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Ritual Worship of the *Narasimhamantra* as Depicted in the *Sātvatasamhitā*¹

SUMMARY: Most probably, the *Sātvatasamhitā* is the only one among the recognized *samhitās* of the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra that elaborates upon the procedure of worshipping [the mantra of] Narasimha belonging to vibhava deities (*vaibhavīyanarasimhakalpa*). Its aim is formulated in SātS 16, where it is stated that an initiation with the help of *narasimhamantra* (*narasimhadīkṣā*) as well as the further worship of this mantra remove sins committed in previous lives, even in the case of *nāstikas*. The detailed account of the procedure is given in the next chapter, i.e. SātS 17. Yet, when analyzed out of the general context of the text, *vaibhavīyanarasimhakalpa* seems to present a fully fledged procedure meant for a *sādhaka* striving for magical powers (*siddhi*); it depicts the *narasimhadīkṣā* which grants the right to worship the *narasimhamantra* in order to realize worldly aims. The traces of textual re-working suggest that the idea of *vaibhavīyanarasimhakalpa* might come from another context. It is also probable that for some reasons its original function considering the attainment of magical powers was reformulated within the scope of SātS into the purifying ceremony preceding the proper initiation.

KEYWORDS: Vaishnavism, Pāñcarātra, *Sātvatasamhitā*, initiation, *narasimhadīkṣā*, kalpa, purification, conversion.

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Introduction

Regardless of the firm recommendation of three initiations (*vibhava-*, *vyūha-* and *paradīkṣā*)² by the *Sātvatasamhitā* (SātS),³ its two chapters, the 16th and the 17th, mention additionally the fourth one, i.e. *narasimhadīkṣā*. Whereas the former chapter formulates its aim as a purifying practice enabling sinful adepts to proceed to the abovementioned three regular *dīkṣās*, the latter one contains the detailed description of the *narasimhadīkṣā* being an integral part of the procedure devoted to Narasimha in his *vibhava* form (*vaibhavīyanarasimhakalpa* according to the colophon). Thus the process of purification of sins is confined not only to the *narasimhadīkṣā* itself but it also includes the following worship of the *narasimhamantra* by an adept who was granted with a right to do so by the means of the *narasimhadīkṣā*. This worship, recommended in SātS 16 and discussed broadly in SātS 17, leads to the acquisition of certain magical powers (*siddhi*).

Most of the contemporary interpretations of the *narasimhadīkṣā* (Smith 1975–1980; Gupta 1983; Hudson 2002, 2007; Carman 2007) focus chiefly on the content of SātS 16. These interpretations are as follows: (1) the *narasimhadīkṣā* is the lowest one among all initiations of SātS. It is a preliminary type of initiation (*samaya*), providing the adepts, called therefore *samayins*,⁴ with the right to perform basic

² On the relation between the names of the three initiations of SātS and the three stages of creation see: Gupta 1983: 76–78.

³ The text together with the *Jayākhyasamhitā* (JayS) and the *Pauṣkarsamhitā* (PauṣS) is perceived by the tradition of the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra as the most authoritative stratum of its literature, the “three gems” (*ratnatraya*). According to Sanderson, their currently available redactions were composed in Kashmir under the influence of the Śaiva *mantramārga*. It is, therefore, very probable that they were composed during the 2nd half of the 9th century AD but not later than the 10th century AD, after the end of the Kārkoṭa dynasty (626–855/6). See Sanderson 2001: 38.

⁴ Pāñcarātra texts present different systems of initiation (*dīkṣā*), although the initiatory entitlements (*adhikāra*) are usually the same and

rituals and a general knowledge of rules considering religious and social life (*samaya*). Then, by means of the *vibhavadīkṣā*, the adepts become *putrakas* and by means of the *vyūha-* or *paradīkṣā*, as there is no clear difference between them, they may become *sādhakas* or *ācāryas* (Gupta), (2) a procedure eliminating aspirants for the initiation (Smith), (3) a purifying/converting rite (Hudson, Carman).⁵ It is only

hierarchically structured: a *samayin* has only basic knowledge of religious and social behavior, hence he cannot perform rituals himself; a *putraka* can perform some rituals and strives for liberation (*mokṣa*); a *sādhaka* is allowed to perform rituals and on his way to liberation realizes his worldly aims (*bhoga*) through mastering a *mantra*; and, finally, an *ācārya*, who is responsible for passing the doctrine and initiating the followers. For example, according to JayS there are three types of a *dīkṣā*: a common one (*sāmānya*) with *mantras*; another common initiation in three forms: short, middle and extended; and a particular one (*viśeṣa*), which consists of five types: for *samayins*, *putrakas*, *sādhakas*, *ācāryas* and women (see JayS 16. 54–61 in: Czerniak-Drożdżowicz 2008: 100–101). In turn, Pauṣ teaches the system consisting of four initiatory stages related to four different kinds of *maṇḍalas* (Pauṣ 1. 8–21). The *Paramasamhitā* (ParS) 8. 3–10ab presents one system consisting of three stages: *samayadīkṣā*, which grants the basic religious and social rules (*samaya*); *granthadīkṣā*, which aims at introducing the adept into the doctrine; *mantradīkṣā*, which grants the right of performing rituals. On the other hand, the system of the *Lakṣmītantra* (LT) seems to resemble that one of SātS: it includes three kinds of initiation: solid (*sthūla*), subtle (*sūkṣma*) and the highest (*para*). Each of them embraces four stages of entitlements (*adhikāra*) and depends on wealth of an adept. Therefore, it might be performed either with an adoration of a great *maṇḍala* (*mahāmaṇḍalayaṅga*), either with a butter-offering (*havana*) or exclusively with *mantras* (LT 41. 7–8).

⁵ Hudson proposed to explain the purpose of the *narasimhadīkṣā* as a unique converting/cleansing rite enabling barbarians to become Pāñcarātra rulers. Carman (Carman 2007) agreed with this interpretation. Yet, Hudson's textual evidence for such an explanation comes from the anthology of Tamil poems written by Tirumaṅkai Ālvār, who lived in Tamilnadu during Pallavamala's reign (the 8th century). In one of his poems he mentions Narasimha deity and, most probably, due to this fact, Hudson links the *narasimhadīkṣā* of

Hikita⁶ (Hikita 1990, 1991, 1993) who seems to consider also the content of SātS 17. Having noticed that the *siddhis* are the outcome of the initiation by means of the *mantra* of Narasimha, he expresses his doubts against the opinion of Gupta that the *narasimhadīkṣā* is a simple *samaya*-initiation (Hikita 1993: 1, 8), but in the meantime we can observe how his own interpretation has evolved, from sharing Gupta's conclusions into the proposal that it is a part of a regular *vibhavadīkṣā* (Hikita 1990: 12; Hikita 1991: 166).

In the present paper I would like to draw some attention to the fact that even though in the broad context of SātS the *narasimhadīkṣā* plays the role of purification meant for sinners, including strangers such as *nāstikas*, whose attempt is to join a regular initiation, its original function might have been different. When analyzed out of the context, it seems to fulfil requirements of a fully fledged initiation granting an advanced adept (*sādhaka*) with various magical powers arising out of worshipping the *mantra*. Thus, in agreement with the colophon of SātS 17, it resembles in such a form the *kalpa* type of procedures characterized by Goudriaan as “devoted to the worship of a single deity for the sake of realizing one's objectives by magical means” (Goudriaan 1981: 115).⁷ Traces of the textual re-working seem to suggest that some portions of the text might hail from another context (SātS 17. 148–153ab). Given that Pāñcarātra authors were so prone to textual re-working,⁸ it might be possible that also in the case of SātS a passage of a *kalpa* character was re-used and, for some reasons, a new meaning of a purifying practice was superimposed onto it.

the SātS with a particular cleansing ritual undertaken by the king Pallavamala about 753–754 AD, when after a long exile, he came back to Kāñcīpuram (Hudson 2007: 131–132, comp. Hudson 2002: 144–145).

⁶ To Hikita we owe the English translation of many chapters of SātS.

⁷ Similarly, according to Sanderson (Sanderson 2001: 11–13), the terms *kalpa* and *mantrakalpa* are used in tantric Śaiva literature to denote the manuscript of a text setting out the procedure for the propitiation of a *mantra* by a tantric *sādhaka* in order to obtain magical powers.

⁸ The best example is the case of PārS, see Rastelli 2006.

In order to show that out of the SātS's context the *narasimhadīkṣā* might be interpreted as a practice aiming originally at providing an advanced adept with magical powers, firstly a brief analysis of SātS 17 will be presented. Then I will concentrate on the content of SātS 16, where the aims of the respective elements of the Narasimha-procedure (the *narasimhadīkṣā* and the worship of the *narasimhamantra*) are established as a preliminary rite aiming at purification.

2. The *vaibhavīyanarasimhakalpa* as presented in SātS 17

In general, SātS 17 includes: an account of the extraction of the *narasimhamantra* followed by a preliminary practice of an *ārādhaka* (*ārādhana*) (SātS 17. 3–115ab), proper procedures of the *narasimhadīkṣā* (SātS 17. 115cd–123), particular *samaya* rules preached by an *ācārya* to the adepts initiated with the help of *narasimhamantra* (SātS 17. 124–139ab), the account of the final activities of an *ācārya* (SātS 17. 139cd–148) and some general instructions regarding how to master the *narasimhamantra* in order to obtain desired supernatural powers (SātS 17. 149–150ab). Then, after a short passage displaying some irregularities (SātS 17. 150cd–153ab), comes an impressive account of subsequent magical rites (SātS 17. 153cd–456). Thus the practice as a whole is similar to that of the *sādhaka* described in some portions of JayS characterized by Rastelli: “[t]he main characteristic of a *sādhaka* is that he desires the attainment of enjoyment (*bhukti*, *bhoga*), such as the dominion over the worlds or the fulfillment of all his wishes, and of emancipation (*mukti*, *mokṣa*) from the world. For the achievement of these goals, he has to undergo the appropriate *dīkṣā* and thereafter to perform the religious rites prescribed for him, that consist in particular of the worship of a *mantra* for the purpose of mastering (*sādh* caus.) it” (Rastelli 2000: 320).

The preliminary practice

The initial part of the chapter that deals with the preliminary worship of the *mantra* (SātS 17. 3–114ab) does not speak about the grammatical

subject directly. We can read that the worshipper in question starts his practice with extracting the *narasimhamantra*, which consists of twelve syllables: *om namo bhagavate nārasimhāya*.⁹ He has been already initiated with this particular *mantra* and due to that he is entitled to worship it (SātS 17. 13ab: *atha labdhādhikāras tu mantreṇānena dīkṣitah*). He might be either a *gr̥hasṭha* or *vānaprastha*, his chief objects should be permanently faith and devotion, he should be intelligent, without doubts, fond of the knowledge of his teacher, deprived of confusion arising out of the mass of words and reasons, pleased with his duty (SātS 17. 13–14). Being an *ārādhaka*, he knows also how to apply *mantras* such as those of insignias of gods etc. during the ritual and meditation, and during each activity (SātS 17. 41). For the sake of calling the deity of the *mantra* from his heart into the *maṇḍala* during his worship, he visualizes the body of Narasimha in his mind and invites him in the same way as *sādhakas* striving for *siddhis* do (SātS 17. 61cd–63): “Then, the resplendent *mantra* should be brought from the heart by advanced adepts (*sādhakas*) searching for accomplishment (*siddhimārgeṇa*) with deed, thought and word. One should set in motion the *mantra* whose own form is undiminished similarly like the disc of the Sun [reflecting] in water [is undiminished] with deeds and express it verbally. One should visualize its shape in his mind saying the phrase: come!”¹⁰

Since the account of the preliminary practice precedes directly the description of the *narasimhadīkṣā* (SātS 17. 114cd–123) and particular *samaya* rules preached to the adepts (SātS 17. 124–138), one

⁹ The process of extraction of the *mantra* of Narasimha along with its *aṅgamantras*: SātS 17. 4cd–12. The *mantra* of Narasimha in its full 12-syllabled form is given in SātS 17. 11cd.

¹⁰ SātS 17. 61cd–63:

*athā 'vatāryo hṛdayān mantrō vimaladīdhitiḥ //61//
karmaṇā manasā vācā siddhimārgeṇa sādhakaiḥ /
anujñitasvarūpaṁ ca sūryabimbam ivāmbhasi //62//
karmaṇā prerayec caiva vācā taṁ mantram uccaret /
āgacchapadasamyuktaṁ saṁsmaren manasākṛtim //63//.*

would expect that it regards an *ācārya*, referred to in SātS 17. 119 with the term “the wise one” (*buddhimān*). Yet, nowhere in this initial passage is the *ācārya* mentioned explicitly, whereas, as we could see above, SātS 17. 61cd–63 speaks clearly about the methods of worship applied by *sādhakas* striving for magical powers. Given that the preliminary worship is similar in both cases (an *ācārya* and a *sādhaka*) we may interpret that passage as concerning the *ācārya* who prepares to confer the initiation. This is how it seems to be structured in the context of SātS. Nevertheless, the reference to *sādhakas*, the general characteristics of the grammatical subject and the course of the practice itself make this particular passage quite provocative because, on the other hand, it might be also interpreted as regarding the general worship of initiated *sādhakas*, which is performed before they start the realization of superhuman powers.

The instructions how to worship the *mantra* of Narasimha externally and internally, together with its ancillary *mantras* (*aṅgamantra*), after imagining its bodily form (SātS 17. 12), **start just after the question** about the methods of worshipping it (SātS 17. 15ab: *mantram ārādhayed yena vidhinā tam niśāmaya*). They begin with a bath and collecting all materials suitable for offering (*bhoga*). Having fulfilled the morning duties, the worshipper performs *bhūtaśuddhi* ceremony. By the means of two *dhāraṇās*, he visualizes the *narasimhamantra* in the area of *dvādaśānta* and the *śikhamantra* in the area of his big toe. After visualization that his body burns, he enters his new auspicious body, sprinkles it with the nectar oozing from the *narasimhamantra* and draws Narasimha into his heart (SātS 17. 17–27ab).

For the sake of diffusing with the Narasimha in order to be able to worship the deity, he attributes the proper *mantras* onto the relevant parts of his body. Firstly, he allocates the *narasimhamantra* together with *mūlamantra* and *aṅgamantras* starting with *hrdmantra* onto his both hands (*karanyāsa*) (SātS 17. 27cd–29ab), then, with already sanctified hands, onto the limbs of the body (*aṅganyāsa*) (SātS 17. 29cd–31ab) and, finally, he applies the *mantras* of ornaments, attributes, weapons and potencies (SātS 17. 31cd–35). To the left of his

breast he puts the *mantra* of the *śrīvatsa* jewel, in the area of the heart he puts the *kaustubhamantra*, on his neck the *mantra* of a flowery garland, on the right arm the *mantra* of lotus (*padma*) and mace (*gadā*) whereas on the left arm—the *mantra* of conch (*śaṅkha*) and the king of the discus (*cakrarāj*). Additionally, on the right hand he puts the *mantra* of a sword (*khadga*) and on the left one—the *mantra* of a bow (*dhanu*). Starting with his arm, he covers the upper part of the right side of his body with the *mantra* of goddess Śrī, and similarly, up to the area of an ankle—he covers his body with the *mantra* of goddess Puṣṭī. Into the mouth he inserts the *mantra* of goddess Sarasvatī and on his back—the *mantra* of goddess Nidrā.

The attribution of *mantras* concludes with presenting the proper gesture (*mudrā*) and with realization of the phrase: “I am God”: *mudrām baddhvā smared dhyānam devo ‘ham iti bhāvayet* (SātS 17. 36ab). From now on, he can worship Narasimha properly; firstly internally and then externally. The internal worship (*mānasayāga*) starts with preparing in mind the simple throne (*āsana*) to which the God will be summoned.¹¹ When all internal rituals are fulfilled, the God might be sent off through the ceremony of *visarjana* and then the external rituals (*bāhyayāga*) start. During them he worships the washed idol of a deity, either painted (*citrasthā*) or in a form of a metal figure (*dhātudravayamaya*) (SātS 17. 47–48ab). To arrange the suitable place for the deity he will soon summon again, he prepares the proper *maṇḍala* (SātS 17. 48cd–51) and, when it is ready, within it the throne for Narasimha (SātS 17. 52–56). This throne differs from the *āsana* visualized before in the context of the internal ritual. The account

¹¹ In this case the throne (*āsana*) comprises only a snake at its bottom (*śeṣapūrva*) and a fire on the top (*vahnnyanta*). Above the throne he should contemplate his pure consciousness in the form of Brahman and indifferent for the concepts (*vikalpoparata*), evolving, according to the wish, into the Highest Sound (*paradhvanisvarūpa*) of elucidating nature (*tatprakāśātman*) and into the manifested state (*vyaktibhāva*) when the world melts (*pravilaye sati*).

is more detailed though still brief.¹² In order to make the deity descend from his heart into it, he attributes the proper *mantras* onto the suitable places within *maṇḍala* and meditates on them. In the meantime he puts the flowery chaplet (*puṣpacakrikā*) sanctified with the *mantra* of the throne (*pīṭhamantra*) to the north of *maṇḍala* and places the *narasimhamantra* upon it (SātS 17. 57–61ab).

After summoning Narasimha from his heart, he mentally honours the deity through worshipping all *mantras* the deity consists of, starting with *mūlamantra*, each of them in its proper place (SātS 17. 64–65ab). The meditation on the group of *mantras* (*mantravyūha*) results in realizing the shape of Narasimha equipped with all attributes: “[He should meditate] on the God consisting of all gods who is the ocean of all lights, equipped with all qualities and virtues, such as knowledge, possessing the great body and perfect members of the colour of melting gold, the face of a terrifying lion with eyes like fierce Sun and surrounded by hair like thunderbolts, with claws harder than diamonds shining like the petal of a red lotus, with a mane rippling like the Lord of snakes and shining like millions of Moons, who emits through the hole in his skull the inner fire along with the air, who expresses himself with a roar resembling the peal of thunder when the world ends, surrounded by the circle of flames appearing at the end of an eon, the Lord possessing six weapons and eight arms, who takes a rest after pervading worlds, whose members are anointed with a divine perfume, covered with a divine cloth and a garland decorated with divine ornaments, whose breast is adorned with a *kaustubha* jewel and a *śrīvatsa* emblem, the highest God decorated with a flowery garland interlaced

¹² This throne consists of Lord Ananta supporting the cosmos in the middle and eight states (*bhāva*) of mind (*buddhi*): starting from the southern east and ending with the northern east, there are righteousness (*dharma*), knowledge (*jñāna*), sovereignty (*aiśvarya*) and indifference (*vairāgya*). Their opposites—*adharmā*, *ajñāna*, *anaiśvarya*, *rāga*—are put from the east to the north. Above it he visualizes the lotus with his own name inscribed onto it, above it the Sun and Moon within the stamens of the lotus and the fire in its pericarp. Finally, he worships the throne mentally with the help of sandal-paste etc.

with jewels, gold, splendid pearls and sacred thread. There are magnificent weapon, lotus and other [emblems] on his arms. He should then visualize the lotus (*padma*) as white as the ocean of milk on the right arm, whereas on the left arm the best conch (*śaṅkha*), more splendid than the Himalayas, being the source of the syllable *om*. On the other pair of arms he should visualize the mace and the sword (*gadākhaḍgau*) shining like rays and a discus (*cakra*) resembling the lustre of the fire destroying the world. On one hand of the left pair of hands he should visualize a bow (*dhanu*), and a gesture removing the ignorance called ‘karma’ (*karmākhyā*) [shown] by the other hand of the pair.”¹³

Then the respective ancillary *mantras* are visualized in proper colours, next come the *mantras* of insignia starting with *kaustubha* possessing human forms with two arms and holding weapons, then *mantras*

¹³ SātS 17. 73–84ab:

*sarvadevam ayaṁ devaṁ sarveṣāṁ tejasāṁ nidhim /
sarvalakṣaṇasampūrṇaṁ sārvaññādiguṇair yutam //73//
niṣṭaptakanakābhaṁ ca sampūrṇāṅgaṁ mahānutam /
ghoraśārdūlavadaṇaṁ caṇḍamārtāṇḍalocaṇam //74//
saudāminīcayaprakhyair lomabhiḥ paripūritam /
aruṇāmbhojapatrābhaṁ vajrādihikakaroruham //75//
calaṭphaṇīśvarasaṭam candrakoṭīśatadyutim /
vamantamāntaraṁ vahnīm kharendhrair mārutānugaiḥ //76//
pralayāmbudanirghoṣam udagirantaṁ svavācakaṁ /
yugāntahutabhugjvālāmaṇḍalāntarvyavasthitam //77//
śaḍaṣṭraṁ cāpy aṣṭabāhuṁ vyāpya lokān shtitam prabhum/
divyagandhānuliptāṅgaṁ divyāmbaṛadharaṁ tathā //78//
divyasragveṣṭanopetaṁ divyālanākāramaṇḍitam /
kaustubhenorasisthena śrīvatsenāpy alanḁṛtam //79//
ratnakāñcanaśmuktāyuktayā vanamālayā /
sabrahmasūtrayā caiva śobhitam parameśvaram //80//
bhujāny astravarair dīptaiḥ kamalādyair yutāni ca /
kṣīrasāgaravacchubhraṁ tataḥ padmaṁ tu dakṣiṇe //81//
praṇavadhvanigarbhaṁ tu himādrīśataśo ‘dhikam /
vāme śaṅkhavaram dhyāyed gadākhaḍgau jvalatprabhau //82//
dakṣiṇe pāṇiyugme ‘tha cakram kālānaladyutim /
sadhanurvāmahastābhyāṁ tataḥ pāṇidvayena tu //83//
avidyādalinīm mudrām karmākhyām saṁsmaret prabhoḥ /.*

of mace and garland in a female shape and, finally, the *mantras* of Goddesses: Śrī, Puṣṭī, Sarasvatī and Nidrā (SātS 18. 84cd–93ab). Having meditated on them, he offers various substances (SātS 17. 93cd–96) and *mudrās* (SātS 17. 97–106ab). After that he recites the *mūlamantra* of Narasimha 108 times, as well as the subsequent *āngamantras*, one by one (SātS 17. 106cd–108ab). The last element of his practice is a full offering (*pūrṇāhuti*) (SātS 17. 108cd–115ab).

The *narasimhadīkṣā*

With regard to its subsequent elements, the *narasimhadīkṣā* follows a customary schema of initiation. Among the elements shared with other accounts of tantric *dīkṣās*, one can enumerate for example the very characteristic moments of a *samaya*-initiation when (1) an *ācārya* leads the pupils with their eyes covered into the *maṇḍala* and (2) teaches them the rules of behaviour (*samaya*). However, the adept of the *narasimhadīkṣā* is to follow a very particular set of *samayas*, different from those given in another chapter of SātS, i.e. SātS 21. Moreover, he does not obtain a secret name. Yet, the *narasimhadīkṣā* does not finish with preaching the rules of religious and social conduct. It is presented as granting eventually the right to master the *narasimhamantra*, which results in obtaining magical powers and therefore culminating in creating a *sādhaka*.

The ceremony starts with a prescription to make the pupils enter the *maṇḍala*. They are led there by the *ācārya*: “He should lead there the adepts wearing white clothes, fasting and cleansed, with their eyes covered and holding flowers in their hands. He should make them throw [the flowers] down within the boundaries of the *maṇḍala*. Having had their eyes uncovered, they should honour, again and again, the God, the fire, the teacher and the vessel by the obeisance with eight limbs of the body and circumambulation.”¹⁴ There are different ways

¹⁴ SātS 17. 115cd–117:

*tataḥ śucīn sopavāsān śodhitān baddhalocanān //115//
bhaktān praveśayet tatra grhītakusumāms tu vai /*

of initiating with the *narasimhamantra*, depending on the level of the devotion displayed by the adepts: “Then, when [*ācārya*] recognizes the readiness [of the adepts] on the basis of the level [of their] devotion (*bhakti*), he should confer on them the intense, the slow or another initiation (*tīvramandādika* type).”¹⁵ The terms used for expressing different levels of intensity remind in that case the concept of a strike of the power (*śakti*), the so-called *śaktipāta*, experienced by an adept at the time of initiation and usually associated with Śaiva *tantras*.¹⁶ A Pāñcarātra evidence of the three types of *śaktipāta* (*tīvra/divya, manda, madhya*) comes from the *Nārādīyasamhitā* 9. 315–320.

A prominent role during the *narasimhadīkṣā* is played by the purification of the adepts.¹⁷ It starts with reciting of the *narasimhamantra*,

*prakṣepayen maṅḍalāntar netrabandham vimucya ca //116//
aṣṭāṅgapraṇipātais tu pradakṣiṇayutais tataḥ /
devaś cāgnir guruḥ kumbhaḥ pūjanīyaḥ punaḥ punaḥ //117//.*

¹⁵ SātS 17. 118:

*tatkālam bhaktibhāvena vijñātā योग्या यदा /
tīvramandādikām teṣām tadā dīkṣām samācaret //118//.*

¹⁶ Brunner explains that in the context of Śaiva tradition the term *mandatīvrādi* (words reordered due to the metre) signifies four different kinds of a strike of the power (Brunner 1977: 6).

¹⁷ Emphasizing the purificatory aspect goes in agreement with the function of the *narasimhadīkṣā* as formulated in SātS 16, however, in fact, apart from bestowing knowledge, the purification is considered to be the most important function of the tantric initiation, mostly Śaiva but also Vaiṣṇava. See for example *Kiraṇāgama* 6.19:

*anekabhavikam karma dagdham bījam ivāṇubhiḥ /
bhaviṣyad api samruddham yenedam tad dhi bhogataḥ //*

—The mantras burn the karma of one’s many former lives and prevent any future karma. [But] that [karma] by means of which [one lives] this [present life is destroyed only] by [its fruition into] experience (translation by Sanderson).

See Sanderson 1993: 287. Compare the passage of the LT 41. 5cd–6ab:

*yad dyati kleśakarmādīkṣayaty akhilaṁ padam //5//
kṣapayitvā malaṁ sarvaṁ dadāti ca param padam /*

its ancillary *mantras* and *mūlabīja* and comprises three corresponding gradual phases. Basing on the relevant passages of the commentary of Alaśiṅghabhaṭṭa (19th century) we may say that these phases are: (1) purification of the manifested elements (*vyaktasamśuddhi*), which refers to the purification of the body consisting of solid elements, (2) purification of the unmanifested elements (*avyaktaśuddhi*), which refers to the purification of the subtle elements of the body and (3) bestowing the adept with the suitable form (*svarūpāpādana*) in the sense of purification of his soul. SātS 17. 119–123 reads: “The wise one should offer into the fire the sesame seeds mixed with butter more than 108 times together with [recitation] of the twelve-syllabled [*mantra* of Narasimha] in order to complete the purification of the manifested [elements] (*vyaktasamśuddhi*). Then he should present a full-offering (*pūrṇāhuti*). In order to purify the unmanifested [elements] (*avyaktaśuddhyartham*), he should worship the *mantra* with its retinue with a help of the *arghya*-offering so many times as before. Then he should present the full-offering (*pūrṇāhuti*). After that, in order to bestow [the souls of adepts] with the suitable form (*svarūpāpādanārtham*), reciting the *mūlabīja* with *praṇava* at the beginning and *namas* at the end, the concentrated one should perform the homa-offering followed by the meditation upon the God, who is free from bounds, purified, peaceful, omnipresent, omniscient. Then, the knower of *mantra*, being compassionate towards the adepts, should perform the full-offering (*pūrṇāhuti*) while reciting the *mūlamantra*.”¹⁸

¹⁸ SātS 17. 119–123:

*juhuyād vyaktasamśuddhau śatam aṣṭādhyāyikā tu vai /
tilānām tadvad ājyasya dvādaśārṇena buddhimān //119//
dadyāt pūrṇāhutiṃ paścān mantram arghyādinārcya ca /
tataś cāṅgasamūhena prāguktapariśamkhyayā //120//
kuryād avyaktaśuddhyartham dadyāt pūrṇāhutiṃ tataḥ /
svarūpāpādanārtham tu mūlabījēna vai tathā //121//
praṇavādinamo 'ntena kuryād homam atandritaḥ /
dhyātvā nirastabandham taṃ śuddham śāntam tu sarvagam //122//
samastasamvitpūrṇam ca dadyāt pūrṇāhutiṃ tataḥ /
mūlamantraṇa mantrajño bhaktānām anukampayā //123//.*

Afterwards, the *ācārya* teaches the adepts the rules of behaviour and religious norms (*samaya*) they are obliged to respect. Some of these rules (10–12) refer directly to *sādhakas* entitled to worship the *narasiṃhamantra*. Others refer to a lion (5–6): “Then he should teach the rules. You should not give up [worshipping the God] in a vessel, fire and *maṇḍala* by deeds, thought and word because thanks to devotion (*bhakti*) you will acquire future and present [results] (1). You should not avoid a bath etc. without a reason (*sādhyam vinā*) (2). As long as he lives, according to his power, wherever he is, he should worship the group of *mantras* in the abodes such as the heart etc. using such substances as flowers and water but if they are unavailable, he should perform the mental ritual (*manasī pūjā*) in the heart proceeded by attribution of *mantras* (*nyāsa*), as he did before (3). He should consider the Lord of *mantra*, a teacher and the *mantra* as identical. He should perfectly protect *mantra*, *maṇḍala* and *mudrā* (4). From the distance, he should pay obeisance to the king of wild deer, namely to the lion (*vyāghra*)¹⁹ or to the rest of animals possessing a similar shape (5). He should not sit on his skin, step over it or touch with his foot the seat [made out of it] etc. (6). He should avoid meals served with the lotus-leaves and *aśvattha*-leaves, as well as the seat decorated with a conch, lotus and other emblems [of Viṣṇu] (*śaṅkhapadmādi*) (7). He should eat only at night or mortify himself during the eleventh day of the half of a moon (*ekadāśī*) (8). On the twelfth day of the half of the moon (*dvādāśī*), half of a year (*ayana*), and when the Sun enters into a new sign of the Zodiac (*sūryasaṅkramaṇa*), he should perform the special offering (9). He should never annihilate the misfortune appearing due to the inauspicious configuration of stars,

See comm. SātS 17. 115cd–123:

[...] *vyaktasamśuddhau mahadādirūpeṇa sthūlāvasthāpanna
prakṛtīśuddhyartham ity arthaḥ /* [...] *avyaktaśuddhyartham
sūkṣmāvasthāpannaprakṛtīśuddhyartham ity arthaḥ /
svarūpāpādanārtham cetanaśuddhyartham ity arthaḥ /*

¹⁹ The term *vyāghra* might be translated as “tiger”, but in the context of the ceremony devoted to Narasiṃha I decided to choose the meaning “lion”.

due to demons (*bhūtagrahaduṣṭa*) and illnesses by means of his own *mantra*, if it is not [yet] overpowered (*asiddha*) (10). If he experiences the symptom of magical powers (*siddhilinga*) arising out of the *mantra*, in dream or in reality, he should not tell anyone but the teacher about it (11). Wherever he sees the manifested (*vyakta*) *bīja-mantra* of Narasimha (*nṛsimhabīja*), he should pay obeisance to it, having worshipped it before with words, flowers and circumambulation (12). Whenever he weeps or grieves because of the separation, he should perform an offering for the ancestors, fire and deity, not having taken a bath earlier (13). Otherwise, if the impurity caused by the birth of a child called *sūtaka* occurs, he should not practice anything that was mentioned before until the umbilical cord is cut (14). He should insistently protect the doctrine (*āgama*) of his own religious practice (*svānuṣṭhāna*) and respect it (15). He should protect Brahmanas etc. according to his capability if they are oppressed (*dīna*) as well as those, who do not have protectors (*anātha*) (16).²⁰

²⁰ SātS 17. 124–139ab:

samayān śrāvayet paścāt kumbhe 'gnau maṇḍale tatah /
bhaktiyā yayā tu samprāptam aihikāmuṣmikaṁ tvayā //124//
nāsyāḥ kuryāḥ parityāgam karmāṇā manasā girā /
sādhyam vinā na kuryād vai snānādīnām ca lapanam //125//
yāvaj jīvaṁ yathāśaktiḥ saṁ sthito yatra kutracit /
sthāneṣu hṛdayādyeṣu kuryān mantragaṇārcanam //126//
dravyaiḥ puṣpāmbupūrvais tu tadabhāve tu vai hṛdi /
mānasīm pūrvavat pūjām nirvapen nyāsapūrvikām //127//
mantranātham guruṁ mantram samatvenābhivikṣayet /
mantramaṇḍalamudrāṇām parām guptim samācaret //128//
dūrād eva namaskāryo mṛgarād vyāghra eva vā /
tadākr̥tir mṛgo 'nyo vā tac carma kvāpi nāruhet //129//
na cākrameta pādena na ca talpādikam spr̥set /
padmapatrais tathāśvatthaparṇair bhojanabhājanam //130//
varjanīyam tathā śaṅkhapadmādyāṅkitam āsanam /
naktam vā paripīḍam vā 'py ekādaśyām samācaret //131//
viśeṣapūjanam kuryād dvādaśīsv akhilāsu ca /
ayanādiṣu cānyeṣu sūryasam kramaṇeṣu ca //132//
na bhūtagrahaduṣṭānām vyādhinām vā kadācana /
asiddhena svamantreṇa kuryād utsāraṇam tu vai //133//

After preaching, the *ācārya* sprinkles the pupil with water from the jar marking in this way his next initiatory entitlement, i.e. *sādhaka*. Then he summons the King of the *mantra* again and asks for *naivedya* for himself as well as for other participants, and offers the food to a brahmin (SātS 17. 140cd–141). After that, he asks the King of the *mantra* to forgive any faults that consciously or unconsciously happened during the ritual, and worships Viṣvaksena using the leftovers of *naivedya* offering (SātS 17. 142–143ab). He performs the offering for the demons (*bhūtabali*) (SātS 17. 143cd–144) and the ceremony of letting the God leave (*visarjana*) (SātS 17. 145ab). For the sake of the final purification, the *ācārya*, who contrary to *sādhakas*, has no desires (*niṣkāma*), consumes in silence a little bit out of previously gathered offering-leftovers. When the night comes, having finished the meal, he repeats the *mantra* and visualizes it (*dhyāna*), having sanctified it with water. For the rest of the night, until the sunrise, he continues recitation and visualization uninterruptedly (SātS 17. 145cd–148).

Mastering the *narasimhamantra* for the sake of magical powers (*siddhi*)

After describing the activities of the *ācārya*, the text turns to the activities of the *sādhaka*, who undertakes a time-consuming recitation of *narasimhamantra* together with its visualization (*dhyāna*) (SātS 17. 149–150ab): “Having completed an offering in that way every day, the owner of the *mantra* (*mantrin*) should repeat the *mantra*

*mantrajam siddhiliṅgam yat svapne pratyakṣato 'pi vā /
 anubhūtam na vaktavyam kasyacid guruṇā vinā //134//
 vyaktam nṛsimhabijam tu dṛṣyate yatra kutracit /
 namaskuryāt samabhyarcya vākpuspaiḥ sapradakṣiṇaiḥ //135//
 kṛtvā 'śrupātam śokam vā viprayoganimitataḥ /
 snānād ṛte na kuryād vai devāgnipitṛtarpaṇam //136//
 ā nābhivardhanāt kālād anyatra sati sam kare /
 sūtākākhye na kartavyam prāguktaṁ caiva yatnataḥ //137//
 svānuṣṭhānam hi vai yasmād āgamāt samupāgatam /
 tasya sampūjanam yatnād gopanam ca samācaret //138//
 brāhmanādīn yathāśakti dīnānāthāmś ca pālayet /.*

eight hundred thousand times. Then the King of the *mantra* will bring all types (*sarvānurūpaka*) of desired magic powers (*siddhi*) to him.”²¹ It is however unclear what the expression “in that way” (*evam*) refers to. Obviously, it cannot refer to the activities of the *ācārya* who has performed the previously described initiation (*dīkṣā*), since it is not performed every day.

Also the following passage (SātS 17. 150cd–153ab) is quite ambiguous since it would better fit the already completed section on *samaya*-rules preached by the *ācārya* (SātS 17. 124–139ab). Besides, it displays a grammatical irregularity. Within this particular passage an unexpected change of the grammatical subject (from “I” to “he”) takes place: “I communicated the *śāstras* to Rudra, Āditya, Indra, the seers and the *bhaktas* in conformity of the mind of the people [and] differently in the [various] *yugas*.”²² For your personal success, you should learn the ritual, the ritual substances, the pure idol etc. from the *āgamas* [and] directly from those, who know them, perfectly in agreement everywhere. What was said here in brief, he will explain in detail somewhere else.”²³ Hikita sees the problem of the change of the grammatical subject but proposes the emendation, which because of the grammatically incorrect form *vadem* is unconvincing: “*vaded* seems a little curious, because this is the dialogue between the Highest God and Saṃkarṣaṇa.

²¹ SātS 17. 149–150ab:

*evam eva vidhānena pūjayitvā dine dine /
japel lakṣāṣṭakam mantrī tataḥ siddhyati mantrarāṭ //149//
dadāti manaso ‘bhīṣṭāḥ siddhīḥ sarvānurūpakāḥ /.*

²² Different kinds of *vākyas*: divine (*dīvyā*), told by sages (*munibhāṣita*) and human (*pauruṣa*) are described in SātS 22. 52cd–60ab in the context of the characteristics of the *ācārya*.

²³ SātS 17. 150cd–153ab:

*rudrādityendrarṣibhyo bhaktebhyas ca mayoditam //150//
lokacittānusāreṇa śāstram vai yugabhedaṭaḥ /
yāgo yāgopakaraṇam vimalam pratimādikam //151//
jñātavyam tat tvayā samyag avirodhena sarvadā /
āgamebhyo ‘tha tajjñebhyaḥ sakāśād ātmasiddhaye //152//
athoktam iha saṃkṣepād vaded anyatra vistarāt /.*

Therefore it must be *vadem* instead of *vaded*. Or, else, we may assume this sentence is told by Nārada” (Hikita 1990: 137). All these irregularities seem to indicate that the passage SātS 17. 149–153, which directly precedes the description of the *sādhaka*’s practice, might have belonged originally to another context.

In general, the characteristic practice of a *sādhaka* begins with a vow (*vrata*). Such a vow, as is stated by Rastelli, usually “includes the worship of a *mantra*, staying in a particular place, a particular diet, the wearing of a particular garment, etc. [...]. Up to this point the worship performed is a kind of general worship of the *mantra* [...]. Only after this worship ending with the oblations to the fire does a ritual procedure that is characteristic of *sādhaka* start which begins with the making of a decision or an observance” (Rastelli 2000: 329). In the case of SātS 17, an adept has already overpowered the *mantra* so he is depicted as starting the performance of magical rituals: “Listen, how a *mantrin* can use a *mantra* that has been overpowered by means of restrictions (*saṃyama*) starting with abstinence from sexual activities (*brahamcaryādi*) and diet comprising milk with oats, vegetables, water, clarified butter, roots and fruits in rites such as *śāntika*.”²⁴

Magical rituals arising out of mastering the *narasimha-mantra* comprise two sets of apparently different character. Whereas the former one presents a “tantric” type of *siddhis*: pacification (*śānti/śāntika*) (SātS 17. 157–181ab), prosperity (*puṣṭi/pauṣṭika*) (SātS 17. 181cd–198), welfare (*āpyāyana*) (SātS 17. 199–235), protection from all disadvantages (*rakṣā*) (SātS 17. 236–333ab) with its subtype, the keeping people in a good state (*saṃdhāraṇī rakṣā*) (SātS 17. 333cd–357ab), **the latter one describes practices corresponding to the four goals of human life (*puruṣārthasādhana*) recognized by the orthodox tradition: *dharma* (SātS 17. 357cd–387ab),**

²⁴ SātS 17. 153cd–154:

*atha saṃsādhitaṃ mantraṃ brahmacaryādisaṃyamaiḥ //153//
payoyāvakaśākāmbughṛtamūlaphalāśanaḥ /
mantrī yathā prayuñjīyāc chāntikādiṣu tac chr̥ṇu //154//*

artha (SātS 17. 387cd–439ab), *kāma* (SātS 17. 439cd–447) and *mokṣa* (SātS 17. 448–456).

The account is very meticulous in regard to the details of respective activities undertaken by the *sādhaka* depending on the type of supernatural power he expects. The rites belonging to the first set are differentiated by many particularities, such as for example the colour of substances, though they follow the same schema more or less. Each of them starts with preparation of a suitable *maṇḍala*. The description of *śāntika* (SātS 17. 157–158ab) and *puṣṭi* (SātS 17. 182) share the same simple diagram, whereas the *maṇḍala* used while *āpyāyana* (SātS 17. 200) is decorated with mirrors and bells. For the sake of the most complex type of *siddhi*, i.e. *rakṣā*, seven *maṇḍalas* are to be prepared. Then the *sādhaka* prepares eight jars, usually wrapped with a thread, into which the substances suitable for particular *siddhi* are to be put (*śāntika*: SātS 17. 158cd–164ab; *puṣṭi*: SātS 17. 183–184; *āpyāyana*: SātS 17. 201–204ab; *rakṣā*: SātS 17. 243–249). After that he arranges an amulet (*yantra*) onto which he engraves his own name or the name of a person for whom he performs the rite (*sādhya*). The written name is usually surrounded by the lotus-petals and the *mūla-mantra* of Narasimha is attached to it. After wrapping the amulet with a thread it is either put into the jar (*śāntika*: SātS 17. 165–169; *puṣṭi*: SātS 17. 185–191ab; *āpyāyana*: SātS 17. 205cd–224), or, as in case of *samdharaṇī rakṣā*, hidden on the body (*samdharaṇī rakṣā* SātS 17. 337–354). Afterwards follows the meditation upon the *narasimhamantra* concluded with summoning the deity to descend from the heart into a *maṇḍala* (*śānti*: SātS 17. 170; *puṣṭi*: SātS 17. 191–192; *āpyāyana*: SātS 17. 225–232ab; *rakṣā*: SātS 17.250–256cd). When the deity is present, the *sādhaka* worships it, identifies with it and finally calls the suitable *siddhi* with a phrase “come” (*śāntika*: SātS 17. 171–172ab; *puṣṭi* SātS 17. 193–197ab; *āpyāyana* SātS 17. 232cd–234). At the end he performs the fire-offering (*homa*) and offers the *bali* for the sake of satisfying the demons and guardians of the world (*śāntika*: SātS 17. 179cd–180ab; *puṣṭi*: SātS 17. 197cd; *āpyāyana*: SātS 17. 235).

As was already mentioned, the other group of *kāmya* rituals secure the quick and purely ritualistic method of realization of the four goals of life to the people who due to some reasons were not able to fulfil them in a traditional, orthodox and time-consuming way piously passing through the successive stages of their life.²⁵ The first practice (*dharma*) is meant for the poor devotees whose minds are focused exclusively on the one *mantra*, desiring the fruit coming out of its adoration, but their practice is not complete because of omitting of a bath (*snāna*), meditation (*dhyāna*), yoga, recitation of *mantras* (*japa*), fire-offering (*homa*), sincere vow (*sadvrata*), suitable food and drink, donation (*dāna*), avoiding all of them or omitting them due to an illness. The *dharmasādhana* is taught especially to rich ones (SātS 17. 385–387ab). The practice aiming at the fast acquisition of wealth (*artha*) may be undertaken by all men regardless of the stage of their life: disciples (*brahmacārin*), the heads of the house (*grhastha*), those who left for the forest (*vānaprastha*) and ascetics (*yati*) but after completing the practice of *dharma*. In such circumstances it is recommended to propitiate vigorously the *narasimhamantra* for a whole week having performed the offering (*yāga*), taken a bath thrice and undertaken the fast before (SātS 17. 387cd–388ab). Quick realization of *kāma* resulting in an immediate attraction of all women is possible only after the successful completing of the previous one by *sādhakas* striving for terrestrial pleasures (*bhogin*) (SātS 17. 439cd–440ab). The realization of *mokṣa* is possible when the adept abandons the *kāma* practice (SātS 17. 448).

To sum up, SātS 17 seems to present a fully fledged practice comprising the preliminary practice, conferring of the *narasimhadīkṣā*, teaching of the particular *samaya* rules to the adepts who due to the initiation gain the right to master the *narasimhamantra* and, finally, worship of the *narasimhamantra* by those adepts for the sake of magical powers.

²⁵ For some observation regarding the rite aiming at realization of *kāma* in the case of SātS 17 see Oberhammer 2010: 55–56.

The aims of Narasimha-ceremony according to SātS 16.

In Dvivedī's edition of SātS (Dvivedī 1982), there is already a colophon of SātS 16 (*aghaśāntikalpa*), which speaks about a procedure dealing with mastering of the *mantra* (*kalpa*) for the sake of pacifying the evil (*aghaśānti*). In accordance with that statement, the chapter outlines the concept of a procedure comprising (1) the initiation with the help of the *narasimhamantra* (*narasimhadīkṣā*) and then (2) the worship of that *mantra* (including acquisition of magical powers) for the sake of a specific, long-term purification aiming at preparing the adepts for the proper initiation. This particular idea of worshipping the Narasimha-*mantra* in order to remove the evil seems to be troublesome even for Dvivedī. Perhaps this is the reason why he provides a different variant of the title in his introduction to the very same edition of SātS: *trividhadīkṣāvīdhānam* (Rule [regarding] the threefold initiation) (Dvivedī 1982: 79). Also Smith, in the descriptive catalogue of Pāñcarātra *samhitās*, abandons the meaningful term *kalpa* in the case of the colophon of SātS 16 and provides instead another variant: *dīkṣāṅgāghaśāntividhi* "Rules for the Expiation of Sins as a (Preliminary) Part of *dīkṣā*-Initiation" (Smith 1975–1980: 526).

The chapter begins with a general statement, which, in agreement with other parts of the text, indicates the possibility of being initiated into its tradition regardless the social position.²⁶ Saṁkarṣaṇa wants to know from Nārada, who, in turn, communicates the words of Vāsudeva, how the representatives of all *varṇas* who accepted the tradition of SātS (*sampratipannā ye krame 'smin*) should be initiated. The God replies

²⁶ For example, in SātS 7. 29–31, within the prescriptions regarding the worship of four *vyūhas*, it is said that while brahmins start it with Vāsudeva, *kṣatriyas* with Saṁkarṣaṇa, and *vaiśyas* with Pradyumna, the good *śūdras* (*sacchūdra*) shall do it with Aniruddha; in SātS 18. 15, in the context of the rules concerning preparation for the regular initiation (*adhivāsa*) it is recommended to prepare the same pavillon for all classes, ending with *śūdras*; in SātS 19. 54 concerning the proper initiation, it is, however, said that *śūdras* should offer a cow in order to be initiated.

that there are three methods of initiating (*trividha dīkṣaṇopaya*) available for all *varṇas* starting with brahmins.²⁷ As we can see, already here the *narasimhadīkṣā* is excluded from the regular initiatory pattern of the text. According to SātS 16 its aim is different: through removing sins committed in previous lives, it allows people such as *nāstikas* and others, who do not respect the customary norms of pious Vaiṣṇavas, to join the tradition and proceed to a regular initiation (SātS 16. 23–29).

There are several passages in the text characterizing the three regular initiations. According to SātS 19. 3–6, they provide different kinds of fruit: “Listen about the initiation, characterized as [possessing] one but many [forms] (*ekāneka*). Having undertaken it, people reach the desired abode when the life ends. One [of these initiations] always brings the fruit of liberation to the enlightened ones, the other one—worldly goods and liberation and the third one brings only worldly goods. To get the fruits, all [the initiations] should be properly carried out with a consent of the teacher for the pupils full of devotion to the God, even for old men and women, and also for dedicated youngsters, as [these initiations] do not contain many rules difficult [to follow]. Having firstly mentally examined the approached [pupil] and having known his disposition, one [of initiations] should be chosen [by a teacher], o Great-minded!”²⁸ The above passage contains con-

²⁷ SātS 16. 1–3:

[*nārada uvāca*] *prabhur munīśvarā bhūyaś cādito vanamālinā / sarvalokahitārthaṃ tu yat tad vakṣyāmy ataḥ param //1//*
 [*saṅkarṣaṇa uvāca*] *deva sampraitipannā ye krame 'smin brāhmaṇādayaḥ / dīkṣaṇīyāḥ kathaṃ te vā etad icchāmi veditum //2//*
 [*bhagavān uvāca*] *yathākrameṇoditānāṃ varṇānāṃ śṛṇu lāṅgalin / trividhaṃ dīkṣaṇopāyaṃ saṃkṣepāt sarvasiddhidam //3//*

Compare: SātS 18. 3:

dīkṣātrayasya bhagavan jñātum icchāmi nirṇayam / yat prāpya bhagvadbhaktāḥ kṛtakṛtyo 'cirād bhavet //

²⁸ SātS 19. 3–6:

ekānekasvarūpāṃ vai dīkṣāṃ saṃsāriṇāṃ śṛṇu / āsāḍya yāṃ samāyānti dehānte 'bhimataṃ padam //3//
kaivalyaphaladā 'py ekā bhogakaivalyadā parā /

tradictory phrases. Whereas each initiation is linked to the particular fruit—the highest *dīkṣā* (*paradīkṣā*) to liberation (*kaivalya*), the middle one (*vyūhadīkṣā*) to worldly pleasures (*bhoga*) together with liberation (*kaivalya*), and the lowest among them, *vibhavadīkṣā*, exclusively to worldly pleasures (*bhoga*)—within the same passage all of them are said to lead eventually to the desired abode after death, i.e. liberation. Such contradistinction might point simply to the carelessness of the redactor, or to the general attempt of SātS at the diminution of the role of a tantric *sādhaka*. It seems that this position agrees with the way of presenting the *sādhaka* in SātS 17. As we could see, at the beginning the worship of the *narasimhamantra* provides a *sādhaka* with a set of typical tantric magical powers, starting with *śānti* and ending with *rakṣā*. This set of *siddhis* requires typical, tantric elements such as a *maṇḍala* and an amulet. But the other set, being in Hikita's opinion a result of a re-working of the text for the sake of making it more moderate (Hikita 1990: 174), covers the four goals of life (*puruṣārtha*) and brings eventually the magical power of attaining liberation. In this light, the *sādhaka*'s ultimate goal seems to be not realizing *bhoga* but *mokṣa*. In a consequence, the attention from his factual aims is averted.

As SātS 19. 3–6 suggests, the three regular *dīkṣās* are optional and selected by the teacher.²⁹ Further on the choice of initiation depends either on the social background or the spiritual level of the initiated

*bhogadaivatṛṭīyā ca prabuddhānām sadaiva hi //4//
 ācāryānumatāḥ sarvāḥ kāryāḥ samyak phalāptaye /
 bhaktibhāvānuviddhānām śiṣyāṇām bhāvitātmanām //5//
 vṛddhānām aṅganānām ca bālānām bhāvitātmanām /
 vinācārasamūhena duśśakena ca tā hitāḥ //6//
 purā dhiyā vicāryaivam upasannena vai saha /
 tadīyam āśayam jñātvā sampādyaikā mahāmate //19.7//*

²⁹ Hence, the Gupta's opinion (1983: 76–77, 82) that SātS presents a hierarchically initiatory structure with the *narasimhadīkṣā* as a *samaya-dīkṣā*, *vibhavadīkṣā* meant for *putrakas* and *vyūha-* and *paradīkṣā* meant for *sādhakas* and *ācāryas* might be refuted.

person: “Having received the initiation, the *yogins* successful in eight limbs of *yoga* and performing the offerings in the heart, have a right to [worship] the One, whose abode is in the heart. [Similarly] sages skilled in *Vedas*, engaged in the mixed ritual, have a right to [worship] four *vyūhas* with *mantras*, not otherwise, but three *varṇas*, as *kṣatriyas* etc., truly devoted [to God], have a right to perform ritual sequences related to four *vyūhas* without *mantras*. [Similarly] the followers belonging to four *varṇas*, who are deprived of discriminating knowledge and ego, satisfied with their *karman* and properly venerating the Highest God with deed, speech and mind, have a right to worship the circle of *vibhava* deities with ceremonies related to them”.³⁰ The formulation *ekāneka* ([possessing] one but many [forms]) (SātS 19. 3ab) means in that context that initiations of SātS differ in regard to the type of the *mantra* that is used during initiation (*mantra* belonging to *vibhava*, *vyūha* or *para* aspect of Viṣṇu), but not in their internal structure.³¹

³⁰ SātS 2. 7ab–12cd:

aṣṭāṅgayogasiddhānām hr̥dyāganiratātmanām //7//
yoginām adhikārah syād ekasmin hr̥dayeśaye /
vyāmiśrayāgayuktānām viprānām vedavādīnām //8//
samantram tu caturvyūhe tv adhikāro na cānyathā /
trayānām kṣatriyādīnām prapannānām ca tattvataḥ //9//
amantram adhikāras tu caturvyūhakriyākrame /
sakriye mantracakre tu vaibhavīye 'vivekinām //10//
mamātāsannirastānām svakarmaniratātmanām /
karmavān manasaiḥ samyag bhaktānām parameśvare //11//
caturṇām adhikāro vai prāpte dīkṣākrame sati /

³¹ See SātS 19. 169–177, where after the account of *vibhavadīkṣā*, it is stated that in the case of *vyūhadīkṣā* *bījas* of four *vyūhas* should be applied in each rite, whereas in the case of *brahmadīkṣā* (*paradīkṣā*) it should be the first mantra (*ādyamantra*) divided into six parts.

In that light, the opinion of Smith that there is a gap within the treatment of an initiation since due to its three-fold character one would expect a similarly careful treatment of all of them, whereas the present text contains only the treatment of *vibhavadīkṣā*, becomes unconvincing. See Smith 1975–1980: 535.

Since the three initiations are to some extent similar, we may presume that each initiation comprises the typical, hierarchical order of advancements regarding *samayin*, *putraka*, *sādhaka* and *ācārya*. Their characteristics are to be found in SātS 22.³² This is why only one initiation is discussed in full (initiation with *vibhava-mantras*).

Before undertaking the regular *dīkṣā*, the text recommends a general purification of the body comprising penances of *kṛcchātīkṛccha* type and a *brahmakūrca* practice that is a kind of a *prāyaścitta* (SātS 16.6–10).³³ The atonement (*prāyaścitta*) together with *brahmakūrca* purifies the bodies of those who have resisted sins and resorted to *bhakti* until the end of their lives

³² See the characteristics of *samayin* (SātS 22. 2–24), *putraka* (SātS 22. 32–41ab), *sādhaka* (SātS 22. 41cd–46) and *ācārya* (SātS 22. 47–61). A similar structure is known also from LT 41. 7–8:

*dīkṣā sā trīvidhā tāvat sthūlasūkṣmaparātmanā /
punar dīkṣyavibhedena trīvidhā sā caturvidhā //7//
samayī putrakaś caiva tṛtīyaḥ sādhakas tathā /
ācāryaś ceti dīkṣyās te teṣām anyatra vistaraḥ //8//*

—The initiation is at first the triple one of a solid, subtle and supreme nature. Then, that triple initiation is divided into four grades—*samayī*, *putraka*, as well as the third type of *sādhaka* and then *ācārya*.

Their characteristics are elsewhere.

³³ Penances include staying in the teacher's house, where an adept has to confess all misdeeds he remembers, and a proper cleansing (SātS 16. 6–7). If the penances are too demanding, till the moment of pacifying the mind or for the period of twelve days, one should eat purified food obtained by begging only at night and make offerings, gather flowers, cleanse the idol of God, sing religious hymns etc., stay in a Vaiṣṇava environment or observe the idol of Viṣṇu (SātS 16. 8–10). The *brahmakūrca* begins with cutting off the hair and nails. Then the teacher should cleanse the pupil with a mixture of five cow-products (*pañcagavya*) for four days. For that period four times a day, the disciple should also take a sip of the mixture while reciting *mantras*, starting with a *Vāsudeva-mantra*. Eventually he should consume a small amount of milk and clarified butter or eat fruits and roots for four days and nights (SātS 16. 12–16ab).

(SātS 16. 16cd–17).³⁴ The condition of becoming clean-minded, even if one’s body has already been purified from sins, is devotion to the God (SātS 16. 11).³⁵ Additionally, as we read further on, *brahmakūrca* does not affect the sins gathered during previous lives. It is important, since the candidates for initiation might come from all strata of society, as well as they may seriously break the customary rules or even come from the outside of the tradition (SātS 16. 23–25ab): “Even if earlier one behaved badly (*durācāra*), ate everything (*sarvāśin*), was a murderer (*kṛtaghna*) and non-believer (*nāstika*), he should trustfully seek refuge in the first of Gods. You should know that thanks to the great *ātman*, such a person becomes sinless. So what about the man, who is engaged in religious austerities, devoted to that tradition, desisted from sins and stays in a shadow of *bhakti*?”³⁶

In order to remove the sins committed in previous births or, as we can suppose on the basis of the term *nāstika*, caused by the adherence to different religious affiliation, the next passage recommends conferring *narasimhadīkṣā* and, later on, putting adepts under the observation of the teacher to check their skills in mastering the *mantra* connected to *vibhava* deities as well as their mental ability to receive the proper initiation (SātS 16. 25cd–29ab): “O Wise one! After conferring the [initiation] of Narasimha for the sake of destroying the sins gathered during many previous births of the people who have been already

³⁴ SātS 16. 16cd–17:

*iti bhaktyā prapannānām ā jīvam api duṣkṛtāt //16//
kathitaṁ viratānām ca dehasuddhikaram param /
brahmakūrcasametam tu prāyaścittam mayā 'dya te //17//.*

³⁵ SātS 16. 11:

*abhijātatanur yaḥ prāg duṣkṛtair malinīkṛtaḥ /
sāmprataṁ bhagavadbhaktyā pavitrīkṛtamānasaḥ //.*

³⁶ SātS 16. 23–25ab:

*durācāro 'pi sarvāśī kṛtaghno nāstikaḥ purā /
samāśrayed ādidevaṁ śraddhayā śaraṇam yadi //23//
nirdoṣaṁ viddhi taṁ jantuṁ prabhāvāt paramātmanaḥ /
kiṁ punar yo 'nutāpārtaḥ śāsane 'smin hi samsthitaḥ //24//
virato duṣkṛtāc caiva bhakticchāyām samāśritaḥ /.*

purified, he should duly confer the [proper] initiation. Having observed external and internal adoration of the all-pervading [deity] belonging to the *vibhavas* connected with the *mantra* [carried out] correctly for four, eight or twelve months, and having known the strength of the character [of the adepts] before and the divine grace of the supreme god [towards] them with their minds fixed, he should immediately give an initiation called *vibhava*, *vyūha* [or] *sūkṣma*.³⁷ The commentator's explanation of the aim of *narasimhadīkṣā* points to the fact that its only function is to remove the sins committed during previous births, with a help of the grace of God. As he explains, it is also thanks to God that one's mind becomes purified during the observation period, which comes after the *narasimhadīkṣā*, when the teacher should make an adept propitiate the *mantra*. According to the commentator this *mantra* is the *narasimhamantra* (*tena nṛsimhārādhanam ca kārayet*): "Having initiated [him] by the means of *narasimhamantra* in order to destroy sins gathered during many previous births, since in the case of atonements like *brahmakūrca* only sins committed during present life have been removed, he should make [him] propitiate Narasimha. Having recognized in him the grace of God in a form of purified mind etc., he should initiate him with *mantras* of *para*, *vyūha* and *vibhava* [modes of God]."³⁸

³⁷ SātS 16. 25cd–29ab:

*evam saṁsuddhadoṣāṇām bahujaṇmārjitasya ca //25//
kalmaṣasya viḡhātārthaṁ nārasimhūn mahāmate /
kṛtvā vai sāmprataṁ dīkṣāṁ dadyād vai mantrapūrvakam //26//
ārādhanam hi tasyaiva vaibhavyasya vai vibhoḥ /
sabāhyābahyantaram caiva samyaṇmāsacatuṣṭayam //27//
māsāṣṭakam vatsaram vā buddhvā bhāvabalaṁ purā /
jñātvā bhavyāśayānām ca prasādam pārameśvaram //28//
vibhavyavyūhasūkṣmākhyām dīkṣāṁ kuryād anantaram /.*

³⁸ Comm. SātS 16. 25cd–29ab:

*pūrvoktabrahmakūrcādiprāyaścittānām iha janmani saṁ pāditado-
ṣamātraśamakatvāt prāḡ bahujaṇmārjitadoṣaśamanārthaṁ
nṛsimhamantradīkṣāṁ api dattvā tena nṛsimhārādhanam ca kārayet /*

What the signs are of *mantra*'s grace is explained in SātS 16. 29cd–31ab: “O Lord of Kamalā, through what signs the grace of *mantra* arising from destruction of sins and the proper worship should be recognised among *sādhakas*? It is to be known that the *mantrātman* will stand in front of those who possess the qualities: unequalled clearness of mind, exceeding increase of energy, firmness, contentment of strength, willpower etc. Further, the application of rituals such as *śāntika* etc. [is possible]. If one reaches success, which can be recognized by this reason (i.e. by having the *mantra* standing in front of oneself and by being able to perform rites like *śāntika* successfully), the sins are burnt successfully, and the *mantra*-king is pleased. He will immediately bring *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha*, if [the *mantra*] is applied. Afterwards, the octad, starting with *aṇiman*,³⁹ and various yogic powers along with self-realization, appear. Then he is known as being completely satisfied”.⁴⁰ In accordance with this passage, if the *mantra* is successfully mastered, it appears in front of the worshipper. Then he can perform rites such as *śāntika* etc. (see SātS 17. 153cd–154) and as a result his sins are completely burnt. The other types of perfections seem not

*tanmanah pariśuddhyādikaṁ tasmin bhagavadanugrahaṁ ca jñātvā
paravyūhavibhavamāntradīkṣāṁ dadyād ity āha /.*

³⁹ The term *aṇimādi* refers to eight yogic accomplishments (*Yogabhāṣya* 3. 45): *aṇiman*—the ability of minimizing to the size of atom, *laghiman*—the ability of becoming excessively light, *mahiman*—the ability of increasing one's body, *prāpti*—the ability of reaching everything like touching the Moon, *prākāmya*—the unlimited will, *vaśitva*—the ability of subduing, *īśitṛtva*—the ability of creating and destroying, *yatrakāmāvasāyitva*—the ability of determining things.

⁴⁰ SātS 16. 29cd–34:

[*saṁ karṣaṇa uvāca:*] *prajñeyo hi kair liṅgaiḥ sādhakānām aghakṣayāt
//29 //
samyag ārādhānān mantraprasādaḥ kamalāpate //30ab//
[śrībhagavān uvāca:] cittaprasādas tv atulas tejoyrdhīr atīva hi //30//
dhairyam utsāhasantoṣas tv akārpaṇyādayo [em. Hikita] guṇāḥ /
yeṣāṁ teṣāṁ hi boddhavyaṁ mantrātmā 'bhimukhaḥ sthītaḥ //31//*

to be connected to burning of sins. In addition, the next verse says that it need not to be the *narasimhamantra* to destroy the sins but any other *vibhavamana* can be selected for this aim (SātS 16. 35): “He should give him the initiation for the sake of removing sins with [the *mantra*] of any *vibhava*-deity which pleases him.”⁴¹ The idea that any other desired *mantra* (*nārasimhena vānyena mantreṇābhimatena ca*) might be chosen for the sake of burning out the sins under the observance of the teacher as well as that only the set of rituals starting with *śāntika* is related to that is continued in the next passage (SātS 16. 36–41): “Having worshipped him for the time which was mentioned before and having asked him in order to check [his] eligibility, up to the calmness of mind (*śānti*) in all matters, [and] having realized that the sin perished with a help of the *narasimhamantra* or any other desired *mantra*, initiation, worship, fire-offering, recitation, vow etc. and exclusively with a powerful rituals like *śāntika* etc., but without *animan* and other *siddhis*, o Lotus-eyed, he should (*bhāvayet*) make [him] stay for a given time. Then, in order to obtain the greatness of six qualities⁴² of perfections of *vibhava* type and for the sake of acquisition of perfections and salvation (*niśśreyasavibhūtyartham*)⁴³ the best threefold initiation should be taken by those who are already cleansed from sins, anxious, seek for refuge with God, consecrated with *samskāras* and engaged in rites removing sins from an approached, gracious teacher who has

*prayuktiḥ śāntikādīnām karmaṇām acirād api /
 prayāti yadi sāphalyam vijñeyam tena hetunā //32//
 sampannaḥ pāpadāhaś ca prasannaś cāpi mantrarāt /
 dadāti dharmakāmārtthān acirād yadi yojitaḥ //33//
 aṇimādyasṭakam cāpi vividhā yogasiddhayaḥ /
 āmasiddhisametāś ca parituṣṭas tadā smṛtaḥ [em. EDB; parituṣṭas tadā
 smṛtāḥ, E. U.] //34//.*

⁴¹ SātS 16. 35:

*yasmin vai vaibhave rūpe yasyābhiramate manaḥ /
 tasya kalmaṣaśāntyartham dīksām kuryāc ca tena vai //35//.*

⁴² The six divine qualities are *jñāna*, *aiśvarya*, *śakti*, *bala*, *vīrya* and *tejas*.

⁴³ The meanings of the term *vibhūti* see Rastelli 2006: 469–470.

been asked for it, or does it on his own, having not been asked, out of his compassion.⁴⁴

Despite calling the purifying initiation after the Narasimha, the sins might be removed due to the worship of any other *vibhava*-deity. Yet, this is again the worship of the *mantra* that brings such perfections as *śāntika* etc., which is presented as a ceremony purifying the sins. In this light, the magic powers related to this procedure are apparently different from the perfections obtainable due to regular initiations. Moreover, the perfections of the latter ones might be granted either in the form of six qualities or yogic powers (*vibhūti*). According to SātS 19. 168cd–169ab, as a result of *vibhavādīkṣā* one may expect the perfections of *vibhava* type (*vaibhavī siddhi*) along with the wealth of liberation (*mokṣalakṣmīsamānvitā*).⁴⁵ These perfections appear in the form of particular virtues (*guṇa*) corresponding to yogic powers such as the ability to minimize oneself etc. (*aṇimādi*) and occur out of the adoration of God (*ārādhana*) as well as the correct yogic practice

⁴⁴ SātS 16. 36–41:

*tam ārādhya hi pūrvoktaṁ kālaṁ tam anuyojya ca /
yogyatāyāḥ parīkṣārtham ā śānteḥ sarvavastuṣu //36//
nārasimhena vānyena mantreṇābhimatena ca /
dīkṣayā 'rādhanaenaiva homajāpavratādinā //37//
karmanā kevalenaiva śāntikādyucchritena [em. EDB; śāntikātyucchrit-
ena U.] ca /
vinā 'ṇimādisiddhibhyo buddhvā pāpaṁ kṣayaṁ gatam //38//
bhāvayet tena kālena tataḥ padmadalekṣaṇa /
siddhīnām vaibhavīyānām śāḍgunyamahimāptaye //39//
niśreyasavibhūtyartham grāhyam dīkṣātrayaṁ varam /
abhyarthitāt suprasannāt pratipannāc ca deśikāt //40//
sānukampena vā tena svayam aprārthitena ca /
kāryam saṁśuddhapāpānām bhītānām śaraṇaiṣiṇām //
saṁskṛtānām hi yuktānām aghakṣālanakarmani //41//.*

⁴⁵ SātS 19. 168cd–169ab:

*tavastu vaibhavī siddhir mokṣalakṣmīsamānvitā //168//
iti vaibhavādīkṣāyā lakṣaṇam samudāhṛtam /*

—May the perfections of *vaibhava* type along with the wealth of liberation be yours. This is the characteristics of *vibhavādīkṣā*.

(*yogābhyāsa*).⁴⁶ The other two initiations, namely *vyūha* and *para*, are eternal (*nitya*) since they guarantee liberation from the circle of life (SātS 19. 178cd–180), however, in the case of *vyūhadīkṣā*, it comes after realizing the mundane aims through acquisition of six divine virtues (*ṣaḍguṇyabhoga*).⁴⁷ Therefore, the adept of a regular initiation of SātS, even if he obtains perfections, seems to be a *yogin* striving primarily for liberation, rather than a tantric *sādhaka* aiming at *bhoga*.⁴⁸

Conclusions

The procedure of the *vaibhavīyanarasimhakalpa*, comprising the *narasimhadīkṣā* together with the worship of the *narasimhamantra*, seems

⁴⁶ SātS 18. 165:

*sāmpratam cānimādīnām guṇānām uttaratra tu /
vibhor ārāadhanāt samyag yogyābhyāsāc ca bhājanam //165//*

—Now, due to the propitiation of God and the correct practice of *yoga*, comes the gradual acquisition of such virtues like *aṇiman* etc.

⁴⁷ SātS 19. 178cd–180:

*nityadīkṣādvayasyāsya nānyan mokṣād rte phalam //178//
tatrāpi cātūrātmīyā dīkṣā prak kamalekṣaṇa /
balād dadāti ṣaḍguṇyabhogāptim bhāvitātmanām //179//
phalam srakcandanādīnām homadravyasya cāpi yat /
prakṛtyā saha cābhyeti vilayaṁ brahmadīkṣayā //180//*

—In the case of these two eternal initiations there is no other fruit than liberation. Thus, *cātūrātmīyadīkṣā*, o Lotus-eyed!, firstly provides the people of concentrated minds with the assuming of six divine virtues. Due to *brahmadīkṣā*, the fruit arising out of [using] garlands, sandal-paste etc. along with the other offering-substances disappears together with *prakṛti*.

⁴⁸ This supposition follows the words of Rastelli formulated in the context of JayS:

In contrast to *sādhaka*, the main aim of *yogin* is emancipation. [...] In the course of his practice the *yogin* achieves various kinds of *siddhis*, but these [...] represent obstacles to the achievement of the main goal since they divert the *yogin* from it and cause him to lose his powers; they are “side-products” that the *yogin* obtains but should not attach importance to. See Rastelli 2000: 359.

to be unique to SātS. Its particularity lies, however, in the fact that the worshipping of the *mantra*, usually associated with the activities of an advanced adept called *sādhaka*, is presented here in the context of a purifying practice preceding the regular initiation.

The recommendation to confer the *narasimhadīkṣā* to everybody, including serious sinners (*kṛtaghna*) and non-Vaiṣṇavas, such as eaters of everything (*sarvāśin*) and non-believers (*nāstika*), makes this purification very specific. As such, it cannot be meant for the customary category of devotees aspiring to the basic level of an initiation which grants the status of *samayins* as Gupta proposed. For, quite contrary, among many features of *samayins*, the SātS 22 enumerates also those defined as: “born in a true Vaiṣṇava family [and] well consecrated by good sacraments” (SātS 22. 3cd: *sadvaiṣṇavakule jātaḥ susaṁskāraiḥ susaṁskṛtaḥ*), “belonging to the class of *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* [and] chaste in regard to wine or meat” (SātS 22. 8.cd: *kṣatraviṣṭśūdra-jātīyo madyamāmseṣvalapaṭaḥ*).

Additionally, nowhere in SātS but in the context of general purification including *narasimhadīkṣā* is the acceptance or grace towards non-believers (*nāstika*) mentioned. For example, according to the SātS 21. 15:⁴⁹ “The entrance [to the house of God] should be allowed neither for those who are not [his] followers, fools, and especially for non-believers (*nāstika*), nor for those attached to fun”, whereas SātS 25. 381–384, within the very last section of the text, customarily prohibits revealing the text to *nāstikas*: “That supreme [knowledge], which removes sins, which is auspicious, pure and brings true perfections should be communicated to those whose minds are fixed (*bhavyāśaya*) and focused upon *ātman* (*bhāvitātman*), to attentive followers who serve to the Lotus-eyed and desire *yajña*, emancipation, good fame and stay in contact with *sādhus*. The one who hides [it] from those who desire worldly pleasures, from non-followers,

⁴⁹ SātS 21. 15:

*nābhaktānām na mūrkhāṇām nāstikānām viśeṣataḥ /
dātavyaḥ saṁpraveśaś ca nopahāsarātātmanām //15//.*

from those who are fond of untruthful talk etc., from those who are approached wrongly, and, especially, from non-believers (*nāstika*), and bestows that upon those who are proper [for it], such a person is worthy of honour to me. May it be well. I am leaving.”⁵⁰

The teaching that even *nāstikas* may remove their sins if they perform the *narasimhadīkṣā*, and, as we can presume, proceed to the regular initiation then, may suggest that in the general context of SātS, and in special circumstances, this particular initiation might have been meant not only as a purification but also as a sort of a converting ceremony. Nevertheless, the relevant verses of SātS 16 present the strangers quite vaguely comparing to the accounts of similar practices known from Śaiva *āgamas*, where their proper sectarian affinity is usually mentioned. For example, in the 27th verse of the *cāryapāda* section of *Mṛgandrāgama*⁵¹ (the 8th century AD), one finds the information regarding the ceremony for those who gave up different religious doctrines in anticipation for being initiated into the Śaiva tradition. These different doctrines according to *vṛtti* of Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇakaṇṭha are Saṁkhya and Buddhism etc. (*kāpilasaugatādi*). The commentator explains that

⁵⁰ SātS 25. 381–384:

*param pāpaharam puṇyam pāvanam sadvibhūtidam /
idam bhavyāśayānām ca vaktavyam bhāvitātmanām //381//
bhaktānām apramattānām puṇḍarīkākāṣasevinām /
yajñāpavargasatkīrtisādhusaṅgābhilāṣinām //382//
bhogeṣūnām abhaktānām vākchalādiratātmanām /
anyāyenopasannānām nāstikānām viśeṣataḥ //383//
yo gopāyatyayogyānām yogyānām samprayacchati /
imam artham sa mānyo me svasti vo 'stu vrajāmy aham //384//.*

⁵¹ MṛgĀ, cp, 27:

*darśanāntarasamsthābhyaś cyutānām anuvartinām /
vidhāyaivaṁ svajātyantam dīkṣām kuryād vilomataḥ //27//*

comm. MṛgĀ, cp, 27:

*[darśanāntarasamsthābhyaḥ] yāḥ kāpilasaugatādiradarśanoditāḥ
samsthā uktayas tābhyaḥ cyutānām bhāvanādivaśād bhraṣṭānām [anu-
vartinām] kālāntarataḥ śaktipātāmāhātmyād andhatvanivṛttyā śaiva-
mārgānuvartinām satām prāyaścittārtham evam iti prāgvatsṛṣṭikramāt
sāmānyamantrasamhitāhomam svajātyantam kuryāt /*

their followers decided to become worshippers of Śiva, having been struck by the *śaktipāta* and, in consequence, ridding themselves of blindness. Before newcomers are accepted onto the path of Śiva, they have to be cleansed by the *prāyaścitta* ceremony aiming at cutting of the bondages of former social status and religious affiliations. Another Śaiva text containing a similar practice is *Somaśambhupaddhati* (the 11th century AD). The ceremony is called *vratoddhāra*—”the rule of removing of [religious] vows”. In that case, the outsiders are those who follow the religious vows [of another doctrines] (*vrata-yukta*) or bear the marks [of another doctrines] (*liṅgin*). They are Buddhists, Jainas, Vedāntins, Vaiṣṇavas and Śaivas belonging to heretical, from Somaśambhu’s point of view, sects: Pāśupatas and Mahāvratas. Only after the converting rite comprising purifying ceremonies is accomplished, can one undertake the proper initiation. This is how, as a result of three elements: *prāyaścitta*, removing of the previous affiliations and regular *dīkṣā*, a new adept is created.⁵²

The purifying function of both the *narasimhadīkṣā* and the following practice of mastering the *mantra* is quite reasonable in the general context of SātS, nevertheless, its detailed description becomes slightly ambiguous when analyzed beyond this context. The account found in SātS 17 seems to deal with a complex and fully fledged ceremony comprising an initiation granting the *sādhaka* with a right to worship the *narasimhamantra* for the sake of realization his worldly aims. In the terms of the procedure granting magical powers it has been preserved in other sources. It is referred to in one of the later Pāñcarātra text, namely in the *Ahīrabudhnyasamhitā* (AhS).⁵³ While speaking about various powers (*siddhi*) obtainable by the king due to the worship of

⁵² On the schema of Hindu conversion see Gengnagel 2010: 294.

⁵³ The AhS is quoted in *Prapannapārijāta* of Varadaguru, who was born between 1190 and 1200 A.D. (Rastelli 2006: 50–51). On the other hand, it must have been composed after Kṣemarāja’s *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* (1000–1050 A.D.) (Sanderson 2001: 35–38).

sudarśanayantra,⁵⁴ AhS refers directly to the *narasimhakalpa* of SātS and other sources: “O sage!, in *Sātvata* and other *tantras* all the prescriptions applied for the sake of the worship (*kalpa*) of the *mantra* of Sudarśana or Narasimha together with the prescribed method are given. In its [*yantra*’s?] presence they become complete [if] performed with its power. Therefore, he should worship it having placed it according to the aforesaid way.”⁵⁵ Further, the teaching on the particular procedure of *narasimhamantra* leading to the acquisition of magical powers, is shared with a hardly known text preserved in a manuscript bearing the title *Narasimhakalpa [which belongs to] Īśvarasamhitā of Pāñcarātra*. It focuses mostly on the ways of acquiring magical powers arising out of the repetition of the *anuṣṭubhmantra* of Narasimha.⁵⁶ Two other texts teaching on the *mantra* of Narasimha in the similar manner are the *Jayākhyasamhitā* and *Paramasamhitā*. The JayS 29 contains the description of powers acquired by a *sādhaka* due to worshipping the *narasimhamantra* (JayS 29. 27–58). It appears within a *kalpa*-procedure concerning the three *mantras* of the face (*vaktra-mantrakalpa*).⁵⁷ Besides the worship of the *mantra* of Narasimha’s face (JayS 29. 2–58), the procedures regarding Kapila (JayS 29. 59–110abc) and Varāha (JayS 29. 110d–183ab) are described. In turn, the ParS presents the ways of accomplishing supernatural powers both due to the worship of the *mantra* of Narasimha (ParS 16. 8cd–18ab) and

⁵⁴ On *sudarśanayantra* see Rastelli 2007: 144–151.

⁵⁵ AhS 27. 31–33ab:

*sāttvatādiṣu tanreṣu vihitenaiṣa cādhanā /
sudarśanasya mantrasya nārasimhasya vā mune //31//
kalpaprayuktā vidhayaḥ sarve caitasya saṁnidhau /
bhavanti sakalāś caitat prabhāveṇa prayojitāḥ //32//
tasmād yathoktamārgena pratiṣṭhāpyaitad arcayet//*

⁵⁶ According to Sadhu Parampurushdas and Sadhu Shrutiprakashdas the unpublished *Narasimhakalpa* was composed around the 15th century AD (Parampurushdas, Shrutiprakashdas 2002: 81, 172–174. The text shares some features with AhS, see Deḥicka-Borek 2011.

⁵⁷ JayS 29. 1cd:

śṛṇu vaktratrayasyātha kalpaṁ vakṣyāmi yādṛśam //1cd//.

Sudarśana (ParS 16. 37–58). According to the text, these *mantras*, together with the *mantras* of Śrīkara and Varāha, are the best *mantras* to realize worldly aims quickly (ParS 16. 1–3).⁵⁸

The traces of reworking found in SātS 17 may suggest that some portions of the *vaibhavīyanarasimhakaḷpa* come from another context/source, where, most probably, its original function was in agreement with the requirements of a *kaḷpa* procedure meant for a *sādhaka*. Yet, the number of textual discrepancies is significantly small. If some portions of the text were reworked, it must have happened during the phase of the SātS's composition. Besides, the concept of the *narasimhadīkṣā* as a purifying ceremony was introduced into the SātS very skillfully. As we could see it fits well its general context. Most of all, the logical sequence is kept: the *narasimhadīkṣā* is mentioned in SātS 16 and then more details of this practice are given in SātS 17. Moreover, the exposition of SātS 16 agrees in many points with that of SātS 17, such as in the case when SātS 16 speaks of the signs of *siddhis* arising out of the mastering of the *mantra*, and of *śāntika*-rites described in SātS 17.

Still, the issue of *vaibhavīyanarasimhakaḷpa* might be even more complex. As was already mentioned, within the initial portion of SātS which deals with a preliminary practice (SātS 17. 3–115ab), the grammatical subject is not explicitly designated and even though

⁵⁸ ParS 16. 1–3:

*kāmasiddhikarān mantrān kāmścid vakṣyāmi padmaja /
 śruṇu tān prañidhānena mahāvīryān mahābalān //1//
 vārāhaṁ nārasimhaṁ śrīkaraṁ ca sudarśanam /
 etac catuṣṭayam prāhuḥ śreṣṭham mantreṣu vaiṣṇavāḥ //2//
 acirād eva sidhyanti mantrā hy ete mahodayāḥ /
 anyeṣu cirakālena tasmāt teṣāṁ pradhānatā //3//*

—O, Lotus-born one! I will explain some mantras that bring the realization of enjoyment. Listen about these very efficient and powerful [*mantras*] with attention. The Vaiṣṇavas announced these four [*mantras* of] Varāha, Narasimha, Śrīkara and Sudarśana as the best among *mantras*. These very fortunate *mantras* bring accomplishment quickly, [whereas] others [do it] slowly. That is why they are excellent.

in the context of the SātS 17, it seems to describe the practice of an *ācārya*, it may be interpreted as regarding the practice of an initiated *sādhaka*, too.

Nevertheless, if we accept the possibility of reformulating the original function of the *vaibhavīyanarasimhakaḷpa* within the context of SātS, then the protective features of half a Man and half a Lion might explain to some extent why despite a relatively frequent association of the *narasimhamantra* with acquisition of *siddhis*, the redactor of SātS has chosen this specific deity for a patron of the purifying ceremony introducing even strangers into the Pāñcarātra tradition.⁵⁹ It might be also important that being a terrible and liminal figure, the one who goes in-between, Narasimha was well known to and respected not only by Vaiṣṇavas but also by adherents of other traditions.⁶⁰ In addition, it is convincing that only such a ferocious form of Viṣṇu is able to burn out the sins of strangers and serious offenders of tradition as is shown in the context of SātS 16. As for the historical backgrounds of establishing a purifying rite within SātS, it is interesting to notice that, quite exceptionally, after the 7th century in Kashmir, the royal dynasty of Kārkoṭas (625–855/6) was Vaiṣṇava (Sanderson 2009: 60–61). Their openness towards other traditions present in Kashmir at that time is proved by the fact that despite their devotion to Viṣṇu, the Kārkoṭas established in the 8th century AD several Buddhist foundations and patronized them (Sanderson 2009: 73). Apart from Viṣṇu, sometimes the Kārkoṭa king enshrined also the Sun-God or Buddha (Sanderson 2009: 60). The social-religious situation of this period might be helpful in explaining the need to establish the practice of this kind.

⁵⁹ A protective aspect of Narasimha is emphasized already at the beginning of SātS 17, where Samkarṣaṇa asks: SātS 2:

*bhagavan vidhinā kena prasādam adhigacchati /
nṛṇām ārādhakānām tu viśvatrātā nṛkesarī //2//*

—Bhagavan, but by what means Narasimha, the protector of the world, becomes favourable towards the people [who are his] worshippers?

⁶⁰ For the identification of Narasimha with Śiva and his meaning in the process of hinduization of tribals see Eschmann 2005: 104–105.

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