hand, the concept of the rite as a structure provided a means whereby ritualists could integrate and homogenize new ritual elements. The modern researcher who is tempted to follow ritualists in this concept, could end up with an ideal ritual model, a notion that runs counter to the basic idea of historical evolution. In fact, an apparently common structure which ritual texts tend to emphasize, may conceal significant differences.

A second area which provides meaning lies in the proclamation of the aims of the various rites in the handbooks themselves. In this regard, we must distinguish between the specific aims of the performance of rites and the eulogising statements of the *arthavāda* type which tend to attach maximum results to the performance. In the medieval Vaikhānasa corpus, for instance, whereas a black magic rite has a specific aim, many other rites are said to bring well-being in this world and final release in the other (Colas 1996: 200–203).

A third area which reveals meaning consists of what we could call symbolic though ritually “passive” statements in the handbooks. Such statements provide an occasional and unsystematic symbolic interpretation of ritual elements or objects. For instance, in the *Kriyādhikāra*, the temple is identified with water, the fixed image of the temple with mud out of which the lotus grows, and the

19 Chapter 60 in the edition of Ramakrishna Bhat (1982).

movable image with the lotus flower. Elsewhere, a pestle is identified with Viṣṇu and the corresponding mortar with the goddess Lakṣmī. Often, these symbolic interpretations do not have permanent import. For instance, in one place the tree from which a divine image is carved is identified with Viṣṇu and in another with Soma (Colas 1996: 208–210). Such interpretations, however, remain purely rhetorical. Since they do not produce, lead to or sanction a specific ritual action, they may be considered “passive”. They occur only occasionally and are often eulogistic.

A fourth area corresponds to what we could call “active” interpretation, because it determines specific ritual actions. This type of “active” interpretation may have influenced what ritual performers thought about the ritual itself, and determined and/or strengthened certain main ritual trends. For instance, the *Kāś-yapajñānakāṇḍa* states that the fixed image of god in the temple represents the immovable and unmanifest aspect of the god, whereas movable images represent the god’s movable and manifest aspects. This theological exegesis probably reinforced a technical differentiation (in terms of the material used, for instance) between both types of images. It may also have guided the ritual performance accordingly, since the major parts of the rites are addressed to the movable (manifest) aspect not to the fixed one (unmanifest) (Colas 1986: 71–73).

Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the active area of meaning and the above “passive” interpretation. For instance, the equivalence, which the *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa* draws, of the installation of the image with the installation of the fires (*agnyādheya*) in the Vedic Śrauta ritual (Colas 1996: 212) may appear purely rhetorical at first sight, but it is in fact significant. As Vaikhānasas gave a major role to the (Vedic and non-Vedic) fires in the installation of the image (which precedes the regular worship), they tended naturally to identify the installation of the image with the installation of Vedic fires (which precedes Vedic Śrauta rites). The equivalence drawn by the *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa* confirms this tendency.

Examples of obviously “active” interpretations abound. The installation rite (*pratiṣṭhā*) (a term sometimes translated “consecration”) of a divine image shows that a single text can provide multiple “active” interpretation of a rite during its performance as prescribed. It would be tempting to privilege one interpretation in favour of others found in the same text. For example, in the *Vimānārcanākālpa*, the opening of the eyes of the image appears as an important operation which links the image with the cosmos and brings the image alive. But, this takes place at an early stage in the rite and, if it were to be seen as a fundamental ritual act, it would render many subsequent ceremonies of the rite unnecessary from a semiotic point of view. On the other hand, the image is

treated as a living being even before its eyes have been opened. The meaning of the *pratiṣṭhā* rite is also closely related to the concept of *śakti*, that is, divine power,²⁰ as the rite culminates in the transmission of this power to the image through a libation of empowered water over the image. Even after the *pratiṣṭhā*, the image is sometimes considered merely as the residence of a god, who can leave it at will. Thus the installation rite suggests a number of interpretations which are not strictly homogenous. This may be the result of a conflation of several viewpoints which are technical, metaphysical, and devotional.

Another type of “active” interpretation is the remodelling or creating of a ritual procedure to yield sense, that is, answer a question about the meaning of the rite. In the Vaikhānasa texts, the fire-ritual and image-ritual cycles are almost independent of each other. Some Vaikhānasa ritualists apparently saw this as posing a problem which they have attempted to solve by linking both cycles. Two passages from the *Kriyādhikāra* will serve to illustrate this attempt. According to the first one, at the end of the daily fire-sacrifice, the fire is absorbed in a small fire-log or the performer’s self as is usually prescribed in the Vedic Sūtras. But the text goes further and adds that the fire can also be absorbed in the fixed image of the god of the temple from which it can be drawn daily. The second passage comes from a description of the installation rite. According to normal rules, once the image has been ritually installed, a fire-sacrifice is performed daily. The passage, which is an interpolation, enjoins a special ritual procedure if, for some reason, the fire-sacrifice cannot be performed every day. By that special procedure the fire is absorbed in the image. The prescription which envisages the daily ritual without the fire-sacrifice is clearly an attempt to legitimise the abandoning of offering a fire-sacrifice, which may have been frequent when the interpolation was added and consequently required a textual sanction and regularisation. Both passages illustrate an “active” interpretation by remodelling the rites.

The authors of ritual handbooks probably needed to preserve the existing prescriptions and include new ones. The fact that new ritual texts were composed proves that existing handbooks did not reflect the whole range of practices which the authors of new texts could observe during their own time and in their own place. It is not possible to ascertain to what extent the performers of temple rites were involved with the meaning of the rites performed. However, the authors of their handbooks probably felt the need to give meaning to the rites. The phenomenon which I called “active” interpretation testifies to this tendency

20 Cf. Colas 1989: 146–147, especially about the opening of the eyes and its place in the series of the ritual actions.

which is furthermore proved by exegesis or rationalization of the prescriptions in ritual handbooks.

The Testimony of Epigraphy

As we have seen, practice is the ultimate reference point for ritual prescriptions. Inscriptions on stone and copper-plate form the main historical testimony of rites as practised, in contrast with ritual texts which convey an idealized, prescriptive view of rites. Epigraphy also reminds us of the gap between historical facts and the knowledge derived from the texts.

For instance, both early and recent Vaikhānasa and non-Vaikhānasa Sanskrit texts usually seem to imply that Vaikhānasas are exclusively Vaiṣṇavas.²¹ The medieval corpus of the Vaikhānasas does not mention the fact that Vaikhānasas were allowed to officiate in non-Vaiṣṇava temples. Modern historiography and Pandits agree that Vaikhānasas are Vaiṣṇavas and that Vaikhānasa priests today officiate exclusively in Vaiṣṇava temples. However, a copper-plate inscription (in Sanskrit and Kannada) from Maṅṅe (Karnataka), dated 828 C.E., overthrows this common view (Colas 1996: 58–59, 150). It mentions a Vaikhānasa named Devaśarman who was expert in the application of treatises, favoured by the goddess (*devī*) holding a drawn sword. A prince named Mahendra gives him a village which enables him to a regular *bali*-offering of incense and lamps to the goddess. Since she carries a drawn sword she is clearly not a Vaiṣṇava deity. The fact that Vaikhānasas could have been priests of non-Vaiṣṇava deities has been forgotten. This epigraphic evidence also raises the question of whether the extant Vaikhānasa medieval corpus addressed only the Vaiṣṇava section of the medieval Vaikhānasa community and not the non-Vaiṣṇava section of that community. In this connection, we may recall that several Vaikhānasa medieval texts prohibit Vaikhānasas who are devotees of non-Vaiṣṇava deities, from holding the office of ritual master.

One advantage of comparing textual prescriptions with epigraphic data is illustrated by another instance (Colas 2003). Since the Gupta age, epigraphy records that images of Hindu gods and the Buddha received donations of land. Śābara, who belongs to that period, mentions the ownership of land and villages by deities, although he considers this to be a convention, as the lands and villages

21 However, that Vaikhānasas were apparently accused of practising Śaiva cults could be inferred from the description of the *Vaikhānasāropitadevalakatvanirākaraṇa* as “a tract in Sanskrit and Telugu, proving that Vaikhānasas are not ministrants of Śaiva cults” in Barnett 1928: col. 888.

were in actual fact “used” by temple priests. The Vaikhānasa corpus enjoins patrons to donate lands to the temple priests to enable them to live in exchange for their regular service in the temple. The *Prakīrṇādhikaraṇa* like other handbooks in the Vaikhānasa corpus, prescribes the gift of lands to priests, thus following an established Vaikhānasa point of view in this respect. When describing the act of donation, however, it states that the act should be engraved on copper-plate and should mention that the god is the recipient of the donation, which can also, as a second option, be made to the priest. Interestingly enough, this text conforms to a socially conventional way of recording donations of land to the god even though the intended recipient was in fact the priest. It appears that the Vaikhānasa text is aware of two levels of understanding of the land gift, one its own and the other pertaining to its epigraphic presentation. It apparently illustrates the gap between the vision usually projected by the texts which were composed by and for the priests and the epigraphic interpretation which probably reflects the common ideology of the society. The *Prakīrṇādhikaraṇa* pragmatically integrates both points of view in its prescriptions.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the question of how to make sense out of rites should be preceded by another: “in temple worship what is and is not a rite?”. We then tried to see under which conditions the modern researcher could make sense of the temple rites handbooks. In this connection, the article contrasted the work of the ethnologist with that of a philologist studying ritual texts as well as the advantages and limitations of field observations for understanding ancient ritual texts. I also underlined the limitations of the philological approach and the difficulties in establishing a critical edition of a ritual text. Then the question: “how does the ancient documentation make sense of rites?” was discussed. Finally, I briefly mentioned how epigraphy can provide us with concrete examples of ritual contexts and force us to become aware of the gap between the ritual prescriptions as found in the handbooks and their application in times past.

References

- Barnett, Lionel D. 1928. *A Supplementary Catalogue of the Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit Books in the Library the British Museum acquired during the years 1906–1928*. London: The British Museum.
- Bhaṭṭācārya, Roṃ. P. Pārthasārathi (ed.) 1961. *Khīlādhikāra (Bhṛgusaṃhitā)*. Tirupati. [repr.: T.T.D. Religious Publication Series 490. Tirupati, 1997 (Devanāgarī characters)]

- Caland, Willem 1991. *Vaikhānasaśrautasūtra*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.
- Cerquiglini, Bernard 1989. *Éloge de la variante: Histoire critique de la philologie*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil (Collection des Travaux).
- Clooney, Francis X. 1988. "Devatādhikaraṇa: A Theological Debate". In: *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 16: 277–298.
- Colas, Gérard 1986. *Le temple selon Marīci*. Pondicherry: Institut Français d'Indologie (Publications de l'Institut Français d'Indologie 71).
- 1989. "L'instauration de la puissance divine dans l'image du temple en Inde du Sud". In: *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 206: 129–150.
- 1996. *Viṣṇu, ses images et ses feux: Les métamorphoses du dieu chez les Vaikhānasa*. Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient (Monographies 181).
- 1999. "Critique et transmission des textes de l'Inde classique". In: *Diogenes* 47: 37–54.
- 2002. "Variations sur la pāmoison dévote. A propos d'un poème de Vedāntadeśika et du théâtre des araiyars". In: *Images du corps dans le monde hindou*, Bouillier, V. & G. Tarabout (ed.). Paris: CNRS Éditions, 275–314.
- 2003. "Immagini e terre degli dei: dal precepto all'epigrafe". In: *Etnosistemi. Processi e dinamiche culturali* 10: "Terra, territorio e società nel mondo indiano", Berti, D. & G. Tarabout (ed.), 28–42.
- 2004. "The Competing Hermeneutics of Image Worship in Hinduism, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD". In: *Images in Asian Religions: Texts and Contexts*, Granoff, P. & K. Shinohara (ed.), Washington: University of Washington Press, 149–179.
- forthcoming. "Yajña and pūjā". In: *Puruṣārtha* 25, Colas, G. & G. Tarabout (ed.). Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.
- Dain, Alphonse 1997. *Les manuscrits*. Paris: Diderot Éditeur (Collection Pergame).
- Greetham, David C. 1994. *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction*. New York & London: Garland Publishing (Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 1417).
- Heesterman, Johannes C. 1997. "Vedism and Hinduism". In: *Studies in Hinduism: Vedism and Hinduism*, Oberhammer, G. (ed.). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 19): 43–68.
- Humphrey, Caroline & James Laidlaw 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual: A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Lévi, Sylvain 1898. *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas*. Paris: Ernest Leroux (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études–Sciences religieuses 11).
- Malamoud, Charles 1989. *Cuire le monde. Rite et pensée dans l'Inde ancienne*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte (Collection Textes à l'appui).
- Mauss, Marcel 1968. *Œuvres 1. Les fonctions sociales du sacré*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit.

- Ramakrishna Bhat, M. 1982. *Brhatsaṃhitā*. Vol. 2. Delhi, Varanasi & Patna: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Rao, V.N. (trans.) 1961. *Kōyil Oḷugu*. Madras: Rochouse & Sons.
- Renou, Louis 1949. "Sur la notion de brāhman". In: *Journal Asiatique* 237: 7-46.
- Reynold, Leighton D. & Nigel Guy Wilson ³1991. *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Smith, Frederick M. 1987. *The Vedic Sacrifice in Transition: A Translation and Study of the Trikāṇḍamaṇḍana of Bhāskaramiśra*. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Bhandarkar Oriental Series 22).
- Staal, Frits 1996. *Ritual and Mantras: Rules Without Meaning*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

AXEL MICHAELS

Samkalpa: The Beginnings of a Ritual¹

Introduction

Almost all traditional rituals which follow Brahmanic or Dharmasāstric rules, must be preceded by a formal decision or declaratory formula called *saṃkalpana* or *saṃkalpa*. When, for instance, pilgrims walk for five days on the Pañcakrośī-yātrā around Benares, they first contact the Vyāsa Brahmin at the Muktiṃaṇḍapa temple in order to formulate the *saṃkalpa* for the pilgrimage. Only then is it possible to acquire spiritual or religious merit. In other words, a tourist who accompanies a pilgrim on the Pañcakrośīyātrā is not a pilgrim because he has not formulated the *saṃkalpa*. In looking at these formal elements, we learn to differentiate between action (e.g. walking around) and ritual action (religious circumambulation).

In this paper I shall try to analyze basically this preliminary rite, which has almost entirely escaped scholarly attention. I shall focus on the determination of location and time called *deśakālasṃṛti* (or *-smaṛaṇa*), which is “the remembrance of space (lit. country) and time”, or *deśakālasaṃkīrtana*, “the proclamation of space and time”. Basically I want to stress two points: the *deśakālasṃṛti* is a particular means of reducing or expanding the religious complexity of rituals, including pilgrimages, from walking or travelling long distances to small-scale circumambulations or even verbal and inner journeys. It helps to transform religious ideas into the ritual *hic et nunc*, thus making it possible to include sectarian or political concerns within an otherwise rather fixed and stereotyped series of prescribed actions. I shall first present a description of the *deśakālasṃṛti* according to three ritual handbooks. I will then illustrate the complexity of any *saṃkalpa* by elaborating on a specific astronomical problem and its practical implications. In the final section I will try to draw some conclusions on the basis of the above materials, which would contribute to a theory of how rituals are localized and timed, or the issue of space and time in rituals.

1 Thanks are due to P. Aithal for his kind help in discussing astronomical problems and providing textual material.

The Features of a *saṃkalpa*

Most Sanskritic rituals require a *saṃkalpa*, and generally *saṃkalpas* imply that the ritual is localized and fixed in time, along with some other features discussed below. Thus the *Samkalparatnāvalī*, published in 1923 C.E. in India, is a collection of *saṃkalpas* for a great number of rituals, such as the ritual recitation of a text (*caṇḍīpāṭha*), rites de passage (*saṃskāra*), rites of gift-giving (*dāna*), vows (*vrata*) etc. In his “Gems of [religious] Decisions”, Harinātha Śarmā, a pandit from Nepal, defines a *saṃkalpa* as follows:

saparikarasamkalpavākyaprayogaś ca nitye, naimittike, kāmye, prāyaścitte ca karmaṇi sarvatra āvaśyakaḥ | “saṃkalpena vinā vipra yat kiñcit kurute naraḥ | phalaṃ cālpāpakaṃ tasya dharmasyārdhakṣayo bhavet” iti ratnāvalīdṛṭtabhaviṣyavākyāt | “māsapakṣatithinān ca nimittānāṃ ca sarvaśaḥ, ullekhanam akurvāṇo narakam pratipadyate”² iti tatraiva śātātapokteś ca || (Samkalparatnāvalī 10)

The use of a *saṃkalpa*-sentence along with its adjuncts is always necessary for obligatory, casual (or) optional ritual action and for an expiatory rite. “The fruits of whatever a man does (ritually), o Brahmin, without a *saṃkalpa*, will be petty and its *dharma* will diminish by half”—thus it is said in a quotation from the Bhaṣya of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* quoted by the *Ratnāvalī*. “Who does not completely mention the month, fortnight, lunar day and purposes (of the ritual) will fall into hell”—such is the saying of *Śātāta* (quoted) there (in the *Ratnāvalī*).

It is not only obligatory for certain rituals to commence with a *saṃkalpa* but also for a *saṃkalpa* to be characterized by some distinctive features, which Harinātha Śarmā lists as follows (they will be listed in a more systematic form in the tables below):

puraścaryārṇavaratnāvalyor merutantra: tāmrapātre kṛtvā kuśatīlākṣatān |³ udamukhas tu saṃkalpaṃ kuryāt saṃvatsarādīkān | kāmanāntān uccaret tu trayaviṃśatisaṃkhyakān | samvatsarāyane māsaḥ pakṣaḥ pañcāṅgam eva ca | navagrahasthitiṃ ghasrabhāgaṃ muhūrtakaṃ tv iti | svadeśabhedāṃs tattulyān kāmanāsaḥhitān vadet | dvīpe ‘muke ‘muke khaṇḍe ‘muke varṣe ca nīvr̥ti | amuke cāmuke kṣetre gotrapravaram uccaret | svanāmajātīnāmāntaṃ dvijāccharma ca varma ca | gupto dāsa iti | puraścaryārṇave sanatkumārasaṃhitāyāṃ pranavaṃ tatsad adyeti māsapakṣatithīr api | amukagotro ‘muko ‘ham ceti | (Samkalparatnāvalī 10–11)

In the *Puraścaryārṇava*, the *Ratnāvalī* and the *Merutantra* (the following verses are given): “After one has placed in a copper vessel *kuśa* grass, sesame and

2 In the *Śāntimayūkha*, the second half of the verse is slightly different: *samullekham akurvāṇo na tasya phalabhag bhavet* (quoted after Kane 1968ff. vol. 5.1: 650).

3 Four syllables are missing in the *pada*.

grains of rice, one should formulate the *saṃkalpa* facing north, starting with the year and ending with the wishes (regarding the ritual), altogether 23 items: the year (*saṃvatsara*), the (northern or southern course of the sun or) half-year (*ayana*), month (*māsa*), fortnight (*pakṣa*), and also the five parts of a traditional calendar (*pañcāṅga*), [i.e. lunar day (*tiithi*), weekday (*vāra*), lunar mansion (*nakṣatra*), conjunction (*yoga*), half of the lunar day (*karaṇa*)] the position of the nine 'planets' (*graha*), the zodiacal sign (*rāśī*), hour (*muhūrta*). One should mention the parts of one's own country together with the suitable wishes, in such and such a (mythical) continent (*dvīpa*), in such and such a subcontinent (*khaṇḍa*), in such and such a part of the world (*varṣa*), in such and such a kingdom (*nīvṛt*), in such and such a region (*kṣetra*), one should proclaim the (name of the) clan and the clan segment (*gotra, pravara*), one's own name, up to the name of the subcaste (*jāti*), (and additionally) in the case of twice-born (men): Śarmā (in the case of a Brahmin), Varmā (in the case of a *kṣatriya*), Gupta (in the case of a *vaiśya*), and Dāsa (in the case of a *śūdra*)". In the *Puraścaryārṇava*, the *Sanat-kumārasaṃhitā* (the following verse, which is to be formulated in a *saṃkalpa*, is quoted): "Om tat sat. Today". Also the month, fortnight and lunar day. Also "Such is my gotra, I am such a person".

From this definition and the *saṃkalpas* as practised, it follows that a *saṃkalpa* must be formulated (a) prior to the ritual, (b) consciously, and (c) verbally; it must (d) also mention the purpose of the ritual and should be (e) accompanied by certain ritual gestures. I will now take a closer look at these characteristics.

(a) Within the sequence of a ritual, the *saṃkalpa* is part of the preliminary or preparatory sub-rites (*pūrvāṅga*). As such it can be part of pilgrimages (*tīrthayātrā*), oaths (*vrata*) and worship (*pūjā*), but also of sacrifices (*yajña, homa, iṣṭi*) or rites *de passage* (*saṃskāra*). A rough scheme of the ritual procedure in which *saṃkalpas* occur is the following:

1. Preparatory rites (*snāna* etc.)
2. Formal decision to undertake the ritual act, including the mentioning of its purpose (*saṃkalpa* or *saṃkalpana*)
3. The main actions of the particular ritual (*tīrthayātrā, yāga, homa, pūjā, vrata, utsava*)
4. Supplementary actions, such as fasting or night vigils (*upavāsa, jāgara* etc.)
5. Communal actions, such as feasts (*bhojana*)
6. Gifts (*dāna, dakṣiṇā, prasāda*)
7. Concluding actions, such as farewell rituals to the gods (*visarjana*)

Important in this sequence is the fact that the *saṃkalpa* precedes the core of the ritual actions, though for some ritualists it constitutes part of the preparatory subrites (*pūrvāṅga*). Benveniste (1973) has differentiated between two types of oaths: "declaratory" or "judiciary", which pertain to past events, e.g. swearing

the truth of past actions in a law case, and “promissory” which refer to future events, e.g. pacts, promises or vows. Clearly, the *saṃkalpa* belongs to the second category since it is a promissory speech-act. For this reason the future tense is generally prescribed in the formulation of a *saṃkalpa*:

prātar deva caturdaśyāṃ jāgariṣyāmy ahaṃ niśi. (*Garuḍapurāṇa* 1.124.12ab)

In the morning, o god, on the fourteenth, I shall keep awake in the night.

śivarātrivratam deva kariṣye śivasamnidhau. (*Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi* 255: 13)

I shall, o god, keep the vow of Śivarātri in the presence of Śiva.

(b) However, the decision to take a religious vow must not only be well articulated and formulated prior to the performance of the ritual, it must also be consciously declared—usually but not necessarily in a public and explicit form. If therefore—as Śrīdatta in his *Samayapradīpa* states—“a man of weak intellect or an ignorant man observes a fast without *saṃkalpa*, it would be simply so much physical hardship but not a *vrata*”.⁴ Many Dharmasāstrins stress the necessity of the mental (*mānasa*) act in ritual decisions.⁵ Thus, a *saṃkalpa* for a *vrata* has to be intentional, as is stated by Śabara on *Jaiminīyasūtra* 6.2.20:

vratam iti mānasaṃ karmocyate idaṃ na kariṣyāmīti yaḥ saṃkalpaḥ. (*Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* 6.2.20)

A *vrata* is said (to be) a mental act, which is an intention (formulated with a phrase like:) “I will not do this” (e.g. eat during a fast).

(c) Thirdly, a *saṃkalpa* should be phrased in a certain linguistic form which leaves little space for alterations. Harinātha Śarmā who, quoting from various sources, reflects the use and importance of *saṃkalpas* in an analytical way, is also precise regarding the formulation:

ratnāvalyāṃ “kuśodakaṃ samādāya saṃkalpeta hi vākyataḥ | tiṅsuvantayutaṃ vākyam ātmanepady ucyate | madhye kāmañ ca hetuñ ca tithyādyam vākyam uccaret [”] | [...] saṃkalpeta vākyataḥ, mānasaṃ karma vākyena prakāśayet | (Saṃkalparatnāvalī 11)

In the *Ratnāvalī* (the following verse is given): “After he has taken *kuśa* water, he should explicitly (lit. in sentences) formulate the *saṃkalpa*, he should use a sentence with finite verb forms in the middle voice (*ātmanepada*); in the middle he should proclaim a sentence (which contains) the wishes and reasons (for the ritual) and also the lunar day at the beginning”. [...] “He should explicitly formulate the *saṃkalpa*”. (Which means:) The mental act (or what one does by

4 Quoted from Kane 1968ff. vol. 5.1: 30f.

5 See, for instance, Medhātithi on *Mānavadharmasāstra* IV. 13, Mitākṣara on *Yājñavalkya-smṛti* I.129; *Amarakoṣa* 1.8.2; cf. Kane 1968ff. vol. 5.1: 28f.

thoughts in rituals) must also be proclaimed through sentences which he should formulate as *saṃkalpas*.

(d) The phrasing should contain the essence of the ritual action and its purpose (*artha*) or the wishes (*kāma*) it incorporates, as can be seen from the *saṃkalpa* formulas which follow in the next section. Traditionally, a *saṃkalpa* is regarded as an act of willing. If there is no desire, there will be no ritual and especially no fruit of the ritual. Thus, the *Mānavadharmasāstra* says:

*saṃkalpamūlaḥ kāmo vai yajñāḥ saṃkalpasambhavaḥ |
vratāni yamadharmaś ca sarve saṃkalpajāḥ smṛtāḥ || (Mānavadharmasāstra II.3)*

Desire has *saṃkalpa* as its root, and sacrifices are caused by a *saṃkalpa*; vows and all the *dharma*s of restriction are said to come from *saṃkalpa*.

However, in this verse *saṃkalpa* is not yet a technical term but means “desire, will”. The restrictive behaviour so essential in most pilgrimages, which results from a *saṃkalpa*, is imposed by the *yamas* and *niyamas*, of which various lists exist (Kane 1968ff. vol. 5.1: 29 n. 57). They can be classified as (a) ethical, e.g. non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), not stealing (*asteya*), speaking the truth (*satya*) etc., (b) purifying, e.g. bathing (*snāna*), purification (*śauca*) etc., or (c) asceticism, e.g. celibacy (*brahmacarya*), fasting (*upavāsa*), vigil (*jāgaraṇa*), silence (*mauna*) etc. It seems, then, that everyday behaviour has to be intentionally directed towards religious aims in order to be ritually acceptable. Unknowingly, unconsciously and unwillingly performed rituals have no religious result (*phala*, *puṇya*). This idea, common to many religions and theologies, is again *expressis verbis* mentioned in the *Samkalparatnāvalī*:

*saṃkalparacanāprakāraḥ
yadyapi saṃkalpo nāmāham evaṃ kariṣyāmīty adhyavasāyarūpo manaso vyāpā-
raḥ tathāpi tadabhidhāyivākyam api saṃkalpaḥ | saṃkalpaṃ racayāmi, saṃ-
kalpaṃ paṭhāmi, saṃkalpaṃ kuru iti vyavahāradarśanena nirūḍhalakṣaṇāṅgī-
kārāt || (Samkalparatnāvalī 10)*

The manner of composing a *saṃkalpa*: Even when that which is called a *saṃkalpa* is a mental process in the form of a resolution, “I shall act in such a way”, even then, the sentence expressive of that (resolution) is also a *saṃkalpa*. This is because of the incorporation of the conventional meaning (of the term) through seeing its popular usage (in sentences such as), “I compose a *saṃkalpa*, I read (or recite) a *saṃkalpa*, You formulate a *saṃkalpa*”.⁶

*deśakālayor adhikaraṇatvāt saptamīvibhaktiyā prayogaḥ | tatas ca pratipadoktā-
sandarbhānusāreṇa sāmpradāyikaṃ saṃkalpavākyam | (Samkalparatnāvalī 11)*

6 *Nirūḍhalakṣaṇa* is a *terminus technicus* which expresses the secondary or metaphorical meaning of a word: see Kunjunni Raja 1963: 62f.

Because of the locative sense of place and time one should use the locative. Then, the *saṃkalpa*-sentence is in accordance with tradition because it follows the connection (between the words) mentioned at the beginning.

(e) Finally, a *saṃkalpa* can be accompanied by certain ritual gestures to support the truth of the speech-act. Thus it is usual to touch a vessel filled with water or to sprinkle water with *kuśa* grass on the palms. One should also wear a ring because it is inauspicious to perform rituals with bare hands. If one does not have a metal ring one should make a ring out of *kuśa* grass:

śuktiśaṅkhāśmarūpyamṛṇmayapātraiḥ kevalena hastena vā saṃkalpaṃ na kuryāt | atra hastaniśedhaḥ pātrāntara-sadbhāvaviṣaya ekahastaparoveti) raghunandanāye durgākṛtyakaumudyām ca | (Saṃkalparatnāvalī 11)

One should not perform a *saṃkalpa* with vessels made of oyster pearl, stone, silver or clay or with the (bare) hand. And in Raghunandana's *Durgākṛtyakaumudi* (it is stated): "Here, the prohibition of the hand refers either to the matter of the existence of another (kind) of vessel or to the dependence on one hand".

tāmrāpātre kuśatrayaṃ tilāṅ jalaṅ ca nidhāya tatpātram ādāya vāmahastānvārabdhena dakṣahastena kuśatilaḥjalāny ādāya vā | (Saṃkalparatnāvalī 12)

Having placed three blades of *kuśa* grass, sesame seeds and water in a copper vessel, having taken that vessel, or having taken *kuśa* grass, sesame seeds and water in the right hand cupped in the left hand.

To be sure, not all five features of a *saṃkalpa* are found in the written sources (samples of which are given in the next section), but they can generally be observed in ritual practice. *Saṃkalpas* belong to the practical knowledge of priests that is often only orally preserved.

Saṃkalpa Formulas

Most priests follow a formula similar to one of the three following examples arranged in order of increasing complexity. However, in manuscripts one can find even longer versions especially used during marriages. P. Aithal has kindly provided me with a copy of a manuscript titled *Mahāsaṃkalpa* from the Chandra Shamsher Collection in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (ms. no. d. 825/4), which contains a comprehensive sacred geography and cosmology of India. It mentions the 7 *lokas*, 7 *purīs*, 7 *dvīpas*, 7 *merus*, 10 *āraṇyas*, *varṣas*, *kṣetras* and many items more.

(a) *Ṛgvedīyabrahmakarmasamuccaya* of Vāsudeva Paṇaśīkara. The *saṃkalpa* concerns the ritual morning bath (*prātaḥsnāna*):

*gaṃgāgaṃgeti yo brūyād yojanānāṃ śatair api |
mucyate sarvapāpebhyo viṣṇulokaṃ sa gacchati ||*

ācāmya prāṇāyāmaṃ kṛtvā śrīmadbhagavato mahāpuruṣasya viṣṇor ājñayā pravartamānasya adya brahmaṇo dvitīye parārdhe viṣṇupade śrīśvetavārāhakaḷpe vaivasvatamanvamtare kaliyuge prathamacarāṇe bhāratavarṣe bhāratākhaṇḍe jambudvīpe daṇḍakāraṇye deśe (godāvaryāḥ dakṣiṇe tīre kṛṣṇāveṇyore uttare tīre vā) śālivāhanaśake bauddhāvātāre rāmakṣetre rāmarāmāśrame asmin vartamāne amukanāmasaṃvatsare amukāyane amukartau amukamāse amukapakṣe amukatithau amukavāsare amukadivasanakṣatre amukasthe vartamāne caṃdre amukasthe śrīsūrye amukasthe devagurau śeṣeṣu graheṣu yathāyathaṃ sthānasthiteṣu satsuśubhayoge śubhakarāṇe evaṃguṇaviśeṣaṇaviśiṣṭāyāṃ śubhapuṇyātithau

śrīparameśvarājñārūpasakalaśāstraśrutismṛtipurāṇoktaphalaprapṭyartham mama ātmaṇḥ kṛtakāyikavācīkamānasika-sāṃsargikasakalapāpakṣayārtham prātaḥsnānam ahaṃ kariṣye | (fol. 4)

“Whoever says ‘o Gaṅgā, o Gaṅgā’, even (if he is) hundreds of miles away, he is released from all evil (and) reaches the world of Viṣṇu”.

After ritually cleaning myself, after ritually controlling the breath, acting on the command of the Blessed One, the Great Puruṣa, Viṣṇu, today, on the Viṣṇupada (51st day) of the second, latter half of (the life of) Brahmā, in the Śvetavārāha period (*kalpa*), in the Vaivasvata period (*manvantara*), in the first quarter of the Kaliyuga, in Bharatavarṣa (India), in the Bharata part (of the continent), on the Jambudvīpa continent, in the Daṇḍakāraṇya (the jungle area of Dekkhan), in the land at the southern bank of the Godāvarī River or on the northern bank of the Kṛṣṇā River or Veṇī River, during the Śālivāhana era, during the (period of the incarnation of Viṣṇu as) Buddha, in this realm of Rāma (= Maharashtra), in the year with such and such a name, in such and such a half of the year (*āyana*), in such and such a season (*ṛtu*), in such and such a lunar month (*māsa*), in such and such a fortnight (*pakṣa*) (of the lunar month), on such and such a lunar day (*tithi*), on such and such a weekday (*vāsara*), on the lunar mansion (*nakṣatra*) of such and such a day, when the moon resides in such and such a position, when the sun is in such and such a position, when Jupiter is in such and such a position (and) when the other “planets” (*graha*) are in a proper position, in an auspicious stellar constellation (*yoga*), in an auspicious half (*karaṇa*) of a lunar day (*tithi*), on an auspicious and meritorious lunar day characterized by such special qualities, in order to receive the fruits mentioned in all the Śāstras, Śrutis, Smṛtis and Purāṇas, which are in the form of the commands of the Highest God, and for all corporeal, verbal, mental and sāṃsāric evil done by me to perish, I shall perform the morning bath.

Interestingly and despite its length, neither the clan (*gotra*) nor further personalizing features have been mentioned in this *saṃkalpa*.

(b) *Samkalparatnāvalī* of Harinātha Śarmā. The *saṃkalpa* is formulated as a sample (*svarūpa*):

saṃkalpavākyasvarūpam

*om tatsat adya brahmaṇo dviṭīye parārdhe śvetavārāhakaḥ vaivasvatama-
nvantare 'aṣṭāvīṃśatitame kalau yuge jambūdvīpe bhārate varṣe uttare khaṇḍe
āryāvartāntaragate nepāladeśe pāśupater kṣetre prabhava samvatsare dakṣiṇe
'yane śaradī rtau āśvine māse kṛṣṇe pakṣe dviṭīyāyāṃ tithau śanau vāsare reva-
tyāṃ nakṣatre dhruve yoge gare karaṇe kanyārāśīsthitayoḥ sūryaśukrayoḥ ka-
rkaṭarāśīsthitēṣu ketuṣu mithunarāśīsthitayoḥ śanibhaumayoḥ mīnarāśīsthitayoḥ
candrajīvayor makararāśīsthitē rāhau tulārāśīsthitē budhe kauṇḍinyagotraḥ
kauṇḍinyavāśīṣṭha maitrāvaruṇeti tripravaro | harināthaśarmā sakalapāpakṣa-
yārthaṃ gaṅgāsnānam ahaṃ kariṣye iti saṃkalpya jalamaśānyāṃ kṣipet | (Saṃ-
kalparatnāvalī 12f.)*

“The essential nature of a *saṃkalpa*-sentence: *Om tat sat*. Today, in the second (half of the life) of Brahmā, in the Śvetavārāha period (*kalpa*), in the Vaivasvata period (*manvantara*), in the 28th *manvantara*, in the Kaliyuga, in the Jambūdvīpa, on the Bharatavarṣa continent, in the northern part of it, in Nepal which falls under the Āryāvarta region, in the field (*kṣetra*) of Paśupati, in the *prabhava* (i.e. name of the year), in the southern part of the year (i.e. when the sun is in the southern hemisphere), in the autumn season, in the month of Āśvina, in its dark part, on the second lunar day, on Saturday, in the Revatī zodiacal sign, when the polar star is in the fifth division (*gara, karaṇa*) of the day, when the sun and Venus are in the sign of Virgin, when the Ketu is in Cancer, when Saturn and Mars are in Gemini, when the moon and Jupiter are in the Fishes, when Rāhu is in Capricorn, (and) when Mercury is in Libra, I, Harinātha Śarmā, belonging to the clan (*gotra*) of Kauṇḍinya, and to the three clan segments (*pravara*) Kauṇḍinya, Vāśīṣṭha and Maitrāvaruṇa, shall take a bath in the Gaṅgā in order to destroy all (my) evil”. Having thus ritually decided, he shall throw water to the north.

(c) *Vratibandhapaddhati* of Kṛṣṇaprasāda Bhaṭṭarāi. This text is a recent handbook for performing the *upanayana* or initiation ceremony (in Nepal generally called *vratibandha*). The formula for the *saṃkalpa* is short and modernized:

*om adyeha [...] gotraḥ [...] pravaraḥ [...] śarmā (varmā vā) ahaṃ mamāśya [...] nāmnah kunārasya, kariṣyamāñacuḍopayanavedārambhasamāvartanakarma(ṇi) tatpūrvāṅgatvena dīpakala-śādisthāpanapūrvakaṃ yathāhilitopacārāiḥ śrīgaṇa-
patipūjana-puṇyāhavācanamātrkāpūjananāndīśrāddhagrahaśāntīyādi sakalaka-
rma(ś ca) tantreṇa yathāvidhi kariṣye | etakarmaṇi yathāvihitopayogyakarma
kartum (puṇyāhavācanārthaṃ ca) ebhiś candanapuṣpākṣatapūgīphalavāsodra-
vyādibhir yathānāmagotrān yathānāmaśarmaṇo brāhmaṇān yuṣmān ahaṃ vṛṇe |
(pp. 8–9)*

Oṃ. Today and here, belonging to such and such a clan (*gotra*) and such and such a clan-segment (*pravara*), [...] I, Śarmā (or Varmā), shall perform, according to injunctions, in an abbreviated form, for my son named [...], (in the matter of) the obligatory ritual of cutting the hair (*cūḍā*), initiation (*upanayana*), first reading of the Veda (*vedārambha*) and the ritual ending of studies (*samāvartana*), through means of its preliminaries (*pūrvāṅga*), after first (doing) the rituals of lighting a lamp (*dīpa*) and setting up a vessel (*kalaśasthāpana*), with the offerings (*upacāra*) available, all the rituals such as the worship of Gaṇeśa (*śrīgaṇapati-pūjā*), proclamation of the religious merit of the day (*puṇyāhavācana*), the worship of the Mātrkās (*mātrkāpūjana*), a (commemorative and auspicious) death ritual (*nandīśrāddha*), the ritual of appeasing the planets (*grahaśānti*) etc. In the matter of this ritual, I choose you Brahmans of such and such a *gotra* named such and such “Śarmā”, in order to do the subsidiary rites as enjoined, (as well as for proclaiming the religious merit of the day) with these (things), sandalwood paste (*candana*), flowers, whole-grain rice, areca nuts, cloths, money etc.

Thus, any *saṃkalpa* has ideally the following form (in brackets the grammatical essentials, the sequence of no. 3–8 is not fixed):

1. *mantra* (e.g. *oṃ tatsad*)
2. *hic et nunc* (usually *adyeḥa*)
3. place-names [loc.]: see Table 1
4. time parameters [loc.]: see Table 2
5. genealogical and kinship data [gen.]: see Table 3
6. personal name(s) [nom.]
7. aim or purpose [acc.]
8. ritual action [acc.]
9. verb [1. ps. sg. fut. Ātm. (or present tense used as future tense)].

Place, Time and the Individual

As we have seen, by means of the declaratory formula the performer of a specific ritual has to specify and identify himself in accordance with (1) spatial, (2) chronological and (3) genealogical criteria. I call these criteria respectively “localization”, “timing” and “personalization”. It would appear that the space and time parameters are construed in a similar way as in the dating of inscriptions. There are significant differences, however, as I will try to show in the concluding section. The following tables list the most common criteria and divisions used in *saṃkalpas* (see *Saṃkalparatnāvalī* 23–30).

(1) Localization

The spatial criteria resemble in a way the well-known Russian Matryoshka toy consisting of a series of dolls encapsulated in increasingly larger ones. Among the geographical coordinates are:

Tab. 1: Spatial levels mentioned in *saṃkalpas*

Supraregional Level	Regional Level	Local Level
<i>brahmāvārta</i> —Brahmā's region	(<i>sva-</i>) <i>deśa</i> —country: <i>nepāladeśa</i> etc.	<i>grāma</i> —village
<i>āryāvarta</i> —region of the Āryas	<i>ṣeṭra</i> —region, usually named after a god: <i>paraśurāmakṣeṭra</i> , <i>rāmakṣeṭra</i> , <i>-rājya</i> , <i>hindusthānadeśa</i> , <i>paśupatiṣeṭra</i> etc.	<i>nagara</i> —city
<i>Khaṇḍa</i> —continent, usually <i>bharatakhaṇḍa</i>	<i>pāṭha</i> —directions: <i>dakṣiṇā-</i> , <i>uttara-</i> etc. (see <i>ayana</i> in Table 2)	<i>nadī</i> —river
<i>dvīpa</i> —subcontinent: <i>jambudvīpa</i> , <i>puṣkaradvīpa</i> etc.		<i>tīra</i> —bank
<i>bharatavarṣa</i> —sacred land of India		

In the ritual context, the supra-regional aspect is more subject to debate than the regional or local criteria. The supra-regional level can be open to ideological arguments, since cosmographical and even political definitions of the borders of a sacred land or territory vary. Although terrestrial features, such as mountains or rivers, are mentioned early (see *Mānavadharmasāstra* II.17–24), the sacred land in which the ritual can take place is more often defined in distinction to a foreign region or country, e.g. *mlecchadeśa* (*Mānavadharmasāstra* II.23), which is not considered as sacred, and which the pious man should avoid. I will not elaborate here on the extensive literature on *bharatavarṣa* etc., which is mainly concerned with cosmographical and geographical details (see Kirfel 1920, Sircar 1967, Gombrich 1975, Schwartzberg 1992). Conceptually, it seems to me that only at this point can new religious and ideological concepts of space enter the formula of a *saṃkalpa*—for instance, the concept of India as a nation (*bharata*), the idea of Hindusthāna or, recently, Rāmarājya. However, sacred geography has always been political in the Durkheimian sense that religion also serves the solidarity of social groups.

The sacred space of rituals is therefore not defined by “objective”, geocentric criteria but by religious concepts. In other words, sacred space in rituals is construed, not measured. A sacred place is never just out there, it is always also *in illo loco*. From this it follows that the sacred land of India is not just the territory of the nation. The sacred land of India is also beyond India. Brahmin or Hindu priests do not have any problem in reformulating and adapting the *saṃkalpa* to foreign countries, as has been observed by M. Deshpande in two Hindu weddings in the USA:

On one occasion, the priest recited the formula *bharatakhāṇḍe bharatavarṣe* etc. without any modification. After the ceremony was over, I asked the priest for an explanation. The clever priest, who had not thought of this problem before, responded by saying that all the regions of the world where Indian immigrants have settled are now included in the region referred to by *bharatakhāṇḍe bharatadeśe*. On the other hand, I have observed other Hindu priests in my state of Michigan adjusting the traditional formula of *saṃkalpa* to reflect the changed geography: *amerikākhāṇḍe amerikādeśe miśiganrājya anārbarnagare huron-nadyās tīre*, “in the continent of America, in the country of America, in the state of Michigan, in the city of Ann Arbor, on the bank of the Huron river”. (Deshpande 1996: 425)

(2) Timing

In terms of chronology, the following divisions and subdivisions are made and mentioned in *saṃkalpas*.

Tab. 2: Chronological divisions mentioned in *saṃkalpas*

Cosmological Divisions	Calendrical and Chronological Divisions	Astronomical Divisions, i.e. zodiacal signs occupied by the sun, moon, Jupiter and other planets
<i>kalpa</i> —a day of Brahmā = 1000 <i>mahāyugas</i>	<i>saṃvat</i> —era: <i>vikrama</i> , <i>śāka</i> etc. <i>varṣa</i> , <i>vatsara</i> —a year of 360 lunar days	<i>nakṣatra</i> —27 lunar mansions: <i>aśvinī</i> , <i>bharaṇī</i> , <i>kṛttikā</i> ... <i>uttarabhādrapadā</i> , <i>revatī</i> <i>yoga</i> —27 conjunctions: <i>viṣkumbha</i> , <i>prīti</i> , <i>āyusmān</i> , ... <i>aindra</i> , <i>vaidhṛti</i>
<i>yuga</i> —four ages of the world: <i>kṛta</i> , <i>tretā</i> , <i>dvāpara</i> and <i>kali</i> = 1 <i>mahāyuga</i> or 1 <i>manvantara</i> (Manu-period) = 4,320,000 years	<i>ayana</i> —half of the year according to the position of the sun in the northern (<i>uttara</i>) or southern (<i>dakṣiṇa</i>) hemisphere <i>ṛtu</i> —6 seasons: <i>vasanta</i> , <i>grīṣma</i> , <i>varṣā</i> , <i>śarad</i> , <i>hemanta</i> , <i>śiśira</i>	<i>rāśi</i> —12 solar mansions or zodiacal signs: <i>meṣa</i> , <i>vṛṣabha</i> , <i>mithuna</i> , ... <i>kumbha</i> , <i>mīna</i> Position of <i>sūrya</i> , <i>candra</i> and (other) <i>grahas</i> or <i>navagrahas</i>

saṃvatsara—usually according to the 60-year cycle of Jupiter: *prabhava, vibhava, śukla, pāṛthiva, vyaya, ... kṣaya*

māsa—12 months: *vaiśākha, jyeṣṭha, āṣāḍha, śrāvaṇa, bhādra, āśvina, kārttika, mārga, pauṣa, māgha, phālguna, caitra*

pakṣa—half of a month according to the size and position of the moon: *śukla, kṛṣṇa*

tithi—15 lunar days including full or new moon: *pratipad, dvitīyā, tṛtīyā, ... caturdaśī, pūrṇimā, amāvāsyā*

karaṇa—11 divisions of a day: *vava, vālava, kaulava, taittila, gara, vaṇija, viṣṭi, śakuni, capuṣpad, nāga, kiṃstughna vāra, dina*—7 weekdays: *ravi,*

soma, bhauma, budha, brhaspati, śukra, śani

yāma—quarter of a day

muhūrta, ghaṭī, pala—

divisions of an hour (1

muhūrta = 48 minutes, 1 *ghaṭī*

= 12 minutes = 60 *pala*)

Timing a ritual can be an extremely difficult task. It therefore lies in the hands of specialists, i.e. astrologers and astronomers, even if educated Indians can read and use a traditional calendar (*pañcāṅga*). I do not deal here with astronomical or calendrical problems involved in timing rituals but with concepts of time relevant for ritual actions. From this point of view, ritual time and “real” time are not only different but may also conflict with each other. To give just one example: For most rituals, festivals or pilgrimages, the lunar day (*tithi*) is decisive; a *tithi* can cover two or even three solar days (*dina, divāsa*). What is to be done, then, if a certain natural time is prescribed for a specific ritual, e.g. the night vigil in the case of Śivarātri, but if the *tithi* happens to fall in the daytime? In this case most traditional experts refer to the *yugmavākyā*. According to this rule it is the *tithi* which lasts until sunrise or is just beginning that gives the solar day its

name and number. However, since a *tithi* can be very short, lasting only a few hours, it can happen that a lunar day does not cover the nighttime. In this case the decision has to be made whether the night vigil should be held the night before or after the *tithi* (both ways are possible: see Michaels 1996: 325). But more important is the fact that the conceptual night is independent of the natural day- or nighttime. The timing of the ritual performance must be in accordance with the bio-rhythm, the organization of the festival etc., but the religious timing can be independent of it: *in illo tempore*.

(3) Personalization

Besides localization and timing it is necessary to involve the performer of the ritual (the *yajamāna*) through using the following criteria:

Tab. 3: Personal criteria mentioned in *samkalpas*

Genealogical criteria	Personal criteria	Educational criteria
<i>gotra</i> —clan names of the eponymous seers (<i>ṛṣi</i>), from which all twice-borns are believed to descend, usually <i>viśvāmitra</i> , <i>jamaḍagni</i> , <i>bharaḍvāja</i> , <i>gautama</i> , <i>vasiṣṭha</i> , <i>kaśyapa</i> , <i>agastya</i>	personal names (<i>nāma</i>) given at the naming ceremony (<i>nāmakaraṇa</i>)	Guru's name
<i>pravara</i> —clan segments according to legendary descendants of the <i>ṛṣis</i>	Father's name	<i>śākhā</i> —Vedic school
	Mother's name	<i>pāṭha</i> —name of the recited text
	Name of the <i>varṇa</i> : <i>śarmā</i> for <i>brāhmaṇa</i> , <i>varmā</i> for <i>kṣatriya</i> , <i>gupta</i> for <i>vaiśya</i> , <i>ḍāsa</i> for <i>śūdra</i>	
<i>sāpiṇḍa</i> —patri- and matrilineal male and female ancestors	Name of the sub-caste (<i>jāti</i>)	

Interestingly, personalization can be a ritual act with spatial and chronological implications. Thus, for the match-making ceremony in the selection of a suitable marriage partner, it is necessary not only to compare the genealogical criteria of bride and bridegroom, but also, for example, the names. If the name of the bride begins with a syllable that according to the usual calendars (*pañcāṅga*) is combined with the lunar mansions (*nakṣatra*) and other categories (*varṇa*, *yoni*, *gaṇa*

etc.), and if these categories do not fit with those of the bridegroom, then the marriage will not be auspicious. Similarly it can be astronomically tested whether a person corresponds well to a new settlement he has chosen (G.G. Raheja 1987: 52f.).

Personalization is therefore not individualizing but, on the contrary, de-individualizing: the individual is associated and sometimes even ritually identified with “greater” spatial and chronological criteria, which transcend the ego to culminate in a sphere beyond the human world.

Samkalpa as Speech-Acts and the Intentionality of Rituals

As can be seen from the material presented, a *samkalpa* is an *intentio solemnis* through the enunciation of which all action that is mentioned in it is recognized as sacred. This is what C. Humphrey and J. Laidlaw (1994: 88ff.) have called the ritual commitment. Indeed, only if such a formal decision has been made and expressed in words, are the ritual acts religiously valid. Only then can an everyday action such as the washing of a statue be distinguished from pouring sacred water over it (*abhiṣeka*).

Moreover, with the five characteristics mentioned in section 2 above, *samkalpas* share syntactic and pragmatic structures with vows (*vrata*), oaths (*vacana*, *praṇidhāna*, *praṇidhi*), promises (*pratijñā*), curses (*śapatha*), charms (*mantra*), blessings (*āśīrvāda*), magic truth-acts (*satyakriyā*, “Wahrheitszauber”) and other speech-acts.⁷ In most cases, a *samkalpa* is both a verbal and performative utterance that evokes something immediately, that is articulated in a solemn way, referring to past or future actions, regarding which it expresses a commitment or promise, and that is often (but not always) accompanied by ritual gestures. In short, *samkalpas* can be characterized as performative utterances or as a variant of illocutionary acts. However, the analogy is dangerous. For Searle, all

7 Until now the discussion of these speech-acts in Indian contexts (cf. Alper 1989, Benveniste 1973, Brown 1978, Lüders 1951 and 1959, Thompson 1998 (with further references), Staal 1989, Tambiah 1990, Wheelock 1982) has concentrated on the semantic and pragmatic aspects of *mantras*. If I am not mistaken, neither the collection of articles edited by Harvey P. Alper (which, unfortunately, has no index) nor the important publications of Frits Staal or Stanley Tambiah even mention the institution of *samkalpa* so essential for the study of Hindu (as well as Jain and Buddhist) rituals (cf., however, Staal 1983, vol. 1: 283 for a discussion of *ākuṭi* as a kind of predecessor of *samkalpa*). All this is regrettable since any *samkalpa* is very similar to the category called speech-acts analyzed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), especially “promises” as discussed extensively by Searle.

speech-acts involve intention and language is basically communicative. But *saṃkalpas* need neither be communicative nor express intention.

Prima facie, all rituals performed with a *saṃkalpa* seem to be meaningful and intentional acts. I do not wish to elaborate on the discussion which was initiated by Frits Staal with his theory on the meaninglessness of rituals⁸ and which was continued, to a certain extent, in the book of C. Humphrey and J. Laidlaw (1994). However, I would briefly like to address the question of whether *saṃkalpas* indicate the intentionality of ritual acts, given that they mention the intention (*artha*, *kāmya*) of the ritual to be performed: see, for example, the already quoted end of the *saṃkalpa* of the *Ṛgvedīyabrahmakarmasamuccaya*:

I shall perform the morning bath in order to be released from all evil caused by *saṃsāra*—no matter whether it (evil) be done (by) bodily (actions), by words or mentally—and in order to receive the fruits that are mentioned by the highest god (Viṣṇu) in the Śāstras, Śrutis, Smṛtis and Purāṇas.

In this *saṃkalpa* not only the aim of the morning bath has been mentioned but also the desired fruits of the ritual. For C. Humphrey and J. Laidlaw (1994: 88f.), on the contrary, rituals must be “non-intentional” (as well as “stipulated”, “elemental” or “archetypical” and “apprehensible”). It is especially the argument for the unintentionality of rituals which invites criticism. Indeed, if one were to follow Humphrey and Laidlaw’s admittedly brilliant theory on this point, rituals with *saṃkalpas* would not, it seems, really be rituals.

However, a closer look at *saṃkalpa* makes it clear that the intention mentioned in them are not motives. Humphrey and Laidlaw say of rituals that they are always non-intentional but not necessarily unintentional. They can be performed with a variety of motives, but whatever they are, these wishes or motives do not change the ritual acts and, even more importantly, they are not at all necessary for recognizing ritual acts as such. Whereas in the case of normal actions the intention is necessary to distinguish them from other actions or to perceive them as such, ritualized actions are not characterized by the intentions accompanying them. A *saṃkalpa* cannot be considered as a communicative or informative act because its purpose is neither to communicate nor to inform anybody about the ritual. It just signalizes that from that point in time on the sphere of existence has changed. It indicates, so to say, a change of programme, a shift to the level of ritualization, so that all actions that follow and are framed by the *saṃkalpa* and *visarjana* may be considered as being of a ritual or sacred nature, similar to plays in the theatre—where one can be sure that Othello will not really murder Desdemona. This is what C. Bell (1992) calls “ritualization” and Humphrey

8 Staal 1979, 1989; see also Michaels 1998: 257–260; 1999 and 1999a.

and Laidlaw call “ritual stance”. Thus “in ritual you both are and are not the author of your acts” (Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: 99).

Whatever the personal motive for performing a ritual may be, it does not affect the formulation of the *saṃkalpa*, which is itself already part of the ritual. Imagine somebody changing the formula of an oath; this would make it irrelevant and invalid. Similarly, a *saṃkalpa* is not an informal promise (although it has much in common with that speech-act). Neither the priest nor the performer can alter the phrasing or add personal motives. If this were done, it would create amusement or scandal (as the sudden change of the formula “I do” in the Christian marriage ceremony).

If, then, a *saṃkalpa* in the final analysis is not a declaration of motives or desire for performing a ritual, but the indication of a change in bearing or stance, why is it necessary to mention the time and location of the performance along with its ritual purpose (*artha*)? In my view this has to do with the complexity of ritual actions.

Conclusion: Reducing and Expanding Ritual Complexity

Prima facie, localization, timing and personalization seem to be means of identifying or authorizing the pilgrim, *yajamāna* or *vratin*. The person has to show a ritual license, as it were, by affirming that the ritual will be performed in a sacred space, at a sacred time and by a genealogically admissible man or woman. By following these steps a night vigil, for instance, will be ritually effective, in contra-distinction to just staying awake at night.

However, a closer look at the processes involved has shown that the exact form of localization, timing and personalization is, to a certain extent, the opposite of formulating a custom-made license for the ritual. It de-individualizes, de-chronologizes, and de-spatializes—in other words, transforms reality. This is the theoretical point I wish to stress. Rituals cannot be conceptually reduced to the actual ritual performed, they can never be repeated, and they are thus not remembered, but re-remembered and always newly created. Seen from the religious concept behind it, a ritual is always a unique totality. Thus the space mentioned in a *saṃkalpa* of a pilgrimage is conceptually not limited to geographical criteria. It is always the space beyond the visible borders which is realized. This space is not the space within space but a singular, unique space, which is connected with myth or a primordial divine act. The borders of this space are ideative, not empirical.

In a circumambulation such as the *Antargṛhayātrā* in Benares (cf. Gutschow & Michaels 1993: 103–109) it is not the circumambulatory route which gives the

pilgrimage its sacred character, but the *solemnis intentio* or *saṃkalpa*. Only then are “normal” ways solemnly declared to be sacred routes. This view seems to create a problem for localizing and timing rituals, since they always happen to occur in empirical space and time. However, the religious feeling relating to space and time is absolute, not relative, it creates identities or distinctions, rather than similarities between spaces: Uttarakāśī is not similar to Kāśī; it *is* Kāśī! Thus any space is subjective or singular, but there is no space as such or *an sich*.

A space *an sich*, or a transcendental space, does not exist because such a space would not need any empirical space. The Absolute cannot manifest itself, it has no sphere of existence (*loka*). This is precisely the difference between religious and profane conceptions of space and time.

Localizing and timing rituals therefore means identifying the individual with religious forces which are regarded as absolute and singular. It is because of this that the complexity of any ritual can be enlarged or reduced, so that the Pañcakrośīyātrā of Benares, for example, can be performed either as an elaborate five-day-long circumambulation of the sacred field of Kāśī, or as a short circuit of the Pañcakrośī Temple within Benares, or else mentally, by reciting the “108” sacred *tīrthas*. From the religious point of view all these ritual acts are identical because they all have the sacred force of a “Pañcakrośīyātrā”. But only when a *saṃkalpa* is formulated and declared, and only when the individual is ritually identified with this religious force through means of the formula, is the ritual potency valid and capable of providing the desired results.

References

Texts

- Garuḍapurāṇa*, ed. Jivānanda Vidyāsāgara Bhaṭṭācārya. Calcutta: Sarasvatīyantra, 1890.
- Mīmāṃsāsūtra* with Śābarabhāṣya. Poona: Ānandāśrama Press, 1931–34 (Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series, 97).
- Mahāsaṃkalpa*. Manuscript d. 825/4 from the Chandra Samsher Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford, dated 18.4.1880, 5 fol. with 10 p.
- Mānavadharmasāstra*, ed. V.N. Mandlik. Bombay: Nirṇaya Sāgara, 1933.
- Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi*, ed. Vāsudeva Śarman. Bombay: Pāṇḍuraṅga Jāvajī, 1927.
- Rgvedīyabrahmakarmasamuccaya* of Vāsudeva Paṇāśīkara, ed. Moreśvara Nāṃdurakara, Pune: Anamola Prakāśana, 1979
- Saṃkalparatnāvalī* by H. Śarmā, Lucknow: Bhāratabhūṣana Press, V.S. 1980 (= 1923 C.E., numbers refer to pages).

Vratibandhapaddhati by Kṛṣṇaprasāda Bhaṭṭarāi, Kāthmāṃḍū: Nepāla Rājakīya Prajñā-Pratiṣṭhāna, V.S. 2030 (=1973 C.E.).

Secondary literature

- Alper, H.P. (ed.) 1989. *Mantra*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Austin, J.L. ²1962. *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bell, C. 1992. *Ritual Theory—Ritual Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Benveniste, E. 1971. *Indo-European Language and Society*. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press.
- Brown, W.N. 1978. *India and Indology: Selected Articles*. Delhi et al.: Motilal Barnarsidass.
- Deshpande, M. 1996. "Contextualizing the eternal language: Features of priestly Sanskrit". In: *Ideologies and Status of Sanskrit: Contributions to the History of the Sanskrit Language*, Houben, J.E.M. (ed.). Leiden, New York & Cologne: E.J. Brill, 401–436.
- Gombrich, R. 1975. "Ancient Indian Cosmology". In: *Ancient Cosmologies*, Blacker, C. & M. Lowe (ed.). London: George Allen & Unwin, 110–42.
- Gutschow, N. & A. Michaels 1993. *Benares: Tempel und religiöses Leben in der heiligen Stadt der Hindus*. Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag.
- Humphrey, C. & J. Laidlaw 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual: A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kane, P.V. ²1968ff. *History of Dharmaśāstra (Ancient Mediæval Religious and Civil Law)*. 6 vols. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Kirfel, W. 1920. *Die Kosmographie der Inder nach den Quellen dargestellt*. Bonn & Leipzig: Schroeder.
- Kunjūni Raja, K. 1963. *Indian Theories of Meaning*. Madras: Adyar Library and Research Centre.
- Lüders, H. 1951 & 1959. *Varuṇa I–II*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Michaels, A. 1996. "Śivarātri at Deopatan". In: *Change and Continuity: Studies in the Nepalese Culture of the Kathmandu Valley*, Lienhard, S. (ed.). Turin: Edizioni Dell'orso (Collana di Studi Orientali del CESMEO 7), 321–332.
- 1998. *Der Hinduismus: Geschichte und Gegenwart*. München: C.H. Beck. [engl. transl. by Harshaw, B.: *Hinduism: Past and Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004]
- 1999. "Le rituel pour le rituel? Oder wie sinnlos sind Rituale?" In: *Rituale heute*, Caduff, C. & J. Pfaff-Czarnecka (ed.). Berlin: Dietrich Reimers Verlag, 23–47.
- 1999a. "Ex opere operato. Zur Intentionalität promissorischer Akte in Ritualen". In: *Im Rausch des Rituals*, Koepping, K.-P. & U. Rao (ed.). Münster, Hamburg, London: Lit Verlag, 104–123.

- Raheja, G.G. 1988. *The Poison in the Gift: Ritual, Prestation, and the Dominant Caste in a North Indian Village*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
- Schwartzberg, J. 1992. "South Asian Cartography". In: *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, Harley, J.B. and D. Woodward (ed.). Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
- Searle, J.R. 1969. *Speech Acts. An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sircar, D.C. 1967. *Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature*. Calcutta: Indian Studies: Past and Present.
- Staal, F. 1979. "The Meaninglessness of Ritual". In: *Numen* 26: 2–22.
- 1983. *Agni. The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*. 2 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 1989. *Rules without Meaning*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Tambiah, St.J. 1990. *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson, G. 1998. "On Truth-acts in Vedic". In: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41: 125–153.
- Wheelock, W. 1982. "The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation". In: *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 32: 49–71.

JÖRG GENGNAGEL

Kāśīkhaṇḍokta: On Texts and Processions in Vārāṇasī

Introduction¹

The 18th September 2000 issue of the Hindi newspaper *Gāṃḍīva* in Vārāṇasī contained the following text titled “The procession on the waning fortnight of the month Āśvin”:

Kāśī. The head of the Vyās seat at Jñānavāpī Paṇḍit Kedārnāth Vyās declared that by a ritual bath, libations of water, ancestor worship and worship of Pitreśvara Mahādeva at the Piṭṛkuṇḍa on any day during the waning fortnight of the ancestors in the month Āśvin the father, forefathers etc. will be satisfied. This is mentioned in detail in chapter 97 of *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* verse number 204 and 235. He said that according to *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* chapter 97 verse 245 the fear to be reborn again will come to an end for the man or woman who performs a ritual bath, libations of water, ancestor worship and worships Mātṛī Devī as prescribed in the fortnight of the ancestors on Mātṛ Navamī, 22nd September at the Mātṛtīrtha (Mātākunḍ).²

This short description of a procession that leads to the Piṭṛ- and Mātṛkuṇḍa in order to perform ancestor worship at the two *tīrthas* Mātṛ- and Piṭṛkuṇḍa stresses the relevance of textual prescriptions. If one looks at the textual sources that are mentioned by Kedārnāth Vyās one has to note that the verses given can hardly be described as extensive or detailed (*vistṛta*). There the names of the temples

1 This paper is based on research carried out in the years 2000 to 2002 as part of the Vārāṇasī Research Project, Heidelberg, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

2 *Āśvin kṛṣṇa pakṣa kī yātrā. Kāśī. jñānvāpī vyāspīṭha ke adhyakṣa paṇḍita Kedarnāth Vyās ne eka vaktavya meṃ batāyā ki āśvin kṛṣṇa piṭṛpakṣa meṃ kisī din piṭṛkuṇḍa meṃ snāna, tarpaṇa, śrāddha aur śrī pitreśvara mahādeva kī pūjā se piṭṛ pitāmahādikoṃ kī tṛpti hotī hai. is samdarbha meṃ kāśīkhaṇḍa ke adhyāya 97 ke śloka saṃkhyā 204, 235 meṃ vistṛta ullekha hai. unhoṃne batāyā ki kāśīkhaṇḍa adhyāya 97 śloka 245 ke anusāra piṭṛpakṣa mātṛ naumī 22 sitaṃbar ko mātṛtīrtha (mātākunḍa) snāna, tarpaṇa, śrāddha aur mātṛī devī kā yathopacāra pūjā jo nara nārī karate haiṃ unke punarjanma kā bhaya samāpta hotā hai [...].*

and *tīrthas* are enumerated in a relational spatial pattern that characterizes large portions of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* where clusters of sacred places are listed. The three passages cited from chapter 97 read as follows:

To the south of it is Maṇīkarṇīśa, Paliteśvara to its north and there itself is Jarāhara, behind is Pāpanāśana. To its west is Nirjareśa and to the southwest is Pitāmaha also the Pitāmahasrotikā, there ancestor worship [brings about] great reward.³ [...]

To the north of it is Piśāceśa the remover of the state of a Piśāca, to the south thereof is Pitṛīśa, Pitṛkuṇḍa is in front of it.⁴ [...]

To the north thereof is Mātṛtīrtha that removes the fear of birth of one who takes a ritual bath. If one takes a ritual bath there, whether woman or man, he attains the desired fruit through the favour of the Mothers.⁵ [...]

In contrast to the impression given in the newspaper statement we find neither references to the temporal dimension connected with the mentioned sacred places nor any detailed prescriptions for the performance of a procession or other ritual actions. Nevertheless, in this short statement of some thirty lines, five references to verses in the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* are given. The eulogical Sanskrit literature on Vārāṇasī and in the given context more specifically the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*—the section of the *Skandapurāṇa* that was composed in the 14th century C.E.⁶—serve as important textual authorities to legitimize statements about the performance of *yātrās* in Vārāṇasī.

Kedārnāth Vyās has more to say about the places mentioned, the appropriate time and the respective ritual actions than the quoted textual source tells us. He is in fact himself a source for spatial knowledge and the author of a book on the sacred topography of Vārāṇasī that contains an extensive description of more than fifty processions within the sacred field of Vārāṇasī (Vyās 1987).⁷ As a member of the Vyās family that has hereditary rights over the Vyās Pīṭha situated near the Viśvanātha temple compound he is perceived by the pilgrims as an

3 *Tadyāmyāṃ maṇīkarṇīśaṃ tadudak paliteśvaram | jarāharam ca tatraiva tat paścāt pāpanāśanam | tatpaścime nirjareśas tan nairṛtyāṃ pitāmahaḥ | pitāmahasrotikā ca tatra śrāddham mahāphalam. (Kāśīkhaṇḍa 97.204–5)*

4 *Taduttare piśāceśa piśācyapadahāraḥ | pitṛīśas tadyamadiśi pitṛkuṇḍam tadagrataḥ. (ibid. 97.235)*

5 *Taduttare mātṛtīrtham snātur janmabhayāpahṛt | tatra snānam tu yaḥ kuryān nārī vā puruṣo 'pi vā | īpsitam phalam ānoti mātṛñām ca prasādataḥ. (ibid. 97.245–46ab)*

6 For a discussion of the date of the *khaṇḍa*-sections see the introduction to the critical edition of the *Skandapurāṇa* by Adriaensen & Bakker & Isaacson (1998).

7 Whether the majority of these processions was ever performed needs careful investigation. An example of the complex process of re-invention and invention of processions is discussed below.

authority on the sacred topography of Vārāṇasī. The Vyās Pīṭha is the place where the pilgrim starts his procession with the performance of a vow that consists of the declaration of the intention (*saṃkalpa*) to perform the respective procession and to return to this place after this vow is fulfilled.⁸ At the Vyās Pīṭha one male member of the Vyās family recites as part of this *saṃkalpa* the list of places to be visited during the intended *yātrā* and receives donations for the performance of this rite. Kedārnāth Vyās and his family are thus directly involved in most of the *yātrās* that are performed within Vārāṇasī and the donations given by the pilgrims at the Vyās Pīṭha are part of the income of his family.⁹

Although the authority of the ritual specialist is derived from his family tradition and is directly linked to the sacral power of the place where the family resides, the need to refer back to the textual authority in order to remind the inhabitants of Vārāṇasī of their religious and ritual duties is nevertheless considered an imperative by Kedārnāth Vyās. This tendency to refer to scriptural authority in order to legitimize actual practice is widespread in the ritual sphere of *yātrās* in Vārāṇasī: the formulas “in the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*” (*kāśīkhaṇḍe*) or “as told in the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*” (*kāśīkhaṇḍokta*) are used in various contexts as labels to stress the seemingly age-old continuity of ritual performances which are, in fact, influenced by diverse factors resulting in changing practices.¹⁰

This article analyses this interrelation between script and performance in the context of processions performed within Vārāṇasī. This complex and dynamic relation between the script in its descriptive and prescriptive dimensions and the actual performance of rituals might be called, as in Catherine Bell (1988), the “ritualization of texts” as well as the “textualization of rituals”. After some remarks on the textual background of processions performed in Vārāṇasī, the role of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* and its relation to the *Skandapurāṇa*, I will analyze the ritual prescriptions for the most famous procession performed in Vārāṇasī, the Pañcakrośīyātrā. This is followed by a description of the ritual practice of the small group Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala, which performs regular bi-weekly processions within Vārāṇasī and which has had to face negotiations and contestations with regard to its performance of processions.

8 See the contribution of Axel Michaels in this volume for an analysis of the rite of *saṃkalpa*.

9 It is a matter of dispute whether every *yātrā* that is performed in Vārāṇasī has to be started and finished at the Vyās Pīṭha.

10 These two labels are found in inscriptions as well as in printed grey literature. In 2001 I came across one graffiti at a shrine near Durgākūṇḍa in Vārāṇasī where the label *kāśīkhaṇḍokta* was distorted into *kāśīkhaṇḍotra*.

Yātrā-Texts on Vārāṇasī

Diana Eck's now 20 year old statement that "the Sanskrit texts [...] that deal primarily with Banāras—the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* and the *Kāśīrahasya*—have not previously been translated or studied by Western scholars" (1982: xiv) still holds true if one thinks of a detailed study of the mentioned texts, whether one has Western or Eastern scholars in mind. A first step towards a study of *yātrā* texts on Vārāṇasī was the "Survey of the Sanskrit sources for the study of Vārāṇasī" prepared by Eck (1980). A valuable addition to the editorial history of the voluminous *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* is the reprint of the Sanskrit text and the commentaries *Rāmānandī* (Sanskrit) and *Nārāyaṇī* (Hindi) in four volumes edited by Karuṇāpati Tripāṭhī (1991ff.)¹¹ and the translation into English in two volumes by G. V. Tagare (1996, 1997).

The critical edition of the *Skandapurāṇa* undertaken in Groningen by Adriaensen, Bakker and Isaacson has shed new light on the different recensions of the *Skandapurāṇa* in general as well as on the sections on Vārāṇasī and their relation to the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*.¹² The earliest known version of the *Skandapurāṇa* contains three chapters on Vārāṇasī (26, 29 and 30) and a short description of the *avimuktakṣetra* in chapter 167 (verses 150–75). These chapters are not yet published but a short summary of their mythological content has been prepared by Hans Bakker (1993: 24–7). Based on textual criticism and epigraphic evidence Bakker highlights the various constructions and reconstructions of the *kāśīkṣetra* in the period between the earliest known version of the *Skandapurāṇa* (8th cent.)¹³ and the incorporation of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* into this Purāṇa (around 1400). The *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* in the light of these facts of the redaction of the *Skandapurāṇa* has to be described as a text that incorporates various textual traditions and reflects the sacred territory of the city as perceived in the 14th century. This is described by Hans Bakker with the following words:

11 The edition is a reprint of the edition of the Sanskrit text and commentary (Bombay, Hari-prasāda Bhagīratha, 1908) and the Hindi commentary by Nārāyaṇapati Tripāṭhī published as *Kāśīkhaṇḍabhāṣā* in 1908 at the Venkateśvara Steam Press in Bombay. For an online index based on both the edition and translation see Dimmers & Gengnagel 2002 (www.benares.uni-hd.de/kkh-index.htm).

12 The edition is based on a Nepalese manuscript dated AD 810. The oldest version of the *Skandapurāṇa* is therefore at the same time "one of the oldest dated manuscripts found in Nepal" (Bakker 1993: 22 n. 4).

13 I avoid the term "the original *Skandapurāṇa*" used by the Groningen group since this might create the impression that other versions of this text are less "original" or valuable.

In response to the degrading reality of the 13th and 14th century, a timeless Vārāṇasī centring around Viśveśvara, drawn up on a grand scale, was depicted in a new text of about 12.000 verses, the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*. (Bakker 1996: 43)

Among the most important historical facts is the shifting of the place of Kāśī's main deity: the famous "Lord of the Universe" (Viśvanātha, Viśveśvara) was called Avimukteśvara at the time of the early *Skandapurāṇa* (Bakker 1996) and his territory, the *avimuktakṣetra*, was situated in the northern section of the present city and limited to one *krośa* (c. 3.4 km). The probably earliest textual records of a group of *tīrthas* that formed the basis of a procession called Caturdaśāyatanayātrā in Vārāṇasī are found in the earliest known version of the *Skandapurāṇa* chapter 29.60–61 and thus reach back at least to the 8th century C.E.¹⁴ This *yātrā* is subsequently mentioned in Lakṣmīdhara's (12th cent.) *Tīrthavivecanakāṇḍa*¹⁵ (p.121, 135) and with variants in the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* 73.60 and 100.51–62.¹⁶

In the present context it is important to note that the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* provides an authoritative textual background and frame for the performance of processions in Vārāṇasī. The textual history of this Purāṇic source and the factual appearance of descriptions of processions are irrelevant in the context of the construction of the sacred territory of Vārāṇasī. The *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* serves as an all-pervasive referential textual frame for the construction of the sacred topography of Vārāṇasī. The Pañcakrośīyātrā—the most well-known among the processions that are still performed in Vārāṇasī which is described in the following section—is situated within this referential textual framework even though the procession is not described in the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* itself but only in a later text, the *Kāśīrahasya*.

The Pañcakrośīyātrā and Its Textual Sources

The Pañcakrośīyātrā is of crucial importance for the religious identity of Vārāṇasī and the territorial definition of the present *kāśīkṣetra*. The "procession [with a radius] of five *krośa* [c. 17km]" is commenced in the religious centre of Vārā-

14 See Bakker, forthc. as well as Bhaṭṭarāī's edition *Skandapurāṇasya Ambikākhandaḥ* 1988: 147–48. The listed *tīrthas* are: Avimukteśvara, Śaileśa, Saṃgameśa, Svarlīna, Madhyameśvara, Hiraṇyagarbha, Goprekṣa, Vṛṣabhadhvaja, Upaśāntaśiva, Jyeṣṭhasthāna, Śukreśvara, Vyāghreśa and Jambukeśvara. Because of the problematic sequence of these *tīrthas* Hans Bakker (forthc. and oral communication) avoids calling this group a *yātrā*.

15 On the relation between *Skandapurāṇa* and *Tīrthavivecanakāṇḍa* see also Bisschop 2002.

16 In *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* 100 twelve different processions are mentioned and described in some detail. In 1987 the compilation of Kedarnāth Vyās adds more than forty processions to this list.

ṅaṣī at the Jñānavāpī well near the Viśvanātha temple complex. The roughly 80 km long path leads from the cremation *ghāṭ* Maṅikarṇikā along the river to the south up to the confluence of the rivers Assi and Gaṅgā, goes west through the countryside in a half circular shape until it reaches the confluence of the rivers Varuṅā and Gaṅgā. It finally follows the *ghāṭs* back to the beginning in the centre.¹⁷

The present day Kāśīkṣetra is circumscribed by the Pañcakrośīyātrā and the seemingly “age-old” boundaries of the sacred territory are defined by this procession. However, in contrast to the apparent antiquity the scriptural testimonies do not reach back to the time of the redaction of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*. Neither Lakṣmīdhara’s *Tīrthavivecanakāṇḍa* (12th cent.) nor the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* section of the *Skandapurāṇa* mention this procession.¹⁸ The *Kāśīrahasya*, an appendix of the *Brahmavaivarttapurāṇa*, provides the earliest Māhātmya of the Pañcakrośīyātrā known to us.¹⁹ The chapters nine to eleven give a detailed description of the Pañcakrośīyātrā, chapter 10 is entitled “Description of the rules concerning the Pañcakrośīyātrā” (*pañcakrośīyātrāṇiyamavarṇanam*). The entire description of the Pañcakrośīyātrā given in the tenth chapter of the *Kāśīrahasya* is quoted in Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa’s *Tristhalīsetu* ending with “*iti śrībrahmavaivarte pañcakrośāyātrā nāma daśamo ‘dhyāyaḥ’*” (*Tristhalīsetu*: 278). The *Tristhalīsetu*—primarily a compilation of citations—was composed in the middle of the sixteenth century C.E. (Salomon 1985: xxvi). and is therefore the *terminus ad quem* for the first known description of the Pañcakrośīyātrā.

The following summary of the textual prescriptions for the performance of the Pañcakrośīyātrā is based on the text of the *Kāśīrahasya*. While the search for manuscripts on processions in Vārāṇasī shows that many different texts describe the Pañcakrośīyātrā, a synopsis of these texts proves that only the ritual speech acts are given in the same wording.²⁰ The ritual prescriptions, the enumerations

17 For a general description of the Pañcakrośīyātrā see Gutschow & Michaels 1993: 109–44, Singh 1991, 1998 and 2002.

18 Kane (1968ff. vol. 4: 637) and subsequently Singh (1993: 43) suggest that the Pañcakrośīyātrā is described in the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*. But the given references (*Kāśīkhaṇḍa* 26.80, 114a and 55.44) only refer to the size of the *kāśīkṣetra*, the protection of this field by the Gaṇas and the salvatory dimension of it. The mere description of the *kāśīkṣetra* with its dimension of 5 *krośas* should not be confused with a description of a pilgrimage route called “Pañcakrośīyātrā”.

19 The name “*pañcakrośīmāhātmyam*” is given in the colophon of chapter 9 (*Kāśīrahasya* 1957: 133)

20 The collected manuscripts will be described in a forthcoming publication. The Pañcakrośīyātrā texts are either part of descriptions of a whole set of *yātrās* (*Vārāṇasīyātrāvidhiḥ*,

and other explanations differ in style, length and wording. This fluidity of the textual descriptions only allows for a synopsis of the different textual sources but not for a constitution of a single “authentic” description of the procession. These texts are obviously used in different versions and copies as hand lists during the performance of the Pañcakrośīyātrā. They belong to a genre of ritual texts that is classified in the manuscript catalogues under the heading “*karma kāṇḍa*” (“section on rituals”). The *Kāśīrahasya*—attached as an appendix to the *Brahmavaivarttapurāṇa*—and especially the chapters on the Pañcakrośīyātrā have shifted categories by being incorporated into the corpus of the eulogical Purāṇic literature that belongs to the section on “*purāṇa-itihāsa*”. Though these two categories certainly do not indicate clear-cut distinctions between literary genres, they do nevertheless indicate the process of incorporation of ritual hand lists into texts of the so-called “high-tradition”.²¹ In order to give an example of this similarity of direct ritual speech and variety in the wording of the ritual prescriptions, a synopsis of relevant passages of *Kāśīrahasya* chapter 10 and the manuscript *Pañcakrośīvidhāna* is given in the appendix. The *Pañcakrośīvidhāna* has been selected as one example of an undated manuscript of the 18th or 19th century that is still available in private collections in Vārāṇasī.

The Beginning of a Procession

The enumeration of temples, shrines and sacred water structures that are to be visited during the Pañcakrośīyātrā is preceded by a description of the five halting places of the procession in the ninth chapter of the *Kāśīrahasya*. These places consist of larger temple clusters and provide the necessary infrastructure for the pilgrims to stay overnight. The *Kāśīrahasya* lists the Durgākunḍa, Kardameśvara, Dehalīśa, Rāmeśvara and Vṛṣabhadhvaja as halting places.²² The modern practice—most probably influenced by the building of rest houses (*dharmasālās*) during the 19th century—usually differs from this list in so far as the first halting place is at the Kardameśvara temple cluster, the second at the village Bhīma-

Kāśīyātrāvidhiḥ, Kāśīkṣetratīrthayātrāvidhiḥ) or described independently (*Pañcakrośīyātrāvidhiḥ, Pañcakrośīyātrāmāhātmyam, Pañcakrośīvidhāna*).

21 Besides this incorporation I have found many examples of a splitting of texts. Here manuscripts list shrine and *tīrthas* by quoting passages or chapters of the *Kāśīkhāṇḍa*.

22 *Kāśīrahasya* 9 (p. 131–32): *durgākunḍe sthitāḥ sarve yātriṇas tad dine gatāḥ* 118 | [...] | *evaṃ dvitīye divase kardameśvarasannidhau* 121 | *tṛtīye dehalīśe ca cakre sāvaraminī* | *rāmeśvare caturthe tu snātvā sāvaraminī* 122 | [...] | *pañcame divase sarve yātriṇo vṛṣabhadhvaje* | *sthitā sāpi mahābhāgā nivṛtta sarvapāpataḥ*. 133 | *tataḥ prāptaḥ kṣaṇenaiva varaṇasāngamaṇ janāḥ* | *tatra snātvā vidhānena natvā keśavam ādārāt*. 134.

caṇḍī, followed by the halting places Rāmeśvara, Śivapur and Kapiladhārā.²³ That Nīlakaṇṭhasarasvatī in his commentary *Setubandhaṭikā* on *Kāśīrahasya* 10.83 quotes variant lists with four halting places according to the *Līngapurāṇa* and 8 places according to the *Śivarahasya* illustrates, at the level of the ritual texts, the awareness of variation in pilgrimage practice.²⁴

Chapter ten of the *Kāśīrahasya* starts with an indication of the auspicious time for the performance of the *yātrā*. The three months Āśvin, Kārttika and Mārgaśīrṣa as well as the four months Māgha, Phālguna, Chaitra and Vaiśākha are indicated, covering thus two periods reaching roughly from September to December and January to April.²⁵ After this description of the temporal frame the spatial dimension and the pilgrimage's ritual beginning is indicated. On the preceding day one has to worship Ḍhuṇḍhirāja, the Gaṇeśa near the Viśvanātha temple complex. On the next morning Viśveśa should be worshipped after a bath in the Gaṅgā. Now Śiva and his consort should be worshipped once again for the purpose of the procession (*yātrārtha*). Having entered the Muktimaṇḍapa, where the well Jñānavāpī is situated, the great promise (*pratijñā*) should be made and a *pūjā* is performed.²⁶ The text prescribes a sequence of ritual speech acts starting with a declaration of intention and a description of the divine qualities of the area that will be circumambulated. Both Śiva as Viśveśa and the Gaṇeśa Ḍhuṇḍhirāja as the remover of all obstacles are then addressed directly and informed about the intended procession and asked for permission. Finally, after three circumambulations of Śiva, one should worship the five Gaṇeśas as well as Kālarāja. Then one should leave the Viśvanātha temple complex:

Having requested the Great God and Goddess with joined hands:

“In order to attain liberation in Kāśī that is produced (*janita*) by uttered speech, by the body and by the mind, for the liberation of known and unknown (*jñātā-jñāta*) sins and evil²⁷ I want to perform the circumambulation of the field, [that

23 See Vyās 1987: 50; Singh 1998: 64–76, and 2002: 66f.; Gutschow & Michaels 1993: 114–42; and fig. 1.

24 *Setubandhaṭikā* on *Kāśīrahasya* 10.83: (p. 141): *dinacatuṣṭayam iti līngapurāṇe tu pāśāpāṇau caturdivase vasa ukto na tu vṛṣabhadhvaja iti viśeṣaḥ. śivarahasye tu 'dināṣṭakena kartavyaṃ pañcakrośapradakṣiṇam' ity uktam, tadā durgākuṇḍe kardameśvare bhīmacañḍyāṃ dehalīṣe rāmeśvare pāśāpāṇivīnāyake vṛṣadhvaje grhe ity aṣṭau vāsasthānāni.*

25 *Āśvinādiṣu māseṣu triṣu pārvati sarvadā | pradakṣiṇā prakartavyā kṣetrasyāpāpa-kāṅkṣibhiḥ | māghādicaturō māsāḥ proktā yātrāvidhau nṛṇāṃ. (Kāśīrahasya 10.6–7ab)*

26 *Pūrvasmīn divase ḍhuṇḍhim pūjayitvā haviṣyabhuk | prātar uttaravāhinyāṃ snātvā viśveśam arcayet | punar yātrārtham api ca śivayoḥ pūjanam bhavet | muktimaṇḍapikāyāṃ ca samviśya varavarṇini | pratijñāṃ mahatīm kṛtvā pūjanam tatra tatra ha. (Kāśīrahasya 10.7cd–9)*

27 I am reading *ahitāya* with the *śuddhapāṭha* of the Kalkutta edition (1957: 8).

is] the eternal *liṅga* that consists of five *krośas* and has the form of light, that is embellished by Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu (*śrīśa*) and by Bhavānī and Śaṅkara, that is surrounded by the 56 Gaṇapas beginning with Ḍhuṇḍhirāja, that is endowed with the Nṛsimhas and the Keśavas together with the 12 Ādityas, joined with Kṛṣṇa and the triad of the Rāmas [i.e. Paraśurāma, Rāmacandra, and Balarāma] and with the other incarnations of Viṣṇu like the turtle, the fish etc. and endowed with Śiva's Śaktis beginning with Gaurī", one declares (*saṃkalpya*):

"I will perform the procession of Pañcakrośa according to the rules, in order to please you, Lord of the Gods, and for the pacification of the multitude of all sins", one bows again and again respectfully in silence [praying]:

"Oh Ḍhuṇḍhirāja, Lord of the Gaṇas, destroyer of the mass of huge obstacles, please, Lord, grant the permission for the procession of Pañcakrośa!" After three circumambulations of Viśveśa and a full prostration one should salute and worship [the five Gaṇeśas] Moda, Pramoda, Sumukha, Durmukha and Gaṇanāyaka, then Daṇḍapāṇi should be honored. One should worship Kālarāja in front of Viśveśa, the father of the world, and then go to Maṇikarṇī in accordance to the rules [i.e. in silence]. (*Kāśīrahasya* 10.10–19)²⁸

This description is followed by a short enumeration of the places that are to be visited during the circumambulation of the Kāśīkṣetra. As mentioned above, the procession is structured by a set of halting places where the pilgrims stay at rest houses (*dharmaśālās*) overnight. The *Kāśīrahasya* prescribes the visit of the Durgākunḍa with the temple of the goddess Durgā and the Durgāvināyaka in the South of the city as first halting places. However, contemporary practice as observed by me does not include the Durgā temple as halting place. Although this temple is very popular for the daily visits of the inhabitants of Vārāṇasī, many pilgrims nowadays do not even visit it during the performance of the Pañcakrośī-yātrā.²⁹ A plausible explanation for this deviation from textual prescription is that this temple lies inside the field and that one therefore has to leave the path along the Gaṅgā at Assi Ghāṭ and walk some 800 meters to the West in order to reach the Durgākunḍa.³⁰ Taking into account that Vārāṇasī over the centuries has extended its urban space towards the South the performer of the Pañcakrośī-yātrā in the 16th cent. left the urban space behind by the time he reached the Durgākunḍa and this trespassing of the borderline between urban and rural space

28 This and the following passages of the *Kāśīrahasya* is included in the appendix below.

29 This statement is based on personal observations and interviews at Assi Ghāṭ with performers of the Pañcakrośīyātrā during the years 2000 to 2003.

30 There are other places that are often overlooked because they are off the road, mainly Viṣvaksena, Bhairava and Bhairavī as well as Devasaṅgheśvara.

was marked by the first halting place at Durgākuṇḍa.³¹ However, even at that time the authors of the *Kāśīrahasya* were aware of the temptation of not walking to the place of the Durgā temple. Therefore, just before prescribing the path to the Durgā temple a sentence is added that alerts the pilgrim: “Performing the circumambulation one should not abandon the *kṣetra* even one sesame seed”.³² Is it by mere chance that this sentence is added at precisely this moment where the pilgrim is tempted to go straight on instead of moving inside the field and coming back again? In this case “deviant” pilgrimage practice seems to be reflected on the level of textual prescriptions and these prescriptions try to preserve ideal practice against the everyday performances of the pilgrims. That this points to a constant tension between the two poles of ideal prescribed performance and actual practice will be shown below by the description of the contemporary pilgrimage practice of the group called Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala.

The *Kāśīrahasya* goes on with the prescriptions given for the sojourn at Durgākuṇḍa and the temple of Durgā Devī:

Having taken a bath in the Durgākuṇḍa one should worship Durgāvināyaka, pay homage to Durgā and stay there according to the rules, in order to attain happiness. There one should feed the Brahmins with [the sweetmeats] sugar (*madhu*), sweet rice pudding (*pāyasa*) and sweet-balls (*laḍḍuka*). At night one should stay awake (*jāgaraṇa*) accompanied by hearing of the Purāṇas etc. and one should recite with devotion and [perform] acts of charity (*paropakaraṇa*).

“Hail, Durgā, Great Goddess, hail, dweller in Kāśī, goddess, remover of obstacles in this field, good bye to you!” Having thus requested Durgā [one should move on and] then worship Viṣvakseneśvara and pay homage to Kardameśa with the five sorts of grains (*pañcavrihi*, i.e. barley, rice, wheat, green and black lentils) and sesame. (*Kāśīrahasya* 10.25cd–29)³³

In the following sections the text enumerates the places to be visited according to the sequence of the procession. Only at the following four halting places are brief prescriptions for the ritual actions given. They are similar to the ones indicated for Durgā Devī and vary only in so far as the indicated substances are adjusted to the preferences of the visited deities. Each sojourn at the respective places is framed by performative speech acts at the time of the arrival and departure. These are all indicated in direct speech. An important activity is the prescribed religious speeches (*kathā*, *śravaṇa*) that are performed in the late after-

31 The map “The City of Bünarus” drawn by James Prinsep in 1822 still shows the area of Kurukṣetra, Puṣkaraḥṣṭra and Durgākuṇḍa without buildings and surrounded by trees and gardens.

32 *Kṣetram pradakṣiṇīkuruvaṃs tilamātran na santyajet.* (*Kāśīrahasya* 10.25)

33 The text is included in the appendix.

noon at the respective halting places, which refer to the textual sources for the performance of processions and the merits gained by the pilgrimage practice.

The End of a Procession

The Pañcakrośīyātrā comes to an end at its starting point. The pilgrims pay homage to Viśveśvara and formally declare the fulfilment of their vow to perform this procession. Included in this declaration is the request for an atonement of all deficient, excessive or wrong actions that have been performed during the procession:

“Hail, Viśveśa, soul of the universe, lord of Kāśī, teacher of the world, through your grace, great god, the circumambulation of the field was performed [by me]. O Śaṃkara, the sins that I have committed during innumerable births are gone because of the circumambulation of this *liṅga* that consists of five *krośas*. It is through the devotion to you that the inhabitants of Kāśī are without sinful *karman*. May the time be always spent in association with the good (*satsaṅga*), with listening etc. O Hara, Śambhu, great god, omniscient, bestower of happiness, through your grace the expiation of the sins is accomplished. May I never again have sinful thoughts, may my mind always be righteous!”

Having thus recited one should give donations to the twice born according to one’s capacities, put the palms of the hands together and the *mantrin* should recite the following *mantra*:

“I have performed this procession of the five *krośas* according to my capacity. May it, because of your grace, Umāpati, move from deficiency to completeness!” Having thus asked the Great God everyone should go to one’s own house. As atonement (*parihāra*) for the mistakes that [consist] of deficient (*nyūna*) or excessive (*atirikta*) [acts one should give] a donation. Having thus declared one’s intentions one should go home and then feed Brahmins. Having come home one should eat together with one’s family.³⁴

This formal declaration at the end of the procession explicitly aims at ruling out all deficiencies, failures and mistakes that happened during the preceding ritual acts. It also clearly marks the end in correspondence with the beginning of the ritual. The vow that has been declared in front of the god in the beginning is now fulfilled. In the given case the two declarations about the intended procession and the actually performed procession provide for a framing of the ritual action. This frame at the same time serves as a marker for the beginning and end of the ritual and distinguishes everyday actions from ritual acts. In the words of Don Handelman:

34 The text is included in the appendix.

The frame may communicate a meta-message, like that of *This is ritual*, thereby shifting modes of perception with regard to what is within the frame; and, too, the meta-message, *Let us believe*, to orientate participants to that which will occur within ritual. (Handelman 2004: 9)

One has, however, to bear in mind that the frame itself is part of the ritual and that the declaration of intention (*saṃkalpa*) in the beginning of the Pañcakroṣī-yātrā is preceded by several preliminary rites on the same day and the day before. That the formal framing of the described processions is “much more *fuzzy* and flexible than it is lineal” (Handelman 2004: 13) becomes obvious in the context of the following short case study of pilgrimage practice in Vārāṇasī.

Contestations of Actual Practice: the Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala

The following description provides us with a modern example of a milieu where the spatial texts of Sanskrit sources are used, processions and rituals are performed and new texts are produced. This, however, does not happen without transformations and subsequent negotiation and contestation with local experts on the correct performance of processions. It is precisely the sphere of invention and re-invention of pilgrimage traditions that leads to these negotiations and contestations. The model of the Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala, though in this case modern, fits well into comparable historical settings that provide similar circumstances for the complex interrelation between the performance of processions and their textual sources.

Since August 1999 a group of citizens of Vārāṇasī performs processions within Vārāṇasī in a generally weekly or biweekly pattern. This group calls itself Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala and announces its activities in leaflets that are attached on the walls of a fixed series of places as well as along the path of the next procession. Its spiritual leader is Daṇḍī Svāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī of the Dharma Saṃgha at Durgā Kuṇḍa. Umā Śaṃkar Guptā (Assi) is the organizer or *sūcanā mantrī* of this group, in addition Ravi Mahārāja (Maṇikarṇikā Ghāt), Balarām Jī Miśra, and Devendra Tripāṭhī (both Assi) are regularly mentioned on the distributed leaflets as Tīrtha Purohitas of the group.³⁵

35 For a more detailed description see Gengnagel, forthc. The material was collected in the context of research in Vārāṇasī during the years 2000 to 2002. Among the documents are the leaflets of all 63 processions that have been performed by the group until December 2001. I took part in processions of the group on 27.02.2000 (Daśamahāvīdyāyātrā) and 25.02.2001 (Antargrhayātrā). On 5th March 2001 an interview (47 min.) with Umāśaṃkar Guptā, the research assistant Hemant Sarna and my colleague Stefan Schütte was audio taped. On several occasions the ritual proclamations (*saṃkalpa*) of the group were audio

Daṇḍī Svāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī is a pupil of Svāmī Karpātrī (Hariharānanda Sarasvatī, 1907–82), who founded the Dharma Saṃgha in Vārāṇasī in 1940 and is described as a Daśanāmī “ascetic leader and vociferous advocate of Brahmanical orthodoxy” (Lutgendorf 1991: 96).³⁶ Śivānanda Sarasvatī places himself within the lineage of Svāmī Karpātrī but has not yet reached a comparable following. The number of the participants in the processions that he leads as their “spiritual head” (*adhyakṣatā*) varies from roughly 30 members up to 120.³⁷ Among his publications are the books *Kāśī Darśana* (1990), *Kāśī Māhātmya* (1997), *Kāśī Gaurava* (1998), and small pamphlets like the *Kāśī Paṃcakroṣī Yātrā Māhātmya* (n.d.) which are primarily compilations of the eulogical Sanskrit literature on Vārāṇasī with Hindi translations and explanations. One focus of these publications is the description of processions in Vārāṇasī. To this publishing activity is added the printing of a very simple map of the Paṃcakroṣīyātrā called *paṃcakroṣī kā mānacitra* (1991).

The distributed leaflets contain prescriptions for the performance of the processions. Among others the members of the group are asked to enter only those temples that are mentioned on the list. Other temples that are on the road should be greeted with respect—but only from outside.³⁸ The background for this rule becomes obvious if one looks at observed practice: the carefully prepared list of places to be visited functions as a guideline for the itinerary but the participants of the procession do not hesitate to stop at places and temples that seem important to them. Long breaks at temples that are not on the agenda are not unusual.³⁹ This is why the *yātrīs* have to be reminded to stick to the text, only the distributed list (*sūcīpatra*) should be relevant for the entrance into a temple. Another prescription underlining the collective dimension of processions says that the

taped (Antargṛhayātrā 25.02.2001, Navadurganavagaurīyātrā 21.10.2001, Mahāviṣṇuyātrā 25.11.2001 etc.) by myself and Stefan Schütte who took part in many of the activities of the *Kāśī Darśana Yātrā Maṇḍala* in the years 2000 to 2002.

- 36 Lutgendorf describes Karpātrī as the “guiding genius of the Rām Rājya Pariṣad” (1991: 384) a party founded in 1948 that opposed the opening of the Viśvanātha temple for untouchables. For more information see Upādhyāya (1994: 859–72) and Lutgendorf’s index.
- 37 The numbers are based on a survey by Hemant Sarna of the processions performed between 08.07.2001 and 10.02.2002.
- 38 See leaflet 18.3.2001: *not 3. yātriyom se nivedana hai ki jin mandiroṃ kā nāma sūcīpatra meṃ hai. unhīṃ mandiroṃ meṃ praveṣa kareṃ. rāste meṃ jo anya mandira mile vahāṃ bāhar se praṇāma kar ke caleṃ.* These notes are repeated regularly on other leaflets.
- 39 In the case of the Daśamahāvīdyāyātrā on 27.2.2000 this happened at the temple of Bare Gaṇeśa, a temple forming not part of the procession but situated along the road. There the whole group entered and spent at least half an hour inside.

group members should recite “*Hara hara mahādev śambho kāśīviśvanātha gaṃge*” while performing the processions.⁴⁰

The list of processions performed by the Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala is not only to be placed within a living performing tradition but re-invents and invents processions mainly according to textual sources. This fact of re-invention and invention of a tradition is reflected in the contestations of various agents that the group had to face. Two of the local experts and specialists for the religious geography of Vārāṇasī, the above mentioned Kedārnāth Vyās and the Professor of Geography Rana P.B. Singh, are important authorities for the group. Both are involved in the preparation of the processions: once Svāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī or the committee (*samiti*) of the group has selected the next procession, Umā Śaṃkar Guptā consults the publications of Kedārnāth Vyās and often seeks guidance from Rana P.B. Singh.⁴¹ Drafts of the leaflets show that the itinerary of the procession and the sequence of the places to be visited are negotiated and changed. Sometimes sketches of topographical maps are provided by Rana P.B. Singh to help the group perform a “correct” procession. The selection of a procession is influenced by practical reasons like distances from Assi and the possibility of performing a *yātrā* in one day. If necessary the procession is performed with a motor boat or the members take a rickshaw to cover longer distances.

Most important for our purpose are the discussions and contestations that the practice of the Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala had to face. The critics based their remarks on two central aspects of the performance of rituals: the correct framing and formal declaration (*saṃkalpa*) of ritual actions and the correct sequence (*krama*) of the performed acts. The renowned expert of the sacred topography of Vārāṇasī, Kedārnāth Vyās, on several occasions questioned the whole structure and the sequence of the processions performed by the group. He stated that the route the group had taken was wrong.⁴² Another matter of dispute is the fact that

40 These words are sometimes merely added on the bottom of a leaflet (no. 16) or a sentence is added that the group should recite this *mantra* while walking through the streets (*mantra kā jāp karte lāin meṃ caleṃ*, no. 31).

41 See the interview where Umā Śaṃkar states about Śivānanda: *vah jaise-jaise mārg-diśā dete haiṃ, jaise-jaise yātrā decision karte haiṃ. sab final yātrā vahī karāte haiṃ. sab unheṃ ke sānnidhya meṃ cal raha hai* (trans. p. 3). About Prof. Rana Singh: *unko jānkārī hai, un se milte rahate haiṃ. [...] vaise unko pura de dete haiṃ pura sahayoga dete haiṃ, [...], Kedarkhaṇḍā kā nakṣā de diye the, Viśvanātha jī kā nakṣā diye the, [...] har tarah se madad karnā raheṃ haiṃ* (trans. p. 4).

42 *Bīc meṃ milte haiṃ, bāt karte hai, vah [Kedarnāth Vyās, J.G.] kahate haiṃ ki āpke svāmī-jī ke yātrā kā route galat hai* (trans. p. 7). It follows a discussion of the correct sequence of the Navadurgā and Navagaurī *yātrā*. Umāśaṃkar puts forward that for practical reasons and because of lack of time one should first go to the place that is nearest to one’s home:

the processions of the group often did not start and end with the promissory vow (*saṃkalpa*) that should be performed at the Vyās Pīṭha near Jñānavāpī. The group did not stick to this practice their argument being that this would force them to cover much greater distances. They openly questioned the demand to start and end each and every procession with a *saṃkalpa* at the Vyās Pīṭha near Jñānavāpī.⁴³ About this issue a meeting at the Tilabhandeśvara temple was held where both Rana Singh and Kedārnāth Vyās were present.⁴⁴ Umā Śaṃkar's summary of this meeting starts with a description of a situation where a tradition of spatial knowledge and pilgrimage practices has almost come to an end and has to be re-invented. He mentions the group Śrī Dātār Pañcakoś Maṇḍalī—founded in 1925 by Śrī Dātār—which is now headed by Śrī Pālande, who in the course of time became famous for his religious speeches (*kathā*) and who does not have enough time to perform and organize processions. Kubernāth Sukul (1900–83)—the grandson of Kailāsanāth Sukul, the author of the map *Kāśīdarpaṇa* (1876)—is mentioned as another local expert who had no male offspring and therefore that the tradition of processions that he established ended. In this situation Daṇḍī Svāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī was filling the void and started yet a new tradition, since it is always better to do something than to remain inactive as it is being argued by Gupta.⁴⁵ This pragmatic approach taken by the Kāśīdārśanayātrā Maṇḍala echoes an argument that was put forward by pilgrims and criticized by Bhāratendu Hariśchandra of Vārāṇasī in the nineteenth century dispute about the correct performance of the Pañcakrośīyātrā: “It is better [to perform the procession] in an insufficient way than to do nothing” (*akaraṇān mandakaraṇam śreyah*).⁴⁶ A similar kind of stance is reflected in the solution found in the *saṃkalpa*-conflict: the group continued to start their processions at the first place of the itinerary and as a sort of compromise agreed to send one member of their group to the Vyās Pīṭha in order to give donations to the Vyās family and to fulfil the expectations and demands of these influential ritual experts.

to hamko jab ek hi din meṃ sab se milnā hai, to āpse bhi pahale mil sakte haiṃ, āp se bhī pahale mil sakte haiṃ. āpkā ghar nazdik paregā, to āpse pahale mil liye (trans. p. 8).

43 One might add that it is not clear if it is a commonly accepted rule to start and end every procession with a *saṃkalpa* at the Vyās Pīṭha. It is evident for specific *yātrās* that start in the Viśvanātha temple cluster. To what extent the lists of Kedārnāth Vyās are descriptive and whether these lists have to be read as a prescriptive effort with the interests of the Vyās' family in mind remains an open question.

44 Transcript p. 11–16.

45 *Kuch nāye ā rahe haiṃ, kuch purāne nahūṃ ā rahe haiṃ. To na karāne se baṛiyā kuch karā rahe haiṃ to yah karāne ṭhik hai* (trans. p. 11).

46 See Pañcakrośā Sudhā, *pariśiṣṭa* p. 118. For a discussion of this debate see Gengnagel, forthc.

Conclusion

The close interrelation of ritual practice and textual sources has been shown at the beginning of this article by the newspaper clipping that referred to a statement of Kedārnāth Vyās. However, this interrelation consists of an encompassing textual frame that reflects an ideal type of pilgrimage in contrast to the variety of actual performances. The written and oral scripts as given by texts and ritual experts also hint at the fact that these prescriptions try to alter and interfere in ritual performances. Contestations and negotiations of pilgrimage practices take place because the statements of textual authorities and ritual experts are not directly linked to actual practices but provide for a rather loose authoritative frame. Pilgrimage practice had to constantly adapt to changes in the sacred topography and the social and cultural setting within the city. Changes in performance are sometimes even reflected on the textual level by the attempt to alter deviant practice. To what extent the attempts at a textualization of ritual practice are documented for Vārāṇasī is illustrated by inscriptions found at several shrines along the road of the Pañcakrośīyātrā. These stone inscriptions firstly help the pilgrim in identifying the correct shrine along the road by naming it. They, moreover, mention the textual source that lists the respective shrine that the pilgrim has in front of him. The spatial text, the sacred place where the god lives and the pilgrim who performs the circumambulation are united at one spot. The inscription reads as follows:

[As written in the] *Kāśīrahasya*, chapter ten. Salutation to Virūpākṣeśvara, the deity of the Pañcakrośīyātrā. Impelled by Dvārakānātha Dūbe a disciple of Gorajī, resident of Bundi [has build this]. Saṃvat 1948 [1891 C.E.].⁴⁷

The small shrine of Virūpākṣeśvara situated at the already mentioned Kardameśvara temple cluster is identified by this inscription and the pilgrimage practice is linked to its textual source, the *Kāśīrahasya*. I have put forward as a starting point to this paper the argument that the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* provides for a general frame of sacred textual authority that is used in the production of the cultural identity of the “holy city” Vārāṇasī. It is therefore not surprising that above the shrines along the Pañcakrośīyātrā marble plates with the inscription “*kāśīkhaṇḍe*” have been fixed during the 20th century. This monumental eulogical text on Vārāṇasī serves as a scriptural authority that transcends time and therefore also legitimizes a procession that did not exist at the time when this text was composed.

47 *Kāśīrahasya a. 10 pañcakrośasya ke devatā virūpākṣeśvarāya namaḥ gorajī ke śiṣya dvārakānātha dūve prerṇā vundi kāyastha caturbhujā sa 1948.*

References

Texts

- Kashi Khand with poorvardha and uttarardha*, Skanda Puranam vol. IV, Shrimanmaharshi Krishna Dwaipayana Vedavyas (ed.), Calcutta: 1961 (Gurumandal Series No. XX).
- Kāśīkhaṇḍaḥ Mahārṣivyaśapraṇītaḥ Rāmānandapraṇītayā “Rāmānandī” vyākhyayā; Nārāyaṇapatitripāthīprāṇītayā “Nārāyaṇī”*, Karuṇāpati Tripāthī (ed.), 4 vols. Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, 1991; 1992; 1996; 1998.
- Kāśīrahasya*. Jagadīśa Nārāyaṇa Dūbe (ed.), Vārāṇasī: Ādarś Prakāśan Mandir, 1984.
- Kāśīrahasyam, Brahmavaivartapurāṇapariśiṣṭam saṭīkam kāśīrahasyam*, Rādhākṛṣṇa Mor (ed.), Gurumaṇḍalagrāṇthamālā No. 14, vol. 3, Calcutta: 1957.
- Pañcakrośa Sudhā*. Granthakāra. Anantaśrīcaraṇa Śrī Devatīrtha (Kāṣṭhajihva Svāmī) anuvādak evaṃ sampādak: Ācārya Paṃ. Satyanārāyaṇa Śāstrī Khaṇḍūrī. Vārāṇasī: Sarvabhāratīya Kāśīrāja: Sarvabhāratīya Kāśīrāja Nyāsa 1997.
- Pañcakrośīvidhāna*. Manuscript, n.d., 16 pages with 20/21 lines each, bound, title on cover, Devanāgarī script, private collection, Vārāṇasī.
- The Skandapurāṇa. Volume I. Adhyāyas 1–25. Critically edited with a Prolegomena and English Synopsis*. Adriaensen, R. & H.T. Bakker & H. Isaacson (ed.). Groningen: 1998.
- The Skanda-Purāṇa. Translated and annotated by G.V. Tagare, Part X, XI, Book IV: Kāśī-Khaṇḍa*, 2 vols. Delhi: Motilal, 1996; 1997 (Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology Series 58, 59).
- Skandapurāṇasya Ambikākhaṇḍaḥ*, Kṛṣṇaprasādabhaṭṭarāī (ed.). Kathmandu: Mahendrasaṃskṛtaviśvavidyālaya, 1988. (Śrī 5 Mahendraratnagrāṇthamālāyā dvitīyaṃ puṣpaṃ).
- Tīrthavivecanakāṇḍa*, in: Bhaṭṭaśrīlakṣmīdharaviracite Kṛtyakalpatarau aṣṭamo bhāgaḥ. K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar (ed.), Baroda, 1942 (Gaekwad's Oriental Series 98).
- Tristhalīsetu of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa*. Gaṇeśa Śāstrī Gokhale (ed.), Poona: Ānandāśramamudraṇālaya, 1915 (Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 78).
- Tristhalīsetu[sārasaṅgraha] by Bhaṭṭojidīkṣita; Tīrthenduśekhara by Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa; Kāśīmokṣavīcāra by Sureśvarācārya*. Sūryanārāyaṇa Śukla (ed.), Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, 1997.

Secondary Literature

- Bakker, Hans (ed.) 1990. *The History of Sacred Places in India as Reflected in Traditional Literature: Papers on Pilgrimage in South Asia*. Leiden: Brill (Panels of the 7th World Sanskrit Conference 3).
- 1993. “Early Mythology Relating to Vārāṇasī”. In: Singh 1993: 21–28.

- Bakker, Hans 1996. "Construction and Reconstruction of Sacred Space in Vārāṇasī". In: *Numen* 43.1: 32–55.
- forthc. "The Avimuktakṣetra in Vārāṇasī. Its Origin and Early Development. Studies in the *Skandapurāṇa* VI". In: *Visualizing Space in Vārāṇasī. Images, Maps, and the Practice of Representation*, Gaenszle, Martin & Jörg Gengnagel (ed.).
- Bell, Catherine 1988. "Ritualization of Texts and the Textualization of Ritual in the Codification of Taoist Liturgy". In: *History of Religions* 27.4: 366–92.
- Bisschop, Peter 2002. "On a Quotation of the *Skandapurāṇa* in the *Tīrthavivekanāḥa* of Lakṣmīdhara's *Kṛtyakalpataru*. Studies in the *Skandapurāṇa* V". In: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 45: 231–43.
- Dimmers, Michaela & Jörg Gengnagel 2002. *Index of Kashikhanda. Compiled by Michaela Dimmers & Jörg Gengnagel*. University of Heidelberg, South Asia Institute (Electronic Publications of the Varanasi Research Project II). URL: <http://www.benares.uni-hd.de/kkh-index.htm>.
- Eck, Diana L. 1980. "A Survey of Sanskrit Sources for the Study of Vārāṇasī". In: *Purāṇa* 22.1: 81–101. [Reprint in Singh (ed.) 1993: 9–19.]
- 1982. *Banaras, City of Light*. New York: Knopf.
- 1998. "The Imagined Landscape: Patterns in the Construction of Hindu Sacred Geography". In: *Contributions to Indian Sociology (n.s.)* 32.2: 165–188.
- Ensink, J. 1974. "Problems of the Study of Pilgrimage in India". In: *Indologica Taurinensia* 2: 57–79.
- Entwistle, Alan W. 1990. "Māhātmya Sources on the Pilgrimage Circuit of Mathurā". In: Bakker 1990: 5–28.
- Gengnagel, Jörg 2003. "Mapping Sacred Spaces—Aspects of Cartography in 19th Century Vārāṇasī". In: *Creating and Representing Sacred Spaces*, Dorofeeva-Lichtmann, Vera & Michael Dickhardt (ed.). Göttingen: Peust & Gutschmidt (Göttinger Beiträge zur Asienforschung 2–3, special issue), vol. 2: 243–258.
- forthc. "The Real *yātrā*: On a 19th Century Debate About the Correct Performance of the Pañcakrośīyātrā". In: *Visualizing Space in Vārāṇasī. Images, Maps, and the Practice of Representation*, Gaenszle, Martin & Jörg Gengnagel (ed.).
- Gutschow, Niels 1994. "Vārāṇasī/Benares: The Centre of Hinduism? A Discussion of the Meaning of 'Place' and 'Space'". In: *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Geographie* 48: 194–209.
- Gutschow, Niels & Axel Michaels 1993. *Benares. Tempel und religiöses Leben in der heiligen Stadt der Hindus*. Köln: DuMont Buchverlag.
- Handelman, Don 2004. "Re-Framing Ritual". In: *The Dynamics of Changing Rituals. The Transformation of Religious Rituals within Their Social and Cultural Context*, Kreinath, Jens & C. Hartung & A. Deschner (ed.). New York et al.: Peter Lang (Toronto Studies in Religion 29), 9–20.
- Herbert, Jean 1957. *Vārāṇasī. A Guide to Panch-Kroshi Yatra*. Calcutta: Saturday Mail Publications.
- Kane, P.V. ²1968ff. *History of Dharmasāstra (Ancient Mediæval Religious and Civil Law)*. 6 vols. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

- Lutgendorf, Philip 1991. *The Life of a Text: Performing the Ramcaritmanas of Tulsi-das*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Salomon, Richard 1979. "Tīrtha-pratyāmnāyāḥ: Ranking of Hindu Pilgrimage Sites in Classical Sanskrit Texts". In: *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 129: 102–128.
- (ed.) 1985. *The Bridge to the Three Holy Cities. The Sāmānyapraghaṭṭaka of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's Tristhalīsetu*. Delhi, Varanasi, Patna.
- Sarasvatī, Daṇḍī Svāmī Śivānand 1990. *Kāśī darśana*. Vārāṇasī: Dharmasaṃgha.
- 1998. *Kāśī gaurav (kāśī kī pañcakrośī yātrā 'māhātmya' kāśī kī itihās kāśī māhātmya vartamān meṃ pracalit vārāṇasī kī sampūrṇ yātrā)*. Vārāṇasī: Dharmasaṃgha.
- Singh, Rana P.B. 1991. "Panchakroshi Yatra, Varanasi: Sacred Journey, Ecology of Place and Faithscape". In: *National Geographical Journal of India* 37(1–2): 49–98.
- (ed.) 1993. *Banāras (Vārāṇasī): Cosmic Order, Sacred City, Hindu Traditions*. Varanasi.
- 1998. "Sacred Journey and Faithscape: An Experience of the Panchakroshi Pilgrimage, Varanasi (India)". In: *The Pennsylvania Geographer* 36.1: 55–91.
- 2002. *Towards the pilgrimage Archetype. The Pañcakrośī Yātrā of Banāras*. Varanasi: Indica Books.
- Singh, Rana P.B. & Masaaki Fukunaga 2000. "Performing Pilgrimage and Pilgrimage-Tourism: An Experience of the Pañcakrośī Yātrā, Varanasi". In: *Pilgrimage Studies: The Power of Sacred Places*, Dubey, D.P. (ed.). Allahabad: Society of Pilgrimage Studies (Pilgrimage Studies 5), 183–205.
- Sprockhoff, Joachim-Friedrich 1964. "Religiöse Lebensformen und Gestalt der Lebensräume. Über das Verhältnis von Religionsgeographie und Religionswissenschaft". In: *Numen. International Review for the History of Religions* 11: 85–146.
- Upādhyāya, Baldeva ²1994. *Kāśī kī pāṇḍitya parampārā (kāśīstha saṃskṛta vidvāṇoṃ jīvancaṛit evaṃ sāhityak avadānoṃ kā pramāṇik vivaraṇ)* [1200–1980]. Vārāṇasī: Viśvavidyālaya Prakāśan.
- Vyās, Kedārnāth 1987. *Pañcakośātmaka jyotirlinga kāśīmāhātmya evaṃ kāśī kī prācīn itihās*. Varanasi.

Appendix

The synopsis of the *Kāśīrahasya* 10 and the *Pañcakrośīvidhāna* shows that we can distinguish between 8 passages with altogether 17 verses with almost exactly the same wording. Long passages give the same sequence of actions to be performed and the same places to be visited but described in a different wording. Both texts contain passages that have no equal in the other source. The text of the *Kāśīrahasya* is structured as a dialogue between Devī and Śiva. However,

the manuscript *Pañcakrośīvidhāna* shows no traces of that. In no case can indications for quotations be found.

The text of the *Pañcakrośīvidhāna* is based on a single manuscript. The manuscript consists of 16 pages bound together on top of the short side of the paper. The unnumbered pages are inscribed with 20 to 21 lines on the first 13 pages, the pages 14 to 16 contain a list of names mentioned in the text. The title *Pañcakrośīvidhāna* is given only on the cover page written by a different hand. The manuscript is complete, after a salutation to Gaṇeśa, Annapūrṇā and Viśveśvara the content and beginning of the text is indicated by the phrase *śrīkāśīpaṃcakrośīyātrām likhyate*. The actual description of the *Pañcakrośīyātrā* ends on page 13 with *iti paṃcakrośīyātrā samāptā*. No further indications about the title, author or date are given. The language is Sanskrit, the script is Devanāgarī. A few additions and corrections have been made by the scribe himself. The manuscript belongs to the private collection of Shashank Singh (Vārāṇasī).

The text of the *Kāśīrahasya* is based on chapter ten of the Calcutta edition by Rādhākṛṣṇa Mora (1957). No indications of the used manuscripts are given. The Vārāṇasī edition by Jagadīśa Nārāyaṇa Dūbe (1984) is a mere copy of this edition. The extensive *śuddhipatram* of the Calcutta edition has not been consulted by Dūbe systematically.

The synopsis includes *Kāśīrahasya* 10.1–29 and 65cd–77. Parallel passages are set in italics. Where the wording is not exactly similar but the sequence of action is I have “synchronised” the two columns.

Kāśīrahasya 10

śrīdevy uvāca
 deva deva mahādeva vedavidyā-
 viśārada |
 yathā pradakṣiṇā kāryā manujair
 vidhipūrvakam || 1
 sthānam vāsasya vada no bhakṣyam
 cābhakṣyam eva ca |
 pūjām śimnasthitānāṃ ca devānām
 dānam eva ca || 2
 yathā sampūrṇatām eti yātrākṣetrasya
 sattama || 3
 śiva uvāca
 śṛṇu devi mahābhāge
 sarvalokopakāraṅgam |
 tad bravīmi mahēśāni yathāvad

Pañcakrośīvidhāna

śrīgaṇeśāya namaḥ | śrīanna-
 pūrṇāviśveśvarābhyām namaḥ |
 śrīkāśīpaṃcakrośīyātrām likhyate |
 deśakālau saṃkīrtya | śvaḥ kariṣyamāṇa
 paṃcakrośīyātrāṅgabhūtaṃ
 dhumḍhivināyakaṃ
 yathāsaṃbhavanīyamādyupetaṃ
 asatipratibamḍhe pūjanaṃ kariṣye | tataḥ
 saṃpūjya haviṣyāśī bhavet |

vidhipūrvakam || 4
 pañcakrośasya yātrāyā vidhiḥ samyag
 udīryate |
 śrutvā manuṣyo yenāśu niṣpāpaḥ
 puṇyavān bhavet || 5
 āśvinādiṣu māseṣu triṣu pārvati
 sarvadā |
 pradakṣiṇā prakartavyā
 kṣetrasyāpāpakāṅkṣibhiḥ || 6
 māghādicaturo māsāḥ proktā
 yātrāvidhau nṛṇām |
 pūrvasmin divase dhuṇḍhim pūjayitvā
 haviṣyabhuk || 7
 prātar uttaravāhinyāṃ snātvā viśveśam
 arcayet |
 punar yātrārtham api ca śivayoḥ
 pūjanam bhavet || 8
 muktimaṇḍapikāyāṅ ca samviśya
 varavarṇini |
 pratijñāṃ mahatīm kṛtvā pūjanan tatra
 tatra ha || 9

kāśyām prajātavākkāyamanojanita-
muktaye |
jñātājñātavimuktyartham pātakebhyo
'hitāya ca || 10
pañcakrośātmakam liṅgam jyotirūpaṃ
sanātanam |
bhavānīśaṅkarābhyāṅ ca
lakṣmīśrīśavirājitam || 11
dhuṇḍhirājādigaṇapaiḥ
ṣaṭpañcāśadbhir āvṛtam |
dvādaśādityasahitam nṛsiṃhaiḥ
keśavair yutam || 12
rāmakṣṇatrayayutaṅ
kūrmamatsyādibhis tathā |
avatārair anekaiś ca yutam viṣṇoḥ
śivasya ca || 13

tataḥ prātara dine prāprātar
 uttaravāhinyāṃ gaṃgāyāṃ
 pañcanadādītirthe snātvā viśveśvaram
 abhyarcya punar yātrānimitam
 annapūrṇāviśveśvarau saṃpūjya
 muktimaṇḍape upaviśya viśveśvaram
 dhyātvā uttarābhimukhaḥ san prāñān
 āyamyā saṃkalpaḥ kartavyaḥ sarvatra
 pañcopacārāiḥ saṃpūjya deśakālau
 saṃkīrtya |
kāśyām prajātavākkāyamanojanita-
muktaye
jñātājñātavimuktyartham pātakebhyo
'hitāya ca | 1 |
pañcakrośātmakam liṅgam jyotirūpaṃ
sanātanam
bhavānīśaṅkarābhyāṅ ca
lakṣmīśrīśavirājitam | 2 |
dhuṇḍhirājādigaṇapaiḥ ṣaṭpañcāśadbhir
āvṛtam
dvādaśādityasahitam <2> nṛsiṃhaiḥ
keśavair yutam | 3 |
kṣṇarāmatrayayutaṅ kūrmamatsyādibhis
tathā
avatārair anekaiś ca yutam viṣṇoḥ
śivasya ca | 4 |

*gauryādiśaktibhir yuktaṃ kṣetraṃ
kuryām pradakṣiṇam |
baddhāñjaliḥ prārthayitvā mahādevam
maheśvarīm || 14*

*pañcakrośasya yātrām vai kariṣye
vidhipūrvakam |
prītyarthan tava deveśa
sarvāghaughaprasāntaye || 15
iti sañkalpya maunena praṇipatya
punaḥ punaḥ |*

*ḍhuṇḍhirāja gaṇeśāna
mahāvighnaughanāśana || 16
pañcakrośasya yātrārthan dehy ājñāñ
kṛpayā vibho |*

*viśveśan triḥparikramya daṇḍavat
praṇipatya ca || 17
modam pramodaṃ sumukhan
durmukhañ gaṇanāyakam |*

*praṇāmya pūjayitvā dau daṇḍapāñin tato
'rcayet || 18*

*kālarājañ ca purato viśveśasya
jagadguroḥ |
pūjayitvā tato gacchen maṇikarnīm
vidhānataḥ || 19*

*gauryādiśaktibhir juṣṭam yathā
saṃbhavanipayādyupetaṃ
asatpratibaṃdhe vārāṇasīkṣetra
pradakṣiṇāṃ kariṣye | tato baddhāñjaliḥ
san prārthanā kartavyām |
pañcakrośasya yātrām vai kariṣye
vidhipūrvakam |
prītyarthan tava deveśa
sarvāghaughaprasāntaye | 1 |
iti sañkalpya | maunena punaḥ punaḥ
praṇāmya ḍhuṇḍhigaṇeśāṃ gatvānujñāṃ
prārthayet |
ḍhuṇḍhirāja gaṇeśāna
mahāvighnaughanāśanaṃ
pañcakrośasya yātrārthaṃ dehy ājñāñ
kṛpayā vibho | 1 |
iti saṃprārthya |
viśveśvaram triḥpradakṣiṇīkrtya
daṇḍavat paṃcavāraṃ praṇāmya |
modam | 1 | pramodaṃ | 2 | sumukhaṃ | 3
| durmukhaṃ | 4 | gaṇanāyakam | 5 |
iti paṃcagaṇeśān saṃpūjya praṇāmya |
viṣṇuṃ | ādityaṃ | avimukteśvaram |
daṇḍapāñim prapūjya praṇāmya
prārthayet |
annadaḥ prāṇadaś caiva jñānado
mokṣadas tathā |
bhaktāṃś ca <3> tapasāraḥṣadaṃḍapāṇe
namo 'stu te | 1 |
daṃḍas tavāyudhaṃ cograṃ hy
abhaktānāṃ tu mohanaṃ
varapradānasampanna daṇḍapāṇe namo
'stu te | 2 |
iti saṃprārthya | viśveśvarasya
paścimābhimukhasyāgrataḥ sthitām
kālarājaṃ saṃpūjya praṇāmya |
pañcakrośasya yātrārthaṃ anujñāṃ dehi
bhairava |
iti saṃprārthya |*

tatra snātvā mahādevam maṇikarṇīśam
arcayet |
vināyakam siddhidañ ca punar āgatya
pūjayet || 20

maṇikarṇītaṭac channaṃ gaṅgākeśavam
apy uta |
lalitāñ ca tataḥ pūjya jarāsandheśvaram
vibhum || 21

somanātham tataḥ pūjya dālabheśvaram
eva ca |

śūlaṭaṅkeśvaran devam ādivārāham eva
ca || 22

daśāśvamedhakam liṅgam vandan
tatraiva pūjayet |

sarveśvarañ ca kedāran tato
hanumadīśvaram || 23

saṅgameśan tataḥ pūjya lolārkaṃ
pūjayet tataḥ |

arkasaṃjñāñ gaṇādhyakṣam ases tīram
punar vrajet || 24

kṣetram pradakṣiṇīkurvaṃs tilamātran
na santyajet |

durgākuṇḍe tataḥ snātvā yajed
durgavināyakam || 25

durgāṃ sampūjya vidhivad vaset tatra
sukhāptaye |

brāhmaṇān bhojayet tatra
madhupāyasalaḍḍukaiḥ || 26

rātrau jāgaraṇan tatra
purāṇaśravaṇādibhiḥ |

kuryāc ca kīrtanam bhaktyā
paropakaraṇāni ca || 27

jaya durge mahādevi jaya kāśinivāsini |
kṣetravighnahare devi punar darśanam
astu te || 28

iti durgāṃ prārthayitvā
viṣvakseneśvaran tataḥ |

tataḥ maunena maṇikarṇīṃ gacchet |
maṇikarṇikāyāṃ snātvā

siddhivināyakadarśanapūrva
maṇikarṇīśvaram | 1 | sampūjya punaḥ
siddhivināyakam | 2 | sampūjya

maṇikarṇītaṭac channaṃ gaṅgākeśavam
abhyarca | 3 | lalitādevīm | 4 |
jarāsaṃdheśvaram | 5 |

somanātham | 6 | dālabhyeśvaram | 7 |

śūlaṭaṅkeśvaram | 8 |

dharaṇīvārāheśvaram | 9 |

daśāśvamedheśvaram | 10 |

baṃdimocanīdevīm | 11 | sarveśvaram | 12 |

haraṃpāpatīrthaṃ | kedāreśvaram | 13 |

hanumadīśvaram | 14 |

asīsaṃgameśvaram | 15 | lolārkaṃ | 16 |

arkaḥ gaṇapatiṃ | 17 | sampūjya punaḥ

asīsaṃgamatīram āgatya

tilamātrapradeśvyavadhānena

kṣetrapradakṣiṇāṃ kurvan san

durgākuṇḍam āgatya tatrā snātvā |

durgāvināyakam | 18 | durgāṃ ca | 19 |

sampūjya durgā prītyarthaṃ

yathāsambhavam madhupāyasalaḍḍukair

viprān saṃbhojya svayaṃ ca bhuktā tad

dine tatra sthitvā dīnānāthān

yathāsambhavadāne na saṃbhāvya rātrau

sapurāṇaśravaṇādīnā jāgaraṃ kuryāt |

itī prathamadinakṛtyam |

atha dvitīye 'nhi prātaḥ snātvā durgāṃ

paṃcopacārair abhyarcya prārthayet |

jaya durge mahādevi kāśivāsānīvāsini |

kṣetravighnahare devi punar darśanam

astu te | 1 |

iti saṃprārthya | viṣvakseneśvaram | 20 |

mārge sampūjya pradakṣiṇā krameṇa

pūjayitvā kardameśam pañcavrihitilair
namet || 29

[...]

maṇikarṇyān tataḥ snātvā gacched
viśveśvaram yaṭi |
namaskṛtya maheśānam praviśed
devasannidhau || 66
pañcopacāraiḥ sampūjya stutvā natvā
punaḥ punaḥ |

muktimaṇḍapam āgatya kṛtārthas tatra
saṃviśet || 67
viṣṇuṅ ca daṇḍapāṇiṃ ca dhuṃḍhim
bhairavam eva ca |
ādityam pañcagaṇapāṇ pūjayet punar
eva ca || 68

pradakṣiṇīkṛtāṅ devān smaret tatra
kramāt sudhīḥ |

*jaya viśveśva viśvātman kāśinātha
jagadguro || 69
tvatprasādān mahādeva kṛtā
kṣetrapradakṣiṇā |
anekajanmapāpāni kṛtāni mama
śaṅkara || 70
gatāni pañcakrośātmaliṅgasyāsya
pradakṣiṇāt |
tvadbhaktikāśivāsābhyāṃ rahitaḥ
pāpakarmaṇā || 71
satsaṅgaśravaṇādyaiś ca kālo gacchatu
naḥ sadā |
hara śaṃbho mahādeva sarvajña*

kardameśvaram gatvā
paṃcajāitīyavrihibhis tilaiś caṭhapāyanam
dattvā namet |

[...]

yatra kutracit tataḥ maṇikarṇyāṃ
snānatarpaṇe vidhāya maunapūrvakam
viśveśvarālayam gatvā saṣṭāṅgam
praṇipatyā garbhāgāre praviśya
pañcopacāraiḥ viśveśvaram sampūjya
stutvā muktimaṇḍapam āgatya kṛtārthaḥ
tatra saṃviśet |

atha muktimaṇḍapagān viṣṇave namaḥ |
daṇḍapāṇaye namaḥ | avimukteśvarāya.
dhuṃḍhirājāya. | bhairavāya. |

ādityam sampūjya | modaṃ | pramodaṃ |
sumukhaṃ | durmukhaṃ | gaṇanāyakaṃ |
praṇamya sampūjya |

prathamadinādikrameṇa pradakṣiṇīkṛtāḥ
sarvā devatāḥ krameṇa smaret tataḥ
praṇatimudrāpūrvakam smartavyāḥ |
annapūrṇāviśveśvarābhyāṃ namaḥ |
bhavānīśaṅkarābhyāṃ namaḥ |
dhuṃḍhirājāya. | modāya. | pramodāya. |
sumukhāya. | durmukhāya | gaṇanāthāya. |
tato devasanmukho bhūtvā prārthayet |

*jaya viśveśvara viśvātman kāśinātha
jagadguro |*

*tvat prasādān mahādeva kṛtā
kṣetrapradakṣiṇā | 1 |
anekajanmapāpāni kṛtāni mama
śaṅkara |*

*gatāni pañcakrośātmaliṅga saṃyak
pradakṣiṇāt | 2 | <13>
tvadbhaktikāśivāsā ca rahitaḥ
pāpakarmaṇā |*

*satsaṅgaśravaṇādyaiś ca kālo gacchatu
naḥ sadā | 3 |
hara śaṃbho mahādeva sarvajña*

sukhadāyaka || 72
prāyaścittaṃ sunirvṛttaṃ pāpānān
tvatprasādataḥ |
punaḥ pāpamatir māstu
dharmabuddhiḥ sadāstu me || 73
iti japtvā yathāśaktyā dattvā dānaṃ
dvijanmanām |
baddhvā karayugaṃ mantrī mantram
etaḥ udīrayet || 74
pañcakrośasya yātreyaṃ yathāśaktyā
mayā kṛtā |
nyūnaṃ sampūrṇatām yātuṃ
tvatprasādād umāpate || 75
iti prārthya mahādevaṃ gacched
gehaṃ svakaṃ svakaṃ |
nyūnātiriktaḥ parihārāya
dakṣiṇām || 76
saṅkalpya gatvā ca gṛhaṃ brāhmaṇān
bhojayet tataḥ |
tata āgatya ca gṛhaṃ kuṭumbaiḥ saha
bhojanam || 77
kṛtātmanān tato dhyāyet kṛtakṛtyo
bhavet tataḥ |
 [...]

sukhadāyaka |
prāyaścittaṃ sunirvṛttaṃ pāpānān
tvatprasādataḥ | 4 |
punaḥ pāparatir māstu dharmabuddhiḥ
sadāstu me |
iti japtvā yathāśaktiḥ dattvā dānaṃ
dvijanmanām | 5 |
baddhvā karayugaṃ mantrī mantram
etaḥ udīrayet |
pañcakrośasya yātreyaṃ yathāvadyā
mayā kṛtā | 6 |
nyūnaṃ sampūrṇatām yāti tvatprasādād
umāpate |
iti prārthya mahāṃ devaṃ gacched
gehaṃ svakaṃ svakaṃ | 7 |
nyūnātiriktaḥ parihārāya
dakṣiṇām |
tato yathā vibhavam viprabhojanaṃ
dakṣiṇā dānaṃ kariṣye iti saṅkalpya
tathā
kṛtvā kṛtārthaḥ sakuṭumbo bhujjīta | iti
pañcakrośīyātrā samāptā | <13>

SRILATA RAMAN

Samāśrayaṇa in Śrīvaiṣṇavism

This paper evaluates the significance of the concept of *samāśrayaṇa* in the Śrīvaiṣṇava ritual and textual tradition of South India. The first section deals with two descriptions of the contemporary ritual of *samāśrayaṇa* and then proceeds to compare it with a standard textual account of the ritual given in the *Parāśa-raviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra*. These accounts of *samāśrayaṇa* as ritual are then viewed, briefly, against the background of the interpretation of *samāśrayaṇa* in the theological writings of the Śrīvaiṣṇava *ācāryas* around the same period. Such an evaluation will show that in the period between the 12th–15th centuries there is a sustained reflection in Śrīvaiṣṇava literature on how *samāśrayaṇa* is to be understood, yielding a range of not necessarily reconcilable meanings. This section of the paper examines the implications of such a broad definition of the concept against the light of certain recent theories and formal definitions of ritual action and suggests that in a highly self-reflective theological tradition such as that of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas the meaninglessness of ritual activity in a specific sense was not only acknowledged but even endorsed precisely because such meaninglessness can be located within a larger vision of the divine plan for human salvation. The final section of the paper shows that these theological reflections ultimately had an effect on ritual practice, moulding it and recreating it in such a manner as to make it consistent with doctrine.

Samāśrayaṇa Today

In his 1931 monograph on the Śrīvaiṣṇava Brahmins K. Rangachari stated that every Śrīvaiṣṇava has to be initiated into the secrets of the Vaiṣṇavite religion by a teacher and that this can only be done after he/she had undergone the initiation of the “five rites” (*pañcasamskāra*) more commonly called, from perhaps as early as the 12th–13th centuries “resorting [to Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa]” or *samāśrayaṇa*.¹

1 “To call oneself a Shri vaishnava Brahmin this initiation is necessary. Even non-Brahmans undergo this ceremony of Panchasamskara if they are to become Vaishnavas” (Rangachari 1986: 36).

Simply put, this initiation consists of five rites in the following order: there is the branding of the initiate with certain emblems (more specifically, the weapons) of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa called *tāpasamṣkāra*, the wearing of his insignia on various parts of the body called *punḍrasamṣkāra*, the taking on of a Vaiṣṇava name called *nāmasamṣkāra*, the initiation into certain Vaiṣṇava *mantras* called *mantrasamṣkāra* and, finally, obtaining the idol form (*vigraha*) of the God for private worship called *yāgasamṣkāra*. This initiatory ritual, or certain aspects of it, appears to have been a marker of Vaiṣṇava identity in the Tamil country at least since the 9th century C.E. Thus, we already have a reference to it in a Tamil verse of that period where the poet states that those such as he serve Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa after having been branded with a red-hot discus and conch.² The initiation was also undoubtedly a conversion or induction ceremony of sorts into the Vaiṣṇava community in the Chola period (when Vaiṣṇavism vied constantly with Śaivism for greater royal patronage) and a means by which anyone—male, female and belonging to any of the four *varṇas*—could become a Vaiṣṇava.³

Samāśrayaṇa ceremonies which take place nowadays among the Śrīvaiṣṇavas are frequently mass ritual ceremonies with an *ācārya* fixing an auspicious day and time and doing *samāśrayaṇa* for a group of people simultaneously.⁴ Both the ceremonies described here, though, were done for individual, female initiates and the account given here is not a detailed description of each of the ceremonies. Hence, a full account of the sub-rites and *mantras* involved is omitted. Instead, the paper delineates the broad features of the contemporary ritual of *pañcasamṣkāra* as it is performed today and compares this with one standard prescriptive account of the ritual in the Āgamic literature. Further, by reflecting on the performances witnessed, the paper demonstrates how the ritual, in practice, has come to be re-defined or reinterpreted on the basis of theological considerations. The paper therefore concludes by showing that, at least in the case

2 The reference is from the *Tiruppallāṇḍu* of Periyālvār. *Tiruppallāṇḍu* v. 7a–b: *tīyirpoli-kiṇraceṇcuṭarāli tikaṭtiruccakkarattin | kōyirporiyālēorruṇṭuniṇṇu kuṭikuṭiyāṭceykinrōm*.

3 The probability that *pañcasamṣkāra* was a conversion ritual to Śrīvaiṣṇavism in the medieval period is strengthened by the evidence of the Śrīvaiṣṇava hagiographical literature which came to be composed sometime after the mid-12th century C.E. On this evidence see my forthcoming article “*Pañcasamṣkāra* as Historical Practice in the Śrīvaiṣṇava Hagiographical Literature” in the Proceedings of the Conference, *The Relationship between Viśiṣṭādvaita and Pāñcarātra*, September 2003, Vienna.

4 This, for instance, is common practice at Ahobilam, Tamil Nadu where such large-scale ceremonies take place at the Ahobila *maṭha* on a daily basis (oral conversation with Prof. M.A. Venkatakrishnan in April 2003).

of certain rituals, there is a close relationship between theology and ritual of a kind which is sometimes questioned in the anthropological approach to ritual.

Here, I first describe the main features of a typical *samāśrayaṇa* done for an individual instead of a mass ceremony, for a female initiate by the current incumbent *ācārya* Śrī Raṅga Rāmānuja Mahādeśikaṅ of the Śrīraṅgam Śrīmuṣṇam Śrīmad Āṇḍavaṅ Āśrama, which took place in January 2001 in Chennai, India.

The female initiate was told to come to the religious institution, the *maṭha*, at a specific time in the morning dressed in the traditional clothes (which for women means wearing the saree, which is called *maḍicāru*, in the traditional way by tucking one end of it in the back). She was told to bring with her a specified amount of milk, clarified butter, betel leaves and areca nuts on a plate (*tāmbūla*), fruit and an appropriate amount of money which would be the sacrificial fee (*gurudakṣiṇā*). The *samāśrayaṇa* is choreographed in such a way that several of the auxiliary rites of which the main one is the offering of oblations into the fire, the *homa*, is done not by the *ācārya* himself but by a disciple of his. The plate with the fruits, betel leaves and areca nuts was placed beside the brick mound (*homakuṇḍa*) created for lighting a sacrificial fire. A coconut was placed on the plate draped with some yellow threads. Next to the plate four square-shaped wooden vessels were placed, two of them filled with milk, the other two with clarified butter. The ritual of *samāśrayaṇa* began with the disciple lighting the fire and pouring into it the oblations of clarified butter doing a Sudarśana *homa*, followed by further oblations to the accompaniment of the Viṣṇu Gāyatrī and the Puruṣa Sūkta. While much of the *homa* was being done the female initiate was sent to have a symbolic bath which involved washing her feet and hands. On returning she was made to stand next to the fire facing east such that she and the disciple stood parallel to each other.

The disciple then made the initiate repeat after him the words: *asmat gurubhyo namaḥ*. Next, the initiate repeats after him, twice, the salutations in Sanskrit to the teacher-disciple lineage (*guruparamparā*) of the incumbent *ācārya* beginning with him and going backwards twelve generations to Rāmānuja himself. Thus, one begins with *śrī raṅga rāmānuja mahādeśikāya namaḥ* and concludes with *śrīmate bhagavate bhāṣyakārāya mahādeśikāya namaḥ*. Then the initiate is made to recite, once, the laudatory verses to the two most important *ācāryas* of that particular *maṭha*'s teacher-disciple lineage, Vedānta Deśika and Rāmānuja, and concludes this with salutations to Nārāyaṇa. The disciple then has the initiate ask to have *pañcasamskāra* in order to be rid of all defects (*doṣa*), without remainder and then the first line of the Nārāyaṇa Mantra known as the Dvaya which goes, "I take refuge at the feet of Nārāyaṇa" (*śrīman nārāyaṇa caraṇau śaraṇam prapadye*). The initiate follows this up, at the instigation

of the disciple, with a recitation of the first *śloka* of the Viṣṇusahasranāmastotra. This part of the ritual, which also concludes the *homa*, is wound up with the disciple offering the initiate unbroken rice (*akṣata*) and receiving a sacrificial fee (*dakṣiṇā*) in return.

At this juncture, the *ācārya* appears and facing the initiate, prior to *tāpasam-skāra*, ties the yellow thread around the initiate's left wrist. Then, facing the initiate, he places the *mantras* of the twelve names of Viṣṇu using hand-gestures (*mudrās*) on various parts of the initiate's body.⁵ While this was being done, the disciple heated two copper rods with wooden handles in the sacrificial fire, which had, respectively, a discus and conch affixed to them at one end. The *ācārya* then made the initiate repeat after him the *mantra* of Viṣṇu's discus and then fold the arms.

The red-hot rod with the discus on it was pressed on the right shoulder. Then the *mantra* of the conch, the Pāñcajanya, was recited by both the *ācārya* and the initiate and the rod with the emblem of the conch pressed on the left shoulder. The copper rods were immediately dipped into two square wooden vessels containing milk by the disciple. Next, the disciple handed to the *ācārya* a small wooden bowl containing the white, liquidized mud called Tirumaṇ, used for painting the insignia of Viṣṇu called the *ūrdhva puṇḍra* on the body.⁶ The *ācārya* proceeded to paint these on the female initiate—and this is where the *samāśrayaṇa* ritual for a female deviates from that for a male—the female initiate receives only two such signs unlike the twelve received by the male. Thus, the *ācārya* painted on her forehead the sign with the words: *keśavāya namaḥ*, then making her turn around, on the nape of her neck: *damodarāya namaḥ* and, finally, making her face east, he recited *śriyair namaḥ*. He concluded the *puṇḍrasam-skāra* by tying a yellow thread around the initiate's right wrist. The *ācārya* then

5 The twelve forms, sequentially, are Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Trivikrama, Vāmana, Śrīdhara, Hṛṣikeśa, Padmanābha and Dāmodara. Entwistle (1981–82: 18) quotes the *Padmapurāṇa* on these twelve forms and where they are to be invoked: “One should contemplate Keśava on the forehead and Nārāyaṇa on the stomach, Mādhava on the chest and Govinda on the base of the throat, Viṣṇu on the right side, Madhusūdana on the (right) arm, Trivikrama on the (right) shoulder, Vāmana on the left side, Śrīdhara on the left arm, Hṛṣikeśa on the (left) shoulder, Padmanābha on the (small of the) back, and Dāmodara on the back of the neck; saying ‘Vāsudeva’ one should place water used for washing on the head”.

6 On the clay used by the Śrīvaiṣṇavas for the *ūrdhva puṇḍra* Entwistle (1981–82: 5) says: “Followers of Rāmānuja used a white-coloured clay (*kanyaka*) which is taken from a tank [in Melkote] where it was discovered by the *ācārya* himself [...]. The clay is distributed free in Rāmānuja temples and is used for the white frame of the *ūrdhva puṇḍra*, though chalk may be used when the special clay is unobtainable”.

left after having made the initiate repeat after him, twice, the eight-syllabled Nārāyaṇa Mantra (*oṃ namo nārāyaṇāya*) with a substitution of “*aṃ*” for “*oṃ*”.

This part of the *samāśrayaṇa* is completed with the initiate repeating the salutations to the teacher-disciple lineage with which the ritual commenced, followed by a Tamil verse which recites the lineage from Rāmānuja back to Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa and concludes with the acknowledgement that she has taken refuge with the *ācārya* and through him has surrendered herself at the feet of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa.

The *samāśrayaṇa* ritual concludes with the initiation into the *mantras*, the *mantrasaṃskāra*. The *ācārya* returns and makes the initiate repeat after him, thrice, the Dvaya Mantra and then *Bhagavadgītā* 18.66, also known as the Caramaśloka. After this, the initiate prostrates at the feet of the *ācārya*, places the fee for the ritual at his feet and receives his blessings. The entire ritual lasts for approximately one-and-a-half hours.

The second ritual of *samāśrayaṇa* was again for a female initiate and took place in Kāñcīpuram on the 13th of April 2003 at the house of the *ācārya*, who was also a married householder, *gṛhastha*, aided constantly in the ceremony by his wife. The initiate was the wife of a retired headmaster and former Sanskrit teacher who had himself undergone the *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony sometime previously and was well-versed (as his enthusiastic participation during the course of the ceremony showed) in the *mantras* and *ślokas* recited during the ritual. The family has a traditional *ācārya-śiṣya* relationship with the family of the famous Tenkalai scholar Prativāti Payaṅkaram Aṅṅaṅkarācāriyār Svāmi and the *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony described here was performed by the grandson of the latter, P.B. Rajahamsa Chariyar.⁷

The first and obvious difference between this occasion and the previous one was that it was an initiation for a Tenkalai and not a Vaṭakalai initiate. Secondly, it was performed not by an ascetic head of a *maṭha* but a married Śrīvaiṣṇava *ācārya*, in the precincts of his own house, in front of his household altar or *pūjā* room. Hence, both the Śrīvaiṣṇava lineage as well as the ritual functions of the *ācārya* were different compared to the previous case and these facts, among

7 I particularly wish to thank Professor M.A. Venkatakrishnan of Madras University Vaishnavism Department who arranged for me to witness and record the ceremony, Shri Rajahamsachariyar for his invaluable explanations during the course of the ceremony as well as his copy of the *Samāśrayaṇapaddhati*, and his family for their generous hospitality. The more detailed account of the performance of this *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony (in contrast to that of the one in Chennai) has been made possible because I was both able to film this ceremony as well as discuss salient features of the ritual with the *ācārya* during and after the performance.

others, also led to significant differences in the ritual which only began to emerge as it progressed.

The ceremony approximately lasted two hours, starting at 9 a.m. in the morning. During the first half-hour neither the initiate nor her spouse were present and one was informed that that they were worshipping at the Varadarāja Perumāḷ temple nearby and would arrive shortly. At the beginning of the ceremony Rajahamsa Chariyar gave me a list of the most important sub-rites (*kriyā*) which, in his view, were an indispensable part of the *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony: the gathering together of the *pañcagavya* (*pañcagavyasammelana*) and the fire-sacrifice, *homa*, for the Śrīsūkta, the Puruṣasūkta and Aṣṭākṣaramantra and, finally, the *sāntihoma*.

The ceremony took place in the central hall of the house of the *ācārya* directly in front of the *pūjā* room, which was kept open throughout the ceremony and which had the metal rods with the images of Viṣṇu's discus and conch lying before the deities worshipped.

In front of Rajahamsa Chariyar was the unlit *homakuṇḍa*, to the left of which was the *kalāśa*, the water-pot filled with water, resting on a bed of rice, decorated at its rim with mango leaves. On the leaves rested a coconut on which was draped the thread, which would eventually be tied around the left wrist of the initiate.

The ceremony began with the *ācārya* paying his respects to the entire community of Śrīvaiṣṇavas and declaring the formal intention (*saṃkalpa*) of performing the ceremony of *pañcasamṣkāra*.⁸ The next step was the worship of Viṣvaksena, undertaken in order that all the ritual activity to follow thereafter would be successfully concluded.⁹ Hence, Viṣvaksena was invoked and then worshipped with the traditional *upacāras*.¹⁰ This initial rite concluded again with a formulaic statement of intention (which recurred several times in the course of the ceremony) to do the *pañcasamṣkāras*.¹¹ Then there was the proclamation of

8 The *saṃkalpa* closed with the following words: *eteṣāṃ mama svācāryasya śiṣyāṇāṃ tāpādi pañcasamṣkāra-karma kariṣye*.

9 *Viṣvaksenaṃ saparivāraṃ sūtram-adhisametam ādau āvāhayāmi*.

10 As Bühnemann (1988: 64) has pointed out, the number of *upacāras* offered can differ, providing they are considered complete: "The worship with the five *upacāras* (*pañcopacārapūjā*) is very common while the one with the sixteen *upacāras* (*ṣoḍaśopacāra*) is the standard type of *pūjā* to be performed in temples, also at home when there is sufficient time or a special occasion. Five as well as sixteen are symbolic numbers both signifying completeness. When something consists of five or sixteen parts it is considered complete". During the ceremony I witnessed the *upacāras* offered were of the first variation.

11 *Śrībhagavadājñābhagavadkainkaryarūpau tāpa-samṣkārārthaṃ puṇḍra-samṣkārārthaṃ mantra-samṣkārārthaṃ nāma-samṣkārārthaṃ deva-pūjāyāṃ samṣkārthaṃ pañcasamṣkā-*

the auspiciousness of the day—*puṇyāham*. At this juncture, the initiate entered the hall with her husband and a female relative and seated herself with the relative in a corner of the room, to the right of the *ācārya*.

There now followed two rites, which concluded with the *homa*. The first was the consecration (through the sprinkling of water and the utterance of *mantras*) of the thread, *pavitra*. The rite is called *rakṣbandhana saṃprokṣaṇa*. The main adjuncts to this rite was the recitation of the Śrī- and Puruṣasūkta, followed by the *vyāhṛtis*. Finally, a consecration *mantra* was recited, which was a Nṛsiṃha Mantra.¹² The second rite was the “uniting of the five cow-products” (*pañcagavya sammelana*) involving the summoning of deities onto the *pañcagavya* with the use of hand gestures, *mudrās*. The final rite in this series was the performance of a series of *homās* which the *ācārya* announced through reciting the *saṃkalpas* for each of them, in sequence, as they were done: the *akārādihoma*, *puruṣasūktahoma*, *śrīsūktahoma*, *sudarśanamāntrahoma*, *mūlamantrahoma* and the *sāntihoma* with the offering of oblations, *āhutis*, in the fire and concluding with a final oblation, the *pūrṇāhuti*.

On finishing the *homa* the *ācārya* stood up and invited the initiate and her husband to first prostrate before the fire altar before seating themselves to his right. The initiate’s husband sat to the right of his spouse. Once seated the initiate received the *pañcagavya* from the *ācārya*. As she sipped it thrice she was made to recite a *śloka* which expressed the wish that the vessel of *pañcagavya*

rakarma kariṣye. It is important to note that the fifth *saṃskāra* referred to here is not called *yāgasamskāra* but *devapūjā*. This term, in fact, accurately describes the fifth *saṃskāra*, in which the initiate is taught how to correctly worship the idol form, which would theoretically have been gifted to him immediately, during the course of the *yāgasamskāra* by the *ācārya*. On *devapūjā*, which replaced the conception of the *devayajña* still present in the Āraṇyaka literature see Kane 1974 vol. 2: 705ff. The substitution of the term *devapūjā* for *yāga* is also explicable since Kane points out: “The word *devapūjā* occurs in the Vārtika of Pāṇini I.3.25. The digests show that, just as *yāga* (sacrifice) consists in giving up materials accompanied by a *mantra* with reference to a deity that is principally in view, so *pūjā* is also *yāga*, as therein there is the giving up (or dedication) of materials to a deity” (ibid.: 714).

12 *Tryambakaṃ yajāmahe sugandham puṣṭivardhanam | puṣpatantur bandhanāt pavitrāṇi-
yāvṛtāt | tryambakadevatābhyo namaḥ | śrīlakṣmīnṛsiṃhāya namaḥ ||* The first line of this *mantra* is identical with the salutations to Rudra-Tryambaka in the context of the Rāja-sūya sacrifice given in *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* I.8.6. This line is here integrated into a Nṛsiṃha Mantra.

may purify her of the evil deeds (*pāpa*) present in all ways in her body and soul.¹³

In the next rite, the *ācārya* tied the consecrated thread, *pavitra*, around the initiate's left wrist. Prior to doing so he sprinkled her with water from the *kalaśa*, removed the coconut with the *pavitra* from the pot and placing it on her cupped hands recited the first section of the Śrīsūkta yet again, concluding with the Lakṣmīgāyatrī and the Vedic hymn *badraṃ karṇe* after which the husband tied the thread around the left wrist of his wife thrice. It is after these series of rites that the *pañcasamskāra* proper is finally done.

The *ācārya* rose, entered his household shrine and retrieved from it the metal rods with the emblems of the discus (*sudaraśana*) and the conch (*pāñcajanya*) on them. He returned and placed them beside him on a small, metal tray—a glass of water was kept nearby. He heated the discus on the weakly smouldering *homa* fire. In the meantime the initiate had been readied for the branding—*tāpasamskāra*—by the female relative and sat facing him with her hands folded.¹⁴ The *ācārya* then made her recite a Sudarśana Mantra:

O discus, Great light akin to a thousand suns,
O Lord show me, ignorant and blind, the path of Viṣṇu.¹⁵

Then holding the initiate's right arm the *ācārya* said:

śrīsudarśanāya hetirājāya namaḥ

and branded her on her right arm. The wife of the *ācārya* assisted and showed her support by holding the initiate at this point. Next, the conch was heated in the fire and held up in front of the initiate. The Pāñcajanya Mantra was recited first by the *ācārya* and then the initiate:

O Conch, whose sound is true, who makes fit the lost sinner,
Save me, the Sinner, fallen into the Frightful Ocean of Transmigration.¹⁶

Then the metal rod with the emblem of the conch is pressed on the left shoulder of the initiate with the words:

śrīpāñcajanya śaṅkhādhipataye namaḥ

13 *Sarvagantugataṃ pāpaṃ dehe tiṣṭhati māmaka | vāsanaṃ pañcagavyasya mamātmañca dehaṃś ca śuddhyatām ||*

14 She had briefly left the ritual space and retired to a nearby room together with the female relative after which she returned with her upper garment—the blouse of her saree—removed such that her upper arms were bare and prepared for the branding.

15 *Sudarśana mahājvāla koṭisūrya samaprabha | ajñānāndhasya me deva viṣṇor mārgaṃ pradarśaya ||*

16 *Pāñcajanya nijadhvāna dhvastapātakasañcaya | pāhi mām pāpi me ghorasamśārṇava-pātinam ||*

After the branding the *ācārya* removed the metal tray with the rods and took them back to his household shrine. When he returned, the second rite—the *puṇḍrasaṃskāra*—took place. It was extremely brief and was done by the wife of the *ācārya* who painted the insignia of Viṣṇu with wet, vermilion powder—the *śrīcūrṇa*—on the forehead, right arm, left arm and neck of the initiate alone even while the *ācārya* repeatedly said: *tāpaḥ puṇḍraḥ*. Soon after this the initiate prostrated herself once more before the *ācārya* saying (in a mixture of Tamil and Sanskrit), “I, a subordinate, am [now] a subordinate of [all] Śrīvaiṣṇavas”.¹⁷

Then, the fourth rite of the five-fold *saṃskāra* ceremony—the *mantrasaṃskāra*—began. It consisted of three parts, in all of which the *ācārya* recited the verses first, followed by the initiate. First there was the recitation of the common *guruparamparā* verses of both the Vaṭakalai and Teṅkalai lineages, though this recitation was prefaced by the Teṅkalai verse: *śrīśaileśadayāpātram*. The second part consisted of the recitation of the three *samāśrayaṇa mantras*—the Aṣṭākṣara, the Dvaya and the Caramaśloka, which was taught in a lowered voice by the *ācārya* to emphasise their esoteric nature. The third part consisted of the recitation of the *guruparamparā* verses of the *ācārya*’s own lineage beginning with that of Nāthamuni and ending with that of Rājahamsa Chariyar himself. This third part concluded with the words: “The feet of the *ācārya* alone are the refuge. The feet of [Namm]ālvār, Emperumāṅār [Rāmānuja] and Cīyar [Maṇavālamāmuṇi] alone are the refuge”.¹⁸

Once the ceremony was over the initiate and her husband offered the sacrificial fees—*dakṣiṇā*—to Rajahamsa Chariyar’s father who was the head of the family and had been present throughout the ceremony though he had not conducted it.

A comparison of the two ceremonies enables one to detect a common script which consists of two main components in the following order: the *samāśrayaṇa* consists of an initial *homa* followed by the *pañcasamskāra* in which the order of procedure is *tāpa*, *puṇḍra*, [*nāma*,] *mantra* [and *yāga*]. Nevertheless, even this basic script had been modified, in each of the performances, in significant ways.

The first difference is that the ritual in Chennai was done by a Vaṭakalai ascetic, while the one in Kāñcīpuram was done by a Teṅkalai householder. This difference in the *āśrama* of the *ācārya* concerned led to a division in the ritual

17 *Aṭiyēṅ śrīvaiṣṇavadāsyai*.

18 Before this part of the ceremony of imparting the *mantras* began Rajahamsachariyar requested that Christoph Emmrich, who had accompanied me to witness the ceremony, leave the room temporarily since he is not a Śrīvaiṣṇava and should not have access to the esoteric aspect of the ceremony. Once the three *mantras* had been taught to the initiate he was allowed to re-enter the room.

duties performed in the course of the ceremony: in Chennai most of the rites prior to the *pañcasamṣkāra* itself (the *rakṣābandhana samprokṣaṇa*, *pañcagavya sammelana* and the *homa*) were done by the married disciple of the *ācārya* and these rites were concluded even before the initiate entered the hall of the *maṭha* for the ceremony. The ascetic *ācārya*'s ritual duties began after these were concluded when he came in front of the *homakuṇḍa* in order to tie the *pavitra* around the initiate's wrist.¹⁹ In contrast to this Rajahamsa Chariyar did all the preliminary rites himself assisted considerably by his wife during portions of the ceremony. Thus, in effect, in both ceremonies it was a married householder, the *grhastha*, who did the rituals preceding the main rite of *pañcasamṣkāra*.

In the sequence of the pre-rites to the *pañcasamṣkāra* two differences are to be noted: in the Kāñcīpuram ritual the tying of the *pavitra* around the wrist of the initiate had been preceded by the consecration and ingestion of the *pañcagavya*. In the Chennai ceremony this did not take place. In contrast, in the Chennai ceremony the *rakṣābandhana* had been followed up by a rite in which the ascetic *ācārya* laid or deposited the twelve *puṇḍras* of the twelve names of Viṣṇu on the body of the initiate. This was not done in the Kāñcīpuram case.

Certain differences also emerged in the performance of the *pañcasamṣkāra* itself. Firstly, the significant role of the wife of the householder *ācārya*, assisting throughout and particularly prompting him when it came to the recitation of the *śloka*s regarding the *guruparamparā*, was reinforced in the *puṇḍrasamṣkāra*. For, then, it was she, not the *ācārya*, who did the *puṇḍrasamṣkāra* for the female initiate.

The next difference was in the *nāmasamṣkāra* ceremony. While it was completely elided in the Vaṭakalai ceremony it is my opinion that it was alluded to in the second, where the female initiate admits to taking on a Śrīvaiṣṇava identity and, hence, name, by acknowledging that she is, henceforth, a "Śrīvaiṣṇavadāśī".

Two differences could be noticed as far as the *mantrasamṣkāra* was concerned. The first is again traceable to the difference in *āśrama* between the *ācāryas*: when the *guruparamparā* of an ascetic lineage is recited one begins with the incumbent and traces the lineage backwards, for the *grhastha* it is done the opposite way. The second difference was doctrinal, reflecting the influence of the schismatic dispute within Śrīvaiṣṇavism. One of the so-called "eighteen points of difference" between the two schools of Śrīvaiṣṇavism—*aṣṭhādaśabhe-*

19 Speaking of the ancient laws pertaining to ascetic life, Olivelle (1995: 18) states: "Two of the most ancient of such rules are the prohibition on the use of fire and on a stable residence outside the rainy season. Ancient texts use the epithet *anāgni* 'fireless man' with reference to ascetics".

dāh—lies in the fact that the Vaṭakalais believe that women should not pronounce the *praṇava*, *oṃ*, when they utter *mantras* while the Tenkalais permit this. This theological difference emerged as established in the respective ceremonies witnessed: in the Vaṭakalai ceremony the female initiate substituted *aṃ* for the *praṇava* of the three esoteric *mantras* taught while in the Tenkalai ceremony she said *oṃ*.

Most importantly, in both cases the *pañcasamskāra* ceremony, in effect, concluded after the *mantrasamskāra* and the fifth and final rite, the *yāgasamskāra*, did not take place. In other words, it does not seem to be a component of the *pañcasamskāra* ceremony as we know it today and the ceremony performed these days may be properly called a *catuḥ-samskāra*. The reason for this becomes clear in the next section, where a relatively late textual account of the ceremony is examined.

Samāśrayaṇa in the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra*

The *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* is a not earlier than 12th century ritual appendage to the *Parāśarasamṛti*. The brief editorial introduction to the printed copy of the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* which I possess identifies the *Parāśarasamṛti* with the *Parāśarasamhitā* and further states that the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* is considered to be the latter portion (*uttarabhāga*), to be found only in southern recensions of the text. The *New Catalogus Catalogorum* (vol. 11: 208) indicates that there are at least two *Parāśarasamṛtis*. The more famous one is that which is summarized in Chapter 107 of the *Garuḍapurāṇa*. The other is a [Pāñcarātra] Śrīvaiṣṇava theological text with the colophons of all the available manuscripts containing only an *uttarakhaṇḍa*. To add to the confusion, in his bibliography of Pāñcarātra texts Daniel Smith lists and describes a *Parāśarasamhitā*, which is a work of approximately 2000 *śloka*s divided into thirty-one chapters. It speaks of both the *ālvārs* and the *ācāryas* such as Nāthamuni leading him to the conclusion “that the composition of this work must have been before the 15th century but considerably after the time of Sundara [sic]. Thus it belongs to the *Samhitās* of the ‘later’ period” (Smith 1978: 61–62). A comparison of the contents of this *Parāśarasamhitā* with the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* could not be undertaken for this study, since I do not possess a copy of this former work. Nevertheless, even a cursory examination of the chapterization of the *Parāśarasamhitā* given in Smith (1978: 188–196) with the chapterization and contents of the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* indicates wide discrepancies. This, at the very least, seems to indicate that the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* is not a straightforward textual extract from the

Pāñcarātra *Parāśarasamhitā* described by Smith but, in the event of being one, has undergone considerable modification. At this stage, all that can be said about the text is that, inasmuch as it deals at such length with the *pañcasamskāras*, it cannot be an earlier than 12th century text. The text, in the edition consulted, consists of the following ten chapters:

description of *tāpasamskāra* (*tāpasamskāravaraṇa*)

sequence of *puṇḍrasamskāra* (*puṇḍrasamskārakrama*)

sequence of *mantrasamskāra* (*mantrasamskārakrama*)

sequence of *yāgasamskāra* (*yāgasamskārakrama*)

worship of the Blessed One and the rights pertaining to one's station in life (*bhagavadārādhana-varṇāśramadharmavarṇana*)

extensive description of daily worship (*viśṛtanityārādhana-krama*)

description of the swing festival (*ḍolotsavavarṇana*)

description of occasional festivals (*naimittikotsavavarṇana*)

description of the "great festival" (*mahotsavavarṇana*)

worship of Bhāgavatas and their greatness (*vaiṣṇavārādhana-tanmāhāmyavarṇana*)

The analysis in this section concentrates on the first four chapters. The text begins with the seers (*munis*) asking Parāśara to instruct them in detail about how to do *samāśrayaṇa* to Hari and how to worship him. Parāśara replies that he will do so and, in addition, also inform them about the injunction relating to the *mantra* initiation (*mantradīkṣāvidhi*).

He then adds: "Foremost, indeed, regarded as Vaiṣṇava, is the bearing of, among others, the conch, the discus, the insignia, [undergoing] the naming ritual, the *mantra* and the ritual worship of Hari. Five *samskāras* have to be done for the Brahman, according to the precepts".²⁰

A detailed description of the *pañcasamskāras* begins in verse 10 of this first chapter, with that of the first rite, the *tāpasamskāra*. The *ācārya* does the *tāpa-*

20 *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* I: 1–4a: *vistareṇa samākhyāhi hari-samāśrayaṇam param | katham āśrayaṇam nṛṇām katham ārādhanaṃ vibhoḥ || vakṣyāmi munayoḥ sarve viṣṇor āśrayanakṛyām | mantradīkṣāvidhiś caiva tasya pūjāvidhiṃ tathā || ādyaṃ tu śaṅkhacakraḍidhāraṇam vaiṣṇavam smṛtam | puṇḍram nāmakriyā caiva mantraścaivārcanam hareḥ || samskārāḥ pañcakartavyā brahmaṇasya vidhānataḥ |* It has been suggested to me that among the Pāñcarātra Āgamas, the *ratnatraya* (*Sātvata*, *Jayākhyā* and *Pauṣkara*) do not deal with the *pañcasamskāra* but with *dīkṣā*. Among the first texts to deal at length with the ceremony appears to be the *Īśvarasamhitā* which, inasmuch as it deals with the rituals of Mēlkoṭṭai would be a *Samhitā* of the Rāmānuja/post-Rāmānuja period of Śrīvaiṣṇavism (personal communication from Dr. Marion Rastelli).

samskāra on an auspicious day, in the early part of it (*pūrvāhni*), after having bathed and worshipped Viṣṇu, for the *śiṣya* who is summoned to the ceremony after his daily ablutions, whose sacred thread ceremony has taken place (*kṛta-kautukamaṅgalam*) (10).²¹ The *ācārya* has already had models (*pratikṛti*) of the conch, discus etc. made out of metals such as gold, silver or copper (11–12).²² These model weapons are first purified in the “five-fold nectar” (*pañcāmṛta*) and then worshipped with flowers and the *mantras* pertaining to them (13). The *ācārya* then establishes the sacrificial fire, *homa*, according to the *gṛhyasūtra* of his lineage, does the *homa* to the extent of placing the fuel sticks in the fire (*idhmādhāna*) (14) and, then, placing the weapons on the fire he sacrifices together with the disciple (15).²³ The disciple, who is seated facing the east, is anointed with water consecrated with *mantras* and then is to be branded with the conch, discus and other weapons (16–17).²⁴ He is first branded on his upper left arm with the discus, then with the conch on his right, upper arm, with the mace in the middle of the forehead, with the sword on the heart and the bow on the head (17–18).²⁵

The second chapter deals with the ritual sequence of the *punḍrasamskāra*. The *ācārya* does the rite on another day. He begins by drawing the twelve *punḍras* of the twelve names of Viṣṇu on the ground, or on sand strewn for that purpose (3).²⁶ The twelve forms of Viṣṇu are worshipped on these *punḍras*, in sequence and then honoured with the *upacāras*, before doing a *homa*, similar to the one which took place for the *tāpasamskāra* (4–5).²⁷

21 Ibid. I: 10: *snātvā śubhe 'hni pūrvāhne samyagabhyarcya keśavam | snātum śiṣyaṃ samāhūya kṛtakautukamaṅgalam ||*

22 Ibid. I: 11–12: *ācāryo vidhivat kuryāt cakrapunḍrādi satkriyām | kārayet śaṅkhacakrādi-hetiḥpratikṛtiḥ śubhāḥ || svarṇarājatatāmṛādīdravyaiḥ kuryād yathocitam | śaṅkham cakram gaḍgāḥ khaḍgam śārngam pañcāyudham kramāt ||*

23 Ibid. I: 14–15: *purato 'gniṃ pratiṣṭhāpya svagrhyoktavidhānataḥ | idhmādhānādi paryantaṃ tāmbūlaṅca niveḍayet || paścāt pañcāyudhanyagnau pratikṣipyā ca yathāvidhi | juhūyāt hetimantraiś ca śiṣyeṇa sahoto guruḥ ||*

24 Ibid. I: 16–17a: *namaskuryāt tato bhaktyā devadevaṃ janārdanam | prāṇmukham tu samāśinam śiṣyaṃ mantrajalāplutam || pratāpec chaṅkhacakrādihetibhiḥ prayato guruḥ ||*

25 Ibid. I: 17b–18b: *pavitreṅkhaḥayet pūrvaṃ bāhumūlam tu dakṣiṇam || śaṅkhena pratāpet savyaṃ gaḍgāy phalamādhyamam | tathā khaḍgena hṛdayaṃ śārngenaiva tu mastakam ||*

26 Ibid., II: 3: *sthaṅḍile saikate vāpi hyupalipyā tato guruḥ | dvādaśaitāni puṅdrāni likhet tasmīn yathākramam ||*

27 Ibid. II: 4–5: *aṣṭapunḍraṇy aṣṭadikṣu madhye catvāri vinyaset | vyāharan sarvapunḍreṣu keśavāḍīn yathākramam || āvāhanārghyapādyaiś ca dhūpadīpaniveḍanaiḥ | sampūjyāgnim prathiṣṭhāpya homaṃ pūrvavaḍ ācāret ||*

Once the *homa* is finished, the *ācārya* begins to paint the *puṇḍras* on the seated disciple who, henceforth, is to wear the *puṇḍras* (painted with mud taken from a site holy to Vaiṣṇavas and consecrated with the Mūlamantra) on a daily basis (8–9).²⁸ Several verses follow which are devoted to the correct measurements of the *puṇḍra* (10), how one should draw it accurately (11–12) and the consequences of not doing so (13–14). Some verses stress the particular necessity of wearing the *ūrdhvaṇḍra* when obligatory rituals such as the morning and evening *sandhyā*, the evening *japa*, *homa* and *śrāddha* are done (15–16).²⁹ If one performs these rituals without wearing it they would be unsuccessful (17).³⁰ With this set of verses the core elements of the *puṇḍrasaṃskāra* are mentioned and concluded. The rest of this section of the second chapter is devoted to establishing the superiority of the *ūrdhvaṇḍra* over the *tripuṇḍra* of the Śaivites and then concludes with once again listing the deities of each of the *puṇḍras*.

The second part of the second chapter, which begins with verse 45, deals with the *nāmasaṃskāra*. Parāśara suggests that the naming ceremony, *nāmakarma*, could be done at different phases in the individual's life: at the time of the naming ceremony after birth, at the tonsure, during the sacred-thread ceremony or at the time of the *puṇḍrasaṃskāra* itself, before the study of the *mantras* (45–46).³¹ The name can be that of one of the forms of Viṣṇu, such as Vāsudeva or Keśava, one of his emanations (*vyūha* or *vibhava*) or any other auspicious Vaiṣṇava name (46–47).³² The ceremony itself, if one were to do it as part of the *pañcasamskāra* ceremony, is described in one-and-a-half verses. Viṣṇu is first worshipped, the deity whose name will be bestowed is meditated upon and worshipped with *upacāras*. After that one offers oblations (into the *homa*).³³ It is to be presumed, even though this is not explicitly stated in the text, that the

28 Ibid. II: 8–9: *namaskṛtya tataḥ śiṣyo guruṃ sarvaguṇānvitam | tadāprabhṛti puṇḍrāṇi mṛdā dhāryāṇi nityaśṛṅḥ || ādāya vaiṣṇave kṣetre mṛttikāṃ vimalāṃ śubhāṃ | mūlamantreṇābhimantrya cordhvaṇḍrāṇi dhārayet |*

29 Ibid. II: 15–16: *sandhyākāle jape home svādhyāye pitṛtarpaṇe | śrāddhe dāne ca yajñe ca dhārayed ūrdhvaṇḍrakam || ūrdhvaṇḍraṃ tu viprāṇāṃ sandhyānuṣṭhānakarmavat | śrāddhakāle viśeṣeṇa kartā bhoktā ca na tyajet ||*

30 Ibid. II: 17: *ūrdhvaṇḍravihīnastu karma yat kiñcid ācaret | tat sarvaṃ viphalam yāyād iṣṭāpūrtam api dvijāḥ ||*

31 Ibid. II: 45–46a: *nāmakarma pravakṣyāmi pāpanāśanam uttamam | jātakarmani vā kṣaure tathā mauñjīnibandhane || mantrādhyayanakāle vā nāma kuryād vidhānataḥ |*

32 Ibid. II: 46b–47: *vāsudevādayo ye ca mūrtayaḥ keśavādayaḥ || matsyakūrmādayo vyūhāḥ vibhavaḥ ca tathā 'pare | teṣāṃ anyatamaṃ nāma dadyād vānyaṃ śubhāhvayam ||*

33 Ibid. II: 48–49a: *abhyarcya vidhivad viṣṇuṃ nāmamūrtim anusmaran | āvāhanārghyapādyaiś ca dhūpadīpādibhis tathā || gandhapuṣpādīnābhyarcya juhūyāc ca vidhānataḥ |*

disciple receives the new name after this *homa*. In verses 51–52 it is strongly recommended that the *ācārya* bestow upon the disciple the name of the particular form of Viṣṇu who is also the “lord of the month” (*māsādhipathī*) on which the ceremony is performed.³⁴ The final verse of the chapter recommends that the name consist of two components: a name of Viṣṇu or one of his devotees and a suffix—*dāsa*, “servant”.³⁵

The third chapter deals with *mantrasaṃskāra*. Some initial verses describe the pertinent *homa*: oblations of ghee are to be offered accompanied by the recitation of the Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa Mantras (such as the Dvaya and Aṣṭottara), the Puruṣasūkta, the Viṣṇugāyatrī, among others (2–3).³⁶ After these oblations are concluded the *ācārya* brings a *kalaśa* filled with water consecrated with the Dvaya- and Mūlamantras and sprinkles the disciple with this consecrated water even while reflecting on the same *mantras* again. After this the water has to be sipped three times (4–7).³⁷ Then the *ācārya* places his right hand on the disciple’s head, his left hand on his heart and gazing with compassion upon him, contemplating his own *ācārya* is his heart, reciting the *guruparamparā* of the lineage, he begins the process of teaching the *mantras*.³⁸ The *mantrasaṃskāra* is initiated through a prayer first addressed to the Goddess.³⁹

You are the mother of all, O Beloved of the Lord of all the Worlds,
Ignore/overlook/tolerate (*śrāvāyasya*) this person today, who is surrounded (*vṛta*)
with these thousand transgressions.

Then, says the text, after appealing to the Goddess, the Lord is resorted to with the following words:

34 Ibid. II: 51–52: *yā tanmāsapatermūrṭiḥ tatra tāṃ deśikāḥ svayam | parikramya namaskritya hyāvāhya purato hareḥ || tanmūrṭiṃ manasā dhyātvā nāma tasyāḥ pracodayet | nāma vaiṣṇavatāhetuḥ mukhya ity ucyate budhaiḥ ||*

35 Ibid. II: 53: *yojayen nāma dāsāntaṃ bhagavannāmapūrvakam | tathā bhāgavatānāṃ ca nāma syāt nāmapūrvakam ||*

36 Ibid. III: 2–3: *snātaṃ śiṣyaṃ samāhūya homaṃ kuryād vidhānataḥ | mantradvayena juhūyāt ājyam aṣṭottaraṃ śatam || vaiṣṇavyā caiva gāyatrīyā mūlamantreṇa deśikāḥ | hutvā pradakṣiṇaṃ kṛtvā saśiṣyaḥ praṇamed guruḥ ||*

37 Ibid. III: 4b–7a: *tataḥ kalaśā ādhāya pavitrajalasaṃbhr̥te || tulasīṃ gandhadūrvāgre kauśeyaṃ gaurasarṣapam | abhimantrīya dvayenātha mūlamantreṇa mantravit || tena samārjayet śiṣyaṃ mantratanena deśikāḥ | samārjayec ca taṃ śiṣyaṃ mūlamantram anuttamam || prāśayet salilaṃ paścāt trivāraṃ mantravic ca tam |*

38 Ibid. III: 7b–8: *mūrdhnī hastaṃ viniḥṣipya dakṣiṇaṃ jñānadakṣiṇam || savyaṃ ca hr̥daye nyasya kṛpayā vikṣayed guruḥ | svācāryaṃ hr̥daye dhyātvā japtvā guruparamparām ||*

39 Ibid. III: 9–10: *tataḥ samprārthayet devīm sarvalokeśvarīm priyām | mātā tvam sarvalokānāṃ sarvalokeśvarapriye || śrāyayasvainam adyemaṃ aparādhaśatair vṛtam | evaṃ ramām puraskṛtya paścāt devaṃ samāśrayet ||*

O Nārāyaṇa, Ocean of Compassion, Sea of the Quality of Parental Love,
Rescue this Evil-doer O God, who has come [to you] out of compassion.⁴⁰

After reciting these two verses the *ācārya* proceeds to teach the initiate the “Jewel among the *mantras*” which is the Dvaya Mantra, followed by the eight-syllabled Aṣṭākṣaramantra.⁴¹ The next verse states emphatically that the *mantra-saṃskāra* can only take place after the disciple has been branded with the conch and discus. A *guru* who imparts the *mantras* without these preliminary *saṃskāras* to a disciple goes to hell.⁴² The *mantrasaṃskāra* is brought to a close by finishing the *homa* and feeding Brahmins.⁴³

The fourth and final chapter, in terms of this analysis, concerns the *yāga-saṃskāra*. Sometime after the above-mentioned rites have taken place, the initiated disciple visits the *guru* and obtains from him, with his blessings, an idol (*vigraha*) of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa with that of his consorts, Śrī, Bhūmi and Nīlā which he has to henceforth worship every day of his life.⁴⁴ Prior to giving the main idol of a form of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa to the disciple, the *guru* establishes a *homa* (4) and does oblations which involve the recitation of the important Vedic and Pāñcarātric *mantras* already mentioned in the previous chapters (5–6).⁴⁵ Once the *homa* is concluded the *guru* gives the idol to the disciple, teaches him the proper manner of worship, has the disciple do the worship himself and sees to the feeding of Vaiṣṇava Brahmins.⁴⁶

A comparison of the two performances of this ritual witnessed with the textual account of it in the four chapters of the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* shows, in principle, that it is remarkably true in its essentials to the textual

40 Ibid. III: 11: *nārāyaṇa dayāsindho vātsalyaguṇasāgara | trāhyenaṃ pāpinaṃ deva kṛpayā samupāgatam ||*

41 Ibid. III: 17: *adhyāpayet dvayaṃ mantram ācāryaḥ śiṣyavatsalah | adhyāpayet tataḥ paścāt mantram aṣṭākṣaram tathā ||*

42 Ibid. III: 18: *acakradhāriṇaṃ vipraṃ yo 'dhyāpayati deśikaḥ | sa gururnarakaṃ yāti kapakoṣīṣatam dvijāḥ ||*

43 Ibid. III: 22: *homaśeṣaṃ samāpyātha brāhmaṇān bhojayet śubhān | yāvaccharīrapātaṃ tu dvayam āvarttayen manum ||*

44 Ibid. IV: 1–2: *śubhakāle vidhānena praṇipatya tato gurum | asya prasādabdhāṃ tu grhītvā vighrahaṃ hareḥ || śrībhūminīlāsahitaṃ sāyudhaṃ saparicchadam | arcayed vighrahaṃ nityaṃ yāvatkālam atandritaḥ ||*

45 Ibid. IV: 4–6: *arcayet pūrvavat snātvā hareḥ saṃpūjya vighrahaṃ | homaṃ kuryāt vidhānena śrīmadāṣṭākṣareṇa vai || mantradvayena ca tathā hotavyaṃ vidhinā haviḥ | sūktena ca tathā homaḥ pauruṣeṇa vidhīyate || śatamaṣṭākṣarāt homaḥ mantrābhyañca tathoditāḥ | sūktena pratyarcam homaḥ hotavyaṃ vidhinā haviḥ ||*

46 Ibid. IV: 8–9a: *tasmai tadvighrahaṃ dattvā vṛttiṃ saṃyak pracodayet | yajñakarmavidhānena saṃyak snātvā gurus tathā || yājayet vaiṣṇavaṃ bhaktyā vaiṣṇavaṃ paritoṣayet |*

account. Where there is deviation it is inevitably in the form of contraction, a telescoping of entire facets of the ritual or even entire auxiliary rites within it to their minimal form. Thus, to begin with, the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* recommends, ideally, that each of the five *saṃskāras* be done on different days with an elaborate *homa* for each occasion. Even so, at the end of the third chapter, after the description of the “sequence of the *mantrasaṃskāra*” the text allows for the possibility that all the *saṃskāras* can be done on one single day provided they are done in orderly succession.⁴⁷ Next, there is the fact that *samāśrayaṇa* nowadays consists, in effect, only of three of the *saṃskāras* with the *nāmasaṃskāra* and the *yāgasamskāra* being omitted during the ritual. The *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* clearly allows for the omission of the *nāmasaṃskāra* at the time of *samāśrayaṇa*. In II: 45–46 the text states that one could have been bestowed with a Vaiṣṇava name at the time of the birth ceremonies (*jātakarman*), or at the time of tonsure or during the sacred thread ceremony, thus allowing for this *saṃskāra* to have taken place prior to *samāśrayaṇa*.⁴⁸ What was important is that it had taken place prior to the *mantrasaṃskāra* at some point in time, since one could not be instructed in the Vaiṣṇava *mantras* without a Vaiṣṇava name. Less obviously explicable is the omission of the *yāgasamskāra*—which in the Śrīvaiṣṇava context is the obtainment of the idol of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa for daily worship from the *ācārya*, along with the proper instructions on how to conduct this worship⁴⁹—from *samāśrayaṇa* nowadays when it is described in elaborate detail in the fourth chapter of the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra*. Firstly, the very fact that the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* allows for the telescoping of the entire ceremony of *pañcasamskāra*, at the end of the third chapter, may well be an indication that an elaborate procedure such as teaching the disciple how to do his proper, daily worship may have become redundant to the ceremony by the time of the redaction of the text. This redundancy can only be deduced, though, from the perspective of contemporary, Śrīvaiṣṇava practice. Since most Śrīvaiṣṇava households have one if not several idols of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa in regular, private worship any person born a Śrīvaiṣṇava is expected to be instructed in the procedures of daily worship by the elders of the family or the family priest nowadays rather than the *ācārya*. Finally, allowing for the view that the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* is

47 Ibid. III: 20: *ekasmin divase vāpi kṛtvā tāpādi saṃskriyāḥ | pṛthak pṛthak cānupūrvyā sarvaṃ kuryād atandritaḥ ||*

48 Ibid. II: 45cd–46ab: *nāmakarma pravakṣyāmi pāpanāśanam uttamam || jātakarmaṇi vā kṣaure tathā mauñjīnibandhane | mantrādhyayanakāle vā nama kuryād vidhānataḥ ||*

49 The name *yāgasamskāra*, hence, corresponds to the Mīmāṃsaka definition of *yāga* as the worship of a deity. Cf. *Śabarabhāṣya* IX: 1.6: *api ca yāgo nāma devatā-pūjā*.

prescriptive and gives an account of the ideal ritual, further discrepancies between text and context could also be explained by the adaptation of the *saṃskāras* to changing circumstances. To take the obvious example of the *tāpasam-skāra*, even the most orthodox of Śrīvaiṣṇavas these days would balk at the idea of being branded, as the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* perhaps hyperbolically recommends, not just with the discus and conch but, in addition, with the mace (*gadā*) on the forehead, the sword (*khadga*) on the chest and the bow (*śārṅga*) on the skull.

The significance of *samāśrayaṇa* is laid out by the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* in the very first chapter. The text offers us two main reasons why this ritual is mandatory for all Vaiṣṇavas, women at the time of marriage, men at the time of the sacred, thread ceremony, the *upanayana*.⁵⁰ The ritual is a marker of Vaiṣṇava identity, without it one is not a Vaiṣṇava (I: 3)⁵¹ and cannot be instructed in the *mantras* which are necessary for salvation (I: 21–22).⁵² A male Brahmin cannot be considered a Brahmin without *samāśrayaṇa* because it complements or is equivalent to the sacred, thread ceremony (I: 4–6).⁵³ It also follows from this that it is only *samāśrayaṇa* following upon and complementing the sacred thread ceremony that qualifies the Śrīvaiṣṇava for doing any further ritual activity (I: 9)⁵⁴ and the *smārta* rituals such as the *śrāddha* ceremony for the dead (I: 7).⁵⁵

Thus, in the final analysis, it is by drawing an explicit parallel between the ritual and *upanayana*, that the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* validates this Śrīvaiṣṇava ritual as a *saṃskāra* par excellence. By doing so, the text explicitly draws legitimacy from none less than Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā in as much as in the *Mīmāṃsā-sūtras* VI: 1.35 the word *saṃskāra* is synonymous with that ritual which qualifies the male for Vedic learning, the *upanayana*. And by elevating

50 *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* I: 22cd–23ab: *udvāhasamaye strīṅaṃ puṃsāṃ caivopānayanē || cakrādīdhāraṇaṃ proktaṃ mantraiḥ pañcāyudhasya ca |*

51 *Ibid.* I: 3: *ādyam tu śaṅkhacakrādīdhāraṇaṃ vaiṣṇavaṃ smṛtam | puṇḍraṃ nāmakriyā caiva mantras caivārcanaṃ hareḥ ||*

52 *Ibid.* I: 21cd–22ab: *karmasaṃskārasiddhyarthaṃ jātakarmādi kārayet || mantrasaṃskārasiddhyarthaṃ mantradīkṣāvidhiṃ tathā |*

53 *Ibid.* I: 4cd–6: *vinā yajñopavītena vinā cakrasya dhāraṇāt || vinā dvayenaiva viprah caṇḍālatvam āpnuyāt | vidhinā śaṅkhacakrādīdhāraṇaṃ cordhva puṇḍrakam || upavītaṃ śikhābandhaṃ viprasya satataṃ smṛtam | cakralāñcanahīnasya vipratvaṃ niṣphalaṃ bhavet ||*

54 *Ibid.* I: 9: *tasmāt cakrādīsaṃskārāḥ kartavyā munisattamāḥ | cakralāñcanahīnena kṛtaṃ karma ca niṣphalam ||*

55 *Ibid.* I: 7: *acakradhāriṇaṃ vipraṃ yaḥ śrāddhe bhōjayen naraḥ | retomūtrapuriṣādīn sa pīrbhyaḥ prayacchati ||*

samāśrayaṇa to the level of the *upanayana* the Śrīvaiṣṇava ritual theorists were, in effect, doing what Alexis Sanderson (1995: 27) has pointed out regarding the legitimation of Tantric ritual in general: that the rituals aim at “achieving parity with the orthodox by providing the system with equivalents of all the essential *smārta* rites which the invested perform or undergo during adult life and, indeed, beyond it”.

Enquiry among contemporary Śrīvaiṣṇavas who have undergone *samāśrayaṇa* about the significance of it for them elicited, as might be expected, a spectrum of responses. Broadly classified, the response was two-fold. Men and women less well-informed or learned in aspects of Śrīvaiṣṇava ritual significance or theology were of the opinion that it was a good thing to do if one wished to intensify one’s religious life, become more orthodox as it were. And this becoming more orthodox was seen primarily in terms of further dietary restrictions as well as a more strict adherence to daily worship at the household altar. The response, on the other hand, of orthodox Śrīvaiṣṇava males as to the significance of the ritual was almost text-book perfect—they told me that *samāśrayaṇa* qualified them for all ritual activity whether in the temple or for the domestic, *smārta* rites.

The Theology of *samāśrayaṇa*

This very spectrum of interpretation—of what the ritual of *samāśrayaṇa* signifies today needs to be contextualized theologically as well and evaluated against the background of developments in Śrīvaiṣṇava theology in the post-Rāmānuja period of Śrīvaiṣṇavism. In that period, commencing in the mid-12th century, *ācāryas* such as Tirukkuruḱaip Pirāṇ Piḷḷāṇ and Nañciyar wrote the first commentaries on the Tamil devotional poetry of the *ālvārs*. In the writings of these two *ācāryas*, in particular, we see the emergence of certain doctrines of salvation which are not entirely compatible with each other, an incompatibility which eventually led to a sectarian split within the Śrīvaiṣṇava community and the formation of the “Northern” and the “Southern” schools (Vaṭakalai & Tenkalai) of Śrīvaiṣṇavism. I give below a summary of the contours of the theological dispute in the earliest phase of its emergence.⁵⁶

Śrīvaiṣṇava soteriology at least from the time of its consolidation, i.e., the 12th century, is based upon the conviction that the divine plan for human salva-

56 For a detailed examination of this early phase of the dispute see Raman 2004 and Raman forthc. a. For full-length studies of the mature phase of the dispute in the writings of Piḷḷai Lōkācārya and Vedānta Deśika see Jagadeesan (1977) and Mumme (1988).

tion is ultimately unfathomable. Not capricious but beyond human perception. The Southern School of Śrīvaiṣṇavism endorsed the view that the ideal stance to be adopted by the human being in the face of this unfathomability would be to arrive at a full cognition of one's utter helplessness followed by a surrender to the divine plan. The rare few who do this are "resorting to Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa", doing, variously, *prapatti/āśrayaṇa/samāśrayaṇa* which is, in effect, pure contemplation of this fact of their helplessness. Called *adhyavasāya* or *anusamdhāna*, it is this kind of *samāśrayaṇa* which is the guarantee of salvation. This definition of *samāśrayaṇa* became widespread in the post-Rāmānuja theological commentaries of the *ācāryas* Nañcīyar, Naṃpiḷḷai and their disciples and ultimately derives its legitimacy from Rāmānuja's interpretation of certain chapters and verses of the *Bhagavadgītā*. From this perspective, *samāśrayaṇa* is not a ritual at all but only a specific kind of cognition. One does not do anything, one just realizes the truth and those rare few who do so are called men of wisdom, *jñānīs*. The Northern School of Śrīvaiṣṇavism held the view that, as far as the non-enlightened majority of Viṣṇu *bhaktas* are concerned, the *prapatti/samāśrayaṇa* done in whatever form, without or prior to the acquisition of this superior knowledge which the *jñānī* possesses, is a ritual and has the specific power of ritual to bring about certain specific consequences—whether the qualification for further ritual activity or as expiation for demerit (*pāpa*). This interpretation of *prapatti/samāśrayaṇa* as ritual is also present in the commentaries of the post-Rāmānuja *ācāryas* such as Piḷḷān and ultimately derives its legitimacy from other textual passages of the *Bhagavadgītā* as well as *stotra* literature.

In the final analysis, then, even the Śrīvaiṣṇava Tenkalai theological literature on *prapatti/samāśrayaṇa* is at pains not to repudiate ritual as such. Rather, it differentiates between various kinds of intentionality and held that the one correct intentionality, which is the recognition that one was not the agent of ritual action or of one's own salvation, transformed ritual activity into pure cognition, into non-ritual and a guarantee of salvation. The term *prapatti/samāśrayaṇa* was particularly useful for generating and encompassing this amplitude of meaning in the theological literature because it could be interpreted both as a resorting to or passive surrender to a higher knowledge just as much as a participation in and active surrender to God through the utterance of a *mantra* during the course of a ritual of surrender—making it both a ritual and non-ritual in Śrīvaiṣṇavism.

The previous sections have shown, though, that at some point in the historical evolution of Śrīvaiṣṇavism, the term *samāśrayaṇa* came to almost exclusively be understood as the *pañcasamskāra* ceremony, which is very clearly a ritual. Thus, in effect, both schools of Śrīvaiṣṇavism would appear, at first

glance, to be recommending a ritualized surrender to God. The implication of such a development is that a major theological dispute between the two schools is not reflected in their ritual literature, such as the *Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmaśāstra* or in their contemporary ritual practice. This, it turns out, is not so, as the final part of the Kāñcīpuram ceremony showed.

The Tenkalai *samāśrayaṇa*

Once the main part of the *pañcasamskāra* ceremony finished in Kāñcīpuram Rajahamsa Chariyar turned to me and said, “It is from now that the difference between those who are Vaṭakalais and those who are Tenkalais emerges. That is, they [Vaṭakalais] have the tradition (*sampradāya*) that one should do this thing called *prapatti* separately. But [the view of the Tenkalais is that] one should perform that which is *prapatti* during the *yāgasamskāra* itself, that it does not have a separate time, for it is only when one requests the deity of the sacrifice (*yāgadevatā*) to come by saying, ‘You please come’, by doing *prapatti*, will it come. Hence, it is the tradition of the Tenkalais to do *prapatti* here itself and not separately, while it is the tradition of the Vaṭakalais that one should do it separately. This *prapatti* will now take place”.

Having said this, he went to the shrine in his house. The initiate and her husband faced him, standing next to the door of the shrine on one side and Rajahamsa Chariyar’s wife instructed both of them to prostrate in front of the shrine and remain in that position till they were instructed to get up. Rajahamsa Chariyar entered the shrine and began to recite the *Śaraṇāgatigadya*, the devotional hymn attributed to Rāmānuja with folded hands.⁵⁷ After completing a shortened version of it he turned to the initiate and her husband and made them recite after him Yāmunācārya’s *Stotraratna* verse 22,⁵⁸ Tirumaṅkai Ālvār’s *Periyatirumoḷi* 1. 9.7⁵⁹ and finally Nammālvār’s *Tiruvāymoḷi* VI. 10.10,⁶⁰ all of which verses deal with a situation where the poet acknowledges his own sinfulness and

57 On the authorship of the *Śaraṇāgatigadya* and its significance for Śrīvaiṣṇava ideology see Raman (2004)

58 *Stotraratna* V: 22: *na dharmaniṣṭho ’smi na ca ātmavedī na bhaktimāms tava caraṇāra-vinde | ākiñcanyo ’nanyagatiḥ śaraṇya tvatpādamūlaṃ śaraṇaṃ prapadye ||*

59 *Periyatirumoḷi* I: 9.7: *katiyēyillai niṇṇaruḷallatu eṇaku | nitiyē tirunīrmalai nītilattottē | patiyē paravittoḷum toṇṇar tamakkuk | katiyē unṇaiikkaṇṇukoṇṇu uyntoḷintēnē.*

60 *Tiruvāymoḷi* VI: 10.10: *akalakillēṅ iraiyūm eṇru alarmēlmaṅkai uṇaimārpā | nikaril puka-lāy ulakammūṇruṭayāy eṇṇayālvānē | nikarilamararmuṇikaṇaṅkaḷ virumpum tiruvēṅkaṭa-ttānē | pukaloṇṇrillā āṭiyēṇ uṇ āṭikīḷ amarntu pukuntēnē.*

requests God's grace by surrendering himself to him. This small rite finally concluded the Teṅkalai *pañcasamskāra* ceremony.

In order to understand what exactly had happened in this last section of the performance of the Teṅkalai *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony one would have to reflect on Ramanuja Chariyar's words. He, in effect, stated that the Vaṭakalais believe in doing *prapatti* as a separate ritual but the Teṅkalais don't since they consider it an essential part of the *pañcasamskāra* ritual or more precisely, as the *yāgasamskāra*. In giving his explanation Rajahamsa Chariyar was taking it for granted that I was conversant with the theological dispute about *prapatti/samāśrayaṇa*, which indeed I was. Further, he was proposing that the theology of *prapatti* held by the Teṅkalais and the differing theology of the Vaṭakalais had, in turn, influenced the *pañcasamskāra* initiation ritual of both groups, by altering the manner in which each group performed the last section of the ritual. It was not possible for me to discuss with him after the ceremony how he would justify, from the Teṅkalai point of view, the theology of *prapatti/samāśrayaṇa* as cognition with its performance as ritual within the *pañcasamskāra* ceremony. But it seems to me that there is one possible answer: that is, as long as the Teṅkalai ritual tradition did not accept *prapatti* as a separate ritual in itself but absolved it as a sub-rite of another main ritual (in this case the *pañcasamskāra*) it need not be considered a ritual. In contrast, according to Rajahamsa Chariyar's explanation, the Vaṭakalai ritual tradition adopted the stance that an explicit ritual of *prapatti* and not just of *samāśrayaṇa/pañcasamskāra* needs to be done. This observation of Rajahamsa Chariyar's was also confirmed, if only negatively, by the fact that the terminus *prapatti* was never once uttered during the Chennai ceremony but only *samāśrayaṇa*. Hence, in contemporary ritual practice which I witnessed the Teṅkalais do a *samāśrayaṇa/pañcasamskāra* ceremony which incorporates *prapatti*, while the Vaṭakalais do a separate *samāśrayaṇa/pañcasamskāra* ceremony and a separate *prapatti* ceremony. In both cases, the two schools seem to have consciously restructured a fundamental ritual which bestows Śrīvaiṣṇava identity upon members of their community in such a way as to result in differently practiced *samāśrayaṇa* ceremonies.

In their observations on the issue of how theological texts relate to actual ritual performance (observations quoted in the preface to this volume) Humphrey & Laidlaw (1994: 199) have discouraged the view that there might be a correlation between the two, citing Christopher Fuller's study of the consecration rituals of the priests of the Mīnākṣī temple in Madurai as further evidence for their views. Often a priestly citation of Āgamic sources as the basis for their ritual practice proves to be highly misleading. "The accepted idea that they [such

sources] are authoritative can well go along with almost universal ignorance about their content” (ibid.: 200).

The Tenkalai *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony could, at one level, be seen as validating this view. Certainly, from the perspective of the initiate the Tenkalai ceremony, its significance and its possible theological underpinnings would seem not to matter and it would be radically underprescribed, her observance of it largely being a matter of a family tradition which she too chooses to faithfully uphold. Yet, the other main participant or performer of the ritual, Rajahamsa Chariyar was only too aware of its significance and the manner in which it is differently “inflected”⁶¹ from the Vaṭakalai ceremony. In other words, it can be argued that, in the case of the Śrīvaiṣṇava *samāśrayaṇa* ceremony we appear to have a ritual which is considered so crucial to the establishment of the respective, specific, sectarian religious identity that its interpretation is still kept within the control of the religious and theological experts of the community. Hence, in its case, theological exegesis has continued to inform ritual performance and moulded it to the extent that one nowadays entering the Śrīvaiṣṇava community enters it through a ritual by which one is marked as either a Tenkalai or a Vaṭakalai Vaiṣṇava, at the very moment of initiation.

References

- Bühnemann, Gudrun 1988. *Pūjā. A Study of Smārta Ritual*. Vienna.
- Entwistle, A.W. 1981–82. *Vaiṣṇava Tilakas. Sectarian Marks Worn by Worshipers of Viṣṇu*. IAVRI Bulletin XI & XII. London.
- Humphrey, Caroline & James Laidlaw. 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford.
- Jagadeesan, N. 1977. *History of Sri Vaishnavism in the Tamil Country: Post-Rāmānuja*. Madurai.
- Kane, Pandurang Vaman ²1974. *History of Dharmasāstra*. Vol. 2. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Mumme, P. 1988. *The Śrīvaiṣṇava Theological Dispute: Maṇavālamūni and Vedānta Deśika*. Madras.
- Olivelle, Patrick. 1995. *Rules and Regulations of Brahmanical Asceticism*. Albany.
- Parāśaraviśiṣṭāparamadharmasāstra*. Not dated. In: *Śrī Viṣṇucittavijayam*. Tiruchi.
- Raman, Srilata 2004. “Soteriology in the Writings of Rāmānuja: *Bhakti* and/or *Prappatti*?” In: *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 154.1: 85–130.

61 I am indebted to Alexis Sanderson’s insightful use of this term in his studies on Tantric ritual.

- Raman, Srilata forthc. a. *Tamil Cats and Sanskrit Monkeys? Surrender to God (Prapatti) in Śrīvaiṣṇavism*. Under review for publication with Routledge/Curzon.
- Raman, Srilata forthc. b. "Pāñcasaṃskāra as Historical Practice in the Śrīvaiṣṇava Hagiographical Literature". In: *The Relationship between Viśiṣṭādvaita and Pāñcarātra*, Gerhard Oberhammer & Marion Rastelli (ed.). Vienna.
- Rangachari, K. 1986. *The Sri Vaishnava Brahmins*. Madras: Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum.
- Sanderson, Alexis 1995. "Meaning in Tantric Ritual". In: *Essais sur le rituel III*, Blondeau, Anne-Marie & Kristofer Schiper (ed.). Louvain-Paris: Peeters, 10-95.
- Smith, Daniel. 1978. *The Smith Āgama Collection: Sanskrit Books and Manuscripts Relating to Pāñcarātra Studies. A Descriptive Catalogue*. Syracuse.

MARION RASTELLI

Unaltered Ritual in Transformed Religion.
The *pūjā* According to *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28
and the *Nityagrantha*¹

In their study on the Jaina *pūjā*, Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw have shown that ritual acts have no meaning that is intrinsic to them (Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: esp. 5, 35, 41). There is no immediate correlation between the external appearance of a ritual and the meaning that is attributed to it. From the observation of a ritual action one cannot infer the meaning being ascribed to it by its performer.

Meaning can only be given to rituals by their performers.² The field study of Humphrey and Laidlaw has shown that the meaning attributed to one and the same ritual act by various worshippers can vary to a great degree.³ The same is true for the performer's intention or the object she or he pursues with a ritual, as the pursued object is often related to the meaning attributed to it. The form or identity of a ritual does not depend on the performer's aspirations. This is what Humphrey and Laidlaw call the non-intentionality of ritual (ibid.: 89).

If the meanings attributed to a ritual and the intentions being pursued are independent from the outer form of the ritual, the meanings and the performer's intentions can change without transforming the ritual itself. In addition, not only the meanings and intentions can change, but also all the underlying assumptions such as, in the case of a religious ritual, theological teachings or the concept of

1 I am grateful to Ute Hüskén and Srilata Raman for valuable suggestions and comments. I would also like to thank Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek for suggesting various stylistic corrections to the English manuscript.

2 Here, "performer" signifies any person who acts in a ritual, be it through his/her mere presence. By "ritual" I mean physical ritual activity. Of course, authors of texts who do not actually perform a ritual may also attribute meanings to it, as we will see in the texts examined below. However, a concrete physical ritual has this meaning only if its performer, having drawn it from the text, attributes it to his/her act (for this cf. also Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: 191–210).

3 Cf. the meanings ascribed to the *puṣpapūjā*, ibid.: 34f.

God. I will exemplify this thesis by means of the *pūjā* described in *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28 and the *Nityagrantha*.

The *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* belongs to the Pāñcarātra tradition. We can date it chronologically but not absolutely. It is partly based on the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* and the *Sātvatasāṃhitā* and also mentions their names (cf. Matsubara 1994: 25), and therefore was certainly written after these texts, which are, in addition to the *Paṅṣkarasaṃhitā*, the oldest Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās. It probably also postdates the *Paramasaṃhitā*.⁴ The *Pādmasaṃhitā* and the *Pārameśvarasaṃhitā* are partly based on the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* and were therefore definitely written later.⁵ The earliest absolutely datable text that quotes the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* is the *Prapannaparijāta* of Vātsya Varadaguru, who was probably born between 1190–1200.⁶ It may be also noted that with regard to its contents, the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* shows the influence of several other traditions, as for example Kashmirian Śaivism⁷ and Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta.⁸

The *Nityagrantha* is traditionally ascribed to Rāmānuja. Although it is disputed whether he really authored this work (cf. Carman 1974: 18–22, 63f, and 298–300), I won't deal with this question here, since in our context it is not of importance. Crucial to us is that the *Nityagrantha* is an authority for the school of Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta and highly valued by this tradition.⁹

The *Nityagrantha* is a description of the daily *pūjā* from the morning bath through to the proper worship of God. Its text is based on that of *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*.

-
- 4 The use of the *pañcopaniṣanmantras* for the reestablishment of the worshipper's body after the purification of the elements (*bhūtaśuddhi*) in *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.27ab probably originates from the *Paramasaṃhitā*, which teaches the concept of a subtle body of God consisting of the *pañcopaniṣats* (*Paramasaṃhitā* 2.29–34; cf. also Oberhammer 2000: 94f). Matsubara's (1994: 26) opinion that the *Paramasaṃhitā* is later than the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*, based on the assumption that the more frequent use of the terms *bhāgavata* and *vaiṣṇava* in the *Paramasaṃhitā* are an indication of this, does not convince me.
- 5 See e.g. *Pādmasaṃhitā yogapāda* 2.12–13b (probably based on *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 32.22); *Pārameśvarasaṃhitā* 23.2c–3b (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 25.14c–15b), 53ab (ibid. 26.16ab), 85cd (ibid. 26.53ab), 87 (ibid. 26.54).
- 6 *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 37.30c–31 is quoted in *Prapannaparijāta* 2.27. Varadaguru does not explicitly say that this quotation comes from the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*, but Veṅkaṭanātha also quotes this passage and ascribes it to the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* (*Stotraratanabhāṣya* 76,3–5). For the dates of Vātsya Varadaguru cf. Stark 1990: 24f.
- 7 Cf. Schrader 1916: 90, 115, Sferra 1994: 61–64, and Torella 1998: 81.
- 8 Hints are, for e.g., the mention of “pure *sattva*” in *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 3.13c and 41.16d (for the concept of *śuddhasattva* cf. Nayar 1992: 110, 161 and Oberhammer 2000: 74ff) and the formula of *śaraṅāgati* (cf. ibid.: 126).
- 9 Cf. the references to the *Nityagrantha* in Veṅkaṭanātha's *Pāñcarātrarakṣā* (55,15f; 56,3; 57,14ff; etc.).

saṃhitā 28. It follows this chapter of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* very closely and in large passages the words are the same, with the exception of some insertions that show that the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* is the source of the *Nityagrantha* and not vice versa.

There are only a few formal differences between the two texts. The *Nityagrantha* is written in prose, its source, as the other *Saṃhitās*, is in *ślokas*. The *Nityagrantha* sometimes describes the prescribed ritual acts in greater detail than the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*, and it adds passages that inform us about the mental attitude to be aspired to by the worshipper, and about the theology and cosmology that form the ritual background of worship as performed by a follower of the Rāmānuja school.

I would first like to give an analysis of both texts and a short description of the ritual prescribed by them, and then show the differing backgrounds of the ritual that, externally, is performed in an identical way. According to the ritual structure, the texts can be divided into the following units (the parallel wording of the two texts can be seen in the appendix of this paper).

<i>Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā</i>	<i>Nityagrantha</i>	Contents	remarks ¹⁰
1ab	181,4	announcement of the content of the texts	e
1c–2	181,5–7	AS: purpose of worship; NG: <i>anusamādhāna</i> of the worshipper	d
3–9	181,7–21	morning bath, <i>sandhyā</i>	l
10abc	181,21– 182,1	going to the sacrificial place (<i>yāgabhūmi</i>), washing of hands and feet, sipping water	l
10d–20b	182,1–6	AS: description of the sacrificial place; NG: taking refuge (<i>śaraṅāgati</i>), meditation on God	d
20c–21b	182,7–10	AS: declaration of worship; NG: <i>anusamādhāna</i>	e
21c–26	182,10–17	purification of the elements (<i>bhūtaśuddhi</i>)	l
27abc	182,17–21	placing of <i>mantras</i> on the body (<i>dehanyāsa</i>)	l
27d–28b	182,22–23	AS: invitation of Sudarśana to the heart; NG: sprinkling of oneself with nectar from the big toe of God's left foot	d
28c	182,23	beginning of worship	l

10 e = equivalent with regard to contents; l = in great parts literally the same; d = different with regard to contents; l = insertion.

28d	182,24	AS: placing of <i>mantras</i> on the hands (<i>karanyāsa</i>); NG: contemplation that God causes the performance of worship	d
29ab	182,24	worship in the heart (<i>hṛdyāga</i>)	l
29c-37	182,24- 183,10	preparation and purification of the sacrificial substances	l
	183,11- 186,2	NG: visualization of the throne for worshipping God, of God Himself and of his retinue	i
	186,3-4	NG: mention of various places suitable for worship	i
	186,5-8	NG: renewed visualization of God; offering of oneself to Him; beginning of worship	i
38-41	186,9-15	offering of <i>arghya</i> , <i>pādya</i> , <i>ācamānīya</i> , and other substances; offering of oneself (<i>ātmanivedana</i>) to God on the <i>mantra</i> -throne (<i>mantrāsana</i>)	l
42-51b	186,15-21	worship on the throne for bathing (<i>snānāsana</i>)	l
51c-61	186,22- 187,6	worship on the throne for adorning (<i>alaṃkārasana</i>)	l
62-69	187,6-15	worship on the throne for feeding (<i>bhojyāsana</i>)	l
70-73b	187,16-18	worship on the <i>mantra</i> -throne	l
73c-77b	187,18-25	worship on the bed (<i>paryaṅkāsa</i>)	l
77c-80b	187,25- 188,5	<i>śaraṅāgati</i> ¹¹	l
	188,6	NG: offering of <i>arghya</i> , conclusion of worship	i

The parallel daily ritual described in both texts¹² starts with the morning bath. The bath consists mainly of purification of the worshipper's body with physical and ritual means. On the one hand mud and water are used to cleanse the body, physically, and on the other hand, rituals such as the recitation of *mantras*, the sprinkling of water upon one's head, and the visualization of oneself being be-

11 *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.78c-79b = *Sātvatasāṃhitā* 6.187c-188b; *Nityagrantha* 188,1-4 = *Sātvatasāṃhitā* 6.187c-189b.

12 I give only the main features of the ritual here. For a translation and more detailed information about the ritual of the *Nityagrantha* cf. Esnoul 1972.

low God's feet, from which the river Gaṅgā emits, are performed (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.3–8b, *Nityagrantha* 181,7–16). Having finished the bath and got dressed, the worshipper offers libations to God and other divine beings (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.8c–9, *Nityagrantha* 181,16–21). This ritual is usually called *sandhyā*.¹³ The worshipper then goes to the sacrificial place (*yāgabhūmi*), prepares himself by washing his hands and feet and by sipping water, and then gives a declaration of his intention, that is, that he is now going to worship (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.10–21b, *Nityagrantha* 181,21–182,10). Then follows what is usually called “purification of the elements” (*bhūtaśuddhi*). This is a mental destruction and reconstruction of the elements that constitute the worshipper's body (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.21c–26, *Nityagrantha* 182,10–17). After the *bhūtaśuddhi* the worshipper prepares his body by placing *mantras* on it (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.27abc, *Nityagrantha* 182,17–21).

The first part of the actual worship is “worship in the heart” (*hr̥dyāga*). Here, the worship is mentally visualized and consists of the same parts as the ensuing physical worship (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.27d–29b, *Nityagrantha* 182,23f). Then the requisites and substances needed for external, i.e. physical, worship are prepared (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.29c–37, *Nityagrantha* 182,24–183,10).

Externally, God is worshipped in an idol on various thrones in succession. This form of external worship is widespread in the Pāñcarātra tradition. It is first described in the *Sātvatasamhitā*, which is possibly one of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*'s sources, and is also found in many later *Samhitās*.¹⁴ The first throne where God is worshipped is the so-called *mantra*-throne (*mantrāsana*), where special waters such as *arghya*, water used for washing the feet (*pādyā*) and water for sipping (*ācamāniyā*) are offered to God, as well as perfumes, flowers, etc. (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.38–41, *Nityagrantha* 186,9–15). Then follows the throne for bathing (*snānapīṭha*, *snānārtham āsana*), where God is cleaned and bathed (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.42–51b, *Nityagrantha* 186,15–21). He is decorated with various embellishments (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.51c–61, *Nityagrantha* 186,22–187,6) on the throne for adorning (*alaṅkārasana*). Food is given to Him (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.62–69, *Nityagrantha* 187,6–15) on the throne for feeding (*bhojyāsana*). Then God is again worshipped on the *mantrāsana* (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.70–73b, *Nityagrantha* 187,16–18), and finally He is led to the *paryāṅkāsa*, His bed, where His worship is concluded, following which He is

13 For a description of the various parts of the *sandhyā* cf. Kane 1974 vol. 2: 312–321.

14 *Sātvatasamhitā* 6.23–75c, *Pādmāsamhitā caryāpāda* 3.116–179, *Lakṣmītantra* 39.3c–32, *Viśvāmītrasamhitā* 10.136–183b. For a description of the various *āsanas* see *Pādmāsamhitā kriyāpāda* 23.53ff.

put to sleep (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.73c–77b, *Nityagrantha* 187,18–25). The ritual is closed with the taking refuge (*śaraṅgati*) with God (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.77c–80b, *Nityagrantha* 187,25–188,5).

This is the ritual as prescribed in both the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* and the *Nityagrantha*. Externally it is almost identical, and an observer of a follower of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* and a follower of the *Nityagrantha* would hardly recognize a difference between the performance of their rituals. However, there are essential differences between them. These are (1) different purposes of worship, (2) different views of God and the relationship between God and His devotee, and (3) different cosmologies. I will now go into these three main differences in detail.

The beginning of *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28 states clearly why worship of God should be performed. Its first two *śloka*s are: “I shall briefly explain the prescription for worship, o Nārada, which bestows a long life, health, victory, land, money and grain, which is the best means for [fulfilling the] respective [wishes] of those who long for sons, cattle, and food, [and] which gives enjoyment and emancipation, appeases [and] effects the subjugation of enemies”.¹⁵ Here the purpose of worship is the fulfilment of various wishes. These wishes are mainly worldly-minded and, without exception, in the worshipper’s self-interest. The primary aim of worship here is not to please God, but, rather, worship is a means to obtain various goals.¹⁶ This attitude is characteristic of Tantric traditions.¹⁷

The *Nityagrantha* does not give explicit goals of worship as the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* does, but there are nevertheless several hints as to its purpose. In its opening section, it gives as a precondition for the performance of worship that

15 *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.1–2: *ārādhanaividhiṃ vakṣye samāsenaiiva nārada | āyurārogyavijayabhūpradaṃ dhanadhānyadam || 1 putrapaśvannakāmānāṃ tattatsādhanam uttamam | bhuktimuktupradam śāntam parābhibhavakāraṇam || 2.*

16 Cf. also the concluding passage of *ibid.* 28: “One who worships for only one day in this way, Nārada, has emancipation in [his] hands, and how much more so, [the fulfilment of] all [his] wishes. All regents of the [eight] directions of the world and troops of deities, all Siddhas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Nāgas, and the troops of Apsaras are subdued through it, [and] how much more so, the human beings on earth. Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśācas, Kūśmāṇḍas, and the removers [of obstacles] will be the servants of this noble *sādḥaka*” (*ibid.* 28.81c–84: *samārādhayatas tv evam ekāham api nārada || 81 muktiḥ kare sthitā tasya sarve kāmās ca kiṃ punaḥ | anena lokapālās ca sarve devagaṇās tathā || 82 siddhagandharvayakṣās ca nāgās cāpsarasāṃ gaṇāḥ | sarve vaśyā bhavantiḥa kiṃ punar bhuvi mānavāḥ || 83 bhūtapretapiśācās ca kūśmāṇḍās ca vināyakāḥ | preṣyās tasya bhaviṣyanti sādḥakasya mahātmanaḥ || 84).*

17 Cf. e.g. the description of the *sādḥaka*’s practice, through which everything can be attained, according to the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* as discussed in Rastelli 2000.

one should “become one whose only pleasure is the service of the Venerable (*bhagavatkañkaryaikarati*), whose only aim is the Highest [God] (*paramaikāntin*)”.¹⁸ From this description we see that the worshipper has only one pleasure and thus, only one desire, the service (*kaiṃkarya*) of God. Thus, his worship has, as it the *Nityagrantha* describes it, “the form of perfect service that is caused by the unmeasurable joy engendered by the experience of God”.¹⁹ This means that after having experienced God, the worshipper feels an unmeasurable joy that causes him to render service to God.²⁰

The worship’s purpose as being service (*kaiṃkarya*) characterizes the text of the *Nityagrantha* throughout, and thus is specifically expressed several times in the course of the ritual. During his acts of offering the worshipper is humble and filled with fear as is proper for a servant.²¹ The purification of the elements (*bhūtaśuddhi*), which according to the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* consists of three parts, namely the drying, burning, and re-creation of the body (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.21c–26), is supplemented by a fourth part in the *Nityagrantha*. This fourth part is the placement of one’s *ātman* under the big toe of Viṣṇu’s right foot through which the suitability for being a servant of God (*bhagavatkañkaratvayogyatā*) is attained by His grace.²² According to the *Nityagrantha*, the result of the complete process of purifying the elements is a nectar-made body that is attractive and suitable for the entire service (*sarvakaiṃkaryamanohara*, *sarvakaiṃkaryayogyā*) of God (*Nityagrantha* 182,17). This is in accordance with the *bhūtaśuddhi*’s usual purpose, the attainment of fitness for worship, but fit-

18 *Nityagrantha* 181,5: *bhagavatkañkaryaikaratiḥ paramaikāntī bhūtvā*.

19 See *ibid.* 182,5f: *tatas tadanubhavajanitātimātraprītikāritaparipūrṇakaiṃkaryarūpapūjām ārabheta*.

20 For an understanding of the compound *tadanubhavajanitātimātraprītikāritaparipūrṇakaiṃkarya* cf. Veṅkaṭanātha’s commentaries on *Śrīraṅgagadya* 1 (*Gadyatrayabhāṣya* 181,15–21) and *Śaraṅgagatiḡadya* 2 (*Gadyatrayabhāṣya* 138,10–20) which include similar compounds. Pleasure is also felt during worship itself, as shown by the description of the worshipper as “having bowed the head, the eyes opened wide in rapture, and rejoicing in the mind” (*Nityagrantha* 187,8: *avanataśirā harṣotphullanayano hr̥ṣṭamanā*) shows.

21 *Nityagrantha* 187,13f: “[Thinking] ‘accept this, which is exceedingly numerous, complete, dearest, and which endlessly causes *bhakti*’, he should make the offering while prostrating and bowing down on account of his exceeding fear and modesty” (*atiprabhūtam atisamagram atipriyatam atyantabhaktikṛtam idaṃ svīkurv iti prañāmapūrvakam atyantasādhasavinayāvanato bhūtvā nivedayet*).

22 Cf. *ibid.* 182,13–15: “He should lead his *ātman* to the big toe of the Venerable’s right foot by means of the *mūlamantra*. Having obtained the suitability for the service of the Venerable through the Venerable’s grace by means of another breath exercise [...]” (*bhagavaddakṣiṇapādāṅguṣṭhe mūlamantreṇa svātmānaṃ praveśayet. apareṇa prañāyāmena bhagavatprasādena bhagavatkañkaratvayogyatām āpādyā [...]*).

ness is defined in a way that is characteristic of the *Nityagrantha's* main goal of worship.²³

The worshipper's final aim is eternal service (*nityakimkaratva*) to God, that is, being eternally His servant in the divine world *Vaikuṅṭha*. The offering of oneself (*ātmanivedana*), which is performed in addition to the offering of other gifts to God,²⁴ is made with the aim of becoming an eternal servant of God. This is expressed by saying: "O Venerable, accept [me] for eternal service".²⁵ In the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* the worshipper also offers himself as a servant to God,²⁶ but the concept of eternal service is not as emphasized.²⁷

With the worshipper's aim of serving God, we have already arrived at the second point, the relationship between God and His devotee. According to the *Nityagrantha*, the worshipper, being God's servant, does not operate actively and self-consciously, but is dependent upon God in his acts. The real agent is God and not the worshipper. God causes the devotee to worship Him. He uses the devotee as an instrument for pleasing Himself, just as the things that are offered to Him are. This is realized by the devotee through his use of a reflection (*anusamdhāna*) at the beginning of various ritual acts, namely, at the worship's actual beginning in the morning, before the purification of the elements (*bhūtaśuddhi*), and before the mental worship, and then at the end of the *pūjā*. At these four points, the formulations of this reflection are very similar. At the outset of worship the devotee should think: "The Venerable alone sets about having Himself and [His] whole retinue and attendants pleased by my self, who is His *śeṣa*, through his most auspicious objects of enjoyment that are honorific, are related

23 The *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* does not say anything about the result of the *bhūtaśuddhi*, but in other *Samhitās* it is usually the fitness for worship; see e.g. *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* 10.16c–17b.

24 This is common in the *Pāñcarātra Samhitās*; cf. e.g. *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.41d, 59cd, *Sātvatasamhitā* 6.24c–25b, *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* 12.73c–74b, *Pāḍmasamhitā caryāpāda* 3.137c–139.

25 *Nityagrantha* 186,15: *bhagavan nityakimkaratvāya svīkuru*. Cf. also *Nityagrantha* 187,5: "having offered [his] *ātman* on account of eternal service" (*ātmānaṃ nityakimkaratayā nivedya*).

26 Cf. *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.59cd: "He should offer himself to the Venerable for the purpose of service" (*svam ātmānaṃ bhagavate kimkaratvāya vedayet ||*) and 80b: "And accept me for service" (*dāsyena ca grhāṇa mām*).

27 The concept of eternal service is not unknown to the authors of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*. In *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 44.16cd, *Sudarśana* is described as the "eternal servant of the Venerable, who dwells in the highest heaven" (*paramavyomanilayo bhagavannityakimkaraḥ ||*).

to touch, and consist of food”.²⁸ Before the *bhūtaśuddhi* he thinks: “The Venerable alone sets about offering Himself all the exceedingly numerous, complete, dearest, and endlessly *bhakti*-causing objects of enjoyment that are honorific, are related to touch, and consist of food, etc., which are made of His most auspicious substances, to Himself and [His] whole retinue and attendants for His pleasure by means of this *ātman*, whose only flavour is being His *śeṣa*, whose essential nature, existence, and activity are under His control, and by means of His body, sense organs and internal organ”.²⁹ Before mental worship he thinks simply: “The Venerable alone causes all things to be made”.³⁰ At the end of worship, analogously to the thought at the beginning of the purification of the elements he thinks: “The Venerable alone has offered Himself all exceedingly numerous, complete, dearest, and endlessly *bhakti*-causing objects of enjoyment

28 *Nityagrantha* 181,5f: *bhagavān eva svaśeṣabhūtena mayā svakīyaś ca kalyānatamair aupacārikasāṃsparśikābhya vahārikair bhogair akhilaparījanaparicchadānviṭam svātmānam prītam kārayitum upakramate*. *Aupacārika*, *sāṃsparśika* and *ābhyavahārika* are three categories of objects of enjoyment (*bhoga*). The *Lakṣmītantra*, which differentiates four categories of *bhogas*, defines *sāṃsparśika* as follows: “Objects of enjoyment, which are gentle, pleasing, and soft to the touch, such as water used for washing the feet, *arghya*, and the throne, [all these] that satisfy the Unborn with touch are *sāṃsparśikas*” (*Lakṣmītantra* 36.89c–90b: *sukhā ramyā mṛdusparśāḥ sparśair ye tarpayanty aḥam || bhogāḥ sāṃsparśikās te syuḥ pādyaṅghyāsana pūrvakāḥ |*) and *ābhyavahārika* as follows: “Auspicious objects of enjoyment that continually satisfy [God] with [their] taste such as *prāpaṇa* (i.e., various food articles; cf. Gupta 1972: 246 n. 1), water for the [ritual] sipping, etc., are *ābhyavahārikas*” (*Lakṣmītantra* 36.88c–89b: *bhogāḥ śubhakarāḥ śaśvat tarpayanti rasair hi ye || prāpaṇācamaniyādyās te syuḥ ābhyavahārikāḥ |*). The other two categories according to the *Lakṣmītantra* are *sāṃdr̥ṣṭika*, *bhogas* that please with their sight such as lamps, and *ābhimānika*, *bhogas* that consist of smells of cooked food, of sound such as praises (*stuti*) and music, and of humility, *añjalis*, etc. (*Lakṣmītantra* 36.87cd and 91–92b). The *Lakṣmītantra* does not mention *aupacārika bhogas*. Alāśiṅga Bhaṭṭa, while commenting on the word *aupacārikabhoga* in *Sātvatasamhitā* 6.61c, explains that *aupacārika* means the *sāṃdr̥ṣṭika* and the *ābhimānika bhogas*, which he bases on the passage of the *Lakṣmītantra* mentioned above (*Sātvatasamhitābhāṣya* 80,17–81,10). However, these are later interpretations that can not be applied to the *Nityagrantha* with certainty. *Nityagrantha* 182,8 gives *aupacārikasāṃsparśikābhya vahārikādi*; thus the three categories are simply chosen from a group of several.

29 *Ibid.* 182,7–9: *bhagavān eva svanīyāmyasvarūpasthitipravṛttisvaśeṣataikaraseṇānenātmānā svakīyaś ca dehendriyāntahkaraṇaiḥ svakīyakalyānatamadravayamayān aupacārikasāṃsparśikābhya vahārikādisamastabhogān atiprabhūtān atisamagrān atipriyatamān atyantabhaktikṛtān akhilaparījanaparicchadānviṭāya svasmai svaprītaye svayam eva pratipādāyitum upakramate*. Here is meant the body, etc., of the worshipper, which is the body, etc., of God in the actual sense.

30 *Ibid.* 182,24: *bhagavān eva sarvaṃ kārayati*.

that are honorific, are related to touch, and consist of food, etc., which are made of His most auspicious substances, to Himself and [His] whole retinue and attendants for His pleasure by means of this *ātman*, whose only flavour is being His *śeṣa*, whose essential nature, existence, and activity are under His control, and by means of His body, sense organs and internal organ”.³¹

Through these repeated reflections the worshipper does not consider himself the agent of his worship, but an instrument through which God pleases Himself. This view is emphasized by his seeing himself as a *śeṣa* of God. The relationship between God and the individual soul, or between God and the world as that of a *śeṣin* and a *śeṣa* is one of the crucial teachings of Rāmānuja. *Śeṣa* literally means “remnant”, and a *śeṣin* is one who possesses remnants and is therefore the “principal element”, as expressed by Carman. Rāmānuja exemplifies the relationship between *śeṣin* and *śeṣa* as that of a master and his servant, and thus we can see the idea of the relationship between God and the worshipper: the latter is subservient and completely dependent on the former.³²

The reflections (*anusamdhāna*) at the beginning of ritual acts are functionally equivalent to the declaration (*saṃkalpa*) of one’s intention, usually made at the beginning of any worship. This declaration typically consists of a phrase such as “I perform worship” (cf. Bühnemann 1988: 113–115). In the *Nityagrantha*, this “declaration” assumes another form on account of the given theological background. The declaration of the worshipper according to the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* is quite different: “He should say: ‘I, belonging to you, worship God with [objects of enjoyment] that are honorific, are related to touch, and consist of food, which have been given [to me] by you’”.³³ Here the worshipper is the active agent. God is not causing him to act. However, one must admit that also here a dependence on God is emphasized: the worshipper is God’s property (cf. *tvadīya*), and the substances used for worship have been given by God, that is, they are also His property. Although it is true that this emphasis of the worshipper’s dependence on God is not as strong as in the *Nityagrantha*, it nevertheless reveals a way of thinking that is quite different from that of the authors of other

31 Ibid. 187,20–23: *bhagavān eva svaniyāmyasvarūpasthitipravṛttisvaśeṣataikaraseṇānenā-tmanā svakīyaś ca dehendriyāntaḥkaraṇaiḥ svakīyakalyāṇatamadṛavyamayān aupacāri-kaśāṃsparśikābhyavahārikādisamastabhogān atiprabhūtān atisamagrān atipriyatamān atyantabhaktikṛtān akhilaparijanaparicchadān vitāya svasmai svaprītaye svayam eva pratipāditavān.*

32 For Rāmānuja’s teachings on the *śeṣa-śeṣin* relationship see Carman 1974: 147–157; for its effects on the attitude of worship esp. 154–156.

33 *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.20c–21b: *arcayāmi tvadīyo ’haṃ tvaddattair aupacārikaiḥ || 20 sām̐sparśikair iti brūyād devam ābhyavahārikaiḥ |*

Samhitās in which the worshipper is the agent without reservation.³⁴ This manner of thought represents perhaps a middle way between the self-confident *sādhaka* of the Samhitās and the humble worshipper who is dependent on God in his whole nature and every activity in the *Nityagrantha*.

In addition to the reflections just described, there is another ritual means for realizing one's inferiority with respect to God. This is the taking refuge (*śaraṇāgati*), which, according to the *Nityagrantha*, is performed at the beginning and at the end of worship, and according to the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* only at the worship's end. In the *Nityagrantha*, the *śaraṇāgati* is preceded by a reflection (*anusamdhāna*) on God as the final aim that should be reached (*prāpya*) and as the one who is leading (*prāpaka*) to that aim, as the one who keeps off the undesirable and leads to the desirable, and as the "expansion of essential nature, form, attributes, [eternal] realm, and instruments of sport as it is in reality" (*yathāvasthitasvarūparūpaguṇavibhūtililopakaraṇavistāra*).³⁵ The taking refuge itself is performed by reciting a formula given in the *Śaraṇāgatigadya*, which is a declaration of this act.³⁶ The aim of this ritual is the evocation of the grace of God, by which the activity of the worshipper's mind is strengthened.³⁷ This is a necessary prerequisite for worship, as worship consists to a great extent of mental visualizations and reflections.

According to the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*, the *śaraṇāgati* is performed only at the end of worship. Its formula is given in *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 37: "O Venerable, Conqueror of all, Thousand-spoked One, Unsurpassed One, I take refuge with you, who gives good fortune, the Venerable Sudarśana".³⁸ By this taking of refuge in Sudarśana, Viṣṇu's discus-shaped aspect who is the deity worshipped

34 Cf. e.g. *Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 3.133cd: "Now I devotedly worship You with objects of enjoyment such as *arghya*, etc., in the correct order" (*tvam bhaktyā pūjāyāmy adya bhogair arghyādibhiḥ kramāt* ||).

35 See *Nityagrantha* 182,2f: *tam eva prāpyatvena prāpakatvenāniṣṭānīvarakatveneṣṭaprāpakatvena ca yathāvasthitasvarūparūpaguṇavibhūtililopakaraṇavistāram anusandhāya*. Also in *Śaraṇāgatigadya* 17 God is called *yathāvasthita(mat)svarūparūpaguṇavibhūtililopakaraṇavistāra*; cf. for this term Carman 1974: 143 and *Gadyatrayabhāṣya* 171,16–18.

36 *Nityagrantha* 182,3: "He should take refuge only with Him by means [of the words] *akhila* etc." (*tam eva śaraṇam upagacched akhiletyādinā*). The formula for taking refuge consists of a series of invocations of God using his different names and the phrase: "having no other refuge, I want to take refuge with your pair of lotus-feet" (*Śaraṇāgatigadya* 5: [...] *ananyaśaraṇas tvatpādāravindayugalam śaraṇam aham prapadye*.).

37 Cf. *Nityagrantha* 182,4: *evam śaraṇam upagamyā tatprasādopabṛṃhitamanovrttiḥ*.

38 *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 37.32: *bhagavan sarvavijayi sahasrārāparājita | śaraṇam tvam prapanno 'smi śrikaram śrīsudarśanam* ||

in *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28,³⁹ all sins are destroyed. Its effect is the same as that of all austerities (*tapas*), all visits to holy places (*tīrtha*), all sacrifices and donations, and through it final emancipation is attained.⁴⁰ Also here, we see the self-interested goals of worship that are characteristic of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*.

However, the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* teaches still another formula of taking refuge that is devoted to Viṣṇu Himself: “I am a receptacle of sins, worth nothing, without resort. You be my means.’ This prayer of request, which is called ‘taking refuge’ should be applied with regard to this God”.⁴¹ This formula shows an influence of the Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta on the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*. Its description of the worshipper as helpless without God and completely dependent upon Him is characteristic of the Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta’s way of thinking, rather than that of the Pāñcarātra tradition. The formula’s wording even leans partly on a Viśiṣṭādvaitic text, namely verse 22 of Yāmuna’s *Stotraratna*, which reads as follows: “I am not grounded on the *dharma*, I do not know the *ātman*, I am not devoted to your lotus-feet. I am worth nothing, without any other resort. O Yielder of Shelter, I take refuge with Your foot’s sole”.⁴² The close relation between this part of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* and the Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta is also shown by Veṅkaṭanātha, who quotes extensively from chapter 37 of the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*, it being an authority on *prapatti*, i.e., *śaraṅāgati*.⁴³ This and other traces of Viśiṣṭādvaitic teachings possibly are the reason why the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* was chosen to be the source of the *Nityagrantha*.

39 Cf. *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.27d.

40 Ibid. 37.33–35b: “All uninterrupted succession of sins of one who has taken refuge with the Venerable Sudarśana in this way are destroyed without doubt. Through it, O Best of Ascetics, all austerities are performed. Through it, all [visits of] holy places, all sacrifices, and all donations are performed immediately, and emancipation is in his hand without doubt” (*anenaiva prapannasya bhagavantam sudarśanam | tasyānubandhāḥ pāpmānaḥ sarve naśyanty asaṃśayam || 33 kṛtāny anena sarvāṇi tapāṃsi tapatām vara | sarve tīrthāḥ sarvayajñāḥ sarvadānāni ca kṣaṇāt || 34 kṛtāny anena mokṣaś ca tasya haste na saṃśayaḥ |*).

41 Ibid. 37.30c–31: *aham asmy aparādhānām ālayo 'kiṃcano 'gatiḥ || 30 tvam evopāyabhūto me bhaveti prārthanāmātiḥ | śaraṅāgatiḥ ity uktā sā deve 'smin prayujyatām || 31*.

42 *Stotraratna* 22: *na dharmaniṣṭho 'smi na cātmavedī na bhaktimāms tvaccaraṅāravinde | akiñcano 'nanyagatiḥ śaraṅya tvatpādamūlam śaraṅam prapadye ||*

43 *Stotraratnabhāṣya* ad *Stotraratna* 22, p. 76, 1–24. It is remarkable that Veṅkaṭanātha does not mention the *śaraṅāgati* formula devoted to Sudarśana, and he even quotes *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 37.33ab (*anenaiva prapannasya bhagavantam sudarśanam |*) in a different version (*Stotraratnabhāṣya* 76,5: *anenaivaṃ prapannasya bhagavantam sanātanam |*). Obviously, the more self-confident *śaraṅāgati* with Sudarśana does not suit the Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta’s way of thinking.

The third difference between the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* and the *Nityagrantha* is their cosmology. When the throne, which serves as God's seat during His worship, is mentally visualized at the beginning of worship, the respective tradition's conception of the structure of the world becomes visible. This throne usually consists of entities that, together, represent the totality of the universe. According to the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* it consists of the "supporting power" (*ādhāraśakti*), a tortoise (*kamaṭha*), the snake-king Ananta, the eight conditions of the *buddhi*, the four Vedas and the four *yugas*, a lotus, sun, moon, and fire, and the three *guṇas* of the primary matter *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* (*Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28.18). Compared to other older *Samhitās*, this form of the throne is a bit reduced,⁴⁴ but it corresponds more or less to the *āsanas* that are common in the *Pāñcarātra Samhitās*.

The throne described in the *Nityagrantha* reveals a cosmology that is different from that of the *Samhitās*. The base of the throne and thus of the world is also the "supporting power" (*ādhāraśakti*). However, above it are primary matter (*prakṛti*), a tortoise, the snake-king Ananta and the earth. On top of them the world of *Vaikuṅṭha* begins. It is described from larger to smaller units. The *Vaikuṅṭha*'s largest unit is *divyaloka*, the divine world. Then follow its divine people (*divyajana*), a divine town (*divyanagara*), a divine palace (*divyavimāna*), and a "pavilion-jewel" (*maṅṭaparātna*). God's proper throne is in this pavilion, and consists of Ananta, the eight conditions of the *buddhi*, again Ananta, a lotus, nine *śaktis*, a *yoga*-pedestal (*yogapīṭha*), a bed (*paryāṅka*), Ananta, and a footstool.⁴⁵ God is present here, together with His goddesses Śrī, Bhūmi, and Nīlā, and His other servants (*Nityagrantha* 183,11–186,2).

This conception of the world, and especially this topography of the heavenly world *Vaikuṅṭha*, seems to be, at least originally, a characteristic of the tradition of Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta. We find a similar description of *Vaikuṅṭha* in Rāmānuja's *Śrīvaikuṅṭhagadya*: "[...] in the glorious divine world (*divyaloke*) *Vaikuṅṭha*, which is the range of Brahmā's, etc., mind and speech [and] which is called highest space (*paramavyoman*), which is full of innumerable, eternally emancipated noble divine men (*divyapuruṣaiḥ*), whose nature and sovereignty is inconceivable even to Sanaka, Vidhi, Śiva, etc., [and] whose only pleasure is the favour of the Venerable, [*Vaikuṅṭha*], which can not be circumscribed as 'also these have such a size, such a sovereignty, such a nature';⁴⁶ within [which is] a

44 For the *āsanas* in the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* and the *Pauṣkarasaṃhitā* cf. Rastelli 1999: 73–80 and 2002: 10–17.

45 Cf. also the drawing of the throne in Esnoul 1972: 42.

very big, divine house (*divyāyatane*), which is encompassed by a hundred thousand divine enclosures, adorned by divine wishing trees [and] enclosed by a billion divine parks; within [which is] a divine hall of audience (*divyāsthāna-maṇḍape*) made of various divine jewels somewhere in it, adorned with a billion pillars made of divine jewels, decorated with *sthālas* made of various divine jewels, embellished with divine ornaments, [...]”.⁴⁷

Rāmānuja’s disciple Kūreśa describes a similar ambience in His *Sundarabāhustava*: “Remaining eternally [in Vaikuṅṭha] along with Lakṣmī, Bhū, and Nīlā inside the great jewelled *maṇḍapa* in the palace of bliss, [reclining] on the lord of serpents, and fit to be served only by His own countless, eternal, and divine attendants, Sundarabāhu is devoted to Vanādri!”.⁴⁸ Another disciple of Rāmānuja, Tirukkurukai Pirāṇ Piḷḷāṇ, describes Viṣṇu’s setting as: “he sits in Heaven (*Tirunāṭu*) under a great canopy of gems (*tirumāmāṇimaṇṭapam*) in a divine court filled with ‘never-tiring immortals’ and others who are his servants”.⁴⁹ Also in later texts belonging to the Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta, pictorial portrayals of God sitting in His *maṇḍapa* in Vaikuṅṭha can be found,⁵⁰ and even younger Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās incorporate this conception.⁵¹

46 This means that there is nothing that has a size, sovereignty, and nature that is as large as Vaikuṅṭha’s, and thus Vaikuṅṭha can not be described through a comparison with any other thing.

47 *Śrīvaikuṅṭhagadya* 179,2–6: [...] *paramavyomaśabdābhidheye brahmādīnām vānmanasā-gocare śrīmati vaikuṅṭhe divyaloke sanakavidhiśivādibhir apy acintyasvabhāvaiśvairyair nityasiddhair anantair bhagavadānukūlyaikabhogaiḥ divyapurūṣair mahātmabhir āpūrite teṣāṃ apīyatparimāṇam iyadaiśvaryam idr̥śasvabhāvam iti paricchettum ayogye divyāvaraṇaśatasahasrāvṛte divyakalpakatarūpaśobhite divyodyānaśatasahasrakoṭibhir āvṛte atipramāṇe divyāyatane kasmim̐ścid vicitradivyaratnamaye divyāsthānamāṇḍape divyaraṇastambhaśatasahasrakoṭibhir upaśobhite divyanānāratnakṛtasthalavicitrite divyālamkā-rāṅkṛte [...].*

48 *Sundarabāhustava* 79: *ānandamandīramahāmaṇimaṇṭapāntar lakṣmyā bhuvāpy ahipatau saha nīlayā ca | nissam̐khyanīyanījadivyaajākasevyo nityam vasan saṅgati sundarador vanādrau ||* (Translation by Nayar 1994: 107).

49 Quoted from the translation by Carman & Narayanan 1989: 276 n. 11.

50 Cf. the quotation of the *Viṣvakṣenasam̐hitā* (which is probably not identical with the edited version of the *Viṣvakṣenasam̐hitā*) in Venkaṭanātha’s *Stotraratnabhāṣya* 89,7–13 (Venkaṭanātha remarks that such a visualization was taught by Rāmānuja in his *Nityagrantha*: *evam eva dhyānam bhāṣyakārair nitye proktam [Stotraratnabhāṣya 89,13]*) and Śrīnivāsācārya’s description of Vaikuṅṭha in his *Yatīndramatadīpikā* 25,14–23, 35,11–21, 40,15–24. With the exception of *Yatīndramatadīpikā* 35,11–21, the passages mentioned have been translated into German by Oberhammer 2000: 109 n. 303, 108, and 112f.

51 *Pādmasam̐hitā jñānapāda* 12.54c–61, *Bṛhadbrahmasam̐hitā* 3.2.89c–96. The conception of Vaikuṅṭha in Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta and Pāñcarātra and the mutual influences of the two traditions with regard to it is discussed in Rastelli (2003).

I come now to the conclusion. A follower of the *Nityagrantha* bases his rituals on a different purpose, a different view of his relationship to God, and a different cosmology than a worshipper following the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*. As we have seen, this does not influence the actual act of worship. The physical performance of the rituals has not changed. Externally, both worshippers do the same. What has changed, however, is their inner attitude. The author of the *Nityagrantha* has adopted ritual worship from the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*—perhaps because this text shows some affinities to Viśiṣṭādvaitic thoughts—but has supplemented it with mental reflections and visualizations through which a particular inner attitude is attained. Thus the *Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*'s worship as a means for fulfilling various wishes has become, in the *Nityagrantha*, a ritual that is a well-conceived expression of a humble devotee's service of God.

References

Texts

- Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā*. Ahīrbudhnyasaṃhitā of the Pāñcarātrāgama. 2 vols. Ed. by M.D. Ramanujacharya under the Supervision of F. Otto Schrader. Revised by V. Krishnamacharya. (*The Adyar Library Series* 4). Adyar ²1986 (First Repr.).
- Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā*. Nāradapañcarātrāntargatā Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā. Tat Hari Nārāyaṇa Āpaṭe prakāśitam. (*Ānandāśramasaṃskṛtagranthāvaliḥ* 68). Poona 1912.
- Gadyatrayabhāṣya*, Veṅkaṭanātha. In: Srimad Vedānta Desika's Chatusslokihashyam, Sthothratrayabhāṣyam, and Gadyatrayabhāṣyam. Ed. by V. Srivatsanacharya. Madras n.d., pp. 125–193.
- Gītārthasaṃgraha*, Yāmuna. In: Gītārthasaṃgraharakṣā, Gītābhāṣyatātparyacandrikā ca. paryavekṣakaḥ pariṣkāraś ca Prativādidibhayānkaraḥ Aṅgaṅgarācāryaḥ. (*Śrīmadvedāntadeśikagranthamālā*). Kañjīvaram 1941.
- Jayākhyasaṃhitā*. Crit. ed. with an Introduction in Sanskrit, Indices etc. by Embar Krishnamacharya. (*Gaekwad's Oriental Series* 54). Baroda 1931.
- Lakṣmītantra*. Lakṣmī-Tantra. A Pāñcarātra Āgama. Ed. with Sanskrit Gloss and Introduction by V. Krishnamacharya. (*The Adyar Library Series* 87). Madras 1959.
- Nityagrantha*, Rāmānuja. In: Sri Bhagavad Ramanuja Granthamala. Ed. P.B. Annagaracharya. Kancheepuram 1956, pp. 181–188.
- Pādmasaṃhitā*. Padma Samhita. Part I crit. ed. Seetha Padmanabhan—R.N. Sampath—Part II crit. ed. Seetha Padmanabhan—V. Varadachari. (*Pancaratra Parisodhana Parisad Series* 3–4). Madras 1974–1982.
- Paramasaṃhitā* [of the Pāñcharātra]. Ed. and translated into English with an introduction by S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar. (*Gaekwad's Oriental Series* 86). Baroda 1940.

- Pārameśvarasamhitā*. Śrī Pārameśvara Samhitā Śrī Govindācāryaiḥ saṃskṛtā, an-ekavidhādarśādibhiḥ saṃyojitā ca. Śrīraṅgam 1953.
- Prapannaparijāta*, Varadaguru. Prapanna Parijata in Sanskrit with Translation in English by Nadadoor Ammal [= Varadaguru]. Madras 1971.
- Śaraṅāgatigadya*, Rāmānuja. In: Sri Bhagavad Ramanuja Granthamala. Ed. P.B. Annangaracharya. Kancheepuram 1956, pp. 173–176.
- Annangaracharya. Kancheepuram 1956, pp. 178–180.
- Sātvatasamhitā*. Sātvata-Samhitā. With Comment[a]ry by Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa. Foreword by Gaurinath Sastri. Ed. by Vraja Vallabha Dwivedi. (Library Rare Texts Publication Series 6). Varanasi 1982.
- Sātvatasamhitābhāṣya*, Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa. See *Sātvatasamhitā*.
- Śrīvaikuṅṭhagadya*, Rāmānuja. In: Sri Bhagavad Ramanuja Granthamala. Ed. P.B. Stotraratna, Yāmuna. See *Stotraratnabhāṣya*.
- Stotraratnabhāṣya*, Veṅkaṭanātha. In: Srimad Vedanta Desika's Chatusslokibhashyam, Sthothraratnabhashyam, and Gadyatrayabhashyam. Ed. by V. Srivatsankacharyar. Madras n.d., pp. 21–123.
- Sundarabāhustava*, Kūreśa. Śrīvaiṣṇavasampradāya-pravartaka-sakalapūrvācāryānugṛhītasakalastotrāgranthasanāthā Stotramālā pariśkārakaḥ paryavekṣakaś ca Aṅgaṅgarācāryaḥ. Kāñcīpuram 1958, pp. 26–34.
- Viśvaksenasamhitā*. Viśvaksena Samhitā. Crit. ed. by Lakshmi Narasimha Bhatta. (*Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha Series 17*). Tirupati 1972.
- Viśvāmitrasamhitā*. Viśvāmitra Samhitā. Crit. ed. by Undemane Shankara Bhatta. (*Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha Series 13*). Tirupati 1970.
- Yatīndramatadīpikā*, Śrīnivāsācārya. In: Śrī Bhāshya Vārtika, A Treatise on Viśisthādvaita Philosophy; Also Yatīndra Mat Dīpikā, By Nivāsā Chārya son of Govindā Chārya, And Sakalāchāryamat Saṅgrah. Ed. by Ratna Gopāl Bhaṭṭa. (*Benares Sanskrit Series 123 & 133*). Benares 1907, pp. 1–47.

Secondary Literature

- Bühnemann, Gudrun 1988. *Pūjā. A Study in Smārta Ritual*. Vienna: Sammlung de Nobili (Publications of the De Nobili Research Library 15).
- Carman, John Braisted 1974. *The Theology of Ramanuja. An Essay in Interreligious Understanding*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press. [Reprint 1981. Bombay: Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute (Ananthacharya Indological Research Series 9).]
- Carman, John Braisted & Vasudha Narayanan 1989. *The Tamil Veda. Piḷḷān's Interpretation of the Tiruvāymoḷi*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Dasgupta, Surendranath 1922. *A History of Indian Philosophy*. Vol. 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Reprint 1991. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.]
- Esnoul, Anne-Marie 1972. "Le Nityagrantha de Rāmānuja". In: *Journal Asiatique* 160: 39–78.

- Gupta, Sanjukta 1972. *Lakṣmī Tantra. A Pāñcarātra Text. Translation and Notes*. Leiden: E.J. Brill (Orientalia Rheno-Traiectina 15).
- Humphrey, Caroline & James Laidlaw 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual. A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press (Oxford Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology).
- Kane, Padurang Vaman ²1974. *History of Dharmaśāstra (Ancient and Mediaeval Religious and Civil Law)*. Vol. 2. Poone: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Government Oriental Series Class B, no. 6).
- Matsubara, Mitsunori 1994. *Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās & Early Vaiṣṇava Theology. With a Translation and Critical Notes from Chapters on Theology in the Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Nayar, Nancy Ann 1992. *Poetry as Theology. The Śrīvaiṣṇava Stotra in the Age of Rāmānuja*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz (Studies in Oriental Religions 22).
- 1994. *Praise Poems to Viṣṇu and Śrī. The Stotras of Rāmānuja's Immediate Disciples. A Translation from the Sanskrit with Introduction and Notes*. Bombay: Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute (Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute Series 23).
- Oberhammer, Gerhard 2000. *Materialien zur Geschichte der Rāmānuja-Schule V. Zur Lehre von der ewigen vibhūti Gottes*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 684 = Veröffentlichungen zu den Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens 34).
- Rastelli, Marion 1999. *Philosophisch-theologische Grundanschauungen der Jayā-khyasaṃhitā. Mit einer Darstellung des täglichen Rituals*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 668 = Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 33).
- 2000. "The Religious Practice of the *sādhaka* According to the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā*". In: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 43.4: 319–395.
- Rastelli, Marion 2002. "The *āsana* According to the *Pārameśvarasaṃhitā* or a Method of Writing a *Saṃhitā*". In: *Studies in Hinduism III. Pāñcarātra and Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta*, Oberhammer, Gerhard & Marion Rastelli (ed.). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 694 = Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 40), 9–32.
- 2003. "On the Concept of *Vaikunṭha* in Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta and Pāñcarātra". In: *Cracow Indological Studies* IV–V, 427–447.
- Schrader, F.O. 1916. *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra and the Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā*. Madras: Adyar Library.
- Sferra, Francesco 1995. "Le Speculazioni su *vāc* in alcuni testi del Pāñcarātra". *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 68.1–2: 45–108.
- Stark, Sylvia 1990. *Vātsya Varadagurus Tatvanirṇaya. Teil 1: Kritische Textedition. Teil 2: Übersetzung und Anmerkungen*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen

Akademie der Wissenschaften (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 570 = Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 4).

Torella, Raffaele 1998. "The *kañcukas* in the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava Tantric Tradition: A Few Considerations Between Theology and Grammar". In: *Studies in Hinduism II. Miscellanea to the Phenomenon of Tantras*, Oberhammer, Gerhard (ed.). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 662 = Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 28), 55–86.

Appendix: Parallel Passages of *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā* 28 and the *Nityagrantha*

Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā 28

*ārādhanaividhiṃ vakṣye
samāsenaiḥ nārada |*

*āyurārogyavijaya-
bhūpradaṃ dhanadhānyadam || 1
putrapaśvannakāmānāṃ
tattatsādhanam uttamam |
bhuktimuktipradaṃ śāntaṃ
parābhibhavakāraṇam || 2*

tīrthaṃ gatvā

śucau deśe mṛdam ādāya mantrataḥ |

dvidhā kṛtvaikabhāgena

*kuryād dehasya śodhanam || 3
snātṛvācamya*

gṛhītvānyam mṛdbhāgam

Nityagrantha

181,4

*atha paramaikāntino bhagavadārādhana-
naprayogaṃ vakṣye.*

181,5–7

*bhagavatkaikārikaratiḥ
paramaikāntī bhūtvā bhagavān eva
svaśeṣabhūtena mayā svakīyaiś ca
kalyāṇatamair aupacārikasāṃsparśi-
kābhavahārikair bhogair akhilapari-
janaparicchadānviṭaṃ svātmānaṃ
prītaṃ kārayitum upakramata ity
anusandhāya,*

181,7–10

*tīrthaṃ gatvā,
śucau deśe pādau prakṣālyācamya,
tīraṃ saṃśodhya,*

*śucau deśe mūlamantreṇa mṛdam
ādāya,*

*dvidhā kṛtvā śodhitatīre nidhāya,
ekenādhikabhāgena*

*dehamalaprakṣālanam kṛtvā,
nimajjya, ācamya,*

*prāṇāyāmatrayam āsīno bhagavantaṃ
dhyāyan kṛtvā,*

anyaṃ mṛdbhāgam ādāya

vinyaset tridhā | vāme pāṇau

diśābandhaṃ vidadhyād ekabhāgataḥ ||

*gātrālepaṃ tataḥ kuryād
anyenāṃśena nārada |*

*saṃkalpayet trītyāṃśaṃ
tīrthapīṭhaṃ ataḥ param || 5*

*gaṅgāṃ tatra smared viṣṇor vāmapāda-
viniḥsṛtām |
arghyam asyai nivedyātha*

*tato hṛtvā jalāñjalim || 6
svamūrdhni siñcet tris tāvat saptakṛtvo
'bhimantritam |*

*nimagnas tatra devasya
pādābjanyastamastakaḥ || 7
yathāśakti japeṇ mantram
tasya dhyānaparāyaṇaḥ |
tata uttīrya cācamya
dhṛtvā vastrottariyake || 8
dhṛtordhva puṇḍraḥ
svācānto
devādīn acyutātmakān | dhyātvā
saṃtarpayed anyad
āhnikam vidhivac caret || 9*

*vāmapāṇitale tridhā kṛtvā,
pṛthakpṛthak saṃprokṣya abhimantrīya
ekena digbandhanam astramantreṇa
kuryāt.*

181,11b

itareṇa gātrānulepanam.

181, 11a

anyena tīrthasya pīṭham.

181,12–182,1

*tataḥ pāñī prakṣālyā udakāñjalim ādāya
tīrthasyārghyam utkṣīpya*

*bhaga<vad>vāmapādāṅguṣṭhavinis-
sṛtagaṅgājalam saṃkalpitapīṭhe āvāhya,
arghyam datvā,*

mūlamantreṇābhimantrīya,

udakāñjalim ādāya,

saptakṛtvo 'bhimantrīya svamūrdhani

*siñcet. evaṃ triḥ pañcakṛtvāḥ saptakṛtvo
vā.*

dakṣiṇena pāñinā jalam ādāya

abhimantrīya pūtvā ācamya svātmānaṃ

saṃprokṣya (pariṣicya)

tīrthe nimagno bhagavat-

pādāravindavinyastaśirasko

yāvachchakti mūlamantṛaṃ japitvā,

uttīrya śuklavastradhāro

dhṛtōttariyāś ca ācamya,

ūrdhva puṇḍrāṃś tattanmantreṇa

dhārayitvā,

bhagavantam anusmṛtya,

tattanmantreṇa

bhagavatparyantābhidhāyīnā

mūlamantreṇa ca jalam pitvā, ācamya,

prokṣya, pariṣicya, udakāñjalim

bhagavatpādayor nikṣīpya, prāñān

āyāmya, bhagavantaṃ dhyātvā,

yāgabhūmim athāgamya
kṣālitānghrikaro vaśt |
ācamya

vāgyato bhūtvā
prārabheta samarcanam || 10
caturdvārayutaṃ ramaṃ
gatvā śaraṇam ātmavān |
dvāṣṭhānaśeṣān abhyarcya
tato maṇḍapam āśrayet || 11
tuṅgaṃ maṅgalasaṃyuktaṃ
maṇikuṭṭimabhūṣitaṃ |
sauvarṇair bahubhiḥ stambhair
maṇividrumabhūṣitaiḥ || 12
upetaṃ dīpikājālair
jātarūpamayair vṛtam |
vicitrābhiḥ patākābhis
torāṇair upaśobhitam || 13
maṇikiṅkiṅjālais ca
vitānaiḥ kṣaumakalpitaḥ |
virājamānaṃ sarvatra
maṇipīṭhvirājitam |
tasya maṇḍaparatanasya
madhye paramabhāsvarām |
padmarāgamayaiḥ stambhaiś
caturbhir upaśobhitām || 15
muktāmayavitānena
yuktāṃ ratnicatuṣkikām |
vaiḍūryaghaṭitotuṅga-
vedikāṃ dīpikāyutām || 16
evaṃ kartum aśaktaś ced

aṣṭottaraśataṃ mūlamantram āvartya,
parikramya, namaskṛtya, ādhāra-
śaktyādirthivyantaṃ tarpayitvā,
śrīvaikuṇṭhādipāriśadāntaṃ tarpayitvā,
devān ṛṣīn pitṛn bhagavadātmakān
dhyātvā saṃtarpya, vastraṃ śucau deśe
saṃpīḍya, ācamya, āvāhitatīrthaṃ
mūlamantreṇātmani samāhṛtya,
yāgabhūmim gacchet.
suprakṣālitapāṇipādaḥ
svācāntaḥ

182,1–6

śucau deśe 'tīmanohare niśśabde
bhuvam saṃgrhya, tām śoṣaṇādibhir
viśodhya, guruparamparayā
paramaguruṃ bhagavantam upagamya,
tam eva prāpyatvena prāpakatvenāni-
ṣṭānivāratatvenēṣṭaprāpakatvena ca
yathāvasthitasvarūparūpaṅga-
vibhūtilīlopakaraṇavistāram
anusandhāya, tam eva śaraṇam upa-
gacched akhiletyādinā.
evaṃ śaraṇam upagamya tatprasādopa-
br̥ṃhitamanovṛttiḥ tam eva bhagavan-
taṃ sarveśvareśvaram ātmanas
svāmitvenānusandhāya, atyartha-
priyāvīrataviśadatamapratyakṣarūpānu-
dhyānena dhyāyann āsīta. tatas tadanu-
bhavajanitātimātraprītikāritaparipūrṇa-
kaiṅkaryarūpapūjām ārabheta.

evam dhyāyīta pūjakaḥ |
evam catuṣkikāmadhye
cakrābjamayaviṣṭare || 17

ādihāraśaktikamaṭhā-
nantaadharmādiadhārite |
padme somaravijyotiḥ-
sattvādiparivārite || 18

evam uktaparakāreṇa
parivārain niṣevitam |
vedair mantrais tathā śāstrair
astraiḥ śaktibhir āvṛtam || 19
dhyāyet tadāsane devam
samāsīnaḥ samāsane |

arcayāmi tvadīyo 'haṃ

tvaddattair aupacārikaiḥ || 20
sāṃsparsikair iti brūyād
devam ābhayahārikaiḥ |

saṃhared dehatattvāni
pratisaṃcaravartmanā || 21
tataḥ sthūlam idaṃ dehaṃ
śoṣayitvātha saṃdahet |
prāṇāyāmena cādyena
mantram nābhyāṃ tu vinyaset || 22
taduabhūtena nādena
susumnāmadhyavartinā |
vāyumaṇḍalam abhyetya
tadutthenaiva vāyunā || 23
saṃśoṣayed imaṃ dehaṃ
sthūlaṃ suramune tataḥ |

182,7–14

bhagavān eva svaniyāmyasvarūpasthiti-
pravṛttisvaśeṣataikaraseṇānenātmanā
svakīyais ca dehendriyāntahkaraṇaiḥ
svakīyakalyāṇatamadavyamayān
aupacārika-
sāṃsparsikā-
bhayahārikādisamastabhogān
atiprabhūtān atisagrān atipriya-
tamān atyantabhaktikṛtān
akhilaparijanaparicchadān vitāya
svasmai svaprītaye svayam eva
pratipādayitum upakramata ity
anusandhāya,
svadehe pañcopaniṣanmantrān
saṃhārakrameṇa nyasya,

prāṇāyāmenaikena dakṣiṇena pāṇinā
nābhideśe mūlamantram nyasya,

mantrodbhūta caṇḍavāyavāpyāyitanābhī-
deśasthavāyunā śarīram antarbahis ca
sarvatattvamayaṃ tattvakrameṇa

*prāṇāyāmadvitīyena
hṛdaye vinyasen manum || 24
mantrotthenāgninā dehaṃ*

dahen maṅḍalavartinā |

*trītyena svam ātmānaṃ
prāṇāyāmena deśikaḥ || 25
adho niveśayan viṣṇor
vāmapādāmbujasya vai |*

*svam tadanḡuṣṭhaniṣṭhyūta-
pīyūṣāplāvitam smaret || 26*

*pañcaupaniṣadair mantrais tataḥ
saṃjātavigrahaḥ |*

*nyastāṅgo mantravin mantraiś
cintayitvā sudarśanam || 27
āvāhya brahmarandhreṇa
hṛtpadme sūryamaṅḍalāt |*

*viśoṣya,
punar apī prāṇāyāmenaikena
hṛddeśe mūlamantram nyasya,
mantrodbhūtacakrāgnijnivālopabṛṃhita-
jāṭharāgninā
dagdhatattatsamaṣṭipralīnasarvatattva-
sarvakilbiṣasarvājñānatadvāsano
bhūtṛvā, bhagavaddakṣiṇapādānḡuṣṭhe
mūlamantreṇa svātmānaṃ praveśayet.
182,15–21*

*apareṇa prāṇāyāmena
bhagavatprasādena
bhagavatkiṅkaratvayogyatām āpādyā,
tasmād ādāya,
tadvāmapādānḡuṣṭhādastātman-
trātmānaṃ vinyasya,
devavāmapādānḡuṣṭhanakhaśītāmśu-
maṅḍalanirgaladdivyāmṛtarasair
ātmānaṃ abhiśicya, bhagavatprasādena
tadamṛtamayaṃ sarvakainkaryā-
manoharaṃ sarvakainkaryayogyāṃ
śarīraṃ labdhvā,
tasmin śarīre pañcopaniṣanmantrān,
sṛṣṭikrameṇa vinyasyet. om śāmaḥ
parāya parameṣṭhyātmane namaḥ iti
mūrdhni sprśet. om yāmaḥ parāya
puruṣātmane nama iti nāsāgre. om rāmaḥ
namaḥ parāya viśvātmane nama iti
hṛdaye. om vāmaḥ parāya
nivrītyātmane nama iti guhye. om lāmaḥ
namaḥ parāya sarvātmane nama iti
pādayoḥ. evamaṃ nyāsaṃ kurvaṃs
tattacchaktimayam udbhūtadehaṃ
dhyāyet.*

*prārabheta tataḥ pūjāṃ
karanyāsaṃ vidhāya vai || 28*

*ḥṛdyāgaṃ prathamam kuryān
niyatendriyamānasaḥ |
ātmano dakṣiṇe pārśve
vāsitaiḥ pāvanair jalaiḥ ||
pūritaṃ sthāpayet pātraṃ*

mūlamantreṇa mantritam |

*vāmapārśve tathā sarvaṃ
vinyaset sādhanāntaram || 30
tato vistūrya purataḥ
śāṅtikām atinirmalām |
tasyām āgneyadiḡbhāge
vinyased arghyapātrakam || 31
pādyapātram atho nyasyet
koṇe dakṣiṇapaścime |
pātram ācamanīyasya
vinyaset paścimottare || 32
snānīyapātraṃ diḡbhāge
vinyasec chāṃkare tataḥ |*

*siddhārtham akṣataṃ caiva
kuśāgraṃ tilam eva ca || 33
yavaṃ gandhaṃ phalaṃ puṣpam*

182,22–23

*punar api prāṇāyāmenaikena
bhagavadvāmapādāṅguṣṭhavinissṛtā-
mṛtadhārayātmānam abhiścya
kṛtalāñchano dhṛtordevapuṇdro
bhagavadyāgam ārabheta.*

182,24–183,10

*bhagavān eva sarvaṃ kārayatīti
pūrvavat dhyātvā,
ḥṛdyāgaṃ kṛtvā,*

*sambhārān sambhṛtyātmano
vāmapārśve jalakumbhe toyam utpūrya,*

*gandhapuṣpayutaṃ kṛtvā,
saptakṛtvo 'bhimantrya,
viśoṣya, dagdhvā, divyāmṛtatoyam
utpādya,*

*astramantreṇa rakṣāṃ kṛtvā,
surabhimudrāṃ pradarśya,
anyāni pūjādravyāny ātmano
dakṣiṇapārśve nidhāya,
ātmanaḥ puratas svāstūrṇe pīṭhe*

*krameṇāgneyādikoṇeṣv
arghya-
pādya-*

ācamanīya-

snānīyapātrāṇi nidhāya,

*(astra)mantreṇa prakṣālyā, śoṣaṇādinā
pātrāṇi viśodhya, saṃskṛtatoyena tāni
pūrayitvā,*

*arghyapātre gandhapuṣpa-
kuśāgrākṣatādīni nikṣipet.*

aṣṭāṅgaṃ cārghyam ucyate |
 dūrvā ca viṣṇuparṇī ca
 śyāmākam padmam eva ca || 34
 pādyadravyāṇi catvāri
 sodakāni prakalpayet |
 lavaṅgajātītakola-
 dravyāṇy ācamanīyake || 35

siddhārthakādi snānīye
 pūrvavat kalpayed budhaḥ |
 arghyaṃ saṅkalpayāmīti
 spr̥ṣej japtvārghyam āditaḥ || 36

pādyapātrādikeṣv evaṃ
 brūyāt suramune kramāt |

gandhatoyena saṃpūrya
 pātrāṇy etāni sarvaśaḥ || 37

dūrvāṃ viṣṇuparṇīm
 śyāmākam padmakam pādyapātre.

elālavaṅgatakkolalāmajjakajātīpuṣpāny
 ācamanīye.

[dve haridre murāśaileyatakkolaja-
 tāmāmsīmalayajagandhacampaka-
 puṣpāni snānīye]

siddhārthakādīni snānīye.

anyasmin pātre sarvārthatoyam
 saṅkalpya tato 'rghyapātram pāninā
 spr̥ṣtvā, mūlamantreṇābhimantrya, oṃ
 namo bhagavate 'rghyam

parikalpayāmīty arghyam parikalpayet.
 evaṃ pādyam parikalpayāmīti pādyam.

ācamanīyam parikalpayāmīty
 ācamanīyam. snānīyam parikalpayāmīti
 snānīyam. śuddhodakam

parikalpayāmīti śuddhodakam. tato
 'rghyajālat jalam anyena pātreṇādāya
 yāgabhūmiṃ sarvāṇi yāgadravayāṇy
 ātmanāṃ ca [pratyeкам] prokṣyāsanam
 parikalpayet.

oṃ ādhāraśaktyai namaḥ,

oṃ mūlaprakṛtyai namaḥ,

oṃ akhilajagadādhārāya kūrmarūpiṇe

nārāyaṇāya namaḥ,

oṃ bhagavate 'nantiāya nāgarājāya
 namaḥ,

oṃ [bhūm] bhūmyai namaḥ iti

yathāsthānam upary upari dhyātvā
 praṇamya,

oṃ śrīvaikuṅṭhāya divyalokāya namaḥ

iti [śrīvaikuṅṭha]divyalokaṃ praṇamya,

oṃ śrīvaikuṅṭhāya divyajanapadāya

namaḥ iti divyajanaḥ prāṇamya,
oṃ śrīvaikuṅṭhāya divyanagarāya
namaḥ iti divyanagaraḥ prāṇamya,
oṃ śrīvaikuṅṭhāya divyavimānāya
namaḥ iti divyavimānaḥ prāṇamya,
oṃ ānandamayāya
divyamaṅṭaparātāya namaḥ iti
maṅṭaparātāḥ prāṇamya,
tasmīn, anantāya [nāgarājāya] namaḥ
ity āstaraṇam prāṇamya,
tasmīn upari, oṃ dharmāya namaḥ ity
āgneyyāḥ pādaḥ vinyasya,
oṃ jñānāya namaḥ iti nairṛtyāḥ,
oṃ vairāgyāya namaḥ iti vāyavyāḥ,
oṃ aiśvaryāya namaḥ ity aiśānyāḥ,
oṃ adharmāya namaḥ iti prācyāḥ pīṭha
gātraḥ vinyasya,
oṃ ajñānāya namaḥ iti dakṣiṇasyāḥ,
oṃ avairāgyāya namaḥ iti pratīcyāḥ,
oṃ anaiśvaryāya namaḥ ity uttarasyāḥ,
ebhiḥ paricchinntānaḥ pīṭhabhūtaḥ
sadātmakam anantaḥ vinyasya,
paścāt sarvakāryonmukhaḥ vibhum
anantaḥ—oṃ anantāya namaḥ iti
vinyasya,
tasmīn upari oṃ padmāya namaḥ iti
padmaḥ vinyasya,
tatpūrvapatre oṃ vimalāyai
(cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ iti vimalāḥ
cāmarahastāḥ vinyasya,
tata ārabhya prādakṣiṇyenaiśānāntaḥ
patreṣu oṃ utkarṣiṇyai
(cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ,
oṃ jñānāyai (cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ,
oṃ kriyāyai (cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ
oṃ yogāyai (cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ,
oṃ prahvyai (cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ,
oṃ satyāyai (cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ,
oṃ īśānāyai (cāmarahastāyai) namaḥ—

iti sapta śaktīś cāmarahastā vinyasya,
 oṃ anugrahāyai (cāmarahastāyai)
 namaḥ iti karṇikāpūrvabhāge
 'nugrahāṃ cāmarahastāṃ vinyasya,
 oṃ jagatprakṛtaye yogapīṭhāya namaḥ
 iti yogapīṭhaṃ vinyasya,
 oṃ [divyāya yogaparyānkāya]
 divyayogapīṭhaparyānkāya namaḥ iti
 divyayoga[pīṭha]paryānkam vinyasya,
 tasminn anantaṃ nāgarājyaṃ sahasra-
 phaṇāśobhitam oṃ anantāya
 nāgarājyāya namaḥ iti vinyasya,
 oṃ anantāya namaḥ iti purataḥ
 pādapīṭhaṃ vinyasya,
 sarvāṅy ādhāraśaktiādīni pīṭhāntāni
 tattvāni pratyekaṃ
 gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpair abhyarcya,
 sarvaparivārāṇāṃ tattatsthāneṣu pad-
 māsanāni saṃkalpya,
 anantagaruḍaviśvakṣenānāṃ
 sapīṭhakaṃ padmaṃ vinyasya, sarvataḥ
 puṣpākṣatādīni vikīrya, yogapīṭhasya
 paścimottaradigbhāge
 oṃ asmadgurubhyo namaḥ iti gurūn
 gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpāis saṃpūjya,
 praṇamyānujñāpya bhagavayāgam
 ārabheta.

184,6

kalpīte nāgabhoge samāsīnaṃ
 bhagavantaṃ nārāyaṇaṃ
 puṇḍarikadalāmalāyatākṣaṃ kirīṭa-
 mukuṭakeyūrahārakaṭakādīsarvabhūṣa-
 ṇair bhūṣitaṃ ākuñcitadakṣiṇapādaṃ
 prasāritavāmapādaṃ jānuvinyasta-
 prasāritadakṣiṇabhujam
 nāgabhogavinyastavāmapabhujam
 ūrdhvabhujadvayena
 śāṅkhacakraḍharam sarveṣāṃ sṛṣṭi-
 sthītipralayaḥ tubhūtam añjanābhaṃ

kaustubhena virājamānaṃ
 cakāsatamuḍagrabuddha-
 sphuraḍapūrvācintyaparamasattva-
 pañcaśaktimayavigrahaṃ
 pañcopaniṣaḍair dhyātvā,
 ārāḍhanābhimukho bhaveti [mūlaman-
 treṇa] prārthya, mūlamantreṇa
 ḍaṇḍavat praṇamya, utthāya, svāgataṃ
 niveḍya, yāvaḍ ārāḍhanasamāpti
 sānnidhyayācanaṃ kuryāt.

184,12

anyatra svābhimataḍeṣe pūjā ceḍ evam
 āvāhanam—

mantrayogas samāhvānaṃ
 karapuṣpopaḍarśanam |
 bimbopaveśanaṃ caiva
 yogavigrahacintanam ||
 praṇāmaś ca samutthānaṃ
 svāgataṃ puṣpam eva ca |
 sānnidhyayācanaṃ ceti
 tatrāhvānasya satkriyāḥ ||

184,15

tato bhagavantaṃ praṇamya
 ḍakṣiṇataḥ, oṃ śrīṃ śrīyai nama iti
 śriyam āvāhya praṇamya,
 vāmataḥ oṃ bhūṃ bhūmyai nama iti
 bhuvam āvāhya,
 tatraiva oṃ nīṃ nīlāyai nama iti nīlām
 āvāhya,
 oṃ kirīṭāya makuṭāḍhipataye nama ity
 upari bhagavataḥ paścimapārśve
 caturbāhuṃ caturvaktraṃ
 kṛtāñjalipuṭaṃ mūrḍhni bhaga-
 vatkirīṭaṃ ḍhārayantaṃ
 kirīṭakhyaḍivyapuruṣaṃ praṇamya,
 evam eva oṃ kirīṭamālyayāpīḍakātmane
 nama ity āpīḍakaṃ tatraiva (purastāt)
 praṇamya,
 oṃ ḍakṣiṇakuṇḍalāya makarātmane

*nama iti dakṣiṇakuṇḍalam dakṣiṇataḥ
 praṇamya,
 oṃ vāmakūṇḍalāya makarātmane nama
 iti vāmakūṇḍalam vāmataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ vaijayantyai vanamālāyai nama iti
 vanamālāṃ purataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ śrītulasyai nama iti tulasīm (devīm)
 purataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ śrīvatsāya śrīnivāsāya nama iti
 śrīvatsaṃ purataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ hārāya sarvābharaṇādhipataye
 nama iti hāraṃ purataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ śrikaustubhāya sarvaratnādhipataye
 nama iti kaustubhaṃ purataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ kāñcīguṇojjvalāya pītāmbarāya
 nama iti pītāmbaraṃ purataḥ
 praṇamya,
 oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavadbhūṣaṇebhyo
 nama iti sarvabhūṣaṇāni sarvataḥ
 praṇamya,
 oṃ sudarśanāya hetirājāya nama iti
 sudarśanaṃ raktavarṇaṃ raktanetraṃ
 (dvi)caturbhujam kṛtāñjalipuṭam
 bhagavantam ālokayantaṃ
 taddarśanānandabrṃhitamukhaṃ mūr-
 dhni bhagavaccakraṃ dhārayantaṃ
 dakṣiṇataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ nandakāya khadgādhipataye nama
 iti nandakātmānaṃ śīrasi
 bhagavatkhadgaṃ dhārayantaṃ tatraiva
 praṇamya,
 oṃ padmāya nama iti padmaṃ (padmaṃ
 śīrasi dhārayantaṃ) praṇamya,
 oṃ pāñcajanyaया śaṅkhādhipataye
 nama iti śaṅkhātmānaṃ sitavarṇaṃ
 (raktanetraṃ) dvibhujam kṛtāñjalipuṭam
 śīrasi bhagavacchaṅkhaṃ dhārayantaṃ
 vāmataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ kaumodakāya gadādhipataye nama*

iti gadātmānaṃ tatraiva praṇamya,
 tatraiva oṃ śārṅgāya cāpādhipataye
 nama iti śārṅgātmānaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavaddivyāyudhebhyo
 nama iti sarvāyudhāni paritaḥ
 praṇamya,
 oṃ sarvābhyo
 bhagavatpādāravindasaṃvāhinībhyo
 nama iti divyapādāravindasaṃvāhinīs
 samantataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ anantāya nāgarājāya iti pṛṣṭhato
 (bhagavantaṃ) nāgarājaṃ caturbhujam
 halamusaladharaṃ kṛtāñjalipuṭam
 phaṇāmaṇisahasramaṇḍitottamāṅgam
 bhagavantaṃ ālokayantaṃ bhagavat-
 sparśanānandabṛṃhitasarvagātraṃ
 dhyātvā praṇamya,
 oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavatparijanebhyo
 nama ity anuktānantaparijanān
 samantataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ bhagavatpādukābhyāṃ nama iti
 bhagavatpāduke purataḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavatparicchadebhyo
 nama iti sarvaparicchadān samantataḥ
 praṇamya,
 oṃ vainateyāya nama ity agrato
 (bhagavato bhagavantaṃ) vainateyaṃ
 āsīnaṃ dvibhujam kṛtāñjalipuṭam
 dhyātvā praṇamya,
 oṃ namo bhagavate viśvakṣenāyeti
 bhagavataḥ prāguttarapārśve
 dakṣiṇābhimukhaṃ bhagavantaṃ
 viśvakṣenaṃ āsīnaṃ caturbhujam śaṅ-
 khacakraadharaṃ kṛtāñjalipuṭam nīlame-
 ghanibhaṃ dhyātvā praṇamya,
 oṃ gaṃ gajānanāya namaḥ,
 oṃ jaṃ jayatsenāya nama,
 oṃ haṃ harivaktrāya namaḥ,
 oṃ kaṃ kālaprakṛtisaṃjñāya namaḥ,

*oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavadviṣvaksena-
 parijanebhyo namaḥ iti
 viṣvaksenaparijanān praṇamya,
 oṃ caṇḍāya dvārapālāya namaḥ,
 oṃ pracaṇḍāya dvārapālāya namaḥ iti
 pūrvadvārapārśvayoḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ bhadrāya dvārapālāya namaḥ,
 oṃ subhadrāya dvārapālāya namaḥ iti
 dakṣiṇadvārapārśvayoḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ jayāya dvārapālāya namaḥ,
 oṃ vijayāya dvārapālāya namaḥ iti
 paścimadvārapārśvayoḥ praṇamya,
 oṃ dhātre dvārapālāya namaḥ,
 oṃ vidhātre dvārapālāya namaḥ ity
 uttaradvārapārśvayoḥ praṇamet.
 ete dvārapālās sarve
 śaṅkacakraḡadādhara ājñāmudrāyutā
 dhyātavyāḥ.
 oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavaddvārapālebhyo
 nama iti sarvadvāreṣu sarvadvārapālān
 praṇamya,
 oṃ kumudāya gaṇādhipataye
 savāhanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama iti
 pūrvasyāṃ diśi pārśvadeśvaraṃ
 kumudaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ kumudākṣāya gaṇādhipataye
 savāhanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama ity
 āgneyyāṃ kumudākṣaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ puṇḍarikāya gaṇādhipataye
 savāhanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama iti
 dakṣiṇasyāṃ puṇḍarikaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ vāmanāya gaṇādhipataye savāhana-
 parivārapraharaṇāya nama iti
 nairṛtyāṃ vāmanaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ śaṅkukarṇāya gaṇādhipataye savā-
 hanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama iti
 paścimsyāṃ śaṅkukarṇaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ sarpanetrāya gaṇādhipataye
 savāhanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama iti*

vāvyāṃ sarpanetrāṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ sumukhāya gaṇādhipataye
 savāhanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama ity
 udīcyāṃ sumukhaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ supraṭiṣṭhitāya gaṇādhipataye
 savāhanaparivārapraharaṇāya nama ity
 aiśānyāṃ supraṭiṣṭhitaṃ praṇamya,
 oṃ sarvebhyo bhagavatpāriṣadebhyo
 nama iti sarvasmād bahiḥ praṇamet.
 186,3

anyatrāvāhya pūjāyāṃ āvāhanasthānāni
 paravyomakṣīrāṇavādityamaṇḍala-
 hṛdayāni madhurādvārakāgo-
 kulāyodhyādīni divyāvātārasthānāni
 cānyāni paurāṇikāni śrīraṅgādīni ca
 yathāruci.
 186,5

evaṃ bhagavantaṃ nārāyaṇaṃ
 devībhūṣaṇāyudhaparijanapari-
 cchadadvārapālapāriṣadais
 sevyamānaṃ svādhīnatrividha-
 cetanācetasavarūpasthitipravṛtti-
 bhedaṃ kleśakarmādyaśeṣa-
 doṣasamsprṣṭaṃ svābhāvikāna-
 vadhikātiśayajñānabalaiśva-
 ryavīryaśaktitejaḥprabhṛtya-
 samkhyeyakalyāṇaguṇagaṇaughā-
 mahārṇavaṃ dhyātvā, praṇamya,
 mūlamantreṇa svātmānaṃ devāya
 nivedya, praṇamyānujñāpya, bhagavat-
 pūjāṃ ārabheta.
 186,9–21

arghyāt kiṃcit samuddhṛtya
 jalaṃ pātrāntareṇa tu |

pātreṇa pūrvasthāpitārghyapātrād
 arghyajalam ādāya
 pāṇibhyāṃ mukhasamam uddhṛtya,
 bhagavan idaṃ pratigṛhṇīṣveti cintayan
 bhagavanmukhe darśayitvā
 bhagavaddakṣiṇahaste kiṃcit
 pradāyārghyaṃ

devasya dakṣiṇe pāṇau
 mūlamantreṇa vinyaset || 38

*puṣpaṃ dattvātha pādyaena
pādaḥ devasya secayet |*

vastreṇa mārjayitvātha

dadyād ācamanīyakam || 39

*arghyādidattaśiṣṭāni
kṣipet pātrāntare tadā |
candanaṃ mālyadānaṃ ca
dhūpaṃ dīpaṃ diśet tataḥ || 40
punar ācamanīyaṃ ca
mukhavāsam ataḥ param |
tāmbūlaṃ ca nivedyātha
praṇamyātmanivedanam || 41*

*vidhāya
snānapīṭhaṃ tu
gandhapuṣpādīnārcayet |*

*vijñāpya pāduke dattvā
deve snānāsanam gate || 42
vastrabhūṣaṇamālyāni
vyapanīya tataḥ param |*

*snānārtham śāṭikāṃ dadyāt
pādyaṃ ācamanīyakam || 43
pādapīṭhapradānaṃ ca
dantakāṣṭhaṃ diśet tataḥ |
jihvānirlekhaṇam caiva
mukhaśodham atho diśet || 44*

*pratigrahapātre prakṣipet.
hastau prakṣālyā
pādayoḥ puṣpāṇi samarpya pādya-pātrāt
pādya-jalam ādāya pādayoḥ kiṃcid
datvā manasā pādaḥ prakṣālayan
pādyaṃ pratigrahapātre nikṣipet.
(hastau prakṣālyā)
vastreṇa pādaḥ sammrjya
gandhapuṣpāṇi datvā,
ācamanīya-pātrād ācamanīyam ādāya
bhagavadakṣiṇahaste kiṃcid pradāya
bhagavadvadane ācamanīyaṃ
samarpitam iti manasā bhāvayan śeṣam
ācamanīyaṃ pratigrahapātre nikṣipet.*

*tato gandhapuṣpa-
dhūpadīpa-
ācamana-
mukhavāsa-
tāmbūlādīnivedanaṃ kṛtvā,
praṇamyātmānam ātmīyaṃ ca sarvaṃ
bhagavan nityakiṃkaratvāya svīkurv iti
bhagavate
nivedayet.
tataḥ snānārtham āsanam ānīya
gandhādibhir abhyarcya
bhagavantaṃ praṇamya
anujñāpya, pāduke pradāya,
tatropaviṣṭe
mālyabhūṣaṇavastrāṇy
apanīya,
viṣvaksenāya datvā,
snānaśāṭikāṃ pradāya,
pādya-ca<ma>nīya-
pādapīṭhapradāna-
dantakāṣṭha-
jihvānirlekhaṇa-
gaṇḍūṣamukhaprakṣālyāna-*

*punar ācamanīyaṃ ca
tathādarśopadarśanam |*

*punas tāmbūladānaṃ ca
tailābhyaṅgaṃ ataḥ param || 45*

*udvartanavidhānaṃ ca
dānaṃ āmalakasya ca |
toyadānaṃ tataḥ kuryāt
kaṅkataplotam eva ca || 46*

*tato vidyād devasya
dehaśodhanaśāṅikām |
haridrālepanaṃ kuryāt
prakṣālanam ataḥ param || 47*

*vastrottariyake dadyād
upavītaṃ tathaiva ca |
pādyācamanake kuryād
vicitraṃ candanaṃ tathā || 48*

*gandhaṃ puṣpaṃ tathā dhūpaṃ
dīpaṃ ācamanaṃ tathā |
nṛttavādītraḡūdi-
sarvamaṅgalasaṃyutam || 49*

*abhiṣekaṃ tataḥ kuryān
nīrājanavidhiṃ tataḥ |
plotavastrottariye ca
upavītam ataḥ param || 50*

*tata ācamanīyaṃ ca
dattvā devāya deśikaḥ |*

*alaṅkāraśanaṃ paścād
abhyarcya prokṣaṅādīnā || 51*

*vijñāpya pāduke dattvā
deve viṣṭaram āśrite |
arghyādīny atha pātrāṇi*

*ācamana-
ādarśopadarśana-
hastaprakṣālanamukhavāsa-
tāmbūla-
tailābhyaṅga-
udvarta-
āmalaka-
toya-
kaṅkataplotā-*

*dehaśodhanaśāṅikāpradāna-
haridrālepana-
prakṣālana-
vastrottariya-
yajñopavītapradāna-
pādyācamana-
pavitrāpradāna-
gandhapuṣpadhūpa-
dīpācamana-
nṛttagītavādyādi-
sarvamaṅgalasaṃyukta-*

*abhiṣeka-
nīrājana-
ācamanadehaśodhana-
plotavastrottariya-
yajñopavīta-
ācamana-
kūrcaprasāraṇasaahasradhārābhiṣeka-
nīrājanācamanadehaśodhanaplotā-
vastrottariyayajñopavītācamānāni
dadyāt.*

186,22–187,13

tato 'alaṅkāraśanam

abhyarcya

praṇamya

anujñāpya, pāduke pradāya,

tatropaviṣṭe

pūrvavat snānīyavarjam arghyapādyā-

camānīyaśuddhodakāni mantreṇa

pūrvavat kalpayet tataḥ || 52
arghyaṃ pādyaṃ tato dadyāt
tata ācamanīyakam |

gandhavaccandanādyaiś ca
dravyaiś cārghyādikaṃ caret || 53
tataś citrāṇi vāsāṃsi
prayacched bhūṣaṇāni ca |
yajñopavitādānaṃ ca
tata ācamanīyakam || 54

gandhapuṣpapradānaṃ cāpy

ādarśasya pradarśanam |
dhūpadīpau tathā dadyāt
punar ācamanīyakam || 55
tataḥ stotraṃ japec
chatracāmarāṇaṃ pradarśanam |
darśanaṃ vāhanānāṃ ca
tataḥ śaṅkharavaṃ tathā || 56
vīṅākāhalabheryādi-
ninādaśrāvaṇaṃ tathā |
nṛttavāditragūtādyair
arcayen mantratas tataḥ || 57
mūlamantreṇa dadyāt tu
puṣpaṃ devāya deśikāḥ |

kalpayitvā

bhagavate
gandhapuṣpapādasaṃmardana-
vastrottarīya-
bhūṣaṇa-
upavīta-
arghyapādyaācamanīyāni datvā,
sarvaparivārāṇāṃ
snānavastrādibhūṣaṇāntaṃ datvā,
gandhādīn devān antaraṃ sarvapari-
vārāṇāṃ pratyekaṃ pradāya,
dhūpadīpācamanīyāni dadyāt. athavā
sarvaparivārāṇāṃ gandhādīn eva
dadyāt.

gandhapuṣpapradāna-
alaṅkāraṅjanordhvaṇpundra-
ādarśa-
dhūpadīpa-
ācamanadhvajā-

cchatracāmara-
vāhana-
śaṅkacihna-
kāhalabheryādi-

sakalanṛttagūtavādyādibhir
abhyarcya
mūlamantreṇa puṣpaṃ pradāya,

pratyakṣaraṃ puṣpaṃ pradāya
dvādaśākṣareṇa viṣṇuśaḍākṣareṇa
viṣṇugāyatrīyā pañcopaniśadaiḥ
puruṣasūktargbhir anyaiś ca bhagavan-
mantraiś śaktaś cet puṣpaṃ pradāya,
devyādidivyaṇpāriśadāntaṃ
tattanmantreṇa puṣpaṃ datvā

*puṣpāñjaliṃ pratidiśaṃ
pradakṣiṇapurāḥsaram* || 58

*dattvā punaḥ praṇamyātha
stotrair devaṃ stuvīta vai |
svam ātmānaṃ bhagavate
kiṃkaratvāya vedayet* || 59
*tato dhyātvā japeṇ mantram
yathāśakti samāhitaḥ |
ācāryaṃ gandhapuṣpādyaiḥ
samabhyarcya mune tataḥ* || 60
*sarvabhogais tu saṃpūrṇān
mantrāms tasmai nivedayet |
mukhavāsaṃ tato dadyāt
tāmbūlaṃ cārghyam eva ca* || 61
*bhojyāsanam athābhyarcya
devaṃ vijñāpya pādūke |
dadyāt tatropaviṣṭe 'smin
pādyam ācamaṇaṃ tataḥ* || 62
*arhaṇaṃ ca tataḥ kṛtvā
dadhyājyākṣīramākṣikān |
gandhaṃ ca pātre nikṣīpya
śoṣaṇādīkam ācāret* || 63
*saṃprokṣyārghyajālenaiva
madhuparkam atho diśet |*

*tato dadyāt suvarṇaṃ ca
gāṃ ca ratnāni pūjakaḥ* || 64
*susaṃskṛtānnaṃ ājyaṃ ca
dadhikṣīramadhūni ca |
mūlāni modakān snigdhaṇ
vyañjanāni phalāni ca* || 65
*yāni kālopapannāni
śucīni guṇavanti ca |*

*praṇamya,
pratidiśaṃ
pradakṣiṇapraṇāmapūrvakam
bhagavate puṣpāñjaliṃ
datvā purataḥ praṇamya,
śrūtisukhaiḥ stotrāiḥ stutvā,
ātmānaṃ
nityakiṃkaratayā nivedya,
tathaiva dhyātvā, yathāśakti
mūlamantram japitvā,

sarvabhogaprapūraṇiṃ mātṛāṃ datvā,

mukhavāsa-
tāmbūle pradāya, arghyam datvā
bhojyāsanam abhyarcya praṇamya
anujñāpya pādūke pradāya,
tatropaviṣṭe
pādyācamaṇīya-
arhaṇāni datvā,
guḍaṃ mākṣikam sarpir dadhi kṣīraṃ
ceti pātre nikṣīpya
śoṣaṇādibhir viśodhya,
arghyajālena saṃprokṣya,
madhuparkam
avanataśirā harṣotphullanayano
hr̥ṣṭamanā bhūtvā pradāyācamaṇīyaṃ
dadyāt. yat kiṃcid dravyaṃ bhagavate
dīyate tat sarvaṃ śoṣaṇādibhir
viśodhyārgyajālena saṃprokṣya dadyāt.
tataś ca gāṃ svarṇaratnādīkaṃ ca
yathāśakti dadyāt.
tatas susaṃskṛtānnaṃ ājyādhyam
dadhikṣīramadhūni ca
phalamūlavayañjanāni modakāṃś
cānyāni ca loke priyatamāny ātmanaś
ceṣṭāni śāstrāvīruddhāni saṃbhr̥tya*

svādiṣṭhāni prabhūtāni
 hr̥dyāny anyāni yāni ca || 66
 viśodhya śoṣaṇādyais tu
 samprokṣyārghyajalena tu |
 vidhāya rakṣāṃ astreṇa
 havir arhaṇapūrvakam || 67
 mudrām tu surabhiṃ kṛtvā
 devāyaitan nivedayet |
 anuvāsam tato dadyād
 darpaṇam ca tataḥ param || 68

dadyād ācamanīyam ca
 hastamārjanacandanam |
 mukhavāsam ca tāmbūlam
 pradāyāsmāi praṇamya ca || 69
 atha mantrāsanaṃ nyasya
 kūrcena parimṛjya ca |
 gandhapuṣpādīnābhycarya
 dadyād vijñāpya pāduke || 70
 tathādhirūḍhe deveśe
 mālyādīkam apohya tu |

pādyācamanake dattvā
 tato dhūpaṃ nivedayet || 71
 svādiṣṭhāni phalāny asmai

dadyāt tāmbūlam eva ca |
 gītavādītranṛttādyair
 devam abhycaryet tataḥ || 72
 pradakṣiṇam vidhāyāsmāi

śoṣaṇādibhir viśodhya
 arghyajalena samprokṣya
 astramantreṇa rakṣāṃ kṛtvā,
 187,13b
 arhaṇapūrvakam havir nivedayet.
 187,13a
 surabhimudrām pradarsya
 187,13–188,6

atiprabhūtam atisamagram
 atipriyatamam atyantabhaktikṛtam idaṃ
 svīkurv iti praṇāmapūrvakam
 atyantasādhrvasavinayāvanato bhūtvā
 nivedayet.
 tataś cānupānatarpaṇe pradāya
 hastapraṁkṣāḥ-
 ācamana-
 hastasammārjanacandana-
 mukhavāsatāmbūlādīni
 datvā praṇamya
 punar mantrāsanaṃ
 kūrcena mārjayitvā,
 abhycarya
 anujñāpya, pāduke pradāya
 tatropaviṣṭe
 mālyādīkam apohya
 viśvaksenāya datvā,
 pādyācamanīya-
 gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpācamanāpūpa-
 phalādīni datvā,
 ācamanamukhavāsa-
 tāmbūla-
 nṛtagītavādīyādibhir
 abhycarya,
 pradakṣiṇikṛtya

praṇamed daṇḍavat tataḥ |
 atha paryāṅkam abhyarcya
 devaṃ vijñāpayet tataḥ || 73
 tataḥ pādūpradānena
 deve paryāṅkam āsthite |
 pādyam ācamaṇīyaṃ ca
 punar dattvā samāhitaḥ || 74
 mālyabhūṣaṇakādīni
 vyapanīya mahāmate |

śayanocitamālyāni
 bhūṣaṇāny aṃśukāni ca || 75
 sukhasparśāni cānyāni
 dadyād yajñopavītakam |
 dadyād ācamaṇīyaṃ ca
 gandhaṃ puṣpam atho diśet || 76

mukhavāsaṃ ca tāmbūlaṃ
 dattvā stotraih stuvīta tam |

aṣṭāṅgena praṇāmena

daṇḍavat praṇamya,
 paryāṅkāsanam abhyarcya
 anujñāpya
 pādūke pradāya,
 tatropaviṣṭe
 pādyācamane
 dattvā
 mālyabhūṣaṇavastrāṇy
 apanīya
 viśvakṣeṇāya dattvā
 sukhaśayanocitaṃ sukhasparśaṃ ca
 vāsaś taducitāni bhūṣaṇāny

upavītaṃ ca pradāya
 ācamaṇīyaṃ dattvā
 gandhapuṣpa-
 dhūpadīpācamana-
 mukhavāsatāmbūlādibhir abhyarcya
 śrūtisukhaiḥ stotrair abhiṣṭīya
 bhagavān eva svanīyāmyasvarūpasthiti-
 pravṛttisvaśeṣataikaraseṇānenātmanā
 svakīyaś ca dehendriyāntaḥkaraṇaiḥ
 svakīyakalyāṇatamadravayamayān aupā-
 cārikasāṃsparśikābhyavahārikādīsama-
 stabhogān atiprabhūtān atisamagrān
 atipriyatamān atyantabhaktikṛtān
 akhilaparijanaparicchadānvitāya
 svasmai svaprītaye svayam eva
 pratipāditavān ity anusamdhāya,
 bhagavantam anujñāpya,
 bhagavanniveditahaviśśeṣād viśvakṣe-
 ṇāya kiṃcid uddhṛtya nidhāyānyat
 sarvaṃ svācāryapramukhebhyo
 vaiṣṇavebhyo dattvā, bhagavadyāgāvi-
 śīṣṭair jalādibhir dravyair viśvakṣeṇam
 abhyarcya, pūrvoddhṛtaṃ haviś ca
 dattvā, tadarcanam parisamāpya, bhaga-
 vantam
 aṣṭāṅgena praṇāmena

praṇamya śaraṇaṃ vrajet || 77
pradakṣiṇasametena
devaṃ yogāsanasthitam |
manobuddhyabhimānena
saha nyasya dharātale || 78
kūrmavac caturaḥ pādāñ
chiras tatraiva pañcamam |

praṇamya śaraṇaṃ upagacchet.

manobuddhyabhimānena
saha nyasya dharātale |
kūrmavac caturaḥ pādāñ
śiras tatraiva pañcamam ||
pradakṣiṇasametena
tv evaṃrūpeṇa sarvadā |
aṣṭāṅgena namaskṛtya
hy upaviśyāgrataḥ prabhoḥ || [= SS
 6.187c-189b]

ity ukto 'ṣṭāṅgapraṇāmaḥ.
śaraṇāgatiprakāraś ca pūrvoktaḥ. tato
'rghyajalaṃ pradāya bhagavantam
anujñāpya pūjāṃ samāpayet.

UTE HÜSKEN

Samskāras in Theory and Practice¹

The present paper deals with one of the transitional rites (*samskāras*, *rites de passage*) of a South Indian caste of temple priests, the Vaikhānasas. We are fortunate to have a ritual (the *samskāra niṣeka*) which can be traced back to the first literal exposition of a religious group (the Vaikhānasas), which is dealt with in many textual layers of this tradition, and which today still plays an important role in the self-definition of this group.

I shall track down the history and change of this ritual, and demonstrate the theoretical and practical impact of this change. It is evident that this ritual in spite of all changes is today nothing more than a formula which nevertheless establishes the uniqueness and superiority of the Vaikhānasa tradition within the Vaiṣṇava groups of South India. The considerations presented here are mainly based on Vaikhānasa Sanskrit texts,² but also on interviews with members of diverse Vaikhānasa communities in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Present-day Vaikhānasas are members of a Brahmin caste of temple priests in South Indian Viṣṇu temples.³ They have a very long literary tradition, reaching back most probably to the third or fourth century C.E., around the time when their Sūtras (*Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, *Vaikhānasaśrautrasūtra*) came into existence.⁴ At that time they formed a “branch” (*śākhā*) of the Taittirīya section of the black Yajurveda. Some centuries later a group called “Vaikhānasas” produced a number of Sanskrit-texts dealing with temple rituals to be performed by temple priests (*arcaka*) in a Viṣṇu temple. These texts are collectively called *Vaikhānasasamhitās*, the main corpus of which was written between the 9th and

1 I would like to thank the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) for its generous financial support which made the research for this paper possible.

2 In the present paper I only take into account printed Vaikhānasa texts. Furthermore, I did not standardize the cited Sanskrit-texts according to the common orthography.

3 See Colas 1996: 111–138; Colas 1984: 73–86; Hüsken 2001: 169–179.

4 On the date of the Vaikhānasasūtras see Bloch 1896, Caland 1926 and Keith 1927: 623–624.

the 14th centuries C.E.⁵ At the time of the compilation of the *Vaikhānasasamhitās* the *Vaikhānasas*—or at least some of them—evidently had developed from a Vedic school to a group of ritual specialists, occupied with the performance of the ritual in Viṣṇu temples.

This holds true until today: nowadays the *Vaikhānasas* are one of two main groups in South India⁶ which perform the rites in Viṣṇu temples. Contemporary *Vaikhānasa arcakas* claim to be direct descendents of *Vikhanas*, the mythical enunciator of the *Vaikhānasasūtras*, and they frequently refer to the four mythical *ṛṣis*, who were pupils of *Vikhanas* and who compiled the *Vaikhānasasamhitās* on the basis of *Vikhanas*' personal instructions on temple rites. Therefore, the *Vaikhānasasūtras* together with the *Vaikhānasasamhitās* are collectively called *Vaikhānasabhagavacchāstra*, the “canon” of the *Vaikhānasas*.

While referring to their supposedly *vaidika* tradition the *Vaikhānasa* texts rarely mention a concrete “Vedic” ritual. One exception is the prenatal *saṃskāra niṣeka*, which is mentioned in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* and therefore is Vedic in character. The contemporary *arcakas* belonging to this tradition frequently refer to one half-verse given in some of the *Vaikhānasamhitās* which characterizes one of the peculiarities of the *Vaikhānasas*: as temple priests they are “endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*, as laid down in the *Vaikhānasasūtra*” (*vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvit[a]*).⁷

The contents of the *Sūtras* are very different of those of the *Samhitās*: while the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is concerned with the religious duties during the four “stages of life” (*varṇāśramadharmā*), and the domestic duties and rituals of an individual *Vaikhānasa* male, the *Samhitās* are mainly guidelines for the public rituals to be performed by a “professional” *Vaikhānasa* priest in Viṣṇu temples. Therefore, the expression “being endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*, as laid down in the *Vaikhānasasūtra*” in the *Samhitās* is the most conspicuous reference to the “Vedic roots” of the *Vaikhānasas* in their *Samhitā*-literature⁸ and thus seems to bridge a gap of at least 500 years between the com-

5 Colas 1996. On the dates of the *Vaikhānasasamhitās* see esp. pp. 57–97.

6 The other group of temple priests are the so-called *Pāñcarātrins*.

7 This half-verse frequently appears in the *Samhitās*; see for example *Ānandasamhitā* 4.73ab, *ibid.* 9.2ab, *ibid.* 11.13cd, *ibid.* 13.37cd, *Yajñādhikāra* 51.2cd, *ibid.* 51.33cd, *Samūrtārcanādhikāraṇa* 27.10ab, *ibid.* 65.122cd, *Khilādhikāra* 1.38cd, *ibid.* 16.3ab, *ibid.* 41.6cd, *Kriyādhikāra* 1.22cd, *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 11.2ab, *ibid.* 18.4ab.

8 Although there are frequent references to the Vedic background and principles underlying the temple rituals of the *Vaikhānasas* (for example *Ānandasamhitā* 14.18ab: *yad vāstv a-ṅgālaye viṣṇor arcanam vaidikam bhaved* |; *Yajñādhikāra* 51.1cd: *viṣṇos tantram dvidhā proktam arcanārthan tu vaidikam* |; *Samūrtārcanādhikāraṇa* 65.120cd: *mukhyaṃ vaidi-*

pilation of the Sūtras and the emergence of the Saṃhitās—a period otherwise covered rather poorly in the textual references to the Vaikhānasas.⁹

Niṣeka, the ritual referred to in the above-mentioned self-projection, is the first sexual intercourse of a newly married couple (literally *niṣeka* means “pouring [of semen]”). It is one of the rituals usually categorized as *saṃskāra* in the earliest texts on domestic rituals, the Gṛhyasūtras. *Saṃskāras* are transitional rites to be performed at crucial points in the life of an individual. Other common *saṃskāras* are for example the rituals connected with childbirth, name-giving, initiation to Vedic learning, marriage etc.¹⁰

Niṣeka in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*

The use of the term *niṣeka* for the first sexual intercourse of the newly married couple is by no means uniform in the early literature on domestic rituals, the Gṛhyasūtras. There are also other traditional terms: *garbhādhāna* (“giving of a foetus”), *ṛtusamgamana* (“coming together during the fertile period”)¹¹ and *caturthivrata* (“vow of the fourth night [after marriage]”), or *caturthikarman* (“the ritual of the fourth night [after marriage]”). The *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, however, counts *niṣeka* as well as *garbhādhāna* and *ṛtusamgamana*. In our context *niṣeka* as “pouring of semen” mainly refers to the (possible) result of the husband’s emission of semen, namely “impregnation”. Therefore, it is considered “the first *saṃskāra*” of an unborn child in the Vaikhānasa tradition.

Since the mediaeval ritual texts as well as the present day representatives of the Vaikhānasa tradition frequently refer to the earliest preserved literary expositions of this group, the *Vaikhānasasūtra*, as the authoritative and primary source of their rituals, I will examine the ritual *niṣeka* as given in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* first.

kam uddiṣṭam gauṇam vai tāntrikaṃ smṛtam |; *Ānandasamhitā* 2.87ab: *sa tu vaikhānase sūtre viṣṇvarcām āha vaidikīm* |; *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 30.6a: *vaikhānasaṃ vaidikaṃ syād*; *Ānandasamhitā* 8.21cd: *vaidikaṃ vikhanāḥ proktaṃ tāntrikaṃ pāñcarātrakaṃ* |) and although the *Vaikhānasasūtra* is sometimes even equated with the Veda (*Ānandasamhitā* 4.49: *vede vaikhānase sūtre yo dharmāḥ parikīrtitaḥ* | *sarvais sadharmo ’nuṣṭheyo nātra kāryā vicāraṇā* ||), the reference to a concrete “Vedic” ritual is rare.

9 On the rare inscriptional references to Vaikhānasas see Colas 1996: 58–63. Therefore, the development of a group called Vaikhānasa from a Vedic branch (*śākhā*) to a Hindu caste remains obscure for the time being.

10 On the Gṛhyasūtras see Gonda 1977. On *saṃskāras* see Pandey 1949, and see Kane 1997 vol. 2, chapter 6: *Saṃskāras*.

11 On menstruation as a period of fertility, see Slaje 1997: 207–234, see also Slaje 1995: 109–148.

The opening sentence there reads: “We will now explain the *saṃskāras*, which begin with *niṣeka*” (*atha niṣekādisaṃskārān vyākhyāsyāmaḥ*). Thus, not only do the *saṃskāras* start with *niṣeka*, but the whole *Vaikhānasasūtra* puts *niṣeka* in the first place. It is evident that the standard expression in the *Samhitās vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvit[a]-*, “endowed with the *saṃskāras* as laid down in the *Vaikhānasasūtra*, beginning with *niṣeka*”, is based on this first sentence of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. The *Sūtra* then continues:

There are eighteen *saṃskāras* relating to the body: (*niṣeka* as the first, secondly the couple) comes together during the (wife’s) fertile period (*ṛtusamgamana*), the impregnation (*garbhādhāna*), the ceremony of securing male offspring (*pumsavana*), the parting of the (pregnant wife’s) hair (*sīmanta*), the *bali*-offering to Viṣṇu (*viṣṇubali*), the birth-rite (*jātakarman*), the getting up (from the child-bed) (*utthāna*), the name-giving (*nāmakaraṇa*), feeding (the child the first solid) food (*annaprāśana*), the return from (the first) excursion (*pravāsāgamana*), the increasing of the rice-balls (*piṇḍavardhana*), the (first) tonsure (*cauḍaka*), the initiation into Vedic studies (*upanayana*), the undertaking and the abandonment of the *pārāyaṇa*-vow (*parāyaṇavratibandhavisarga*), the (annual) taking up (of studies) (*upākarman*), the returning (home after the completion of the Vedic studies) (*samāvartana*), the grasping of (the future wife’s) hand (= marriage) (*pāṇigrahaṇa*); and the 22 sacrifices (*yajña*) (which also count as *saṃskāras*) are the sacrifice to Brahmā (*brahmayajña*), to the Gods (*devayajña*), to the Fathers (*pitryajña*), to the Bhūtas (*bhūtayajña*) and to the men (*manuṣyayajña*)—(these are the) five (which) have to be performed daily (and which together count as one). (Furthermore there are) the seven sacrifices of cooked food (*pākayajña*), (namely) *sthālīpāka*, *āgrayaṇa*, *aṣṭakā*, the sacrifice of rice-balls to the Fathers (*piṇḍapitryajña*), the monthly *śrāddha* (*māsiśrāddha*), the *caitri*- and *āśvayujī*-sacrifices, (furthermore) the seven sacrifices of *havis* (*haviryajña*), (namely) *agnyādheya*, *agnihotra*, the two sacrifices at full and new moon (*darśapūrṇamāsa*), *āgrayaṇeṣṭi*, *cāturmāsya*, *nirūḍhapaśubandha* and *sautrāmaṇī*, (furthermore) the seven sacrifices to Soma (*somayajña*), (namely) *agniṣṭoma*, *atyagniṣṭoma*, *ukthya*, *ṣoḍaśin*, *vājapeya*, *atirātra*, and *aptoryāma*. These are the 40 (*saṃskāras*).¹²

12 *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* I.1: *atha niṣekādisaṃskārān vyākhyāsyāmaḥ. ṛtusamgamanagarbhādhānapumsavanasīmantaviṣṇubalijātakarmothānanāmakaraṇānnaprāśanapravāsāgamanapiṇḍavardhanacauḍakopanayanapārāyaṇavratibandhavisargopākarmasamāvartanapāṇigrahaṇānīty aṣṭādaśa saṃskārāḥ śārīrāḥ. yajñās ca dvāviṃśat brahmayajño devayajño pitryajño bhūtayajño manuṣyayajñās ceti pañcānām aharaharanuṣṭhānam. sthālīpāka āgrayaṇam aṣṭakā piṇḍapitryajño māsiśrāddham caitryāśvayujīti sapta pākayajñāḥ. agnyādheyam agnihotram darśapūrṇamāsāv āgrayaṇeṣṭiś cāturmāsyo nirūḍhapaśubandhaḥ sautrāmaṇīti sapta haviryajñāḥ. agniṣṭomo 'tyagniṣṭoma ukthyaḥ ṣoḍaśī vājapeyo 'tirātro 'ptoryāma iti sapta somayajñā ity. ete catvāriṃśad bhavanti.*

This list in the beginning of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* speaks of 18 *saṃskāras* “relating to the body” and 22 sacrifices, which also count as *saṃskāras*. This amounts to 40 *saṃskāras* altogether. While according to the opening sentence the series of *saṃskāras* starts with *niṣeka*, this ensuing list continues with *ṛtusamgamana*, the “coming together during the fertile period”, which is a term for the sexual intercourse of husband and wife at a certain time after the beginning of the wife’s menstrual flow.

This has been interpreted differently by the first Western investigators of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. Theodor Bloch¹³ counts *ṛtusamgamana* as the first *saṃskāra* and counts *pārāyaṇa*, *vratibandhavisarga* and *upākarmaṇ* each as separate *saṃskāras*. Therefore, he evidently considers *ṛtusamgamana* identical with *niṣeka*. Caland in his translation of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* follows the interpretation of Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s commentary¹⁴ and explicitly states that *niṣeka* is different from *ṛtusamgamana*. Kane in his *History of Dharmaśāstra* states that in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* *ṛtusamgamana* is also called *niṣeka*.¹⁵ Pandey in his *Hindu Saṃskāras* interprets *ṛtusamgamana* as the Vaikhānasas’ first *saṃskāra*. However, he does not count *puṃsavana*, he separates *pārāyaṇa* from *vratibandhavisarga*, and places a *saṃskāra* called *utsarjana* after *upākarmaṇ*.¹⁶ This interpretation cannot be based on the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*.

A close look at the text shows that the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* itself is not uniform in this respect either. In the description of the prenatal *saṃskāras* (from *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8 onwards) it leaves it largely to the reader to decide which of the described prenatal rituals is designated by which of the “key words” given in the list at the beginning of the text. Only in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.11 (*puṃsavana*) 3.12 (*sīmanta*), and 3.13 (*viṣṇubali*) are the names of the *saṃskāras* listed in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.1 mentioned,¹⁷ but not in the sections on *niṣeka*, *ṛtusamgamana*, and *garbhādhāna*. In *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8 the first sexual intercourse of the newly married couple in the fourth night

13 Bloch 1896. It should be noted that Bloch also lists Varṣavardhaṇa as *saṃskāra*, which is not given in the list, and thus counts 19 *saṃskāras*.

14 For his edition of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* Caland used one manuscript in Telugu characters which contains the Bhāṣya of Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin (see Caland 1941: v).

15 See Kane 1968ff. vol. 2.1: 195ff.

16 See Pandey 1949: 17–23.

17 For example *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.11 starts with: *atha garbhādhānādicaturthe māsi puṃsavanaṃ bhavati*.

after the marriage ceremonies is prescribed under the heading *caturthivāsa*¹⁸. This is *niṣeka*, although the term *niṣeka* is not used here.¹⁹

Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra 3.9 (the heading *ṛtusamgamana* is given only by the editor and translator Caland), describes the restrictions for a menstruating woman and prescribes sexual intercourse in the fourth night after the beginning of the menstrual flow, without actually using the term *ṛtusamgamana*. *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.10, under the heading *garbhādhāna*, which is also inserted by Caland, describes a ritual which should be performed when the first signs of pregnancy are perceptible, again without explicitly using the term *garbhādhāna*. Thus according to *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8 and 3.9 *niṣeka* is indeed different from *ṛtusamgamana*, and is given—among other rituals—as part of the rituals subsumed under the heading *caturthivāsa*.

Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra 6.1, the beginning of the *prāyaścitta*-chapter, reads: *atha niṣekādisaṃskārāṇāṃ prāyaścittaṃ vyākhyāsyāmaḥ*, “we now will explain the atonement for the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*”. Here the *saṃskāras* are characterized as “beginning with *niṣeka*”, too. Thus this sentence is in perfect accordance with the opening sentence of the Sūtra. However, in the beginning of the next sub-chapter, *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 6.2, the opinion of “others” is given: *ṛtau saṃgamaṇaṃ niṣekam ity āhuḥ*, “they say that the sexual intercourse during the fertile period is *niṣeka*”. Here the Sūtrakāra quotes “their” opinion without giving his own. However, on account of indirect evidence one could be tempted to conclude that the Sūtrakāra himself is of the opinion that *ṛtusamgamana* and *niṣeka* are one ritual: the description of the expiation for *ṛtusamgamana* follows immediately, whereas no atonement for *niṣeka* is given at all.²⁰

18 *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.5 starts with *atha caturthivāso*. Under this heading we find a detailed description of the proceedings following the marriage rituals, that is a description of the regular sacrifices the husband has to commence as soon as he reaches home with his wife etc.

19 Caland, however, gives the heading “The ceremony performed on impregnation: *niṣeka*” for *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8. in his translation (p. 77).

20 Ibid. 6.2: *svabhāryāyāṃ ṛtusnātāyāṃ ṣoḍaśāhe saṃgamane hīne ’gnim ādhāyāghāraṃ hutvā vaiṣṇavaṃ brāhmaṃ aindram āgneyaṃ dadbhyaḥ svāhety aṅgahomaṃ jayān abhyātānāṃ rāṣṭrabhr̥to hutvāntahomaṃ juhōti snātām alamkṛtām bhāryāṃ pūrvavad gacchet*. “If he is without sexual intercourse on the 16th day with his own wife, who has bathed (after the first three days) of her fertile period, (then,) having placed the fire (in the sacrificial fire-place), having sprinkled ghee on the fire, having offered (while reciting) the Vaiṣṇava(mantras), Brāhma(mantras), Aindra(mantras) (and) Āgneya(mantras), (having offered) the *homa* for the limbs (reciting) ‘To the teeth, svāhā (etc.)’, (having offered reciting the) Jaya(mantras), the Abhyātāna(mantra)s and the Rāṣṭrabhr̥t(mantra)s, he of-

Evidently, even within the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* there is not always a clear dividing line between the prenatal *saṃskāras* *niṣeka*, *ṛtusamgamana*, and *garbhādhāna*. There is some evidence that the impregnation (*niṣekarṛtusamgamana*) in some cases is also referred to as *garbhādhāna*, which literally means “the giving of a foetus”. *Garbhādhāna* according to the “list of 18 *saṃskāras*” at the beginning of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* has to be performed after *ṛtusamgamana* and before *pūṃsavana*. As already mentioned, the relevant passage *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.10 does not use the term *garbhādhāna* and the ritual described there is in fact a public acknowledgement of the pregnancy. However, in other texts on domestic rituals the term *garbhādhāna* is often used in its literal meaning, designating the sexual intercourse resulting in impregnation,²¹ instead of *niṣeka*, *caturthīvāsa/caturthīvrata/caturthīkarman* or *ṛtusamgamana*. This seems to be the case also in some passages of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. For example the proper time for the performance of *pūṃsavana* and *sīmanta/viṣṇubali* is calculated in relation to *garbhādhāna*. *Pūṃsavana* shall be performed four months after *garbhādhāna*,²² and *sīmanta* shall be performed eight months after *garbhādhāna*.²³ If, as the “list of 18 *saṃskāras*” at the beginning of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* suggests, *garbhādhāna* is a separate ritual, different from *niṣeka* and *ṛtusamgamana*, then it has to be the ritual described in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.10, marking the public acknowledgement of the pregnancy. This ritual takes place as soon as unmistakable signs of the pregnancy are recognizable. Thus, this ritual can be performed in the third month of pregnancy at the earliest.²⁴ The duration of pregnancy is ten (lunar) months. Accordingly, the proper time for *sīmanta* (and *viṣṇubali*) cannot possibly be in the 8th month after *garbhādhāna*, since this would be in the 11th month of pregnancy—one month after birth. Therefore I assume that the two prescribed dates for *pūṃsavana* and

fers the final *homa*; he approaches his wife, who has taken a bath and who is adorned, as told before”.

21 See for example *Boḍhāyanagrhyasūtra* 4.6.1, *Boḍhāyanagrhyasūtra* 2.2.1 and 2.2.7, *Gautamaḍharmasūtra* 1.8.14, *Kāṭhagrhyasūtra* 30.8, Kullūka on *Manusmṛti* 2.16, 2.26 and 2.27, Harīta as quoted in *Saṃskāramayūkha*, p. 11, Aṅgīras as quoted in *Saṃskāramayūkha*, p. 11.

22 *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.11: *atha garbhāḍhānāḍicaturthe māsi pūṃsavanaṃ bhavati*.

23 Ibid. 3.12: *atha garbhāḍhānāḍyaṣṭame māsi sīmantonnyanaṃ kuryāt*.

24 The signs of pregnancy are described in *ibid.* 3.10: *atha gṛhītagarbhāliṅgāni śarīrāṭopah sakthiśīḍanaṃ ḍveṣo bhartur arūcīr āhāro lālāprakopaḥ kharatā vācaḥ spuranaṃ yoner iti garbhasya ḍaivānubandhaṃ jñātvā [...]*. “After he [the performer] has perceived the signs of pregnancy, (namely) the swelling of the body, tiredness of the thighs, dislike of the husband, aversion to food (see Caland’s translation, p. 80 note 1), superabundance of saliva, roughness of the voice, quivering of the womb [...]”.

sīmanta do not refer to *garbhādhāna* as given in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.10, but to the—ritualized—moment of impregnation, which is termed *niṣekal ṛtusamgamana* in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, but *garbhādhāna* in other Sūtras. This hints at a potential interchangeability of the terms for those 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*. This could explain the non-uniform use of the respective terms.

There is one more passage in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* where *niṣeka* is given as the first *saṃskāra*. In *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.1, immediately after the list of 40 *saṃskāras*, a hierarchy of Brahmins laid down:

A *putramātra* (“only a son”) is one who is just born from a Brahmin out of a Brahmin woman, who 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 *pāṇigrahaṇa*, he is a *śrotriya* as soon as he is also offering the *pākayajñas*. One who has kindled his fire, who is keen on studying (the Veda), through the *haviryajñas* is an *anūcāna*. Through the *somayajñas* 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*”). 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*,²⁵ is a *muni*. Thus, in consequence of the particularity of each preceding *saṃskāra* respectively, he becomes the most excellent, thus it is taught.²⁶

This hierarchy is explicitly arranged according to the *saṃskāras* a (potential) Brahmin should be endowed with (*śārīra saṃskāras*) or is supposed to perform (*yajña saṃskāras*). Additionally, in the cases of the *ṛṣikalpa*, the *ṛṣi*, and the *muni*, a Brahmin should have further qualities pertaining to his abilities to control his body and, as the best quality of all, he is exclusively devoted to Nārā-

25 Caland translates with reference to Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s Bhāṣya (p. 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”.

26 *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 1.1: *niṣekād ā jātakāt saṃskṛtāyāṃ brāhmaṇyāṃ brāhmaṇāj jātamātraḥ putramātra. upanītaḥ sāvitṛyadhyayanād brāhmaṇo. vedam adhūta śārīrair ā pāṇigrahaṇāt saṃskṛtaḥ pākayajñair api yajan śrotriyaḥ. svādhyāyapara āhitāgnir haviryajñair apy anūcānaḥ. somayajñair api bhrūṇaḥ. saṃskārair etair upeto niyamayamābhyām ṛṣikalpaḥ. sāṅgacaturvedatapyogād ṛṣiḥ nārāyaṇaparāyaṇo nirdvandvo munir iti saṃskāraviśeṣāt pūrvāt pūrvāt paro varīyaṇ iti vijñāyate.*

yaṇa. This passage expresses the concept of the *saṃskāras* in the early Vaikhānasa system, which is in full accordance with Brian K. Smith's definition that the *saṃskāras* actualize and realize the potential inherent in a human being.²⁷ In this case, one can even go further, since the Vaikhānasas not only gradually become "better" Brahmins, but they also become Vaikhānasas by undergoing the *saṃskāras* given in their Sūtra.

Here, as in the beginning of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, *niṣeka* is considered the first *saṃskāra*. However, I would like to give the expression *niṣekād ā jātakāt saṃskṛtāyāṃ brāhmaṇyāṃ brāhmaṇāj jātamātraḥ*, "[...] born from a Brahmin out of a Brahmin woman, who is endowed with the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka* to *jātaka* [...]" a second interpretation. Although the performance of these rituals evidently is for the child insofar as the child successively becomes a better Brahmin through the *saṃskāras*, grammatically it is the mother who is "made perfect" (*saṃskṛtāyāṃ brāhmaṇyāṃ*) by the prenatal *saṃskāras* and the birth rites.²⁸ The opinion of "some", given in the *prāyaścitta* section of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, that the prenatal *saṃskāras* are performed only in the first pregnancy,²⁹ is in full accordance with this view.

To sum up, the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*'s description that *garbhādhāna* stands for a ceremony which marks the public acknowledgement of the pregnancy, is rather unusual for the Sūtra literature. In fact, the term is not explicitly used in the relevant passage of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. Moreover, in two cases *garbhādhāna* evidently refers to the moment of impregnation. The term *niṣeka* is also not used in an entirely uniform manner in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. A part of the marriage ceremonies—described under the heading *caturthivāsa* in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8—is *niṣeka*. In two cases the "*saṃskāras* relating to the body" are referred to by *niṣekādisaṃskārān/niṣekādisaṃskārāṇām*, and once the prenatal *saṃskāras* together with the birth rites are described as *niṣekād ā jātakāt*. This use of the term *niṣeka* may be inspired by Manu's *Dharmaśāstra*: in three *ślokas* he uses the expression *niṣekādi[-]* to summarize the *saṃskāras* without actually describing them.³⁰

27 B.K. Smith 1998: 86f. and 92.

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

29 *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 6.3: *garbhinyāḥ prathame garbhe kṛtā garbhasaṃskārās, tasyāḥ sarvagarbhāṇām saṃskārā bhavantīty eke*.

30 *Manusmṛti* 2.16: *niṣekādiśmaśānānto mantrair yasyodito vidhiḥ | tasya śāstre 'dhikāro 'smiñ jñeyo nānyasya kasya cit ||*; *Manusmṛti* 2.26: *vaidikaiḥ karmabhiḥ puṇyair niṣekādīr*

Niṣeka in the *Vaikhānasasamhitās*

As mentioned in the beginning of this paper, the most explicit reference the *Vaikhānasasamhitā* literature makes to the *Vaikhānasasūtras* is the expression *vai-khānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvit[a-]*, “endowed with the rituals which begin with *niṣeka* according to the *Vaikhānasasūtra*”.³¹ This standard expression is usually given as one defining characteristic of a priest (*arcaka*) who regularly performs the rituals in a Viṣṇu temple, or of the main priest who leads the performance of the temple rituals (*ācārya*). In more specific terms this view is also expressed in the *Ānandasamhitā* 4 (verses 45–49 and 70–73), although the term *niṣeka* is not used there: the *Vaikhānasas* perform Viṣṇu’s worship, they belong to the family (*vaṃśa*) of *Vikhanas*, they follow the *dharma* laid down in the *Vaikhānasasūtra*, and they are endowed with the 18 *saṃskāras* “relating to the body” (*śārīra*) and the 22 sacrifices (*yajña*).³²

Moreover, the expression *vai-khānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvit[a-]* also is frequently used in order to distinguish the *Vaikhānasas* from other *Vaiṣṇava* groups. One passage in the *Yajñādhikāra* deals with the “division of the *Vaiṣṇava-Śāstra*” (*vaiṣṇavaśāstrabheda*, *Yajñādhikāra* chapter 51). There it is stated that there are two teachings (*tantra*) for the worship of Viṣṇu. One is character-

dviṅmanam | kāryaḥ śarīrasaṃskāraḥ pāvanaḥ pretya ceha ca || Manusmṛti 2.142: niṣekādīni karmāṇi yaḥ karoti yathāvidhi | saṃbhāvayati cānena sa vipro gurur ucyate || This further supports Keith’s thesis that Manu’s *Dharmaśāstra* precedes the compilation of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. Caland (1926: 176ff.) argues mainly on account of the congruence of the “eight forms of marriage” that one of Manu’s sources was the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. In his review, Keith (1927: 623–624), argues that Manu was one of the sources of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, mainly on account of the local character of the *Vaikhānasa* tradition

- 31 Another important connecting link between *Sūtras* and *Samhitās* is *Vikhanas* himself. He is said to have enunciated the *Sūtra* as well as the content of the *Samhitās* (see, for example, *Ānandasamhitā* 17.10–12, and 17.38–39).
- 32 In the *Yajñādhikāra* there are two passages dealing with the necessary qualifications of an *ācārya*, where—in both cases without reference to *niṣeka*—it is only mentioned that the *ācārya* has to be a *Vaikhānasa* (*Yajñādhikāra* 2.1–3, *ācāryavaraṇam*) and that he has to be “endowed with the rituals given in *Vaikhānasasmārta-* and *śrautasūtra*” (*Yajñādhikāra* 23.11, *ācāryavaraṇam: vai-khānasena sūtreṇa śrautasamrtakriyānvitān*). However, in the same text (ibid. 51.33–34) it is stated that not only the *arcakas*, but also less important assistants (*paricāraka*) and the cooks in the temple have to be “endowed with the *saṃskāras* as given in the *Vaikhānasasūtra*, which start with *niṣeka*”. I only found two further instances in the *Samhitās* where in a similar context the *saṃskāras*, beginning with *niṣeka*, are not explicitly mentioned or referred to: in *Khilādhikāra* 22 (162: *arcakamahimā*) it is only stated that the *arcaka* is identical with Viṣṇu, and in *Vāsādhikāra* 1 (*śiṣyalakṣaṇa*) *niṣeka* is also not mentioned.

ized as *vaidika* and *saumya*. It is followed by Brahmins, who are “endowed with the rituals given in the Vaikhānasasūtra, which start with *niṣeka*”. This method of worship is based on the Veda. The other method of worship is *tāntrika* and *āgneya* and is performed by people who have undergone an initiation (*dīkṣā*; *Yajñādhikāra* 51.1–7). This *dīkṣā* is not described in this passage of the *Yajñādhikāra*. One Vaiṣṇava group which is frequently described as “having a *dīkṣā*” in the Vaikhānasasamhitās are the followers of the Pāñcarātra system of Viṣṇu-worship.³³ Since some passages describe a *dīkṣā* as “consisting of marking/branding” (*Kriyādhikāra* 36.48, AS 8.27) and at the same time the Pāñcarātrins are frequently described as “having a marking/branding”,³⁴ it is legitimate to conclude that at least one of the possible *dīkṣās* for Pāñcarātrins consists of or includes a process referred to as *cihna*, *taptamudrā*, *taptacakrāṅkaṇa*, *cakralāñchana* or *tāpasamskāra* in the Samhitās,³⁵ a “marking” (*cihna*, *lāñchana*, *anka-na*) with a “wheel” (*cakra*) which consists of “branding” (*tapta-*, *tāpa-*). This is explicitly stated in the *Ānandasamhitā*: a process called *bahistaptacakradīkṣā*/*bāhyataptadīkṣā* consists of heating (metal symbols of a) wheel in the fire for the oblations during the *upanayana samskāra* and the subsequent marking (branding) of the arms of the Pāñcarāta-initiant with it.³⁶ The term *cakrāṅkana* clearly refers to one element of the so-called *pañcasamskāras* of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, as is evident from another passage of the *Ānandasamhitā*.³⁷ These *pañcasamskāras*, the “five *samskāras*”, are a set of rituals which already can be found in some of the Pāñcarātasamhitās and was later on taken over by the Śrīvaiṣṇavas as initiation into their tradition.³⁸

In five Vaikhānasasamhitā texts a clear line is drawn between (the branding element of) the *pañcasamskāras* and the *samskāras* of the Vaikhānasasūtra: in the *Kriyādhikāra* Viṣṇu emphasizes that the Vaikhānasas are his sons, that they

33 See for example *Yajñādhikāra* 51.4ff., *Kriyādhikāra* 1.18 and 36.32.

34 See for example *Ānandasamhitā* 19.13, 19.15, *Samūrtārcanādhikāraṇa* 65.122–124.

35 *Ānandasamhitā* 4.50f., 4.57, 4.60–67c, 4.81, 8.1, 8.3, 8.8–10a, 8.13, 8.24, 8.25–28a, 8.31, 8.33, 9.11, 11.28–29, 12.30–31, 13.39, 16.19, 17.19, 19.11, 19.13, 19.15, *Samūrtārcanādhikāraṇa* 65.122–124, *Yajñādhikāra* 51.4ff., *Kriyādhikāra* 1.18, 32.94, 33.56–57, 36.32, 36.45f., 36.48d, 36.51ff., *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 18.25, 27.266, 30.7, *Khilādhikāra* 41.9.

36 *Ānandasamhitā* 8.26c: *upanayanāgninā taptacakreṅgāṅkanam aṃsayoh* | Ibid. 8.27a: *yā sā bahistaptacakradīkṣety evam udāhṛtā* || and ibid. 8.29a: *bāhyataptādīkṣānusaraṇam pañcarātriṇaṃ*. See also *Prakīrṇādhikāra* 30.5–7.

37 *Ānandasamhitā* 12.30: *cakrāṅkaṇaṃ cordhvapuṇḍraṃ śrīharer dāsanāma ca* | *kṛṣṇama-ntrajapaś cāpi mādhavārādhanaṃ tathā* || Ibid. 12.31: *amī tu pañcasamskārāḥ pāramai-kāntya siddhidāḥ* | *pāramaikāntya yuktā hi gaccheyur vaiṣṇavaṃ padam* ||

38 As Raman argues, this ritual since the 12th–13th centuries was called “resorting to Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa”, *samāśrayaṇa* (see Raman in this volume).

are Vaiṣṇavas by birth (*garbhavaiṣṇava*), that they do not have the *taptamudrā*, that they are endowed with the rituals starting with *niṣeka*, and that they do not have a *mantradikṣā* or any other teacher but Viṣṇu himself.³⁹ Since the *pañca-saṃskāras* also include a *mantra* element and the role of the teacher (*guru*) is very important, the reference to the *pañcasamskāras* is very clear here. There is a similar statement in the *Ānandasamhitā* (4.50–52), where Viṣṇu stresses that the Vaikhānasas are his sons and marked by him, and therefore do not need to undergo a branding (*cihna*) but are Vaiṣṇavas by birth (*garbhavaiṣṇava*).⁴⁰ The regular distinction drawn between Vaikhānasas and Pāñcarātrins therefore is between those, who are “endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*” and those who have undergone the branding.

Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa is another Saṃhitā-text which uses the expression *taptacakrāṅkana* to distinguish between Vaikhānasas and Pāñcarātrins. However, here the Pāñcarātrins are described as being “marked with a heated wheel, and being endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* as given by Bodhāyana or Kātyāyana”. Furthermore, they are endowed with Smārta- and Śrauta-rituals other than Vaikhānasa, and they perform the worship according to the Pāñcarātra teachings.⁴¹ A similar view on this topic is expressed in *Khilādhikāra*. There, while dealing with the two systems of worship (*vaikhānasa/śaun-ya/vaidika* and *pāñcarātra/āgneya/tāntrika*; *Khilādhikāra* 41.1–2), it is explicitly stated that only those who are “endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra, which begin with *niṣeka*”, are allowed to perform the “Vedic worship” (*vaidikapūjā*). Those who are endowed with the *saṃskāras* according

39 *Kriyādhikāra* 36.53: *vaikhānasā mama sūtā garbhavaiṣṇavajātakāḥ | teṣāṃ bahir na tāpo na punaḥ karaṇam āpadi || madbhaktiyuktasya madaurasasya niṣekakarmādivirājitasya | vaikhānasasyāsyā na taptamudrā na mantradikṣā na gurur mayā vinā ||*

40 *Ānandasamhitā* 4.50: *kṛtamallāṃchanānāṃ ca garbhavaiṣṇavajanmanāṃ | matputrāṅṅāṃ na cihnāni dāsās cihnāsamanvitāḥ || Ibid. 4.51: vaikhānasā mama sūtā garbhavaiṣṇavajātakāḥ | teṣāṃ pṛthaṇ na cihnāni cakrādīnāṃ gurur na hi ||* Here another passage in the *Ānandasamhitā* explicitly states that an *ācārya* who is endowed with the rituals given in the Vaikhānasasūtra, which start with *niṣeka*, can bestow *taptacakrāṅkana* on others in order to transform them into Vaiṣṇavas (*Ānandasamhitā* 11.12–15).

41 *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa* 65.122: *gauṇe mukhyaṃ prakurvīta mukhyaṃ gauṇe na cācaret | vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvitāḥ || Ibid. 65.123: brāhmaṇā vaiṣṇavāḥ proktāḥ saumyāḥ paramasāttvikāḥ | pāñcarātravidhānena taptacakrāṅkitā bhuvī || Ibid. 65.124: bodhāyanādisūtroktaṇiṣekādikriyānvitāḥ | āgneyā vaiṣṇavāḥ proktāḥ tathā kātyāyanādayaḥ || Ibid. 65.125: avaiṣṇavasūtroktaśrautasamārtakriyānvitāḥ | vaiṣṇavās tāmasāḥ proktāḥ pāñcarātrādhikāriṇaḥ ||*

to another Sūtra may not do so.⁴² A more complicated categorization partly based on the *saṃskāras* is given in the 9th chapter of the *Ānandasamhitā*, classifying not only Vaiṣṇavas, but also different categories of Vaikhānasas. There are three categories of Vaikhānasas (*śuddha*, *miśra*, *smārta*) who, at the same time, belong to three categories of Vaiṣṇavas (*saumya*, *miśra*, *śuddha*). Those “endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra, which start with *niṣeka*” are Śuddhavaikhānasas/Saumyavaiṣṇavas. They are *garbhavaiṣṇavas*, “Vaiṣṇavas by birth”. Those who are endowed with the “*saṃskāras* according to a Sūtra other than the Vaikhānasasūtra, which start with *niṣeka*” and who underwent an initiation (*dīkṣā*) “according to the Vaikhānasāgamas” (i.e. Saṃhitās) are Miśravaikhānasas/Miśravaiṣṇavas. However, the category of Miśravaiṣṇavas does not apply to the Pāñcarātrins: while (Miśra-)Vaikhānasas do have a so-called *nigamadīkṣā*, the Pāñcarātrins have a so-called *āgamadīkṣā*. The third category of Vaikhānasas comprises all those who are in the third stage of life, the Vānaprasthas, they are Smārtavaikhānasas.⁴³ Thus, in this Saṃhitā different subdivisions are presented. However, here as everywhere else it is very clear that only the Vaikhānasas can be “endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra, starting with *niṣeka*”.

To sum up, there are five texts in this group which use the expression “being endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra, which start with *niṣeka*” in order to explicitly distinguish between Vaikhānasas and other groups of Vaiṣṇavas (*Yajñādihikāra*, *Prakīrṇādihikāra*, *Samūrtārcanādihikāraṇa*, *Khilādihikāra*, *Ānandasamhitā*). No matter whether these texts enumerate three or two groups, the Pāñcarātrins are always among them. One of the attributes of the Vaikhānasas in these passages always is that they are Vedic (*vaidika*), as against the Tantric (*tāntrika*) Pāñcarātra-tradition, although this concept is not elaborated there. The *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* are contrasted with the initiation (*dīkṣā*) of the Pāñcarātrins. A slightly different picture emerges from two

42 *Khilādihikāra* 41.6c: *vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādyaḥ saṃskṛtaiḥ* || Ibid. 41.7: *brāhmaṇair eva kartavyaṃ vaidikārādhanaṃ sadā | caturvargaphalaṃ saumyapūjanāt phalati dhruvam* || Ibid. 41.8: *vaidikārādhanaṃ nānyasūtrasaṃskārasaṃskṛtāḥ | arhanti kartuṃ arhanti vikhanassūtrasaṃskṛtāḥ* ||

43 *Ānandasamhitā* 9.2: *vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādīkriyānvitāḥ | śuddhavaikhānasāḥ proktās te saumyavaiṣṇavās smṛtāḥ* || Ibid. 9.3: *avaikhānasasūtroktanīṣekādīkriyānvitāḥ | vaikhānasāgamoktāyāṃ dīkṣāyāṃ ye ca dīkṣitāḥ* || Ibid. 9.4: *miśravaikhānasāḥ proktās te miśravaiṣṇavās smṛtāḥ | vaiṣṇavā dvividhā miśrā nigamāgamadīkṣitāḥ* || Ibid. 9.5: *nigamo vikhanāḥ proktas tv āgamo haricoditāḥ | vaikhānasaṃ hi nigamaḥ pāñcarātraṃ tathā-gamaḥ* || Ibid. 9.8: *ṛtīyāśramaṇas sarve smārtā vaikhānasās smṛtāḥ | saumyavaiṣṇavasāḥ proktā garbhavaiṣṇavajātakāḥ* ||

Vaikhānasasaṃhitās: the *saṃskāras* of the Vaikhānasas, beginning with *niṣeka*, are contrasted not with a Pāñcarātra *dīkṣā*, but the Pāñcarātrins are said to be endowed with the *saṃskāras* laid down by another Sūtrakāra (*Samūrtārcanādhi-karaṇa*, *Khilādhikāra*). Finally, the *Ānandasamhitā* combines the notion of “belonging to a specific Sūtra-tradition” and initiation in a unique way: according to this text somebody who is endowed with the *saṃskāras* of another Sūtra can become an (inferior) Vaikhānasa through a Vaikhānasa-*dīkṣā*. In this passage neither the Vaikhānasa-*dīkṣā* nor the Pāñcarātra-*dīkṣā* is described. Thus all Vaikhānasasaṃhitās use the expression “endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra, which start with *niṣeka*” to describe those who are eligible to perform the rituals in a Viṣṇu temple. Only rarely is *niṣeka* not explicitly mentioned in such chapters. One text (*Yajñādhikāra*) goes even further by stating that these *saṃskāras* are a precondition even for assistants and cooks in the temple. However, there are also passages stating that if a Vaikhānasa is not available, others may be employed as cooks and assistants (*Ānandasamhitā* 13.36–39).

Therefore, the Vaikhānasa-*saṃskāras* are presented as the most prominent connecting link between the Vaikhānasa *arcakas* in the Saṃhitās and the Vaikhānasas of the time of the Sūtra. In the Saṃhitās *niṣeka* stands for the whole set of 18 *saṃskāras*: there an essential characteristic of a Vaikhānasa is “being endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra, beginning with *niṣeka*”. In a next step it is unanimously stated in the Saṃhitās that only a Vaikhānasa is eligible to perform temple worship. However, not a single passage in the entire Vaikhānasasaṃhitā-literature dwells upon the question as to how and when *niṣeka* is performed.

Niṣeka in Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s Commentary on the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*

Since, on the one hand, the use of the term *niṣeka* in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* is not uniform, but on the other, the “mediaeval” ritual texts of the Vaikhānasas frequently refer to “the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*” it may be worthwhile to look at other Vaikhānasa texts dealing with the *saṃskāras*. We are in the fortunate position to have two printed commentaries on the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, which both deal with the Vaikhānasa *saṃskāras*. One is the *Vaikhānasa(kalpa)sūtrabhāṣya* (*Śrīnṛsiṃhavājapeyabhāṣya*) by Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin,⁴⁴ who also

44 This text was printed in full only once. At first extracts of this commentary were given in the edition of the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, in Devanāgarī characters. In 1984 and 1987 the full

authored the text *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtradarpaṇa*,⁴⁵ a handbook on *gṛhya*-rituals. The only texts Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin quotes in his commentary are other *Gṛhyasūtras*, and as far as I can see he is not quoted by others. Therefore there is no clue as to his date apart from the lists of the teacher-pupil succession (*Vai-khānasaguruparamparā*), which all place him seven to nine generations before the other commentator on the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita.⁴⁶ Compared to the works of Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin in his *Bhāṣya* remains very close to the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*.⁴⁷ Although in this case it is not even possible to establish a relative chronology, the statements of Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's *Bhāṣya* will be dealt with first. Generally speaking, the *Bhāṣya* is a somewhat independent text and does not constitute or follow the main stream of *Sūtra*-interpretation within the *Vaikhānasa* tradition.⁴⁸

Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's commentary on the first sentence of the *Sūtra* literally explains *niṣeka* as "pouring of the semen into the Yoni of the wife".⁴⁹ His commentary on the "list of 18 *saṃskāras* relating to the body" consists of literal explanations for each term. He explains *ṛtusamgamana* as the sexual intercourse during the fertile period,⁵⁰ and *garbhādhāna* as the act of "giving a foetus".⁵¹ This last explanation is neither in accordance with the content of *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.10, nor does it agree with Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's own explanations on this passage. There he closely follows the *Sūtra*, but adds that the performing husband shall start the ritual with the formula: "I will endow this wife with the *garbhādhāna saṃskāra*".⁵² Here for the first time it is explicitly stated that this

text was printed in two volumes in Telugu characters. In 1996, in his PhD thesis Sri S. Muthu edited the first three chapters of this commentary. The present paper refers to the Telugu edition.

45 Only three out of 11 chapters of this text are printed. There the performance of the "18 *saṃskāras* related to the body" is given.

46 *Vaikhānasaguruparamparā*, pp. 1–6; *Guruparamparā*, pp. 1–3; *Śrīvaikhānaścāryaparamparānusamdhānakrama*, pp. 20–23.

47 Since Caland made use of one manuscript of Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's commentary, his translation in many respects is influenced by this text.

48 As far as I know, there are only two (*Vaikhānasa*) texts which occasionally refer to *Vaikhānasasūtrabhāṣya*: Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya in his Sanskrit commentary on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇavyākhyāna*), and the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*, part 2 (*Sūtrānukramaṇikā*).

49 *Vaikhānasasūtrabhāṣya* 1.1: *retasā bhāryāyāḥ yoniḥ niṣicyate saṃsicyate asminn iti niṣekaḥ*.

50 Ibid. 1.1: *ṛtau ṛtukāle saṃgamyate bhāryā aneneti ṛtusamgamanam*.

51 Ibid. 1.1: *garbhaḥ ādhīyate anenāsyām iti garbhādhānam*.

52 Ibid. 3.4: [...] *enām patnīm garbhādhānena karmaṇā saṃskariṣye iti saṃkalpya* [...].

saṃskāra is in fact supposed to be *garbhādhāna*. Also in the description of *garbhādhāna* in his *Sūtradarpaṇa*, Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin states that this ritual shall be performed as soon as “he knows that she is pregnant” (*Sūtradarpaṇa*, p. 54: *grhītagarbhām jñātvā*). It is evident that Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin considers *niṣeka* and *ṛtusamgamana* as separate *saṃskāras*. However, a few sentences later he explicitly discusses the question whether *niṣeka* is identical with *ṛtusamgamana* or not:

If someone says: How can one say that *niṣeka* is (an) individual (*saṃskāra*)? In spite of the statement of the Sūtrakāra: “They say that the sexual intercourse during the fertile period is *niṣeka*”?—this is true. Now this here is the opinion of the *ācārya* [= Vikhanas]: “Some say that the sexual intercourse during the fertile period is *niṣeka*, (but) not we”. If someone says: “If it is so, where is the characteristic feature (of *niṣeka*) given?” (the answer is:) “(One section begins with) *tad evaṃ trirātraṃ haviṣyāśināu*”⁵³—here it is said by the *ācāryas*, thus we say. Otherwise the restriction on the number 18 (for the *saṃskāras* relating to the body) would be senseless. If someone says: “(The number 18 is not senseless if) we perform *pravāsāgamana* as two (*saṃskāras*)” this is not (correct), because in the statement “Without both, *pravāsāgamana* and *piṇḍavardhana*”⁵⁴ (the *saṃskāra* *pravāsāgamana*) appears individually.⁵⁵ If someone says: “Then I accept *varṣavardhana* as a ritual (= *saṃskāra*)”, this is not correct, because it is not mentioned (as *saṃskāra*) in the enumeration. And because it is again stated (in the next section:) “From *niṣeka* to *jātaka*”. Therefore (the *saṃskāras*) are established as having *niṣeka* as the first.⁵⁶

At the beginning of the detailed description of the *saṃskāras*, which starts with *upanayana* in the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin gives a reason for

53 This is a quotation of the first words of *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8, where the first sexual intercourse of the newly married couple under the heading *caturthivāsa* is described.

54 This is a quotation from the *prāyaścitta* section of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* (6.5: *pravāsāgamanaṇḍavardhanayor hīne mūlahomaṃ juhōti*).

55 In Muthu’s edition the following sentence is inserted here: *pārāyaṇavratibandhavisargaṃ dvidhā kurmaḥ iti cet tad asat. pārāyaṇavratibandhavisarga ity ekatvena upapādānāt*, “If one says ‘We split *pārāyaṇavratibandhavisarga* into two’—this is not good, because [this ritual] is given as a unit, (namely) ‘*pārāyaṇavratibandhavisarga*’”.

56 *Vaikhānasasūtrabhāṣya* 1.1: *niṣekam iti pṛthaktvena katham ucyate. “ṛtau saṅgamaṇḍavardhanayor hīne mūlahomaṃ juhōti” iti sūtrakāravacanād iti cet satyam. ayaṃ khalv atrācāryasyābhīprāyaḥ ṛtau saṅgamaṇḍavardhanayor hīne mūlahomaṃ juhōti eke na vayan iti. tathā bhavaty asya tantraṃ kutroktam iti cet. “tad evaṃ trirātraṃ haviṣyāśināu” ity atroktam ācāryair iti brūmaḥ itarathā-ṣṭadaśasaṃkhyāniyamo nirarthakas syāt. pravāsāgamanaṇḍavardhanayor hīne mūlahomaṃ juhōti—iti cet—tanna. pravāsāgamanaṇḍavardhanayor hīne mūlahomaṃ juhōti ity ekatvenopādānāt. tarhi varṣavardhanaṇḍavardhanayor hīne mūlahomaṃ juhōti ity ekatvenopādānāt. pariḷāṅgikaromīti cet—tad anupapannaṃ pariḷāṅgikaromīti apāḥitatvāt. niṣekād ā jātakād iti punar vacanāc ca, tasmān niṣekādayaḥ siddhā bhavanti.*

this sequence: only *upanayana* makes an individual eligible to perform all rituals by himself. Therefore, this *saṃskāra* marks the entrance of an individual into this excellent stage of life.⁵⁷

Since Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin argues that the sexual intercourse described in *Vai-khānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8. is in fact *niṣeka*, he splits the *caturthīvāsa* of the Sūtra in his description of the individual rituals into two, namely *caturthīvāsa* and *ni-ṣeka*. After giving detailed prescriptions for the first three days and nights after marriage (*caturthīvrata*), Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin continues that the husband in the fourth night should utter the *niṣeka*-vow.⁵⁸ Here Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin explicitly uses the term *niṣeka*, in contradistinction to the Sūtra.

To sum up, Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin rejects the opinion that *niṣeka* and *ṛtusamga-mana* are identical. Therefore he claims that the first sexual intercourse of the newly married couple, which is described under the heading *caturthīvāsa* in *Vai-khānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8, is in fact *niṣeka*, whereas the other rites given there are *caturthīvāsa* “proper”.

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita on *niṣeka*

As shown, some Vaikhānasasaṃhitās seem obliged to explicate that the Vaikhānasa *saṃskāras*—beginning with *niṣeka*—are indispensable for being a Vaikhānasa and an *arcaka*, and that the *saṃskāras* provided by other Sūtras do not make the recipient eligible to perform the temple ritual in Viṣṇu temples. Some texts written in the period of the later Saṃhitās deal with the question of why the Vaikhānasa *saṃskāras* are indispensable and what the differences are between the Vaikhānasasūtras and other Sūtras. Here the “Vedic” (*vaidika*) aspect of the Vaikhānasa tradition plays an important role.

Contrary to that of the commentator Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin the views of another Vaikhānasa teacher, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, did and still does have an enormous influence on the Vaikhānasa school(s) of thought and on the diverse Vaikhānasa communities in South India.⁵⁹ Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita is a Vaikhānasa of the Kauśika

57 Ibid. 2.2: *sarvāśramāṇāṃ prathamavād uddeśakramam ullaṅghyātropanayanam ucyate. upanītasyaiva sarvakarmādhikāratvam iti jñāpanārthaṃ cāthānantaram.*

58 Ibid. 3.8: *trirātrānantaram caturthyāṃ rātrau aparasyām, aparabhāginyām, rātryām a-lamkṛtya patnīm ātmānaṃ vastragandhamālyādyaiḥ vibhūṣya patnyāsaha prāñānyamyā niṣekakarma kariṣye iti saṃkalpya agnim aupāsanam upasamādhāya parisamūhya pari-ṣicyāsminn agnau navaprāyaścittāni vyāhṛtiparyantaṃ juhuyāt.*

59 Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya for example expressed his high regard for Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita in one letter to Caland as follows: “[...] Thus they [the Vaikhānasas] form a separate and independent minority within the Vaishnava community, as the followers of their Acharya

clan. He was born in Śrī Venkaṭācala (Tirumalai, Andhra Pradesh). Only scant information on his life is given in Sundararāja Bhaṭṭācārya's *Śrīnivāsadīkṣitendracaritra*.⁶⁰ Sundararāja's lifetime is the *terminus ante quem* for Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's dates, who most probably lived between the end of the 14th and the middle of the 18th centuries.⁶¹

While the older commentary (*Vaikhānasasūtrabhāṣya*) only briefly deals with the *saṃskāra niṣeka*, this ritual plays a prominent role in the works of Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, especially in his commentary on the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, and in the lengthy "introduction" to this text with the title *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*.

The explicit intention of the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, the "presentation of the tenfold reason (why the Vaikhānasas are superior)" is to prove the superiority of the Vaikhānasas over other ritualistic traditions.⁶² In the beginning of this work Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita presents ten arguments, the "ten(fold) reason" for two central propositions: (1) the Vaikhānasasūtra is the best of all Sūtras. It was taught by the four-faced Brahmā, who—in this form—is called by the name Vikhanas, and who was born of Nārāyaṇa. (2) Those who follow the *dharma* as propagated in the Vaikhānasasūtra are the best of all.⁶³

The reasons are dealt with successively, but with considerable difference as to detail in his argumentation. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita in his arguments makes use of many quotations from texts generally considered authoritative in his time, namely diverse Ṛg̃hya- and Dharmasūtras, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, diverse Dharmaśāstras, Upaniṣads and Purāṇas, some Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās etc. The author connects these quotations with his own (prose) statements and thus uses them as supporting arguments for his "ten(fold) reason". The *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* is the first Vaikhānasa text which explicitly expresses central positions of this tradition as against other religious or/and ritualistic traditions.

[Vikhanas] and Bhashyakara Srinivasa Dikshita. [...]” (quoted by Caland 1941: xxx–xxxì).

60 See *Śrīnivāsadīkṣitendracaritramu*. However, there the year of Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's birth is given as 1199 C.E., which is hardly possible, since Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita in his work *Vaikhānasamahimamañjarī* refers to the Vaiṣṇava scholar Venkaṭa Deśika, whose traditional dates are 1268–1369 C.E.

61 See Hüsken forthc.; for Sundararāja see Kunjunni Raja 1958: 253.

62 The *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* was printed twice, both editions were prepared by Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya. In the present paper I refer to the Devanāgarī edition.

63 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 2.1–3: *atha satyatvādisamastakalyāṇaguṇaviśiṣṭāt parabrahmaṇaḥ śrīmannārāyaṇād utpannena vikhanaśśabdavācyena caturmukhabrahmaṇā praṇītasya vaikhānasasūtrasya sarvasūtrottamatve tatsūtrotkadharmānuṣṭhātṛṇām sarvotrṣṭatamatve ca daśavidhahetavo nirūpyante.*

In our context the fifth “reason” is of importance. It reads: “Because (the Sūtra) gives *niṣeka* as the first *saṃskāra*” (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 2.7: *niṣekasaṃskārādīmatvāt*).⁶⁴ Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita considers the fact that *niṣeka* is the first of the Vaikhānasa *saṃskāras* as characteristic and as expressing the advantage of his tradition over that of others. Only those are *śrotriyas*, he argues, who have had *niṣeka* as first ritual and only they are eligible to act according to the Dharmasāstras and therefore have ritual competence (ibid. 84.21–85.8).

Before Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita deals with the “fifth reason” in detail, the *saṃskāra niṣeka* is mentioned in passing a few times, for the greater part in quotations from other texts. There Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita anticipates his argument that *niṣeka* as the first *saṃskāra* is a feature peculiar only to the Vaikhānasas, and adds that this makes the Vaikhānasas eligible to perform temple worship. This connection is put into Nārāyaṇa’s mouth and therefore is undisputable: while relating how Vikhanas and the Vaikhānasa tradition came into existence Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita gives a lengthy quotation from the *Ānandasamhitā* stating that Nārāyaṇa created Vikhanas and ordered him and those who follow his Sūtra to worship him, Nārāyaṇa. In this quotation *niṣeka* as the first *saṃskāra* is presented as a peculiarity of the Vaikhānasas and therefore as a characteristic mark of those who are able and eligible to perform the worship of Nārāyaṇa.⁶⁵ In a similar context, describing the origin of the Vaikhānasas, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita states that they are “endowed with the rituals, starting with *niṣeka*”. He describes the Vaikhānasas as a group originating from the *ṛṣis* “Bhṛgu and so on” who are “mental sons” of Bhagavān. With reference to a passage in the *Mahābhārata*,⁶⁶ where nine *ṛṣis*

64 In ibid. 80.1–5 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita repeats that this “reason” is proof of the fact that the Śrīvaikhānasasūtra is better than all other Sūtras and that the Vaikhānasas are therefore better than the all others. For the greater part those “others” are understood as “followers of other Sūtras”, see below.

65 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 14.7–8 [*Ānandasamhitā* 4.47]: *tvadvaṃśajānām sarveṣāṃ kāle vai kṛtakarmaṇām [Ānandasamhitā: jātakarmaṇām] | niṣekādīśmaśānāmīti kār्याḥ mantrasamanvitāḥ [Ānandasamhitā: kriyāmantrasamanvitāḥ] ||* Ibid. 14.9–10 [*Ānandasamhitā* 4.48]: *aṣṭādaś ca karmaṇi śārīrāṇi pracakṣate | yajñās ca viṃśatir dvau ca dharmam vaiṣṇavam uttamaṃ ||* Ibid. 14.11–12 [*Ānandasamhitā* 4.49]: *vede vaikhānase sūtre yo dharmah parikṛtitaḥ | sarvais sa dharmo ’nuṣṭheyo nātra kār्या vicāraṇā ||* and ibid. 14.22–23 [*Ānandasamhitā* 4.72]: *matprasādabhujas saumyā atipriyatamā mama | ṣaṭkarmānirātās te vai sātṛvīkāhārataṭparāḥ ||* Ibid. 14.24–15.1 [*Ānandasamhitā* 4.73]: *vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvitāḥ | bhavanti bhāvitātmano matkarmakaraṇakṣamāḥ ||*

66 Ibid. 20.1–5 [*Mahābhārata*]: *bhṛgvaṅgiromaricyatripulastyapulāhāḥ kratuḥ | tathā vasiṣṭho dakṣaś ca nava svāyambhuvā dvijāḥ || ete vaikhānasānān tu ṛṣīnām bhāvitātmanām | vaṃśakartāra ucyante sātṛvīkāhārabhojinām ||* This verse, however, is not given in the standard editions of the *Mahābhārata*.

are given as founder of the Vaikhānasa families, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita states that these *ṛṣi*s as well as their family members are known as Vaikhānasas. He adds that they are endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* and that only they are allowed to perform Nārāyaṇa's worship.⁶⁷ In a further step, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita proves that *niṣeka* as first *saṃskāra* is a characteristic mark of the Vaikhānasas, makes them eligible to perform Nārāyaṇa's worship and is a sign that the Vaikhānasa tradition is Vedic. In the description of diverse groups of Vaiṣṇavas Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita quotes the Śaiva text *Suprabhedāgama*. There the Vaikhānasa tradition is presented as being "vaidika", Vedic, and it is stated that in larger settlements the worship of Hari should be performed according to the Vaikhānasa system. The additional information is given that the Vaikhānasas are "endowed with the *saṃskāras*, beginning with *niṣeka*".⁶⁸ Here the connection of "being Vedic" and "being endowed with the *saṃskāras*, beginning with *niṣeka*" explicitly is established.

So far in the discussion of *niṣeka* only the Vaikhānasas and followers of other Sūtras were mentioned. Therefore the expression "the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* of the Pāñcarātrins", which is given in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 66.9–13 is exceptional. A set of *saṃskāras* requires a specific Sūtra tradition. The Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās, however, do not claim to go back to a specific Sūtra tradition, but in some cases the reference to the Vedic *ekāyanaśākhā*, which is the now lost root of all other *śākhās* can be found.⁶⁹ The specific textual tradition of the Pāñcarātrins is constituted by the so-called Saṃhitās, sectarian works of divine origin, (ideally) dealing with knowledge (*jñāna*), practice (*yoga*), (temple)rituals (*kriyā*), and (daily) conduct (*caryā*).⁷⁰ Within the Pāñcarātra tradition there seem to have existed four teachings (*siddhānta*), all of which

67 Ibid. 20.6–8: *tasmād bhagavatā nārāyaṇena brahmaṇā ca sṛṣṭānām bhṛgvādīnām ṛṣiṇām tadvaṃśajānām ca niṣekādīkriyāvātām advārabhagavadyaajanādhikāravātām eva loke vaikhānasā iti prasiddhiḥ*.

68 Ibid. 25.5–11 [*Suprabhedāgama*]: *sahasrabhūsurād ūrdhve grāme brahmāṅkaṇe 'pi ca | vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādisusaṃskṛtaiḥ || bhārgavādīmahātantramantrabhedavica- kṣaṇaiḥ | anuddhṛtair mantragaṇair vedavedāntasambhavaiḥ || kramādhyayanasaṃpan- nais sāṅgopāṅgaiś ca saṃskṛtaiḥ | pañcamūrtiprakāreṇa pratiṣṭhāpyārcayed dharim || vaidīkaṃ tad iti proktaṃ rājarāṣṭravivardhanam ||* The printed text of the *Suprabhedā- gama* does not contain this passage. However, the *saṃskāras* as enumerated in this text seem to be inspired by the Vaikhānasasūtra (*Suprabhedāgama*, *caryāpāda*, chapter 5; see also Brunner 1967: 31–60).

69 See *Īsvarasaṃhitā* 1.18b, 18.474–475, 21.533–535, 21.540; *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* 20.269; *Paramapurūṣasaṃhitā* 1.16a; *Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 13.67–8; *Pārameśvarasaṃhitā* 10.134, *Pauṣkarasaṃhitā* 38.305; *Śrīpraśnasaṃhitā* 2.38–39.23.185a.

70 Schrader 1916; H.D. Smith 1975ff., vol. 1 and 2; Varadachari 1982.

required a special initiation (*dīkṣā*). Thus the Pāñcarātra as a system of ritual prescriptions⁷¹ is performed by priests who have undergone one or more initiations (*dīkṣā/abhiṣeka*) into this system. The statements in the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās are by no means uniform in this respect, but generally it seems (with one exception, see below) that—whether a Dīkṣita is to be a Brahmin or not—the respective *dīkṣā* is never performed according to a particular Sūtra but according to one of the four *siddhāntas*, which are four different types of worship patterns.⁷² These four kinds of worship should not be mixed and those who have undergone an initiation in one *siddhānta* may not perform the worship or other ritual duties in one of the other three *siddhāntas*.⁷³ In the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* some of these verses are quoted⁷⁴. In addition, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita gives the following picture of the Pāñcarātrins: They are in general followers of the Kātyāyana-Sūtra (a *śākhā* of the white Yajurveda), and they belong to one out of five *gotras*, namely Aupagāyana, Śāṅḍilya, Bhāradvāja, Gautama, or Mauñjāyana. Here Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita refers to a source described as *pāñcarātre*.⁷⁵ The only passage in a *Pāñcarātrasaṃhitā* which—according to Smith's index (1980)—possibly could contain information regarding five *gotras* and/or a Vedic *śākhā* is the *Īśvarasaṃhitā*. There are in fact five *munis* enumerated: Śāṅḍilya, Aupagāyana, Mauñjāyana, Kauśika, and Bhāradvāja.⁷⁶ However, later in the text the *munis* are mentioned in the following context: Śāṅḍilya taught the Śāstras (Sātvata etc.) to the *munis* Aupagāyana, Mauñjāyana etc., and Sanaka etc. Henceforth these *munīśvaras*—with Śāṅḍilya as their leader—practised the worship of Hari according to the Sātvata(śāstra). They endowed their pupils, who belong to their *vaṃśa* and who learnt the Kāṇvī-śākhā, with the initiation according to the

71 The many other aspects of the Pāñcarātra system will not be dealt with here.

72 These are: *mantrasiddhānta*, *āgamasiddhānta*, *tantrasiddhānta* and *tantrāntarasiddhānta*. See for example *Īśvarasaṃhitā* 21.559–587; *Pādmasaṃhitā jñānapāda* 1.80–82, 86, *caryāpāda* 19.110–132, 21.1–84a; *Pārameśvarasaṃhitā* 19.522–543; *Pauṣkarasaṃhitā* 38.295–309.

73 See *Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 19.124–127 and 131–132.

74 *Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 19.112–113, 131–132 and 21.55. The division into four *siddhāntas* in the Pāñcarātra literature is sometimes equated with the fourfold division of the Veda (*Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 19.111–112). However, significantly this equation is not referred to in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*.

75 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 66.9–13 [*Pāñcarātre*]: “*ekagotrasamutpannam pañcagotram pṛthak pṛthak* |” *ityārabhya* “*sūtram kātyāyanam śākhām yājuṣam śuklam eva ca* | *aupagāyanasāṅḍilyau bhāradvājo 'tha gautamaḥ | mauñjāyanis tu pañcaite pāñcarātradhikāriṇaḥ* |” *ity adhikāribhedasya vidhīyamānatvāt*.

76 *Īśvarasaṃhitā* 21.519: *pañcāyudhāśās te pañca śāṅḍilyas aupagāyanaḥ | mauñjāyanaḥ kauśikaś ca bhāradvājaś ca yoginaḥ* ||

Sātvata(śāstra).⁷⁷ It is thus evident that the text quoted by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita gives a different picture.

Then Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita speaks about lost or unknown texts and draws a picture of Pāñcarātra *saṃskāras* from them which is not in accordance with the picture derived from the Pāñcarātra texts themselves: He artificially combines this notion of a “Pāñcarātra-Sūtra” with the notion of the four *siddhāntas*, each of which requires its own initiation. Here he refers to the above mentioned statement in the Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās that one should cling to one’s original *siddhānta*, and transfers this notion to the Sūtras. He concludes that (1) one should not change the *tantra* (equated with *siddhānta* here). Although the initiations into the four *siddhāntas* may be identical, the initiate is eligible only for the performance of the ritual in his *tantra*, not in one of the three other Tantras. Furthermore, (2) one should not change the Sūtra, and therefore, if one is endowed with the *saṃskāras* of one particular Sūtra, the *saṃskāras* of other Sūtras should not be resorted to. Therefore, the “*saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* according to the Pāñcarātra” are, for example, not for Āpastambins, who are already endowed with *saṃskāras* according to their Sūtra.⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita presupposes that there are in fact “*saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* according to the Pāñcarātra”. However, his point of view is not as far fetched as it may seem: if one accepts that the *Kātyāyanagrhyasūtra* is authoritative for the Pāñcarātrins, one has to admit that the *Kātyāyanagrhyasūtra* does in fact give *saṃskāras*. Furthermore, in one passage in the *Pādmasaṃhitā*, which is closely connected with the description of the four *siddhāntas*, “the *saṃskāras* starting from *niṣeka*” are mentioned.⁷⁹ However, these passages are not substantial enough to warrant far-reaching conclusions. It remains to be noticed that in this passage of the

77 Ibid. 21.551: *labdhvaivaṃ sātvatādīni śāstrāṇi munipuṃgavaḥ | śaṅḍilyo ’dhyāpayāmasa munīṃ caivaupagāyanam ||* Ibid. 21.552: *tathā mauṅjyāyanādīṃś ca sanakādyāṃś ca yoginaḥ | tataḥ prabhṛti te sarve śaṅḍilyādyaḥ munīśvaraḥ ||* Ibid. 21.553: *sātvatādyuktamārgena harer ārādhanaḍīkam | kurvantaḥ svasvavaṃśyāṃś ca śiṣyāṃś cāpi sahasraśaḥ ||* Ibid. 21.554: *kāṇvīm śākhām adhīyānān vedavedāntapāragam | saṃskṛtya dīkṣayā samyak sātvatādyuktamārgataḥ ||* Ibid. 21.555: *abhiṣicya ca tān sarvān kṛtvā svārthaparārthayo | pūjādhikāriṇo viprā! tair etat sātvatāḍīkam |*

78 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 66.16–18: *ity āpastambādisūtraiḥ saṃskṛtasya pāñcarātroktamārgena niṣekādisaṃskāra-yogyatābhavakathanāt. tāntrikoktprakāreṇa dīkṣitānām eva tantroktārcaṇāyām adhikāritva sambhavāt.*

79 *Pādmasaṃhitā cāryapāda* 21.56: *niṣekāḍīs ca saṃskāras pañcakāḍīditaḥ tathā | tyaktvā trayīm tantram eva prapadya śaraṇaṃ sthitāḥ ||* In the *Sanat Kumārasaṃhitā* “the rituals starting with *garbhādhāna*” are mentioned (*Sanat Kumārasaṃhitā brahmarātra* 38: *garbhādhānāḍīkā vakṣye kriyāḥ sarvā yathākramam | ṛtukāle ramet patnīm ekānte nirjane naraḥ ||*).

Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita refers to a *Pāñcarātra-Sūtra* and to “Pāñcarātra *ṣaṃskāras*, beginning with *niṣeka*”, both of which are not given in the *Pāñcarātrasaṃhitā*s as handed down to us.

The most detailed treatment of *niṣeka* in his *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, however, can be found in the section explaining the “fifth reason”. There Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita quotes the two opening sentences of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. Here he himself raises the first objection, which he puts in the mouth of “others”: *niṣeka* is performed only after the birth rites (*jātaka*),⁸⁰ *upanayana* and marriage (*vivāha*), not as first ritual action.⁸¹ Furthermore, there are descriptions of procreation without sexual intercourse.⁸² Therefore, the objection continues, *niṣeka* cannot be called “the beginning” of a human being. This argument is rejected by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 80.20–23). According to him, the instances given in the objection cannot be generalized. He continues that only Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā and the *ṛṣis* through the power of their asceticism and Yogic practice are able to create “mental progeny”.⁸³ Furthermore, he states that even Rudra originated from sexual intercourse/*niṣeka*, as is described in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*.⁸⁴ The proper procedure for *niṣeka* is already given in the Śruti—here he refers to *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* 2.1.5 and *Chāndogyopaniṣad* 5.8.1 (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 81.11–18).

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita then develops a “chronology” of how *niṣeka* (sexual intercourse) as a means of procreation came into being, based on quotations from the

80 Here a quotation from the *Mahābhārata* is given, where the birth-rites (*jātaka*) are given as first *ṣaṃskāra* (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 80.11–15 [= *Mahābhārata* 12.182.2–3]: *jāta-karmādibhir yais tu [Mahābhārata: yas tu] ṣaṃskāraih ṣaṃskṛtaś śuciḥ | vedādhyayana-sampannaḥ ṣaisu karmasv avasthitah || śaucācārataś samyak [Mahābhārata: śaucācārasthitah samyag; v.l. the Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa reading] bhikṣārthi ca gurupriyaḥ [Mahābhārata: vighasāsī gurupriyaḥ] nityavratas satyaparaḥ [Mahābhārata: nityavratī] sa vai brāhmaṇa ucyate ||*).

81 This argument is discussed again in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* and not dealt with here elaborately.

82 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita quotes the *Harivaṃśa* here (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 80.17–19: *kva dārāḥ kva ca ṣaṃsargaḥ kva ca bhāvaviparyayaḥ | yadiyaṃ brahmaṇā sṛṣṭā manasā mānasī prajā || yady asti tapaso vīryaṃ yuṣmākaṃ viditātmanāṃ | sṛjadhvaṃ mānasān putrān prājāpatyena karmaṇā ||*).

83 Ibid. 80.20–23: *iti niṣekaṃ vināpi utpattiḥ śrūyate iti niṣekasyāditvaṃ na sambhavati iti cet—tad asat. niṣekavirahe 'pi utpattis sambhavatīty etan nopapadyate. tapobalād yogabalāc ca bhagavato nārāyaṇasya brahmaṇo maharṣiṇāṃ vā mānasaprajāsṛṣṭau śaktis sambhavati. nanyeṣām*. He supports this argument with a quotation from the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 81.1–6 [*Śrīviṣṇumahāpurāṇam* 1.15.83–84]).

84 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 81.7–10: *rudrotpattir api niṣekeneti śrūyate śatapathe [reference to Śatapathabrāhmaṇa 6.1.3.7, 8 and 10].*

*Viṣṇupurāṇa*⁸⁵ and from the *Mahābhārata*.⁸⁶ He concludes this argument with the statement that without *niṣeka* there is no procreation, therefore *niṣeka* is the first “action” in the life of a being.⁸⁷ In this whole passage *niṣeka* is not primarily treated as a ritual, but is equated with the actual sexual union of a couple, resulting in impregnation.

The next section is presented by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita as a discussion between the followers of Bodhāyana and those of Āpastamba. Thus Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita himself does not have to argue with these two traditions because the arguments are brought out by them, not by him. At first the difference between *niṣeka* and *garbhādhāna* is dealt with. The Āpastambins argue that *niṣeka* is the same ritual as *garbhādhāna*, because—on account of a passage in the Śruti—the semen which is sprinkled during sexual intercourse (*indriya*) is identical with the foetus (*garbha*). This means that “pouring of semen” is identical with “giving of *garbha*”. Therefore, they continue, they also have *niṣeka* as first ritual, which is called *garbhādhāna* in their case.⁸⁸ The Baudhāyanins contest this identification of *niṣeka* and *garbhādhāna*, since these two actions are described separately in their Sūtra.⁸⁹ In *Bodhāyanagrhyasūtra* 1.7.37–44 the sexual union of the couple in the fourth night after marriage is presented as *niṣeka* (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 81.18–20), and the *garbhādhāna* ritual as described in the *Bodhāyanagrhyasēsa-sūtra* 2.2.1 (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 81.20–22) is referred to. On the other hand, the Baudhāyanins continue, the Āpastambins do not have *niṣeka* as a *saṃskāra* at all.⁹⁰ The Āpastambins’s conjectured reply to this is that the Baudhāyanins do

85 Dakṣa, who was ordered to create the beings by Brahmā, first created the gods and other heavenly beings. However, he had to discover that they did not reproduce by themselves. Therefore, Brahmā “invented” sexual intercourse, which henceforth was the cause for human reproduction (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 81.19–82.2 [*Śrīviṣṇumahāpurāṇa* 1.15.86–88, 82, 79]).

86 *Mahābhārata* 12.200.35–37 (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 82.3–8).

87 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 82.9–10: *evaṃ śrutismṛtiṣu sṛṣṭikālād ārabhya niṣekād evotpattir iti śravaṇāt niṣekena vinā utpādana-sāmarthyābhāvāc ca niṣekādimitvād ity uktam.*

88 Ibid. 82.11–15: *atrāpastambiyā evam āhuḥ. “niṣeko nāma garbhādhānam eva. niṣekagarbhādhānayoḥ paryāyatvāt garbhādhānāṭirekeṇa niṣekasābdasyārthāntarāsambhāvāc ca. garbhādhānāsābdasyārthe vicāryamāṇe ‘garbho ‘sminn ādhīyate’ iti vyutpattyā ‘indriyam vai garbha’ iti śrutyānusāreṇa retas secanam eva garbhādhānam ity avagateḥ niṣekādīvam asmākam apy astī”ti.*

89 Ibid. 82.16–18: *atra baudhāyanīyaḥ pratyavatiṣṭhante: “yad uktaṃ ‘niṣeko nāma garbhādhānam niṣekagarbhādhānayoḥ paryāyatvād’ iti—tadasat. niṣekagarbhādhānayoḥ prthaktvena pratipādanāt paryāyatvaṃ na ghaṭate. [...] Ibid. 82.22–23: evaṃ niṣekagarbhādhānayoḥ prthaktvena kīrtanāt “niṣeka eva garbhādhānam” iti vaktum ayuktam.*

90 Ibid. 82.24–25: *kiñca āpastambasūtre niṣekapūrvakatvenānuktatvāt catvāriṃśat saṃskārapariḡṇane agrhītatvāc ca teṣāṃ niṣekādīyās saṃskārā na bhavanti”ti.*

not have *niṣeka* as the first *ṣaṃskāra* either, since their Sūtra describes *vivāha* in the first place. Additionally, in the Baudhāyanins' list of *ṣaṃskāras niṣeka* is not even mentioned by name, and in the description of the *ṣaṃskāras* the signs and the proper time of *garbhādhāna* are not given.⁹¹ Therefore, the Āpastambins continue, neither Bodhāyana nor Āpastamba have *niṣeka* as first *ṣaṃskāra*. This feature is peculiar only to the Vaikhānasa tradition.⁹²

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita interprets a passage given by Yājñavalkya accordingly (*Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 1.10c/11a; *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 83.9–14). Moreover, in contradistinction to the Baudhāyanins, the Vaikhānasasūtra gives the proper time as well as the signs for *garbhādhāna*, as Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita observes (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 83.15–20).

Now Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita proves the authority of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* by stating that other *sūtrakāras* refer to Vikhanas as their *ācārya* (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 83.23–84.12). All references to an (unspecified) *ācārya* in the *Bodhāyanagr̥hyasūtra* and by Āpastamba are interpreted by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita as referring to Vikhanas alone (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 83.23–84.13). Then Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita again rejects the idea that *niṣeka* and *garbhādhāna* are identical (ibid. 84.14–20) and afterwards elaborates on the importance of *niṣeka* (ibid. 84.21–85.13), which according to some quotations is a precondition for being a Brahmin. In the end, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita concludes that only the *Vaikhānasasūtra* in fact lists *niṣeka* as the first *ṣaṃskāra*, and therefore the followers of the *Vaikhānasasūtra* are the best.

Niṣeka in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*

Since nowhere in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* is reference made to the actual performance of the ritual *niṣeka*, these details can be expected in the commentary on the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* by the same author, the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*. However, as we will see, even in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* the ritual act of *niṣeka* plays no prominent role.

91 Ibid. 83.1–5: *atra āpastambīyā ūcuḥ*: “*yady asmākaṃ ‘niṣekādyaḥ ṣaṃskārā na bhavanī’ ty ucyate tarhi yuṣmākaṃ api tathaiṅva, bhavat sūtre ‘pi* [*Bodhāyanagr̥hyaśeṣasūtra* 1.1.1]: ‘*yato etad dhutaḥ prahutaḥ āhutaḥ śūlagavo baliharaṇaṃ pratyavarohanam aṣṭakā pārvanahoma’ ityārabhya vivāhādyevoktam—na tu niṣekādītvena. kiñca sūtropakrame ṣaṃskāragāṇānyām api niṣekas tu ṣaṃskāratvena vā śabdamatreṇa vā na pratipāditaḥ.*”

92 Ibid. 83.5–8: *kiñca* [*Bodhāyanagr̥hyaśeṣasūtra* 1.7.37]: “*caturthyāṃ snātāyām*” *ityādinā pṛthaktena vidhīyamānasya garbhādhānasya lakṣaṇapratipādanābhāvāt viśiṣya kālani-rūpaṇābhāvāc ca (vaikhānase sūtre eva niṣekādītvena uktatvāc ca vaikhānasānām niṣekādītvaṃ), āvayoḥ ubhayor api niṣekādyaḥ ṣaṃskārā na bhavanti iti. ayam eva siddhāntaḥ.*

After a short explanation of the composite *niṣekādisaṃskārān* (*Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 1.6–7) Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita deals with the bipartition of the ritual category “*saṃskāras*” into “*saṃskāra* relating to the body” (*sārīrasaṃskāra*) and “sacrifice” (*yajña*), which is already presented in the Sūtra. In order to support this division Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita quotes a corresponding division into *brāhmasaṃskāras* and *daivasaṃskāras*. According to this source the *sārīrasaṃskāras* of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* are *brāhmasaṃskāras*, and the *yajñasaṃskāras* are called *daivasaṃskāras* there.⁹³ *Niṣeka* is therefore the first of the *sārīra-* or *brahmasaṃskāras*. Thereafter, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita gives a further subdivision of the *sārīrasaṃskāras* (*brahmasaṃskāras*), arranged according to the effect of the respective rituals. According to this passage, the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka* to *jāta-karman* are so-called *bijakṣetraśuddhikara*, “causing purity regarding semen and womb”.⁹⁴ This again points to the fact that it is only through the *saṃskāras* (represented by *niṣeka*) that the “ritual body” of the *Vaikhānasas* is constituted, that is their eligibility to perform sacrifices and other rituals. The gradual classification of Brahmins depending on *saṃskāras* is also based on this assumption. According to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, Brahmins reach another state through each and every *saṃskāra*.⁹⁵ This fact is expressed by the words “through the (*saṃskāras*) from *niṣeka* to *jātaka*”. These words also make it clear that not only the father but also the mother has to be endowed with these *saṃskāras* and therefore that she has to be a Brahmin woman.⁹⁶

93 *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 4.6–8: *yajñāḥ kevalaṃ sārīrā na bhavanti, anena saṃskārāṇāṃ dvai-vidhyaṃ darśitaṃ. uktaṃ ca: “saṃskārā dvidivdhā jñeyāḥ brāhmā daivāḥ prakṛtiṭāḥ ||” iti;* and *ibid.* 4.10: *tatra niṣekādīpānigrahaṇāntīḥ brāhmasaṃskārāḥ. yajñāḥ daivasamkārāḥ.* The division of *saṃskāra* into *brāhma* and *daiva* is given also in *Hārītheadharmasūtra* according to *Saṃskāramayūkha* and according to Kane (1968 vol. 2: 193).

94 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita later refers to this category again. There he explains that “causing purity regarding semen and womb” makes the person eligible to receive other rituals, whereas through the *yajña saṃskāras* the “other worlds” are attained by the performer (*Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 11.17–18: *niṣekādisaṃskārāḥ bijakṣetraśuddhidvārā karmāntarayogyatā siddhimātram ity āśāṅkhya bhūrādīlokāntarajayārthaṃ yajñasaṃskārā uktāḥ*). Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita substantiates this statement by a quotation from the *Yajurveda* (*Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 11.18–20).

95 *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 6.17–18: *brāhmaṇānāṃ saṃskāraviśeṣād avasthāntarāvṛptiṃ darśayati niṣekādājātakādi ty ādinā.* In this connection a quotation from *Manu* (*ibid.* 4.17–18; see also *Mahābhārata* as quoted in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 85.9–10) by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, where the Vedic rituals—the *sārīrasaṃskāras*—are presented as being auspicious and purifying for twice-borns.

96 Here Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita quotes a few verses taken from *Dharma* texts which are in full accordance with *Manusmṛti* 3.174–175 (164–165) (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* 6.21–25): the sacrifice from sons which are not born from the husband’s semen are ineffective. *Tāi*

Here as well as in the following quotation from the *Mahābhārata*⁹⁷ the expression “endowed with the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka* to *jātakarman*” in form and content refers to the mother. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita eventually wants us to conclude that *niṣeka* and the other *garbhasaṃskāras* are not only for the child but also for the mother.⁹⁸ Therefore it seems that the expression “endowed with the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka* to *jātakarman*” hints at the fact that the wife also must be endowed with the *saṃskāras*, beginning with *niṣeka*, and therefore comes from a family which follows the Vaikhānasa tradition regarding the *saṃskāras*: a Vai-khānasa-family.

Niṣeka is dealt with by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita in the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* once again in the commentary on the presentation of different categories of Brahmins: here he quotes Bodhāyana who also classifies the Brahmins on account of the *saṃskāras* (*Bodhāyanagrhyasūtra* 1.7.1–9). A Brahmin is a *śrotriya*, if he is endowed with “the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka* to *jātaka*, (performed) with *mantras*”, if he has taken upon him the observances which are connected with *upanayana* and if he has mastered one Vedic *sākhā*.⁹⁹

The question as to why the list at the beginning of the Sūtra does not contain all the *saṃskāras* which are dealt with later on in detail is dealt with by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita in one passage, where he briefly states that *varṣavardhana* etc. are subdivisions of *saṃskāras* enumerated in the list at the beginning of the Sūtra.¹⁰⁰ A few pages later he refers to the question as to why the Sūtrakāra does not deal with *niṣeka* in the first place. According to him, *niṣeka* as first *saṃskāra* is a precondition for the authorization to perform worship. Manu also mentions *niṣeka* as first *saṃskāra*, although he does not describe the *saṃskāras* in detail. Then, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita alludes to the frequent references to *vaikhānasena sūtreṇa*

paryacintāmaṇi 6.18–23: “*jātamātra*” ity uktau brāhmaṇena sūdrādīkṣetre jātānām api brāhmaṇyaṃ sambhavatīti “brāhmaṇyaṃ brāhmaṇād” ity uktam. “niṣekād” ityādy anuktau: “amṛte jārajaḥ kuṇḍo mṛte bhartari golakaḥ | te na jātāḥ parakṣetre dehīnām pretya ccha ca || dattāni havyakavyāni nāśayanti pradātṛṇām | pitur hi narakāyaiva golakas tu viśeṣataḥ ||” iti.

97 Ibid. 7.2–12 quoting *Mahābhārata* 13.49.313°.1, 13.49.15, 13App.7A, 128/129.

98 This also becomes clear from a look at the formal declaration (*saṃkalpa*) given in the Prayoga-texts which are in use today. These *saṃkalpas* are uttered before the *saṃskāras* are performed. They consistently tell us what ritual the performer is going to perform—for example during *garbhādhāna* he has to declare: “I endow my rightful wife with the *garbhādhāna saṃskāra*”.

99 Ibid. 7.19–21: *bodhāyana*: “niṣeke garbhasaṃskāre jātakarmakriyāsu ca | vidhivat saṃskṛtā mantraiḥ cīrṇavratasamāpanān || śrotriyaḥ iti vijñeyāḥ sākhāpārās ca ye dvijāḥ ||” iti.

100 Ibid. 5.1–2: *niṣekād ā jātakād ityādibhiḥ sūtrakāreṇottaratra vakṣyamānā varṣavardhanādāyaḥ uktasaṃskārāvāntarabhedā ity avagantavyam.*

niṣekādikriyānvit[a-] in the *Vaikhānasasamhitās*. He concludes that *niṣeka* is in fact the first *saṃskāra*. On the other hand the performance of *niṣeka* is only possible in immediate connection with the performance of *vivāha*. Thus—and also because in the description of the Sūtra righteous conduct is very important—*pāṇigrahaṇa* is described before *niṣeka*.¹⁰¹ Therefore, according to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita the difference between the list in the beginning of the Sūtra and the actual descriptions of the *saṃskāras* later on in the Sūtra is not a real discrepancy: the meaning of the words is of greater importance than their sequence. Thus, *niṣeka* is the first of the *saṃskāras*, although it is described in the chapter on *vivāha*.¹⁰²

It is a fact that the ritually performed—or ritually accompanied—sexual intercourse is described in the Sūtra's *vivāha* section under the heading *caturthivāsa* (*Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8). This ritual evidently is conceived of as *niṣeka*, although the term *niṣeka* is not mentioned at all in that passage. In the commentary on the eighth *kaṇḍa* of the third *praśna*, Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita describes the three days of celibacy which immediately follow the marriage rituals (*Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, pp. 400ff.). Here again Bodhāyana is referred to as an authority. Then the *mantras* and “nine *prāyaścittas*”—as part of the ritual—for the sexual intercourse in the fourth night after marriage are briefly given. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita then describes the offering of ghee sprinkled on the wife's head. Through these rituals, according to another source quoted there, the wife becomes part of the man and therefore part of the husband's *gotra*.¹⁰³ According to Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita the actual sexual union is performed after the final *homa* (*antahoma*) of this ritual, and therefore is not part of the ritual proper. It is evident, that here ritual and religious law are closely interlocked. Not the sexual union itself but the ultimate

- 101 Ibid. 12.18–26: *nanu sūtre tāvat “niṣekādisaṃskārān vyākhyāsyāmaḥ” ity uktam. niṣekasaṃskāras tu madhye (vivāhaprakaraṇe) paṭhita iti katham niṣekādītvam ucyate iti cet ucyate. “niṣekādisaṃskārān vyākhyāsyāma” ity uktvā punar api ṛtusaṅgamanetyādinā pradhānabhūtasāṅgamanasyādāv eva pratipādanāt ata eva “niṣekādiśmaśānāntā” iti manūktaparakāreṇa niṣekādyaparasāṃskārāntam saikṣepeṇoktatvāt itarasūtreṣv anuktatvāt “vaikhānasena sūtreṇa niṣekādikriyānvitah” iti bhṛguṇā pratipāditaniṣekādītvam upapadyate eva. niṣekasaṃskāram āditas saṅgrahēṇoktvā anantaram vistareṇa pratipāditavataḥ dviṭyākhaṇḍād ārabhya ācārādīpūrvakatvenoktavataś ca sūtrakārasyaṃ abhiprāyaḥ. niṣekaḥ prathamah saṃskārah sa ca pāṇigrahaṇābhāve na sambhavatīti pāṇigrahaṇam uktam.*
- 102 Ibid. 13.19–21: *evam ca niṣekād ārabhya pāṇigrahaṇāntatvena gaṇayitum śakyatvāt “pāṇhakramād arthakramo balīyān” iti nyāyād anyeṣāṃ madhye pratipādane ‘pi niṣekādītvam astīti boddhavyam.*
- 103 Ibid. 401.12–13: *kiñca: “caturthīhomamantreṇa māṃsamedo ’sthibhir saha | ekatvaṃ saṃgatā bhartrā tasmāt tadgotrabhāk bhavet ||” iti.*

transfer of power of disposition (*svāmya*) from the bride's father to her husband is of prime importance and thus also the future son's right to inherit his father's property.

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's interpretation of the next passage in the Sūtra is equally interesting. First he quotes the end of the *caturthīvāsa* section in the *Vaikhānasa-smārtasūtra* (*Tātparyacintāmaṇi* 402.2–3):

“*suprajās tvāye*” *ty upaḡamanam* “*sannāma mana*” *ity āliṅganam* “*imām anuvrate*” *ti vadhūmukhekṣanam ity eke*:

(With the *mantra* *suprajās tvāyā* he approaches her, (with the *mantra* *sannāma mana* he touches her, (with the *mantra* *imām anuvratā* he kisses the mouth of the woman, thus say some.

Then he gives a list of women who should be “avoided”, among whom a girl before maturity (*kanyā*) is mentioned.¹⁰⁴ He explains that sexual intercourse with such a girl is forbidden. Therefore, the “intercourse” in this case consists of uttering the *mantras*.¹⁰⁵ He also interprets a passage quoted from the *Vaikhānasa-ḡrhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* in this sense. There it is stated that when the fourth night is spent in the father-in-law's house, the couple should return to the husband's house the next day, perform *puṇyāha* there and feed the Brahmins. Henceforth the wife should be pure and obey her husband and take care of the fire.¹⁰⁶ Although Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita does not comment on this statement here, it is evident that he sees the reason for the fact that husband and wife spend the “fourth night” in the father-in-law's house in the age of the wife—she has not reached puberty yet. This connection is elaborated in Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya's 20th century commentary on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*. Additionally, this point of view evidently is the key for the present day oral tradition regarding *niṣeka* and its performance.

In the *Tātparyacintāmaṇi* Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita surpasses the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* insofar as he stresses the importance of the mother. This is an obvious hint that the mother too has to have a Vaikhānasa pedigree, an important aspect for the prenatal *saṃskāras*. Here, together with Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's demand in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* that one may not change from one's own to another

104 Ibid. 402.4–5: “*vṛddhām vandhyām svṛttāñ ca mṛtāpatyāñ ca puṣpiṇīm | kanyāñ ca bahuputrāñ ca varjayen mucyate bhayāt ||*”.

105 Ibid. 402.7–8: *iti kanyāyām (maithunasya) aśakyatvād anucitavād akṣatayonitvam eva bhāryāve hetur ity abhiprāyeṇa ca mantrajaparūpeṇa saṃgamanam pakṣāntareṇopapādayati—“suprajās tvāye” tyādi.*

106 Ibid. 402.9–11: *ḡrhya: “vadhūḡrhe caturthī cet paredyuh svagḡram punaḥ | praviśya pūrvavat kṛtvā puṇyāham bhojayed dvijān || sā ca nityam śucīś cāgnibhartrṣūśrūṣanam caret ||”.*

Sūtra, the Vaikhānasa's transition from a Vedic *śākhā* to a Brahmin caste becomes visible.

Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya's *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*-Commentary on *niṣeka*

In the subsequent Vaikhānasa literature *niṣeka* is not dealt with. Evidently this *saṃskāra* lost its significance. Although some passages still describe the Vaikhānasas as "being endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*", the defining characteristic of the Vaikhānasas as against other religious and ritual groups became the prenatal *saṃskāra viṣṇubali* rather than *niṣeka*. This aspect will be dealt with elsewhere. Thus there are only few texts which 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-texts) for the domestic priests, which are guidelines for the actual performance of the domestic rituals.

Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya's commentary on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* is very informative regarding the contemporary performance and interpretation of the *saṃskāra niṣeka*. Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya (~1895–1987) played a very important role in the Vaikhānasa communities in the 20th century. He was one of six sons of a very conservative Vaiṣṇava Brahmin in a little village in Andhra Pradesh (Ākulamannāḍu, near Machilipatnam, East Godāvarī district). His father sent him to a missionary school so that he learnt English (he even won some prizes in Bible studies there) and therefore was able to communicate with the colonial representatives. Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya dedicated his life to the preservation and propagation of the Vaikhānasa system of worship. His knowledge of English also enabled him to establish contact with Willem Caland who prepared the edition of the *Vaikhānasaśrautasūtra*. One letter to Caland, entitled "a short note on the Vaikhānasaśrautasūtra", is quoted in the preface to the Śrautasūtra edition (pp. xxvii–xxxi). For many years Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya served as main *arcaka* in the very famous Veṅkaṭeśa temple in Tirumalai. He founded the supra-regional Vaikhānasa organization "Sri Vaikhanasa Divya Vivardhini Sabha" and edited many Vaikhānasa texts.¹⁰⁷ He was known as a very erudite Sanskrit scholar and as an authority on the Vaikhānasa system of worship in theory and practice. That is why his commentaries on and explanations of central Vaikhānasa texts have had a deep influence on subsequent generations of Vaikhānasa scholars and *arcakas*.

107 See the bibliography at the end of this article.

Here his statements on the role, function and performance of the *niṣeka śaṃskāra* are examined. In his voluminous commentary on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* he often corroborates Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's arguments by extending the quotations already given there.¹⁰⁸ While commenting on the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*'s "fifth reason why the Vaikhānasas are superior", Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya elaborates on some points which were only hinted at so far.¹⁰⁹

He rejects the opinion of "some" that *garbhādhāna* and *niṣeka* are one and the same ritual and that the two terms are therefore synonyms.¹¹⁰ He explains that in other Sūtras *garbhādhāna* is the first *śaṃskāra*, and that this *garbhādhāna* is in many cases identical with *ṛtusamgamana*.¹¹¹ In the Vaikhānasasūtra, however, according to Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya, the term *garbhādhāna* indicates a ritual for the wife when she is already pregnant.¹¹² This, he continues, is the only correct interpretation. He underpins this with the claim that the Vaikhānasasūtra—which in this case includes the Vaikhānasasamhitās—is on par with the Veda, and therefore is the highest authority.¹¹³

108 For example he extends the quotation from the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* given in *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* (ibid., p. 81; *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇavyākhyāna*, p. 390), and a quotation from the *Chāndogyaopaniṣad* (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, p. 82; *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇavyākhyāna*, pp. 394f.) etc. While commenting on a passage dealing with *niṣeka* in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya also gives an extensive quotation from a non-Vaikhānasa text which is otherwise unknown, the *Praudhivyānjikā* by Śrīvaikhānasadāsa Kṛṣṇakumāra.

109 There he also briefly deals with the fact that *upanayana*, and not *niṣeka*, is dealt with first in the Vaikhānasasūtra (*Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇavyākhyāna*, pp. 396 and 370: *tathā ca nāṃdimukhapūrvakatvenopanayanasaṃskāram ārabhya śaṃskāropadeṣe 'pi sa prakramabhaṃgaḥ*).

110 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇavyākhyāna*, p. 369: 'nye 'pi garbhādhānādiśabdāms tad ekārthān vyākhyānūti. This opinion is briefly referred to also in *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*. However, Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya admits that Bodhāyana—in contrast to Āpastamba and others—does not say that *garbhādhāna* and *niṣeka* are synonymous (ibid., pp. 399–400: *tataś cānūcānādy utpādanaprakāraṃ tato rajasśvalāyāṃ brāhmaṇapratīṣiddhakarmopadeśam uktvā 'ste "caturthiyāṃ snātāyāṃ niṣi"tyādī prakṛthagrantha uktaḥ [khaṇḍaḥ 11] tato viṣṇor yonim antānukṛtvā "evam eva caturthīprabhṛtyāṣoḍaśīm uttarām uttarām yaugmām upaiti prajāniśśreyasam ṛtugamanam ity ācāryāḥ sarvaṇy upagamanāni mantravanti bhavanti bodhāyanaḥ yac cādau yac cartāv iti sālīkiḥ [khaṇḍaḥ 12, saptamo 'dhyāyaḥ]" iti samveśanaprakāra uktaḥ ayam eva niṣekaḥ*).

111 Ibid., p. 404: *athetaresāṃ "garbhādhānam ṛtāv" ity ādinā niṣekarahitān garbhādhānā-dīn śaṃskārān*.

112 Ibid., p. 404: *śrīvaikhānasasūtre garbhādhānakālasya gṛhītagarbhāyā vihītatvāt [...]*.

113 This fact is already hinted at in the *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* (where Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita mainly dwells on the term *ācārya* for Vaikhānasas) but is elaborated in Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya's commentary. Ibid., p. 405: "veda" itī vedo vaikhānasasūtraṃ ca tulyaba-

What interests us most here is the description of the actual performance of *niṣeka* in Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya's commentary. From the beginning he makes it clear that *niṣeka* is performed at the end of the vow called *caturthivrata*.¹¹⁴ In general, he agrees with Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's view that *niṣeka* literally means the pouring of semen.¹¹⁵ At the end of this section of the commentary, Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya clearly subscribes to the view first expressed in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, that the last sentence in the *caturthivāsa* (= *niṣeka*) section of the *Vaikhānasasūtra* (*Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8: "*suprajāstvāye*" *ty upagamanam* "*saṃnāmana*" *ity āliṅgam* "*imām anuvrate*" *ti vadhūmukhekṣaṇam ity eke*) refers to a case where the wife has not yet reached puberty. Then *niṣeka* can only be performed by reciting the relevant *mantras*, which differ from the *mantras* to be uttered when a man marries a grown-up woman.¹¹⁶ Here Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya quotes many Śāstras which clearly state that a girl should be given away in marriage before she reaches puberty. Evidently the "*mantra-version*" of *niṣeka* is considered the regular procedure.¹¹⁷

It is evident that Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya considered *viṣṇubali* a much more important defining element of *Vaikhānasa* identity than *niṣeka*. In his commentary on the *Ānandasamhitā* he gives eight authoritative descriptions of *viṣṇubali*,¹¹⁸ whereas he does not describe *niṣeka* at all.

laṃ pramāṇam. vedaḥ ṛgādīḥ vaikhānasasūtram, śrautasmārtabhedena bhinnam dvā-triṃśatpraśnāmakam cāturalakṣaparimita śrīvaikhānasabhagavacchāstram ca tatpra-pañcanarūpaṃ tatra saṃgrhyate.

- 114 Ibid., p. 370: *pāṇigrahanacaturthivāsavratavisarjanānte niṣekasambda*. Bodhāyana, as Pārthasārathi Bhaṭṭācārya indicates, places at this stage the sexual intercourse during the fertile period. Therefore, in Bodhāyana's case *ṛtusamgamana* would be the appropriate name for this ritual. See e.g. *ibid.*, p. 402: *tat pakṣan dūṣayati "caturthyām" ity ādinā rajasvalādharmaṇy uktvā "caturthyām snātāyām" itidam sūtram ārabhyate*.
- 115 Ibid., p. 371: *atra vājapeyāyam bhāṣyaṃ "retasā bhāryāyā yonir niṣecyate, saṃsicyate 'sminn iti niṣekaḥ" ity prajāprajananārthaṃ yonyāṃ retas sekasya nāntariyakatā sūtra-kārair ucyate*.
- 116 Ibid., p. 420: *kiṃ ca vivāhaniṣpādakās ca maṃtrās sarve prauḍhām evoddiśya vadhūm pravṛttāḥ, yathā: "grbhṇāmi te [...] prajāpatī sā jīva śaradām śatam" ityādi maṃtrānām anyāsv aṣṭavarṣavayaskāsu samanvayo 'saṃbhāvī*.
- 117 Ibid., p. 421: *iti sarvaṃ saṃgataṃ bhavati rajodarśananāntaravivāhasya doṣaduṣṭatvam aṃgīkurvāṇām api tādr̥ṣavivāhe prāyaścittādikam api sulabham uktam*.
- 118 In his commentary on *Ānandasamhitā* 8.32 (pp. 115ff.) he quotes Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin's *Bhāṣya*, Sundararāja's *Prayogavṛtti*, Vasantayājñin's commentary, Sañjivayājñin's *Nibandhana*, Veṅkaṭayogin's *Nibandhana*, Gopānācārya's *Anukramaṇikā*, and Śrīkoṇḍarāmayajvan's *Samartakarmānukramaṇikā* on the performance of *viṣṇubali*.

Prayoga-Texts on *niṣeka*

The idea that *niṣeka* as the first *saṃskāra* constitutes Vaikhānasa identity is perpetuated in the Sanskrit Prayoga texts, ritual handbooks for practitioners which are in use today. These are the most recent expositions on the domestic rituals of the Vaikhānasa tradition. They give detailed descriptions of the diverse elements of the rituals arranged in their proper order. These handbooks were actually consulted by the *ācāryas* in most of the rituals I witnessed during my recent stay in South India.

There are two series of Prayoga texts in use today, which are in use in different regions: the Telugu speaking Vaikhānasa communities (mainly in Andhra Pradesh) use the *Vaikhānasasūtrānukramaṇikā* in Telugu characters.¹¹⁹ The first volume describes some sub-rituals which are an integral part of many other rituals (e.g. *viṣvaksenārādhana*, *puṇyāha*, *āghāra*, *nāndīmukha*, *aṅkurārpaṇa* etc.). The second volume deals with the procedure for establishing the *aupāsana*-fire and the 18 *śārīrasaṃskāras* with their *prāyaścittas*. The third volume contains some additional sub-rites and prescriptions which are not at all dealt with in the Sūtras, such as *karṇavedha* and the *saṃskāras* for a girl etc.

The Tamil speaking Vaikhānasas (mainly in Tamil Nadu) use three Prayoga texts, namely the *Pūrvaprayoga*, the *Vivāhaprayoga*, and the *Aparaprayoga*, which are all printed in Grantha- and Tamil characters. The *Pūrvaprayoga* deals with the *saṃskāras* from *niṣeka*/*ṛtusamgamana* to *narāyaṇavratibandha*, an integral part of *upanayana*. The *Vivāhaprayoga* describes all rituals connected with marriage, and the *Aparaprayoga* gives prescriptions for the rituals *post mortem*.

One important difference between both Prayoga texts and the Sūtra is the sequence of the rituals. In the Prayogas the description of the *saṃskāras* starts with the prenatal *saṃskāras*, whereas it starts with *upanayana* in the Sūtra and the commentaries. Since in some respects there are considerable differences between the descriptions of the *saṃskāras* between the two Prayogas I deal with them separately.

According to the table of contents, *niṣeka* (*niṣekaprayoga*) is dealt with at the beginning of the *Pūrvaprayoga*. In the relevant passage first (*Pūrvaprayoga* 1.6–9) the beginning of the Vaikhānasasūtra is quoted. Then it is stated that a group of five Brahmins should be present, the couple should have taken a bath in the

119 This text was published in two volumes (1924 and 1928) as Kusumas 10 and 17 of the series Vaikhānasagrāṇthamālā in Īgāvāripāḷem. Later it was reprinted several times in three volumes in Nallūru. This is the text I used for the present article (*Sūtrānukramaṇikā*).

morning, and the performer should wear two rings made of *darbha*-grass on his hand, and that he should wear the twelve Vaiṣṇava-signs (*ūrdhvaṣṭra*).¹²⁰ The first ritual is described as a *homa* which is an atonement for not having performed *ṛtusaṃgamana* at the proper time (*Pūrvaprayoga* 5.4: *ṛtusaṃgamana-kālātūtaprāyaścittahoma*). Then follows the relevant passage from the *Vaikhānasasūtra* (*Pūrvaprayoga* 5.5–9)—which starts with the sentence “some say that the union during the fertile period is *niṣeka*” (*Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 6.2: *ṛtau saṃgamanam niṣekam ity āhuḥ*). In the actual description of this *prāyaścitta* in the *Pūrvaprayoga*, however, the term *niṣeka* is not used. The relevant term consistently is *ṛtusaṃgamana*. Therefore, *ṛtusaṃgamanaprayoga* is described under the heading *niṣekaprayoga*. However, the subsequent description (*Pūrvaprayoga*, pp. 16ff.) of the main offering for *ṛtusaṃgamana* (*ṛtusaṃgamanapradhānahoma*) contains several sub-rites. In the subrite called *phaladānam* (“the giving of fruit”, *Pūrvaprayoga*, p. 19) the *saṃkalpa* surprisingly reads: “I will perform, in order to attain the complete bliss for my rightful wife, named [...], a part of the *niṣeka* ritual, namely the giving of fruit, the giving of betel, and the giving of betel leaves”.¹²¹ A similar expression can be found in the next two sub-rites, namely the “appeasing of the planets” (*grahaprīti*)¹²² and in the “giving of betel”¹²³. In the latter sub-rite the *saṃkalpa* reads: “For the complete bliss of both of (us) I will perform the *niṣeka* ritual”. However, the *mantras* the performer has to recite are taken from the *ṛtusaṃgamana* chapter of the *Vaikhāna-*

120 *Pūrvaprayoga* 1.10–13: *pañcavarān śrotriyān āhūyābhipūjayati. dāmpatyoh prātasnātvācamya. dhṛtobhaya-pavitrapāṇiḥ dvādaśorddhvapūṇḍradharah. samdhyām upāsya brahmayaññaṅ kāṇḍarīṣi tarpaṇam ca kṛtvā.*

121 *Ibid.* 19.17–20.2: *prāṇānyāmya [...] svar oṃ. śubhatithau. nakṣatre rāśau jātasya śarmaṇah. nakṣatre rāśau jātāyāḥ nāmnyāḥ mama dharmapatnyāḥ samastamaṅgalāvāptyartham niṣekakarmāṅgam phaladānam tāmbūladānam haridrādānānicādyā kariṣye. apa.*

122 *Ibid.* 20.14–25: *grahaprīti prāṇānyāmya [...] svar oṃ. śubhatithau nakṣatre rāśau [...] mama dharmapatnyāḥ samastamaṅgalāvāptyartham niṣekamuhūrtalagnāpekṣayā ādityādīnām navānām grahānām ānukūlyasiddhyartham ādityādi navagrahadvārā bhagavat prūyartham yat kiñcid dhirānyadānam, tāmbūlaharidrādānānicādyā kariṣye. apa upa. hiraṇyagarbhagarbhastham [...] prayaccha me. niṣekamuhūrtalagnāpekṣayā—ādityādīnām—navānām grahānām—ānukūlyasiddhyartham—ye ye grahāḥ—śubhasthāneṣu sthitāḥ—teṣām grahānām atyanta [...].*

123 *Ibid.* 21.5: *tāmbūladānam; Pūrvaprayoga* 21.14–21: *prāṇānyāmya [...] svar oṃ. ubhayoh samastamaṅgalāvāptyartham niṣekakarmaṇā saṃkariṣye. apa upa. viṣṇur yoniḥ kalpayatv iti tāṃ upagacchet. viṣṇur yoniḥ kalpayatu tvaṣṭārūpāṇipīmṣatu āśimcatu prajāpatir ddhātā garbhan dadhātu te. garbhan dhehi sinivālī garbhan dhehi sarasvati. garbhan te aśvinau devāv ādhattām puṣkarasrajā. hiraṇyayī arāṇīyānicirmatthato aśvinā tante garbham.*

sasmārtasūtra (3.9). The next ritual described is *garbhādhāna* (*Pūrvaprayoga* 23.12: *garbhādānādirayoga*).¹²⁴ Therefore, the term *niṣeka* is evidently used here only by mistake. In the relevant chapter on *caturthīvāsa* in the *Vivāhaprayoga* (pp. 68ff.), there is another passage headed “*niṣeka*”. This passage is placed after *āgneyasthālīpāka* (*Vivāhaprayoga*, p. 71), *aupāsana* (*Vivāhaprayoga*, p. 73), *vaiśvadeva* (*Vivāhaprayoga*, p. 74), *śeṣahoma* (*Vivāhaprayoga*, p. 77), and *antahoma* (*Vivāhaprayoga*, p. 78). There a passage from the *Vaikhānasasūtra* (*caturthīvāsa*, 3.8) is quoted (inaccurately) and the relevant *mantras* are given in full—however, in this description the term *niṣeka* is not used at all.¹²⁵ Therefore there is strong evidence that the compiler(s) of the *Pūrvaprayoga* and the *Vivāhaprayoga* did in fact regard the rituals *ṛtusamgamana* and *niṣeka* as one and the same procedure.

The situation is different in the Telugu *Prayoga* text. The *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* is based on five sources: 1) the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, 2) Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin’s *Bhāṣya*, 3) Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s commentaries (on *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* and *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*), 4) on the practice according to time and place, 5) on a text called *Vaikhānasagrhyaparīśiṣṭasūtra*. Since the other texts mentioned have already been introduced a few words on the *Vaikhānasagrhyaparīśiṣṭasūtra* are required here. The full text of this *Vaikhānasagrhyaparīśiṣṭasūtra* is evidently lost—its only existent parts are the quotations given in Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita’s works and in the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*. Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita frequently refers to this text, mainly in connection with his “seventh reason”, where he argues that the *Vaikhānasasūtra* is better than all other *Sūtras* since it does in fact contain each and every necessary ritual.¹²⁶ Here he refers to the *Vaikhānasagrhyaparīśiṣṭasūtra*, which describes the rituals that are not found in the *Vaikhānasasūtra*.

Back to the question of how *niṣeka* is dealt with in the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*. In the table of contents of its second volume dealing with the 18 *saṃskāras* relating to the body, *niṣeka* is not listed—neither (as in the *Pūrvaprayoga*) placed before

124 The whole passage is not given in *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*.

125 *Vivāhaprayoga*, pp. 78–79: *agniṃ pradakṣiṇaṃ kṛtvā. prācyāṃ udīcyāṃ vā tām upaveṣya, abhiṣṭvā pañcaśākhēti yonim abhimṛśya. abhiṣṭvā prañcaśākhēti śivenābhitiṣvātā sahasareṇa yaśas vinā hastenābhimṛśām asi. suprajās tvāyeti. tām upagachet, suprajās tvāya suvīryāya. santā mamatassaṃ hṛdayā santābhis hattvavā. sattvākāmasya yoktraṇayauñjāmya vimocanāya. imām anuvratā bhavasahacaryāmayābhava. yā te patighnītanūr jāraghnīm tvenām karomi. śivātvaṃ mahyamedhikṣur apavirjārebhyaḥ. madhu hen maddhv idaṃ madhujihlāto bhavam aśvināmukhomā. sārasaṃ madhumat susaṃvadatām kṛtam. vakravākāṃ saṃvananaṃ yantadūbhya udāhṛtam. yady uktau devagandharvau tena saṃvaninai svaḥ.*

126 *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, pp. 90ff.

rtusamgamana, nor as a part of the *vivāha* rituals. However, looking at the formal introduction of the diverse sub-rituals connected with *vivāha*, one discovers that *niṣeka* is in fact given there: it is presented after the topics *aupāsana*, *vaiśvadeva* (*Sūtrānukramaṇikā* 2, p. 120), and *grhadevatābhyo baliharāṇam* (*Sūtrānukramaṇikā* 2, p. 121), namely under the heading *caturthīhoma* (*Sūtrānukramaṇikā* 2, p. 124, there is also a footnote on *niṣeka*).

First the introductory sentence from *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 3.8 is quoted.¹²⁷ The relevant *saṃkalpa* is: “I will endow this wife with the *niṣeka* ritual”.¹²⁸ Then the procedure of *niṣeka* follows, in full accordance with the Sūtra and taking into account the additional prescriptions from the *Vaikhānasagrhyaparīśiṣtasūtra*,¹²⁹ which are given in a footnote.¹³⁰ In this footnote the compilers of the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* also discuss the question of the other method of performing *niṣeka*. According to them there are two options. One is that which is already given, the other is based on the last sentence in the Sūtra (*Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 6.2: “*suprajās tvāye*”*ty upagamaṇam* “*sannāmamana*” *ity āliṅganam* “*imānuprate*”*ti vadhūmukhekṣaṇam ity eke*). Both sides are equally valid, since already Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita (in his *Tātparyacintāmaṇi*) had stated that sexual intercourse with a girl who has not yet reached puberty is prohibited. In that case the second method is applied. *niṣeka* then only consists of the recitation of *mantras*.

-
- 127 *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* 2.124: “*tad evaṃ trirātram haviṣyāśinau brahmacāriṇau dhautavastravratācāriṇau syātām*” *tato 'parasyām rātryām* “*caturthyām*” *ātmānaṃ patnīm cālamkṛtya*.
- 128 *Ibid.* 2.124: *prāṇānāyamyā deśakālau saṃkīrtya śubhatithau (gotrām nānnīm) enām patnīm niṣekena karmaṇā saṃskariṣyāmi. iti saṃkalpya (apa) vivāhāgnāv āghāraṃ hutvā. agniṃ pariṣicya. adite 'numanyasva*.
- 129 *Ibid.* 2.124–125: *agne vāyav ādityā āditya vāyav āgne 'gne vāyavādityeti nava prāyaścittāni vyāhṛtīs cājyena juhuyāt. agne vāyavādityāditya vāyavagne 'gne vāyavāditya. bhūs svāhā 4. atha vadhūmūrdhni svarṇam nidhāya bhūr bhagam ityādi caturbhir mantrais sruveṇājyam ādāya mūrdhni juhuyāt. bhūr bhagas tvayi juhomi svāhā, bhuvo yaśas tvayi juhomi svāhā. sivaśśriyas tvayi juhomi svāhā. bhūr bhuvās suvās śriyas tvayi juhomi svāhā. antahomānte 'gniṃ pradakṣiṇakṛtya tam agniṃ aranyām idhme vā samāropya dampatī pra tam visṛṣtam ity ābhāṣya carmādi tyajetām. bandhubhis saha bhuktvā. bhuktavatayām patnyām vitānādibhir alamkṛte grhet alpe prācyām udīcyām vā tām upaveśya suprajās tvām ety upagamaṇam. suprajās tvāya suvīryāya. sannāmamana ity āliṅganam. sannāma manassamhṛdayāsannābhis sastvacā. santyākāmasya yoktreṇa yujñāmy avimocanāya. imām anuprateti vadhūmukhekṣaṇam kuryāt. imām anuvratā bhavasahacaryāmayā bhava. yā te vatighnī tanūr jāraghnīm tvenāṅkaromi. śivā tvam mahyam edhikṣuravavirjārebhyaḥ*.
- 130 *Ibid.* 2.126: *vadhūgrhe caturthī cet paredyuh svagrhaṃ punaḥ | praviśya pūrvavat sthitvā puṇyāhaṃ bhojayed dvijān || sā ca nityam śuciś cāgni bhartṛśūsṛṣaṇam caret ||. iti*.

It is evident that the compilers of the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā* regarded the ritual at the end of *caturthīvāsa* as *niṣeka*, in contrast to the compilers of the *Pūrvaprayoga* and *Vivāhaprayoga*, who evidently considered *niṣeka* as identical with *ṛtusamgamana*. As a consequence of this difference of opinion the “variant” of *niṣeka*, consisting of the uttering of *mantras*, is known only in the *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*.

The Opinion of Contemporary Vaikhānasa-ācāryas on *niṣeka*

In order to find out about the present day oral tradition I interviewed some members of the Vaikhānasa communities in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu about the significance and present-day performance of the *saṃskāra niṣeka*.¹³¹ It was evident that, although many Vaikhānasas are of the opinion that being a Vaikhānasa usually is defined by “being endowed with the *saṃskāras*, beginning with *niṣeka*”, very few of them have a concrete perception of how and when the ritual named *niṣeka* is performed. As was to be expected, there is a difference of opinion between those Vaikhānasas who perform the domestic ritual for other Vaikhānasas, the so-called *bṛhaspatīs*, and those who are representatives of the Vaikhānasa tradition as a school of temple ritual (the so-called *arcakas*), but who have less theoretical knowledge of the sequence and the performance of the *saṃskāras*.

All practising *bṛhaspatīs* as well as all practising *arcakas* told me that *niṣeka* today generally is performed immediately after the marriage rituals or three days later.¹³² However, uncertainty regarding the identity of *niṣeka* and *ṛtusamgamana* (sometimes also *garbhādhāna*) is very common. One *arcaka*, who also occasionally performs domestic rituals, is of the opinion that both, *niṣeka* and *garbhādhāna* are performed after the marriage rituals. *Niṣeka*, he adds, is performed after the first menstruation of the wife after marriage. For four days the couple is not allowed to have sexual intercourse, until the bleeding comes to an end. According to him, *ṛtusamgamana* is the monthly cohabitation on the fourth day of the wife’s menstruation. Another *arcaka* states that—although he regards *niṣeka* and *ṛtusamgamana* as separate rituals—identical *mantras* are used during both rituals.

However, one Vaikhānasa who occasionally performs temple rituals insists that *niṣeka* and *ṛtusamgamana* are separate rituals. In full accordance with

131 This passage contains the results of interviews I conducted as part of my field work in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh January/February 1998 and from August 2000 to March 2001, both possible only through the generous financial support of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG).

132 For obvious reasons the names will not be given here.

Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita he states that the ritual which concludes the ritual complex called *caturthīvāsa* is *niṣeka*. According to him, *ṛtusaṅgamana* is performed after the third day of menstruation. The present day performance of *niṣeka* is as follows: the husband touches the belly of the wife. Before that, husband and wife may only touch each other's hands for three days. However, this *arcaka* admits that nowadays *niṣeka* is usually not performed at all—and if so, it simply consists of the recitation of *mantras* at the end of the *vivāha* ceremonies. He attributes this custom to the “early times”, when girls were given away in marriage before they reached puberty. At that time, from *vivāha* until the wife's first menstruation, only the sub-rituals *aupāsana*, *sthālīpāka* and *vaiśvadeva* were performed. This is, he adds, the reason why these chapters in the *Vaikhānasa-smārtasūtra* are given between *vivāha* and *caturthīvāsa*.¹³³ This connection between the marriage age of girls and the actual performance of the *niṣeka* ritual is also drawn by other *arcakas* and *brhaspatīs*. One professional *brhaspati* states that in former times *niṣeka* was performed when the couple had not reached puberty. At that time *niṣeka* consisted of reciting *mantras*. The first actual sexual intercourse then was *ṛtusaṅgamana*. Another Vaikhānasa is of the slightly different opinion that “in former times, when girls were already married at the age of eight”, *niṣeka* was performed only after the girls reached puberty.

The uncertainty as to whether *ṛtusaṅgamana* and *niṣeka* are one and the same ritual continues until the present day. The same holds true for the objective of *niṣeka* and its actual time and method of performance. Contrary to the regional Prayoga tradition, as far as I can see the oral tradition is not dependent on regional factors but, it seems, on the degree of the theoretical and/or practical background of the respective priest.¹³⁴

In some cases a connection is expressed between the actual marriage age of the couple (wife) and the concrete performance of *niṣeka*. Most probably this is based on the Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita's expositions, which introduced a distinction between *niṣeka* as first sexual intercourse and *niṣeka* as a symbolical act consisting of reciting *mantras*. The common present-day practice of *niṣeka* as a symbolic

133 *Caturthīvāsa/niṣeka* was performed only after the woman's first menstruation. The regular rituals *aupāsana*, *sthālīpāka* and *vaiśvadeva* are interrupted during the menstruation of the wife, because these rituals can only be performed together with the wife, who is, however, considered impure during menstruation. Thus for four days the place for the sacrifices may not be entered, after that *prāyaścittas* are performed, and then the usual procedure starts again.

134 This does not mean that those with the deepest theoretical knowledge are necessarily at the same time the most reliable informants regarding the actual present day practice.

act involves *mantras* and the act by which the couple looks into each other's face (and, occasionally, the man touches the woman's belly).

However, on a theoretical level, which is mainly concerned with the eligibility to perform the temple rituals in Vaiṣṇava temples, even today it is of great importance whether a Vaikhānasa is in fact "endowed with the rituals beginning with *niṣeka* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra" or not. Here the main issue is the marriage of Vaikhānasa men with Brahmin women of other Sūtra-traditions. Thus in the mid-nineties of the twentieth century it was vehemently discussed whether the children from a union of a Vaikhānasa father and a mother of a family with another Sūtra-tradition are eligible to perform temple worship in a traditional Vaikhānasa temple. It was decided that these children are considered "half pure", since the mother is not endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka*. In this case the relevant *prāyaścittas* are applied. This argument clearly is based on the passage in the Sūtra which reads *niṣekād ā jātakāt saṃskṛtāyām brāhmaṇyām brāhmaṇāj jātamātraḥ putramātraḥ* (Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra 1.1), which introduces the diverse categories of Brahmins. There *niṣekād ā jātakāt* grammatically refers to the mother, not to the child. Only the children in the next generation are "pure" Vaikhānasas, if their mother and father are both "endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* according to the Vaikhānasasūtra". Here the conflict of two related but essentially different concepts of lineage becomes evident: that of a Vedic "branch" (*śākhā*), the content of which is transmitted from teacher to pupil, and that of a Brahmin caste, which is transmitted from father to son. Both concepts are claimed by the Vaikhānasas for themselves: the Vedic branch in order to underpin their unquestionable authority, the Brahmin caste in order to establish the hereditary and thus insurmountable boundaries of the group.

The awareness that being endowed with the *saṃskāras* beginning with *niṣeka* is a precondition for being a Vaikhānasa and to perform the ritual in Vaikhānasa temples is reflected by another *arcaka*'s statement. He considers *niṣeka* and *viṣṇubali* "additional" *saṃskāras*, peculiar only to the Vaikhānasa tradition. According to him *niṣeka* is performed together with *garbhādhāna* after marriage and before the first sexual intercourse of the couple. Its aim is to provide the child with the ability to perform the temple rituals.

Summary

Since *niṣeka* is rarely performed today, its function must be on a more abstract level. *Niṣeka* is mentioned as a distinctive feature of the Vaikhānasas among Vaiṣṇava groups as well as among Sūtra traditions. In both cases *niṣeka* consti-

tutes a demarcation on the basis of genealogy. This becomes very clear when reference is made to the mother of the unborn child: she also has to be endowed with the *saṃskāras* according to the Vaikhānasa-sūtra and therefore has to stem from a Vaikhānasa-family. Therefore, the affiliation to the Vaikhānasa group invariably derives from descent. At the same time the Vaikhānasa claim to constitute a Vedic branch, which in principle is not based on descent, but on teacher-pupil succession, which is realized by an initiation. Through the linkage of a Vedic branch with specific prenatal *saṃskāras* this peculiar Vedic tradition is limited to the Brahmin caste of the Vaikhānasa. *Niṣeka* stands here for all *saṃskāras* of this tradition. These *saṃskāras* create ritual authorization for the concerned person by constituting his “ritual body”.¹³⁵ Based on the Vedic principle that biological facts by nature are defective and therefore have to be “formed” and “structured” through rituals, men overcome their natural deficits only through rituals, according to their inherent potential.¹³⁶ This process is enacted through *saṃskāras*: a man is “made perfect” and “appropriate” through ritual actions—he unfolds by and by. Literally this idea is expressed by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita who states that a Vaikhānasa who is endowed with *niṣeka* etc. has “the body of Brahmā”.

The *saṃskāras* “from *niṣeka* to *śmaśāna*” constitute a frame for the ritual construction and dissolution of the ritual body of a Vaikhānasa. On the concrete plane the performance of a “ritual decision” (*saṃkalpa*) and the “dismissal” (*visarjana*) of the god constitutes the beginning and the end of a ritual.¹³⁷ Therefore *niṣeka* on a more abstract level, as first *saṃskāra*, marks the beginning of the construction of the ritual competence of a Vaikhānasa. Since *niṣeka* at the same time is presented as a *saṃskāra* which is also necessary for the mother, it could serve until now as a badge for the Vaikhānasa as a group of hereditary ritual specialists, irrespective of the fact whether the ritual is in fact performed or not.

To sum up, while the practice as well as the interpretation—which is the meaning imposed by the actors, spectators, and other participants—of this ritual evidently always were at variance, *niṣeka* remained important as a label for a Vaikhānasa identity among ritual specialists. Thus this peculiar ritual is an example for the fact that even if the contents of a ritual change in every respect, even if its performance is suspended, still the ritual as concept does not necessarily lose its significance.

135 See B.K. Smith 1989: 51.

136 See *ibid.*: 82–86 and 92f.

137 See Michaels 1998; see also B.K. Smith 1989: 91.

References

Texts

- Aparaprayoga*. Śrīvaikhānasasūtrīyāparaprayokāḥ, Paṭṭācāryarālūm, Nārāyaṇa & Natar Ko. Śrīnivāsa Paṭṭācāryarālūm (ed.). Kumpakoṇam, 1964 (Grantha and Tamil characters).
- Ānandasamhitā*. Śrīvaikhānasabhaḡavacchāstre Bhagavan Marīci Mahārṣiproktā Ānandasamhitā, Pārthasārathi, R. (ed.). With the Sanskrit commentary *Ānandasamhitāvyaḡhyā* and a short Telugu commentary of the editor. Īgāvāripāḡem, 1924–1925. 4 vols. (Vaikhānasagranthamālā, Kusuma 12); vol. 1: 1924; vol. 2: 1924; vol. 3: 1925; vol. 4: 1925 (all in Telugu characters). (repr. T.T.D. Religious Publication Series 509), Tirupati, 1998.
- Bodhāyanagrhyasāḡasūtra*. In: *Bodhāyanagrhyasūtra*, pp. 178–376.
- The Bodhāyana Grhya Sūtra*. Shastri, R. Sharma (ed.). (Panini Vaidika Granthamala 3). New Delhi, 1920 (repr. 1982).
- Chāndogyopaniṣad*. In: *The early Upaniṣads: annotated text and translation*, Olivelle, Patrick (ed., transl.). New York [et al.], 1998 (South Asia Research).
- Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa*, by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita. Bhaṭṭācārya, Pārthasārathi (ed.); (Rompicarla Bhattar Srinivasa Aiyangar). Together with a Sanskrit commentary (Vyāḡhyāna) and Telugu explanations (Āndhratātparya), (Śrīvaikhānasagranthamālā, Anubandha 15). Īgāvāripāḡem, 1931 (Telugu characters).
- Daśavidhahetunirūpanavyāḡhyāna*. In: *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* edition in Telugu characters (see above).
- Gautamadharmasūtra*. In: *Dharmasūtras. The Law Codes of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasiṣṭa*, Olivelle, Patrick (ed., transl.). Delhi, 2000, pp. 116–189.
- Guruparamparā*. In: *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā*, by Raghupatibhaṭṭācārya. Veṅkaṭanarasimhācārya, Dīvi (ed.). (Śrīvaikhānasabhaḡavacchāstragranthamālā, Prasūna 7). Nallūru, 1948 (Telugu characters), pp. 1–3.
- Īśvarasamhitā*. Kāranāntācārya, Prativādhaya (ed.). (Śāstramuktāvali 45) Kāñcī, 1923.
- Jayāḡhyasamhitā*. Krishnamacharya, Embar (crit. ed.). With an Introduction in Sanskrit, Indices etc. (Gaekwad's Oriental Series 54), Baroda, 1931.
- The Kāṭhagrhyasūtra*. With extracts from three commentaries, an appendix and indexes, Caland, Willem (ed.). Lahore, 1925.
- Khilādhikāra* (=Bhrgusamhitā), Bhaṭṭācārya, Roṃ. P. Pārthasārathi (ed.). Tirupati, 1961 (repr. T.T.D. Religious Publication Series 490, Tirupati, 1997) (Devanāgarī characters).
- Kriyādhikāra*. Śrīmatī Vaikhānase Bhagavacchāstre Kriyādhikāra (=Bhrgusamhitā), Raghunāthācārya, Es. Bi. (ed.). 3rd ed. (T.T.D. Religious Publication Series 491), Tirupati, 1998 (Devanāgarī characters).
- Manusmṛti*. With the Sanskrit Commentary Manvarthamuktāvali of Kullūka Bhaṭṭa, Shastri, J.L. (ed.). Delhi, 1983.

- Muṇḍakopaniṣad*. In: *The early Upaniṣads: annotated text and translation*, Olivelle, Patrick (ed., transl.). New York [u.a.], 1998 (South Asia Research).
- Pādma Samhitā*. Padmanabhan, Seetha & R.N. Sampath (crit. ed.). (Pancaratra Parisodhana Parisad Series 3–4) 2 vols., Madras, 1974 & 1982.
- Paramapurūṣasamhitā*. Sītārāmānujācāryulu, P. & G.C. Śrīnivāsācāryulu (ed.). (The Publication of the Literary Pride of India) Bhadrācalam, 1938 (Telugu characters).
- Pārameśvarasamhitā*. Pāñcarātrāntargatā Pārameśvarasamhitā, Govindācārya (ed.). Śrīraṅgam, 1953.
- Pauṣkarasamhitā*. Pāñcarātrāgame ratnatrayāntargatā Pauṣkarasamhitā, Rāmānujamuni, Sampatkumāra (ed.). Bangalore, 1934.
- Prakīrṇādhikāra*. Śrīvaikhānasabhaḡavacchāstrebhagavadbhrgumahārṣiproktāsu samhitāsu, Bhaṭṭācārya, Māḡaṃbākaṃ Kṛṣṇasvāmi Śrīnivāsa (ed.). (T.T.D. Religious Publications Series 483) Vijayawada, 1997 (Telugu characters).
- Pūrvaprayoga*. Śrīvaikhānasa pūrvaprayokam, Paṭṭāccāryarāl, Śrīnivāsa (ed.). Kumpakoṇam, 1979 (Grantha and Tamil characters).
- Samskāramayūkha*, by (Nīlakaṃṭhasuta) Śāṅkara Bhaṭṭa, Śeṃḡe, Narahariśāstri (ed.). Vol. 1, Bombay, 1913.
- Samūrtīrcanādhikaraṇa*, Bhaṭṭācārya, V. Raghunātha Cakravarti & M. Ramakṛṣṇa Kavi (ed.). (Śrī Venkaṭeśvara Oriental Series 6) Tirupati, 1943 (Devanāgarī characters).
- Sanatkumāra-Samhitā of the Pāñcarātrāgama*. Krishnamacharya, V. (ed.). (The Adyar Library Series 95) Madras, 1969.
- Śrīnivāsadiḡsitendracaritramu*, by Sundararāja Bhaṭṭācārya. Tenali, 1912 (Telugu characters).
- Śrīpraśna Samhitā*, Padmanabhan, Seetha (ed.). (Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha Series 12) Tirupati, 1969.
- Śrīviṣṇumahāpurāṇa*. The Viṣṇumahāpurāṇam. Introduction, Text, Textual Corrections and Verse-Index. Delhi, 1985 (kṣemajāya śrīkrṣṇadāsenasampādītasya mumbaī śrī venkaṭeśvaraśrīna mudraṇālayena prakāśītasya punamudranam) (śloka-index by Nāgaśaraṇasimha).
- Suprabhedāgama*. Suprapetakamam, Mutaliyar, Mayilai-Aḡakappa (ed.). Ceṇṇai [Madras], Civananapotayantra [Śivajñānabodhayantra], [1907] (Grantha and Tamil characters).
- Sūtradarpaṇa*. Śrīvaikhānasasūtradarpaṇam, by Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyayājīn. Śrīnivāsa-bhaṭṭācārya & Śrīnārāyaṇa Śeṣācārya (ed.). Helāpurī, 1915 (Śrīvaikhānasagrānthamālā, Kusuma 1) (Telugu characters).
- Sūtrānukramaṇikā*. Śrīvaikhānasasūtrānukramaṇikā, compiled by various Pūrvācāryas. Bhaṭṭācārya, U. Ch. Śrīnivāsa (ed.). With a preface by S. Śeṣācārya, Īḡāvīripāḡem, 2 vols.: 1924 (Vaikhānasagrānthamālā, Kusuma 10) and 1928 (Vaikhānasagrānthamālā, Kusuma 17) (Telugu characters). Reprinted in three volumes as Vaikhānasabhaḡavacchāstragrānthamālā, Prasūna 4, 9, and 10 several times (Nallūru, 1971, 1982, 1991, 1997).

- Tātparyacintāmaṇi*, by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita. Śrīvaikhānasagr̥hyasūtram, Śrīnivāsa-makhivedāntadeśikāiḥ viracitayā Śrīsūtratātparyacintāmaṇyākhyayā vyākhyayā samalan̄kṛtam, Bhaṭṭācārya, Ākulamannadu Śrī Rom. Pārthasārathi (ed.). Tirumala, Śaka 1779 (1967; repr. T.T.D. Religious Publications Series 494, Hyderabad, 1997); *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa* is the introductory portion of vol. I, pp. 1–122 (Devanāgarī characters).
- Vaikhānasagr̥hyasūtrabhāṣya—A critical edition and study*. Thesis submitted to the University of Madras by Sri. S. Muthu (Department of Sanskrit; Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College), Madras, 1996 (unpublished).
- Vaikhānasasūtrabhāṣya*. Śrīvaikhānasasmārtasūtram. Śrī Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyabhāṣya-sahitam, Bhaṭṭācārya, Pārthasārathi (ed.). (Śrīvaikhānasamahāmaṇḍali), Vijaya-vādikā, 2 Vols., 1984 and 1987.
- Vāsādhikāra*. Śrī Vaikhānasabhagavacchāstre Vāsādhikāraḥ, Maharṣi Bhṛgu praṇītam, Rāmānāryulu, Śrīmān Dīvi Veṅkaṭa Guṇṭūru & Śrīmān Nallūru Vikhanasa Bhaṭṭācāryulu (ed.). Tirupati, 1999 (T.T.D. Religious Publications Series 512) (Telugu characters).
- Vaikhānasagr̥hyaparīśiṣṭasūtra*. Quoted in: *Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa, Tātparyacintāmaṇi* and *Sūtrānukramaṇikā*.
- Vaikhānasaguruparamparā*. In: Śrī Vaikhānasam, Sudarśanan, S. (ed.). Thanjavur (Thanjavur Sarasvatī Mahal Series 365), 1995, pp. 1–6.
- Vaikhānasamahimānañjarī*, by Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita, ed. E.V. Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭācārya, Madras 1918 (Vaikhānasagranthamālā, Kusuma 6); repr. Tirupati 1998 (T.T.D. Religious Publications Series 505).
- Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. Caland W. (ed.). Asiatic Society of Bengal (Bibliotheca Indica 242), Calcutta, 1927 (Devanāgarī characters).
- Vaikhānasaśrautasūtram*. Caland W. & Raghu Vīra (ed.). Asiatic Society of Bengal (Bibliotheca Indica 265), Calcutta, 1941 (Devanāgarī characters).
- Vivāhaprayoga*. Śrī Vaikhānasa Vivāhaprayokam Parvaṇi stālīpākattuṭaṇ, Paṭṭāc-cāriyarāl, Natār Na. Ko. Śrīnivāsa (ed.). Kumpakoṇam, 1987 (Grantha and Tamil characters).
- Yajñādhikāra*. Śrīvaikhānase Bhagavacchāstre Bhagavadbhṛgumahaṛṣiproktāsu Saṃhitāsu Yajñādhikāra, Bhaṭṭācārya, Māḍambākaṃ Kṛṣṇasvāmī Śrīnivāsa (ed.). (T.T.D. Religious Publications Series 484), Tirupati, 1997 (Telugu characters).
- Yājñavalkya-smṛti of Yogīśvara Yājñavalkya*. With the commentary *Mitākṣarā of Vijñāneśvara*, Notes, Variant readings, etc. Acharya, Narayan Ram (ed.). Bombay, 1949.
- The white Yajurveda*. In three parts, Weber, Albrecht (ed.). Berlin/London, 1852–1859; part 2: *The Catapatha-Brahmana in the Mādhyandina-Cākhā*. With extracts from the commentaries of Sayana, Harisvamin and Dwivedaganga, Berlin/London, 1855.

Secondary Literature

- Bloch, Theodor 1896. *Über das Grhyasūtra und Dharmasūtra des Vaikhānasa*. Leipzig.
- Brunner, Hélène 1967. "Analyse du *Suprabhedāgama*". In: *Journal Asiatique* 255: 31–60.
- Caland, Willem 1926. *Over het Vaikhānasaśūtra*. Amsterdam: Mededeelingen der koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen (Asdeeling Letterkunde, Deel 61, Serie A, No. 8).
- 1941. "Preface". In: *Vaikhānasaśrautasūtram*, Caland, W. & Raghu Vīra (ed.). Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal (Bibliotheca Indica 265), xxx–xxxi.
- Colas, Gérard 1984. "Etat de recherches sur les Vishnouites Vaikhānasa". In: *BEI* 2: 73–86.
- 1995. "Cultes et courants du vishnouisme en Inde du Sud, Quelques observations à partir des textes". In: *Les ruses du salut: Religion et politiques dans le monde indien*, Reiniche, M.-L. (ed.). Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes études en sciences sociales (Puruṣārtha 17), 111–138.
- 1996. *Viṣṇu, ses images et ses feux. Les métamorphoses du Dieu chez les vaikhānasa*. Paris: Presses de l'école française d'extrême-orient (Monographies 182).
- Gonda, Jan 1977. *The Ritual Sūtras*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (A History of Indian Literature 1.2).
- Hüsken, Ute 2001. "Die Vaikhānasa: Tempelpriester im südindischen Viṣṇuismus". In: *Akten des 27. Deutschen Orientalistentages. Norm und Abweichung*, Wild, S. & H. Schild (ed.). Würzburg: (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 1), 169–179.
- forthcoming. *Rites of Passage of the Vaikhānasa: Construction of Religious Identity in South India*.
- Kane, Pandurang Vaman ²1968ff. *History of Dharmaśāstra (Ancient Mediæval Religious and Civil Law)*. Vol. 2, part 1. Poona.
- Keith, Arthur Berriedale 1927. "Review on Caland's *Over het Vaikhānasaśūtra*". In: *BSOAS*: 623–624.
- Kunjunni Raja, K. 1958. *Contribution of Kerala to Sanskrit Literature*. Madras.
- Michaels 1998. *Der Hinduismus: Geschichte und Gegenwart*. München: C.H. Beck.
- Pandey, Raj Bali 1949. *Hindu Saṃskāras. A Socio-religious Study of the Hindu Sacraments*. Banaras: Vikrama.
- Schrader, F. Otto 1916. *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra and the Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā*. Madras: Adyar Library.
- Slaje, Walter 1995. "Rtú, Rtv(i)ya-, Ārtava-. Weibliche 'Fertilität' im Denken vedischer Inder". In: *Journal of the European Āyurvedic Society* 4: 109–148.
- 1997. "Zur Erklärung der sog. 'Tobiasnächte' im vedischen Indien". In: *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 21: 207–234.
- Smith, Brian K. 1989. *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Smith, H. Daniel 1975 & 1980. *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Printed Texts of the Pāñcarātrāgama*. Vol. I. Baroda: Baroda Oriental Institute (Gaeckward's Oriental Series 158). Vol. II: *An Annotated Index to Selected Topics* Baroda: Baroda Oriental Institute (Gaeckward's Oriental Series 168).
- Varadachari, V. 1982. *Āgamas and South Indian Vaiṣṇavism*. Madras.

ALEXANDER VON ROSPATT

The Transformation of the Monastic Ordination (*pravrajyā*) Into a Rite of Passage in Newar Buddhism

The *upanayana* ritual is in many ways the most important Hindu rite of passage,¹ the *saṃskāra* par excellence. In this ritual the boy is introduced (*upa√nī*, hence *upanayana*) to the teacher by his father. He becomes his student and, as an outward sign of this, puts on the girdle (*mekhalā*). The teacher in turn introduces (*upanayana*) the boy to the Vedas, notably by teaching him the Gāyatrī Mantra, which is considered to be a condensation of the Vedas. The boy is thereby initiated into the divine realm of the Vedas and authorized and empowered to function as a ritual subject who may maintain the sacred house fire and carry out rituals as a *yajamāna*. As an outward sign of this, he is invested with the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*). It is by virtue of this ritual that Hindu males become confirmed members of the caste into which they have been born. While *śūdras* are completely excluded, the performance of the ritual differs for *vaiśyas*, *kṣatriyas* and Brahmins by details such as the materials employed and the form in which the Gāyatrī Mantra is imparted. In this way the initiates come to be endowed with the qualities of their respective *varṇa*, which they acquire by their natural birth only in latent form. The transformation effected by the *upanayana* is so decisive that the tradition views it as a second birth—a birth that constitutes a being in a more fundamental sense than the first (biological) one does.²

Given the *upanayana*'s supreme social importance, it comes as no surprise that the non-Brahmanical traditions in India, which were never completely segregated, felt compelled to offer their lay adherents an equivalent rite, rather than leave them on the quasi-prenatal stage of uninitiated raw manhood. Thus the Digambaras of South India adapted the *upanayana* ritual and other *saṃskāras* to

1 For convenience sake, I restrict the term “rite of passage” in this paper to life-cycle rituals that are undergone as a matter of course rather than as a matter of choice. According to this usage, the *bare chuyegu* ordination is a rite of passage, whereas this does not apply to an ordination that is not taken routinely by members of a certain social group at a particular stage in their life, but rather out of inclination or some other reason.

2 For a discussion of this aspect of the *upanayana* ritual see Smith 1998: 93f.

a Jain ritual framework.³ For the Buddhist tradition in India, I am not aware of sources that would shed direct light on this issue. However, in Nepal Mahāyāna Buddhism survives in its original South Asian setting, and it is instructive to examine how the Buddhist tradition here transformed the monastic ordination into a rite of passage that is not only modelled on the *upanayana*, but also integrates and surpasses it.

This transformed rite of ordination is called *bare chuyegu* in Newari, an expression that renders *pravrajyā* and literally means “becoming a *bare*”, a word derived from *vandya* “venerable” and used for “monk”. In this rite the boys—in Kathmandu the *bare chuyegu* is usually performed for a group rather than singly—undergo the *pravrajyā* ceremony, become monks⁴ for three days,⁵ and then disrobe in order to remain householder Buddhists for the rest of their lives. In the process the boys become full-fledged members of the monastic community of their father. Without patrilineal descent one cannot be initiated into such a monastic community. There are some one hundred functioning communities of this kind left in the Kathmandu Valley (see Locke 1985, p. 514). Each community is regarded as a separate *saṃgha* that has its own *vihāra* (New.: *bāhāḥ* or *bahīḥ*), to which occasionally one or several branch *vihāra(s)* (New.: *kacā bāhāḥ*) are attached.⁶ All male members of such monastic communities are householders who have undergone the *bare chuyegu* ritual, and who usually marry and beget sons who will subsequently also be initiated into the same community.⁷

3 See, for instance, Dundas 1992: 162.

4 Since there is no higher ordination than the *bare chuyegu* in the Newar tradition (see below), I use the term “monk” even though from a Vinaya perspective the boys only become novices (*śrāmaṇera*).

5 By Newar reckoning they are monks for four days because the first day of ordination and the last day of disrobing are counted as full days.

6 The *vihāra* in Newar Buddhism is a monastery laid out in traditional Buddhist style according to a quadrangular plan with an open courtyard in the middle. Though it does not accommodate resident monks (of whom there have been none in Newar Buddhism for several centuries), it functions as the focus of the attached *saṃgha*, housing its deities and shrine rooms and providing space for rituals and other cultic activities. The differentiation between *bāhāḥ* and *bahīḥ* in Newari follows from the two different monastic traditions these two types of *vihāras* represent. While *bāhāḥs* have an explicit Tantric agenda, *bahīḥs* are institutions where, by contrast, the principle of celibate monkhood was emphasised, and accordingly also upheld for much longer than in the *bāhāḥ* tradition (cf. below n. 37). For further details see Gellner 1987: 365–414.

7 Note that irrespective of caste, all individuals but the sons of members are excluded from a given *saṃgha* (and hence have no access to the main exoteric shrine housing the principal Buddha image, the *kvāpāḥḍyaḥ*; see plate 9). Thus, the exclusiveness of the monastic

The *bare chuyegu* ordains the candidates into the *saṃgha* of the monastery to which they belong by patrilineal descent. It thereby transforms them into Buddhist specialists who continue to be distinguished from common laymen by their full membership in a monastic *saṃgha* even after they have disrobed. Hence, the *bare chuyegu* differs fundamentally from the temporary ordination in Southeast Asian Theravāda countries.⁸ The temporary ordination there also functions as a rite of passage that is undergone before marriage, with particular emphasis placed on the merit (*puṇya*) generated by the ordination for the parents. However, it is in principle accessible to all male candidates regardless of social background and does not confer permanently an elevated status in the way the *bare chuyegu* ritual does.⁹ Rather, after disrobing, the Southeast Asian initiates again become unequivocally laymen, in contrast to those monks who do not disrobe but renounce lay life as a life-long commitment. The lack of such vocational monks in Newar Buddhism, by contrast, means that there the disrobed initiates can continue to lay claim to a special status that elevates them above the common laymen who are barred from temporary ordination and access to a *saṃgha*.¹⁰

communities in Newar Buddhism is not intrinsically tied up with notions of caste. Rather it was only in a further, separate step that all members of monastic communities came to form an endogamous caste group so that the *bare chuyegu* consequently also assumed the function of an initiation into caste (see below).

8 See, e.g., Spiro 1982: 234–247, and Swearer 1995: 46–52.

9 This principal difference also shows in recent efforts to popularize Newar Vajrayāna Buddhism (as a response to the challenge posed by Buddhist modernism and the proselytizing Theravāda movement) by making the *bare chuyegu* ritual as an initiation into Mahāyāna Buddhism with a Tantric orientation accessible to all, irrespective of caste. Rather than performing the *bare chuyegu* as a simple temporary ordination for those boys without inherited ties to a monastic community, the need was felt to set up a new monastery of sorts, so that the boys be initiated into the *saṃgha* of a monastery. For this the Jinasamghavihāra above Vairocana Tīrtha, halfway between Kathmandu and Svayambhū was founded in 1997 (for details see the commemoration volume *Pravrajyā-saṃvara (bhikṣu-luṣe)*. *Lumaṃkā* - 2 published by Phaṇḍiratna Vajrācārya). However, the *saṃgha* of the monastery is largely a theoretical construct devoid of social significance. Accordingly, the initiated boys do not obtain the status of Buddhist specialists in the way the hereditary *bares* do by virtue of their initiation into a functioning monastic community. It is indicative of the difference between the newly created *saṃgha* and the *saṃghas* of the historical *bāhās* that access to the *kvāpāḥḍyaḥ* shrine room of the Jinasamghavihāra is not—as in traditional Newar monasteries (see n. 7)—restricted to members of this *viḥāra's saṃgha*.

10 I am not aware of a detailed historical study of the custom of temporary ordination. Max Weber (1921: 261f.) must be one of the first to comment on this custom. Following Bühler's translation of the phrase *sagha upete* in the minor rock inscription 1 of Rupnath, Max Weber holds that Aśoka was ordained into the *saṃgha* without abdicating. Though Weber presumes that Aśoka did not disrobe subsequently (instead, so Weber, he was ex-

In a syncretic setting with strong Hindu overtones, the *bare chuyegu* ritual is of pivotal importance for the Buddhist sense of identity, not only for the initiates but also for the Buddhist community at large. Because of this importance, and because of its exoteric character, the *bare chuyegu* is the most studied of all Newar Buddhist rituals. Starting with Brian Hodgson in 1841, it has been described numerous times, most recently by Siegfried Lienhard (1999, chapter 6). The most sophisticated study is by David Gellner (1988). He supplemented his fieldwork account of the ritual by translating a widely used Newari handbook (namely the *Cūḍākarma Vidhāna*, published in 1993 by Padmaśrī Vajra Vajrācārya) and by referring to the *pravrajyā* section in the *Kriyāsamgrahapañjikā*, a vast compendium of diverse rites (probably composed by Kuladatta in Nepal sometime in the second half of 11th century)¹¹ upon which much of the ritual tradition of Newar Buddhism is based. All the studies of the *bare chuyegu* have treated it as a coherent whole (which of course it is), focusing on the Buddhist script in the foreground of the ritual and on its social implications. Little attention has been paid, however, to the genesis of the *bare chuyegu* rite, to the various levels on which it operates, and—most importantly—to its relationship to the Brahmanical tradition.

Such an analysis of the *bare chuyegu* rite (which is attempted in the present paper)¹² is not only of interest for our understanding of the workings of the

empted from keeping the full vows of monkhood), he speculates that Aśoka's ordination functioned as a model for the custom of temporary monkhood that developed in imitation in Theravāda countries. Besides the problematic rendering of *saḅha upete* (which should rather mean "I have visited the *saḅha*" as Hultzsch and others have it), it is difficult to see how the concept of a semi-monastic king could have functioned as a model for the temporary ordination taken up as a rite de passage by men of all strata of society.

11 There are a number of dated manuscripts of the *Kriyāsamgrahapañjikā* from the early 13th century as well as its Tibetan translation from the end of the 13th century. On the basis of arguments that are too complex to be repeated here, Tanaka & Yoshizaki (1998: 128) arrive at the conclusion that Kuladatta flourished between 1045 and 1089.

12 I here do not offer yet another description of the *bare chuyegu* ritual—for this I refer the reader to the aforementioned accounts, notably by Lienhard and Gellner. However, I do recount the main steps in the course of my analysis and partly illustrate them with photos. Let it be added that none of the studies deals in detail with the Tantric ritual framework and the fire ritual. Nor do they register all preparatory and concluding rites that are performed on the days before and after the *bare chuyegu* ritual. Details of these ancillary rites differ from monastery to monastery, something a comprehensive study would need to take into account. I had the opportunity to observe the *bare chuyegu* on two separate occasions in monasteries in Kathmandu, namely in February 1998 in Bikamā Bāhāḅ and at the end of February and the beginning of March 2001 in Mu Bāhāl. I am very grateful to the members of both *bāhāḅs* for generously allowing me to watch and also photograph and

Newar Buddhist tradition in a Hindu dominated setting, but may also—in a more general vein—shed light on the mechanisms of change and continuity and the dynamics of rituals in South Asia. Let it be added that Newar Buddhism not only provided for the need of an initiation for boys corresponding to the *upanayana* but adapted the whole cycle of Brahmanical rites of passage, including the *śrāddha* ceremonies for the deceased, into its framework. This process of adaptation and the ensuing issue of change and continuity have as yet not been examined in detail, and the present paper can be but a small contribution towards such a larger study.

As mentioned, *bare chuyegu* means literally “becoming a monk” and hence is nothing but the Newari term rendering *pravrajyā*. The starting point of the *bare chuyegu* rite is more precisely the *pravrajyā* rite as attested in the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins and transmitted in the *Bhikṣukarmavākya* discovered in Gilgit¹³ and—in a more extended version—in the translation of the *Vinayavastu* in the Kanjur (sDe-dge no. 1, ’dul-ba, ka 47b7–63b7)¹⁴ and in two independent Vinaya works of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, namely the *Upasampadājñāpti* (preserved in the Sanskrit original and published by B. Jinananda) and the **Ekaśatakarman*, translated into Chinese (Taishō 1453) as part of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (cf. Tanemura 1994).¹⁵ With the intention of taking *pravrajyā*, the Mūlasarvāstivādin candidate first goes for refuge to the Buddha, *dharma* and *saṃgha*, vows to keep the five main rules (*śikṣāpada*) and thus becomes explicitly a lay follower, an *upāsaka*. In a second step of what is clearly one ritual sequence, he seeks the *saṃgha*’s permission to “go forth,” asks for a preceptor and then has his hair shaved, takes a bath and in exchange for his lay outfit dons the monk’s robes and implements, handed over by the officiating *upādhyāya*. After having

film their sacred rituals. It was only by seeing how the rituals are performed that I could abstract from the script in the foreground (as fixed in the ritual handbooks and described in the secondary literature) and become aware of the various levels on, and the different ways in which, the ritual operates in practice.

- 13 The Sanskrit text was first published by Banerjee (1949). Härtel (1956) has cited this text at length in his study of the *Karmavācanā*, drawing also upon the Tibetan version and the *Bhikṣuṇī-Karmavācanā*, published first by Ridging & de la Vallée Poussin (1917–20) and later in revised form by Schmidt (1993) on the basis of a Nepalese manuscript. Von Hinüber’s publication (1970) of parts of the Gilgit *Karmavācanā* sets in after the *pravrajyā* section.
- 14 It follows from Wille’s (1990: 27f) summary of the preserved fragments of the *Vinayavastuvāgama* found in Gilgit that the section in question has been lost. As for the Tibetan translation, cf. the summary of the *Pravrajyāvastu* in Banerjee 1979: 100–186.
- 15 Härtel (1956: 68–72) also adduces two fragments from the Turfan finds (numbered 17 and 18), which reproduce part of the *pravrajyā* ritual, apparently in a shortened version.

received a monastic name, he again goes for refuge to the Three Jewels and then pledges the ten vows of monkhood. He has now become a *śrāmaṇera*, that is, a novice. In order to become a full monk (*bhikṣu*) he also needs to take the *upasampadā* ordination. As part of this ceremony, the *pravrajyā* rite outlined above is repeated, even though the candidate has undergone this rite already before, when becoming a novice.

The aforementioned *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* by Kuladatta follows this tradition of taking *pravrajyā*. More precisely, it is closely based on the more elaborate version of the *pravrajyā* ceremony transmitted in the Tibetan translation of the *Vinayavastu* (and in the above-mentioned *Upasampadājñāpti* and **Ekaśatakarman*), and includes—partly as quotes—passages from this version that are missing in the *Bhikṣukarmavākya* from Gilgit. Thus the quote from the *Vinaya* (*tad uktam vinaye*) that introduces the *pravrajyā* section in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*,¹⁶ forms part of the version translated into Tibetan,¹⁷ but is not found in the *Bhikṣukarmavākya*. More importantly, in contrast to the Gilgit recension, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* prescribes—in accordance with the instruction by the Buddha transmitted in Tibetan translation¹⁸ as well as in the *Upasampadājñāpti*¹⁹ and the **Ekaśatakarman*²⁰—that the hair is to be cut in two stages.²¹

16 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 249,4f (I have changed the punctuation of the Śata Piṭaka edition and emended the text slightly in accordance with Tanemura 1997: 44f.): *idānīm pravrajyāgrahaṇam ucyate. tad uktam vinaye ācāryopādhyāyāiḥ pravrajyāvitavyaṃ <m upa>saṃpādayitavyam iti. bhikṣavo na jānanti katham pravrajyāvitavyam katham upasaṃpādayitavyam iti. bhagavān āha. yasya kasyacit pravrajyāpekṣa upasaṃkrāmati sa tenāsau antarāyikān dharmān prṣṭvā ādau trisāraṇagamanāni pañcaśikṣāpadāny upāsakasamvaraś ca dātavyaḥ.*

17 *Vinayavastu*, Sde-dge no. 1, vol. ka 49a1–3 (= Peking no. 1030, khe 51a6–b1; cf. Eimer 1983, vol. 2: 128f): *bcom ldan 'das kyis mkhan po dang slob dpon dag gis rab tu dbyung bar bya zhing bsnyen par rdzogs par bya'o zhes bka' stsal nas | dge slong rnams kyis ji ltar rab tu dbyung bar bya ba dang | ji ltar bsnyen par rdzogs par bya ba mi shes nas bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal pa | 'ga' zhig gi gan du rab tu 'byung bar 'dod pa 'ongs na des de la bar chad kyis chos rnams dris nas gzung bar bya'o || bzung nas gsum la skyabs su 'gro ba dang | dge bsnyen nyid du khas blangs pas dge bsnyen gyi sdom pa sbyin par bya'o ||*

18 *Ibid.*, vol. ka 50a6–b1 (= Peking no. 1030, khe 52b5–7; cf. Eimer 1983, vol. 2: 132): *de'i 'og tu gang gis de'i skra dang kha spu dag 'breg par byed pa'i dge slong la bcol bar bya'o || des thams cad 'breg par byed nas | bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal pa | thams cad breg par mi bya bar 'di ltar gtsug phud gzhas par bya zhing de'i 'og tu ci gtsug phud breg gam zhes dri bar bya'o || gal te mi breg go zhes zer na 'o na song shig ces brjod par bya'o || gal te breg shig ces zer na breg par bya'o ||*

19 *Upasampadājñāpti* 9, 5–8: *tataḥ paścāt keśā avatārayitavyāḥ | keśān cāvātārayati | bhagavān āha śikhā sthāpayitavyo (sic.) | tataḥ paścāt prṣṭavyaḥ | avatārayatām ca śikhā | yadi*

First, all hair but a tuft (*cūḍā*) is to be cut. Then the candidate is reminded that he now is equal to a householder and asked if he really wants to go forth (*pravrajyā*). After he has confirmed this, the tuft, too, is cut off.²² That the hair is cut in two stages reflects the procedure of the *upanayana* where at the outset the candidate also has his head shaved except for the *cūḍā*.²³ Moreover, it is possible that—in accordance with the *upanayana*—the *cūḍā* was ritually fashioned in terms of the Brahmanical *cūḍākarma* rite, as is indeed the case in the Newar *bare chuyegu* (see below).²⁴ The procedure may also have been adopted as a dramatic device to highlight the rupture with Brahmanical Hinduism. For the decisive act of cutting hair that segregates the Buddhist initiate from Brahmanical society and turns him into a novice is only the tonsure of the *cūḍā*.²⁵

kathayati neti vaktavyaḥ ata eva gaccha [] kathayaty eva tām (sic.) abhyavatārayitavyā |
 Cf. the corresponding passage in the *Bhikṣuṇīkarmavācānā* (folio 10b/11a, cited according to Schmidt 1993: 250, 16–19): *tata upādhyāyikayā keśāvatārikā bhikṣuṇī adheṣṭavyā yā keśān avatārayati | tayā keśān avatārantyā praṣṭavyā bhagini kiṃ keśā avatāryantām iti. yadi kathayaty eva avatāryantām ity avatārayi<ta>vyā | atha ka<tha>yati neti vaktavyā ata eva gaccheti |*

20 *Taishō* 1453, 456b7–9.

21 This procedure is also prescribed in the *Śrāmaṇeratvopāyavidhi* of Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra*, a text presumably dating to the first half of the seventh century (cf. Nietupski 1993: 235–7), in *sūtras* 13–14: *keśāśmaśrūn ava[tārayet ācūdam] || avatāryantām cūdeti prṣṭenānujñāte, tām ||* (quoted from Bapat & Gokhale 1982: 7). At the end of the sentence *avatārayet* or something to the same effect has to be supplied.

22 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 250,5f (I have again changed the punctuation of the Śata Pīṭaka edition and emended the text slightly in accordance with Tanemura 1997: 44f.): *tataḥ keśān avatārya cūḍā sthāpayitavyā. tataḥ praṣṭavyaḥ | adyāpi tvaṃ ḡṛhinā samāna eva, kiṃ pravrajyāyāṃ niścaya iti. yadi bravīti niścaya iti tadāvatārya catuḥsamudrajalaḥ snāpayitvā kāṣāyavastrair āchhādyā [...].*

23 Note that the same procedure of cutting the hair in two stages is attested for the *saṃnyāsa* ritual in Nepal (see Bouillier 1985: 206f). Here, too, the candidate first has all his hair but the *cūḍā* shaved, and then has the *cūḍā* cut off at a later stage in the ritual in order to mark his renunciation of worldly life. This raises the possibility that the Buddhist *pravrajyā* ceremony is modelled at this point on the *saṃnyāsa* ritual. However, even in this case the underlying model would still be the *upanayana*, because the *saṃnyāsa* ritual clearly has to be understood against the background of this archetypal Brahmanical rite of initiation.

24 It is even conceivable that the candidate was understood to have undergone the *cūḍākarma* ritual at an earlier stage of his life as a rite de passage in accordance with the Brahmanical tradition where the *cūḍākarma* ritual is ideally only repeated at the *upanayana* and not performed for the first time.

25 But note that in the course of what Olivelle (1995: 12, 25f.) calls the “domestication of asceticism” it became controversial among Brahmanical ascetics whether the top-knot is to be cut off or not. While Advaita ascetics remove the *cūḍā*, Vaiṣṇava ascetics generally do not (ibid.: 11).

The explanation found in the Chinese translation of the **Ekaśatakarman* (ibid.) points in the same direction. There the Buddha stipulates the rule to cut the hair in two stages in order to allow a wavering candidate, who might regret his decision to go forth to monkhood once his hair is shaved, to back off in the last moment. Similarly, the *Vinayavastuṭīkā* preserved in the Tanjur (Sde-dge 4113) explains that this procedure is to ascertain whether the candidate is really absolutely sure that he wants to go forth to monkhood (tsu 242a5–6). At any rate, the procedure to cut the hair in two steps attests to the—direct or indirect—influence exerted by Brahmanical *saṃskārass* upon Buddhist ordination rituals at a time early enough for it to find entry into a canonical recension of the Vinaya, namely the aforementioned Mūlasarvāstivāda version preserved in Tibetan translation.

The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* goes beyond the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, as attested in the above-mentioned works, by introducing Tantric elements, such as worship by means of *maṇḍalas* and the sanctifying *abhiṣeka* with the waters from the four oceans (*catursamudrajala*), which replaces the bath after the tonsure. These changes strengthen the initiatory character of the *pravrajyā* ritual.²⁶ More importantly, already in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* there are indications that the *pravrajyā* ritual had been adapted to a specific social context. To start with, it is significant that the *pravrajyāvidhi* is embedded in a ritual compendium otherwise not concerned with *vinaya* issues, i.e. the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. To my mind this indicates that, in the monastic milieu for which the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* was written, the traditional *vinaya* was of little, if any, consequence, that is, with the exception of the ordination ceremony, which therefore was incorporated into the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*.²⁷ This would accord with the situation in contemporary Newar Buddhism where monasteries do not

26 I follow Eliade (1995: 53f.), who has argued that the common Buddhist ordination shows important structural parallels with the Hindu *upanayana* (see below) and hence is not a purely legal act, as Dickson (1875) maintained. Therefore, I do not regard the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s addition of rites that confer special qualities upon the candidate as a radical transformation of the Buddhist ordination, but rather as a subtle shift of emphasis. This shift is taken to its extreme in the *bare chuyegu* ritual where the legal aspect of the ordination fades into the background (though without getting lost entirely), and where the rite becomes principally an initiation into the sacred realm of Buddhism.

27 Of course, it could be argued that Kuladatta incorporated the *pravrajyāvidhi* because the foundation of a new monastery, the principal concern of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, included the establishment of a new *saṃgha* and, as part of this, the ordination. This in turn, however, would raise the question why new monasteries were typically founded for newly ordained members. In search of an answer one could posit a situation as in Newar Buddhism, where without inherited ties the only access to membership in a monastic community is the establishment of a new *saṃgha* and with it the foundation of a new monastery.

use (and possibly not even own) Vinaya texts, but rather rely for the ordination ceremony (either directly or via secondary ritual handbooks) exclusively on the *pravrajyāvidhi* transmitted in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahaṇīkā*. It is also noteworthy that the *upasampadā* ordination does not feature in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahaṇīkā*, though it is mentioned as a separate act in the quotation from the Vinaya (adduced above in n. 16). This accords with the situation in Newar Buddhism where the *upasampadā* is not performed, and where in its place the *pravrajyā* functions as an ordination that transforms the initiates into full-fledged members of the *saṃgha*, whose seniority is normally computed by the date of their *bare chuyegu* and who are even referred to as *bhikṣus* (see below).²⁸ Note also that at the end of the *pravrajyā* rite in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahaṇīkā* (251,6–255,1) the candidate receives upon his request, addressed individually to the *ācārya*, the *upādhyāya* and the *saṃgha*, the permission to use the monk's robes, alms bowl, water pot and staff (Sanskrit: *khikkhirikā*, Newari: *sisalākū*) within the *saṃgha*, when going to the royal palace and when moving about in public. To my knowledge this authorization does not form part of the *pravrajyā* section in the canonical Vinayas. Rather, it corresponds to the conferral of robes and alms bowl in the *upasampadā* ritual.²⁹ This, too, suggests that the *pravrajyā* initiate has become a fully qualified member of the *saṃgha*, rather than a mere novice, just as is the case in contemporary Newar Buddhism. What is more, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahaṇīkā* attests also in other contexts to a setting at odds with standard Buddhist monasticism. Thus it instructs the donor of a new monastery (referred to as *upāsaka* and *yajamāna*) at the beginning of his project and later at the time of the monastery's consecration to seek out the *ācārya* (or *ācāryas*) needed for the rituals at his (or their) house (*grha*).³⁰ This suggests that the masters in charge of such a pivotal undertaking as the foundation of a monastery would typically be individuals living at home rather than in a monastic institution.³¹

28 Compare the original situation in Buddhism when there was no differentiation between a provisional and full ordination, and monks were received into the *saṃgha* by the mere command "come monk!" (*ehi bhikkhu*). See Kloppenburg 1983 and Kiefer-Pülz 2000: 371f.

29 Thus, the instruction *pātracīvaraṃ paryeṣitavyaṃ* ("bowl and robes are to be requested") in *Kriyāsaṃgrahaṇīkā* 252,5 serving as an introduction to the elaborate supplication for the permission to officially use robes, alms bowl, water pot and staff can be found in precisely the same wording at the beginning of the *upasampadā* ritual as transmitted in *Upasampadājñapti* 11,2.

30 *Kriyāsaṃgrahaṇīkā* 3,4f and 193,4f. Cp. Tanemura 2001: 72 n. 27.

31 Cp. also Darpañācārya's instruction in his *Kriyāsamuccaya* that monks (*bhikṣu*) should give up their robes (*kāśāyaparitāga*) before receiving Tantric empowerment (see Tanemura 2001: 72f. n. 29).

I want to digress briefly here and elaborate upon the possible implications of the aforesaid matter. The above-mentioned points suggest that Newar Buddhism with its characteristic institution of married householders who form a *saṃgha* as quasi-monks attached to a monastery should not be viewed as a purely local Nepalese development that could only happen after Buddhism had vanished from the Indian mainland. Rather, this institution seems to be reflected already in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, a text which originated presumably more than two centuries before Buddhism vanished in the Indian mainland (see above). Given the well-attested links between Buddhists in Nepal and India at this time, it is unlikely that the form of Buddhism that then existed in Nepal was vastly different from that in India. Thus, even though the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* presumably originated in Nepal, it is most probably not at complete odds with the Buddhism prevalent at that time in Northern India. This means that many of the so-called “Hindu” features commonly attributed to the supposed degeneration of Buddhism in a Newar setting after the demise of Buddhism in India may be of greater antiquity and have their origins in the assimilation of Indian Buddhism to its Hindu surroundings already in Northern India.³²

There is evidence of different provenance that also points in this direction and needs to be evaluated systematically for a better understanding of the social history of Buddhism. It is important to differentiate between instances where particular individuals have violated the otherwise upheld monastic norm, instances where a pattern of systematic deviation emerges, and instances where deviations from the traditional monastic norm have themselves become, or at least started to become, the norm, as happened in the *bāhāḥ* tradition of Newar Buddhism.³³ To name but one example from outside Nepal,³⁴ the *Rājatarāṅinī*,

32 Cp. Max Weber's speculation (1921: 287) that the Newar system of Buddhist priesthood has its origin in Indian developments: “So dürfte sich auch in Indien ziemlich bald eine verheiratete, die Kloster-Pfründen erblich appropriierende buddhistische Weltpriesterschaft entwickelt haben. Wenigstens zeigt Nepal und das nordindische Randgebiet deutlich diese Entwicklung noch heute”.

33 This is not the place to go into the factors and precise circumstances and mechanisms that may have given rise to such a deviant tradition. Among the avenues of enquiry to be pursued in this context is a comparison with the erosion of celibate monkhood in other Mahāyāna cultures. For instance, the figure of the married Tantric practitioner (*sngags pa*) in the rNying ma pa and other Tibetan traditions may be of help in assessing the impact that esoteric forms of Tantric practices with their emphasis on a female partner had on celibate monkhood in India and Nepal. Similarly, the example of other Buddhist societies may shed light on the role played by monks' private ownership of monasteries and the principle of passing monastic property on within one's family.

the celebrated chronicle written by Kalhaṇa in the middle of the 12th century, attests to the phenomenon of married “monks” in Kashmir. It records the endowment of a monastery by king Meghavāhana’s wife Yūkadevī,³⁵ which had one half set aside for practising *bhikṣus* (*bhikṣavaḥ śikṣācārāḥ*) and one for householder ones (*gārhasthya*) “together with their wives, children, cattle and property” (*sastrīputrapaśuśrī*).³⁶ The endowment of half a monastery for householder “monks” shows that we are not dealing with a mere violation of the norm, but with a different pattern of Buddhist monasticism that had become a tradition in its own right, coexisting alongside celibate monasticism. This coexistence of a celibate and non-celibate monastic tradition accords with the situation in medieval Newar Buddhism where in the aforementioned *bahīs*, i.e. *vihāras* with less of a Tantric agenda, the tradition of celibate monkhood was retained until the Malla period,³⁷ existing alongside the *bāhāḥs* with their tradition of married

34 Further examples can be found in von Hinüber’s recent review (2001) of Lienhard 1999. Referring to his essay on “Old Age and Old Monks in Pāli Buddhism” (1997) he makes note of “a certain *samaṇa-kuṭimbika*” (attested in Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Samyuttanikāya: Sāratthappakāsinī* III 33,15) as an “ascetic who is at the same time a landlord” (von Hinüber 1997: 74), making “a living as a farmer together with fellow-monks, however without leaving the order” (von Hinüber 2001: 356). In the same review, von Hinüber also draws attention to the dealings of monks, attested in the so-called Niya documents (which stem from the ancient Silk Road kingdom of Shanshan and dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries C.E.), as further evidence that would suggest a “fairly early date” for “the beginnings of this aberration from true monkhood” (i.e. as found in Newar Buddhism). In his paper “Buddhism in the Niya Documents” read at the Third Silk Road Conference at Yak in 1998, S. Insler has presented more concrete material from these documents that demonstrates the engagement of monks in standard family life. Let it be added that I am ill at ease with von Hinüber’s choice of words in the present context. Once a deviating pattern of monasticism has become a tradition in its own right (as happened in Newar Buddhism), I prefer to regard it as an alternative model of Buddhist monasticism, rather than as a mere “aberration from true monkhood”.

35 Though the precise dates of king Meghavāhana are uncertain, there can be little doubt that he reigned before the 7th century C.E. While we cannot take the *Rājatarāṅginī*’s records at face value, the report of the monastery’s donation shows at the very least that the custom of “householder monks” was well-established by the 12th century when Kalhaṇa composed his chronicle.

36 *Rājatarāṅginī* 3.11–12: *cakre naḍavane rājñō yūkadevyabhidhā vadhūḥ | vihāram adbhutākāraṃ sapatnīspardhayodyatā || ardhe yad bhikṣavaḥ śikṣācārās tatrārpitās tayā | ardhe gārhasthyagarhyāś ca sastrīputrapaśuśriyaḥ ||*

37 Lienhard (1996: 250–252) suggests that the tradition of celibate monkhood in the *bahīs* became gradually assimilated to the householder model of *bāhāḥ* Buddhism sometime in the 14th to 17th century. He also claims—regrettably without revealing his source—that in

quasi-monks. Incidentally, the fact that the *bāhāḥ* monastic tradition did not outright replace the tradition of celibate monkhood but operated side by side with it lends weight to my argument that the tradition of *bāhāḥ* Buddhism cannot be explained simply in terms of degeneration.

There is, however, no direct and unequivocal indication that the *pravrajyā* was already in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* conceived of as a temporary ordination.³⁸ By contrast, it is noteworthy that although the rite of disrobing (called *cīvar toteyā vidhi* in Newari) forms an integral part of *bare chuyegu* handbooks, Kuladatta does not deal with it. I also do not know of other sources that would clearly attest to the practice of temporary ordination before the Malla era. From that era, by contrast, there are ritual handbooks³⁹ and other sources⁴⁰ that testify

the 17th century there were still some 25 monasteries in Patan with celibate monks (1984: 110).

- 38 Tanemura recently suggested that “the Brahminical life-cycle rites known as the ten rites had already been taken over by the Buddhist community in the Kathmandu valley in Kuladatta’s time, and disciples had to go through the ten rites before they were empowered to be *vajrācāryas*” (Tanemura 2001: 64). He apparently deduces this from the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*’s teaching that the consecration of sacred objects includes the performance of the ten rites of passage. However, the ten rites prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* are not identical with those performed typically by Newar Buddhists of the monastic milieu. While these Newars pass through the *bare chuyegu* rite treated in this paper, the sacred objects undergo the *upanayana*, *vrataśeṣa* and *samāvartana* rite. Thus the prescription of the “ten rites” in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* is not closely modelled on the life-cycles of Newar Buddhists. It has to be conceded, however, that in the Vajrācārya tradition of Patan (but not of Kathmandu) the consecration rites for sacred objects may—at least nowadays—also include the ritualization of the *bare chuyegu*. Despite this particular Patan tradition, I deem it more likely—this needs confirmation through detailed research—that the *saṃskāras* for sacred objects have originally been adopted from the Newar Hindu tradition where basically the same set of ten rites of passage forms an intrinsic part of consecration rituals. This, of course does, not preclude that by the time of Kuladatta the Brahminical rites of passage had—in an adapted version—already become prevalent among Buddhist Newars. Finally, note that at least nowadays in Kathmandu the *ācāryābhīṣeka* is routinely imparted before (and not after, as Tanemura has it) the tenth life-cycle rite, i.e. the wedding, has been undergone.
- 39 See, for instance, the two manuscripts microfilmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) with the reel numbers E 1488/3 (dating to 1681/82) and E 1455/3 (dating to 1736/7). I have not systematically searched for earlier handbooks from the Malla period testifying to the transformation of the *bare chuyegu* into temporary ordination.
- 40 The earliest such proof known to me is a note in a palm leaf manuscript from 1440/41 C.E., published by Sakya & Vaidya (1970: 50). See also the summary in Locke (1985: 489 n. 50). The note (referring to *Om Bāhāḥ*, Patan) specifies some rules concerning the performance of the *bare chuyegu*, which accord with contemporary practice. More pertain-

that the *bare chuyegu* ritual was then performed in basically the same way as it is even today, with the disrobing as an integral part of the ritual. Rather than pursuing the difficult (and important) question of when precisely the *pravrajyā* ritual came to be transformed into a rite of passage, I want to examine in the following how this transformation was effected against the backdrop of the Hindu *upanayana* ritual.

As mentioned above, the standard Buddhist ordination as such already has some important structural similarities to the *upanayana*. It, too, introduces the boy to a preceptor and transforms him into a religious student. Moreover, in a more basic sense it, too, introduces the boy to the sacred sphere of his religion and effects his passage to this realm. Accordingly, also in the Buddhist context, this is viewed as a fundamental transformation that resembles a second birth (Eliade 1995: 53f.). Thus the Buddhist monk becomes a “son of the Buddha,” and seniority is computed by referring to the ordination rather than to the natural birth. Furthermore, the *pravrajyā*, too, transforms the candidate into a member, albeit only a probationary one, of a new religious community.

The *bare chuyegu* that developed in the Newar tradition takes these structural parallels with the *upanayana* much further. Most importantly, by transforming the ordination into (ideally) permanent monkhood into a temporary ordination that is followed as a matter of course after a few days by disrobing, it clearly duplicates the structure of the *upanayana* as an initiation into a temporary period of *brahmacarya* that is concluded by the subsequent return back home from the teacher’s abode, the *samāvartana*. More precisely, the ritualization of monkhood with its reduction to four days imitates that Brahmanical model (itself the product of complex changes) in which the stage of *brahmacarya* and the subsequent return are merely ritually enacted. Nowadays in Nepal and large parts of India the *samāvartana* is generally performed even on the same day as the *upanayana*, but Kane, in his *History of Dharmasāstra* (vol. II, 1, p. 415), also makes reference to a four day period, i.e. a length of time that agrees with the schedule of the *bare chuyegu* ritual. It is in accordance with this structural assimilation that the *bare chuyegu* came to have much the same social consequences as the *upanayana*. It, too, transforms the initiate into a full-fledged member of his community entitled (and obliged) to function as ritual subject, and by the same token into a confirmed member of his caste who is eligible to marry accordingly.

nently, it stipulates that the sons of *saṅgha* members who are married to women of lower caste are not entitled to undergo the *bare chuyegu*. This stipulation accords with present-day practice and reveals that already then the *bare chuyegu* initiates went on to disrobe in order to marry and become procreating householders.

Similarly, once a boy has undergone the *bare chuyegu* ritual, it becomes the duty of his relatives to observe the full period of mourning and ritual impurity should the boy die. Conversely, by virtue of his *bare chuyegu* an eldest son, becomes responsible for performing the funerary rites for his father, including setting fire to the pyre.

In accordance with this transformation of the Buddhist ordination into a rite of passage, the first step of the tonsure prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, i.e. the above-mentioned cutting of all hair but the *cūḍā* (see plate 2), is treated in the *bare chuyegu* as the *cūḍākarman* ritual. As such, it features in Padmashri Vajra Vajracharya's aforementioned handbook (1983 p. 1, cited by Gellner 1988, p. 78) in the solemn declaration of the intention (*saṃkalpa*) of the *bare chuyegu* ritual, which states that the taking of the observance of going forth is preceded by the fashioning of the *cūḍā* (*cūḍākaraṇapūrvakapravrajyāvratagrahaṇārtha*). Accordingly, this first tonsure is ritualized as in Brahmanical practice. Thus, before shaving the head a piece of gold is tied onto the tuft of hair that is to be left standing. In this way the *bare chuyegu* ritual ensures that the candidate has undergone the—from a Brahmanical perspective obligatory—*saṃskāra* of tonsure before being initiated. This procedure accords with the common Hindu practice (itself characteristic for the prominent tendency of lumping together originally distinct rites of passage) of performing the *cūḍākarman* for the first time just before the *upanayana*, rather than just repeating it on this occasion as would conform with orthodox injunctions that prescribe the performance of the *cūḍākarman* as a distinct *saṃskāra* for a much earlier age.

As a further consequence of the assimilation to the *upanayana* ritual, a number of elements of the Brahmanical ritual tradition came to be incorporated into the *bare chuyegu*. Some elements, such as the treading on a stone (*aśmāropana*) (see plate 1) or the taking of the seven steps (see plate 8) were taken over without changes, though learned Newars are often ready to offer interpretations that adapt the rites to a Buddhist context. For example, the seven steps are frequently likened to the first steps taken by the Buddha after his birth in Lumbini (Gellner 1988: 58). Such interpretations are, however, purely speculative and often problematic, as indeed in the example given here—the identification of the seven steps with those of the newly-born Śākyamuni does not take into account that the same rite of taking seven steps recurs in other contexts, notably in the wedding ritual. Anyway, from the perspective of ritual practice, such interpretations are secondary and do not affect the performance of the rituals. In addition to such elements as the seven steps borrowed from the Hindu *saṃskāras*, there are other features of the *bare chuyegu*, such as the giving of a new name or the beg-

ging for alms by the newly initiated, that match the Brahmanical tradition, but have always been integral parts of Buddhism.

Among the elements adapted from the Braminical tradition, it is particularly instructive to examine the treatment of the girdle (*mekhalā*), which also came to be a definite part of the *bare chuyegu* rite. At the beginning of the ritual the boys receive the girdle from one of the *saṃgha*'s elders and, exchanging it for their street clothes, tie it around their waist. As signs of their lay status, the tuft of hair and the girdle are subsequently cut off at the time of *pravrajyā*. The tying on of the girdle (*mekhalā*) is one of the central elements of the *upanayana*,⁴¹ of greater antiquity than the investiture with the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*).

By first tying on the girdle and having a *cūḍā* fashioned, the boys in a sense pass first through the Hindu *saṃskāras* of *cūḍākarman* and *upanayana*, and then, with the subsequent removal of these two items when entering monkhood, progress beyond them.⁴² Hence the *bare chuyegu* ritual is not only crafted upon the model of the *upanayana* that ritualizes the stage of *brahmacarya* and the subsequent return, but in a restricted sense also incorporates and transcends the *upanayana* rite as such.⁴³ Admittedly, all I can actually point to in the *bare*

41 Cf. *Manusmṛti* II, 170: *brahmajanman mauñjībandhanacihnitam*.

42 This corresponds to the situation of both vocational and hereditary *saṃnyāsins* in Nepal (see below). They, too, can only renounce the world and take *saṃnyāsa* if they have undergone the *upanayana* ritual before (see Bouillier 1985: 203f). Similarly, in the *saṃnyāsa* ritual of the Dharma literature and Upaniṣads as summarized and analyzed by Sprockhoff (1994: 64–72), it is presumed that the renouncer has previously been a householder who set up and maintained the sacred fire in his homestead. Accordingly, the termination of the external sacred fire by way of absorption (*agnisamāropana*) has become an integral part of the *saṃnyāsa* rite that is performed even if the candidate has not previously set up a fire.

43 Drawing on information provided by G. Houtman, Gombrich (1984: 42–4) relates that the temporary ordination in Burmese Buddhism likewise incorporates elements from the Hindu *upanayana*. This includes notably a “*mantra* thread” which is put around the boy’s head by a particular ritual specialist called *beitheik*. This specialist is meant to be versed in the Vedas. Gombrich reasonably identifies this thread with the “Brahminical sacred thread” with which the twice-born boy is invested in the *upanayana*. However, it seems that in the Burmese ordination this thread is protective and—unlike the girdle in the *bare chuyegu*—not discarded later in the process of the ordination. Thus in the Burmese case there seems to be no implied subordination of the Brahminical initiation as in the Newar case. According to Gombrich the term *beitheik* derives from Sanskrit *abhiṣeka ācārya* and hence points back to a time when Burmese Buddhism was still Tantric. I find it difficult, however, to accept that an initiation master (*abhiṣeka ācārya*) in Tantric Buddhism would be grounded in the Vedas. Rather, it would seem more likely that the *beitheik* has to be traced back to a different Tantric tradition of Brahminical origins. It would follow that in the Burmese model of temporary ordination a Brahminical ritual, i.e. the *upanayana*, was

chuyegu ritual as corresponding to the *upanayana* is the element of the girdle. Unlike the *cūḍākarmaṇ*, the *upanayana* does not form part of the *saṃkalpa*. Moreover, neither it nor even the girdle feature in any way in the Sanskrit formulas. It follows that the girdle in the *bare chuyegu* does not stand specifically for the initiation into Brahmanical Hinduism. Rather, it represents the stage of the householder. This interpretation is confirmed by the Sanskrit formula spoken just before the boy candidate has his *cūḍā* cut off and does *pravrajyā* (see plate 3). It informs the boy that now (*adya*) he is at the stage of a *gṛhastha* and poses the question whether he really wants to go forth to become a monk. Moreover, when he dons his robes he does so in exchange for the girdle which is identified as the characteristic mark of the householder (*gṛhiliṅga*).⁴⁴ Thus the *bare chuyegu* may only be said to incorporate and transcend the *upanayana* rite inasmuch as this rite is identified with the stage of the *gṛhastha*—an identification justified by the function of the *upanayana* to effect the passage to this stage.

To pass through the stage of a householder is in conformity with the Hindu scheme of the four successive stages of life (*caturāśrama*), namely student, householder, forest dweller and renouncer. On the one hand, this scheme encompasses the *saṃnyāsa* tradition within the Brahmanical fold, on the other hand, it subsumes the *gṛhastha* as an inferior stage to be passed through.⁴⁵ However, while the *saṃnyāsa* originally marks the irreversible rupture with lay life as a whole, the discarding of *cūḍā* and girdle in the *bare chuyegu* ritual functions, by contrast, as part of a sequence of rites that integrate the boy into his caste within the framework of society. It is noteworthy that the binding force of the *āśrama* model can also be observed in the hagiography of the historical Buddha. It is related that Śākyamuni left his home and went forth to become an ascetic the very night that a son was born to him. (In the narrative's logic, could the last look that was cast by the Buddha upon his wife and new-born child before departing have served to ascertain the baby's male gender?) Like the Newar initiates, Śākya-

adapted to a Buddhist framework together with its ritual specialist. This model of adaptation could well have its root in Indian Tantric Buddhism. Indeed, the presence of the Brahminical *upanayana* in the Burmese temporary ordination suggests that we are dealing with an Indian innovation, conceivably catering specifically to the need of temporary ordination (which hence may have been a prevalent practice in Indian Buddhism).

44 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 250,6–251,1 (I have again changed the punctuation of the Śata Pīṭaka edition and emended the text slightly in accordance with Tanemura 1997: 48): *aham itthaṃnāmā yāvajjīvaṃ gṛhiliṅgaṃ parityajāmi pravrajyāliṅgaṃ samādade*.

45 Note, however, that in the original form recorded in the Dharmasūtras the four *āśramas* were conceived of as alternative models of life that could be chosen freely. As Olivelle (1993) has shown, it was only later that the *āśramas* assumed their classical form as stages of life to be passed through successively.

muni could only go forth after he had become a full-fledged householder, which here includes marriage and the fathering of a son—from a Brahmanical perspective a holy duty for the perpetuation of the ancestral lineage and for guaranteeing the maintenance of the *śraddhā* rites. This reading of the Buddha's hagiography is in accordance with the ritualized wedding dialogue that among Newar Buddhists is exchanged traditionally between the parties of bride and groom. There the need for the groom to marry is brought home in the following way: "A man cannot fulfil his sacramental religious duty without going through the Ten Sacraments. In accordance with this rule the prince Siddhārtha first married Yaśodharā and only then did he renounce the homely life and go forth to obtain complete enlightenment" (cf. Gellner 1992: 228–230). Furthermore, this interpretation is reinforced by the deviant tradition preserved in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, according to which Śākyamuni impregnated his wife in the very night that he abandoned his palace and took up the life of a mendicant.⁴⁶ Clearly, according to the logic of this tradition he then did not cohabit with his wife out of passion. Rather, he did so as part of the sequence of renunciatory acts, and this sequence incorporated the fulfilment of the duty to perpetuate one's ancestral lineage as a prerequisite for renunciation. Similarly, when taking *saṃnyāsa*, vocational *saṃnyāsins* perform as part of their mortuary rites the *sapinḍīkaraṇa* ritual, which integrates them into their ancestral lineage, thereby ensuring its unbroken continuity.

The *bare chuyegu* rite incorporates not only the Hindu *saṃskāras* in an inclusivist vein, but also the Vinaya ordination ritual itself, namely by embedding it in the larger frame of Mahāyāna Buddhism with a Tantric orientation. Thus the *bare chuyegu* is introduced by the request to become a *bhikṣu* with the express purpose of attaining buddhahood for the welfare of all beings.⁴⁷ In the Pali tradition, by contrast, the intention expressed at this point is to set an end to (one's own) suffering and realize *nirvāṇa* (*dukkhanissaraṇa-nibbānasacchikaraṇatthāya*).⁴⁸ More importantly, the ordination is concluded by the adoption of Mahāyāna Buddhism (*mahāyānacaryā*) and Tantric practices (*śrīguruvajrasattvakraśvarasya caryā*) which are enjoined on the pupil when he renounces the robes

46 Cf. Strong 1997.

47 See Vajracharya 1983: ii, cited by Gellner 1988: 77: *adhyeṣayāmy ahaṃ nāthaṃ tvaṃ me śāstā mahāvibho | asmākam anumāpāya bhikṣubhāvaṃ dadātu naḥ | anekaguṇasaṃyuktāṃ trailokyē durlabhaṃ padaṃ | asmadarthena hi nātha sarveṣāṃ duḥkhabhāgināṃ | hitasukhanimittāya buddhatvapadaṃ prāptaye ||* The passages cited by Lienhard (1999: 63) only express the candidate's aspiration to obtain buddhahood, but do not mention that this is motivated by the desire to help and rescue all suffering beings.

48 Cf. Dickson 1875: 3.

a few days later, and with it monastic Śrāvākayāna.⁴⁹ To be sure, this renunciation of the robes is ambiguous. It also means defeat for the boy who finds the monk's way of life too hard to follow, as expressly stated in some versions of the *bare chuyegu* liturgy.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, what matters is that the boy passes beyond celibate monasticism to the sphere of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Tantric practices, in accordance with the assumed superiority of the Mahāyāna that has superseded the Śrāvākayāna in the Newar tradition.

The inclusion and subordination of the Brahmanical *saṃskāras* and the Vinaya ordination within the framework of the *bare chuyegu* ritual is not only effected by the boys' passage from one stage to another in the way outlined above. Rather, on a different plane this subordination also finds its expression in the way in which the *saṃskāras* and the ordination are embedded in the overarching framework of a Vajrayāna ritual. For a start, they are preceded and followed by sets of introductory and concluding Tantric rites that frame the *bare chuyegu* ritual as a whole. Moreover, as thematic ritual actions they are performed within the context of the fire ritual.

It is in accordance with the transformation of the ordination ceremony into an initiatory rite of passage that the boys are liberally decked with various kinds of ornaments when they don the robes, that is, at the very moment of *pravrajyā* which normally functions as the occasion for precisely the opposite, namely the shedding of all jewellery and other finery (see plate 6). The ornaments put on by the newly made *bares* are of the kind characteristically offered to and worn by deities. Fittingly, subsequently during the *bare chuyegu* ritual (notably, when the boys are taken around town) honorific parasols are held over them (see plate 7), just as when deities are being paraded. This shows that on one level the *bare chuyegu* serves to sanctify the boys, a point that unlearned Newar participants seem to be instinctively aware of when they explain the *pravrajyā* rite in terms of the boys' deification. This aspect of the *bare chuyegu* ritual is at odds with the common perception of the Buddhist *pravrajyā* as a mere ordination, but is less surprising from the perspective of Vajrayāna where the practitioner aims at his identification with a chosen deity, and in this sense at his own deification.

49 Cf. Gellner 1988: 61–63.

50 For instance, the manuscripts "T1" and "T2" used by Gellner (1988: 62) prescribe that the boy addresses the guru with the words: "I did not know how very difficult [it is to keep the vow of *pravrajyā*]; I cannot follow it forever" (*sudullabhaṃ na jānāmi sadā dhāryaṃ na śakyaṭe*). Upon this the guru retorts: "I asked You before whether or not You were capable or not," and adds: "It is exceedingly difficult to obtain the so-called *pravrajyā*; to maintain it is the highest vow" (*sudullabhaṃ pravrajyākhaṃ dhāraṇaṃ vratam uttamaṃ*). Cf. also Lienhard 1999: 98.

Furthermore, the sanctification of the boys in the *bare chuyegu* also makes sense in the light of the Hindu *upanayana* ritual which initiates the boys into the divine sphere of brahmanhood and also sanctifies them.⁵¹ What is more, the custom of decking the candidate with ornaments is attested for the *upanayana* tradition itself.⁵²

Another aspect to be taken up in this context concerns the purity restrictions that are imposed upon the initiates during the *bare chuyegu* ritual, starting in fact on the day before the *pravrajyā* itself. In accordance with Hindu concepts of purity, the boys are not to touch leather or dogs. Nor may they eat salty or spicy food, let alone onions, garlic or meat. This is at odds both with the Theravāda rejection of a differentiation between pure and impure food as spiritually irrelevant (or even counter-productive), and also at odds with the higher Tantric ideal of transcending the pure-impure dichotomy. However, notions of ritual purity are pervasive in Buddhist rituals and not a specific Newar development. Rather, they are ubiquitous already in the ritual tradition of Indian Buddhism, and are also a marked feature of Tibetan Buddhism.

The sanctification of the boys and the observance of purity restrictions can be made sense of if we view the *bare chuyegu* ritual outside its Buddhist context and consider it as a classical initiatory rite of passage. In accordance with the standard pattern described by Arnold van Gennep in his *Les Rites des Passage*,⁵³ the *bare chuyegu* may be viewed as spanning three stages, namely 1) that of separation at the beginning of the ritual when—marked by the shedding of clothes and hair—the boy is segregated from the world of uninitiated childhood, 2) that of transition in-between when the boy is a monk, and 3) that of incorporation (*agrégation*) into a new social context at the end of the ritual, when—marked by the donning of new street clothes—the boy is integrated into the world of male adults who are full-fledged members of the *saṃgha* and caste community. In this transitional phase the boy exists on a sacred plane, as indicated by the ornaments sanctifying him. At the same time, he is particularly vulnerable in this liminal phase. Hence the mentioned purity restrictions may be viewed as particular precautions, protecting and safeguarding the boy during his critical passage from one stage of life to the next.

51 It is this sanctifying effect of the *upanayana* and other *saṃskāras* that is at the basis of the practice of imparting the *saṃskāras* as an integral part of the consecration rituals.

52 Cf. Gonda 1980: 380.

53 Cf. van Gennep 1960: 11: “[...] a complete scheme of rites of passage [...] includes pre-liminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation) [...]”.

Another conspicuous feature of the *bare chuyegu* ritual is the direct and indirect involvement of the boy's family and relatives. The paternal aunt has the most important function as she takes the boy through the entire ritual from the first to the last day. In particular, she is charged with taking care of the boy's hair: she catches it on a platter when it is cut (see plates 2 and 3) and discards it in a river a few days later, once the boy has disrobed. In the case of *vajrācārya* boys (see below) from Kathmandu, she may also assist when the *ācāryābhiṣeka* is imparted as an immediate sequel to the *bare chuyegu* rite. Besides the paternal aunt, the maternal uncle is also obliged to participate. Most importantly, he has to present the boy with the new clothes to be put on upon after disrobing. In addition to the paternal aunt and maternal uncle, the parents and other relatives also take part. They are present on the day of *pravrajyā* and offer alms to the boy just afterwards. On the two intervening days before the disrobing, the boy is taken to visit paternal and maternal relatives from whom he again receives presents that are ritualized as alms. Moreover, a banquet may be organized for the boy to which close and distant relatives as well as friends are invited. This is in addition to the traditional feast that is served on the day of the *pravrajyā* to all participants but the ordained boys themselves. Thus, in a way characteristic of Newar society, the ritual serves as an important occasion for familial bonding with paternal and maternal relatives beyond the immediate confines of the initiate's home.

The *bare chuyegu* includes a procession of all the newly ordained boys from the monastery through the town to the palace where they deposit betel leaves and nuts as well as coins on the royal throne, in order to give notice to the king of their new status (see plate 10). The procession is led by the priests and Newar musicians. With the honorific parasols (*chattrā*), the red or yellow robes, and the aunts and uncles in their best outfits, the procession is also a public demonstration and affirmation of the *bares'* religious and caste identity.

There is a further way in which I want to deal with the function of the *bare chuyegu* ritual, namely by relating it to the equivalent initiation ritual performed for Newar Buddhists who are not of *bare* descent and hence have no inherited connections with monkhood. These boys who come from trader, artisan or farmer castes undergo the so-called *kaytā pūjā*.⁵⁴ With the exception of the ritual

54 Lienhard (1999: 102–112) has described this rite under the title “Die Weihe der Kastenbuddhisten”. He, however, does not deal with the preparatory rites leading to the *kaytā pūjā*. In Kathmandu, for instance, boys of the farmer castes (*vyāpu*) pass several nights (*vaḥlāḥ*) at shrines linked with the locality from which they come before they undergo the *kaytāpūjā*. For their sense of social and religious identity this practice is equally, if not more, important than the *kaytāpūjā* as such.

framework, this ritual is clearly modelled on the Hindu *upanayana* rite. (The *kaytā* is the aforementioned girdle that is tied on as part of the *upanayana*.) Most importantly, unlike the *bares* these boys do not have their *cūḍā* and girdle cut off and thus do not cross over the threshold to monkhood. Moreover, they do not even go for refuge, let alone take the five *upāsaka* vows.⁵⁵ This allows the *bares* to maintain a distinct identity as Buddhist specialists elevated above the rest of the Buddhist laity, even though after their *bare chuyegu* they go on to marry and live the life of perfectly normal householders. Thus I do not consider Newar Buddhism as a “Buddhism without monks” as Michael Allen and more recently Siegfried Lienhard (1999) have put it. Rather, I prefer to view it as a Buddhism with monks who have turned householders without really giving up their identity as monks. Hence I find fitting the term “householder monk” used by David Gellner in his writings.⁵⁶ It seems that this perspective was shared by Max Weber (1921: 308), who refers to the disrobing at the end of the *bare chuyegu* ritual merely as the dispensation from the vows. The *bares*’ continued identity as monks is clearly borne out by the fact that some sections among them are traditionally even called *bhikṣus* (*sākyabhikṣu*, *cailakabhikṣu*).⁵⁷ There is justification for this identity as monks insofar as the *bares* are members of what is considered a monastic community with a living monastic cult which they maintain. Moreover, on the occasion of major rituals requiring purity, the *bares* shave off their entire head of hair without leaving a tuft, thus reasserting their identity as Buddhist monks. Fittingly, once a year during the festival of *paṃjādān*⁵⁸ (celebrated routinely during the “month of virtue” [*guṃlā*] that coincides with much

55 Note, however, that according to Minayeff’s (1894: 296–8) summary of the *Pāpaparimocana*, apparently a Nepalese text belonging to his private collection, the taking of the *upāsaka* vows is obligatory for Buddhists of *brahman*, *ṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or *sūdra* caste. I had no access to this text, but found similar statements in the *Avadāna* literature from Nepal. The *Ahorātravratākathā*, for instance, specifies that members of the four aforementioned “castes” (*jāti* in the text’s terminology) are entitled to engage in the practice of venerating *caityas* for a whole day and night (*ahorātravratā*) (*Ahorātravratākathā* verse 108 and paragraph 10 of the prose version as published in Handurukande 2000). It has to be taken into account, however, that the mentioned texts contrast *brahman*, *ṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *sūdras* with low castes (*hīnajāti*, *duṣṭajāti*) or with the “other 36 castes” (*śoḍaśaviṃśati-jāti*), who are apparently excluded from the mentioned practice.

56 Cp. Jaffe’s phrase “Neither Monk nor Layman” entitling his study of “Clerical Marriage in Modern Japanese Buddhism” (Jaffe 2002).

57 Cf. Gellner 1989a and Gellner 1992: 165f.

58 *Paṃjādān* is commonly understood to correspond to Sanskrit *pañcadāna*, but this Sanskritization is certainly not correct. Lienhard (1999: 179) derives *paṃjādān* from *paṇḍitajādāna*, meaning “alms in the form of boiled rice for the learned”.

of August),⁵⁹ the Buddhist lay castes give alms (including such items as brooms and toothpicks typically donated to monks) to the *bares*, thereby affirming the *bares*' identity as monks and their own identity as lay devotees.

Though paradoxical, the institution of a caste of householder monks is not as unique as one might suppose. For instance, in Nepal the members of a *saṃnyāsin* caste in the Hindu fold also marry and take up common worldly professions, even though they renounce, like the *bares*, the status of laymen after they have passed through the *upanayana*, namely when they are initiated as *saṃnyāsins* and accordingly have their tuft of hair cut (see Bouillier 1985: 203–206). At the time of death their funeral rites—burial instead of cremation—confirm their status as *saṃnyāsins* (ibid.: 208–210; cf. Michaels 1994: 340). The case of the Newar *jogis* who are identified as descendants of Kāṇphaṭa yogis seems to be similar (see Levy 1990: 368ff). Thus the householder monks are not a specifically Buddhist phenomenon. In contrast, they are typical of the paradoxical integration of hereditary renouncers into the fold of Indian society and the caste system.

The *bares* are the backbone of Newar Buddhism. Without their sense of identity as Buddhist monks of sorts and without the cults and traditions they perpetuate, Newar Buddhism would most likely have been absorbed into the Hindu fold, as happened in Northern India. This is so because among the lay castes without a monastic connection, Buddhism is not firmly anchored and rooted, and hence is not institutionalized enough to guarantee a sense of distinctness from the Hindu surrounding. Compare the sense of religious identity of a lay Newar Buddhist who performs his *upanayana* in very much the same way as a Hindu and retains his *cūdā*, with—let us say—that of a Christian convert in India who, at least in the past, had to cut off his *cūdā* and publicly dine together with untouchables in order to mark his break with Hinduism. The fact that the institution of monkhood and monasticism can even without vocational, celibate monks be of such pivotal importance as it is in Newar Buddhism shows how vital it is for the integrity and survival of Buddhist societies.

The boys undertaking the *bare chuyegu* initiation fall—again by the principle of patrilineal descent—into two groups, namely the *śākyas* and the *vajrācāryas*. After the *bare chuyegu* the latter go on to become Tantric masters and for this receive the *ācāryābhiṣeka* (New.: *ācāḥ luyegu*) and the matching *mantra*. In Kathmandu this rite is normally performed in the secrecy of the monastery's Tantric shrine (*āgam*), immediately after the boys have disrobed. After the *ācāryābhiṣeka* has been imparted, the boys perform their first fire ritual, thereby demonstrating that they have become *vajrācāryas* and are, unlike all other

59 On the festival of *paṃjadān* see Gellner 1992: 180–183.

Buddhists, authorized to perform the *homa*. Thus the *ācāryābhiṣeka* can, from a sociological perspective, be viewed as part of the boy's rite of passage which introduces him to his religion and into his status group, namely that of the *vajrācāryas*.

It can thus be observed that in Newar Buddhism a tiered system of initiation developed. On the lowest tier are the impure castes which are completely excluded from initiation rituals. Above them come the middle-range castes who perform, within the framework of a Buddhist ritual, an *upanayana* along Hindu lines, but who are not admitted into the fold of full-fledged Buddhism. They are surpassed by the *bares* who by virtue of their *bare chuyegu* become "householder monks". The *bares*, in turn, are differentiated by their access, or lack of access, to Tantric priesthood. On account of this access the *vajrācāryas* may be viewed as a group elevated above the common *bares*. As I mentioned, this tiered system allows Newar Buddhism to uphold the strict separation of monkhood and laity even in a context in which the institution of "vocational", unmarried monks long ago vanished. It also creates "caste" distinctions in a way that is reminiscent of the Brahmanical tradition where the *sūdras* are excluded from initiation, and where the *upanayana* ritual is structured in such a way that it implements (and in a sense even creates) the caste distinctions between *vaiśyas*, *kṣatriyas* and Brahmins.

For an appraisal of Newar Buddhism, it has to be borne in mind that the rites of passage examined here are not the only means of access to Tantric Buddhist teaching. On another plane there is the tradition of imparting a set of highest Tantric initiations (commonly referred to as *dīkṣā* rather than *abhiṣeka*) in a complex series of rituals, lasting some ten days (see Gellner 1992: 266–281). These initiations do not confer a special social status in the way the *bare chuyegu* and *ācāḥ luyegu* do. In theory, it should even be kept secret that one has taken them. Because these initiations do not have the same social implications as the initiatory rites of passage, they are accessible not only to male *vajrācāryas*, but—irrespective of gender⁶⁰—also to *sākyas* and even to the uppermost lay castes with no inherited link to monastic communities. It is these initiations rather than the initiatory rites of passage that are viewed as soteriologically relevant. Thus the highest forms of teaching in Newar Buddhism are not limited to

60 It would be wrong to view the participation of women exclusively in terms of their roles as female partners. Rather they, too, are treated as initiates in their own rights and receive esoteric *mantras* enabling them to engage as independent subjects in Tantric practices. As nowadays initiation is not only imparted to couples, it is accordingly possible for females as well as for males to receive Tantric initiation singly, without a partner.

male *vajrācāryas*, but are imparted more freely than appears on first sight. Nonetheless, the point remains that the large section of the population ranking below the upper lay castes is excluded from such teachings on the basis of caste. They, however, tend to have esoteric cults of their own. On the whole little is known about these cults, except that they are deeply rooted in autochthonous forms of religiosity.

To sum up, though the rite of initiation into monkhood in the Newar Buddhist tradition has preserved the structure, and to a considerable extent even the wording, of the canonical Vinaya tradition of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, it has been fundamentally transformed by 1) being turned into a rite of passage, analogous to the *upanayana*, that enacts only ritually the stage of *brahmacarya* and the subsequent return, 2) being embedded in the framework of Tantric Mahāyāna Buddhism, and 3) being adapted to its Newar setting. In accordance with the Brahmanical scheme of the *catuṛāśrama*, the *cūḍākarmaṇ* and the tying on of the girdle as an allusion to the *upanayana* came to be incorporated into the *bare chuyegu* as rites identified with the stage of the householder that needs to be passed through. Similarly, the monastic *pravrajyā* rite (which itself in turn subsumes the conversion to an *upāsaka* as a first step before the adoption of monkhood) is treated as a stage to be covered on the way to the initiation into Mahāyāna in its Tantric form. This approach of incorporating the *saṃskāras* and the *pravrajyā* by subordinating them as stages that need to be transcended is typically Indian. It is characteristic of the way in which the Indian tradition transforms itself without breaking with the past, and it also bears traces of what Paul Hacker has called inclusivism, namely the tendency in the cultural history of India to deal with elements of rival traditions by relegating and subordinating them within one's own framework rather than by rejecting them outright (see Oberhammer 1983). If one views the *bare chuyegu* as part of the larger picture of initiation rites performed as *saṃskāras* for boys of castes with a Buddhist identity, it becomes clear that much the same mechanisms are at work as in a Hindu context. This also applies if one views the paradoxical status of the *bare*s as householder monks in the light of the aforementioned castes of hereditary *saṃnyāsins* or *jogis*. Thus, even though the Buddhist ritual tradition in Nepal expresses itself in its own idiom and thereby preserves its distinct identity, the operation of forces and the evolution of patterns similar to those in Hinduism can be observed. This shows that, for the study of Buddhist phenomena such as rites, it is important to take Hindu parallels into account and to refrain from dealing with Buddhism as a phenomenon divorced from its Indian setting.

References

- Allen, Michael R. 1973. "Buddhism without Monks: the Vajrayāna Religion of the Newars of Kathmandu Valley". In: *South Asia* 2: 1–14.
- Banerjee, Anukul Chandra 1949. "Bhikṣukarmavākya". In: *The Indian Historical Quarterly* 25.1: 19–30.
- 1979. *Sarvāstivāda Literature*. Calcutta: The World Press.
- Bapat, P.V. & V.V. Gokhale 1982. *Vinaya-Sūtra and Auto-Commentary on the Same by Guṇaprabha*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Bouillier, Véronique 1985. "The Ambiguous Position of Renunciants in Nepal: Interrelation of Asceticism and the Social Order". In: *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre* 7: 199–229. [Translation of Bouillier, V. 1979. "Les Renonçants de Népal". In: *L'Ethnographie* 1: 105–127.]
- Dickson, J.F. 1875. "The Upasampadā-Kammavācā being the Buddhist Manual of the Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests and Deacons. The Pāli Text with a Translation and Notes". In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 7: 1–16.
- Dundas, Paul 1992. *The Jains*. London: Routledge.
- Durgāprasāda (ed.) 1868. *The Rājatarāṅginī of Kalhaṇa*. Bombay: Gov. Central Book Depot.
- Eimer, Helmut (ed.) 1983. *Rab tu 'byung ba'i gzhi. Die tibetische Übersetzung des Pravrajyāvastu im Vinaya der Mūlasarvāstivādins. Nach Vorarbeiten von Frank-Richard Hamm und weiteren Materialien herausgegeben durch Helmut Eimer*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- **Ekaśatakarman*. Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (Buddhist Tripiṭaka in Chinese, Taishō-edition) no. 1453.
- Eliade, Mircea 1995. *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*. Woodstock: Spring Publications. [first published in 1958]
- Gellner, David 1987. "The Newar Buddhist Monastery. An Anthropological and Historical Typology". In: *Heritage of the Kathmandu Valley. Proceedings of an International Conference in Lübeck, June 1985*, Gutschow, Niels & Axel Michaels (ed.). Sankt Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag.
- 1988. "Monastic Initiation in Newar Buddhism". In: *Indian Ritual and its Exegesis*, Gombrich, R.F. (ed.). Delhi: Oxford University Press, 42–112.
- 1989a. "Buddhist Monks or Kinsmen of the Buddha". In: *Kailash* 15: 1–20.
- 1989b. "Monkhood and Priesthood in Newar Buddhism". In: *Prêtrise, pouvoirs et autorité en Himalaya*, Bouillier, V. & G. Toffin (ed.). Paris: Editions de l'EHESS, 165–192.
- 1992. *Monk, Householder and Tantric Priest. Newar Buddhism and its Hierachy of Ritual*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 1997. "The Consecration of a Vajra Master in Newar Buddhism". In: *Les habitants du toit du monde. Études recueillies en hommage à Alexander W. Macdonald*. Karmay, Samten & Philippe Sagant (ed.). Nanterre: Société d'ethnologie, 659–675.

- Gennep, Arnold van 1960. *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [English translation of the French original first published in 1908]
- Gombrich, Richard 1984. "Temporary Ordination in Sri Lanka". In: *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 7.2: 41–65.
- Gonda, Jan 1980. *Vedic Ritual. The Non-Solemn Rites*. Leiden & Köln: Brill.
- Greenwold, Stephen M. 1974. "Buddhist Brahmins". In: *European Journal of Sociology* 15: 101–123. [Reprinted as "The Role of the Priest in Newar Society". In: *Himalayan Anthropology. The Indo-Tibetan Interface*, Fisher, James F. (ed.). Paris: Mouton. 1978, 483–504.]
- 1974. "Monkhood versus Priesthood in Newar Buddhism". In: *The Anthropology of Nepal*, Fürer-Haimendorf, Ch. von (ed.). Warminster: Aris and Philips.
- Härtel, H. 1956. *Karmavācanā. Formulare für den Gebrauch im buddhistischen Gemeindeleben aus ostturkistanischen Sanskrit-Handschriften*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.
- Handurukande, Ratna 2000. *Three Sanskrit Texts on Caitya Worship*. Tokyo: International Institute of Buddhist Studies.
- Hartmann, Jens 1996. "Cultural Change through Substitution: Ordination versus Initiation in Newar Buddhism". In: *Change and Continuity. Studies in the Change of the Kathmandu Valley*, Lienhard, S. (ed.). Turin: Edizioni dell'Orso (Collana di Studi Orientali des CESMEO 7), 355–365.
- Hinüber, Oskar von 1970. "Eine Karmavācanā-Sammlung aus Gilgit". In: *ZDMG* 119: 102–132.
- 1997. "Old Age and Old Monks in Pāli Buddhism". In: *Aging: Asian concepts and experiences, past and present*, Formanek, Susanne & Sepp Linhart (ed.). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 20), 65–78.
- 2001. "Lienhard, Siegfried: Diamantmeister und Hausväter. Buddhistisches Gemeindeleben in Nepal". In: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 44.4: 355–358. [review of Lienhard 1999]
- Hodgson, Brian H. 1874. "The Pravrajyā Vrata or Initiatory Rites of the Buddhists, According to the Pūjā Khanda". In: *Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Buddhists*. Serampore 1841, pp. 212ff. Reproduced in the Hodgson's *Essays on the Languages, Literature, and Religion of Nepal and Tibet*. London 1874 (reprint: New Delhi: Asian Educational Service, 1991), part 1, 139–145.
- Jaffe, Richard 2002. *Neither Monk nor Layman: Clerical Marriage in Modern Japanese Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jinananda, B. 1961. *Upasampadājñāpti. Critically Edited with Notes and Introduction*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Kane, Pandurang Vaman 1941–1962. *History of Dharmaśāstra*. 6 vols. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Kieffer-Pülz, Petra 2000. "Die buddhistische Gemeinde". In: *Der Buddhismus I*, Bechert, Heinz et al. (ed.). Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 281–402.

- Kloppenburger, Ria 1983. "The Earliest Buddhist Ritual of Ordination". In: *Selected Studies on Ritual in Indian Religions. Essays to D.J. Hoens*, Kloppenburger, Ria (ed.). Leiden: Brill, 156–168.
- Levy, R.I. with K.R. Rājopādhyāya 1990. *Mesocosm: Hinduism and the Organization of a Traditional Newar City in Nepal*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Lienhard, Siegfried 1984. "Nepal: the Survival of Indian Buddhism in a Himalayan Kingdom". In: *The World of Buddhism. Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, Bechert, H. & R.F. Gombrich (ed.). London: Thames and Hudson, 108–114.
- 1996. "On some Key-Terms in Newar Buddhism". In: *Change and Continuity. Studies in the Change of the Kathmandu Valley*, Lienhard, S. (ed.). Turin: Edizioni dell' Orso (Collana di Studi Orientali des CESMEO 7), 241–256.
- 1999. *Diamantmeister und Hausväter. Buddhistisches Gemeindeleben in Nepal*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Locke, John 1975. "Newar Buddhist Initiation Rites". in: *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 2.2: 1–23.
- 1985: *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal*. Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan.
- Michaels, Axel 1994. "Die heilige Schnur und 'hinduistische' Askese". In: *ZDMG* 144: 330–344.
- 1998: *Der Hinduismus. Geschichte und Gegenwart*. München: C.H. Beck.
- Minayeff, I.P. 1894. *Recherches sur le Bouddhisme*. Paris: Ernest Leroux.
- Kuladatta: *Kriyāsaṃgraha. A Sanskrit Manuscript from Nepal Containing a Collection of Tantric Rituals by Kuladatta*. Reproduced by Sharada Rani. New Delhi: Sharada Rani (Śatapiṭaka Series 236), 1977. (The manuscript reproduced in facsimile is a copy made in 1965, from a manuscript kept in the National Archives of Kathmandu (Accession no. 4–318, NGMPP A 59/1), dated *jyeṣṭha* of *nepāl samvat* 337 (= C.E. 1217), to my knowledge [cf. Tanemura 1997, p. 13] the second oldest extant manuscript of this text, only one year younger than the oldest one, which is kept in the Kesar Library, Kathmandu [No 109, NGMPP C 11/5]). For an edition of the seventh chapter containing the *Pravrajyāgrahaṇa* section, see Ryugen Tanemura 1997.)
- Nietupski, Paul K. 1993. *The History and Development of Buddhist Monasticism*. New York: PhD thesis Columbia University.
- Oberhammer, G. (ed.) 1983. *Inklusivismus. Eine indische Denkform*. Wien: De Nobili Research Library.
- Olivelle, Patrick 1993. *The Āśrama System: The History and Hermeneutics of a Religious Institution*. New York: SUNY.
- 1995. *Rules and Regulations for Brahmanical Asceticism. Yatidharmasamuccaya of Yādava Prakāśa*. Edited and Translated by Patrick Olivelle. Albany: SUNY.
- Pravrajyāgrahaṇavidhi*. Manuscript (*thyāsaphū*-style) dated Nepal Saṃvat 802 (C.E. 1681/2). NGMPP reel number E 1488/3.

- Pravrajyāvidhi*. Manuscript (*thyāsaphū*-style) dated Nepal Saṃvat 857 (C.E. 1736/7). NGMPP reel number E 1455/3.
- Ridding, C. & L. de la Vallée Poussin 1917. "A Fragment of the Sanskrit Vinaya. Bhiksunikarmavacana". In: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 1: 123–143.
- Sakya, Hemraj & T.R. Vaidya 1970. *Medieval Nepal (Colophons and Inscriptions)*. Kathmandu: T. R. Vaidya.
- Schmidt, Michael 1993. "Bhikṣuṇī-Karmavācānā: Die Handschrift Sansk. c 25(R) der Bodleian Library Oxford". In: *Studien zur Indologie und Buddhismuskunde. Festgabe für Prof. Bechert, Grünendahl, R. et al.* (ed.). Bonn: Indica et Tibetica Verlag.
- Smith, Brian K. 1998. *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. [first published in 1989]
- Spiro, Melford E. ²1982. *Buddhism and Society: a Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Sprockhoff, J. F. 1994. "Zur Weihe des Asketen. Eine Skizze". In: *WZKS* 38: 61–83.
- Strong, John S. 1997. "A Family Quest: The Buddha, Yaśodharā and Rāhula in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*". In: *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, Schober, Juliane (ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 113–128.
- Swearer, Donald K. 1995. *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia*. Albany: SUNY.
- Tanaka, Kimiaki & Kazumi Yoshizaki 1998: *Nepāru Bukkyō* [Nepalese Buddhism]. Tokyo: Shunjusha.
- Tanemura Ryugen 1997. *Kriyāsaṃgraha of Kuladatta. Chapter VII*. Tokyo: The Sankibo Press.
- 2001. "One Aspect of the Consecration Ceremony of Images in Buddhist Tantrism: 'The Ten Rites' Prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and their Background". In: *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies* 13 (2001), pp. 52–75.
- Vaidya, Karunakar 1986. "Chuda-Karma—Buddhist Initiation Rites". In: *Buddhist Traditions and Culture of the Kathmandu Valley (Nepal)*, Vaidya, Karunakar (ed.). Kathmandu: Shajha Prakashan, 14–23.
- Vajrācārya, Padmaśrī Vajra 1983. *Cūḍākarma Vidhāna*. Kathmandu: Puṣpa Śākya. *Vinayavastu*. Tanjur: Sde-dge no. 1 (cf. Eimer 1983).
- Weber, Max 1921. *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie. Bd. II*. (Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen, II. Hinduismus und Buddhismus. Edited by Marianne Weber). Tübingen: Mohr.
- Wille, Klaus 1990. *Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung des Vinayavastu der Mūlasarvāstivādin*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Plates

All photos have been taken by the author on the occasion of the *bare chuyegu* ritual performed in Mu Bāhāl Kathmandu on 28 February, 2001.



Plate 1: The treading onto the stone (*aśmāropana*). On his way to the tonsure (*cūḍākarana*) that precedes the ordination, the candidate, led by his paternal aunt, steps on a stone mortar and pestle, and with his right foot grinds black lentils. According to a common interpretation, he thereby overcomes potential obstacles on the new path that he is about to set out on. The rite is performed among Buddhist and Hindu Newars in the same way also as part of other *samskāras*.



Plate 2: The ritual tonsure (*cūdākarāṇa*) preceding the ordination. The hair caught by the boy's paternal aunt (*nini*) on a platter is kept until the day of disrobing when it is ritually discarded by the aunt in the Biṣṇumati river.



Plate 3: The cutting of the hair tuft (*cūḍā*) at the time of “going forth”. The *cūḍā* is cut by the most senior member of the *saṃgha* of Mu Bāhāl. Together with the other elders of the *saṃgha* he functions as sponsor (*yajamāna*) of the ritual. The officiating main priest (*mūlācārya*) on the left wears the characteristic helmet-like crown adorned with the Five Buddhas. Again, the hair is caught by the boy’s paternal aunt on a platter. The other elders are standing with clay vessels in order to pour the “waters of the four oceans” over the boy once the tuft has been cut.



Plate 4: The presentation of the robes. One of the elders of the monastic community into which the boy is ordained presents the robe and other implements of monkhood to the candidate after the tonsure of the *cūḍā*.

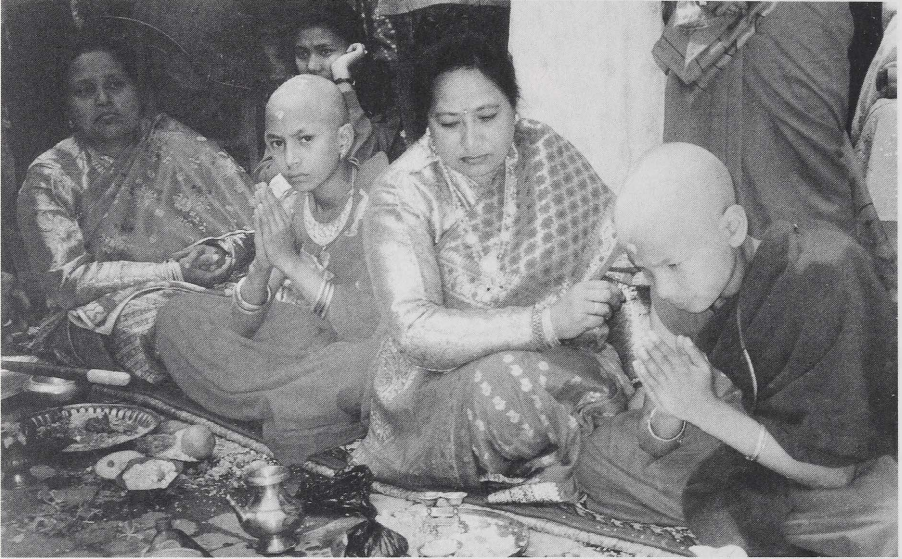


Plate 5: The pledge of monkhood. After having put on the new robes, the boys pledge to abandon the dress of a householder and in exchange take up the monk's robe for the whole of their life.

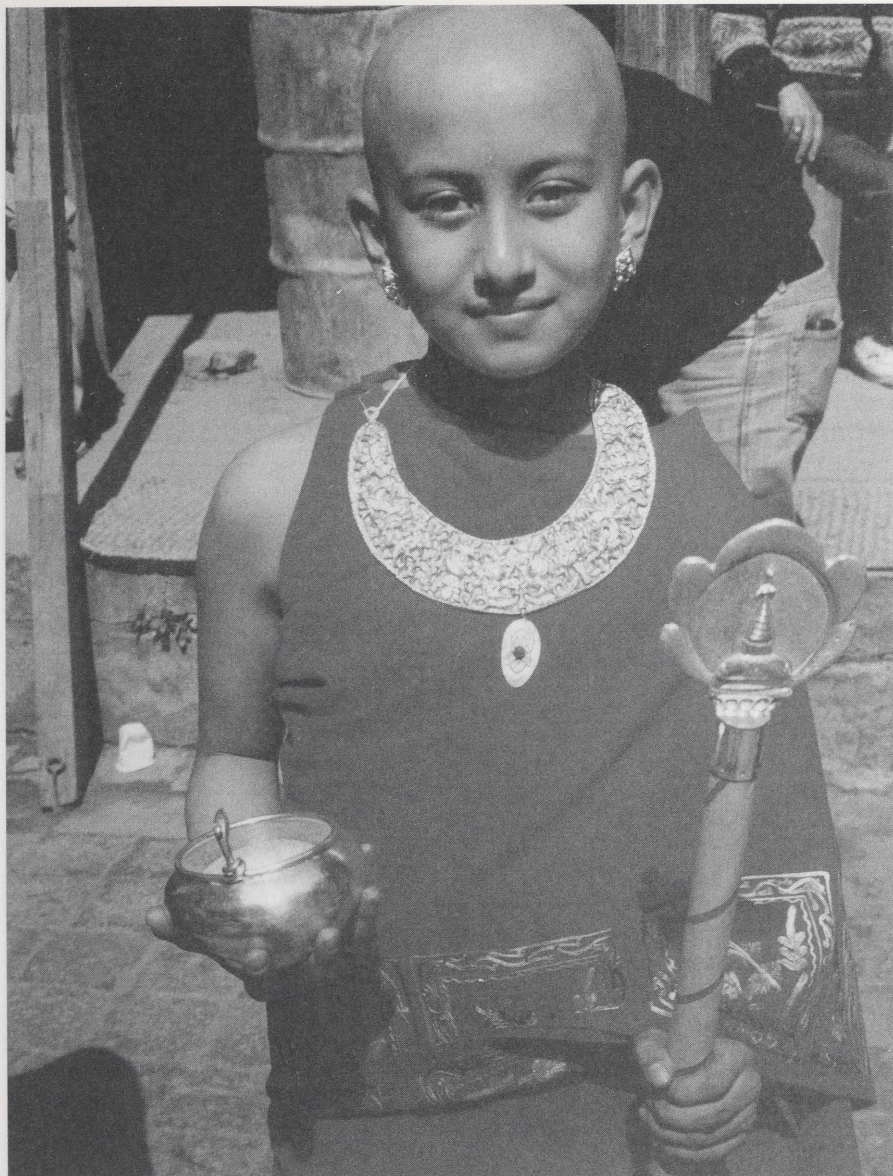


Plate 6: A newly-ordained boy in his monastic garb. In addition to the robe, alms bowl and staff (the finial of which is marked with a *caitya* in typical fashion), the boys also put on earrings and other ornaments. They thereby break the vow of renouncing all forms of adornments which they pledge at this very occasion in accordance with the *vinaya*. This bears out that the *pravrajyā* in Newar Buddhism is not so much a monastic ordination as an initiation into the sacred realm of Buddhism.



Plate 7: In the shade of the honorific parasol. While seated to perform further rites, the same boy is shaded with an honorific parasol. This is indicative of the quasi-divine status that he is assuming in course of the *bare chuyegu* ritual.

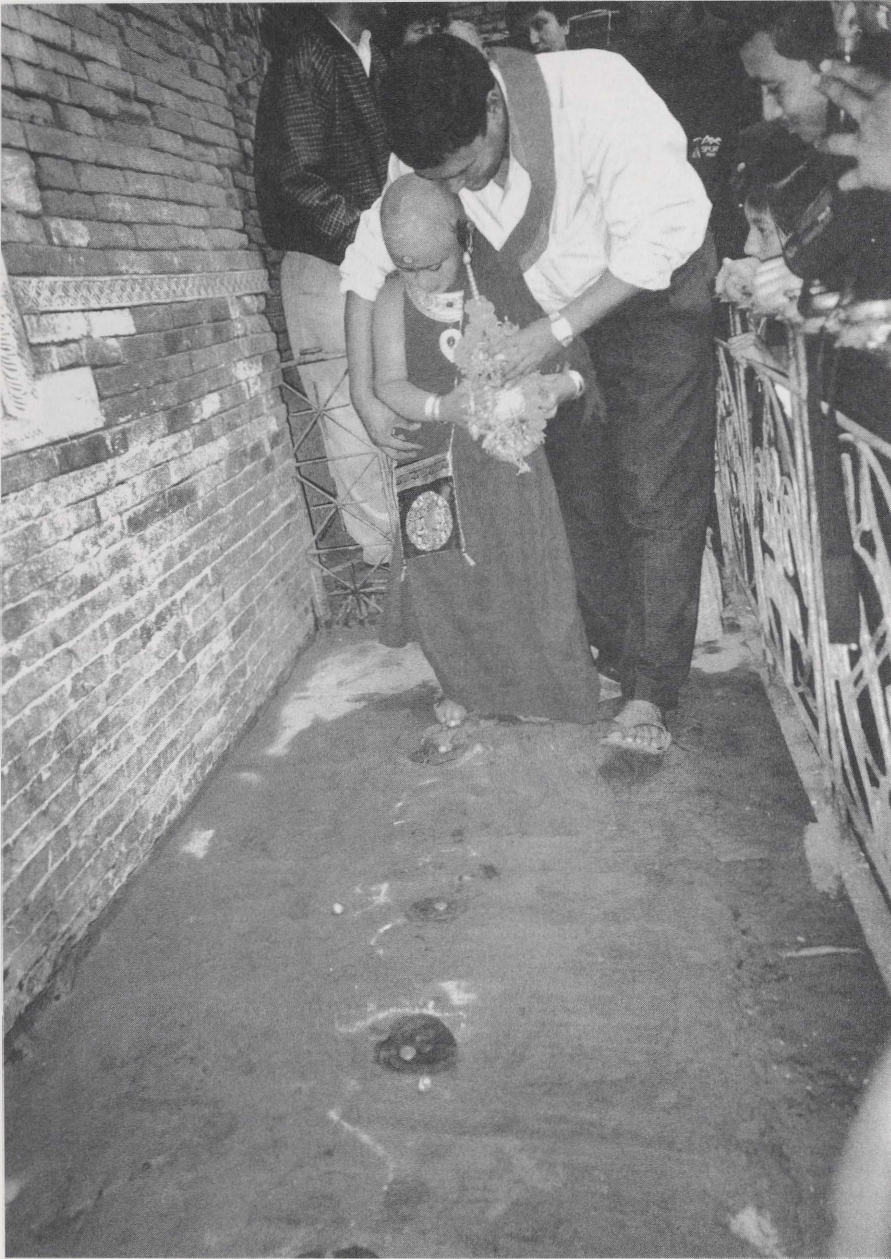


Plate 8: The taking of the Seven Steps. On his way to the main exoteric shrine housing the principal Buddha image, the newly ordained boy takes seven steps. He is led by the main priest who pours out water from the pitcher thus purifying the path taken by the boy.



Plate 9: The introduction of the newly-ordained boys to the *kvāpāhdyah*. Upon the conclusion of the ordination the boys are—for the first time in their life—taken into the shrine room of the monastery's principal exoteric deity, the *kvāpāhdyah*, here a black image of Akṣobhya that can be seen in the background. As only ordained members are entitled to enter this shrine room, this marks their new status as members of the monastery's *saṃgha*. The boys' veneration of the deity on this occasion also marks their introduction to the cult of the monastery towards which they henceforth will have to contribute.



Plate 10: Group photo of newly ordained monks with their paternal aunts. Upon conclusion of the *bare chuyegu*, the boys are taken to the royal palace in Hanumān Dhokā where they give formal notice of their ordination by depositing pan, betel nuts and coins on the throne. In the courtyard of the palace, group photos of the newly initiated boys with their relatives are taken in various formations, bearing out that—in a manner characteristic for Newar society—the *bare chuyegu* serves as an important occasion for family bonding.

OLIVER FREIBERGER

Resurrection from the Dead?

The Brāhmaṇical Rite of Renunciation and Its Irreversibility

This paper deals with Brāhmaṇical concepts of the rite of renunciation, the ritual act that marks the transition from the “worldly person” to the renouncer.¹ It focuses on one particular feature of the concept of this ritual, its irreversibility. The term irreversibility refers to the idea that becoming a renouncer is a final act; once this ritual has been performed, a person remains a renouncer for the rest of his/her life.² First, I will present the concept of the irreversible rite of renunciation, as it appears in the Brāhmaṇical literature on renunciation. Then I shall examine textual accounts that indicate tensions between this theoretical concept and actual social practice. Considering such tensions, I attempt to sketch the social background against which the idea of irreversibility may have developed. Finally, I shall reflect upon the relations of Brāhmaṇical theory and social practice regarding this issue.

The Irreversible Rite of Renunciation

Tracing back the history of the rite and the idea of its irreversibility, we first have to consider the accounts of the Dharmasūtras, our earliest Brāhmaṇical sources that deal at some length with renunciation. These codes of social and religious behaviour can roughly be dated between the 3rd century B.C.E. and the

1 A Donald D. Harrington Faculty Fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin (2002/2003) made research for this paper possible. I am grateful for the financial support and for the chance to spend one exciting year at UT’s Department of Asian Studies. I would also like to thank Edeltraud Harzer and Patrick Olivelle for valuable comments and suggestions.

2 Axel Michaels has suggested that every ritual can be considered irreversible—to reverse the process, you need to perform another ritual. See Michaels 1999: 35. The concept of the rite of renunciation, however, demands the ultimate transformation of the individual person: once a person is transformed into a renouncer, there is no return, and there is no ritual for re-transforming this renouncer into a “worldly person”.

beginning of the Common Era. Although the Dharmasūtras contain a number of rules concerning the life style of a renouncer, its authors are rather tight-lipped when it comes to a rite of renunciation. In these accounts, which I examine in the appendix to this paper, they generally advocate the life-long vocation of the renunciation state (*āśrama*), but contain very little information alluding to a ritual procedure. We find a short description of a renunciation ritual only in the *Mānavadharmasāstra* and then frequently in the subsequent Dharmasāstras. These accounts (*Viṣṇusmṛti*, *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, and also the elaborate ritual descriptions in the *Vaikhānasa Smārtasūtra*), are already contemporaneous with those texts I shall discuss in greater detail, the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads (cf. appendix).

These twenty Upaniṣads, composed in Sanskrit, belong to what scholars have labeled the “Minor Upaniṣads”, compared to the „Major” or „Classical Upaniṣads” which are generally considered to be older. The composition of the earliest Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads has to be dated presumably to the first centuries of the Common Era; the youngest can be dated to the 15th century. In spite of this very wide time frame, Friedrich Otto Schrader, who provided the critical edition published in 1912, decided to put them together, for good reasons. As Patrick Olivelle (1992: 5) says in his introduction to his translation of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads, “from the viewpoint of Brāhmaṇical theology, these Upaniṣads provide the basis in Vedic revelation for the institution of renunciation (*saṃnyāsa*) and for the rules and practices associated with that state. They played a central role in the theological reflections and disputes concerning that key institution of Brāhmaṇical religion”.

The contents of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads are by no means uniform.³ They contain various views on almost every issue of renunciation, and this is true also for the rite of renunciation, which is described in nine of the twenty Upaniṣads.⁴ The descriptions of the rite vary with regard to length, elaborateness, and con-

3 Cf. Sprockhoff’s comprehensive study (1976), and Olivelle’s introduction to his *Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads* (1992). The references to these Upaniṣads given in this paper refer to page and line of the critical edition by Schrader (1912).

4 *Āruṇi*, *Laghusaṃnyāsa*, *Kuṇḍikā*, *Kaṭhaśruti*, *Jābāla*, *Nāradaparivrājaka*, *Brhatsaṃnyāsa*, and *Paramahaṃsaparivrājaka Upaniṣads*; the *Yājñavalkyopaniṣad* quotes verbatim the ritual section of the *Jābālopaniṣad*. Certain elements appear in a rather general formulation in other Upaniṣads, too. The *Paramahaṃsopaniṣad* 46,3f. for example, says, “The man should renounce his sons, friends, wife, relatives, and so forth, as well as the topknot, the sacrificial string, Vedic recitation, and all rites” (Olivelle 1992: 137). Although such statements parallel elements of the ritual procedure, they are not considered here when they do not appear in an actual ritual context.

tents. We face a general methodological problem in dealing with the ritual descriptions of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads. To what extent is it justifiable to supplement a seemingly “incomplete” ritual description with data from other Upaniṣads? Was there a common ritual procedure all Upaniṣads refer to, some more extensively than others? And is the mere allusion or the lack of certain elements merely due to the specific purpose and aim of the respective Upaniṣad? It is difficult to answer these questions.⁵ And it becomes even more difficult when we take the diachronic change into consideration. Apparently, the ritual procedure was further developed in the course of time, and became increasingly elaborate. The accounts of the older group of Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads contain a number of “basic” elements,⁶ but we find the most detailed and extensive description only in the late and “encyclopaedic” (Sprockhoff) *Nāradaparivrājakopaniṣad*, the longest of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads, composed not before the 12th century.⁷ Not only the older ones but even this detailed description could hardly be used as a manual for a ritual performance—it still appears too unspecific and sketchy.⁸ For this reason, it is also difficult to use this description as a basis for the examination of ritual performances. Although it may be possible to detect van Gennepe’s three phases of the ritual process in the more elaborate formulations,⁹ we have to remind ourselves that these accounts are normative, theological conceptions and by no means ethnographic observations.¹⁰

5 Some passages clearly allude to more detailed descriptions, particularly when they are connected with quotations; others are less obvious. Although there is a family resemblance among the different procedures, it would be problematic to supplement lacking elements, especially when the supplementing text is much younger than the Upaniṣad in question.

6 These are not necessarily identical even in those Upaniṣads of the older group; but it would go beyond the scope of this paper to discuss them in detail.

7 *Nāradaparivrājaka* 136–139; 149–151; 162–170. Cf. Sprockhoff 1976: 174–186.

8 In the older Upaniṣads, the prescription of the single act can be fairly concrete, as for example, “I have renounced! I have renounced! I have renounced!—having proclaimed this three times, he should say, ‘Safety from me to all beings!’”. But it can also appear rather unspecific, as in the statement, “He should abandon father, son, fire, sacrificial string, rites, wife, and everything else here below” (both quotations *Āruṇi* 9,2–4 [Olivelle 1992: 117f.]). Although the latter quotation directly precedes the former one, it is unclear whether the abandonment of relatives and rites is to be regarded as an integral part of the ritual procedure. While the sacrificial string (*yajñopavīta*) may be abandoned ritually, as other Upaniṣads prescribe, it is difficult to imagine how this can be done in practice with an unspecific item such as “everything else here (below)” (*anyaḥ apīha*).

9 Rites of separation (*rites de séparation*), of transition (*marge*), and of incorporation (*agrégation*). See van Gennepe 1909.

10 For the differences between textual prescription and actual performance (and for their dialectic relationship) cf. the papers of Ute Hüsken and Srilata Raman in the present volume.

As I intend to focus on the notion of irreversibility in these conceptions, it will suffice to mention a few basic elements of the rite.¹¹ We find a number of ritual acts expressing the end of the present life of the candidate and the beginning of his new life as a renouncer (*saṃnyāsin*). The person indicates the end of his former life by cutting his sacrificial string or discarding it on the ground or in water,¹² by shaving his head and cutting off his topknot,¹³ by abandoning all his property,¹⁴ by transferring his knowledge and ritual authority to his son,¹⁵ by performing his last sacrifice with funeral *mantras*,¹⁶ and by discarding his sacrificial vessels and burning his two fire drills.¹⁷ Therefore, he is enjoined from “bringing back”, i.e. rekindling the fires and returning to ritual activity.¹⁸ The candidate expresses the beginning of his new life by internalizing the fires with a *mantra* which indicates a new beginning,¹⁹ by proclaiming the *praiṣa* “I have renounced!” three times,²⁰ by accepting the ascetic garment or the loincloth, the staff, and other ascetic requisites,²¹ and by bestowing freedom from fear on all beings.²²

As becomes apparent from this rough sketch, one crucial feature of this ritual is its relation to death. It has been pointed out various times that the procedure particularly implies the ritual death of the candidate; “the world” considers this

-
- 11 See for a general analysis of the rites Olivelle 1992: 82–97; the description of the rite in the *Laghusaṃnyāsopaniṣad* has been analyzed in detail in Sprockhoff 1976: 52–66. Apart from abandoning relatives (or asking for their permission), three elements are particularly frequent: proclaiming the *mantra* “I have renounced” three times (*praiṣoccāraṇa*), bestowing freedom from fear on all living beings (*abhayaḍāna*), and internalizing the ritual fires (*agnisamāropana*). Joachim Friedrich Sprockhoff (1994) has discussed this in detail.
- 12 *Āruṇi* 5,3–6,1; *Kaṭhaśruti* 39,2; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 167,11–168,6; *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa* 251,6–8; *Paramahaṃsaparivrājaka* 280,11–281,1.
- 13 *Kaṭhaśruti* 32,3, 36,3f., 39,1f.; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 163,10–164,3, 167,10; *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa* 251,6; *Paramahaṃsaparivrājaka* 280,11.
- 14 *Kaṭhaśruti* 31,6.
- 15 *Kaṭhaśruti* 32,4f., 36,5–8; *Paramahaṃsaparivrājaka* 280,4–7.
- 16 *Laghusaṃnyāsa* 15,2–17,7; *Kaṭhaśruti* 31,6–32,3, 38,1–5; *Jābāla* 65,1–66,6; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 162,5–165,2.
- 17 *Kaṭhaśruti* 38,5–7; *Laghusaṃnyāsa* 16,15.
- 18 *Laghusaṃnyāsa/Kuṇḍikā* 20,4; *Kaṭhaśruti* 40,1.
- 19 *Laghusaṃnyāsa* 17,8–11; *Jābāla* 65,4–66,1; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 165,7–11. Cf. Sprockhoff 1976: 63–65.
- 20 *Āruṇi* 9,3f.; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 167,5f., 168,6–8; *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa* 251,9f.
- 21 *Āruṇi* 5,1f., 9,5–10,2; *Laghusaṃnyāsa/Kuṇḍikā* 20,8; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 169,8–170,10; *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa* 252,3–253,1; *Paramahaṃsaparivrājaka* 281,11–282,5.
- 22 *Āruṇi* 9,4; *Nāradaparivrājaka* 167,8f.

person dead in terms of ritual.²³ Therefore a renouncer, once his life has ended, must not be cremated, but buried. He had already been cremated symbolically during the rite of renunciation and had given up the fire by which he could be cremated (Sprockhoff 1980: 282f.). The performance of the candidate's ritual death expresses the notion of irreversibility. Once the candidate has renounced "the world" with its ritual procedures, there is no return. He is considered dead, and "resurrection" is impossible. *Laghusaṃnyāsa* and *Kuṇḍikopaniṣads* clearly state, "Having renounced the fire, there is no turning around again" (*apunarāvartana*).²⁴ We can thus conclude that according to the view of "classical" Brāhmaṇical theory, the ritual of renunciation is irreversible; a renouncer is considered dead and cannot return to lay life.

Social Reality: Apostate Renouncers

The issue of irreversibility appears in a rather different light when we shift the focus from Brāhmaṇical theory to social practice. There are indications that every now and then, the idea of a life-long vocation of *saṃnyāsa* remained unnoticed. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, for example, the famous Sanskrit treatise on politics, mentions renouncers who return to lay life. It says, "One, who has relinquished the life of a wandering monk (*pravrajyā*), (and) is endowed with intelligence and honesty, is the apostate monk (*udāsthita*)".²⁵ This apostate renouncer shall be recruited and, equipped with money and assistants, shall provide other

23 Cf. Sprockhoff 1980; Olivelle 1992: 89–94. According to Sprockhoff, the oldest way of dealing with the problem of the renouncer's body in Brāhmaṇical theology is the performance of a ritual that aims at his disembodiment and at the symbolic replacement of his old body by a new one (besides religious suicide or the later philosophical idea of illusion). Sprockhoff mentions three ways for a candidate to do this, either (1) by transferring his sense organs, his breath, his (ritual) "works" (*karmāṇi*) and his habitat (*loka*) to his son before he begins to wander around; or (2) by a ritual performed by priests who place the sacrificial utensils on his body so that his breath can enter the sacrificial fires; or (3) by a symbolic execution of his cremation, performed by himself. Sprockhoff emphasizes the fact that in each case, "the world" considers this person dead in terms of ritual. Sprockhoff 1980: 270f. For the three ways, Sprockhoff refers to *Kaṭhaśruti* 36,4–37,4, *Kaṭhaśruti* 31,4–32,3, and *Laghusaṃnyāsa* 15,2–17,8, respectively. Cf. also Olivelle 1992: 86–89.

24 *Saṃnyasyāgnim apunarāvartanaṃ* (*Laghusaṃnyāsa*/Kuṇḍikā 20,4). The *Kaṭhaśrutyupaniṣad* states similarly, "having renounced the fires let him not bring them back" (*saṃnyasyāgnīn na punarāvartayet*; *Kaṭhaśruti* 40,1).

25 *Arthaśāstra* 1.11.4 (transl. Kangle 1960 & 1963).

ascetics with their needs in order to convince them to work as spies “in the interest of the king” (1.11.5–8).²⁶

This account portrays an “apostate” in the literal sense, one who has given up the ascetic life and now acts as a rich lay donor, providing ascetics with food, clothes, and lodging. The question arises why the authors of the *Arthaśāstra* considered a former renouncer particularly qualified for this task—compared to any other lay person. Oftentimes, the economic situation of apostate renouncers was probably bad; later law texts portray them as outcasts and slaves of the king. For those vulnerable persons, “joining the secret service would have seemed an attractive alternative” (Olivelle 1987: 49), and for the state, they were reliable because of their material dependence. In addition to that, apostate renouncers may have been considered particularly qualified because of their insider knowledge of the ascetic scene; they probably knew the ascetics in their neighbourhood personally, and the authors apparently expect many ascetics to beg for food from them. If these assumptions are correct, the return to lay life as such did not pose a problem for the other ascetics who accepted food and the like also from a former colleague. In this case, of course, the political twist is the funding by the king and the secret order to recruit spies among the ascetics.

We can thus further speculate about apostate renouncers who were *not* recruited by the secret service. Did they become outcasts and slaves of the king as later law texts say? Some of them may have, because of their poor economic situation. But there are reasons to believe that others returned to a normal lay life, just as described by the *Arthaśāstra* account. These apostates were not funded by the king but lived on their own property, which they had not fully abandoned when entering the state of a renouncer (see below).

The *Arthaśāstra* thus clearly shows that in the social reality of its time, there were renouncers who returned to lay life. Our considerations lead us to the

26 In addition, Muṇḍa and Jaṭila ascetics shall be recruited as “seeming ascetics” (*tāpasavyañjana*) who will act as holy men and pretend to prophesy certain events (secretly carried out by their assistants), in order to gain the authority to advise influential persons in the interest of the king (1.11.13–21). It is important to note that, whereas the Muṇḍa and Jaṭila ascetics, as well as those renouncers recruited as spies, keep acting as ascetics, the *udāsthita* in fact returns to lay life, as becomes evident from 1.11.5–8: “Equipped with plenty of money and assistants, he should get work done in a place assigned (to him), for the practice of some occupation. And from the profits of (this) work, he should provide all wandering monks with food, clothing and residence. And to those (among them), who seek a (permanent) livelihood, he should secretly propose, ‘In this very garb, you should work in the interest of the king and present yourself here at the time of meals and payment.’ And all wandering monks should make similar secret proposals to (monks in) their respective orders” (transl. Kangle 1960 & 1963).

assumption that in the period of the *Arthaśāstra*, such a return was not abnormal and not necessarily looked down upon by other ascetics. The authors of the *Arthaśāstra* themselves do not seem to be biased. When they talk about “apostate renouncers” (*udāsthita*), this is not a moral judgment; the term is used neutrally, only to denote this specific candidate for the secret service. The authors do in no way condemn the respective persons; but this may also be due to the *artha* genre, the major concern of which is the enforcement of political objectives.

In texts of other genres, such as the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads, the abandonment of renunciation is harshly condemned. The *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsopaniṣad* states, “One who lapses from renunciation, one who admits a lapsed man into renunciation, and one who hinders renunciation: these three are reckoned to be lapsed”.²⁷ The verbal root rendered here as “lapse” is *pat*, to fall, which can also refer to a person fallen from his caste, i.e. an outcaste. And this is probably meant to be the penalty for the three persons in question.²⁸ The *Śātyāyanīyopaniṣad* is even harsher. It states,

He who abandons this state of renunciation, the final *dharma* of the self, is a slayer of a hero, he is a slayer of a Brahmin, he is a slayer of an embryo, and he is guilty of a great crime. He who gives up this Vaiṣṇava state is a thief, he is a violator of his teacher’s bed, he is a treacherous friend, he is an ingrate, and he is banished from all the worlds. This very point has been declared in these Vedic verses:

A thief, one who drinks liquor, a violator of his teacher’s bed, and a treacherous friend—these become purified through expiations. But he who bears the manifest or the unmanifest emblem of Viṣṇu and then abandons it, is not purified by all the luster of the self.

The utter fool who, after abandoning the internal or the external emblem of Viṣṇu, resorts to his own order or to a non-order, or who undergoes an expiation—we see no happy issue for such people even after 10 million eons. Abandoning all other orders, let a wise man live long in the order devoted to liberation. There is no happy issue for one who has fallen from the order devoted to liberation.

He who takes to renunciation and then fails to persevere in his own *dharma* should be known as an apostate—so the Vedas teach.²⁹

27 *Samnyāsam pātayed yas tu patitam nyāsayet tu yaḥ | samnyāsavighnakartā ca trīn etān patitān viduḥ ||* (*Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa* 250,4f.; transl. Olivelle 1992: 241)

28 Cf. Olivelle 1992: 241f. n. 2.

29 *Śātyāyanīyopaniṣad* 329,10–330,14 (transl. Olivelle 1992: 285f). Certainly, “abandoning the emblem of Viṣṇu” refers not only to ascetics, but in this context, the authors apply the “Vedic verses” explicitly to the ascetic (“he who abandons this state of renunciation [...]”).

It is striking that on the one hand, these Upaniṣads emphasize the renouncer's ritual death and the irreversibility of his move, and on the other hand, they condemn this very reversion in great detail. This clearly reflects a social reality in which renouncers have in fact abandoned their state and returned to lay life; it would not have been necessary to waste words and thoughts if the return was an impossible and unreal option in practice.

The quoted passage predicts unpleasant future lives, possibly punishments in hell and the like. But apart from the religious effects of the defection from *saṃnyāsa*,³⁰ Brāhmaṇical lawgivers designed "this-worldly" penalties, as well. From the *Viṣṇusmṛti* (5.152) onwards, the authors of the Dharmaśāstras "agree that an apostate renouncer (*pratyavasita*) becomes a slave of a king. (The) *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*] (2,183) specifies that this slavery lasts until death" (Olivelle 1984: 149f). These regulations once more corroborate the existence of apostate renouncers, as do later handbooks on renunciation.³¹ We can therefore conclude that in social reality, a number of renouncers apparently returned to lay life.

The Emergence of the Idea of Irreversibility and the "Liberation of the Household"

To this point, we have discovered two sides of the ritual of renunciation. On the one hand, there is the theory of ritual irreversibility; on the other hand, there is

30 Considering this tension, Joachim Friedrich Sprockhoff points at the difference between the ritual and legal dimensions, saying, "The *impossibility* of returning in terms of ritual is made a *prohibition* by legal literature. [...] A mere 'priestly law' guarantees gruesome punishments in hell for a renouncer even if he only intends to—literally—revoke his call of renunciation (*praiṣa*) which amounts to a defection from *saṃnyāsa*". „Aus dieser ritualistischen *Unmöglichkeit* der Rückkehr macht das Rechtsschrifttum ein *Verbot*. [...] Ein bloßes 'priesterliches Recht' versichert demjenigen grausigste Höllenstrafen, der seinen Entsagungsspruch (*praiṣa*) im durchaus wörtlichen Sinne auch nur zu widerrufen trachtet, was dem Abfall vom *saṃnyāsa* gleichkommt" (Sprockhoff 1980: 272f).

31 Later *nibandha*-type treatises on renunciation include Yādava Prakāśa's *Yatidharmasamuccaya* (11th century), Viśveśvara Sarasvatī's *Yatidharmasangraha* (16th/17th century), or Vāsudevāśrama's *Yatidharmaparakāśa* (17th/18th century). *Yatidharmasamuccaya* 4.45 (see Olivelle 1995). *Yatidharmasangraha* 5,22f. *Yatidharmaparakāśa* 68.158–167 (see Olivelle 1976–77). Interestingly, the *Mānavadharmasāstra* is silent on renouncers who returned to lay life; apparently, for the author it was not an issue worthy of specific regulations, as it was for his Dharmaśāstric successors. According to commentators, Manu refers to them by mentioning a *daṇḍadāsa* ("a man enslaved for punishment") among the seven ways of becoming a slave (*Mānavadharmasāstra* 8.415). See Olivelle 1984: 151. This term appears to be rather general, and it remains debatable whether Manu refers to enslaved *renouncers* in particular.

evidence of renouncers having returned to lay life. What is the relation of these two levels of theory and practice? One simple and plausible answer is that a rule was violated in practice; some renouncers ignored for whatever reasons the deeper meaning of the renunciation ritual, “resurrected from the dead”, and illegally returned to lay life. In this case, the norm had existed before its violation in practice.

Is the opposite conceivable, too? May the existence of apostate renouncers have had an effect on the development of the rite? Thus viewing the relation between theory and practice from a different angle, we can ask why Brāhmaṇical scholars actually developed the idea of irreversibility. Apart from religious reasons, that is, for emphasizing the state of a person who has abandoned the world in order to attain liberation, there may have been tangible social motives, too. A story from an early Buddhist canonical work may help us in this matter. In the introductory story of the first *pārājika* rule in a law book of early Buddhist monasticism,³² Sudinna, the son of a wealthy merchant, wishes to enter the monastic order (*saṅgha*) and has a hard time convincing his parents to give their consent. When they, under pressure, finally agree, he becomes a *bhikkhu*, a Buddhist monk. A little later, this *bhikkhu* returns to his parents’ house in order to beg for food. The story then tells us in a colourful and very realistic way how his family members do all they can to convince Sudinna to return home. They present before him heaps of coins and gold which he would own and could use for meritorious works; his former wife displays herself adorned and attractive; and they entreat him to return to his family and to come together with his wife in order to beget offspring. He finally consents only to the latter, which then becomes the occasion for the Buddha to prescribe the *pārājika* rule of celibacy.³³

There is no doubt that Sudinna’s family would have highly welcomed his return to lay life. He just would have to take off his robe, return to his wife, beget offspring and inherit the wealth. For the family, Sudinna is obviously not “dead”; if it were for them, the act of renunciation would be easily reversible. In fact, Sudinna’s friends reportedly convinced his parents to give their consent to his going forth by saying, “If he does not enjoy the going forth from home into

32 The following refers to the monastic law (*vinaya*) of the Theravāda school, composed in Pāli.

33 *Vinayapiṭaka* III 11–21 (Oldenberg 1881). The four *pārājika* rules are the gravest offences of Buddhist law and involve the permanent and irreversible expulsion from the monastic community. They comprise abstention from sexual intercourse, from theft, from the killing of a human being, and from falsely boasting about superhuman knowledge and insight.

homelessness, what alternative (*gati*) will he have than to come back here?"³⁴ In short, a return certainly would have posed no "ritual problem".

This story shows that at its time,³⁵ at least in the segments of Indian society represented by the agents, the theory of an irreversible rite of renunciation was not an issue in practice. Although we may not expect to find this Brāhmaṇical theory displayed in Buddhist texts, they can provide us with valuable information about social practice in ancient India.³⁶ It is likely that the story reflects "real life" in showing that it could be unproblematic, even welcomed, for a renouncer to return to lay life. Sudinna's family does not care about any idea of ritual irreversibility and wishes the return of their son for a clearly expressed socio-cultural reason: he has to prevent the family from an heirless fate. This householder ideal is very common and well-known to the Brāhmaṇical tradition, too, and for such cases, it would not have been reasonable to develop an irreversible ritual. From a socio-cultural perspective, it would have been even counterproductive.

But there could have been another threat to society. It is evident from the texts that not only young men, such as Sudinna, became renouncers but also older householders who were settled and rich, persons like Sudinna's father, for example. If such a man were to leave his home without cutting off his bonds entirely, that is, without transferring his duties and property to his sons once and for all, the household would remain in a rather ambivalent state. Some householders apparently kept their property when they became renouncers. For them, of course, it was much easier to return to lay life whenever they changed their minds, because they could come back to their own house and property.³⁷

In Buddhist texts, we find explicit evidence for such a practice. Already in the *Suttanipāta*, for example, we encounter the Jaṭila naked ascetic Keṇiya who

34 *Vinayaṭīkaṃ* III 14,22–24 (transl. Horner 1949: 25).

35 This story, as an introductory story to a *vinaya* rule, may be much younger than the *pātimokkha* rule itself; perhaps it was composed in the period of the Dharmasūtras. The *pātimokkha* (Skt. *prātimokṣa*) comprises the rules for the individual behaviour of *saṅgha* members. This list of rules, which is to be recited every fortnight as part of the *uposatha* ceremony, is considered very old, whereas its explanatory context in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* is for the most part much younger. For the relationship between the actual *pātimokkha* rules and their narrative introductions in the *Suttavibhaṅga*, many of which were verifiably composed later, see Schlingloff 1964; see also von Hinüber 2000: 13–15. A parallel story can be found in the *Raṭṭhapālasutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya* (II 54–74).

36 Such introductory stories only make sense if they are realistic, and in ancient Indian society, a "Buddhist laity" can rarely be distinguished from a "non-Buddhist laity".

37 Note that the practice of temporary renunciation is wide-spread in Buddhist countries such as in today's Thailand or Burma.

invites the Buddha and his entourage of 1250 *bhikkhus* for a meal. The text describes how Keṇiya's "friends and acquaintances, kinsmen and relations" help him to prepare this meal.³⁸ Another example can be found in the 5th century commentary of the *Samyuttanikāya*, the *Sāraṭṭhappakāsinī*. It reports on a *bhikkhu* who had joined the order in old age. According to the monastic rules, however, the individual status within the community depends not on the actual age of a person but on the period of time the person has been a member of the *saṅgha*. That old man, placed in status below younger colleagues, soon became dissatisfied with his lack of seniority among the other *bhikkhus*. He thus decided to subsist on family property which was still in his possession. Entering the order, he had deliberately kept his property, thinking, "Who knows what is going to happen?" (*ko jānāti kiṃ bhavissati*). After having received permission from a *vinaya* expert (!), he settled down in a village and became an "ascetic-householder" (*samaṇa-kuṭumbika*).³⁹ Moreover, as Gregory Schopen has shown in several publications, Buddhist *bhikkhus* in India did not only own property but spent it generously for religious donations.⁴⁰ We can easily imagine how members of the households of such persons panic when they see the wealth dwindle away. Such a situation was certainly unacceptable to Brāhmanical scholars and lawgivers who more often than not felt responsible for the prosperity of the household of the twice-born family.⁴¹

A renouncer who is dead to society, who has abandoned the world entirely and has left everything behind, is not only free to seek liberation—he is also completely cut off from his family and relatives. Viewed from their perspective, he has no influence on them anymore, no access to the property and no sharing. During the ceremony of the "classical" rite of renunciation, he hands over his "worldly" and ritual authority and power to his son and is symbolically cremated and transformed into one of the deceased relatives (cf. Olivelle 1992: 90f.). Henceforth, he is free to attain salvation, and the household is freed of him. Brāhmanical theologians may have aimed at such a "liberation of the household" when they developed an irreversible ritual of renunciation which cuts the ascetic off his household for evermore.

38 *Suttanipāta* 103,21–104,26 (Andersen & Smith 1965; Norman 1992).

39 *Sāraṭṭhappakāsinī* III 32,25–33,17 (Woodward 1937). This story is mentioned and briefly analyzed by von Hinüber (1995: p. 28). See also von Hinüber 1997: 73f.

40 See, for example, Schopen 1995; see also Schopen 1997 and other studies in this volume.

41 Already in the *Arthaśāstra*, we find an example of this sense of responsibility. In 2.1.29, it states that, "If one renounces home (to become an ascetic) without providing for his sons and wife, the lowest fine for violence (shall be imposed)" (transl. Kangle 1963: 65).

Thus, the social reality of apostate renouncers who returned to lay life must have been considered a threat to the household, a threat Brāhmanical lawgivers attempted to mitigate by developing a theory of an irreversible rite of renunciation. This theory may thus have been one reaction to social practice. At this point, we could continue to reflect upon the function of the ritual for the community or society, and its potential for mitigating social conflicts.⁴² With this, we come close to modern theories on ritual, but again, we must not forget that Brāhmanical theory does not necessarily reflect social practice; even if the intention was to “liberate the household”, we cannot automatically conclude that it worked. Nevertheless, it seems probable that the social reality of apostate renouncers was one motive for developing the notion of the ritual’s irreversibility.

Re-renunciation and Its Willing Helpers

As if it was not problematic enough, Brāhmanical theologians had to deal not only with renouncers who returned to lay life, but also with apostate renouncers who wanted to renounce again. As we saw before, the *Brhatsaṃnyāsopaniṣad* condemns a person who “admits a lapsed man into renunciation”. This statement too would be meaningless if such “lapsed men” who wished to renounce again had not existed at all. In the context of this very passage, which deals with persons not eligible for renunciation, we find some further remarks:

Children of apostate renouncers, those who have bad nails or dark teeth, those who suffer from consumption, and cripples are not at all fit to renounce.

One should never admit to renunciation apostate renouncers, mortal sinners, Vṛātyas, and the infamous.

One should never admit to renunciation those who have neglected vows, sacrifices, austerity, liberality, fire offerings, and Vedic recitation, and those who have fallen from truth and purity.⁴³

These remarks suggest a historical situation in which apostate renouncers (*ārū-dhapatita*) seek to renounce again. In the *Nārada-parivrājako-paṇiṣad*, we find a similar rule, saying that, among others, persons who have “renounced two or three times” (*dvitri-vāreṇa saṃnyastaḥ*) “are unfit for orderly renunciation”.⁴⁴

42 Michaels (1999: 36) labels this aspect as “the modal criterion of action, *societas*”.

43 *Brhatsaṃnyāsa* 250,11–251,5 (transl. Olivelle 1992: 242). Note that not only apostate renouncers, but also their children are mentioned. The text adds that an exception is made only for those who are in mortal danger (*ātura*).

44 *Nārada-parivrājaka* 137,3f. (transl. Olivelle 1992: 174). Here also, an exception is made when they are in mortal danger.

Thus the authors of our texts had to cope with former renunciators who wished to renounce again, a second or even a third time. Do we have to assume that these persons take so little notice of the renunciation ritual and its deeper meaning that they attempt to “resurrect from the dead” and return to lay life—just to renounce again later on? And that after having renounced a second time, they once more ignore the irreversibility of the ritual and return to lay life a second time—just to begin the procedure a third time? It is difficult to imagine that the procedure of the renunciation rite, including paying the officiating priests, being symbolically cremated, handing over one’s property to the son etc., can be carried out a number of times. This would be particularly true for persons who are already cut-off from their property and family and who, apostate renunciators as they are, would be bound to become lifelong slaves of the king according to the law.

There is a second interesting aspect in the mentioned text passages. The *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsopaniṣad* says that not only one who lapses from renunciation was reckoned to be “lapsed” (*patita*) but also a person who admits a lapsed man into renunciation (*patitaṃ nyāsayet tu yaḥ*).⁴⁵ The Upaniṣad continues by saying that one “should never admit to renunciation” (*saṃnyāsaṃ naiva kārayet*) apostate renunciators (*Bṛhatsaṃnyāsopaniṣad* 251,2). These rules clearly are not targeted at the apostate renunciators themselves but at other persons, persons who admit them to renunciation and thus make such “re-renunciations” possible, even several times.

Who are these persons? We could think of the priests who perform the rite for the future renouncer. It is, however, unlikely that they would agree to perform the same (irreversible!) ritual for the same person a second or a third time, particularly when the person has given up his property and is thus unable to pay for their service and, furthermore, would become a slave of the king. It is more likely that the rules are targeted at another group of persons, persons the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads merely allude to, the “teachers” (*guru, ācārya*) of the candidate. Such a teacher, with which the new renouncer stays for one year, is supposed to give him instructions on upaniṣadic doctrine, to provide him with staff, water pot, waistband, loincloth, and garment, and, finally, to invest him with the *yoga* band (*yogaṭṭa*), which appears to be a form of higher ordination.⁴⁶

If the rules are targeted at teachers who admitted candidates several times, such teachers in all likelihood existed in social reality; otherwise there would be no need for a regulation. If this assumption is correct, we can conclude that in

45 *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa* 250,4f.; see above, note 27.

46 *Nāradaparivṛājaka* 169,7–170,10; *ibid.* 195,13–196,7; see also *Paramahaṃsaparivṛājaka* 282,5–7; *Śātyāyanīya* 333,2–10. Cf. Olivelle 1992: 96f., 195 n. 52.

the period of the younger Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads, there were ascetic teachers who admitted apostate renouncers to renunciation, even several times, and who obviously did not consider the act of renunciation an irreversible move.⁴⁷ Even if we assume that due to the authority of the texts, the procedure of the irreversible rite became widespread in Indian society, the texts suggest that there were alternative procedures which remained unaffected by the theory of ritual irreversibility.

Alternative Concepts of Renunciation?

The indications that in social reality, alternative, more easily “reversible” procedures of renunciation were carried out by some unknown teachers, lead us to ask whether there were also alternative concepts of renunciation which did not emphasize ritual irreversibility. Our sources contain too little data to answer this question properly. There are only a few hints in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads pointing to this direction, when some of the later Upaniṣads reflect upon the relevance of certain ritual elements. One passage, for example, allows the candidate alternative ways of renouncing, among them the mere mental (*manasā*) utterance of the renunciation call (*praīṣa*).⁴⁸ This option reduces the ritual performance drastically; apart from the person concerned, nobody would recognize it as a

47 Likewise, reentering the *saṅgha* was possible in the Theravāda Buddhist tradition. As for the first *pārājika* rule concerning sexual intercourse, which involves expulsion from the *saṅgha* (see above, note 32), the Buddha declares that a *bhikkhu* who indulges in sexual intercourse while being a *bhikkhu* should not receive the higher ordination (*upasampadā*) (once again). He continues, “But, monks, if one comes, disavowing the training and declaring his weakness, yet indulging in sexual intercourse, he should receive the *upasampadā* ordination” (*Vinayapiṭakaṃ* III 23,29–31; transl. Horner 1949: 41). If he thus orderly leaves the *saṅgha* first before he has sex, he does not commit an offence and is therefore eligible to enter the *saṅgha* again. This interpretation is also held by the 5th century commentary on the Pāli Vinaya; see Takakusu & Nagai 1924–1947: 230,7–15. Cf. also Hüsken 1997: 44f.

48 A verse of the *Nāradaparivṛājakoṇiṣad*, for example, mentions three alternative ways of renunciation. It says, “A wise man should renounce either mentally, or by reciting the *mantras* given in the procedure, or after he has offered the oblation either into water or as laid down in the Veda. Otherwise he shall become an outcaste” (*Nāradaparivṛājakoṇiṣad* 138,6–8; transl. Olivelle 1992: 175). Olivelle comments on this verse (Olivelle 1992: 175 n. 18): “One renounces mentally by saying mentally the Call: ‘I have renounced’ [...] The two other alternatives are (1) to recite orally all the *mantras* contained in the renunciatory rite and (2) to actually offer the sacrifice that precedes the renunciatory rite. The latter sacrifice, furthermore, may be offered either into water or into the sacred fires, as prescribed in the Veda”.

ritual. It is a challenging question whether this should still be regarded as a ritual at all—or rather as an internalization or reinterpretation of the act of becoming a renouncer.⁴⁹ Another passage emphasizes that the essence of renunciation does not lie in formal procedures such as “forsaking rites or chanting the call (*praiṣoccāraṇa*)”, but in meditation and insight.⁵⁰ We can speculate whether this view and the idea of a “mental renunciation” were inspired by, or even themselves reflect, the factual practice of certain teachers who had a critical stance towards extensive and irreversible renunciation procedures, teachers who emphasized the individual spiritual progress more than formal requirements and advocated a “reversible” procedure that can be performed even several times for the same person.⁵¹

Whether these accounts reflect concepts that were realized in practice or mere theoretical speculations upon hypothetical cases, at any rate they remind us of the possibility that within religious traditions, we find tensions not only between theory and practice, but also between certain theories. It may well be that some Brāhmaṇical thinkers considered the idea of performing a ritual in order to renounce all rituals superfluous, if not absurd. This example may thus inspire us to take into consideration also the (conceptual) criticism of ritual within one religious tradition or culture. It may be challenging to ask whether modern ritual

49 It is possible that the verse refers to a special situation in which the person is gone to a foreign land (*deśāntaragata*), as said in the previous verse. The connection between the two verses, however, is loose and arguable. But even in that case the passage would remain remarkable; renouncing mentally does not include the transfer of obligations and property to the son, the ritual death and the complete cut-off from the family. The idea of irreversibility is definitely lacking. One might wonder what would happen when this person returns from the foreign land.

50 The *Maitreyopaniṣad* reflects on the essence of renunciation. It says, “Forsaking rites or chanting the Call (*praiṣoccāraṇa*) does not make renunciation. To meditate at twilight: ‘Soul and Supreme Self are one,’ is said to be true renunciation” (*Maitreyopaniṣad* 116,7f.; transl. Olivelle 1992: 163). For the authors of this verse, the essence of renunciation lies in meditation and insight rather than in formal procedures. In the “classical” procedure of renunciation, however, the abandonment of rites and the proclamation of renunciation (*praiṣa*) are essential elements.

51 The same may be true for a statement in the *Jābālopaniṣad* which is openly opposed to the *āśrama* system in its classical form. After declaring that one may renounce from each of the three other *āśramas*, it says, “Let him even renounce on the very day that he becomes detached, regardless of whether he has taken the vow (i.e., Vedic initiation) or not, whether he has graduated (from Vedic school; *snātaka*) or not, and whether he has kindled the sacred fire or is without a fire” (*Jābālopaniṣad* 64,3–5; transl. Olivelle 1992: 143). We can speculate whether those persons who are “without a fire” (*anagni*) would include apostate renouncers.

theorists, when they describe the fundamental and essential social functions of ritual, for example, tend to ignore voices within the tradition that totally reject certain rituals. From a History of Religions perspective, these voices, even if they represent a minority, are just as interesting as the mainstream or major tradition.

Conclusion

Mainstream Brāhmanical theology, as represented in the texts discussed in this paper, portrays irreversibility as a central feature of the fully developed ritual of renunciation. There is no doubt that the more elaborate formulations of the rite became authoritative.⁵² They had a strong impact within the Brāhmanical ascetic tradition, and later works quote them frequently.⁵³ In a paper dealing with this issue, Y. Krishnan (1969) raises the question “Was it permissible for a *saṃnyāsī* to revert to lay life?” Regarding those texts, we can generally agree when he answers the question in the negative.

On the other hand, it is obvious that “permissible or not, many did leave renunciation and reentered society” (Olivelle 1984: 149). A number of sources testify that apostate renouncers have existed in social reality. The accounts in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads and the zero-tolerance policy of the Dharmaśāstras indicate that a renouncer’s reentry into society was a wide-spread practice and, for this reason, a serious problem. The development of the elaborated, irreversible ritual may have been a means of dealing with this problem. The notion that households have to be protected against claims of returning renouncers may be regarded as a socio-cultural motive for developing the idea of the rite’s irreversibility.

Some accounts in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads suggest that notwithstanding this theory, there were teachers who admitted apostate renouncers to renunciation a second or a third time. Obviously, those teachers did not worry much about the idea of irreversibility. Moreover, some passages indicate that this social practice had a theoretical basis, too; reflections upon the essence of the renunciation ritual could have led Brāhmanical thinkers to the belief that the traditional rite of renunciation was not the only way to renounce.

Despite the evident gaps between theory and practice in this case, both seem to have interacted vividly. These dialectics of theory and practice are still tangible in the texts, which, between the lines, reveal a diversity in Brāhmanical

52 Note that the *Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads* are considered *śruti* literature, “revealed” texts.

53 Cf. the works cited in note 31.

theory and social practice that is much broader than the advocates of the mainstream theology would have wanted us to recognize.

Appendix: The Rite of Renunciation in the Older Brāhmanical *dharma* Tradition

The earliest relevant sources for the *dharma* of a renunciant, the Dharmasūtras, contain little information about a rite of renunciation. The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* does not mention any ritual; it just says, “From that very state [of a novice student], remaining chaste, he goes forth;” “he should live [...] without fire” (2.21.8–10).⁵⁴ *Gautama* does not mention a rite either. The only possible hints on a general sphere of ritual are, “He shall be shaven-headed or wear a topknot” (3.22); “he shall not undertake (ritual) activities” (3.25).⁵⁵ *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* 2.11 states that the candidate should “wander forth according to the rule (*yathāvidhi*)”.⁵⁶ There is no hint whatsoever what rule (*vidhi*) *Baudhāyana* has in mind. One could, of course, think of the long description of a renunciation rite in another chapter of the same Dharmasūtra (2.17–18). This would thus be the earliest account of such an elaborate ritual. But this description appears to be incongruous in its context; it “is probably a later addition and resembles the ritual accounts of medieval handbooks (*paddhati*)”.⁵⁷ In chapter 2.11, *Baudhāyana* continues with a few remarks that may hint at a ritual sphere. The renouncer “has his head shaven except for the topknot” and he was “rejecting Vedic rites”.

54 *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* 2.21.7–17 (transl. Olivelle 2000: 105).

55 *Gautama Dharmasūtra* 3.11–25 (transl. Olivelle 2000: 129). Note that in the ritual procedure of later texts, the candidate is required to pluck out his topknot, thereby demonstrating the abandonment of ritual, as he does by discarding his sacrificial string (see above). Here, he has the option to keep his topknot.

56 *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* 2.11.16–26 (transl. Olivelle 2000: 281).

57 Olivelle 2000: 610; Olivelle regards this passage as belonging to a “Deutero-Baudhāyana” (Olivelle 1984: 118). One reason for the assumption that it is a later addition, besides the incongruous form of the description, is that *Baudhāyana* is otherwise not at all in favour of renunciation; just like *Gautama* (*Gautama Dharmasūtra* 3.36), he is of the opinion that there was only a single order of life, that of the householder (*Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* 2.11.27). One would not expect a critic of renunciation making such efforts to describe its ritual in detail. In his *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Kane (1974 vol. 2) merely retells this procedure of *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* and remarks that it was “probably the most ancient among extant works”. He does not address the issue of the almost complete silence of the other Dharmasūtras. Describing the rite of renunciation, he quotes, in addition to *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*, only later works: *Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, *Vaikhānasaśmārtasūtra*, some *Samnyāsa Upaniṣads*, and some medieval works. See Kane 1974 vol. 2.2: 953ff.

Also in the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra*, we search in vain for a description of a rite of renunciation. The only statements coming close to the ritual sphere are, “He should depart after giving the gift of safety to all creatures”⁵⁸ (10.1); “he should be shaven-headed” (10.6); “let him abandon all ritual activities; the Veda alone let him never abandon” (10.4).⁵⁹

We find a short description of a ritual preceding renunciation only in the *Mānavadharmasāstra*, which says, “Only after he has offered a sacrifice to Prajāpati at which all his possessions are given as the sacrificial gift and after he has deposited the sacred fires within himself, should a Brahmin go forth from his home as an ascetic” (6.38), “bestowing freedom from fear to all creatures” (6.39), “he should live without fire or house” (6.43).⁶⁰

Thenceforward, the subsequent Dharmasāstras frequently describe the rite of renunciation. The *Viṣṇusmṛti*, for example, states, “He must offer an oblation to Prajāpati, in which he bestows all his wealth (upon priests) as fee for the performance of the sacrifice, and enter the order of ascetics. Having deposited the fires in his own mind, he must enter the village, in order to collect alms”.⁶¹ The *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* has a very similar formulation.⁶² These accounts, and also the elaborate ritual descriptions in the *Vaikhānasa Smārtasūtra* (9.6–8 and 10.6–8), are already contemporaneous with those earlier Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads that contain such rites.

In sum, it is apparent that the earlier *dharma* texts contain little information about a rite of renunciation. For Patrick Olivelle, “it is beyond doubt, however, that such a rite, at least in a rudimentary form, did exist during the *sūtra* period”. He refers to Baudhāyana’s remark that a person should renounce “according to the rule” (*yathāvidhi*), which is corroborated by another passage in *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* 1.18.31 saying that one should not eat the food of a man who has gone forth without following the rule (*avidhinā pravrajitaḥ*). Olivelle remarks

58 This is the *abhayadāna* (here: *abhayadakṣiṇā*), common in later ritual descriptions; see above.

59 *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* 10.1–26 (transl. Olivelle 2000: 387f). There is one verse in *Vasiṣṭha* which at first glance seems to point to the renouncer’s return to lay life: “After giving the gift of safety to all creatures, however, when someone backslides (*nivartate*), he brings to ruin the past and future generations of his family, as also anyone who accepts anything from him” (10.3). It is more likely, however, that the “backsliding” of the ascetic does not refer to a general return to lay life but to the directly preceding *abhayadāna*. Who backslides to harming living beings jeopardizes past and future relatives.

60 *Mānavadharmasāstra* 6.33–86 (see Jolly 1887; transl. Olivelle 2004: 101).

61 *Viṣṇusmṛti* 96.1 (see Jolly 1881: 194–199, here: 199; transl. Jolly 1880: 279–287, here: 279).

62 *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 3.56f. (see Stenzler 1849: 86; transl. *ibid.* vol. 2: 95).

that “the term *vidhi* (rule, procedure) no doubt refers to some rite or procedure of renunciation laid down in the *śāstras*”. Further hints to this rite or its procedure are the gift of freedom from fear to all creatures (*abhayadāna*), the sacrifice to Prajāpati, and the abandonment of ritual and fire (Olivelle 1984: 115–118). Despite these hints, the *vidhi*, which both *Baudhāyana* and *Āpastamba* refer to, remains hard to assess. The few accounts do not say much about the actual ritual procedure; the *abhayadāna* and the abandonment of ritual and fire are merely alluded to, and the sacrifice to Prajāpati is briefly mentioned only in the (later) *Dharmaśāstras*.

With this poor knowledge of the rite of renunciation in the period of the earlier *dharma* texts, we know even less about the idea of irreversibility. The few mentioned elements are not as clearly connected with the ritual death of the candidate as elements in later text are, such as reciting funeral *mantras*, burning the fire drills, or handing over the property and ritual authority to the son. On the level of ritual theology, the irreversibility is not yet tangible as it is in later descriptions.

This is different on the level of the *āśrama* theory. According to the “original” *āśrama* theory formulated in the *Dharmasūtras*, the *āśramas*, including *saṃnyāsa*, are life-long vocations. In the “classical” form of the theory, developed in *Manu* and later works, one can switch from one *āśrama* to another, but in one direction only. Here *saṃnyāsa*, the last *āśrama*, cannot be abandoned either. The idea of the life-long vocation of the *saṃnyāsa āśrama* is thus present in both formulations of the *āśrama* theory (cf. Olivelle 1993).

Why do the *Dharmasūtras* lack a ritual description which would correspond to this aspect of their *āśrama* theory? One possible answer is that those elements which emphasize irreversibility were not yet incorporated into this rite in the period of the earlier *dharma* texts. This could explain why they, as records of custom and convention, did not document this custom, and why it did not occur to the Brāhmaṇical lawgivers to prescribe such ritual elements. The idea of life-long vocations may not yet have been transferred to and realized in the sphere of ritual.⁶³ Another possible answer is that such a rite is not described due to the peculiarities of *dharma* literature. The rite appears rudimentary even in later *Dharmaśāstra* works, while at the same time contemporary texts such as the *Samnyāsa Upaniṣads* describe it in detail. The lack of a description does not necessarily mean that in the period of the *Dharmasūtras*, the rite was not in

63 For the definition of *dharma* literature as a record of customs and conventions see Lari-viere 1997; cf. also Wezler 1999. For the prescriptive character of *dharma* literature cf. Olivelle 1984: 108.

existence—the early *dharma* texts lack a description of the rite for marriage as well.⁶⁴

It is thus difficult to explain the rudimentary form the rite has in early *dharma* literature and the lack of elements which would emphasize its irreversibility. From around the beginning of the Common Era onwards, there is eventually broad evidence for an elaborate rite and the idea of its irreversibility, whether this is due to their late development or to the different literary genre in which they are set forth.

References

- Andersen, Dines & Helmer Smith (ed.) 1965. *Sutta-Nipāta*. London: Pali Text Society.
- Gennep, Arnold van 1909. *Les rites de passage*. Paris: Nourry.
- Hinüber, Oskar von 1995. “Buddhist Law According to the Theravāda-Vinaya: A Survey of Theory and Practice”. In: *Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies* 18: 7–45.
- 1997. “Old Age and Old Monks in Pāli Buddhism”. In: *Aging: Asian Concepts and Experiences, Past and Present*, Formanek, Susanne & Sepp Linhart (ed.). Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 65–78.
- 2000. *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter.
- Horner, I.B. (transl.) 1949. *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Piṭaka)*. Vol. 1. London: Pali Text Society.
- Hüsken, Ute 1997. *Die Vorschriften für die buddhistische Nonnengemeinde im Vinaya-Piṭaka der Theravādin*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Jolly, Julius (transl.) 1880. *The Institutes of Viṣṇu*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- (ed.) 1881. *Viṣṇusmṛti (The Institutes of Viṣṇu)*. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society.
- (ed.) 1887. *Mānava Dharmaśāstra: The Code of Manu*. London: Trübner.
- Kane, P.V. 1974. *History of Dharmaśāstra*. Vol. 2, pt. 2. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Kangle, R.P. (ed./transl.) 1960 & 1963. *The Kauṭīlīya Arthaśāstra*. Part 1–2. Bombay: University of Bombay.
- Krishnan, Y. 1969. “Was It Permissible for a *Samnyāsī* (Monk) to Revert to Lay Life?” In: *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute* 50: 75–89.
- Lariviere, Richard W. 1997. “Dharmaśāstra, Custom, ‘Real Law’ and ‘Apocryphal Smṛtis’”. In: *Recht, Staat und Verwaltung im klassischen Indien*. Kölver, Bernhard (ed.). München: Oldenbourg, 97–109.
- Michaels, Axel 1999. “‘Le rituel pour le rituel’ oder wie sinnlos sind Rituale?” In: *Rituale heute: Theorien—Kontroversen—Entwürfe*, Caduff, Corina & Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka (ed.). Berlin: Reimer, 23–47.

64 I thank Patrick Olivelle for having called my attention to this fact.

- Norman, K.R. (transl.) 1992. *The Group of Discourses (Sutta-Nipāta)*. Vol. 2. Revised translation. Oxford: Pali Text Society.
- Oldenberg, Hermann (ed.) 1881. *The Vinaya Piṭakaṃ*. Vol. 3. London: Pali Text Society.
- Olivelle, Patrick (ed./transl.) 1976–1977. *Vāsudevāśrama Yatidharmaparakāśa: A Treatise on World Renunciation*. Part 1–2. Vienna: University of Vienna.
- 1984. “Renouncer and Renunciation in the *Dharmaśāstras*”. In: *Studies in Dharmaśāstra*, Lariviere, Richard (ed.). Calcutta: KLM, 81–152.
- 1987. “King and Ascetic: State Control of Asceticism in the *Arthaśāstra*”. In: *Adyar Library Bulletin* 51: 39–59.
- 1992. *Samnyāsa Upaniṣads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation. Translated and with an Introduction by Patrick Olivelle*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 1993. *The Āśrama System: The History and Hermeneutics of a Religious Institution*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- (ed./transl.) 1995. *Rules and Regulations of Brahmanical Asceticism: Yatidharmasamuccaya of Yādava Prakāśa*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- (ed./transl.) 2000. *Dharmasūtras: The Law Codes of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasiṣṭha*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- (transl.) 2004. *The Law Code of Manu*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schlingloff, Dieter 1964. “Zur Interpretation des Prātimokṣasūtra”. In: *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 113: 536–551.
- Schopen, Gregory 1995. “Monastic Law Meets the Real World: A Monk’s Continuing Right to Inherit Family Property in Classical India”. In: *History of Religions* 35: 101–123.
- 1997. “The Ritual Obligations and Donor Roles of Monks in the Pāli Vinaya”. In: *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 72–85.
- Schrader, F. Otto (ed.) 1912. *The Minor Upaniṣads, vol. I: Samnyāsa Upaniṣads. Critically Edited*. Madras: The Adyar Library.
- Sprockhoff, Joachim Friedrich 1976. *Samnyāsa: Quellenstudien zur Askese im Hinduismus I: Untersuchungen über die Samnyāsa Upaniṣads*. Wiesbaden: Steiner.
- 1980. “Die feindlichen Toten und der befriedende Tote. Die Überwindung von Leben und Tod in der Entsagung”. In: *Leben und Tod in den Religionen: Symbol und Wirklichkeit*, Stevenson, Gunther (ed.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 263–284.
- 1994. “Zur ‘Weihe’ des Asketen: Eine Skizze”. In: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 38: 61–83.
- Stenzler, Adolf Friedrich (ed.) 1849. *Yājñavalkyas Gesetzbuch*. Vol. 1. Berlin: Dümmler.

- Takakusu, Junjiro & Makoto Nagai (ed.) 1924–1947. *Samantapāsādikā*. London: Pali Text Society.
- Wezler, Albrecht 1999. “Über den sakramentalen Charakter des Dharma nachsinnend”. In: *Raum-zeitliche Vermittlung der Transzendenz: Zur sakramentalen Dimension religiöser Tradition*, Oberhammer, Gerhard & Marcus Schmücker (ed.). Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 63–113.
- Woodward, F.L. (ed.) 1937. *Sāratthappakāsinī*. Vol. 3. London: Pali Text Society.
- Yatidharmasaṃgraha*, Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 60. Poona: Ānandāśrama, repr. 1980 [1902].

KARIN STEINER

Proposal for a Multi-Perspective Approach to Śrauta Ritual¹

“Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts”

The basis for research in Śrauta rituals² is the elaborate and chronologically complex corpus of Vedic literature. Especially the Yajurveda-Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas as well as the Śrauta-Sūtras are “the field of the Vedic fieldworker” (a term introduced by C.G. Kashikar). Therefore the first perspective must be philological: investigating the Śrauta rituals means working “inside the texts”. In this paper I will try to outline an approach to Śrauta-Ritual which goes “beyond the texts” (following Michael Witzel’s book title 1997), which can supplement the philological work, exemplified in the concrete case of the *vājapeya* ritual.³

History of Research

Vedistic literature concerned with Śrauta ritual is copious: out of this bulk the studies of single rituals are of special interest here. The earliest studies are from the pioneering phase of Vedistic research: to mention a few of them: Hillebrandt (1879) on the *Dārśapūrṇamāsa*; Schwab (1886) on the *Paśubandha*; Weber (1893) on the *Rājasūya*; Caland (1893) on the *Pinḍapitryajña*, the most recent studies are e.g. Krick (1982) on the *Agnyādheya*, Einoo (1988) on the *Cāturmāsya*, Kolhatkar (1998) on the *Sautrāmaṇī*. Most of the studies of single rituals

1 I am grateful to Ulrich Oberdiek for the many fruitful discussions on the “anthropological aspects” of this paper.

2 Even today Śrauta rituals are conducted occasionally. These performances are revivalistic, often the result of academic or politically fundamentalist motives. A special case is the uninterrupted tradition of performance of the Nambudiri Brahmins of the *agniṣṭoma* and the *atirātra-agnicayana* until ten years ago (see below chapter 2 about Frits Staal). Perhaps the last *agnicayana* took place in 1990 (see Staal 1992). A new performance is not being planned because there are no sponsors (personal communication with Dr. Radhakrishnan Nayar, who was one of the organizers of the 1990 Agnicayana).

3 For the texts in which the *vājapeya* is treated see appendix.

are largely descriptive presentations of the ritual activities according to the Brāhmaṇas and Śrautasūtras. They do not try to analyze or interpret *the rituals as rituals*⁴ in a broader context. Often not even the explanations and initial stages of interpretation given in the Brāhmaṇas are utilized and considered fully.⁵ All these studies have in common the feature that they hardly ever influenced the work of non-specialists.⁶ It is likely that this lack of influence is due to the ways in which the material is presented: the discourse on sacrifice and ritual prevalent in the social and religious sciences has had hardly any effect on Śrauta studies to the extent that not even the terminology current in present academic discourse has been introduced.⁷

Since the 19th century nearly all theorists of socio-religious studies and anthropology have been working on the fields of sacrifice or ritual more or less extensively.⁸ The pioneers of “modern” studies in sacrifice and ritual, however, were Henry Hubert and Marcel Mauss with their classical article *Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice* published in 1899. In a time dominated by evolutionist approaches Mauss and Hubert were the first social scientists who engaged in analyzing specific sacrificial rituals regarding their processual structure, their symbolism, and functions, also taking into account the intentions of the performers. According to Mauss and Hubert the ritual process is basically a transfer, a transition of the sacrificial matter from the profane to the sacral sphere. By this

-
- 4 For the problem of applying anthropological theories or methods to exclusively textual evidence see Steiner, *forthc.*
 - 5 Exceptions are the works by Heesterman (1957) and Krick (1982). Special cases are presented by Bodewitz (1973, 1976 and 1990) and Houben (1991) who investigate individual rituals in the light of a specific ancient interpretation. The attitude of western scholars towards the genre of Brāhmaṇa even nowadays is characterised in many cases by a kind of—often unreflected—fascinated aversion, which results in an attitude that the texts cannot be taken seriously: Staal (1996: 118f.) for example expressly refutes the interpretations of the Vedic ritualists. Or the texts are exploited only with regard to very special mono-causal explanations.
 - 6 Even researchers concerned with later or contemporary ritual practice which is replete with Vedic elements often pay only lip-service to the so-called “Vedic sacrifice”, repeating often quoted clichés, without ever having read any description of a ritual.
 - 7 The state of affairs is similar regarding studies in (Ṛg-)Vedic religion. Cf. Oberlies 1998: xii.
 - 8 It is impossible to consider and discuss all the diverging approaches presented by numerous scholars and scientists, nor is it possible to give a summary of the discourse about ritual. A detailed and critical survey about so-called theories of sacrifice is given by Drexler (1993); for a short summary see e.g. Seiwert (1998); detailed on ritual theories: Bell (1992); short summaries see e.g. in Lang 1998, and Gladigow 1998; methodological criticism e.g. in Bell 1987, Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: 64–87, and Staal 1996: 115–12 and *passim*.

transfer the religious condition of the sacrificer is changed. Mauss and Hubert are of special interest in the present context, because they were the first social scientists who utilized Śrauta rituals extensively⁹ for establishing a general theory of sacrificial rituals. But as one of their main sources is the Vedic animal sacrifice the theory focuses too much on the nature of the sacrificial matter being destroyed or killed.¹⁰ Above all Mauss' and Hubert's argumentation is based on the Durkheimian dichotomy of profane vs. sacral, the universal validity of which has been rejected repeatedly.¹¹

The first¹² indologist to introduce a sociological perspective into the investigation of a Śrauta ritual was Jan Heesterman in his book about the *Rājasūya: The ancient Indian royal consecration* (1957). Heesterman was inspired mainly by another classic work by Mauss, namely the *Essai sur le don* (1924). Starting from the study of the *Rājasūya* Heesterman developed¹³ a model in which he tried to explain the "classical" ritual system presented in the Śrauta texts as originating from "preclassical" structures. In spite of the many correct and astute observations on details the approach to Śrauta ritual, which can be deduced from Heesterman's writings, is not acceptable.¹⁴

Also, Frits Staal has to be mentioned. Starting with a "thick description" of an *agnicayana* performed by Nambudiri Brahmins in 1975 (published in two big volumes in 1983), he finally arrived at the point of radically rejecting all existing interpretative approaches to ritual because of the postulated "meaninglessness of ritual", formulated most effectively in "Rules without meaning" (1989). His famous *Agni* (alongside with the film by Robert Gardner) is probably the only description of a Śrauta ritual having been widely acknowledged by non-vedistic as well as vedistic scholars. The documentation and investigation of such

9 Their main sources were the *Paśubandha* according to Schwab (1886) and the *Dārśanīyapūrāṇamāsa* according to Hillebrandt (1879). They also quote Sylvain Levi's classic *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brahmanas* (1898).

10 Drexler (1993: 27–41) discusses this theory in the context of its time—against the background both of the sciences and the humanities.

11 See e.g. Goody 1961: 155f. and Kippenberg 1987: 22f.

12 Keith (1925) is the first indologist who discussed the then current theories regarding the interpretation of sacrificial rituals, though he does not apply them to specific rituals.

13 In a series of articles and finally in a monograph (1993) [Review: Minkowski (1996)]. Heesterman in the first chapter of his monograph also discusses the theories of Meuli (1946), Jensen (1951), Girard (1972), Burkert (1972, 1987) and others who contributed to the discussion about "sacrifice".

14 Krick in her investigation of the *agnyādheya* ritual follows Heesterman's conception of classical/preclassical, but does not give up the connection with philological and historical facts, wherein lies the great value of Krick's work.

performances for their own sake is valuable and necessary—perhaps from a point of view different from Staal's. But as it has become obvious through Staal's documentation, such performances—in spite of their uninterrupted tradition—only contribute in a rather limited way to a better understanding of the ancient textual sources. The Śrauta rituals performed today are extremely anachronistic regarding the language of the *mantras* and the symbolism of the other elements. They have survived as pure activity detached from their socio-cultural context. This is the reason for Staal's perception of the ritual's meaninglessness and his postulate that ritual has nothing to do with religion and society (Staal 1996: 123 and *passim*). Staal utilized the results he found in the special case of the Nambudiri-*agnicayana* for establishing a new ritual theory which radically challenged all preexisting approaches. In this challenge lies Staal's merit. Especially Staal's insistence that ritual acts are meaningless has caused much discussion¹⁵ and was indeed seminal to the most important work on ritual theory published during the last years, namely that of Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994).¹⁶ Starting from Staal's meaninglessness Humphrey and Laidlaw settle their more sophisticated view of meaninglessness in the framework of the theory of action developed by Wittgenstein and others. I doubt, however, whether the characteristics of ritual action pointed out by Humphrey and Laidlaw are generally applicable to Śrauta ritual.

Possible Approaches

A new discussion of the Śrauta system must be based on the investigation or re-investigation of single rituals incorporating a balanced perspective from current studies in ritual, sociology, and anthropology. Now, which, out of the numerous theoretical approaches would be compatible with the Śrauta field¹⁷ or the *vājapeya*, if we do not follow Staal?

15 See e.g. Grapard 1991, Mack 1991, Strenski 1991, Scharfe 1990, Witzel 1992. See also Staal's debate with his critics (Staal 1991 and 1993).

16 For a review see e.g. Boyd & Williams 1996.

17 Of little value is Göhler 1990. He gives a survey of the state of research from the indological and philosophical-religious side including the Marxist perspective, as a result of which the work at least becomes an interesting document of late East-German (intellectual) history. However, his assessment of the Vedic textual sources is partially inappropriate and he does not establish a relation between the so-called "philosophisch-methodologischen Grundlagen" and concrete rituals.

Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner

A framework for understanding processual aspects of the *vājapeya*-ritual¹⁸ is Arnold van Gennep's well-known three-phase-model formulated in his *Rites de passage* (1909). It is quite obvious, that many, if not most, rituals of different cultures and societies—not only life cycle rites—are concerned with the central idea of transformation of a condition, human or natural, including a change of state of the person undergoing the ritual—be it only on the psychic level of mental condition. Therefore it is not surprising, that independent of the cultural context analogous patterns can be found which stress the aspect of transformation, of change. This was shown by van Gennep who analysed life cycle rites which are characterised by a threefold basic pattern. In its ideal-typical form the structure has the following parts: the phase of separation or segregation (1), which separates the ritual subject from his actual condition or state, is followed by the liminal phase of transition (2), during which the ritual subject is between two worlds. The rite is concluded by the phase of aggregation or integration (3), which integrates the subject into the new condition or state.

Victor Turner reformulated van Gennep's model with special emphasis on the liminal phase and liminality (first in Turner 1967; also e.g. Turner 2000: 95ff.). Many societies regard the ambiguity of the liminal phase as being dangerous, as Turner shows. Accordingly the liminal phase is often associated e.g. with death and/or with the prenatal existence in the womb. Both associations can be clearly demonstrated in the *vājapeya*, or in the *soma* ritual in general and agree with the explanations of the Brāhmaṇa-authors.

Turner interprets the immediate meaning and significance of rituals for the members of a given culture. In the case of the rituals of an African tribal society (the Ndembu) Turner demonstrates his methods of comparative symbolism research and processual analysis. He coined the notion of "ritual elements" (Turner 2000: 21) which are objects used in a ritual context, actions carried out, gestures, but units of space and time as well. These "ritual elements" are also called "symbols" by Turner. This means that most of the ritual elements—according to the conventions of the respective culture—stand for something else.¹⁹ Turner's assumption is congruent with the ancient Brāhmaṇa authors'

18 The evidence of the *vājapeya* and of *soma* ritual in general shows, that Staal's criticism (1996: 123f.) of the applicability of so-called "transition or liminal theories" to Śrauta ritual is not correct.

19 The fact that Turner occasionally may have tended to over-interpretation—Mack [1991: 221] criticized Turner's studies as "display of meaning-under-every-rock symbolic analysis"—does not minimize the principal efficiency of his method.

convention of making *bandhus* “links of identity”²⁰, although they have no term for Turner’s notion of “symbol”.

Semantic Approach vs. “Meaninglessness” of Ritual

I aim at a hermeneutic or semantic reading and analysis of the *vājapeya*-ritual in spite of Humphrey and Laidlaw. It is not a Western obsession with semantics and hermeneutics²¹ that leads me in this direction. It is in line with the ancient ritualists themselves, whose explanations, preserved by the texts, are a sort of “standardized hermeneutic” of the Śrauta system, not to say of Vedic culture.²² This does not mean of course, that I favour a “pure” Vedic “theological” explanation of the ritual and make myself what would be in Burghart’s (1996) wording a “European Brahmin”.

The *vājapeya*²³

My presentation of the *vājapeya* follows the sequence of actions as laid down in the *Baudhāyanaśrautasūtra* (11).²⁴ For interpretation I take some important points from the *Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* (1.3.2–9),²⁵ both texts belonging to the Taittirīya school of the Black Yajurveda. The *vājapeya* is classified by the normative texts as one of the basic forms of *soma* sacrifice the paradigm of which is the *agniṣṭoma*. The central event of the *soma* ritual is the preparation, offering and consumption of *soma*, which takes place in three pressing sessions (*savana*).

20 The fact that ritual elements stand for something else other than themselves is expressed in the Brāhmaṇa texts by so-called “identifications” (about this see Wezler 1996; see also Minkowski 1989: 5) of the ritual elements with micro- and macrocosmic entities.

21 A criticism that is implicitly applied by Staal (1996) to the whole of ritualistic research preceding his own work, explicated in Mack 1991: 214.

22 The Brāhmaṇa explanations are not “arbitrary and ad hoc” (Staal 1996: 118) which is shown exemplarily by Minkowski (1989), although they can be piecemeal and sometimes not very illuminating. They do not give an interpretation in larger units, and explanations of the structure and interrelation of ritual elements are missing. Such interpretations are given only occasionally and up to a certain point. Often they are not intelligible without further commentaries.

23 Some of the following remarks are extracted from a detailed study of the *vājapeya* (Steiner 2002, habilitation thesis) to which I refer for all further details. In the thesis, however, the interpretations partially took a different course since the present paper has been written already in 2001.

24 The derivations in the sequence of activities of the other *śākhās* or in the other Sūtras of the Taittirīyakas can be neglected for the present purpose.

25 For technical reasons quotations are given without Vedic accents.

Around this event are grouped numerous ritual activities lasting several days. The features characterising the *vājapeya* against other forms of *somayajña* are embedded into this basic structure. The most spectacular of these characteristic features are:

- (1) besides the regular sacral drink of *soma* the alcoholic drink *surā* is being prepared and used
- (2) a chariot race of 17 chariots with the sacrificer as participant
- (3) the climbing of a short wooden post, which has a wheel of a chariot fixed to it
- (4) the climbing of a long post, the so-called sacrificial pole (*yūpa*) by the ritual patron and his wife.

The main purpose of the *vājapeya* is the attainment of a position or state called *svārājya*, usually translated as “universal sovereignty” by the ritual patron. In the form of the ritual preserved by the Brāhmaṇa- and Sūtra-texts *svārājya* implies a prestigious social position but not any socio-political function or office. So the *vājapeya* is a ritual of status elevation. It accompanies, or should I say effects, a change of state of the ritual subject, the *yajamāna*. The ritual subject is separated from his fixed position in the everyday social structure to be transformed, and to assume a better position in social life again after the liminal phase of transition. Inseparable from the status elevation of the *yajamāna* are two further ritual topics: on the one hand the attainment or reaching (*āpti*) of the creator god Prajāpati, which in this context means the union of sacrificer and Prajāpati; and on the other hand a “journey to heaven” (*svargo loka, asau loka*) of the sacrificer. I can elaborate here only on one aspect, namely the ascension to heaven / to the sky of the *yajamāna*.²⁶

Figure: Structure of the Ritual Plot

The plot of the *vājapeya* is characterized by two opposed processes, namely, ascension and the following descent, which the ritual subject undertakes or undergoes. During ascension the ritual subject is immersed deeper and deeper into the liminal state whereas the descent is characterized by gradually decreasing liminality. These processes develop while the structure of the plot unfolds. The

26 In this context different levels or layers of interpretation, pointing to historically different origins, can be recognized: There is every reason to believe that the concept of the “journey to heaven” is quite ancient and inseparably connected with the status elevation, which is legitimated through the ritual subject’s contact with “heaven”. The concept of the sacrificer’s union with Prajāpati is of later origin. But it would be beyond the scope of this paper to discuss this historically complex matter in detail.

structure consists in three interlocked sets of three phases each. The picture is somewhat simplified for the present purpose.

The basic structure of *soma* ritual resembles to a great extent the classical threefold model of van Gennep/Turner:

There are three phases, the introductory phase characterized by separation (1), which introduces the middle phase of liminality (2–3) with the three pressing sessions (*savana*) and (7–8), finally the concluding phase of integration (9).

The activities specific to the *vājapeya* (4–6) are an almost self-contained ritual within the ritual also characterised by three phases. They start during the midday pressing session (*mādhyaṇḍinasavana*), (3) being the centre of the middle phase of the *soma* ritual:

introductory: (4) drawing of 17 cups of *soma* and *surā* respectively,

middle: (5.1) a chariot race of 17 chariots with the sacrificer as participant,

(5.2) the climbing of the short wooden post by the Brahman priest, which has the wheel of a chariot fixed upon it,

(5.3) the climbing of the sacrificial pole (*yūpārohaṇa*) by the *yajamāna* and his wife,

concluding: (6) descending from the *yūpa*; ascending a stool (*āsandī*).

These sequences of actions (4–6) are intrinsically connected with the ritual topic of ascending to heaven (*ārohaṇa*) and descending again (*pratyavarohaṇa*).

The introductory phase (4) consists of the drawing of the 17 cups of *soma* and *surā* respectively which are sacred to the creator god Prajāpati. *Soma* and *surā* are to be considered polar, they are an antagonistic pair with qualities that can be arrayed in terms of binary oppositions: *etad vai devānāṃ paramam annam yatsomaḥ etan manuṣyāṇām yatsurā* “*soma* is the best food of the gods, *surā* of the human beings” [...] *pumān vai somaḥ strī surā* “*soma* is the man, the woman is *surā*” (*Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* 1.3.3.16–21) or *satyaṃ śrīr jyotiḥ somo 'nṛtaṃ pāpmā tamaḥ surā* “*soma* is prosperity, truth, light, *surā* is misery, untruth, darkness” (*Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* 5.1.2.10).

<i>soma</i>	<i>surā</i>
male	female
truth	untruth
light	darkness
divine	human

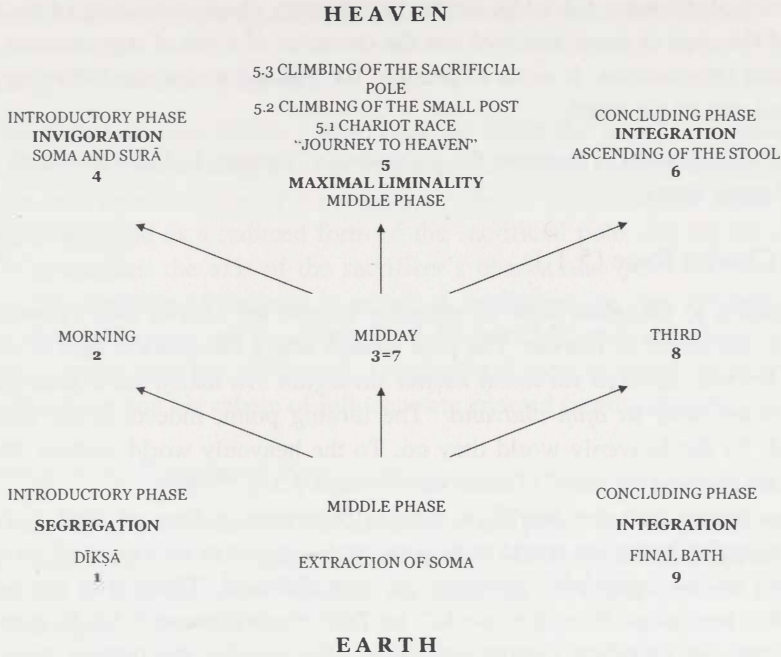


Figure 1

Soma and *surā* represent two contrasting principles. This view is supported by a myth related in the context of the *Sautrāmaṇī*, the only other ritual in which *surā* (but not *soma*) is used. In the context of this myth *surā* is the antidote to *soma* and in the context of the *vājapeya* the two contrasting principles have to be integrated. By this integration the sacrificer is healed and regenerated. This state of wholeness, integrity (*sarvatva*) is necessary for attaining heaven. The first interpretation, namely regeneration through reintegration of the two contrasting principles, is related to the sacrificer himself. A second, coexisting interpretation pertains to the sacrificer's wife who accompanies him in his ascension to heaven. It is evident, that *soma* has a strong relation to the sacrificer while *surā* is more related to his wife: *ātmanam eva somagrahais sprṇoti jāyāṃ surāgrahaiḥ tasmād vājapeyayājy amuṣmin loke striyaṃ saṃbhavati* "[The sacrificer] sets himself free by the cups of *soma*, his wife by the cups of *surā*. Therefore the

vājapeya sacrificer in yonder world has [sexual intercourse] with the woman²⁷ (*Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* 1.3.3.18). So the introductory phase consisting of the drawing of the cups of *soma* and *surā* has the character of a rite of regeneration, healing and invigoration. It aims to prepare the *yajamāna* for the following most critical part of the ritual.

The middle phase (5) contains the *yajamāna*'s "journey to heaven" which is enacted three times:

The Chariot Race (5.1.)

In relation to the ritual topic of attaining heaven the chariot race symbolizes a ride to the world of heaven. The post around which the chariots turn is equated with heaven: *suvaro vai lokaḥ kāṣṭhā suvargam eva lokaṃ yanti suvargaṃ vā ete lokaṃ yanti ya ājīṃ dhāvanti* "The turning point, indeed, is the heavenly world. To the heavenly world they go. To the heavenly world, indeed, they go who are running the race" (*Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* 1.3.6.35–36).

Ascending into the world of heaven represents a time of high risk. The turning point, being the world of heaven, may turn out to be a point of no return, for *pra vā ete 'smāl lokāc cyavante ya ājīṃ dhāvanti* "Those who are running the race precipitate from this world", as *Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* 1.3.6.36 puts it. In the ritual the sacrificer returns unharmed after passing the turning point. The chariot race anticipates the actual ascension to heaven which is enacted by climbing the sacrificial pole and secures its safe end. It is an "altitudinal" action which is physically projected into the longitudinal plane and aims at expanding ritual space and the ritual subject.²⁸ By the chariot race the sacrificer wins an

27 For the syntax of *vājapeyāyā amuṣmīn loka striyaṃ sambhavati* see Oertel 1942: 18f.: *sam-bhū* with Acc. of the person, usually with ellipsis of *mithunaṃ* "to have sexual intercourse with".

28 It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss in detail the structure and symbolism of the sacrificial enclosure (*devayajana*), the ritual space, where the performance takes place. Hence, some remarks on the spatial symbolism related to the structure of the ritual plot and ritual topics, respectively, must suffice. The *vājapeya* or *soma* ritual in general deals with the transformation and expansion of the ritual subject or of his sphere of influence. This expansion is also enacted or performed by the various movements of the sacrificer and/or the sacrificial party in the ritual space. On the *devayajana* the expansion of length and breadth takes place. The *devayajana*, a liminal space, is the space where the earthly/human and heavenly/divine sphere meet. It represents the "world of living" in an everyday sense as well as in a cosmological-conceptual sense. The *yūpa* is erected on the eastern demarcation line of the sacrificial enclosure, to one half on this side of the line, to one half on that side. This fact underlines its being a liminal symbol. The sacrificial pole

expanded sphere of influence (*loka*) and generative power (*vāja*) as prize. This enables him to manage the actual ascension to heaven by his own efforts.

Climbing of the Short Post (5.2)

Now the Brahman-priest climbs a short post, on which the wheel of a chariot is fixed—an action symbolizing also the ascension to heaven. The Brahman priest here acts as a representative of the sacrificer. On the one hand, the small post must be understood as a reduced form of the sacrificial pole, and on the other hand, it symbolizes the axis of the sacrificer's chariot and (*pars pro toto*) the chariot. The climbing of the post is an act of mediation: the two symbolic actions of the chariot race and the climbing of the sacrificial pole are united, while the latter is anticipated one more time. Longitudinal and altitudinal expansion of the ritual subject and his sphere of influence are enacted simultaneously.

Climbing of the Sacrificial Pole (5.3)

The climax of the ritual action is the climbing of the *yūpa*. The sacrificial pole is the dominant symbol of the *vājapeya* because the various ritual topics meet here. Accordingly it is a polysemic symbol, the meaning of which depends on the respective topic:

- (1) The sacrificial pole represents the sacrificer or his *ātman* ("self" in the sense of "trunk" or "body") respectively. More exactly speaking: it is the consecrated sacrificer (*dīkṣita*), since with the post and the sacrificer identical rites are performed: like the fitting out with a new garment and headgear as well as a girdle of grass, unction with water and ghee. The *yūpa* is a prolonged, "bigger" form of the *yajamāna*'s body being tall enough for him reach the sky.
- (2) The sacrificial pole is addressed as "first among leaders" (*agraḡa netrāṇām*) and is dedicated to the god Indra, the victorious leader par excellence. The sacrificer is identical with Indra. In this connection also the location of the post is of importance: it is erected on the eastern boundary of the sacrificial enclosure, which means it stands in the front line of the symbolic campaign of conquest enacted by the ritual as Indra, the human leader, would stand there. This symbolic meaning is related to the topic of attaining *svārājya*.
- (3) The sacrificial pole represents Prajāpati, the creator god. This is expressed by the height of the post of 17 cubits (*aratnī*), for the number 17 represents Prajā-

represents the triadic cosmological concept in a condensed form. At the same time it produces expansion of the ritual space into height. It is the concept of the world projected into a vertical line, whereas the *devayajana* represents a projection of the world into the horizontal plane.

pati. The sacrificer is also identical with this deity or becomes identical with Prajāpati through the ritual performance.

(4) The sacrificial pole represents the well known triadic structure of the universe: earth (*prthivī*), intermediate space (*antarikṣa*) and sky (*div*). In the context of the topic of ascension, of climbing, however, the *yūpa* is the manifestation of the cosmic pillar (*skambha*) which according to Vedic cosmology gives firm hold to the earth and props up the sky. The cosmic pillar secures fertility, for through its location on earth it opens up the earth. At the same time it can split the clouds in the sky and cause rainfall which is the precondition of fertility. As long as fertility is guaranteed the claim of the sacrificer for the state of *svārājya* is secured. Last, but not least, the cosmic pillar represents the connecting path between this world and the world of heaven, the other world beyond. In Turner's wording it would be the liminal symbol par excellence.

By climbing the sacrificial pole the ascension to heaven and descent back to earth is enacted most directly. In the context of the *yūpārohaṇa* it may be asked whether the characteristics of ritual action as postulated by Humphrey and Laidlaw namely the disconnection of intention from the identity of the act (Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: 2 et passim) applies.²⁹ Before the *yajamāna* starts to climb he declares his intention with the *mantra jāya ehi suvo rohāva*³⁰ "Come, wife, let us both ascend to the sunlight / to the bright sky" (*Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* 1.3.7.41). After declaring that he intends to engage in the activity expressed by the root *ruh* he actually does *ruh*. There is no disconnection of intention and the identity of the act.³¹ The attainment of heaven by ascension is made sensorily perceptible and visible here by using a symbol and symbolic action. It is thereby made accessible to the purposive action of the sacrificer, and society. It is this act of making apparent abstract goals or concepts, in Turner's wording the "principle of revelation" (Turner 2000: 31), which is characteristic for the ritual act under discussion. It is the principle of revelation in which the power of the ritual performance manifests itself.

Reaching the top of the post is the point of maximal liminality of the ritual subject. The top of the post is the place where the transformation, the change of

29 There are further examples of the *vājapeya*, to which Humphrey and Laidlaw's criterion does not apply.

30 Cp. *Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā* 1.11.8.

31 Of course it must have been obvious to the *yajamāna* and the other participants, that "in reality" he did not reach the sun/sky/heaven after climbing the post of 17 *aratnīs* height either. But we have no information about the inner attitude of the *yajamāna*, about his opinion towards that ritual act, about his state of consciousness and the psychic effect on him.

state of the ritual subject takes place. It is the most dangerous place, the most dangerous period of time during the ritual. The risk of precipitating or not coming back (*Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* 1.3.7.44–45) is visible and tangible here. Climbing the post / ascending to heaven means consciously exposing oneself to the possibility of death, for being in heaven / in the beyond means being dead. The actual death of the ritual subject is suggested or even anticipated. Accordingly, the ascension is accompanied by a series of ritual acts, which should be interpreted as a kind of funeral rite. They aim at the well-being of the ritual subject in the beyond, or at transferring earthly conditions such as *annādyā*, space, time and corporeality into the other world. The reintegration of the *yajamāna* can be brought about only gradually. The contact with earth and society must be restored step by step in a series of acts. Finally the *yajamāna* climbs a stool (*āsandī*) (6) and is carried away from the sacrificial pole by some of the officiants. Climbing the *āsandī* underlines the establishment of the sacrificer in his new elevated position, and being carried away by the officiants stresses the fact of integration, as well as acceptance by society.

This last action concludes the features specific to the *vājapeya*, the ritual within the ritual. The ritual process is then resumed following the paradigm of *soma* sacrifice with the midday pressing (7) and the third pressing (8), then there follows the concluding phase (9) with the final reintegration of the sacrificer culminating in the final bath of the main participants of the ritual.

Some Remarks Towards a Diachronic Approach

I have presented a strictly synchronic approach to the *vājapeya*, considering the time of the final codification of the ritual. I have tried to analyze the textual evidence “in its performance” as some anthropologists would say. But I cannot conclude this paper without a few remarks on a diachronic approach. It has long been recognized that the Śrauta ritualistic system as laid down in the texts represents a “frozen” form of the sacrificial rituals, which shows traits of secondary systematization. It is undoubtedly the case that the Śrauta system represents only the last stage of a development which the rituals certainly underwent during the long period of time while being practised, before they were finally codified.³² It

32 There seems to be a typical evolutionary process according to which rituals develop over a longer period of time, as e.g. Gladigow (1998: 558) points out: rituals become more differentiated, extensive and costly. The growing complexity of rituals seems to be a part of the general process of the professionalisation of religion. On the other hand ritual forms tend to be handed over unaltered for a long time although the socio-religious, political and economic context may change.

is also unquestionable that elements from various traditions were incorporated into the Śrauta system.³³ But in most cases—because of lack of evidence—it is extremely difficult to trace the earlier stages as well as the elements of various traditions.³⁴ Any attempt at historical reconstruction will necessarily remain tentative. One must also take into consideration the fact that what seems to be a discontinuity or an inconsistency in the ritual or an anomalous element to one or the other modern researcher may not necessarily have been one for the ancient ritualists. Also, the perception or non-perception of inconsistencies depends on the categories used by the researcher.

However, starting from a synchronic study in some cases diachronic conclusions about earlier stages of development, meanings and functions of the rituals or single elements within them are possible.³⁵ But a diachronic investigation must not utilize the categories “classical vs. preclassical” as suggested by Heeserman. Also, one or the other element will turn out to be secondarily incorporated. But the search for such elements must not fall into the trap of using the

33 These traditions result from the complex early history of India (the latest state of research is summed up in Witzel 2003: 10–33, whom I follow here). First, it is safe to assume that the immigration of the Vedic speaking Indo-Aryans to the Panjab, starting from Central Asia, took place with numerous stops, marriages into the respective indigenous populations, and the taking over of cultural elements. It is true that some elements of the Vedic ritual can be traced back into the Indo-Iranian past, there are even some Indo-European elements. But many elements taken over during the long period of migration have a genuine Vedic aspect—although they were acculturated (in this context Witzel especially stresses the influence of the Oxus culture). Further it is safe to assume that the Indo-Aryan tribes who arrived in the Panjab during the first wave of immigration underwent a large degree of acculturation absorbing many traits from the indigenous population. According to Witzel, in the late Ṛgveda at least three speech groups can be traced which are in close contact to each other, with an effect on culture and religion: the dominant Indo-Aryan, the early acculturated Para-Munda, and the Dravidian. Also, it cannot be taken for granted that the many rival Indo-Aryan tribes and clans, partially fighting each other—in spite of a kind of common identity—had a completely homogenous culture, religion, social structure and ritual system. Further we have to consider that there are different ritual traditions, or levels of ritual tradition, within one single society (see below the differentiation between liturgy- and performance-centred rituals).

34 Our most important evidence, the texts, do not tell us explicitly how they and the rituals were compiled and systematised. They represent an ahistorical perspective. Our oldest text, the Ṛgveda, is not concerned with “technical” questions about how and which rituals had to be performed but consists of liturgical material to be recited within the rituals. As the rituals were not performed in fixed locations or buildings and as the ritual implements were fabricated out of perishable materials we have no archaeological evidence.

35 In the Ṛgveda only two rituals are attested for: the *soma* ritual and the *pravargya* (see Houben 1991 about an early form of the *pravargya*).

categories “Brāhmaṇical vs. *kṣatriya*”, or “folk, popular vs. priestly”, which has been prominent since the pioneering days of Śrauta studies, for example in the works of Weber and Hillebrandt, and up to the present day as in a recent study of the *sautrāmaṇī* ritual (Kolhatkar 1998).

Along with text-historical³⁶ and socio-historical³⁷ aspects dealt with by Witzel and others the following criteria or approaches should be taken into consideration for the historical contextualization and assessment of the rituals and their elements:

(1) The differentiation between liturgy-centred and performance-centred rituals³⁸ introduced by Atkinson (1989: esp. 14f., 252, 298). Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994: 8–12) have stressed that societies invariably have both types of practices and that there may be an inverse relation between the two. The same members of society practise both types of ritual depending on the circumstances and requirements, or enlist the help of different types of ritual/religious specialists.³⁹ The Śrauta rituals are liturgy-centred. Reflexes of performance-centred ritual practices existing together with the various Śrauta schools can be found within the Śrauta system itself as well as in the Atharvanic tradition. Especially the *vājapeya* has elements that should be seen in the light of performance-centred rituals (among others the use and significance of the ritual drink *surā* pointing to healing rituals; the *yūpārohaṇa* pointing to “shamanic” practises).

(2) Catherine Bell’s (1988) insights into the ritualization of texts and textualization of rituals must be brought together with Witzel’s (1997) results on the formation of the Vedic canon and its socio-political background.

Both approaches will shed more light on the mechanisms of how liturgical and political authority was established and legitimated in Vedic society, or on the way in which the reformed Śrauta ritual system strengthened “the new Kuru dynasty” and “provided for some measure of upward social mobility” (Witzel 1997: 267).

36 Witzel 1997, where earlier studies are quoted.

37 Rau 1957 and 1997, Scharfe 1992, Witzel 1997 and others.

38 I cannot elaborate here on the interesting question if and how this differentiation can be related to the anthropological concept of Great and Little Tradition.

39 It would be inappropriate to apply the differentiation “popular vs. priestly” in this context.

References

Texts

- Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā*. Ed. by Leopold von Schröder. Reprint. Wiesbaden: Steiner 1970.
- The Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*. Ed. by Albrecht Weber. Reprint. Varanasi: Caukambha Samskrt Sirija Aphis 1964.
- Taittirīyabrāhmaṇam*. Ed. by E. Mahādevaśāstrin. Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1985.

Secondary Literature

- Atkinson, Jane Monnig 1989. *The Art and Politics of Wana Shamanism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bell, Catherine 1987. "Discourse and Dichotomies: the Structure of Ritual Theory". In: *Religion* 17: 95–118.
- 1988. "Ritualization of Texts and Textualization of Ritual in the Codification of Taoist Liturgy". In: *History of Religions* 27.4: 366–392.
- 1992. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bodewitz, H.W. 1973. *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I, 1–65. Translation and Commentary with a Study of Agnihotra and Prāṇāgnihotra*. Leiden: Brill.
- 1976. *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas*, Leiden: Brill.
- 1990. *The Jyotiṣṭoma Ritual: Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa I, 66–364. Introduction, Translation and Commentary*. Leiden: Brill (Orientalia Rheno-Traiectina 34).
- Boyd, James W. & Ron G. Williams 1996. "Review of the Archetypal Actions of Ritual: A Theory Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship, by Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw". In: *Journal of Ritual Studies* 10: 135–138.
- Burghart, Richard 1996. "Ethnographers and Their Local Counterparts in India". In: *Conditions of Listening. Essays on Religion, History and Politics in South Asia*, Fuller, C.J. (ed.). Delhi: Oxford University Press, 88–112.
- Burkert, Walter 1972. *Homo neccans*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- 1987. "The Problem of Ritual Killing". In: *Violent Origins*, Hamerton-Kelly, Robert G. (ed.). Stanford: Stanford University Press, 149–188.
- Caland, Wilhelm 1893. *Altindischer Ahnenkult*. Leiden: Brill.
- Drexler, Josef 1993. *Die Illusion des Opfers. Ein wissenschaftlicher Überblick über die wichtigsten Opfertheorien ausgehend vom deleuzianischen Polyperspektivismusmodell*. München: Akademischer Verlag (Münchner ethnologische Abhandlungen 12).
- Einoo, Shingo 1988. *Die Cāturmāsya oder die altindischen Terialopfer dargestellt nach den Vorschriften der Brāhmaṇas und der Śrautasūtras*. Tokyo: Universität Tokyo.

- Gennep, Arnold van 1986. *Übergangsriten*. Frankfurt: Campus. [Translation of *Les rites de passage. Etude systématique des rites*. Paris 1909]
- Girard, R. 1972. *La violence et le sacré*. Paris: Grasset.
- Gladigow, Burkhard 1998. "Ritual, komplexes". In: *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*. Vol. 4, Cancik, Hubert et al. (ed.). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 458–460.
- Göhler, Lars 1990. *Zu philosophisch-methodologischen Grundlagen der Erforschung des vedischen Opferrituals*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Goody, Jack 1961. "Religion and Ritual: the Definitional Problem". In: *British Journal of Sociology* 12: 142–164.
- Grapard, Allan G. 1991. "Rule-Governed Activity vs. Rule-Creating Activity". In: *Religion* 21: 207–212.
- Heesterman, Jan C. 1957. *The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration*. 's-Gravenhage: Mouton.
- 1993. *The Broken World of Sacrifice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hillebrandt, Alfred 1879. *Das altindische Neu- und Vollmondsopfer*. Jena: Gustav Fischer.
- Houben, Jan E. M. 1991. *Pravargya Brāhmaṇa of the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- 2000. "On the Earliest Attestable Forms of the Pravargya Ritual: Ṛg-Vedic References to the Gharma-Pravargya Especially in the Atri-Family Book". In: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 43: 1–25.
- Hubert, Henry & Marcel Mauss 1899. "Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice". In: *L'Année Sociologique* 2: 29–138. [English translation: *Sacrifice, Its Nature and Function*. London 1964]
- Humphrey, Caroline & James Laidlaw 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual: A Theory of Ritual Illustrated by the Jain Rite of Worship*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Jensen, A.E. 1951. *Mythos und Kult bei den Naturvölkern*. Wiesbaden: Steiner.
- Keith, Arthur Berriedale 1925. *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kippenberg, Hans G. 1987. „Einleitung: Zur Kontroverse über das Verstehen fremden Denkens". In: *Magie. Die sozialwissenschaftliche Kontroverse über das Verstehen fremden Denkens*, Kippenberg, Hans G. (ed.). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 9–51.
- Krick, Hertha 1982. *Das Ritual der Feuergründung Agnyādheya*. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Südasien H. 16: Philologisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 399). [Dissertation Wien 1972]
- Lang, Bernhard 1998. "Ritual/Ritus". In: *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*. Vol. 4, Cancik, H. et al. (ed.). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 442–458.
- Mack, Burton L. 1991. "Staal's Gauntlet and the Queen". In: *Religion* 21: 213–218.
- Mauss, Marcel 1923–24. "Essai sur le don". In: *L'Année Sociologique (N.S.)* 1: 30–186.

- Meuli, Karl 1946. "Griechische Opferbräuche". In: *Phyllobolia für Peter von der Mühl*. Basel: Schwabe.
- Minkowski, Christopher 1989. "The *udumbara* and Its Ritual Significance". In: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 33: 5–23.
- 1996. "Rezension of Heesterman (1993)". In: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 116: 341–344.
- Oberlies, Thomas 1998. *Die Religion des Ṛgveda: Das religiöse System des Ṛgveda*. Vienna: University of Vienna (Publications of the De Nobili Research Library 26).
- Oertel, Hanns 1942. *Euphemismen in der vedischen Prosa und euphemistische Varianten in den Mantras*. München (Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philologisch-historische Abteilung 1942.8). [repr.: Oertel, Hanns 1994. *Kleine Schriften. Band 32*. Hettrich, Heinrich & Thomas Oberlies (ed.).]
- Rau, Wilhelm 1957. *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- 1997. "The Earliest Literary Evidence for Permanent Vedic Settlements". In: *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts. New Approaches to the Study of the Vedas*, Witzel, M. (ed.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series. Opera Minora 2), 203–206.
- Scharfe, Hartmut 1990. "The Great Rituals—Were They Really Meaningless?" In: *Sanskrit and Related Studies*, Matilal, Bimal Krishna (ed.). Delhi: Shri Sadguru Publications, 89–98.
- 1992. "Sacred Kingship, Warlords, and Nobility". In: *Ritual, State and History in South Asia. Essays in Honour of J.C. Heesterman*, Van Den Hoek, A.W. (ed.). Leiden: E.J. Brill, 309–322.
- Schwab, Julius 1886. *Das altindische Thieropfer*. Erlangen: Verlag von Andreas Deichert.
- Seiwert, Hubert 1998. "Opfer". In: *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*. Vol. 4, Cancik, Hubert et al. (ed.). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 268–283.
- Staal, Frits (ed.) 1983. *Agni: the Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press.
- 1991. "Within Ritual, About Ritual and Beyond". In: *Religion* 21: 227–234.
- 1992. "Agni 1990. With an Appendix by H.F. Arnold", In: *Ritual, State and History in South Asia. Essays in Honour of J.C. Heesterman*, Van Den Hoek, A.W. & D.H.A. Kolff & M.S. Oort (ed.). Leiden: E.J. Brill, 650–676.
- 1996. *Ritual and Mantras: Rules without Meaning*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. [Reprint of 1989]
- 1993. "From Meanings to Trees". In: *Journal of Ritual Studies* 7.2: 11–32.
- Steiner, Karin 2002. *Die Illusion des Rituals: Der Vājapeya im Schwarzen Yajurveda*. Habilitation thesis Universität Würzburg.
- forthcoming. "The Vajapeya Sacrificial Ritual: How to Attain Heaven". In: *The Power of Performance*, Brückner, Heidrun & E. Schömbucher & P. Zarilli (ed.). Delhi: Manohar.
- Strenski, Ivan 1991. "What's Rite?" In: *Religion* 21: 219–225.

- Turner, Victor 2000. *Das Ritual: Struktur und Anti-Struktur*. Frankfurt: Campus. [translation of *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure*. Chicago: 1969]
- 1967. *Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Weber, Albrecht 1892. „Über den Vājapeya”. In: *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch-historische Classe* 39: 765–813.
- 1893. *Über die Königsweihe, den Rājasūya*. Berlin: Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin).
- Wezler, Albrecht 1996. “Zu den sog. Identifikationen in den Brāhmaṇas”. In: *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 20: 485–522.
- Witzel, Michael 1992. “Meaningful ritual. Vedic, medieval and contemporary concepts in the Nepalese Agnihotra Ritual”. In: *Ritual, State and History in South Asia. Essays in Honour of J.C. Heesterman*, Van Den Hoek (ed.). Leiden: Brill, 774–825.
- (ed.) 1997. *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts*. Cambridge: Department of Sanskrit Studies, Harvard University (Harvard Oriental Series, opera minora, 2).
- 1997. “The Development of the Vedic Canon and Its Schools: The Social and Political Milieu”. In: *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts. New Approaches to the Study of the Vedas*, Witzel, M. (ed.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series. Opera Minora 2), 257–345.
- 2003. *Das alte Indien*. München: C.H. Beck.

Appendix: The *vājapeya* Is Dealt With in the Following Texts
of the Vedic Canon

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Saṃhitās: | Śāṅkhāyana 13.3.5–12; 15.1.1–38; |
| <i>Black Yajurveda:</i> | 15.2.1–12; 15.3.2–4; 15.3.13–15; |
| Maitrāyaṇi 1.11.1–10 | 15.4.1; 16.17.1–12 |
| Kāthaka 13.14; 14.1–10 | <i>Sāmaveda:</i> |
| Taittirīya 1.7.7–12 | Lāṭyāyana 8.11.1–25; 8.12.1–15; |
| <i>White Yajurveda:</i> | 5.12.8–23 |
| Vājasaneyī (Mādhyandina) 9 | Drāhyāyana 15.4.1–19; 24.3.1–28; |
| Vājasaneyī (Kāṇva) 10 | 24.4.1–17 |
| 2. Brāhmaṇas | <i>Black Yajurveda:</i> |
| <i>Sāmaveda:</i> | <i>Taittirīyaka:</i> |
| Pañcaviṃśa 18.6–7 | Baudhāyana 11; 22.13 |
| <i>Black Yajurveda:</i> | Vādhūla 9 |
| Taittirīya 1.3.2–9 | Āpastamba 18.1–7 |
| <i>White Yajurveda:</i> | Sātyāśadha-Hiranyakeśin 13.1–2 |
| Śatapatha (Mādhyandina) 5.1.1.– | Vaikhānasa 17.7–18 |
| 5.2.2. | <i>Maitrāyaṇīya:</i> |
| Śatapatha (Kāṇva) 6.1.1.–6.2.2. | Vārāha 3.1 |
| 3. Śrautasūtras | Mānava 7.1 |
| <i>Rgveda:</i> | <i>White Yajurveda:</i> |
| Āśvalāyana 9.9.1–19 | Kātyāyana 14 |

MONIKA HORSTMANN

Why Ritual? An Eighteenth-Century Debate

In the year 1727, the doctrine and practice propagated by the seventeenth-century-teacher Rūpa Kavirāja were declared heterodox and his followers criminal.¹ The religious leaders (*mahants*) representing his tradition were deprived of their rights over religious estates and their faculty to teach. The Maharaja of Amer, Jaisingh II (r. 1700–1743), passed this decision in his capacity as Governor of Agra and Faujdār of Mathura, positions he had held since 1722. Rūpa Kavirāja belonged to the Gauḍīya tradition of Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* and thereby to a powerful branch of Vaiṣṇavism which had contributed to the reformulation of Vaiṣṇava orthodoxy since the fifteenth century. It was part of the “four orders” of Vaiṣṇava orthodoxy which adhered to a both Vedic and Vaiṣṇava tradition, much indebted also to the Tantric tradition. The case of Rūpa Kavirāja was just one out of the many cases in the process of which the king of Amer/Jaipur reshaped the Vaiṣṇava orders and the structure of religious power in North India. Rūpa Kavirāja’s case is of topical interest because, apart from raising a host of other salient questions, it foregrounded the fundamental question why there should be ritual at all if a person had attained perfected devotion. This issue was crucial to the Vaiṣṇavas, but in addition addressed broader concerns as one tried to come to terms with all those religious groups that were critical of ritual on the whole or with respect to renouncers who deemed themselves exempt from it. Thus, a seemingly sectarian conflict had great consequences for state approval or disapproval of religious orders, lifestyles and the social and material position of religious groups. The issue of the doctrine of Rūpa Kavirāja formed but one, albeit particularly grave and consequential, concern in the religious policy of the

1 This contribution covers a facet of the religious debates conducted at the court of Jaisingh II on which I am currently preparing a study. I acknowledge gratefully the support of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft which enabled me to collect the relevant manuscript material in 1987 and 1988. I also thank the participants of the seminar at which the first version of this paper was first presented for their comments, notably Professor Alexis Sanderson. For the case of Rūpa Kavirāja, see Bansal 1980: 504–506; Haberman 1988: 98–104.

first third of the eighteenth century. It was only in the 1730s that the debate was concluded.

As for Rūpa, his case hurt the Gauḍīya order to the quick, and, for that matter, also the other Vaiṣṇava orders. Rūpa raised questions that had been virulent since the beginning of the tradition, and especially the case of ritual was one such issue. No wonder that his approach failed to be suppressed by the solution proffered by as great a philosopher as Viśvanātha Cakravartī, who nevertheless set in motion formidable and persisting changes in the tradition.² The issue had an eminently social aspect, for there roamed renouncers through both Braj and Jaipur who in the name of god-madness sported a religiously or otherwise female persona thereby imitating the exemplary female companions of Kṛṣṇa and Rām, as he was worshipped by the followers of the Rāmarasikasampradāya.³ These renouncers were thereby felt to be well on the way to making a travesty of their own order and eroding Vaiṣṇavism as a whole.

Rūpa's stance proved so enduring because religious transgression of gender also related to, and was supported by, popular religious usage and, parallel to this, in aesthetics, by a well-established gentle oscillation in male-female identity. It could therefore not be eradicated by a stroke of the pen. A powerful pen, however, to be wielded to this effect was that of the Sārvabhauma Kṛṣṇadeva Bhaṭṭācārya, who, on the order of the Mahārājā, wrote the treatises by which the king eventually proceeded. It took more than a decade to pass the aforementioned verdict, and it took even longer for it to gain lasting impact.

Before I go into the issue of ritual itself, I will, first, briefly make mention of the basic assumptions on which the ritual conflict hinges, aspects of which I will discuss here, and, secondly, say something about the Sārvabhauma himself.

In the Gauḍīya doctrine, elaborated by the Gosvāmīs of Vrindaban, who were authorised by the founder of the Gauḍīya order, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (traditionally dated 1486–1533), two assumptions are important from the point of view of ritual. One is that the perfection of the devotee leads through various stages of practice, starting with the execution of ritual injunctions which, as faith grows, leads on to the desire to learn more about Bhagavat,⁴ hence to mixing with the like-minded. The process of spiritual perfection is inseparable from practising ritual, religious discipline and complying with Vaiṣṇava ethics. This is called the *vaidhībhakti*. As perfection grows, the devotee develops *bhāva*. The

2 See Haberman 1988: 104–114.

3 For this, see Siṃha V.S. 2014.

4 In congruence with the Gauḍīya doctrine, I am using the term Bhagavat, who is Kṛṣṇa and the manifestation of God in his true form.

growing religious accomplishment entails a problem. As Dimock put it so lucidly (*Caitanyacaritāmṛta* 1999: 120–21),

It is obvious that if love is the proper relationship between man and God, the more intense the love the more intense the religious experience and satisfaction. Being pragmatists, the Vaiṣṇavas observe that of these kinds of love relationships, passionate love is the most intense. This, then, is the *bhāva*. But it is equally obvious that passionate love for a male is the only one among these relationships which is not typically available to a male worshipper in particular experience. So *bhāva* also means the transformation of one's self into the condition of a *gopī*. And this is where *sādhana*, ritual and religious discipline, comes in. One concentrates all one's activity and power of mind on one or another of the characters of the *Bhāgavatapurāna* story, preferably a *gopī*. And with the constant application of sixty-four types of discipline, meditation, chanting, listening to the *Bhāgavatapurāna*, serving the image, etc., a change takes place in one's psychic state. One knows one's self as that *gopī* upon whom one has been concentrating; and knowing is becoming.

This knowledge, the transformed state, is the madness which the *bhakta* displays. He is simultaneously in two worlds. He walks around in this one, performing bodily and social duties, [...]. But his real existence is even now in the eternal Vṛndāvana, face to face with his beloved Kṛṣṇa. The separation between human and divine has been wiped out. The state in which the *bhakta* is still striving for complete transformation is called *vaidhī*, injunctional, *bhakti*; when he has attained his goal and knows pure abstracted bliss in Kṛṣṇa's presence, his *bhakti* is *rāgānugā*, ruled by pure passion.

The perfection of the religious process consists in the rise of *prema*, experienced as the consumption of the *rasa* in which "self-love and love for God [are] united" (*ibid.*: 131).

The second assumption is that in the process the body of the practitioner undergoes a transformation. He, of course, retains his usual body (the *sādhakadeha*). At the same time he resides in the heavenly Vrajaloka and with his interior perfect body (*siddhadeha*) lives in imitation of the exemplary players. So whereas he functions as a social being as he used to, he lives in a different, imperishable world as a being related to Bhagavat. If, in his perfect body, he identifies with a *gopī*, he is not supposed to walk around as a transvestite.⁵

These basic assumptions underlie the system elaborated by Rūpa Gosvāmī (not to be confounded with Rūpa Kavirāja). However, the way in which he for-

5 Bon Mahārāj 1965: 303–304 on *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 2.295 and Viśvanātha Cakravartī's commentary thereon.

mulated this point gave rise to the interpretation by Rūpa Kavirāja and is known by the term *sauramyavāda*. Rūpa Gosvāmī says (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 2.295),⁶

One who is desirous of attaining one of the emotional states of the residents of Vraja should perform services in a manner that imitates them with both the practitioner's body (*sādhakarūpa*) and the perfected body (*siddharūpa*). (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 2003: 83)

The question here was what precisely Rūpa Gosvāmī may have meant to say by this. What was to be achieved with the practitioner's body and the perfected body, respectively? Rūpa Kavirāja argued that the devotee had to imitate Bhagavat in both his mundane and perfected body. Not only this; he also thought that as perfection advanced, the *sādhaka* was to abandon both the regular and the occasional rites (*nitya*- and *naimittikakarman*). The religiously advanced were thus exempt from ritual and social obligations (Haberman 1988: 104). Rūpa Kavirāja's doctrine was rejected by Viśvanātha Cakravartī, but it remained fecund in the minds of his followers and ineradicable. The doctrine of the founder-Gosvāmīs was undermined which was all the more alarming because even the founding fathers of the system had had to struggle hard to mediate positions popular in the various regions of origin of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, namely Bengal and Orissa, in the east, and Braj, in the centre. The Gauḍīya system was thereby endangered by schism, doctrinally and socially.

This was the vexing issue that Kṛṣṇadeva had to solve on behalf of the king. Who was that authority? By 1715 he became Jaisingh's theological counsellor (Burton 2000), residing in the then emerging complex of the new Kachavāhā residence, later on named Jaipur. He was a representative of the Gauḍīyas, the order that had enjoyed imperial and royal support from the very beginning and whose deity Govinddevjī had become the personal deity of Jaisingh. He hailed from a distinguished family, for his ancestor was Gadādhara, Caitanya's companion from Navadvīpa. He himself had lived in Vrindaban as a follower of, and perhaps also initiated by, the great theological doctor Viśvanātha Cakravartī in whose estate he lived in Rādhākuṇḍa in Braj before he was asked to become Jaisingh's counsellor. He followed the king's summons bringing with him the deity Śrī Rādhāvinodilālī that he had inherited from Viśvanātha and that had come down to him from Lokanātha, Caitanya's companion. So charged with Vaiṣṇava legitimating power was the deity that it was coveted and, indeed, appropriated for quite some time, when Kṛṣṇadeva left for the east, by other Vaiṣṇavas of less indisputable legitimacy before it was returned to the Gauḍīyas.⁷

6 All translations are taken from the edition and translation by D. L. Haberman 2003.

7 See Horstmann forthc. a.

Despite being continuously attached for four years or so to Jaisingh's court, Kṛṣṇadeva remained based in Braj, with a special focus on the Madanamohana temple of Kāmāṃ. From administrative and fiscal papers we know of the largesse showered on him by the king.⁸ In 1718, he was sent to Bengal to mediate the persistently conflicting positions within the Gauḍīya order. For Jaisingh, he wrote five texts, out of which four figure prominently, and in addition to these he left numerous letters and brief statements which allow us to reconstruct the kind of issues he mediated.⁹ The four main treatises are the *Jñāna-*, *Karma-* and *Bhaktivivṛti* and the *Siddhāntaikyaprakāśikā*. Of the *vivṛtis*, only the one on *bhakti* is dated (1722), but of the three, this was probably the last.¹⁰ In the treatises it is clearly stated that the texts were commissioned from Kṛṣṇadeva by the king. We also know that the king himself made amendments in some disputed texts of the Gauḍīya order to iron out what were from his point of view positions bordering on heresy (Bansal 1980, l.c.). Finally, we also know that Kṛṣṇadeva was personally responsible for the outcome of the *śūstrārtha* for which he had written those treatises (Bahura 1976, l.c.). Apart from these, he authored commentaries on Viśvanātha's, Rūpa Gosvāmī's and other authors' works (Burton 2000). The weight of his texts is only enhanced by the fact that, being written to advance conclusive decisions to be taken by the king that would be palpable also to non-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the author refrains completely from polemical statements. He certainly does quote Rūpa Kavirāja's points, but in the *Karmavivṛti* he does not even go as far as to mention his name. The argument is established almost solely on the basis of the scriptural tradition received as canonical by the Gauḍīyas. This scholastic method should not delude us into believing that we are dealing with an issue confined to the minds of the learned.

Here I am presenting Kṛṣṇadeva's *Karmavivṛti*. In doing so I follow the organisation of the text. Kṛṣṇadeva first defines what ritual is. Given the presupposition that the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* are the perfection of the Veda, not its supersession, Kṛṣṇadeva unsurprisingly sets out from the definition of the Śrauta sacrifice, namely, *dravyaṃ devatā tyāga (Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra 1.2.2)*, albeit proceeding directly from the argument put forth by Śāṅkara in his commentary on *Bhagavadgītā* 8.3. Here, *karma* and *visarga*, "outpouring", are equated (*visargaḥ karmasamjñītaḥ*). The half-line runs,

8 Burton 2000; Horstmann 2004.

9 Bahura 1976: 110 n. 3; Kapad Dwara 1523 and 1295.

10 The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (11.20.6) establishes a triad of disciplines arranged in that sequence, namely *yogās trayo mayā proktā nṛṇāṃ śreyovihitsayā | jñānaṃ karma ca bhaktiś ca nopāyo 'nyo 'sti kutrचित् ||*

bhūtabhāvodbhavakaro visargaḥ karmasaṃjñitaḥ ||

[...] the outpouring that brings about the origination of the being of the creatures is called act.¹¹

This again refers to the idea that it is by the sacrifice that the cosmic wheel is kept in motion, as put forth in *Bhagavadgītā* 3. 14–21,

Creatures exist by food, food grows from rain, rain springs from sacrifice, sacrifice arises from action. (3.14)

This ritual action, you must know, originates from the *brahman* of the Veda, and this *brahman* itself issues from the Syllable *OM*. (3.15)

Therefore the ubiquitous *brahman* is forever based upon sacrifice. He who does not keep rolling the wheel that has been set in motion, indulging his senses in a lifespan of evil, lives for nothing, Pārtha. (3.16)

On the other hand, a man who delights in the self, is satiated with the self, is completely contented with the self alone, has nothing left to do. (3.17)

He has no reason at all to do anything or not to do anything, nor does he have any incentive or personal interest in any creature at all. (3.18)

Therefore pursue the daily tasks disinterestedly, for, while performing his acts without self-interest, a person obtains the highest good (*param*). (3.19)

For it was by acting alone that Janaka and others achieved success, so you too must act while only looking to what holds together the world (*lokasaṃgraha*). (3.20)

People do whatever the superior man does: people follow what he sets up as a standard. (3.21)¹²

Kṛṣṇadeva would throughout his discourse always recall these ideas, notably action without self-interest, but in the cosmic interest of “holding the world together”. From the process depicted in *Bhagavadgītā* 3.14, he can logically equate *visarga* with *tyāga*, *tyāga* with *yajña*, and *yajña* with *karma*. Anything that is righteous (*dharma*) and called *karma* is characterised by this. That *dharma/karma* is founded on the Veda who is Nārāyaṇa himself. And finally, the “domain of the Vedas is the world of the three *guṇas*”, as Kṛṣṇadeva concludes by quoting *Bhagavadgītā* 2.45. This is already a hint that ritual is going to be extended to the total comportment of the devotee in the world.

As for ritual acts, they lead either to involvement in the world (*pravṛtti*) or to rest (*nivṛtti*). Anything that is governed by one’s own wishes and objectives

11 *Bhagavadgītā* (trans. van Buitenen 1981: 101). In the following, all translated passages from the *Bhagavadgītā* are taken from that translation.

12 Trans. van Buitenen 1981: 83.

leads to further involvement in the world. Therefore, *kāmya* rites, which are performed to obtain the fulfilment of a wish, are forbidden. This leaves us with the *nitya* and *naimittika* ritual. Also this is denounced as *pravṛtta* unless it is carried out “with one’s face turned to Bhagavat”, that is, with the sole objective of pleasing him. In fact, any activity has to follow this description. Therefore, ritual dedicated to Bhagavat leads to pure *bhakti* (*śuddhabhakti*). Put differently, *karma* practised with such an attitude is a practice of pure *bhakti* (*śuddhabhakti-sādhana*), and not something inferior to pure *bhakti*. *Karma* is the door opening on *bhakti*, and but for it, Bhagavat cannot be found. *Karma* can only exist within the norms of one’s own social position (*svadharmā*) (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.20.10–11). There is no salvific action outside service (*sevā*) to Bhagavat to whom every action has to be dedicated. The distinguishing mark of a devotee is that for the sake of *bhakti* he abides by the norms of good conduct (*sadācāra*). Thereby, one’s whole life becomes the arena of a ritual dedicated to Nārāyaṇa. The scriptural authority for this is *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.2.36,

*kāyena vācā manasendriyair vā buddhyātmanā vānusrtasvabhāvāt |
karoti yad yat sakalaṃ parasmai nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayet ||*

All that he performs for someone else by his body, speech, mind, senses, intellect and self because he is disposed to imitate Him, he does for Nārāyaṇa to whom he thereby dedicates it.

Action is determined by attitude which is effective within and without an isolated ritual act.

Now what about the nexus between *karma* and *dharma*? Why are the two connected with *bhakti*? The crucial point is contained in *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.2.6 (and the two subsequent verses, 7–8). Śrīdhara bases his discussion of *pravṛ-* and *nivṛ-* on that stanza which shows the importance attributed to it by him, as much as by subsequent authors.

*a vai puṃsām paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje |
ahaitukyapratihatā yayātmā samprasīdati ||*

Verily, the highest *dharma* of humans is that from which arises *bhakti* of Adhokṣaja, it has no cause and no restraints, the soul finds rest by it.

In fact, the stanza in a nucleus contains the quintessence of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, for it is an answer to that question of existential dimension in the opening chapter (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.1.11 ef),

brūhi naḥ śraddadhānām yenātmā samprasīdati ||

Tell us what it is by which the soul finds rest, for we are full of faith.

This kind of *dharma* is the good conduct comprising ritual and leads to *bhakti* characterised by a growing inclination on the part of the practitioner to listen to

narratives about Bhagavat and to praise him. All this is *bhaktisādhana* (or *bhaktiyoga*). Being a full human being lies in following this kind of *dharma*. The supreme *dharma* is, thereby, *ahaitukī saguṇa bhakti*, conducted within the boundaries of one's own *varṇāśramadharmā* (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.2.13). Unless *dharma* is conducive to *rati*, "love, delight", it is mere toil, something utterly inferior and thwarting human fulfilment.¹³ Accordingly, the view that *bhāva* produces what rites and other strategies fail to do is invalid. Implicitly, this goes to defeat Rūpa Kavirāja's position.

All ritual needs to be more than what is revealed by the visible and audible action, for to prove salvific it has to have an additional quality: Dedication to Bhagavat and the absence of any other ulterior motive. Relevant to any distinction between ritual and ordinary action is the assumption that the practitioner's actions become inseparably linked with listening to religious discourses and praising Bhagavat (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.5.35–36).¹⁴

yad atra kriyate karma bhagavatparitoṣaṇam |
jñānam yat tad adhīnam hi bhaktiyogasamanvitam ||
kurvāṇā yatra karmāṇi bhagavacchikṣayāsakṛt |
grṇanti guṇanāmāni kṛṣṇasyānusmaranti ca ||

Enlightenment, accompanied by *bhaktiyoga*, does not but derive from an act that is done to please Bhagavat.

While performing acts according to Bhagavat's teaching, they praise and remember Kṛṣṇa's excellencies and names.

This, "listening and praising" (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 2.3.11), may be called a shorthand term for religious life as community experience. It is a style of life that leads on to imperturbable love (*prīti*). Its eminence made Śrīdhara Svāmī identify it with the highest *puruṣārtha*, and this was confirmed by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja (*Caitanyacaritāmṛta* 2.9.241). But for this assumption and its implications for a wide concept of ritual and a religious life perfected within the community, Gauḍīya religion would be deprived of its essentials (and so probably would all other *bhakti* systems). All one's senses and one's intellect have to be turned towards Bhagavat (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 4.31.9). Without the religious discourse, *kathā*, the awakening of faith (*śraddhā*) is unfeasible (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 10.14.5). The development that is assumed to take place is from *śraddhā* over *rati* to *bhakti*. All, including *jñāna*, can only be produced by *bhakti* and within the boundary of

13 *Dharmahī svanuṣṭhitāḥ puṁsām viśvakṣenakathāsu yaḥ | notpādayed yadi ratim śrama eva hi kevalam ||*, as *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.2.8 says.

14 Cp. especially *Karmavivṛti* fol. 11b, #7.

the norms of good conduct. The ritual act is purified thereby, because it becomes pleasing to Bhagavat; otherwise it is futile.

Kṛṣṇadeva, after emphasising the communal and communicative factors that determine the “ritual stance”, moves on (fol. 12b, #17)¹⁵. Beyond this extended notion of *karmayoga*, the practitioner also needs to observe the wide spectrum of ethical and social rules (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 3.29.15–19). Apart from serving the deities, this includes doing good to one’s fellow human beings and compassion as well as observing the *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa (*madbhaktikṛt*, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.19.27), and therefore also the renouncer is enjoined to continue practising ritual the boon of which is the love of God for human beings.

The rise of *bhāva* is indicated by man’s eagerness to listen and praise. Therefore, no ritual is valid unless the love of God is constituted in a process of communication. The Gauḍīya system, as Rūpa Gosvāmī established it, first treats *sā-dhanabhakti* from which develops *bhāva*. He did not rigidly define how long ritual had to be sustained during the process of the perfection of love. This is the cleft in which Rūpa Kavirāja inserted his own concept which led him to disapprove of ritual action. Kṛṣṇadeva starts his counter-argument with a passage from *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (11.20.9) which is of pivotal importance for understanding the Gauḍīya tradition.

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvataḥ |
matkathāśravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate ||

One should perform ordinarily prescribed ritual actions until one has developed an indifference toward them or until there arises a faith for listening to my stories.

The Gauḍīya tradition, indeed, emphasises the superiority of *prema* over *karma* and quotes this verse as a testimony. An eminently exemplary case is that of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who says (*Caitanyacaritāmṛta* 2.9.241–2, pp. 476–7),

241. For *prema* comes to Kṛṣṇa from *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana*: and that is the highest end of man, the limit of the goals of men. [...] (In support of this, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.2.40 is quoted.—MH)

242. The abandonment of *karma* and the vilification of *karma*—this the *śāstras* attest; there is never any *prema-bhakti* of Kṛṣṇa from *karma*. [...] (In support of this, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.11.32, *Bhagavadgītā* 18.66, and—*nota bene*—*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.20.9 are quoted.—MH)

15 For some portions, the *Karmavivṛti* proceeds by numbered paragraphs which seems to reflect that Kṛṣṇadeva took up issues submitted to him as a list numbered accordingly.

Already Viśvanātha Cakravartī tried to straighten out the interpretation by

[explaining] “Karma” here as “daily relative duties in *Varṇa* and *Āśrama* life according to the injunctions of the Scriptures”. The Lord Himself has said elsewhere: “The *Śrutis* and the *Smṛtis* are My Own Orders. One who violates them disobeys My Orders, and hence is hostile to Me. Even if he be a devotee, he cannot be a Vaiṣṇava.” The offence mentioned in this śloka cannot be applicable to a pure devotee, because a pure devotee must have crossed the barriers of Karma and Jñāna. In fact, if one performs Karma even after gaining indifference to Karma and gaining faith in listening to and singing the glories of the Lord, then in such cases only one has violated the Orders of the Lord, and not otherwise. (Bon Maharaj 1965: 251)

Kṛṣṇadeva thus squarely addressed the issue by basing his point on that stanza of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.20.9, which seems to blatantly contradict his own position. He tackled the problem by linking it with the issue of eligibility (*adhikāra*) to act. Apart from the general ineligibility to perform *kāmya* rites, there exists among the Gauḍīyas a system of three grades of eligibility. One is inferior (*kaniṣṭha*) and entitles one to *karmayoga*, the advanced (*madhyama*) entitles one to *jñānayoga*, and the superior (*uttama*) makes one eligible for *bhaktiyoga*. As long as one has not achieved *jñāna*- and *bhaktiyoga*, one has to abide by *karmayoga*.¹⁶ The candidate of the inferior grade is not yet firmly rooted in faith (*śraddhā*). The advanced candidate is well-versed in the *śāstras* and has faith, whereas the superior practitioner is rooted in the *śāstras* and reasoning (*yukti*), firmly determined and of mature faith. By this scale, it seems clear that ritual is restricted to the inferior grade of incipient faith. All agree that a mature devotee (*prauḍhaśraddha*) does not commit a sin by not performing ritual. So why should he perform ritual? Despite his missing eligibility to performing ritual (*karmādhikāra*) he must abide by ritual, for it is his duty to contribute to “holding the world together” (*lokasamgraha*). Accordingly, he must not abandon ritual because the *dharma* must be sustained and his family purified. Kṛṣṇadeva expressly refers to the direct injunction of *Bhagavadgītā* 3.20. However, the stance that the devotee takes is one detached from the act itself, for he acts as an exemplar of *dharma*. It is by his example that the unenlightened or immature faith recognise the impact of *śraddhā* and *bhakti*. This duty is especially well taken care of by householders, although it also applies to renouncers. As long as humans live they have to conduct ritual. So doing does not sully the state of *suddhabhakti*. Faith (*śraddhā*) is no uncertain term, for in the Gauḍīya tradition

16 I am here not pursuing the issue of *jñāna*, which is discussed in the *Karmavivṛti*, but which also forms the topic of a separate treatise, the *Jñānavivṛti*.

it is *śāstrārthaviśvāsa*.¹⁷ That faith is tantamount to faith in the decisions arrived at by the debates of the learned has been emphasised deliberately. Kṛṣṇadeva as spokesman of the king confirms the *śāstrārtha* as authority against popular belief which holds, as Kṛṣṇadeva reports, that deviating from good conduct does no harm if only one firmly believes, and this is also corroborated by scriptural testimony. For Kṛṣṇadeva this is as terrible as venerating alien gods. Hence faith is delimited to faith in learned authority, and based foremost upon the triad of serving the guru (*gurusevā*), initiation, and following the path of the godly (*sādhuvartmānuvartanam*) (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 2.74 and pass.).

There may, no doubt, arise a state when a man cannot but abandon ritual, when this happens spontaneously because he finds himself transformed (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 2.67 = *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.11.32). The transformation makes him partake of Bhagavat in all that exists. At this stage, he takes refuge in Bhagavat (*madekaśaraṇa*). Ultimately, *śraddhā* and *śaraṇāpatti* coincide.

If, from such a perspective, the *prauḍhaśraddha* is exempt from ritual, how is his status to be ascertained? One unconditional symptom is *śaraṇāpatti*. However, this has at least two properties, compliance (*ānukūlasaṃkalpa*) and humility. Because the perfected devotee may have retained earlier stances of conduct, these must be rectified by rites within the spectre of ethics conforming to his status in the world (*maryādā*).

The conclusion from this kind of reasoning is that, for the sake of “holding the world together”, also the supreme form of *bhakti*, *rāgānugā*, even in its ultimate perfection (*mukhyarāgānugā*), requires that ritual injunctions be faithfully executed. Thus, whereas the perfected devotee (*siddhabhakta*) is certainly considered to be a transformed persona, the stance of a practitioner (*sādhaka*) retains social relevance for him, for to serve those who are Bhagavat’s own (*tadīya*) is part of the sixty-four kinds of *vaidhīsādhanabhakti* (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 2.89–95). Consonant with *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 11.11, Kṛṣṇadeva reviews the spectre of social action (*sādhusevā*) coming within the orbit of *karma* with its material aspects. The quintessence of the text is that *śuddhabhakti* and “holding the world together” are linked. *Bhakti* can only be attained within the boundaries of the all-encompassing good conduct (*sadācāra*). This implies that the ritual stance cannot be dissociated from the totality of the practitioner’s lifestyle and attitudes.

It is obvious that the debate triggers the question of how this sophisticated reasoning could effectively relate to what actually happened in the religious practice. The decision taken certainly did discipline deviant practitioners, per-

17 This is the definition given by Jīva Gosvāmī, cp. *Karmavivṛti*, fol 24b.

haps by force rather than by argument. It repressed the status of renouncers to the benefit of householder authorities. It also repressed non-canonical doctrine, for in the same breath the canon was rigidly defined and the heretical works condemned.¹⁸ How far, however, did it reach the common devotee? If we ask this question on the basis of contemporary practice, two points seem obvious. Firstly and unsurprisingly, scholarly debates such as the reported one are beyond the interest and capacity of devotees beyond a handful of specialists, for whom much is at stake and who operate in a politically charged atmosphere. Secondly, the Gauḍīya tradition remains a specialist tradition. Its orthodoxy and orthopraxy, however, are effectively and powerfully mediated and transported to the congregation of ordinary devotees by a sophisticated apparatus of aesthetic performance of ritual, also ritual drama, dance and music, and that which the texts call in that short-hand fashion “listening and praising”, that is religious discourse and communal worship of the *kīrtan* type. As an element of this, the display of *bhāva* is permitted and appreciated, but it unfolds, as it were, following an established norm and does not spill over the boundaries within which space is provided for it. The impact of ritual must therefore be assessed within its wider living context.

References

- Bhagavadgītā. The Bhagavadgītā in the Mahābhārata. Text and translation.* Ed. and tr. by J. A. B. van Buitenen. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press. 1981.
- Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, with Śrīdhara Svāmī’s *Bhāvārthadīpikā*. Ed. Paṇḍey Rāmtej Śāstrī... Banaras: Paṇḍit-Pustakālay. V.S. 2019.
- Rūpa Gosvāmī. *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*. Ed. and tr. by Triḍaṇḍī Swāmī Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāj. Vrindaban. 1965 (incomplete).—Ed. and tr. by David L. Haberman. Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Motilal Banarsidass. 2003.
- Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja 1999. *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*. Tr. by Edward C. Dimock, Jr. With an Introduction by Edward C. Dimock, Jr. and Tony K. Stewart. Ed. by Tony K. Stewart. (Harvard Oriental Series, v. 56). Cambridge, Mass.: Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard University. Distr. by Harvard University Press.
- Kapad Dwara [Kapaṛ Dvārā] Collection of the City Palace, Jaipur.
- Kṛṣṇadeva Bhaṭṭācārya. *Karmavivṛti*. MS 2342. Pothikhānā, City Palace, Jaipur.

18 Bansal 1980: 504–6; documents in the holdings of the Vrindaban Research Institute, microfilm T[emples]/[reel]2, frames 23 and 24.

- Bahura, Gopal Narayan 1976. *Literary Heritage of the Rulers of Amber and Jaipur: with an Index to the Register of Manuscripts in the Pothikhana of Jaipur*. Jaipur: Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum.
- Bansal, Nareś Candra 1980. *Caitanya-sampradāy: siddhānt aur sāhitya*. Agra: Vinod Pustak Mandir.
- Burton, Adrian 2000. "Bengali Brahmins and Rajasthani Rajahs: An Archival and Textual Investigation into the Text and Times of the Sārārtha-varṣiṇī Commentary on the Bhagavad-gītā by Viśvanātha Cakravartī". Canberra, unpublished Ph.D. thesis Australian National University.
- Haberman, David L. 1988. *Acting as a Way of Salvation*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Horstmann, Monika 2004. "A Theological Statement by Kṛṣṇadeva Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya". In: *The Ananda-Vana of Indian Art*, Krishna, Naval & Manu Krishna (ed.). Banaras: 367–374.
- forthcoming. a. "Power and Status: Rāmānandī Warrior Ascetics in 18th-century Jaipur". In: *Asceticism and power in South Asia*, Flügel, Peter and Gustaaf Houtman (ed.). Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Mukherjee, Tarapada & Irfan Habib 1989. "The Mughal Administration and the Temples of Vrindavan during the Reigns of Jahangir and Shajahan". In: *PIHC* 49th session, Dharwad: 287–300.
- Siṃha, Bhagvatī Prasād V.S. 2014. *Rāmbhakti mē Rasik Sampradāy*. Balrāmpur: Avadh-Sāhitya-Mandir.

CONTRIBUTORS

Monika Boehm-Tettelbach (author's name: Monika Horstmann) is head of the Department of Modern South Asian Studies at the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University. Her fields of research include Hinduism since its early modern period.

Gérard Colas is Directeur de recherche at the CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) and a member of the Centre for Indian and South Asian Studies (Paris). His major interests include Sanskrit religious and philosophical literature and Indian paleography. He is currently working on a history of the understanding of religious images in ancient India.

Oliver Freiburger is Assistant Professor at the Department of Asian Studies, University of Texas at Austin. His research interests include Indian Buddhism, asceticism in comparative perspective, and method and theory in the study of religion.

Jörg Gengnagel is research fellow of the Collaborative Research Centre "Dynamics of Ritual" at Heidelberg University. He is member of the Department of Modern South Asian Studies at the South Asia Institute. His fields of research include court ritual in Jaipur, the sacred topography of Banaras and dualistic Śaivism.

Ute Hüsken is currently research fellow of the Collaborative Research Centre "Dynamics of Ritual" at Heidelberg University. She lectures at the Department of Classical Indology of the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg and at present works on Vaiṣṇava Temple Rituals in the South Indian temple town Kāñcīpuram. Her main fields of research are Theravāda Buddhism, ritual studies, and South Indian Vaiṣṇavism.

Axel Michaels is head of the Department of Classical Indology at the South Asia Institute and speaker of the Collaborative Research Centre "Dynamics of Ritual" at Heidelberg University. Among his fields of specialization are Nepalese culture and religion, ritual studies and Dharmaśāstra.

Srilata Raman is lecturer in Sanskrit and research fellow currently heading a project on Temple rituals in Kancipuram at the Department of Classical Indology, South Asia Institute. Her areas of research include medieval South Indian Bhakti and 19th century socio-religious reform movements.

Marion Rastelli is a research fellow at the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna. Her research focuses on the teachings and ritual of Pāñcarātra.

Alexander von Rospatt is Professor in the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies of the University of California at Berkeley. At Hamburg University he earned his Ph.D with a study of the Buddhist doctrine of momentariness. In addition to doctrinal history, he is interested in the living traditions of Buddhism in South Asia.

Karin Steiner is research fellow at the Department of East- and South Asian Cultural Studies of the University of Würzburg. Her research interests are classical Sanskrit dramatic literature and the cultural and historical contextualisation of Sanskrit drama, Vedic studies (philologically grounded as well as Vedic ritual and society).

INDEX

- Abhinavagupta 37
abhiṣeka 58, 147, 173, 206, 213, 221
ācārya 91–110, 149, 151, 162, 164, 168,
 177, 183, 185, 189, 207, 210, 213, 218,
 220–222, 247
ācāryābhiṣeka 210, 218, 220, 221
adhikāra (eligibility to act) 286
 Adriaensen, R. 66, 68
āgamadīkṣā 165
agnicayana 257, 259, 260
Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā 19, 115–122, 124–
 127, 129, 132
 animal sacrifice, Vedic 259
ānukūlasaṃkalpa 287
 Araiyaars 27
arcaka 153, 154, 162, 166, 169, 182, 189,
 190, 191
Arthaśāstra 19, 239–241, 245
arthavāda 38
 ascetic lineage 100
 ascetic requisites 238
 ascetic-householder 245
āśrama 99, 100, 214, 236, 249, 253, 286
 Aṣṭākṣaramantra 96, 106
 authority, liturgical and political 271
 auxiliary rites 93, 107
avimuktakṣetra 68, 69
 A vimukteśvara 69, 86

bāhāh. See *vihāra*
bahīh. See *vihāra*
 Bakker, H. 66, 68, 69
bandhu 188, 262
bare chuyegu 20, 199–203, 205–207, 210–
 222
 bath, symbolic 93
Baudhāyanaśrautasūtra 262
Bhagavadgītā 95, 110, 281, 282, 285, 286

Bhāgavatapurāṇa 279, 281, 283–287
bhakti 88, 111, 121, 123, 124, 126, 135,
 151, 164, 277, 279, 281, 283–287
Bhaktirasāmrtasindhu 279, 280, 287
bhaktisādhana 284
Bhaktivivṛti 281
bhaktiyoga 284, 286
 Bhaṭṭarāi, K. 52, 69
bhāva 21, 50, 175, 215, 278, 279, 284, 285,
 288
bhikku. See *bhikṣu*
bhikṣu (*bhikkhu*) 204, 207, 209, 215, 219,
 243, 245, 248
bhūtaśuddhi 116, 117, 119, 121–123
 book religions 7
 Boyd, J.W. 21, 260
 Brahmanical model 211
 Brahmanical practice 212
brāhmasaṃskāras 178
Brahmavaivartapurāṇa 70, 71
 branding 92, 98, 99, 163, 164
brhaspatis 189, 190
Brhatsaṃnyāsopaniṣad 236, 238, 241, 246,
 247
 Buc, P. 17
 Buddhist lay castes 220
 Buddhist monasticism 207, 209, 243
 Buddhist specialists 201
 Buddhist specialists, distinct identity as 219

Caitanyacaritāmṛta 279, 284, 285
caturāśrama 214, 222
 Caturdaśāyatanayātrā 69
caturthīhoma 180, 188
caturthīkarman 155, 159
caturthīvāsa 158–161, 168, 169, 180, 181,
 184, 187, 189, 190
caturthīvrata 155, 159, 169, 184

- conversion ceremony 92
cūdā (tuft) 53, 205, 212–214, 219, 220, 229
cūdākarman 205, 212–214, 222
- daily worship, procedures of 107
daivasamṣkāras 178
dakṣiṇā. *See* sacrificial fees
darbha-grass 186
 Daśanāmī 77
Daśavidhahetunirūpaṇa 167, 170–178, 181–183, 187
 deification 216
 de-individualizing 58, 60
 determination of location 45
devayajana. *See* rite of regeneration
 Dharma Saṃgha 76, 77
dharmasālā 71, 73
 Dharmasūtras 170, 214, 235, 236, 244, 251, 253
dīkṣā 102, 163–166, 173, 221
 Dimock, E.C. 279
 disrobing 200, 201, 210, 211, 218, 219, 228
 Dvaya Mantra 93, 95, 99, 105, 106
- Eck, D. 68
ekāyanaśākhā 172
 Ethno-Indology 11
- faith (*śraddhā*) 215, 284–287
 fire-sacrifice 40, 96
 framing 75, 76, 78
- Gadādhara 280
garbhādhāna 155–161, 167, 168, 174, 176, 177, 179, 183, 187, 189, 191
garbhasamṣkāras 179
garbhavaīṣṇava 164, 165
 Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism 280, 281
 Gāyatrī Mantra 93, 105, 199
 Geertz, C. 11
 gender, transgression of 278
 genealogical criteria 20, 53, 57
 Goody, J. 8, 259
 Gosvāmīs of Vrindaban 278
 Govinddevjī 280
- Graham, W.A. 8
 Ṛṅhyasūtras 155, 167
guruparamparā 93, 95, 99, 105, 134, 167, 192
- Handelman, D. 17, 75, 76
 Heesterman, J. 11, 26, 258, 259, 270
 hereditary *saṃnyāsins* or *jogis* 213, 222
 historical contextualization of ritual 271
 Höfer, A. 9
homa 10, 47, 93, 94, 96–100, 103–107, 158, 159, 168, 177, 180, 186, 187, 221
 householder monk 209, 219–222
 Hubert, H. 258, 259
 Humphrey, C. 11, 15, 16, 21, 25, 58, 59, 112, 115, 258, 260, 262, 268, 271
- identification with a chosen deity 216
 incorporation (*agrégation*) 217, 237
 indological research 8, 28, 33
 Indra 267
 initiates, female 92–95, 100, 101
intentio solemnis 58
 irreversible ritual 235, 244–246, 248, 250
 Isaacson, H. 66, 68
- Jain *pūjā* 15, 115
jātaka 160, 161, 168, 175, 178, 179
 Jaṭila 240, 244
Jñānavāpī 65, 70, 72, 79
Jñānavivṛti 281, 286
jñānayoga 286
 Journal of Ritual Studies 21
- kāmya* rites 283, 286
 Kāñcīpuram 95, 99, 100, 111
karmādhikāra (eligibility to performing ritual) 169, 286
Karmavivṛti 281, 284, 285, 287
karmayoga 285, 286
 Kāśīdarśanayātrā Maṇḍala 67, 74, 76, 78
Kāśīkhaṇḍa 65–71, 80
Kāśīrahasya 69–74, 80, 83, 84
kathā. *See* religious speeches
Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra 281
kaytā pūjā 218

- Keṇiya 244, 245
kīrtana 87, 285
 Kōyiloluku, chronicles of the Shrirangam temple 27
krama (sequence) 78
Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā 202, 204–208, 210, 212, 214
 Kṛṣṇadeva 280–282, 285–287
Kuṇḍikā Upaniṣad 236, 238, 239
- Laghusaṃnyāsopaniṣad* 236, 238, 239
 Laidlaw, J. 11, 15, 16, 21, 25, 58–60, 112, 115, 258, 260, 262, 268, 271
 Lakṣmīdhara 69, 70
 lay donor 240
 lay Newar Buddhist, religious identity of a 220
 Lévi, S. 9, 25
 life cycle rites 261
Liṅgapurāṇa 72
 localization 53, 57, 60
 Lokanātha 280
- Madanamohana 281
 Mahāyāna Buddhism, Nepalese 200
 Mahāyāna Buddhism, Tantric 222
Mānavadharmasāstra 48, 49, 54, 161, 162, 236, 242, 252
mantradīkṣā (*mantra* initiation) 95, 102, 108, 164
mantras 24, 38, 58, 92, 94, 95, 97, 99, 101, 103–108, 110, 117–119, 179–181, 184, 186–190, 221, 238, 248, 253, 260
mantrasaṃskāra 92, 95, 99–102, 105–108
 mass ritual ceremonies 92
 Mauss, M. 25, 258, 259
 meaningful and intentional acts 59
 meaninglessness of ritual 21, 59, 91, 259, 260, 262
mekhalā (girdle) 199, 213, 214
 mental visualizations and reflections 125
 mental worship 122, 123
 Mīmāṃsāsūtras 37
 monk, wandering 239, 240
 monkhood, permanent 211
 monks, vocational 201
- mudrās* (hand-gestures) 88, 94, 97, 137, 144, 150, 163, 164
 Mūlasarvāstivādins, Vinaya of the 18, 203, 206, 215, 222
 Muṇḍa 240
- naimittika* 280, 283
nāmasaṃskāra 92, 100, 104, 107
 Nambudiri Brahmin 257, 259
Nāradaparivṛājakopaniṣad 236–238, 246–248
 Nārāyaṇa Mantra, eight-syllabled. See Aṣṭākṣaramantra
 Newar Buddhist rituals 202
niḡamadīkṣā 165
niṣeka 18, 20, 153–177, 180, 183, 184, 186, 190
niṣekaprayoga 185, 186
nitya 280, 283
Nityagrantha 19, 115–129, 132
 non-ritual 21, 110
 Nṛsiṃha Vājapeyin 157, 160, 166–169, 184, 187
- offering, abandoning of 40
 Olivelle, P. 100, 205, 214, 235–242, 245–254
 oral texts 8, 15
 ordination, temporary 18, 201, 202, 210, 211, 213
 orthodoxy and orthopraxy 288
- Pañcakrośīvidhāna* 71, 83, 84
 Pañcakrośīyātrā 18, 45, 61, 67, 69–71, 73, 75–77, 79, 80, 84
 Pāñcarātra texts 101, 174
 Pāñcarātra tradition 24, 116, 119, 126, 172
 Pāñcarātrāgama 24
 Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās 116, 122, 127, 128, 170, 172–175
 Pāñcarātrasūtra 174, 175
 Pāñcarātrins 154, 163–166, 172–174
pañcasamskāras 20, 91–93, 96–104, 107, 110–112, 163, 164
 pandits 31, 41
pārājika rule 243, 248

- Parāśaraviśiṣṭaparamadharmasāstra* 91,
101, 102, 106–108, 111
- Pārthasārathi Bhāṭṭācārya 167, 169, 170,
181–184
- pātimokkha*. *See* *prātimokṣa*
- performance of the rituals, physical 129
- performative rituals 10
- performer's intention 115
- personalization 53, 57, 58, 60
- pilgrimage practice, deviant 74
- pilgrimage traditions, invention and re-
invention of 76
- polythetic definition 17
- praiṣa*. *See* renunciation call
- Prajāpati 252, 253, 263, 264, 267, 268
- prapatti* 110–112, 126
- pratijñā* (great promise) 58, 72, 85
- prātimokṣa* (*pātimokkha*) 244
- Prativāti Payaṅkaram Aṅṅaṅkarācāriyār
Svāmi 95
- praudhaśraddha* 286, 287
- pravrajyā* 199, 200, 202–207, 210, 211,
213, 214, 216–218, 222, 231, 239
- pravrajyā* rite 203, 205, 222
- pravrajyāvidhi* 206, 207
- prāyaścitta* 89, 158, 161, 168, 180, 185,
186, 190, 191
- Prayoga 29, 49, 132, 179, 182, 185, 187,
190
- premabhakti* 285
- preparatory rites 47, 218
- preparatory sub-rites 47
- priests, gift of lands to 42
- Prinsep, J. 74
- processions, re-invention and invention of
66
- pūjā* 10, 19, 20, 25–27, 37, 47, 53, 65, 72,
84, 95–97, 107, 115, 116, 121, 122, 134,
137, 141, 145, 152, 164
- puṃsavana* 156, 157, 159
- punḍrasaṃskāra* 92, 94, 99, 100, 102–104
- purity restrictions 217
- Rādhāvinodilālji 280
- rāgānugā* 279, 287
- Rāmarasikasampradāya 278
- Raṭṭhapālasutta* 244
- religious concepts 54
- religious donations 245
- religious identity, sectarian 113
- religious speeches (*kathā*, *śravaṇa*) 74, 79,
284, 285
- renouncers 24, 220, 239–244, 246, 247,
250, 277, 278, 286, 288
- renunciation call (*praiṣa*) 238, 242, 248,
249
- renunciation, handbooks on 242
- renunciation, rite of 19, 20, 235, 236, 239,
245, 250–253
- renunciation, three alternative ways of 248
- renunciatory acts, sequence of 215
- re-renunciation 246, 247
- rite of passage 46, 47, 153, 155, 199–202,
205, 211, 212, 216, 217, 221, 222
- rite of regeneration (*devayajana*) 266, 267
- ritual acts, beginning of 124
- ritual body 178, 192
- ritual death 238, 239, 242, 249, 253
- ritual decisions 48
- ritual gestures 47, 50, 58
- ritual handbooks 23, 29, 32, 33, 37, 40, 41,
45, 185, 203, 207, 210
- ritual handbooks, critical edition of 35
- ritual performance 15, 21, 29–31, 39, 67,
80, 112, 113, 237, 248, 268
- ritual performance, timing of the 57
- ritual practice 16–18, 30, 37, 50, 67, 80, 91,
112, 212, 271
- ritual purity, notions of 217
- ritual stance 60, 285, 287
- ritual structures 37
- ritual texts, critical edition of 33
- ritual time 56
- ritual, contemporary 16, 91, 92, 111, 112,
258
- ritual, definition of 17
- ritual, fruit of the 49
- ritual, intentionality of 58, 59, 110
- ritual, non-intentionality of 59, 115
- rituals, exegesis of 10
- rituals, textualization of 67, 80, 271
- robes, renunciation of 216

- rtusaṅgamana* 155–160, 167–169, 183–190
- rtusaṅgamanaprayoga* 186
- Rūpa Kavirāja 19, 20, 277, 279–281, 284, 285
- sacred geography 50, 54
- sacred space 54, 60
- sacrifice (*yajña*, *yāga*) 10, 25, 26, 47, 49, 97, 99, 103, 107, 111, 126, 137, 156, 158, 160, 162, 178, 190, 238, 246, 248, 252, 253, 257–259, 262–264, 269, 281, 282
- sacrificer's chariot 267
- sacrificer's wife 265
- sacrifices, twenty two 156, 157, 162
- sacrificial fees (*dakṣiṇā*) 47, 54, 89, 93, 94, 99
- sacrificial fire 93, 94, 103, 158, 239
- sacrificial pole (*yūpa*) 263, 264, 266–269
- sadācāra* (good conduct) 283, 287
- sādhakadeha* 279
- sādhana*bhakti 285, 287
- sādhusevā* (social action) 287
- Śaivāgama 24
- samāśrayaṇa* 91–96, 99, 101, 102, 107–113, 163
- saṃgha* 200–203, 206–208, 211, 213, 217, 229, 234
- saṃkalpa* (declaration of intention) 19, 20, 45–55, 57–61, 67, 76, 78, 79, 85, 96, 97, 124, 138, 161, 179, 186, 188, 192, 212, 214
- saṃkalpa*, distinctive features of 46
- saṃkalpa*-conflict 79
- saṃnyāsa* tradition 214
- Samnyāsa Upaniṣads 19, 236, 237, 241, 247, 248, 250–253
- saṃskāra* *niṣeka* 153, 154, 170, 171, 182, 189
- saṃskāra*, first 155, 157, 160, 161, 171, 175, 177, 180, 183, 185, 192
- saṃskāra*, *niṣeka* as first 172, 177, 179
- saṃskāras* 106–108, 153–166, 168–175, 177–182, 185, 189, 191, 192, 199, 210, 212, 213, 215–217, 222, 227
- saṃskāras*, eighteen 156, 157, 159, 162, 166, 167, 187
- saṃskāras*, forty 156, 157, 160
- saṃskāras*, additional 191
- saṃskāras*, Brahmanical 206, 216
- saṃskāras*, incorporating the 222
- sandhyā* 104, 117, 119, 186
- Sanskrit Prayoga texts 185
- Sanskrit ritual texts 26
- śaraṅāgati* 116–118, 120, 125, 126, 152
- Śaraṅāgatigadya* 111, 121, 125
- śaraṅāpatti* 287
- Sāratthappakāsinī* 209, 245
- śarīra* 135, 136
- śarīrasaṃskāra* 162
- Sārvabhauma Kṛṣṇadeva Bhaṭṭācārya 278
- śāstrārtha* 281, 287
- Śātyāyanīyopaniṣad* 241, 247
- sauryavāda* 280
- Sautrāmaṇī 257, 265
- second birth 199, 211
- śeṣa* 122–124, 146
- Setubandhaṭikā* 72
- sevā* 27, 283, 287
- shamanic practises 271
- Shrirangam, temple of 27
- siddhabhaktā* 287
- siddhadeha* 279
- siddhānta* 173, 174
- Siddhāntaikyaprakāśikā* 281
- siddhāntas* 177
- siddhāntas*, four 172–174
- śimanta* 156, 157, 159, 160
- Śivarahasya* 72
- skambha* (cosmic pillar) 268
- Skandapurāṇa* 66–70
- soma* ritual 19, 261–264, 266, 270
- soma* sacrifice 269
- speech-act 20, 48, 50, 58–60
- Sprockhoff, J.F. 213, 236–239, 242
- śraddhā*. *See* faith
- śraddhā* rites, maintenance of the 215
- śrāmaṇera* 200, 204
- Śrauta ritual 39, 257, 259–261, 269, 271
- Śrauta sacrifice 281
- Śrāvakayāna in the Newar tradition 216

- śravaṇa*. See religious speeches
 Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu 278
 Sri Vaikhanasa Divya Vivardhini Sabha
 182
 Śrīnivāsa Dīkṣita 167, 169–181, 183, 184,
 187, 188, 190, 192
 Śrīvaikuṅṭhagadya 127, 128
 Śrīvaiṣṇava ācārya 91, 95
 Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition 163
 Staal, F. 11, 21, 23, 58, 59, 257–259, 260–
 262
 sub-rites 47, 92, 96, 185, 186
śuddhabhakti 283, 286, 287
śuddhabhaktisādhana 283
 Sudinna 243, 244
 Sukul, Kubernāth 79
Suprabhedāgama 172
 supra-regional aspect 54
surā 263–266, 271
Suttanipāta 244, 245
 Svāmī Karpātrī 77
svāmya 181
svārājya 263, 267, 268
- Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa* 262, 264, 266, 268,
 269
 Tambiah, S. 10, 21, 22, 58
 Tantric initiations, set of highest 221
tāntrika 155, 163–165
tāpasamskāra 92, 94, 98, 102, 103, 108,
 163
Tātparyacintāmaṇi 166, 170, 175, 177–
 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 187, 188
 technical chain of acts 25
 temple priests, Brahmin caste of 153
 temple rites, interpretation of 37
 temple rites, performers of 40
 temple, Vaiṣṇava 24, 27, 41, 191
 temporary ordination, practice of 210
 Teṅkalai 95, 99, 101, 109, 110–113
 text, authenticity of 34
 texts, ritualization of 67, 271
 throne 118, 119, 123, 127, 218, 234
 Timm, J.R. 8, 16
 Tīrtha Purohitas 76
Tīrthavivecanakāṇḍa 69, 70
 tonsure 104, 107, 156, 205, 206, 212, 227–
 229
Tristhalīsetu 70
 Turner, V. 11, 19, 261, 262, 264, 268
- udāsthita* (apostate renouncer) 239–243,
 246–250
upacāra 53, 96, 104
upādhyāya, officiating 203, 229, 247
upanayana (sacred thread ceremony) 18,
 52, 53, 103, 107, 108, 156, 160, 163,
 168, 169, 175, 179, 183, 185, 199, 200,
 203, 205, 206, 210, 211–214, 217, 219,
 220–222
upāsaka 203, 204, 207, 219, 222
upāsaka vows, five 219
upasampadā ordination 204, 207, 248
upasampadā ritual 207
ūrdhvaṇḍra 94, 104, 133, 186
- vaidhībhakti* 278
vaidika 154, 161, 163–165, 169, 172
vaidika tradition 154
 Vaikhānasa identity 184, 185, 192
 Vaikhānasa medieval corpus 24, 29–33, 36,
 38, 41
 Vaikhānasa pedigree 181
 Vaikhānasa ritual handbooks 23
 Vaikhānasa ritual texts 23, 24
 Vaikhānasa temple priests 24, 30
 Vaikhānasa tradition 153, 155, 162, 167,
 169, 171, 172, 177, 179, 185, 189, 191
 Vaikhānasa-dīkṣā 166
 Vaikhānasaguruparamparā 167
 Vaikhānasasamhitās 153, 154, 162, 163,
 166, 169, 180, 183
Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra 24, 153–162, 166–
 170, 175, 177, 178, 180, 181, 184, 186–
 188, 190, 191, 251
 Vaikuṅṭha 122, 127, 128
vājapeya 19, 156, 257, 260–269, 271, 276
vajracārya 218, 220–222
 Vallabha tradition 27
 van Gennep, A. 19, 217, 237, 261, 264
varṇa 57, 92, 199, 286
 Vaṭakalai 95, 99–101, 109, 111–113

- Vedic and post-Vedic literature 10
 Vedic culture 7, 262
 Vedic mantras 24
 Vedic rites 32, 37, 251
 Vedic sacrifice 25, 26, 258
 Vedic sacrifice, Hinduisation of 26
 Vedic *sākhā* 24, 173, 179, 182
vihāra (*bāhāḥ*, *bahīḥ*) 200, 202, 208–210
 Vīkhanas 154, 162, 168, 170, 171, 177
vinaya expert 245
 Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta 116, 126–128
 Viṣṇu temples, South Indian 153
viṣṇubali 156, 157, 159, 182, 184, 191
Viṣṇusmṛti 236, 242, 252
 Viśvanātha 69, 280
 Viśvanātha Cakravartī 278–280, 286
 Viśvanātha temple 66, 70, 72, 77, 79
 Viśveśvara 69, 75, 84–86, 88
 Vyās Piṭha 66, 67, 79
 Vyās, Kedārnāth 65–67, 78–80
 Williams, R.G. 21, 260
 Witzel, M. 257, 270, 271
 worship by means of *maṇḍalas* 206
 worship, agent of 124
 worship, attainment of fitness for 121
 worship, external 119
 worship, prerequisite for 125
 worship, purposes of 120
 worship, reorganization of 27

yāga. *See* sacrifice
yāgasamskāra 92, 97, 101, 102, 106, 107, 111, 112
yajamāna 24, 26, 57, 60, 199, 207, 229, 263, 264, 266–269
yajña. *See* sacrifice
yajña or *yāga*, mechanical aspect of 25
yajñasamskāras 178
yajñopavīta 147, 148, 151, 199, 213, 237
yogapaṭṭa 247
yūpa. *See* sacrificial pole
yūpārohaṇa 264, 268, 271