

The Ekāyanaveda in the Pāñcarātra Tradition*

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According to the tradition of Pāñcarātra, its texts (*saṃhitās*) were revealed by Viṣṇu Himself. In their introductory sections, the Saṃhitās often describe the incident of this revelation and the ensuing tradition. Generally, these sections relate a story about one or several sages who have been tormented by the calamities of transmigration and therefore request still another sage to give them a means to overcome transmigration. This sage is willing to teach them a doctrine by which both freedom from transmigration as well as worldly pleasures can be attained. According to his story, in ages past this doctrine had been revealed to a sage or a deity by God Himself. This revelation of God, presented in the form of a dialogue between God and his interlocutor, is the actual content of a Saṃhitā.¹

The frame story of the PārS, a Pāñcarātra text that was probably written in South India between A.D. 1100 and 1300,² keeps to the pattern just described. However, there is one difference: Viṣṇu's revelation takes place in several stages.

It is recounted that in the *kṛtayuga*, the Golden Age of the Indian mythological chronology, Viṣṇu revealed a teaching that leads to emancipation from transmigration exclusively. This teaching is variously called the “first teaching” (*prathama śāstra*), the “secret tradition” (*rahasyāmnāya*), the original Veda (*mūlaveda*), and the Ekāyanaveda, the

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¹ PārS 1 und JS 1 are examples of such stories about the “descent of the doctrine” (*śāstrāvatāra*). For translations of these chapters and “stories of revelation” in general see Oberhammer 1994 and Grünendahl in Schreiner 1997: 362-370. Not every Saṃhitā contains stories of this kind; the first chapters of the Pauṣkarasaṃhitā and the Sanatkumārasaṃhitās, which probably included revelation stories, have been lost.

² The first author to quote the PārS is Veñkaṭanātha (e.g. PārS 19.540-543 in PRR 12,10-17), who is traditionally dated to 1270-1369. The PārS adopts many passages from other Saṃhitās, namely, the JS (e.g. JS 12.108-125 ≈ PārS 5.143-160), the SS (e.g. SS 6.2-4 ≈ PārS 6.21c-24b), the PauṣS (e.g. PauṣS 27.109c-116b ≈ PārS 7.315c-322b), the NārS (e.g. NārS 20.46-49b ≈ PārS 14.148c-152), the ParS (e.g. ParS 3.91-93b ≈ PārS 2.103c-105), the SanS (SanS *ṛṣirātra* 1.22-23b ≈ PārS 15.490c-491), the PādS (PādS *cp* 8.119-127b ≈ PārS 22.54c-62) and the AS (AS 25.14c-15b ≈ PārS 23.2c-3b). Thus, the PārS must have been compiled at a later date than these parts of other Saṃhitās (this list is not exhaustive; to date, more than a quarter of the PārS text has been identified as stemming from passages of these listed Saṃhitās).

Veda that is the only path or that is the path to the Only One.³ In the ideal age of the *kṛtayuga*, human beings were able to follow this teaching, but already in the next era, the *tretāyuga*, they began to have worldly wishes, and therefore abandoned this teaching and followed the Veda, which promises the fulfilment of such wishes. As a consequence the Ekāyanaveda vanished and, it is said, would once again be revealed by Viṣṇu only to a suitable being. According to the PārS, the Veda arose from the Ekāyanaveda, but, according to the PārS, the Veda refers, however, not only to Viṣṇu but also to many other deities and hence cannot bestow emancipation. Viṣṇu is merciful to those human beings who are not able to strive exclusively for emancipation, but who also want to attain worldly pleasures, and thus He revealed the Saṃhitās such as the SS, JS and PauṣS, which lead to both goals.⁴

This is the PārS's story about Viṣṇu's revelation. Initially, a first teaching was revealed, the Ekāyanaveda, which lead exclusively to emancipation. When human beings were not able to follow this teaching and instead devoted themselves to the Veda, which promises the fulfilment of worldly wishes, the first teaching vanished and subsequently Viṣṇu revealed other texts that bestow both emancipation and pleasure, namely, the Saṃhitās.⁵

To the followers of Pāñcarātra this conception conveys firstly, that the origin of the Saṃhitās is God; secondly, that the Saṃhitās are superior to the Veda; and thirdly, that the Veda is inferior to the original first teaching, which was the Veda's source. Simultaneously, this conception shows us a tradition that must stand up against the Vedic orthodoxy and prove its own authority (*prāmāṇya*). The emergence of the conception of the Ekāyanaveda is thinkable only in a Vedic-orthodoxy dominated environment that is reproaching the Pāñcarātra for being outside the Veda (*vedabāhya*).⁶ By means of the Ekāyanaveda, the Pāñcarātra tradition not only has Vedic foundations, but moreover claims to be the actual foundation of the Vedic orthodoxy itself.

³ PārS 1.16cd, 74ab, 32d, 56c. The PārS's explanation of the term is: "No other way than this one is indeed known for going (*ayana*) to emancipation. Therefore the sages call [it] 'the only path (*ekāyana*)'." (1.57c-58b: *mokṣāyanāya vai panthā etadanyo na vidyate || tasmād ekāyanam nāma pravadanti manīṣiṇaḥ* |).

⁴ PārS 1.74c-93.

⁵ A similar story of revelation can be found in ĪS 1, which was written in imitation of PārS 1 and even adopted some verses verbatim from it; cf. Rastelli 1999: 80-84. See also the story in PārS 10.108c-224 according to which Viṣṇu first revealed a Veda called "Sātvata" to Brahmā and then the Pauṣkarasaṃhitā, which prescribes the ritual of the Raṅganāthasvāmī temple in Śrīraṅgam.

⁶ For reproaches of this kind see e.g. ĀP 17,7-19,13.

At the same time, the PārS's story of revelation conveys that the authoritative texts of the current time, the *kaliyuga*, are the Saṃhitās. On account of this story neither Pāñcarātra followers nor modern indologists would expect the actual existence of the Ekāyanaveda or adherents thereof.

There is evidence, however, that among the Pāñcarātrins certain groups that referred to the Ekāyanaveda as their authority actually did exist. I don't mean by this that the PārS's story of revelation delivers historical facts, but I mean that in the course of the emergence of the conception of the Ekāyanaveda, groups of persons also arose who referred to it and were acknowledged as its adherents by other Pāñcarātrins. It may be presumed that these Ekāyanas, as they are called,⁷ used certain texts for their religious practice that they may have considered as Ekāyanaveda. We do not know which texts these might have been. However, it may be deemed certain that these did not belong to the Vedic texts in the orthodox sense.

What do we know about these so-called Ekāyanas? A passage of the PauṣS, one of the oldest extant Saṃhitās, aspires to convey the impression that only the Ekāyanas were true Pāñcarātrins: "These Brahmins who are called Ekāyanas are truly worshippers of Acyuta. (260) [These], who are devoted to a single object, who abide in [their] true nature after death, who worship nobody else, [and] who worship Viṣṇu without a result because it must be done, (261) become Vāsudeva at the point of death, O Lotus-Born One. The others, however, who worship in a mixed way are taught as [being people] who have the mere appearance of worshippers. These Brahmins are to be recognized on the basis of [their] worship of various troops [of deities] in [various] ways."⁸ As in the PārS's *śāstrāvātāra* story, the Ekāyanas

⁷ Matsubara seems to understand the term *ekāyana* as a synonym of *ekāntin* (1994: 54 and 56). This is certainly not generally true. Although both terms express the concept of exclusivism (having only one path/one goal), they are usually not used synonymously. As Matsubara himself writes, *ekāntin* was "an old sectarian name given to the devotees of *pañcarātra*", frequently used in the Nārāyaṇīya and in the Saṃhitās (1994: 52). *ekāyanas*, in contrast, are a particular group among the Pāñcarātrins, as it is shown below. (According to JS 22.11-13b, there was also a particular group among the Pāñcarātrins called *ekāntins*. Their description, however, does not indicate that they were identical with the *ekāyanas* as described below.) *ekāyanas* are, of course, also *ekāntins* (see PauṣS 36.261a, quoted in n. 8), but not every *ekāntin* is an *ekāyana*. There are two passages (PauṣS 32.72d, PārS 20.83ab) that possibly use *ekāntin* in the sense of *ekāyana* as they contrast *ekāntins* to followers of the Vedas, but I think that here rather Pāñcarātrins in general are meant.

⁸ PauṣS 36.260c-263b: *viprā ekāyanākhyā ye te bhaktās tattvato 'cyute* || 260 *ekāntinas sutattvasthā dehāntān nānyayājinaḥ | kartavyatvena ye viṣṇuṃ samyajanti phalaṃ vinā* || 261 *prāpnuvanti ca dehānte vāsudevatvam abjaja | vyāmiśrayājinaś cānye bhaktābhāsās tu te smrtāḥ* || 262 *parijñeyās tu te viprā nānāmārgagaṇārcanāt* |.

worship Viṣṇu exclusively here, and have no desire for attaining a particular result through their worship. The other people worship not only Viṣṇu but other deities as well, and so doing wish to attain wordly fruits. Thus, they are merely feigned worshippers of Viṣṇu. Hence, according to this passage of the PauṣS, only Ekāyanas are true Pāñcarātrins.

However, if we look at the ritual prescriptions of the Saṃhitās, especially at those for major rituals that require several acting persons, the agents are not only Ekāyanas, but also adherents of one of the four Vedas.⁹ The description of these Veda followers shows that they are not called in from the outside, but that they are also followers of Pāñcarātra. Thus we have two principal groups among the Pāñcarātrins, the Ekāyanas on one hand and the followers of the Veda on the other. As we are going to see, these two groups competed with each other, and consequently in the texts that each group composed their description, esteem and function in rituals differ accordingly.

I have been able to assign particular texts to one or the other of the two groups. The PārS and at least the first chapter of the *cāryapāda* of the PādS were written by Ekāyanas. The greater part of the PādS was composed by *vaidikas*. My following statements refer to these two texts to exemplify works by each group.¹⁰

The perhaps most important difference between the Ekāyanas and the followers of the Veda is that the former do not undergo an initiation (*dīkṣā*) according to the texts of both groups.¹¹ An Ekāyana is born as such. He has the authority (*adhikāra*) to perform the ritual from childhood. He does not have to acquire this authority through an initiation.¹² The

⁹ For an example see below, p. 8.

¹⁰ Other texts that were probably composed by one or the other of the two groups will be dealt with in a forthcoming study. This study will also include a more detailed description of the characteristics of each group. Here only the main features are presented.

¹¹ PādS *cp* 1.4, 21.53. The PārS often contrasts Ekāyanas to initiated persons (*dīkṣita*). This is also an indication that the Ekāyanas are not initiated; cf. PārS 9.187-190, 15.14c-20, 18.116-117.

¹² Cf. the following two passages: “And at the end of his [life] he is born in a house of pure, illustrious [people], gets acquainted with the Ekāyana teaching, properly performs the thirteenfold ritual that springs from it, and attains the Venerable One.” (PārS 13.114c-115: *tadante janma cāsādyā śucināṃ śrīmatām grhe* || 114 *śāstram ekāyanaṃ jñātvā samyak kṛtvā tadudbhavam | trayodaśavidhaṃ karma bhagavantam samāpnuyāt* || 115; for the thirteenfold ritual cf. Rastelli 2000: 119f.); “Having obtained again an excellent birth, O First among the Twice-Borns, he is deeply versed in the ritual for the Venerable One, has Him as his highest object, [and] is absorbed in Him from childhood. Without aiming at a result even in time of distress, he does not attain re-birth here [in this world] after having left [his] body, O Pauṣkara.” (PauṣS 36.265b-267b: (...) *punar eva hi | janma cāsādyā cotkṛṣṭam ābālyād dvijottama* || 265 *bhagavatkarmaniṣṇātata tatparas tanmayo bhavet | nābhisandhāya ca*

followers of the Veda must undergo an initiation,¹³ and the PārS often emphasizes that they must be versed in the teachings and the rituals of Pāñcarātra,¹⁴ whereas this skill is apparently a matter of course in the case of Ekāyanas.

The texts often emphasize that the Ekāyanavedins practise *karmasaṃnyāsa*, that is, they renounce (ritual) actions.¹⁵ This does not mean that they do not perform rituals. In this context, *karmasaṃnyāsa* means, as already hinted at in the passage quoted from the PauṣS, the renunciation of results from a ritual, that is, the performance of a ritual without desiring a result.¹⁶ This is the precondition to attain the Ekāyanas' only goal, the emancipation from transmigration.¹⁷

The Ekāyanas are identified with the followers of the Āgamasiddhānta.¹⁸ The Āgamasiddhānta is one of four Siddhāntas into which the Pāñcarātra is subdivided. The other three Siddhāntas are Mantrasiddhānta, Tantrasiddhānta, and Tantrāntarasiddhānta.¹⁹ Generally, *siddhānta* means a settled doctrine. In our context, I understand the Siddhāntas to be certain doctrines and the traditions connected to them, also including religious practices, within the tradition of Pāñcarātra. The PārS describes the Āgamasiddhānta as being the *dharma* of the *kr̥tayuga*, just as we have heard the Ekāyanaveda to be. Further, it is described

phalam āpatkālagato 'pi vai || 266 tyaktvā dehaṃ punarjanma nāpnuyād iha pauṣkara |). Also in AS 15.11b a group that is presumably identical with the Ekāyanas is described as “possessing authority from [the beginning of] creation” (*āsṣṭer adhikāriṇaḥ*).

¹³ Cf. PārS 15.19cd (*trayīdharmaniṣṭho yaḥ prāptadīkṣaḥ*), 19.315ab (*prāptadīkṣitaiḥ ... trayīdharmasthitaiḥ*), and 551ab (*trayīdharmaratair vipraiḥ siddhānteṣv api dīkṣitaiḥ |*).

¹⁴ Cf. PārS 15.20b: “knowing the true meaning of Pāñcarātra” (*pañcarātrārthatattvavid*), 19.556b: “versed in the meaning of the Siddhāntas” (*siddhāntārthaviśārada*), 19.316: “proved in rituals such as fixation, visualisation, etc., having laboriously studied *mantras*, *maṇḍalas*, *mudrās*, weapon [*mantras*], fire-pits, etc.” (*dhāraṇādhyānapūrvāṇāṃ labdhalakṣais tu karmaṇāṃ | mantramaṇḍalamudrāstrakuṇḍādīnāṃ kṛtaśramaiḥ ||*).

¹⁵ PārS 15.16cd ≈ 19.305cd (= PauṣS 38.32cd), 19.555c, PādS *cp* 19.117ab, 21.35cd.

¹⁶ Cf. also PauṣS 38.293c-294 and PādS *cp* 21.32d-35b, in which the Āgamasiddhāntins' motive for the performance of the ritual is described as *kartavyatvena*. For the Āgamasiddhāntins, see below.

¹⁷ Cf. PārS 10.145cd: *anicchāto 'dhikāriṇāṃ tatprāptyekaphalapradam ||*, PārS 19.526ab: (...) *param śāstram anicchāto 'pavargadam |*, and PRR 9,13-10,2.

¹⁸ Cf. PādS *cp* 21.36c, 47a, 51b, 53d and the PārS's depiction of the Āgamasiddhānta described below, which corresponds to that of the Ekāyanaveda.

¹⁹ For descriptions of the four Siddhāntas in the Saṃhitās see PauṣS 38.293c-302, PādS *jp* 1.76c-83, *cp* 19.110-122, PārS 19.522-543, ĪS 21.560-586, BhT 22.87-94b.

as having the form of the *śruti*, that is, of the Veda; it is the teaching of those who worship Vāsudeva exclusively and it leads solely to emancipation.²⁰ In the *tretāyuga*, the Mantrasiddhānta arose from the Āgamasiddhānta. The Mantrasiddhānta leads to both emancipation and worldly pleasures.²¹

The PādS assigns itself to the Mantrasiddhānta.²² Thus, in most cases, the PādS ascribes to it the first rank among the Siddhāntas. According to the PādS, the Mantrasiddhānta traces back to 8,000 Brahmins who belonged to the Vedic schools (*śākhā*) of the Kāṇvas and Mādhyandinas of the White Yajurveda. These Brahmins longed for emancipation and asked Brahmā for a means to achieve it (*mokṣopāya*). Thereupon Brahmā initiated them in the manner of the Mantrasiddhānta. Then he instructed them to study the *kāṇvi* and *mādhyandini śākhā* and to perform the ritual that is “connected with the visualisation (*dhyāna*) of Viṣṇu and is characterised by His worship”, this meaning a ritual that is modified in comparison to the original Vedic orthodox ritual and that is devoted exclusively to Viṣṇu.²³

The followers of the Mantrasiddhānta, who are the descendants of the 8,000 Brahmins, are called “Bhāgavatas”. They undergo an initiation (*dīkṣā*) and subsequently possess the authority to perform the ritual that leads to emancipation.²⁴ Furthermore, they possess – and this is very important – the exclusive authority to perform the ritual for the sake of other (*parārtha*) persons by their order, meaning, in practise, the right to perform public temple worship.²⁵

²⁰ PārS 19.524-528.

²¹ PārS 19.529-539.

²² PādS *jp* 1.86cd.

²³ PādS *cp* 21.2-13.

²⁴ PādS *cp* 21.14c-15: “Those who are born in [one of] the lineages [mentioned] as a consequence of [their] devotion to the Venerable One are called ‘Bhāgavatas’, O Four-Faced One. If they perform the ritual as prescribed after having been initiated according to prescription, they attain the Highest Place.” (*bhagavadbhaktikaraṇād vaṁśajātās caturmukha* || 14 *nāmnā bhāgavatāḥ santo dīkṣayitvā yathāvidhi | yathoktaṁ karma kurvāṇāḥ prāpnuvanti param padam* || 15).

²⁵ PādS *cp* 21.17c-21b: “Worship for others is to be performed by men who are Bhāgavatas in a village, a town, a fortress, in their own house or in an independent [temple]. It confers final beatitude on oneself and on others. (17c-18) However, men who do not belong to the lineage of the Bhāgavatas [are allowed to perform] only worship for themselves, never at any time for others, even if they are initiated. (19) Worship for others is forbidden for them, O Best Ones among the Brahmins. By order of a Bhāgavata, [however,] an initiated [man] may also perform worship for others along the lines of the teaching, even if he does not belong to the lineage of the Bhāgavatas.” (*tathā parārthayajanaṁ grāme vā pattane pure* || 17 *svagrhe vā svatanre vā kāryaṁ*

It is interesting to note that, according to the PādS, the Mantrasiddhānta, just as the Āgamasiddhānta, leads exclusively to emancipation and not to the fulfilment of wishes.²⁶ This is remarkable, for according to the PārS and also according to other passages of the PādS, emancipation as the exclusive goal, and thus the ensuing freedom from desire in the performance of rituals, is a characteristic of the Āgamasiddhāntins.²⁷ This feature is, however, obviously decisive for higher esteem and thus in the PādS it must also be ascribed to the Mantrasiddhānta.²⁸

According to the passages of the PādS that were composed by Mantrasiddhāntins, Ekāyanas are not authorized to perform rituals for others. They are also not allowed to consecrate an idol or to build a temple, but they must ask a Mantrasiddhāntin to do it for them. The Mantrasiddhāntin then performs these rituals, but uses only a particular *mantra*, the so-called twelve-syllable *mantra*. Ekāyanas are not allowed to use a *mantra* other than this one, at least when reciting. They are also not allowed to use idols other than those that have been consecrated with this *mantra* for them. And finally, they are not allowed to study the Veda nor to use Vedic *mantras*.²⁹

In contrast to this, according to the PārS and the first chapter of the PādS's *caryāpāda*, the Ekāyanas possess the authority for the so-called "principal rule" (*mukhyakalpa*), whereas the *vaidikas* have only the authority for the "secondary rule" (*anukalpa*).³⁰ The *anukalpa* is a reduced variant of the *mukhyakalpa*. In most cases, it is less extensive and certain ritual

bhāgavatāir naraiḥ | ātmanāś ca pareṣāṃ ca tan niśśreyasakṛd bhavet || 18 abhāgavatavaṃśais tu dikṣitair api mānavaiḥ | ātmārtham eva yajanaṃ na parārthaṃ kadācana || 19 parārthayajanaṃ teṣāṃ garhitaṃ viprasattamāḥ | abhāgavatavaṃśyo 'pi dikṣitāś śāstravartmanā || 20 parārthayajanaṃ kuryād api bhāgavatājñayā | Cf., however, also PādS cp 1 where another opinion is expressed.

²⁶ PādS cp 21.11c-12: "[What] is taught in the Veda as to be done is without a result. If you perform the ritual [thinking]: '[it] is to be done', you will attain highest beatitude through the Mantrasiddhānta." (*kartavyatvena vedoktaṃ ity evaṃ phalavarjitaṃ || 11 kartavyam iti kurvāṇaiḥ karma niśśreyasaṃ param | prāpyate 'nena yuṣmābhir mantrasiddhāntavartmanā || 12*).

²⁷ See n. 17 as well as PādS cp 19.117ab, 21.34c-35, and 42.

²⁸ Cf. also PRR 9,13-14 in which the superiority of Āgamasiddhānta is explained to be exactly due to the fact that it leads exclusively to emancipation.

²⁹ PādS cp 21.43-48 and 37c-39b.

³⁰ See PārS 15.14c-20, 19.301c-318 (≈ PauṣS 38.28c-45), 550-556b.

elements such as the fire-ritual are not contained in it at all.³¹ This means that according to these texts the Ekāyanas have a greater authority in ritual than the *vaidikas*.

These are the most important characteristics of the two groups from opposite points of view: the Ekāyanas who, from the viewpoint to the PārS, are the principal agents in temple ritual performed for the sake of others but who, according to the PādS, are not allowed to perform these rituals at all; and the *vaidikas* who, according to the PārS, are subordinate to the Ekāyanas but who, in contrast, possess the exclusive authority for the performance of the ritual for others according to the PādS. However, the PādS limits these rights to followers of the White Yajurveda and does not grant them to all *vaidikas*.

The different esteem of the two groups can also be observed in certain rituals. In some rituals, texts from the Ekāyanaveda and the “other” four Vedas are recited by the respective followers of each Veda. While reciting at the consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*) of a temple, according to the PārS four Ekāyanas sit on the four cardinal points and followers of each of the four Vedas sit in the intermediate quarters.³² According to the PādS, on the contrary, the followers of the four Vedas sit on the four cardinal points and the Ekāyanas in the intermediate quarters.³³ The persons sitting on the cardinal points recite before those sitting in the intermediate quarters. This difference in the ritual prescription of the PārS and the PādS clearly shows the different hierarchy of the two groups in the two Saṃhitās.

The reason for the rivalry, which is, by the way, more prominent in the PādS than in the PārS,³⁴ is obvious. It is a question of who is allowed to perform worship for others (*parārtha*), this being a substantial source of income for temple priests. Each group tries to reserve this privilege for itself. The strategy of the Ekāyanas is to represent themselves as the only true Pāñcarātrins by referring to the Ekāyanaveda that was revealed by God Himself, whereas the Mantrasiddhāntins teach that their *gotras* have been chosen for this right by Brahmā – and, interestingly, not by Viṣṇu.

We have yet more evidence of the different groups among the Pāñcarātrins. Yāmuna, who wrote a treatise entitled *Āgamaprāmāṇya* in defence of the Pāñcarātra in the 10th century, describes various groups of Bhāgavatas. The first group are certain temple servants who clean

³¹ See PārS 3.222-230, 6.110ab, 7.10, 8.101cd, 9.9-13, 98-99b, 104cd, 111-113, 11.302.

³² PārS 15.362c-365b ≈ SS 24.301c-304b.

³³ PādS *cp* 11.242c-243b, 14.104c-105b, 15.34c-35.

³⁴ According to PārS 9.152-153b, initiated non-Ekāyanas are also allowed to perform the ritual for the sake of others.

the temple and undertake other similar tasks. According to Yāmuna, these people aren't true Bhāgavatas and are called by this name only because they work in the temple of the *bhagavat*. They do not receive a *dīkṣā*.³⁵ The second group are adherents of Viṣṇu who earn their living by temple service. They undergo a *dīkṣā*. Traditionally, professional temple priests are not highly esteemed. Yāmuna also has a low opinion of them, but he defends them as true Bhāgavatas and tries to show differences between them and the temple servants of the first group.³⁶ The third group are the followers of the Ekāyanaveda. They have abandoned the Vedic Dharma (*trayīdharma*), follow the prescriptions of their own *śākhā*, and desire only emancipation from transmigration.³⁷ Finally, the fourth group follows the prescriptions of the Veda and the Pāñcarātra. They belong to the Vājasaneyasākhā, that is, the White Yajurveda, and follow the prescriptions of Kātyāyana³⁸ and others, which also lead to worldly pleasures.³⁹ Yāmuna himself was probably a member of this group.⁴⁰

In addition, we also know of a historical personage who belonged to the Ekāyanas. Vāmanadatta, who lived in Kashmir in the 10th century,⁴¹ states in his *Samvitprakāśa* that he was born among the Ekāyanas in Kashmir.⁴²

In conclusion, I would like to take a brief look at a more contemporary description of Śrīvaiṣṇava temple priests. In his book on the religious practice of the Śrīvaiṣṇava Brahmins researched during the twenties of the last century, Rangachari (1930: 100) writes that the temple priests believe their tradition to trace back to the Ekāyanaveda and that they also

³⁵ ĀP 12,1-17,5; 149,8-151,7; 156,7-158,3.

³⁶ ĀP 150,13-151,7 and 154,13-156,5.

³⁷ ĀP 169,9-170,9.

³⁸ Cf. Gonda 1975: 331: “Kātyāyana (...) was not only the founder of a ritual school of the White Yajurveda, but also the main organizer of the learning of the Vājasaneyin.”

³⁹ ĀP 139,6-140,4; 169,4-7 and 170,3f. In Vaikhānasa texts, there is also evidence for the last two groups; cf. Colas 1990: 25: “The *Khilādhikāra* (41, 9a) adds that the Pāñcarātra followers must be twice-born and that there is no condition relating to the *śākhā* or the *sūtra* which is followed. But *Ānandasamhitā* (14, 31-33a) stipulates that the condition to belong to the *tāntrika* Pāñcarātra tradition is not only the undergoing of a *dīkṣā*, but also the adherence to the Kātyāyanasūtra.”

⁴⁰ See also Neevel 1977: 35f. Neevel, however, interpreted the four groups of Bhāgavatas differently (ibid. 30-37).

⁴¹ For Vāmanadatta see Torella 1994.

⁴² Cf. *SamP* 1.137c-138a [= 2.61abc, 4.98abc, 5.52abc]: “This is the work of Vāmanadatta, the twice-born, who was born in the Ekāyana [clan] in Kashmir.” (*ekāyane prasūtasya kaśmīreṣu dvijātmanah | kṛtir vāmanadattasya seyam*).

classify their tradition into the four Siddhāntas. However, no priest is able to identify to which Siddhānta he actually belongs. Rangachari also reports that only temple priests who follow the Baudhāyana, Vaikhānasa or the so-called Śaunaka or Śaunakādi Sūtras are entitled to perform the ritual for others.⁴³ Thus we see that the *vaidikas* have finally met with success, however not the White Yajurveda followers who dominated in the PādS. The Baudhāyana and the Vaikhānasa Sūtras belong to the Black Yajurveda, and the Śaunaka Sūtras are probably identical with the Śaunakīya, which is ascribed to the teacher of Āśvalāyana who authored the Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtras of the Ṛgveda's Śākalaśākhā.⁴⁴

On the other hand, there are other groups of temple priests of whom it is said that they have abandoned the Vedic ritual in order to devote themselves exclusively to temple service such as the Sāttāda Śrīvaiṣṇavas. At their *pūjās* they recite *mantras* from the so-called Tamil Veda instead of Vedic *mantras*. Instead of the Vedic initiation (*upanayana*), they undergo the *pañcasamśkārādīkṣā* (*tāpa, puṇḍra, nāma, mantra, ijjā*) that is described in the later Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās.⁴⁵ Hierarchically, they are lower than the Śrīvaiṣṇava Brahmins.⁴⁶ However, with the present state of knowledge, it cannot be conclusively determined whether they are related historically to the Ekāyanas.

⁴³ Rangachari (1930: 100) substantiates this as follows: “This is so as rules pertaining to worship are given only in the Grihya sūtras of these three sūtras.” Also Veṅkaṭanātha says that these *sūtras* prescribe the consecration and worship of Viṣṇu (PRR 21,7f.). The references for these prescriptions are Bodhāyanagrhyasūtra 2.13-15 (which belongs to the Bodhāyanagrhyasūtra) and Vaikhānasagrhyasūtra 4.10-12. For the Śaunakasūtra see n. 44.

⁴⁴ With regard to the identification of the Śaunakasūtra, in the first instance two texts come to mind: the Kauśikagrhyasūtra of the Atharvaveda's Śaunakaśākhā and the Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra. (According to tradition, Śaunaka was the teacher of Āśvalāyana [see Gonda1977: 475]. According to Gonda, the Śaunakagrhyasūtra mentioned by Hemādri is “in all probability practically identical” with the Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra [ibid. 605].) However, neither of these *sūtras* contains prescriptions for temple worship.

The Śaunakīya is ascribed to Śaunaka, the teacher of Āśvalāyana (see the preface of the edition and Śaun 2.21.2 in which Āśvalāyana is addressed). In PRR 56,10-12, Veṅkaṭanātha quotes a verse from a *sūtra* (*sūtrāntarāmusarāt*) that begins with *śaunako 'haṃ pravakṣyāmi*, “I, Śaunaka, will speak (...)”. On the basis of the fact that Śaunaka is speaking here, it is probable that the verse originates from the Śaunakasūtra mentioned by Veṅkaṭanātha (see n. 43). This verse is identical to Śaun 2.21.1. The entire chapter 2.21 of the Śaunakīya deals with the consecration and worship of Viṣṇu. Thus, it is possible that the text that Rangachari and Veṅkaṭanātha call Śaunakasūtra is identical with the Śaunakīya. Possibly, the tradition considered the Śaunakīya to be a supplement to the Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra and thus called it a *sūtra*.

⁴⁵ See Lester 1994: 40.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 42.

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Other Abbreviations

cp caryāpāda.

jp jñānapāda.

kp kriyāpāda.