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## THE ECLECTIC PADDHATIS OF KERALA

### *Introduction of Tantra in Kerala*

According to tradition, Sage Paraśurāma has been credited with the introduction of *tantra* in Kerala. Paraśurāma, after resurrecting the land of Kerala from the sea (that is why this region is called *Paraśurāmakṣetra*), established therein a number of temples and brought Brahmins from outside to officiate in them<sup>1</sup>. It is said that the first group of temple priests who came to Kerala were the *Taraṇanallūr* family who were *Yajurvedins* and who followed the *Vāthūlagr̥hyasūtra*. The descendants of this family are presently settled in *Iriñjālikuḍa* near Trichur. But we are not in a position to locate any historical evidence to show that this happened before 800 A.D. One of the inscriptions found in *Iriñjālikuḍa* dates to 855 A.D. and this shows that the priest group related to this temple might have settled in *Iriñjālikuḍa* by this time<sup>2</sup>. The *Añcaikalam* (present *Tiruvañcikulam*) temple situated not far from the above men-

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1. *uttarādīn dvijān atra godāvaryupasevitān /  
kalpayāmāsa devānāṃ pūjārtham bhrgusattamaḥ //  
tantriṇo dvādaśa śreṣṭhān pratiṣṭhārtham akalpayat /  
caturviṃśasahasraṃ ca devālayam akalpayat //*

(*Keralamāhātmya*, quoted by N. P. Unni, *Tantrasamuccaya*, p. 6).

2. cf. Kesavan Veluthat, *Brahmin settlements in Kerala: Historical studies*. Sandhya Publications, Calicut, 1978.

According to Kesavan Veluthat “the word *Irungatikkutal* has undergone a change and become *Irinjalakuda* in Thrissur district. This temple was a wealthy one. Two inscriptions datable to A.D. 855 and c. 1000, discovered from the temple, show

tioned location might have already existed during the 8<sup>th</sup> century since this temple is included in the *Tēvāram talams*<sup>3</sup> and this also shows the possible settlement of priests related to this temple during the 8<sup>th</sup> century. It is also said that Brahmins were also brought from Gujarat, Kumbakonam and Kanchipuram.

But there is little textual evidence which remains of texts written or used in Kerala related to Śaiva worship until the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. An attempt is made here to give a broad idea about the different manuals related to Śaiva worship written in Kerala between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century. Their approach to the *saidhāntika* material with special reference to the *dīkṣā* ritual and its present status are also dealt with here.

### *Bhavatrāta*

In the earlier texts on *tantra* produced in Kerala we can notice references of the name of Bhavatrāta. But so far we do not know of any text written by him. He is mentioned as an authority, *guru* (*guroḥ prasādalābhena* (21:92cd); '*prathitabhavatrātakula*' (21:94c)) and also as the grandfather of Ravi, son of Aṣṭamūrti who wrote the *Prayogamañjarī*. Vāsudevan the author of *Rahasyagopālatantracintāmaṇi* too refers to Bhavatrāta as a predecessor of Ravi<sup>4</sup>.

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that the prosperity can be traced back to such early periods. The second part of the name, *Kutal*, has been Sanskritised into *Samgamam* and is mentioned in the *Kokilasandesam* and *Chandrotsavam*. Around the word *Samgamam* has been fabricated a legend that a precious stone borrowed from the ruler of *Odanad* merged with the forehead of the deity and that the temple properties were since hypothecated to the ruler of *Odanad*. That the temple and rulers of *Odanad* had some connections is, however, shown by the temple records dating as early as A.D. 1442". Reproduced from the article 'Brahmin settlements in Kerala' provided in a web page hosted by 'Namboothiri websites trust'.

3. *Tēvāram*, 7:4.

4. N. P. Unni, *Tantra Literature of Kerala*, p. 101.

*Prayogamañjarī*

Probably the earliest now surviving full-fledged treatise written in Kerala which depicts the installation and worship of the *liṅga* is the *Prayogamañjarī* of Ravi <sup>5</sup>, son of Aṣṭamūrti, which has been referred to by several of the later writers on the subject. The date of the *Prayogamañjarī* has been assigned between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century A. D. <sup>6</sup>. Towards the end of the work, the author introduces himself and indicates the scope of his work in the following verses:

*sarvāṇi tantrāṇi nirīkṣya tebhyaḥ sārāṃ samuddhṛtya yathākrameṇa /  
proktā pratiṣṭhā sakalāṅgayuktā saṅkṣepatasadbhir atīva rakṣyā // 21:91 //*

*bhaktyā padāmbujasamarpitayā smarāres---  
trailokyasṛṣṭivilayasthitikāraṇasya /  
ārādhitasya sucireṇa guroḥ prasāda---  
lābhena ca kṣapitaviśvamanomaleṇa // 21:92 //*

*śivapurasadgrāmabhuvā vidhyarpitasomapānaśuddhena /  
kāśyapagotrāprabhuṇā māṭharakulābjavanahaṃsena // 21:93 //*

*campataṭākamanoharātīrārāmasthaśāstrguptena /  
prathitabhavatrātakuladhvajabhūtenāṣṭamūrtibhuvā // 21:94 //*

*raviṇā harapādābjabhṛṅgeṇa racitā kṛtiḥ /  
prayogamañjarī nāma saṅkṣepakusumojjvalā // 21:95 //*

*sārārthavinyāsamadhū sravanū vicitravṛttacchadasampradīptā /  
prayogamañjary avataṃsabhūmau saṃtānnavēyaṃ padam ādadhātu //  
21. 96 //*

5. Manuscripts of *Prayogamañjarī* bearing Nos. L. 530, L. 674, T. 20, 5439, C. 1796A, C. 693, C. 730 and T. 413 are available in the Trivandrum Manuscripts Library; Prof. N. V. P. Unithiri and S. A. S. Sarma are presently engaged in preparing a critical edition of this text with the commentary *Pradyota* of Trivikrama.

6. N. P. Unni, Introduction to *Tantrasamuccaya*, p. 23; *Kerala Sahitya Caritram*, I, p. 200.; See also: E. V. Raman Nambuthiri, Introduction to *Tantrasamuccaya* (Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum), pp. 84-85.

Here the author admits that he has consulted numerous works from which he has taken the essential procedures for the installation of idols. ‘Then he observes that it is the blessings of the preceptors that stood him in good stead and gave clarity to his mind. He further informs that he has purified himself by drinking the soma juice after the proper conduct of the sacrificial rites. Further he belongs to the *Kāśyapagotra* and was born in the *Māṭharakula*. He is protected under the benevolent hand of *Śāstā*, the God consecrated at the temple located at *Campātaṭākatīrārāma*<sup>7</sup>. According to the author, Bhavatrāta was a predecessor in the family where his father Aṣṭamūrti was born. Ravi, the son of Aṣṭamūrti was a devotee of Hara (Śiva) and his *Prayogamañjarī* is like a bunch of the choicest flowers. The author hopes that the bouquet oozing with the honey of its essence and set in a beautiful pattern may decorate the earlobes of noble minded people’<sup>8</sup>.

The *Prayogamañjarī* is also known as *Śaivāgamasiddhāntasāra*. The author gives the intention of the work, in the following stanza:

*durjñeyāni bahūni mandamatibhis tantrāṇi gaurīpater  
udgīrṇāni mukhāmbujād avikalās tv ekatra teṣāṃ kriyāḥ /  
noktās tena śivāgamāṃś ca sakalān udvikṣya tās tāḥ kriyāḥ  
saṃkṣipyā pravādāmi yāś ca vihitā liṅgapraṭiṣṭhāvīdhau // 1:6 //*

‘Many *tantras* preached by the lotus face of Śiva are quite unintelligible for the dull-witted. Also their practices are not brought together in one place in their entirety. Therefore having consulted all the *Śivāgama* texts, I shall teach in brief the various rites as well as those found prescribed in the texts on the consecration of Liṅga’.

The text is divided into twenty one *paṭalas* on different topics namely *ācāryapari-graha*, *bhūpari-graha*, *vāstuyāga*, *iṣṭakānyāsa*, *garbhādhāna*, *prāsādalakṣaṇa*, *śilālakṣaṇa*, *liṅgalakṣaṇa*, *dīkṣā*, *aṅkurārpaṇa*, *jalādhivāsana*, *rakṣoghna-homa*, *liṅgaśuddhi*, *praṭiṣṭhā*,

7. *Campātaṭākatīrārāma* has been identified as the the present *Cemparakulangara* shrine located three miles north of the Mankara Railway station in the Northern district of Kerala. (cf. V. Rajarajavarma Raja, *Keralīyasamṣkr̥tasāhityacaritram*, Vol. II, p. 494).

8. N. P. Unni, *Tantrasamuccaya*, p. 22.

*parameśvarapūjā, caturthadivasasnapana, utsava, tīrthasnanavidhi, snapana and jīrṇoddhāraavidhi.*

Generally the Śaiva *paddhatis* or manuals follow the system of the *Kālottara* tradition<sup>9</sup>. The *Prayogamañjarī* also follows the *Kālottara* tradition but it is quite different from the *paddhatis* of Somaśambhu, Aghoraśiva and Jñānaśiva which also follow the *Kālottara*. Let us look into some of the features described in its 16<sup>th</sup> chapter on *pūjā* to see how it differs with other texts.

- In its description of the throne, the *Prayogamañjarī* (16:41-42) follows the early *paddhatis* and indicates only the *yogapīṭha* in contrast to the *pañcāsana* concept of dividing the throne into five sections namely *anantāsana, siṃhāsana, yogāsana, vimālāsana* and *padmāsana* which is followed by the later texts (ex. *Ajita, Kriyāpāda* 20:143ff).
- In the visualization of the *pīṭha*, *Prayogamañjarī* follows a different tradition than the other texts (*Somaśambhupaddhati* I, 3:43), according to which ‘the feet are a red bull, a black lion, a yellow *bhūta* and a white elephant’ (16:78).
- The description of the *gātraka* or struts between the four lion legs, which is not to be found in the earlier texts is included here with the term *īṣā* (16:43a) which may be perhaps a corruption of *elikā* (*Rauravasūtrasaṅgraha* 10:23a). But the visualisation of these *gātrakas* is not included in the text (like in the *Kriyākramadyotikā*, 35, p. 88).
- The *chadana* or the ‘coverings’ for the throne are also described (16:44) which most of the pre-twelfth-century *said-dhāntika* texts do not take into consideration.

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9. In most of the cases it is the *Dviśatikālottara*. But the *Mṛgendrapaddhati* of Aghoraśivācārya follows the *Mṛgendra* which is an exceptional case in this regard (cf. *Pañcāvaraṇastava*, p. 28).

- Veneration of the 'Maṇḍalātrīṭaya', 'the three concentric maṇḍalas placed on the tips of the petals, on the kesaras and on the pericarp and associated with the sun, moon and fire' during the throne worship is also included in the *Prayogamañjarī* (*Maṇḍalātrīṭayaṃ nyaset patrakesarakarṇikāḥ* 16:47cd).
- While describing the visualization of Sadāśiva the text portrays a one-faced, four-armed Sadāśiva (16:49c-52b) but also provides a visualization of Īśāna equating with Sadāśiva with five faces and ten arms (16:77). Its visualization of the *brahmanamantras* is also quite different (16:73-77).
- The usage of *Prāsādamantra* which we notice in most of the *paddhatis* is prescribed by the *Prayogamañjarī* also.

Even though the *Prayogamañjarī* is written in the style of a *paddhati* text, it deals mostly with the *parārthapūjā*. Topics such as the daily routines which are normally described in the *paddhatis* are not dealt with. It devotes nearly 150 verses to describe the process of *dīkṣā*. Auspicious days for the ritual, the places for the initiation, the *maṇḍala* for the initiation, preliminary rites for the initiation, *agnikārya*, description of *bhuvanas* and *tattvas*, *nāḍīśodhana*, performance of *samskāras*, *vratas* and *yajñas*, final oblation with the tuft and *abhiṣeka* all are included in the description. While introducing the topic of *dīkṣā* the author designates the purpose of *dīkṣā* as a qualification for performing the *pratiṣṭhā* whereas the standard *paddhatis* prescribe this ritual purely as a passage for salvation.

*bhaktastapasvī dhanavān praśāntaḥ*  
*siddhāntadīkṣākṣapitāghasuddhaḥ /*  
*kartuṃ pratiṣṭhām ucitas tato 'haṃ*  
*dīkṣāṃ pravakṣye prathamāṃ samāsāt // 9:8 //*

But the *Prayogamañjarī*'s description of the practical process of the ritual for *dīkṣā* is the same as that of other *śaiva paddhatis* and deals with two types of *dīkṣās*, namely the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* and the *sādhakadīkṣā*. Although the author begins by describing *dīkṣā* as related to

installation, at the end of the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* he explains it as a passage for liberation.

*evam yuktaḥ pare tattve na bhūyaḥ paśutām vrajet /  
rasasprṣtam hi yat tāmraṃ na tat tāmraṃ punar bhavet // 9:119 //*

*dīkṣā mumukṣuviṣayā kathiteyam anyām  
saṃsārīnāñ ca kathayāmy adhikāradīkṣām /  
saṃkṣepato jananabhogalayair vihinām  
homena tattvavihitena yathāsya śuddhiḥ // 9:120 //*

He also adds the *abhiṣeka* to the *śiṣya* at the end of *dīkṣā*:

*dīkṣāprakṛptīkṣapitāghaśuddhaṃ nādākyabijena sahasrakṛtvah /  
japtvātha gandhodakapūritena saṃsnāpayet taṃ kalaśena śiṣyam // 9:147 //*

While most of the other texts of Kerala on *tantra* deal with different deities, the *Prayogamañjarī* deals only with the installation and worship of Śiva. The phrase *Siddhānta-dīkṣākṣapitāgha-śuddhaḥ* (9:8b) used by the author makes clear that one should be free from sins (*agha*) to be able to perform the installation of the deity. Apart from prescribing the initiation as a qualification for doing the installation, the *Prayogamañjarī* stresses its importance as a path for liberation (*dīkṣā mumukṣu-viṣayā* 9:110a). Through its detailed description of *dīkṣā* or initiation it follows a *saiddhāntika* approach whereas many of the later texts of Kerala disregard it. It can be assumed that the author of this text must have been familiar with the earlier *tantra* texts and must have followed the *Kālottara* tradition.

The work has been elaborately commented upon by Trivikrama (15<sup>th</sup> A.D.), son of Nārāyaṇa, in his commentary called the *Pradyota*<sup>10</sup>. In this commentary the author quotes very often from some of the well-known earlier texts<sup>11</sup>. He also quotes from rare texts<sup>12</sup>, such as the *Vidyācandrikā* (he refers to this as his own text '*ityādi vidyācan-*

10. T. 713 of Trivandrum Manuscripts Library.

11. ex. p. 106, 117, 120 etc. of T. 713 of Trivandrum Manuscripts Library.

12. See also: E. V. Raman Nambuthiri, Introduction to *Tantrasamuccaya* (Oriental Research Institute and Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum).

*drikāyāṃ vyutpāditam asmābhiḥ*’)<sup>13</sup>. His long discussion on *said-dhāntika* matters shows his expertise in the subject. The variations given by the commentator during the course of the commentary are also noteworthy<sup>14</sup>. The authoritativeness of the *Prayogamañjarī* is evident from the references to it found in later works such as the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*.

### *Śaivāgamanibandhana*

Most historians of the Kerala Sanskrit literature do not seem to be aware of a text named *Śaivāgamanibandhana* by one Murāridatta<sup>15</sup>. Not much information is available about this author but the text has been quoted in different contexts in the commentary of Trivikrama on *Prayogamañjarī*. We also find several parallel verses in the *Prayogamañjarī* as well as in the *Śaivāgamanibandhana*. In the beginning of the text the author says:

*namaskṛtya śivaṃ devaṃ dehināṃ hitasāadhanam /  
śivāgameṣu yat proktaṃ tantrasāraṃ vadāmy aham //  
prayogaṃ mantrasiddhiṃ ca mudā dīkṣābhiṣecanam /  
maṇḍalāni ca śaivāni pratiṣṭhāṃ jīrnasamskṛtim //  
snapanāni ca sarvāni śaivatattvoktipūrvakam /  
kriyāntaraīś ca sarvaiś ca sahaitāni samāsataḥ /  
sādhakānāṃ hitārthāya tantrān ālocya sarvataḥ //  
pravādāmi tataḥ prāpta snānam evāditaḥ kramāt / (IFP T. 379, p. 1)*

The text includes twenty *paṭalas* dealing with *arcanāvidhi*, *mantrapāṭala*, *mantrasāadhanapāṭala*, *agnikāryapāṭala*, *mudrāpāṭala*, *ācāryapūjanapāṭala*, *dīkṣāpāṭala*, *adhvapaṭala*, *abhiṣekapāṭala*, *maṇḍala-*

13. cf. p. 106, T. 713, Trivandrum Manuscripts Library.

14. ex. P. 124, T. 713, Trivandrum Manuscripts Library.

15. Manuscripts of this text are available in the Calicut University Manuscript Library (Malayalam Department) Ms. No. 2433; Trivandrum Manuscripts Library, Ms. No. 18818-22 (5 mss.); French Institute, T. 379, and also in the two private collections of Puliyannūr Mana (Ms. No. 108) and Taraṇanallūr (Ms. No. 177A).



*paṭala*, *yāgabdhūmilakṣaṇavidhi*, *vāstuyāgapaṭala*, *prāsādalakṣaṇa*, *liṅgalakṣaṇa*, *pratimālakṣaṇa*, *lakṣaṇoddhāra*, *maṅgalāṅkurapaṭala*, *liṅgaśuddhividhi*, *adhivāsapaṭala*, *pratiṣṭhāvidhi*, *aṅgapratiṣṭhāvidhi*, *jīrṇoddhārapaṭala*, *prāyaścittavidhi*, *utsavapaṭala* and *tīrthasnānapaṭala*. Unlike the *Prayogamañjarī*, this text clearly follows a *pad-dhati* pattern by giving details of the daily routines of a *dīkṣita*, *ātmārthapūjā* etc. But like in the *Prayogamañjarī*, it states clearly that the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* is prescribed for salvation while introducing the two types of *dīkṣā*. This text does not seem to mix *pratiṣṭhā* and *dīkṣā*.

*atha dīkṣāṃ pravakṣyāmi sarvapāpaprāṇāśinim /*  
*hitāya sādhakendrāṇāṃ yathāha bhagavān purā //*  
*dve dīkṣe kathite hy atra śivenāśivahāriṇā /*  
*kriyādīkṣeti caikānyā nirvāṇākhya tu mokṣadā // (IFP T. 379, p. 59)*

The confirmation of this text having originated from Kerala can be gathered especially through the process of rituals prescribed for *utsava* and *snapana*. The usage of *aiśa* forms in the text, its simple language, the *anuṣṭubh* meter, and the standard pattern of dealing with topics that are normally dealt with in the *paddhatis* lead us to think about the possibility of placing this text even before the *Prayogamañjarī*.

### *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*

Most of the manuals written after the period of the *Prayogamañjarī* deal with both the *Śaiva* and the *Vaiṣṇava* systems and among these manuals the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, also known as the *Tantrapaddhati*, could be the earliest one. The *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* is an elaborate treatise dealing with different aspects of tantra. Some historians of Sanskrit literature in Kerala date the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* to the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.<sup>16</sup> But if we consider the works cited by *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, especially the *Somaśambhupaddhati*, we may not be able to date it earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Even the *Maya-*

16. *Keralīyasamskr̥tasāhityacaritram*, III, p. 462; N. P. Unni, A general introduction to *Tantrasamuccaya*, p. 29.

*mata*, which has been quoted several times, has been dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Another *śaiva* text, the *Bṛhatkālottara*, which has been quoted in the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* has not been quoted by any authors before the 12<sup>th</sup> century; it has been quoted by authors such as Jñānaśambhu and the disciples of Aghoraśiva who belong to the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Apart from this, there are no manuscripts of this text that date earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. If we take the above mentioned points into consideration, it is rather difficult to place this text earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

It has been observed by several scholars<sup>17</sup> that the *Īśānagurudeva* belongs to Kerala because of its usage of the word ‘*timila*’<sup>18</sup> which is a musical instrument used in temple rituals of Kerala. The references to the *Nārāyaṇīya*<sup>19</sup> and the references to the *Prayogamañjarī*, a text which is not at all known in other parts of the country, found in several locations of the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* seem to clearly show that the *Īśānagurudeva* belongs to Kerala. It should be added here that the enormous number of quotations and references from *Mayamata* empahsises this view further. It is to be noted that when many of the early *śaivasiddhāntas* (up to 1157 A.D., the floruit of Aghoraśiva) quote a Maya, they refer not to the *Mayamata* but to a different treatise called the *Mayasaṅgraha*<sup>20</sup>. But the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, however, while it

17. N. P. Unni, *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, I, pp. 12-13; *Keralasāhityacaritram*, I, p. 202; *Keralīyasamskṛtasāhityacaritram*, III, p. 462-463.

18. *saṅgītanṛttavāditraiḥ śaṅkhakāhalaḡomukhaiḥ / tīmilānakabheryādyair ninadadbhir anāratam // Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, IV. 50:343; T. V. Gopala Iyer of the French Institute informs me that the word *timila* could be seen in the Tamil literature too. ex. Lists of drums are given in the commentary of *Aḡiyārkkunallār* on *Śilappatikāram*, 3.27, in which the *timila* also is included.

19. Published under the title *Tantrasaṅgraha*, ed. with commentary, Madras Government Oriental Series, No. 15, Madras, 1950.

20. “The *Mayasaṅgraha* (sometimes simply the Maya, e.g. *Tantrālokaviveka* ad 28:151-6b) is to be distinguished from the published *Mayamata*. From the opening prose of the commentary it is evident that it is a tantric work in which the same Maya, architect of the asuras, instructs sages in what he was himself taught by Svayambhū, on the top of the Himavat mountain. Professor Sanderson has been able to identify a number of early quotations of the work in the sole surviving incomplete palm-leaf manuscript of the *Mayasaṅgraha* in Kathmandu (National Archives of Kathmandu, Ms No.1-1537). Maya is cited as an authority by Nārāyaṇakanṡha in the *Mrgendravṛtti* on

quotes several *saiddhāntika* works in different parts of the text, it only refers to the *Mayamata* and not to the *Mayasaṅgraha* as in the other *śaivasiddhānta* texts from other parts of India. So if we assign the authorship of *Mayamata* to a Keralite, then this too provides one more argument for confirming that the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* has been written in Kerala. It may be added here that manuscripts of a text named the *Khadgarāvaṇacarita*, which has been quoted in the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, are to be found only in Kerala<sup>21</sup>.

The *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* consists of nearly 18000 stanzas in various metres and divided into a total of 119 *paṭalas* of varying

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the *kriyāpāda* (pp. 31, 69, 74, 81 etc.); by Kṣemarāja ad *Stavacintāmaṇi* (87, p.96); by Jayaratha in the *Tantrāloka* (ad 8:32c-35b); by Bhaṭṭotpala (ad *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* 52:41); by Hemādri in the *vratākhaṇḍa* of his *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (Vol. I, Part I, p. 138); and by Somaśambhu (*Karmakāṇḍakramāvalī* 1278-1299).

The full *āyātikrama* of the work is as follows: Pārvatīpati taught the text in a crore of verses to Svayambhū, who taught it in 100,000 and 12,000 to Maya, the Vālakhilyas, Aṅgīras, Atri, Marīci, Pulastya, Bhṛgu, Pulaha, Svāyambhuva, Manu, Kratu and Nārada, who teach it to their disciples. With the consent of those sages Maya now teaches a part of it (the conceit intended is presumably that the knowledge was whole, but Maya, being the architect of the *asuras*, taught only what relates to *pratiṣṭhā*) to his disciples:

*etat svayambhūr bhagavān deveśāt pārvatīpateḥ  
labdhavāms tapasogreṇa koṭyā jñānāmṛtātamam  
saṃkṣīpya lakṣmātreṇa punar dvādaśabhir jagau  
sahasrair vālakhilyebhyo mahyam aṅgirase 'traye  
marīcaye pulastyaḥ bhṛgave pulahāya ca  
svāyambhuvāya manave kratave nārādāya ca  
jagus te 'pi svaśiṣyebhyaḥ samāsavyāsayogataḥ  
bhaktebhyaḥ prārthayadbhyaś ca tadicchāto maharṣayaḥ  
tadekadeśam iṣṭārthasiddhibījam anākulam  
mayā tadicchayaivoktaṃ bhavadbhyaḥ śivam astu naḥ  
iti mayasaṅgrāhe pratiṣṭhāsūtram samāptam".*

Dominic Goodall, *Kiraṇavṛtti*, Vol. I, (French Institute, Pondicherry, 1997), pp. x-xi.

References in the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, however are to the later *Mayamata*. Another Keralite work, the *Manuṣyālayacandrikā* of Nilakaṇṭha mentions two *Mayamata* works (*mayamatayugalaṃ* 1:7-8) and mostly he might have been referring to the *Mayamata* and *Mayasaṅgraha*.

21. Dominic Goodall of the EFEO informs me about a manuscript of this text in the French Institute of Pondicherry but it is yet to be checked to know whether it contains the same text as preserved in the Trivandrum Manuscripts Library.

length<sup>22</sup>. It is divided into four parts, namely (i) *Sāmānyapāda* (ii) *Mantrapāda* (iii) *Kriyāpāda* and (iv) *Yogapāda*. “The subject dealt with includes the hymns on various deities; *Japa*; *Homa* and other religious rites to be carried out to please them and derive benefits; the means of their attainment; their application for averting the evil effects of poison; malicious plants and diseases; the use of medicines; the properties of medicinal herbs; the science of magic; the construction of temples; consecrations of idols; modes of worship; details of festivals and other allied topics”.<sup>23</sup>

Among the *tantra* texts of Kerala, the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* can be considered as an authoritative text which deals exhaustively with the subject of initiation. It gives the requirements and definitions of *dīkṣā* as follows:

*atha prakṣīṇadoṣāṅām śivānudhyānayogataḥ /*  
*śaktipāto bhavet tena dhīprasādas tato 'pi ca //*  
*gurūpasadanaṃ tasmāc chivadīkṣābhilabhyate /*  
*malaṃ karma ca māyā ca pāśabandhasya hetavaḥ //*  
*tadvīśeṣāc chivajñānam anugrāhyasya jāyate /*  
*sā dīkṣā dīkṣayetyasmāddhātoḥ pāśakṣayo yataḥ //*  
*dīkṣeti kathyate jantor anugrāhyasya vai paśoḥ /*  
 (Īśānagurudevapaddhati III, 16:1-4a)

It divides *dīkṣā* into two classes, namely the *niradhikaraṇa* and the *sādhikaraṇa* (*Īśānagurudevapaddhati* III, 16:9/10) which are further subdivided into two namely, *sabīja* and *nirbīja*. It describes these two classes and indicates for whom they can be performed. While the *Prayogamañjarī* deals with two types of *dīkṣā* namely the *sādhaka* and the *nirvāṇa*, the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* deals with the *samaya*, *nirvāṇa* and *sādhaka*. The prescription of rituals given in the *Prayo-*

22. See the introduction by N. P. Unni in the reprinted edition of *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, Ed. T. Ganapati Sastri, published by the Bharatiya Vidya Prakasan (in 4 vols.) Delhi, pp. 1-126. (First published in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series Nos. 69, 72, 77 and 83, Trivandrum, 1920, 1921, 1922 and 1925.)

23. N. P. Unni, *Īśānagurudevapaddhati*, p. 26.

*gamañjarī* and the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* for different types of *dīkṣā* are the same, but the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* describes each ritual in detail and with authoritative quotations whenever required. The *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* gives the description of the six paths (*ṣaḍadhva*) very clearly (*Īśānagurudevapaddhati* XVII, 1b-8). The descriptions of *bhuvanas* are also given in detail. At the end of rituals, like the *Prayogamañjarī*, it prescribes the oblation of the tuft of the disciple and then announces the disciple's eligibility for union with the Lord thus:

*asyātmanah kṛtā deva! lūnapāśaśikhā yataḥ /*  
*śivatvaṃ ca paraṃ dhāma yātv ayaṃ tvadanunugrahāt //*  
*ājñā me dīyatām asya śivatvaguṇayojane /*  
 (*Īśānagurudevapaddhati* III, 18:119-120a)

While the *Prayogamañjarī* does not mention anything about the list of the eight *samayas* (the rules to be followed by the disciple after initiation), the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* gives them in detail. While the *Prayogamañjarī* mentions only an *abhiṣeka* at the end of the *dīkṣā* ritual, the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* gives a full description of the *ācāryābhiṣeka* (*Īśānagurudevapaddhati* III, 19:1-90).

The various topics dealt with in the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* such as treatment of poison, black magic etc. might lead us to think that its approach is strange, but we must remember that some of the earlier texts such as the *Niśvāsa* never made a clear distinction between the strictly soteriological *saiddhāntika* material and non-*saiddhāntika* material<sup>24</sup>. One can see that such topics are dealt with in early *saiddhāntika* texts too<sup>25</sup>.

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24. These views were expressed by Professor Sanderson during a workshop on *Niśvāsatāntra* held in EFEO, Pondicherry (Jan 2007).

25. *Niśvāsa* and *Kālottara* contain such topics.

### *Tantrasamuccaya*

Nārāyaṇa (born A.D. 1428)<sup>26</sup>, a Nampūtiri brahmin from the Cennās family in Kerala, who flourished as one of the ‘eighteen and a half’ (*patinettarakkavikal*) poets in the court of the Zamorins of Calicut during the fifteenth century, is the author of the *Tantrasamuccaya*<sup>27</sup>. This text deals with the rituals connected with seven important deities, viz. Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa, Durgā, Subramaṇya, Gaṇapati and Śāstā. The text reads:

*śrīśeśaseśaharisumbhajidāmbikeya-  
vighneśabhūtapatinām avibhinnabhūmnaḥ /  
vakṣye parasya puruṣasya samānarūpam  
arcāvidhiṃ saha pṛthak ca viśeṣayuktam // (Tantrasamuccaya 1:3)*

“*śrīśo=viṣṇuḥ, īśaḥ=śivaḥ, seśahariḥ=śivanārāyaṇaḥ, sumbha-  
jid=durgā, āmbikeyaḥ =skandaḥ, vighneśo=gaṇapatiḥ, bhūtap-  
atiḥ=śāstā, eatir nāmabhir eva vibhinnaṃ viśeṣataḥ pṛthagbhūtaṃ  
bhūmā mahatvaṃ yasya tasya | parasya puruṣasya arcāvidhiṃ pūjāvi-  
dhānaṃ vakṣye |*” (*Vimarśini ad Tantrasamuccaya 1:3*)

While we can see that most of the early tantric texts dealt with a specific deity, this text not only deals with the deities of the *śaiva* system but also of the *vaiṣṇava* system and *Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa* which is a mixed cult of Śiva and Viṣṇu. This may be the reason that the work achieved such a prominent place among the tantric texts produced in Kerala. This text is still used as a manual by the priests of different temples of Kerala. Its significance rests in its relevance, concision, and coherency in its design. In twelve paṭalas consisting of 2896 graceful verses, the work deals with the temple life from the very testing of the soil of the ground to the renovation of dilapidated temples. The names of the chapters are: *kṣetrabhūlakṣaṇa*, *prāsādalakṣaṇa*, *bimba-lakṣaṇa*, *maṇḍapasamkāra*, *bimbaśuddhi*, *pratiṣṭhā*, *nityapūjā*, *kalaśasnāna*, *utsavavidhi*, *prāyaścitta*, *jīrṇoddhāra* and *mantrōd-*

26. N. P. Unni, Introduction to the *Tantrasamuccaya*, p. 34.

27. Ed. T. Ganapati Sastri, Reprint with Introduction by N. P. Unni, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1990.

*dhāra*. This work has been ably commented upon and elaborated by Śaṅkara, the author's own son, in his commentary *Vimarśinī* and by a pupil of the author, probably named Kṛṣṇaśarma, in his *Vivarāṇa*. Kuzhikkāṭṭu Maheśvaran Bhaṭṭatiri has composed an elaborate commentary in Malayalam on this work.

### *Kriyādīpikā (Puṭayūrbhāṣā)*

A work named *Kriyādīpikā* also known as *Puṭayūrbhāṣā* written in Maṇipravāḷa by one Vāsudevan Puṭayūr of Pūnthoṭṭam needs to be given special attention, since the *Kriyādīpikā* and *Tantrasamuccaya* share several common features. 'There are twelve chapters called *paṭalas* in both *Kriyādīpikā* and *Tantrasamuccaya*. A comparative study of the topics of each chapter of these two works would reveal that the contents of them are more or less the same'<sup>28</sup>. While the Kali chronogram given in the *Kriyādīpikā* corresponds to 1343 A.D. the one provided in the *Tantrasamuccaya* corresponds to 1429 A.D.<sup>29</sup> Moreover the *Kriyādīpikā* originated from the *Peruñcellūr* region (modern Taliparamba), one of the earliest Brahmin village in Kerala. The tradition also maintains that in all matters pertaining to *tantra* the scholars belonging to the *Peruñcellūr* region are the unquestionable authorities. These views and also the similarity between the two works suggest the dependence of one on the other.

The *Kriyādīpikā* introduces a *mantradīkṣā* in the beginning of the work itself, in the same way as a *paddhati* text prescribes the *dīkṣā* ritual. While the prescription of the *bhadrakamaṇḍala*, consumption of *pañcagavya* and *mantrahastābhimarśa* are included, it omits the *pāśacchedana* and prescribes an *abhiṣeka* to the disciple. After the *abhiṣeka* it requires that the disciple be taken near to the deity and that he be given the *mantropadeśa*. After the period of this text, the initia-

28. N. V. P. Unithri 'Is the *Tantrasamuccaya* an original work?', in Indian Scientific Traditions (Prof. K. N. Neelakanthan Elayath Felicitation Volume), Revised Edition, Univeristy of Calicut, 2006, p. 272.

29. *cellūradhipatījyeyam*, *Kriyādīpikā*, 11:237; *kalyabdeṣvatiyatsu nandanayaneṣv ambhodhisaiṅkhyeṣu*, *Tantrasamuccaya*, 12:215.

tion begins to be prescribed purely as a preliminary rite to acquire eligibility for officiating rituals in the temples.

In the twelfth *patala* of the *Tantrasamuccaya* too we can find the following description of the *mantropadeśa*:

*samyak sādhitamaṇḍape 'tha janimajjājvalyamānānalo-  
ddipte svepsitamāntradaivatasamijyābhuyujjvalanmaṇḍale /  
kvāthodādisusambhṛtāñcitaghaṭāḍhye dīkṣaṇīyaṃ guruḥ  
suddhaṃ prāśītagavyam antar upanīya sthāpayed agrataḥ // 12:57 //*

*prṥhvyādipratisargaviagrahaviśuddhyutpattimantrodaya-  
nyāsārceśakarābhimarśavidhibhiḥ saṃsuddhibuddhātmani /  
tatrārādhītamaṇḍalādhigatadevekṣāttapuṇyocchaye  
'nvārabdhe 'tha karotu tattvahavanaṃ tatsaṃskriyārhaṃ sudhīḥ // 12:58 //*

*hutvājyaṃ manubhiḥ śataṃ vihitabijasthaiḥ prṥhivyādibhir  
mantrī tatra nivr̥ttipūrvakakalātmāntaiḥ kramāt pañcabhiḥ /  
antyaṃ svātmani pūrṇayā paratāre nītvā samitpūrvakaṃ  
hutvā niṣkr̥taye 'strataḥ praṇavataḥ śāntyai ca tāvad hunet // 12:59 //*

*kṛtvā homasamāptim atra pariśuddhe dhāraṇābhis tataḥ  
kṣetre kṣetravidaṃ suyojya janayitvā tāttvikaṃ viagraham /  
sākalyaṃ parikalpya pūrṇakalaśenāsicya devāgrataḥ  
saṃśrāvyaṇuvaram tadarhasamayādyaṃ ca svayaṃ śikṣayet // 12:60 //*

It is worth noting that the author of the *Tantrasamuccaya* does not define the *mantropadeśa* ritual as an initiation. His intention is to prescribe an *ācāryābhiṣeka*, which is normally to be followed after undergoing *dīkṣā*. A text such as the *Tantrasamuccaya*, which deals with the three different cults of Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta would probably have found it difficult to prescribe a *dīkṣā*, which is elsewhere a soteriological ritual particular to the theology of a particular sect. That is why the later authors of the Kerala *paddhati*'s might have purposely avoided the ritual of *dīkṣā* in their manuals. Moreover, manuals such as the *Tantrasamuccaya* were meant for purely temple-related rituals and thus their aim might have been to deal only with to acquire eligibility to perform an installation in a temple. It is worth



noting that at present, in Kerala, the initiation prescribed in the *Prayogamañjarī* and the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* is no longer followed and it is totally forgotten by the present scholars who handle tantric tradition in Kerala. But, on the other hand, *dīkṣā* is still being practised in the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu. In Kerala, the main shrines such as the Guruvayur and Sabarimala, follow the system of performing *abhīṣeka* for priests before they start worshipping in that particular temple, followed by the *mantropadeśa* of that particular deity. This also shows very clearly that in Kerala, the tradition of performing initiation is a totally lost practice.

### *Śeṣasamuccaya*

The *Śeṣasamuccaya* by Kṛṣṇaśarma forms a supplement to the *Tantrasamuccaya*, and provides the *pūjāvidhi* of certain other deities including Brahmā, Āditya, Kubera, Śrīkṛṣṇa, Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Gaurī, Jyeṣṭhā, Bhadrakālī, Mātr-s, Kṣetrapāla, Bṛhaspati, and Indra and other lords of the quarters. The chapters seven, eight and nine of this text pertain to the rituals of the rare cult of the goddess Rurujiṭ, which differ from normal procedures. The source for these chapters might be the *Mātr̥sadbhāvantra*, which according to its author is a *sārasaṅgraha* of the *yāmalatantras*. Many<sup>30</sup> claim that the *Rurujiṭvidhāna* embodies the [Kashmirian] concepts of Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī and the Mahārtha (*Krama*) tradition of Kālī worship. But according to Professor Sanderson<sup>31</sup> there is no trace there of Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī and the Mahārtha in the *Rurujiṭvidhāna*. Even though there are temples devoted to Rurujiṭ, it seems that the rituals performed in these temples no longer follow the methods prescribed in the *Śeṣasamuccaya*.

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30. cf. Introduction to the *Śeṣasamuccaya* (Tantravidyapeetha, Aluva, nd.); S. Jayashanker, *Temples of Kannoor District* (Census of India Special Studies, Kerala, 2001) p. 28.

31. I am thankful to Professor Sanderson who shared with me his views on *Rurujiṭ*. There are two manuscripts of the *Mātr̥sadbhāvantra* available in the Trivandrum Manuscripts Library bearing numbers, 1017a and 13377.

## Commentators on the Tantra texts of Kerala

Commentators on tantric texts of Kerala too require mention. Śrikumāra, son of Śaṅkara of the Bhāradvājagotra is one among the Kerala authors who contributed to the *śaiva* system through his commentary *Tātparyādīpikā* on *Tattvaparakāśa* of Bhojadeva. Trivikrama, the commentator of the *Prayogamañjarī*, Śaṅkara who commented on *Tantrasamuccaya* and *Śeṣasamuccaya* (*Vimarśinī*), Kṛṣṇaśarma (*Vivaraṇa*), who commented on *Tantrasamuccaya*, Svarṇagrāma-Vāsudeva, who commented on *Tantrasārasaṅgraha* and *Prayogasāra* are some of the known commentators of *tantra* texts produced in Kerala. Among these, the contribution of Vāsudeva deserves special mention. In his commentary on the *Tantrasārasaṅgraha* Vāsudeva describes in detail the *Śivapūjā* in more than three hundred verses and has used the famous eleventh-century *śaiva* ritual manual, *Somaśambhupaddhati*, as this source (*vakṣye sākṣāt somaśambhūpadiṣṭam*). The daily routines of a *dīkṣita*, *pañcāvaraṇa* worship for Śiva and detailed *agnikāryā* are all shown in his crisp and clear poetic verses. He also describes the *śaiva* initiation in great detail. While texts written after the *Īśānagurudevapaddhati* have not treated the topic of *dīkṣā* at all, this commentary, written after the period of the *Tantrasamuccaya*, reintroduced *dīkṣā* and took up the topic in detail.

## Conclusion

From the above description of some of the *paddhati*'s of Kerala we can see that the *dīkṣā* ritual prescribed as a passage for salvation became a process to bestow eligibility for *pratiṣṭhā* and the scope of the ritual was also limited to *mantropadeśa*. We can also see that the earlier *paddhatis* of Kerala dealt only with the *śaiva* system, while the later works dealt with a range of divinities without differentiating between the *śaiva* and the *vaiṣṇava* systems. But even though the Kerala Brahmins worship in both *śaiva* and *vaiṣṇava* temples, we can assume from their day to day life and the customs that they follow that they are much closer to the *śaiva* system. The Taliparamba temple, one of the earliest temples devoted to Śiva, is still venerated by all the Kerala Brahmins. The *Śāṅkarasmṛti* or the *Laghudharmaparakāśikā*, a

manual describing the customs of the Kerala Brahmins, puts forward on several occasions its customs and these are similar to those of the *śaiva* system, such as the prescription of *snāna* (4.1:8), *dantadhāvana* with special instructions for a *dīkṣita* (4.1:23; 4.1:34), rules for smearing ashes (4.2:19-38), rules for making ashes (4.3:1-28), rules for collecting ashes (4.4:1-17) etc. The following well-known verse may be aptly applied to the Kerala Brahmins:

*maheśvare vā jagatām adhīśvare  
janārdane vā jagadantarātmani /  
na vastubhedapratipattir asti me  
tathāpi bhaktis taruṇenduśekhare //*

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