Hindu and Buddhist Initiations in India and Nepal

Edited by
Astrid Zotter and Christof Zotter

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Cover: The initiand is ritually bathed by his sisters (*vratabandha* of Raunak Koirala, Deopatan, March 2006, photo by Astrid Zotter)

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Astrid and Christof Zotter

Preface

The volume at hand brings together the papers of the International Symposium "Hindu and Buddhist Initiations in India and Nepal" held at Heidelberg in May 2008. Sponsored by the *German Research Foundation* (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, DFG) and by the symposia program of the University of Heidelberg, this event was organized under the aegis of the Collaborative Research Centre (Sonderforschungsbereich) on *Ritual Dynamics*. Its purpose was to discuss changes in and interrelationships among different initiation rituals in South Asia and their relation to other kinds of rituals. Apart from papers delivered at the meeting, we present additional related contributions by Gérard Colas, Kathleen Gögge and Todd Lewis.

Initiation rituals have attracted enormous academic attention ever since Joseph-François Lafitau (1724) first applied the term initiation to individual or collective entry into a new phase of life or into group membership (Streck 2000: 111).[1] On the whole, two explanatory models have dominated debate. Michael Houseman and Carlo Severi observe that "initiation rites are almost invariably analyzed, either explicitly or implicitly, in terms of Van Gennep's (1909) classic three-part progression: separation, liminality, aggregation" (1998: 278). Outside as well as inside academic circles, Van Gennep's structural model of *rites de passage* has often been combined with Eliade's idea of initiation as *regressum ad uterum* and spiritual rebirth (Grimes 2000: 100–7). But both components of this dominant explanation have been subject to criticism. What Pierre Bourdieu misses in Van Gennep's merely descriptive conception of the rites of passage and its more systematic refinement by Victor Turner (1969) is any notion of the "social function and the social significance of the boundaries or limits which the ritual allows one to pass over or transgress in a lawful way" (1991: 117). For Bourdieu, who prefers to speak of "rites of consecration, or rites of legitimation, or, quite simply, *rites of institution*—giving this word the active sense it has, for example, in expressions like '*institution d'un héritier*' ('appointing an heir')" (ibid.)—the essential effect is not the passage, but the separation of those who have undergone the ritual (i.e. the persons initiated), not from those who have not yet undergone it, but from those who are not eligible to undergo it.[2] The social significance of initiation rituals and their role in constructing identity is addressed in several contributions to this volume. Yet such trans-

1 For a survey of the approaches taken by Schurtz, Webster, Van Gennep, Kristensen, Eliade, Thurnwald, Van der Leeuw, Heiler, Goldammer, Van Baaren, Stanner, Turner, Young and La Fontaine, see Snoek 1987. For the more recent approaches of Bloch and Whitehouse, see Gellner in this volume.

2 Bourdieu (1991: 119) calls these rites acts of "social magic" which manage to produce discontinuity where once there was continuity (cp. Wulf & Zirfas 2004: 27–8).

formation by means of ritual is an important but only one aspect of the dynamics of initiations.

When it comes to elucidating other aspects of change, metacultural and transhistorical models of interpretation are of little use. It has been remarked that the pervasiveness of the rites of passage structure undermines its analytical usefulness,[3] and furthermore, that the focus on one structural, symbolical or functional feature blurs the complexity ritual events often display.[4] Changes in details cannot be comprehended by recourse to invariable structures. Mono-causal explanations ignore the possibility of a changing interrelationship among form, function and meaning. If, as in this volume, the notion of dynamics is not restricted to the transformation of persons by rituals but also includes the transformation of rituals by persons, it is useful to base analysis—in accordance with the general agenda set out for the Ethno-Indology Series (see Michaels 2005)—on a study of ritual details in their historical and cultural context.

Treating a given ritual in historical perspective—tracing, in other words, the transformations which have occurred to the ritual in its passage through time—almost necessarily includes an examination of its relationship to other rituals of the same tradition. But interrelations exist not only between rituals within a single tradition. As argued above, rituals of initiation—or more general rituals of institution—allow a person to cross socially constructed borders. Several examples in this volume demonstrate that ritual procedures themselves can overstep borders they themselves are involved in establishing. Whole rituals, or certain elements of them, may ignore social, ethnic and religious boundaries. Some of the elements transferred reappear in different types of rituals. On the one hand, initiations, like other rituals, usually embody the general standards of their given tradition. On the other hand, specific elements of initiations can be found in rituals that are usually not regarded as initiations. While most of the papers in this volume treat initiatory rituals for human agents, some papers show how elements of such rituals are adapted to the installation of non-human objects of worship. Ritual transfer involves, in these and other cases, such readjustments to the new context as the modification of procedures or the reassignment of meanings. Further aspects of the dynamics of ritual addressed by the authors include the relation of script (ritual handbooks) to performance or various forces of change (e.g. the economics of ritual, gender-related variations, modernization and democratization).

The papers of the volume

In South Asian languages there is no single term for what we call initiation rituals. Broadly speaking, two sets of rituals are relevant to a discussion of initiations in Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Firstly, life-cycle rituals (*saṃskāra*s) are observed in many social groups, and are compulsory depending on gender or age. Secondly, there are ini-

3 See Houseman & Severi 1998: 170–1 (with further references).

4 See Gladigow 2004: 57; Grimes 2000: 105–7.

tiations, more optional in character, that allow admittance to a certain religious group or practice; these are usually called *dīkṣā* or *abhiṣeka*. The contributors to this volume treat examples of both kinds of rituals in various Hindu and Buddhist settings. The papers could have been arranged in various ways—for example, according to the religion or region being dealt with. The nature of the material presented or the methodology applied to it could have been still other criteria, again resulting in a rather mechanical grouping into sections. But since our interest lies in the intersections between the different initiatory rituals and between the different ways the contributors approach them, we opted for the following arrangement.

The volume begins with the papers by Christof Zotter and Anne Keßler-Persaud, each of which deals with the Brahmanical life-cyclic initiation (*upanayana*) and such modifications of models of this ritual as can be found in the pan-Indian textual tradition. Both articles present cases in which the *upanayana* is performed together with other life-cycle rituals, and both focus on modifications of the ritual procedure from an historical perspective. Each stresses the fact that the processes of construction, adaptation and change within such rituals are rule-bound. Christof Zotter examines the post-Vedic development of the *upanayana* in one Vedic tradition predominant in Nepal. He demonstrates how the modern-day practice of performing *vratabandha*—that is, a cluster of four *saṃskāra*s from the "making of the tuft of hair" (*cūḍākaraṇa*) up to the "return (after Vedic study)" (*samāvartana*)—is reflected in the recent textual tradition. From a comparison of prescriptive texts of different historical periods he deduces some general principles at work in the evolution of this initiation ritual, such as the successive accumulation of ritual elements or the transfer and adaptation of ritual standards used as a construction kit for the *saṃskāra*s. By means of these rules, the creation of the *vedārambha saṃskāra*, the ritualized beginning of the Vedic study, which nowadays forms part of the *vratabandha*, can be comprehended as well. Whereas among the Bāhun and Chetri of Kathmandu Valley the *upanayana* is, as described by Zotter, the centre of a complex event, Anne Keßler-Persaud shows that among the Gaddi Brahmins in the Kangra Valley the *upanayana* is attached to the nuptial ceremonies, the *vedārambha* being skipped and the *samāvartana* being performed in a condensed form. While the combination of *upanayana* and marriage is a relatively recent economization of the ritual life-cycle, Keßler-Persaud argues that a close connection between *samāvartana* and marriage is attested already in some of the Gṛhyasūtras. According to these texts, either *samāvartana* and marriage are performed in direct succession (with some overlap), which makes the former a prelude to the latter, or the interval between the two is bridged by repeating certain elements of the *samāvartana*—such as a bath, dressing and the reception with *argha*—again at the beginning of a wedding. In both cases, she concludes, from a compositional point of view there is no gap between *samāvartana* and marriage.

While the first two papers analyze complete rituals that undergo a rearrangement of their elements, the third contribution focuses on modifications to the details of a single element in different contexts. Bringing together substantial references to the salving of the eyes (*āñjana*) in different initiations (*dīkṣā* for the Soma sacrifice, *samāvartana*)

and other rituals, Shingo Einoo describes how this element is embedded in the procedures, how the eye salve is applied and which mantras are used. Based on his findings, Einoo points out the different effects achieved by this act. Depending on the setting, it can be observed that such ointment has a general protective or curative function, or else that it is employed to achieve specific results.

Attesting formal interrelations—for example, by pointing out shared elements—is but one way to relate initiations to other rituals. Still other bonds, of a conditional nature, can be observed. The life-cycle initiation is a precondition for marriage and for different forms of *dīkṣā* as well, and it itself requires rituals to be performed in advance. The series of rituals conducted in early childhood, which gradually remove birth-related pollution and prepare an individual for initiation, are the topic of Kathleen Gögge's paper. She presents the results of fieldwork in the Kathmandu Valley and of having analyzed modern Nepalese handbooks. The textual tradition provides normative models for these childhood rituals. Still, as many examples described by Gögge reveal, to a considerable extant the actual responsibility for carrying out the rites lies not with priests who consult manuals but with women (the midwife, the eldest woman of the clan or the mother), who draw their knowledge from oral traditions. Apart from the influence of modern living conditions, the dependence of the ritual procedure on orally transmitted customs of caste, family and locality accounts for the great variance in the performance. Yet despite all variance, the unity of the ritual culture within one ethnic group is discernible.

One of Gögge's sample groups are the Newars, speakers of a Tibeto-Burman language who live in Nepal. In the following section of the volume, contributions deal with facets of different initiation rituals within this specific ethnic context. Taking the boys' initiation *mekhalābandhana* ("binding of the girdle") as an example, Axel Michaels examines the language of a personal handbook used by a Newar priest. He demonstrates that the hybrid character of the idiom in which these *aide-mémoires* are written reflects the hybrid character of the ritual. Michaels urges that this material not be measured in terms of grammatical correctness or against the Great Tradition, but rather be appreciated as an expression of a culture in its own right. Adoption of linguistic and ritual elements from the pan-Indian textual tradition enriches Newar ritual culture. But what on the surface may look like Sanskrit and pan-Indian ritual is, underneath, Newar.

One ritual unique to Newar culture is *ihi*, the marriage of a girl to a *bel* fruit. Based on his observations in the city of Bhaktapur, Niels Gutschow argues that *ihi* is first and foremost an initiation, parallel to the one for boys. It both makes a girl a full member of her clan, which she will leave at the time of her marriage to a human spouse, and imposes ritual duties, such as the worship of the ancestors and the lineage deity. Moreover, the female initiand is introduced to the larger urban realm through visits to the houses of relatives. Gutschow sees these formal visits as part of a process which started with earlier childhood rituals.

The *ihi* is also dealt with in the next three papers, there in the context of the Newar Buddhist community. Together with the contribution on initiation in tantric Buddhism, these articles show how Hindu initiation rituals are variously transferred to or abandon-

ed by Buddhist traditions, and in the former case Buddhicized by inflection of forms or infusion with new meanings. Changes which have affected Newar Buddhist initiations over the last few decades are the subject tackled by David N. Gellner, who styles such changes as reformists' attempts to distinguish Buddhist rituals from their Hindu counterparts, and yet maintain Newar identity. Gellner demonstrates how Newar ritualists have responded to initiations offered by the Theravāda movement as more economical or more rational alternatives. In the case of the boys' initiation, competition has led to opening up the temporary ordination (*bare chuyegu*), formerly restricted to high-caste Buddhists, to all Newars independently of any traditional affiliation their families may have with a particular monastery. Initiations for girls have changed much more drastically. The customary confinement ritual related to the onset of menstruation (*bārhā tayegu*) has been discontinued and superseded by a temporary ordination (*rikhini pabbajjā*) imported from Burma. In contrast, the performance of *ihi* has generally been maintained by Newar Buddhists. Both faithfulness to traditional forms and modern adaptations of initiation rituals, Gellner concludes, must be seen primarily as expressions of identity.

That ritual practice is vital to the building, defining and maintaining of Buddhist identity is also held by Todd Lewis. He challenges the widespread notion of a "Protestant" Buddhism, in which rituals appear to be superfluous and on the verge of being abandoned, by pointing out the fact that Newar Buddhist rituals occasion movement toward enlightenment as well as earthly benefits, and are furthermore a means of acculturating the young. The Newar Buddhists' *saṃskāra*s are characterized by the author as a continuous chain of initiations preparing a candidate for further initiations (*nikhan* and *dekhā*) which are optional and explicit religious. For the Urāy, a grouping of Buddhist merchant castes in Kathmandu, the performance of these life-cycle rituals serves the purpose of sustaining their social bonds with the Nepalese Hindu rulers, protecting their wealth and marking their high-caste status. The *saṃskāra*s themselves appear to be transpositions of corresponding Brahmanical ones; that is, these latter are invested with Buddhist meanings. With reference to the twelfth-century *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, the author suggests that the life-cycle rituals for Newar Buddhist householders were not directly taken over from the Hindus but rather were adapted from consecrations of images.

This last point is substantiated in Alexander von Rospatt's paper. In the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, the consecration of images is a composite ritual including an installation proper (*pratiṣṭhā*), life-cycle rituals and a series of tantric initiations (*abhiṣeka*). Von Rospatt's focus lies on the ten *saṃskāra*s (collectively called *daśakriyā*), which are equated in the text with steps of the consecration process. Drawing on parallels in other texts and on actually observed practice, he investigates their development within the Newar Buddhist tradition. Rather than searching for an "original" ritual from which later practice deviates, he takes the variance observable in different localities as being of interest in its own right. Treating some features of the procedure more closely, he points out local variations which themselves have become standard. His investigation of the marriage rite for exemplification purposes is especially fit to attest that the link

between the life-cycle rituals for humans and their employment in image consecrations is not a one-way process of adapting the former to the latter but rather a complex relationship of mutual influences. Whereas the use of *saṃskāra*s in image consecration may be an adaptation of Hindu practice unique to the Nepalese Buddhist tradition, the application of *abhiṣeka*s to images is a well-attested feature in the broader Buddhist literature.

The historical development of the higher Buddhist tantric consecrations (*abhiṣeka*) for humans, which serve as empowerments to tantric practice, is treated by Harunaga Isaacson. The common method followed by the authors of the texts Isaacson investigates is to take earlier sets of *abhiṣeka*s and relegate them to a lower level, while adding new and still higher empowerments. One such newcomer is the so-called "Fourth" consecration (*caturthābhiṣeka*), on which Isaacson focuses more closely. He traces the debate surrounding, and indeed the very notion of, this *abhiṣeka* back to a cryptic line in the *Guhyasamājatantra*, which he considers unlikely to have originally been intended in that passage. The diverging interpretations by scholars of different tantric schools of what the "Fourth" empowerment might entail show how an initiation ritual taken over from Śaiva traditions was creatively reassigned Buddhist functions and how the necessity of a ritual sexual in character was justified in terms of Buddhist soteriology. Remarkably, most of the authors treated managed to accommodate the further empowerment on the interpretative level without changing the actual ritual practice.

What is known about the Buddhist current Isaacson focuses on holds good for tantric traditions in general. There, initiation is a multilevelled process by which a practitioner gradually advances in his ritual practice. In the cases of sectarian Hindu traditions dealt with in Jörg Gengnagel's and Ute Hüsken's papers, for example, there are a series of mutually non-exclusive initiations, called *dīkṣā* or *abhiṣeka*. Moreover, in the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition there is a ritual that annuls any previous adherence to other traditions. This "removal of sectarian marks" (*liṅgoddhāra*) is discussed by Gengnagel in relation to the initiatory system of the Śaiva Siddhāntins, and also within the general debate over conversion to Hindu traditions. He sees conversions as being characterized by a fixed determination and an accentuation of difference, hinting at rivalry between religious communities. At the end, he raises the question to what extant historical cases of kings who renounced the religious affiliation of their forefathers and took initiation into another tradition presuppose rituals of conversion.

As highlighted by several contributions, initiations betoken frontiers, be they penetrable or impenetrable ones. They may mark the admittance to a religious tradition, the rejection of another or the empowerment to a certain religious practice. Moreover, they may entitle a person to ritually act on the behalf of others. In her paper on a South Indian Vaiṣṇava tradition, Ute Hüsken elaborates on the composite nature of eligibility (*adhikāra*) to act as temple priest. According to the authoritative *Pādmasaṃhitā*, initiation (*dīkṣā*) into the Pāñcarātra tradition is open to all, whereas the quality of eligibility (*adhikāra*) acquired through this ritual depends on caste and gender. Only male Brahmins who have undergone *saṃskāra*s beforehand are entitled to perform rituals for others. In practice, the necessary series of initiations is not the only precondition for

serving in a temple. Particularly restricted is admittance to the priesthood in the major Vaiṣṇava temples, where certain Brahmin families hold hereditary priestly monopolies and every priest needs a written appointment letter from the temple administration. This traditional system came into question in recent public debates on ritual competence, in which the focus shifted from eligibility to the actual ability to carry out rituals. Complaints about the low performance standards of priests led the Tamil Nadu government to open up the temple priests' profession to all communities and to establish educational institutions to train future priests. But, as Hüsken argues, such education, which mainly inculcates knowledge of the authoritative scriptures, cannot make up for the traditional way in which priests' sons accustom themselves to the routine of a temple from childhood onwards. Therefore, formal education or legislative measures do not represent a real challenge to the hereditary priesthood.

The interplay of ritual and non-ritual (social or historical) factors is also one of Gérard Colas's interests. He points out the fact that conflicts between different groups of specialists involved in ritual (e.g. craftsmen vs. Brahmin priests) find expression in differing versions of ritual procedure described in handbooks. Although it does not deal with any initiation, we thought it might be fruitful to include Colas's paper on the installation of images (*pratiṣṭhā*). On the macroscopic level, one may argue that there is a clear classificatory distinction between rituals performed for human initiands and rituals for installing images of deities.[5] But on a micro level, focusing on details of the procedure, there seem to be several interrelationships between the two types of ritual. For example, initiatory rituals and *pratiṣṭhā* have been adapted to one another. As in the text sample of the *mekhalābandhana* treated by Michaels, a *pratiṣṭhā* can be performed for a boy to be initiated. From von Rospatt and Colas we learn that *abhiṣeka*s or *saṃskāra*s are employed as consecration rites for images in all major South Asian religious traditions. Therefore we suggest expanding the term "rituals of institution" to cover not only rituals for human beings but also the installation of images (*pratiṣṭhā*). In his treatment of such installations, Colas's major concern is to elucidate the historical dynamics that play into them. He shows that the models of *pratiṣṭhā* were subject to constant remodelling. Apart from presenting evidence for both one-way and two-way exchange between Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions, he convincingly demonstrates that features often perceived as being central to *pratiṣṭhā* rituals, such as the opening of the eyes or the infusion of power into the image, do not represent the essential core of the ritual but can rather be better treated as instances of ritual and hermeneutical accretion.

Whereas Gérard Colas analyzes how models of *pratiṣṭhā*s were reconfigured over time, Astrid Zotter shows how elements of *upanayana* and *pratiṣṭhā* are combined in the composition of one specific ritual. She has edited a Nepalese handbook on the Brahmanical initiation of the *aśvattha* tree (*Aśvatthopanayanavidhi*) which has parallels in some of the North Indian ritual compendia (*nibandha*). From her analysis of the elements and the liturgy of the *aśvatthopanayana*, she infers that the two rituals are not re-

5 For recent studies on consecration rituals in South Asia, see the volume *From Material to Deity* edited by Shingo Einoo and Jun Takashima (2005).

lated hierarchically; rather, some components of the *pratiṣṭhā* and *upanayana* are interwoven. Moreover, the ritual includes, as a third strand, elements specific to the *aśvattha* tree. Such amalgamation offers scope for different interpretations. Zotter sees the conceptual link between installation and initiation in their both marking ritual beginnings, that is, establishing someone or something in the ritual sphere. The *aśvatthopanayana* thus presents a case in which we cannot decide whether it is an initiation or an installation, but if modifications are made to the above concept it can be labelled a "ritual of institution."

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Christof Zotter

Notes on the Evolution of an Initiation Ritual: The *Vratabandha* of the Bāhun and Chetri*

For the Bāhun and Chetri, a group of Nepalese high-caste Hindus,[1] the initiation—the "leading near (to preceptor and sacred knowledge)" (*upanayana*),[2] or as it is more often called, the "binding to an observance" (*vratabandha*(*na*), Nep. *bartaman*)[3]—is the important life-cycle ritual (*saṃskāra*) by which a boy becomes a twice-born member of his caste and lineage.[4] Its modern performers characterize the ritual as *vaidika*. Indeed the rich material on this initiation which the Indian textual traditions provide bears witness to continuity from ancient Vedic times on. But it also attests to constant change regarding both the form and meaning of the initiation.

The ritual in question has customarily been studied from one of two perspectives: either anthropologically, based on ethnographic data drawn from modern contexts, and usually without considering historical material; or indologically, focusing on the origin of the ritual and the early period of its development, as captured in a few references in the Vedic hymn collections (Saṃhitās) and in the treatment accorded to it in the treatises on domestic ritual (Gṛhyasūtras) and in the legal codes (Dharmasūtras and -śāstras),[5] with references to later (including modern) times being made only sporadically, usually in order to demonstrate a decline from some original meaning or form.[6] Although attempts have been made to bridge the gap between the textual tradition and modern-day practice,[7] the role of post-Vedic texts in shaping the ritual has yet to receive due at-

* I would like to thank Philip Pierce for correcting the English of this paper and Timothy Lubin for his valuable comments.

1 The Bāhuns (Brahmins) and Chetris (Kshatriyas), whose mother tongue is Nepali, are also known as Indo-Parbatiyā or Parbate, and constitute one of the largest ethnic groups of Nepal.

2 On this term, see Gonda (1979, with further references); Kajihara (2002: 8f); Lubin (1994: 171–4).

3 On the term *vratabandha* see Michaels (1986: 195–6). The word was apparently first used in Puranic texts for the *upanayana saṃskāra*: e.g. *Agnipurāṇa* 24.31 and 34.

4 For different aspects of the complex meaning of the modern *vratabandha*, see Bennett (2005: 59–61); Gray (1995: 42–6); Bouillier (1986: 9–11); Michaels (1998: 91–114). As I have argued elsewhere (Zotter 2009), the new status of the boy is primarily acquired through his being activated as a ritual agent.

5 See Altekar 1965: 298–305; Barua 1994: 37–59; Bhattacharyya 1980: 60–9; Bronkhorst 1992; Gopal 1969: 296–301; Kajihara 2002 and 2004; Kane 1968ff.: II, 256–346; Lubin 1994; Oguibénine 1990; Pandey 1998: 112–5; Scharfe 2002: 87–114.

6 Pandey, for example, refers to some late features and modifications of the initiation ritual as "a tragedy of the educational ideal of the Upanayana Saṃskāra" (1998: 139) and even "a mockery of fate" (ibid.: 148).

7 Bouillier (1986) and Michaels (1986 and 1998: 91–114) combine analyses of textual and ethnographic material.

tention. The present paper will deal with some of the developments which have occurred up to the present day within one Vedic tradition of particular relevance to Nepalese ritual culture, the Vājasaneyi school of the White *Yajurveda*.[8] The analysis will be based on this school's treatise on domestic rituals, the *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra* (PG),[9] commentaries on it written by Harihara (before AD 1250) and Gadādhara (ca. AD 1500),[10] Rāmadatta's handbook on *saṃskāra*s, (written in the first decades of the 14th century),[11] selected modern ritual manuals together with commentaries,[12] and observa-

8 On the predominance of this school in Nepal since the Newar renaissance in the 11th century, see Witzel (1976: 19, 20, 22–4 and 2001: 260, 262, *passim*).

9 I have based myself throughout on Gopālaśāstrī Nene's edition (Mālavīya 2000). In some chapters, the verse count differs from the one in Stenzler's edition (1876) and from the translations by Stenzler (1878) and Oldenberg (1989), which will be given in parentheses.

10 Gonda 1977: 602. On Harihara, see also Kane (1968ff.: I, 736–7).

11 Rāmadatta was a member of the famous Ṭhakkūra family. Like his father Gaṇeśvāra and his cousin Caṇḍeśvara, he was not only a scholar but also a minister at the court of Harasiṃhadeva, the last king of the Kārṇāṭa lineage of Mithilā (on Rāmadatta and his family, see Ganguly 1972: 86–9; Miśra 1973; Thakur 1956: 347–8; for further references, see Zotter 2009). Rāmadatta composed a handbook for the whole set of life-cycle rituals (excluding death rituals), which was copied and published under such titles as *Vājasaneyināṃ Vivāhādipaddhati* or *Daśakarmapaddhati*. In the following I will refer to two manuscripts copied in the middle of the 17th century in the Kathmandu Valley and filmed by the *Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project* under NGMPP E 915/6 (partial retake E 1549/15) and H 391/27; a modern edition of the text published as *Daśakarmapaddhati* (DP) by Khemarāja Kṛṣṇadāsa in Bombay; and the *Vājasaneyinām Upanayanapaddhati* (VUP), a description of the *cūḍākaraṇa*, *upanayana*, *vedārambha* and *samāvartana*, edited and commented upon by Rāmacandra Jhā and published by the Caukhambā Vidyābhavana, Benares. As investigations into the interdependence among the ritual handbooks have shown, Rāmadatta's text was used by Dadhirāma Marāsini in compiling his *Karmakāṇḍabhāskara* (KBh), an exhaustive ritual compendium, written in the 1930s and first published in 1997 by the Mahendra Sanskrit University in Dang (West Nepal). See also the following note.

12 At present one of the most popular initiation handbooks in the Kathmandu Valley is a text of uncertain origin. I refer to this manual as the *Cūḍopanayana* text, since most of its editions contain the term *cūḍopanayana* in their title. The text is available in two versions, which have been regularly reprinted by different Nepalese publishers in Benares. The present paper has made use of a recent reprint of the *Cūḍopanayanavidhi* (CV) together with a Nepali commentary probably published for the first time in 1991. Relevant handbooks have also been published in Nepal itself, including by the Nepalese government. The only Nepalese initiation handbook noted so far in Western academic literature (e.g. Bouillier 1986: 12–5; Michaels 1986: 195; cp. Witzel 1976: 24) is the *Vratabandhapaddhati* by Dhanaśamśera J.B. Rāṇā und Kṛṣṇaprasāda Bhaṭṭarāī, published in 1973 (V.S. 2030) by the Royal Nepalese Academy. This Nepali text has strongly influenced later handbooks (see below) but has been out of print for many years, and therefore rarely used in rituals. Since the 1980s the School Book Department of the Ministry of Education and Sport has been publishing a set of textbooks on ritual called either *Karmakāṇḍam* or *Asmākam Karmakāṇḍam* (KK). The text has been re-edited several times by a changing editorial board mainly consisting of pandits who teach at Vedic schools in the Kathmandu Valley. At least one of these re-editions of the book, for class nine, contains a description of the *vratabandha*. Recently ritual texts were also published by the Mahendra Sanskrit University in Dang. The KBh has already been mentioned (see the previous note). These days the *Vratabandhapaddhati* of Ṛṣirāma Ghimire (VPGh), published by the same institution, is the most readily available. The Sanskrit text of the VPGh is mainly based on the KBh, but the Nepali commentary also adopts many details from the VP. Finally, a booklet

tions of actual performances of the ritual.[13]

Although I will focus on only one Vedic school, it is far beyond the limits of this paper to treat all deviations within its corpus.[14] It is not my aim to provide a complete picture of the initiation and its development, but to examine selected components from a historical perspective in order to demonstrate some general principles at work in the evolution of this ritual and in its structure.

The Vedic and modern *upanayana*

By performing the *upanayana*, a candidate becomes a religious student (*brahmacārin*)[15] bound to a special observance (*brahmacarya*). Early traces of the notion of *brahmacārin* can be found already in the Vedic Saṃhitās. The word is attested for the first time in *Ṛgveda* (ṚV) 10.109.5,[16] but only in the *Atharvaveda* (AV) do more substantial lineaments appear, including some features still important in the modern initiation ritual.[17] Kajihara, who has extensively investigated the early material on the institution of *brahmacarya*, has concluded that the ritual actions attested in the oldest stratum of the AV "may have constituted a prototype of the *upanayana*" (2002: 38), a base later gradually elaborated (ibid.: 398, *passim*).

Within the textual tradition of the White *Yajurveda*, a first account of the ritual is found in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* (ŚB) 11.5.4: According to this text, the candidate declares that he has come in order to enter upon *brahmacarya*. The preceptor (*ācārya*) asks the candidate's name, takes him by the hand, accepts him as a religious student (*brahmacārin*), entrusts him to the care of various deities, instructs him in the rules of *brahmacarya* and finally teaches him the *sāvitrī* (ṚV 3.62.10). All these ritual elements mentioned in the Brāhmaṇa are inherent parts of the *upanayana* as prescribed later in

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by Madhusūdana Suvedī has been consulted: the *Saralīkṛtagrahaśāntyagnisthāpanacūḍopanayanavedārambhasamāvartanavidhi* (SV). This text combines the *Cūḍopanayana* text with the VP. For further details on the Nepalese handbook tradition, see Zotter 2009.

13 In the years 2006 and 2007 I observed about ten *vratabandha*s in different localities in Kathmandu, Deopatan and Thankot (for further details, see Zotter 2009).

14 For a more detailed analysis, see Zotter 2009.

15 The *brahmacārin* is "someone who is engaged in / devoted to *brahman*". For the etymology of the term, see Gonda (1965: 284). Cf. also Kajihara (2002: 6–7); Scharfe (2002: 91).

16 In ṚV 10.109.5 (= Atharvaveda [AV] 5.17.5), the only occurrence of the word *brahmacārin* in the *Ṛgveda*, the candidate is characterized as rendering service and becoming a limb (*aṅga*) of the gods. See Gonda 1965: 284–5; Kajihara 2002: 35–6, 40–1; Kane 1968ff.: II, 265; Scharfe 2002: 92.

17 For instance, AV 11.5.4 mentions a girdle (*mekhalā*) and kindling (*samidh*) in connection with the *brahmacārin*, while AV 11.5.6 states that he wears the skin of a black antelope (*kārṣṇa*); cf. Gonda 1965: 285–6; Kajihara 2002: 107–50 (with further references); Kane 1968ff.: II, 270; Oguibénine 1990: 3–6.

the Gṛhyasūtras.[18] The PG adopts even minor details of the account in the ŚB, ones uncommon in Gṛhyasūtras belonging to other Vedic schools.[19]

The Sūtras treat the *upanayana* as an important link in the chain of *saṃskāra*s, the gradual series of rituals that form milestones in human life from conception to death.[20] These texts describe a form of ritual procedure for the initiation which is much more detailed than in older kinds of texts. The insignia of a *brahmacārin* (the girdle, antelope skin etc.) are ritually handed over or put on as certain mantras are being uttered. Service to the sacrificial fire and the begging of alms—both daily duties of the *brahmacārin*—are integrated in a ritualized form. But the *sūtrakāra*s not only incorporated features of the *brahmacārin* mentioned in earlier texts. In the period in which the *upanayana* was being formed into a *saṃskāra*, it did so not in a vacuum but in correlation with other rituals, especially with another kind of initiation, the consecration for the Soma sacrifice (*dīkṣā*). Several features of the consecrated Soma sacrificer (*dīkṣita*) developed on the model of the *brahmcārin*. But, as Kajihara (2002: 390) has argued, there are also features that passed from the *dīkṣita* to the *brahmcārin*. For instance, the staff (*daṇḍa*) that had been associated with the *dīkṣita* since the Brāhmaṇas became an important insignia of the *brahmacārin* in the Gṛhyasūtras.

The *upanayana* developed also in correlation with the marriage ritual (*vivāha*), another important *saṃskāra*. In the PG, the *upanayana* and *vivāha* share a complete sequence of ritual elements. The preceptor/bridegroom makes the student/bride look at the sun and touches his/her heart. So too the student's cupped hands are filled, and the bride's head sprinkled, with water, both performed while the so-called *āpohiṣṭīya* verses (ṚV 10.9.1–3) are being recited. All three gestures are adapted to their respective contexts, but the parallel is quite obvious.[21]

The levelling process continued. Ritual elements were transferred from other rituals or even newly created. Some of the late additions to the *upanayana* relate to the sacrificial cord (*yajñopavīta*, Nep. *janai*), a ritual object which advanced to become the most prominent outward sign of an initiated, or twice-born (*dvija*), Hindu.[22] Harihara's com-

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18 On the descriptions of the *upanayana* in the different Gṛhyasūtras, see Altekar (1965: 298–305); Gopal (1959: 296–301); Kane (1968ff.: II, 281–7); Lubin (1994: 174–99); Pandey (1998: 135–40).

19 One instance is the recurrence of the rule "consume water" (*āpo'śāna*) among the instructions (*anuśāsana*) to the student (cf. ŚB 11.5.4.5 and PG 2.3.2). For a comparison of the passages from the two texts, see Kajihara (2002: 255–60).

20 On the term *saṃskāra*, see Gonda (1980: 364); Gopal (1959: 255); Kane (1968ff.: II, 190–1); Pandey (1998: 15–7); Scharfe (2002: 103); Smith (1986: 66).

21 Cf. PG 1.8.3–6 (*vivāha*) and 2.2.16–18 (14–16, *upanayana*). See also Oldenberg (1894: 467). For the mutual influence of the initiation and marriage rituals in the tradition of the Atharvaveda, see Kajihara (2004).

22 Cf. Michaels 1998: 100; Pandey 1998: 98; Scharfe 1999: 89 and 2002: 105; Stevenson 1971: 22–3. The sacrificial cord probably first appeared in the late *smṛti* period, on the analogy of the deerskin (*ajina*) or upper garment (*uttarīya*), worn (like the cord) on different occasions in different positions (Gopal 1959: 317–20, n. 21; Kane 1968ff.: II, 287–91; Scharfe 1999: 90–5, 97–9 and 2002: 104–8; cf. Michaels 1998: 105). According to Scharfe (1999: 99 and 2002: 104) the deerskin was replaced by the cord (cf. Altekar 1965: 318). At least for Nepal this statement does not appear to be valid. In script as well as in performance both, deerskin and cord, are given to the candidate.

ment on PG 2.2.10–13 states that the *sūtrakāra* failed to mention the investment with the sacrificial cord (*yajñopavītadhāraṇa*).[23] He himself offers a short instruction since, as he argues, the cord should be given in the *upanayana*.[24] Later initiation handbooks expand on this ritual element.[25] Whereas Rāmadatta and his editors add only minor details,[26] in the more recent manuals the *yajñopavītadhāraṇa* is often described elaborately. For instance, according to the VP (p. 92) the *gāyatrīmantra* (ṚV 3.62.10) is recited ten times over the thread beforehand. Other initiation handbooks adopt detailed instructions for the worship of strands and knots of the thread from manuals on daily ritual obligations (*nityakarman*).[27] There is another ritual element mentioned neither in the PG nor by its commentators but commonly found in Nepalese handbooks. Rāmadatta says that according to custom ([*lok*]*ācāra*)[28] eight sacrificial cords are to be given to Brahmins (*yajñopavītāṣṭakadāna*) before the boy receives his *yajñopavīta*.[29] As further preparation, some modern texts also include a ritualized binding of the tuft of hair (*śikhābandhana*) resulting from the first haircut (see below p. 24). This successive elaboration clearly reflects the growing importance attached to the sacrificial cord.

The development of the *upanayana* in the textual tradition of the White *Yajurveda* is summarised in table 1. It is obvious from it that changes and modifications of the ritual procedure have occurred at every historical stage. But the table also clearly demonstrates the conservative attitude ritualists take toward their texts. An element once introduced to the ritual by some authority may undergo radical change in form or mean-

23 The *yajñopavītadhāraṇa* is not mentioned in most of the Gṛhyasūtras (Gopal 1959: 296; Kane 1968ff.: II, 284, 291; Pandey 1998: 131–2; Scharfe 1999: 96 and 2002: 107; Smith 1989: 96). An instruction relating to it found in some manuscripts of the PG is a late interpolation (Kane 1968ff.: II, 284, n. 662; Mālavīya 2000: 35; Speijer 1872: 22; Stenzler 1876: 53 and 1878: 42 [note on PG 2.2.10]).

24 To support his view Harihara quotes, among other verses, *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 2.29 (*daṇḍājinopavītāni mekhalā caiva dhārayet*). His view regarding the *yajñopavītadhāraṇa* in the commentary is merely that the mantra "*oṃ yajñopavītam paramaṃ pavitram* etc." should be recited by the boy while putting on the cord in its *upavīta* position (i.e. hanging over the left shoulder) and sipping water (Mālavīya 2000: 35). Harihara adds some further details in his *prayoga* at the end of the commentary on PG 2.5.44 (Mālavīya 2000: 79).

25 See NGMPP E 1549/15: 1v; H 391/27: 6r; CV: p. 37; DP: p. 60; KBh: p. 250; KK: p. 80; SV: p. 223; VP: pp. 62–3; VPGh: pp. 108–9.

26 Some manuscripts call for the cord to have three strands (NGMPP E 1549/15: 1v; H 391/27: 6r. Cf. Harihara's *prayoga* [Mālavīya 2000: 79]). The VUP (p. 34) mentions knots whose number coincides with the segments (*pravara*) of the clan (*gotra*) of the boy. The Maithili commentary specifies the number as three or five (VUP: p. 34). The KBh (p. 250) adds a detail also found in the *prayoga* of Harihara (Mālavīya 2000: 79) and in other texts (e.g. CV: p. 38; VP: p. 92): the boy should raise his right arm while the cord is being put on. The DP (p. 60) gives no further details.

27 E.g. *Upanayanapaddhati* pp. 68–72 and *Saṃskāradīpaka* pp. 291–2. For one description of this preparatory act in the *nityakarman*, see *Nityakarmapūjāprakāśa* pp. 37–9.

28 This statement is found at least in some versions of the text (see NGMPP E 1549/15: 1v; DP: p. 59).

29 NGMPP E 1549/15: 1v; H 391/27: 6r; CV: p. 37; DP: pp. 59–60; KK: p. 79; KBh: p. 250; SV: p. 223; VP: pp. 90–91; VPGh: p. 108; VUP: p. 34.

Ritual element	ŚB[30]	PG[31]	Hari-hara[32]	Hand-books[33]
Fire ritual I (first part of preparations)			x	x
Instruction I (*anuśāsana*) or student's entering upon *brahmacarya*	x	x	x	x
Putting on the lower garment (*vāsaḥparidhāpana*)		x	x	x
Binding the girdle (*mekhalābandhana*)		x	x	x
Binding the tuft of hair (*śikhābandhana*)				(x)
Gift of eight sacrificial cords (*yajñopavītāṣṭakadāna*)				x
Investment with the sacrificial cord (*yajñopavītadhāraṇa*)			x	x
Putting on the deerskin (*ajinadhāraṇa*)		x	x	x
Taking the staff (*daṇḍagrahaṇa*)		x	x	x
Filling of cupped hands (*añjalipūraṇa*)		x	x	x
Looking at the sun (*sūryodīkṣaṇa*)		x	x	x
Touching the heart (*hṛdayālambhana*)		x	x	x
Dialogue (*praśnottara*) or asking the student's name	x	x	x	x
Entrusting to deities or act of protecting (*rakṣaṇa*)	x	x	x	x
Circumambulation of the fire (*pradakṣiṇa*)		x	x	x
Fire ritual II (further preparations, oblations of ghee and some concluding elements)		(x)[34]	x	x
Instruction II (*anuśāsana*) or teaching of rules	x	x	x	x
Gift of a cow (*godāna*)				(x)[35]
Teaching of the *sāvitrī* (*sāvitryupadeśa* or *mantradāna*)	x	x	x	x
Laying kindling (*samidādhāna*)		x	x	x
Warming the hands (*pāṇipratapana*) and washing the face (*mukhamārjana*)		x	x	x
Touching all parts of the body (*sarvagātrasparśa*)			x	x
Marking the body with ashes (*tryāyuṣakaraṇa*)			x	x
Formal salutation (*abhivādana*)			x	x
Bestowing blessings (*āśīrvādapradāna*)			x	x
Begging for alms (*bhikṣācaraṇa*)		x	x	x
Fire ritual III (further concluding elements)				(x)[36]

Table 1: Ritual elements of the *upanayana* according to the Vājasaneyi school of the White *Yajurveda*.

30 See ŚB 11.5.4.1–15.

31 See the chapters PG 2.2 to 2.5.

32 According to Harihara's *prayoga* (Mālavīya 2000: 78–84).

33 NGMPP E 1549/15: 1r–6r; H 391/27: 5r–10r; CV: pp. 34–61; DP: pp. 57–77; KBh: pp. 248–60; SV: pp. 222–43; VP: pp. 84–150; VPGh: pp. 106–30; VUP: pp. 31–63.

34 PG 2.3.2 mentions only the *ājyāhuti*s and the eating (of the remains). See below p. 28.

35 The "gift of a cow" (*godāna*) is a very common ritual element, usually performed by worshipping some money and giving it to the priest. Some of the handbooks prescribe it as preparation for the *sāvitryupadeśa* (e.g. CV: p. 53; KK: p. 86; KBh: p. 257, n. 11; SV: pp. 235–7; VP: pp. 125–8; VPGh: pp. 120–1).

36 See below p. 30.

ing, but usually it does not simply disappear in the later textual tradition. The history of a ritual of enduring importance like the *upanayana* is a constant process of accumulation or accretion. Although the performers may stress the antiquity of the acts they are performing, the modern *upanayana saṃkāra* is not a faithful imitation of the ancient original (or ur-ritual). The ritual is and always has been open to change within the surrounding culture and its whole stock of rituals. Before further examples are given of such adaptations, one of the most striking differences between the ancient *upanayana* and the modern performances of the initiation needs to be addressed.

The combining of *saṃskāra*s in the *vratabandha*

Like the *upanayana*, the cycle of *saṃskāra*s as a whole has been subject to modifications. After the cycle's formation in the Sūtra period several new *saṃskāra*s arose,[37] while others went out of vogue.[38] As a necessary precondition for marriage, the *upanayana* remained securely in place, but changes in the conducting of the *saṃskāra*s affected it. It has been noted that in order to reduce expenses the *upanayana* can be delayed and performed in an abbreviated form directly before the marriage (*vivāha*).[39] Among the Bāhun and Chetri of modern Nepal, their life-cycle initiation, usually called *vratabandha*, is still observed as a ritual separate from marriage, but here too the classical concept of the *saṃskāra*s can undergo noticeable alteration. Whether performed for a single person or a group of boys,[40] the modern *vratabandha* is usually a very complex event which takes weeks of preparations. It consists of different preparatory rituals (*pūrvāṅgakarman*)[41] performed on the first day and a four-to-eight-hour procedure on the second (the main) day. Although the term *upanayana* is used synonymously for

37 One example of a *saṃskāra* of relatively late origin is the *karṇavedha* or piercing of the ears (Kane 1968ff.: II, 196, 254–5; Pandey 1998: 102–5). Rāmadatta prescribes it—as usual in texts of the Vājasaneyi school (cf. Hillebrandt 1981: 50; Speijer 1872: 21)—for the third or fifth year (H 391/27: 4v–5r; DP: pp. 55–6; KBh: pp. 236–7), i.e. between the *cūḍākaraṇa* and *upanayana*. On the creation of the *vedārambha saṃskāra*, see below pp. 33–5.

38 Several Gṛhyasūtras describe the first shaving of the beard (*keśānta* or *godāna*), a ritual modelled on the first haircut (*cūḍākaraṇa*), as part of the *saṃskāra* cycle in the sixteenth year, counted either from birth or conception (Gopal 1959: 28–9; Hillebrandt 1981: 50; Pandey 1998: 143–5), but most of the medieval digests contain hardly any information about it (Kane 1968ff.: II, 405).

39 See Bennett 2005: 60; Michaels 1986: 194; Pandey 1998: 148; and (with further references) Keßler in this volume.

40 Like many Newars in their neighbourhood, some Indo-Parbatiyā families prefer more economical group initiations (*samūhika vratabandha*), even if according to tradition the initiation is prescribed for a single boy (see Bouillier 1986: 11, 17). A rare textual instance of a collective initiation, *Brahmavaivartapurāṇa* 2.101.14, tells of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma being jointly initiated by Vasudeva (see Dange 1987: 912–3).

41 Harihara was already prescribing a worship of the Mother Goddesses (*mātṛ(kā)pūjā*) and an auspicious form of the ancestral rite (*ābhyudayika-* or *nāndī(mukha)śrāddha*) as preparation (see, for example, his *Upanayanaprayoga* [Mālavīya 2000: 78]). In modern-day practice, the *pūrvāṅgakarman* of the *vratabandha* likewise usually includes the "binding of the tuft" (*jūṭikābandhana*), which is performed at dusk on the first day in preparation for the cutting of the boy's hair the next day.

vratabandha, to denote the whole ritual, the initiation of the Bāhun and Chetri in its present form is a combination of the *upanayana* with three other *saṃskāra*s. On the main day of the *vratabandha* the candidate passes through:

- The "first haircut", literally the "making of a tuft of hair (at the back of the head by cutting away all the rest)" (*cūḍākaraṇa*), which according to PG 2.1.1–4 is performed when the boy is one year old, in the third year or when otherwise considered auspicious.
- The *upanayana*, according to PG 2.2.1–4 performed for a Brahmin in the eighth year after birth or conception, for a Kṣatriya in the eleventh and for a Vaiśya in the twelfth year,[42] or for all whenever considered auspicious (by family custom).
- A ritualized "beginning of the Veda (study)" (*vedārambha*), not described by the PG as a *saṃskāra* (cf. below p. 33).
- And finally, the "return (home)" (*samāvartana*), prescribed at the end of the Veda study (cf. PG 2.6.1).

The details concerning the age of the boy and the time of the ritual given in the list clearly show that the *sūtrakāra* is referring to separate *saṃskāra*s. The commentaries on the Sūtra and Rāmadatta's handbook also describe separate rituals. But in some of the modern editions Rāmadatta's text has been modified to accord with the present ritual practice. For instance, in the *Vājasaneyinām Upanayanapaddhati* (VUP), a version of the text containing only descriptions of the four *saṃskāra*s mentioned above, all statements about the proper time have been removed from Rāmadatta's text. Instead, the editor supplies the relevant information in a foreword—quoting, for example, the popular verses *Mānavadharmaśāstra* 2.36–37—but only for the *upanayana* (VUP: pp. 5–6).[43] A similar meshing of *saṃskāra*s, unknown to older textual authorities, can be found in other recent ritual texts. While some modern handbooks—such as the *Vratabandhapaddhati* (VP) and later compilations based in part on it—still contain traces of the old form and mention the joint performance of the *saṃskāra*s as the (usual) alternative,[44] other initiation manuals (the *Cūḍopanayana* text being one example) use the

42 The numbers correspond to the number of syllables in a *pāda* of the mantra to be learnt, respectively the *gāyatrī*, *triṣṭubh* and *jagatī* (Altekar 1965: 296, n. 1; Glaser 1912: 5; Kajihara 2002: 379, n. 7; Lubin 1994: 175; Oldenberg 1894: 466–7; Pandey 1998: 117–8; Scharfe 2002: 88, n. 7; cf. the *Saṃskāraprakāśa* of the *Vīramitrodaya* pp. 344–5). In the VPGh (p. 7) these numbers are also associated with different sets of deities, namely the Eight Vasus, the Eleven Rudras and the Twelve Ādityas (cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 3.9.3 [= ŚB 14.6.9.3]).

43 Another modification can be found in the *Karmakāṇḍabhāskara* (KBh). The "piercing of the ear" (*karṇavedha*), as in Rāmadatta's text, is performed between the *cūḍākaraṇa* and *upanayana* (see n. 37), but the order of *saṃskāra*s has been changed. There the instructions for the *karṇavedha* are given before the ones for the *cūḍākaraṇa* (without modifying the details about the age), the heading "*Cūḍopanayanavedārambhasamāvartanakarmaṇāṃ sahaprayogaḥ*" being added (KBh: pp. 236–8). In the VUP (p. 30, n. 2) the *karṇavedha* is merely mentioned in a footnote at the end of the *cūḍākaraṇa*.

44 According to the VP (p. 4), the *cūḍākaraṇa* should be performed at the age of one or three years, or else together with the *upanayana* (cf. SV: pp. kha–ga, 169; VPGh: p. 12).

same technique as the VUP: they describe four *saṃskāra*s but quote the proper time only for the *upanayana* (e.g. CV: pp. 25–8).

Reflecting actual ritual practice, the modern textual tradition depicts the initiation as a bundle of rituals centred on the *upanayana*. Different conceptual links exist between the central (sub-)ritual and the other *saṃskāra*s attached to it in the modern Nepalese tradition. Since early times the *upanayana* has determined eligibility (*adhikāra*) to study the Veda. The teaching of the *sāvitrī*, or *gāyatrī* (ṚV 3.62.10), grants access to the holy text.[45] In the modern *vratabandha*, the *upanayana saṃskāra* is immediately followed by two so-called educational *saṃskāra*s: the ritualized beginning and end of the Vedic study (respectively the *vedārambha* and the *samāvartana*). Thus in the modern initiation wholly different stages of the classical educational system are amalgamated and passed ritually. In contrast to the classical conception, ritual and education have nothing to do with each other anymore. This does not necessarily mean that the ritual replaces actual Vedic learning. Ritual has a reality of its own. The study of the Veda is still prestigious, and although it is not very common in modern Nepal, I know personally of several Brahmin boys who joined a Vedic school after their *vratabandha*s. Thus they started to learn the Veda by heart after the end of their Vedic studies was ritually sealed!

Unlike the other *saṃskāra*s of the *vratabandha*, the *cūḍākaraṇa* is not reckoned among the educational ones.[46] This first of the bundle of *vratabandha saṃskāra*s replaces an ordinary act of shaving the head at the beginning of the *upanayana*, which is prescribed as purificatory preparation, for example, in PG 2.2.7 (5). While the *vedārambha* and *samāvartana* were simply attached to the *upanayana*, the *cūḍākaraṇa* was integrated into the pre-existing structure of that ritual.

Modern practice suggests that the conception of the *cūḍākaraṇa*, too, has undergone change. According to the textual tradition, it is the child's first haircut, performed to remove the impurity of the initial hairs.[47] Since this *saṃskāra* is nowadays combined with the *upanayana*, the age of the candidate at his *cūḍākaraṇa* is higher than prescribed in

45 This mantra is said to be the essence of the Veda (see Altekar 1965: 302–3, n. 1; Michaels 1986: 204). Stevenson states "so sacred is the *gāyatrī* that the right ear of the child, once he has heard it [in the *upanayana*], becomes holy for life and can save the sacred thread itself from contamination if that be wound over it" (1971: 36).

46 Altekar (1965: 290–1) has suggested that the *vidyārambha*, the commencement of one's primary education, is recommended only by very late authorities, given that it was long combined with the *cūḍākaraṇa*. But since most Gṛhyasūtras prescribe the *cūḍākaraṇa* for the third or even earlier year (for references, see Gonda 1980: 90; Gopal 1959: 280; Hillebrandt 1981: 49; Kane 1968ff.: II, 260; Pandey 1998: 96–7), this seems quite implausible.

47 According to some Sūtras (e.g. *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra* 1.17.18), the *cūḍākaraṇa* is also performed for girls, but without (Vedic) mantras (Bhattacharyya 1980: 48; Gopal 1959: 283; Hillebrandt 1981: 50; Schmidt 1987: 24–5). In the early 20th century, Stevenson (1971: 20, 23) reported that a ritualized first haircut for girls is no longer common (see also Campbell 1976: 62). Kane (1968ff.: II, 265), too, states that the *cūḍākaraṇa* for female children is practised only among a few castes.

the Sūtras,[48] so that in the initiation ritual the hair of the boy or young man is usually not being cut for the first time in his life. But even though a ritualized first haircut may have been done in early childhood, the performers insist that the shaving of the head within the *vratabandha* is not just a preparation for the *upanayana* but the *cūḍākaraṇa saṃskāra*. It seems that a change in ritual practice brought about a split of this *saṃskāra* into a purificatory "first haircut" (*muṇḍana*) and the "making of the tuft of hair" (*cūḍākaraṇa*), the investment with the most prominent outward sign of a twice-born (*dvija*) alongside the sacrificial cord.[49]

The combination or temporal fusion of different *saṃskāra*s is the most striking modification of the modern-day initiation, but not the only one. The four *saṃskāra*s constitute merely the central part of the ritual *vratabandha* complex. They form, one could say, the skeleton of the ritual structure but not its complete body. In the course of time these nuclei merged with other rituals, above all the fire offering (*homa*) and common forms of worship (*pūjā*).

*Saṃskāra*s and the fire ritual (*homa*)

Fire offerings, the central feature of Vedic ritual culture, remained of great importance into post-Vedic times and beyond. Even in modern ritual the fire sacrifice (*homa*) often serves as a frame for a ritual event.[50] As Einoo (2005: 5) has argued, although there are great differences between Vedic and post-Vedic rituals, the later borrow many elements from the former in order to give the new procedures a Vedic appearance. The material on the initiation ritual confirms this opinion.

The *homa* is combined with *saṃskāra*s already in the Gṛhyasūtras—at least with the most important ones. Like other Sūtras, the PG provides a model *homa* which can be

48 According to the Sūtras, the *cūḍākaraṇa* is usually performed in the third year of a child. Only a few passages, such as PG 2.1.1 and 4, mention an alternative performance at the end of the first year or at some commonly recognized auspicious time (cf. Gonda 1980: 90; Gopal 1959: 280; Hillebrandt 1981: 49; Kane 1968ff.: II, 260; Pandey 1998: 96–7). The proper age for the *upanayana* differs to a much greater extent in the Sūtras (Lubin 2005: 85–6). While many Indian scholars have tried to explain the divergence by referring to changes in the ancient educational system, and have assumed a low age as original (e.g. Altekar 1965: 295–8; Pandey 1998: 117–20), another group of scholars is of the opinion that the *upanayana* was primarily performed at a higher age as a puberty rite (Bhattacharyya 1980: 59–60, 67; Oldenberg 1894: 469; Scharfe 2002: 87–8; cf. Kajihara 2002: 143, 375; Kane 1968ff.: II, 270). In modern Nepal the *vratabandha* is related neither to the boy's education nor to his physiological state, and is therefore quite flexible in terms of his age. In the initiations I observed myself, the age of the candidates ranged from five up to twenty-two years (cf. Bennett 2005: 120, n. 7; Michaels 1998: 94).

49 For the significance of the tuft of hair (*śikhā*), see Michaels (1998: 100–1); Pandey (1998: 98–9); Stevenson (1971: 22–3).

50 According to a modern Nepalese school book on ritual, the *Karmakāṇḍam* class 8 (p. 1, n. 1), a *homa* is performed not only in *saṃskāra*s, but also in pacification rituals (*śāntika*s, such as the *graha-, vināyaka-, śrī-, ṛtu-* or *mūlaśānti*) or in order to promote growth and welfare (*pauṣṭika*s, such as the *tulasī homa,* the *viṣṇu-* or *rudrayāga,* and the *vrata-* or *devapratiṣṭhā*). Compare Gadādhāra's commentary on PG 1.1.5 (Mālavīya 2000: 9).

applied *mutatis mutandis* within different ritual contexts.[51] The text prescribes a set of ritual actions for the preparation of the fire ritual at its very beginning, when dealing with the domestic sacrifice of cooked food (PG 1.1.2–4).[52] This is, as explicitly stated, the general procedure for any *homa* (PG 1.1.5). In the first description of a *saṃskāra,* namely the marriage ritual (*vivāha*), PG 1.5.3 specifies a standard set of fourteen oblations of ghee (*ājyāhuti*),[53] while PG 1.5.6 explains where the oblations unique to the *vivāha* should be inserted.[54] The Sūtra goes quickly down the list of actions and oblations, leaving it to the commentaries to provide further details (Mālavīya 2000: 4–9, 74–78).[55]

Once having introduced the model of the *homa*, the *sūtrakāra* contents himself with presenting select features of it. In its description of the *cūḍākaraṇa*, PG 2.1.6 merely states that the mixing of hot and cold water, the first specific act of the *saṃskāra*, should be done after (the father) is touched (by a priest), offers oblations of ghee and eats (the remains).[56] Based on this short remark, the commentators of the Sūtra outline the usual preparations: the set of fourteen *ājyāhuti*s and two concluding elements, namely the "eating of the remains" (*saṃśravaprāśana*) and the "gift of a filled vessel (to the priest)" (*pūrṇapātradāna*).[57] Thus they sketch out a standard *homa* including preceding and succeeding elements.[58] The handbooks, meant for guidance in the performance of the ritual, give full-fledged instructions for the *homa*, describing the proce-

51 For the model *homa* in the various Gṛhyasūtras, see Kane (1968ff.: II, 207–10); Gonda (1980: 346–62); Gopal (1959: 381–7); Harting (1922: xxx–xxxi).

52 This includes the five preparations of the ground (the so-called *pañcabhūsaṃskāra*s), the preparing and placing of the utensils and so forth.

53 The fourteen oblations (*āhuti*) of ghee (*ājya*) consist of two *āghāra* oblations (for Prajāpati and Indra), two *ājya* portions (for Agni and Soma), three oblations for the *mahāvyāhṛti*s, five *sarvaprāyaścitta* oblations (to different deities), another ghee offering for Prajāpati, and finally an oblation to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt.

54 For modification of ritual procedures in the form of insertions (*āvāpa*), see Staal (1996: 91–9). Cf. Hillebrandt 1981: 98–9; Lubin 1994: 149; Oldenberg 1997: 28–9 (n. on *Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra* 1.9.12).

55 To give just one example: About the placing of the *brahman*, an important priest who monitors the performance (cf. Kane 1968ff.: II, 1021), the Sūtra only states: "...having spread the seat of the *brahman* to the south..." (*dakṣiṇato brahmāsanam āstīrya* PG 1.1.2). Harihara (Mālavīya 2000: 4–5) additionally prescribes a standardized dialogue by which the *brahman* priest is selected and appointed for the ritual, and mentions different materials for worship. He also notes another feature that is standard in modern-day *homa*s (see e.g. ASA: p. 42; ASP: p. 18; CV: p. 43; KBh: p. 253): if a *brahman* priest is not available, he can be replaced by a (bundle) of fifty blades of *kuśa* grass (cf. Gadādhara's commentary [Mālavīya 2000: 6]).

56 *anvārabdha ājyāhutīr hutva prāśanante* PG 2.1.6a. Oldenberg translates *anvārabdha* as "the father taking hold (of his wife)" (1997: 301). Stenzler translates: "Nachdem (der Vater, von der Frau) berührt..." (1876: 38). But according to the commentaries of Harihara (*brahmaṇā upaspṛṣṭa*) and Gadādhara (*brahmaṇānvārabdha*) the sacrificer is touched by the *brahman* priest (Mālavīya 2000: 7). Compare the commentaries of Harihara and Gadādhara on PG 2.5.3 (Mālavīya 2000: 75, 76).

57 See Harihara's and Gadādhara's commentaries on PG 2.1.6 and the *prayoga*s for the *cūḍākaraṇa* after their commentaries on PG 2.1.24 (Mālavīya 2000: 7, 18–9, 21–2).

58 Likewise, the central set of *ājya* oblations can be divided into preparatory (the *āghāra*s, the two *ājya* portions etc.), central (in case of the *cūḍākaraṇahoma*, the five *sarvaprāyaścitta* oblations) and finalizing parts (such as the offering to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt).

dure step by step. Its composers adopt most of the details added by the commentators to the concise description of PG 1.1.2–4 and 1.5.3[59] and make additions of their own.[60] One especially significant restructuring of the ritual is a modification at the end of the *homa*. According to Harihara and Gadādhara, the *homa* ends before the *saṃskāra* starts, and can therefore be regarded as a preparatory ritual (*pūrvāṅgakarman*) of the *saṃskāra*. In the handbooks, by contrast, additional concluding elements related to the *homa*—usually a "full (ladle) oblation" (*pūrṇāhuti*)[61] and the marking of the body with ashes (*tryāyuṣakaraṇa*)—follow the *saṃskāra*.[62] Here the *homa* serves not so much as a preparation but rather as an enclosure that frames the main or core ritual. The handbooks thereby come closer to acknowledging the compositional principle that the main act (*pradhānakarman*), here the *cūḍākaraṇa saṃskāra* as a whole, is embedded in preparatory and concluding acts, the *pūrvāṅga-* and *uttarāṅgakarman*s respectively.

As with the *cūḍākaraṇa*, the commentaries on the PG and the ritual handbooks prescribe the *homa*, whether as a preparation or an enclosure, for each of the four *saṃskāra*s constituting the modern *vratabandha*, although the Sūtra itself does not mention an oblation of ghee (*ājyāhuti*) for the *samāvartana* and says nothing about a *vedārambha saṃskāra*.[63] But there are modifications of the combination model outlined above, namely the sequence of (the first part of) the *homa*, the specific elements of the respective *saṃskāra* and, at least according to the handbooks, the final part of the *homa*. PG 2.3.2 has the oblations of ghee (*ājyāhuti*) for the *upanayana* occurring only after the conferral of the diverse insignia, the first part of the ritualized dialogue between preceptor and student and the entrusting of the boy to different deities (see table 1). In later texts, the usual series of preparations for the *homa* is split up. The five preparations of the ground (*pañcabhūsaṃskāra*) and the laying of the fire (*agnisthāpana*) are interwoven with other preparations and placed at the very beginning of the *upanayana*,[64] whereas the bigger part of the *homa* (the remaining preparations, the *ājya* oblations and the first part of the concluding elements) is performed at the position called for in the Sūtra.[65] Referring to *Mānavadharmaśāstra* 2.169, where the second birth of an Āryan is linked to the *mauñjibandhana*, Scharfe has stated that "the central act of initiation was originally not the investment with the sacrificial cord, but the 'tying of

59 NGMPP H 391/27: 1v–3v; CV: pp. 4–18; DP: pp. 41–9; KBh: pp. 239–44; SV: pp. 171–81; VP: pp. 32–51; VPGh: pp. 86–96; VUP: pp. 5–17.

60 Some modern *vratabandha* handbooks, for instance, insert a fairly elaborate *agnipratiṣṭhā* (KBh: p. 241, n. 2; SV: p. 172; VP: pp. 33–4; VPGh: p. 90).

61 Einoo terms the *pūrṇāhuti* an example of "the revival of quasi Vedic elements" (2005: 4).

62 NGMPP H 391/27: 4v; DP: pp. 54–5; KBh: p. 247; SV: p. 211; VP: pp. 67–8; VPGh: p. 102; VUP: pp. 28–9. Some handbooks mention other standard concluding elements, such as the payment to the priest (*dakṣiṇādāna*).

63 That the fire ritual played an important role when it came to constructing a new *saṃskāra* for the beginning of Vedic studies will be shown below (see p. 34).

64 NGMPP H 391/27: 5; DP: pp. 57–8; KBh: pp. 248–9; SV: p. 222; VP: pp. 84–5; VPGh: pp. 104, 106; VUP: p. 31.

65 Cf. Mālavīya 2000: 45–6, 80, 86. NGMPP H 391/27: 7r–8v; DP: pp. 63–70; KBh: pp. 252–6; SV: pp. 227–34; VP: pp. 103–23; VPGh: pp. 113–9; VUP: pp. 39–49.

the *muñja*-girdle'" (1999: 99).[66] But judging from the structure of the ritual in the PG, and assuming that the central acts of a *saṃskāra* are prepared for by the oblations of ghee, neither the binding of the girdle nor the investment with the sacred thread occupies a central position. From the structural point of view, both elements appear to be mere preparations, albeit fundamental ones.

During the central acts of initiation (which are prepared for—and in later texts enclosed by—the *homa*), the candidate is bonded to the crucial constituents of Vedic ritual (cf. Lubin 1994: 192–3). Once introduced to the language of the ritual by being taught the *sāvitrī*, the *brahmacārin* is brought into contact with the sacrificial fire. Under the guidance of his preceptor, he performs a series of ritual actions common to the preparation of a *homa*. According to PG 2.4.2–7, he is to wipe the ground around the fire with his hand, sprinkle water, stand up and put three pieces of kindling (*samidh*) into the fire, and then to repeat the whole procedure. These gestures, in PG 2.4.1 collectively termed "placing of the kindling" (*samidādhāna*), are an integral part of the daily duties of a student. By performing them at his initiation, the boy is acting for the first time as a *brahmacārin*. With regard to the structural principles of the ritual composition, it is noteworthy that the *samidādhāna* is also performed in the *samāvartana* (see PG 2.6.9), the *saṃskāra* that brings the observance of *brahmacarya* to an end. While the *saṃskāra*s, or the central elements of them, are embedded in corresponding parts of the *homa*, the period of studies is framed by the repetition of one specific element of the *homa*.[67]

The *samidādhāna* was not only subject to procedural modifications,[68] but its meaning also changed. In Śrauta rituals the *samidh*s are meant as kindling for the sacrificial fire, never as an oblation themselves, whereas in post-Vedic ritual, as Einoo (2005a: 41–9) has pointed out, they appear as offering material (cf. Gonda 1980: 166–7). At least some of the material examined here clearly documents this shift of meaning. Harihara (Mālavīya 2000: 52–3) and some of the handbooks (e.g. CV: p. 56) use the verbs *ā-dhā-* or *pra-kṣip-*: the student "lays" or "throws" the wood. According to Rāmadatta and others, the *samidh*s should be "offered".[69] Some manuscripts even add a variant of the *tyāgavākya*, a short formula common in the *homa* by which the sacrificer renounces the offered material.[70]

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66 See also Scharfe (2002: 108).

67 Depending on the text, one or more elements of the *upanayana*, such as the formal salute (*abhivādana*) and the bestowing of blessings (by the preceptor) (*āśīrvādapradāna*), may be repeated in the *samāvartana* as well.

68 In the initiation handbooks, the wiping of the ground (*parisamūhana*) prescribed in PG 2.4.2 is replaced by a fivefold placing of fuel (*indhana*) (NGMPP E 1549/15: 4v; H 391/27: 9r; CV: p. 55; DP: p. 72; KBh: p. 258; SV: p. 239; VP: pp. 134–136; VPGh: p. 125; VUP: pp. 52–3). Cf. Harihara's commentary on the Sūtra (Mālavīya 2000: 52–3).

69 *juhuyāt* NGMPP E 1549/15: 5r and H 391/27: 9r; DP: p. 73; KBh: p. 258. Cf. VP: p. 136 (*caḍāuna lāune*); VPGh: p. 125 (*homa garnū*).

70 *idam agnaye* E 1549/15: 5r; H 391/27: 9r. Contrariwise, the VUP (p. 54, n. 2) remarks that this action is not an offering (*havana*) and therefore no *tyāgavākya* is spoken. See the discussion in Gadādhara's commenary on PG 2.4.3 (Mālavīya 2000: 55).

This post-Vedic reinterpretation coincides with another modification of the *upanayana* ritual. After the laying of the *samidh*s, PG 2.4.8 mentions two more elements related to the fire, namely warming one's hands (*pāṇipratapana*) and washing one's face (*mukhamārjana*). Later texts insert the touching of the bodily parts (*sarvagātrasparśa*) and the marking of the body with ashes (*tryāyuṣakaraṇa*).[71] In the handbooks, the *tryāyuṣakaraṇa* is a regular element of the *uttarāṅgakarman* of the *homa* (see above p. 28). Rāmadatta consequently describes two *tryāyuṣakaraṇa*s for the *upanayana*, one after the *sarvagātrasparśa* (to conclude the "fire offering" within the core ritual of the *saṃskāra*) and a second after the begging for alms (*bhikṣācaraṇa*) (to finalize the framing *homa*).[72] In modern ritual manuals, the historically accreted redundancy is moderated. The *pūrṇāhuti*, another standard concluding element of the *homa* (see above p. 28), is inserted before the *tryāyuṣakaraṇa* within the *saṃskara*, and the final part of the *homa* after the *bhikṣācaraṇa* is elided.[73] In this way the core ritual is conflated with its enclosure, or to be more precise, the outer frame of the *saṃskāra* is merged into an inner frame.[74]

The *saṃskāra*s and *pūjā*

It was not only in the formative period of the ritual life-cycle that the different *saṃskāra*s developed in correlation with the surrounding ritual culture. When dealing with the post-Vedic dynamics of ritual, special attention must be paid to *pūjā*, the most common and important form of ritual in contemporary Hinduism.[75] The central or core act of *pūjā* is the worship of a venerated object with varying acts of service (*upacāra*).[76] But depending on text and performer, the *pūjā* may contain several other features, many of them serving as frames: a ritualized invocation (*āvāhana*) and dismissal (*visarjana*) of the deity or the worship of the standard set: lamp (*dīpa*), jar (*kalaśa*) and Gaṇeśa.[77] By incorporating diverse Vedic, Puranic and Tantric elements, *pūjā* evolved into an elaborate ceremony, and eventually began to be employed as a construction kit for adapting other rituals, including the *saṃskāra*s, to popular ritual practice.

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71 These elements are already found in the commentaries of Harihara and Gadādhara on PG 2.4.8 (Mālavīya 2000: 57, 59) and are part of the sequence quoted in the *samāvartana* (ibid.: 103, 115, 127).

72 NGMPP E 1549/15: 5v, 6r; H 391/27: 9v, 10r; DP: pp. 74–5, 76–7; VUP: pp. 59, 63.

73 CV: pp. 59–60; SV: pp. 241–2; VP: pp. 143–5; VPGh: pp. 127–8. In the KBh (pp. 259–60) Rāmadatta's text is modified accordingly.

74 For examples of reduction of redundancy by merging inner frames into an outer frame, see below p. 38.

75 On the incorporation of the *pūjā* into the ritual practices of other religions, see Bühnemann (1988: 7–8).

76 On the historic origins of these acts of service see Thieme (1939) and Einoo (1996). In current ritual practice, a sequence of five or sixteen acts is the most common (see Bühnemann 1988: 10, 29, 64), but the number can be increased up to 108 or more, or, conversely, the different materials can be replaced by some unbroken rice (*akṣata*) or a flower.

77 For the standards governing *pūjā*, see Bühnemann (1988); Tripathi (2004).

That the investment with the sacrificial cord (*yajñopavītadhāraṇa*), an element of relatively late origin, can be elaborated and highlighted by introducing worship of the strands and knots of the thread has already been mentioned (see p. 21). But old core elements of the *saṃskāra*s, too, have been influenced by *pūjā*. To give another example from the *upanayana*: in some North Indian handbooks, which also (like the Nepalese manuals) belong to the Vājasaneyi school of the White *Yajurveda*, the teaching of the *sāvitrī* (*sāvitryupadeśa* or *mantradāna*) is supplemented by borrowings from *pūjā*. For instance, the *Upanayanapaddhati* (p. 87) describes how, in preparation for that ritual element, the mantra is written with a golden pen on a plate of rice and then worshipped together with Sarasvatī and the preceptor. In the *Yajñopavītapaddhati* (pp. 38–9) this sequence—extended by the worship of Gaṇeśa and the clan deity (*kuladevatā*)—is interpolated in Rāmadatta's text. But to my knowledge only one of the handbooks used in Nepal has taken notice of this *pūjā*: referring to the *Saṃskāragaṇapati* of Rāmakṛṣṇa (cf. *Saṃskāragaṇapati* p. 712), Nityānanda Panta Parvatīya (1867–1931) in his *Saṃskāradīpaka* (p. 298)[78] offers a parenthetical description but remarks that this *pūjā* is neither mentioned by Gadādhara, Nṛsiṃha and others nor common in "our regions".[79] Thus while the manuals describe the time-honoured core actions of the *saṃskāra*s and the *homa* with great unanimity, they do display regional variations concerning details added to the ritual later, even though they all belong to the same Vedic school and thus follow the same Gṛhyasūtra.

Pūjā has also influenced the other *saṃskāra*s that constitute the modern *vratabandha*. It is common in modern Nepalese handbooks and practice to prepare the *cūḍākaraṇa* by fastening to the hair of the boy three bundles of cloth in which Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva have been worshipped with customary *pūjā*.[80] An example from the *samāvartana* can serve to demonstrate how features of *pūjā* have been incorporated into the *saṃskāra*: According to the school of the White *Yajurveda*, one central act of the *samāvartana* is a bath (*snāna* or *abhiṣeka*) with the water of eight jars (*aṣṭakalaśa*).[81] PG 2.6.9–14 specifies the position of the vessels[82] and the mantras for taking and sprinkling the water. In his commentary and manual, Harihara adds a few details to these frag-

78 This influential handbook (frequently quoted by the KBh and the VPGh) was written in AD 1917. Its author lived and died in Allahabad (see Upadhyāya 1994: 408), and it is widely employed in Nepal by Kumāī Brahmins (oral communication, Mahes Raj Pant).

79 *gadādharanṛsiṃhādibhir noktam | na cāsmaddeśeṣu pracalati.*

80 The descriptions of the *jūṭikābandhana* or *-adhivāsana* differ in details (cf. CV: pp. 2–3; KBh: p. 239; SD: pp. 278–9; SV: pp. 47–53; VP: pp. 134–6; VPGh: pp. 77–83; VUP: pp. 1–3). Rāmadatta only hints at this preparatory ritual (*pūrvāṅgakarman*) when, in his description of the *cūḍākaraṇa*, he says that, of the three tufts tied the night before, the right-hand one should be moistened first (NGMPP H 391/27: 3v; DP: p. 50; KBh: p. 244; VUP: p. 17).

81 Other Gṛhyasūtras, while not mentioning the eight vessels, do offer details not found in the PG: for example, that the student is to sit on a cow's hide during the bath. For these differences, see Gopal (1959: 311–4); Hillebrandt (1981: 61–3); Kane (1968ff.: II, 408–11); Pandey (1998: 150–1).

82 According to PG 2.6.9, the water vessels are placed north of the fire on *kuśa* grass that has been laid out east to west, pointing east. Some of the handbooks mention an alternative position: the VP (p. 240), for example, says that the vessels are placed either north or east of the fire. In modern practice, the vessels occupy space on the eastern side of the ritual arena.

mentary instructions: the water should be taken with the right hand, the procedure starts with the vessel in the south and works its way north, and so forth (cf. Mālavīya 2000: 103–4, 127). These points are standard. In Hindu ritual, the right hand is generally favoured over the left, and many acts are directed toward the north, the direction of the gods. Rāmadatta's handbook is very close to Harihara's,[83] but some more recent texts devote particular attention to the *kalaśa*s, the jars from which the water for the bath is taken. The *kalaśa* is an important implement in *pūjā*. As they do for other utensils used in *pūjā*, the manuals in question elaborate on its installation: First the ground is prepared and a seat (*āsana*) erected. Then the *kalaśa* is filled with several auspicious materials and a series of gods is invoked onto the vessel, especially its "shoulder region" (*skandhapradeśa*), and worshipped.[84] Different parts of this standard set of preparations have been transferred to the *saṃskāra* ritual. The VP (p. 241) describes how eight seats (*āsana*) are prepared by tracing out eight-petalled lotus blossoms (*aṣṭadalakamala*) and placing leaf-plates of rice on them. The text also mentions the filling of the vessels with, among other things, water, sandal paste, barley, sesame, flower, "all herbs" (*sarvauṣadhi*),[85] "five jewels" (*pañcaratna*) and "five leaves" (*pañcapallava*) (cf. VPGh: p. 159). Other handbooks adapt certain details of the invocation (*āvāhana*) and worship.[86] For instance, in the CV (pp. 73–5) the Eight Mothers (Aṣṭamātṛkā) and the Guardians of the Eight Directions (Dik- or Lokapāla), two popular groups of deities collectively invoked onto the *kalaśa* of the *pūjā*, are assigned to the eight vessels. Together with other Vedic and Puranic gods, they are worshipped vessel by vessel, each with five acts of service (*pañcopacārapūjā*) and various mantras (cf. KK: pp. 105–6):

Kalaśa	Mantras	Deities
1st	*oṃ tattvā yāmi brahmaṇā* etc. (VS 18.49, 21.2)	Varuṇa, Brāhmī, Indra
2nd	*oṃ namo 'stu sarpebho ye* etc. (VS 13.6)	The Nāgas, Maheśvarī, Agni
3rd	*oṃ ṛtāṣāḍṛtadhāmāgniḥ* etc. (VS 18.38)	The Apsarases, Kaumarī, Yama
4th	*oṃ brahma jajñānaṃ prathamam* etc. (VS 13.3)	Brahmā, Vaiṣṇavī, Nirṛti
5th	*oṃ viṣṇo rarāṭamasi* etc. (VS 5.21)	Vāmana, Vārāhī, Varuṇa
6th	*oṃ mā nastoke tanaye* etc. (VS 16.16)	Rudra[87], Aindrī, Vāyu
7th	*oṃ sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ* etc. (VS 31.1)	The Cirañjīvins,[88] Cāmuṇḍā, Soma
8th	*oṃ śrīś ca te lakṣmīś ca* etc. (VS 31.22)	Lakṣmī, Mahālakṣmī, Iśāna

Table 2: Deities worshipped in the eight vessels (*aṣṭakalaśa*) as part of the *samāvartana*

83 Only a few additions are made in order to provide more precise instructions for the ritual acts indicated in the PG (E 1549/15: 11v–12r; H 391/27: 16rv; DP: pp. 101–3; KBh: pp. 277–8; VUP: pp. 97–100).

84 For the standard procedure for the *kalaśasthāpana* in the *pūjā*, see KBh: pp. 6–11, 54–7, 60; SV: pp. 8–13, 15–6; VPGh: pp. 41–4, 49–52. Cf. Bühnemann 1988: 45–6.

85 *Sarvauṣadhi* is a mixture of (often ten) different plants, see e.g. *Agnipurāṇa* 177.17.

86 The VP (p. 241) notes parenthetically that, according to some, the Eight Mothers (Aṣṭamātṛkā) are worshipped in the vessels.

87 According to the SV (p. 278) the Eleven Rudras beginning with Vīrabhadra etc. are worshipped.

88 This group of eight long-living or immortal beings (Mārkaṇḍeya, Vyāsa, Paraśurāma, Aśvatthāmā [also known as Drauna], Kṛpa [also known as Kṛpācārya], Bali, Hanumān and Vibhīṣana) is also worshipped in a *pūjā* on the occasion of one's birthday (see KBh: p. 232; KK9: pp. 119–21).

In the SV (pp. 271–82), a handbook just recently compiled, the information given in the VP and CV is combined, with the *aṣṭakalaśapūjā* being further elaborated. The vessels are filled with additional materials, and the text enumerates for each of the deities given in table 2 a separate *āvāhana* formula (*oṃ* N.N. *ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭha* etc.) and a specific mantra.[89] Even Puraṇic deities are invoked by means of Vedic mantras. In *pūjā* in general, and not only in *pūjā*-ized modern ritual, components of ritual (actions, deities, mantras, materials) of different historical origin are readily combined.

The construction of a new *saṃskāra*

In the post-Vedic period, the principles of accretion introduced so far—the transfer or creation of new core elements, the framing by a fire ritual, and the adoption of *pūjā*-based standards—were used not only to modify existing rituals but also to construct a completely new *saṃskāra*.

In the series of *saṃskāra*s, the PG does not mention a separate ritual for the beginning of study. PG 2.5 having ended with the description of the *upanayana*, the next section starts with the instruction that one should take a bath (i.e. perform *samāvartana*) when the study of the Veda is complete (PG 2.6.1). This does not mean that Pāraskara made no provisions for ritual at the beginning of Vedic study. A later chapter of the PG is concerned with the inauguration of the annual course of study (*adhyāyopākarman*) in the month of Śrāvaṇa. For that occasion the text outlines a special *homa* (PG 2.10.3–9), which is more generally performed whenever observances (*vrata*) are begun or ended (PG 2.10.10).[90] It prescribes a number of other ritual actions, too, including the laying of *samidh*s, the eating of grains and yoghurt, and the recitation of the *sāvitrī* (PG 2.10.11–18).[91] Thus the PG contains a cyclic but no life-cycle ritual for the beginning of the study of the Veda.

At the end of his *upanayana* manual, Harihara quotes PG 2.6.1 (see above) and argues that the completion of Vedic study presupposes having begun it.[92] Consequently he includes instructions for the "beginning of the Veda" (*vedārambha*) before proceeding on to the *samāvartana*.[93] Like other *saṃskāra*s, this "new" ritual is to be preceded

89 The first deity or group of deities of each vessel (Varuṇa, the Nāgas, Apsarases etc.) is worshipped while reciting the mantra given in table 2. For the worship of the Eight Mothers (Brāhmī, Maheśvarī, Kaumārī etc.) the text employs the mantra VS 28.13, with three exceptions: Vaiṣṇavī (like Vāmana) is worshipped to the text of VS 5.21; Aindrī or Indrāṇī, to that of VS 38.3; and Mahālakṣmī (like Lakṣmī), to that of VS 31.22. The mantras given for the eight *dikpāla*s (Indra, Agni, Yama etc.) are VS 20.50, 22.17, 37.11, 12.62, 21.1., 27.12, 34.12 and 25.18 respectively.

90 For the different *vrata*s which had to be observed in order to make a student eligible to study (a certain portion of) the Veda, see Gopal (1959: 306–10); Kane (1968ff.: II, 370–5); Pandey (1998: 141).

91 For the conclusion (*utsarga*) of the annual course of study in the month of Pauṣa, see PG 2.12.1–3.

92 *tatra vedasya ārambhaṃ binā samāptiḥ karttum aśakyeti* (Mālavīya 2000: 84).

93 This ritual is also called *vratādeśa* by Harihara (Mālavīya 2000: 84). On this term, cf. Kane (1968ff.: II, 197); Pandey (1998: 142).

by the worship of the Mothers (*mātṛpūjā*) and an auspicious form of the ancestral rite (*ābhyudayikaśrāddha*). Then, before starting to teach the Veda to the *brahmacārin*, the preceptor (*guru*) conducts a *homa* (Mālavīya 2000: 84). While the *saṃskārahoma*s for the *cūḍākaraṇa* and *upanayana* feature the standard fourteen oblations (see above n. 53), the *vedārambhahoma* is modified by the insertion (*āvāpa*) of the *vedāhuti*s, a set of oblations mentioned in PG 2.10.4–9 for the *adhyāyopākarman*. Harihara applies the same modification to the *samāvartanahoma* (Mālavīya 2000: 103), thus employing an element from the ritual frame of the annual course of study to close out the life-cycle period of studenthood.

In Harihara's manual, the *vedāhuti*s can be viewed structurally as the centrepiece of the *vedārambha* ritual, but the handbooks add further elements, with the effect that this set of oblations forms part of the frame of a new core ritual.[94] Rāmadatta's text contains four new elements: 1) the recitation of the *gāyatrī*, 2) a formal salutation, 3) the teaching of the mantras VS 3.1 and 3.2a, and 4) the recitation of the *svastivācana*.[95] Except for the teaching of the Vedic mantras, these elements are standard for the ritual, being performed, for example, in the *upanayana*. Later texts make further additions. Gadādhara mentions *pūjā*s for Vighneśa (Gaṇeśa), Sarasvatī, Hari (Viṣṇu), Lakṣmī and one's own tradition or school for the *vedārambha* (Mālavīya 2000: 96). More recent handbooks often include the worship of the preceptor or other persons who have kept up knowledge of one's Vedic tradition,[96] along with a *pūjā* for the Veda itself.[97]

Since the handbooks are not bound to an ancient model in a scripture as authoritative as the PG, it is no surprise that they vary to a much greater extent concerning the *vedārambha* than in their descriptions of other life-cycle rituals. Considerable differences are even attested for the very central element of the *saṃskāra*. According to Rāmadatta, the student is taught the beginning of the third book of the VS.[98] This book contains the mantras for the daily fire oblations (*agnihotra*) (cf. *Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra* 4.12–15). The reason for this choice may have been its great importance for the ritual practice of a householder. However, more recent handbooks follow a different principle in selecting the text to be taught. The *Cūḍopanayana* text has settled upon (embedded in a repeated recitation of the *gāyatrī*) VS 1.1a and 40.17c along with ŚB 1.1.1.1 and

94 Like Harihara's, all other handbooks begin the *vedārambha* with the *homa* that centres on the *vedāhuti*s (E 1549/15: 6r–8r; H 391/27: 10v–12v; CV: pp. 62–4; DP: pp. 78–86; KBh: pp. 262–7; KK: pp. 91–6; SV: pp. 247–54; VP: pp. 159–84; VPGh: pp. 132–9; VUP: pp. 64–75), but (as is usual in the other *saṃskāra*s) most of them attach the *pūrṇāhuti* and *tryāyuṣakaraṇa* as concluding elements to the new main or core part of the *saṃskāra* (see E 1549/15: 8v; H 391/27: 12v–13r; CV: pp. 64–5; DP: pp. 87–8; KBh: p. 269; SV: p. 257; VP: pp. 194–6; VPGh: pp. 145–6; VUP: pp. 76–7).

95 NGMPP E 1549/15: 8r; H 391/27: 12v; DP: pp. 86–7; KBh: p. 268; VUP: pp. 75–6.

96 Depending on the handbook, this *pūjā* may honour one's preceptor (*guru*), the *sūtrakāra*s and sometimes the Ṛṣis (cf. CV: p. 64; KBh: p. 237, n. 2; VP: p. 184; VPGh: p. 140). According to the KK (p. 96), Kātyāyana is worshipped as the *sūtrakāra*.

97 According to the *Cūḍopanayana* text, the book of the Veda is itself worshipped (CV: p. 64). The VP (p. 184) prescribes the worship of Vedapuruṣa through offerings on the book (cf. SV: p. 254; VPGh: pp. 139–40).

98 NGMPP E 1549/15: 8r; H 391/27: 12v; DP: p. 87; KBh: p. 268; VUP: p. 76.

14.9.4.33 (CV: p. 64). Thus, independently of their content or ritual significance, the very first and last words of the Saṃhitā and the Brāhmaṇa of the White *Yajurveda* are to be recited *pars pro toto*. The two dissimilar models can be found in extended versions, and also in different (and sometimes conflicting) combinations with each other.[99]

Most of these variations clearly impose a drastic change of meaning upon the *vedārambha*. Introduced to mark a beginning, it was transformed into a ritual representation of the study as a whole. In the contemporary initiation, the learning of the Veda is not only initiated but also passed and finalized within one complex ritual.

The *vratabandha* in modern-day Kathmandu

So far the *vratabandha* has been described as a bundle of four *saṃskāra*s of different historical origin, each framed by a fire ritual (*homa*). The ritual was enriched by adding details and elements from other rituals (such as *dīkṣā*, *vivāha*, and *pūjā*), and with that the outlines of the complex form of the *vratabandha* began to take shape. But this sketch, based on the descriptions in the handbooks and their textual predecessors, does not yet reflect the whole complexity of the ritual as it is performed in modern-day Nepal.

Among the Bāhun and Chetri of Kathmandu there is a tendency to engage for the *vratabandha* professional priests who have passed the course of study of Vedic schools and so can claim that they perform the ritual according to the rules of the textual tradition (Nep. *vidhile*). These priests not only consult an initiation handbook to guide them through the ritual; they also make use of a manual on how to lay a sacrificial fire (*agni-*

99 According to the VP (pp. 186–95), the teaching begins (as in the text of Rāmadatta) with VS 3.1 and 2, but the handbook subsequently also cites the beginnings of the other Saṃhitās (ṚV 1.1.1 etc.), while specifying alternative verses or text passages in case the student is a Kṣatriya or Vaiśya. The *Saṃskāradīpaka* (pp. 311–4), on the other hand, extends the structure found in the *Cūḍopanayana* text. The mantras given are: VS 1.1 and 1.2 entirely, the beginnings of the following chapters (VS 2.1, 3.1 and so forth up to 40.1) as *pratīka*s and VS 40.17 completely. Then follows ŚB 1.1.1.1 and 14.9.4.33, the beginnings of the other Saṃhitās, and finally PG 3.16, the last section of the Gṛhyasūtra, which is said to prevent what is learnt from falling into oblivion (see also VP: pp. 187–8). Modern compilers often combine different information of older authorities. The KBh (pp. 268 and 267–9, n. 2), for instance, follows Rāmadatta in the main text and quotes (with slight variations) the corresponding passage of the *Saṃskāradīpaka* in a note. The main text of the KK (pp. 96–8) adopts the order of the *Saṃskāradīpaka*, while noting that, as an alternative to VS 1.1, VS 3.1 can be taught as the first mantra of the so-called "short beginning of the Veda" (*svalpavedārambha*). The SV (pp. 254–6), by contrast, adds the mantras VS 1.1 and 2 to an abbreviated version of the VP. The VPGh (pp. 139–42), finally, represents a combination of the passages in the KBh and VP.

sthāpana or *-sthāpanā*).[100] Before observing how the *agnisthāpanā* is combined with the initiation ritual, it is worth considering the composite character of this fire ritual.

As noted above, the *saṃskāra*s have been *homa*- and *pūjā*-ized in a process of accretion. In the contemporary ritual practice, there are still other correlations between these rituals. A *pūjā* can be framed and upgraded by a *homa*.[101] The *agnisthāpanā*, at least according to the specialized modern Nepalese handbooks, combines all three forms of ritual. This ritual adapts the human *saṃskāra*s to the "new-born" fire[102] and also provides several examples of the *pūjā*-ization of the fire ritual.[103] The preparatory part includes the general components of *pūjā*: the purification and placement of the different vessels;[104] the worship of a lamp (*dīpa*), jar (*kalaśa*) and Gaṇeśa; and so forth.[105] Some of the *pūjā* elements, including those mentioned, have been transferred to the *homa* without any modification. In other cases, standards applicable to *pūjā* have been adapted to components specific to the *homa*, as in the worship of the fire altar (*vedi*) or the "girdle" (*mekhalā*) around the fire (namely a pattern formed by powder on the ground).[106] Another way of combining features of a *pūjā* and *homa* is illustrated in the centremost part of the *agnisthāpanā*. As noted previously (see p. 34), the standard set of fourteen oblations of ghee (*caturdaśājyāhuti*) can be modified by insertions (*āvāpa*). In the *agni-*

100 There are several such publications available in the Nepalese market: for example, the booklet of Buddhisāgara Parājuli titled *Agnisthāpanā* (ASP), which has been reprinted since the 1960s by different publishers, or the newly compiled *Agnisthāpanāvidhi* (or *°paddhati*) of Oṃ Prakāśa Adhikārī (ASA). The procedure for laying a fire is also included in some comprehensive works on ritual. In the latest edition of the official Nepalese school book series on ritual, the general *homa* ordinance (*sāmānyahomavidhi*) is the first lesson of class eight (KK8: pp. 1–51). Dadhirāma Marāsini deals with the *agnisthāpanā* in the general part of his ritual compendium, just after the *mātṛkāpūjā* and the *ābhyudayikaśrāddha* (KBh: pp. 37–86); Madhusūdana Suvedī, too, has integrated the relevant instructions into his initiation manual (SV: pp. 54–114, 296–324).

101 In the contemporary ritual practice, several elaborate forms of *pūjā*, such as the popular *śiva*- or *satyanārāyaṇapūjā*, usually include a *homa* conducted so as to conform to an *agnisthāpanā*.

102 In order for the fire to be laid properly, it has to pass through the different *saṃskāra*s from *garbhādhāna* up to *vivāha*. These *agnisaṃskāra*s are usually performed in a very concise way by reciting mantras (cf. ASA: pp. 54–6; ASP: pp. 13–17; KBh: pp. 40–2; KK8: pp. 7–9; SV: pp. 67–70). For Puranic references, see Einoo (2005: 4, n. 3); Hikita (2005: 149).

103 In general, the *agnisthāpanā* can be seen as an extended version of the standard *homa* (cf. p. 28–9). Only a few of the basic elements have been subjected to serious modification. To give an example: whereas in the initiation handbooks (in accordance with older normative texts) a seat (*āsana*) is offered to the *brahman* priest (see n. 55), in the modern *agnisthāpanā* a figure made of 50 stalks of *kuśa* grass is placed on the *āsana* and worshipped together with Viṣṇu and Prajāpati as the god Brahmā (cf. ASA: pp. 42–3; ASP: pp. 18–20, 32–4; KBh: pp. 42, 47–8; KK8: pp. 9–10, 14–5; SV: pp. 79–80). In the ASA (pp. 42–3), Śiva is worshipped instead of Prajāpati, the handbook having introduced into the textual tradition a variant quite common in modern ritual practice.

104 According to most of the handbooks, the so-called "ritual vessel" (*karmapātra*: see ASA: pp. 7–8; ASP: pp. 2–3; KK8: p. 2; SV: pp. 55–7) and the vessel with water for receiving a respected guest (*argh[y]apātra*: see ASA: pp. 13–5; ASP: p. 32; KK8: p. 14; SV; p. 79) are installed during the *agnisthāpanā*.

105 ASA: pp. 29–40; ASP: pp. 45–56: KBh: pp. 54–8; SV: pp. 88–97.

106 For these *pūjā*s specific to a *homa*, see ASA: pp. 22–28; ASP: pp. 9–11; KBh: pp. 39–40; KK8: pp. 4–6; SV: pp. 65–6.

sthāpanā, one addition to the basic scheme of oblations is a *pradhānadevatāhoma*, a set of oblations for the 58 "main deities" summoned—in the *pūjā* as well as in the preparation of the *pūjā*-ized *homa*—onto the shoulder of the *kalaśa*s.[107] Finally, extensive refinements are also made to the concluding part, to allow for blessings to be bestowed upon the participants of the ritual. Many of the elements added here correspond to elements of the extended beginning.[108] Like the basic *homa* described in initiation handbooks, the procedure for the *agnisthāpanā* can be divided into three parts: the preparations (*pūrvāṅgakarman*), the main act or *homa* proper, and a final part (*uttarāṅgakarman*). A central set of oblations is enclosed in both forms of a *homa*, but in the *agnisthāpanā* further layers are added to this framework.[109]

The principle that something ritually important needs a frame (provided by preparations and corresponding parts at the end, reduplication of ritual elements etc.) can be applied to all levels of ritual. The different parts of the basic *homa* are arranged to frame the main acts of each *saṃskāra* (see p. 28–9) and in a slightly modified form to frame the ritual stage of studenthood (see p. 34). In the modern *vratabandha*, the *agnisthāpanā* manual is used to instal an additional fire admidst the four fires for the *saṃskārahoma*s.[110] This *pūjā*-ized form of a *homa* encloses the bundle of four *saṃskāra*s as a whole. In this way the *vratabandha* is marked as a ritual unit and the general framework of a *pūjā* is integrated into the initiation ritual.

This complex construction built up around the four *saṃskāra*s and their different frames can be altered further by either supplementation or reduction. Most of the modern initiation handbooks at least mention the "pacification of the (nine) seizers" (*grahaśānti*) as a necessary preparatory ritual before the first *saṃskārahoma*.[111] In actual prac-

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107 The *pradhānadevatāhoma* consists of oblations for the Pañcāyanadevatās, the Five Lokapālas, the Navagrahas, the Adhidevatās, the Pratyādhidevatās, the Dik- or Ten Lokapālas, the Eight Vasus, the Twelve Ādityas, Eleven Rudras, the Sixteen Mātṛkās, the Seven Maruts and the six gods Vināyaka, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Arka and Vanaspati (ASA: pp. 63–76; ASP: pp. 77–86; KBh: pp. 63–70; SV: pp. 104–14; KK8: pp. 27–34; for the invocation of these deities onto the *kalaśa*, see ASA: p. 56; ASP: p. 40; KBh: pp. 9–11, 45–9; KK8: p. 25; SV: pp. 15–6, 98–9; VPGh: pp. 49–51). A second insertion, often called the (subsequent or concluding) sacrifice for the four Svastis etc. (*catuḥsvastyādi[uttarāṅga]homa*), consists of oblations for further (groups of) Vedic and Puranic deities, and even epic heroes like the five Pāṇḍavas (for the variants, cf. ASA: pp. 70–6; ASP: pp. 87–94; KBh: pp. 70–6; KK8: pp. 34–40; SV: pp. 296–307).

108 E.g. the ritual dismissal (*visarjana*) of Agni, Brahmā and other gods invoked for the ritual (ASA: pp. 106–7; ASP: pp. 112–3; KBh: p. 82; KK8: p. 45; SV: pp. 319–20), the *maṅgalābhiṣeka* with water from the *kalaśa* (ASA: pp. 107–11; ASP: pp. 114–5; KBh: pp. 82–4; KK8: pp. 46–8; SV: pp. 320–3) or the binding of a protective thread (*rakṣā*) around the wrist of the sponsor and other participants (ASA: p. 112; ASP: p. 117; KBh: p. 85; KK8: p. 48; SV: pp. 223–4), after having been prepared and worshipped at the beginning of the ritual (ASA: pp. 43–5; ASP: pp. 53–6; KBh: pp. 58–60; KK8: pp. 24–5; SV: pp. 97–8).

109 On the framing of the fire ritual with elements from other rituals, see Witzel (1986: 176–7 and 1992: 780–2).

110 Usually all five fires are situated in a line on the central north-south axis.

111 Cf. CV: pp. 3–4; KBh: p. 239; KK: p. 71; VP: pp. 9–11; VPGh: p. 78. A more detailed account is given in the SV (pp. 114–68). Compare the *grahaśānti* manuals in the appendix of the VPGh (pp. 177–236) and the general part of the KBh (pp. 87–152).

tice it is not uncommon to combine the *vratabandha* with still other popular rituals, such as the worship of Śiva (*śivapūjā*) or the donation of a lakh of lamp wicks (*lakṣa-vartikādīpadāna*, Nep. *lākhabattī*). Quite often additional priests are employed to recite auspicious texts.[112] It all depends on the sponsors' resources to what extent the ritual is expanded. A lack of resources or interest in the ritual conduces to a minimalized form. Instead of separate fires, all necessary oblations can be offered to one fire, and the procedures for the different *saṃskāra*s can also be reduced to a few basic elements. As long as there are certain significant features, the ritual performed remains valid.[113]

But even when the ritual is well equipped, the ideal scheme spelled out above cannot always be strictly followed. Not only the day of the ritual needs to be auspicious, but certain important moments within the ritual, too, are fixed astrologically.[114] It is therefore rather the rule than the exception that the priests are forced to rearrange the sequence of acts in order to harmonize ritual and cosmic events. Some elements, such as the *pradhānadevatāhoma* or parts of the *grahaśānti*, may be postponed or, if the personal resources are available, held parallel to core elements of the *saṃskāra*s. Less important ritual elements can be skipped. How the procedure is accommodated to the time frame has to be decided upon on an individual basis.

Beyond that, some more general modifications of the ritual structure can be observed. It has already been seen that an outer frame can merge into an inner frame (see p. 30). But in ritual practice the reverse form of reduction is much more common. Initiation handbooks redundantly describe for every *saṃskārahoma* the standard *pūrvāṅgakarman*. In modern performances, the procedure is abbreviated by amalgamating parts of those frames with the *agnisthāpanā*. After the central fire has been elaborately laid on the basis of the *agnisaṃskāra*s and what follows, the *saṃskāra* fires are kindled by transferring embers of the central one without repeating the time-consuming preparations from *pañcabhūsaṃskāra* to *samidādhāna*. A similar shortcut can be applied to certain other ritual elements repeatedly prescribed by the manuals, including the "gift of a cow" (*godāna*) and such standard concluding elements of *pūjā* as the "prayer for forbearance (towards ritual mistakes)" (*kṣamāprārthanā*) and the "presenting the ritual (to the god)" (*karmasamarpaṇa*). In some cases this is done not only to save time and effort. Even as the light (*dīpa*) kindled at the beginning is kept burning throughout the whole procedure, so too all the different gods, once invoked, should remain present for the ritual as long as possible. Their dismissal (*visarjana*), although in the handbooks often prescribed for immediately after their *pūjā*, is usually postponed and collectively performed as part of the *uttarāṅgakarman* of the *agnisthāpanā*, that is, just before the ritual ends and blessings are distributed.

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112 Chapters of the Veda, the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa,* the *Durgāsaptaśatī* (*Caṇḍī*), the *Viṣṇusahasranāma* or the *gāyatrīmantra* are favoured for recitation.

113 For example, the *upanayana* should include at least the investment with the sacrificial cord and ascetic-like dress, the teaching of the *gāyatrī* and the begging for alms.

114 Besides the beginning of the ritual (*śubhāramba*), an auspicious moment (Nep. *sāit*) needs to be assured for the cutting of the boy's hair, the teaching of the *gāyatrī* and the begging for alms.

Textual normative models of the ritual offer several possibilities when it comes to substituting components and to elaborating or shortening the procedure. In practice the idealized form of a ritual is accommodated to the limits of personal, temporal and material resources. Therefore, significant variations can occur. The attempt has been made, though, to show that most of the modifications during the historical evolution of the ritual, and during modern performances as well, are not random, but follow clear conventions or rules. Some of the principles underlying the composition and dynamics of the ritual have, I hope, been demonstrated in this paper.

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Economy and Composition of Complex Rituals: *Upanayana* and *Samāvartana* as Part of Nuptial Ceremonies*

1 Economizing complex rituals

Many Hindus—like the majority of people worldwide—have to cope with time constraints and/or financial pressure when planning the rituals prescribed by their respective traditions. Among other factors, the inflexibility of many jobs and the long distances relatives live apart nowadays demand strategies to economize these rituals.[1] Thus, while many Hindus theoretically adhere to the course of *saṃskāra*s prescribed by classical traditions, in practice this elaborate cycle is often abbreviated. However, modifications of rituals may also be caused by new theological doctrines and the decline of older ones.[2]

The ritual systems of classical Indian traditions provide many possibilities for compositionally correct changes as their rituals are constructed according to certain "grammatical" rules.[3] The rites characteristic of, e.g., initiation or marriage are framed by certain ceremonies which need to be carried out for every ritual in the same or a very similar way.[4] In order to economize the elaborate cycle of *saṃskāra*s prescribed by classical traditions the special rites of more than one life-cycle ritual may be embedded into a single paradigm. This appears to be a "grammatically" correct modification.

A second rule which can be tentatively deduced from the data given below regards the interim between two life-cycle rituals: If a ritual starts with (almost) the same sequence of rites or ritual elements as the one performed before ends with, the whole sequence has to be performed only once if the two rituals are carried out in direct succesession. This modification does not violate the ritual "grammar" because an interim

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* In the article at hand, Sanskrit words which might be used in Hindi and Pahari are transcribed according to Sanskrit conventions; unless they are given in continous Hindi text.

1 On the economy of religion see Gladigow (1995).

2 An example for a theological doctrine which continues to have an effect on the ritual practice, is the *āśrama* system (see pp. 52–3).

3 The idea that ritual actions function analogous to language and that the composition of rituals follows a kind of "grammar" has been put forward rather early (for references see Michaels 2007). Methods for the sequencing of rituals—an integral part of a "grammar" of rituals—have been put forward by Gladigow (2004). The "grammar" of the classical marriage ritual is the subject of my dissertation *Rites and Ritemes of the Classical Marriage Ritual and the Rules of their Combination – A Contribution to a 'Grammar' of the Gṛhya-Rituals* (Göttingen) which is part of the project *The Composition of Gṛhya-Rituals* (Göttingen, see http://www.indologie.uni-goettingen.de/cms/index.php?id=28).

4 On the frame or paradigm of classical rituals see p. 50, Caland ([KauśS] 1900: vi–viii), Gonda (1980: 345–57), Harting ([BaudhGPS] 1922: xxx) and Kane (1974: 207ff.).

between two rituals (or rites) appears to be elided on the level of composition when the last sequence of the first ritual is repeated at the beginning of the second ritual which may be performed months or years after the first one.

Both these rules are applied in order to economize the cycle of *saṃskāra*s prescribed by classical traditions.[5] In the article at hand it shall be shown in which way *upanayana* and *samāvartana* are, by these rules, shortened and incorporated into the marriage ritual in the Kangra valley.[6] The compositional preconditions of these *saṃskāra*s and the influence of the *āśrama*-system on their modification shall also be discussed. As it remains uncertain whether *samāvartana*, in the Kangra valley, has usually been performed at an occasion distinct from marriage, in the second part of the paper some Gṛhyasūtras are discussed which allow conclusions about the classical concept of the connection of *samāvartana* and marriage. These texts basically provide two compositional types. Either the two rituals are connected by the "grammatical" figure of repetition or they actually overlap each other (see §3).

2 Initiation and the bridegroom's paraphernalia in the Kangra valley

According to classical formulations of the *āśrama* system, boys have to be ritually born a second time through the performance of *upanayana* and thereby enter *brahmacarya*, the first stage of life (*āśrama*) during which the Veda is to be studied. Only when this aim is accomplished and a young man has taken the absolving bath and has returned home (*samāvartana*) he is allowed to marry and thereby become a householder (*gṛhastha*).[7]

Among the upper castes of the Kangra valley initiation remains important—if not in itself, then at least as an indispensable precondition for marriage. Therefore, it will not

5 A third possibility to economize the classical *saṃskāra*s is the shortening of these rituals by leaving out some of their rites or ritual elements. This strategy is applied frequently as in almost every *saṃskāra* some of the rites prescribed by ritual handbooks are not carried out (see p. 51). The omission of certain rites also follows particular rules which have to be deduced for the specific cases. A fourth strategy to cut down ritual costs is to carry out the *saṃskāra*s for a group instead of an individual. This practice will not be treated in the article at hand but has been reported by other scholars. Thus, e.g., among some castes of Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), initiation is usually performed for a group of brothers or for all the boys of a household at the same time (see Hesse 1996: 219). In this case the *saṃskāra* can still be carried out as discrete ritual in full or abbreviated form. The major disadvantage is that the boys might be of rather different age when their initiation takes place.

6 In 2006 I carried out fieldwork in the Kangra valley (Himachal Pradesh) which provided part of the data basis for my master thesis *The Composition of the Classical Marriage Ritual* (Göttingen 2008). Here I would like to take the opportunity to thank Prof. Dr. Thomas Oberlies for his valuable advise, Dr. Brigitte Luchesi (Bremen) who introduced me to the Kangra valley, as well as Didi Contractor and Sarla Korla who not only accommodated me during my fieldwork but also supported me in the organisation of many of my undertakings in Himachal Pradesh. Further I am thankful to the *German National Academic Foundation* (*Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes*) and the *Ernst Waldschmidt Foundation* (Göttingen) who made my fieldwork possible financially.

7 On the classical formulations of the *āśrama* system see Olivelle (1993: 131ff.) and cf. p. 52–4.

be abandoned (completely). However, today *upanayana* is carried out well in advance of marriage only for few boys at the age of eight to twelve. In particular, these might be sons of traditionally oriented families of (very) high status and/or rather wealthy families. For most young men *upanayana*, *samāvartana* and marriage are usually combined, thus, in a sense, forming a single ritual entity. This custom has already been reported for the nineteen-twenties[8] and is common at least since the nineteen-seventies (see Campbell 1976: 64–5 and 74–7). The combination of *upanayana*, *vedārambha*, *samāvartana*, and marriage is widespread in other areas as well, though groups oriented towards *śāstrik* tradition often try to prevent such abbreviations.[9]

The *paddhati Saṃskārapañcaka*[10] (SP) which is currently used by the majority of the Kangra valley's pandits treats five different life-cycle rituals. It comprises tonsure (*cūḍākaraṇa* or *muṇḍana*), piercing of the ears (*karṇavedha*), initiation (*upanayana* or *janeo*), the ritually marked start of the Veda studies (*vedārambha*), and the student's bath (*samāvartana* or *snāna*) which is taken after the completion of the Veda studies. While *cūḍākaraṇa* and *karṇavedha* may be performed on a single day,[11] *upanayana*, *vedārambha*, and *samāvartana* are clearly conceptualized as discrete rituals to be carried out on distinct occasions and framed by certain unvarying ceremonies (see p. 50).

Among the Gaddis, one of the so called "scheduled tribes" of Himachal Pradesh, initiation has been a prelude or even part of marriage at least from the beginning of the twentieth century. The apparently earliest report about Gaddi initiation is given by *Chamba District Gazetteer* (Punjab Gov. 1910: 141–2) where it is already depicted as a regular part of marriage. Furthermore, for the Gaddis, there is—as far as I can see—no document that would prove *upanayana* having been performed usually as a discrete ritual at an occasion distinct from marriage. Reporting from a village of the lower Hima-

8 *Kangra District Gazetteer* (1926: 136) reports that among "the wealthy classes the thread is usually assumed at the age of 10, but among the poor, *upanayana* or investiture is often deferred until marriage".

9 In the nineteen-thirties the Khatri of Mandi argued vehemently against the local custom to perform *upanayana*, *vedārambha*, and *samāvartana* in a very shortened manner just prior to marriage (see Hesse 1996: 219). Freed & Freed (1980: 443) report the same custom for "Shanti Nagar", a village near Delhi. Here especially elderly Brahman men stated that such abbreviations are not in accord with tradition. They were of the opinion that the performance of *upanayana* is proper only at an age much earlier than marriage.

10 The *paddhati*s prevalent in the Kangra valley are generally in accordance with PGS and some pandits explicitly trace local customs to this late Vedic compendium. But the ritual traditions of Kangra cannot be assumed to be continuous since Vedic times. Rather it appears that a revitalization of Vedic rituals has taken place at some point of time, probably towards the end of the long period of British colonialism. The handbook SP was published in the middle of the second half of the twentieth century. Anyhow, it is modelled after an older *paddhati* which was composed in the forties.

11 For the case that *cūḍākaraṇa* and *karṇavedha* are performed on the same day the *paddhati* prescribes an alternative *saṃkalpa* (see SP 3, n. 1: *yadi ukt[a] donõ saṃskār sāth hi karne ho to is prakār saṃkalp[a] kare*…). In view of the handbook the combination of *cūḍākaraṇa* and *karṇavedha* appears to be the regular case (see p. 50).

Plate 1: Manoj Kumar, dressed as an ascetic smeared with ashes and wearing a yellow *dhotī* and turban during his initiation (Siddhbari, May 2006).

layas of western Uttar Pradesh Berreman (1972: 130) has made the case that the initiation ceremony is "evidently of relatively recent origin in the hills, adopted along with Sanskritic marriage forms in an effort toward plains emulation or Sanskritization". This interpretation is probably also correct for the Gaddis.

One of the marriage rituals I attended during my fieldwork in Himachal Pradesh was Manoj Kumar's whose family defines itself as "Gaddi Brahman". The young man's *upanayana* took place amid the nuptial ceremonies. The rites of Manoj's initiation and marriage alike displayed rites and ritual elements characteristic to Gaddi as well as Brahman traditions. When the smearing with turmeric paste (*buṭnā*) and the *sand* ceremony which comprises *nāndīmukhaśrāddha*, installation of the fire (*agnisthāpana*), *śāntihavana*, tying of wristbands (*kaṅganabandhana*), and application of oil on the young man's head (*tel* ceremony) were completed, Manoj was dressed as a regular ascetic (see plate 1). The priest (pandit or [*kula*] *purohita*) and the barber (*nāī*) smeared him with ashes and made him wear a yellow *dhotī* and turban. Then Manoj's lower back was covered with an animal's (traditionally an antelope's) skin and a black woollen girdle (*mekhalā*) was wound around his upper body. After earrings of flour had been attached to his ears, he eventually picked up a bow and an arrow. Around the latter the "sacred thread" (*yajñopavīta*) was tied. Now the pandit instructed Manoj in the proper conduct of a *brahmacārin* while both men were standing. Afterwards the young man went to the courtyard to ritually beg alms from his female relatives. At the outer limits of the courtyard his mother's brother showed the four cardinal directions and Manoj symbolically shot an arrow. This "journey" was repeated three times.[12] Now,

12 The specific modes of repeating discrete sequences in a ritual were dealt with in a lecture given by Prof. Dr. Thomas Oberlies and Anne Keßler in June 2006 in Heidelberg (see URL: http://www.indologie.uni-goettingen.de/cms/index.php?id=28). For repitition as a figure of ritual "grammar" see also Gladigow (2004: 74).

back in the room where the *sand* ceremony took place, the young man was given the *yajñopavīta* (untied from the arrow) by his *purohita*. Manoj had to hold the thread with both thumbs high above his head and was made to recite the following two mantras word by word:

> *oṃ yajñopavītaṃ paramaṃ pavitraṃ prajāpater yat sahajaṃ purastāt |*
> *āyuṣyam agryaṃ pratimuñca śubhraṃ yajñopavītaṃ balam astu tejaḥ ||* (SP 22)[13]
>
> *oṃ yajñopavītam asi yajñasya tvopavītenopa nahyāmi ||* (SP 23)[14]

Afterwards each of the relatives gave the young man a *yajñopavīta* and a mark on his forehead (*tilaka*). Hereafter his teacher, the *kula purohita*, taught him the *sāvitrī*, i.e. the stanza which contains the whole Veda in condensed form. During this rite both of them were covered by a blanket. Now, having completed the rites specific to *upanayana*, the "finishing oblation" (*pūrṇāhuti*) and the fire's dismissal (*agnivisarjana*) were performed.

After a short period of *brahmacarya*, Manoj was equipped as a bridegroom. The young man's hair was cut, his beard shaved and sitting on a small stool in the courtyard he was bathed by his mother with lukewarm water.[15] When the *birdhi* or *vṛddhi* ceremony[16] and the *mallīpatana* ceremony[17] had been carried out, Manoj was dressed with great splendour. His equipment included an upper and a lower garment (i.e. a western-style suit), a second *yajñopavīta*, a sash, knife, turban and crown.[18]

Thus equipped the bridegroom and his party set out in procession (*barāt*) for the bride's house. After arrival, the young man was respectfully received by his prospective father-in-law with the *argha* ceremony. Hereafter the actual marriage rites were commenced.

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13 See PGS (2.2.10 [ed. Speyer 1872: 22]) and BaudhGS (2.5.7).

14 See PGS (2.2.10 [ed. Speyer 1872: 22]) and ŚGS (2.2.3).

15 These rites are central elements of the *godāna* ceremony (see SSU 82) which—according to classical view already—are performed as part of *samāvartana* as well (see Hillebrandt 1897: 61).

16 Seven *suhāgin*s, i.e. married women whose husbands are alive, and an unmarried girl (*kanyā*) acquire water from the groom's maternal uncle (*māmā*) who stations himself for this purpose under the archway (*toraṇa*). These women as well as the girl, one after another, pour water over the feet of the bridegroom who is seated on a small stool in the courtyard. When the whole process has been repeated three times, they put the small bowls, with which the water was carried, headfirst on the young man's feet. This ceremony is prescribed by SSU (2–3) and SP (55); cf. also Campbell (1976: 77–8) and Conzelmann (1996: 275–6).

17 *Mallīpatana* is closely related to the *birdhi* ceremony (see n. 16). While the bridegroom stands on the small stool in the courtyard the barber puts a tiny pot (*mallī*) with embers in front of the groom and a female relative adds mustard seeds. She then touches feet, shoulders and head of the young man three times with smoke from the *mallī*. Having put some *darbha* grass behind the bridegroom's left ear she leads him to the shrine inside the house while pouring out water from a pitcher (*kumbha*). The bridegroom follows her after he has overturned the *mallī* with his left foot. This ceremony is prescribed by SSU (3) and SP (55).

18 According to the *paddhati* (SU 9) the brother's wife (*bhrātṛpatnī*) should now put collyrium around the groom's eyes and the latter should look into a mirror. However, these rites were not performed during Manoj's marriage ritual.

2.1 *Upanayana* – the bridegroom's admission to marriage

Upanayana is prescribed by the *paddhati* as a discrete ritual and has been performed as such in former times (see §2). Contrary to this, the abbreviated initiation described above appears to be, at least at first sight, a mere rite of the marriage ritual which is the main motive for the festivities. However, many ceremonies serve as preparation for *upanayana* as much as for marriage—an interpretation which is not only etic but is consciously recognized by the people involved. All auspicious *saṃskāra*s should start with the ceremonies prescribed by *Śāntipaddhati* (ŚP).[19] These are *nāndīmukha-* or *ābhyudayikaśrāddha*, giving of *tilaka*, tying of wristbands, sipping of water (*ācamana*), *gaṅgāpūjā*, purification (*pavitrīkaraṇa*), banishment of ghosts (*bhūtāpasaraṇa*), *pṛthivīpūjā*, ritual decision (*saṃkalpa*), singing of *svastivācana*, and *pūjā*s to different gods, goddesses and other deified phenomena. These are, among others, Gaṇeśa, the specific family deity (*kuladevatā*), the Nine Planets (Navagraha), Sixteen Mātṛkās, the syllable *oṃ*, the Seven Vasudhārās, Seven Ṛṣis, and the Sixtyfour Yoginīs. These ceremonies constitute the first part of the ritual frame which is completed by the installation of the fire and the performance of *śāntihavana* and the *tel* ceremony[20].

In the case of *upanayana*, *vedārambha*, and *samāvartana* the characteristic actions of the particular *saṃskāra* are performed subsequent to the named ceremonies, and the ritual is closed with *pūrṇāhuti*, the application of ashes on the forehead (*bhasmadhāraṇa*), the untying of the wristbands (*kaṅganamocana*), and the fire's dismissal. For *cūḍākaraṇa* and *karṇavedha*, two *saṃskāra*s which are to be performed on a single day (see p. 47), the *paddhati* prescribes the performance of the regular ritual frame only once. *Pūrṇāhuti* is offered at the completion of *karṇavedha* only and not when *cūḍākaraṇa* is finished. Consequently for *karṇavedha* the first part of the ritual frame is not performed (see SP 13). In the case of marriage, the ritual frame has to be partly doubled due to the change of location from the groom's to the bride's house (and back again). Hence, after arrival at the bride's place, *tilaka*, *ācamana* and all the *pūjā*s mentioned above are performed again before the rites constitutive for marriage are carried out. The whole ritual is then completed by a final oblation, *bhasmadhāraṇa*, and the fire's dismissal. Finally, the wristbands are untied in a separate ceremony back in the bridegroom's house.

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19 The rites prescribed by ŚP provide a frame for many discrete rituals. SP (3), e.g., is explicit on this point in its prescription for *cūḍākaraṇa*: *śānti paddhati mẽ likhit vidhān ke anusār tilak, kaṅkaṇ bandhan, ācamanam, gaṅgāpūjan, pavitrīkaraṇ, bhūtāpasāraṇ, pṛthvīpūjan karākar saṃkalp[a] pātr[a] mẽ til ḍālkar trikuśā lekar saṃkalp[a] karāve.*

20 *Tel* is conceived as "special offering" (*viśeṣa homa*) of the *sand* ceremony which comprises *nāndīmukhaśrāddha*, *śāntihavana*, and the tying of wristbands. ŚP (72) makes explicit that the *tel* ceremony is part of every *saṃskāra*: *yadyapi sab śubh kāryõ mẽ yahī śānti vidhān haĩ, tathāpi cūḍākarmādi saṃskārõ mẽ nimn[a] viśeṣtā hotī hai | barhirhom ke anantar kaṅkaṇ 3, 5, 7 muñj[a]mālā yajñ[a]mālā 3, tail, toraṇ inkī pratiṣṭhā kare | paścāt purohit pratham kuṃvārī kanyā ko kaṅkaṇ bāndhe, phir jiskā saṃskār ho use tathā puhāiyõ ko kaṅkaṇ bāndhe | anantar muñj[a]mālā kā sparś[a] karte hue sab log bālak tathā kanyā śir par sthāpan karẽ | … phir bālak athavā kanyā var ke śir par tel ḍalvāve.*

At least in the ritual described above (see §2), the priest consciously made the bridegroom offer *pūrṇāhuti* subsequent to the rites specific to *upanayana* and not before.[21] When performed this way, initiation is not a mere rite of marriage but a full ritual in itself. It does not differ substantially from initiation performed as a discrete ritual at an occasion distinct from marriage. Rather the effects of *nāndīmukhaśrāddha*, *śāntihavana* and *tel*, i.e. the first part of the ritual frame performed previous to *upanayana*, are used for the nuptial ceremonies, too. Due to the continued effects of these ceremonies they need to be carried out only one time for initiation and marriage.

The economic advantages of combining rituals in this way are manifold: relatives can attend *upanayana* and marriage at one instead of two occasions and thus have to be accommodated and entertained only once. The community feast (*bhojana*) that invariably accompanies bigger rituals and the giving of gifts (*bartan*) are held only once. The "gift" or ritual fee (*dakṣiṇā*) for the ritual experts also needs to be given just one time. Additionally the rather elaborate ceremonies of *nāndīmukhaśrāddha*, *śāntihavana* and *tel* have to be performed only once, too.

In order to further economize the process of initiation some of the rites characteristic to *upanayana* as taught by the *paddhati* were left out.[22] The filling of the pupil's hands with water (SP 23), showing the sun (*sūryadarśana*, SP 24), and touching the place of the student's heart (*hṛdayasparśa*, SP 24) were not performed. Even the asking for the name of the young man was left out (*praśnottara*, SP 24), as were the different *homa*s, and the touching of limbs (*aṅgasparśa*, SP 34).

From comparison with other rituals I attended it appears that on the one hand those rites which concern only student and teacher are susceptible to omission, particularly in comparison to those which include relatives and friends, i.e., for example, the begging of alms and the giving of the *yajñopavīta* by relatives. On the other hand those elements common to initiation and marriage will rather be performed in marriage and elided in initiation. This concerns, among other rites, *sūryadarśana*, *hṛdayasparśa*, and *aṅgasparśa*.

An incident, which I learned about only a few days after one of the marriage rituals I attended, concerned the elaboration of the single rites. Some guests were displeased because the pandit—apparently because of my presence—performed more rites or the regular rites in a more elaborate way than he usually would though the *dakṣiṇā* did not exceed the regular amount. This incident shows that the social prestige earned from the performance of rituals does not only depend on the dowry given, the number of people attending the festivities, or the richness of dresses but also on the elaboration of ritual actions.

21 This structure is similar to the one prescribed by the *paddhati* for *cūḍākaraṇa* and *karṇavedha* when they are performed on a single day (see p. 50 and SP 13).

22 Anyhow, the omission of certain rites prescribed by ritual handbooks can be conceptualized in another way: the *paddhati* might prescribe rites which have never been (usually) performed in the Kangra valley. This might also be true for whole rituals, like *vedārambha* and, to a certain extent, *samāvartana* (see §2.2).

2.2 From *brahmacārin* to bridegroom

When Manoj's initiation was completed, the young man, a *brahmacārin* at that time, was equipped with the dress typical for a bridegroom. The ritually marked start of the Veda studies (*vedārambha*) which is described as a discrete *saṃskāra* in the *paddhati* (SP 39–47) was not performed[23] and *samāvartana* only to some extent. It was certainly not carried out as a self-contained ritual but neither left out completely. This is because *samāvartana*, as it is prescribed by the ritual handbook,[24] is equivalent to the bridegroom's bath and accoutrement. It comprises almost the same rites, a similar equipment is required and—with few exceptions—the same mantras are to be uttered.[25]

Campbell (1976: 65) unambiguously conceptualized the bridegroom's final bath and dressing as a condensed form of *samāvartana*, a *saṃskāra* which, he reports, is carried out immediately before marriage. However, it is questionable whether *samāvartana* as a discrete ritual has ever been part of the Kangra valley's traditions. It rather appears to be a matter of textual representation that the ceremonies are mentioned in the ritual handbook for *samāvartana* as well as in the one for marriage. The authors of these handbooks might have intended this practice to become customary. This is all the more likely as *Saṃskārapañcaka*, unlike the *paddhati* for marriage, does not mention an *argha* reception for the *snātaka* (lit. "one who has taken the bath") which is, according to Vedic tradition, a central part of the *samāvartana* ritual.[26]

It appears that the rites constituting *samāvartana* are not usually performed at an occasion different from marriage but traditionally have been part of the nuptial ceremonies only. The reason for this *identity* of *samāvartana* and the bridegroom's bath and accoutrement is not to be searched in economic advantage alone. The necessity to belong to an *āśrama* at all times (cf. Campbell 1976: 65) might also be a reason for this

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23 *Vedārambha* was also not performed in the Seventies (see Campbell 1976: 64–5).

24 According to the *paddhati* (SP 47–62) *samāvartana* comprises—apart from the ceremonies belonging to the ritual frame (see p. 50)—bath, different sacrifices, *aṅgasparśa*, respectful salutation (*abhivādana*) of the teacher, besprinkling (*abhiṣeka*) of a waterpot, untying of the *mekhalā* and other items peculiar to a *brahmacārin*, *buṭnā* ceremony, *birdhi* (see n. 16), and *mallīpaṭana* (see n. 17), application of sandal paste, and accoutrement with a second *yajñopavīta*, an upper and a lower garment, knife, sash, flower garland (*puṣpamālā*), and headdress. When the *snātaka* has looked at himself in a mirror, he is also given a parasol, shoes, stick of bamboo (*veṇudaṇḍa*), and turban. Thus equipped he shall symbolically set out to study. Some local customs (*deśācāra*) are also mentioned, but chariot drive and *argha* are not.

25 See SP (47–62) for *samāvartana* and SSU (2–11) for the bridegroom's bath and equipment. Though some of the pieces of clothing are named differently in the two handbooks, the mantras to be uttered are almost identical. The headdress, for example, is called *ṭopī* ("headdress") by SP and *mukuṭa* ("crown") by SSU. Anyhow, both are tied to the young man's head with the same mantras. These are the ones already prescribed by PGS (2.6.20.21 and 24) for *samāvartana*.

26 In the Kangra valley an *argha* is performed in the bride's house when the marriage ritual proper has already started. *Aṅgasparśa* which is prescribed for *samāvartana* (SP 52), also is a regular and actually performed part of marriage (SSU 51).

custom. From the proscription of being *anāśramin*[27] it follows that no time gap is allowed between *samāvartana* and the beginning of marriage. If this proscription is followed, *samāvartana* and marriage either have to be performed in direct succession[28]—in this case *samāvartana* is equivalent to the bridegroom's bath, equipment, and respectful reception—or, if there is a considerable gap between the two rituals, this time span must be ritually elided.[29] One possibility to elide such a gap is to repeat all or some of the rites of *samāvartana* at the beginning of marriage in order to tie in with *samāvartana*. Such a compositional figure might be particularly important for (contemporary) traditions according to which *samāvartana* is carried out together with *upanayana*, well in advance of marriage.[30] In this particular case *brahmacarya* lasts only for a short period of time, from *upanayana* until *samāvartana*. The time of being *anāśramin*, on the other hand, would be rather long and, if the interim was not compositionally elided in one or another way, the boy would remain between the *āśrama*s possibly for a couple of years until he gets married.

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27 The status of those outside the *āśrama* scheme has been controversial since long. Already the *Brahmasūtra* (3.4.36–39, cf. Mādhava's *Pārāśaramādhavīya* 1.533), which was probably composed in the early centuries of the common era, contains a discussion on whether such people could attain the liberating knowledge of Brahman (see Olivelle 1993: 222). Śaṃkara (on *Brahmasūtra* 3.4.39: *anāśramī na tiṣṭheta dinam ekam api dvijaḥ*) forbids twice-born men being *anāśramin*. Very similar rules are found in Mbh (1.1618*: *anāśramī na tiṣṭheta kṣaṇamātram api dvijaḥ*; cf. 13.24.7), SkP (4.36.35), BḍP (2.50.7), and *Dakṣasmṛti* (1.6–9: *svīkaroti yadā vedaṃ cared vedavratāni ca | brahmacārī bhavet tāvad ūrdhvaṃ snāto bhaved gṛhī || dvividho brahmacārī tu smṛtaḥ śāstre manīṣibhiḥ | upakurvāṇakas tv ādyo dvitīyo naiṣṭhikaḥ smṛtaḥ || yo gṛhasthāśramam āsthāya brahmacārī bhavet punaḥ | na yatir na vanasthaś ca sa sarvāśramavivarjitaḥ || anāśramī na tiṣṭhet tu kṣaṇam ekam api dvijaḥ | āśrameṇa vinā tiṣṭhan prāyaścittīyate hi saḥ*).
Mbh (13.24.71) lists "those who are outside an *āśrama*" among people who go to hell and *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* (3.241–242 [ed. Bombay 1949]) names being *anāśramin* among the minor sins (*upapātaka*). This Smṛti has probably to be dated back to a period between the first century BCE and third century AD (see Kane 1930: 184). Derrett (1973: 27) even assumes that *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* will have been in existence by AD 100. As the *sūtra* in question misses in some manuscripts (see Stenzler [*Yājñavalkyasmṛti*] 1849 and Gaṇapati Śāstri [*Yājñavalkyasmṛti*] 1922–24) it might be an interpolation of later origin.
From GaP (1.227.19 and 2.44.3), KūP (2.21.36), and BḍP (2.15.39) it is clear that the state of being *anāśramin* was socially objectionable or even precarious. For further references on *anāśramin* see Olivelle (1993: 220–2) and EDS (pp. 2419–20).

28 Pandey (1949: 254), though without citing any references, states that in "mediaeval times it came to be advocated that the Samāvartana should be performed when the marriage of the youth was already settled. So it takes place one day before marriage, possibly with the Haridrā ceremony".

29 Campbell (1976: 65) states for the Kangra valley that "a very particular sort of time is involved between the *snan* [*scil. samāvartana*] and the completion of the marriage—such that the person is at no time ([*scil.*] normal time) without an *asrama*". Later in his book (ibid.: 104) he explains that the *sacred* time dominating during the ritual actions is not affected by the *profane* time which prevails in the intervals between the rites. This interpretation concerns the gap between *samāvartana* and marriage. However, while Campbell's explanation is based on the opposition of *sacred* and *profane* time, the interpretation given in the article at hand is concerned with the composition or "grammar" of complex rituals.

30 The performance of *upanayana* and *samāvartana* together, at an early age, has been reported, e.g., by Kane (1974: 415), Pandey (1949: 255), and Tachikawa (2001: 135).

The "grammatical" figure of repetition by which the interim between rituals is elided—at least on the compositional level—is already found in some Gṛhyasūtras' prescriptions for *samāvartana* and marriage. These rules will be discussed in the following paragraphs. Anyway, the reasons for the use of this compositional element by some Vedic ritual texts cannot be assumed to be the same as today as most of these texts do not know the comparatively young proscription of being *anāśramin*.

3 *Snātaka* and bridegroom – the Gṛhyasūtras' prescriptions

Almost every Gṛhyasūtra handed down to us gives instructions on how to perform *samāvartana*.[31] This ritual usually comprises on the one hand bath and paraphernalia of the *snātaka* and on the other chariot drive and *argha* ceremony. If the "classical" *āśrama* scheme[32] is followed, the subsequent life-cycle ritual will be the young man's marriage. However, only the very young *Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra* names the four life-stages. This text "does not explicitly state that a person should assume each *āśrama* successively, [but] it is clear that its author takes the classical scheme for granted" (Olivelle 1993: 146). *Āgniveśyagṛhyasūtra*, which also does not range among the most ancient Gṛhyasūtras, alludes to the classical system as well (Olivelle 1993: 145, n. 40). Yet, *Āpa-*

31 See ĀgniGS (1.3–4); ĀpGS (12–13); ĀśvGS (3.8–9); BaudhGS (2.6 [see also BaudhŚS 17.39–44 = *Baudhāyanagṛhyaparibhāṣāsūtra* 1.13]); BhāradGS (2.18–26); GGS (3.4); HGS (1.9–1.13.18); JGS (1.19); KauśS (42.12–18); KhādGS (3.1); KGS (3–4); MGS (1.2.8–21); PGS (2.6–8); ŚGS (3.1); VaikhGS (2.13–17); and VGS (9.6–21); see also *Vādhulagṛhyāgamavṛttirahasya* (5.1–144). *Saṃskārakaustubha* (cited by Kane 1974: 415) prescribes a very brief procedure for *samāvartana* when the *brahmacārin* is ill (see Kane 1974: 415).
According to ĀśvGS (3.8.14) *samāvartana* is performed by women as well. This Gṛhyasūtra is also otherwise the most explicit on the participation of women in Vedic rituals. Thus, e.g., *jātakarman*, *annaprāśana*, and *caula* are to be performed for girls, too, though without mantras (see ĀśvGS 1.15.10; 1.16.6; 1.17.19). Kane (1974: 293–6) has collected some passages concerning the topic of performance of *upanayana* for women which some scholars interpret to be "plenty of evidence that women were initiated into Vedic study during the period of the Gṛhyasūtras (roughly the second half of the first millennium B.C.E.)" (Olivelle 1993: 184). Anyway, in spite of such passages, particularly the often cited appellation *yajñopavītinī* (GGS 2.1.19), it remains highly controversial that women participated in the study of Vedic texts on a regular basis or usually had *upanayana* and *samāvartana* performed for them during the time when the different Gṛhyasūtras were compiled (cf. Jamison 1996: 45–8).
The development of *samāvartana* prior to the Gṛhyasūtras will not be treated in the article at hand. However, in Vedic times the Veda student was probably admitted to the *sabhā* ("Männerhaus") by means of this ritual (see Oberlies 1998: 207–13, especially n. 289).

32 The "classical" formulation of the *āśrama* system conceptualizes the four *āśrama*s as life-stages which have to be assumed successively. According to the "original" formulation, on the other hand, one had to decide after the completion of *upanayana* and Veda studies whether to stay student or to become householder, hermit or renouncer (see Olivelle 1993 and Bronkhorst 1993).

stambagṛhyasūtra[33] appears to adhere to the original scheme according to which one can choose whether to stay student[34] or to become householder, hermit or renouncer. The other Gṛhyasūtras do not mention the *āśrama* system, neither in its "original" nor its "classical" formulation. Thus it cannot be taken for granted that *samāvartana* is followed by marriage in every case. However, in the paper at hand only the succession of *samāvartana* and marriage will be discussed. The connection of *samāvartana* and other life-cycle rituals cannot be properly analyzed as the information given by the Gṛhyasūtras is not sufficient to do so.[35]

In order to clarify the relation between *samāvartana* and marriage, it shall be discussed below whether the different Gṛhyasūtras schedule an interim between these two rituals, whether the bridegroom is (still) dressed and adorned in the way he was as a *snātaka* during the nuptial ceremonies, and whether the *argha* mentioned in the passages on *samāvartana* is received from the (prospective) father-in-law at the beginning of the nuptial ceremonies or prior to marriage from another person.

3.1 *Samāvartana* – the bridegroom's accoutrement and *argha* (VaikhGS)

The most unambiguous text is the comparatively young *Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra*. This compendium presupposes the classical *āśrama* system and conceptualizes *samāvartana* as a young adult's preparation for marriage. *Samāvartana*, as it is prescribed by Vaikhānasa (2.13–17), consists of shaving the Veda student's hairs, the cleansing of his teeth and a bath with cold and hot water mixed together. The *snātaka* is then smeared with sandal paste, dressed with two new garments and a girdle, decorated with finger- and earrings and a wreath (of flowers). Having looked into a mirror he takes up a staff, puts on sandals, and takes a parasol. Hereafter the second part of the ritual starts. The *snātaka* mounts a chariot, horse or elephant, and leaves for the bride's house. After arrival, he, i.e. the bridegroom, is respectfully received by his father-in-law with an *argha* ceremony.

Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra makes clear that *samāvartana* and marriage are not only to be performed in direct succession but overlap each other in the sense that during *samā-*

33 ĀpGS (12.14: *rātinā sambhāṣya yathārthaṃ gacchati* "Having spoken with a friend he may go where he likes") runs parallel to the formulation of ĀpDhS (2.21.5: *buddhvā karmāṇi yat kāmayeta tad ārabheta*) which Olivelle (1993: 81, n. 25) from the context interprets to denote the choice of one of the four *āśramas*.

34 Persons who (still) study the Veda should not take the absolving bath (see KGS 3.2–3; MGS 1.2.10; and VGS 6.34). According to Devapāla (*ad* KGS 3.2) these are *naiṣṭhika* who remain *brahmacārin* until their death.

35 The rituals for becoming hermits and renouncers are only treated by ĀgniGS (2.7.11) and VaikhDhS (9.1–4) (see Olivelle 1993: 145, n. 40). As both of these compendiums follow the "classical" *āśrama* system these rituals are carried out only after the performance of *samāvartana* and marriage.

vartana the young man is prepared for his marriage.[36] He is still dressed and adorned as a *snātaka* when he approaches the bride's house where he will be received with an *argha*. Particularly, the chariot drive and *argha* can be understood as part of both, *samāvartana* and marriage. Hence, the bride needs to be chosen and wooed before the performance of *samāvartana* or at least before the chariot drive.[37]

3.2 *Alaṃkaraṇa* – an abbreviation of *samāvartana* (MGS and VGS)

Two closely related compendiums, *Mānava-* and *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra*, do not know (or do not mention) the *āśrama* system. They present a different model for the interim between and connection of *samāvartana* and the bridegroom's preparation for marriage. In their view *samāvartana* comprises an *argha* and the equipment with new garments and other items characteristic to a *snātaka*. Having completed *samāvartana* the young man searches a bride for himself (MGS 1.7.3; VGS 10.1), woos her (MGS 1.7.4; VGS 10.3) and—if he is successful—the girl will be given to him by her father (MGS 1.7.11–1.8.11; VGS 10.11–18).[38] After the bridegroom has arrived at the bride's house to perform the marriage ritual and after he has become the son-in-law, he is received by his father-in-law with an *argha*, the *snātaka*'s second one.[39] At least on the textual level this respectful reception is followed by *alaṃkaraṇa* (MGS 1.9.24–27, VGS 12.1–3) which marks the beginning of the nuptial ceremonies.

In his translation of *Mānavagṛhyasūtra* Dresden ([MGS] 1941: 38–39) assumes that *alaṃkaraṇa* was performed for the bride only (cf. Gonda 1939: 106 [266]). Rolland ([VGS], 1971: 117), on the other hand, interprets the equivalent ceremony taught by *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra* to be carried out for the bridegroom only. Yet, from neither of the two texts it is clear whether *alaṃkaraṇa* concerns the bride, the groom, or both of them. The fact that those mantras are to be uttered, which are taught by *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra* (2.6.18–20) for the *samāvartana* ritual, makes it likely that *alaṃkaraṇa* is performed

36 Pandey (1949: 255, 260) repeatedly laments that in his days *samāvartana* ceased to be a discrete ritual as it was incorporated into the marriage ritual. Anyway, from VaikhGS it appears that at least the direct succession of *samāvartana* and marriage has a rather long tradition.

37 The passage which treats the choosing of a suitable bride does not explicitly state at which point of time the wooing has to be carried out. Hence, it also remains unclear at what time the five days of fasting have to be absolved (see VaikhGS 3.2: 36, 17–18: *kanyāṃ varayitvā pañcāheṣu kulasya pariśuddhyai sapiṇḍaiḥ śrotriyaiḥ saha bhūtaṃ bhuñjīta*).

38 Neither MGS nor VGS make unmistakeably clear whether the bridegroom himself or a wooer (usually his father) acts as representative of the groom's side in the rites of wooing and receiving of the bride—an ambiguity which is probably intended.

39 MGS (1.9.1) and VGS (11.1) name, among other individuals, "persons related by marriage" (*vivāhya*) and *snātaka*s as being entitled to receive an *argha*. As the giving of the bride is performed before the *argha* the bridegroom may be considered to already be a *vivāhya*. Hence, the *samāvartana*'s *argha* is distinct from the *argha* received in the bride's house.

for the bridegroom only.[40] There is evidence for this interpretation in the commentary of Aṣṭāvakra (*ad* MGS), as well. Aṣṭāvakra discusses whether the bath of *samāvartana*, the *madhuparka* or the *alaṃkaraṇa* are to be carried out first.[41] Also, one of the manuscripts of Gadādhara's commentary (*ad* VGS 11.1–24) teaches this rite as part of *madhuparka* (see Vīra [VGS] 1932: 34, n. 6). Furthermore *alaṃkaraṇa* is followed by *pravadanakarman*, an apparently "complementary" ceremony which is explicitly performed for the bride alone (MGS 1.9.28: *kumāryāḥ pravadane*[42]...). In one manuscript of *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra* there is even a chapter separate from *alaṃkaraṇa* (ch. 12) assigned to *pravadanakarman* (ch. 13).

Alaṃkaraṇa is composed as a shortened version of the *samāvartana* ritual. While the latter comprises the *snātaka*'s *argha*, bath, and paraphernalia which includes the application of fragrant substances (MGS 1.2.15, see also n. 63), the former is to be carried out subsequent to the bridegroom's *argha* and comprises his decoration, *aṅganyāsa*, application of fragrant substances (*gandhotsādana*),[43] and dressing (MGS 1.9.24–27). *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra* (12.1–3) does not name *aṅganyāsa* but adds a sacrifice and the asking for *maṅgala*.

	Samāvartana		Marriage		
MGS	A	B		A*	B*
	argha	Bath, dressing, and decoration (including application of *gandha*)	Wooing and giving away of the bride	*argha*	*alaṃkaraṇa*: Decoration, *aṅganyāsa*, application of *gandha*, dressing
VGS	A	B		A*	B*
	argha	Bath, dressing, and decoration	Wooing and giving away of the bride	*argha*	*alaṃkaraṇa*: Decoration, application of *gandha*, dressing, sacrifices, *maṅgala*

40 As it remains highly questionable whether women participated in *upanayana*, Vedic studies, and *samāvartana* (see n. 31), the prescription of the mantras taught by PGS for *samāvartana* is here interpreted to point to the performance of *alaṃkaraṇa* for the bridegroom only. Nevertheless it is possible that *alaṃkaraṇa* was carried out for groom and bride in a parallel manner (cf. §3.3 on BaudhGS 1.1.24).

41 Aṣṭāvakra (*ad* MGS 1.9.26): *kecid utsādanaṃ pūrvam icchanti teṣām alaṃkaraṇenāpi ūrdhvaṃ syāt | anyas tu gandhācchādane gandho vijñeyaḥ | ācchādanaṃ ca paridhānam ata evāha ahataṃ vāsaḥ paridhatta iti | ...tasya snānāt pūrvaṃ kecin madhuparkaprāśane kṛte dāne 'dhikāraḥ paridhāsyety anena paridhatte | ekavacanam atantraṃ tena dve vāsasī bhavathaḥ.*

42 *Pramadana* is apparently the same word as *pravadana* (VGS 12.1) (cf. Dresden [MGS] 1941: 40) and denotes a specific rite, a "*karmaviśeṣa*" (see VWC: 1718 n. c).

43 For *aṅganyāsa* and *gandhotsādana* cf. PGS (2.6.18–19) on *samāvartana*: *utsādya punaḥ snātvānulepanaṃ nāsikayor mukhasya copagṛhṇīte prāṇāpānau me tarpaya cakṣur me tarpaya śrotraṃ me tarpayeti || pitaraḥ śundhadhvam iti pāṇyor avanejana dakṣiṇāniṣicyānulipya japet | sucakṣā aham akṣībhyāṃ bhūyāsaṃ suvarcā mukhena | suśrut karṇābhyāṃ bhūyāsam iti.*

In the model presented in *Mānava-* and *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra samāvartana* and marriage do not overlap. The wooing is clearly scheduled after the completion of *samāvartana*. The period "between" these rituals is compositionally elided by the performance of *alaṃkaraṇa*, a rite which repeats central parts of *samāvartana* at the time of marriage—apparently to tie in with the former ritual. Through this "grammatical" figure the temporal gap between the two ceremonies is closed.

3.3 Nuptial "*samāvartana*" (BaudhŚS / BaudhGS)

A similar connection of *samāvartana* and *alaṃkaraṇa* is displayed by the tradition of Baudhāyana. Here the ritual of *samāvartana* is taught in the Śrautasūtra (17.39–44) and comprises, next to the bath and the *snātaka*'s paraphernalia, a chariot drive and an *argha* which is to be offered to the young man by his teacher.

From *Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra* (2.6.19–21) it is clear that there is a temporal gap between *samāvartana* and marriage. It is stated that the *snātaka* has to offer the daily sacrifices up to his marriage with ghee instead of cooked food.[44] In the section concerning marriage it is then taught that the groom should take a bath, put on new garments, apply perfumes, put a garland, and eat (i.e. break his fast). All these rites should be performed just prior to the nuptial ceremonies, while he is still in his own house(s).[45] Afterwards he proceeds to the bride's house and is received by the bride's relatives with the *argha* ceremony.[46]

As these rites again bear clear resemblance to the ones known from *samāvartana* the same interpretations apply which have been given above for *Mānava-* and *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra*. The temporal gap between *samāvartana* and marriage is elided by the repetition of rites similar to the ones of *samāvartana*. At the time of marriage, bath, equipment, procession and *argha* are performed a second time. The *snātaka*'s respectively the bridegroom's procession is not mentioned in *Mānava-* or *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra* but Baudhāyana names both of them. The Śrautasūtra (17.43) says that the *snātaka* should mount a chariot (*ratha*). Similarly, the Gṛhyasūtra (1.1.24: p. 3, 8) mentions that the groom should travel to the bride's house by a mode different from going by foot (*apadātir gatvā*).[47]

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44 See BaudhGS (2.6.19–21): *samāvartanaprabhṛtyājyena vyāhṛtībhir hūyata ā pāṇigrahaṇāt* ‖ *pāṇigrahaṇaprabhṛti vrīhibhir yavair vā hastenaite āhutīr juhoti agnaye svāhā prajāpataye svāhā iti sāyam* | *sūryāya svāhā prajāpataye svāhā prātar api* ‖ Cf. Smith (1986: 82) on this passage.

45 These rites are also performed for the bride (see p. 17).

46 As the *argha* is performed during both rituals, *samāvartana* and marriage, BaudhGS (1.2.65–66) explicitly mentions *snātaka* and bridegroom as lawful recipients of an *argha*.

47 On the bridegroom's mode of travel see also VaikhGS (2.15: p. 33, l. 8–9), but cf. ĀgniGS (1.6.1: p. 35, l. 2: °*svastyayanaḥ padātir vadhūgṛhaṃ gatvā* which probably has to be emended to °*svastyayano 'padātir*). Similarly, the *snātaka* moves by chariot, horse, or elephant (see, e.g., HGS 1.12.1).

	Samāvartana				Marriage		
BaudhŚS/ BaudhGS	B	C	A		B*	C*	A*
	Shaving, bath, application of *gandha*, dressing, decoration, and second bath	Chariot drive	*argha*	Daily sacrifices with *ājya*	Bath, dressing, application of *gandha*, putting of a *sraj*, and eating	Groom's procession	*argha*

3.4 *Maṅgala* ceremony (ŚGS and ĀgniGS)

The prescriptions of *Śāṅkhāyana-* and *Āgniveśyagṛhyasūtra* for the bridegroom's paraphernalia comprise some words which possibly denote an abbreviated "*samāvartana*" similar to the ceremonies taught by Mānava, Vārāha, and Baudhāyana (see §3.2 and 3.3).

Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra (1.12.1) teaches that the bridegroom has taken a bath and that auspicious ceremonies have been performed for him (*kṛtamaṅgala*) before he arrives at the bride's house. From the preceding text it is clear that these words do not denote the rules for *samāvartana* because in the night of marriage or up to two nights prior to marriage[48] *indrāṇīkarman* or at least parts of this rite have to be performed not only for the bride but for the groom as well (see ŚGS 1.11.6–7).

Āgniveśyagṛhyasūtra (1.6.1) uses a wording similar to Śāṅkhāyana. According to this text, the bridegroom wears a wristband (*baddhakautuka*[49]), and auspicious ceremonies are performed along with *svastyayana*[50] (*kṛtamaṅgalasvastyayana*) before he leaves for the bride's house.

It is neither clear for Śāṅkhāyana nor for Āgniveśya which actions are denoted by *maṅgala*. Anyhow, the wording finds a parallel in the *alaṃkaraṇa* ceremony of *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra* which is completed by the bridegroom's asking for *maṅgala* (see VGS 12.3: *maṅgalāny āśāset*).[51]

48 See ŚGS (1.11.1): *athaitāṃ rātrīṃ śvas tṛtīyāṃ vā kanyāṃ vakṣyantīti tasyāṃ rātryām atīte niśākāle.*

49 For the *kautuka* ceremony see ĀgniGS (2.3.5: pp. 58, l. 9–59, l. 18).

50 Gonda (1989: 177) defines "auspicious progress" as the basic meaning of *svastyayana*. This meaning is particularly clear in passages which are concerned with some kind of movement like journeys. Therefore *svastyayana* might denote the bridegroom's procession as an "auspicious progress". But the expression might also indicate a mantra or another verbal expression which facilitates such an "auspicious progress" (see Gonda 1989: 180).

51 Cf. also Mbh (1.190.9): *kṛtābhiṣekāḥ kṛtamaṅgalakriyāḥ*. However, by KGS (17.2) and *Harivaṃśa* (87.32) girls for whom the *maṅgala* ceremony has been performed are mentioned in connection with Indrāṇī. This points to a connection to *indrāṇīkarman* (ŚGS 1.11).

3.5 The other Gṛhyasūtras' view

The other Gṛhyasūtras handed down to us are far less explicit about the connection of *samāvartana* and marriage. However, there certainly is a close relation (but not necessarily a direct temporal succession) of the Veda student's absolving ceremony and marriage. *Gobhilagṛhyasūtra* (2.1.1–2) teaches in its passage on *samāvartana* that the *snātaka* should take a wife after his bath, and in its passage on marriage again states that a young man should marry after he has studied the Veda (*vedam adhītya*, GGS 3.4.1). According to Khādira (1.3.2) he should take a wife after having absolved the [*samāvartana*-]bath (*āplavana*).[52] The close relation between *samāvartana* and marriage is also alluded to by Jaiminīya (1.20: p. 19, 10–11: *snātvā … jāyāṃ vindeta*), Āgniveśya (1.6.1: p. 34, 9: *samāvṛtte bhāryām upayaccheta*) and Hiraṇyakeśi (1.19.1: *samāvṛtta … bhāryām upayacchet*). However from these passages it is not clear what happens in the period between *samāvartana* and the reception of the bridegroom at the bride's house.

Most of the Gṛhyasūtras do not prescribe in which way the young man is to be dressed and adorned for the marriage ritual.[53] Contrariwise the bride's dressing is mentioned by many of these handbooks.[54] This arrangement points to the model known from Vaikhānasa (see §3.1). The young man might be dressed and adorned at the occasion of *samāvartana* and remain this way until after the marriage ceremony.

The majority of the Gṛhyasūtras opt for the *snātaka* going "somewhere else" to be welcomed with the *argha* ceremony (see Heesterman 1968: 439). This wording includes the possibility that only one *argha* has to be performed for *samāvartana* and marriage. If the *snātaka* sets out for the bride's house right after his bath, he will receive the *argha* from his prospective father-in-law.[55] Thereby the *samāvartana* is completed and the nuptial ceremonies commenced. Hence, in this case, *samāvartana* and marriage overlap each other. Contrariwise *Baudhāyanaśrautasūtra* (17.43–44), *Jaiminīya*- (1.19: p. 18, 12ff.), *Gobhila*- (3.4.30 and 34) and *Khādiragṛhyasūtra* (3.1.32) assign the task of respectful reception at the teacher's door. Thus, according to these texts, the *snātaka* is here first received by his teacher with an *argha*. After a certain period of time, when his marriage has been settled, he is again received with that ceremony in the bride's house.

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52 However, the commentary on this *sūtra* discusses whether the bath of *samāvartana* or the one of marriage has to be taken first. This reveals that, at least according to the commentary, the young man, before marriage, has to absolve two ceremonies comprising a (very similar) bath.

53 Only the Gṛhyasūtras discussed above (*viz.* BaudhGS, MGS, and VGS) mention the groom's equipment for marriage (see §3.2 and 3.3).

54 The bride is usually dressed with an upper and a lower garment (see ĀpGS 4.8; BhāradGS 1.13: p. 13, 4–14; GGS 2.1.18; JGS 1.20: p. 20, 1–3; KhādGS 1.3.6; KGS 25.4; MGS 1.10.8; PGS 1.4.12–13; VGS 14.1). Some Gṛhyasūtras also mention the girding with a string of *muñja* grass (see ĀpGS 4.8; KGS 25.4; VGS 14.2). ŚGS (1.12.3–9) gives an exceptionally detailed passage on the bride's equipment (see §3.6).

55 See Heesterman (1968: 441), Hillebrandt (1897: 79), Krick (1982: 90, n. 227) and Oberlies (2007: 144, n. 12).

The persons to be honoured with an *argha* are mostly named as teachers, priests, *snātaka*s, kings, fathers-in-law (*śvaśura* or *vivāhya/vaivāhya*) and friends.[56] *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra* (1.24.2: *snātakāyopasthitāya*) makes clear—at least if one follows the commentary[57]—that the *snātaka* is to be honoured when he approaches for marriage. This view is further substantiated by *Kauśikasūtra* (92.32) which does not name the *snātaka* but the bridegroom as lawful recipient of an *argha* reception (see Oberlies 2007: 143, n. 8). But even when *snātaka* and bridegroom are mentioned as persons to be honoured with an *argha* (see BaudhGS 1.2.65; ĀgniGS 2.6.6), this does not mean that the first *argha* (which is part of the *samāvartana* ritual) cannot be received from the prospective father-in-law. The title of a bath-graduate might attach to an individual not merely between the conclusion of studentship and his marriage but also after marriage (see Olivelle 2003: 500 [*ad* ĀpDhS 1.30.4]).

Many ritual Sūtras teach the *argha*[58] in the context of *samāvartana* where, most often, it is performed during the second half of this ritual.[59] Significantly the *argha* is instead explained in the context of marriage by *Baudhāyana-* (1.2), *Kāṭhaka-* (ch. 24), *Mānava-* (1.9.1–23), and *Vārāhagṛhyasūtra* (ch. 11). Except for *Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra* these texts are the ones most explicit on the difference between the *snātaka*'s and the bridegroom's paraphernalia.

3.6 The bride's bath and paraphernalia

Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra (1.1.24) prescribes bath and equipment at the beginning of the marriage ritual not only for the groom (see §3.3) but, in absolutely parallel manner, for the bride, too. For her an abbreviated "*samāvartana*" is performed as well. It comprises bath, dressing with new garments, application of perfumes, wearing of a garland, and eating of food.[60]

While *Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra* only indicates about the bridegroom that he has taken a bath and auspicious ceremonies were performed for him (see §3.4), the text holds greater indepth information for the bride's paraphernalia. These are given to her at the beginning of the marriage ritual (see ŚGS 1.12). Subsequent to *indrāṇīkarman* the young woman is given the marital dress by the bridegroom, her eyes are anointed with

56 See GGS (4.10.24), KhādGS (4.4.24), KGS (24.1), PGS (1.3.1), MGS (1.9.1), ŚGS (1.15.4–9), and VGS (11.1). Anyhow, ĀgniGS (2.6.6: p. 101, 8–9) and BaudhGS (1.2.65–66) name both, the *snātaka* and the bridegroom, as recipient of the *argha* (see Oberlies 2007: 143–4).

57 Nārāyaṇa (*ad* ĀśvGS 1.24.2): *upasthitāyeti | kṛtasamāvartanāya | tasmin nahani gṛhān abhyāgatāya vivāhārthine ca.*

58 On the *argha* ceremony in the Gṛhyasūtras see Oberlies (2007: 143–5).

59 JGS (1.19), HGS (1.12.5–1.13.18), and, VaikhGS (2.15–16: pp. 33, 9–34, 8) teach the *argha* as part of *samāvartana*; BhāradGS (2.23–26) and ĀpGS (ch. 13) directly after *samāvartana*; and ŚGS (2.15 [2.16–17]) before this ritual.

60 See BaudhGS (1.1.24): *snāto 'hatavāso gandhānuliptas sragvī bhuktavān pratodapāṇir apadātir gatvā vadhūjñātibhir atithivad arcitas snātām ahatavāsasāṃ gandhānuliptāṃ sragviṇīṃ bhuktavatīm iṣuhastāṃ dattāṃ vadhūṃ samīkṣate…*

collyrium, and she receives a mirror, a wristband (*pratisara*), and *madhūka* flowers which are bound around her body. All these rites are accompanied by *ṛc*-stanzas and resemble remarkable similarity with the rites typical for *samāvartana*.

Some other rites performed for the bride before marriage, namely *pravadana-karman* (MGS 1.9.24–27, VGS 12.1–3), *jñātikarman* (GGS 2.1.10–11, cf. Rudraskanda [*ad* KhādGS 1.3.4]), *indrāṇīkarman* (ŚGS 1.11), and the elaborate ceremonies performed for the bride according to *Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra*[61] (ch. 17–22) will not be discussed here as, on the main lines, they belong to a realm different from *samāvartana* and its abbreviations.[62]

4 Résumé

Krick (1982: 5) has mentioned in her dissertation that *samāvartana* should *ideally* be performed at the time of marriage. This prescription is explicitly given by *Vaikhānasa-gṛhyasūtra* (see §3.1) and might be correct for other Gṛhyasūtras as well (see §3.5). The young man resorts to the bride's house immediately after his absolving bath and equipment as a *snātaka*. Hence he does not need to dress a second time for marriage and receives the *argha* not from his teacher but from his father-in-law. In this case *samāvartana* is a discrete ritual but serves as a prelude of marriage as well. However, other traditions, namely Mānava, Vārāha, Baudhāyana, Āgniveśya, and Śāṅkhāyana, are rather explicit on the point that *samāvartana* is to be performed well in advance of marriage (see §3.2–3.4). From the rules that these ritual texts give for *samāvartana* and the bridegroom's preparation for marriage respectively, it follows that the latter is an abbreviation of the former. According to these texts *samāvartana* is carried out at an occasion distinct from marriage and comprises bath, paraphernalia and *argha*.

From a compositional point of view the result is the same in both cases: there is no gap between *samāvartana* and marriage. While in the former case the two rituals actually overlap, in the latter the time span between them is elided by the "grammatical" figure of repetition. An abbreviated form of *samāvartana* is performed at the beginning of the nuptial ceremonies.

61 But the fact that according to *Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra* (17.1) the bride shall be adorned while the priest recites the mantras of *godāna* (*gaudānikair mantrair*) might point to a connection of this rite with the *samāvartana* as the *godāna* ceremony is often used as a rite of the *samāvartana*, too (cf. n. 15).

62 A full index of discrete sequences of the marriage ritual will be one of the results of my dissertation (see n. 3). However, the sequences in question have already been dealt with in my master thesis which will be published soon.

Between *samāvartana* and marriage the *snātaka* appears to be separated[63] by status elevation[64] which is a particular mode of liminality. He is decorated in an eye-catching manner and only now wears ointment and garland in public.[65] He has the appearance of a king (see Heesterman 1968: 440) but in a sense even ranges above him. A king has to salute a *snātaka* with respect.[66] The *snātaka* is also said to be a "great being" (see ĀśvGS 3.9.6) and instead of cooked food he uses ghee for his daily sacrifices (see BaudhGS 2.6.19–21) which is regarded as purest of all substances.

Possible reasons for the *snātaka*'s liminality are—depending on tradition and its respective concept of life—the standing between two life-stages, or the decision which life-style one wants to adhere to. No matter which concept of life the different Gṛhyasūtras promote, the time following *samāvartana* denotes a or even is *the* turning point in a young adult's life.[67]

The ritual traditions of the Kangra valley of Himachal Pradesh are based on *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra* (see n. 10) but with regard to the combination of *samāvartana* and marriage they *structurally* follow the model of *Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra*. *Samāvartana* is equivalent to the bridegroom's absolving bath and equipment and as such becomes a prelude or part of the nuptial ceremonies. By this way of performance a violation of the proscription of being *anāśramin* (a concept not known to the Gṛhyasūtras) is avoided as the young man turns from student to householder without interim.

By the incorporation of another *saṃskāra*, namely *upanayana*, into the marriage ritual—a practice common in the Kangra valley and other regions of India as well—the duration of the life-stage of *brahmacarya* is considerably shortened. This loss is accepted because the social circumstances today do not usually allow an extended period of Veda studies anyway. In opposition to the amalgamation of *samāvartana* and the nuptial ceremonies, the incorporation of *upanayana* into the marriage ritual is a rather recent strategy to economize the cycle of *saṃskāra*s prescribed by classical traditions.

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63 The groom's and bride's seclusion in the period before marriage is well known from many contemporary traditions. Usually, this process is commenced by the ritual application of turmeric paste which is repeated for some days. The prescriptions of some Gṛhyasūtras for *samāvartana* and the bridegroom's (and bride's [see §3.6]) paraphernalia point to a liminality similar to the status of an adult just before marriage in today's traditions. Thus, the repetition of an abbreviated form of *samāvartana* might be an influence on today's *buṭnā* or *haridrā* ceremonies which aid to pass a particularly liminal phase, too. Especially *utsādana*, a part of *alaṃkaraṇa* as prescribed by MGS (1.9.26: *atha gandhotsādane vāsasī*), points to this relation, see also Aṣṭāvakra on this *sūtra* (*gandhaś candanādi | utsādanam udvarttam pakvatailādinā*).

64 Similarly the bridal couple is marked by status-elevation during the liminal phases of marriage. In Himachal Pradesh they are identified with Viṣṇu and Śrī or Śiva and Parvatī (see Luchesi 1999). Deification of bride and bridegroom, as it can be reconstructed from the *sūryāsūkta* (RV 10.85), will be discussed by Keßler-Persaud (forthc.).

65 See Kane 1974: 413, ĀpDhS 1.32.5, MDhŚ 4.72, GautDhS 9.32, and VāsDhS 12.39 as well as Mbh 2.19.38–40.

66 See MDhŚ 2.138–139; GautDhS 6.25; VāsDhS 13.59.

67 In the "original" formulation the time following *samāvartana* was "the critical time of a young adult's life when he had to make a decision regarding how he would live his adult life by choosing one of the four *āśramas*" (Olivelle 1993: 131).

Nevertheless, due to the specific way of incorporation into the nuptial ceremonies, *upanayana* remains a self-contained ritual. Its special rites are embedded into the ritual frame(s) which serve(s) for marriage as well as *upanayana*.

Two rules for a "compositionally correct" possibility to economize the classical life-cycle rituals can be tentatively deduced from the material given above: 1.) The special rites of more than one life-cycle ritual can be embedded into a single ritual frame and thus, in a sense, performed as one ritual, and 2.), as the interim between two rituals is elided when the last sequence of the first ritual is repeated at the beginning of the second, the sequence needs to be performed only once if the rituals are carried out in direct succession. Thus, the same goal can be reached by different ways of performance both of which are "grammatically" correct.

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Shingo Einoo

Notes on *Āñjana*

Āñjana (eye-salve), or any substance which is applied to the eyes, plays an important role in a number of initiation rites such as the *dīkṣā* (consecration), preceding the Soma sacrifice (*agniṣṭoma*), and the *samāvartana*, the ceremony marking the end of studentship. Eye-salve is used also in other rites described in the Vedic and post-Vedic ritual texts. In this paper I first analyze the usage of *āñjana* in the *dīkṣā* of the Soma sacrifice, and then discuss its use in the *samāvartana*. I also touch briefly on examples of its use in other ritual texts, and attempt to show its ritual importance, as well as some changes in conception concerning this small element of ancient Indian ritual.

Āñjana in the *dīkṣā* of the *agniṣṭoma*[1]

During the *dīkṣā*, the sacrificer has his beard and his armpits shaved and his hair cut, and after taking a bath, puts on new garments. He eats what he likes, anoints his body, applies eye-salve and is ritually purified by means of eleven bundles of *darbha* stalks.[2] The following description of how the eye-salve is applied to the eyes in the *dīkṣā* is based on prescriptions given in the Brāhmaṇas and the Śrautasūtras:

The *āñjana* is ground and kept in the lower grind-stone (*dṛṣad*) (BaudhŚS). The *āñjana* used here comes from Mount Trikakubh (*traikakubha*) (MS and MānŚS) or Trikakud (*traikakuda*) (ŚB, BhārŚS, ĀpŚS, VaikhŚS, KātyŚS). If this special *āñjana* is not available, any other salve can be used (ŚB, BhārŚS, ĀpŚS, VaikhŚS, KātyŚS). The salve is applied with what is called simply a "stalk" (*īṣīkā* (MS), *iṣīkā* (KS)), though the ŚB specializes it as a reed-stalk (*śareṣīkā*); most of the later texts follow it (MānŚS, BaudhŚS, BhārŚS, ĀpŚS, VaikhŚS, KātyŚS). A stalk of *darbha* grass (*darbheṣīkā*) (MānŚS, BhārŚS, ĀpŚS) or a bunch of *darbha* stalks (*darbhapuñjīla*) (BhārŚS, ĀpŚS,

1 *Āñjana* is treated in the following Brāhmaṇas: MS 3.6.2 [p. 61, 18–19], MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 5–13], KS 23.1 [p. 73, 8–18], TS 6.1.1.5–6, AB 1.3.6–7, ŚB 3.1.3.10–17, and in the following Śrautasūtras: MānŚS 2.1.1.38–39, BaudhŚS 6.2 [p. 158, 2–7], BhārŚS 10.4.10–13, ĀpŚS 10.7.1–4, HirŚS 7.1.39 [p. 588, 5–6], VaikhŚS 12.7 [p. 137, 10–13], and KātyŚS 7.2.34. *Āñjana* is sometimes called *traikakuda*, because it originated in the Trikakud peaks of the Himalayas, as for example in AV 4.9.9b (for the uses of this mantra *pāda*s a and b in other ritual contexts, see below p. 78), AV 4.9.10, AV 19.44.6; in the *dīkṣā* ŚB 3.1.3.12, BhārŚS 10.4.10, ĀpŚS 10.7.1–2, VaikhŚS 12.7 [p. 137, 10–13]; in the *samāvartana* BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 7–9], HirGS 1.3.31, BodhGPbhS 1.13.47. It is also called *traikakubha* MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 8–10] (*dīkṣā*), MānŚS 2.1.1.38 (*dīkṣā*), and MānGS 1.11.8 (marriage ceremony). KS 23.1 [p. 73, 10–11] only refers to Mount Trikakubh. See Macdonell & Keith (1912: 55).

2 For the ritual procedure of these acts, see Caland & Henry (1906: 11–13).

VaikhŚS) is permitted for this purpose. The stalk should have some sprouts (*prasū*) (MS), though other texts do not stipulate this. Only MānŚS says that the stalk is used with *muñja*-grass (*samuñjā*). All the texts unanimously enjoin that the stalk should have a tuft (*satūlā*).

The procedure of eye-salving can be reconstructed according to descriptions given in the Brāhmaṇas and the Śrautasūtras. The *adhvaryu* sits to the west or to the east of the sacrificer (BaudhŚS) and applies the salve first to his right eye and then to his left eye (all the texts); according to MS and MānŚS this is done three times, and according to KS it is done either two times to the right eye and once to the left or three times to the right and twice to the left (the first way given in KS is followed by ĀpŚS as its first alternative). ŚB prescribes that the *adhvaryu* should first apply the salve once to the right eye with a formula (*yajus*) and once silently, and then once to the left eye with a formula and twice silently; this method is the second alternative in ĀpŚS and the only method in KātyŚS. The total number of times is therefore five, and TS simply teaches that the salve is applied five times; according though to the Śrautasūtras belonging to the Taittirīya school the salve is applied three times to the right eye and two times to the left, or according to the alternative method in BaudhŚS and VaikhŚS to both five times. Finally ĀpŚS says that the act is done to both three times. In any case the act of eye-salving is done a specific number of times (*parimitam*) (TS). All the texts presumably imply that the salve is applied only in one direction, though they use different wording. And it is only in MānŚS that the *adhvaryu* also anoints the eyes of the wife with the remaining *āñjana*.

When *āñjana* is applied to the eyes, certain mantras are used.[3] They are as follows:

> KS 2.1 [8, 11] *mitrasyāsi kanīnikā* "You are the pupil of Mitra's eye."
> MS 1.2.1 [10, 4] *vṛtrásyāsi kanī́nikā* "You are the pupil of Vṛtra's eye."[4]
> VS 4.3b *vṛtrásyāsi kanī́nakaḥ* "You are the pupil of Vṛtra's eye."
> TS 1.2.1.i *vṛtrásya kanī́nikāsi* "You are the pupil of Vṛtra's eye."

In MS, TS, and VS the *āñjana* is related to Vṛtra. This connection between the eye-salve and the pupil of Vṛtra's eye is explained by means of similar myths:

> MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 8–10] *índro vaí vṛtrám ahaṃs tásya kanī́nikā párāpatat sā́ trikakúbham agachat tád ā́ñjanaṃ traikakubhám* "Indra verily killed Vṛtra. His pupil fell away. It went to Mount Trikakubh. It became the eye-salve that originated from Mount Trikakubh."

3 The mantras used are collected in the following texts: MS 1.2.1 [p. 10, 4–6], KS 2.1 [p. 8, 11–12], TS 1.2.1.i, VS 4.3b.

4 Only MS 1.2.1 [p. 10, 4–5] reads then *cákṣuṣo me vayodhā́* "(You are) one who bestows strength to my eye." For this kind of a request to the eye-salve see below p. 73.

KS 23.1 [p. 73, 10–11] *índro vaí vṛtrám ahaṃs tásya cákṣuḥ párāpatat tát trikakúbhaṃ prāviśat* "Indra verily killed Vṛtra. His eye fell away. It entered Mount Trikakubh."[5]

TS 6.1.1.5 *índro vṛtrám ahan tásya kanīnikā párāpatat tád āñjanam abhavad* "Indra killed Vṛtra. His pupil fell away. It became eye-salve."[6]

ŚB 3.1.3.12 *yátra vā́ índro vṛtrám áhaṃs tásya yád ákṣy āsīt táṃ giríṃ trikakúdam akarot* "When Indra verily killed Vṛtra he made his (Vṛtra's) eye the Mount Trikakud."[7]

Though KS relates this myth, the mantra of KS curiously connects the eye-salve to the pupil of Mitra's eye. But the corresponding mantra of KapS 1.13 [pp. 11, 19–12.1] reads *vṛtrasyāsi kanīnikā*, so we can safely amend *mitrasya* in the KS mantra to *vṛtrasya*.

MS and KS contain similar mantras:

KS 2.1 [p. 8, 11–12] *antar ahaṃ tvayā dveṣam antar arātīr dadhe* "I block the hostility to you, malevolence."

MS 1.2.1 [p. 10, 5], MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 5–13] *antár aháṃ tváyā dvéṣo antár árātīr dadhe mahatā́ párvatena* "I block the hostility to you, malevolence, with a great mountain."[8]

In another group of mantras, the *āñjana* is requested to do something good for the sacrificer:

MS 1.2.1 [p. 10, 6], MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 12], TS 1.2.1.i *cakṣuḥpā́ asi cákṣur me pāhi* "You are the protector of the eye; protect my eye."

KS 2.1 [p. 8, 12] *cakṣurdhā́ asi cákṣur me dhehi* "You are one who bestows the eye; bestow the eye on me."

VS 4.3b, ŚB 3.1.3.15 *cakṣurdā asi cakṣur me dehi* "You are the giver of the eye; give me the eye."

Thus at the level of the mantras, the *āñjana* is related to the pupil of Vṛtra's eye, their connection being explained through myths from the Brāhmaṇas. The salve is requested to block hostility and malevolence on one hand and to give eyesight to the sacrificer on the other. According to the Brāhmaṇa texts, the *āñjana* is interpreted as follows:

5 KS does not relate that it became the *traikakubha āñjana*. What follows says that the salve is applied in order to obtain his eye, certainly Vṛtra's eye: *yád āṅkté tásyaivá cákṣuṣó 'varuddhyai*.

6 TS does not mention any mountain.

7 ŚB does not relate that Vṛtra's eye became the *traikakuda āñjana*.

8 The part "with a great mountain" is based on the myth that the eye-salve originated from Mount Trikakubh (see above).

- The eye-salve, the anointing the body (*abhyañjana*) and the garment make up the body (*tanū*): MS 3.6.2 [61, 18–19], KS 22.13 [69, 2–3].[9]
- To block the Rakṣases: KS 23.1 [p. 73, 8–10], ŚB 3.1.3.13[10] or to block the hostility (*dveṣas*) and the malevolence (*arāti*): (MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 11–12]).[11]
- To raise a rampart of stone all round: ŚB 3.1.3.11.[12]
- To obtain eyesight: KS 23.1 [p. 73, 10–11], ŚB 3.1.3.12.[13]
- To make sure the eyes are not damaged (*acchidra*): KS 23.1 [p. 73, 17–18][14] or to make the eyes sound (*anaru*): ŚB 3.1.3.10.[15]
- To deprive a rival of eyesight: TS 6.1.1.5.[16]
- To obtain the truth (*satya*): MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 8–11].[17]

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9 MS 3.6.2 [p. 61, 18–19] *ā́ṅkte 'bhyàṅkte vā́saḥ páridhatta etā́ vaí púruṣasya tanvàḥ sátanūr evá médhyam úpaiti* "He eye-salves; he anoints his body; he puts on a garment. These are the body of a human; being provided with the body he approaches the sacrifice." Cf. KS 22.13 [p. 69, 2–3] *ā́ṅkte 'bhyàṅkte 'śnā́ti vā́saḥ páridhatta etā́ vaí púruṣasya tanvàs sárvatanūr evá bhūtvā́ dīkṣā́m úpaiti.*

10 KS 23.1 [p. 73, 8–10] *índraṃ vaí vṛtráṃ jaghnivā́ṃsaṃ rákṣāṃsy asacanta tā́ny añjanagiríṇāntár adhatta rákṣāṃsy etáṃ sacante yó dī́kṣate bhávati hí yád āṅkté rákṣasām antárhityai* "The Rakṣases pursed Indra who killed Vṛtra; he blocked them with a mountain of the eye-salve. The Rakṣases purse him who consecrates himself, because he prospers. The act of eye-salving is in order to block them." ŚB 3.1.3.13 *yát sátūlā bhávati virakṣástāyai.*

11 This is given as the interpretation of the mantra MS 1.2.1 [p. 10, 5], see above p. 73.

12 ŚB 3.1.3.11 *yátra vaí devā́ḥ | asurarakṣasā́ni jaghnús tác chúṣṇo dānavā́ḥ pratyáṅ patitvā́ manúṣyāṇām ákṣīṇi práviveśa sá eṣá kanī́nakaḥ kumāraká iva páribhāsate tásmā evaítád yajñám upaprayánt sarváto 'śmapurā́ṃ páridadhāty aśmā́ hy ā́ñjanam* "When the gods killed the Asuras and Rakṣases, Śuṣṇa, the demon, fell backwards and entered into the eyes of men. He is the pupil of the eye that shines like a boy. He (the sacrificer), entering into the sacrifice, raises a rampart of stone all around against him (Śuṣṇa), because the eye-salve is stone.

13 KS 23.1 [p. 73, 10–11] *índro vaí vṛtrám ahaṃs tásya cákṣuḥ párāpatat tát trikakúbhaṃ prā́viśad yád āṅkté tásyaivá cákṣuṣó 'varuddhyai* "Indra verily killed Vṛtra. His eye fell away. It entered into the mount Trikakubh. That he eye-salves is in order to obtain eyesight of him (of Vṛtra). ŚB 3.1.3.12 *traikakudáṃ bhavati | yátra vā́ índro vṛtrám áhaṃs tásya yád ákṣy ā́sīt táṃ giríṃ trikakúdam akarot tád yát traikakudáṃ bhávati cákṣuṣy evaítác cákṣur dadhāti* "The eye-salve originates from Mount Trikakud. When verily Indra killed Vṛtra, he made that which was his (Vṛtra's) eye Mount Trikakud. The reason that the eye-salve originates from Mount Trikakud is that he thus puts the eye in the eye."

14 KS 23.1 [p. 73, 17–18] *ūnám iva vā́ etác chidrám iva yác cákṣur yád āṅkté tád evā́pūrayaty ácchidra-tvāya* "The eye is as if empty, as if torn up. When he eye-salves, he namely fills it for the sake of not being torn up."

15 ŚB 3.1.3.10 *áthā́kṣāv ā́nakti árur vaí púruṣasyā́kṣi praśā́n maméti ha smāha yā́jñavalkyo durakṣá iva hāsa pū́yo haivā́sya dūṣī́kā té evaítad ánaruṣ karoti yád akṣyāv ānákti* "Now he (the priest) applies the eye-salve to the eyes (of the sacrificer). 'Wounded, indeed, is the eye of man. Mine is sound,' so used to say Yājñavalkya. He had bad eyes. His eye mucus festered. When he applies the eye-salve to the eyes, he thus makes the eyes sound."

16 TS 6.1.1.5 *índro vṛtrám ahan tásya kanī́nikā párāpatat tád ā́ñjanam abhavad yád āṅkte cákṣur evá bhrā́tṛvyasya vṛṅkte* "Indra killed Vṛtra. His pupil fell away. It became the eye-salve. When he eye-salves, he thus deprives his rival of eyesight."

17 MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 8–11] *índro vaí vṛtrám ahaṃs tásya kanī́nikā párāpatat sā́ trikakúbham agachat tád ā́ñjanaṃ traikakubhám ā́ṅkte satyáṃ vaí cákṣur néva vācé śráddadhāti satyám evā́lābhya dīkṣā́m upaiti* "Indra verily killed Vṛtra. His pupil fell away. It went to Mount Trikakubh. That is the eye-salve originating from Mount Trikakubh. He eye-salves. The eye is indeed truth. One

- To make the sacrificer possessed of brilliance (*tejas*): AB 1.3.7.[18]
- To obtain the sacrifice (*yajña*): KS 23.1 [p. 73, 11–13], TS 6.1.1.6, ŚB 3.1.3.17.[19]
- To be connected with Mitra: KS 23.1 [p. 73, 16–17], TS 6.1.1.6.[20]
- For the procreation: MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 5].[21]

The interpretations of *āñjana* in the Brāhmaṇas concern many aspects of the act of applying salve to the eyes. In many of them the salve is connected with the pupil of Vṛtra's eye, as at the level of the mantras, but this relationship is difficult to understand if we do not know the background to the myth.

Āñjana in the *samāvartana*

In the *samāvartana* the student who has finished his Vedic study bathes, and is then adorned in various ways and given various paraphernalia. Two groups of texts describe the series of acts involved: one group does not contain the act of *āñjana* while the other has the act embedded in the whole series. The texts of the first group include ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.4–11, KauṣGS 3.1.2, GobhGS 3.4.24–26, KāṭhGS 3.4–8, and VārGS 9.9–15. The relevant acts and objects are itemized as follows:

- Bathing: ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.4, KauṣGS 3.1.2, GobhGS 3.4.24, KāṭhGS 3.5, VārGS 9.9.

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seemingly does not put faith to speech. Thus taking hold of truth he approaches the consecration." For the identification of the eye with truth see Lévi (1898: 165).

18 AB 1.3.6–7 *āñjanty enam | tejo vā etad akṣyor yad āñjanaṃ satejasam evainaṃ tat kṛtvā dīkṣayanti* "They (the priests) apply the eye-salve to him (the sacrificer). The eye-salve is indeed the brilliance of the eyes. Verily thus having made him possessed of brilliance they consecrate him."

19 KS 23.1 [p. 73, 11–13] *dvír dákṣiṇam āṅkté sakṛ́t savyáṃ trivṛ́d yajñó mukhatá evá yajñám álabhate trír dákṣiṇam āṅkté dvís savyám páṅkto yajñó yajñám evā́varunddhe* "He twice anoints his right eye, once his left eye. The sacrifice is three-fold. In the beginning he thus obtains the sacrifice. He thrice anoints his right eye, twice his left eye. The sacrifice is five-fold. He thus obtains the sacrifice." TS 6.1.1.6 *páñca kṛ́tva ā́ṅkte páñcākṣarā paṅktíḥ pā́ṅkto yajñó yajñám evā́va runddhe* "He eye-salves five times. The metre *paṅkti* has five syllables. The sacrifice is five-fold. He thus obtains the sacrifice." ŚB 3.1.3.17 *tád yát páñca kṛ́tva ānákti | saṃvatsarásaṃmito vaí yajñáḥ páñca vā́ ṛtávaḥ saṃvatsarásya táṃ pañcábhir āpnoti tásmāt páñca kṛ́tva ānakti* "The reason why he applies the eye-salve five times is that the sacrifice is of the same measure as the year; the year has five seasons. He reaches the year with the five; therefore he applies the eye-salve five times."

20 KS 23.1 [p. 73, 16–17] *sátūlā bhavati maitrī́ vaí sátūlā vāruṇī́ páriśīrṇā maitró dīkṣitás sámṛddhyai* "(The stalk (*iṣīkā*) used for the anointing) has a tuft. (The stalk) having a tuft is related to Mitra. (The stalk tufts which) are cut off are related to Varuṇa. The consecrated is related to Mitra. It is for the sake of success by relationship." TS 6.1.1.6 *yád ápatūlayāñjītá vájra iva syāt sátūlyā́ṅkte mitratvā́ya* "If he eye-salves with a stalk without tufts, it becomes like a thunderbolt. He eye-salves with a stalk with a tuft, for the sake of being related to Mitra."

21 MS 3.6.3 [p. 62, 5] *prasvā́ṅkte prájātyai* "He eye-salves with a stalk with sprouts for the sake of procreation."

- Adornment: ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.5, KauṣGS 3.1.2, GobhGS 3.4.24.[22]
- A pair of garments: ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.6, KauṣGS 3.1.2, GobhGS 3.4.24, VārGS 9.9.
- Golden ornament: ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.7 (*niṣka*), KauṣGS 3.1.2, KāṭhGS 3.7, VārGS 9.12.
- A veiling (*veṣṭana*): ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.8.
- A garland: GobhGS 3.4.24 (*sraj*), VārGS 9.11 (*mālā*).
- An umbrella: ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.9, KāṭhGS 3.6, VārGS 9.10.
- A pair of sandals: ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.10, GobhGS 3.4.25, KāṭhGS 3.8, VārGS 9.13.
- A staff (*daṇḍa*): ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.11, GobhGS 3.4.26, VārGS 9.14.
- A water-pot: VārGS 9.15 (*kamaṇḍalu*).

The second group consists of ĀśvGS 3.8.12–21, JaimGS 1.19 [pp. 17, 11–18, 3], MānGS 1.2.11–17, BaudhŚS 17.40–42 [pp. 320, 12–323, 13], BhārGS 2.19–22 [pp. 52, 3–55, 12], ĀpGS 5.12.6–10, HirGS 1.3.10.2–11.10, VaikhGS 2.13–15 [pp. 32, 5–33, 6], ĀgnGS 1.3.3–5 [pp. 21, 3–23, 4], and PārGS 2.6.18–31. The relevant acts and objects related to them are itemized as follows:

- Bathing: ĀśvGS 3.8.12, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 17, 11–12], MānGS 1.2.11, BaudhŚS 17.40–41 [pp. 320, 12–321, 2], BhārGS 2.19 [p. 52, 3–7], ĀpGS 5.12.6, HirGS 1.3.10.2, VaikhGS 2.13 [p. 32, 5–6], ĀgnGS 1.3.3 [p. 21, 3–5], PārGS 2.6.18–19.
- Brushing teeth: BhārGS 2.19–20 [p. 52, 7–11], ĀpGS 5.12.6.
- A pair of garments: ĀśvGS 3.8.12, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 17, 18–19], MānGS 1.2.11–12, BaudhŚS 17.41 [p. 321, 3–5], BhārGS 2.20 [p. 52, 16–17; p. 54, 2–3], ĀpGS 5.12.8, HirGS 1.3.10.5, VaikhGS 2.14 [p. 32, 9–12], ĀgnGS 1.3.3 [p. 21, 5–10], PārGS 2.6.20–22.
- A ring: VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33.1] (*aṅgulīyaka*).
- Eye-salve: ĀśvGS 3.8.12, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 17, 19–20], MānGS 1.2.13, BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 7–9], BhārGS 2.22 [p. 55, 4–5], ĀpGS 5.12.10, HirGS 1.3.11.5, VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 1–2], ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [pp. 22, 20–23, 1], PārGS 2.6.27.
- Looking into a mirror: BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 9–10], BhārGS 2.22 [p. 55, 5–7], ĀpGS 5.12.10, HirGS 1.3.11.6, VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 3], ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [p. 22, 19–20], PārGS 2.6.28.
- Gold: MānGS 1.2.14.
- An amulet (*maṇi*): ĀśvGS 3.8.21 (on the neck), JaimGS 1.19 [pp. 17, 20–18, 1], BaudhŚS 17.41 [p. 321, 5–12], BhārGS 2.21 [pp. 52, 17–54, 1], ĀpGS 5.12.8, HirGS 1.3.11.3, VaikhGS 2.15 [pp. 32, 18–33, 1], ĀgnGS 1.3.3–4 [p. 21, 10–18].
- A pair of earrings: ĀśvGS 3.8.13, BaudhŚS 17.41 [pp. 321, 12–323, 2], BhārGS 2.21–22 [p. 54, 3–15], ĀpGS 5.12.11, HirGS 1.3.10.6–11.2, VaikhGS 2.15 [p.

22 ŚāṅkhGS 3.1.5, KauṣGS 3.1.2, GobhGS 3.4.24 *alaṃkṛtya* "after having adorned him". This simple prescription does not tell us how the student was adorned.

32, 16–18], ĀgnGS 1.3.4–5 [pp. 21, 18–22, 15], PārGS 2.6.26.[23]
- Ointment (*anulepana*): ĀśvGS 3.8.14 (in his two hands)[24], BaudhŚS 17.41 [p. 321, 2–3] (on his body), BhārGS 2.20 [p. 52, 11–16], ĀpGS 5.12.8, HirGS 1.3.10.4, PārGS 2.6.18 (for nostrils and mouth).
- A garland: ĀśvGS 3.8.18 (*sraj*), MānGS 1.2.15 (*mālā*), BaudhŚS 17.41–42 [p. 323, 2–7] (*sraj*), BhārGS 2.22 [pp. 54, 15–55, 4] (*sraj*), ĀpGS 5.12.10 (*sraj*), HirGS 1.3.11.4 (*sraj*), VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 2–3] (*sraj*), ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [p. 22, 15–18] (*sraj*), PārGS 2.6.23–24 (*sumasasaḥ* "flowers").
- Perfume (*gandha*): MānGS 1.2.15.
- A pair of sandals: ĀśvGS 3.8.19, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 18, 3], MānGS 1.2.16, BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 10–11], BhārGS 2.22 [p. 55, 7–10], ĀpGS 5.12.10, HirGS 1.3.11.9, VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 5], ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [p. 23, 3–4], PārGS 2.6.30.
- An umbrella: ĀśvGS 3.8.19, MānGS 1.2.15, BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 12–13], BhārGS 2.22 [p. 55, 12], ĀpGS 5.12.10, HirGS 1.3.11.10, VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 5–6], ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [p. 23, 2], PārGS 2.6.29.
- A staff (*daṇḍa*): ĀśvGS 3.8.20, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 18, 1–2], MānGS 1.2.15, BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 12], BhārGS 2.22 [p. 55, 10–11], ĀpGS 5.12.10, HirGS 1.3.11.7–8, VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 3–5], ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [p. 23, 1], PārGS 2.6.31.
- A turban: ĀśvGS 3.8.21, PārGS 2.6.25.

The act of the applying eye-salve generally takes place after the student bathes and puts on new garments. Directions regarding the application during the *samāvartana* are very simple. Most texts give only the mantra to be used. BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 7] and HirGS 1.3.11.5 call the eye-salve *traikakuda*[25] and the latter also says that if eye-salve originating from Mount Trikakud is not available, any *āñjana* can be used. As regards the order of the application, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 17, 19–20] says that the left eye is anointed first, but according to VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 2] the right eye comes first. Mantras to be recited vary slightly according to the text:

> PārGS 2.6.27 gives only the first words of the mantra, which is the same as that used in the *dīkṣā* VS 4.3b *vṛtrasyāsi kanīnakaḥ* "You are the pupil of Vṛtra's eye."
>
> ĀśvGS 3.8.9 *aśmanas tejo 'si cakṣur me pāhi* "You are the brilliance of the stone; protect my eye."[26]

23 In the texts belonging to the Taittirīya school, the word representing the earring is *pravarta*. For an interpretation of this word see Rau (1974: 51).

24 In *sūtra*s 14–17 different parts of the body which are to be salved first, according to the different classes, are mentioned: a Brahmin the face (*mukha*), a Rājanya his two arms, a Vaiśya the belly, for woman her secret parts (*upastha*), and one who earns his living by running (*saraṇajīvin*) his thighs.

25 See also BodhGPbhS 1.13.47.

26 The first part of this mantra seems to be based on the identification of the eye-salve with the stone in ŚB 3.1.3.11 *aśmā hy āñjanam*, see p. 74, n. 12.

JaimGS 1.19 [p. 17, 19–20] *yaśasā mā* "With fame to me."

MānGS 1.2.13 *yathā dyauś ca pṛthivī ca na bibhīto na riṣyataḥ | evaṃ me prāṇa mā bibha evaṃ me prāṇa mā riṣaḥ* "As sky and earth do not fear, do not suffer from damage, so may my breath not fear, so may my breath not suffer from damage."[27]

AV 4.9.9 gives a mantra of the eye-salve which reads as follows:

yád áñjanaṃ traikakudáṃ jātáṃ himávatas pári | yātúṃś ca sárvāṃ jambháyat sarvāś ca yātudhānyàḥ "The ointment that is of the three-peaked [mountain], born from the snowy one (*himavant*)—may it grind up all the familiar demons and all the sorceresses" (Whitney 1905: 160).

The texts belonging to the Taittirīya school make use of the first half of this mantra with slight variations.

BaudhŚS 17.42 [p. 323, 7–9] *yad āñjanaṃ traikakudaṃ jātaṃ himavata upari | tena vām āñje mayi parvatavarcasam astu* "Originated from the Trikakud mountain, born on the top of the snowy one, I apply it to both of you; be the lustre of the mountain in me."[28]

BhārGS 2.22 [p. 55, 4–5] teaches a similar but deficient mantra:

yad āñjanaṃ traikakudaṃ jātaṃ himavata upari mayi parvatavarcasam "…, (be) the luster of the mountain in me."

The mantra used in ĀpGS 5.12.11 is MP 2.8.11 and here the fourth *pāda* is changed:

yad āñjanaṃ traikakudaṃ jātaṃ himavata upari | tena vām āñje tejase varcase bhagāya ca "…for brilliance, for lustre and for luck."

The mantra of HirGS 1.3.11.5 is also changed in the fourth *pāda*:

yad āñjanaṃ traikakudaṃ jātaṃ himavata upari | tena vām āñje 'haṃ bhagena saha varcasā mayi parvatapūruṣam "…I apply it to both of you together with luck and lustre, be in me the man of the mountain."

In ĀgnGS 1.3.5 [pp. 22, 20–23, 1] the third and fourth *pāda*s are different:

yad āñjanaṃ traikakudaṃ jātaṃ himavata upari | tena māṃ cāyuṣyaṃ varcasyaṃ me astu "…with it to me; may it be for long life and for lustre."

VaikhGS 2.15 [p. 33, 1–3] enjoins two mantras, the first for the right eye and the second for the left eye, both quoting the beginning part: *yad āñjanam iti dakṣiṇaṃ cakṣur*

27 This mantra seems to have nothing to do with the eye-salve and the eye. It is a modification of AV 2.15.1 *yáthā dyaúś ca pṛthivī́ ca ná bibhīto ná ríṣyataḥ | evā́ me prā́ṇa mā́ bibheḥ.*

28 BodhGPbhS 1.13.47 gives the same mantra.

yan me mana iti vāmaṃ cāñjanenāñjayitvā. The first mantra may be the same as that of BaudhŚS (see above) and the second mantra is TS 6.6.7.2:

> *yan me manaḥ parāgataṃ yad vā me aparāgatam | rājñā somena tad vayam asmāsu dhārayāmasi* "That mind of mine which hath gone away, or which hath gone elsewhere, by means of King Soma, we keep within us" (Keith 1914: 553).[29]

Āñjana in other rituals

Jan Gonda treated *āñjana* briefly in his *Vedic Ritual* (Gonda 1980: 150–1). After dealing with the use of eye-salve in the *samāvartana* he turns to its use in the marriage ceremony.

> "[H]aving arrived the bridegroom gives his bride elect a salve-box (*āñjanakośa*) with ṚV. 10, 85, 7 '...sight was the ointment, heaven and earth were the trunk (case, *kośa*) when Sūryā (the primaeval divine bride) went to her husband' (ŚG. 1, 12, 4); the stanza for the anointing (5) is ṚV. 10, 85, 47 requesting the Viśve Devāḥ and the Waters to 'salve together' the hearts of the two (cf. PG. 1, 4, 14; MG. 1, 11, 8; GG. 2, 2, 15 f.)[30]; at a later moment he anoints her eyes with *ājya* salve (ŚG. 1, 16, 5)[31] with ṚV. 10, 85, 44 'with no evil (i.e. a benign, kind) eye, not bringing death to your husband, ...bring us luck'—with which they are made to look at each other (PG. 1, 4, 14; cf. BG. 1, 1, 24 f.), a form of precaution required by the first marital contact, because the eye of a stranger might carry evil; ... cf. KauṣG. 1, 8, 4."

KauśS 79.2 prescribes that the bride and the bridegroom anoint one another's eyes using the AV 7.36.1.

Gonda also refers to eye-salving in a ceremony to tie a protective thread onto a boy's hand (*kautuka*) described in ĀgnGS 2.3.5 [p. 59, 3]. Among the rites of passage, KauśS 54.6 uses AV 7.30.1 to accompany the eye-salving of a boy at the *godāna* ceremony. Gonda then mentions *āñjana* being used in rites performed on the full moon day of the month of *śrāvaṇa*, when the eye-salve is given to serpents, referring to ŚāṅkhGS 4.15.11, BhārGS 2.1 [p. 31, 8–10], and HirGS 2.6.16.7. We can find also the similar acts in KauṣGS 4.2.3, ĀpGS 7.18.11, and PārGS 2.14.17. As regards funeral rites, Gonda first refers to ŚB 13.8.4.7 where it is said that eye-salve and body ointment (*abhyañjana*) are given to those who have come back from the cremation. According to ŚāṅkhŚS 4.16.6, at the funeral rite of a dead wife, after her corpse is burned, the eyes of the women are anointed reciting ṚV 10.18.7. Almost the same act for the women is recorded in BaudhPS 1.17 [p. 28, 12–15].

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29 This mantra was originally used in the Soma sacrifice and has nothing to do with eye-salving.

30 See also KhādGS 1.3.28–30 and ĀśvGS 1.8.9.

31 See also KauṣGS 1.10.6.

In the *pitṛyajña* which is performed during the afternoon of the *sākamedha*, eye-salve, body ointment and other items are given to the ancestors (Einoo 1988: 262–5) and this act is said to be performed according to the *piṇḍapitṛyajña* performed on the afternoon of the new moon sacrifice.[32] These are all Śrauta rituals. Gonda mentions the presentation of eye-salve and body ointment to the ancestors at the time of the *śrāddha* referring to JaimGS 2.2 [p. 28, 1] and VaikhGS 4.6 [p. 60, 5–6] and at the *anvaṣṭakya* ceremony to propitiate ancestral spirits prescribed in GobhGS 4.2.27–28, 3.13. Thus eye-salve was used both in funeral rites and ancestor veneration.

Additionally, in a rite for cattle breeding KauśS 51.11 enjoins that the faces of the twin animals which are born first to a female animal are to be anointed.

Āñjana in magic rites

Gonda also touches on some magical uses of eye-salve. At the beginning of his treatment of *āñjana* he refers to Teun Goudriaan, who also discusses this topic in his *Māyā Divine and Human* (1978: 317–8) especially focusing on its magical uses.

Cases of magical uses of *āñjana* are found in AVPŚ 4, which describes ceremonies to be performed daily by the *purohita*, and AVPŚ 4.1.8 says that the *purohita* should anoint his eyes reciting AV 4.9.1. The same verse is used in *Śāntikalpa* 19.8 to prepare an eye-salve which is used as an amulet (*maṇi*) in the *airāvatī mahāśānti*. In *Śāntikalpa* 19.7 the eye-salve is also used as an amulet in the *nairṛtī mahāśānti*.

AVPŚ 33.7.1cd–2ab prescribes that a king, after being decorated with a yellow pigment (*rocanā*), bdelium (*guggulu*), yogurt, body ointment and eye-salve, looks at his face in a mirror (Gonda 1980: 151).

AVPŚ 35.2.3cd–4ab says in the description of the *āsurīkalpa* that the eye-salve together with *tagara* (*Tabernaemontana coronaria* WILLD.), *kuṣṭha* (*Saussurea lappa* C.B. CLARKE), a stalk of black pepper (*āsurī*), and *māṃsī* (*Nardostachys jatamansi* DC.) brings good luck (*saubhāgya*) for all (Gonda 1980: 151). According to *Sāmavidhāna* 2.6.2 [p. 130, 19–20] he who applies eye-salve chanting two *sāman*s based on SV 1.449 becomes very fortunate (*subhaga*).

It is interesting to note that the Kauṭalya's *Arthaśāstra*, a treatise on ancient Indian politics, contains in chapter 14 (*aupaniṣadika* or related to the Upaniṣads), many magical procedures for the sake of the king. Several of them use eye-salve. *Arthaśāstra* 14.3.1–2 and 3 teach how to prepare a magic eye-salve for seeing at night and in darkness. The eye-salve described in *Arthaśāstra* 14.1.15 makes the enemy blind and pollutes water. When one applies the eye-salve prepared according to *Arthaśāstra* 14.3.6–7 and 11, one becomes invisible. The same effect is assigned to eye-salve in *Garuḍapurāṇa* 178.9 (Goudriaan 1978: 318) and *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* 55 [p. 690, 18–20].

A miraculous *añjana*, by which one sees all the Buddhas, is mentioned in *Amoghapāśakalparāja* folio 20r5 and according to *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* 55 [p. 690, 17–18] eye-

32 For the passages, see Einoo (1988: 264 n. 1414 and n. 1415).

salve accompanied by incantations is applied to the eyes of one who can defend himself successfully in a lawsuit. *Vīṇāśikhatantra* 279–281 teaches how to prepare *añjana* that makes one attractive and beautiful like Kāmadeva. When one uses the eye-salve as taught in *Indrajālavidyāsaṃgraha* (p. 27, 9) one becomes dear to all (Goudriaan 1978: 317).

The most numerous cases involving the use of eye-salve are associated with the magical action of subjugation. AVPŚ 35.2.2cd–3ab, another case from the *āsurīkalpa*, prescribes that whoever is seen by him who anoints his eyes with eye-salve made of *nāgakeśara* (*Mesua ferrea* L.) becomes his servant (Gonda 1980: 151 and Goudriaan 1978: 317). *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* 48 [p. 538, 17–18] also teaches the same effect (Goudriaan 1978: 318). Goudriaan makes mention of five further cases of the subjugation (Goudriaan 1978: 317–8).

There is a special kind of magic act called *añjanasādhana* or "mastery over supernatural ointments" and Goudriaan mentions one such act from the *Siddhikhaṇḍa* of Pārvatīputra Nityanātha and another in the *Siddhanāgārjunakakṣapuṭa* (Goudriaan 1978: 262, 263).

Amoghapāśakalparāja folios 54v7–55r2 [pp. 41, 22–42, 12] and 55r2–55v2 [pp. 42, 12–43, 25] teaches two *añjanasādhana*s. The *Hemasādhanapaṭala* in *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* 55 sets out the same *sādhana* in different places (p. 706, 5–13 and p. 716, 23–28).

It is likely that further investigation of Hindu and Buddhist tantric texts will reveal still more examples of the magical uses of eye-salve.

Concluding remarks

In the *Yajurveda* Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Śrautasūtras, and Gṛhyasūtras the word denoting eye-salve is generally *āñjana* and the act of eye-salving is expressed by the word *ā-añj*. In ṚV 10.85.7b *abhyañjana* is used to denote eye-salve.[33] In KS 23.1 [p. 73, 8–9] the word *añjanagiri* "a mountain of the eye-salve" is used. The word *añjana* in ŚāṅkhŚS 4.16.6 clearly means eye-salve. The simple verb *añj-* also expresses the act of eye-salving in several Gṛhyasūtras.[34] In post-Vedic texts, the frequency of the use of *añjana* and *añj-* seems to increase.

The *Atharvaveda* has three hymns dedicated to *āñjana*, namely AV 4.9, AV 19.44, and AV 19.45 but there *āñjana* does not always means "eye-salve". *Āñjana* is used variously as AV 19.45.5ab shows:

> AV 19.45.5ab *áṅkṣvaíkaṃ maṇím ékaṃ kṛṇuṣva snáhy ékena píbaíkam eṣām*
> "Apply one to the eyes; make one an amulet; bathe with one; drink one of them."

The expressions such as AV 4.9.5d *yás tvā bíbharty āñjana* "one who bears you, O *āñjana*," and AV 19.45.4a *cáturvīraṃ badhyata áñjanaṃ te* "The *āñjana* which is con-

33 For the use of this verse, see above p. 79.
34 KauśS 51.11, JaimGS 1.19 [p. 17, 19–20], PārGS 2.6.27, and PārGS 2.14.17.

nected with four heroes is bound to you" suggest that *āñjana* is being used as a *maṇi* or an amulet. Indeed, Maurice Bloomfield mentions *āñjana* among the amulets (Bloomfield 1978: 64).

According to these three hymns in the *Atharvaveda*, *āñjana* is firstly an effective protection; our protection (AV 4.9.10d) or my protection (AV 19.44.6b) is requested; this is a protection (*paripāṇa*) of men, cows, and horses (AV 4.9.2); the objects from which one wishes to be protected are various evil things such as sorcery (*yātu*) (AV 4.9.3b, 9c), sorceresses (*yātudhānī*) (AV 4.9.9d), curses, witchcraft, scorching (AV 4.9.5ab), witchcraft and the evil eye (AV 19.45.1bc), bad dreams (AV 19.45.2a), spells, bad dreams, evil deed, pollution, evil eye (AV 4.9.6); evil beings such as Nirṛti (Destruction) (AV 19.44.4cd), Grāhi (Possesser) (AV 19.45.5d), and Rakṣas (AV 19.44.7b) can be driven away by *āñjana*. *Āñjana* is conceived to be a good remedy: it is called all-healing (*viśvabheṣajam*) (AV 19.44.1b) and diseases such as *yakṣman* and others are named which can be cured by *āñjana* (AV 4.9.3d, 4c; 19.44.2, 7bc). Thus *āñjana* is used for the living (AV 4.9.1d) and for enjoyment (AV 19.44.10d), it is gratification of the living (AV 4.9.3c), an extender of life (AV 19.44.1a), and the rescuer of life-breath and life (AV 19.44.4ab). It even protects men from untruth (AV 19.44.8–9).

In the initiatory rites such as the *dīkṣā* and the *samāvartana* the function of *āñjana* is limited to eye-salving, but the protective and curing effects are still unmistakable and this can also be said about its uses in other domestic rites. But in the post-Vedic texts, especially in tantric texts, the eye-salve is considered to achieve various other effects, some of which are indeed supernatural.

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Kathleen Gögge

Early Childhood Rituals among the Newars and Parbatiyās in the Kathmandu Valley

1 Introduction

This study is concerned with the early childhood rituals currently performed by the Newars and Parbatiyās in the Kathmandu Valley. Childhood rituals of the Newars have been dealt with in a monographic study by Gutschow & Michaels (2008) and as part of more comprehensive publications by for instance Nepali (1965), Greenwold (1974), Toffin (1984), Löwdin (1985), Pradhan (1986), Lienhard (1986 and 1999), Gellner (1992), and Ishii (1995). Bennett (1976 and 1978) studied the life-cycle rituals of the Brahman-Chetri community in Narikot.

The study of life-cycle rituals is strongly influenced by the pioneering work of Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner, who have introduced the key terms for the discussion of rituals: "rites de passage", "rites de séparation", "rites de marge", "rites de agrégation" or "liminality"; further "communitas", "social drama", and "anti-structure". Van Gennep (1909) argues that all "rites de passage", which for him include life-cycle rituals and calendrical rituals, follow the scheme of separation or pre-liminal rites, rites of transition or liminal rites, and rites of reintegration or post-liminal rites. Turner understands "liminality" as those parts of rituals that are not everyday but instead are reversible, paradoxical, playful and sometimes absurd. He especially relates this to life-cycle rituals. Rituals that fall in those categories have mostly been understood either as hierophanic events, or as events which help to overcome life crises, or to strengthen the solidarity of a social group, or to build up identity and personhood.

Gutschow & Michaels (2005: 6–7; 2008: 7–8) have developed a more complex theory of ritual acts, which concentrates on polyvalent and polythetic aspects and the specific components of rituals. They suggest that "ritual acts are mostly 1) formal, stereotypical, and repetitive (therefore imitable); 2) public; and 3) irrevocable; in many cases they are also 4) liminal. So they may not be spontaneous, private, revocable, singular or optional for everyone. Ritual acts are not deliberately rational; they cannot simply be revised to achieve a better or more economical goal. Therefore, formalism constitutes a central criterion in most definitions of ritual" (Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 7). Further "rituals are not limited to just one meaning or purpose, such as auspiciousness. They are complex events in which actions and words are constantly adapted to situations, needs, ritual specialists and other persons involved" (ibid.: 8).

The number of the *saṃskāra*s, the life-cycle rituals laid down in the Sūtras range from the eleven mentioned in the *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra* up to more than forty in the

Dharmasūtras.[1] Out of these *saṃskāra*s sixteen are the classical *saṃskāra*s although the enumeration differs in the ritual manuals (*paddhati*s). These are: *garbhādhāna* (conception), *puṃsavana* (encouraging the birth of a male child), *sīmantonnaya* (hair parting), *jātakarman* (birth rituals), *nāmakaraṇa* (name-giving), *niṣkramaṇa* (the first outing), *annaprāśana* (first feeding of solid food), *cūḍākaraṇa* (tonsure), *karṇavedha* (piercing the ears), *vidyārambha* (learning the alphabet), *upanayana* (initiation), *vedārambha* (commencement of Vedic studies), *keśānta* (shaving the beard), *samāvartana* (end of studentship), *vivāha* (marriage), and *antyeṣṭi* (death ritual).

One point in common is a list of "Ten Rites" (Skt. *daśakriyāḥ* or *daśakarman*). The (so far) oldest dated source in Nepal dealing with this subject is the *Daśakarmapaddhati*, written in A.D. 1176 in Newari (NGMPP B 36/1). A modern list of the *daśakarman* performed by the Newars counts: 1) *jātakarman* (birth rituals), 2) *nābhicchedana* (severing the umbilical cord), 3) *chaithī* (the sixth day ritual), 4) *āśauca* (impurity, especially the period of mourning), 5) *nāmakaraṇa* (name-giving), 6) *annaprāśana* (first feeding of solid food), 7) *cūḍākaraṇa* (tonsure), 8) *vratabandha* (initiation), 9) *bibāha* (marriage), and 10) *antyeṣṭi* (death ritual).[2] Rites 1–8 of this list are performed during the childhood of a male person. Actually, during the performances the Newar priests mostly use handwritten ritual manuals that are passed down in the family. For the performance of rituals, Hindu Newars engage Rājopādhyāya Brahmins and Buddhist Newars Vajrācāryas. Gellner points out: "Each caste, and indeed each local clan, has its own traditional ways of performing these rites. Ordinary Newars, particular Maharjans, carry out birth purification themselves, without calling a priest. Śākyas and Vajrācāryas call a priest only for the first rice-feeding of the first child: subsequent children receive their first rice not from the priest, but from the Maharjan midwife (*didi aji*)" (1992: 200). The Parbatiyā Brahmins mostly use ritual manuals published in India.

The aim of my paper is to give a more detailed account of the ritual acts performed during the period from the birth of a child up to *nāmakaraṇa*, the name-giving ceremony. For Newars these are above all the affinal gift-exchange and the rituals connected with it, *macābu byēkegu* (the birth purification), *chaiṭhī* (the sixth day ritual), and *nā̃ chuyegu* (name-giving). The rituals of the Parbatiyās I shall deal with here are *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* (the sixth day worship) and *nāmakaraṇa* (name-giving). In the case of the Newars, only the rituals of the Hindu Newars will be taken into consideration. This paper is a supplement to studies done by Gutschow & Michaels (2005 and 2008), von Rospatt (2005a and 2005b), and Zotter (2009).

Three methods have been used to obtain data for the paper: 1) participant observation, 2) interviews, and 3) studies of the relevant ritual manuals and secondary literature. The fieldwork was done in August/September 2008. The author has taken all the pictures in the paper. When not otherwise mentioned, all terms are given in Newari (New.) as spoken by the farmers (Jyāpus) of Bhaktapur.

1 See Pandey (1969: 17–23) and Kane (1968ff.: II, 189–201).

2 Prepared and published by Jośī Samāj (Jośi Society) 2000.

2 Impurity through birth

The Hindu concept of pollution is based on two kinds of impurity: Firstly, impurity that is collective and permanent, and secondly, impurity that occurs temporarily and personally. Although the first kind of impurity is closely connected to a caste, caste group or caste category, the second kind (which will be the concern in this article) is independent of caste status and results from certain actions and events during the life of an individual. These can be events such as birth, death, menstruation, and a girl's menarche seclusion. Besides that, temporary and personal impurity can be caused by contact with substances that are regarded as contaminating, e.g., bodily excretions like faeces, urine, saliva, blood, fat, marrow, nails (clippings), mucus, sweat, semen, and menstrual blood (cf. Kane 1968ff.: IV, 311–6). In the context of life-cycle rituals there are three *saṃskāra*s that cause temporary and personal impurity: birth, death, and menarche seclusion. In the following, I will show the effects of impurity caused through birth, and the steps to avoid and remove this impurity.

2.1 Impurity through birth among the Newars

The general term used for impurity in Newari is *cipã*, for impurity through birth *jayabili* or *jebeli*. Not only the individuals immediately involved in the event of birth, death and menarche seclusion are contaminated for a number of days, but also those around them in their environment (i.e. relatives). The impurity in these cases affects the relatives automatically—even without any physical contact to the mother, the newborn, or the girl in seclusion or, in the case of death, the corpse. Impurity can also be transferred from a person already affected by it to outsiders by physical contact or acceptance of food such as cooked rice and water (cf. Höfer 2004: 61).

The period of impurity is a liminal one that begins with the occurrence of the event or action causing impurity and ends as soon as the purificatory rituals have been performed. During this time of impurity, those immediately affected—in the case of birth pollution mother and child—as well as the members of the child's patrilineage have to remain separated from the rest of society. They are obliged to follow restrictions to avoid any transfer of the impurity. Thus they avoid any contact with outsiders, and do not perform or participate in any pure or auspicious rituals such as initiation, marriage, religious vow taking (Skt. *vrata*), festivals, or *durgāpūjā*. During the impure time, they may not enter temples, monasteries or any other sanctuary. The contacts to benevolent cosmic deities (such as Viṣṇu, Śiva or Gaṇeśa) have to be minimized, while at the same time the worship of ambiguous or malevolent deities like Chvāsaḥ Ajimā, the grandmother goddess of the crossroads, is increased (see Pradhan 1986: 67).

At the end of a period of impurity, purificatory rituals are performed. These rituals are of two kinds: mechanical procedures such as removing dirt from surfaces (e.g., ritual cleansing of the house) and the purifying of a person by taking a ritual bath, cutting their toenails and painting the toe tips, wearing freshly washed clothes, tonsure, sexual

abstinence, fasting, and the avoidance of any contact with persons, substances or objects in an impure state. To what extent these steps are performed depends on the status of the person, the kind of impurity, and the status of purity that will be obtained, e.g. to restore ordinary purity by removing impurity or to remove ordinary purity to become ritually pure for a ritual performance. The formalized purificatory rituals for the body are called in New. *byẽkegu*, literally "to cause to become untied", which means to become freed (from impurity). For the purification of objects or places the ordinary term *saphā yagu*, literally "to clean or to arrange neatly" is used. With the performance of the purificatory rituals a person is freed from impurity—which means from the restrictions imposed on him or her during the liminal period—and reincorporated into society.

The impurity caused through birth starts for the mother as soon as labour sets in and for the child at the moment of birth. Their impurity lasts until the twenty-first day if the child is male, and for one month if the child is female. The effects of this impurity for the mother are partial separation from the family (especially from male relatives), and a prohibition on entering the kitchen[3] and touching food and water that may be consumed by the relatives.[4] The severing of the umbilical cord (*pī dhenegu*) marks the beginning of the impure time for the child's father's patrilineage (*phukī*). Married daughters and father's married sister(s) are not contaminated by this impurity because they belong to the *phukī* of their respective husband. In older times, a woman of the butcher caste (Kaṭaḥ) usually severed the umbilical cord some days after the delivery and disposed of the placenta either on a *chvāsaḥ* stone or at a crossroads if there was no *chvāsaḥ* stone nearby.[5] Nowadays many butcher women refuse to conduct this highly impure act. The impure time for the *phukī* lasts till the performance of the purificatory rituals on *macābu byẽkegu*, which is done between the sixth and the tenth day after birth. For the close relatives, such as the child's father, grandparents, and father's brothers and unmarried sisters the impure time ends on the twelfth day when, in the higher castes, the name-giving ritual (Skt. *nāmakaraṇa*, New. *nā̃ chuyegu*) is conducted.

The Rājopādhyāyas (a wholly endogamous caste who act as the domestic priests of high-caste Hindu Newars and temple priests) and partly the Chatharīyas and Pāñcharīyas (families of high status who traditionally work as courtiers, merchants, and assistant priests) perform a particular ritual to avoid impurity through birth—a form of

3 The reason for this prohibition is that the fireplace in the kitchen is considered to be sacred and thus has to be protected from impurity. This segregation also includes menstruating women.

4 For the relatives the impure period ends on *macābu byẽkegu*, usually performed between the fourth and tenth day after birth.

5 A *chvāsaḥ* is a spot marked by an uncarved stone usually buried partly in the ground, although in some places it is located below the surface. The *chvāsaḥ* protects a defined area around it and can be found at major crossroads inside Newar settlements. It is considered to be a divinity itself or a seat for a deity, or often regarded as a female mother or grandmother deity (Aji, Ajimā), which is often called Chvāsaḥ Ajimā. It is also believed that the ancestors (Skt. *pitṛ*) and ghosts (Skt. *piśāca*) reside there (see Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 426). Since umbilical cords are also disposed of at these spots, the *chvāsaḥ* is connected to early childhood and often identified with Hārītī, the Buddhist goddess of smallpox. Cf. Gellner (1992: 81) for Patan.

ancestor worship (Skt. *vṛddhiśrāddha,* also called *nāndīmukhaśrāddha*).[6] After this ritual, the *phukī* members are in a ritually pure state for the next six days. Since these castes are involved in the role of priests, assistant priests, and astrologers in various ritual performances, such as private rituals, temple rituals and during the innumerable festivals, the avoidance of impurity is necessary for the maintenance of religious life of Newar society. According to the information of Kedarnath Rajopadhyaya of the Ipāchẽ Rājopādhyāya clan in Bhaktapur, the procedure is as follows: Before the umbilical cord is severed, which in former times was done between the second and the sixth day (nowadays shortly after delivery), all *phukī* members have to be informed about the birth of the child in order to perform the *nandīmukhaśrāddha* in good time. The agents of this ritual distribute water to all *phukī* members who need to stay in a pure state. By accepting the water, they will not be contaminated by the impurity. Afterwards, they have to leave their houses and stay in a different locality. In older days, a *sataḥ*, a religious building used for shelter or a feast was employed for the purpose. If someone decides to stay away from home during this time, he may accept neither food nor water from his house, and not have any physical contact with members of his *phukī* who are in an impure state, otherwise the impurity would be transferred to him.

2.2 Impurity through birth among the Parbatiyās

In contrast to the Newars, the Parbatiyā husband and his relatives are not contaminated by the impurity through birth, which is called in Nepali *sūtak* (Skt. *sūtaka* or *jananāśauca*). No restrictions are placed on them regarding physical contact with outsiders or food. But, after the umbilical cord is severed, they may not worship benevolent cosmic deities—neither at home nor in temples—until *nāmakaraṇa*, the naming ceremony of the child is performed, which is usually done on the eleventh day after birth. Furthermore, they may not perform or participate in any auspicious rituals such as marriage, initiation or festivals. According to the sources of Classical Hindu law, a woman becomes touchable ten days after delivery. However, she may not participate in religious performances for thirty days after giving birth to a son and for forty days for a daughter. If a woman delivers her child at her husband's house, her father and brother(s) are not contaminated by the impurity, but if she delivers in her father's or brother's house, then her parents and all of her brothers living in this house become impure for one day (see Kane 1968ff.: IV, 275–6). The *Mulukī Ain*, the legal code of Nepal from 1854 states that after a delivery, not only is the mother impure, but also the child's father, the father's brother, and also classificatory brothers together with their wives, sons and unmarried daughters. For them the period of impurity lasts ten days if the woman in confinement is of the same caste as theirs, and for three days if she is of a lower caste or has undergone a decline in her feminine status (Höfer 2004: 62). During the impure time the woman is free from impurity for two short periods: Firstly, between delivery

6 I have no information as to whether a similar ritual is performed among the Parbatiyās.

and the severing of the umbilical cord, and secondly, on the sixth day after delivery on *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā,* because in both periods physical contact with the mother cannot be avoided (ibid.).

Due to the highly polluting character of birth, men are strictly excluded from the delivery site. Furthermore, children and all those women who have not yet delivered are excluded, too. It is said that if the latter group is present at the delivery site, it will make the woman's labour longer and more painful (Bennett 1976: 24). When delivery takes place at home, as soon as the labour starts particular high caste Hindus send women either into a separate delivery room in the house, or to a hut near the house. During the impure period, a woman is untouchable for all, especially men. Only the female members of her husband's family and the midwife can touch her so as to help and massage her. However, after having touched the birthing mother, these women have to wash their body and hair and put on freshly laundered clothes before eating and touching a man (ibid.: 29). I doubt that all these points are nowadays followed so strictly, especially in urban centres where a family often lives together in one or two rooms. According to Bennett, the child is not considered to be contaminated by impurity and can be touched by men. But the mother may not hand over the child directly. She has to place it first on the neutralizing earth or on a floor that has been purified with cow dung (ibid.). I suppose that nowadays this is only done by orthodox families and in rural areas. When a woman gives birth in a hospital, some members of the husband's family and often the husband himself take care of her—at least during visiting hours—after she has left the delivery room. The family members take the child directly from the mother's hands.

When at the end of the time of impurity, the woman leaves the delivery room or the hut, she has to perform certain rituals to remove the impurity. These rituals include cleaning the house and especially the delivery room or the hut using a coat of clay and/or cow dung on the floor, washing all the clothes and bedding the mother came in contact with, and washing the mother.

3 Affinal gift-exchange before and after a childbirth among the Newars

The affinal relations between a wife's natal home and her conjugal home are often close.[7] According to Löwdin, "the stream of gifts between the two households should preferably be to the advantage of the husband's household" (1998: 109). The occasions on which gifts are sent are life-cycle and certain calendrical rituals. In the following section, I will concentrate on the gifts sent between a wife's natal and conjugal home shortly before and after the birth of a child. However, this can only be a general description because the gifts differ according to locality and caste.

7 See Toffin (1984: 165–7 and 413–8) for the relations between affines in Pyangaon and Panauti; Löwdin (1998: 98–123) for affinal relations in Sunakothi; Quigley (1984: 261–2) for Dhulikhel; and Ishii (1995: 127–37).

3.1 The ritual of feeding yoghurt and beaten rice – *dhaubaji nākegu*

Especially during the first years of marriage, a wife frequently visits her natal home, and spends even more time there after the birth of her first child. However, her natal relatives usually do not visit her in her conjugal home during the period between her wedding and an advanced stage of her first pregnancy. A few weeks before the expected date of the delivery, usually in the eighth or ninth month of pregnancy, the ritual of *dhaubaji nākegu* ("feeding yoghurt and beaten rice"), alternatively called *dhaubaji nakaḥ vanegu* ("going to feed yoghurt and beaten rice") is performed. For that, female relatives of the pregnant woman's natal home—such as her mother, her sister(s) and her brother's wife—come to visit her. They bring nourishing food to feed her including yoghurt (*dhau*), beaten rice (*baji*), eggs (*khẽ*), fruits (*sisā busā*), *mār* (a kind of sweetmeat), *yaḥmāri* (cone shaped sweets made of rice flour filled with molasses [*cāku*] and black sesame seed [*hāku hāmo*], which are offered on birthdays and during full moon in November), liquor (*ailā*), and different kinds of meat such as buffalo meat (*mey/mesyāgu lā*), goat (*khasiyāgu lā*) or nowadays especially among the Jyāpus (the agricultural caste) chicken (*khāyāgu lā*). Among the Śreṣṭhas (who are divided into two sub-castes, Chathariyā and Pāñctharīya)[8], the pregnant woman goes to her natal home and is fed there (Ishii 1995: 130). In older days it was the custom among the high castes (Rājopādhyāya, Chatharīya and Pāñctharīya—former ritual specialists, courtiers and merchants) to send expensive goat meat (*khasiyāgu lā*) for the occasion. In addition, the natal relatives bring a red cloth and a piece of fabric for the expectant mother and a piece of fabric for the son-in-law. The natal relatives then feed the pregnant woman with the food they have brought. The Newars believe that by feeding a pregnant woman with nourishing food sent from her natal home, the delivery will be easier, faster and less painful. It was believed in older times that without this meal the child, who expects to be fed before being born, would refuse to be born or become a glutton (see Nepali 1965: 88).

After feeding the pregnant woman, her mother will perform the *svagã* ritual, a ritual expressing a wish for auspiciousness.[9] The *svagã* ritual on *dhaubaji nākegu* consists of two steps: first, the *dhau* (yoghurt) *svagã* is performed, and then *khẽ* (egg) *svagã*.

For the *dhau svagã* ritual, the mother of the pregnant woman takes a seat opposite her daughter facing east. The *sukũda*, the ritual lamp pot that represents the god Gaṇeśa is placed to the daughter's left. Nowadays it is usual for the son-in-law to also join this ritual. He sits next to his wife on the floor. The mother gives a ritual plate (*pūjā bhaḥ*) to her daughter and son-in-law, who each touch the plate with their right hand. The plate contains yoghurt (*dhau*), beaten rice (*jāki*), deep red powder (*abīr*), flowers (pre-

8 See Quigley (1995: 80–108).

9 *"svagã"* is the name given to a ritual for someone who is undergoing a major juncture in his or her life, as for instance an auspicious life-cycle ritual, regardless of whether it is associated with pure or impure events, a long journey, birthdays, a marriage etc. This ritual consists of a ceremonial meal of one hard-boiled egg, a small dried roasted fish and liquor; see Lienhard (1986: 7); Pradhan (1986: 70).

ferably red) and fruit (*sisā busā*). The mother mixes the yoghurt, beaten rice, vermilion, and petals and puts some of this mixture three times on the floor in front of her daughter and her son-in-law. Then all three of them offer a small portion of the mixture to Gaṇeśa by putting it on the *sukũda*, an oil lamp with a receptacle for storing oil and adorned with an image that represents the gods Agni, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa or Śiva and Śakti. After that, the mother throws a portion of the mixture up to the ceiling to worship the goddess Gṛhalakṣmī. She then takes some more of the mixture with her right hand, applies it as *tikā*, a mark on the forehead worn as a sign of having done *pūjā,* to the foreheads of her daughter and son-in-law, and puts vermilion and petals on their heads.

This is followed by the *khẽ svagã* ritual. On offering *khẽ svagã* at the end of a ritual, a person is freed from all restrictions imposed on him or her, especially those regarding food. For that the mother takes a plate with an egg (*khẽ*), a small dried roasted fish (*sukhunyā*), meat (*lā*), and a small cup of liquor (*ailā*). If dried fish is not available on the market, ginger (*pālu*) can be used as a substitute. Among the Rājopādhyāyas milk (*duru*) is used instead of liquor. The daughter and son-in-law touch the plate with their right hands. Then the mother distributes the goods on the plate to all the family members attending the ritual.

The *dhaubaji nākegu* ritual marks an important change in the relationship between a wife's natal and her conjugal home. On this occasion, gifts from the wife-giving side to the wife-taking side are sent for the first time after the wife's wedding. Not until the *svagã* ritual has been performed on the day of *dhaubaji nākegu* during a woman's first pregnancy will her natal relatives accept food and water in her conjugal home. This rule is compulsory for the high caste Rājopādhyāyas and mostly in operation among the Chatharīyas and Pāñctharīyas. Jyāpus and castes below them seem only partly to follow this rule; they often accept food and water after the wedding of their daughter in the in-law's house. Nevertheless, the younger sibilants of a married woman are usually permitted to eat and drink there before the *dhaubaji nākegu* ritual is performed. On that day the son-in-law's relatives have to prepare an elaborate meal for the guests from the woman's natal home. Most of my informants were of the opinion that there is no reason to cultivate any food or exchange relations to their son-in-laws house before the daughter is in an advanced stage of her first pregnancy.

3.2 The announcement of childbirth

On the day of the birth, *macābu kanke chvayegu* ("sending [a messenger] to announce the childbirth") takes place. In former times, in case of a home delivery it was usually done before the umbilical cord was severed, but at the latest before *macābu byẽkegu*, the birth purification ritual. According to the information of women who had just given birth and their relatives, who were interviewed at Thapathali Maternal Hospital in August/September 2008, the procedure for announcing a childbirth is as follows: The mother's conjugal relatives send a messenger to her natal relatives to inform them about

the childbirth. This job is done by Jyāpus (agricultural caste) or Duĩs[10] (farmers and manufacturers of grain products) whose caste role includes acting as messengers, bearers, and attendants in life-cycle rituals, feasts, and festivals.[11] Nowadays, a woman from the mother's conjugal home often informs the natal home about the birth. The messenger brings a basket or a small packet filled with the following items: areca nut (*gvẽ*), a slab of molasses (*cāku*), ginger (*pālu*), vermilion (*sinhaḥ*), celery seeds (*īmu*), clove (*lavã*), and a coin. The content of the basket or packet reveals the sex of the child. According to my information, two practices are common: If the child is a boy the molasses are shaped into a round ball and the areca nut is unbroken. For a girl the molasses will be formed into a flat cake and halved. Alternatively, an areca nut is halved. If the child is a boy one half of the areca nut is put with the conical side up in a small bowl filled with some unbroken rice, if it is a girl then the cut side of the areca nut faces up. The symbolism behind both methods is the same: the roundness of the slab of molasses and the conical side of the areca nut represent testicles; the flatness of the flat cake and the cut side of the areca nut represent the vagina. The information about the sex of the child is important for the mother's natal relatives because the number of items that have to be sent on *macābu byẽkegu* depends on it. On the same day, the mother's natal relatives have to return the same kind of items, but twice the amount.

3.3 Visits from and to the mother's natal home

One or two days after birth, *ghyaḥle siyā baji nakaḥ vanegu* ("going to feed beaten rice parched in clarified butter"), alternatively called *cāku baji nakaḥ vanegu* ("to go to feed molasses and beaten rice") takes place. For that, the mother's mother and other women of her natal home visit her and feed her with parched beaten rice, molasses, clarified butter, and celery seeds. According to my informants, this visit is not obligatory, but it is still usually performed. Around one week after *macābu byẽkegu*, which will be dealt in greater detail later, the mother's mother visits her daughter and feeds her meat, beaten rice, beans, bread, and liquor. This visit is called *lā nakaḥ vanegu* ("going go to feed meat"). She visits her daughter again between the fifteenth and twentieth day after birth to feed her molasses, clarified butter, beans, vegetables, etc. on the occasion of *cāku nakaḥ vanegu* ("going to feed molasses"). Those visits should on the one hand ensure that the daughter receives nourishing food, and on the other hand provides psychological support. The mother in her weak condition after delivery is frequently surrounded and taken care of by the persons she loves and grew up with. Around one month after the birth of a child, the mother goes with her child to her natal home where she stays for at least one month, which is called *macābu lahĩ yanegu* ("taking out the child"). In her parents' home the mother is taken care of. She can rest, does not have to do any hard work, and is given nutritious foods. Traditionally, her husband may not

10 This caste is extinct in Bhaktapur. Nowadays, the announcement of a childbirth is done by Jyāpus.
11 For Jyāpus as tenants and ritual specialists see Gellner & Pradhan (1995: 169–74).

visit her there but nowadays this rule is rather lax. However, on one occasion her mother-in-law will come to visit her and bring her food such as meat, clarified butter, beaten rice, pulse, vegetables, sweets, liquor, and rice beer. Additionally, she brings a special sweet called *pvastigã*, which is made of molasses and milk and is regarded as very tasty and fattening.[12] The purpose of this visit might be to show that the mother's paternal relatives also take care of her, and of course to find out about the mother and child's health.

4 The purificatory rituals after childbirth among the Newars – *macābu byẽkegu*

The time of impurity after a childbirth is brought to an end for the patrilineage of the child's father (*phukī*) by a ceremony called *macābu byẽkegu* (literally "becoming free of the impurity through birth" (*macā* – child; *bu* [from *buye*] – to give birth) which has to be performed. There is no common agreement about the specific day for performing *macābu byẽkegu*. The ceremony takes place between the fourth and the twelfth day after the birth of a child. Generally it is said that for a son it should be held between the tenth and the twelfth day, and for a daughter on the fourth, sixth or twelfth day. According to Nepali (1965: 92), the ceremony is performed for the first child on the sixth day and for subsequent children on the fourth day.[13] All of my informants agreed in that the day of *macābu byẽkegu* should have an even number (counted from the day of delivery). Mostly, the day of this ceremony depends on family tradition rather than on caste. In individual cases *macābu byẽkegu* is performed as early as possible if the *phukī* has religious obligations that demand they have to be in a ritually pure state. It is tradition in some families that an astrologer (Jośi) fixes the time for this ritual. A woman of the family—usually one of the father's sisters (*nini*)—visits the astrologer to inform him about the date and exact time of the child's birth. He will at least prepare a provisional horoscope for the child.

The performance of *macābu byẽkegu* does not follow any standard pattern, neither in its course nor in the day it is held or in the ritual agents who attend it. *Macābu byẽkegu* seems rather to be performed according to the respective family traditions and the current circumstances. During my fieldwork, I observed four different *macābu byẽkegu* ceremonies and took many interviews. Despite the divergences in the manner of performance, the following seem to be essential features of *macābu byẽkegu*:

In the early morning, the preparatory rituals such as ritually cleaning the house and purifying the *phukī* members by taking a bath, paring and colouring the toe-nails, dressing in clean clothes, burning the straw, and bathing and massaging the child with oil are all performed. Later that morning, the mother's natal home sends gifts, at least for the first-born child. Several *pūjā*s are performed during the course of which mother and

12 As Löwdin (1989: 112) recorded for Sunakothi (near Kirtipur) in the years 1982–83.

13 Nepali concentrated his study on Kathmandu and Panga.

child are ritually purified. Then the child's father announces his paternity. Afterwards, the senior-most woman of the household (*nakhĩ*) distributes *dhau svagã* to all the participants at the ceremony. My informants agreed that during *macābu byẽkegu,* at least the following persons should be present: The baby, the mother (if she had died during or after the delivery, a women of the household who takes the mother's place), the performer of the *pūjā* who can be a priest, the senior-most woman of the household (*nakhĩ*), the midwife ([*didi*] *aji*) or somebody who acts for her, and ideally the child's father.

4.1 *Macābu byẽkegu* in Bhaktapur and Kathmandu

Because of the variety of ways that *macābu byẽkegu* may be performed, a general description of this ritual seems impossible. Therefore, I will describe a *macābu byẽkegu* ceremony I observed that was held on the 20th August 2008 in Kamal Vinayak, a quarter in the outskirts of Bhaktapur. I have chosen this ceremony for two reasons: Firstly, it was performed for the first-born son who is also the first child of the parents, and secondly, it provides a vivid example of the ceremony's flexibility and adaptability to the family's circumstances and of the ritual agents who perform this particular ceremony. The family belongs to the Bakhādyos, a Jyāpu (farmer) sub-caste. The ceremony was held on the tenth day after the delivery of the child. The child was born by caesarean section in the maternity hospital in Thapathali/Kathmandu. Mother and child had been discharged just the day before the ceremony took place. The mother was still weak and uncomfortable during the *macābu byẽkegu* ceremony. As a result, the whole procedure, which started at 7 o'clock in the morning, lasted almost seven hours until 1.45 p.m., for it included several breaks for the mother to rest. As already mentioned, the performance of the *macābu byẽkegu* ceremony differs from family to family. The members of the Bakhādyo household in Kamal Vinayak did not perform certain steps that I have observed in other *macābu byẽkegu* ceremonies. For this reason, I will give these steps as I observed them during a *macābu byẽkegu* ceremony performed by a Jyāpu family on the 6th September 2008 in Baphal, a quarter in the western part of Kathmandu. It was held for the second child, like the first-born a son who was likewise born in the maternity hospital in Thapathali/Kathmandu. I mentioned earlier that the number of the day on which *macābu byẽkegu* is held should be even. In this particular case the ceremony was held on the eleventh day after the child's birth because the *aji* (midwife) who performed parts of the ceremony had been busy the day before, the day the family would have preferred. The ceremony started at 7.45 a.m. and finished at 11.30 a.m.

4.1.1 Preparatory rituals

In the early morning, women of the household in Bhaktapur ritually cleaned the house by spreading a mixture of red soil (*sīcā*) and cow dung (*gobar*) on the floors and stairs. The mother washed all the clothes she had used and come in contact with during the

days after the delivery. The father's sister then washed all the clothes the family members used during the cleaning of the house. The whole family, including mother and child, took a bath in the morning and put on clean clothes. Then the family members had to sprinkle themselves with *pañcagavya*, a mixture consisting of the five purifying products of the cow (cow's urine, cow dung, milk, yoghurt and clarified butter) as part of their ritual purification. Since cow's urine and cow dung are difficult to obtain in cities, the sprinkling of *pañcagavya* was not carried out in either of the ceremonies I observed. The *naunī*, a woman of the barber caste (Nau) arrived, pared the toenails (*lusi dhenegu*) of each member of the household, and coloured their toe-tips red (*alaḥ tayegu*).[14]

Burning the straw

The next step is a left-over from older times when women always delivered their children at home. The delivery took place in a small room, which most of the time had been used as a storeroom. Shortly before the expected delivery, it was cleaned with red soil and cow dung and a bed of straw was prepared for the birthing women. Traditionally, on *macābu byẽkegu* the mother and child left the delivery room for the first time. The bed of straw, which had been used by the mother during this time was taken out of the house and burned. The tradition of the Rājopādhyāyas differs on this point. They do not take out and burn the straw until the twelfth day after delivery when they perform *nāmakaraṇa*, the name-giving ritual. Nowadays, the majority of women in the Kathmandu Valley give birth in maternity hospitals. When they return home from hospital, they use an ordinary bed. Additionally, often a whole family living in a modern house has just one or two rooms, without any possibility of making space for a separate bed. However, after the mother and child return from hospital, some straw is put below the mattress of the bed they use. This can be understood as a symbolical act, which allows, under modern living conditions, a well-defined part of the bed to be prepared for the mother and child during their ritually impure period and to purify this very place on the day of *macābu byẽkegu* by removing the straw and washing the bedding. So, in the course of the ritual purification of the house in the morning the straw is taken outside by a woman of the family (usually one of father's sisters) or by the *aji* in case she already arrived at the house.

The family in Bhaktapur did not call their *aji* on that day because she is already 85 years old and was feeling ill. Instead, they called for a woman from the neighbourhood who does the traditional oil-massage of babies for her livelihood. This is an adaptation to modernity: since almost every woman in Bhaktapur nowadays goes to a maternity hospital for delivery, fewer women than in older days work as an *aji*. Moreover, their payment is low and the younger generation is not attracted to the job, which they con-

14 As in case of other specialists, the Nau women pass on their patrons as a kind of property. As Gellner (1995: 23) points out, a person cannot change the specialist without the risk of alienating for example all the barbers.

Plate 1: *Macābu byẽkegu* in Kamal Vinayak/Bhaktapur 2008: The straw from below the mattress is burned in the courtyard. The mother (middle) purifies herself by waving smoke over her body. The masseuse (left) brings kitchen utensils to be waved and purified in the smoke.

sider to be old fashioned. Media such as TV, newspapers and magazines distort the image of the traditional *aji* and favour trained midwives and nurses. The woman who was called in by the family belongs to the caste of the oil-pressers (Sāymi). Unlike an *aji,* she neither helps during deliveries nor takes part in the ritual performances during *macābu byẽkegu*. She will come twice a day for three months—once in the morning and once in the afternoon—to give the baby an oil massage. The family addresses her as *tamā* (lit. "mother's elder sister"), a title of respect. After she arrives at the family's house early in the morning of *macābu byẽkegu*, she helps the mother to wash and dress. The father's mother takes the straw to an already erected heap of straw at the back of the house and burns it together with some clothes the mother had used during the last few days. The mother comes near and circles the fire in a clockwise direction. She purifies herself by waving smoke with her hands from the fire over her body. The father's mother then brings some kitchen utensils to the fire and waves them up and down in the smoke (see plate 1). These utensils are representative for all the kitchen utensils of the household, which are ritually purified by waving them in the smoke.

Plate 2: *Macābu byẽkegu* in Baphal/Kathmandu 2008: The *aji* stands on the rooftop terrace and shows the sun to the child *(sūrya jo[jala]pegu* or *macāyāta sūrya kenegu*). The saucer in her left hand is filled with a mixture of broken rice, which she throws up into the air to worship the sun.

4.1.2 Showing the sun to the child – macāyāta sūrya kenegu

The members of the household in Bhaktapur did not perform the ritual of showing the sun, so I shall describe the ritual as I saw it in the Jyāpu family in Baphal/Kathmandu. Before the *aji* (midwife) burns the straw she performs a ritual called *macāyāta sūrya kenegu* ("showing the sun to the child"), or alternatively called Skt. *sūryadarśana* (New. *sūrya jo[jala]pegu* – "worshiping the sun") (See Lienhard 1986: 9). According to Lienhard, this ritual was performed in former times in India and Nepal between the third and the fourth month after birth as part of the Hindu life-cycle ritual *niṣkramaṇa* (New. *pājuyā thāy vanegu*), the child's first outing (ibid.: 9–10). However, nowadays *macāyāta sūrya kenegu* and *pājuyā thāy vanegu* are performed on different dates. The child's first outing is performed on an evening between the third and the fourth month. The women of the family (grandmother and/or older sisters) throw rice onto every threshold of the house and draw a line of rice from the house to the *pikhālākhu* (the stone guardian of the house) situated in front of the building. Lienhard assumes that the *niṣkramaṇa* performed by the Newars is actually *candradarśana*, the showing of the moon, which in former times in India was performed after *sūryadarśana*, but is no

longer practised. On *macāyāta sūrya kenegu*, the baby is ritually shown the sun for the first time. In former times and even today in cases of home deliveries, the baby is then taken out of the house for the first time. Nowadays, the babies who are born in a maternity hospital have already been outdoors when they are taken home after being discharged. In these cases, this ritual is more a symbolical act.

The *aji* in Kathmandu takes the child up to the rooftop terrace, holds the baby in her arm and throws a mixture of broken rice (*cvaki*) onto the baby's forehead and then up into the air, which means to the sun (Skt./New. *sūrya*) (see plate 2). This ritual was not performed during the *macābu byẽkegu* ceremony in Bhaktapur because the *aji* was not present and as the *nakhĩ*—the senior-most woman of the household who later during the *pūjā* acted as *aji*—told me after the ceremony, she had simply forgotten to perform it. A short debate arose and the family decided that the baby had already seen the sun on the way from the maternity hospital to the house and therefore no further complications would arise for the child by not performing this ritual.

As can be seen from the description, the preparatory rituals of the two ceremonies were almost the same—with the exception of the ritual of showing the sun to the child. They only varied in their order of performance and in their agents.

4.1.3 The offering of gifts

Having finished their purification over the burning straw, the women of the household in Bhaktapur start to prepare the spot for the subsequent *pūjā*s. The family lives in a traditional Newar house where the kitchen is situated under the roof. In this house, the kitchen was the only room with a floor made of tamped clay. As a result, the front part of the kitchen is used for all the indoor rituals because the floor can be traditionally purified by spreading a mixture of cow dung (*gobar*) and red soil (*sīcā*) on it. Then mats and pillows are put around the *pūjā* spot (*bã̃ thilegu*). If a priest performs the *pūjā*s—as is done at least among the Rājopādhyāya families—he draws diagrams (Nep. *rekhī*) on the floor to serve as seats for the gods, plates and ritual agents. A *cauki*, a square diagram on which later the *sukũda* ("ritual lamp pot") is placed, is drawn in detail to the right of the mother's place, a *svastika* (Skt. "a kind of mark on persons or things denoting good luck") on which the wooden seat (*kupu*) for the mother is placed, and a lotus diagram (New. *palesvã̃*; Skt. *padma*) as seat (Skt. *āsana*) for all the deities.

In the morning hours but before the *pūjā*s start, porters bring gifts (*ku hegu*) from the mother's natal home to her conjugal home. Usually, the mother's mother (*tā mã̃ḥ*), the mother's older or younger sisters (*tari mã̃ḥ* or *ciri mã̃ḥ*) or mother's brother's wives (*maleju*) come on this day to join the *pūja*s. The women of the mother's natal home put the gifts inside the conjugal house on plates and baskets and place them in a ritually cleaned spot. Afterwards, the members of the mother's conjugal home come and check whether the items are complete and in a proper condition. The variety of the gifts differs according to the sex of the baby and whether or not he is the first-born son. For a first-born son, the maternal uncle has to send the head of a buffalo. If the first-born is a girl, only half a buffalo's head is sent. In that case, the maternal uncle has again to send

Plate 3: *Macābu byẽkegu* in Kamal Vinayak/Bhaktapur 2008: On the floor are the gifts that have been sent by the child's mother's brother. On the left side is the buffalo head that is sent for a firstborn son. Behind it are bedding and in the middle foodstuffs and gifts for the child's parents.

items when the next child is a son. If the subsequent children are female or a son has already been born, no further items have to be sent. The items can be divided into those for the child, those for the mother, those for the father, and those for the use of all paternal family members, such as foodstuffs.

On the *macābu byẽkegu* ceremony in Bhaktapur, the mother's mother arrived at 9.40 a.m. For this she took a taxi. Since she came alone it took her a while to arrange all the items on the living room floor. The following items were brought (see plate 3):

- Items for the child: a buffalo head (will be prepared and eaten during the feast by the family), *kãy khvalā* – a small bronze cup, *kãy gilās* – a bronze tumbler, *bhvay jvalaṃ* – a set of dishes, *vātā* – a storage pot made of brass or copper, *khvalā* – a small cup, *tapes* – a bowl-shaped pan with a handle used to heat water for bathing the child, *sābun* – soap, *sukū* – a straw mat, *silaḥ* – a quilt, *phvāgā* – a pillow, *macā kusā* – a sunshade made of three pieces of bamboo reed that is threaded together at one end, set up like a tripod and covered with a piece of cloth, *vaḥ macā aṅgū* – silver rings for the baby (sometimes even golden (*luṃ*) rings are given), *vaḥ macā ajaḥ vaṭṭā* – a small silver box for soot used as eye-liner around the eyes, a white and a yellow cloth called *vaḥ icā* and *luṃ icā* (lit. "silver cloth" and "golden cloth, the term *icā* stands originally for a ragged cloth

used as a diaper or nappy for babies)—these two gifts have a more symbolical character—and finally a baby outfit.
- The gifts for the mother were a length of cloth for clothes. The father received some ready-made clothes such as a pair of jeans, sweaters and a jacket.
- The items for family use consisted of foodstuffs such as *kaygū* – peas, *vaũcā* – green vegetables, *tusi* – cucumber, *ālu* – potatoes, *vã* – unhusked rice, *jāki* – uncooked rice, *baji* – beaten rice, *būbaḥ* – cereals, *gaṃji* – hemp, *cikã* – oil, *gyaḥ* – clarified butter, *dhau* – yoghurt, *mey/mesyāgu lā* – buffalo meat, *khāyāgu lā* – chicken meat, *ailā* – alcohol, and *masalā* – spices.

After the paternal family members had inspected the gifts, the father's sister and his mother tidy them away. They arrange some of the items around the place where later the *pūjā*s would take place. Perishable goods such as meat are taken into the kitchen. Parts of the buffalo and chicken meat are cooked and fried for the *pūjā*.

4.1.4 The pūjās performed on macābu byẽkegu

On *macābu byẽkegu* several *pūjā*s are performed one after another. In detail these are *sukũdapūjā, chvāsāmāīpūjā, sūrya bvaḥ* and *dhau svagã*. Because the *pūjā*s are done according to the respective family tradition, there are large variations in the performances. Additionally, even in the same family this ritual is done every time in a different way, depending on the respective ritual agents.

The pūjās performed in Bhaktapur

The preparations for the *pūjā*s in Bhaktapur start at 11.40 a.m. The father's mother (*tā mãḥ*) and father's sister (*nini*) put the materials used during these *pūjā*s around the already purified *pūjā* spot (*bã thilegu*) in the kitchen. The ritual agents performing in the rituals are the mother's mother, her mother-in-law, and the senior-most woman of her conjugal home who will act instead of an *aji*. The mother sits down on a pillow in front of the *pūjā* spot and puts the baby on her lap. Her mother-in-law takes a seat on the opposite side. The materials that will be used during the ritual are placed on plates on the *pūjā* spot. The mother-in-law starts with the *sukũdapūjā*. She worships the *sukũda*, the ritual lamp pot by applying vermilion powder (*sinha*) mixed with yoghurt to it. Then she wraps a sacred thread (Skt. *yajñopavīta*) around the *sukũda*, throws some unbroken rice (Skt. *akṣata*, New. *kigaḥ*), and puts some petals on it. In a similar way, she puts the yoghurt-vermilion paste, the sacred thread, unbroken rice and petals on a leaf placed on the *pūjā* spot in front of the mother. This leaf represents a seat (Skt. *āsana*) for all gods and goddesses. After this, she mixes a paste with her right hand consisting of water, unbroken rice and vermilion powder, applies it as *tikā* firstly to the child's, then on the mother's and at last to her own forehead, and puts petals on each *tikā*. She lights some wicks on the *sukũda*. While holding the burning wicks with her left hand she touches her own forehead once with her right hand and throws some yoghurt mixed with vermilion and unbroken rice up to the ceiling. This is done to worship the goddess Gṛhalakṣmī, the *iṣṭadevatā* (Skt. "a deity chosen as the personal deity") and the *kuladevatā*

(Skt. "the lineage deity", New. *dugudyaḥ*). Then she takes the burning wicks with her right hand and worships the *sukũda* and the child by circling the burning wicks in a clockwise direction in front of them. The masseuse then takes a bundle of new clothes for mother and child and gives it to the mother.

Then the mother's mother takes a seat opposite the mother. She worships the *sukũda* and the leaf in front of the mother with flowers and coins. She puts an apple on the leaf as a food offering (Skt. *naivedya*) and throws yoghurt mixed with vermilion and unbroken rice up to the ceiling. After this she applies *tikā* paste made of yoghurt, vermilion and unbroken rice to the foreheads of the mother and child and places petals on both of their heads. She gives two plates to the mother: one for the child containing fabrics for baby clothes, baby oil, silver rings (*vaḥ macā aṅgū*), and a small silver box for soot used as eye-liner (*vaḥ macā ajaḥ vaṭṭā*). From now on, the child will wear kajal round its eyes. On the second plate are fabrics for the mother. Now the mother's mother applies a *tikā* to the father's forehead and places petals on his head. He receives a plate with gifts: a jacket, a pair of jeans, sweaters and money. Then she puts some oil on the child's forehead and money (banknotes) on top. The masseuse will collect the money, which is put during the ceremony on the child's forehead. In this way, an *aji* is traditionally paid for her service.

In this family the following rituals are usually done by the *aji*. As she was unable to participate in this ceremony, it was performed by the *nakhĩ*, the senior-most woman of the household, who acted in her place. The *nakhĩ* was the only woman present who knew how to perform the *aji*'s part in the rituals, because, due to her approximately 70 years she had seen the rituals many times. She sits down and starts to prepare twelve portions of food on a tray made from a banana tree for the sun god Sūrya. This food offering is called *sūrya bvaḥ* ("feast for Sūrya"). The twelve portions represent the twelve suns (Āditya) (Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 175).

The *nakhĩ* puts twelve leaves from a *jẽlālapte* tree onto the tray and on each of these a portion of the following items: beaten rice (*baji*), small pancakes made of peas (*kasuva*), fermented spinach (*sĩkẽ*), fried rice (*sabhū*), a paste made of peas mixed with salt, red pepper and cumin (*kāgasāḥ*), ginger (*pālu*), soybeans (*musyā*), pieces of buffalo meat (*mey/mesyāgu lā*), a piece of dried fish (*sãgā*), raw sugar (*cāku*), and *isicā* (spiral ginger).[15] She puts a small amount of each item in a metal bowl as an offering to the ancestors. Having done this she then worships Sūrya—represented by the twelve portions and the *sukũda* lamp pot—with unbroken rice, vermilion, a holy thread, petals, burning wicks and *tikā* paste. The child's father takes the tray, opens the door to the rooftop terrace and dedicates the portions to the sun. He then takes the tray out of the

15 This root is used in two rituals. Firstly, it is offered to women on *macābu byẽkegu* and secondly, after six days and at the end of the girl's seclusion *(bārhā tayegu)* performed after the mock marriage *(ihi)* and before the onset of menstruation. On both occasions, the smashed *isicā* root is mixed with salt, cumin and turmeric, formed into small flat cakes and fried in mustard oil. Cf. Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 175).

Plate 4: *Macābu byẽkegu* in Kamal Vinayak/Bhaktapur 2008: The *aji* worships the deities who are represented by different plates, pots, bowls etc. The mother with the child is sitting in the background.

house and distributes these portions to children calling out: *āgã bvaḥ kā vā masta* ("Children, come and take *āgã* food!").[16] At the same time, the *nakhĩ* carries the metal bowl with the offering for the ancestors to the next crossroads and discards it there on the *chvāsaḥ* stone.

At the end of the *pūjā* the mother again receives presents for the child, this time bedding and a sunshade. The *pūjā* concludes half an hour after noon.

The pūjās performed in Kathmandu

The *pūjā* performed by the family in Baphal/Kathmandu differs in most of the steps. The reason for this comes from differences between the local and the family traditions. Apart from that, here the *aji* functions as one of the main agents in the ceremony. Actually, neither the mother's mother nor the father's mother plays an active part. The per-

16 Here *āgã bvaḥ* stands for food, which is consecrated and dedicated to any deity at the ritual. In other contexts, the term can also stand for the food consecrated and dedicated to *āgãdyaḥ*, the esoteric deity of the clan.

formers are the mother with her child, the *aji*, the father and at the end of the ceremony the *nakhĩ*. The participants all gather together in the living room where the *pūjā* takes place. All the materials and utensils that are used during the rituals have been placed at the *pūjā* spot next to the wall. On the left side of the *pūjā* spot the tray is placed bearing the twelve portions for the sun god Sūrya, and next to that three plates which the *aji* will later take for herself once the ceremony has finished. In the middle of the *pūjā* spot is a plate with offerings for Chvāsaḥ Ajimā and on the right hand side are the *sukũda* lamp pot, some plates, and bowls containing materials used during the ritual. The *aji* sits in front of the *pūjā* spot facing the wall; the mother with the child on her lap sits on the right side of the *aji*. Firstly, the *aji* worships the *sukũda* with *tikā* paste made of vermilion, unbroken rice and yoghurt, a sacred thread and petals. Then she worships in the same manner the plate for Chvāsaḥ Ajimā and then one by one all the other plates. After this, she waves burning wicks in a clockwise direction over all plates, and then she does the same with incense sticks. For *naivedya* she puts yoghurt, a mixture of vermilion, and popped rice (*tãy*) on each plate (see plate 4).

In the next step, the *aji* purifies the mother. For that, the *aji* takes a pot of cow milk and sprinkles this over the mother's body using some pieces of *ḍubo* grass (Skt. *dūrvā*; *Cynodon dactylon* [L.] PERS.). According to this family's tradition, the mother is now sufficiently purified to be able to use the kitchen. However, to worship the gods and enter temples she has to wait until the twenty-second day after birth. The *aji* again worships all the plates and the *sukũda* with burning wicks, incense sticks, petals and the mixture of vermilion, unbroken rice and yoghurt.

Then the *kulī bau pūjā* is performed, a *pūjā* exclusively for Chvāsaḥ Ajimā. The *aji* and the mother worship the goddess with a mixture of broken rice (*cvaki*) and mother's milk. For that, the mother drops milk from her breasts onto the plate with the offerings for Chvāsaḥ Ajimā. Then the *aji* applies a *tikā* to her forehead. After that, she gives first the child and then the mother *tikā* and petals on the forehead and *dhau svagã* on the temple—for the child on the right temple (because he is male) and for the mother on the left.

After that, the *aji* presents the plate with the offerings for Sūrya to the mother and carries it out of the house. She puts one portion on the side of the nearby main road. Because the family lives next to an industrial estate there is neither a *chvāsaḥ* stone nor a crossroads where ritual leftovers can be placed. She distributes the other eleven portions to children.

The participants of the ceremony in Bhaktapur didn't perform the announcement of the child's paternity by putting the child on its father's lap. But the father held the child during the *pūjā*s when he sat next to his wife. During the ceremony in Baphal/Kathmandu the announcement of the paternity was done as follows:

The *aji* now puts a plate with *pūjā* materials (petals, flowers, wicks, incense sticks, vermilion and unbroken rice), a water vase, a *sukũda* and a plate with presents for the child (a small bowl with mustard oil, a piece of cloth, some money and a areca nut) in

Plate 5: *Macābu byẽkegu* in Kamal Vinayak/Bhaktapur 2008: The *aji* puts the child on its father's lap. With this the father publicly announces his paternity of the child. In front of him are a *sukũdā* lamp pot and a bowl containing a small bowl with mustard oil, fabrics, and money, which will be presented to the child.

front of the father on the purified floor. The *aji* first applies a *tikā* to the father's forehead and gives him a flower, and then applies a *tikā* of yoghurt to his right temple. After that she takes the child from the mother and places him on his father's lap (see plate 5). By holding the child on his lap, the father announces his paternity of that child. The father puts some money on the child's forehead, which is collected by the *aji* as part of her payment. The *aji* then applies a *tikā* to the child's forehead.

Finally, the *nakhĩ* takes over. She receives a *tikā* applied by the *aji*. Then the *nakhĩ* applies a *tikā* to the child's forehead. She gives a plate with presents for the child to the father. With her right hand, the *nakhĩ* takes some mustard oil and drops it on the child's fontanel, puts some unbroken rice on it and places money on the child's forehead (see plate 6). She gives a *tikā* to the *aji*. Then everybody who has been present during the ceremony receives a *tikā* applied by the *aji*. In return, the participants use their right thumb to apply mustard oil to the child's forehead and put some unbroken rice and

Plate 6: *Macābu byẽkegu* in Kamal Vinayak/Bhaktapur 2008: The *nakhĩ*, the senior-most woman of the family applies *tika* to the child's forehead and puts a flower on its head. The child's mother is sitting to the right.

money on that spot. After everybody has received a *tikā* the *nakhĩ* puts a golden ring on the third finger of the baby's right hand. The ring is a symbol of the child's prosperity. After a moment, she takes the ring back. In the late morning, the ceremony is finished.

The rituals on *macābu byẽkegu* are performed by the *aji* whose services include—besides the oil massages for the child up to the fifth month after the birth—the performance of rituals. Usually the *aji* belongs to the Jyāpu (farmer) caste. The lower castes call upon women of their respective caste. The *aji* is the ritual specialist for the worship of Chvāsaḥ Ajimā after the birth of a child. Apart from the women of the child's family, she is the only one who touches the mother and child during the impure period. During this time, she performs daily worship to Chvāsaḥ Ajimā or Hārītī, who is represented in the house by an iron measure (*kukecā*) filled with beaten rice, mustard oil, and clarified butter, and in the *chvāsaḥ* stone at crossroads. After worshipping the goddess, the *aji* distributes *prasāda* (Skt. food offerings blessed by a deity) containing *sisāpālu* (ginger, molasses, and beaten rice) to the members of the family where the birth took place.

Macābu byẽkegu marks the end of the impure time after a birth for all members of the clan (*phukī*). They are freed from the restrictions imposed on them during the last days and reincorporated into society. For the child this ceremony means the incorporation into the patrilineage. This is expressed in the public announcement of paternity by the child's father and by the distribution of *dhau svagã* and *tikā* to the child by the senior-most woman (*nakhī*) of the paternal family. Besides the purificatory aspect of *macābu byẽkegu,* the announcement of the paternity and the giving of *tikā* to the child by the members of the father's patrilineage can be interpreted (for those who do not perform *chaiṭhī*) as the first step towards the child's integration into its father's patrilineage.

5 The ritual on the sixth day after childbirth – *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā*

The goddess Ṣaṣṭhī(devī), who is worshipped during the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* and who is also known by the name Devasenā, is the protective deity of children and bestower of offspring. Ṣaṣṭhī is the personification of the sixth day after the birth of a child and so she is worshipped in a ritual performed in the night from the sixth to the seventh day. Because the sixth day can also mean the night from the fifth to the sixth day, the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is partially done on that night, too. Her name derives from her origin. She is called Ṣaṣṭhī because she was born out of 1/6 part of the original matter (Skt. *mūlaprakṛti*). Her antiquity may be traced back to the Ancient Period (see Bhattacharya 1956: 57). However, Ṣaṣṭhī is also referred to in a few later Purāṇas such as the *Devibhāgavata-* and the *Brahmavaivartapurāṇa* (see S.R. Das 1953: 37), which are dated not earlier than the 12th–13th centuries, and in the mediaeval Bengali literature.[17] Through her husband Kārttikeya (alternatively called Kumāra or Skanda), the war god, she is associated with Śiva. R.S. Freed and S. Freed (1998: 122–3) assume that she is worshipped in areas especially where the worship of Śiva and related deities dominates, and replaced by Bemātā, the midwife of the god Kṛṣṇa in areas where the worship of Kṛṣṇa dominates. Ṣaṣṭhī has close affinities to goddesses like Manasā and Śitalā, ambivalent goddesses who are associated in their dangerous aspect with infectious illness such as smallpox and snakebites, and in their benevolent aspect grant protection against these misfortunes.[18]

Slusser (1982: 120–1) traces the worship of Ṣaṣṭhī in the Kathmandu Valley back to the reign of Aṃśuvarman (A.D. 605–621). She presumes that a minor shrine dedicated to Siṭhīdyo, as Newars call both Kārttikeya and Ṣaṣṭhī, which is situated in the heart of Kathmandu in Kelāychok, a small domestic courtyard, is what now remains of a temple to Ṣaṣṭhī.

17 For an overview of the Bengali sources see Maity (1989: 159, n. 62).

18 Cf. Wadley (1980: 33–62). For Ṣaṣṭhī worship in India see also Gadon (1996).

5.1 *Ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* among the Newars

It has become apparent from my fieldwork that nowadays *chaiṭhī*, as the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is called in Newari, seems to be performed only among the Rājopādhyāyas. The *chaiṭhī* ceremony has been performed at least since the late Malla period, as a *pūjā* manual from that time shows.[19] It is not clear whether the non-performance of this ritual among the majority of the Newars is a recent development, or was never practiced by them to any large extent.

Pradhan (1986: 81–4) describes the rituals done on the sixth day but unfortunately does not mention to which castes his account refers. According to Pradhan, four different rituals are performed on that occasion. Firstly, in the morning of the sixth day various deities are worshipped such as Viṣṇu, Kumāra, Ṣaṣṭhī, and Chvāsaḥ Ajimā. During this ritual, the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī is represented by two heaps of fresh cow dung and the goddess Chvāsaḥ Ajimā by an iron measure. Secondly, in former times the umbilical cord was severed between the third and the sixth day after birth. If it was done on the sixth day, it coincided with *chaiṭhī*. In the meantime, the placenta had been kept in a small bamboo basket (*dālā*) and covered with a cloth. It was believed that if anyone except the midwife touched the placenta the mother might go mad (Dhungel 1980: 41). Traditionally, women of the butcher caste (Kaṭaḥ) performed in many places and for all castes the cutting of the umbilical cord. Among the Kaṭaḥ themselves, this is done by the senior-most married woman of the household or *phukī,* or sometimes by the midwives (see Gellner 1995: 273). The Kaṭaḥ women in Bhaktapur abandoned the task of severing umbilical cords approximately ten years ago because nowadays women go to hospital for delivery. Thirdly, in the evening a ritual is performed during which one of the child's father's sisters (*nini*) sits on purified ground surrounded by six oil lamps with her brother's child on her lap. She applies oil to the child's head, black soot paste mixed with oil round the child's eyes, and dresses the child in new clothes and ornaments sent by the mother's brother (*pāju*). Fourthly, late at night a few grains of paddy, a pen, and a notebook are put under the child's pillow. For the entire night a light is kept burning near the child.

5.1.1 Ṣaṣṭhīpūjā or chaiṭhī among the Rājopādhyāyas of Bhaktapur

I was unable to observe the different rituals on *chaiṭhī* which Pradhan has mentioned. The following description is an account of the rituals on *chaiṭhī* as they are performed among the Rājopādhyāyas of the Ipāchẽ clan, who live opposite the palace in Bhaktapur. The source of information is a series of interviews with Kedarnath Rajopadyaya of the Ipāchẽ clan, and videos of the *chaiṭhī* ceremony filmed by a member of that clan in 2005.

The *chaiṭhī* ceremony of that clan consists of the following elements: purificatory rituals and preparing the *pūjā* spot, *nārāyaṇapūjā*, *brāhmaṇapūjā*, *ṣaṣṭhīmaṇḍalapūjā*,

19 This ritual manual is in the personal keeping of Kedarnath Rajopadhyaya in Ipāchẽ/Bhaktapur and had been written in the 16th /17th centuries.

shaping a doll out of cow dung and placing a burning lamp next to the child during the night.

In the late evening, the relatives of the newborn gather together. Besides the child's relatives, a Rājopādhyāya priest, an assistant priest (Jyāpu Ācāju), an astrologer (Jośi), and the *aji* have to be present during the ceremony. The mother's natal relatives do not attend the *chaiṭhī* ceremony but they do have to send material for the *pūjā*, including silver jewellery, which is put on the child during the ceremony. All relatives attaining the ceremony have to take a ritual bath earlier in the day. The *aji* bathes and then massages the child with mustard oil (*paḥkā cikā*). Because the room that is used by the mother and the child during the period of birth pollution is too small for the relatives, the ceremony takes place in a living room. The *pūjā* side is purified with a mixture of red soil (*sīcā*) and cow dung (*gobar*). Then two water vases (Skt. *kalaśa*) representing the god Śiva and his female Śakti, a *sukūda* lamp pot, and plates with material for the *pūjā* are put on the *pūjā* side. The priest who performs the following ritual must not be contaminated by the impurity brought about by the birth. So either a priest related by marriage (a son-in-law, brother-in-law or nephew) will perform, or a male *phukī* member who has arranged not to be contaminated by the impurity (as mentioned above). In the actual ceremony, a nephew was called in. First, a share of the offerings (Skt. *bali*) is carried to the *pikhālakhu*, a stone set at the threshold of houses and temples that absorbs ritual waste.

The pūjās performed by the priest

In the next step the priest performs a *nārāyaṇapūjā* during which the god Viṣṇu is worshipped. On this occasion two representations of Viṣṇu are worshipped: the Nārāyaṇa of the Cāṅgunārāyaṇa temple, which is situated on a hill about four miles east of Bhaktapur, and the Nārāyaṇa of the Tilmādhava temple in Taumāḍhī/Bhaktapur. Nowadays, these two gods are worshipped only symbolically during the *pūjā*; they are represented by two small Nārāyaṇa statues placed on the *pūjā* spot—on the right Cāṅgunārāyaṇa and on the left Tilmādhavanārāyaṇa. However, in former times a "storekeeper of the lock" (*tālcā bhaḍel*) went to the Cāṅgunārāyaṇa temple, worshipped the god there and carried a small brass statue of the God to the riverside of the Kāsān Khusi, a rivulet between Bhaktapur and the Cāṅgunārāyaṇa temple. The rivulet marks the eastern border of Bhaktapur. The storekeeper of the lock stopped there, not crossing the rivulet yet. The priest who was to perform the *nārāyaṇapūjā* went there accompanied by musicians to welcome the god. The storekeeper then carried the statue into the courtyard of the house where the child was born. After worshiping Cāṅgunārāyaṇa there, the storekeeper, the priest, and the musicians went to the Tilmādhava temple, worshipped the god there and likewise carried a small brass statue of Tilmādhavanārāyaṇa into the courtyard. Then the *phukī nāyaḥ*, the senior-most man of the *phukī* worshipped both of the gods.

As Kedarnath Rajopadhyaya confirms, at the present time the following steps are performed inside the house. After finishing the *nārāyaṇapūjā*, the *brāhmaṇapūjā* is performed, the worship of the Brahmin. The *phukī nāyaḥ* then draws a *ṣaṣṭhīmaṇḍala*, a lo-

tus shaped diagram made of a mixture of *pvatāy* (flour of parched rice used during rituals to draw diagrams on the floor) and yellow powder (*halū*) on the floor, spreads paddy (*vā*) and yoghurt (*dhau*) on it and finally places an oil lamp on this diagram. Then he performs the *ṣaṣṭhīmaṇḍalapūjā* by worshipping the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī with vermilion, unbroken rice, flowers, fruits, light, and incense. Again, a share of the offerings is sent to the *pikhālakhu* stone.

The ṣaṣṭhīmaṇḍalapūjā performed by father's sisters

For the next step the ritual agency passes to father's sisters, who will be supervised by the senior household members and the priest. Now the father's sisters (*nini*) sit down in a row in order of seniority. Should a man have no sisters or his sister(s) are unable to attend the ceremony, any of his female relatives can act instead. Six burning oil lamps representing the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī should surround each of the *nini*s. In reality there is only one oil lamp in front of each *nini*. The senior-most *nini* puts the child on her lap, rubs the child with mustard oil, and then applies eyeliner round the child's eyes. The eyeliner is a paste mixed from soot she has taken from the oil lamp in front of her and oil. The black soot paste is applied round the eyes as protection against evil spirits. Then she puts money on the child's forehead. Afterwards, the *aji* who attends the ceremony will collect the money as part of the payment for her services. The senior-most *nini* dresses the child in a *pvānaṃ*, a shirt with two knots tied above the shoulders.[20] This procedure is done one by one by all the *nini*s. Once the *nini*s have finished, the child's paternal grandfather distributes money and gifts to them. A female relative gives a small amount of molasses (*cāku*), ginger (*pālu*), and salt (*ci*) to each of the *nini*s. On this day the mother is fed celery (*īmu*), which is only eaten by women after delivery, molasses, ginger, and salt. The *nini*s then go to the courtyard and place burning oil lamps in each of the entry gates. Traditionally 108 oil lamps have to be placed on the threshold of the entry gate(s) and in the courtyard, but nowadays it is custom to place only one oil lamp at every gate. In former times, the *mhenāyaḥ*, the senior-most of the tenants cultivating the fields owned by the landholding high castes was called in for *chaiṭhī*. He had to protect the entry gate of the courtyard while holding a sword in his hands.

Performances in the late evening

Later, after the *nini*s have returned from the courtyard, they make a small ball out of cow dung. The assistant priest and the astrologer then shape a ball into a doll called *katãmarī* ("a rag doll"; "a doll of a human figure"), which represents the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī. They wrap the doll in a red cloth and mark its eyes with cowrie shells. Then the sisters bring the doll to the room where the mother and the child are staying. It is kept next to the bed until the child is fed its first cooked rice (Skt. *annaprāśana*; New. *macā jākva*). On that occasion, it is put by a river bank, a common procedure when discard-

20 It is customary for a child to receive another such a shirt on his/her second birthday, but this time from the mother's natal relatives.

ing things and substances that have a sacred quality, as for instance ritual leftovers, ritual masks, cut hair, etc.

Later in the evening, some cow dung is smeared on the wall just above the bed in which the mother and child sleep. Then a small doll made of a ball of cow dung wrapped in a red piece of cloth is attached to this thin layer of cow dung. The doll represents an unidentified goddess named Śaktidevī, who is supposed to protect mother and child.

When the child is put to bed, the mother places an oil lamp on the floor next to the child's bed. In this context the light, which symbolizes longevity for the child, is intended to protect the newborn from evil spirits. So the mother keeps a vigil and makes sure the oil lamp burns the whole night long; it is considered inauspicious for the child if the flame goes out. In addition, the mother or a female relative puts a pen, a notebook, and a few grains of paddy under the child's pillow (see also Pradhan 1986: 83). It is believed that on this night of Candragupta, the messenger of Yama (god of death) comes to write the child's future in the notebook.

Chaiṭhī according to a ritual manual from Bhaktapur

Chaiṭhī is mentioned briefly in a ritual manual, which is in the possession of the Ipāchẽ Rājopādhyāya clan in Bhaktapur. According to the manual, one should perform this ritual on the sixth day after the birth of a child by worshipping Nārāyaṇa and Ṣaṣṭhī. They did not use it during the ceremony described above. Gutschow and Michaels (2008: 204–26) published a *Daśakarmavidhi* that contains *chaiṭhī* in more detail. It is written in Newari by an anonymous author dated *saṃvat* 2005, on Tuesday, the 23rd day of Caitra (1948 A.D.). This ritual manual is the personal handbook of the priest Mahendra Raj Sharma, Bhaktapur. Here is the section concerning *chaiṭhī* from this manual.

> The Night Vigil for the Goddess Ṣaṣṭhī (*ṣaṣṭhījāgaraṇa*, New. *chaiṭhī*):
>
> Now the rules for the night vigil for the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī (in the sixth night after delivery). Let the child take a bath. Wherever Viṣṇu is established (i.e. the place where the ritual is commenced), exactly there the ritual dissolvement (*visarjana*) should be performed. Send a share of the offerings (*bali*) to the absorbing stone (*pikhālakhu*). Make a ritual bath of (the statue of) Nārāyaṇa. Welcome (the child with a white cloth) at the auspicious time. Give a finger to the boy (to welcome him). Place (a person) on the door holding a sword. Here hand over the flower basket. Worship (Viṣṇu) according to the custom (i.e. with) incense, light, recitations (and) prayers. Worship the Brahmin. (Recite the) *śāntikapuṣṭika* (mantras with) *svasti no mimītā...*; *kanikrada...*; *āśuḥ śiśāno...*; *yaj jāgrato...*; *sahasraśīrṣā..; agnes tanūr...* (and) *vayaṃ soma...* Worship at the birthplace (of the child) in the temple of Ṣaṣṭhī at the auspicious time. Place a grinding stone. Offer a lamp with six (wicks) to the Ṣaṣṭhī goddess. Offer fragrant materials etc. Recitation and (the following) prayer: Śivā, Ṣambhūti, Prīti, Saṃtati, Anusūyā and Kṣemā—these are (the names of) the Ṣaṣṭhī goddess. Offer fragrant materials etc. Give flower during the (recitation of the) *śāntikamantra.* (Make) the ritu-

> al decision for food. *Dakṣiṇā* (should be given to the gods and priest). (Auspicious) recitations. Blessings from the gods (in the form of *prasāda*). Release (the deities). Send a share of the offerings (*bali*) (to the *pikhālākhu*). Ritual washing. Fragrant materials etc. Blessings. Speak (a few pleasing words) to the newborn child. Here end the rules for the night vigil for the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī. Hail.[21]

A comparison of the instructions in the ritual manual and the above description of the ceremony I watched on video in Bhaktapur in 2005 reveals that most of the features are similar. The brief instructions of the above manual can serve only as a memory aid for the priest.[22] The only ritual agents mentioned in Kedarnath Rajopadhyaya's ritual manual are the child, the person with the sword, and indirectly the priest as the performer of the *pūjā*s, another person who bathes the child, and someone who makes the ritual donation. The manual cannot provide much information about the interaction of the ritual agents and about the acts in which the priest is not directly involved.

Chaiṭhī as currently performed can be interpreted in different ways. As long as the umbilical cord is not severed, the child belongs to the mother's lineage. The acceptance of the child by the father's sister(s) by putting the child on their laps and taking care of it by oil massages, dressing it, applying eye-liner etc. is the first in a sequence of steps in which the newborn child becomes a full member of the patrilineage, a process that is completed after the initiation rituals (cf. Pradhan 1986: 81–2). The acceptance of the child by the father's sister(s) within the first days after birth is even more important due to the high mortality rate in former times among women who had recently given birth. On the other hand, the *chaiṭhī* is a ritual of protection for the child, as shown by the making of the dolls.

5.2 *Ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* of the Parbatiyās

In contrast to the majority of Newars, Parbatiyās all seem to perform a ceremony called *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* on the sixth day after the birth of a child. There are several ritual manuals available on the markets, in which the performance of the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is elaborately described. To my surprise, I could hardly find anyone who actually performed the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* the way it is described in these ritual manuals. It seems that *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is only performed at length by the upper classes. The majority performs a brief ceremony, which is not even mentioned in the ritual manuals but is widespread among Hindus in India. In distinction to the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* of the ritual manuals, the brief ceremony does not require a priest because the mother or a woman of the family performs it. Since I was unable to observe the elaborated *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā*, I will give an account of it as described in a ritual manual from Nepal. Afterwards, I will make some additional remarks – such as that at some points my priest informants perform this ritual in a different way. At the

21 Translation by Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 218).

22 The cursory instructions are typical of ritual manuals. Only the most important features are mentioned, the priests perform the rituals largely by heart.

end, I will describe the brief ceremony that is done in the majority of households and which I have observed two times.

5.2.1 Ṣaṣṭhīpūjā according to a ritual manual

In 1971, Paṇḍit Kṛṣṇaprasād Bhaṭṭarāī published the *Śrīḥ pūrvāṇgavidhiyukta garbhādhānādi-annaprāśanānta saṃskārapaddhati*, a ritual manual of life-cycle rituals which includes the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* at length.[23] The chapter concerning *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* contains not only the mantras but also more elaborate instructions in Nepali for each step of this ceremony. In the introduction to this chapter we read that *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is performed out of joy at the birth of a son. On the sixth day after birth, every relative and friend should be invited, especially the child's mother's natal relatives.

I will give an overview of the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* as described in this ritual manual. The ceremony consists of the following steps: 1) preparatory rituals (making a small packet [Nep. *poṭalikā*], worshipping Kṣetrapāla, the Seven Dvāramātṛkās, and Gaṇeśa, the ritual decision, worshipping the light, establishing the sacred vase, preparing the seat for the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī, and the invocation of the Eight Cirañjīvins), 2) the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā*, and 3) the performances in the late evening and during the night.

Preparatory rituals

The evening is the time to perform the preparatory rituals. The child's father ritually purifies himself and the *pūjā* spot. It is explicitly mentioned that a Brahmin should be called to act as priest for the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā*. The father should make a small packet (Nep. *poṭalikā*) out of a piece of cloth and attach it to the lintel over the door of the room where the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is later performed. He should go out of the house and bring a share of the offerings (Skt. *bali*) to Kṣetrapāla (the guardian of the courtyard or square). On his return he should worship the seven Dvāramātṛkās (the seven Door-Mother Goddesses, whose names are Kumarī, Dhanadā, Nandā, Vipulā, Maṅgalā, Acalā, and Padmā) at the door of the above-mentioned room. The father should then worship an idol of Gaṇeśa at the door. On the right side of the door he should worship Kṣetrapāla and Durgā. This is followed by the ritual decision (Skt. *saṃkalpa*), the worship of light (Skt. *dīpa*), the establishing of the sacred water vase (Skt. *kalaśasthāpanā*), and the worship of Gaṇeśa. After that, a seat for the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī should be prepared. For that, a lotus shaped diagram with eight petals (Skt. *padma*) is drawn with sandal paste (Skt. *candana*) on the *pūjā* spot. In the middle of this diagram a small heap of unbroken rice (Skt. *akṣata*) or a leaf plate (Nep. *thālī*) should be placed for Ṣaṣṭhī. Then the Eight Cirañjīvins, who are represented here by the eight petals of the lotus diagram and who stand for long life, should be invoked. The ritual manual mentions alternatives: One can make sixteen small images of cow dung and mark the eyes with cowrie shells. Then the Eight Cirañjīvins and Ṣaṣṭhī should be worshipped.

23 Bhaṭṭarāī, Kṛṣṇaprasād: *Śrīḥ pūrvāṇgavidhiyukta garbhādhānādi-annaprāśanānta saṃskārapaddhati*, pp. 215–67.

Ṣaṣṭhīpūjā

Different ways to establish the image of Ṣaṣṭhī are mentioned in this ritual manual, depending on the respective family tradition. The image of Ṣaṣṭhī can be placed either in the middle of the lotus diagram or on a separate leaf plate, or on a wooden seat. It can be made of cow dung with cowrie shells for eyes, or can be a golden image or a small heap of unbroken rice. After the invocation of the goddess, she should be worshipped by a sixteen-step service (Skt. *ṣoḍaśopacāra*). After that, the gods Skanda and Pradyumna are to be worshipped. Then a sword (Skt. *khaḍga*) and a bow and arrow (Skt. *dhanurvāṇa*) should be worshipped. In the next step, the father's sister takes the child from the mother's lap and gives it to the father or puts it next to him. The father lifts the child together with a fan of peacock feathers, holds the child with its head to the feet of the image of Ṣaṣṭhī (or lets the child touch the heap of unbroken rice), and requests Ṣaṣṭhī to give protection to the child. The Brahmin then gives the child back to the father's sister who again hands it over to the mother.

Performances in the late evening and during the night

After finishing the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā,* the priest should write the twelve names of the god Viṣṇu on a small piece of yellow cloth, which is touched with a thread while the priest recites for example the twelve names of Viṣṇu. The thread is then given to the child. Either a garland of eight *bārā* (Nep., a kind of cake made of pulse and oil) or of eight *phulauro* (Nep., a kind of cake made of ground pulse with oil or clarified butter) should be placed around the neck of a black male goat tied to the doorframe. Then the right ear of the goat is pulled until it screams out in pain. Everybody should receive a *tikā* and *dakṣinā* (Skt., ritual donation) should be given to the priest. All the relatives should have a feast together.

In the late evening, the small packet that was made by the father in the preparatory phase is attached to the door lintel. Men should then shoot at with arrows until it falls down. A light should be kept burning throughout the entire night and men armed with weapons should protect the child. The relatives should spend that night dancing and singing.

A number of priests who were consulted in this context agreed with most of the points in this ritual manual. One of them actually uses this manual to perform the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā*, whereas the others perform this ceremony without referring to any ritual manual. Their performances differ in the following points: There are even more ways to establish the image of Ṣaṣṭhī. The image can be made of a ball of cow dung with areca nut (Nep. *supāri*) for eyes and blades of *ḍubo* grass marking the ears. The image is placed on a wooden seat besmeared with cow dung standing on a lotus diagram. Alternatively, two more balls of cow dung but without "eyes" and "ears" can be placed on both sides of the image of Ṣaṣṭhī. In that case, the image on the right side represents the god Skanda and the image on the left side the god Pradyumna. Ṣaṣṭhī can also be represented by a heap of barley (Nep. *jau*) instead of unbroken rice. There are diverging opinions about the order for worshipping Ṣaṣṭhī, Skanda and Pradyumna. In contrast to

Plate 7: *chaiṭhī* in Balaju/Kathmandu 2008: The mother has placed a notebook and a pen above the child's head. A leaf plate filled with husked rice and an oil lamp, which the mother keeps burning for the entire night, are located on top of the shelf unit.

the above mentioned ritual manual, the priests I consulted begin by worshiping of Skanda, then Pradyumna and at the end Ṣaṣṭhī. According to the ritual manual Ṣaṣṭhī is worshipped first. The custom of shooting arrows at the small packet seems to have been abandoned. The reason for hurting the he-goat is that its screams ward off all evil spirits such as *bhūta, preta*, and *piśāca*. So, to make the he-goat scream as long and as loud as possible its ear is squeezed and tugged very hard or even cut with a knife. Some priests perform this step before *naivedya*, the ritual food offering that is given to Ṣaṣṭhī during her worship. But they denied that the he-goat was a sacrifice in any sense.

5.2.2 Ṣaṣṭhīpūjā in Balaju/Kathmandu

As already mentioned there seems to be a general tendency among the Parbatiyās of Kathmandu Valley to perform only a brief ceremony in the evening on the sixth day after the birth of a child. I will describe here a *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* that was held in Balaju, a quarter on the south-eastern rim of Kathmandu on 7th of September in 2008. This ceremony was performed for the first child, a son, of a Davadi family (Parbatiyā Brahmins). The parents of the child live in a small room in a newly-built house. The brief ceremony

was performed by the child's mother, Mina Davadi, and attended by some women living on the same floor. The child's father was absent.

In the evening the mother washes the child and massages him with oil. Then she dresses him in new clothes and puts him to bed. In the meantime, a woman staying on the same floor is sent to buy a notebook and a pen. After she returns, the mother puts the pen and notebook next to the child's pillow in such a way that the pen points to the notebook. Sometimes the notebook is put on an *oṃ* drawn with vermilion powder and a small paper with the child's date and time of birth, but that was not done in this place. Then the mother places a leaf plate filled with unbroken rice beside the bed on a shelf and puts an oil lamp on top of it (see plate 7). She lights the oil lamp and worships it with vermilion powder (Nep. *abīr*), unbroken rice (Nep., Skt. *akṣata*) and flowers (Nep. *phul*). According to the mother, the oil lamp is a representation of the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī. The mother keeps the oil lamp burning for the entire night while she keeps a vigil. During this night the female neighbours attend to her.

It is believed that in the sixth night after childbirth Bhāvī, the goddess of destiny comes to write the future of the child on its forehead. For that, the mother or a woman of the household puts a notebook and a pen next to the child's bed. An oil lamp is placed beside the bed and is worshipped either as the goddess Bhāvī or Ṣaṣṭhī. According to the particular family tradition, a simple act of worship is performed to the oil lamp. The lamp is kept burning for the entire night. It is said that the goddess needs light to write the future and she will write as long as the oil lamp burns, implying a long life for the child. The pen and the notebook are kept next to the child to inspire her.

In its elaborated form the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* of the Parbatiyās serves two purposes. It is a ceremony performed to protect the child from malevolent spirits. This is clearly shown by requesting the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī to protect the child, by applying eye-liner round the child's eyes, by making the he-goat scream, by shooting arrows at the small packet, and by placing armed men next to the room where the child sleeps. It is believed that the child is extremely vulnerable to attacks by evil spirits, who can inflict illness and death on the child. The child has thus to be protected. Further, the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is a ceremony during which the first in a sequence of steps is done to incorporate the child into its father's patrilineage. This is symbolized by handing over the child to the father's sister, who then puts it on the father's lap or next to him on the purified floor. According to Veena Das, "the rituals within the first forty days, the period for which the impurity of the mother and child lasts in most communities, emphasize the incorporation of the child as part of the cosmic design" (1977: 125). Das continues that on the sixth day after birth, the child is ceremonially offered to Ṣaṣṭhī and the god Brahma comes in person to write the future of the child. During the *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* the child is presented for the first time to the gods, who write out the future and ordain the individual biography of the child.

The beginning of the incorporation of the child into the father's patrilineage on the sixth day is celebrated in some parts of India and Bangladesh by observing a nocturnal

vigil. Musicians are invited and the women spend this night dancing and singing.[24] This custom seems to have been abandoned in the Kathmandu Valley, but elderly people can still remember it. I was told that this custom is still followed in some parts of the Terai region along the border to India. According to Pradhan (1986: 84), it is the custom in some families among the Newars to keep a vigil for the entire night and sing religious songs to ensure that the oil lamp does not go out and to welcome Citragupta (who attends Yama, the god of death and records every man's good and evil deeds) to write the child's future.

6 The name-giving ceremony

Before describing the *nāmakaraṇa* or *nã chuyegu,* as it is called in Newari, the name-giving ceremony as the Newars and Parbatiyās currently perform it in the Kathmandu Valley, I will give a brief summary of the history of this classical *saṃskāra*. In the beginning, the *nāmakaraṇa* seemed to be more a custom, which in the course of time was included in the *saṃskāra*s. Although there are already references in the *Ṛgveda* to the as many as four names a person can have, which is reflected in the *Aitareya-* (1.3.3) and *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* (3.6.2.24; 5.4.3.7; 6.6.1.3.9), a naming ritual is not mentioned.

According to the sources of classical Hindu law, a person should be named. However, there is great divergence in opinions about the time when a child should be named, the composition of the name, and the number of names given to a person. Many sources agree that two—at least—names should be given: one for common use and the other a secret name which only the child's parents will know until *upanayana*, the initiation of a boy during which his secret name is divulged to him. According to the *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa Upaniṣad*, *Āśvalāyana-*, *Śāṅkhyāna-*, and *Kāthakagṛhyasūtra,* the child is named on the day of birth. Other Gṛhyasūtras such as those of Āpastamba, Baudhāyana, Pāraskara, prescribe the tenth day, *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* the eleventh day, *Baudhāyana-* and *Vaikhānasagṛhyasūtra* the tenth or twelfth day (see Kane 1968ff.: II, 234). Manu prescribes the tenth or twelfth day or an auspicious *tithi* (lunar day), *muhūrta* (a period of 48 minutes, an auspicious time or moment), and *nakṣatra* (lunar mansion) thereafter. Sources such as Gobhila and Khādira prescribe the naming process in a vague fashion: It should take place after ten nights, one hundred nights or a year (ibid.: 238–40). In *Mānavadharmaśāstra* (2.30) it is said that the birth rituals (Skt. *jātakarman*) can therefore be performed during the impure time after birth; *nāmakaraṇa* may be performed on the tenth day.

The prescriptions about the time when a secret name is given also differ according to the source. According to the Gṛhyasūtras (except Pāraskara and Mānava), parents give a boy a secret name. Gobhila and Khādira, quoting *Soṣyantīkarma*, say that the secret name is given at birth. Other Gṛhyasūtras, such as Āpastamba, Baudhāyana, and

24 For Bangladesh see e.g. Blanchet (1987: 108), for the Central Himalayan region see Primdahl (1993: 15–7).

Bhāradvāja prescribe the tenth day or the twelfth day when *nāmakaraṇa* is performed (ibid.: 246). Gobhila says a boy is told his secret name by the *ācārya* (teacher) at the time of his *upanayana*. Khādira on the other hand says that the boy already receives his secret name from his parents and is informed by the teacher on the occasion of *upanayana* (ibid.: 247).

In the Sūtra and later periods, rules were laid down for the composition of the name. Despite all the divergent opinions in the sources, there is agreement that a boy's name has to consist of an even number of syllables and a girl's name an uneven number with three or five syllables. This prescription derives from the Vedic literature where most of the mentioned names follow this scheme (ibid.: 243f.). The *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra* (1.17.1) says that the name has to be of two or four syllables, must begin with a sonant, should have a semivowel in it, and has to end with either a long vowel or *visarga*. According to Baijavāpa (Pandey 1969: 133–4) there are no restrictions on the number of syllables. However, Vāsiṣṭha says that the name should be composed of two or four syllables and endings in "l" or "r" should be avoided.[25] The *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra* (1.15.4–10) attributes different kinds of merits to different numbers of syllables. Therefore, the name of a person who desires fame should be composed of two syllables and of four syllables if one desires holy lustre.

There are twenty-seven *nakṣatras,* each of them associated with a god, e.g., *kṛttikā* with the god Agni or *śravaṇa* with the god Viṣṇu. One way of composing the name was to make a compound with the name of the *nakṣatra* of birth in the first element and *kumāra*, meaning son or boy at the end. For instance, a boy born in *āśvinī* would be named "Āśvinikumāra". Another method described in great detail in the medieval works on Dharmaśāstra and Jyotiṣa (treatises on Hindu law and astrology) and still practiced today is as follows: Each *nakṣatra* is divided into four parts (Skt. *pāda*) and each *pāda* has a specific letter of the Sanskrit alphabet assigned to it. Since there are only twenty-seven *nakṣatra*s but fifty-two letters, each lunar mansion is associated with more than one letter. For instance, the letters of the four *pāda*s of the *nakṣatra āśvinī* are *cū, ce, co,* and *lā*. Therefore, a child born under this constellation would be named accordingly, e.g. Cūḍāmaṇī, Cedīśa, Coleśa and Lakṣmaṇa (see Kane 1968ff.: II, 248–9 and Pandey 1969: 137–8). Most of the sources either agree that the secret name derives from the *nakṣatra* of birth or from the deity associated with the particular *nakṣatra*. The reason why the *nakṣatra* name has to be kept secret might be so as to prevent magical practices being used against a person (Kane 1968ff.: II, 248). Furthermore, a child's name can be selected according to the family deity or the month in which the child was born. The twelve months of a year are associated with the twelve names of the god Viṣṇu as laid down in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira.[26] Divergent prescriptions are given for the composition of a girl's name. According to *Mānavadharmaśāstra* (2.3 and 3.9), the name should be easy to pronounce, not hard to hear,

25 *Vāsiṣṭhadharmasūtra* 4.

26 Kane 1968ff.: II, 249–50. The twelve names of Viṣṇu are: Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Trivikrama, Vāmana, Śrīdhara, Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, and Dāmodara.

should have a clear meaning, be charming and auspicious, and end in a long vowel. Furthermore, it should contain some blessings. The name should not indicate a constellation, a tree, a mountain, a river, a bird, a servant, or a terror.

The number of names a person can have is not fixed. According to the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* (6.1.3.9) a son should be named (by his father) after birth to drive away the evil that might attack him. Additionally, he is also given a second and even a third name. In the *Ṛgveda*, frequent references are made to the different names of a person. A boy should be given a secret name by his parents, derived from the *nakṣatra* on which he was born, and an ordinary name for public use. He can bear a third name by having a sacrifice performed later in his life and could even obtain a fourth name by these means.[27] The system of fourfold naming was not yet fully developed in the pre-Sūtra and Sūtra period. Only by the time of the later Smṛtis and astrological works was the system fully worked out. The reasons for this may lie in the rise of religious sects and astrology (see Pandey 1969: 136).

6.1 *Nã̄ chuyegu* – the name-giving ceremony among the Newars

In contrast to the Parbatiyās, for the majority of the Newars the naming of a child does not involve any particular ritual. A child is given two names: a secret name based on its birth horoscope (*jātaḥ*) and a public one. Usually, after the birth of a child the child's father's sister (*nini*) informs the family astrologer, who belongs to the astrologer caste (Jośi), about the date and the exact time of the birth. She functions as the ritual protector of her brother and his children. The close relationship between brother and sister shows itself in certain ritual roles a brother and his sons perform towards her and her children (see Pradhan 1986: 80). The astrologer calculates the horoscope and matches it with the parents' horoscopes to see if the child may cause them harm or even death. In such cases, the family will "sell" and later "rebuy" the child, or it will be sent to its maternal uncle's home or even given away for adoption. In his general observations on Kathmandu in the mid-eighties, Pradhan (ibid.) assumes that propitiatory rituals may be performed to appease the gods and the nine planets to ward off any further mischief to the child.

The senior-most man (*nāyaḥ*) of the household or *phukī* performs the act of naming by whispering the child's secret and public name into its right ear if it is a boy, or into its left ear if it is a girl. According to Gopal Nepali (1965: 98), the father's sister does the naming. It seems that there is no fixed date to name a child. Sometimes the secret name is given to the child between drawing up the birth horoscope and *annaprāśana*, the first feeding of cooked rice performed between the fifth and eighth month after the birth. The public name is given any time before the child's second birthday, mostly on *annaprāśana* (ibid.).

27 *Ṛgveda* 8.80.9, 9.87.3, 10.54.4, and 10.55.1–2.

6.1.1 Nã chuyegu in Bhaktapur

In this section I shall give an account of the rituals performed on *nã chuyegu,* as done by the Rājopādhyāyas of the Ipāchẽ clan who live opposite the palace in Bhaktapur. My source of information consists of interviews given by Kedarnath Rajopadhyaya and ritual manuals that are in his keeping. The name-giving ceremony as performed in the Ipāchẽ clan comprises the following steps: writing the initial letter of the child's secret name on a leaf, the welcoming ritual for mother and child, the worship of the child, and the naming of the child.

Writing the initial letter of the child's secret name on a leaf

The ceremony starts with *kalaśasthāpanā*, the establishing of the sacred vase (Skt. *kalaśa*). For that, all materials for the worship are arranged on and around the *pūjā* spot. The *phukī nāyaḥ*, the senior-most man of the *phukī* who will act as *yajamāna* (Skt. "sacrificer") during the ceremony, takes a betel leaf (*gvāḥ*) and spreads it with clarified butter (*ghyaḥ*). Then he mixes yellow powder with water or milk and writes the initial letter of the child's secret name on the betel leaf with a golden needle (*luṃ mulu*). In the days following the birth of a child, the father or one of his sisters goes to visit an astrologer (Jośi) to prepare the child's birth horoscope. The initial letter of the name results from the astrologer's calculation. Sometimes a *svastika*, a kind of mark on persons or things denoting good luck is also drawn on the leaf. The *svastika* represents here the Eight Cirañjīvins, the semi-immortals who symbolize long life. The *phukī nāyaḥ* covers the inscribed leaf with a blank one and puts them on top of the *mūlakalaśa*, the main sacred vase. The two leaves are considered to represent Śiva and Śakti; the cover leaf represents Śiva, who protects the inscribed leaf representing Śakti. By covering the inscribed leaf the horoscope remains undamaged during the following ritual. The letters are said to be representations of Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech and learning. Then the *phukī nāyaḥ* performs *kalaśapūjā* (worshiping the sacred vase), *navagrahapūjā* (worshipping the nine planets), and *aṣṭacirañjīvipūjā* by offering flowers, sandalwood and vermilion paste, light, incense, food offerings etc.

The welcoming ritual for mother and child (lasakusapūjā) and the worship of the child

After this the priest performs *lasakusapūjā*, the welcoming ritual for the mother and child. He draws a *svastika* on the *pūjā* spot and puts a wooden seat (*kupu*) on it. With his left hand he takes some husked rice (*jāki*) and a long iron key (*sāṃ taḥcā*) and with his right hand he grasps a *karuvā* (a spouted metal water pot) filled with water. In the meantime, the mother stands some metres away holding her child. The *phukī nāyaḥ* goes to her and pours a circle of water on the floor with the *karuvā*. From his left hand he throws *jāki* on it. Then still holding *jāki* and the iron key, he grasps the mother's left arm with his left hand and "pulls" her to the wooden seat, while continuously pouring water onto the path they walk along. He stops before they reach the seat, pours another circle of water on the floor, and throws *jāki* onto it. Finally, the mother sits down on the wooden seat with the child on the *pūjā* spot. By pouring water and throwing *jāki*, the path to the seat is purified and evil spirits are warded off.

After the mother has taken a seat, the *phukī nāyaḥ* puts charcoal (*hẽgvā*) into a small earthen saucer (*salĩcā*) and lights it. He puts the saucer in front of mother and child on the floor. Then with his two thumbs and both of his second and third fingers he takes a small amount of a mixture of yellow mustard seed (*īkā*) and dark reddish brown mustard seed (*pakā*) and uses it to draw a circle in a clockwise direction around all the pots, vases, and plates on the *pūjā* spot representing the various deities that had been invoked for the ceremony. Then he puts the rest of this mixture into the burning charcoal. This procedure is done three times. The *phukī nāyaḥ* again takes some of the mixture, sprinkles it first in a circle round the mother and child, and then puts the rest into the burning charcoal. This is done three times, too. After that, he applies three *tikā*s to the child's forehead, one of *candana* (sandalwood) or yellow paste, one of vermilion and one of yoghurt (*dhau svagã*). The saucer with the burning charcoal is sent to the *pikhālakhu* (the guardian of the house and absorbing stone) in front of the house. Then the *phukī nāyaḥ* takes a big wooden measurement pot (*sĩyāgu pāthī*) and fills it with flowers, fruits and popped rice (*tāy*). He grasps the rim of the pot with his thumbs, second and third fingers and throws its contents first three times over the sacred vase and then three times over the child who has been covered beforehand with a shawl for protection. He does this very carefully so as not to throw out the iron key, which is still in the measurement pot. He lights a small oil wick on the *sukũda* lamp and worships the main sacred vase (Skt. *mūlakalaśa*) and the child by waving the oil lamp in front of them in a clockwise direction. Then he puts the small oil lamp (*matā*) on the floor in front of the baby. To bless the child, all the participants throw popped rice at the child, who is once again covered by a shawl. Then the *phukī nāyaḥ* presents a plate to the child bearing a golden and a silver ring and a *macālaṃ*, an infant dress with four knots. A areca nut rests on top of the gifts that are given by the father's sister, along with a *gvẽsvã* (a lilac flower shaped like a areca nut representing longevity), and some money.

The naming of the child

Afterwards, the *phukī nāyaḥ* takes the betel leaves from the *kalaśa* and touches the child with them. If it is a son, he touches him on three points on the right side: the right side of the head above the ear, the shoulder, and the knee. If it is a daughter he touches her on the corresponding three points of her left side. He then whispers the name three times into the child's ear, if it is a boy into his right ear, if it is a girl into her left ear. Immediately after the naming, the horoscope (*jātaḥ*) containing the secret name is written with the golden needle using sandalwood or vermilion paste on white nepali paper (*nepālī bhoṃ*). The parents will keep this horoscope. Then women of the *phukī* take the betel leaf inscribed with the horoscope and present it in the *āgãchẽ* (tantric god-house) to *āgãdyaḥ*, the Āgamic or tantric deity of the *phukī*. In the meantime, the *phukī nāyaḥ* again throws flowers, fruits, etc. from the big wooden measurement pot over the child and then waves the oil lamp. All the participants throw popped rice onto the child, which marks the end of the ceremony. Later that day, all of the *phukī* members (except the mother who is still impure) bring the child to *āgãdyaḥ*. There the child is introduced to *āgãdyaḥ* by performing a ritual called *macā thā taygu* (introducing the baby to the

gods). Only once this particular ritual has been performed is the child allowed to enter the tantric god-house.

The family celebrates this day with a feast to which at least one member of the *phukī* is invited, along with all the married sisters and daughters of the family.

6.2 *Nāmakaraṇa* ceremony among the Parbatiyās

In Kathmandu Valley the Parbatiyās usually perform *nāmakaraṇa* or in Nepali *nvāran/ nvārān* on the morning of the eleventh day after birth (counting from the day of birth). The family priest performs the rituals. The description of the naming ceremony is based on my observations of five *nāmakaraṇa* ceremonies during my fieldwork in 2008 in the Kathmandu Valley.

The naming ceremony consists of the following steps: Preparatory rituals, a fire ritual (Skt. *homa*), the preparation of the child's horoscope, giving the child its name (*nāmakaraṇapūjā*), *sūrya dekhāune* (Nep. "showing the sun"), lifting the child over the fire, and concluding rituals.

Preparatory rituals

Before the naming ceremony starts, several preparatory rituals have to be performed in the morning. The child's mother takes a bath, and washes the clothes and bedding she has used over the last few days. In former times the straw on which the mother had slept since the child's birth was burned. The child's father must also take a bath in the morning, wear freshly washed clothes, and put on a new sacred thread (if he belongs to a cord-wearing caste). Should the father be absent from the *nāmakaraṇa,* a deputy father will take his part during this ritual. Traditionally, the ritual is performed on the ground floor of a house. Because a fire ritual is performed during *nāmakaraṇa,* the *pūjā* spot has to be fireproof. The ground floor of an old house is made of tamped clay but the ground floors of newly built houses are often used as flats or shops and cannot be used for the performance of a fire sacrifice. In these cases either the courtyard or the rooftop terrace is used. As soon as the priest arrives at the house, the preparations for the *pūjā* spot are done. First, this area has to be cleaned first by dusting it and then by a woman of the family spreading cow dung mixed with water on it. If no cow dung is available, it is purified by water alone.

The priest then prepares the fire pit. For this he places six bricks in a square in the middle of the *pūjā* spot. After that, he draws *rekhī*s (Nep. "lines" made of flour drawn in the course of a ritual; Skt. *rekhā*) on and around the fire altar. The flour can be mixed with red (Nep. *abīr*) or yellow powder (Nep. *keśarī*). The *rekhī*s have the form of diagrams and are drawn according to the prescriptions in the ritual manual the priest uses

during the ritual.[28] He then piles up firewood on the bricks. During the next step, he purifies the *pūjā* spot by sprinkling *pañcagavya* (Nep. "mixture of the five products of a cow: dung, urine, milk, yoghurt, and clarified butter") and *jautil* (Nep. mixture of "barley and sesame seed") on it while uttering the *gāyatrī*. To sprinkle the mixture he uses *ḍubo* grass. Then the materials for the ritual are put on the *pūjā* spot. The family members and the priest place leaf plates (large size – Nep. *ṭaparī/ṭaparā*, small size – Nep. *botī*, and small ones in a round or rectangular form – Nep. *dunā*) on the diagrams, which function as seats (Nep./Skt. *āsana*) for the deities invoked during the ritual. The leaf plates are filled with unhusked (Nep. *dhān*) or husked rice (Nep. *cāmal*) into which the rice from beneath the lamp on *ṣaṣṭhīpūjā* is mixed. The water vases, the oil lamp, and several bowls are placed on the leaf plates on their respective place, which is laid down in the ritual manuals for performing a fire sacrifice.

The fire ritual

After all the preparations are finished, the priest takes a seat facing east and proclaims the ritual decision (Skt. *saṃkalpa*). Then the *yajamāna* (Skt. "sacrificer") sits down south of the *pūjā* spot. If the child's father is the senior-most man of his family who is present, he acts as the sacrificer. If not, his father or grandfather or older brother will act. The priest and the sacrificer invoke and then worship the deities on the *pūjā* spot. Afterwards, the priest lights the wood in the pit and starts the fire ritual. During the course of a *homa*, the priest and the sacrificer pour clarified butter and throw grains and other ingredients such as fruits, milk, yoghurt, and lentils into the fire. The priest recites Vedic mantras for each single action. For that, the ritual manual is put next to him on the ground or he holds it with his left hand while doing the offerings with the right. The *homa* performance lasts between approximately thirty and ninety minutes. During this time, the mother and child do not have to be present. After the *homa* is finished, and before *visarjana* (Skt. "emitting", "sending away") —a ritual releasing of the deities—takes place, the naming of the child is performed.

The preparation of the child's horoscope

The priest asks the father or grandfather for the exact time of the child's birth and consults his astronomical almanac (Nep. *pātro*) to determine the initial letter of the secret name for the child. The initial letter results from the lunar mansion (Skt./Nep. *nakṣatra*) and more precisely, from the particular part (Skt./Nep. *pāda*) under which the child has been born. If the parents have already visited an astrologer to prepare the birth horoscope (Nep. *janma kuṇḍalī*), or at least a provisional version, the priest will check it carefully.

28 In all five *nāmakaraṇa* ceremonies I have observed, the priests used for the fire ritual the ritual manual *Saralīkṛtaḥ agnisthāpanā viddhi* by Madhusūdana Suvedī. This ritual manual is widely used in the Kathmandu Valley and easily available on the market.

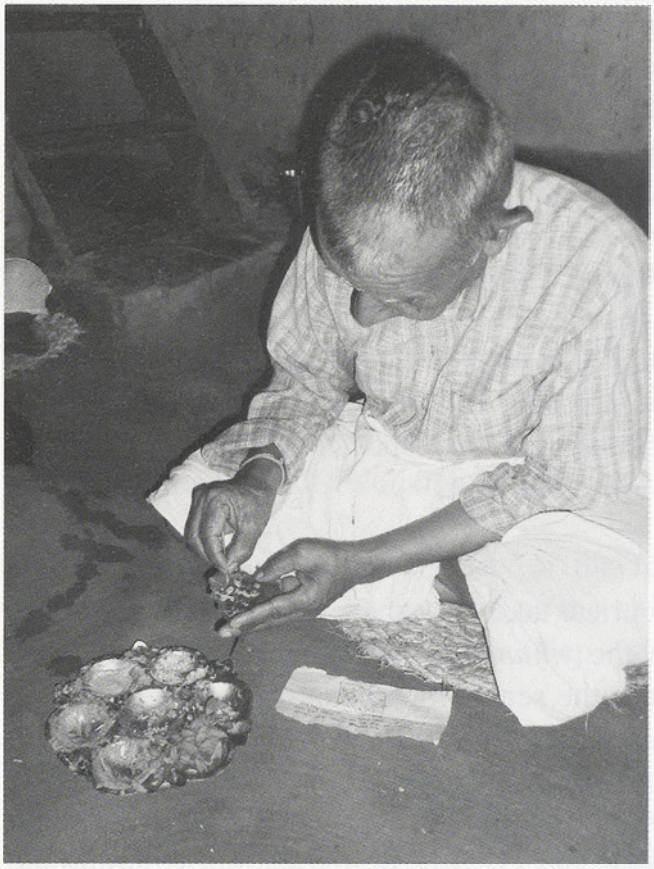

Plate 8: *Nāmakaraṇa* in Mulpani 2008: The priest writes the birth horoscope of the child on a pipal leaf using a blade of *kuśa* grass as the brush. On the floor in front of him is a slip of paper with the details of the horoscope he prepared earlier that day.

First, the priest asks for two *pipal* leaves (*Ficus religiosa* L.) that have to be fresh and immaculate. He cleans the leaves with water and puts them in front of him on the ground. Then he mixes yellow powder (Nep. *keśarī*) symbolizing gold with water and draws the child's horoscope and the initial letter of the child's secret name on both leaves. For that, he uses a stalk of *kuśa* grass (*Desmostachya bipinnata* [L.] STAPF) as his brush (see plate 8). By way of example, the horoscope of a child born on 19th August 2008 would be:

svastika	a kind of mark on persons or things denoting good luck
oṃ namaḥ	*oṃ* salute
tesro pāu	the third part (= noon)
bhādra nakṣatra	the lunar mansion Bhādra
kumbha rāśī	the astronomical house (is) Aquarius
ā. dāna	the initial letter (is) "d"

Sometimes the horoscope is written on only one of the leaves and a *svastika* drawn on the second. According to my priest informants, only one leaf is actually needed and the second leaf is merely there as a replacement if the first leaf breaks or the colour fades. Furthermore, as already mentioned in the naming ceremony performed by the Newars, the two leaves are considered to represent Śiva and Śakti. The leaves are kept until the astrologer makes a birth horoscope on a sheet of Nepali paper, which is kept by the parents.

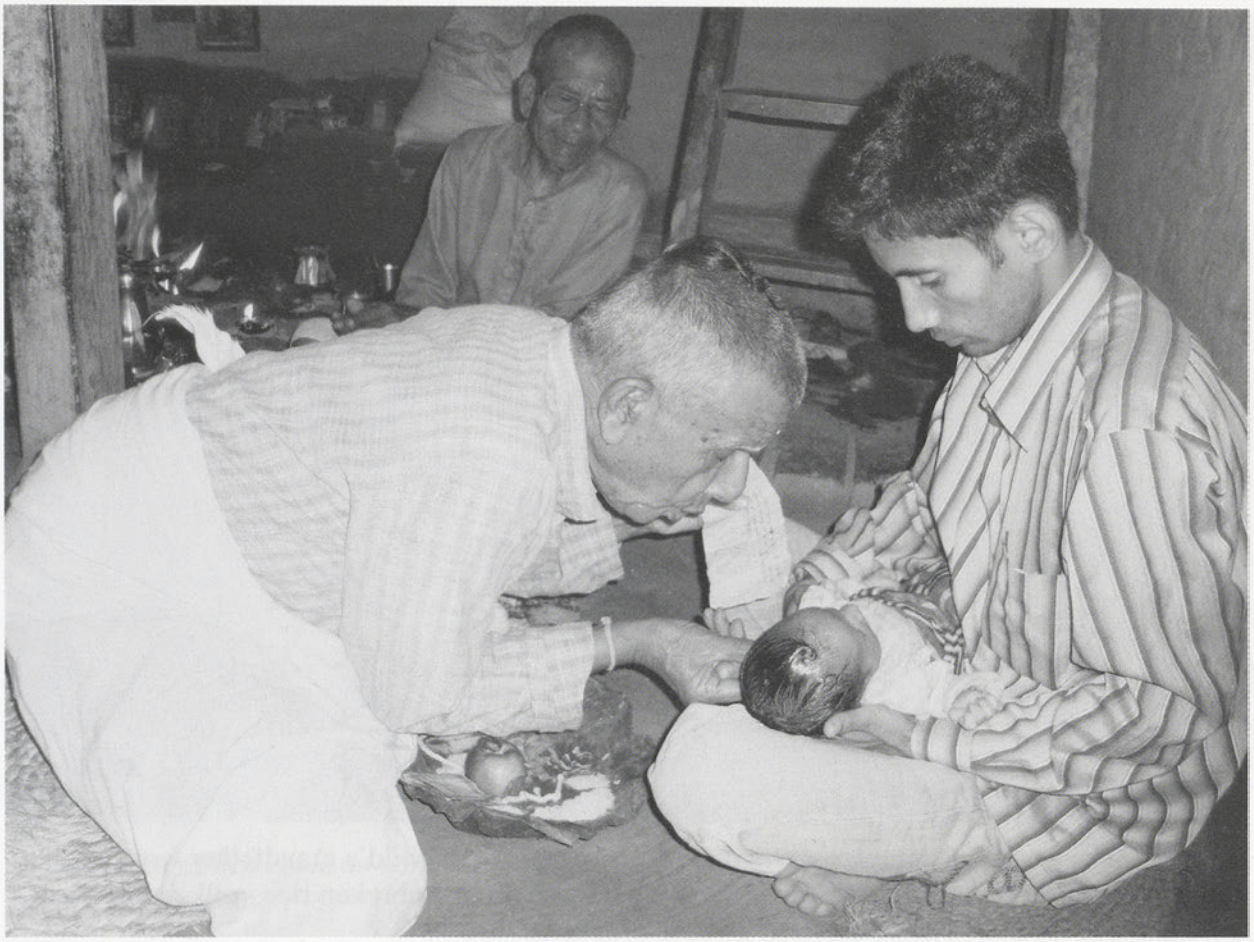

Plate 9: *Nāmakaraṇa* in Mulpani 2008: The priest whispers the name three times into the child's left ear. The child is held by his father. The person in the background is the child's grandfather who acts as *yajamāna* during the ceremony.

The priest puts both leaves and the slip of paper with the provisional horoscope made by an astrologer or by the priest himself on a leaf plate (Nep. *ṭaparī*) or a brass dish (Nep. *kāṃsako thāla*) that is filled with husked rice (Nep. *cāmal*) and fruit. The child's father puts some money on it and then the priest worships it.

The name-giving of the child (nāmakaraṇapūjā)

Afterwards, mother and child are called upon to take a seat south of the *pūjā* spot. Sometimes, the father will act instead of his wife during the ensuing ritual. The family and the priest discuss the secret name for the child. Once they have finished, the priest takes a seat on the left side of the mother (or the father) with the child on his or her lap. The priest touches first the head of the child and then the mother with a *suro*, a kind of ladle used in sacrificial rituals. In order to get the attention of the child the priest rings a bell or strikes a brass bowl three times with an areca nut to make a sound. Then he breathes two times onto the child and whispers three times the secret name or the initial letter of the name into the child's left ear (see plate 9) by uttering: "(the child's name)

Plate 10: *Sūrya dekhāune* on *nāmakaraṇa* in Mulpani 2008: The child's grandfather worships a ball of cow dung representing the pit of the sun with vermilion, unbroken rice, milk, curd, flowers, light, and incense. The priest (left) gives instructions.

nāmāsi bālaka tvaṃ dīrghāyurbhūyāḥ" ("Oh Boy, who is called … May you be one who lives long!") if the child is a boy. For a girl he speaks "(the child's name) *nāmnī asi bālike tvaṃ dīrghāyurbhūyāḥ"*. The priest again breathes onto the child and then sprinkles some unbroken rice (Skt./Nep. *akṣata*) over the child's head. After this, the priest calls the father to come and explains the child's horoscope to him. With this act, the *nāmakaraṇapūjā* is finished.

Showing the sun – sūrya dekhāune

On the occasion of the name-giving ceremony, *niṣkramaṇa* (Skt. the child's first outing) is performed. According to the sources of classical Hindu law, this classical *saṃskāra* is performed between the eleventh day up to the fourth month after birth (see Pandey 1969: 146; Kane 1968ff.: II, 225). Among the Parbatiyās of Kathmandu Valley the ritual is called *sūrya dekhāune* (Nep. "showing the sun"). In former times, on *niṣkramaṇa* the child was taken out of the house for the first time. Nowadays, when the delivery takes place in a maternity hospital the child is taken out for the first time when child and mother are discharged. In the following, I will describe *sūrya dekhāune* as I observed it in Mulpani, a small village situated on the eastern rim of Kathmandu Valley on 2nd of September in 2008 in a Khadka family (Parbatiyā Brahmins).

Plate 11: *Sūrya dekhāune* on *nāmakaraṇa* in Mulpani 2008: The priest shows the sun to the child carried by his mother.

After finishing the *nāmakaraṇapūjā*, a small area in the courtyard of the house is ritually cleaned and a circle of cow dung spread over it. The priest forms a small ball of cow dung, makes a small hole in it with the thumb of his right hand, and puts it in the middle of the circle used as the *pūjā* spot.[29] The ball is called *sūryako kuṇḍa* (Nep. "the well of the sun" or "the pit of the sun") from which the alternative names of this ritual *sūryako kuṇḍapūjā* or *gobar* (cow dung) *kuṇḍapūjā* derive.[30] Before a child can be shown the sun in the sky, it first has to worship the sun. The priest and the sacrificer worship the *sūryako kuṇḍa* with a simple *pūjā* in five steps. The priest pours yoghurt and milk into the hole of the *sūryako kuṇḍa* and offers unbroken rice, vermilion powder, *ḍubo* grass, fruits, flowers, a coin, and incense sticks (see plate 10).[31] The child is brought to the *sūryako kuṇḍa* and the priest pours the offering of milk and yoghurt onto the child's right hand from whence it flows onto the ball of cow dung. In this way, the child itself worships the *sūryako kuṇḍa.* Then the child is shown the sun represented by the *sūryako kuṇḍa*. For that the mother first touches the child's head to the *sūryako kuṇḍa* and then the child's feet. After that, the mother circles the *sūryako kuṇḍa* three

29 A member of the household can make the ball of cow dung, too.

30 The term *kuṇḍa* describes in that context "a well consecrated to a deity".

31 Sometimes the offerings include *jautil* (Nep. a mixture of "barley and sesame seed"), *kuśa* grass, and *sarsiuṃ* (Nep. "rape seed") as well.

times in a clockwise direction while holding the child in her arms. Only then does the priest standing next to the mother, who is holding the child in her arms, show the sun in the sky to the child by raising his arm to it (see plate 11). Finally, the mother applies a *tikā* of yoghurt from the *sūryako kuṇḍa* to the child's forehead as a blessing.

Lifting the child over the fire and concluding rituals

After showing the sun, the priest and the parents with the child go back to the *homa* site. The father, the mother, or the priest lifts the child three times up and down over the fire (see plate 12). The reason for this is to purify the child in the smoke—an act associated with the purifying quality of fire. It is believed that this will make the child brave. Then the priest pounds some charcoal he has taken from the fire pit with the ladle he used during the *homa*. He touches the father on the head and shoulders with the ladle and applies first a *tikā* of charcoal to his forehead and then a *tikā* of vermilion and *akṣata* above that. After this, the priest ties a *rakṣābandhana*, a ritual thread around the father's right wrist. He repeats this procedure for the mother, child, and all the participants of the ceremony, one-by-one. Sometimes the priest only applies *tikā* to the child while the mother ties the thread. In the ceremony that I observed in Mulpani, the mother tied the thread around the child's wrists and ankles and around the belly so as to protect it against malevolent spirits (see plate 13). Then the priest distributes *prasāda*, auspicious food that is first offered to the deities before being given to all of the participants. He takes the two *pipal* leaves with the child's birth horoscope, places them together with a sacred thread and a areca nut in a cloth and ties it up. The parents of the child will keep this.

Finally, the priest performs *visarjana*, the ritual release of the deities who had been invited to the ceremony. He puts out the fire and family members clean the *pūjā* spot.

7 Conclusions

As the accounts of the rituals dealt in this paper have shown, there is a great deal of diversity in the way they are performed. Not only does each caste have its own traditions for performing these rituals; even within one caste the performances differ according to the particular family clan and the locality. For example, *macābu byēkegu* is often celebrated on the fourth or sixth day after the birth of a child in Thimi, but it is usually performed on the sixth or tenth day in Bhaktapur. Especially the high Newar castes perform the early childhood rituals more elaborately and hire a priest to perform the *pūjā*s. I doubt that the majority of Jyāpus and lower castes had ever performed *chaiṭhī* and *nā̃ chuyegu* in the past. I agree with Gellner who says: "It is unlikely that the sacred texts describe a state of affairs once general but now abandoned; it is more probable that the texts and the *paṇḍit*s' schemas describe an ideal which those of high status (particularly kings) might enact in full, but which were never wholly practised by the vast majority" (1992: 198).

Plate 12: *Nāmakaraṇa* in Basbari/Kathmandu 2008: The child's father encourages his wife to lift the child up and down over the fire pit three times. The two priests hired to perform the ceremony are sitting in the foreground.

Plate 13: *nāmakaraṇa* in Mulpani 2008: The mother ties the sacred thread around the child's wrists, ankles and around the belly.

The early childhood rituals are performed for two reasons: Firstly, to remove the impurity caused by birth. As I have shown among the Newars, the whole *phukī* is affected by it. The rituals, which are done on the first days after the birth of a child, are clearly a women's affair. During this highly polluting period only the women of a family and the *aji* are able to touch a woman. Therefore, the *aji* is the main ritual agent at this time. She is the one who performs daily worship to the goddess Chvāsaḥ Ajimā or Hārītī for protection of the mother and child. Both mother and child are in great danger during this stage from attack by malevolent spirits. And it is the *aji* who performs the rituals on *macābu byẽkegu*. The removal of the impurity accrued by birth is not expressed so strongly among the Parbatiyās, because none of the family of a newborn child—except its mother—is affected by it. However, they ritually cleanse themselves, their clothes, and the house before the *nāmakaraṇa* is performed.

Secondly, the early childhood rituals locate the child within society. The child is given a name and a local habitation. As long as the umbilical cord has not been severed, the child belongs to its mother. Its severance marks the beginning of the process of the child's separation from its mother. Before the umbilical cord has been cut, the child is considered to be caste-less and could be adopted by anyone. With the severing of the cord the child becomes a matter of its father's patrilineage, which for its part becomes attached to the child by the impurity of birth that lasts until the purification rituals on *macābu byẽkegu*. Because of the child's affiliation to its natal lineage up to the announcement of the paternity, it is the *aji* who hands over the child to its father. Only once he has accepted the child by putting it on his lap does the senior-most woman (*nakhī*) of the household take over. She applies *tikā* to the child's forehead and massages its head with oil. For me this act clearly shows the ritual welcoming and the beginning of the incorporation of the child into its patrilineage. The acceptance of the child by the father's sisters (*nini*) is expressed on *chaiṭhī* (which is not performed by the majority of the Newars) when—one-by-one—they put the child on their laps, rub it with mustard oil and apply eye-liner round its eyes. Given the high mortality rate in former times experienced by women during and after a delivery, the acceptance of the child by the *nini*s is very important. Should the mother die, they will take care of the child. The newborn is also embedded in its natal family, which is expressed by the gifts the mother's brother (*pāju*) sends during the period between the delivery and *macābu byẽkegu.*

In the vast majority of cases Newars do not perform an elaborate version of the name-giving ritual, which is usually performed among the Parbatiyās on the eleventh day after birth. The exception among the Newars is formed by members of the high castes. The Newars usually call in a priest for the first time on *annaprāśana*, the first feeding of solid food to a child. By then at latest the child is named. The reason why the naming among the Newars is often performed by the senior-most man (*nāyaḥ*) of the household, or *phukī,* or by the child's father's sister instead of a priest might be due to economical factors. In former times the mortality rate of newborns was high, so the families may have refused to perform a costly ritual involving the services of a priest.

Since only the Parbatiyā and the Hindu Newar rituals have been dealt with in this paper, I hope that further research will outline the rituals of the Buddhist Newars, especially on *nā̃ chuyegu*. That would constitute a great enrichment of our knowledge of early childhood rituals.

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Axel Michaels

Newar Hybrid Ritual and its Language in Hindu Initiations[1]

Introduction

In his article "The Language of the Buddhist Sanskrit Texts" from 1954, John Brough aptly remarks that in comparison to texts in Classical Sanskrit, Buddhist Sanskrit works frequently appear "ungrammatical, on occasion barbarously so." And he continues: "The immediate and natural reaction of scholars accustomed to the regularity of Sanskrit was to stigmatise these shortcomings, and to attempt to remove as many irregularities as possible by forcibly emending the text" (Brough 1954: 25).

Similarly Newar ritual handbooks and other texts in Newari seem to be obscure, written in a rather fussy Sanskrit with numerous grammatical and orthographical "mistakes" and lacunae, and cheaply produced or simply copied in low-priced modern copybooks. These shortcomings have been declared (with regard to the *Svayambhūpurāṇa*) to be the result of the authors' "lack of proficiency in what to the Subcontinent was the chief language of traditional learning" (Kölver 1999: 189)—and according to Sylvain Lévi the text is written in a "barbarous style and abominable metrics" (Lévi 1905: 210).

However, whereas the anomalies of the Buddhist Sanskrit tradition were soon recognised through Edgerton's *Buddhist Hybrid Grammar and Dictionary* to be something genuine and as texts in their own right, Newar ritual handbooks continued to be treated with scepticism or curiosity. The difference is partly due to the fact that Newar ritual handbooks have yet to receive the attention they deserve. And the structural and fundamental problem behind this hierarchy of texts and contexts is likewise seldom addressed: the problem posed by the contextualisation of the texts, a typical ethno-Indological conundrum which I would like to examine in this paper.

To be sure, ritual handbooks, especially as manuscripts, are often just private notebooks that have been written and produced solely for private and practical use. They are *aide-mémoires* for the priests and therefore provisionally designed: full of trans- and overscriptions, additions, corrections, marginalia and sketchy drawings concerning for instance how and where to place ritual objects, *maṇḍala*s and *yantra*s, or the *navagraha*s (Kropf 2005). They are not meant for an audience or for publication. In the Newar context, the scribes are not always Brahmins, sometimes they are Jośis or other specialists. The "mistakes" are therefore not always a sign of linguistic incompetence

1 Parts of this paper have been read in the panel "Ritualhandbücher – Text und Kontext" at the 30th Deutschen Orientalistentag (DOT) in Freiburg, 25.9.2007. I am grateful to the participants for their comments.

but rather of the personal ways notes and memos are made. After all, these priests are more concerned with getting the ritual right rather than the text. Such personal handbooks are far more personal than the subject they are dealing with.

Any editor of such texts is confronted with problems relating to this aforementioned conundrum: should one regard the anomalies of the texts as showing a lack of knowledge of Sanskrit, as priestly and/or scribal fallibility, and if so, should the text be emended and corrected—to the extent that the original becomes scarcely recognisable? Or is the language and style of these texts a phenomenon in its own right that can be understood as a local (Newar and Newari) hybridisation of Classical Sanskrit traditions? In other words, do the texts simply show linguistic decadence, corruption and incompetence, or do they constitute a genuine and authentic genre, a linguistic and stylistic category of its own?

In the following I will argue that Newar initiation rituals and the accompanying handbooks are basically distinguished by two facts:

1. The use of the texts does not necessarily require a knowledge of Sanskrit;
2. Although seemingly written in a form of Sanskrit, the structure of the language is Newari, not Sanskrit.

In both cases, Sanskrit is on the surface while the hypertext is a local ritual and linguistic context. Both the ritual context and the structure of the language can be seen as a Newarisation of ritual traditions. The handbooks combine Newari with Sanskrit and Nepali, verses (mantras) with prose, and manuscripts with printed texts. And the ritual combines the high with the local tradition, Brahmanical rituals with non-Brahmanical rituals, Hindu ritual elements with folk customs. Such interferences between Sanskrit and Newari have been noticed before, especially with regard to Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit and the *Svayambhūpurāṇa* (Kölver 1999).

I will focus on the Hindu initiation ritual (*mekhalābandhana*, New. *kaytāpūjā*) among the Newar farmers of Bhaktapur, but despite this limitation I regard my argument as valid for the following categories of such texts:

- Personal handbooks belonging to the priests, not normally printed, but occasionally microfilmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project; such texts are generally written in a mixture of Sanskrit, Newari and Nepali.
- Printed manuals in Sanskrit, often published with a commentary or translation in Nepali; such texts are used by many *pūjāri*s during their rituals.
- Documents from private persons or from the Guṭhi Saṃsthāna related to the rituals performed.
- Grey literature (pamphlets etc.) from ritual organisations.

The argument does not concern ritual handbooks in Sanskrit (*sūtra*s, *smṛti*s, *nibandha*s, *vidhi*s etc.) from the Great Tradition with a pan-Indian distribution, and only partly elaborated ritual texts in Sanskrit written by known learned scholars and locally published by the Mahendra-Saṃskṛta-Viśvavidyālaya, Tribhuvan Viśvavidyālaya, Nepāla Rājakīya Prajñā-Pratiṣṭhāna or private publishers.

The example from the loin-cloth ritual (*mekhalābandhana*)

Before I come to my main point, I would like to present an example from a *Daśakarmavidhi* manuscript belonging to a Rājopādhyāya family of Bhaktapur, the *mekhalābandhana* section. For reasons of convenience I have numbered the ritual sequences in this excerpt from 1 to 48. The Newari sentences are underlined and the mantras appear in bold.

No. 1–15 are preparatory and include several purifying ritual elements that in many respects are "typically" Newar, e.g. worshipping the absorbing stones in front of the house (6), sprinkling water with an *arghapātra* (7), throwing pieces of dried fruit and flowers from a wooden measuring vessel (8–9), worshipping the lamp, the wooden measuring vessel and the iron keys (10), paring the nails by the barber's wife (12), the nails being collected by the father's sister (13), and bathing the boy with water mixed with pulverised oilcake and a special mixture of herbs (14).

The boy is brought to the sacred arena, where the main ritual starts with *nīrājan* or *nirañjan(a) yāy(e)gu* (16). This is followed by waving a small clay saucer with burning coals in which a lit wick of raw cotton, mustard seeds, a flower and rice are all offered in order to destroy evil and to remove sins and obstacles. It is touched and then brought to the threshold stone (*pikhālākhu*). This is again followed by various purifying rites—among them *svagā*. The climax is of course the binding and worship of the loincloth (22–23), followed by various strengthening and purifying rites such as *pratiṣṭhā* (27, 32), in which popped rice is thrown over the boy by his relatives, and *siphārati* (31), where a light (Skt. *ārati*) is waved with a *sukūda* lamp (in front of an im-age or person) together with a wooden measuring vessel (*siphā*).

The ritual is concluded by various rites that are characterised by again purifying and blessing the boy and the participants, as well as by paying the *brāhmaṇa* priest (33–48).

Daśakarmavidhi[2], *mekhalābandhana* section

1. *atha mekhalāvandhana.*
   Now the binding of the girdle (*mekhalā*).
2. *vidhitheṃ kalasa tiyeke.*
   Prepare the sacred vase (*kalaśa*) according to the rules.
3. *vrāhmanena vidhivat kalaśārcanaṃ kuryāt yathākarmatvaṃ.*
   The Brahmin should worship the sacred vase at the auspicious time.

2 No title page, anonymous author. Handbook of Hari Sharan Rajopadhyaya, Lalache, Bhaktapur. No date. Nepali paper, 84 fols., incomplete. Size: ca. 28 x 9 cm, 17–19 lines per folio, Devanāgarī script, black ink, occasional underlining of the mantras with yellow (*kuṃkuma*) and red (*haridrā*) colour, some marginalia. The manuscript has been edited by Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 227–35).

4. *thaṃkāli nāyakanaṃ kumāra lāsālāhaye svastikāsana taye.* ***oṁ (a)suraghneti***[3].
The *thakāli* or head of the family (*nāyaka*, New. *nāyaḥ*) should bring the boy by the hand and make him sit on a seat with *svastikā* and (recite) ***oṁ asuraghnam...*** (ṚVKh 2.4.1)
5. *nirma[n]chanādi,* ***oṁ raksohaṇaṃ valagahanti, adhy avocad adhi*** *iti,* ***oṁ tejo si.***
Purifying etc. (reciting) ***raksohaṇaṃ valagahanaṃ...*** (VS 5.23), ***adhy avocad adhi...*** (VS 16.5) and ***tejo 'si...*** (VS 22.1).
6. *saliṃ milā pikhālaṃkhu choye.*
Send the clay cup with fire to the absorbing stone (*pikhālākhu*).
7. *arghapātrayā laṃkhana hāye,* ***oṁ devasya tvā.***
Sprinkle water from the *arghyapātra* (reciting) ***devasya tvā...*** (VS 1.10).
8. *si pene,* ***oṁ tava vāyu vṛhaspate.***
Throw pieces of fruits[4] (reciting) ***tava vāyav ṛtaspate...*** (VS 27.34).
9. *kumārana kalaśayāke ke tānake.*
The boy should worship the sacred vase by throwing rice.
10. *mata pha tācā pūjā.* ***oṁ agnir mūrdheti, oṁ trātāram indram avitāram indraṁ have have suhavaṃ śūram indraṃ hvayāmi śakraṃ puruhūtam indraṁ svasti no maghavā dhātv indraḥ.***
Worship the lamp, the (wooden) measuring vessel[5] and the (iron) keys (reciting) ***agnir mūrdhā divaḥ...*** (VS 3.12) (and) ***trātāram indram...*** (VS 20.50).
11. *svagoṇa bīye.* ***oṁ yad adya ka, oṁ tvaṃ yaviṣṭha dā, oṁ dadhikrāvṇo, oṁ yā phalini.***
Give *svagā*[6] (reciting) ***yad adya kac...*** (VS 33.35), ***tvaṃ yaviṣṭha dāśuṣo...*** (VS 13.52), ***dadhikrāvṇo...*** (VS 23.32) (and) ***yāḥ phalinīr...*** (VS 12.89).
12. *siphārati yāṅāvali lusi dhene.*
Let the nails be pared after having performed *siphārati*[7].
13. *ninina lusi phaye.*
The father's sister should collect the nails.
14. *khau sarvoṣadhi, tayā kumāra snāna yācake.*
Let the boy take a bath after anointing the body with *khau*[8] and *sarvoṣadhi*[9].
15. *lā sālāva nāpāyā thāyasa duta yene.*
Take the boy back inside holding his hand and make him sit on his previous place.

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3 *a-* is added to *suraghneti* by a second scribe.
4 Meaning unclear, possibly derived from *si* "fruits" and *pene* "to spread".
5 New. *pha*, a measuring pot for 8 *mānā* of rice (Nep. *pāthi*).
6 Nep. *sagūn* i.e. a mixture of rice, red powder, flowers etc. for *ṭīkā*.
7 *Ārati* using a mixture of fruits with dried fried rice (*lasa*).
8 A kind of soap, pulverised oil-cake.
9 Available in local shops.

16. *nimaṃchanādi*.
(Again) purifying etc.
17. *matā pha tāḍacā, svagoṇanaṃ tvāye*.
(Again) waving with (a plate of) *svagã* and the lamp, the (wooden) measuring vessel and the (iron) keys.
18. *kumārayā lāhatisa svasti coye*.
Draw a *svastika* on the hands of the boy.
19. *pātayā kastā*[10] *tayā svagoṇa biye*.
Give *svagã* together with a silk-made loin cloth (*kaytā*).
20. *velā julaṅāva thakālinaṃ kaetā cike*.
The *thakālī* should fasten the loin-cloth at the proper (i.e. auspicious) time.
21. *veda,* ***oṁ yenendrāya vṛha(spa)ti vāsaḥ paryyadadhād amṛtaṃ tene tvā paridhanyāyuṣe dīrghāyastvāya valāya varccase***
Recitation of the Veda:[11] ***yenendrāya...*** (PG 2.2.7).
22. *graṃthi ja vasaṃ lātake*.
Put the knot on the right side (of the boy's hips).
23. *graṃthi pūjā*.
Worship the knot.
24. *snāna*.
Ritual bath.
25. *candana svagoṇa*.
(Give *tikā* of) sandalwood (and) *svagã*.
26. *puṣpaṃ nama*.
Salutation (with) flowers.
27. *patiṣṭhā*[12], ***mano jūti***.
(Throw) popped rice (on the boy reciting) ***mano jūtir...*** (VS 2.13).
28. *thvate dhunanāva suyāgu kaetā vasa tayā svagoṇa biye uthe*.
After finishing this, give *svagã* together with a stitched loin cloth (*kaytā*).
29. *vasa hlāye veda,* ***oṁ vasoḥ pavitram asi, dīrghāyustvāya***.
(In the same way[13]) hand over the dress, recite the Veda ***vasoḥ pavitram asi...*** (VS 1.3, and) ***dīrghāyutvāya...*** (KS 3.9.6).
30. *vasa tiyeke*.
Put on the dress.
31. *siphārati*.
(Perform) *ārati* with *siphã*.
32. *pratiṣṭhā*.
(Throw) popped rice.

10 Read New. *kaytā*; according to DCN *kastā* is "a kind of garment", here it is the loincloth.
11 Although the boy is not entitled to receive the Veda, the main actions are liturgically accompanied by Vedic verses.
12 Read *pratiṣṭhā*.
13 He should give *svagã* reciting "*oṁ yad adya kac...*" (VS 33.35) etc. as before.

33. *annasaṃkalpa.*
Ritual decision for the gift of food (to the priest).
34. *devadaksiṇā.*
(Give) *dakṣiṇā* to the deities (i.e. the *kalaśa*s etc.).
35. *vrāhmaṇādi sarveṣāṃ dakṣiṇā.*
(Give) *dakṣiṇā* to the Brahmins etc. and all other (ritual specialists?).[14]
36. *vācanaṃ,* ***svasti bhavamto me brūtām svasti.***
Blessings (*vācana*) (reciting) ***svasti bhavaṃ...***
37. *trir ācamya.*
Sip three times water (from the palm of the hand).
38. *nyāsa līnaṃ.*
Dissolve the mental commitment (*nyāsa*).
39. *kalasavisarjanaṃ,* ***ud vayaṃ tamasvaḥ*** *iti.*
Remove the sacred vases (reciting) ***ud vayaṃ tamasas...*** (VS 27.10 = 20.21).
40. *jvalānhaskanasa kalasayā laṃkhana hāye jvalānaskanasa.*
Sprinkle water from the sacred vase over the pots of vermilion and the ritual mirror.
41. *ghaḍiyā laṃkha tayā abhiṣeka,* ***oṁ devasya tvā.***
Ritual washing (*abhiṣeka*) with water from the clock water pot (*ghaḍiyā*)[15] (reciting) ***devasya tvā...*** (VS 1.10).
42. *caṃdana,* ***oṁ yad adya ka.***
(Give a *tikā* of) sandalwood (to all participants reciting) ***yad adya kac...*** (VS 33.35).
43. *siṃdhūra,* ***oṁ tvaṃ yaviṣṭha dā.***
(Give a *tikā* of) *sindūra* (to all participants reciting) ***tvaṃ yaviṣṭha dāśuṣo...*** (VS 13.52).
44. *svagoṇa,* ***oṁ dadhikrāvṇo.***
(Give) *svagā* (to all participants reciting) ***dadhikrāvṇo...*** (VS 23.32).
45. *āśīrvāda,* ***oṁ dīrghāyuṣ ṭa 'oṣadhi.***
(Give) blessings (reciting) ***dīrghāyus ta oṣadhe...*** (VS 12.100).
46. *sakalastaṃ biye.*
Give (this blessing) to everybody.
47. *sākṣi thāye.*
Release (the sun etc.) as the witness(es).
48. *iti mekhalāvandhana samāpta.*
Here ends (the chapter on) the binding of the girdle.

14 *Jośi, ācāju* etc.

15 According to the tradition, one *jośi* should tell the accurate ritual time (Nep./New. *sāit*) using a clock water pot and the water from that pot should be used for the *abhiṣeka.*

Sanskrit, Pseudo-Sanskrit or Newar Hybrid Sanskrit?

The tendency in Classical Newari to borrow from other languages, especially from Sanskrit, has often been noted (Joergensen 1931: 12, Kölver & Śākya 1985: 27). Estimates of the proportion of *tadbhava* and *tatsama* loan words range between 10 and 25 percent (DCN, p. xii). This inclination towards Sanskrit is even stronger in ritual and more recent texts: "However, as we come to later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts there is a marked tendency to borrow, and use learned vocabulary—so much so that very often only the grammar of the text is Newari, the lexical items nearly all from loanwords" (DCN, p. xiii).

The *mekhalābandhana* section of this *Daśakarmavidhi* is no exception to the rule and confirms what can be observed in similar texts: the language of these ritual handbooks differs from Sanskrit *paddhati*s or *vidhi*s through a number of linguistic peculiarities. The following is a (partial) list of such features:

1. Syntactical characteristics
- Words are separated without following the *sandhi* rules (similar to Jaina-Sanskrit: see Maurer 1962: 136–7, Balbir 1982: 53–5): *graṃthi pūjā* (23) or *mekhalāvandhana samāpta* (48).
- Vernacularisitation of verb forms for the ritual instructions: preference for Sanskrit nouns and Newari verbs.
- Associative use of mantras: See, for instance, the use of the Ṛgvedic mantra *dadhikrāvṇa* (ṚV 4.39.6, VS 32.32) together with New. *svagã* (*saguṇa*), i.e. diluted yoghurt (*dadhi*), although this mantra from the *Ṛgveda* is related to the Dadhikrāvan horse (cf. Deshpande 1996: 416).

2. Lexical characteristics
- Bilinguality: use of vernacular languages such as Newari and Nepali together with Sanskrit; the Newari portions have been underlined in the sample given above.
- Sanskritisation of Newari words: *svagoṇanam* (perhaps instrumental case in Newari if read as *svagoṇanaṃ*) for *svagã*.

3. Morphology
- Absent or corrupt case suffixes: *kalasa* (2), *snāna* (24), *candana* (25), but, for instance, *puṣpam* (26)*; samāpta* (48).
- Arbitrary or Newari case suffixes in Sanskrit words: *vidhitheṃ* (2), *arghapatrayā* (7), *kumārana* (9), *kumārayā* (18); this phenomenon goes along with a nasalation of Sanskrit words, especially when combined with *-theṃ*, *-tvaṃ* or *-thyaṃ*.

4. Orthography
- Inconsistency or spelling "mistakes", probably due to the background of the Newari script, such as the mixture of sibilants: *saṣṭi* (11), *abhiseka* (17), *āsirvāda* (12, 18), *candana* (25) and *caṃdana* (42); (cf. also Gutschow & Kölver & Shresthacarya 1987: 11).

- Frequent interchanges (see Brough 1954: 354): *a* and *ā*; *i* and *ī*; *u* and *ū*; *e*, *ya* and *ye*; *o*, *va* and *vo*; *ja* and *ya*; *jña* and *g(n)ya*; *ṭa* and *ta*; *śa* and *sa*; *ṣa* and *kha*; *va* and *ba,* etc.

Given these and many other features,[16] is this Sanskrit "a jargon born of ignorance of 'good' Sanskrit" (Salomon 1989: 285)? Or is it an independent Sanskrit, which can be compared with Buddhist, or Jaina Sanskrit? Should it be called vernacular or colloquial Sanskrit? It is certainly not the Sanskrit of a closed community, school or sect; it is also not to be regarded as vernacular Sanskrit or dialect. And nor is it a Sanskrit that is developing into a kind of middle-Indian language. It is, I would argue, a language that could and should be called Pseudo-Sanskrit or, better, Newar Hybrid Sanskrit, because the text consists of calques from standard Sanskrit texts and mantras. However, despite its Sanskrit title and appearance, the text remains in its syntactical and contextual structure a Newar and a Newari text.

The *mekhalābandhana* portion of the *Daśakarmavidhi* has 256 words, but only 94 are in Newari. In the *ṣaṣṭhījāgaraṇa* section the relation is 127 to 21. This clearly shows a dominance of Sanskrit. However, on closer inspection it appears to be a text in Newari because nearly all the Sanskrit words are nouns, if one leaves out the mantras and words like *atha*, *iti, yathā* etc. The grammatically important instructions for the ritual actions are in Newari or given implicitly in the Sanskrit nouns (e.g. *snāna*, *pūjā* etc.).

Such use of ritual terms or specialised ritual language is widespread. The Latin liturgy in Christian services is perhaps the most prominent example. Likewise in the Indian or South-Asian context one encounters a frequent change between sacred and vernacular languages. Thus, flowers, water or rice become ritual flowers, ritual water or ritual rice just by a terminological change: *pāni* ("water") becomes *jal*, *mīthai* ("sweets") becomes *naivedya*, *phul* ("flower") becomes *puṣpa*, *bati* ("light") becomes *dīp*, *camal* ("rice") becomes *akṣetā* (Skt. *akṣata*) (cf. Humphrey & Laidlaw 1994: 120). However, the use of a leaning word should not be confused with language proficiency. For reasons of prestige the language of the text is adapted to Sanskrit but not *vice versa* (cf. Salomon 1989: 286). In this way a collection of Sanskrit words and Vedic mantra quotations give the pretence of a Sanskrit text that essentially retains its Newari structure. I will return to this point later.

The Newarisation of the ritual

The hybridity of the language corresponds to the hybridity of the ritual. What on the surface looks like a Brahmanical *upanayana* or *vratabandha(na)* ritual (cf. Michaels 2004: 71–110; Zotter 2009) triggered by several Vedic recitations, is in reality a rural and localised event enriched by ritual elements from the Great Tradition.

16 E.g., to substitute singular for plural, neuters for masculines, and many features regarding verbs (see Kölver 1999 describing the language of the *Svayambhūpurāṇa*).

Thus, in an *upanayana* ritual that follows the common Gṛhyasūtras or modern ritual handbooks, the central elements are the tonsure, including the binding of the tuft (*śikhā*), the girdling with a *muñja* girdle, the investment with the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*), the Vedic instruction, especially the teaching of the *sāvitrī* hymn, the lighting of the fire, the commencement of study (*vedārambha*), the *deśāntara* rite, and the ritual conclusion of the study period (*samāvartana*). Except for the tonsure, none of this is found in the Newar *kaytāpujā* or *mekhalābandhana* rite.

It seems that the *kaytāpūjā* is an initiation that has transported ritual elements from the *upanayana* into a context dominated by special Newar rites. To give but a few examples:

- The cutting of the nails (*lusi dhenegu*): lit. "to pare the nails": the ritual or symbolic paring of the toenails by a barber's wife is part of the body purification prior to any life-cycle ritual. It is often accompanied by colouring the feet with red colour (*alaḥ*).
- *kisli* (var. *kisalī*): from *ki*, "rice" and *salī*, "small clay saucer"; offering of a small clay saucer with rice, a areca nut and a small coin, often placed on the *kalaśa* or hung from the ceiling or offered to a deity that invokes Mother Earth (represented by the clay pot), Dhānya-Lakṣmī (grains), a minister (nut) and the king or the population (coin) as witnesses to the rituals. *Kisli* is an essential part of *mimicā*.
- *mimicā*: small tray, a small flat plate made of reed with *kisli* as well as oil in a clay saucer, flour, *svāvā* ("flower rice") and a coin and sometimes meat; given to the barber.
- *matā-phā-tācā-pūjā*: lit. "worship with lamp, measuring vessel and iron key(s)": purifying worship with lamp (*matā*, often *sukūdā*), a measuring vessel (*phā*) and iron key(s) (*tacā*), often held together by two hands.
- *nīrājan* or *nirañjan(a) yāy(e)gu*: from (Skt.) *nīrājana*, "making bright" or (Skt.) *nirañjana*, "spotless" (cf. Gellner 1992: 361, n. 17): waving with a small clay saucer with burning coals in which a lit wick of raw cotton, mustard seeds, a flower and rice are offered in order to destroy evil, to remove sins and obstacles. It is touched and then brought to the threshold stone (*pikhālākhu*). See also DCN s.v. *nirmmachanādi*: "a ritual act of putting yellow mustard seed and reddish brown mustard seed in a small clay pot and make hands warm and then touch one's eyes".
- The sending of a share of the sacrificial gifts to the ritual absorbing stone (*pikhālākhu*) in front of the house.
- *chvāsaḥ*: protective stone with a defined catchment area of households, which absorbs ritual waste and impure material, e.g. impure food, left-overs, the umbilical cord, and the dresses and beds of a dead person which are later collected by ritual specialists, e.g. the Jugīs. The stone is sometimes also called *kalādyaḥ* (although some insist that this concerns a different place), a non-iconical female deity whose name is derived from *kalaṃka*, "unclean, impure things, left-overs."

However, it is often unclear which deity resides in the *chvāsaḥ*. It is often regarded as a female mother or grandmother deity (*aji*, *ajimā*), often also called Chvāsaḥ Ajimā, but it is also believed that the ancestors (New. *pitri*) and ghosts (*piśāca*) reside there (cf. Toffin 1984: 486, Gellner 1988: 107).

- *siphārati*, *siphã luyegu*: lit. "to pour (ritual fruits) from the wooden measuring vessel (*siphã*)" (from Skt. *śrī* and *phala*, cf. Skt. *puṣpavṛṣṭi*, "rain of flowers"): pouring of small pieces of ritual fruits and flowers over the heads of the participants, often done with a *sipha* (mod. New. *siphã*), "a wooden measuring vessel," with a mixture of any fruit pieces and popped rice (*lāvā*), flowers, coins etc. In Buddhist rituals, it is generally poured from the bell.
- The ritual welcoming (*lasa kusaḥ*) at the threshold of a house or a courtyard, often performed by the elderly women before or during a ritual. The received person has their hands washed with added broken flattened rice (*cvakā baji*).
- *svagã, sagã, svagoṇa,* (Nep.) *sagūn,* (Skt.) *saguṇa*—"well-wishing food" (lit. "with good qualities, with virtue"): presentation of certain items such as new dresses and rice, dried fish, red powder, flowers, boiled eggs, coins, liquor (*aila*), ginger, soybeans etc. when giving the auspicious *tikā*; in the Parbatīya tradition, *sagūn* is sometimes just a *tikā* with yoghurt (cf. Gellner 1988: 108).

None of these ritual elements are described or listed in the traditional Gṛhyasūtra texts on initiation. Nor are they limited to initiations, for they are often seen in further life-cycle and other Newar rituals.

However, the main point is that *kaytāpūjā* follows the Sanskritisation pattern by imitating the loincloth element and using Vedic mantras, but in its structure it remains a Newar ritual which originally probably followed other models. It lacks the educational and the sacrificial aspect. It is Brahmanical by the fact that Brahmin priests conduct major parts of it, but in most parts other ritual specialists such as the *jośi*, *tini* or *karmācārya* as well as the eldest of the clan (*nāyaḥ*), the barber, the father's sister (*nini*) or the *pāju* etc. take over the performance of the ritual. We can therefore see that the Newarisation of Hindu initiation rituals entails a great number of specific linguistic and ritualistic elements that are likely to be overseen if one looks at such rituals from the purist's point of view.

The functionality of ritual languages

As Sheldon Pollock has shown in his book *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (2006), the claim to grammatical and linguistic correctness has much to do with (royal) power and prestige as well as claims to exclusivity and membership of an elite. The Brahmanical administrators of the Sanskrit language effortlessly disregarded grammatically corrupt texts. Indologists, too, tend to depreciate hybrid forms of Sanskrit. Thus while editing and brilliantly analysing a series of Newari documents, Bernhard Kölver and Hemrāj Śākya (1985: 27)

spoke of "much distorted" Sanskrit texts with "morphological malformations", "syntactical clumsiness" or "clumsy expansions of the standard text".

However, such texts, simple as they may be, reveal valuable information on ritual survivals—"Überlebsel" as Hillebrandt (1897: 3) called them—or on local practice and terminology that is missing in other texts. In other words, many ritual elements or regional specialities can only be found in the personal handbooks of the priests, or by observation of the rituals in the field. In vain one looks, for example, for a myth that explains the *ihi* marriage of girls to the *bel* fruit, sometimes called Suvarṇakumāra, who Hindus regard as Viṣṇu or Śiva, Buddhists, however, as Buddha. It is only in a text called *Pāṇigrahaṇavidhi* (ed. Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 258–63) that we find a passage which declares this "marriage" to be an initiation (*upanayam*, sic!, read: *upanayanam*) of the girls, thus opening it to another interpretation than the one usually assumed.

Moreover, the notion of the purity of Sanskrit mostly overlooks socio-linguistic aspects und linguistic developments.[17] "We find in it [i.e. classical Sanskrit, AM]", says Emenau, "no dialects, no chronological developments, except loss and at times invasions from the vernaculars of the users, and no divergences" (cited after Deshpande 1996: 401). Modern ritual handbooks are texts, characterised, as we have seen, by the fact that Vedic Sanskrit and classical Sanskrit mixes with vernaculars and even dialects; but they are not second-class texts. However, influenced by Pāṇineian ideas of Sanskrit as an ideal, eternal language, quite a few scholars remain sceptical about non-standardised texts. This attitude "turned us", as Ramesh (1984: 44) said, "blind to changes and development of a living language and trained us to dismiss all of them as mistakes resulting from ignorance or half knowledge."

Deviations from Pāṇineian Sanskrit do not make for an ungrammatical text. It has been demonstrated by Richard Salomon (1989: 284) and others that from early on, Sanskrit has been a living language that has adapted to local situations and conditions. And it has done so without giving up the claim to be a sacred language by maintaining the formal and technical aspects, as well as the recitations, in a more or less unchanged form, while expressing the operational and pragmatic aspects in vernaculars. However, it is precisely this that makes for a loss in language competence, and this is why I propose to speak of Newar Hybrid Sanskrit and the Newarisation of such rituals.

Quite assuredly, Newar Hybrid Sanskrit is legitimate Sanskrit, because correct and wrong Sanskrit only exists when the authors demonstrate that they master correct Sanskrit.[18] This is not the case with the personal handbooks used by most Newar Brahmin priests (in Bhaktapur). In which case we are dealing more with what Ramesh calls "functional Sanskrit" than right or wrong Sanskrit.

17 Exceptions to this view are expressed in Brough 1954, Ramesh 1984, Salomon 1989, Deshpande 1993.

18 Examples are given by Salomon 1989.

Conclusions

I could not conclude better than with the final observations of Richard Salomon in his seminal article "Linguistic variability in post-Vedic Sanskrit". Salomon first remarks that Sanskrit, even if it is the language of the elites, must maintain a certain degree of flexibility when it is used for practical, ritual and learned purposes. For these aims it sometimes is necessary to exclude the problem of correct or wrong Sanskrit: "Given this approach, it is undeniable that the degree of variability in Sanskrit as the language was actually used through history was much greater than it is usually realized, and that the search for linguistic perfection was more an ideal than a reality. While Sanskrit is indeed notably resistant to dialectical variation, it was nonetheless inevitably subject to various forces of linguistic change, which the traditional models could only retard and minimize but never wholly suppress" (Salomon 1989: 291).

I would add to this that Hindu ritual handbooks are not only related to the authority of the Veda and the sacred Sanskrit language, but also to another "language", i.e. the language of the ritual and its peculiar grammar (Michaels 2007), or to the dynamic and ever-varying process that intertextually frames the rituals.

Viewed intertextually, ritual handbooks must be regarded as a corpus with various windows—to the Vedic context, the ritual practice, forms of recitation, the participants and audiences, as well as to the participant observers. Without these contexts the text of a ritual handbook is almost incomprehensible. Ritual objects, paraphernalia and items, ingredients, objects or specialists that often are not even mentioned in the text must be considered—to the extent that some rituals can only be understood when they are observed.

It then often becomes obvious that the ritual handbook also has a demonstrative function that makes the Brahmin a special ritual specialist. The book is his sign of status—in distinction to the drum of the shaman (see Oppitz 1986). Frequently the Brahmin arrives at the ritual place simply with his book wrapped in a newspaper or plastic bag. He brings it and shows it even when he does not use it.

Given this, ritual handbooks appear not as a separate but as an essential part of rituals. Their domain lies in the representational and procedural structures. They constitute only one side of a narrative, to which many ritual specialists and participants contribute. This perspective often includes orally transmitted practical knowledge as an ineluctable part of rituals.

Thus, in rituals Brahmins and their texts might have a higher authority than other specialists, but only when it concerns their domain, i.e. the Veda and the (Sanskrit) book, but not because of the logocentric dominance of certain material. If such sources are not privileged one truly encounters the often claimed confluence of Indology and anthropology (Dumont). And then the real ritual text reveals itself in its intertextual dimensions.

To sum up, I have tried to confirm that Hindu initiation rituals and their handbooks are not, in the Newar context, linguistically or ritually corrupt forms of a longstanding ritual Brahmanical tradition. On the contrary, by complex processes of ritual transfer

and invention, and of merging and supplementing ritual and textual elements, various ritual specialists, not only Brahmins, create a new and specific form of Hindu initiation that deserves to be treated—in Don Handelman's words—"in its own right".

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Niels Gutschow

The *Ihi* Marriage among the Newars of Bhaktapur, Nepal: Spatial Connotations of an Initiation Ritual

The setting: Urban space – a stage for initiation rituals

By the end of the first millennium A.D. quite a number of settlements had developed within the narrow confines of the Kathmandu Valley. The bottom of the valley was a lake in prehistoric times, the deposits of which invited an extremely intensive form of agriculture with two yearly crops. Crafts and trade added to this natural wealth to allow the emergence of three large urban clusters as centres of royal power: Bhaktapur, Patan and Kathmandu (Gutschow 1982).

The clusters of earlier settlements somehow survived to become quarters (New. *tvaḥ*, Nep. *ṭol*) of a continuous urban fabric. The borders of these quarters are annually reconfirmed by processions of the Navadurgā troupe of goddesses and gods. On yet another level of spatial organization, the sections of the urban territory (*ilākā*) centre around non-iconic shrines dedicated to the nine protective Mother Goddesses, to Gaṇeśa or to Bhairava (Gutschow & Michaels 2005: 16–22). All of these shrines call for blood sacrifices. Each quarter or even sub-quarter has its own non-iconic Gaṇeśa shrine, which receives a variety of offerings (*pūjā*) during life-cycle or annual rituals prior to the enactment of the main event. In the case of *ihi*, Gaṇeśa is worshipped by the eldest woman (*nakhī*) of the lineage prior to the feeding of the girl (*ihimacā nakegu*) and prior to proceeding to the ritual site on the first day of the *ihi* ritual. The blood of a goat is offered to the deity presiding over the section in which the residence of the organizer of the *ihi* ritual is located, the goat's head being divided into nine pieces, which are then offered to nine privileged girls, the *navakanyā*. The goat is consumed as part of a feast held for the girl initiates on the first day of the *ihi* ritual.

During the first feeding of solid food to children at the age of five to eight months (*annaprāśana*, see Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 40–51) the ritual ends with the first outing of the child in the arms of its maternal uncle (*pāju*) to the deity of the *ilākā*, upon which occasion the child's head is touched the stone representing the deity. With this gesture the child takes the first step in a gradual process of becoming a social being. It has left the confines of the house to move within a defined area of urban space.

A few years later, girls explore a larger realm on the occasion of the *ihi* ritual when they visit the homes of those families into whose clan they will be admitted, whereas in the initiation ritual of boys (*vratabandha* or *kaytāpūjā*) the initiates have to be prevented from crossing the borders of the wider urban territory.

Plate 1 (opposite page): Bhaktapur, the urban sphere as experienced by Benita Basukala from the quarter of Byasi between mid-January and early May 2001. Routes are indicated which led Benita Basukala within the two weeks prior to her *ihi* marriage on 29 January to the houses of her paternal lineage (nos. 1, 2), her paternal great-grandmother's family (3), her paternal grand-aunts (4, 5, 6, 10) and their daughters (11, 12). Finally she visited her maternal grandfather (13) and the maternal uncle of her mother (14). The first offerings on the occasion of the *ihi* ritual and during the concluding visit to the Kaumārī shrine are dedicated to Chumā Gaṇeśa, the non-iconic protective deity of her quarter. The day after the *ihi* ritual she visited the shrine of Kaumārī, the third of the eight protective Mother Goddesses (Aṣṭamātṛka) of Bhaktapur, who presides over the south. On the day of Tadhi—two days after the Indestructible Third (Akṣaya Tṛtīyā) in early May—she offered a duck at the shrine of Kvathusubya, which houses the lineage deity, the *dugudyaḥ* of her clan, to confirm her temporary membership.

The Eight Mothers Goddesses (Aṣṭamātṛkā) collectively protect the urban habitat: Their non-iconic shrines encircle the historic core, marking symbolically the cardinal and intermediate directions of the universe. The encircled urban space all but attains the quality of a *temenos*, the sacred territory of a temple (*templum*) which invites one to pause and contemplate (*contemplari*) (Assmann 2008). The city is indeed a realm or field (*kṣetra*) that is imbued with special qualities. Besides their place within the pantheon of the Great Tradition of Hinduism, the non-iconic deities of the *ilākā*, which demand blood sacrifices, function as the landmarks within a universal religion of place.

Prior to the *ihi* ritual, a ritual specialist (*ācāju*) worships the Nine Goddesses. Starting in the east he collects the power of these deities, materialized in soot produced in the course of a processional circumambulation of the urban centre prior to the ritual. Bhaktapur's power places convene, as it were, to witness the girls' admission to society. In a concluding rite, the *ihi* girl visits the shrine of the third of the Eight Mother Goddesses, Kaumārī (see plate 1), on the day after her marriage to the Golden Boy.

On yet another level, the notion of *deśa*, a territory between two rivers, plays an important role, distinguishing as it does an auspicious and pure continuum of space from a limitless and unordered, potentially chaotic one. In Bhaktapur, this territory is called Kvapade (*kvapa* – New. for Bhaktapur and *de* for Skt. *deśa*), the city's two rivers being the Hanumante in the south and the Kasankhusi in the north (Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 16–20). In the initiation rituals of boys the initiates have to be prevented from crossing these rivers. The two rivers thus mark the borders of a pure territory. Corpses, for instance, are taken across them for cremation beyond the confines of the *deśa* (Gutschow & Michaels 2005: 26).

The character of the *ihi* marriage as an initiation ritual is strikingly confirmed by the fact that the girls are allowed to feed the ancestors. The symbolic representations of these ancestors as non-iconic deities, collectively called *dugudyaḥ,* receive the paraphernalia of the *ihi* ritual a few months later. Altogether 151 stones representing ancestor-deities have been identified beyond the urban centre, for the most part at the embankments of rivers and ponds (Gutschow & Michaels 2005: 73).

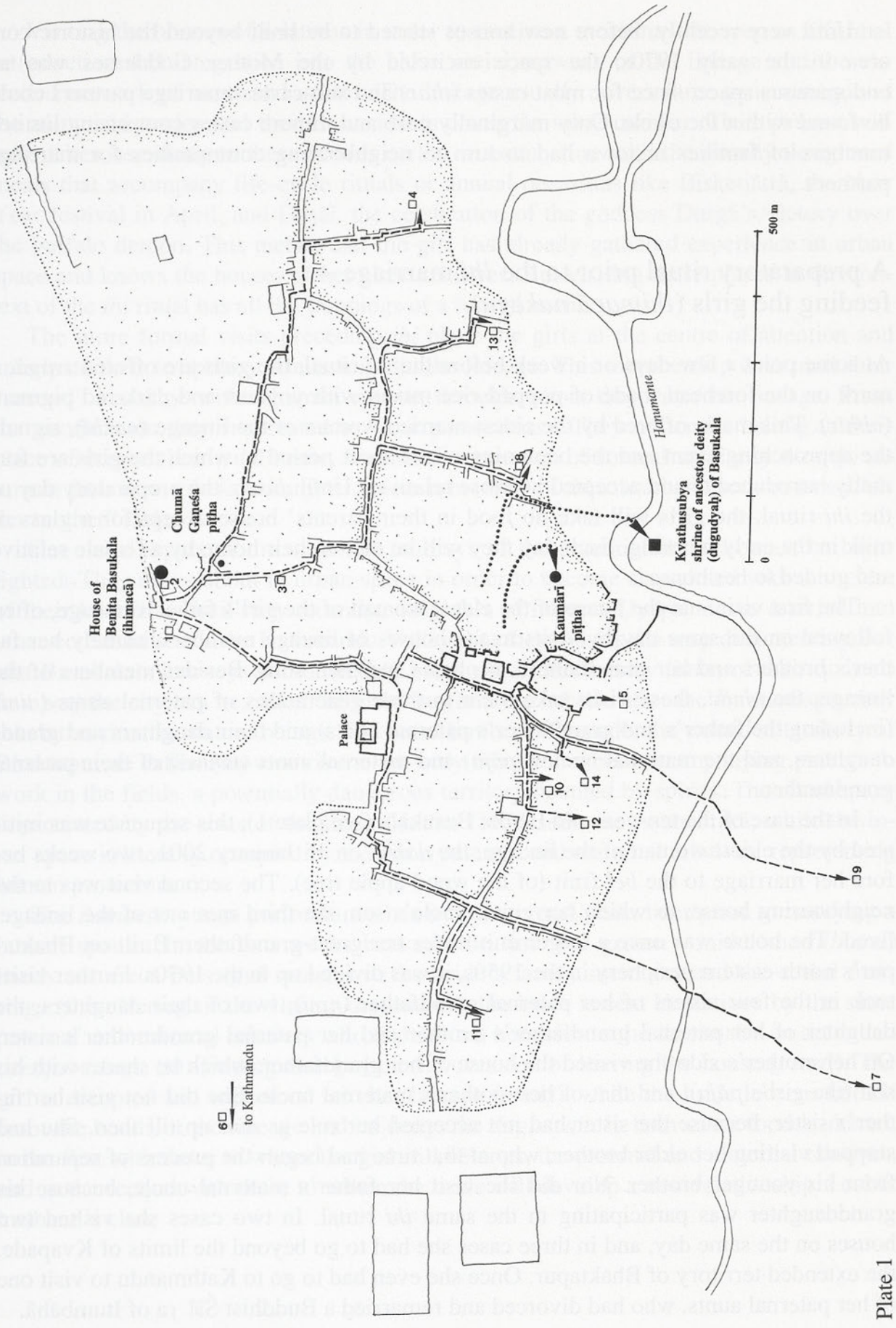
House of Benita Basukala (ihimacā)
Chumā Gaṇeśa pīṭha
Palace
Kaumārī pīṭha
Kvathusubya shrine of ancestor deity (dugudyaḥ) of Basukala
Hanumante
500 m
0
to Kathmandu
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14

Plate 1

Until very recently, before new houses started to be built beyond the historic core area in the early 1970s, the space encircled by the Mother Goddesses was an endogamous space, since for most castes (*thar*) and sub-castes marriage partners could be found within the circle. Only marginally pure and impure castes comprising limited numbers of families in town had to turn to neighbouring communities for marriage partners.

A preparatory ritual prior to the *ihi* marriage – feeding the girls (*ihimacā nakegu*)

At some point a few days or a week before the *ihi* ritual, the girls are offered *svagã*, a mark on the forehead made of popped rice mixed with yoghurt and dark red pigment (*abhīr*). This mark, offered by the eldest married woman of the lineage (*nakhĩ*), signals the approaching event and the beginning of the short period in which the girls are formally introduced to and accepted by close relatives. Until *dusva*, the preparatory day of the *ihi* ritual, the girls will take no food in their parents' house except for a glass of milk in the early morning. Each day they will be met at their home by a female relative and guided to her house.

The first visit is to the house of the eldest woman of the girl's father's lineage, often followed on the same day by visits to the houses of lineage members, namely her father's brothers and her grandfather's nephews and their sons. Besides members of the lineage, the *phukĩ*, these visits take them to three generations of paternal aunts (*nini*) (including the father's and grandfather's paternal aunts) and their daughters and granddaughters, and the maternal uncles (*pāju*) and maternal aunts (*taḥmā*) of their paternal grandmother.

In the case of the ten-year-old Benita Basukala (see plate 1), this sequence was initiated by the eldest woman of the lineage, the *nakhĩ*, on 15 January 2001, two weeks before her marriage to the *bel* fruit (of the wood apple tree). The second visit was to the neighbouring house, in which her grand-uncle's son, the third member of the lineage, lived. The house was once a larger unit under her great-grandfather. Built on Bhaktapur's north-eastern periphery in the 1950s, it was divided up in the 1970s. Further visits took in the four sisters of her paternal grandfather (*nini*), two of their daughters, the daughter of her paternal grandfather's brother and her paternal grandmother's sister. On her mother's side she visited the house of her grandfather, which he shares with his son (the girl's *pāju*), and that of her mother's maternal uncle. She did not visit her father's sister, because the sister had not accepted her role as *nini* up till then. She had stopped visiting her elder brother, who at that time had begun the process of separation from his younger brother. Nor did she visit her father's maternal uncle, because his granddaughter was participating in the same *ihi* ritual. In two cases she visited two houses on the same day, and in three cases she had to go beyond the limits of Kvapade, the extended territory of Bhaktapur. Once she even had to go to Kathmandu to visit one of her paternal aunts, who had divorced and remarried a Buddhist Śākya of Itumbāhā.

Visiting the houses of relatives in order to receive a meal must be seen as a formal introduction and integration into the close social network of the lineage and the extended network of aunts and uncles. The lineage usually covers three generations, and the aunts and uncles and their descendants cover the same number. Their parents will have taken her along to these houses earlier in connection with the ritually designated meals that accompany life-cycle rituals or annual occasions like Bisketjātrā, the New Year festival in April, and Dasāĩ, the celebration of the goddess Durgā's victory over the buffalo demon. This means that the girl has already gathered experience in urban space and knows the houses of her close relatives. But visiting these places in the context of the *ihi* ritual has all the trappings of a formal event.

The more formal visits preceding *ihi* place the girls at the centre of attention and anticipate their temporary admission into the lineage. This membership lasts until their "second" marriage with a human spouse, through whom they enter his lineage. From that moment on they are treated as "living ancestors." They no longer belong to their place of origin, their natal home. But in an expression of sororal solidarity they do return in their new role as a daughter, as an aunt (*nini*) of their brother's sons or as an "elder mother" (*taḥmā*).

One more aspect of the manifold journeys of the potential *ihi* girls must be highlighted. They move about in urban space in order to become acquainted with the realm of their later life. Until very recently, daughters of farmers (Jyāpu) never married into other communities of the Kathmandu Valley, but they did (as the map documenting Benita Basukala's journeys demonstrates) break out of the narrow limits of their quarter. In a way the city can be called the girls' larger home which, after the *ihi* marriage, they inhabit as ritually mature beings. The outer limits of Kvapade, the extended territory of Bhaktapur as defined by two rivers, are only breached when accompanying parents to work in the fields, a potentially dangerous territory haunted by spirits. The ritual space is protected by the seats of the Eight Mother Goddesses, the Aṣṭamātṛkā, while the inner space is literally occupied by the girl's paternal and maternal relatives, representing human protectors.

The *ihimacā nakegu* performance has its counterpart years later prior to marrying a human spouse. In the two weeks between the time the groom's middleman (*lhami*) hands out areca nuts (*gvẽ svaygu*) to the bride's family members and the actual marriage (the offering of the virgin, *kanyadāna*), the bride is sent invitations by the same paternal and maternal relatives who had invited her prior to the *ihi* ritual—an act called *penaja nakegu* (lit. feeding rice [*ja*] on the occasion of leaving the house [*pena*]). The girl is accepted and welcomed into her lineage (*phukī*), while the bride loosens herself from the bonds of the lineage and its deity, the *dugudyaḥ*. In both cases food is shared, in the first with those to whom the girl still belongs, the paternal and maternal relatives, and in the second with those to whom the bride will develop a new relationship, i.e. her husband's clan.

Worshipping Bhaktapur's power places (*pīṭha*) on the first day of the *ihi* ritual – the urban territory as a sacred realm

In the early morning of the first day of the *ihi* ritual the acting *karmācārya* priest who, as a helper of the Brahmin priest, conducts all preparatory rituals heads for the Salã Gaṇeśa shrine in Tacapaḥ, the central quarter of the upper town. With him as his own helper is the *mhaynayaḥ*, the eldest among the group of wife-takers, in this case a son-in-law of the organizer of the event. Salã Gaṇeśa is the most important Gaṇeśa shrine in town, and is regularly worshipped as the deity that shows the way forth on a journey. On the occasion of *ihi*, offerings to this shrine are mandatory by reason of the soot produced there from a small flame while worshipping. The soot accumulates on the surface of a shallow clay cup which almost covers a flame burning in another cup below it. The clay cup used to collect the soot is carefully placed in a basket together with *pūjā* material. This is the soot used for the empowering *mvaḥni* stroke of the *ihi* ritual. A streak of the black soot is applied to the pipal leaf that is handed to girls on the occasion of the "offering of the virgin". Starting at the Gaṇeśa temple, the group undertakes a procession to the Aṣṭamātṛkā shrines, in the process encircling the urban realm. The path first leads to the easternmost of the "seats" (*pīṭha*) of the Eight Mother goddesses, Brahmāyaṇī. From there it covers a circumambulatory route to the remaining seven shrines, and finally veers off to the ninth and central one, dedicated to Tripurasundarī, with the flame still constantly producing soot.

Visiting the shrines of the Aṣṭamātṛkā is a preparatory ritual observance that is mandatory for *ihi* and many other rituals and festivals. The fire is kept alive by adding mustard oil when the flame dwindles, allowing the soot developing on the surface of the clay cup to represent in all its fullness the essence of the urban habitat. The goddesses not only guard this space, they collectively represent the energy or *genius loci* which enables the urban society to function. The soot collected while circumambulating the space is used to mark the girls' foreheads in an invitation to them to become members of society. It graces the pipal leaves that are dedicated to Viṣṇu, while in the "offering of the virgin" it transmits the power of Durgā displayed in her eight manifestations.

From the eighth goddess, Mahālakṣmī, the path leads to Tripurasundarī (the ninth and central goddess) in Tulāchẽ, and from there to the Gaṇeśa, Bhairava or Mātṛkā shrine of the locality in which the *ihi* ritual is to be enacted. This shrine is invariably one of the 21 non-iconic deities of Bhaktapur that accept blood sacrifices anytime, not just during *ihi*. Returning to the house of the organizer of the *ihi* ritual, the performing *karmācārya* priest and his helpers are received by the organizer and are served *khẽ svagã*, a symbolic meal consisting of a boiled egg, dried fish and brandy.

The concluding feast on the second day of the *ihi* ritual

After the girl is married to the *bel* fruit on the second day of the ritual, she returns to her parental home, where a feast is offered to the members of the lineage to whom she

now belongs and to all those from her mother's natal home (*thachẽ*) who had invited the girl for *ihimacā nakegu* during the days preceding the *ihi* ritual. Thus the round of feeding and being fed is brought full circle back to the distinct social group to which the girl now securely belongs. As a *kumārī*, she had been nothing more and nothing less than a representative of the female sex, with whatever positive, auspicious associations that involved. During and after the *ihi* ritual she remains a virgin, but she loses the specific quality of a *kumārī* once she enters the circle of the lineage and establishes firm links to the female world of her mother's natal home—a bond that will shift exclusively to her own natal home after her marriage to a human groom.

The third day of the *ihi* ritual – *kumārīpūjā*

Early in the morning the mothers of the girls for whom the ritual of the "offering of the virgin" was performed the day before head off to the Gaṇeśa shrine of their quarter to offer *pūjā*. Gaṇeśa is inevitably invoked at least once in every ritual event: at the very beginning or, in the case of ancestor worship (*śrāddha*), at an auspicious moment indicated by the Brahmin priest.

Having returned from the Gaṇeśa shrine, the mother will dress and make up the girl in the same way she did on preceding days. Fitted out in a special sari, the *ihiparasi*, which signals her new status, the girl is paraded from her house through the lanes and streets of the city to the seat (*pīṭha*) of Kaumārī, the third of the Eight Mother Goddesses who guard the urban space along its historic perimeter. The goddess is represented at her seat non-iconically by a stone, which was "discovered" there in the misty past. By now a few more stones have been added around it, which collectively represent the Eight Goddesses. Along with the remaining seven goddesses and the central Tripurasundarī, Kaumārī had been worshipped on the day preceding the *ihi* ritual by the *ācāju* as part of the *pīṭhapūjā* which confirmed the venue of the ritual within the sacred urban landscape. On the third day, however, this goddess is the sole focus, for she is identified with the seat of Kumārī, the virgin goddess. The offerings to the deity include ritual rice, popped rice, flowers, an egg and a particular kind of citrus fruit (*taḥsi*) which represents longevity and fertility. One of the three objects depicted on the block print fastened to the girl's forehead prior to the act of the "offering of a virgin," this singular and remarkably sour citrus fruit is consumed exclusively on the day of *mhāpūjā*, the worship of the body on the first day of the Newar New Year (Nepāl Saṃvat) in November. In a decisive gesture of worship, the mother touches her forehead to the stone representing Kaumārī and asks her daughter to do the same.

As they return home, the mother throws a few grains of rice in the direction of the shrines and temples they pass. Passing the temple of Bhairava at Taumādhi Square, the mother turns to the tiny iconic representation of this powerful deity and asks her daughter to touch it with her head in a gesture of reverence. The route home never follows a straight line, but rather a prescribed ritual route, which takes in temples and shrines that

Plate 2: Bhaktapur, the third day of the *ihi* ritual, 24 January 2007 – For the second time in her life, Lipisa Lakhebindyo receives food from the eldest women (*nakhĩ*) of the lineage, including brandy (note the shallow earthen cup beside her dish). For the first time she offers food to the ancestors (*pitṛ*) before starting to eat. She places tiny heaps of food on a leaf in front of her plate.

are regularly worshipped by the families of their own particular quarter. Adults and children are taught early on to follow the "correct" route. Not that there is any notion of the direct route being "forbidden"; rather, going to and returning from rituals is quite simply such a frequent occurrence that movement within urban space on such occasions takes on a special quality, one different from what occurs when pursuing profane matters.

Worshipping the ancestors

Having returned from visiting the seat of Kaumārī, the *ihimacā* is offered a ritual welcoming meal (*samay*), which includes a boiled egg and a small dried fish (*khẽ svagẽ*), along with small pieces of buffalo meat, soybeans, raw ginger and garlic, flattened rice and, of decisive importance in a ritual context, brandy (*ailā*). The egg and brandy are offered with arms crossed; three initial sips of brandy and a few small bites of egg are compulsory. Often, deep-fried sweets (*jeri* and *nimki*) are added.

Still fully dressed, the girl receives the egg together with the fish and brandy (see plate 2) from the eldest woman of the lineage (*nakhĩ*). The girl had received the same

such ritual food on the occasion of her first being fed solid food (*annaprāśana*) to mark her crossing the first barrier on the way to becoming a social being. This time she achieves passage into a new world in which she will be acting as a member of the patrilineage. Equally important is the first offering of food to the ancestors (*dyaḥ cayegu*) before she herself starts eating. She places tiny heaps of flattened rice and bits of egg and meat on a leaf in front of her.

Before *ihi* the girl was a child without social duties. Her marriage to the *bel* fruit has turned her into a member of society and, as such, of the lineage. From now on she shares her food with her deceased great-grandparents, who are still known by name.

The *ihi* girl's spouse – multiple identities

It is not too misleading to say that *ihi* expresses a certain respect for the female members of Newar social groups, although it should be added that this mainly applies to virgin girls. Indeed, Newars have preserved a special cult for the virgin goddess, the Kumārī (see Allen 1976). Rajendra Pradhan (1986: 111), who did his fieldwork in Kathmandu in 1982, points out one difference between a *kanyā* and a *kumārī*: "once they have performed *ihi* the girls are no longer *kanyās* but *kumārīs*." Therefore, "only those who have performed *ihi* and become *kumārīs* are eligible to become members of their father's lineage and caste and to marry human husbands." Fieldwork in Bhaktapur reveals a decisive difference there. There girls who have not performed the *ihi* ritual are virgins (*kanyā*), who on the occasion of the Dasāī festival participate in the *kumārī-pūjā*. They are treated and worshipped as *kumārīs*. Once the girls have participated in the *ihi* ritual, they are neither a *kanyā* nor a *kumārī* but a member of their father's lineage group, the *phukī*. After *ihi*, girls are no longer treated as an incarnation of a goddess (Kumārī) because, ritually and socially, they have now become adults.

It is also often stated that girls' sexuality is brought under control through the *ihi* marriage and that "*kumārīs* ... are considered dangerous unless their sexuality is controlled" (Pradhan 1986: 112). This view bespeaks an underlying male fear of female sexuallity in Hindu societies. To be sure, in the Dharmaśāstra it is often stated that a girl has to be married before her menarche, and her not being married would be tantamount to the murder of an embryo. Levy (1990: 665) even says that the Newar Rājopādhyāya Brahmins started to celebrate *ihi* only after child marriage was banned in Nepal in 1951. However, it would be too simplistic to reduce a complex ritual—one that is basically rooted in parts of one ethnic community and probably older than the Dharmaśāstra rules—to the gender identity of the girl, who through *ihi* becomes a potential marriage partner.

The heavily disputed question about which deity the girls are married to is a great source of confusion (see, for example, Levy 1990: 764, n. 23). In a Hindu context, the majority favours Viṣṇu or Kubera, while in a Buddhist context Buddha or Jambhala, a Buddhist equivalent of Kubera (Gellner 1991: 112), is usually mentioned. The texts,

Plate 3 (opposite page): Bhaktapur – The venues of 19 *ihi* rituals for 924 initiates (*ihimacā*) performed in 2004/05 (VS 2061), from Akṣaya Tṛtīyā (22 April 2004) to Śrīpañcamī (13 February 2005). The Viśvakarma *guthi* of 11 Citrakār families performs the concluding *pūjā* at the shrine of Chumā Gaṇeśa. The worship of the Clay God (*alīdyaḥpūjā*) is invariably performed on Tālākva square.
Place, date, organizer and number of initiates (*ihimacā*): 1. Naraincok, Taumādhi, 21/22 April, Vaidyaguthī, 41 girls; 2. Khaumā, 27/28 November, house of Mahendra Sharma, 3 girls; 3. Khichẽ, 5/6 December, Tirnalal Karmacharya, 82 girls; 4. Itāchẽ, 8/9 December, Tulsi Bahadur Duval, 113 *ihimacā*; 5. Khaumā, 8/9 December, house of Mahendra Sharma, 13 girls; 6. Khaumā, 21/22 January, house of Mahendra Sharma, 10 girls; 7. Rāmghāṭ, 21/22 January, Tulsi Madhikarmi, 33 girls; 8. Mulḍhokā, 21/22 January, Punyaram Lavaju, 83 girls; 9. Paśubāhā, Kvathādau, 24/25 January, 31 girls; 10. Khaumā, 28/29 January, house of Mahendra Sharma, 10 girls; 11. Cvāchẽ, 29/30 January, Premlal Thusa, 60 girls; 12. Itāchẽ, 29/30 January, Mohan Duval, 30 girls; 13. Khaumā, 29/30 January, house of Mahendra Sharma, 10 girls; 14. Yātā, Golmādhi, 30/31 January, Lakshmi Bhakta Tajale, 137girls; 15. Yāchẽ, 2/3 February, the local *samaj sewa samiti* 65 girls; 16. Naraincok, Taumādhi, 12/13 February, Śrī Tilamādhava Nārāyaṇa Bhajan Maṇḍal, 76 girls; 17. Bārāhīsthān, 12/13 February, Bārāhī Pīth Bikas Samiti, 99 girls; 18. Khaumā, 12/13 February, house of Mahendra Sharma, 16 girls; 19. Palikhel, Golmādhi, 12/13 February, Tejbahadur Pailikhel, 12 girls.

however, refer to Suvarṇakumāra, the "Golden Boy," without specifying his identity. As already mentioned, for most Newars Viṣṇu is the marriage partner whom most believe to be present in the *bel* fruit, whereas others see him in the gold platelet that is fixed to the girl's forehead, or in both. It is also said, or one can read (e.g. Levy 1990: 668), that the *bel* fruit represents Śiva or his son Kumāra, while the "image" (*pratimā*), the golden platelet, represents Viṣṇu, or else that Śiva is a witness during the marriage with Viṣṇu.

Ihi – a trans-familial ritual performed in urban space

Ihi, like all Newar life-cycle rituals, cannot be seen as an event focused on a single individual. Such events, rather, constitute links in a chain that runs through an individual's life and connects him or her with other rituals and with the social group. *Ihi*, for instance, must be seen as a ritual that is bound up with the menarche rituals (*bārhā tayegu*) and the marriage to a human groom, while also being a ritual that transforms the individual into a member of a clan (*phukī*) associated with a specific ancestor-deity (*dugudyaḥ*) and mortuary association (*siguthī*).

It is striking that for most girls the *ihi* ritual takes place in public. Only for small groups is it performed in the house of the acting Brahmin (see plate 3: six occasions with 3–16 participating girls) or, for Buddhist groups, in a courtyard of a monastery (see plate 3: Dipaṅkarbāhā). *Ihi* is indeed a social event, not one performed for single individuals. It is an event that takes place on the street or in public places and is often organized by social organizations (see plate 3). For example, within the period between

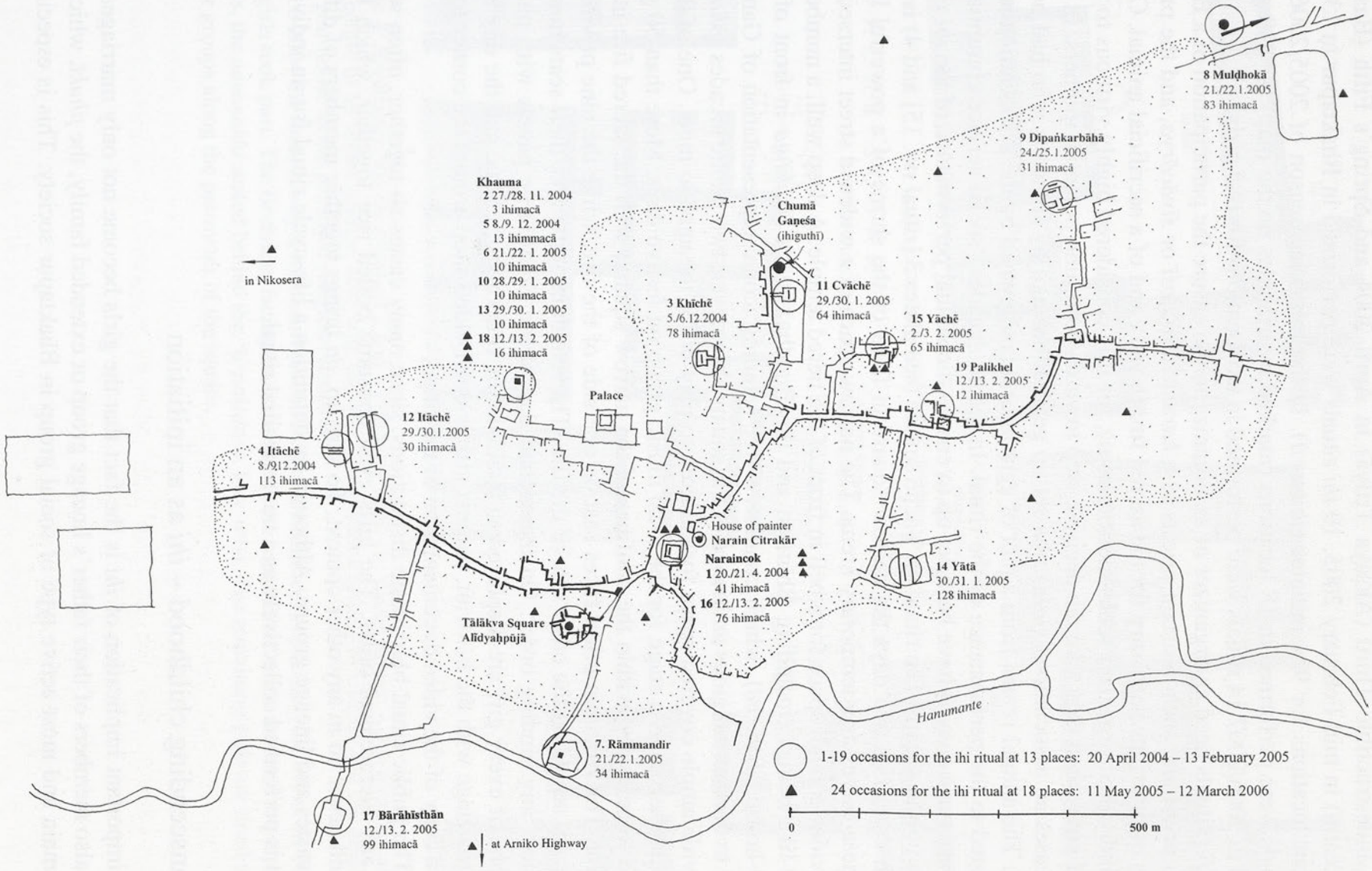
in Nikosera
Khauma
2 27./28. 11. 2004
3 ihimacā
5 8./9. 12. 2004
13 ihimmacā
6 21./22. 1. 2005
10 ihimacā
10 28./29. 1. 2005
10 ihimacā
13 29./30. 1. 2005
10 ihimacā
18 12./13. 2. 2005
16 ihimacā
Chumā
Gaṇeśa
(ihiguthī)
11 Cvāchē
29./30. 1. 2005
64 ihimacā
3 Khīchē
5./6.12.2004
78 ihimacā
15 Yāchē
2./3. 2. 2005
65 ihimacā
19 Palikhel
12./13. 2. 2005
12 ihimacā
9 Dipaṅkarbāhā
24./25.1.2005
31 ihimacā
8 Mulḍhokā
21./22.1.2005
83 ihimacā
Palace
12 Itāchē
29./30.1.2005
30 ihimacā
4 Itāchē
8./9.12.2004
113 ihimacā
House of painter
Narain Citrakār
Naraincok
1 20./21. 4. 2004
41 ihimacā
16 12./13. 2. 2005
76 ihimacā
14 Yātā
30./31. 1. 2005
128 ihimacā
Tālākva Square
Alīdyaḥpūjā
Hanumante
7. Rāmmandir
21./22.1.2005
34 ihimacā
17 Bārāhīsthān
12./13. 2. 2005
99 ihimacā
at Arniko Highway
1-19 occasions for the ihi ritual at 13 places: 20 April 2004 – 13 February 2005
24 occasions for the ihi ritual at 18 places: 11 May 2005 – 12 March 2006
0
500 m

Plate 3

the Indestructible Third (Akṣaya Tṛtīyā) in April 2004 and Spring's Fifth (Basanta Pañcamī) in mid-February 2005, 19 *ihi* rituals were performed in Bhaktapur in 13 different locations for 924 initiates (*ihimacā*). In the following season of 2005/2006, 24 rituals were performed in 18 locations (marked by triangles on the map) for 839 girls, and in 2006/2007 14 rituals were performed in ten locations for 685 girls.

Ihi rituals need an organizer or an organization to ensure the participation of a Brahmin priest and such assistant priests as a *karmācārya*, *jośī* or *śivācārya*, and the provision of offerings necessary for the sacred fire (*homa*), and of a sacrificial animal. Often an individual organizer seeks merit (*puṇya*), for it is considered highly virtuous to support girls when they take the decisive step towards becoming potential mothers. In other cases an association (*guthi*) was set up generations ago by someone who had no issue. The annual return from a plot of agricultural land owned by the assoociation is dedicated to the performance of the ritual. In recent decades "social service committees" (*samaj sewa samiti*) have been set up to ensure the annual performance of the *ihi* ritual on a public square. The ritual on Yāchẽ square (see plates 3 [ritual no. 15] and 4) is one such case. For two days the narrow square in front of the shrine of a powerful local Gaṇeśa serves as a temporary arena. The narrow space of a widened street intersection provides enough space for a bell in front of the tiered temple. A deep well, a number of god-like beings (including Bhīmsen and the Buddha) and a *śivaliṅga* in front of the god-house (*dyaḥchẽ*), which contains a free-standing iconic representation of Gaṇeśa, add to the rich religious ambience of the square. Moreover, two public arcades (*phalcā*) provide ample covered space for children to play or for the aged to meet. One of these arcades serves as a stage for the local music group on festive days. More than 50 girls have to be seated within the confines of the narrow square, with the sacred fire in the centre. The Brahmin priest faces east on one side of the fire, while the nine privileged girls are seated on the other side of the fire. The remaining girls take their seats in rows without any binding order. On the second day of the ritual large panels with photographs of every girl are displayed to facilitate the ordering of prints, and the day after the marriage with the *bel* fruit, parents visit a small video shop around the corner to order a copy of the video documentation of the ritual.

The public ritual blurs caste distinctions, since many castes sit together, often without any hierarchical order. The girls even consume boiled rice together, which they would never do in any other context. To sum up, *ihi* brings together members of different castes and lineage groups. Although by definition a life-cycle ritual for an individual, it is performed collectively as a trans-familial ritual.

Transcending childhood – *ihi* as an initiation

An important implication of *ihi* is the fact that the girls become not only marriageable but also members of their father's lineage group or extended family, the *phukī*, which is the main and most active type of social group in Bhaktapur society. This is especially

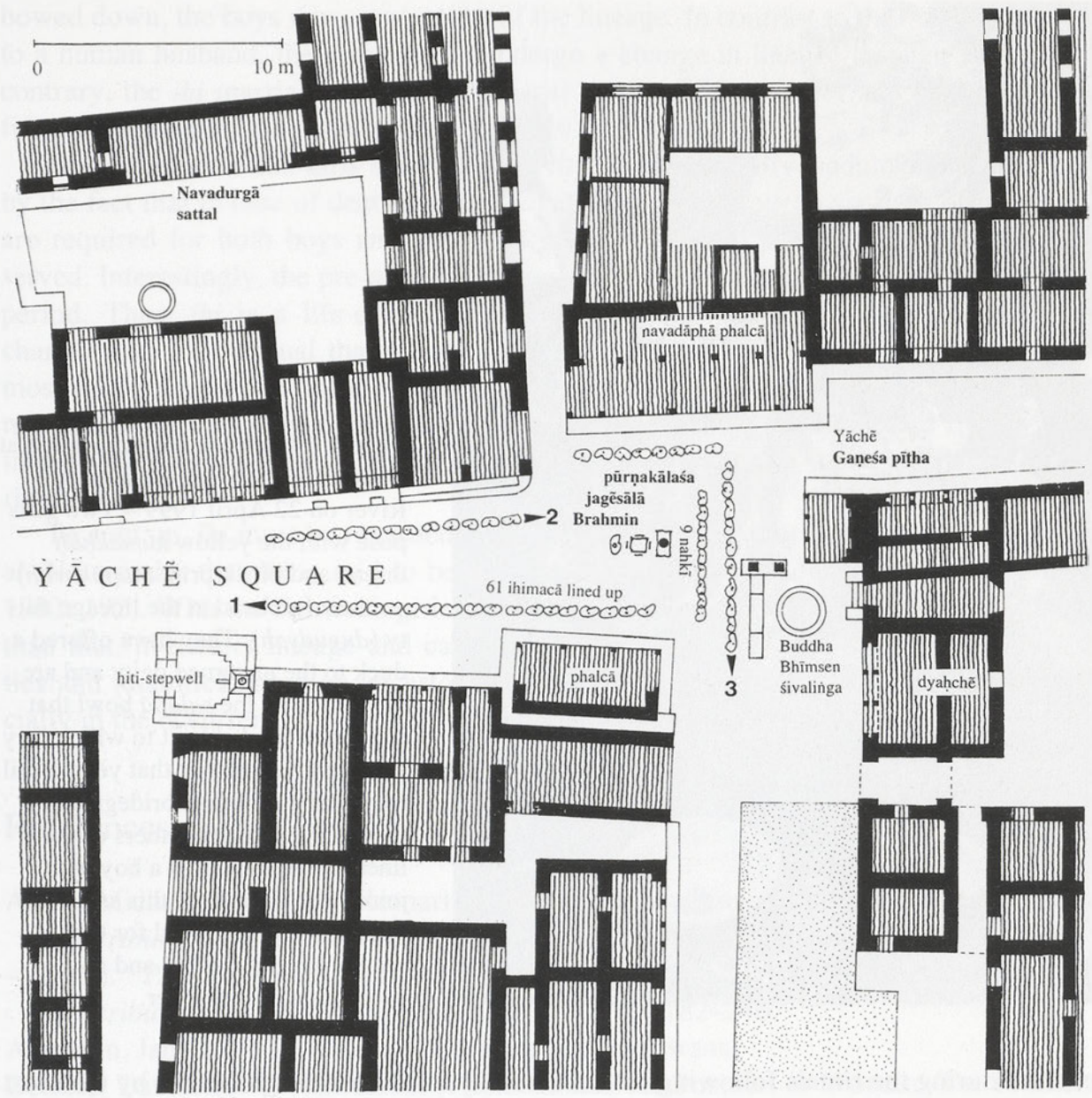

Plate 4: Bhaktapur, the *ihi* ritual on 2 and 3 February 2005 on Yāchē square – A typical square at the centre of an urban quarter, here with the non-iconic shrine (*pīṭha*) of Gaṇeśa and the adjoining god-house as the principal religious structures.
Since 2004 the local *samaj sewa samiti* (social service committee) organizing the event. In 2005 61 girls took part. The Brahmin, facing east, maintains the sacred fire, while the nine principal girls, the *navanakhī* seated behind the *pūrṇakalaśa*, face west. The remaining girls are lined up in four groups along the perimeter of the square.

Plate 5: Bhaktapur, *dugudyaḥpūjā* at Bisinkhel across the Hanumante River on 22 April 1999 – Two girls pose with the yellow *kumakhāḥ* thread and block print (*sāpākhvaḥ*) on their forehead at the lineage deity (*dugudyaḥ*). They have offered a duck to the unnamed deity and are now offering the *salāpā* bowl that contained the *bel* fruit to which they were married earlier that year. Until they marry a human bridegroom they will remain members of the lineage. On the left is a boy who joined the lineage on this same occasion. He is shaved for the second time in his life and so becomes a full member.

evident during the rituals following the core *ihi* days, because the girls have by then lost their virgin (*kanyā*) status and qualify for membership in the lineage (*phukī*). The formal membership initiation takes place during the following joint worship of the lineage deity (*dugudyaḥpūjā*), at which time the girls offer a duck and hand over the *bel* fruit to the lineage deity (see plate 5).

Thus only after the *ihi* ritual do girls acquire membership in the lineage with all its rights and obligations. Seen from this perspective, *ihi* is more an initiation than a marriage rite. To be sure, girls are only members of the father's lineage for a few years, the period between *ihi* and marriage, at which point they become a member of their husband's lineage. Boys, on the other hand, become members of the *phukī* not only through *kaytāpūjā* but to a limited extent they are treated as such as soon as they are able to walk independently. They then go to the lineage deity and offer husked ritual rice (*kigaḥ*) and popped rice (*tãy*) and perform *darśana* (New. *bhāgye yayegu*, lit. "to bow down"). This ritual encounter with the *dugudyaḥ* is called *dūp tayegu*. Having

bowed down, the boys rise as members of the lineage. In contrast to the "real" marriage to a human husband, the girls do not undergo a change in lineage through *ihi*. On the contrary, the *ihi* marriage "reaffirms the girl's ties with her father and confers on her full membership of his caste" (Allen 1982: 192).

The assumption that girls after *ihi* are—ritually and socially—adults is strengthened by the fact that in case of death prior to *kaytāpūjā* and *ihi*, four to six days of mourning are required for both boys and girls, but after *ihi* the full period of mourning is observed. Interestingly, the pre-menarche ritual (*bārhā*) has no influence on this mourning period. Thus, *ihi* is a life-cycle ritual that celebrates not a biological but a social change; and it is a ritual that makes a girl not so much marriageable as bound to the most vital social group, the extended family and its lineage. This is overwhelmingly demonstrated by the offering of *vākijāki,* a mixture of husked and unhusked rice by both lineage members and the maternal relatives upon entering the house at the end of the ritual.

To sum up, *ihi* must be regarded much more as an initiation than as a marriage ritual. No wonder that *ihi* is said to be the girls' *vratabandhana* or *upanayana* (cf. Allen 1982: 192). With the *ihi* ritual, girls take their first step towards womanhood. But more than that, it confers lineage and caste membership, enabling and strengthening social ties and identities based on ancestor and clan deity worship, commensality and, especially in the occurrence of death, ritual solidarity.

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Initiation as a Site of Cultural Conflict among the Newars*

The meanings and uses of initiation

Rituals of initiation have loomed large in the anthropological imagination. They are among the most dramatic of rituals that anthropologists encounter in the field. Initiation rituals frequently challenge or invert the conventions and expectations of normal life, thereby both drawing attention to those conventions and breaching them. At the same time, such rituals play a crucial role either in creating new social units or in recruitment to, and the perpetuation of, existing units.

As Van Gennep was the first to point out, the three-phase structure of initiation rituals—separation, liminality, and reincorporation—helps to create new persons. Whether the liminal phase simply reinforces existing rules, or actually opens up the possibility of change and resistance, has been an important line of debate and development within anthropology. Thus Victor Turner's interest in the ritual and symbolism of the Ndembu developed later into a theory of communitas and an interest in pilgrimage. Some, such as Kapferer (1997) and Grimes (1991), have seen in the liminal nature of ritual potentials for innovation and creativity. Others, such as Kertzer (1988) and Tilly (2004), have seen the same in new political uses of ritual.

Initiation rituals have also been at the centre of Bloch's attempts (1986, 1992) to define ritual as such. His global theory is built on the examples of Merina circumcision and the frightening initiation of the Orokaiva of Papua New Guinea: in his view *all* ritual is built on "rebounding violence", i.e. the revitalizing force that initiates come to embody, once they come out the other end of the experience, thanks to being subject to, and going through, the process of the ritual.[1] In a radically different approach, Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994) have outlined a sophisticated theory of ritualization based on a very different kind of ritual, the Jain practice of *pūjā* in Rajasthan. Finally, in the new cognitive anthropology of religion, Harvey Whitehouse argues that frightening initiation rituals form one of two major poles or ideal types of religion, the other being

* For helpful comments on earlier drafts I would like to thank Christoph Emmrich, Chiara Letizia, and members of the seminar in Heidelberg. I would like also to thank Basanta Maharjan and Sharad Kasa for help in obtaining the Nepal Bhasha texts cited.

1 I have criticized Bloch's theory for being overly monistic, i.e. for forcing all types of ritual into the Procrustean bed of Durkheimian, community-focused rituals, among which festivals and life-cycle rituals are the most common (Gellner 1999).

routinized or, as he calls it, doctrinal religiosity.[2]

The problem with all these anthropological approaches is that the empirical basis on which they are built is too narrow. They all are illuminating so far as they go, but they illegitimately generalize insights about one kind of ritual to all ritual. I believe that one must recognize at least three fundamentally different kinds of ritual action, namely, 1) soteriological, 2) social or communal, and 3) instrumental. Each kind of ritual has a characteristically different intentional stance. Soteriological ritual is undergone as a kind of training or discipline, social or communal ritual in order to carry out one's obligations and/or to achieve a social result, and instrumental ritual in order to bring about some advantageous change in the material world. Another way to put this is to say that the three types of ritual are oriented respectively towards 1) the other world and transforming the self, 2) society, and 3) nature.

From this point of view, one must ask whether Humphrey and Laidlaw's characterization of *the* ritual stance—action that is intentionless, in which the normal relation between intention and action is "disrupted"—provides a good model for all types of ritual, or whether, rather, it fits their soteriological example, but is less appropriate to the other two types. Likewise, Bloch's model is based on the example of a violent initiation ritual, and he struggles to apply the model to Japan (which lacks animal sacrifice) as well as to other, less obviously communal rituals. Finally, Whitehouse's model, though it has the virtue of positing two types and not just one, is, in my opinion, too simple, and too Judaeo-Christian in its assumptions, to grasp the full complexity of ritual types.

In the present case, I shall be considering boys' and girls' initiation rituals among the Newars, leaving to one side other kinds of initiation, such as *dīkṣā* (tantric initiation).[3] These sacraments are, or at least were, considered essential for all "clean"-caste Newars, and no one could be married without having been through them. There were prescribed methods of going through them, all of which required the presence of a priest, either a Brahman or a Vajrācārya. Some were normally carried out in large groups, others in small groups or singly. All involved at least some expense for the household of the child. For most households they did not trigger an extravagant feast, as with weddings, but a trend towards large-scale celebrations of initiations has been observable for some years. These rituals are—for the boys—cast in a soteriological idiom, for all that they are paradigmatic social-communal rites. For the traditional girls' rituals, by contrast, the dominant metaphor is that of marriage. It is surely no coinci-

2 What Whitehouse's theory may not capture is the way in which initiation rituals are highly routinized in South Asian culture, and therefore are not particularly traumatic for those who go through them. The means by which their exegesis is passed on is closer to doctrinal religion than to imagistic religion, in his terms, and thus there is a thorough muddling of the types and not the tendency in complex ritual systems that he predicts for them to be "attracted" to one pole or the other; presumably he would explain this by saying that "lay versions of the world religions [often] migrate away from both of our modal attractor positions and settle around more easily acquired, intuitive concepts and practices" (Whitehouse 2004: 74). The problem here is that most of learned and Sanskritic Hinduism becomes a "lay version" of a world religion.

3 On the latter among the Newars, see Gellner (1992: ch. 9) and Levy (1990: 314–7).

dence that the main re-modelling in the modern period should involve the introduction of a girls' initiation rite that is also in a soteriological idiom.

In addition to flagging up the obvious and important gender contrast, one must note that we are dealing here with a hierarchical world. In this world, the divide between gods and humans is far from absolute—in the terms that Eriksen introduces for the discussion of ethnicity, the divide is analogical rather than digital, a question of more or less rather than either/or (Eriksen 1993: 66–7). But while the cosmos is seen in this essentially graded and hierarchical form (cf. Levy 1990), the purpose of initiation rituals is often either to create a clearly bounded social group (so that people are unambiguously either in or out) or clearly and unambiguously to establish belonging to a pre-existing social group on the part of the individual passing through the rite. In other words, ritual is used to impose digital precision on an analogue universe. Some are made unambiguously to belong; others are left unambiguously as excluded. Thus Dalits, deprived of high-caste priestly services and denied the opportunity to go through Sanskritically legitimated initiation rituals, are condemned for being "without *dharma*" and are correspondingly viewed, traditionally, as being non-persons or lesser persons.[4]

Ritual among high-caste Newar boys

A striking aspect of initiation among the Newars is its connection to social status. The form of the ritual, i.e. by whom it is done and in what ritual idiom, is determined by the caste of the parents. None the less, there is a sense in which the ritual is an individual matter, conferring adulthood, but not of itself granting membership in any collectivity beyond the household. Thus the sons of lower-caste mothers were entitled to the same kind of initiation, but simply going through the ritual does not of itself confer membership in the lineage organizations of the father. That membership is conferred by the combination of the ritual *and* the acceptable status of the mother. For most Newars the ritual takes place at home and the question of belonging will be decided elsewhere, at the annual worship of the lineage deity or similar ritual. By contrast, for Śākya and Vajrācārya boys, the fact that initiation normally takes place within the father's monastic complex (*vihāra*, colloquially *bāhā* or *bahī*), means that these two social events—symbolic entry into adulthood and joining the descent-based socio-religious guild of the father—occur through a single ritual event. For this reason, sons of a Śākya or Vajrācārya man by a lower-caste woman may not go through the initiation ritual in their father's *bāhā* or *bahī* but must do it elsewhere, either at a convenient *caitya* or, nowadays, in a Theravāda *vihāra* instead, a procedure which is understood to "make the boy a Buddhist" but which confers membership in no social grouping.

Because of this overwhelming need to belong to an established *bāhā* or *bahī*, Śākya and Vajrācārya families, until the end of the Rana period in 1951, used to trek at enormous expense in time and money, from all over Nepal, in order to have their boys initi-

4 See Levy (1990: 366–71), Gellner (1995b).

ated at their ancestral *bāhā* in the Kathmandu Valley. This was despite the fact that, because they lived at such a distance, they could never avail themselves of the practical benefits conferred by membership in the *bāhā*, such as attendance at *bāhā* feasts or claiming a share of offerings to the *bāhā* gods (nor were they in a position to fulfil their regular duties to the *bāhā*, such as taking their turn as the "god-guardian", *dyaḥpāḥlā*). Although lineage deities (*digudyaḥ*) could be "pulled" from one place to another, evidently, at least during the Rana period, it was not considered possible to establish a new *bāhā*, and the risk of outcasting, were the boys not initiated, was considered too great. A glimpse of the strong resentments that this engendered can be had from a short piece published in the magazine *Dharmodaya* in 1950, just before the collapse of the Rana regime:

> Letter to the editor:
>
> Because the economic situation of Buddhists living in Tansen is weak, there are many Gurujus and Barejus who are incapable of going to their ancestral (home) in order to perform *cūḍākarman*. For this reason this year on 21st and 29th Baisakh all the Gurubhājus of Tansen held a meeting. The meeting made four decisions:
>
> 1. All Buddhists would cooperate in order to make a new *bāhā* in order to carry out their *cūḍākarman* ritual, inviting priests (*guruju purohit*) from Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur, so that everyone could be initiated according to the Buddhist practice of their own place.
>
> 2. Because of Barejus' and Gubhājus' contemporary economic misfortune, they would no longer be able to continue to observe *cūḍākarman* spending huge amounts of money (*dolaṃdo dāṃ kharca yānāḥ*).
>
> 3. Nowadays Gubhājus and Barejus without resources (*anāth*) are selling, pawning, or mortgaging their houses, land, jewellery, etc., in order to go to the Kathmandu Valley (*nepā*) and carry out their sons' life-cycle ritual. The children of those poverty-stricken Barejus and Gubhājus who cannot even raise the money to go to Kathmandu and do that are living in wayside shelters.
>
> 4. The poor Gubhāju and Bareju living in Palpa Tansen in the west and Bhojpur in the east have up till now been able to do what is necessary to preserve their caste and ancestry (*kul*). But if the Vajrācārya Sthavira Gurubhājus of Kathmandu (*nepā*) do not show compassion and mercy to this state of poverty it is not possible to say that this will continue.
>
> This special announcement is being addressed to the Buddhist scholars (*ācārya*) and elders (*ājupiṃ*) of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur through *Dharmodaya* monthly magazine. We believe it would be excellent if everyone could pay attention to this issue. We have full confidence that *Dharmodaya* monthly will

> publicize our request that the senior Vajrācāryas, having compassion for our poverty, should consider the issue of whether it is permissible or not to make a new *bāhā*.[5]
>
> Surjelal Bajracharya, Purnaman Shakya, and the Buddhists of Tansen.
> (*Dharmodaya* 3.9, July 1950, p. 256)[6]

This resentment against traditional Newar Buddhism was surely a strong factor predisposing Śākyas and Vajrācāryas resident in hill-top bazaars outside the Kathmandu Valley to the new Theravāda, and this, I would claim, is part of the explanation for their prominent role in the early years of the movement.[7]

The position for other (non-Buddhist) Newars who had emigrated from the Kathmandu Valley to the hills or Tarai was much easier. In the absence of Newar Brahmans they simply made use of local Parbatiyā Brahmans. This is one reason, among others, for their faster assimilation to Parbatiyā culture and quicker adoption of the Nepali language, when compared to the Śākyas and Vajrācāryas. Switching priest, and thereby switching the idiom in which the household's life-cycle rituals were performed, was, of course, an old practice, one that the upwardly mobile had always practised. In the Newar case this was carried out most within the Valley in the nineteenth and early twentieth-century by those who wished to be seen as Shresthas.[8] It may be surmised that at an earlier period, middle castes who wished to express alignment with the Hindu court adopted *karmācārya* (*ācāju*) priests, as for instance in the village of Tokha north of Kathmandu or in Bhaktapur and surrounding villages.[9]

During the 1980s, when I first did fieldwork in the Kathmandu Valley, it was a matter of frequent complaint by articulate and politically aware Buddhists that the number of Buddhists in the census was declining. They knew that traditionalists would not countenance the initiation of "half-caste" boys inside monasteries, so they eventually founded a new monastery in Teku where such boys were initiated on more than one occasion.[10]

Buddhist activists explained the decline in Buddhist numbers by citing both government influence on the census-takers and processes of Hinduization (likewise encouraged by the government). The fact that the percentage of Buddhists jumped from 5.3 in 1981 to 7.8 in 1991 (back to the level of 1971) would seem to justify their complaints.

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5 According to Kedar Shakya, as cited by Bhikshu Kondanya (2007: 21–2), in 1951 Bhikshu Amritananda (himself from Tansen), Bhikshu Shakyananda (from Bhojpur, but based in Tansen), and Bhikshu Subodhanand (from Bhojpur) all went to intervene with King Tribhuvan in order to get permission for Newar Buddhists to be initiated outside the Valley and in their home towns.

6 My translation from Nepal Bhasha. From a literary point of view what is remarkable is the number of different words for poverty and suffering that are used in this short letter: *durbal*, *durdasā*, *anāth*, *bicarā*, *nirdhan*, *daridratā*, *garibtā*.

7 See LeVine & Gellner (2005: 33–4, and 312, n.19 & n. 20).

8 On this process, see the foundational article by Rosser (1966), and the qualifications to his thesis made by Quigley (1995, 1996).

9 See Levy (1990: 356–7) and Shrestha et al. (2004) for the position in Bhaktapur.

10 The *bāhā* is described in Locke (1985: 413–4).

When it jumped yet again to 10.7% in 2001, it seemed that the pressure to Hinduize had finally been lifted. (The figures also disproved the wilder claims about the true percentage of Buddhists made by some activists.)

Support for the Theravāda movement certainly came, right from the very beginning, from those who felt that the traditional Vajrayāna Buddhism had become overly influenced by Hinduism: that it had adopted too many of the outer ritual forms of Hinduism and that it had forgotten the simple, renunciatory message of Buddhism's founder. However, most of the early Theravādins were not modernists: they did not reject Vajrayāna lock, stock, and barrel, as some do today (see Leve 2002; LeVine & Gellner 2005: 282–3); rather they sought, much like the founders of celibate monasteries among the Sherpas (Ortner 1989), to revive Newar Buddhism. However, whether they intended it or not, their movement became the conduit for Buddhist modernism and the vast majority of reformist effort, with some notable exceptions, was channelled through Theravāda Buddhism.[11]

The Theravāda movement was initially concerned with establishing monasteries, initiating novices, monks, and *anāgārikā*s, and building a supportive lay community. Gradually the services that they supplied to that lay community expanded to include the provision of alternative life-cycle rituals. The first boys' initiation was held in 1956 (girls' rituals are dealt with below). It began to be used by those who wished to avoid the expenses of the traditional ritual, by the mixed-caste parents as a more inclusive alternative to the Vajrayāna option discussed above, and by those who were on bad terms with (or simply lacking) the mother's brother who plays a key role in the traditional ritual.

Somewhat later, from 1974, the notion that adults might ordain temporarily as a special practice also began to gain ground (through the Burmese and Thai examples, where ordination for a short period, e.g. the rains retreat, is widely practised). In November 1985 seventy-three Śākya men took temporary ordination in Kirtipur for the 73rd birthday of the Thai Sangharaja. The birthdays of respected figures within the Nepalese *saṅgha* began to be observed in a similar way (e.g. at Pragyananda's 85th, Ashwaghosh and Kumar Kashyap's 77th, and Dhammawati's 70th birthdays: LeVine & Gellner 2005: 93, 206; Kondanya 2007: 21). Similarly, large-group temporary ordination as a Theravāda novice became a part of the annual Buddha Jayantī celebrations in Lalitpur from 2001 (LeVine & Gellner 2005: 121). It also became common for children to take temporary ordination during their long winter holidays and to stay, learning meditation, at the International Buddhist Meditation Centre in Shankhamul, or in other monasteries.

A final and important aspect of the Theravāda temporary ordination ritual is that it is offered to all who are willing to accept the universal Buddhist idiom in which it is offered. As such, it has become part of Janajāti politics. Some Tharu, Magar, Gurung, and Tamang activists have seen in Theravāda Buddhism the most acceptable and conve-

11 For this argument, see LeVine & Gellner (2005); for the comparison with Ortner on the Sherpas, see in particular pp. 285–7, 289–91.

nient tool with which to reverse centuries of Brahman and Hindu influence and domination.[12] Among the Tharus, it is primarily an elite movement, encouraged by landlord intellectuals from the eastern Tarai, primarily former Attorney General Ramananda Prasad Singh (1933–2008) with his claim, first aired in 1988, that the Tharus are the descendants of the Buddha's tribe, the Śākyas (Singh 1988). Among the Magars there has been a much wider, deeper, and more "bottom-up" acceptance of the movement, which has led to the creation of a new class of lay Buddhist officiants seeking to replace all Brahman-run rituals by "their own".[13] All these modernist Buddhist activists are certainly following the lead of Bhimrao Ambedkar. However, not wishing to advertise any connection to Dalits, they avoid making any prominent acknowledgement of this fact.

The success of Theravāda Buddhism has led to attempts by the leaders of Vajrayāna Buddhism to respond. The introduction of the Pañcabuddha dance at Svayambhu on Buddha Jayantī was an early such response. The move by Badri Ratna Bajracharya, and later by his pupil Naresh Man Bajracharya, to offer the monastic initiation (*bare chuyegu*) ritual to all comers, is a direct imitation of the Theravādin rite. It is defended by Naresh Man as a reformist and progressive thing to do (see Appendix). There is no question, however, of allowing it to be performed inside an established monastic compound, thereby giving membership of its *saṅgha*. Nor is there any question of opening up initiation as a Vajrācārya to anyone other than boys from a pure Vajrācārya background.[14] Many decades after the idea was first mooted and some decades after a preliminary attempt was struck down by the Supreme Court of the state, the Tamil Nadu government, in May 2006, passed an order that anyone, of any caste, should be allowed to become a temple priest, i.e. that the job should not be restricted to certain Brahman sub-castes.[15] A similar move would appear to be a long way off in Nepal, though given how rapid social and political change has been there in the last twenty years, it would be rash to make any predictions.

Initiations for Newar girls

Initiation for girls might be expected to be less contentious, and in fact it is here that there has been the greatest innovation. Upper-caste Newar girls traditionally went through two separate initiation rituals, first the "marriage to a *bel* fruit", known as *ihi* (a

12 On the adoption of Buddhism by Janajātis, see LeVine & Gellner (2005: 140–1, 234–6), Krauskopff (2001), Letizia (2006).

13 Among Magars, these new lay officiants are called *uāpā* and among the Tharu *thāru paṇḍit* (Letizia 2006: 64, n. 34).

14 This blind spot among Newar Buddhist activists is discussed in LeVine & Gellner (2005: 266).

15 As with many anti-Brahman measures in Tamil Nadu, this is likely to remain a very largely symbolic move, since implementation would require non-Brahmans to want to train as temple priests, *pāṭhaśālā*s to be willing to accept them as students, and temples to be willing to take on the graduates. See Fuller (2003) on the politics of temple priesthood in Tamil Nadu.

one-day procedure), and second *bārhā tayegu*, or "placing a barrier", in which girls sometimes singly but often in a group, have to spend eleven days confined to a room from which the rays of the sun were excluded and no men were allowed to see them (Allen 1982; Vergati 1982; Toffin 1984: 401–5; Pradhan 1986: 110–42). Interestingly, it is in the latter ritual that the most radical change has occurred. The overwhelming majority of Buddhist households, and a significant number of others, now no longer perform *bārhā tayegu* in the traditional way. Instead they have replaced the *bārhā tayegu* ritual with a newly invented, or at least newly imported, ritual, *rikhini* (or *ṛṣiṇī*) *pabbajjā*. This was started when the Venerable Dhammawati returned from Burma in 1963. Modelling the rite on the temporary girls' ordination that she had seen in Burma, she introduced it as a substitute rite in 1966 and it quickly caught on. The arguments typically put forward for doing the ritual this way are that the old way of observing the ritual was "superstitious" and "a waste of time"; and that this way is both cheaper, quicker, and educational, since the girls at least learn some Pali and start to understand something of Buddhism.

Initially it was indeed very cheap, since the nuns did not charge anything for the girls staying in the nunnery, though families would of course have felt obliged to make some kind of donation to cover the expenses of the stay. In subsequent years, a fixed charge has been introduced to cover some of the extras that the girls expect. It is now carried out at many different monasteries and nunneries. In the early years *rikhini pabbajjā* always lasted for twelve days, in imitation of the *bārhā tayegu* ritual that it replaced, but subsequently it has frequently been shortened to five days or even fewer.[16]

The question arises, and was well put first by Kunreuther (1994), why should this ritual have caught on so well, when other proposed rituals, that the Theravāda monastics were willing to put on, did not? Why was *bārhā* replaced when *ihi* has not been? A combination of factors seems to be at play here. The Theravāda movement has succeeded in establishing a widespread "common-sense" discourse, according to which Newar Buddhism is deeply Hinduized. This makes many Newar Buddhists apologetic about their traditions. Many rituals can be defended in terms of Newar culture, if not in terms of their Buddhism, but *bārhā tayegu* was particularly vulnerable, since it had no discernable Buddhist rationale and at the same time was transparently similar to the non-Newar, Parbatiyā ritual of *guphā rākhne*, which is also concerned with dealing with the problem of female menstruation. Combined with this is the rising middle-class obsession with education and the constructive use of time. The new Theravāda ritual taps in to this, since it replaces eleven days of play and indulgence with study and learning moral rules. The cost issue also raises its head, because by sending the girls to a monastery a family could avoid the expense of a feast, if they so wished.

16 Christoph Emmrich informs me that such foreshortening happens also sometimes with performances of *bārhā tayegu*. Furthermore, apparently some modern performances of *bārhā tayegu* now incorporate study on the Theravāda model; contrariwise, some of those who send their daughters to Theravāda nunneries, take them on the final day to Gaṇeś shrines, as if it were a performance of *bārhā tayegu*. In short, the two kinds of ritual are coming closer together (personal communication, 25/6/08).

Michael Allen interpreted both the traditional girls' initiation rituals in terms of adaptations of an initially "tribal" society to Hindu norms. It cannot be denied that the *bārhā* confinement rite and the *ihi* mock marriage do indeed enact Hindu norms. The most common justification given for the *ihi* ritual is that it means that Newar girls will never be a widow. It is certainly right that by performing this ritual, Newars are therefore acknowledging Hindu norms that ban widow remarriage, but reinterpreting them. However, as I have pointed out in a previous publication (Gellner 1991), not all Newars observe the *ihi* rite. In fact, it is precisely those who are most relaxed about widow remarriage—low castes, Maharjans in outlying villages—who do not perform the *ihi* ritual, whereas those who do not allow widows to remarry and do indeed regard them as stigmatized and inauspicious—namely high castes—are precisely those who perform the ritual. In other words, the ritual seems singularly unable to create the very empowerment that is claimed for it.

Part of the problem may lie in the assumption that rituals do straightforwardly accomplish particular social ends. Low castes and rural Maharjans do not need a ritual that is "about" widowhood, because they have (or had) no aspirations to high status in Brahmanical terms. It is precisely because high-caste Newars do share, even if only partially and with caveats, the Brahmanical worldview, that they "need" a ritual. It is paradoxical, of course, and ironic, that, because of their commitment to that Brahmanical worldview, the ritual mostly does not seem to accomplish what is so often claimed for it (removing the stigma of widowhood).

In part what I was objecting to in that earlier article was the crude, essentialist, and unhistorical use sometimes made of models that posit an unchanging "Hinduism" to which, in teleological fashion, all cultural change in the past, before the advent of "modernity", must have been tending. I was also objecting to the designation of Newars as "tribal" since their culture was and is the very opposite, from a sociological and cultural point of view, of what is normally meant by that term in South Asia; many Newars themselves are and have been unhappy with the designation of Newars as Janajātis for that very reason (cf. Gellner 1995a: 30–4; 2003: 93). In fact, Hinduism, as of course the slightest reflection must acknowledge, is itself a changing phenomenon, with changing ideals and changing models of what counts as "proper Hindu behaviour", so that what might now be seen as "low" or "un-Hindu" (e.g. widow remarriage) was at one time perfectly respectable.

Christoph Emmrich (2008) has thrown new light on these girls' rituals by paying attention to the chat that surrounds them as they are performed. He points out that at *ihi* men joke about the girl taking her "husband", i.e. the *bel* fruit, home, rather than the other way around; mothers joke with their daughters about the qualities of the fruit, which are supposed to reflect those of her future human husband. There is an even more marked difference between the ways in which men and women talk about

bārhā.[17] For men it has to do with educating girls about menstruation. Women denied this and said it was about training girls for daily ritual, and also getting them accustomed to the fasting and denial of performing *vrata*s.[18]

Conclusion

When Bhikshu Sudarshan set out in 1998 to list all the things that Theravāda Buddhism had contributed to Newar culture and society, he came up with eighteen items, including establishing Buddha Jayantī (a.k.a. Wesak) as a major holiday, introducing sermons, initiating pilgrimage to Buddhist sites in India, reviving Lumbini as a holy site, encouraging meditation and caste-free recruitment to the *saṅgha*, and providing a religious role for women.[19] The one thing he did not mention was the introduction of Theravāda life-cycle rituals. The reason is, no doubt, that both Theravāda monastics themselves and reflective laypeople are somewhat uneasy at the thought that the monastics are coming to resemble Vajrācāryas—that is to say, that their main raison d'être is the performance of ritual services for lay people. In their view Theravāda Buddhism is not about providing priestly services, and in this they are certainly true to long-established views within Theravāda Buddhism, a point which has not always been properly understood.[20]

None the less, in the struggle to reform Newar Buddhism, and in the move to distinguish Buddhism as far as possible from Hinduism, the provision of alternative life-cycle rituals was a key step, just as it was a key step in the survival of Newar Buddhism in a Hindu environment in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This move—using life-cycle rituals to define a separate and to some extent oppositional social identity—is a strategy that is now being followed, quite consciously and deliberately, by other ethnic groups, such as the Magars, who have no verifiable history of Buddhist practice at all. It is entirely consonant with the egalitarian ethos of modernizing Buddhism, and the stress on female empowerment, that an older ritual with a symbolic focus on marriage and the dangers of menstrual impurity should be replaced by a renunciatory ritual with a message of hard work and book study, one that parallels the rituals for boys. It is perhaps a sign of a continued attachment to much of traditional Newar culture that girls continue to go through the other female initiation rite, namely mock marriage to a *bel*

17 Emmrich also notes that *bārhā* is often identified in handbooks with *garbhādhāna*. Ancient commentaries differed on whether *garbhādhāna* is to be performed for the unborn embryo (and therefore has to be done frequently) or for the woman, in which case it is done just once after she is married. If *ihi* is the marriage, then *bārhā* is *garbhādhāna*.

18 The remarks he cites about *riṣiṇī pabbajjā* and *sāmaṇerī pabbajjā* (where the girl shaves her head and undertakes 10 precepts, not just 8), bear out the interpretation I have given of motivations for replacing the traditional way of doing *bārhā*.

19 See Sudarshan (1998) and LeVine & Gellner (2005: 283–4).

20 See Gombrich (1995). I discussed the opposition between monk and priest in the Newar context in Gellner (1989).

fruit. In other words, discourses of "superstition" are mobilized contextually and rarely systematically.

Both the traditional forms of these initiation rituals and the new modernized adaptations must be seen primarily as expressions of identity—in the first case of particular caste and religious identities, in the latter of new understandings, and contestations of older attributions. In the case of the traditional girls' rituals it was a question of taming powers (of sexuality), rather than of using liminality to imbue vitality as Bloch would have it. In the more soteriologically oriented boys' rituals, based on values of renunciation, once again the symbolic load is not obviously to do with violence or the incorporation of sources of vitality. In all of them it is a question of transforming the child into a particular kind of adult in a highly structured and plural society. Where there is a social unit into which the boy is being initiated, as with Newar Buddhists, there are plenty of other social forces supporting and reinforcing that identity: the group does not need to be created by the inherent power of the ritual; in those cases where a large group of boys are initiated together, no specific bond is created between them, other than that they all belong to the monastery where the initiation takes place. There is no need for the ritual to be particularly dramatic or traumatic in order to impress itself on the boy's memory forever—though becoming a monk for four days, or an ascetic for one day, is a dramatic and unusual enough break from everyday routine that it is hardly likely to be forgotten. In short, the pressures which would push the initiation ritual in the direction of what Whitehouse calls imagistic religion are also largely absent. What there is instead is a public demonstration of the religious allegiances of the child and their household. Given that religion is a highly salient aspect of identities in Nepal, it is not surprising that these rituals have, just as religion has, been subject to considerable modification, change, and substitution in the last fifty years. Naresh Man's use of the *bhikṣu luyegu* ritual is a response to and an imitation of the Theravādins' temporary *pabbajjā* rite, which is itself a response and potential replacement for the Vajrācāryas' traditional *bare chuyegu* ritual, which in turn is an ancient adaptation of monastic initiation going back almost to the Buddha's time.[21] Naresh Man's innovation is thus one more link in the on-going debates between Buddhists over the meaning of renunciation and over the consequences of the ritual of renunciation for relationships with significant others.

21 I owe this observation to Chiara Letizia. On the *bare chuyegu* ritual, see Locke (1975), Gellner (1988), Lewis (1994: 12), Letizia (2000), and von Rospatt (2005).

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Appendix: Naresh Man Bajracharya's use of *bhikṣu luyegu* to reform Newar Buddhism

...However much the country's political situation may oppress us, as long as Svayambhū, Sīghaḥ [Śrīghaḥ], and Khāsti [Bauddha] *caitya*s remain upright, as long as people continue to perform the *chāy hāykegu* ritual to [Hārītī] Ajimā, as long as Janmādyaḥ's chariot is pulled, as long as Asaṃmaru Ajimā remains in Asan, as long as *cacā* [*caryā gīt*] are sung, as long as the sound of the Guṃlā music is heard, as long as the *dhimay*, *koṃcākhiṃ*, and *pacimā* drums are played, as long as the sound of the *kotāḥ* and *peṃytāḥ* are heard, as long as the Pañcabuddha are painted at every doorway, as long as new daughters-in-law are welcomed with the pouring of the *siphaḥ* measure, as long as people eat from the ceremonial *thāybhū*, as long as people observe all classes of festival (*nakhaḥ cakhaḥ*), as long as there are priests (*guruju*) and patrons (*jaymāṃ*), whatever ill wind comes, our traditions and culture will not be lost. But our Newar Buddhist traditions and culture, while ascending the steps of progress have reached a final limit (*caram sīmā*)...

In our Newar Buddhist society, [we need] to recognize deformations and to start the process of removing them: Urāy (Tulādhars etc.), Jyāpu (Maharjans etc.), Puṃ, Khusaḥ, Nau, Kau, Sāymi, Thaṃhiti Syasya (who are connected to Mhaypidyaḥ), Kocheṃ Syasya (who have Svayambhū *caitya* as their lineage deity), Thanbahi Paḥmā

(Pradhān),[22] etc.—the sons of all these groups have their topknot cut in *kaytāpūjā*, and this is a corruption. Thus, just like Gurujus and Barejus they should become *pravrajit* in *bāhā* or *bahī* and have their topknot fully shaved off, and thereby made to belong to the Buddhist *saṅgha*. This would be a big reform, as is fully recognized by intellectuals both in Nepal and abroad. An organization called the Nepal Bauddha Dharma Sangha has decided that it will shortly be proceeding to give *pravrajyā sambara* to the sons of its lay supporters.

(Naresh Man Bajracharya "Newar Buddhist Culture: Deformations and Reform" *Vishwabhoomi* 8, 131, p. 2, 22/4/96)

Just over a year later the same newspaper carried an interview by Basanta Maharjan with Naresh Man on the occasion of his third performance of *pravrajyā samvara pradān* (proferring the vow of renunciation) glossed as *bhikṣu luyegu* (literally "lustration as a monk"):

This is a campaign to give this initiation to all Buddhist *jāti*s, and if possible even to convert non-Buddhists into Buddhists. It is against carrying out the *kaytāpūjā* sacrament... This tradition has been there from the beginning. There is a lineage of Maharjans in Kathmandu's Pyaṃgaḥthāṃ whose elder has been having it continuously. This elder is called the "Phū Bare".[23] Still today there is a tradition among the Paḥmā (Pradhān) gentlemen of the Śreṣṭha caste, who belong to Thaṃ Bahi, that one of their number is initiated in this way so that he may stay with the main deity (*kvāpādyaḥ*). The four *varṇa* system was established by King Jayasthiti Malla, which means that before that time it didn't exist. So we can see that it was only after that that ordination of a monk (*bhikṣu luyegu*) ritual was limited to Śākyas and Vajrācāryas... I wouldn't say that there is absolutely no one who sees it negatively, but anyone who is a progressive Newar won't see it in that light. Our main aims in carrying out this ritual are three: 1) to get rid of corruptions, 2) to lessen caste distinctions, 3) to preserve and develop Buddhist customs. In this connection Bhikshu Amritananda remarked that it was the tradition of *bare chuyegu* that was responsible for the preservation of Buddhism in Nepal.

("In Order to get Rid of Corruptions in Buddhism, Let's Ordain Monks", Basanta Maharjan, interview with Naresh Man Bajracharya, *Vishwabhoomi*, 6/7/1997, p. 3)[24]

22 This is a list of Newar castes with Buddhist priests. On Thaṃ Bahi and its unusual Pradhan Sangha, see Locke (1985: 405–13).

23 On the Phū Bare, see Locke (1985: 257–8).

24 My translations from Nepal Bhasha.

Todd T. Lewis

Ritual (Re-)Constructions of Personal Identity: Newar Buddhist Life-Cycle Rites and Identity among the Urāy of Kathmandu

Introduction – Buddhist tradition and ritual

Among contemporary Buddhists in both the Euro-American world and Asia, the very notion that ritual is formative of Buddhist identity, or could engender a transformative spiritual experience, is seen as outdated or even absurd. What is worthy in this tradition, in this view, is the legacy of individual meditation practices passed down from its spiritual virtuosi and the fearless parsing of reality by its extraordinary sage-scholars. Most of the equally ancient daily and lifelong ritual practices in each regional formation of Buddhism are destined to fade away. In this "Protestant Buddhist" perspective (Gombrich & Obeyesekere 1988; Schopen 1991), there is little to mourn from the excision of superstitions, rituals, and habits that developed in previous centuries at Buddhist monasteries and temples, in towns and villages, and in families; since most people do not know the rationale of these religious acts, the exact meanings of the words they utter or have uttered on their behalf, this modernist reduction of Buddhist tradition to its "true essence" is positive, even necessary. If in the past being a Buddhist entailed much more than sitting in meditation and joining in discourse on the intricacies of doctrine, the modern Buddhist no longer needs to carry on this vestigial baggage.

As I have written elsewhere (Lewis 2002), this reduction of Buddhism to what its virtuosi do and think is a historical distortion; still common today is a fundamental failure to understand the fullness of the tradition's spiritual reach and the richness of its pragmatic religious services to communities across Asia (Obeyesekere 1968; Tambiah 1973). Central to comprehending Buddhist tradition in history and contemporary Newar practice is *anupurvikatha*, the early and textually-located notion of "the gradual path". For millennia, the specific progress of a typical Buddhist is charted as:

dāna/puṇya	*śīla/svarga*	Evil of *pāpa/ kāma*	Renunciation	Four Noble Truths
→	→	→	→	
Generosity/ merit making	Moral actions/heaven	Demerit/desire	Joining *saṅgha*	Practicing meditation

This gradual path doctrine envisions society as a multi-point hierarchy of beings who are different according to their *karma* and spiritual capacities.[1] In the "gradual path", too, we find the central ideal of a Buddhist society that is interdependent and linked through ritual and patronage, connecting advanced practitioners with others moving up along the "gradual path." It has been these relationships among unequal spiritual individuals that have shaped and sustained Buddhist communities for over two millennia. Such inclusivity applies to societies following Mahāyāna tradition, with the appreciation of teaching and ritual performance as *upāya*s, expressions of a Bodhisattva's skillful assistance to the community.

Across pre-modern Buddhist Asia, the multitudes who have performed rituals, taking refuge in Buddha/*dharma*/*saṅgha* meant following a tradition that had demonstrated that the Buddha's words and the faith's saints could exert control over the powers of the universe that could resist disease and chaos while promoting worldly prosperity. As Yün-hua Jan has noted, the same strong focus on spiritual power can be found in the Chinese Buddhist storytelling traditions:

> The claim of supernatural power of recitation may be disputable among scholars as well as sectarians, yet one point has clearly emerged. ... From an insider's viewpoint, the power of recitation is extremely powerful, and in certain cases, it is claimed to be even more powerful and preferable than either a philosophical understanding or the excellence in moral disciplines (Jan, Yün-hua 1977: 239).

Thus, I would argue that it was ritual practice that created and defined Buddhist identity and it was faith in the pragmatic powers of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas accessed via ritual that held the center of Buddhist tradition. Lofty moral values and blissful fruits of meditation, and beautiful *dharma* formulations certainly must have impressed and converted some; but the *dharma*'s control over the powers that insure health, wealth, progeny, peace—even overcoming bad *karma*—certainly would have had the widest appeal in securing the faith's success in contexts as different as nomadic pasturelands, urban enclaves, or subsistence farming villages.

Thus, in every society where Buddhism flourished, it ritualized its spiritual ideals and incorporated pragmatic healing traditions. These are seen in monastic iconography and ritualism, in textual chanting and *stūpa* devotions; they are woven into the festival year, integrated into the life-cycle rites of specific communities, and the procedures for building homes and monasteries.[2] As David Ruegg has noted, "Buddhism is indeed not only philosophy and/or religion but also a way of living and being, a cultural and value

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1 As George Bond draws out the importance of this understanding very explicitly: "The notion of the path links all diverse persons, stages, and goals. Although these manuals define some suttas as mundane and others as supramundane, and though they identify some suttas as applying to ordinary persons and others applying to adepts, the manuals do not regard these as distinct religious paths; they do not separate the kammic from the nibbanic path. Though the path has many levels and applications, the Dhamma is one and the path one. This ... is the secret to understanding the logic and meaning of the Buddha's teachings." (1988: 42–3).

2 See, e.g. Tanemura 2004.

system permitting Buddhists in vast areas of the world to construct so much of their mundane as well as spiritual lives" (1995: 104).

The neglect of ritual in the understanding of Mahāyāna Buddhism (and Buddhists) has also obscured how Buddhist doctrinal constructs were applied to the events of "real life", especially childhood, marriage, old age, after-death contingency. Buddhism in its pre-modern setting was adapted to the existential reality that most householders were illiterate. Since only very few individuals could read texts to learn the *dharma*, most had to learn through oral renderings of the text and their experiences in Buddhist ritual. Buddhist ritual, thus, was developed and sustained by those wishing to shape human experience consciously for the good of Buddhists in a community.

Far from being a "vulgarization" or a "concession" to the masses, ritual has been the fundamental means of applying *dharma* analysis to acculturate the young or, to use Buddhist terms, to shape consciously and beneficently (*kuśala*) the *skandhas*—body, sensations, perceptions, habit energies, consciousness—of individuals, ultimately pointing them toward spiritual maturity and awakening. As Martin Southworth has noted, "Buddhists themselves are very aware of this effect, and they stress that just as it is true that having a right or good state of mind leads to right or good conduct, so too does good conduct tend to produce good states of mind" (1983: 199).

To have studied a living Buddhist community is to know that children come to understand the teachings by questioning the meaning of rituals, through practical examples conveyed in stories, and by listening very intently to the doctrinal testimony that swirls around them when death rituals are being conducted in the family circle. What Newar monks and elders have done in Nepal for centuries is to perform Buddhist rituals that apply the *dharma* with compassion to help especially the young, the grieving, and the dead. To generate good *karma* and material blessings is the central goal.

Recognizing this in Nepal means to discern, again to use a Buddhist term, the *upāya* ("skillful means") of the collective Mahāyāna tradition that its religious masters developed over the last millennium to benefit Buddhist householders. The examination of Mahāyāna life-cycle rites in the Newar community demonstrates how each rite was constructed to work on multiple levels, to impart meanings and secure blessings differentially for those all along Buddhism's "gradual path", from beginners to advanced tantric practitioners, from little children to elder adepts. Buddhist rituals in the Newar context also served other local interests, as well.

The Nepalese Buddhist context

The abundance of cultural vitality evident in the later Malla era (1482–1768) that created the magnificent art and architecture in the Kathmandu Valley and established vast libraries of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts was applied to other cultural domains as well. Hindu and Buddhist Newars—kings, priests, merchants, commoners—maintained an almost continuous yearly round of festival observances for their society. Likewise, their priests arranged complex rites to mark all significant events in an individual's life-

time. From conception to long after death, in celebration and in mourning, rituals have long been integral to the Newar lifestyle. The elaboration of Buddhist ceremonies in this community is truly immense: a recent handbook on rituals lists over 125 "major" *pūjā*s (Bajrācārya 1980). The vast orchestration of such performances shows the extent to which Buddhists in the Kathmandu Valley adopted and maintained traditions from earlier Indian civilization. Nowhere else in the Himalayas has so much of earlier Northern Indian Buddhist culture survived intact.

The Vajrayāna Buddhist tradition that grew in importance from the fifth century CE onward in India furthered these ritualistic tendencies, representing both a critique and a fulfillment of early Mahāyāna philosophy and praxis. The chief Tantra-path exponents and exemplars, the Siddhas, developed *sādhana* traditions outside of the scholarly monastic circles and rejected the prevalent multi-lifetime, slow approximation Bodhisattva approach to enlightenment. These *yogin*s introduced the means to visualize and control *śūnyatā* by identifying with the Buddha's three "secrets": Body (*mudrā*), Speech (mantra) and Mind (*samādhi*) (Wayman 1971: 443). Through a host of innovative techniques, the Vajrayāna masters showed the immediate possibility of harnessing the experience of *śūnyatā* to attain enlightenment. As a corollary to their soteriological discoveries, the Siddhas also composed rituals that applied a master's power to accomplish more mundane goals. The later scholars who eventually organized and domesticated the *sādhana* practices fashioned a Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhist culture that emphasized *pūjā* (ritual performance), *vrata* (devotional rites to a chosen deity[3]), and *abhiṣeka* (esoteric initiation). One definite record of a tantric master and ritual innovator active in Nepal around 1216 CE was Kuladatta, who is cited as the author of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, a source-book still cited in for contemporary ritual guidebooks (Tanemura 2004: 10).

For the Newar *saṅgha*, the major areas of religious focus were preservation and manuscript copying and Nepal's *vihāra*s to this day preserve a massive corpus of Sanskrit Buddhist texts. Ritual priests in medieval Nepal also devoted themselves to adapting Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna religious understandings in ritual terms. This development explains why Newar Buddhist tradition seems to lack a strong philosophical/scholastic dimension. What is crafted in rituals are expressions and interjections of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna world view into every conceivable juncture: for relating to deities, celebrating festivals, moving an individual through his lifetime, and seeking *nirvāṇa*. Lacking in philosophical inquiry, the "genius" of Newar Buddhism lies in its pervasive orchestration of Vajrayāna rituals and teachings which channel blessings, well-being, and—for those householders willing to practice—movement toward enlightenment.

This perspective on Newar Buddhist life-cycle rites is clearly visible in the modern compilation of life-cycle rites composed in 1962 by Badri Ratna Bajracarya and Ratna Kaji Bajracarya of Kathmandu City, the *Nepāl Jana Jīvan Kriyā Paddhati*.[4] From the first passages of this text, the application of core Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna concepts to con-

3 Lewis 1989.

4 Translated in Lewis (1994).

struct rituals is apparent. Conception is described in terms of tantric physiology and the priest's *sādhana* is often cited as the basis for the rituals performed. The Vajrācāryas' generation of *amṛta prasād* ("ambrosia") through their *pūjāri*s became integral to a medical-religious system that linked priests to laymen (Stablein 1976).

There was also the force of historical influences that guided the expressions of ritual adaptation. It is possible, as a reading of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* would suggest, that the rites of vitalization designed to "give life" to Buddhist icons were adapted for Buddhist householders under the influences on society exerted under the Malla and Shah rulers, when the socio-cultural context of Newar Buddhism was also one of increasing Brahmanical dominance in the cultural environment and law.

The Newar Buddhist *saṃskāra*s outlined in the *Jana Jīvan* manual closely follow the classical paradigms of Indian Brahmanical tradition, marking the key points in a person's life with Vajrayāna rituals that remove forces that threaten his passage, empower him, while eliminating any incurred pollution. These Buddhist *pūjāri*s follow many ancient Brahmanical ritual procedures, but they have also transformed them with alternative Buddhist gestures (*mudrā*s), incantations (mantras, *dhāraṇī*s) and symbolic meanings. In general, Newar Buddhist ritualists adopted many core components of Brahmanical ritualism (caste perceptions, rite organization, mantra belief, purity concerns) but maintained separate boundaries through transpositions of ritual implements, priestly vestments, mantra formulae, *mudrā*s, theories of ritual empowerment.

Particularly striking is the acceptance of caste categories in ritual reckoning. The *Jana Jīvan* text states that birth into a Śākya caste family is a necessary prerequisite for entry into the Newar *saṅgha*. Because Buddhism existed for at least 1700 years in India, this attention to caste should not be surprising. Nonetheless, the Newars' use of strict endogamous lineages to define *saṅgha* membership and categories of practice available to laity is a unique and heterodox feature of the modern tradition.

It is significant to note that approximately one half of this guidebook is devoted to the rituals associated with death. All Vajrayāna ritual activity seeks to avert bad destiny and make *puṇya* to insure a good future for the sponsor(s), but the rituals surrounding death are the most prominent. In prescribing year-long *śrāddha* offerings to the departed person for the first year after death, the Newar tradition is different from Tibetan and East Asian Buddhist practice, where 49 days is usually recognized as the limit of possible linkage and thereby effective ritual action.[5] This seems highly unorthodox: despite espousing the doctrine of *karma* and rebirth, Newar Vajrācāryas simultaneously maintain the necessity of these monthly *śrāddha* rituals throughout the first year. Even more Brahmanical in content, this text gives repeated assurances that the departed will reach the Vedic afterlife in "*pitṛloka*" if all of the rituals are done well and the requisite offerings are made by a suitable priest; but it does not specify how this cosmology meshes with alternative Buddhist textual notions.

In pursuit of this Brahmanical desideratum, Newars spend vast time and resources on their *śrāddha* rituals. Thus, this Buddhist tradition plays to both sides of the Indian

5 Subsequent yearly rites on the death anniversary are consistent across the entire Buddhist world.

question of whether one's destiny is based strictly upon the individual's own *karma* from past and present lifetimes, or whether rituals done before and after death can overrule this and manipulate rebirth destiny (Edgerton 1927). Like most Indic religious systems founded on the doctrine that the cosmos is governed by karmic law, Newar tradition naturally looks to death as the critical time when causal mechanisms operate. It is not surprising that the very highly ritualized Buddhism of the Newars' has applied Vajrayāna ritual expertise to this time as well.

This example represents the Newar *saṅgha*'s economic adaptation in parallel with the patterns of Newar Brahman ritualists who subsist mainly through death time gift-giving. It is important to note that *śrāddha* rituals are one of the chief occasions for laymen presenting *dāna* to the Vajrācārya *saṅgha*. So proficient were they in these rituals that until recent times even otherwise Hindu high caste Newar laymen regularly called Vajrācāryas to perform their death rites.[6]

Newar Buddhist *saṃskāra*s as initiations

The great masterpiece of Newar Buddhism in the 20th century, Chittadhar Hridaya's *Sugata Saurabha*, recounts the Buddha's life from birth to death in a book-length poem of 19 chapters.[7] The author follows the classical textual sources carefully where they exist, but where these are silent—predominantly in Siddhārtha's youth and home setting—he contextualizes and humanizes Siddhārtha's life by having him follow the often complex and detailed cultural traditions of modern Newars. Sugata Saurabha unself-consciously conveys the Newar Buddhist perspective that performing life-cycle rites are an important part of life, natural to the future Buddha's formative experiences. The text contains descriptions of many of still-observed life-cycle rites, with an especially detailed account of Siddhārtha's marriage to Yaśodharā.[8]

While the exact historical factors that led Newar Buddhists to develop a set of *saṃskāra*s in concordance with those in the Brahmanical Dharmaśāstras remain uncer-

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6 Dependence on after death ritual service for income also shows the Newar form of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhism similar to modern Japanese traditions, where such rituals are the predominant area where Buddhist tradition endures (Reader 1991).

7 This work has been recently published in a bi-lingual translation as *Sugata Saurabha: A Poem on the Life of the Buddha by Chittadhar Hridaya of Nepal.* [with Subarna Man Tuladhar] by Harvard University Press in 2008; a popular edition will be published by Oxford University Press in late 2009.

8 Sugata Saurabha's life-cycle rituals are 1) Mother's release from birth pollution; 2) Infant rice feeding and presenting objects to predict child's career; 3) *kaytāpūjā*, departure to study with *guru*; 4) The vast inventory of Newar marriage rites: Areca nuts and gifts sent to finalize proposal; Pastry gifts (*lakha*) sent to fix wedding date, bride opening *lakha* bowl, men's procession to fetch bride back home, bride's ritual farewell, offering betel, procession fetches bride in palanquin, bride's family priest's oration, groom's priest's oration, dowry recounted, bride's first entry to new home, areca nut greeting to groom's kin, bride/groom eat from common plate/cups, groom applying make-up, hair part *tikā* to bride, pair worships at Gaṇeś temple, bride's kin visit to "see her face"; 5) Death wailing and procession; 6) Cremation of Buddha's mother and father.

tain, the succession of rites performed by Newar householders function simultaneously to define their high caste status as well as their Buddhist identity. Malla-era ritual Vajrācārya masters created Buddhist transpositions of standard Brahmanical rites but in a Buddhist modality, for Buddhist laymen, using Buddhist ritual objects, performed by members of the Buddhist *saṅgha*. Aligning their community in outward conformity with the ideal Brahmanical life marked by *saṃskāra*s, they skillfully created an alternative identity using ritual, one that was not Hindu and one that generated world benefits and good *karma*. While the term "Buddhist Brahmins" coined long ago by Stephen Greenwold (1974) for their modern successors neglects some portions of their identity, when considering Newar Buddhist rituals, their service today is indeed Brahman-like.

Saṃskāra	Practical Religious Meaning(s)	Vajrayāna Meaning(s)
Macābū byēkegu	Release from birth pollution Protection of the baby	Ajimā/Hārītī converted by the Buddha
Macā jākva	Name given Personhood established Career determined	Vajrayāna methods of marshaling the powers of the *dharma*
Ihi	Purification Partial ritual maturity	Symbolism of *bodhicitta*; girl becomes vessel of *prajñā*, symbolized by *bel* fruit
Bārhā tayegu	Full ritual maturity Protection and purification Prevents painful menstrual periods	Sun identified as a Bodhisattva
Kaytāpūjā	Ritual adulthood	Re-enacting Śākyamuni's departure from home Vajrayāna powers of protection
Marriage	Protection rituals Woman's entrance to marriage	Buddhist deities witness communal relations Worship of Yoginī seals family bond
Nikhan	Mahāyāna initiation Foundation for tantric initiation (*dekhā*)	Taking 3 refuges and 5 refuges; taking Bodhisattva vow chanting mantra to strengthen moral practice
Burā jākva	Protection, vitality Freedom from ritual rules	Making *puṇya* for elder Averts inauspicious moment of 77 years/7 months/7 days Assistance in state between births
Śrāddha	Protection from evil spirit Purification of house Purification of the *phukī*	Averts a bad destiny Rebirth in *sukhāvatī*

Table 1: Urāy *saṃskāra*s and meanings in Vajrācārya tradition

The maximum development of such Buddhist rituals was accomplished for the Urāy,[9] a grouping of Buddhist castes in Kathmandu whose mercantile activities brought them in regular contact with royal families. In both the Malla and Shah eras, rulers of the Valley claimed their devotion to orthoprax Brahmanical practices. For sustaining their social connections with these rulers, protecting their wealth, and expressing their high social status the Urāy depended, in part, on demonstrations of ritual purity in an Indic framework, but in a Buddhist mode. Table 1 provides a summary of the Buddhist life-cycle rites performed by the Urāy, given with information on their interpretation by their Vajrācārya ritualist informants.

Several comments pertinent to the consideration of initiation can be made. First, each Newar Buddhist life-cycle ritual performed always has the priest administer a vow to the family (*saṃkalpa*) to begin the rite. Although this formality is not recognized by all as such, it nonetheless marks entrance into a sacred Buddhist time interval and the formal intention to move into the next stage of life. Second, moving ahead in life to take the optional and explicitly religious initiations (*nikhan* and *dekhā*) requires that the individual complete the normal sequence of these Buddhist *saṃskāra*s. In this sense, all the earlier rites are part of a chain of the preliminary preparations for the religious initiations of adulthood.

Third, there are times when the *saṃskāra*s may be done more for the extended family and less for the individual. A family may perform the girl's *ihi* more for the merit earned by parents doing *kanyādāna*, than for the spiritual benefit of the children involved.[10] It is also true that in some Urāy families the old age ritual, *Burā jākva*, is done more to express its own status and less to provide a religious experience for the elder. Fourth, and related to the former, is the acceptance of a whole range of possible attitudes of engagement from those taking part in the complex Vajrayāna rituals. Newar Buddhists generally, like Tibetans, feel that mere exposure to the mantras, images, and rites, that is, simply the experiences of listening and *darśana* themselves exerts a beneficent effect on key individual as well as the other witnesses. To take part, even if not much is understood, is meritorious while exerting a positive influence on the person's character. Here is where the term *saṃskāra*'s two meanings meet: a rite that shapes an individual's character.

The explicitly Buddhist practice of initiation into a meditative tradition is common among the Urāy. Consistent with the Vajrayāna ethos, the Vajrācārya teacher and his wife instruct the recipients on the practices involved. He also asks all to not share the details with others. It is expected that every young person, either before or right after marriage, will take the first meditation initiation, called *nikhan*. While there may be

9 See extensive treatment in Lewis (1995).

10 My own experience in this phenomenon illustrates this point. In the winter of 1998, my daughter Melissa, then five years old, became the first non-Newar to do *ihi* with a group of Newar friends' daughters. On the second day, as I was following the Vajrācārya's ritual guide, he came to a point in the liturgy when the text called for "preach about the meaning of the ritual," the priest did not do so, despite the deployment of a large microphone and sound system in the courtyard. When I asked him about this omission, he replied, "It doesn't mean anything."

variations in the precise practices bestowed by Kathmandu Vajrācāryas, all Urāy *nikhan* initiations introduce meditation involving mantra recitation that focus on Karuṇāmaya-Avalokiteśvara.[11]

Only members of the Vajrācārya, Śākya, Urāy and Citrakār castes are deemed eligible for the second Newar Buddhist initiation, *dekhā*. And only those with this initiation can enter the family tantric shrine room, the *āgāchẽ*, to see the paintings of the esoteric Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The warnings about secrecy are stern, and teachers require a talking vow to uphold it, citing serious dangers (illness, derangement, death) to the initiate and any outsider who breaches the circle of secrecy. To take *dekhā* is a highly personal decision, ideally taken with one's spouse to receive the full tradition. Due to the required daily practice that can take one hour, the cost of gifts to the teacher at initiation, and the expectation that one will join in subsequent rituals with co-initiates at the tantric shrines, the number of Urāy taking *dekhā* has been in sharp decline over the last half century. Certain notable Vajrācārya masters in Kathmandu periodically offer these initiations and the word spreads; at times individuals approach the master, usually with interested friends lined up to join them. In Kathmandu there are three Vajrayāna initiations that are bestowed to Urāy by the tantric master Vajrācāryas, those focused on Cakrasaṃvara, Vajravārāhī, and Acala.

A final note is that for the Urāy, the entire Kathmandu Valley religious field—including Tibetans, Theravādins, and others—offers possibilities for initiation if one is so inclined. There are records of Newars taking initiations with Tibetan masters going back at least 500 years (Lewis & Jamspal 1988), as well as Urāy who have been strong drawn into serious engagement with Theravādin *vipassanā* (Skt. *vipaśyanā)* practices.

Buddhist initiation in Urāy life – further topics

1 Initiation and social group boundaries

Despite many influences of modernity in Kathmandu's Urāy communities, caste and sub-caste as boundaries of significant concern and maintenance endure. Among the Tulādhars, the largest Urāy group, membership in male lineage descent groups is recognized from three specific localities—Asan, Naradevī, and Jhvā Bāhā—and status is legitimated according to membership in units that perform rituals of Buddhist devotion. The most critical, if least often performed, ritual unit is that associated with the 12-year Samyak festival, a complex series of events organized by the Samyak Guthi. Asan and Naradevī Tulādhar groups have clearly specified duties of food offering preparation in this *guthi*; the Jhvā Bāhā group does not and so is perceived as having lower status. The same opinion is reinforced due to Jhvā Bāhā Tulādhars lacking their own *gumlābājan* group. The *gumlābājan* unites men for Buddhist ritual processions, and to play drums in this group is a skill that must be learned from one's locality caste elders; boys in the

11 The practice once also involved visualization of the celestial Bodhisattva; now it consists only of mantras chanted using as rosary.

Asan and Naradevī communities are still eager to learn, attending classes to master a variety of beats and tunes. But unless their family has clear patrilineal descent in either of these two groups, they are not allowed to learn or play.

It is precisely here where we can see an instance of Newar Buddhists using caste membership in a merit-making, ritual group to maintain caste exclusivity, and ignore the contending ideal of Buddhist universalism: sharing the teachings and acting compassionately towards all beings, not just one's own kin.

This tendency is not true in all areas of collective Buddhist life, however. Another ritual tradition, the Buddhist *vrata*, provides a case study that begins with a vow and a short-term initiation into a Bodhisattva's ritual cosmos. It is likely that the formation of dozens of Buddhist *vrata*s—dedicated to Avalokiteśvara (the *aṣṭamī* or *uposatha vrata*), Vasundharā, Tārā, Mahākāla, among others—was part of the same historical movement that led to the formation of Buddhist *saṃskāra*s: Vajrācārya ritual masters adopting ancient Brahmanical practices to unite devotees to worship, under their direction, major Mahāyāna divinities. For these one or two-day events, Buddhist householders fast, perform rituals on a *maṇḍala*, and hear testimonial stories about the deity and past blessings garnered in the past by those performing the rite. The ephemeral *vrata* participants meet only once, or more rarely, on the same lunar day each month for a year. These groups form along many affinity lines: caste, kin, neighbors, uniting Buddhist householders regardless of caste or subcaste. There are also devotional *guthi*s, especially those associated with the Newar Buddhist holy month of Gumlā, that unite householders of different castes and subcastes to recite sacred texts (*stotra*s). In *vrata*s and religious performance *guthi*s, the ideal of Buddhist universalism ranks supreme.

2 Limited access to tantric mantras and initiation

The textual history of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhist tradition in South Asia recounts that esoteric Buddhism began on the periphery of society and settlement, among ascetics and others who ignored the caste system and Dharmaśāstra norms of gender, and whose spiritual explorations took place in society's periphery, in wilderness or cremation grounds. This movement that crossed or blurred the lines of Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist traditions, probably began as early as classical India (500 CE), affecting in subsequent centuries all traditions in many dimensions of belief and practice. By 1000 CE, when Buddhism was in decline in many regions, tantric Buddhism dominated in a new formation of the tradition in Pala-Sena north India, Orissa, and Nepal and with strong resonance and further development in Tibet (Davidson 2003). By the time Muslim rulers came to power in the Gangetic plain (1200 CE), tantric Buddhism in Nepal had begun a process of reformation and domestication, the Indic version of which survives in Newar Buddhism and Hinduism.

What is clear by the time we reach the early modern era in the Kathmandu Valley is that tantric tradition had long-ago ceased to be peripheral or the possession of the low castes. In fact, tantric initiation had became, as it is today, the carefully guarded possession of the elite groups in society: kings, priests (Brahman and Vajrācārya), merchants, and virtuoso artists. This extraordinary inversion requires analysis.

It is certain that mantras and *dhāraṇī*s are believed capable of giving extraordinary abilities to individuals by giving them access to great cosmic powers. The stories of the Siddhas and Yoginīs in the Tantras recount how individuals seeking the experience of enlightenment also gain a host of supernormal powers (*siddhi*s), from telekinesis to clairvoyance, from harming enemies at a distance to aiding others. It is natural that those with political power eventually sought to control who could obtain and use this exceptionally potent "classified" knowledge to access worldly powers. Initiation into Vajrayāna practices in later centuries served to guard access to this spiritual resource and came to exclude the lower class members of society. So while there is a rhetoric of philosophical belief in Vajrayāna Buddhism, directed to *nirvāṇa*-seeking individuals, tantric Buddhist traditions in Newar society became an attribute of high social status and a means by which the Kathmandu Valley's elite, Hindu and Buddhist, perpetuated its status.

One case study illustrating high caste control over mantra practices in the Newar community came to me in 1987, having met a group of Jyapunis, lower class farmer women from Kathmandu city, sitting in a circle at Svayambhu making clay *caitya*s using small moulds. Making *stūpa*s in this manner is one of the earliest Buddhist rituals; ancient and medieval texts promise extraordinary merit for construction of replicas of the shrines in which the Buddha's relics, and those of other saints, were consigned. Having documented the Urāy tradition of clay *caitya* construction, called *ciba dyah dayekegu* in Newari, I asked one of the elder ladies what mantras they were reciting as they went through the process. I had assumed that they were making them as the Urāy were, with twelve steps in the process—from picking up the clay to depositing the small conical shrine—each done with the recitation of a short mantra. The Jyapuni women were completely dumfounded by my question, as they insisted that they had never even heard of this being part of the ritual, much less as part of their own tradition of practice. While from the perspective of Buddhist universalism and compassion, the *dharma* and Buddhist rituals should be shared with everyone for the greatest good, in practice the most advanced spiritual technology, like society's wealth, remains concentrated among the top ten percent of society.

This example points to what is a larger insight from the practice of Newar Vajrayāna initiation. In noting how tantric tradition migrated from society's margins to its center, we can discern the arc of religious history begun in pre-Islamic north India. Traditionally, anyone deemed qualified in the judgment of the tantric master—who stands in the traditional descent of *sādhana* teaching (*paramparā*) from *guru* to living master—is deemed eligible to receive initiation (*dekhā*). What we see in modern Nepal is that only those born into the highest castes can be considered for tantric initiation. A similar exclusivity was documented by Robert Levy (1991) for Hindu Brahmans in Bhaktapur, indicating how powerful the press of caste prestige and boundary maintenance was in Malla Nepal.

3 Shifting boundaries – modernity and Buddhist initiation

A final concluding observation must note that access to initiation occupies a central place in the modernization of Newar Buddhism since 1990. Two young Newar Buddhist modernizers in contemporary Nepal, Naresh Bajracarya of Kathmandu and Min Bahadur Shakya of Patan, have sought to change to powerful force of caste in their communities. Both extensively studied their own traditions from elders, and both have taken degrees in the academic study of Buddhism; both have also traveled to other Buddhist countries, witnessing how the Mahāyāna tradition had evolved elsewhere. Shakya has sought to break down the caste-based prejudice against Tibetan teachers by promoting Newar connections with leading Lamas who offer initiations and *dharma* teachings. He has also highlighted the study of traditional Mahāyāna texts. Bajracarya for over ten years has performed initiations into the Newar *saṅgha* for boys of mixed Śākya and Vajrācārya parentage, who would otherwise be excluded from attaining *saṅgha* member status; he has also offered *nikhan*-style meditation initiations (devoted to Avalokiteśvara) to large assemblies of householders, regardless of ethnic or caste identity. Bajracarya has also widened the circle of eligibility for tantric initiation to anyone deemed spiritually prepared for taking the vows for practice. While both have been severely criticized by traditionalist elders in the Newar *saṅgha*, they aver that their innovations respond to the democratic changes underway in Nepal, while simultaneously defending their reforms by invoking the norms of Vinaya and Sanskrit tantric texts. Here again, the boundaries of initiation point to fundamental issues of religious and ethnic identity, and how historical context has shaped religious change.

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Alexander von Rospatt

Remarks on the Consecration Ceremony in Kuladatta's *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and its Development in Newar Buddhism*

Introduction

The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (henceforth also abbreviated as "KSgP"), authored by Kuladatta probably in the eleventh or twelfth century,[1] is the foundational work of the ritual tradition followed in the Newar Buddhist tradition of the Kathmandu Valley,

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1 Tanemura (2004: 5–10) has reviewed the various dates that have been proposed for the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and its author Kuladatta, though he does not mention Gustav Roth's certainly untenable assignment of the text "to the category of Kriyā-tantras of the eighth and ninth centuries" (1980: 195). It can be gathered from Tanemura's somehow inconclusive treatment that the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* has been generally placed in either the eleventh or twelfth century, with 1216 being a firm *ante quem* since the oldest manuscript dates to that year. There are at least two further manuscripts dating to the first half of the thirteenth century (one is from 1217), and there are also numerous further manuscripts dating to the latter half of the thirteenth century, not to mention the Tibetan translation from the end of the same century. This relative profusion of manuscripts contrasts conspicuously with the complete lack of manuscripts from the eleventh or twelfth century, but is of course no proof that the text was only produced towards the end of the twelfth or even the beginning of the thirteenth century. Rather, there is various circumstantial evidence that points to an earlier date. Notably the Newar sources produced by Kazumi Yoshizaki (Tanaka & Yoshizaki 1998: 128) suggest that Kuladatta flourished already between 1045 and 1089. A relatively early date would seem to be supported also by the assignment of the *Sitaprajñāpāramitāsādhana* (which survives in a manuscript dating to 1165) to "Kula, son of Saṃghadatta." The meter of the verse assigning the authorship of this *sādhana* in the *Sādhanamālā* (number 155; vol. 1, p. 314 of B. Bhattacharya's edition) did not allow for more than the phrase *kulanāmnā* ("Kula by name"), but Kula's full name was probably Kuladatta. This Kuladatta could be identical with the author of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, as suggested by the oral communication from the late Ratna Kaji Bajracharya according to which the author of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* was the son of a certain Saṃghadatta, who had supposedly migrated to Nepal from Kashmir. If this identification of Kuladatta is correct, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* must have been produced well before the oldest surviving manuscripts mentioned above. At any rate, whatever the precise date of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s composition, the material brought together in this text was most likely already current in the eleventh century and partly even before then.

where it was likely composed.[2] While it foregrounds the establishment of a monastery, it is in truth a collection (*saṃgraha*) of diverse rites (*kriyā*) that relate in various ways to monasticism and were presumably current at the time of Kuladatta. Thus, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* deals not only with rites like the examination and purification of the building ground, or the laying of the foundation (*pādasthāpana*), but it also includes such elements as the wooden gong used in daily monastic practice (*gaṇḍī*) or the rite of ordination (*pravrajyā*). More to the point here, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* also contains a detailed section laying out how to consecrate an image (*pratimā*) or other object serving as a receptacle for buddhahood (in the widest sense of that term), such as a *caitya*, monastery, cloth painting or book. (In the following I use the term "image" out of convenience to refer to any kind of object undergoing the consecration ceremony.) This procedure consists of a complex sequence of rites that collectively imbue the object with the qualities of buddhahood and enliven it. These rites have not been newly devised by Kuladatta, but were pre-existing in one form or another. In the tradition recorded in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* they were brought together, adapted to a tantric framework and fused into a complex but coherent and interconnected whole. The resultant scheme remains authoritative to this day, and as surviving manuscripts and historical documents prove, has also in the past been the standard in the historic Nepal Valley (which has become the modern Kathmandu Valley).

The consecration ceremony in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* has been the principal object of an excellent monograph by Ryugen Tanemura (which is the revised version of the doctoral dissertation that he submitted in 2002 in Oxford).[3] The author provides a critical (and reliable) edition of the consecration section of the sixth chapter,[4] and of three closely related preceding sections, namely the "examination of the ground" (*bhūmiparīkṣā*), the "preparation of the water jugs" (*kalaśādhivāsana*) and the "casting of the cords" (*sūtrapātana*). His careful translation is accompanied by copious notes in which he adduces much additional textual material that elucidates the more arcane details of the consecration ceremony. In his lengthy introduction the author provides an overview of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s consecration ceremony and its historical context. In the process he also considers the employment of the Brahmanical life-cycle rituals as consecration rites (Tanemura 2004: 64–97) and reproduces the findings that he had published previously in a separate paper entitled "One Aspect of the Consecration

2 We know practically nothing about Kuladatta and the circumstances of the production of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. However, it seems obvious that the author captures and records the ritual practices of his time. Given the considerable variety in ritual practice that can be observed in the contemporary Newar tradition, this must have involved choices and allowed for some personal preferences. Even so, such a production is, of course, different from founding a new ritual tradition. Hence the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* is only a foundational work in the weak sense that it has come to function as the principal textual basis for the ritual tradition of Newar Buddhism, a role that it initially did not have but later assumed.

3 Ryugen Tanemura: *Kuladatta's Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā: A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of Selected Sections* (2004).

4 All quotations from the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* in this paper refer to the edition by Tanemura (2004).

Ceremony of Images in Buddhist Tantrism: The Ten Rites Prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and their Background" (2001). While Tanemura's monograph is the first thorough textual study of a substantial part of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and raises the academic treatment of this important but neglected text to a new level, it can, of course, not answer all questions raised by Kuladatta's exposition of the consecration ceremony.

In the following I want to deal with one particular aspect that Tanemura only touches upon, namely how the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s treatment of the consecration ceremony with its employment of the ten *saṃskāra*s relates to forms of practice that developed later in the Newar Buddhist tradition.[5] Though the starting point is different, this is similar to tracing the historical roots of the consecration ceremony current in Newar Buddhism and will shed light on the more general question of how Newar Buddhist practice relates to its historical precursors. A comprehensive treatment of the history of the consecration ceremony in the Newar tradition would require a monograph, and I had to restrict myself here to a selected treatment and focus on particular elements. After an overview of the consecration ceremony and an introduction to the written sources employed for this study, I first analyze the overall structure of the consecration ceremony and its employment of the *saṃskāra*s. In the process I pay particular attention to the prenatal *saṃskāra*s, and how their treatment in the KSgP differs from Newar practice. Then I proceed to deal with the so-called *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* and the bathing vessels set up on the day prior to the principal day, and their employment for identifying the deity with the lord of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. I will argue that the complex configuration used in Kathmandu evolved from the much simpler setup prescribed in the KSgP. Subsequently I will move on and deal with the wedding rite performed for the deity. This will give occasion to treat the so-called *ihi* ritual performed in unison for girls. I will argue that the *ihi* practice is grounded in the wedding ceremony for deities, but, on the other hand, also has come to shape this ceremony in turn. The wedding ritu-

5 Tanemura's treatment of this aspect is not informed by a knowledge of the pertinent Newar sources. It is also marred by an insufficient acquaintance with Newar ritual practices on the ground. In particular, Tanemura seems to be unaware of the considerable diversity of practices within the fold of Newar Buddhism. Tanemura relies largely on John Locke's description of the re-consecration rites for the Karuṇāmaya deity of Jana Bāhāl after its annual renovation (1980: 208–21). However, this treatment does not do full justice to the underlying textual sources, and it is also not grounded in an accurate observation of the rites. An example of the resultant inaccuracies is Locke's claim that when reconsecrating the image upon conclusion of its renovation, the ten *saṃskāra*s are imparted even before the divine life (*nyāsa*) has been re-inserted (ibid.: 219). In the numerous handbooks on renovations that I have consulted the *nyāsa* is invariably transferred back into the sacred object before the rites of passage are performed. This is also the only sequence that makes sense because, were it not so, the image would be "empty" and there would be no subject undergoing the ten *saṃskāra*s. I observed and video-filmed the re-consecration of the Jana Bāhāl Karuṇāmaya in winter 1998. As confirmed by the footage, the *nyāsa* was transferred into the statue at the beginning of the re-consecration rituals, *before* the performance of the ten *saṃskāra*s. Another example of an inaccuracy in Locke's account is the (less consequential) claim that the imposition of vows (*vratādeśa*) serves "to send the newly initiated one out around the country to preach the *dharma*" (ibid.: 214), a claim possibly owed to an informant who felt uncomfortable with the role of the Buddhist deity as a student.

al is followed by the rite of *pratiṣṭhā,* and I will attempt to show that this rite originally served as consecration ritual in its own right. This study is concluded by considering Tanemura's contention that the *saṃskāra*s came to be employed for the consecration of deities in the Nepalese tradition in imitation of human practice. Against this I will point out that there are substantial divergences between the *saṃskāra*s as performed for deities and for humans, something that will lead me to suggest that the origins of the tradition recorded in the KSgP may have to be sought also outside the fold of Buddhism. As a corollary, I will argue that the employment of the *saṃskāra*s for the purpose of consecrating Buddhist images necessitated the comprehensive reworking of these rites in a Buddhist idiom, and propose that the resultant format in turn came to influence the performance of the *saṃskāra*s for human actors of Buddhist heritage.

For the present study I have consulted various consecration manuals of the Newar tradition, including a modern printed version (see below). I also base myself upon my observation of these consecration ceremonies, which I have had the opportunity to witness and document on a number of occasions over the past eleven years in both Kathmandu and Patan. Finally, I consider the evidence of historical sources recording consecrations rites performed in the past for the Svayambhūcaitya of Kathmandu. Even so, the study that I offer here is in various ways incomplete. For a start, I have only managed to study a small fraction of the hundreds of consecration manuals that have been compiled over the centuries and are still extant today. Moreover, I focus here on mainstream practice in Kathmandu and on the tradition attached to one particular monastery in Patan, namely Kvā Bāhāḥ (Hiraṇyavarṇa Mahāvihāra), while I have not been able to consider the local traditions of Bhaktapur and other, smaller centers of Newar Buddhism. Also, I have only examined in passing how in the Śaiva tradition of the Kathmandu Valley the *saṃskāra*s feature when consecrating images, *liṅga*s and other sacred objects. This is a serious drawback since I suspect that this tradition played a crucial role in the formation of the Buddhist practice that I study here.

My treatment of the mentioned aspects of the consecration ceremony goes into considerable detail. At times, these details may seem arcane, but I find attention to such details an indispensable (and often neglected) part of the study of Newar Buddhism. More precisely, I believe that it is essential for the study of Newar Buddhism that the texts underlying the tradition are properly studied. It is not enough to rely on learned local scholars, though they can be a useful resource and often are invaluable conversation partners, being at the same time colleagues and part of the field we study. Rather, we should also study the handbooks and other sources they use, and more generally take into account the literary heritage in which the tradition is grounded. Moreover, it is important that the rituals and other religious practices that survive are studied with sustained care. There is, as this paper will show, considerable variation in practice between Kathmandu and Patan and, to a lesser extent, also within each urban tradition. The study of particular rituals requires that their performance be witnessed again and again. This alone allows one to capture variations in practice, and this alone sensitizes the observer to issues that he or she may otherwise overlook. The paper here is in various

ways lacking and incomplete, but it does, I hope, give a sense of the complexity of the Newar Buddhist ritual tradition and of the need and merits to attend to details.

Overview of the consecration ceremony

I would like to start with a brief overview of the consecration ceremony treated here. From a technical tantric perspective, the core of this ceremony consists in the technique of generating the presence of the deity, projecting it into and binding it to the receptacle in question. This happens principally by way of the deity's seed syllable that the tantric priest first visualizes and then draws down (*ākarṣaṇa*) with the rays emanating from the same seed syllable that he has visualized likewise in his heart.[6] As part of the same process the seed syllable that has been drawn down (*ākarṣaṇa*) is made to enter (*praveśana*) the receptacle, where it is bound (*bandhana*) and pleased (*vaśīkaraṇa* understood as *toṣaṇa*). Initiating this process, the deity is invoked and invited to take up abode in the receptacle (*adhivāsana*). In the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* this method is employed the first time when the image (*pratimā*) is made. Then the materials out of which the object in question is to be fashioned are visualized as having the form of the deity of which the icon is to be made. In a second step the materials are empowered by the heart mantra of that deity, which is then, as "knowledge-being" (*jñānasattva*),[7]

6 The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* prescribes, more precisely, that the priest "visualizes the deity's seed [syllable], accompanied by the three essences (i.e. the syllables *oṃ āḥ huṃ* activating body, speech and mind), as enclosed by a pair of red *hoḥ* syllables on a lunar disk" (163, 3f.: *candramaṇḍalastharaktahoḥkāradvayagarbhitaṃ tritattvasahitaṃ devatābījaṃ dṛṣṭvā*). As Tanemura explains in his translation (2004: 265f., n. 129), the flanking *hoḥ* syllables signal that the deity is in the intermediate state, which, according to the underlying Buddhist teaching on transmigration, precedes conception. This accords with the syllables' use at the renovation of a *caitya* or other consecrated receptacle. Then the deity is first transferred from the dilapidated object into a water vessel that functions as its temporary abode. Upon conclusion of the renewal work, the deity is transferred back from this vessel into the receptacle, which in the meantime has either been renovated or replaced by an exact copy. From the deity's perspective this process is analogous to transmigrating from one existence (and body) to the next (cf. von Rospatt 2010), with the period of renovation in between corresponding to the intermediate state. Hence, when the priest draws the deity out of the receptacle and later projects it back into it, he likewise visualizes the deity's seed syllable as flanked by the syllables *hoḥ*. The Sanskrit term used to qualify the seed syllable as enclosed by a pair of *hoḥ* syllables is *garbhita*. This literally means "wombed" by these syllables, and points to the association with a state preceding birth, though not conception.

7 The corollary of the *jñānasattva*, the "knowledge-being," is the so-called "pledge-being," the *samayasattva*. This is the form of the deity visualized at the beginning of the process of its generation. The *jñānasattva* is summoned and projected into this visualized object. There it is merged with the *samayasattva* thereby making the deity present. In the case of the consecration of an object, the receptacle in question is visualized as the *samayasattva*, and through the attraction of the *jñānasattva* becomes imbued with the presence of the deity. For details of this complex process see Yael Bentor's monograph *Consecration of Images and Stūpas in Indo-Tibetan Tantric Buddhism* (1996).

drawn down and made to enter these materials, where it is bound and pleased.[8]

In addition to this tantric procedure the deity is also animated and consecrated in various other ways. This includes the bestowal of sight (*dṛṣṭidāna*), a rite corresponding to the eye-opening ceremony that has been used for the animation of cult images not only in Indian religion but also in other civilizations flung far apart both in space and time.[9] Moreover, the object is also consecrated by reciting the formula of the *ye dharmā gāthā* over it and blessing it with unbroken and popped rice empowered by this *gāthā*. This was originally a non-tantric consecration technique in its own right.[10] Attesting to its enormous popularity, it survives in Vajrayāna Buddhism where, however, it only plays an ancillary role.

The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* includes yet another technique of consecration, namely the life-cycle rites (*saṃskāra*) of Brahmanical Hinduism. More precisely, it prescribes the performance of a total of ten such sacraments that the deity undergoes in much the same way as "twice-borns" do. They are performed in chronological order, starting with three prenatal rites, namely 1) the purification of the mother's womb (*yoni-śodhana*), 2) the generation of a male (*puṃsavana*) performed to render the embryo male, and 3) the parting of the mother's hair (*sīmantonnayana*), a protective and purificatory rite performed likewise during pregnancy. The subsequent rites are 4) the rite of birth (*jātakarman*), 5) the name-giving ceremony (*nāmakarman*), the 6) infant initiation (*upanayana*) consisting in the first feeding of fruits (*phalaprāśana*) and rice (*anna-prāśana*) and the clearing of the throat (*kaṇṭhaśodhana*),[11] the 7) rite of tonsure leaving a tuft of hair (*cūḍākaraṇa*), 8) enjoining the vows of disciple-hood (*vratādeśa*), 9) the release from these vows (*vratamokṣaṇa*) and the return from studies (*samāvartana*), and finally the 10) wedding (*pāṇigrahaṇa*). The performance of these ten rites might appear as the deliberate treatment of the deity in human terms. This, however, is not the

8 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 160, 12–162, 4: *tataḥ pavitramṛtsikthādikaṃ jhaṭiti śūnyatādhimokṣeṇa hṛdbījena kariṣyamāṇaṃ devatārūpaṃ vicintya,*

tathāgato yatsvabhāvas tatsvabhāvaṃ idaṃ jagat |
tathāgato niḥsvabhāvo niḥsvabhāvam idaṃ jagat ||

anayā vastuśuddhīkaraṇaṃ kṛtvā, nabhasi sarvatathāgatān dṛṣṭvā puṣpādibhiḥ saṃpūjya lāsyādibhiś ca <pūjāṃ> kṛtvā sāṃnidhyaṃ kuryāt.

khavyāpisarvasaṃbuddhā bodhisattvāś ca sarvagāḥ |
iha buddhakṛte vāse sāṃnidhyaṃ kartum arhatha ||

iti paṭhitvā, tato bhaviṣyaddevatāhṛnmantreṇāṣṭottaraśatavāram adhiṣṭhāya jñānasattvam ākṛṣya praveśya baddhvā vaśīkṛtya kalaśodakena ca snāpya pañcabhir upacāraiḥ saṃpūjya

oṃ vajrasattva aḥ

anena vajrasattvasamayamudrāṃ darśayitvā

oṃ vajrāveśa hoḥ

anena vajrāveśasamayamudrāṃ baddhvā śatākṣareṇa trir dṛḍhīkuryāt.

9 For an overview see the chapter "L'Icone Animée" in Michel Strickmann: *Mantras et Mandarins: le Bouddhisme Tantrique en Chine* (1996). For a concrete example of a particular eye-opening ceremony performed in Sri Lanka see Richard Gombrich's study "The Consecration of a Buddhist Image" (1966).

10 Cf. Daniel Boucher: "Pratītyasamutpādagāthā and its Role in the Mediaeval Cult of the Relics" (1991).

11 For details see the treatment below on p. 250.

point. These rites serve to purify their subject and endow it with divine qualities. Hence, rather than rendering deities human, they render humans divine, and it is because of their sacralizing qualities that they are adapted for consecration rites in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*.

For the same reason the consecration of the image (or another receptacle such as a *caitya*, monastery or book) in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* also includes the tantric initiations (*abhiṣeka*) that are normally imparted to human initiands, just as the consecration does in the *Vajrāvalī,* an extensive ritual treatise authored outside the fold of the Nepalese tradition by Abhayākaragupta, the celebrated 11th/12th century abbot of Vikramaśīla and Nālanda.[12] More precisely, after the deity has been sacralized by way of the *saṃskāra*s, it receives the nine *abhiṣeka*s that constitute the standard set in the ritual tradition underlying the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and Newar Buddhism at large. These include the higher initiations that were developed in the tradition of the Yoginītantras. As the initiand would, the deity first receives a set of five initiations, namely the water initiation (*udakābhiṣeka*), the crown initiation (*mukuṭābhiṣeka*), the *vajra* initiation (*vajrābhiṣeka*), the bell initiation (*ghaṇṭābhiṣeka*) and the name initiation (*nāmābhiṣeka*), which are identified respectively with Akṣobhya, Ratnasaṃbhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi and Vairocana and the particular Buddha knowledge they each stand for. These five *abhiṣeka*s (*pañcābhiṣeka*), which are collectively known as *vidyābhiṣeka* and originally stood on their own as a complete set of initiations, are complemented by the initiation of the master (*ācāryābhiṣeka*). From the perspective of the higher *abhiṣeka*s, the fivefold *vidyābhiṣeka* and the *ācāryābhiṣeka* form collectively one form of empowerment known as *kalaśābhiṣeka* (lit. "flask initiation") and identified with the purification of the body. Upon these elementary initiations the three higher initiations follow, namely the secret initiation (*guhyābhiṣeka*) identified with the purification of speech, the initiation of the knowledge of gnosis (*prajñājñānābhiṣeka*) identified with the purification of mind, and the so-called fourth initiation (*caturthābhiṣeka*).[13] Whether actually enacted or only ritually alluded to, the former two initiations involve sexual practices, whereas the final "fourth" initiation is predicated upon such practices having been performed.[14]

In its treatment of consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*) the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* foregrounds the ten *saṃskāra*s, to which it collectively refers as the "ten rites" (*daśakriyā*). Accordingly it introduces this treatment with the sentence: "Now the ten rites for a cloth painting, book, image etc. are to be set forth."[15] In the Newar tradition consecration manuals are likewise typically entitled "The Procedure of the Ten Rites" (*daśakriyā-pratiṣṭhā-vidhi* or *-vidhāna* or something similar to this effect). The "ten rites" have

12 Cf. Masahide Mori's treatment of the *Vajrāvalī*'s consecration ceremony in his paper "The Installation Ceremony in Tantric Buddhism" (2005).

13 Cf. Tanemura (2004: 35–7) and David Snellgrove: *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism* (1987: 229, 243–7). See also, e.g. *Saṃvarodayatantra* (pp. 308f.).

14 For details regarding the origins and interpretations of the "fourth initiation" see Isaacson's contribution in this volume, and his paper "Tantric Buddhism in India" (1998).

15 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 157, 3: *idānīṃ paṭapustakapratimādīnāṃ daśa kriyā abhidhānīyāḥ.*

come to be equated with the entire process of consecration because they structure it. That is, though only ten rites are mentioned, this appellation includes the other consecration rites, such as the aforementioned bestowal of sight, that are performed in the context of these *saṃskāra*s, and it includes by implication also the tantric *abhiṣeka*s and other rites of consecration (see below) that are performed after the last *saṃskāra*, namely the wedding.

The structuring function of the ten *saṃskāra*s is confirmed impressively by historical documents recording the extensive re-consecration rituals that were performed for the Svayambhūcaitya of Kathmandu upon the conclusion of its renovation. Such extended consecrations are performed in the context of an extended fire ritual that comprises the offering of (nominally) 100,000 oblations (hence the designation *lakṣāhuti*)[16] and lasts accordingly several days and nights (hence the designation *ahorātra*). During the day the main ritual action is performed, while the nights are dedicated to tantric feasts which focus on the performance of dances impersonating in the main particular deities of the Yoginītantras. The *ahorātra* ritual itself is initiated on the preceding day (Newari: *dusaḥ*) by the summoning of the deities (Sanskrit: *adhivāsana*). On the next day the fire is started (*agnisthāpana*) and the rite of birth (*jātakarman*) is performed for the *caitya*. The remaining rites of passage are spread out over the days between the first and last day. In this context the bestowal of sight and occasionally one or two other functions may feature additionally as rituals in their own right. A good example is the consecration performed in 1758.[17] The *ahorātra* fire ritual lasted twelve days and eleven nights. After the first day with the rite of birth and the concomitant establishment of the fire (*agnisthāpana*), the next eleven days were dedicated to 2) the bestowal of sight (*dṛṣṭidāna*), the 3) so-called "starting (?) of the fire" (*mi chuya*) (the details of which are unclear to me),[18] 4) the name-giving ceremony (*nāmakaraṇa*), 5) the first nourishment with fruits (*phalaprāśana*) and 6) with rice (*annaprāśana*), 7) the subsequent clearing of the throat (*kaṇṭha khuya*; Sanskrit: *kaṇṭhaśodhana*), 8) the rite of tonsure (*cūḍākaraṇa*), 9) the imposition of vows (*vratādeśa*), 10) the return from the sacred studies (*samāvartana*), 11) the marriage ritual (*pāṇigrahaṇa*) and 12) finally the rites of completion (*pūrṇa*). Another interesting example is the consecration performed in 1595.[19] It lasted for the same number of days and only differed insofar as there was no day dedicated particularly to the *samāvartana* rite. (I presume this rite of returning

16 As a matter of fact, "lakh" (i.e. 100,000) is here understood to be 125,000 (*savā lākh*). The same holds good in other context when a "lakh" items (such as a lakh of lights) is offered. The additional 25,000 units are often understood to be a safeguard, in order to make up for possible errors when counting the 100,000.

17 Details of the consecration ceremony can be found in Vimalaprabhānanda's chronicle (18v1–19r1) cited in von Rospatt (2001: 221–8).

18 Regrettably, the text does not provide more information than this designation. I have also no other information about the details of this rite. It is tempting to emend *chuya* to *duya*, the verb used commonly for offering into the fire, but the reading *chuya* in the present context is well attested. At any rate, it ought to be different from the installation of the fire, which took place on the first main day coinciding with the rite of birth.

19 For details regarding this renovation see von Rospatt (2001: 207–13).

from studies was performed in conjunction with either the *vratādeśa* rites as its logical sequel or with the marriage rite as its necessary precursor). The resulting extra day was instead dedicated to the rite of *pratiṣṭhā* that follows upon the wedding and precedes the concluding day. This rite, which originally was a consecration ceremony in its own right (see below), serves to permanently fix the deity in its receptacle and in this sense seals the preceding rites of consecration. (The term *pratiṣṭhā* hence has two different referents referring either to the entire consecration ceremony as a whole, or more narrowly just to the mentioned rite of fixation.)

Textual sources

These two prominent examples from the Malla period confirm the prominence of the *saṃskāra*s in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. However, they also show that there are marked discrepancies between this text's prescription and later practice. In the following I want to explore some of these differences. For this it will be necessary to first consider the relevant primary sources. For a start, there are a few other (anonymously) authored Sanskrit texts that prescribe like the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* the performance of the rites of passage as part of the consecration ceremony. The fact that these texts survive in palm leaf manuscripts and are free from Newari suggests that they predate the Malla era. Though presumably originating in the historical Nepal Valley and relatively close in time to the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, they differ considerably in detail. Some of these differences have been pointed out by Tanemura, who has dealt in his monograph on the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (2004: 72–8) with two of these texts, namely the *Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana* and the *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi*. However, a thorough study of the mentioned texts and their relationship to the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and later Newar practice remains an important desideratum. I find such a study particularly promising because it may shed some light on the (hardly explored) formative phase of Newar Buddhism. In the present paper I restrict myself to a (partial) comparison between the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and standard Newar practice as it emerged during the Malla era and survives today. However, rather than skipping over the mentioned Sanskrit texts entirely, I would like to give at least a brief introduction to the textual layer situated after the composition of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and before ritual sources came to be composed in the mix of Sanskrit and Newari characteristic for the Newar Buddhist tradition.

For a start, there is the so-called *Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana,* which survives in a sole incomplete palm leaf manuscript kept in the National Archives at Kathmandu (hereafter: NA) (1-1697) and microfilmed by the Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project (hereafter NGMPP) (A 936/6).[20] It basically replicates the scheme of the

20 The manuscript is incomplete, with only six folios preserved. It seems that a cataloguer has retrospectively assigned the title. The pagination of the preserved pages also seems to be retrospective. The folio paginated as "2" in fact belongs between the folios paginated as "5" and "6." This was

ten *saṃskāra*s of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*.[21] However, unlike Kuladatta's text, it prescribes for each *saṃskāra* that a particular form of Agni is to be invoked and worshipped.[22] This important feature continues in significantly modified form in standard Newar practice right to the present.

Another prominent text deserving consideration here is the *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi*. This text has been translated into Tibetan (Tohoku catalogue No. 2499) and also survives in a number of manuscripts in the original Sanskrit.[23] Tanemura has consulted the Tibetan translation and extracted useful material (2004: 74–8), but there is still the

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not noted by the contributors to the journal *Dhīḥ: Journal of Rare Buddhist Texts Research Project* (vol. 22) summarizing this text, who, as a consequence of the garbled pagination, wrongly read *annaprāśana pañcama* instead of the correct *[nā]makaraṇapañcamavidhi* (3v4; according to the extant pagination 4v4).

21 Note that already in the preserved manuscript of the *Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana* the term *sīmantonnayana* (lit.: "the drawing [*unnayana*] of the parting of the hair") had morphed into the term *sīmantopanayana* ("the initiation [*upanayana*] of the parting of the hair"), which has become the standard expression in the Newar tradition. This terminological shift suggests that the parting of the hair was practically unknown as a *saṃskāra* performed for humans.
The sixth *saṃskāra* is referred to as *annaprāsanopanayana* (1v3), *upanayana* (3v4; according to the extant pagination 4v4) and as *annaprāsana* (4r4; according to the extant pagination 5r4). To my mind this shows that the terms *annaprāśana* (to use the standard spelling instead of the spelling favored in the manuscript) and *upanayana* are two different terms to refer to the same rite (hence I take *annaprāsanopanayana* to be a *karmadhāraya* and not a *dvandva* as Tanemura (2004: 73), namely the infant initiation (known in Newari as *macā jaṃko*). It consists in the main of the first rice feeding, but also comprises the preceding first feeding of fruits (*phalaprāśana*) and the subsequent cleansing of the throat (*kaṇṭhaśodhana*). (Cf. also Tokyo Ms. 113 of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, which reads, as cited in Tanemura's monograph [2004: 69, n. 47], *iti upanayanānnaprāsanaḥ*, an expression I again take as a *karmadhāraya* compound.)
Unlike the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, the treatment of the wedding in the *Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana* is followed by instructions for the fire ritual. Surprisingly, both the wedding and this fire ritual are designated as pertaining to the stage of *adhivāsana* (6v1–7: *daśamakriyāvidhānena vivāhenādhivāsanaṃ samāptaṃ* ‖ … 6v7 ‖ ◎‖ *tato 'dhivāsana-homa<ṃ> kārayet*). Normally, at this stage the deity is first summoned in order to inform it about the imminent consecration rite and beg for its favor to oblige and comply with the rites to be performed for it. It is of course quite possible that further rites of consecration followed in the lost section of the manuscript, which breaks off with the line instructing to perform the *adhivāsana homa*. Given the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s instruction and Newar practice, the *pratiṣṭhā* rites proper (i.e. in the narrower sense of that word) and the tantric *abhiṣeka*s would come to mind as possible sequels (see below). However, I find it puzzling that the entire consecration by way of the ten *saṃskāra*s should be assigned to the preparatory stage and wonder whether the term *adhivāsana* might be used differently in the present context. It should also be noted that the *pratiṣṭhā* rite proper and the tantric *abhiṣeka*s are absent in the next two texts to be discussed here.

22 For details see Tanemura (2004: 74).

23 At least four copies survive in the National Archives of Nepal in Kathmandu (NA) and have been microfilmed by the NGMPP, namely:
NA 5-279, NGMPP A 920/9 (dated 1620)
NA 4-905, NGMPP E 1514/5
NA 5-150, NGMPP A 920/8 (it contains Newari translations and explanations).
The oldest (and sole palm leaf) manuscript is NA 3-380 (NGMPP B 30/33). It has been wrongly catalogued as *Karmādhikāravidhāna*, but the colophon identifies this manuscript as *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi*.

need of a proper study of the Sanskrit original. The *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi* does not list the rite of *puṃsavana* as a separate *saṃskāra*, though it does teach as part of the *sīmantonnayana* the crucial installation of the heart mantra in the image, which is taught in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* as part of the *puṃsavana* (pp. 163f.). Instead of the *puṃsavana* rite, the *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi* adds a detailed treatment of the fire rituals (entitled *Dvādaśabāhyāgnikriyā*) that are to be performed upon conclusion of the wedding rite as the tenth item. These rites comprise the invocation and worship of twelve kinds of fire (which differ from the ten fires prescribed in the *Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana* and matched with particular *saṃskāra*s). Each fire serves as a form of empowerment bestowing a particular *siddhi*,[24] with the consecration image being presumably the recipient here. Thus, even though the thrust of these empowerments is very different from the soteriologically oriented *abhiṣeka*s ordained in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, they apparently serve a comparable purpose, namely to complete the consecration by imbuing the image with all further requisite qualities in addition to the sacralization effected by the preceding ten *saṃskāra*s.

A further relevant manuscript is again kept in the National Archives (5-278, NGMPP B 106/27). It consists of two parts, the former dealing with rites related to the construction of *caitya*s, and the latter (starting at 12r3 with an invocation of Sarvajña and verses in praise) expounding the ten rites of the consecration proper. (It is not clear whether the title *Daśakriyā* given in the last line refers only to the latter part, or whether it is also meant to subsume the first set of rites.) The rites taught in the second part are exactly the same ten *saṃskāra*s taught in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, with large chunks of that text being reproduced verbatim. However, despite the great closeness, the text is not identical. It only renders part of the material of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, and unlike that text it includes the invocation of particular forms of fire in the context of each particular *saṃskāra*. In this it agrees with the *Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana* though the details are not identical. Moreover, unlike the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* the text includes neither the *pratiṣṭhā* rites proper nor the *abhiṣeka*s, but ends upon conclusion of the wedding rites.

There is a further, closely related palm leaf Sanskrit manuscript dealing with the establishment and consecration of images and *caitya*s. It is the kept in the Lingyinsi temple in Hangzhou (located in Zhejiang province in southern China). The Chinese transmission accompanying the mentioned manuscript (and studied by Guangchang Fang)[25] suggests that it dates to 1000 CE. If this were correct, it would predate the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and be a possible direct or indirect source. However, the colophon dates the manuscript to the year 520, i.e. 1400 CE, and according to Harunaga Isaacson the script of the manuscript (to which I have no access) confirms this date and does not date back to 1000. The Lingyinsi manuscript prescribes the same ten rites as in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and has a separate first part dealing with the construction of

24 For details see Tanemura (2004: 75).

25 For details of this manuscript see Guangchang Fang's paper "Findings about a Northern Song Dynasty Pattra Sutra Kept in the Lingyinsi Temple" (2008).

sacred structures. As Isaacson informed me, it in fact seems to reproduce the same text as the manuscript described in the preceding paragraph (i.e. NGMPP B 106/27).

No doubt, a sustained survey of relevant manuscript collections will uncover more relevant Sanskrit materials than the texts mentioned here. However, for the present purposes this brief sketch shall suffice in order to give some idea of the range of texts that underly and inform the Newar tradition. The other manuscripts examined as part of the present study have been produced in the Malla era or later. They are written in a characteristic mix of Newari and Sanskrit. The instructions to perform specific ritual acts are written in Newari, while the text to be recited is in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit portions have been mainly (but not exclusively) taken over from the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. In addition to invocations and verses of praises they also include *sādhana* instructions pertaining to the visualization of the deity (often in form of its seed syllable) and the process of drawing the deity into the object that is being consecrated (often by means of rays emanating from the *ācārya*'s heart). This shows that *sādhana* instructions in the Newar tradition have since long had a tendency to be treated liturgically, being recited in Sanskrit without being set into action mentally. To be sure, this tendency is not operative in all contexts and not among all practitioners, whose degree of proficiency can vary widely.

The examined manuscripts typically serve as ritual handbooks for practicing priests. They have found their way in large numbers into collections such as the National Archives, but they also continue to be owned privately by Vajrācārya priests, some of who continue to maintain the waning tradition of scribing copies of their own.[26] I have sampled a number of these manuscripts and ended up studying in more detail a handful, which are listed in the bibliography. The focus has been on material from the Kathmandu tradition, which I am particularly familiar with through my research on the Svayambhūcaitya. Its texts are more readily available than those of the Patan tradition as they are better represented in the collections of the National Archives and the Āśā Saphū Kuthi, and as they have, as a consequence, been microfilmed to a greater extent by the NGMPP. For the Patan tradition, I have used two near-identical texts, which represent the ritual tradition of Kvā Bāhāḥ (Hiraṇyavarṇa Mahāvihāra). Hence, it should

26 A good example is the collection of the late Ratna Kaji Bajracharya. It includes a massive manuscript of 198 paginated folios, dated to 1864 and titled *Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha* on the wooden book cover. It treats not only the consecration rites but also most other rites typically performed by Vajrācārya priests. Ratnakaji purchased it from another Vajrācārya. In addition there is a manuscript scribed by the late Harsha Ratna Bajracharya of Te Bāhāḥ, reportedly one of the last professional copyists operating in the Valley. The manuscript is solely dedicated to to the consecration ceremony and on 22 folios reproduces the standard text used nowadays. Moreover, there is a manuscript scribed by Ratnakaji himself in 1974 in traditional Newari script. In addition to the consecration rites (which are treated in standard form), it also includes— separately paginated— the rites performed in the context of establishing a new *caitya*. Ratnakaji continued to use this manuscript for the performance of consecration rituals, even after he obtained a printed copy of the *Daśakarmapratiṣṭhā* published in 1989 by Badrīratna Bajrācārya. This printed copy reproduces what appears to be the most common version of the text. Nowadays, the Vajrācāryas of Kathmandu generally use this printed version instead of manuscripts.

be borne in mind that my remarks regarding the practices of Patan only represent one, particularly prominent, tradition and do not take into account the divergent practices at Bu Bāhāḥ (Yaśodhara Mahāvihāra) and at Bhiñche Bāhāḥ (Mayūravarṇa Mahāvihāra) or at other ritual centers in Patan with their own distinct traditions. More generally, since I have only studied a small selection of texts, the results presented here can only have preliminary character and call for a more detailed study of the vast body of ritual texts preserved. From my survey it transpires that there are marked differences (on which more below) between the texts used in Kathmandu, on the one hand, and in the ritual tradition associated with the Kvā Bāhāḥ of Patan, on the other. It is clear that, though equally rooted in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, these two principal centers of Newar Buddhism developed and preserved their distinct traditions. By contrast, I have only detected minor deviations among the texts pertaining to the Kathmandu tradition.[27] This homogeneity also extends in time, with large conformity between handbooks of the Malla era—the earliest dated text I consulted is from the very end of the seventeenth century—and contemporary handbooks including the above mentioned printed copy that is widely used in present-day practice.

The prenatal *saṃskāra*s and their place in the consecration ceremony

The most important differences between the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and Newar practice concerns the overall structure. The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* identifies the first prenatal *saṃskāra* with the initiation of the image's production. More precisely, the rite of *yoni-śodhana* is performed here in order to purify the materials for the production of the image and empower the artisans and their tools. As for the subsequent prenatal *saṃskāra* of rendering the fetus male (*puṃsavana*), the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (162, 12) instructs the ritual master "to have an iron rod fixed (or: fashioned) so that it becomes the deity's strength/essence" (*ayomayīṃ yaṣṭiṃ devasya sārabhūtāṃ ghāṭayitvā*). Skorupski (2002: 142, 6) has taken *sāra* (strength/essence) to refer more precisely to the deity's spine as which the rod is to function. Tanemura (2004: 265, n. 128), by contrast, has argued that the instruction refers to the lost wax technique of making images, and that the rod is to serve as an armature supporting the casting core. I find the phrase too terse and enigmatic to have confidence in either interpretation.[28] In this I am not alone, for the Newar handbooks dealing with the *puṃsavana* rite have chosen to ignore the critical expression *devasya sārabhūtam* qualifying *yaṣṭi* (rod) and simply render the Sanskrit as fol-

27 As for the case of Patan, see my remarks above.

28 I have discussed the instruction in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* with statue makers in Patan specializing in the lost wax technique. They could not explain the possible use of an iron rod and said that at most they might use iron wire or mesh in order to strengthen the mold.

lows: "set up an iron or copper rod."[29] However, even with his incomplete rendering of the Sanskrit instruction it would still seem that the rite of *puṃsavana* is to be performed during the production stage, as Tanemura and Skorupski have it. The final prenatal rite, namely the parting of the mother's hair (*sīmantonnayana*), is identified in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* with the phase of *adhivāsana*, when the deity is summoned and invited to enter the completed image. The *adhivāsana* rites are preparatory and performed on the day before the principal rites of consecration. They include the setting up and ritual installation of the bathing vessels (*snānakalaśa*), which are used in the course of the consecration rites to sprinkle water over the image, thereby empowering it. The *sīmantonnayana* thus introduces the principal consecration ceremony that spans two days. The second and main day commences with the rite of birth when the deity comes alive in the image, and includes all the following *saṃskāra*s, as well as the subsequent rites of consecration.

In the Patan tradition studied here, two of the three prenatal rites are observed, namely the *yonisaṃśodhana* (the standard term used instead of *yoniśodhana*) and the *sīmantopanayana* (as the *sīmantonnayana* has come to be known in the Newar tradition)[30], while the *puṃsavana* does not feature. However, unlike in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* these rites are not associated with the initiation of the production process and the preparatory *adhivāsana* day, but are performed in one go together with the other *saṃskāra*s on the main day of the consecration ceremony. The preceding *adhivāsana* day in this tradition is limited to the ritual installation of the fire pit, and to the establishment of the nine bathing vessels. These vessels are prepared by imbuing them with the presence of the fifty-three deities of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala (in the standard configuration attested in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*), a topic to which I will return in more detail below. In the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* the bathing vessels are likewise set up on the *adhivāsana* day and identified with the deities of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala, but this happens within the brackets of the *sīmantonnayana* rite. It can thus be witnessed that the *sīmantonnayana* rites in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and in the Patan tradition differ as to their content.

Similarly the *yoniśodhana* rite prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* differs from the brief *yonisaṃśodhana* that initiates the process of consecration on the main day in the Patan tradition. While the former rite consists in the purification and sacralization of the materials out of which the icon is fashioned, the latter rite entails the summoning of the deity (*adhivāsana*), an act that normally is performed a day ahead of the main

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29 *Pratiṣṭhāvidhāna* (B 105/10), 95v2: *nakasaṃ ñja sejala, yirasi dayake.* Cf. *Pratiṣṭhādasakriyāvidhi* (E 2571/4, 44v5f.).
If the phrase *sārabhūtam* does not refer to an important structural function of the *yaṣṭi*, could it be that it refers to the overt purpose of the *puṃsavana* rite, namely to imbue the deity with masculinity, the idea being that the erect iron *yaṣṭi* and its strength and hardness render the deity male? Such an interpretation would have the benefit that *devasya* would not need to refer to the physical image (for which the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* generally uses the expression *pratimā* or *pratimādevatā*), but to the deity that is established by the consecration rites inside the image.

30 Cf. n. 21.

ritual function and in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* occurs as part of the *sīmantonnayana*. This does not mean that in the Patan tradition the ritual purification of the raw materials is unknown, but that it is performed without identifying it with the *yonisaṃśodhana* rite of passage. In other words, the rites subsumed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* under the rubric of the prenatal *samskāra*s are (at least partly) performed, though not under this rubric but as stand-alone rites. This disassociation, which is also attested in the Kathmandu tradition (see below), was possible because these subsumed rites only have a tenuous link with the corresponding *saṃskāra* performed for humans. This is particularly so in the case of the *sīmantonnayana* rite, which in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* does not entail any rite that could be identified specifically as an act performed during pregnancy for the mother or the fetus she is carrying. To my mind, this suggests that not only nowadays but also in the past Newar Buddhists normally did not perform the *sīmantonnayana* rite for human actors, a point to which I will return below. On the basis of this I propose that the incorporation of the ten *saṃskāra*s as attested in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* was not motivated by the desire to subject the consecration image to the same set of rites of passage as performed for human actors. I will suggest below that instead the consecration ceremony may have come to include the ten *saṃskāra*s in imitation of Hindu tantric practice where there had long been a tradition of performing the *saṃskāra*s, including the *sīmantonnayana*, for the generation of Agni as part of the fire ritual.

Having considered the structure of the consecration ceremony in the tradition of Patan studied here, I now turn to the more complex situation in the Kathmandu tradition. The handbooks that I have surveyed (for details see the bibliography) impose a differentiation between, on the one hand, the principal consecration ceremony performed for the finished image, normally over the course of two days, and, on the other hand, the various consecration rites that are to be performed prior to this final consecration ceremony. Larger compendia of Newar Buddhist rites (bearing such names as *Karmavidhisaṃgraha* or *Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha*) treat the prior consecration rites and the final consecration ceremony as two separate parts (or even texts). Briefer handbooks typically only treat the final consecration ceremony. These treatments have become texts in their own right and as such are typically called "The Consecration Ceremony of the Ten Acts" (*daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhi*) or a close variant thereof.[31] This includes the printed version by Badrīratna Bajrācārya, entitled *Daśakarmapratiṣṭhā.*

31 The title for the consecration ceremony proper mentions ten acts because this had come to be perceived as the standard requisite number for a complete consecration. The absence of the three prenatal rights in this ceremony meant that other rites had to be counted as *saṃskāra*s in their own right in order to yield the total number of ten. Though this is not spelled out explicitly in the sources I studied, it is apparent that the constituent parts of the infant initiation (*upanayana*; Newari: *macā jaṃko*) came to be reckoned separately. This makes sense for the first two elements, namely the first feeding of fruit (*phalaprāśana*) and the first feeding of rice (*annaprāśana*). They are distinct rites in the Brahmanical scheme, and they are also differentiated in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. Thus, the consecration image is bathed separately on the occasion of each of these feedings. What is more, for this consecrated water from two different vessels is used (see n. 37), with the result that in the course of these two rites the image becomes empowered by different dei-

As in the case of the final consecration ceremony, there seems to have emerged one standard version for the prenatal rites that is attested with slight variations across the handbooks I have studied. This version is clearly based on the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* but also deviates significantly. Regarding the first prenatal rite, the *yoniśodhana*, the examined manuscripts differ insofar as they do not differentiate between the treatment of cloth paintings and of images made of stone, copper etc. Rather, they have merged the separate prescriptions found in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* for these two types of icons into one ceremony. The Newar handbooks follow the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, however, in treating "books" (*pustaka*) separately, though they deal with the production of books not as part of the *yoniśodhana* prescriptions as the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* does, but as an independent section, which is entitled "book-writing" (*puthi coya vidhi*) and follows upon the *yoniśodhana*.

Though not subsumed under the ten *saṃskāra*s of the principal consecration ceremony, the *yoniśodhana* is a rite that in one form or another is indeed commonly performed when manufacturing sacred objects. On August 17, 2008 I had the opportunity to witness how the *yoniśodhana* ceremony was performed at Svayambhū in order to purify and consecrate the copper sheeting to be used for repairing the Svayambhūcaitya, and in order to empower the artisans and bless their tools. The priests used the same standard text attested in the manuscripts studied here and followed its prescriptions closely. The Svayambhūcaitya is the most sacred shrine of Newar Buddhism, and its renovation obviously means that particular care is taken. More commonly, a much simpler rite is performed in order to bless the building materials and the artisans and their tools.

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ties. The identification as a separate *saṃskāra* also works for the third element, namely the rite of cleaning the throat (*kaṇṭhaśodhana;* Newari: *kaṇṭha khuye*). However, this is less convincing since this action is closely associated with the preceding rice feeding (cf. n. 21). Counting the first fruit and rice feeding and the cleansing of the throat as distinct rites brings the total number of *saṃskāra*s to nine. As for the tenth rite, it seems that the Newar handbooks—for lack of a better solution—reckon *upanayana* as a distinct *saṃskāra* beyond its three mentioned constituent parts. For this they mark off what originally was the concluding section of the infant initiation as a separate rite and entitle it alone *upanayana.* However, this section does not include any *saṃskāra*-like acts and consists only of the praise and worship of the deity present in the image, accompanied by the entreaty to fulfill the sponsor's wishes and work for all beings (cf. Bajrācārya 1989: 14). Though not entirely satisfactory, this solution allowed for the identification of ten distinct *saṃskāra*s, while yet sticking closely to the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and avoiding the addition of rites not prescribed in that text.

Tanemura (2004: 72) takes it that the *Bauddhadaśakriyāvidhāna* also treats the *annaprāśana* and *upanayana* as distinct rites, but as I have argued above (see n. 21) it is better to interpret this text's key term *annaprāśanopanayana* (1v3) as a *karmadhāraya* rather than a *dvandva* and understand the "the rice feeding initiation." Tanemura also claims (2004: 288, n. 190) that in the *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi* the *upanayana* only includes the feeding of fruit and the cleansing of the throat and that the rice feeding is omitted all together. However, as the Newari translation (A 920/8, 3v4–folio 3 has been wrongly paginated as "2") with its gloss of *upanayana* (*upanayana, śi nako, ja nako, kaṇṭhasodhana*) makes clear, the rice feeding, too, is subsumed in this text under the *upanayana*.

As for the subsequent prenatal *saṃskāra* of rendering the fetus male (*puṃsavana*), nowadays this rite is, as far as I know, not performed as a separate ceremony on its own, and I suspect that, if known at all, its performance was very rare in the past. Of the handbooks treating the prenatal rites, only some include it, and where I found the rite attested the text simply renders the Sanskrit wording of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* into Newari without any sign that its content has been modified in order to reflect changes in practice.[32] This strongly suggests that there was no tradition of performing the *puṃsavana* in practice as a distinct rite, and that the authors simply included it for completeness' sake in order to comply with the authoritative model of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. The avoidance of performing the *puṃsavana* as taught in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* may have to do with the difficulty of carrying out this rite during the production stage, as the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* seems to prescribe. As the most crucial part of this rite, the priest draws down the deity's seed syllable into the image and binds it there. This process is clearly identified with conception, as indicated by the use of the syllables *hoḥ* which enclose the seed syllable as it is drawn down (see n. 6), and as also explicitly expressed by the accompanying verses that are recited thrice:

> "Just as all the Saṃbuddhas have settled in the *tuṣita* heaven and just as [Śākyamuni stayed] in the womb of Māyādevī, so may [the deity] stay in this image (*ākṛtau*). May the Buddhas in all directions be my witness. I, a *vajra* holder (*vajrī*) named such and such, establish the deity [in this image]."[33]

At the end of the *puṃsavana* rite, the priest does not dismiss the deity. The object hence remains imbued with the divine presence transported by the seed syllable. This raises the question of how the artisans can continue with the production work of the image, which by necessity involves intrusive acts such as chiseling. Such problems are avoided in the Newar tradition where the crucial drawing down of the seed syllable is not performed during the production stage, as the *puṃsavana* seems to require, but as part of the *sīmantonnayana* rite performed once the image has been completed. This accords with the *Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi.* It dispenses with the *puṃsavana* (but not with the other prenatal rites) as a separate rite associated with the stage of production, and it likewise subsumes the drawing down of the heart syllable under the *sīmantonnayana saṃskāra.*

As for the principal consecration ceremony in the Kathmandu tradition, the first *saṃskāra* to be nominally performed is the rite of birth (*jātakarman*). However, the *jātakarman* includes at the very beginning the principal rites of summoning the deity (*adhivāsana*) as set forth in the *sīmantonnayana* section in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, with verses 3–12 of that section being reproduced verbatim (cf. Bajrācārya 1989: 4–6). This means that the rites of summoning in Kathmandu practice are performed at the

32 Cf. *Pratiṣṭhāvidhāna* (B 105/10) 94r1–95v1, and *Pratiṣṭhādasakriyāvidhi* (E 2571/4) 44v4–45r5.

33 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 163, 5–8 (the above translation is Tanemura's, 2004: 266): *yathā hi sarvasaṃbuddhās tuṣite saṃpratiṣṭhitāḥ, māyādevyā yathā kukṣau tadvat tiṣṭhatv ihākṛtau. samanvāharantu māṃ buddhā aśeṣadikṣu saṃsthitāḥ, amuko 'haṃ nāma vajrī devatāṃ kalpayāmy aham.*

same point as in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, the difference being that nominally they pertain to the rite of birth rather than to the prenatal rite of parting the hair, which does not feature. Unlike the Patan case, the rites of summoning the deity (*adhivāsana*) are performed on the so-called *dusaḥ* day preceding the main day (which is commonly known as *pūrṇa* because it sees the completion of all consecration rites). But whereas the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* prescribes that the *sīmantonnayana* with the *adhivāsana* rites alone are performed one day ahead of the main consecration rites, in Newar practice not only the *adhivāsana* rite, but also the subsequent rites of birth and all other *saṃskāra*s up to the return from sacred studies (*samāvartana*) are performed on the first day. On the main day the consecration rites are completed by performing the wedding rites as well as the subsequent *pratiṣṭhā* rites proper (see below), the tantric *abhiṣeka*s that are bestowed upon the image and the concluding sealing of the consecration. It can be seen, then, that both the Kathmandu and the Patan tradition treated here deviate from the model of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, albeit in opposite ways. While in the former tradition rites belonging in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* to the main day are performed on the *dusaḥ* day, in the latter tradition rites belonging to the *dusaḥ* day are performed on the main day. To be sure, these differences do not have to be the result of divergent developments that have the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* as their point of origin. It is also conceivable that they are rooted in closely related but different traditions contemporaneous with the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. The quest for an original tradition as the starting point for all later developments seems to me, at least at the present stage of research, an impossible and ill-conceived undertaking. The emphasis should rather be on an accurate description of the different forms of ritual practice and their analysis.

The *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* and bathing vessels

A key element of the consecration ceremony is the bathing of the image with previously empowered water. Kuladatta prescribes in his *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* how on the preceding *adhivāsana* day a bathing platform (*snānavedī*) with bathing vessels (*snāna-kalaśa*) is prepared for this purpose. These vessels have already been mentioned above, though without providing much information. The constellation of the bathing vessels and their use are crucial elements of the consecration ceremony and in the following I want to present how the scheme laid down in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* has been modified in different ways in the Kathmandu and Patan tradition. Since the consecration practices of Newar Buddhism have hardly been studied, I will attempt as accurate a description as possible and go into considerable detail.

The natural starting point is again the treatment in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. It prescribes that in the center of the bathing platform a lotus flower is drawn on which the consecration image is to be set up. It is surrounded by eight vessels (*kalaśa*) into which the fifty-three deities of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala as recorded in the *Niṣpanna-*

yogāvalī are summoned.[34] They are located in the cardinal and intermediate directions,[35] and marked with the signs (*cihna*) of the deities they contain. In course of the consecration the image is bathed with water from each *kalaśa*. In this way the deity is consecrated with water that has been imbued with the presence of all of the deities of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. This serves to identify the deity with the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The details for the vessels' location, the deities summoned into them, and the context of their use are as follows:[36]

- Northeast: Vairocana together with Sattvavajrī, Ratnavajrī, Dharmavajrī, and Karmavajrī, i.e. the same goddesses who surround Vairocana in the central chamber of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The image is consecrated from this flask (*kalaśa*) as part of the name-giving ceremony (*nāmakaraṇa*).
- East: Akṣobhya together with Vajrasattva, Vajrarāja, Vajrarāga and Vajrasādhu, i.e. the same deities who surround Akṣobhya in the eastern chamber of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The image is consecrated from this flask as part of the birth ceremony (*jātakarman*).
- Southeast: the eight worship goddesses (*pūjādevī*), namely Vajralāsyā, Vajramālā, Vajragītā, and Vajranṛtyā, as well as Vajradhūpā, Vajrapuṣpā, Vajradīpā and Vajragandhā. In the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala, they occupy the intermediate directions of the central chamber and of the circle enclosing the five chambers of the five Buddhas. The image is consecrated from this *kalaśa* as part of the wedding ceremony (*pāṇigrahaṇa*) and possibly also in preparation of the rice feeding ceremony.[37]

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34 Henceforth all references to the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala will refer to the version recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* (number 19), which is the standard employed in the Newar tradition.

35 The *Vajrāvalī*, too, prescribes that on the bathing platform eight (earthen) vessels be set up in the cardinal and intermediate directions around the center (Mori 2005: 204, n. 17: *snānavedīṃ ... digvidikṣu sthāpitāṣṭakalaśāṃ mṛnmṛṣṭāṃ ... kārayitvā...*). However, Abhayākaragupta provides no information on which deities are to be summoned into these vessels.

36 Cf. *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 165f.: *saṃprati vitānacchatradhvajapatākākusmādibhiḥ snānavedīm alaṅkṛtya tanmadhye viśvadalakamalam abhilikhya, athavā piṣṭātakair abhilikhya tadbahir aṣṭau kalaśāni sthāpayet. tatraiśānyāṃ mahāvairocanasattvavajrīratnavajrīdharmavajrīkarmavajrīṇāṃ pañcacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. pūrvasyām akṣobhyavajrasattvavajrarājavajrarāgavajrasādhūnāṃ pañcacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. āgneye vajralāsyāvajramālāvajragītāvajranṛtyāvajradhūpāvajrapuṣpāvajradīpāvajragandhānām aṣṭacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. dakṣiṇasyāṃ ratnasaṃbhavavajraratnavajratejavajraketuvajrahāsānāṃ pañcacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. nairṛtyāṃ vajrāṅkuśavajrapāśavajrasphoṭavajrāveśānāṃ catuścihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. pṛṣṭhato 'mitābhavajradharmavajratīkṣṇavajrahetuvajrabhāṣāṇāṃ pañcacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. vāyavye maitreyāmoghadarśisarvāpāyañjahasarvaśokatamonirghātanamatigandhahastiśūraṅgamagaganagañjajñānaketvamitaprabhacandraprabhabhadrapālajālinīprabhavajragarbhākṣayamatipratibhānakūṭasamantabhadrāṇāṃ ṣoḍaśacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam. uttarasyām amoghasiddhivajrakarmavajrarakṣavajrayakṣavajrasaṃdhīnāṃ pañcacihnāṅkitakalaśam ekam.*

37 The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s treatment of the first feeding of rice begins with the phrase "then, after having bathed [the image] with water from the flask over which [the mantra of] Vajragītā has been recited, ..." (187, 2: *tato vajragītābhijaptakalaśodakena snāpya*). Vajragītā is among the eight Pūjā Goddesses. Hence, this phrase implies that the vessel containing these deities is not only employed at the wedding rite, but also at the very outset of the first feeding of fruits or rice. However,

- South: Ratnasaṃbhava and the four surrounding deities Vajraratna, Vajrateja, Vajraketu and Vajrahāsā, i.e. the same deities who surround Ratnasaṃbhava in the southern chamber of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The image is consecrated from this *kalaśa* as part of the ear-piercing ceremony that is performed immediately after the tonsure in the context of the *cūḍākaraṇa* ceremony.
- Southwest: Vajrāṅkuśa, Vajrapāśa, Vajrasphoṭa and Vajrāveśa, the four gate keepers of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The second bathing on the preparatory *adhivāsana* day is from this *kalaśa*. It occurs in context of the *saṃskāra* of "parting the hair" (*sīmantonnayana*).
- West: Amitābha as well as Vajradharma, Vajratīkṣṇa, Vajrahetu and Vajrabhāṣa, the four deities who surround him in the western chapel of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The image is consecrated from this *kalaśa* at the beginning of the tonsure ceremony (*cūḍākaraṇa*).
- Northwest: The sixteen Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Amoghadarśin, Sarvāpāyañjaha, Sarvaśokatamonirghātanamati, Gandhahasti, Śūraṅgama, Gaganagañja, Jñānaketu, Amitaprabha, Candraprabha, Bhadrapāla, Jālinīprabha, Vajragarbha, Akṣayamati, Pratibhānakūṭa, Samantabhadra. In the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala they are arranged in sets of four along the four sides of the square enclosing the inner chamber (*garbhakūṭa*). The bathing of the image commences with the waters from this *kalaśa* on the *adhivāsana* day as part of the ceremony of "parting the hair" (*sīmantonnayana*).
- North: Amoghasiddhi and Vajrakarman, Vajrarakṣa, Vajrayakṣa and Vajrasaṃdhi, the four deities who surround Amoghasiddhi in the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala in the northern chamber. The image is consecrated from this *kalaśa* as part of the first feeding of fruits (*phalaprāśana*).

This setup is largely preserved in the Patan tradition that I had occasion to witness in

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it is surprising that the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* only refers to this bathing in such a cursory manner, without providing details of the *maṅgalagāthā* that normally would go along with the sprinkling of the image from a bathing vessel. Moreover, it is irregular that according to this instruction the bathing vessel with the eight Pūjā Goddesses would be employed twice, while otherwise the bathing vessels are only used once. Given these difficulties, it is tempting to choose the alternate and well-attested reading *vajrakarmābhijaptakalaśodakena* which mentions Vajrakarman (rather than Vajragītā) and hence refers to the Amoghasiddhi flask. If this reading were adopted the text would not refer to the bathing of the image at the outset of the *annaprāśana* rite, but instead it would refer back to the bathing that occurs just before, in context of the first feeding of fruits, when indeed "the waters of the flask that has been empowered with the mantra of Vajrakarman" are employed (*vajrakarmābhijaptakalaśajalaiḥ;* 186, 3f.). However, the Newar sources I have consulted confirm that the image is to be bathed anew at the outset of the rice feeding ceremony, though they do not specify which vessel should be used for this, and thus suggest that this bathing is not equivalent to the sprinkling of the image with consecrated water from a *snānakalaśa* of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. Possibly, the Newar tradition is a response to the mentioned difficulties posed by the reading *tato vajragītābhijaptakalaśodakena snāpya*. (To modify the text and read Vajrakarman instead of Vajragītā may have been an alternative attempt to address the same problem.)

Plate 1: The nine bathing vessels (*snānakalaśa*) as they were set up for a consecration ritual performed in Guji Bāhāḥ (Jñānakīrti Vihāra) in Patan on the 19th of November 2003. The vessels are covered by small clay saucers containing rice grains, a areca nut and a coin (*kisali*). They are crowned by honorific parasols (*chattra*) made of round white fabric cut into circular shape and fixed to a wooden stick.

practice, and to study on the basis of two closely related handbooks, as well as interviews with practicing priests. However, there is an important deviation from the prescription of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. The vessels do not encircle the consecration image but are set up to its side.[38] The vessels are arranged according to the eight points of the compass in basic agreement with the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. However, the center is not left vacant, but filled by the vessel dedicated to Vairocana and the four surrounding Vajrī Goddesses. In the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* this vessel is located in the northeast, but its natural place is indeed in the center in accordance with the constellation of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. The resultant gap in the northeast is filled by an additional ninth vessel. It contains again Vairocana, but apparently without the four surrounding goddesses, possibly to avoid their duplication. While this solution entails the duplication of Vairocana in the central and north-eastern vessel, it has the advantage that it is otherwise faithful to the authoritative tradition of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. Plate 1 shows the nine vessels in the tight square arrangement typically employed in Patan.

38 As the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and *Vajrāvalī* (Mori 2005: 205) explicitly state, the center of the *snāna-maṇḍala* is by need unoccupied if the object to be consecrated is an immovable permanent structure, such as a monastery or non-portable *caitya*. Could it be that this exceptional case had become so common in the Newar tradition that it became the norm for consecration rites generally, with the consequence that the permanently vacant center called for an occupant?

Regarding the bathing vessels there is a further important difference between the prescriptions of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and the Patan tradition as recorded in the two handbooks I studied. It concerns the context in which these bathing vessels are used for sprinkling the consecration image. In the Patan tradition their employment is spread differently over the *saṃskāra*s and they are allocated to different rites than prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. The details can be gleaned from the following table, which also includes the equivalent data from the Kathmandu tradition. The first column gives in chronological order the *saṃskāra* or other rite, in the context of which the image is sprinkled with water from one of the bathing vessels. The subsequent columns provide information on the bathing vessel used for a given rite, mentioning the direction in which the vessel is set up, and the deities which have been summoned into it. If no bathing vessel is used this is indicated by a "0." The table provides this data for the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, the Patan tradition and the Kathmandu tradition:

Context of sprinkling from bathing vessel	*Kriyāsaṃgraha-pañjikā*	Patan Tradition	Kathmandu Tradition
First part *sīmantonnayana*	NW (sixteen Bodhisattvas)	NE (Vairocana alone)	0
Second part *sīmantonnayana*	SW (Vajrāṅkuśa etc.)	East (Akṣobhya etc.)	0
Rite of birth	East (Akṣobhya etc.)	NW (sixteen Bodhisattvas)	First Amitābha vessel then separately Akṣobhya vessel and then later again Akṣobhya
Name giving ceremony	NE (Vairocana etc.)	South (Ratna-saṃbhava etc.)	Vairocana
First feeding of fruits and rice	North (Amoghasiddhi etc.)	SW (Vajrāṅkuśa etc.)	Amoghasiddhi
Rite of tonsure	West (Amitābha etc.)	North (Amoghasiddhi etc.)	Amitābha
Rite of ear-piercing belonging to tonsure	South (Ratna-saṃbhava etc.)	0	Ratnasaṃbhava
Imposition of vows	0	West (Amitābha etc.)	0
Return from studies	0	SE (Vajralāsyā etc.)	0
Wedding	SE (Vajralāsyā etc.)	0	0
Water consecration first Tantric *abhiṣeka*	0	Vessel in middle (Vairocana etc.)	0

As can be gathered from this table, even though the Patan tradition operates with basically the same configuration of bathing vessels as prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgraha-pañjikā*, the vessels' assignment to specific rites could hardly be more different. This discrepancy (for which I do not have a ready explanation) is even more striking if we consider the Kathmandu data. It shows that the vessels of the five Buddhas (which are the sole bathing vessels employed for sprinkling the deity in the Kathmandu tradition) are—with the exception of the vessel of Amitābha that is used at the start of the birthing rite—assigned to the same rites as prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. On the other hand, the table also shows that in the Kathmandu tradition only the vessels of the five Buddhas are employed for sprinkling the deity. Moreover, these vessels are identified with a single Buddha alone and do not include their entourage.[39] These peculiarities are indicative of the fact that in the Kathmandu tradition the constellation and setup of the bathing vessels for the consecration ceremony deviates considerably from the scheme of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* outlined above, a topic that will be treated in the following.[40]

I have found no historical sources that would document the details of the bathing vessels' constellation current in Kathmandu. Therefore, I have to rely here on the ceremonies that I witnessed in practice, on the interviews that I conducted with priests and on one modern publication that provides some details, namely Ratnakājī Bajrācārya's *Yeṃ deyā bauddha pūjā kriyāyā halaṃjvalaṃ (Materials Required for the Rituals of the Buddhists of Kathmandu* (1980: 48f.). Though there is broad agreement regarding the basic structure, there are, within contemporary Kathmandu practice, some variations in details. These variations often have their origins with the traditional painters (Citrakāra; Newari: Puṃ) who provide the bathing vessels. Commonly, the priest or patron orders these vessels as a set, with the understanding that the painter knows the precise makeup of this set. This means that deviations between different Citrakāras translate into differently configured sets being used in practice.[41] Since I have not been able to identify one authoritative model the details of which would be accepted by all, I present the case of

39 As a result, the image receives the consecration of the five Buddhas just as it does later on when it is empowered by the *vidyābhiṣeka*, which consists of the five *abhiṣeka*s identified with the five Buddhas (see p. 203). However, I presume that the underlying rationale of the Kathmandu tradition is not the emulation of the structure of the tantric *abhiṣeka*s, but rather the reduction of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala to its core of the five Buddhas.

40 It is tempting to view the divergences between the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, on the one hand, and the Patan tradition and Kathmandu tradition, on the other hand, as the result of modifications of the original scheme recorded in that text. However, as mentioned above, it is also conceivable that there were divergent traditions already at the time of Kuladatta, and that elements of these traditions survive in the practice of Patan and Kathmandu. Alas, the textual study of Newar Buddhism is still in its infancy, and we do not possess the necessary knowledge of its ritual literature and the historical precursors in order to address such questions of development.

41 The differences in the precise configuration of the vessels do not come to the fore because, as we have seen, in course of the consecration rituals as performed in Kathmandu only the vessels of the five Buddhas are used for sprinkling water over the image. The five Buddhas, of course, constitute the core of the setup and are invariably represented.

Plate 2: Adhivāsana-maṇḍala with surrounding Mahākrodha Deities and bathing vessels. The set-up here was installed by Sarbagnya Ratna Bajracharya for a consecration ceremony performed on September 8 and 9, 2008 in Mhaypi, Kathmandu.

one particular ceremony that I have observed on September 8 and 9, 2008 in Mhaypi, on the northwestern outskirts of Kathmandu. It was performed by Raju Bajracharya and Sarbagnya Ratna Bajracharya. The latter priest acted as *upādhyāya* and was in charge of empowering the bathing vessels. He had also painted these vessels and the *maṇḍala* that was used in addition (see below). In doing so, he had followed the tradition recorded by his father, Ratnakājī Bajrācārya (1980: 48f.). I have chosen this particular ceremony because of its written basis, and the additional information that Sarbagnya Ratna kindly shared with me. Also, the ceremony in question accords with other ceremonies that I had previously witnessed and recorded in Kathmandu. Hence, I believe that its details are in basic agreement with general practice and hence deserve to be published here, in order to inform about this largely unknown tradition.

As prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* the water vessels are arranged in the Kathmandu tradition in a circle around the center. However, just as in the case of the Patan tradition, the center is not occupied by the consecration image, which is set up

separately. Instead the center is occupied by a painted *maṇḍala* that is mounted on a tripod and framed under glass so as to allow for offerings to be made onto it. Between this *maṇḍala* and the bathing vessels the ten Mahākrodha Deities are arranged in a circle as protectors. They are represented by iron pegs (*kīlana*), sticking in clay clods together with the matching banner. Plate 2 records this setup as it was employed for the mentioned consecration performed in September 2008 in Kathmandu.

The painted *maṇḍala* in the center is commonly known as *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* in Sanskrit and, as *dusaḥ-maṇḍala* in Newari. The later name is used because the *maṇḍala*'s empowerment is an essential element of the preparatory rites performed on the so-called *dusaḥ* (or *dusala*) day, which precedes the main day when the principal ritual action takes place. In this *maṇḍala* the deities are represented by way of their marks (*cihna*). The center is occupied by Vairocana, who is represented by a stylized wheel (*cakra*). In accordance with the standard configuration of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala, Vairocana is surrounded—starting in the east and proceeding in clockwise direction—by Akṣobhya, Ratnasaṃbhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi, who are respectively depicted by a blue *vajra,* three inset jewels, a red lotus and a double *vajra*, the so-called *viśvavajra*. Starting in the northeast and proceeding clockwise, the intermediate directions between the four Buddhas are occupied by the Goddesses Locanā (eye on white water lily), Māmakī (*vajra* upon lotus flower), Tārā (blue water lily) and Pāṇḍarā (red lotus flower). They feature instead of the four Vajrī Goddesses, namely Sattvavajrī, Ratnavajrī, Dharmavajrī and Karmavajrī, who surround Vairocana in the cardinal directions of the innermost circle of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. This deviation from the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*'s setup is very common in Newar Buddhism.[42] It has, for

42 However, the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* differs from the standard constellation used normally in Newar Buddhism, insofar as Tārā and Pāṇḍarā have traded places, with Tārā located in the southeast and Pāṇḍarā in the northeast rather than the other way around. This is also at odds with the standard scheme attested in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* for the Mañjuvajra-maṇḍala of forty-three deities, the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara-maṇḍala and the Pañcaḍāka-maṇḍala, as well as for the Mañjuvajra-maṇḍala, the Akṣobhya-maṇḍala of the *Piṇḍīkrama*, and the Vajrasattva-maṇḍala of the *Śrīsamputatantra*. (Because the latter three *maṇḍala*s' central Buddha is a form of Akṣobhya, the goddesses' location shifts by 90 degrees, with Pāṇḍarā located in the northwest and Tārā in the northeast).

Pāṇḍarā and Tārā's trading of places in the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* removes Tārā by 135 degree from Amoghasiddhi. This is odd because Tārā is commonly matched with Amoghasiddhi (just as Māmakī is typically matched with Akṣobhya, Pāṇḍarā with Amitābha, and Locanā with Vairocana). In the Newar tradition the four goddesses are habitually treated counterclockwise, starting with Māmakī in the southeast, proceeding with Locanā in the northeast and Pāṇḍarā in the northwest, and ending with Tārā in the southwest. If Tārā is treated mechanically as occurring after Pāṇḍarā, then this results in her localization in the southwest after Pāṇḍarā in the northwest. However, the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* starts with Māmakī and not with Locanā when proceeding in reverse order. Hence, it could have also adjusted the sequence of Pāṇḍarā and Tārā. Tārā's position in the southwest would not be odd if Amoghasiddhi had assumed the central position of the *maṇḍala*—in the Piṇḍīkrama-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala Māmakī is located in the southwest but this is not problematic since Akṣobhya has assumed the center in this *maṇḍala*. However, this is clearly not so in case of the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala*, which has the standard configuration with Vairocana in the center. It is of course possible that there is no deeper rationale to the trading of places. Rather, it might have

instance, become the standard pattern employed for structuring the dome of larger free-standing *caitya*s across the Valley, with the four Buddhas occupying the niches of the cardinal directions, and the four goddesses set in the niches of the intermediate directions.[43] Similarly, when worshiping the Buddha as the first of the three jewels, this happens typically by way of a simple *maṇḍala* (known as Buddha-maṇḍala) with Vairocana in the center, surrounded by the remaining four Buddhas and the four goddesses in the cardinal and intermediate directions.[44] This configuration is not a Newar innovation, but accords with the general tendency in Indian Buddhism to substitute the Vajrī Goddesses of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* with Locanā and so on. The four goddesses of both sets are related each to one of the five Buddhas in a largely but not completely congruent manner.[45] They are hence often viewed as alterna-

started as a simple oversight (possibly prompted by proceeding counterclockwise, as mentioned) and then somehow assumed authoritative status. Such accidental creation of a new tradition would not be singular in the fold of Newar Buddhism (nor, for that matter, in the history of religions writ large).

43 That this was not always the standard model is suggested by particularly old *caitya*s, such as the Pūlaṃseṃgu-caitya at Svayambhū, where the goddesses are not represented in the intermediate directions. Such *caitya*s, it seems, represent an earlier stage when the scheme of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala without the goddesses in the intermediate directions was still binding. Nowadays, *caitya*s commonly not only have the niches of the goddesses, but also a further niche dedicated to Vairocana and located just to the left (viewed from the outside) of Akṣobhya. Though represented on the eastern side, the depiction of Vairocana there does not signal a departure from the traditional scheme with Vairocana in the center. Rather, conceptually speaking he continues to abide in the center.

Vairocana's depiction in a niche at the periphery is an innovation that probably dates back to the renovation of Svayambhū commenced in 1710 on the initiative of the queen mother Bhuvanalakṣmī and her adolescent son, the king Bhāskara Malla (see von Rospatt 2001: 219–21). The records for the previous renovation of Svayambhū from 1681 to 1683 only mention four Buddha statues. Moreover, in the record of the renovation carried out from 1814 to 1818 when a new Vairocana statue was installed, the replaced original is explicitly identified as "the Vairocana installed by the venerable mother Bhuvanalakṣmī" (*bhuvanarakṣmīmājuṃ tayāhma vairocana*). That Bhuvanalakṣmī had commissioned the Vairocana statue, and that this was indeed an innovation is confirmed by a source recording the renovation of her time (NGMPP B 100/22). It specifies that after the production of the four Tathāgatas of the cardinal directions, a Vairocana statue of smaller size was made (163v4f.). The text then goes on to describe how the *four* old statues in the niches were ritually removed, thereby indicating that there was no previous Vairocana statue that would have needed removal.

44 For an example see the handbook of the boy initiation, the so-called *kaytāpūjā*, reproduced in Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 235–6). See also Lienhard (1999: 84).

45 Māmakī corresponds to Sattvavajrī and like her is matched with Akṣobhya, Pāṇḍarā corresponds to Dharmavajrī and like her is matched with Amitābha, and Tārā corresponds to Karmavajrī and like the latter is normally matched with Amoghasiddhi. By contrast, Locanā is commonly matched with Vairocana and hence does not correspond to Ratnavajrī, who belongs to the gem family and is matched with Ratnasaṃbhava (or Ratneśa). Reflecting the association of Locanā with Vairocana and of Māmakī with Akṣobhya, the location of the goddesses varies by 90 degrees according to whether Vairocana or Akṣobhya (or a form thereof) occupy the center of the given *maṇḍala*. Note that in the Mañjuvajra-maṇḍala as recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* Tārā is not identified with Amoghasiddhi but with Ratneśa.

Plate 3: *Adhivāsana-maṇḍala* in the possession of Sarbagnya Ratna Bajracharya and used by him for the consecration ceremony performed on September 8 and 9, 2008 in Kathmandu.

tive personifications of the same female principle complementing the five Buddhas.[46] However, leaving the significant lack of complete congruency aside, the substitution of the four Vajrī Goddesses by Locanā and so on constitutes a noteworthy shift that entails the goddesses' relocation within the *maṇḍala* and deserves to be studied properly.[47] The precise circumstances and dating of this shift are beyond the scope of the present paper.[48] However, it is noteworthy that the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* preserves the older

46 Such a position has also been adopted by Newar Vajrācāryas I discussed this with.

47 A further noteworthy difference would seem to be that the Vajrī Goddesses are more closely identified with Vairocana, whom they surround in the innermost circle, than Locanā and so on are. Accordingly, in the scheme of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* their presence is invoked in the same bathing vessel in which Vairocana is located, and they do not share the vessel of the Buddha to whose family they belong.

48 The art historian Christian Luczanits relates the four goddesses of the intermediate directions to the four Vajrī Goddesses surrounding Vairocana, viewing them as substitutes who came to the fore in the iconography program of Alchi and related sites around 1200 CE (personal communication).

scheme with the Vajrī Goddesses as recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*, while the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* of the Kathmandu tradition reflects the later stage when these goddesses have become substituted by Locanā and so forth.

The inner circle of the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* with the Buddhas and goddesses is enclosed in a square. In its corners there are—again starting in the southeast and proceeding clockwise—Rūpavajrā, Śabdavajrā, Gandhavajrā and Rasavajrā, who are depicted respectively by a mirror, a sitar, a conch shell, and a plate with food. The four gates to this square are guarded by Vajrāṅkuśa, Vajrapāśa, Vajrasphoṭa and Vajrāveśa. They are respectively represented by an *aṅkuśa*-style hook, a noose, a *vajra* chain and a five-pronged double *vajra* (*viśvavajra*). Plate 3 shows the *maṇḍala* used at the mentioned consecration ceremony.

As will be seen, the *maṇḍala* reproduced here as plate 3 deviates partly from my description (which follows the mentioned work by Ratnakājī Bajrācārya). The lotus flower in the southwest—as is standard, the *maṇḍala*'s bottom points to the east not the south—is yellow rather than blue. According to the painter of the *maṇḍala*, Sarbagnya Ratna Bajracharya, this is a simple mistake. Vairocana in the center is not depicted by his symbol, the wheel, but in his corporeal form. The lotus flower in the southeast is not surmounted by a *vajra.* Moreover, the eight guardian deities of the directions are present in the outermost ring of flames, the *jvalāvalī.* The mentioned painter regards the latter three deviations not as mistakes but as permissible variations. A more standard version without these three variations and the mentioned mistake is the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala*, reproduced as plate 4.

The painted *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* of the Kathmandu tradition may be equated with the lotus drawn in the center of the ablution altar described in the *Kriyāsaṃgraha-pañjikā*. There Kuladatta simply refers to it as a *viśvadalapadma* (or *aṣṭadalapadma*), but the closely related *Vajrāvalī* allows for the possibility of expanding this minimal configuration so that it results either in a mediate or an extended *maṇḍala*.[49] As for the extended version, it bears, starting in the east, the marks of wheel, jewel, lotus and sword in the cardinal directions. They should represent respectively Vairocana, Ratnasaṃbhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi. The intermediate directions are occupied by the "four mother goddesses" who are likewise represented by their symbols. This presumably refers to the aforementioned four goddesses of the intermediate directions, namely Locanā, Māmakī, Pāṇḍarā and Tārā.[50] The center is occupied by an eight petaled *viśvapadma* that is not inscribed, presumably because it serves as a seat (*āsana*)

49 *Vajrāvalī* (cited according to Mori 2005: 204, n. 17): ... *ācāryo vajrasattvamūrtiḥ savidyas tasyā vedyā madhye viśvapadmaṃ paścimadvāracaturasraikarekhāveṣṭitaṃ rajobhir ālepanādibhir vā likhet | athavā nistoraṇapaścimadvāracaturasramadhyagataṃ | athavā garbhamaṇḍalārdhamānaṃ caturasraṃ caturdvāraṃ dviputaṃ nistoraṇaṃ pūrvādipaṭṭikāsu cakraratnapadmakhaḍgān koṇeṣu caturmātṛcihnāni madhye viśvāṣṭadalakamalaṃ ceti saṃkṣiptamadhyavistarabhedāt tridhāsnānamaṇḍalaṃ |*

50 These four goddesses are also referred to as mothers in Jagaddarpaṇa's *Ācāryakriyāsamuccaya*. Cf. fol. 289 of Lokesh Chandra's facsimile edition.

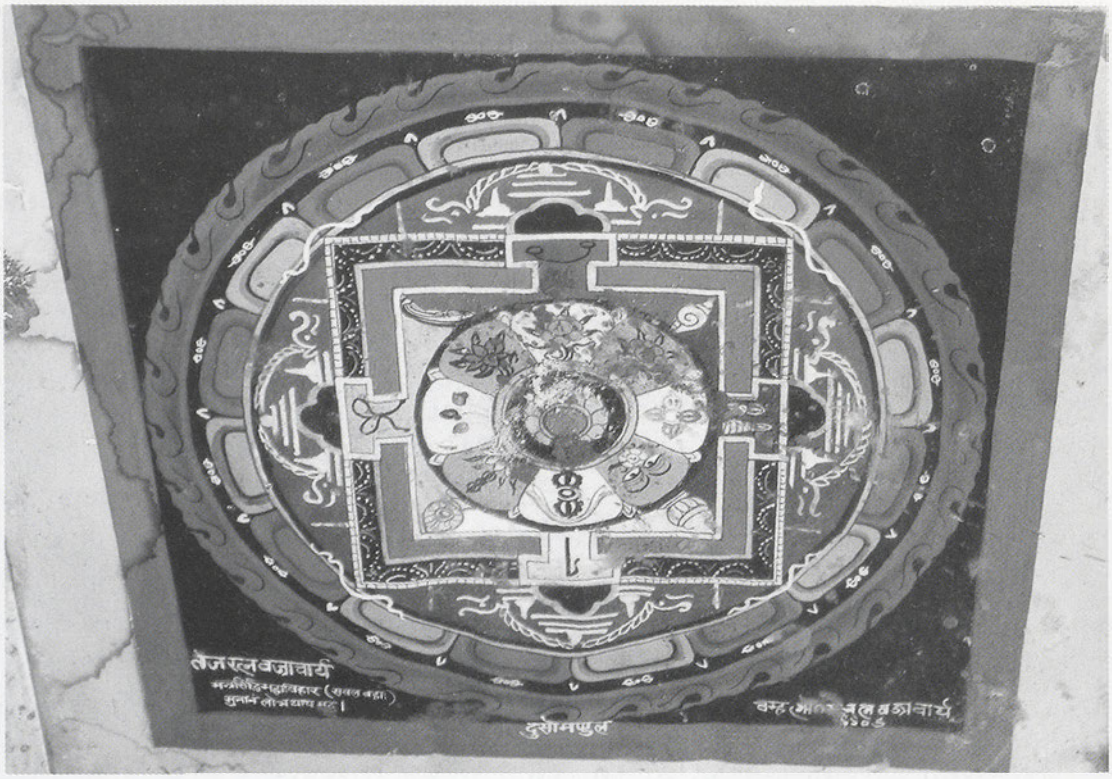

Plate 4: *Adhivāsana-maṇḍala* painted by Gautam Ratna Bajracharya of Kathmandu for Tej Ratna Bajracharya who is one of the most active priests of Kathmandu. The photo was taken when the *maṇḍala* was in ritual use in October 2003, hence the traces of offerings which are sticking to the glass used for framing.

for the consecration image that is set up here. Clearly, the center, and by extension the image set up there, is identified with Akṣobhya who has traded his seat in the east with Vairocana. This constellation is identical with the core of the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala as attested in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*. (I presume that in accordance with this *maṇḍala*, the inversion of Akṣobhya and Vairocana in the *snāna-maṇḍala* of the *Vajrāvalī* implies the localization of Locanā in the southeast, rather than northeast, of Māmakī in the southwest, rather than southeast, and so on.)

The *Kālacakrasupratiṣṭhopāyikavidhi* confirms that a *maṇḍala* for bathing may bear the marks of deities in the cardinal and intermediate directions. The text refers to the deities summarily as "Amoghasiddhi and so on". While it is likely that four of the five Buddhas occupy the central directions, it is less obvious whether Locanā etc. or some other set of goddesses occupy the intermediate directions.[51]

Like the *snāna-maṇḍala* of the *Vajrāvalī,* its functional equivalent, namely the painted *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* employed in the Kathmandu tradition, corresponds in numerous ways to the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala. Unlike the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala (but like the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara-maṇḍala), it too includes the five Buddhas and the

51 *Kālacakrasupratiṣṭhopāyikavidhi* (cited by Tanemura 2004: 269, n. 137): *phyogs daṅ mtshams rnams la don yod grub pa la sogs pa'i mtshan ma rnams rdul tshon gyis bya'o.*

four goddesses of the intermediate directions, though it does so, while retaining the supremacy of Vairocana in accordance with the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. Because it does not follow the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala in privileging Akṣobhya over Vairocana in accordance with the Guhyasamāja tradition, the resultant shift of the goddesses' location by 90 degrees clockwise is likewise absent. However, other than that there is close agreement. Thus, the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala*, too, includes the four Vajrā Goddesses of the sense objects, namely Rūpavajrā, Śabdavajrā, Gandhavajrā and Rasavajrā. They are located in the intermediate directions, just as they are in the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala. (By contrast, these four goddesses feature neither in the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala, nor—in this precise constellation and with these names—in the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara-maṇḍala recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.) Furthermore, just as the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala (and the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara-maṇḍala, but not the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala) is protected by the ten surrounding Mahākrodha Deities, so is the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala*, though in its case the Mahākrodha Deities are arranged around the painted *maṇḍala* as iron pegs, rather than appearing in it. This covers all deities of the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala except for the eight Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Kṣitigarbha, Vajrapāṇi, Khagarbha, Lokeśvara, Mañjughoṣa, Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhi and Samantabhadra, who in that *maṇḍala* surround the four sides of the rectangle enclosing the circle with the five Buddhas and four Goddesses. Reportedly, there is a tradition, only recently discontinued, where these Bodhisattvas feature—with one alteration (instead of Lokeśvara, Gaganagañja is represented)—by way of the bathing vessels that surround the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* and the Mahākrodha Deities.[52]

Unlike the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* and the establishment of the bathing flasks, the ritual establishment of the ten Mahākrodha Deities (see plate 5) is treated in the standard short *daśakarmapratiṣṭhā*, when dealing at the beginning with the preparations for the *adhivāsana*.[53] For the intermediate directions and for the upwards and downwards direction the configuration of the ten Mahākrodha Deities accords with the standard that is attested, for instance, in the *Vighnakīlanavidhi* of the *Vajrāvalī* (which in this text follows upon the *Bhūmiparigrahavidhi* and precedes the *Vasundharādhivāsanavidhi*), and in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* (for the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala, the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara-maṇḍala, etc.), that is, Acala is located in the SE, Ṭakkirāja in the SW, Nīladaṇḍa in the NW, and Mahābala in the NE, while Uṣṇīṣacakravartin guards upwards, and Sumbharāja downwards). There is, however, the following oddity. After Yamāntaka has been installed in the east, the priest is instructed to proceed counterclockwise and install Vighnānataka in the north, Prajñāntaka in the west and Paramāntaka in the

52 Cf. de Mallmann (1986: 124f.), where the set of the Eight Bodhisattvas of the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala is juxtaposed to the set that is also used in the Newar tradition.

53 Bajrācārya (1989: 2–4) and identical *Pratiṣṭhāvidhāna* (B 105/10, 71r3–v6) and *Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhāna* (Āśā Saphū Kuthi scan number 2228; running number 2668: 3r1–4r5), but not so in the *Daśakarmakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhi* scribed by Harsha Ratna Bajracharya.

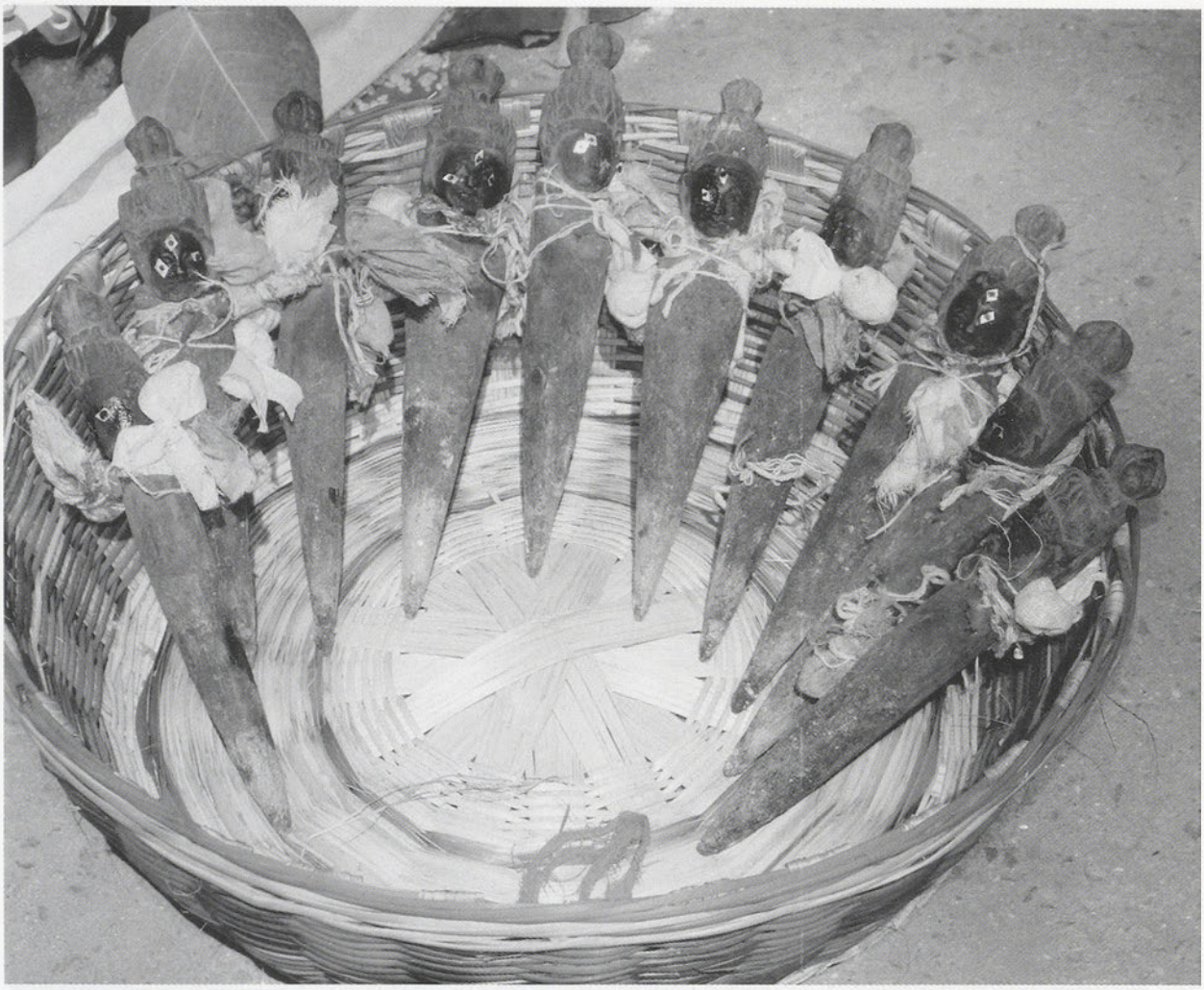

Plate 5: Basket containing the ten Mahākrodha Deities. Before they are pegged into clay clods in order to encircle and protect the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala*, they are prepared by rubbing red sandal onto the face, applying three eyes, and tying around the neck a pouch containing unbroken and parched rice, yellow and black mustard, *ṭīkā* powder, etc.

south. The name Paramāntaka is uniformly attested in the Newar sources I consulted, but I presume that it originated as a simple orthographic variant of Padmāntaka (resulting from the phonetic equation of "d" with "r" and the consequent operation of *svarabhakti*). However, this still leaves the oddity that in Kathmandu practice Prajñāntaka and Padmāntaka (to use the standard name) are located in the west and south, and not the other way around as is the normal standard. This inversion of places is similar to the one of Pāṇḍarā and Tārā, and it again occurs in the context of proceeding counterclockwise, which would seem to fit the assumption that the inversion of the goddesses' locations may be the direct or indirect result of not proceeding in the standard clockwise order.

As for the surrounding bathing flasks, at the previously mentioned ritual performed in September 2008 the following flasks were employed and set-up as indicated in the captions:

Plate 6: The Five Buddhas: Three inset jewels (*ratna*) for Ratnasaṃbhava, blue *vajra* (*nīlavajra*) for Akṣobhya, [stylized] wheel (*cakra*) for Vairocana, red lotus (*raktapadma*) for Amitābha, double *vajra* (*viśvavajra*) for Amoghasiddhi.

Plate 7: The Four Goddesses of the Intermediate Directions (arranged in counterclockwise order in which they are treated in Newar ritual): Blue lotus flower (for prescribed "*vajra* upon lotus flower") for Māmakī, eyes upon white water lily (*utpala*) for Locanā, red lotus for Pāṇḍarā, blue water lily for Tārā.

Plate 8: The Four Vajrā Goddesses of the Sense Objects (located in the intermediate directions, starting in the SE): Mirror (New.: *jvalānhāykaṃ*) for Rūpavajrā, sitar for Śabdavajrā, conch shell (*śaṃkha*) for Gandhavajrā, plate with food (*naivedyathalac*) for Rasavajrā.

Plate 9: The Four Pūjā Goddesses (located in the intermediate directions starting with the SE): Metal bowl holding flowers (New.: *kotaḥ*) for Puṣpā, incense holder (New.: *dhūpa makaḥ*) for Dhūpā, lamp (*dīpa*) for Dīpā, conch shell (*śaṃkha*) for Gandhā.

Plate 10: The Four Door-Keepers (Dvārapāla) (located in the cardinal directions starting in the east): hook for Vajrāṅkuśa, a noose for Vajrapāśa, lock and key (an alternative of the *vajra* chain) for Vajrasphoṭa, and a five-pronged double *vajra* (*viśvavajra*) for Vajrāveśa (crossed *vajra-ghaṇṭā*).

Plate 11: The Four Guardians of the Cardinal Directions (starting in the east): Yellow *vajra* for Indra, a staff with the head of Yama (*yamadaṇḍa*) for Yama, a serpent (*nāga*) for Varuṇa, the *hiṃsī* fruit for Kubera.

Plate 12: The Four Guardians of the Intermediate Directions (starting in the SE): Ladle (*sulupā*), for offerings into the fire, for Agni, sword (*khaḍga*) for Nairṛti, banner (*dhvaja*) for Vāyu and Trident (*triśūla*) *for* Īśāna.

Plate 13 and 14: Moon (Candra) and Sun (Sūrya), flask (*kalaśa*) for Mother Earth (Pṛthvīmātā).

Plate 15 and 16: Vessels marked respectively by a stylized wheel, characteristic of Vairocana, and by a double *vajra*, the sign characteristic of Amoghasiddhi.

On the eastern side, the circle with these flasks is augmented by two larger vessels, one dedicated to Vairocana, and one to Amoghasiddhi, as depicted on plate 15 and 16. Though set up in a circle together with the other bathing flasks, the two larger vessels are not used for bathing. According to one opinion the vessel of Amoghasiddhi forms the starting point and the vessel of Vairocana (which is located just to its right) the ending point of the circle of flasks. They bracket and in this sense enclose all these flasks, because they represent the last and first of the five Buddhas. Whatever the merits of this explanation, the importance of these two vessels is borne out by the fact that after the rite the main priest gets to keep the Vairocana vessel and the *upādhyāya* the vessel of Amoghasiddhi.

Proceeding clockwise and starting in the east just to the left (if looking on from outside) of the large vessel dedicated to Amoghasiddhi, and finishing just to the right of the large vessel of Vairocana (which was adjacent to the one of Amoghasiddhi), the bathing flasks were, at the mentioned ritual in September 2008, distributed in the following way over the circle they describe:

- Moon (flanking, together with the sun on the other side, the two large vessels of Vairocana and Amoghasiddhi)
- Vairocana (located in the east but standing for the center)

- Akṣobhya (located in the east)
- Agni (introducing the southeastern segment of the circle)
- Māmakī
- Puṣpā
- Rūpavajrā
- Yama (introducing the southern segment of the circle)
- Vajrapāśa
- Ratnasaṃbhava
- Nairṛti (introducing the southwestern segment of the circle)
- Dhūpā
- Śabdavajrā
- Pāṇḍarā
- Varuṇa (introducing the western segment of the circle)
- Vajrasphoṭa
- Amitābha
- Pṛthvīmātā[54]
- Dīpā (introducing the northwestern segment of the circle)
- Rasavajrā
- Tārā
- Vāyavya
- Kubera (introducing the northern segment of the circle)
- Amoghasiddhi
- Vajrāveśa
- Īśāna (introducing the northeastern segment of the circle)
- Gandhavajrā
- Gandhā
- Locanā
- Vajrāṅkuśa (introducing the remainder of the eastern segment of the circle)
- Indra
- Sun

Unlike in the constellation reproduced here, there is, as mentioned above, an alternate tradition in Kathmandu that includes in addition eight further vessels, who are marked by the eight auspicious signs (*aṣṭamaṅgala*) and represent the eight Bodhisattvas featuring commonly in Newar Buddhism as a set. They are, in accordance with standard Newar practice, distributed over the eight points of the compass as depicted on plate 17, starting with the endless knot (*śrīvatsa*) representing Maitreya in the east and proceeding clockwise with the white lotus (*puṇḍarīka*) for Gaganagañja, the banner (*dhvaja*)

54 Pṛthvīmātā is likewise located in the west of the Mahāvairocana-maṇḍala employed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* for the sanctification of the building ground (cf. Tanemura 2004: 21).

Plate 17: Vessels marked by the eight auspicious signs (*aṣṭamaṅgala*). Apparently, there was until recently a tradition to include this set among the bathing vessels.

for Samantabhadra, the flask (*kalaśa*) for Vajrapāṇi, the pair of yak whisks (*cāmara*) for Mañjughoṣa, the pair of fishes (*matsya*) for Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin, the honorific parasol (*chattra*) for Kṣitigarbha and the conch shell (*śaṃkha*) for Khagarbha.

The constellation of bathing vessels can be regarded as an expanded version of the painted *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* that these vessels surround. It accommodates all deities of that *maṇḍala*, and in addition it includes the eight guardian deities of the directions, the four Pūjā Goddesses Dhūpā, Puṣpā, Dīpā and Gandhā, as well as moon and sun, and Mother Earth. Furthermore, following the mentioned alternate tradition, it includes in addition also the mentioned eight Bodhisattvas. The bathing vessels thus constitute a *maṇḍala* in their own right. This is comparable to the manifestation of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala by vessels (which are to be marked with the same signs), as prescribed in the third section of the third chapter of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (cf. Tanemura 2004: 20–5). Given this parallel, it is possible to view the vessels used in the Kathmandu tradition not primarily as bathing vessels but as iconic representations of the *maṇḍala*'s deities. In support one could point out that of all the flasks only five (namely those of the five Buddhas) are used for sprinkling water over the image. On the other hand, since these vessels apparently take the place of the bathing vessels prescribed in the *Kriyā-*

saṃgrahapañjikā, it would be prudent not to discount the purpose of providing empowered water for bathing the consecration image.

With the above mentioned eight Bodhisattvas made present by water vessels and the ten Mahākrodha Deities represented by pegs, the *snāna-maṇḍala* of the Kathmandu tradition represents all deities of the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala (that is, with the exception of the Bodhisattva Lokeśvara instead of whom Gaganagañja is present). It does so, however, without copying the crucial inversion of Akṣobhya and Vairocana that is the hallmark of this *maṇḍala*. Moreover, the presence of the eight guardian deities, of the four Pūjā Goddesses, and of moon and sun, and Mother Earth cannot be explained on the basis of the Piṇḍīkramokta-Akṣobhya-maṇḍala. By contrast, these deities feature—with the exception of Mother Earth—in the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara-maṇḍala. On the other hand, the mentioned set of eight Bodhisattvas only overlaps somehow with the sixteen Bodhisattvas of that *maṇḍala*. It is, hence, not possible to align the set-up employed in Kathmandu for the bathing of consecration images one to one with one of the standard *maṇḍala*s as recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*. This includes the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. For, as we have seen above, contrary to the prescriptions of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and unlike in Patan practice, the configuration employed in Kathmandu differs considerably from the layout of this *maṇḍala* as recorded in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*. Most importantly, it does not include the set of four deities surrounding each of the five Buddhas in that *maṇḍala*, while it does include the four goddesses of the intermediate directions. Though it is noteworthy that the core of the *adhivāsana-maṇḍala* beyond the five Buddhas deviates from the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala of the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*, and hence from the instructions of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā,* it has to be borne in mind that in most other contexts the consecration rituals performed in the Kathmandu tradition follow the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s prescriptions closely and hence accord in detail with Abhayākaragupta's version of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. This applies to the *maṇḍala* traced on the ground as part of the sanctification of the building ground (*sūtrapātana*), to the *maṇḍala* employed for the laying of the foundation (*pādasthāpana*), as well as to the *maṇḍala* operative when the jewels are deposited (*ratnanyāsa*) in the base of the sacred structure that is being newly erected (cf. von Rospatt 1999: 122–5). The fact that in the course of constructing and consecrating sacred structure two differing versions of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala come to be employed—one with the Vajrī Goddesses in accordance with the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*, and one with Locanā and so on in their stead—bears out their functional equivalence. While there is some scope for variation, what really matters is the immutable core of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala, namely the five Buddhas with Vairocana in the center and Akṣobhya, Ratnasaṃbhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi in the cardinal directions around him. Accordingly, in the Kathmandu tradition, of all the deities represented by way of bathing vessels, only those of the five Buddhas are employed in the course of the consecration rites in order to sprinkle water over the image.

The wedding rite

After having dealt with the structure of the consecration ceremony and the underlying *maṇḍala* constellation, I would like to consider two particular rites, belonging to this ceremony, namely the wedding (*pāṇigrahaṇa*) and the subsequently performed rite of *pratiṣṭhā*, which I believe to have been originally an independent rite of consecration in its own right. I will touch upon some further *saṃskāra*s in the final part when I will reflect upon the background of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s employment of the ten *saṃskāra*s for the consecration ceremony.

The wedding rite prescribed in the KSgP is performed with the assumption that the consecration deity is male. In preparation the priest generates Vajradhātvīśvarī as the deity's consort in his heart and then mentally places her on a lotus seat to the left of the consecration image, just as the bride is seated to the left of the groom at the outset of the wedding rite.[55] Vajradhātvīśvarī is the consort of Vairocana. Her function as bride underlines that the consecration image is treated as lord of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala. In the *gāthā* concluding the wedding, the bride is less specifically identified as "seal" (*mudrā*), that is consort, of the Tathāgata. After Vajradhātvīśvarī has been made present, the consecration image is anointed, dressed and decked with ornaments. It is blessed, receives wedding gifts and further auspicious offerings. The image is made to circumambulate the fire—an act only carried out in actuality for portable objects which the sponsor carries around the fire. It has a headband (*paṭṭa*) tied to its forehead and a *bel* fruit placed in its hand.[56] After further protective and auspicious rites the wedding is concluded with the following *gāthā*:

> "This is the seal (consort) of the Tathāgata (*tāthāgatī mudrā*), who produces the splendor of the light of knowledge. Take her hand in yours and commence the task of a Buddha."[57]

In Newar consecration practice the wedding rites are not only performed for the image, but commonly—though according to older handbooks not necessarily—also for a number of young girls who undergo these rites at the same time as the image, in unison with

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55 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 194, 9–195, 2 (the translation is by Tanemura 2004: 293): "Then having visualised the syllable *āḥ* on a lunar disk of his own heart, and having transformed it into the Lady of the *vajra* realm as the consort of the deity of the image etc., he should emit [her] from his own heart, and cause her to sit on a lunar disk on a lotus [placed] on the left side of the image etc. Then he should mark her head with the pledge seal of Vajrasattva [uttering] the mantra 'Oṃ Vajrasattva! Āḥ' and perform the marriage ceremony following the rule." (*tataḥ svahṛccandrastha-āḥkāraṃ vibhāvya pratimādidevatāmudrātmikavajradhātvīśvarīrūpeṇa niṣpādya svahṛdayād utsṛjya pratimāder vāmapārśve padmacandrāsane niṣādya oṃ vajrasattva <ā>ḥ iti mantreṇa tasyā mūrdhni vajrasattvasamayamudrayā ca mudrya vidhivad vivāham anutiṣṭhet).*

56 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 197, 3f.: ... having protected the image deity, one fastens a headband with a *phaṇānikā* and places a *bel* fruit in the [deity's] hand ... (... *pratimādidevatāṃ saṃrakṣya phaṇānikayā paṭṭabandhaṃ kṛtvā haste śrīphalaṃ dattvā* ...).

57 KSgP 197, 9f. (the translation above is, except for a minor modification, by Tanemura 2004: 295): *iyaṃ tathāgatī mudrā jñānālokaprabhākarī | gṛhītvā pāṇinā pāṇiṃ buddhakṛtyaṃ pravartyatām.*

it. This complicates the procedure and raises a number of pertinent issues I want to deal with here. For the girls these rites are known in Newari as *ihi*. They do not wed the girl to a human spouse. Rather, the girl is in a sequence of rites that includes the parental gift of the virgin (*kanyādāna*) tied to a *bel* fruit, supposedly symbolizing wedlock.[58] The *ihi* serves primarily as a life-cycle rite of initiation for the girls, making them full-fledged members of the caste into which they have been born. This function of the *ihi* is not a radical innovation but in line with Brahmanical practice where the wedding functions as the *saṃskāra* par excellence for females, and in this corresponds to the *upanayana* performed for boys.[59] As a consequence, the *ihi* subjects them to the given caste's purity restrictions and obliges them to observe death pollution in case someone in the family dies. Conversely, their death henceforth necessitates, at least in theory, full-fledged funerary rites including the subsequent observation of *śrāddha* offerings. In all this the *ihi* corresponds functionally to the boy's initiation, the so-called loincloth worship *(kāytāpūjā),* which is a modified version of the Hindu *upanayana* rite and like the latter preceded by the rite of tonsure (*cūḍākaraṇa*).[60] In other words, the *ihi* brings the wedding rite forward to roughly the same age at which the *upanayana* is performed—though crucially without entailing actual marriage to a human spouse—so that boys and girls undergo at about the same time the initiatory rites that transform them into proper members of their parental caste with all the privileges and obligations this entails.[61] Fittingly, the *ihi* rite is sometimes referred to as the *upanayana* for girls.[62] (This usage of *upanayana* bears out that in the Newar ritual system it may assume the

58 For a documentation of the *ihi* rite as performed nowadays for girls in Bhaktapur, see Gutschow and Michaels' study *Growing Up: Hindu and Buddhist Initiation Rituals among Newar Children in Bhaktapur, Nepal* (2008).

59 Cf. Joachim Sprockhoff "Die Alten im alten Indien: Ein Versuch nach brahmanischen Quellen" (1979: 376).

60 For details of the so-called *kāytāpūjā* see again Gutschow & Michaels (2008). In case of the Śākyas and Vajrācāryas, the loin cloth *pūjā* is performed as a preparatory element of the temporary monastic ordination that the boys pass through in order to become members of the monastery to which they belong by patrilineal descent. Cf. my article "The Transformation of the Monastic Ordination *(pravrajyā)* into a Rite of Passage in Newar Buddhism" (2005).

61 One may hence view the institution of *ihi* as an ingenious move to put girls on the same footing with boys without marrying them off in childhood. This interpretation has certainly more currency than other explanations for the *ihi* rite commonly put forward, such as that it protects girls from widowhood when their human spouse later dies (it does not; Newar widows are viewed and treated as widows, no matter whether they underwent the *ihi* rite or not), or such as that it allows for easy divorce and remarriage since the human spouse never quite attains the status of first husband (he does, and divorce is initiated by women only under extreme circumstances, precisely because they are not viewed as fit for remarriage). Even so, it would be precarious to conclude from the function of the *ihi* rite highlighted here that the *ihi* rite was introduced in the first place to serve this purpose. Rather, the historical origins of this rite are obscure and call for detailed research that also takes into account how the *ihi* rite relates to the consecration ceremony treated in this paper. It is to be hoped that Christoph Emmrich's ongoing engagement with the *ihi* rite will shed some light on this complex issue.

62 See for example page 5 of the handbook reproduced in Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 258ff.).

general meaning of "initiatory life-cycle rite of passage" rather than referring specifically to the boy's initiation.[63])

The procedure of the *ihi* ritual is grounded in the prescriptions recorded in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* for the wedding of the consecration deity. This includes the adornment of the girl's forehead with a block print called *moḍakī* or *mokī* for short.[64] But the *ihi* also incorporates numerous other elements that do not form part of the consecration ceremony for deities. The girls don a yellow-threaded garland with knotted pouches (known nowadays as *śatabhedikā*) that measures a multiple of their height. Moreover, they are also presented with a bowl (*salāpā* or *ihipā*) containing the *bel* fruit, a rope and further items used for the crucial act of tying their hands to the fruit in order to wed them. The rites for the girls and the consecration deity are performed in unison, and the deity is also offered the block print for the forehead,[65] the *śatabhedikā* garland (the length of which is in identical manner a multiple of the deity's height) and the *salāpā* bowl. In this way, the wedding of the girls is not only patterned on that of the consecration deity, but in turn has also come to shape this ceremony in Newar Buddhism.

The analogous treatment of the deity, and in particular the offering of the *salāpā* with the items for the *bel* fruit wedding, suggest that the deity undergoes the wedding like the *ihi* girls as bride.[66] This impression is shared not only by common onlookers, but also by priests who frequently claim that the deity is treated as female during the wedding, in order to endow it in the course of the consecration rites also with supposedly female qualities, such as compassion. While it is indeed true that many of the initiatory rites for the girls are also performed for the consecration deity, such an interpretation is yet problematic. It is so because the above-cited instructions from the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, which clearly treat the deity as the groom wedded to a female consort, are reproduced almost verbatim in the Newar manuals and enacted accordingly during the ritual. Moreover, the crucial act of tying the girl's hands around the *bel* fruit is not simulated for the consecration deity. Hence, the deity retains its male identity

63 Another example is the term *vṛddha-upanayana* used at times for the *bhīmarathārohaṇa* old age ritual mentioned in n. 66.

64 For examples of the block print used for the *ihi* rite, see Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 119). Instead of *mo(ḍa)kī*, the designation commonly used in Kathmandu or Patan, the authors report that the block print is known in Bhaktapur as *sapākhvaḥ*.

65 In Kathmandu practice the block print used for the consecration image differs from the one used for girls by depicting a *vajra* rather than a *kalaśa*. In Bajracharya's printed handbook (1989: 23f.) it is accordingly called *vajrakī* rather than *moḍakī*.

66 The *bhīmarathārohaṇa* ritual as performed in Kathmandu for someone reaching the august age of 77 years, 7 months, 7 days and 7 minutes (for details see von Rospatt 2005b) entails the consecration of a new icon, typically a scroll painting with one or two commemorative registers at the bottom. When the *ihi* ritual is performed on this occasion, the block print for the forehead, the *śatabhedikā* garland and the *salāpā* bowl are offered to the female celebrant just as they are to the *ihi* girls and to the consecration deity. By contrast, they are not offered to the male celebrant. Therefore, the presentation of these items to the consecration deity implies its treatment as female in this context. This, however, does not distract from the fact that at the crucial moment of marriage the consecration deity is male and functions as groom.

even while it undergoes some of the same initiatory treatment that the *ihi* girls do in preparation of their role as bride.

In the following I want to deal in more detail with two particular elements that play a prominent role in the *ihi* ritual and already feature in the consecration ceremony recorded in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, namely the *bel* fruit and the tying of the headband. Their presence might be regarded as evidence suggesting that the rite of *ihi* with the so-called wedding to the *bel* fruit (*bel vivāha*) was current already at the time of Kuladatta. It seems more likely to me, however, that the *ihi* rite developed only later, and, because of its initiatory character, came to incorporate elements of the wedding rite as performed for deities.[67] (As I will suggest at the end of this paper, it seems also in the case of other *saṃskāra*s that the method of performing them for humans was influenced or even shaped by the procedure developed previously for consecration images.) The most important element incorporated from the wedding procedure for consecration images is the *bel* fruit, or, more precisely, the specific way in which it is employed. To shed more light on its role I like to turn to a particular tradition of performing the wedding ritual for human spouses current among Buddhists of Patan. As the parents hand over their daughter to the groom, the girl grasps a *bel* fruit in her hands which has been wrapped in a leaf (*jyonālapte*), just as happens during the *ihi* rite. The mother and father lay their hands around the girl's hand, and then the father recites the appropriate Sanskrit stanzas of gifting the daughter to the groom. Afterwards the girl's hands are laid into the grooms and the *bel* fruit is handed over to him.[68] The same rite is found among Buddhists of Kathmandu. However, it is not performed as part of the *kanyādāna*, but rather as part of the so-called *hvaṃkegu vidhi* in the groom's house after the *kanyādāna* has been performed and the bride has been brought home. Instead of the bride's parents, the groom's father and mother enclose her hands clasping the *bel* fruit. As they entrust her right hand to the groom (in what looks like a reenactment of the *kanyādāna*), the *bel* is handed over, too.[69] This role of the *bel* fruit in the mentioned

67 There is no evidence in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (or any of the other early Sanskrit sources mentioned above) that the wedding for the consecration deity was to be performed simultaneously for the image and for girls, as is commonly the case in present-day practice, and as is also attested as an option in earlier Newar sources. Cf. *Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhāna (*Āśā Saphū Kuthi scan number 2228; running number 2668: 16r5: *ihi yāyapiṃ datasā, ...*) and *Pratiṣṭhāvidhāna* (B 105/10, 111r4: *ihimacāta datasā, ...*). Note that according to an unpublished survey by Christoph Emmrich of some 58 *ihi* manuscripts microfilmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project the earliest such manuscript dates back only to the beginning of the seventeenth century (cf. Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 93, n. 19).

68 See Buddharatna Bajracharya's *Bajrayāna pūjāvidhi saphu. Part 2* (2008: 50): *thana jyonālapte byāḥ chagva pvacinā mhyāymacāyā hlātī tayā māmha, baumhanaṃ mhyāymacāyāgu lhāḥ jvanā varayāta dāna biye ‖ vākya ‖ adya dānapatityādi ‖ mama putrī amukanāmnī, śubhalagne, śubhadine, śubharātrī, sudhana kumāra svarūpa varebhy[o ']haṃ dadāmi ‖ thuli baumhaṃ dhāye ‖ ‖ varaṃ dhāye ‖ dadasva 3 ‖*

69 Cf. Vajrācārya 1983: 16. The wedding ceremony detailed in this text is extended and includes the elaborate blessing of the couple (imparted in tantric terms as *abhiṣeka*s) by the eight auspicious signs, the *aṣṭamaṅgala*. The first sign, the endless knot known as *śrīvatsa*, is identified with the *bel* fruit. It is the very *bel* fruit that the bride later clasps in her hand as she is entrusted to the groom.

cases[70] suggests that in the consecration ceremony of the KSgP the fruit is placed in the hand of the consecration image to simulate its presentation by the bride Vajradhātvīśvarī. In this way the fruit points to the bride and arguably even represents her. In support of such an interpretation it can be noted that after the *bel* fruit has been placed in the hands of the image (and after subsequent protective rituals have been performed in between) the aforementioned wedding *gāthā* is recited, namely "This is the seal (consort) of the Tathāgata. ... Take her hand in yours and commence the task of a Buddha." The same *gāthā* is, following the *Pāṇigrahaṇavidhi* (Vajrācārya 1983: 17), recited after the bride has presented the *bel* fruit to the groom (and after a few intervening ritual acts have been performed). The matching employment of the *gāthā* strengthens the interpretation that in the consecration ritual the *bel* fruit is associated with the bride, just as it appears to be when the wedding rite is performed for humans. Such a function of the *bel* fruit is also in broad accord with the *ihi* rite, which enacts the *kanyādāna*, the parental gift of the virgin, and by implication also entails that the girl is united via the *bel* fruit with a divine spouse. Here, too, the *bel* fruit is identified with the bride's transfer to the groom and points to the physically absent spouse, who in the *ihi*'s case is female, rather than male, as in the consecration ceremony.[71]

I would like to move on and consider the second item of the *ihi* rite featuring already in the KSgP, namely the fastening of a headband (*paṭṭa*) to the consecration image. It corresponds to the adornment of the forehead of the *ihi* girls and the consecra-

70 Note that, more commonly than the *bel* fruit, areca nuts are offered by the Newar bride to the groom. Outside a Newar context, instead of nuts or the *bel* fruit, the bride may grasp a small conch shell with sanctified water as she is gifted to the groom and has her right hand placed into his hands. Cf. the Hindu ritual prescribed by Ṛṣirāmaśarmā Ghimire in his *Vivāhapaddhatiḥ* (2000: 150).

71 While the *bel* fruit points to the groom, it is another matter whether it actually represents him. Even though this is a common perception—hence the term *bel vivāha* used in Nepali—this is not as straight forward as it may appear. To start with, this identification obviously does not tally with the bel's above mentioned function in the wedding rite among humans. Moreover, when performing the *ihi* in a Hindu context, the *bel* fruit is regularly supplemented by a minute piece of gold or even a small golden image that stands for the divine groom instead of the *bel* (for an example see Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 157). Furthermore, in conversation with me some Vajrācāryas in Patan have claimed that the *bel* fruit used for the *ihi* rite should afterwards ideally be kept by the girl, until she is married to a human spouse. Then she should use this very *bel* fruit in the wedding rite and present it to her spouse. I have not been able to confirm this claim. However, whether actually in accordance with practice or not—and there are good reasons to be skeptical—the claim itself would make little sense if the fruit were perceived to represent the divine spouse wedded by way of the *ihi* rite. Rather this claims seems to identify the *bel* fruit, in accordance with its overt function in case of the wedding rite among humans, with the transfer of the bride to the groom, rather than the groom himself. All this goes to show that the function of the *bel* fruit and the meaning attached to it are a complex issue, and that it cannot be taken for granted that the *bel* fruit in the *ihi* rite stands for the divine spouse the girl is supposedly marrying.

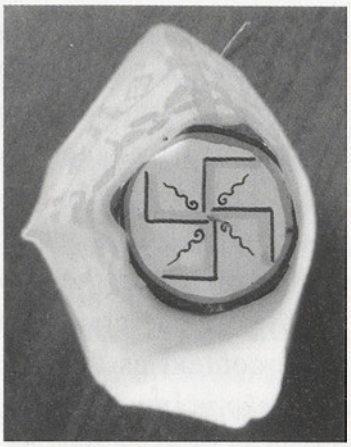

Plate 18 and 19: Sample of a *cākraphaṇi* as used in Kathmandu with a *svastika* painted on the inside of the cover.

tion image with the block print.[72] The precise details in the KSgP are not clear, because the act of binding the headband is qualified by the obscure word *phaṇānikayā*.[73] In Newar handbooks this word survives as *phaṇin* or *phaṇinī* (and also *phalini*)[74] apparently meaning serpent (lit. hooded one). Unfortunately, it is not obvious what this term refers to. I will devote some space in quest of an answer for the remainder of this section because I believe it is a particularly instructive example for the ways in which ritual elements in a Newar context can change their role and assume new meanings. Some of the details are admittedly arcane and may not be of equal interest to all readers.

In order to probe into the meaning of the term *phaṇin* (or one of its derivatives), I would like to start with the so-called *cākraphaṇi* used in Kathmandu. This is a rotund cylindrically shaped paper device (see plates 18 and 19) that is used when imparting the crown *abhiṣeka* at the time of the *cūḍākaraṇa* rite for the consecration deity (but not for boys undergoing this rite). It is not used as a crown and attached to the head but rather suspended above the deity. Because of this and its shape, which is not crown-like, it is commonly identified as honorific parasol (*chattra*) and not as crown. However, the texts do not identify it as such, and it seems more prudent to stick to the literal meaning, "circular hood" (or "circular hooded one," if *-phaṇi* is derived from *phaṇin* ["hooded one," i.e. serpent] rather than being taken as an abnormal i-stem formation of *phaṇa*). It is tempting to interpret this as a snake hood spread over the consecration deity. This is a prominent motive featuring in the iconography of Amoghasiddhi or the legend of the serpent Mucalinda, who spread his hood over Śākyamuni Buddha in order to protect him shortly after his supreme awakening. However, there is nothing serpen-

72 This is somewhat confusing because rather than being a headband itself, the block print is in fact tied to the forehead with a headband. For this a particular band, the so-called *aḍawa* (cf. Vajracharya & Vajracharya 1998: 2) tends to be used.

73 Tanemura (2004: 294, n. 212) conjectures that the term *phaṇānikayā* may refer to a goddess Phaṇānikā who is made to tie the headband. This is not unreasonable given that immediately before the phrase cited above the goddess Aiśānikā is made to protect the deity. However, I am not aware that there is such a goddess as Phaṇānikā. Moreover, this interpretation is not supported by the Newar tradition.

74 The form *phali* instead of *phaṇi* may owe to the fact that the two *akṣaras la* and *ṇa* look similar in the Newari script and are prone to confusion.

tine about the *cākraphaṇi*s I have seen, nor do I have any other corroborating evidence from within the tradition that would corroborate such an interpretation.

In the Kathmandu tradition some handbooks mention a *phalinī* as a distinct item when instructing that the *moḍakī* is to be fastened to the forehead as part of the wedding rite,[75] i.e. in exactly the same context in which the KSgP mentions the obscure word *phaṇānikayā*. It is tempting to dismiss the lack of the qualification as circular (*cākra*) and surmise that the *phalinī* likewise refers to a hood held over the consecration deity. In support one could point out that the *phalinī* item features in the wedding rite in the same context as the *cākraphaṇi* does in the *cūḍākaraṇa* rite, namely when the crown *abhiṣeka* is imparted.[76] However, I have not been able to ascertain this, as no hood-like object is used as part of wedding rituals in the living tradition. The text almost always used nowadays, namely Badrīratna Bajrācārya's *Daśakarmapratiṣṭhā*, conveniently omits the critical word *phaṇi* (or *phalinī*) (1989: 23f.). So does the near-identical version scribed by Ratna Kaji Bajracharya (3v2).[77] Other texts preserve the word *phaṇi* (or one of its variant) but seem to equate it with the *moḍakī* block print. This is possibly also the situation in the Śaivite *Puṣkaraṇīpraṇālīpratiṣṭhāvidhi* which only prescribes the mounting by the *phaṇin* (or of the *phaṇinā*?) and does not mention separately the block print headband which should be fastened at this point around the forehead.[78] Accordingly, questioned Rājopādhyāya priests opined that the term *phaṇin(ā)* must be an alternative designation for the block print otherwise known as the *moḍakī*.

In Patan, too, there is the tradition of employing the cylindrical paper device as part of the consecration ceremony in context of the *cūḍākaraṇa* and wedding rite. The device is here known as *phaliṃdyaḥ* (lit. *phaliṃ* deity) instead of *cākraphaṇi*. It does not feature as part of the *cūḍākaraṇa* performed for boys undergoing the *kāytāpūjā* outside the context of the consecration ceremony. By contrast, it is an indispensable element of the *ihi* rites performed for girls, no matter the context. The *phaliṃdyaḥ* is employed when the crown *abhiṣeka* is imparted, just as the *cākraphaṇi* of Kathmandu when this *abhiṣeka* is given as part of the *cūḍākaraṇa* rite. Though the texts I have seen do not make this clear, the *phaliṃdyaḥ* seems to be identified as the crown itself (the role seemingly played by the *moḍakī* in the Kathmandu tradition) and not as an additional hood. More precisely, in the tradition of Patan the association of the Five Buddhas' consorts with the crown comes to the fore, and the *phaliṃdyaḥ* becomes identified with

75 So the *Daśakarmakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhi* scribed by Harsha Ratna Bajracharya (13v6: *moḍaki taye* ‖ *au vajrasattva hūṃ* ‖ *phalinī taye*), and the *Pratiṣṭhādasakriyāvidhi* (E 2571/4, 64r5: *morakinī tayeke* ‖ *ida<ṃ> tat sarvabuddhānāṃ traidhātuka ... paṇcakurodhabhavaṃ* ‖ *phaliṇī taya* ‖ *oṃ vajrasattva hūṃ*).

76 The *moḍakī* seems to function as crown when this *abhiṣeka* is given as part of the wedding rites. To bestow this *abhiṣeka* in the context of the wedding rites is an important departure from the tradition of the KSgP, where it does not feature as part of the wedding rites.

77 So, for instance, the *Karmavidhisaṃgraha* kept in the Āśā Saphū Kuthi (23v: ... *phani moḍakina ciyake*), the *Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha* (43r7: *thana thakalinaṃḥ phani moḍaḥ molasaḥ cināo viya*). Cf. also the Buddhist *Pāṇigrahaṇavidhi* handbook from Bhaktapur (p. 11: *thana panini (!) chāya*) reproduced in transliteration in Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 258ff.).

78 *Puṣkaraṇīpraṇālīpratiṣṭhāvidhi* (Āśā Saphū Kuthi scan number 186) [40a]: *phaṇīnārohaṇaṃ*.

these consorts, just as is the case in the crown *abhiṣeka* attested in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. It is used not only to bless both the deity and the *ihi* girls as part of the wedding rites, but it functions also as the female equivalent of the *aliṃdyaḥ*, that is the portable *caitya* modeled from fresh clay that the potter in charge of preparing the ritual clay vessels provides on the main day of the consecration ceremony.[79] Just as the clay *caitya* is provided by the potter, so the *phaliṃdyaḥ* is provided on the same day by the Citrakāra who has painted the ritual utensils. And just as the *aliṃdyaḥ* is set up in line with the other sacred items as part of the *kalaśārcana* ritual and consecrated for the purposes of this rite as a *pañcabuddha caitya*, so the *phaliṃdyaḥ* is set up towards the other end of the same line (cf. the sketch in Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 166) and imbued with the presence of the five goddesses corresponding to the five Buddhas (in the common configuration Vajradhātvīśvarī, Sattvavajrī, Ratnavajrī, Dharmavajrī and Karmavajrī).[80] Moreover, just as the *aliṃdyaḥ* is taken in procession around the fire together with the girls—an honor shared by a few more prominent ritual items such as the flask of Gaṇeśa—so the *phaliṃdyaḥ* is. Though it is possible to account for the term *phaliṃdyaḥ* on its own terms (*phaliṃ* is a variant of *phaṇiṃ*, and *dyaḥ* is suffixed frequently to deified entities), it may well be that the term *phaliṃdyaḥ* was coined in imitation of *aliṃdyaḥ* in order to reflect their close association.

The rite of *pratiṣṭhā* and its place in the consecration ceremony

The ten *saṃskāra*s conclude with the wedding rite. This, however, is not the end of the consecration ceremony. Afterwards the deity receives the nine tantric initiations as if it were a human initiand. The prescription of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and the manuals derived from it largely accord with the instructions found in Abhayākaragupta's *Vajrāvalī*.[81] There is, however, one significant difference. Unlike in the *Vajrāvalī*, in the tradition of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* there is a brief sequence of two originally independent consecration rites that is inserted in the beginning of the series of tantric initiation rites. These tantric rites are prefaced in both the *Vajrāvalī* (cf. Mori 2005: 211–3) and *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (p. 198) by the generation of the *maṇḍala* with Vajrasattva in the center who subsequently imparts the initiations for the deity in question. (The deity is made to enter this *maṇḍala* as an initiand; hence in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* this section is entitled *maṇḍalapraveśavidhi*.) Whereas in the *Vajrāvalī* this section is followed directly by the water consecration (*udakābhiṣeka*), the *Kriyāsaṃgraha-*

79 For a depiction of the Hindu version of the *aliṃdyaḥ*, see Gutschow & Michaels (2008: 142).

80 The *phaliṃdyaḥ* also features in Bhaktapur practice as part of the *ihi* rites. It is reportedly identified with "Pañcatārā" (Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 166), which I take to refer to Vajradhātvīśvarī, Locanā and so on. Though this has not been captured in Gutschow and Michaels' study, it might function as female equivalent of the *aliṃdyaḥ*, in the same way as in Patan.

81 Tanemura (2004: 9f.) discusses the relationship between Abhayākaragupta and Kuladatta. Though the discussion is not conclusive, it seems rather likely that the two masters are indebted to the same source(s) and did not borrow directly from each other.

pañjikā here inserts the mentioned sequence of originally independent consecration rites, which are immediately followed by the *udakābhiṣeka*.[82] The details of this sequence in the Kathmandu tradition (the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* deviates slightly from this)[83] are as follows: Holding a five-stranded thread (*pasūka*) that is connected to the consecration image together with a *vajra* and flower garland in his hands, the priest recites 108 times the mantra *oṃ hūṃ hrīḥ vajrībhava dṛḍhaṃ tiṣṭha bhrūṃ khaṃ hūṃ svāhā*. He then gets up and, taking the one-pointed *vajra* step,[84] walks to the consecration image, while holding the *vajra* in his hand ringing the bell. He recites the *ye dharmā* verse and scatters unbroken and popped rice over the image. Finally he garlands the image, touches its head with his *vajra* and recites *oṃ supratiṣṭhitavajrāya svāhā*.[85] The first and last action serve to permanently fix the deity in its receptacle. This accords with the literal meaning of *pratiṣṭhā*,[86] which hence has two different referents, namely either the consecration ceremony as a whole, or more narrowly just this rite of fixation. As mentioned, the enclosed empowerment of the receptacle with the ancient *ye dharmā* verse corresponds to an old pre-tantric form of consecration. The verse

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82 In the Kathmandu tradition the *pratiṣṭhā* rites are embedded somehow confusingly within the *udakābhiṣeka*. On the one hand, there is an additional bath (which is dispensed from a conch shell) that is separate from the water consecration (*udakābhiṣeka*), which follows immediately upon the *pratiṣṭhā* rite and is dispensed from a flask (*kalaśa*). On the other hand, the invocation *oṃ vajrodakābhisiñca hūṃ* ("oṃ *vajra* water, sprinkle, hūṃ"), which typically accompanies the *udakābhiṣeka,* has been shifted and no longer accompanies the ablution dispensed from the flask as it does in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, but the additional bath dispensed from the conch shell.

83 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 199, 2–11: *... ācāryo dakṣiṇahastena vajraṃ pañcasūtraṃ kusumamālāṃ ca dhārayan, 'oṃ hūṃ hrīḥ vajrībhava dṛḍhaṃ tiṣṭha bhrūṃ khaṃ hūṃ svāhā,' 'oṃ supratiṣṭhitavajrāya svāhā' ity anenāṣṭottaraśatavāram adhitiṣṭhet. 'ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetuṝteṣāṃ tathāgataḥ | hy avadat teṣāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ' evaṃ pratimāṃ pratiṣṭhāpya ...*
The instructions given here by Kuladatta differ form the standard Newar procedure insofar as the mantra *oṃ supratiṣṭhitavajrāya svāhā* is recited together with the mantra *oṃ hūṃ hrīḥ vajrībhava dṛḍhaṃ tiṣṭha bhrūṃ khaṃ hūṃ svāhā* when the priest is sitting. This means that there is no separate act where the priest gets up and walks to the image in order to empower it by touching its head with a *vajra*.

84 The priest does not walk ordinarily because he moves within the framework of the ritual. Thus, when he gets up he at this critical juncture of the rite and walks to the image, he steps with the empowering "gait of the one-pointed *vajra*" that helps overcome "all bad *asuras*" and other malign forces. Cf. *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā,* section 6-3-4-1 (following Tanemura's unpublished segmentation and edition): *evaṃ sarvottarasādhakā api paribhrameyuḥ. kiṃtu pūrvadigavasthita uttarasādhaka ekasūcikavajrapadaṃ hūṃkārajaṃ pādatale vicintya, dakṣiṇacaraṇena pṛṣṭhe 'gre tathaiva vāmacaraṇena bhūmau cākārayan, 'oṃ ekasūcikavajrapada vajramahākrodha bhañja 2 sarvaduṣṭāsurān hūṃ phaṭ'.*

85 *Pratiṣṭhādasakriyāvidhi (*E 2571/4) 69r4–v5 (I reproduce the Newari text as it is, but I have emended the Sanskrit slightly without marking my changes; cf. Bajrācārya 1989: 29f.): *thana pratiṣṭhā yāya ‖ ācāryyana makuṭaṇa pusyaṃ java rāhātana paṃcasutrakā, vajra tvāka svānamālā tāya akṣatra joṅaṃ, paṃcasūtrakāna pratiṣṭhāde, vanesaṃ hayāva khava rāhātana jāpa yāya ‖ ‖ mantra pva ‖ oṃ hūṃ hrīḥ vajrībhava dṛḍhaṃ tiṣtha bhrūṃ khaṃ hūṃ svāhā ‖ dhāra 108 ‖ thana murācārya vajra joṅāva ghantha thāseṃ ekasucina parikramana ṅāyāva deva hṅevane ‖ thana ye dharmmā gāthā paḍapaṃ tāyana lucake ‖ tvāka svānamālāna kokhāyake ‖ vajrana deva thiya ‖ oṃ supratiṣṭitavajre svāhā ‖ ‖ iti pratiṣṭhāvidhi.*

86 Cf. Gonda's article "Pratiṣṭhā" (1954).

is understood to contain the essence of the teaching of the Buddha, and hence it has been employed since old in numerous contexts to imbue objects with the power of the *dharma*.

I presume that the *pratiṣṭhā* rite and the *ye dharma gāthā* were integrated into a single ceremony already before their incorporation into the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. At any rate, whether they had already been merged into one sequence outside the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* or not, it is clear that these rites of consecration had a prior existence, independently of the ceremony set forth by Kuladatta. It accords with their original independence that the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* introduces them with a phrase instructing that the image should be set up "on a throne made by a skilled artist in the perfume chamber or elsewhere in the abodes of deities," and that this should happen "when the lunar and solar day and the lunar mansion and the moment are auspicious."[87] These instructions indicate that the following rites stood originally on their own, because they make hardly any sense when they occur (as they do in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*) in the middle of a sequence of rites that has long begun.

This original independence is also confirmed by another consideration. When a consecrated structure such as a *caitya* is deconsecrated for the purposes of renovating it, the drawing out of the divine essence by way of the deity's heart mantra is not sufficient. Rather, after the structure has already been deconsecrated in this way, it is necessary to release the object in a further step from the fixation that was effected by the *pratiṣṭhā* rite discussed here. For this, a bull—or in modern practice a cow—is connected by way of a rope to the structure's finial. The bovine is then driven away so that the rope pulls down the finial, thereby dislodging the structure. This act of deconsecration, which is prescribed already in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (Facsimilie edition in the Śatapiṭaka Series, 1977: 269, 9–271, 3) and also the *Ācāryakriyāsamuccaya* (26, 6–28, 4), has been performed in the past and continues to be an integral part of deconsecration rituals also in contemporary Newar Buddhism. It correlates with the rite of fixation as effected by the mentioned *pratiṣṭhā* mantras and confirms the independence of the *pratiṣṭhā* from the tantric consecration that is effected drawing down the heart mantra (and merging the *jñānasattva* with the *samayasattva*). It may be added that the weight of the *pratiṣṭhā* rite is also borne out by the fact that at the re-consecration of the Svayambhūcaitya in 1758 an entire day was dedicated to this rite (see above).

The point of insertion of the *pratiṣṭhā* rite (in the narrower sense) with the *ye dharmā gāthā* consecration has been carefully chosen. It accompanies the *udakābhiṣeka,* which itself is associated with the bath of the newly born Buddha, as expressed by the accompanying verse.[88] They are thus related to the moment of birth, which covertly is replicated by the *udakābhiṣeka*. This is in accordance with their original function as

87 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 198, 12–199, 2: *tato gandhak[u]ṭyām anyatra vā devāyataneṣu śikṣitaśilpighaṭitasundarasiṃhāsane śubhatithivāranakṣatramuhūrte pṛthvīsthānagate prāṇe pratimādikaṃ saṃsthāpya, ...*

88 *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* 200, 4f.: *yathā hi jātamātre[ṇ]a snāpitāḥ sarvatathāgatāḥ | tathāhaṃ snāpayiṣyāmi śuddhaṃ divyena vāriṇā.*

independent consecration rites that bring about the animation of the image and in that sense correspond to its birth. In the *Vajrāvalī* the *udakābhiṣeka* is linked by the same *gāthā* with the birth of the Buddha (Mori 2005: 213). Here this makes more sense than in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* as the tantric initiations are not preceded by the rite of birth and the other *saṃskāra*s. The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*'s repetition of the Buddha's birth, albeit covertly, by way of the *udakābhiṣeka,* is an indication that Kuladatta has merged separate consecration rites into an overall ceremony without purging the resultant product of duplications. Clearly, the integrity of the constituent parts mattered to Kuladatta too much to allow for such purging. Besides, it is questionable whether duplications such as considered here, and such as pointed out by Tanemura (2004: 90), would have been viewed as problematic in the first place. While from a western perspective duplications may appear to be unwelcome incoherencies, they may have been accepted by the tradition as welcome reinforcements of a process that only gains strength and momentum if reiterated.

Whence the employment of the *saṃskāra*s for consecrating images?

I am not aware of any Buddhist works not associated with the tradition of the Nepal Valley that would prescribe the performance of the ten life-cycle rituals as part of the consecration ceremony. This includes the voluminous Tibetan literature on consecration (*rab gnas*), which, as far as I know, does not bear witness to the explicit employment of the *saṃskāra*s. Significantly, the *saṃskāra*s are also conspicuously absent in the otherwise closely related section on consecration in the *Vajrāvalī*. As for the *Saṃvarodayatantra* (22.15), it mentions the performance of ten rites (*daśakarman*), presumably the *saṃskāra*s, in the context of its treatment of consecration,[89] but it appears this text originated in the Nepal Valley.[90]

However, it seems that the concept of performing Brahmanical life-cycle rites for the consecration image is indirectly operative in the Kālacakra tradition. This tradition has a complex system of initiations.[91] It includes seven preliminary initiations imparted to the student as a prerequisite for the higher *abhiṣeka*s starting with the *kalaśābhiṣeka*. The seven preparatory initiations are modeled upon events in infancy and childhood in the following way. The water initiation corresponds to washing the newborn baby, the crown initiation to arranging the child's hair, the silk ribbon initiation to piercing the

89 A later commentary, the *Padminī*, opines that these ten rites are tantric empowerments. If not grounded in actual ignorance of the true context, this appears as an attempt to explain away the role of the *saṃskāra*s, presumably because they did not feature in the consecration tradition represented by *Padminī*. Hence, I concur with Tanemura who has treated the critical passage in the *Saṃvarodayatantra* and the commentary and concludes that "the ten rites" could well refer to the *saṃskāra*s (2004: 92f.).

90 Here I follow the learned opinion of Harunaga Isaacson (oral communication).

91 For the following I draw largely upon Jeffrey Hopkins' introduction to *The Kālachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation for the Stage of Generation* (1985: 68f., 118f.). I am grateful to Yael Bentor for bringing this material to my attention.

ears and adorning the child, the *vajra* and bell initiation to the child's laughing and talking, the conduct initiation to the child's enjoyment of the five sense objects of the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*), the name initiation to naming the child, and finally the permission initiation to the father giving reading and so forth to a child. While the washing of the newborn baby and the name giving are arguably events that take place in a child's life as a matter of course, this can hardly be said for the rite of fixing up the hair on top of a child's head, or for the rite of piercing the earlobes and bedecking the child with ornaments. Rather, these two rites closely correspond to the Brahmanical rite of *cūḍākaraṇa* and *karṇavedhana* and are clearly related. What is more, the Kālacakra tradition equates the rite of tying the hair with the crown *abhiṣeka*, just as happens in the case of the *cūḍākaraṇa* rite in the KSgP. It is also noteworthy that there are exactly seven initiatory rites starting with birth, just as there are seven *saṃskāra*s starting with the rite of birth in the scheme of the KSgP. Moreover, in the form of the four "internal initiations" the Kālacakra tradition also includes rites corresponding to the prenatal phase. In similitude to the fetal development, these initiations purify the student's body, faculty of speech, sense powers and pristine consciousness. Since there was the well-established tradition of bestowing the higher *abhiṣeka*s upon consecration images in imitation of the disciple's career, it made sense to perform these preparatory rites also for images. Accordingly Kālacakrapāda in his *Śrīkālacakrasupratiṣṭhopāyikavidhi*[92] prescribes with regard to the consecration of an image that the priest "performs the water consecration and others according to the consecration of a disciple" (cited according to Mori 2005: 231). The expansion of the higher *abhiṣeka*s by preceding preparatory rites that correspond to the prenatal phase and childhood of the student is, therefore, comparable to the KSgP's employment of the *saṃskāra* life-cycle rites. However, the scheme of the Kālacakra does not include the fruit and rice feeding ceremonies, nor the imposition of vows and the subsequent release thereof, nor the wedding. Moreover, the prenatal *saṃskāra*s do not feature as such. What is more, the *saṃskāra*s that occur in the Kālacakra initiation scheme do so only implicitly because they have been transformed into tantric initiations. The result is that the Kālacakra scheme only indirectly reflects the concept of performing the *saṃskāra*s for the sake of consecrating deities. (Whether this was a deliberate move to veil the Brahmanical background or not, this allowed for the easy spread of the Kālacakra scheme beyond the realm of Indic culture and civilization.)

As we have seen, despite significant parallels, the Kālacakra's scheme of preparatory initiations differs markedly from the explicit employment of the *saṃskāra*s in the KSgP. As mentioned, such unveiled employment of the *saṃskāra*s is not prescribed in any known work outside the fold of the Newar tradition. However, there is scant literature from the late phase of Buddhism in India that has survived outside Nepal. Hence, it is perilous to draw any conclusions from the fact that particular traditions are not attested in the extant corpus of texts. On the other hand, this does not mean that we should ignore the (little) evidence we have and refrain from engaging with the definite

92 As Mori (2005: 228–232) has argued, the *Śrīkālacakrasupratiṣṭhopāyikavidhi* may have been the principal source for the treatment of the consecration ceremony in the *Vajrāvalī*.

possibility that the tradition of consecrating images (and other objects) by way of performing the complete set of *saṃskāra*s for the deity, starting with conception and ending with the wedding, may have been unique to Nepal. This, to be sure, does not imply that this form of practice would have been completely unknown elsewhere in the Buddhist world. Rather, even if unique to the Nepalese tradition it seems likely that knowledge of such practice would have spread beyond the Valley, though without finding approval.

Tanemura is less guarded and takes it for granted that the *saṃskāra*s came to be incorporated into the consecration ceremony in the Nepalese tradition. More concretely, he advances the hypothesis that the ten *saṃskāra*s were added to the *abhiṣeka*s in imitation of the practice that was supposedly current then among the Buddhists of the Nepal Valley (2004: 91). Since, as the *Vajrāvalī* already prescribes, the deity to be consecrated receives the *abhiṣeka*s just as human initiands do, it made sense—so Tanemura's argument—to add the ten *saṃskāra*s as a precursor to the *abhiṣeka*s because this supposedly reflected the situation among the Buddhists of Nepal at the time. I find this hypothesis problematic on a number of counts. To start with, a key element is the assumption that already at the time of Kuladatta in the eleventh or twelfth century, Buddhists of the Kathmandu Valley routinely went through the Brahmanical *saṃskāra*s including marriage and only thereafter received higher tantric *abhiṣeka*s, essentially as is the case today.[93] In support of this assumption, Tanemura points to text-internal evidence from the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, bearing out that this text is set in a milieu dominated by married tantric practitioners. As a ritual compilation, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* indeed draws together the rites typically performed by such practitioners. Even though these rites center around the construction of a monastery, they do not cater specifically for celibate monastics.[94] Rather, they treat the monastery much like a temple

93 In contemporary Newar Buddhism tantric *abhiṣeka*s are conferred upon unmarried male and female candidates, but this is not considered ideal because, even if not acted out, the secret initiations presuppose the presence of a sexual partner. Moreover, in the tradition of Kathmandu the "master consecration" (*ācāryābhiṣeka*) is bestowed upon sons of Vajrācāryas (typically when they are somewhere between four to ten years old) as a rite of passage. This happens on the very day that they disrobe, upon conclusion of the temporary ordination, which the boys take upon themselves for three days as part of their initiation into the monastery to which they belong by patrilineal descent. In the tradition prevalent in Patan, by contrast, the presence of a partner is considered indispensable, and hence the *ācāryābhiṣeka* is only bestowed upon hereditary Vajrācāryas once they are married and have access to a spouse with whom they can undergo the initiation rites.

94 This may even include Kuladatta's treatment of the rite of ordination, which is followed—almost word for word—when performing the temporary ordination that characterizes Newar Buddhism (cf. von Rospatt 2005). Granted, in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* the rite of disrobing is not included, but there are other indications, such as the lack of differentiation between the novice and the full ordination, which suggest that the ordination rite prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* was not to serve as a permanent ordination into a celibate monastic community. This does not mean that the Buddhist tradition current in the Nepal Valley in the twelfth century had already then lost the tradition of celibate monasticism. Rather, this means that the sole form of monasticism surviving in Newar Buddhism seems to have been current already at Kuladatta's time, albeit without being necessarily the exclusive or even dominant monastic tradition.

and are also in other ways in accordance with the social structure and peculiarities that have characterized Newar Buddhism since at least the Malla era. However, if the *saṃskāra*s had indeed become part of mainstream Buddhism by the time of Kuladatta, why is their performance not treated in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*? In this Kuladatta's compendium differs significantly from later ritual compilations, such as the *Karmavidhisaṃgraha* or *Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha* consulted for this study, that reproduce—in adapted form—the rites of consecrations set forth in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, and alongside also include a section treating the *saṃskāra*s as performed for humans.[95] Indeed, the performance of the rites of passage for their clients is the principal occupation of priestly Vajrācāryas in Newar Buddhism, and there are numerous historical and modern handbooks dedicated to this theme. Hence, given the comprehensiveness of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* otherwise, it is conspicuous that these rites do not feature.

The main objection to Tanemura's hypothesis, however, is different. Contrary to Tanemura's poorly substantiated claim that the "ten rites listed by Kuladatta are identical ... with the life-cycle rites gone through by a Newar man" (2004: 91), there are numerous discrepancies between the *saṃskāra*s performed for the consecration of deities and performed for human actors. Most importantly, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* prescribes the performance of the three prenatal rites *yoniśodhana*, *puṃsavana* and *sīmantonnayana*. However, the latter two rites are not performed by Newar Buddhists, and the case of the *yoniśodhana* is also problematic. The only prenatal rite Newar Buddhists perform during pregnancy is the presentation of curd and beaten rice to the mother (cf. Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 39f.). Sometimes this rite is identified with the *puṃsavana* rite of rendering the fetus male, but this is a fanciful association (possibly owing to the identification of curd with semen) that does not take into account that the *puṃsavana* is commonly performed in the early stage of pregnancy, while the mentioned offering of curd is clearly apotropaic and presented shortly before delivery. As for the *sīmantonnayana* rite, it has been pointed out above (cf. n. 21) that the practice of parting the pregnant woman's hair is unknown and that accordingly this *saṃskāra* came to be known as *sīmantopanayana* ("the *sīmanta* initiation") instead. This happened already at an early stage because the term *sīmantopanayana* is attested even in some of the Sanskrit texts examined here. It could, of course, be argued that the *puṃsavana* and *sīmantonnayana* have simply been lost, but were indeed performed for human actors at the time of Kuladatta. However, I am not aware of any evidence to this effect. On the contrary, the mentioned sections of the *Karmavidhisaṃgraha* and *Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha* commence their treatment of the *saṃskāra*s performed for human actors with the removal of birth pollution (*macā bu byanake vidhi*) and do not mention any prenatal rites in this context.

As for the purification of the womb (*yoniśodhana*), there is no such rite separately performed among the Newars. However, this rite is sometimes identified with the *bārhā tayegu* ritual, when girls, upon the onset of their first menstruation (or, out of convenience, prior to this) are confined for ideally twelve days in a room shielded from

95 Cf. *Karmavidhisaṃgraha*, fols. 1–14 and *Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha*, fols. 1–32.

the sun and from males, who are barred from entering (cf. Gutschow & Michaels 2008: 173–87).[96] Though this rite deals with the first menstrual pollution of the future mother and in this way indeed serves the purification of her womb, I find it hard to believe that this *saṃskāra* with its focus on menstrual pollution could have inspired the performance of the rites prescribed by Kuladatta under the rubric of the *yoniśodhana*. Rather, while it makes sense to identify the purification of the materials from which the object in question is to be fashioned as well as the empowerment of the artisans' hands with the "purification of the womb" (*yoniśodhana*) that arguably is effected by the *bārāḥ tayagu* ritual, it seems improbable that these purificatory rites were developed in the first place in imitation of the *saṃskāra* of confinement necessitated by the first onset of menstruation, as Tanemura's hypothesis would seem to imply.

A further discrepancy between Newar practice and the prescriptions of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* concerns the rite of "cleaning the throat" (*kaṇṭhaśodhana*) which is known in the Newar tradition as *kaṇṭha khuye* (literally: "tearing the throat"). It is performed for infants after they have undergone the rite of the first feeding of rice (*annaprāśana*). Nowadays rarely performed, the beak of a live male duck is inserted by the priest into the mouth of the child so as to "tear the throat" open (*kaṇṭha khuye*). This rite is to be performed on the day after the *annaprāśana (*cf. Bajrācāryya & Bajrācāryya 1963: 6). In the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* there is no mention of a duck, and the text merely teaches that as part of the *annaprāśana* ritual one should feed roasted [meat] (*bhrāṣṭra*) and deep fried cake made of ground lentils (*vaṭaka*; New.: *vaḥ*) "so as to purify the throat" (*kaṇṭhaśodhanāya*) (188, 1). This discrepancy, however, is not a strong argument since the roots of the Newar practice with the drake are not clear and may well have to be sought in developments posterior to the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*.[97]

A final point to consider here is the custom of Newar Buddhists with inherited monastic links to undergo as their boyhood life-cycle rite the temporary ordination rite (*bare chuyegu*). This is instead of the *vratādeśa* and *samāvartana* rite that Kuladatta prescribes for the consecration ceremony along Brahmanical lines (cf. von Rospatt 2005: n. 38).[98] It is of course possible that only after the time of Kuladatta the

96 The purification rites performed upon the first onset of the menses are identified also in other Indic tradition with the *saṃskāra* of *garbhādhāna*, which is equivalent to the *yoniśodhana* (see Kane 1974: 210ff.).

97 The practice of inserting a drake's beak into the infant's mouth is not attested in Rajbali Pandey's *Hindu saṃskāras* (1987) or in Kane's *History of Dharmaśāstra*. The testimony of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* suggests that there may be a link between this Newar practice and the Brahmanical feeding of specific foodstuffs as part of the first feeding of rice (*annaprāśana*). In *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra* (1.18.7) it is taught that on this occasion the meat of the *bhāradvājī* bird is to be fed if one wants to render the infant fluent in speech (*bhāradvājyā māṃsena vākprasārakāmasya*). This accords with the explanation popular among Newars that the insertion of the drake's beak is to open the throat and induce the gift of speech. However that may be, further research is needed in order to explore the origins of this Newar custom.

98 In the textual traditions of Kathmandu and Patan studied here, the *bare chuyegu* rite does not feature as part of the consecration rituals. The Vajrācārya priests with whom I have discussed this also insisted that there was no place for the ordination rite. Among the numerous consecration rites that I have witnessed, there was, however, one consecration ceremony, performed in Guji Bāhāḥ

ordination came to be employed as a rite of passage in lieu of the *vratādeśa* and *samāvartana saṃskāra*s. However, this is by no means certain and would also be in tension with Tanemura's own claim that the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* originated in a milieu dominated by married tantric practitioners. Rather, it would seem much more likely that the Buddhist tradition captured by Kuladatta deliberately bypassed the temporary ordination as not appropriate for the purpose of the consecration ceremony and instead chose the *vratādeśa* and *samāvartana*. Even though it is conceivable that these two *saṃskāra*s were already then performed in a Buddhist idiom for boys without inherited links to a monastery (as happens today in the case of families whose hereditary priest is a Vajrācārya), this choice would seem to have been dictated by different considerations than the mere wish to imitate practice current among human protagonists. For, if that had been the dominant motivation, why not mimic the much more prestigious practice of the temporary ordination imparted to boys in order to initiate them into the community (*saṃgha*) of the monastery to which their fathers belong? This then appears to be yet a further instance where the employment of the *saṃskāra*s was not simply modeled on the practices actually current among Buddhists.

The foregoing shows that the *saṃskāra*s performed for the purposes of consecration as prescribed in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* differ in considerable detail from those performed for human actors. This, to my mind, makes it unlikely that they were designed in simple adaptation of practice current among the Buddhists of that time, as Tanemura has proposed. This raises the question what else may have influenced Kuladatta or his precursors when they prescribed the performance of the *saṃskāra*s as part of the consecration ceremony. Though I am not able to furnish any proofs, I would like to raise the possibility of Hindu influence. Crucial for this suggestion is the assumption that at the time of Kuladatta there was a flourishing tradition in the Hindu fold of performing the *saṃskāra*s in order to consecrate images and other objects. Regrettably, I am not aware of any evidence that would prove this either for the Nepal Valley or for any other tradition on the subcontinent. However, in the Śaiva tradition of the Nepal Valley it is indeed standard to perform the ten *saṃskāra*s, starting with the three prenatal rites of conception (*garbhādhāna*), *puṃsavana* and *sīmantonnayana*, for the purpose of consecration. This has clearly been a hollowed practice for long, but I have not done the necessary research to trace this tradition back in time. Presuming it dates back some thousand years—this is of course highly speculative—it would have been current in the Valley at the time when the Buddhist consecration ceremony recorded in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* took shape. Crucial for the hypothesis that at that time the Hindu tradition

(Jñānakīrti Vihāra) Patan on the 19th of November 2003, when the *cūḍākarman* ritual included the main principal elements of the *bare chuyegu* rite. Standing in for the consecration deity, one of the ritual's patrons (*yajamāna*) received monastic robe, staff and begging bowl (*piṇḍapātra*), and after taking the seven steps, departed. Having circumambulated the ritual arena, he returned and formally returned the robe, staff and begging bowl to the officiating priest. This sequence of rites was carried out not instead of, but in addition to, the *vratādeśa* rite performed subsequently. This deviant tradition is a good example for the proliferation of variations in the ritual practice of Newar Buddhism.

may have influenced or even inspired the incorporation of the *saṃskāra*s into the Buddhist consecration ceremony is the fact that in the Kathmandu Valley, then as now, Buddhism existed alongside with Hindu tantric traditions. Sharing the same constrained urban spaces, these traditions were not hermetically sealed but open to mutual influence, such as mediated through the participation in some of the same cults, something that can still be witnessed today.

The Hindu and Buddhist traditions in the Valley influenced each other mutually, and it is, therefore, prima facie not clear why the Buddhists should have been inspired by Hindu practice rather than the other way around. A possible reason would seem to be that the *saṃskāra*s are by nature Brahmanical and alien to Buddhism. However, by the time of Kuladatta, Buddhism had embraced so much of the ritual vocabulary and practices originally Brahmanical, that it is questionable whether the *saṃskāra*s would have been perceived as alien—a perspective that certainly would be at odds with later Newar Buddhism when the performance of the life-cycle *saṃskāra*s for humans became one of the principal elements of this tradition. There is another, stronger reason to believe that in the Hindu fold the *saṃskāra*s were first employed for consecrating images, namely the fact that by the time of Kuladatta, Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavas had for several centuries employed the three prenatal *saṃskāra*s (*garbhādhāna* functions as the equivalent of *yoniśodhana*) together with the rite of birth and the name-giving ceremony, in order to generate the fire deity when installing the sacred fire as part of the *homa* ritual.[99] This tradition is first attested in some early Śaiva works, starting with the *Niśvāsaguhyasūtra,* which, however, only mentions the use of these five *saṃskāra*s summarily without listing them individually. The full names of the *saṃskāra*s to be performed for the fire deity, namely *garbhādhāna*, *puṃsavana*, *sīmanta*, *jātakarman* and *nāmakarman* are given—here I am particularly indebted to Diwakar Acharya—in the *Svāyambhuvāgama* (c. early 7th century), the *Matańgakriyāpāda*, the *Brahmayāmala*, the *Svacchandatantra* and the *Netratantra* (c. 850). The use of these five *saṃskāra*s for the generation for Agni is—together with other *saṃskāra*s—also attested in an early Vaiṣṇava source, namely the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā,* which is, according to Acharya, an extended version of the *Jayottaratantra,* most probably authored in Kashmir in the first half of the ninth century. While the focus was first on the prenatal and natal *saṃskāra*s which were performed in order to generate Agni and bring the God of Fire to life, the principle of using the *saṃskāra*s in this way was eventually extended beyond the prenatal and natal phase to include also the subsequent *saṃskāra*s up to and including the wedding. The result of this process can be witnessed in an early Śaiva manuscript of the Newar tradition (NA 5-433, NGMPP B 24/8), which dates back to the second half of the fourteenth century. It lists twelve *saṃskāra*s[100] to be performed for the genera-

99 For the following I draw heavily upon information that Diwakar Acharya of Kyoto University generously provided in a fruitful e-mail exchange in fall 2008.

100 The text refers to these twelve *saṃskāra*s as *dasakriyā* (3v6–4r1). It is tempting to emend the text and read *dvādasakriyā* (or *dvādaśakriyā*), since twelve *saṃkāra*s are listed and this had indeed become the standard number in the underlying tradition. However, it is not impossible that the text deliberately reads *dasakriyā* because this had become the stock expression for the perfor-

tion of Agni at the beginning of the fire ritual, namely *garbhādhāna, puṃsavana, sīmantonnayana, jātakarman, nāmakaraṇa, niṣkramana* (sic.), *phalaprāsana, annaprāsana, cūḍākaraṇa, vratabandhana, samāvarttana* and *patnīsaṃyojana* (3v6–4r1).[101] Given the evidence sketched here, I find it much more likely that the application of the *saṃskāra*s to images in the Hindu tradition is rooted in this practice of generating Agni,[102] than that it was derived in imitation of Buddhist practice. However, I am in no position to substantiate this point because I am not aware of textual evidence that would attest to the practice of performing the *saṃskāra*s for images in the Hindu fold before Kuladatta.

Rather than offering a fully worked out and substantiated hypothesis, I here do little more than point in a particular direction and raise the possibility that the tradition recorded in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* was influenced by the application of the *saṃskāra*s for the purposes of consecration in contemporaneous Hindu traditions. To be sure, such influence would have been complex and not reducible to a simple, one-dimensional taking-over of a ritual procedure. This is confirmed by the significant differences between the Buddhist scheme recorded by Kuladatta and the standard scheme used in the Śaiva Newar tradition. For instance, as we have seen above, in Kuladatta's scheme the first two prenatal rites are identified with the stage of production and divorced from the principal consecration ceremony. By contrast, in Hindu practice all *saṃskāra*s, including the prenatal ones starting with the rite of the purification of the womb, are performed together, on a single day, as part of one elaborate sequence of rituals, in order to consecrate the completed image. There are more such deviations which bear out that the Buddhist tradition recorded by Kuladatta is the result of a complex and original process of formation that cannot be reduced to the wholesale import of Hindu practice. I accordingly concur with Tanemura that the Buddhist practice of imparting tantric initiations for images, and possibly also the performance of *saṃskāra* life-cycle rites by contemporaneous Buddhists, may well have played an important role in this process of formation. What I object to is the, in my eyes, simplistic notion that these two factors alone can explain this process. Rather, I believe that any attempt to account for the scheme of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* should take into account the Hindu parallels. This, incidentally, is not an exceptional instance but exemplary for the principal need to view Newar Buddhism—the same holds good for other forms of Buddhism—not in isolation but as a religious tradition embedded in a larger socio-religious field and context.

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mance of the *saṃskāra*s, no matter their real number.

101 For another example see the aforementioned *Puṣkaraṇīpraṇālīpratiṣṭhāvidhi* (ASK 186, folios 38–40) where however, the sequence of *niṣkramaṇa* and *nāmakaraṇa* is inverted.

102 It is also conceivable that there was an even earlier tradition (of which no testimony survives) of performing the *saṃskāra*s for images and that the application to the fire deity happened only in a second step. Such an earlier tradition would need to be so early that it could not have been influenced by Buddhist practice. Hence, the issue raised in this note has no bearing on the hypothesis proposed here.

I would like to conclude this paper by briefly returning to my contention that the employment of the *saṃskāra*s for the consecration ceremony as recorded in Kuladatta's *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* was not simply modeled on the practices current among Buddhists at that time. This point I would now like to take one step further and suggest that, on the contrary, the *saṃskāra*s performed for Newar Buddhists were shaped to some extent by the procedure prescribed for deities in the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā.* Such a hypothesis does not imply that the *saṃskāra*s were not performed for lay Buddhists before, but rather that they were not performed in the same way in a specifically Buddhist idiom, as they later came to be in Newar Buddhism.[103] Instead most rites—think of the purification after birth, the first feeding of fruits and rice, the first formal coiffure or the wedding—may have appeared as acts that were naturally given and in no need of explicit buddhicization. This, I suggest, changed once these rites became performed as part of the consecration ceremony for Buddhist deities. Then there was the need to adapt them to the pronounced purpose of this ceremony, namely to endow the object in question with the qualities of buddhahood. This led, I propose, to a thorough adaptation of the *saṃskāra*s to a Buddhist framework, more precisely to a framework which happened to be dominated by the Yogatantras and notably the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*. Once the *saṃskāra*s had been buddhicized in this way, there was a tendency, so my hypothesis, to apply this new format also to human actors. Such a step not only offered the advantage of cladding the *saṃskāra*s in an explicit Buddhist idiom, but it also made sense because the purpose of the *saṃskāra*s is to deify their subjects. Thus, I propose that the Buddhist versions of the different *saṃskāra*s current among the Newars owe, to differing degrees, to the adaptation of practice that was initially developed with regard to deities. To be sure, the formation of the *saṃskāra*s as performed for Buddhist Newars was clearly a complex and lengthy process that was also shaped by many other factors and considerations. Accordingly, it is to be expected that there was great variation in the extent and manner in which the performance of specific *saṃskāra*s for human actors was influenced by consecration practice. For instance, while I believe the *ihi* ritual to be much indebted to the wedding rites developed for consecration images, the temporary ordination current among high caste Newars as a rite of passage is grounded in the monastic ordination prescribed in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* and shows no such influence (cf. von Rospatt 2005b). Further research is needed to ascertain the historical origins of the individual *saṃskāra*s performed in the Newar Buddhist

103 By the time of Kuladatta in the eleventh or twelfth century, the Buddhist tradition of the Kathmandu Valley (as Buddhist traditions elsewhere on the subcontinent) inhabited a larger socio-religious world that was shaped by Brahmanical concepts and institutions. Part of this world must have been the practice of imparting the *saṃskāra*s as life-cycle rituals, even as it is today. It seems likely that members of this society would have felt the need to undergo these rites, no matter what their religious identity. Rather than leaving this domain of religious activity entirely to Brahmans, it must have made sense for Buddhist practitioners to offer their own priestly services for the performance of these rituals. It is less obvious, however, to which degree, if any at all, they would have adapted these rites to a Buddhist framework. I am not aware of material that would shed light on this issue, but I suspect—and here my hypothesis really takes off—that initially the degree of deliberate "buddhicization" was moderate.

tradition for human actors, and to examine how precisely they relate to consecration practice. Even so, I think it is safe to propose that the employment of the *saṃskāra*s for the purpose of consecrating images did not only imitate human practice but also changed that practice in turn.

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Abbreviations

ASK	Āśā Saphū Kuthi Collection, Kathmandu
KSgP	*Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*
NA	National Archives, Kathmandu
NS	Nepāla saṃvat, i.e. the traditional lunar calendar of Nepal that began on October, 20 879 CE
NGMPP	Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project

Texts – unpublished manuscripts[104]

1) Sanskrit

Bauddhadaśakriyāsādhana. Incomplete palm leaf manuscript with six extant folios (NA 1-1697, NGMPP A 936/6).

Bauddhadaśakriyāvidhāna. Sanskrit manuscript of 23 folios, which is closely based on the KSgP (NA 5-278; NGMPP B 106/17).

Hiraṇyamālādaśakriyāvidhi. The following four manuscripts were consulted:

NA 5-279, NGMPP A 920/9: 30 extant fols., dated NS 740 (= CE 1620).

NA 4-905, NGMPP E 1514/5: 46 extant fols.

NA 5-150, NGMPP A 920/8: 159 extant fols., contains Newari glosses and explanations.

NA 3-380, NGMPP B 30/33: palm leaf manuscript of 18 folios, catalogued as *Karmādhikāravidhāna*.

2) Newari

a) Kathmandu

Ācāryapūjākarmasaṃgraha. 198 paginated folios, dated to NS 984 (= CE 1864) and kept in the private collection of the sons of Ratna Kaji Bajracharya from Kathmandu. The title is taken from the wooden book cover; the manuscript is a compendium that includes a wide array of Vajrācārya rituals including the extended consecration ceremony entitled *Daśakarmmapratisthāvidhi* (fols. 37r2–46r6).

104 Cf. the more detailed description of the principal manuscripts used for this study on pp. 205–8.

Karmavidhisaṃgraha. 109 folios, kept in the Āśā Saphū Kuthi Collection (running number 2587), the title is given according to Vaidya & Kansakar (1991: 50–4). The manuscript has been scanned by the Āśā Saphū Kuthi (scan number 2174) and microfilmed by the NGMPP (E 1109/30). The manuscript is again a compendium that includes the extended consecration ceremony, here entitled *Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhi* (fols. 14r5–28v2).

Daśakarmakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhi. 22 folios, copied by Harsha Ratna Bajracharya, of Te Bāhāḥ of Kathmandu in 1925. The copy was obtained by Ratna Kaji Bajracharya and is kept in the private collection of his sons.

Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhāna. 28 folios, has no prenatal section and is undated. It is kept together with the *Daśakriyāvidhi* (see below) in the Āśā Saphū Kuthi.

Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhi. 21 folios, scribed by Ratna Kaji Bajracharya in 1974 and kept in the private collection of his sons.

Dāsakriyāvidhi. 29 folios (paginated 1–[9] dealing with prenatal consecration rites and 1–20 dealing with the main ceremony starting with the rite of birth); the manuscript contains subsequently (fols. 21–4) a text on *gṛhapratiṣṭhā* that is scribed in the same hand. I take it that the date at its end (NS 819 = CE 1699) refers to the entire manuscript and hence also to the *Daśakriyāvidhi*. The manuscript is kept together with the differently scribed *Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhāna* in the Āśā Saphū Kuthi (running number 2668) and has been scanned together with this text (scan number 2228). Presumably reflecting the wrong sequence in which these manuscripts seem to be kept together, the *Daśakriyāpratiṣṭhāvidhāna* has been scanned after the first part of the *Dāsakriyāvidhi* and before its second part.

Devapratiṣṭhāvidhi. Pp. 1–24 of a notebook that also includes other rites; scribed by Dharmaratna Bajracharya of Ratnakīrti Mahāvihāra (= Makhan Bāhāl) in Kathmandu in *vikrama saṃvat* 1985 (= CE 1929).

Pratiṣṭhādasakriyāvidhi. 82 folios; NGMPP E 2571/4.

Pratiṣṭhāvidhāna. Compendium of rituals related to the establishment of sacred structures and other objects, and to their consecration. Folios 91r1 to 120r5 reproduce the *Daśakriyā* which falls into two parts, viz. the prenatal rites (up to 100v2) and the subsequent rites (starting at 101r1). The text is kept in the National Archives (4-1368) with other, differently paginated texts and has been microfilmed together with them by the NGMPP (B 105/10 and A 918/9). The set of texts have been collectively entitled *Digbandhanapūjāvidhi* by the cataloguer(s) because of the last item in the set. One of the texts united here has a colophon stating that it was scribed by Vajrācārya Cittamuni of Maitripurī Mahāvihāra in Kathmandu in the month of *mārgaśira* in *saṃvat* 953 (CE 1832). Another included text portion is dated to *saṃvat* 996 (CE 1875/6). It is hence most likely that the imbedded *Daśakriyā* dates to the nineteenth century. The texts assembled here may have been written by the mentioned Vajrācārya at different times in his career, though it is also conceivable that more than one generation contributed to the collection.

Puṣkaraṇīpraṇālīpratiṣṭhāvidhi. 98 folios. This Śaiva text on the consecration ceremony is kept at the Āśā Saphū Kuthi (scan number 186). According to the title list, it dates to NS 827.

b) Patan

Daśakarmavidhi. I have used two different manuscripts to which I had access in the form of photocopies, one being a *thyāsaphū* of 55 folds and 109 pages, the other being a *thyāsaphū* of 55 folds and 110 pages.

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Harunaga Isaacson

Observations on the Development of the Ritual of Initiation (*abhiṣeka*) in the Higher Buddhist Tantric Systems

The hundreds of texts dealing with initiation (mainly manuals, though including also a few works of more theoretical nature) that have been written by Indian tantric Buddhist authors, for the most part between around the ninth and the thirteenth centuries of the common era, form an immense and complex body of evidence that has so far only barely begun to be explored from a historical perspective. No more than a small percentage of these fascinating texts—in which one can sometimes find, for instance, ritual dialogue that can be shown to have been a half a millenium old or more at the time of compilation next to material that represents the very latest developments—have been edited, and none have been the subject of detailed studies in a modern Western language. The highest priority for scholars, then, would naturally appear to be the production of careful editions and studies of individual works. With this I would agree. Nonetheless I think there may be some use in putting forward here, however premature that may seem, some broad hypotheses regarding the overall picture as I see it at present. In doing so I shall concentrate on the "higher" consecrations, though there is, no doubt, much that can be learned from focusing on other parts of the ritual too.

To explain briefly, in a manner that should be sufficient for the purposes of this paper, what ritual may typically be comprised under the "higher" consecrations, let me quote here a summarized account, based on the *Vajrāvalī* of Abhayākaragupta and the *Kriyāsamuccaya* of Darpaṇācārya (Jagaddarpaṇa), which was given in an important paper by Alexis Sanderson on the empowerment rituals of the Buddhist Yoginītantras, published in 1994. All the footnotes on the following passage are mine (Sanderson has none on the part quoted).

> After the rituals described so far have been completed a tantric ritual feast [*samayacakra*] is served.[1] A candidate for these higher empowerments must leave the

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* This paper remains in some respects close to the oral presentation at the symposium in Heidelberg. Substantial parts of my arguments here have been made at presentations elsewhere as well. Parts have also appeared in less finished form, but with documentation that is sometimes somewhat more detailed than here, in a paper (itself an only slightly revised version of a lecture) called "Tantric Buddhism in India (from c. A.D. 800 to c. A.D. 1200)." In: *Buddhismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Band II.* Hamburg. pp. 23–49. [Internal publication of Hamburg University, now available in slightly corrected form online at http://www.buddhismuskunde.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/pdf/digitale_texte/Bd2-K02Isaacson.pdf.]

1 The *samayacakra* is not mentioned in the *Vajrāvalī*.

> feast with the girl who will be his consort, go in to the guru, give her to him,[2] and return to the group outside. The guru copulates with the girl. The candidate is then led in by an assistant [*karmavajrin*].[3] He kneels down and offers a flower. The guru then[4] gives him his semen, which the śiṣya must place on his tongue and swallow, thinking of it as the embodiment of all the Buddhas. The female rises and gives him from her sex 'a drop of the pollen of all the Tathāgatas.'[5] He must swallow it in the same way. This is termed the 'secret empowerment' [*guhyābhiṣeka*]. The guru then returns the girl to the disciple, or gives him another who is bound by the pledges and vows, or is at least endowed with beauty and youth. He unites with her and experiences the four blisses [*ānanda*]. This is 'the consecration of the knowledge of wisdom' [*prajñājñānābhiṣeka*]. Finally the śiṣya requests what is termed 'the fourth empowerment' [*caturthābhiṣeka*], so called because it is the fourth if all the empowerments up to that of the Vajra Master are counted as one 'vase-empowerment' [*kalaśābhiṣeka*]. It takes the form of the guru's reciting an exposition of the nature of the four blisses, consisting for the most part of quotations from the esoteric Tantras and of Apabhramśa and Sanskrit verses attributed to Siddhas. (Sanderson 1994: 90)

The remarkable ritual prescribed here raises numerous questions, and deserves discussion from many aspects. Sanderson's own primary aim in the paper from which I have quoted was to argue for the non-Buddhist origin, but simultaneously the Buddhist function, of "almost everything concrete in the system" (Sanderson 1994: 92). The debate on origins remains, fifteen years later, a lively one; it is not my concern here.[6] Instead, I intend to discuss some aspects of the historical growth of the ritual as we see it in Buddhist texts such as those summarized, and at the same time also to make some observations supplementary to Sanderson's on the Buddhist function of this ritual.

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2 In fact the girl who is given to the guru here need not, according Abhayākaragupta and Darpaṇācārya, be the same as the one who is to be the *śiṣya*'s consort. After the conclusion of his account of the *guhyābhiṣeka*, beginning his account of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, Abhayākaragupta states: *tadanu tām* (i.e. the consort with whom the guru had copulated in the *guhyābhiṣeka*) *anyāṃ vā prajñāṃ samayasaṃvarasthām anyāṃ vā rūpayauvanāḍhyāṃ... śiṣye... samarpayet* (Sakurai 1996: 467). Similary, Vāgīśvarakīrti refers in his *Saṃkṣiptābhiṣekavidhi* (ibid.: 417) to a "view that there is one consort [in both the *guhyābhiṣeka* and the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*]" (*ekatathatāmata*)and a "view that [the consort in the *guhyābhiṣeka* and the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*] are different" (*bhinnamata*).

3 This detail is not given in the *Vajrāvalī*, while the *Kriyāsamuccaya* actually says that the *śiṣya* is led in by a *yoginī* or a *karmavajrin*, i.e. by a female or a male assistent.

4 Correcting the typo "them" in the printed version of Sanderson 1994.

5 "Pollen" here renders Sanskrit *makaranda* (*Vajrāvalī*; Sakurai 1996: 466); this choice is perhaps misleading, in as much as "pollen" probably suggests to most English-speakers something dry (powdery), while the metaphor used in the Sanskrit, literally "honey, flower-juice", suggests, more appropriately, something liquid.

6 For the latest and most comprehensive, though no doubt not the last, words on this subject see the extremely rich monograph-length article Sanderson 2009, especially pp. 124–243 (with answers to some sceptics and critics at especially pp. 186–92).

I think it may be helpful to begin our considerations by emphasizing that the main purpose of this Buddhist tantric consecration (or sequence of consecrations) is to entitle the initiate to tantric practice, particularly (*mantra*)-*sādhana*. Herein lies an important difference between Śaiva and Buddhist tantric systems. There can be, to my mind, no doubt that Śaiva Tantra has exercised an important influence on tantric Buddhism, and that there are numerous and widely pervasive similarities between the two esoteric religions.[7] But it must be noted that the corresponding Śaiva ritual of initiation (*dīkṣā*) is in general held to be itself, directly, salvific—not in the sense that the initiand is immediately thereby liberated, but rather that in the ritual the bonds that hold the soul in its non-liberated condition are cut, with the exception of a tiny portion that gradually decreases (if the post-initiatory observances are kept correctly) till death, when the soul becomes fully liberated.[8] This was in the main the position even of those Śaivas who maintained that there was in fact another way (through gnosis) to liberation, and that this other way was superior in that it allowed the possibility of liberation in life (*jīvanmukti*).[9] As Buddhists, the followers of the Vajrayāna could not accept the possibility that ritual performed by an officiant (*ācārya*) for an initiate could have a directly soteriological effect on that initiate; for them it was in general repeated practice of tantric meditation that brought about liberation. Initiation is none the less essential, inasmuch as this ritual alone can qualify one for the directly salvific meditative practice. During the rite of consecration, the initiate is introduced to a particular *maṇḍala* of deities, and is given mantras that he is later to use in his religious practice. Without consecration, as our texts often repeat, the tantric methods cannot be employed—to attempt to do so is compared with striking the air with one's fist or trying to drink water from a mirage.[10]

Now in what is clearly the earliest of the stages of development that I shall be considering, the core and at the same time the culmination of the ritual is a set of five consecrations, concluding with the bestowal of the initiatory name that betokens the initi-

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7 There is now no better starting point for the study of their relationship than Sanderson 2009 (cf. my previous note).

8 See, e.g., Sanderson (1995: 25–6) with references to sources in n. 27–32.

9 See, e.g., Sanderson (1995: 20) with references to sources in n. 15.

10 Cf. e.g. from the third *paṭala* of the *Laghuśaṃvaratantra* or *Herukābhidhānatantra*, the basic Tantra of the cult of Cakraśaṃvara and his consort Vajravārāhī, *adṛṣṭamaṇḍalo yogī yogitvaṃ yaḥ samī-hate hanyate muṣṭināākāśaṃ pibate mṛgatṛṣṇikām* (3.20cd–21ab in the numbering of Pandey; MS Baroda 13290 fol. 4r7–4v1; for *pibate*, which is the reading of the MS, Pandey reads the metrically bad *pibati*, with no variant reported). Here *adṛṣṭamaṇḍalo yogī* means of course a (would-be) *yogin* who has not received the empowerments (of this Yoginītantra system). The second half of the verse is, it should be noted, a formula which is found, with some minor variants, in a number of tantric works both Buddhist (e.g. GuSi 1.63cd, with the grammatically better *hanty asau* for *hanyate* and with *pibec ca* for *pibate*) and Śaiva (e.g. TaSaTa 28.88ab, with *hanate* for *hanyate*). A variant form of this verse is quoted in the *caturthābhiṣekavidhi* section of the *Kriyāsaṃgraha-pañjikā*, with the first half reading *nābhiṣikto hi yo yogī yogitvam abhivāñchati* (Sakurai 1996: 514, 17–8). The vast *sādhana*-literature also contains numerous references to the fact that the meditative practices which they teach are only allowed to one who has received the corresponding con-secrations; cf. e.g. *sādhako bhūtaḍāmaratantre labdhābhiṣeko gurubhir anujñāto...* (SāMā 265, p. 515, 4).

and's new identity. The soteriological relevance of this set of five is often underlined by the fact that they are homologized with the five types of knowledge or cognition of a Buddha (*buddhajñāna*) which are distinguished in tantric buddhological theory.[11] The correspondences are as follows:

udakābhiṣeka ≈ *ādarśajñāna*
mukuṭābhiṣeka ≈ *samatājñāna*
vajrābhiṣeka ≈*pratyavekṣaṇājñāna*
ghaṇṭābhiṣeka ≈ *kṛtyānuṣṭhānajñāna*
nāmābhiṣeka ≈ *suviśuddhadharmadhātujñāna*

This set survives, with explicit statement of the correspondences that show that it was at one stage intended to be complete in itself, as part of the set of Higher Yogatantra empowerments as taught for instance by Kuladatta in his *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and by Darpaṇācārya in his *Kriyāsamuccaya*.[12] It was however not to remain the culmination or the main part of the ritual. In the Guhyasamāja system the *guhyābhiṣeka* was added, first, probably, as a separate ritual,[13] later as a culmination to follow the Yogatantra initiations. There seems to be no sign in the *Guhyasamājatantra* itself, excluding the *Samājottara* (an originally independent appendix that later was integrated into the Tantra as its eighteenth and final chapter), that a *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* was envisaged; rather the *guhyābhiṣeka* seems to be clearly regarded as the highest of empowerments.

Other textual materials too show signs of a phase in the development of esoteric Buddhism in which the *guhyābhiṣeka* was the final and highest of the series of empowerments.[14] However it seems likely that the supremacy of the *guhyābhiṣeka* was rela-

11 They may also be explicitly homologized with the Lords of the five Buddha-families.

12 It is of interest to note that in his *Vajrāvalī* Abhayākaragupta does not teach the correspondences of the set with the *buddhajñāna*s. Is this an example of the way in which Abhayākaragupta appears to have sometimes removed (traces of) elements which, in the course of the centuries of development of the consecration ritual, have resulted in possible inconsistencies or tensions?

13 See especially the eighth *paṭala* of the GuSaTa.

14 In the *Kṛṣṇayamāritantra*, an important Yamāritantra which has survived and even been published in Sanskrit, we find four consecrations mentioned (*prathamaṃ maulisekena dvitīyaṃ khaḍgamodanāt | tṛtīyaṃ vajraghaṇṭāṃ ca caturthaṃ candrabhakṣaṇam catvāry ete mahāsekāḥ kṛṣṇasya mukhanirgatāḥ | etatsekaprabhāvena bodhisattvā jinaurasāḥ* (em., *jinorasāḥ* ed.) KṛYaTa 6.5–6), but they clearly do not correspond to the typical later lists of four, culminating in the Fourth. Rather the first three seem to correspond (at least in type) to the lower consecrations, and the last should be understood as referring to the *guhyābhiṣeka*; the "eating of the moon" (*candrabhakṣaṇa* in KṛYaTa 6.5d) is most naturally taken as meaning the consumption of semen that is the defining act in the *guhyābhiṣeka*. It is true that this also often has a part in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, but it cannot be said to be the defining or essential element of that consecration. Indeed there are accounts of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* that do not refer to it at all.

tively short-lived.[15]

It is in the *Samājottara* that it seems that the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* first emerges. A key passage here is the following:

> *abhiṣekaṃ tridhā bhinnam asmiṃs tantre prakalpitam* |
> *kalaśābhiṣekaṃ prathamaṃ dvitīyaṃ guhyābhiṣekataḥ* |
> *prajñājñānaṃ tṛtīyaṃ tu caturthaṃ tat punas tathā* || GuSaTa 18.113[16]

Here there is an explicit statement that consecration is threefold, and that the "Vase Consecration" (about which there is agreement that it comprises the "lower" consecrations, including the old set of five) is the first of these, the *guhyābhiṣeka* the second, and the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* the third. The statement, after this, that "the fourth is that again in the same way" (to attempt a literal translation which does not immediately slant the expression in the direction of one of its possible interpretations) is, to say the least, cryptic. I shall return to this later in considering the next innovation, the introduction of the Fourth consecration.

With the formulation of empowerment in the Higher Yogatantra as three-fold, it was a natural step, and one that may have swiftly followed, to assign to the three the functions of purification or transformation of, respectively, the initiand's body, speech, and mind.[17] The empowerments now form a set with what may be called a rather convincing internal logic; the increase in intensity as the initiand passes through them culminates in a natural climax with his experience, guided by the prior instruction of his guru, of the blissful moment of consciousness without duality in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*.

This state of affairs remained for quite some time, perhaps, a widely accepted mainstream one. There was obviously, and unsurprisingly, some controversy concerning the question whether the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* did not involve for a initiand who was a monk

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15 On this point I am partly in agreement with Jacob Dalton, who speaks of "an effacement of the period by the later tradition" (Dalton 2004: 4), though the word "effacement" seems to me too strong. Dalton seems to have in mind here, however, mainly a shift in which "the secret consecration was restricted to the initiation setting, and its importance in the actual sexual practice was forgotten" (ibid.). Be this as it may, for my purposes here it is more important to note that even within the context of initiation alone, we can observe that the *guhyābhiṣeka*, once the culminating ritual, is pushed to the background by the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* (and, later yet, by the Fourth), so that, though still a part of the sequence of consecrations, it is accorded relatively little importance. Dalton's thought-provoking paper contains much that is of value; some of its theses seem to me, however, hard to accept. I comment below, as relevant to my present topic, on our differences regarding a few points.

16 Cf. HeTa 2.3.10 (quoted in n. 29 below) and cf. also *tac cābhiṣekaṃ caturvidham prathamaṃ kalaśābhiṣekaṃ dvitīyaṃ guhyābhiṣekataḥ prajñājñānaṃ tṛtīyaṃ tu caturthaṃ tat punas tathā* SaTa 2.1.46 and also *ācāryābhiṣekasampūrṇaṃ dvitīyaṃ guhyam uttamam prajñājñānaṃ* (em., *prajñājñāna*° Tsuda) *tṛtīyaṃ tu caturthaṃ tat punas tathā* SaUdTa 18.28 All of these parallels are from almost certainly later Yoginītantra literature.

17 This correspondence is made explicit at various places in the literature, including in works, such as the *Kriyāsamuccaya*, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, and Kumāracandra's *pañjikā* on the *Kṛṣṇayamāritantra*, in which a Fourth consecration follows after the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*.

infringement of his monastic vows (and similarly whether the *guhyābhiṣeka* did not involve such infringement on the part of the *ācārya*, if he was a monk). Abhayākaragupta and others discuss these doubts explicitly, and the position that we see repeatedly in Indian sources is that contrary to appearances and expectation the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* does not entail sin for a suitable initiand, even if he is an ordained *bhikṣu*. This debate has been discussed briefly by Sanderson in the paper I quoted at the beginning,[18] and in more detail by Sakurai Munenobu in his rich doctoral thesis (Sakurai 1996). I do not wish to take this matter up here, but shall say instead a few words about a no less interesting question which I think has not been addressed by those scholars.

Even if it is accepted by the Buddhist authors—though not, again, without some controversy—that the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* does not entail any sin, this in itself does not explain why the empowerment should be necessary in the first place. So the question remains: what is, from the perspective of the Buddhists who taught and may be presumed to have practised it, the function of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*? Putting it another way, and narrowing it down a little: what reason is given by the proponents of the Vajrayāna themselves for the fact that to enter into this domain of esoteric practice by which liberation is to be achieved swiftly and easily, the initiand must receive the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, ideally with a physical female partner?

On this point our manuals of the ritual may fail to satisfy us completely. The functions they explicitly assign to the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, when they offer any specific explanation at all, do not as a rule go beyond the equating of it with the purification of mind (as part of the set, already mentioned above, of purification of body, speech and mind as the function of the *kalaśābhiṣeka*, the *guhyābhiṣeka* and the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* respectively). While perfectly consonant with the thought of these systems, this does not provide a really compelling or satisfying answer to our question, and hardly reveals anything of the logic behind the necessity of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*. For clear statements that offer more than this we must look elsewhere.

If we do so, it becomes clear that despite the near-silence of the manuals, many Buddhist authors were more or less acutely aware of the question—or criticism—which could easily be raised concerning the sexual character of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* and its function. In a few texts we find explanations of that function which seem to have at least in part the purpose to answer the question or rebut a possible attack on this point. One of the most interesting of such texts that I have seen is one entitled *Abhiṣekanirukti* (AbhiNi) that is attributed in one Tibetan translation (Tōhoku catalogue No. 2476) to the celebrated eleventh-century master Ratnākaraśānti, but more probably was written

18 Sanderson 1994, especially p. 97 and n. 37–8. Note that the material quoted by Sanderson in n. 37 from the *Kriyāsamuccaya* is, as so often with Jagaddarpaṇa, lifted from the *Vajrāvalī*; the only addition is the quotation of the verse beginning *caṇḍālaveṇukārādyāḥ* (which corresponds to HeTa 2.4.76, though with a variant in *pāda* c). There are also omissions, including an omission of an auto-reference of Abhayākaragupta's to his *Āmnāyamañjarī* (Sakurai 1996: 445, 15–6).

by a disciple of his called Jinasujayaśrīgupta.[19] This text in fact presents three different views (*pakṣa*s) on the function of what is supposed to happen during the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* in the Yogatantras (by which is meant here principally the *Guhyasamājatantra*) and, more briefly, three positions on what happens in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* in the Yoginītantra systems. Interestingly, the author does not himself decide in favour of any particular *pakṣa*—instead, in one of the verses at the conclusion of the work, he says that the wise should select the appropriate one.[20]

In tantric Buddhism, as in the non-tantric Mahāyāna, the practitioner aims not merely at personal freedom from suffering and rebirth but at helping all sentient beings by becoming a Buddha.[21] To become a Buddha may be paraphrased as the acquisition of the bodies of a Buddha, the most important of which (*pradhāna*) is the *dharmakāya*. In the *mantranaya*, these bodies are to be achieved through specifically tantric methods, such as the meditative evocation of a deity who is a transformation from a mantra, the emanation and resorption of *maṇḍala*s of deities and so on. Now for it to be possible to meditatively cultivate in the *mantranaya* the non-dual, transcendent and supremely blissful goal that is that which is called the *dharmakāya*, it is necessary first to have some sort of cognition or experience of it.[22] We might put it that a glimpse of this tran-

19 The author is thus named in the colophon of the sole complete manuscript of it that I am aware of at present; if this attribution—which is also made in the colophon of another Tibetan translation (Tōhoku 2477), independent of the abovementioned one—is correct, the author has incorporated his name in the last verse of the work as preserved in this manuscript (*abhidadhatā tattvam idaṃ puṇyaṃ yad avāpi paramasekasya jinasujayaśrīguptaṃ jagad idam akhilaṃ tato bhavatāt* AbhiNi fol. 45r3–4). The attribution of Tōhoku 2476 to Ratnākaraśānti has been accepted without question by Sakurai (1996: 41 and 238) and Davidson (2002: 199); both were evidently unaware of the fact that Tōhoku 2477 is another translation of the same work, with different attribution, and that the text is extant in Sanskrit, again not attributed to Ratnākaraśānti. Having examined all versions that are known to survive, I conclude, on grounds of style and terminology, that it can be ruled out that the work was written by Ratnākaraśānti. It is quite clear that the work has been re-redacted deliberately at the same time that it was re-attributed; note for instance that at one point when the text refers to a *Sahajasādhana* "extracted" from the *Hevajratantra* by the author's guru (this is probably a reference to the *Hevajrasahajasadyoga* of Ratnākaraśānti preserved in Royal Asiatic Society, London, MS Hodgson 35 as the work directly following the *Abhiṣekanirukti*) the Tibetan translation that ascribes the *Abhiṣekanirukti* to Ratnākaraśānti has *kho bos* (*sDe dge bstan 'gyur, rgyud* vol. *zi* fol. 168v1) where the Sanskrit MS has *asmadgurubhiḥ* (AbhiNi fol. 44v9). We are looking, I suggest, at a deliberate attempt to pass the work of an otherwise unknown (and hence in some sense at least "minor") student of Ratnākaraśānti as the composition of the master himself, and to give it thereby an interest and authority that it could not normally hope to acquire.
I have made an e-text of the *Abhiṣekanirukti* available online at http://tantric-studies.org/e-texts/bauddha/AbhiNir.txt. A printed text, based on an earlier draft of my e-text, is included, with attribution to me, in an appendix in an unpublished Oxford Ph.D. dissertation (Onians 2001: 351–68), together with an English translation (ibid.: 323–48).

20 *prajñājñānābhiṣekasya prabhedā lakṣyalakṣaṇāḥ | trayaḥ proktā nirūpyātra yukto grāhyas tu paṇḍitaiḥ* AbhiNi fol. 45r1.

21 In this paragraph and the following I paraphrase freely from the *Abhiṣekanirukti*.

22 See especially ... *pradhānaṃ dharmakāyākhyaṃ phalaṃ suviśuddhadharmadhāturūpaṃ yogatantreṣu bhāvanāsādhyam. na cājñātaṃ bhāvayituṃ śaktam. na ca samprati tadālambanaṃ jñānam* (em., *tadālambanajñānam* MS) *asti, tatprāptau bhāvanāyā vaiyarthyaprasaṅgāt* (AbhiNi fol. 40v1).

scendent target must be had, in order that one can later firmly set one's meditative sights on it. It is the function of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* to provide this glimpse.

Having been instructed by the guru what he must do and on what he must concentrate, the initiand, uniting with the consort, must mark that moment of blissful experience that, checking or counteracting all other sensations offers an at least apparent absence of all duality (*advayābhāsa*). This experience is said to occur in the brief interval between the moment in which the intiand's *bodhicitta*, that is his semen, is in the center of the *maṇi*, that is the glans of his penis, and the moment of emission. Though not the goal itself, it is so to speak an illustration or example (*dṛṣṭāntabhūta*) of what the nature of that goal is.[23] This is roughly the first position or theory (*pakṣa*) set out in the *Abhiṣekanirukti*; it is the simplest and most straightforward one. Without going into the other positions, something for which the time and space at my disposal now are insufficient, it should be clear that we see here both awareness of the problem—the need to provide some justification for the prescription of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* as essential for bestowing *adhikāra*—and an answer to it that is at least more satisfactory than anything that we find in the ritual manuals. This illustrates, I think, what Sanderson means by the thoroughly Buddhist function and self-perception of tantric Buddhism.

The existence of sophisticated justifications such as those given in the *Abhiṣekanirukti* seems to me to confirm that the stage of development of the ritual in which it is the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* that is the highest, culminating, element was an enduring one. It was not, however, the final stage to which our texts bear witness. Rather, we have abundant evidence to show that the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* was eventually in its turn widely superceded by a further consecration which took its place as the highest. This consecration was usually known simply as the "Fourth" (*caturtha*, *caturthābhiṣeka*).

Those whose knowledge of Buddhist Tantra is mainly based on contemporary secondary sources or on the Tibetan traditions as they are known today may possibly be surprised to learn that the Fourth was not always the culmination of the initiation ritual of the higher Buddhist tantric systems. But our Indian sources show us clearly that it was not; and that even after a Fourth had been introduced by some, there was for centuries a lively controversy about whether or not it should be a part of the sequence of consecrations, and what its nature should be if it was included.

An important source for this controversy is, again, the *Abhiṣekanirukti*. There are however many other textual sources which shed light on it as well. From a survey of these sources, published and unpublished, it emerges rather clearly, in my view, that the debate, and almost certainly the very idea of a Fourth consecration as possibly following the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, goes back to the passage from the *Samājottara* that we have already seen, and to a controversy concerning what the cryptic line "the fourth is that again in the same way" (GuSaTa 18.113f.) might mean.

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23 See especially *tantroktalakṣaṇamudrāsaṃyoge gurūpadeśato bodhicittamaṇimadhyasthitibahirnirgamayor antarāle yad upalabhyate sarvānyopalambhapratyanīkabhūtam advayābhāsaṃ mahāsukhākāraṃ jñānaṃ tad dṛṣṭāntabhūtaṃ draṣṭavyam* (AbhiNi fol. 40v2–3).

That a separate Fourth empowerment was originally intended herewith seems to me, as to Sakurai (who has probably written more extensively on the problem of the Fourth than any other modern writer), extremely unlikely. The strongest arguments here are the fact that the same verse explicitly refers to the empowerments as three; that the early Jñānapāda tradition (as well as, to the best of my knowledge, the early Ārya tradition) of Guhyasamāja exegesis and practice not only does not teach a Fourth empowerment but even seems ignorant of any suggestion that there might be such a thing; that elsewhere too it seems clear that a stage in which no Fourth was known preceded that in which the Fourth was commonly accepted; and that we find a range of widely (not to say wildly) diverging interpretations of what the Fourth might consist in if it is indeed referred to in this verse.[24]

Apart from the view that in the Guhyasamāja system there are only three consecrations, no Fourth, which both the *Abhiṣekanirukti* and Vāgīśvarakīrti's *Tattvaratnāvaloka* mention, and which corresponds to a very real, early, and well-documented position, several other positions can be found mentioned in our sources which are at variance with what came to be the "standard" view on the Fourth. Two which I would like to mention very briefly are found reported in the *Tattvaratnāvaloka* and its *vivaraṇa*, though not in the *Abhiṣekanirukti*.[25] The first of these, which is reported in *Tattvaratnāvaloka* 15 and the *vivaraṇa* thereon, is that the Fourth empowerment consists in the initiand, after the copulation with a female partner in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, taking the *bodhicitta*, that is semen, from his partner's sex with his tongue. Here it should be noted that it cannot be the action itself that Vāgīśvarakīrti condemns, for this quite commonly forms part of the ritual, and does so also in Vāgīśvarakīrti's own manual, the *Sāmājika Saṃkṣiptābhiṣekavidhi* (SaAbhiVi), edited by Sakurai in an appendix

24 Dalton, on the other hand, apparently suggests that the *locus classicus*, GuSaTa 18.113, did originally intend a Fourth consecration. This seems to me historically unlikely in the extreme, mainly for the reasons just given. Dalton suggests that the original intention of the verse may have been that the Fourth initiation was to be "a repetition of the second initiation," (i.e. of the *guhyābhiṣeka*) "but this time as a self-consecration" (Dalton 2004: 26); compared to this he finds the standard interpretation of the Fourth as a verbal instruction "incongrous". The only Indian source for such an interpretation which Dalton cites is Vāgīśvarakīrti's *Tattvaratnāvaloka*; Dalton does not make it clear, however, that it is there only one of a number of different interpretations of the Fourth which are strongly rejected by Vāgīśvarakīrti. See my discussion below. From the perspective of the vast majority of tantric teachers, I would think that such an interpretation of the Fourth would seem far more incongrous, an inexplicable step backwards after the logical progression from the *guhyābhiṣeka* to the even more intense experience of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*. Dalton appears in his paper of 2004 to have been unaware of the important investigations which Sakurai published (in Japanese) in 1996. It should be added, though, that he does express justified reservations concerning what he is evidently aware is a somewhat speculative suggestion.

25 This need not mean that the author of that text did not know of them: we know in fact that he did not set forth all the different views with which he was familiar, but only those which he did not consider to be utterly indefensible. These two positions, both rejected vehemently by Vāgīśvarakīrti, may well have been among those which the author of the *Abhiṣekanirukti* knew but felt not to merit consideration.

of his book. It is rather the interpreting of this element as constituting a separate, Fourth, empowerment that our author rejects.[26]

The next position, which Vāgīśvarakīrti explains and rejects in the following verse of his work, sees the Fourth consecration as being the sexual enjoyment of women by the initiand after the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, i.e., evidently, after the completion of the entire empowerment ritual. It is indeed somewhat surprising that some authorities should thus have regarded what would normally (whether condoned or not) be considered to fall clearly under post-initiatory practice (*caryā*) as a Fourth empowerment. This too Vāgīśvarakīrti rejects. I have not found any other text that explicitly mentions either of these two positions, let alone one that actually upholds one of them. I do not rule out that such texts may still exist, but I should think that it is also possible that the strong condemnation of these views voiced by Vāgīśvarakīrti—in which he surely would not have been alone—may have actually resulted in their disappearing without leaving other traces.

We come now to the final *pakṣa* with reference to the *Guhyasamājatantra* system's Fourth empowerment that I wish to draw attention to. It is that which became, I think we may say, the standard orthodoxy, also in the Yoginītantra systems. At the same time it is a solution which is a little difficult to pin down; or, to put it differently, it could and perhaps should be differentiated into two or possibly more very closely related but slightly divergent variants. This would require a very close and careful examination of a not inconsiderable number of texts, something which I have not yet been in a position to do. I shall therefore gloss over these possible differences here, and can refer you to Sakurai's book for a tentative distinction into two *pakṣa*s of what I shall treat for our present purposes as one.

The defining characteristic of this *pakṣa*, then, is that it holds that the Fourth empowerment is one which is bestowed verbally, i.e. by the initiating guru giving a verbal instruction to the initiand. Now some texts seem to indeed refer to this consecration as only verbal—Vāgīśvarakīrti in his *Saṃkṣiptābhiṣekavidhi*, calls it the *vacanamātrābhiṣeka* (cf. Sakurai 1996: 419, l. 11 and l. 13), and in this text at least does not indicate that anything more is involved than this speech by the guru. But it is also clear that in fact usually, if not always, the Fourth empowerment was seen as having, theoretically at least, another component as well. Indeed, had it been otherwise, that which as the final one one expects to be the culminating or crowning empowerment or consecration could well seem an anti-climax. This no doubt was as clear to these tantric authors as it is to us. The way that this added element is sometimes expressed in is that the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* and the Fourth empowerment are said to be related to each other as mark/characteristic and that which is marked, or ultimate goal. In theory, the verbal instruction received from the guru is supposed to cause the bliss experienced, for an instant, without sensation of duality in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* to become strong or steady.

26 As mentioned in n. 24 above, this view is taken by Dalton as evidence for what Dalton suggests was the form of the Fourth originally intended in GuSaTa 18.113.

Treating the Fourth empowerment as representing or being, in some way, the ultimate goal, means that explanations of its nature may vary according to just how that goal is envisaged. In the—as far as I can tell at present very influential—works of Vāgīśvarakīrti, the transcendental or goal-aspect of the Fourth empowerment is explained as being seven-fold or having seven aspects, the so-called seven *aṅga*s of *mahāmudrā*.[27] I don't want to go into an explanation of this rather complicated matter here; let me just conclude our brief survey of the Guhyasamāja *pakṣa*s by repeating that in the last solution, which I referred to as the orthodox one, we find two elements combined: first the notion that the Fourth empowerment is given verbally to the initiand by his guru, and secondly that it in some way should also be seen as being or as containing, ideally at least, the goal (*lakṣya* or *phala*).

Let us now turn our attention to the Yoginītantra or Yoganiruttaratantra systems. Here the quantity of literature is far greater than that dealing with the Guhyasamāja system, and to survey it all is a task that will require many years of study. Still, following the lead of the *Abhiṣekanirukti*, I shall at least touch on the question of the existence and nature of the Fourth empowerment in the Yoginītantras too. The *Tattvaratnāvaloka* and its *vivaraṇa* provide us with no information, for Vāgīśvarakīrti does not there refer to, nor show any awareness of, these systems. But the *Abhiṣekanirukti*, after its account of the different *pakṣa*s in the Guhyasamāja system, goes on to tell us that there are some who hold that in the Yoginītantras such as the *Hevajratantra*, too, there is no Fourth empowerment.[28]

Now, at first sight at least, it may well be found surprising that, as we are told, some teachers held there to be only three kinds of consecration even in the "Yoginītantras such as the *Hevajratantra*". For in the HeTa itself there is clear reference to the empowerments being four in number.[29] And indeed in the commentatorial and other material directly related to the HeTa that I have been able to study till now, I know of no passage that denies existence of a Fourth empowerment.

But if we take other Yoginītantra cycles into consideration, there are, I think clear signs to be found that a Fourth empowerment indeed was not an element that was invariably present. Here, however, much of my evidence must necessarily be negative. But I believe that the absence of any mention of a *caturthābhiṣeka* in an otherwise detailed account of the ritual of empowerment must be taken as a significant and probably reliable indication that no Fourth empowerment was envisaged. This is the case with the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra*, a work famous rather for its frankness and lack of reticence. In its third chapter, called the *abhiṣekapaṭala*, this scripture teaches how the *abhiṣeka*s are to be performed, and does so with no mention of the Fourth empower-

27 Though his *Saṃkṣiptābhiṣekavidhi*, as I said, does not discuss this other component, Vāgīśvarakīrti goes into this in detail in other works of his: both in his *Saptāṅga* (Tōhoku catalogue No. 1888, Ōtani catalogue No. 2752) and in his *Tattvaratnāvaloka* and the auto-commentary *vivaraṇa* thereon.

28 *yoginītantre tu hevajrādau kecid ācāryās trividham abhiṣekaṃ manyante* AbhiNi fol. 44r10.

29 Cf. *ācāryaguhyaprajñā ca caturthaṃ tat punas tathā ānandāḥ kramaśo jñeyāś* ***catuḥsecanasaṃkhyayā*** HeTa 2.3.10.

ment. Rather, at the end of the account of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, we are told simply that the ritual concludes with a tantric feast (*bhakṣaṇacakra*, corresponding to what is usually called a *gaṇacakra*).[30] The sole commentary that seems to exist on this Tantra, the *Padmāvatī* by Mahāsukhavajrapāda (PaCaMaTaPa), gives us much useful additional material on the empowerment rituals, but it too simply does not mention any further empowerment after the *prajñābhiṣeka* (as the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* is called in these texts).[31]

The CaMaTa is not the only Yoginītantra that has, or that originally had, no Fourth empowerment. But in what may perhaps be called the Yoginītantra mainstream, the cults of Heruka forms such as Hevajra and Cakraśaṃvara and Vajravārāhī, it is pretty clear that it was, or came to be, the overwhelmingly widely held view that a Fourth empowerment followed the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, and that this empowerment was verbal in nature. This mainstream view is virtually identical with the final *pakṣa* we saw in the Guhyasamāja system, which as I said seems to have become established as the standard orthodoxy. In the Yoginītantras too (even more so perhaps than in the literature relating to the Guhyasamāja), it would be possible and useful to distinguish between slightly different variants of this *pakṣa*, but again I shall not here try to do so.[32]

Another important idea which I should mention here, however, is one which is expressed by, among others, Kamalanātha in his commentary on the *Hevajratantra*. This is the notion that the Fourth empowerment, understood as the state (or the realization of the state) which is the goal, is experienced directly by some few (fortunate, or rather advanced) disciples during the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*. For others, however, it must be re-

30 See CaMaTa (ed. George) 3.9.2.

31 I must admit that I have not yet read more recent sources for the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra* ritual of empowerment, which continues to be practised in Nepal; it would not surprise me to learn that in later times the Fourth consecration was imported into the cult of Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇa from, for instance, the Hevajra or Cakraśaṃvara systems. But it seems certain that it did not originally form a part of the Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇa consecrations.

32 I may however point out some points of particular interest in the *Abhiṣekanirukti*'s second and main *pakṣa* with regard to the Yoginītantras. One of the features here which is as far as I can see not common, is that the Fourth empowerment is said to be or involve an expansion of the bliss that was initially experienced during the the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* to fill first the initiand's entire body and than all things, moving and unmoving, which the initiand is to cause to become of the nature of, or one might say suffused with this bliss. This is therefore said to be, like the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, a consecration or empowerment of the initiand's mind. So the *caturthābhiṣeka* here, and as I say this seems to me uncommon, seems to represent both the fruit and a part of the cause, the purification or transformation of the initiand's mind. Cf. *tatra prajñāṅgasaṅge sahajamahāsukhasya yat sthirīkṛtya lakṣaṇaṃ tat prajñāṅgāśrayatvāc cetasaḥ prajñājñānābhiṣeka ity ucyate. yat punaḥ sthirīkṛtasya sahajamahāsukhasya yathāśakti samāhitena manasā sarvāṅgapratyaṅgavyāpanaṃ viśvavyāpanaṃ ca viśvasya ca tanmayīkaraṇaṃ tat prajñājñānavad advayam akalpaṃ mahāsukhamātrapratibhāsam, ataḥ so 'pi cetasa evābhiṣekaś caturthaṃ tat punas tathety anena nirdiṣṭo veditavya iti manyante* (AbhiNi fol. 44v7–9).

vealed with words thereafter.[33] This is an interesting proposal;[34] it divides the two components I spoke of above, which indeed are a little difficult to integrate in a natural fashion. The verbal instruction is only needed for those who do not have this intense experience of enlightened bliss in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*. Presumably, however, this would in Kamalanātha's view have applied to most cases, and the advanced who did not need the oral instruction would have been indeed few.

A final selection from the vast Yoginītantra literature that I wish to mention here is one to which Snellgrove has already drawn attention in his book *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, though it seems that Snellgrove was not fully aware of the unusual character of his source, nor of the underlying problems.[35] This is a manual of the ritual of empowerment or initiation into the *maṇḍala* of Hevajra, written by an author of whom nothing seems to be known beyond his name, Prajñāśrī, if that.[36] This is Snellgrove's translation of the description of the *caturthābhiṣeka* in this work:

> Then on the western side of the main *maṇḍala* one should prepare the *maṇḍala* for the Fourth Consecration one fathom across, sprinkling it with sandalwood scent and so on and with *bodhicitta*. On it one places a white blanket and so on and then the Wisdom-maiden, who is consecrated, adorned and honored just as before. Then the pupil makes his request in this manner:
>
> Salutation to you, the inward self of the sensible world,
> Salutation to you, inwardly gentle to sensible things
> and inwardly released from the sensible world.
> Inward bestower of sensible things, salutation to you!
> O excellent lord, grant to me, the excellent Fourth Consecration.

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33 From the commentary on *Hevajratantra* 2.3.10b: *tad eva prajñājñānam. punar iti paścāt. yadi paścād api tad eva kiṃ caturthenety āha—tatheti. tad eva prajñājñānaṃ rūpaviśeṣeṇa jalam iva taraṅgarūpeṇotpannaṃ caturtham ity arthaḥ. sa punar ayaṃ mahāsukhamayo vajradharaḥ. sa cāyaṃ keṣāṃcit tadaiva prajñājñānābhiṣekakāla eva cakāsti, tadapareṣāṃ vacasā prakāśyate* (RaĀvHePa fol. 17r6).

34 It is incidentally followed, it seems, by Abhayākaragupta in his famous commentary *Āmnāyamañjarī* on the *Sampuṭodbhavatantra*; cf. *de yaṅ bsod nams daṅ ye śes kyi bag chags bsags pa rnams la śes rab ye śes kyi dbaṅ gi dus kho nar gsal źiṅ. de las gźan rnams la tshig gis gsal bar bya'o* (quoted in Sakurai 1996: 251, n. 76). There is evidence, which I intend to discuss elsewhere, that Kamalanātha precedes Abhayākaragupta.

35 I may perhaps be permitted to remark here that Snellgrove's account of Higher Yogatantra initiation in this book, though treating some interesting material, is very inadequate as far as his grasp of the historical development is concerned, and in several repects seems to me both confused and confusing.

36 Though it is purportedly a translation into Tibetan from Sanskrit, I have come to the opinion that this is in fact an indigenous Tibetan work. I cannot examine the evidence for this in detail here; for my purpose in this paper the provenance of the work is not of great importance, since it is the motivation which can be sensed behind its innovations, be they of an Indian or of a Tibetan teacher, which I wish to highlight. Let me mention however as one point that should arouse suspicion the (repeated) use of such structuring elements as (to cite one example): *las la 'jug pa la yaṅ gñis te| dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga daṅ| dbaṅ bskur ba'i cho ga'o|| dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga la yaṅ bcu gsum ste | ...* (AbhiVi Derge fol. 41v1).

Then the master speaks thus:

> You must slay living beings. You must speak lying words.
> You must take what is not given. You must frequent others' wives.
> If you do these things, no evil is done, great merit is yours.
> If these things you can do, I will give the Fourth Consecration.

The pupil replies:

> Great protector, by your gracious favor, I can.

Then he unites in the embrace, performs coition, and as the great bliss descends to the palace of knowledge, he reverses it upward to the level of non-cognition, holding it there. This experiencing of noncognitive knowledge is the Fourth in terms of its (psychophysical) support. The Fourth in terms of no support is to be known from one's master's mouth. (Snellgrove 1987: 259–60)[37]

As Snellgrove remarks, a "distinctive feature of this account is the deliberate separation of the Fourth Consecration from the preceding one[s], each taking place at one of the four sides of the main maṇḍala" (Snellgrove 1987: 260). Also noteworthy is that in Prajñāśrī's account of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* (translated in Snellgrove 1987: 258–9), the initiand is said to retain rather than emit his semen; in the Fourth consecration, in which as we see the copulation is repeated, he not only retains it but is said to reverse it upwards. In itself this is a not uncommon yogic sexual technique; but in the context of what should be an intiatory rite, the entrance of a pupil into the religion, it is highly unnatural that that pupil should be expected to perform so advanced a feat. And in forbidding emission of semen in the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, while making it perhaps a little easier for the initiand to repeat his performance in the *caturthābhiṣeka*, Prajñāśrī appears to go against the *Hevajratantra* itself, which should have presumably been his main scriptural authority.[38] Altogether, Prajñāśrī's anomalous account is for many reasons clearly "secondary". I shall return below to what may underlie what one cannot but suspect were innovations intended for the use of at most a tiny group of virtuosi.

I have presented just enough material here to show that in Yoginītantra as in the Guhyasamāja system we do not find a single unanimous view either on the existence or the nature of the Fourth empowerment. There is much that I am leaving unreported here, but I believe that we are not overlooking anything that would very substantially affect the overall broad picture that emerges of a historical development and of its underlying motives.[39]

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37 For the Tibetan text see AbhiVi Derge fols. 48v7–49r4.

38 That the *Hevajratantra* itself did prescribe emission of semen during the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, followed by the intiand's consumption thereof, is seen most clearly in HeTa 2.4.39: *na kareṇa tato gṛhyet śuktikayā na śaṅkhakaiḥ amṛtaṃ jihvayā grāhyam edhanāya balasya vai.*

39 My most important omission here (Sakurai too, no doubt for reasons similar to mine, leaves it out of consideration) is the Kālacakra system, in which of course much interesting, and in several respects untypical or innovative material is to be found.

Historically speaking, the evidence points quite clearly to the fact that this Fourth was an addition, and one which is fundamentally connected with the cryptic formulation of GuSaTa 18.113. In the different *pakṣa*s we saw as to the nature of this Fourth consecration we can now easily discern different strategies. The first of the two *pakṣa*s rejected by Vāgīśvarakīrti can be seen as an attempt to accommodate a Fourth empowerment without actually adding anything to the ritual performance; the taking with the tongue of the semen from the consort's sex, usually a part of the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, is labelled the Fourth empowerment. The idiosyncratic solution chosen by Prajñāśrī is an interpretation in ritual of the cryptic *caturthaṃ tat punas tathā*; if the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* consisted in the initiand's uniting with a consort, to say that the "fourth is that again, in the same way" must mean that in the Fourth empowerment the act of copulation is repeated. Of course there are other factors involved in the development represented by Prajñāśrī's solution, but it seems to me that it is above all the formulation *caturthaṃ tat punas tathā* that is to be seen as underlying it.

As for the solution that came to be the preferred one, I see it as having, aside from the *caturthaṃ tat punas tathā*, two main factors that shaped its two components. First of all, the idea that the Fourth empowerment consisted in an oral instruction of the initiand by the guru was probably, on one level at least, another attempt to accommodate a further empowerment without significantly changing the way in which the ritual was performed. For it seems to be an early tradition that after the *guhyābhiṣeka* and the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* the guru proceeded to impart instruction on the nature of reality (or on the true meaning of the initiations received). This is found stated in the important and early *Guhyasamājamaṇḍalavidhi* by Jñānapāda's pupil Dīpaṃkarabhadra, but with no hint that it is understood as forming a separate empowerment.[40] This manual can be shown to have retained its importance for centuries; an extensive commentary on it exists (Tōhoku catalogue No. 1871 by Ratnākaraśānti)—a very unusual distinction for a mere manual of the ritual—and it is quoted and referred to explicitly in several later texts, including works that themselves belong rather to the Yoginītantra systems.[41] It is thus conceivable that it is indeed this ritual manual by Dīpaṃkarabhadra that, while not knowing a Fourth empowerment itself, provided the element that was re-interpreted as

40 *maṇḍalaṃ devatātattvam ācāryaparikarma ca | saṃkathya guhyaprajñābhyāṃ siktvā tattvaṃ samuddiśet* GuMaVi fol. 15v3–4.

41 Cf. e.g. VaĀv MS A fols. 59v7–60r1, MS B fol. 55r1–2; YaTaMaUpā fol. 26r4. That Abhayākaragupta held the *Guhyasamājamaṇḍalavidhi* in high esteem is clear already simply from his references to and acknowledged quotations from it. Close examination of the YaTaMaUpā shows the deep influence, though in this case not explicitly acknowledged, of Dīpaṃkarabhadra's work; the same holds true, I do not doubt, of many other ritual manuals.

being the Fourth.[42]

The second factor that I suggest was involved is one which is even harder to pin down, and which I extrapolate from some accounts of the Fourth empowerment rather than being able to attest its prior existence. Let me put it that it was the not always clearly formulated idea that while the empowerment ritual, and particularly the set of three consecrations, was a cause (though an indirect rather than a direct one) of the initiand's future Buddhahood, the ritual should contain also an element that corresponded to his enlightenment itself; that even the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, though a religious act, was nonetheless in a sense worldly (*laukika*) or conventional (*saṃvṛtisat*). The Fourth empowerment was then to serve ideally as the goal, ultimately real (*paramārthasat*), utterly transcendent (*lokottara*). Such a role had probably been previously played, at least to a certain extent, by the *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, but this had meant that that element of the ritual had had the double function of being both a purifier (of the initiand's mind) and a foretaste or representative of the pure goal.[43]

Once the orthodox solution had become the most widely accepted,[44] its spread may have been furthered by the composition of manuals giving a general account of Higher Yogatantra consecrations, meant to serve as a template no matter which particular cult was being followed or into which *maṇḍala* a pupil was being initiated. In the popular manuals of this type, the *Vajrāvalī*, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* and the *Kriyāsamuccaya*, the consecration always includes some form of the orthodox type of *caturthābhiṣeka*. It may have been under the influence of such texts and of the practice that they reflect that Kumāracandra felt motivated to give an account of Kṛṣṇayamāri empowerment ritual that conformed to the"Yoginītantra-norm" rather than accepting at face value what from a historical perspective seems clearly to be an older (or at least archaic) form of the ritual envisaged by the *Kṛṣṇayamāritantra* itself.[45]

There are, I think, lessons of various kinds that can be learned from what has been considered here. Let me conclude by emphasizing only two points. Firstly, and I think most obviously, it is instructive to see how much of the multiplicity of views, positions, and arguments preserved in our texts can be plausibly seen as, in the first place, the

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42 It cannot be ruled out however that Dīpaṃkarabhadra himself was following an earlier, possibly scriptural, source. This may perhaps be suggested by the quotations I have noticed of what seems to be a single *pāda* of a metrical text, of which it is not made quite clear however whether or not it is scriptural, which speaks of an instruction following the *abhiṣeka*s: *siktvā tattvaṃ prakāśayet* (APa fol. 14r5; ViPra ad *Kālacakratantra* 5.112, vol. 3 p. 53, 1). But note that both the authors who quote this *pāda*, Abhayākaragupta and the self-styled Bodhisattva who authored the *Vimalaprabhā*, postdate Dīpaṃkarabhadra by several centuries; till the source of the *pāda* has been found we have no good reason to assume that Jñānapāda's disciple indeed knew it.

43 The same double role is played by the *caturthābhiṣeka*, it is interesting to note, in the second *yoginītantra-pakṣa* in the *Abhiṣekanirukti*; cf. n. 32 above.

44 Its wide acceptance among the Tibetans is indicated by the fact that in indigenous Tibetan works the *caturthābhiṣeka* is not infrequently called *tshig dbaṅ*, a term for which I have seen no exact equivalent in an Indian work available in Sanskrit, though it may be noted that Vāgīśvarakīrti in his *Saṃkṣiptābhiṣekavidhi* twice uses the expression *vacanamātrābhiṣeka* (cf. p. 270 above).

45 Cf. n. 14 above.

result of alternative exegetical, interpretive, strategies. Scripture and how to interpret scripture play central roles even where one might not at first expect it.

Secondly, I for one cannot help being struck by the creativity with which Indian Buddhist tantric teachers often found new ritual solutions for problems with which they were faced, and with which they attempted to resolve inconsistencies, keeping in mind the Buddhist function which their rituals should have. As masters not only of ritual but of ritual scholarship, they deserve the respect of modern ritual scholars; and it would be a pity if the Collaborative Research Center "Ritual Dynamics", with its far-ranging span of studies, were not to give more attention to these predecessors and to the remarkable rituals, and texts teaching and discussing rituals, which they created.

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Conversion or Initiation? On the Removal of the Sectarian Marks (*liṅgoddhāra*) in Śaiva Siddhānta

The removal of the sectarian marks (*liṅgoddhāra*)

The removal of the sectarian characteristics or marks (*liṅgoddhāra*) that I propose to analyze in the context of initiation is taught in the eleventh century ritual manual of Somaśambhu immediately after the prescriptions for the different kinds of initiations (*samaya-* and *nirvāṇadīkṣā*) and consecrations (*ācārya-* and *sādhakābhiṣeka*).[1] It forms part of a section on the liberation or abandonment of vows (*vratamukti*, *vratasaṃtyāga*). This passage starts with prescriptions for Śaiva Siddhāntins who wish to remove a temporary vow of celibacy (*brahmacarya*). At the end of this rite the teacher pronounces the wish that his pupil should get married.[2] The subsequent section is meant for others, i.e. Non-Śaivas bound by vows of their respective religious traditions.[3] The removal of the sectarian marks is performed by the *ācārya* of the tradition but it is made clear that he is acting in Śiva's place. Divine presence is postulated and the agency is with Śiva, since he is present in the *ācārya*'s body (*ācāryamūrtistha*). In an attempt of hierarchisation each soul that undergoes *liṅgoddhāra* will be ascribed a level corresponding to a specific *tattva* chosen from the series of altogether 36 *tattva*s corresponding to its previous religious affiliation. The removal of the sectarian marks aims to destroy the link to this *tattva* and all merit related to this respective level. The soul thus looses all its existing characteristics and has to start its path of liberation from the very beginning, i.e. from the lowest *tattva* Earth and the stage of a householder (*gṛhastha*). The compounds "*liṅga-uddhāra*" or "*vrata-samuddhāra*"[4] are thus directly linked to this notion of the removal of sectarian marks as well as to the removal of all signs of the previous sectari-

1 My presentation is largely based on Hélène Brunner's edition of the *Somaśambhupaddhati* (SŚPdh, 1963–98). In SŚPdh 3 (p. 1–565) the rituals are given in the following sequence: section 1) *samayadīkṣā*, 2) *viśeṣasamayadīkṣā*, 3) *nirvāṇadīkṣā*, 4) *tritattvadīkṣā*, 5) *ekatattvadīkṣā*, 6) *ācāryābhiṣeka*, 7) *sādhakābhiṣeka*, 8) *astrābhiṣeka* and 9) *vratoddhāra*.

2 *anurūpāṃ kulīnāṃ ca pariṇeṣyasi kanyakām* SŚPdh 3: p. 547.

3 *śaivānāṃ vratasaṃtyāgaḥ saṃkṣepeṇeti darśitaḥ | anyeṣāṃ vratayuktānāṃ prasaṅgāt so 'bhidhīyate |* SŚPdh 3: p. 547–51.

4 This is the term used at the end of this section: *iti vratasamuddhāro racitaḥ somaśambhunā* (SŚPdh 3: p. 565). Hélène Brunner translates *vrata-/liṅga-uddhāra* with "éradication d'une observance/du signe caractéristique" (SŚPdh 3: p. 550, n. 14) and *vratasamuddhāra* with "extraction du *vrata*" (SŚPdh 3: p. 564). A rite called *dīkṣoddhāra* is performed for *dīkṣita*s who are *śivabhaktivibhinna*; according to Brunner a "rite capable de défaire une *dīkṣā* śivaïte, soit que celle-ci ait été donnée dans des conditions irrégulieres, soit que l'initié s'avère indigne de son élévation ..." (SŚPdh 3: p. 564, n. 52).

an affiliation (*vratāṅgas*). This is a prerequisite for the transformation of the convert's soul.

Who are now the followers of other religious traditions mentioned in the *Somaśambhupaddhati*? In two verses we find six religious groups enumerated, each one allocated to a specific *tattva*:

> *buddhitattve sthitā bauddhā jainās tu guṇamastake |*
> *vedāntajñās tu tadyonau puruṣe bhagavanmukhāḥ || 7 ||*
> *pāśupatās tu māyāyāṃ vidyāyāṃ tu mahāvratāḥ |*
> *bauddhādiliṅginām eṣāṃ muktisthānāny anukramāt || 8 ||*[5]
>
> The Buddhists reside in the *tattva* "intellect" (*buddhi*), the Jainas are at the top of the *tattva guṇa*, the knowers of the Vedānta in its origin [i.e. the *tattva* "nature" (*prakṛti*)], those, who turn their faces to Bhagavān [i.e. Viṣṇu], in the [*tattva*] soul, the Pāśupātas in the [*tattva*] "matter" (*māyā*), the Mahāvratas in the [*tattva*] knowledge. These are in the sequence of their respective places of liberation the bearer of characteristics (*liṅgin*) starting with the Buddhists.

It is remarkable that the Buddhists and Jainas although on the two lowest levels (see Table 1) are not dealt with in a different way than the other mentioned Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva groups that have been later labelled as being part of the "Hindu" religions.[6] The following are among these four groups: 1) The term "knowers of the Vedānta" does of course refer to the well-known orthodox system of monistic Indian philosophy. It is most likely that this refers to the tradition founded in the 8th century by Śaṃkara. 2) Those who turn their face to Bhagavān are the followers of Viṣṇu, here without any specific hints for a specific affiliation within this group. The Pāśupatas and the Mahāvratas form part of the sphere of the religious traditions of Śaivism. They are sorted hierarchically above the other religious groups. The Pāśupātas (3) and the Mahāvratas (4) pertain to the "outer path" (*atimārga*) that is meant for celibate ascetics aiming for liberation. In the case of the Pāśupatas this path transcends the traditional Brahmanical system of the four stages of life (*atyāśramavrata*). The Mahāvratas do adhere to antinomian practices. The Śaiva Siddhānta does not form part of this "outer path" but follows the path of the mantras (*mantramārga*) instead and is opposed to mentioned heterodox practices. The *mantramārga* is accessible for married householders and ascetics alike, the ascetics aiming primarily for extraordinary powers (*bubhukṣu*), the householders and the lay followers for liberation (*mumukṣu*).

The quoted verses do sort the soteriological quality of rival religious traditions in a hierarchical order corresponding to the sequence of the 36 *tattvas*. The followers of the

5 SŚPdh 3, p. 553.

6 The passage under discussion has been already dealt with in the context of definitions or deconstructions of the term "Hinduism" in pre-modern and modern India. See von Stietencron (1995) and Michaels (2004: 15–21). In this context Michaels states that "the individual cults, sects, philosophies, and theistic systems are not different religions—as von Stietencron portrayed them—but rather cognitive systems of socioreligious institutions" (ibid.: 19).

six mentioned groups do reach the worlds of the Śaiva cosmos linked to "their" respective *tattva* and are thus excluded from the path leading via the highest *tattva* to liberation. Polemical passages that do deal with rival religious traditions can be found in non-ritual contexts as well. It can be noted that the Buddhists and Jainas are consistently linked to the *tattvas buddhi* and *guṇa* respectively whereas the number of the Śaiva und Vaiṣṇava systems varies. In some cases the classical philosophical systems like Sāṃkhya or Yoga are included.[7]

Six groups with sectarian marks (*liṅgin*)	Correlation to the 36 *tattvas*
	1–4 Śiva; Śakti; Sadāśiva; Īśvara
Mahāvrata	5 *śuddhavidyā*
Pāśupata	6 *māyā*
	7–11 five *kañcukas*
Bhāgavata	12 *puruṣa*
Vedāntin	13a *prakṛti*
Jaina	13b *guṇa*
Buddhist	14 *buddhi*
	15–16 *ahaṃkāra; manas*
	17–21 five *jñānendriyas*
	22–26 five *karmendriyas*
	27–31 five *tanmātras*
	32–36 five *bhūtas*

Table 1: The six religious groups and their respective placement in the sequence of the 36 *tattvas*

The prescribed sequence of acts to be performed during the *liṅgoddhāra* is believed to be a means to transform the souls of the adepts and destroy all the qualities and characteristics that pertain to their previous level. Three basic activities form part of the ritual performance. 1) The convert has to fast for a period lasting from three to five days. 2) Through an expiatory rite with an elaborate recitation of mantras the convert is purified. 3) Then follows the removal of the sectarian marks: during this process all the merit acquired so far has to be destroyed and all inner and outer qualities of the soul have to be removed. The soul has to be reinstated into its status prior to becoming a member of the mentioned religious traditions.

The characteristic of the Buddhists is the *tattva* intellect and the corresponding cosmological elements. That of the Jainas is the *tattva* quality and so forth. The process of the removal of the marks is similar for every convert, specific is the respective *tattva*. In the case of a Buddhist the *ācārya* starts with a veneration of Śiva by placing Śiva's soul in his own body and becoming Śiva (*śivīkaraṇa*). Then he recites the names of the

7 For parallel passages see SŚPdh 3, p. 553–5.

22 *tattva*s starting with the *tattva* intellect and ending with *tattva* earth. Having poured these *tattva*s in the sacrificial fire he venerates them by reciting the names of all the 22 *tattva*s. Now the ritual specialist unites the soul of the Buddhist with his own soul, accompanied by specific *mudrā*s and mantras. With the mantra of the sword ending with "*phaṭ*", all the gained merit of the (former) Buddhist's soul is destroyed. With the five-syllabled root mantra of the tradition (*namaḥ śivāya*) each of the *tattva*s is separated from the soul. Finally the soul is re-united with its previous caste (*pūrvajāti*) and its prescribed behaviour. The signs of the religious affiliation (*vratāṅga*s) are dismissed into flowing water (*visarjana*). The soul that once was a "Buddhist" is now reinvested into its original condition. In case the acting *ācārya* is full of compassion (*anukampā*) towards his disciple, he is now as a householder entitled to undergo the various types of initiations (*samaya-* and *nirvāṇadīkṣā*) into Śaiva Siddhānta as described above.[8] Only then the convert is allowed to enter into the pavilion, the outsider is allowed inside in order to receive the previously described initiation into the tradition of the Śaiva Siddhānta. But it is important to note, that the outsider does never become a complete insider, since he is excluded from receiving consecration as a Śaiva *ācārya*. As Srilata Raman has rightly stated "his status as a convert (*punarbhū*) makes him forever inferior in the Śaiva hierarchy" (2007: 284). To sum up, the described process that leads to a conversion is therefore necessarily two-fold: the purification and removal of a previous vow (*liṅga-* or *vratoddhāra*) has to be followed by the initiation (*dīkṣā*) into the tradition. I will therefore describe the basic elements of the Śaiva initiation in the following section.

Initiation – the *samaya-* and *nirvāṇadīkṣā*

The Śaiva *dīkṣā*—called by Surdam "the central ritual act in the life of a Śaiva-siddhāntin" (1984: lxviii)—generally consists of two distinct levels, the initiation into the rules (*samayadīkṣā*) and the initiation to liberation (*nirvāṇadīkṣā*). The initiation into the rules (*samayadīkṣā*) is on the level of the manuals generally split into two sections called general initiation into the rules (*sāmānya-samayadīkṣā*) and special initia-

8 *trirātraṃ pañcarātraṃ vā liṅgināṃ upavāsināṃ | prāyaścittaviśuddhānāṃ sthitānāṃ maṇḍapād bahiḥ | 9 | saṃpūjya paśubhartāraṃ vistareṇa yathā purā | amīṣāṃ deśikaḥ kuryāl liṅgoddhāravidhiṃ yathā | 10 | buddhyādibhūmiparyantatattvavrātaṃ vibhāvasau | upasthāpya svasaṃjñābhir ekaikaṃ vā prapūjayet | 11 | bahiṣṭhānām athaiteṣāṃ nāḍīsandhānapūrvakam | kṛtvā tāḍanaviśleṣāv ākarṣaṃ svātmani sthitam | 12 | svāhāntena ca mūlena tadyogaṃ jātavedasi | iṣṭadevārcanāpuṇyaphaladhvaṃsāya homayet | 13 | śastrasyāṣṭau sahasrāṇi liṅginaṃ liṅginaṃ prati | pañca pañca ca mūlena pratitattvavimuktaye | 14 | buddhyādibhyo dharāntebhyaḥ samuddhṛtya niyojayet | pūrvajātau tadācāre tadyogasthitaye punaḥ | 15 | pūrṇāntaṃ mūlamantreṇa yajed aṣṭottaraṃ śatam | tadvat toye vratāṅgāni kṣiptvā kuryāt gṛhasthitān | 16 | ... tato vastrayugaṃ datvā gārhasthye viniyojayet | teṣāṃ kurvīta vā dīkṣāṃ bhaktānām anukampayā | 23 | visṛjya sthaṇḍileśāgnī vidhinā śodhayed bhuvam | iti vratasamuddhāro racitaḥ somaśambhunā | 24.* (SŚPdh 3, p. 555–65). Verses 18 to 22 (SŚPdh 3, p. 559–63) do refer to an alternative method probably linked to the rite of *vratoddhāra* and are therefore not relevant for the present context (see SŚPdh 3, p. 560, n. 39).

tion (*viśeṣadīkṣā*) or special initiation into the rules (*viśeṣa-samayadīkṣā*). On this first stage of initiation the devotee becomes a member of the Śaiva community, receives a new name, attains the right to perform the daily worship of Śiva and the fire ritual. This initiation ends with the enumeration of the rules (*samaya*) as a code of conduct and the handing over to the *samayin* of the signs of the vow (*vratāṅga*).[9] The *nirvāṇadīkṣā* intends to cut away the bonds of the disciple's soul and its basic aim is the unification of the disciple's individual soul called *paśu*, *aṇu* or *ātman* with the soul of Śiva.[10] After having temporarily reached the place of Śiva's soul, the soul of the *dīkṣita* is led back by the *ācārya* into its body. The adept has now become Śiva's son, a *putraka* and has thus attained a status where he can be certain that he will not be reborn after his death.[11] In addition to this promised liberation he has attained the right to obtain an ordination or consecration (*abhiṣeka*) as *ācārya* or *sādhaka*, but only if he is selected by his *ācārya* for either of the two positions.[12] The methods of performing the *nirvāṇa-dīkṣā* vary according to the category of elements that are purified during the initiation. Among the means of initiation are the nine *tattva*s (*navatattvadīkṣā*) or 36 *tattva*s (*tattva-dīkṣā*), the worlds (*bhuvana-dīkṣā*), the six *adhvan*s (*ṣaḍadhvadīkṣā*) or the five *kalā*s (*kalā-dīkṣā*).[13]

The complex *nirvāṇadīkṣā* is to be performed during two successive days (*atirātra*). The first day serves for the preparation (*adhivāsana*) of the initiation that takes place only on the second day. The complexity of the whole ritual is partially due to a "modular" structure: the prescribed ritual sequence is accompanied by numerous rites necessary for the preparation of the disciple, the *ācārya* and the creation of the presence of divine beings. Complex elements of the initiation are sometimes prescribed without a detailed explanation of the actual sequence of rites. This has to be studied in preceding or succeeding passages of the *paddhati*, thus for example the daily ritual (*nitya-karman*)[14] performed in the morning of the second day, the installation of the *dīkṣita*[15] or the adoration of Śiva, Agni and other gods are prescribed but not explained in the section on *nirvāṇadīkṣā*. The phases of the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* have been summarized in

9 Five items are mentioned as insignia of the observance: *vratāṅgāni jaṭābhasmadaṇḍakaupīnasaṃyamān* SŚPdh 3: p. 149. The meaning of *saṃyama* is not totally clear, Brunner suggests to think of an "objet matériel" instead of "contrôle des sens". As fifth element the *yajñopavīta*, *akṣasūtra* or *kamaṇḍalu* are named in parallel passages (SŚPh 3: p. 153, n. 61).

10 See for a general definition of *dīkṣā*: *malamāyādipāśānāṃ viśleṣaḥ kriyate yayā | jñānaṃ ca janyate śiṣye sā dīkṣety abhidhīyate* (SŚPdh 3: p. 3).

11 For the concept of "instant liberation" (*sadyonirvāṇadīkṣā*) see SŚPdh 3: p. 10, n.16.

12 See Brunner (1975) for a closer examination of the categories *putraka* and *sādhaka*. The two terms *dīkṣā* and *abhiṣeka* are usually used for the different categories "initiation" and "consecration, ordination" respectively. See Surdam (1984: xc–xciv) on the evolution of the *dīkṣā*. In the current practice in South India the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* "is hardly ever performed as an independent rite" (1984: xciv) but as a prerequisite linked with the *ācāryābhiṣeka*.

13 See *Matańgapārameśvarāgama*, *kriyāpāda*, ch. 7 for a description of the *bhuvanadīkṣā*, ch. 8 for *tattvadīkṣā* and ch. 9 for *navatattvapīṭhadīkṣā*.

14 See Table 2, 2.3 and the detailed description in SŚPdh 1: p. 3–67.

15 See Table 2, 2.5 and the description in SŚPdh 3: p. 2–110 (*samayadīkṣā*).

Table 2, split into two sections with seven steps for the preparatory day and eleven steps for the day of the main ritual.[16]

Stages of the ritual	Sequence of rites
1. First day: Preparatory rites (*adhivāsana*) for the initiation	1.1 "Activation" of the mantras (*mantradīpana*) 1.2 Preparation of the "cord of the bonds" (*pāśasūtra*) 1.3 Consumption of the five cow products (*pañcagavya*) and sacrifical rice (*caruka*) 1.4 Tooth-brushing (*dantadhāvana*) and dropping of the stick (*dantakāṣṭha*) 1.5 Worship of Sthaṇḍileśa, Caṇḍa, Agni, the pot (*kalaśa*) and the Guardians of the World (Lokapālas) 1.6 Purification of the pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) and entrance 1.7 Sleep of disciple and *ācārya*
2. Second day: The liberating initiation	2.1 Morning bath 2.2 Examination of the disciple's dreams, expiation for inauspicious dreams 2.3 Daily ritual outside and inside the pavilion 2.4 Preparatory rites performed by the *ācārya* inside the pavilion (*nityakarman*, worship of Śiva and Agni, nourishing (*tarpaṇa*) and activation of the mantras etc.) 2.5 Entrance and installation of the disciple 2.6 Purification of the 5 *kalā*s (*kalāśuddhi*) and visualization of all the elements 2.7 Successive joining of each *kalā* with *pāśasūtra* 2.8 Cutting of the tuft (*śikhā*) 2.9 Unification of the disciple's soul with Śiva's soul (*yojanikā*) 2.10 Reinstallation of the disciple's soul in his body 2.11 Veneration of Śiva and disciple, bath of the disciple (now called *putraka*)

Table 2: The sequence of the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* according to the *Somaśambhupaddhati*

I would now like to give an exemplary description of the sequential purification of the five *kalā*s (*kalāśuddhi*) and the function of the cord of bonds as a substitute of the disciple's body (*pratikāya*) during the most crucial phase of the main ritual.[17] The cleaning of the five *kalā*s and the successive joining of each *kalā* with the cord of bonds form the most original, significant and elaborate part of the whole liberating initiation. The disciple's self is now being prepared for the final act, the unification with Śiva's soul that is

16 Jun Takashima gives in his article on *dīkṣā* in the *Tantrāloka* a list with "the program of *dīkṣā* rituals" and states correctly that the *dīkṣā* of the *Somaśambhupaddhati* "is not so different from the ordinary *dīkṣā* of the *Tantrāloka* at least on the level what is done (though not its interpretation)" (1992: 47).

17 Besides this *kalādīkṣā*, the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* in the form of a purification of the 5 *kalā*s, Somaśambhu teaches a *tri-* and *ekatattvadīkṣā* (SŚPdh 3: p. 427–54).

called *yojanikā*. But before this unification is made possible all factors that bind his soul have to be removed and destroyed. For this purpose powerful means and actions are employed.

The most important media and ritual object is the already mentioned cord of bonds (*pāśasūtra*). On this cord everything that binds the soul is projected and then finally destroyed. This cord is fixed at the body of the disciple reaching from his hair to his feet, it is fixed on the left side in the case of female adepts on the right in the case of male. The whole body is put into relation with the five *kalā*s. These *kalā*s called from beneath Nivṛtti, Pratiṣṭhā, Vidyā, Śānti, and Śāntyatītā encompass the totality of worldly phenomena structured into the five categories or sections. Each *kalā* has its own governor who is the sovereign over the whole section (*kāraṇeśvara*). The five *kalā*s thus correspond to the five parts of the body and form at the same time a section of the cord of bonds.

The liberating initiation as described in Somaśambhu's manual is based on the fivefold division according to the five *kalā*s and therefore also called *kalādīkṣā*. The preparation, purification and subsequent transformation of the disciple's soul is undertaken by a sequence of action that is repeated on the level of each of the five *kalā*s. In order to show the main steps of this process I will describe the sequence for the lowest *kalā*: The process starts with an extensive visualization (*bhāvanā*) of all that is contained in the *kalā* Nivṛtti. This includes the different worlds, sounds, organs, beings, gods etc. Then follows the extraction of the *kalā* Nivṛtti out of the disciple's body and the imposition on the cord of the bonds. At a next step divine presence is created on two levels: at a first step an invocation, nourishment (*tarpaṇa*), and adoration of Brahmā, the governor of the *kalā* Nivṛtti is performed. Now that Brahmā is present, the *ācārya* is uttering a request: "Brahmā, I am initiating this aspirant for liberation (*mumukṣu*) under your supervision. Please be favourable!"[18] Then the highest gods, the divine couple in the form of Vāgīśvarī and Vāgīśvara are invoked and adored.

With the presence of these gods being assured, the soul of the disciple trespasses for a last time all the spheres of the *kalā* Nivṛtti and then leaves this part of his bondage forever behind. The part of the cord of bonds that corresponds to the section of the *kalā* Nivṛtti is cut and the piece of the cord is burned so that it will be destroyed forever. After this action we do find an interesting notion of territoriality: Brahmā is invoked once again, he now receives the fee or price (*śulka*) for his permission to cross his territory. The *ācārya* then lets Brahmā know Śiva's order: "Brahmā, do no longer bind this soul, its bonds are completely burned!"[19] Finally after an adoration of the disciple who is now liberated of the lowest part of his bonds, Vāgīśvara and Vāgīśvarī are dismissed

18 See SŚPdh 3 *nirvāṇadīkṣā* (p. 255–7) for the whole passage: *"oṃ hāṃ brahmaṇe namaḥ" iti brahmāṇam āvāhya saṃpūjya ca svāhāntena saṃtarpya ca, brahmaṃs tavādhikāre 'smin mumukṣuṃ dīkṣayāmy aham | bhāvyaṃ tvayānukūlena vidhiṃ vijñāpayed iti.*

19 See SŚPdh 3 *nirvāṇadīkṣā* (p. 285–91): *"oṃ hāṃ brahman śabdasparśau śulkaṃ gṛhāṇa svāhā!" ity āhutitrayeṇādhikāram asya samarpayet | dagdhaniḥśeṣapāśasya brahman asya paśos tvayā | bandhāya na punaḥ stheyaṃ śivājñāṃ śrāvayed iti.*

(*visarjana*). This process is repeated for all four other *kalā*s and their respective spheres.

The context – Śaiva initiation and the monarch

Competition between rival religious traditions at court linked to royal initiations is a well documented feature. For the Śaiva tantric traditions Alexis Sanderson (2004; forthcoming) has shown that "for several centuries after the sixth it [Śaivism of the *mantramārga* J.G.] was the principal faith of the élites in large parts of the Indian subcontinent and in both mainland and insular Southeast Asia." (2004: 231). This influential position among the élites and the development of Śaiva rituals has led to close links with the institution of kingship and "the occupying by Śaiva officiants of the office of Royal Preceptor (*rājaguruḥ*) and in this position their giving Śaiva initiation (*dīkṣā*) to the monarch" (2004: 233). In addition the development of Śaiva rituals has enabled "a specialized class of Śaiva officiants to encroach on the territory of the Rājapurohita, the Brahmanical expert in the rites of the Atharvaveda who served as the personal priest of the king" (ibid.). Since this encroachment by Śaiva officiants on the territory of established ritual experts at court is linked to the performance of the Śaiva *dīkṣā* I would like to raise the question to what extant this practice can be seen as related to the Śaiva ritual of conversion that is called "removal of the sectarian marks" (*liṅgoddhāra*). This ritual as attested in an eleventh century ritual manual of dualisitic Śaivism is an encroachment on the territory of competing religious traditions and, as I have shown, the Śaiva *liṅgoddhāra* is closely related to the Śaiva *dīkṣā*.

The religious and ritual literature of the Sanskrit Śaiva Siddhānta does not reveal much about the social milieu and historical context of this tradition. The studied ritual manual of Somaśambhu forms part of a Śaiva tantric school that within the framework of tantric Śaivism belongs to the doctrines of the right: the Goddess and the concept of the feminine power (*śakti*) is depersonalized, the *śakti* is seen primarily as the male deity's power to act, the liturgy is based on the male deity Sadāśiva. He is worshipped without a female consort; no impure materials are used in ritual (*dvaitācāra*). All this distinguishes the Sanskrit Śaiva Siddhānta from the much better known non-dualistic tantric Śaivism—often misleadingly labelled "Kashmir Śaivism". This esoteric and heterodox strand of tantric Śaivism is characterised by the adoration and visualization of personified Goddesses as well as the usage of impure materials in ritual (*advaitācāra*). The scriptural authorities of the Śaiva Siddhānta are the Śaiva Āgamas or Tantras, a textual corpus with generally dualistic metaphysics and theology. The earliest scriptures of this Śaiva tradition date before 800 AD.[20] Important for the development of the

20 See Goodall (1998: xxxix–xlvii) where he discusses criteria for a relative antiquity of Siddhānta Tantras and his excellent preface to the edition of the *Parākhyatantra* (2004). The earliest extant manuscripts seem to belong to the first half of the 9th century (xli, n. 95 and xliii, n. 97). Sanderson (1988: 663) gives a period of 400 to 800 AD for the composition of early Tantras.

Sanskrit Śaiva Siddhānta has been a lineage of Śaiva teachers forming a dualistic exegetical school of Śaivism that based itself on the Śaiva Tantras and started before the 10th century AD. This *guruparaṃparā* is known to us through a number of independent treatises, commentaries as well as ritual manuals. The authors of these *paddhati*s relied on the ritual sections of the Tantras but they presented the material of the different scriptural sources known to them in a homogenous and sequential way. This seems to be one of the reasons why these handbooks and not the ritual sections of the different Tantras became the main textual source for ritual practice. One of the most important sources is the *Kriyākāṇḍakramāvali* ("Continuous arrangement of the ritual sections [of the Tantras]") or simply *Somaśambhupaddhati* of Somaśambhu (11th century). Closely related with this work and much better known is the *Kriyākramadyotikā* ("Light on the arrangement of ritual") of Aghoraśivācārya (12th century).[21] Difficult to date but certainly later is the manual of Īśānaśivagurudeva (14th/15th cent.?).[22] Especially Aghoraśivācārya's and Īśānaśivagurudeva's manuals remained influential prescriptions for private worship (*svārthapūjā*) and to a large extant influenced public Śaiva temple worship (*parārthapūjā*) in South India until today.[23]

It is precisely because of the practice of royal initiation that we can postulate that the Śaiva Siddhānta was influential among the élites at various courts. Inscriptional evidence for the links of the Śaiva Siddhānta with royal patronage and regional monastic traditions has been already summarized.[24] I will therefore restrict myself to indicate some of the earliest references: a seventh century inscription in the Kailāsanātha temple in Kāñcī of the Pallava king Narasiṃha II (also called Rājasiṃha and Atyantakāma) mentions a "*śaivasiddhāntamārge*".[25] In the area of today's Madhya Pradesh we find references to the ninth-century royal initiation of Avantivarman by Purandara, the founder of the Mattamayūra and Raṇapadra monasteries. In Rajasthan the Rājor inscription by the Śaiva king Mathanadeva, vasal of the Gurjara-Pratihāra king Vijayapala, testifies of Śaiva Siddhāntikas and the construction of a Śaiva temple at Rajyapur (960 AD).[26] Finally the Karhad Plates of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Kṛṣṇa III record a gift to a Saiddhāntika ascetic in 959 AD. These references for royal patronage of the Śaiva Siddhānta might be best summed up by an observation of Ulrike Teuscher. After a survey of the inscriptural evidence for the relation of the king with Śaiva ascetic groups in early medieval Mewar she concludes:

> Es zeigt sich deutlich, daß es kaum Institutionen gab, auf die er [der König J.G.] zurückgreifen konnte. Die einzige starke Institution war offensichtlich die der

21 See Surdam (1984) on the *dīkṣāvidhi* in the *Kriyākramadyotikā*.
22 See Bühnemann (1999: 305) on the date of the Mantrapāda of this manual.
23 See the article of Brunner (1999) about the difficulties of comparing contemporary South Indian temple rituals with textual sources of medieval Śaiva Siddhānta.
24 See Davis (1991: 12–5; 168, n. 24) and especially Goodall (2004: xix–xx, n. 17, 18) for detailed references.
25 See Goodall (2004: xix, n. 17) for references and a discussion of the half-verse given by Hultzsch (1890: 12–4).
26 See Hooja (2006: 280) and Teuscher (2002: 61, 63).

> Asketenorganisationen. ... Der König erhielt offensichtlich, wie in den Inschriften angedeutet, eine Initiation als Asket. (Teuscher 2002: 69–70)

These examples of links between ascetic institution and royal initiations can be supplemented by more recent examples linked to the study of court ritual and ceremonies with a focus on the consecration of the monarch in the kingdom of Amber/Jaipur (Rajasthan) during the 18th century. The court protocol on the installation of the king mentions various categories of ritual specialists. Besides the royal chaplain or *rājapurohita*,[27] the *rājācārya* performing primarily the daily ritual, the already mentioned Royal Preceptor, *rājaguru* or *dīkṣāguru* who bestows the "*guru-mantra*" form part of the ritual specialists at court. The ritual and ceremonial interactions linked to the installation of the Mahārājā, the *rājyābhiṣeka* termed *rājatilaka* at the courts situated in Rajasthan, reveals a complex interdependence of the monarch and the ritual and religious specialists of various *saṃpradāya*s. Royal patronage of the religious groups and their temples and monasteries is directly linked to aspects of legitimation of kingship. The local dynasty of the Kachvāhās was connected to the Śaiva Nāthyogīs. This linkage to tantric Śaiva religious traditions seems to be a regular feature of the Rājput-kingdoms of this period that is especially well documented for Mewar and the Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas.[28] During the 16th century the Rāmānandīs took over the seat of the Nāthyogīs situated at Galtā near Amber. Kṛṣṇadās Payohārī, the head of this group of Rāmānandīs became the *dīkṣāguru* of Mahārājā Pṛthvīrāja (r. 1503–1527) in Amber and donated two images to Pṛthvīrāja that both became most important for the religious legitimation of the dynasty: a statue of Sītārāma and a *śālāgrāma* representing Narasiṃha. Kṛṣṇadās Payohārī thus succeded in establishing a strong and lasting interrelation between the Rāmānandīs and the Rājput dynasty of the Kachvāhās:

> ... il mit fin aux liens privilégiés que sa dynastie avait établis avec les Nātha, ... Dès lors, Rāma remplaça Śiva comme élément central de la religion du royaume. Cette révolution religieuse au palais porta un coup très dur à la tradition nātha: forts du soutien royal, les Rāmānandī s'établirent à Galta, le lieu sacré des Nātha au sud-est d'Amber, et en firent le centre de leur mouvement. (Clémentin-Ojha 1999: 28)

A recent dispute shows the importance of royal initiations and the position of being the personal priest of the king. In 1944 this very lineage of Rāmānandīs with their seat in Galtā near Jaipur had to prove that they are initiating the king in the prescribed way.

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27 The documents on the *rājatilaka* of Mahārājā Savāī Pratāpsingh (r. 1778–1803) distinguish between two kinds of *rājapurohita*s: the *purohita*s of the court (*hajūrī*) and the local or regional (*deś*) *purohita*s (*Syāhā Hajūrī* V.S. 1835, Jyeṣṭha, vadi 2).

28 See for more details and references the excellent summary of available evidence by Ulrike Teuscher (2002: 59–70). She states that "śivaitische Asketenorden ... seit dem 10. Jh. in fast allen Rajputenstaaten eine außerordentliche Machtposition einnahmen." (2002: 60) and "Ihr Aufstieg zu Offizianten königlicher Kulte verlief weitgehend parallel mit dem der neuentstehenden frühmittelalterlichen Staaten." (ibid.: 61). See Sanderson (2009) for a detailed study on the rise of Śaivism during the early medieval period.

With the help of the 19th century court protocol (1828, 1845) this group of Rāmānujīya-Rāmānandīs could show that they apply the correct Rāma-mantra (*ṣaḍakṣara-mantra*, also *tulasī* and *taptamudrā*) of the Rāmānandī tradition and not the Nārāyaṇa-mantra (*aṣṭākṣara-mantra*) of the Rāmānujīyas.[29]

Conversion or initiation?

Coming back to the two elements of *dīkṣā* and *liṅgoddhāra* one might ask whether the sequence of acts prescribed during *liṅgoddhāra* that is given as a prerequisite for the initiation into Śaiva Siddhānta should be called a conversion? I would like to give a positive answer by referring to a classification of conversions given by Lewis R. Rambo in his monograph *Understanding Religious Conversion* (1993). He attempts to define "how far someone has to go socially and culturally in order to be considered a convert" (ibid.: 13) and enumerates five different kinds of conversions:

1) *apostasy, defection*: "the repudiation of a religious tradition or its beliefs by previous members."
2) *intensification*: "the revitalized commitment to a faith with which the convert has had previous affiliation, formal or informal."
3) *affiliation*: "the movement of an individual or group from no or minimal religious commitment to full involvement with an institution or community of faith."
4) *institutional transition*: "involves the change of an individual or group from one community to another within the same major tradition."
5) *tradition transition*: "the movement of an individual or a group from one major religious tradition to another." (ibid.: 13–4)

Of the five categories in Rambo's classification *institutional transition* (4) and *tradition transition* (5) are most relevant. If one considers Buddhism and Jainism[30] as "major religious traditions" as opposed to "Hinduism" the described ritual process would fall under the category of a conversion that leads to a "tradition transition". The conversion of the Vedāntins, Vaiṣṇavas, Pāśupatas or Mahāvratas would then take place within the same major tradition of Hinduism and belong to the category "institutional transition". But the ritual prescription of the *Somaśambhupaddhati* makes clear that the distinction between the mentioned religious traditions is gradual, not categorical. It is obviously not intended to distinguish between categories like Hinduism, Buddhism or Jainism. Although the six groups are listed in a hierarchical sequence, no distinct acts for the transformation of the soul of a Buddhist or a Jaina are prescribed on the level of the rit-

29 See Horstmann (2009: 4–6; 171–9; 2002) for more detailed information about the present conflict in Galtā and its background. Another case of "conversion" in Jaipur, this time from Vaiṣṇavism to Śaivism, by Mahārājā Savāī Rāmsingh II (r. 1835–1880) and the subsequent *tilakavivāda* in the 1860s is described by Clémentin-Ojha (1999).

30 On the Śaiva-Jain encounter in medieval South India see Davis (1998) and Monius (2004).

ual activity. It makes no difference whether a Pāśupata-Śaiva or a Buddhist converts to Śaiva Siddhānta, only the number of *tattva*s that are deposed into the fire varies: 22 for the Buddhist and 31 for the Pāśupata. The Buddhists and Jainas are not subject to a specific treatment because they are considered to belong to a different "major religious tradition". Therefore the distinction between the categories 4) "institutional transition" and category 5) "tradition transition" does not apply in the present case. Nevertheless, the fact that absolutely no value is ascribed to the merit acquired by the previous religious and ritual acts of the members of the six groups underlines that the „tradition transition" has to be considered as a conversion.

Lewis Rambo (1993: 20–43) rightly states in his chapter on "context", that for a typology of conversion the social, cultural and historical context of the prescribed ritual of conversion has to be taken into consideration. In the presented ritual prescription the boundaries between the religious traditions appear to be rigid, a fact that might reflect the specific historical and religious context of this tradition. In their introduction to the volume *Religious Conversion in India* (2003) Robinson & Clarke state:

> What the boundaries of the renounced tradition are is itself by no means an unambiguous question and has been answered differently by different denominations at different periods of time. ... Moreover we are aware that certain historical periods have seen the rise of the pursuit of exclusion and the struggle to delineate boundaries tightly among traditions, which did not always subscribe to these notions... (ibid.: 7)

The term "conversion" is in South Asia most prominently used in the context of Hindu-Muslim interaction and in the colonial period. But as I have shown, issues of conversion and initiation should be seen in a larger historical context of competition between rival religious and ritual traditions as well as examples of actual ritual prescriptions.[31] But the perspective on conversion is still dominated by an approach highlighted in William Dalrymple's book on the *White Mughals* (2002) where he provides us for the 17th and 18th century with an image of vivid interactions between European mercenaries, businessman and employees of the East India Company. We find references of Europeans who not only smoke Huqqa, wear Indian cloths, are surrounded by a Harem and Indian servants, but also do convert to Islam, at that time the dominant religion at the courts. When it comes to Hinduism in this somewhat romantic description of an atmosphere of fluidity and amalgamation of varying cultural and religious practices, we do learn about a "Hindoo-Stuart" who apparently lived and travelled with a whole entourage of Hindu gods and goddesses. One would therefore expect the same kind of fluidity and accounts of conversions from Christianity to Hinduism. But Dalrymple makes

31 The removal of the sectarian marks is only rarely taken into consideration in the modern discourses on conversion in South Asia. Among the examples that refer to *liṅgoddhāra* while discussing conversion are: Clémentin-Ojha (1994: 104, n. 5), von Stietencron (1995: 52–66), Michaels (2004: 20) and Raman (2007: 284).

out in all the instability, change and flexibility an unchangeable, universally accepted rule within the religion of the Hindus:

> Technically it is impossible to convert to Hinduism: as much a social system as a religion, to be a Hindu you must be born a Hindu; traditionally there was no ceremony for conversion. No one, however, seems to have told this to 'Hindoo Stuart'. (2002: 42)

This view seems to echo the statement by the authority on Dharmaśāstra P.V. Kane given in the chapter on *upanayana* in the context of a section on *vrātyastoma*:

> Hinduism has not been an avowedly proselytizing religion. In theory it could not be so. For about two thousand years the caste system has reigned supreme and no one can in theory be admitted to the Hindu fold who is not born in it.[32]

Kane then goes on by saying "The ancient smṛtis do not expressly prescribe any rites for bringing into the Brahmanic or Hindu fold a person who or whose ancestors did not belong to it" (1974: 388). But since as in the case of "Hindoo Stuart", who "in theory" could not exist, Kane admits that there exist exceptions to the prescribed rule. Not only by absorption[33] but also by the performance of rituals that allow the inclusion of outsiders into the Hindu religion:

> In a very few cases persons born in western countries have been taken into the Hindu fold by the performance of vrātyastoma and other rites. But such instances are very rare and are not yet supported by the vast majority of Hindus. (ibid.: 391–2)

To conclude I would like to raise the question if we possess additional evidence for ritual actions that fall under the category of conversions to the religious traditions labelled as "Hinduism". Most prominent in the numerous studies on conversions in South Asia are processes of apostasy and defection from Hinduism that have led to conversions to Islam, Buddhism or Christianity.[34] Dominant in the discourse on conversion to Hinduism is the movement that performed re-conversions of Christians, Muslims and Sikhs to Hinduism at the end of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th century. These purificatory rituals called *śuddhi* are invented by Dayananda Sarasvati's (1824–83) Ārya Samāj and can be seen as a reaction to the activity of Christian missionaries mainly in North India (Punjab, Kashmir, Bengal).[35] The term *śuddhi* is used for this rite because it "restores to the Hindu that ritual purity which is necessary for the performance of Hindu

32 Kane (1974: 387). I have corrected one obvious but crucial typo: "For about two thousand years the caste system has reigned supreme and on [read "no" J.G.] one can in theory be admitted to the Hindu fold who is not born in it."

33 "But as Hinduism has been extremely tolerant (barring a few exceptional instances) it had a wonderful power of quiet and unobstrusive absorption" (Kane 1974: 388).

34 See especially Robinson & Clarke (2003), Viswanathan (1998, 2003) and Oddie (1991, 1997).

35 See Jordens (1991: 218) who reports for the Punjab an increase of the Christian converts from 4,000 to 19,000 between 1881 and 1891.

rites, and for social interaction with his caste-fellows" (Jordens 1991: 215). While only two instances of reconversions are recorded during Dayananda Sarasvati's life the number of *śuddhi*s increased considerably from 1900 onwards. Jordens (ibid.: 221) mentions 60,000 to 70,000 re-conversions that have taken place in the Punjab by 1910; between 1911 and 1921 the number of members of the Ārya Samāj in Kashmir rouse from 1,000 to 23,000. This highlights the important fact that although the convert was reinstated in his former caste, generally access to religious rites was only possible by being enrolled in the Ārya Samāj. The ritual practice and the effectiveness of the *śuddhi* were not without contestations. Dayānanda Sarasvatī never prescribed the precise sequence of acts for the performance of the *śuddhi*. Since participation and involvement in the reconversion created danger of excommunication a sequence of rites that found approval by orthodox pandits was fixed in 1893. Among the prescribed elements were a purificatory fast and bath followed by a *homa*, the shaving of the head and the explanation of the *gāyatrī*. Investiture with the sacred thread followed where applicable and finally the duties of the Ārya Samāj were explained. The prescribed rites do therefore combine elements of a *prāyaścitta*, *upanayana* and *dīkṣā*.[36]

I have already stated that one should consider the removal of the sectarian characteristics as a conversion in the sense of a tradition or institutional transition. If one looks at the prescribed sequence of rites one should be more precise. The *liṅgoddhāra* proper does not create a new member or *punarbhū* of the group of Śaiva Siddhāntins. The result of the destruction of the sectarian marks of the Mahāvrata, Pāśupata, Bhāgavata, Vedāntin, Jaina and Buddhist is not a Śaiva Siddhāntin but a householder in the state prior to his becoming a member of one of these traditions. The bearer of the sectarian characteristics (*liṅgin*) looses all of these characteristics and in this state he could be placed in Rambo's classification under the last category "defection, apostasy", since it must be seen as a "repudiation of a religious tradition or its beliefs by previous members". But for a Śaiva ritual manual it would make no sense to stop on that level. The intention is of course to create a new *liṅgin* or *dīkṣita* who is initiated into the Śaiva Siddhānta. Therefore from the point of view of Somaśambhu's manual the ritual of conversion consists of two separate elements. The removal of the sectarian marks *liṅgoddhāra* and the initiation into the tradition. Therefore it seems to be necessary to add an additional aspect to the description of initiations in general as well as the royal initiations by Śaiva officiants. These initiations could be seen in the context of a practice of bestowing several layers of non-competing initiations as exemplified in the often quoted statement "privately Kaula, publicly Śaiva and Vedic in one's intercourse" (Sanderson 1988: 699). But it might as well be possible that at times where the delineation of sectarian and ritual boundaries was of importance a close link between *dīkṣā* and *liṅgoddhāra*, initiation and conversion did exist.

36 The details of the ritual practice need further study, for a summary of some of the rites performed see Jordens (1991: 218–9) and Clémentin-Ojha (1994: 100–3). On the postulation of a relation between the *śuddhi* and *vrātyastoma* by some members of the Ārya Samāj see Clémentin-Ojha (1994: 107).

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Ute Hüsken

Challenges to a Vaiṣṇava Initiation?

In mid-May 2006 the DMK government[1] of Tamil Nadu decided that "qualified persons of any caste can be priests in any temple run by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments." Accordingly, since then several schools for Brahmins and non-Brahmins for teaching temple rituals have been set up in Tamil Nadu.[2] It was announced that young men "of all communities" who passed the eighth standard, aged between fourteen and twenty-four years, can join the training program. The one-year-long training course, accommodation, food, clothing and teaching materials are free in these institutions. Furthermore the students are given a monthly stipend of 500 Indian rupees. Since traditionally in south Indian Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva temples the ritual is performed by specially initiated Brahmin priests alone, as soon as this new training program was announced, protest was voiced by the temple priests and their organisations.[3] The objections against this program were concerned with interference of the secular government in religious affairs, especially in trying to influence the performance and language of

1 This party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), was founded 1949 by C.N. Annadurai. From the beginning, it rather stood for the interests of the Tamilians than for those of south India as a whole and especially is opposed to the perceived "foreign" sanskritic-Brahmanic traditions. Thus, this party in 1971 abolished hereditary priesthood (see Presler 1978: 106–9). The priests successfully opposed to this and in 1974 brought to pass a stay order stating that in all temples the rituals should continue "according to tradition". Thus, the hereditary transmission of the priestly profession in fact continues to be practiced. In 1972 part of the DMK split from the party and formed the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). Since then, the government of Tamil Nadu changes basically during every election (every five years) and either DMK or AIADMK (which is much more pro-Brahmanic), form coalitions with smaller parties and rule the state.

2 According to the Tamil Newspaper "Dinamalar" (dated 12.5.2007) training institutions for Vaiṣṇava temple priests (*arcaka*s) have been set up in Chennai, near the Vaikhānasa Pārthasārathi temple, and in Śrīraṅgam. For Śaiva priests training institutions have been set up in Tiruvannamalai, at the Arunacaleśvara temple, in Madurai at the Mīnakṣī temple, and in the Palani and Tiruchandur Murugan temples. The author of this essay visited the training center in Śrīraṅgam in early summer 2007.

3 Thus, the Adi Saiva Sivachariyargal Nala Sangam, an association of priests from Madurai and Trichi successfully filed a petition: the Supreme Court on the 14th of August 2006 stayed the Tamil Nadu Government Ordinance allowing the appointment of *arcaka*s of the temples "without any discrimination of caste and creed," on the basis of the argument that "TN ordinance amounts to interfering in religious freedom" (see TheHindu.online, 14.8.2006; see also NDTV.com, 14.8.2006). The Tamil Nadu Government responded by proposing a 69% reservation rate for students from all communities (see also "Dinamalar", dated 27.5.2007). On similar procedures in the early 1970s, see Presler (1978).

temple rituals.[4] However, apart from these rather sporadic protests, this initiative by the state government failed to cause a major uproar among the Brahmins priests, whose inherited profession seems to be seriously challenged by this legislation. The priests by and large took it rather calmly. Some—albeit few—of the temple priests evidently even volunteered as teachers in these training programs.[5]

Becoming a priest (*arcaka*) in south Indian Brahmin temples[6] is tied to certain preconditions, only one of which is challenged by this new legislation of opening up the priestly profession to members of all communities. While this legislation is presented and perceived as social reform, other important preconditions for becoming a temple priest are, however, not put into question. This is, I argue, one of the major factors contributing to the Brahmin priests' relative ease when being confronted with this new legislation and its impending practical implementation.

Taking my research on the texts of the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra tradition and my field research at the Varadarāja Perumāḷ temple in the south Indian town Kāñcipuram as examples, in this essay I will raise questions regarding initiation, learning and ritual competence, its definition in a given context, its transmission and its confirmation. These examples illustrate, I argue, how a ritual tradition is maintained and changed at the same time.

I present here one of the initiation rituals as it is represented in the relevant ritual texts, analyse diverse layers of meaning implicitly conveyed by the text (especially concerning *adhikāra*, the eligibility conferred with the initiation ritual), and proceed then to describe and compare the initiations and other preconditions required for present day priests at the south Indian Varadarāja Perumāḷ temple in Kāñcipuram.[7] In the

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4 Although this issue was according to my knowledge not prominent in the program, the priests' worries about the language of the ritual performances is not at all unfounded, since the DMK government repeatedly tried to enforce temple service to be conducted in Tamil instead of Sanskrit.

5 Thus one main priest from the Śrīraṅgam temple was appointed as principal and teacher of the training centre in Śrīraṅgam. He also was member of the committee selecting the students. One of his motivations was certainly that being involved as a major actor also implies a chance to influence the proceedings. Thus already in February 2007 he wrote in a letter to the Hindu Religious Endowment Board officer insisting that the students, in order to be taught the Vedas, had to have undergone the *upanayana saṃskāra*, and in order to be allowed to touch the god and to perform his worship, they had to undergo the so-called *samāśrayaṇa* initiation and a Pāñcarātra *dīkṣā* (on this, see below).

6 Usually the priests (*arcaka*)—at least in Vaiṣṇava temples—are the only ones who may have bodily contact with the image of the god, in which the god is (made) present.

7 "Initiation" is understood here as comprising both, *saṃskāra*s and *dīkṣā*s. *Saṃskāra*s are life-cycle rituals, the rituals which literally "make a person perfect" in the sense that they realise the potential inherent in a person (see B.K. Smith 1989: 82–6, 91–2). This potential depends on the gender, and the family background (class, or caste), and other circumstances, most of which are determined before birth. These rituals accompany a person's life and mark the transition from one stage in life to another. In contrast, the term *dīkṣā* refers to a (theoretically) optional initiation, which confers a special competence or eligibility (for the performance of rituals, in our case) to the person who undergoes it. However, *dīkṣā*s are usually also tied to certain preconditions; they are usually not conferred to just everybody. I refer to both, *saṃskāra* and *dīkṣā*, as initiation rituals in the sense that they serve to demarcate a group's identity, they mark a change of religious status for those who un-

next step, I will take into account what the contemporary performers think about these issues, how they deal with more recent challenges to their right (and obligation) to perform temple rituals, and also look at the issue of how not only the eligibility, but also the ability to perform these rituals is acquired by them. This will lead to more general reflections on the connection of ritual texts, practice, and understanding in these traditions.

Adhikāra for Vaiṣṇava temple priests

The south Indian Vaiṣṇava ritual tradition in question, called Pāñcarātra, has a vast literature on temple rituals, written in Sanskrit, containing rules and regulations on how to perform them.[8] This literature, the earliest texts of which were already in use before the 10th century CE, is written and transmitted by and for ritual specialists (priests) in Vaiṣṇava temples, called *arcaka* or *ācārya*.[9] The priests are mediators between god and humans in the context of public temple rituals. These rituals are "for others" (*parārtha*), as opposed to the rituals a householder performs "for himself" (*svārtha*) and his family.[10] The priestly profession is, as mentioned above, traditionally not open to all. The right to perform *parārtha* rituals is in the ritual texts and in present day discourse usually called *adhikāra* ("eligibility"). According to the Sanskrit texts this eligibility to perform rituals "for others" in south Indian Vaiṣṇava temples is acquired through several initiation rituals (*dīkṣā* and *saṃskāra*).[11]

Text as sole authority?

Asked about ritual norms, members of this Vaiṣṇava group invariably refer to "tradition." This tradition is nowadays mainly understood as being fixed in and by the above-

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dergo them, they make the concerned person a member of a group, they change the relation between individual and former group of not initiated persons, and they mark the fact that the concerned person has acquired a new competence.

8 For an overview over Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās, see Schrader (1916), Smith & Venkatachari (1975 and 1980), and Rastelli (1999a, 1999b, 2006).

9 In the context of temple ritual, the term *ācārya* describes a "master" by contrast with a simple temple priest, who is usually described as an *arcaka* or, though rarely in the Saṃhitā texts, as *pūjaka* (see Colas 1996: 129f., 153). In the temple, an *ācārya* is responsible for the proceedings and leads the rituals while other priests assist him. The *ācārya* takes the highest place in the hierarchy of ritual specialists in the temple (see Colas 1996: 132, 143, 153f.).

10 The life-cycle rituals (*saṃskāra*) a Brahmin householder performs for himself and for his family are for example *svārtha*, whereas temple rituals, which are "for others", comprise the big yearly temple festivals and all other daily or monthly rituals performed for a god in a temple.

11 A summary of the textual accounts of Pāñcarātra initiations (*dīkṣā*) is given in Gupta (1979). On the life-cycle rituals called *saṃskāra* see Pandey (1949) and Kane (1974).

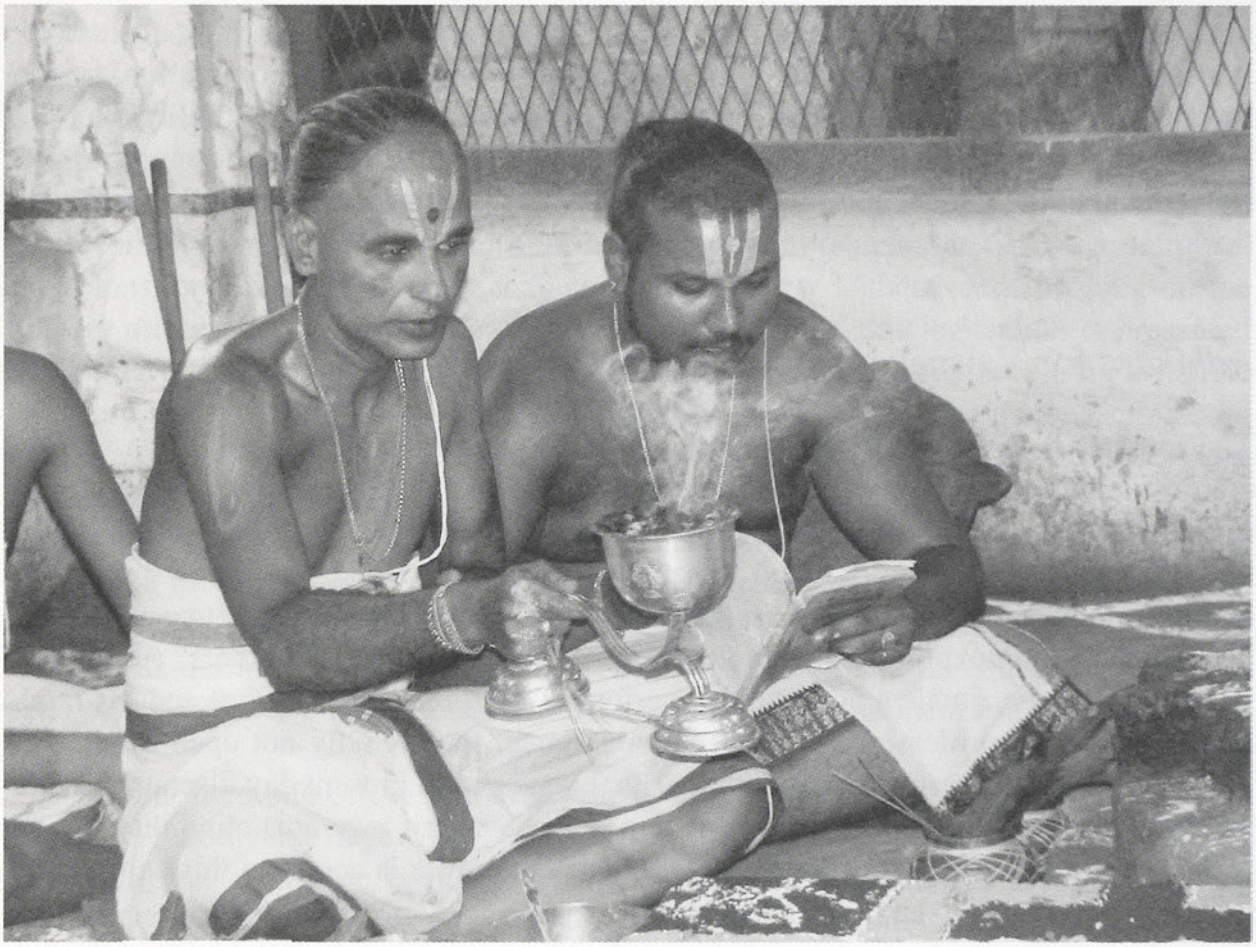

Plate 1: Ritual handbooks are sometimes consulted while performing temple rituals.

mentioned mediaeval Sanskrit texts, the Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās, usually referred to by the term *āgama*.[12] These Sanskrit texts are invoked, cited, and referred to as *the* authority. The authority attributed to them is also expressed by one phrase, frequently used when a ritual practice is subject to criticism: "This is deviating from the Āgama rule."[13]

The more recent printed ritual handbooks,[14] which are in one way or the other based on these mediaeval Sanskrit texts, in addition include commentaries and explanations in vernacular languages such as Tamil, Kannada or Telugu, in order to make their content comprehensible to those priests who have no or only little knowledge of Sanskrit.

These ritual handbooks are at times even used during the performances (see plate 1). However, in spite of the constant reference to texts as main authority, the physical use of printed texts is actually assessed ambivalently: while on the one hand this use of texts during performances is appreciated as a proof of "following the authentic tradi-

12 See Chaudhari (1995: 406) on the use of the terms *āgama* and *saṃhitā*.

13 This is also one of the objections most frequently brought forward against the institution of the Āgama schools for members of "all communities", mentioned in the introductory portion of this essay.

14 See, e.g. *Ālayanityārcanapaddhati*, *Bhagavadārādhanakrama*, *Mahotsavaprayoga*, *Śrībhagavadārādhanakrama*, and *Śrīpāñcarātra Pātmasamhitā Tvajārōhaṇaviti*.

tion",[15] on the other, it is also evaluated by the ritual specialists themselves as a deficiency, since it reveals that the knowledge of the acting priest is insufficient and that he has to resort to guidelines in the form of a text.[16] Thus, from the latter perspective, in spite of the authority attributed to them, in practice these texts are not conceived as models that should be followed word-for-word (see Welbon 1984: 97; Brunner-Lachaux 1999: 263–8; Fuller 2003: 81, 87).

In fact, a close look at the Sanskrit ritual texts reveals that their prescriptions remain largely incomprehensible without a certain amount of pre-knowledge. Moreover, the rituals prescribed therein have to be constantly adapted to the concrete place and circumstances of their performance. This insight inevitably leads to the question of what is, and what is not stated in these ritual texts? Additional performative knowledge, gained mainly through experience is required to translate text into practice. Thus, knowledge of texts *and* knowledge of how to apply them, including knowledge of how to react creatively and convincingly on contingencies is an essential part of priestly competence. Text and performance are therefore never 100% congruent. Yet the priests' claim that their rituals are performed "according to the Āgamas" is perfectly valid, too.

The *cakrābjamaṇḍala* initiation procedures according to the *Pādmasaṃhitā*

I will now illustrate this point by taking initiation rituals for the Pāñcarātra priests in the south Indian Varadarāja Perumāḷ temple (short: Varadarāja temple) as an example, thereby discussing the relation of the "ideal" (that is, textually prescribed) procedures with the actual enactment of the rituals, and at the same time introducing an important initiation that confers *adhikāra* (eligibility) to a priestly candidate within the Pāñcarātra tradition.

While the diverse Pāñcarātrasaṃhitās differ in details regarding the *dīkṣā*s described in them, nowadays evidently only one single text is used and referred to in actual practice for the performance of Pāñcarātra initiations, namely the *Pādmasaṃhitā*. This text is said to be based on the older text *Jayakhyāsaṃhitā*[17] which, together with the *Sāt-*

15 Following a text in this view can be equated to following a "frozen rule-bound structure" which permits no variance in the rituals which might endanger the efficacy of the rituals performed.

16 Thus, the scene depicted in plate 1 was strongly criticized by some participants.

17 *Pādmasaṃhitā* is the main text followed in the Varadarāja temple in Kāñcipuram. According to the priests serving in this temple, no ritual handbooks (*prayogas, paddhati*s) are used by them. The information given by the *Pādmasaṃhitā* is considered to be sufficient. The *Jayakhyāsaṃhitā*, however, is said to contain more detailed information on the ritual ablutions (Skt. *abhiṣeka* / Tamil *tirumañjana*) and on the big yearly festival Brahmotsava, whereas the *Pādmasaṃhitā* contains more detailed instructions on how to erect for example the *cakrābjamaṇḍala*, used during the yearly Pavitrotsava festival and required for the *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* (on Pavitrotsava, see Hüsken 2006).

vatasaṃhitā and *Pauṣkarasaṃhitā* constitutes the so-called "three gems".[18] These "three gems" most probably were already in use in the tenth century CE (see Rastelli 1999: introduction). In contrast, the *Pādmasaṃhitā* is considerably younger (ca. 13th/14th century CE). The initiations depicted in the texts differ: while the older *Jayakhyāsaṃhitā* knows four different *dīkṣā*s which are described as differing in form, content, and result,[19] in the *Pādmasaṃhitā* only the so-called *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* (the initiation by means of a wheel-shaped lotus *maṇḍala*) is described. This *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* is in fact performed today for future temple priests in the Varadarāja temple in Kāñcipuram.

The *Pādmasaṃhitā* gives the following description of the *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* (*Pādmasaṃhitā*, *caryāpāda* 2.3–84):[20]

> First a pavilion has to be built (2.3) and the fire pit for the sacrificial fire is to be established (2.4). The form and cardinal direction of the fire pit depends on the *varṇa* of the person to be initiated (2.4–6). The length of the sacrificial ladles (*sruc* and *sruva*) likewise is determined by the *varṇa* of the candidate (2.7). The proper time for the preparation and the *dīkṣā* itself are mentioned as the tenth or eleventh day of a fortnight (2.7–8). The initiation starts with an invocation ceremony (*adhivāsana*). In the pavilion a *cakrābjamaṇḍala* has to be established and a "door-jar" (*dvārakumbha*) is to be set up (2.8–9). The guru, after meditating, is to prepare a jar and a water vessel made of gold and other metals (2.9). He fills them with water, with jewels inside, covers the jars completely with thread, places a garland on them and smears sandal paste on them. He covers the jars with new clothes and speaks one hundred times the *astramantra* over them (2.10–11). He pours water around the altar and places the vessels on the north-eastern side of the *maṇḍala* on a base made of grain, reciting the *mūlavidyāmantra* (2.12–13). Then he invokes and worships Viṣṇu in the jar and in the *maṇḍala* (2.14). He kindles the sacrificial fire and places it in the fire pit, while reciting the *aṣṭākṣaramantra* (2.15). The mash (*caru*) cooked by this fire is afterwards presented to Viṣṇu in the *maṇḍala*, in the jar, and in the fire, and the fourth part is consumed by the preceptor. The offering of 108 wooden sticks (*samidh*) (2.16–17) is followed by the sacrifice of clarified butter while reciting the corresponding mantras. The sacrifice is ended by a "complete oblation" (*pūrṇāhuti*) (2.18). The candidate, adorned and clad in new clothes, is then blindfolded, and made to sit to the right of the preceptor, facing east (2.19–20). The preceptor touches him with *darbha* grass while reciting the *puṇḍarīkākṣavidyā*. Then he offers twelve clarified butter offerings and *caru* into the fire (2.21). An offering of *samidh* sticks, flowers and sesame seeds while performing the *prasṛtimudrā* follows. Then the preceptor circumambulates the fire and touches the

18 See Schrader 1916, introduction.

19 These are *dīkṣā*s for the *samayin*, *putraka*, *sādhaka* and *ācārya* (see Gupta 1979).

20 I wish to thank Dr. Johanna Buss, Vienna, for providing me with a draft translation of this section of the *Pādmasaṃhitā*, which is paraphrased here (see also Smith & Venkatachari 1975: 225–6).

head of the candidate three times (2.22) and, while reciting the *āṣṭākṣaramantra* and the *ūrdhvapūṇḍraka*, smears white ashes on his forehead (2.23) and ties a thread around his wrist. The candidate is then given *caru* and a mixture of the five cow products to eat (2.24). Then the candidate cleans his teeth with a stick, then throws this stick on the ground (2.26). The direction of the top of this stick indicates the auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of the procedures (2.26). If inauspiciousness is indicated, a *śāntihoma* (pacifying fire offering) should be performed, which requires the preceptor to recite the *narasiṃhamantra* 108 times while offering sesame seeds into the fire (2.27). Then the guru leads the candidate by the hand in front of the god, makes him bow to the god (2.28), and has him recite: "For the sake of release from the fetters of the unreleased souls, which are bound in the fetters of *saṃsāra,* only you, oh God, are the refuge. No other refuge can be found. The cause for release of the fetters consists in the propitiation of you. I know, that you, oh Lord of gods, are able to free these unreleased beings, which are bound through the fetter of (re)births." (2.29–31). The preceptor then winds a thread, consisting of three strands, twenty-five times around the body of the candidate, from his top-knot to his feet, touching him while reciting the *mūlamantra* (2.32–34). Then follows another sacrifice of clarified butter, while the preceptor recites the *svapnādhipatimantra* 108 times (2.35). In conclusion then a bean porridge offering (*bali*) to the *bhūta*s is performed (2.36). The thread and the blindfolding are removed and deposited on a dish (2.37) which is covered with another dish, and the candidate should go to sleep (2.38). In the next morning, at dawn, in case the candidate had an inauspicious dream, another *śāntihoma* is to be performed. Both the preceptor and the candidate enter the sacrificial pavilion after having taken a bath (2.39–40). The god is worshipped in the doorways, banners, in the *maṇḍala*, and in the jar [of the pavilion]. The god is fed, and the preceptor bows and circumambulates the sacrificial place (2.41). Again, the candidate is blindfolded, is made to sit, and again *samidh* sticks are offered into the fire (2.42). Then the preceptor recites the *mūlamantra* and meanwhile cuts the thread which had been tied around the candidate's body (2.43), and instructs the candidate the twenty-five *tattva*s (2.44). Now the preceptor contemplates "on the highest light in the lotus of his own heart and the highest *puruṣa*". In his heart he also visualizes the soul of the candidate (2.45), mentally destroys the candidate's body, meditates on the egg that comes from his own heart (2.46), and then lets the candidate's soul emanate, while offering the pieces of thread into the fire, addressing the *tattva*s in their right order (2.47). He furthermore should reflect upon the "splitting of the egg" and contemplates on the "self that is born through the self." (2.48). Now the blindfold is removed while the preceptor recites the *mūlamantra*, and the candidate puts on another cloth, washes his feet (2.49), and sips water. He is again blindfolded and mentally purifies himself (2.50–51). The preceptor continues the sacrifice, touches the feet of the candidate (2.52), the candidate's navel, his heart region and his head, sacrificing various substances into the fire (2.53). Again he

offers clarified butter 108 times while reciting the *mūlamantra*. At the end of the *homa* he then takes the candidate by his right hand (2.54), leads him clockwise around the fire to the jar and the *maṇḍala* (2.55), and fills the candidate's open hands either with jewels, pearls and corals, or with flowers (2.56). Instructed by the preceptor, the students scatters the flowers on the *maṇḍala*. The place where most of the flowers fall determines the first part of the name of the candidate (2.57–58). The second part of his new name is "Bhaṭṭaraka" if it is a Brahmin, if he is a Kṣatriya it is "Deva", for a Vaiśya it should be "Pāla", and for someone born in the low castes it should be "Dāsa". Now the blindfold is removed and the candidate is made to look at the *cakramaṇḍala* (2.59–60). Both the preceptor and the candidate meditate on Nārāyaṇa, and thereafter the preceptor delivers the mantra into the right ear of the candidate, which starts with "oṃ". The mantras to be delivered are first the twelve-syllabled mantra, then the eight-syllabled mantra (2.61–62), and then the *mūrtimantra*. Afterwards the preceptor makes the candidate meditate (2.63). If the candidate is a woman or a Śūdra, or an *anuloma*, the mantras have to be taught without "*oṃ*", "*huṃ*", "*phaṭ*", and the sacrifice has to be performed without the words "*vaṣaṭ*", "*svāhā*" and without the syllable "*oṃ*" (2.64). The candidate now worships Viṣṇu in the jar on the *maṇḍala* (2.65) and then stands up, the hands in the *añjali* gesture, while the preceptor visualises the *maṇḍala* on the candidate's head, and deposits Viṣṇu's hand in the hand of the candidate. In front of the fire the preceptor instructs the candidate on the rules of right conduct (2.66–67). [The rules are given in 2.68–80 and are mainly about keeping the secrets of the initiation, respecting his preceptor, and the candidate's daily ritual duties, moral conduct and study, following the *sūtra* he inherited]. The initiation ends with a *śāntihoma* and a "complete oblation" (*pūrṇāhuti*) (2.81). The preceptor then releases the god from the jar and the *maṇḍala* and blesses the candidate (2.82–83), who, according to his capacity, hands over the ritual fee (mentioned are a cow, land, gold, ornaments and a carriage and female and male servants) to the preceptor (2.83). At sunset the newly initiated person, with his ornaments, is taken to his house (2.84).

Here, as well as in a passage preceding this section (*Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 1.3–9), it becomes clear that not only Brahmins, but members af all *varṇa*s, and even women are eligible to be initiated, and thus can become Pāñcarātrikas. However, in *Pādmasaṃhitā caryāpāda* 1.7–9, the eligibility to perform worship *for others* is restricted to Brahmins who are endowed with the life-cycle rituals (*saṃskāra*).

Thus, although the pattern of the performances is identical, according to this text the competence (*adhikāra*) resulting from this initiation depends on the *varṇa* and gender of the candidate: while the *cakrābjamaṇḍala* initiation can be performed for almost everybody, only for Brahmins it does result in the eligibility to perform temple rituals.

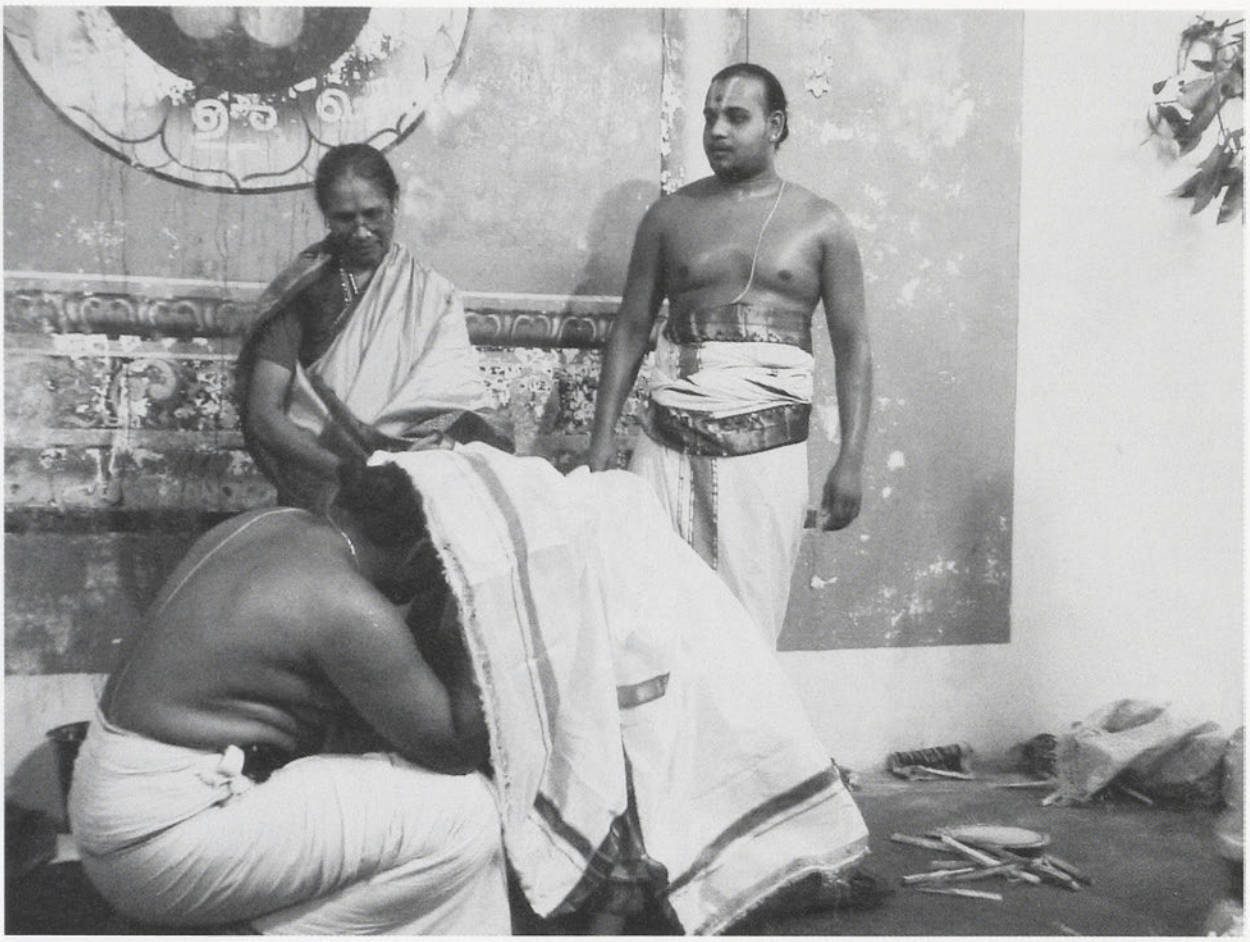

Plate 2: As part of *upanayana* the *gāyatrīmantra* is taught to the boy.

Initiation as a priest in present day practice

Present day practice, however, proves to be more exclusive. The performance is abbreviated and differs slightly, depending on the candidate's family background, his affiliation to one of the two dominant Vaiṣṇava sects (Teṉkalai and Vaṭakalai), among other issues. This shall be explored further below.

In order to be eligible to serve as a priest (*arcaka*) in the Varadarāja temple, several preconditions have to be met. First and foremost, only male candidates from six specified Brahmin families in Kāñcipuram are eligible to serve as *arcaka*s in the Varadarāja temple.[21] They acquire this eligibility through a series of four initiation rituals (*saṃskāra*s and *dīkṣā*s). These four "ritual components" of their *adhikāra* are the life-cycle cycle rituals *upanayana* and *vivāha*, and the initiation rituals called *pañcasaṃskāra* (or *samāśrayaṇa*) and the *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā*.

21 Only four of these six families are "active" in the sense that they in fact perform the rituals in the temple. At present, the other two families "rent" their "shares" (Tamil *muṟai*) in the rituals to members of the other four families. Oral tradition has it that the legal stipulation of these six families took place in colonial times (no written documents are available to the author of this essay).

Plate 3: The metal symbols of disk and conch are heated in the sacrificial fire.

The sequence of the rituals' performance is as follows: for the potential future temple priests (as for other Brahmins), *upanayana* is the initiation into Vedic studentship, ideally performed when a boy is between eight and twelve years old (see plate 2). This life-cycle ritual makes the boy eligible to learn the Veda and to wear the sacred thread—it is his "second birth" as Brahmin. This ritual is the precondition for the other three initiations. The second ritual necessary for any temple priest of this tradition (and in this temple) is called *pañcasaṃskāra* (also called *samāśrayaṇa*).[22] This is an initiation into Vaiṣṇavahood, into being a devotee of the god Viṣṇu, and is, nowadays, performed not long after *upanayana*. It consists of five elements, one of them is the branding of the boy's or young man's upper arms with two heated metal symbols of the god Viṣṇu's weapons, disk (*cakra*) and conch (*śaṅkha*) (see plate 3). Only after this ritual is performed another initiation, the *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* (described after its textual account above), can be performed. This initiation by means of the wheel-shaped Lotus *maṇḍala* is an initiation into Pāñcarātra rituals, the specific Vaiṣṇava tradition followed in the Varadarāja temple. It confers on the candidate the right or eligibility to perform the rituals within the three main shrines of the Varadarāja temple, including the right to touch the main images and to feed the god. This initiation is—as per local tradition—

22 On *pañcasaṃskāra* see Raman (2005 and 2007), see also Hüsken (2009a: 105ff.).

Plate 4: The Rāmānuja shrine in the Varadarāja temple in January 2006, before renovation.

performed in the Rāmānuja shrine located in the temple precincts (see plate 4). Thus, in contrast to the prescriptions given in the *Pādmasaṃhitā*, it is not necessary to erect a pavilion for the procedures: the Rāmānuja shrine itself serves as *maṇḍapa* in actual practice. Some of the mantras prescribed during the diverse sequences of the ritual are not recited as often as suggested by the text. Moreover, the performance of this initiation takes one to two hours, not two days: the sequences during which the candidate cleans his teeth with a stick and afterwards throws it on the ground, and the investigation of the auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of candidate's dream after he spent the night, are nowadays not performed during initiations at the Varadarāja temple, and the blindfolding of the candidate is therefore performed only once.[23]

23 The performers are well aware of these differences and are explicitly unhappy about the fact that they cannot perform the procedures as elaborately as suggested by the text. But, as they argue, since neither time nor resources usually allow for the "long version", they have to be content with performing this *dīkṣā* in an abbreviated way. In some—albeit rare—cases the preceptor even conveys the initiation via telephone.

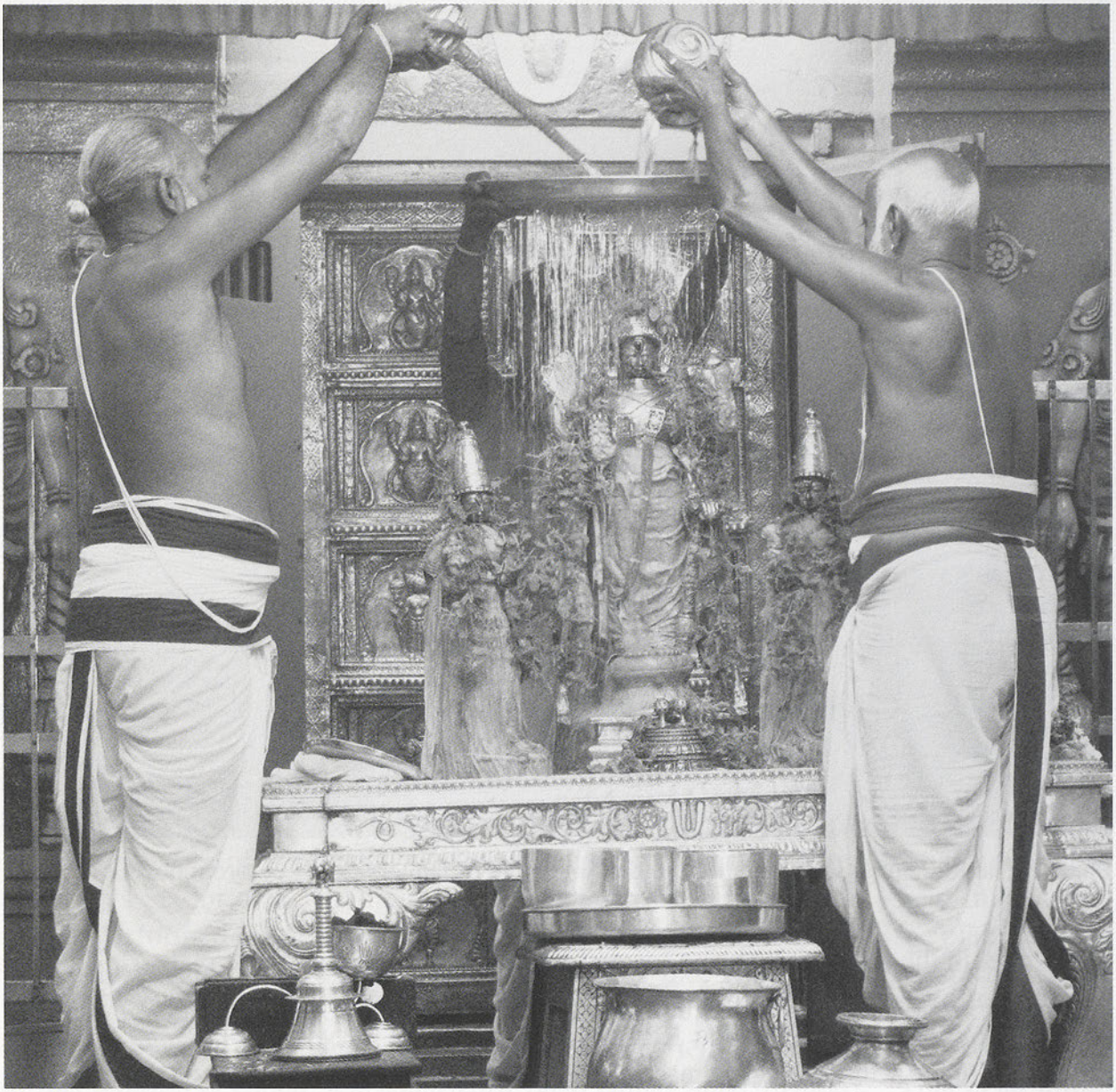

Plate 5: *Abhiṣeka*, the ritual ablution of the god's image.

Another crucial difference between the text and actual practice is that nowadays this initiation is performed only for male Brahmins, not, as the text suggests, for members of all castes or for women.[24] Moreover, with regard to the *adhikāra* conferred through this initiation there is nowadays an important difference between the male members of the six above-mentioned families in Kāñcipuram and other Brahmins who want to be-

24 In that respect the new legislation by the DMK government confirms to the *Pādmasaṃhitā* on the one hand, in that it is explicitly for "people from all communities", but not entirely, since it excludes women. However, since the aim of the training programs set up is to "produce" temple priests who perform rituals "for others", it deviates from the prescriptions given in the *Pādmasaṃhitā*, according to which *parārtha* rituals are to be performed by male Brahmins alone.

Plate 6: Offerings into the fire (*homa*) during the major temple festivals.

come Vaiṣṇava temple priests: while members of the six families are initiated inside the temple precincts (in the Rāmānuja shrine) and thereby gain the right to perform the ritual as *arcaka* in the Varadarāja temple, the *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* of others takes invariably place in the preceptor's house and confers only the right to perform the ritual in other, "minor" Vaiṣṇava temples, but not in the Varadarāja temple.[25]

However, even in the case of a descendant of the above-mentioned six Brahmin families in Kāñcipuram, only later, as a married householder, may he perform certain rituals such as the ritual ablution (Skt. *abhiṣeka* / Tamil *tirumañjana*) of the god (see plate 5), and only then may he attend to the sacrificial fires (*homa*) lit during the major tem-

25 The priests of the major south Indian Pāñcarātra temples, namely those in Śrīraṅgam, in the Kāñcipuram Varadarāja temple, and in the Viṣṇu temple in Melkote are considered to be the *ācārya*s of other Pāñcarātrikas. They are frequently asked to perform initiations for others, who want to serve in a smaller Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra temple. The Melkote priests, for example, also serve as *ācārya*s for the ISKCON temple in Bangalore. There they acted as the main priests responsible for its inauguration rituals, and act as the leading priests during the major temple festivals.

ple festivals (see plate 6). Therefore, the final ritual which makes a candidate a fully-fledged priest is marriage (*vivāha*), another life-cycle ritual (*saṃskāra*). Only after marriage, can a priest act as main priests (*ācārya*) during the four most important festivals at the Varadarāja temple celebrated every year.[26] In addition, only after marriage can the priests of the Varadarāja temple initiate others.[27]

Although the adept should after his *cakrābjamaṇḍaladīkṣā* be eligible to touch the god in this temple, there are some factors of an entirely different character which could prevent him from doing so. Since the temple is run by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Board (a governmental institution), no priest can perform the rituals inside the temple without a "written order" by the temple administration. This points to the fact that there is one more important literary genre regulating the ritual performed in the Varadarāja temple: court orders and administrative documents. Whether and when a candidate receives this written order depends on various factors, such as his reputation among the local influential Vaiṣṇava communities, on whether the number of already acting priests is sufficient, or whether more acting priests are needed to guarantee uninterrupted worship. It depends on the goodwill of the acting Executive Officer (EO) who issues these written orders, and it depends the candidate's actual skill in performing the required ritual actions.

Eligibility versus ability

I want to focus especially on this last point for the remaining part of this essay, since the question of the ability, in contrast to the eligibility to perform the rituals "for others" in the temple has been an important issue in south Indian temple politics for more than a century now. This issue is also implicitly taken up in several ways by the legislation mentioned in the beginning of this paper, which aims at opening up the temple priest profession to all strata of society.

Criticism of the priests' ability to "perform rituals properly" has a long tradition. Priestly competence was generally put into question at the end of the 19th and throughout the 20th century. At that time, in the course of modern temple reform in Tamil Nadu, many complaints were voiced about the mismanagement of temples, and also about the alleged "low performance standards", "ignorance", "laxity" and lack of education of the priests (see, e.g. Presler 1978: 115).[28] As one consequence, attempts were made

26 These festivals are Brahmotsava, Vasantotsava, Pallavotsava and Pavitrotsava.

27 In practice, however, the initiation of the young priests at this temple is usually done by the eldest acting priest only, or in his name. Initiation to others, who are going to perform rituals in other Vaiṣṇava temples, can be conferred by any married priest of this temple. I am told that others than members of the priestly families in Kāñcipuram, Śrīraṅgam and Melkote are not supposed to confer initiation on others.

28 On the traditionally low status of temple priests (termed *devalaka*), see also Hüsken (2009a: 54ff.).

Plate 7: Students in the Āgama Pāṭhaśālā in Madurantakam.

to offer a standardised training for temple priests and other ritual specialists. Special training institutions (named Āgama schools, Pāṭhaśālā or Vidyāpīṭha) were established (see plate 7).

In 1964 a new service rule issued by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department stated that every newly appointed priest needs a certificate issued by an Āgama school or its equivalent. Although this service rule has so far not been consistently enforced, priests are well aware of the fact that this might happen. Therefore, many temple priests' families in Kāñcipuram, who enjoy hereditary rights to perform worship, encourage their male children to subscribe to such courses in an Āgama school and earn a certificate of sorts.

Hand in hand with the demand, from government and the general public, for a "better education" of temple priests went efforts to print and publish texts on temple rituals. Fuller says: "Agamic education as it operates in the modern era is predicated upon the existence of texts that are accessible, and serve as standardized source of authoritative knowledge. In producing such texts, printing and publication have played a crucial role" (Fuller 2003: 86). Many of the Sanskrit ritual texts (Āgamas and Saṃhitās) were then printed for the first time, and distributed among the temple priests. One of the

aims of printing the books in great number was their potential use for educating the young priests in Āgama schools or Pāṭhaśālās.

As Presler (1978: 123f.) reports, in the late 1970 ironically the temple priests' organisation "South India Arcaka Sangham" itself demanded compulsory education for the *arcaka*s, establishing learning institutions for them, and not admitting uneducated *arcaka*s even if they enjoy hereditary rights. It thus seems that the accusations of "low performance standards" were internalised by the priests themselves. Today, too, many of the elder priests complain about the general lack of education and interest in the younger priestly generations.

This internalisation of the accusation of "low performance standards", together with the concept that "text *is* authority", are formative factors for the present day's priest's reference to the mediaeval ritual texts in Sanskrit as the main authority for the performance of the rituals in their temple.

However, a standardized education for temple priests had never actually existed before (see Good 2004: 134). The traditional mode of transmitting ritual knowledge was rather shaped by the personal relationship between the student and the learning environment created by the teacher, and the concrete performance of the ritual was mainly determined by the specific local traditions, and the relationship of the officiating priest and the commissioner and sponsor of the ritual in question, the *yajamāna*. Establishing institutionalised training centres such as the Pāṭhaśālās thus resulted in the de-individualizing as well as the de-localizing of the training: neither the specific relationship between teacher and student, nor local traditions and customs were supposed to shape ritual performance. This was a radical departure from the then prevalent practice. What was sold as a "return to tradition" did in fact result in a "reinvention of tradition."

In contrast to this learning by participating in the life and ritual practice of the teacher, in many of the present day Āgama schools learning of texts and theoretical knowledge is emphasised. However, the effect of the inclusion of "canonical texts" in the curriculum of the Āgama schools on the quality of education was evidently misjudged. According to a report by a Government Commission, the introduction of uniform reading of certain texts as well as timetables, and also uniformity in the examinations, contributed instead to a decline in learning (see Michaels 2001: 5).

The lack of emphasis on practical training is evidently one of the major disadvantages of many of the Āgama schools. This, however, is already built into the very concept underlying these institutions, namely that knowing the Āgama texts inevitably implies that one is capable of performing the rituals, and that standardised texts alone are perceived and represented as the source of authoritative knowledge (see Fuller 2003: 86). In fact, as indicated above, these ritual texts (Āgama / Saṃhitā) do not contain detailed instructions about how to perform the rituals (see ibid.: 82), and evidently they never were meant to be used as "how to do" handbooks: "they are written for functioning priests and serve them as compendious references, sanctions, and models more

than exhaustive procedural guides" (Welbon 1984: 72).[29]

Interviews among the priests of the Varadarāja temple who attended courses in these Āgama schools, but also among the experienced elder priests clearly indicate that the ability to perform the rituals is not acquired in these institutions. Priestly competence does not only include the adherence to written ritual rules, but also the ability of the main actors to convince the audience and to maintain this conviction. The performers achieve this thorough knowledge in the rituals' practical performance in the first instance from learning with their fathers, or with other male elders, and through their constant exposure to the temple's ritual procedures and setting.[30] This dimension of rituals is connected with aspects of technique, but also with contextual knowledge, and, as Schieffelin puts it, with the performer's interactive and improvisational abilities (see Schieffelin 1998: 198; 1996: 62f. and 80).

Conclusion

What does this mean for the initial question, namely the implications of the 2006 legislation by the DMK government to "open up the temple priests' profession to all communities", and the—at first sight—surprising lack of concern among the hereditary Brahmin temple priests about the issue? Presler (1978) concluded that the priests' lack of organized resistance against a similar legislation (issued in the early 1970s) was caused by the priests' perpetual (economic) dependence on the state, by their lack of an efficient organization to enforce their interests, and by the internal social and sectarian division which prevents common action. However, in the present situation major factors seem rather to be the priests' awareness of the differences in eligibility (*adhikāra*) that is conferred by one and the same initiation ritual, their experience that these legislations are likely to be abolished as soon as the political wind changes, and their awareness that the skills to perform public rituals convincingly is attained through practice, experience, and by being from childhood onwards constantly exposed to the ritual routine in the temple. It seems that it is mainly this factor that results in the priests' own conviction that they cannot be easily dismissed. Since they have spent their lives engaged in these ritual activities the recent confrontation with the establishment of Āgama schools for "all communities", which could be a threat to their inherited professional specialization, leaves them rather undazzled.[31]

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29 The large number of ritual texts of the concerned Vaiṣṇava traditions suggests that the officiants of both temple and domestic ritual have never been unanimous regarding the performance of rituals. Evidently there always have been local traditions, personal styles, and even ritual "fashions", handed down not only in written records, but also by different performative and oral traditions.

30 I pursue this issue further in Hüsken 2009b. There I argue that not only in the context of highly performative rituals, such as possession and healing rituals, but also in text-dominated, predominantly rule-governed ritual traditions such as this Vaiṣṇava tradition, the body and questions concerning the body-mind distinction are important issues.

31 However, slight irritations arose when the priest mentioned in n. 1 of this article was stylised as "new Ambedkar" in an article published in the Tamil magazine "Nakiran", on 14.5.2008 (pp. 3–4).

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Gérard Colas

Pratiṣṭhā: Ritual, Reproduction, Accretion

Pratiṣṭhā is well known as a term designating the installation of a religious image from the beginning of the Christian era. But installation as a social event had an import far beyond the image as a focus of devotion and worship, for it involved such factors as the spread of religious communities of temple-priests, the religious donation and administration of lands, or the regulation of religious expansion through the agency of political and economic powers. For instance, *pratiṣṭhā* was often accompanied by the notion of ownership by the deity- or Buddha-/Bodhisattva-image (Colas 2009: 110–7). However, because the direct source of knowledge about image *pratiṣṭhā* consists mainly in ritual texts, modern scholarship tends to approach the subject as ritual. For the same reason, the present paper will concentrate on *pratiṣṭhā* as rite. But one must bear in mind that this is not "pure rite". *Pratiṣṭhā* is intimately connected with other and non-ritual historical parameters, most of which are difficult to elucidate. It forms a very fertile example for the study of ritual.

Pratiṣṭhā, like all rites, has evolved over time. Some scholars suggest that it developed from a simple to a complex ritual (see Einoo & Takashima 2005: 2, 3, 137, etc). This implies the notion of a model that gradually included an increasing number of elements, although it contained from the beginning several salient features, such as the opening of the eyes.[1] Thus, it has been said that the *pratiṣṭhā* of the Śaiva *liṅga* in Āgamas evolved from simple to complex and from private/personal to public worship (Takashima 2005: 137). But it should be noted that descriptions of complex public *pratiṣṭhā*s could have been almost contemporaneous with those of simple private *pratiṣṭhā*s. Some of the oldest descriptions of private image *pratiṣṭhā* are found in late Gṛhya texts (4th century at the earliest) (see Einoo 2005: 95). Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (middle of the 6th century[2]) describes the "public"[3] installation of religious images.[4] This maximum span of one and half centuries, between the Gṛhya texts and the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, forms a relatively short period where both kinds of installations were almost, if not completely, contemporaneous. This can hardly be interpreted as a period of fast evolution from a private to a public model of *pratiṣṭhā*, for as we will see, Buddhist epigraphy proves the existence of public *pratiṣṭhā*s long before the 4th century

1 See Einoo's "Introduction" in Einoo & Takashima 2005: 3.

2 Renou et al. 1985: 189.

3 The applicability of the distinction between public and private in ancient India remains to be demonstrated, but that discussion would exceed the limits of the present paper.

4 In its chapter 60. This chapter uses the terms *saṃsthāpana* (15) and *sthāpana* (21). The term *pratiṣṭhāpana* appears only in its title (in Bhat's edition), a position susceptible of interpolation and alterations. For this chapter, see also Colas (2006: 368).

(see below). One could also suppose that the Gṛhya descriptions are simplified versions of complex *pratiṣṭhā*s. The notion of an evolution from a private to a public form of *pratiṣṭhā* remains purely conjectural.

One of the main features of the evolution of *pratiṣṭhā* is the great importance of the dialectical connection between ritual action and its hermeneutics. Ritual manuals bear witness to this interrelation, as we will see. Most of the extant ritual manuals were composed from around the 8th century onwards. Because they were supposed to guide and inform practice, their authors probably bore in mind the contemporaneous way of performing when writing them. These authors also had to follow certain conventional patterns with regard to the structure of their composition, and at times they introduced novelties to cater to local or regional needs. As a consequence, the descriptions of *pratiṣṭhā* in ritual manuals are not rational accounts in which the principle of non-contradiction must operate.[5] Catering to the needs of patrons, priests, devotees, ritual traditions and sometimes political powers, the *pratiṣṭhā* evolved against multifarious ideological pressures, especially in the public sphere. Since the installed object (image or other) was a central element and *pratiṣṭhā* determined the ensuing set of rites as well as the human group in charge of them, it was unavoidable that *pratiṣṭhā* should constitute a crucial issue and receive ideological marks from various origins.

We can distinguish three dimensions in the ritual manuals: prescriptive, mantric and descriptive. Prescriptions are the mere enumeration of ritual actions. They consist of the succession of injunctions (sentences often composed with absolutive and optative verb forms). Mantras are formulas that accompany and often illustrate the prescribed acts. These solemn enunciations also sometimes connect descriptive and interpretative notions with physical actions of the rite.[6] Descriptive sentences express the interpretative vision of the rite. This is where rite and its accessories are named, where indications of the purport of the rite are sometimes given. Naming actions and objects of the rite sometimes means giving them sense and value. For instance, naming a vase as *śaktikumbha* ("vase of power") suggests that it is a recipient of divine power. Or again, the statement that God becomes present through meditation (see Colas 1986: 78) goes beyond mere prescription, because it speaks of a spiritual result external to the ritual action.

The descriptive interpretative elements sometimes infiltrate the prescriptive dimension and influence ritual injunctions. For instance, the Vaikhānasas who proclaim themselves to be *vaidika*s introduced a large quantity of pseudo-Vedic ritual features into their own prescriptions. This "stuffing" helped to project the image of their being *vaidika* in comparison with the Pāñcarātra, another Vaiṣṇava sect, whom they qualified as *tāntrika* (see Colas 1996: 266–84, 164–71). The present article will study some problems in connection with *pratiṣṭhā*, with no claim, of course, to being exhaustive.[7]

5 See, for instance, Colas 1989: 146–7.

6 "Mantras of prayer" (*prārthanāmantras*), for instance, are directly linked with the content of the action. Some other mantras guide the understanding of the action. See Colas 1996: 236–8.

7 For instance, we will not make use of Tibetan material, for which see Bentor (1998).

Pratiṣṭhā as "establishing"

The word *pratiṣṭhā* was used in Vedic literature in a wide quantity of meanings. *Pratiṣṭhā* in Brāhmaṇa texts is understood as a place of firm position or as a process of establishing. It also designated a substance on which an object was installed (see Gonda 1975; Schayer 1925: 280). In the *Kena Upaniṣad* (4.8), *pratiṣṭhā* means a base and the verb *pratitiṣṭhati* (4.9) means "is firmly seated". In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (1.6.1–2; 3.6–9),[8] one becomes established (*pratitiṣṭhati*) at various steps before becoming the supreme being. In Brāhmaṇas *pratiṣṭhā* also refers to the stabilization of the individual both in nature and in society (Gonda 1975: [341]–[2], [351]–[2]).

Evidence from belles-lettres and epigraphy points to the political shade of meaning of the word *pratiṣṭhā*. Viśākhadatta's play, *Mudrārākṣasa* (3rd or 9th century)[9] displays two different meanings of *pratiṣṭhā*: psychological (personal security and moral or spiritual stability[10]) and political (establishment of dynasty and restoration of monarchical power).[11] A 5th century stone pillar inscription of Bhitarī employs the expression *pratiṣṭhā* and its derivatives to signify establishment of the king's family, its prosperity and government.[12] Interestingly, the same inscription uses the expression *prati-ṣṭhā* with reference to the installation of a divine image (Colas 2009: 111).

Despite the scantiness of the information about the nature and meaning of *pratiṣṭhā* in early Buddhist period, the meaning of *pratiṣṭhā* at that time seems to have been stabilization and material installation. It was applied to man-made objects (architectural elements, images) as well as objects possessing an inherent religious value (relics). Inscriptions of the first four centuries AD record the *pratiṣṭhā* of images and relics, and, less frequently, of architectural elements (such as *vedī*, *chattra*, etc.) of the *stūpa*.[13]

The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (*-prajñāpāramitā*), which *could* be ascribed to the first century AD,[14] mentions the installation and worship of scriptures. The installation of Buddhist scriptures in the form of a book was meant for the sanctification of the earth.[15] Buddhist inscriptions convey a similar idea with regard to the *pratiṣṭhā* of relics and *stūpa*s. For instance, a first century BC inscription mentions that the members of an association of lay Buddhists established a *stūpa* "dans un endroit où il n'y avait pas de fondation

8 See also 3.10.3 and other passages referred to in the index of the edition, vol. 2, p. 812, col. B, under *pratiṣṭhā* etc.

9 See Renou et al. 1985: 272.

10 See verse 5 of Act II.

11 See verse 9 of Act II; verse 14 of Act I.

12 The inscription states that Skandagupta re-established (*pratiṣṭhāpya bhuyaḥ*) his family (verse 7), the prosperity of his family (verse 6), and that his government was well established (*supratiṣṭhita-śāsanaḥ*, verse 11).

13 See Tsukamoto 1996–98: 135, 300 (AD 12 and 5); 990, 1008–9 (AD 41 and 52); 397 (AD 350–351); 632, 668 (AD 4 and 171).

14 See Lancaster 1974: 287; 1975: 31 (first Chinese translation probably between 147 and 186); Schopen 1997: 127; 2005: 79 (n. 69, precautions about the date).

15 See Schopen 2005: 31, 29. Installation of scriptures is also known in other Indian religious traditions: see, for instance, the Pāñcarātra *Pauṣkarasaṃhitā* 41.77b–142.

auparavant".[16] An epigraph of the first century mentions the installation of relics also in "un endroit de la terre où il n'y avait pas de fondation auparavant".[17] The term "fondation" in the French translations corresponds to a term derived from the Prakrit verb equivalent of *pratiṣṭhā*. It may be noted that the Vinaya literature of the first three centuries AD prescribes the installation of relics in "a previously unestablished place on earth" for the sanctification of the surface of the earth. This kind of installation also produces "Brahmic merit".[18]

Relics perhaps received special attention and treatment, but the *pratiṣṭhā* process did not give them any new quality, for they already had inherent virtues. Relics are in themselves "endowed with life", according to an inscription ascribed to 150 BC (although perhaps a fake, at least according to Falk 2005: 351),[19] or "infused with morality", "infused with concentration, wisdom, emancipation, and knowledge and vision" (*samasiprañavimutiñaṇadra(śa)paribhavita*), according to a first century AD inscription.[20] There seems to be no definite evidence to prove that *pratiṣṭhā*s of the early Buddhists were ritualized.[21] But it is difficult to speculate that they could have taken place without public solemnity, at least for those which are documented. These *pratiṣṭhā*s were recorded by inscriptions (which emphasizes the importance of these actions), probably took place (at least sometimes) at auspicious moments (see Fussman 1988: 9) and were attended by members of religious and lay communities. To conclude, these instances seem to point to the old Buddhist notion of *pratiṣṭhā* as a public process of stabilizing sacred articles on the surface of the earth and an ideology of terrestrial expansion of the Buddhist religion and message.

Previously venerated objects *versus* new images

In early Buddhism as known from epigraphy, the distinction between venerated objects (relics) and newly made elements (images and architectural elements) does not seem to have been important with regard to *pratiṣṭhā*. The aim of the process seems to have been the fixation of the object, not its transformation. Chapter 37 of the *Pauṣkara-*

16 *apratriṭhavitra-pruvami* (tr. Sadakata 1996; see ibid.: 306–7).

17 *apratiṭhavitra-pruvami paḍhavi-pradeśami* (tr. Fussman 1986; see ibid.: 2).

18 See Schopen 2004: 21. See also Fussman (1994: 22) quoting Salomon & Schopen (1984).

19 Lamotte 1958: 474; Fussman 1993: 101–10; Schopen 1997: 126. Discussion of Falk's view in Salomon (2009: 128–9).

20 According to the reading and translation by Schopen (1997: 126). Fussman (1982: 4) has a similar reading (with, at the end: *ñaya-deśa(ṇa)-paribhavita*) and translates: "parfumées de moralité, parfumées de l'enseignement du chemin qui mène à la délivrance par la concentration et le discernement" (ibid.: 8).

21 Sadakata (1996: 307) speaks of a "cérémonie d'installation" of relics on the basis of a first century BC inscription.

saṃhitā, an early Pāñcarātra work,[22] deals with the "placing" (*nyāsa*), accompanied with rites, of stones marked with footprints, disk or lotus, other supports (of worship), as well as stones "obtained since eternity" (37.1–2). This passage employs the term *nyāsa* (37.1) rather than *pratiṣṭhā*, which only appears occasionally in it. While upholding the sacredness of these stones, the text seems to propose their ritual inclusion into a certain orthodoxy. Here the attempt seems to have been to normalize objects of worship whose prestige and efficiency have long been recognized.

However this kind of Hindu prescription is rare and seems to have disappeared from more recent Hindu ritual scriptures. The majority of the prescriptions of temple ritual manuals concern new, man-made images. For example, the scriptural rules of the *pratiṣṭhā* ritual in the Vaiṣṇava Vaikhānasa medieval corpus (around 10th century) apply to the "human" (*mānuṣa*) category, that is, temples and images made according to the corpus prescriptions, and not to the other four categories: "self-manifested" (*svayaṃvyakta*), founded by gods (*divya*), founded by Ṛṣis (*ārṣa*) or Siddhas (*saiddha*), antique or mythological (*paurāṇa*, *paurāṇika*). This classification is not specific to Vaikhānasas; it is found, more or less the same, in the Śaiva ritual corpus and in Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra texts (see Colas 1996: 189–91; Granoff 2006: 404). The standardization of *pratiṣṭhā* rituals by temple manuals made the *ad libitum* reproduction of the installation rites easy. The great development of image installation coincided with the decline of Vedic rites. While adhering to the traditional *varṇa* division of society, the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus also allowed the classes barred from Vedic rites to practise ritual patronage (see Colas 1996: 122–9). There was probably an economic alliance between these wealthy classes and the priestly groups. Epigraphic evidence from this period abounds with mentions of donations by these classes to temple-deities and temple-priests.

The temple *pratiṣṭhā* ritual was, or perhaps rather became a process during which the human origin of the artefact was obliterated. Ritual contributed to the metaphysical idealization of the man-made image, for it was a substitute for supra-human origin. The aim of setting strict iconographical techniques and standards and imposing them on the craftsmen was to control the production of images and to make them suitable to ritual as prescribed by the manuals. Incidentally, this explains the great wealth of descriptions of artistic and architectural techniques in these manuals (see Colas 1989: passim).

The above observations distinguished between two concepts of *pratiṣṭhā*: one being general, ancient and applicable to various kinds of objects, the other being specific to the religious image. This distinction does not, however, have an absolute value in history. It is an outcome of a rational understanding of the evolution of the prescriptions and is not based on textual evidence. On the other hand, as we will see, the *pratiṣṭhā* specific to images influenced that of other objects, over the course of time. This paper will examine three topics: deposits as an example of an ambiguous ritual module, and two

22 I have no definite proof to ascribe it to a date earlier than 10th century, but from its style and content it does not seem to be later than the 8th century. Even if it were later than 8th century, it apparently contains ancient material. On the dates of early Pāñcarātra texts, see Colas (2003: 239).

instances of ritual and hermeneutical accretions: the opening of the eyes of images and the notion of power in the image.

Names and practices – Relics and "embryo", ambiguity and modelization

Deposits are important modules in *pratiṣṭhā* rituals. Modern scholarship insists on their differences from relics. Nor do extant textual prescriptions appear to explicitly mention similitudes between the two types of objects. In this respect, naming actions and objects helps to create and maintain divides and contrasts. However, and in spite of the strong arguments in favour of such a clear-cut distinction, some ambiguities may have presided over practices regarding the use of deposits and relics. Deposits were an essential feature in the construction of religious buildings and in the pedestal of images, although we can only speculate about the significance of the act of depositing (referred to as *nyāsa*) and the content of the deposits. Archaeological findings seem to indicate that deposits were placed in or around *stūpa*s as early as the first century BC.[23] These deposits consisted of precious and/or symbolic objects. In theory, they should be clearly distinguished from the Buddhist relic boxes, even though the latter, like deposits, also contained precious objects such as precious or semi-precious stones, coins, miniature objects in gold, etc. in addition to relics.[24] Brown (2006) identifies certain common features between the two kinds of containers, but concludes: "the valuable treasure placed with the Buddhist relic is not the same as the highly structured and symbolically potent objects placed in the deposit boxes" (ibid.: 192). Ślączka (2007: 8–10) provides an elaborate comparative table of the two kinds of containers. It is suggested (Ślączka 2007: 10, n. 15) that the presence of reliquaries as well as deposit boxes in certain *stūpa*s in Sri Lanka indicates that they corresponded to two different functions.[25] Some of the arguments of Brown and Ślączka may need to be qualified. For instance, Brown observes that boxes of foundation deposit are generally square while reliquaries are circular (2006: 192). But the *Mayamata* and other texts mention circular boxes of founda-

23 See Willis 2000: 80. For observations about deposit boxes in Southeast Asia and the question of the relation with Indian practices (though not with precise historical setting), see O'Connor (1966).

24 See Salomon 1986: 262; 2005: 360, 383–5; Sadakata 1996: plates 1 and 3; Brown 2006: 189–91; Willis 2000: 19–21. See also Willis (ibid.: 80) about the stone casket discovered in the *stūpa* 1 of Satdhāra: "Although this may have been intended as a supplementary relic deposit, it is more likely to have contained symbolic objects associated with guardian deities". According to Marasinghe (1989: xlviii) the Sinhalese term *yantragala* refers to *ratnanyāsa* foundation deposits and differs from the "relic casket" (ibid.: li). The same term refers to stone reliquaries according to Bandaranayake (1974: 192). But his description (ibid.: 120) of the *yantragala*s found in the Madirigiriya temple (11th–13th century) shows them to be foundation deposits rather than reliquaries.

25 The organic remains found in certain deposit boxes in Java were of animal origin and not human (see Ślączka 2007: 8, n. 11).

tion deposit.[26] More deeply perhaps, Brown's and Ślączka's comparative observations are confined to formal differences. A fundamental common feature between reliquaries and foundation boxes is that they contain auspicious objects, be they precious gems, coins, relics, etc. A specificity of reliquaries is that they contain relics.

In spite of the clear distinction projected by prescriptions and Indology, Buddhist texts and archaeological findings reflect a complex situation where the boundaries between reliquaries, deposits and images are not always clear. A Buddhist image could itself be a sort of reliquary. Early Mahāyāna literature records the existence of images with relics (*dhātupratimā*).[27] Images could also contain inscriptions (especially of *dhāraṇī*s).[28] A deposit (a gold tube containing 95 pearls) found in the base of a Buddha image at Nagarjunakonda apparently also contained ashes that could have been bone ashes (see Bentor 1995: 250). The difference between reliquaries and ritual deposits could be ambiguous, for example, in the *Mañjuśrībhāṣitavāstuvidyāśāstra*, a Buddhist Sanskrit treatise of architecture.[29] This text prescribes (3.100–5) the deposit of a copper casket below the *stūpī*-finial at the summit of the parasol which shelters the *caitya* (i.e. *stūpa*). This casket, however, resembles the foundation deposit prescribed in Hindu texts. The casket contains *dhātu*s and grains and, in its central compartment, a mantra inscribed on a metal sheet. The *dhātu*s mentioned by the text have been interpreted as relics,[30] but they are colouring substances, as in Hindu prescriptions. Apparently, the mantra serves as relic in the *Mañjuśrībhāṣitavāstuvidyāśāstra* prescription. It should be recalled that inscribed mantras and *dhāraṇī*s could be taken as substitutes for relics, al-

26 See *Mayamata* 12.13 (early 9th – late 12th century: see Dagens 1985: vi and Colas 1986: 5–6); Colas 1986: 154. The deposit box has nine or twenty-five compartments according to the *Mayamata*, nine according to the *Vimānārcanakalpa* (*Marīcisaṃhitā*) (around 10th century).

27 See Schopen 1978: 334; 2004: 296. The *Sarvatathāgatādhiṣṭhānasattvāvalokanabuddhakṣetradarśanavyūha[sūtra]* (p. 68) mentions the installation of an image (*pratimā*) with relic (*sadhātuka*). This text seems comparatively late. Its manuscript apparently belongs to the younger part of the Gilgit manuscripts (Schopen 2005: 119, 180). The Gilgit manuscripts "can be more or less accurately dated on paleographic grounds to the sixth [seventh] century A.D." (Schopen 2005: 180; see also 218, n. 40).

28 See Bentor 1995: 254.

29 Belongs to the period between the 5th and 7th century according to Marasinghe (1989: xvi, lii): a hypothesis that should be treated with reservation.

30 See Marasinghe 1989: 193. Verse 100a prescribes the deposit of the mantra in the middle of the casket (divided into nine squares), which is confirmed in verse 103a. Verse 100a also prescribes the deposit of *dhātu*s and *bīja*s (grains) without specifying the square where they are deposited within the casket. Details about *dhātu*s and grains are given in verses 101–2. Grains (then named *aṣṭadhānya*) are placed in the eight surrounding squares from the north-east (*īśāna*) onwards (verse 101b). Then "one places in due order *añjana*, *mākṣa* [for *mākṣika*, pyrite] *hiṅgulya*, *haritāla*, *gairika*, *manaḥśilā*, *antarita* [= probably *darada*] and *rājāva*[*r*]*ta*" (verse 102): these are eight colouring substances (*dhātu*s; compare with *Mayamata* 12.25b–7a for a list of the colouring substances contained in the "embryo": *jātihiṅgulya*, *haritāla*, *manaḥśilā*, *mākṣika*, *rājāvarta*, *gairika*, *añjana* and *darada*). This confirms that the *dhātu*s mentioned in verse 100 are eight colouring substances and not relics. The inclusion of colouring substances in the foundation deposits is common in Hindu architectural treatises and temple manuals (see *Mayamata* 12.25b–7a, already mentioned; 96;102; 112; *Vimānārcanākalpa* [= *Marīcisaṃhitā*] in Colas 1986: 232, 233, [tr.:] 152, 154, 155).

though both types of objects—inscribed formulas and relics—could be put together (see Bentor 1995: 250–8). Thus, the casket seems to combine the characteristics of a deposit and a reliquary.

The earliest non-Buddhist prescriptions of deposits seem to appear in late Vedic texts. They concern religious images. The *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* and the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* prescribe the deposit of precious stones, pearls, coral, gold and silver, or one of these, at the summit of the pedestal on which the religious image is to be installed (Colas 1994: 514, 517). The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (60.17) enjoins the deposit of a piece of gold in a recess on the pedestal. Treatises of architecture and religious fine arts and temple manuals of the end of the first millenary prescribe deposits below the image to be installed (or at the summit of the pedestal) and various deposits in the temple building and in other buildings in the temple compound: in the middle of the first bricks or stones, in the middle of the bricks or stones of the summit (below the finial). It is also important to point out that these deposits, along with accompanying objects like the first or summit bricks, also receive a ritual similar to the *pratiṣṭhā* of images, although in a reduced form. The placement of deposits gained importance, for some medieval manuals designate them as *pratiṣṭhā*s (Colas 1996: 312).

Manuals of architecture and temple rituals designate as *garbha* ("embryo") the deposit of foundation[31] of temples, non-religious buildings and personal houses. They also designate by the same name, but less frequently, a deposit below an image.[32] The architectural "embryo" is a compartmented casket which contains auspicious objects, miniature reproductions of mountains, weapons, symbols of the classes of the Hindu society, colouring substances (*dhātu*), grains, metals, precious stones, etc. (see Colas 1996: 311; Ślączka 2007: 178, 224–7). The prescriptions of the medieval Vaikhānasa corpus suggest that the "embryo" represents the nascent universe. Its germinative power is associated with Viṣṇu, who is evoked to prepare the womb; the place of deposit is identified with a fertility goddess.[33] In some Pāñcarātra texts, probably later than the 10th century, this deposit is explicitly identified with the *saṃskāra* of the "implantation of the embryo" (*garbhādhāna*), one of the domestic rites of human beings.[34]

It is interesting to mention the expression *dhātu-garbha* (Pāli *-gabbha*), in which *dhātu* means relic and *garbha* a confined space. This Buddhist expression from an earlier period is usually understood as "relic chamber", the space where the relics were

31 See *Mayamata* 12; 18.147b–50 and 157–8; Colas 1986: 106, 151–6, 159; 1989: 138; 1996: 311–2. On the comprehension and translation of the word *garbha*, see Bhatt et al. (2005, ch. 17, n. 1).

32 For instance in the medieval Vaikhānasa corpus (see Colas 1989: 148). *Contra* Ślącka's statement (2007: 210 and n. 42) that *garbha* is not applied to image deposits.

33 Colas 1996: 311. See also Ślączka 2007: 201–15. The deposit of grains is reminiscent of prescriptions of the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*: water containing barley (*yava*) grains is besprinkled on the *udumbara* post of the *sadas* (3.6.1) and on the sacrificial stake (*yūpa*) (3.7.1) and in each case the rest of that water is poured in the holes that will receive the post and the sacrificial stake. This water containing barley grains is said to keep from enemies and endow with strength and sap the worlds symbolically situated in the post and the stake (3.6.1.[11]–[2]); 3.7.1.[5]).

34 See Smith 1980: 30–1 (entry *garbhanyāsa*) and its mentions of *Sanatkumārasaṃhitā*, *Brahmarātra*, 8.14b–5a (for the date of this text, see Colas 1996: 54, n. 4) and of *Agastyasaṃhitā* 1.34–74.

placed in the *stūpa* (see Willis 2000: 20). The coincidence in the vocabulary of Hindu and Buddhist descriptions is striking. Can we venture the hypothesis that non-Buddhist texts reinterpreted Buddhist vocabulary at a time when the Buddhist religion was on the verge of disappearing in most parts of India?

Deposits seem to form an ancient and enduring element in *pratiṣṭhā* rituals. While the concept of deposit could have combined to some extent with the Buddhist concept of reliquary, it also acquired, with the "embryo" deposit, a strong symbolic meaning in Hindu temples. It is difficult to know the significance of deposits in the early Buddhist period. But one notion at least, that of auspiciousness, seems to emerge from the observation of the constituents of the deposits; symbols of auspiciousness also accompanied ashes and bones in the relic caskets. In the 16th century, bones of deceased Hindus could be the object of veneration and of a particular treatment: they were anointed with perfumed paste before being worshipped, then placed in a box with precious stones and metals; they were transported up to a *tīrtha*, where they were finally thrown, mixed with gold.[35] Moreover, deposits, like *pratiṣṭhā*, seem to have had the function of contributing to the stability of the installation of objects. The importance of the notion of "embryo" from the end of the first millenary onwards seems to corroborate this.

The opening of the eyes

The anthropomorphic representation of the religious image in general gave rise in ritual manuals to such conceptions as considering the image as a human being or as an incarnation of a superhuman being. These conceptions sometimes went beyond the realm of ritual rhetoric and materialized as ritual accretions, especially in the *pratiṣṭhā* of images. A striking instance is the *pratiṣṭhā* which the Buddhist text *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (prior to 1216) describes and prescribes. This description systematically identifies the different steps of the *pratiṣṭhā* of the image with the *saṃskāra*s of human beings. Such idea also appears in Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa texts, but often remains incidental and rhetorical.[36] Does the account of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* go beyond rhetoric and reflect actual prescriptions? It appears that the identification of the steps of the

35 As is prescribed by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa in the *Sāmānyapraghaṭṭaka* section of his *Tristhalīsetu* (639.2–11; tr. Salomon 1985: 432–3).

36 For *garbhanyāsa* identified as *garbhādhāna*, see above. According to the Vaikhānasa *Vimānārcanakalpa*, the *pratiṣṭhā* of an image in a context of reinstallation is said to be analogous to the *saṃskāra* needed by men when they take a new body (see Colas 1996: 309, n. 4). However, the Vaiṣṇava ritual manuals give complete prescriptions for the marriage of the two goddesses Śrī and Bhū with god. The Vaikhānasa medieval corpus gives these prescriptions after the *pratiṣṭhā* of the new images of both the goddesses: see, for instance *Vimānārcanakalpa* 39, pp. 245–50. The *Viṣṇutilakasaṃhitā*, a comparatively late Pāñcarātra text (see Smith 1975: 385), includes the possibility of a marriage of the goddesses with the god during the *pratiṣṭhā* of their images (see 7.584–612). Phyllis Granoff informs me that the identification of the *pratiṣṭhā* ceremony with life-cycle rituals is common to the Jains as well. The Digambara *pratiṣṭhā* texts in particular are modeled on the life-cycle model.

pratiṣṭhā with the *saṃskāra*s often remains superficial. Firstly, it appears mainly in the titles of the chapters: *sīmantonnayana*, *jātakarman*, *nāmakarman*, *upanayana*, etc. Secondly, the elements contained in the *saṃskāra* framing of the description often have little to do with human *saṃskāra*s. For example, the text integrates the opening of the eyes (which belongs to the then-current ritual model of image *pratiṣṭhā*) into the ceremony of the new-born (*jātakarman*). Yet the *saṃskāra* interpretation sometimes seeps into the prescriptions, for instance with regard to the *saṃskāra*s of tonsure and marriage.

The ceremony of the opening of the eyes[37] of the image is often considered to be a characteristic feature of the image *pratiṣṭhā* ritual. But it does not seem to have been universal in *pratiṣṭhā* prescriptions, as we will see. The Buddhist text *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* alludes to the opening of the eyes several centuries before Buddhaghosa (5th century AD). Buddhaghosa himself mentions the ritual introduction of power in an image by means of painting its eyes (see Schopen 1997: 138, n. 9). He also states that the emperor Aśoka celebrated this ceremony for seven days.[38] The *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* and the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* (two "late Vedic" texts that could be contemporaneous with Buddhaghosa) describe the ceremony of the opening of the eyes of divine images installed at home. According to the first text, the eyes are opened with a pointed tool made of gold; according to the second, they are opened "with gold", i.e. with a pointed tool made of gold.[39]

However, the 6th century text *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* does not mention the opening of the eyes in its chapter (60) dedicated to the installation of images, as pointed out by Hikita (2005: 151). This absence might be significant. For chapter 60 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* gives a set of prescriptions that all worshippers can apply for the installation of the respective deities, including Buddha and Jinas. The omission of the eye-opening ceremony in this comparatively late text suggests that certain ritual circles may not have included it in their installation ritual. Perhaps they perceived it as unorthodox or were reluctant to apply this act to images because they considered them as inert, or because they considered the eye-opening ceremony as popular.

Modern scholarship sometimes sees a connection between the opening of the eyes of images and the Vedic ceremony of anointing the eyes of a person undergoing a *dīkṣā* and of a student at the ceremony marking the end of Vedic studies (*samāvartana*).[40] Ac-

37 Terms which designate this ceremony are numerous: *akṣyunmeṣaṇa*, *akṣimocana*, *nayanonmīlana*, etc.; see Hikita 2005: 191. Harting (1922: 65–6) quotes some ethnographic accounts.

38 Gombrich 1966: 26. A frieze of the Thousand Buddhas from Dunhuang dated 439–535 (reproduced in Giès & Cohen 1996: 125) seems to be another early testimony. The eyes of the Buddhas and the dancing girls on this painting have been left unpainted, which apparently shows that the eyes have not been "opened". However, the author of the notice attributes the absence of the delimitation between lower and upper eyelids to the bad conditions of conservation.

39 Colas 1994: 514, 516. The *Āśvalāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭa* 4.5 of the Poona edition (p. 177, l.13) also enjoins the opening of the eyes of the image (Einoo 2005: 98; Hikita 2005: 192). But this version of the text seems to be later than the version edited by Aithal, which does not prescribe the *pratiṣṭhā* of images (see Aithal 1993: 230–2).

40 See Hikita 2005: 193.

cording to Vedic texts, especially Brāhmaṇas, this anointing enables one to destroy enemies, protect oneself, obtain truth, etc. Some Hindu and Buddhist texts prescribe eye-anointing during or after the opening of the eyes of the image.[41] However, it is difficult to consider this prescription as a specific Vedic influence, for the Vedic interpretation of anointing the eyes may stem from a general conception of the power of vision in ancient Indian society, not exclusively from Vedic circles.

The assessment of the role of the craftsman with regard to the rite also influenced the structure of the opening of the eyes. The *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* and the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* do not mention the craftsman. In the first text, the ritual performer himself makes the image. The second text does not mention any intervention of a craftsman in the *pratiṣṭhā* rite (see Colas 1996: 24–5). Both texts mention only briefly the act of opening of the eyes. Later temple rituals distinguish between two kinds of opening of the eyes, one material, realized by the craftsman, and the other purely ritual, performed by the ritual performer. Two ancient Pāñcarātra texts, the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* and the *Sātvatasaṃhitā*[42] refer to this distinction (see Hikita 2005: 192–3). In both these texts, the ritual opening of the eyes precedes the action of the craftsman. According to the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus, the first opening of the eyes is performed without mantras by the craftsman. It consists in drawing or sculpting the eyes. This is immediately followed by a ceremony of purification of the image from the touch of the craftsman. The second opening of the eyes is performed with mantras by the priest who mimes the work of the craftsman.[43] Thus, the order of the actions of the priest and the craftsman seem to be reversed in the Vaikhānasa texts as compared to the two ancient Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās. This reversal is not insignificant, for it brings out the cruciality of the ceremony: it purifies the image from the touch of the craftsman, removes the image from the human realm and introduces it into the process of ritual divinization (see Colas 1989: 140, 148–9).

The *Mayamata*, a treatise of fine arts and architecture, does not highlight the distinction between the roles of the priest and the craftsman with regard to the image. The only actor in the opening of the eyes is the craftsman-architect.[44] However, the roles of

41 See Hikita 2005: 192. Eye-anointing and eye-opening should, perhaps, sometimes be considered as two different operations. See, for instance, *Agnipurāṇa* (58.9cd–13): after the opening of the eyes, the ritual performer anoints the eyes of the image with various ingredients, such as honey or clarified butter, while reciting appropriate mantras. In Abhayākaragupta's *Vajrāvalī* (11th–12th century), the opening of the eyes apparently consists of the application of butter and honey with a "stick" of gold (Mori 2005: 217). The Buddhist *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (p. 180) prescribes the opening of the eyes with a golden pointed instrument smeared with clarified butter and honey, but does not prescribe a separate anointment before or after the opening of the eyes.

42 But the *pratiṣṭhā* portion of the *Sātvatasaṃhitā* was probably added later. Firstly, because it includes many Vedic mantras and non-Ekāyana Brahmins assume a major role in this portion, and secondly, because it contains passages parallel to prescriptions of other sects. I thank Professor Hiromichi Hikita for this observation.

43 The priest sometimes adds the last touch of painting (Colas 1989: 139, 140–1; 1996: 313–4).

44 *Mayamata* 18.185–8. See also the quotation from P.K. Acharya about the *Mānasāra* in Harting (1922: 66).

the Master and the craftsman are distinguished in the adaptation of the ceremony for *liṅgas*.[45] The Master is apparently a ritualist who recites the required mantra and draws several lines on the *liṅga* with a golden stylus. The craftsman then completes the details of the sculptural work. There is no mention of purification from the touch of the craftsman nor of any further action by the Master with regard to this ceremony. This omission, together with the order of the performance, when this is a significant element, could testify to the desire of craftsmen to retain a maximal symbolic role in the image making.[46] It must be added that the probable competition between priest (in general) and craftsman to control the *pratiṣṭhā* ritual was perhaps only one among other socio-religious rivalries. Debates also apparently arose at times about the religious importance and social qualification of several performers which were particular to the *pratiṣṭhā* ritual. Such is the case of the "placer" (*sthāpaka*), for instance.[47] This could testify for a relative lability of social relations within *pratiṣṭhā* rites even in predominantly brahmanized context. Extent Sanskrit sources rarely make explicit these debates. The relative importance ascribed to the various performers of *pratiṣṭhā* was significant in the eyes of the patrons, who paid them according to a specific hierarchization.[48]

In several other comparatively late sources (that is, dating from 8th century onwards), the opening of the eyes is clearly interpreted as a process of giving knowledge[49] or power. According to some manuals, the opening of the eyes apparently corresponds

45 *lakṣaṇoddharaṇa*: "bringing forth the characteristics" (33.101–9).

46 The third *khaṇḍa* (97.1) of the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* goes as far as identifying the craftsman-architect (*sthapati*) as one of the sixteen *ṛtvij*s of the *pratiṣṭhā*. This text is liberal in assigning the *ṛtvij* title, for the astrologer too is included among the *ṛtvij*s. The editor, Shah, dates this *khaṇḍa* to "between circa 450 and 650 A.D. An earlier date after the third century A.D. however is not excluded by the evidence." (introduction, xxvi). But the debate over the age of this *khaṇḍa* remains open. Chapters could be of different dates (Colas 2002: 301–2). Phyllis Granoff draws my attention to chapter 4 of the *(Ārya-)mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, a Buddhist text, and informs me that this chapter does not minimize the role of craftsmen; the painting on cloth is never consecrated ritually, but the steps that lead up to its completion are all ritually regulated (personal communication). Craftsmen (weaver [pp. 55–9] and painter [p. 61]) cooperate closely with the main performer of the rite (the *sādhaka*, also called *vidyādhara*, pp. 56, 58) (see Lalou's translation for informative notes). The *(Ārya-)mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* was gradually composed between the beginning of the 8th century and the end of 10th century. Chapter 4 most probably did not escape additions and recasting but apparently belongs to the older stratum of the text (Przyluski 1923: 302–4, 306). 20th century Ceylonese Buddhism does not seem to require the participation of a priest in the opening of the eyes, which is done exclusively by a craftsman (Gombrich 1966: 24–5; 1971: 113).

47 See Granoff 2006: 390–1; Colas 1996: 313. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* mentions twice the *sthāpaka* in its chapter dedicated to the installation of images. The *sthāpaka* lays down the image to sleep on a couch (60.14). He is specially honoured, like the astrologer, the craftsman-architect, members of the assembly, etc. (60.18). However the text neither shows nor states that the *sthāpaka* is the main performer of the installation ceremonies.

48 At least according to Vaikhānasa sources; see Colas 1996: 215–7.

49 For instance, after the opening of the eyes, the *Jayākhyasaṃhitā* (20.166a) states: *nirīkṣeta tato bimbaṃ pradīptaṃ jñānacakṣuṣā*. In the Buddhist Kuladatta's *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, the mantra accompanying the action of the eye-opening identifies it with removal of the "cataract of ignorance" (180, 280). The association of power with the eye-opening could be earlier than the 5th century, as we saw above.

to the sudden release of divine power through the eyes of the image-deity. This is indicated by a supplementary module enjoined immediately after this opening, namely the presentation of appeasing objects to the newly-opened divine eyes. A cow and her calf, grains, clarified butter, etc. are the auspicious objects placed in front of the image.[50] This seems to mean that the first gaze of the divine image is held to be violent and needs to be pacified. This ritual module is prevalent in the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus.[51] But according to the same texts, the introduction of power in the image takes place through another ceremony at the end of the *pratiṣṭhā* ritual. To state that the image emits power at the stage of the opening of the eyes would seem to undermine the interpretation of *pratiṣṭhā* as power-giving rite. It could be explained that it is the *first* act of manifestation of divine power in the image (see Colas 1986: 77). But most probably the arrangement of the ritual succession needed not fit the modern norms of coherence (Colas 1989: 146–7) and this kind of discrepancy was not considered a major flaw.

Interestingly, the ceremony of opening of the eyes of the image was reproduced, though in a modified form, in the *pratiṣṭhā* of other objects. The equivalent of this ceremony with regard to *liṅga*, the "bringing forth of (auspicious) characteristics" (*lakṣaṇoddharaṇa*), appears in the Śilpaśāstra and in Śaivatantras. Practically, it consists in tracing the various parts of the *liṅga*. According to the *Mayamata* (33.101–9; Takashima 2005: 121), it is accompanied by a mantra dedicated to the eyes (33.106) and followed by the presentation of auspicious objects to the *liṅga*. This clearly shows that the opening of eyes was the model for the *liṅga* ceremony. In some Buddhist ritual traditions, the "opening of the eyes" of the manuscripts of scriptures is performed by reflecting them in a mirror.[52]

Empowering of the image

From the notion of installing, placing, the rite of *pratiṣṭhā* acquired the signification of transforming the object into a power-suffused entity. This interpretative overlay was not part of all the earliest versions of the ceremony. The idea of ritually empowering (or giving life to) the religious image through an elaborate process could be the ritual and articulated translation of a current belief in the innate power and life of the representation of a supra-human or divine being. This very belief may not have been origi-

50 Colas 1989: 140–1. See also *Mayamata* 18.189. Observations made in 20th century Sri Lanka recorded the belief that the opening of the eyes of Buddhist images is a dangerous operation for the craftsman who performs it (Gombrich 1966: 24–5).

51 It is, however, absent in the rituals prescribed in early texts like *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* and *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, and in the two ancient Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, the *Jayākhya-* and the *Sātvata-*.

52 According to Abhayākara's *Vajrāvalī* (Mori 2005: 217) and Kuladatta's *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* (181). According to several Purāṇas the *pratiṣṭhā* of trees comprises a ceremony of "ear-piercing" of the tree with the help of a golden needle (Filliozat 2004: 99).

nally "Hindu", but could have belonged to a common and wide-spread devotional conception. The ritual transposition of this idea could express both the legitimation of this belief and the desire of priests to retain the agency of making the image a powerful or living being.

The *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* may be considered as one of the earliest extant texts to prescribe the introduction of power in the religious image. It enjoins the worship of a vase containing water imbued with power, which is poured over the image through the intermediary of a bunch of sacred herb (see Colas 1994: 516–7 and 518). The Pāñcarātra *Pauṣkarasaṃhitā* (43.96–7) considers the introduction of power-consciousness (*cicchakti*) into the image as an essential moment in the *pratiṣṭhā* of the image. Later, the Vaikhānasa medieval corpus also prescribes the preparation and worship of a vase filled with water, various objects and sacred syllables that are mentally deposited in the vase, which is considered as a "vase of power" (*śaktikumbha*). The water of this vase is poured over the image at the end of the *pratiṣṭhā* (Colas 1989: 77–9, 142; 1996: 290–1). The vase also functions as a substitute of the image until the *pratiṣṭhā* of the image is completed. Śaivatantras such as the *Ajita-* and the *Rauravatantra* also enjoin the introduction of power through the vase of power.[53]

The *Vimānārcanakalpa*, besides the two ceremonies discussed above, refers to another power-giving action with regard to religious images made of clay. In the last phase of making the image, colour is applied onto it. A mantra identifies the colour with "life". The text then prescribes a second application of colour mixed with gold and identifies it with "power" (see Colas 1986: 244). This confirms that discrepancy is not a major problem in ritual injunctions and that the theological overlay of giving power can repeatedly find its way amidst the prescriptions.

However, opening of the eyes and pouring of empowered water are mainly performed by two different actors. The first is primarily the work of a craftsman (even though the ritual prescriptions add a second opening of the eyes, by a priest) and is conceived to release violent power from the image. The second is performed by a priest. Could we presume that the opening of the eyes originated in the circles of image-makers and that the element of the "vase of power" was incorporated into the *pratiṣṭhā* ritual either for the purification of the image or to safeguard the socio-religious superiority (and economic interests?) of the priests?

Apparently the notion of empowering the religious image was not conceived as essential to the *pratiṣṭhā* ritual in all religious and ritualist circles. The *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* contains ritual and mantric elements often similar to those of the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*. But this text is not sectarian: it prescribes *pratiṣṭhā* rites for Viṣṇu and Rudra, as well as the daily worship of these two gods together (see Colas 1994: passim). Unlike the *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra*, it does not mention the introduction of divine power into the image (Colas 1994: 518). The installation described in the *Bṛhat-*

53 See Colas 1994: 518, n. 3. The date of these Tantras is difficult to determine. However one may presume that their most ancient chapters contain conceptions which were current at the beginning of the second millenium.

saṃhitā does not prescribe the introduction of power in the religious image either. However, the reason for this absence of empowering of the image may differ according to the text. The *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* perhaps intentionally rejected the introduction of power for an ideological reason (resistance to Tantrism), while the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* prescribed a unificatory ritual model that catered to all obediences. Like the absence of reference to the opening of the eyes, the absence of reference to power introduction might also reveal the reluctance of certain religious traditions about this notion, perhaps considered as unorthodox or "popular". Or, perhaps, the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, not being a priestly text, was not so keen on mentioning the introduction of power in images (through a vase or by another means). The *Mayamata* mentions the opening of the eyes, but not the power in the vases of deities (see 18.185–90a and 18.215–6). It is a suprasectarian text (including prescriptions for Buddhist and Jaina images in 36.281–91), though it shows a leaning towards Śaivism.[54] This could explain why it does not mention the introduction of power in images, a conception which perhaps was unacceptable to certain milieus. However, being later than the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, it could have retained the ceremony of opening of the eyes because this element was commonly accepted by then.

Conclusion

To describe a rite is to interpret it. All scriptural depiction of ritual acts presupposes an analysis of these acts. As we observed, ritual manuals sometimes integrate theological interpretations of the *pratiṣṭhā*. Priests, who used them, were probably anxious to legitimize this rite with theological arguments. Some non-ritual texts also use metaphysical or philosophical interpretations to justify the commonly practised *pratiṣṭhā* rite. The Jaina author Haribhadra (8th century?), for instance, describes *pratiṣṭhā* in a verse which may be translated as: "*Pratiṣṭhā* is indeed of one's own feeling relative to a deity; according to the Scriptures it is the establishment of the supreme in one's own self."[55] According to the commentaries the installation can be neither of a liberated particular deity nor of a living being who is a deity. The installation is of the supreme in one's own self as "I am that" and—when it concerns an external image—it is of the feeling relative to a deity as "this is that". The Naiyāyika author Udayana (11th century), in his *Nyāyakusumāñjali*, does not accept that *pratiṣṭhā* gives a specific power to images. He interprets *pratiṣṭhā* as an act bringing about the conscious reflection, by deities, of themselves as being present in the image (see Colas 2004: 160–4).

This paper, however, focused on the testimony of ritual manuals. If we were to admit that *pratiṣṭhā* is a unique ritual model, we would have to consider it as a stable structure which gathered "meanings" and dynamics in the constant accretion and rein-

54 See Dagens, *Mayamata*, Introduction: p. 6.

55 *bhavati ca khalu pratiṣṭhā nijabhāvasyaiva devatoddeśāt | svātmany eva paraṃ yat sthāpanam iha vacananītyoccaiḥ* (*Ṣoḍaśaprakaraṇa* 8.4).

terpretation of details that were not an integral part of the original model. We would also have to postulate that there is a single, simple origin of the model. The available documentation seems to a certain extent to support this theory, because the prescriptions of *pratiṣṭhā* in the extant ritual manuals from around the 8th century up until modern times show a certain unity. But this model does not have a precise form and escapes all clear definition probably because it never existed except as an ideal. All that we observe in the ritual manuals are particular ritual forms, which nevertheless share certain common points.

Early Buddhist documentation about *pratiṣṭhā* is rare but precious because it reveals the vulnerability of the premise of an exclusive model. For, as we have seen, the elaboration of this rite was a response to various needs, and its various elements may have been brought (sometimes to the forefront) from different horizons, some Vedic (or late Vedic), some theological or yogic, etc. A ritual model results from a historical construction, that is to say, from routinizing, simplifying and sometimes complexifying, while at the same time enhancing, salient features or modules that were supposed to provide rites with "meaning". The authors of ritual manuals analyzed and synthesized; constructions and reconstructions were meant to regulate practice and to canonize the rules obtained, an effort bound to re-occur. The process of modelization was constant, but no model resisted the continual process of modelization.

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Astrid Zotter

How to Initiate a Tree: The *Aśvatthopanayana* in Prescriptive Texts*

Putrair vinā śubhaphalaṃ na bhaven narāṇāṃ duṣputrakair api tathobhayalokanāśaḥ |
etad vicārya sudhinā paripālya vṛkṣān yatnena vedavidhinā parikalpanīyāḥ ||

Without sons there can be no auspicious outcome for men, whereas with bad sons there is loss [for them] in both worlds (i.e. in this world and the next). In consideration of this, the wise man makes every effort to cultivate trees, which are to be adopted [by him] according to Vedic ritual procedure.

From the *Taruputravidhi* of the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*[1]

Following introductory remarks on the cultural significance of the *aśvattha* tree in general, information about textual guidelines for conducting the *aśvatthopanayana* will be presented. One text will be examined more closely with regard to parallels to the standard *upanayana* and other rituals. The analysis of the text, as expected, shows that the latter allows certain leeway for ascribing different meanings and purposes to the ritual some of which will be pointed out in the conclusion. The paper is solely concerned with manuals prescribing how the *aśvatthopanayana* is to be performed. No actual performance of the ritual has been taken into account. The text of an *Aśvatthopanayanavidhi* is provided in an appendix.

The *aśvattha* tree (*Ficus religiosa* L.)

One of the evergreens among South Asian ritual flora is the *aśvattha* tree (*Ficus religiosa* L.), also known as *pippala*, *bodhidruma* or *dharmadruma*.[2] Its religious significance is attested as early as the Indus valley civilization, at whose sites it has been found depicted on different objects.[3] The earliest written evidence dates from the later parts of the *Ṛgveda*.[4] In Vedic ritual, the *aśvattha* ranks among the trees fit to be sacri-

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* My thanks go to Philip Pierce for revising the English of this paper.

1 *Dānakhaṇḍa*, pp. 1055–6.

2 For a botanical description and an account of germination and later development stages of the tree under different circumstances, see Galil (1984). Further Sanskrit synonyms and its medicinal properties are given in Arya Vaidya Sala (1995: 38–42).

3 On the *aśvattha* as a motif on products of the Harappan civilization, see Franke-Vogt (1991: 94–8, 104); for the famous "fig deity seal," see Parpola (1992).

4 *Aśvattha* is mentioned in ṚV 1.135.8 and 10.97.5. The word *pippala* occurs in ṚV 1.164 and 5.54.12, but it is not clear whether it already refers there to the fruit of the *Ficus religiosa* or to that of some other tree.

ficed (*yajñīya*).[5] Its prominence continues up to the present day. Its leaf is one of the group of "five leaves" (*pañcapallava*) popularly used in Hindu ritual.[6] In South Asia the tree is widely cultivated and can be encountered along the roadside, at public meeting grounds or in temple compounds. Especially on Saturday mornings representatives of the species attract the attention of women worshippers, who treat the tree to such devotional service as sprinkling water on its roots or winding threads around its trunk.

Volumes could be written by way of introduction to the *aśvattha* tree. Here I will confine myself to highlighting the most important aspects of its cultural significance. This tree of impressive appearance belongs to the class of *vanaspati*.[7] It is described in texts as the foremost among trees, standing symbolically for *saṃsāra*.[8] It is termed the king of trees (*vṛkṣarāja*).[9]

The extraordinary length of the petioles of the *aśvattha* makes for constant movement among its leaves; hence the tree is also called *calapatra*. Vedic traditions have the Maruts, the wind gods, residing in the tree. In different parts of South Asia it, like other fig tree species, is believed to be haunted by spirits of deceased Brahmins.[10] In texts, the *pippala* is spoken of as housing different divinities: for example, the Apsarases, Agni, Ravi or Nirṛti (as the elder sister of Lakṣmī).[11] In Puranic texts and popular belief

5 For the group of *yajñīya*, as opposed to *ayañīya* trees, and their later use in *pūjā*, see A. Zotter (2009: 295 [with further references], 313).

6 Sources vary as to which leaves make up the *pañcapallava*. Usually four species of ficus plus the mango (*Mangifera indica* L.) are listed; cf. *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Dānakhaṇḍa*, p. 109: "The leaves of *aśvattha*, *udumbara*, *plakṣa*, *cūta* [and] *nyagrodha* are [collectively] called 'the five boughs'; [they are] auspicious in all rituals" (*aśvatthodumbaraplakṣacūtanyagrodhapallavāḥ | pañcabhaṅgā iti proktāḥ sarvakarmasu śobhanāḥ*).

7 In *Mānavadharmaśāstra* 1.47 this term is defined thus: "Those that bear fruit without [first bearing] flowers are known as *vanaspati*" (*apuṣpāḥ phalavanto ye te vanaspatayaḥ smṛtāḥ*). A similar definition is mentioned by Abbott (1932: 334) and Viennot (1954: 23). According to *Mānavadharmaśāstra* 4.39, a *vanaspati* is one of the things a student who has finished his studies but has not married yet (a *snātaka*) must circumambulate.

8 The notion of a *saṃsāravṛkṣa* probably first occurs in ṚV 1.24.7. Only later is it explicitly associated with the *aśvattha* tree (*Kaṭhopaniṣad* 6.1; *Bhagavadgītā* 15.1ff.). This tree needs to be uprooted in order for one to attain liberation. Emeneau (1949: 364–9) summarizes previous discussions of the *aśvattha* as a tree having roots that extend upwards and branches downwards.

9 The *aśvattha* is termed a king of the trees of Brahmin birth (*aśvatthaḥ sarvavṛkṣāṇāṃ rājā brahmaṇavarṇakaḥ*; NGMPP A 435/39, fol. 4v2). In *Atharvaveda* 4.37.4 the *aśvattha* and *nyagrodha* appear together as the great crowned trees (*mahāvṛkṣā śikhaṇḍinaḥ*); cf. Parpola 1992: 229. Like many of its other associations, the *aśvattha* shares that of kingship with the other three major Indian varieties of fig trees.

10 Abbott reports that "all varieties of the fig-tree are haunted by the spirit of a pandit who died without imparting his knowledge to others (*Brahmarākṣasa*)" (1932: 316). Ojha (1991: 65) records the belief that initiated Brahmin youths who have died unwedded reside in an *aśvattha*.

11 Vedic texts call the *aśvattha* a seat of the gods (*devasadana*; e.g. *Atharvaveda* 5.4.3). Different myths relating to the origin of the *aśvattha* and its association with divinities in Vedic, post-Vedic and Puranic literature are recounted by Ojha (1991).

it is particularly associated with Viṣṇu.[12]

The *aśvattha* tree thrives virtually everywhere. It is fast-growing, the destructive force of its roots being notorious. Though usually cultivated as a ground tree propagated by cuttings, by nature it starts life as an epiphyte. It germinates on buildings, walls and other trees, and from there shoots its roots down to the ground. Unlike other (true) strangler figs, such as the banyan, it does not kill its host tree by ringing the trunk with its roots but rather by splitting it apart.[13] In the hymn *Atharvaveda* 3.6, an *aśvattha* growing on a male *khadira* (*Acacia catechu* WILLD.) tree is addressed in order to ensure one's own success in killing enemies. Another hymn of the *Atharvaveda* (6.11), telling of an *aśvattha* which has become parasitic on a female *śamī* (*Prosopis spicigera* L.) tree, is, according to *Kauśikasūtra* 35.8, recited during the *puṃsavana* rite to secure male offspring (Parpola 1992: 228).

The *pippala* falls under the category of milk-producing trees; hence it is called *kṣīradruma*. With its milky sap it is said to be able to nourish the dead. Pots filled with water are hung from its branches the first ten days following a death (Gutschow & Michaels 2005: 10–1; Ojha 1991: 70–1). To water or circumambulate the tree is said to release ancestors from the underworld and help them ascend to heaven.[14] It is one of the plants girls are married to when their birth horoscope displays a danger of widowhood—thus averting an untimely death from their future human husbands.[15]

In rituals, the tree is not only associated with death and the dead but also with the unborn. Like other trees, the *aśvattha* can be adopted as a son by those who have no offspring. It is considered meritorious to circumambulate or embrace the tree. The expected fruits of such an act include fertility for barren women or securing the birth of a male child.[16] An *aśvattha* is customarily planted near temple compounds or other prominent places together with other trees, to one of which it may be married, standing as

12 E.g. *Skandapurāṇa* 6.247.35–44. Cf. Gupta 2001: 32; Pai 2000: 451–5. In *aśvattha* rituals the tree may be addressed as Viṣṇu (e.g. in the *Pippalavrata* of the *Karmakāṇḍapradīpa* [2]: p. 185, or the *Aśvatthasecana* of the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Dānakhaṇḍa*, pp. 993–4).

13 Emeneau's (1949) claim that the *aśvattha* is a true strangler fig, one that does not penetrate another tree with its roots but rather encircles the trunk with them, was proven incorrect by Galil (1984), who notes examples of *Ficus religiosa* splitting the trunks of *Melia azedarach* L. (Skt. *nimba*) and *Acacia catechu* WILLD. (Skt. *khadira*). This stage of development is very rare, though; according to Galil (1984: 197ff.), it only occurs under certain conditions. This unusual phenomenon has not been observed among any other fig species.

14 *Dharmasindhu* (p. 38 *Aśvatthasevana*[for °*secana*°?]*vidhi*). See also below (Conclusion).

15 Even nowadays girls with an inauspicious birth horoscope continue to be married to the *aśvattha*, while boys are married to the *tulasī* (*Ocimum sanctum* L.). This was confirmed by Brahmin informants in Allahabad. The *Karmakāṇḍapradīpa* [2] (pp. 185–8), a modern manual on the ten life-cycle rituals, describes the proper performance of such a marriage.

16 Abbott 1932: 317, 322f.; Gupta 2001: 35; Kane 1968ff.: II, 894. In the *Dharmakośa* (pp. 2498–500) the ritual treatment of the *aśvattha* is explained under *garbhādhāna*, the life-cycle ritual of insemination. According to the section title of the passage, the benefits include increasing the likelihood of obtaining a son or some other wish (*putrādiprāptyārthaṃ dhyānastutipradakṣiṇādirūpanānāvidhāśvatthasevāvidhānam*; *Dharmakośa*, p. 2498).

the bridegroom to a margosa (Skt. *nimba*, *Melia azedarach* L.), or as the bride when given away to a banyan tree (Skt. *nyagrodha*, *Ficus benghalensis* L.).[17]

The textual guidelines for performing an *aśvatthopanayana*

Sometimes the initiation known as *upanayana* is performed for an *aśvattha*.[18] I have not been able to witness such a ritual in the Kathmandu Valley. There the above-mentioned marriage between that tree and a *nyagrodha* is more popular today, with the *aśvattha* as the female.

In one of the late Gṛhya texts, the *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra*[19] (2.10), are found guidelines (*vidhi*) for the performance of an *aśvatthopanayana*.[20] There it is called *aśvatthasaṃskāra* (2.10.1). The text describes a short core ritual couched in the basic pattern of the Gṛhya fire ritual. The time for the performance may be chosen freely (2.10.2). Preparations (2.10.3) include the feeding of Brahmins and the uttering of benedictions (*āśiṣaḥ*). Then water is sprinkled around the tree while reciting the Vedic verse *aśvatthe vo niṣadanam...* (ṚV 10.97.5); the *aśvattha* is worshipped; and a sacrificial cord (*yajñopavīta*) is fastened to it (2.10.3–4). The fire sacrifice is performed up to *agnimukha* (10.2.5).[21] The tree is equipped with the paraphernalia of a student (10.2.5). A garment (*vāsas*) and girdle (*mekhalā*) are donned silently, whereas a knot (*granthī*) is tied into the girdle with the intoning of a mantra. Again, a hide (*ajina*) and a staff (*daṇḍa*) are handed over silently, and then a name is given. The *upanayana* proper (10.2.6) is performed by uttering *devasya tvā...* (e.g. *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhyasūtra* 1.5.8[22]). The fire sacrifice is resumed and concluded (10.2.7–9) with offerings of cooked food (*pakva*) into fire (while reciting the *gāyatrī*), *ājya* oblations (while uttering *kṣetriyai tvā...* [*Āpastambagṛhyasūtra* 6.15.4; *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhyasūtra* 2.3.10] and six[23] *vyāhṛti*s), the offering to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt and the setting down of the remains of the sacrificial ma-

17 Abbott 1932: 335; Gupta 2001: 33; Ojha 1991: 77; On 16 June 2008 the *Himalayan Times* reported an actual case of a marriage between a pipal and a banyan tree. I thank J. Buss for this reference.

18 Abbott 1932: 335. Kane (1968ff.: II, 300) mentions an epigraphic reference to the performance of the ritual in A.D. 1358.

19 According to Harting (1922: xxiv) this text cannot have assumed its final form earlier than the 3rd century A.D.

20 A brief summary of the *vidhi* is given by Gonda (1980: 356).

21 As Harting (1922: xxx) has stated, in the *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* the expression *devayajanollekhanaprabhṛtyāgnimukhāt kṛtvā* is used to refer to the initial parts of the fire ritual, which starts by drawing lines on the sacrificial ground, continues with a number of rites and ends with the *agnimukha*, an offering consisting of twelve oblations of clarified butter (*ājyāhuti*) into fire. For more on the *agnimukha*, see Gonda (1980: 352).

22 The *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* belongs to the tradition of the Black *Yajurveda*, which is why references to the mantras here are from texts of this Vedic branch.

23 Normally, three or seven *vyāhṛti*s, the names of the worlds, are uttered. As in the *aśvatthopanayana* described below, the common three *mahāvyāhṛti*s (*bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ*) are mentioned when offering oblations.

terial (*hutaśeṣa*) on a *palāśa* (*Butea frondosa* ROXB.) leaf. Finally, concluding rites are performed (10.2.10–11).

Some of the elements of this ritual, namely the worship of the tree, the handing over of paraphernalia and the initiation, can also be found in later and more elaborate *vidhi*s for the *aśvatthopanayana*. Among Dharmaśāstra compilations (*nibandha*) and ritual manuals copied by priests in Nepal, only versions of two related texts have so far turned up. The pertinent data are summarized in the following table:

	Found in	Ascribed to	Time and place
Aśvatthopanayana according to Śaunaka	*Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*, pp. 893–4	Śaunaka	A.D. 1713, Jaipur
	NGMPP A 435/39 (see below)	Śaunaka	A.D. 1792, Nepal
	NGMPP E 1662/7	-	A.D. 1918, Nepal (Gorkha)
Aśvatthopanayana-prayoga	*Dharmasindhu*, p. 281	*Pūrtakamalākara*	late 18th cent., Maharashtra
	NGMPP A 435/39 (see below)	*Madanaratna* and others	A.D. 1792, Nepal
	Karmakāṇḍapradīpa [1], p. 331	Kamalākarabhaṭṭa	A.D. 1921, Nasik

Table 1: Textual guidelines for the *aśvatthopanayana* (*nibandha*s and handbooks)

The metrical text called *Aśvatthopanayana* consists of thirty *anuṣṭubh* verses spoken by the seer Śaunaka. It was copied in two handwritten manuals from Nepal filmed by the NGMPP (A 435/39, E 1662/7). It can also be found in the *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*, a *nibandha* from Rajasthan composed at the court of Savāī Jaisingh by the Mahārāja's preceptor, Ratnākara Dīkṣita.[24] The other manual serviceable for the performance of the ritual is a prose text with the title *Aśvatthopanayanaprayoga*. Apart from the Nepalese handbook under discussion here, it occurs in the popular *Dharmasindhu* by Kāśīnātha Upādhyāya[25] and a recent collection of ritual-related material, called *Karmakāṇḍapradīpa*, in the tradition of the White *Yajurveda*. The ascriptions in these two texts seem to be to the *Pūrtakamalākara*, written in the first half of the 17th century by the famous scholar Kamalākarabhaṭṭa in Benares.[26] The attribution could not be confirmed since this text has yet to be published.

The same holds good for the textual source cited in the Nepalese handbook, to which my further analysis will be limited. This manual is the only version which contains both the metrical and prose texts, clearly basing the latter on the former and

24 I am indebted to H. Isaacson for the reference to this text and to M. Boehm-Tettelbach for providing a copy of the rare edition of it. For details concerning the origin of the *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma* and its author, see Horstmann (2009: 24–30, 131–2).

25 See Rocher's introduction to the edition quoted here for details concerning date, place and author.

26 On Kamalākarabhaṭṭa, see Kane (1968ff.: I, 925–37). Kane (ibid.: 928) mentions that the *Pūrtakamalākara*, amongst other topics, deals with the dedication of *aśvattha* trees.

ascribing the *prayoga* section to the *Madanaratna* and other sources.[27] In all likelihood this is a reference to the *Madanaratna*(*pradīpa*), which, as Kane (1968ff.: I, 809) suggests, was compiled by a group of pandits for King Madanasiṃhadeva, who may have flourished in the Delhi region between 1450 and 1500. Regrettably, the project of editing this extensive *nibandha* came to a halt in the 1960s after the second of three volumes of the *Dānavivekoddyota*, one of seven chapters of the work, was published. The published parts of the work do not cover the *aśvatthopanayana*. But judging from the general structure of the text, in which rituals are treated by providing a *vidhi* from a metrical text (usually a Puranic one), accompanied by a *prayoga* in prose, it is not unlikely that the text copied in the Nepalese manuscript ultimately goes back to the *Madanaratnapradīpa*. As the heading of the text in the manual mentions "*Madanaratna* and other [sources]," the manual may have been copied not directly from the *Madanaratna* itself but from an unidentified intermediary. Whether this intermediary text was one of the popular *nibandha*s of the 16th or 17th century, such as Kamalākarabhaṭṭa's *Pūrtakamalākara*, which are known to have relied upon the *Madanaratnapradīpa* as one of their sources (Kane 1968ff.: I, 808) and to have been influential in Nepal, must be left to further investigation.

Although the questions of transmission and origin of the text under discussion, and its relation to the other transmitted versions, cannot be answered in the present state of research, it should have become clear from the foregoing that the Nepalese manual dated A.D. 1792 and edited in the appendix to the present paper is representative of the prescriptive texts relating to the *aśvatthopanayana* as known so far.

Although the *Aśvatthopanayana* (AśU) according to Śaunaka and the *Aśvatthopanayanaprayoga* (AśUP) both treat the same ritual, at times they diverge from one another. In order to point out these differences the contents of the two texts will be outlined one after the other. These rather detailed summaries will at the same time serve in lieu of exact translations.

The *Aśvatthopanayana* first defines the occasion (AśU 1b–3, 5) and object of the ritual (AśU 4). Preparatory rites start inside the house (AśU 6–7) with the brushing of teeth, bathing and other daily ritual duties (*nityakarman*); worshipping one's chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā*); offering to one's ancestors in the auspicious *nāndīśrāddha*; declaring the day to be auspicious (*puṇyāhavācana*); and uttering benedictions (*āśīrvacana*). The ritual prelude further calls for a procession to the *aśvattha* tree (AśU 8–10b). Preparations continue at the ritual site (AśU 10c–15) with the sprinkling of water over the roots of the tree, performing another *puṇyāhavācana* north-west of the *aśvattha*, electing a priest to officiate during the ritual (*brahmavaraṇa*), bathing (the tree?) with the five substances of immortality (*pañcāmṛtasnāna*) and conducting a fire offering (*homa*) according to one's own Vedic branch (*svaśākhayā*) east of the tree. Then the tree is fitted out with paraphernalia while reciting appropriate mantras (AśU 16–17) and is wor-

27 The text runs thus: "Now [follows] the procedure for the *aśvatthopanayana*, as explained by Śaunaka according to the *Madanaratna* and other [sources]" (*atha madanaratnādyanusāreṇa śaunakoktam*[sic] *aśvatthopanayanaprayogaḥ*).

shipped while reciting the mantra *aśvatthe vo...* (ṚV 10.94.5; AśU 18). Twelve oblations of clarified butter (*ājya*) are offered, each time accompanied by a mantra (AśU 19–21). The first words (*pratīka*) of these Vedic formulas are quoted. The first three oblations are offered to the accompaniment of the *vyāhṛti*s; the fourth to sixth, of the three mantras starting with *agna āyūṃṣi...* (ṚV 9.66.19–21); the seventh, again of the *vyāhṛti*s (pronounced all three together)[28]; the eighth, of *yā oṣadhīḥ...* (ṚV 10.97.1); the ninth, of *yā phalinīḥ...* (ṚV 10.97.15); the tenth, of *aśvatthe vo...* (ṚV 10.97.5); the eleventh, of *vanaspate śatavalśo...* (ṚV 3.8.11); and the last, of *dvā suparṇā...* (ṚV 1.164.20). Now the performer sits down west of the *aśvattha* facing east, touches the tree with his right hand and recites the *sāvitrīmantra* (e.g. ṚV 3.62.10) thrice, preceded by the three *vyāhṛti*s (AśU 22–23b). Beholding the tree, he utters *devasya tvā...* (e.g. ĀśvGS 1.20.4) and recites the *dhruvasūkta* (ṚV 10.173), again preceded by the three *vyāhṛti*s (AśU 23c–24b). Afterwards he touches the tree with a golden rod and announces, "I install the *aśvattha*"[29] (AśU 24c–5b). The fire sacrifice is concluded (AśU 25cd), and the *aśvattha* tree is worshipped with different services (AśU 26). The priestly fee including a cow with a calf is given to the performer, and other Brahmins are venerated and fed together with the clients' relatives (AśU 27–29b). Finally, the result of the ritual (*puṇyaphala*) is enunciated (AśU 29c–30b).

The sequence of actions[30] given in the *Aśvatthopanayanaprayoga* (AśUP) differs. For the most part, truncations, enlargements, rearrangements and other changes are related to the application-bound nature of a *prayoga* text, because rendering a metrical text serviceable for an actual ritual performance almost necessarily demands modifications. Other deviations depend on factors not immediately apparent.

The list of preparatory rites in the AśUP is at variance with that of the AśU. On the one hand, it is less detailed, leaving out the procession to the ritual site and not even mentioning the location of the performance. This may be due to the impracticality of an elaborate procession, including Brahmins reciting the Veda, musicians and singing women. On the other hand, the *prayoga* adds certain details relating to ritual standards, such as a mantra for brushing teeth or worshipping (*pūjana*) Gaṇeśa and the Mātṛkās. Importantly, the text contains the ritual resolution (*saṃkalpa*) to be pronounced. This

28 This is how I interpret the verse AśU 19: "One should offer *ājya* while [uttering] the three [mantras] starting with *agna āyūṃṣi...*, having previously offered [it] and [to be followed] afterwards while [uttering] the three *vyāhṛti*s". The *vyāhṛti*s are usually pronounced during four oblations as *oṃ bhūḥ svāhā*, *oṃ bhuvaḥ svāhā*, *oṃ svaḥ svāhā*, and *oṃ bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ svāhā*, so that the present interpretation in which the first three formulas are pronounced before, and the fourth after, the *agna āyūṃṣi...* sequence produces the number of oblations required to make up twelve.

29 The text AśU 24c–25b can be understood as: "[Pronouncing] the word *aśvattha* in the second case (i.e. the accusative), [while touching the tree] with a golden rod, he should pronounce the words 'I install...' (i.e. *aśvatthaṃ sthāpayāmi*)" (*aśvatthanāmam uccārya vibhaktyā ca dvitīyayā | śalākayā suvarṇasya sthāpayeti padaṃ vadet*). I read *sthāpayāmi* for *sthāpayeti*, as in the parallel version in NGMPP E 1662/7 and in the *prayoga* section (*suvarṇaśalakayā aśvatthaṃ spṛṣṭvā aśvatthaṃ sthāpayāmīti vadet*).

30 To facilitate orientation within the Sanskrit text, a shortened form of this synopsis has been used to provide the framework for presenting the edited text of the manual (see appendix).

statement of the aim of the ritual, apparently a quote of the *puṇyaphala* in the Śaunaka text, is provided in direct speech, which can easily be transformed into the full formula by an experienced ritual performer.[31]

Preparations relating to the tree and the fire are described as in the basic text. The ritual proper starts with the *aśvattha* being equipped with a student's utensils. The mantras prescribed appear here, as in the later description of the twelve *ājya* oblations, in their application-bound form. Each mantra is furnished with its full *viniyoga* formula, consisting of the seer (*ṛṣi*) by whom the Vedic hymn was revealed, the deity (*devatā*) it is addressed to, its metre (*chandas*) and its application (*viniyoga*). The mantra itself is given not only in the form of a *pratīka*, but also in a more elaborate (if still abbreviated) form. During the ritual performance the complete *viniyoga* formula should be pronounced before each mantra (Hanneder 1997: 153).

The ritual description proceeds in a way by now familiar, with the worship of the *aśvattha* while uttering *aśvatthe vo...* (ṚV 10.97.5). But unlike in the metrical text, it is before the twelve oblations (*dvadaśāhuti*) are offered into fire that the tree is touched while pronouncing the words *devasya tvā...* (e.g. ĀśvGS 1.20.4) and thrice uttering the *sāvitrī*. There is no apparent reason for this rearrangement. Likewise it is hard to explain why the tree is touched with a golden rod twice, once before and once after the *dvadaśāhuti*. Further, the mantras for the twelve offerings differ, and regardless of the fact that the verses are properly listed one after another, it is a little hard to arrive at an exact tally of the twelve mantras. The mantras are again given with their *viniyoga*s and parts of the full liturgical setting required for the *ājyāhuti*s.[32] At its beginning, the list is close to the Śaunaka text. The first four oblations are made in combination with the *vyāhṛti*s; and the fifth to seventh, with ṚV 9.66.19–21. But then not the first and fifteenth verses of ṚV 10.97 but only the twenty-second of that hymn, *oṣadhayaḥ saṃvadanto...* (ṚV 10.97.22), is prescribed. The list of mantras continues as above with ṚV 10.97.5, ṚV 3.8.11 and ṚV 1.164.20. To account for the missing twelfth oblation one has either to accept a lacuna in the text or take the following six verses of the *dhruvasūkta* (ṚV 10.173) as an insertion and count the following *vyāhṛti*s as going with the last oblation. I personally would opt for this latter solution, while still considering it not fully satisfactory.

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31 Rather than a union with Brahmā, it is a union with Viṣṇu that is here said to be the desired result. This may be due to the fact that Viṣṇu is associated more often than Brahmā with the *aśvattha* tree (see above p. 345). For the standard elements of a *saṃkalpa* formula including a detailed proclamation of time and place (here—as typically—implied in the expression "having announced the time and place" [*deśakālau saṃkīrtya*]) and personal details of the performer, see Michaels (2005: 53–8).

32 During an actual performance each mantra is preceded not only by its *viniyoga* but also by the *praṇava* (the syllable *oṃ*) and followed by the common *tyāga* formula, so that the text of the *vidhi*: *vyāhṛtīnāṃ parameṣṭīprajāpatiḥ prajāpati bṛhatī ‖ home vini° oṃ bhū svāhā | agnayedaṃ* etc. can be read out as: *vyāhṛtīnāṃ parameṣṭīprajāpatir ṛṣiḥ | prajāpati devatā | bṛhatī chandaḥ | home viniyogaḥ | oṃ bhūḥ svāhā | idam agnaye na mama* etc. The clarified butter is to be poured into the fire while pronouncing *svāhā*.

The rest of the ritual is described in accordance with the Śaunaka text. The tree is touched with a golden rod while (again) uttering "I install the *aśvattha*", the fire sacrifice is concluded, the tree is worshipped with sixteen services (*ṣoḍaśopacārapūjā*), again while reciting the mantra *aśvatthe vo...* (ṚV 10.94.5), and finally the Brahmins and other guests are served.

Analysis

The text will be analyzed in two ways. First, the elements of which the ritual is composed will be compared with other rituals. In a second step, the mantras used throughout the ritual will be focused on more closely. This distinction between actions and speech is not useful in every case, and it will be shown that the significance of mantras can be determined more precisely when the associated acts are taken into account.

In addition to the name itself, there are other clear indications that the *aśvatthopanayana* is an *upanayana*. The time parameter is a good example. Both texts state that the ceremony should be performed, depending on the planter's *varṇa*, in the tree's 8th, 11th or 12th year. This is a standard prescription for ages at which boys of respectively Brahmin, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya birth are considered fit to undergo the *upanayana*—as attested, for example, in ĀśGS 1.19.1–4 and in many other texts. This assigns the tree the role of an initiand. The relationship of planter to tree is that of an agnatic relative. The specification of the precise time suited for the ritual agrees with that commonly set for the performance of an *upanayana*. The general statement that the ritual should be performed at a time proper for *upanayana* (e.g. AśUP: *upanayanoktamuhūrte*) is further specified as that the sun should be on its northern course, Jupiter and Venus favourably aspected, intercalary or lapse months avoided, and the whole restricted to the forenoon.[33]

The main stages of the *aśvatthopanayana* are modelled on the human initiation ritual. The standard equipment needed by a student of the Veda is given to the tree: a pair of garments (*vastrayugma*) is wrapped around the tree, a sacrificial thread (*yajñopavīta*) is attached to it, and a girdle (*mekhalā*) made of *muñjā* grass (*Saccharum arundinaceum* RETZ.) is wrapped thrice around the trunk, each time with the recitation of a mantra. A black hide (*kṛṣṇājina*) and a staff (*daṇḍa*) are silently offered. The central ritual act of initiating the tree also very closely resembles its counterpart in the human world. It will be treated later when the mantras are analyzed.

Other elements seem to allude to an installation ritual (*pratiṣṭhā*). The *prayoga* text explains that in the case where the planter of the tree is a Śūdra a Puranic mantra associated with an *ārāmapratiṣṭhā* should be uttered, since an *upanayana* is not to be performed by him. The text does not state this explicitly, but perhaps an *aśvatthopanayana* is replaced by an *ārāmapratiṣṭhā* whenever the performer has no right (*adhikāra*) to

33 For general rules for scheduling an *upanayana*, see Kane (1968ff.: II, 276–7) and C. Zotter (2009: ch. 3).

perform an *upanayana*. The Śaunaka text (AśU 8–9) describes a procession from the house to the *aśvattha*. After performing preparatory rites in the house, one proceeds with the ritual equipment in an easterly direction to the *aśvattha*, accompanied by musical instruments, women singing and Brahmins reciting the Veda. This is analogous to chariot processions in which sacred images are taken to temples, there to be consecrated through *pratiṣṭhā* rituals. Hikita (2005a: 157–8, 170) notes such processions in descriptions of *pratiṣṭhā*s in Purāṇas and Pāñcarātra texts. Another feature of the *aśvatthopanayana* is clearly taken over from *pratiṣṭhā* rituals. The tree is touched with a golden rod while uttering: "I install the *aśvattha* tree".[34] Many instances from texts on *pratiṣṭhā* could be quoted in which a golden instrument is used either to open the eyes or to anoint them.[35] For Hikita, in such ritual "[t]he most important phase is to trace the eyes with a golden stick" (2005a: 192).[36] Possibly the utterance "I install the *aśvattha*" is modelled on a *pratiṣṭhā* ritual as well. Colas (1994: 517) cites an installation ceremony found in *Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra* 4.10–11 calling on the performer to recite, on the last day, the *viṣṇusūkta* (ṚV 1.154.1–6) and the *puruṣasūkta* (ṚV 10.90), and then to declare "I install Viṣṇu".

In the *aśvatthopanayana*, the tree is treated not only the way an initiand is in an *upanayana* or a divine image during *pratiṣṭhā*, but also as it would be treated in other rituals centred on the *aśvattha*. The sprinkling of the roots prescribed as a preliminary rite is known to be meritorious from a short *vidhi* quoted in the *Dānakhaṇḍa* of Hemādri's *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (pp. 993–4). The *pūjā* of the *aśvattha* is also known as a separate ritual.[37]

The *aśvatthopanayana* ritual is related to the *upanayana* in terms not only of composition but also of liturgy.[38] The mantras in some cases indeed resemble their application in the human *upanayana*. The mantra with which the sacred thread is given to the tree is the same as that recited in the *upanayana* ritual when the initiand is invested with the *yajñopavīta*. This same mantra is from then on to be recited every morning and whenever the sacred thread is changed or touched.[39]

34 The utterance *aham aśvatthaṃ sthāpayāmi* is prescribed in AśUP. For the AśU text see n. 29.

35 E.g. *Baudhāyanagṛhyapariśiṣṭasūtra* 2.13.11: *hiraṇyena tejasā cakṣur vimocayet "tejo si" iti*. See Colas (1994: 514, n. 2; 516) for further references; Cf. Hikita 2005a: 158; Mori 2005: 217.

36 That the opening of the eyes still is not part of every *pratiṣṭhā* and thus should not be perceived as an element defining such rituals is shown by G. Colas in the present volume.

37 Directions for a full-fledged *pūjā* of the *aśvattha* with sixteen services (*ṣoḍaśopacārapūjā*) are provided in the *Karmakāṇḍapradīpa* [2] (pp. 195–6) and the *Bṛhatkarmakāṇḍapaddhati* (pp. 216–9).

38 Though it is said one should perform the fire sacrifice according one's own *śākhā*, almost all mantras derive from the Rigvedic tradition. Exceptions are the well-known verses for the *yajñopavīta* and *dantadhāvana*. The pertinent verse for the latter reads: *āyur balaṃ yaśo varcaḥ prajāḥ paśuvasūni ca | brahmaprajñāṃ ca medhāṃ ca tvaṃ no dehi vanaspate.* This is prescribed as a general *dantadhāvanamantra* (cf. Kane 1968ff.: II, 654). It also occurs as the twelfth verse of the *Aśvatthastotra* (*Bṛhatstotraratnākara* p. 278).

39 The full mantra reads: *yajñopavītaṃ paramaṃ pavitraṃ prajāpater yat sahajaṃ purastāt | āyuṣyam agryaṃ pratimuñca śubhraṃ yajñopavītaṃ balam astu tejaḥ.* For a discussion of the late appearance of the mantra, see Kane (1968ff.: II, 291, n. 682).

There is another striking similarity to the *upanayana* in one of the key stages of the *aśvatthopanayana*. The performer of the ritual sits down west of the tree facing east, touches the tree with his right hand, pronounces the *sāvitrī* thrice and utters *devasya tvā...* (AśU 22–23). A similar sequence of acts and words is prescribed by several Gṛhyasūtras for the initiation of a human candidate.[40] For example, in ĀśGS 1.20.4 the teacher takes the hand of the initiand and utters the mantra *devasya tvā...*, which in Oldenberg's translation reads: "By the impulse of god Savitṛ, with the arms of the two Aśvins, with Pūṣan's hands I seize thy hand, N.N." (Oldenberg 1989: I, 188). The parallelism is obvious from the remark in the AśUP that one should add at the end of the verse: "I seize thy hand, *aśvattha*!" The teaching of the famous *sāvitrī*/*gāyatrī* (i.e. ṚV 3.62.10) to the initiate (*gāyatryopadeśa*) is a central element of the *upanayana*.

This example is particularly suited to illustrating the fact that an examination of isolated ritual features here would be of little help in identifying analogies to the *upanayana*. The *pratīka* of the mantra *devasya tvā...* alone allows for a host of interpretations and associations, for it occurs in many texts and ritual contexts from Vedic time onwards. In Bloomfield's *Vedic Concordance* (1990: 492–4) the treatment of this single *pratīka* fills nearly two pages. Only when seen in its specific ritual setting is it permissible to limit its significance to an initiation context.

One other case demonstrates that the interpretation of a mantra without reference to context can lead to overstating an analogy. It is with a recitation of *yuvaṃ vastrāṇi...* (ṚV 1.152.1) that a pair of garments (*vastrayugma*) is given to the *aśvattha*. It is immediately tempting to draw a parallel with the use of the same mantra in a life-cycle ritual. According to ĀśGS 3.8.9, this verse should be spoken by a student who has returned home from his teacher's house (*samāvartana*) and puts on new clothes. Closer inspection reveals that the ritual setting of the mantra differs considerably. During the *samāvartana* the returnee "washed himself with lukewarm water, and having put on two (new) garments which have not been washed, with the (verse), 'Garments with fat splendour you put on (Mitra and Varuṇa)' (Rig-veda I, 152, 1), he should anoint his eyes..." (ĀśvGS 3.8.9[41]), whereas in an *aśvatthopanayana* the mantra accompanies the giving of clothes as part of a student's necessities in the *upanayana*, that is, at the beginning of a period of study. To claim a parallelism solely on the basis of the mantra *yuvaṃ vastrāṇi...*, whose wording obviously links it with putting on clothes, would to my mind overstretch the facts.

For another sequence of mantras, by contrast, there is good reason to claim that the initiation of the *aśvattha* shares them with the *upanayana*. But the parallelism is on a more general level. Three of twelve *ājya* oblations are offered into fire while intoning the three verses starting with: *agna āyūṃṣi...* (ṚV 9.66.19–21). These are prescribed by ĀśGS 1.4 as three of four verses for *ājya* offerings on the occasion of four different

40 It is found not only in ĀśGS 1.20 but also in *Śāṅkhāyanagṛhyasūtra* 2.2.12 (this text, too, belongs to the Rigvedic tradition). *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhyasūtra* 1.5.8 of the Black *Yajurveda* and *Gobhilagṛhyasūtra* 2.10.26 of the Samavedic tradition describe similar sequences.

41 Translation by Oldenberg (1989: I, 227).

*saṃskāra*s: the first cutting of hair (*caulakarman*), initiation (*upanayana*), cutting the beard (*godāna*) and marriage (*vivāha*).[42]

The *dhruvasūkta* (ṚV 10.173), which is supposed to be recited at the end of the *aśvatthopanayana* (AśU, AśUP), is a hymn in "praise of the king" (*rājastuti*) according to its *viniyoga*. According to *Ṛgvidhāna* 4.114 (also counted as 4.21.4), it is to be recited when a king is consecrated after being sprinkled with water (*abhiṣicya*) and blessed (*āśirbhir abhinandya*), while according to ĀśGS 3.12.1–2 the royal priest should declaim the six verses while standing west of the king's chariot, before the king heads off to battle. But the Rigvedic hymn and its counterpart in the *Atharvaveda* (6.87–88) occur not only in royal rituals. Reciting the six verses (in which the word *dhruva* is insistently repeated) in other rituals is geared to yield firmness or fixity of purpose and to verbally reaffirm an act.[43] Their use in the *aśvatthopanayana* can be seen as analogous to that in *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies. Once divine entities are in their proper places, the hymn is recited over them.[44]

Other mantras seem to be related to the *aśvattha* as such. In *dvā suparṇā...* (ṚV 1.164.20), prescribed for one of the twelve *ājya* oblations, the second famous name of the *aśvattha*, *pippala*, occurs. The word *aśvattha* itself is mentioned in *aśvatthe vo niṣadanam...* (ṚV 10.97.5), which seems to be the standard *aśvattha* mantra. This mantra occurs several times not only in the text under discussion but also in other rituals for the tree. The *aśvattha* is regularly addressed with this formula.[45] This verse and others used for the *ājya* offerings are taken from the hymn to the herbs, the *oṣadhisūkta* (ṚV 1.97). In the AśU, the seventh to ninth oblations are offered respectively with the words *yā oṣadhīr...* (ṚV 10.97.1), *yāḥ phalinīr...* (ṚV 10.97.15) and *aśvatthe vo...* (ṚV 10.97.5). The AśUP prescribes for the eighth and ninth respectively *oṣadhayaḥ saṃvadante...* (ṚV 10.97.22) and *aśvatthe vo...* (ṚV 10.97.5). The *oṣadhīsūkta* tends to be applicable to plants in general. For example, this hymn reoccurring in the *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* of the White *Yajurveda* (12.75–101) is said to be recited when seeds are sown at the site of a prospective fire altar. Some of its mantras also turn up in different *paddhati*s involving a jar (*kalaśa*) being consecrated and then filled with different plant

42 The addition of the *vyāhṛti*s before this series can also be justified on the basis of this text. As stated in ĀśGS 1.4.4–5, the oblations can be offered to the accompaniment of both the mantras and the *vyāhṛti*s or of either of them.

43 As Whitney remarks in his translation, *Atharvaveda* 6.87 and 88 are used "in a *kāmya* rite ... by one desiring fixity (*dhrauvya* or *sthairya*); in a rite of expiation for earthquakes..."

44 This fact was brought to my attention by Gérard Colas. Three instances are found in his study of the *Marīcisaṃhitā* (see Colas 1986: Index 3 s.v. *dhruvasūkta*). Other examples relating to a *pratiṣṭhā* are found in Goundriaan's translation of the *Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa* (Goudriaan 1965: 65, 113, 145, 195).

45 E.g. in the *Aśvatthadāna* prescribed in the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (*Dānakhaṇḍa*, pp. 1036–7) or in the *Dharmakoṣa* (p. 2500). In the description of worship in the *Bṛhatkarmakāṇḍapaddhati* (pp. 216–9), the verse is termed a *dhyānamantra*, whereas the sixteen *upacāra*s are accompanied by verses from the Puranic *Aśvatthastotra*.

substances.[46] The verse *vanaspate śatavalśo...* (ṚV 3.8.11), prescribed for the tenth or eleventh *ājyāhuti*, seems to situate the *aśvattha* within a larger class of sacrificial trees. The hymn is used to address a tree before it is felled for the production of sacrificial utensils.[47]

Some of the mantras mentioned seem to work on the principle of lexical analogy. The last mantra, unmentioned so far, can be seen to fall under this category: *prāvepā mā...* (ṚV 10.34.1) is used when binding a girdle around the tree. This verse is taken from the song of the gambler, and at first glance seems to be totally unconnected with the application here. But in the second half of the verse the mountain Mūjavat is mentioned, which Yāska in his *Nirukta* (9.8) relates to *muñja*, the material the girdle of the initiate (*mauñjī*) is made of.

Conclusion

The remodelling of a human life-cycle ritual for non-humans is not a feature unique to the *aśvatthopanayana*. During the consecration of gardens or trees, the leaves of trees are pierced with a golden instrument, an act texts term the "piercing of the ear" (*karṇavedhana*).[48] Likewise, a number of *saṃskāra*s can be applied to the fire (*agni*) ignited in *homa*s.[49] Human *saṃskāra*s performed within installation rituals for images of worship are treated by Gérard Colas and Alexander von Rospatt in this volume. *Pratiṣṭhā*s and *saṃskāra*s seem to get along well. Both mark ritual beginnings, and both serve as gateways to the ritual sphere.

But unlike the other cases mentioned, the *aśvatthopanayana* does not involve a *saṃskāra* being performed *within* a *pratiṣṭhā* or vice versa. The present analysis leads rather to the conclusion that this ritual as a whole is intended to be both an *upanayana* and a *pratiṣṭhā*. Elements from both types of ritual, including mantras, are placed side by side. They are not hierarchized in a way that makes one an element within the structural framework of the other. Thus the ritual can be reinterpreted and reapplied in different contexts. When the ritual is seen as a *pratiṣṭhā*, the tree undergoes a process to qualify as a proper object of worship. The *aśvattha* is not supposed to be worshipped

46 According to a Nepalese tradition, verses of the hymn are recited while putting the following items into a *kalaśa*: a bundle of ten herbs called *sarvauṣadhi* (the first verse), a fruit or areca nut (the fifteenth) and a bundle of *pañcapallava* (the fifth); see C. Zotter (2009: 81). In a description of the same rite recorded by Bühnemann (1988: 46) according to a Rigvedic manual, only the fifth and the fifteenth verses occur, accompanying the *pañcapallava* and areca nut respectively.

47 See Geldner's note on the translation.

48 Filliozat (2004: 99) quotes an example for *ārāmapratiṣṭhā* from the *Padmapurāṇa*. See also *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Dānakhaṇḍa*, p. 1048 (*vṛkṣapratiṣṭhā* quoted from the *Matsyapurāṇa*).

49 Hikita 2005a: 149 and 2005b: 275; see also A. von Rospatt's (p. 252–3) and C. Zotter's (p. 36) contributions in the present volume.

either if it has not undergone an *upanayana* or *vivāha*.[50] For the first time in its life the tree is worshipped and addressed as it will be from that point onwards. Seen as an *upanayana* ritual, the tree acquires the sacramental status of a potential male marriage partner. Subsequently it can be married to girls or to a margosa tree.

Through the *aśvatthopanayana* not only is the tree sacralized and established in the ritual sphere, but also the relationship between the planter and the tree is reaffirmed and reshaped. Ritually, the planter is the tree's father. The adoption of trees as sons (*taruputra*) can be helpful for those without any male offspring, or those with base offspring, as the verse quoted at the beginning from Hemādri's *Taruputravidhi* states. Trees can substitute for sons by nourishing their deceased human father and helping him to cross to the next world, that is, by carrying out the ancestor rituals (*śrāddha*) that normally fall to the lot of natural sons.[51]

A mythical account of the adoption of a tree found in the *Skandapurāṇa* (1.2.27.17–23; cf. *Matsyapurāṇa* 154.506–12) suggests the relevance of the ritual in still another field. Pārvatī adopts a sprout from an *aśoka* tree and fosters it. She summons the seven seers to perform the *saṃskāra*s and utter benedictions for the tree. Asked about the benefits of declaring trees sons, the goddess points out the merits of cultivating trees and establishing public water places. The adoption and care of trees is described, under the broader concept of *pūrtadharma* or *utsarga*, by other sources, too.[52] This includes pious donations for public use, such as water sources or gardens and parks.[53] The dedication of such facilities is, according to Dharmaśāstric tradition, marked by ritual.[54] These rituals, firstly, signify all abandonment of individual ownership; secondly, they sacralize the donation, and therefore impose an obligation to care for it.

The last-mentioned point is creatively interpreted, in the modern context, as a call to engage in environmentalist activities. As was reported in June 2008 from Puri, Orissa, a marriage between a pipal and a banyan tree was organized and carried out by the local priest to create awareness for the need to conserve trees. The ritual became a means by

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50 *akṛte mauṃjibaṃdhe tu akṛte tu vivāhake | naiva sevāṃ praku[r]vīta pūjā nārho kadācana* (NGMPP A 435/39, fol. 4v3). Similarly Abbott: "independently the aśvath, the vat and the audumbar are not the abode of a god, but when their thread and marriage ceremonies have been performed they are visited by gods; the aśvath and nim by Viṣṇu, the audumbar by Brahma, Viṣṇu and Maheśvar" (1932: 337).

51 Kane quotes the *Anuśāsanaparvan* 58.30–31 of the *Mahābhārata* in this regard (*vṛkṣadaṃ putravad vṛkṣās tārayanti paratra ca | tasmāt taḍāge sadvṛkṣā ropyāḥ śreyorthinā sadā | putravat paripālyāś ca putrās te dharmataḥ smṛtāḥ*; Kane 1968ff.: II, 895). Planted trees will be sons in the next world, according to the *Viṣṇudharmasūtra* 91.4 (*vṛkṣāropayitur vṛkṣāḥ paraloke putrā bhavanti*; quoted by Kane 1968ff.: II, 895). The *Padmapurāṇa* (1.58.6) says that *aśvattha*s should be planted near a pond. The leaves that fall into the water are regarded as *piṇḍa*s offered to the ancestors of the one who planted the tree; cf. Abbott 1932: 335.

52 The *Dānakhaṇḍa* of the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (pp. 1001–56) deals at length with topics such as creating public water supplies, planting trees and laying out gardens. In the *Dharmasindhu* (pp. 281–2) the *aśvatthopanayana* and *Taruputravidhi* are treated together.

53 On *pūrta* or *utsarga*, see Kane (1968ff.: II, 889–96) and Pai (2000: 449–50).

54 On rituals for the inauguration of water reservoirs, see Einoo (2002).

which "the villagers have showed their resolve not to allow anyone to cut trees in the area".[55]

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55 *Himalayan Times*, 16 June 2008. Other examples of sacralizing nature in order to protect it are found in Michaels (1999: 128–31). Michaels warns against mistaking the traditional consecration of individual trees for a general awareness of the need to protect the environment. Nevertheless, it seems to me, the long-established practice of sacralizing objects of nature for public use can be adapted to and reinterpreted within this modern framework.

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Appendix: *Aśvatthopanayanavidhi*

Description of the manuscript

Microfilm copy: NGMPP A 435/39, filmed 26.07.1972; National Archives, Kathmandu Ms. No 4-632.

Description: 5 folios; 10 lines; 11.0 x 8.0 cm; foliation: verso left (addition: *aśva°*) and right (addition: *śrīrāmaḥ*).

Contents: *Aśvatthopanayana*: fols. 1v–2v5; *Aśvatthopanayanaprayoga*: fols. 2v5–4r2; *Aśvatthavivāha*: fol. 4r2–4v1; *Aśvatthodyāpana*: fols. 4v1–5r3; deities for *aśvattha-homa*: fol. 5r4–6. Complete.

Date: V.S. 1849 pauṣa śuklapakṣa 14 (27 December 1792), Thursday.

Beginning: *śrī* || *śaunako 'haṃ pravakṣyāmi aśvatthasyopanayanaṃ* |

End: *śrīḥ saṃvat 1849 pauṣa śu° 14 guvā°*

Editorial remarks

The text has for the most part been left as it stands in the manuscript (for example, nasals have not been normalized). It has not been collated with the other versions of the text. In places where the text makes no sense or is otherwise corrupt, suggestions on how to restore it are given in footnotes that refer to the other available versions of the text (see table above, p. 345). Mantras have been verified against their sources. *Daṇḍa* usage has been normalized, and the *avagraha* sign, which is nowhere employed, has been added. Verse numbering is introduced to the metrical text, while a segmentation, added in brackets, is meant to facilitate orientation within the prose text. At the beginning of a new folio, the folio number is provided within square brackets. Likewise references to mantras are added, and the mantras themselves typed in bold.

Text

[Fol. 1v] *śrī* ||
śaunako 'haṃ pravakṣyāmi aśvatthasyopanayanaṃ |
sthāpanādṛṣṭame[56] *varṣe dvādaśaikādaśe 'pi vā* || *1* ||
uktakālās tathā śastāḥ kuryus tasyopanayanaṃ |
tatrottarāyaṇe śreṣṭhe guruśukraprakāśite || *2* ||
māghaphālguṇayoḥ kuryāc caitre vaiśākhajyeṣṭhayoḥ |
kṣayamāsādhimāse ca varjayen maujibaṃdhanaṃ[57] || *3* ||
na kuryā[58] *cheditāśvatthe vidyuddāvāgninā hate* |
upanayanaṃ kurvīta skaṃdhaparṇāṃkurānvite || *4* ||
śuklapakṣe śubharkṣe ca suvāre tithilagnake |
caṃdrānukūlye kartuś ca divā kuryāt prayatnataḥ || *5* ||
daṃtānāṃ dhāvanaṃ kuryāt kuryāt snānaṃ sacailakaṃ |

56 Read *sthāpanād aṣṭame* for *sthāpanādṛṣṭame* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
57 Read *mauñji°* for *mauji°*.
58 Read *kuryāc* for *kuryā* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).

kṛttvā ca nityakarmāṇi pūjyā caiveṣṭadevatā ‖ *6* ‖
nāṃdīśrāddhaṃ prakurvīta gṛhe puṇyāhavācanaṃ |
tasminn eva dine kuryāc cānnahemaphalādibhiḥ ‖ *7* ‖
kṛtvāśīrvacanaṃ pūrve tato gachet prayatnataḥ |
nūryaṃ[59] *ghoṣaiś ca vividhaiḥ puṇyastrībhiḥ samanvitaḥ* ‖ *8* ‖
brāhmaṇair vedaghoṣaiś ca gītavāditranisvanaiḥ |
vastrayajñopavītaṃ ca maujīdaṃḍājinānvitaṃ[60] ‖ *9* ‖
pūjādravyaṃ ca homaṃ ca gṛhītvāśvatthasannidhau |
tataḥ prakṣālitāṃghriś cācamyopaviśed bhuvi[61] ‖ *10* ‖
aśvattheśānadigbhāge kṛtvā puṇyāhavācanaṃ |
ācāryaṃ varayet paścāt kulīnaṃ vedapāragaṃ ‖ *11* ‖
triḥpaṃcadaśahastena gomayenopalipya ca |
dhānyapiṣṭena saṃpūrya gaṃdhamālyādiśobhanaiḥ ‖ *12* ‖
vastropavītagaṃ[fol. 2r]*dhāṣṭair aṃgulīyakakuṃḍalaiḥ* |
karttā saṃpūjayed bhaktyā vittaśāṭhyaṃ na kārayet ‖ *13* ‖
tenaiva kārayed vidvān aśvatthasyopanayanaṃ |
kuryāt paṃcāmṛtai[62] *snānaṃ tattanmaṃtraiḥ pṛthak pṛthak* ‖ *14* ‖
aśvatthapūrvadigbhāge homaṃ kuryāt svaśākhayā |
ullekhanādi yattaṃtraṃ caruṃ tatra prakalpayet ‖ *15* ‖
vastrayugmaṃ tato dadyād ***yuvaṃ vastrāṇi*** [ṚV 1.152.1] *maṃtrataḥ* |
yajñopavītaṃ dadyāc ca ***yajñopavītam*** *ity ami*[63] ‖ *16* ‖
mekhalāvat trirāveṣṭya ***prāvepā me****ti* [ṚV 10.34.1] *maṃtrataḥ* |
tūṣṇīṃ kṛṣṇājinaṃ daṃḍaṃ pradadattu[64] *yathākramaṃ* ‖ *17* ‖
gaṃdhapuṣpākṣataiḥ śuklair aśvatthasya tu paścime |
aśvasye[65] ***vo niṣadanam*** [ṚV 10.97.5] *ity ṛcā pūjayet sudhīḥ* ‖ *18* ‖
tisṛbhir juhuyād ājyam ***agna āyūṣy***[66] [ṚV 9.66.19–21] *anukramāt* |
purastād upariṣṭāc ca hutvā vyāhṛtibhis tribhiḥ ‖ *19* ‖
yā oṣadhīr [ṚV 10.97.1] ***yāḥ phalinīr*** [97.15] ***aśvatthe va*** [97.5] *iti tv atha* |
vanaspate valśo[67] [ṚV 3.8.11] ***dvā suparṇe****ti* [ṚV 1.164.20] *maṃtrataḥ* ‖ *20* ‖
samidbhiś caruṇā caiva pālāśaiś ca pṛthak pṛthak |
jahvā[68] *dvādaśabhiḥ samyagg ekāvṛtyā samāhitaḥ* ‖ *21* ‖

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59 Read *tūryaṃ* for *nūryaṃ* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
60 Read *mauñjī°* for *maujī°*.
61 To fulfil the metrical requirements, one is forced to accept a hiatus between the quarters: *tataḥ prakṣālitāṅghriś ca ācamyopaviśed bhuvi. Jayasiṃhakalpadruma* reads: *tataḥ prakṣālitāṃghriś cācamya copaviśed bhuvi.*
62 Read *paṃcāmṛtaiḥ* for *paṃcāmṛtai* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
63 Read *api* for *ami* (cf. NGMPP E 1662/7; *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
64 Read *pradadyāt tu* for *pradadattu* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
65 Read *aśvatthe* for *aśvasye* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
66 Read *āyūṃṣy* for *āyūṣy*.
67 Read *śatavalśo* for *valśo* to serve the metrical requirements and to cite the *pratīka* of ṚV 3.8.11 correctly (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
68 Read *hutvā* for *jahvā* (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).

aśvatthapaścime bhāge prāṅmukhaś copaviśya ca |
dakṣiṇenaiva hastena spṛṣṭvāśvatthaṃ dvijottama || 22 ||
bhūr bhuva svaḥ[69] *pūrvāṃ tu sāvitrīṃ trir japed atha |*
nirīkṣayet tato 'śvatthaṃ ***devasya ttveti*** [e.g. ĀśvGS 1.20.4] *maṃtrataḥ || 23 ||*
ā tvāhārṣam aṃtaredhi [RV 10.173] *dhruvasūktena vyāhṛtitritayena ca*[70] *|*
aśvatthanāmam uccārya vibhaktyā ca dvitīyayā || 24 ||
śalākayā suvarṇasya sthāpayeti[71] *padaṃ* [fol. 2v] *vadet |*
hutvā sviṣṭakṛtaṃ paścād dhomaśeṣaṃ samāpayet || 25 ||
gandhākṣataiḥ svarṇapuṣpair dhūpadīpopahārakaiḥ |
bhakṣādyaiḥ[72] *phalatāṃbūlais tato 'śvatthaṃ prapūjayet || 26 ||*
dhenuṃ savatsakāṃ dadyād ācāryāya sadakṣiṇāṃ |
aśvatthachāditaṃ vastram ācāryāya pradāpayet || 27 ||
anyeṣām api viprāṇāṃ svaśaktyā pūjayet tataḥ |
brahmaṇe dakṣiṇāṃ dadyād dhomavittānusārataḥ || 28 ||
brāhmaṇān bhojayitvā tu[73] *bhuṃjīta baṃdhubhiḥ saha |*
evaṃ yaḥ kurute tasya vardhaṃte śrīr asaṃśayaṃ || 29 ||
kulakoṭiṃ samudhṛtya brahmasāyujyam āpnuyāt |
|| iti śaunakoktaṃ aśvatthopanayanaṃ ||

[Title]
|| atha madanaratnādyanusāreṇa śaunakoktam aśvatthopanayanaprayogaḥ ||

[Specification of the proper time for and object of the ritual]
tac ca brāhmaṇakṣatriyavaiśyānāṃ vṛkṣasthāpanādṛṣṭame[74] *ekādaśe dvādaśe vā varṣe guruśukrayor astādyabhāve upanayanoktamuhūrte pūrvāhṇe kāryaṃ || śūdrasthāpite 'śvatthe tu pūrvoktapaurāṇikārāmapratiṣṭhāmaṃtraṃ na tūpanayanaṃ || tasyopanayanaṃ nārhatvād ity uktaṃ || madanaratne tathā || na kuryāc cheditāśvatthe vidyuddāvāgninā hate || upavītaṃ prakuvīta*[75] *skaṃdhaparṇāṃkurānvite ||*

[Preparatory rites]
|| atha prayogaḥ || kartā ***āyur balam*** *iti daṃtadhāvanaṃ kṛttvā sacailaṃ snātvā deśakālau saṃkīrttya sarvapāpakṣayakulakoṭisamuddharaṇapūrvakaviṣṇusāyujyaprāptikā* [fol. 3r]*mo 'śvatthopanayanaṃ kariṣyeti saṃkalpa*[76] *gaṇeśapūjanaṃ svastipuṇyāhavācanaṃ mātṛkāpūjanaṃ nāṃdīśrāddhāni kṛtvācāryaṃ vṛṇuyāt pūjayet || athācāryaḥ*

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69 Read *oṃ bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ* to fill out the metre (cf. E 1662/7, fol. 4r10; *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
70 Metrical requirements call for taking *dhruvasūktena* as a gloss (*Jayasiṃhakalpadruma* reads: *ā tveti dhruvasūktena*).
71 E 1662/7, fol. 4r12 reads *sthāpayāmi* for *sthāpayeti* (cf. *prayoga* and n. 29).
72 Read *bhakṣyā*° for *bhakṣā*° (cf. *Jayasiṃhakalpadruma*).
73 E 1662/7, fol. 4v3 reads *bhojayitvāṣṭau* for *bhojayitvā tu* (cf. *prayoga*).
74 Read °*aṣṭame* for °*ṛṣṭame*.
75 Read *prakurvīta* for *prakuvīta*.
76 Read *saṃkalpya* for *saṃkalpa* (cf. *Dharmasindhu*).

paṃcāmṛtaiḥ śuddhodakena sarvauṣadhijalaiś cāśvattham abhiṣicya piṣṭātakena vibhūṣya tatpūrve sthaṇḍilaṃ kṛtvā caruśrapaṇādyājyabhāgāṃ taṃ kṛttvā ‖

[Giving of paraphernalia while reciting mantras]
yurva[77] ***vastrāṇī****ty asya aucathyo dīrghatamā mitrāvaruṇau triṣṭup ‖ vāsodhāraṇe vi°* ***yuvaṃ vastrāṇi pī° rgāḥ | avārita°***[78] ***the*** [ṚV 1.152.1] *vastrayugmenāveṣṭya ‖* ***yajñopavītam*** *ity asya parabrahma*[79] *paramātmā triṣṭubh ‖ yajñopavītadhāraṇe vi°* ***yajñopavītaṃ° t ‖ āyuṣyam agryaṃ° jaḥ ‖*** *iti yajñopavītaṃ datvā ‖* ***prāvepā mā*** *ity asya mauṃjavāyana ailūṣaḥ kavaṣo dhā akṣā*[80] *triṣṭup ‖ maujībaṃdhane*[81] *vi°* ***prāvepā mā bṛha° nāḥ ‖ somasyeva° n*** [ṚV 10.34.1] *iti mekhalāṃ trirāveṣṭya kṛṣṇājinaṃ daṃḍaṃ ca tūṣṇīṃ datvā ‖*

[Worship while reciting ṚV 10.97.5]
aśvatthe vo niṣadanam *ity ṛcena saṃpūjya ‖*

[Initiation]
devasya tve*ti* [e.g. ĀśvGS 1.20.4] *maṃtrāṃte hastaṃ gṛṇāmi*[82] *aśvattheti spṛṣṭvā savyāhṛtikāṃ gāyatrīṃ trir japitvā*

[Touching with a golden rod]
aśvatthe vo niṣadanam [ṚV 10.97.5] *iti sūktena vyāhṛtibhiś cāśvatthaṃ sthāpayāmi iti svarṇaśalākayā spṛṣṭvā*

[Twelve offerings into fire; Nos. 1–11]
ājyena pālāśasamidbhiś caruṇā ca pratyekaṃ vakṣyamāṇamaṃtrair dvādaśāhutīr juhuyāt ‖ mantrās tu | vyāhṛtīnāṃ parameṣṭīprajāpatiḥ prajāpati bṛhatī ‖ home vini° [1] ***oṃ bhū***[83] ***svāhā | agnayedaṃ*** | [2] ***bhuva***[84] ***svāhā vāyavedaṃ*** | [3] ***svaḥ svāhā sū***[fol. 3v]***ryāyedaṃ*** | [4] ***bhūr bhuva***[85] ***svaḥ | bhūr bhuva***[86] ***svaḥ svāhā prajāpatayedaṃ*** | [5–7] ***agna āyūṣī****ti*[87] *tisṛṇāṃ śataṃ*[88] *vaikhānasā ṛṣayaḥ ‖ agniḥ pavamāno devatā | gāyatrī chaṃdaḥ | home° |* ***agna āyuṣi°***[89] ***naḥ | āre bādhaḥ° nā***[90] [ṚV 9.66.19] ***svāhā | agni***[91] ***ṛṣiḥ pava° taḥ | tamīmahe° yaṃ*** [ṚV 9.66.20] ***svāhā ‖*** *tribhiḥ pratyekaṃ* ***agnaye pava-***

77 Read *yuvaṃ* for *yurva*.
78 Read *avātira°* for *avārita°*.
79 Read *°brahmā* for *°brahma*.
80 Read *kavaṣo akṣā* for *kavaṣo dhā akṣā*.
81 Read *mauñjī°* for *maujī°*.
82 Read *gṛhṇāmi* for *gṛṇāmi*.
83 Read *bhūḥ* for *bhū*.
84 Read *bhuvaḥ* for *bhuva*.
85 Read *bhuvaḥ* for *bhuva*.
86 Read *bhuvaḥ* for *bhuva*.
87 Read *āyūṃṣīti* for *āyūṣīti*.
88 Read *śata°* for *śataṃ*.
89 Read *āyūṃṣi* for *āyuṣi*.
90 Read *bādhas° nāṃ* for *bādhaḥ° nā*.
91 Read *agnir* for *agni*.

mānāyedaṃ ‖[92] [8] ***oṣadhayaḥ saṃ va° jñā*** ‖ ***yasmai kṛṇo° si*** [ṚV 10.97.22] ***svā°*** | ***oṣadhībhyaḥ idaṃ*** | [9] ***aśvatthe va*** *ity asyātharvaṇo bhiṣag oṣadhayo 'nuṣṭup* | ***aśvatthe vo° tā*** | ***gobhāja yittki°***[93] ***ṣaṃ*** [ṚV 10.97.5] ***svāhā*** | ***oṣadhībhya idaṃ°*** | [10] ***vanaspate*** *ity asya gāthīno viśvāmitra yūpas triṣṭup* ‖ ***vanaspate śata° ma*** | ***yaṃ tvām ayaṃ° ya*** | [ṚV 3.8.11] ***vanaspatibhya idaṃ°*** | [11] ***dvā suparṇa****ucathyo dīrghatamā viśvedevā triṣṭup* ‖ ***dvā suparṇā sa° the***[94] | ***tayor anya° mi***[95] [ṚV 1.164.20] ***svāhā*** | ***pippalāyedaṃ*** ‖

[Recitation of the *dhruvasūkta*]
ā tvāharṣam *iti ṣaṇṇāṃ dhruva āṃgirasarājastutir iṃdraś cānuṣṭup* ‖ ***ā tvāhārṣam aṃtar edhi° li***[96] ‖ ***viśastvā sarvā° t*** [ṚV 10.173.1] ***svāhā iṃdrāyedaṃ*** | ***ihaivaidhi° li***[97] | ***iṃdra iveha° ya*** [173.2] ‖ ***imam iṃdro° ṣā*** | ***tasmai somo° tiḥ*** [173.3] | ***dhruvā dyau***[98] ***dhruvā° me*** | ***dhruvaṃ viśvam idaṃ° yaṃ*** [173.4] | ***dhruvaṃ te rājā varu° tiḥ*** | ***dhruvaṃ ta iṃdraś cā° tāṃ*** [173.5] | ***dhruvaṃ dhrūveṇa ha° si*** | ***atho ta iṃdra° t*** [173.6] ‖ *sarvatra* ***iṃdrāyeti*** |

[Twelve offerings into fire; No. 12]
[12] ***bhū bhuva svaḥ***[99] ***svāhā*** | ***prajāpatayedaṃ*** ‖

[Touching with a golden rod]
suvarṇaśalākayā aśvatthaṃ spṛṣṭvā aśvatthaṃ sthāpayāmīti vadet |

[End of the fire sacrifice]
tataḥ sviṣṭakṛdādihomaśeṣaṃ samāpya ‖

[Worship with sixteen devotional services]
aśvatthe va° *iti mantreṇa a*[fol. 4r]*śvatthaṃ ṣoḍaśopacāraiḥ saṃpūjya* ‖

[Fee and ministration to Brahmins and friends]
ācāryāya sahiraṇyāṃ gāṃ datvā ‖ *anyebhyo 'pi dakṣiṇāṃ dadyāt* ‖ *aśvatthavastrādyācāryāya datvā aṣṭau brahmaṇān bhojayittvā suhṛdyukto bhuṃjīteti* ‖
‖ *ity aśvatthopanayanam* ‖

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92 That only two mantras, ṚV 9.66.19 and 20, are mentioned should be taken as a transmissional corruption, since the text clearly indicates three mantras (*agna āyūṃṣi* and the following ones) in the preceding *viniyoga*, while at the same time naming Agni Pavamāna as the deity to which the three *ājya* oblations should be offered.
93 Read *itki°* for *yittki°*.
94 Read *°te* for *°the*.
95 Read *°ti* for *°mi*.
96 Read *°liḥ* for *°li*.
97 Read *°liḥ* for *°li*.
98 Read *dyaur* for *dyau*.
99 Read *bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ* for *bhū bhuva svaḥ*.

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